

SCHEHERAZADE

Scheherazade, Rimsky Korsakov's beloved fantasy inspired by One Thousand and One Nights, is a tour de force for symphony orchestra, which presents challenges for both the orchestra and the conductor. When examining my score for a pair of recent performances, I couldn't help but notice the many changes that I have made with many aspects of interpretation and approach. It is my hope that some of what follows might be of assistance to conductors.

Unfortunately, I find the rehearsal figures in the score are inadequate for efficient rehearsing. In my set of parts, for the first movement I have added 17 rehearsal numbers, second movement 31 numbers, third movement 15 numbers, and fourth movement 38 numbers. These extra numbers have made the rehearsal process much easier.

FIRST MOVEMENT

The theme of the Sultan, which undergoes many transformations throughout the piece, is at first haughty, proud, fierce, and arrogant.

Bar 4

If using two downbows, be sure that the winds and brass play accordingly, and the violins don't hold too long. The same holds true for bar 6.

Bar 8

Woodwind, and later horn intonation is very difficult. Players must know which part of the chord that they are playing, especially those playing the third. In a recent woodwind and brass sectional rehearsal at the Cleveland Institute of Music, Mary Kay Fink, flutist with the Cleveland Orchestra, advised that the flutes are often flat and the clarinets often sharp in these kinds of passages. While a bit of a generalization, this suggestion noticeably improved their intonation.

2 bars before Lento

I "dictate" the grace note to the players with my left hand, and then indicate the diminuendo.

Lento

The cutoff of the winds is also the start of the cadenza for the violin, which of course represents Scheherazade "spinning" her tales. Each harp arpeggio needs to be progressively softer, but also the player can roll each one slower. There are many ways to interpret these cadenzas, and my input will be minimal for each. In general, however, I would suggest that the violinist should be patient, and never in a great hurry, with the possible exception of the second cadenza at the beginning of the fourth movement, in which Scheherazade is furious with the Sultan. One thought is for a portamento from the last high G to the F sharp, and for the violinist to be sure to watch the conductor for the downbeat of Allegro non troppo.

Allegro non troppo:

This chord is the first of three E major chords in the woodwinds and horns. The intonation, as in the opening chords, needs attention. The chords at the end of the first movement are voiced differently from this chord and the chord at the end of the fourth movement. I have taken the liberty of exchanging the first oboe and the second and first clarinet notes at the end of the first movement. I have the first oboe play a concert B, and the second clarinet 7 bars from the end play a concert G sharp (written B). The first clarinet 5 bars from the end does the same as requested of the second clarinet, to play a concert G sharp (written B). I have found this adjustment helps the intonation.

As we “launch the ship”, the tempo mustn’t drag – the violas and cellos are responsible for the rolling of the ship on the waves. In the 5th bar, it’s recommended for the violins to continue the trill uninterrupted before the eighth notes, which need to be played exactly in time. In the 13th bar, the subito pp should sound softer than the previous p espressivo. I like to push the tempo a bit here with each new sequence.

Letter A

I have the violinists play open E, and then slur the B to the D in the following bar, playing a portamento on the D string between the two notes. The same pattern occurs in the 6th bar, without the open string. Though somewhat unusual, I find it highly effective. The subsequent passage proceeds in the same way as previously, with the tempo increasing with each sequence.

Letter B

I have the woodwinds phrase in the second bar, and in subsequent patterns, after the first beat, with the phrase starting on the second beat. Intonation in the 5th bar after Letter B can be treacherous. As before, the thirds of the chord in the first flute and first oboe need to be well in tune. In the woodwind answers to the horn solos, I push the tempo ever so slightly.

Letter D

For effective contrast, Letter D must be played at a single forte, with horns not exaggerating their accents. The subsequent non-legato can be played with extreme energy and contrast. A hard stick for the timpani note is very effective. At 13 after Letter D, I add eighth notes for the bass trombone and tuba to match the cello and bass part. I also add a crescendo 2 bars before Letter E, as the horns and trombones are marked mf at 5 bars before Letter E.

