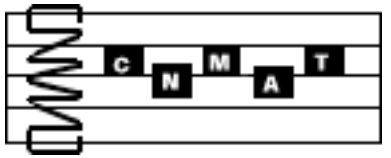
Ronald Bruce Smith

Five Pieces for Guitar and Live Electronics
(2007)

Commissioned under a UC Discovery grant from the University of California's Industry-University Cooperative Research Program (IUCRP) and Gibson Guitar Corporation. It was made possible through the support of the Center for New Music and Audio Technologies (CNMAT), Department of Music, University of California, Berkeley.



Five Pieces for Guitar and Live Electronics (2007)

1) Echoes; 2) Lament, Cortège, Coda; 3) Brunete; 4) Saudade; 5) Stelé

Five Pieces for Guitar and Live Electronics was commissioned under a UC Discovery grant from the University of California's Industry-University Cooperative Research Program (IUCRP) and Gibson Guitar Corporation. It was made possible through the support of the Center for New Music and Audio Technologies (CNMAT), Department of Music, University of California, Berkeley. The aim of the commission was to incorporate into a concert piece for solo guitar the guitar centered software technology that researchers there had developed. These guitar effects were developed in the Max/MSP environment and I make use of a number of them as well as a few other things that are not in that specific package.

The composition consists of five short pieces and, as might be gathered by the titles of each piece, it is reflective of our current time of conflict. Much of the music in this composition requires a high-level of guitar virtuosity. It was written with the outstanding technique and musicianship of David Tanenbaum in mind.

Performance Notes

A number inside of a triangle indicates program changes in the electronics. The program changes are triggered via a MIDI footswitch.

The guitarist plays into the computer via a microphone or by using a guitar with a built in pre-amp, etc. The signal from the computer is sent to a mixing board to the loudspeakers. Stereo and quadraphonic versions can be selected in the Max/MSP patch.

Required electronics:

Max/MSP runtime patch (available from the composer);
1 Macintosh computer running OS 10.4 or higher;
1 MIDI footswitch;
1 Digital Audio Interface (MOTU 828 mkII, RME Fireface, etc.);
1 Mixing board;
Loudspeakers (2 or 4);

TOTAL DURATION: ca 14 minutes

I

Echoes

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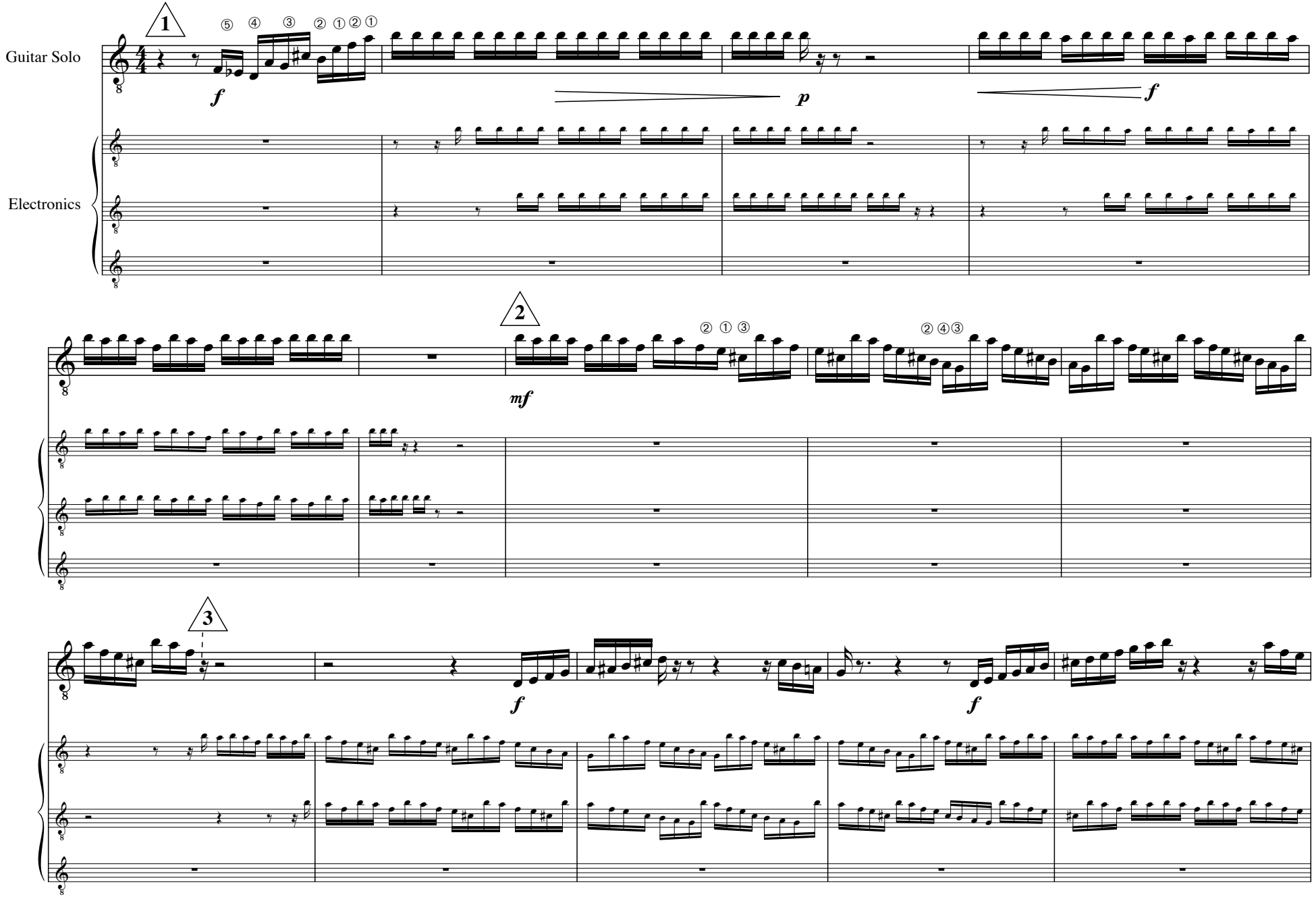
(2007)

