



# The Gothic Horror Music of Bloodborne

**Peter Scaturro - Penka Kouneva - Jim Fowler**

Music Production for Sony Computer Entertainment



## Peter Scaturro

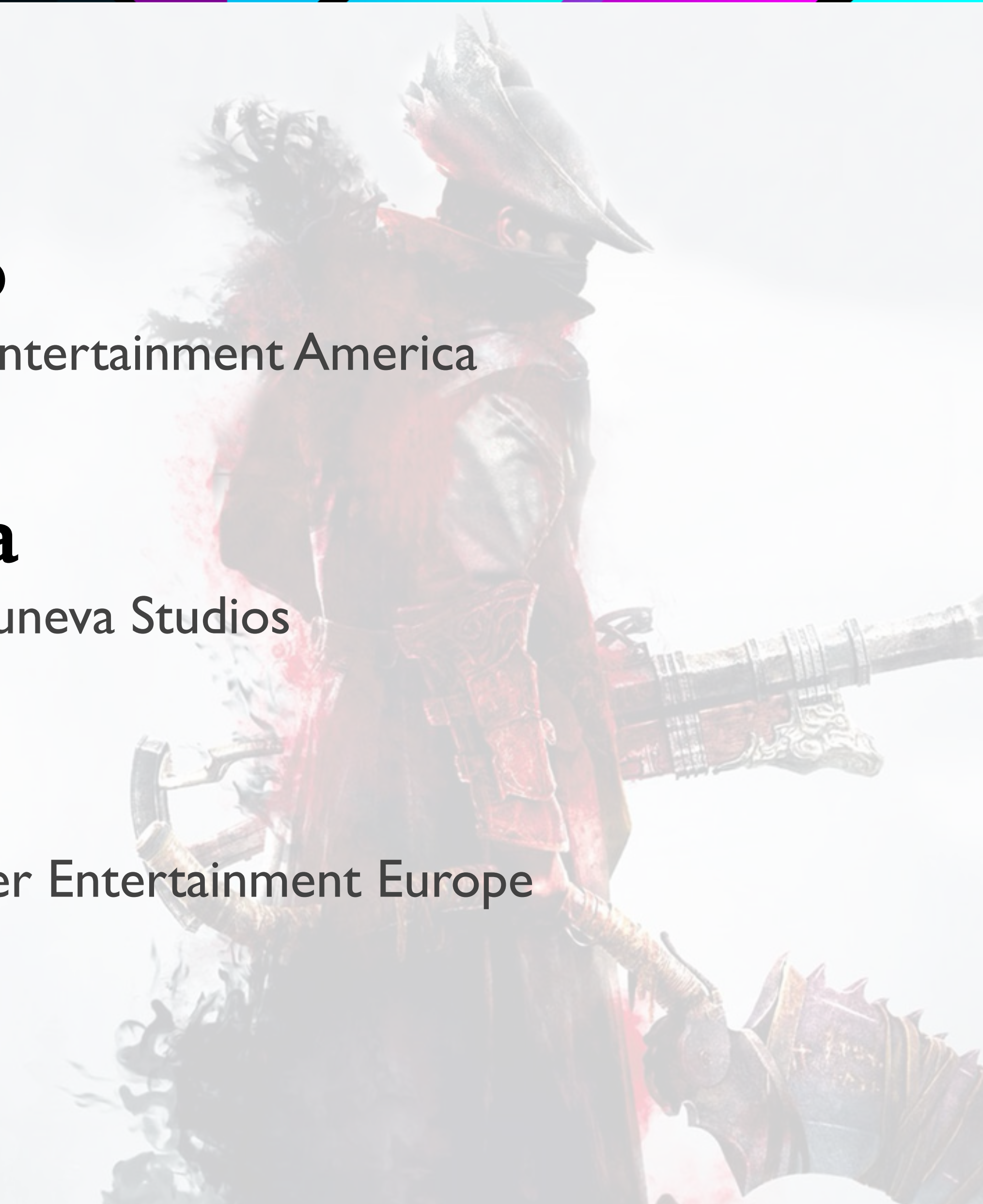
Senior Music Producer for Sony Computer Entertainment America  
@petescat

## Penka Kouneva

Composer and Orchestrator for Kouneva Studios  
@Penka Kouneva

## Jim Fowler

Music Production Supervisor for Sony Computer Entertainment Europe  
@jimfowlermusic





- 6 Composers
- 130 Minutes of Music
- Production on 3 Continents
- 2 ½ Years in the Making
- 5 Sony Campuses





