S e v e r a n c e

for guitar

edited by Geoffrey Morris

"You all know the wild grief that besets us when we remember times of happiness. How far beyond recall they are, and we are severed from them by something more pitiless than leagues and miles. In the afterlight, too, the images stand out more enticing than before... And constantly in our thirst-haunted dreams we grope for the past in its every detail, in its every line and fold. Then it cannot but seem to us as if we had not had our fill of love and life; yet no regret brings back what has been let slip."

-**Ernst Juenger:** On the Marble Cliffs

Duration: about 7 minutes

Originally written between '88 and '91 at the request of Magnus Andersson
with funding provided by the Darmstadt Internationales Ferienkurse für Neue Musik;
reworked and recopied, March '94

1 Accidentals only apply to the notes they immediately precede.

2 No vibrato whatsoever.

3 Fingerings given are the composer's suggestions, and are by no means mandatory. Better solutions may well be available.

4 Except in specific non-legato sections, all lines should be legato.

5 The score is to be understood as inhabiting a world dominated by interpretative rubato. It is nominally notated at 3½ centimetres to 1 second (in performance, however, the time-space seems to average out nearer 2 cm per second (= mm36ish)), and players may, if they wish, go through the score and mark the seconds in, but it is the composer's preference that unfolding time be 'felt' rather than 'calculated'.

Consequently, the rhythmical life is notated unusually; in place of exact detailed -'intellectual'- information, beaming is a reinforcement of distances between noteheads, which are directly proportional to durations. This lessening of rhythmical specificity is not to be understood as licence to waywardness, the musical substance having been composed as rigorously as ever; the character of the resulting music implies a certain elasticity. An ideal performance, therefore, would be one of considered, and consistent, inexactitude.

6 In addition to the modified rhythmical notation, the gracenote life of the piece is more elaborate than usual, utilising several degrees of rapidity. These are beamed as if they were quavers, semiquavers, and demisemis (8ths, 16ths, and 32nds), although the ratios between their tempi should not be fully 4:2:1, but a narrower ratio **...2:1½:1**, for instance. They should always be rapid, but varyingly so. To distinguish them from the metrically uneven 'in-time' music, all groups have a slash at one end. These motoric gracenotes should always have the psychological effect of an uncomfortable intrusion, whether of agitation or respite.

