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sumtone

:

michael edwards

slippery when wet

for solo violin, ensemble, and stereo tape

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Instrumentation:

Alto Flute (in G) doubling piccolo Bb Clarinet doubling Bb Bass Clarinet (with written low C) Horn in F

Percussion: Marimba, Vibraphone,

Sandpaper blocks, Large Tam-tam, Large Chinese Cymbal, Guiro

Solo Violin

Violin Viola Cello

 ${\sf Multi-channel\ Tape\ Recorder}/$ Computer Music System

Duration: 13 minutes

slippery when wet was commissioned by the Österreichisches Ensemble für Neue Musik (ÖENM) and the solo violinist Frank Stadler. The tape part was created from many different source samples: instrumental recordings taken from the score, ambient recordings from various locations in Salzburg (the Mönchsberg, the train station, the old market, and my apartment amongst others), Havana, Cuba, parts of a rather popular violin concerto and songs from a well known Brazilian composer. Thanks go to the soloists of the ÖENM for the instrumental samples and Arteom Denissov who provided some of the ambient sounds.

The samples were processed on a G3 Macintosh computer using the Common Lisp Music (CLM) software by Bill Schottstaedt of the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA), Stanford University, California. I am very grateful to Bill for developing and, furthermore, diligently supporting this free software and its users, as well as to Fernando Lopez-Lezcano and Tim Stilson of CCRMA whose software implementation of a Moog Synthesizer filter was used significantly toward the end of the piece.

The most prevalent technique applied in generating the tape was one of multi-voice looping, granulation and transposition, using a CLM programme written by myself. The note lists were generated from compositional algorithms (also written in Common Lisp) that I have developed over the last several years. Particularly new in this piece though is a close structural relationship between the instrumental and electronic parts that creates an often instrumental feel in the tape. This was accomplished by applying a prototype of my algorithmic composition program *slippery chicken* to the generation of the instrumental score as well as to the processing, ordering, and structuring of the samples.

The title *slippery when wet* comes from a favourite road sign of mine that I encountered daily when living in California. This rather obvious message always amused and appealed to me, as does the rather foreboding *Vous n'avez pas la priorité* as found on French highways and used as the title of another piece of mine. Direct relevance to the piece at hand is, however, tentative at best.

The score is not in C.

opening

The pouring of the ping-pong balls onto the marimba at the beginning of the piece is to be dramatised. The player should hold the bucket high above his or her head and be clearly visible to the public (this could be accentuated by lighting). The player should also hold this position for a number of seconds before the piece begins.

amplification

Each instrument is to be amplified by at least one condenser microphone and mixed with the tape during the performance. Two microphones are recommended for the flute (one each at the top and bottom of the instrument) and two for the solo violin: one an overhead mike, the other a clip-on attached to the bridge. Three or more microphones may be necessary for the percussion.

Except for the percussion, which should be miked "normally," the microphones should be placed as close as possible to the instruments (a few centimeters away) so that every noise produced is clearly audible. In this way, the amplification is not just acting as sound reinforcement but also as an effect.

Compression is essential for each microphone channel so that both the loudest and softest tones are audible without distortion. Without compression, the instruments cannot compete with the loudness of the tape.

Reverberation is discouraged though may be necessary in some performance spaces. If used, then it should be as transparent as possible and not audible as an effect.

tape

The tape is notated in the score by a simple loudness curve. The timings given under this curve begin at 7.5 seconds as this is the duration of the three 2/4 bars count-in given in the click track (see below).

Although the tape is stereo, three playback channels are required, the third being a click track that is sent to the conductor only via headphones. The click track comprises short sine tones on pitches $D\flat 5$ (on the first beat of the bar) and $B\flat 4$ (on the other beats). There is a six-beat (three 2/4 bars) count-in at the beginning of the piece, as well as after the tape solo in the middle.

The playback equipment used could be an ADAT, TASCAM DAxx, or other such multi-channel digital tape machine. Alternatively, a multi-channel computer system such as ProTools could be used. The advantage of this is the ease of finding specific points in the piece when rehearsing. A CD-ROM with the three audio tracks is available should this be required.

to symbols		
•		Quarter-tone flat
#		Quarter-tone sharp
tr		For ease of notation, all tremoli between notes greater than a second apart are written as trills.
\longrightarrow		Transition from one performance state to another (e.g. sul ponticello \longrightarrow ordinario in the strings).
Strings:	$\frac{cl}{\frac{1}{2}cl}$ sp spe hair $tailpiece$	Col legno With the wood and hair of the bow together Sul ponticello Sul ponticello estremo With the hair of the bow (ordinario) Play on the tailpiece (col legno or normal, as indicated)
	Strings:	As usual, open diamond heads indicate natural harmonics, and the sounding note is given in parentheses. When these notes are not beamed, and therefore the rhythmic duration is unclear, this is indicated by the note in square brackets above the stave.
<u>→(•)</u>	Strings: Clarinet:	Play as fast as possible, and in any order, every note (including microtones) between the main note and the small note given in parentheses. Very fast, random fingerings with both hands (small note not given).
	Horn:	Very fast, random half-valve openings (all valves) around the given note (small note in parentheses not given).
III ord	Strings:	Shift the range of the fast notes in the direction of the wavey line, quasi glissando, to the new range indicated.
_	6. 1	



Strings:

Vibraphone:

Random fast harmonics on the indicated strings. Play lightly (as with natural harmonics) on the high part of the string where the harmonic nodes are more numerous. This is not a harmonic glissando, i.e., played with one sliding finger, rather all four fingers are in use randomly touching nodal and nonnodal points alike.



Strings: Wind:

Battuto (col legno or normal, as indicated) "Key Click," with tone "Deadstick"



Flute:

The mouthpiece is closed with the tongue and a key click is made which produces the note given in parentheses (sounds

always a major seventh lower than fingered).

Strings: Percussion: Wind:

Tremolo: always unmeasured, as fast as possible

Flutter tongue



Wind:

A = alternative fingering, N = normal fingering.

Tremolo: always unmeasured, as fast as possible



Wind:

When a tied note is accented, this is a diaphragm accent, i.e.

without the tongue.



Clarinet:

Air tones: without or almost without tone (as indicated). A pp air tone should be equal in dynamic to a pp normal tone,

i.e., it requires more breath pressure.

Flute: Air tones: a more diffuse pitch with more noise and less focus

(but more tone than the clarinet).

When these notes are not beamed, and therefore the rhythmic duration is unclear, this is indicated by the note in square

brackets above the stave.



Clarinet:

"Slap tongue."

Horn:

Hand mute: The hand is inserted far enough into the bell to

create a muffled tone quality.



Horn:

The transposing mute is often used to create a "wah-wah" effect, hence the + (closed) and \circ (open) signs. These refer to the opening of the inserted transposing mute, not the insertion and removal of the mute itself. Satisfactory wah-wah effects may also be achieved with other (perhaps trombone) mutes which can be substituted at the player's discretion.

con sord

Horn:

A simple *con sord* always means with the straight mute.

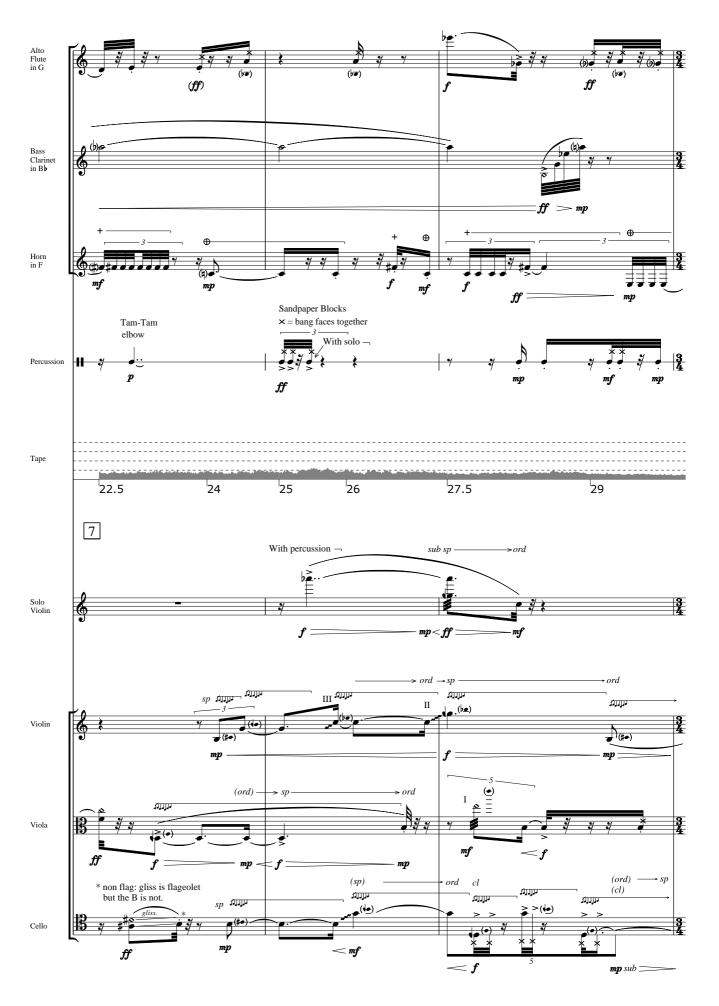


Throughout the score, many directions for ensemble playing (rhythmic unison) are indicated by the direction "With ...". These are given as aids to the players and as possible focal points for the music. The playing with the indicated instruments continues until the end of the bracket, as shown, but this may occur several bars later.