# FROM SOFTWARE

# **JAPAN** Studio <sup>ΔΟΧΠ</sup>





Keiichi Kitahara  
Audio Director for Sony Japan Studio

**JAPAN** Studio 



# GOALS?

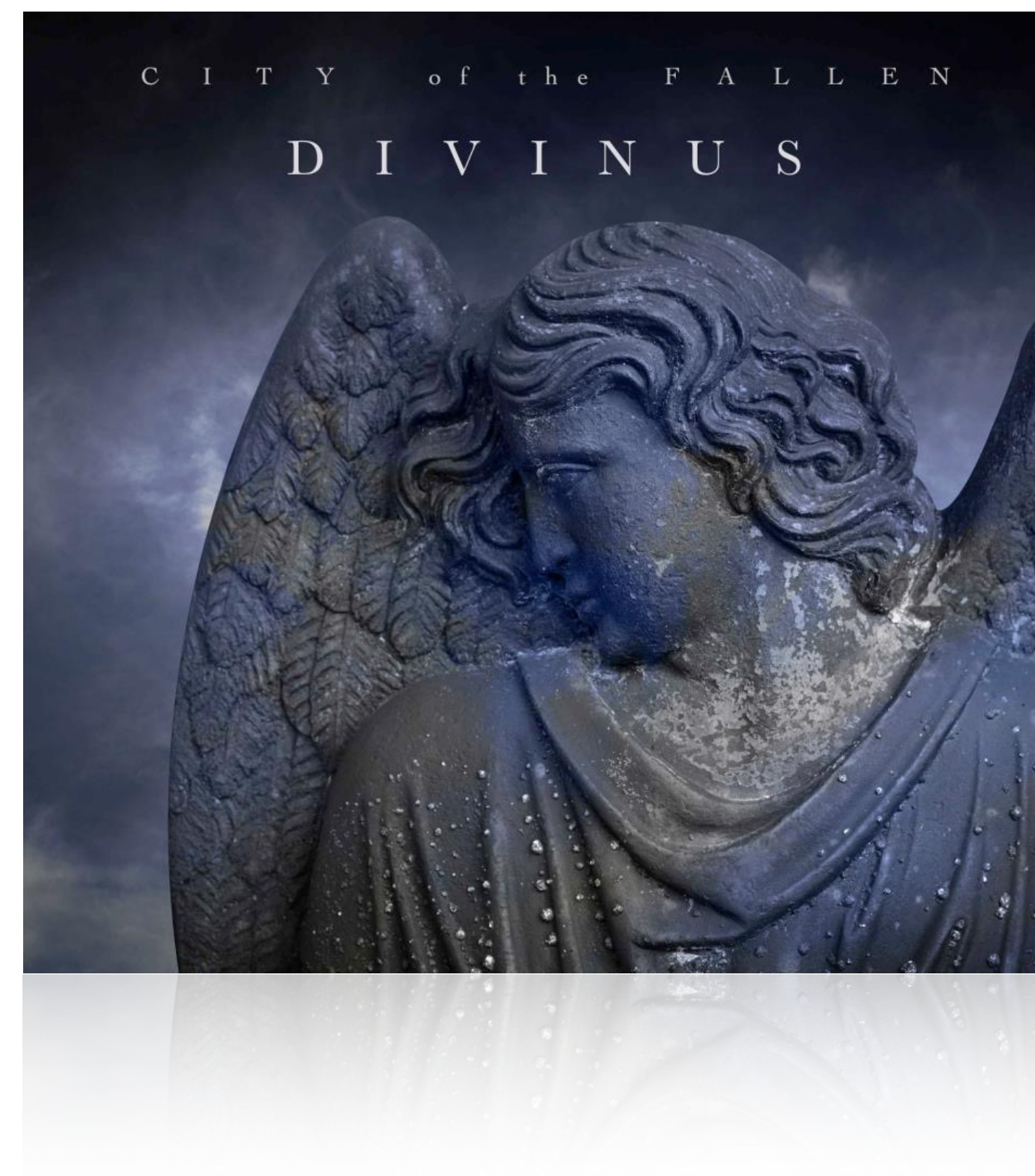
Keiichi Kitahara

Audio Director for Sony Japan Studio

**JAPAN** Studio<sup>△OX□</sup>



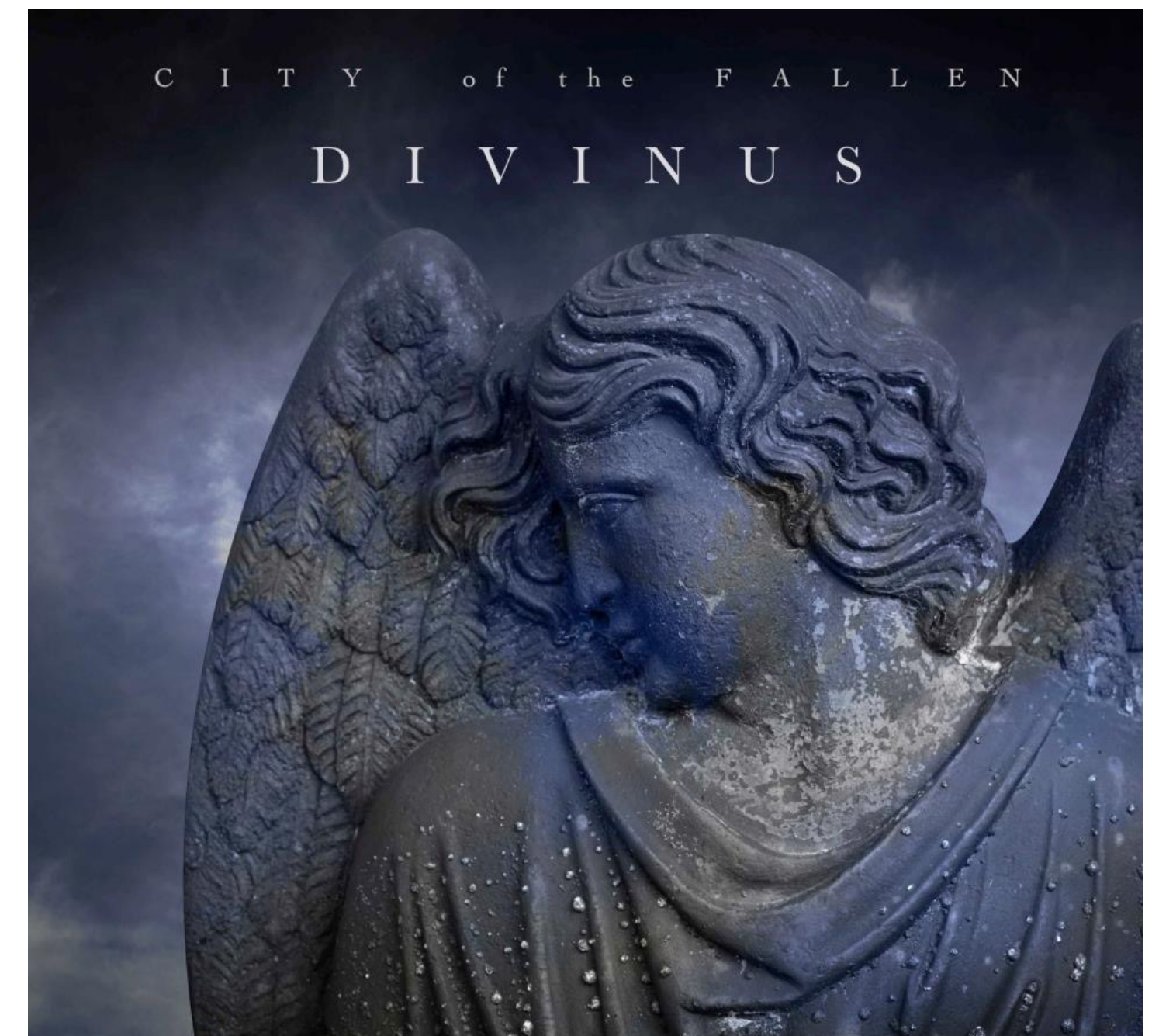
# FROM SOFTWARE





A photograph of Ryan Amon, a man with glasses and a dark jacket, sitting in a workshop or studio. He is leaning on a table with a white sheet of paper. The background shows various tools and equipment, including a microphone stand and a workbench.

Ryan Amon







**Michael  
Wandmacher**



**Ryan Amon**



**Cris Velasco**

**Tsukasa Saitoh**

**Yuka Kitamura**

**Nobuyoshi Suzuki**



# Defining the Sound What is Gothic Victorian?

- Full String & Brass Sections
- Featured Solo Strings
- String Quartet
- Solo Voice
- Choir
- Piano / Celeste
- Percussion



# Musician Line-up

## Strings

12 Violin I

10 Violin II

8 Viola

8 Cello

6 Bass

## Brass

6 Horns

4 Trombones

1 Cimbasso

## Choir

8 Soprano

8 Alto

8 Tenor

8 Bass

## Percussion

Timpani

Chimes





# AIR Studios London







# Abbey Road Studios London





# PENKA KOUNEVA

Lead Orchestrator for Game Score



The Hunter



Yharnam





# Use of Music in the Game

- Game Load
- Boss Battles
- Hub where the player rests, the “Hunter’s Dream”.



# The Hunter's Dream





# Extended Orchestral Techniques

- Clusters
- Aleatoric Techniques
- Tremolos
- Layered Dissonant Harmony
- Rhythmic Ostinatos
- Soaring Melodic Lines













# Main Title – Signature Elements

- Composed by Ryan Amon.
- Mournful theme in cello.
- “Pounding” tones in berimbau, brass, and perc.
- Soprano soloist.
- String and choir clusters and effects.





# Main Theme – Solo Cello Theme

18 *mp poco espr, vibr.* 19 *poco* 20 21

22 *mf* 23 24 25

*Rubato!*

