Rhythm

For Percussion Ensemble and Narrator

By

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A Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Music

Approved April 2018 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Jody Rockmaker, Chair
Rodney Rogers
Kotoka Suzuki

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Rhythm is a work for percussion ensemble and narrator. The percussion ensemble includes five percussionists who each play multiple instruments. The narrator recites quotes from the book *Meter as Rhythm* by Dr. Christopher Hasty.[1] The piece is in six parts with a short introduction (mm. 1-5). The structure is delineated by the quotes from *Meter as Rhythm*. The narrator describes an aspect of rhythm at the beginning of each section and the quote is sonically realized through the percussion ensemble.

This piece experiments with different timbres and rhythmic motives. Timbral variety is achieved through grouping instruments into woods, metals, and membranes and using combinations of those groups to delineate different sections and ideas. The rhythmic motives are based on the numbers 3, 5, and 7, and appear as rhythmic values, phrase lengths, and number of repetitions.

The first section states a definition of rhythm and contains all timbres and motives contained within the composition. The piece then explores the relativity of time and is represented by drums changing the speed of their notes. The third section discusses rhythm as repetition and is illustrated by repetitive rhythmic motives. The text then features rhythm as a subjective human experience and is reflected through polyrhythms played between ensemble members. What follows is a description of meter as a temporal measurement that is unchanged by rhythmic activity. By bringing back previous motives, this section reveals that all of the motives work within the same meter. In the final

[1] Christopher Hasty, *Meter as Rhythm* (Oxford University Press, 1997).

section, the performers play various subdivisions of the beat to show different aspects of proportion by dividing the beat in several ways.

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INSTRUMENTATION

Narrator

Percussion 1: Temple Blocks (2), Floor Tom, Snare, Cowbell

Percussion 2: Low Temple Block, Glockenspiel, Large Cowbell,

Conga, Castanet, Triangle, Snare Drum

Percussion 3: Agogo Bells, Snare, Castanets, Cowbell, Triangle, Clave

Percussion 4: Wood Blocks (2), Guiro, Anvil, Bongos, Bass Drum

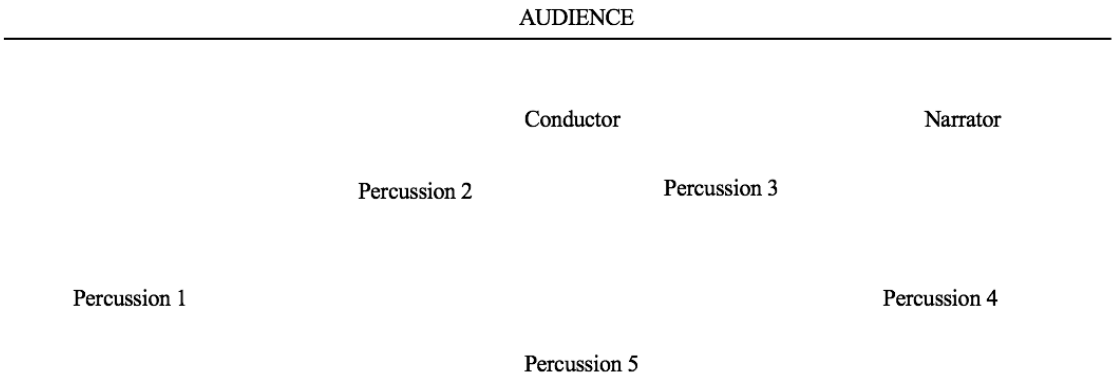
Percussion 5: Bongo, Conga, Timpano (D), Cowbell, Castanets,

Tam-tam, Chimes

Note: A rest with a fermata indicates the narrator should speak in the space created. The ensemble should start after the narrator finishes. At other times, the narrator speaks while the ensemble is playing. For these moments, the narrator should begin and end the quote within the bars marked with slash notation.

Rehearsal letters are given at section divisions.

Ensemble Setup:



Percussion Key:

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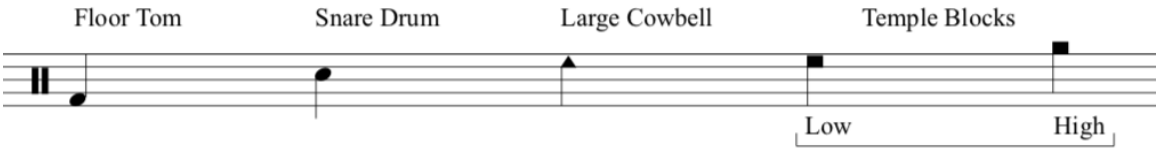

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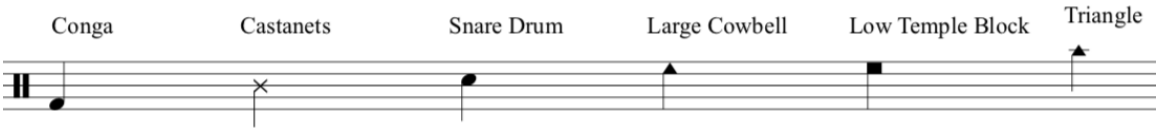

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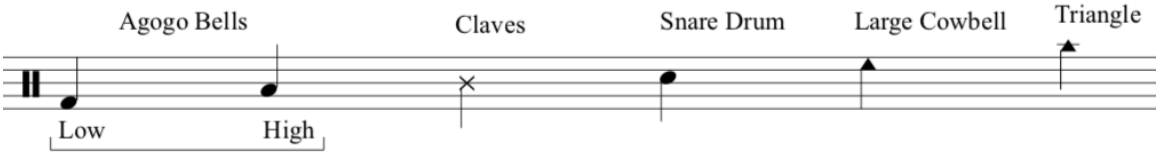

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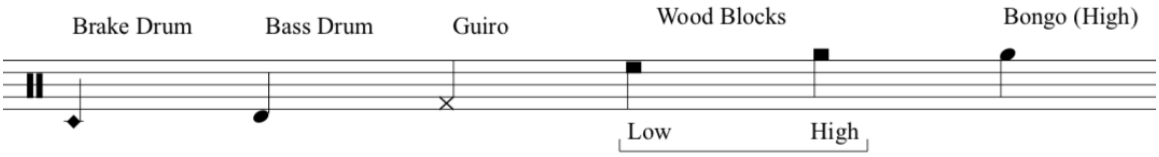

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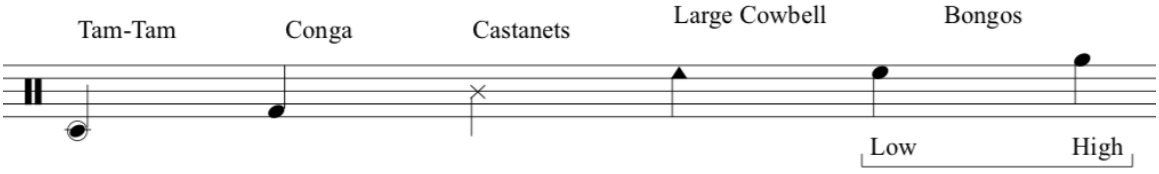
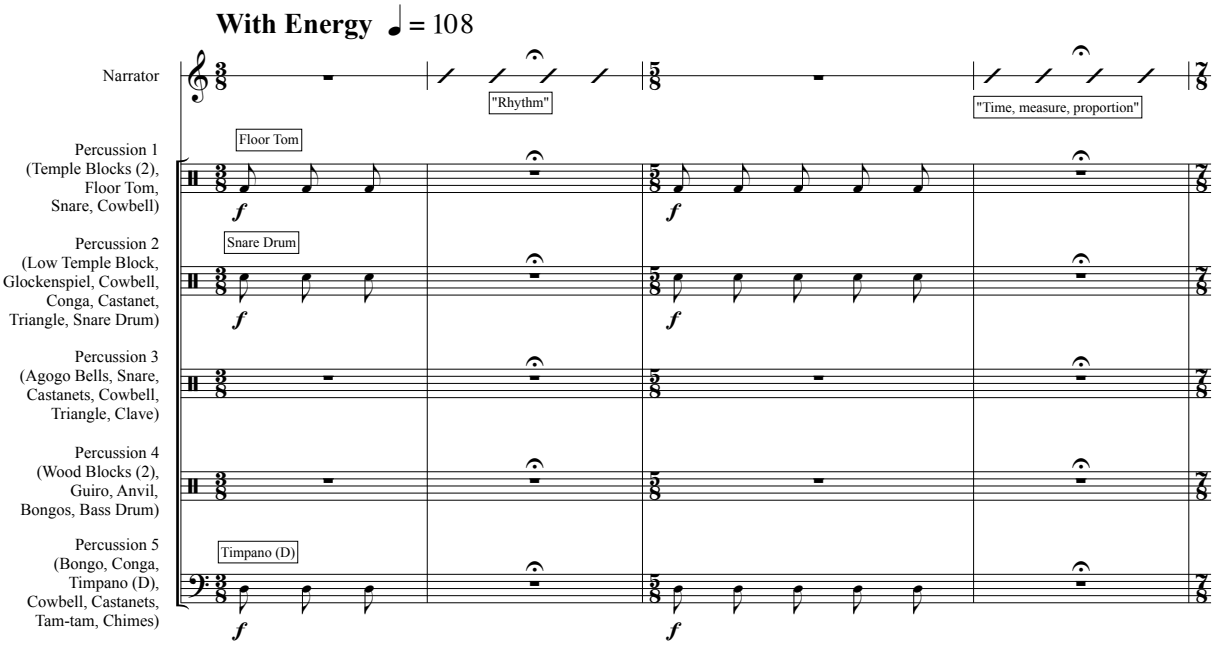


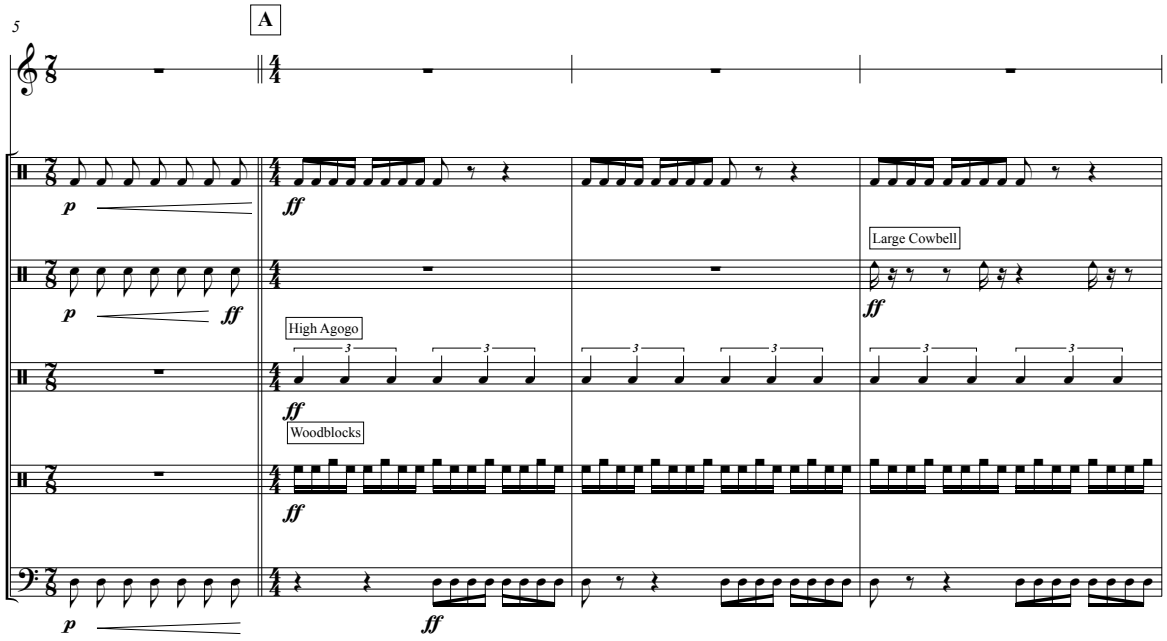
Score

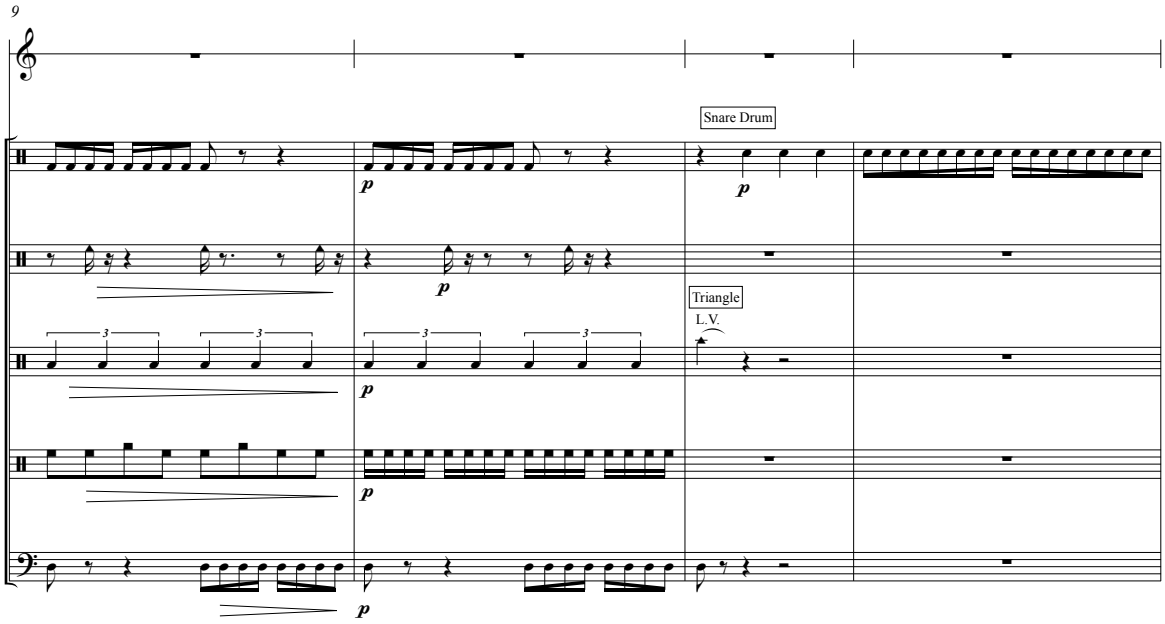
RHYTHM

for percussion ensemble and narrator

Zachary Bush (2018)