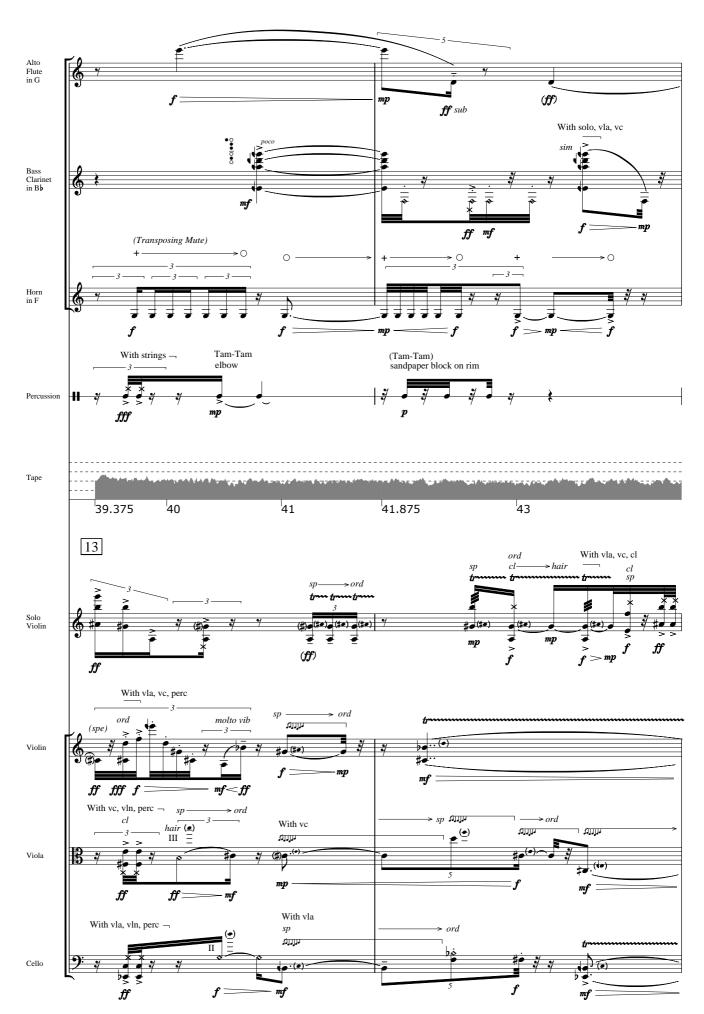
slippery when wet







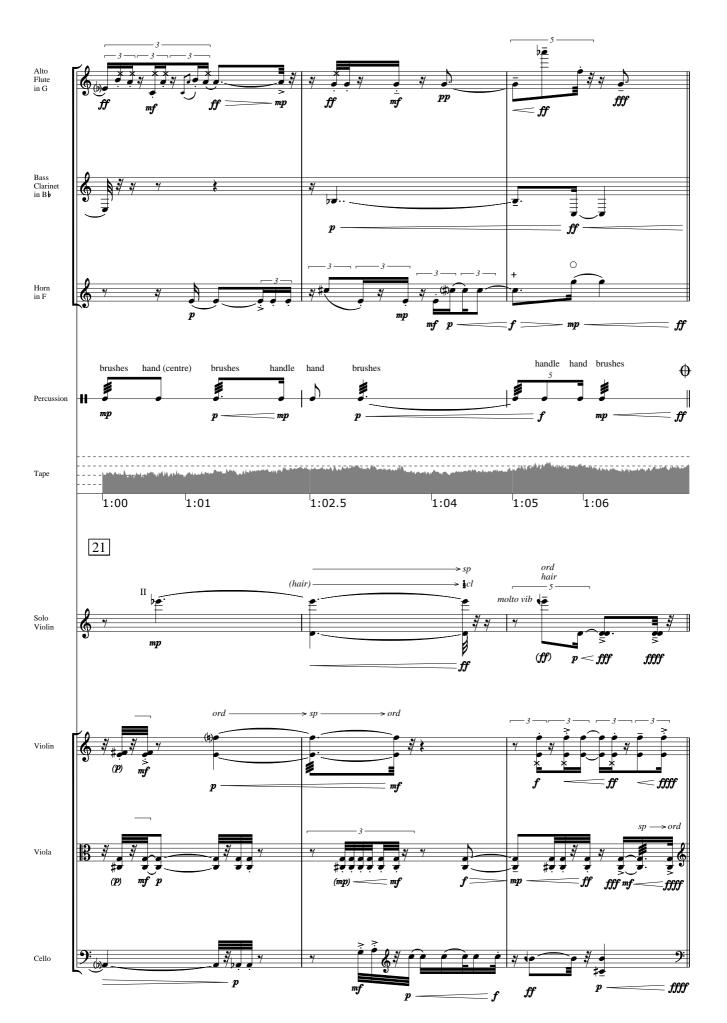


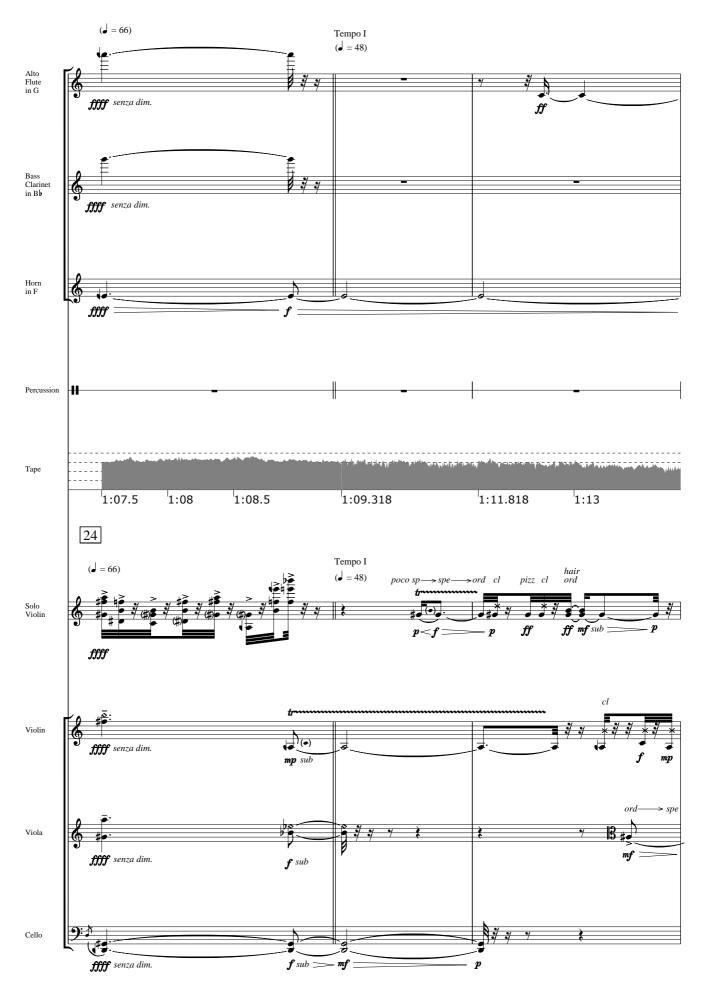






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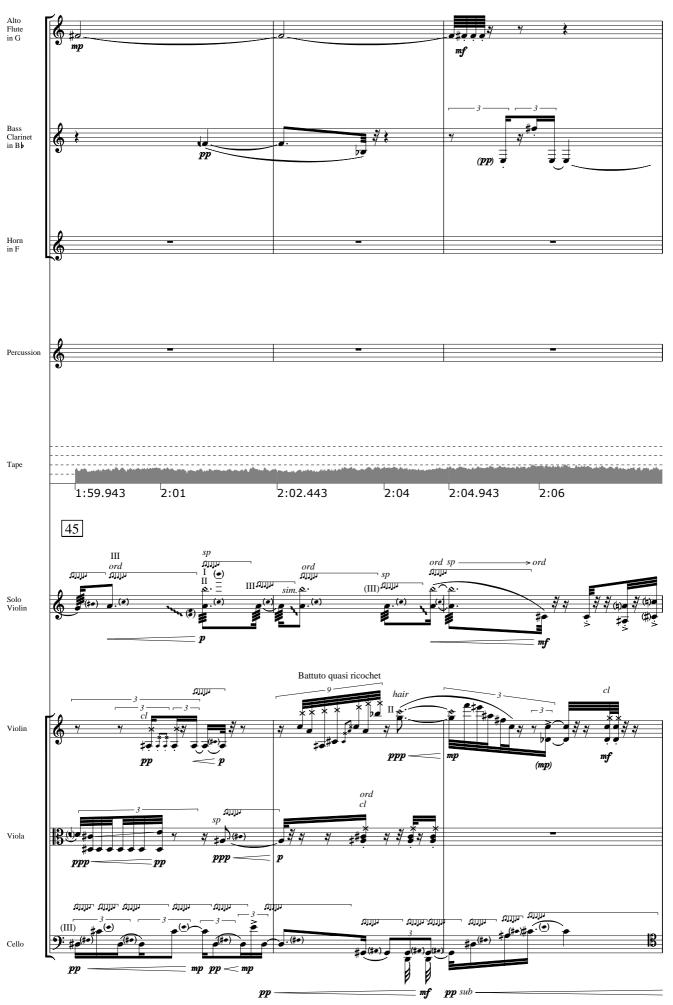






