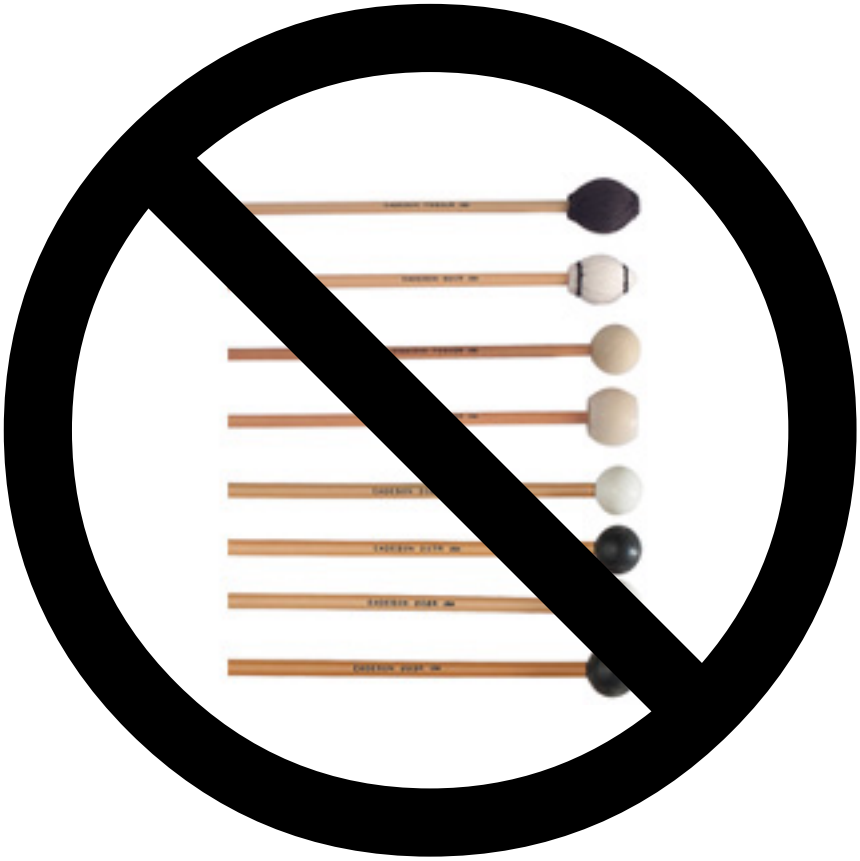
Score

Hands On!

For Percussion Quartet

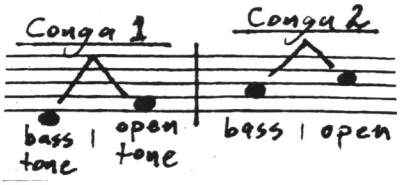
Michael Fiday



Performance Notes

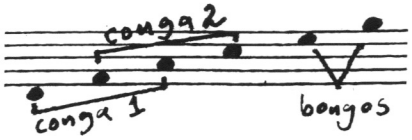
Instrumentation

1. All 4 players need the following instruments:
   - 1 set of hi-hat cymbals
   - 1 tambourine (mounted)
   - 1 set of bongos
   - 2 conga drums: Medium and Large

   Notation: 

2. Larger size cymbals should be used for the hi-hat, and should be adjusted at such a distance from each other to produce the loudest and sharpest attack possible.

3. All drums (congas, bongos) should be chosen and tuned so that 6 distinct "pitches" – low to high – are available, i.e.:

sounding: 

(Note: in written notation, 'bass' and 'open' tones of congas are placed on adjacent spaces, even though the open tone of conga 1 will be higher than the bass tone of conga 2. This is for convenience.)

In addition, all players respective drums should be tuned as close as possible to each other, i.e. all conga 1's at same pitch, all conga 2's at same pitch, etc.

4. Players 2 and 3 share 1 vibraphone – always played with hands. (Fingernails work best for maximum sound.) Note: due to the subtlety of this effect in the context of the louder music, light amplification for the vibraphone is strongly recommended.