7 Notes with a dotted ring around them are isolatedly **sul pont.**

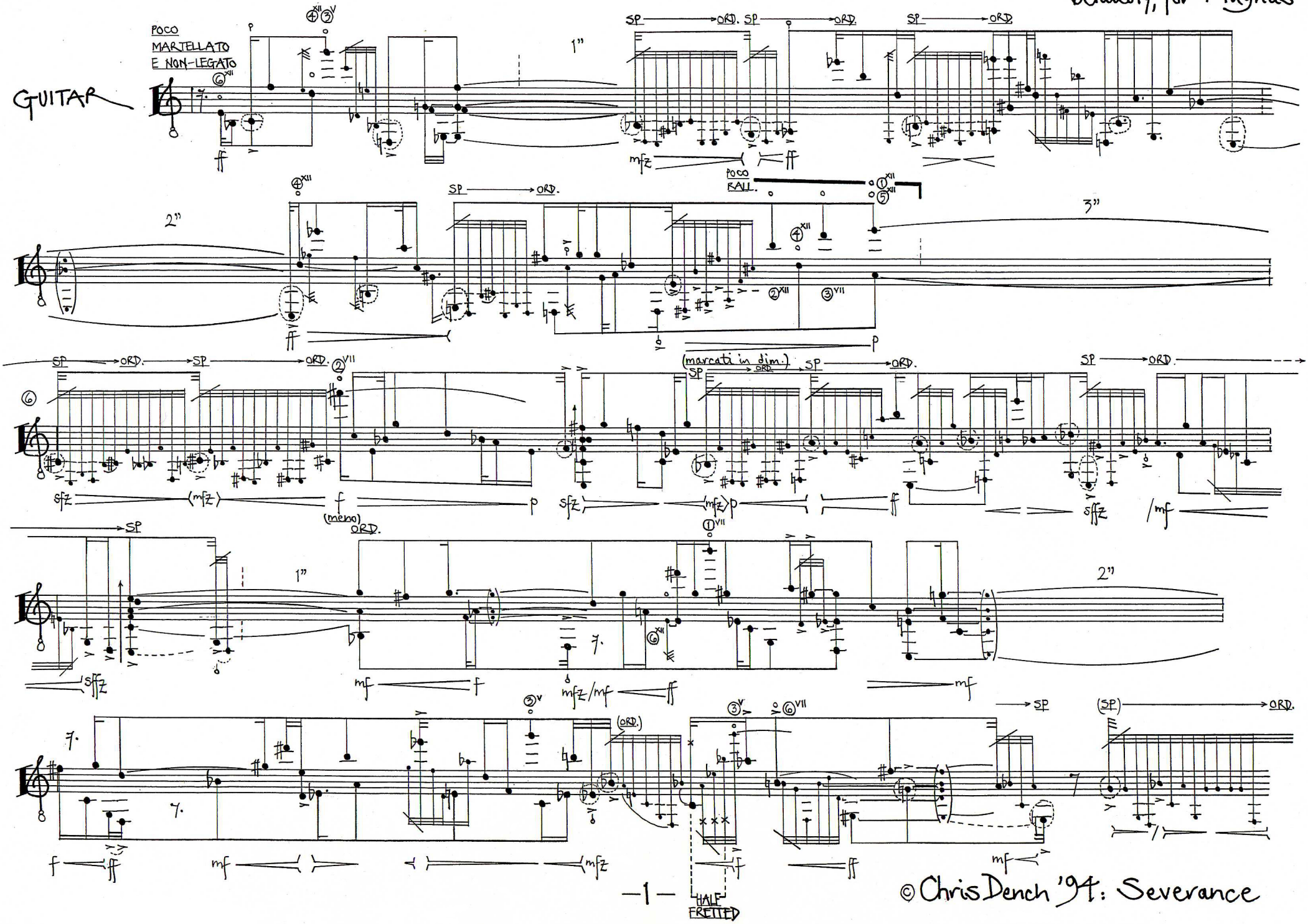
8 Golpe: preferably flat hand slapped on body.

