

Violoncello

Charlie Barber



Instrumentation:

Soprano saxophone
 Violin 1
 Violin 2
 Viola
 Violoncello
 Contrabass

Score in C

Duration:

c. 12 minutes

Programme note:

Khyal—meaning both “lyric” and “imagination”—is a genre of North Indian classical music that flourished in the royal courts of Hindustan. Its origins are shrouded in legend, scattered commentary, and speculation, with many attributing its invention to the poet and composer Amir Khusrau Dihlavi (1251–1326).

This composition, titled *Khyal*, is a contemporary reflection on that tradition. Written in April 1991 and revised in September 2025, it draws its melodic material from transcriptions of vocal improvisations by some of the great classical singers of northern India. The opening movement is based on an improvisation by Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (1903–1968), while the concluding movement takes inspiration from a vocal improvisation by Narayan Rao Vyas (1902–1984).

The work unfolds in four movements, each evoking a different moment in time and atmosphere through its chosen raag:

1. After midnight (raag Malkauns)
2. Late morning (raag Desi)
3. Night music (raag Bageshri)
4. Monsoon rains (raag Gaud Malhar)

Balancing historical reference with imaginative re-composition, *Khyal* pays homage to a centuries-old tradition while reinterpreting it for a new musical context.

Charlie Barber, September 2025

Khyal

1. After midnight (raag Malkauns)

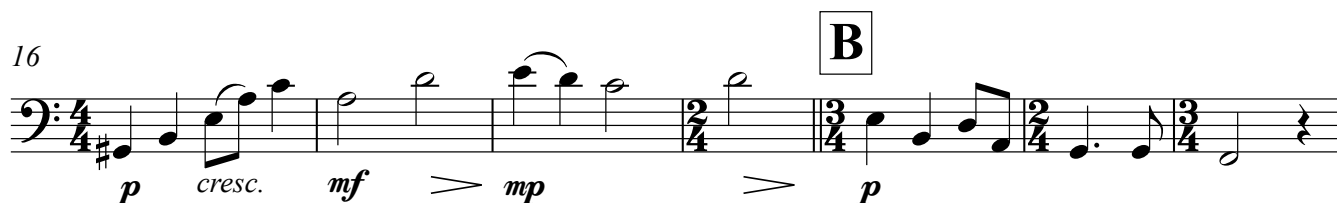
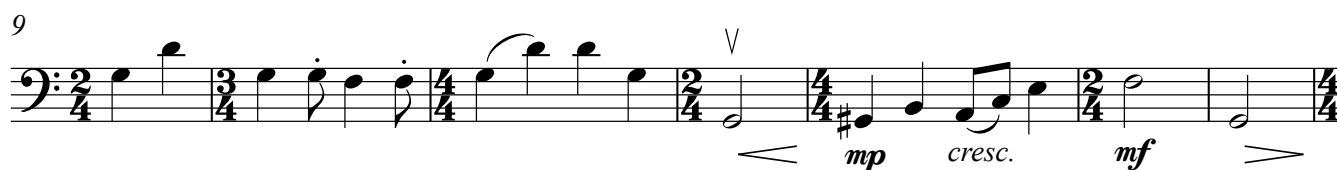
Semplice

