

FIVE REFLECTIVE FRAGMENTS

For Piano, Percussion, and String Quartet

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Duration: 9'00

About the Piece

Five Reflective Fragments is based on a sequence of very brief text fragments extracted from a much longer poetic work, entitled *I Lost Everything* by poet Sarah Lang:

drove
gun
my head
two hours
Pasadena

The piece always presents this series of word-units in order and without overlap. Each unit is spoken—not sung—at the begin-

ning of a musical gesture, and always by the performer who is playing the gesture. Each unit is also repeated multiple times.

I have decided on this approach in order to distance the text from any fixed narrative. The music instead provides a space for these language objects to be observed in, and in which the listener can choose to create or not create his or her own narrative. Presented in this monolithic manner and detached from the contextualization of language prepositions, *Five Reflective Fragments* sets up the opportunity for a kind of mythological reaction to develop around the preconceptions of the listener. The word-units combine with the music to create hints, but hopefully hints that will take each listener in a different direction.

Instrumentation

piano, with headset mic
percussion, with headset mic
2 violins
viola
cello

PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTATION

vibraphone
snare drum (tuned very low)
4 suspended cymbals
china cymbal

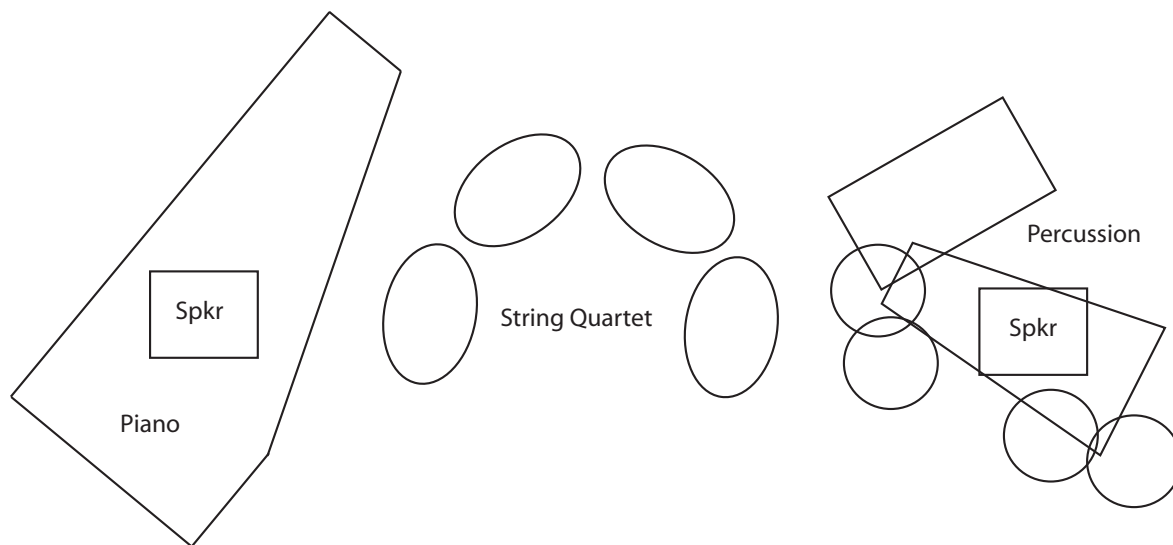
finger cymbal (suspended)
finger cymbal (upside-down on foam)
2 triangles
bell tree
2 woodblocks

Technical Requirements and Staging

The headset microphones for the pianist and percussionist should each be connected to one speaker, directly beneath, and projecting toward, the soundboard or sounding area of the respective performer's instrument. Therefore, the pianist's headset microphone projects through a speaker directly beneath the piano and the percussionist's microphone to a speaker directly underneath

the centre of his/her setup. Angled monitor-style speakers would be ideal in this respect and would be easy to position. It may also be necessary to have some kind of material available to adjust the height of these speakers—they need to be as close to the sounding area as possible. If angled monitors are used, simply having boxes or boards to place them on should work well.

