Tara Mack

Dona Nobis Pacem

for TTBB unison, unaccompanied

taramackmusic.com

Dona Nobis Pacem

TTBB unison, unaccompanied

Programme note

When I thought about setting this short phrase, which has been set so many times before, I wanted to approach it in a way that resonates with our current moment. I believe people in many countries around the world, and across the political spectrum, share a sense of feeling unheard, feeling that the governments that are supposed to represent our interests simply aren't listening and aren't responsive. So rather than a calm meditation on peace, I wanted to write something that sounded like an urgent and frustrated cry. A unison piece sung by choirs from different countries seemed like the perfect context in which to explore this shared sentiment.

This Dona Nobis Pacem opens with a plea that echoes into an empty void. The phrase then cycles through various emotions—urgent demand, fractured disorientation, frenzied desperation, weary disappointment (including a dark spin on the well-known Dona Nobis Pacem round).

Yet underneath all this chaos remains a stubbornly persistent yearning for a life of safety, justice, joy and peace.

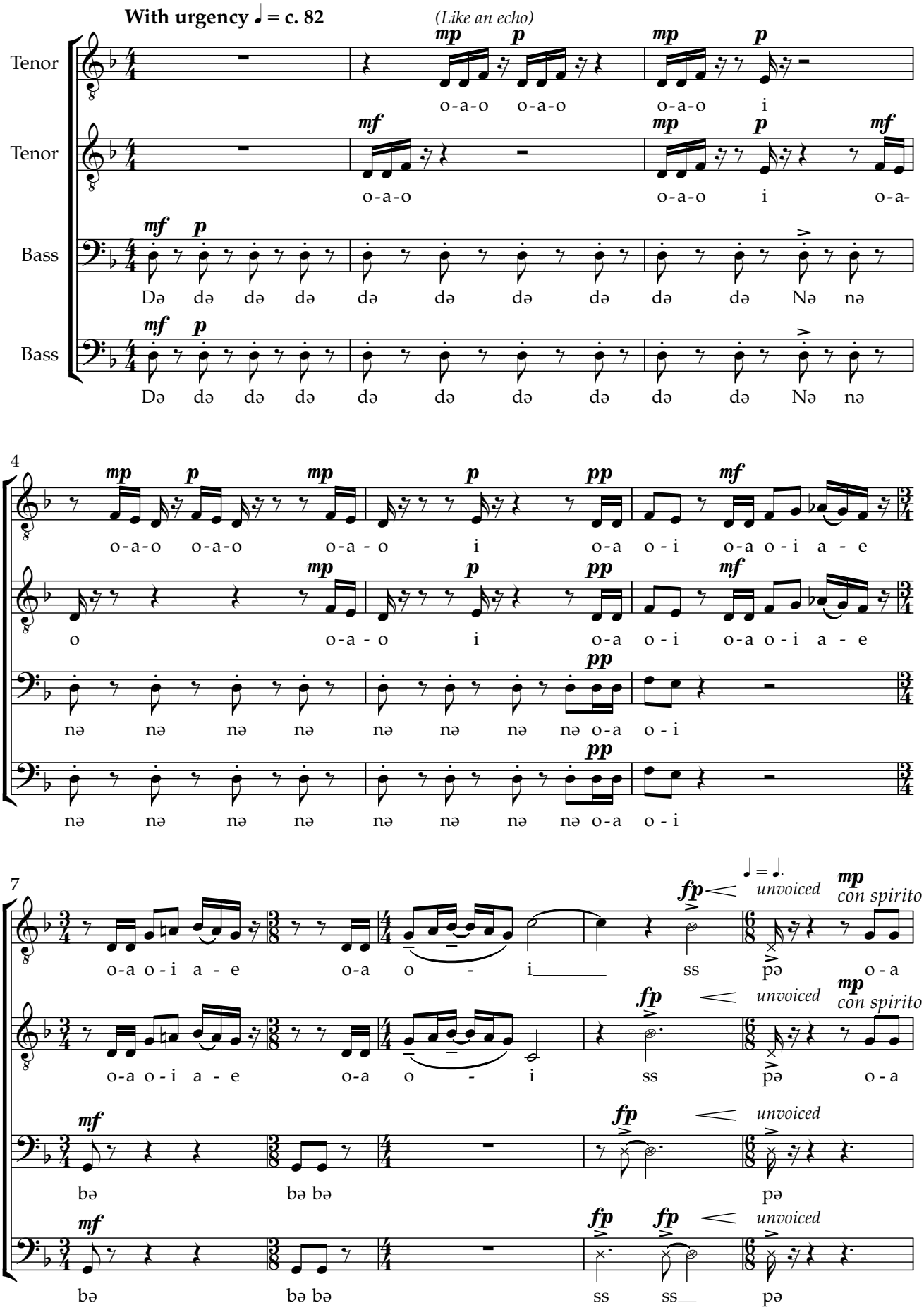
Performance note

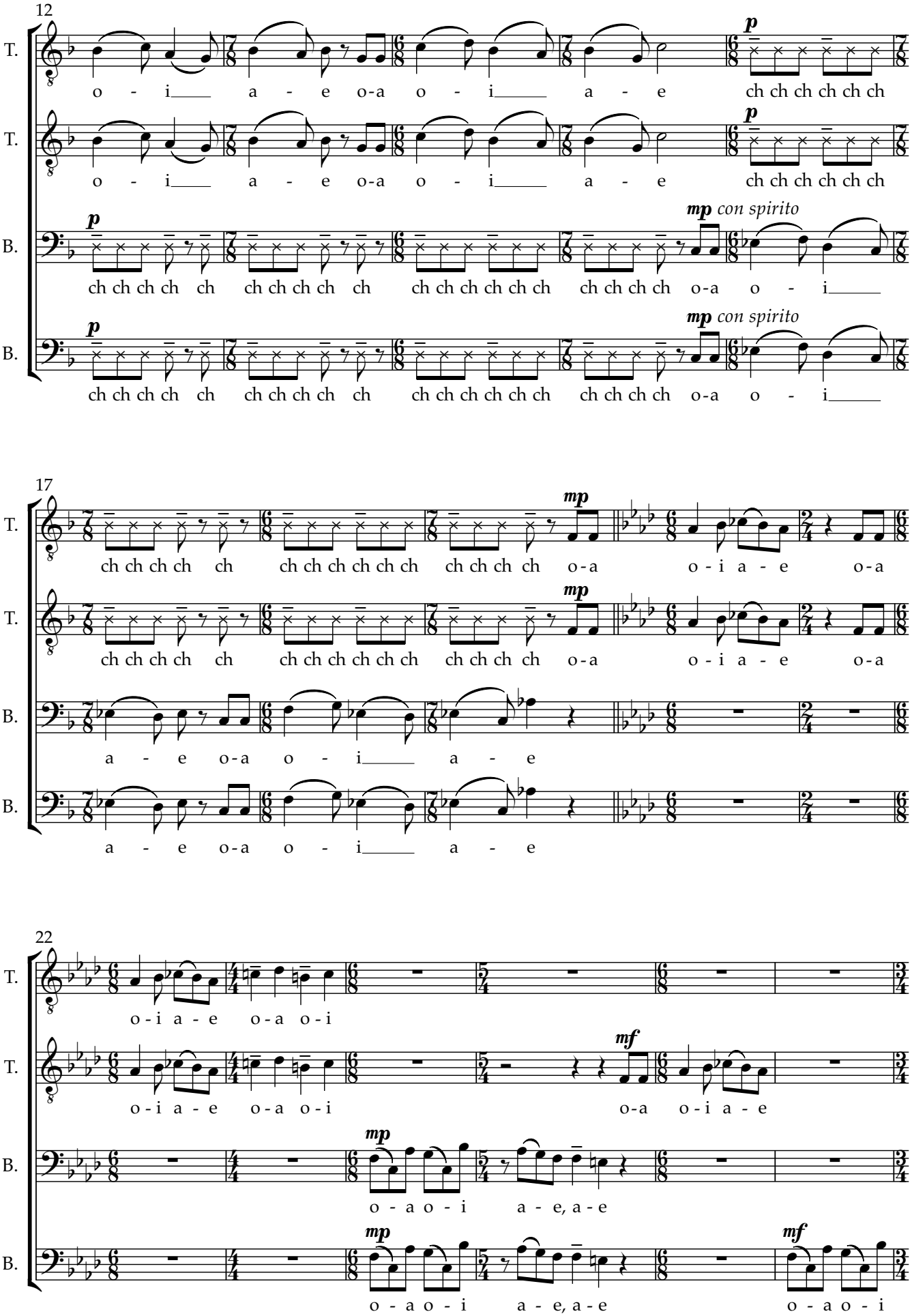
For the first section of the piece (measures 1-55), I took the phrase Dona Nobis Pacem and split it into all its component vowel and consonant sounds, setting them all separately. All the vowels should be pronounced as they would in that phrase. The "ch" represents the "c" sound in "pacem." The "ə" is a schwa sound.

