OCTAVIA. TREPANATION
An opera for soloists, chorus and electronic music

Conceived and developed by Boris Yukhananov and Sergei Adonyev
Libretto by Boris Yukhananov and Dmitri Kourliandski
Composed by Dmitri Kourliandski
Directed by Boris Yukhananov
Set design by Stepan Lukyanov
Costume design by Anastasia Nefyodova
Lighting design by Sergei Vasilyev
Choreography by Andrei Kuznetsov-Vecheslov
Sound artist – Oleg Makarov
English translation by John Freedman

Duration – 90 minutes

Cast

Nero (tenor) – Sergei Malinin
Seneca (baritone) – Alexei Kokhanov
Ghost of Agrippina (mezzo-soprano) – Arina Zvereva
Prefect (bass) – Vasily Korostylyov
Trotsky (actor) – Yury Duvanov
Octavia – "caryatides"
(women's voices) – Maria Grilikhes and Questa Musica
Nadiya Zelyankova
Lyudmila Yeryutina
Anna Shaverdyan
Darya Belousova
Yekaterina Dondukova
Yekaterina Kolomina
Svetlana Barakovskaya

Terracotta Army (chorus) – 79 performers
Choirmaster of the Terracotta Army – Dmitry Matvienko (performs in the production as a member of the Terracotta army)
Subterranean Red Army Soldiers
(dancers) – Konstantin Matulevsky
Roman Andreikin
Igor Bekagaev
Vasily Musikhin

A Head of Lenin, its back turned to the spectators, stands on stage.

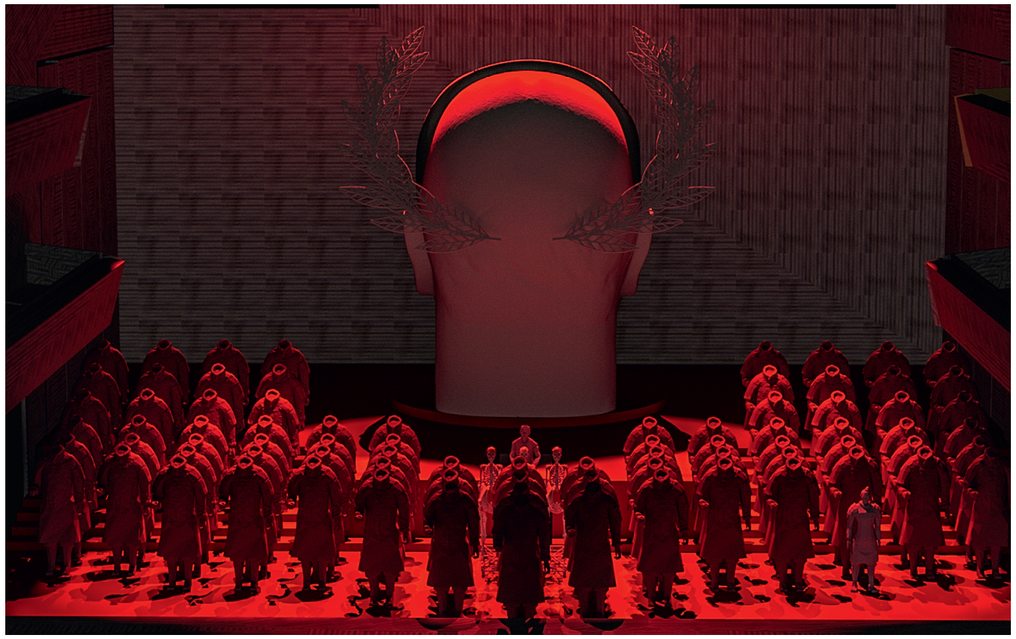
The headless Terracotta Army stands in formation in the "square" – a section of the orchestra pit 10 meters deep – and on steps leading to the stage. That part of the Army standing in the center of the "square" forms a V-shape with its point aimed at the spectators.

The Prefect stands amidst the Army in the uniform of a Chinese general. He is the only one with a head.

A Chariot and coffin harnessed to the skeletons of centaurs stands in the center of the "square" before the proscenium.

Trotsky, in an English costume and hat, and with a travel bag, sits on the Chariot in the driver's seat. The stage, the proscenium, the steps and the "square" are covered with a scarlet floor covering.

While the spectators take their seats (approximately 10 minutes) the Army "breathes" in rhythmic sound waves.





Sketch of the Prefect's costume

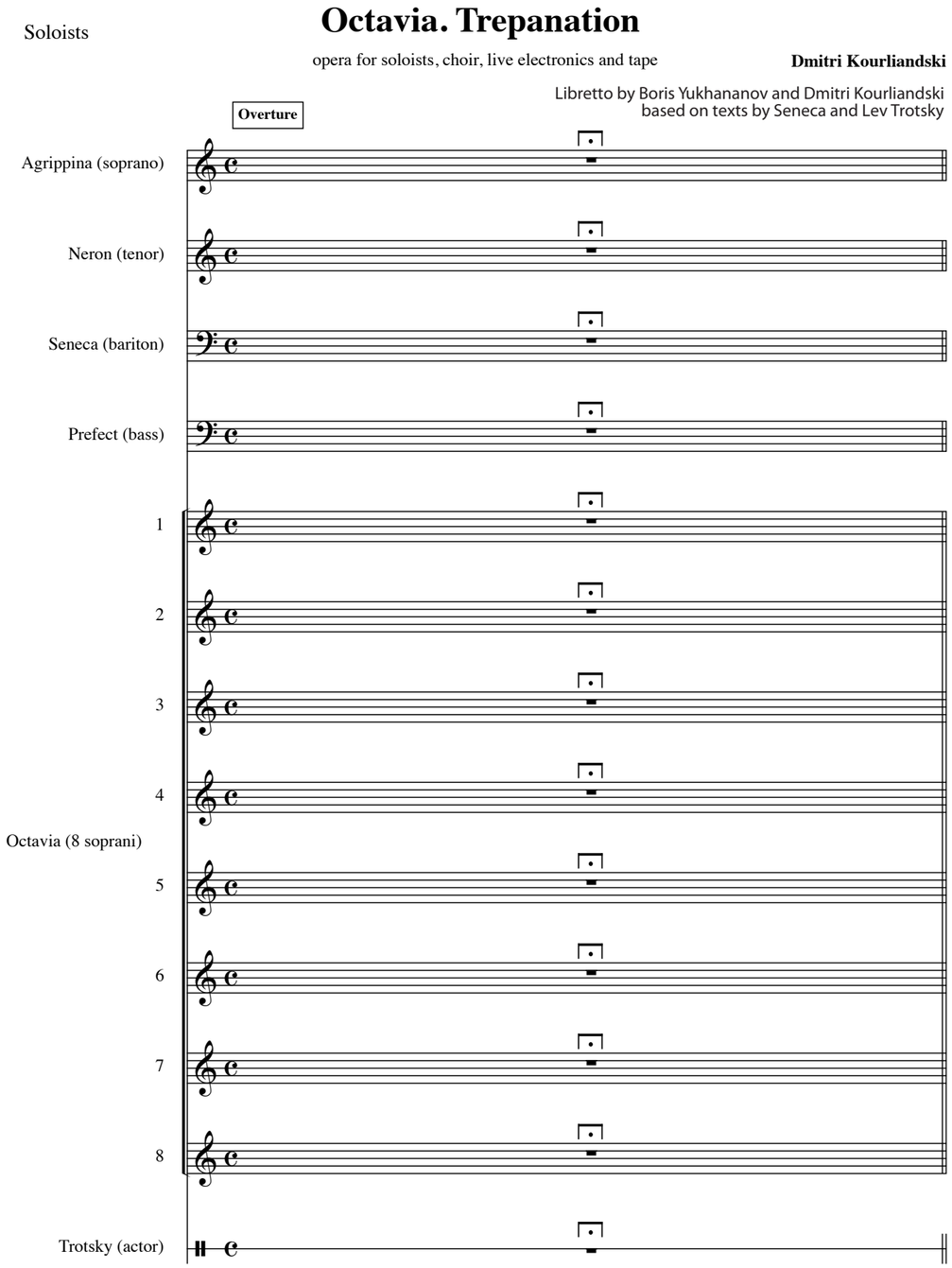


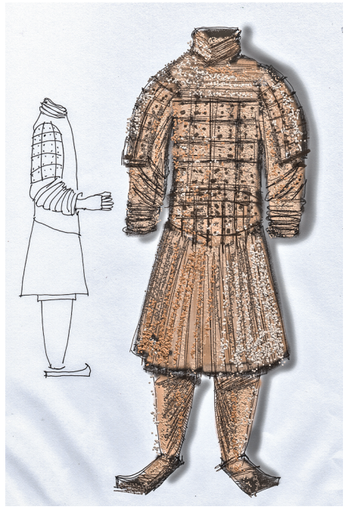
Sketch of Trotsky's costume



Trotsky's props: travel bag, pince nez, an eyeglass case, a kerchief.

Elements of Trotsky's costume: cuff-links, suspenders, tie





Sketch of a Terracotta Army warrior costume



Sketch of a Red Army Soldier



Red Army Soldier prop: a slingshot rifle

The introduction sounds.

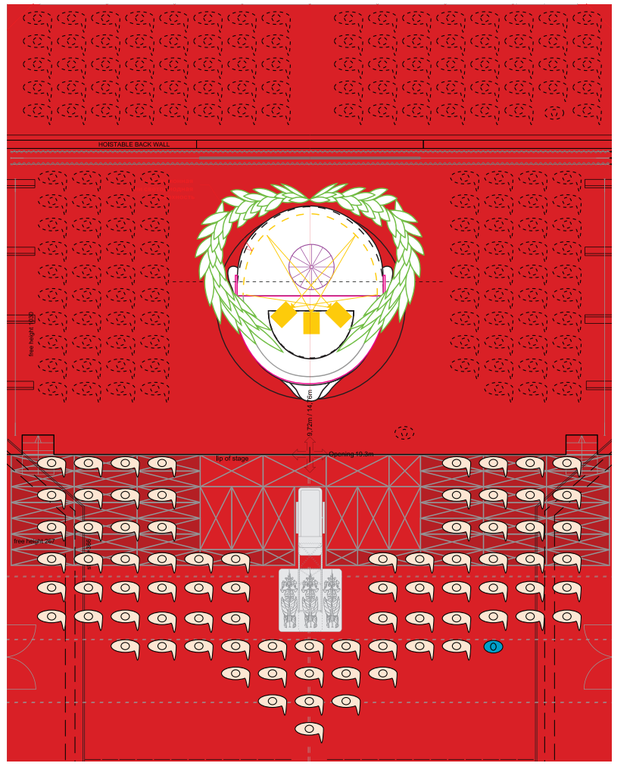
The stage backdrop rises slowly over the course of 60 seconds. In this minute's time the Head of Lenin turns toward the audience. As the backdrop rises and the Head of Lenin turns, the rigid side wings on both sides of the stage turn one by one.

(There are 8 wings in all – 4 on each side. Two wings turn simultaneously – one on the left, another on the right, beginning with the upstage wings. Each pair takes approximately 15 seconds to turn.)

Lighting: changes as the Head of Lenin turns.



OCTAVIA. TREPANATION
CHOIR



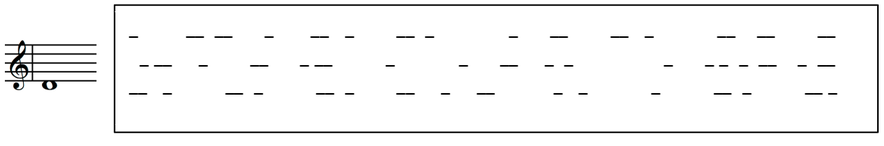
Position 3

Position 2

Position 1

<u>Position 1. Material 1a.</u>

p – mf



[m] [a] [o] [u] ...

Unison D; short soft sounds appearing sporadically; distances between the sounds in each part – approx. 10-20 seconds; change the articulation *([m] [a] [o] [u] ...)*, length *(1-3 sec.)* and dynamics *(p – mf)* for each sound.

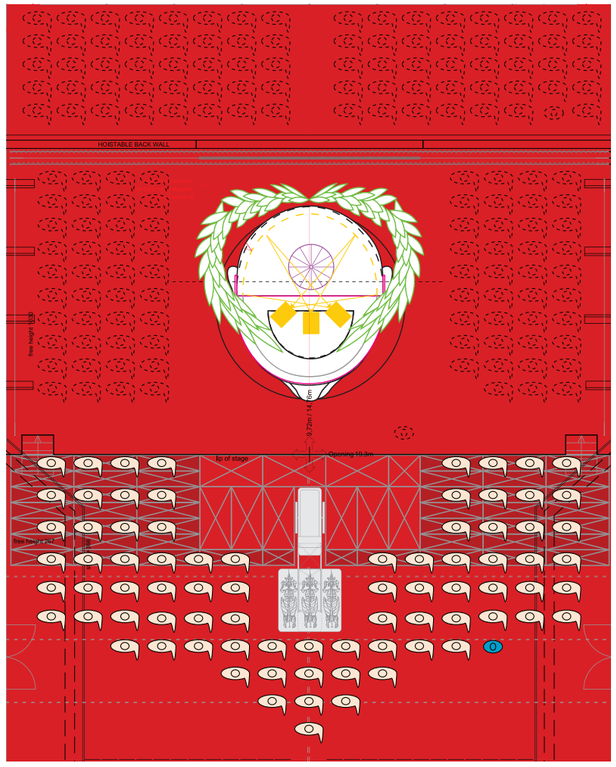
Four Red Army Soldiers, two on each side of the Head of Lenin, stand behind the backdrop at the rear of the stage. They wear red uniforms and hold slingshot rifles. When the backdrop rises high enough, the Red Army Soldiers enter the stage and, while the Head of Lenin turns, they take up their positions – two on the proscenium to the left and right of the Head of Lenin, while the other two descend to the "square" and stand to the left and right of the V-shaped Army.



Lighting: a pulsating device, visible to all, establishes the rhythm for all.
Additionally four spots appear on the floor, providing the precise positions on which the Red Army Soldiers come to a halt.
When the Head of Lenin is completely turned to the spectators, its eyes light up in red.



OCTAVIA. TREPANATION
CHOIR



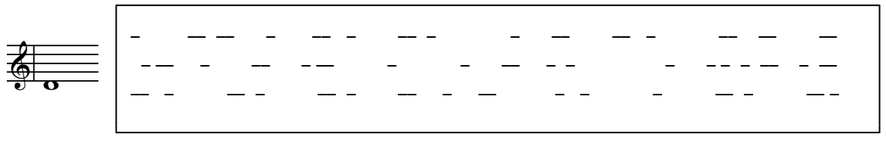
Position 3

Position 2

Position 1

<u>Position 1. Material 1a.</u>

p – mf



[m] [a] [o] [u] ...

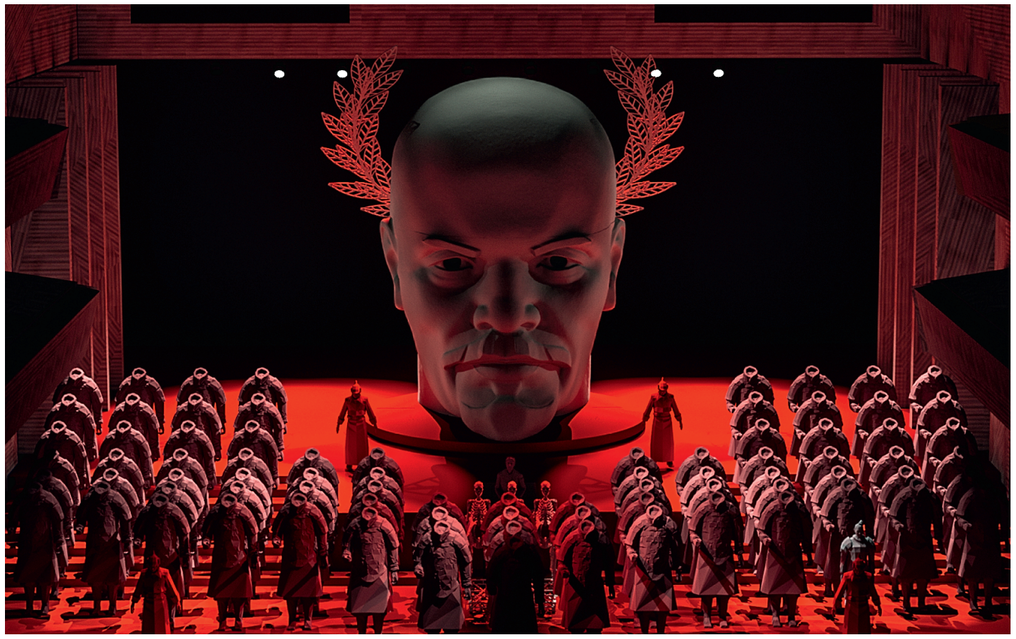
Unison D; short soft sounds appearing sporadically; distances between the sounds in each part – approx. 10-20 seconds; change the articulation *([m] [a] [o] [u] ...)*, length *(1-3 sec.)* and dynamics *(p – mf)* for each sound.

→ Gradual transition to Material 1b →

After all four Red Army Soldiers, in order, take their positions in the spotlights, they give a sign to the Terracotta Army warriors. Those warriors standing on the steps to the left and right of the Head of Lenin, and the three rows of warriors standing on the "square" before the steps, begin turning in formation. They ascend to the stage and line up on either side of the Head of Lenin. The two Red Army Soldiers on stage guide the warriors, line up the slingshots on their rifles, and stand facing the spectators at the head of the newly-formed squadrons.

At this moment the two Red Army Soldiers on the "square" perform the ritual of attaining "demonic essence."

Lighting: changes begin on the "square."



As soon as the eyes in the Head of Lenin light up in red, independent textual phrases show up on the Head's forehead. They are broken down into 10 parts.

The action takes place in Rome, in the year of 62 A.D.

Caesar Claudius Drusus has assassinated Messalina, the mother of his children Britannicus and Octavia, for entering into an affair with Silius.

Subsequently, he marries Agrippina, the daughter of his brother Germanicus and widow of Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus Nero

and gives his daughter Octavia in marriage to her son Nero.

After Claudius and Britannicus are poisoned,

Caesar Nero divorces Octavia, whom he despises,

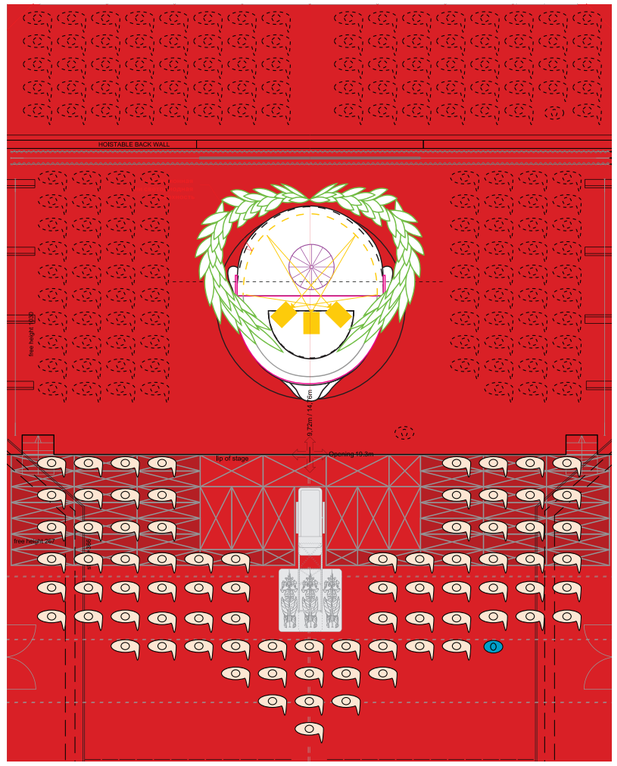
and marries Poppaea Sabina.

Nero crushes the tumultuous rebellion caused among the people by this divorce with many murders.

He destroys Rome by fire,

and orders Octavia, banished to the isle of Pandataria, to be assassinated.

OCTAVIA. TREPANATION
CHOIR



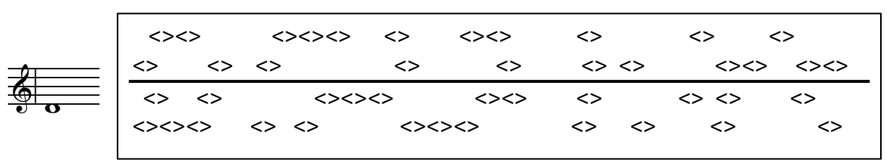
Position 3

Position 2

Position 1

Position 1. Material 1b.

p < ***ff***



[m] [a] [o] [u] …

Inside the permanent unison D short crescendi and diminuendi appear sporadically; change the articulation *([m] [a] [o] [u] …)*, length *(1-5 sec.)* and dynamics *(p – ff)* for each cresc/dim figure.

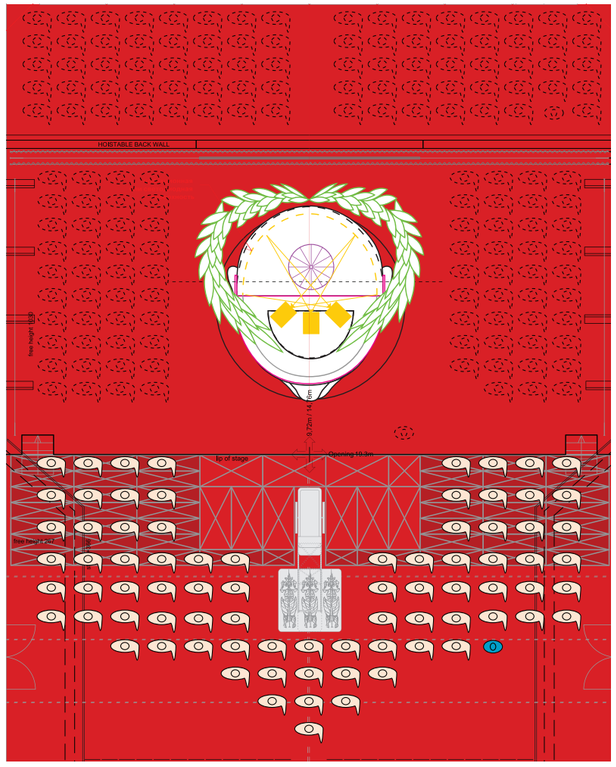
Two electronic tableaux for supertitles hang to the left and right over the Head of Lenin.
Translated supertitles are in English and Dutch.



The text on Lenin's forehead disappears.
Lighting: a red strip appears beneath Lenin's forehead and, "like a laser," makes a cut.



OCTAVIA. TREPANATION
CHOIR



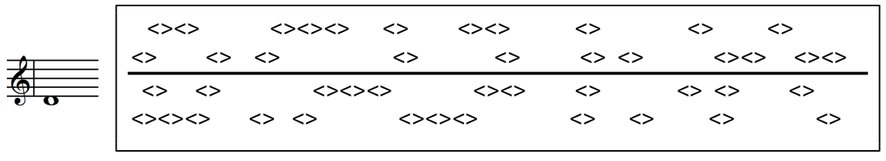
Position 3

Position 2

Position 1

Position 1. Material 1b.

p < ***ff***



[m] [a] [o] [u] …

Inside the permanent unison D short crescendi and diminuendi appear sporadically; change the articulation *([m] [a] [o] [u] …)*, length *(1-5 sec.)* and dynamics *(p – ff)* for each cresc/dim figure.

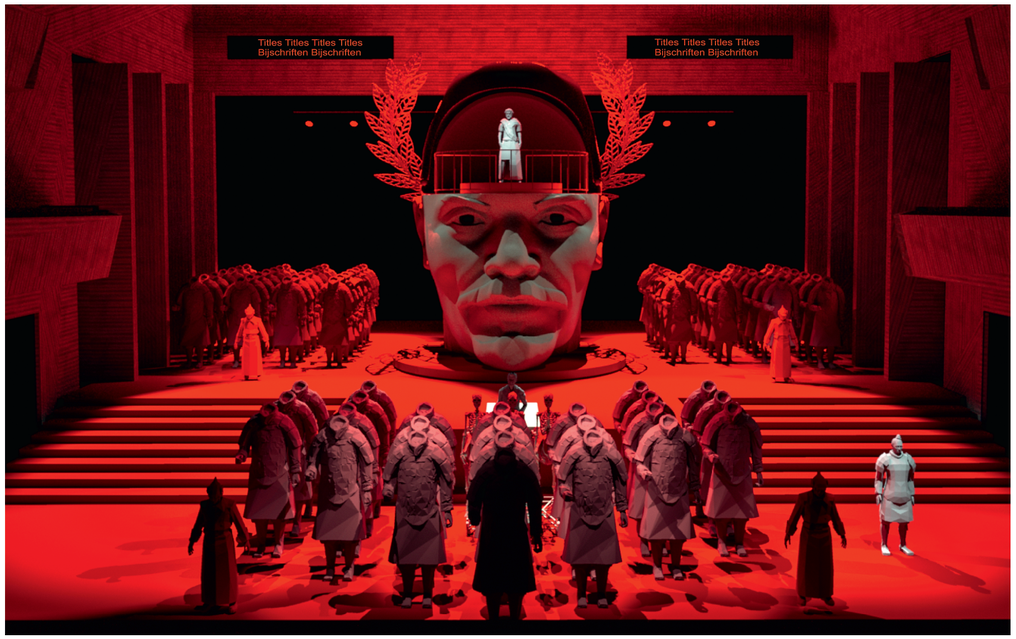
The forehead panel rises.
Video in the Head of Lenin: the cupola of the Pantheon.
Seneca, in the costume of a Roman patrician, appears on a space inside the Head of Lenin.

SENECA

Destiny almighty! Why shouldst bestow on me,
So happy with my lot in life, your forgeries,
Your hollow crooked smile, and raise me up on high?
So I shall now know fear? And plummet from the heights?
I'd rather live on rocky Corsica, as once
I did, far from the stony stares of jealousy,
Where my free spirit answered only to itself.
I gazed upon the sky, through which the sun did move,
Ev'n as the rosy heavens turned from day to night.
When it grows old and cold the world shall return
To lawless, blinded chaos.



Sketch of Seneca's costume



Moderato, molto rubato

SENECA

Sen

mf

Фор – ту – на все – мо – гу – ща – я! За – чем ты мне, до – воль – но – му

сво – им у – де – лом, лжи – во – ю у – лыб – кой у – лыб – ну – лась,

вознесла ме – ня? Чтоб страх узнал я? Что – бы с вы – со – ты упал?

a tempo **Meno mosso**

p

Уж луч – ше жить мне на ска – лис – той Кор – си – ке, Как преж – де, вда – ле – ке от глаз

a tempo **Meno mosso** *a tempo* **Meno mosso**

за – вист – ли – вых, где сам се – бе при – над – ле – жал мой воль – ный – дух. Я наб – лю – дал,

Meno mosso *a tempo* *a tempo*

как солн – це в не – бе дви – жет – ся, как в об – ра – ще – ньи не – ба ночь сме – ня – ет день.

p

Коль он ста – ре – ет – к ха – о – су сле – по – му вновь вер – нет – ся мир;

SENECA

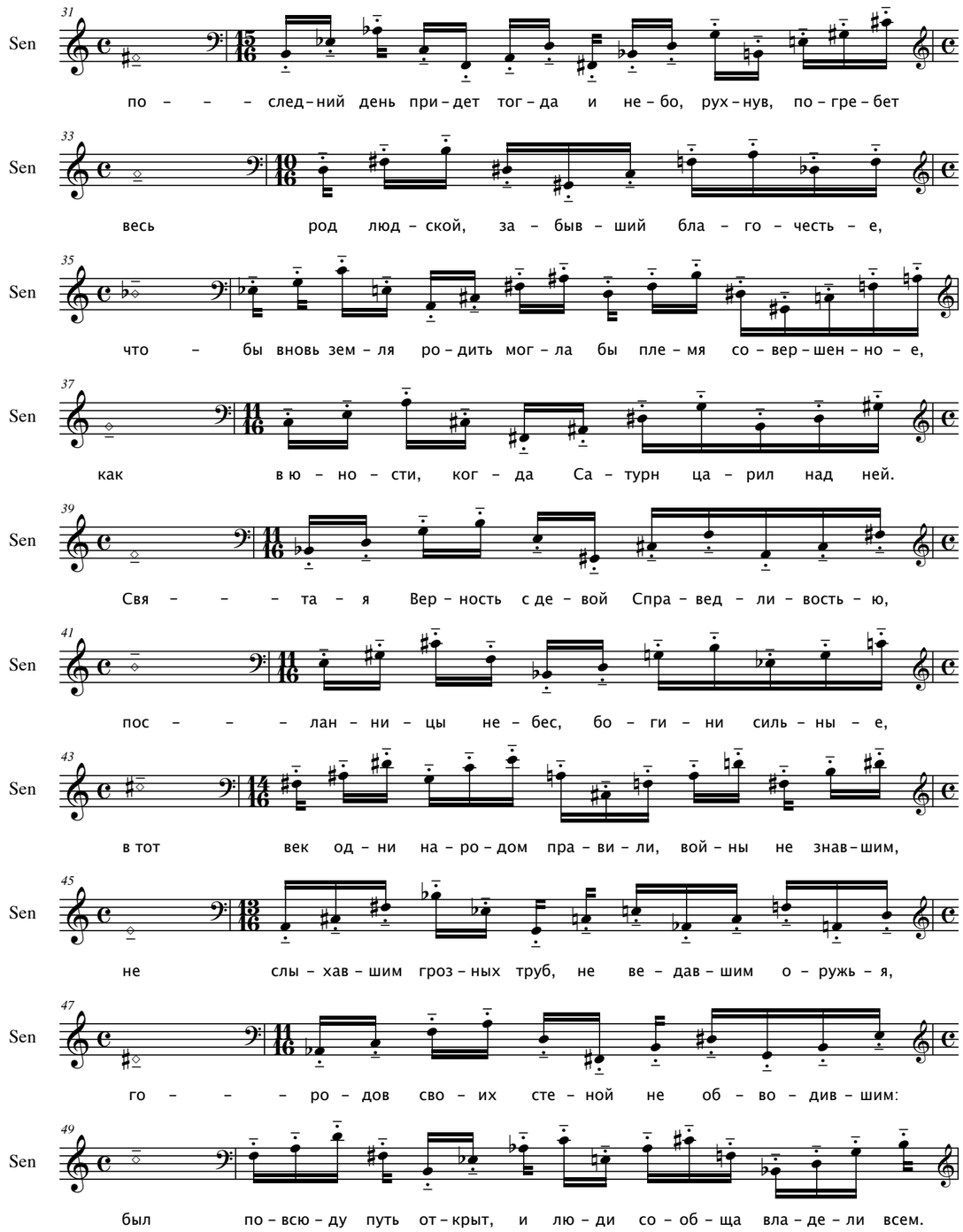
The final day shall dawn,
The heavens will collapse and extirpate all those
Who forsook the mighty gods - and at that hour
The earth, it shall give birth unto a brand new tribe,
Wholly young again, as when Saturn ruled the world.
Sacred Fidelity and sweet maiden of Truth,
Messengers from heaven, goddesses of iron-will:
In that fine age they ruled the people peacefully.
There were no wars, no quarrelsome rebellions.
No one took up arms or hid their native cities
Behind tall walls of stone: the road was always open
Everywhere, and together all shared all in kind.