Letter E

The chord at Letter E is similar to the chord at the Allegro non troppo, but with more instruments added. Here the strings are now playing eighth notes instead of quarter notes. At 3 bars after Letter E, the brass and timpani need to play softer than at Letter E, a noticeable difference from FF to F. At 13 bars after Letter E, the trumpet takes over the melody, in 3 bar phrase groups, breathing every 3 bars, and then every 1 ½ bars, as the melody is heard in diminution. At 5 bars before Letter F, I have the brass play a diminuendo for 2 bars, and then a crescendo for 1 bar, which helps accentuate the phrase, as well as allow the violins, flutes, and piccolo to be heard

more clearly. At 1 bar before Letter F, the violas, cellos, and basses need to be FF before playing their diminuendo.

Letter F

As the woodwinds played at Letter B, the strings can phrase after the first beat, with the phrase starting on the second beat. At 5 bars after Letter F, the violas and second clarinet must be aware of what the other group is playing, with the violas fitting their pizzicato exactly in time with the second clarinet's written D. I ask the clarinetist to put a very small space after the long written G, and clearly articulate the note after it. The ebb and flow of the passage beginning 7 bars after Letter F is similar to the phrases after Letter B. At 9 bars after Letter F, notice the solo bass.

Letter H

The same comments for Letter D would apply here as well, noticing a much fuller sound with the addition of trumpets and trombones. A single F at H is followed by a FF 5 bars later, which might need to be tempered if too loud. At this point I ask for the brass players with accents to articulate well rather than play with a heavy accent. At 4 bars before K, I have the bass trombone and tuba, as before, add the eighth notes that are in the cello and bass.

Letter K

A crescendo in the brass and timpani helps accentuate the C major chord at 3 bars after Letter K. I then have the trombones and tuba back away a bit, and then crescendo to 6 bars after Letter K.

Letter L

The violas and second clarinet are again a "team", with the same idea as at 5 bars after Letter F. I take just a little time at 1 bar before Letter M, with the clarinet playing a small swell, and then a diminuendo into Letter M.

Letter M

I find that high passages like these work well when the violinists asked to play over the fingerboard. This practice allows them to not only to play with a softer color, but also to not play timidly in their efforts to play quietly. I have this passage start up bow, with separate bows for the last 2 quarter notes in the second bar, following the printed bowing for the whole passage, except for the 7th bar after M, which is also played with separate bow for the last two quarter notes. The first dotted half note at 5 bars after Letter M is played on the A string, and the second dotted half note is played on the D string, until the eighth note 8 bars after Letter M, which is played on the G string, remaining on the G string until the end of the passage. At 7 bars before the end, I reverse the first oboe and the second clarinet to match the end of the 4th movement, which, as mentioned earlier, I feel helps lock in the intonation a little more successfully. The first clarinet will then play the concert G sharp 5 bars before the end. The solo cello can take a little time at the end of the 4th bar from the end. A clear cutoff for the woodwinds is needed at this point. I make sure to give the 4th horn lots of time to hold through on the low E.

SECOND MOVEMENT

I suggest attacca, going directly from the first movement to the second. A possible color change for the violin solo would be to play the second measure on the A string, but that is a very subjective choice. A portamento from the C sharp to the B at the end of the cadenza is also a possibility. The bassoon solo is marked to be played in a cadenza-like fashion, however with a basis of eighth note = 112. I have the muted basses play with a full sound, with all voices evenly balanced. A crescendo in the 10th bar brings out the chord change, as does a crescendo 3 bars before Letter A. Make sure that the F sharp on the 3rd beat lines up with the bassoon solo. There is a subtle difference in the bassoon solo between 10 bars before A and 6 bars before A. The bassoonist may take a little time at 6 before Letter A to accentuate the difference between what is essentially a 3/8 bar the first time and a 6/16 bar the second time. This second phrase can also be played as an echo of the first phrase. The oboist can make the same nuance between 12 and 16 bars after Letter A.

Letter A

The oboe solo is marked with the same metronome marking as the bassoon solo; however, this time the indication is *a tempo*. The oboist can play freely 3 bars before Letter B, which is marked *a piacere*. Notice that the horns are holding their same notes for 3 bars as common tones, for an E minor, C major and F# dominant 7th chord with a lowered 9th.