The following diagram demonstrates how the ensemble should be positioned on the stage:



Performance Notes

- The strings should always play **without vibrato** unless otherwise marked.
- **Relative tempo** is very important; all changes in tempo should be performed carefully, and those marked “suddenly” should be executed in such a way that the audience is most likely to hear them.
- **Metric accents** should be avoided throughout.
- **Rehearsing with the microphones** is important in order to work out balance issues. The perceived loudness of the player’s voice in all cases should be approximately equal to the perceived loudness of his/her acoustic instrument—in other words, if the player plays a mezzoforte, s/he also speaks a mezzoforte.
- **Dynamics** within the ensemble may need to be adjusted to match the amplification. The players should decide on the meaning of a dynamic marking based on the combined sound of the amplified voices and the instruments, not simply the acoustic sound of the instruments alone.
- **Boxed text** in the music indicates the ways in which a

word-unit is to be pronounced. This text specifically describes the desired amount of variation in vocal pronunciation between successive iterations of the same word-unit. For example, “slight variation” indicated that the words should be spoken in a similar manner throughout, but not mechanically. Variation should be similar to what would occur naturally in speech if repeating a word. The performers should avoid vocal inflections that are overly dramatic, bizarre, or comical.

- The syllables of the vocal parts are usually divided into phonemes and connected with **dotted slurs** for clarity of enunciation. This does not imply that the sounds of the words should be broken up artificially or that these phonemes should be exaggerated. This phoneme notation is only to assist with the proper placement of speech elements in musical time.
- The **beginning of each syllable** should fall on the start of the beat. For example, at rehearsal A, “drove” should be spoken with the “dr” on the beat, not the “ove”.

The following chart demonstrates the quartertone notational system used:



Preparation of Percussion Instruments

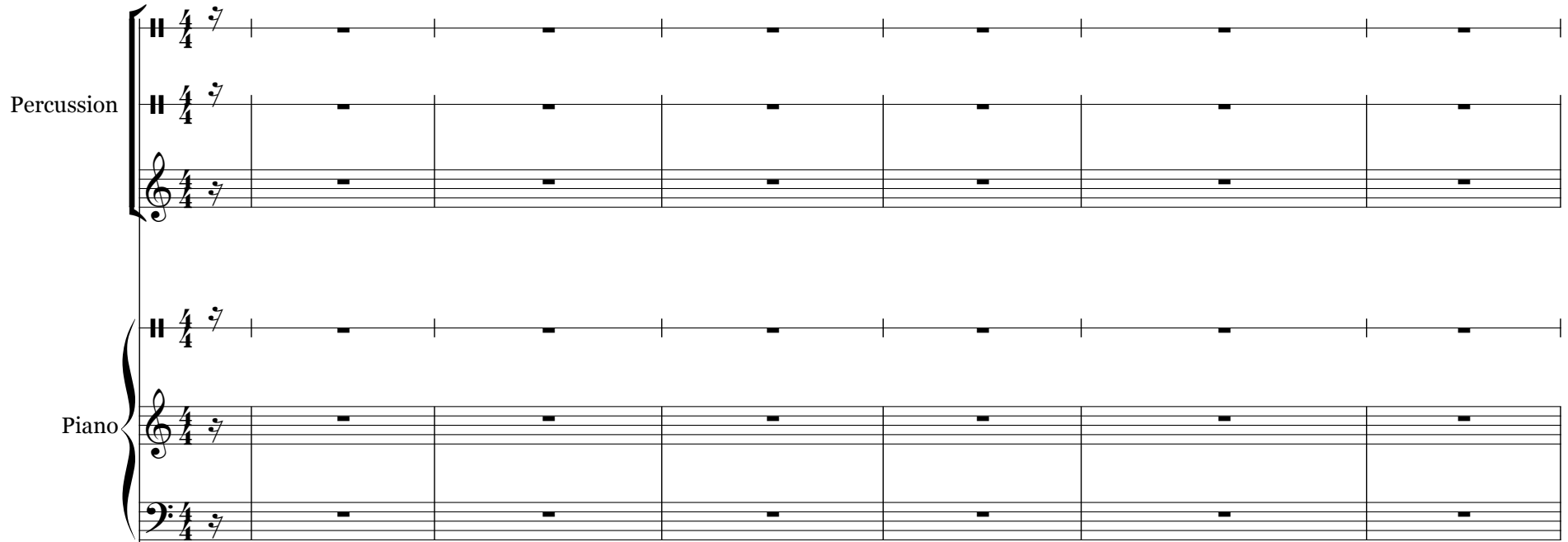
- The **vibraphone** motor should remain off throughout.
- At rehearsal O, the vibraphone is to be prepared with **aluminum foil**. Several lightly-crumpled sheets of varying sizes should be placed over the lower bars. They should be placed slightly above the node closest to the percussionist so that only a small portion of the bars is visible. The desired result is that even when playing the vibraphone very quietly, the foil should create an audible buzz.
- Also at rehearsal O, the percussionist is to shuffle a **piece of paper** with one foot while playing. This shuffling should not be in any particular rhythm. The player should try to make the shuffling as random-sounding as possible.
- One **finger cymbal** should be laid upside-down on a piece of hard foam so that it can be played with both hands. The player should use thin triangle beaters or very small brass mallets. The finger cymbal should be positioned so that the resonance is approximately equal to that of the piano. It is also preferable that a cymbal with a similar pitch to the piano is used. A second finger cymbal of a slightly different pitch should be suspended.
- The **snare drum** should be tuned very low, almost to the point of wrinkling the drumhead. The snares should also be fairly loose, but should still be partially excited by quiet strokes. A piccolo snare drum is preferable if available.

