



excision no. 2: they didn't know we were seeds

for viola and live electronics

tina tallon (2017; rev. 2018)

for Kurt Rohde

*commissioned by
the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition
at Brigham Young University*

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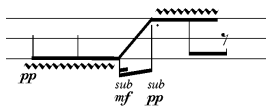
duration: approx. 10 minutes

INSTRUMENTATION

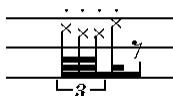
viola

live electronics (available in both stereo and quadrophonic configurations)

PERFORMANCE KEY



In places where a three-line staff is used, the primary purpose of the staff is to indicate bow position along the fingerboard, with the top line corresponding to the nut, the middle line corresponding to the shoulder of the instrument (where the fingerboard meets the body), and the bottom line corresponding to the bridge. Lateral bow position, such as "frog," "mid-bow," or "tip" will be indicated where necessary (but otherwise, the bow should not move back and forth perpendicular to the fingerboard as it normally would). Wavy lines indicate a "shivering" motion, in which the bow is rapidly but barely moved up and down the fingerboard to create a "stuck" sound (as if a fly is trying to escape from flypaper). In general, dynamic is related to the amount of pressure applied to the bow, but not always - as the bow moves toward the nut, the lack of rosin will mean there is less friction, which will result in less sound. This is completely okay - it's a feature of the technique, not a flaw!



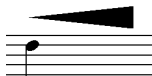
Rolling wood over hair: x noteheads indicate small popping, crunching noises achieved by rolling the wood of the bow atop the hair while pressing the string into the fingerboard with the bow. This is generally best achieved near the middle of the bow, where the wood is closest to the hair (a bow with a circular shaft is best for this; a bow with an octagonal cross-section can decrease the range of motion and/or make it more difficult to roll).



Light finger pressure: diamond noteheads indicate to use light finger pressure, similar to that used in creating a harmonic.



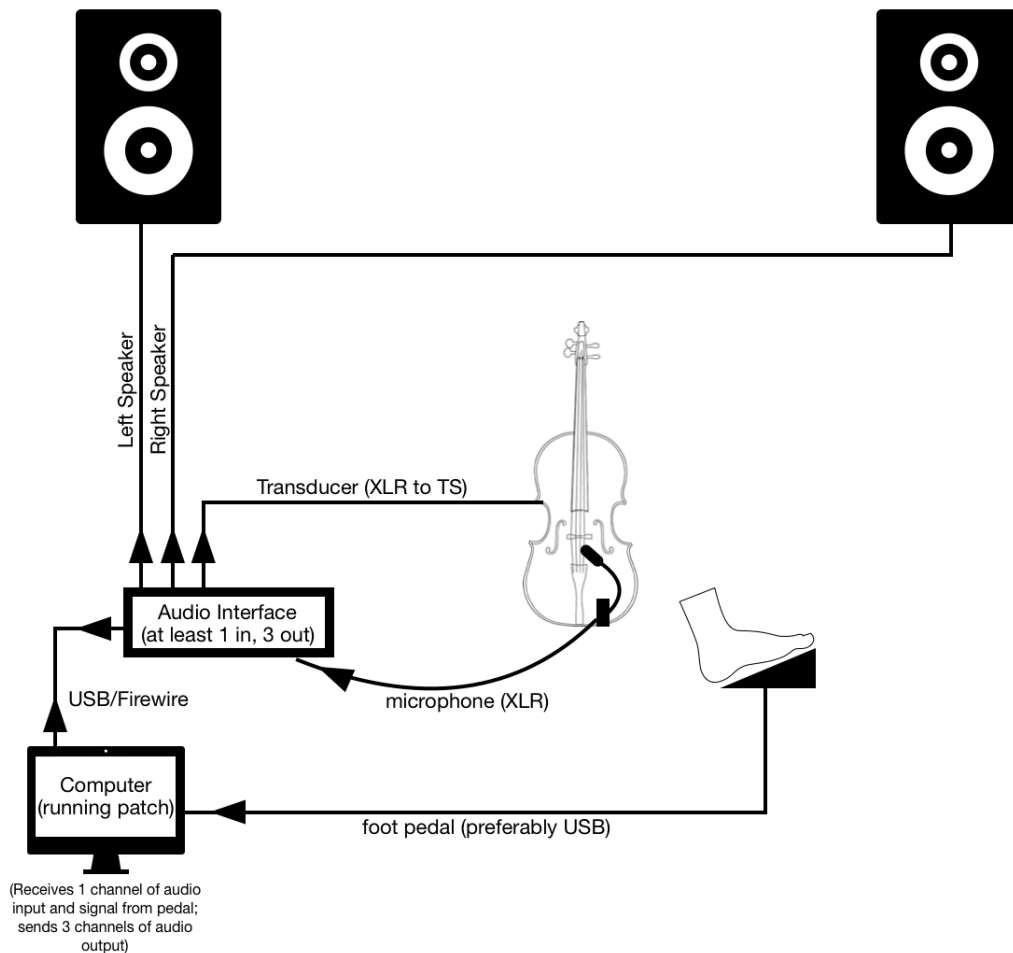
Tremolo (an arrow between the stems of notes with and without tremolo markings indicates a gradual transition between non-tremolo and tremolo)



