Last Island

for Saxophone

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Last Island

Isle Dernière

Instrumentation:

Bb Tenor Saxophone

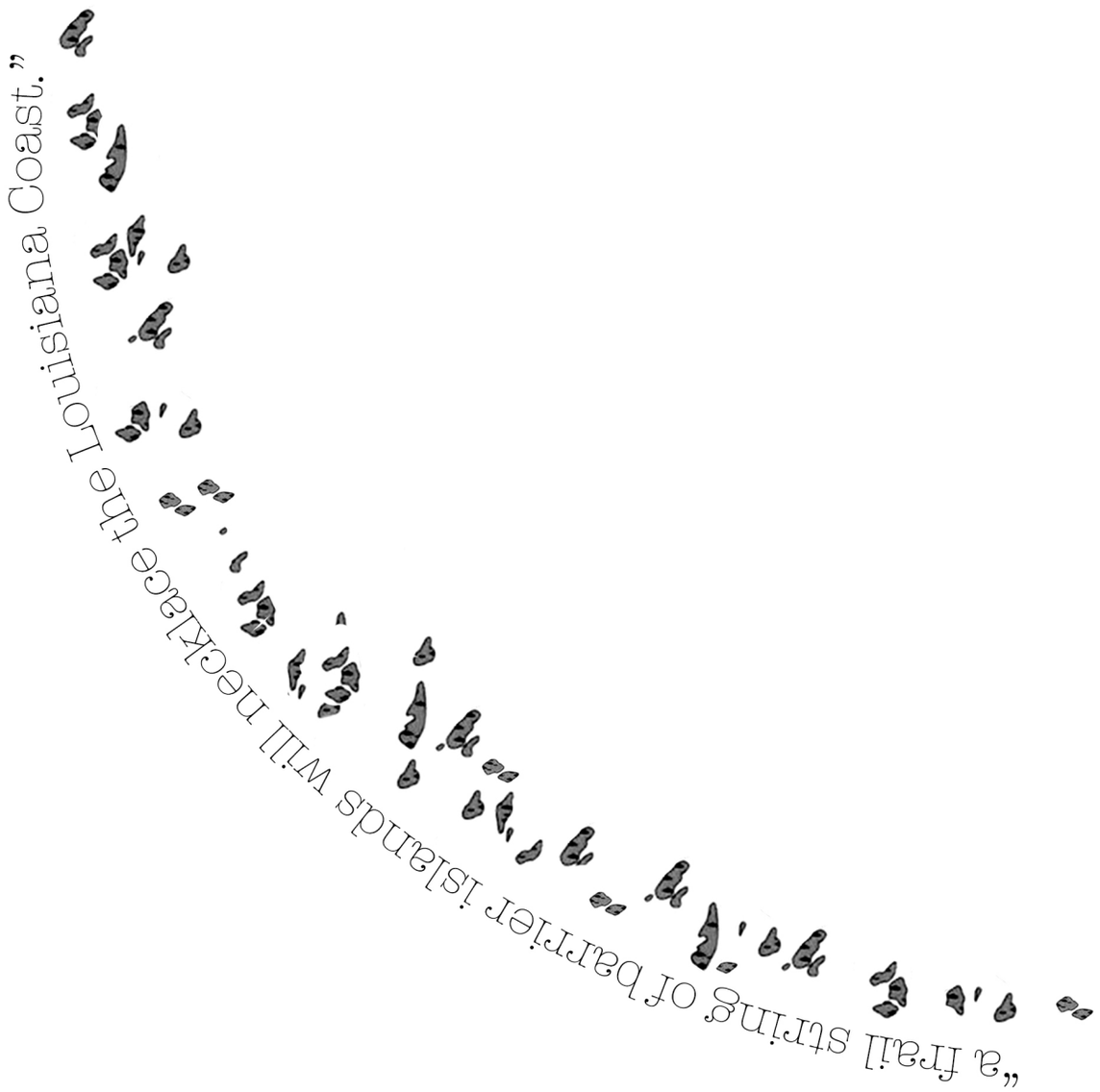
Eb Baritone Saxophone

For Ryan Muncy

Interpretive forward:

The Last Islands (Isle Dernières) were a frail string of barrier islands which ornamented the Louisiana Gulf Coast until they were nearly completely destroyed by the great hurricane of 1856. These islands served as our first line of natural defense from storms. One of the islands was also a vacation destination for New Orleanians.

As time has progressed, we've lost more and more of our barrier islands to storms and coastal erosion due to fracking. This imagery of something still and timeless being taken by a storm or industry has been on my mind, especially during this particularly active hurricane season. I can't shake the notion that as our land recedes, southernmost cities become today's "Last Island"- only instead of undisturbed nature, these new Last Islands are decorated with abandoned oil rigs/refineries, dead cypress forests and small little communities sinking into the Gulf.



Accidentals:

: quarter and eighth tones.
Quarter tones should be as close to in tune as possible most of the time. Eighth tones may be thought of more inflectionally as "a little sharp, a little flat". Roundings to the eighth tone generally range from 12-27¢ in this work.

: "As if a seventh partial". About 31¢ flat from the nearest 12TET pitch. About 1/6 tone flat.
You may also get the tuning by overblowing the fingering a whole step higher than the indicated pitch to the 7th partial, illustrating the desired 7th partial relationship of the written pitch (i.e. the desired pitch 3 octaves higher).

: Inverted 7th partial. About 31¢ sharp. About 1/6 tone sharp.

General Performance Notes:

Both the score and parts are transposing.

This is not a piece of concert music and could not be performed live. Should anyone desire it, a version for 2 players and loop station would be possible in the live concert setting.