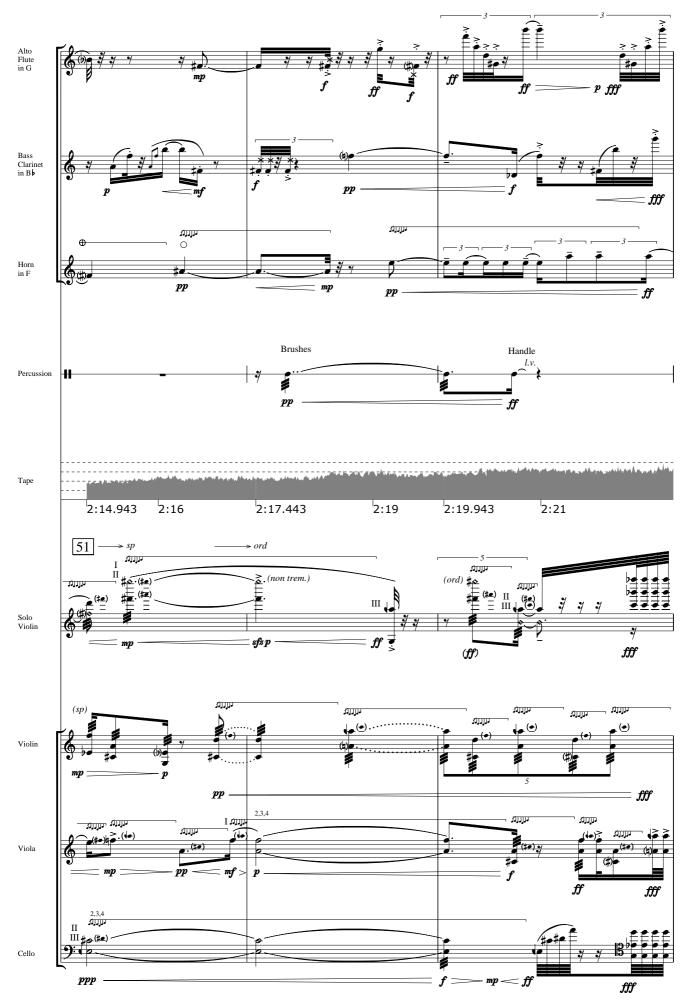


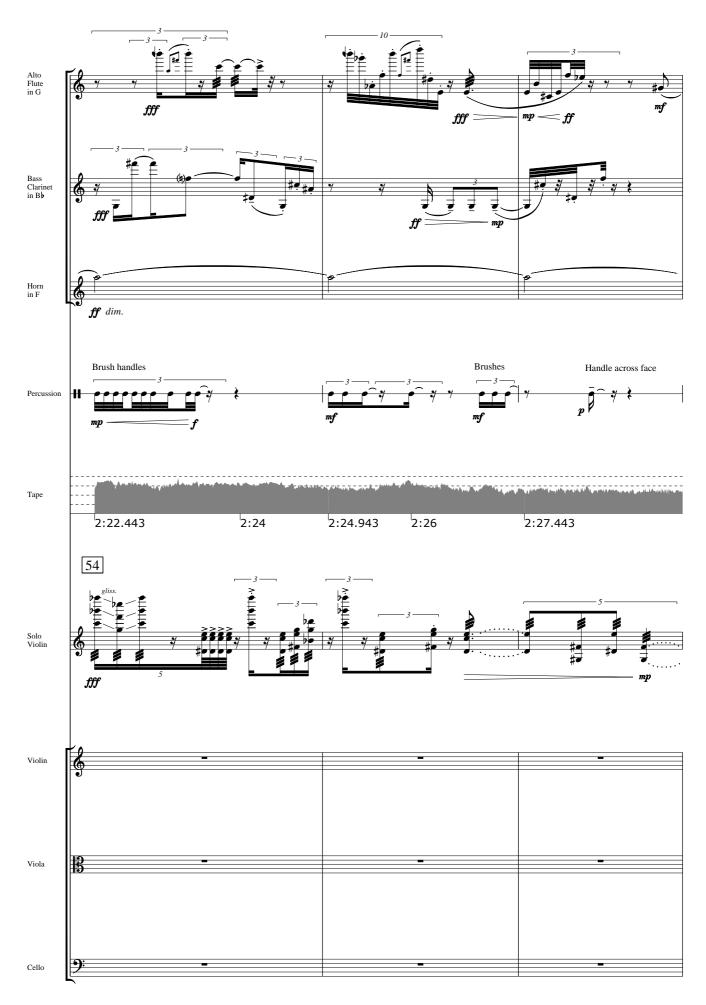


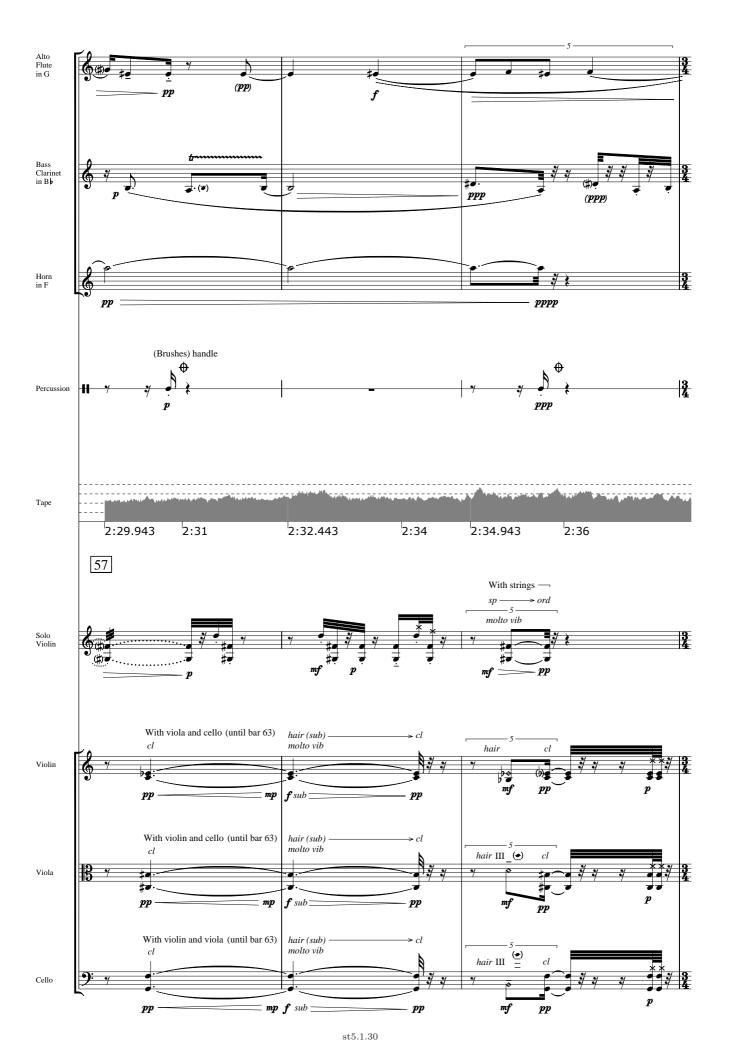


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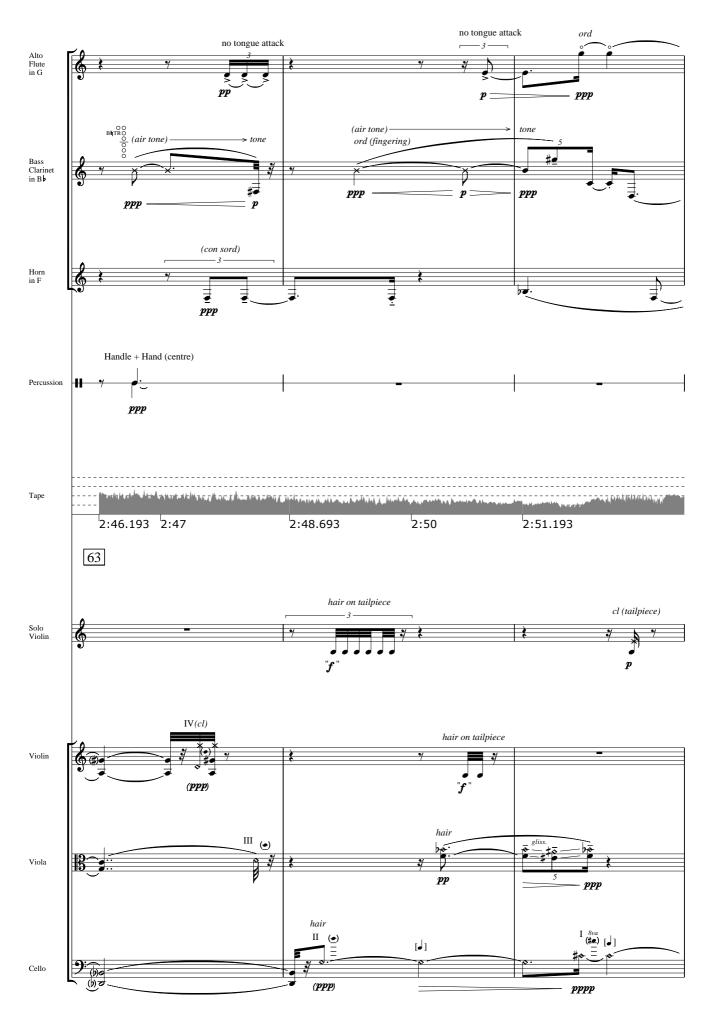


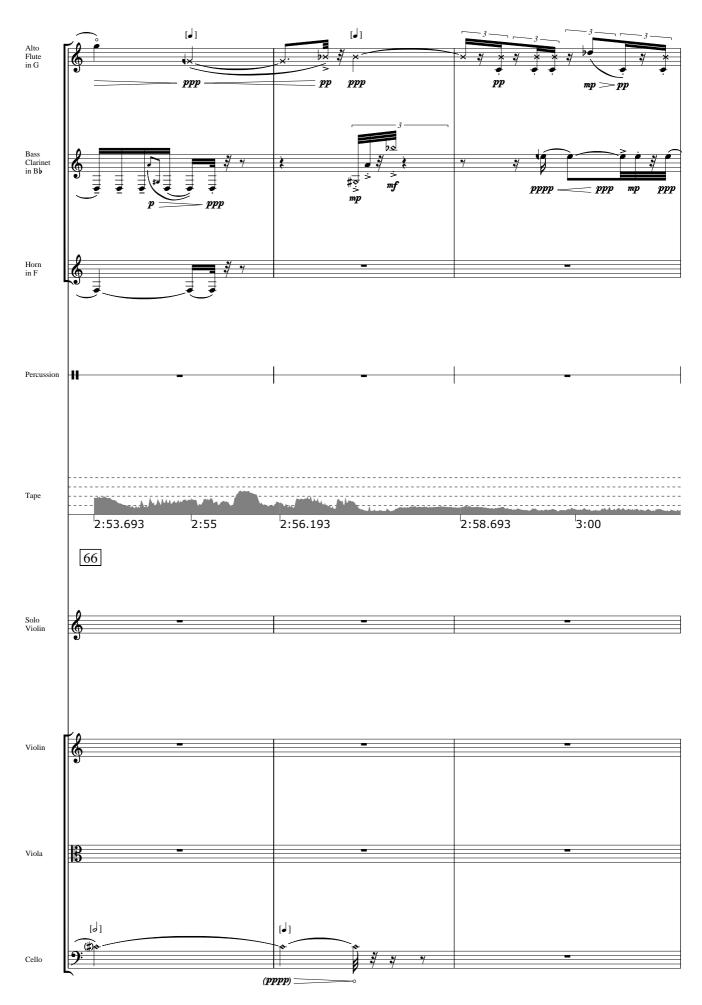




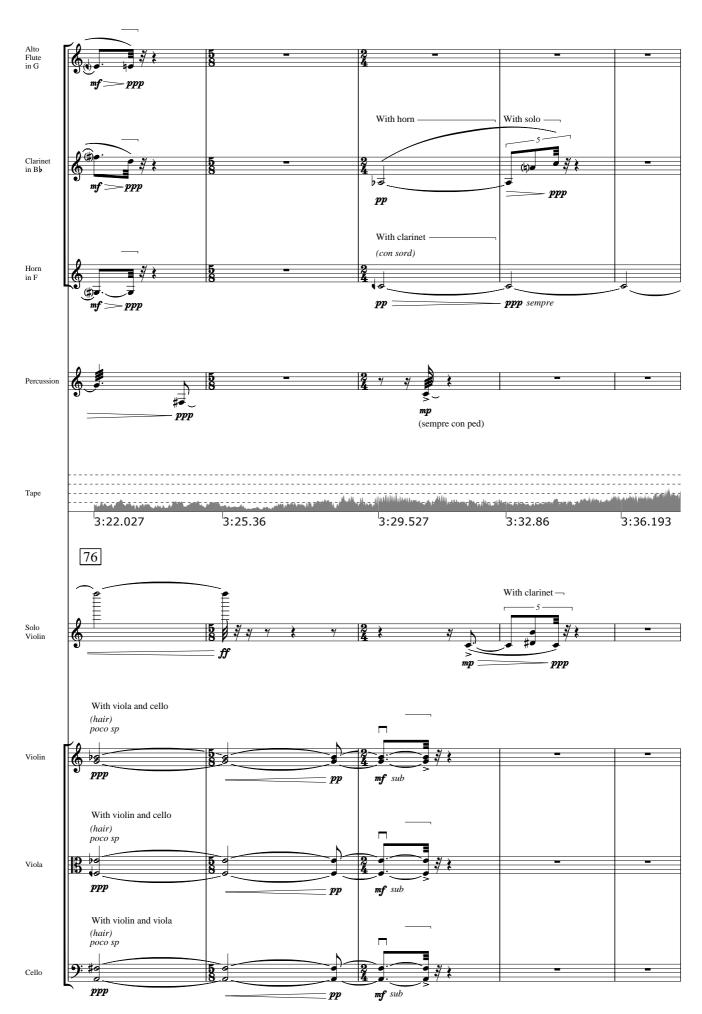


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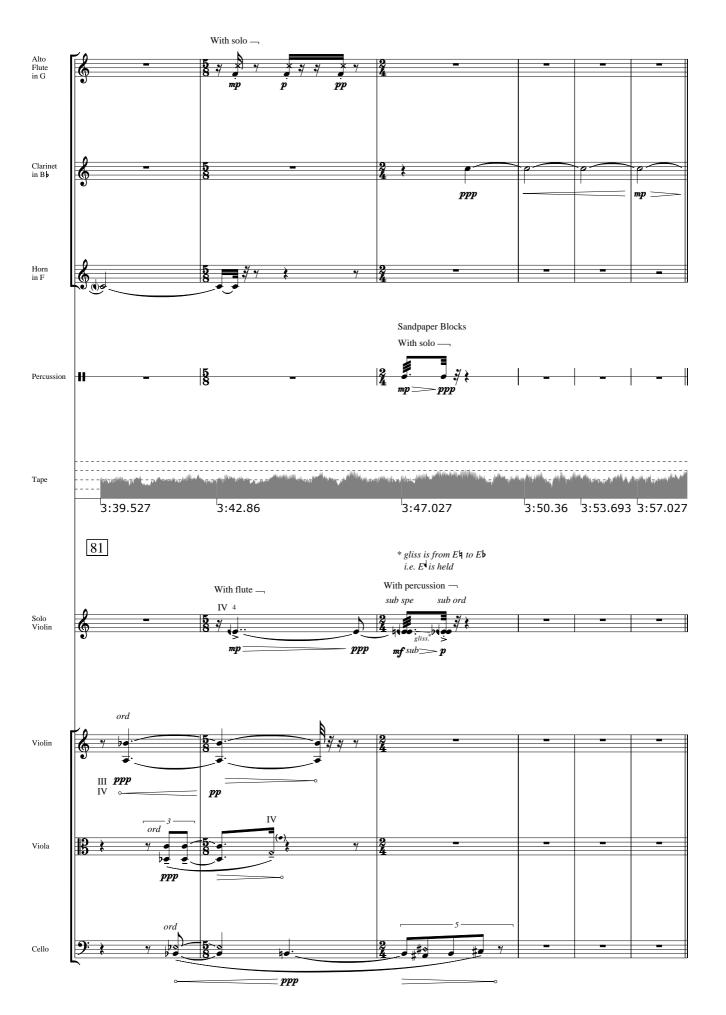