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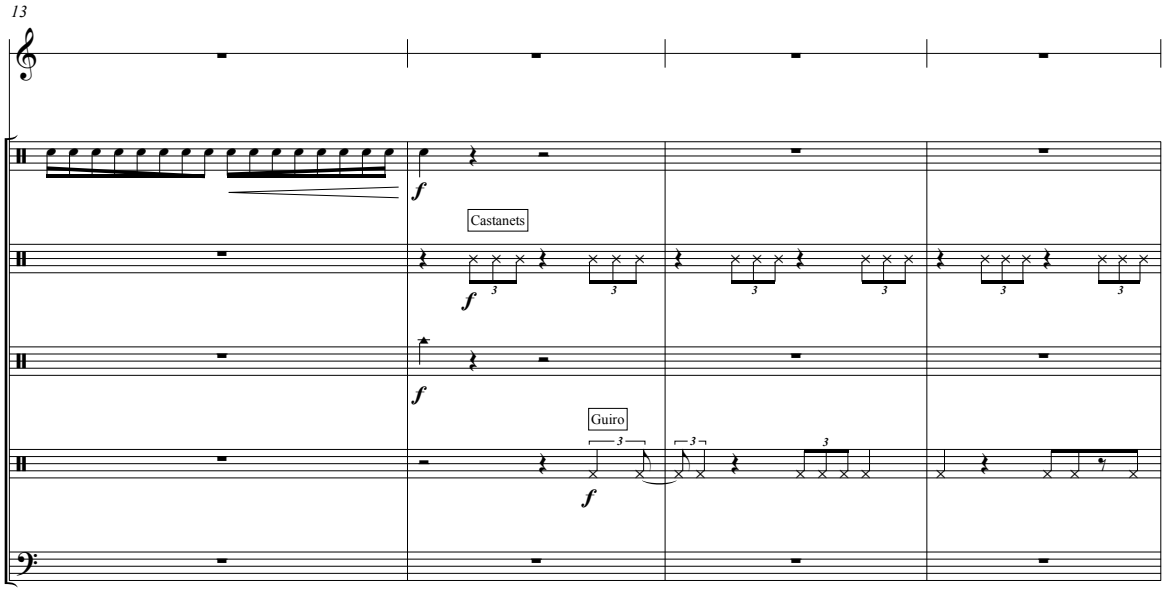
Snare Drum
Triangle
L.V.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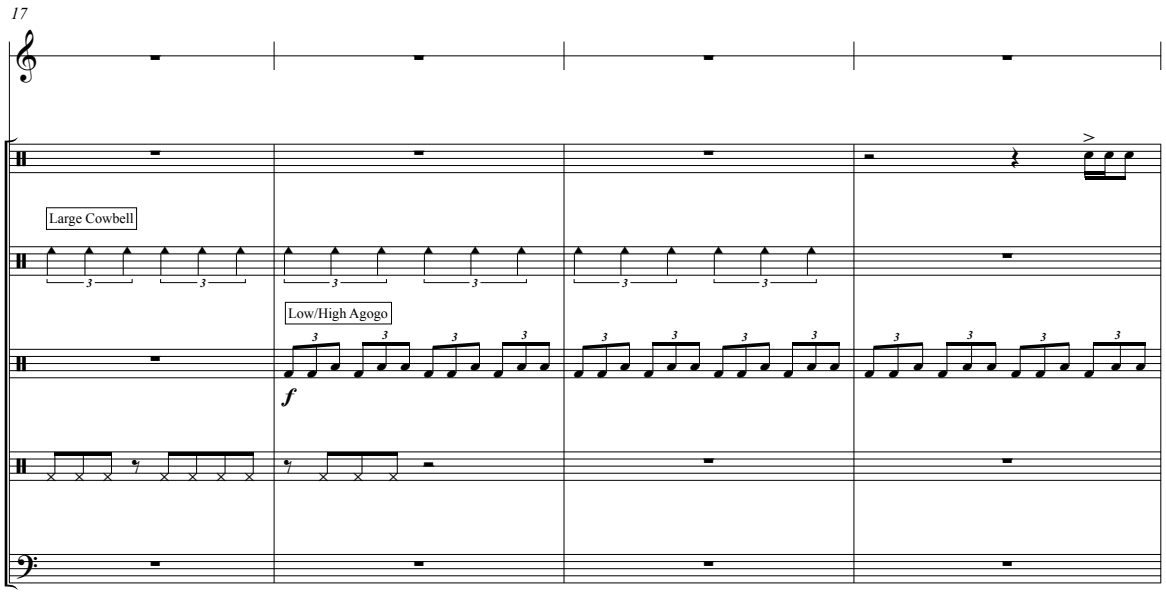
Castanets
Guiro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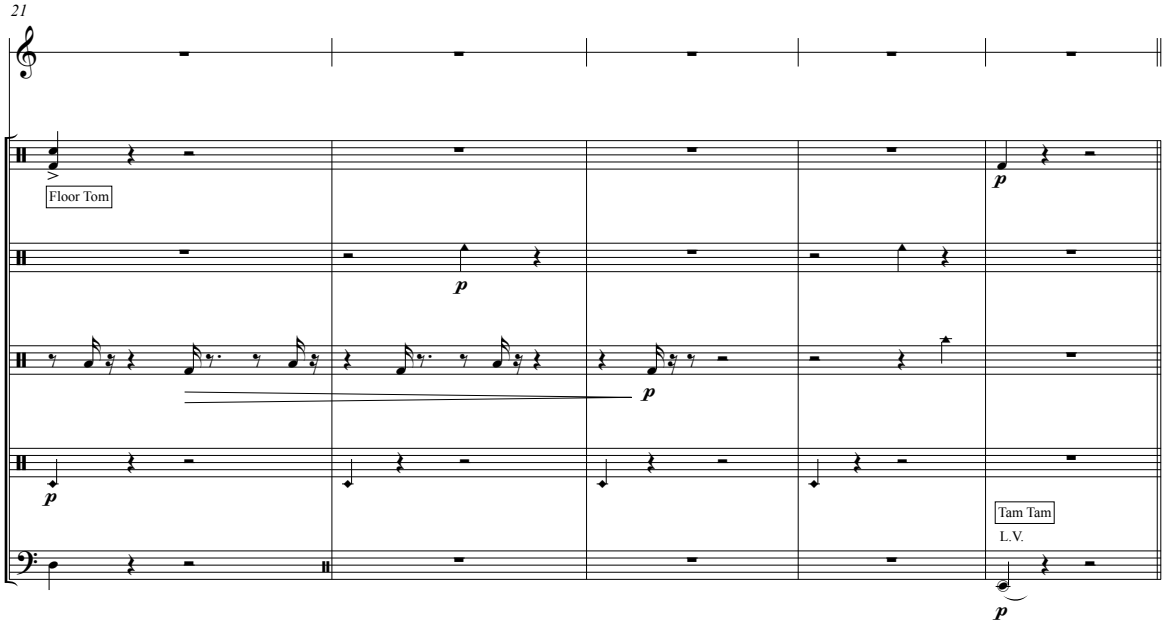
Large Cowbell
Low/High Agogo
f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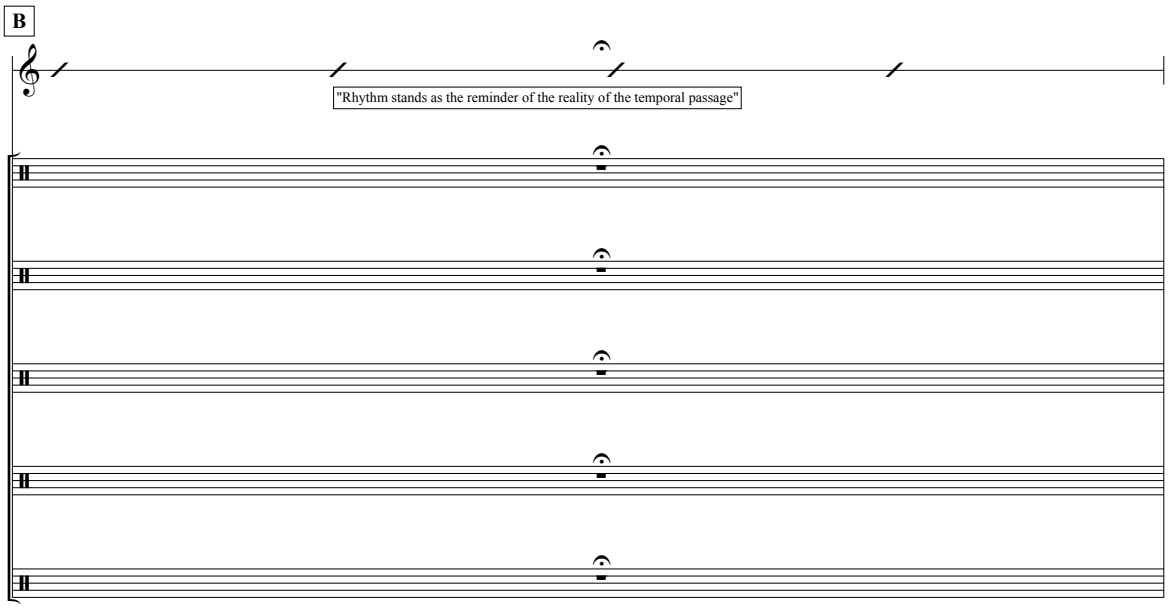
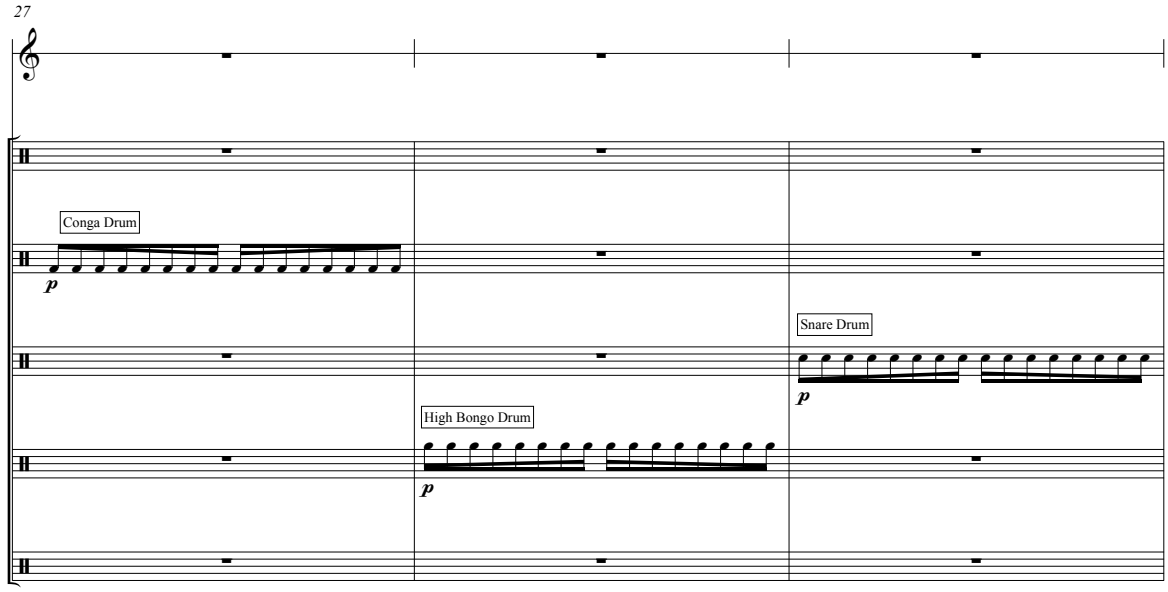
Floor Tom
p
Tam Tam
L.V.