Letter B

At Letter B, metronome marking is quite a bit faster, at eighth note = 144. This passage differs from the bassoon and oboe solos, as there are additional accents added, which make for a very different, lively character. Note that the 3rd horn acts essentially as a third bassoon, a fifth higher than the second bassoon. This is a bit of a reversal of roles, since the bassoons often act as horn substitutes. At 11 bars after Letter B, the character changes; as the cellos are added, the music becomes more lyrical. In situations, such as these, when the cellos are marked divided with the melody in the first part and the second part doubling the basses, I often have the first 6 players play the top part and the last 4 players play the bottom part, assuming, for the moment with a cello section of, let's say has 10 players. At this point, the tempo can broaden just a little bit. The passage starting at the pickup to 4 bars before Letter C is difficult to coordinate, and would likely require substantial rehearsing. I have the violins go to the D string and the cellos go their D string with a portamento on the second beat 1 bar before Letter C; it's a somewhat unusual but very exciting effect. Note that the horns along with the flutes again have common tones with the chords at 4 bars before Letter C, but this time with the addition of an A dominant 7 chord for the second bar.

Letter C

The tempo here picks up a little bit, and again accents are vital. At the piu' tranquillo, the cello is somewhat rhapsodic, and the note changes in the bassoons need to line up with the cello. I move the oboe solo and subsequent horn solos just a little bit. At 3 bars before Letter D, the ritard in

the oboe needs to allow the conductor the chance to catch the harp and the resolution of notes in the horns to B minor.

Letter D

The second large section of the movement starts at Letter D. Several years ago, I had the opportunity to observe a master class with Michael Tilson Thomas, and saw that he conducted Letter D in 1. After years of struggling attempting to do this passage in 2, I subsequently conducted it in 1, which made it much clearer and easier to negotiate. For me, the *Molto moderato* comes alive when I assign specific roles for the solo trumpet and trombone. The second trombone solo is played very pompously, like the captain of the ship. The trumpet solo is played quite a bit quicker, like the subservient and nervous lieutenant who does anything he can to please his commanding officer. I have the *diminuendo* for everyone start toward the end of the trombone solo. Make sure that only the horns, and not the oboes and violins cut off for the second bar. Again, the 3rd bar of the *Allegro giusto* is in 1, with the downbeat also serving as the cutoff for the flutes. The same pacing is in effect at 2 bars before Letter E. Note that the tritone for everyone this time is inverted, which leaves the 2nd oboe sustaining a low B, a very difficult note to play in a soft dynamic.

Letter E

Again, the cutoff for the flutes is the G.P. bar, which makes it crucial for everyone to understand that the 2nd violins play as a pickup to the 5th bar. I add a rehearsal figure at 5 bars after Letter E to make that fact clearer. Both 1st and 2nd violins play here on the G string, and sustain throughout in F. The violins produce another tritone, this time a ½ step higher than during the second cadenza. At 12 bars before Letter F, I have the trombones enter a little more quietly, and then *crescendo* for the last 2 bars with all the brass. At 5 bars before Letter F, there occurs yet another issue which happens quite a bit in this piece and in many others. The instruments who play the harmony and non-changing notes must play less than the melody even though they are playing the same rhythm, and must be made aware of those who are playing the melody. For example, the horns and clarinets at 5 bars before Letter F need to play less than the piccolo, flute, and oboe, and the brass, 2nd violins and violas need to play less than the aforementioned woodwinds and 1st violins.

Letter F

At Letter F, the *pizzicato* can *crescendo* to the whole note, and then *diminuendo* from it each time. There are many ways to interpret the clarinet, and later the bassoon cadenzas. Each pickup can be played more deliberately, with more *diminuendo* on the long note each time. At the end of each cadenza, the player needs to be sure to give a very clear lead in for the conductor to catch. I conduct the *pizzicato* with the left hand, abandoning the beat toward the end of each cadenza.

Letter G

Letter G is essentially the same tempo as the *pizzicato* – I conduct this passage in 1. The ensuing *Vivace scherzando* requires careful rehearsing. Care must be taken to find a suitable tempo,

which will allow the doubled notes to be played accurately. Also the pizzicatos in the second violins often tend to rush, compounding the issue. I do the 3 part divisi by stand. It might prove to be helpful to rehearse the piccolos and top divisi of the violins by themselves.

