Balázs HORVÁTH

Surface studies

for solo marimba

2018

to Gábor Palotás

PLAYING SCORE

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Surface studies contains 6 movements that can be played indipendently or together and in any order. The movements may be performed separately so that other compositions are inserted between the movements.
Each movement is based on a curtain line that directs the harmonic, melodic etc. content of the movements and is composed with a different traditional European scale. Each movement is to be performed with different beater type(s) or hand.

The piece was composed for 4 1/3 octave Marimba (A2-C7) so no larger instrument is needed for the piece.

For explanations see the top of the actual pages.

Beaters needed – actual scales used:
a) **4 soft mallets** – *octatonic* scale
b) **2 very hard mallets** – *chromatic* scale
c) **2 (any) mallets** – *altered* scale (heptatonia secunda)
d) **snare drum stick, hot rod, metal stick, hard mallet, VERY soft sponge beater** – "diatonic" scale
e) **2 friction sticks, 1 superball** – *intervallic model* scale (augm. 4th+perf. 4th) plus one note
f) fingers – *anhemiton pentatonic* scale (with diatonic auxiliary notes)

Total duration: ca. 6 min.

Surface studies was composed for Gábor Palotás who requested and premiered the piece.

The composition was realized with the financial help of the National Cultural Fund, Hungary.

World premiere: 24/03/2019, Balázs Horváth's portrait concert, FUGA, Budapest (H) by Gábor Palotás – marimba