Five Reflective Fragments

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Moderate ♩ = 88

Percussion



Piano

The Percussion and Piano sections are currently blank, with only a 4/4 time signature and a fermata symbol at the beginning of each staff.

Moderate ♩ = 88

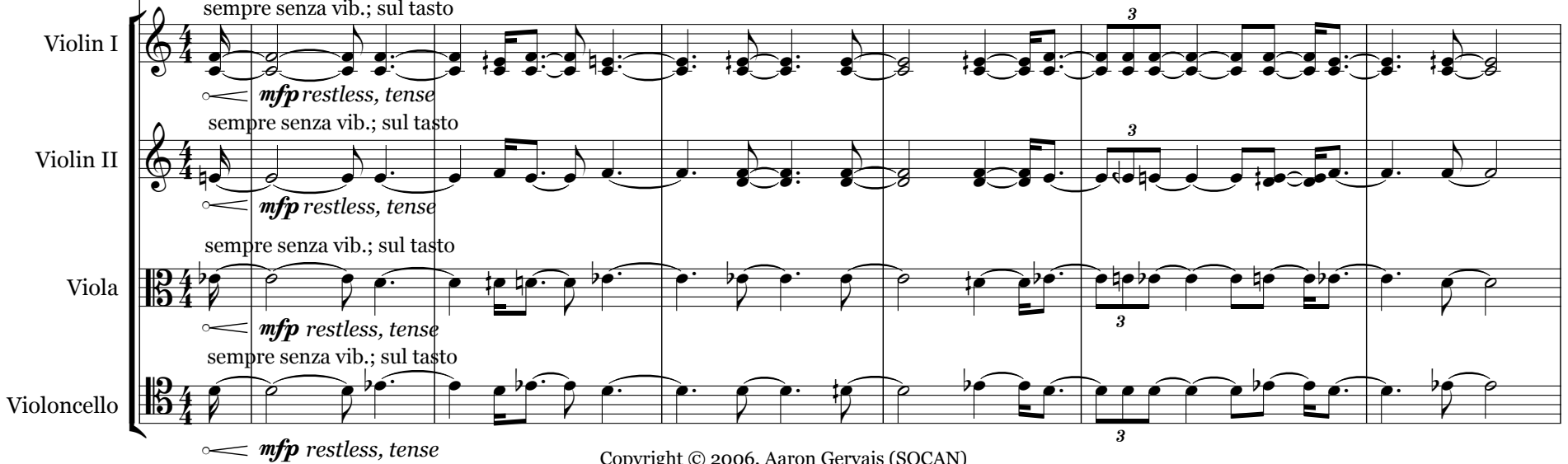
sempre senza vib.; sul tasto

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello



mf restless, tense

mf restless, tense

mf restless, tense

mf restless, tense

3

3

3

3

The string section consists of four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. Each staff begins with a 4/4 time signature and a fermata symbol. The Violin I and II parts are in treble clef, while the Viola and Violoncello parts are in bass clef. The Viola and Violoncello parts are written in 12/4 and 15/4 time signatures, respectively. The music features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and slurs. The dynamic marking *mf* is used throughout, along with the instruction 'restless, tense'. The instruction 'sempre senza vib.; sul tasto' is repeated for each instrument. The number '3' is placed above the staves at the end of the first, second, and third measures, indicating triplet markings.

12

Perc.

drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove

Pno.

drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

16

Perc. *drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove*

Pno. *drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

B

21

sfz mf

drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove

Perc. *sus. cym. w/ shaft near bell*

sfz mf

Red

sfz mf

Red

Pno.

sfz mf

Red

B

Vln. I *pp* mfp

Vln. II *pp* mfp

Vla. *pp* mfp

Vc. *pp* mfp

3

3

3

3

25

Perc.

drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove

Pno.

drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

36

Perc. *drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove drove*

Pno.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Detailed description: This page of a musical score, numbered 8, contains six staves. The top two staves are for Percussion (Perc.) and Piano (Pno.). Both feature a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with triplets and rests, with the word 'drove' written below the notes. The Percussion staff uses a double bar line and a treble clef, while the Piano staff uses a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The bottom four staves are for Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). These staves contain melodic lines with various note values, rests, and triplets. The Violin I and II staves use treble clefs, the Viola staff uses an alto clef, and the Violoncello staff uses a bass clef. The score is in 2/4 time and includes a key signature of one flat (Bb).

