Orbit

For Duo

Percussion and Organ

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Program Notes

The planets go round and round… round and round….

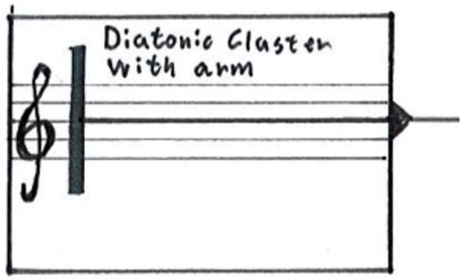
Performance Notes

General

If the piece is performed in a church, with the organ in the back of the hall, the percussionist should preferably be positioned at the front of the church. This is for two reasons, one is to provide the visual aspect of the performance, the second is to balance the sound coming from two directions instead of only having the sound come from the back of the room.

In case of visual issues, with the organist not having a clear view of the percussionist, this can be solved either via usage of mirrors, or through “facetime” or some other form of video communication between the two, since the organist needs to follow the percussionist, and the percussion can be so quiet at times, the organist has no chance but to follow the visual rather than relying on hearing the percussionists progression.

Boxed notation means to repeat the action or notation within the box until further notice. This can either be until new information is given, in the case of a rhythmic box, after a certain number of repeats etc. It differs from a traditional repeat barline in the sense that it allows other, simultaneous progression of events parallel to the contents of the box.



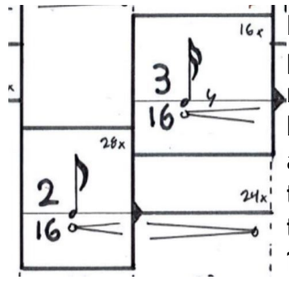
Crescendos and diminuendos within boxes means to perform one singular long crescendo or diminuendo over all the repeats of the bar.

Percussion

The piece requires a setup of two bongos and two toms. The toms should be of different sizes, one referred to as high, and the other as low. However, they should both be rather large, preferably both over 16” if possible. If not, smaller toms also work, but they should preferably have a low tuning. They can be arranged in any order at the discretion of the performer, but my recommendation and preference is to arrange the drums from lowest on the left in a row leading to highest on the right.

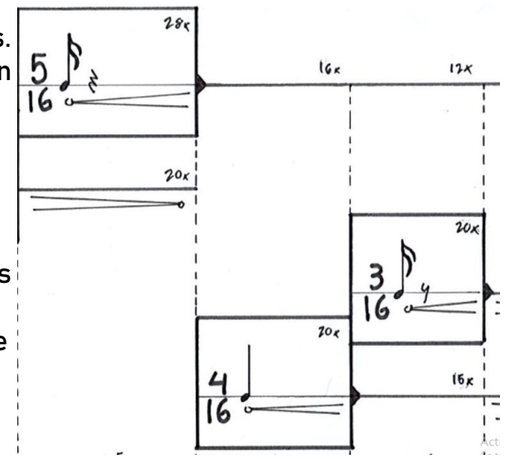
Only beaters used are felt mallets, referred to as “soft mallet” in the score. These are preferably softer timpani mallets or similar.

A circular arrowed graphics refers to performing a circular motion on the head of the drum. Imagine simulating or imitating the orbit of a planet when performing this action.



In the case of simultaneous boxes/actions, these should all be performed with the same strict underlying pulse. In the cases numbers referencing the amount of times they are to be repeated being different numbers during the same sections, this shows the amount of time one box needs to be repeated in the same time it takes another to be repeated. For example, repeating a 2/16 bar 24 times takes the same amount of time as performing a 3/16 measure 16 times. Or repeating a bar of 15/6 14 times takes the same amount of time as measure of 7/8 repeated 15 times. In effect, this second example would create a 15/14 polyrhythm. This idea of overlapping and shifting polyrhythms resulted from the “orbital period” is the main idea within the percussion part.

