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# CHINESE CALLIGRAPHIC THINKING IN MY COMPOSITIONAL WORK

# LEE CHIE TSANG ISAIAH

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts by Research.

October 2012

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(Word count: 13,421)

#### Portfolio

#### Score:

- 1. Interfusion The lament from the Gong- (2011) For Trombone & Piano Amerein, Dirk (Trombone) and Henneberger, Jürg (piano). Auditorium UMS, Sabah, Malaysia, 15th of July 2011 Approx. 12min
- 2. "Interfusion II" -How Slow the Song- "聲聲慢" (2011) Mezzo Soprano unaccompanied voice Unperformed Workshop: Loré lixenberg Approx. 7 min
- 3. *"Interfusion III" -Hui- "惠"(*2011) For Soprano Sheng, Bass Flute, Pipa & Harp SooChou University Music Hall, Taiwan, 14<sup>th</sup> of October, 2012 Approx. 8 min
- 4. *"Interfusion IV" Variegation in Colour-"斑驳的色彩"* (2012) For Viola Solo Hall, Huddersfield, UK, 10th of July, 2012 Bridget Carey Approx. 11 min
- "Tōng" -通- (2012)
   For Flute, Alto Saxophone, Piano, violin & cello
   Commissioned by Asian Contemporary ensemble
   Performed by Asian Contemporary ensemble, Rosmarie Somiah(Story-teller) &
   Tang Soo Kuan (Dancer) on 11th of March 2012 in NUS Arts Festival 2012,
   Singapore.
   Approx. 12 min

#### Sound recording:

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#### Video:

"Tōng" - 通- (2012) For Flute, Alto Saxophone, Piano, violin & cello Commissioned by Asian Contemporary ensemble Performed by Asian Contemporary ensemble, Rosmarie Somiah(Story-teller) & Tang Soo Kuan (Dancer) on 11th of March 2012 in NUS Arts Festival 2012, Singapore. Approx. 12 min

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#### Abstract

This thesis discusses my exploration of Chinese calligraphic thinking in my own work, encompassing a majority of the work contained within my portfolio of compositions. The introduction begins with several questions which inform my research's investigation. Furthermore, the introduction elaborates on a variety of concepts related to Chinese calligraphic thinking and the work of other composers. Chapter one investigates potential relationships between calligraphic materials and musical gesture, focusing on the micro-level of musical gestural details and provides a catalogue of possible transformations between micro-level gestures and the array of brush-stroke techniques; touching on topics of density, intensity, and quality of ink as representative of the dynamism of the musical gesture. Chapter two explores concepts of Chinese calligraphic 'time' and 'space.' Additionally, the micro-level considerations of chapter one are expanded to consider large-scale issues of musical form. The last chapter explores one of the traditional rituals of the Lotud people and the performative nature of 'staged' Chinese calligraphy. In the conclusion, I summarize my investigation of Chinese calligraphy, and its impact on my musical language, opening up a space of dialogue between Chinese calligraphy and my own compositional output.

### **Dedications and Acknowledgments**

I'm heartily thankful and would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Liza Lim whose expertise, understanding, support, and patience, added considerably to my graduate experience.

I am deeply grateful to my co-supervisors, Dr. Bryn Harrison, and Dr. Aaron Cassidy who shared a wealth of wonderful musical knowledge and ideas throughout my study.

Lastly, I would also like to thank my family for the support they provided me through my entire life, without whose love, and encouragement, I would not have finished this thesis.

This thesis is dedicated to my wife and my daughter, Tan Geok Poi and Lee Qiao Hui.

#### Introduction

Gunn states: "Chinese calligraphy is to be experienced. I am referring to a physical, bodily reaction as well as a mental and emotional reaction. As will be seen, this unity of body/mind experience is of the essence of calligraphy." (Gunn, 2009, p.131)

#### (i) Preamble

In 2010, I was selected as one of the candidates during the Kuala Lumpur Contemporary Music festival 2009 to attend the 45<sup>th</sup> International Darmstadt International Summer Course for New Music in Germany. One key experience for me was a short exercise conducted by Prof Liza Lim in which we were asked to write down what are the positive and negative elements that can be found in our music; that is, what we experience and what we have not experienced yet in our music. The exercise seemed to be a simple one, but I was hard-pressed to write even one word. After that, I started to question what the core of my personal musical language was. Was it something from my cultural background or was it related to my own experiences? What was the relationship between cultural context and my musical composition? How could I apply ideas from my own cultural experiences into my work?

During my time in Huddersfield, I have focused on what my own cultural 'mother tongue' is. This focus has given me a specific direction to aim my research, leading me to discover several links between Chinese calligraphy and my personal work as a composer. Throughout this thesis, I will not discuss particulars of the historical background, specific style of character, or the philosophy and forms of Chinese calligraphy work. Instead, I will direct focus towards illustrating correlations between the principles derived from the calligraphic materials themselves (the brush, ink, and paper) and my musical compositions.

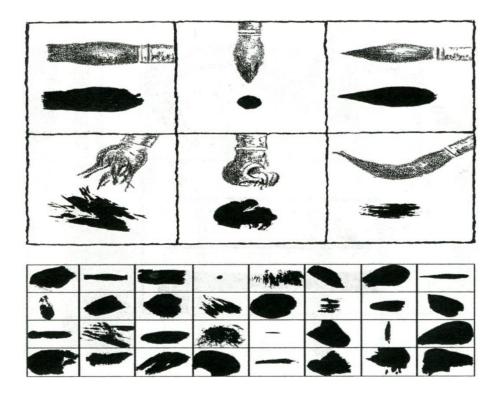
This thesis will examine calligraphic thinking in a musical context in order to communicate the values and processes of Chinese calligraphic performance. The intention is that the musician can begin to consider ways of interpreting my musical work through the gained insight into calligraphic practices. At the same time, in my own work, I hope to establish a new musical language that reflects on my cultural mother tongue by systematically transferring aspects of Chinese aesthetics into composition that sits within a contemporary Western idiom.

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#### (ii) The Concept of 'Calligraphic Thinking in My Musical Composition'

In Western writing traditions, 'calligraphy' is defined as the 'beauty' of writing and often refers specifically to communication whereas in Chinese culture, calligraphy [书法] is defined as an essential art form which transcends the method of writing. The idea of Chinese calligraphy as an art can perhaps be better understood from the quotation used at the beginning of this thesis by Robert W. Gunn, who suggests that Chinese calligraphy is not limited to the field of writing but also deals with the body, the mind, and the spirit to create an experience of the values of time, of space, and the energy that flows throughout the entire process of its 'performance'. I have taken these values of Chinese calligraphy: time, space, energy and physical performance, and have made them into core musical concerns that shape the way I approach musical gesture, the dynamism of the music, musical structure, and meter.

I am particularly interested in how these values are expressed through the calligraphic materials used: the brush, ink, and paper. Each of these materials function in different ways. For instance, the function of the brush serves as a tool of transmission: a tool through which one can experience the process of 'time' and 'space'. This idea is referred to by Gu Gan (2009), in his treatise of calligraphy, 'The Three Steps of Modern Calligraphy', as an experience of time and space that is activated by the motion of the brush-stroke (fig.1). The space is a 'shape' whilst the brush is in contact with the paper and the 'shape' of the mark generated with an enormous range of possible nuances created from the shape of the brush itself. The brush allows the ink and paper to register micro-level changes to the greatest degree of differentiation due to the angles, the quality of hair, and the intensity of pressure activated by the physical gesture. In tandem with this, the element of time can be interpreted as the 'motion' of the brush across the space. In a sense, using Gu Gan words, the 'mark' created by the brush-stroke is a 'crystalized gesture'; a mark as a reflection of time and space.



# Figure 1: The illustrator (Gu Gan, 2009) shows that the experience of time and space that is activated by the motion of the brush-stroke.

I was interested in applying this concept of the brush as an instrument of time and space in a musical context. For instance, in my viola solo piece *"Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour-*, the bow of the viola is metaphorically linked to the calligraphic brush through which I imitate different calligraphic techniques. I wanted to capture the shape of the movements taken by the brush to generate a musical gesture in the musical context. My intention here is to create a different mind-set in the mind of the musician. The musician is required to reexamine the bow and their use of the bow during a performance of the work. In a sense, the bow of the viola is no longer used to 'play' but rather to 'paint' or to 'write' the sound from the music score.

Chiang Yee (2002), in his book, 'Chinese Calligraphy: An Introduction to Its Aesthetic and Technique', he has suggested that the ink can be considered as the 'blood' of the brush. The density and the intensity of change by the quality of ink will result in a variety of layers in the mark. Hence, to me, in a musical context, the responsiveness of the ink is represented by the quality of 'shape', 'colour', and 'energy' of dynamics by which sounds can be transformed into gestures. In addition, the role of the paper in calligraphic practice has influenced the way I organized space in my music. What I find interesting about the space of the paper is not its representation as a single surface dimension or as a 'static' entity, but rather its active dynamic space. The paper is a space which can carry the engagement of the calligraphic energy, which consists of an experience of the dynamic imagination of motion in time.

My research has led me to look at several composers who have embraced some analogue with this kind of calligraphic thinking about their work. For instance, Chou Wen Chung whose music is deeply influenced by the Chinese philosophy, music, and cultural practice includes Chinese calligraphy elements in his music. For example, cursive (1963), a duet for flute and piano, is representative work which is influenced by 'wild' cursive script (a style of calligraphy writing). This piece explores the expressiveness and spontaneity of the gestural movement/flow of calligraphy. The music imitates the responsiveness of the calligraphic material for his work, and he says in his program note from the first performance that the music is a flow of ink which, through the brush-strokes, projects not only fluid lines in interaction with each other, but also density, texture and poise. For instance, figure 2 illustrates the texture of the music, in his program note description Chou (1963) suggests: "musically the cursive concept influences the use of specified but indefinite pitches and rhythm, regulated but variable tempo and dynamics, as well as various timbres possible on the two instruments. The piano serves as a reflection of the flute by 'extending' its range into the lower register and by matching the flute's varied timbral resources, such as microtonal trills and flutter tonguing, using plucked piano strings and foreign materials between these strings."

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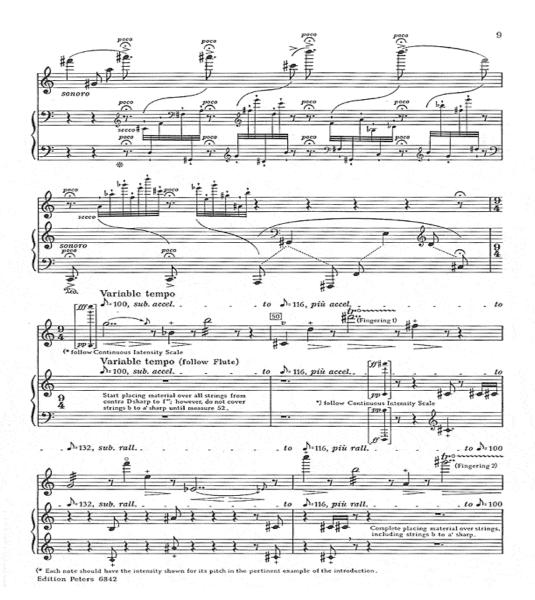


Figure 2: Chow Wen Chung (1962), Cursive for flute and piano

Malaysian composer Yii Kah Hoe, by contrast, utilizes the technique of improvisation to explore the responsiveness of spontaneous movement in his work, *Wild Cursive* [*狂草*] (2009), a chamber piece which was written for the traditional Chinese instrument Zhong Ruan (Chinese guitar) and string trio. In the program notes, Yii (2009) states: "the composition motif is inspired by one of a renowned Chinese calligrapher; Huai Su's [怀素], which the music is explores the style, and the texture of his writing." For instance, in bar 65 (fig.3), the composer indicates a section of improvisation with several extended techniques. These techniques include: glissandi, percussive effects (slapping and knocking on the instrument body), and changes in tone quality (shifting between distorted tone and normal tone), without synchronizing the rhythms or dynamics between each instrument.

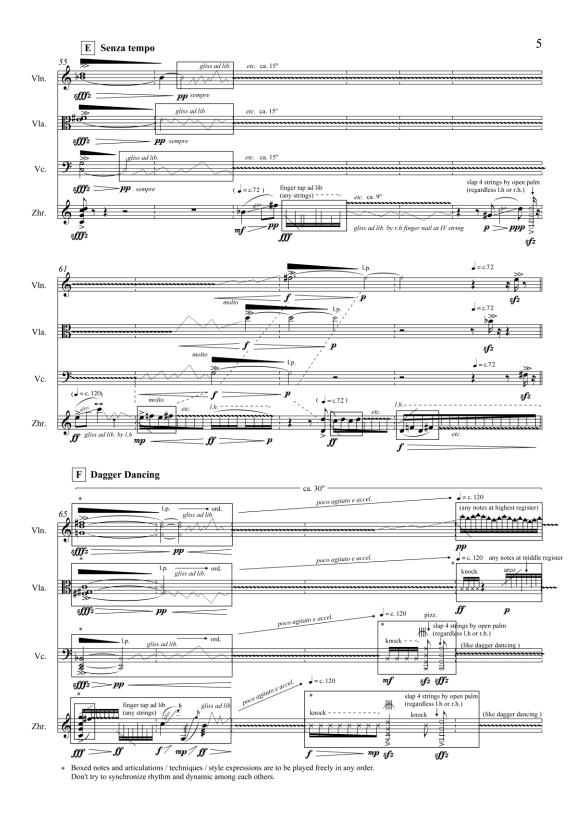


Figure 3: Yii Kah Hoe (2009), *Wild Cursive* for Zhong Ruan (Chinese Guitar and Strings trio)

Furthermore, in the work of Giacinto Scelsi, a composer who was influenced deeply by eastern cultural perspectives, I have found correlations with the essence of Chinese calligraphy values and aesthetics, in that the music contains elements of meditative or religious ritual which he has related to spiritual sensations. What I find interesting about his music is the idea of a single note approach in which a single unit of pitch is enough to express the entire work. This idea seems similar to what Chou (1970) proposes with the idea of single tones as 'music entities' in his article, 'Single Tones as Musical Entities: An Approach to Structured Deviations in Tonal Characteristics', He says: "I am concerned with single tones as musical entities, each endowed with nature by its own acoustic attributes and expressive potential. It is these microcosmic entities in a continual and multi-leveled transformation and interaction that produce the coherent flow of sonic events that we call a composition." A different kind of reference to calligraphic ideas can be found in Kaija Saariaho's work, Verblendungen (1984), her first orchestral piece, which engaged in the interaction between the orchestra and the computer. The idea of this composition is inspired by concrete calligraphic material (the brush-stroke). This brush-stroke (fig.4) is written in a diminuendo shape of trace, and transformed into a graphic in her score where the idea serves as a motif and a main gestural unit of the piece shaping the exploration of texture, dynamics, and the overall structure of this work.

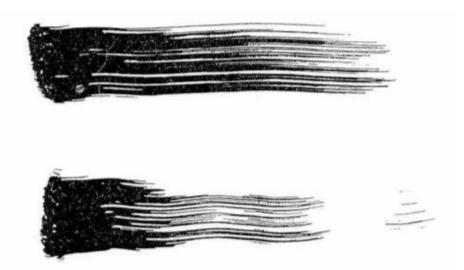


Fig 4: The illustration (Saariaho, 1987) shows that the first sketch of the global form of *Verblendungen* for orchestra and tape.

For me, what I find in Chou and Yii's music is a similar element of spontaneity, particularly in regard to movement. However, the way of approaching music is different for each composer. Specifically: Chow is working with the spontaneity of musical gesture in a controlled musical context, while Yii is largely using improvisation to achieve similar types of spontaneity. At the same time, Yii explores the idea not only with Chinese traditional instrument, but combinations of Chinese and western instruments. However, Saariaho's work explores the 'calligraphic material' in a larger form of setting. At the same time, she treats the 'mark' of the brush-stroke as a texture of dynamism in the tape part which is used to synchronize with the orchestra and organize the texture of the music. This textural identity, contained within Scelsi's work is an area that I explore further within this thesis. Thus, the ideas discussed here have helped to focus the direction of my investigation into calligraphic materials and other possible potential connections with my compositional work.

This thesis will be divided into three chapters. In chapter one, I will explore the possible relationships between calligraphic materials and musical gesture. I focus on the micro-level of musical gestural details and illustrate these as a catalogue of possibilities to demonstrate the ways in which musical gestures can be built up and transformed using subcomponents, just as calligraphic characters are formed through combinations of the brush-techniques producing different ink strokes. In chapter two, the micro-level considerations of chapter one will be expanded to consider more large-scale issues of musical form. I will also examine my musical compositions in terms of how the 'space' and 'time' of the music is being organized, based on the concept of the Chinese calligraphic notion of 'paper' as dynamic space. In the last chapter I will explore one of the traditional rituals of the Lotud's people and the possibility of the performative nature of Chinese calligraphy to be 'staged'.

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#### Chapter 1

The Brush and Ink: Correlations between Calligraphic Material and my viola solo, *"Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour-*.

#### **1.1 Introduction**

It is very difficult to transform a piece of calligraphy work into sounds, musical dynamics, structure, or style. Throughout, the history of Chinese calligraphy, each dynasty has had its own specific techniques, styles, philosophies, and shared practices that define the work produced in each period. Traditionally the process of learning Chinese calligraphy is as follows: the beginner (or a student) will begin the lesson by copying the master's work, in which they follow every single brush-stroke and character, imitating every shape, size, and structure of their master's work. I find this process of learning particular interesting because of the subsequent discovery that unfolds. The student is actually perceiving, receiving, and realising the energy, the memory, and the technique of another master's work. Through this process of learning, it can be understood that the student is experiencing the sensations of the master's work, while developing their own personal style. In other words, this process can be described as a 're-creative' process; a fundamental way to let a person experience, discover, and create their own work. This notion of the 're-creative' process helped to focus the area of investigation undertaken for this chapter. Here I will investigate the correlation between calligraphic materials and my music in terms of musical gesture/texture. However, my intention is not to create a direct representation of calligraphic material for my work, but rather to open up a space where I can experience the possibility these materials present and their influence on my work.

#### 1.2 The Concept

One composition in which I sought to find musical analogues with calligraphic materials is *"Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour-*. The subtitle of this piece: 'variegation in colour' is a metaphorical reference to the variation and the transformation of changes of the ink. In this piece, I explore the possibility of making a correlation between calligraphic

materials and musical gestures. I divide this chapter into a number of sections, with each section discussing the correlation and engagement between the material, and the music illustrated by images of Chinese calligraphy and excerpts from my scores. However, the function of these images is not to represent a transparent relationship between the image and the music but rather to give insight into the process of transformation between calligraphic material and musical material.

#### 1.3 The Brush-stroke

The brush-stroke is fundamental to the creation of Chinese written characters. The brush-strokes used can be categorized into seven different stroke-types considered to be 'the seven mysteries' [七妙]: The strokes include: horizontal, dot, downward left, upward hook, vertical, ending, and left hook. The size, the shape and the length of the strokes are not standardized, and each stroke may not be created by a single motion, but rather through a compound movement. For instance, the dot (fig.5) it is the fundamental stroke-type used to create the six additional strokes. For example, the horizontal-line is a single line that both starts and ends with the dot. In order to create a dot stroke, the brush begins to make contact with the paper, moving forward and then turning to the right. During this initial contact, there is a discharge of energy that is then carried on through to the second stage of the stroke as the brush descends downwards. The stroke is realised only after the brush makes a circular motion to the left to return to the initial starting point (Chiang, 2002, p.153).



#### Figure 5: The dot stroke (left-leaning)

The motions of a compound movement demonstrate the potential energy/value, within the smallest unit of a brush-stroke. Everett (2007), in her article, 'Calligraphy and Musical Gestures in the Late Works of Chou Wen-Chung', has proposed that in Chinese calligraphy the 'oneness' (or smallest unit of a stroke), is enough to express the excellence of an entire

work whereas Chou (1971) has made use of this concept of 'oneness' through exploration into a 'single note' approach in his duet, *Cursive*, for flute and piano. Here, the 'single note' approach aims to act as the embodiment of a complete musical entity, much like 'oneness' that expresses the entirety of a calligraphic work. What I understand of these concepts is that the brush-stroke is represented as a 'crystallization of energy'. Every single stroke has, encoded within its trace, the 'mark' of energy, the 'choreography' of the physical gesture, and personal creativity. In other words, the responsiveness of this material is a fundamental and sensitive tool used to express individual sensations. Therefore, in a musical context, these 'energy marks' have proven instrumental in shaping the way in which I convey the brushstrokes and transform them into musical material.

The shapes of the strokes do not precisely specify the character's length, size, or shape. This imprecision is related to Chiang (2002) who points out that the conception of beauty in Chinese calligraphy, particularly the lack of symmetry and an emphasis on dynamic asymmetry. It can be understood that the nature of the brush-stroke's 'trace' is informed by the calligrapher's sensibility and the fluidity of dynamics created by the physical action of movement. In a musical context, the mark of the brush-stroke can be represented as a musical gesture, a mark which reflects the possible/potential choreography of the physical gesture. Taking this idea further, I will present a catalogue of stroke-types and illustrate the ways I have begun to translate calligraphic writing into a musical language.

#### (i) The Horizontal Stroke

Generally, the horizontal stroke (fig.6) is written beginning with a dot stroke. The brush then moves from left to right.

**Figure 6: Horizontal Stroke** 

In the viola solo piece, an example of the technique of the 'horizontal stroke' can be found in bar 6 (fig. 7). This musical gesture begins on the first beat of the bar, combining two actions simultaneously: normal bowing and left hand pizzicato (which imitates the initial dot stroke).

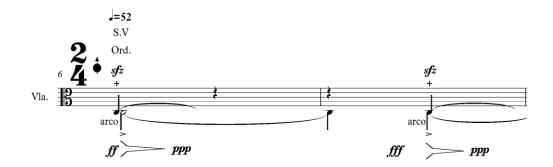


Figure 7: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 6.

#### (ii) The Dot Stroke

As mentioned previously, a normal dot stroke is created through compound movements that have several contact points where there is a discharge of energy. However, in a musical context, the results of these various types of musical gestures reflect calligraphic compound movement, elaborated on earlier. Thus, figure 8 illustrates the possible transformation of musical gestures, changing the size, shape, and length of pizzicato techniques, including: Bartok pizzicato, sliding pizzicato and left-hand pizzicato.

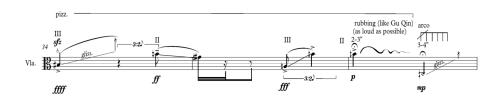


Figure 8: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 34

#### (iii) The Vertical Stroke

The vertical stroke (fig.9), or so-called perpendicular stroke, is generally begun with a downstroke by moving the brush-hair to the left, turning the brush to the right and pulling down; finishing the stroke by leaving a point on the paper.



#### Figure 9: Vertical Stroke.

In a musical context (fig.10), a musical gesture that represents a vertical stroke can be found in bar 61-62. Here the violist is required to start with the highest pitch (indicated by a triangle note head) of a specified string and perform the pitch with a downward glissandi effect, stop at the A natural (open string) with a strong dynamic (*ffff*) marking. The intention of this dynamic marking is to create a dot shape that imitates the end of a vertical stroke.



Figure 10: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 61

#### (iv) The Left Hook Stroke and Ending Stroke

The left hook stroke is an extension of the vertical stroke, with a 'hook' shape whereas the shape of the ending stoke is like a motion in 'wave-like'. In *"Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour-*, I combined these strokes to form musical gestures. For example, in bar 48 (fig.11) the 'left hook stroke' of the calligraphic gestures is established on the downbeat, through the use of arppeggiation. This gesture is then extended through bending the pitch C# to B and back to C#. The second and the third beats represent end of the stroke wave-like calligraphic gesture) through a repetition of the bending effect established in the previous gesture.

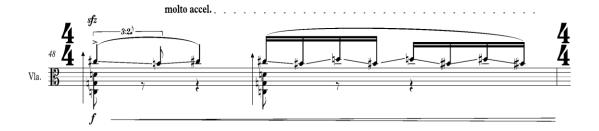


Figure 11: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 48

#### 1.4 The Movement of the Brush

The movement of brush refers to the technique moving the brush across the paper from one position to another; it is an essential technique which activates the energy of a stroke. In Chinese calligraphy, movement is considered an important component of production that reflects one's personal energy, crucial to making an object become a 'living matter'. This idea can relate to Tobey (1966), in his art exhibition catalogue, who suggests: "my work is obviously in a state of constant flux and I want vibration in it. Everything that exists, every human being, is a vibration..." (Helen, 1996, p.113) At the same time, movement also allows a person to experience both time and space as suggested by Gu Gan (2009). This is directly connected to the idea that the movement of the brush, and its resultant 'trace', can represent the experience of time. For me, the movement of the brush is engaged with two elements: the direction and the speed of the brush. In Chinese calligraphy, the movement of the brush is sub-divided into different spaces, which mark the physical trace of the calligrapher over time.

By tracking these different spaces of movement created by the calligrapher/brush, I can more closely examine the temporal unfolding of my work.

There are three components of the sub-divided stroke: the hidden-stroke, the centralstroke, and the return-stroke. The hidden-stroke allows the calligrapher to transfer energy to the tip of the brush hair. During this process, the calligrapher's movements are still stationary. Instead of moving the stroke forward, the calligrapher is preparing the physical energy necessary to initiate a physical motion. The result of this hidden-stroke is a round mark (much like the 'dot'). The second subdivision of the stroke (the central-stroke) marks the movement of the brush along the space. During this stroke, the calligrapher moves away from the hidden-stroke, moving the brush hair evenly and in a balanced manner. The result of this stroke is a thick/round three-dimensional mark. The third stroke is called the return-stroke and during this movement the tip of the brush's hair marks a point ('dot'), signifying the end of the character.

Figure 12 illustrates an example of how I have approached the sub-divisions of this brush movement. For instance, in the following passage, I establish a musical gesture (nine against eight demi-semiquaver notes) in bar 5. The rhythmic patterns are repeated four times and gradually crescendo through the bar. The first two notes (open string D and Eb) are performed using the upper portion of the bow (relating back to the hidden-stroke). The performer then glisses from Eb to F# (representing the idea of a central-stroke) and finishes with a left hand pizzicato (representing the idea of a return-stroke).

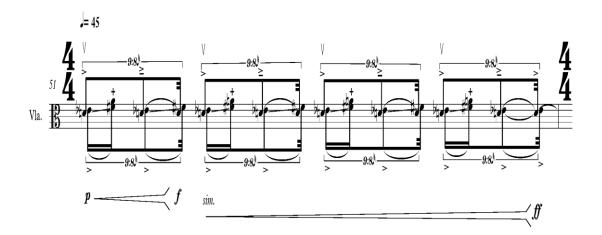


Figure 12: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 51

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#### 1.5 The Harmony of the Line

Different types of brush movement (fig.13) are used to create multiple layers/dimensions. These different layers/dimensions are directly related to the concept of 'harmonization', a central Chinese calligraphic aesthetic, by which the balance of these layers represents a balancing of energy. What I find fascinating about these different types of brush-strokes is the resultant space between the physical traces (fig. 14): a space of 'dialogue' between two lines, where the lines are actually interacting with each other and carry the potential to develop and extended the idea of 'harmonization'.



Figure 13: The painting 'Float Geese' (Wang Xue Zhong, 1985)



Figure 14: The 'trace' from the painting 'Float Geese' (Wang Xue Zhong, 1985)

In a musical context, this idea of different types of brush movement has influenced my approach towards harmonic material in my work. For instance, at the beginning of my viola piece (fig. 15), bar 3, the violist is instructed to cross strings. The passage begins on the D string, with the G string entering close after on the same pitch as the D string (D natural). After that, D natural on the G string moves to D quarter-sharp. The remainder of the bar continues to oscillate around this closely constructed harmonic space, expanding from a minor second to a minor third.

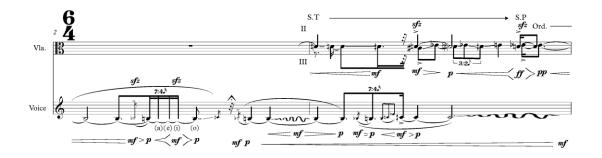


Figure 15: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 2

Another potential extension of this exploration can be found in figure 16. Here I am exploring the possible interaction of 'space' and 'spacing' between lines. For instance, in bars 9-11, the melody line is divided into two independent voices: the C string, which is sustained throughout the passage, and the upper voice executing a series of plucking entrances on the middle of the fourth beat. The interval expands from an augmented fifth to a major seven, with the voice part entering at bar 11. This combination of instrument and voice produces a significant harmonization. For me, I called this quality of harmonization the 'dialogue' between the human and the artificial (the sound world).

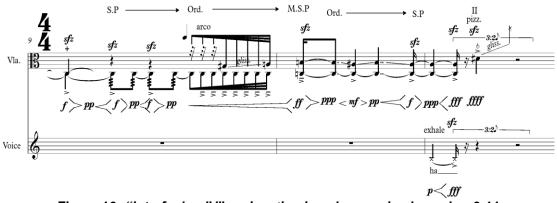


Figure 16: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 9-11

Figure 17 illustrates yet another example of this exploration of harmony though calligraphic means. In bar 21the G string is sustained throughout the whole passage, while the D string starts playing a harmonic (D natural) on the second beat. This harmonic is then used as a pivot point for a reoccurring glissando to the string's highest possible harmonic. The result of this glissando is a rich spectrum of harmonic material.

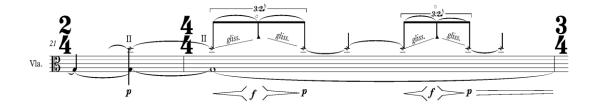


Figure 17: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 21-22

#### 1.6 The Ink

In traditional Chinese Calligraphy, just black ink is used, whereas modern Chinese calligraphy may utilize other materials to refine and explore the possible potential of Chinese calligraphic work. However, during my research, I have only focused on the use of the black ink and the four principle qualities of ink: dry, wet, concentrated, and light. Through exploring these different ink qualities, I have aimed to convey the dynamic energy of each quality and translate them into sound and musical textures. Dow (1905) 'The arrangement between the concentrated and the light' of the ink, saying:

"In eastern art, especially the work in calligraphy and painting are very important to achieve 'Notan' (concentrate and light) which can be translated in English as 'The arrangement between the concentrated and the light' of the ink, to attain an appreciation of Notan, the power to create with it, the following fundamental fact must be understood, namely, that a placing together of masses of the concentrated and the light of ink, synthetically related, coveys to the eyes an impression of beauty entirely independent of meaning." (Dow, 1905, p.37)

#### (i) Dry ink



Figure 18: 'Dry Ink' (Gu Gan, 2009)

This quality of ink (fig. 18) is created by applying ink to the tip of the brush and adding a small amount of water. The result of the ink quality can result in textures that are not necessarily 'withered', but rather 'close' or 'distorted'. The resultant textures created by using this type of ink quality have led me to make use of distortion in my work. For instance, in my viola piece, in bar 45 (fig. 19) the violist begins to press down on the string with the hair of the bow on the first beat, gradually increasing the amount of pressure applied by the bow. At the same time, the violist is instructed to pluck the string with their left hand to create a 'rhythmic noise', representative of the different textures created with dry ink.

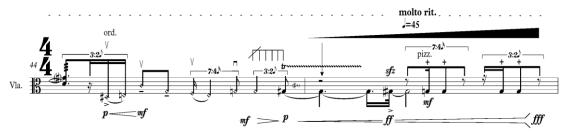


Figure 19: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 43-45

(ii) Wet ink



#### Figure 20: 'Wet Ink' Gu Gan (2009)

This type of ink quality is created by applying a lot of water to the hair of the brush and using a normal amount of ink. The image (fig 20) seems to suggest a type of softness, or perhaps transparency, which harmonizes both positive and negative energies. Using these characteristics as a starting point, I explore techniques such as: harmonics, tremolos, trills, and changing bow positions to create several textures, colours, and qualities of musical gesture. Furthermore, these techniques are used to represent an interaction between the ink (black) and paper (white). Figure 21 provides an example of this interaction, with the violist playing a harmonic tremolo on the first beat of bar 16, creating a metallic and transparent sonic quality, which is then immediately transformed into normal pitch and subsequently transformed back to the previous harmonic quality. This idea continually oscillates through to bar 18.

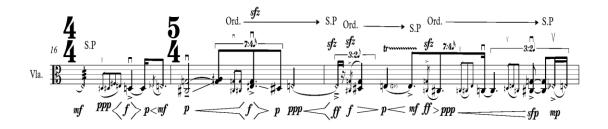


Figure 21: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 16-18

#### (iii) Concentrate ink

This type of ink quality (fig.22) seems to suggest a full and vibrant energy which aims to represent in my work strength, richness, and firmly established musical material. Furthermore, I use specific harmonic techniques to represent the ink's dynamic/energetic qualities.

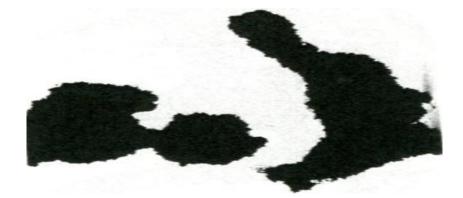


Figure 22: 'Concentrate Ink' (Gu Gan, 2009)

For instance, in bar 82-83 (fig. 23), the violist plays two strings simultaneously, gradually changing from an ordinary bow placement position to molto sul ponticello. The passage begins mezzo forte and becomes increasingly louder, constantly emphasizing (through the use of sforzato dynamic marks) each change of harmony.

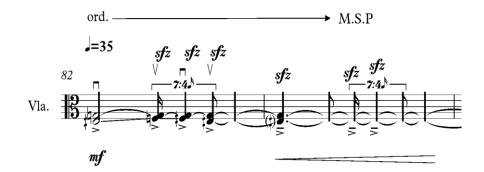


Figure 23: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 82-83

#### (iv) Light ink

Light ink is similar to wet ink, but instead of using a normal amount of ink, light ink uses a significantly smaller amount of ink. Figure 24 illustrates the appearance of this ink quality, and its resultant texture. For me, the resultant texture extends the qualities associated with wet ink, but also has an added sense of blurriness, and continual movement/flow.



Figure 24: 'Light Ink' (Gu Gan. 2009)

In terms of my application of these qualities, I have constructed five groups of pitch material, each accelerating over a specified duration. The following section (fig. 25) is marked with the expressive indication 'murmuring', further highlighting the ink's qualities. The quality of the musical gesture has a sense of constant motion, representing the ink's inherent flow.

Additionally, the dynamic range of the passage is situated in the lower end of the dynamic spectrum, helping to convey a sense of blurring, and transparency.

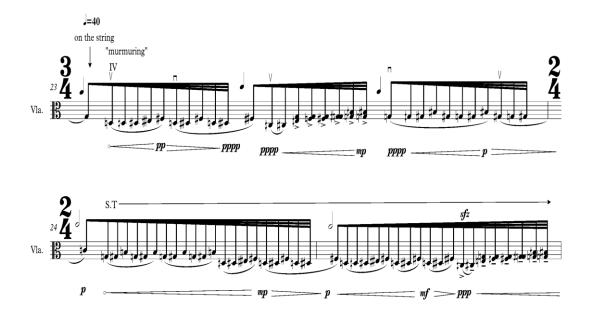


Figure 25: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 23-24

#### (v) 'Broken ink' (combination of concentrate and light)

Figure 26 represents the combination and interaction of concentrated ink and light ink. This interaction reflects the balancing of positive and negative dynamic energy.



