Microworks

a collection of five-second works
mostly involving a solo percussionist

Andrew S. Allen

Thoughts on Duration

Conceptual art can be an eager vessel for the "immediate." When I set out to write this collection of works, I started with the idea of making the pieces each no longer than five seconds. I began to consider what a musical engagement in this small space could mean and what sorts of directions my compositional style would be lead.

Consider the microchip; it works in much the same way as a collection of electrical components that are soldered together do (capacitors, resistors, transistors, etc.) except that it compacts all of those component functions into a singular, smaller unit; essentially a reduction of larger, more unyieldingly-complex schematics. Much in the same way as a microchip, I consider these compositions complete works by themselves, just smaller. Our adaptive facilities allow us to make great leaps in perceptual magnitudes. I've tried to reduce the footprint, not the content.

These works were commissioned by Dustin Donahue.

Collection List:

74C14
for six beer bottles and six brass mallets

Ah, yes
for mouth sounds

Anna, watching couple eating bagel together while he reads *The Speed of Trust* and she reads *The Sex Lives of Animals*
for mixed axillary percussion

Arem
for a six pack of cheap beer

bangs anecdote
for solo bongo player and one bongo

(EXAMPLE OF BLURT):
MIKE -> NERD -> [BLURT] -> MIKE IS A NERD
for laptop operator

Crabbingoff Kingstreet
for wire-bound steel frame

while the dog meat's cookin'
for a hungry knife-wielding person,
3 red potatoes and a stalk of celery

(-*)
for your left and right eyelids

on going on a diet devoid of
high-fructose corn syrup and foxconn...
for a large pad of paper (multiple pages)

Gazebo, Gazelle, zilch.
for heterogeneous pitched instrument

Jew-Goldberg, the accountant,
skips town and orders some cotton candy.
for rube-goldberg device operator

meeting Dostoevsky on the I-95
5 suspension cords from a large bass drum (still attached)

informationgrantedtohappenperceptualinterfacedisregarded
wooden chair, always ***fff***

Obligatory Introductory Phrase
for xylophone

merry-marie
for green frog squeaky dog toy

[=+
for various metals

True minimalism, that is, work conceived of singularized and essentialized performance is never actually achievable, since there are always complex systems of culture, language and phenomenology at work.
(breath)

Good for you for putting old heads on young shoulders!
(sword and shield)

SHOT HIMSELF DEAD
snaredrum

staring at a corner that turns to beige.
for woodblocks (5)

Bring me the head of Stewart Beach on a platter.
spoon, fork, knife

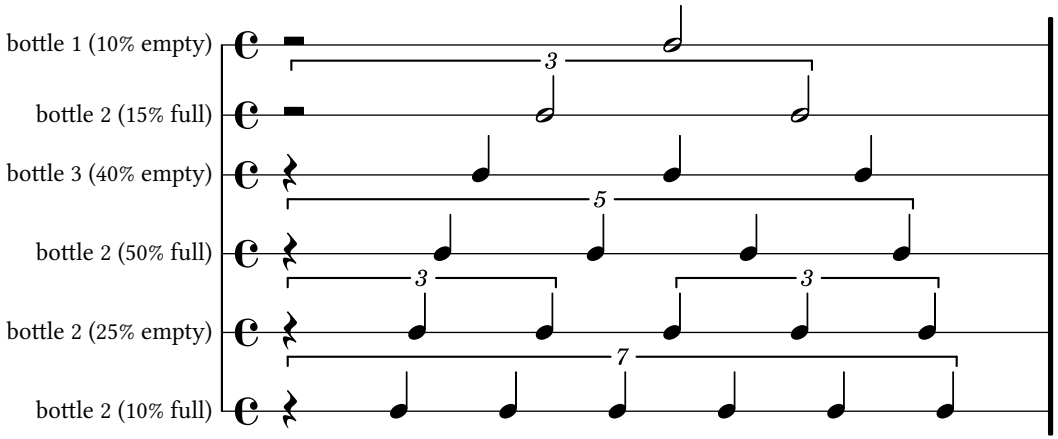
wear hats, switch gears, wear gears, switch hats, witch hears, swear gats
5 pitched wrenches and fedora

symmetry-is-boring
wineglass, mokubio, log drum, muted cowbell and taut rope

tweeting bird
(lg. metal bowl and sweaty palms)

74C14

for six beer bottles, hit with six brass mallets



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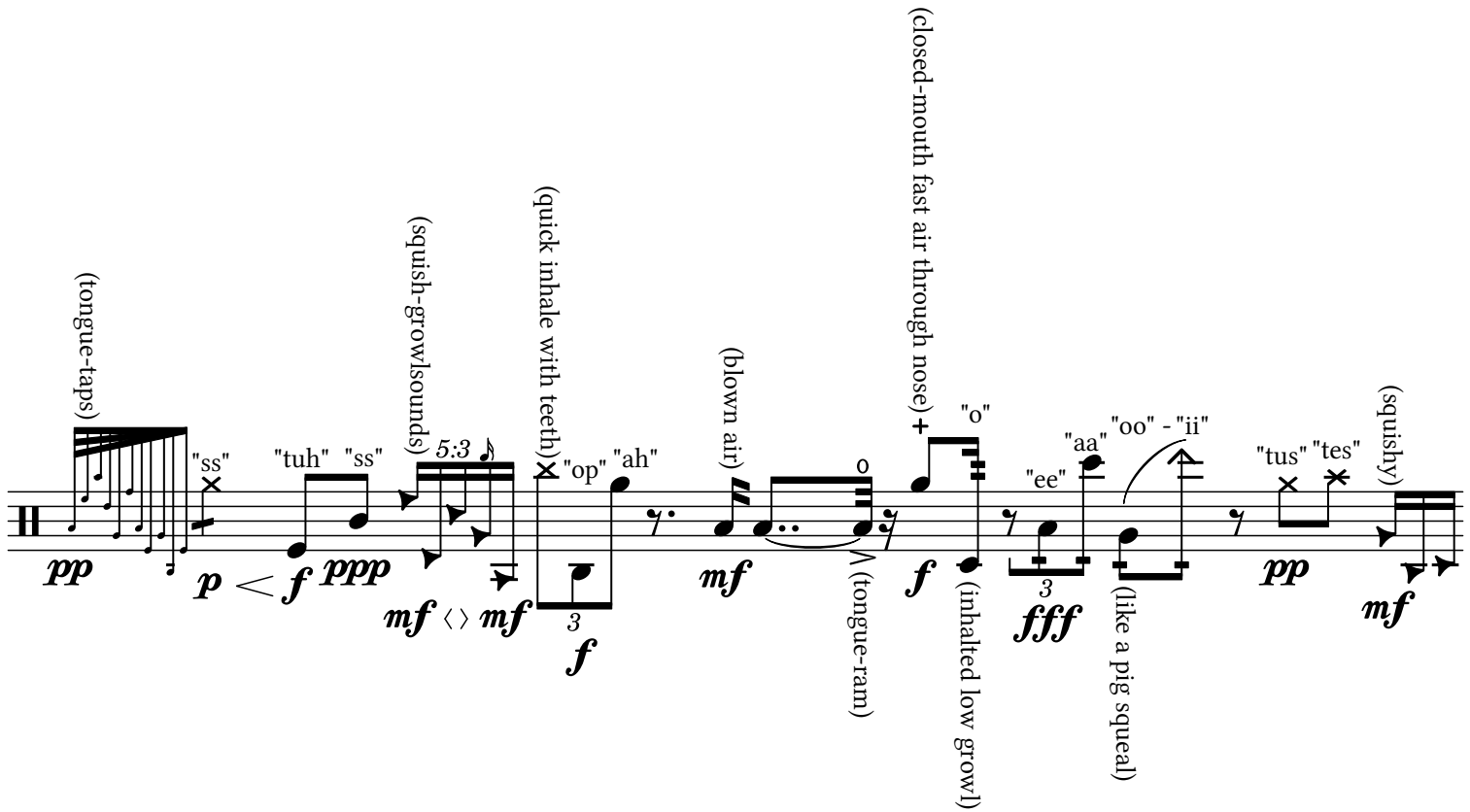
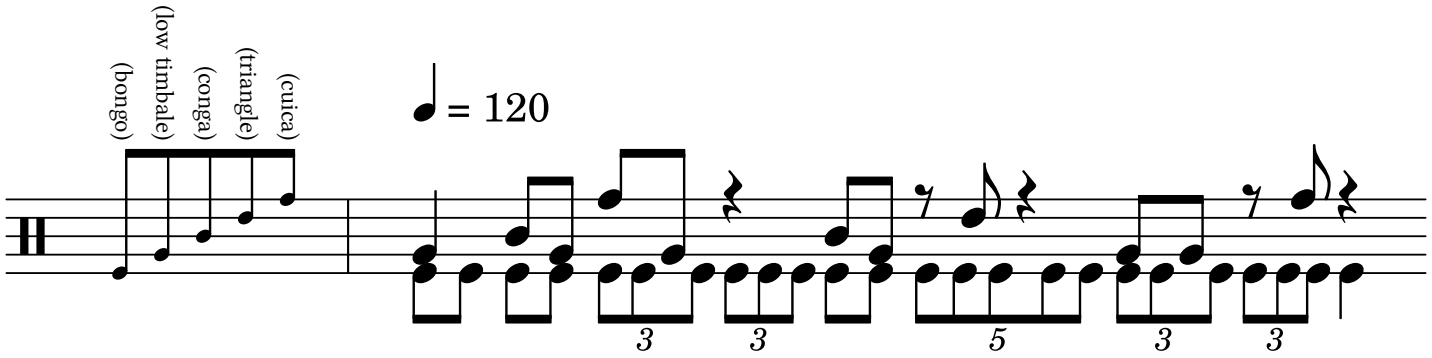
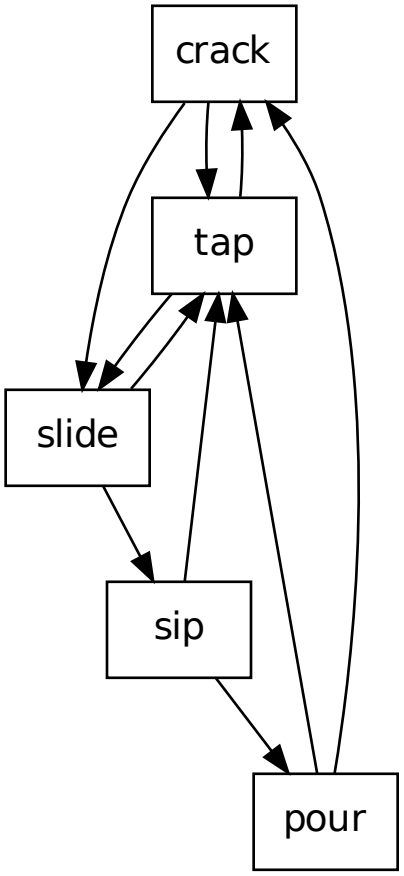


