Stone Compression

for violin,
megaphone & electronics

Stephen de Filippo | 2022

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Duration: 11'24"

-

for Bailey Wantuch

composed in participation in the 78th Composers Conference
26/7/22 – 4/8/22 – Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts

Performance Notes

General

- Measures are proportional to their respective system. Each system has a different duration. For instance, m.2 and m.5 are almost the same duration, but the visual length of each measure is different, only proportional to the measures that are in its system/s.
- The box above each measure displays the length of the measure in seconds. The electronics display the progression of each measure on-screen as to guide the performance. The durations of the measures often synchronise with an aspect of the electronics, so precision in the length, timings, and placement of musical gestures are paramount as to occur alongside the electronic component.
- Internal markers, second durations in bubbles, give proportion to gestures within a measure. These internal markers are less strict than the measure durations, and are used as a general guide of a particular measure.
- The score depicts gestures, but there are aspects of interpretation required. For instance, m.1 shows a series of glissandi, but the kinks in the line depict jagged points and undulations, so it would be appropriate to interpret a glissandi that hits other pitches, not simply a glide to the end pitch. So, measures can depict a more general direction of a gesture.

Violin

Microtonal accidentals in quarter-tones:

Degrees of over-pressure:


normale


over-pressure, with perceptible pitch


scratch tone

Bow position:

ob.
on bridge

msp.
molto sul pont

sp.
sul pont

psp.
poco sul pont

norm.
normale

st.
sul tasto

mst.
molto sul tasto

Megaphone

- The performer is presented with an open staff, with the vertical axis defining a relative pitch of the vocal sound. For *tchip*, the height of the line how forward (pouted) or receeded the lips are, which roughly controls the pitch of the suck sound.
- The input on the megaphone should be almost covered by the mouth, as close as possible to the face, as to amplify the liminal sounds made from the performers mouth. Ingressive sounds, like *tchip*, require the megaphone input to be very close to the mouth as to fully capture and project the sound.
- Arrows leading from one syllable to another depict a gradual transition between mouth shape.

Symbols:


tchip:
suck through teeth to produce different ingressive squeak sounds. expression markings give context to the quality.


breath sound:
the line and notehead depict the relative pitch of the air sound. expression markings like “whistly” may connote more of a whistle tone sound, whereas


vocal fry:
depicted with an accompanying syllable. always depicted in your lowest register. expression markings may give more context to the quality.

[wet]
wet mouth sounds:
any syllables. try to produce very sticky and salivary kinds of sounds.


rearticulate the given sound


tap the input or mouthpiece of the megaphone against the lips, quickly

Electronics Setup/Technical Requirements

- This work is written for two instruments, live electronics, and stereo fixed media. The work can be performed with a single input from the violin, which is channeled into the patch, and a stereo speaker set-up.
- The megaphone can be amplified into the same stereo out, but does not require any processing from the electronics.

Stone_Compression.pd instructions

To run this patch, the user must have a working version of Pure Data. The PD application functions on both MacOS and Windows, and can be downloaded for free at: https://puredata.info/downloads/

A link to this composition's PD patch can be found at www.stephendefilippo.com, on the Stone Compression page. This patch was created by Rand Steiger, with edits and additions by myself.

1. Open Stone_Compression.pd
   this will open the patch. You will then be presented with 4 windows: Stone_Compression.pd, band, mixer, and player. Connection to hardware can be configured in PD's "audio" settings.
2. Press "open_FM", then load Fixed_media.wav. This will load the fixed media component.
3. Enable "cues".
4. Press "play" in the player window to begin the piece.

Note:

- Pressing "stop" or "reset" in the patch will require you to reload the fixed media (step 2).
- You can use the "next" button or "jump" box in the Stone_Compression.pd window to jump through the electronics cues of this piece. This will allow you to hear the electronic processing of a particular measure. However, the timer will not work.
- The timer can only play from the beginning to the end of the piece, you cannot start the timer from a particular measure. However, you can use the timer.mp4 file, which is a video version of the timer window included in the electronics, to support your practise.

Electronics in performance

The player window helps synchronise performed events with the fixed media. Below highlights the components of the player box:

1. The scrollbar will move from left to right, giving a visual cue of the length of each measure.
2. This box will depict the current measure #.
3. This box depicts in milliseconds the time that has elapsed so far in your current measure
4. This box depicts the duration of the current measure.
5. This clock counts the length of the performance in seconds.