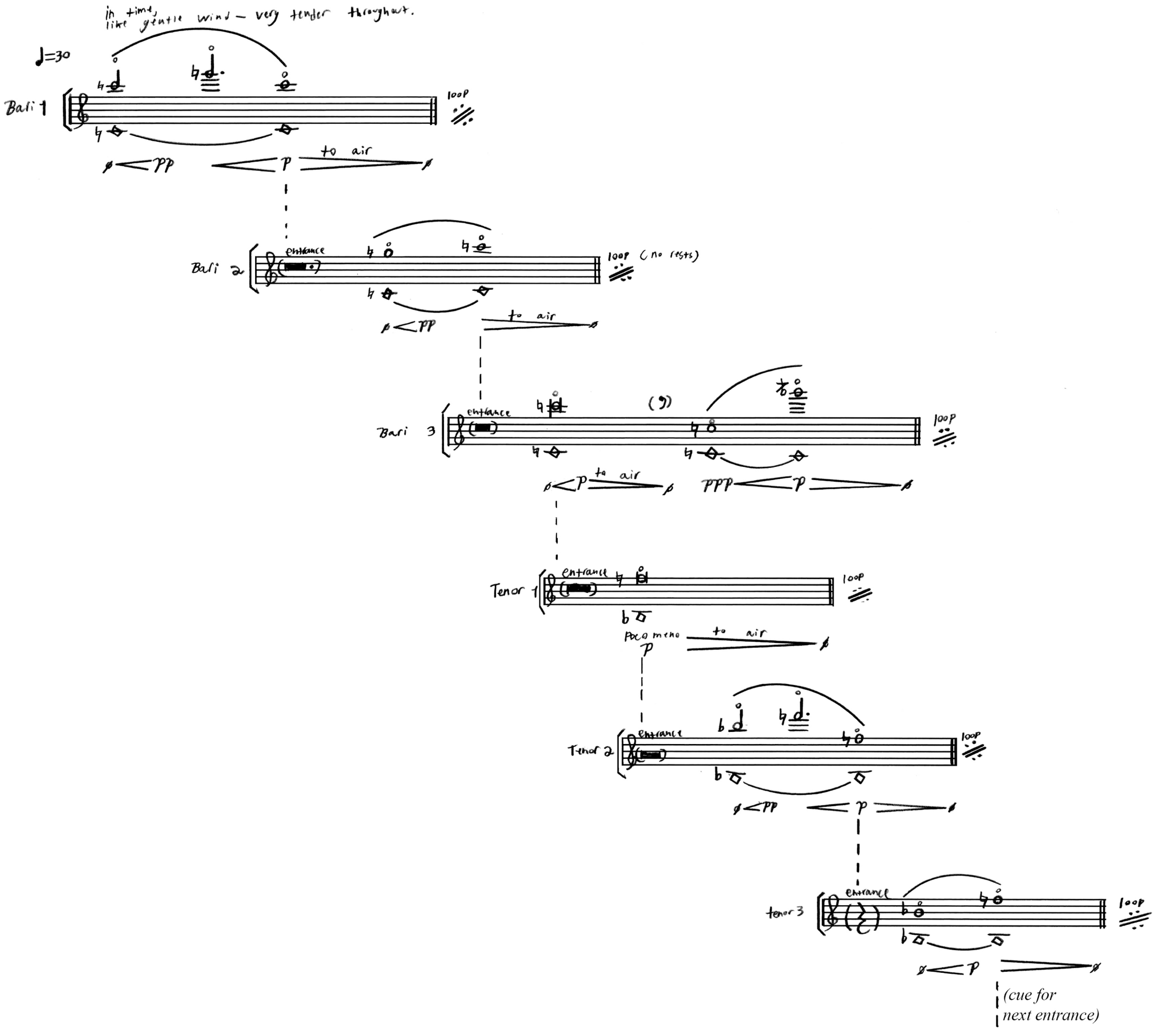
This work is designed to be recorded in small fragments (indicated by instrument and number), and then assembled by the composer, or whoever, on a DAW such as Ableton. The score is accompanied by a tenor and baritone part for ease of recording. This method will allow for lots of the same amazing textures of looped music but with much more control over the micro-aspects of each moment. My technical aim in writing this piece is to utilize recording as its own medium/tool for composition completely independent of concert music.

This work was written as part of Peabody Conservatory's 2020 "Digital Residency Program", during the Covid-19 pandemic, for the wonderful Ryan Muncy.

Many thanks to Ryan Muncy, Michael Hersch, Nicole Cooley and Luca Hoffmann for all y'all have done and are doing to promote the sights and sounds of today's Gulf Coast!

Cover art created by the composer from Luca Hoffmann's photography of Venice, Louisiana.

Quotation from Nicole Cooley's Breach.


in time, like gentle wind – very tender throughout.
♩=30
Bari 1
loop
pp
p
to air
Bari 2
entrance
loop (no rests)
pp
to air
Bari 3
entrance
(9)
loop
p
to air
ppp
p
Tenor 1
entrance
loop
Poco meno
p
to air
Tenor 2
entrance
loop
pp
p
tenor 3
entrance
loop
p
(cue for
next entrance)

Bari 6 (Don't loop)

mf

smooth, but unsettled.
like a Pining tree.

tenor 6

glis.

(b-1/6)

3:2

glis.

loop one time.