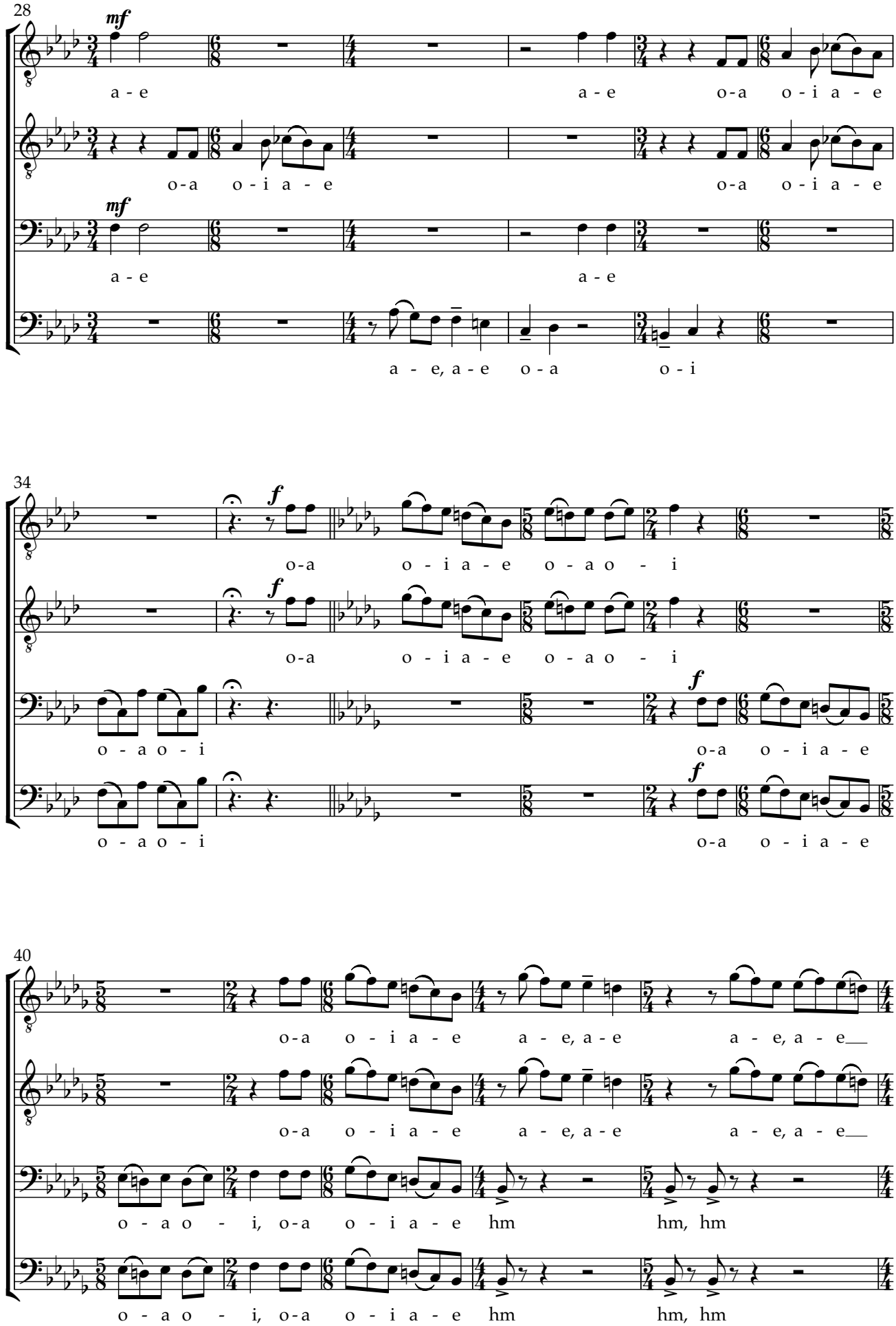
Dona Nobis Pacem

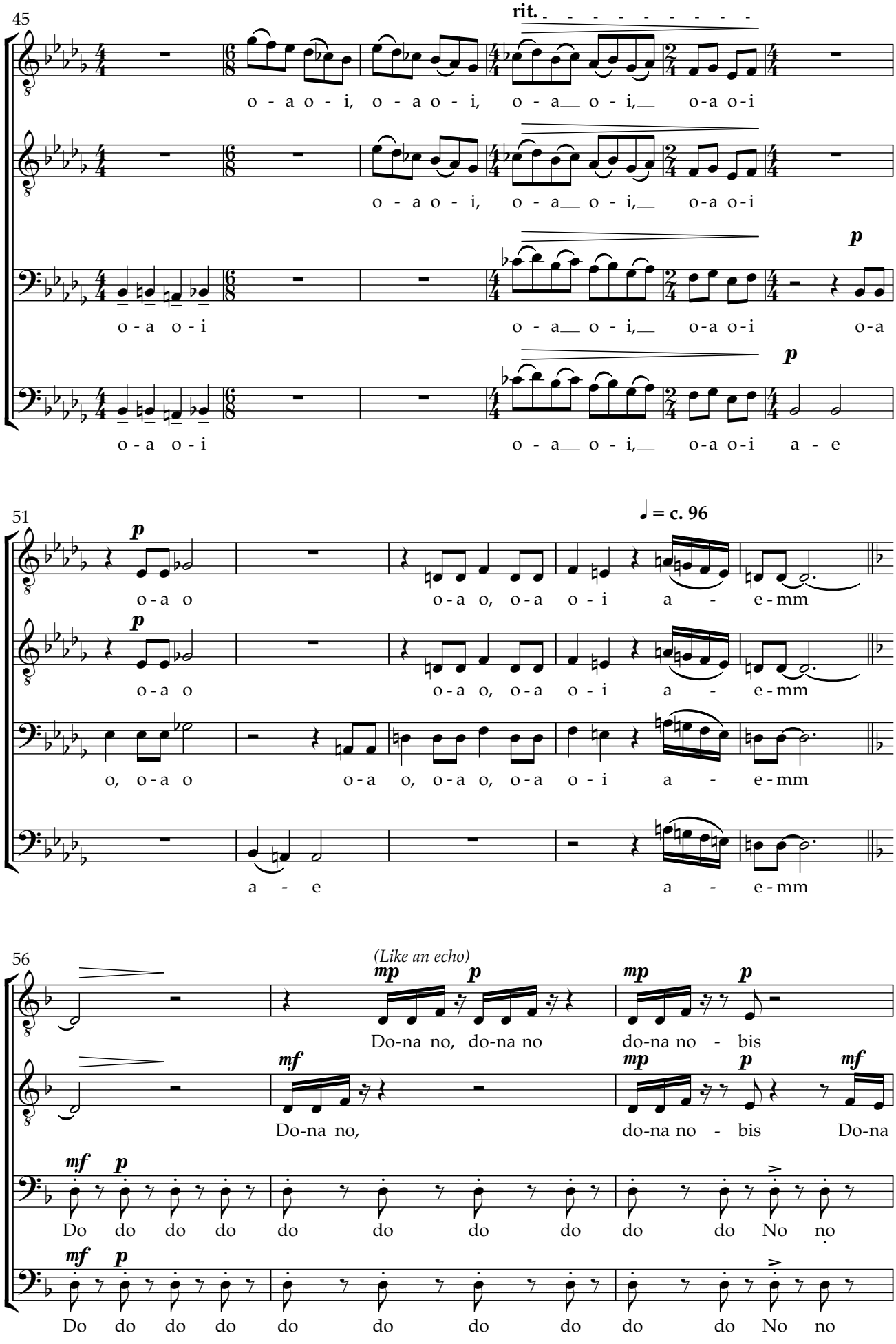
Commissioned by the 7th International Choral Competition Ave Verum, 2026