Anna, watching couple eating bagel together while he reads *The Speed of Trust* and she reads *The Sex Lives of Animals*



Arem

for a six pack of cheap beer

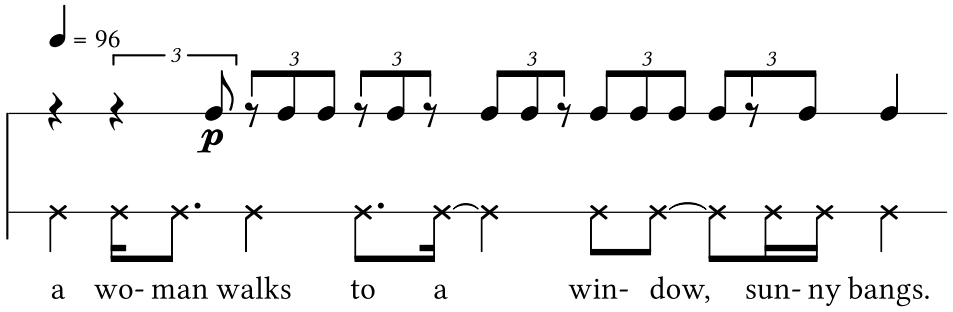


can list:
1) unopened
2) unopened
3) opened, full
4) unopened
5) opened, half-full/half-empty
6) opened, empty

start anywhere in the chain of actions.
perform the indicated action as quickly as possible on one of the six cans.
follow the arrows to another box.
repeat process for 5 seconds total.

bangs anecdote

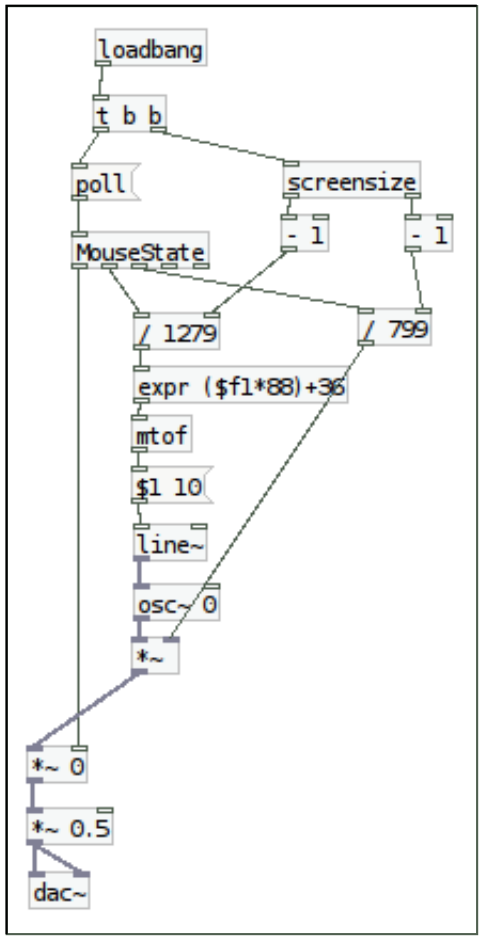
for solo bongo player and one bongo



(EXAMPLE OF BLURT)

MIKE-> NERD->[BLURT]->MIKE IS A NERD

for laptop operator

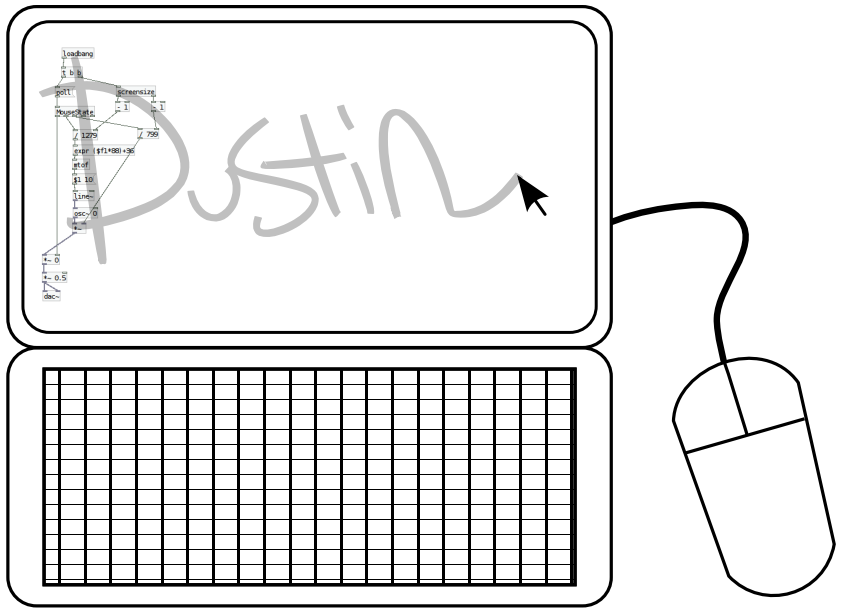


Before the concert:
1. Download PD-extended or compile it from source.
2. Re-create the patch on the left.
3. Maximize the patch window on the laptop computer you will performing from on the concert.
4. Leave edit mode (Ctrl+E)
4. Save the file.

At the concert:
0. Open the patch, compute audio. Hook up the computer's audio output to something audible to an audience.