A

$\text{♩} = 84$

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*quas uni
armonium*



51



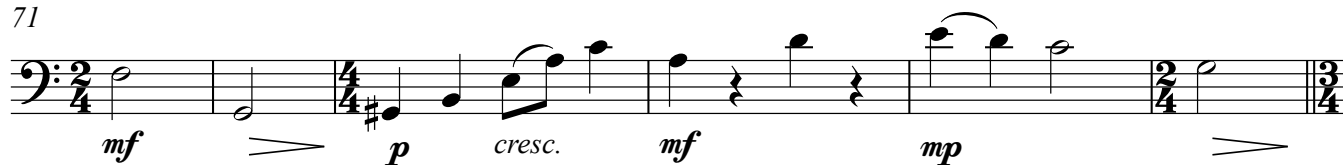
58

D

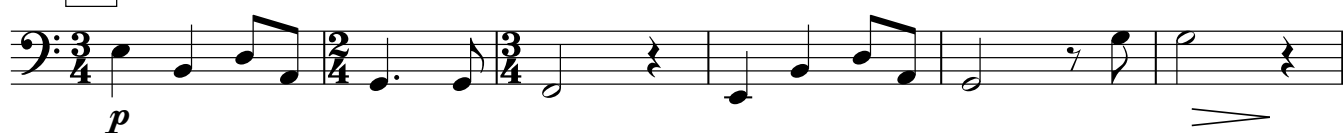
65



71



77

E

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83



89



96

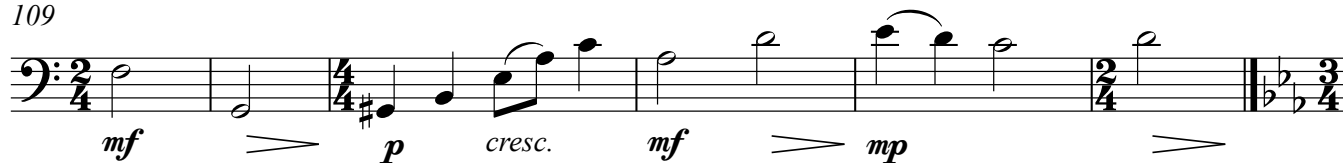
F

103



109

Rit.



2. Late morning (raag Desi)

115 **A** ♩ = 92

mp *f* *p* *mf*

119

p *f* *p* *mf* *p*

123 **B**

mp *cresc.* *mf*

129 **C**

p *f* *p* *mf* *p*

134

f *p* *mf* *p* *f*

5

139

D

The first system of the musical score is written in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It begins with a 3/4 time signature, followed by a 2/2 time signature, and then a 3/2 time signature. The music consists of a series of eighth and quarter notes, with some measures containing rests. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *mp* (mezzo-piano), with a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking towards the end of the system. The system concludes with a double bar line.

145

E

[illegible]

150

[illegible]