Sketch of a Red Army Soldier's slingshot rifle

During this part of the Seneca-Prefect aria, a Red Army Soldier approaches the Prefect and signals to him with his rifle – the Prefect rises onto the proscenium and stands in the spotlight to the right of the Head of Lenin.
The V-shaped Army formation, aimed at the audience, remains at the center of the "square."
Lighting: a spot appears lighting a circle on the proscenium for the Prefect.





The Prefect lifts his hand and signals to the Red Army Soldiers to clear the remaining Terracotta warriors from the "square."

All four Red Army Soldiers, each replacing the other, lead the warriors in rows from the "square" to the stage. The warriors line up in formation on either side of the Head of Lenin.

Meanwhile, the Red Army Soldiers bark commands at the Army warriors.

By the end of Seneca's aria the entire Army is on stage, forming two phalanxes on either side of the Head of Lenin. (Ten rows on each side reach upstage, 4 warriors in each row except for the first row to the right of the Head [assuming the vantage point of the spectators]. There are three warriors in this row).

The Red Army Soldiers exit behind the Head of Lenin. (They go by twos, on the left and right of the Head).

SENECA

That race is now replaced, bereft of modesty.

The generation after, knowing evil not,

Then slyly invented a new array of arts.

Worse yet, the newest age dug deep in mother earth,

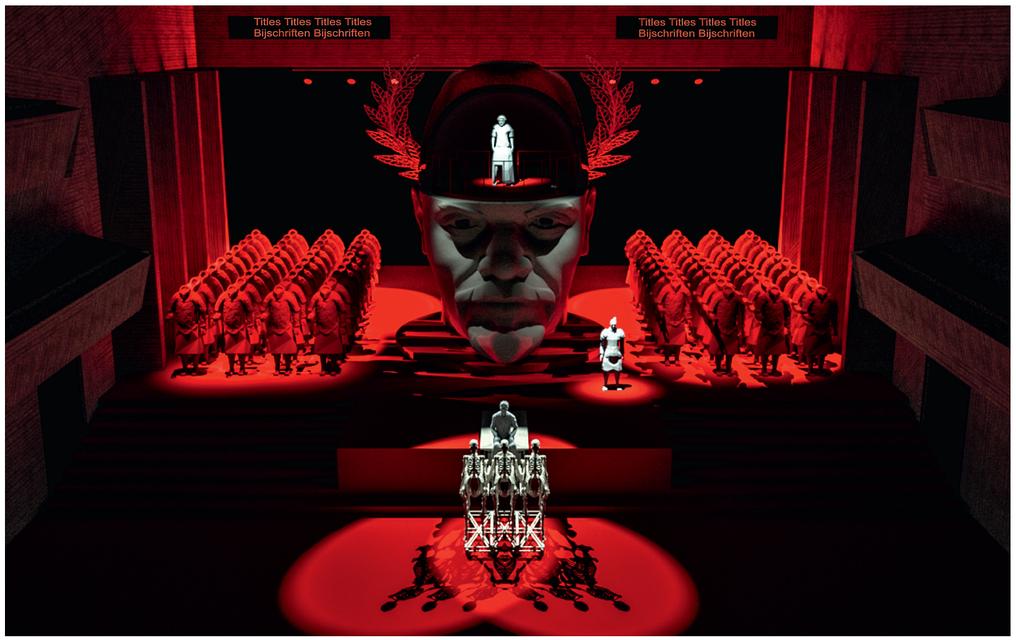
Extricating hard and heavy gold and iron

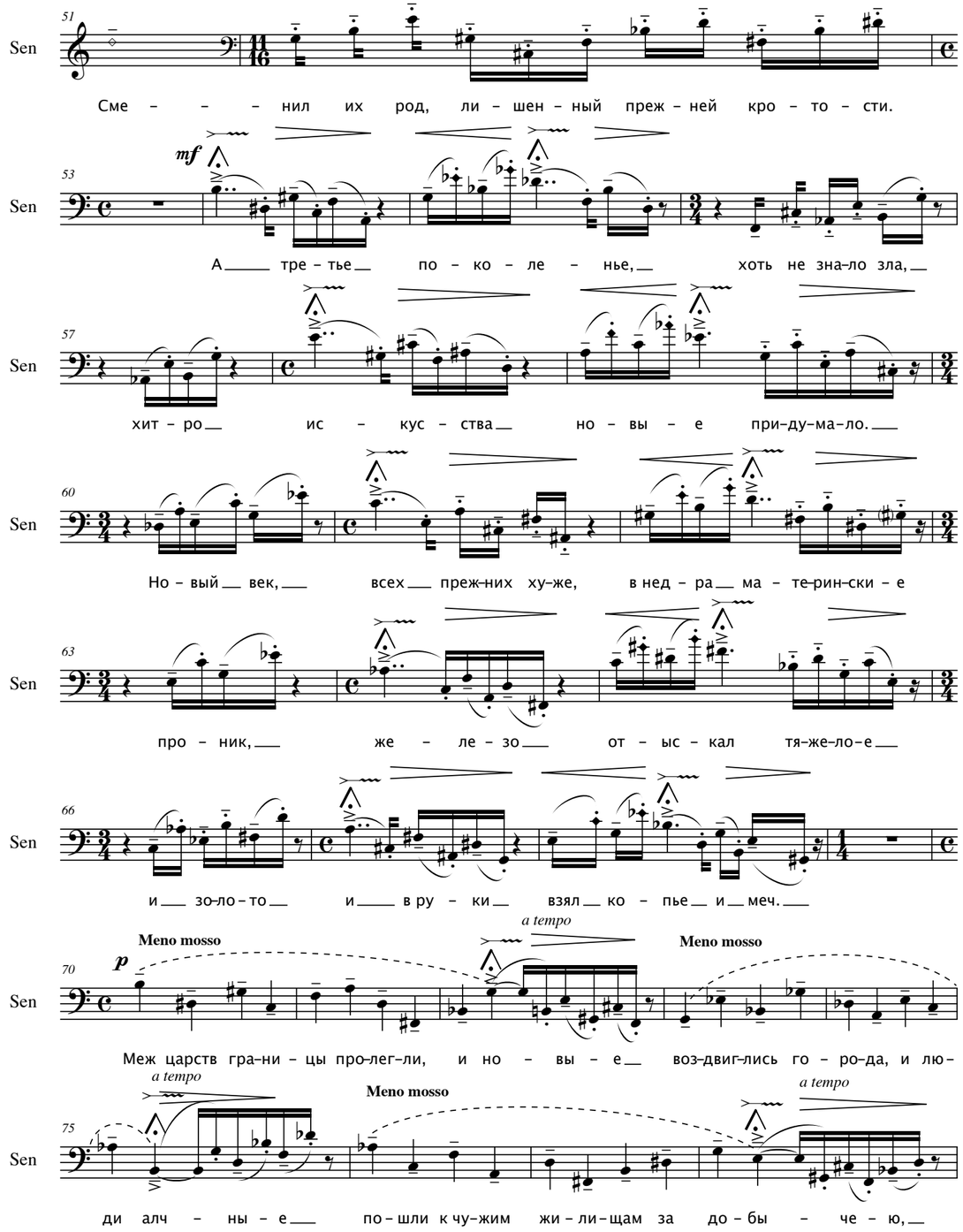
And took to hand and heart the deadly sword and spear.

Boundaries were set among the nations, and new

Cities were erected; avaricious people

Attacked their neighbors, pillaging and plundering,





Lighting: the Chariot opens up on the "square."
Trotsky in his suit and hat sits in the driver's seat next to his traveling bag.

SENECA

And all then had to stand with sword to shield their homes.

We drown in the vices that we have loved so long,

And our vicious age afflicts and oppresses us,

Where villainy and perfidy have the top hand

And each one here is obsessed with scandalous lust,

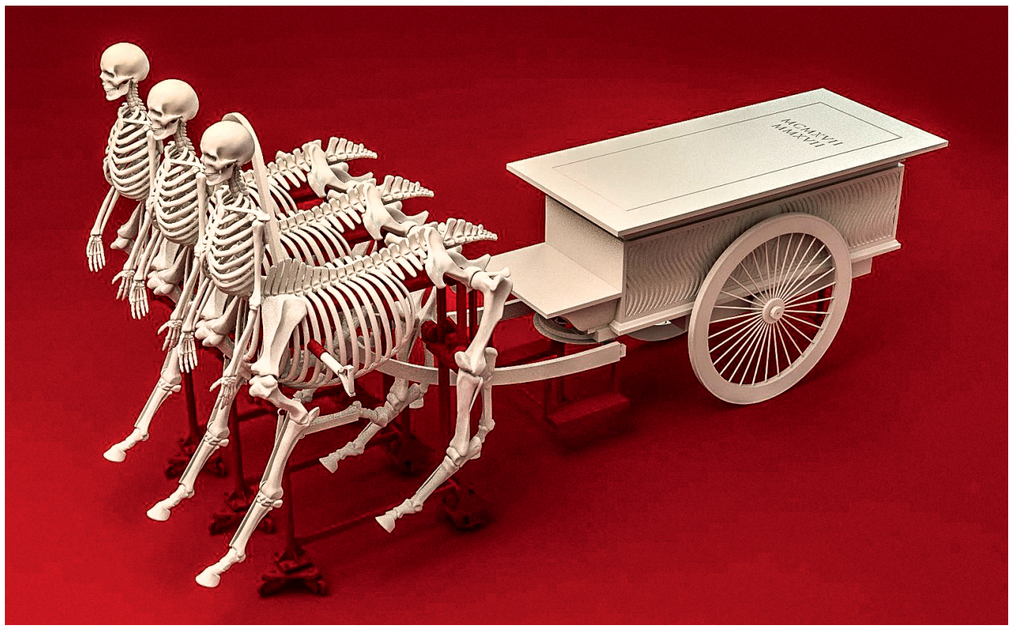
And, compounding rude pleasures, fast hands steeped in greed

Rake in riches lewd and then toss them to the wind.

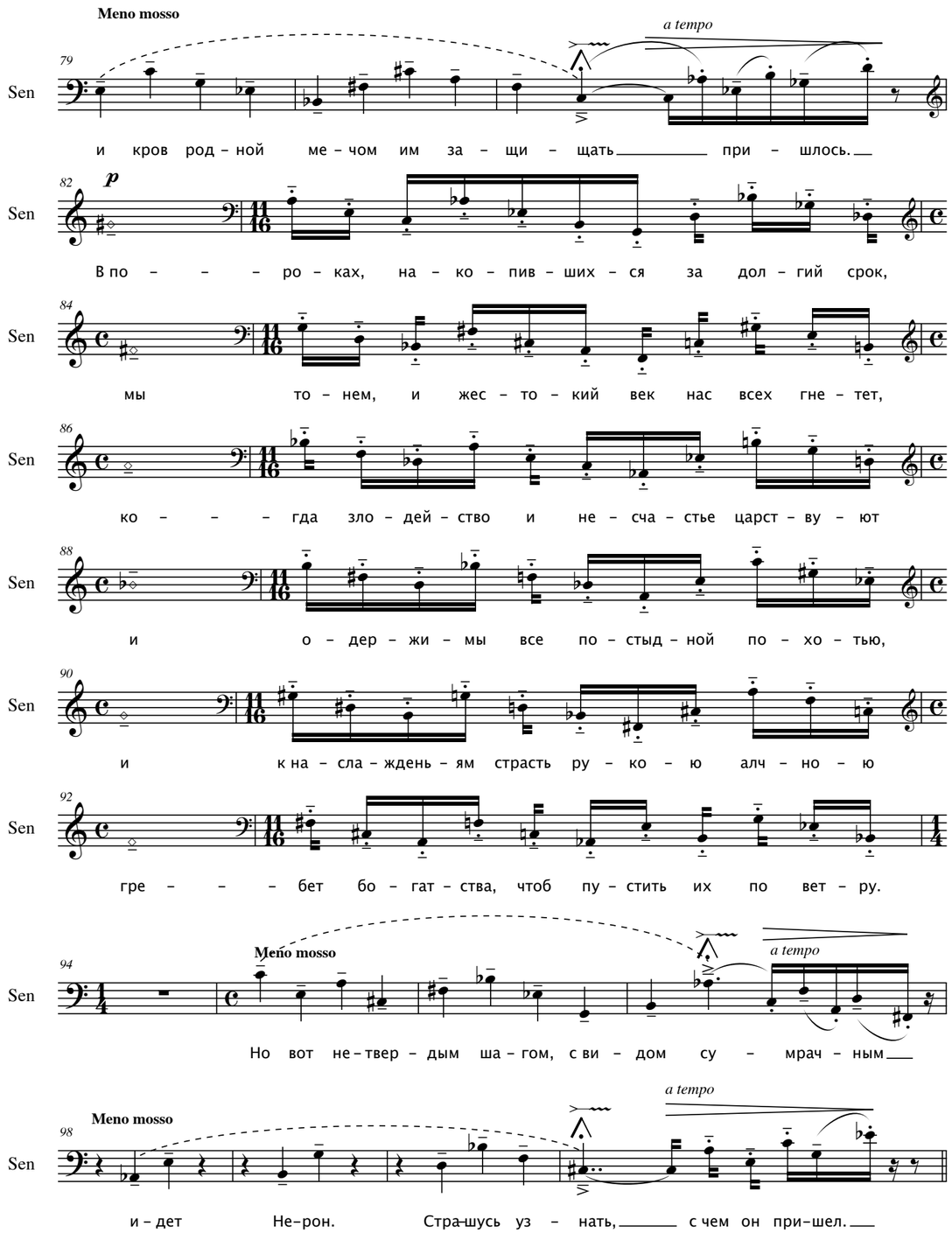
A pause in Seneca's aria.
From behind the Head of Lenin, on the left side (from the spectator's point of view), Nero enters the stage in the uniform of a Red Army commander – he wears a long, red greatcoat and a Budyonny-style hat. The four Red Army Soldiers walk behind him. They are in red uniforms, with their slingshot rifles.
Lighting: a spot lights up a circle on the proscenium to the left of the Head.

SENECA

But here with staggering step and bleak demeanor
Comes Nero. I dread to learn what's on his mind.



Sketch of the Chariot



Nero stops in the spotlight on the proscenium in front of the Head. The Red Army Soldiers stop with him.

The Prefect, illuminated by his spotlight, stands on the proscenium in front of the Head.

NERO

I order thee: Bring to me the severed heads of Plautus and of Sulla. Do now as you are told.

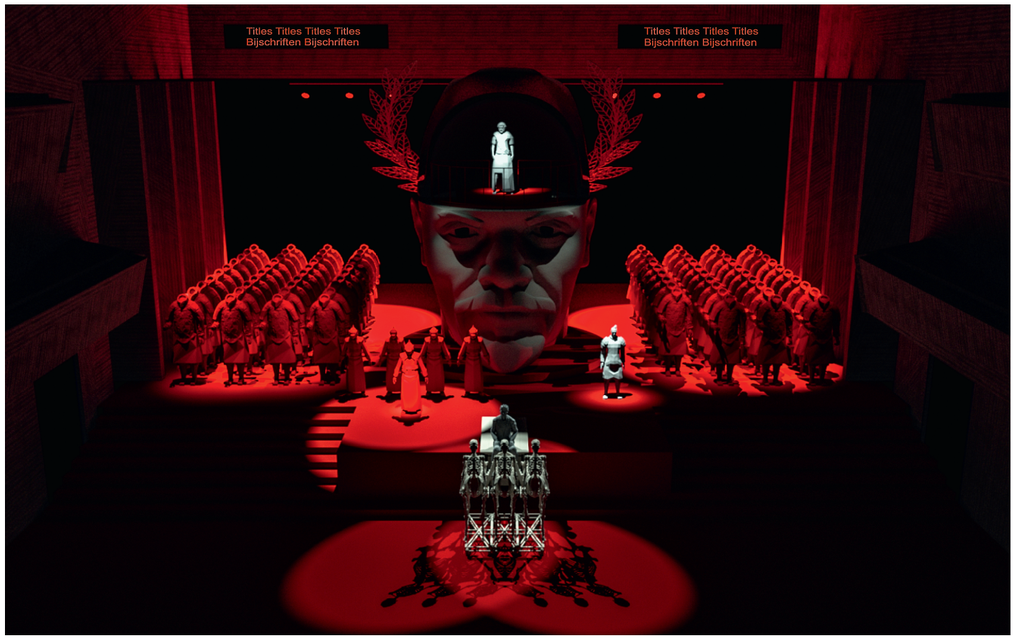
PREFECT

I hasten to the camp. I shall do your bidding.



Sketch of Nero in his greatcoat costume

The Prefect joins the first row of Army warriors, to the right of the Head.



NERON

102

Ner

f *p*

Рас–по – ря – дись: пусть Плав – та го–ло–ву и Сул – лы м...

104

Ner

f

мне до – ста – вят. М... Ис – пол – няй при – каз.

PREFECT

106

Pre

f

И – ду не – ме – для в ла – герь.

109

Pre

Все ис – пол – ню я.

repeat till measure 156;
vary the pauses' length freely

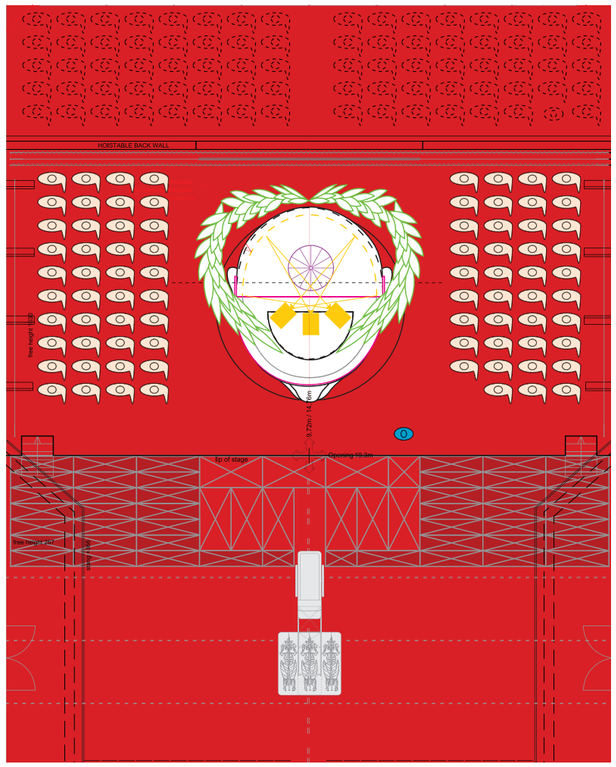
The Chorus sings Material 2 until Trotsky's monologue begins.





Sketches of the lighting structure

OCTAVIA. TREPANATION
CHOIR



Position 3

Position 2

Position 1

Position 2. Material 2.

[30-40"] / 👂 / [30-40"]

Continue singing unison D, then listen to the electronic sounds and repeat any sound you hear (each part independently so that a complex chord will appear); keep changing the dynamics and articulations.

SENECA

You must not execute a friend without a thought!

NERO

‘Tis easy to be just for him who has no fear.

SENECA

Fear has an antidote: They call it mercy.

NERO

Caesar proves his worth by wiping out his enemies.

SENECA

A fearless nation’s father shall protect his people.

NERO

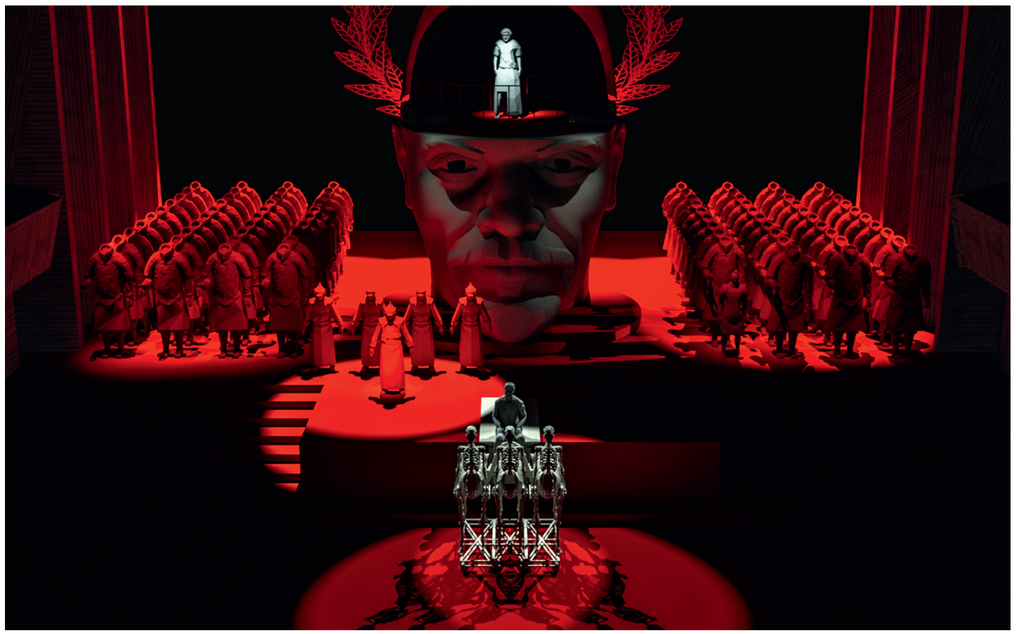
Leave it to old men to teach the young to cower.

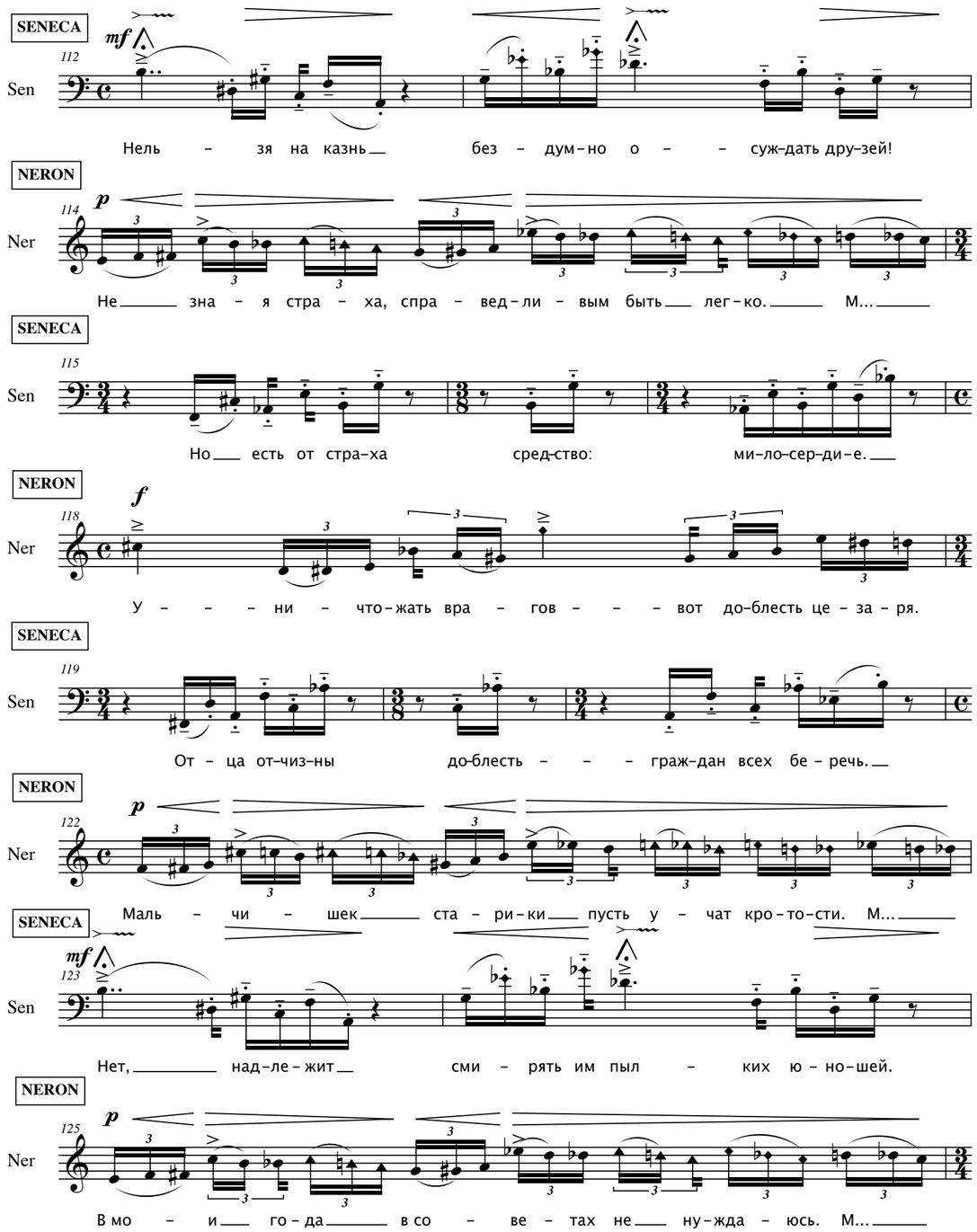
SENECA

But no, we must restrain their ardent temperaments.

NERO

A man of my age needs none of your sage advice.





SENECA

See that your thoughtless deeds don't aggravate the gods!

NERO

Fearing gods is silly: I make them up myself.

SENECA

The more you can invent, the more there is to fear.

NERO

I am omnipotent, and fortune smiles on me.

SENECA

She's also quick to dupe: don't believe her favors.

NERO

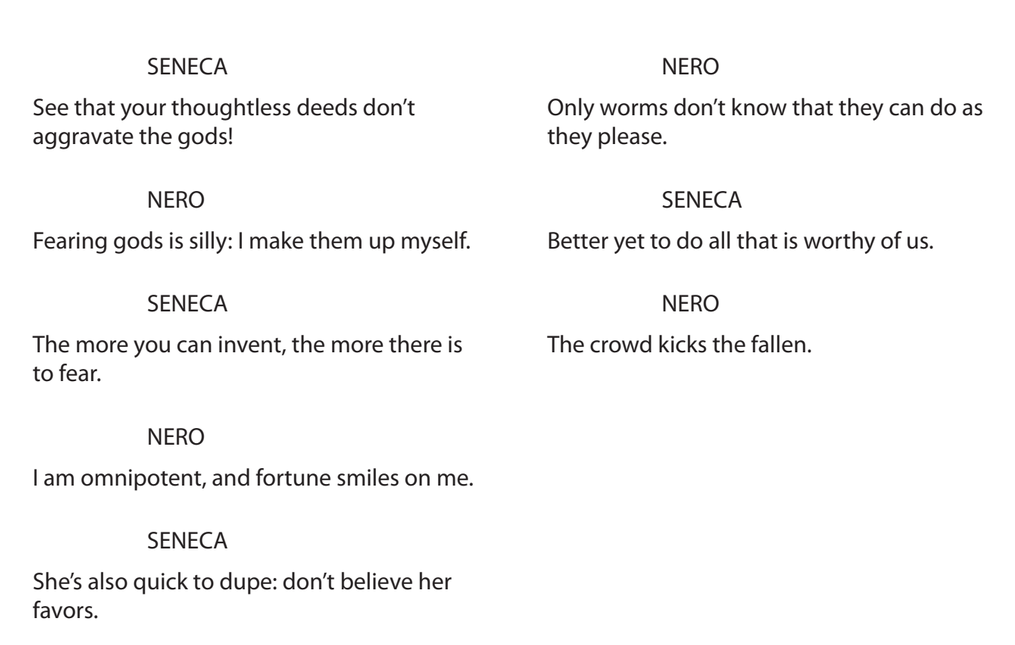
Only worms don't know that they can do as they please.

SENECA

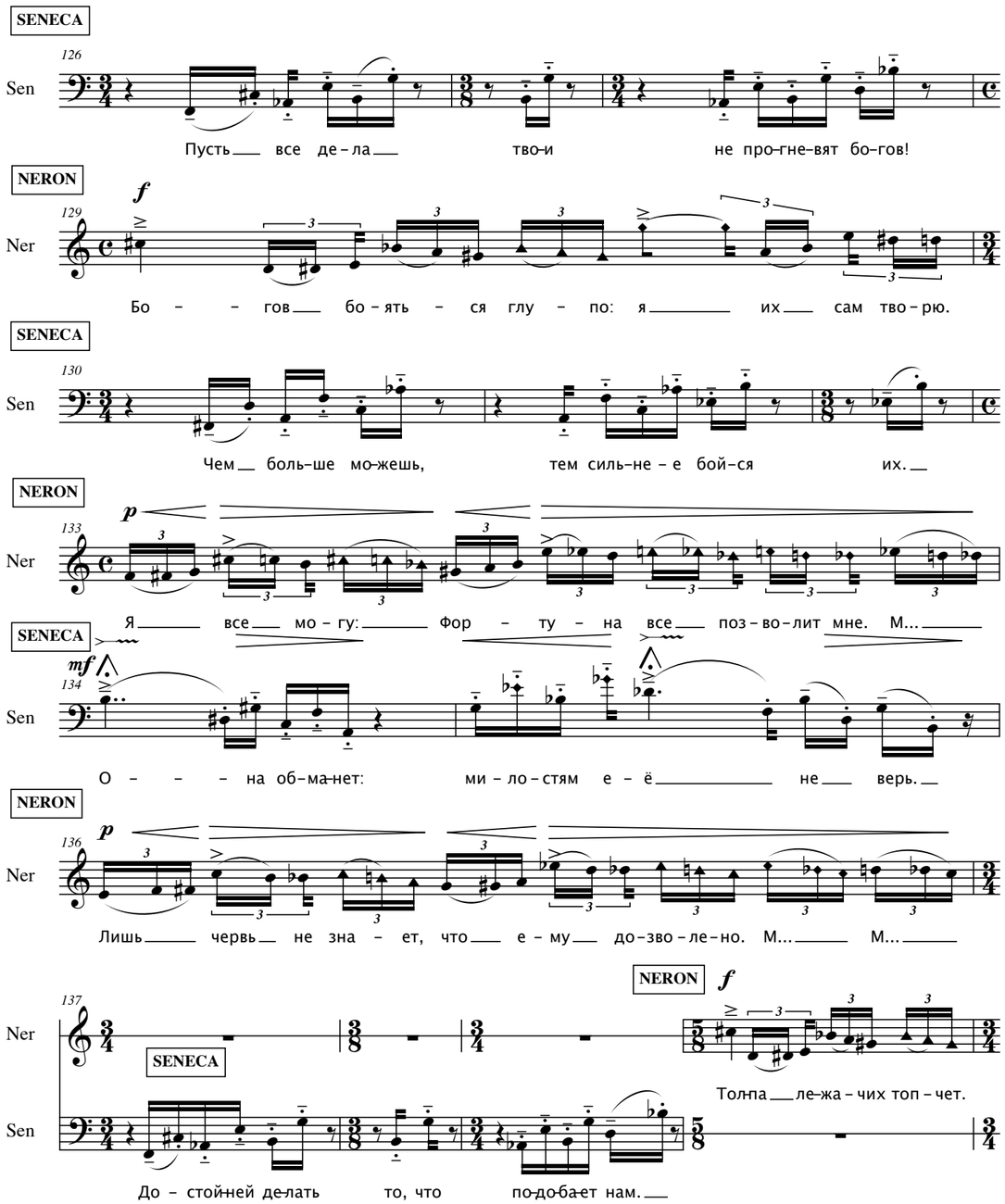
Better yet to do all that is worthy of us.