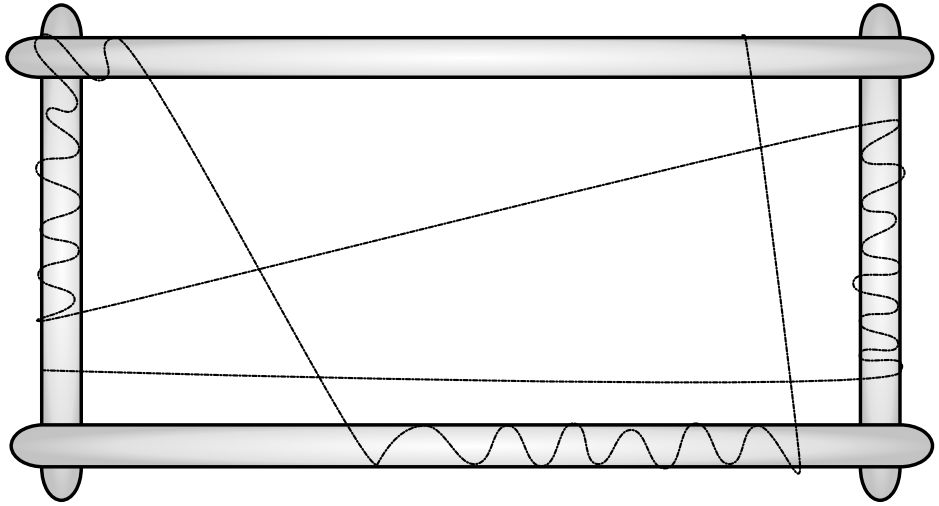
1. Using the mouse, "sign" your name over the space of the entire screen.
(Pen down = left mouse button down, Pen up - left mouse button up)

example:

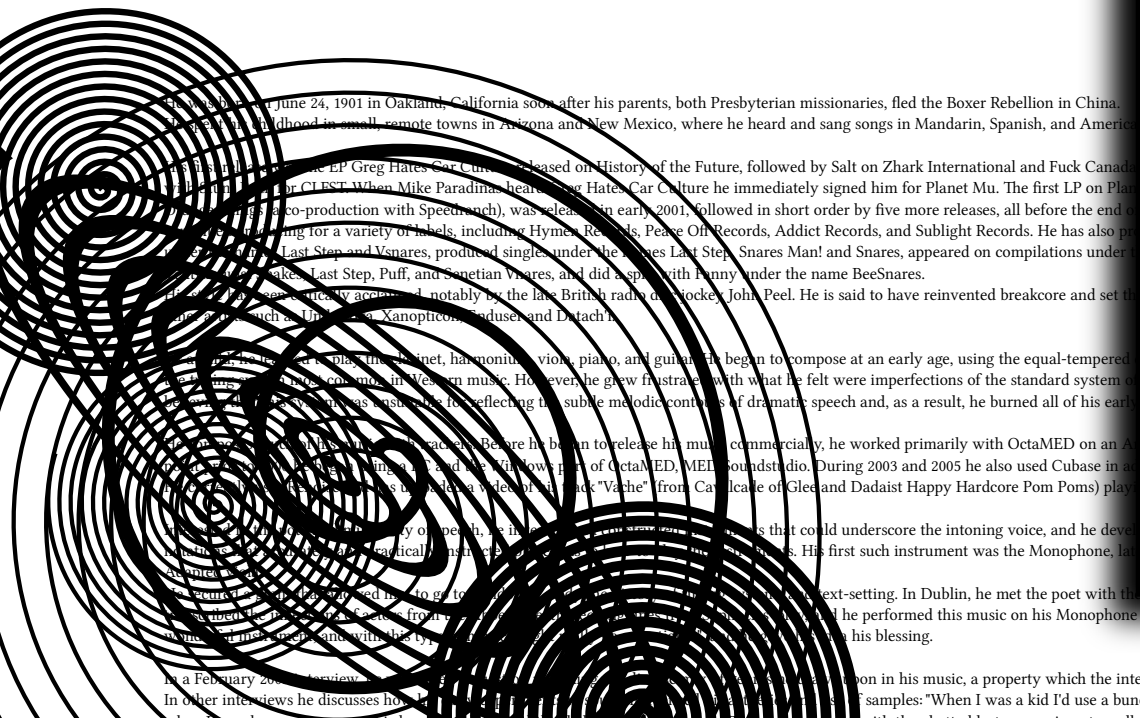


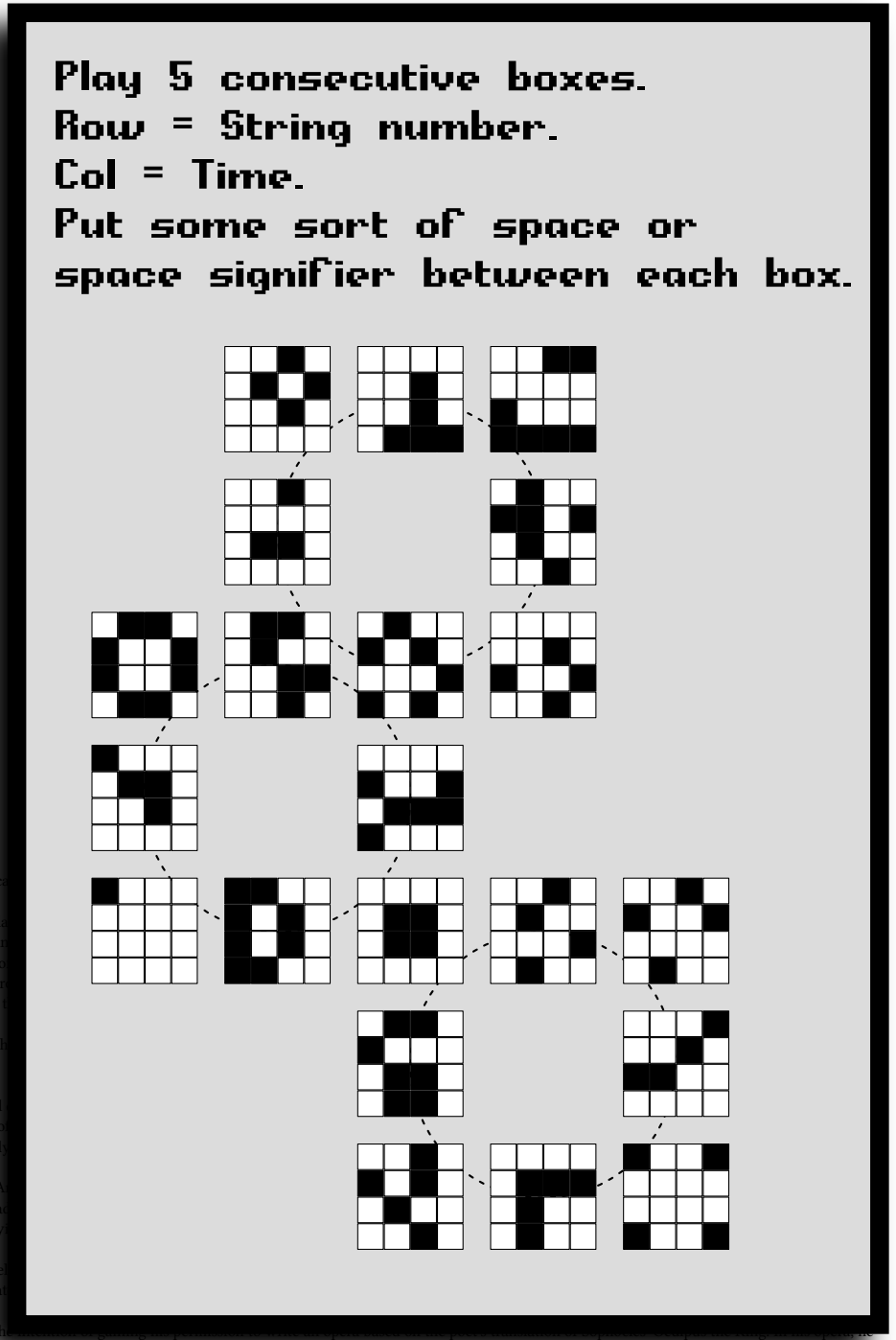
Crabbingoff Kingstreet

for wire-bound steel frame



1 long steel string, wound around metal frame (4 exposed lengths).
Make sure to wind the string so it does not touch itself and each exposed length can resonate freely.