poco rit.

D Slightly faster ♩ = 92

pp

Perc. *pp* delicate

fing. cym. on foam

drove drove drove drove drove

gun gun gun

slight variation

D Slightly faster ♩ = 92

con pedale

poco rit.

Vln. I (soli) overpressure to harmonic *mf > pp*

Vln. II (soli) overpressure to harmonic *mf > pp*

Vla. (soli) overpressure to harmonic *mf > pp*

Vc. (soli) overpressure to harmonic *mf > pp*

45

Perc.

Pno.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

The score for measures 45-48 features a rhythmic pattern of 'gun' sounds. The Percussion part uses a snare drum for the 'gun' sounds, with accents and slurs. The Piano part features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand, with a fermata over the first measure of the triplet. The strings (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc.) are sustained with long notes and slurs across all four measures.

53 **E**

Perc.

Pno.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

55

Perc.

gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun

Pno.

(15)

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 55, 56, and 57. The Percussion part consists of a single line with a snare drum sound labeled 'gun'. It features accents and triplets in measures 55 and 56, and a triplet in measure 57. The Piano part has a right-hand part with a triplet arpeggiated figure (15) and a left-hand part with rests. The String parts (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello) are marked with long fermatas across all three measures.

58

Perc.

Pno.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

The score consists of six staves. The Percussion staff (Perc.) has a snare drum part with 'gun' sounds, marked with triplets and accents. The Piano staff (Pno.) has a right-hand part with a triplet accompaniment of eighth notes, marked with a 15-measure breath mark. The string staves (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc.) are sustained with long notes, marked with a 15-measure breath mark. The measure number 58 is indicated at the beginning of the first staff.

60

Perc.

gun

Pno.

(15)

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

63

Perc.

gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun

non-cres.

Pno.