Figure 26: 'Broken ink' (Gu Gan, 2009)

Applied to my own work, the violist is required to execute a forte arpeggio, sustaining the last note (C natural), which then gradually decrescendos to pianissimo on the first beat of bar 59 (fig. 27). Once reaching that dynamic level, the note starts to a crescendo back to forte, sustaining that dynamic for the remainder of the passage.

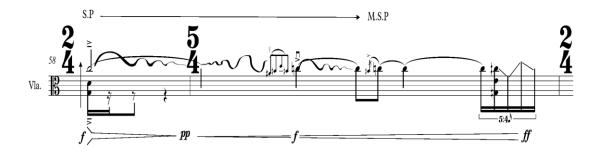


Figure 27: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 58-59

#### (vi) Splash ink

This last ink type contains an element of chance, or indeterminacy (fig. 28): what I find fascinating here is precisely this indeterminacy. In other words, the resultant mark is a representation, or trace, of the calligrapher's own physical sensitivity and spontaneity.

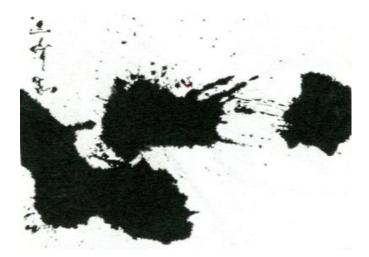


Figure 28: 'Splash Ink' (Gu Gan, 2009)

Again, in my own work, I have aimed to represent the inherent spontaneity through the use of col legno battuto. The result of this playing technique is an unpredictable, physically dependent, musical gesture that strongly correlates with the physical actions required to create a splash-ink effect. Figure 29 shows the application of this technique in my work, with the violist using col legno battuto on the last note of second beat, immediately followed by an upper mordent indication. The col legno battuto indication is repeated, this time ending with a harmonic tremolo.

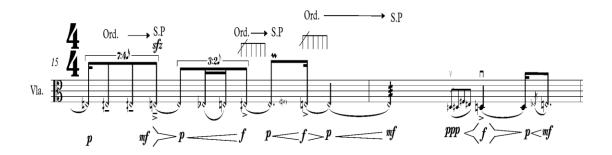


Figure 29: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 15-16

#### (vii) Combination of different quality of ink

This final image (fig. 30) illustrates the combination of the aforementioned ink qualities. The result of these ink qualities interacting with each other creates a complex texture that brings together several of the previously established characters. Additionally, the texture, due to its complex set of relationships, seems to suggest a rich range of dynamic energies and a constant change of colour.



Figure 30: 'Mixture of the ink' (Gu Gan, 2009)

Figure 31 illustrates how I have responded to the texture established in the above image. Here, I have formed eight groups of accelerating rhythmic gestures, spanning bars 80 and 81. Each group has its own dynamic envelope, reaching the peaks of these envelopes at different times for each group. Each group also gradually changes the bow position from ordinary position to molto sul ponticello. The tempo for this passage is crotchet equal 35, and the first and the last groups of the passage are marked with fermatas. Furthermore, the second group in this passage indicates a gradual accelerando. The resultant sonic outcome of this passage produces a vast array of colours, and alters the 'time' and 'space' of the musical material that comes about through the performer's own sensitivity and flexibility as a musician.

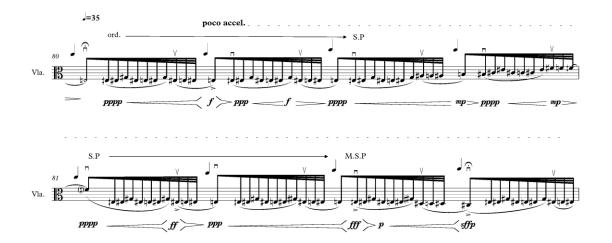


Figure 31: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 80-81

#### **1.7 Concluding Thoughts**

Throughout the course of this investigation, I have encountered several questions related to the process of translation between calligraphic work and my own musical output, specifically, musical gesture. As has been illustrated above, there are often no easy answers or applications of these two areas of interest. For instance, it is very difficult to capture or understand the nature of brush movements in terms of physical gesture, especially the specific 'directions' and 'dynamics' of the brush-stroke movement. Additionally, it is quite challenging to precisely represent the connection between musical gestures and physical tendencies found in the physical movements of calligraphic material. Furthermore, this initial investigation of calligraphic material has raised questions related to the organization of both space and time in my music. More specifically, how can these musical gestures combine with one another to form a larger musical structure? How can I develop and organize these musical gestures and texture to form a larger structure? Additionally, what are the possible potentials of exploring the idea of 'line' in Chinese calligraphy? These challenging areas of representation/translation have led me to further explore the potential relationship between both the physical movement of the calligrapher and my own music, and the relationship between 'line' and larger musical structures; topics I discuss in greater detail in the following chapters.

#### Chapter 2 - Time and Space

# 2.1 Introduction

The intention in this chapter is to explore the ways in which paper used in the calligraphic arts functions in relation to both time and space. I aim to focus on the relationship and connection between ideas about the role of the paper and my own compositions. I have looked at calligraphic ideas at the micro level and how small-scale movements form into larger gestural shapes, and here I want to expand these ideas into a consideration of larger structural forms.

Generally, in Chinese calligraphy, the paper can be understood as the space of the composition: a single dimension of space which allows the calligrapher to write their words. However, what I suggest is that the paper presents not a 'static' condition, but rather a space of dynamism; a space which registers the impulses, the tension, and the release of the energy through an engagement with gestural formations. At the same time, the function of the paper is a 'place' where one can experience time and space, which is what Gu Gan suggests when he states that space and time can be experienced through the brush while in contact with the paper.

Su Chen, in her thesis 'A Line in Motion' (2009), proposes that Chinese calligraphy is a spatial practice: A process which allows a calligrapher to experience the spacing of the character and the space of the movement. She goes on to suggest that calligraphic space can be interpreted as a function of accumulated space. However, Li Ze Hou, states that the Chinese character is a 'significant form': A form which can be understood as a space representing the engagement between personal expression and nature. The 'mark' is the micro level gesture which represents a unit of space and time. In a sense, it can be understood as the brush-stroke with its own temporal character, that being the physical action of making a mark over time. I am interested in the idea of an 'Imaginary square', a formal concept used to organize the Chinese calligraphic character. This is an invisible space or 'frame' used to structure, to organize, and to arrange the spacing of the strokes.

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# 2.2 The 'Imaginary Square'

According to Chiang Yee (2002), the 'Imaginary Square' can be divided into three different categories. The first is 'Chien-Chia' [间架]; which translates as the 'skeleton' of the space (fig. 32, no. 1). The second category is the subdivision of 'Chien-Chia' [间架], into 'fen-chien' [分间]: the 'relative-division' (fig. 32, no.2-5). The principle idea of 'relative-division' is the division of the skeletal space. There are no standard rules or regulations in regard to the type of division; the calligrapher will design and organize their own types of division based on their personal style and the context of the work. The third category is 'pu pai' [布白] (the arrangement of space), a further division of 'fen-chien'. Within this category, the calligrapher organizes both the space and the spacing of the character, adjusting and balancing the space between 'empty space' and the character. (Chiang, 2002, pp. 167-171)

The following example (fig. 32, no.2-5) illustrates the common types of division normally used by a beginner. Furthermore, the division of the space will affect the result of the outcome in terms of the shape, the size, and the structure of every single brush-stroke. In other words, the same character will be formed and finished in utterly different ways from one to another (fig.33). I found it useful to create the following diagrams to visualize and articulate these formed relationships.

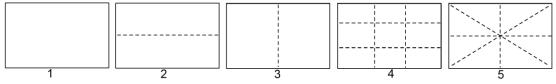


Figure 32: The 'Imaginary Square'.



Figure 33: The dot-stroke place in different form of division.

This concept has influenced the way I approach my own work, and in particular, the way I work with musical gestures on both a micro and macro level, helping to inform the work's large scale musical structure. For instance, bars 6-12 of "*Interfusion IV*" (fig.34), are most like 'Chien-Chia' [间架]: the 'skeleton' of the space, which is then 'divided' by the time

signatures 2/4 (bars 6-8), 4/4 (bars 9-11), and 2/4 (bar 12). Furthermore, I focus on the micro level of musical gesture by having the violist play a single pitch on the C string while using the left-hand to pluck the string simultaneously. The musical gesture is occurring on the downbeat of each bar, and the texture of the gesture is constantly changing; gradually transitioning into another type of gesture.



Figure 34: "Interfusion IV" -variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 6-12

Furthermore, another example (fig.35) illustrates an alternative use of the idea of 'relative-division'. For instance, the 'skeleton' space (bar 53-54) is divided by the time signatures of 2/4 and 1/4. The initial beat of the musical gesture (four demi-semiquaver notes) is sounding the same pitch of D, using the technique of crossing over the D and C strings. However, in this passage, the 'space' has been 'sub-divided' through the indication of the dotted line after the first beat of bar 53, then expanded into a larger musical gesture (accelerando rhythmic pattern) from second beat until bar 54.

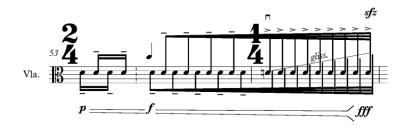


Figure 35: "Interfusion IV" -variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 53 38

In extension, figure 36 shows an example from my vocal piece, "Interfusion IV" - variegation in colour-, illustrating how a musical gesture is developed to a complex passage of transformations of its identity. For instance, the 'skeleton' of this passage (bar 14-16) has been divided by the time signatures of 1/8, 6/4, and 7/8; the duration indicates with crotchet equal 50, and the duration will gradually turn slow at fourth beat at bar 15 and change to crochet equal 42. The placement of the glissandi means that the structural division of the musical gesture is constantly changing in every bar, and these changes are highlighted by different performance technique producing different shadings in the quality of the sound.

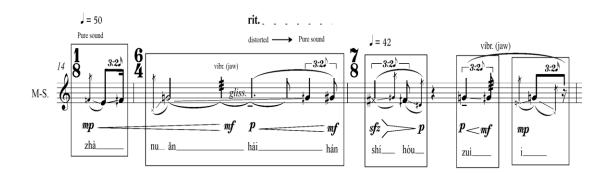


Figure 36: "Interfusion II" - How slow the sound- revised ver., bar 14

The concept of 'pu pai' has helped me organize the 'empty space' in my music. Take for instance the pizzicato glissandi gesture in "*Interfusion IV*" (fig. 37): Taking the idea of 'arranging space', I use rests and fermatas to 'adjust' the space and the spacing of the musical gesture. In addition, this idea is also applied in the previous example (fig. 36) where a crotchet rest in the second beat at bar 16 separates or pushes apart the gestural frames.

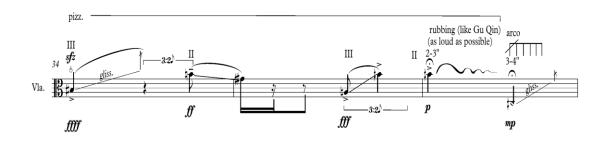
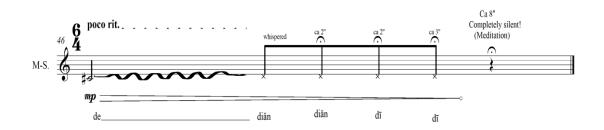


Figure 37: "Interfusion IV" -variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 34-36

#### 2.3 The Function of Fermatas

In my work, three fermata symbols—short, normal, and long—are used. These fermatas are used to explore indeterminacy of space within an established 'frame' (a 'frame' which consists of the elements of meter, of time, and rhythm) by the process of 'collecting time'. By this, I mean that each fermata symbol might be considered a 'point': a point where the musician discharges their energy. Furthermore, each fermata creates a different 'quality' of space. Each fermata type has a slightly indeterminate duration, opening up a new space by which the performer can experience, contact, and engage with the energy of the music. In a sense, this notion of 'space' can represent the sensitivity and flexible energy of the musician during the process of interacting with the work's space and time. For instance, the last bar of *"Interfusion II"* (fig. 38) uses the same fermata type, with each fermata including an indication of approximate duration. The length and the space of the music will change based on the perception of the musician. Therefore, the musician will engage with 'time' and 'space' on a three-dimensional level: accounting for the value of the note, the length of the fermata, and the duration indication.





# 2.4 The 'Motion in Line'

The idea of 'motion in line' is what inspires me in Chinese calligraphy. That is, the way the so called 'abstract line' (fig. 39) contains both the visible mark and an invisible trace of the energy of its production. The dynamic aspect of 'lines' are a highly valued art element in the aesthetics of Chinese calligraphy and it is this 'inner energy' which brings the line to 'life'. To me, the idea of the 'abstract' line has given me a new perspective: the sensation of a space

where I can perceive and experience the invisible and visible forces and energies in my compositions. Furthermore, it also represents an individual's subtleness or signature handicraft in terms of the ability to control and balance the use of these energies.



Figure 39: The 'abstract' line

The idea of 'dynamism within a mark' finds a parallel in the 'single note' approach of Giacinto Scelsi whose compositions deal with single or restricted numbers of pitches with very subtle control of dynamics in the orchestration of the harmonic texture. Scelsi also makes use of graphic notation such as lines to indicate the width of vibrato in his string writing. For instance, Scelsi indicates a 'wave-like' graphics from bars 22-28 in his *String quartet no.4* (1964) (fig. 40).



Figure 40: Scelsi (1964), String quartet no.4, bar 22-28

The graphic (fig. 41) is created in an even-oscillation-line shape. The function of this graphic requires the musician to perform the sound combining the technique of wide vibrato, produced a sonic spectrum of sound by constantly shifting the pitch higher and lower up to a quarter-tone. Therefore, this notion of performance practice will result in a highly diversified sonic landscape, focusing particularly on the micro fluctuations of sound. This musical material is what I find interesting, specifically in terms of how I might approach micro level changes in my own work.



Figure 41: A graphic indicated the technique of the wide vibrato in Scelsi music composition.

What I have taken from this work, is a more refined understanding of the way in which vibrato, particularly the qualities of vibrato, can function in my own work. Therefore, this performance practice (technique of vibration) has given me a great sense of different movements which I translate in my work in terms of a graphical representation of 'calligraphy's choreography': a graphic which reflects the movement of writing calligraphy. This concept of 'calligraphy's choreography' has helped to shape the way I approach my work; focusing directly on the idea of taking the underlying gesture of the writing movement and transforming it into a musical context. Taking this idea of transformation, I have constructed a several 'lines' in my musical composition. For instance, in my vocal piece *"Interfusion II"-How slow the sound*- (fig. 42), I use graphic notation to show transformations of the F sharp note idea of vibrato into a widening pitch oscillation.

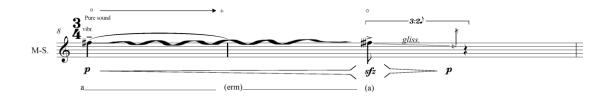


Figure 42: "Interfusion II"-How slow the sound- revised ver., bar 8

The pitch of the note will aery quiet significantly given the depth of the oscillation line producing a marked wave-like sonic characteristic. Furthermore, the sonic quality of the pitch is being altered due to the muting indications. I am fascinated with how this musical material has some analogue with the essence of Chinese calligraphy, in which the oscillation's line is not only presented as a 'calligraphic work' for visual purposes but also embraces the element of spontaneity whereby the sound output results in different qualities of sound and colour.

Additionally, figure 43 illustrates another potential use of graphics where the shape of the line is using a more dynamic contour in order to further explore the 'space' and the 'spacing' of the vibration. To me, this notion of sonic spectrum is the 'dialogue' between the micro and the macro level of the vibration in which there is an engagement and interaction between 'static' and 'mobile' situation of a single note.



Figure 43: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 58-59

I also want to explore the type of 'dialogue' between visible and invisible qualities of energy. Thus, I have created a 'shadowy' like line (fig. 44, within the bracket) which is performed in an improvisatory manner, using: pizzicato, tapping and 'rubbing string' effects that imitate the techniques commonly associated with the Chinese instrument, Gu Qin. Furthermore, figure 45 illustrates the potential of how this performance practice can be extended into larger phrases within the music's structure.

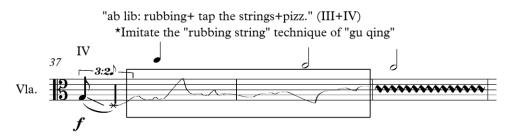


Figure 44: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour- revised ver., bar 37-38

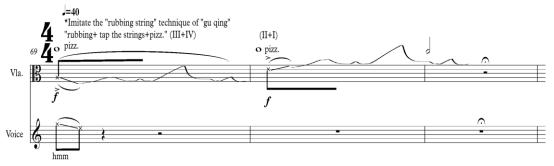


Figure 45: "Interfusion IV"-variegation in colour-revised ver., bar 69-71

What fascinated me about the use of these graphics in performance was the way in which they promoted elements of spontaneous movement within a defined frame. The result of the sonic spectrum being projected is potentially utterly different with every performer. Furthermore, each performer will undoubtedly have a different interpretation of the given visual. For instance, in my viola piece, in bars 69-71 (fig. 45), during the first performance in the workshop, I found that the performer more strongly emphasized the quality change of the pitch whereas in the second performance, the player was more focused on the sensation of the 'space' and the 'spacing' between the notes. At the same time, what I have observed is that performance gestures also change due to the perception of this musical material. Therefore, these graphics (the oscillations lines) not only affect the quality of the sound and the performance gesture, but also the responsiveness of the eye to 'read'. In a sense, these graphics can be understood as a tool to encourage synaesthetic perception which connects to the visualization, the sound of music, and the kinetic movements of the performer.

# **Chapter 3**

In the video on Liza Lim: Paper Music, five lines to make the time (2008), Lim proposes that:

"I think being a composer is a way of seeing, perceiving the world through sound. It's a way in which one constructs one's experiences and sensations and translate them through sound, just as a painter has sensitivity to light and colour and forms..." (Liza Lim, 2008)

# **3.1 Introduction**

The statement above, from an interview with composer, Liza Lim, contains a central thought that I would like to explore related to the idea of how the performative nature of calligraphy is 'staged'. In the previous chapter I proposed that a 'stage' is not only represented in simply a 'static' situation but rather a stage of dynamism. In other words, stage performance is a notion of great dynamic space which reflects the engagement, the transformation, and the interpenetration between sensations of visible and invisible energies throughout the performance on stage. Peter Brook (1968), in his book, 'The Empty Space', has proposed that a theatre can be defined as a stage of 'Invisible-Made-Visible': A place where the invisible 'object' can be experienced, can be perceived, and can be recognized by the audience. In a sense, the notion of visible and invisible forces—the tension and release of energy—can be 'staged', can be experienced.

# 3.2 'Tan Dun's Ghost Opera'

Ghost opera  $[\mathcal{R}\mathcal{R}]$  (1994), composed by Tan Dun, contains strong theatrical elements; exploring relationships between eastern and western cultural aesthetics, musical practices, and is presented in a ritual situation. The music is written for string quartet and pipa. Besides playing their own musical instrument, each musician is required to play different kinds of percussion instruments and execute various types of vocalizations including singing, yelling, and speaking. What I find interesting about this work in particular, is the built- in 'stage energy': the dynamism of the multiple interactions that make up the entire performance. For instance, at the beginning, the violinist plays the gong with a glissandi effect while simultaneously yelling; each of the musicians move from one place to another. A wide screen projects the interaction between the players and their 'shadow', creating multiple images to represent a sense of 'dialogue' between the visible and invisible object. For me, this process of exploring 'performance energy' can be connected to a particularly Chinese aesthetic of performance also central to understanding the aesthetic power of calligraphic traditions. What I have found is an analogue with Chinese calligraphy, that is, a representation of a high-art in terms of an aesthetic to make an object come to 'life', and translated them as a 'living matter'.

At the same time, the idea of this work is connected to Peter Brook's concept of the 'Invisible-Made-Visible'. This idea is supported by Tan Dun's description of the work in his program note, explaining that the work is 'cross temporal, cross-cultural and cross-media', and that it 'touches on the past, present, future and the eternal; employs elements from Chinese, Tibetan, English and American cultures; and combines performance traditions of the European classical concert, Chinese shadow puppet theater, visual art installations, folk music, dramatic theatre and shamanistic ritual' (Peggy, 2006). This 'process' of experience is something I would like to explore in future projects: the idea of cross-cultural interactions; the notion of 'performing' time and space; working with the interaction between visible and invisible energy; and exploring ways in which these elements can be translated into 'sound'. This is the central idea underlying Lim's quote: 'seeing, perceiving the world through sound. It's a way in which one constructs one's experiences and sensations and translated them through sound.' Furthermore, Peggy (2006) makes the point that the 'Ghost Opera' is also an installation which employs the paper, the shadow, and the water gong basins placed around the theater. The performers' movements among the seven positions reflect the back and forth movement between different time frames and spiritual realms, which is characteristic of the "ghost opera" tradition. Therefore, what I understood about the intention behind this work is to open up a space where Tan Dun can explore the possible engagement and the interaction between the invisible and visible movement; positive and negative energy in a performance stage.

#### 3.3 Collaborative Research Session

#### The Concept

This project, *"Tōng" -通*-, was commissioned by the Asian Contemporary Ensemble (ACE) in Singapore. It was premiered at the University Cultural Centre Dance Studio at The National University of Singapore on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2012 during the NUS Arts Festival. The project is 10-minute work involving a collaboration with the ACE musicians, a contemporary dancer-Tang Sook Kuan, a story-teller-Rosemarie Somaiah, and conductor Wong Kah Chun- The artistic director of the ACE ensemble.

*"Tong" -id-* explores one of the significant traditional ritual performances of the Lotud people in Sabah, East Malaysia during the ceremony of 'Mengahau'. According to the dancer (Tang Sook Kuan, personal communication by email. 15 July 2012), the dance is designed to be performed for the spirit and deities of the Lotud people. The idea for this work is taken from one part of the ritual event: the second day of the event, which involves the Lotud people in dialogue with each other, using dance to communicate and interact with ancestors in order to seek their blessing. In other words, the dance is a mediator of transmission through which the Lotud people experience and perceive the sensation of communication between human beings and the spiritual world; an interaction between 'visible' and 'invisible' forces through their physical body, the mind, and the spirit. My intention here is not to recreate a literal representation of the entire performance of the ritual as it is traditionally staged, but rather open up a space where I can experience these sensations and create a work that explores new performative contexts.

The title of the work, "*Tong*", written as a Chinese character is '*i!*'. In Chinese, this character can be interpreted in a number of different ways. For instance, it can be translated as meaning accessible, or 'something that can be connected'. This character has inspired me to explore the 'stage energy' in terms of how this material can act as a 'mediator' to engage, interpenetrate between musician and performer, and then convey information to the audience.

## 3.4 Setting of the performance:

# (i) The music

The score is written using standard western music notation, composed for five western musical instruments: flute, alto saxophone, piano (doubling with large gong), violin (doubling with small gong), and cello. The music utilizes improvisation, solo passages, extended techniques and unconventional performance practices. For instance, the saxophonist is required to produce a number of multiphonics (fig.45).

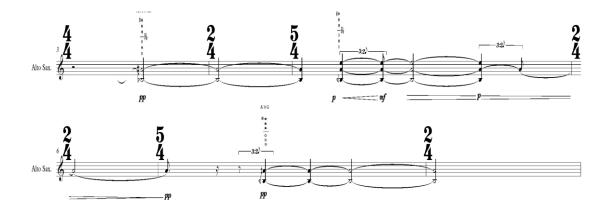


Figure 45: "Tōng" -通- revised ver., bar 3-8

Throughout this work, the music can be read as a metaphor for the calligraphic material that produces the 'ink', which allows the dancer to 'read'. The dancer is continually 'receiving' the information and the sensations of the changing nature of the 'ink' as an aural inscription of energies throughout the music which is then further transformed into choreography based on one's perception and understanding of the music. In other words, the function of the ensemble in relation to the dancer is to act as input devices whereas the improvisation of the dancer's choreography is the output device of one's creative response to the music.

The musical material (fig. 46) reflects some of the elements from the ritual, specifically the gesture of the movement capture in the Dance of Sumaya. The passage is written using a tablature style of notation and requires the flautist to use the head joint and perform with several extended techniques, including: tongue ram, flutter tongue, and pitch bending (through the use of the right thumb).

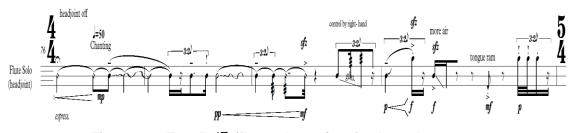


Figure 46: "Tong" -通- (flute solo part) revised ver., bar 76-79

Another example is demonstrated in figure 47. This passage is a solo performed by the saxophonist who uses the extended technique (teeth on reed), changing, bending the tone which is indicated by oscillating lines. The music gradually moves towards improvisation, with the musician producing pitches that occupy a larger sonic spectrum. The idea of this passage is to capture the yelling sound from the Lotud people (audience and dancer) during the ritual of Dance Sumayao.

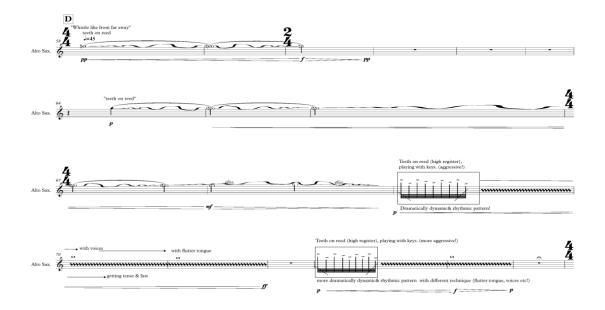


Figure 47: "Tōng" -通- (alto saxophone solo passage) revised ver., bar 58-76

Another example of the music which figure 48 illustrates is the passage of the violin and cello using pizzicato from bar 97-104. This percussive effect captures the rhythmic impulse of the gong ensemble by the Lotud people.

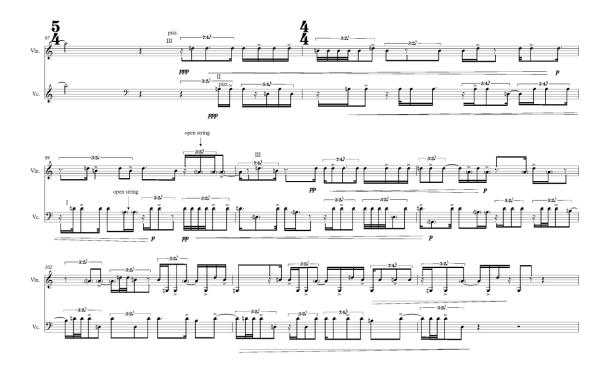
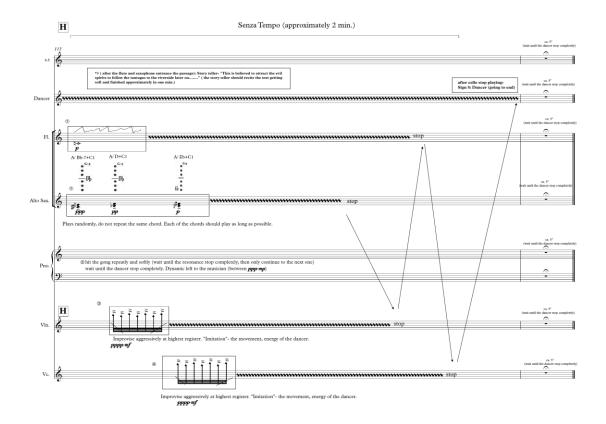


Figure 48: "Tōng" -通- revised ver., bar 97-104

Furthermore, one interesting element of this music is the interaction between the musicians, the dancer, and the story-teller. For instance, in bar 113 (fig. 49), the string musicians imitate the choreography of the dancer; the wind musician and pianist working with the music; the dancer is interacting with the story-teller (see fig. 51). What I find fascinating about this, is the consideration of performance practice that would normally be overlooked by the performer. This is due in large part to the energy, the emotion, the sensations change by the musician, dancer and the story-teller.



# Figure 49: "Tōng" -通- revised ver., bar 113

## (ii) The Dancer

The dancer performs together with a gong and the choreography is fully improvised for the entire performance. In discussion sessions with the dancer, I have suggested to the dancer that the choreography should not represent an actual version of the Sumayao Dance, but rather combine elements of the dance ritual with spontaneous/improvisatory movements that emerge as a result of her reacting to the music, sensations from the environment, and the gestures of the musicians. In other words, what I encouraged was to establish a sense of flow in her movements in a broad sense, which is, to respond to any possibility or potential 'material' within and beyond the stage.

During the first rehearsal (fig. 50), I observed that the dancer was primarily exploring the space of the stage; moving her position from one place to another; crossing one's the position of each musician. The dancer said to me that it was great exposure for her to experience the space of the stage and engage with the musicians, which allowed her to sense the energy from the musicians. At the same time, she also mentioned to me that the musician and the music are actually helping her to develop and create her choreography.



Figure 50: Tang Sook Kuan exploring the space, music, and engaging with musician

## during

# the first rehearsal.

The score indicates several 'signals' to inform the dancer that the music is moving gradually from one section to another so that she can adjust and prepare her choreography for the next passage. However, the function of these signs do not limit the freedom and the flexibility of the movement of the dancer, but rather represent 'reminders' that led the dancer from one space to another.

# (iii) Story-teller

The story-teller never appears physically during the performance. But, however, is cued by the conductor during specific sections and is represented as an indistinct image; reciting text from the score with her image projected onto a screen behind the musicians.

I discovered a paradoxical relationship in the performance between the story teller who never 'appears' herself physically (instead being projected on the screen) and the musicians who occupy a 'real' physical space on the stage (fig. 51). She does not have actual physical interactive contact with the musicians and the dancer. In fact, her performance is limited to the sections where she recites the text. What I have discovered is that her performance is not 'static' but rather constantly changing in terms of her emotion, in the expressions on her face, and the tone quality changes of her voice, which is influenced by the music, the space, the situation, and the environment.

The function of the text is not to represent the plot of the story or be a type of 'storytelling' but is rather treated as a 'point', a form of energetic punctuation of the performance. This idea is taken from the process of writing in Chinese calligraphy discussed in the previous chapters, in which the brush actually stops at several positions, allowing the calligrapher to discharge their energy as they move from one place to another.

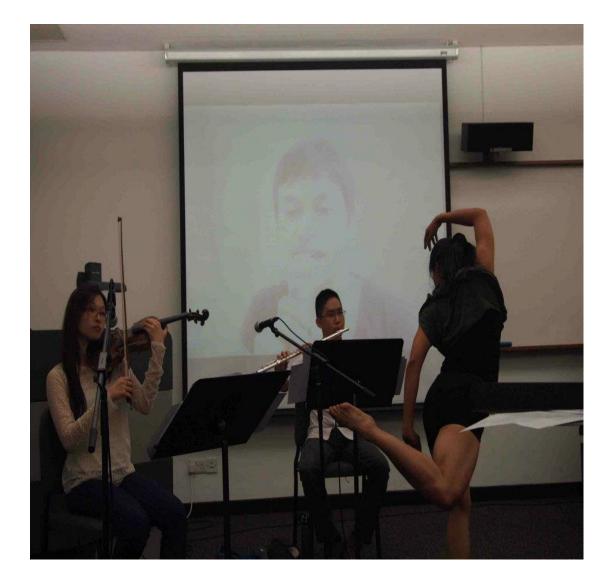


Figure 51: The interaction between the musicians, the dancer, and the story-teller.

# (In rehearsal session)

# 3.5 'Invisible' Notation

I have discovered a 'hidden' material in my composition. I would like to suggest that this 'hidden' material be called 'invisible notation'. It can be found during the performance, in particular, the sections where the dancer is 'communicating' with the gong (fig. 52).

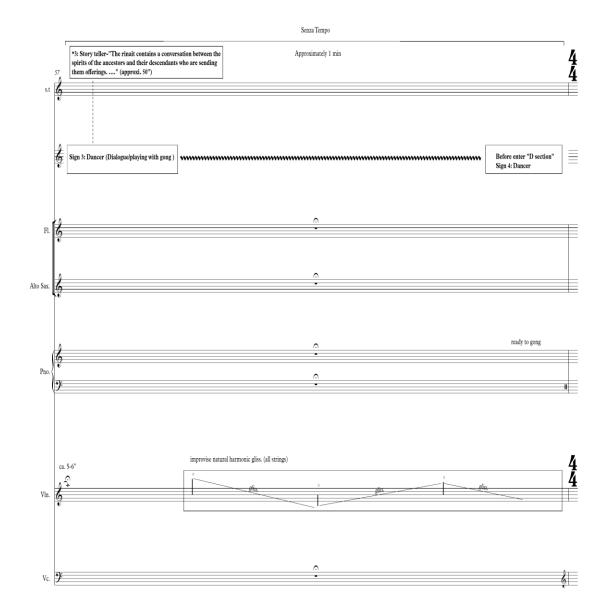


Figure 52: "Tōng" -通- revised ver., bar 57

The 'communication' here lies in the spontaneous quality and responsiveness of reactions during the section where the dancer is interacting with the gong; using her hand to rub randomly over the gong's surface, speaking, yelling, and hitting every part of the gong to produce different quality of sounds (fig. 53) In other words, the dancer is actually working with new material, which contributes to her and the gong's 'voice' (an invisible energy) during the performance.



Figure 53: The 'dialogue' section between the gong and the dancer.

# 3.6 Transformation between Performance Gesture and Choreography

What I've discovered is that the nature of the performance gesture can be transformed into choreography. For instance, in the solo passage (fig. 46), I constructed a type of tablature score where the flautist is using only the head-joint of the flute; changing the pitch by adjusting the position of the right thumb and the placement of the embouchure. The dancer interacts with the flautist, with the choreography of the dancer being directly influenced by the flautist's performance gestures (fig. 54).



Figure 54: Interaction between the flautist and the dancer.

# 3.7 Exploring the 'Forgotten Chant'- 'Rinait'

'Rinait' is a term by Kadazan-dusun people (local people of Sabah, East Malaysia), which translated into English, means 'ritual chant'. It is considered one of the most important elements during the performance of the Mengahau ceremony and performed by the 'Tatangas'- the traditional priest or ritual specialist of the Lotud people. However, the chant is not performed during the Sumayao dance, but rather in other sections of a ritual event. My intent here is to explore and the potentials of Lotud's music and dance in the context of contemporary performance practice.

Figure 55 illustrates one of the ways I have explored the qualities of 'Rinait' in my music. This solo passage is performed by the alto saxophone, using several unconventional techniques. The score requires the saxophonist to play without the mouthpiece from bar 95 to

107. This technique produces a unique, unstable, highly nasal tone quality. Furthermore, the saxophonist is required to play the instrument while using their voice to sing, and bend the pitch simultaneously. This technique is used to imitate the way Tatangas performs their chant with their voice.

