Full score

Time Windows

for Flute, Cello, and 2 Percussion

by Aidan Gold

Duration: 6–8 min.

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Instrumentation

Flute (with low B – if low B not available, play 8va)
Cello
Percussion 1:

Chimes (Tubular Bells), Crotales (only low octave), 1 Timpani (only 29" tuned to A2), 1 Tom, Bass Drum, Ocean Drum, Bell Plate (large, any pitch), Triangle, 2 Wood Slats, 2 Woodblocks, Wooden Wind Chimes (e.g. bamboo)
additional items: bow

Percussion 2:

Marimba (4.3 oct.), Vibraphone, Snare Drum, Rainstick, Tam-tam, Wind Gong, Suspended Cymbal, Singing Bowl (any pitch), Guiro, 2 Metals (unpitched, harsh metallic sounds such as Brake Drums or Anvils)
additional items: superball, rubber honey dipper (or a similarly hard small rubber object, for rubbing on the snare drum head)

Program Note

You are standing in a room with a large row of windows, each looking outside. Out the first window, you see an empty patch of soil, so you decide to plant a tree. Then you look out the second window to see a similar patch of soil, but with a seedling sprouting out. Turning to the third window, you see a young tree, already dozens of feet high. In the next window, a much older tree towers over your room, shading you from the sun with its branches. When you look at the final window, you see a dead snag, all the greenery gone. These are windows into time – snapshots of a linear narrative that we can construct in our heads of the tree's life and what happened to it chronologically. However, these are windows in physical space: we can look through them in any order. We might understand the "correct" linear order through time, but on top of this we can superimpose a new, non-linear narrative: the order in which we view the events tells a story of its own.

This piece attempts to engage with this idea of a non-linear narrative by presenting the ensemble with the building blocks of a muiscal story: 5 loops, that the performers can shift between at any point. The 5 loops played "in order" present 5 windows into a musical process through time, in which amorphous air sounds coalesce into pointillistic clouds, then fragments of accumulating melody and harmony, and finally into driving rhythms. As the ensemble moves freely between the loops, they look through windows onto various parts of this process, but in doing so create their own unique non-linear narrative on top of it.

Performance Instructions

This score consists of ***5*** sections (known as "***Loops***"), each with 16 measures, the same time signatures, and the same tempo. To perform this piece, the ensemble should construct a *non-linear musical narrative* out of these ***Loops***, using the following rules:

First half of the piece (4 loops):

The ensemble can begin at the start of any of the ***5 Loops*** (every musician must start on the same loop).
At any point (after finishing a loop, or in the middle of a loop, or even in the middle of a measure), the ensemble may choose to shift to a different loop. However, they must maintain their relative position within the loop (for example, if the ensemble begins on ***Loop 3*** and wants to shift to ***Loop 1*** after finishing m. 7 of ***Loop 3***, they must begin at the start of m. 8 of ***Loop 1***). For the first half of the piece, all musicians must switch loops at the same time and always be playing the same loop as each other.

Second half of the piece (4–6 loops):

After playing 4 loops worth of music (*meaning 4 times through the 16-bar loop, so even if the ensemble changed which loop they were playing in bar 8, that still only counts as one loop*), each individual ensemble member may now shift independently to their own loop at any point. As above, the relative position within each loop must always be the same across the whole ensemble (e.g., all musicians must be playing bar 8 in sync, even if Flute is on bar 8 in ***Loop 2*** and Cello is on bar 8 in ***Loop 4***, etc.)

The piece ends at the end of a loop (*after 8–10 16-bar loops in total*). Throughout the piece, the performers may repeat the same loop multiple times. The only additional requirement is that each player must have played a part of each of the ***5 Loops*** at some point during the piece.

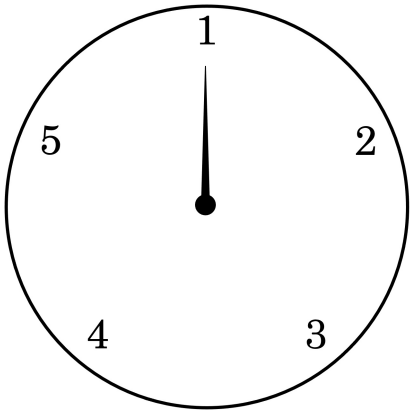
Additional Performance Ideas

The ensemble may choose whether they want to plan out all of their loop switches ahead of time or perform them in real time. If performed in real time, the piece will require a conductor to decide and signal (for the first half of the piece) which loops the ensemble should switch to, so that the ensemble all switches to the same loops for the first half of the piece. It is recommended that the ensemble try several planned versions of the piece in rehearsal before trying a real-time version if desired.

When pre-planning when and how to switch loops, the ensemble can think about what sort of musical narrative they might want to create. Each loop has a different set of musical characteristics that allow many different narrative possibilities. For example, a gradual accumulation of rhythmic and gestural intensity might mean beginning in ***Loop 1*** and then going to ***Loop 3***, ***Loop 2***, ***Loop 4,*** and finally ***Loop 5***, and a decrease of intensity might move in the opposite direction. The ensemble might also choose to move from loops with mostly textural effects and few pitches to loops with clearer harmonic and melodic progressions. The ensemble might also choose to switch loops extremely frequently (every measure?) at the start of the piece, and gradually shift to playing entire loops without switching at the end, or they could go the opposite way. Many different stories and emotional trajectories are possible, and the ensemble is encouraged to discuss what kind of musical story they want to tell using this piece.

Optional Visual Component

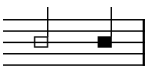
If a projector and screen is available, an image similar to this clock may be displayed above the ensemble indicating to the audience which loop the ensemble is currently on. An additional performer would be needed to control and update the clock in real time. During the second part of the piece, the clock could split into four clocks, one for each performer, or there could be one clock with four different hands, each for one performer.



Notation

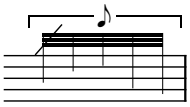
Flute

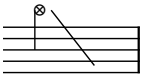
● = cover embochure hole entirely with mouth; ○ = ord. embochure position; ◑ = halfway between

 = mostly air; finger the written pitch;

= air + speak the written syllable into the flute

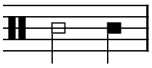
= key click

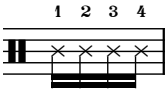
 = random key clicks as fast as possible in the given duration.

 = jet whistle

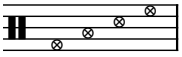
Cello

sp = sul ponticello; msp = molto sul ponticello; st = sul tasto; ⌒ = bow on bridge;

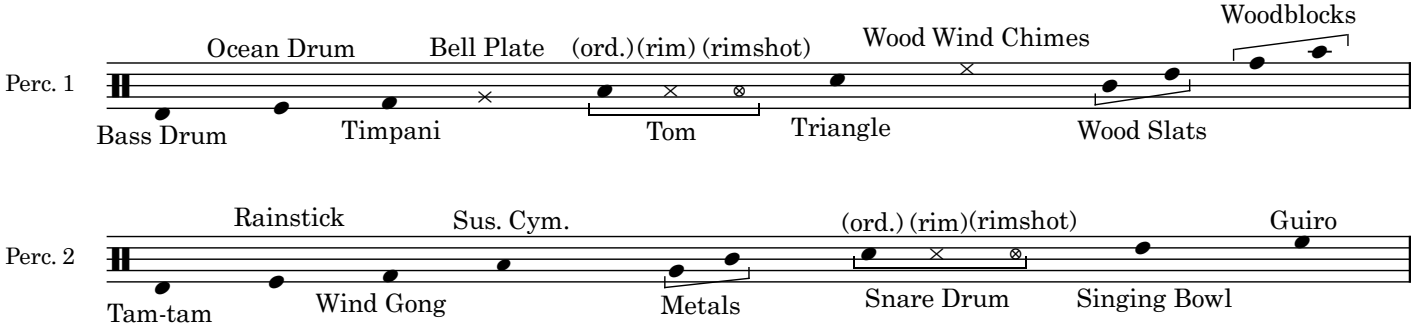
 = pitchless air sound (bow on body of instrument, tailpiece, or on bridge with muted strs.)

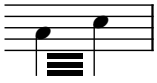


= tap body of instrument with fingers (# indicates which finger to use – 1 = pointer, etc.)

