IN A QUIETNESS OF A BAMBOO GROVE

for violin solo

Lo Ting-cheung

2014

First Performance:

Fabio Sarlo

June 5, 2014

The Sir Jack Lyons Concert Hall

University of York, Heslington, York, UK

Preparation

Prepare strings III and IV by affixing a metal paperclip to each string. The paperclips should be attached firmly to the strings 15mm from the bridge.

Structure and content of the composition

There are six sections (A, B, C, D, E & F) in the composition. Section A contains 12 "segments" and section F is fully notated. Each of the other sections (B, C, D & E) contains a set of brief musical "events" with distinctive sound characteristics. The "segments" are to be performed in order while the "events" are not necessarily so. Each "segment" should last between 6 and 14 seconds. The violinist is free to determine the duration for each "segment" within the given framework.

The performance begins with the first "segment". After each "segment", the violinist is free to proceed to any "event". He is free to perform as many "events" as he wishes before proceeding to the next "segment". (The number of "events" performed may vary from 0 to 10; 0 means that the violinist moves directly from one "segment" to another without any "events" in between.)

Moreover, the violinist is urged to insert *silence* as an "event" between different materials. The duration of silence should be as long as a *coma* to 12 seconds. Silence should be *substantial* and become a presence throughout the performance. The spatial relationships of sound to silence should be maintained.

An "event" can occur as many times as the violinist wishes but it should not be repeated in succession. NOT all the "events" need to be chosen in a single performance, but the violinist is encouraged to use as many different "events" as possible. He should also avoid creating patterns or planning sequences of materials in advance; any ensuing material should be a spontaneous response to how the music should continue at the moment.

After the 12th "segment" and any number of ensuing "events", the violinist will proceed to section F (p.5) and performs from the notated score until the end. There is a special section called "Recap of B" in the third system on p.6. Here the violinist is free to perform any number of "events" chosen from section B before proceeding to the next system. Again, he is free to insert silence between the "events", but it should NOT be substantial as in the previous sections. The duration of silence may be up to 6 seconds. Creation of patterns and repetition of "events" in succession are encouraged in this section. The whole "Recap" should last around 40 seconds.

For sections A, B, C, D and E, the materials are basically composed; but some parameters such as tempo, bowing and timbre are left deliberately to the violinist's discretion.

Tempo: In sections B, C, D & E, the tempo for each material should be between 40 and 50 b.p.m. but the violinist is free to accelerate and decelerate within each material.

Bowing: All materials can be performed with either up bow or down bow.

Timbre: The violinist should try out each material on different bowing positions (sul ponti., molto ponti., molto tasto, sul tasto, close to the clip, ord. etc.). It is important to find the points that produce the richest sonority. Materials with an arrow on top indicate that there should be a change in the bow position.

Use of mute: The violinist may perform any material with or without mute.

Special instructions for section B:

Performing technique: The violinist is free to perform an "event" with any techniques he deems suitable (arco, pizz., col legno, b.a.p. etc.). However, it may not be desirable to apply certain techniques to some events in view of the overall continuity.

Dynamic: The violinist may perform an "event" with any dynamic level ranging from *ppp* to *p*; it is possible to perform an "event" with crescendo or decrescendo.

General comments

The structure is NOT dependent upon improvisation, but there is a high degree of flexibility in the form. Spontaneity is important throughout the performance.

The violinist is advised to familiarize himself with the character of each material. He should rehearse different techniques on the materials and try out different tempi within the given timings to enable him to produce spontaneous continuity during the actual performance.

The duration of the performance is suggested to be between 9 and 15 minutes.