♩= 112 *quickly and evenly*



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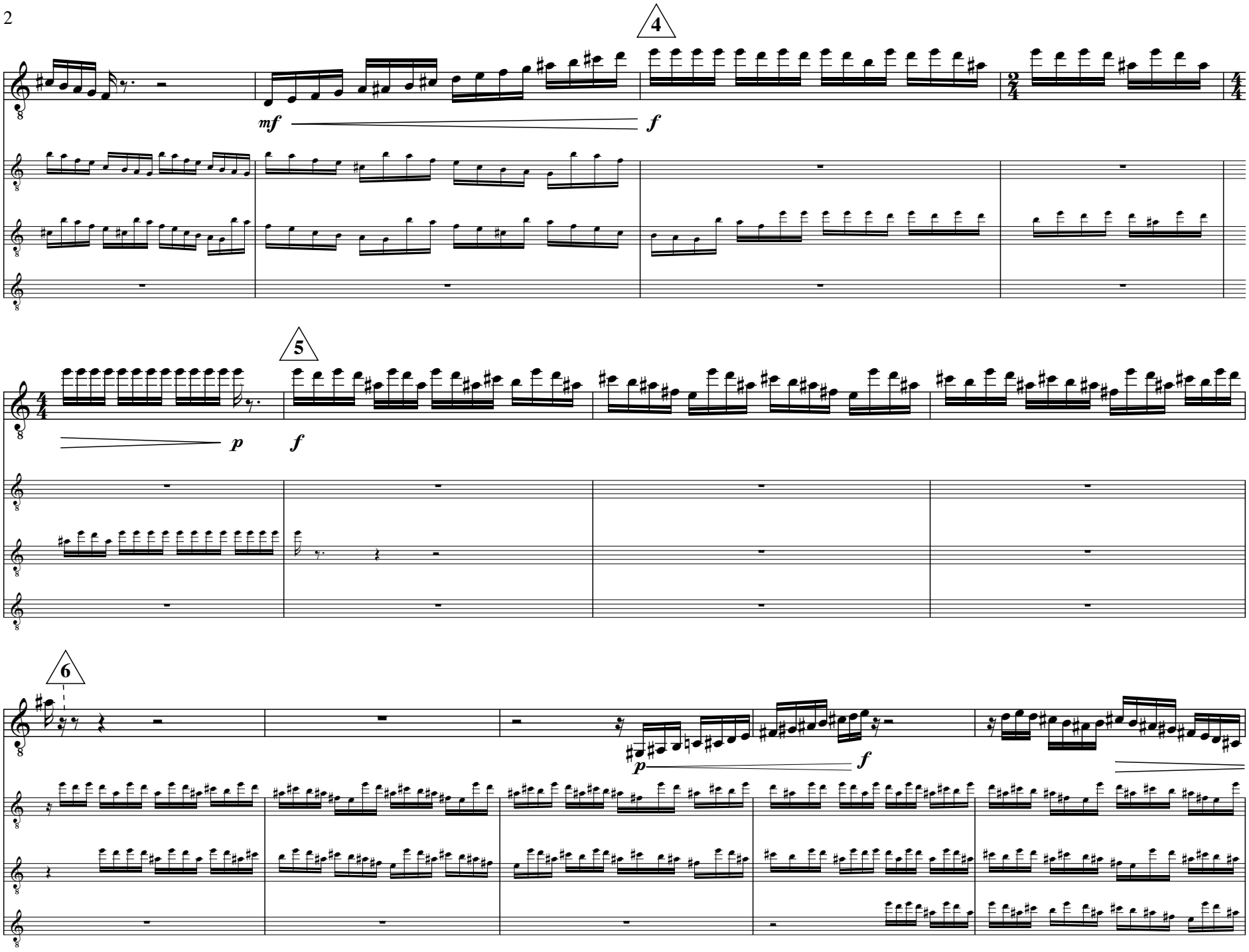