 = play on strings beyond the bridge (lowest space = lowest string, highest space = highest)

Percussion

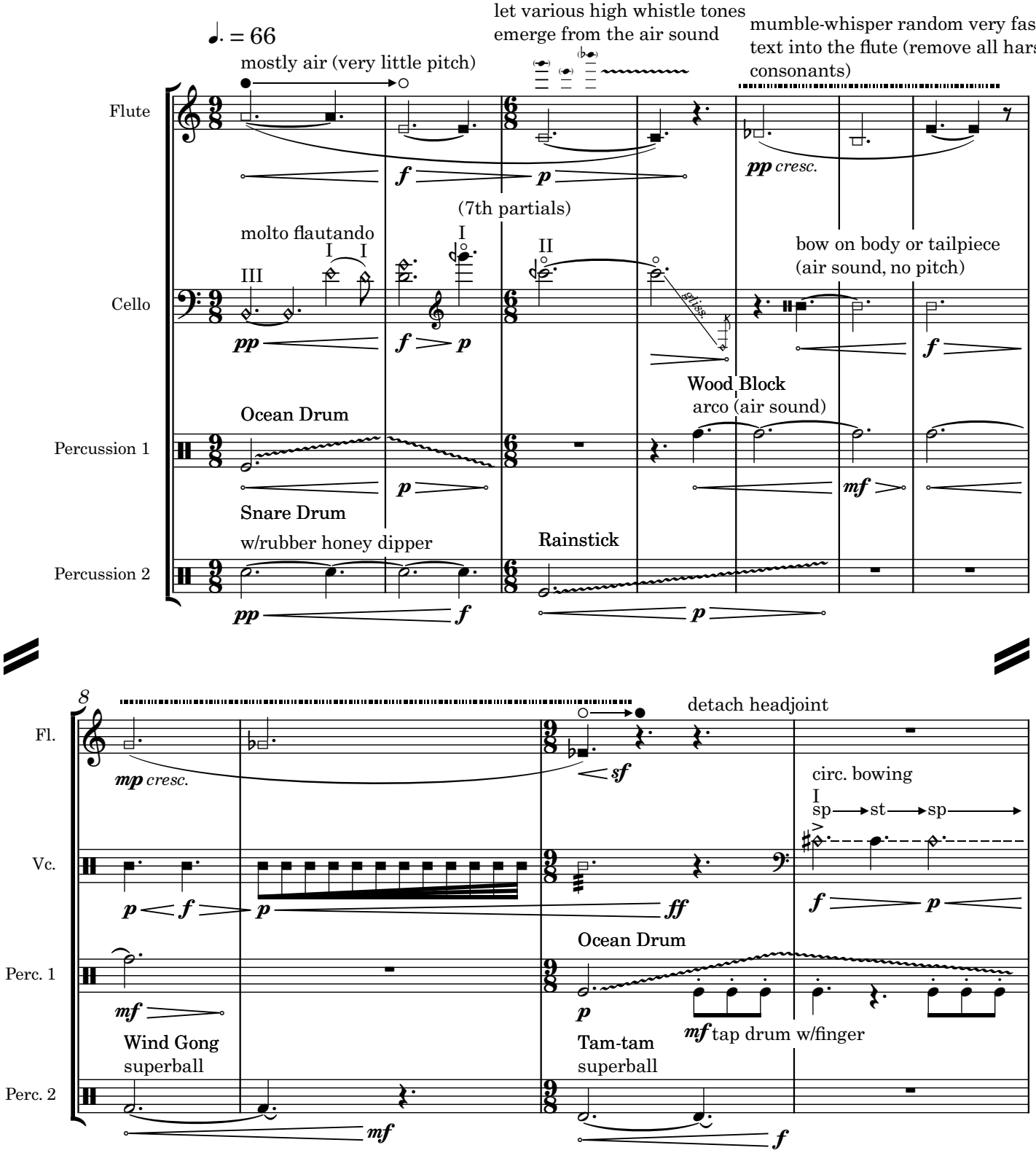


Tremolo shorthand for percussion instruments: for rhythmic clarity,  is notated as

