Written for George Parris and the Carice Singers as part of the Cheltenham Festival's 2025 Composers' Academy.

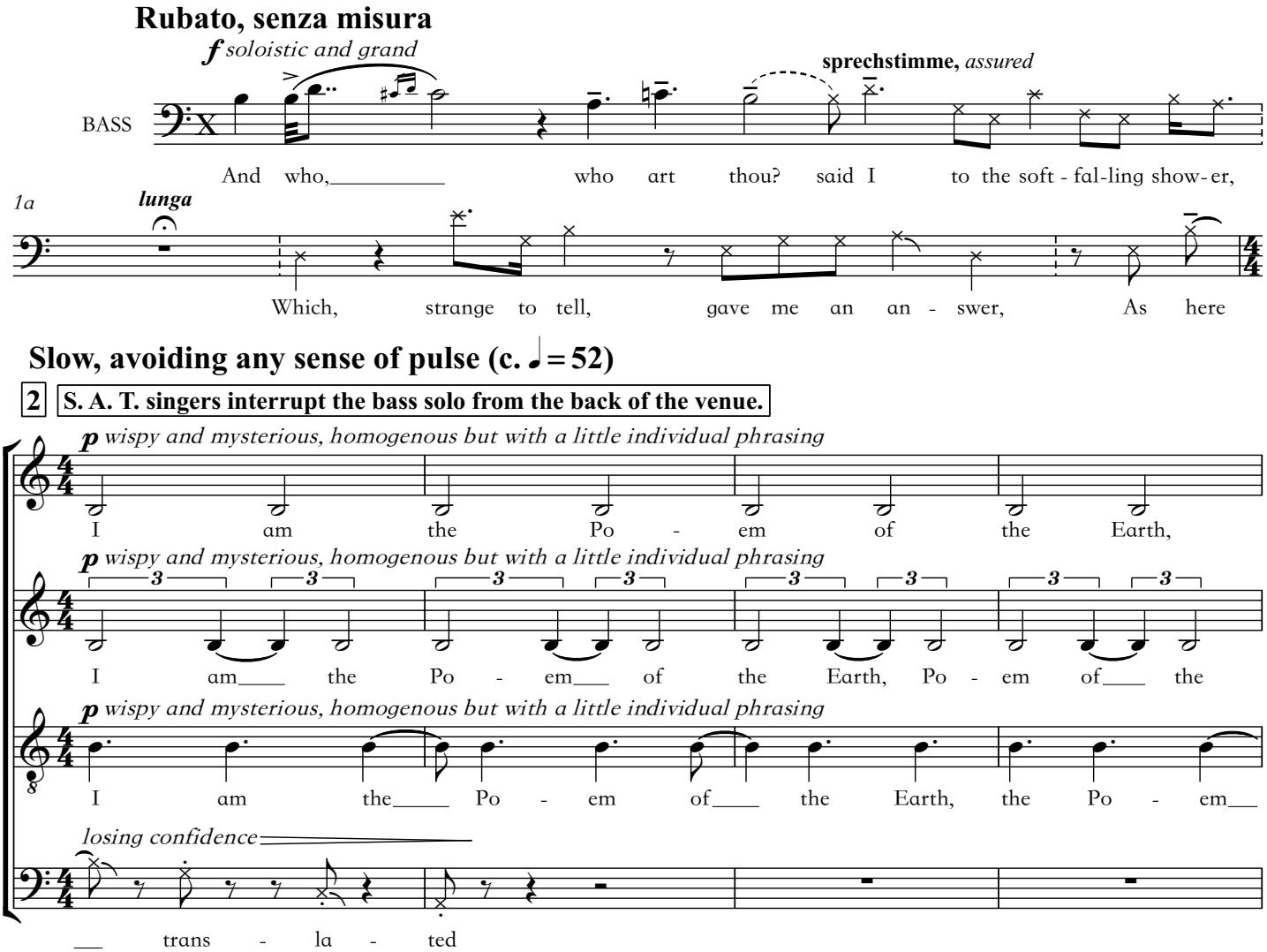
THE VOICE OF THE RAIN

For Four Voices, Finger Cymbals and Wine Glass (B♭)

Walt WHITMAN | 1885

George W. PARRIS | 2025

And who art thou? said I to the soft-falling shower,
Which, strange to tell, gave me an answer, as here translated:
I am the Poem of the Earth, said the voice of the rain,
Eternal I rise impalpable out of the land and the bottomless sea,
Upward to heaven, whence, vaguely form'd, altogether changed,
and yet the same,
I descend to lave the drouths, atomies, dust-layers of the globe,
And all that in them without me were seeds only, latent, unborn;
And forever, by day and night, I give back life to my own origin,
and make pure and beautify it;
(For song, issuing from its birth-place, after fulfilment, wandering,
Reck'd or unreck'd, duly with love returns.)