ppp p mp mf p mf subito p

Circular breathe

Tenor 4

entrance

swiftly

loop

p pp mp to air mp ppp mp p mp p to air

Bari 4

entrance

swiftly

loop

mp to air mp p pp ppp p pp mp pp to air

tenor 5

as long as possible in 1 breath

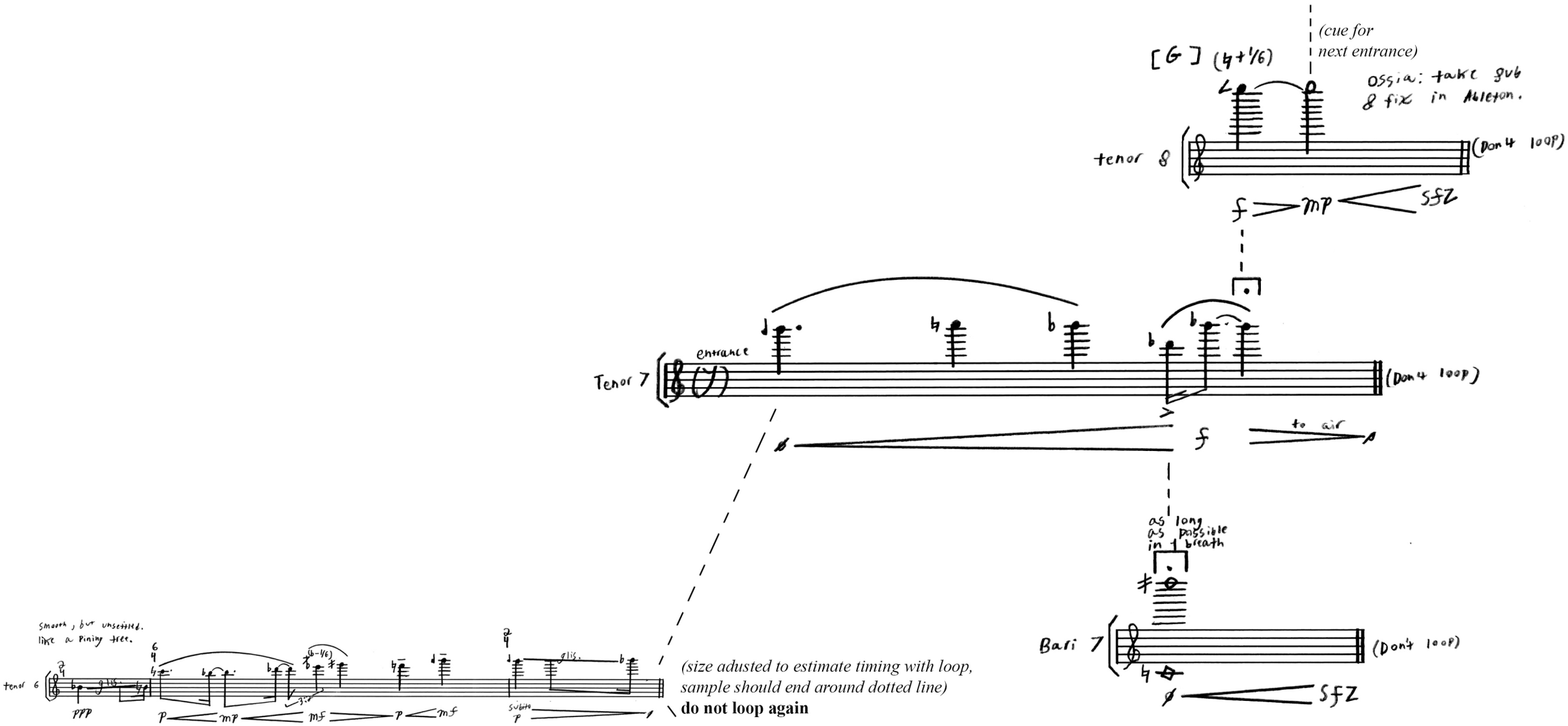
loop

mp, make pppp w/ levels

Bari 5

as long as possible in 1 breath

mp, make p w/ levels.



Gradually bring down levels of the Eb NHS material from baritone 1, 2, 5

Bari 8 (Don't loop)

ff

(trem.) accel. trem.

Tenor 9 (Don't loop)

f

Throughout the descending melodic figure,
bring all looped material to nearly silent. Completely eliminate Bari 3)

tempo 2
♩=43

Tenor 10

long

mf < f 3:2 mf < f 3:2 ff to air

Tenor 4

swiftly

loop

mp ppp mp p mp p to air

(note spacing does not line up)

(loop only Eb timbre trill material)

Bari 4

swiftly

mp to air mp p pp ppp p > pp mp pp to air

digitally transpose 8vb

Tenor 4

swiftly

mp ppp mp p mp p to air

Bari 4

swiftly

mp p pp ppp p > pp mp pp to air

(♩=43)

as long as possible in 1 breath

[6]

ossia: 8vb & alleton trans.

tenor 15

loop

f, p w/ levels

as long as possible in 1 breath

tenor 14

loop

f, mp w/ levels

normal tone

air tone

tenor 16

to air

air tone

normal tone

loop after tenor 17 has arrived at its fermata

as long as possible in 1 breath

tenor 13

loop

f

normal tone

entrance

tenor 17

loop

as long as possible in 1 breath

Bari 10

loop

f, mf w/ levels

Tenor 12

Tenor 11

Bari 9

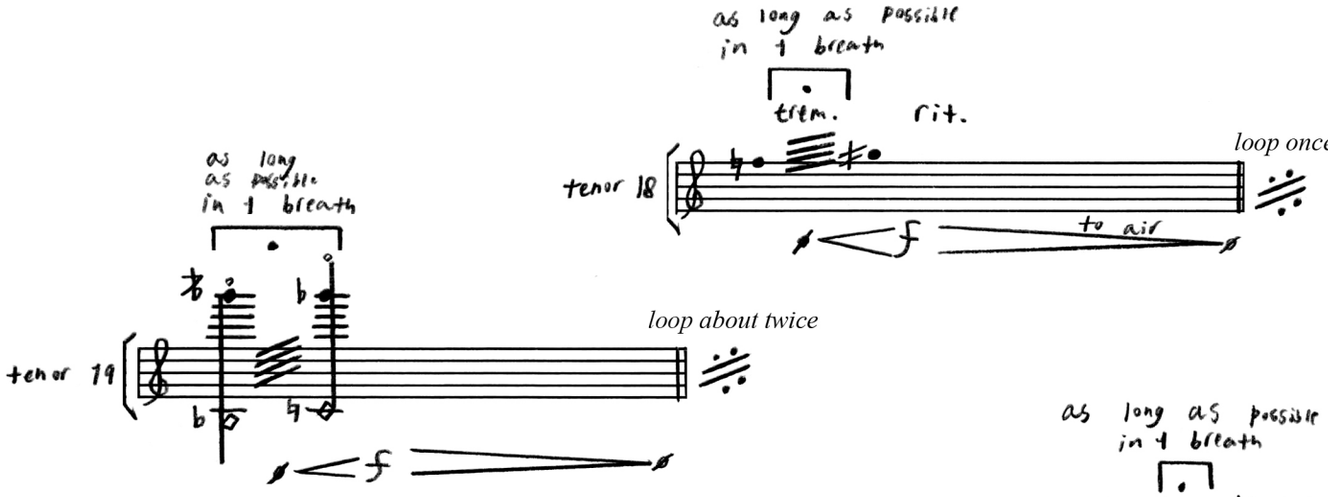
as long as possible in 1 breath

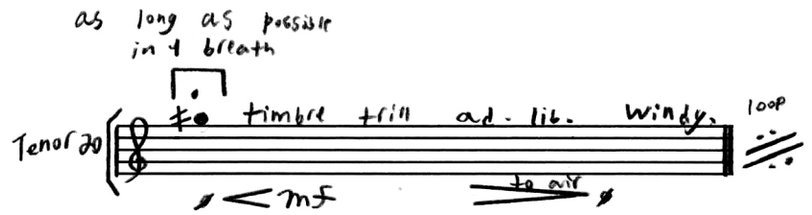
trem.

rit.

