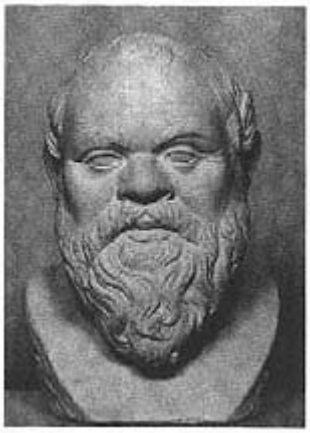
# SATYR QUARTET

## For clarinet, guitar, cello, bass

**Theo Radić**

*Syukhtun Editions*

***Silenus***



***Socrates***

## PREFACE

*Satyr Quartet* is a musical parody of the satyr plays of ancient Greece, themselves parodies. Silenus (said to resemble Socrates) is the "father" of the satyrs. He is the "walking bass" in the piece. The clarinet, guitar and cello are his "sons" – the satyrs. As a baby, Dionysos (god of Drama) was nursed by Silenus. Like Shakespeare's "lost years", Dionysos disappeared for a while. When he returned, he had learned the art of wine making which he passed on to the rest of Europe. The word "tragedy" comes from the ancient Greek word for "goat". The satyrs were half goat, half man, extremely erotic, endowed with over-sized phalluses in the vase paintings. Although one quarter of the plays by the ancient tragedians were satyr plays, only three have survived: *Cyclops*, *Alcestis* (Euripides), and *Ichneutai* (Sophocles). These plays were the last thing the Athenian public saw on stage after the long festival of Dionysos, involving extremely long productions of the tragedies. Despite their comic elements, the satyr plays were created by the great tragic playwrights, *not* the comic playwrights. The tragedies consistently focused on the worst crimes possible for humans to commit. The satyr plays were "asides" on these painfully tragic stories, filled with advanced word-play, raunchy jokes and other theatrical shenanigans. Among the musical shenanigans in this piece I ask the guitarist and cellist to drum on their respective instruments in a samba rhythm. The guitarist drums with his finger(s) on the bridge. The cellist drums where the sonority of the sound box is greatest. The percussion effects on the two string instruments should accentuate the unique wooden sonorities and pitches of each in a dialogue. The opening theme is borrowed from Antonio Carlos Jobim's "Triste" (Sad). In the spirit of the satyr plays, I have used the sad melody as an introduction to playfulness, while old Silenus – the "walking bass" – sees to it that the clarinet, guitar and cello don't get into too much trouble.

Source: *Satyr Drama: Tragedy at Play*, edited by George W.M. Harrison, The Classical Press of Wales, Swansea, 2005.

Theo Radić
Stockholm, Sweden
July 4, 2007

# S A T Y R  Q U A R T E T

## for B ♭ clarinet, guitar, cello, bass

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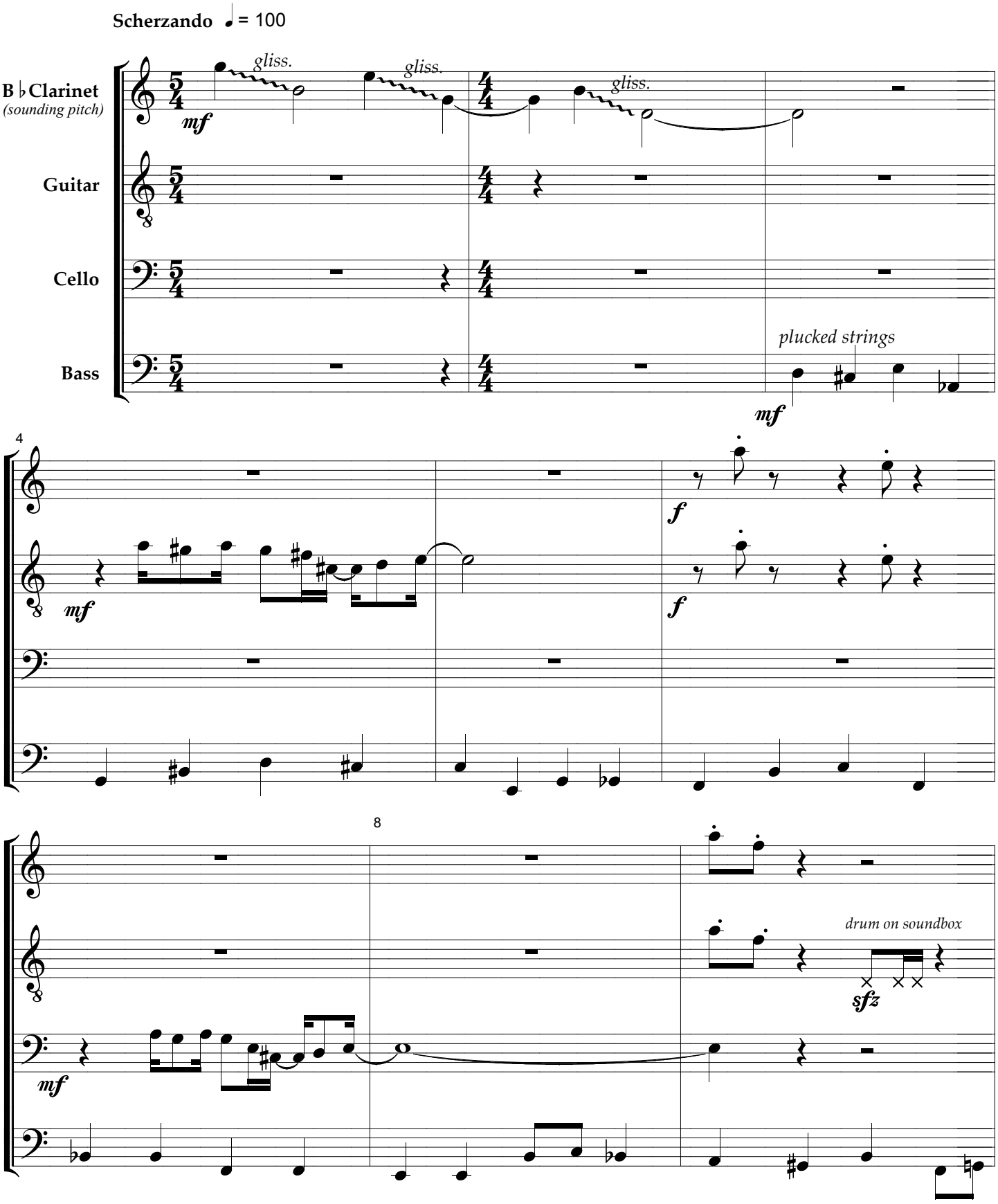