In the case of the triple polyrhythm appearing at the end of the third page, this can be performed two ways. Either through the usage of two mallets in one hand in order to perform the simultanous unison mark of all three parts. The other option, which was used at the premiere of the piece, is to perform the 3 against 4 polyrhythm on the 2 toms with one hand shifting between them and omitting the hit on the high tom when the 2 patterns line up. Since this short section is logistically impractical without the usage of a third mallet, other solutions are fine at the discretion of the performer, as long as a listener can still clearly identify the individual tempi of the 3 drums.



Organ

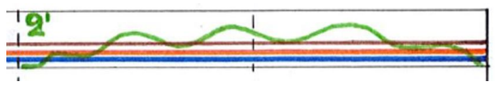
“Orbit” was composed for the baroque organ in Örgryte Nya Kyrka in Göteborg, Sweden. This organ features 4 manuals and pedals, of which 2 manuals and the pedals are used, a substantial amount of different stops, as well as mean-tone temperament. The piece can be performed at other organs as well, as long as it has a minimum of 2 manuals apart from the pedals. If indicated stops don’t exist on the organ, these may be changes at the discretion of the performer, as long as individual stops stay consistent throughout the performance. For example, if the second manual of the organ doesn’t have a 4’ flute stop, this can be replaced with another stop, but that stop should be used every time the score asks for that 4’ flute stop.

The manuals are arranged in the score with 1 being the highest manual and 4 being the lowest manual, closest to the performer.

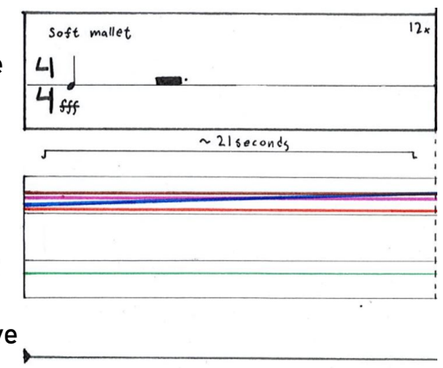
The piece is built on slow and gradual opening and closing of stops. Majority of the time, the stops aren't completely open, instead being in this beautiful unpredictable middle zone, where all sorts of beautiful out of tune and almost distorted qualities color the sound.

The notation uses color to differentiate between different stops within the system. Each manual will have one system represented in the score, with all the stops for each manual color coded on that system. The system is a 2 line staff with the top line meaning to have the stop completely open/enabled, and the bottom line to be completely closed/disabled. Because of this, it is of utmost importance, that the score is read or printed in COLOR.

For the first manual, the specific register types are omitted and only the size is indicated, giving slightly more freedom to the performed to choose which stop they prefer.



The time span during which these movements of the stops are shown in relation to the percussion part and also with an approximate duration (the piece is not performed with a timer, so the durations indicated will only be perfectly accurate if the percussionist has the tempo perfectly. In this case, for the percussionist to perform the indicated bar 12 times, it takes approximately 21 seconds. During these 21 seconds, the organist should gradually move their flute 2' stop (not visible in this case, but it's what the blue line represents) from being just about open to being close to completely open but not entirely.



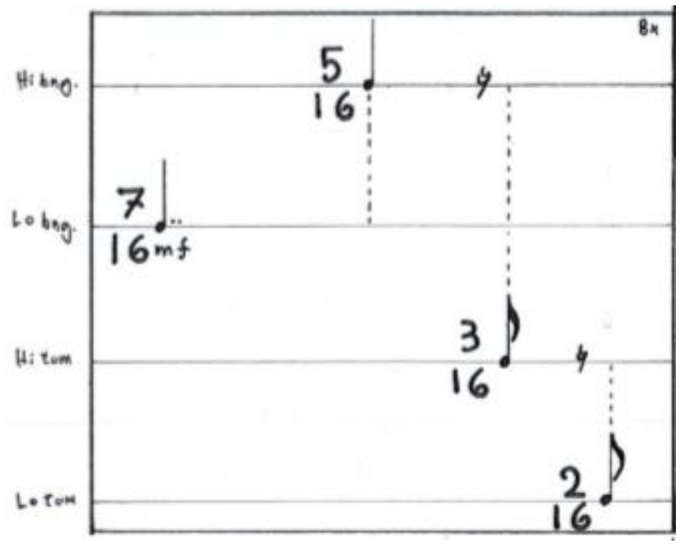
Because of this way of notating duration, time and duration is not clearly visually shown in the piece so careful attention needs to be given to both the percussionists part, and the indicated time, as something that might take up very little space on the page could be 20 seconds long, whilst something that takes up a lot of space might only last for 3