Scratch tone/overpressure

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Computer running Pure Data 0.48-0 or later
- Patch (available by request from the composer)
- Transducer attachment (available by request from the composer)
- Microphone (preferably a DPA 4099 or equivalent)
- Foot pedal for triggering cues (USB is preferred)
- Audio interface with at least 1 channel of input and 3 channels of output (5 for quad. config.)
- Two speakers for stereo configuration or 4 speakers for quadraphonic configuration



Cues are listed in the score and should be triggered as close to the beginning of the measure as possible. While there is flexibility in timing prior to the start of a cue, the player should aim to begin playing as quickly after they trigger a cue as possible, as many cues involve recording material for use later in the piece. Missed cues can have drastic consequences for later cues.

Transducer: The transducer straps to the back of the viola and initiates a controlled (and highly processed) feedback loop between the microphone and the transducer beginning in cue 11.

PROGRAM NOTE

excision no. 2: they didn't know we were seeds takes as its points of departure the human voice and the performer's physical relationship with their instrument to explore notions of agency, subversion, and disenfranchisement. By using a transducer attached to the viola and live electronic processing, the electronic component of the piece questions agency and embodiment, ultimately deconstructing the player's physical intuition about their complicity in sound production through controlled feedback loops.

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♩ = 60

Viola

$\frac{4}{4}$ at the frog
 $\frac{4}{4}$ sul I & II

ppp

Electronics

① -begin reverb, amplification
-slowly fade in pitch-shifted, delayed copies

Note: because all electronics are live, the depicted waveform is only meant to be a guide.

5

Vla.

p

ppp

② -begin convolving with vocal fry
-slowly fade in

Elec.

9

Vla.

mf

p

mf

p

mf

p

mf

Elec.

12

Vla.