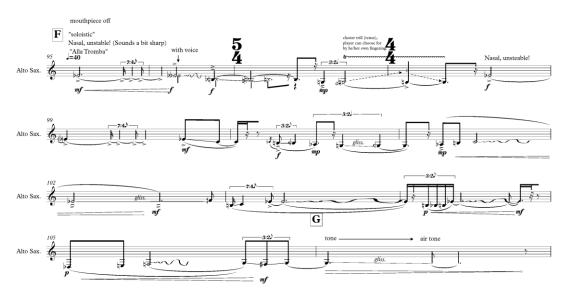


Figure 55: "Tong" -通- (alto saxophone part) revised ver., bar 95-107

# 3.8 The Actual Performance Stage

The energy of performance changes once moved to the actual performance stage, in particular, the gestural movements of the dancer. The choreography of the dancer expanded in terms of the movement, the position, and the pattern of the dance due to the atmosphere, the environment, and the space. For instance, the gestural movements and the pattern of the choreography changes during the sections where the lighting is being projected: often changing the colour on the backstage (fig.56).

In addition, the dancer has expanded their use of the space on the stage (fig. 57) more fully exploring the space and the spacing of the stage while interacting with the music, the performers, and the image of the story-teller. Through this process of engagement, I have found that all the 'materials' of the stage: the light, the sound, and the movement contain the potential to alter the performer's sensation of energy, thus translating into their choreography and voice.



Figure 56: the actual performance stage.



Figure 57: the dancer expanding her choreography in the larger space.

# 3.9 The Perception from the Audience

To 'read' is the fundamental way of experiencing a portion of calligraphy. Reading a Chinese character or a calligraphic work can be described as a process of 'eye architecture', which means the eyes are actually activated as an 'invisible brush', using the eyes to 'write' and

finish a piece of 'imagination work' in that moment. Thus, this notion of the 're-creative' process can be understood as an exploration of ways of 'seeing', which is about perception through motion and the discharge of invisible energy. As well as the aural sense, the audience can also appreciate this performance visually, using their eyes to 'read' and to experience the sensations of the interactive dynamics of the stage, capturing every single movement as a dialogue between sonic and physical choreographic gestural energy.

I would like to suggest that the audience can have different levels of perspective in terms of perception; understanding a performance as an interactive production between the aural, visual, and kinaesthetic. At the same time, the attitude of 'being part of the performance' is what I would like to clearly project to the audience as a way of experiencing the aesthetics of Chinese calligraphy as something 'staged' in the fullest sense.

#### Conclusion

My intentions are not to construct or invent any specific form or system of music but rather to open up a space where the musician, or performers, and audience can experience sensations that are related to the aesthetic world of Chinese calligraphy. Furthermore, this research has allowed me to create a new musical language related to my personal background in terms of cultural perspective.

To me, this research of 'Chinese calligraphic thinking in my composition' has allowed me to examine my cultural background, understanding of music creativity, and my musical compositions. The process of working with this idea has given me new insights in terms of how I might apply the elements of Chinese calligraphy in my work and the ways in which I might approach the organization of my music in terms of material, structure, and performance practice.

In the first chapter, I explored the potential relationship between musical gesture and calligraphic materials. A catalogue provides the basis for working with possible transformation between micro-level gestures and the techniques of the brush-stroke whereas the density and intensity of change of the quality of the ink are the calligraphic mark represented as the dynamism of the musical gesture.

The second chapter explores the concepts of Chinese calligraphic time and space in my compositions, moving from micro-level musical gestures to macro-level issues of musical form. Taking the idea of the 'Imaginary Square' from Chinese calligraphy, I have described how the work is structured, designed, and how the material has been spatially distributed over time. Furthermore, I have explored the oscillation of line and the idea of an abstract line, and how this relates to the invisible traces of Chinese calligraphy. The work of Scelsi has also been influential in terms of describing the spiritual sensation of my work and in terms of informing my understanding of an object (be it calligraphic or musical) as a 'living object'.

The last chapter explores the possibility of the performative nature of Chinese calligraphy to be 'staged' with a piece called " $T\bar{o}ng$ " - $\mathbb{H}$ -, which examines the interaction between the musicians, the dancer, and the story-teller. At the same time, this project has allowed me to explore one of the traditional rituals of the Lotud people which lead me to examine the possible potential of combining different arts and experiencing a multiple context for performance. Moreover, the idea of 'eyes reading' has suggested a way in which the audience has different modes of perception for a performance.

Throughout my research, what I have found fascinating about Chinese Calligraphy can be stated as 'synaesthetic sensations'. The visual, sound, and kinaesthetic referred to the initial quotation from Gu Gan presented in the introduction are what mark the appreciation of Chinese calligraphy on the body, the mind, and emotions. At the same time, this research can be linked to ideas in Liza Lim's statement, in which these synaesthetic sensations function as a 'mediator' that allow me to translate my own relationships with calligraphy into musical material.

After these experiences, I can see a great potential to further explore ideas of time and space between calligraphy, choreography, and music composition. The 'hidden' materialthe processes of transformation of 'invisible-Made-visible'- are what I am interested to investigate in my future work. Taking the idea of 'reconceptualization', I would like to explore the concept, the physicality, and the musicality of aesthetics of calligraphy further, grounding this exploration in a combination of western and eastern elements in terms of cultural practice, philosophy, conceptualization, and performance practice.

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# Chie Tsang LEE 李其昌

# "Interfusion"-The lament from the Gong-"溶" (2011)

Dedicated to Dirk Amrein and Jürg Hennegerger

For Tenor Trombone and Piano

28<sup>th</sup> July 2011

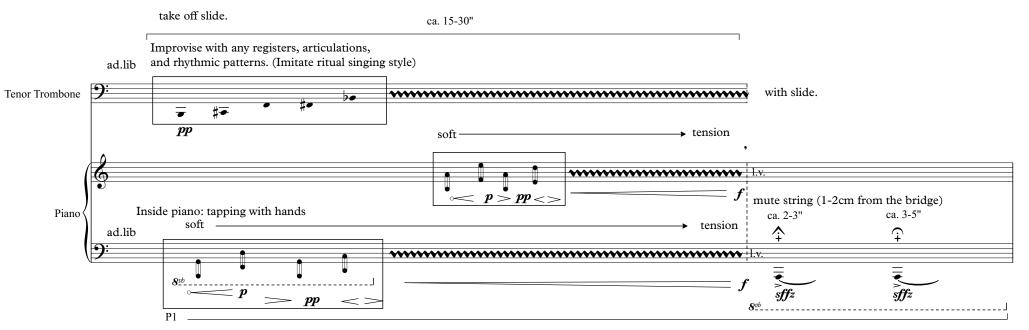
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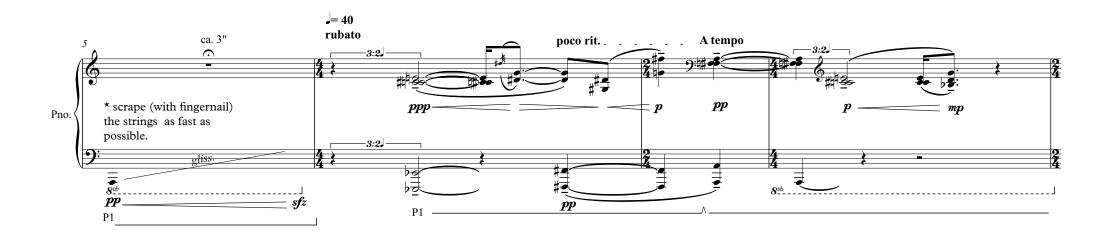
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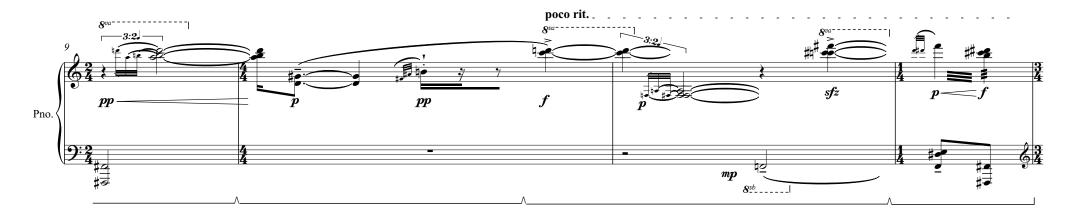
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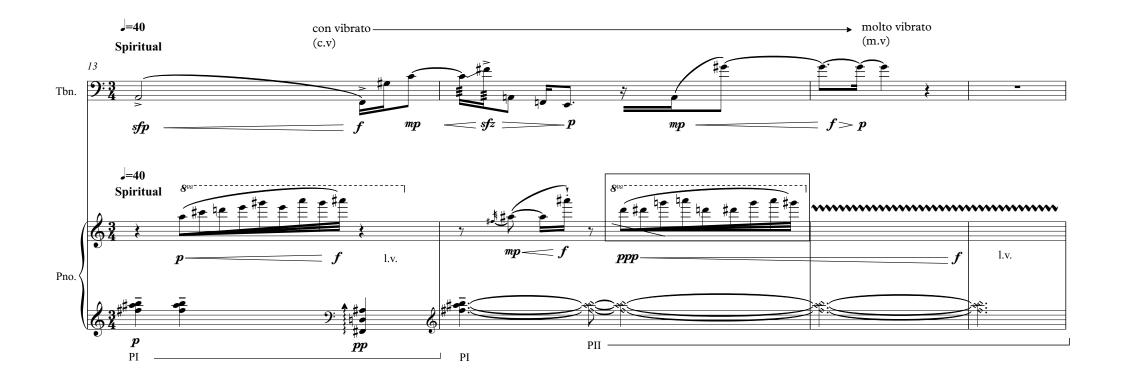
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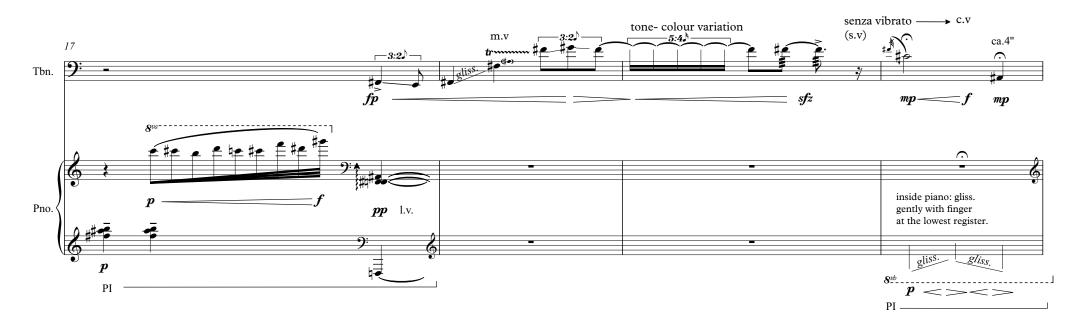
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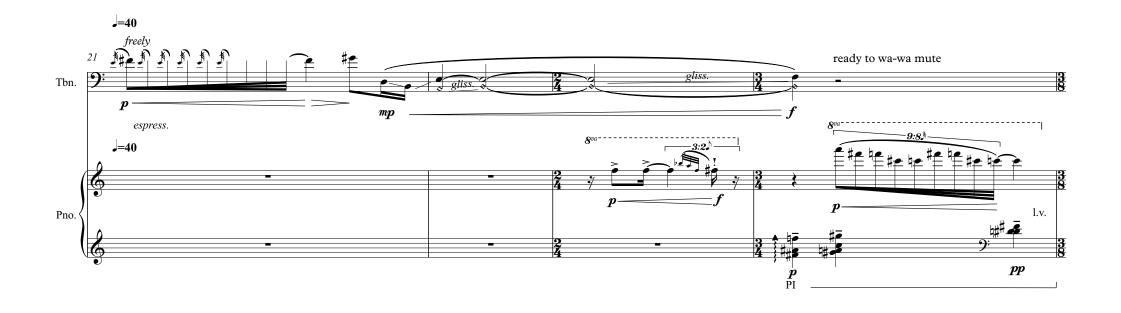


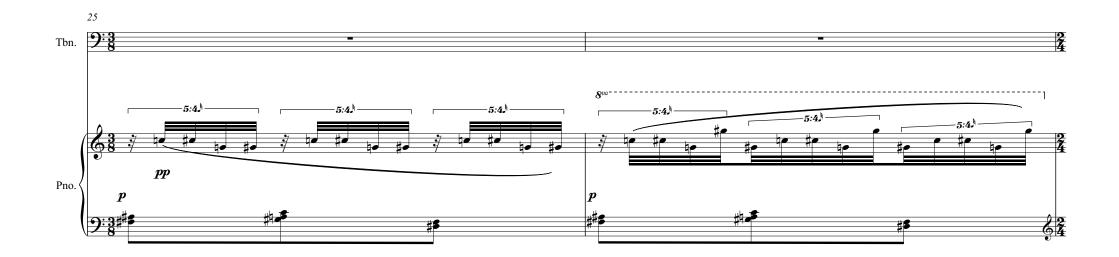


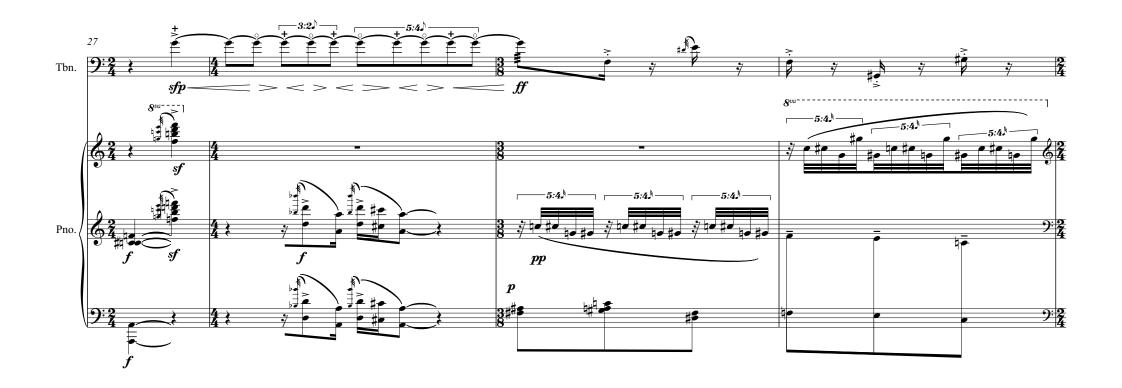


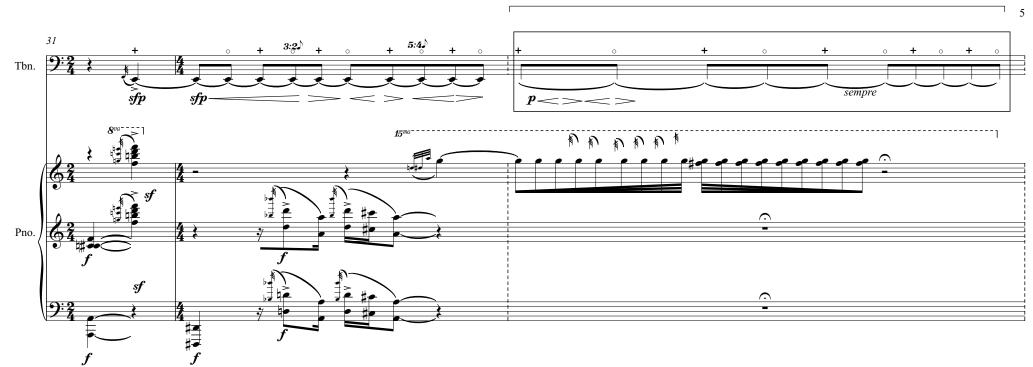


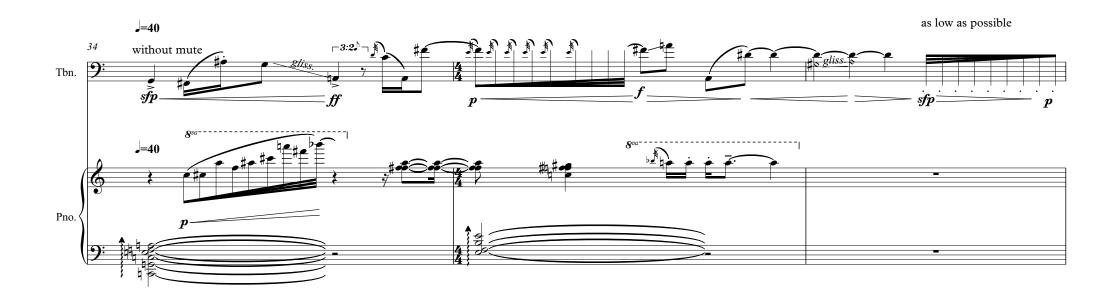




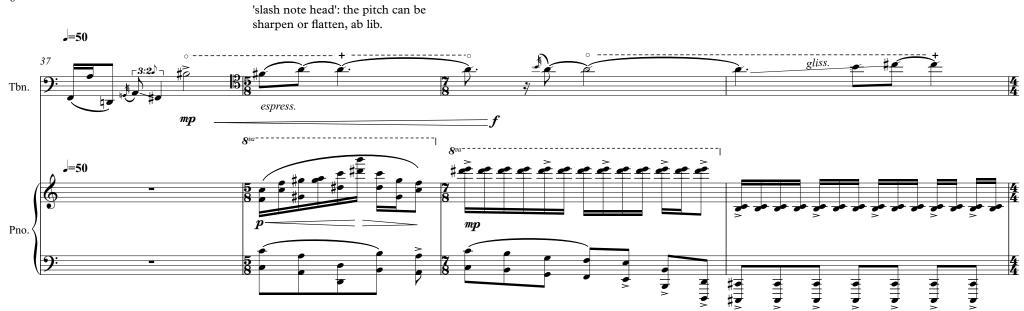




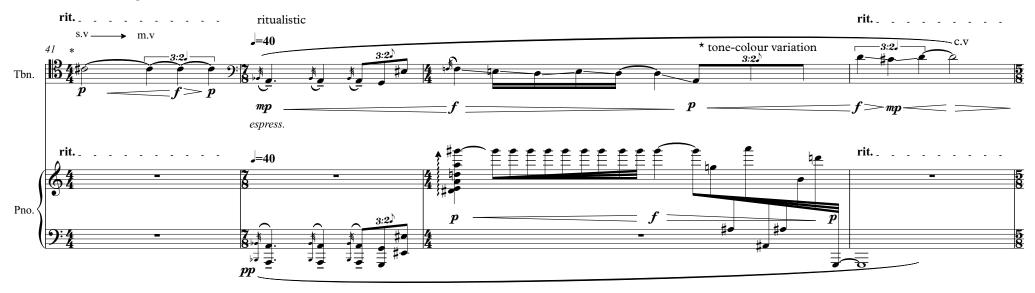


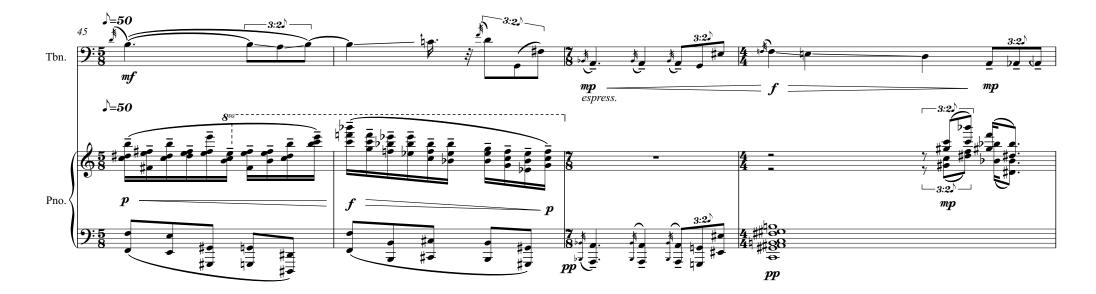


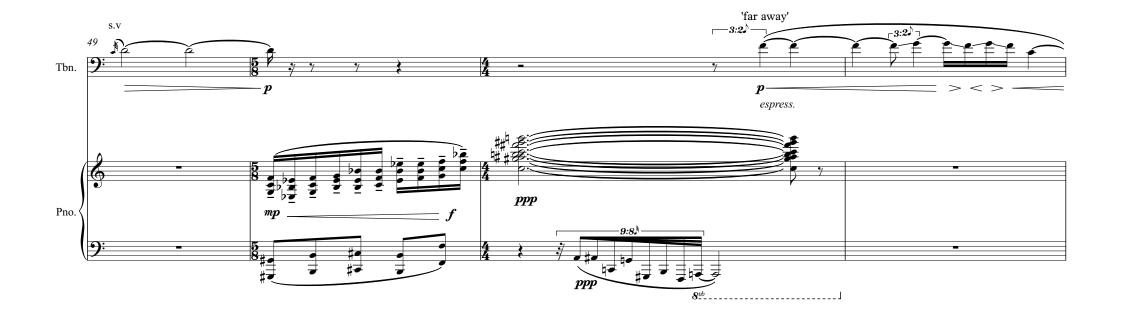
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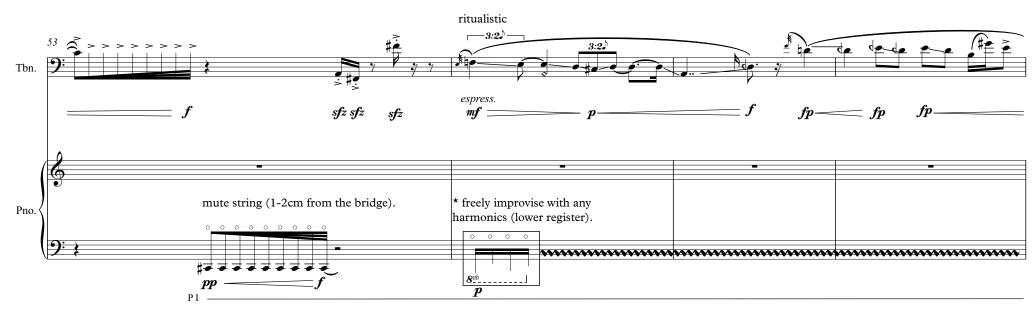


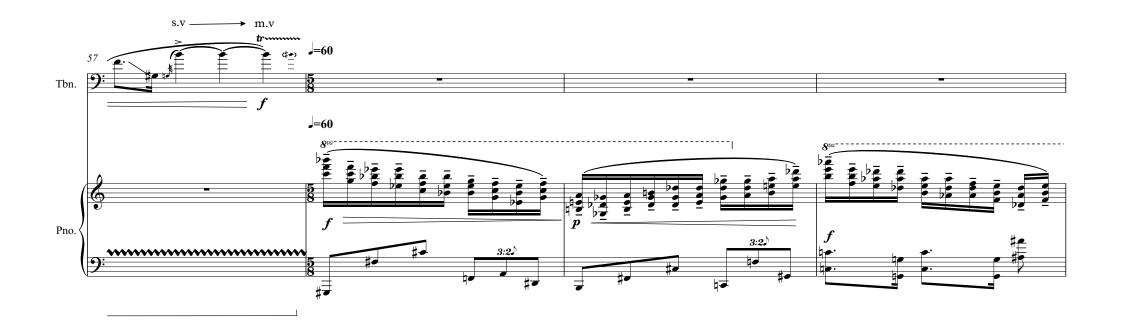
\* as soft as possible

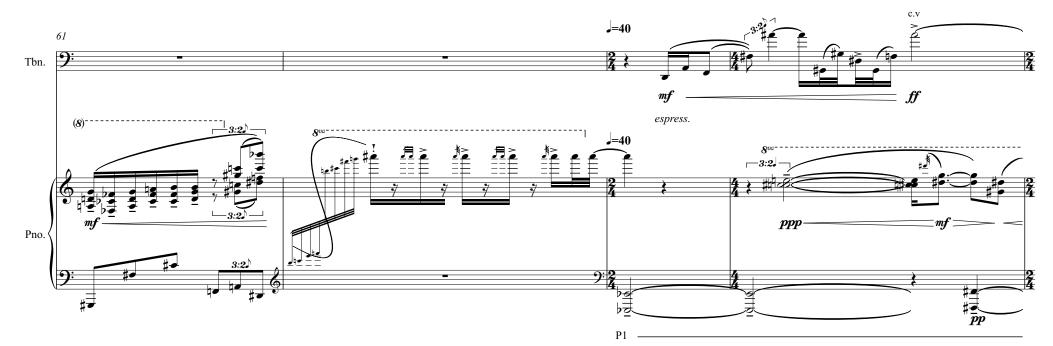


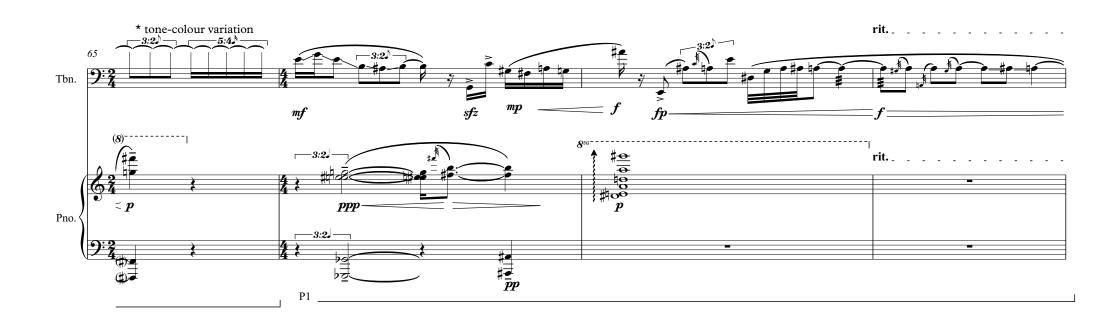




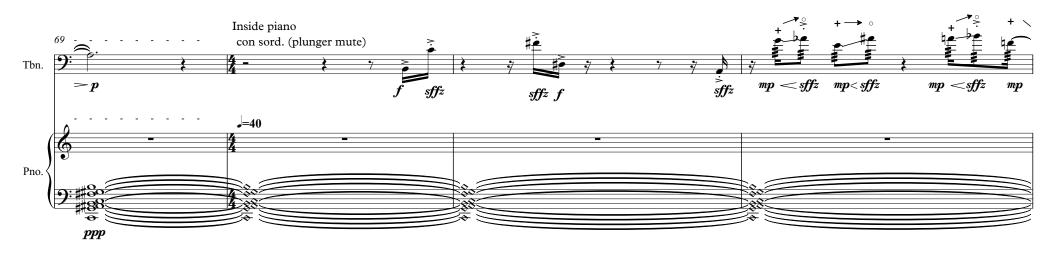


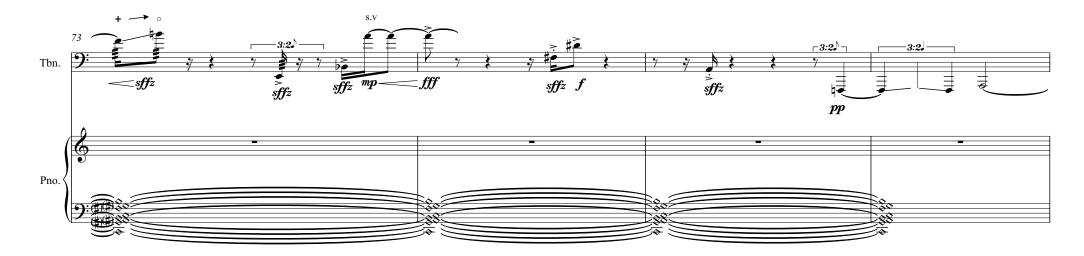




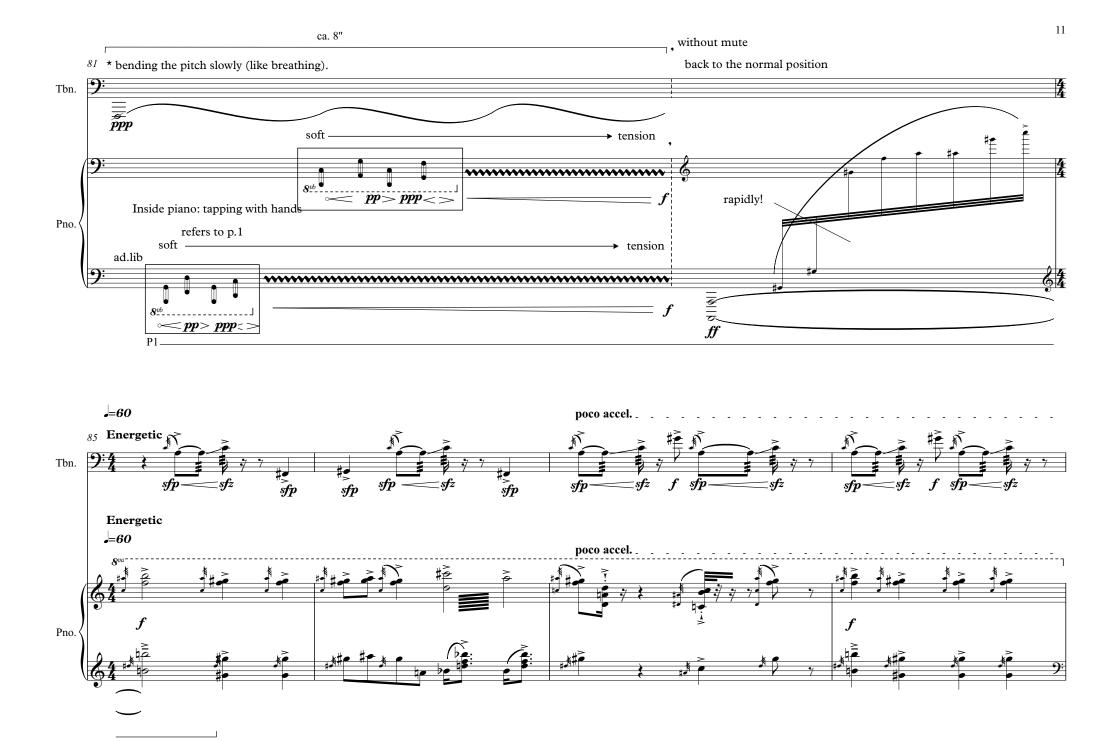


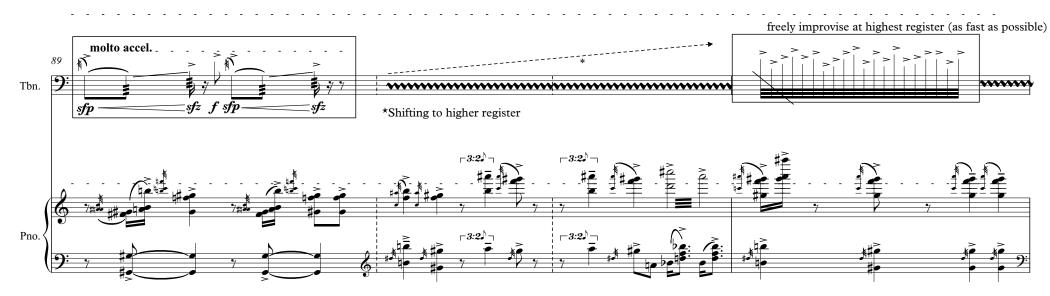
#### **-**=40





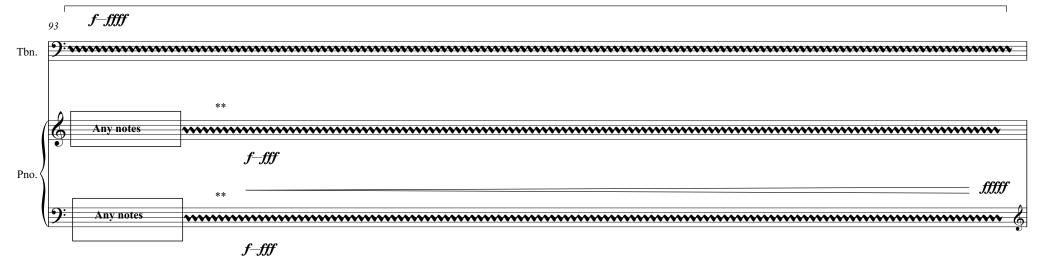


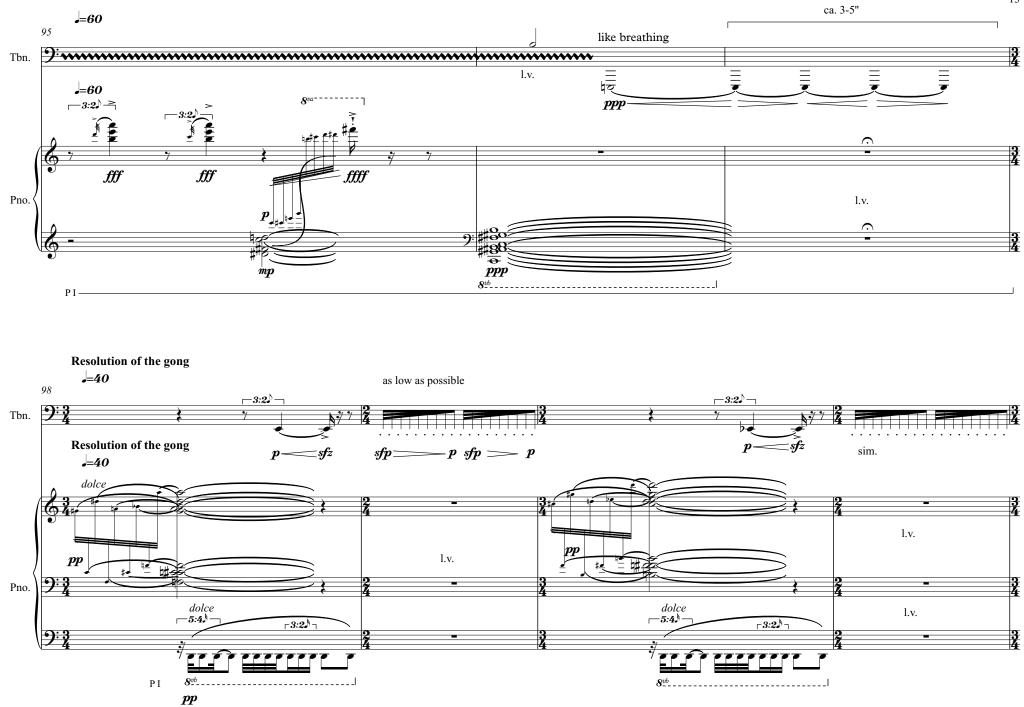


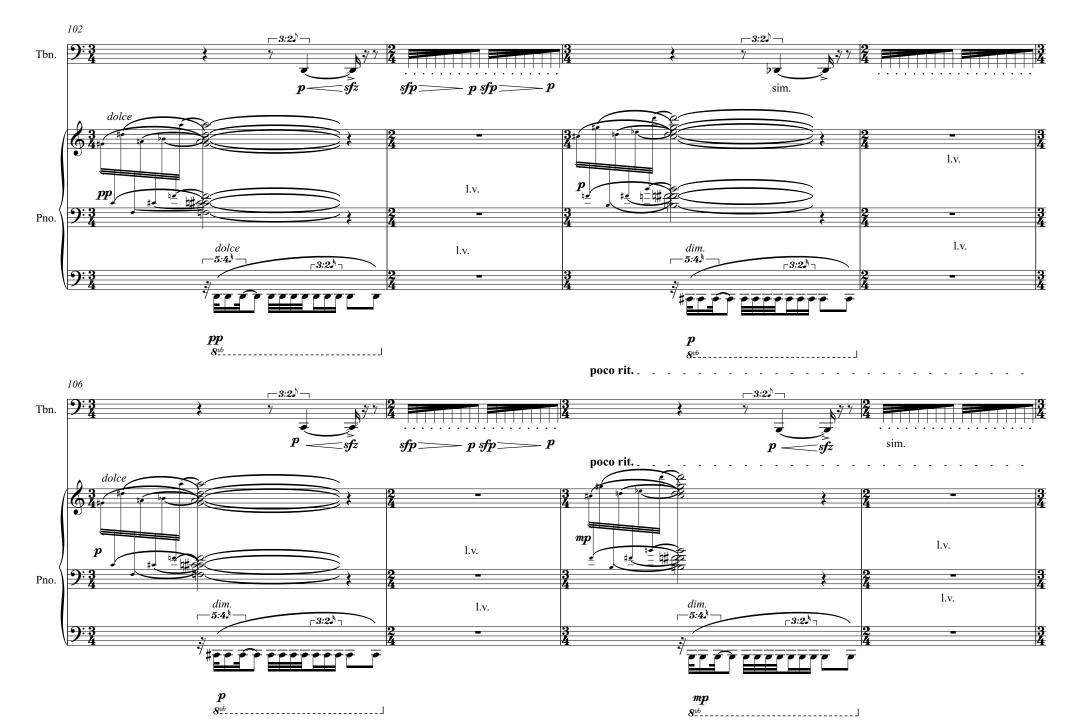


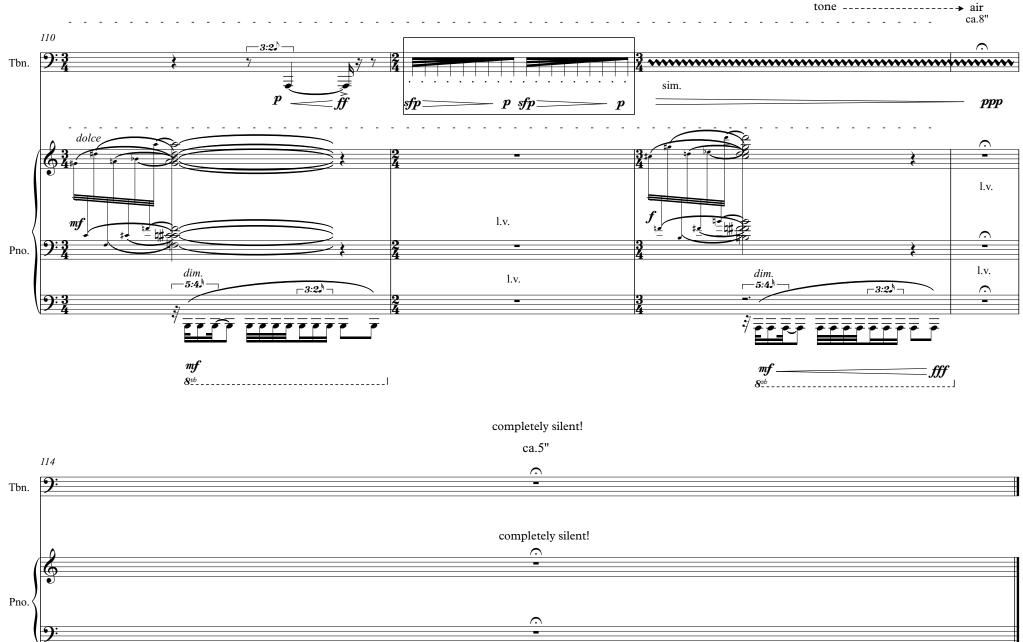
\*\* freely improvise the materials in this composition.

ca.15"









### **Chie Tsang LEE**

# "Interfusion II" -How slow the sound- "聲聲慢" (2012)

Dedicated to Loré Lixenberg

For Mezzo-Soprano unaccompanied voice Poem by LEE QING ZHAO(李清照)

November 2012

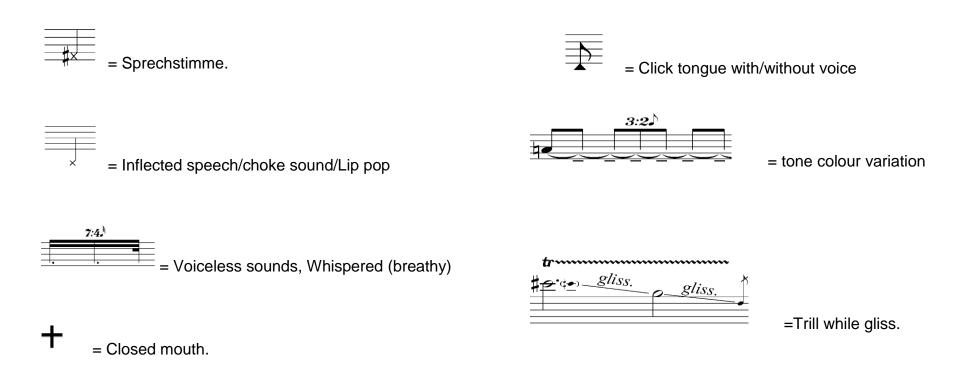
Hudderfield, UK

The text for "Interfusion" -How slow the sound- "聲聲慢" is a Chinese poem composed by a famous female Song dynasty poet- Lee Qing Zhao

The first performance will be given by **Loré Lixenberg** 28/11/2011- The University of Huddersfield (CeReNem) Hudderfield, UK.