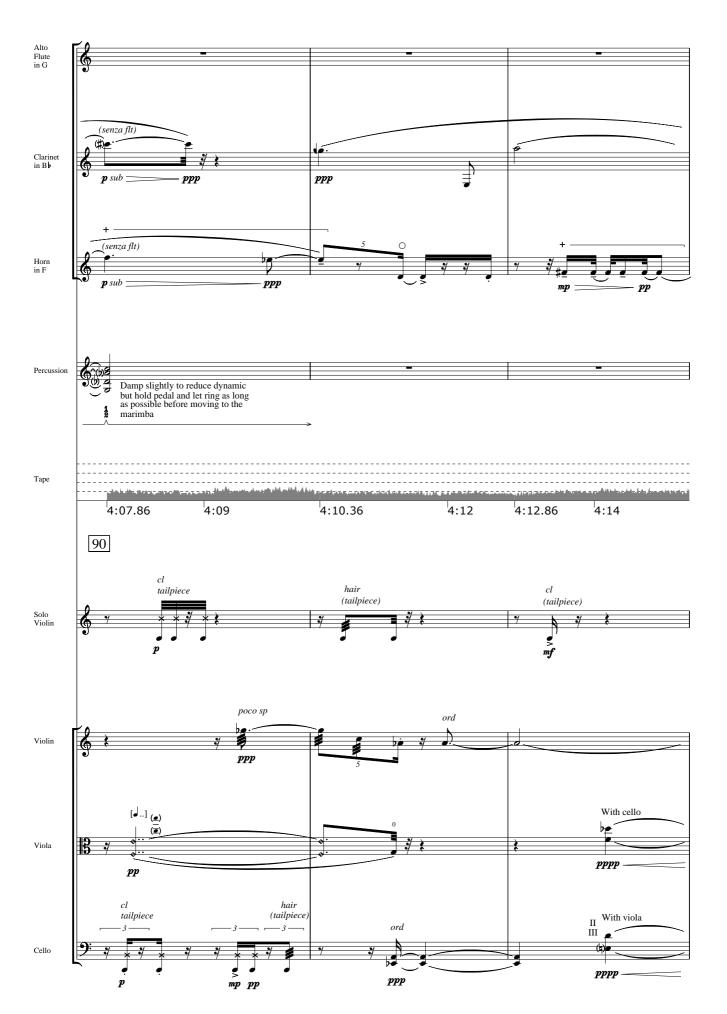


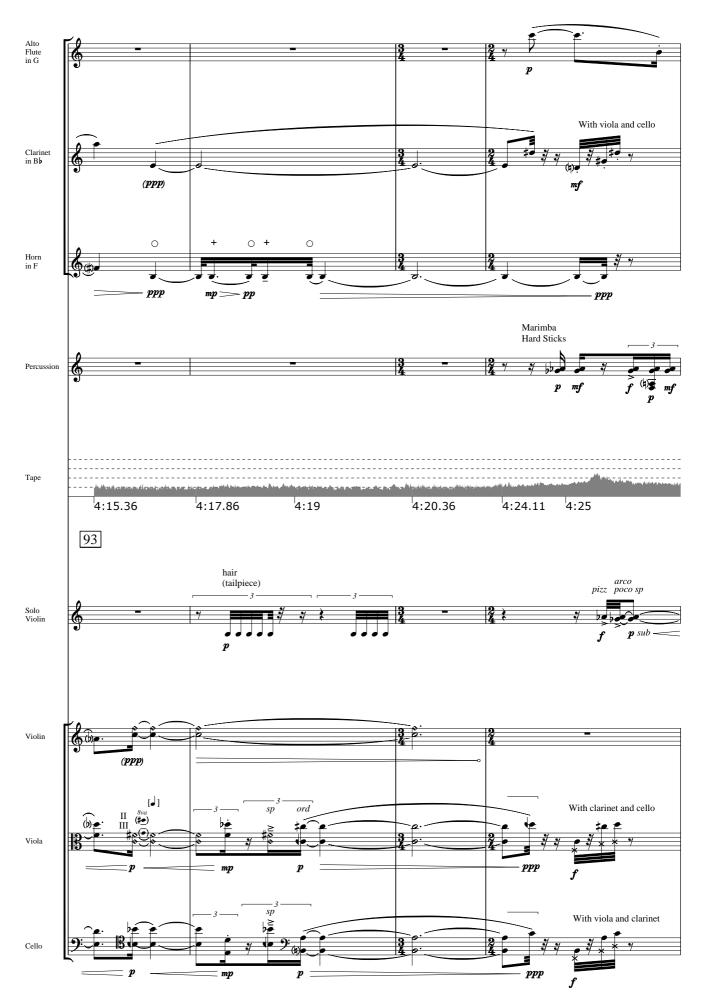
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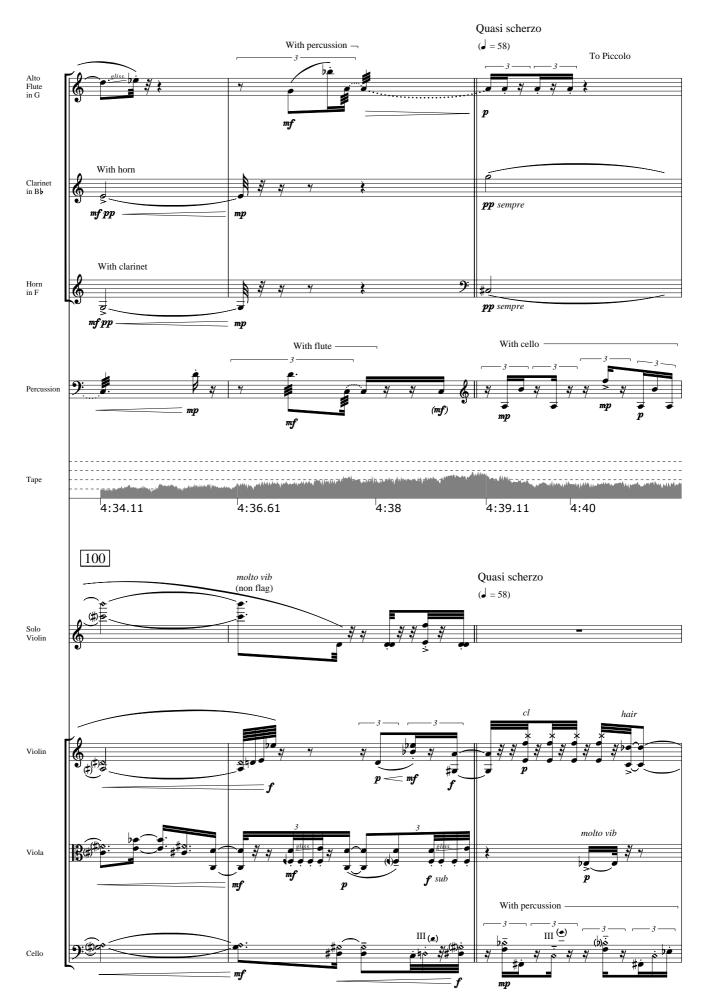
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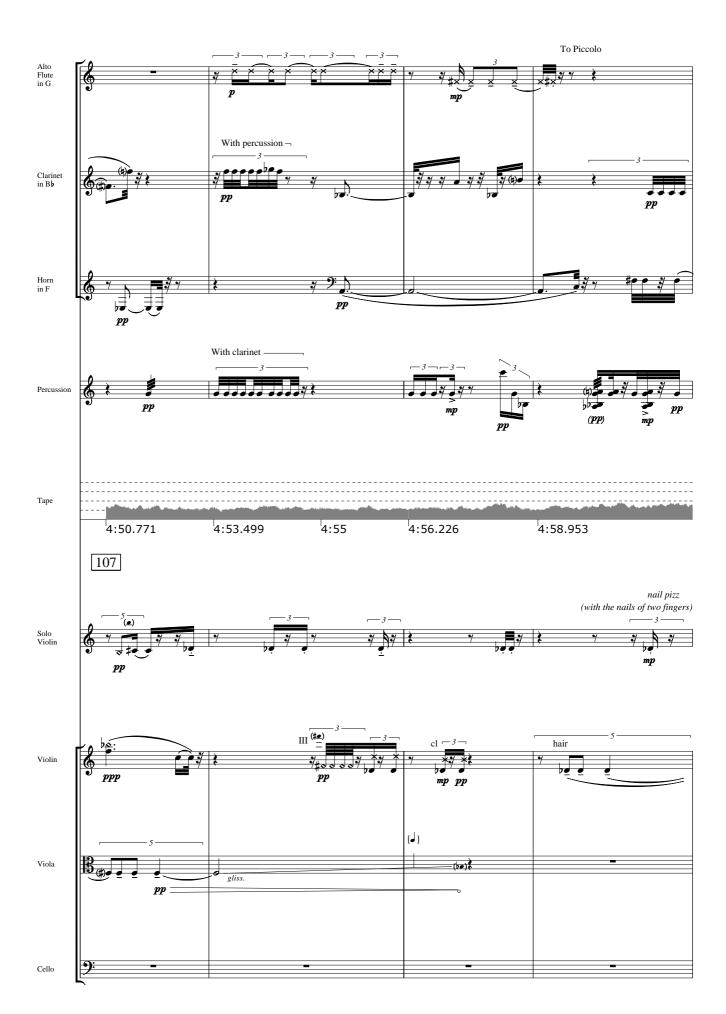


