Passing

For Trombone and Looping/FX interface

Robert Harrison

4. Memories
3. Love
2. Loneliness
1. Death

Preface

Although the original idea of this piece was not surrounding my dedication, recent events have changed this. I would like to dedicate this piece entirely to my late brass tutor, Susan Durant. The themes and instrumentation have formulated into a relevant coincidence, and I would like to thank her for her constant inspiration throughout my student career. All those times I needed convincing of the importance that I continue to play this oddball instrument in different ways. I would never be here, writing this piece, without everything she did for me. Upon hearing of her passing, I was immediately taken back to the times before my grade exams in that dark practice area at Trinity Plymouth, where I would literally be shaking with nerves and only her calming presence could bring me into an appropriate state to perform. Thank you, Sue, may your presence exist forevermore in these long held notes you taught me so proficiently to emulate.

The piece, ‘Passing’ by Robert Harrison was written for solo trombone, loop interface and effects channel. The piece contains a range of extended technique notation that may require written instruction, which is as follows (organised by movement):

4. Memories:

This movement contains ‘Lutoslawski style’ Ad Libitum notation, in which tempo and note length is to be completely the performer’s expressive choice. The rhythmic notation exists solely as guidance. Despite this, long held notes have a thick line guiding the performer when to stop playing or change note. The first section of this movement is written using a percussion clef and the second section is notes written in bass clef. The cross-head notes are extended techniques that are specified on the first time of playing.

Looping: ‘Passing’ was written to be played using Ableton’s loop interface, making use of its infinite channels that can be individually manipulated. This movement does not require a specific time signature or tempo to be selected, but instead simply guides the performer on when to start and stop a loop. A circled number appearing like this (①) instructs the performer to select that channel. A straight ‘on’ line (|) instructs the performer to activate the loop recording. An ‘off’ circle (o) instructs the performer to deactivate the loop recording and allow the loop to play back. A circled number appearing like this (❶) instructs the performer to deactivate the loop from that channel. If the ‘channel select’ instruction has an effect in brackets, this means the channel must be set up with that effect in advance. Then, it will play with that effect while the performer is in that channel. After deactivating this channel, the effect will stop playing.

3. Love:

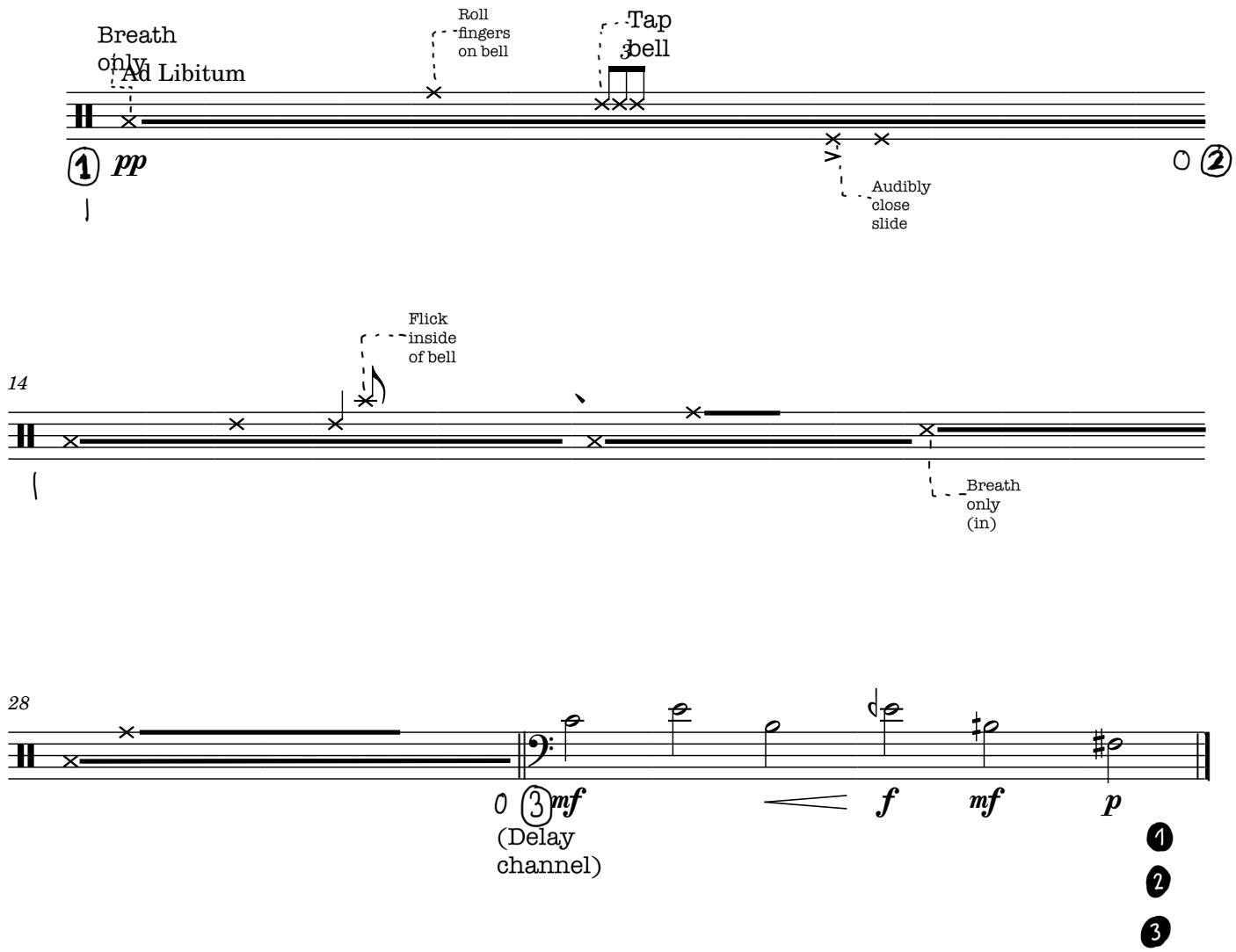
This movement uses the same looping techniques as 4, but this time with a specific tempo and time signature. The instructions on what to select and change are detailed before the playing begins. As a three-part harmony is built, the notes on stave are separated into two categories: what the performer should play, and what is being sounded by the looper. The former is presented as a regular note, the latter as a small notes (as seen in ‘cue notation’). Once the loop recording section is finished, the performer must then follow the ‘Tmb.’ Solo line to the end of the movement.