Time Windows

Aidan Gold

Loop 1



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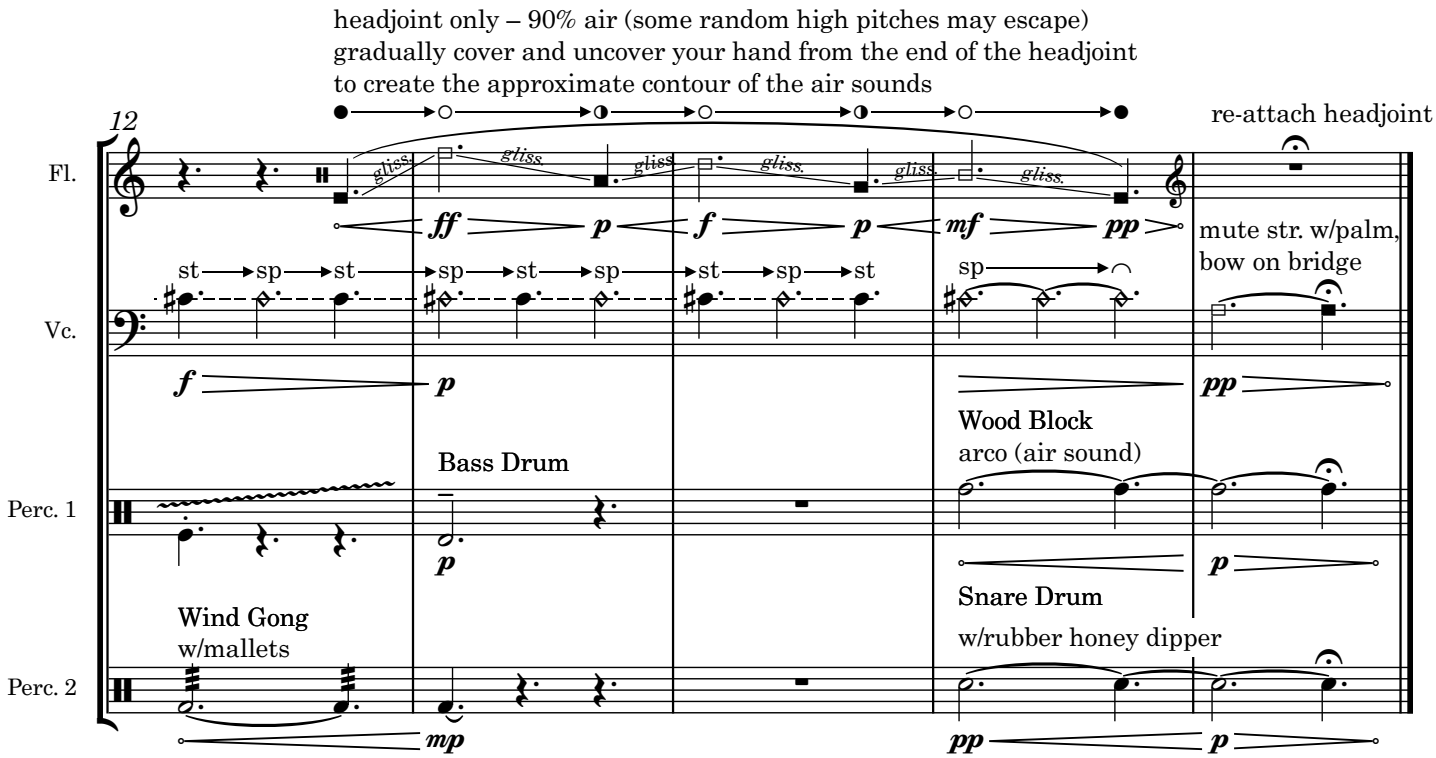
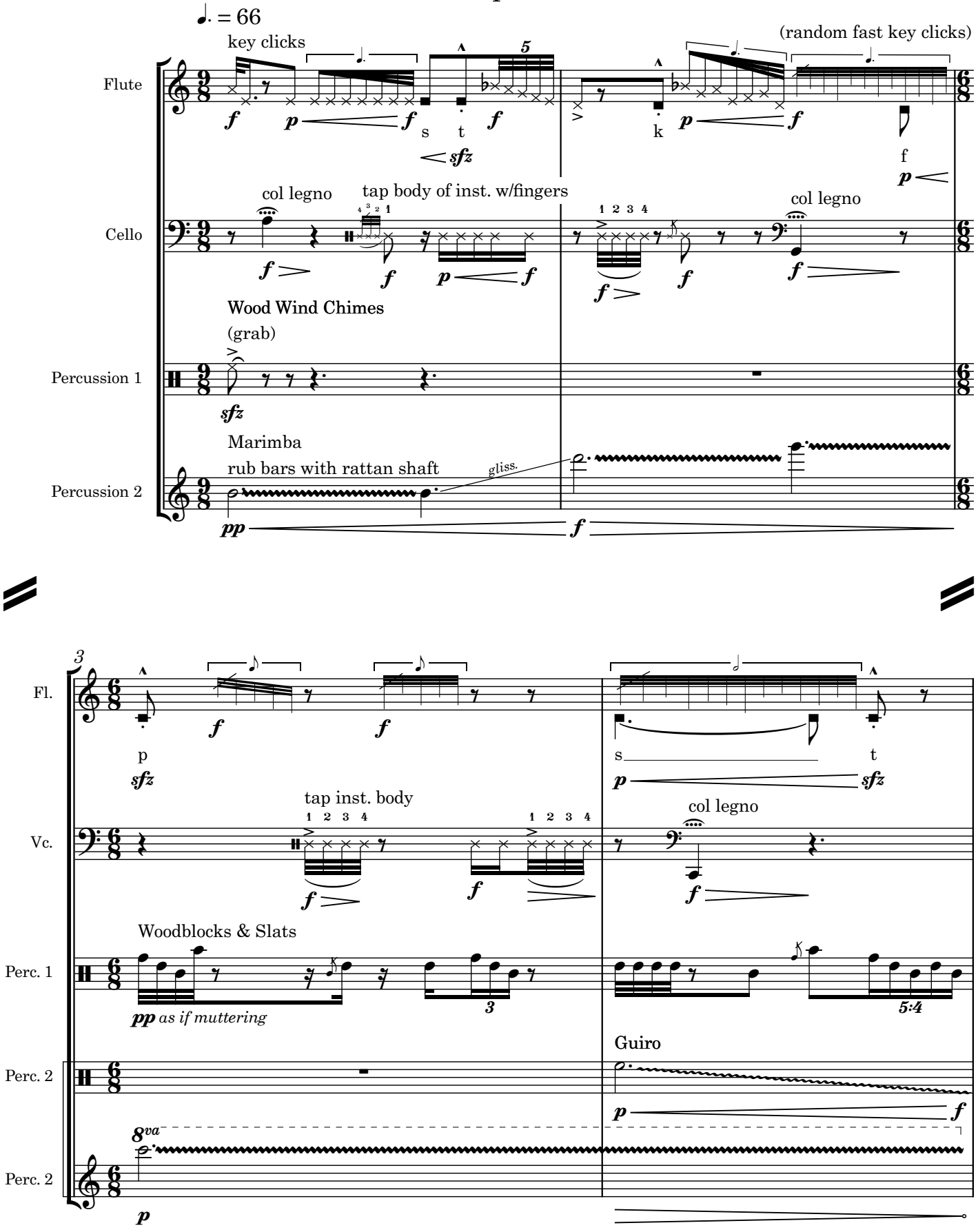
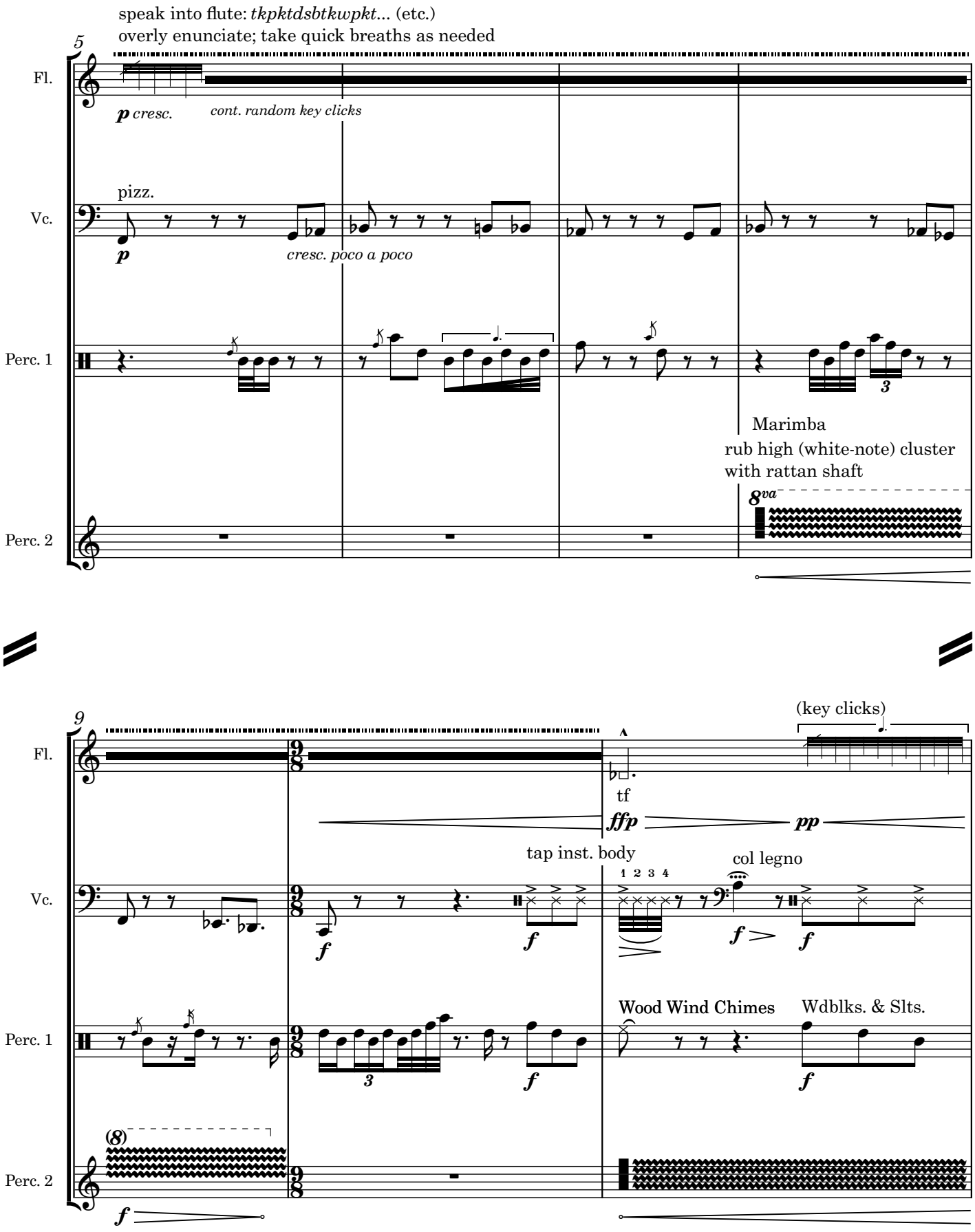
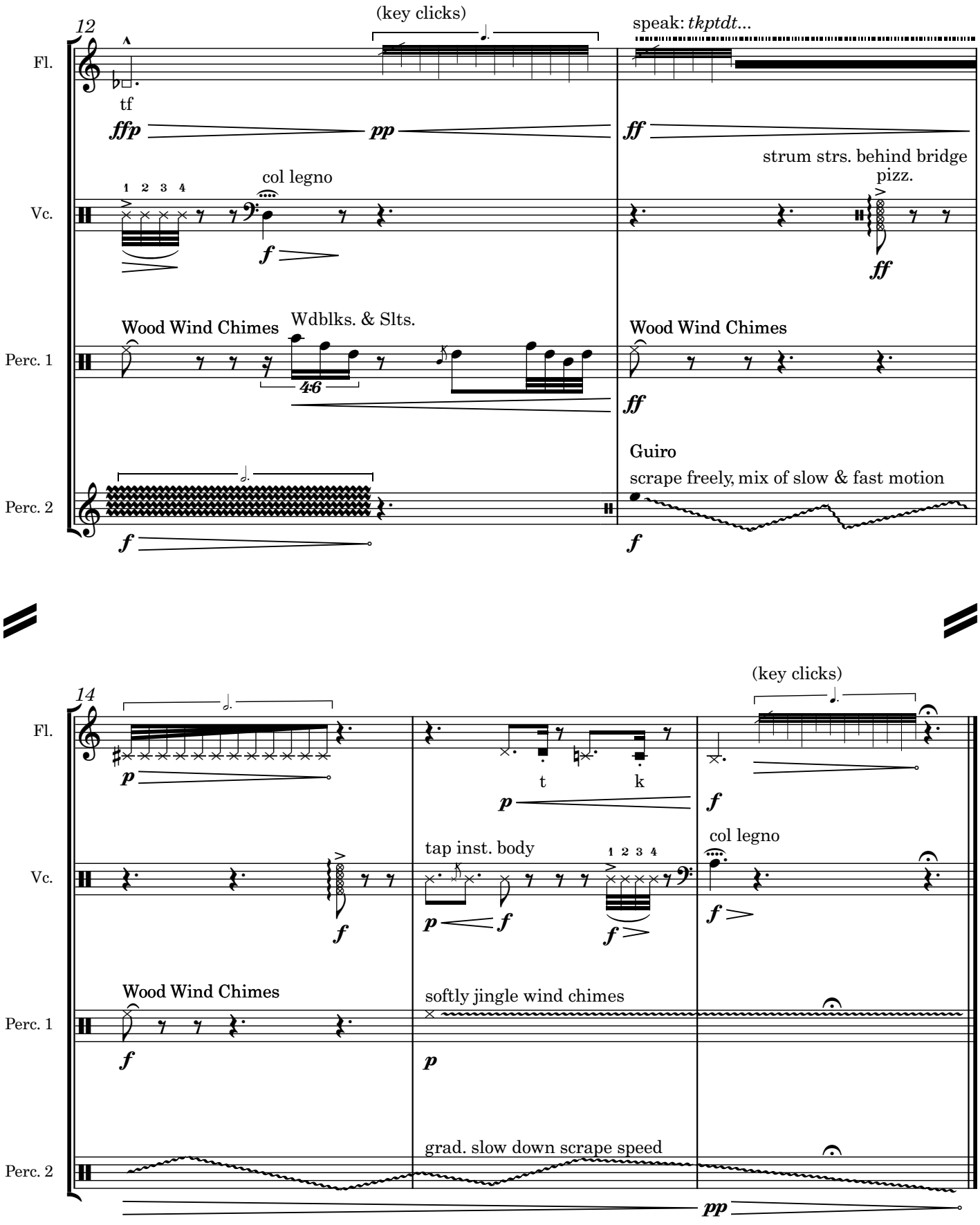