NERO

The crowd kicks the fallen.



Sketch of a video on the screen in the Head of Lenin.
The scene shows Seneca in an aria in the Head



SENECA

Only those it hates!

NERO

May the sword defend us.

SENECA

Better yet the trust of men.

NERO

May all fear mighty Caesar.

SENECA

Better yet to love him.

NERO

But I must be feared...

SENECA

Fear oppresses people.

NERO

I want full submission!

SENECA

Then show that you are just!

NERO

The decision here is mine...

SENECA

It's only good with
Civic support.

NERO

This sword I hold is better!

SENECA

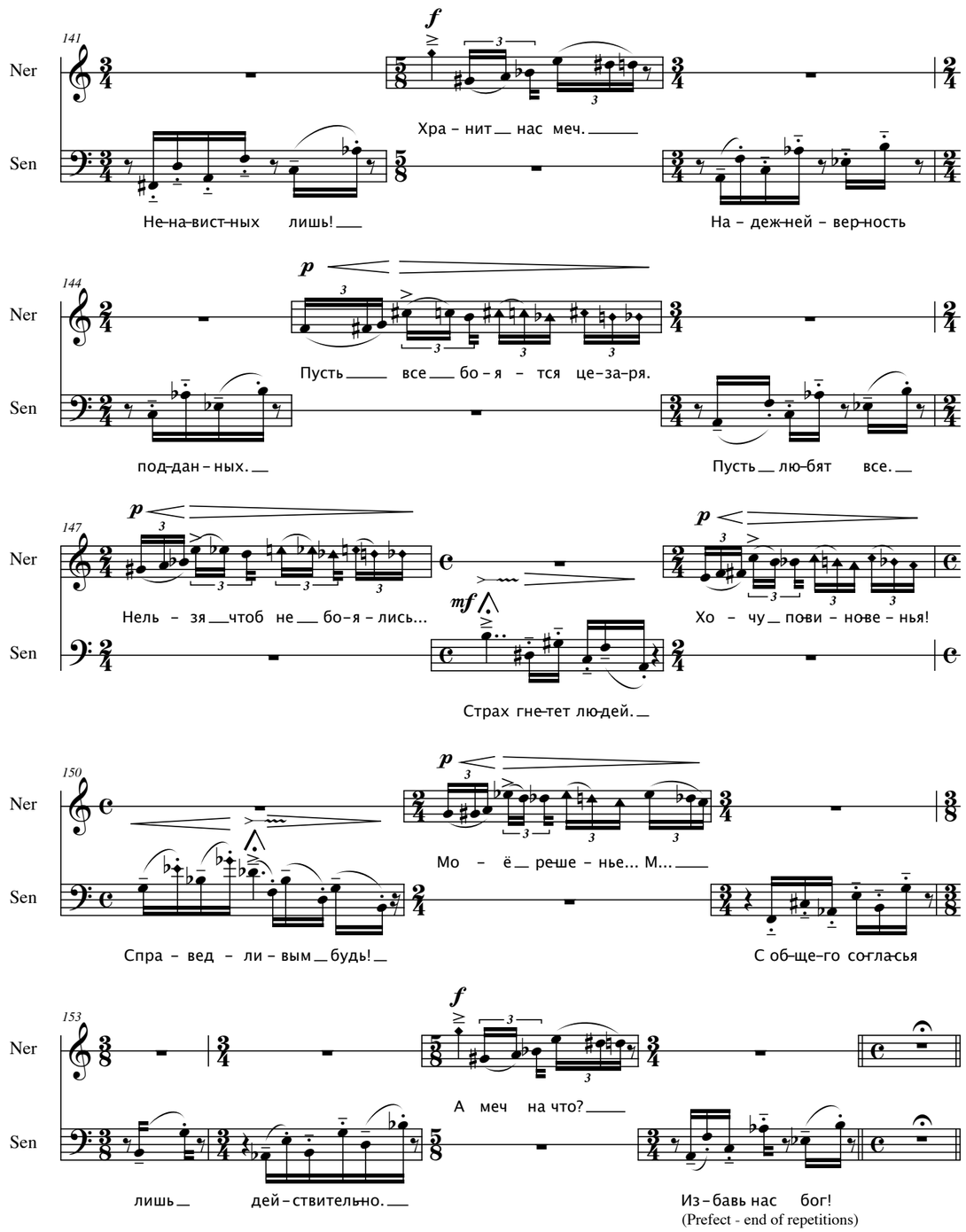
Gods save our souls!

Nero removes his greatcoat, turns it inside-out, revealing its black, other facade, removes his Budyonny-style hat and places them both on the lid of the coffin. Beneath his greatcoat, Nero wears the gold-colored military uniform of a Roman emperor.

At this moment the four Red Army Soldiers form a line on stage before the Head of Lenin, two to the left, two to the right.

Lighting: switch to "forum" lighting.
A spotlight appears on the "square," centered before the Chariot.





(Prefect - end of repetitions)

Nero descends onto the "square," to the left of the spectators, and stands in the spotlight before the Chariot. (When Nero begins to pass the Red Army Soldiers, all four salute him in four various ways. When Nero has passed the Red Army Soldiers, they again salute him in four different ways.)

When Nero walks across the "square" to the spotlight before the Chariot, the Red Army Soldiers step onto the proscenium and stand in rows of two on the left and right sides of the Chariot-coffin. When Nero gets into the Chariot the Red Army Soldiers salute him again.

NERO

Why should I tolerate another coup d'etat,

Forsake revenge, earn their hate, and die a loathsome death?

In exile Plautus thrives while Sulla flourishes;

High and low their malice seeks more evil allies

To aid their vile deed: assassinate their Caesar.

And for the outcasts the riffraff in the city

Bear only love; that love supports their every hope.

If they do not trust me, then let the vermin die!

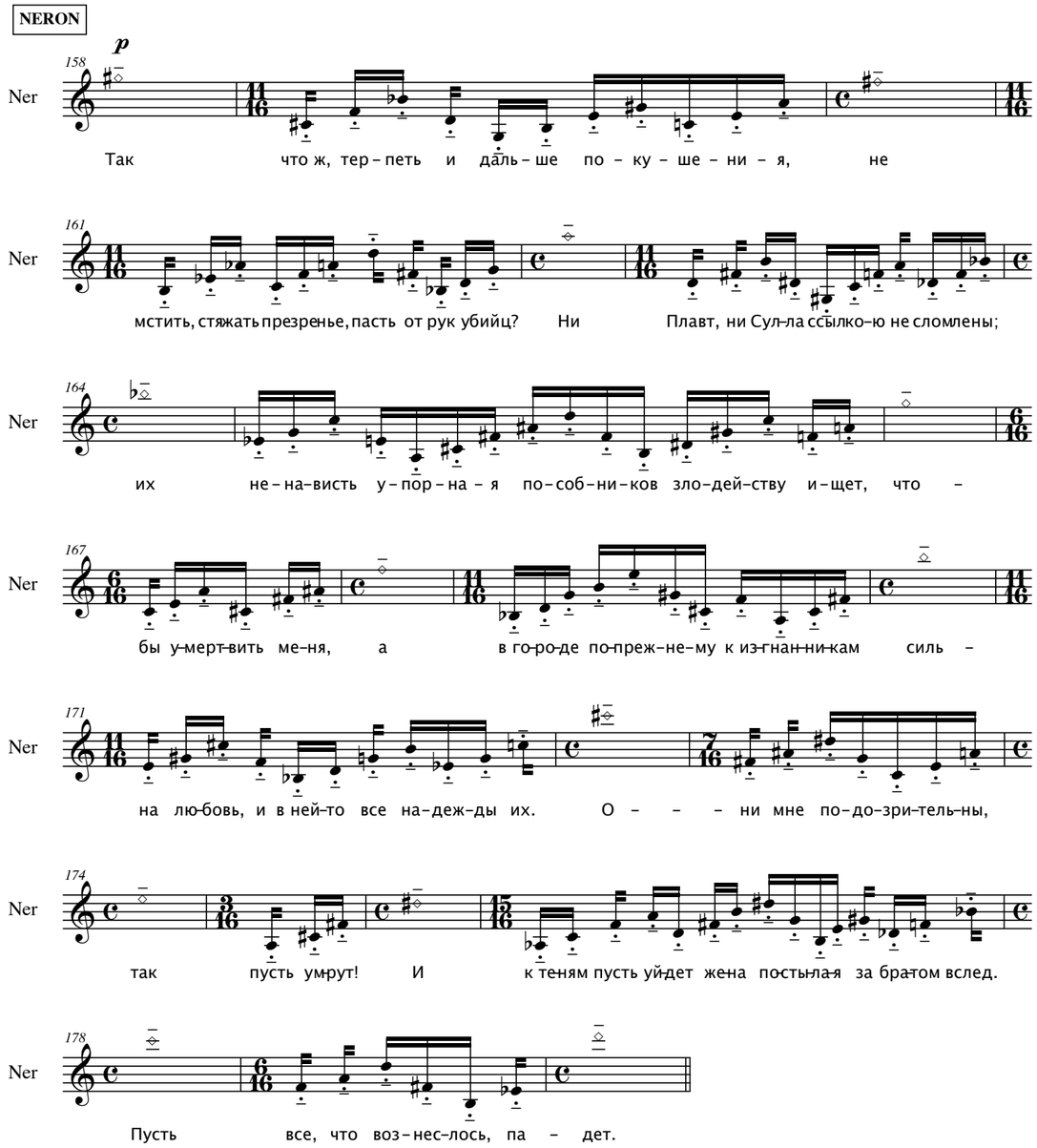
Let them all fade into shade, unloved wives and

Brothers too. May all who had once risen fall.



Sketch of Nero's costume



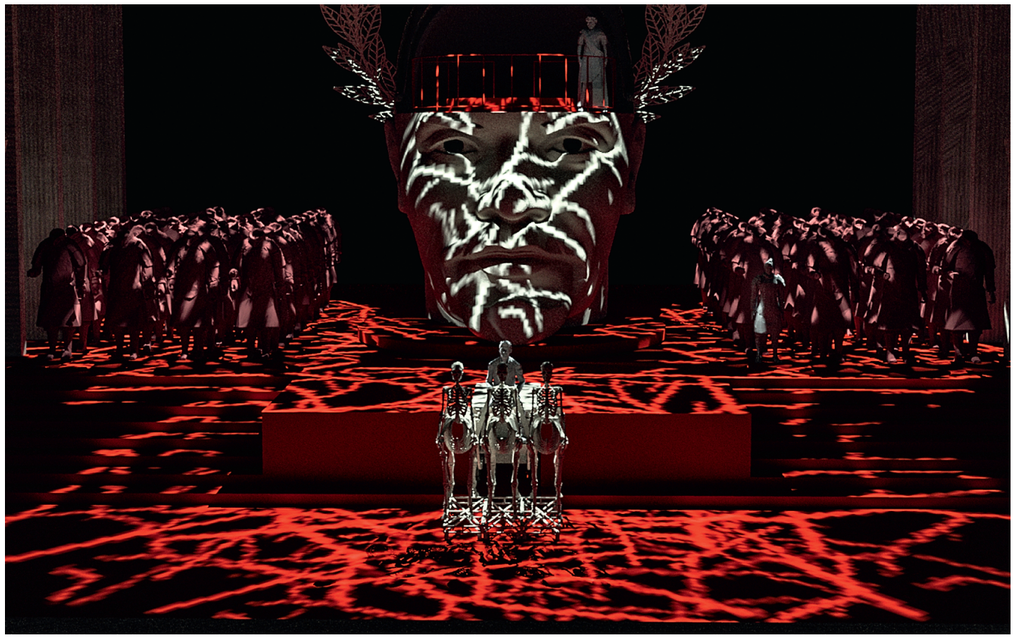


Nero ascends to the stage from the spectators' left, and, walking around the Head of Lenin to the right, disappears behind it. The Red Army Soldiers leave after him.

In the Head of Lenin Seneca descends from the podium on the right-hand side.

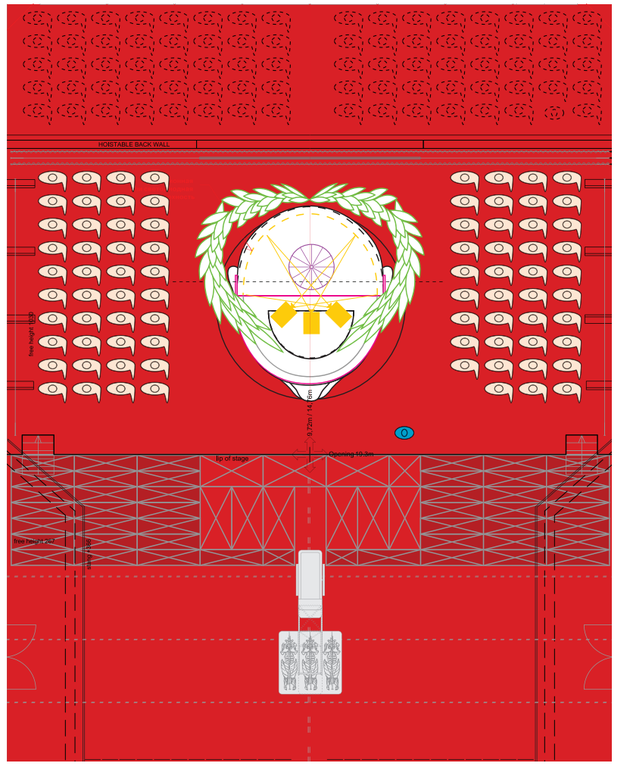
Lighting: a world of Shadows arises.

Video in the Head of Lenin: the shadows of Seneca, Nero and the Red Army Soldiers appear on a screen in the Head. Seneca's Shadow is first, followed by the Shadows of two Red Army Soldiers, the Shadow of Nero, and the Shadows of two more Red Army Soldiers.

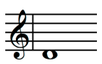




OCTAVIA. TREPANATION
CHOIR



Position 2. Material 2.

 [30-40"] / 👂 /  [30-40"]

Continue singing unison D, then listen to the electronic sounds and repeat any sound you hear (each part independently so that a complex chord will appear); keep changing the dynamics and articulations.

Nero ascends to the platform in the Head of Lenin and stands to the left of the podium.

Lighting: front lighting is removed except for light on the Chariot.
Local lighting within the Head.

Video in the Head of Lenin: the coat of arms of the Roman Empire – the eagle – rises from below.

SENECA

Your house shall fill with children sent down from the gods:

Your wife is a jewel of the house of Claudius.

NERO

No, I do not trust that daughter of a harlot,

I have ever been at odds with Octavia.

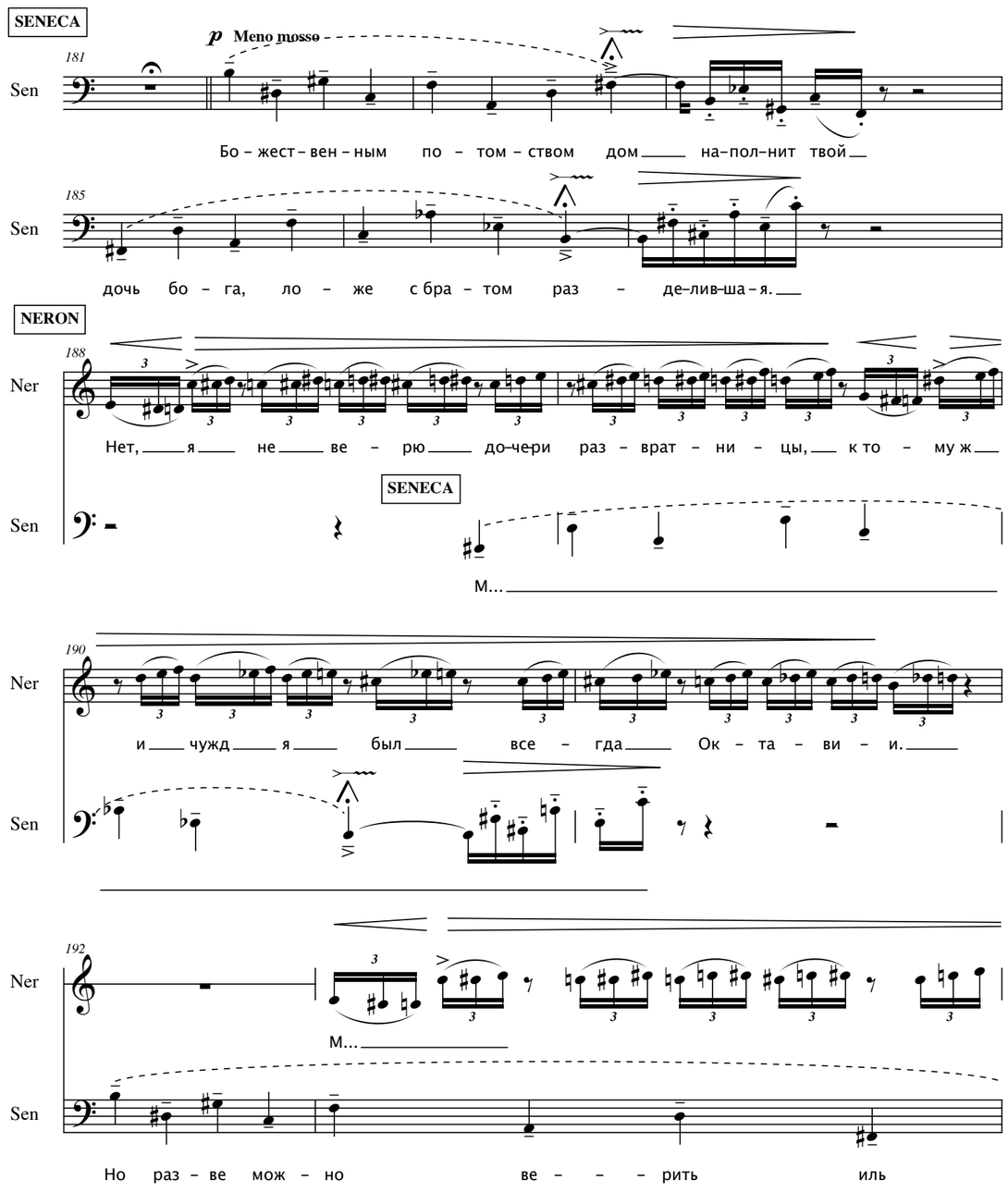
SENECA

How do you know what you can trust or...



Sketch of the lighting structure





SENECA

...not believe?

She is yet young, she is too bashful yet to love.

NERO

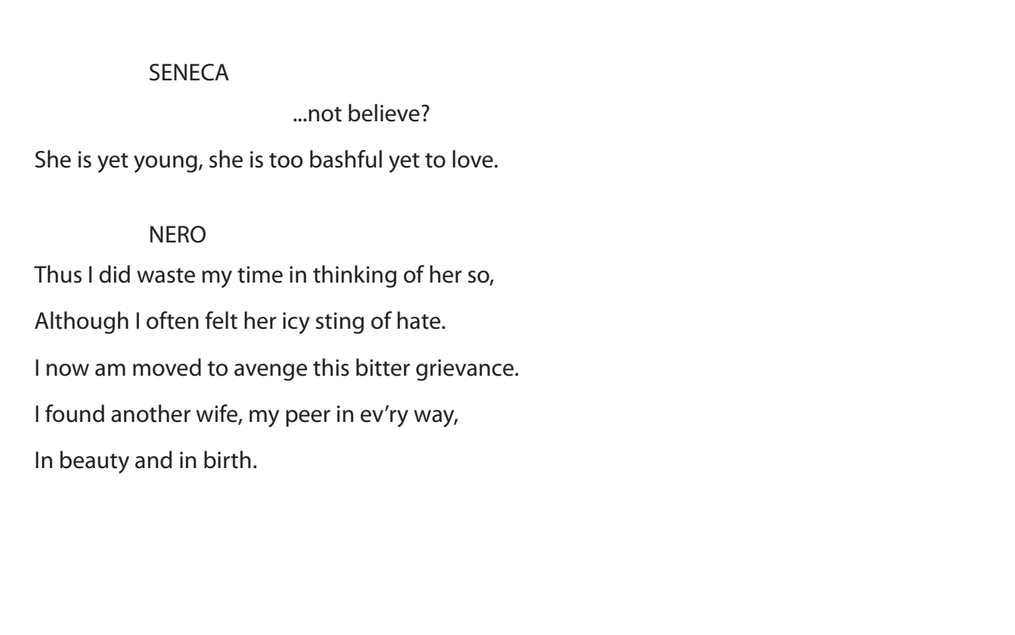
Thus I did waste my time in thinking of her so,

Although I often felt her icy sting of hate.

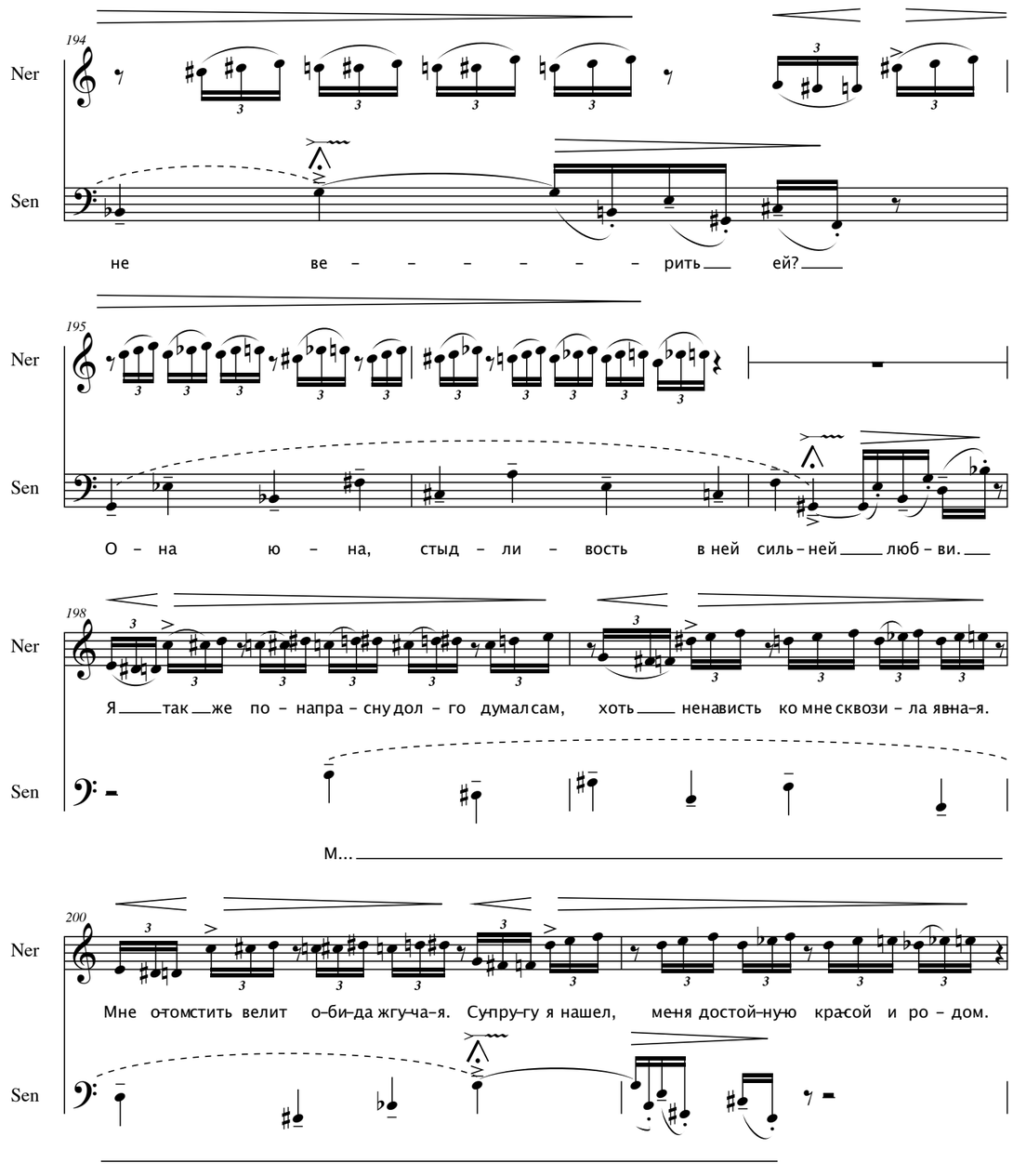
I now am moved to avenge this bitter grievance.

I found another wife, my peer in ev'ry way,

In beauty and in birth.



Sketch of a video on the screen in the Head of Lenin.
Scene: the Nero – Seneca duet in the Head



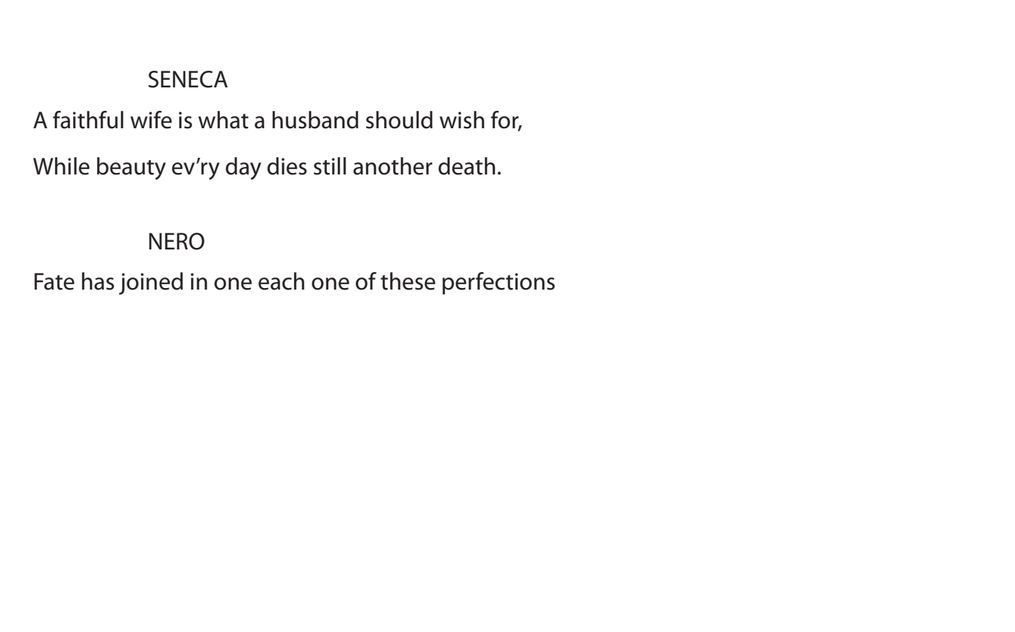
SENECA

A faithful wife is what a husband should wish for,

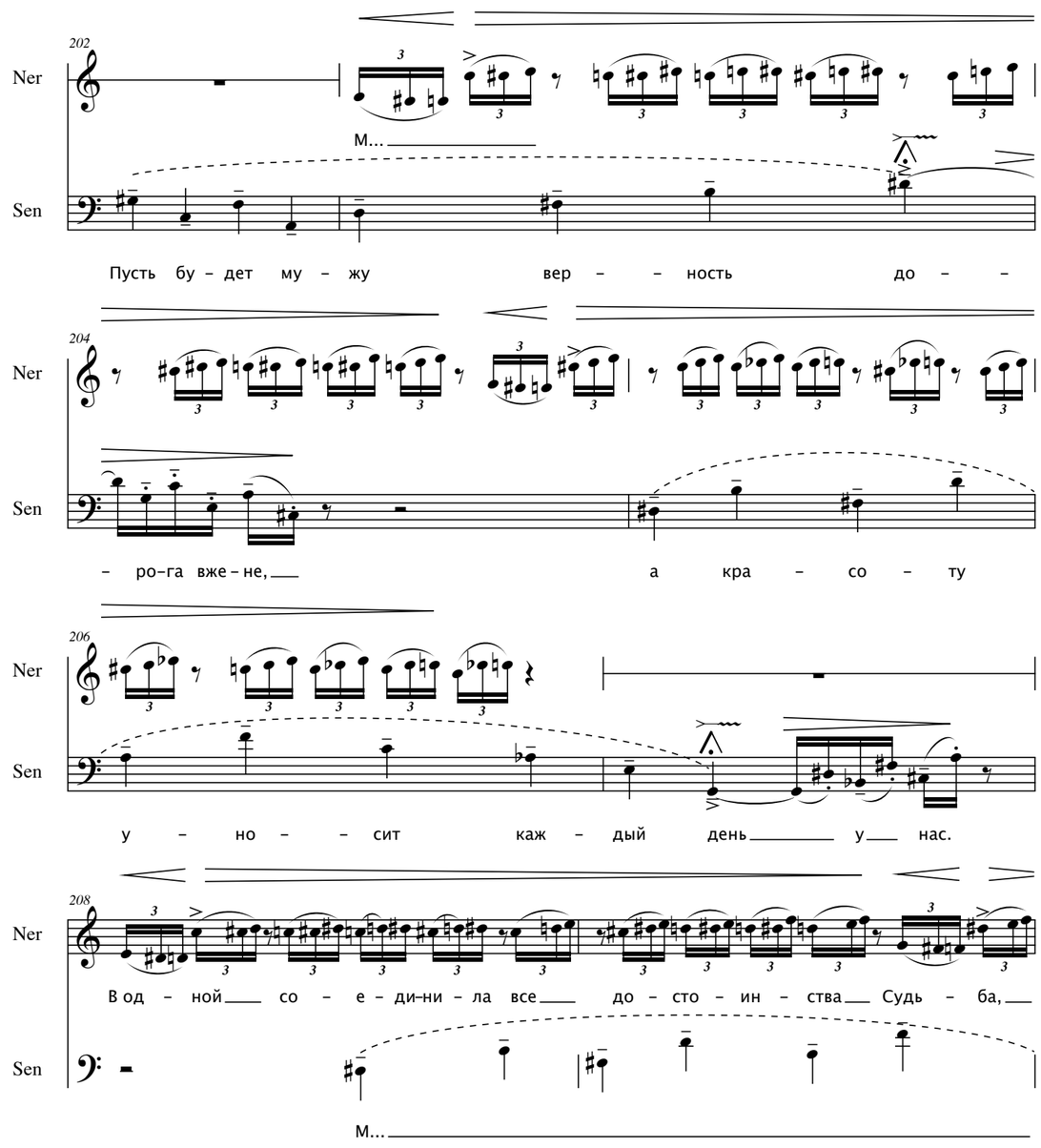
While beauty ev'ry day dies still another death.