2. Loneliness:

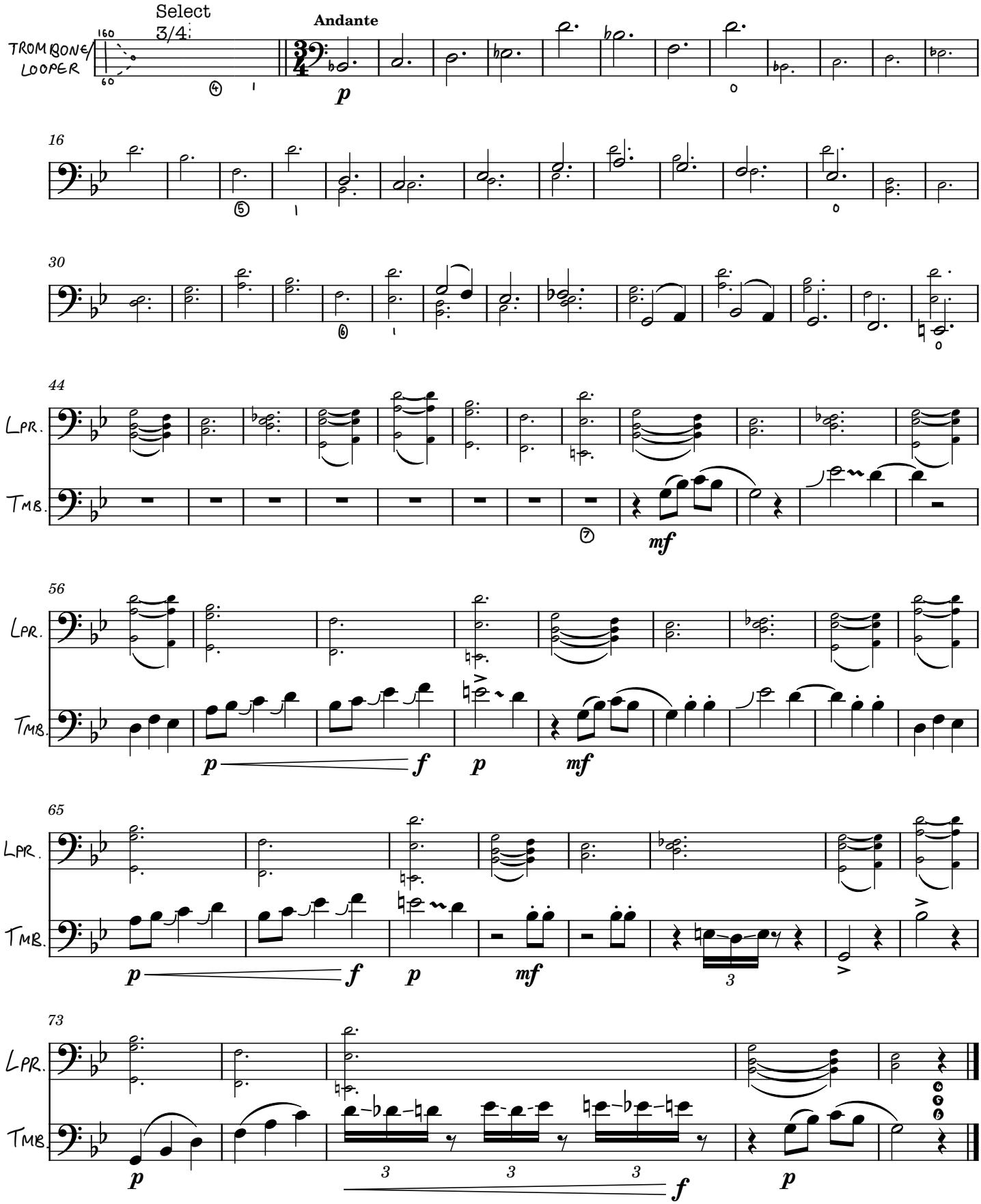
This movement does not contain any looping but instead a new extended technique. The dotted boxes labled as such, [-31ct], are guiding the performer through a microtonal modulation. The performer simply plays anything under [-31ct] approximately a quarter of a semitone flat and anything under [-60ct] just over half a semitone flat.