B
"Rhythm stands as the reminder of the reality of the temporal passage"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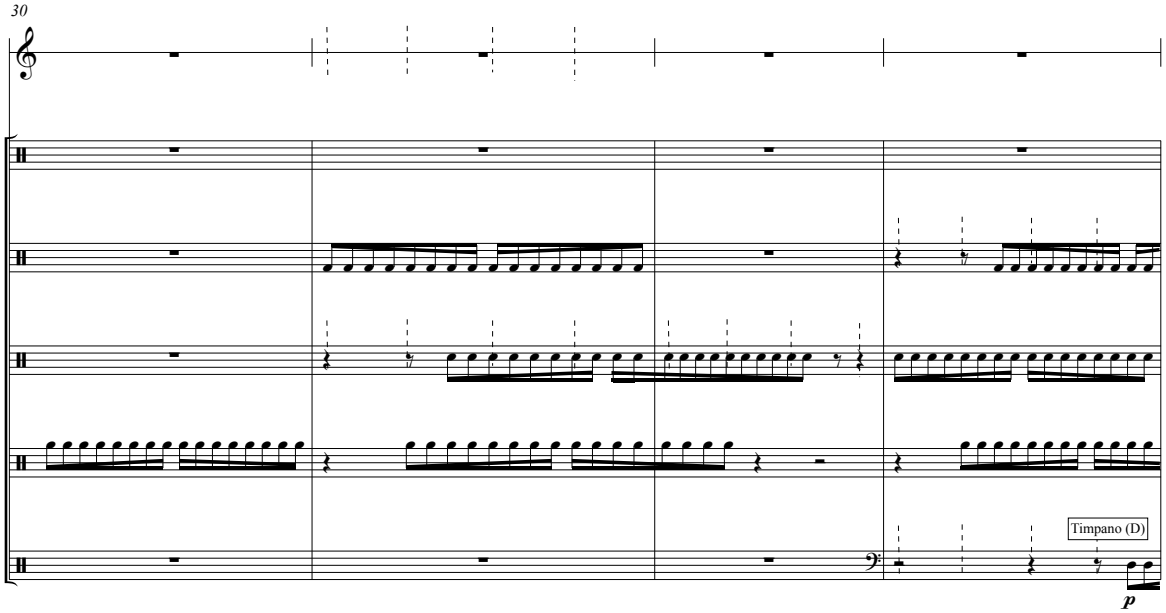
Conga Drum
p
Snare Drum
p
High Bongo Drum
p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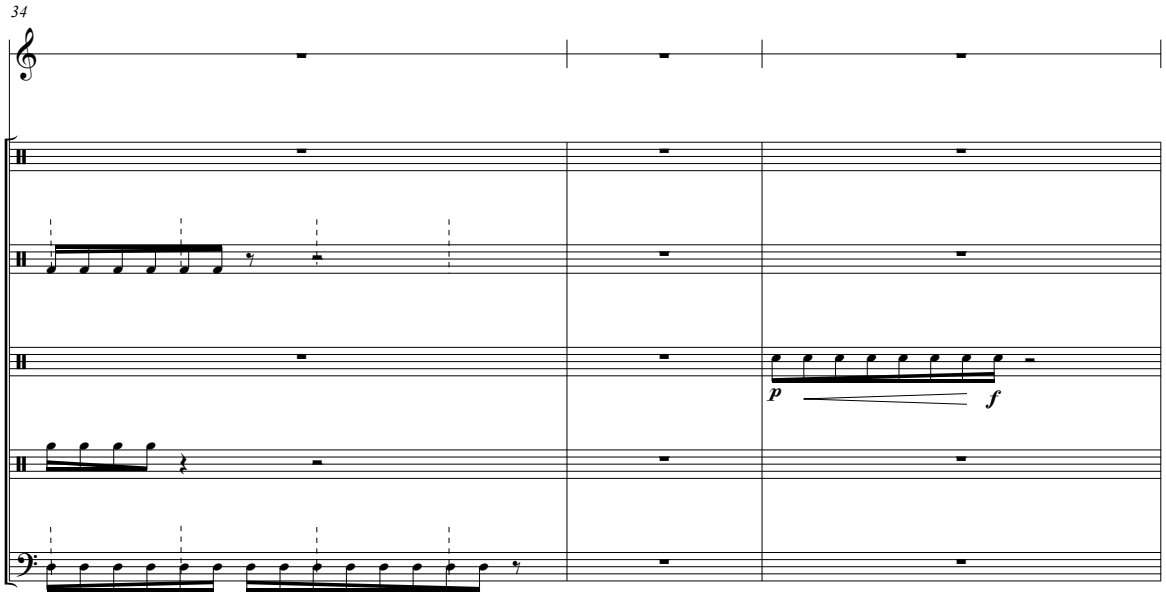
Timpano (D)
p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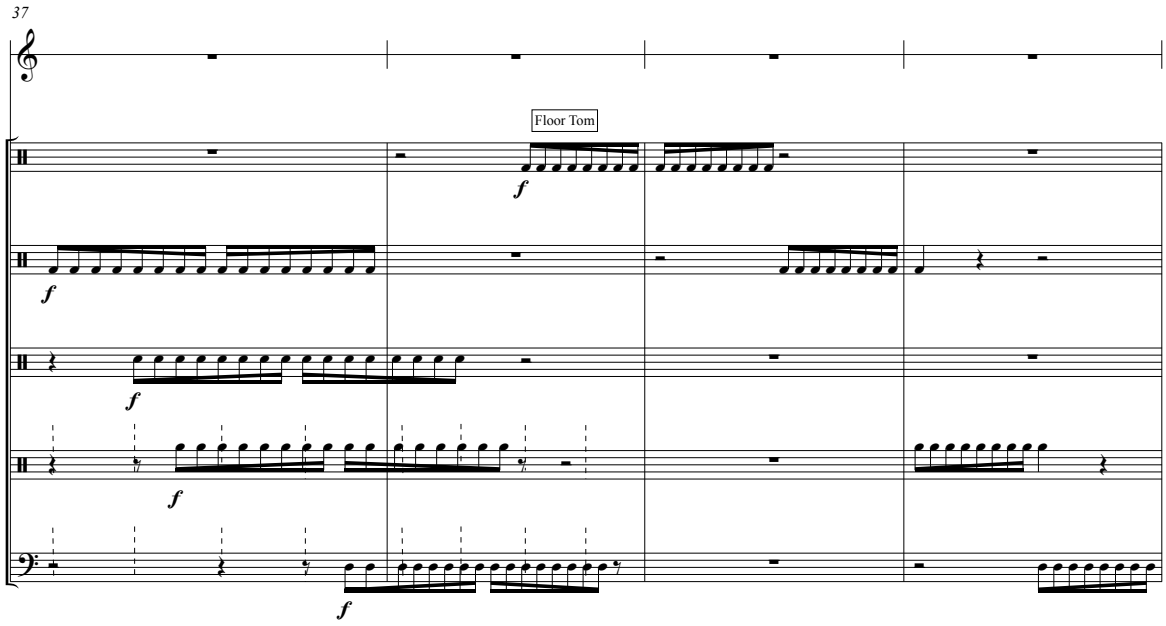
p
f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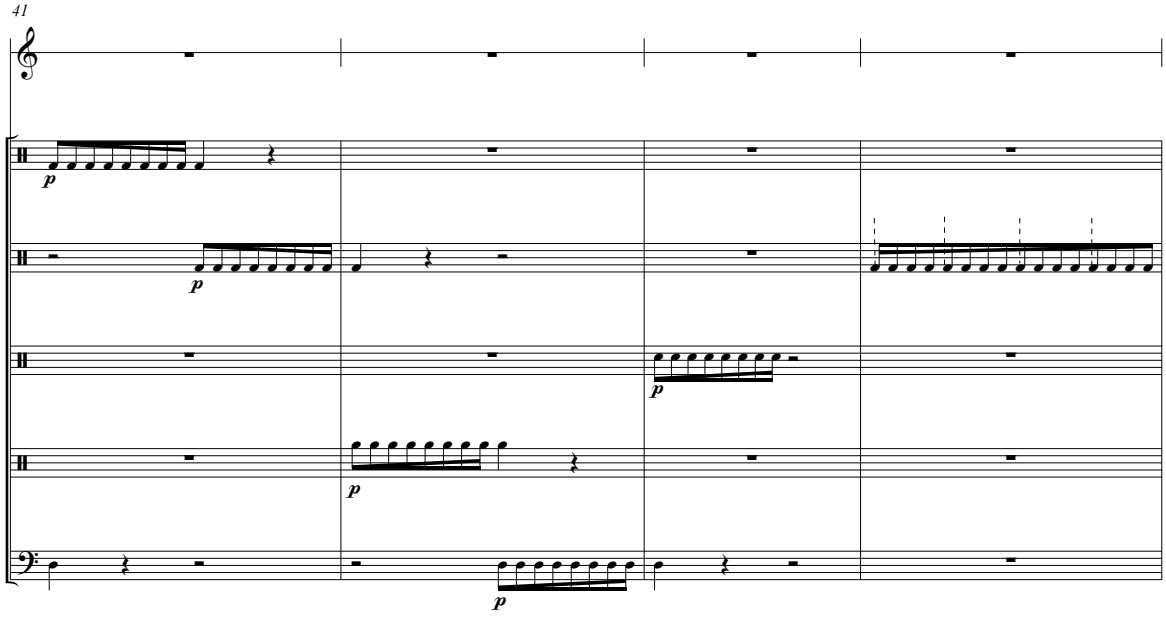
Floor Tom
f
f
f
f
f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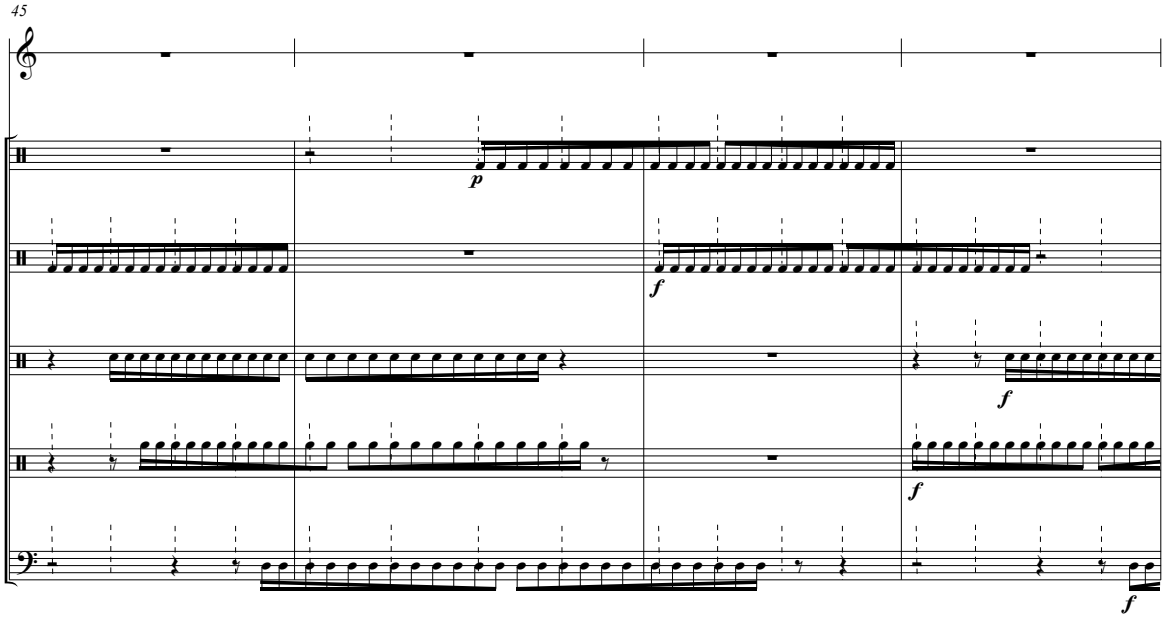
p
p
p
p
p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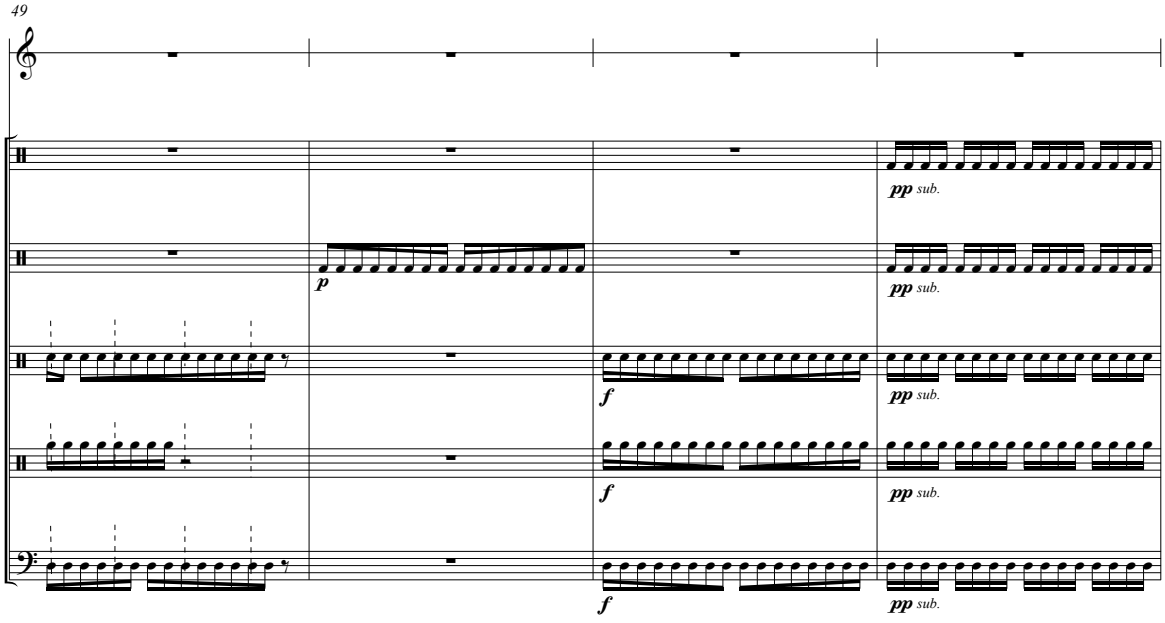
p
f
f
f
f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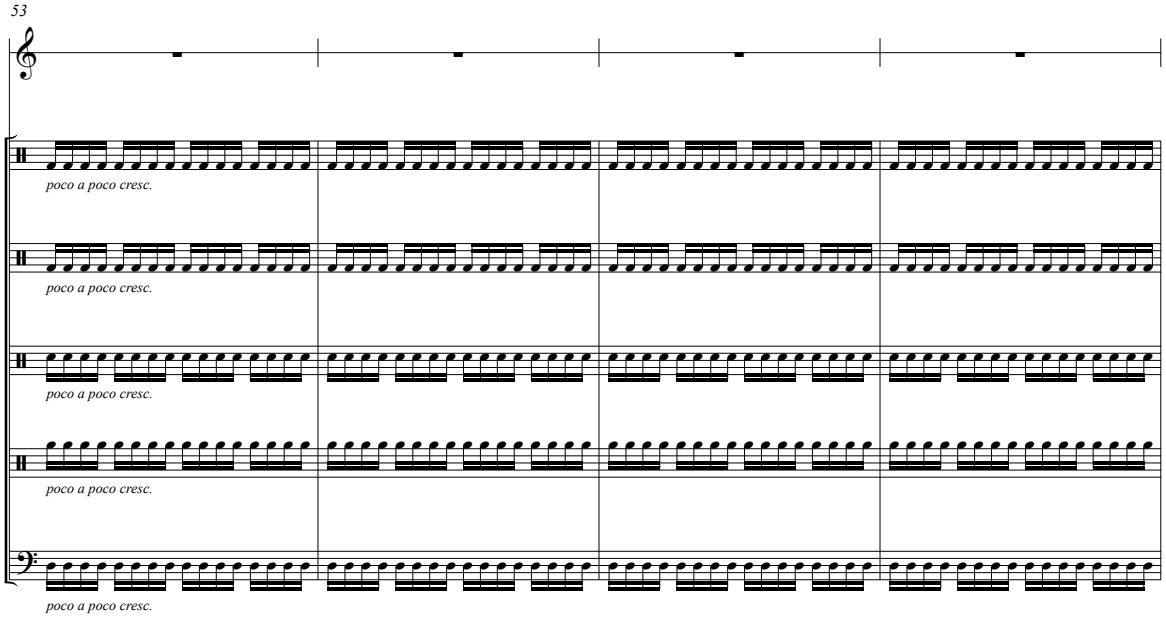
pp sub.
p
pp sub.
f
pp sub.
f
pp sub.
f
pp sub.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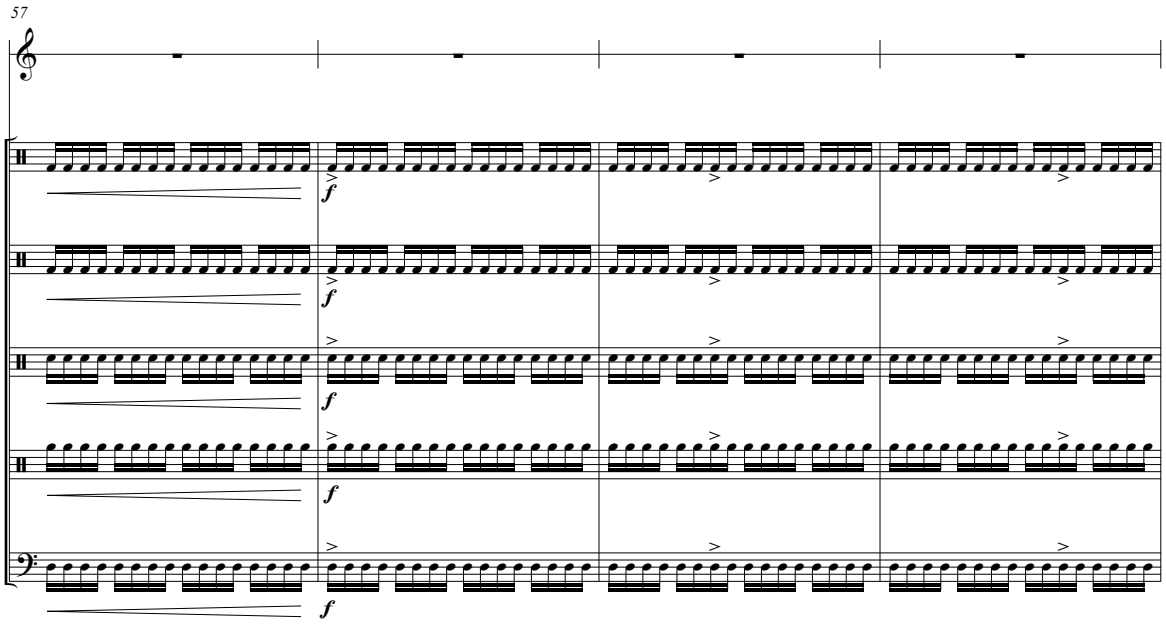
poco a poco cresc.
poco a poco cresc.
poco a poco cresc.
poco a poco cresc.
poco a poco cresc.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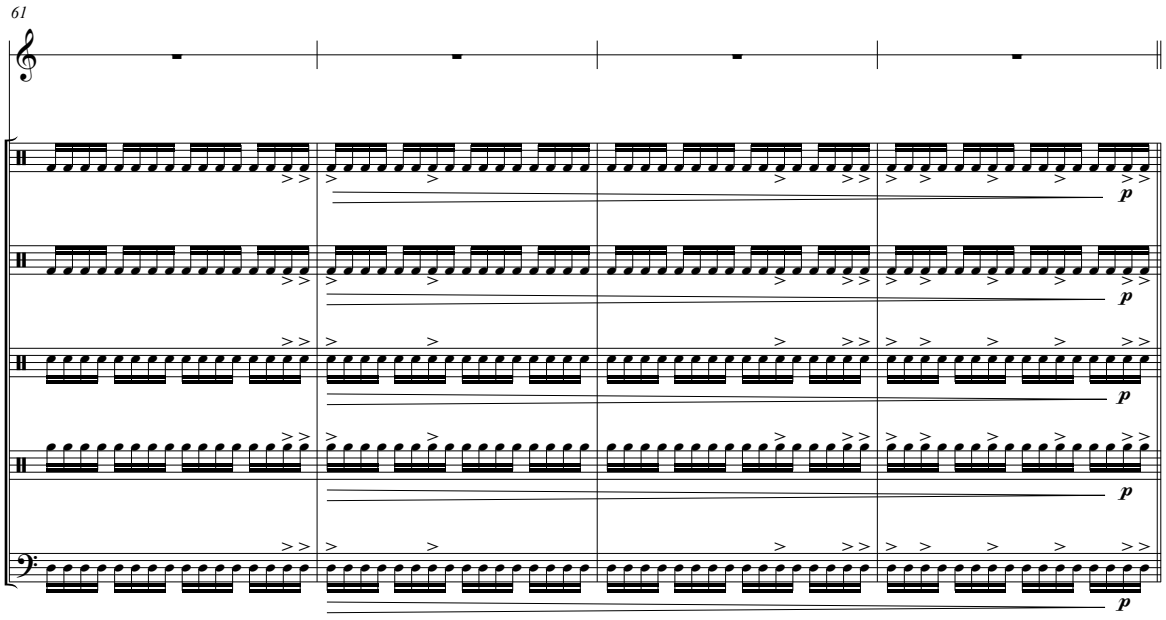
f
f
f
f
f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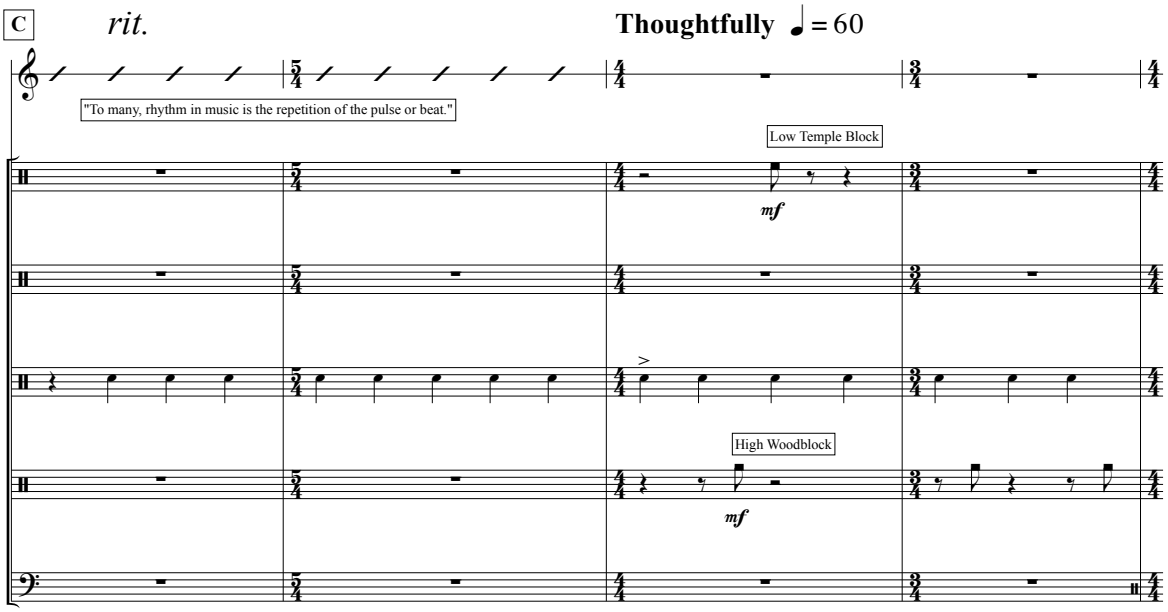
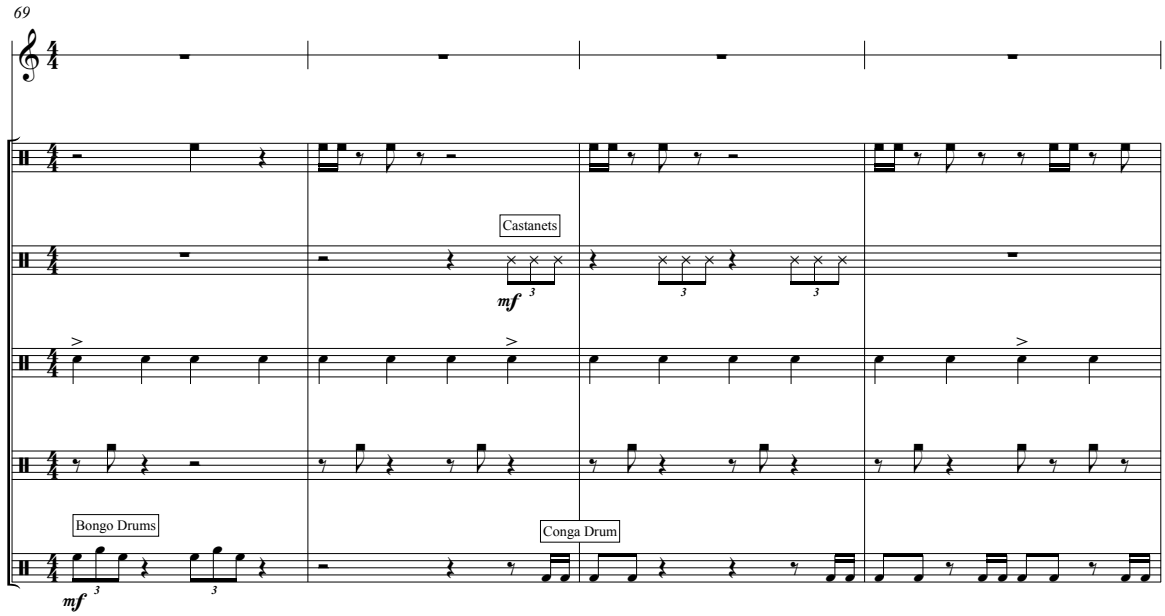
p
p
p
p
p