Letter H

The crescendo at Letter H must be done very gradually to avoid covering the melody on the clarinets, and then the flutes and oboes. At 10 bars after Letter H, the same phenomenon as mentioned earlier occurs, with the horns and clarinets playing single notes while the melody is played by the upper woodwinds and trumpet. Many examples of this sort are found at the following Tempo I. At the second bar of the Tempo I, I suggest that the long notes in the bassoon, violas, and cellos be held for close to full value.

Letter I

At the second bar at Letter I, as referenced at the second bar of the previous Tempo I, I have the winds play full value on their long note, creating a four bar phrase, rather than two 2 bar phrases. Care must be taken at 9 bars after Letter I that the strings keep their pizzicatos from rushing, as the woodwind and brass players need to be able to play their passages without being pushed.

Letter K

Note that the horns play the melody at Letter K, and that the trumpets take over at 5 bars after Letter K. These players can adjust their dynamics according to their respective roles.

Letter L

The same comments would apply to the bassoon cadenzas as the previous clarinet cadenzas. The difference here is the woodwind interventions.

Letter M

I suggest tremolo for the strings at Letter M, which I do in 1. Attention needs to be paid to the basses' pizzicato.

Letter N

Espressivo melody with tenuto eighth notes works for well, and also at 11 bars after Letter N for the woodwinds and violas. A tenuto eighth note at I bar before Letter O keeps the continuity of the melody.

Letter O

Letter O can be played a little faster – note the increased metronome marking. Second violins and violas need to stay soft. I use front and back for the cello divisi, as mentioned previously. 11 after Letter O can broaden slightly, as the passage is marked non divisi. As was the case earlier, 9 bars before Letter P needs careful rehearsing. Note that the passage is marked spiccato, as opposed to 4 bars before Letter C, which is legato. At 5 bars before Letter P, the conductor needs to give the second beat again, to continue after the fermata. Care must be taken that the trombones, tuba, and inside cellos understand what's happening at the fermata, in order to come

in correctly, and, in the case of the cellos, change to F# at the right place. At 1 bar before Letter P, the last sixteenth note might sound a little pedantic if played exactly in time. A possibility is to play this note as a 32nd note, which sounds somewhat more dramatic.

Letter P

Note the metronome marking, which is back to eighth note = 152. At 5 bars after Letter P, be sure that the violinists don't jump up the fingerboard to the high B, but simply play it with the same fingering as the previous note, but as a harmonic. At 15 after Letter P, I beat time through the fermata, but at the new slower tempo. At 16 bars after Letter P, I suggest playing tremolo, and not too slowly. The violinists can briefly stop their tremolo at the fermata in order to play the pickup to the next bar in time. Be sure that the woodwinds understand where their entrances occur.

Letter Q

I'm careful not to take the flute solo too slowly. A little time can be taken in the last bar of the solo. At 13 bars before Letter R, I encourage the violas and cello to play a little louder, so that the PP a few bars later creates a nice atmosphere for the muted horn. Be careful that they change notes accurately.

Letter R

This 5 bar ostinato builds to an exciting conclusion to the movement. I stay in 3 for the entire accelerando, which, for me, helps for accuracy. I ask the strings to play on the string for the entire passage. At 7 bars from the end, I encourage the violins to play a crescendo at the end of the bar, to lead to the second bar of the animato. The brass need to be exactly in tempo when they leave their long note for the last 5 bars, perhaps cutting the long note a trifle short, and clearly articulating the first note after the tie.

THIRD MOVEMENT

The third movement has a feeling of a barcarolle, a Venetian boat song, as in the famous aria from the 3rd act of Offenbach's Tales of Hoffman. The ebb and flow, as well as the direction of the phrases, help give the movement its charm. For example, the opening melody leads naturally to the second, and then to the fourth bars, as do many of the subsequent phrases. In the 8th bar, I essentially add an eighth rest before having the players go over to the G string. In the pickup to the 13th bar, they can continue playing on the G string, or go over to the D string, but the decision must be uniform for everyone, since the change of color is substantial. In either case, 8 bars before Letter A needs to continue on the G string. It's also possible to start the pickup to the 13th bar a little softer, so that the upcoming crescendo might be more pronounced. At 6 bars before Letter A, I take a little time on the dotted eighth note. At 4 bars before letter A, as well as 4 bars before Letter B, everyone needs to be really quiet for the clarinet, and especially for the flute solo, which starts in the low register.