He was born on June 24, 1901 in Oakland, California soon after his parents, both Presbyterian missionaries, fled the Boxer Rebellion in China.
He spent his childhood in small, remote towns in Arizona and New Mexico, where he heard and sang songs in Mandarin, Spanish, and Americ

His first LP Greg Hates Car Culture, released on History of the Future, followed by Salt on Zhark International and Fuck Canad
Upon hearing for CLFST When Mike Paradinas heard Greg Hates Car Culture he immediately signed him for Planet Mu. The first LP on Plan
Hates Car Culture (a co-production with Speedranch), was released in early 2001, followed in short order by five more releases, all before the end o
He has been releasing for a variety of labels, including Hymen Records, Peace Off Records, Addict Records, and Sublight Records. He has also pr
Under the names Last Step and Vsnares, produced singles under the names Last Step, Snares Man! and Snares, appeared on compilations under t
Snares, Snake, Last Step, Puff, and Sonetian Vsnares, and did a split with Fanny under the name BeeSnares.
His work was critically acclaimed, notably by the late British radio DJ "Stockey" John Peel. He is said to have reinvented breakcore and set th
Artists such as Jimmy Edgar, Xanopticon, Endusen, and Datach'i.

He began to play the clarinet, harmonium, viola, piano, and guitar. He began to compose at an early age, using the equal-tempered
He found these commonplace in Western music. However, he grew frustrated with what he felt were imperfections of the standard system o
He was unsatisfied with existing instruments for reflecting the subtle melodic contours of dramatic speech and, as a result, he burned all of his earl

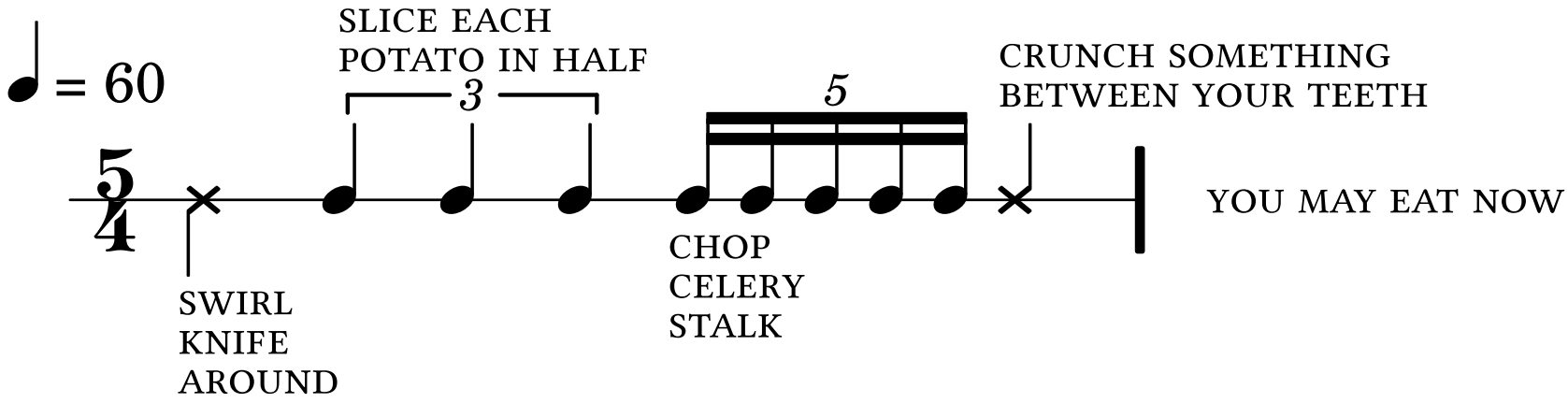
Before he began to release his music commercially, he worked primarily with OctaMED on an A
Beginning in 1999, he used the Windows port of OctaMED, MED Soundstudio. During 2003 and 2005 he also used Cubase in a
His music videos, such as his video for the tracks "Vache" from Cavalcade of Glee and Dadaist Happy Hardcore Pom Poms) play

He was very interested in the melody of speech, and in developing instruments that could underscore the intoning voice, and he deve
He referred to these instruments as radical instruments of speech. His first such instrument was the Monophone, la
He wanted to create
He received a grant that allowed him to go to
He was introduced to the poet
He performed this music on his Monophone while intoning "By the Rivers of Babylon". Tghe poet responded enthusiastically, saying, "A play done entirely in this way, with this
his blessing.

In a February 2004 interview
In other interviews he discusses how
samples: "When I was a kid I'd use a bunch of ghetto blasters playing all at once to play different sounds I'd recorded with some other shitty ghetto blasters. A turning point was

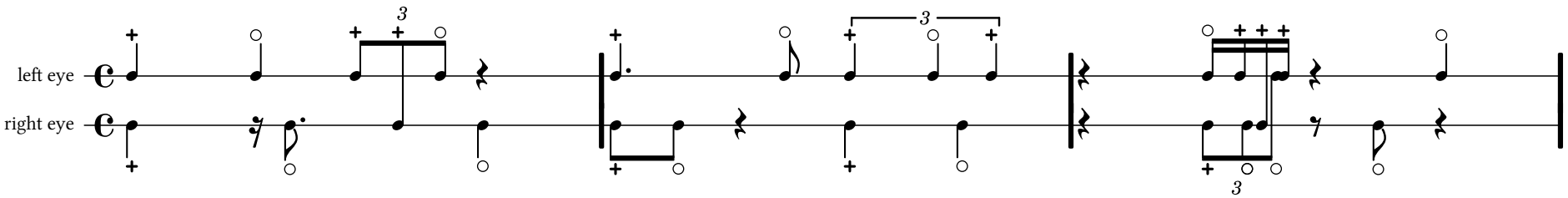
while the dog meat's cookin'

for a hungry knife-wielding person, 3 red potatoes and a stalk of celery



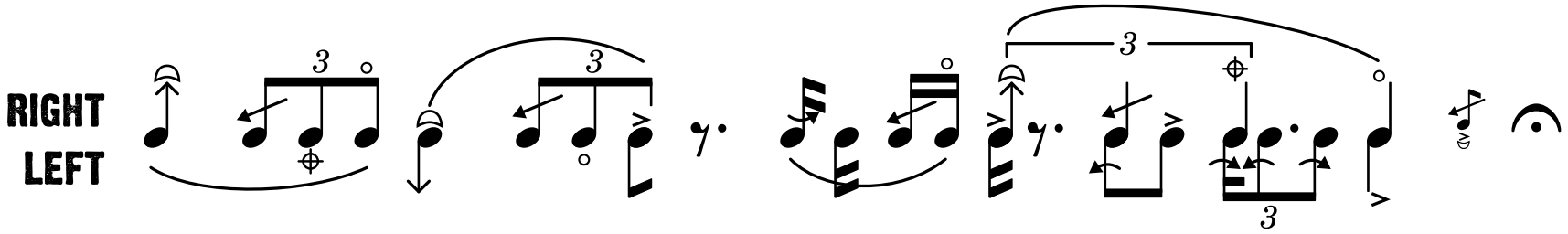
(-*)

for your left and right eyelids



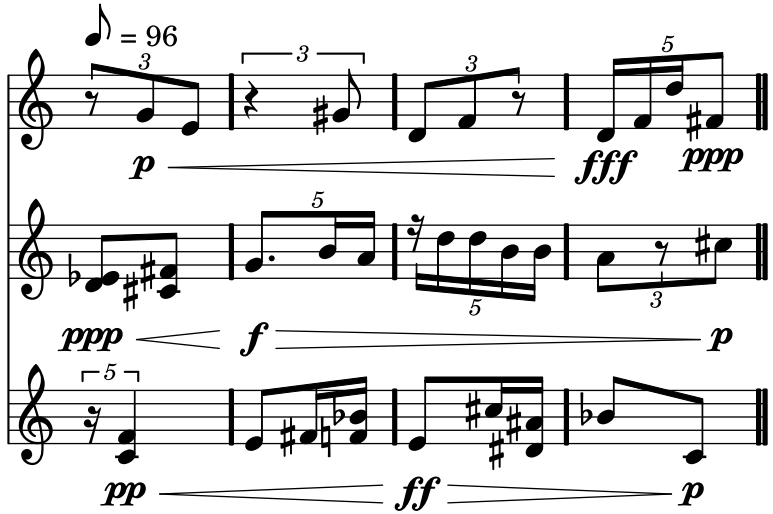
on going on a diet devoid of high-fructose corn syrup and foxconn...