headjoint only – 90% air (some random high pitches may escape)
gradually cover and uncover your hand from the end of the headjoint
to create the approximate contour of the air sounds
12
re-attach headjoint
Fl.
gliss.
ff
p
f
p
mf
pp
mute str. w/palm,
bow on bridge
Vc.
st
sp
f
p
pp
Wood Block
arco (air sound)
Bass Drum
Perc. 1
p
p
Snare Drum
w/rubber honey dipper
Wind Gong
w/mallets
Perc. 2
mp
pp
p

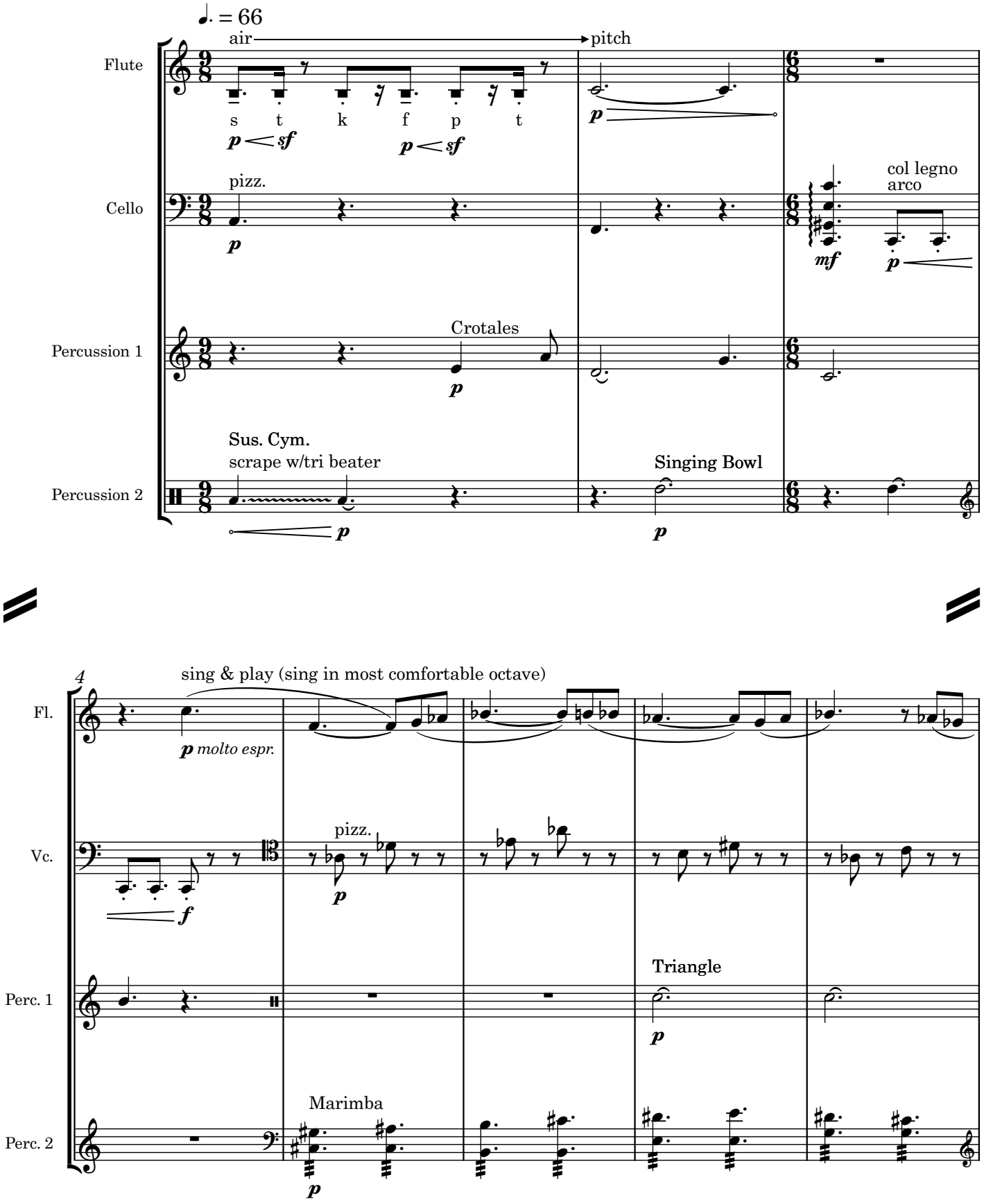
Loop 2

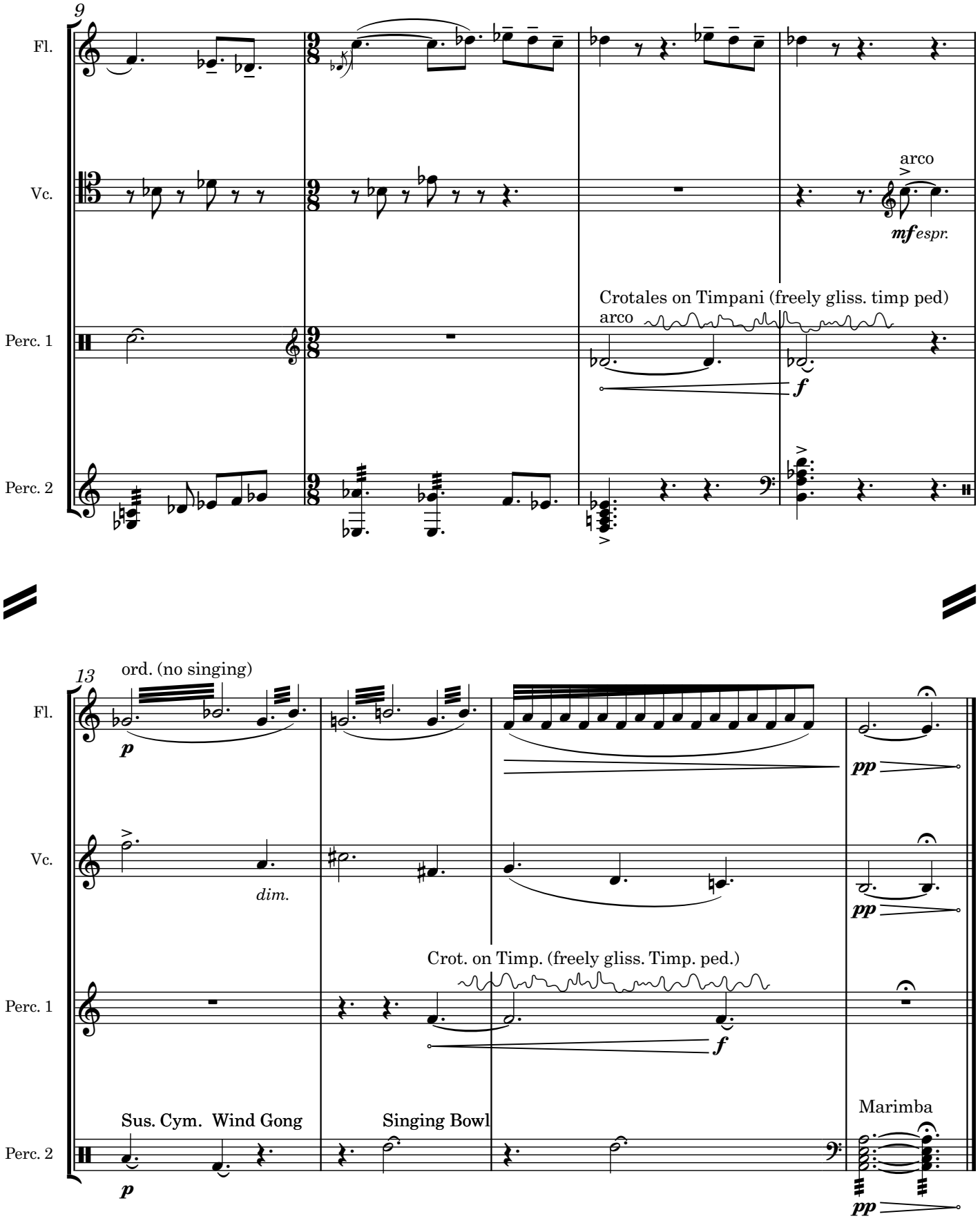

♩. = 66
key clicks
(random fast key clicks)
Flute
Cello
Percussion 1
Percussion 2
col legno
tap body of inst. w/fingers
col legno
Wood Wind Chimes
(grab)
Marimba
rub bars with rattan shaft
gliss.
s
t
k
f
Fl.
Vc.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Perc. 2
tap inst. body
col legno
Woodblocks & Slats
as if muttering
Guiro
8va