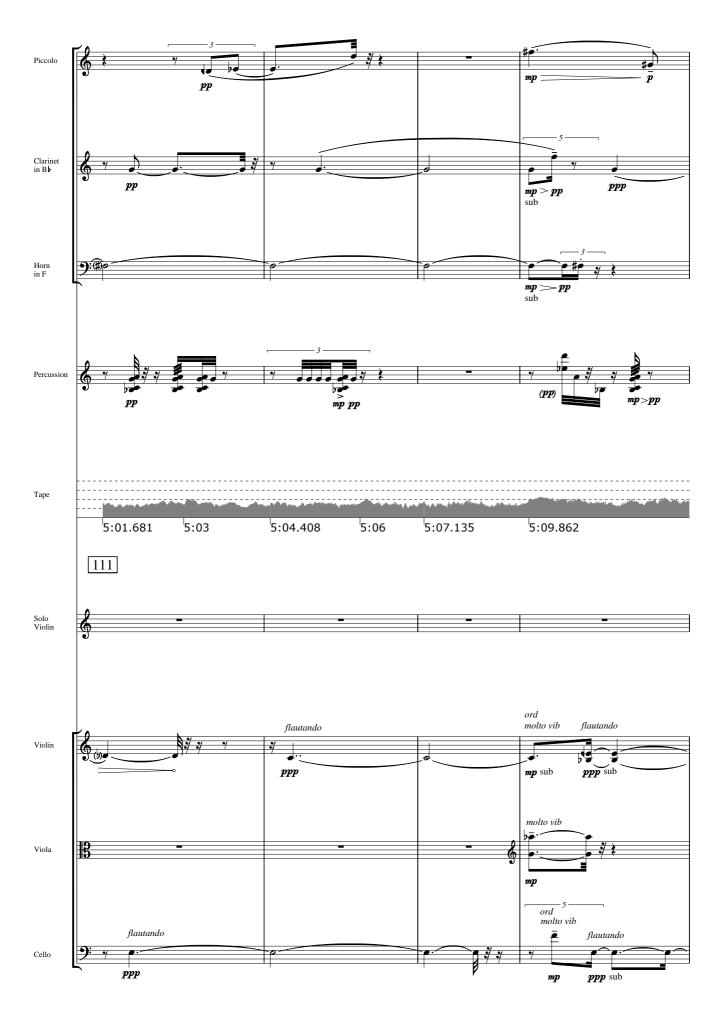


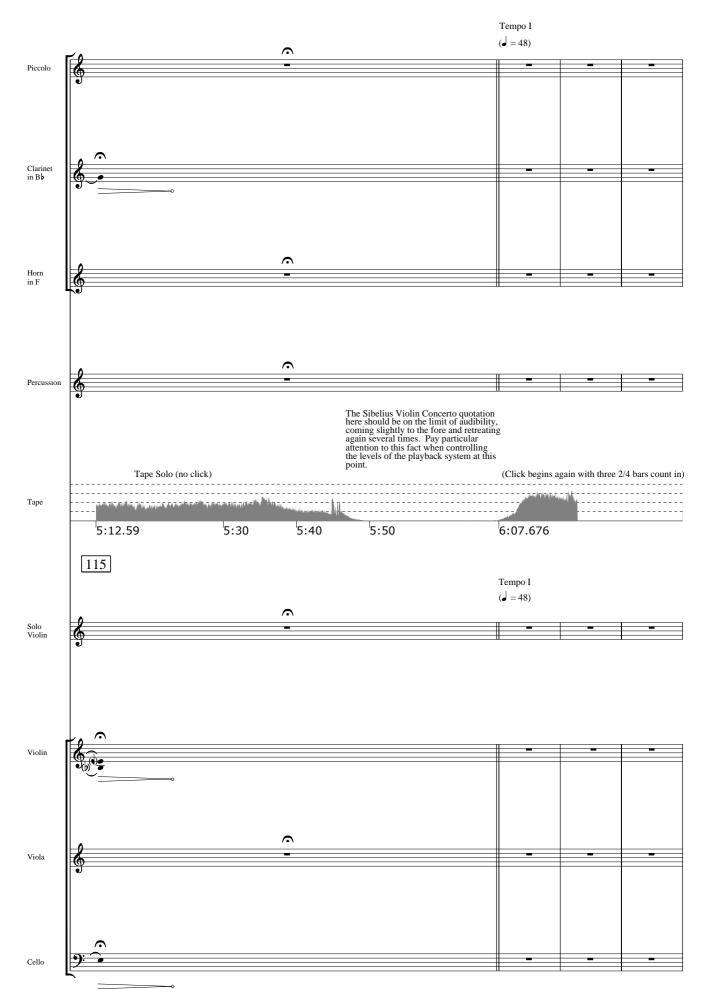
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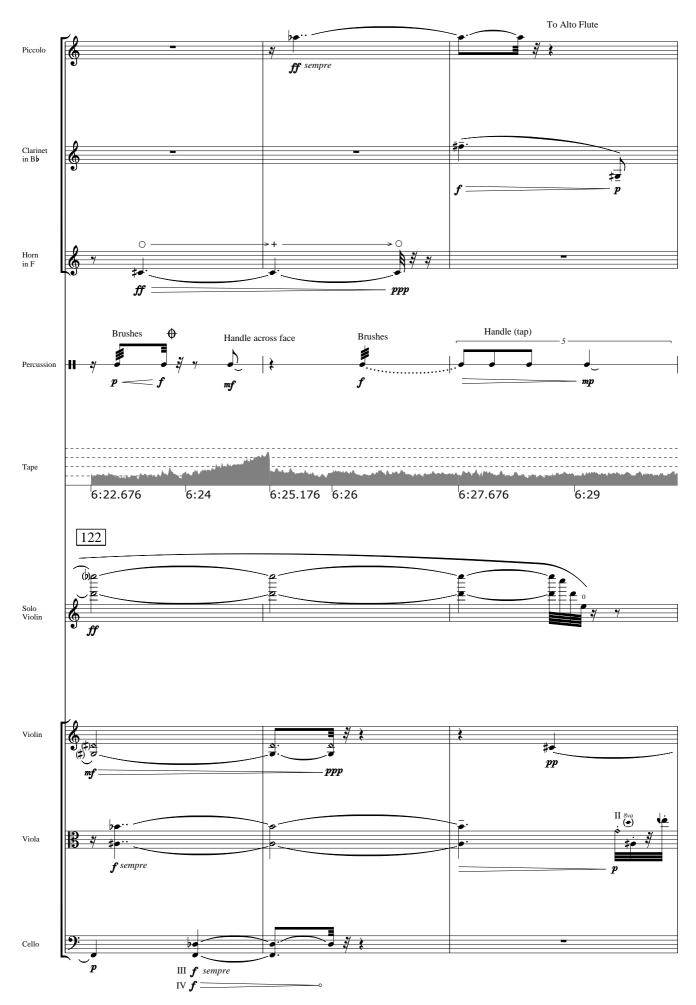




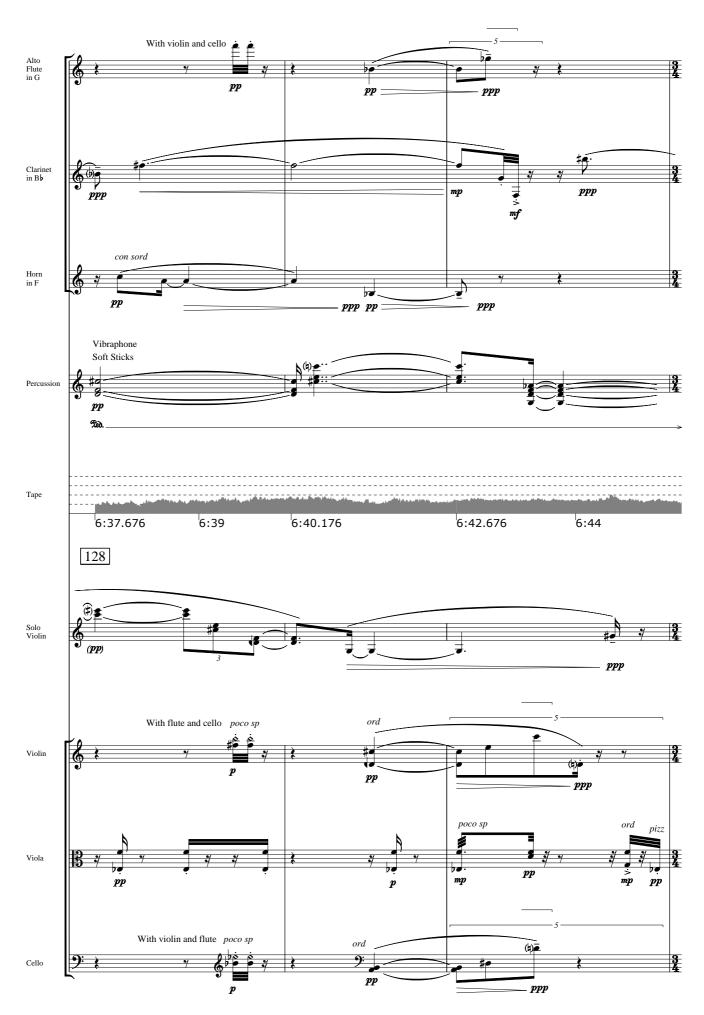




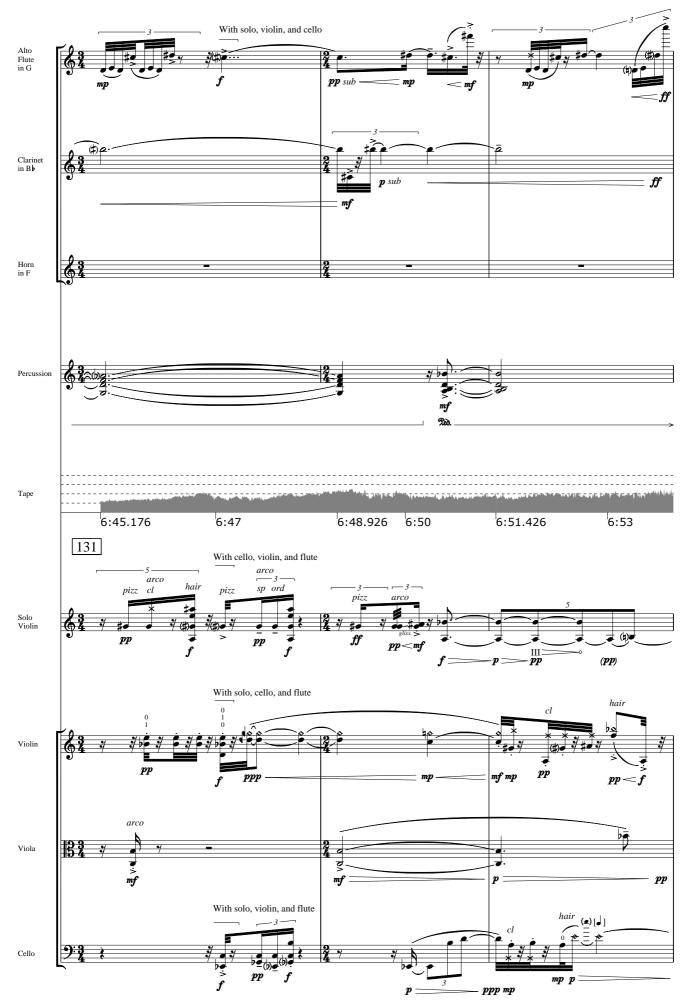








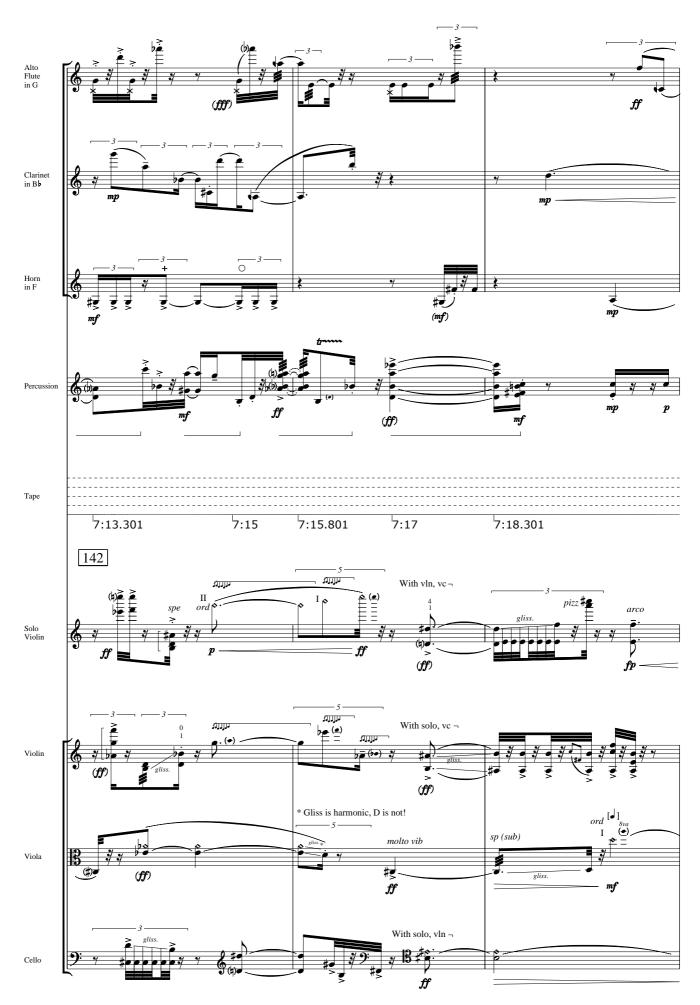
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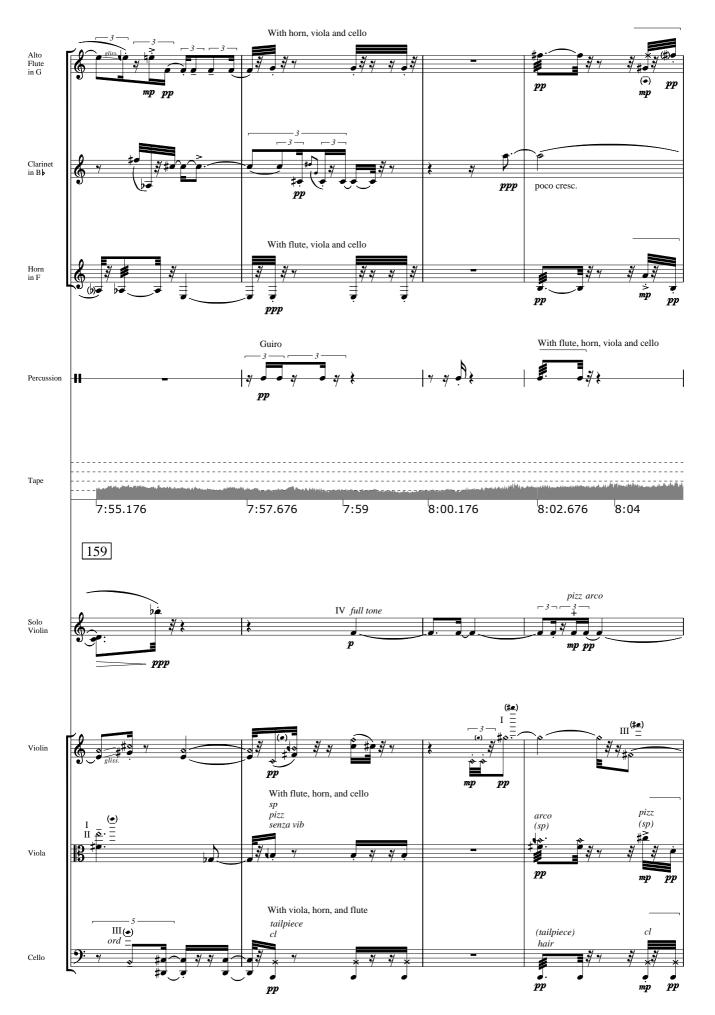