NERO

Fate has joined in one each one of these perfections



Sketch of a video on the screen in the Head of Lenin.
Scene: the Nero – Seneca duet in the Head



NERO

And she did choose to make them mine, a perfect gift.

SENECA

None but a sightless fool would dare to trust in love.

NERO

Love? That is the pow'r that quells the Thunder-Thrower.

SENECA

When you cease to pamper it, it pales and weakens

And it perishes before you know what hit you.

NERO

No, you are wrong: neither life nor pleasure in life

Exist without its sweet caresses.

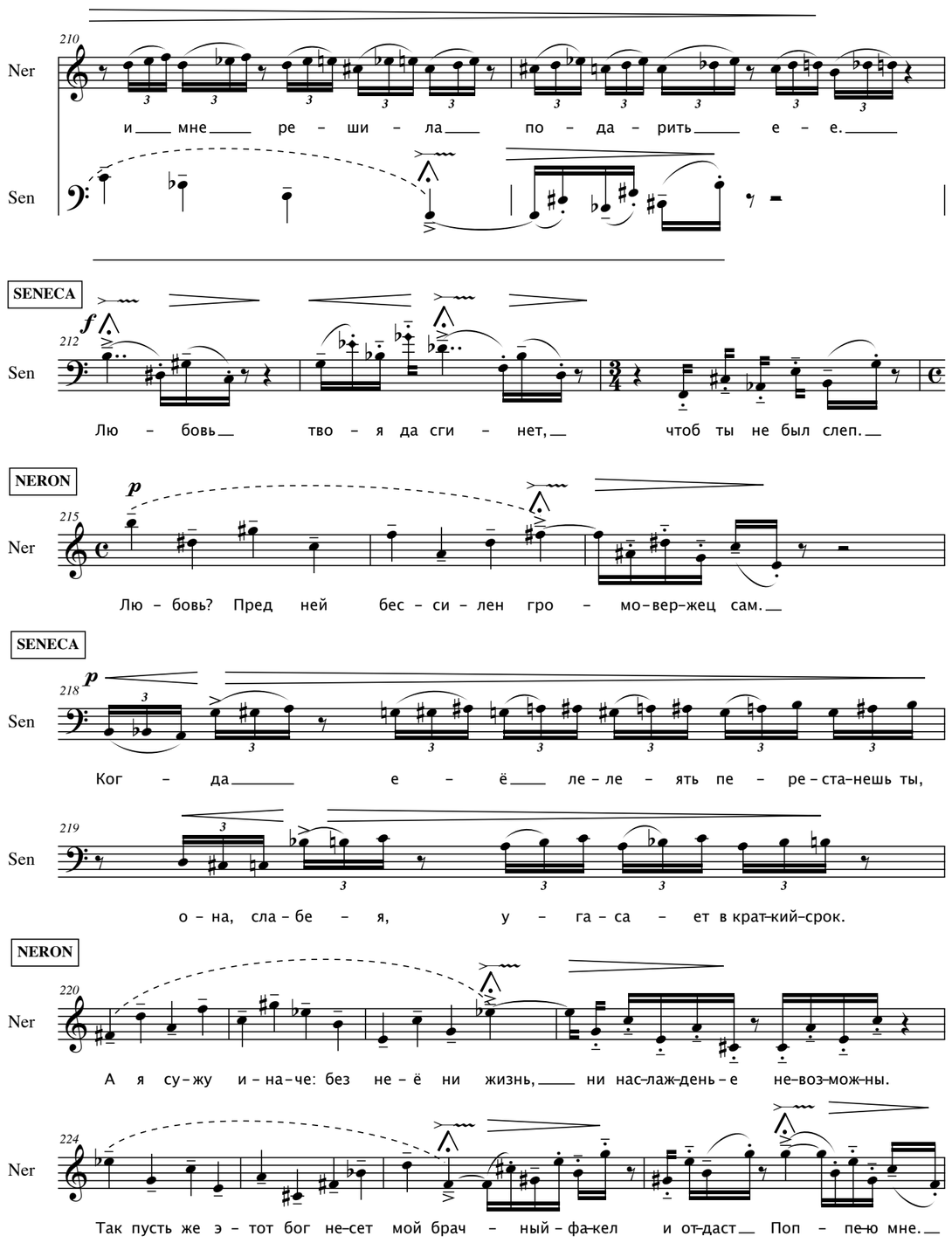
Let a god hold up my wedding

Torch and thereby bind to me the sweet Poppaea.





Sketches of the lighting structure.



SENECA

This union will scandalize the Roman people.

NERO

You say that I can't do what anybody can?

SENECA

We want the greatest men to do the greatest deeds.

NERO

I wish to test the limits of my powers:

To break the fawning hearts of low-bred citizens.

SENECA

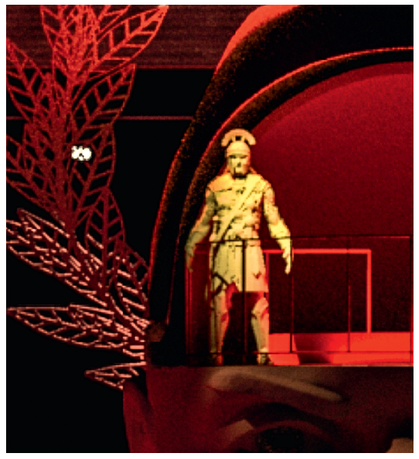
Better yet to heed the will of Rome's own people.

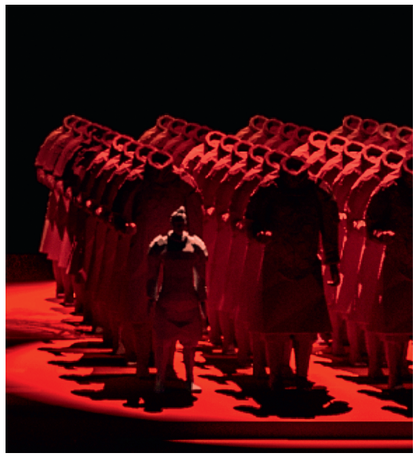
NERO

That ruler is weak, who bends before the rabble.

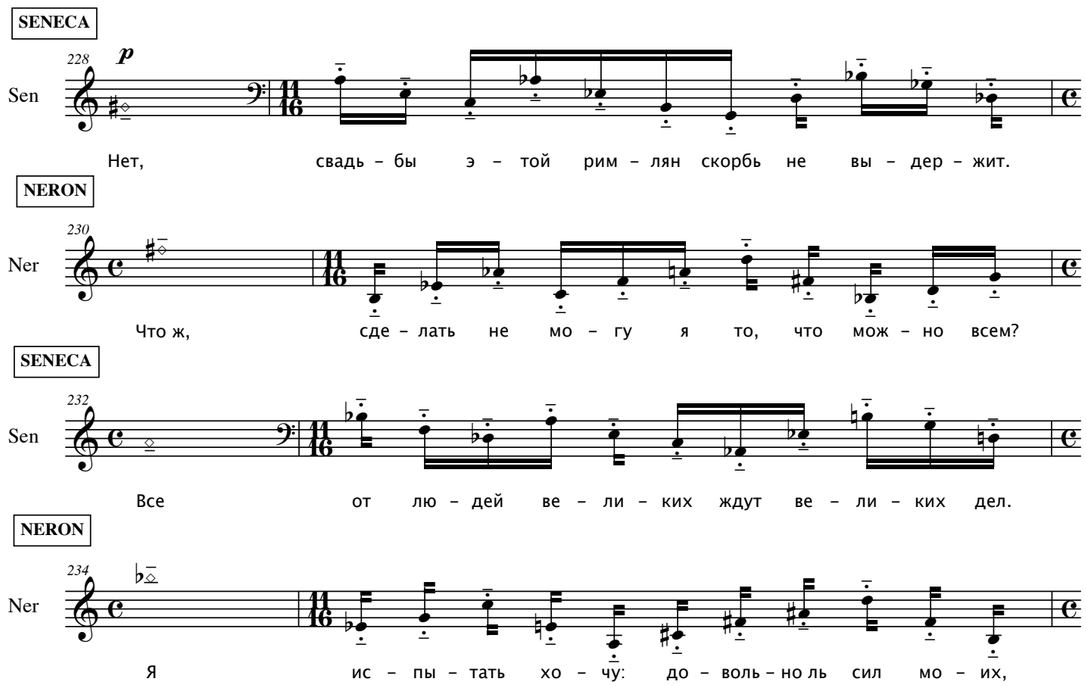
SENECA

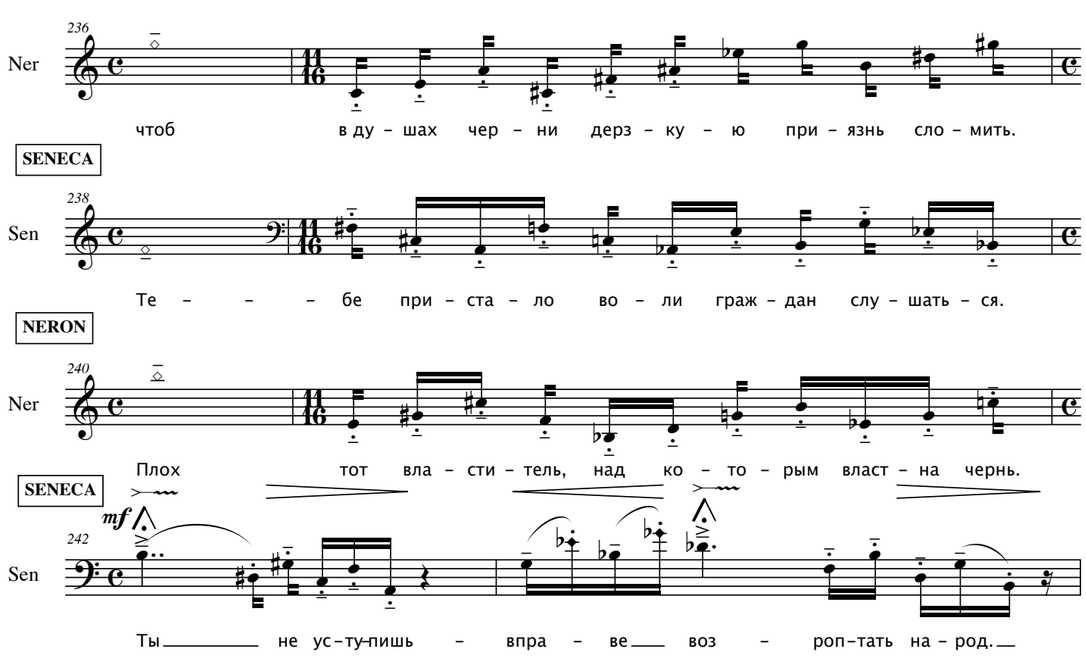
You don't back down - the citizens are right to wail.





Sketches of the lighting structure.





NERO

How can you seize power if you don't make them beg?

SENECA

'Tis hard to beg "no"...

NERO

'Tis a sin to force the king.

SENECA

Then give up yourself.

NERO

And be known as the vanquished?

SENECA

Who cares for idle chatter?

NERO

It often brings one shame.

SENECA

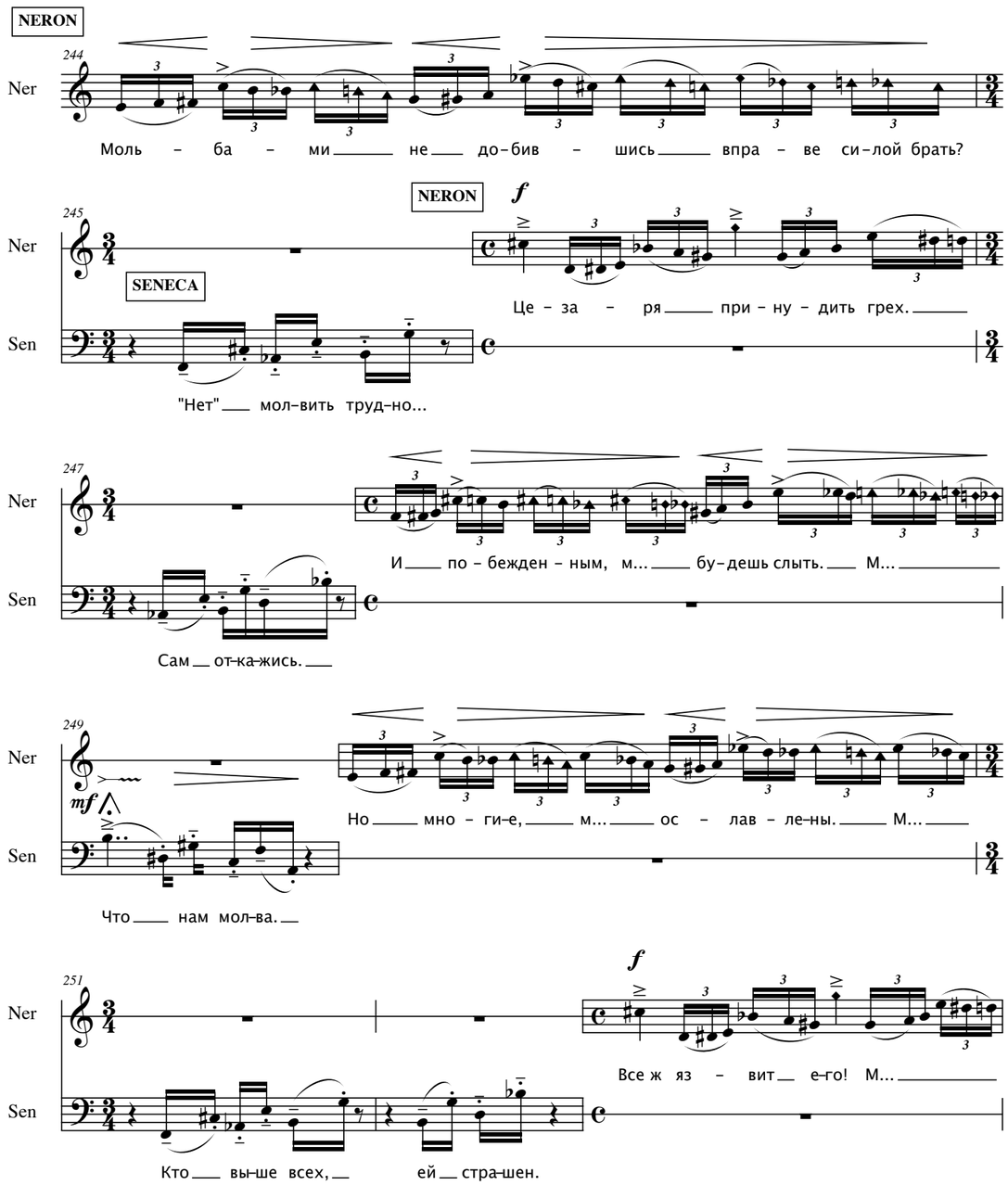
It fears who stands above.

NERO

He mocks me with his words!



Sketch of the lighting structure.



SENECA

You'll cope with chatter. If only your wife's sweetness,

Her tender youth and father's deeds would soften you.

NERO

You bore me! Stop! For once, I say, let me go forth

To do what Seneca would always prohibit!

Video in the Head of Lenin: Big Ben appears. (It is 10:10.)
The Shadow of Seneca stands in the center against the background of the clock-face.
Seneca Leaves.
The shadow of Seneca leaves.
Nero remains in place.

NERO

You see I hesitate to do the Romans' will

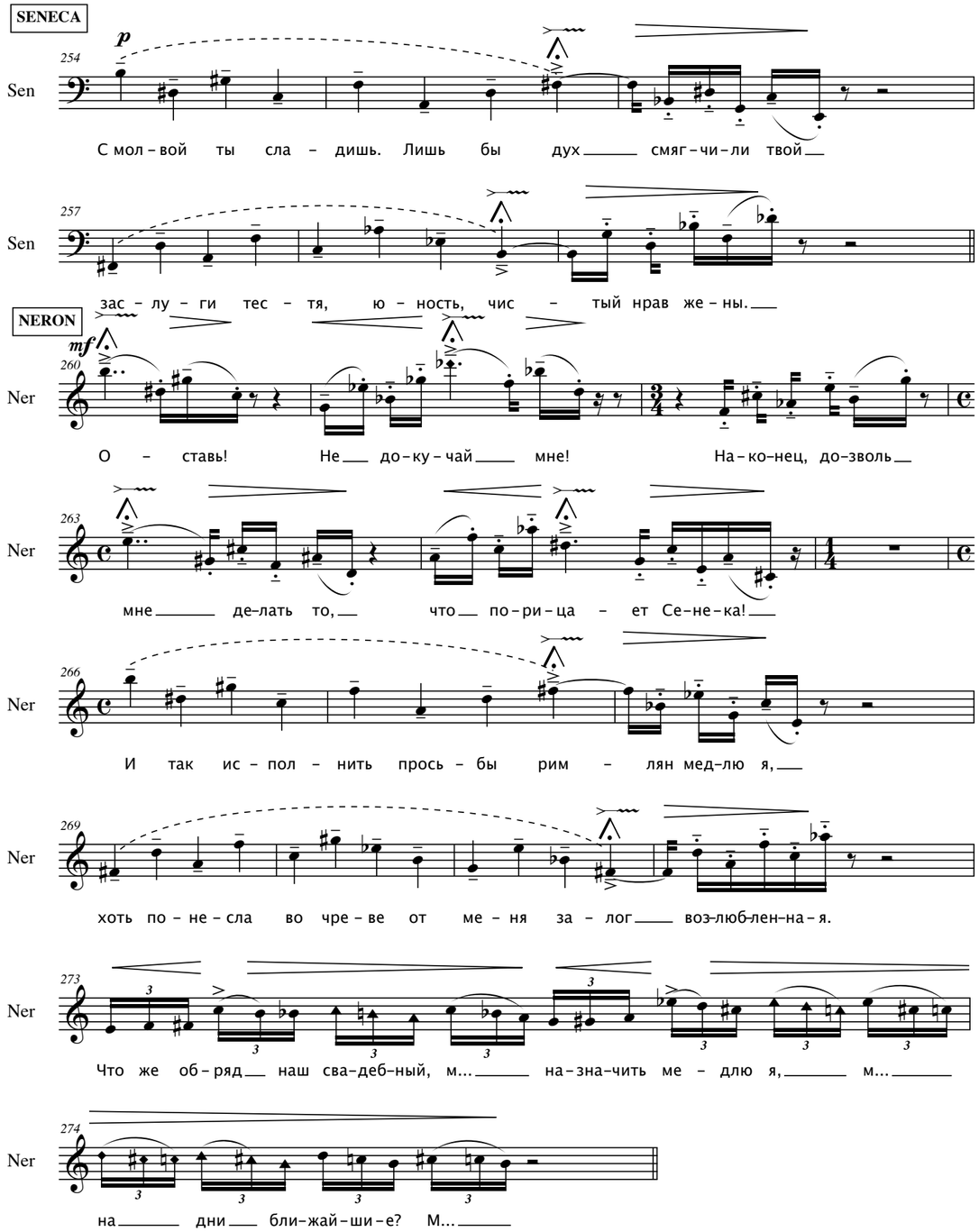
Until such time as my beloved shall conceive

An heir for me. Therefore I say: Set the wedding

For tomorrow: Observe the Rites with no delay.

Nero leaves.
Video in the Head of Lenin: Nero leaves along with his Shadow.
Sound: the sounds of Big Ben and street sounds.
Lighting: "London in autumn at dawn."





Trotsky in his suit and hat sits in the Chariot in the driver's seat.

TROTSKY

I arrived in London in the fall of 1902 – probably in October – early in the morning.

Lighting: a spotlight appears and lights a spot on the "square" to the left of the Chariot. Trotsky descends from the Chariot and, with his travel bag in hand, stands in the spotlight.

TROTSKY

The cab, which I hailed with a mimetic gesture, took me to an address scribbled on a piece of paper, my ultimate destination.

Sketch of a video on the screen in the Head of Lenin.

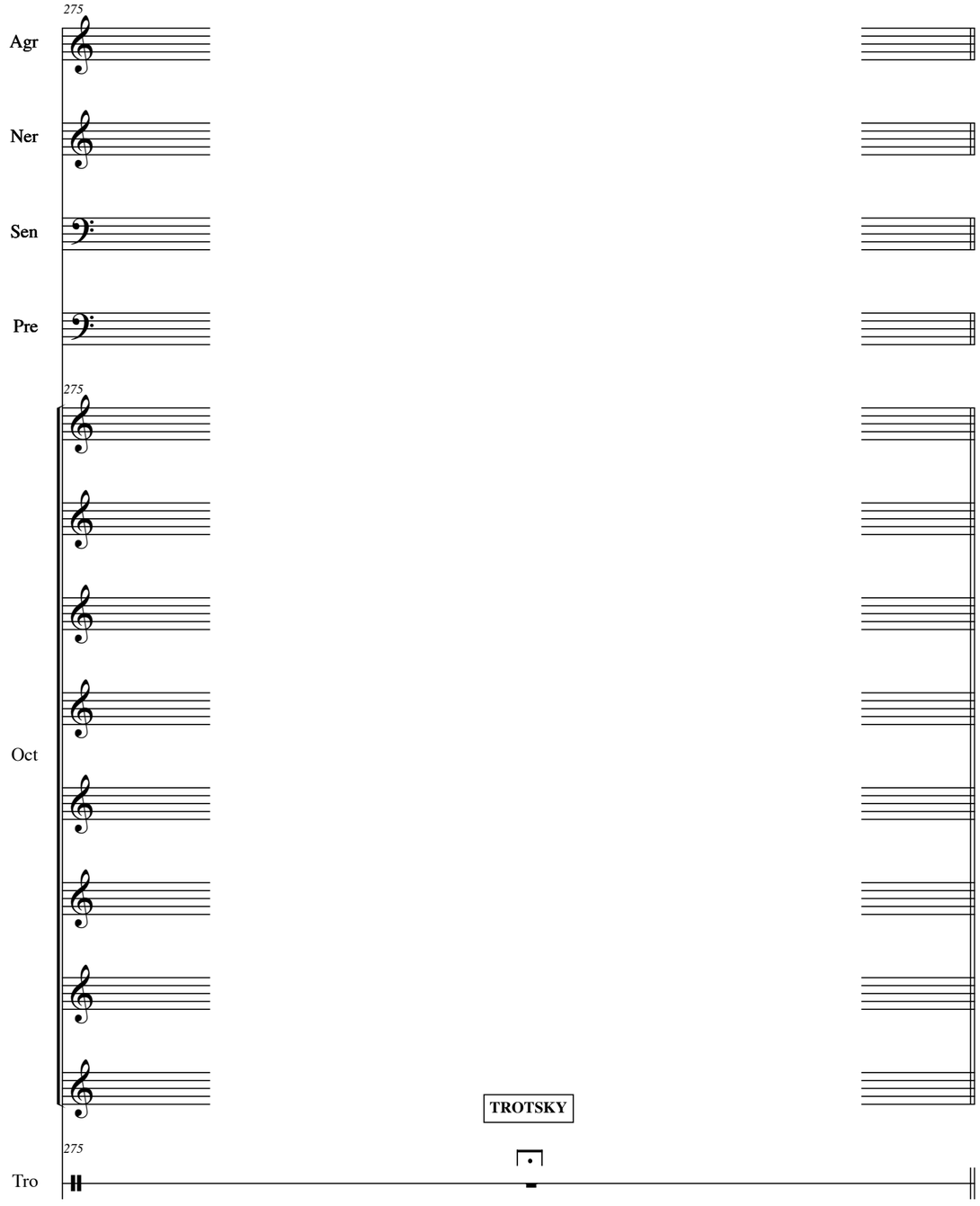
Scene: Nero – Seneca
(the finale of the duet in the Head).

Scene: Trotsky's first monologue.

Scene: the aria of the Ghost of Agrippina
(the appearance of the Shadows of the Red Army Soldiers and the Ghost of Agrippina)







Lighting: a spotlight appears and lights a circle on the stage to the left of the Head.
Trotsky ascends onto the stage and stands in the spotlight.

TROTSKY

The place was the apartment of Vladimir Ilyich. I had been informed earlier (probably when still in Zurich) to knock a certain number of times with the wooden knocker.

Sound: insistent knocking resounds in a defined rhythm

TROTSKY

As I recall, the door was opened by Nadezhda Konstantinovna, whom I assumed I had gotten out of bed with my knock. The hour was early and any person more experienced, I would say, more accustomed to civilized social life, would have sat quietly for an hour or two at the train station instead of going knocking at stranger's doors before dawn. But I was still fully energized by my escape from Verkholensk. I had disturbed the Axelrod home in Zurich in approximately the same way, only that wasn't at dawn, it was in the dead of night. Vladimir Ilyich was still in bed and his face expressed cordiality mixed with understandable bewilderment. Such were the circumstances of our first meeting and our first conversation.

Elements of Trotsky's props:

travel bag,

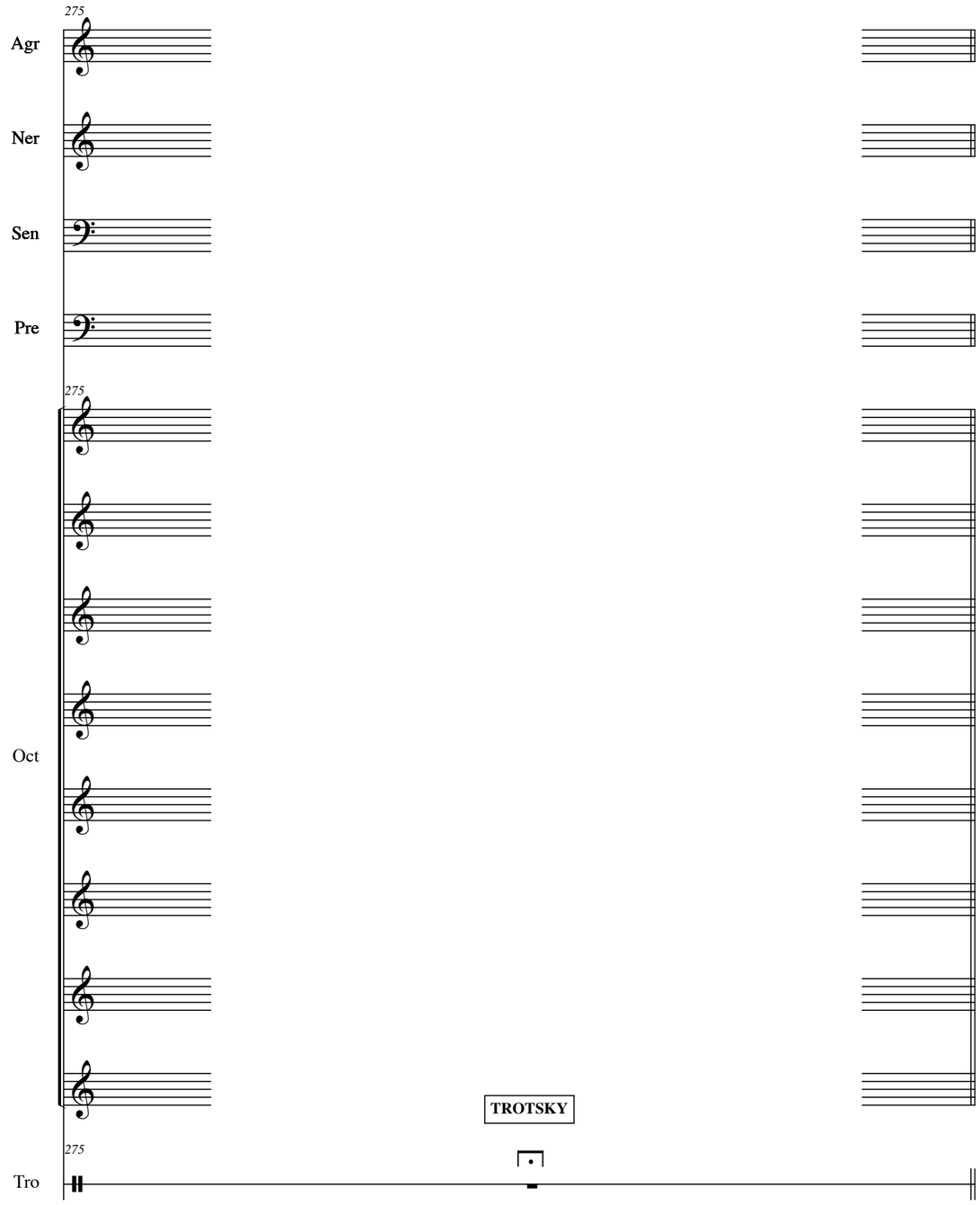
kerchief,

eyeglass case,

pince nez







Trotsky removes his hat and puts it on his travel bag. Lifts the black, inside-out greatcoat and the Budyonny-style hat up off the coffin lid, puts them on and goes behind the Head of Lenin by way of the left side.

Two Red Army Soldiers slowly come on stage one-by-one from either side of the Head in "antler" choreography. The Ghost of Agrippina follows them from behind the Head on the right side.