for a large pad of paper (multiple pages)



= USE NAIL
= SLIDE UP SIDE OF PAPER
= TAP CORNER
= TURN PAGE / FOLDER CORNER
= HOLD PAGE CORNER DOWN
= WHIP BACK TO NEXT PAGE (SINGLE MOTION)
= SWIPE ACROSS PAGE IN INDICATED DIRECTION WITH BACK OF FINGER

STEMS UP = RIGHT HAND
STEMS DOWN = LEFT HAND



for a heterogeneous pitched instrument

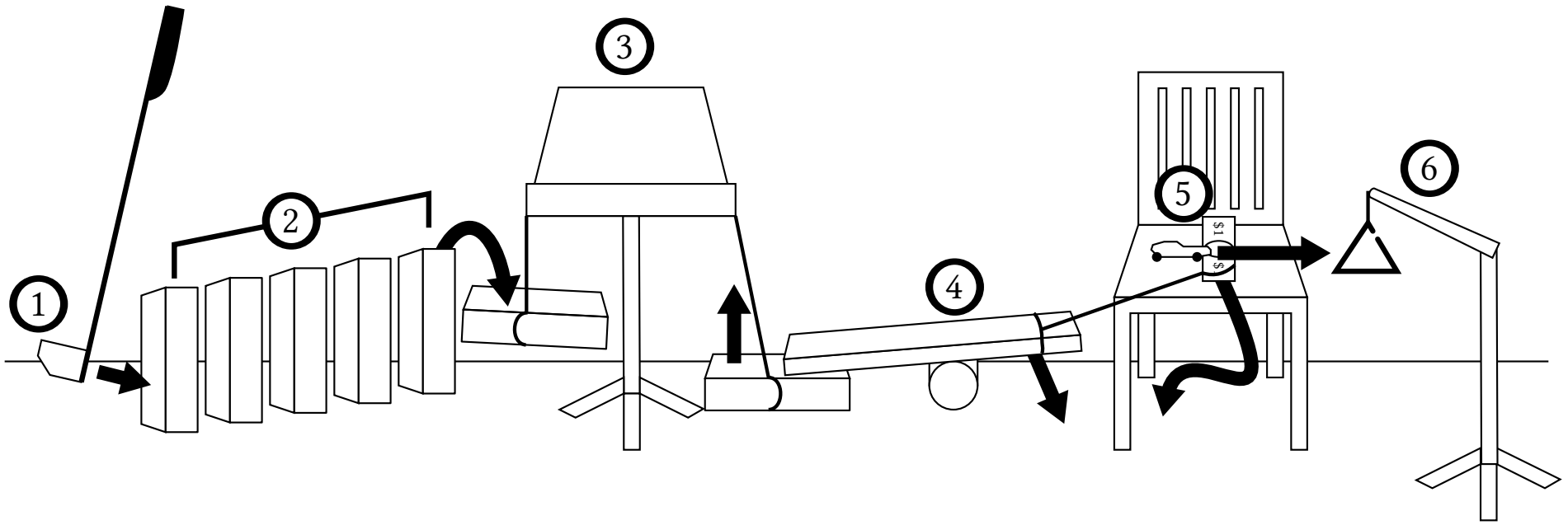
Gazebo, Gazelle, zilch.

Jew-Goldberg, the accountant,
skips town and orders some cotton candy.

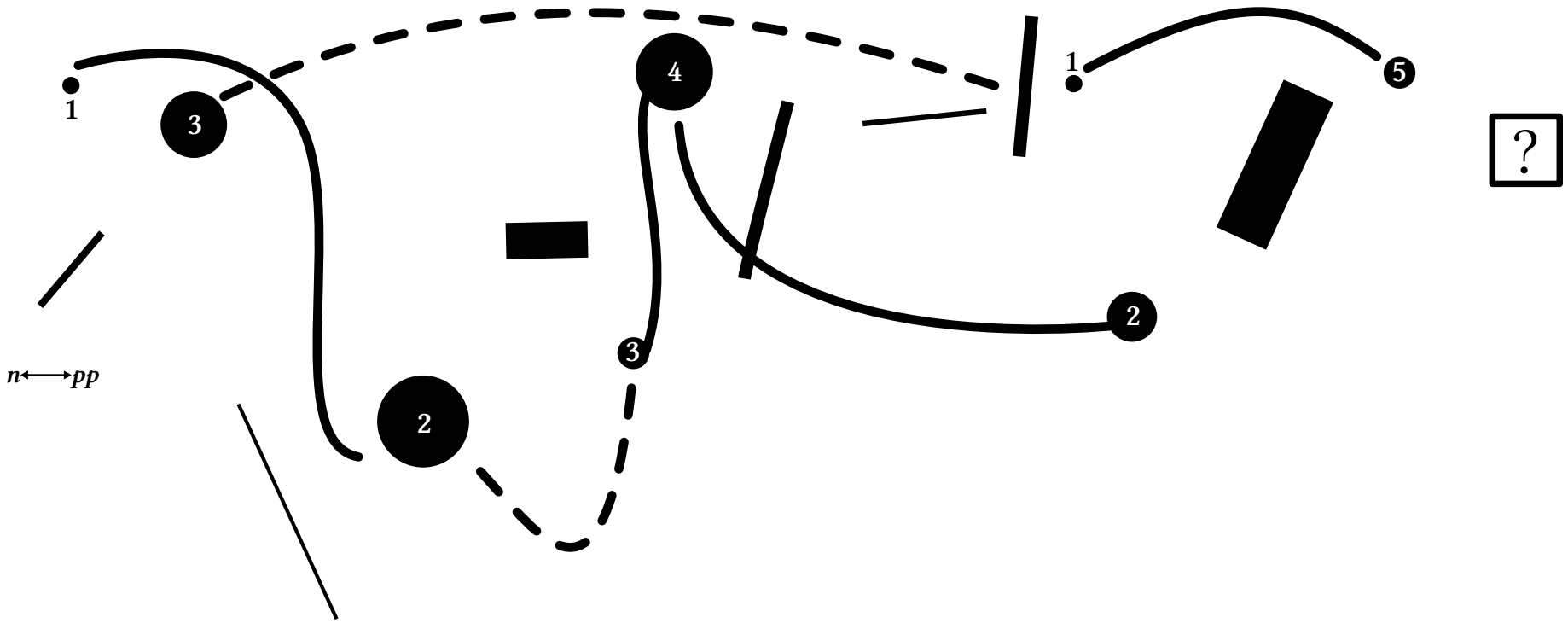
for rube-goldberg device operator

KEY:

1 = operator picks up golf club, swings it at the first book and begins the sequence.
2 = 5 books of scores (dominos): Buxtehude Organ Works , Bach Mass in B Minor, Beethoven Symphony No. 3, Berlioz Requiem and Brahms Hungarian Dances
3 = music stand used as pulley, (books are tied to each other and strung over the stand) book on left is suspended in air (Berio Sequenza for Piano), book on right is on ground (Boulez Structures)
4 = plank of wood on a can of mushroom soup, tied to 5's dollar bill
5 = toy race car with mechanical wheels (pull-back to make car move), car wheels are wond back and the car is held in place with a dollar bill.
6 = a large triangle, the car must fly through the triangle and ting it on its exit sequence (but still must completely go through it).