5. Stage set-up should be in a half-circle, with enough distance between each of the players to bring off the "talking drum" effect of passing music from one player to the other:

PERC. II — V I B E — PERC. III

PERC. I — PERC. IV

Notation

1. Hi-hat: = open, = close, = choke

2. Conga/bongo articulations:
   - > = slap stroke
   - ^ = very loud slap stroke
   - = strike with knuckles
   - · = dead stroke

Program notes

Hands On! was originally composed in 1993 for the Dutch percussion ensemble *Slagwerkgroep Den Haag*, who premiered it in a series of "stokkenthuis" concerts in which the players were forbidden to use drum sticks. All 4 players play the same instruments: congas, bongos, tambourine, hi-hat cymbal – all instruments usually played with either hands or feet. In addition, two of the players share a vibraphone, which is also played by the hands instead of with the customary mallets. The vibraphone functions entirely as a 'resonance' instrument, it's occasional entrances always masked by sharper, louder playing on other instruments – like momentary shades of blue peeking out behind a backdrop of darker, more aggressive lines. As the work unfolds the vibraphone also reveals a thin strand of a chord progression – all in the context of what is basically a rhythm-based music. Certain aspects of *Hands On!* were inspired by surface features of both Indian and West African drumming. The work was composed under the auspices of a Fulbright grant, and is dedicated to Louis Andriessen.