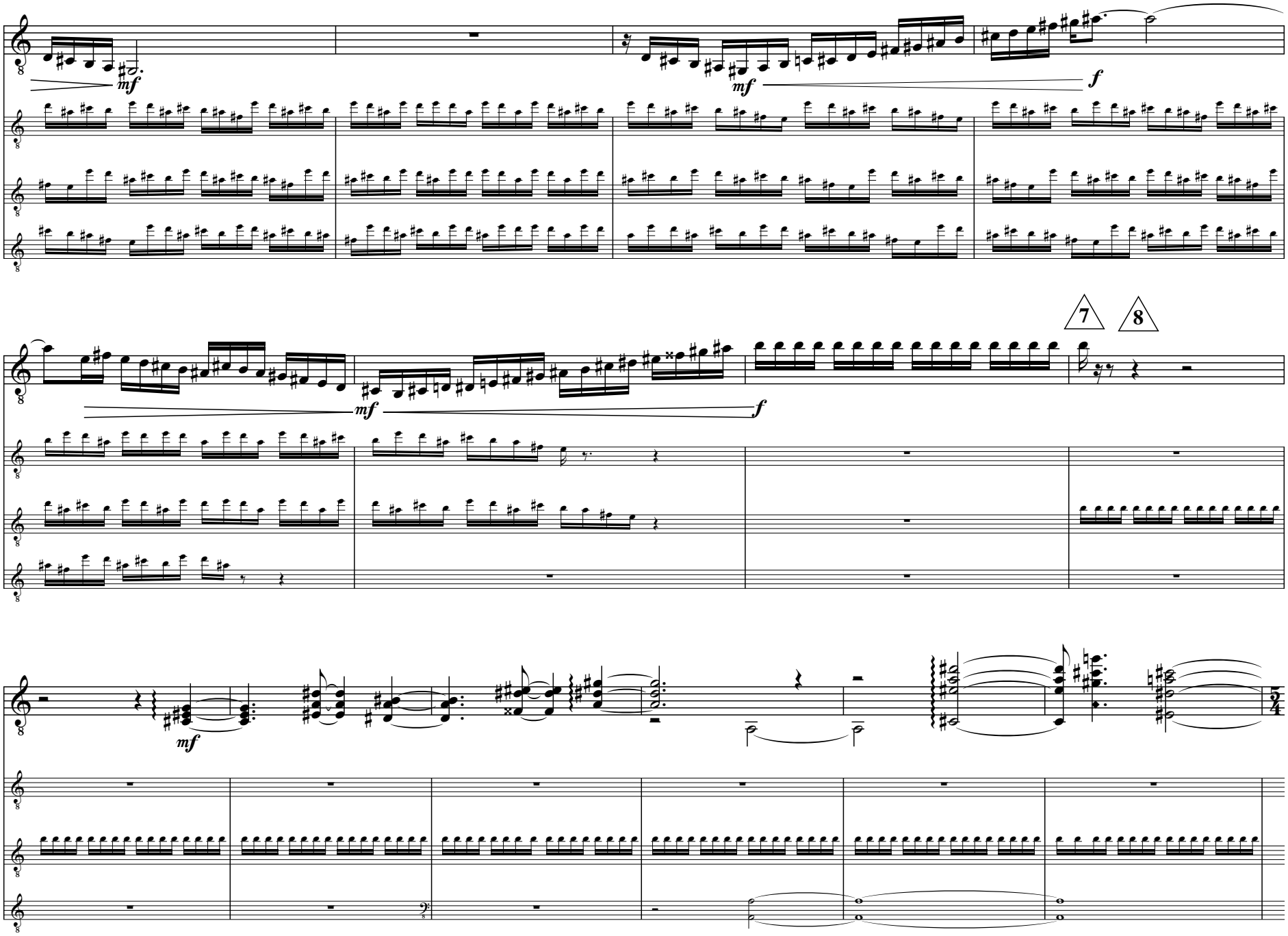
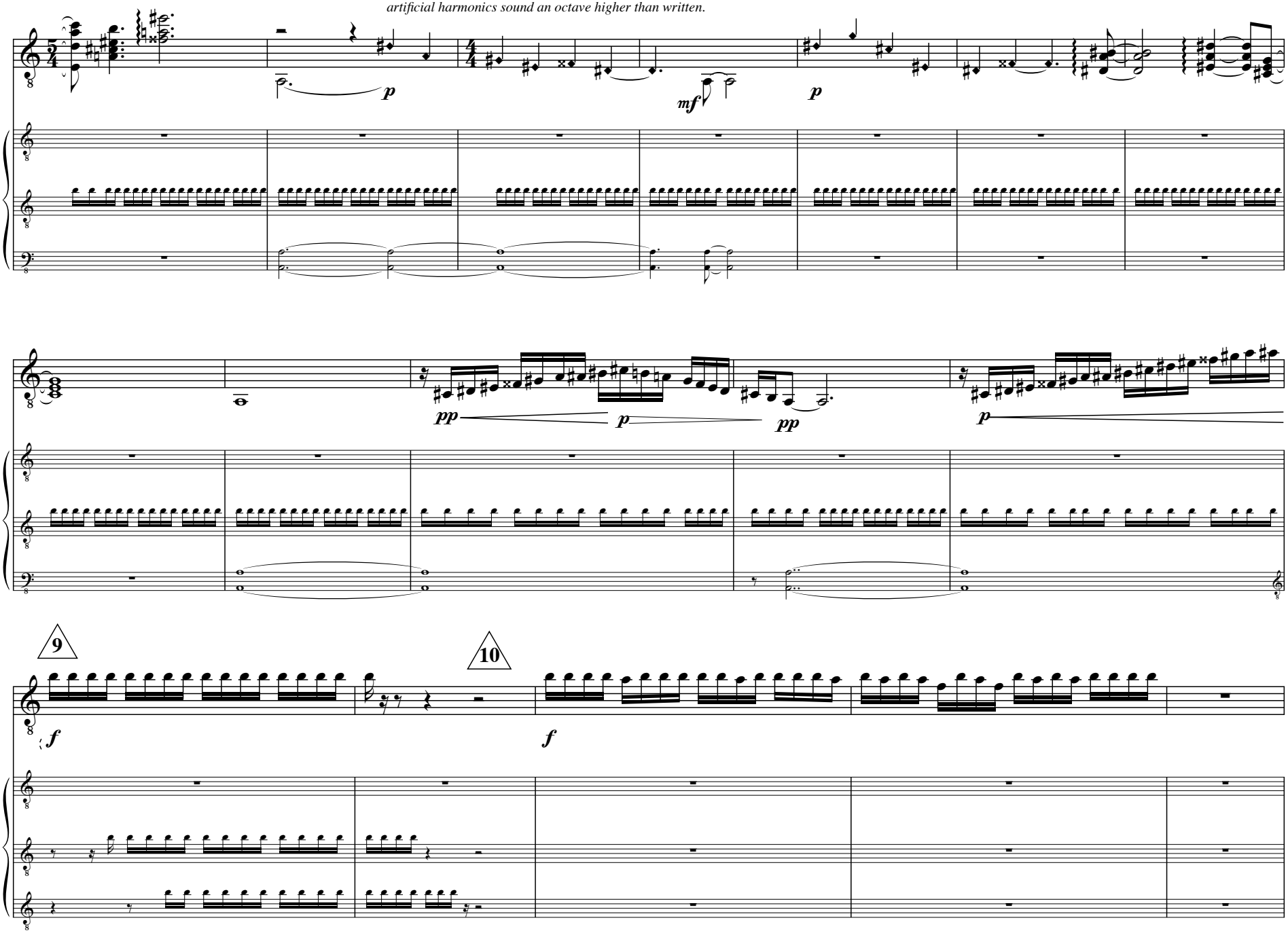
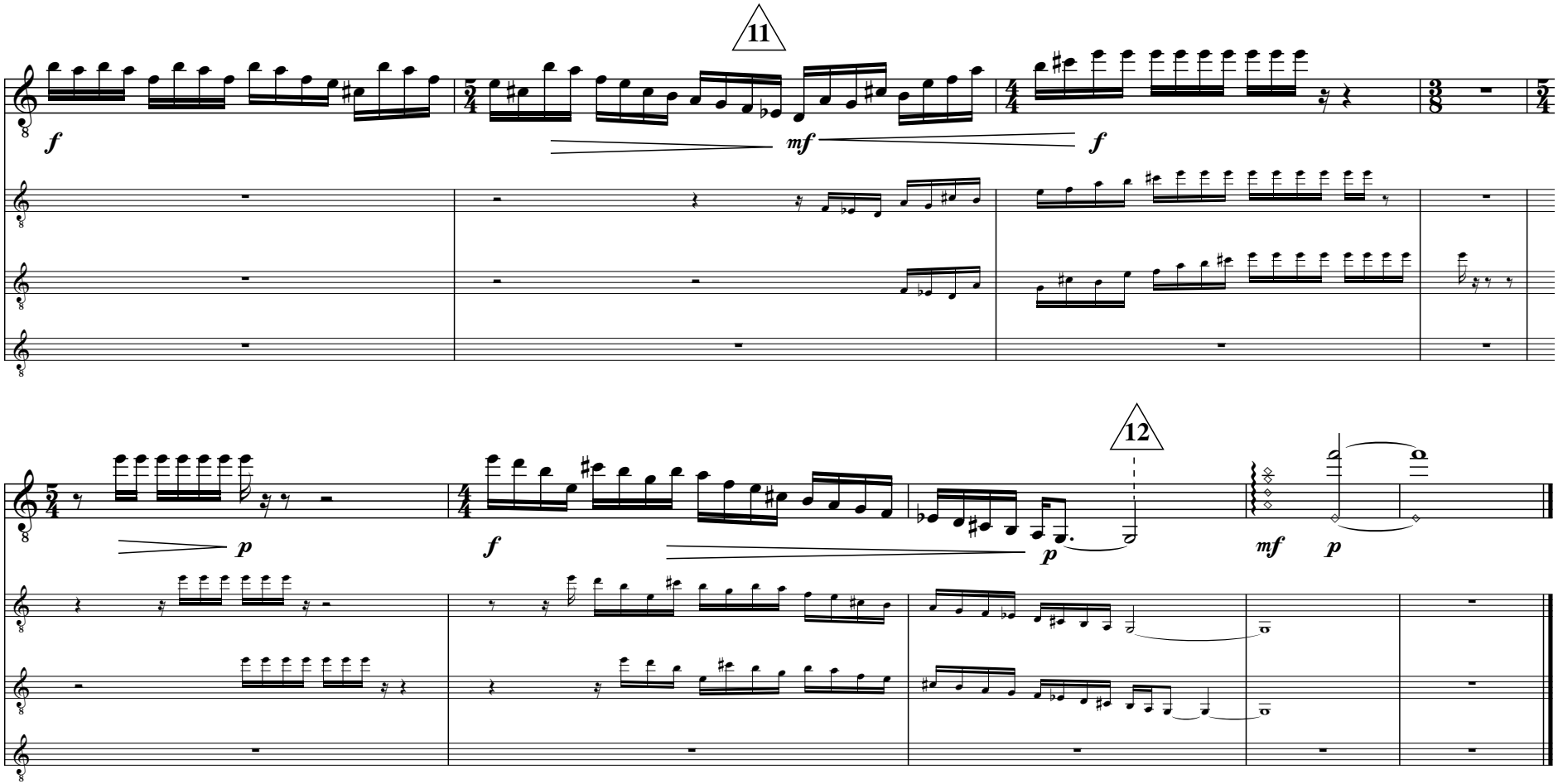
2007