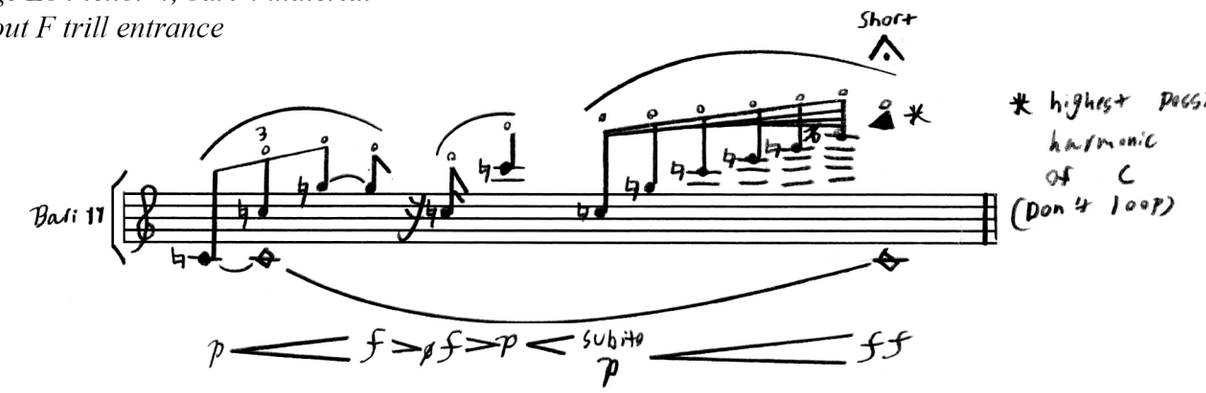
tenor 18

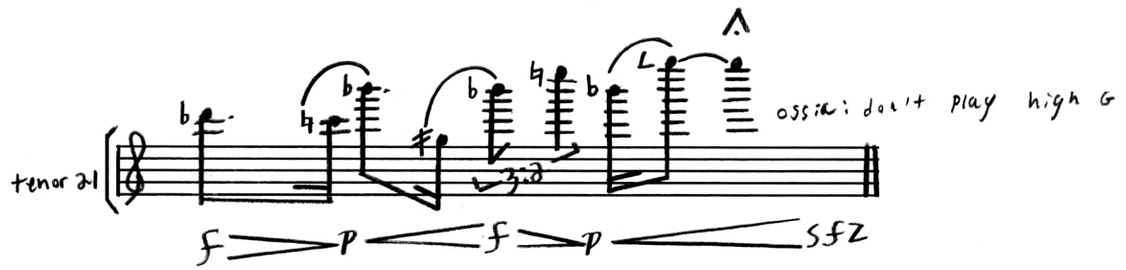
to air

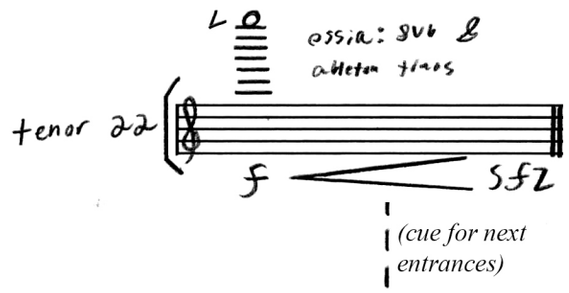


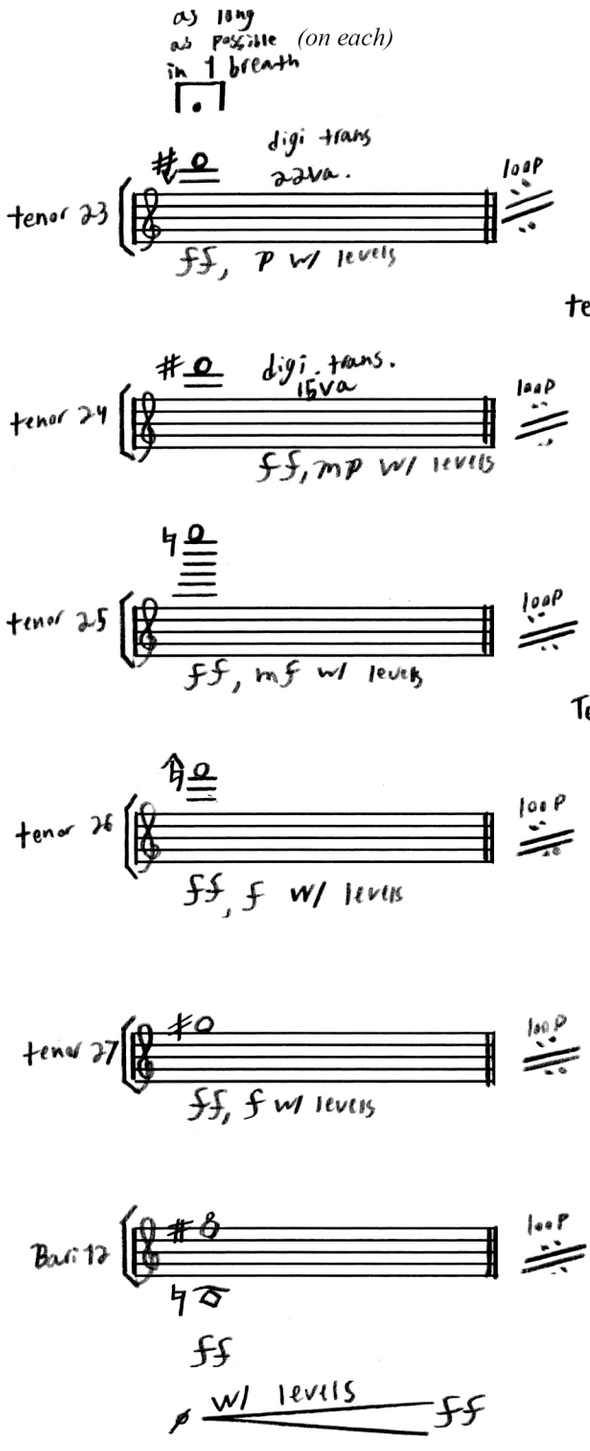


Eliminage Eb4 tenor 4, bari 4 material throughout F trill entrance

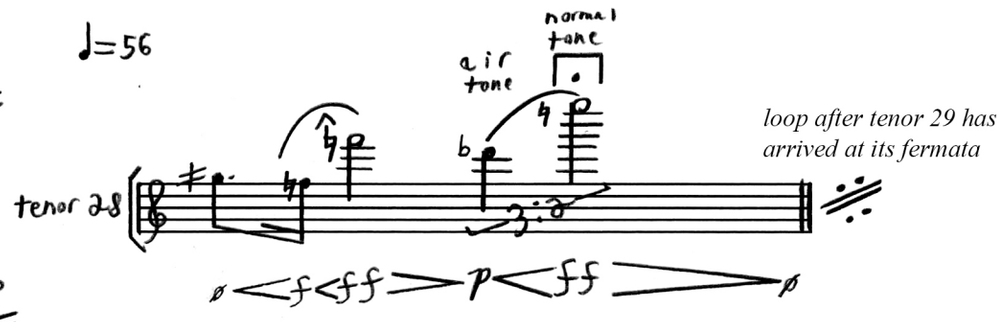