Letter A

Many of the ideas for phrasing in the cello soli are similar to those of the opening violin passages. Cellists must be urged not to press their sound, but to stress the dolce indication as well as the direction of the phrase. At 9 bars after Letter A, I ask the cellos to play these 4 bars on the D string, which makes for a lovely contrast. Note also that this passage is doubled by the English horn. I prefer to use a separate player for English horn, rather than ask the second oboist to play the part. Picking up a cold instrument that's been sitting for two movements and preparing a reed that has been doing the same is a circumstance that I'd rather avoid. The English horn player can play a few notes during some of the louder places in the previous movements to be ready to play in the 3rd movement.

Letter B

At 1 bar before Letter B, I move the tempo so that Letter B is faster than the previous section. I then ask the violins to play the 2nd bar and all similar places spiccato.

Letter C

Starting at the pickup to 1 bar before Letter D, I have this bar played as an echo to the previous one.

Letter D

It's important to lock into a consistent tempo at Letter D. Letter D is a famous audition place for the snare drum, and the player needs this support to play cleanly and accurately. It would be helpful for the violas to know how they fit into the snare drum part, and not to play too softly. The clarinet solo is marked PPP, but of course must project and play in a solo manner. Note that the accents for this melody create a 3/4 hemiola.

Letter E

The second flute here picks up the role of the snare drum. Rimsky-Korsakov marks the part F, in order to project enough sound.

Letter F

At letter F, I incorporate a front and back divisi for the cellos. Again, the accents, which are not to be forced, create the 3/4 hemiola. In the 5th bar, the ricochet bowing for the violins can be played with all 7 notes on one down bow, or with 6 notes down bow and the last note as up bow. At 4 bars before Letter G, I like to stretch the phrase, with some hesitation for the pickup to Letter G in the piccolo and clarinets.

Letter G

The intonation for the piccolo and clarinets often proves to be difficult. If appropriate, do ask them to get together if this problem persists.

Letter H

As at 4 bars before Letter G, I stretch the phrase at 4 bars before Letter I. However, here I ask the players to force neither the FF nor the crescendo, but rather to play an expressive FF and warm crescendo.

Letter I

I do Letter I slightly slower than the beginning, since the triplets in the 3rd bar need to sound unrushed. The 5th bar can be played on the A string, with a subtle portamento in the 6th bar between the E and the G.

Letter K

I subdivide at Letter K, with the violins playing much slower for their 32nd notes than previously. At 5 bars after Letter K, the oboe can play freely; be sure that the 2nd horn changes with the oboe. I subdivide the last bar for the violas. For the solo violin passage at the place marked *cadenza*, a portamento on the half note E on the A, or perhaps D string, is a nice color.

Letter L

The violin solo at this point is an accompaniment to the oboe and English horn, and needs to be played in tempo. Starting at the pickup to 4 bars before Letter M, I subdivide, giving ample time for the solo violin to be expressive. At 3 bars before Letter M, going to the A string for passage starting with the C is an exquisite color.

Letter M

A tradition in the second bar of Letter M is for the half or all the first violins to play an octave higher, starting on the C. The harp can “ad lib” several glissandos in the 3rd bar. The 4th bar is again in 2. Make sure that the second beats in the flute and clarinet in the following bar arrive at the same time.

Letter N

I subdivide starting at the 4 bar after Letter N for a slightly slower tempo, going back into 2 at 2 bars before Letter O.

Letter O

As written, the tempo here can be somewhat quicker. Be sure to be aware of the horns and bassoon triplets. This passage continues to build to the F in the 11th bar. In the 10th, 11th, 12th, and 14th bar, I make sure that the staccato eighth notes are clipped. At 8 bars before Letter P, I exaggerate the diminuendo to PP followed by a big crescendo, then preserving the rolled chord to an open E, and followed by a jump to the D string as marked.