4
mf
f
5
p
f
6
p
f


mf
mf
f
7
8
mf
mf
f
mf
5/4

artificial harmonics sound an octave higher than written.

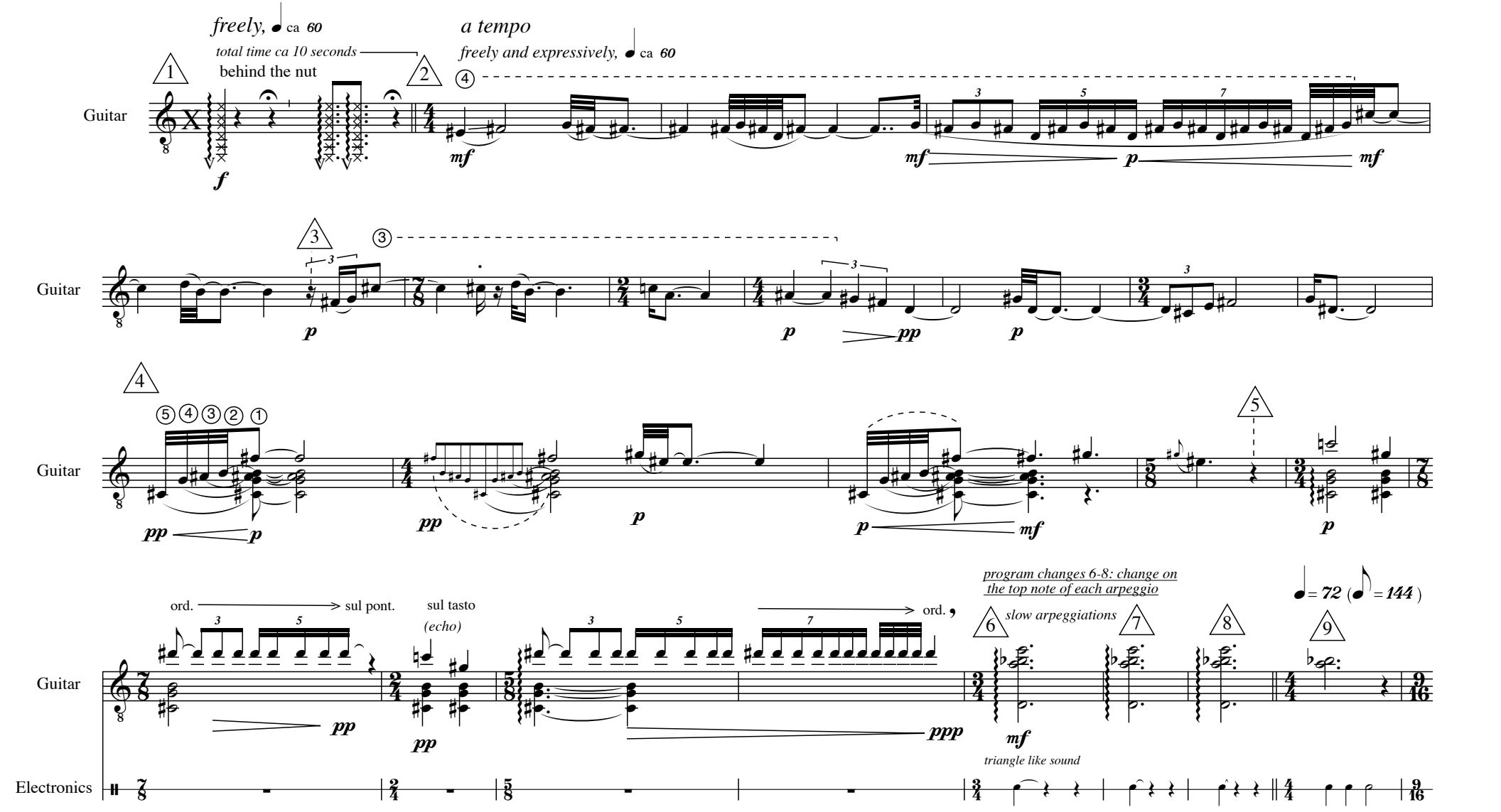




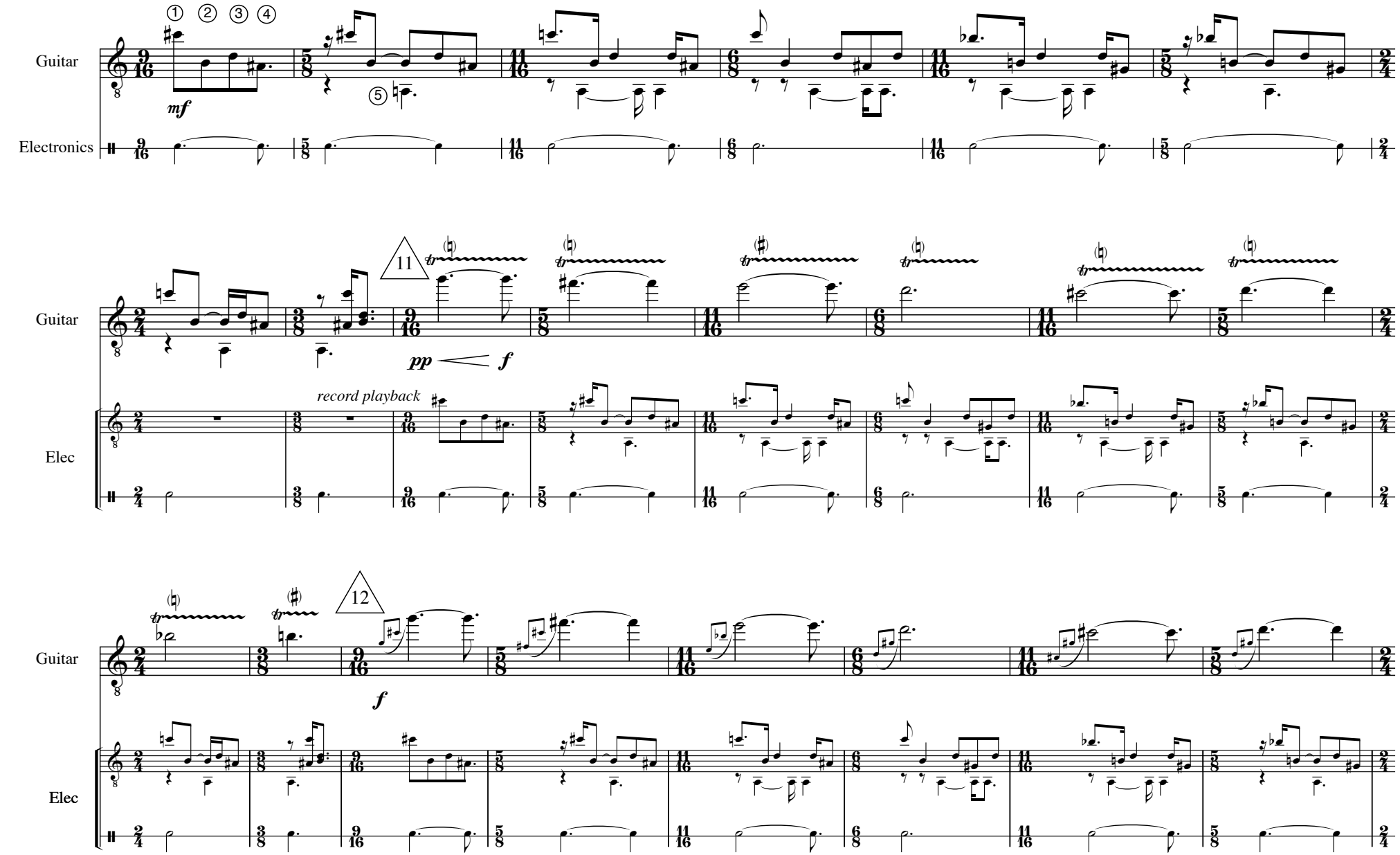
ca 2'30"