9 Dynamics are tiered through seven levels: **ppp - pp - p - mf - f - ff - fff**

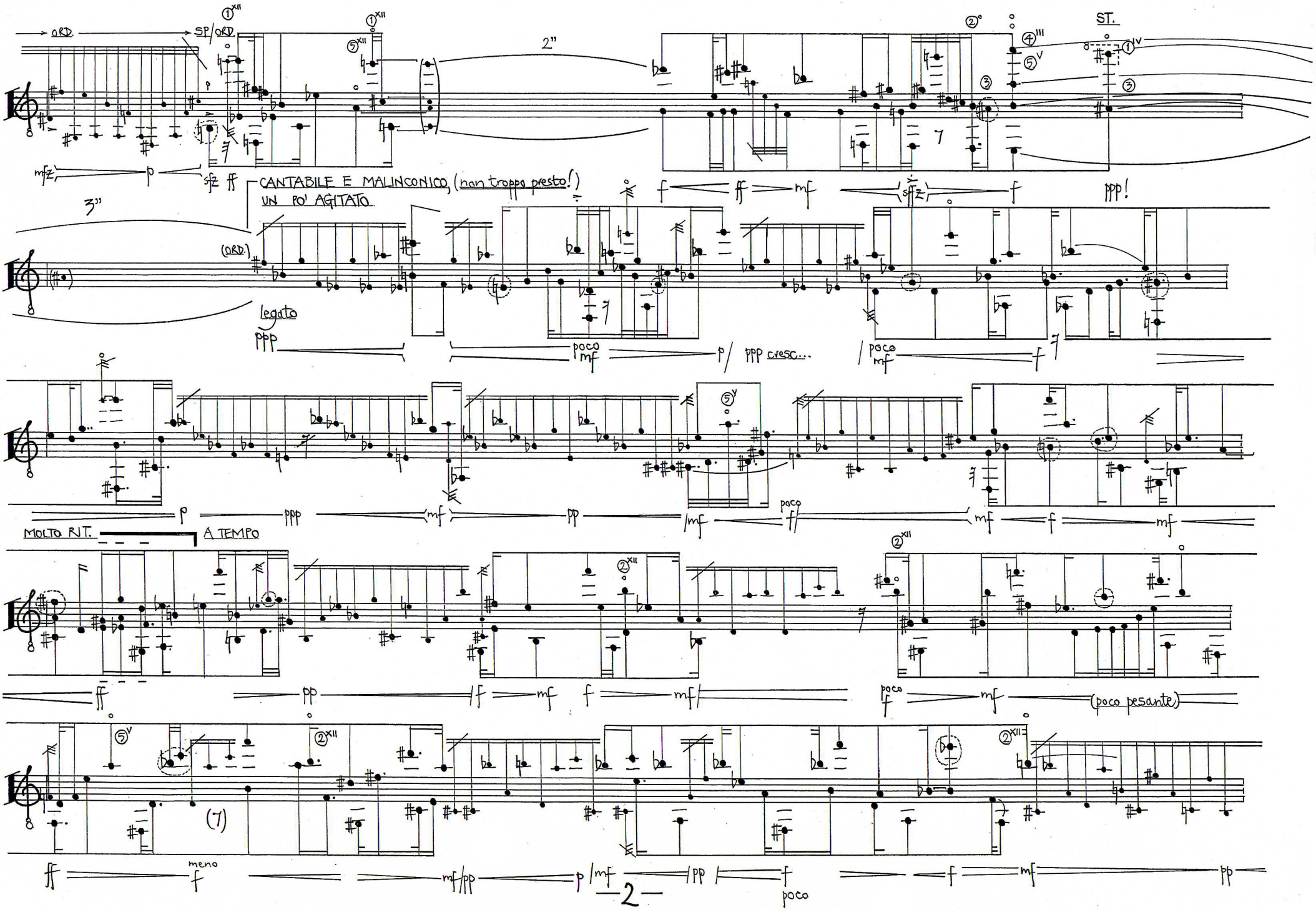
All marcati within prevailing local dynamic unless otherwise indicated.