The image displays a musical score for a solo cello theme, spanning measures 18 to 25. The notation is written on two staves in bass clef. The first staff contains measures 18, 19, 20, and 21. Measure 18 begins with a dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano) and a performance instruction *poco espr, vibr.* (poco espressivo, vibrato). A large red slur labeled *Rubato!* arches over measures 18 and 19. Measure 19 features a *poco* (poco) marking. Measure 20 contains a *poco* marking and a crescendo hairpin. Measure 21 ends with a decrescendo hairpin. The second staff contains measures 22, 23, 24, and 25. Measure 22 starts with a dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte). A large red slur arches over measures 22 and 23. Measure 23 has a decrescendo hairpin. Measure 24 has a crescendo hairpin. Measure 25 ends with a final note. The score is presented on a light beige background with blue measure numbers and pink performance markings.



# Berimbau – a Latin American String Instrument





# Bloodborne™





# Orchestration Approaches

- 2 passes with the strings (melodic lines and rhythmic ostinatos).
- Reinforced low brass, 2 tenor trombones, bass trombone, contrabass tbn, cimbasso, tuba.
- Orchestral FX remained on samples.









# General Characteristics - Choir

- Use of large, prominent 32-person SATB choir.
- Choir divisi – from 3-note chords to 8-note dissonant chords.
- Vocal effects (clusters, slides, murmurs).





# Ebrietas, Daughter Of the Cosmos





# Ebrietas, Daughter Of the Cosmos

- Composed by Yuka Kitamura
- Who is Ebrietas? Difficult to beat boss.
- Monster slug with a squid-like tentacles.
- Bears resemblance to the Chulhu imagery.
- Celestial child.



# Ebrietas – Signature Features

- Through-composed form (no recap of motives).
- Choir dominates the sound.
- Harmonic syntax – polychords, seventh chords, modal harmony, stacked 7<sup>th</sup> dissonances.
- Multiple climactic sections.