The aria of the Ghost of Agrippina commences.

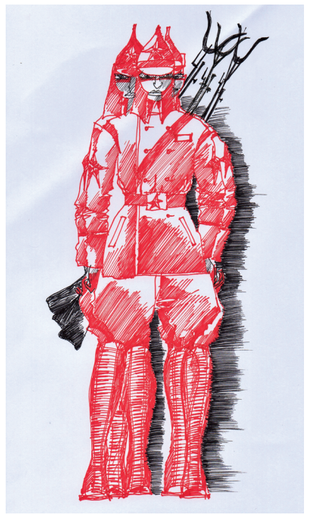
The two other Red Army Soldiers slowly come on stage one-by-one from either side of the Head in "antler" choreography.

Lighting: change to "Tartarus" lighting.

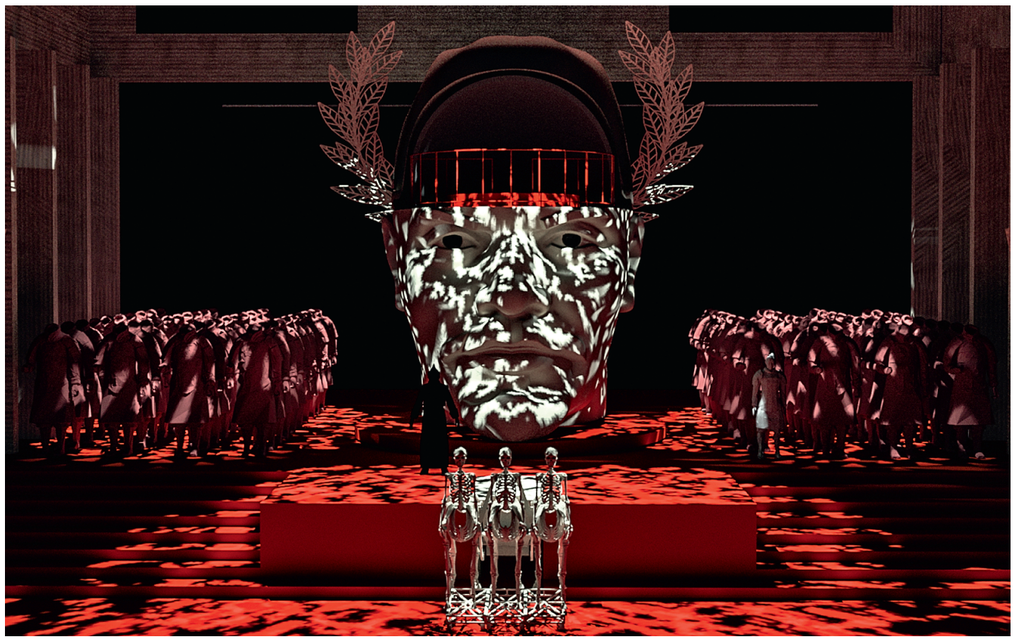
Video in the Head of Lenin: a world of Shadows arises – the Shadow of Trotsky in a greatcoat passes in front of the backdrop of Big Ben, followed by the shadows of two Red Army Soldiers, the Shadow of the Ghost of Agrippina and, finally, the shadows of two more Red Army Soldiers.



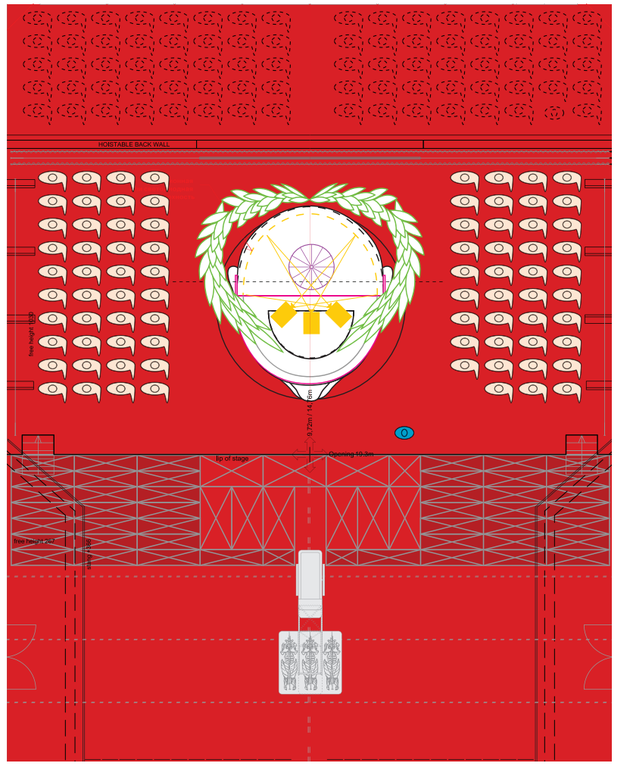
Sketch of Agrippina's costume



Sketch of Red Army Soldiers' costumes



OCTAVIA. TREPANATION
CHOIR



Position 3

Position 2

Position 1

<u>Position 2. Material 3a.</u>



(***pp***)

Unstable "shadow sound" (closed vocal chords)

During the first part of the aria, the Ghost of Agrippina walks onto the proscenium and stands on the lid of the coffin-Chariot.

GHOST OF AGRIPPINA

I came out the abyss of Tartarus onto

Hard land, clutching in bloody grip the torch of Styx:

May it cast its light upon the lawless wedding

Of my son and Poppaea - I, in bitter grief,

Shall employ it to ignite my funeral pyre.

During this part of the aria the first two Red Army Soldiers to come out descend on either side of the Chariot onto the "square" and stand to the left and right of the Chariot. The other two stop on the proscenium to the left and right of the Head. All four Red Army Soldiers, having reached their positions, slowly begin to perform the "throat" ritual.

Video in the Head of Lenin: after all the shadows have passed in front of Big Ben, a volcano erupts.

Lighting: the garland on the Head of Lenin "catches fire." The Head's eyes begin to shine.

Smoke comes out of the Head.

GHOST OF AGRIPPINA

Even among the shadows that dirty murder

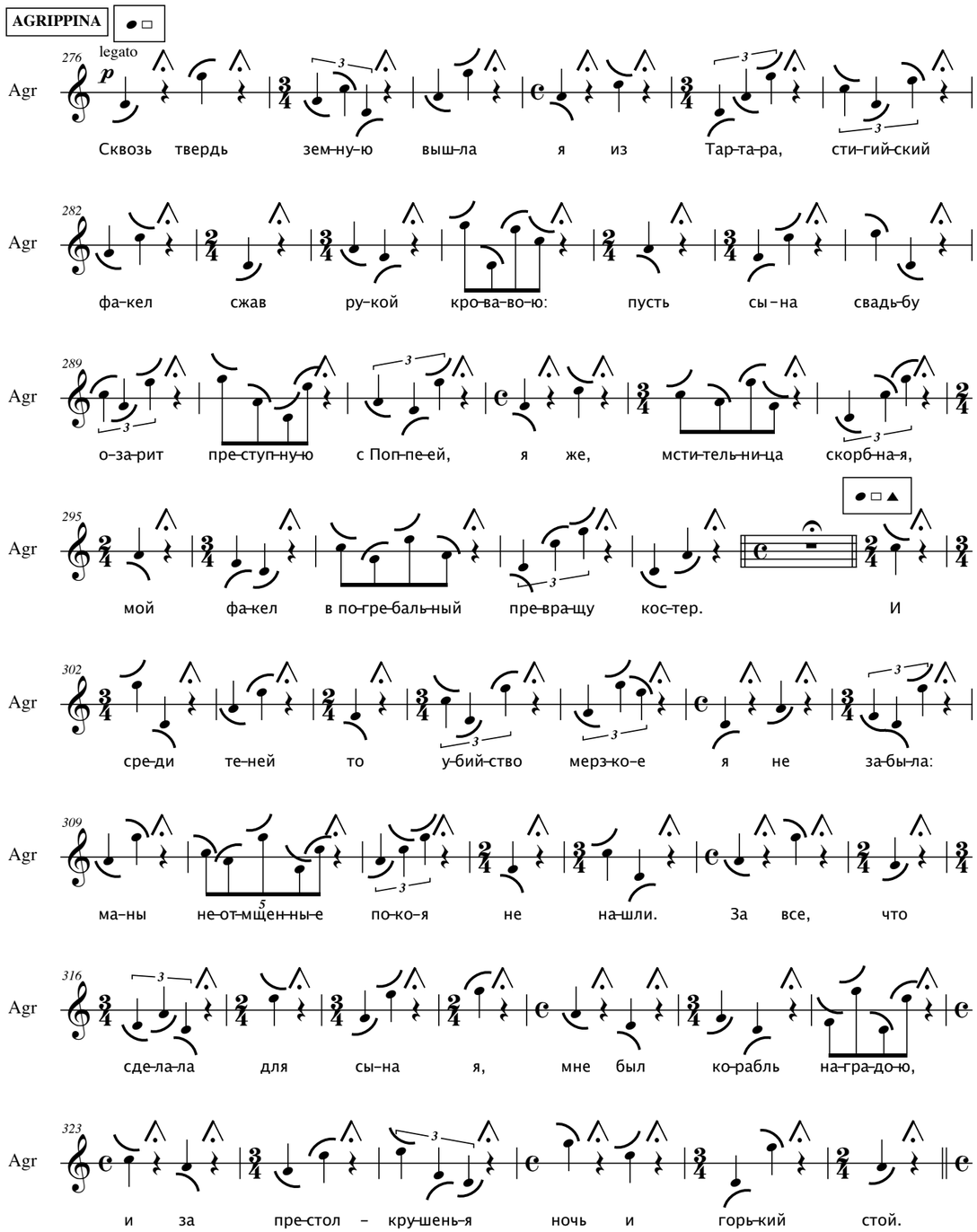
I have not forgotten: the unavengèd Manes

Will find no peace. And for all that I accomplished

For my son – he gave me a ship as compensation;

And for the throne I left him – a shipwreck and cries.





GHOST OF AGRIPPINA

I longed to mourn the deaths of my right companions

And the sins of my son – but no one gave me time

For tears: My son doubled the evil of his sins.

A sabre laid me low, and through those wretched wounds

The juices of my life flowed out...

During the second part of the aria of the Ghost of Agrippina the Red Army Soldiers slowly perform the "sentry" ritual. By the end of this part of the aria all four Red Army Soldiers are standing on the "square."

At the beginning of the third part of the aria of the Ghost of Agrippina, the four Red Army Soldiers roll the Chariot, on which the Ghost of Agrippina stands, forward toward the spectators. They begin slow, ritualistic movements around the Chariot.

Lighting: throughout the entire aria of the Ghost of Agrippina the lighting structure changes numerous times. "Smoke castles" arise.

GHOST OF AGRIPPINA

...I died at home,

My dead, departed husband haunts my tortured soul:

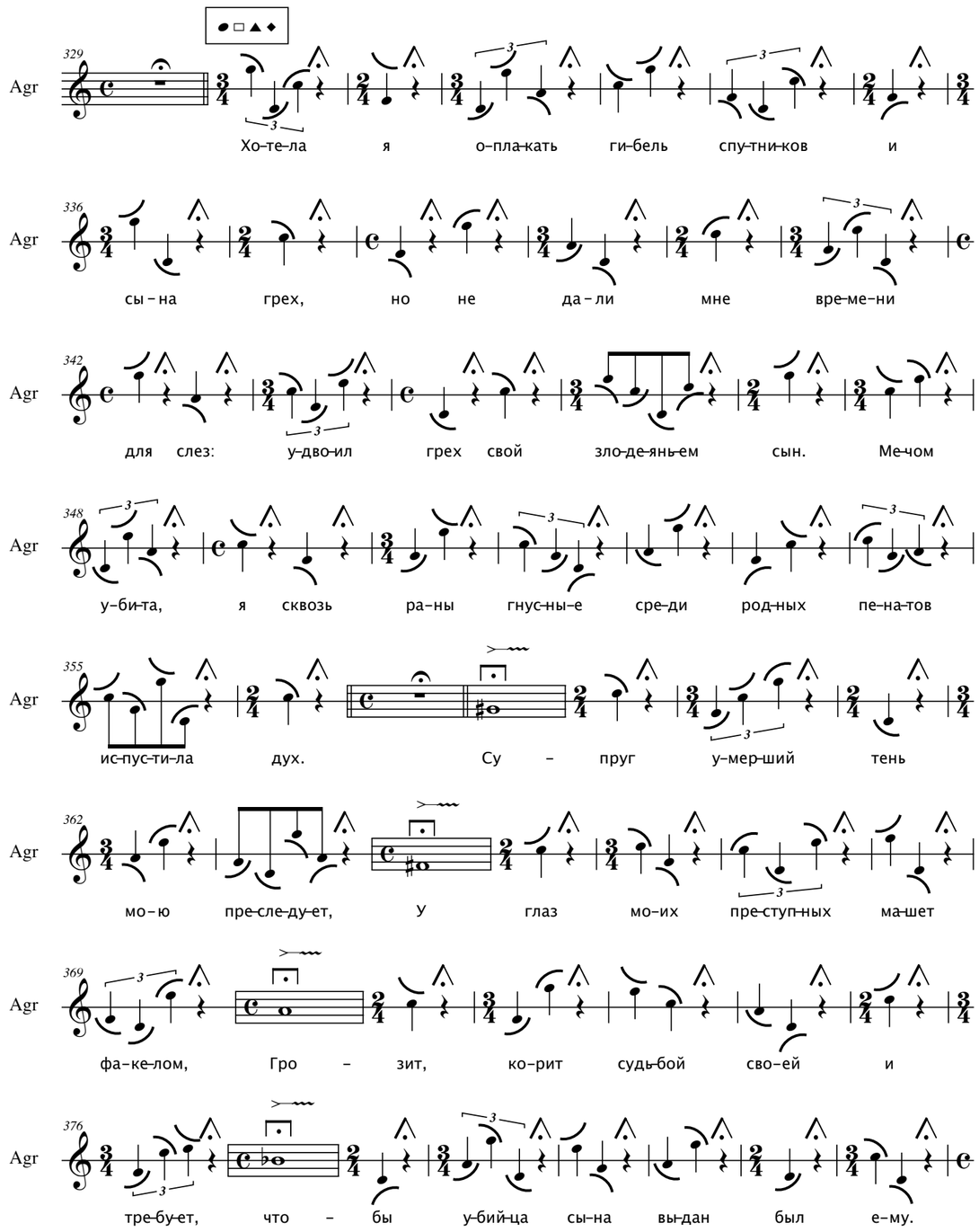
He waves a burning torch before my sinning eyes,

He scowls, reminding me of his own cruel murder,

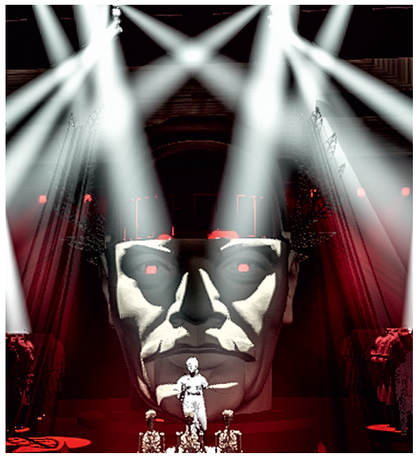
And demands that his son's assassin surrender.



Sketch of a video on the screen in the Head of Lenin.
Scene: aria of the Ghost of Agrippina



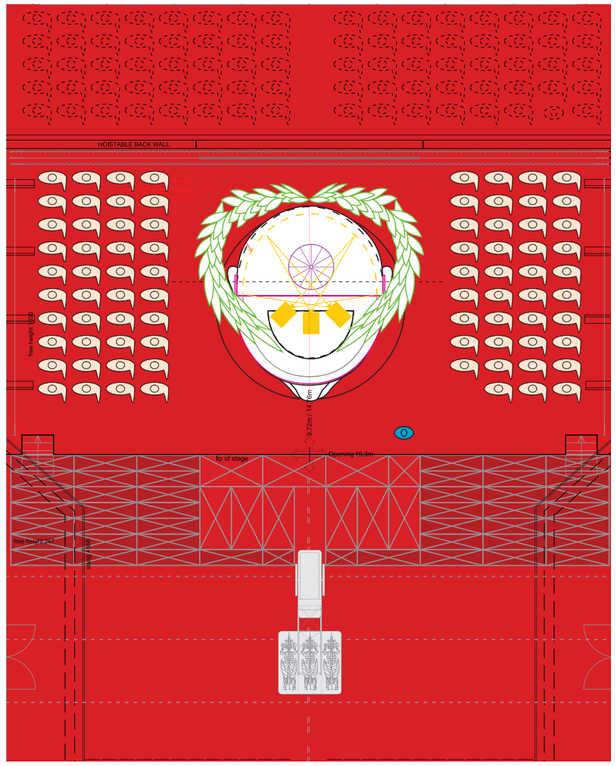




Sketches of the lighting structure.



OCTAVIA. TREPANATION
CHOIR

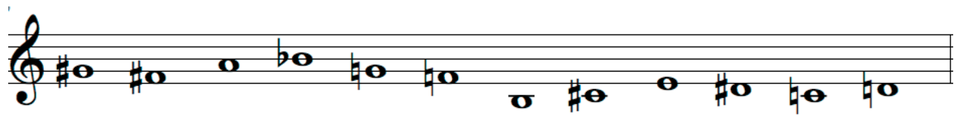


Position 3

Position 2

Position 1

<u>Position 2. Material 3b.</u>



pppp

When Agrippina starts to sing the melody – sing very softly and very slowly (each sound till the end of breath) the given melody; tale time to take breath between the sounds; don't synchronize with the other parts.

<u>Position 2. Material 3a.</u>

After the melody is finished – come back to the Material 3a.

GHOST OF AGRIPPINA

But stop! He is yours: Just give me one more moment.

The Furies have a well-deservèd end in store

For him: damnation followed by a sad retreat,

Then affliction, such as Tityos pecked by vultures,

Tantalus teased by thirst, Sysyphus by labor,

And Ixion trapped on his spinning, burning wheel.

At the beginning of the fourth part of the aria, the Ghost of Agrippina lies on her back on the lid of the coffin – her head toward the stage, her feet toward the centaurs.

During this part of the aria the Red Army Soldiers remove the steps of the central stairwell out of notches on the proscenium and fasten them.

The Red Army Soldiers lift the lid of the coffin – bearing the prone, singing Ghost of Agrippina – over their heads, and ascend to the stage by way of the newly-placed stair steps, then disappear behind the Head of Lenin to the right.

Video in the Head of Lenin: "war" replaces the erupting volcano.

GHOST OF AGRIPPINA

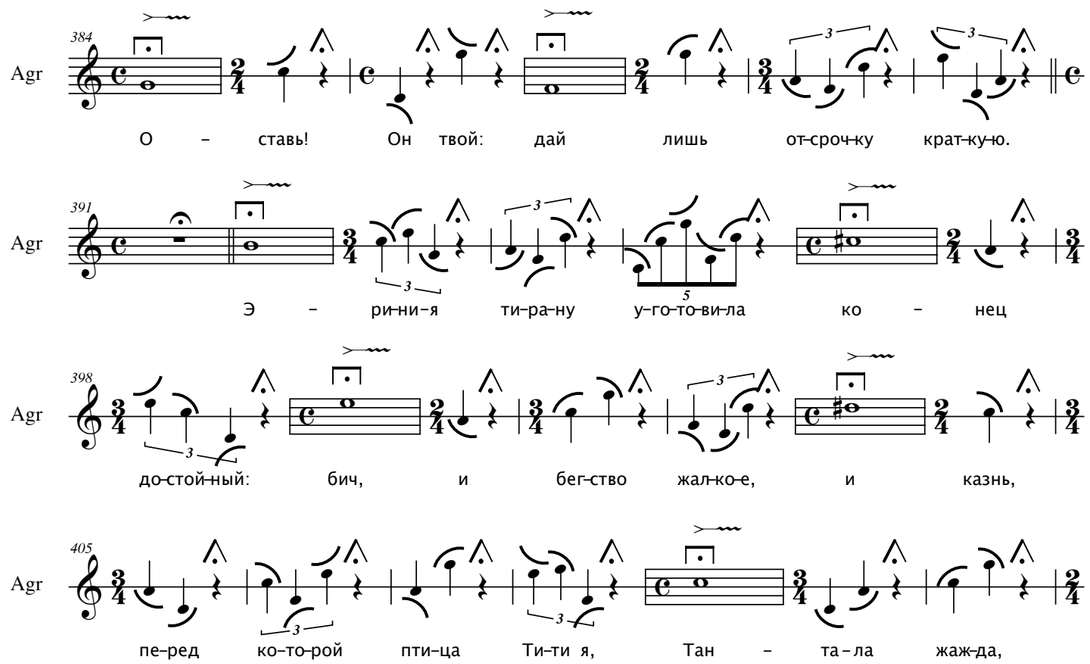
Where shall madness lead you? What lies in store for you,

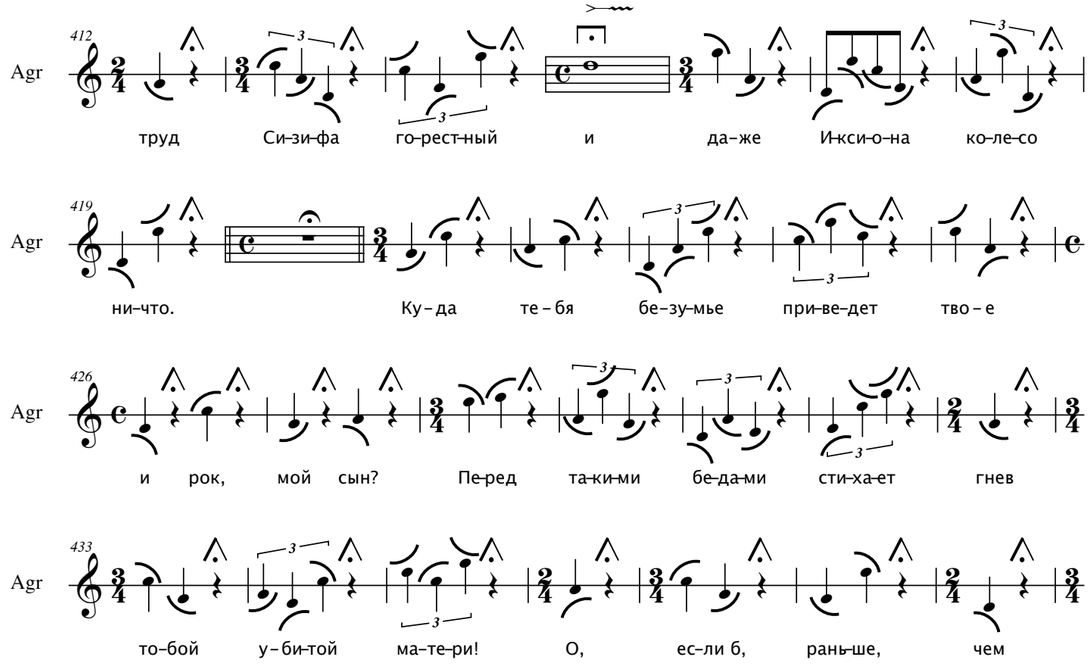
My son? When I imagine the atrocities,

Even your murdered mother's anger wanes and wilts!

O, woe, if only...







GHOST OF AGRIPPINA

...when you still were in my womb

Some ferocious beast had ripped my belly open:

You would have died, still at one with loving mother,

Feeling nothing and knowing nothing of evil,

Would have known no dread in the kingdom of the dead,

Joined your illustrious forebears and your father,

Whose memory we now doom to shame and sorrow,

You and I – I for giving birth to one like you!

Mother, stepmother, wife – I go back to the shades.

I brought ruination to everyone I loved!

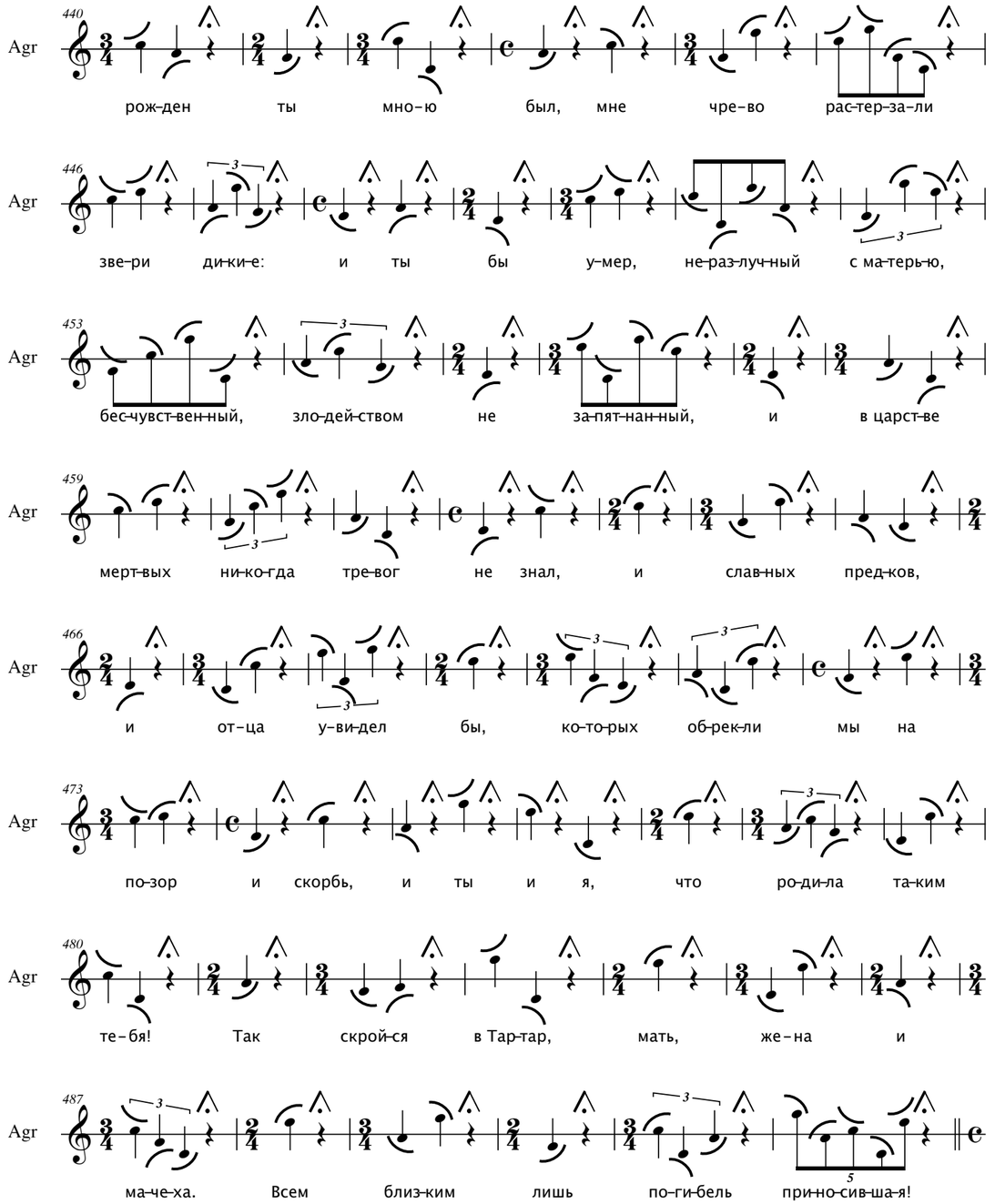
Sounds of war arise toward the end of the fourth part of the aria of the Ghost of Agrippina.

After the Red Army Soldiers go behind the Head of Lenin with the Ghost of Agrippina, two sections of the Terracotta Army, which stand to either side of the Head, begin moving around the Head and exit rear stage in rows.

The Prefect, leading the first row of warriors, goes behind the Head of Lenin with the Army.

The last rows of warriors turn around and leave by way of the rear stage without going around the Head.





As the last few rows of dislocating Army warriors leave, Trotsky appears in the Head of Lenin in his greatcoat. The smoke dissipates when he appears.

Video in the Head of Lenin: barbed-wire appears.

TROTSKY

I learned from American newspapers at Amherst, a Canadian concentration camp, that Lenin had arrived in Petersburg and had spoken out against the war and the Provisional Government. The imprisoned German sailors immediately asked about Lenin, whose name they first had encountered in news dispatches. These men all eagerly awaited the end of the war, for that would open the concentration camp gates for them. They listened with great interest to every voice raised against the war. They still remembered Liebknecht. But they were often told that Liebknecht was corrupt. Now they learned about Lenin.