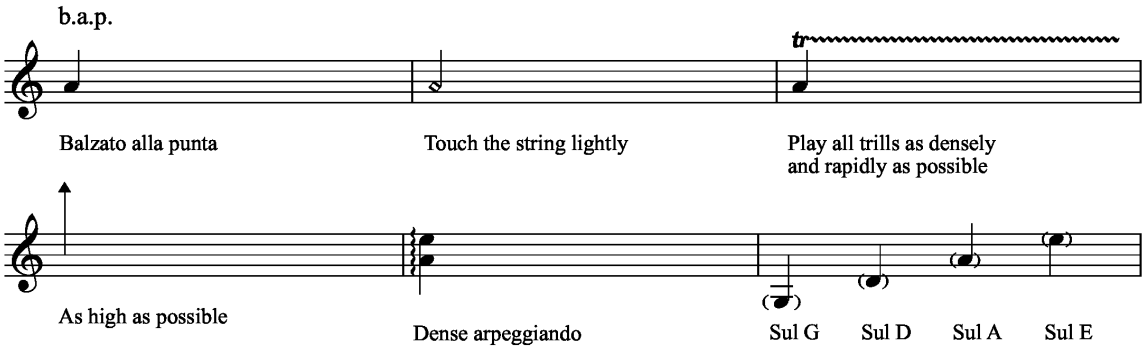
Performance Notes

Accidentals apply to all the notes within the same gesture. Natural signs are used when there is a need to avoid confusion.

When playing on the "prepared" strings (strings III and IV), the performer should be aware that the pitches and the intervallic relations may differ greatly from the sounds as written. The timbre and sonorities may also be heavily distorted.

The articulation is always tentative, lingering and very flexible, regardless of the tempo of the rhythmic pattern involved. The bowing is very light (*flautando*) throughout, and virtually without vibrato (the few exceptions are specifically indicated on the score).

The point at which the bow touches the string changes almost continuously on the long notes. Any change in the bowing direction should be made as inconspicuously as possible.



Programme Note

Zhu Li Guan (**竹里館**) *Wang Wei*

獨坐幽篁裏， I sat alone
in the quietness of a bamboo grove,
彈琴復長嘯。 Pluck-playing the *qin*
whilst whistling into the wind;
深林人不知， The grove was deep inside the wood,
unknown to the boisterous crowd;
明月來相照。 Only the moon came to shine above me,
bearing me company with its silvery glow.

The title of this composition is taken from the first line of *Wang Wei*'s poem *Zhu Li Guan* (**竹里館**) which describes moments of solitude in the quietness of a bamboo grove. An intriguing feature of the poem is the poet's use of the occurrence of sound/noise to emphasize the extreme quietness he feels.

The violin solo is a musical attempt to depict the notion of quietness embodied in this ancient Chinese poem by using a western stringed instrument in a contemporary context. Quietness is experienced not only as a sense of serenity in the environment which provides an opportunity for soul-searching but also as peace in the heart and a sense of coming to terms with oneself regardless of the environment.

幽篁

IN THE QUIETNESS OF A BAMBOO GROVE

for solo violin

Daniel LO Ting-cheung
2013

A

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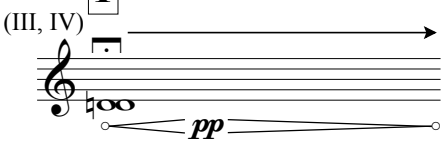

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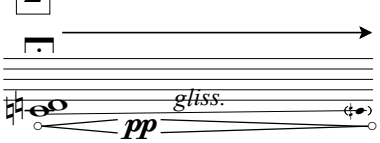

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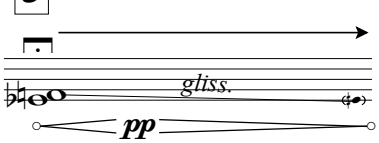

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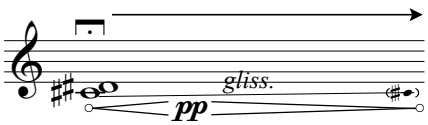

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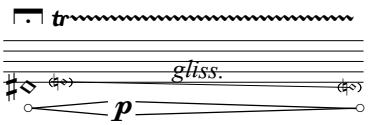

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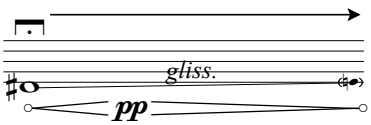

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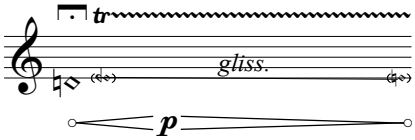