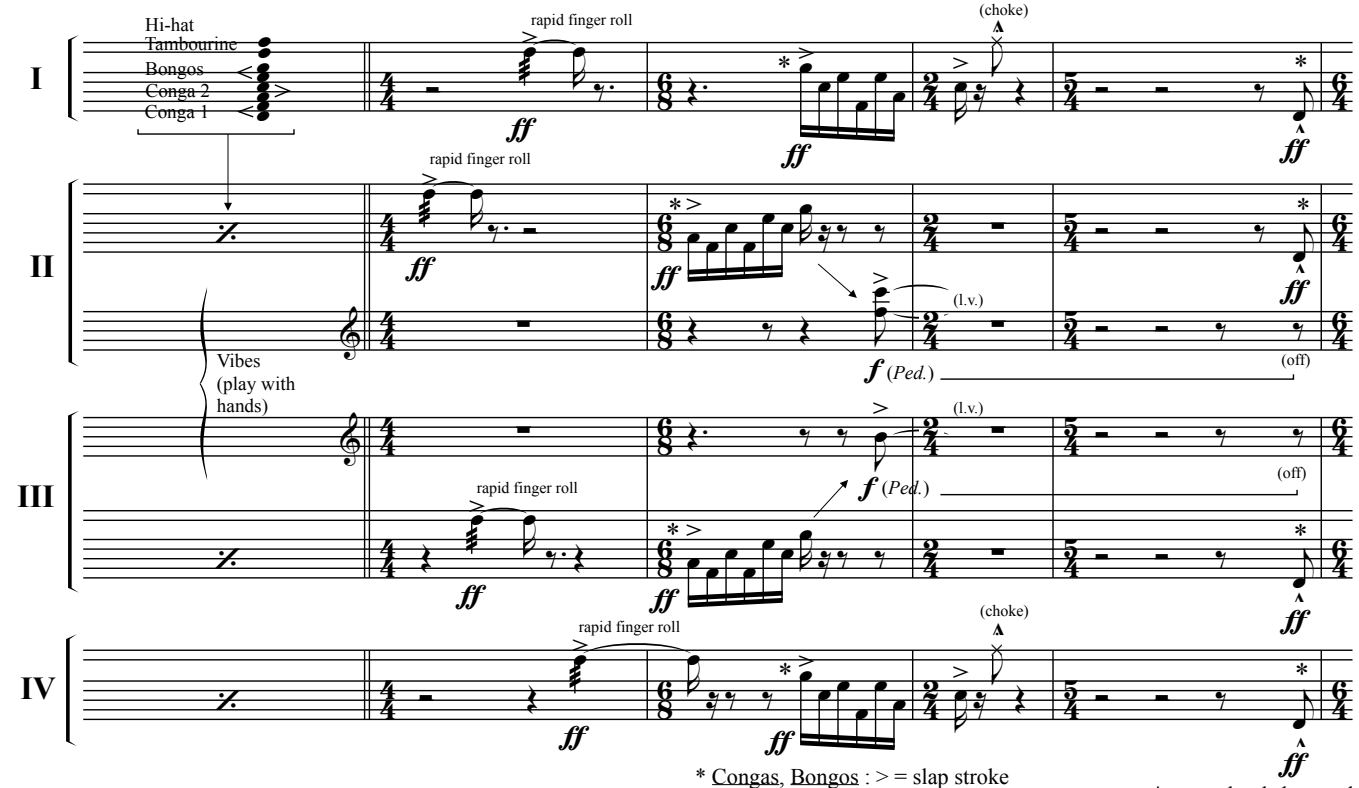
MF

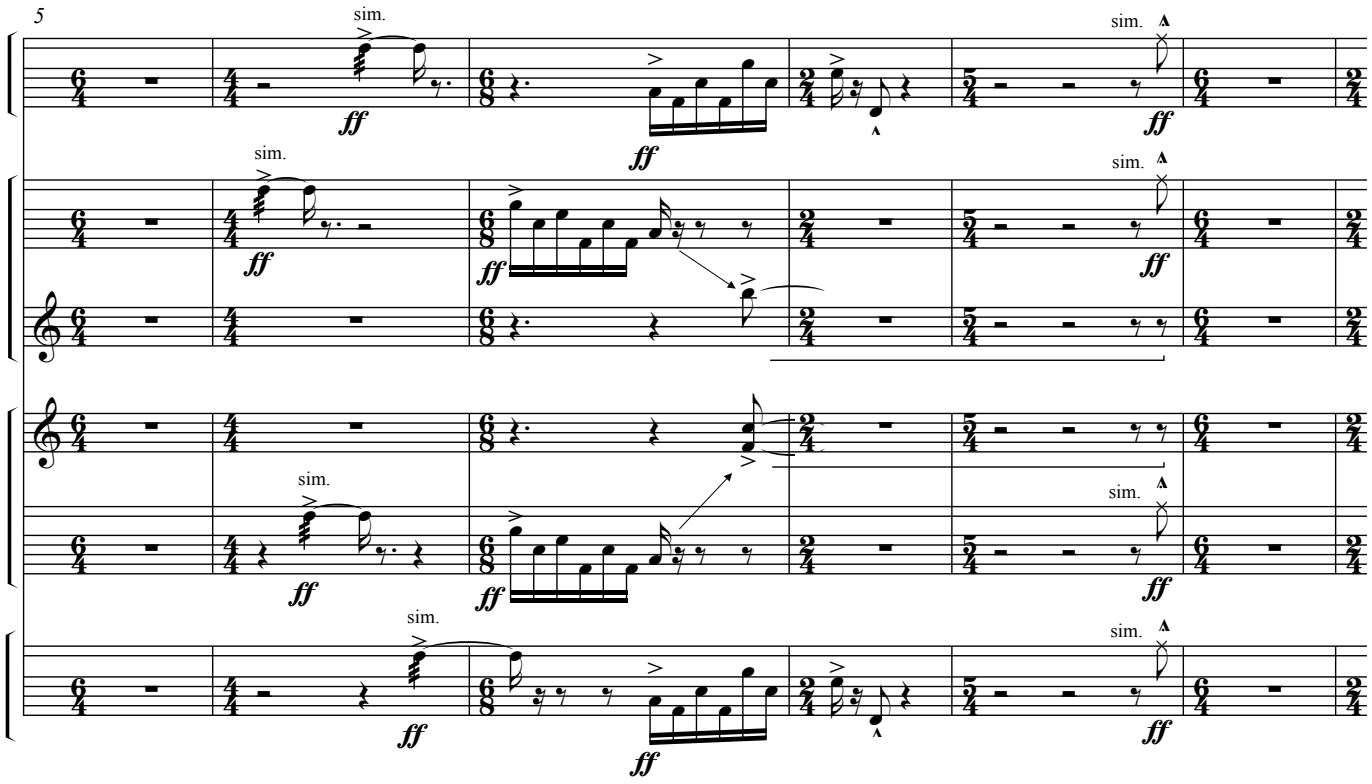
Hands On!

for percussion quartet

Michael Fiday
1993

Provoking, aggressive: ♩ = 140 (𝅘𝅥𝅯 always equal)