153

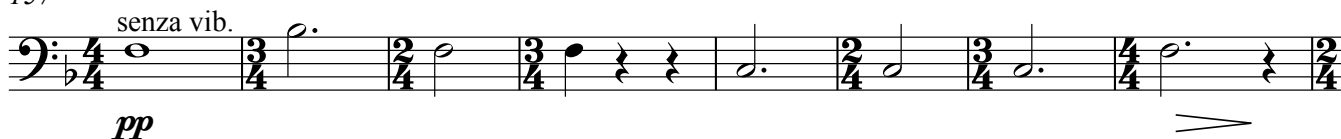
pp *a niente*

3. Night music (raag Bageshri)

Tranquillo

♩ = 80

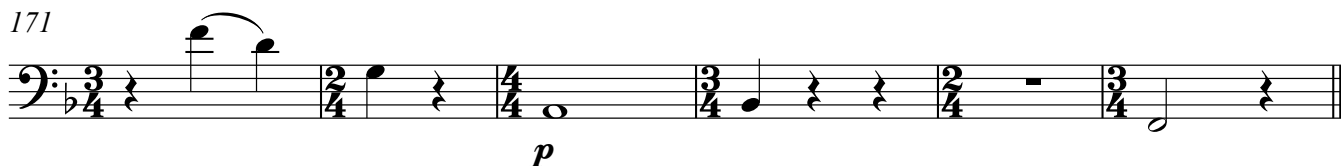
157



165

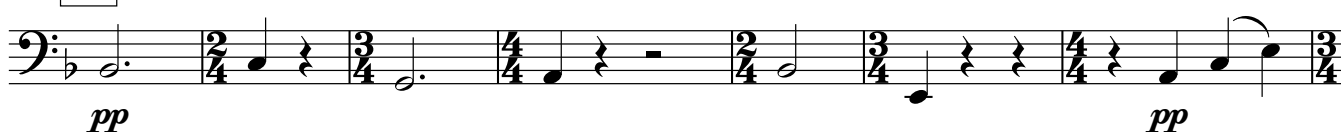


171

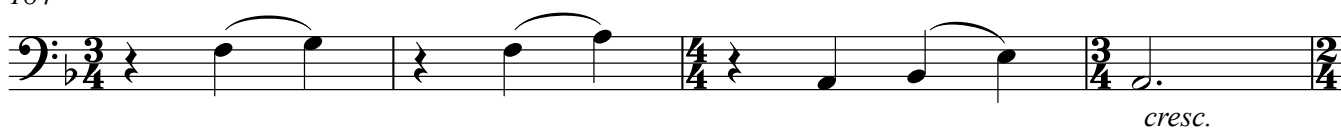


177

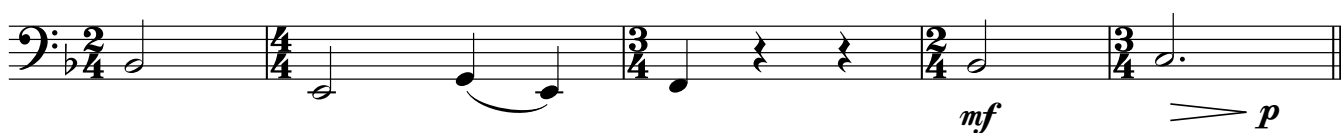
A



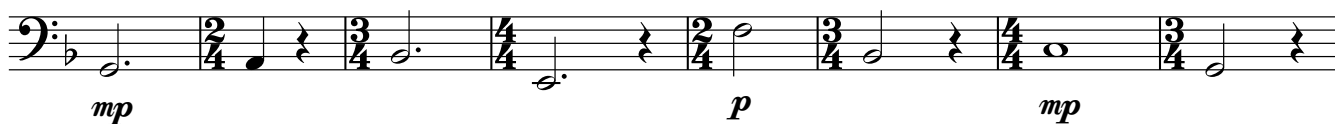
184



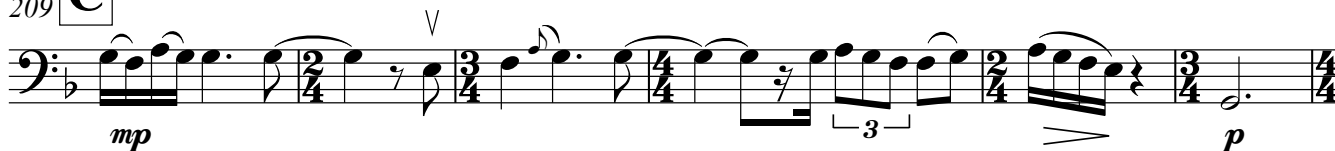
188



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193 **B**

201

209 **C**

215



222

Rit.



4. Monsoon rains (raag Gaud Malhar)

229 **A** $\text{♩} = 116$ **B**

236 **C**

243 **D**

251 **E**

259 **F** **G**

266 **H**

273 **I**

279

mf *mf* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *cresc.* *mf* *f* *cresc.* *ff* *mp* *p* *mf* *p* *cresc.* *mf*

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284 **J**

290



295



301



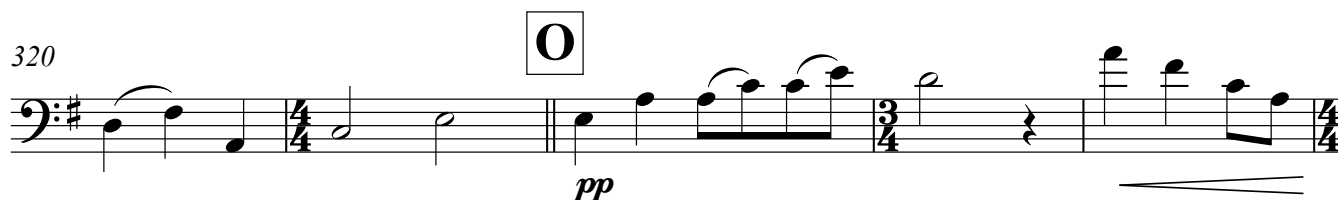
308



314



320



325

Rit.