pp

f

mf

p

mf

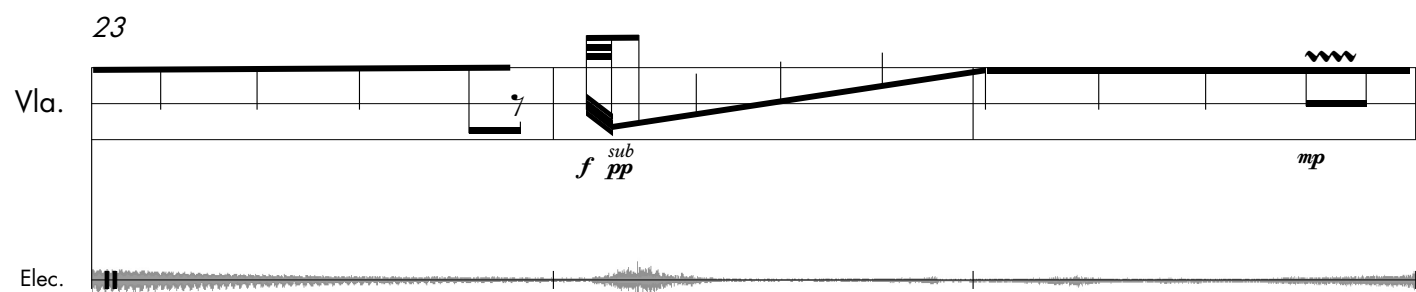
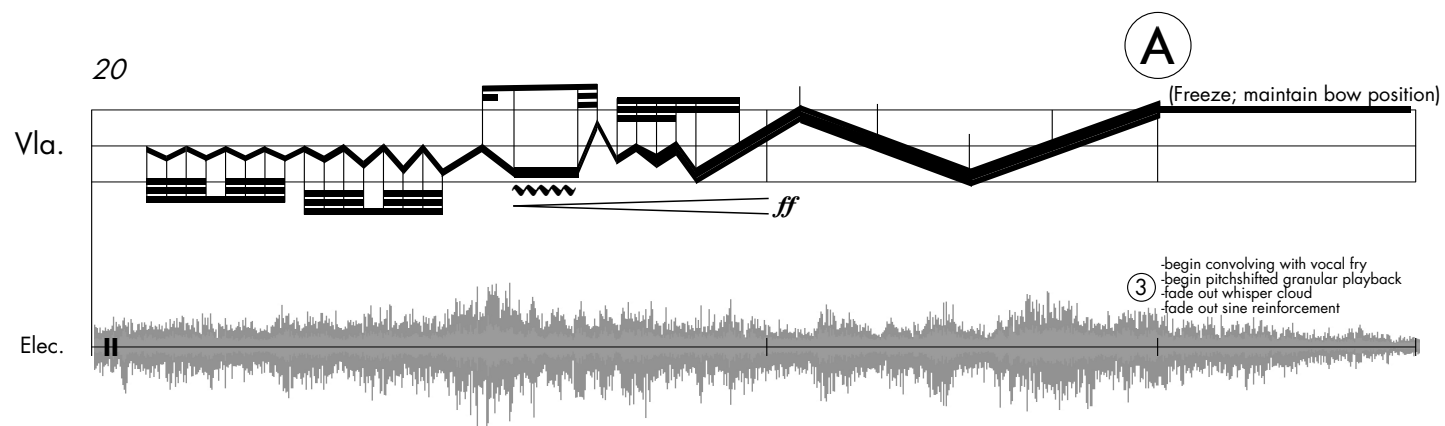
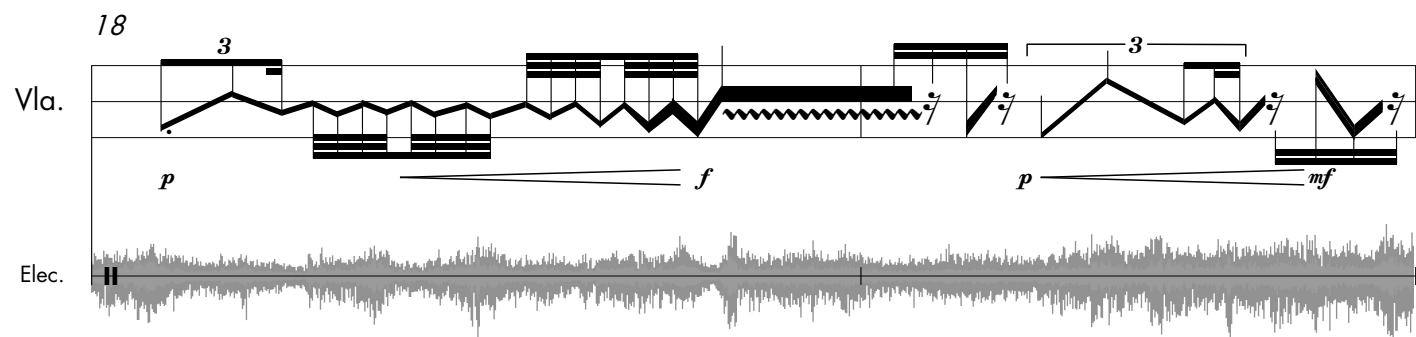
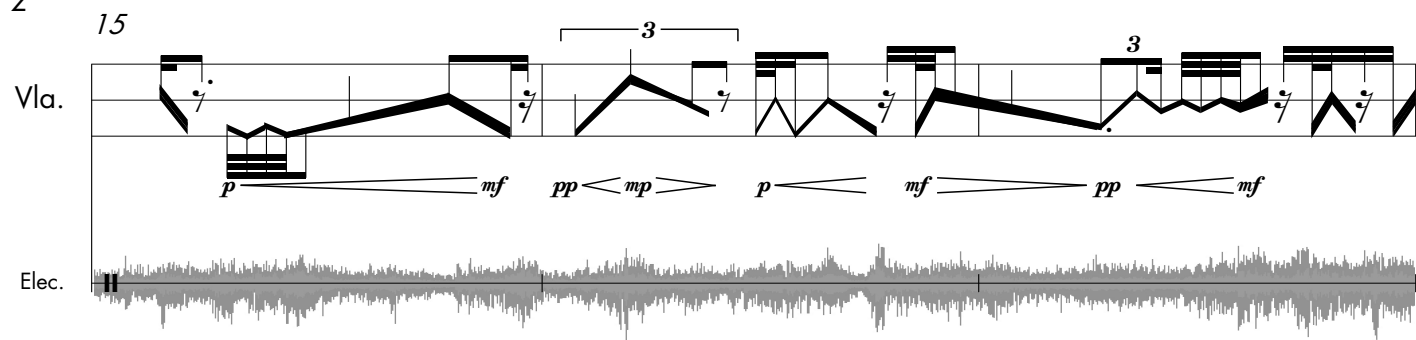
f