C
rit.
Thoughtfully ♩ = 60
"To many, rhythm in music is the repetition of the pulse or beat."
Low Temple Block
mf
High Woodblock
mf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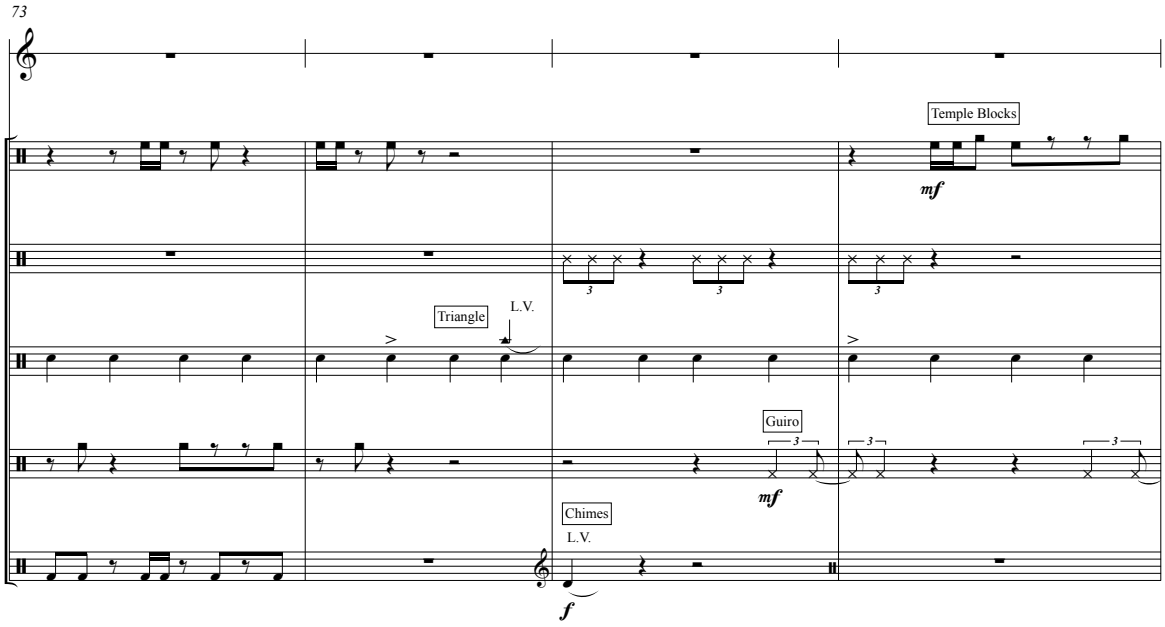
Castanets
mf
Bongo Drums
mf
Conga Drum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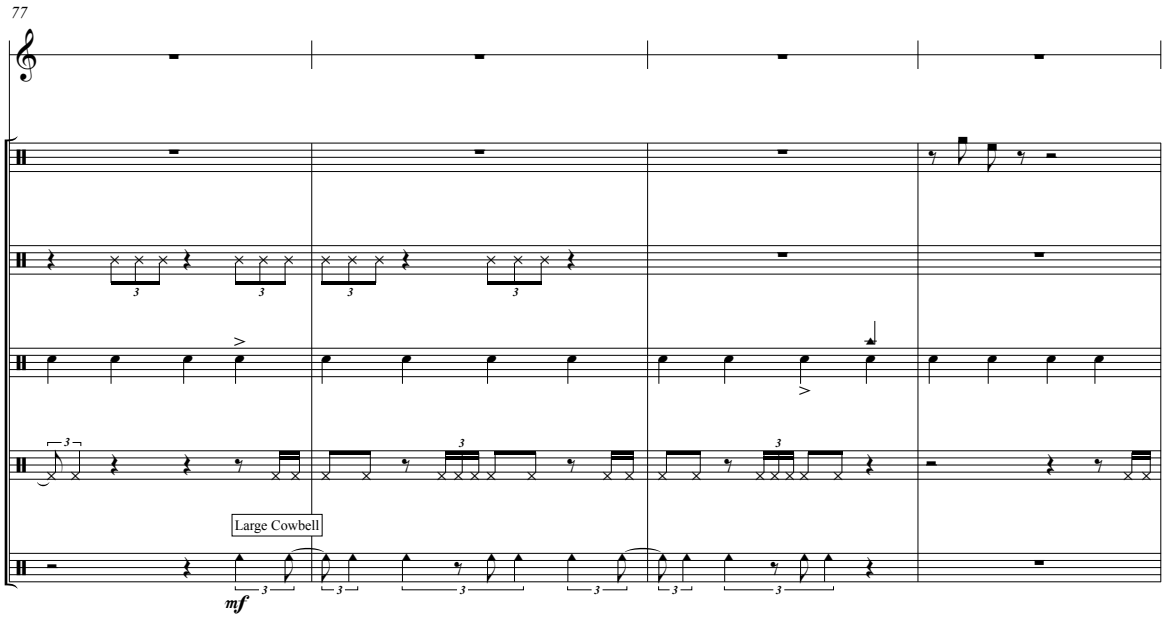
Temple Blocks
mf
Triangle
L.V.
Guiro
mf
Chimes
L.V.
f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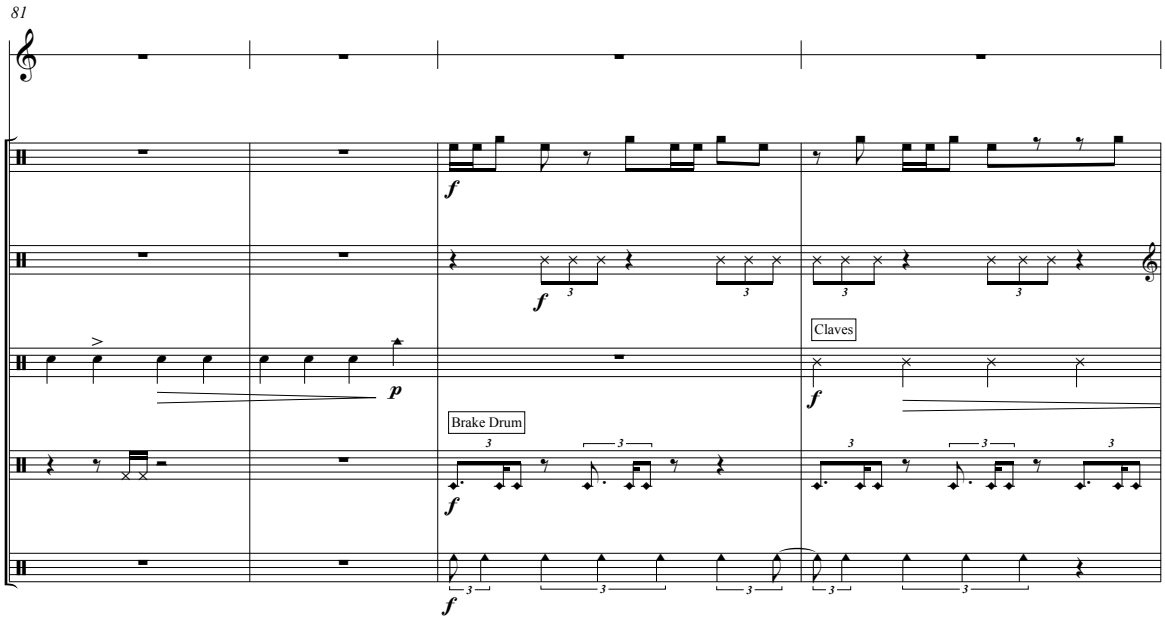
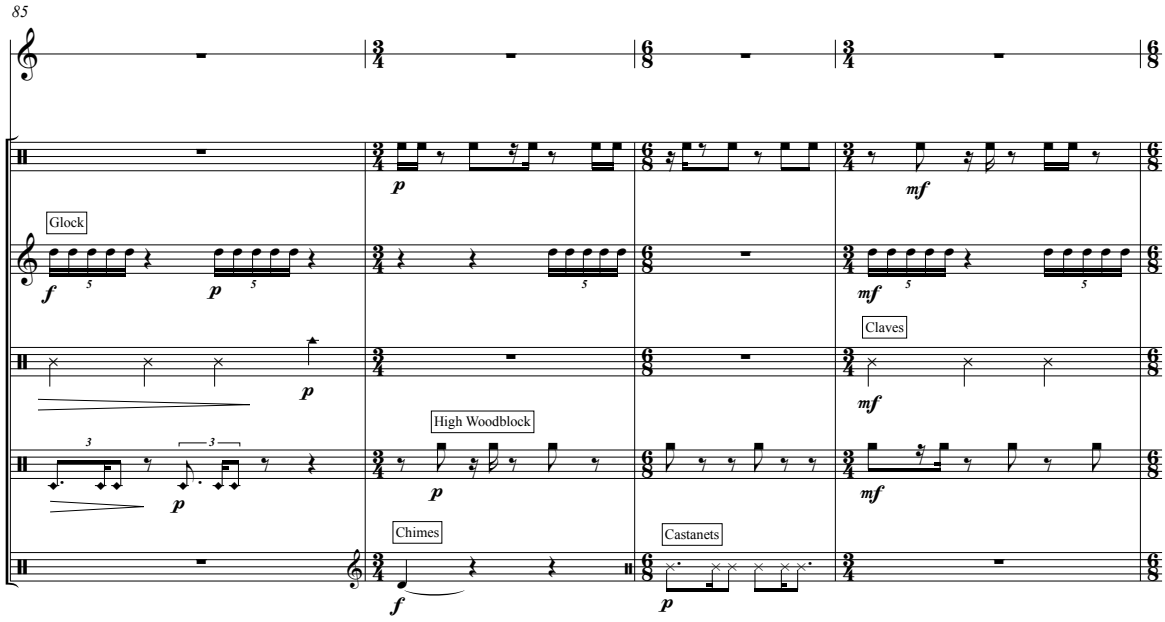
Large Cowbell
mf


81
f
p
Brake Drum
Claves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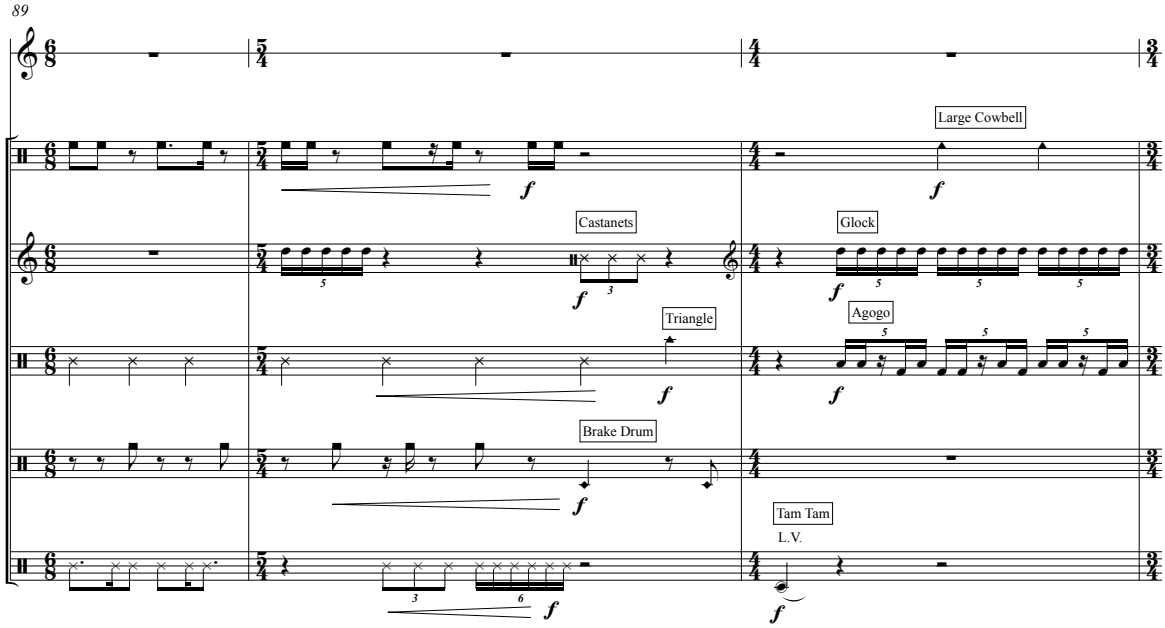
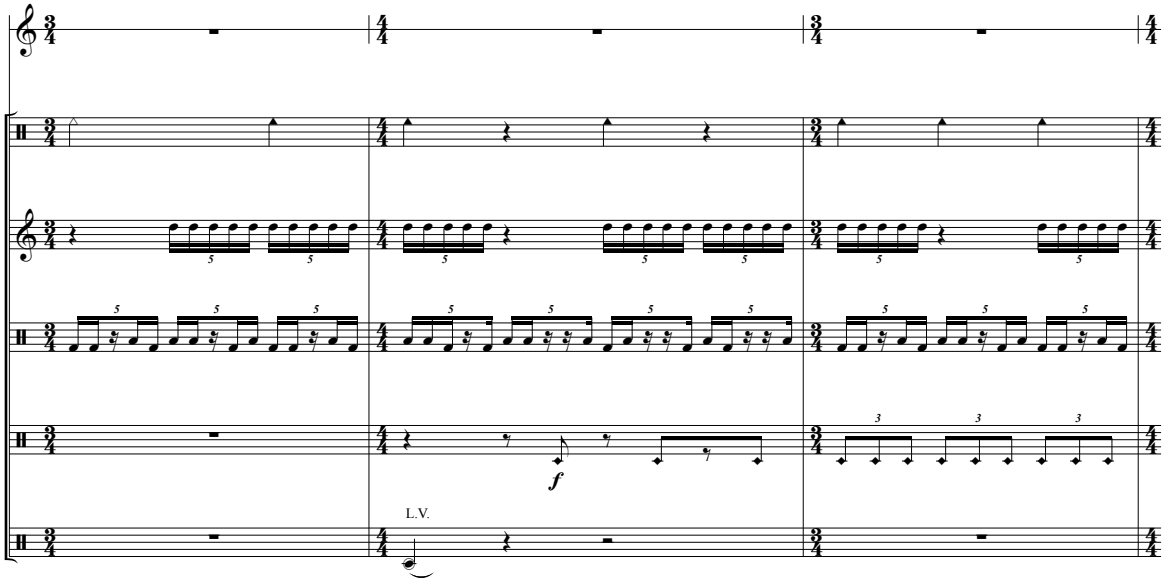
Glock
High Woodblock
Claves
Chimes
Castanets