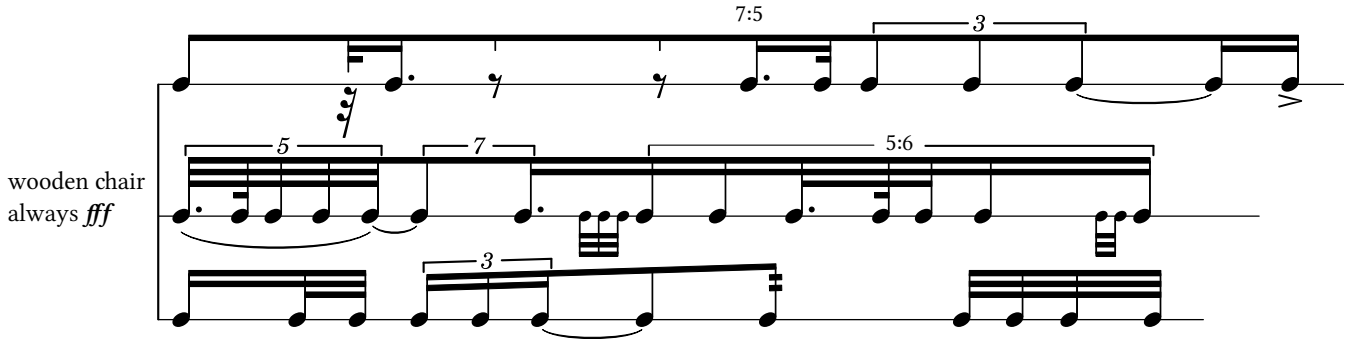


5 suspension cords from a large bass drum (still attached)



meeting Dostoevsky on the I-95

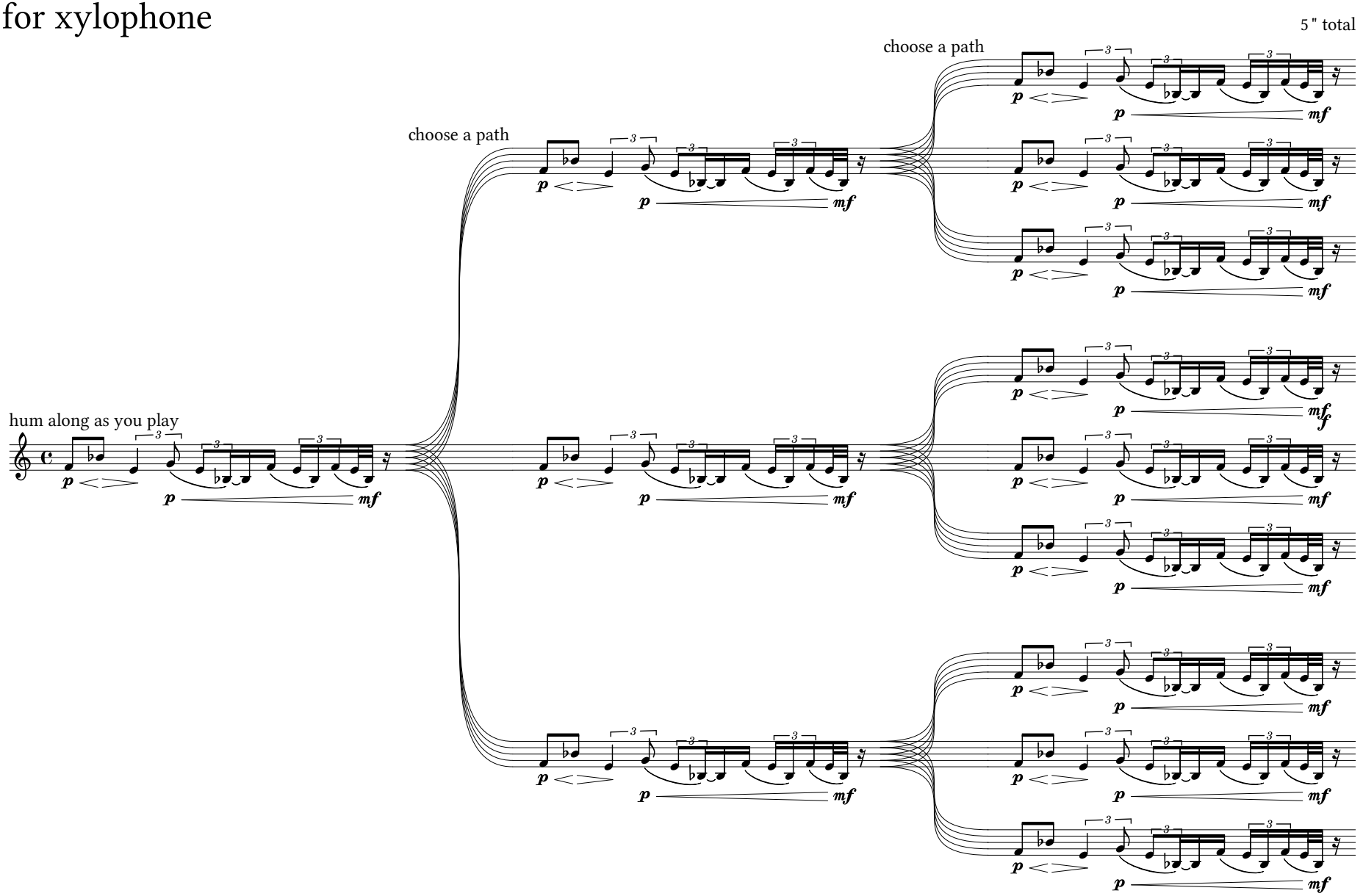
informationgrantedtohappenperceptualinterfacedisregarded



perform one staff, accompanied by playback of a precording of the other 2 staves
the volume of the recording should match the sound of the live chair