speak into flute: tkpktdsbtkwpkt... (etc.)
overly enunciate; take quick breaths as needed
5
Fl.
p cresc.
cont. random key clicks
pizz.
Vc.
p
cresc. poco a poco
Perc. 1
3
Marimba
rub high (white-note) cluster
with rattan shaft
8va
Perc. 2
9
(key clicks)
tf
ffp
pp
tap inst. body
col legno
1 2 3 4
Wood Wind Chimes
Wdblks. & Slts.
(8)

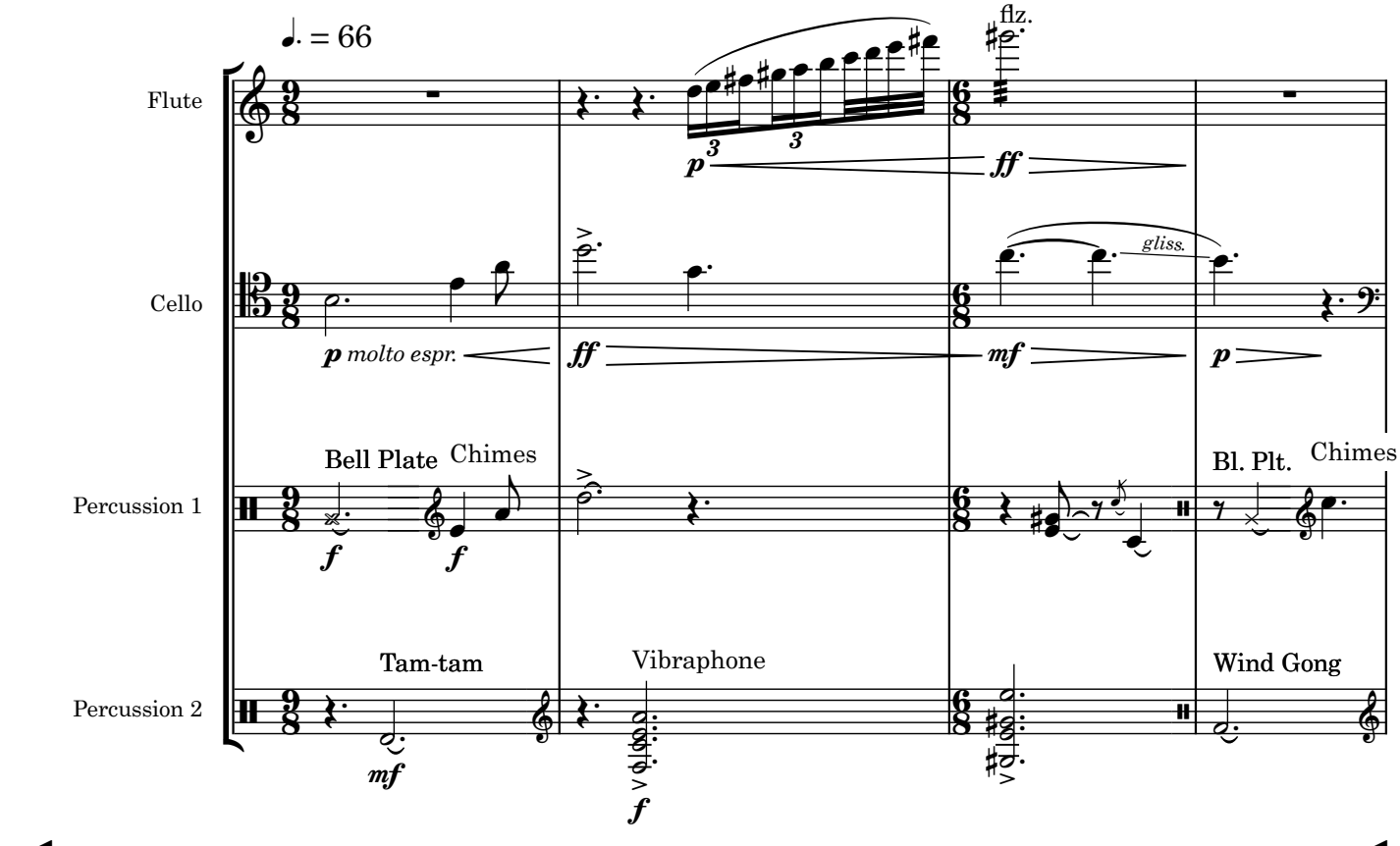

12
(key clicks)
speak: tkptdt...
Fl.
tf
ffp
pp
ff
strum strs. behind bridge
pizz.
col legno
Vc.
1 2 3 4
f
ff
Wood Wind Chimes
Wdblks. & Slts.
Wood Wind Chimes
Perc. 1
46
ff
Guiro
scrape freely, mix of slow & fast motion
Perc. 2
f
f
14
(key clicks)
Fl.
p
t
k
p
f
tap inst. body
col legno
Vc.
1 2 3 4
f
p
f
f
f
Wood Wind Chimes
softly jingle wind chimes
Perc. 1
f
p
grad. slow down scrape speed
Perc. 2
pp