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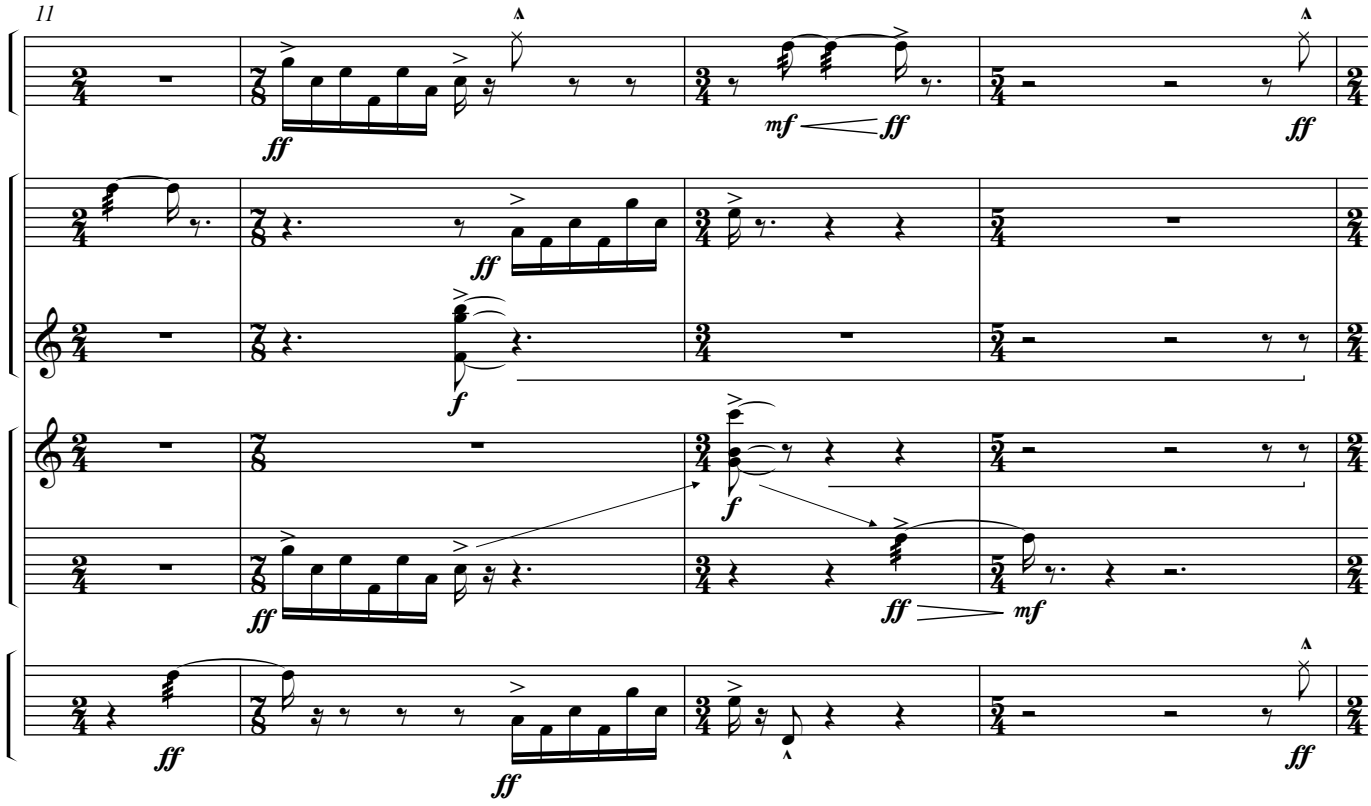