I would like to dedicate this piece to Loré Lixenberg

### **Notes for Performance:**



## 0 = Open mouth.

= Breath tone

#### The English translation is given in two different versions:

#### 1.Tune :"Slow Slow Tune"

Nameless feelings, Restless and listless, peaceless , baseless and ceaseless.

Alternating weather, Proves the hardest to bear. How can this wine Check the chill of rising eve wind!

Wild swans, my old acquaintance Migrate in echelon, Leaving me more forlorn

Mum petals sere, Lying crumpled there Which one is still good enough for a gather?

Waiting at the window, How can I drag through to dusk alone, All, all alone!

Evening rain drizzles upon the tung , And di, di, di, di, down this feeling this time

How can Sorrow, merely a word,

Describe the sorrow?

(Translated by 潘家云)

#### 2.Sheng Sheng Man

Seeking, seeking, Chilly and quiet, Desolate, painful and miserable.

Even when it's warmer there is still a chill it is most difficult to keep well.

Three or two cups of light wine, how can they ward off the strong?

Wild geese fly past, While I'm broken-hearted; But I recognise they are my old friends.

Fallen chrysanthemums piled up on the ground, So withered, Who would pluck them up now?

Leaning on the window, How can I pass the time till night alone?

The drizzle falls on the wu tong trees, Raindrops drip down at dusk.

At a time like this, what immense sorrow I must bear! (Translated by 杨宪益夫)



#### 李清照

寻寻觅觅,冷冷清清,凄凄惨惨戚戚。 xúnxún-mìmì,lěnglěng-qīngqīng,qīqī-cǎncǎnqīqī

乍暖还寒时候,最难将息。 zhà-nuǎn-huán-hán——shíhòu, zuì-nán-jiāng-xī

三杯两盏淡酒,怎敌他、晚来风急。 sān-bēi-liǎng-zhǎn——dàn-jiǔ, zěn-dí-tā、wǎnlái-fēng-jí

雁过也,正伤心,却是旧时相识。
yàn-guò-yě, zhèng-shāng-xīn, què-shì——jiù-shí-xiāng-shí

满地黄花堆积。 mǎn-dì-huáng-huā-duījī 憔悴损,如今有谁堪摘? qiáo-cuì——sǔn, rú-jīn-yǒu-shuí-kān-zhāi

守著窗儿,独自怎生得黑。 shǒu-zhe-chuāng-ér, dú-zì-zěn-shēng-dé-hēi

梧桐更兼细雨,到黄昏、点点滴滴。 wú-tóng-gèng-jiān-xì-yǔ, dào-huáng-hūn,diǎndiǎn-dī-dī

这次第,怎一个愁字了得。 zhè-cì-dì, zěn-yí-gè-chóu-zì-liǎo-de

### A references list of single/group Chinese character with translation.

尋(xún)=look for, searching 覓(mì)= hunt for 冷(lěng)= cold 清(qīng)= clear 冷清= cold and cheerless 凄(qī)=sad 慘(cǎn)=wretched 戚(qī)==sorrowful

乍(zhà)=suddenly 暖(nuǎn)=warm 還(hái)=still 寒(hán)=cold 乍暖還寒= after a short warm spell, the weather has turned cold 時候(shí hou)=time, moment 最(zuì)=most 難(nán)=hard, difficult 將(jiāng)=going to 息(xī)=rest, breath

三 (sān)=three 杯 (beī)=cup 兩 (liǎng)=two 盞 (zhǎn)=small cup 淡 (dàn)=light 酒 (jiǎ)=wine

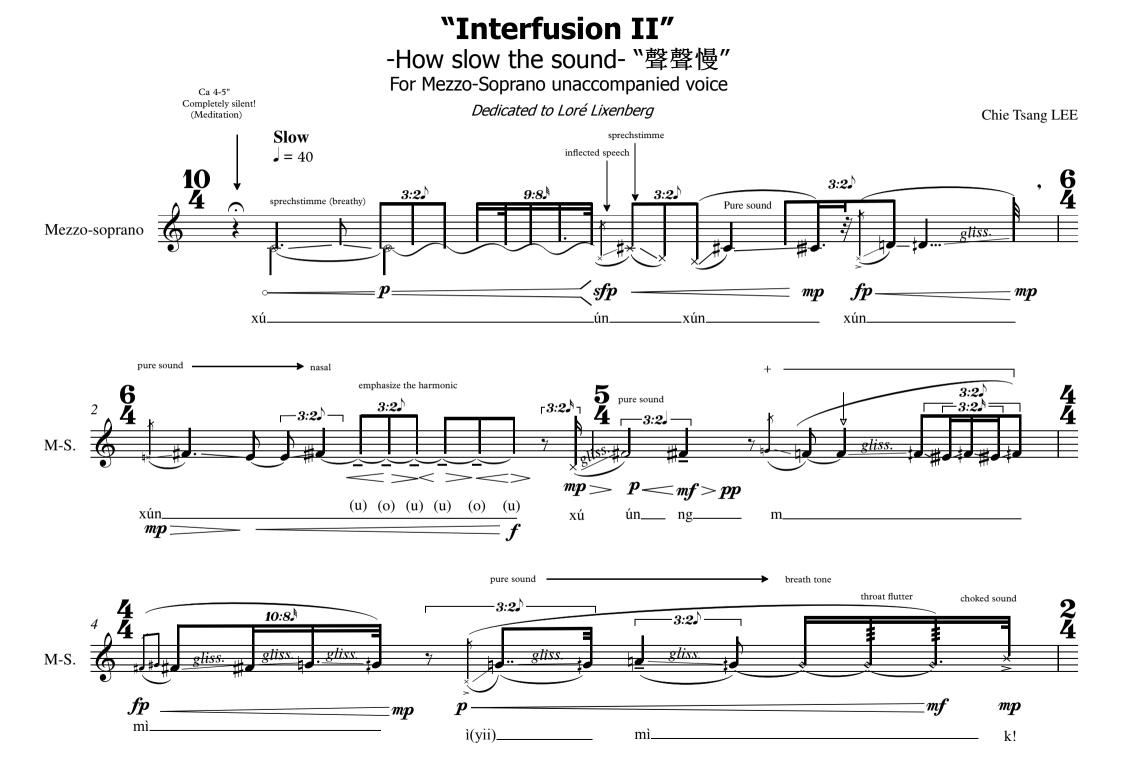
怎(zěn)=how 敵(dí)=resist,hostile 他(tā)=they,them

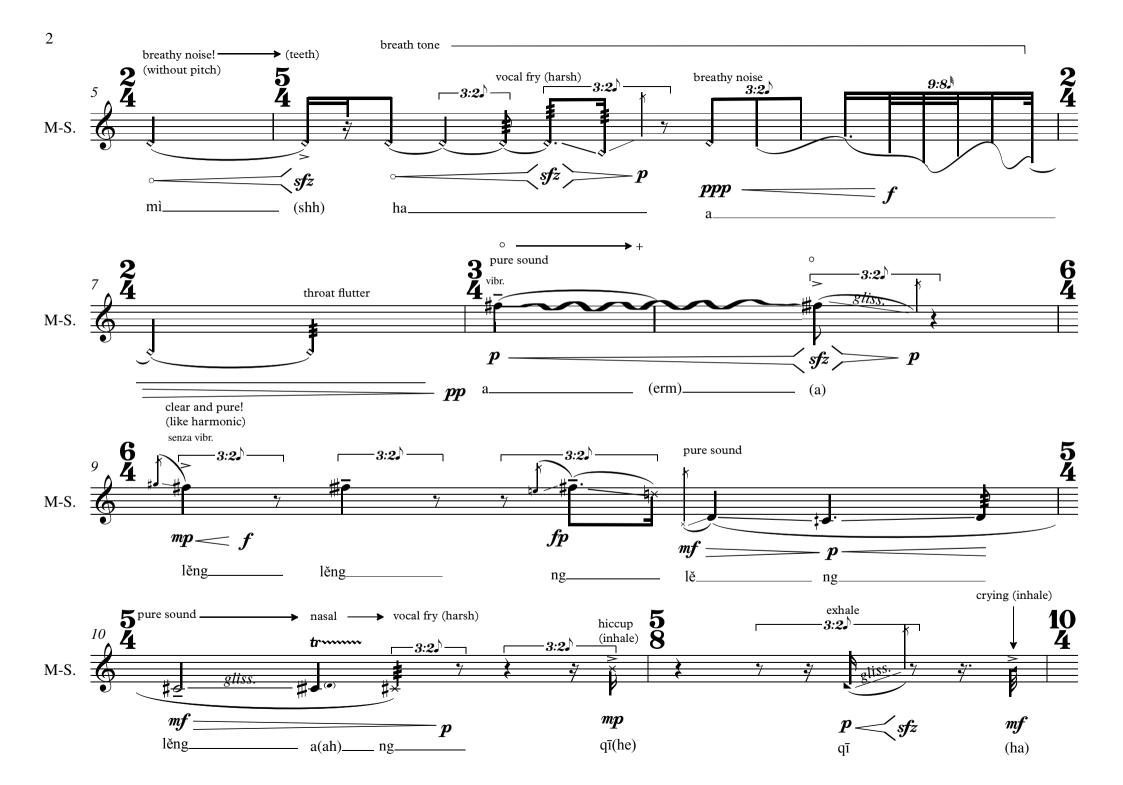
晚 (wǎn)=night 來(lái)=come 風(fēng)=wind 急(jí)=quick, fast 雁(yān)=wild gooes 過(guò)=passed 也(yě)=also 正(zhèng)=just 傷(shāng)=hurt 小(xīn)=heart 却(què)=do away with, refuse to accept 是(shì)=is 舊(jiù)=old 時(shí)=time 舊時(jiu shi)= previous time 相 (xiāng)=mutually 識 (shí)=know 相識= knowing each other

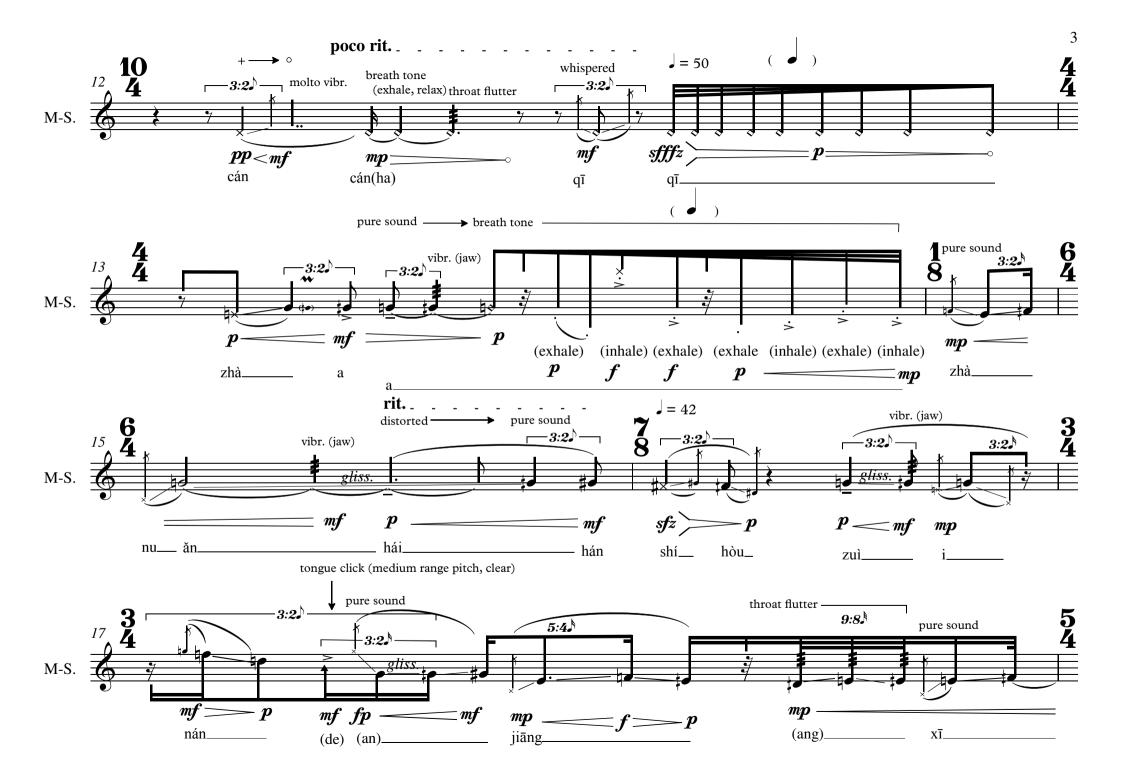
淋(mǎn)= full 地(dì)=floor 黃(huáng)=yellow 花(huā)=flower 堆(tuí)=pile 積(jī)=accumulate 憔悴(qio cuì)=thin and pallid 損(sǔn)=harm, damage 如今(rú jīn)=Nowadays 有(yǒu)=have 誰(shéi)=who 堪(kān)=may

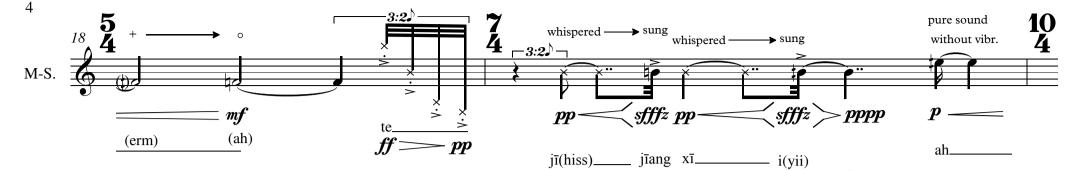
摘(zhāi)=pluck 守著(shǒu zhù)=keep watch 窗兒(chuāng ér)=window 獨自(dú zì)=alone 怎(zěn)=how 生得(shēng de)=grow 黑(hēi)=dark, black 梧桐(wú tóng)= Chinese parasol(tree) 更 (gèng)=futher 兼(jiān)=hold two or more post concurrently. 細(xī)=small 雨 (yǔ)=rain 到(dào)=arrive 黃昏(huán hún)=evening 點(diǎn)=spot, drop 滴(dī)=drip, drop

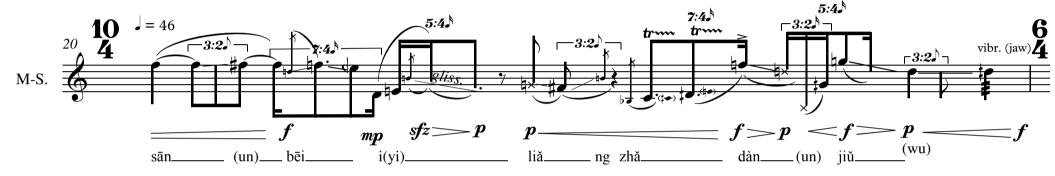
這次(zhè cì)=This time 第(dì)=sequence 怎(zěn)=how 一個(yī gè)=one, single 愁(chóu)=sorrowful 字(zì)=word 了得(liǎo de)=finish

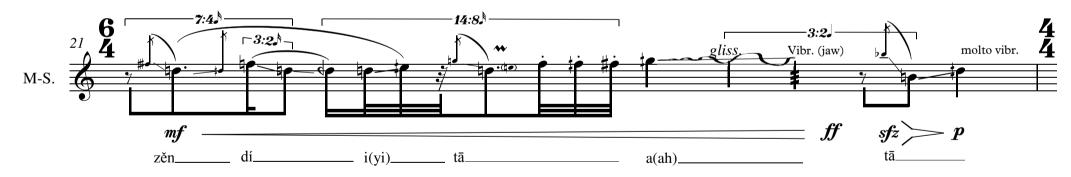


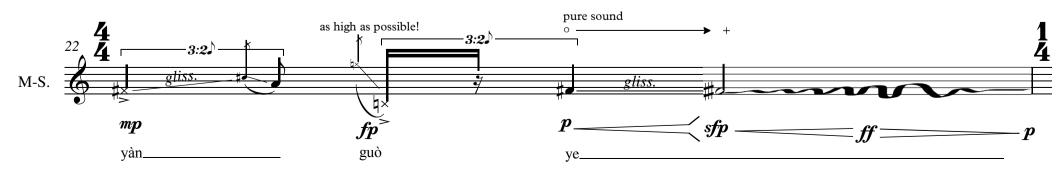


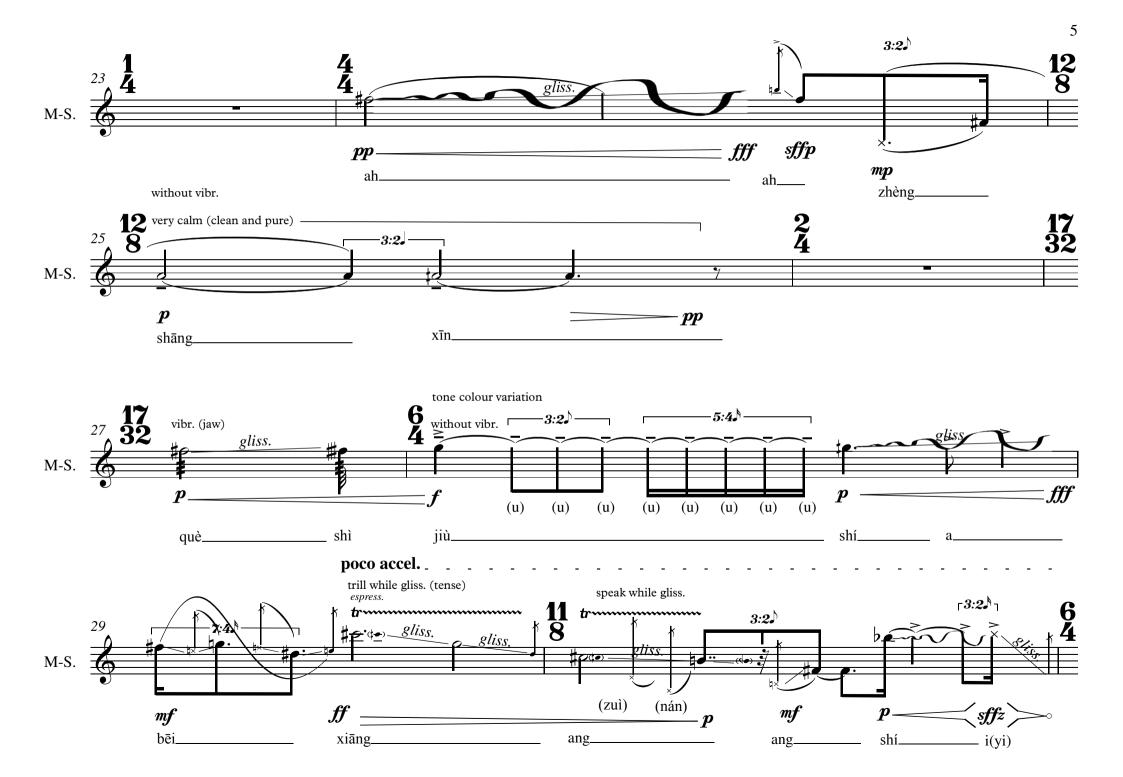


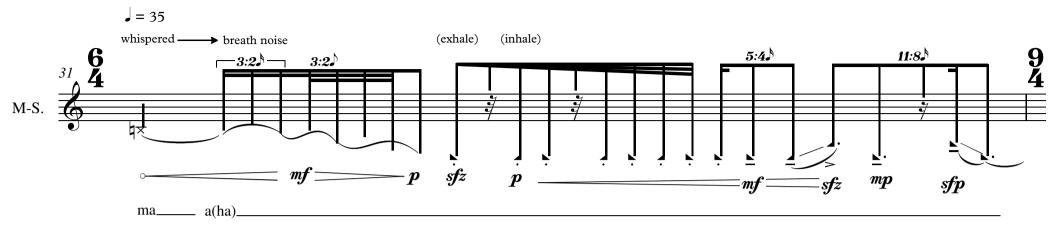




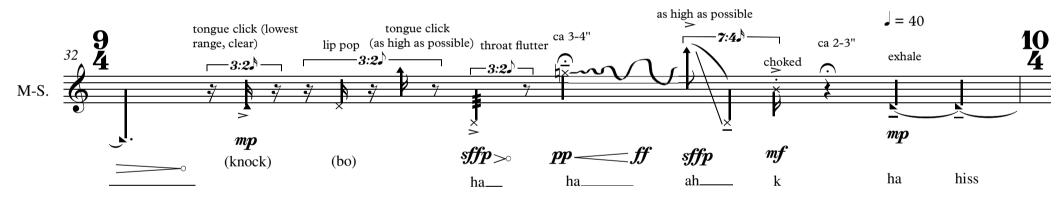


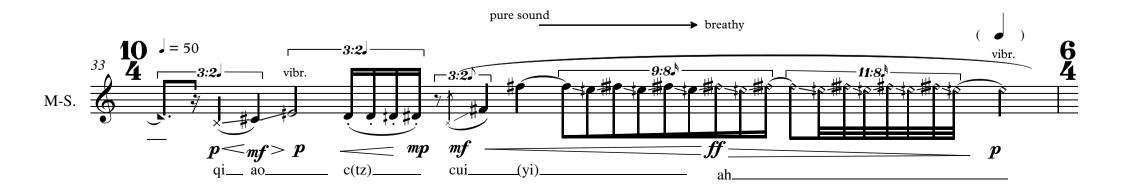


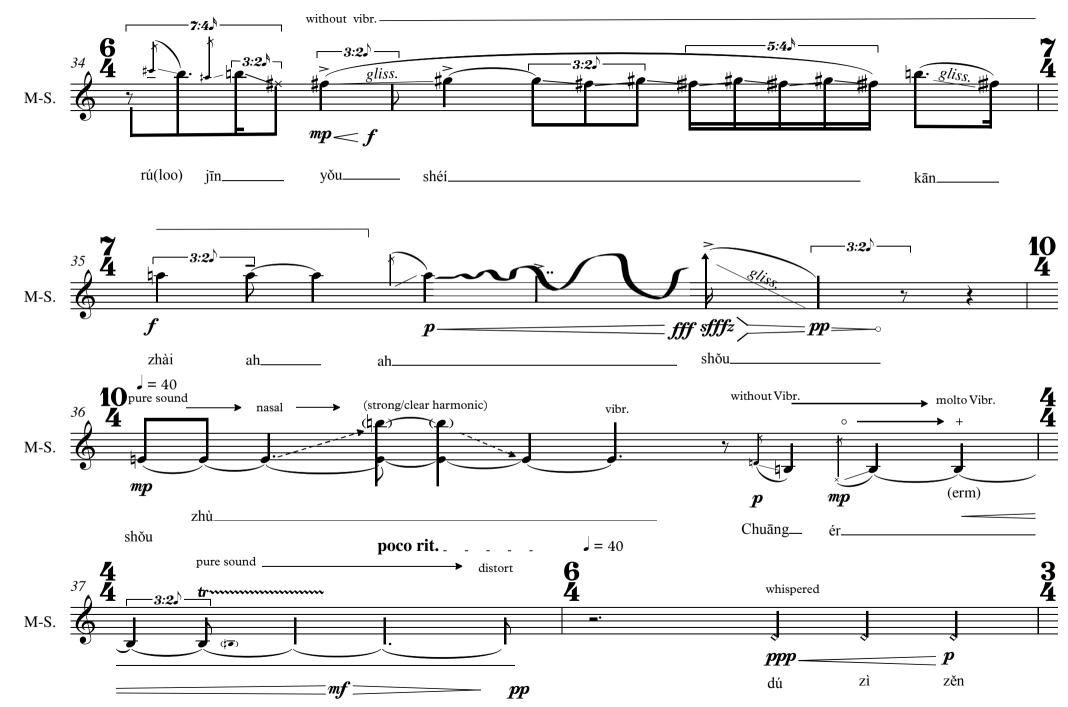


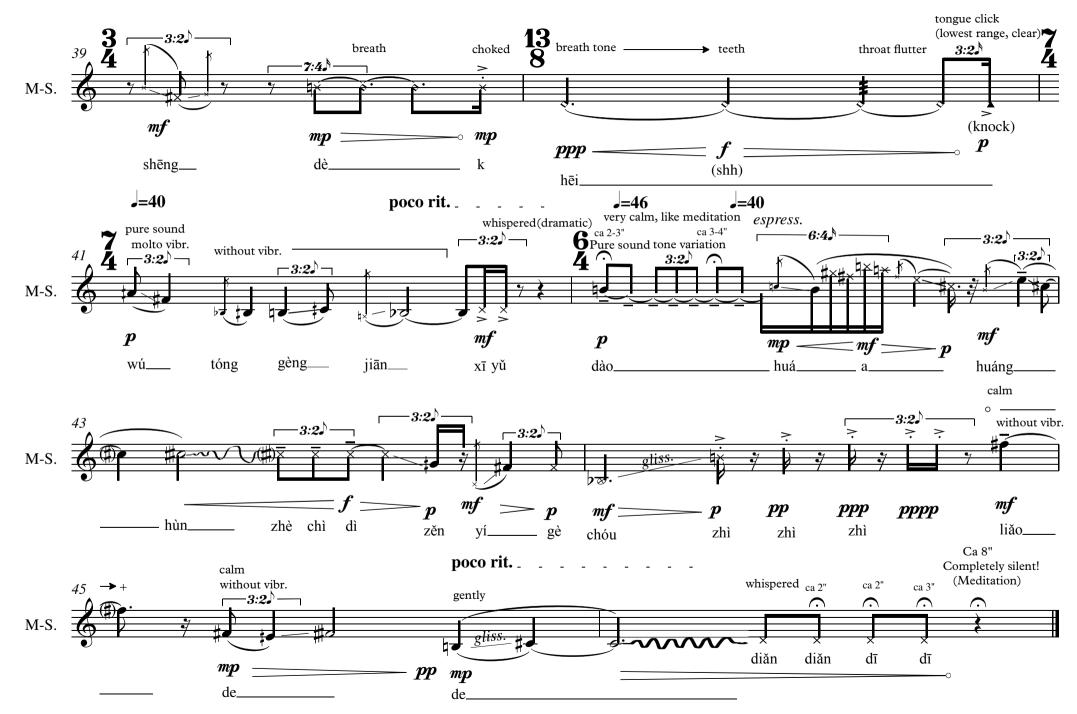












# **Chie Tsang LEE**

李其昌

# "Interfusion III" -Hui- "惠" (2012)

Dedicated to my daughter- Lee Qiao Hui

For Soprano Sheng, Bass Flute, Pipa, and Pedal Harp

2012

HUDDERSFIELD, UK





I.v = let it vibrate

S.V; C.V; M.V= senva vibrato; con vibrato; molto vibrato

= for gongs: Scrape (with bottom of the beater or coin)

= for wind instrument: air tone

= for wind instrument: flutter tongue

\$bd \$ \$ ##

= Ouartertone notes



p.d.l.t = for harp: near the soundboard

aarrow =for harp: fingernail(s)



= for bass flute: multiphonic (fingerings given in score)

0000

= for gongs: rubbing the gong's surface in circular motion.

#### For Sheng:

Xi hua She = soft flutter tongue

Chu hua she = flutter tongue

Bao hua she = molto flutter tongue

Mu yin = gliss.

Hu she = flutter throat

For Pipa:

Shuang tan= tremolo with thumb and index finger.

 $fff \rightarrow mp$  = for sheng: blow the tubes of the sheng

(air-tone effect)

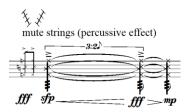
 $\frac{1}{2}$  = tremolo with five fingers.



rub the strings: imitate the technique of Gu qin sliding. (freely improvise with all strings)

 $\widehat{}$ \*\*\*\*\*\*\*

= rubbing strings (imitate the technique of Gu Qin).



= muted percussive effects.