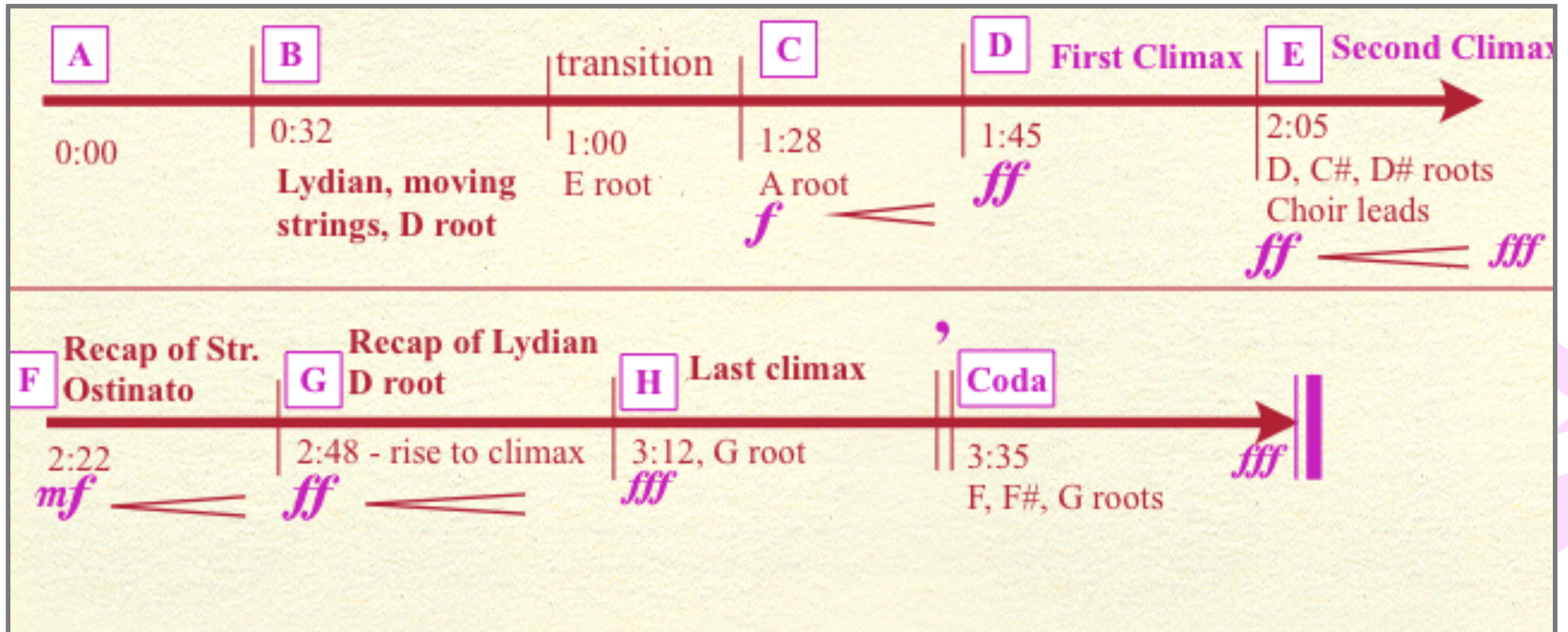


# Ebrietas – Dissonant Harmony at 2:14

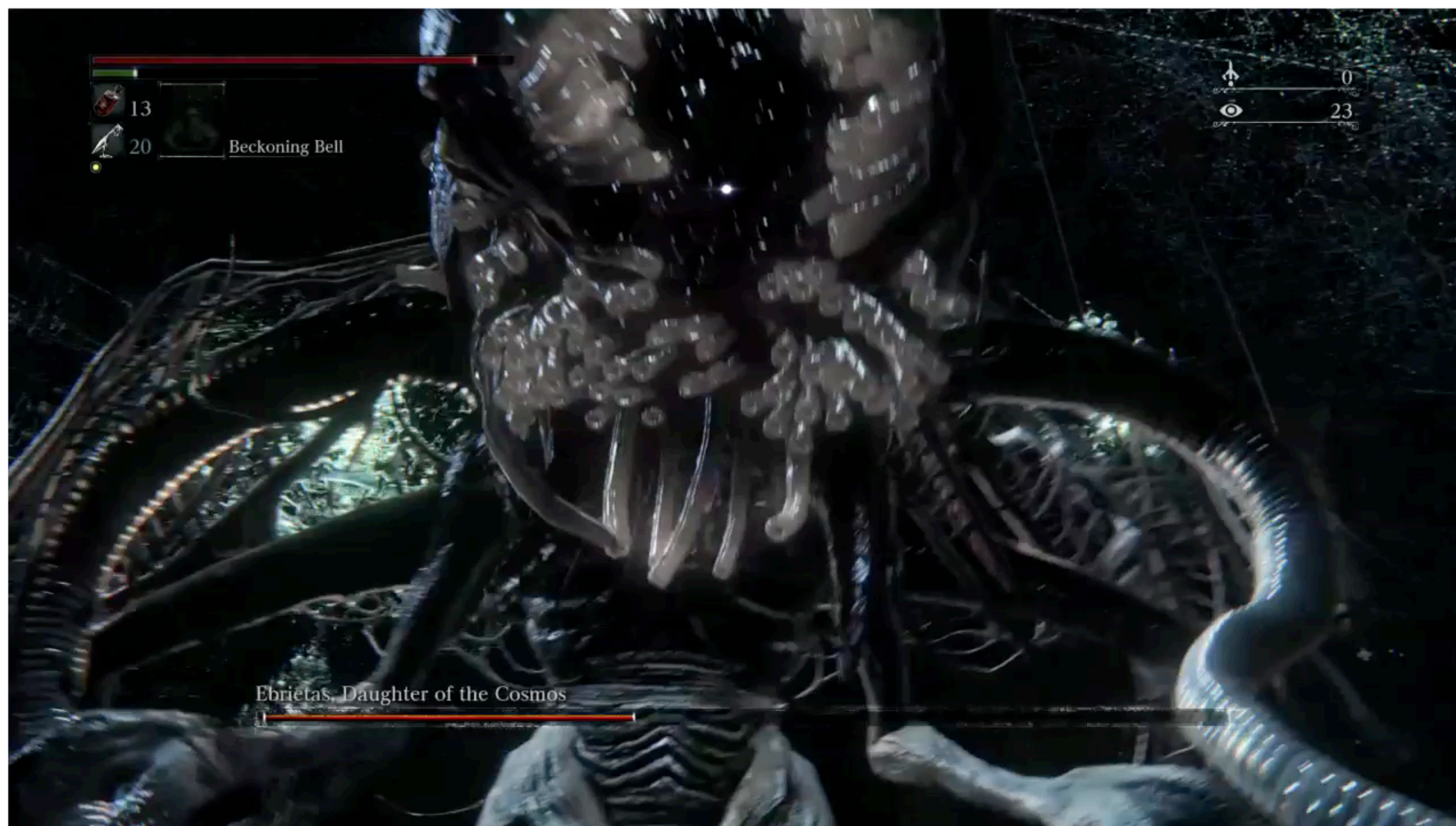
The image shows a musical score for a song titled "The Rose Tree". The score is written for five voices: Soprano (S), Mezzo (Mezzo), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The lyrics are "bris" and "Ah". The score includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. Two red ovals highlight specific intervals in the vocal line, likely for analysis or teaching purposes. The first oval is around the interval between the Mezzo and Alto parts, and the second oval is around the interval between the Tenor and Bass parts. The score is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The tempo is marked "Allegretto".