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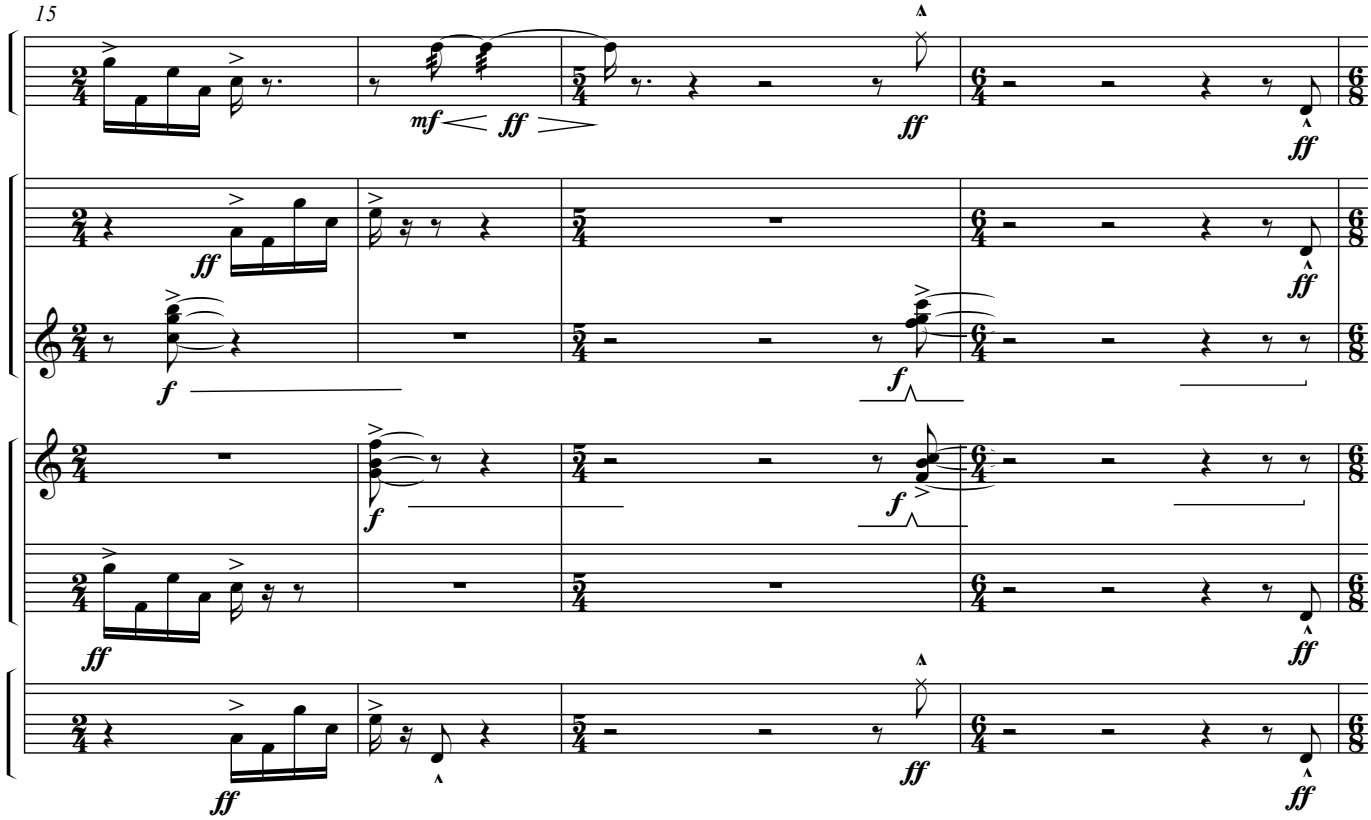
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