Since keeping track of the large amounts of various stops used, their position on the organ and their individual color, some form of marking, such as colored sticky notes attached to each of the stops to quickly identify them.

When stops are notated very close to the bottom, but are still on the staff, they should be just open enough to have the slightest hint of sound produced, but as little as possible to not be completely quiet.

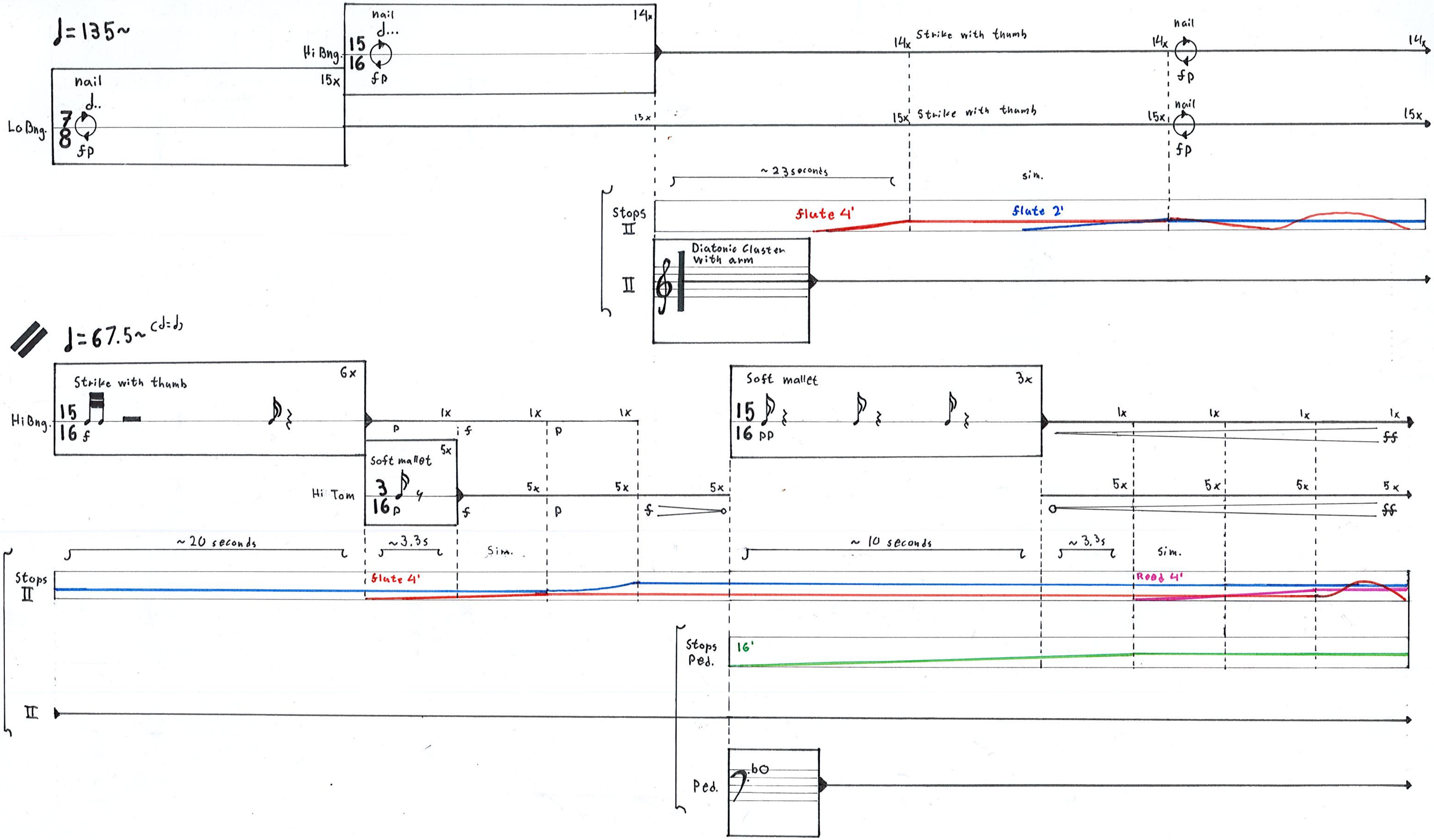
Alternative Performance

In the first "measure" of the final page of the score, this box may be extended freely. In doing so, it can either be repeated, altered, complemented with improvisation, added parts or replaced entirely. In the premiere performance of "Orbit", this measure was followed by a fast improvised section before continuing with the score as ordinary afterwards. If this is done, the organist should simply extend their chord to cover the entire duration until the next notated measure.