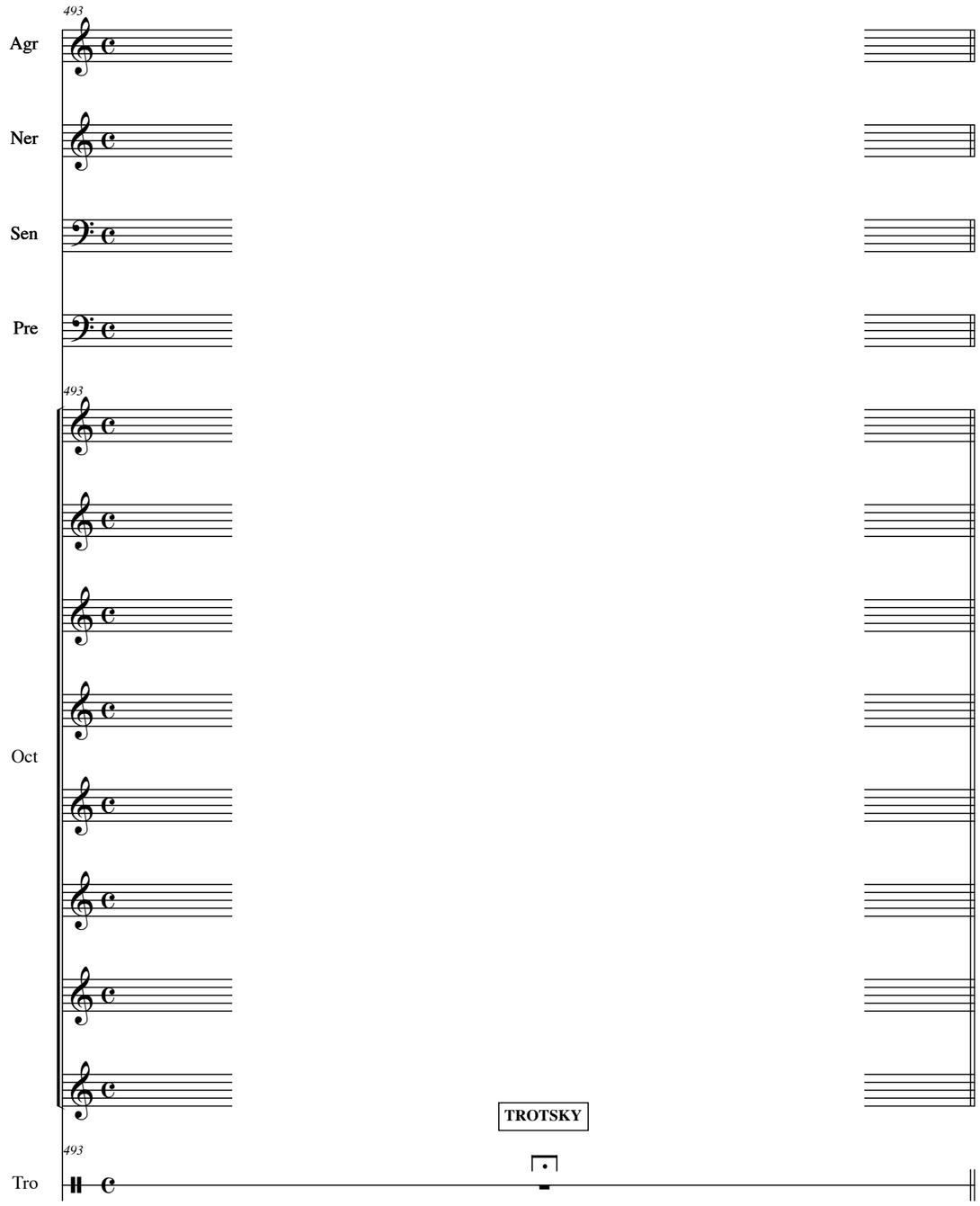




Sketches of on-screen video in the Head of Lenin.
Scene: the aria of the Ghost of Agrippina.



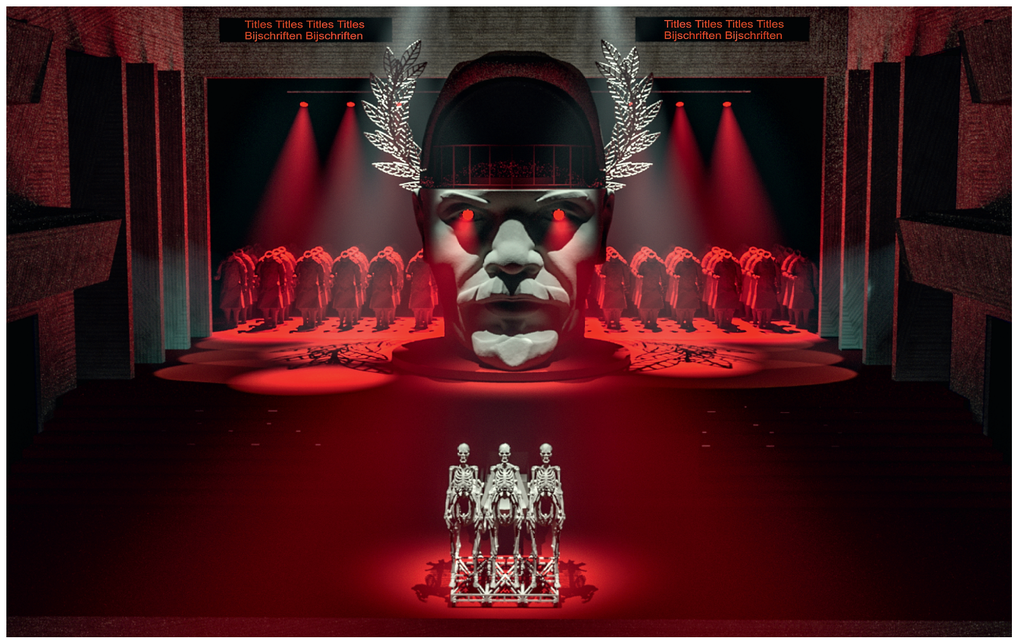
Scene: Trotsky's second monologue



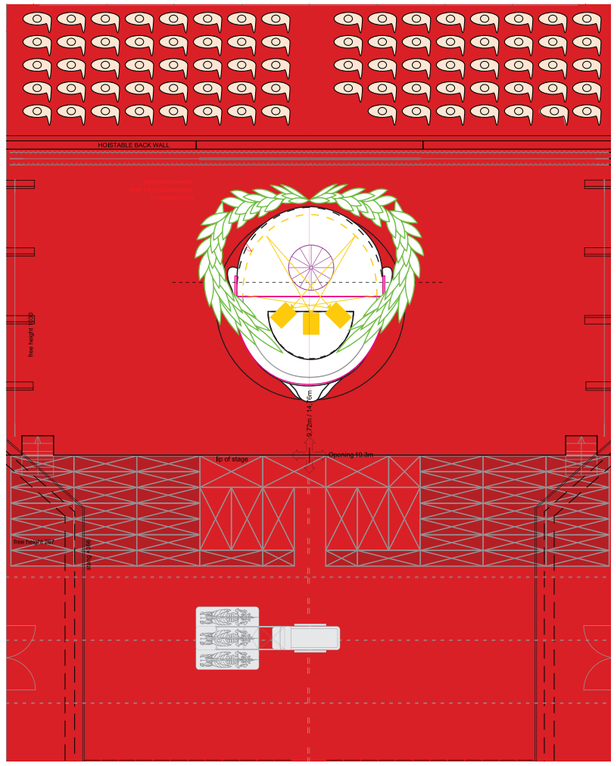
Trotsky leaves the Head of Lenin.



Sketch of the lighting structure.



OCTAVIA. TREPANATION
CHOIR



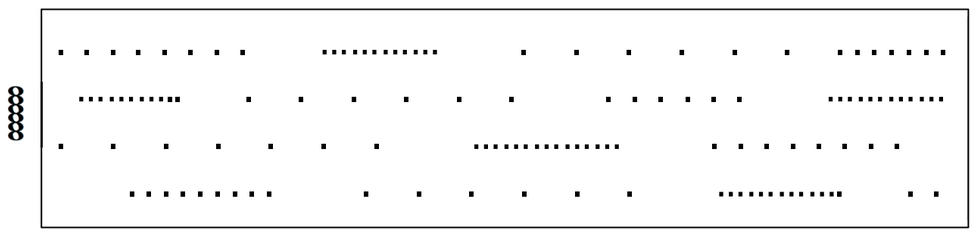
Position 3

Position 2

Position 1

→ Transition from Position 2 to Position 3 →

<u>Transition. Material 4 (sing while moving).</u>



[***p*** *...cresc...* ***ff*** *...dim...* ***p***] – 10-30 seconds

The pitches picked out of the electronic material are repeated in blocks of different pulsations; each block lasts 10-30 seconds; distances between blocks 10-20 seconds; change the articulations for each block *([m] [a] [o] [u] ...)*.

Video in the Head of Lenin: the burning eagle of the Roman Empire rises from below.

Nero enters the empty stage from behind the left side of the Head of Lenin. He is followed by the four Red Army Soldiers in the "ass and prick" choreography. Nero's aria begins.

Lighting: Nero's spot appears on the proscenium to the left of the Head.

Nero stands in the spotlight to the left of the Head.

During this time the Red Army Soldiers spread out across the stage, two to the left, two to the right of the Head, and perform the "prick" and "battle" rituals.

NERO

O, as my warriors do come forth so slowly,

So I myself am weak in anger if I have

Not deflamed the torches threatening me treason

With the blood of Romans; if blood does not freely

Flow through Roman streets, the ones that
bred the rebels.

And she, whom the citizens would force upon me,

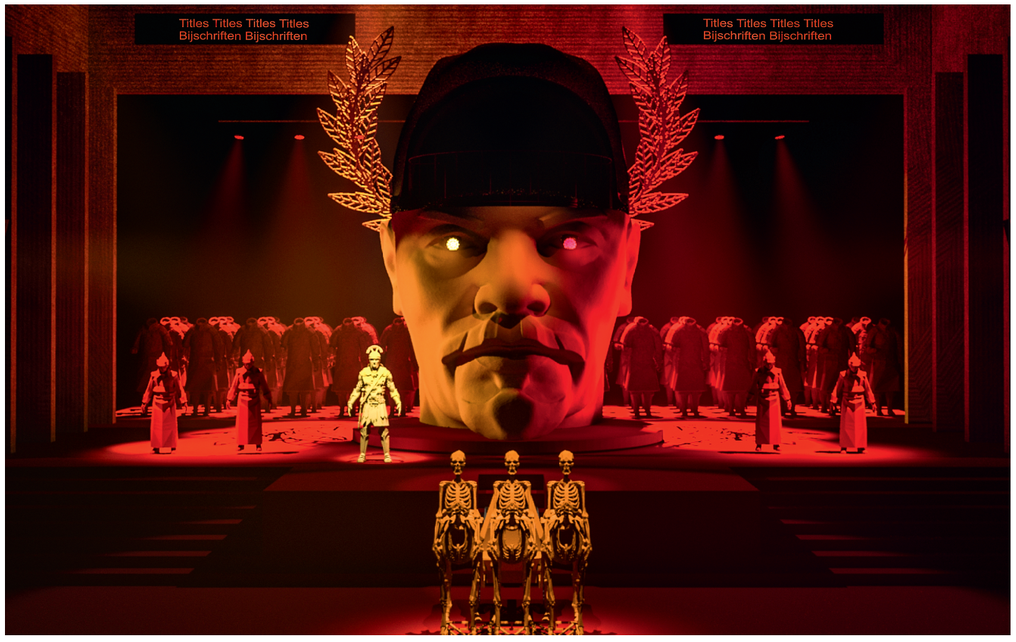
She, of whom I always had my lingering doubts,

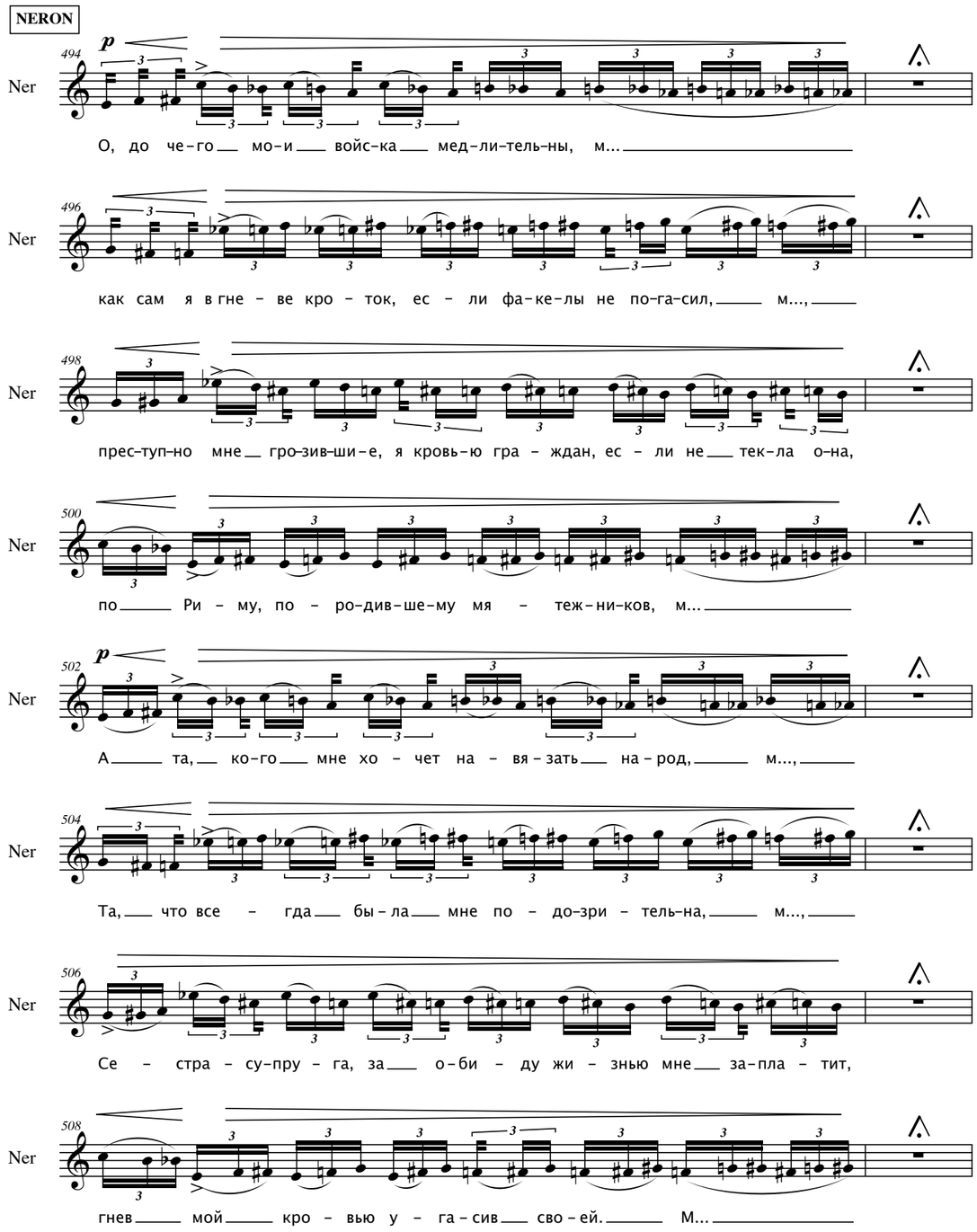
This sister-wife, she shall pay for her offenses

With her life; her oozing blood shall cool my anger.



Sketch of on-screen video
in the Head of Lenin.
Scene: Nero's aria





Nero descends by way of the central steps and gets into the Chariot, taking the place of the driver.

NERO

But death is petty penance for all I suffered,

And so a more disastrous fate awaits the mob:

Houses shall fall, engulfed in leaping flames I send;

Conflagrations shall chasten the malicious horde,

As will bitter famine and spiteful poverty.

Fear alone shall instruct the mob to know its place.

During this part of Nero's aria the Red Army Soldiers, in twos, exit on either side of the Head of Lenin, while the Prefect enters from the right of the Head. The backdrop is lowered in the course of 60 seconds.



NERO

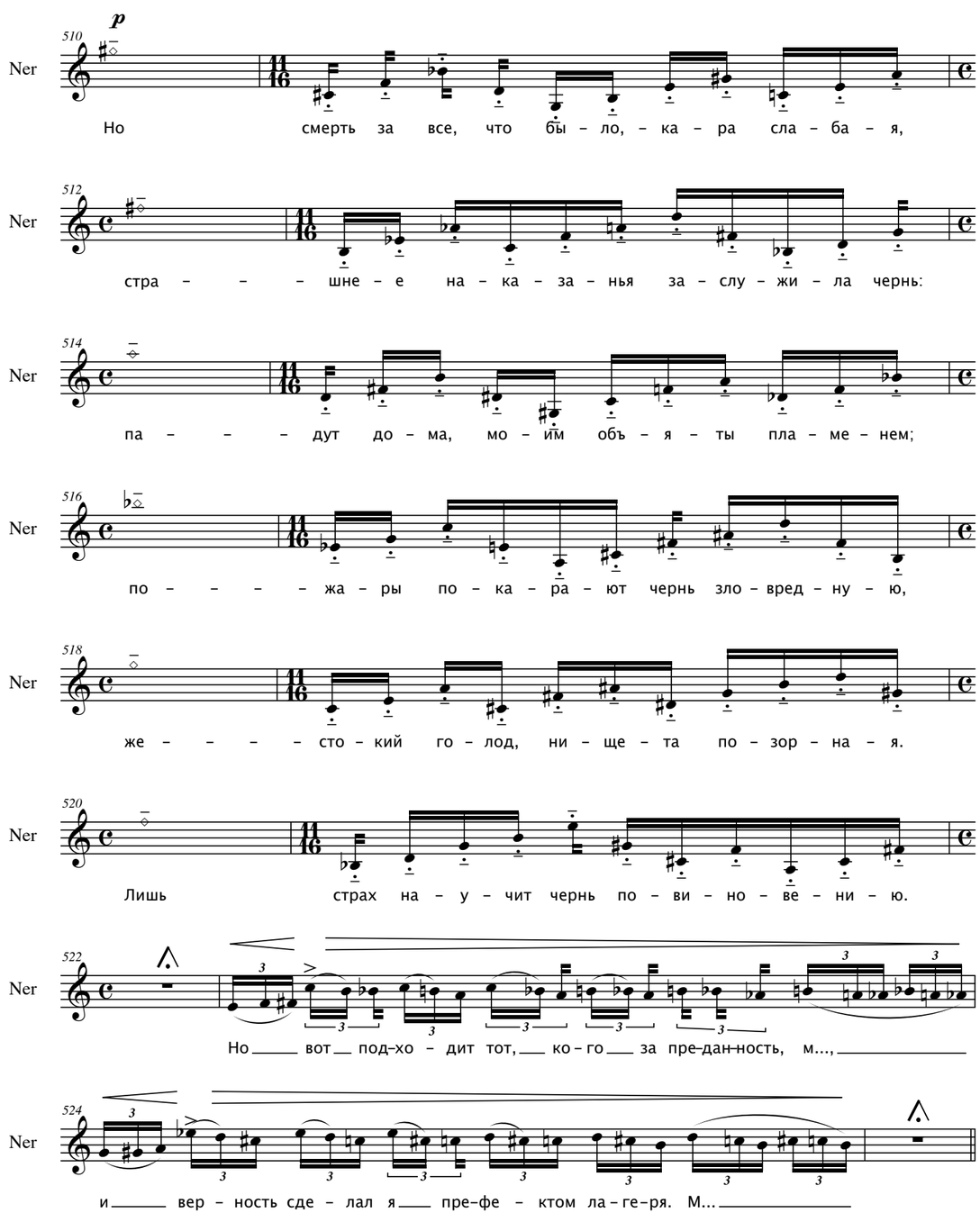
But here comes now that man whose perfect loyalty

Persuaded me to make him Prefect of this camp.

While the backdrop is closing the Red Army Soldiers accompany the Prefect to the "square," where they bring him to his knees in a spotlight to the right of the Chariot. The Red Army Soldiers perform a ritual around the Prefect.

Lighting: after the backdrop is lowered, "war" and projectors are closed down.

Video in the Head of Lenin: the burning eagle is replaced by a beating heart.



PREFECT

The people's riot is quieted. And just a few

Are dead – only those who fought with greatest fury.

NERO

And that is all? Is that how you obey commands?

PREFECT

But ev'ry leader cruelly has been put to death.

NERO

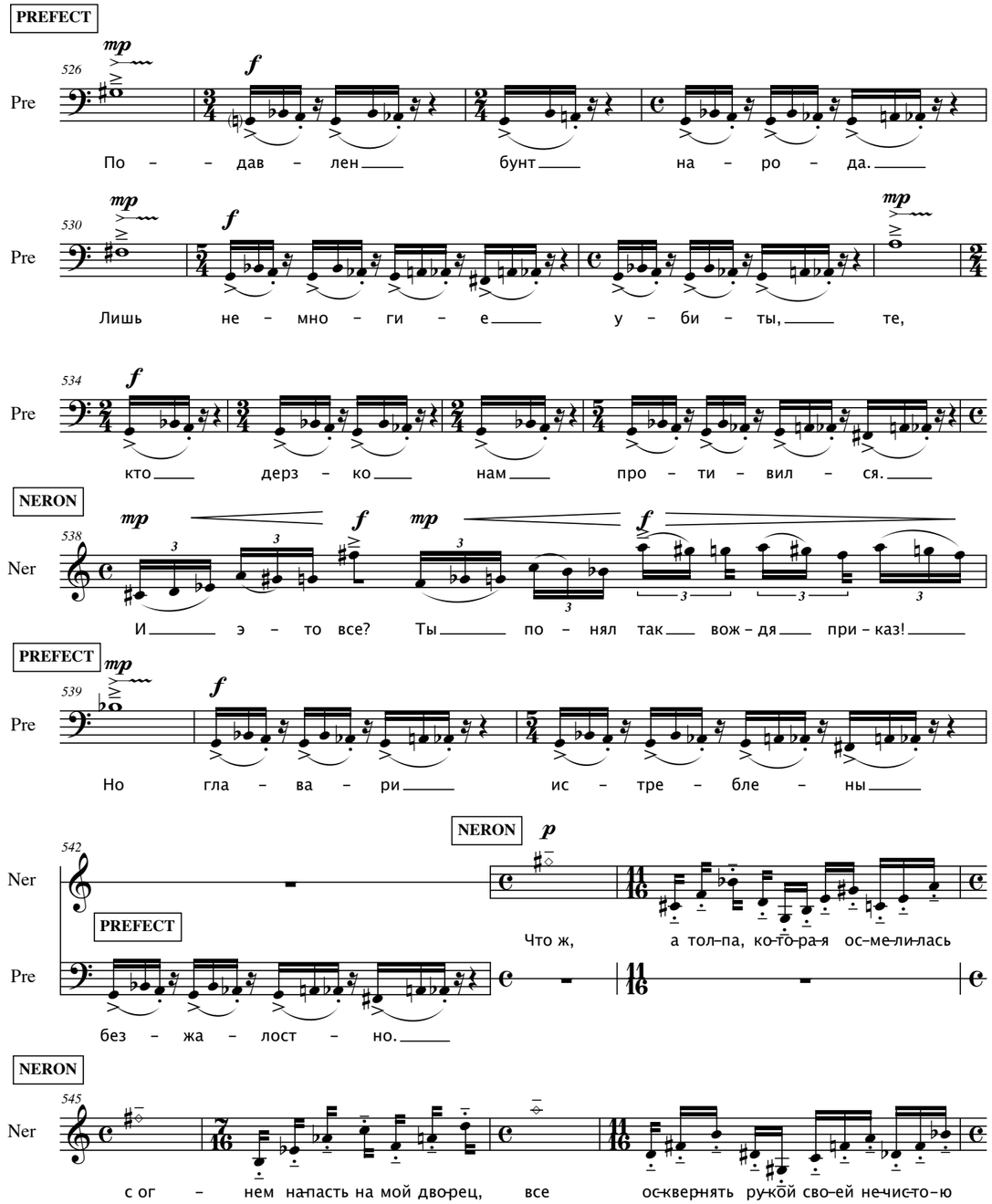
But what about the throng that dared to brandish torches,

Set fire to my palace, rising up against me?

Shall they defile everything with filthy hands

Behind the closed backdrop, unseen by the spectators, 31 members of the chorus exit into the rear stage wings. The remaining members of the Terracotta Army chorus, aided by volunteers, remove the upper half of their costumes – the terracotta torsos – and also exit into the rear stage wings. The warriors' terracotta torsos remain at rear stage and are arranged in three even rows – two phalanxes, each on the left and right of the rear stage, and each with eight terracotta torsos per row.





NERO

And curdled cry, and yet remain unpunished?

PREFECT

Your outrage bespeaks revenge against the people.

NERO

A punishment that history ne'er shall forget!

PREFECT

Your fury, not our fear, shall gauge the blood that flows.

NERO

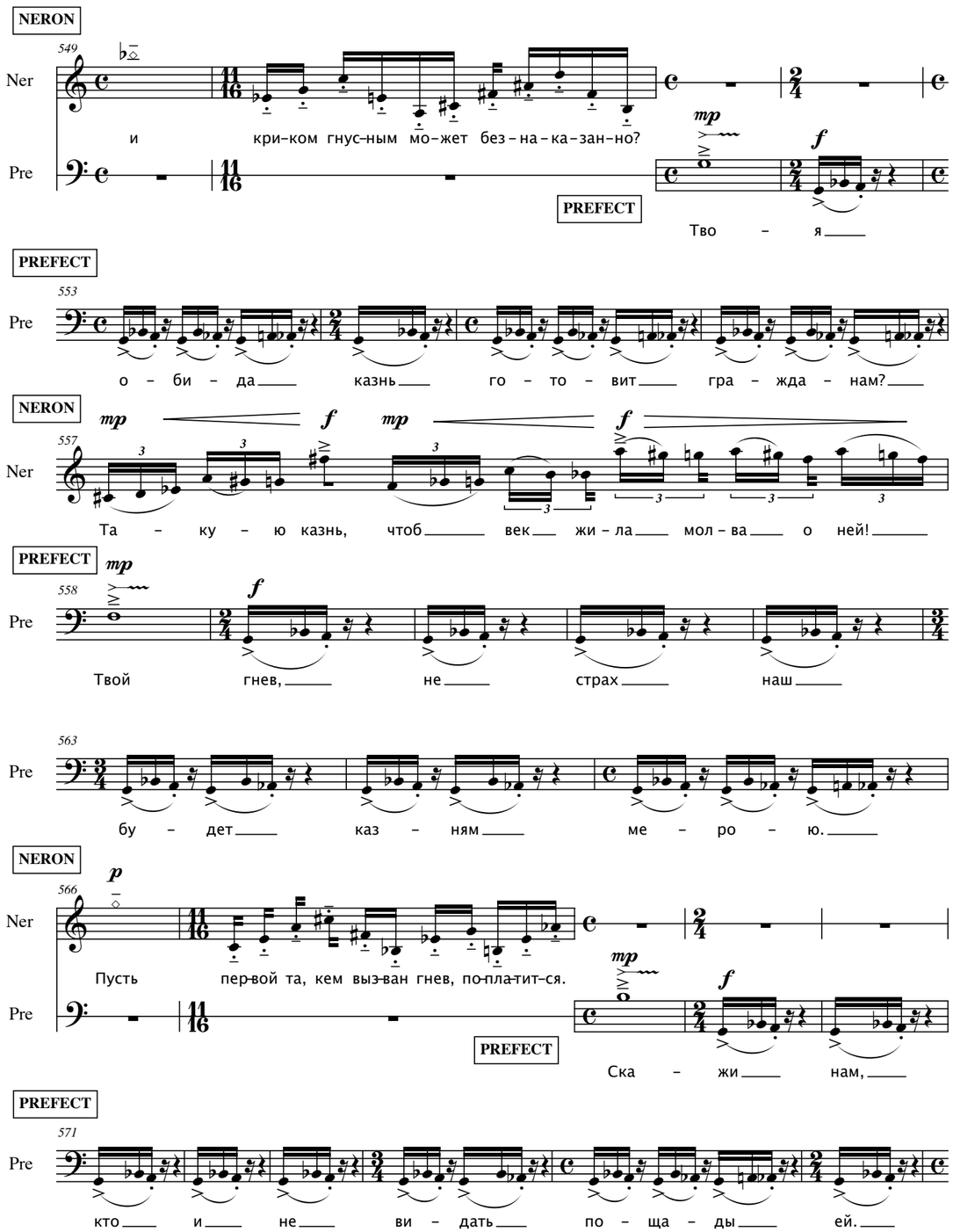
And let the first who angered me now pay the price.

PREFECT

Tell me who it is, and she shall know no mercy.



Sketch of on-screen video in the Head of Lenin.
Scene: duet of Nero and the Prefect on the "square"



NERO

I'll have the head of my accursed sister.

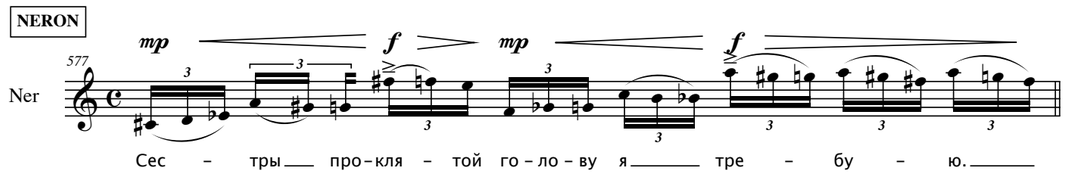
The first "caryatid" of Octavia appears in the Head of Lenin.

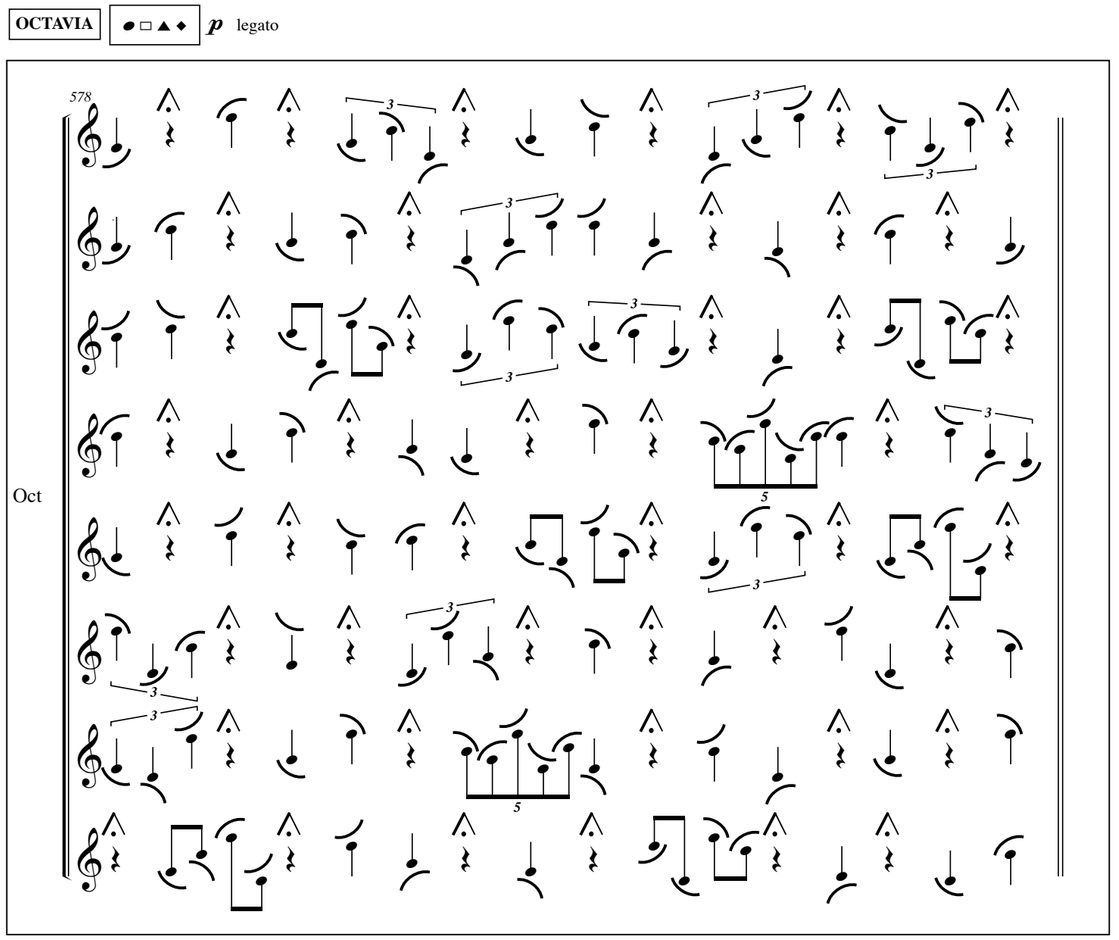
By the end of the Nero-Prefect aria all eight of Octavia's "caryatides" appear – Octavia "moans" from the appearance of the first "caryatid" until the beginning of her aria.