# Ebrietas – Form and Structure









# Watchdog of the Old Lords





# Watchdog of the Old Lords

- Composed by Cris Velasco
- In the Soundtrack, the piece is titled “Terror”.
- In the game it’s used for the Chalice Dungeon bosses.





## Violin I

## 23. Dungeon Lord

Cris Velasco

Violin I musical score for "Dungeon Lord" by Cris Velasco, measures 15-26. The score is written on three staves in treble clef. The first staff (measures 15-18) features a melodic line with a long slur and a red hairpin crescendo. The second staff (measures 19-22) continues the melody with a slur and a red hairpin crescendo, followed by a measure of rest. The third staff (measures 23-26) features a melodic line with a slur and a red hairpin crescendo. The score includes dynamic markings: *f* (forte) at measure 15, *mf* (mezzo-forte) at measure 20, *f* (forte) at measure 21, and *mp* (mezzo-piano) at measure 26. The word *espr.* (espressivo) is written above the first staff at measure 15 and above the second staff at measure 21. The score is marked with measure numbers 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, and 26.



This musical score is for a game soundtrack, featuring brass and choir parts. The score is written for the following instruments and voices:

- Hn. 1,2,3** (Horn 1, 2, 3)
- Hn. 4,5,6** (Horn 4, 5, 6)
- Tbn. 1,2** (Trumpet 1, 2)
- 3-Tbn. 3,4** (Trumpet 3, 4)
- Tuba**
- S** (Soprano)
- A** (Alto)
- Choir**

The score is divided into measures 43 through 54. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked *marc.* (marcato). The dynamics are marked *ff* (fortissimo) and *non-dim.* (non-diminuendo). The choir parts are marked *ff molto vibr.* (fortissimo molto vibrato) and *sim.* (simile).

The score includes the following musical notation:

- Measures 43-54:** The brass parts (Horns and Trumpets) play a series of notes, including *a3* (third octave A) and *a2* (second octave A). The Tuba part plays a series of notes, including *a2* (second octave A). The Soprano and Alto parts play a series of notes, including *Ki* and *Ah*.
- Measures 43-54:** The choir parts play a series of notes, including *Ki* and *Ah*.



77 *f* "sigh" 78 79 80 81 82

S Ah Ah Ah Ah

A Ki Ki Ki Ki

T Ki Ki Ki Ki

B Ki Ki Ki Ki

Detailed description: This is a musical score for four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The score is written in treble clef for Soprano and Alto, and bass clef for Tenor and Bass. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'f' (forte). The lyrics are 'Ah' for the Soprano and 'Ki' for the other three voices. The score is divided into four measures, numbered 77 to 82. Each measure contains a vocal line with a melodic line and a lyric line. The Soprano line starts with a 'sigh' annotation and a fermata. The Alto, Tenor, and Bass lines start with a 'Ki' annotation and a fermata. The score is presented on a yellow background with a blue vertical line on the left.







# JIM FOWLER

Lead Orchestrator for DLC



# Contents

1. Comparison of Original & DLC Recording Sessions
2. Retaining the Established Orchestral Sound
3. The Orphan of Kos - from MIDI Mock Up to Recording
4. Summary



# RECORDING SESSIONS

## Bloodborne

- Five Orchestral Sessions (18 hours total)
- Three Choral Sessions (9 hours total)

## Bloodborne - The Old Hunters

- One Orchestral Session (4 hours total)
- One Choral Session (2 hours total)