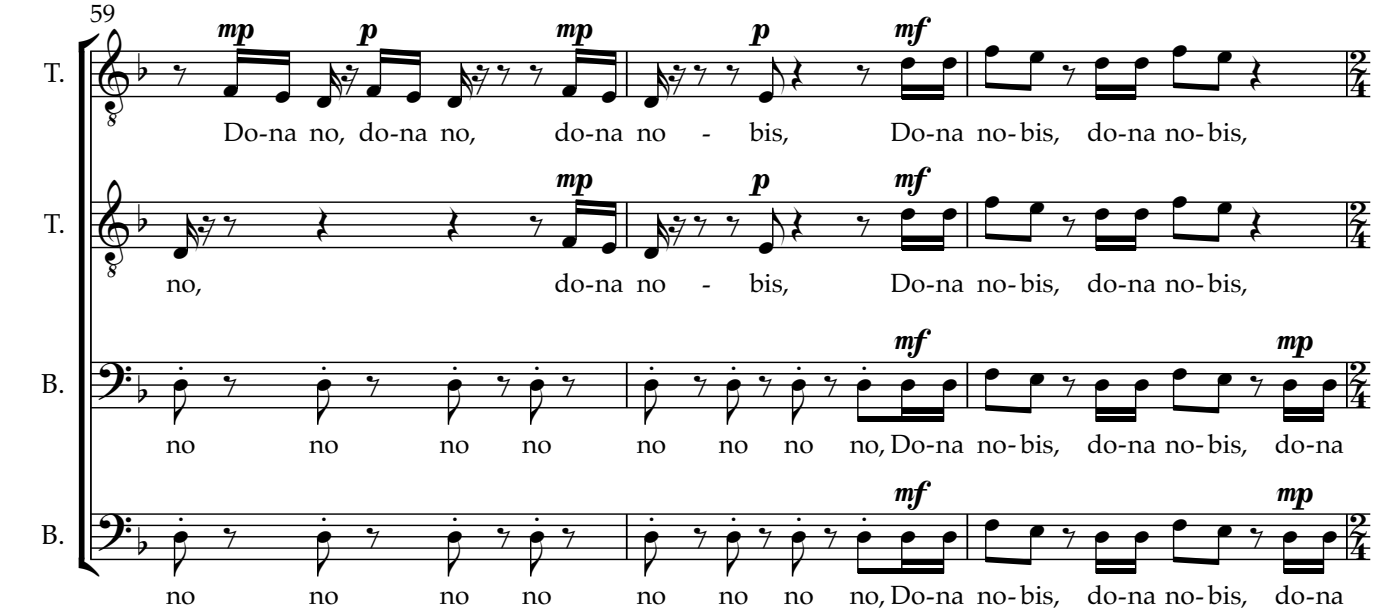
Tara Mack

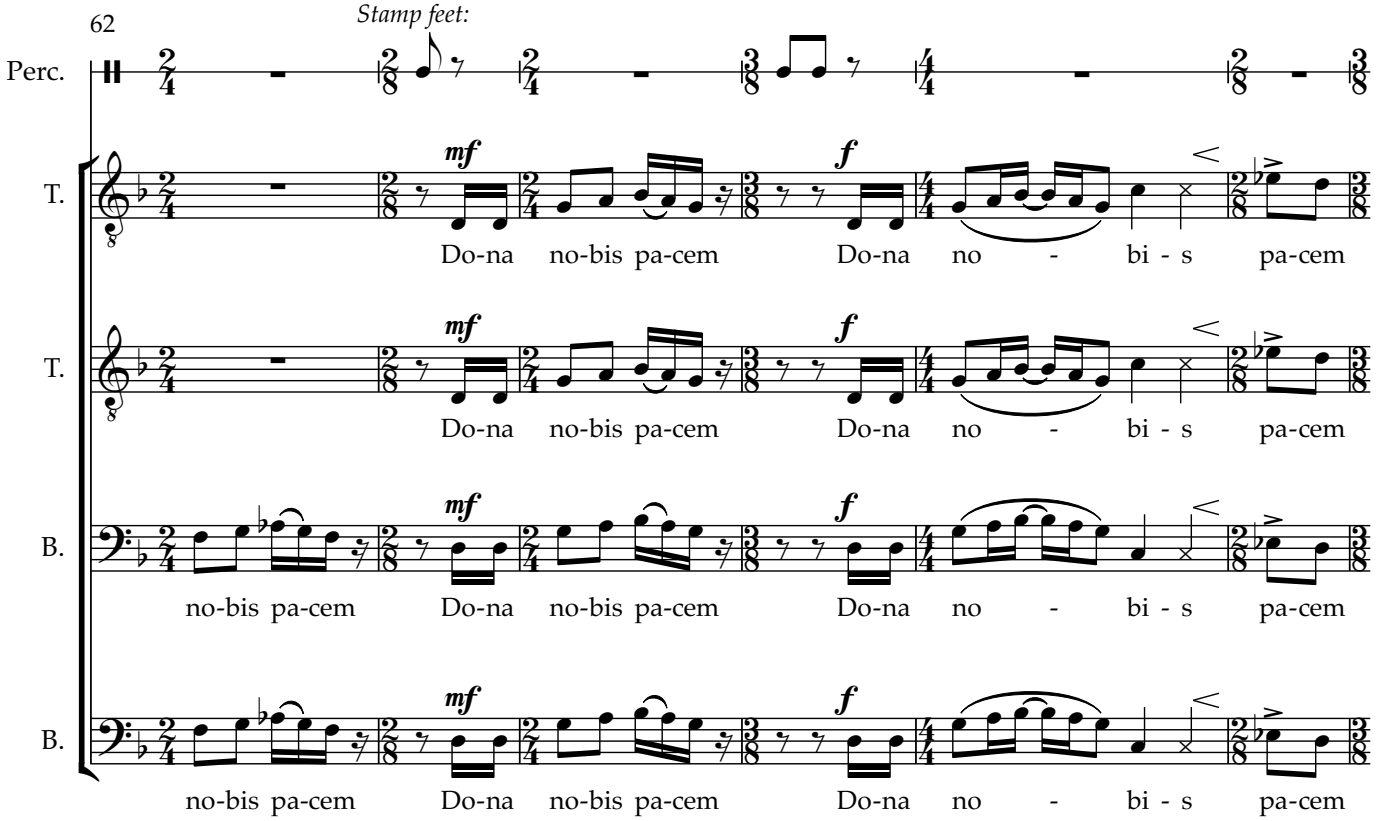


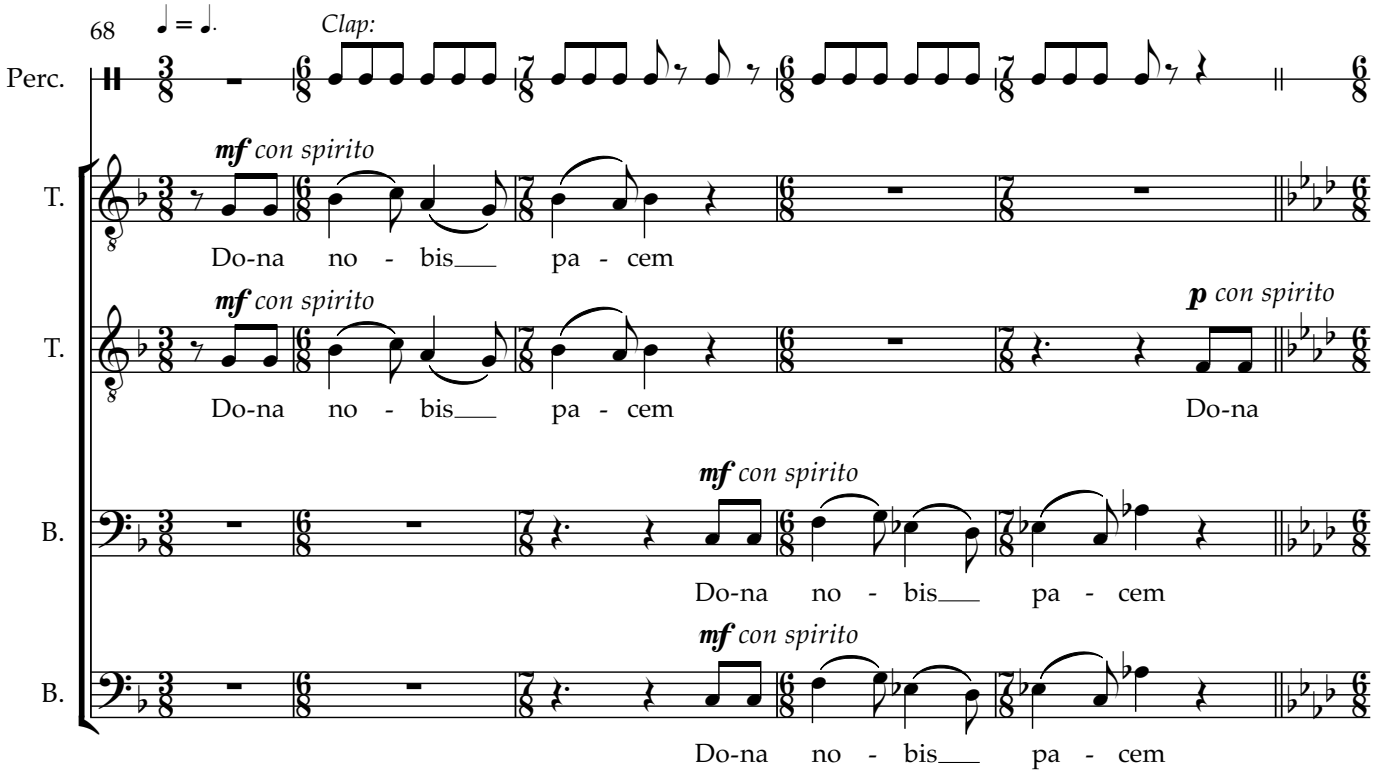

12
T.
o - i___ a - e o-a o - i___ a - e
p
ch ch ch ch ch ch
T.
o - i___ a - e o-a o - i___ a - e
p
ch ch ch ch ch ch
B.
p
ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch
mp con spirito
o-a o - i___
B.
p
ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch
mp con spirito
o-a o - i___
17
T.
ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch
mp
o-a o - i a - e o-a
T.
ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch ch
mp
o-a o - i a - e o-a
B.
a - e o-a o - i___ a - e
B.