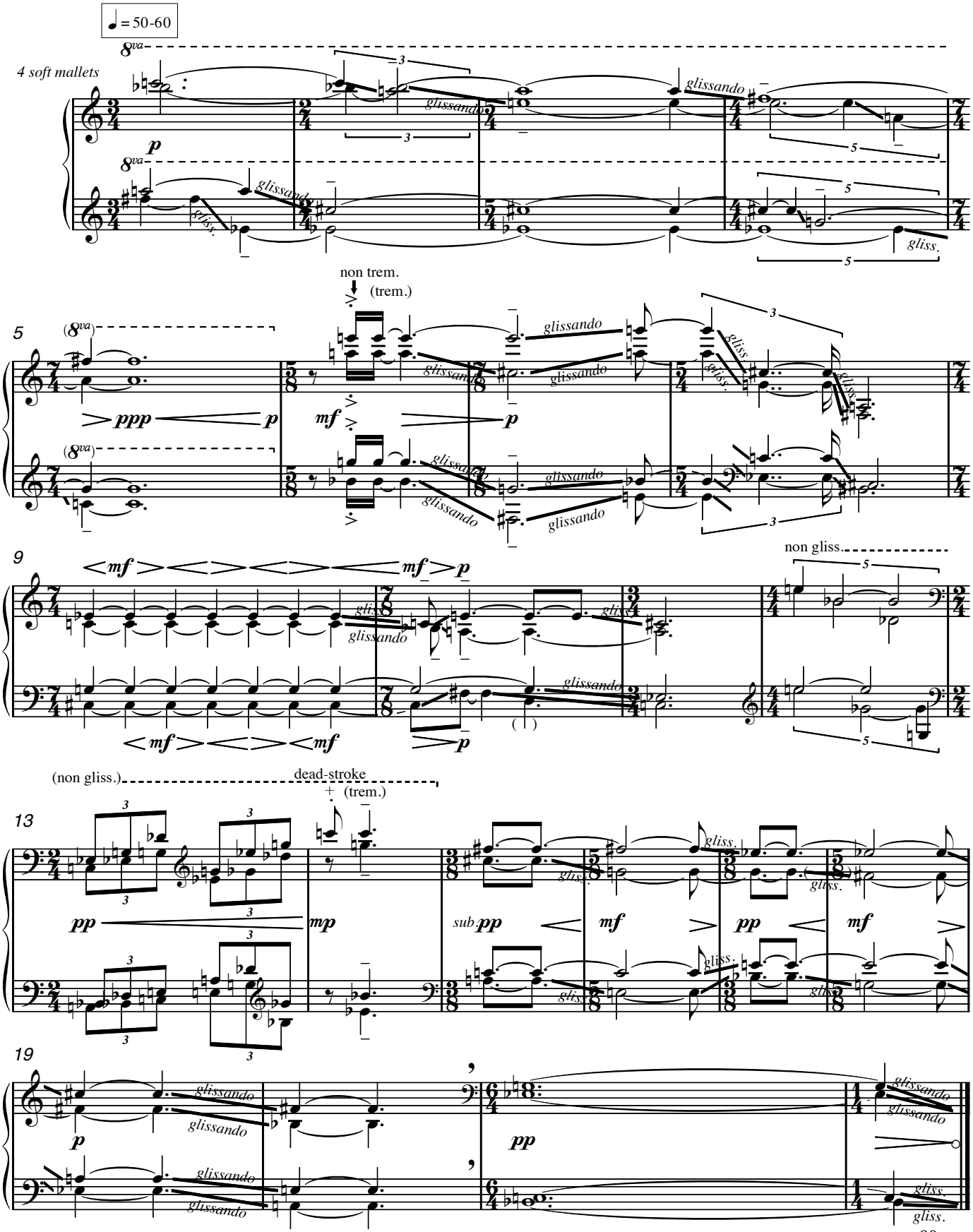
to Gábor Palotás

Surface Studies

Balázs HORVÁTH
(*1976)

a) with 4 soft mallets - octatonic scale

Play roll throughout the movement except where indicated. Connect the chords (individual parts) always with glissando on any keys between the two notes in each hand except where indicated. In case of glissando motion open the beaters as a fan. The motion (and the sound) is a bit similar to that of movement f). Emphasize the arriving notes a bit where tenuto articulation is applied.



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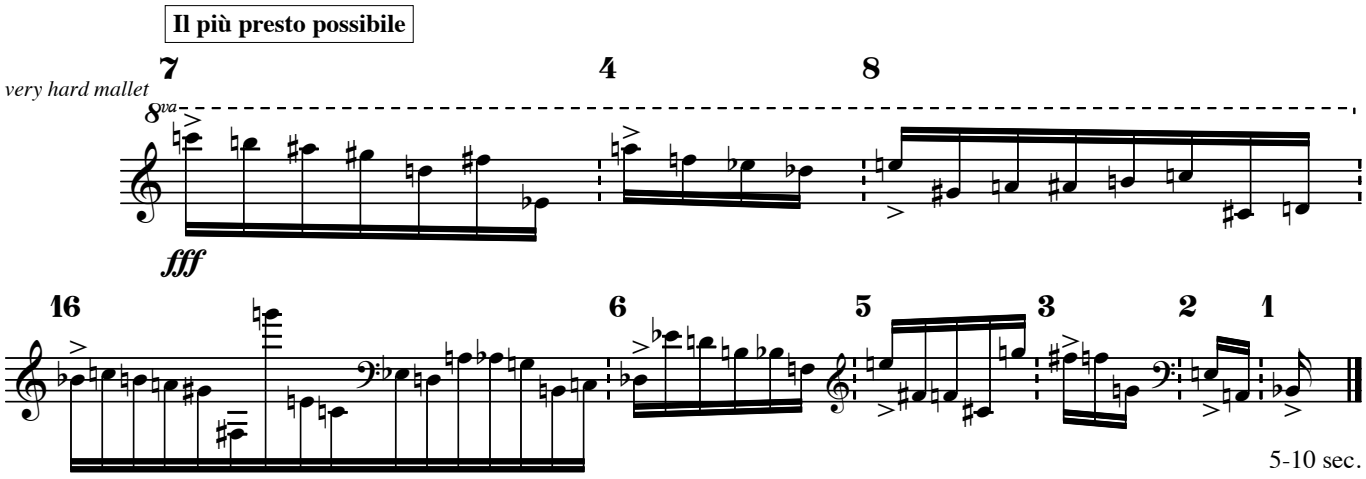