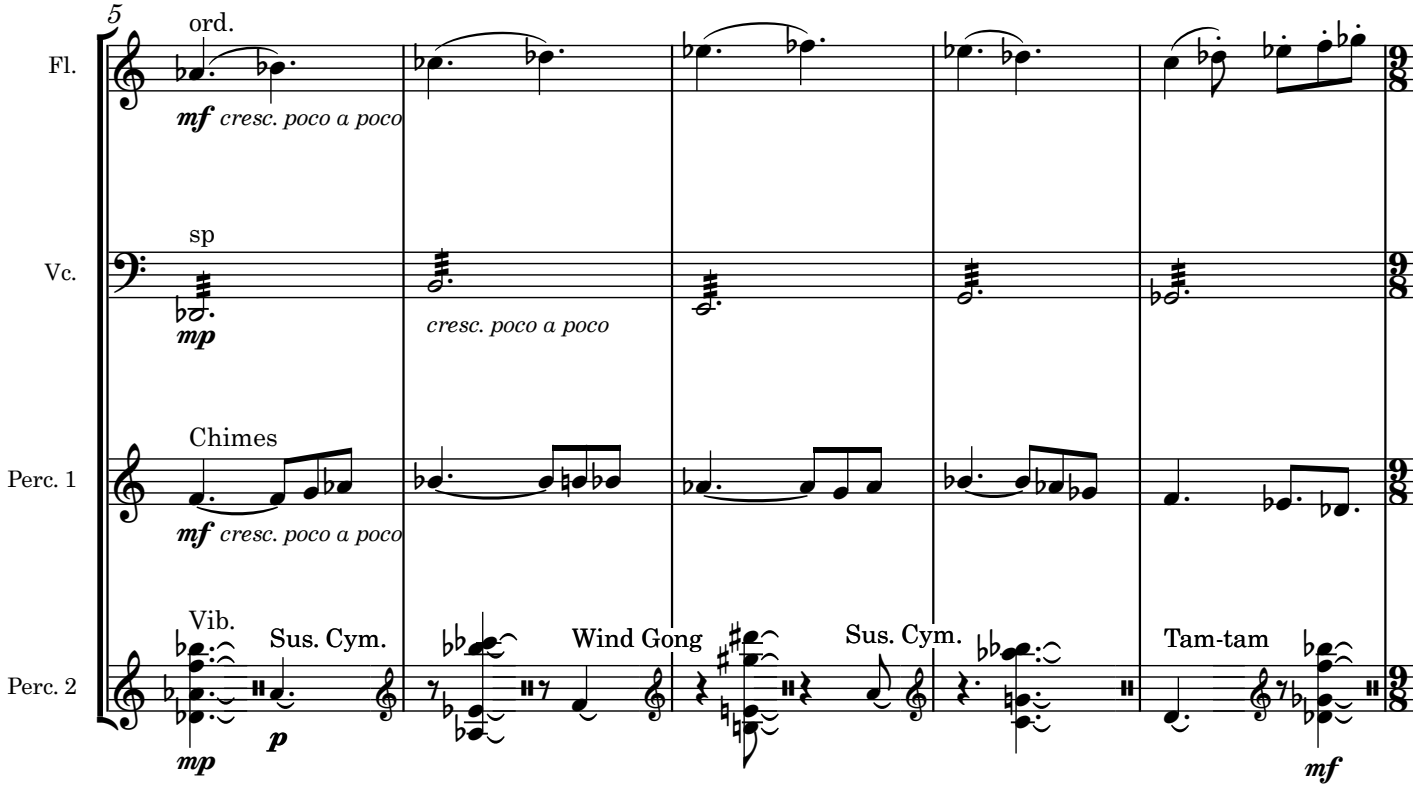
Loop 3

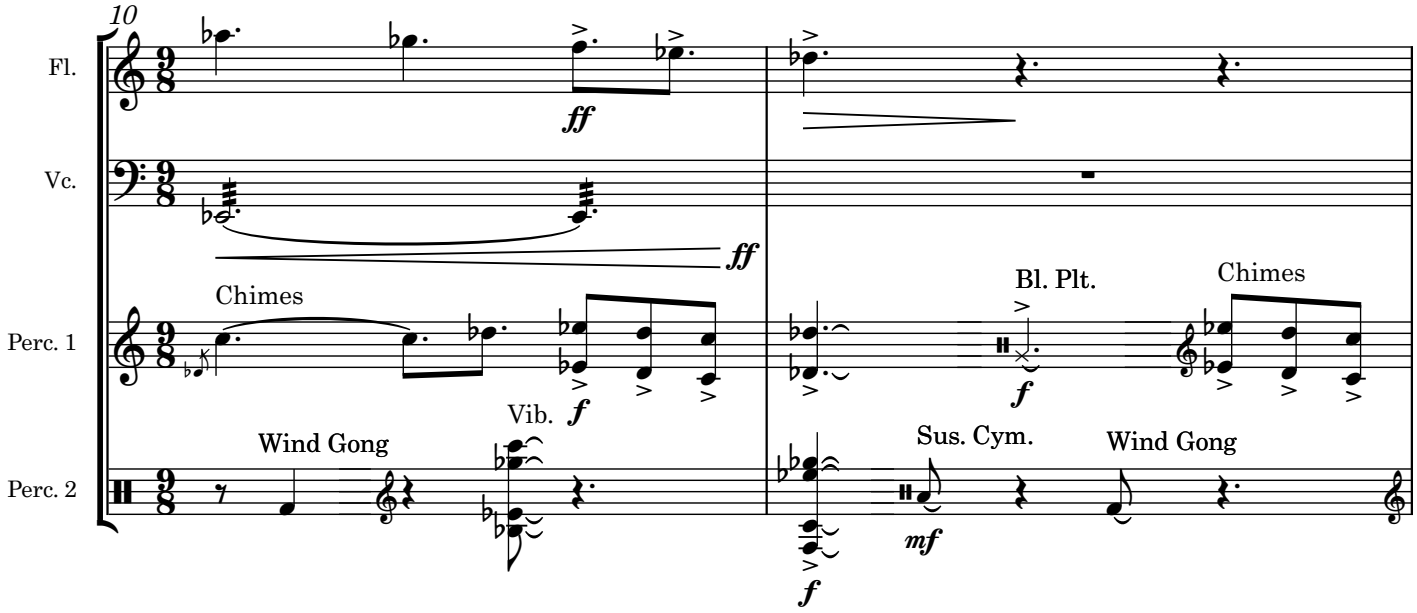

♩. = 66
air
pitch
Flute
s t k f p t
p < sf
p < sf
p
Cello
pizz.
p
col legno
arco
mf
p
Percussion 1
Crotales
p
Percussion 2
Sus. Cym.
scrape w/tri beater
p
Singing Bowl
p
4
sing & play (sing in most comfortable octave)
Fl.
p molto espr.
Vc.
f
pizz.
p
Perc. 1
Triangle
p
Perc. 2
Marimba
p

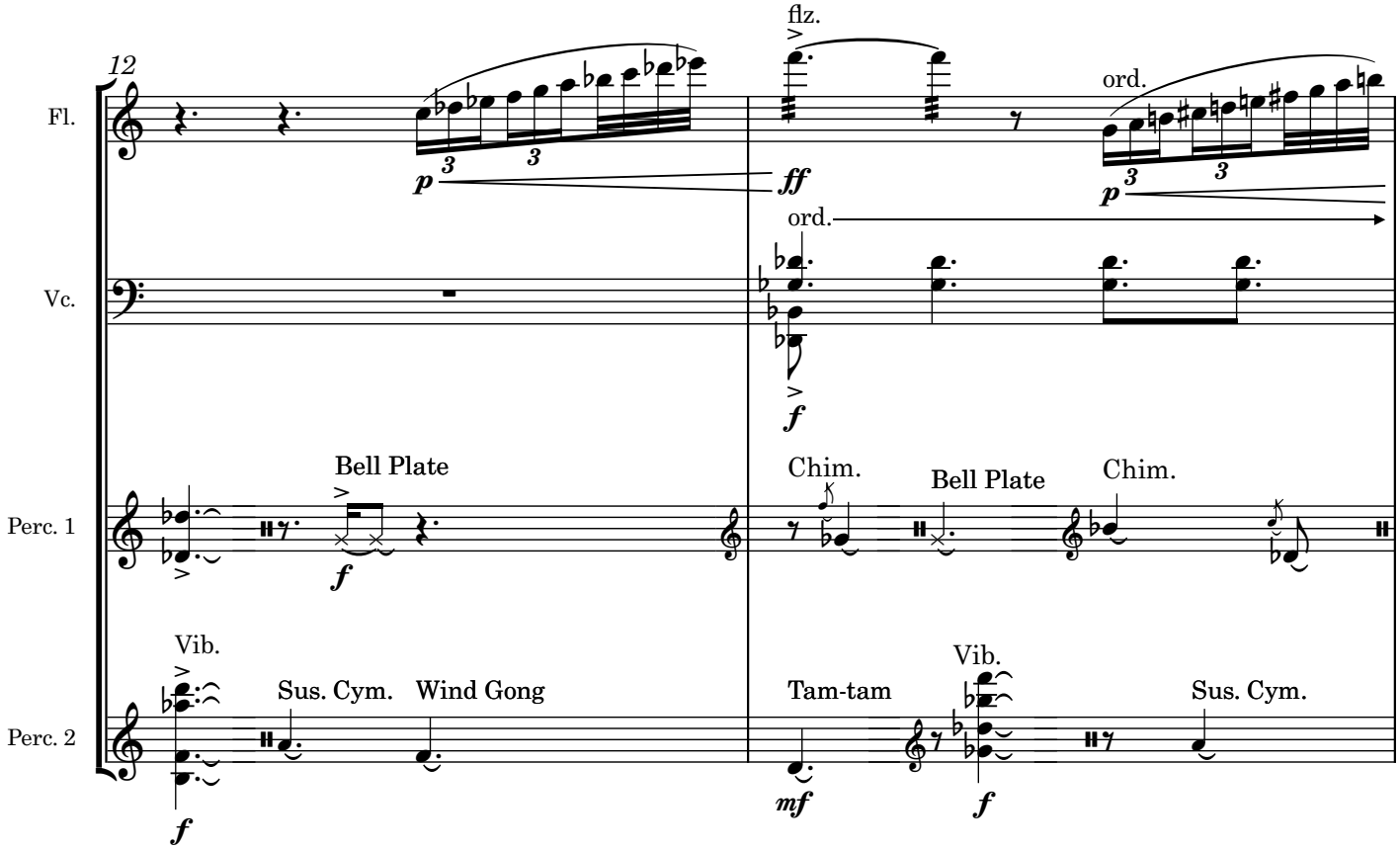

9
Fl.
Vc.
arco
mf espr.
Crotales on Timpani (freely gliss. timp ped)
arco
Perc. 1
f
Perc. 2
13
ord. (no singing)
Fl.
p
pp
Vc.
dim.
pp
Crot. on Timp. (freely gliss. Timp. ped.)
Perc. 1
f
Sus. Cym. Wind Gong
Singing Bowl
Marimba
Perc. 2
p
pp