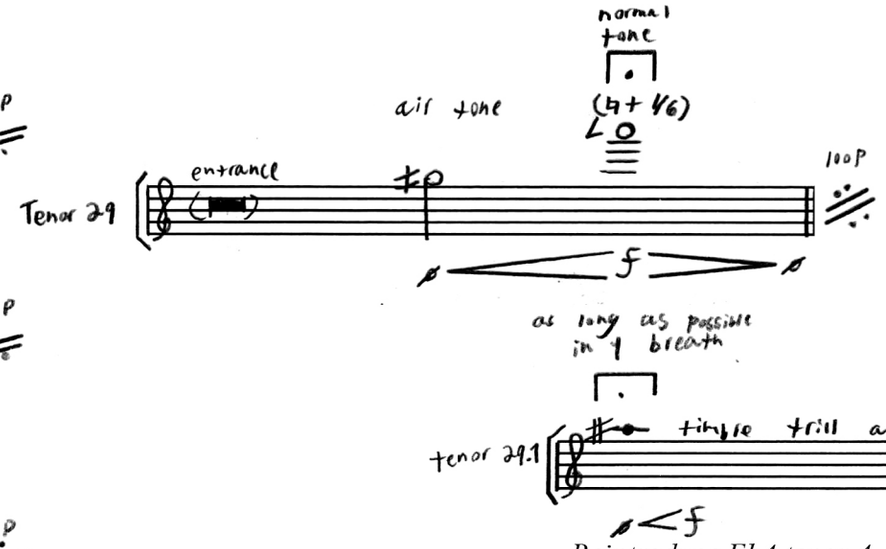




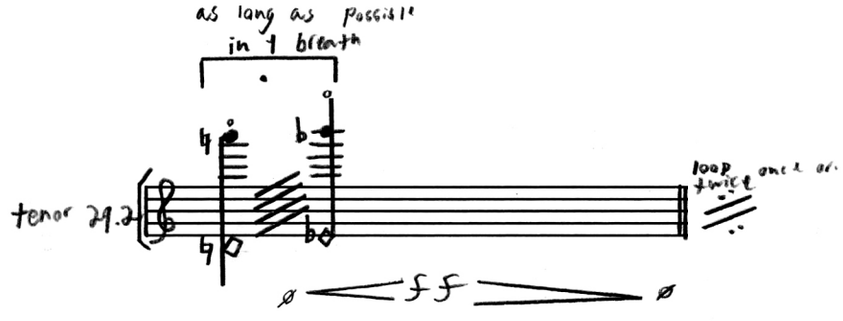
eliminate tenor 18 and 19

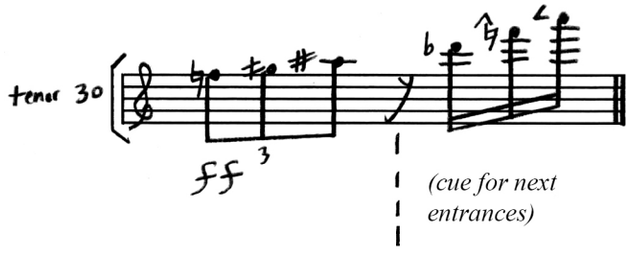


loop after tenor 29 has arrived at its fermata

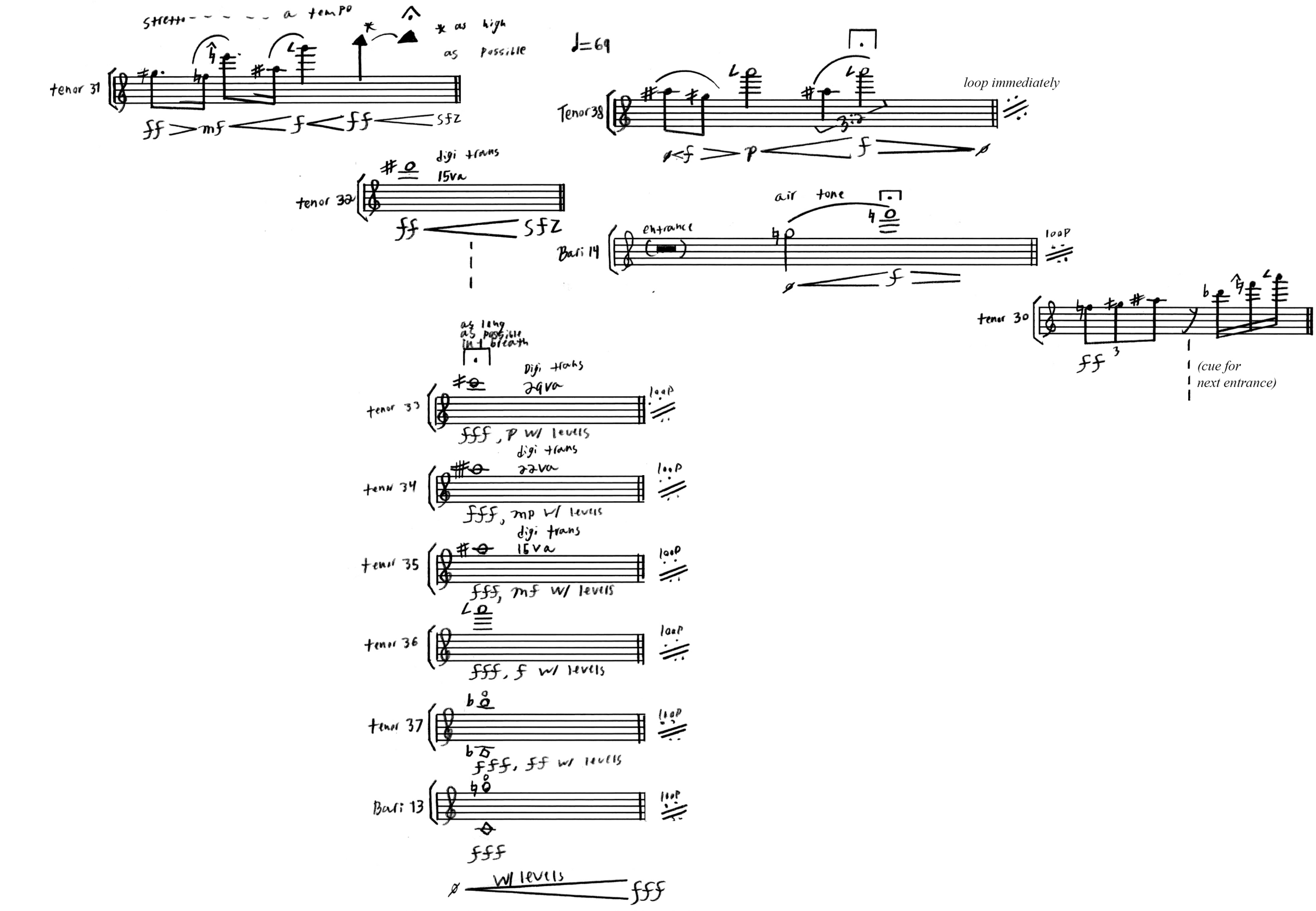


Reintroduce Eb4 tenor 4, bari 4 material throughout G# trill entrance





