

# Score and Part Preparation for Orchestra

Digital and Hard Copy

Alex Clark, 2021

# Alex Clark

## About me

2011: Composition degree from Wilfrid Laurier University (side of viola)

2011-2015: Librarian at KW Symphony 2011-15

2016: present: Assistant Librarian at Vancouver Symphony Orchestra

Founder: AseosA Productions

# Agenda

## **Score and Part Preparation for Orchestra: Digital and Hard Copy**

Orchestral Composition Readings - Professional Commissions

Layout Standards

Scores

Parts

Specific Instruments

Binding and Digital Distribution

Suggestions and Further Reading

# Orchestral Readings to Professional Commissions

## The journey of your music from imagination to performance

- First audience is not the ticket buyer it's the orchestra
- Orchestras are busy and there will almost never be enough time
- Your music can be complicated but notation, nomenclature and “musical grammar” should be as straightforward as possible
- Take score and part preparation as seriously as you take composing the music or hire a copyist
- Commissioning Agreements *can* include copyist fees AND composer fees


# Standard Layout

## Score

- **Portrait layout and try to avoid 11x17 tabloid size**
- **Shared Staves**
- **Brackets**
- Score Order and Instrumentation List
- Page Size
- Further notes

# Brackets


yes



Fl. 1  
Fl. 2  
Picc.

This diagram shows three staves of musical notation. The top staff is labeled 'Fl. 1', the middle 'Fl. 2', and the bottom 'Picc.'. A vertical line with a bracket on its left side spans across all three staves, indicating that all three parts are included in the group.

OK



Fl. 1  
Fl. 2  
Picc.

This diagram is identical to the first one, showing three staves (Fl. 1, Fl. 2, Picc.) with a vertical line and bracket on the left side encompassing all three.

but not



Fl. 1  
Fl. 2  
Picc.

This diagram is identical to the first one, showing three staves (Fl. 1, Fl. 2, Picc.) with a vertical line and bracket on the left side encompassing all three.

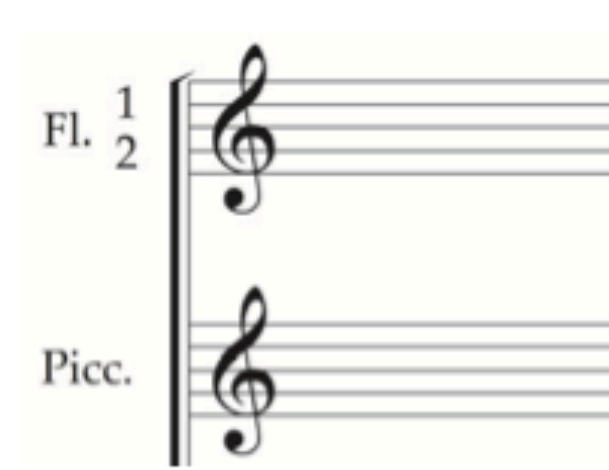
yes



Fl.  $\frac{1}{2}$   
Picc.

This diagram shows two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Fl.  $\frac{1}{2}$ ' and the bottom 'Picc.'. A vertical line with a bracket on its left side spans across both staves, indicating that both parts are included in the group.

OK



Fl.  $\frac{1}{2}$   
Picc.

This diagram is identical to the fourth one, showing two staves (Fl.  $\frac{1}{2}$ , Picc.) with a vertical line and bracket on the left side encompassing both.