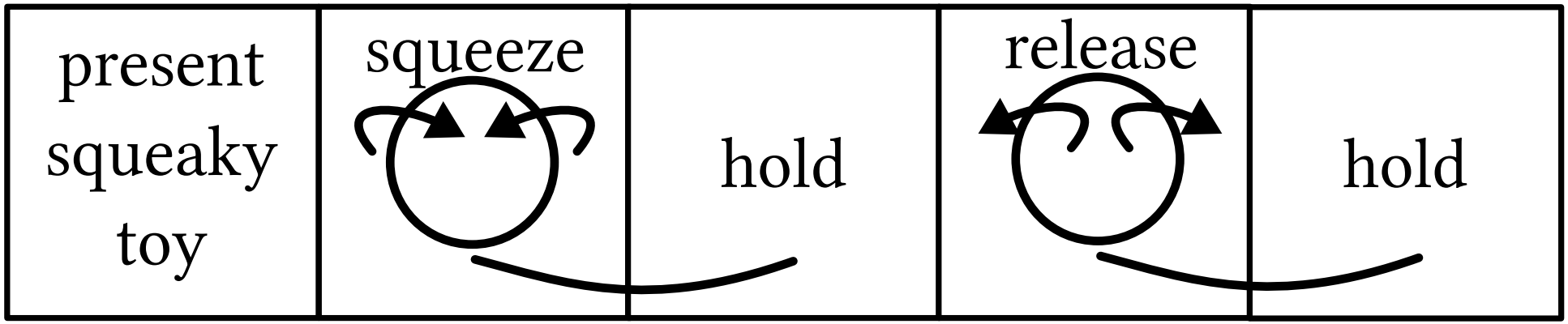
Obligatory Introductory Phrase

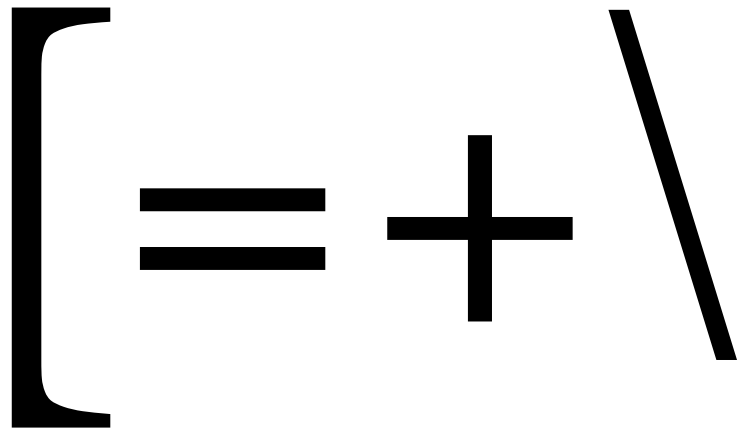
for xylophone



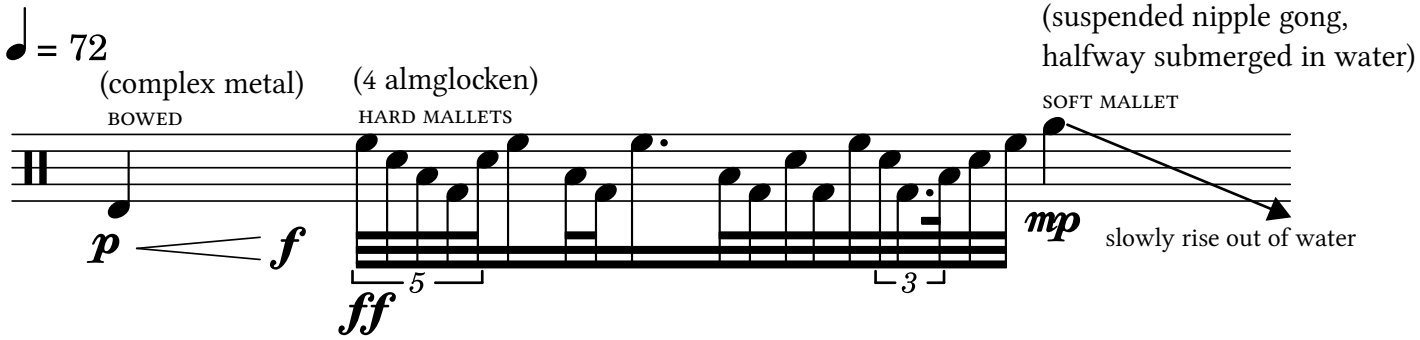
merry-marie

for green frog squeaky dog toy





for various metals



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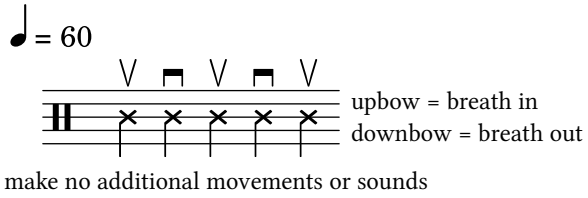
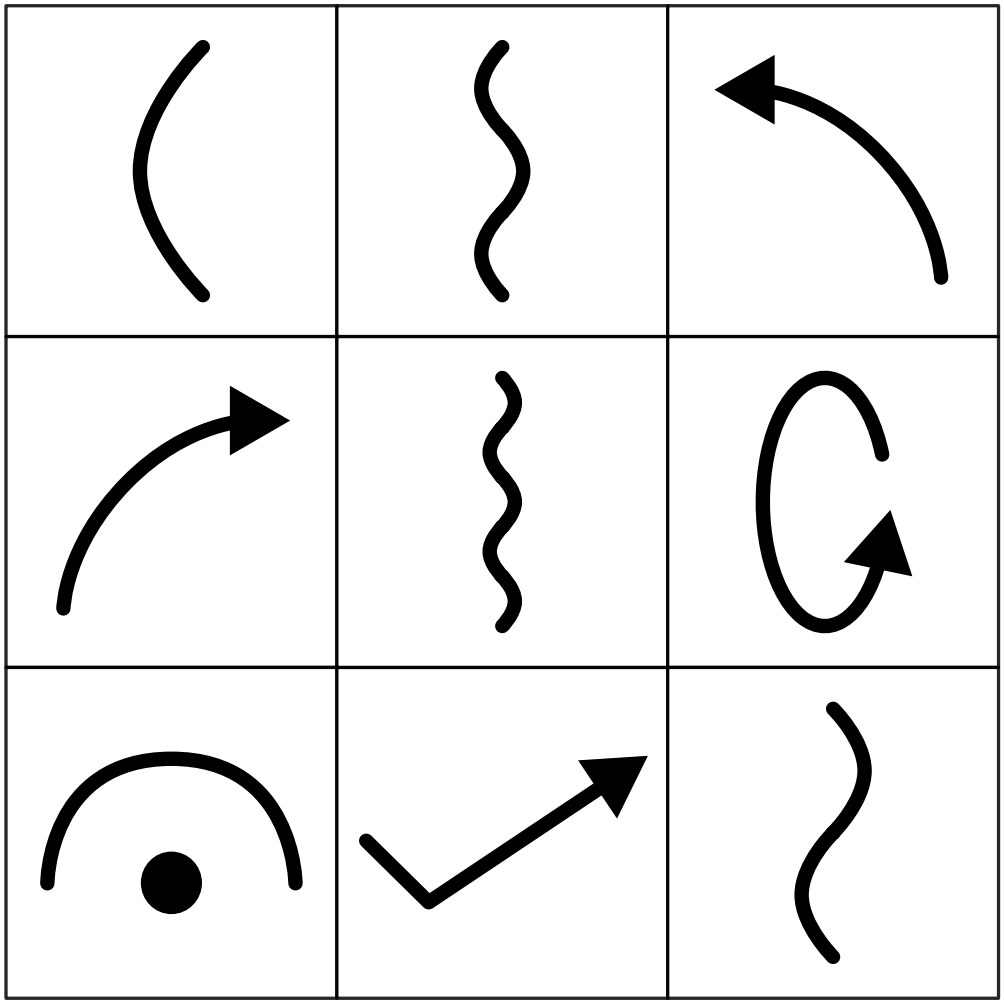


Good for you for putting old heads on young shoulders!



instructions:
weild a sword (empty glass soda bottle) and a shield (a flexible "NO TRESSPASSING" or "BEWARE OF DOG" sign) in your left and right hands respectively.

pick any square to begin in. from this start point, plan a path through the grid that passes through each square exactly one time.

for each square, play the indicated passage and then immediately move to the next square.

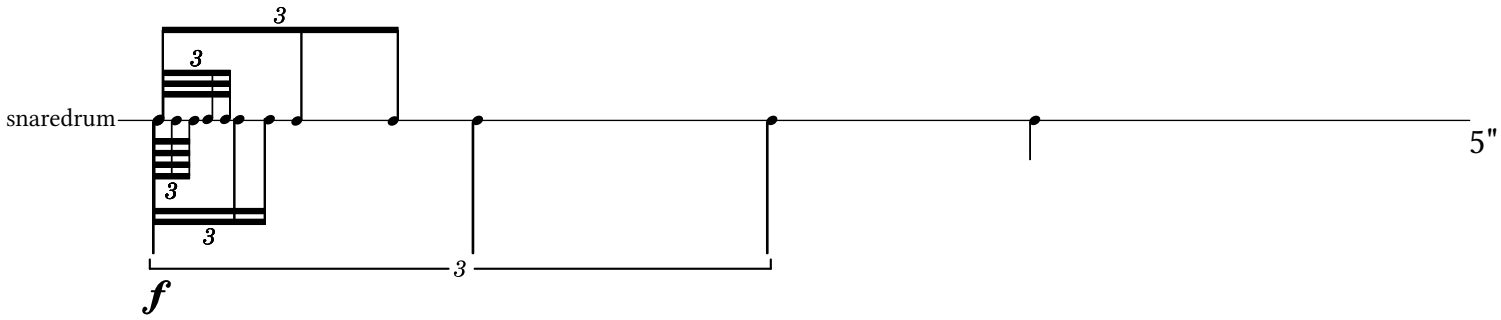
curved lines with arrows indicate to swing your sword left or right.
the arrowed line with a bend indicates to blow gently over the bottle's top.
curved lines with no arrows indicate to bend/shake the shield.
the number of bends indicates how many times to bend/shake the sheild.

all actions should be forceful and fast
yet produce very quiet, gentle sounds.

each square should last slightly over half a second.
total duration: 5 seconds.