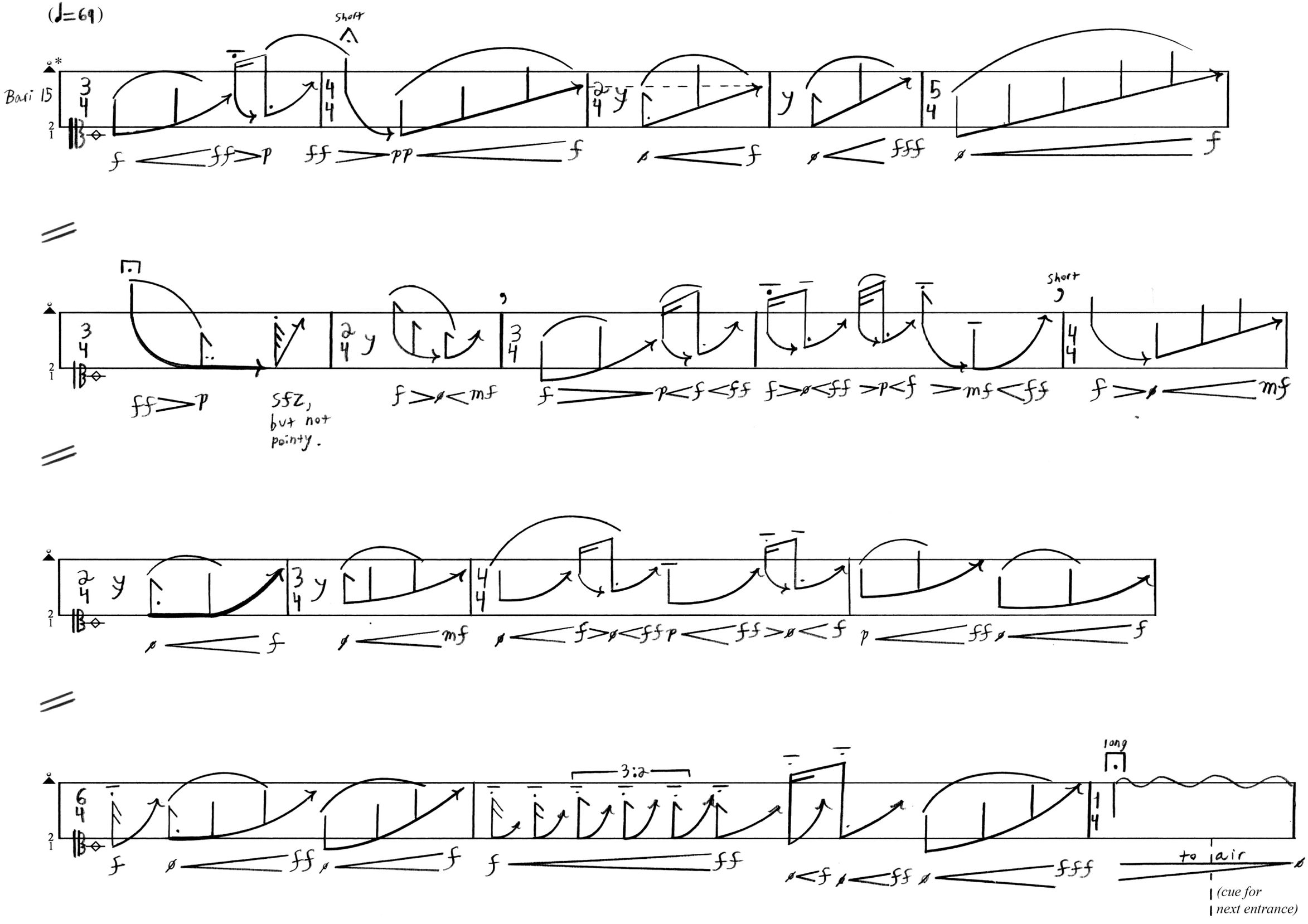
(cue for next entrances)

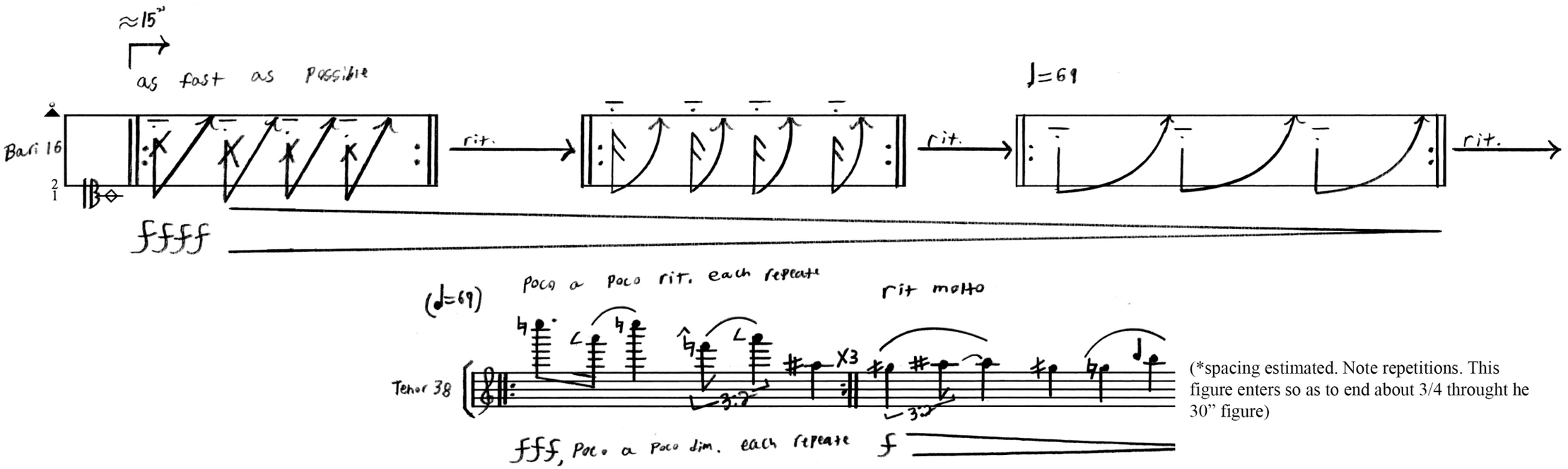


Eliminate Eb MHS harmonies (tenor 13-15, bari 10)

Storm like.
Like a storm wall arriving - hurricane.
As if a train of air.
Ultimately, like lashing winds.