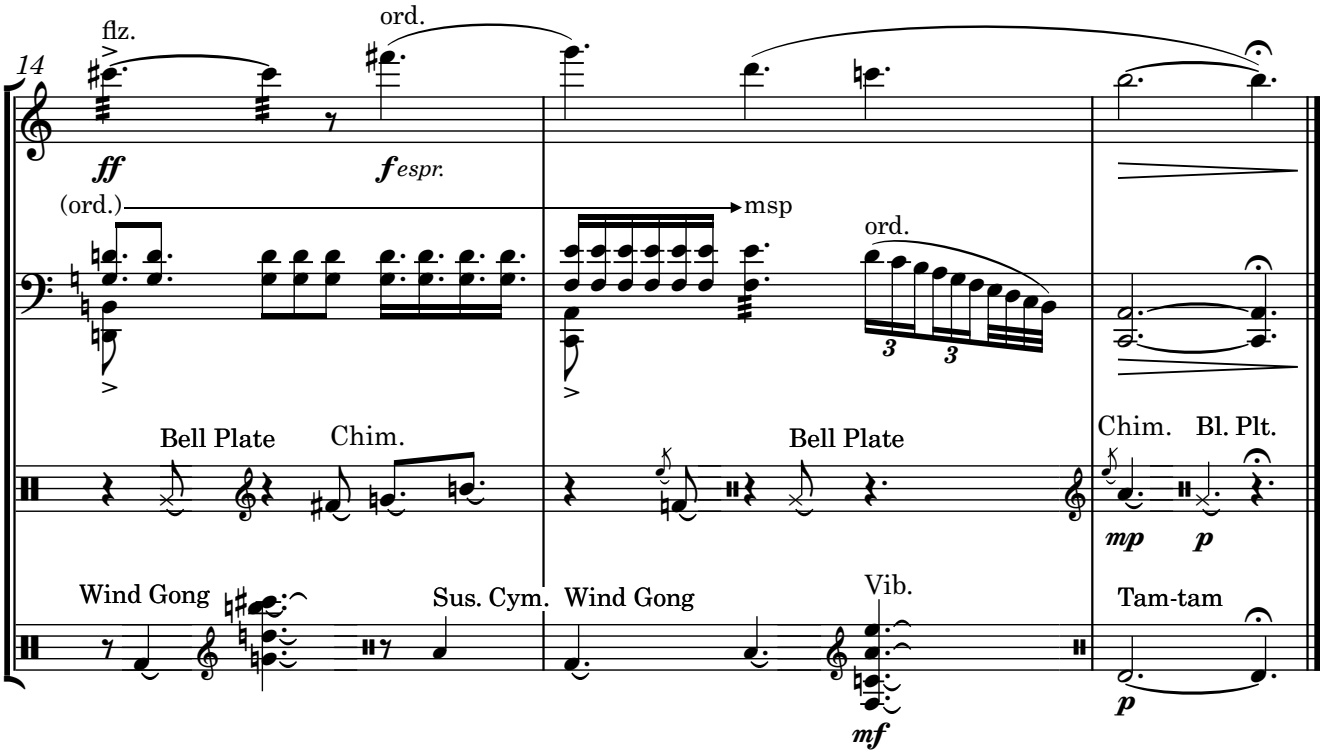
Loop 4


♩. = 66
Flute
flz.
p
ff
Cello
p molto espr.
ff
mf
gliss.
p
Percussion 1
Bell Plate
Chimes
f
f
Bl. Plt.
Chimes
Percussion 2
Tam-tam
mf
Vibraphone
f
Wind Gong

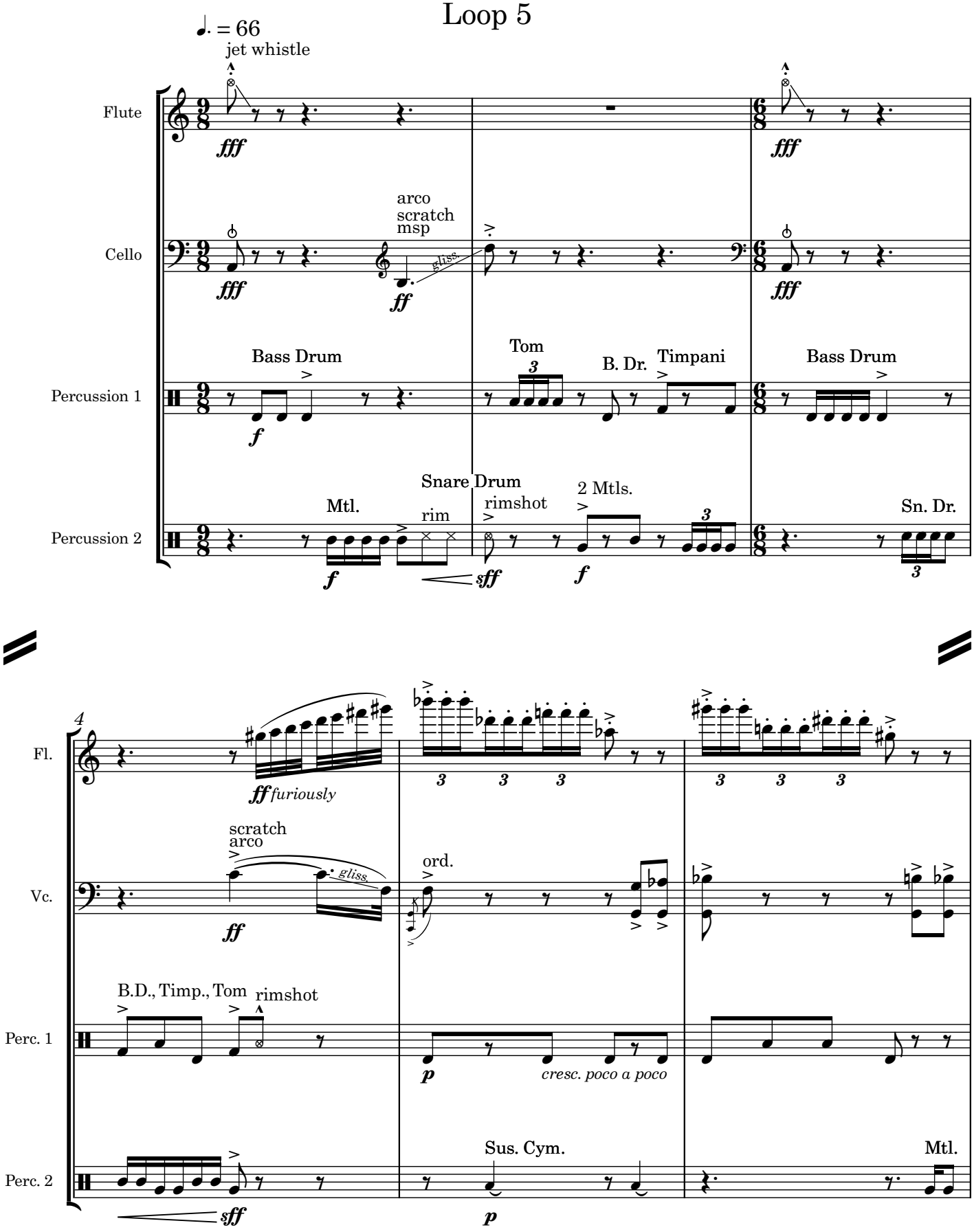

5
Fl.
ord.
mf cresc. poco a poco
Vc.
sp
mp
cresc. poco a poco
Perc. 1
Chimes
mf cresc. poco a poco
Perc. 2
Vib.
mp
Sus. Cym.
p
Wind Gong
Sus. Cym.
Tam-tam
mf