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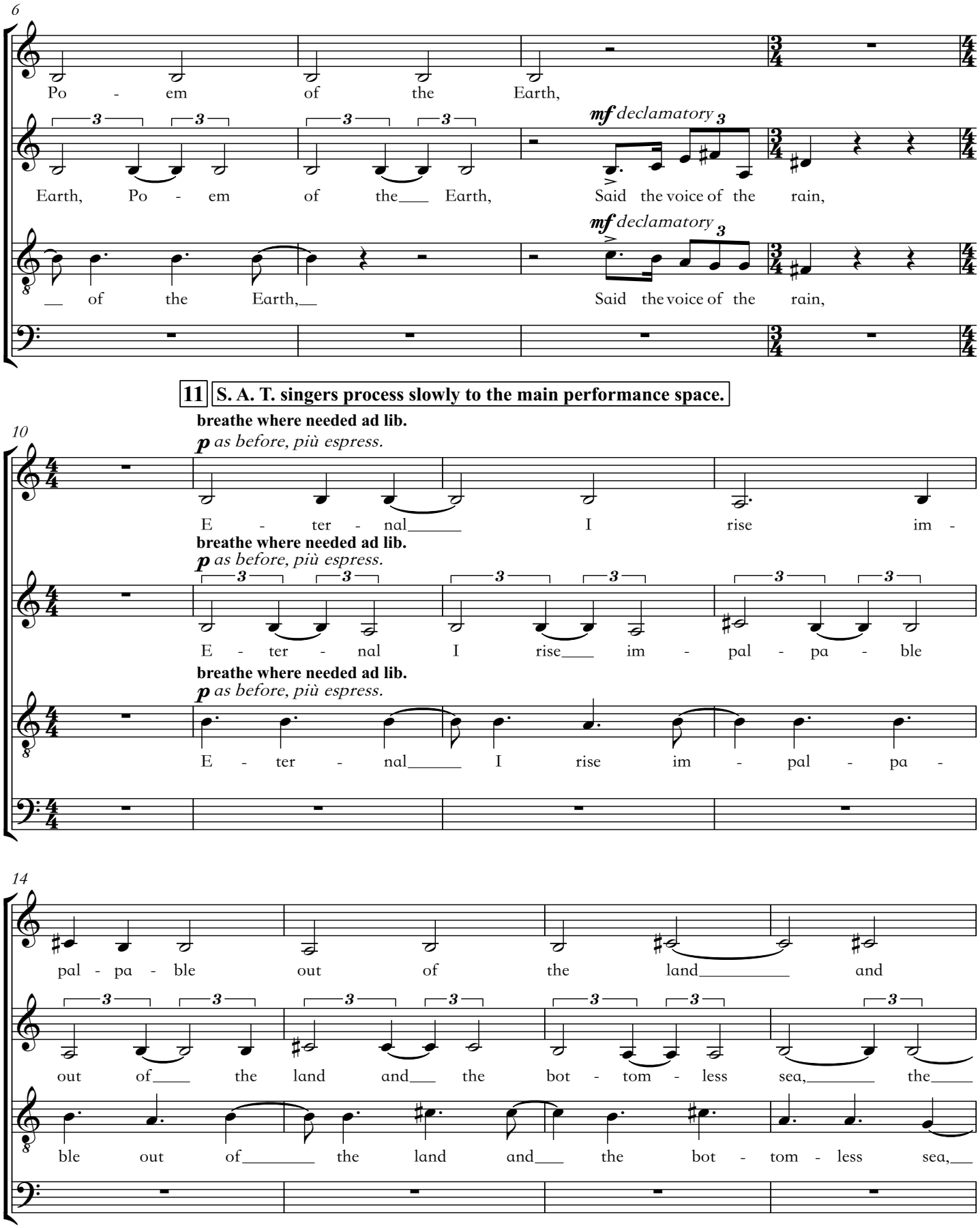
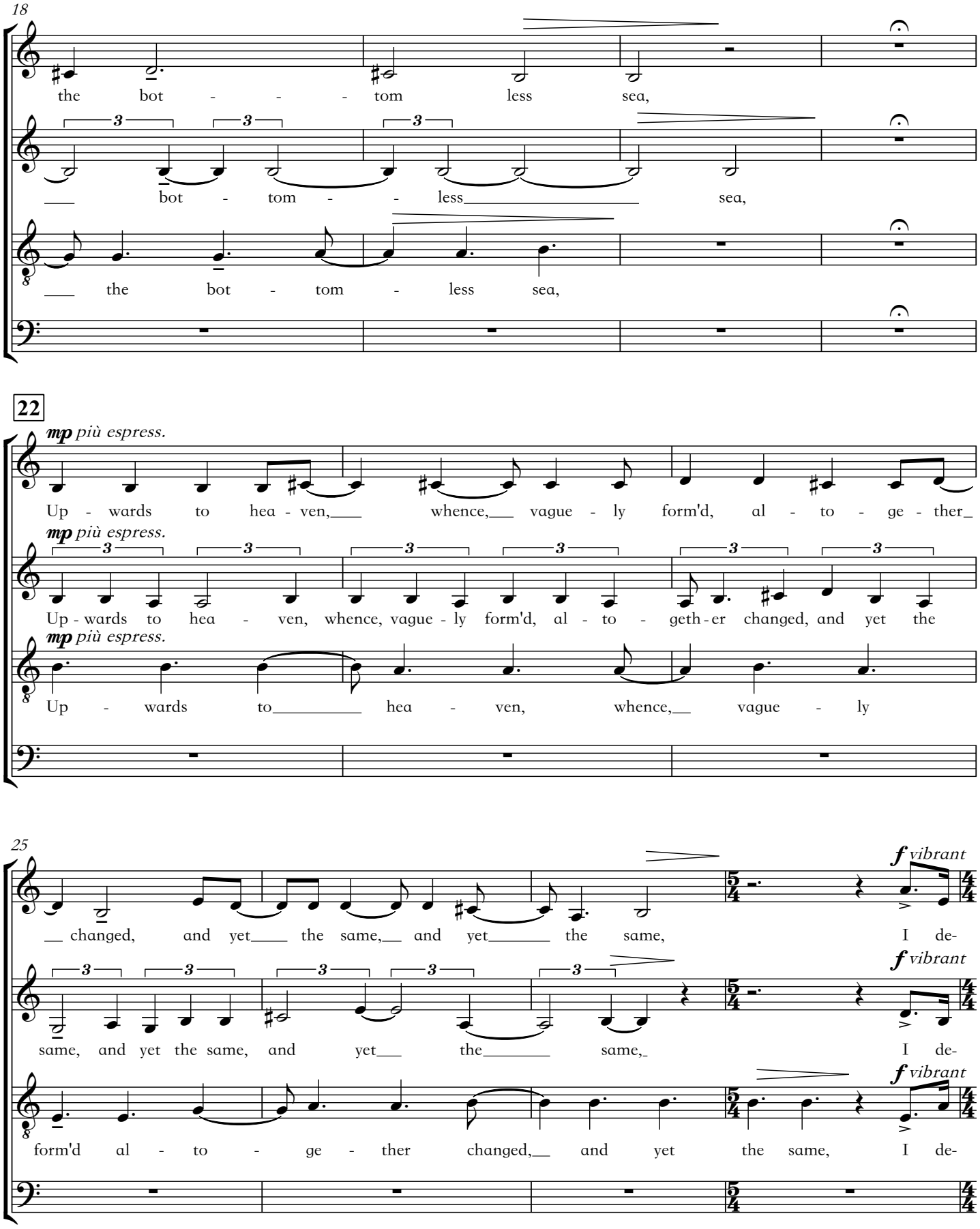