a - e o-a o - i___ a - e
22
T.
o-i a - e o-a o-i
T.
o-i a - e o-a o-i
mf
o-a o-i a - e
B.
mp
o - a o - i a - e, a - e
B.
mp
o - a o - i a - e, a - e
mf
o - a o - i

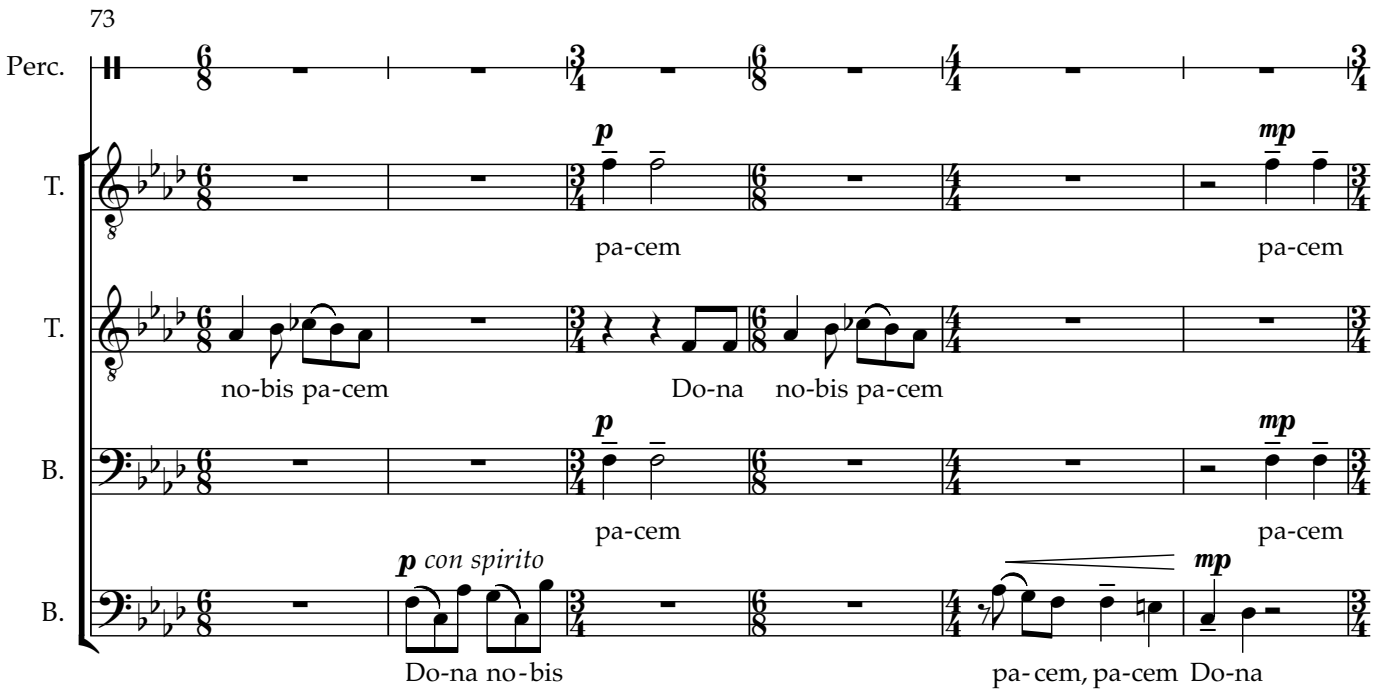

28
mf
T.
a - e
a - e
o-a
o - i a - e
T.
o-a
o - i a - e
o-a
o - i a - e
mf
B.
a - e
a - e
B.
a - e, a - e
o-a
o - i
34
f
T.
o-a
o - i a - e
o - a o - i
T.
o-a
o - i a - e
o - a o - i
B.
o - a o - i
f
o-a
o - i a - e
B.
o - a o - i
f
o-a
o - i a - e
40
T.
o-a
o - i a - e
a - e, a - e
a - e, a - e
T.
o-a
o - i a - e
a - e, a - e
a - e, a - e
B.
o - a o - i, o-a
o - i a - e
hm
hm, hm
B.
o - a o - i, o-a
o - i a - e
hm
hm, hm