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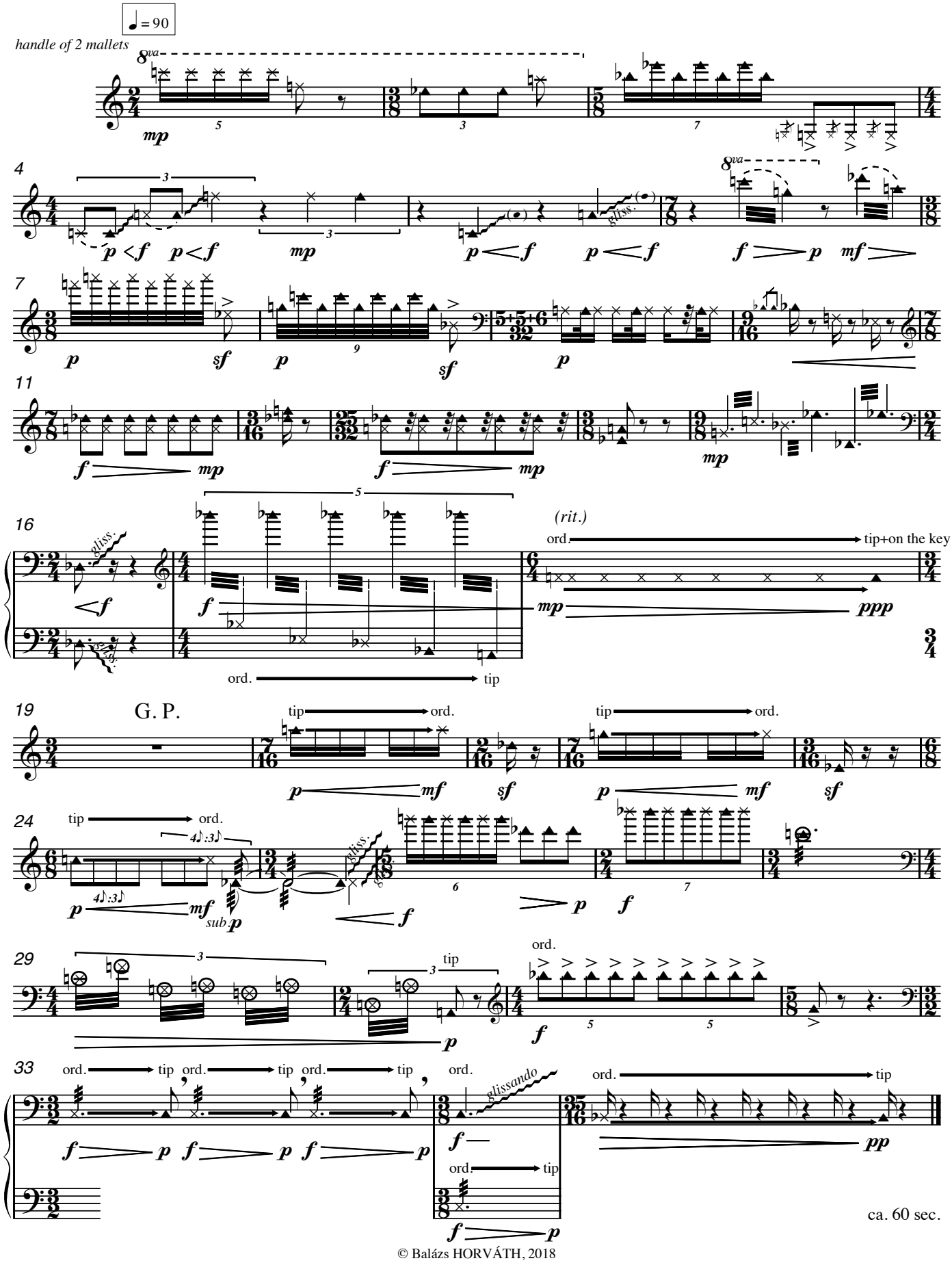
× = beat the edge of the keys with the *handle of the mallet* by side. Hold the head of the mallet in your hand and touch the middle of the beater to the key.
▲= beat the surface of the keys (ordinarily) with the handle tip of the of the mallet holding it diagonally (not vertically).
Move towards the edge of the key+the side of the beater: tip ⟶ ord., move towards the middle of the key+the tip of the beater: ord. ⟶ tip