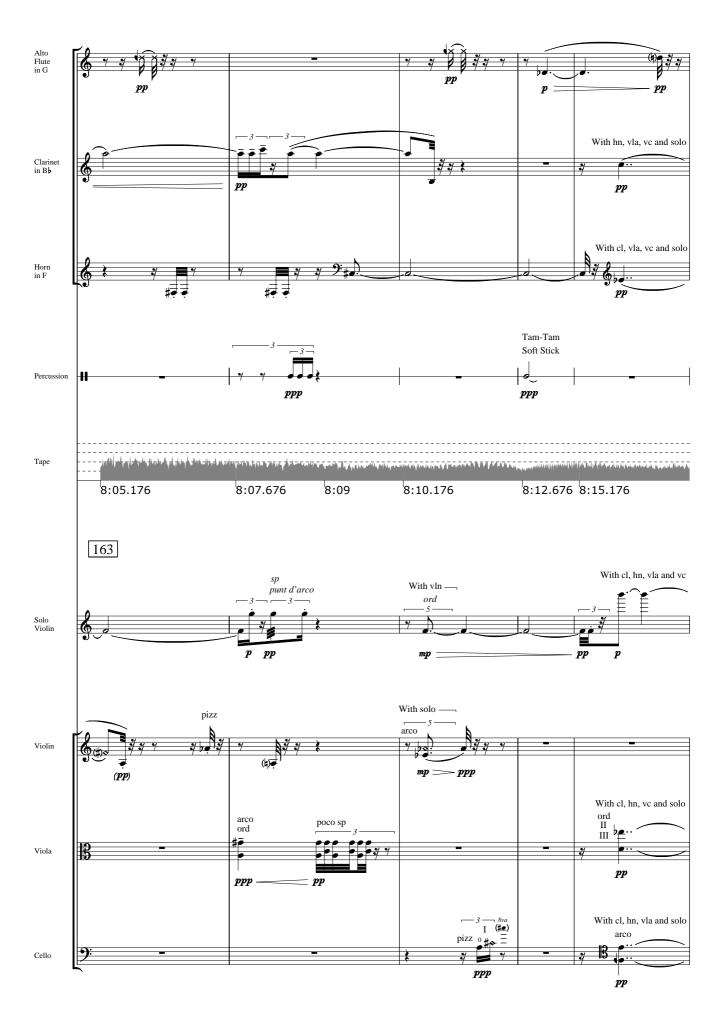


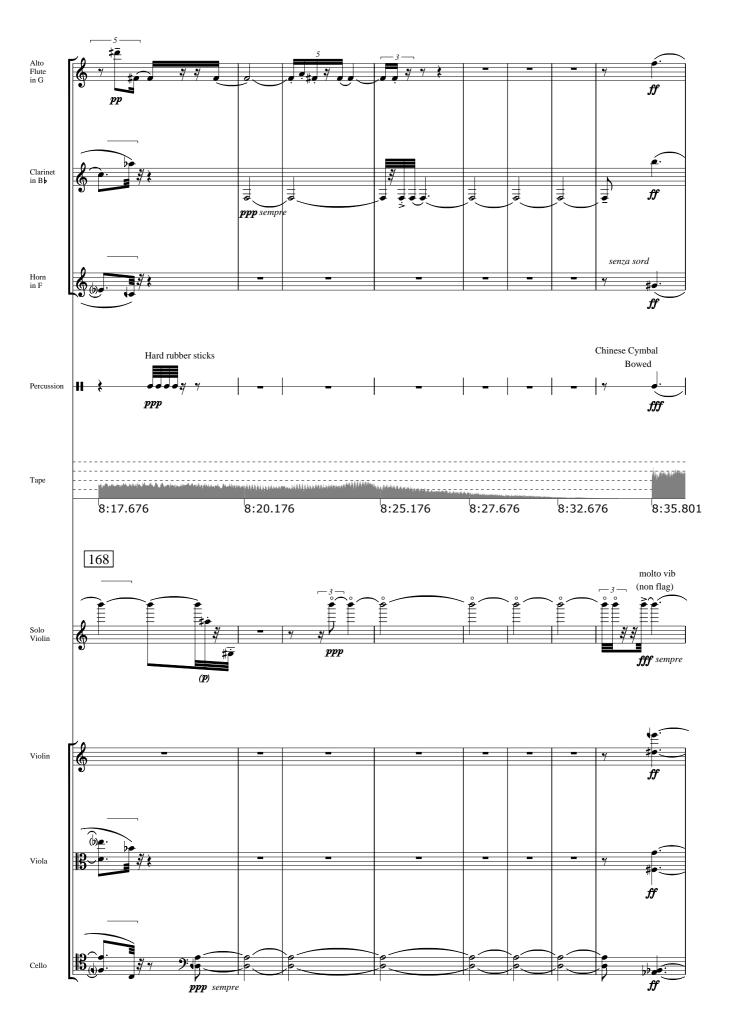


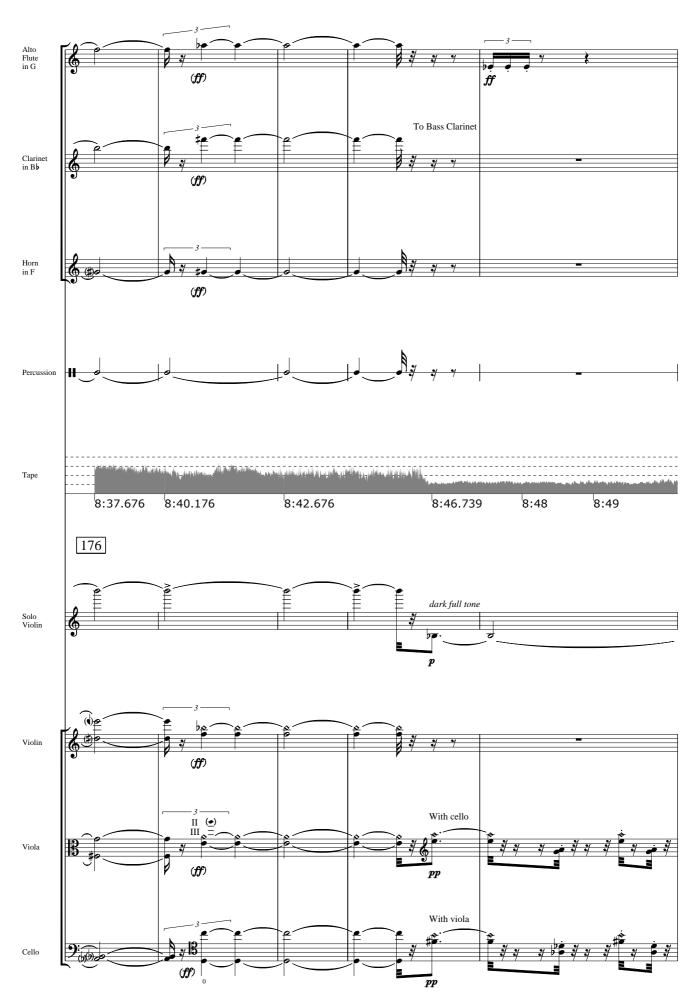














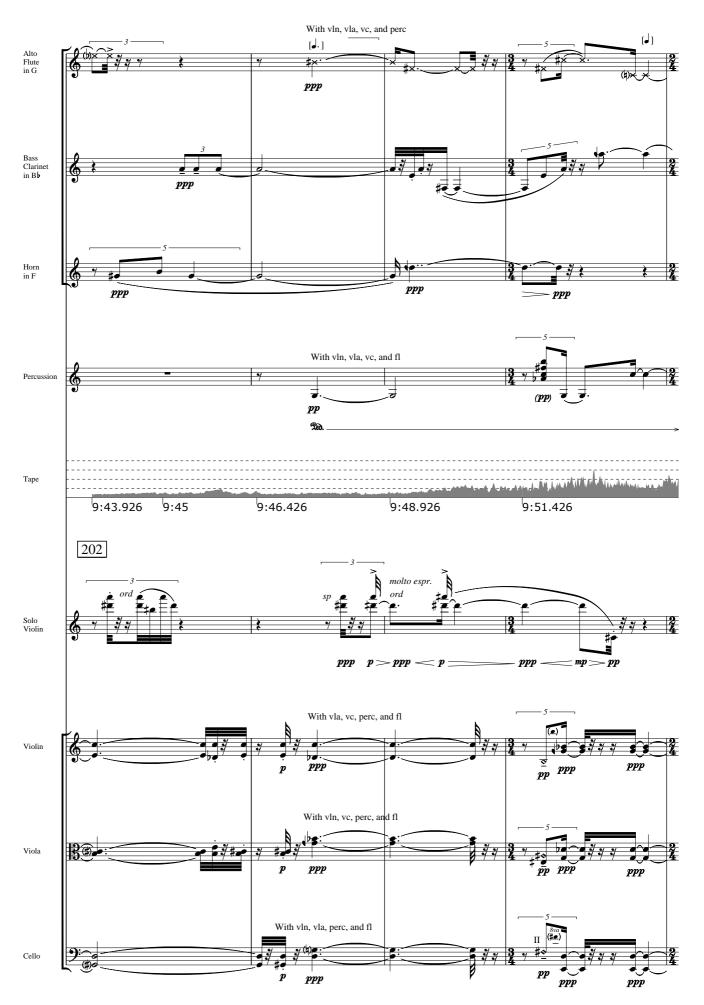


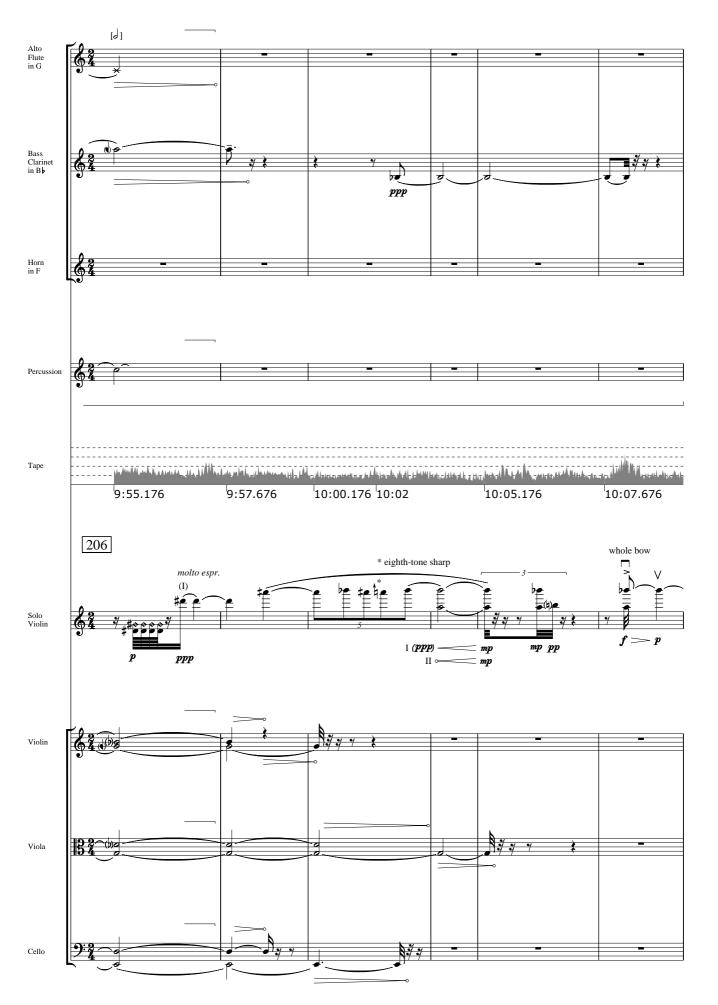