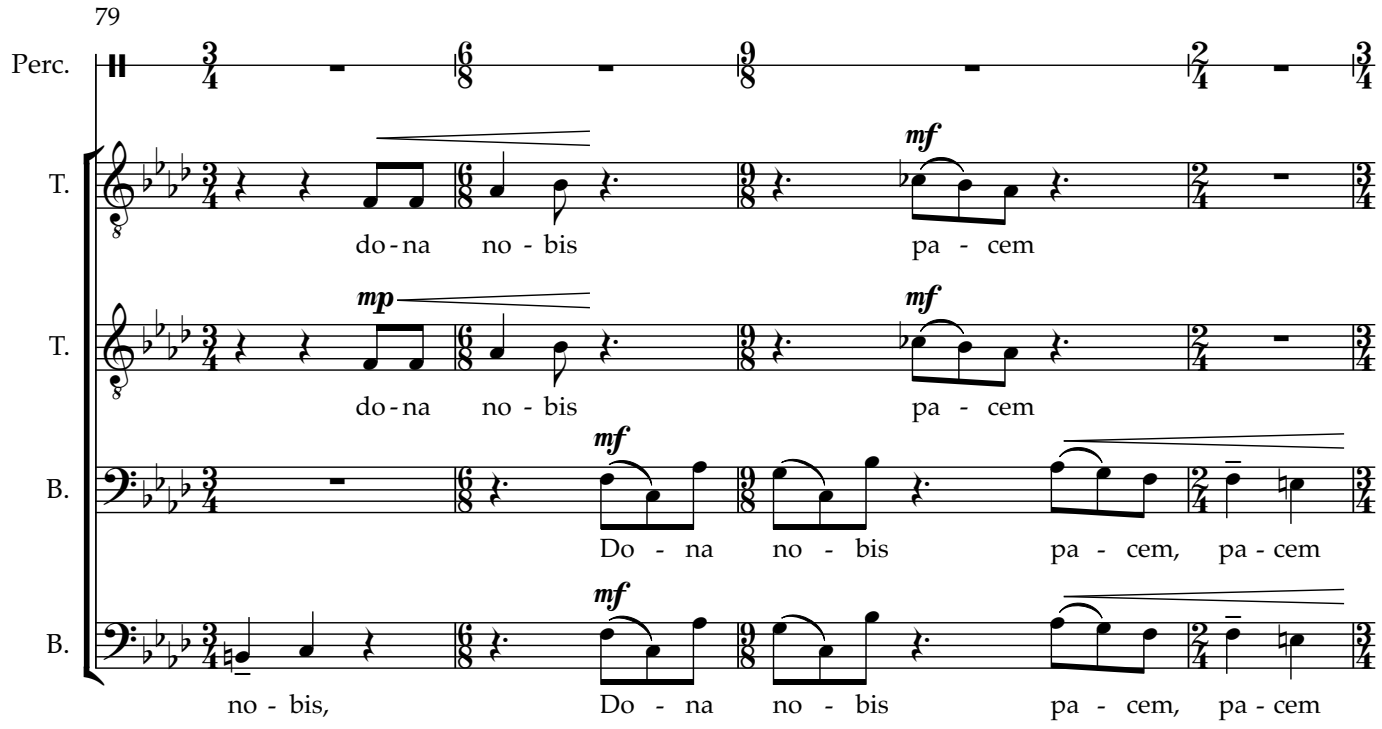

45
rit.
T.
o - a o - i, o - a o - i, o - a o - i, o-a o-i
T.
o - a o - i, o - a o - i, o-a o-i
B.
p
o - a o - i o - a o - i, o-a o-i o-a
B.
p
o - a o - i o - a o - i, o-a o-i a - e
51
p
= c. 96
T.
o-a o o-a o, o-a o - i a - e - mm
T.
o-a o o-a o, o-a o - i a - e - mm
B.
o, o-a o o-a o, o-a o, o-a o - i a - e - mm
B.
a - e a - e - mm
56
(Like an echo)
mp p mp p
T.
Do-na no, do-na no do-na no - bis
T.
mf mp p mf
Do-na no, do-na no - bis Do-na
B.
mf p
Do do do do do do do do do do No no
B.
mf p
Do do do do do do do do do do No no

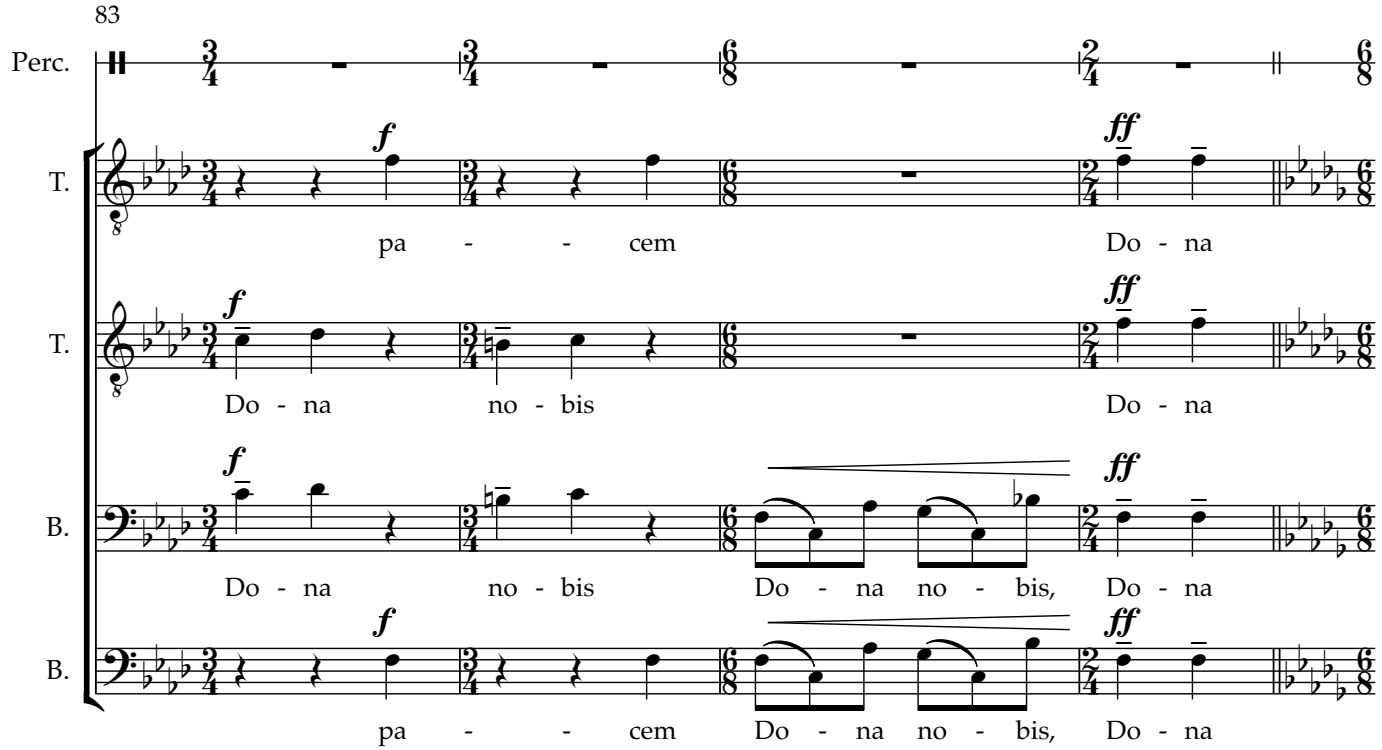

59
T.
T.
B.
B.
mp p mp p mf
Do-na no, do-na no, do-na no - bis, Do-na no-bis, do-na no-bis,
mp p mf
no, do-na no - bis, Do-na no-bis, do-na no-bis,
mf mp
no no no no no no no no, Do-na no-bis, do-na no-bis, do-na
mf mp
no no no no no no no no, Do-na no-bis, do-na no-bis, do-na