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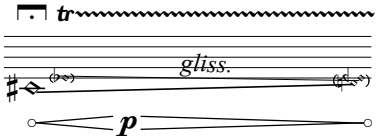

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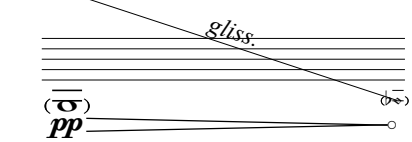

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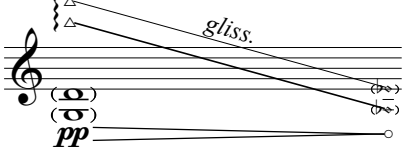

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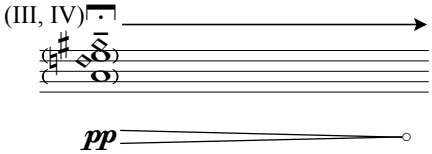

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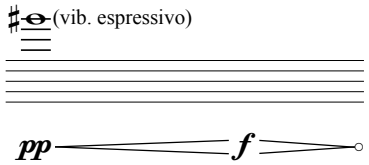

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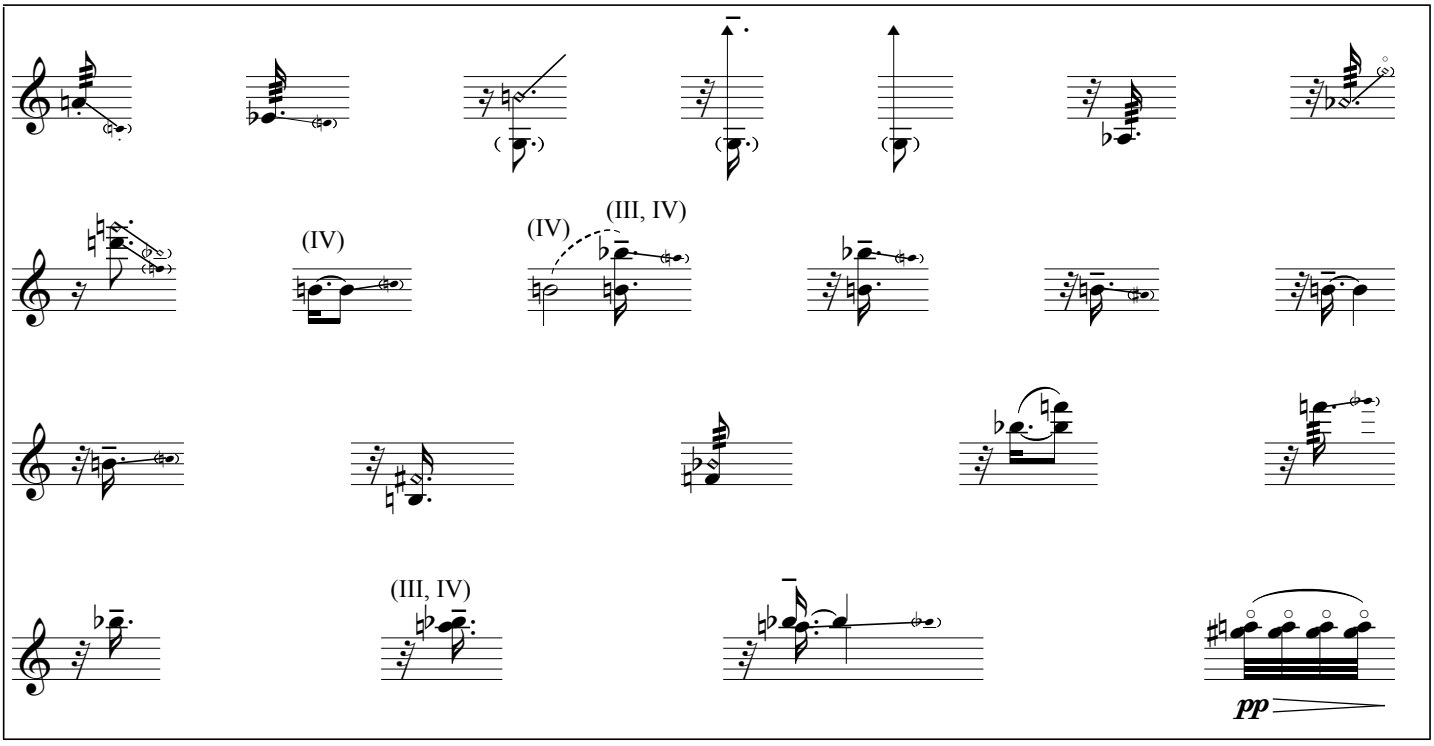
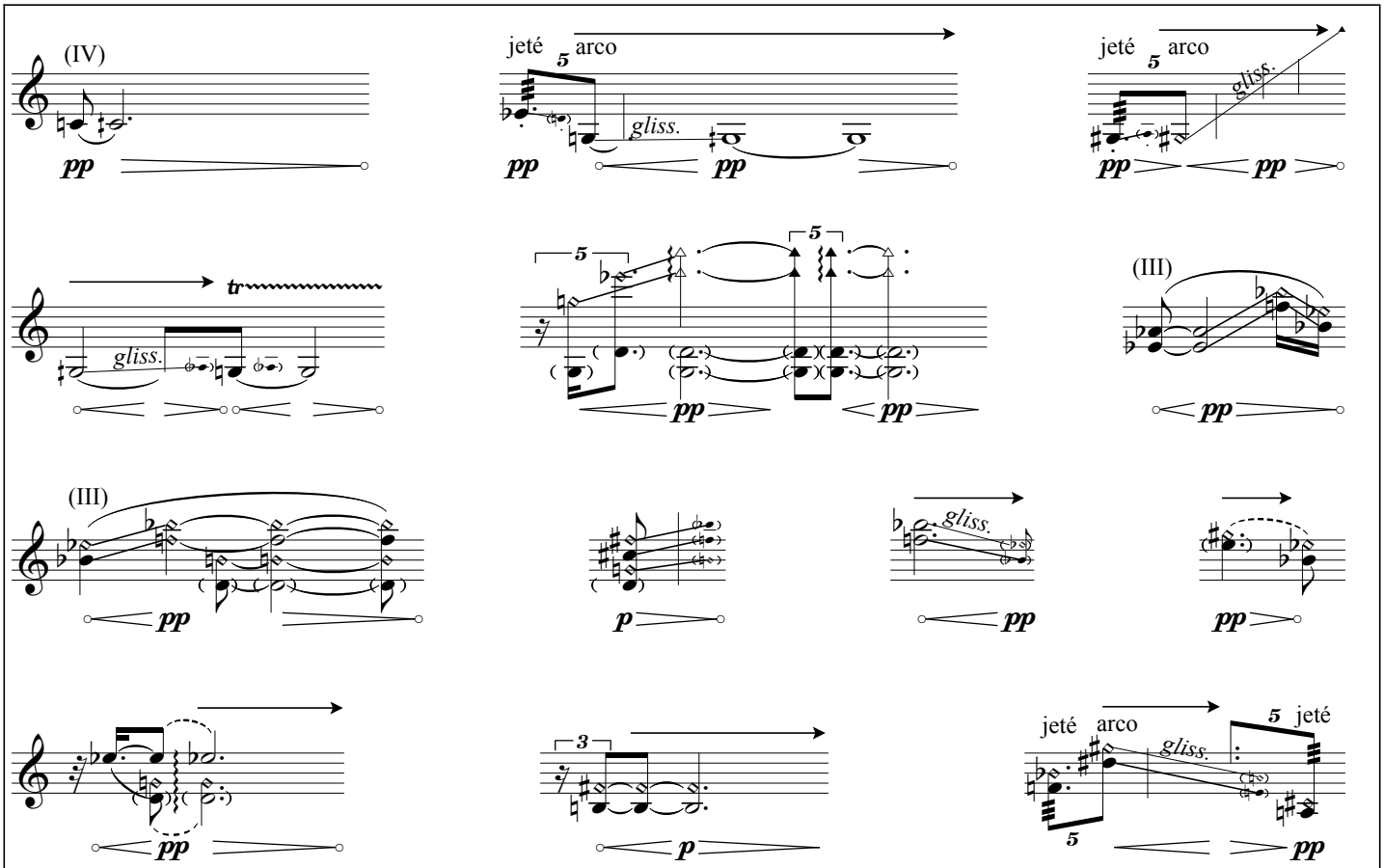