# Standard Layout

## Score

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# Instrumentation and (standard doubling)

4[1.2/pic2.3/pic1.4/pic3] 4[1.2.3/Eh.4] 4[1.2.3/bcl/Ebcl2.4/Ebcl1] 3[1.2.3/cbn] — 7 4 3 1 — 2tmp+3 — hp — str

## Woodwinds:

Flutes  
[Piccolo]  
Oboes  
[English Horn]  
Clarinet  
[Bass Clarinet and E-flat]  
Bassoon  
[Contra-Bassoon]

## Brass:

French Horn  
Trumpets  
Trombones (ttb)  
Tuba

## Timpani

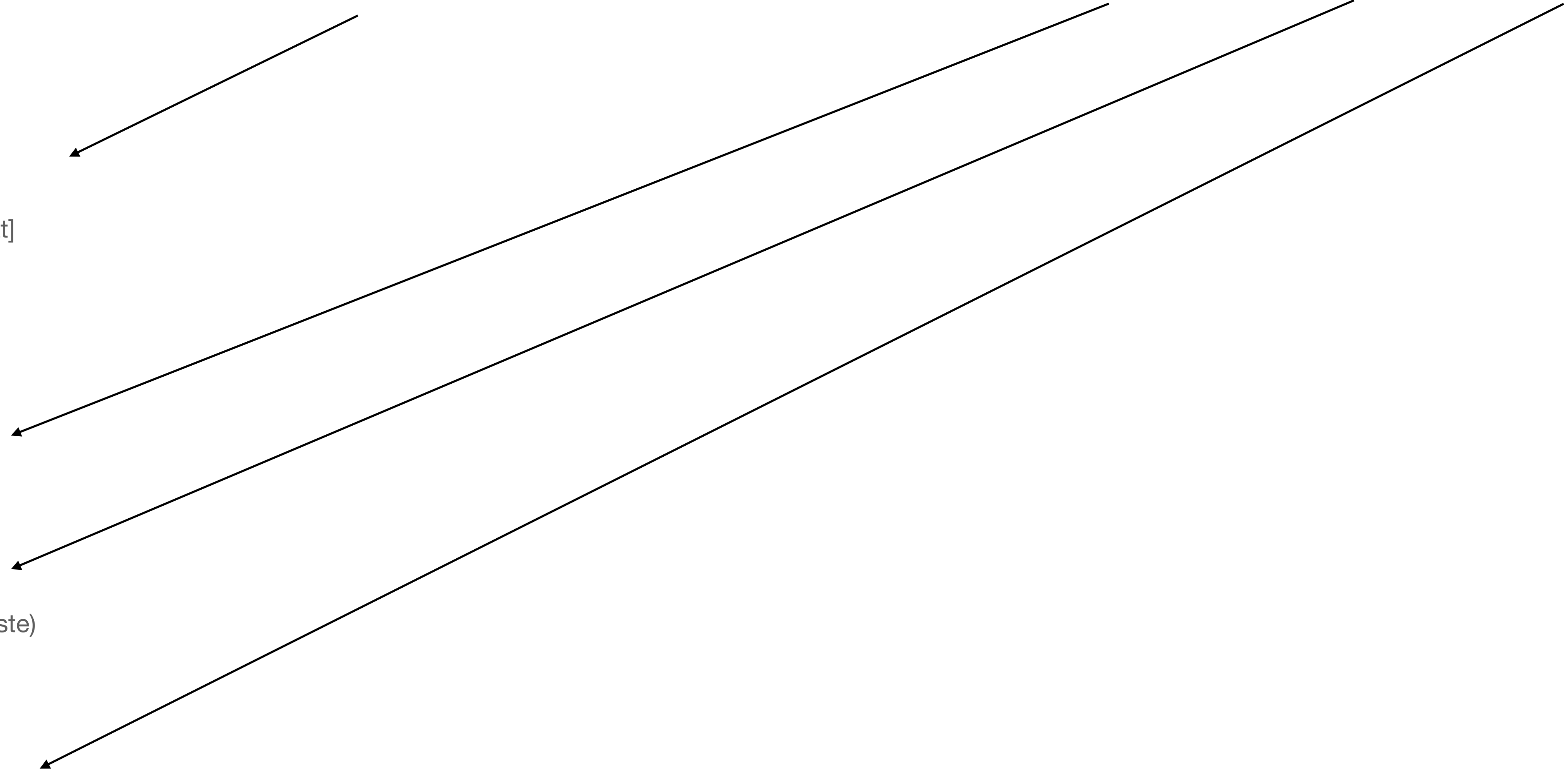
## Percussion

## Harp

Keyboard (Piano or Celeste)

## Strings:

Violin 1  
Violin 2  
Viola  
Cello  
Bass





IV.