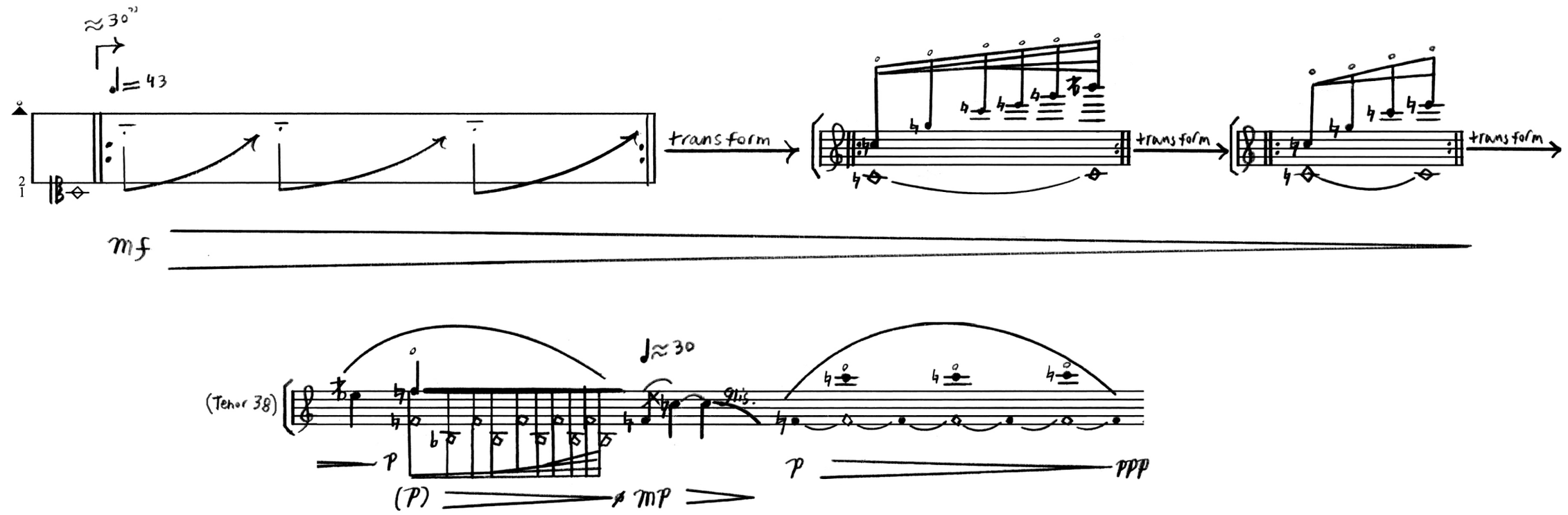
*This is a graphic representation of the baritone low C (sounding Eb) harmonic series. All gestures are harmonic glissandi. The bottom line represents the 2end harmonic partial (C4 written), the ledger below that represents the first partial (low C3), and the top line represents the highest possible harmonic. All gestures should be coarse but fluid, like aggressive winds.

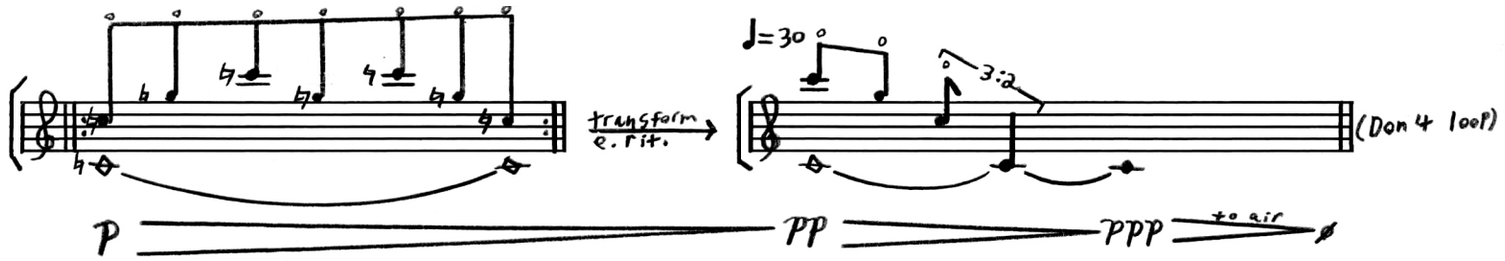




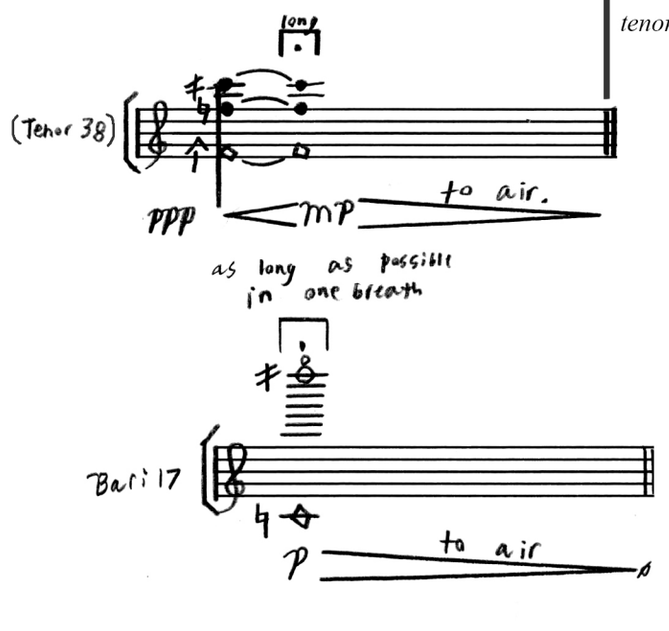
(*spacing estimated. Note repetitions. This figure enters so as to end about 3/4 throught he 30" figure)

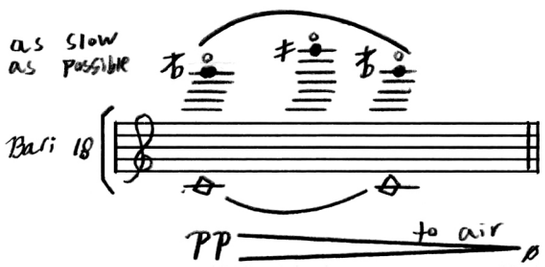
(Gradually reduce & eliminate all large harmonies, timbre trills etc.
Allow looped rythmic figures to fade into the background and linger longer.
Gradually reintroduce opening harmonies, but far out with effects.)