cover: Dionysos and Satyrs
amphora by the Amasis painter, c. 540 BC

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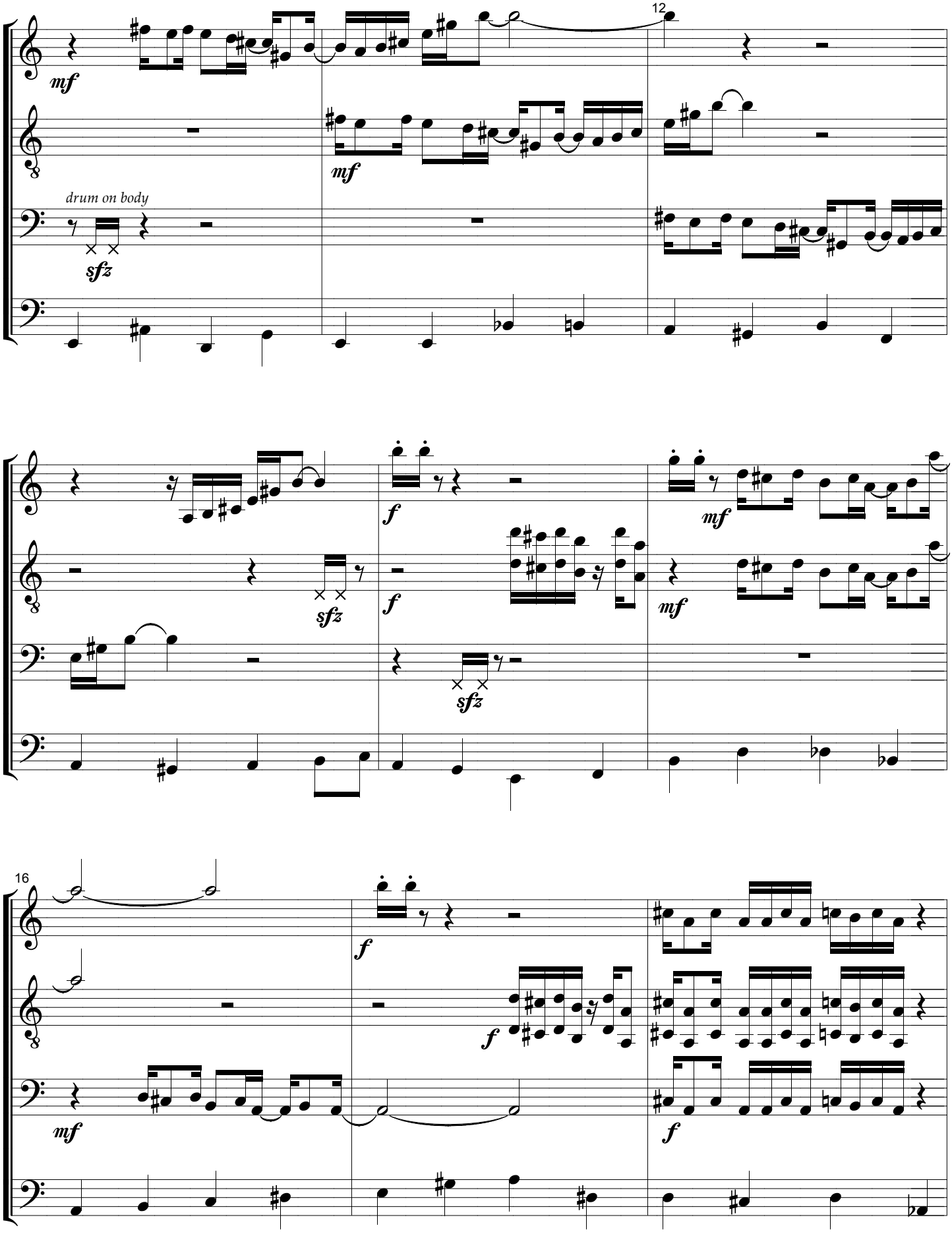


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