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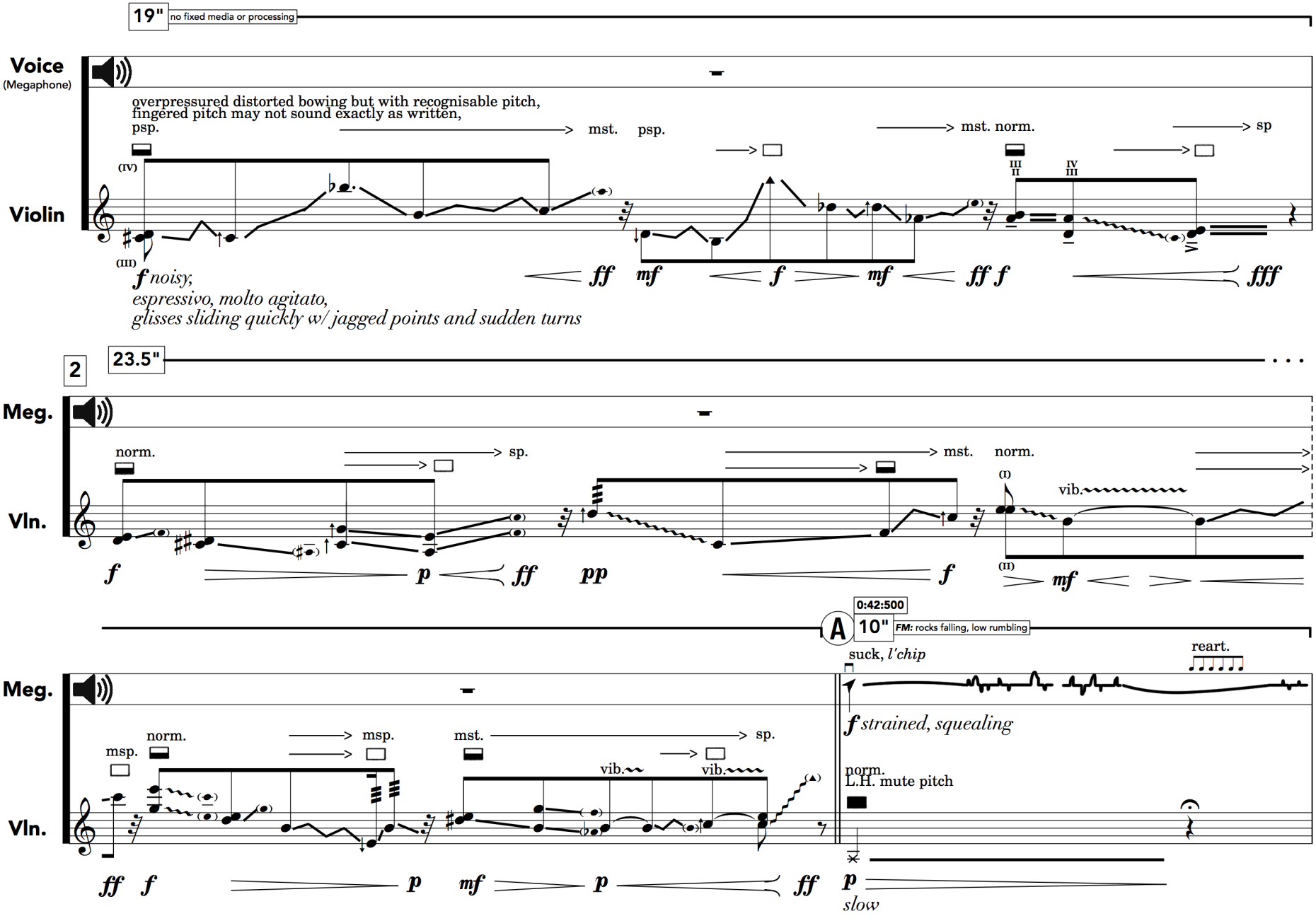
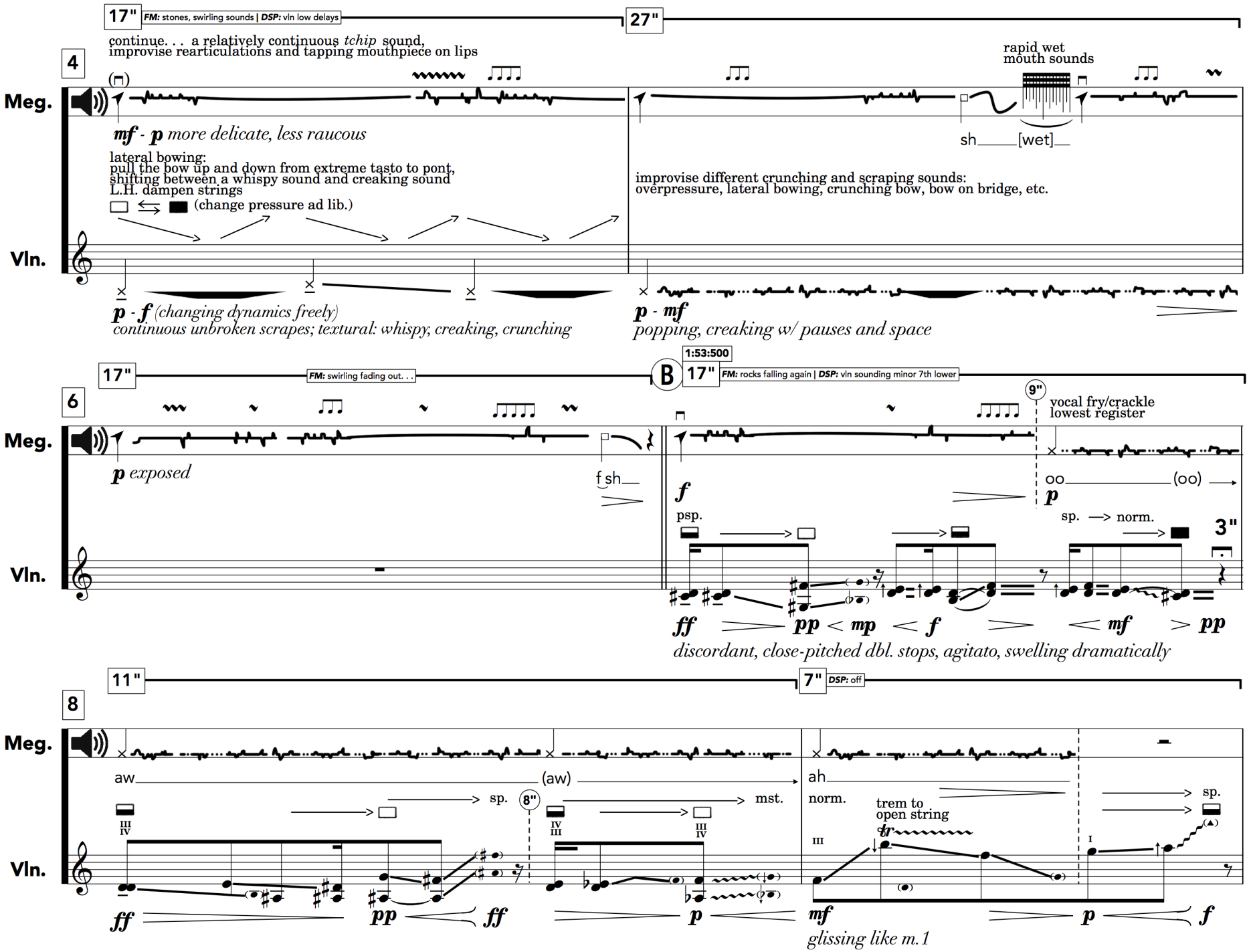