(IV)
(IV)
(III, IV)
(III, IV)
pp

C


(IV)
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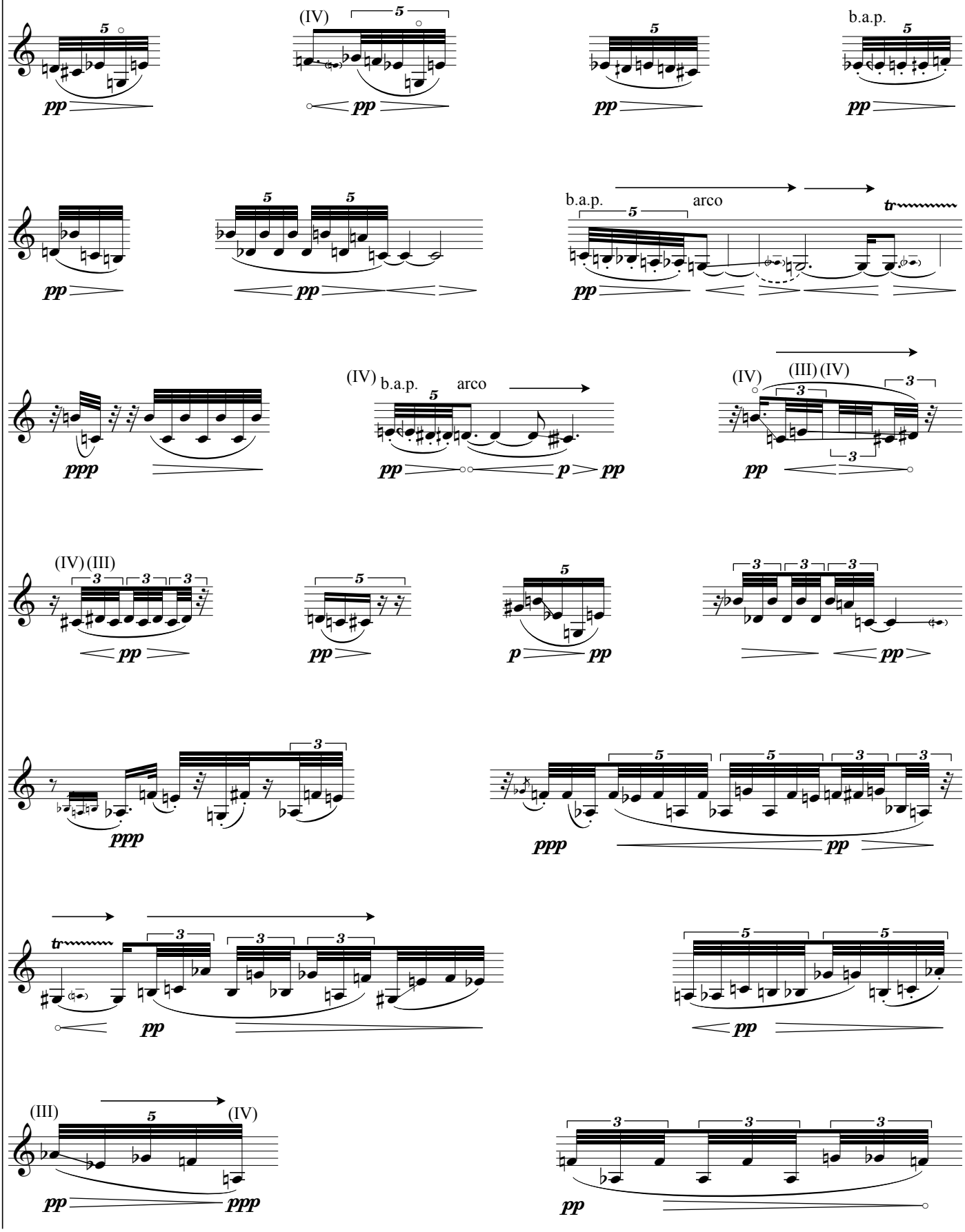
D