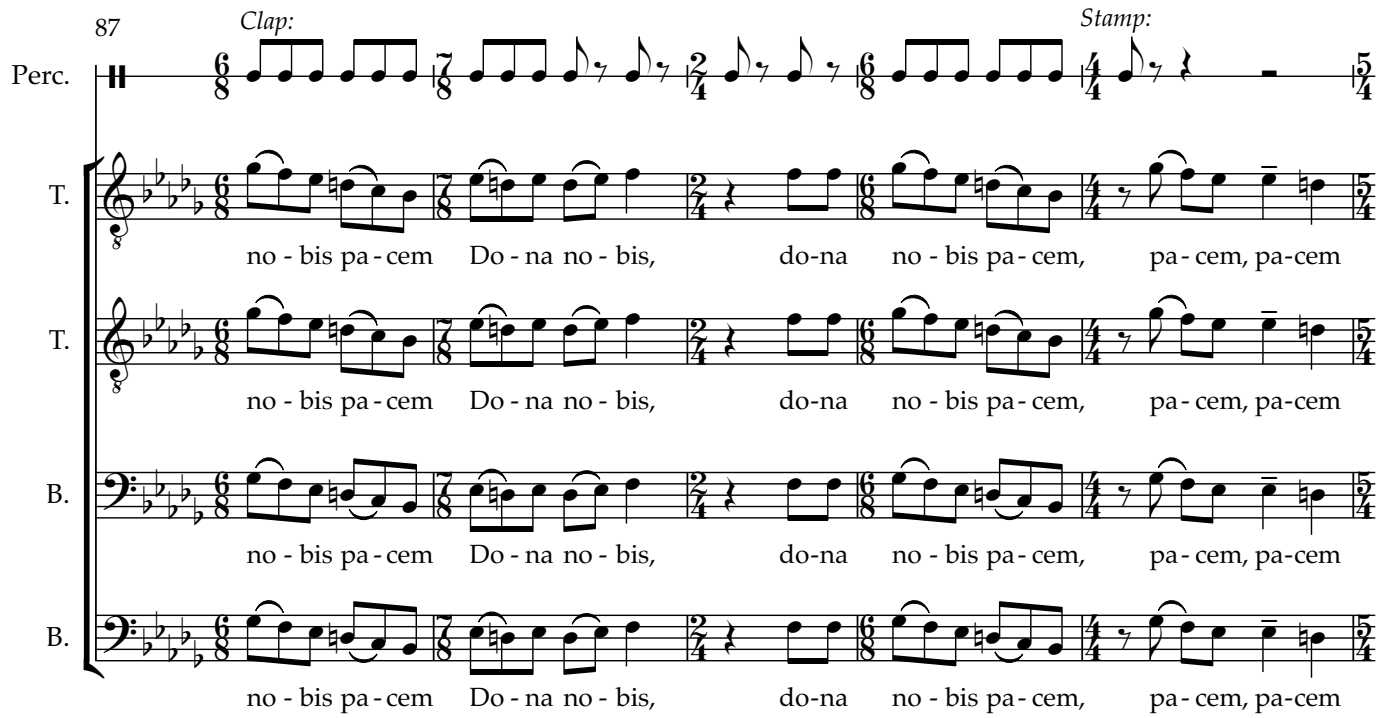

62
Stamp feet:
Perc.
T.
T.
B.
B.
mf f
Do-na no-bis pa-cem Do-na no - bi - s pa-cem
mf f
Do-na no-bis pa-cem Do-na no - bi - s pa-cem
mf f
no-bis pa-cem Do-na no-bis pa-cem Do-na no - bi - s pa-cem
mf f
no-bis pa-cem Do-na no-bis pa-cem Do-na no - bi - s pa-cem