p

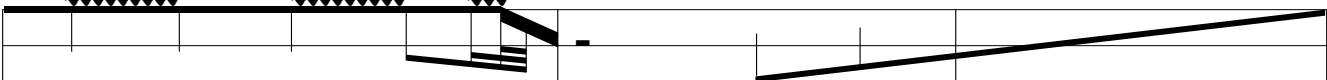
f


Elec.

2



26

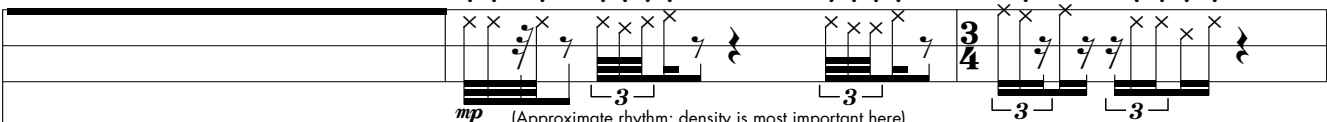
Vla. 

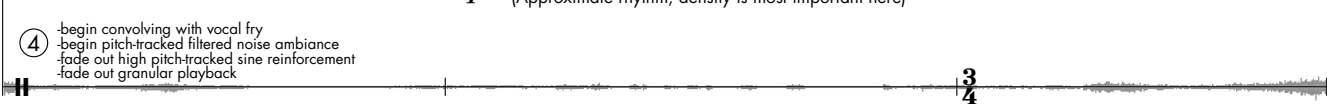
Elec. 

f *pp*

29 (frog) $\xrightarrow{\text{(slowly and silently)}}$ mid-bow

(B) $\text{♩} = 100$

Vla. 

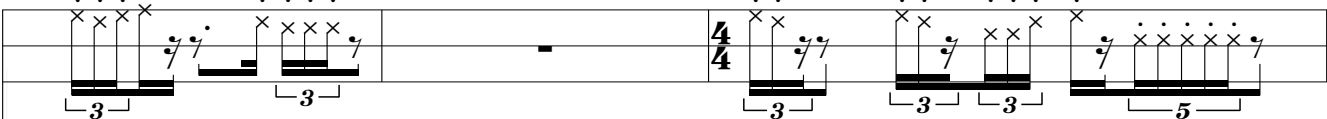
Elec. 


mp (Approximate rhythm; density is most important here)

④ -begin convolving with vocal fry
-begin pitch-tracked filtered noise ambience
-fade out high pitch-tracked sine reinforcement
-fade out granular playback

$\frac{3}{4}$


32


Vla. 

Elec. 

$\frac{4}{4}$

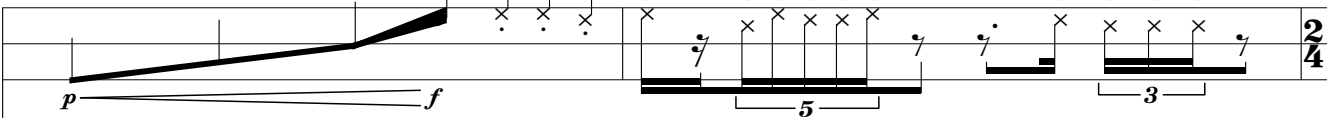
35


Vla. 