89
Large Cowbell
Castanets
Glock
Triangle
Agogo
Brake Drum
Tam Tam
L.V.

92



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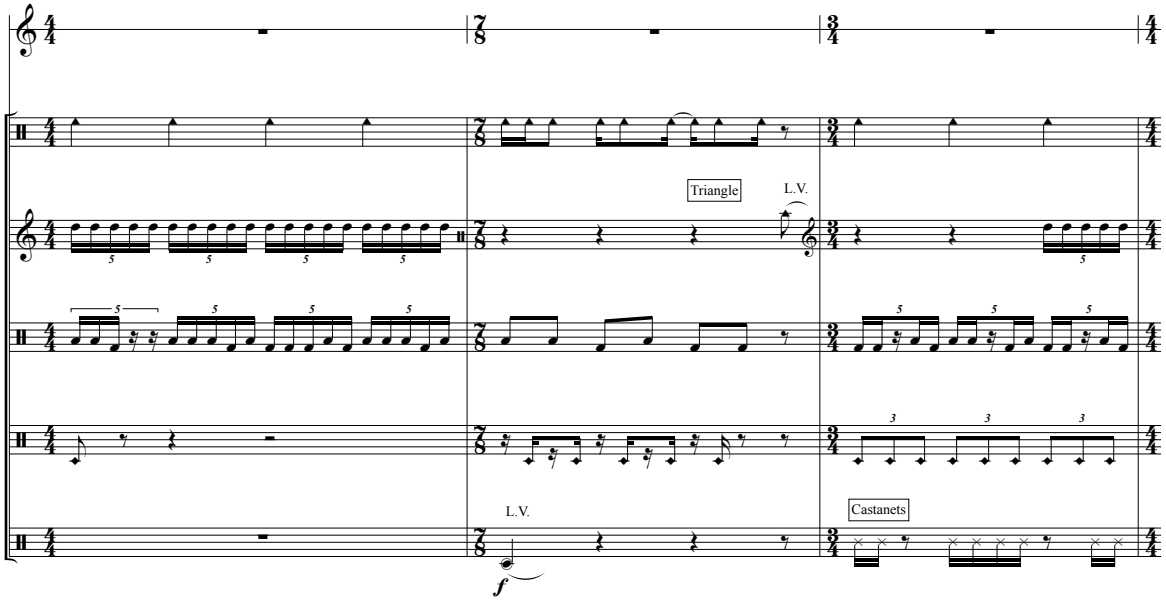
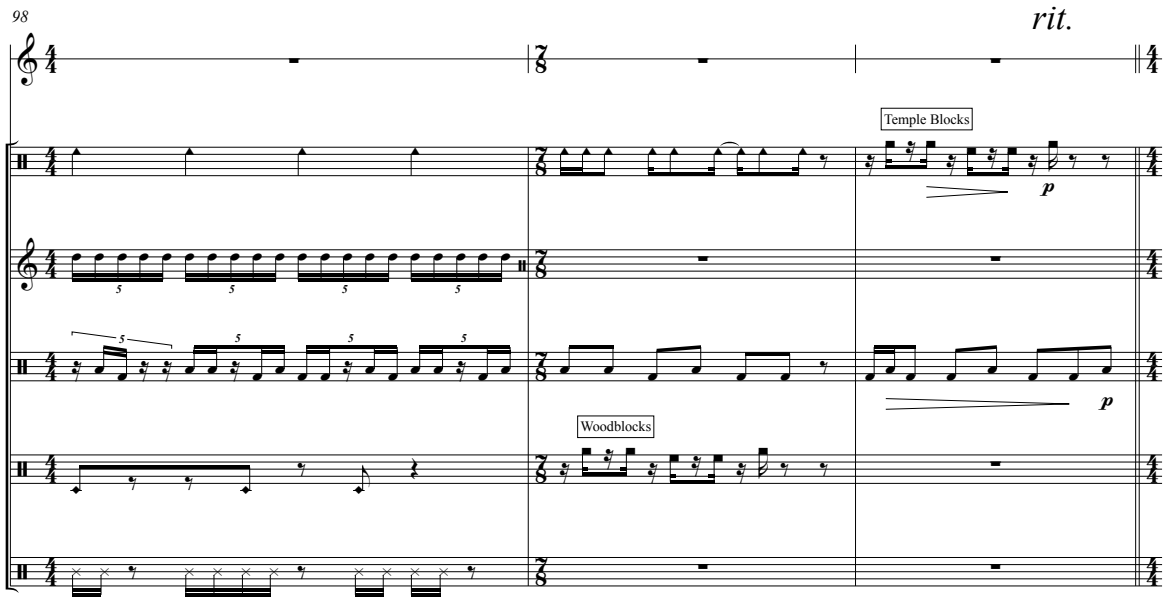
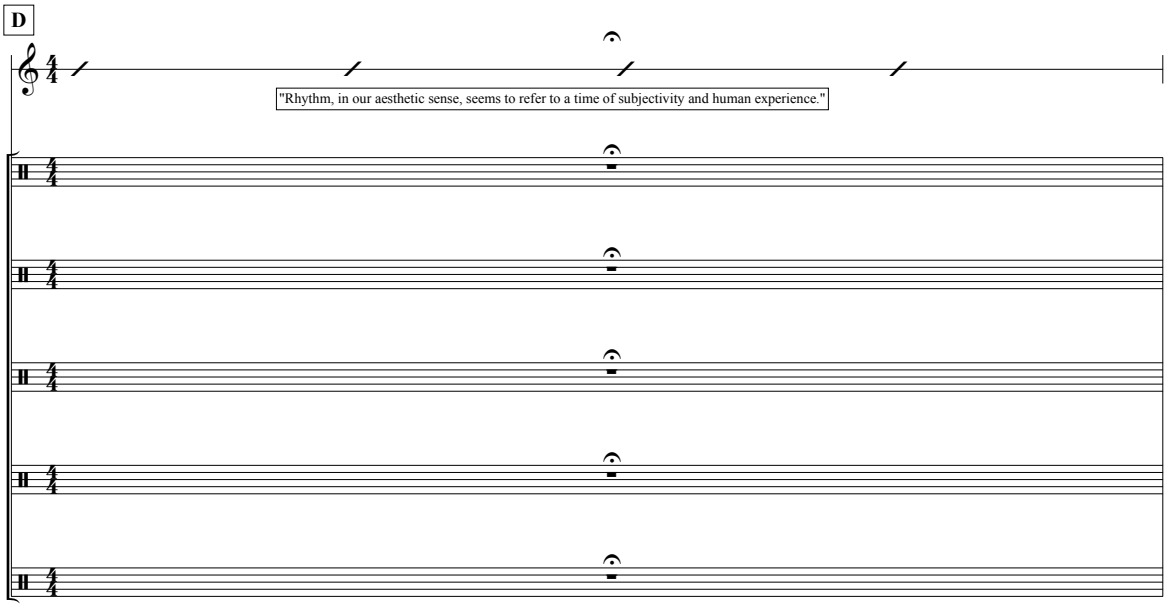
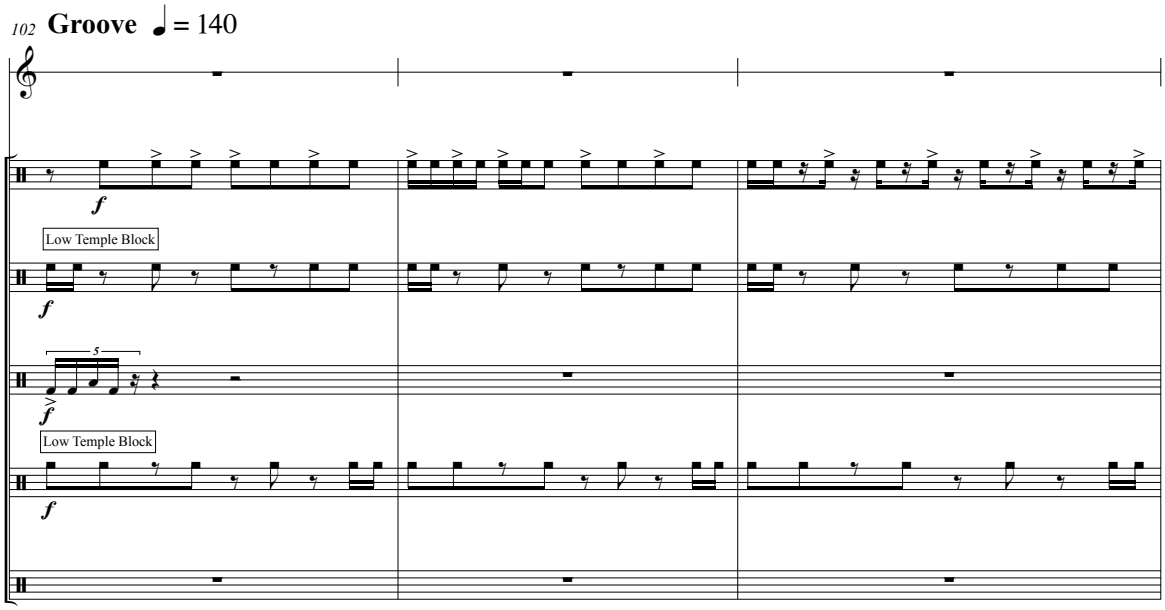
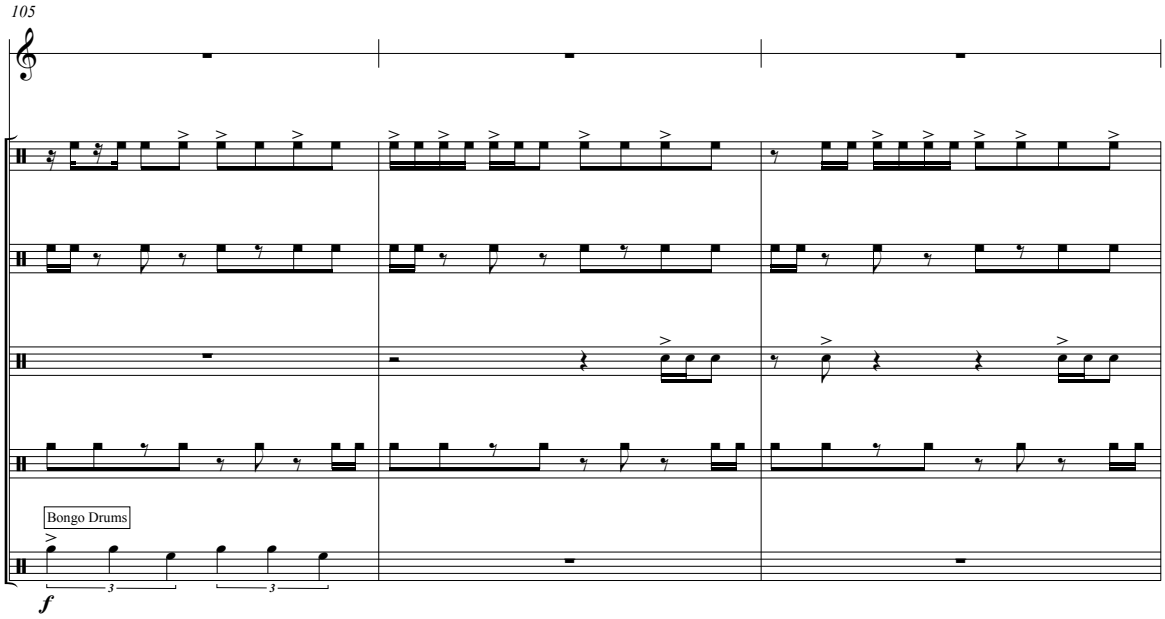



98
rit.
Temple Blocks
p
p
Woodblocks


D
"Rhythm, in our aesthetic sense, seems to refer to a time of subjectivity and human experience."