1. Death: No new instructions for this movement.

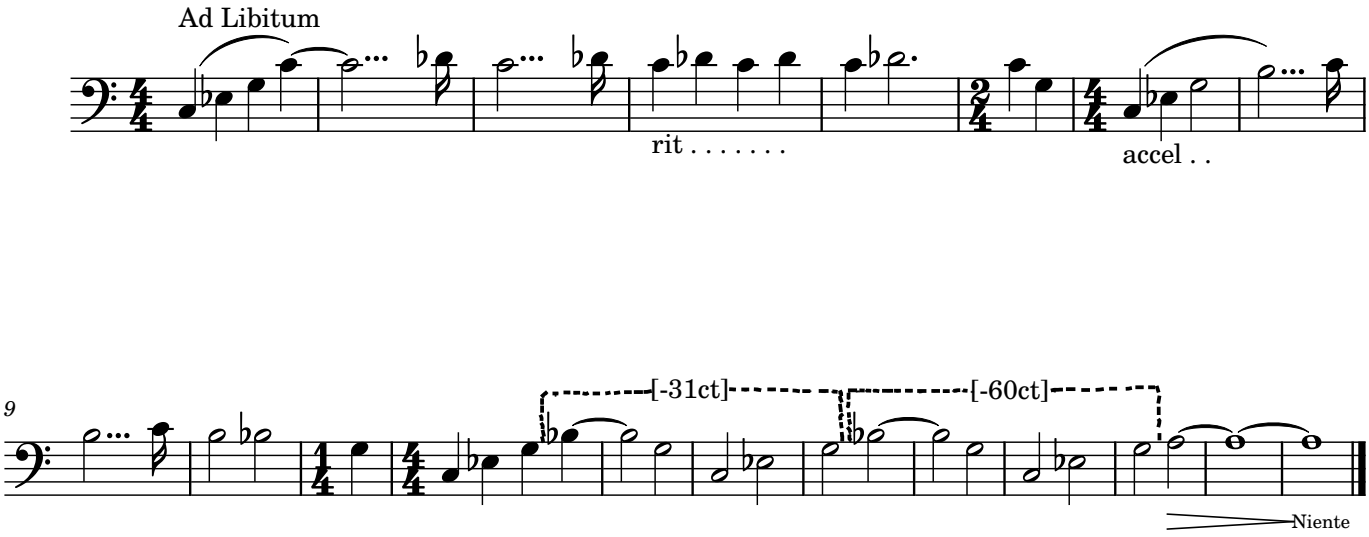
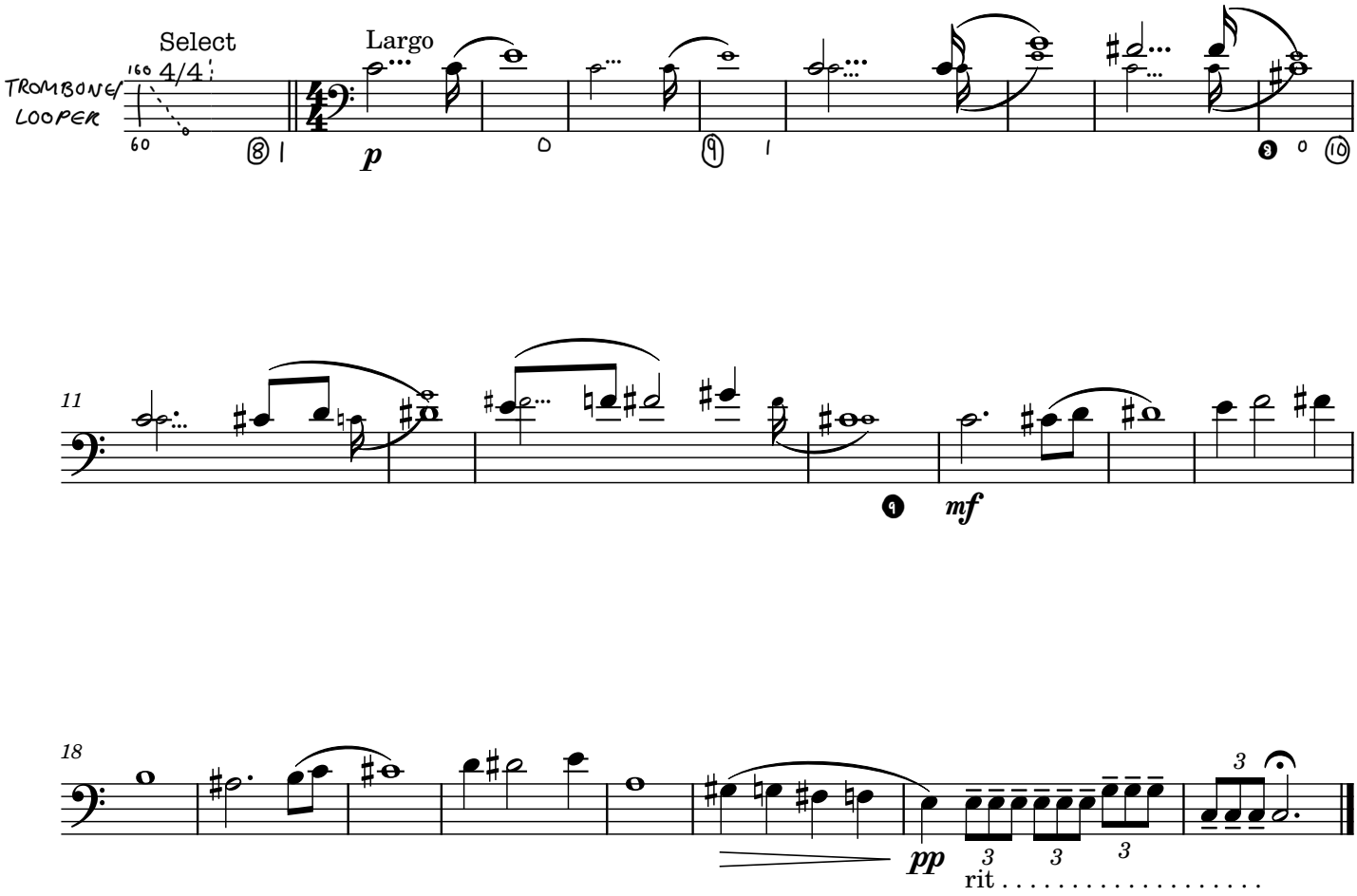
4. Memories


Breath only
Ad Libitum
Roll fingers on bell
Tap bell
3
pp
Audibly close slide
14
Flick inside of bell
Breath only (in)
28
mf
(Delay channel)
f
mf
p
1
2
3

3. Love



2. Loneliness



1. Death