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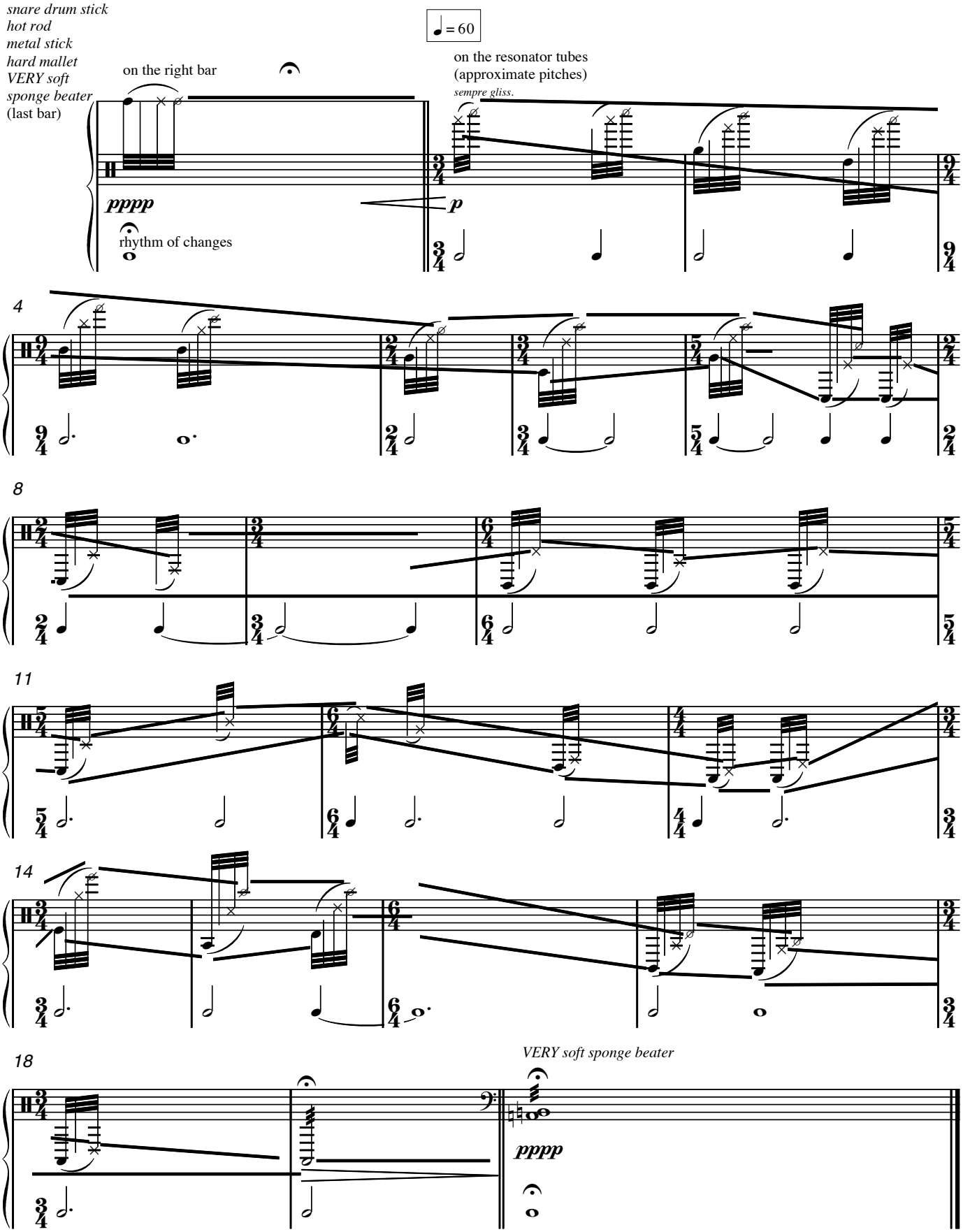
d) with 4+1 different beaters - "diatonic" scale