### "Interfusion III"

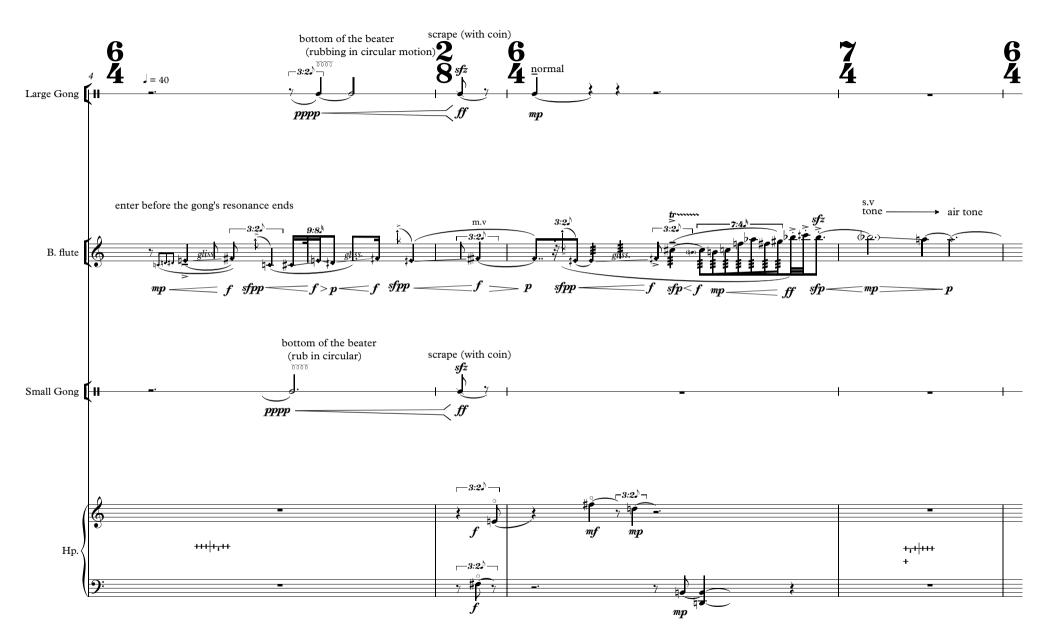
-Hui-"溶 III"-惠-

For Soprano Sheng (doubling large gong), Bass Flute (medium gong), Pipa (small gong) & Pedal Harp (tam-tam)

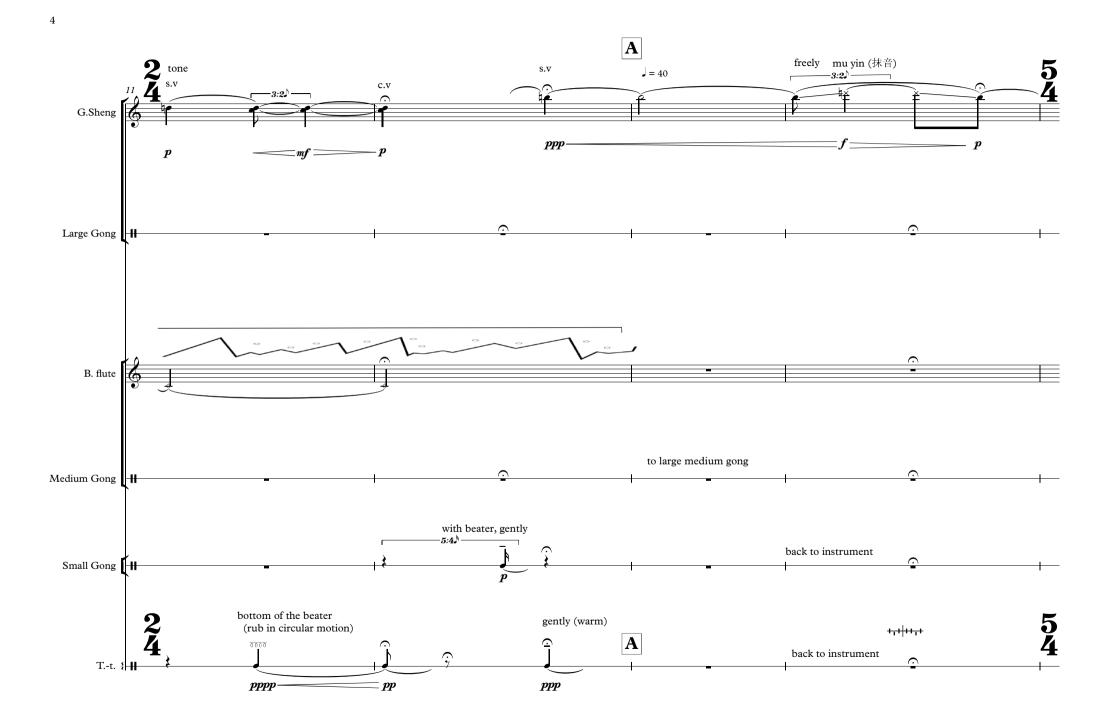
Chie Tsang LEE

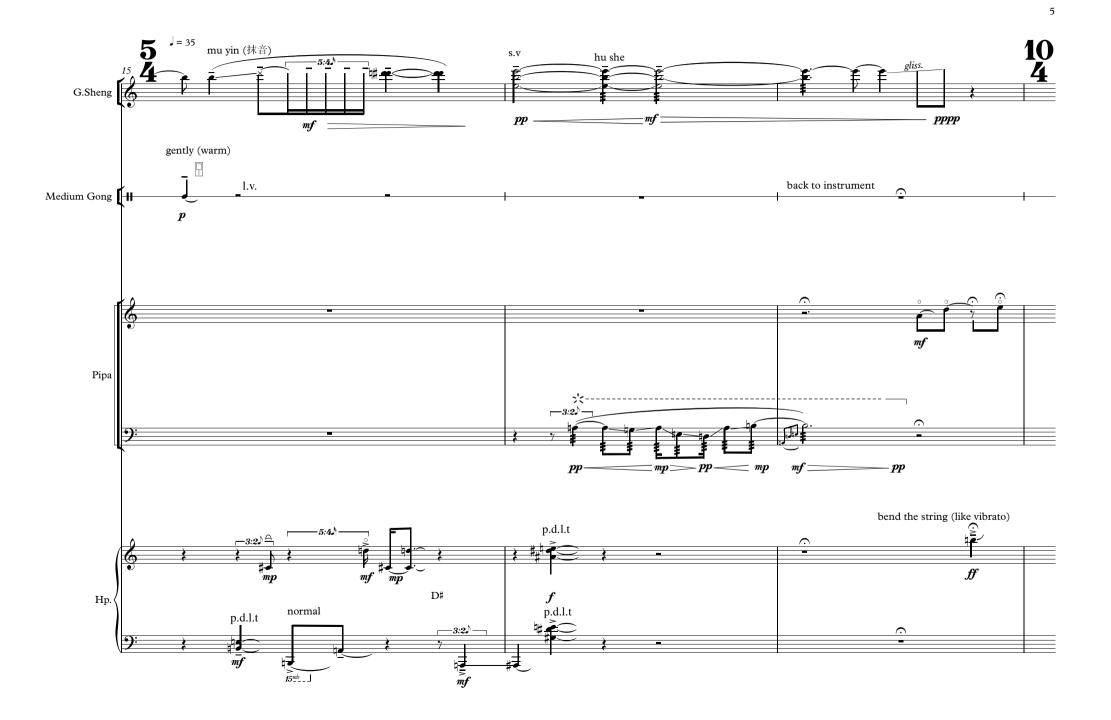
dedicated to my daughter

**2 4 6** 6 Calm and concentrated **a** = 35 **J** = 35  $\hat{}$ Gaoyin Sheng ..... -Π ⊙ gently  $\hat{}$  $\hat{\boldsymbol{\varsigma}}$ 1.v. Large Gong with vibrato s.v breath tone without vibrato with vibrato mf pp S.V (c.v) (c.v) (s.v) -3:2 ð  $\hat{}$ Bass flute ► she wu f pp pppp sfpp mf Medium Gong \*as high as possible (imitate the sound of shakuhachi)  $\sim$ Pipa ----Ì. gently  $\hat{\mathbf{x}}$ SmallGong тp  $\widehat{}$  $\hat{}$ Harp  $\hat{}$  $\hat{}$ **2** 4 6 4 6  $\hat{}$ Tam-tam 开

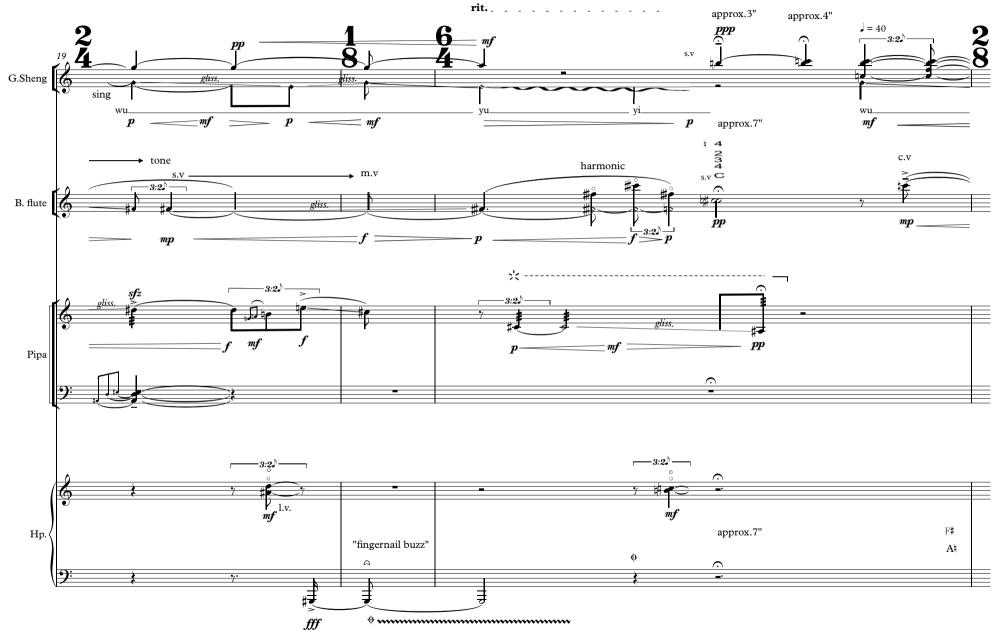








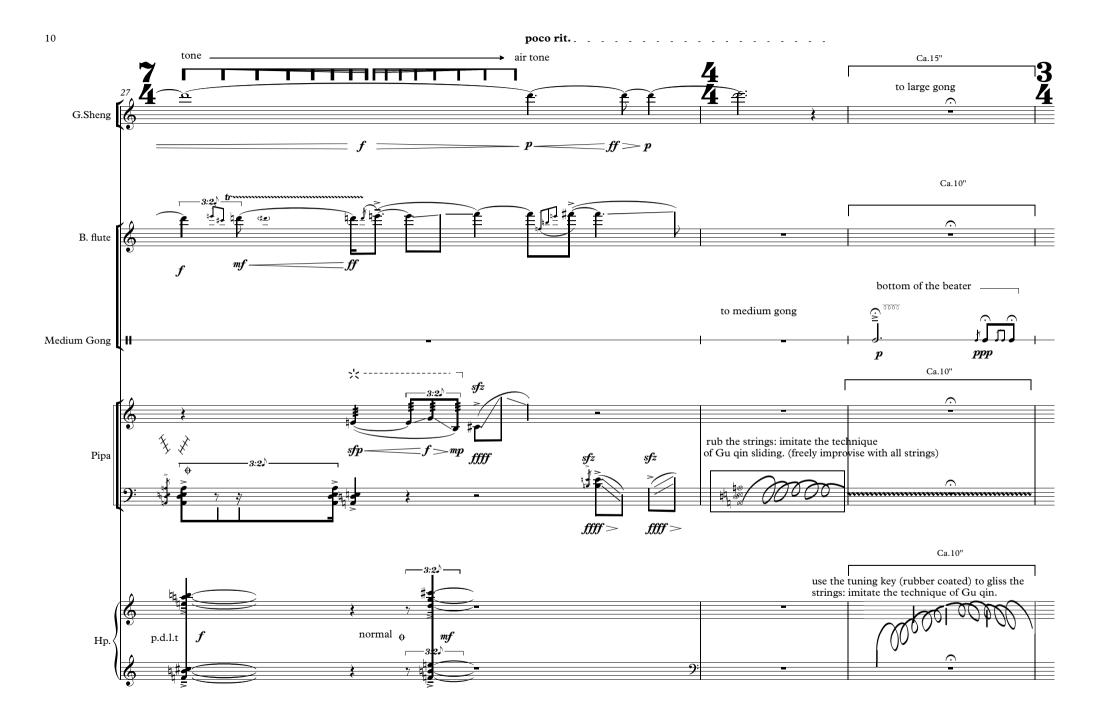


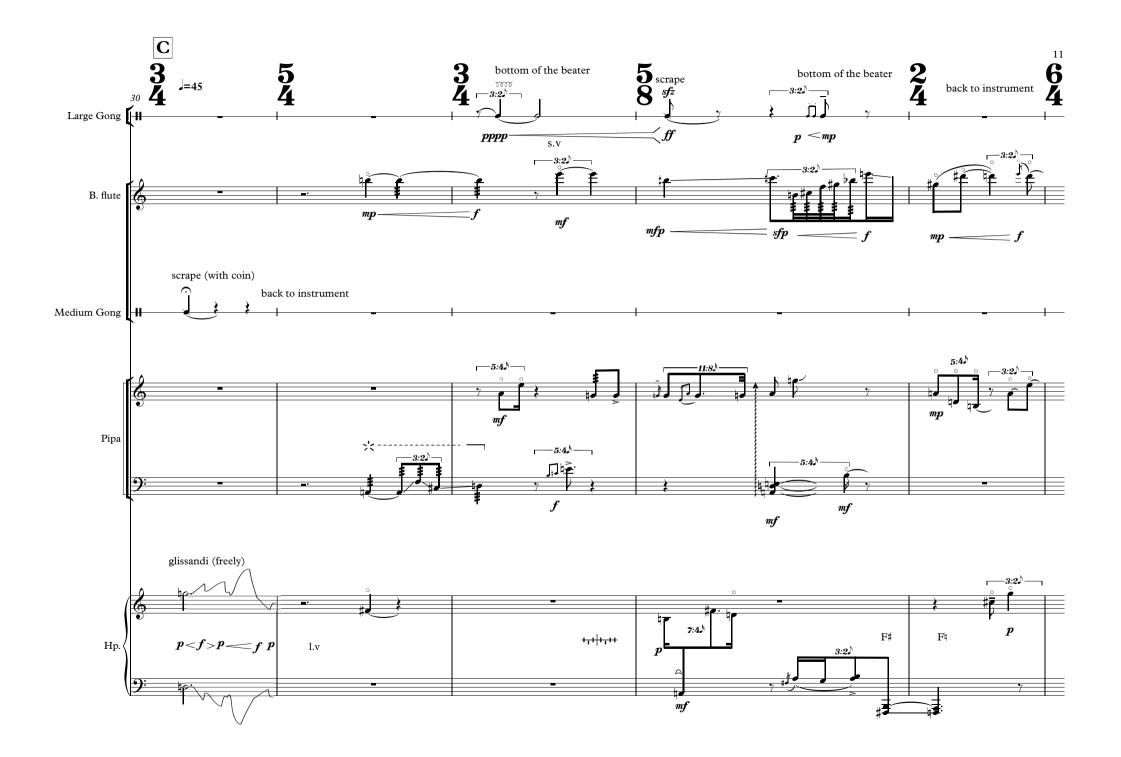


Place the fingernail against the string to create buzz



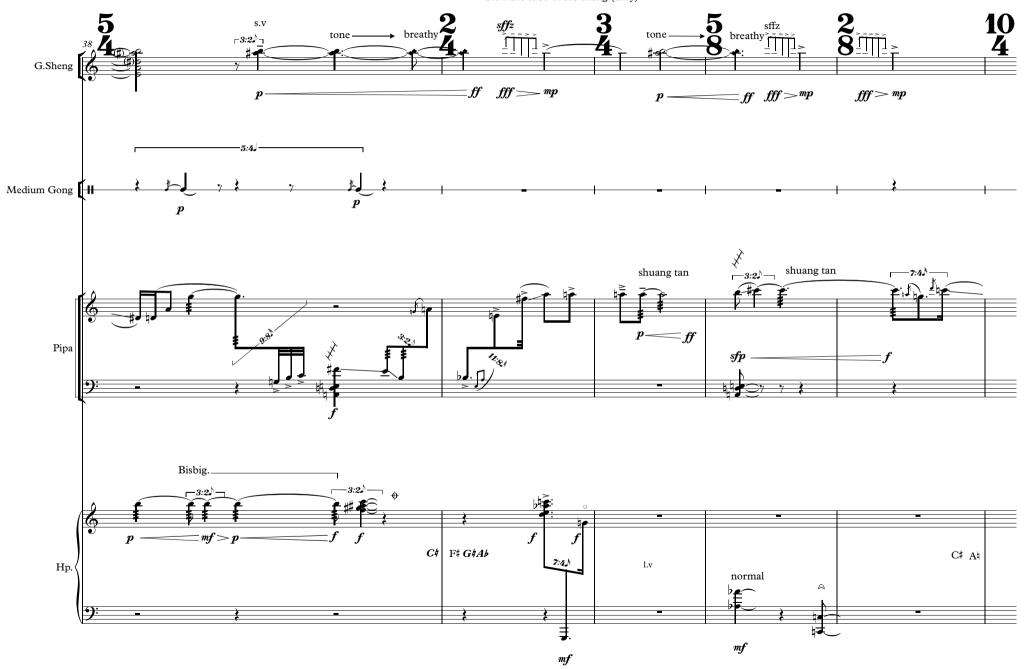








blow the tube of the sheng (airly)

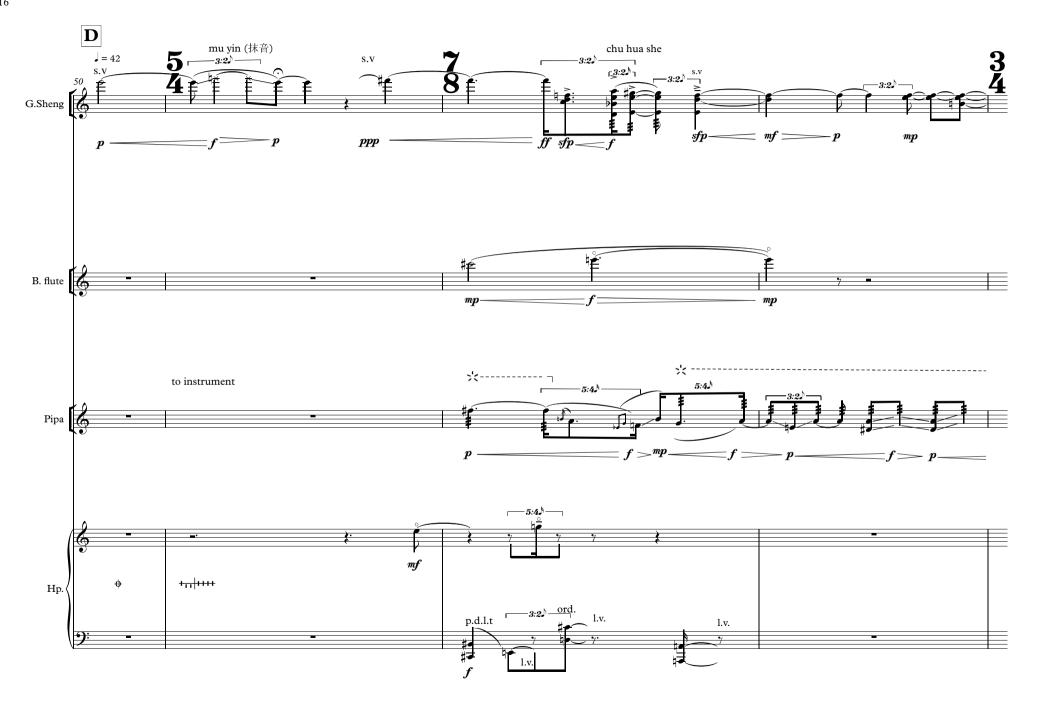


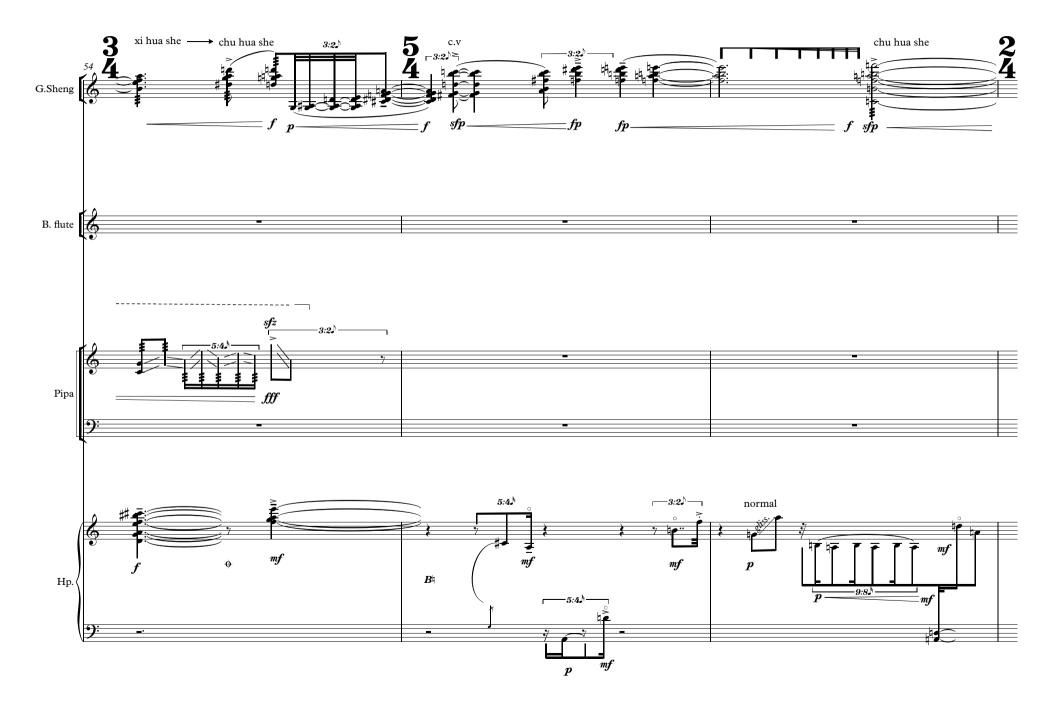


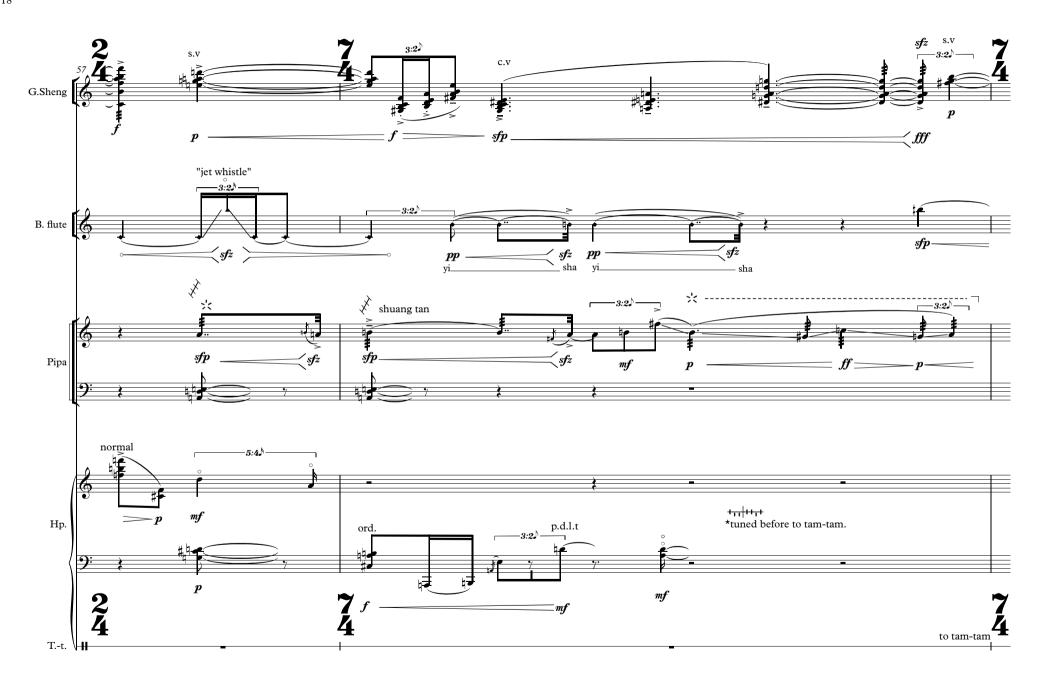
mf

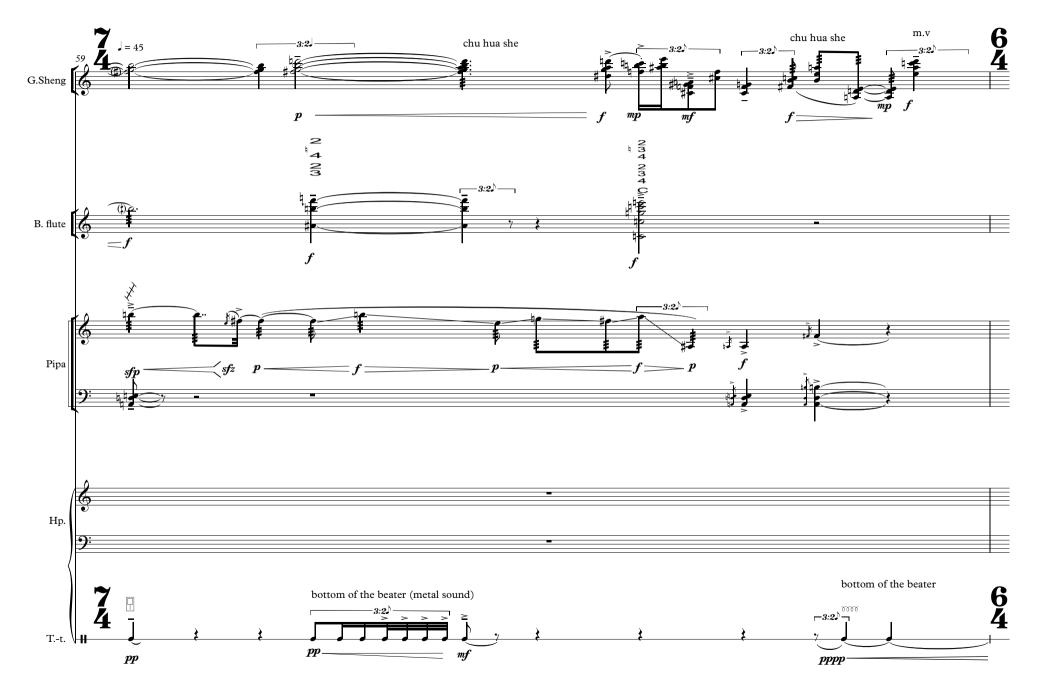
f

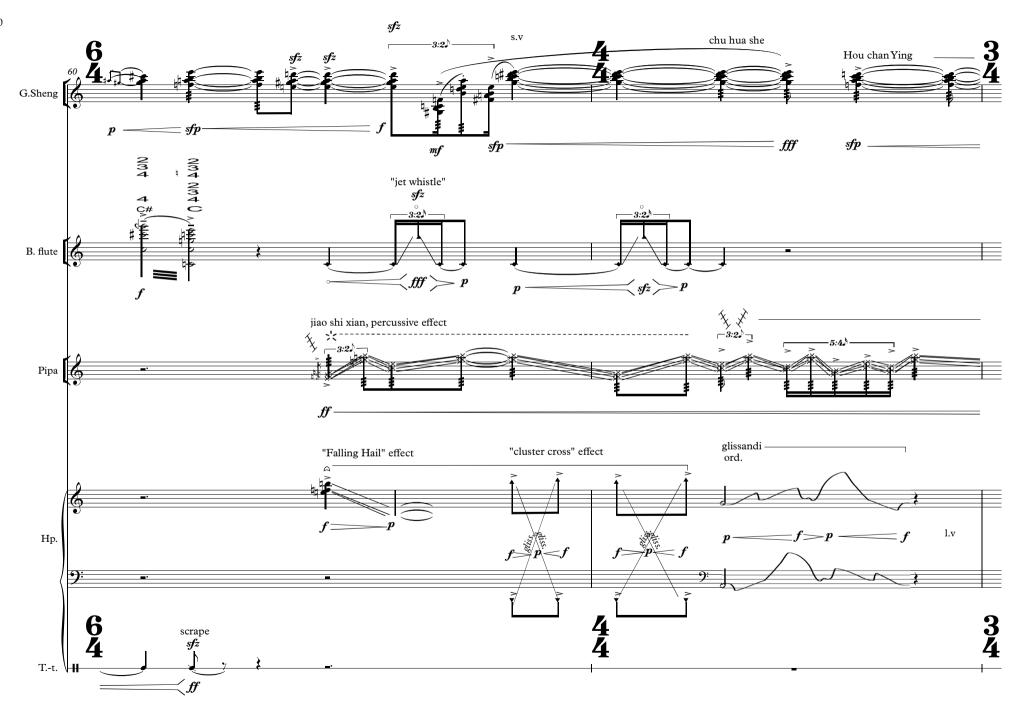


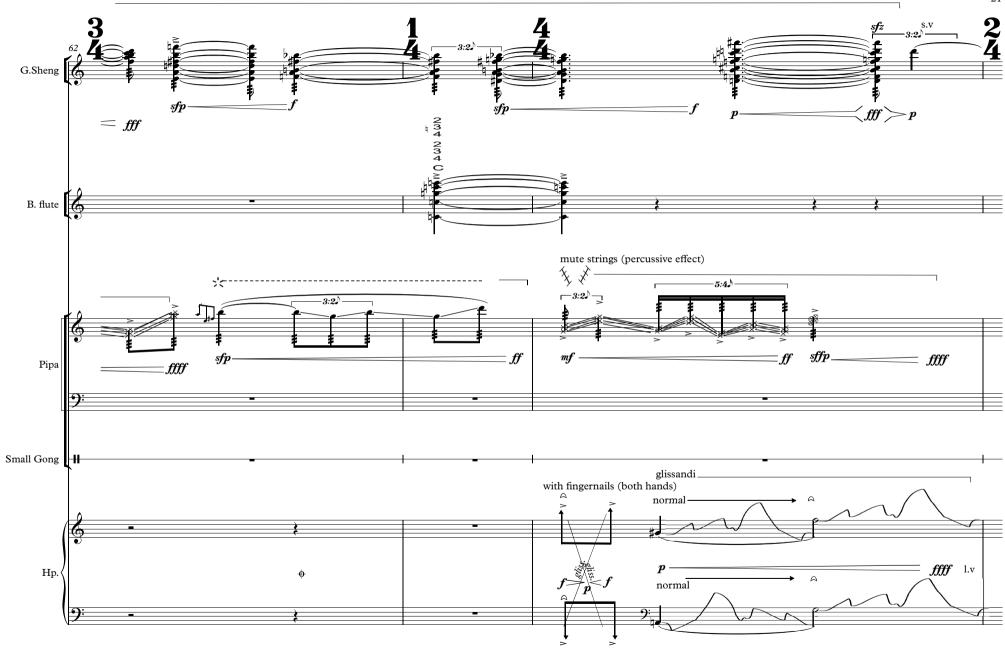


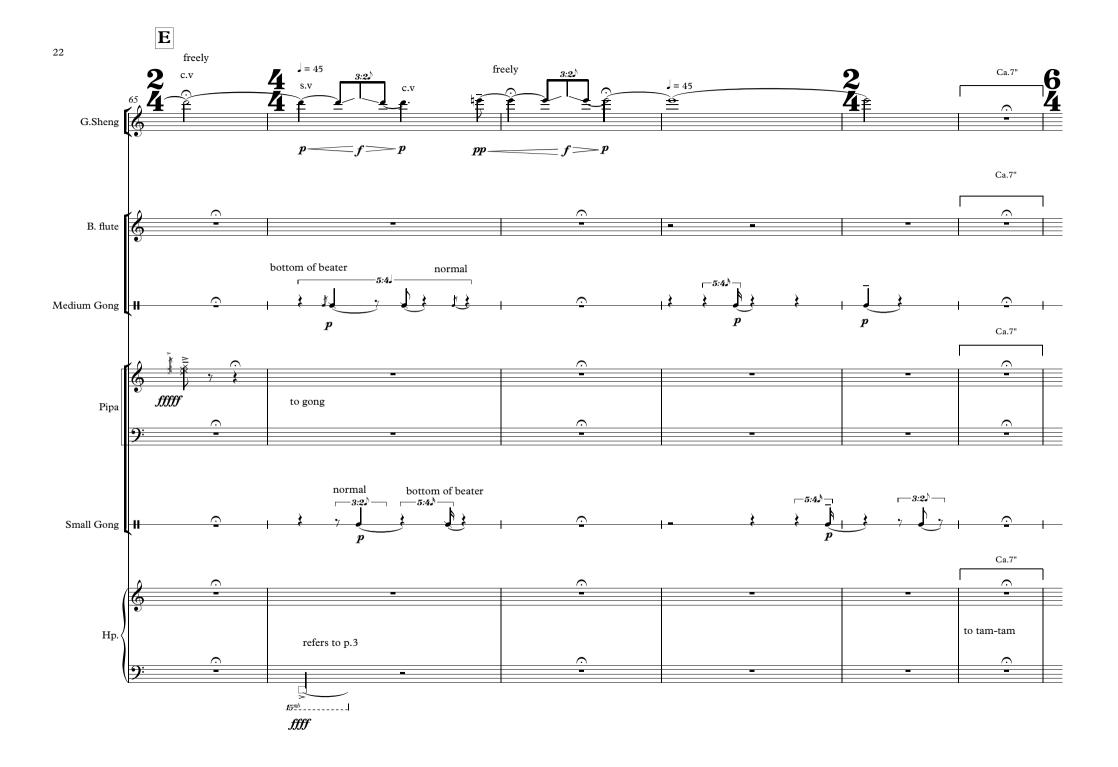


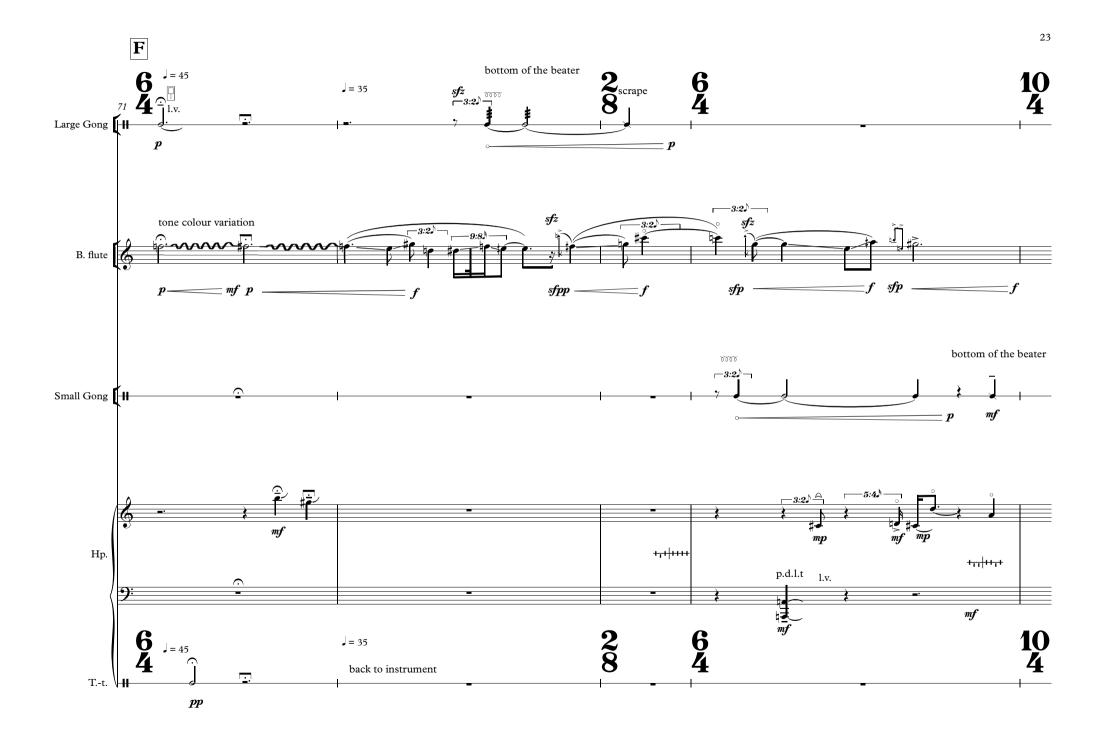


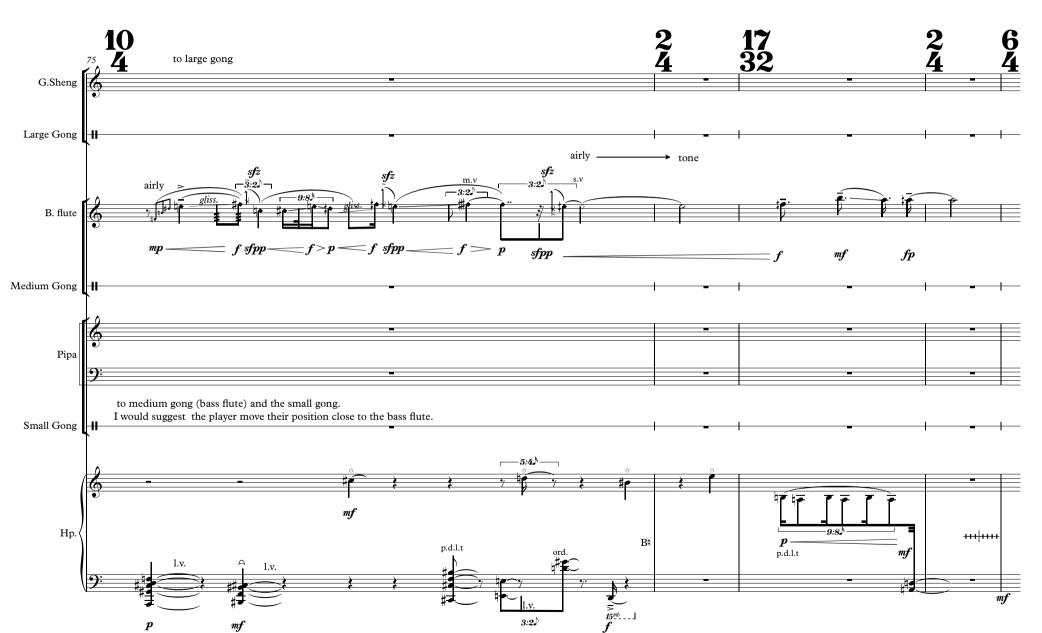


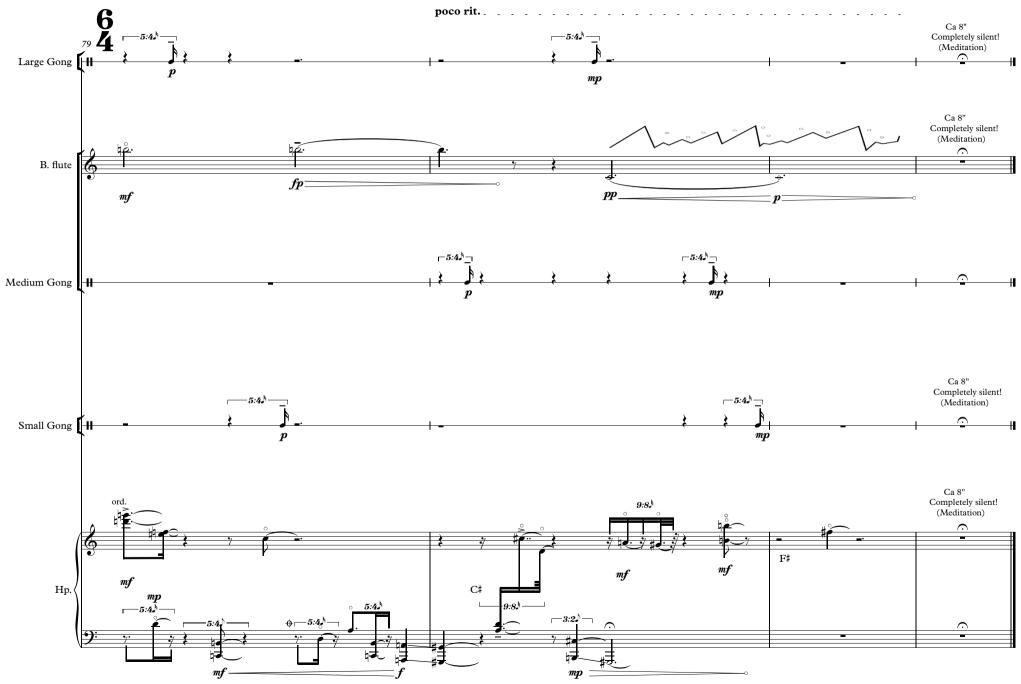












## **Chie Tsang LEE**

李其昌

# 

Dedicated to Bridget Carey

For Viola Solo

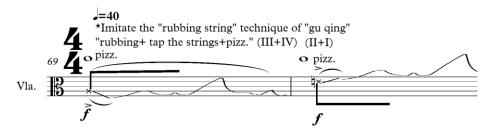
January 2012

HUDDERSFIELD, UK

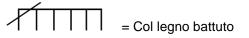
#### **General Symbols**

Inhale (as fast as possible) with voice.
 Inhale (as fast as possible) with voice.