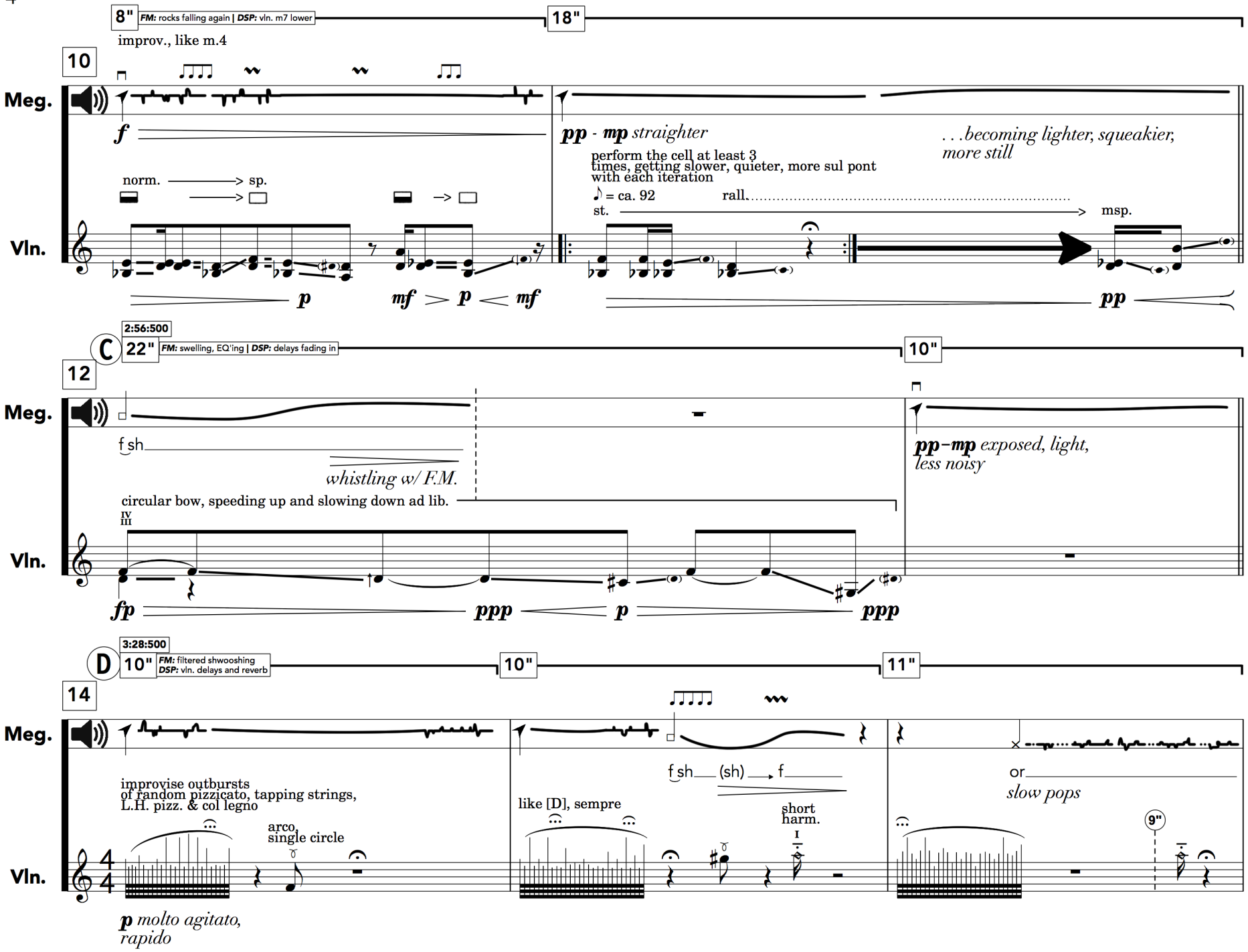
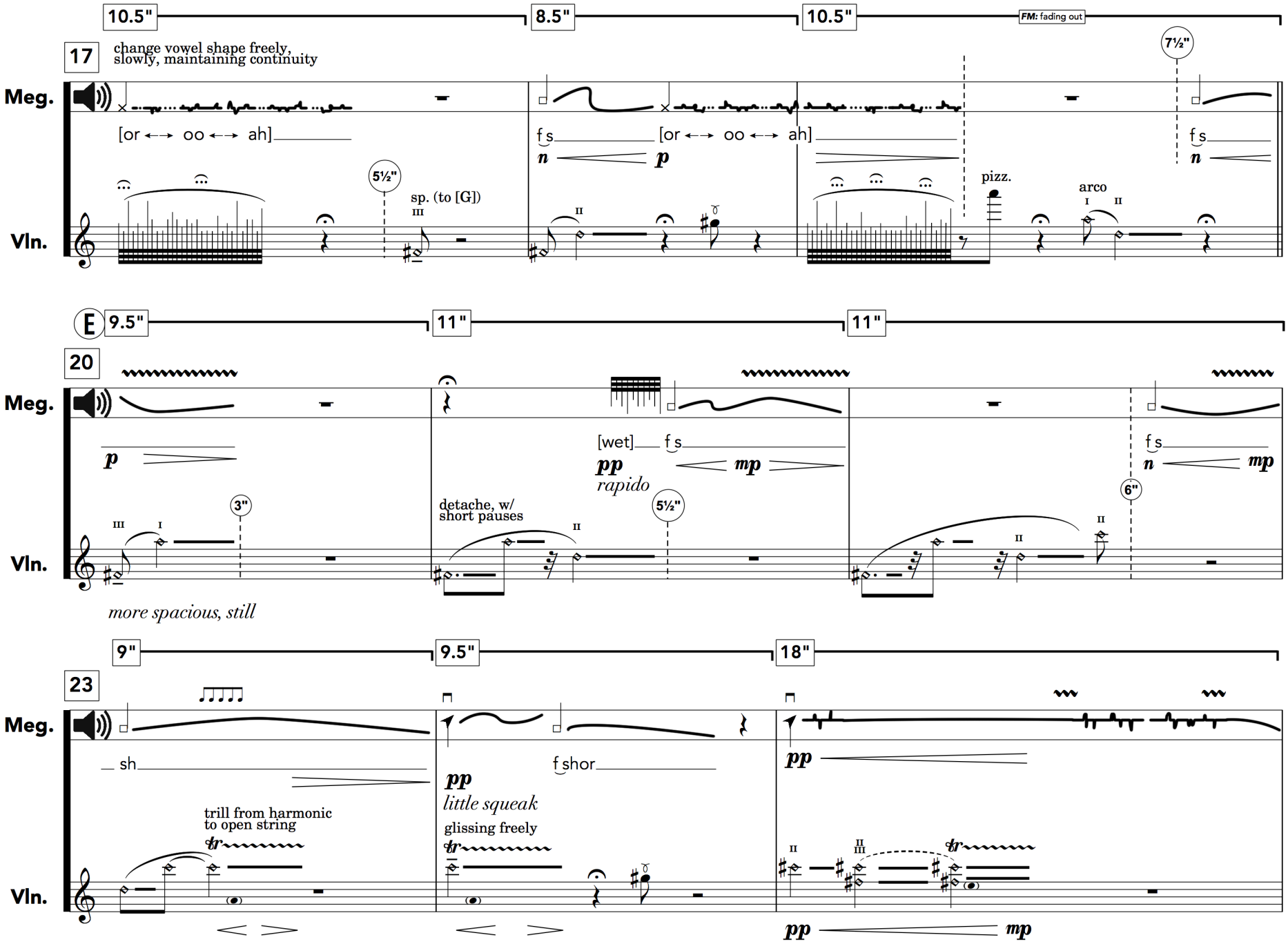
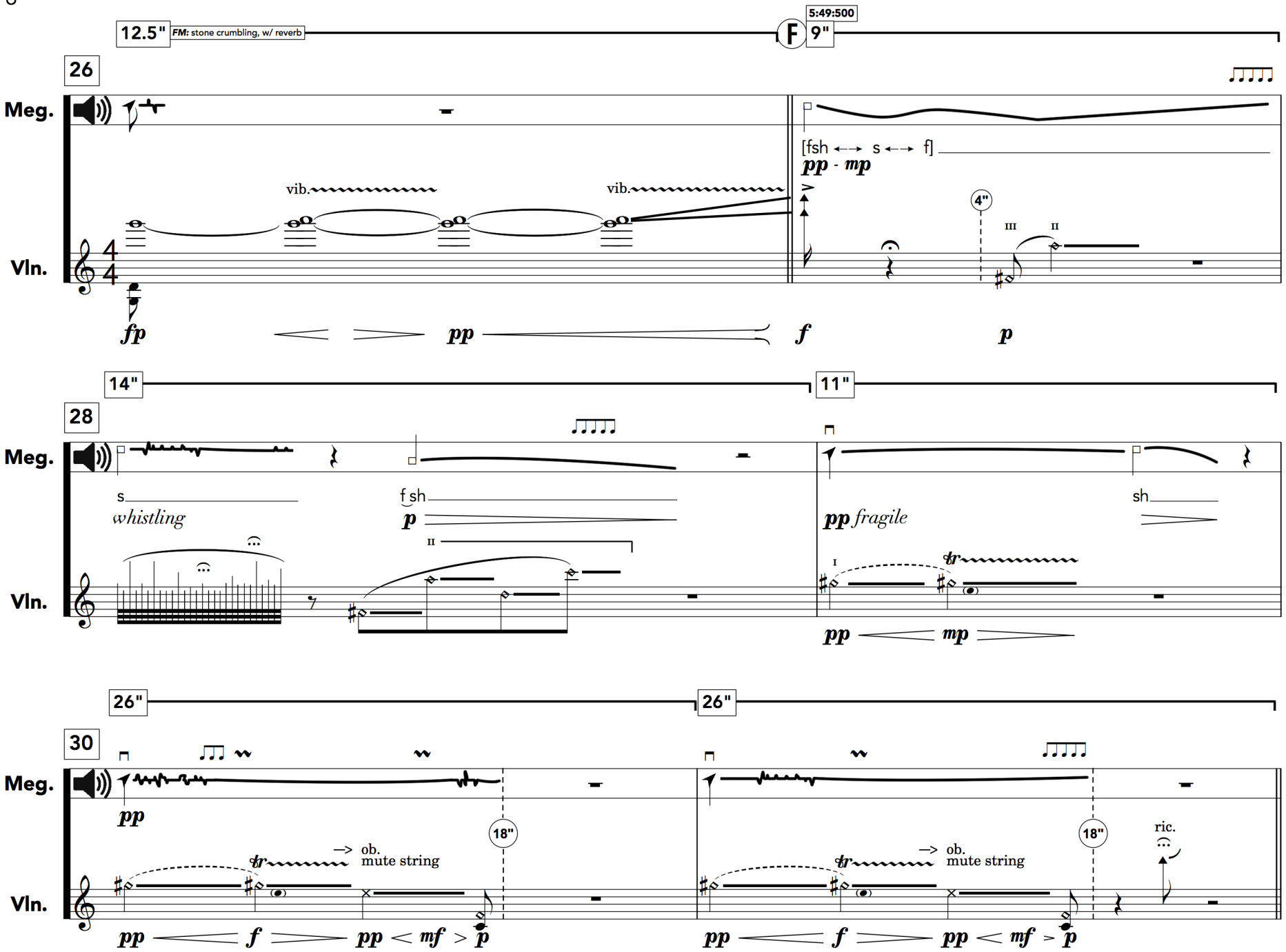
Measures are proportional to their respective system. Each system has a different duration.
Each measure [boxed duration] is guided by the scrolling displayed in the patch.
Circled numbers can be synced to the milisecond clock, these are not strict.
Accidentals apply to pitches they immediately precede.