6
Po - em of the Earth,
Earth, Po - em of the Earth,
mf declamatory
Said the voice of the rain,
of the Earth,
Said the voice of the rain,
11 S. A. T. singers process slowly to the main performance space.
10
breathe where needed ad lib.
p as before, più espress.
E - ter - nal I rise im -
E - ter - nal I rise im - pal - pa - ble
E - ter - nal I rise im - pal - pa -
14
pal - pa - ble out of the land and
out of the land and the bot - tom - less sea, the
ble out of the land and the bot - tom - less sea,


18
the bot - - - tom less sea,
bot - tom - - less sea,
the bot - tom - less sea,
22
mp più espress.
Up - wards to hea - ven, whence, vague - ly form'd, al - to - ge - ther
Up - wards to hea - ven, whence, vague - ly form'd, al - to - geth - er changed, and yet the
Up - wards to hea - ven, whence, vague - ly
25
f vibrant
changed, and yet the same, and yet the same, I de-
same, and yet the same, and yet the same, I de-
form'd al - to - ge - ther changed, and yet the same, I de-

29 — 30

mf proud

scend — I de - scend,

mp with drive — *p*

scend — I de-scend to lave the drouths*, lave the drouths, lave drouths,

mp with drive — *p*

scend — I de-scend to lave drouths*, lave the drouths, the drouths,

p serene

To lave, — To

33

p an echo — *mp* — *mf*

De - scend, — I de-scend,

mp — *mf* — *p*

I de-scend to lave the a - tom-ies, lave the a - tom - ies, lave the a - tom-ies, the a - tom-ies,

mp — *mf* — *p*

I de-scend to lave a - tom-ies, lave the a - tom - ies, a - - tom - ies,

mp — *p*

lave, — To lave, to

37

p — *mp* — *mf*

De-scend, — I de scend,

mf — *p*

Dust lay - ers of the globe, of the globe, of the globe,

mf — *p*

Dust lay - ers of the globe, of the globe, of the globe,

mf

lave,

*) "dr-ow-ths"