Sketch of Octavia's costume







(Octavia singers enter one by one in an interval of 10 sec. approx, freely interpreting the given figures till measure 655)

PREFECT

My hands do tremble... Fear freezes me in stone...

NERO

Would you disobey?

PREFECT

Doubt not my loyalty!

NERO

Shall foe be spared?

PREFECT

Can woman be a villain?

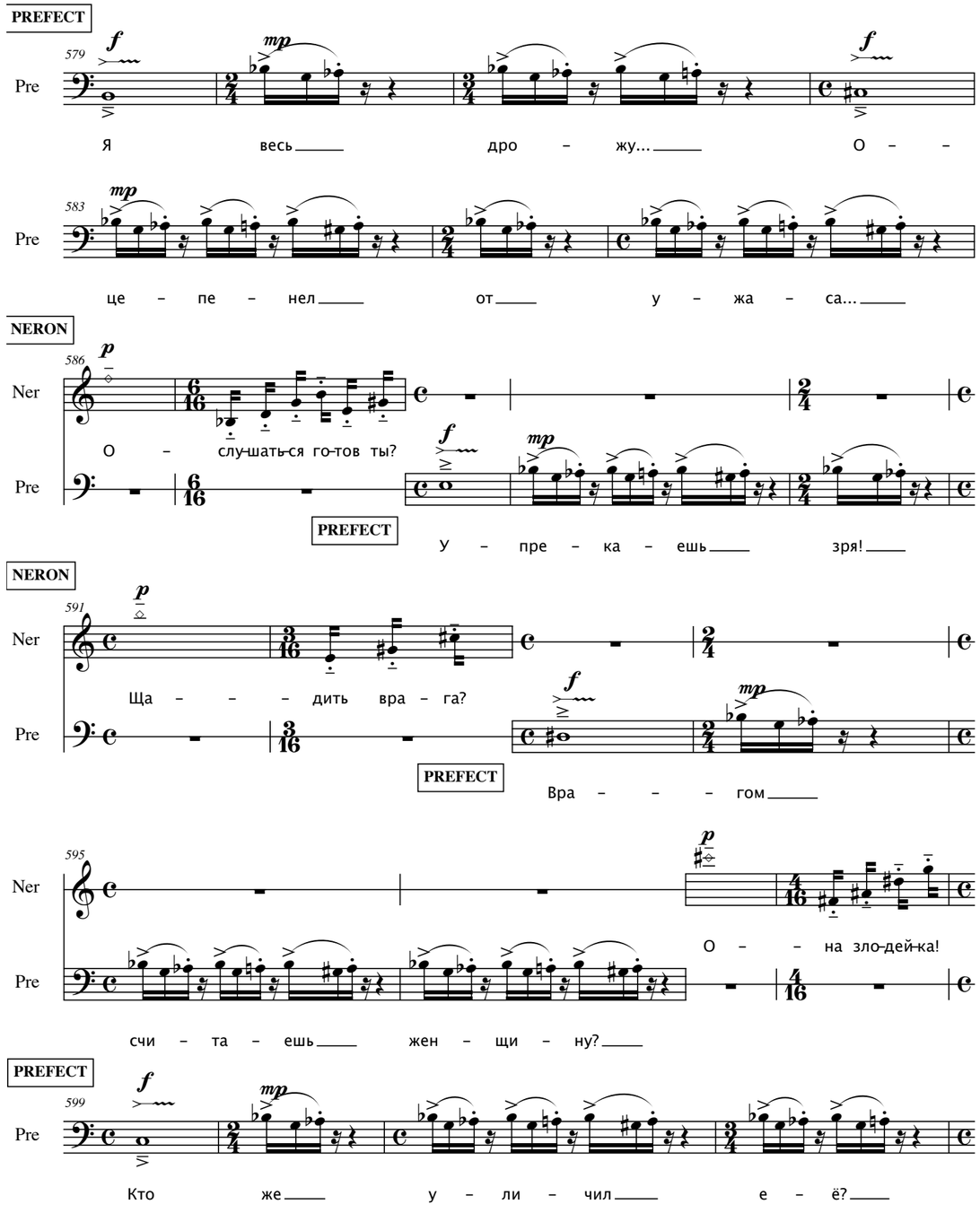
NERO

She is an evil-doer!

PREFECT

What for, why say you so?





NERO

The crowd that does rebel.

PREFECT

Who could lead such chaos?

NERO

She who provoked them!

PREFECT

No one then, I guess.

NERO

A woman, I say: nature fills her full of evil,

Teaches all the arts of hateful perfidy...

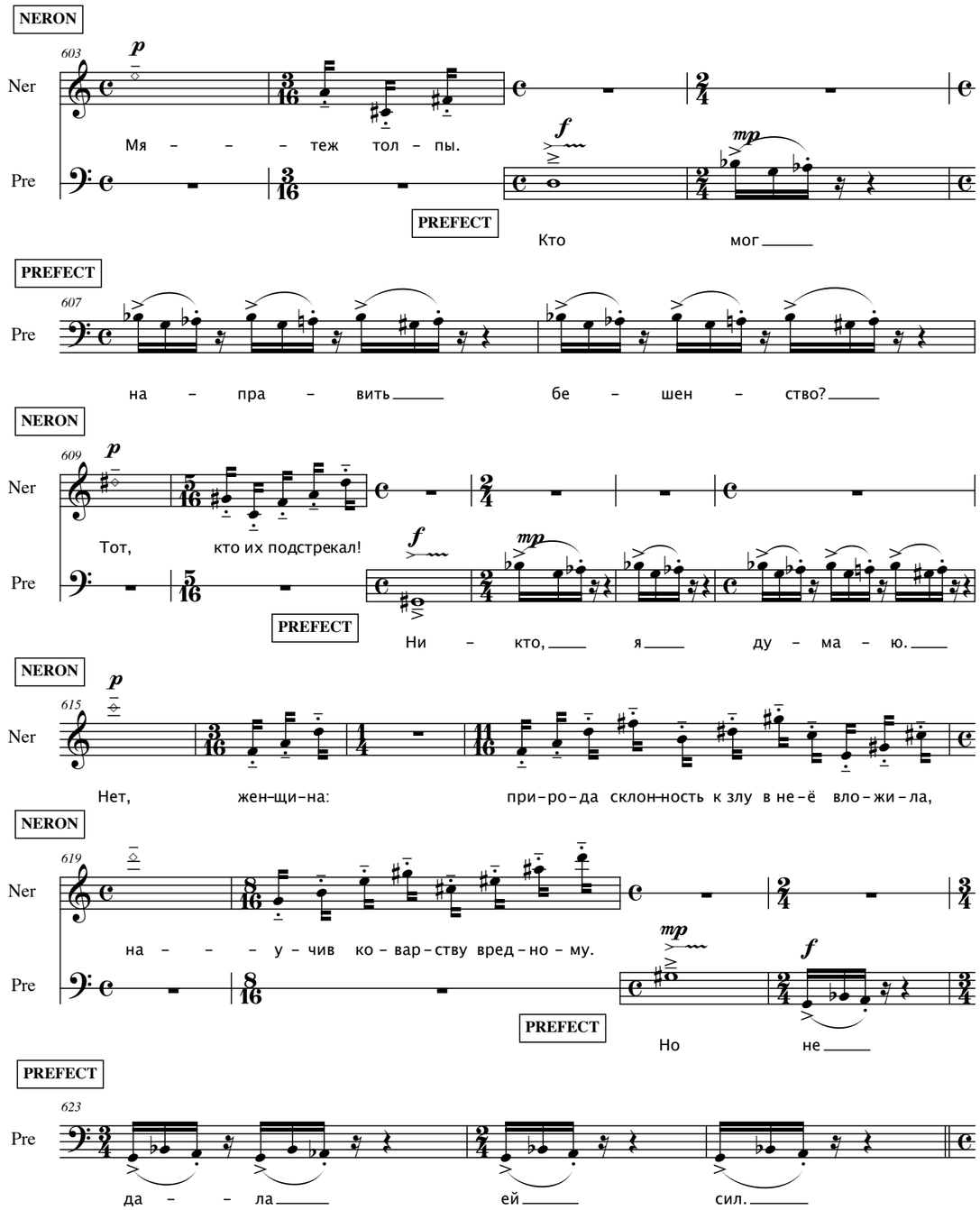
PREFECT

But left her, oh, so weak.





Sketches of the lighting structure.



NERO

So that she'd never be

Unapproachable, so that fear and punishment

Would always break her frail powers. She's been guilty

All along but I was late in condemning her.

But leave aside the lessons and listen to my

Edict: Have Octavia put upon a ship

And take her to a distant shore and kill her there –

So that fear shall ne'er again creep into my heart.

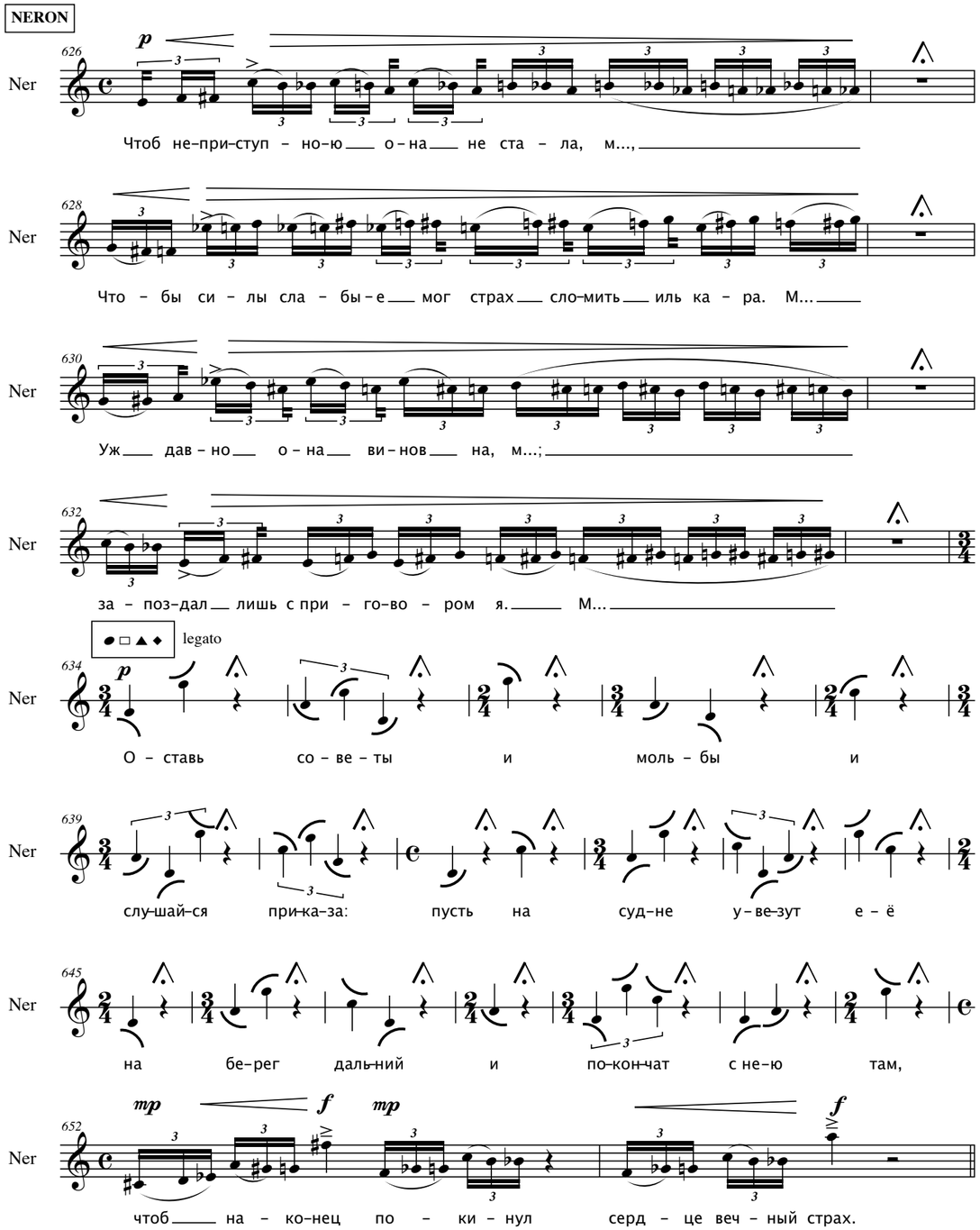
Two Red Army Soldiers drag the Prefect behind the Head of Lenin to the spectators' right.

The two other Red Army Soldiers approach the Chariot, where Nero stands in place of the driver, and they pull it in figure-eights about the "square" so that, by the time they are done, the Chariot stands in profile at the center of the "square."

At this time two Red Army Soldiers lead Trotsky in his greatcoat out of the Head of Lenin, employing the "prick" choreography, and seat him in the upper right corner of the stairwell (according to the spectators' point of view). They then descend to the "square" to the Chariot which has already taken up position at center stage. All four Red Army Soldiers perform a ritual around the Chariot.

Nero descends from the Chariot and disappears behind the Head of Lenin to the spectators' left. The four Red Army Soldiers follow him out.





Lighting: a spotlight illuminates an area in front of the Chariot.

Trotsky walks around the Chariot and takes up a position in front of it in the spot.

TROTSKY

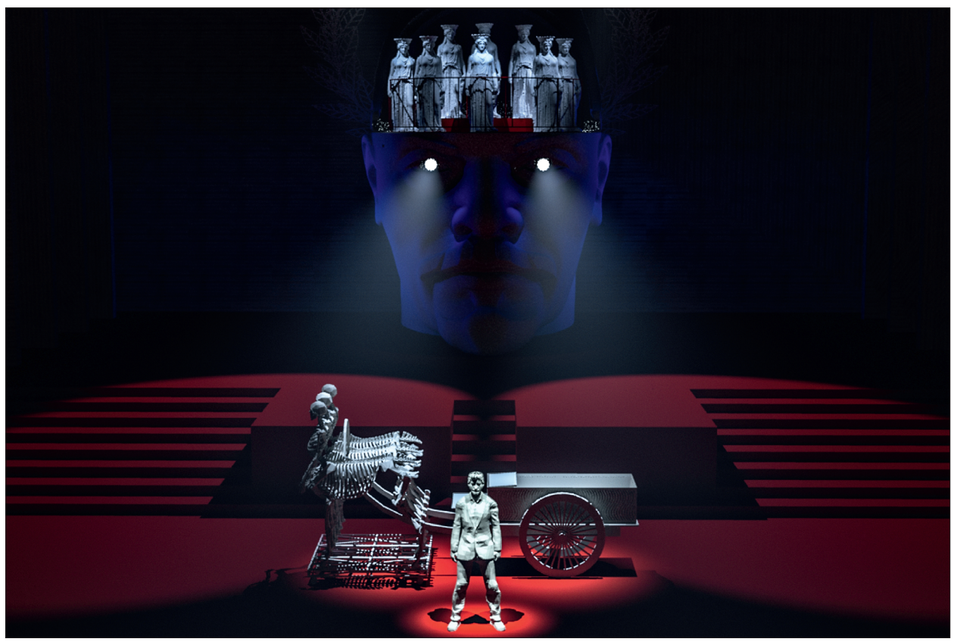
Comrades, we have been put to an additional test this year in regards to our party's clarity of thought and firmness of will. This test was difficult for it was brought about by an event that even now weighs on the consciousness of all party members and the greater part of our nation's working people, or more properly, the entire working population of our country and a significant part of the entire world. I speak of Vladimir Ilyich's illness. After it took a turn for the worse in early March the Politburo of the Central Committee convened to discuss what we should tell the party and the nation's population about the decline in Comrade Lenin's health. I am sure, Comrades, that you fully understand the mood at that Politburo meeting, when we were tasked with informing the party and the nation about this first grave, alarming news. Naturally, we remained politicians at this moment. No one can reproach us for that. We were concerned not only about the health of Comrade Lenin – of course we were primarily concerned at that time with his pulse, his heart and temperature – but we also thought about the effect his heart rate would have on the political pulse of the working class and our party.

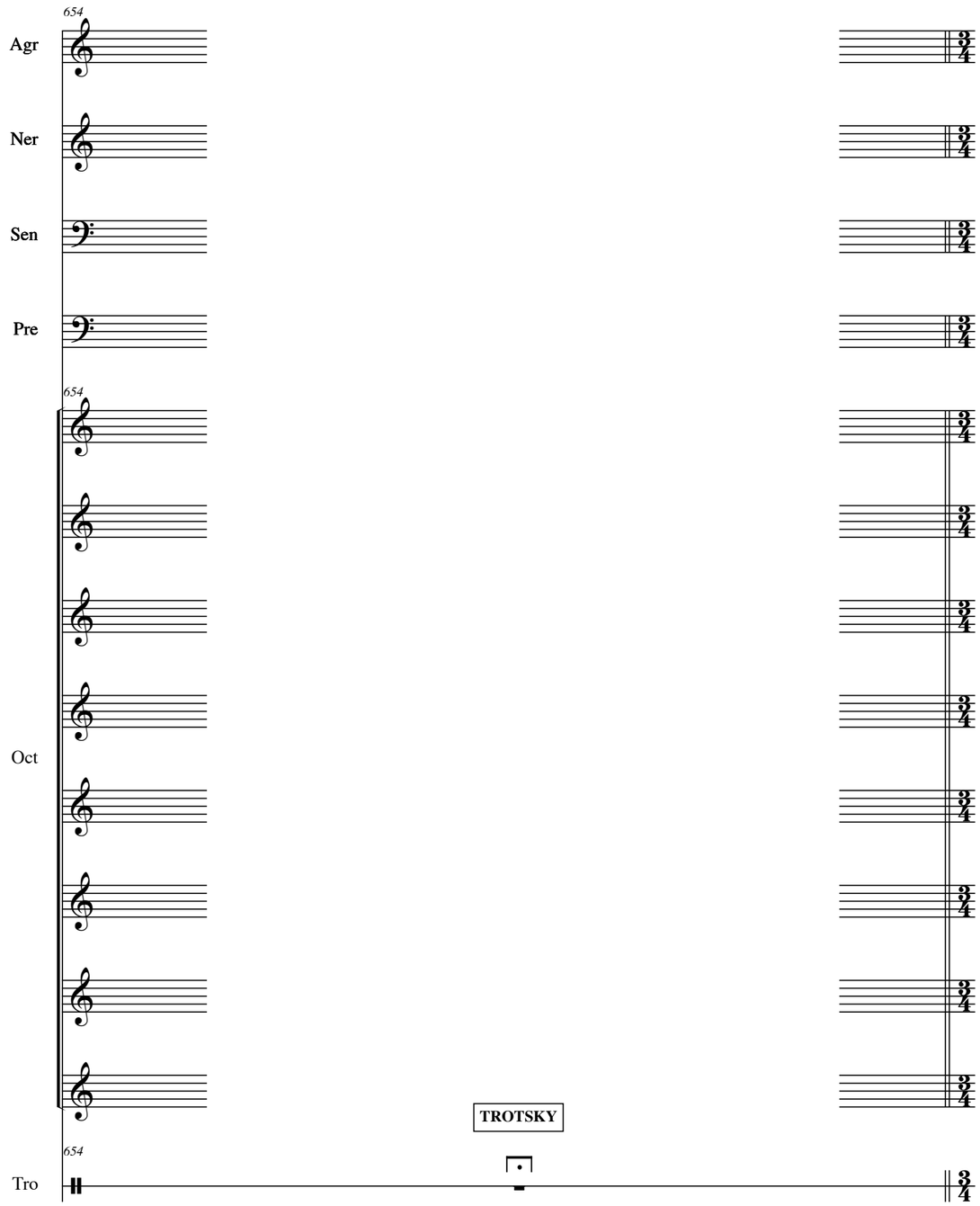
Lighting: by the end of Trotsky's monologue the light in the eyes of the Head of Lenin change to the blinking lamp of a lighthouse.

The backdrop rises in the course of 60 seconds.

Octavia continues to "moan."

Trotsky exits behind the Head of Lenin.





32

OCTAVIA

Where do you take me? Where has Nero's Poppaea

Decided I shall spend my time in exile if

She, touched to the core by my misfortune, did make

The choice to spare the life I was sure I had lost?

Had the tyrants thought it best to terminate my

Bitter, woeful life, then why did they not do it

Where I could fall, received by mine own cruel home soil?

All the hopes...

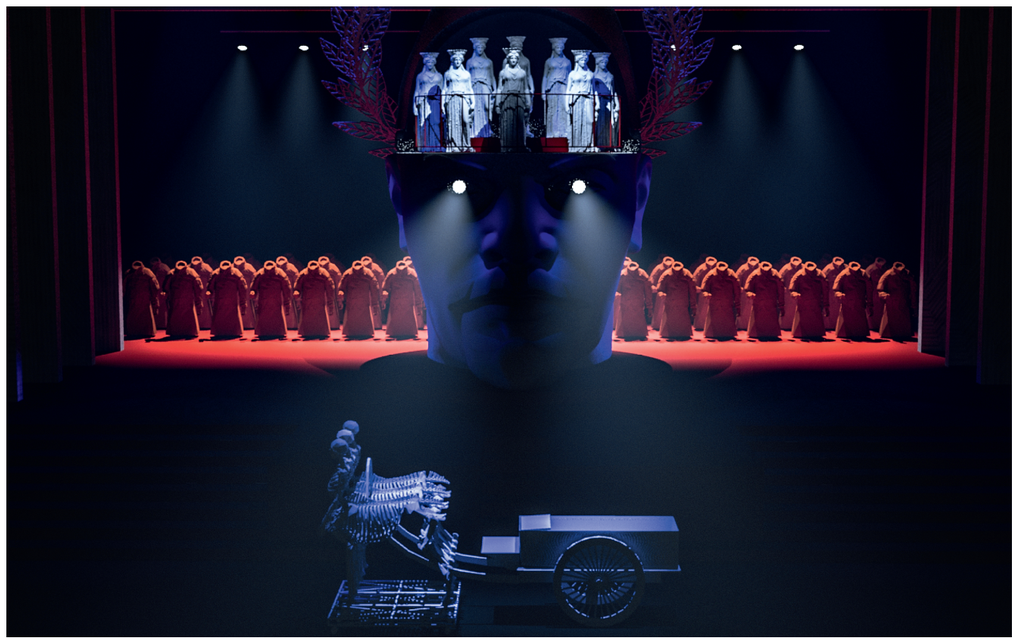
During Octavia's aria, Trotsky appears behind the Head of Lenin in his greatcoat, walks between the two phalanxes of torsos, turns to the right into a corridor between the torso rows and leaves by way of the rear stage wings. Two Red Army Soldiers follow him. The other two exit into the rear stage wings by way of a corridor between torsos to the left.

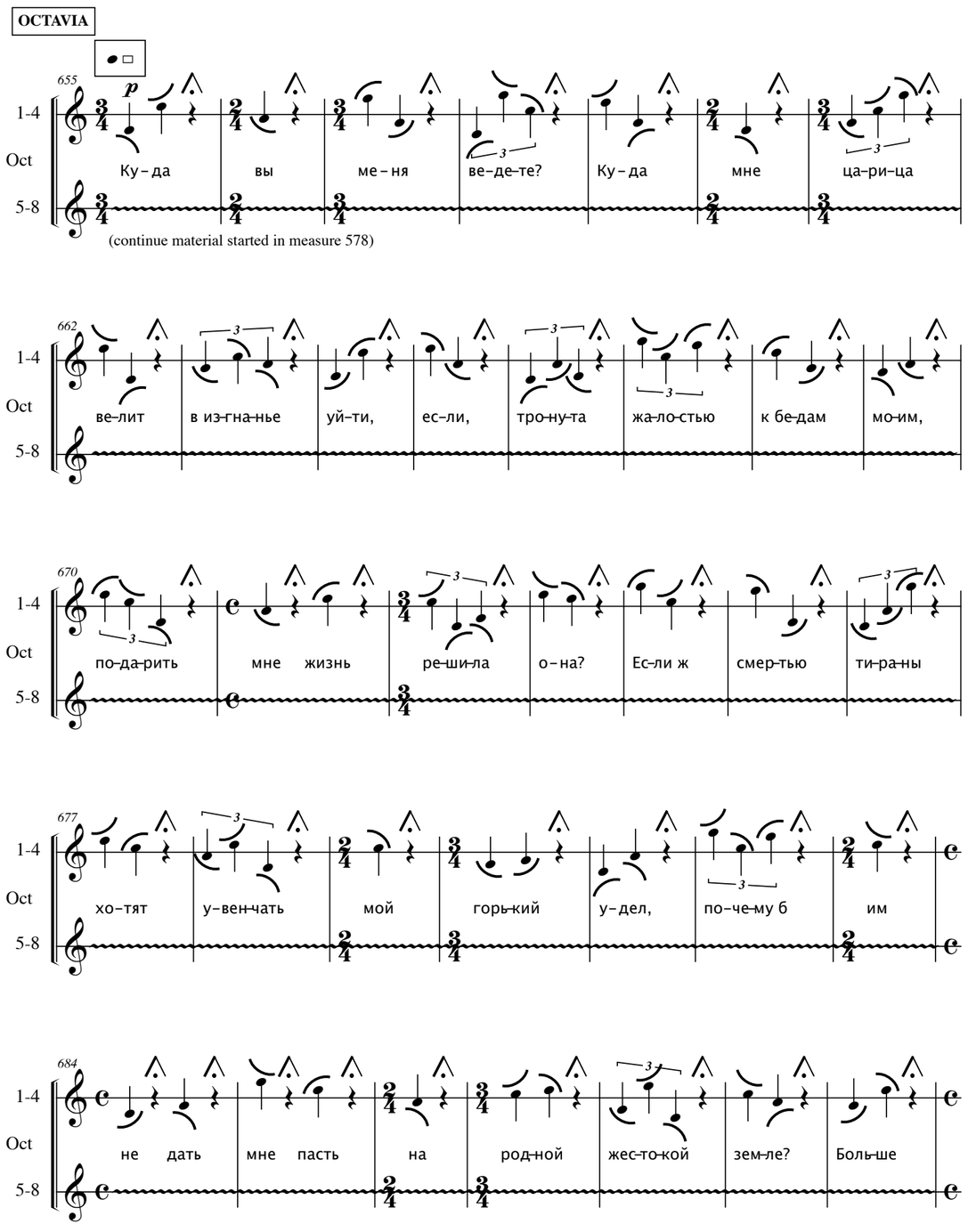
Throughout the entire aria Trotsky and the Red Army Soldiers continue moving through the corridors between rows.

By the end of Octavia's aria Trotsky and the Red Army Soldiers disappear behind the Head of Lenin.

Lighting: a nighttime seascape arises.

Video in the Head of Lenin: a starry realm appears.





OCTAVIA

...I ever cherished have now been dashed!

Who shall mourn my despicable disaster?

Where is the songbird who can turn my moans

Into music? O, if only fate would

Bestow upon me two nightingale's wings!

Then would I throw off heartbreak's weight and fly away

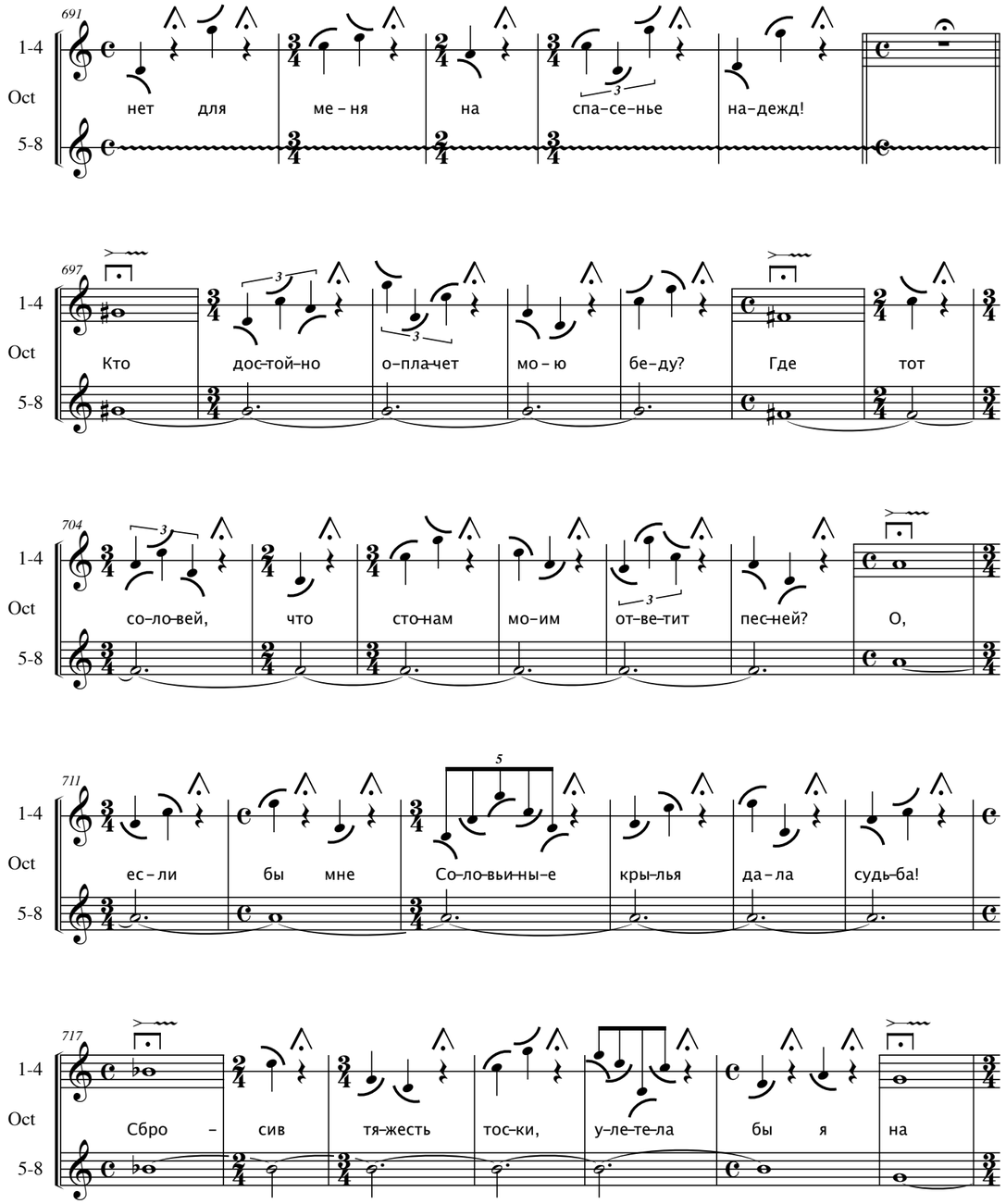
From...