Play on the resonator tubes. The notes represent approximate pitches following the treble clef position. (The beginning of the piece is to be played on the right metal bar by the top key. The last sound is to be played by one very soft beater on the keys. Prepare this beater before playing the movement.
Normal notehead: *hard mallet*, only stem: *metal stick*, x-notehead: *hot rod* (cluster of extra thin wooden sticks), crossed circle notehead: *snare drum stick*.
Repeat the figures with arpeggio motion all the time. The lowerstaff shows the rhythmic shape. There should be *glissando* between each element continuously.
In case you need to keep the notes (without *glissando*), you see a horizontal line after a figure and the rhythm is notated with sustaind notes (ties).



ca. 90 sec.

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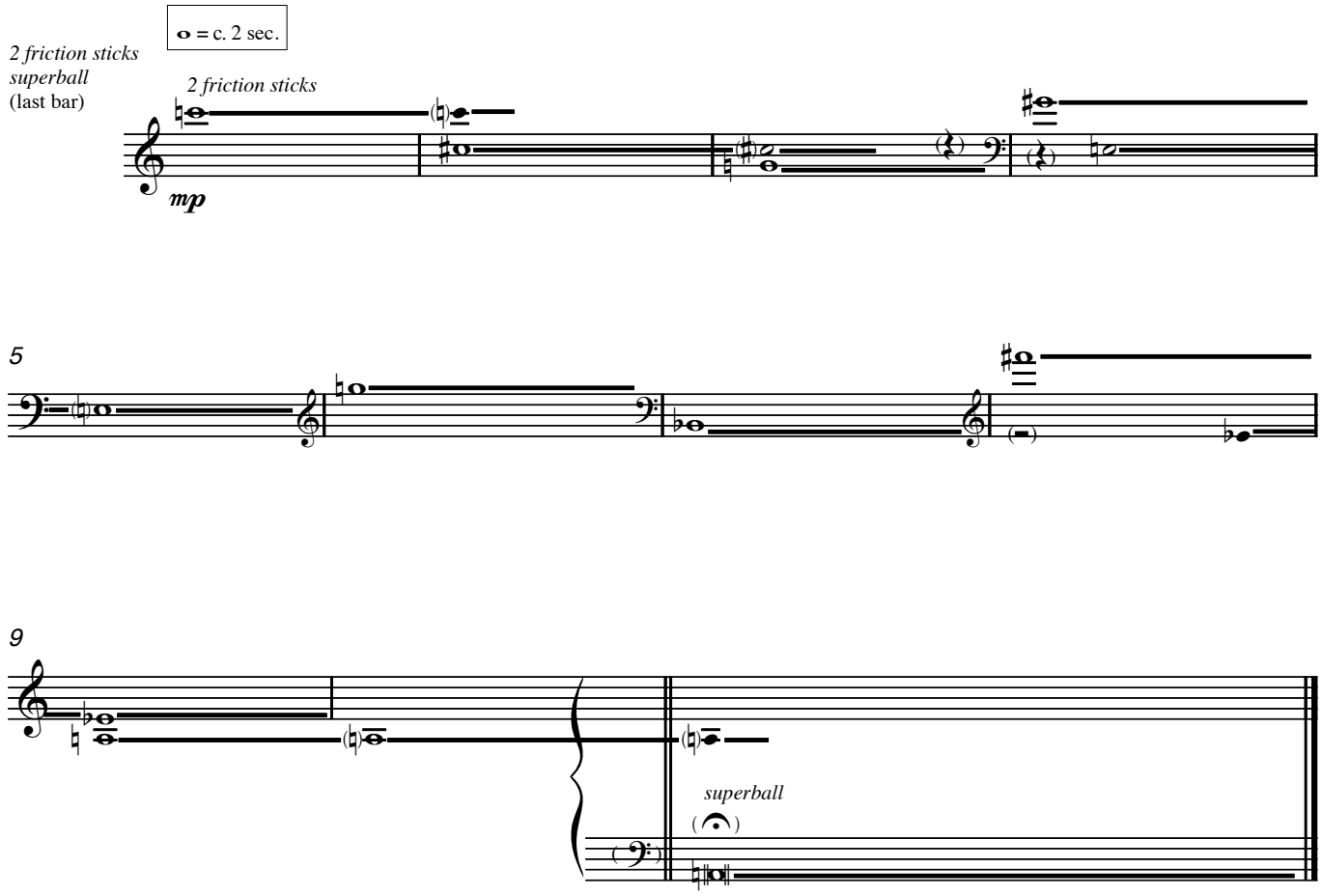
Move *friction sticks* up and down (on the edge of the key) continuously for a sustaind grainy sound
and *superball* (on the surface of the key) for a soft and warm sound.