# Instrumentation

4[1.2/pic2.3/pic1.4/pic3] 4[1.2.3/Eh.4] 4[1.2.3/bcl/Ebcl2.4/Ebcl1] 3[1.2.3/cbn] - 7 4 3 1 - 2tmp+3 - hp - str

## Simplified Inst.

4 4 4 3 - 7 4 3 1 - 2T+3 - hp - str

Could have been 41 staves.

Publisher got it to 22 staves without leaving anything out.

1 Stürmisch bewegt (♩ = 92)

1. 2. Piccolo (8. 4. Flöte)  
 1. 2. Flöte  
 1. 2. 3. Oboe  
 4. Oboe  
 1. 2. 3. Clarinette in C  
 4. Clarinette in Es (mindestens doppelt besetzt)  
 1. 2. 3. Fagott  
 1. 2. 3. 4. Horn in F (zu 4 gestopft)  
 5. 6. 7. Horn in F (zu 3 gestopft)  
 1. 2. Trompete in F (1. Trompete im ff doppelt besetzt) (zu 2 mit Dämpfer)  
 3. 4. Trompete in F (zu 2 mit Dämpfer)  
 1. 2. Posaune  
 3. Posaune  
 1. Pauker  
 2. Pauker  
 Becken (mit Paukenschlägel (Holz))  
 Grosse Trommel  
 1. Violine (Stürmisch bewegt (♩ = 92) (den ersten Ton scharf herausgehoben))  
 2. Violine (Stürmisch bewegt (♩ = 92) (den ersten Ton scharf herausgehoben))  
 Viola (pizz. nicht geth. arco)  
 Violoncello (ff nicht geth. pizz. arco)  
 Contrabass (ff nicht geth. pizz. arco)

1 Stürmisch bewegt (♩ = 92)

U. E. 2981

# Standard Layout

## Score

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- **Further notes**

# Further notes

## Score

- Copyright
- Transposing score
- Instrument list
- Rehearsal figures and bar numbers
- Collisions
- Additive rhythms for uncommon times (good piece title?)
- Just be clear

# Standard Layout

## Parts

- What contents are necessary
- Page layout
- Page turns and other pagination considerations
- Bar numbers, multi-measure rests and cues
- File names

# SYMPHONIE N° 1

F. C.

## 1. Violine

I.

Langsam Schleppend

Gustav Mahler

8

Flag.  $\text{ppp}$

Più mosso 1 2 2

accel. rit. molto riten.

Tempo I. (1.2. Ob.)

Flag. geth.  $\text{pp}$

morendo

Più mosso 3 1

Tempo I. Più mosso Tempo I.

2

Più mosso (Trp.)

pizz.

Tempo I.

Tempo I.

ff accel. molto riten.

4

6

6

Im Anfang sehr gemächlich (1. Trmp.)

4 8 3

2

pp

sempre pp

6

Alle Betonungen zart

1

pp

sempre pp

sempre pp

sempre pp

pp

pp

sempre pp

trm

Von hier an in sehr allmählicher aber stetiger Steigerung bis zum Zeichen  $\oplus$

ohne Nachschlag

1 2 3 4 5 6

8

2

1. Violine

Handwritten: -2-

pp p cresc. mf f p p gliss.

Hier ist ein frisches, be- lebtes Zeitmass eingetreten

f p f ff

10

mf ff sempre ff

11

f mf p pp ppp sempre ppp

12 (= früher)

p pp ppp sempre ppp

13

p ppp rit.

14

p ppp rit.

15

ppp 4fach geth.

16

pppp Bis zum gänzlichen Verschwinden

1. Violine

16 unis. pp

16 unis. pp

Von hier an wird das Tempo bis zum Zeichen  $\Phi$  in sehr allmählicher, unmerklicher Steigerung belebt

pp singend

17

pp Poco accel.