+ = Left hand pizzicato



= 'rubbing the string like Gu Qin': This passage should imitate the sound quality like Gu Qin, creating a unique and subtle of sonic spectrum according to an individual touch.



Ord. = Ordinary position

S.T = Sul Tasto

S.P = Sul Ponticello

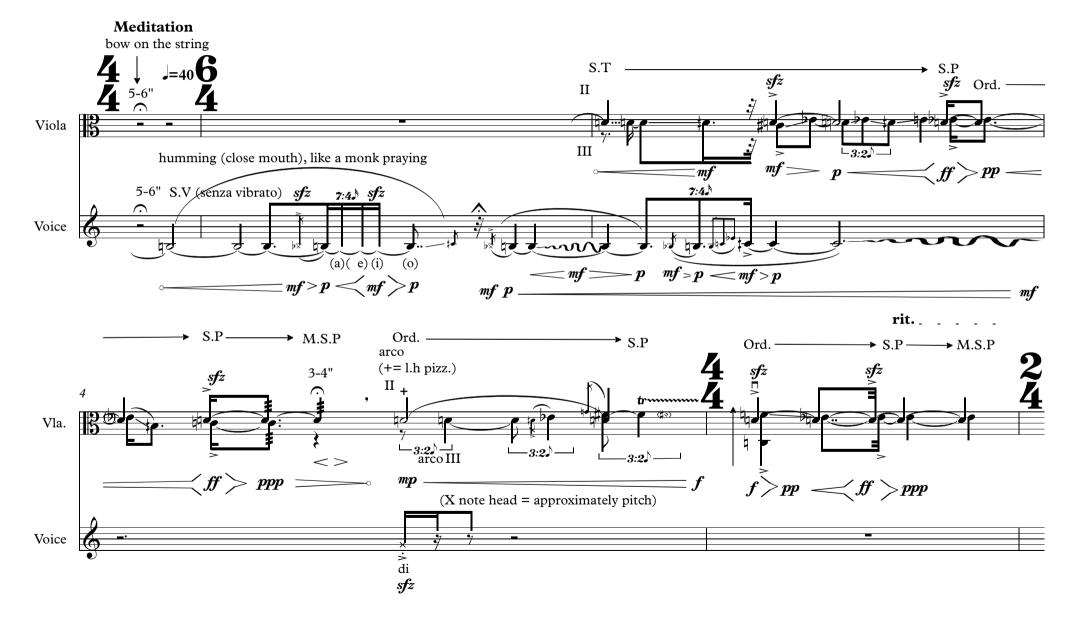
M.S.P = Molto Sul Ponticello

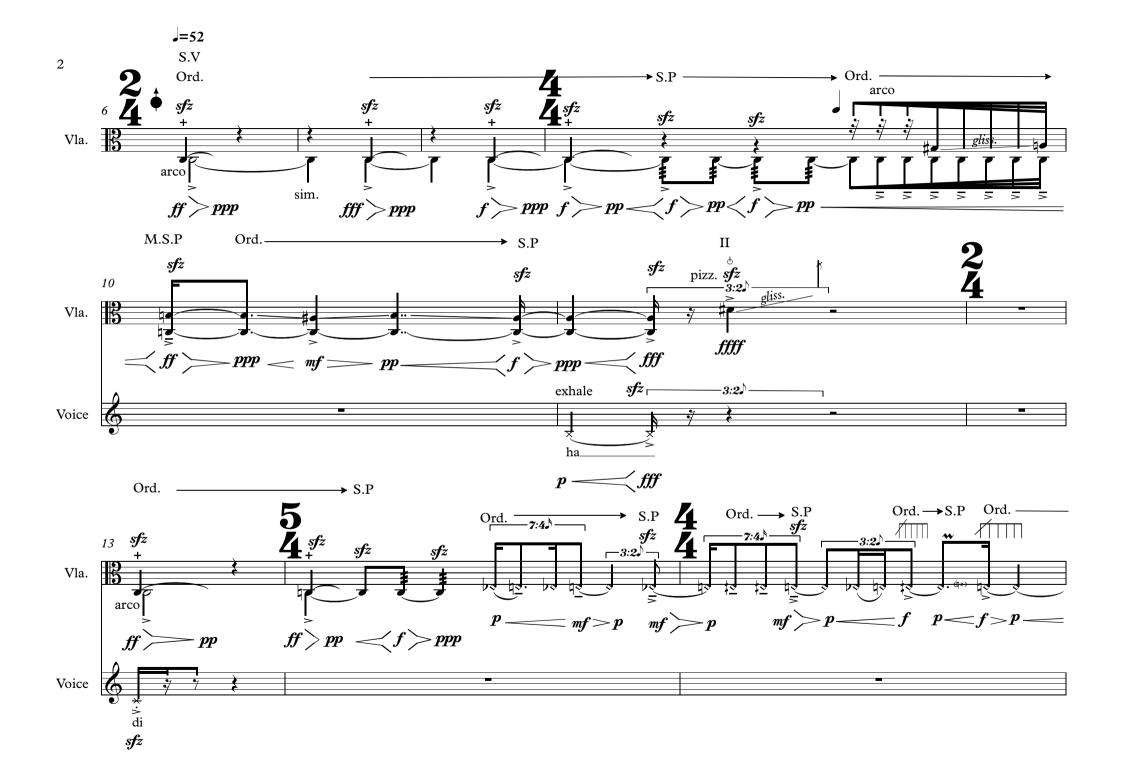
## Interfusion IV-Variegation of Colour- 斑驳的色彩

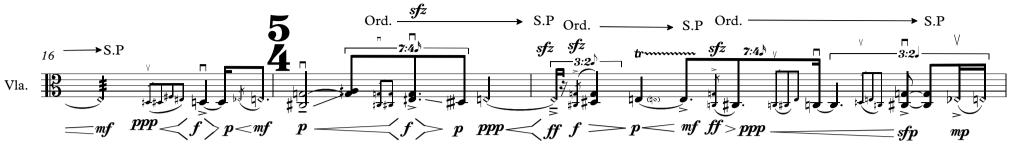
for Viola Solo

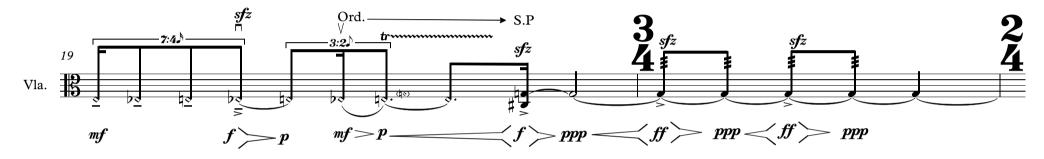
Dedicated to Bridget Carey

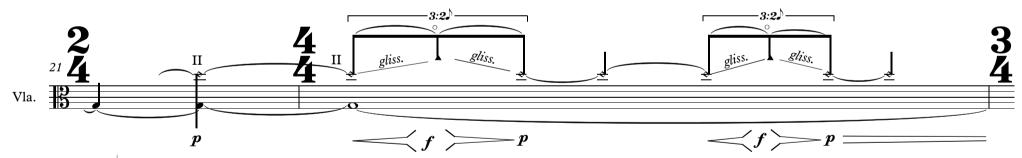
Chie Tsang LEE



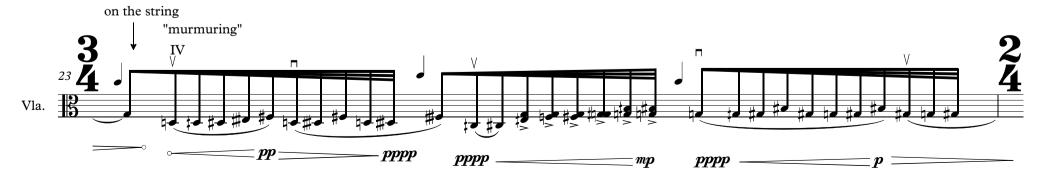


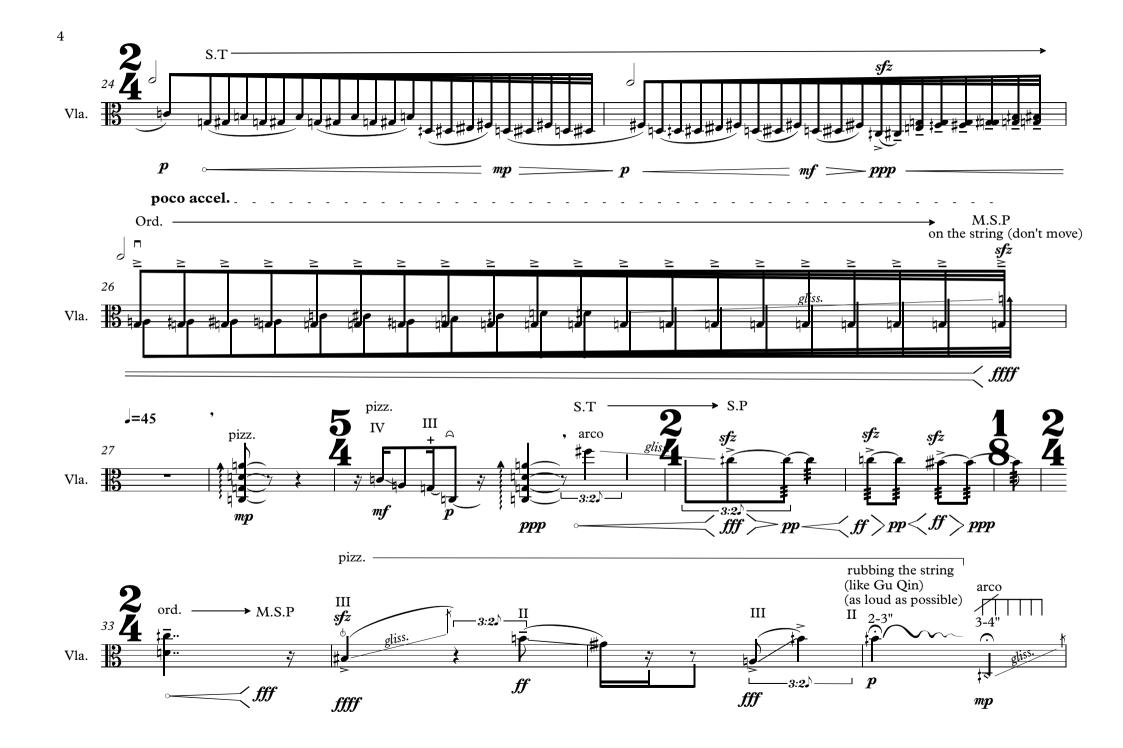


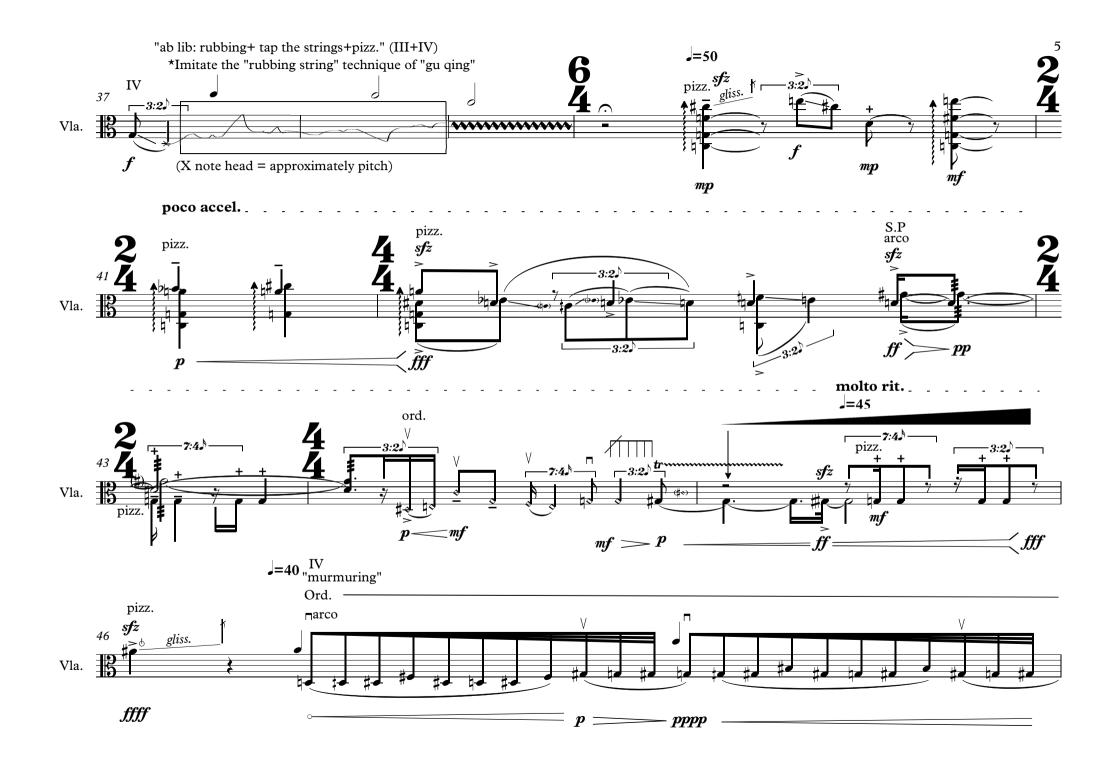


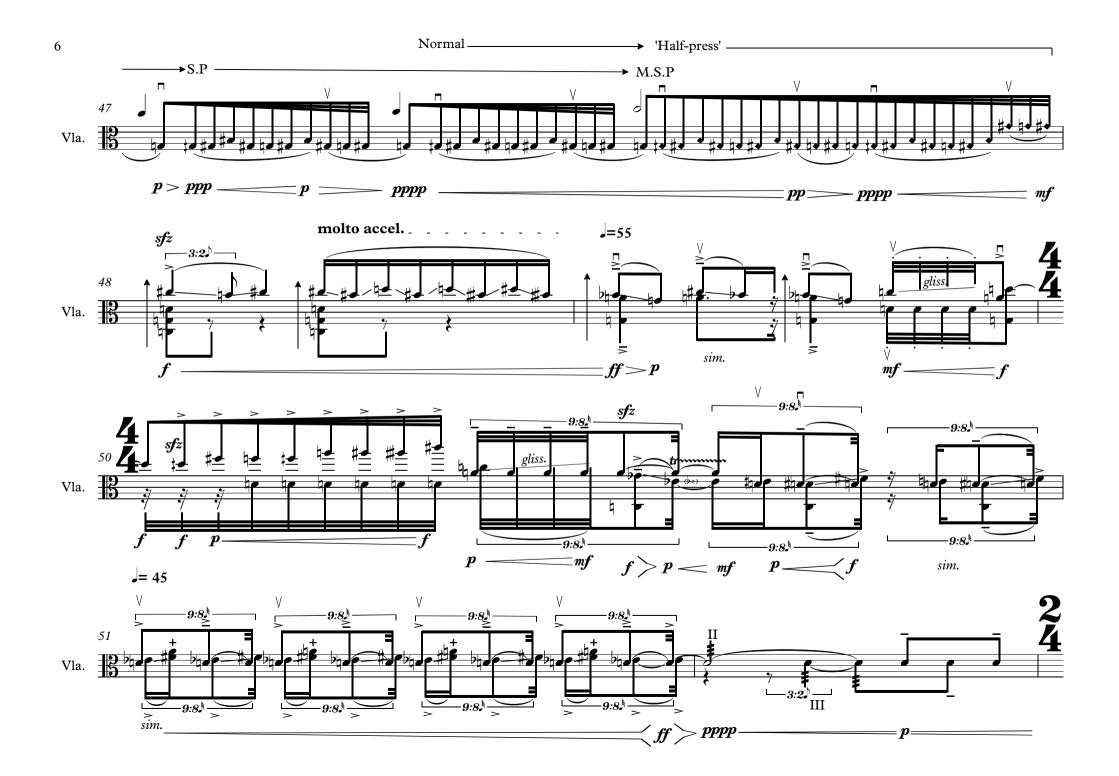


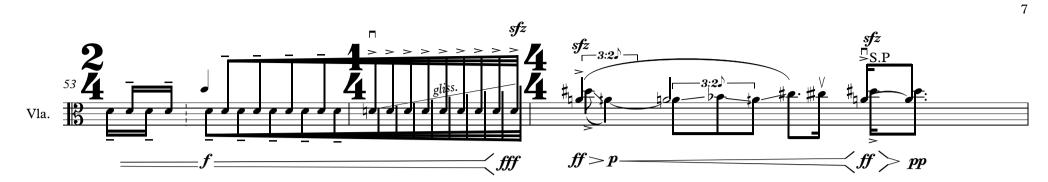
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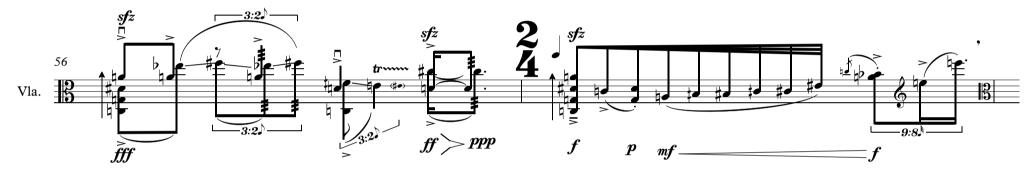


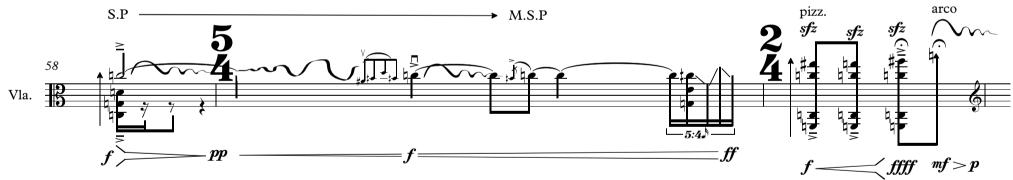


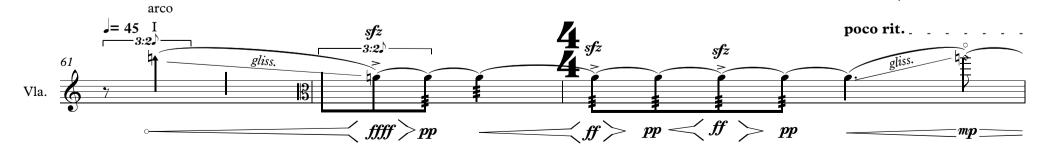


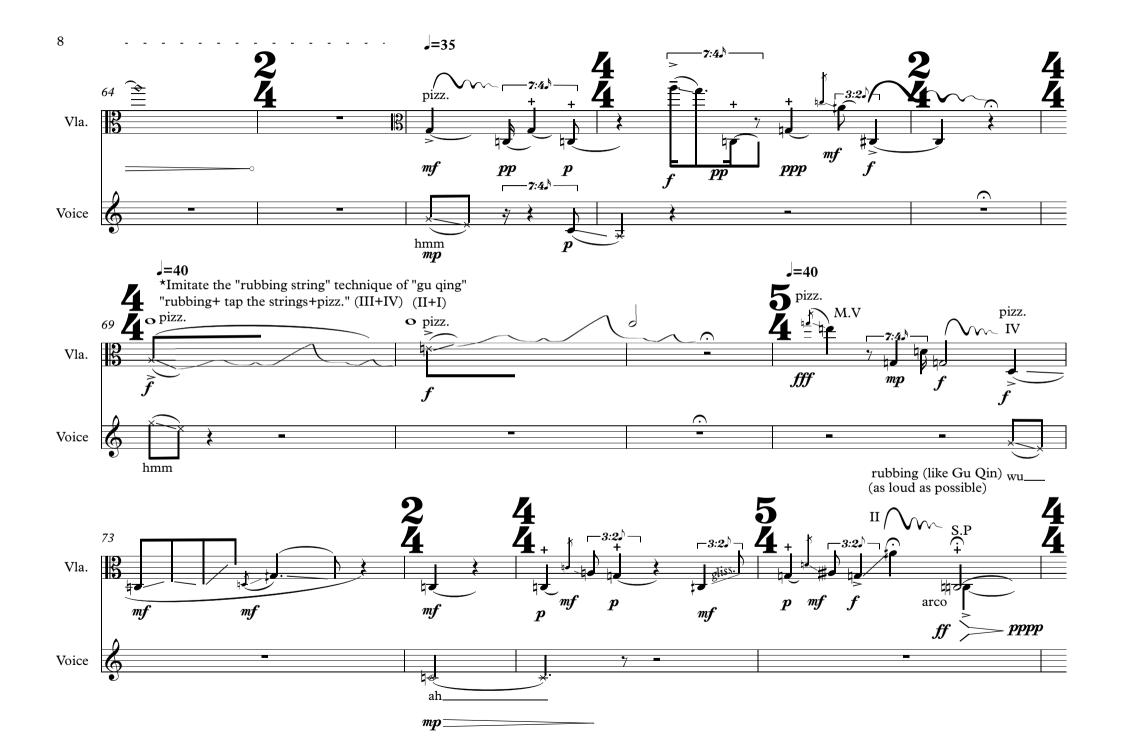


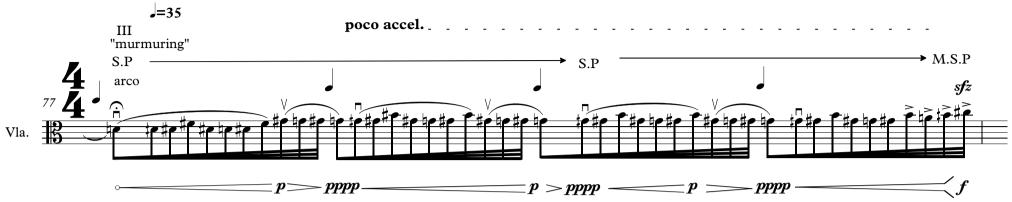


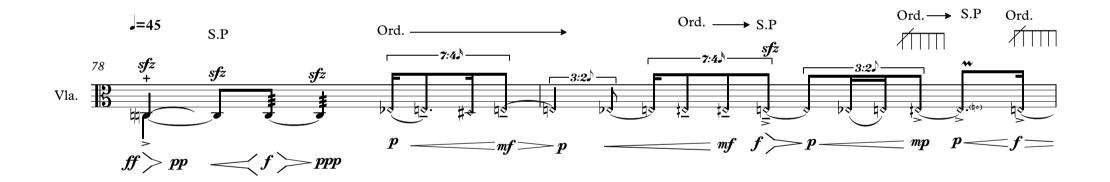


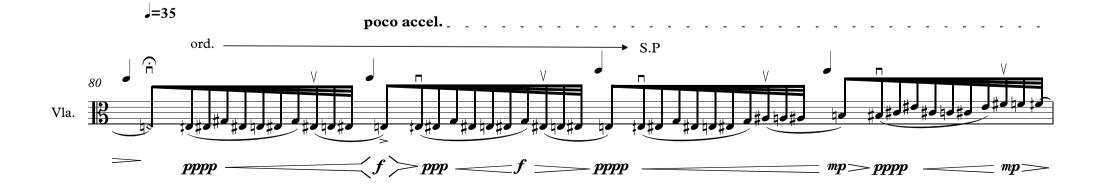


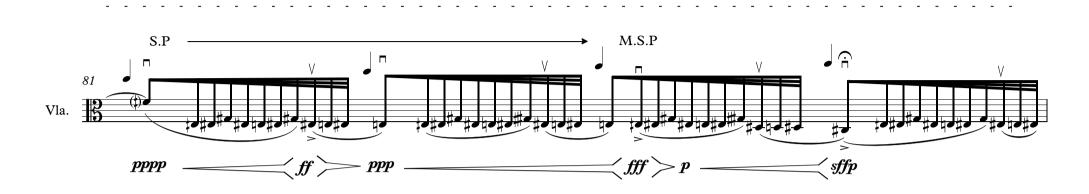


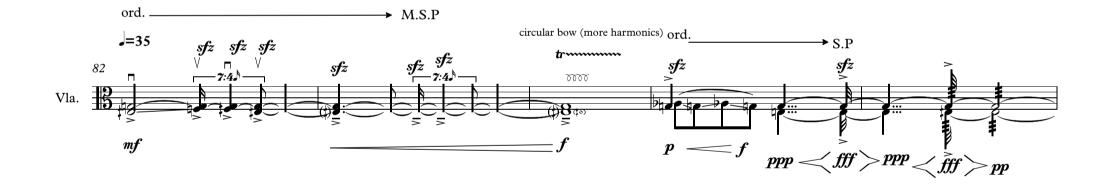


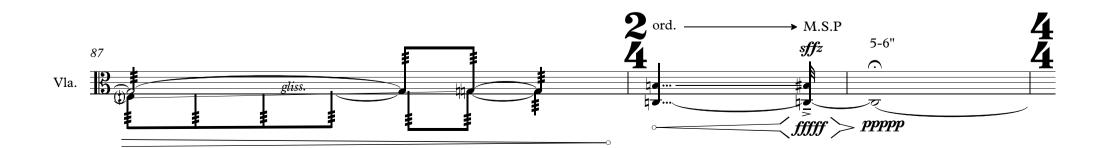


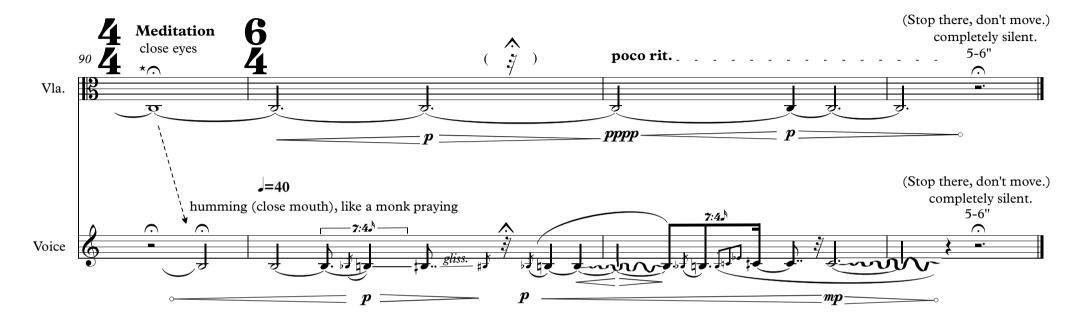












\* The length of the fermata will be decided by the musician.

# **Chie Tsang LEE**

## 李其昌



-Collaboration with ACE Ensemble, Contemporary Dancer & Story Teller-

Dedicated to Asian Contemporary Ensemble, Tang Sook Kuan & Rosemarie Somaiah

For Flute, Alto Saxophone, Piano, Violin & Cello

January 2012

Huddersfield, UK

Chie Tsang LEE

"Tōng"-通- (2012)

Commissioned by Asian Contemporary Ensemble

First performance: 11<sup>th</sup> March 2012 in NUS Arts Festival 2012 (Singapore). Conductor- **Wong Kah Chun** 

#### **Instrumentation:**

(for five players)

Flute Alto Saxophone Piano (doubling large gong) Violin (doubling medium gong) Cello

Duration: approximately 10 min

Score in C

#### **Program note:**

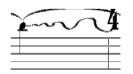
As a Malaysian composer, I am always being influenced and inspired by the multi-cultural: languages as well as cultural behaviors in my music composition. The process of working with 'hybrid' cultures as a transforming 'mother tongue' is giving me such a great inspiration and energy. Through this, the identity of my musical language which has been based on a Chinese idea of 'the single note' will no longer to be a single object but it will carry and mix new concepts from Malaysian culture (Chinese, Malay, Indian cultures).

For this project in Singapore, my composition- "Tōng" - 通- will explore a story about a traditional ritual ceremony (Magavau) from Sabah, Malaysia bringing together the ACE ensemble, a story-teller and a contemporary dancer interacting with elements that are highly programmatic in nature.

I would like to dedicate this piece to Asian Contemporary Ensemble, Tang Sook Kuan & Rosemarie Somaiah

#### **Notes for Flute Performance**

- Suddenly crescendo at the end/ vice versa



- Tone colour variation (the wavy graphics are indicate pitch inflection).

#### ;

- Accelerando; Ritardando

"Whistle tone"

- Blowing a very small amount of air into the flute, producing various harmonics.

# with voices

= cross note is used to indicate singing; this symbol for voice is also used by the alto saxophone.

- Air tone

#### Notes for Alto Saxophone Performance

open slap

sfz

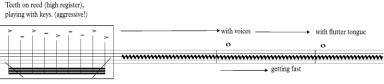
 Open slap: the musician's embouchure is opened abruptly and completely at the moment of attack, producing strong percussive sounds.

#### Sub tone

- The technique of the sub tone refers to a breathy way of playing lower tones.



- 'play with teeth on reed to produce a complex spectrum of sounds



Dramatically dynamic& rhythmic pattern!

\_

×

- Air tone

#### "Alla Tromba"

- Remove mouthpiece and play into instrument with trumpet embouchure. This technique will produce a nasal, brassy sound quality.

The player improvises in high register with the 'teeth on reed' technique.

#### **Notes for Violin Performance**

#### S.T; S.P; M.S.P

- sul tasto, sul ponticello, molto sul ponticello.

#### Ord.

Ordinary position. -

gradually change. \_

- Suddenly crescendo at the end/ vice versa.

## tailpiece

Bow tailpiece. -

#### Ricochet \_



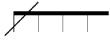
Bartok pizz. \_

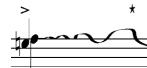


Tone colour variation (the wavy graphics are indicate pitch inflection).

### distort

play sul tasto (near fingerboard) with slow bow speed. \_

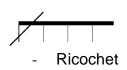




### **Notes for Cello Performance**

## S.T; S.P; M.S.P

- sul tasto, sul ponticello, molto sul ponticello



## (h) ↔ p < d + t # (h)</p>

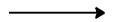
- Quartertones

## Ord.

- Ordinary position.



- Suddenly crescendo at the end/ vice versa.



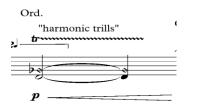
- Gradually change.



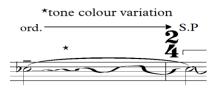
- Half-press on the string.



- Circular motion with bow stroke (emphasis noise and the harmonics).



- The 1<sup>st</sup> finger depresses the fundamental note whilst the 4<sup>th</sup> finger trills graphic indication again (colour/pitch).



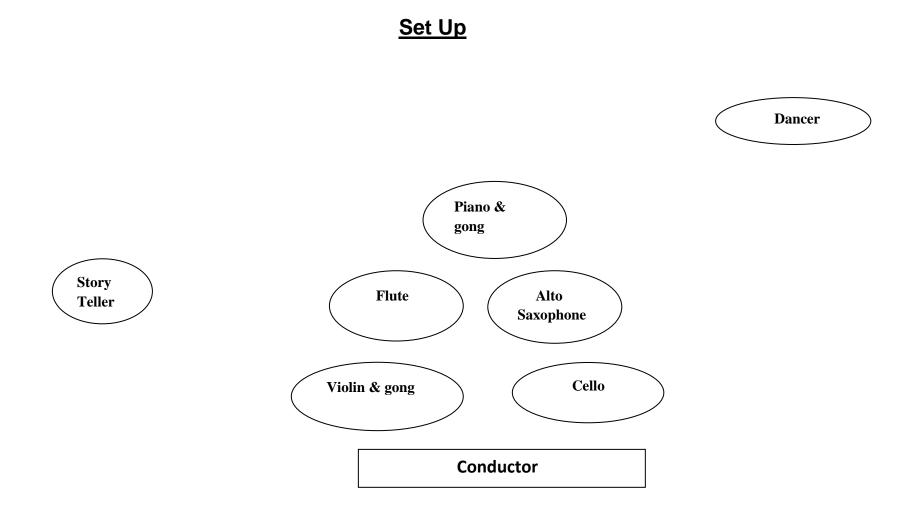
- Tone colour variation (the wavy graphics are indicate pitch inflection).