ca. 25 sec.

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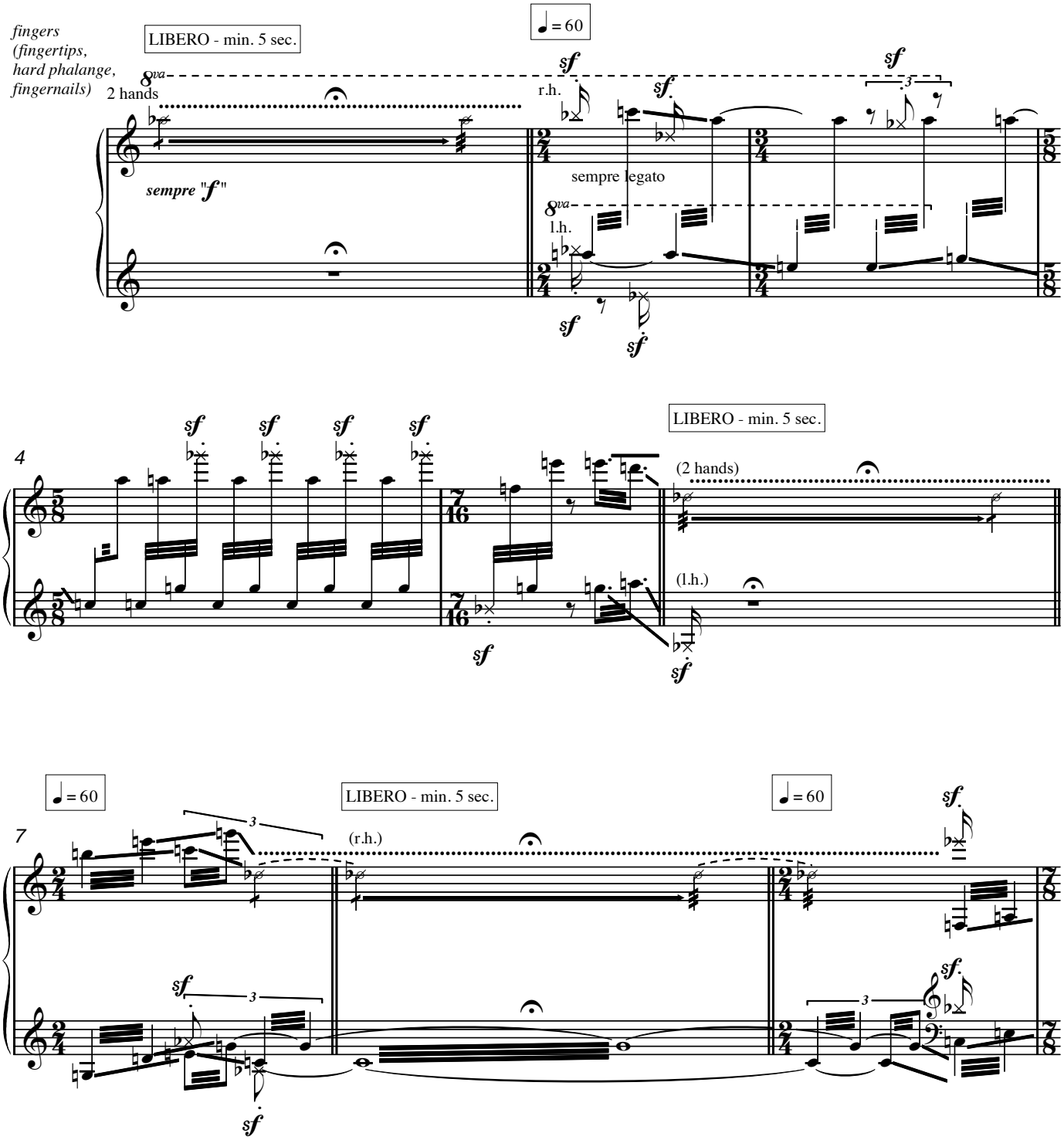
Play on the keys as if on tabla, bongo or a flat surface practicing *with fingers*.
ordinary notehead = beat with fingertips - the notes represent the register borders. You need to shake your hand+fingers so that the thumb and the little finger touches the written notes. Any notes inside this may be (and should be) touched as a diatonic cluster. In case of glissando motion open your fingers as a fan. The motion (and the sound) is a bit similar to that of movement a).
× = knock with phalanges - unexpected knocks during the tremolo motion as if played by another instrument
⌀ = soft tremolo beat with fingernails - always independently from the other two voices