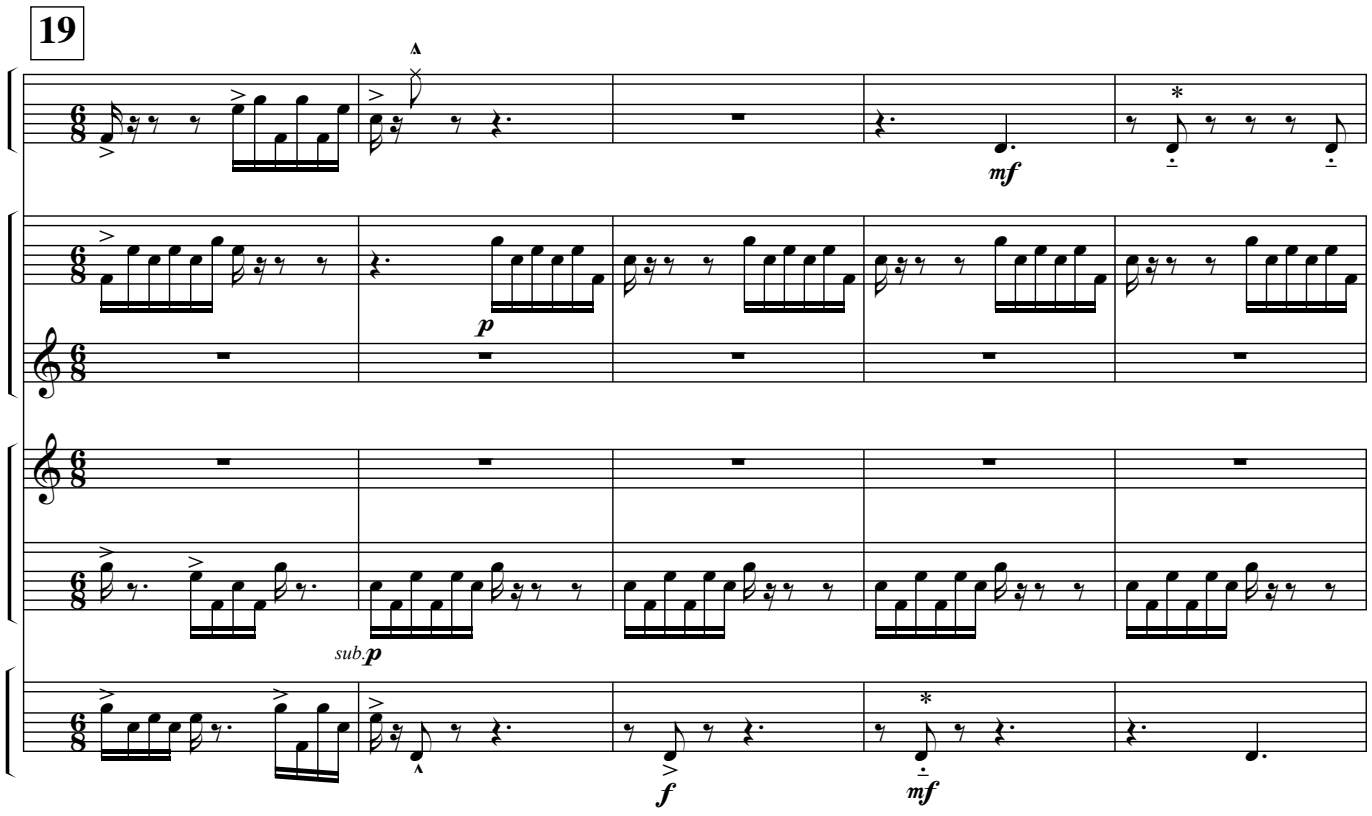
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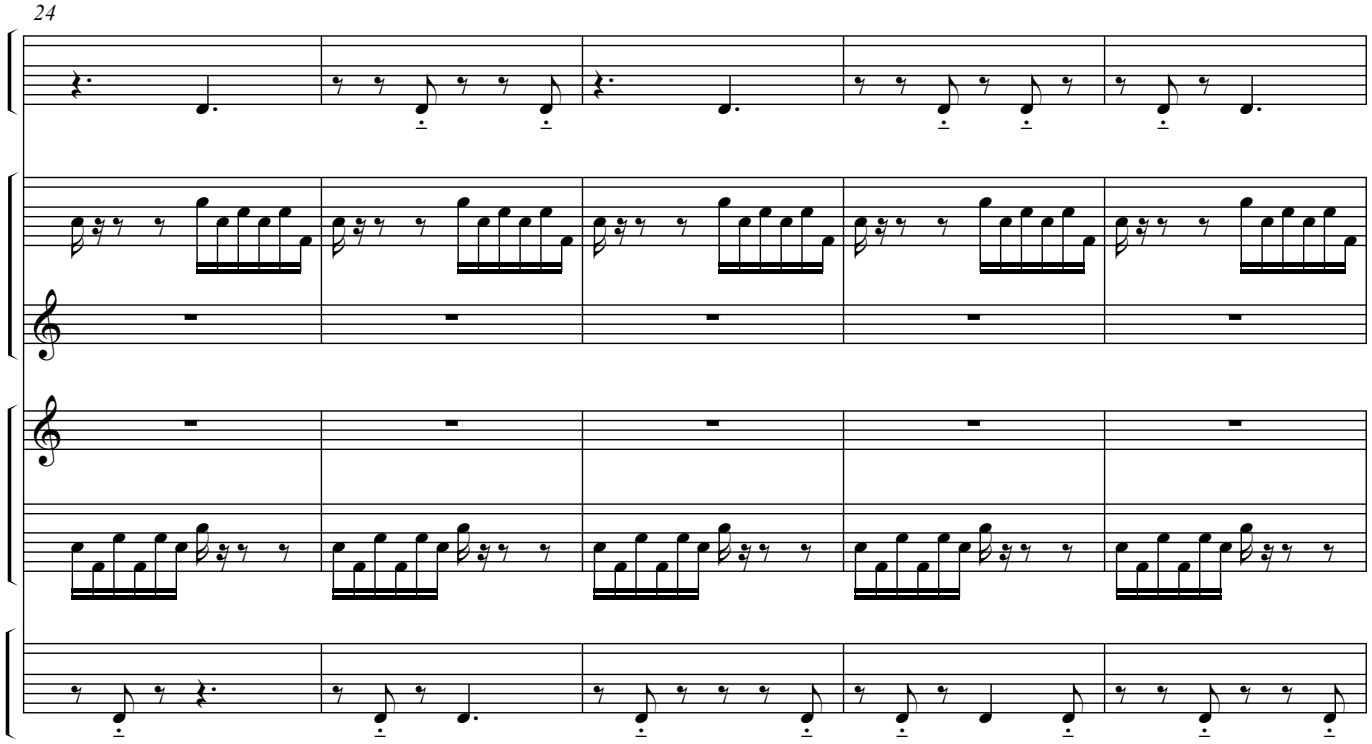