# tailpiece

- Bow tailpiece.

# distort

- Play sul tasto (near fingerboard) with slow bow speed.



## "Tōng" -通-

#### Story Teller (texts)

Cue 1. (Bar .1) approx. 45 second

'Mengahau Ceremony- These rituals are for the purpose of restoring the harmonious relationship between the spirit world and human society. Dance plays a significant role in Lotud's rituals and ceremonies. On the other hand, the dance performance is presented as a full length performance that functioned as an integral part of the ceremonies as a prelude to the ritual of presenting offerings for the deities and the spirits.'

\*Stop 2-3 second before recite the following texts-

'The ceremony starts with the hitting gong ritual...'

Cue 2. (Bar .43) (Approx. 15 second)

'At the beginning of the ceremony, the atmosphere is mournful. This is why the

Mengilau group would recite the *rinait* in a slow and sad tune.'

Cue 3. (Bar .57) (Approx. 50 second)

'The *rinait* contains a conversation between the spirits of the ancestors and their descendants who are sending them offerings. (approx.15)'

*'Tantagas* would recite the dialogue on behalf of the spirits and the family members. It is as if they are listening themselves talking to their ancestors (approx.20).'

'It is believed that the Sumayau Dance is performed for the spirits and the deities of the Lotuds (approx.15).' Cue 4 (Bar.115) approx. 15 second

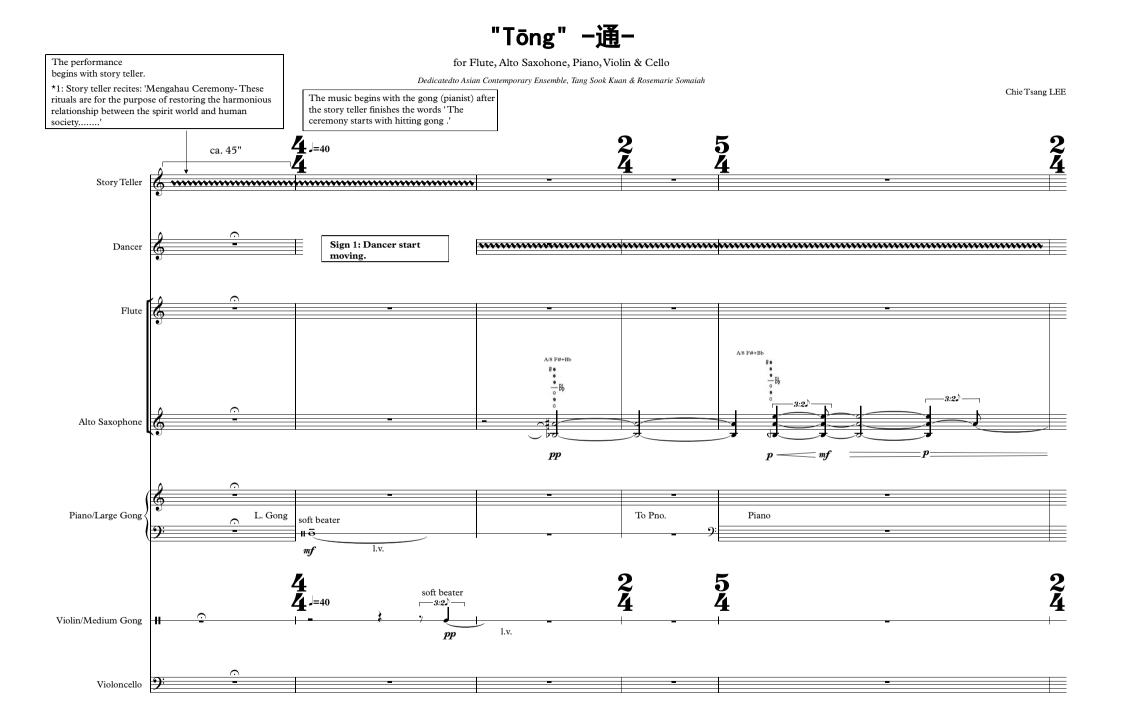
'The morning of the seventh day, *tantagas* go around the villages nearby to inform that the Rolun will be floated away at late afternoon.'

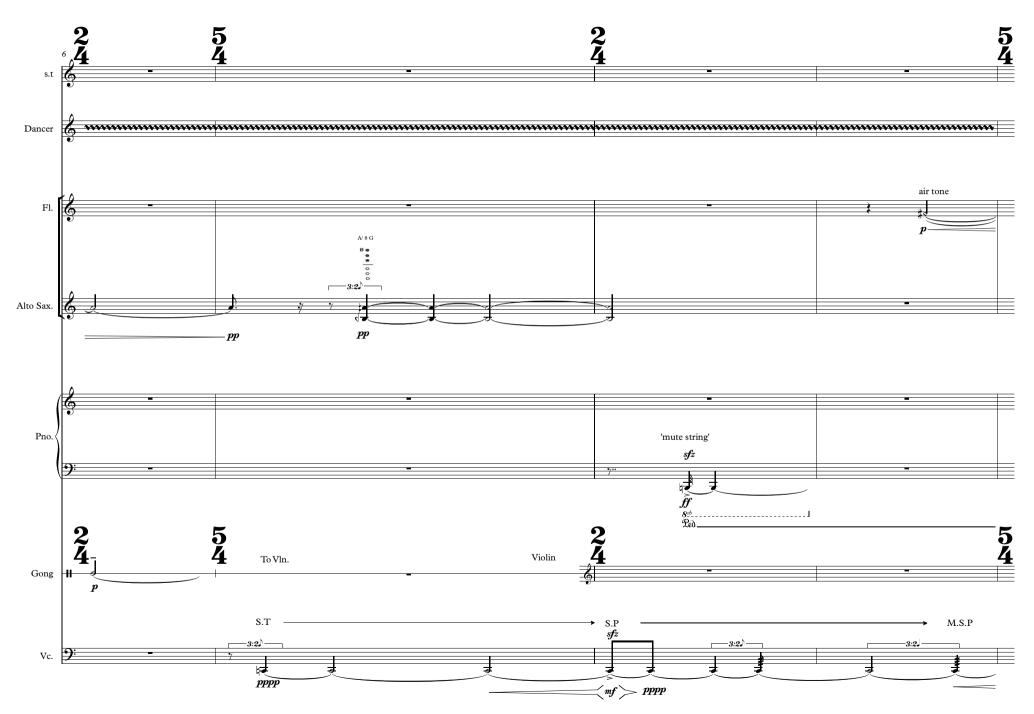
Cue 5 (Bar.116) approx. one min

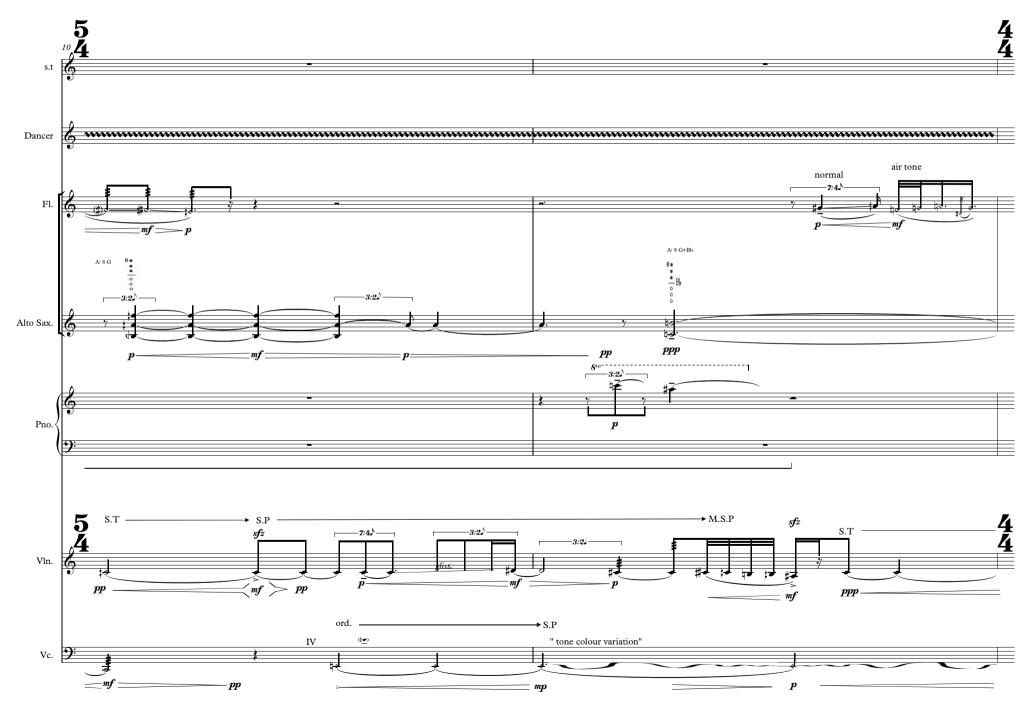
'This is believed to attract the evil spirits to follow the *tantagas* to the riverside later on.The Rolun would be floated away on the river. It is believed that the evil spirits and diseases would drift away with the Rolun.'

'The villagers would ensure that the Rolun is not stuck anywhere near their villages, otherwise the spirits and diseases would escape from the Rolun and affect the whole village.'

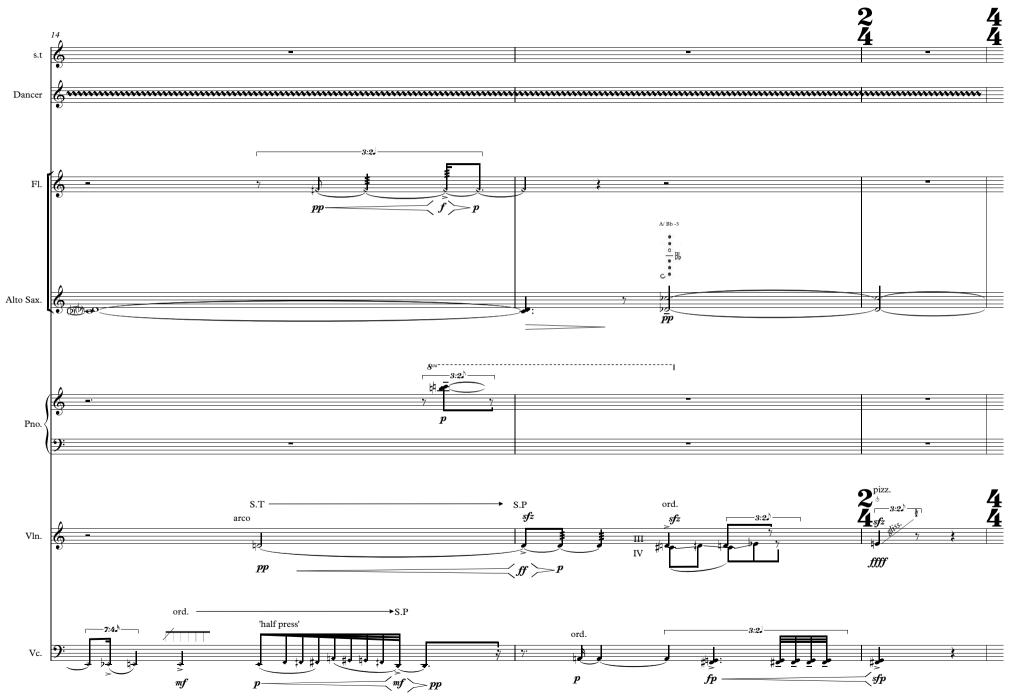
\*The texts is contributed by Tang Sook Kuan (the dancer)