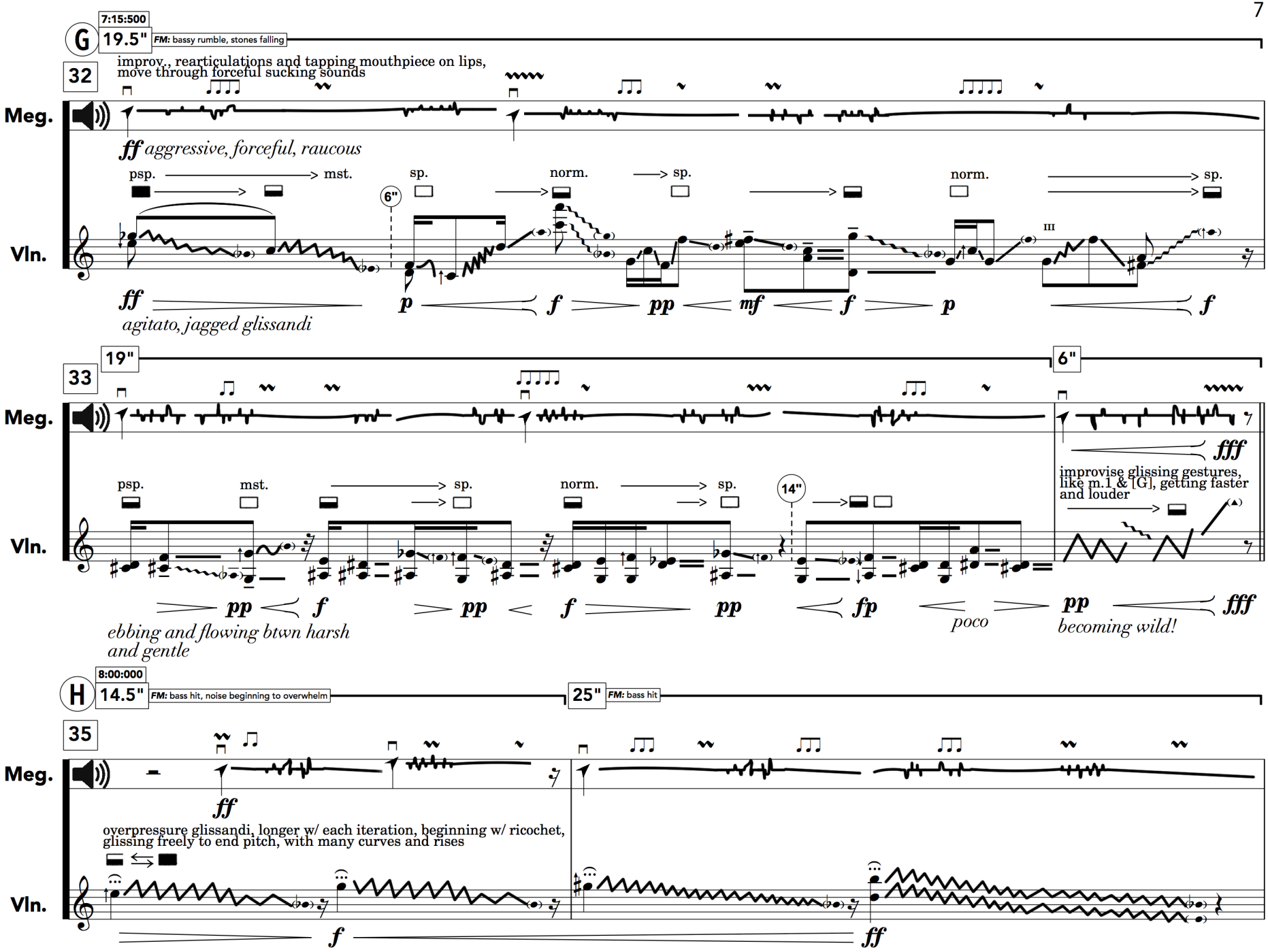


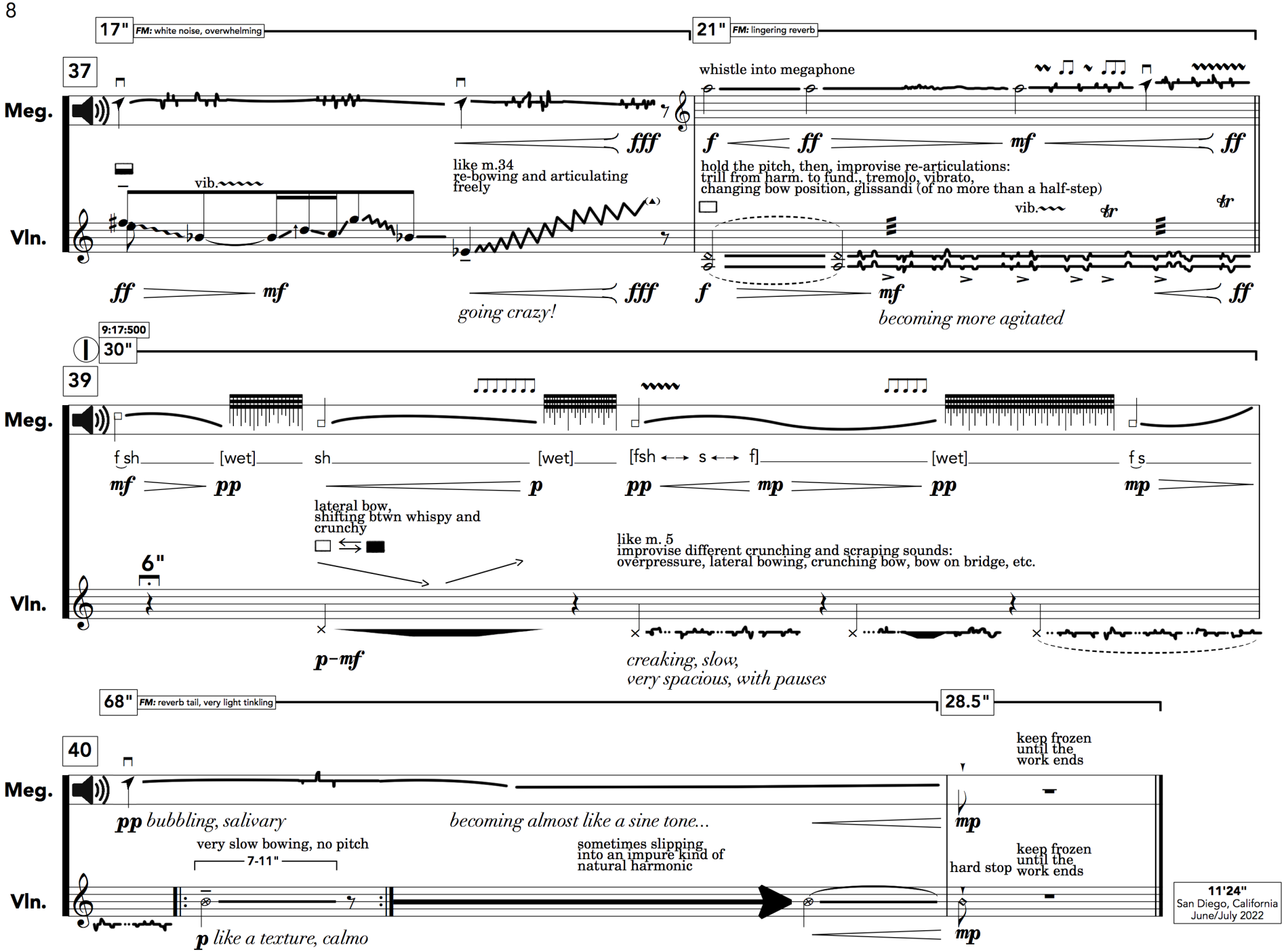

17"
FM: stones, swirling sounds | DSP: vln low delays
27"
continue. . . a relatively continuous tchip sound,
improvise rearticulations and tapping mouthpiece on lips
4
rapid wet
mouth sounds
Meg.
mf - p more delicate, less raucous
lateral bowing:
pull the bow up and down from extreme tasto to pont,
shifting between a whispy sound and creaking sound
L.H. dampen strings
(change pressure ad lib.)
sh [wet]
improvise different crunching and scraping sounds:
overpressure, lateral bowing, crunching bow, bow on bridge, etc.
Vln.
p - f (changing dynamics freely)
continuous unbroken scrapes; textural: whispy, creaking, crunching
p - mf
popping, creaking w/ pauses and space
17"
FM: swirling fading out. . .
1:53:500
B
17"
FM: rocks falling again | DSP: vln sounding minor 7th lower
9"
6
vocal fry/crackle
lowest register
Meg.
p exposed
f sh
f
oo (oo)
p
psp.
sp. norm.
3"
Vln.
ff pp < mp < f > < mf > pp
discordant, close-pitched dbl. stops, agitato, swelling dramatically
11"
7"
DSP: off
8
Meg.
aw (aw)
sp.
8"
mst.
ah
norm.
trem to
open string
sp.
Vln.
ff pp ff p
mf p f
glissing like m.1