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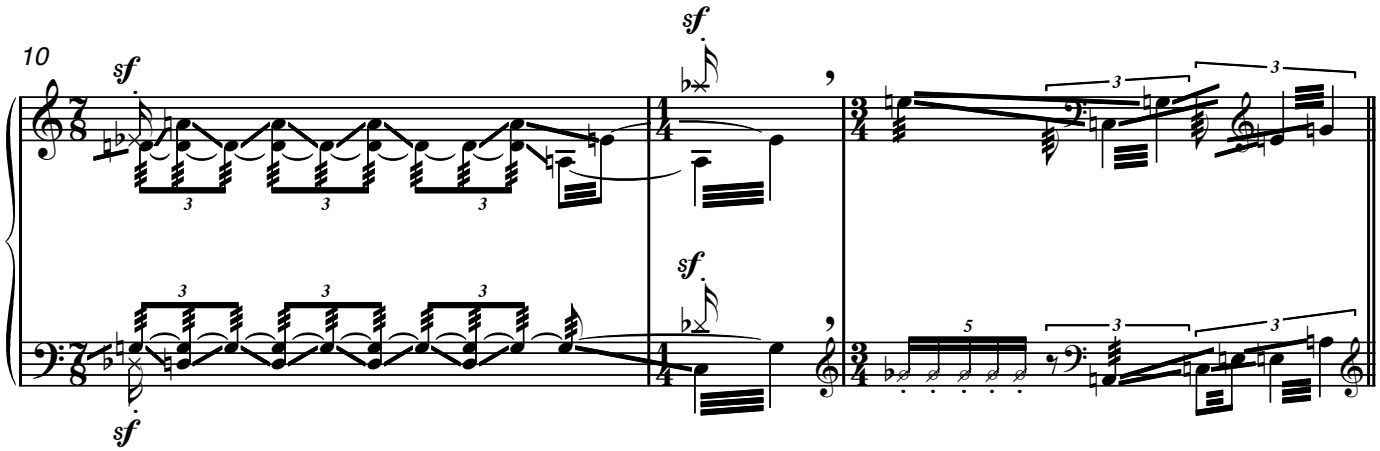