102
Groove
= 140
Low Temple Block
Low Temple Block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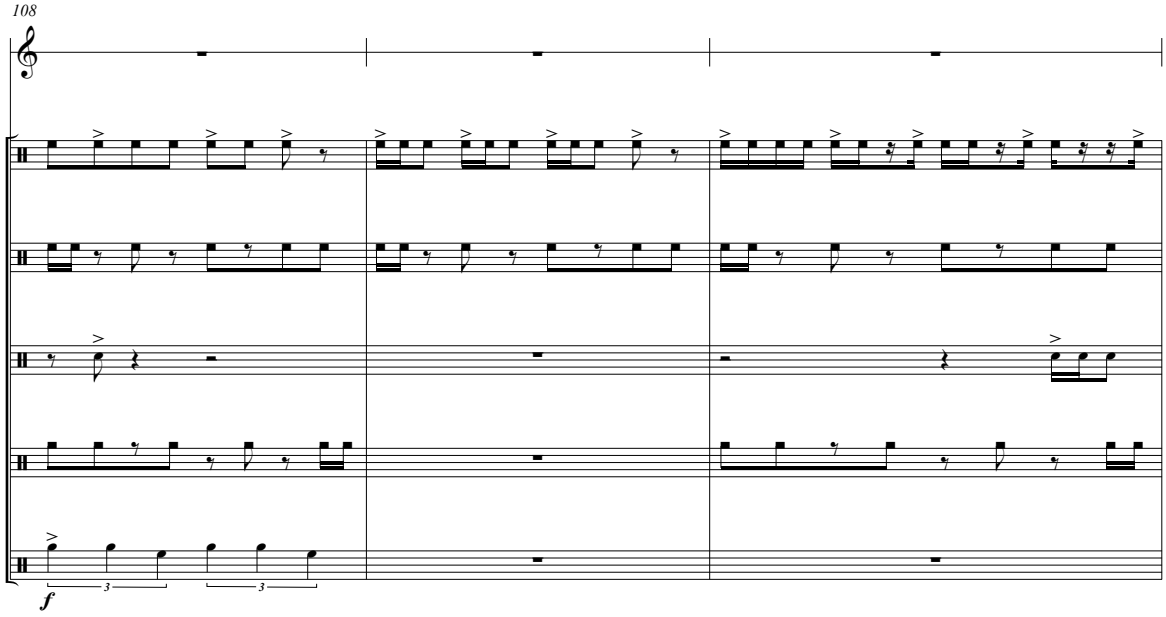
Bongo Drums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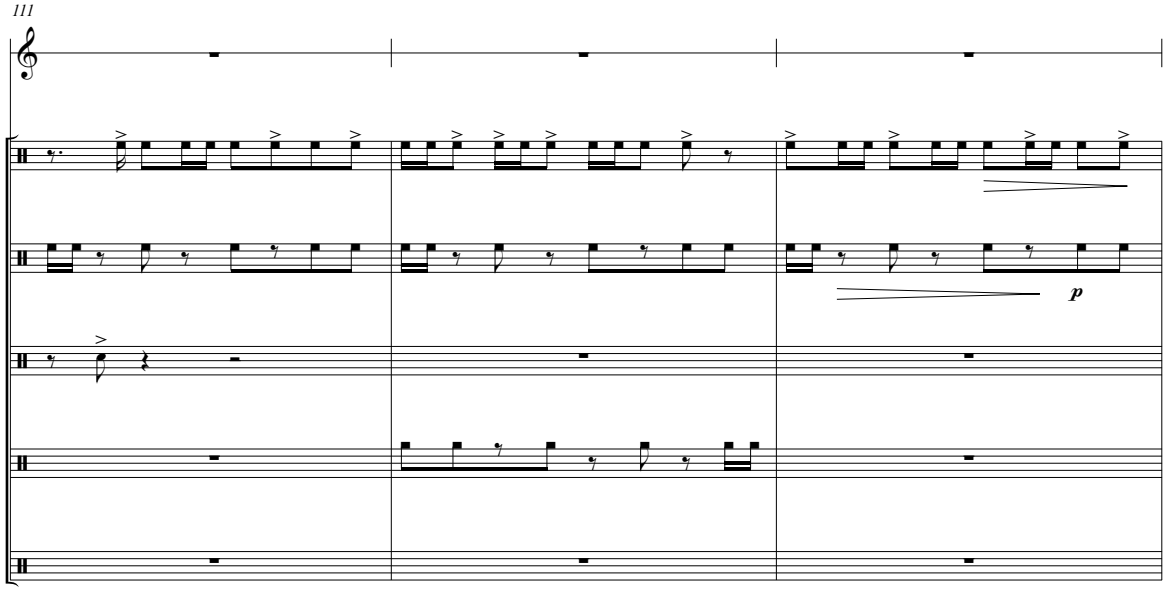
f
3
3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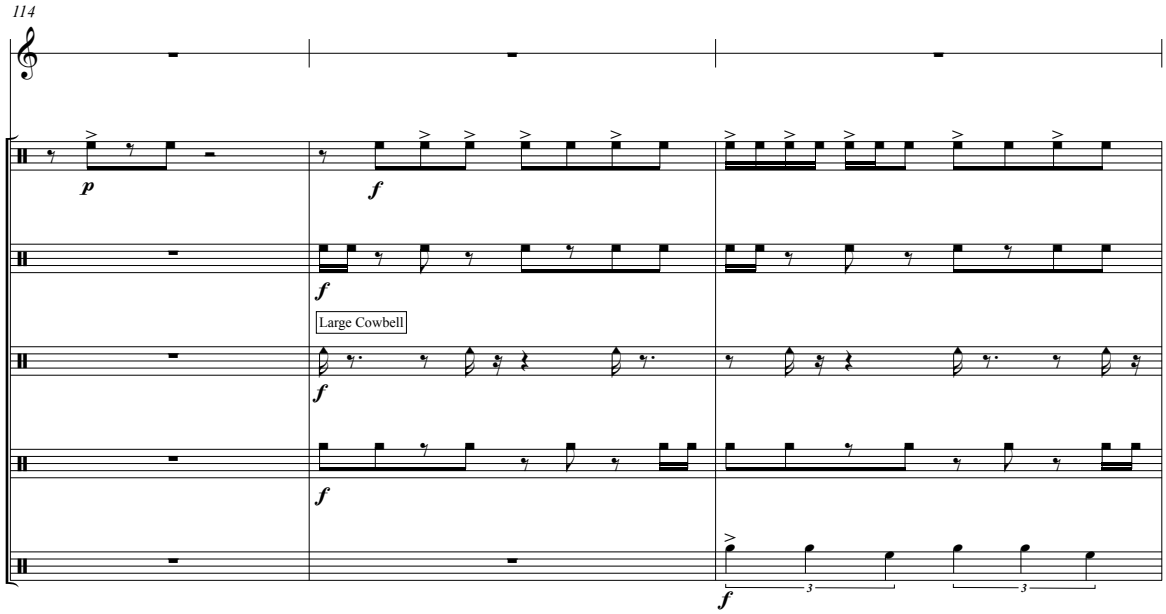
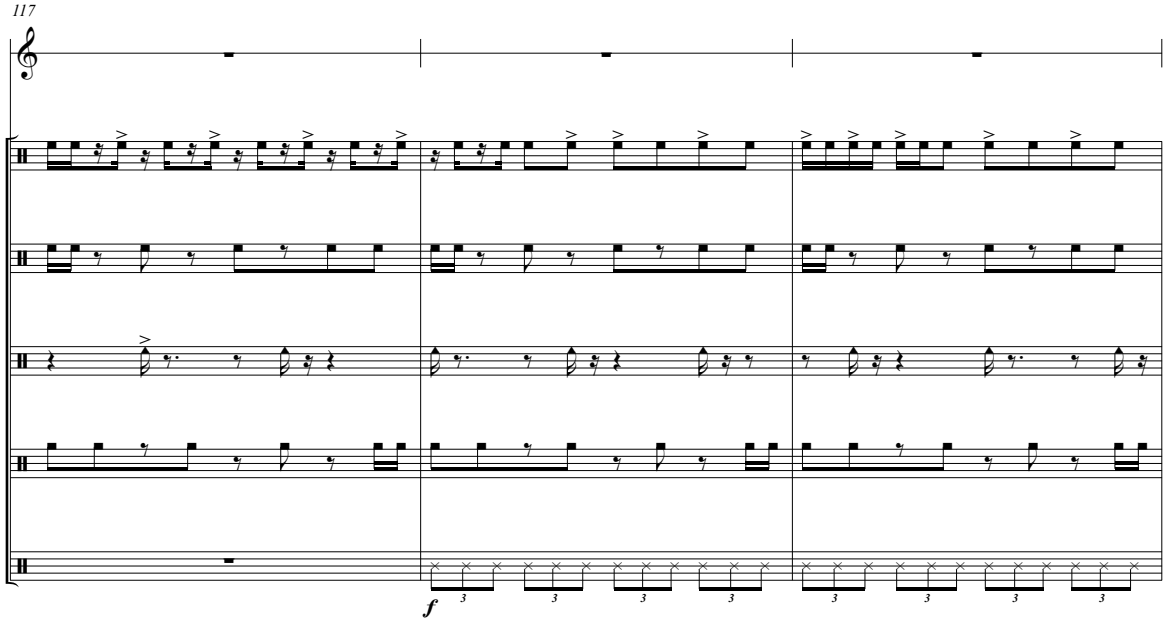
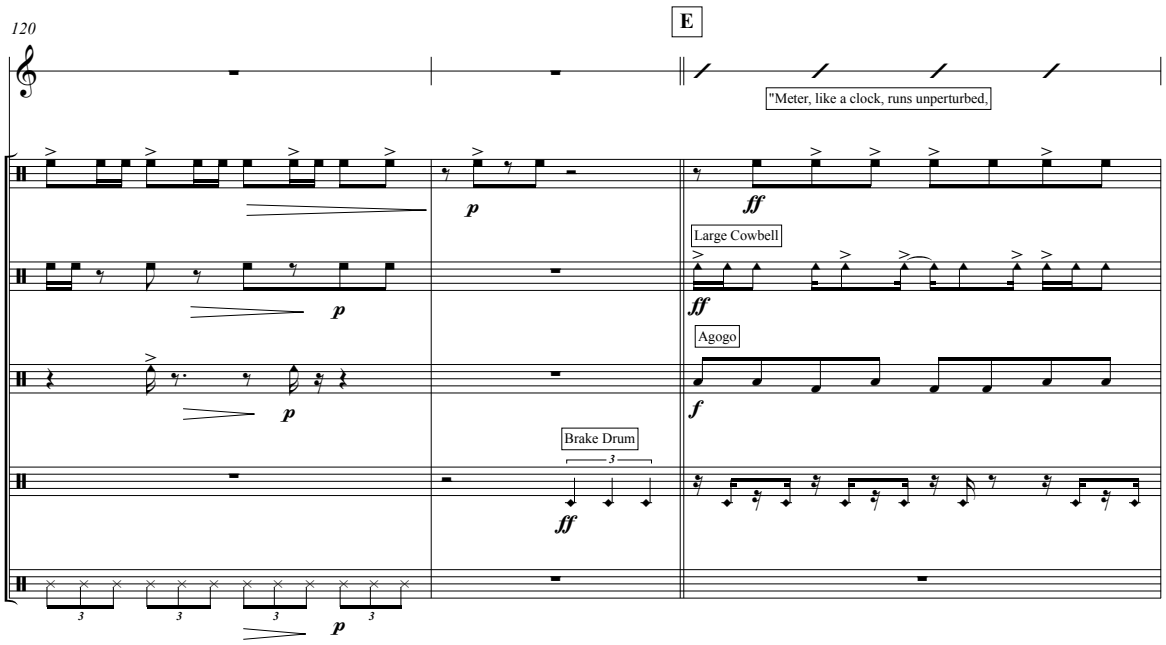
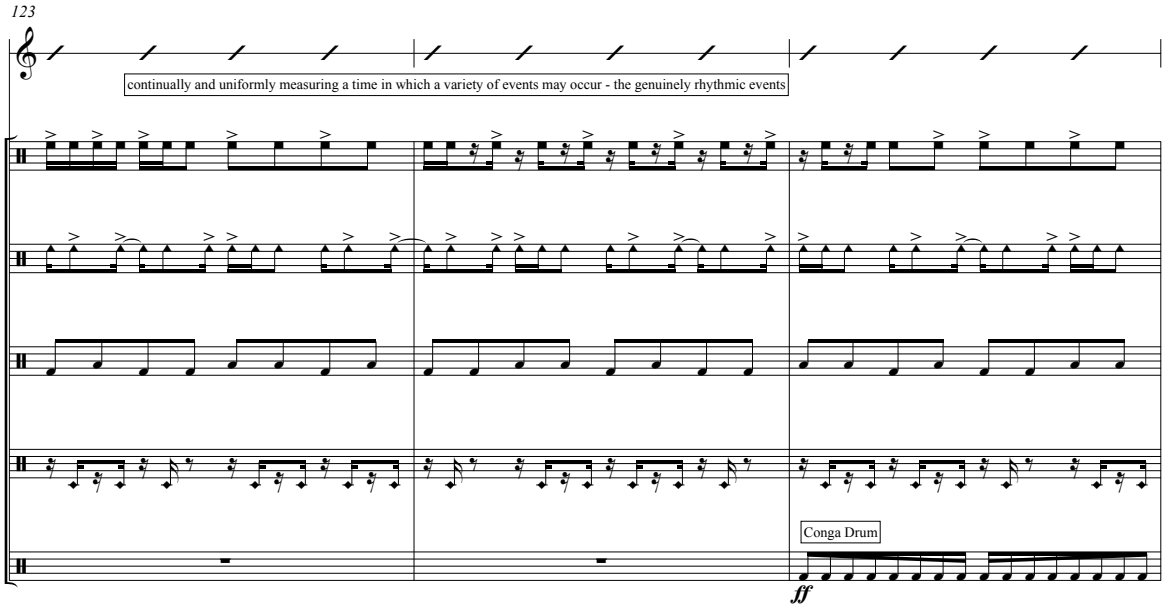
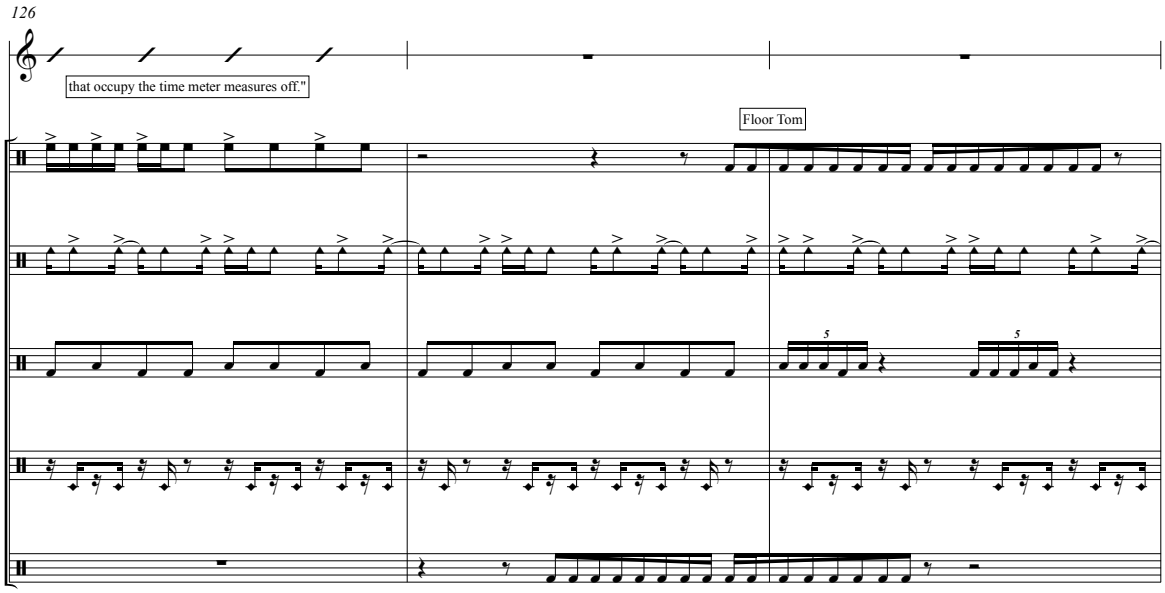
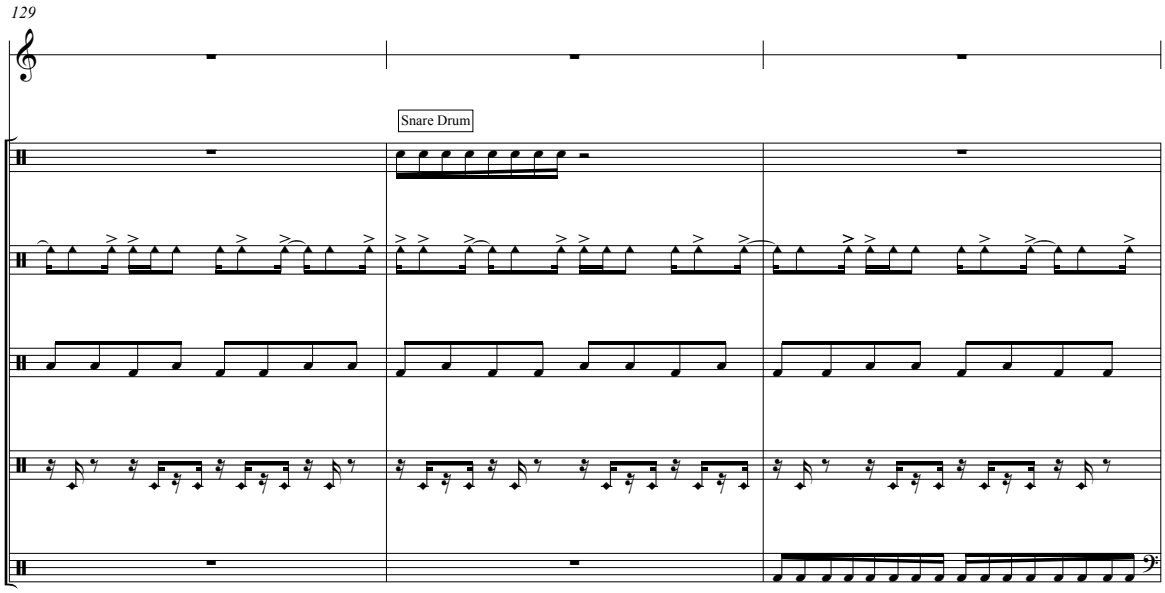

114
p
f
f
Large Cowbell
f
f
f
3
3


117
f
3
3
3
3
3
3
3
3


120
E
"Meter, like a clock, runs unperturbed,
Large Cowbell
Agogo
Brake Drum


123
continually and uniformly measuring a time in which a variety of events may occur - the genuinely rhythmic events
Conga Drum