# RETAINING THE ORCHESTRAL SOUND

## Foreground

- Thematic Material

## Middleground

- Counter Melody & Accompanying Figures

## Background

- Harmonic Support & Supporting Effects



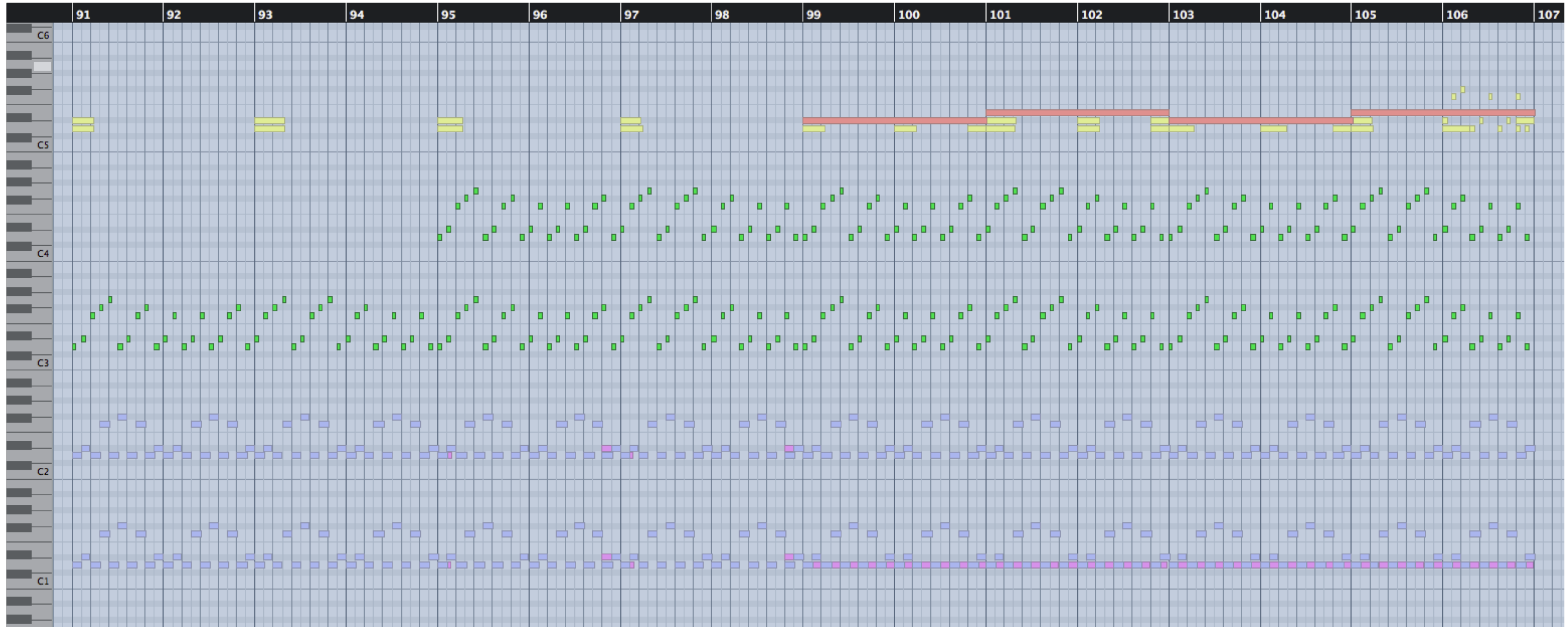




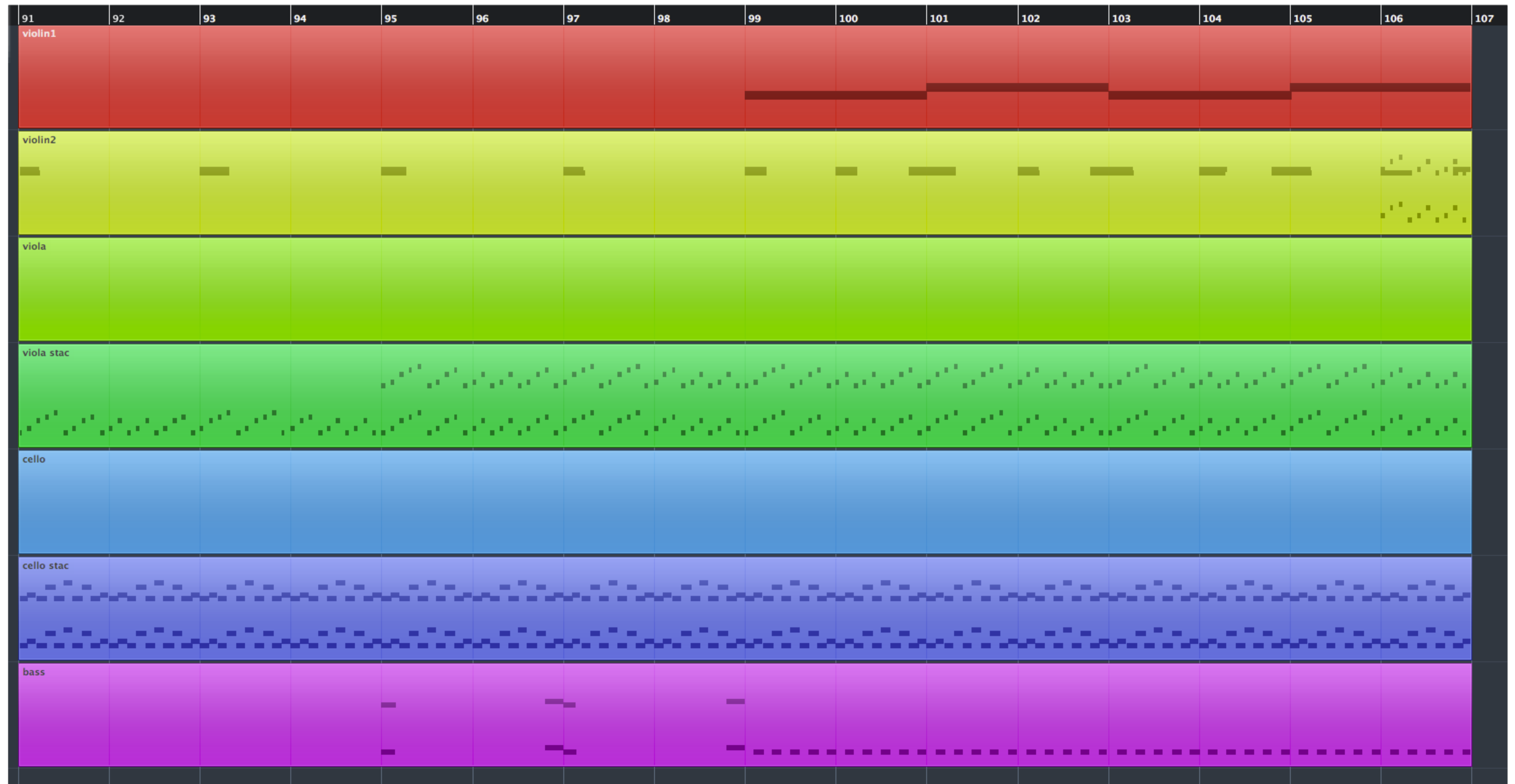
# OSTINATO













91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

99 unis. 100 101 102 103 104 105 106

*f*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Detailed description: This image shows a musical score for measures 91 through 106. The score is written for five instruments: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The time signature is 5/4. Measures 91-98 show a complex texture with Vln. I mostly resting, Vln. II playing eighth notes, Vla. and Vc. playing sixteenth-note patterns, and Cb. playing a simple bass line. Measures 99-106 feature a new section for Vln. I, marked 'unis.' (unison) and 'f' (forte), with a melodic line spanning across the measures. The other instruments continue their patterns, with Cb. playing a steady eighth-note accompaniment.