Elec. 

f *ff*

38

Vla. 

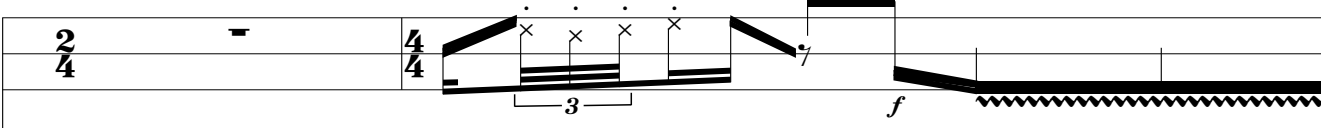
Elec. 


p *f*

$\frac{2}{4}$

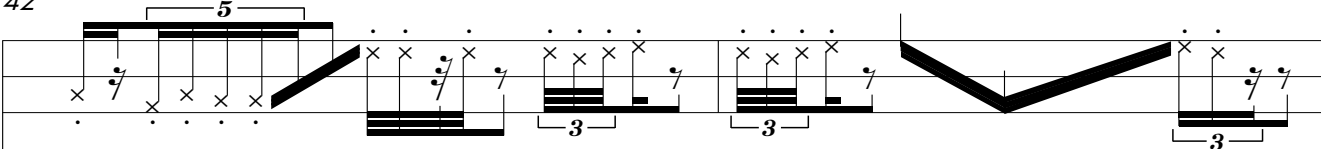
4


40

Vla. 

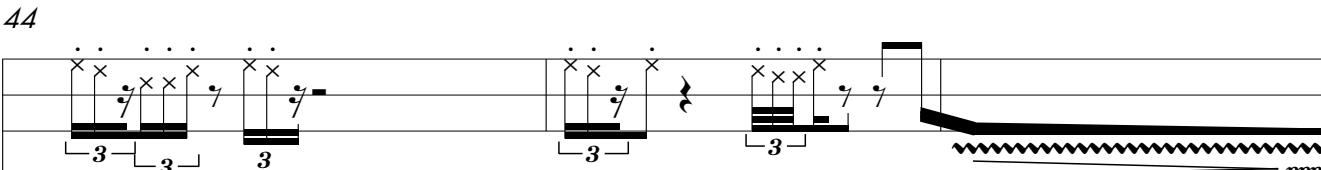
Elec. 


42

Vla. 

Elec. 

44

Vla. 


Elec. 


♩ = 60

47 Freely; take time where needed

ORD → SP

→ ST

Vla. 

Elec. 

⑤ -fade in glitched whispers
-fade in 8vb pitchshifted filtered delay

52 SP → ST → SP

Vla. *p*

ORD → SP

5

Elec.

54 ST → SP

Vla. *pp* *p* *mf* 3

jeté

ORD 8va

Elec.

58 SP

Vla. *pp* *ppp* *pp*

ORD

Elec.

⑥ begin playback reverberated scraping glisses
fade in delay and pitchshifting of playback

61 SP

Vla. *mf* *p* *mf* *sub* *pp* *mf*

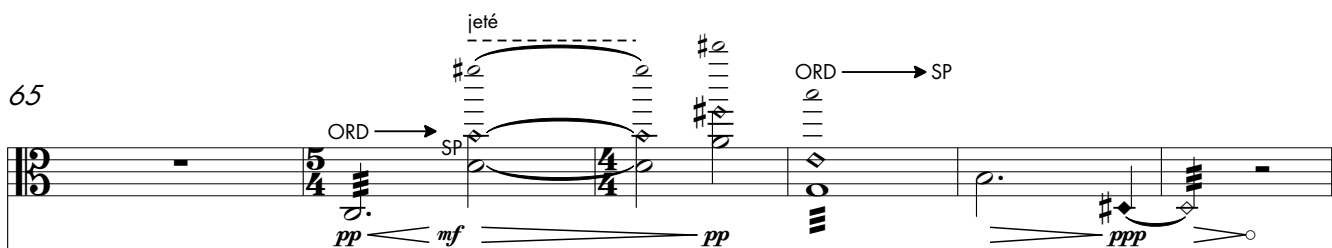
ORD → SP

3

(trill to open string)

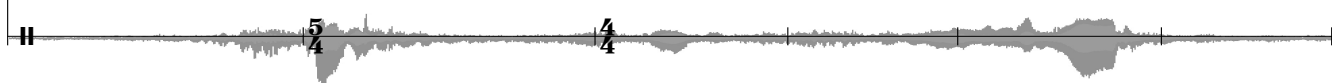
Elec.