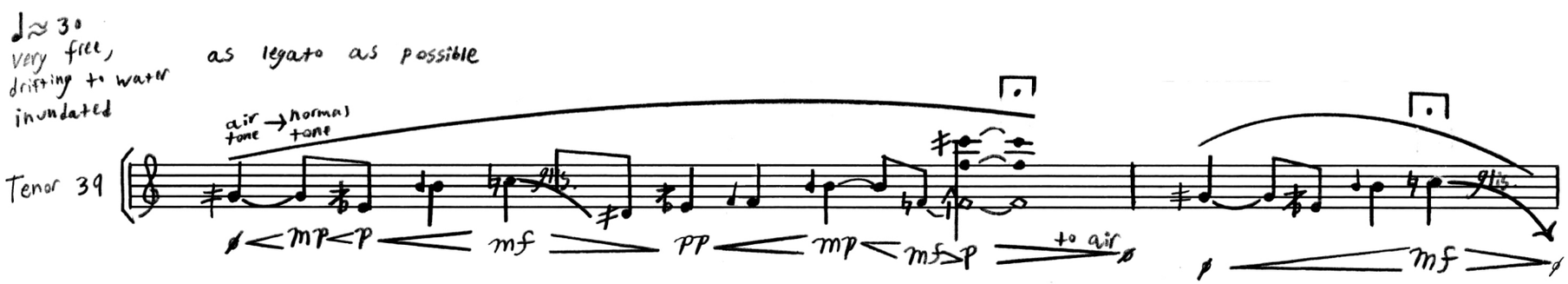


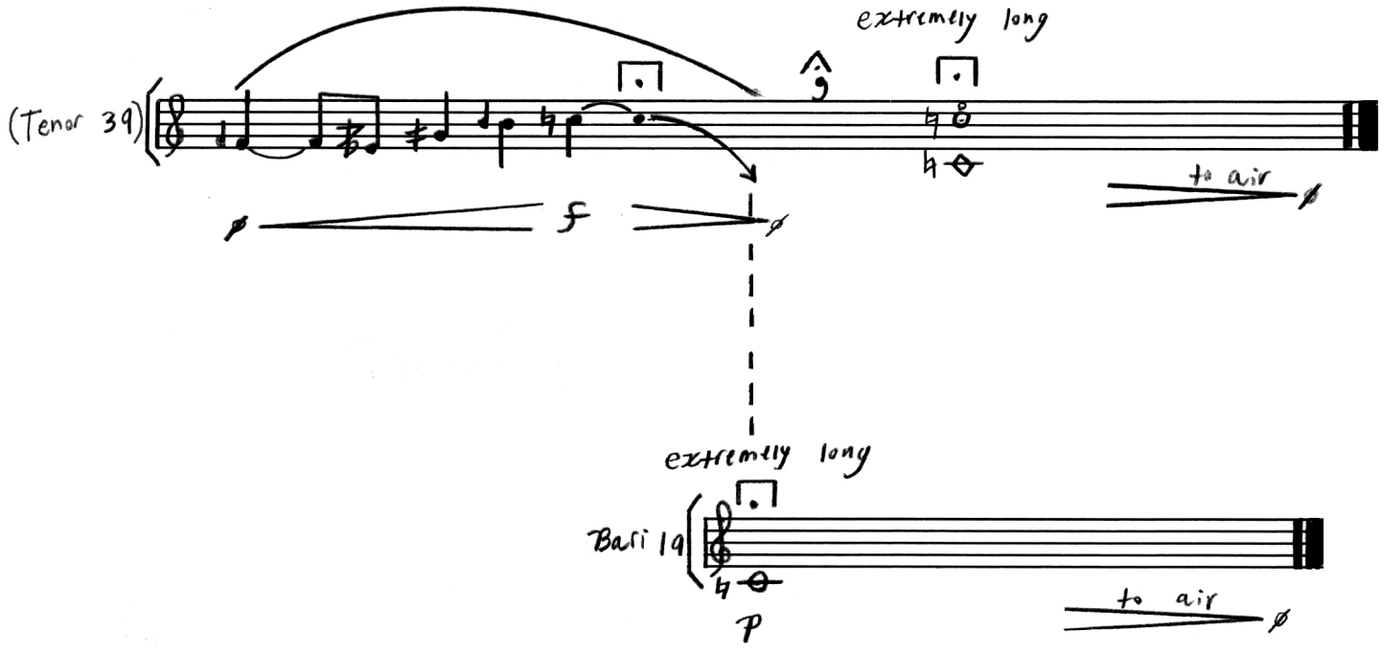


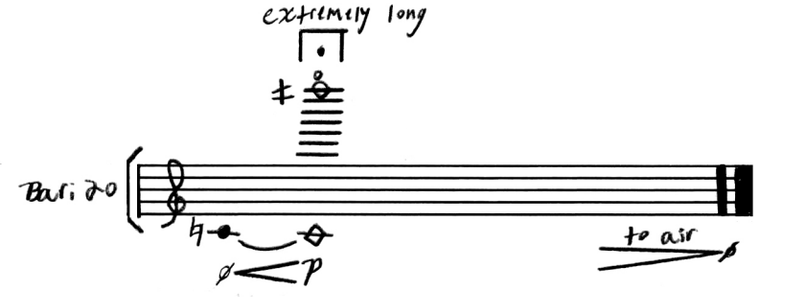
tenor 38 should end about here.

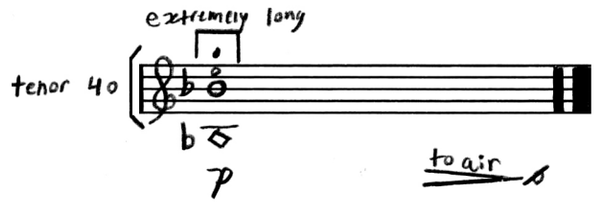












15 October 2020
Baltimore, MD.