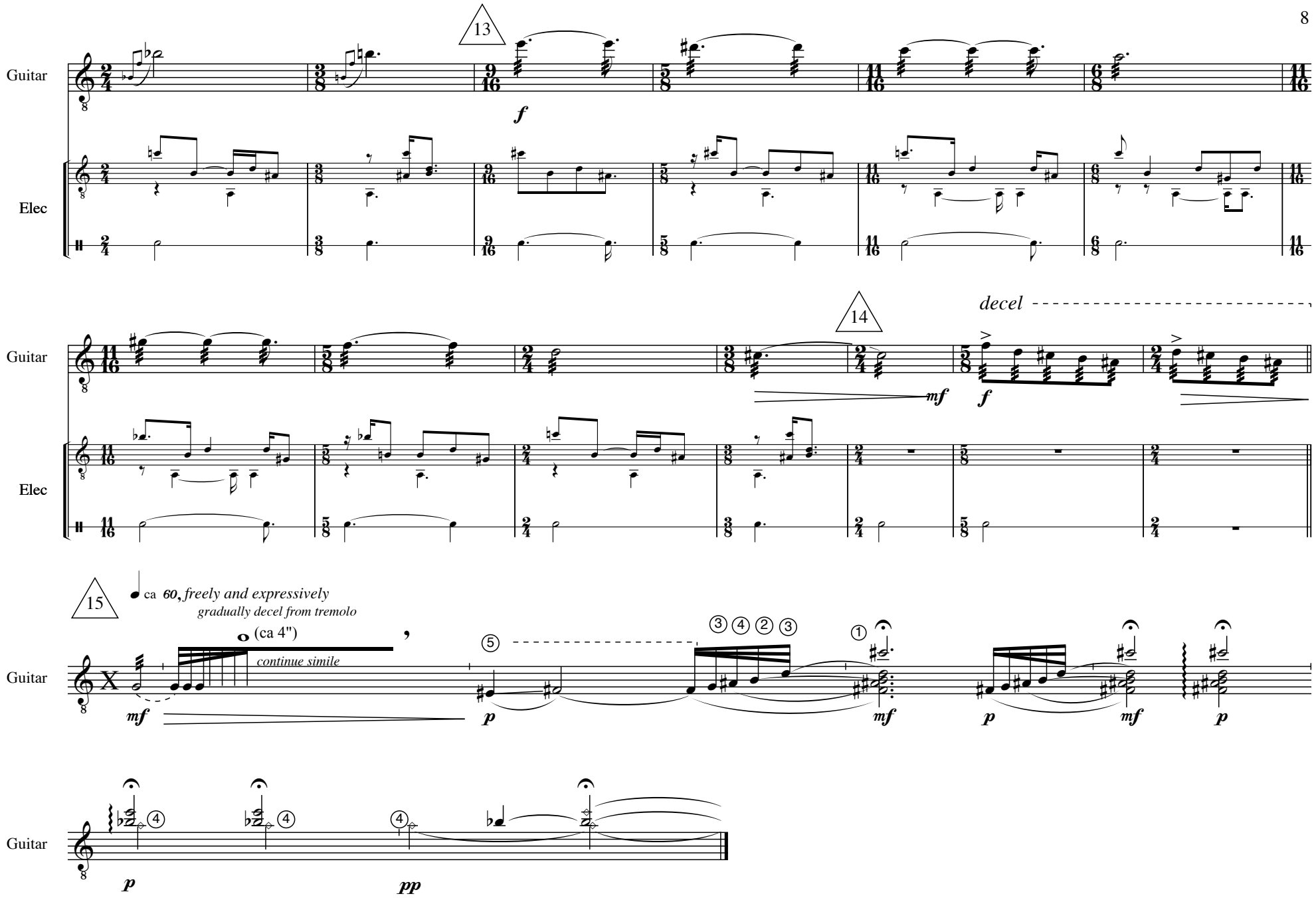
II

lament, cortège, coda



10 *more animated, a staggered march*

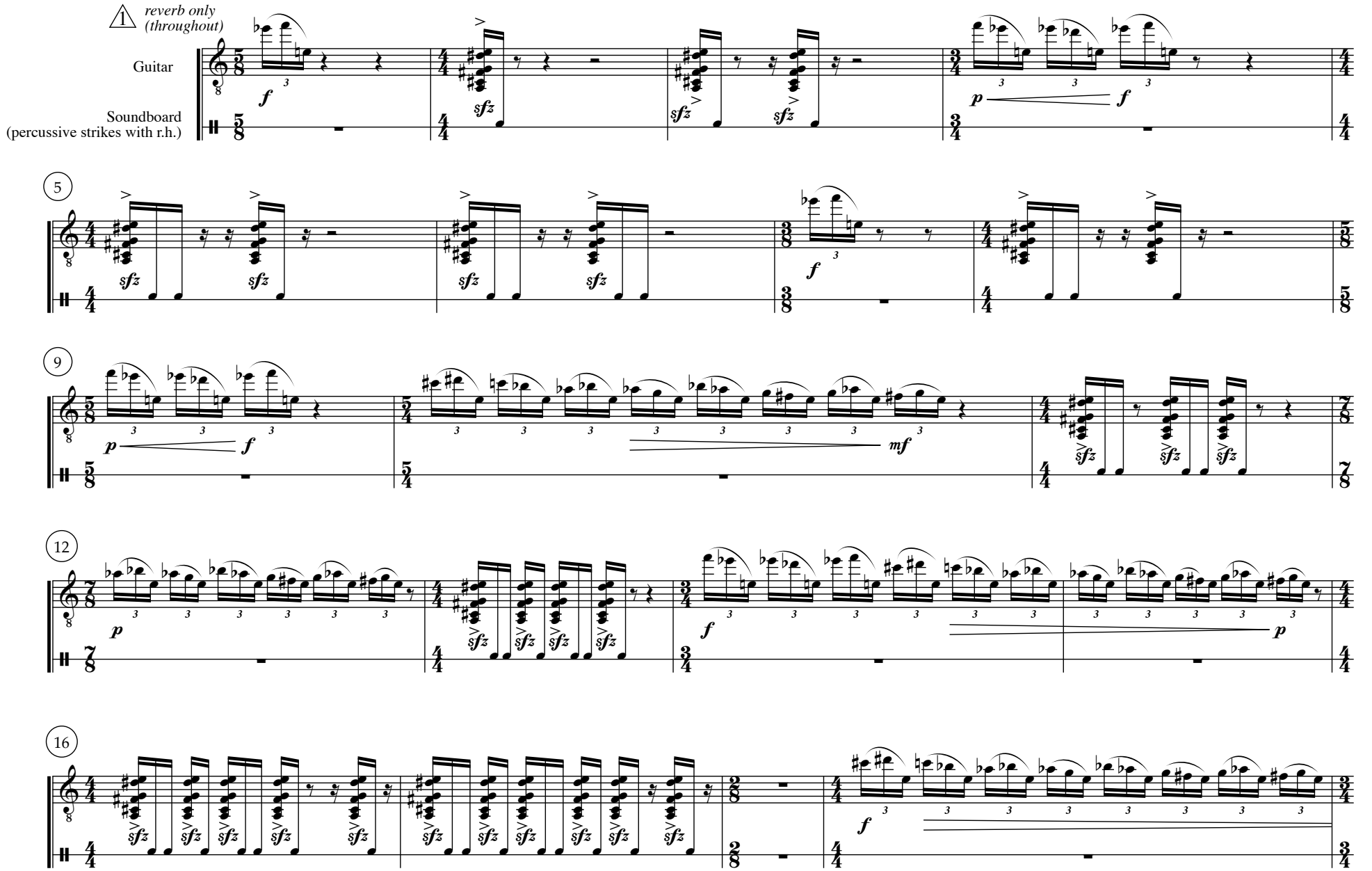


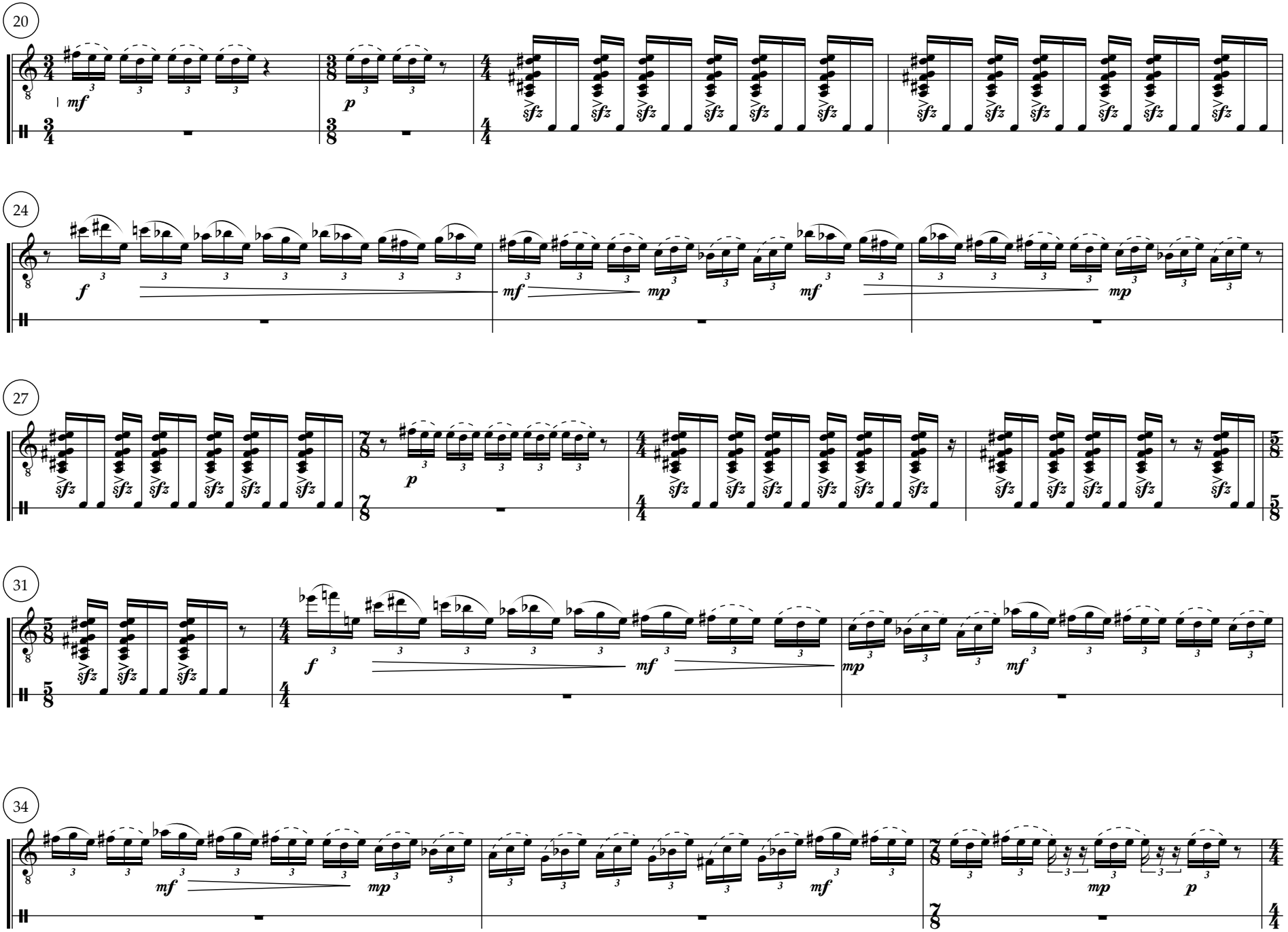

13
Guitar
Elec
f
14
decel
mf
f
15
ca 60, freely and expressively
gradually decel from tremolo
(ca 4")
continue simile
mf
p
mf
p
mf
p
p
pp