65


Vla. 

ORD → SP

pp mf pp ppp

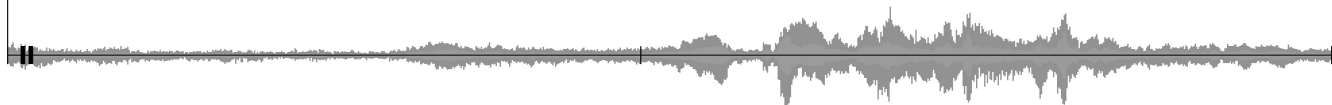
Elec. 

71

Vla. 

ORD 8va → SP

mp

Elec. 

73

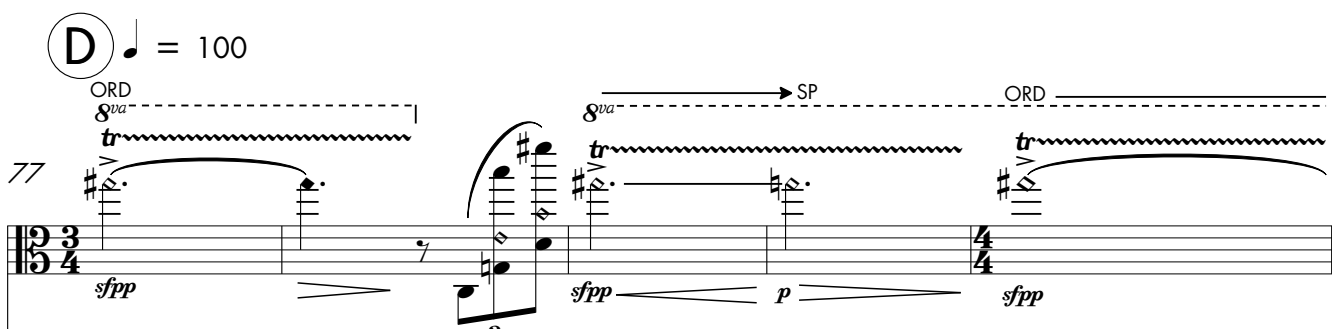
Vla. 

ORD 8va → SP

mp sfpp


Elec. 

77

Vla. 

ORD 8va → SP

sfpp mp p sfpp

Elec. 

82

Vla. $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (tr) $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (trill to open string) $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (trill to open string) $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (trill to open string)

Elec.

mf mp 3 $sfpp$ mf p pp mf $sfpp$ mf p

86

Vla. $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (trill to first finger) $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (trill to open string) $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (trill to first finger) $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (trill to open string)

Elec.

$sfpp$ mf $sfpp$ mf p $sfpp$ mf pp

⑦ begin variable pitch-shifted playback
begin convolution with spoken text

90

Vla. $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (tr) $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (trill to open string) $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (trill to open string) $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (trill to open string)

Elec.

mf f sub pp f p mf p mf

93

Vla. $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (trill to open string) $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (trill to open string) $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (trill to open string) $\text{ORD} \rightarrow \text{SP}$ (trill to open string)

Elec.

p f sub pp f $sfpp$ f

97

Vla.

p *f* *mp* SP

Elec.

99

Vla.

f *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *mp* *f* tr

Elec.

102

Vla.

mp *mf* *fpp* *sub pp*

Elec.

105

Vla.

p *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

Elec.

108 **E** ♩ = 60

ST → SP ST → SP → ST ORD → SP

Vla.

ppp *mf* *pp* *pp* *mf*

8 - gradually increase squelch value on speech convolution
- decrease pitch center of variable pitchshifting

Elec.

112

Vla.

pp *ppp* *mf* *p*

Elec.

116

ORD → SP

Vla.

mf *ppp* *mf*

Elec.