Letter P

I subdivide the last bar before Letter P, and then, starting at the pickup to the third bar, have the violins play on the G string. 5 bars after Letter P is still a little slower, with the rit. molto even slower. The first half of 5 bars from the end is subdivided, with the second half of the bar a

tempo in 2. The last pizzicato at the second bar from the end for the first violins can be played with a diminuendo, and the last pizzicato for everyone can be strummed.

FOURTH MOVEMENT

Apparently, the sultan still hasn't gotten the message – he's still angry. In the first cadenza, Scheherazade is gracious and "capriccioso". However, in the second cadenza, Scheherazade is furious and impatient. She then proceeds to continue to tell more fantastic tales.

The opening passage I conduct in 1, with the violins playing on the G string. For the fermata bars, I ask that nobody moves! In the 9th bar, the cue for the harp also serves to cut off the cellos and basses. In the 10th bar after the first cadenza, I suggest an exaggerated swell. For the last chord of the second cadenza, be sure that the concertmaster holds only the E, ends with a crescendo which the conductor then cuts off to begin the Vivo.

Vivo

Be sure that the violas are very strong, and do their diminuendo gradually. Other instruments need to pace their diminuendo gradually as well. At 1 bar before Letter A, there are several possibilities for the second violins – (1) they can either omit the pizzicatos, (2) play them with the left hand, (3) have the outside players omit the pizzicato, and the inside players play the pizzicato and play letter A one bar later, (4) have the cellos play the pizzicato or (5) play as written, and make the transition as smooth as possible!

Letter A

The pulsation in the bassoons and violas could be more effective with a small space between each note.

Letter B

Violins play on the string, with perhaps a little direction to each phrase toward the fourth bar.

Letter C

The same for the horns and trumpets at Letter C, phrasing toward the fourth bar each time.

Letter D

I stay in 1 4 bars after Letter D, broadening so that the strings can negotiate the chords. 8 bars after Letter D, goes back to Tempo primo, broadening again 5 bars later.

Letter E

G string for first violins. Brass need to enter at a single F, with a small space after the long notes to ensure good articulation on the next note.

Letter F

The tempo here can slacken just a little bit leading into the 5th bar after Letter F. The bassoon and tambourine must line up exactly and be very steady.

Letter G

Here the cellos, horns, and clarinets are the driving force, and must guide the melodic instruments, assuring that they don't fall behind.

Letter H

If the tempo has indeed relaxed, Letter H needs to go back to Tempo primo. As before, a small space between each note for the oboes and bassoons helps keep the pulse.

Letter I

For all the quarter notes after Letter I, the horns should temper their forte, to avoid covering the clarinet. The same is true for the first violins at 12 bars and 16 bars after Letter I.

Letter K

Violas and cellos must be very steady. At 8 bars before Letter L, G string for the violins. Also at this point, essentially a rest or brief pause on the tied notes will help propel the rhythm. The cymbal must be carefully observed.

Letter L

Same as Letter K, but in C instead of G. Note that this time there are 3 sequences before Letter M, as opposed to 2 before Letter L.

Letter M

This place is particularly susceptible to rushing. At 7 bars after Letter M, trombones and tuba can play SF, and come down a bit to make the crescendo more effective. They can leave a space before the tie as previously noted for other instruments earlier. At 8 bars before Letter N, the subito P applies to everyone except for the first flute and first oboe. At 4 bars before Letter N, brass, timpani, and percussion can start substantially less than F to maximize their crescendo.

Letter N

As I've heard these snare drum excerpts for countless auditions, I'm always interested to see how the snare drum player handles this passage. It seems that most players use one stick, but I've seen it played with two sticks. This practice might also depend on the tempo that the conductor selects, and it's vital that this tempo remains consistent from rehearsal to rehearsal, and then to the performance. The same applies for the timpani in the 3rd bar. Tempo consistency is also important in Scheherazade for the brass players, who at times need to decide whether to use single or double tongue. At 9 bars after Letter N, note that the violins play slurred, not articulated. If the tempo starting at Letter N slows down a bit, it might be necessary to push the tempo just a bit into Letter O.