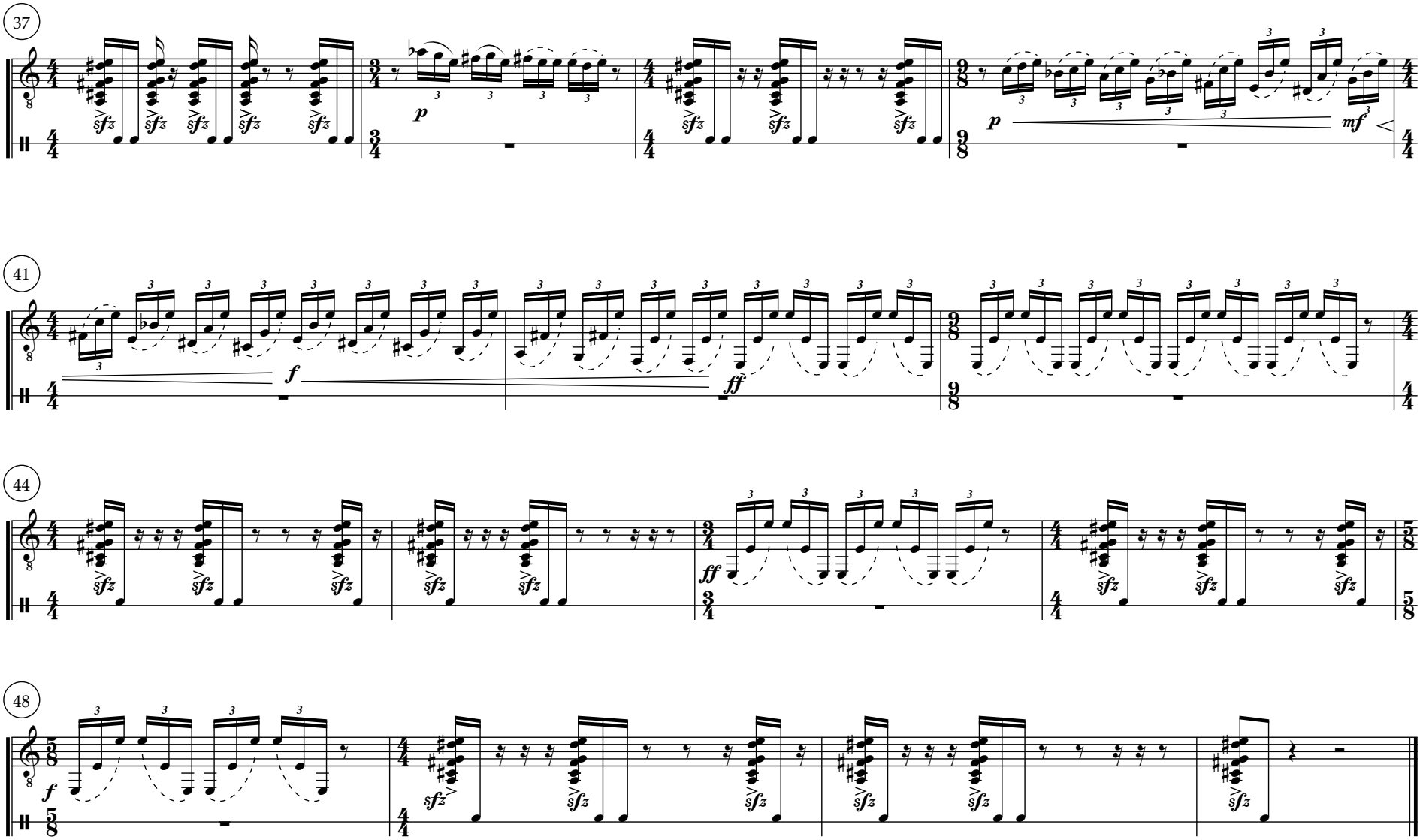
ca 3' 10"

III
Brunete

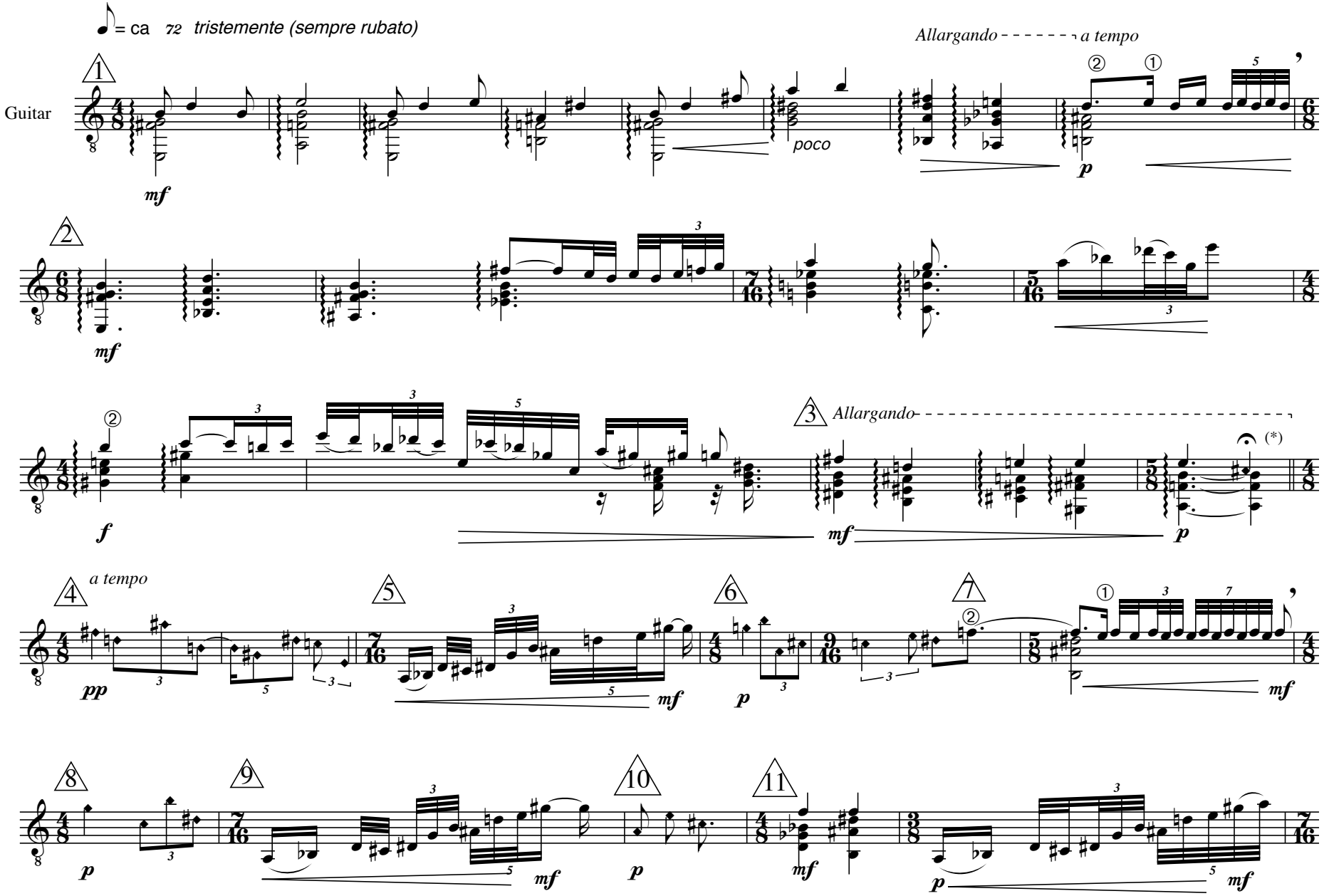
♩ = 88 - 92 *alternately nervous and violent*