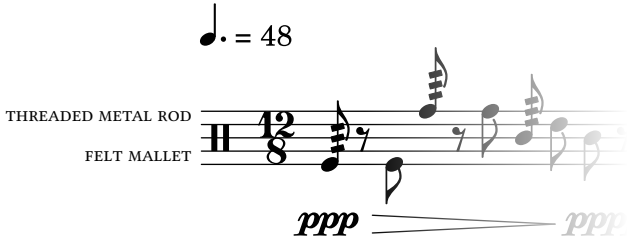
03/23/2011

SHOT HIMSELF DEAD

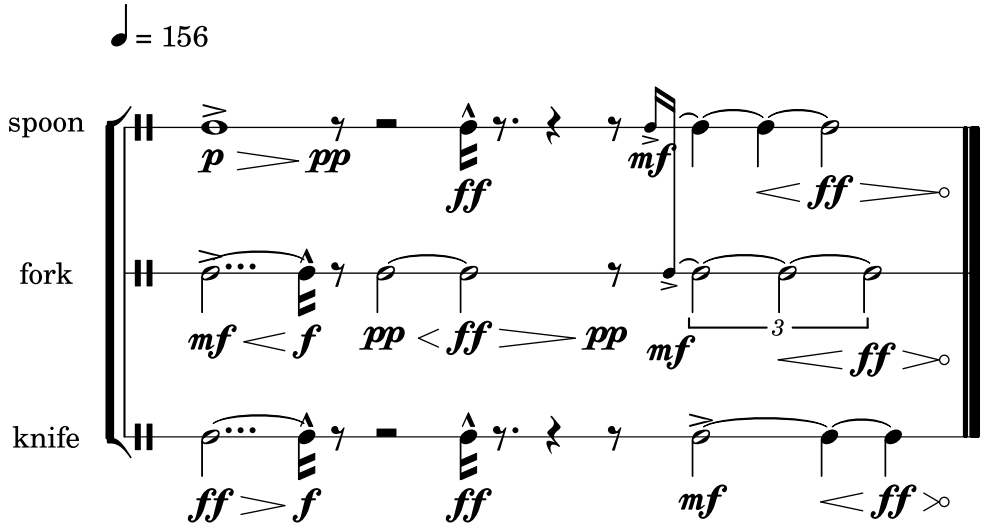


staring at a corner
that turns to beige.

for woodblocks (5)



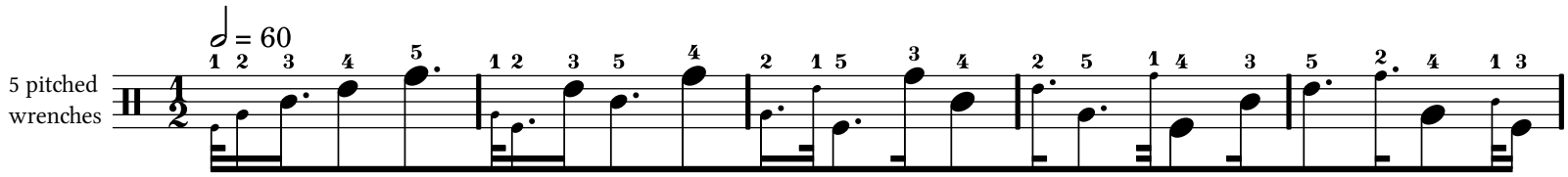
Bring me the head of Stewart Beach on a platter.



instructions:
scrape a large trash can lid with indicated utensils.
the sound should be piercing and unstable throughout.

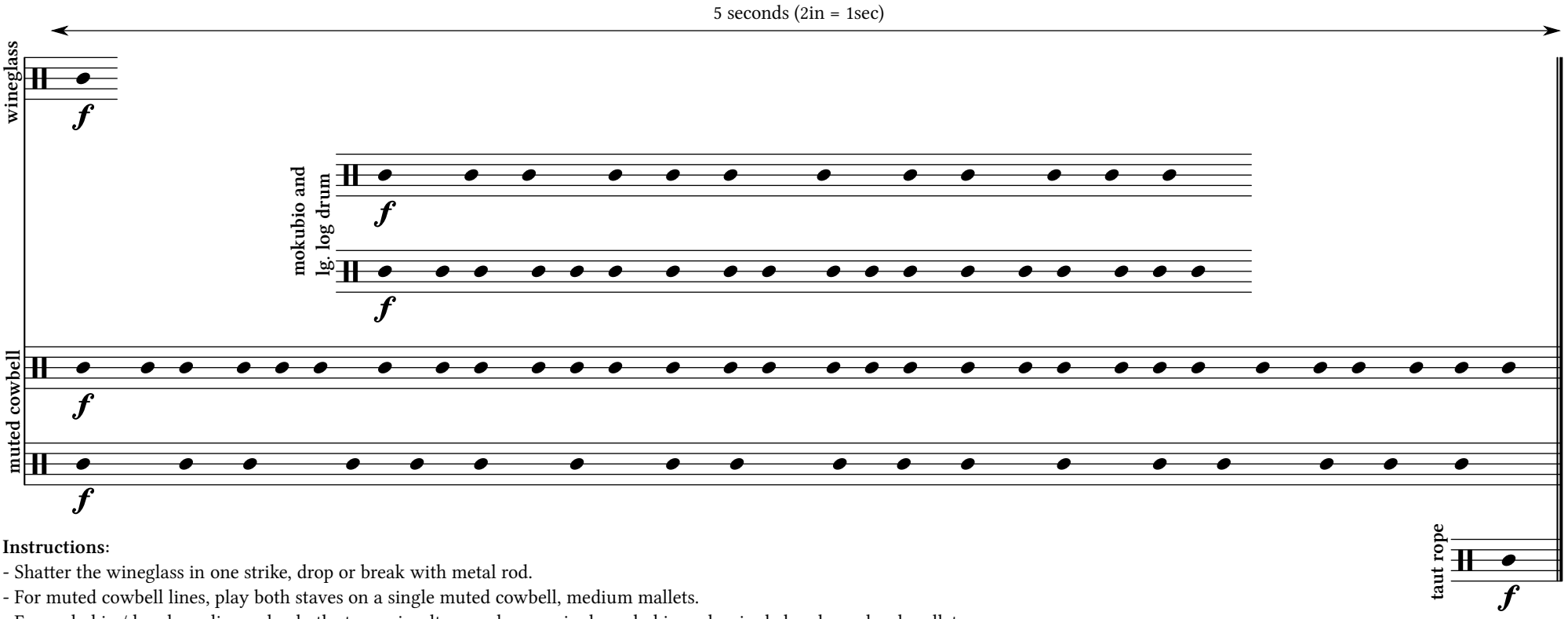
03/09/2011

wear hats,
switch gears,
wear gears,
switch hats, witch hears, swear gats



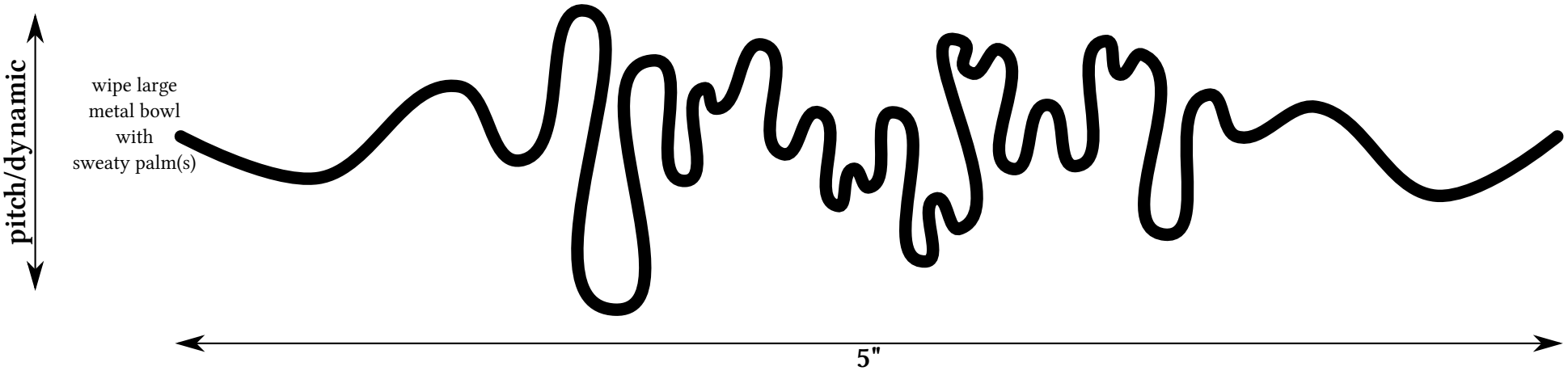
instructions:
before piece begins, don a fedora.
notehead size indicates relative loudness
number above note indicates type of mallet to use (1 = cloth, 2 = yarn, 3 = rubber, 4 = wood, 5 = metal)

symmetry-is-boring



Instructions:

- Shatter the wineglass in one strike, drop or break with metal rod.
- For muted cowbell lines, play both staves on a single muted cowbell, medium mallets.
- For mokubio / log drum lines, play both staves simultaneously on a single mokubio and a single log drum, hard mallets.
- Pluck the taut rope, it should be very long (>10 ft.) and made of a fibrous material, producing a low but still audible pitch.

03/07/2011

tweeting bird