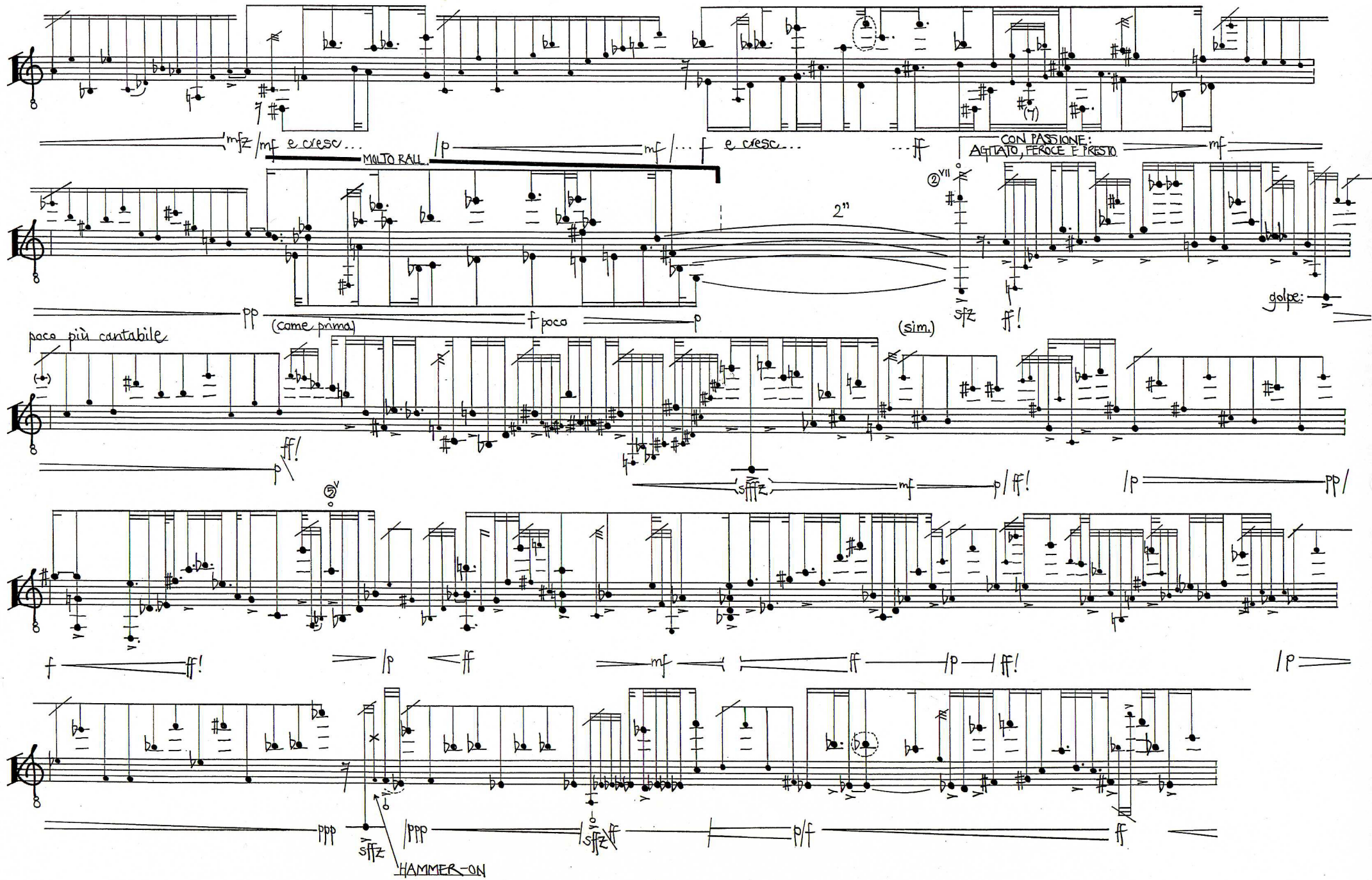
10 Notes where the written pitch is an octave higher than the specified position are to be played as RH octave harmonics. The first few have 'RH' indicated next to the string/fret numbers, and the fingered pitch is given in brackets each time.