8"
FM: rocks falling again | DSP: vln. m7 lower
18"
improv., like m.4
10
Meg.
f
pp - mp straighter
. . .becoming lighter, squeakier, more still
perform the cell at least 3 times, getting slower, quieter, more sul pont with each iteration
norm.
sp.
♪ = ca. 92
rall.
st.
msp.
Vln.
p
mf > p < mf
pp
2:56:500
C
22"
FM: swelling, EQ'ing | DSP: delays fading in
10"
12
Meg.
f sh
whistling w/ F.M.
pp–mp exposed, light, less noisy
circular bow, speeding up and slowing down ad lib.
IV
III
Vln.
fp
ppp
p
ppp
3:28:500
D
10"
FM: filtered shwooshing
DSP: vln. delays and reverb
10"
11"
14
Meg.
f sh (sh) f
or
slow pops
improvise outbursts of random pizzicato, tapping strings, L.H. pizz. & col legno
like [D], sempre
short harm.
I
9"
arco, single circle
Vln.
p molto agitato, rapido


10.5"
8.5"
10.5"
FM: fading out
17
change vowel shape freely, slowly, maintaining continuity
Meg.
[or ↔ oo ↔ ah]
5½"
sp. (to [G])
III
f s
n
p
[or ↔ oo ↔ ah]
II
pizz.
arco
I II
7½"
f s
n
Vln.
E
9.5"
11"
11"
20
Meg.
p
3"
III I
[wet]
f s
pp
mp
rapido
detache, w/ short pauses
5½"
II
f s
n
mp
6"
II
II
Vln.
more spacious, still
9"
9.5"
18"
23
Meg.
sh
trill from harmonic to open string
tr
f shor
pp
little squeak
glissing freely
tr
pp
II
II III
tr
Vln.
pp
mp


12.5"
FM: stone crumbling, w/ reverb
F
5:49:500
9"
26
Meg.
Vln.
vib.
vib.
[fsh ↔ s ↔ f]
pp - mp
4"
III
II
fp
pp
f
p
14"
11"
28
s
whistling
f sh
p
II
pp fragile
sh
I
tr
pp
mp
26"
26"
30
pp
18"
tr
→ ob.
mute string
pp f pp < mf > p
ric.


7:15:500
G
19.5"
FM: bassy rumble, stones falling
32
improv., rearticulations and tapping mouthpiece on lips, move through forceful sucking sounds
Meg.
ff aggressive, forceful, raucous
psp.
mst.
sp.
norm.
sp.
6"
norm.
sp.
III
Vln.
ff
p
f
pp
mf
f
p
f
agitato, jagged glissandi
19"
6"
33
Meg.
fff
improvise glissing gestures, like m.1 & [G], getting faster and louder
psp.
mst.
sp.
norm.
sp.
14"
Vln.
pp
f
pp
f
pp
fp
poco
pp
fff
ebbing and flowing btwn harsh and gentle
becoming wild!
8:00:000
H
14.5"
FM: bass hit, noise beginning to overwhelm
25"
FM: bass hit
35
Meg.
ff
overpressure glissandi, longer w/ each iteration, beginning w/ ricochet, glissing freely to end pitch, with many curves and rises
Vln.
f
ff


17"
FM: white noise, overwhelming
21"
FM: lingering reverb
37
Meg.
Vln.
whistle into megaphone
fff
like m.34
re-bowing and articulating
freely
vib.
hold the pitch, then, improvise re-articulations:
trill from harm. to fund., tremolo, vibrato,
changing bow position, glissandi (of no more than a half-step)
vib.
going crazy!
becoming more agitated
9:17:500
30"
39
f sh [wet] sh [wet] [fsh ↔ s ↔ f] [wet] f s
lateral bow,
shifting btwn whispy and
crunchy
like m. 5
improvise different crunching and scraping sounds:
overpressure, lateral bowing, crunching bow, bow on bridge, etc.
6"
creaking, slow,
very spacious, with pauses
68"
FM: reverb tail, very light tinkling
28.5"
40
keep frozen
until the
work ends
bubbling, salivary
becoming almost like a sine tone...
very slow bowing, no pitch
7-11"
sometimes slipping
into an impure kind of
natural harmonic
hard stop
like a texture, calmo
11'24"
San Diego, California
June/July 2022

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www.stephendefilippo.com