126
that occupy the time meter measures off."
Floor Tom
5
5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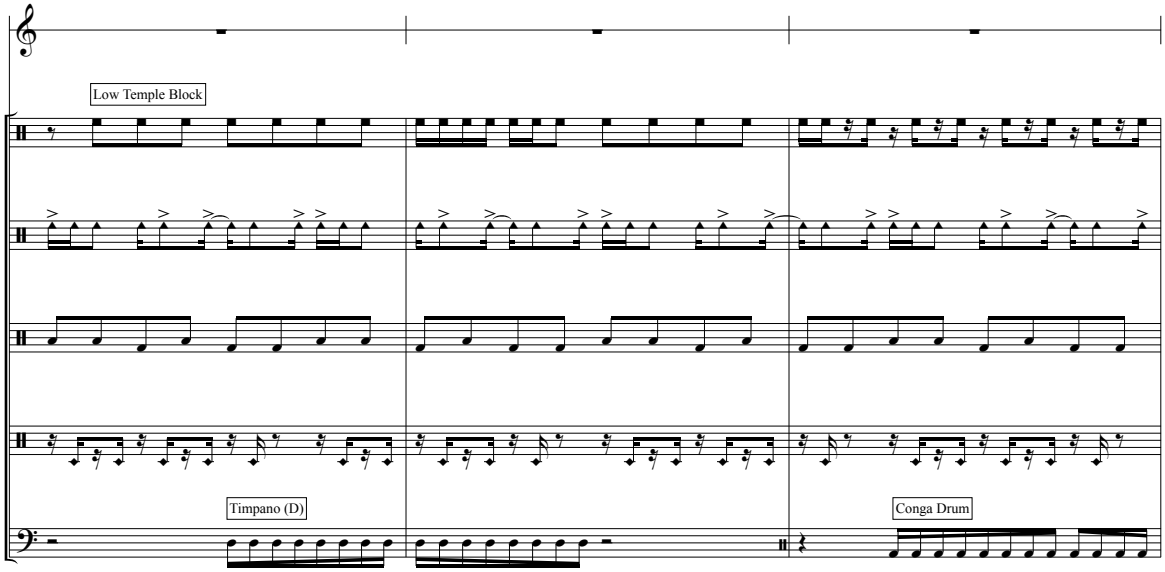
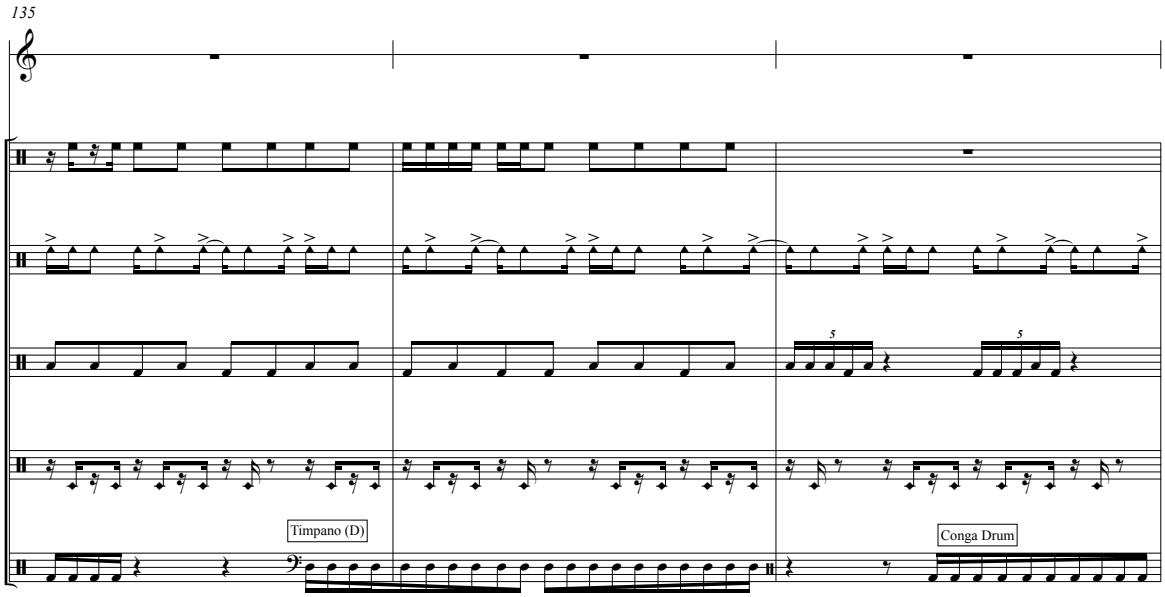
Snare Drum

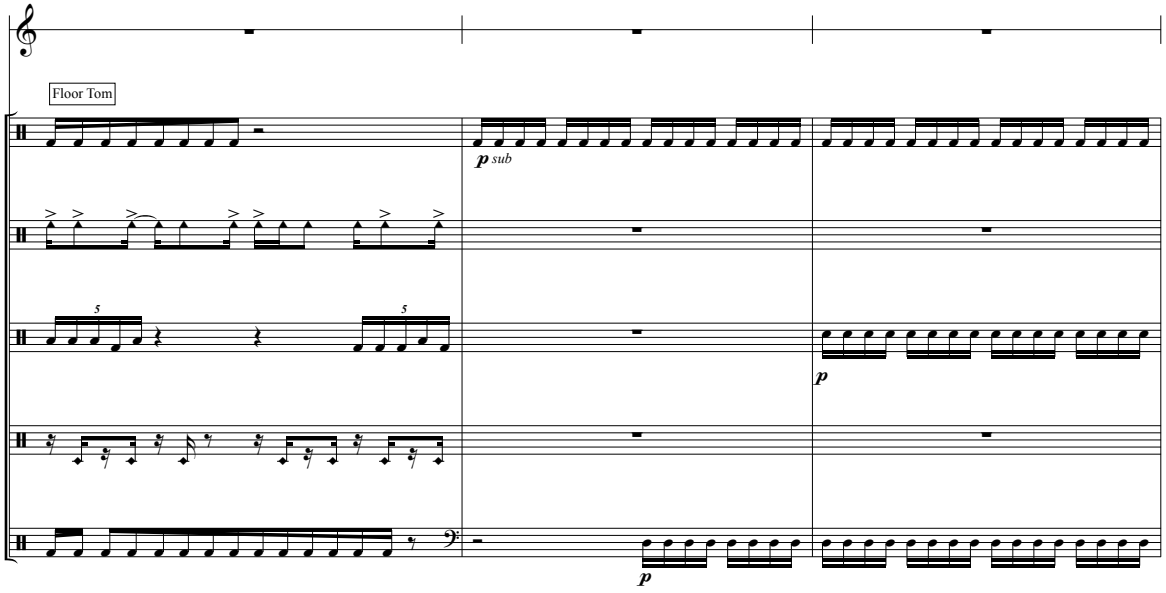
132


Low Temple Block
Timpano (D)
Conga Drum

135


5
5
Timpano (D)
Conga Drum

138



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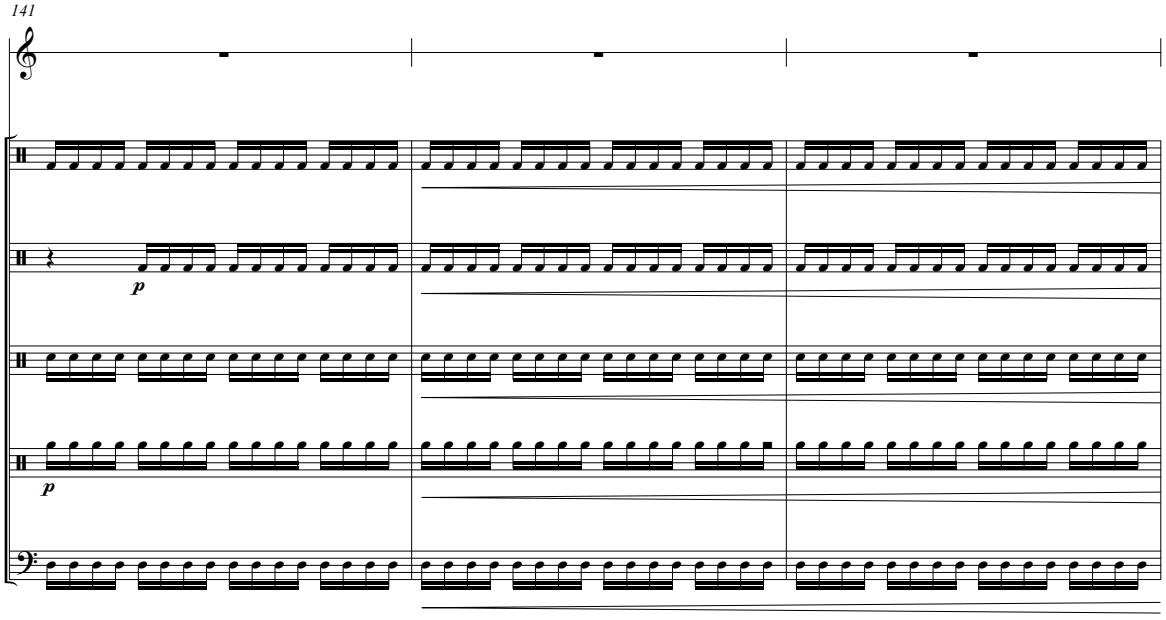
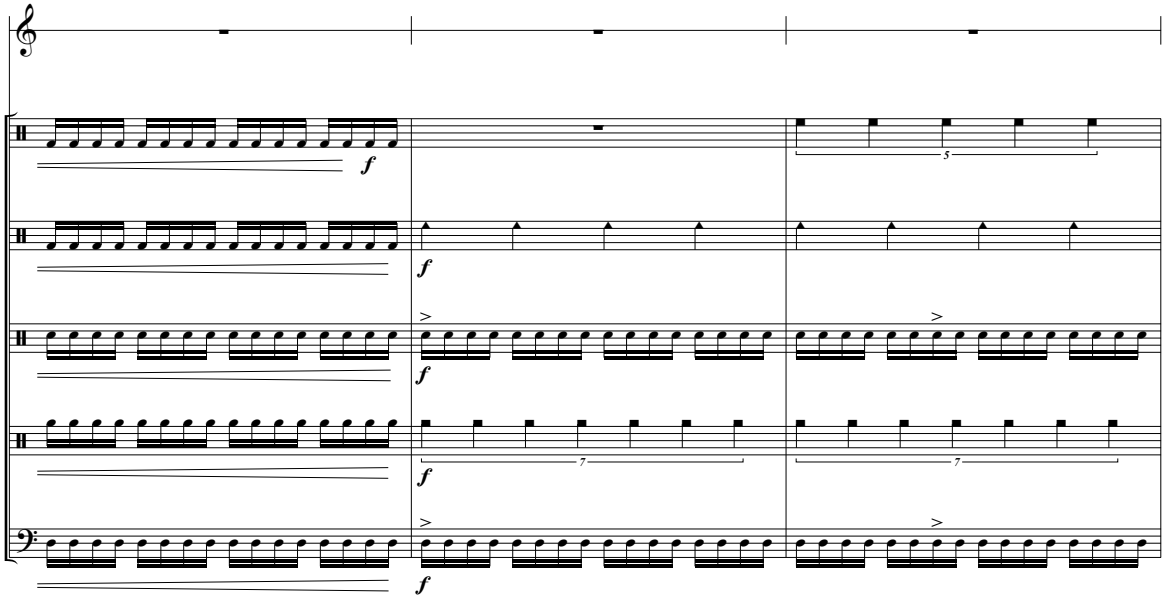


144



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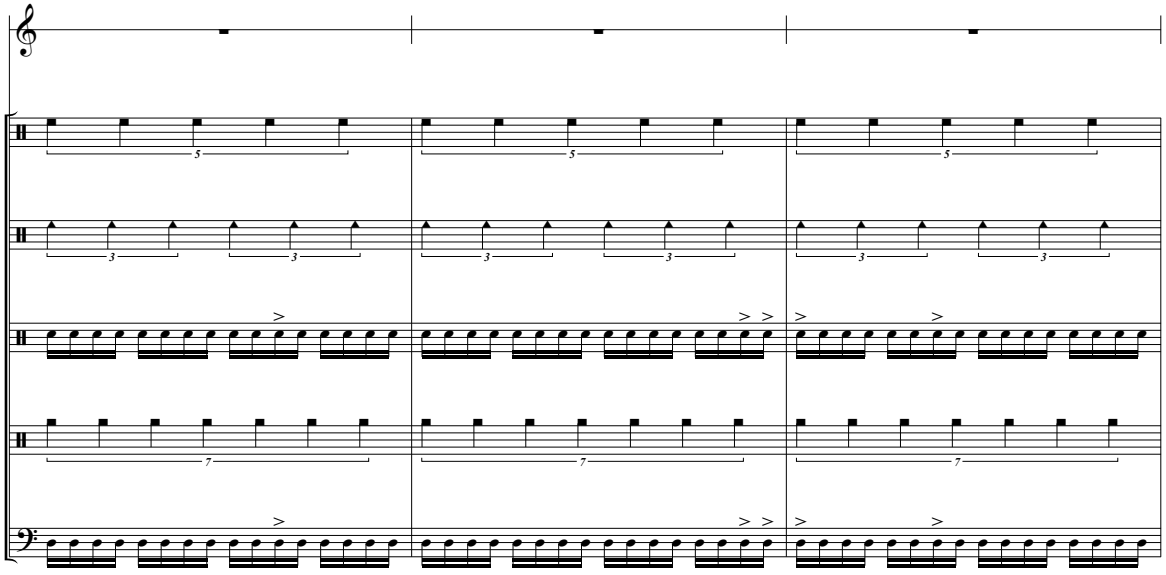
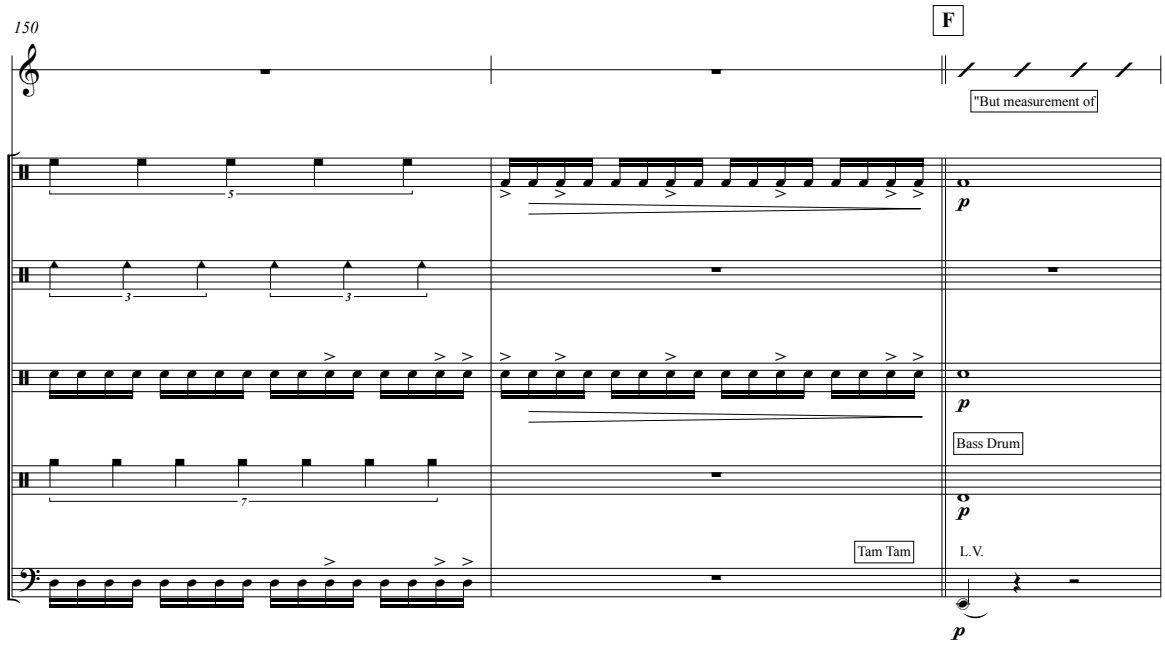
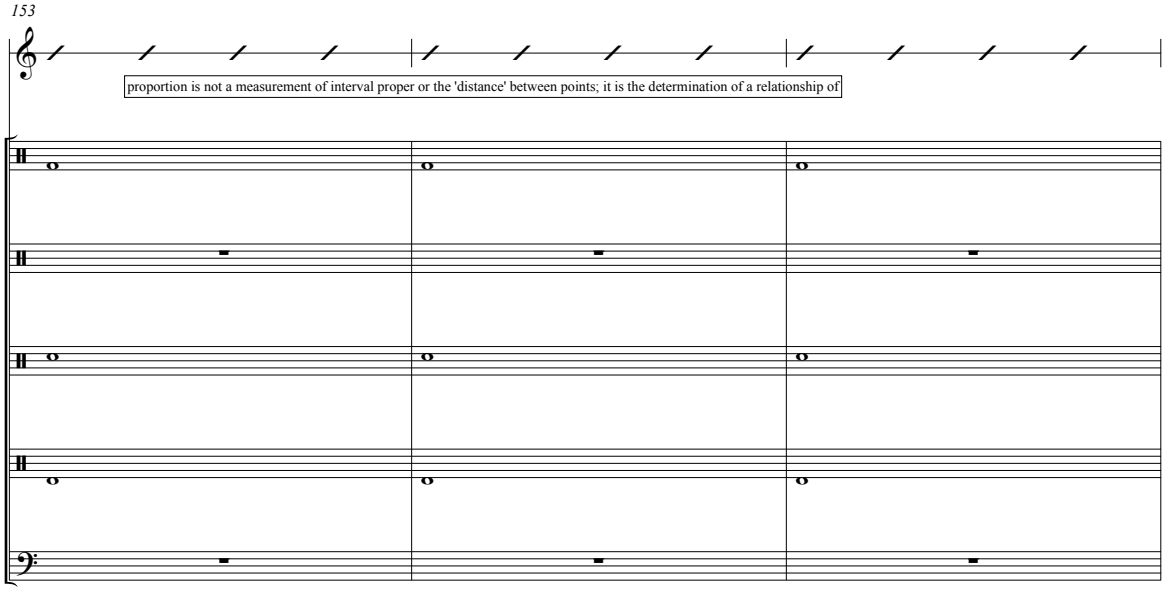
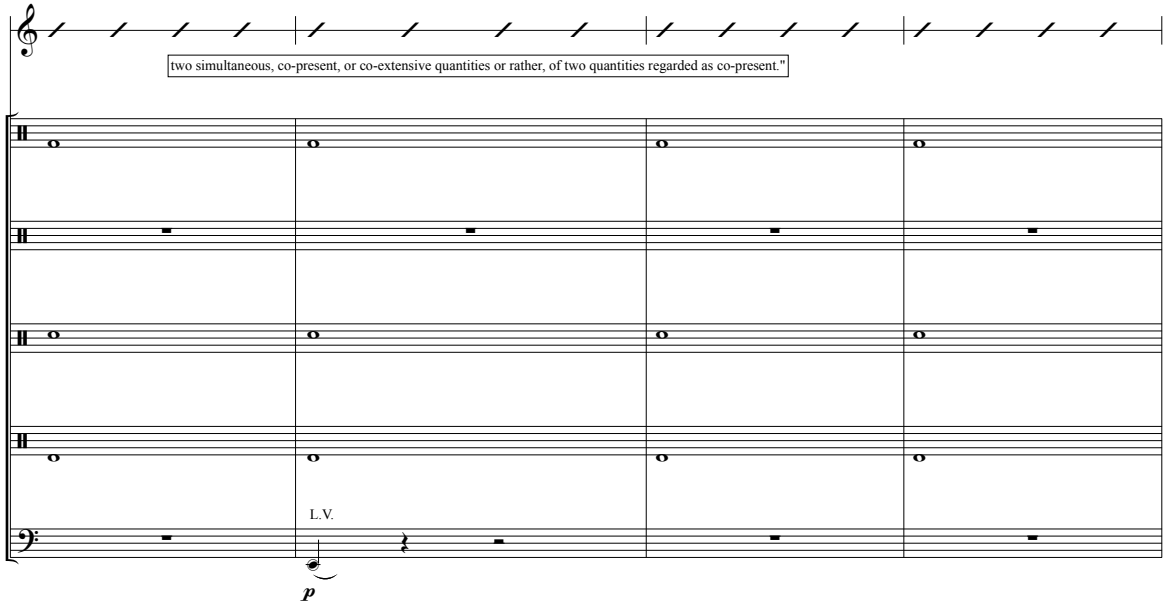