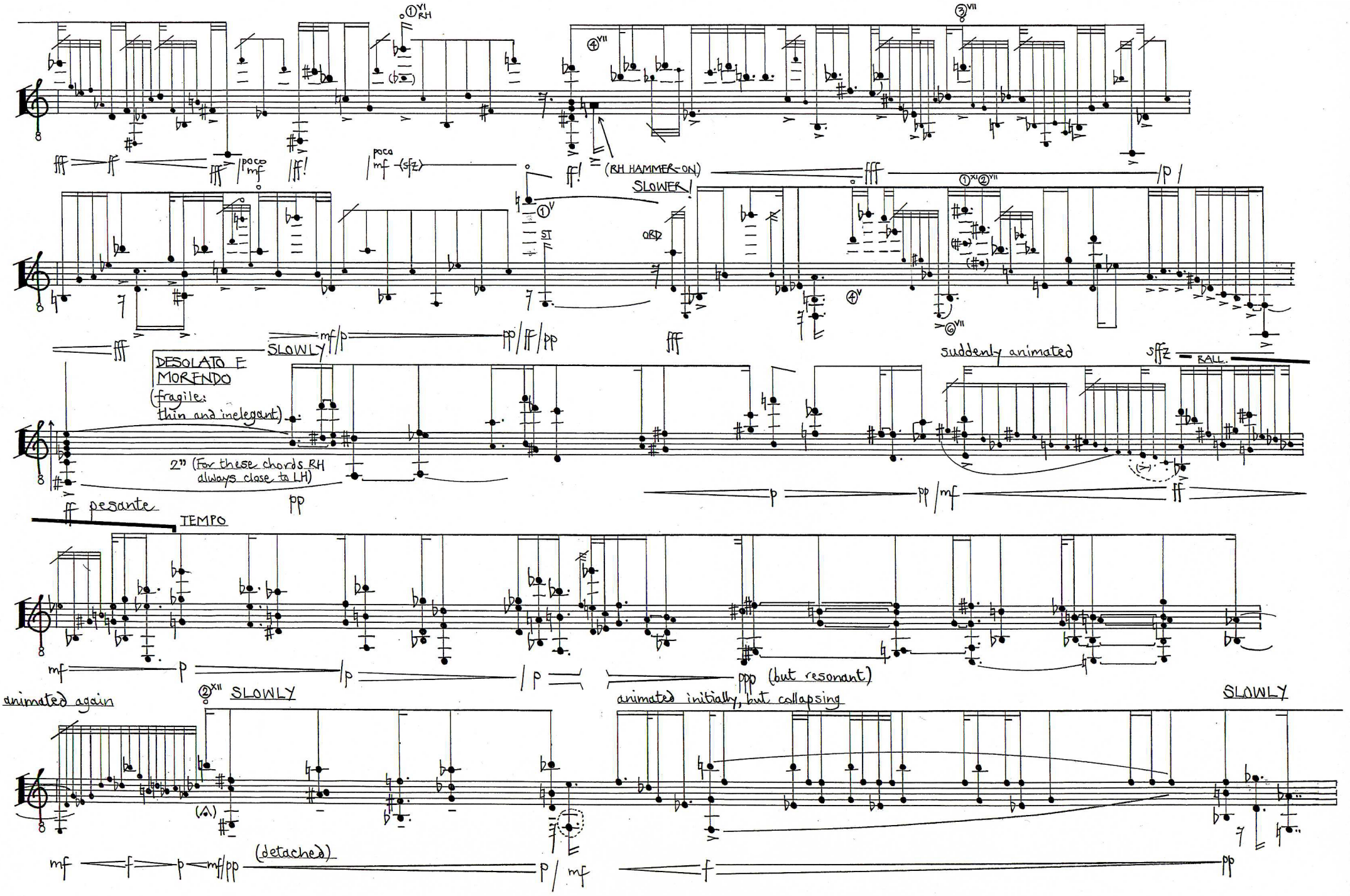
belatedly, for Magnus



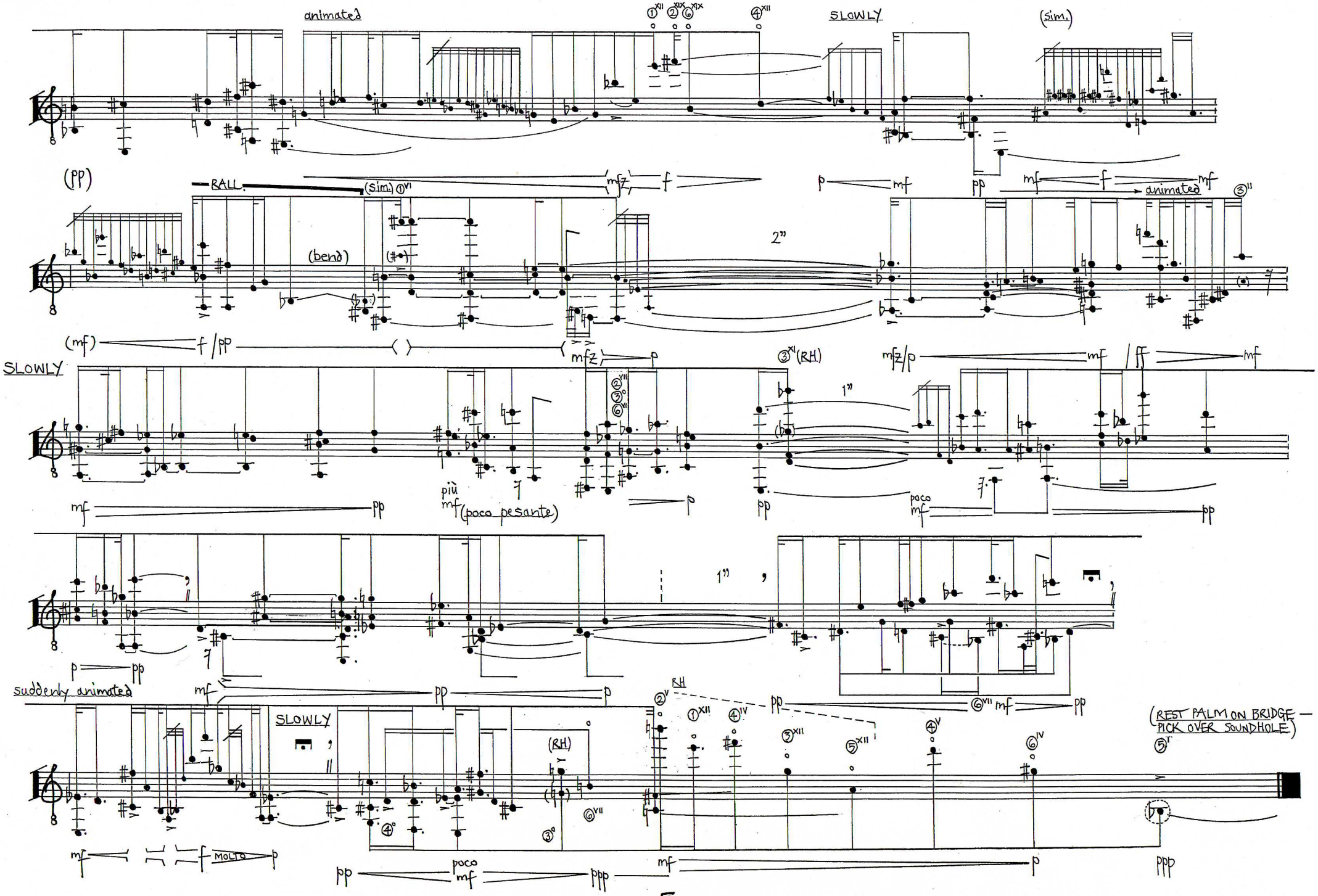
©Chris Dench '94: Severance


ORD.
SP/ORD.
2"
ST.
mfz
p
sfz
ff
CANTABILE E MALINCONICO, (non troppo presto!)
UN PO' AGITATO
3"
(ORD.)
f
ff
mf
sffz
f
ppp!
legato
ppp
poco
mf
p/ ppp cresc...
poco
mf
f
p
ppp
mf
pp
mf/
poco
ff
mf
f
mf
MOLTO RIT.
A TEMPO
ff
pp
f
mf
f
mf
poco
f
mf
(poco pesante)
(7)
ff
meno
f
mf/pp
p
mf
ppp
f
poco
f
mf
pp


mfz mf e cresc...
MOLTO RALL.
p
mf
f e cresc...
ff
CON PASSIONE:
AGITATO, FEROCE E PRESTO
mf
2"
pp
(come prima)
f poco
p
sfz
ff!
golpe:
poco più cantabile
(sim.)
p
ff!
sffz
mf
p/ff!
/p
pp/
f
ff!
/p
ff
mf
ff
/p
/ff!
/p
ppp
sffz
/ppp
sffz
ff
p/f
ff
HAMMER-ON



(RH HAMMER-ON)
SLOWER!
ORD
SLOWLY
DESOLATO E MORENDO
(fragile: thin and inelegant)
2" (For these chords RH always close to LH)
suddenly animated
RALL.
pesante
TEMPO
(but resonant)
animated again
SLOWLY
animated initially, but collapsing
SLOWLY
(detached)



SIENA - RÀSSINA - BERLIN - TAMARAMA - ARMIDALE - CARLTON

'80 ⟶ '91; REWORKED/RECOPIED; COMPLETED 6 MARCH '94