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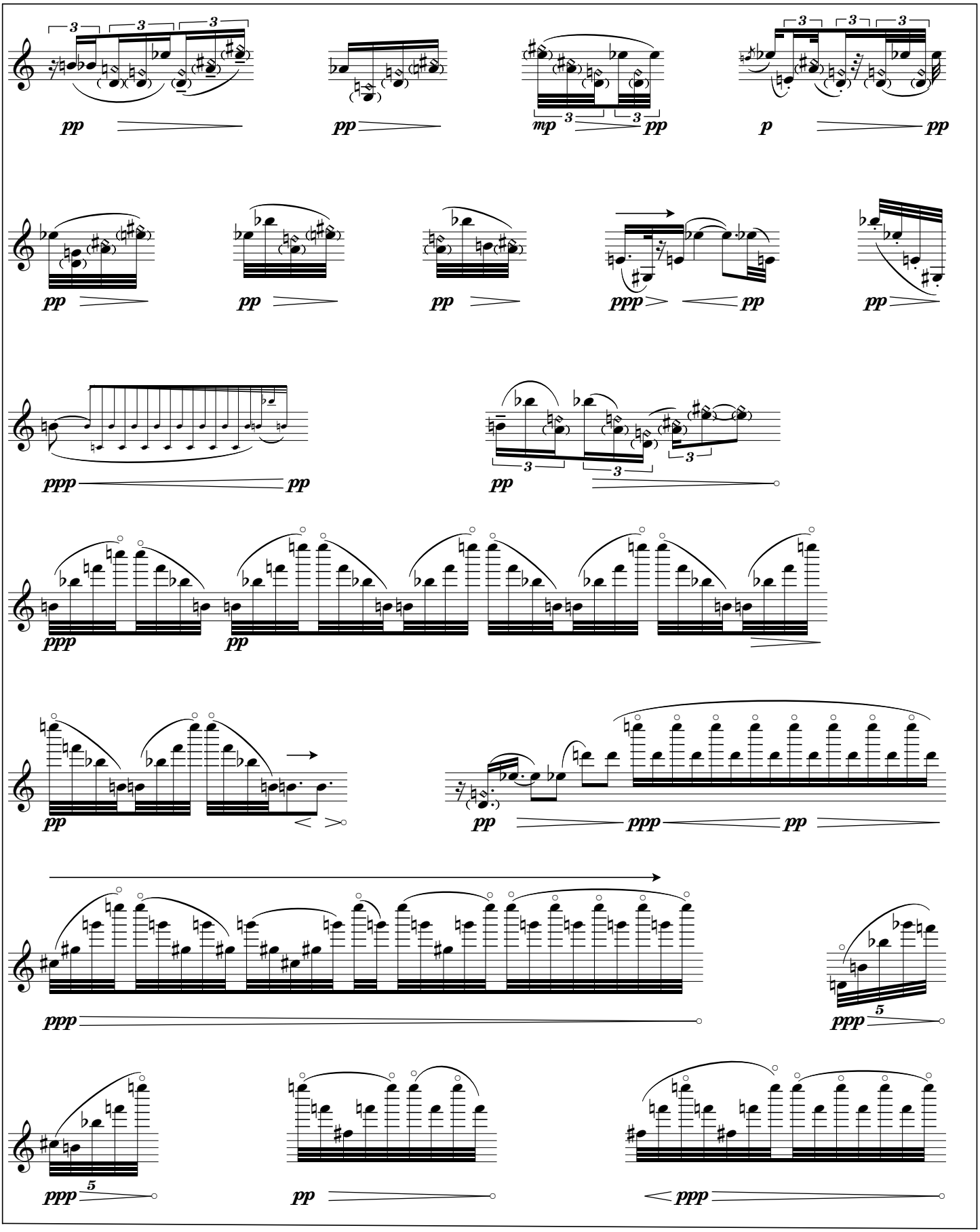
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F

♩ ca. 54-56

con sord.
tasto

ppp

(vib.)

mf

pont.

ppp

ord.

pont.