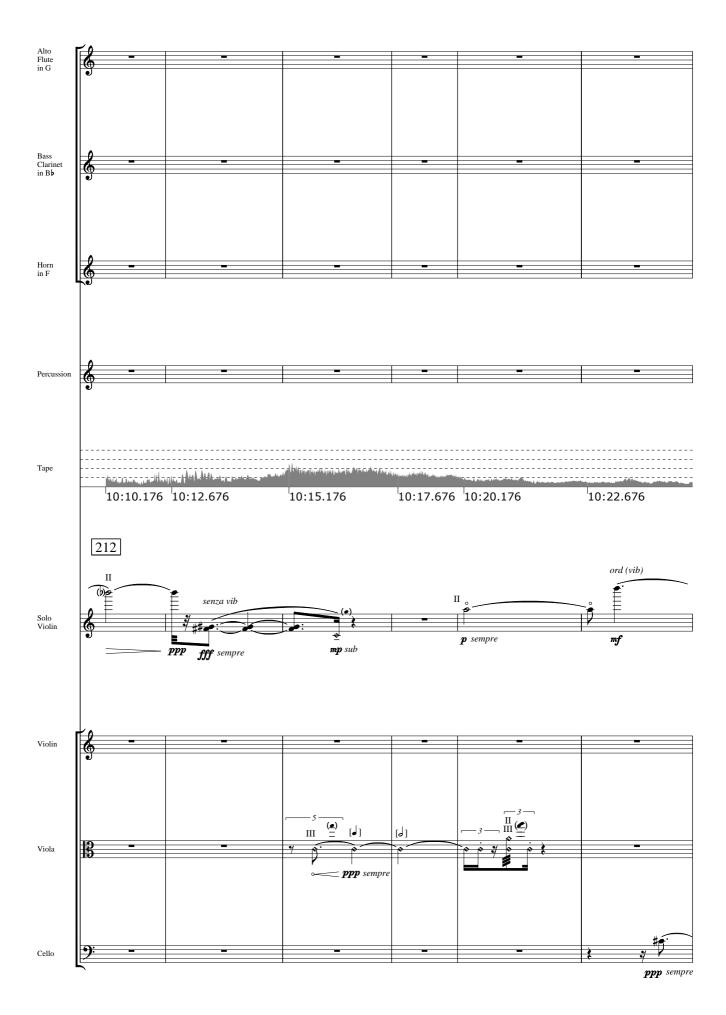


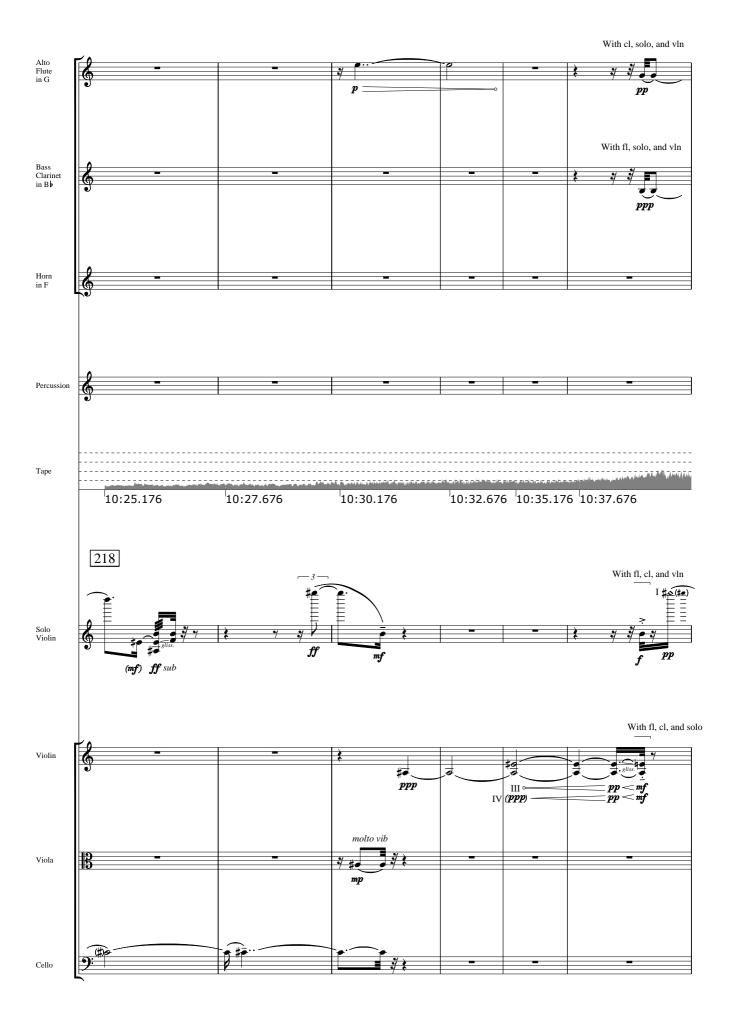


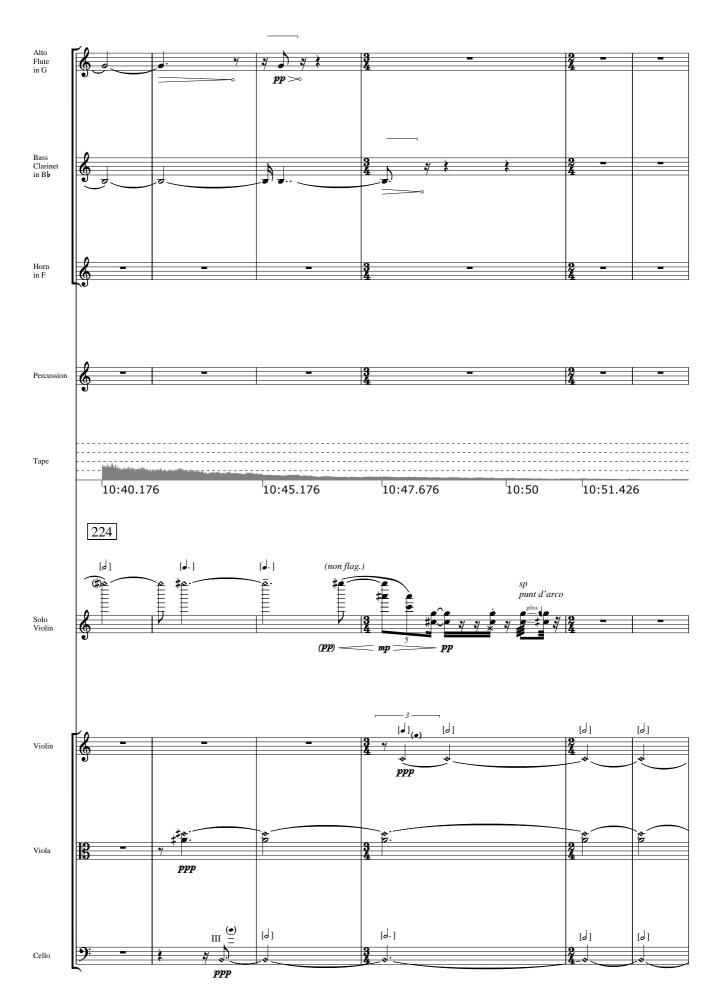
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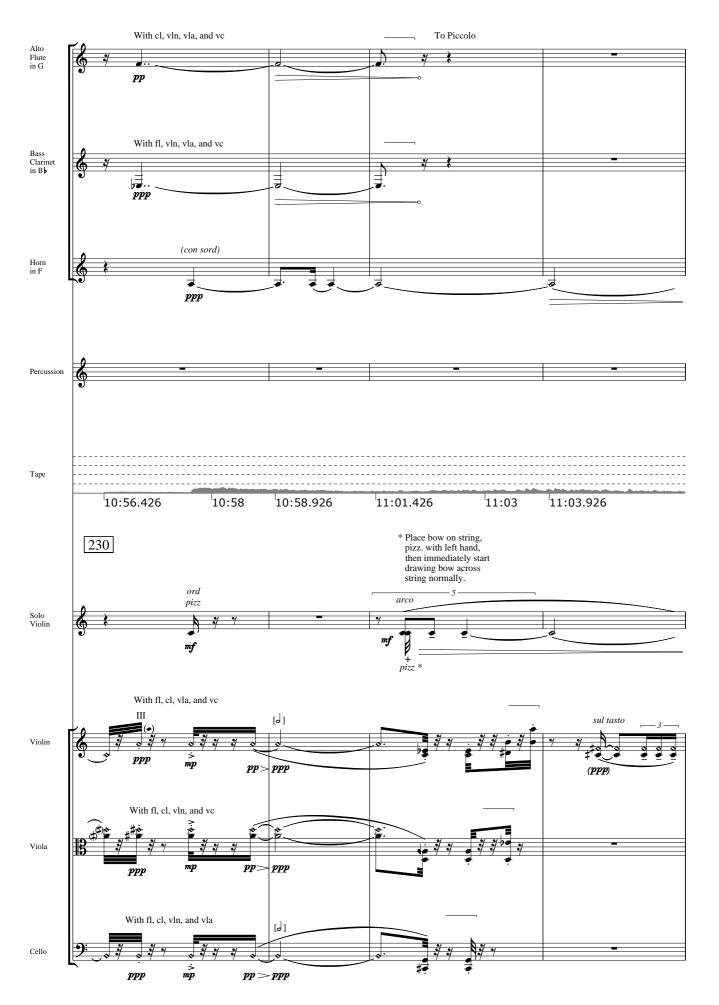