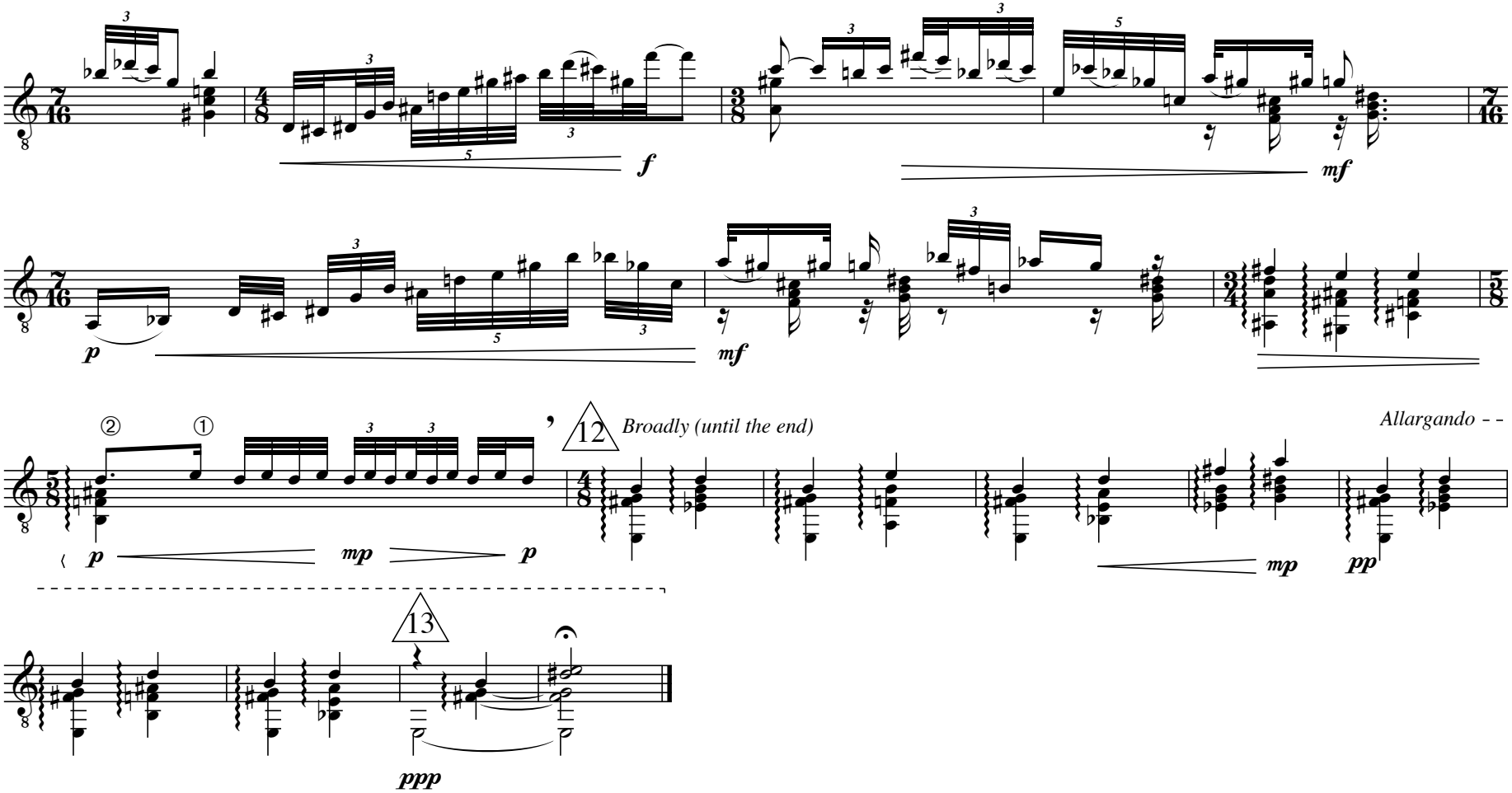

20
24
27
31
34


37
41
44
48
ca 2'00"

IV
Saudade

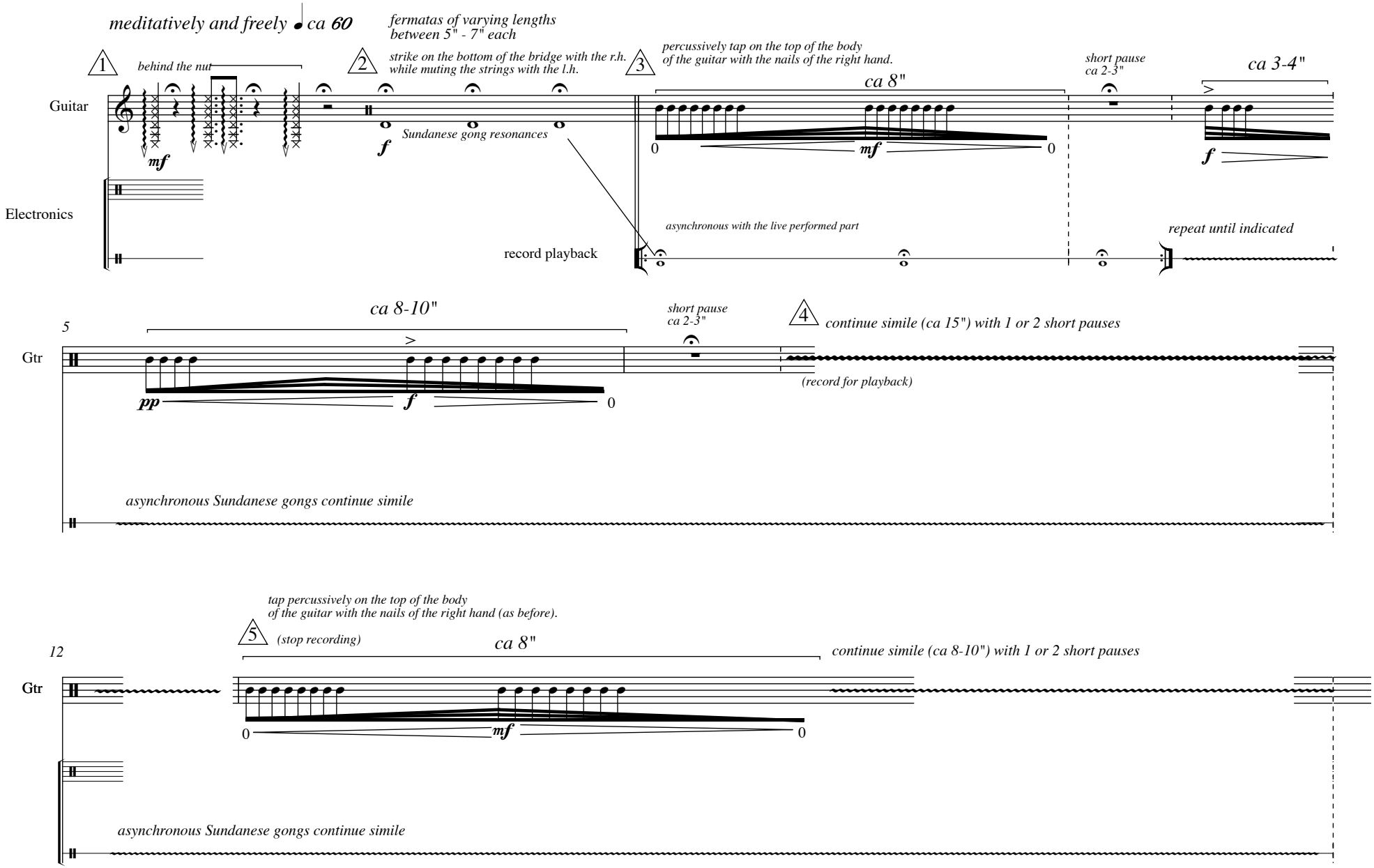


(*) Artificial harmonics sound an octave higher than written


f
mf
p
mf
② ①
12
Broadly (until the end)
Allargando - -
p
mp
p
mp
pp
13
ppp

ca 2'50"

V
Stelé


meditatively and freely ♩ ca 60
fermatas of varying lengths between 5" - 7" each
1
behind the nut
2
strike on the bottom of the bridge with the r.h. while muting the strings with the l.h.
3
percussively tap on the top of the body of the guitar with the nails of the right hand.
short pause ca 2-3"
ca 3-4"
Guitar
mf
f
Sundanese gong resonances
ca 8"
0
mf
0
f
Electronics
record playback
asynchronous with the live performed part
repeat until indicated
5
ca 8-10"
short pause ca 2-3"
4
continue simile (ca 15") with 1 or 2 short pauses
Gtr
pp
f
0
(record for playback)
asynchronous Sundanese gongs continue simile
tap percussively on the top of the body of the guitar with the nails of the right hand (as before).
5
(stop recording)
12
ca 8"
continue simile (ca 8-10") with 1 or 2 short pauses
Gtr
0
mf
0
asynchronous Sundanese gongs continue simile

15

17 6

7

8

♩= 72 (♪= 144)