* : = strike with knuckles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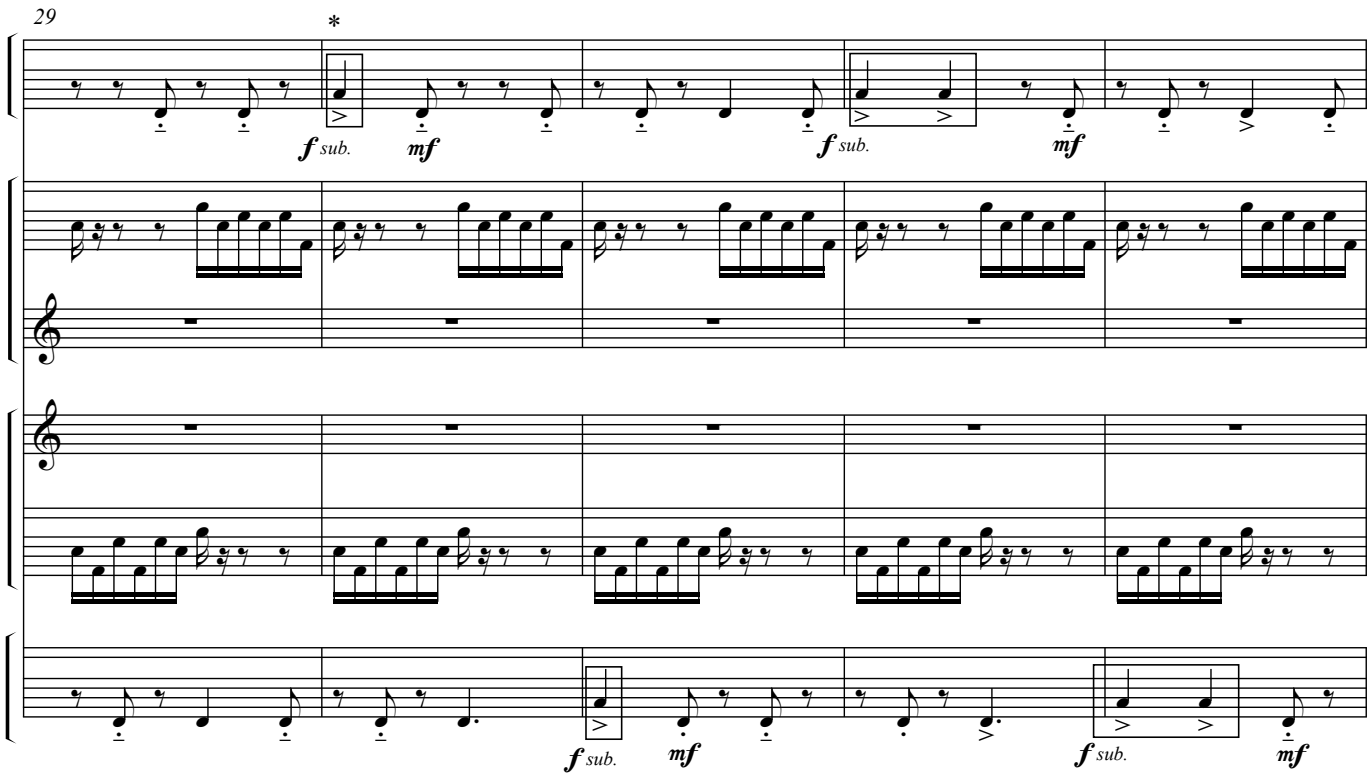