18  $\Phi$  Gemächlich

pp Geth.

19

mf f Ganz unmerklich et-7

20

p pp was zurückhaltend

21

pp Etwas gemächlicher als zuvor

22

pp 3

23

pp 4



### 1. Violine

### II.

1 Kräftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell

(Bässe)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

ff ff ff sf mf cresc. ff ff sf

pizz. arco

geth. Doppelgriff

Wild

### 1. Violine

16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

ff sf sf f sempre cresc. fff ff fp fp fpp

cresc. fff

G-Saite

OUTSIDES 12 Die Hälfte

13 Vorwärts Allegro

pp ff

arco ppp

14 15

ff ff acc. at segno

16 Mässig (1. Horn) poco rit.

pp



# File Names

## Parts and Scores

- COMPOSER work title 00 - score.pdf  
COMPOSER work title 01 - flute 1.pdf  
COMPOSER work title 02 - flute 2.pdf  
COMPOSER work title 03 - flute 3+piccolo.pdf  
COMPOSER work title 04 - oboe 1.pdf  
...  
COMPOSER work title 28 - cello.pdf  
COMPOSER work title 29 - bass.pdf
- Also acceptable to use short names  
COMPOSER work title 03 - fl3+picc
- “COMPOSER” can be first and last name or just last name.

# Specific Instruments

## Orchestration and Standard Doubling

- Know your clefs
- Woodwind doubling
- Brass doubling
- Timpani *and* Percussion
- Strings and Divisi
- Score Order

# Binding and Digital Distribution

## Sending parts: Digital or Printed?

- Coordinate with Orchestra Library
- Printed Parts and Score Page
  - Don't go smaller than 9x12
  - Use good paper (VSO uses 70" Cream paper from Springhill for everything)
- Digital Part Distribution
  - Don't go larger than 9x12 (or smaller than 8.5x11)

# Further Suggestions

## And Suggested Reading (notes from Alastair McKean)

- Excellent example of tape binding: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OYuda9tPBR4>
- David Bruce's: *history of the entire orchestra, I guess*  
<https://youtu.be/tNsZA6q8yH8>
- **Elaine Gould**, *Behind Bars: The Definitive Guide to Music Notation*, Faber 2011  
This is necessary for anybody who wishes to be taken seriously as a composer. There are a few areas where I don't quite agree with Gould and these are noted below. But if you stick with what Gould says you basically can't go wrong.
- **Hector Berlioz** (revised Richard Strauss, translated Theodore Front), *Treatise on Instrumentation*, Kalmus 1948 (Dover reprint)  
Although there have been advances in instrument design since Strauss revised the book (and even more so since Berlioz wrote it), it's useful to have a sense of the history of the instruments the musicians will be playing. Apropos the point above about the volume of work played by big orchestras, it is also worth remembering that the bulk of the orchestral repertoire is of Strauss's time and earlier.
- **Robin Williams**, *The Non-Designer's Design Book* (4th edition), Peachpit Press 2015  
This happens to be a book I've found useful, but any good 'graphic design for dummies' is going to be helpful. Scores and parts are, after all, objects of graphic design, and broader design principles can often help with thinking about knotty problems.

# Even Further Suggestions and Resources

## Be inquisitive

- Talk to orchestra musicians and librarians and ask what they want to see
- Talk to other composers and ask them about their commissions
- Search the publicly available resources on the MOLA website  
<http://mola-inc.org/>
- Use YouTube resources like Finale Superuser:  
<https://www.youtube.com/c/FinaleSuperuser/featured>
- See if your local symphony library needs help with bowings
- Respect deadlines and be on time (Please!)

# Acknowledgements

**Thanks to Alastair McKean for his documents from the Sydney Symphony Orchestra library shared with permission. Also thanks to the MOLA (Major Orchestra Librarians' Association) librarian community for sharing additional resources.**