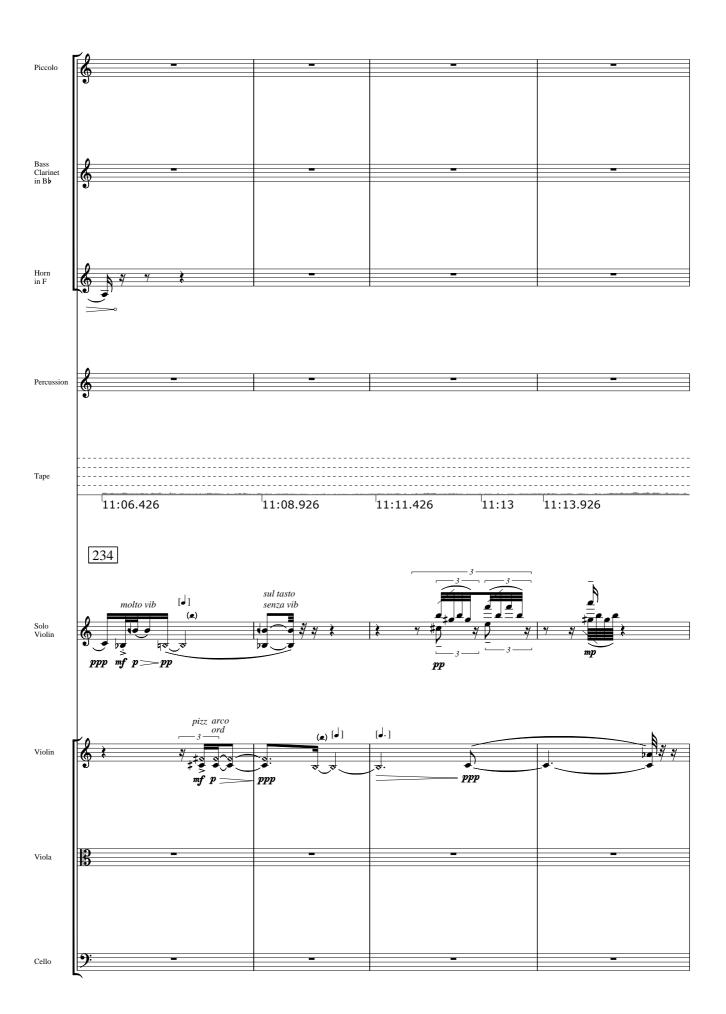








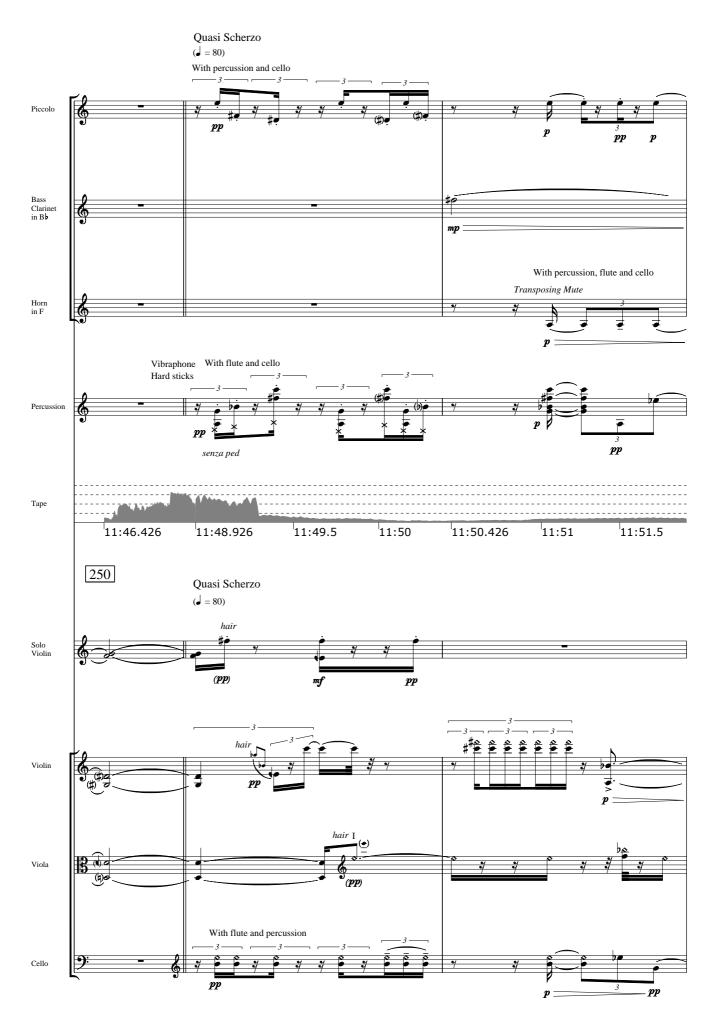


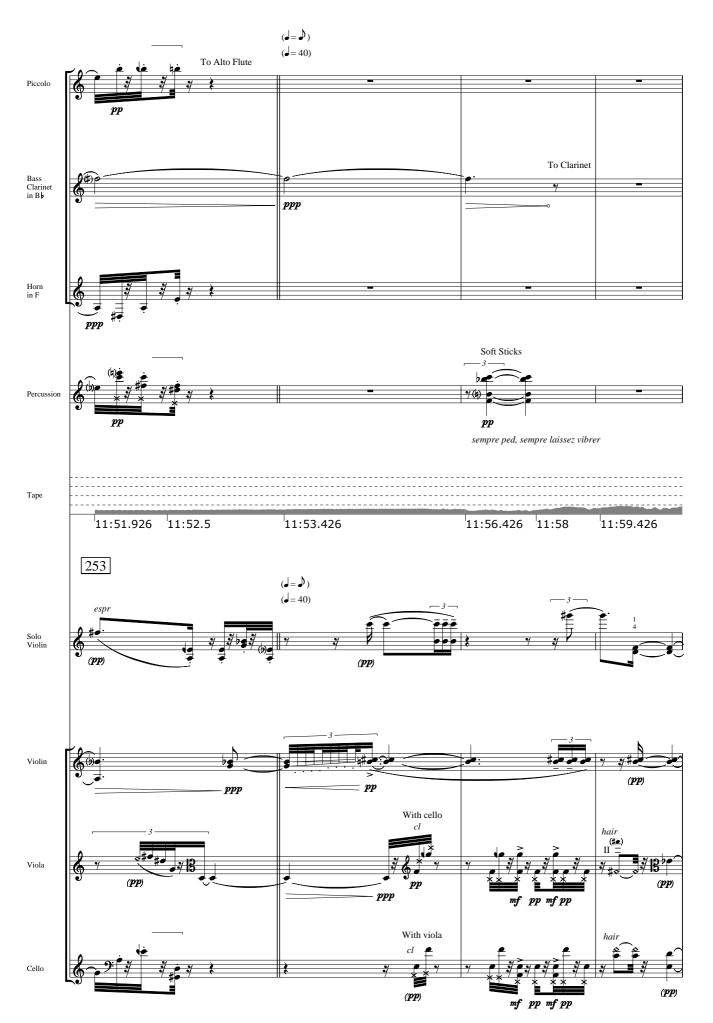




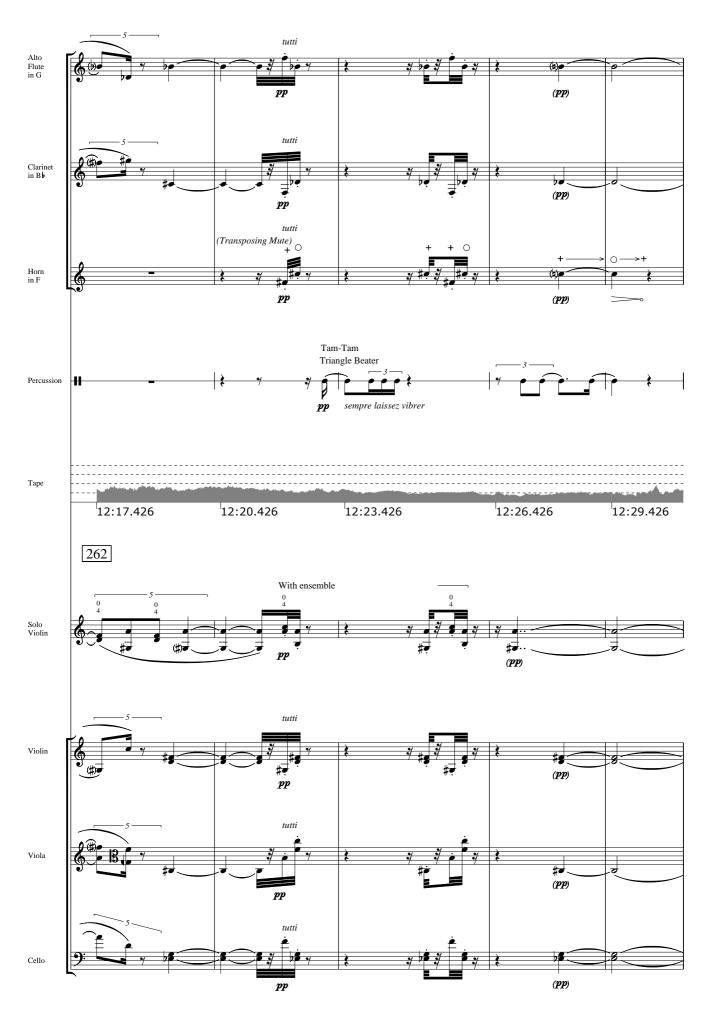


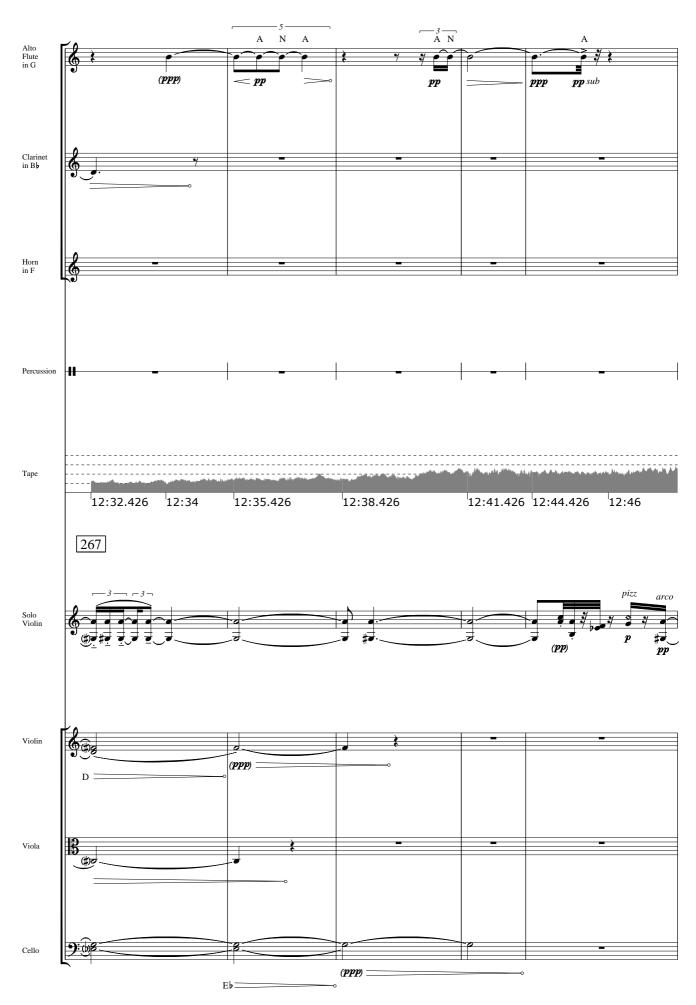












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