① ② ③ ④

Gtr

asynchronous Sundanese gongs continue simile

fade out

l.v. sempre

mf

record playback of 4

mf

triangle-like sample ♩= 60

continues at ♩= 60

♩= 60

thai gong-like sample (tuned to around F-sharp)

mf

continues at ♩= 60

mf

23

9

record playback of guitar ostinato begins

Gtr

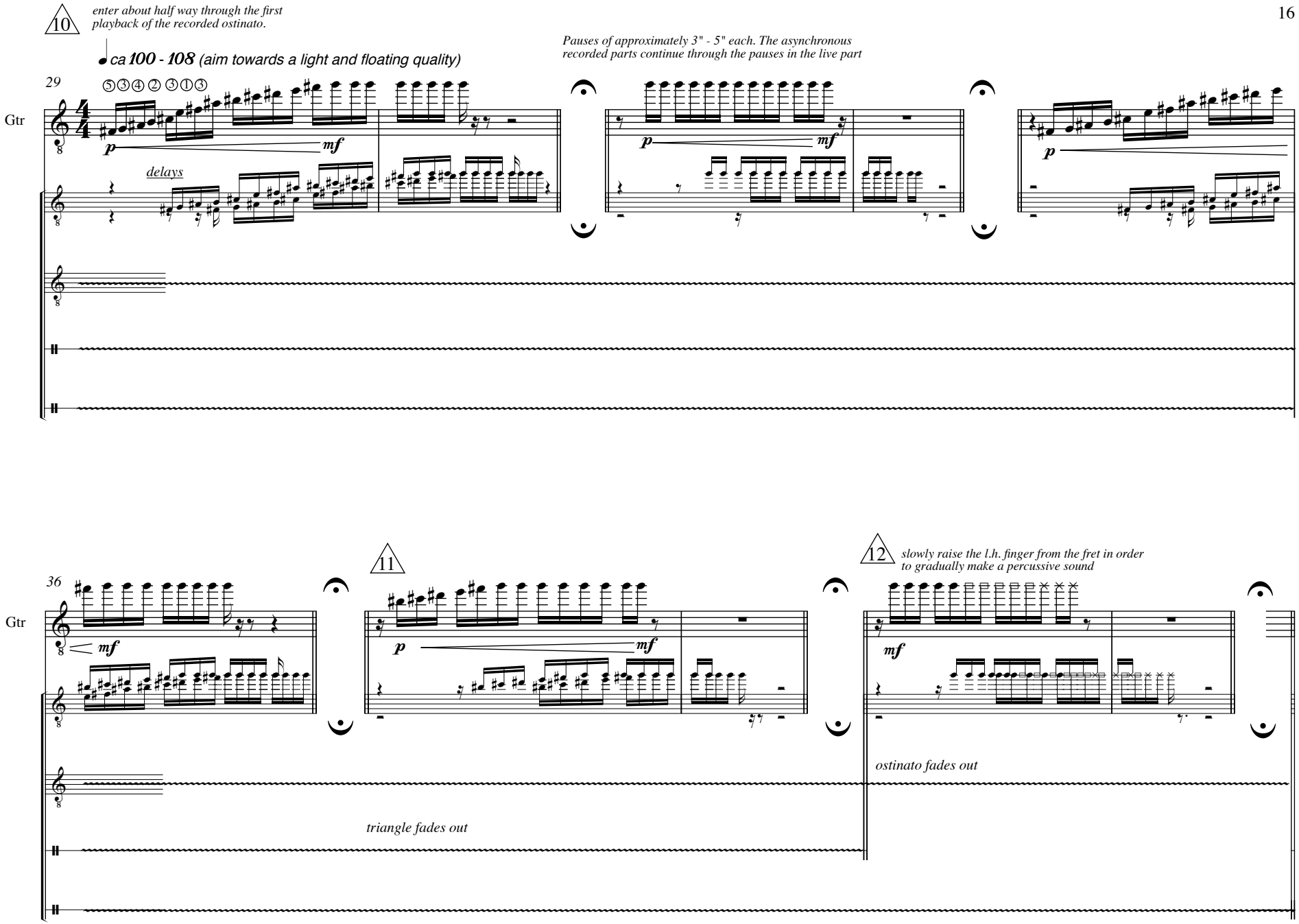
record playback

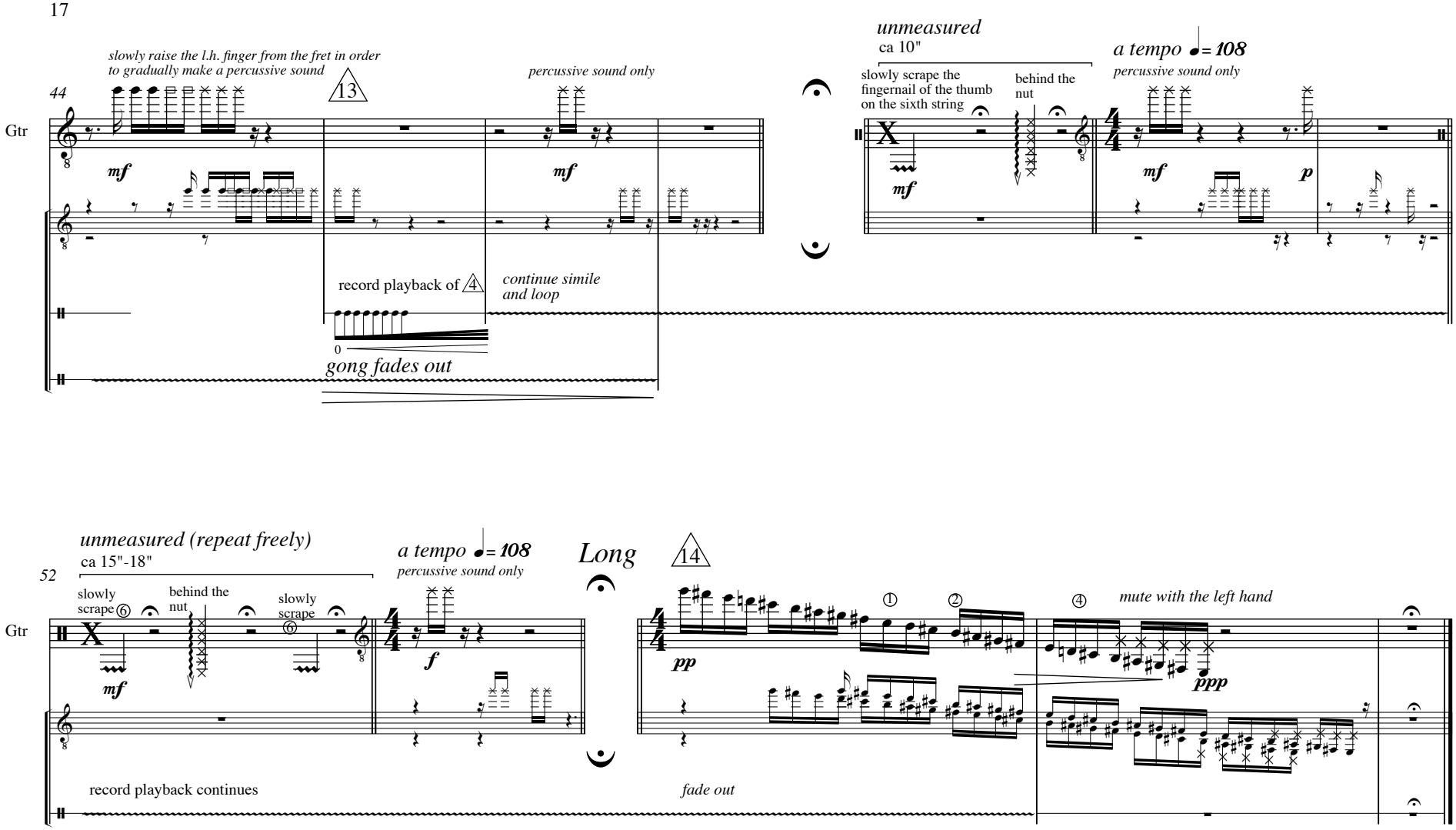
repeat until indicated

repeat until indicated

repeat until indicated

mf


10
enter about half way through the first playback of the recorded ostinato.
ca 100 - 108 (aim towards a light and floating quality)
Pauses of approximately 3" - 5" each. The asynchronous recorded parts continue through the pauses in the live part
29
Gtr
p
mf
delays
36
11
12
slowly raise the l.h. finger from the fret in order to gradually make a percussive sound
ostinato fades out
triangle fades out


44
Gtr
slowly raise the l.h. finger from the fret in order to gradually make a percussive sound
13
percussive sound only
mf
record playback of 4
continue simile and loop
gong fades out
unmeasured
ca 10"
slowly scrape the fingernail of the thumb on the sixth string
behind the nut
a tempo ♩= 108
percussive sound only
p
52
unmeasured (repeat freely)
ca 15"-18"
slowly scrape ⑥
behind the nut
slowly scrape ⑥
a tempo ♩= 108
percussive sound only
Long
14
f
pp
ppp
mute with the left hand
record playback continues
fade out

ca 3'30'