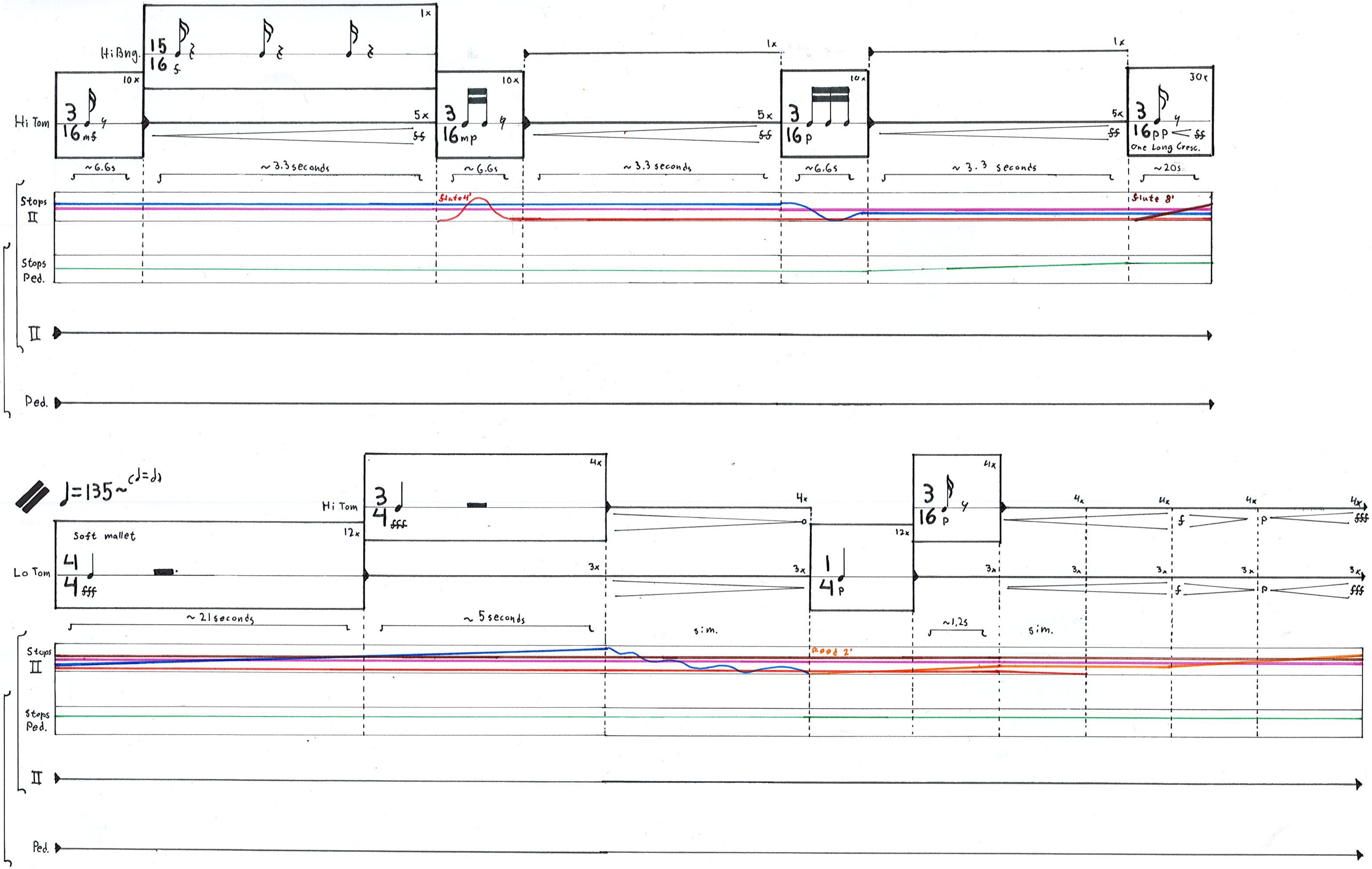


In the final measure of the piece, the percussionist may either continue repeating their pattern for the notated duration, or repeat it for longer, or shorter, and stop playing the instant that the organist becomes quiet.

For further information or questions about the score or music, email antonrunelindstrom@gmail.com



♩=135~
Hi Bng.
nail
14x
15x
Lo Bng.
fp
Strike with thumb
~23 seconds
sim.
Stops II
flute 4'
flute 2'
Diatonic Claster with arm
II
♩=67.5~
Strike with thumb
6x
Soft mallet
5x
Hi Tom
~20 seconds
~3.3s
Sim.
3x
1x
~10 seconds
Reed 4'
Stops Ped.
16'
Ped.


Hi Bng.
15
16
f
1x
Hi Tom
3
16 mf
10x
5x
ff
3
16 mp
10x
3
16 p
10x
3
16 pp < ff
One Long Cresc.
30x
~6.6s
~3.3 seconds
~6.6s
~3.3 seconds
~6.6s
~3.3 seconds
~20s
Stops
II
Stops
Ped.
flute 4'
flute 8'