(molto vib.)

f

pp

ord.

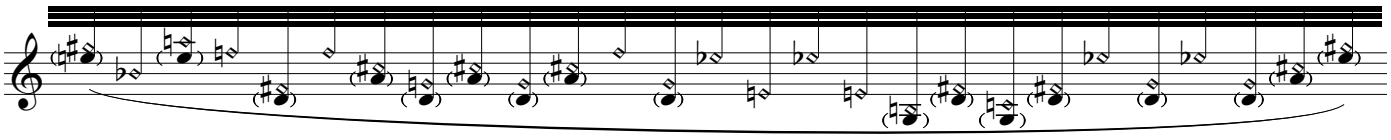
(III) (IV) etc.

ff

pont.

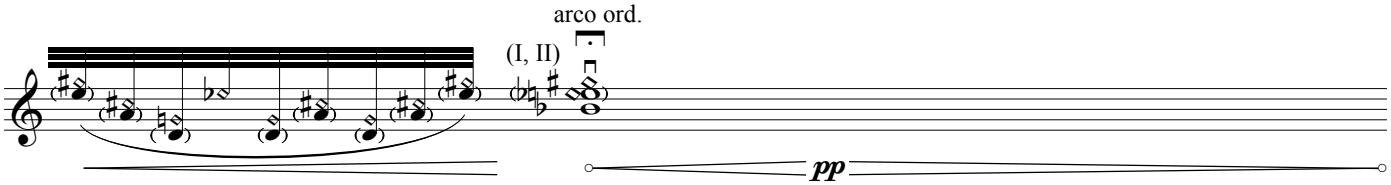
pp

pp



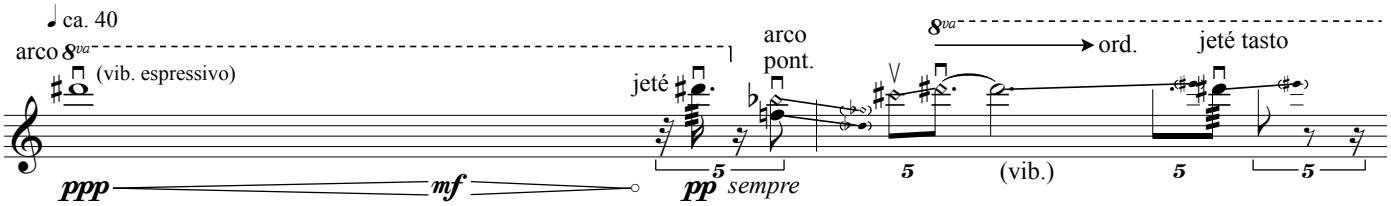
[ca 12"]

arco ord.



[ca 40"]

"Recap of B"



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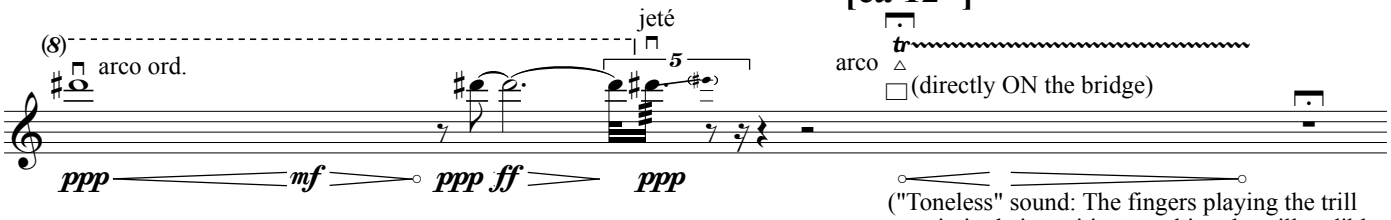

("Toneless" sound: The fingers playing the trill remain in their positions, making the trill audible through the action at the bridge.)