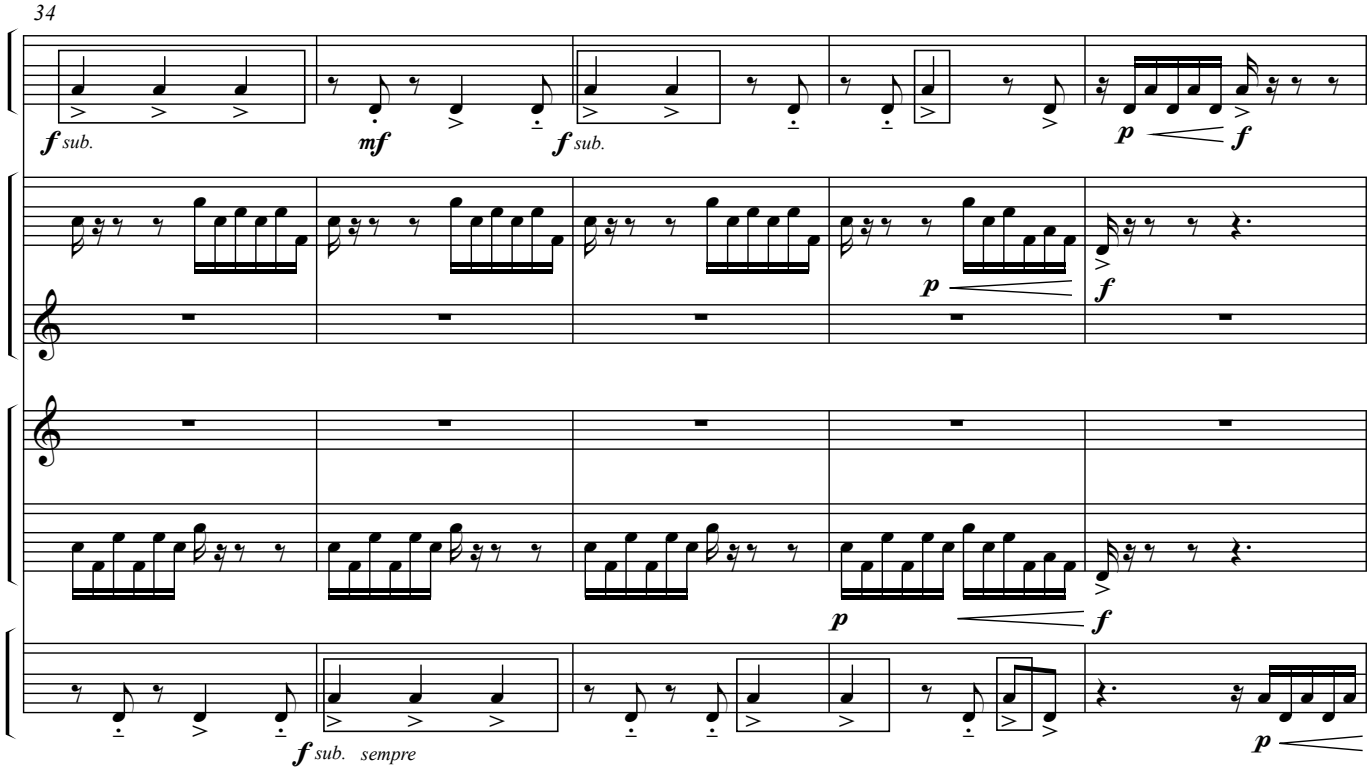
* boxed notes should stand out
from the rest of the ensemble