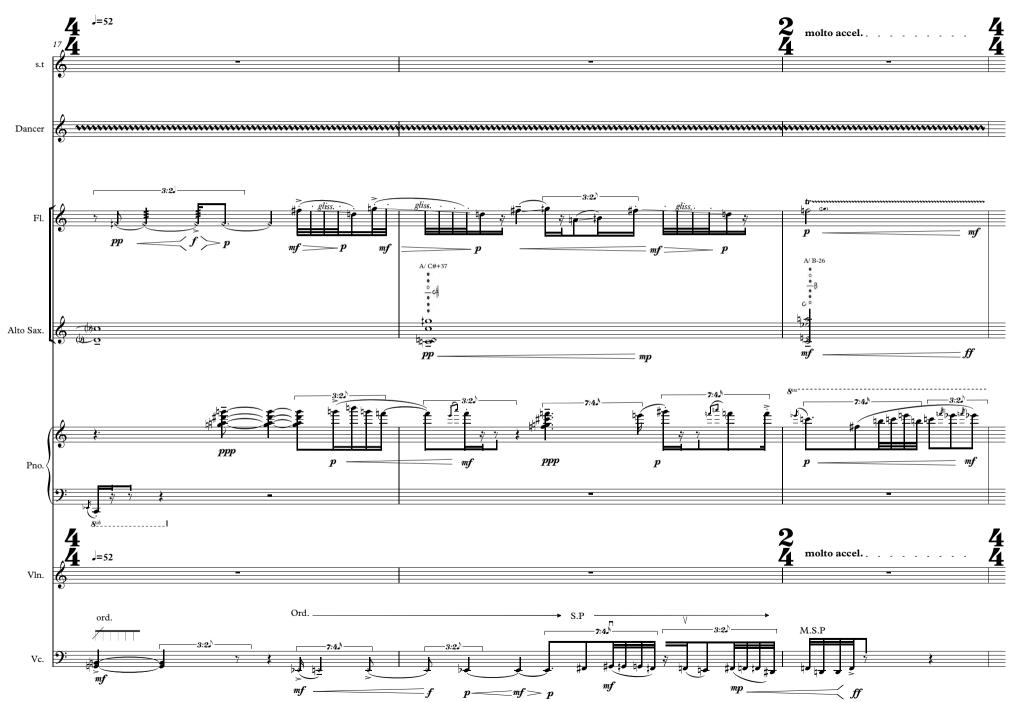




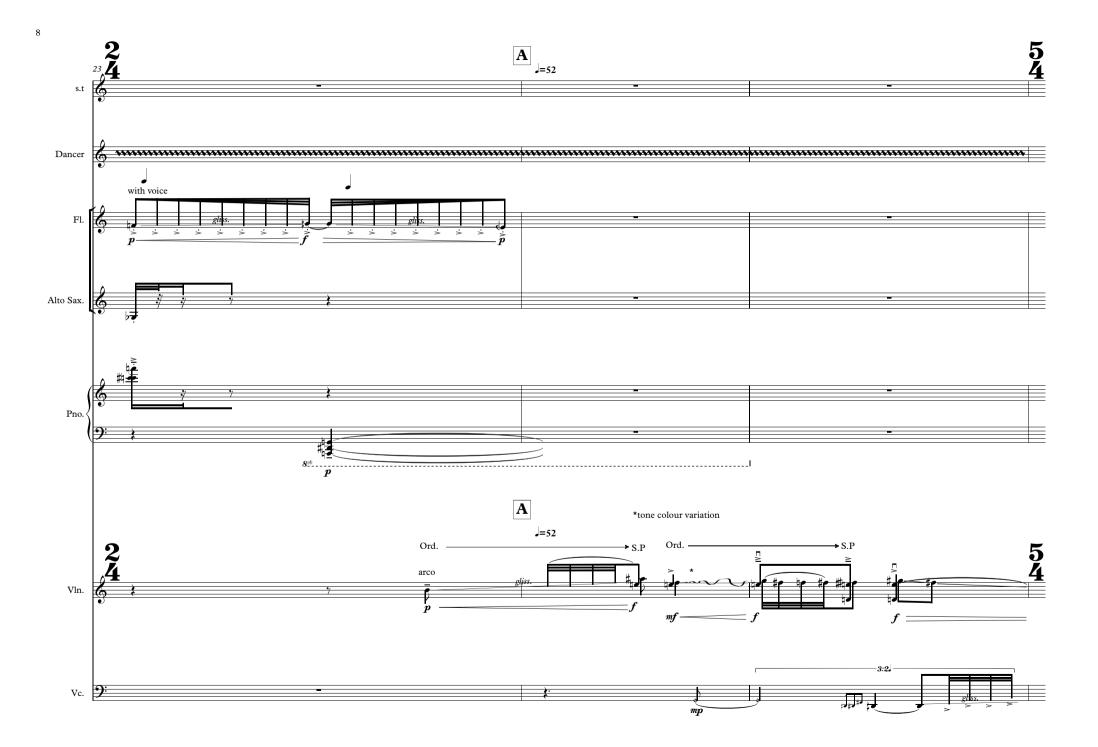






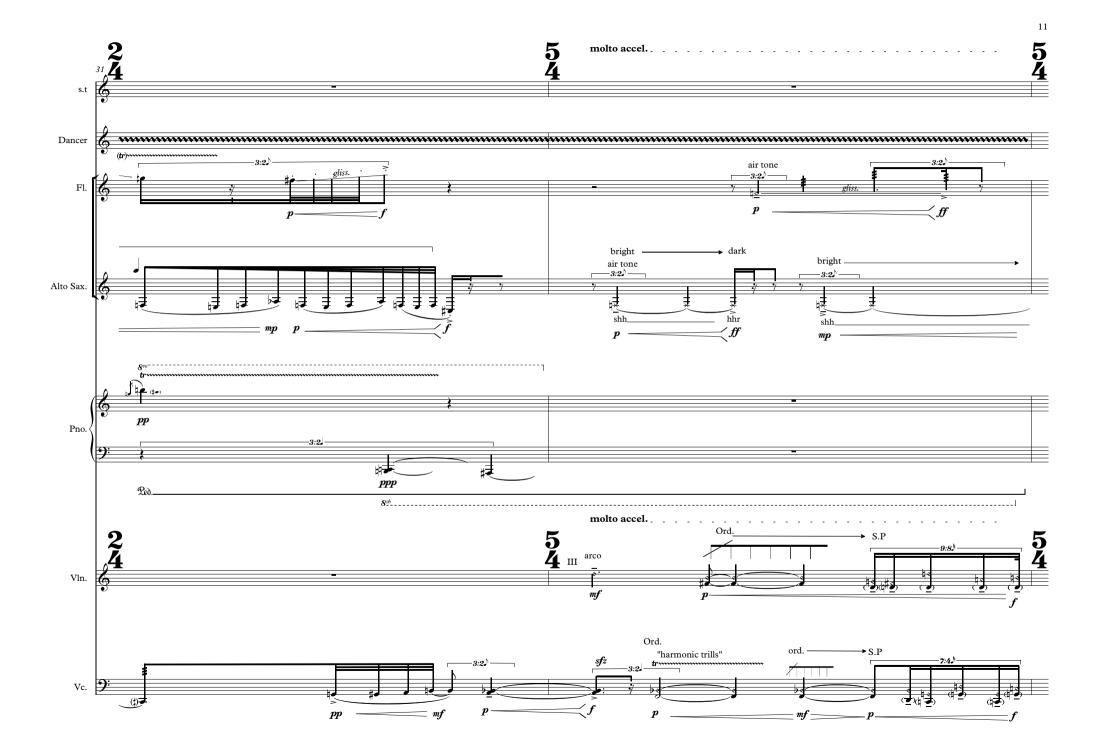


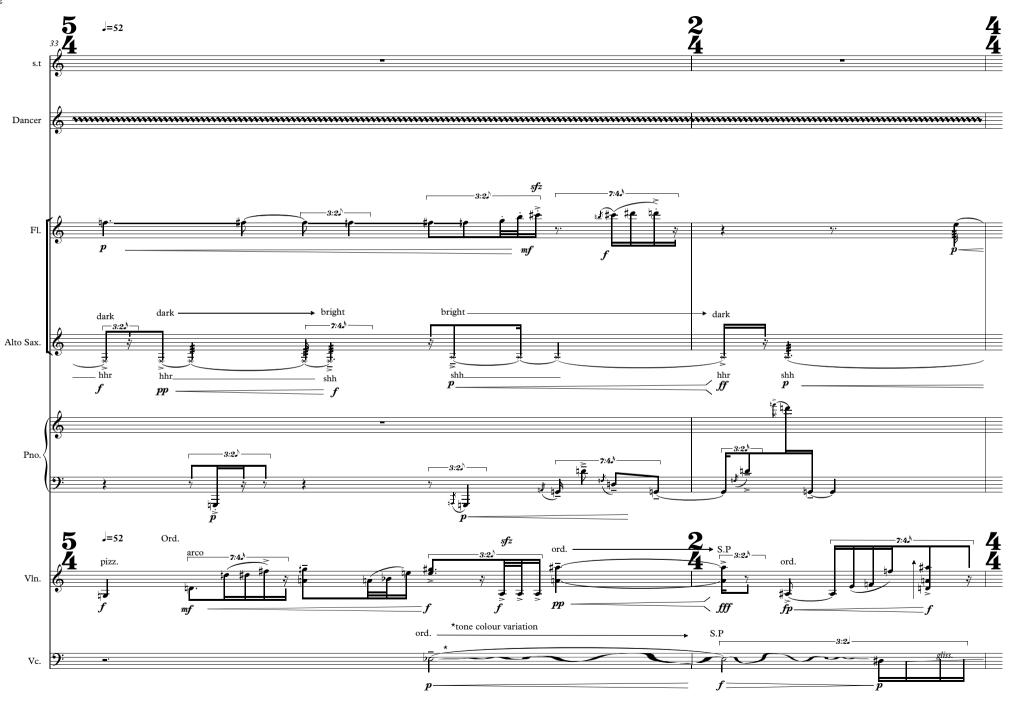


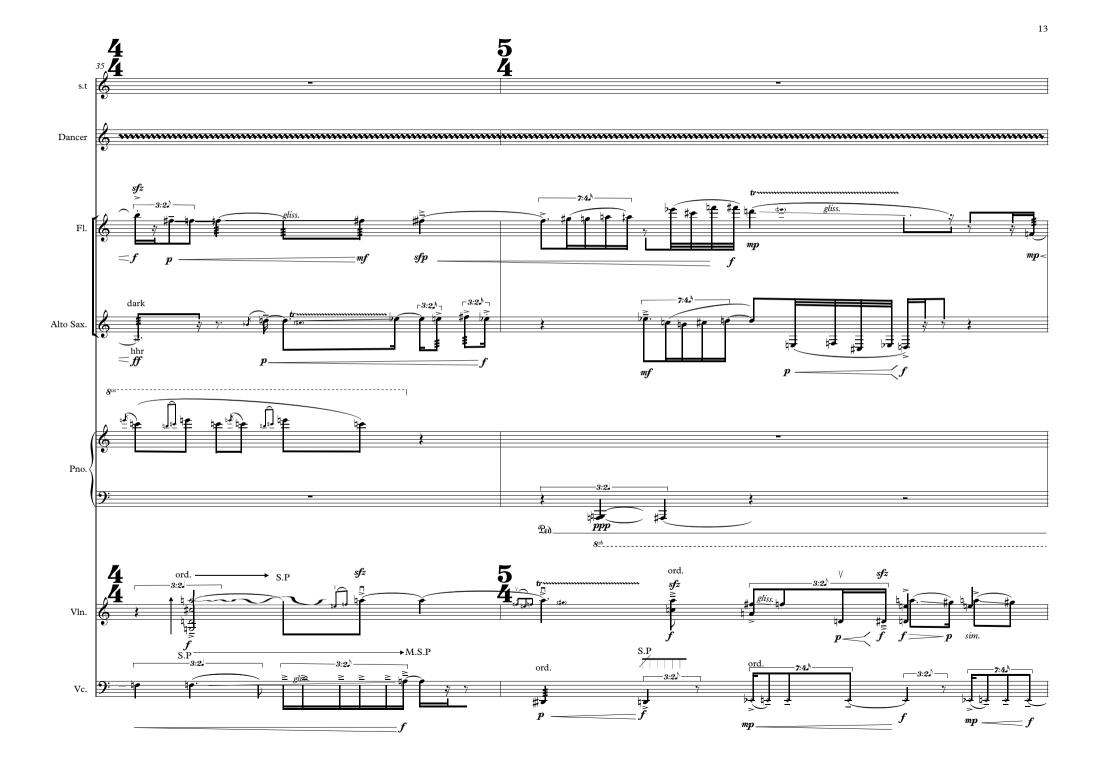




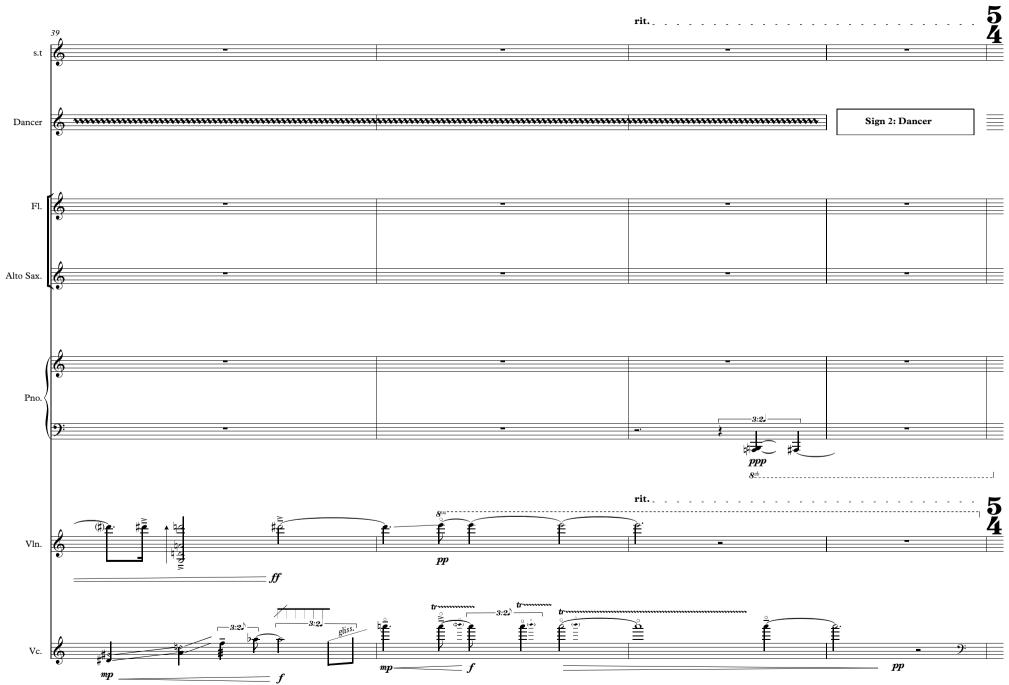


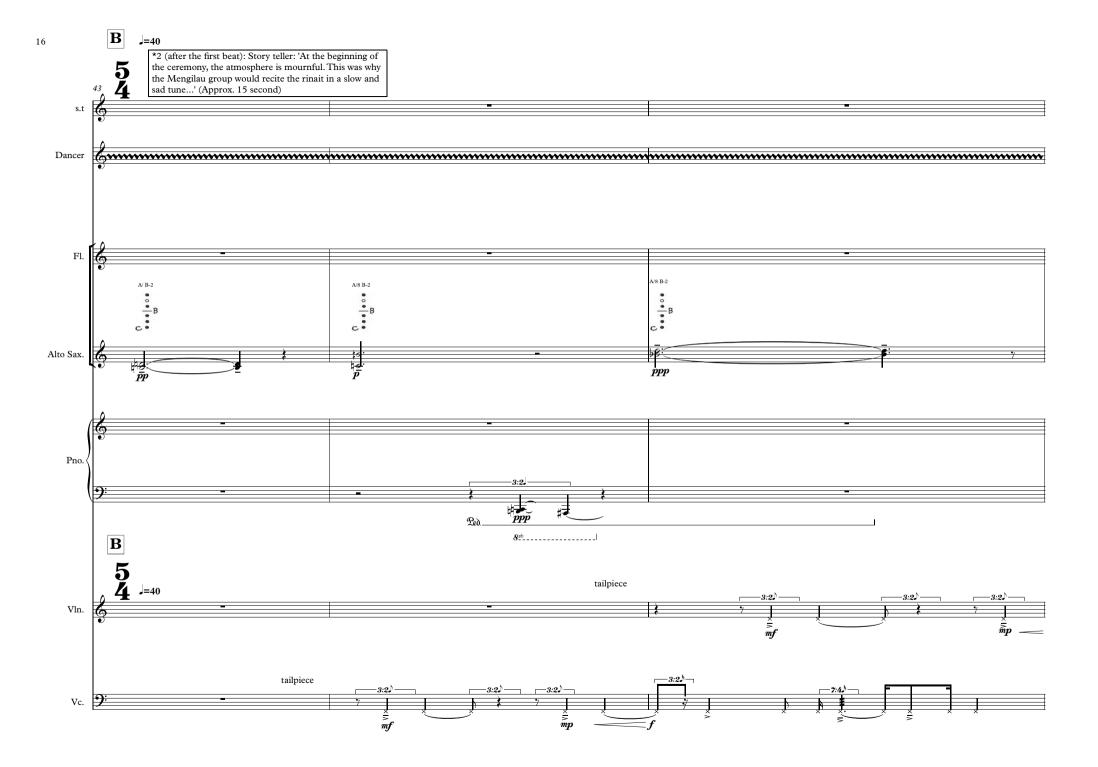


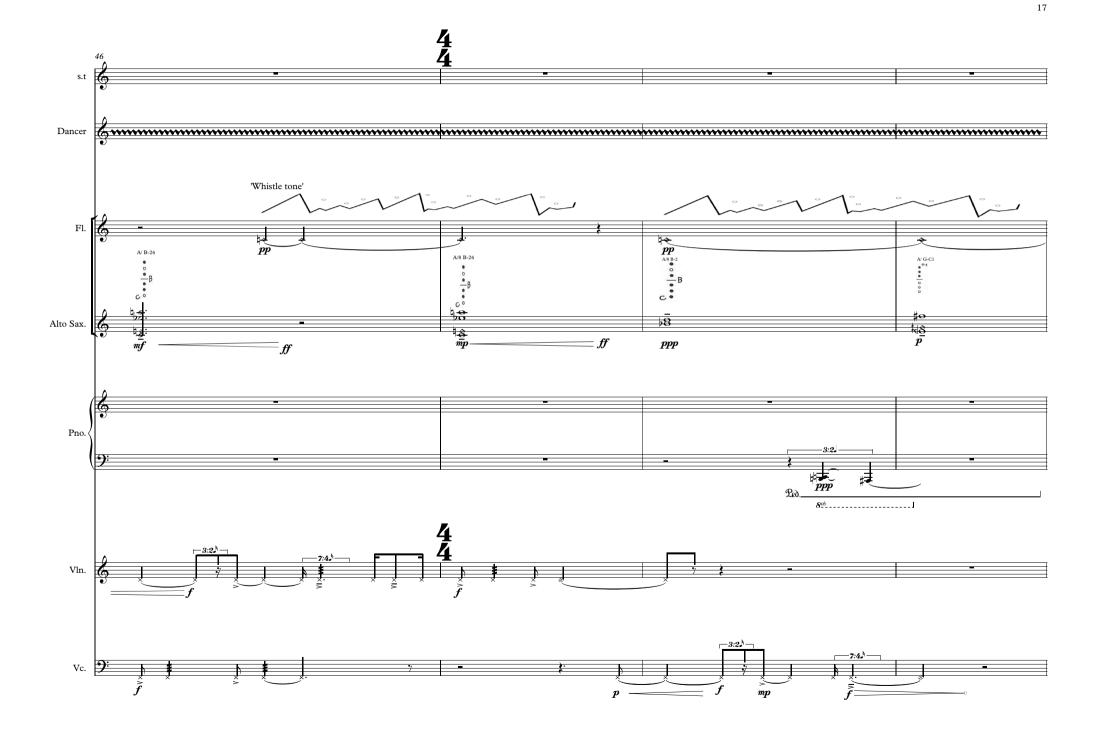


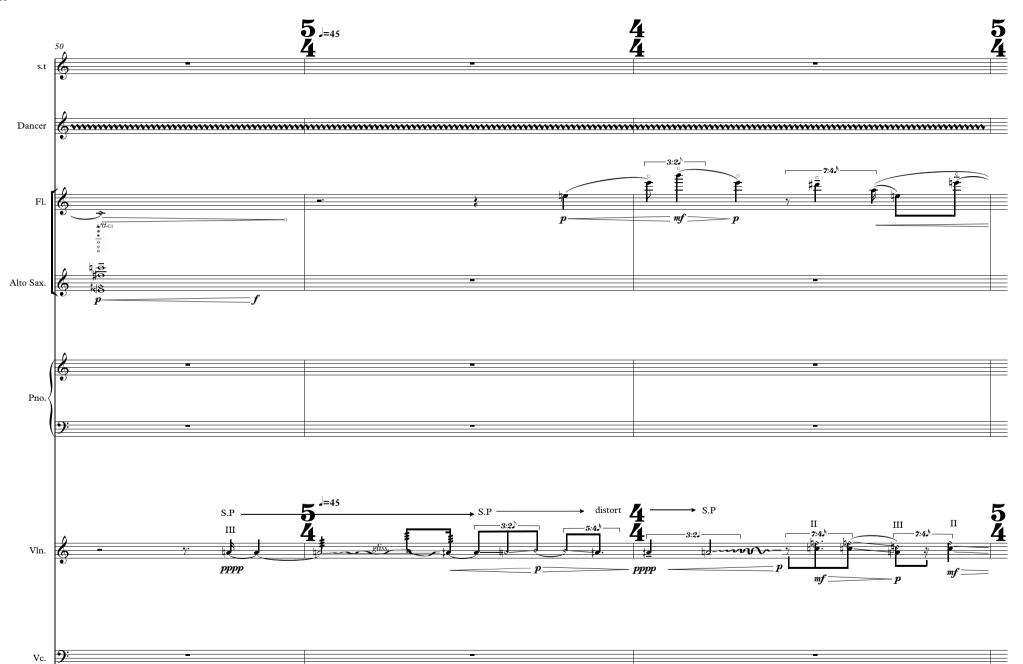


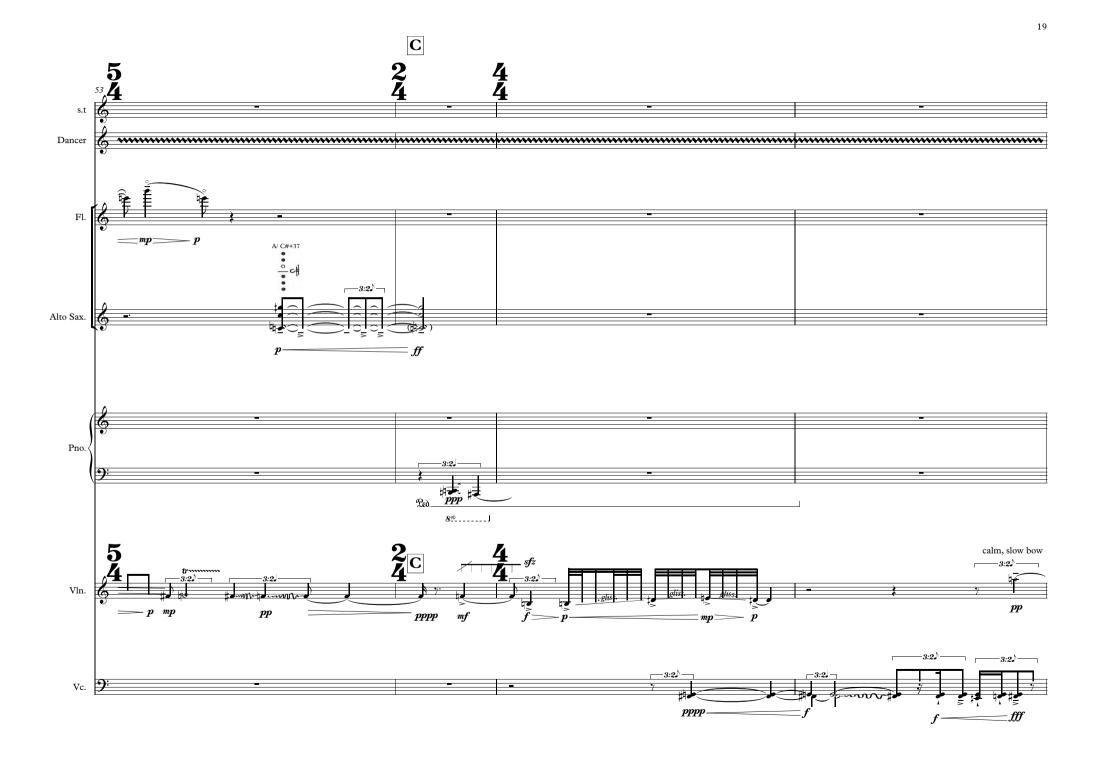




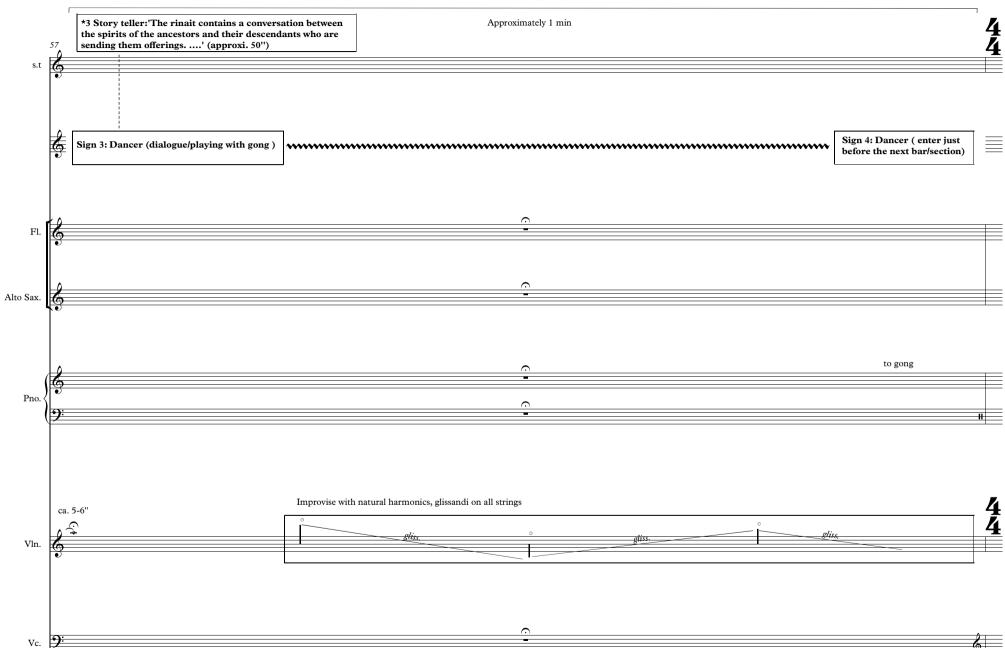


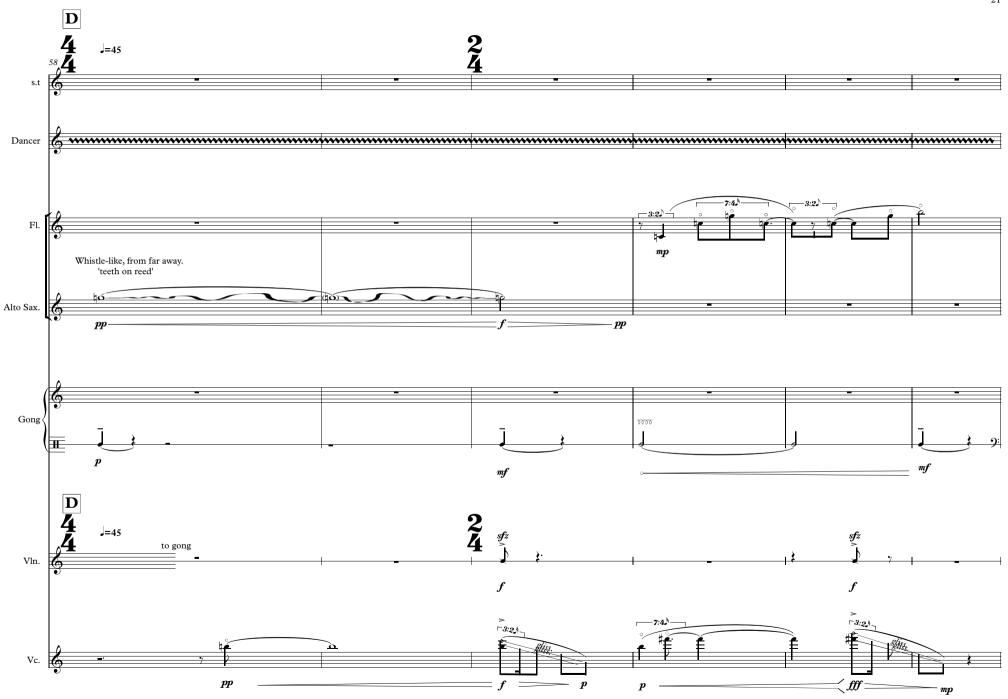


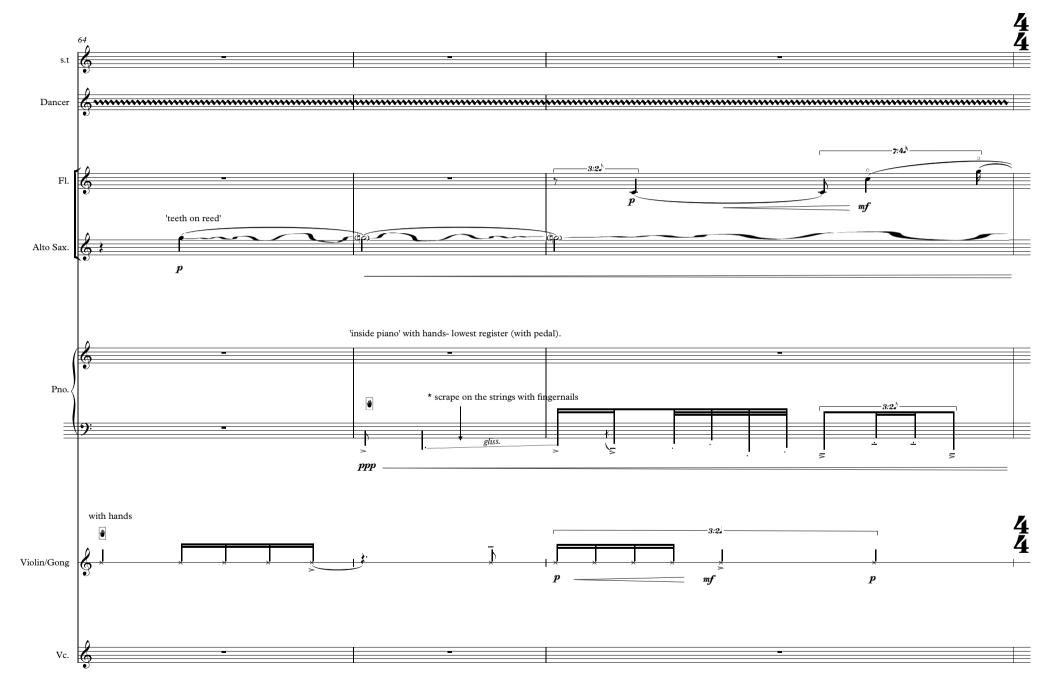


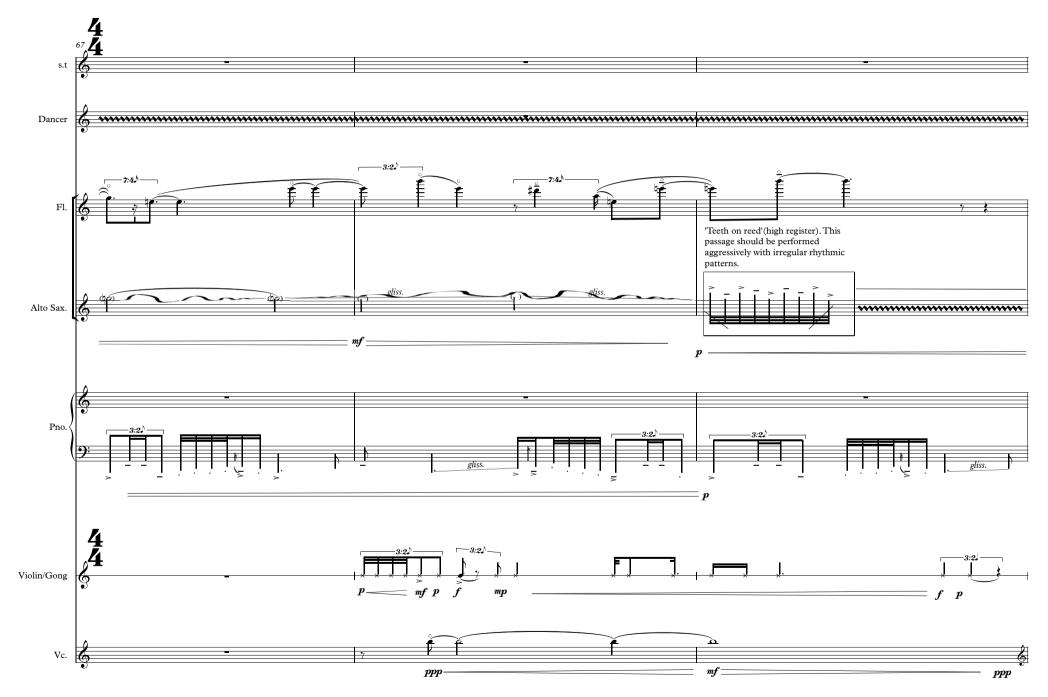


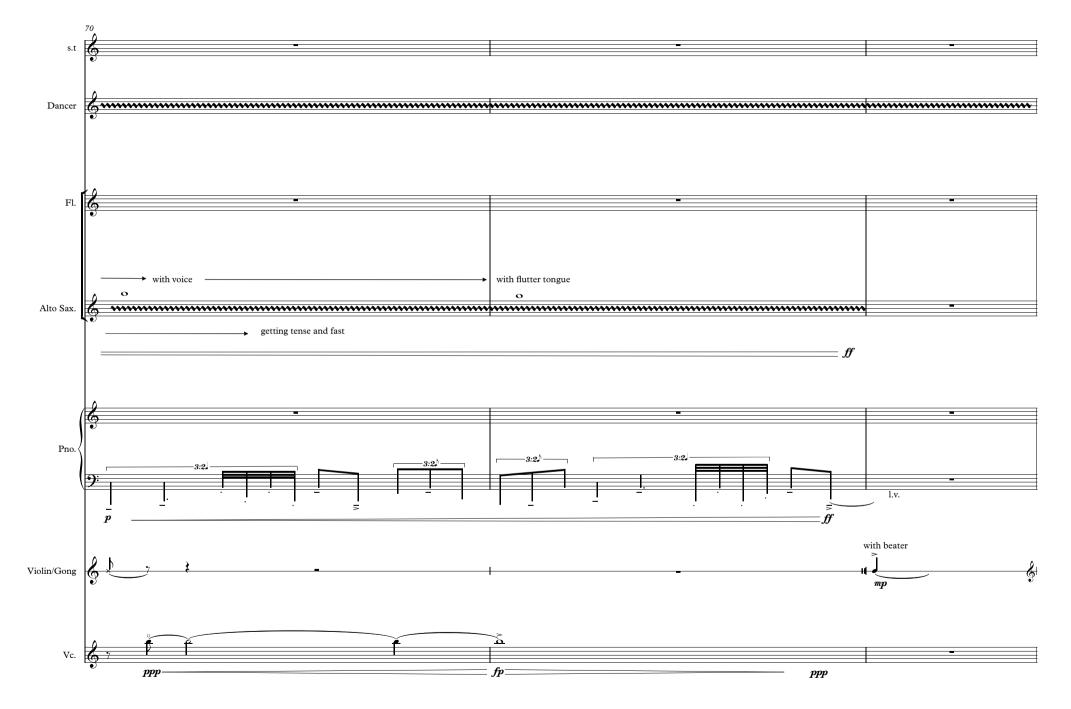
#### Senza Tempo

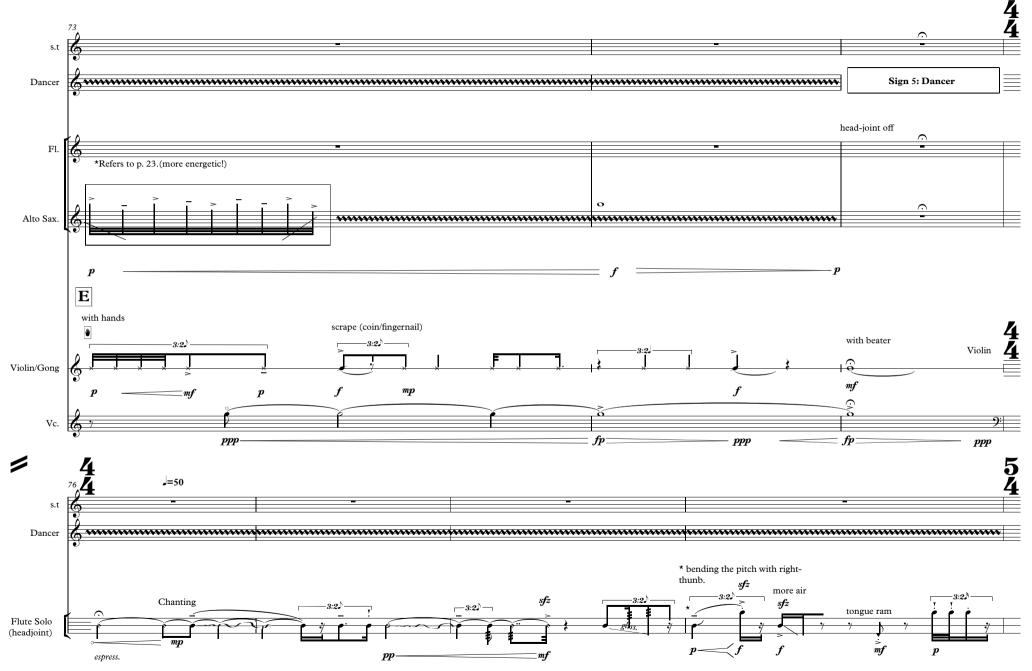




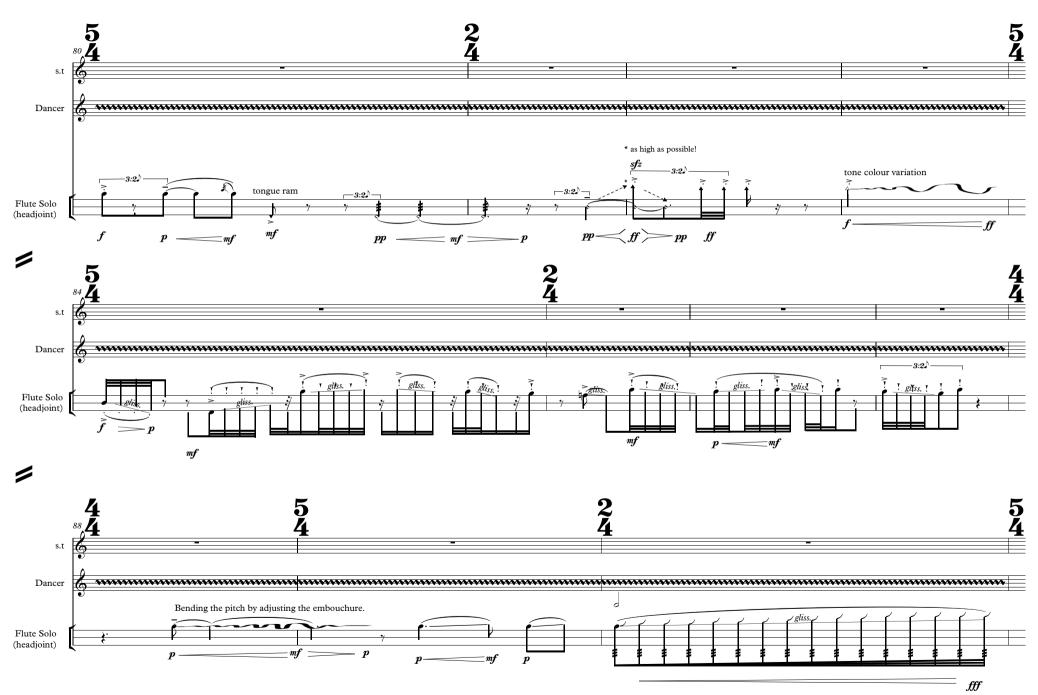


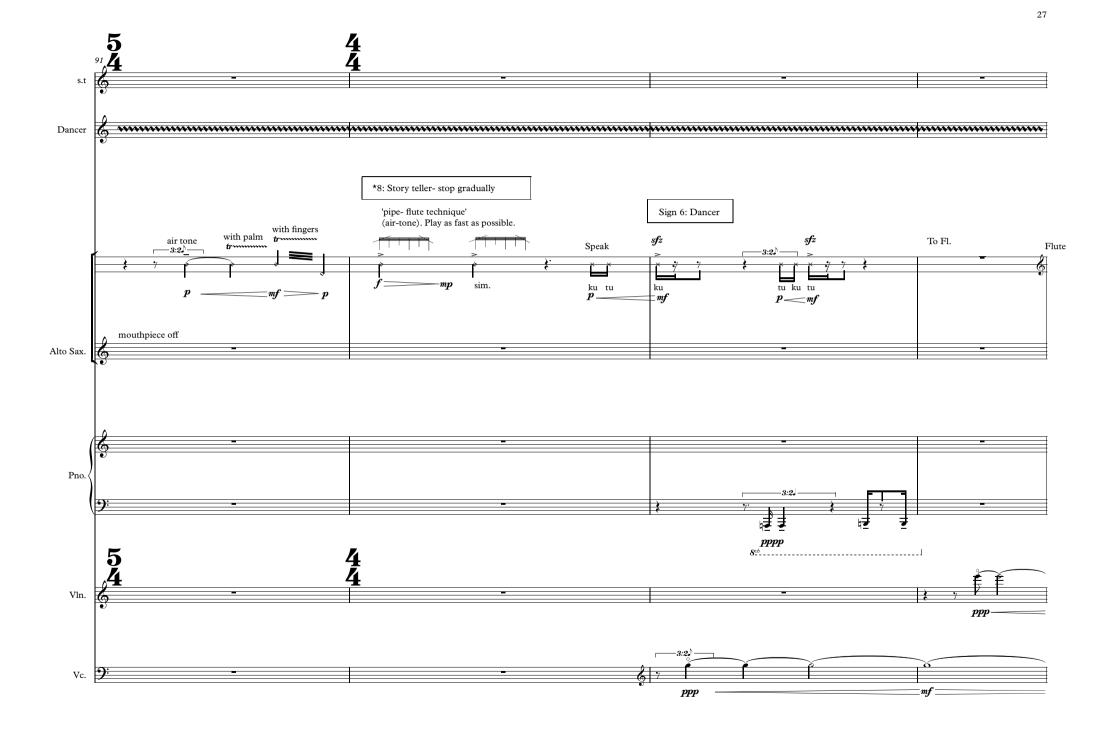


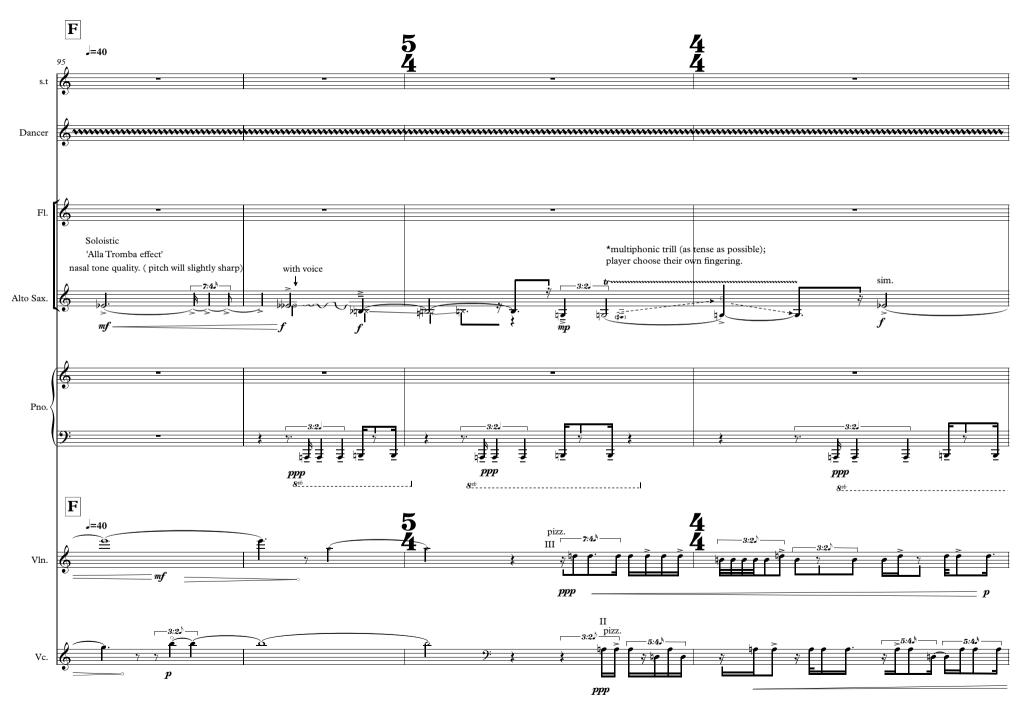


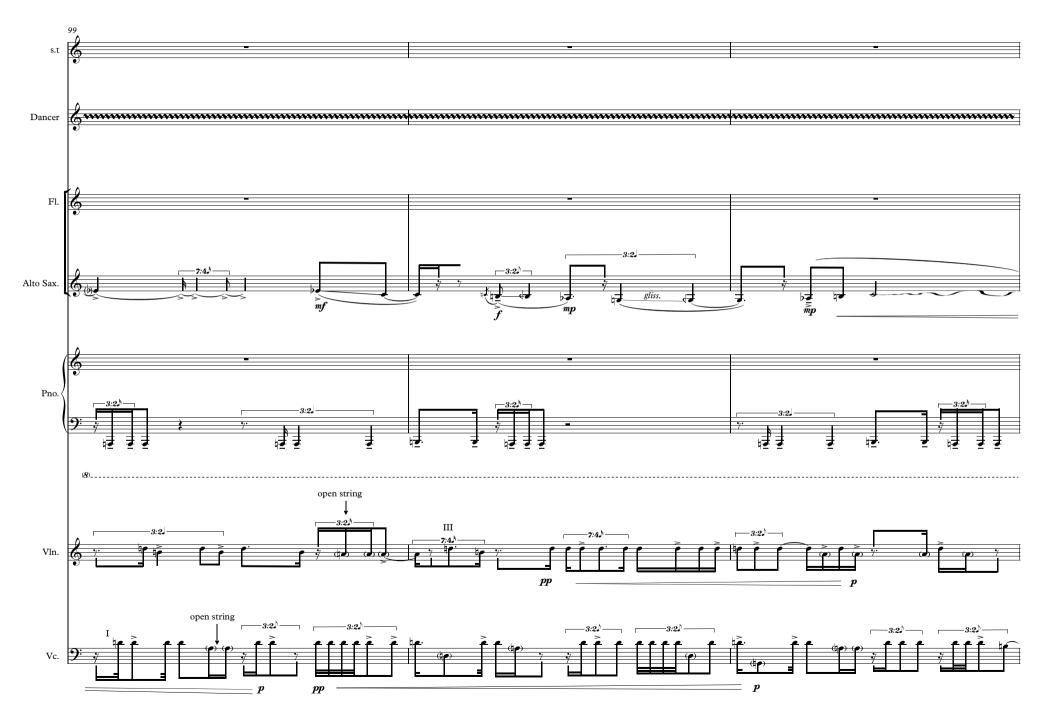


\*The lowest line: use right hand/palm to cover the hole of the head-joint.

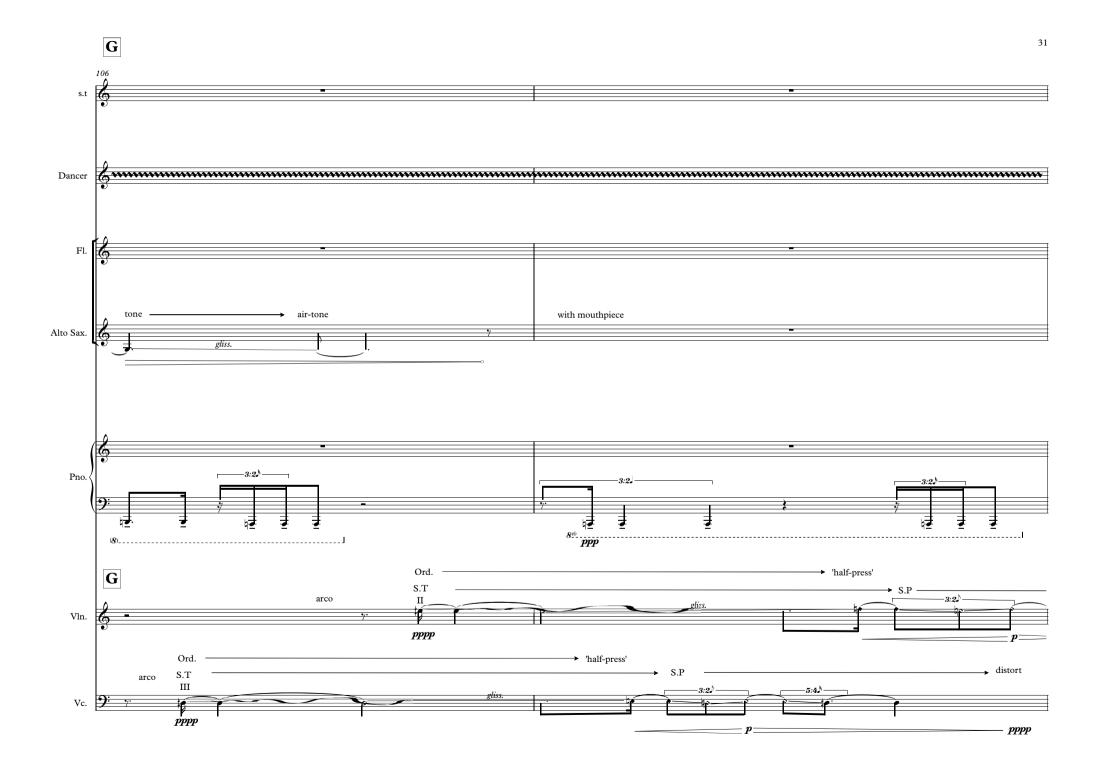


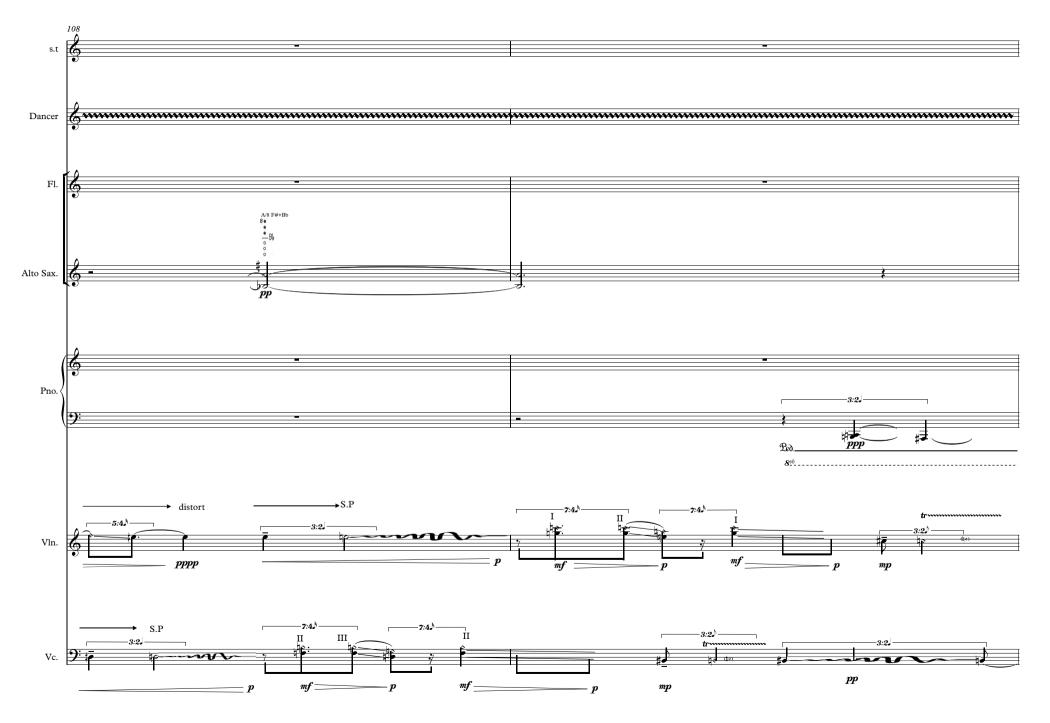


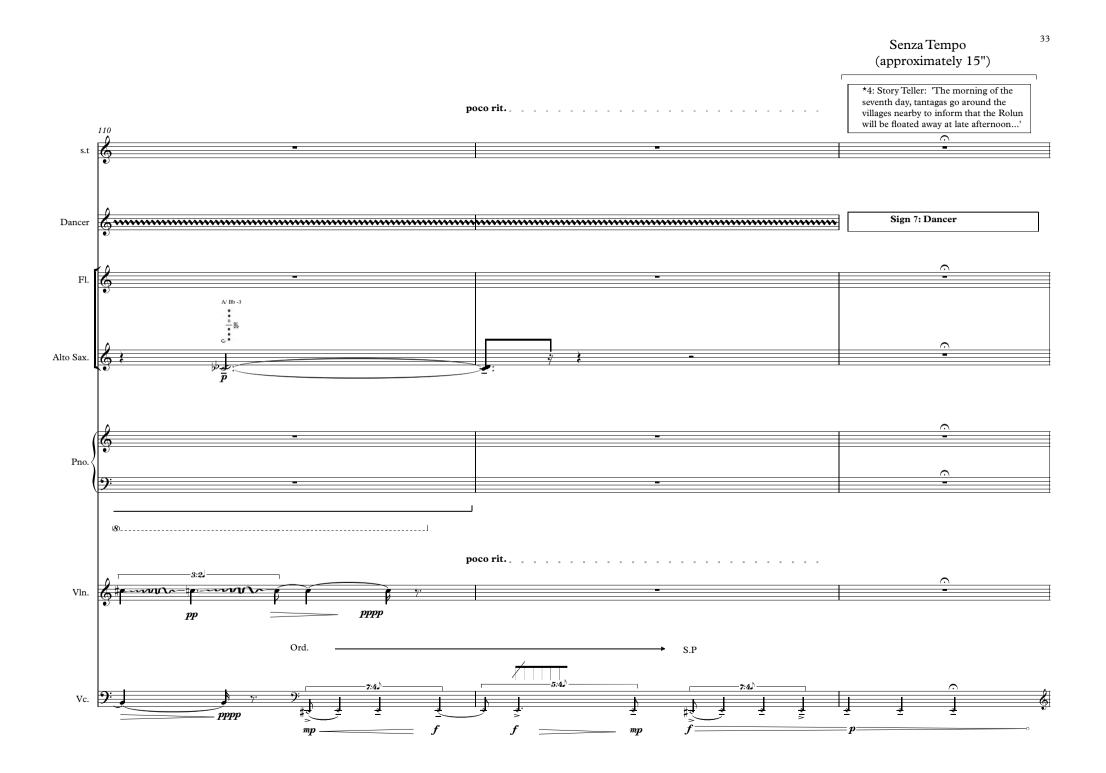


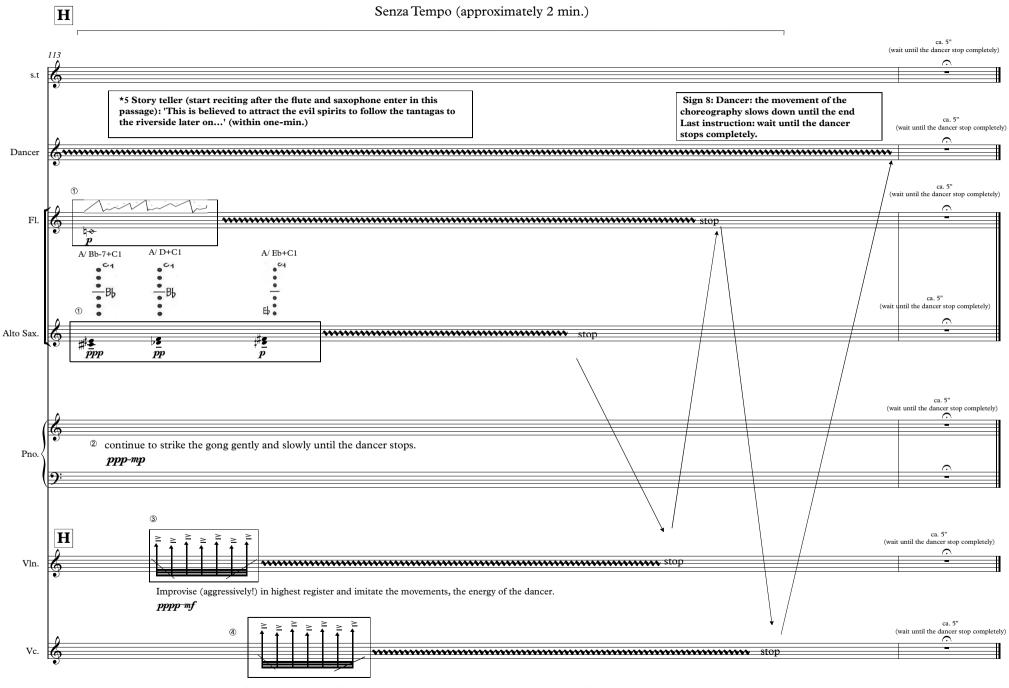












Improvise (aggressively!) in highest register and imitate the movements, the energy of the dancer.

pppp-mf