119 speech-like
SP

Vla.

fpp *mp* *ppp* *p* *pp* *mp* *pp* *pp* *mp*

9 - fade out pitchshifted playback
- decrease squelch on convolution
- record viola signal

Elec.

121

Vla.

mf mp pp p > pp

Elec.

123

Vla.

mf pp p ppp p sfpp

(10) -begin transducer playback of recorded viola signal from 9

ORD → SP

Elec.

126

Vla.

ppp

Elec.

128

Vla.

jeté

pp mf ppp mf p pp f

Elec.

131

Vla.

sul I & II

mf

p *mf* *p*

Elec.

134

Vla.

mf *p* *mf* *pp* *f* *mf* *p* *mf* *f*

(11) -add whispers and glottal sounds into convolution pair
-begin feedback and playback through transducer

Elec.

137

Vla.

p *f* *p* *mf* *pp* *mp* *p* *mf*

Elec.

140

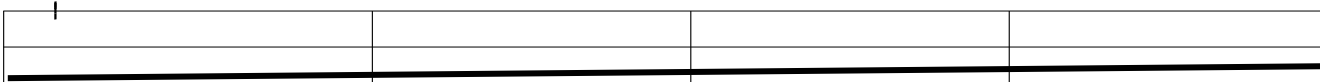
Vla.

pp *mf* *ff*

Elec.

12 **G**
143

Vla.



mp

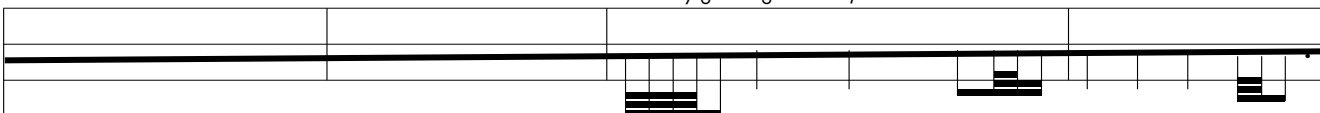
Elec.



(12) -fade out whisper cloud and noise ambience

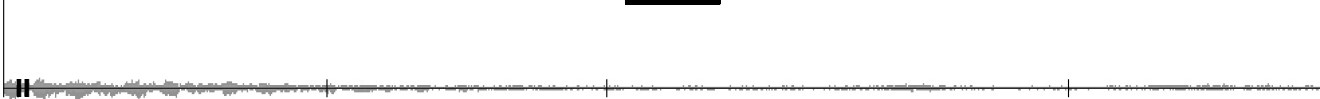
147

Vla.



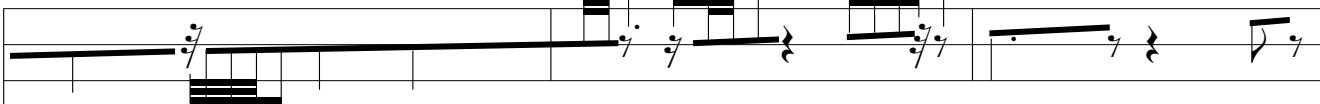
Begin to slow down; rhythm markings show a rough example of potential density of slight articulations to the sound as the rate of movement slows (it should sound like slowly grinding to a halt)

Elec.



151

Vla.

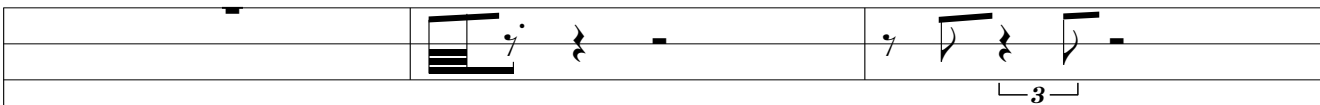


Elec.



154

Vla.

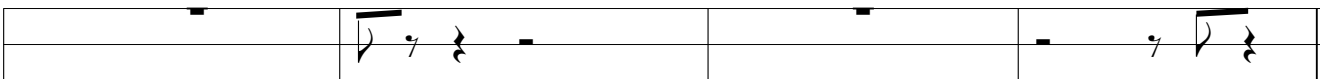


Elec.



157

Vla.



ppp

Elec.



(13)

all processing fades out