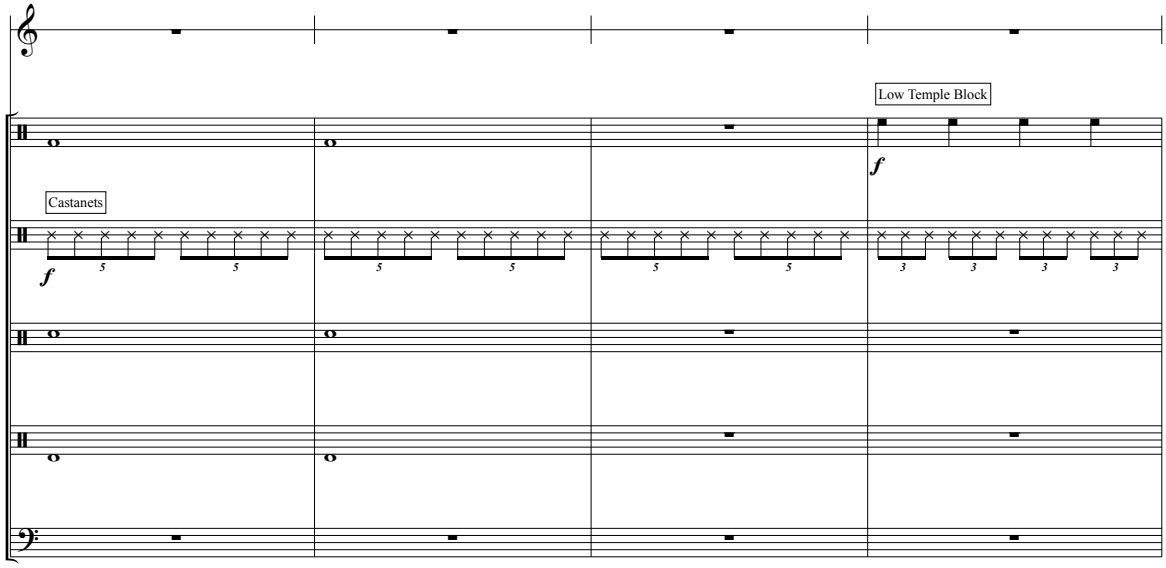

150
F
"But measurement of
p
Bass Drum
Tam Tam
L.V.

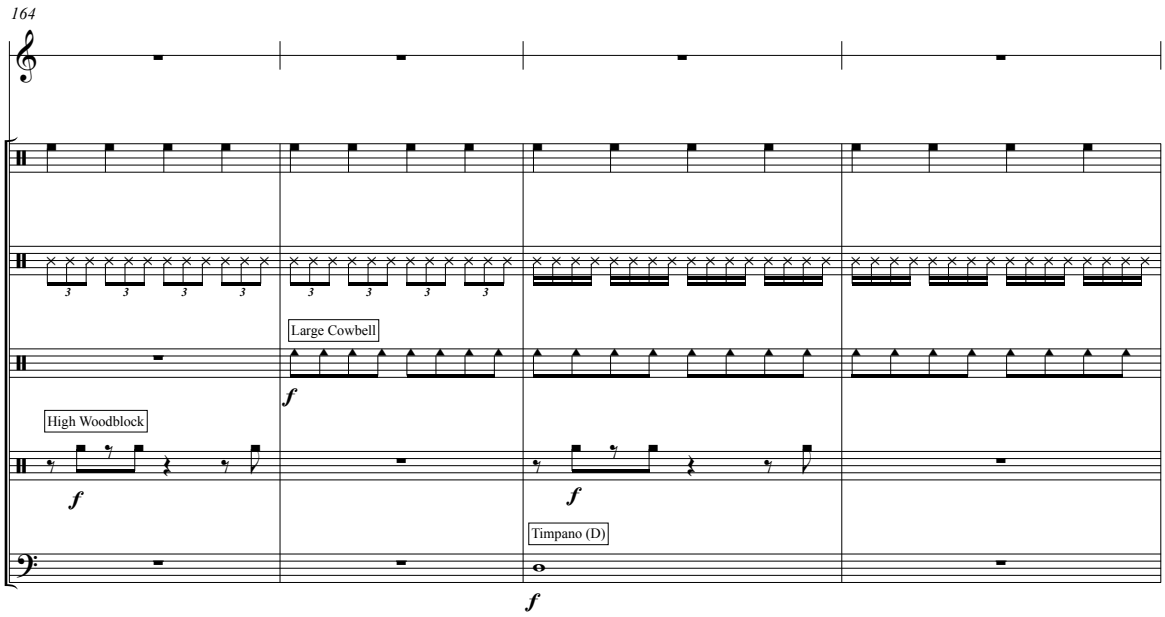

153
proportion is not a measurement of interval proper or the 'distance' between points; it is the determination of a relationship of

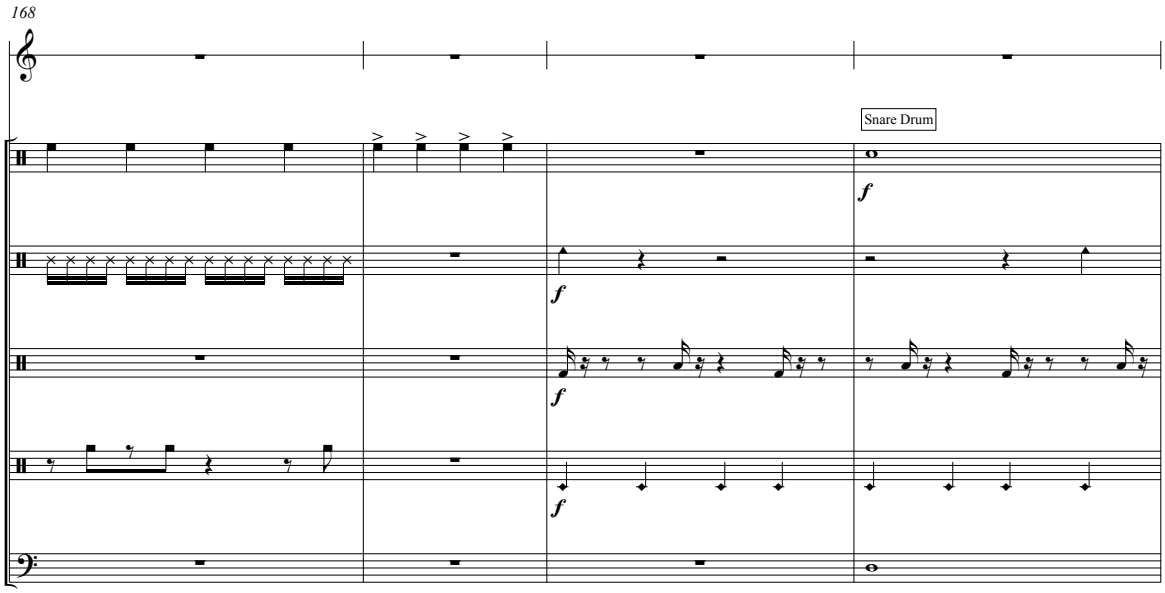
156


two simultaneous, co-present, or co-extensive quantities or rather, of two quantities regarded as co-present."
L.V.
p

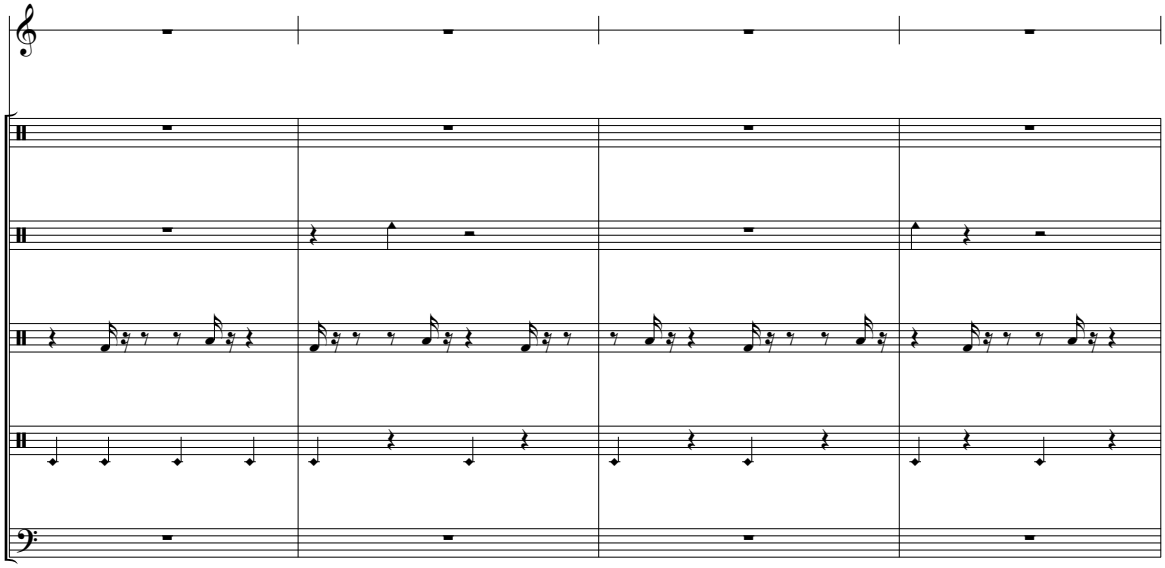
160


Low Temple Block
f
Castanets
f
5
3

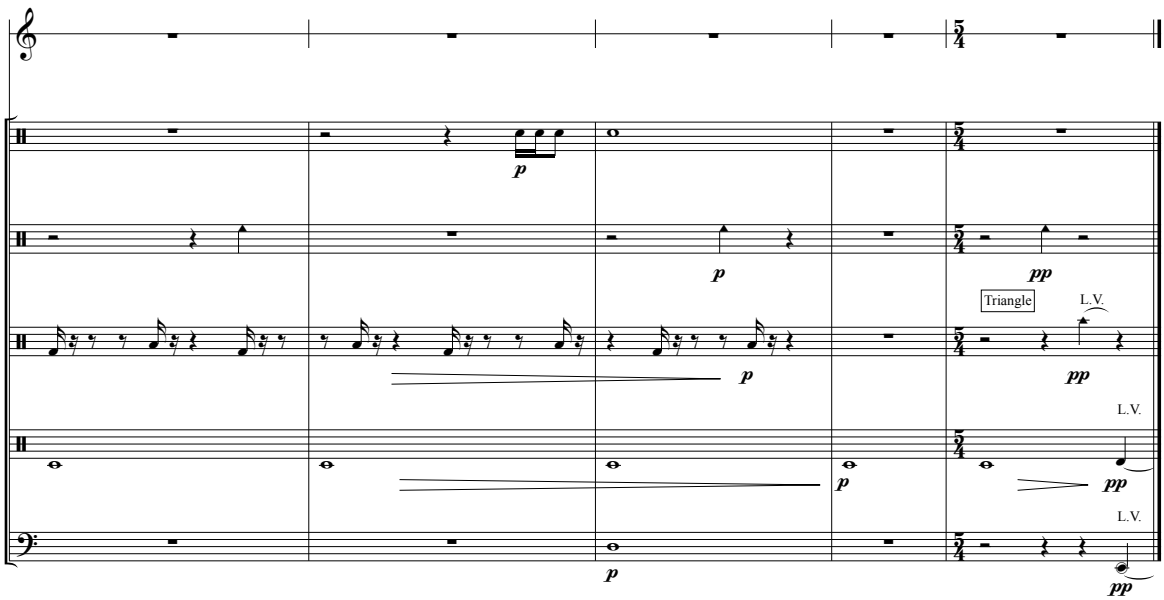

164
Large Cowbell
High Woodblock
Timpano (D)


168
Snare Drum

172



176



APPENDIX A

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Zachary Bush <zbush@asu.edu>

Rhythm as Meter Quotes

Zachary Bush <zbush@asu.edu> Tue, Feb 13, 2018 at 10:20 AM
To: hasty@fas.harvard.edu

Hello Professor Hasty,

My name is Zachary Bush and I am a student of Dr. Jody Rockmaker at Arizona State University. I am currently working on my Master's thesis composition and wanted to use some quotes from your book "Meter as Rhythm" during the piece. The piece is for percussion ensemble and will include a narrator who talks about various aspects of rhythm.

Let me know if this is possible or if I need to contact your publisher. Thank you for your time.

All best,
Zachary Bush
MM in Composition
Arizona State University

Zachary Bush <zbush@asu.edu>

Rhythm as Meter Quotes

Hasty, Christopher <hasty@fas.harvard.edu> Tue, Feb 13, 2018 at 10:31 AM
To: Zachary Bush <zbush@asu.edu>

Hi Zachery,

You're welcome to quote, not need to contact Oxford. Good luck with the piece – sounds interesting. (incidentally, I once used a text of Franco of Cologne on mensural theory for a 4-voice a capella piece.)

CH

From: Zachary Bush <zbush@asu.edu>
Date: Tuesday, February 13, 2018 at 12:20 PM
To: "Hasty, Christopher" <hasty@fas.harvard.edu>
Subject: Rhythm as Meter Quotes

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