95 96 97 98

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

This musical score displays measures 95 through 98 for five instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. Measures 95 and 97 feature rests for Violin I and Violin II, while measures 96 and 98 have rests for the Viola. The Violoncello and Contrabass parts are active throughout all measures, with the Contrabass providing a steady bass line and the Violoncello playing a more complex, melodic line. The score is written in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature.



# Mockup of *The Orphan of Kos*



## Aggressivo



**Aggressivo**

91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98

Vln. I *div.* *ff*

Vln. II

Vla. *ord.* *ff*

Vc. *ff* *stacc. sempre*

Cb. *ff* *stacc. sempre*

99 unis. 100 101 102 103 104 105 106

Vln. I *f*

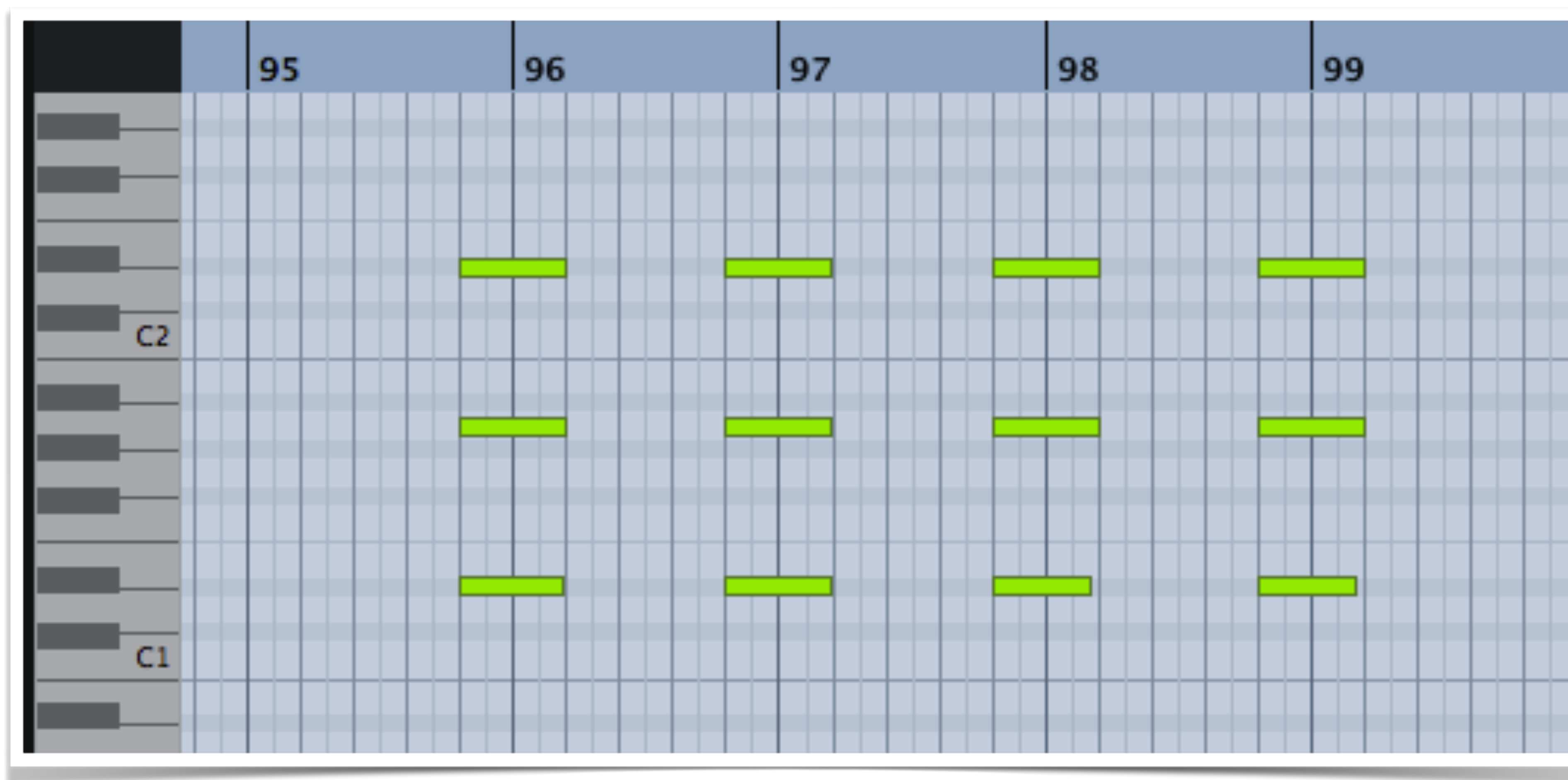
Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.







6 Horns

4 Trombones

Tuba

95 96 97 98

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system, labeled '6 Horns', shows a whole rest in measure 95 and a whole note in measure 96. The second system, labeled '4 Trombones', shows a whole rest in measure 95 and a half note in measure 96. The third system, labeled 'Tuba', shows a whole rest in measure 95 and a whole note in measure 96. The measures are numbered 95, 96, 97, and 98 at the top of the score.



95 96 97 98 (slow bend) ft.