Sketch of the lighting structure



Sketch of on-screen video in the Head of Lenin.
Scene: Octvia's aria



OCTAVIA

...human company on wings so light,
Far from hateful hostility, from bloody brawls,
And far from all I'd sit on weightless branch
Amidst an empty thicket to sing
My warbling, trilling, thrilling song of sorrow.
Now the wicked tyrant would send me to
The shades among the dead in the underworld –
Why waste my time by procrastinating...

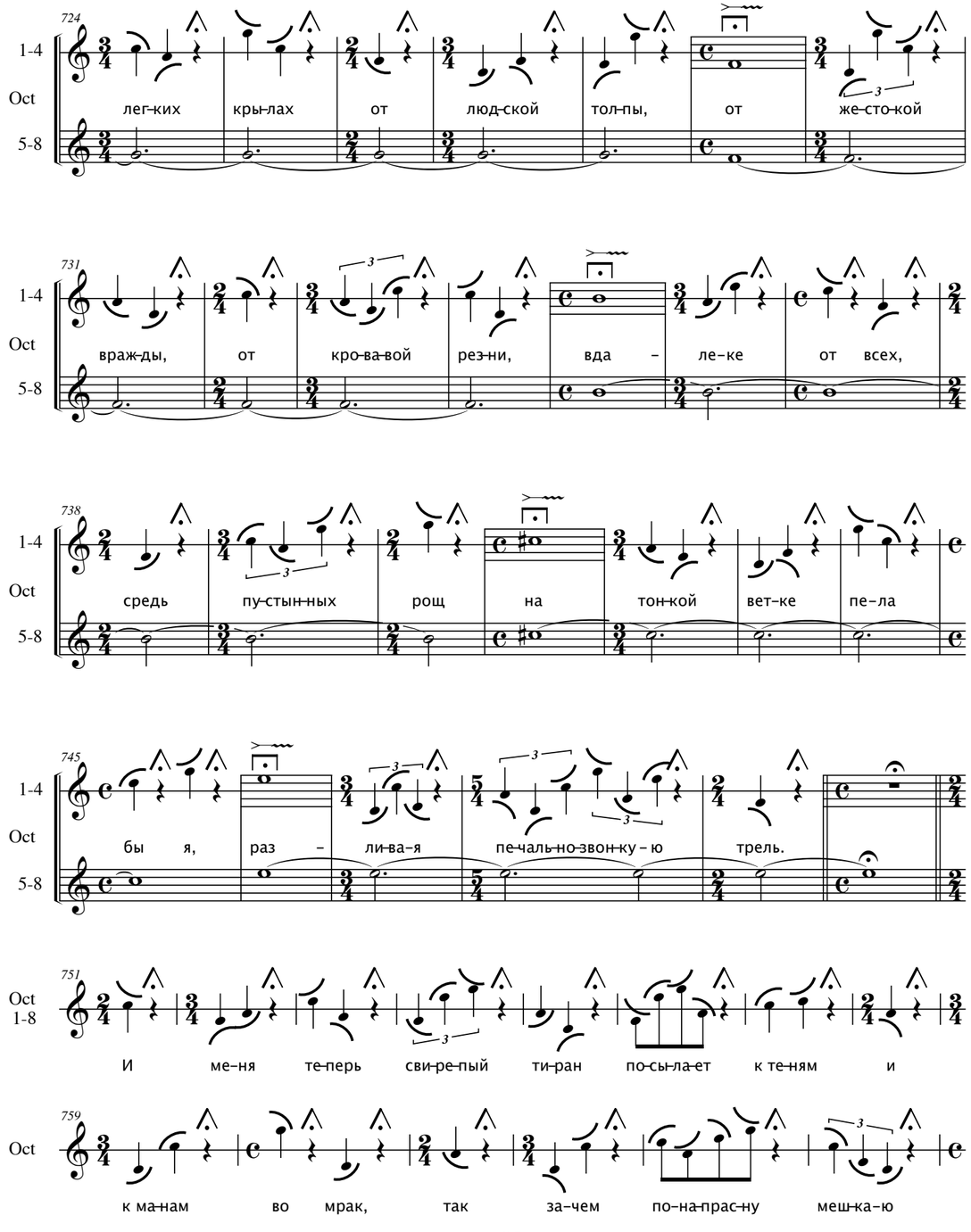
Video in the Head of Lenin: the moon appears.



Sketch of the lighting structure



Sketch of on-screen video in the Head of Lenin.
Scene: Octvia's aria



OCTAVIA

...here?

You! to whom Fortuna gave the right of

Power over us – Take me to my death!

I call upon you, gods... no, forget the pray'rs:

The gods, they hate me; they think me raving mad!

I'll hail Hell's keepers,

The goddesses of Dark, who avenge evil done,

And you, too, my father,

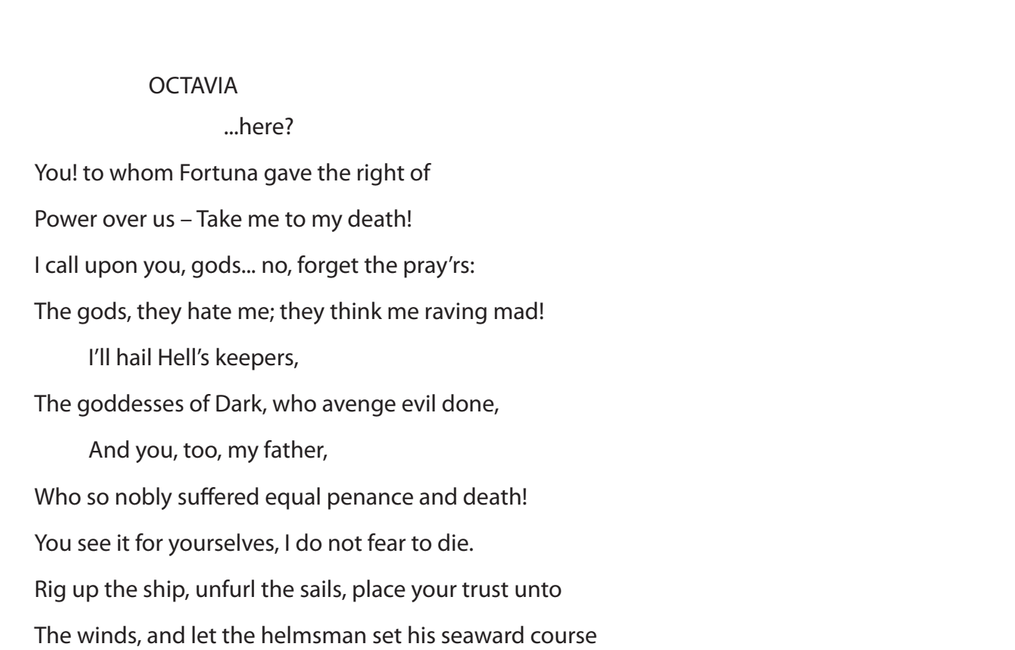
Who so nobly suffered equal penance and death!

You see it for yourselves, I do not fear to die.

Rig up the ship, unfurl the sails, place your trust unto

The winds, and let the helmsman set his seaward course

Toward the distant shores of Pandataria.



Sketch of the lighting structure

765
Oct
я? Вы, ко-му Фор-ту-на над на-ми власть вру-чи-ла,

772
Oct
ве-ди-те ме-ня на смерть! Вас я, бо-ги, зо-ву... Нет,

779
Oct
ос-тавь моль-бы: не-на-вист-на бо-гам, бе-зум-на-я, ты! Я

785
Oct
Тар-тар зо-ву и Э-ре-ба бо-гинь, что зло-де-ям

792
Oct
мстят, и те-бя, мой о-тец, что до-сто-ин был

799
Oct
смер-ти и ка-ры та-кой! Вы сви-де-те-ли: я не

806
Oct
бо-юсь у-ме-реть. Сна-ря-жай-те ко-рабль и вве-ряй-те вет-рам па-ру-са,

814
Oct
что-бы корм-чий на-пра-вил е-го к бе-ре-гам Пан-да-та-ри-и, даль-ней зем-ли.

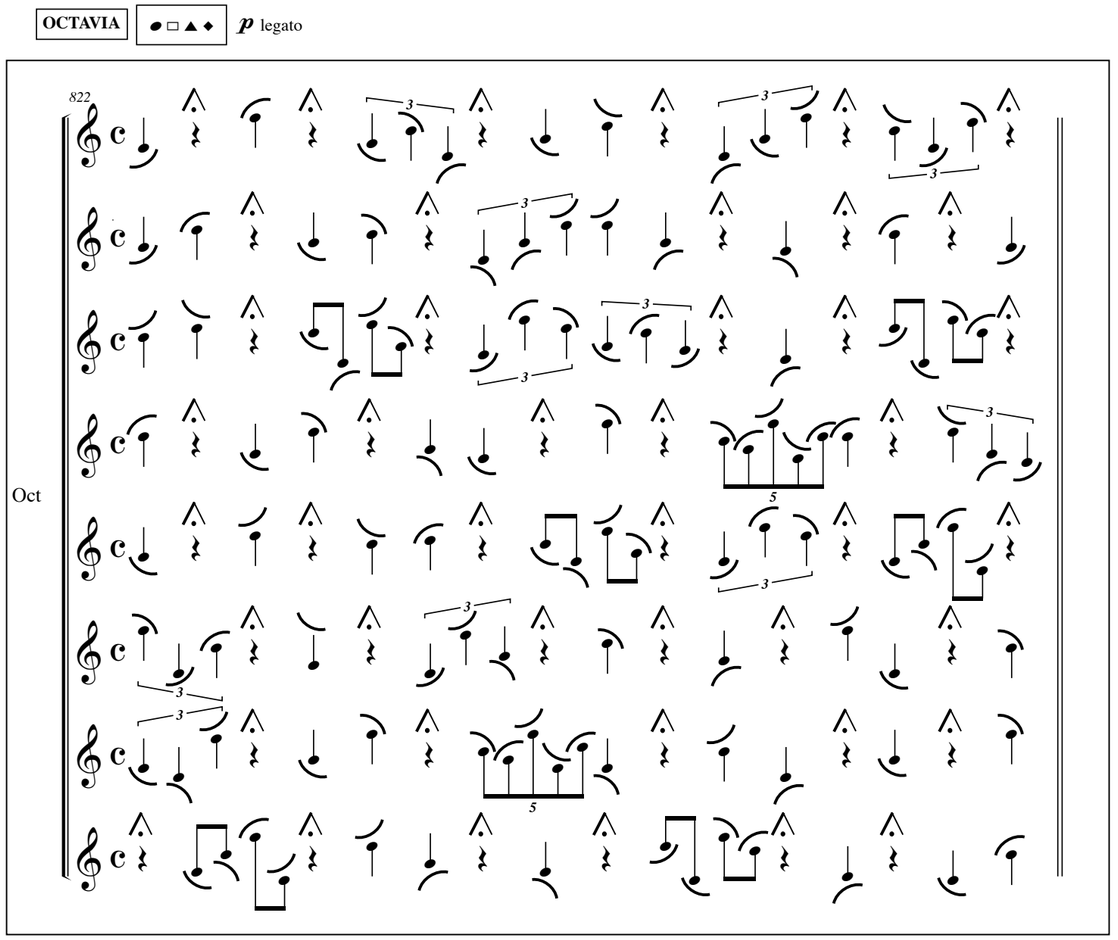
Octavia's eight "caryatides" begin leaving the Head of Lenin.
Lighting: a world of Shadows arises.
Video in the Head of Lenin: the eight Shadows of Octavia's "caryatides" exit.



Sketch of on-screen video in the Head of Lenin.
Scene: Octavia's exit



Sketch of on-screen video in the Head of Lenin.
Scene: Seneca's final aria.



(Octavia singers finish one by one in an interval of 15 sec. approx, freely interpreting the given figures)

Four Red Army Soldiers with slingshot rifles lead Seneca onto the proscenium from behind the Head of Lenin. They lead him to the central stairwell.
Seneca sings in the passageway.
Video in the Head of Lenin: a "bloody" moon appears.

SENECA

Lazy, lovely breeze, who with your breath once sheltered

Iphigenia by hiding her in a cloud

After she was secretly abducted

From the altar of the cruelest goddess -

Save now Octavia, take her far from harm,

To the sanctum of Trivia, I pray!

A pause in Seneca's aria. Seneca descends down the central stairwell to the Chariot and sits in the coffin-bathtub. Red Army Soldiers go to the edge of the proscenium and stand in rows of two to the left and right of the central stairwell. Seneca raises his hands.

SENECA

Even Aulis is more merciful than Rome,

As is the land of the savage Tauri:

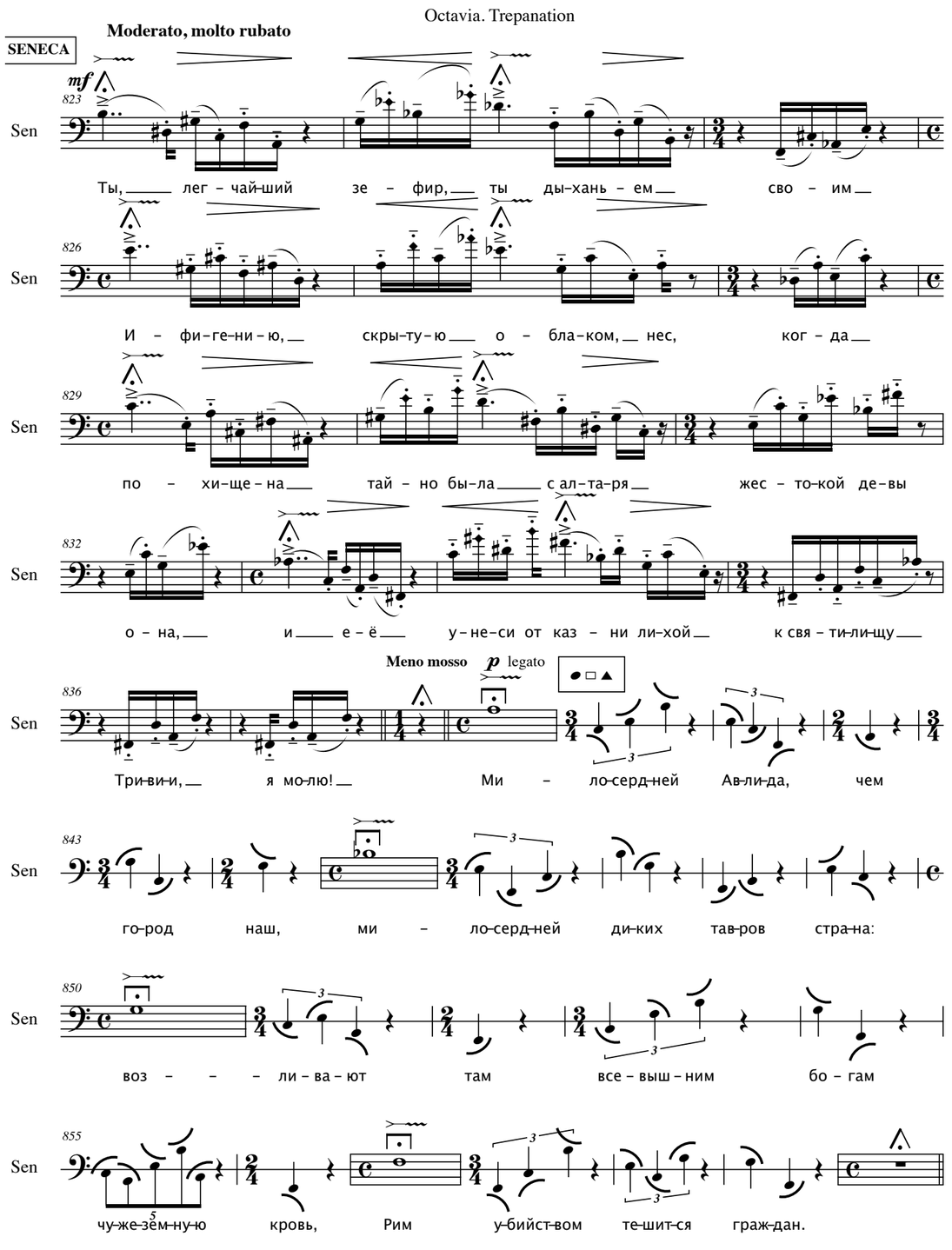
They only sacrifice unto the gods

The blood of foreigners.

Rome revels in killing its own.

Upon completing his aria Seneca lowers his hands and "dies."





Members of the Terracotta Army chorus, without their terracotta torsos, enter by way of wings at left and right and stand in two phalanxes on either side of the Head of Lenin. Chorus members begin singing in the passageway and continue singing once they reach their positions.

The chorus members wear T-shirts on which are printed their real names.

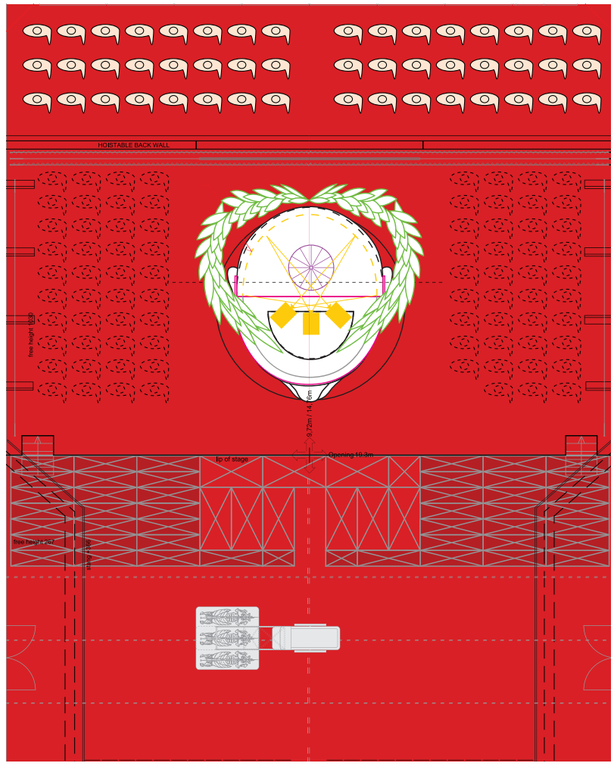
A statue of Buddha, with Lenin's face, is inflated inside the Head of Lenin.



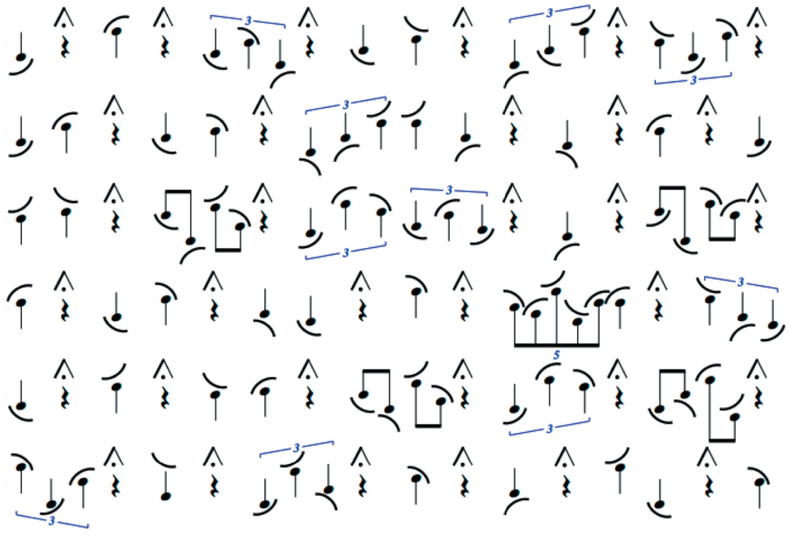
Sketch of the inflated statue of Buddha with Lenin's face



OCTAVIA. TREPANATION
CHOIR



Material 5.



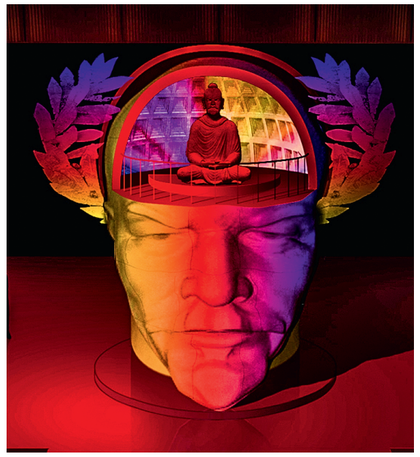
After the statue of Buddha is fully inflated, Trotsky emerges from behind the Head of Lenin and stands at center stage before the Head.

During Trotsky's final monologue, the Terracotta Army chorus continues to sing.

Video in the Head of Lenin: a rainbow.

TROTSKY

Lenin is gone. Lenin is no more. The mysterious laws governing the function of blood vessels cut short this life. Medicine was powerless to do that which millions of human hearts passionately expected and demanded. May that prick of the needle - which we all feel, and which our heart shall feel every time we entertain the thought that Lenin is no more - may that needle prick be for us a reminder, a warning and a summons: Your responsibility has increased.

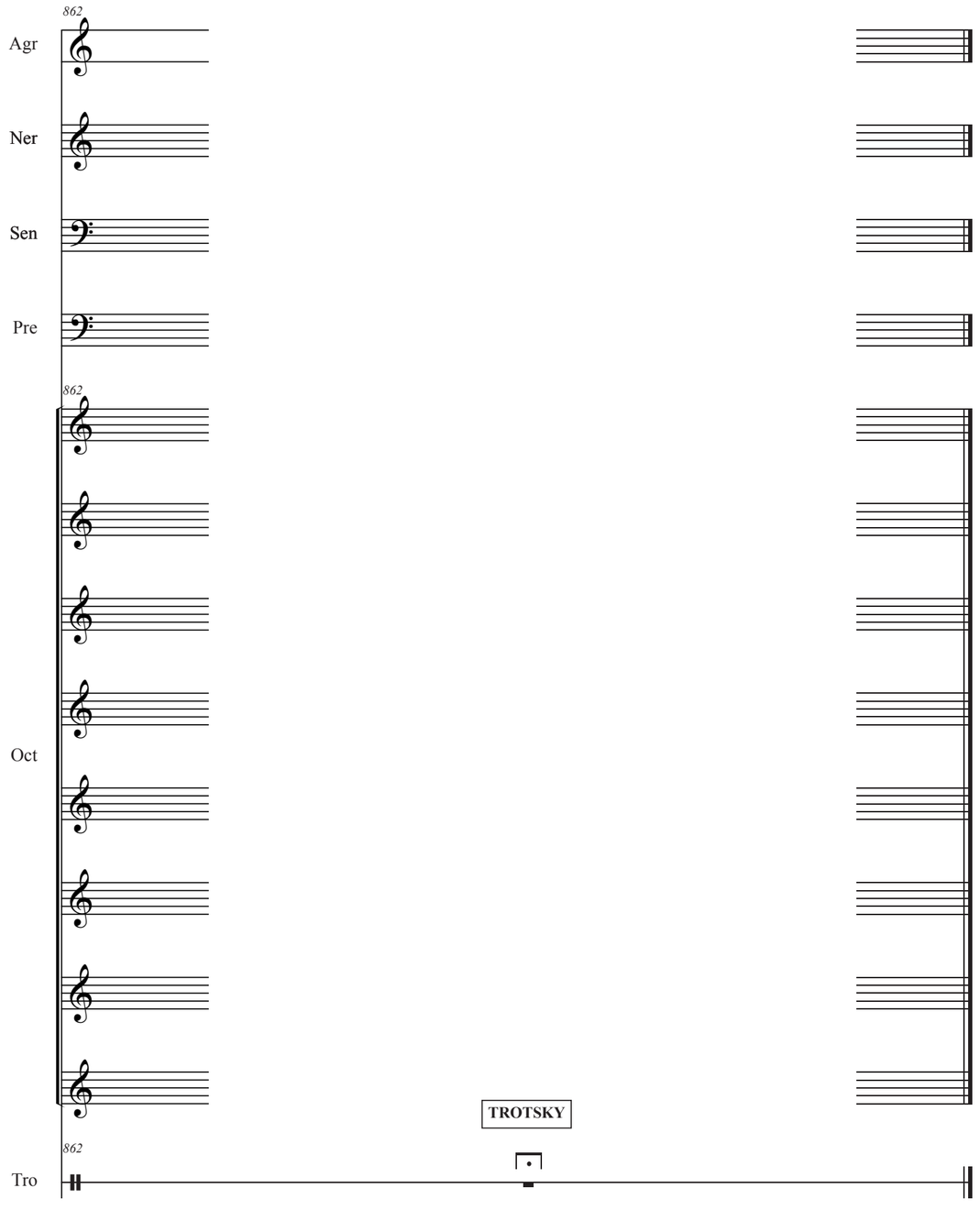


Sketch of on-screen video in the Head of Lenin. Scene: Trotsky's final monologue



Sketch of the lighting structure

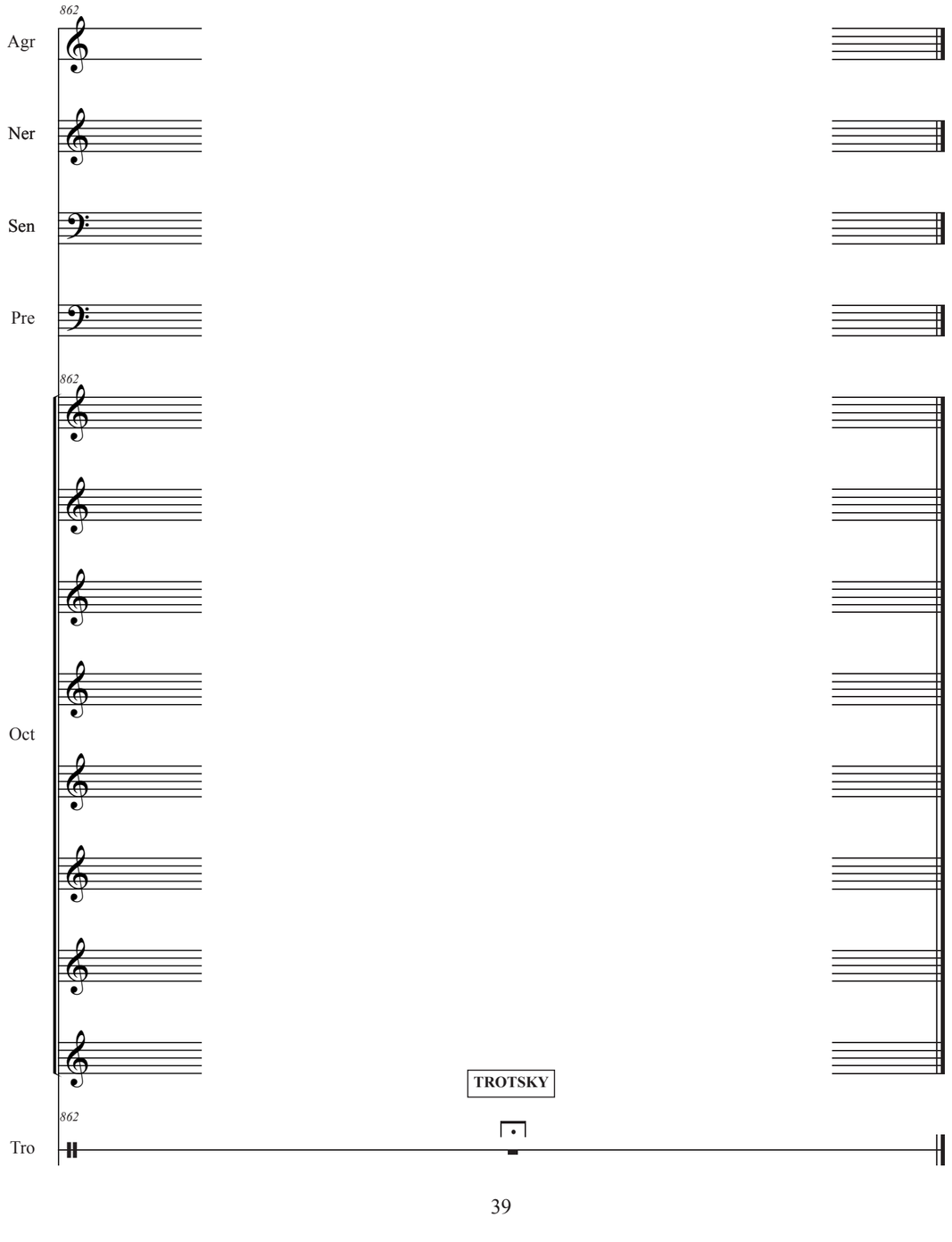




The forehead panel of the Head of Lenin is lowered.
The Terracotta Army chorus falls silent.
The Head turns its back to the spectators and stops.







OCTAVIA. TREPANATION
Oder of the curtain calls:

Part of the members of the Terracotta Army chorus descend to the "square," part of them line up on the steps to the left and right of the Head of Lenin.

(applause)

Trotsky and the Red Army Soldiers descend to the "square" and stand in a line to the right of the Chariot. Trotsky is closest to the Chariot, the Red Army Soldiers follow him.

(applause)

A door in the back of the Head of Lenin opens allowing the Prefect, Agrippina and Nero to enter, then descend to the "square," where they stand to the left of the Chariot.

(applause)

The Small Chorus of Octavia passes through this same door and takes up positions as "caryatides" along the edge of the proscenium, four each on either side of the central stairwell.

(applause)

Seneca stands in the Chariot-coffin.

(applause)

The Head of Lenin turns around.

(applause)

The creative team enters through the wings and descends to the "square" by way of the central stairwell. They take up positions in front of the Chariot.

(applause)