II
Ped.
♩=135~ (♩=♩)
Soft mallet
Lo Tom
4
4 fff
12x
Hi Tom
3
4 fff
4x
3x
1
4 p
12x
3
16 p
4x
f
p
fff
~21 seconds
~5 seconds
sim.
~1.2s
sim.
Reed 2'
Stops
II
Stops
Ped.
II
Ped.

Hi bng.

Lo bng.

Hi tom

Lo tom

~6.2s ~5.3s ~9.4s ~15.5s ~8.8s ~6.6s sim. ~11s

Stops I 8' 4' 2' 2'

~4.4s sim. ~6.6s ~9.4s

Stops II

Stops Ped. 32' (or 8')

fast, wild arpeggios and scales ad lib.

I

II

Ped.

Hi bng.

Lo bng.

Hi tom

Lo tom

8x

5/16

7/16 mf

3/16

2/16

8x

p

8x

4x

8x

10x

1/4 mp

10x

1/4

8x

6x

10x

3/16

8x

7/16 f

6x

ff

14x

ff

together!

14x

f

~14.4 seconds

~4.4s

Sim.

~6.6seconds

~4.4s

~3.3s

~6.2s

~4.6s

Stops I

2'

8'

Stops Ped

I

Ped

nail

15x

15/16 fp

Hi bng.

14x

14x

14x

nail

15x

7/8 fp

Lo bng.

15x

15x

15x

~23seconds

Sim.

Stops I

Diatonic cluster with arm

I