Letter O

At 6 bars before Letter P, I ask the second violins to play expressively.

Letter P

The violins here might produce more sound and character by playing a hooked bowing, starting down bow, as opposed to starting up bow, and playing with separate bows. Note the change of dynamic from single F to FF. At 9 bars after Letter P, an exaggerated swell helps create the feeling of the waves. At 10 bars before Letter Q, be sure that the horns and percussion don't cover the flutes and oboes.

Letter Q

Horns, trumpets, and snare drum need to lock in their 32nd notes. In the 4th bar after Letter Q, the first violins need to accent each first note of the 32nds.

Letter R

Note that here the parts are reversed from the first time – the *A Tempo* is first, with the *un poco pesante* following. Getting back to tempo at 4 bars before Letter S is difficult and for me has required careful rehearsing.

Letter S

This passage has the same issues as at Letter E, except in 32nds as opposed to triplets.

Letter T

At Letter T, I maintain the tempo, as opposed to Letter F, where I allow the tempo to slacken a little. The flute and oboe must keep their tempo, and not drag.

Letter U

Here the tempo needs to stay, focusing on the 32nd notes in the violins, piccolo and flute.

Letter V

Here the tempo might have to pick up just a little bit if necessary. Note that the passage for the first violins has added difficulty, due to the repeated notes. The piccolo and flute players always amaze me with their dexterity and technique.

Piu' stretto

The tempo here increases a little bit, keeping in mind that the tempo increases once more at Letter W. Here, and at Letter W, the basses especially are called upon to play with real virtuosity.

Letter W

As previously, starting down bow and hooking for the violins rather than the printed bowing produces more sound. Notice that the last 6 bars before the *Allegro non troppo e maestoso* are grouped in 2 sets of 3 bars.

Allegro non troppo e maestoso

In the 3rd bar of Allegro non troppo, the trombones are most effective without breathing until after the long note in the 3rd bar. If needed, they can find a way to stagger the breathing so that this phrasing can happen. The trumpets need to phrase the same way at 5 bars before Letter Y. Note that the bass drum plays one eighth note before the trombones eighth notes.

Letter Y

At Letter Y, the strings are alone, and need to produce a huge sound. At the 2nd bar of Letter Y the second violins may be asked to play on the G string. Note that the 3rd bar, the cellos are marked ponticello, producing a somewhat grotesque and nasty sound. Note that at the 5th bar of Letter Y, the trombones are marked with a single F, and subito FFF in the 7th bar. Here is also the only note for tam tam in the entire piece. Be sure that the viola notes are clear in the 11th bar.

Poco piu' tranquillo

The first clarinet here is in tandem with the violas, as opposed to the second clarinet in the first movement. I suggest starting up bow for the first violins, going to the D string for the C natural at 4 bars before Letter Z.

Letter Z

As in the first movement, the phrase is grouped after the first beat. At 5 after Z, I again reverse the first oboe and second clarinet notes, with the first oboe playing B and the second clarinet playing G#.

Lento

The winds can hold over a little bit into the downbeat with the cello. In this cadenza yet a fourth octave is added for the solo violin.

Alla breve

The cellos and basses can play with expression here; note the duple in the 3rd bar. The solo violin is doubled here, but I believe that this doubling is sometimes ignored. The same intonation issues are found here as in the opening of the first movement, here perhaps more complicated due to the fact that the instruments are at different temperatures than when the piece began some 45 minutes ago. I cut off the winds and horn, and give them time to catch a good breath. The solo violin can take time, but needs to be aware that the winds breath capacity, especially for the flutes, is finite. I keep my left hand outstretched for the winds and horns, to be sure that they don't stop when I cue the pizzicato. I then cut off the winds and horns, allowing for the solo violin and timpani to hold through. I instruct the strings to be sure not to move after their last pizzicato until the piece is over.

I give solo bows for the solo violin, cello, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, second trombone, and harp. If there is ample applause, I then give bows to groups of players: timpani, percussion, harp; then brass; then woodwinds; and finally, each individual group of string players.