Hn. 1.2 *mf* *f*

Hn. 3.4 *mf* *f* (slow bend) ft.

Hn. 5.6 *mf* *f* (slow bend) ft.

2 Tbn.  
1 B. Tbn. blatty *f*

B. Tbn. 2 senza sord. *f*

Tba. *f*



# SUMMARY

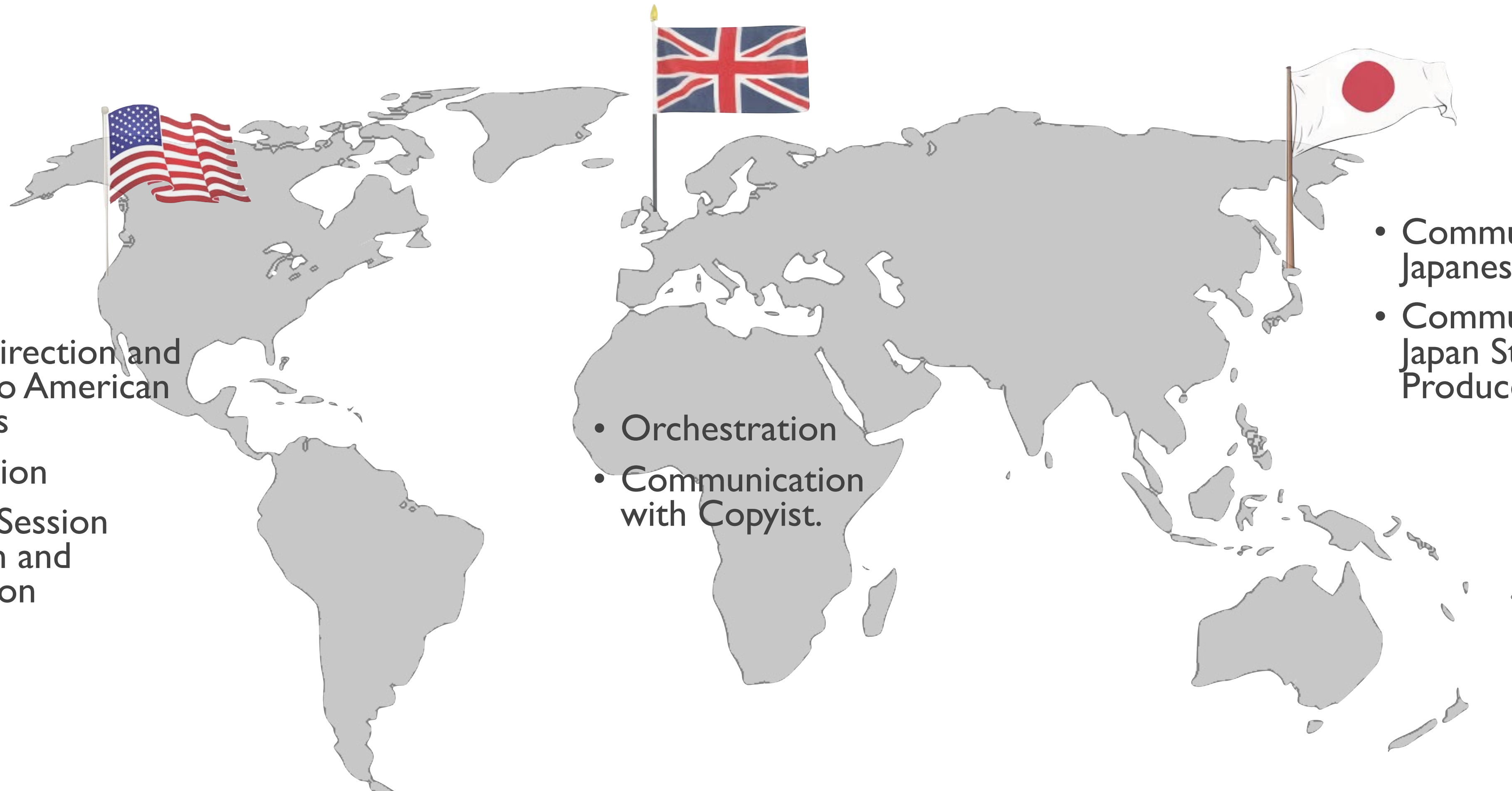
Listen & Look

Arrange (within reason)

The Orchestra is a single instrument



## Global Production Regional Responsibilities

- 
- Creative Direction and Feedback to American Composers
  - Orchestration
  - Recording Session Supervision and Coordination

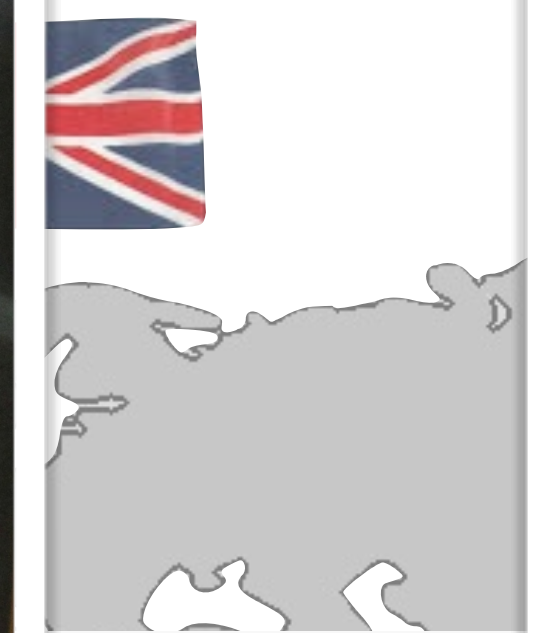
- Orchestration
- Communication with Copyist.

- Communication with Japanese Composers
- Communication with Japan Studio Producers



16-18, 2016 #GD

roduction





# Q&A