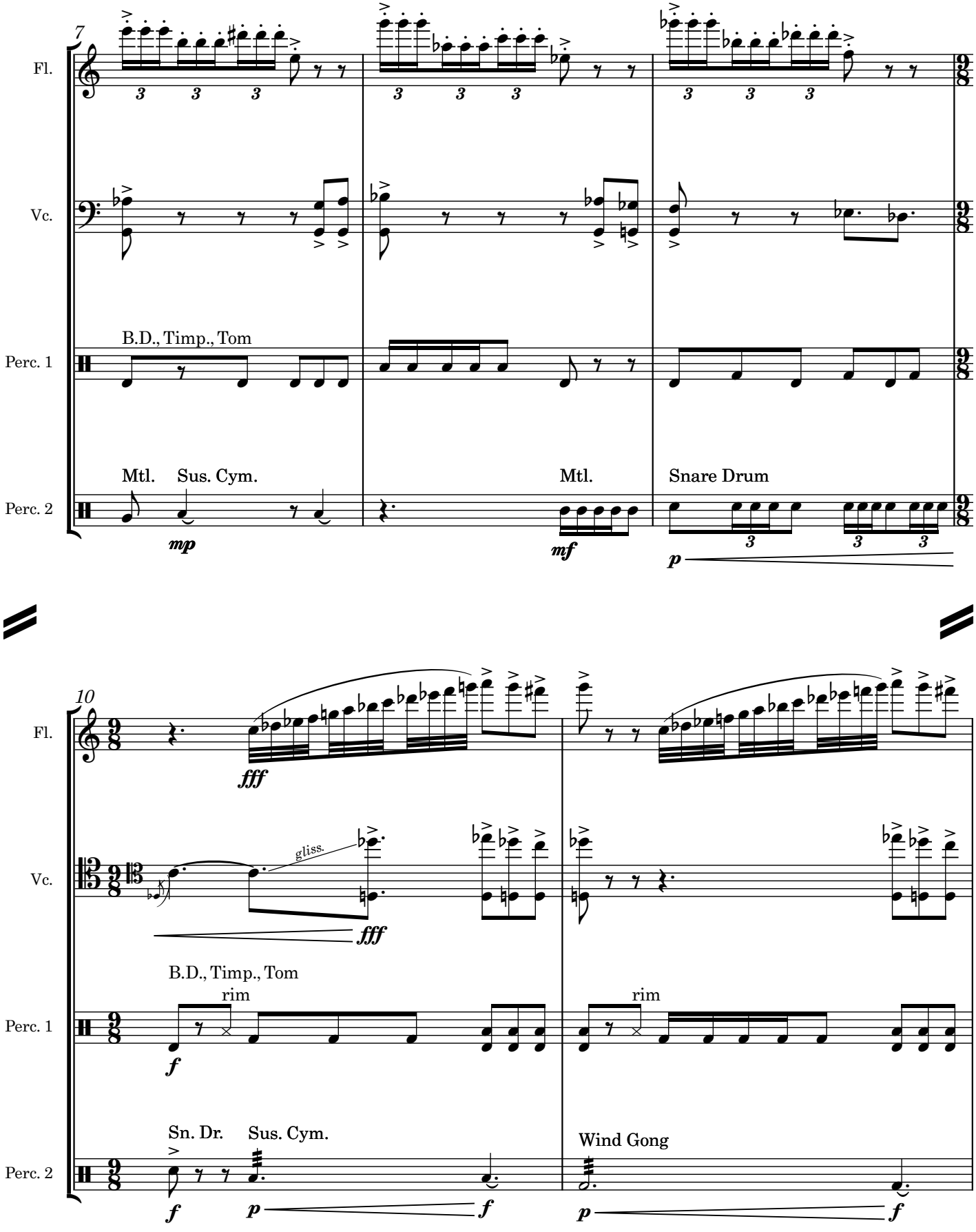

10
Fl.
Vc.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Chimes
Wind Gong
Vib.
Bl. Plt.
Chimes
Sus. Cym.
Wind Gong

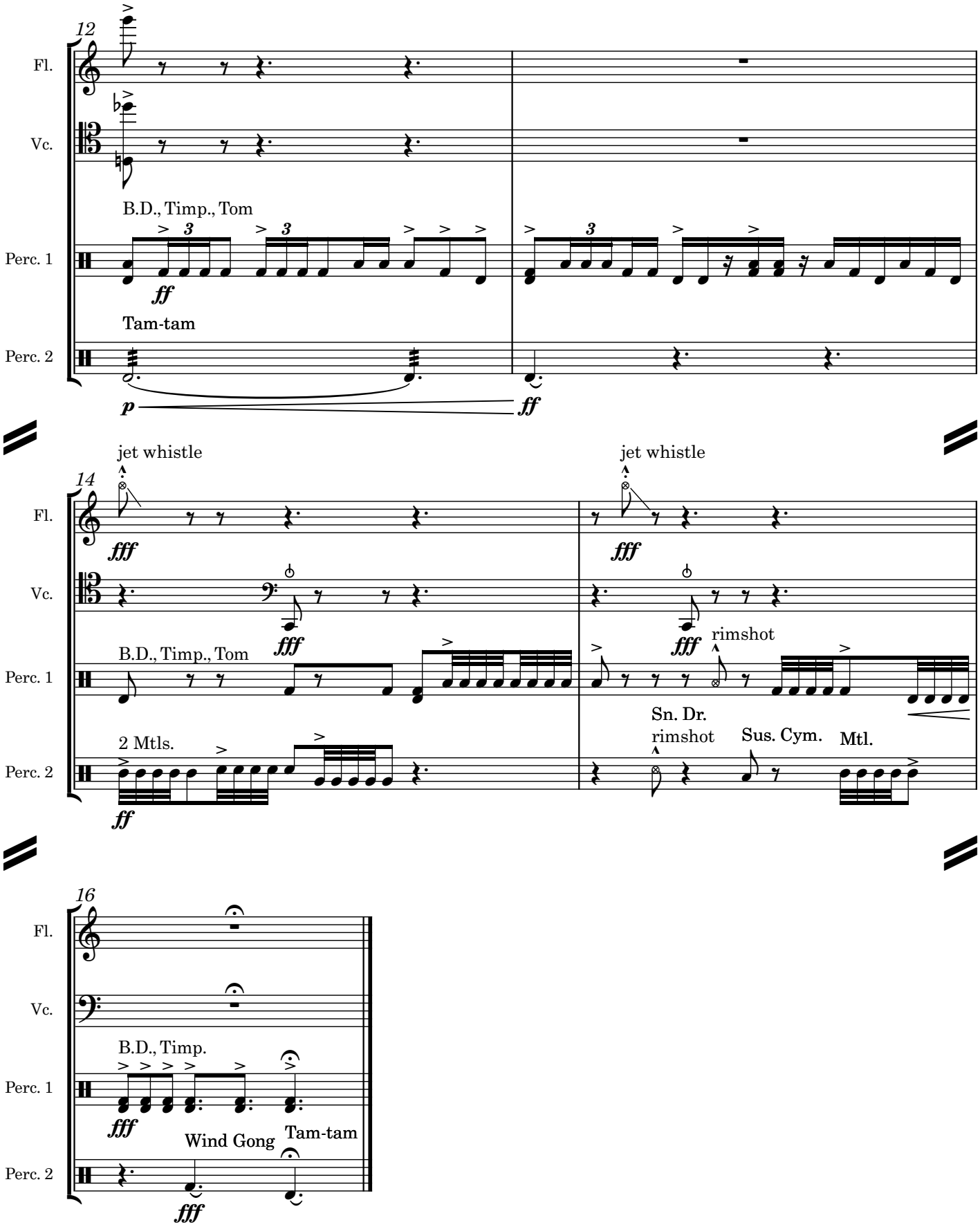

12
Fl.
Vc.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
flz.
ord.
ord.
Bell Plate
Chim.
Bell Plate
Chim.
Vib.
Sus. Cym.
Wind Gong
Tam-tam
Vib.
Sus. Cym.


14
Fl.
Vc.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
flz.
ord.
ff
f espr.
(ord.)
msp
ord.
Bell Plate
Chim.
Bell Plate
Chim.
Bl. Plt.
mp
p
Wind Gong
Sus. Cym.
Wind Gong
Vib.
Tam-tam
mf
p

Loop 5


♩. = 66
jet whistle
Flute
Cello
arco
scratch
msp
gliss.
Percussion 1
Bass Drum
Tom
B. Dr.
Timpani
Bass Drum
Percussion 2
Mtl.
rim
Snare Drum
rimshot
2 Mtls.
Sn. Dr.
4
Fl.
furiously
Vc.
scratch
arco
gliss.
ord.
Perc. 1
B.D., Timp., Tom
rimshot
cresc. poco a poco
Perc. 2
Sus. Cym.
Mtl.


7
Fl.
Vc.
B.D., Timp., Tom
Perc. 1
Mtl.
Sus. Cym.
Mtl.
Snare Drum
Perc. 2
mp
mf
p
10
Fl.
fff
Vc.
gliss.
fff
B.D., Timp., Tom
rim
rim
Perc. 1
f
Sn. Dr.
Sus. Cym.
Wind Gong
Perc. 2
f
p
f
p
f


12
Fl.
Vc.
B.D., Timp., Tom
Perc. 1
ff
Tam-tam
Perc. 2
p
ff
jet whistle
jet whistle
14
Fl.
fff
fff
Vc.
fff
fff
rimshot
B.D., Timp., Tom
Perc. 1
Sn. Dr.
rimshot
Sus. Cym.
Mtl.
2 Mtls.
Perc. 2
ff
16
Fl.
Vc.
B.D., Timp.
Perc. 1
fff
Wind Gong
Tam-tam
Perc. 2
fff