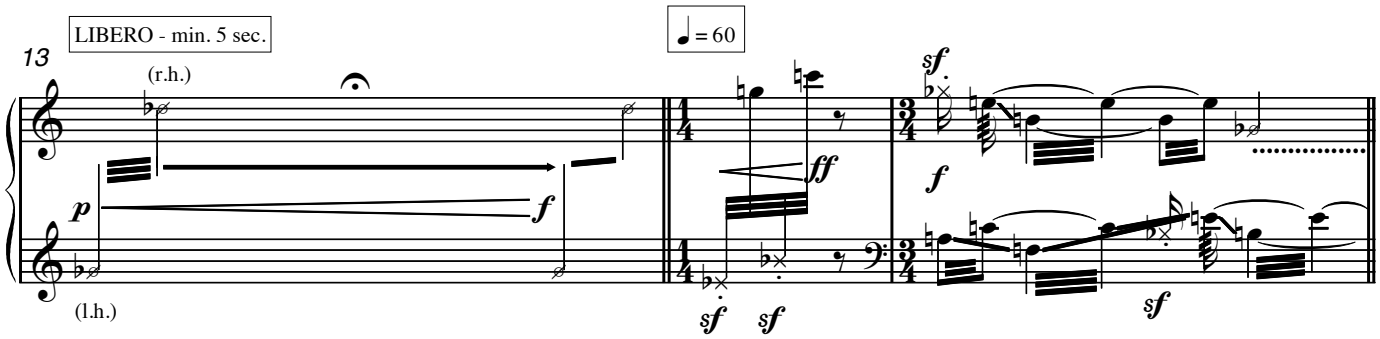

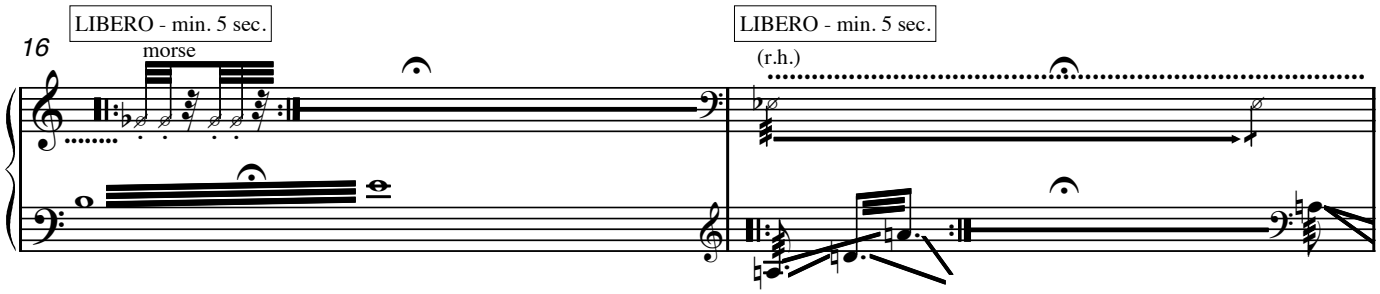

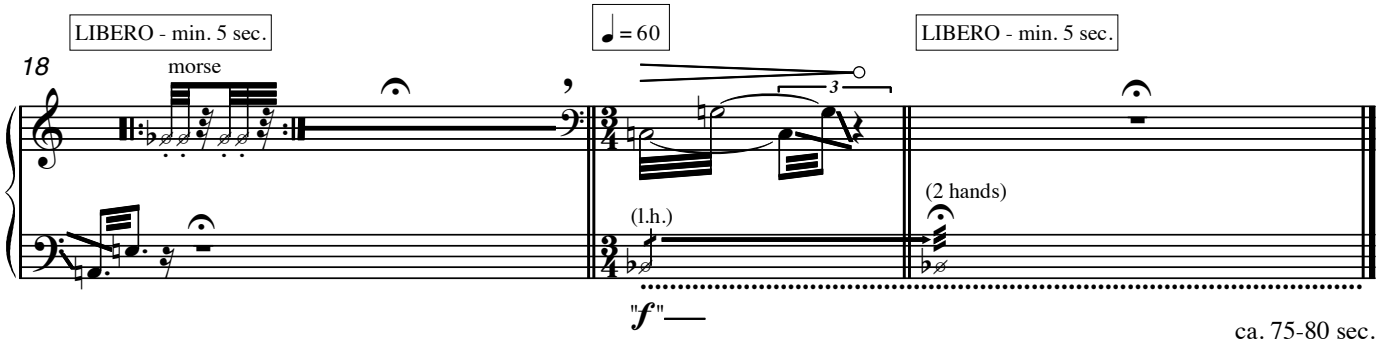

ca. 75-80 sec.

Ócsa, Gera, October-December, 2018

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