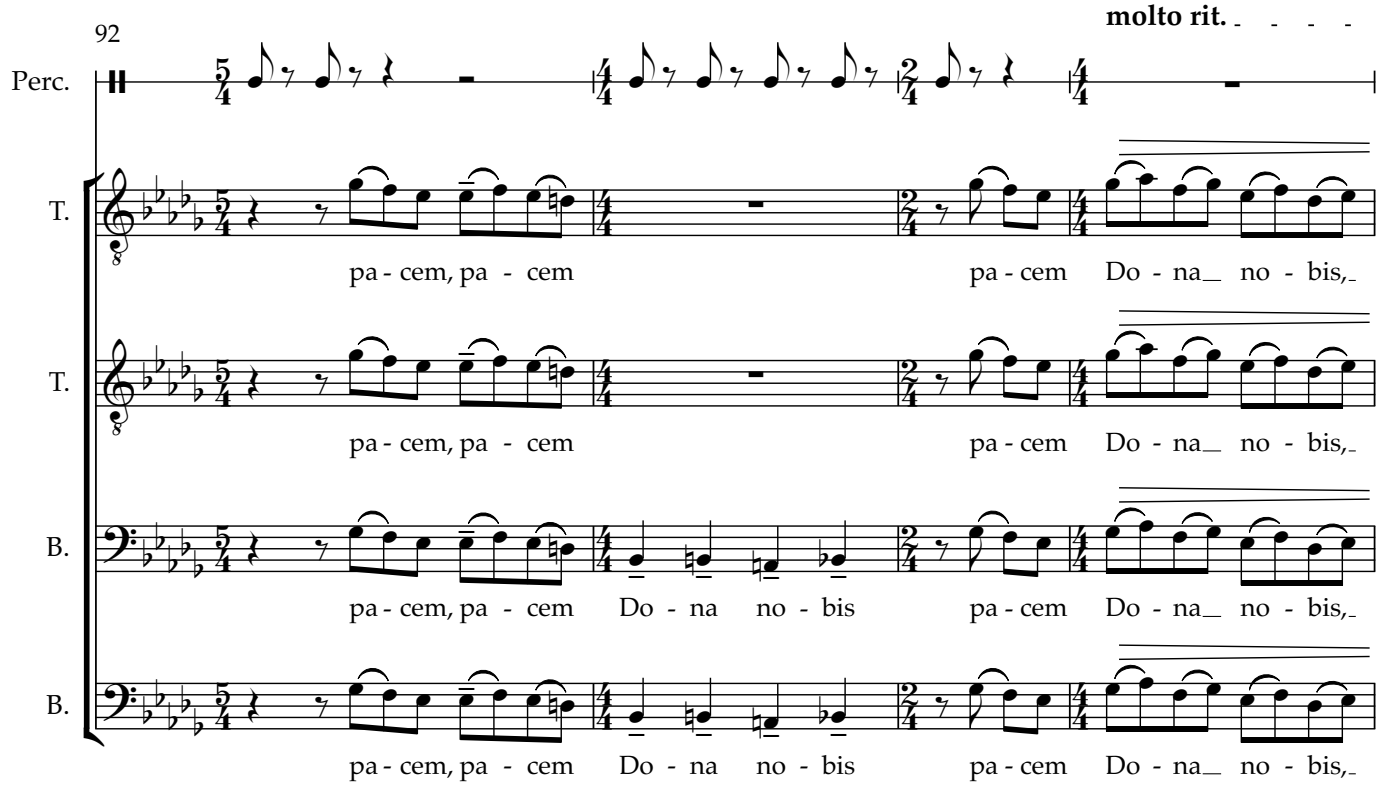

68
Clap:
Perc.
T.
mf con spirito
Do-na no - bis pa - cem
T.
mf con spirito
p con spirito
Do-na no - bis pa - cem Do-na
B.
mf con spirito
Do-na no - bis pa - cem
B.
mf con spirito
Do-na no - bis pa - cem

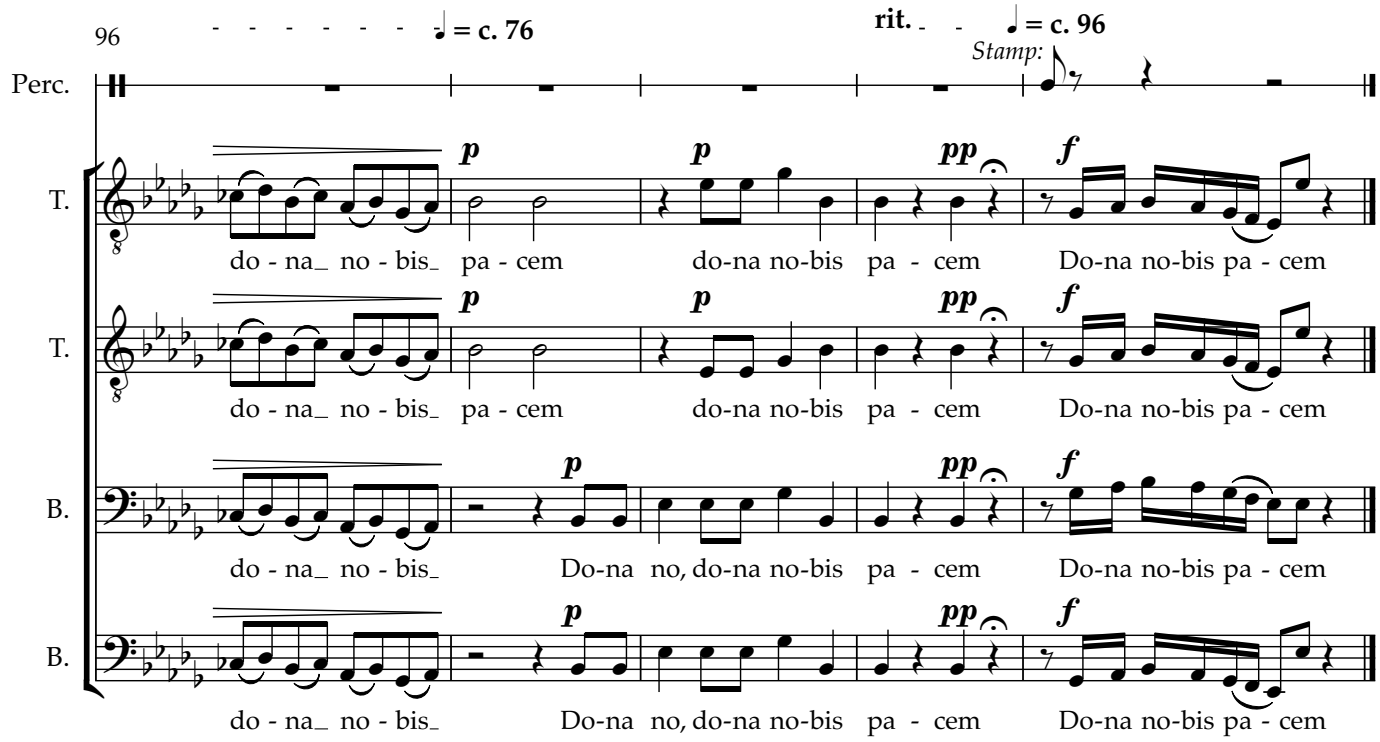

73
Perc.
T.
p
mp
pa-cem
pa-cem
T.
no-bis pa-cem
Do-na no-bis pa-cem
B.
p
mp
pa-cem
pa-cem
B.
p con spirito
mp
Do-na no-bis
pa-cem, pa-cem Do-na


79
Perc.
T.
do - na no - bis pa - cem
mf
T.
mp
do - na no - bis pa - cem
mf
B.
Do - na no - bis pa - cem, pa - cem
mf
B.
no - bis, Do - na no - bis pa - cem, pa - cem
mf


83
Perc.
T.
pa - - cem Do - na
f
ff
T.
Do - na no - bis Do - na
f
ff
B.
Do - na no - bis Do - na no - bis, Do - na
f
ff
B.
pa - - cem Do - na no - bis, Do - na
f
ff


87
Clap:
Stamp:
Perc.
T.
T.
B.
B.
no - bis pa - cem Do - na no - bis, do-na no - bis pa - cem, pa - cem, pa-cem


92
molto rit.
Perc.
T.
T.
B.
B.
pa - cem, pa - cem pa - cem Do - na no - bis,
pa - cem, pa - cem Do - na no - bis pa - cem Do - na no - bis,


96
♩ = c. 76
rit.
♩ = c. 96
Stamp:
Perc.
T.
T.
B.
B.
p
p
pp
f
do - na_ no - bis_ pa - cem
do-na no-bis pa - cem
Do-na no-bis pa - cem
do - na_ no - bis_ Do-na no, do-na no-bis pa - cem
Do-na no-bis pa - cem