(15)

gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun gun

non-cres.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Detailed description: This page of a musical score covers measures 63, 64, and 65. The Percussion (Perc.) part consists of rhythmic patterns labeled 'gun' with accents and triplets. The Piano (Pno.) part features a complex texture of triplets in the right hand and rests in the left hand, with a 'non-cres.' marking in measure 65. The string section (Violins I and II, Viola, and Cello) is shown with sustained notes across all three measures, indicated by long horizontal lines with fermatas.

F Much slower ♩ = 66 *mp*

Perc. *gun gun gun* *slight variation* *my* *hea-d* *my hea-d* *my_ hea*

solo Snare drum, snares on

Pno. *gun gun gun* *slight variation* *my_hea-d* *my hea - d*

mp heavy *mp*

F Much slower ♩ = 66

Vln. I *→ o.p. → norm.* *mf* *→ o.p. → norm.* *sul tasto* *with intensity* *mp* *pp*

Vln. II *→ o.p. → norm.* *mf* *→ o.p. → norm.* *sul tasto* *with intensity* *mp* *pp*

Vla. *→ o.p. → norm.* *mf* *→ o.p. → norm.* *sul tasto* *with intensity* *mp* *pp*

Vc. *→ o.p. → norm.* *mf* *→ o.p. → norm.* *sul tasto* *with intensity* *mp* *pp*

senza pedale

71

Perc.

d my_ hea-d my hea - d my_he-a-d my hea-d

Pno.

my hea-d myhea-d my hea-d my hea-d my

Vln. I

mp *pp* *mp*

Vln. II

mp *pp* *mp*

Vla.

mp *pp* *mp*

Vc.

mp *pp* *mp*

G

Perc.
my head my head my head

Pno.
_ head my head my head my head

Vln. I
pp *mf*

Vln. II
pp *mf*

Vla.
pp *mf*

Vc.
pp *mf*

The score is for measures 76-79. It features a percussion part with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and rests in the left hand. The string section (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello) plays a melodic line with triplets and dynamic markings. The lyrics are 'my head my head my head'.

H Slightly faster ♩ = 69

86

Perc.

4/4

hea-d my hea-d my hea-d my hea-d my hea-d my hea-d my

mp

my hea-d my hea-d my hea-d my hea-d my hea-d my hea-d

mp

H Slightly faster ♩ = 69

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

pont.

mp

97

Perc.

Pno.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head

head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my

u.c.

Detailed description: This page of a musical score covers measures 97 to 100. The Percussion part (Perc.) features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with 'x' marks, indicating cymbal or similar effects. The Piano part (Pno.) consists of two staves: the right hand (treble clef) plays a sequence of eighth notes with 'x' marks, and the left hand (bass clef) plays a similar rhythmic pattern. The vocal line (soprano) has lyrics: 'my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head' in measures 97-100. The vocal line (alto) has lyrics: 'head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my head my' in measures 97-100. The string parts (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello) are all silent, indicated by a horizontal line across each staff. The score is in 4/4 time and ends with a double bar line and a 4/4 time signature.

106

Vocal: *f* hou - r - s *ff* two
Perc. china cym. *sffz*

Piano: *mp* two hou-r-s *mf* two hou-r-s *f* two hou-r - s *mp* two hou-r-s *mf* two

String Quartet (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc.): *mp* *mf* *f* *mp* *mf*

K Suddenly slower ♩ = 50

112

Perc. *f* hou-r-s

Pno. *f* *mf* driving, unchanging

K Suddenly slower ♩ = 50

Vln. I *p* still

Vln. II *p* still

Vla. *p* still

Vc. *p* still

122

de-na Pa - sa - de - na Pa-sa-de-na Pa - sa - de - na

Perc. *p* *mp* *mp*

Pno. *mp* *mp* *mp*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Detailed description: This page of a musical score covers measures 122, 123, and 124. The vocal line (top staff) features the lyrics 'de-na Pa - sa - de - na Pa-sa-de-na Pa - sa - de - na'. The percussion part (second staff) includes a snare drum line with dynamics *p* and *mp*. The piano accompaniment (third and fourth staves) features a right-hand line with triplets and dynamics *mp*, and a left-hand line with sustained chords. The string section (bottom four staves) consists of Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello, all playing rhythmic patterns. The score is marked with dynamic hairpins and includes articulation marks like accents and slurs.

125

p < *mp*

mp

The musical score is divided into six staves. The Percussion staff (Perc.) has three staves with lyrics 'Pa-sa-de-na' and dynamic markings *p* < *mp* and *mp*. The Piano staff (Pno.) has two staves with lyrics 'Pa-sa-de-na' and dynamic markings *mp* and *mf*. The Violin I (Vln. I) and Violin II (Vln. II) staves feature a melodic line with triplets and dynamic marking *pp*. The Viola (Vla.) and Violoncello (Vc.) staves feature a bass line with triplets and dynamic marking *pp*. The score includes various rhythmic values and dynamic markings throughout.

130

p *mp* *mp* *p* *mp*

Pa - sa - de - na Pa - sa - de - na Pa - sa - de - na Pa - sa - de - na Pa - sa - de - na

Perc.

p *mp* *mp* *p* *mp*

p *mp* *mp* *p* *mp*

Pa - sa - de - na Pa - sa - de - na Pa - sa - de - na Pa - sa - de - na Pa - sa - de - na

Pno.

p *mp* *mp* *p* *mp*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

N Suddenly slower ♩ = 44 33

134

mp *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Pa-sa-de-na Pa-sa-de-na Pa-sa - de - na Pa-sa-de-na Pa-sa - de-na Pa-sa-de-na

mp *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

mp *p* *mp* *p*

Pa-sa - de - na Pa - sa-de-na Pa - sa - de - na Pa - sa-de-na Pa - sa - de-na

mp *p* *mp* *p*

almost no variation almost no variation

N Suddenly slower ♩ = 44

Vln. I *pp*

Vln. II *pp*

Vla. *pp*

Vc. *pp*

138 *p* **molto rit.** *ppp* **O** Faster ♩ = 88

Perc. *p* *ppp* sus. fing. cym. *mf* sub. place foil on vibe bars; allow to make noise

Pno. *ppp* *ppp* distant solo *ppp* distant

Vln. I **molto rit.** **O** Faster ♩ = 88 con sord. *ppp* distant con sord.

Vln. II *ppp* distant

Vla. con sord.

Vc. con sord. *ppp* distant

u.c.

144

vibes: play on nodes; hard mallets

Perc. *ppp distant* *non-dim.*

Pno. *non-dim.* u.c.

Vln. I *non-dim.*

Vln. II *con sord.* *non-dim.*

Vla. *ppp distant* *non-dim.*

Vc. *non-dim.*

149

Perc.

non-dim.

Pno.

non-dim.

u.c.

Vln. I

non-dim.

Vln. II

non-dim.

Vla.

non-dim.

Vc.

non-dim.

The image shows a page of a musical score, page 36, starting at measure 149. The score is arranged in a system with six staves. The top staff is for Percussion (Perc.), followed by Piano (Pno.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The Percussion part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in triplets, with a 'non-dim.' marking. The Piano part has a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and a 'non-dim.' marking. The Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello parts all play a similar rhythmic pattern with triplets and a 'non-dim.' marking. The Violoncello part also includes a 'u.c.' marking. The score is written in a common time signature and includes various musical notations such as beams, slurs, and dynamic markings.

P Suddenly faster ♩ = 112

153

Perc.

Pno.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

u.c.

non-dim.

mf

pp

P Suddenly faster ♩ = 112

Q Faster ♩ = 120

159 G.P.

Perc.

mf l.v. to silence

Red. →

Pno.

mf

Red. → l.v. to silence

Q Faster ♩ = 120

G.P.

sul pont. → sul tasto, flaut.

solo

Vln. I

p — *mp*

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

164

Musical score for Percussion (Perc.), Piano (Pno.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The score is divided into five measures. The Percussion part consists of a single horizontal line with vertical tick marks. The Piano part consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with horizontal lines. The Violin I part consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello parts each consist of a single staff with horizontal lines. The score is enclosed in a large bracket on the left side.