MATTHEW SARGENT

Ghost Music

for solo percussionist

Duration: approx. 52’

(2007-8)

Instrumentation

(see next page for more details on instruments/timbre)

Crotales (high octave set, with doubled high G and A cymbals[1])
One pair of finger cymbals
One additional large finger cymbal
Three triangles (small, medium, large)
Two very small bowls or sustaining bells
Four temple bowls
One small gong or tam-tam

Bass bow
Two pairs of triangle beaters (thin and extra thin)
Brass or hard plastic beater
Soft yarn mallets

[1] The doubled crotales may be pitched an octave lower, if pitches at the same register are unavailable.

Notes to the Performer

Ghost Music was composed between July 2007 and March 2008. The piece is dedicated to percussionist Bill Solomon, who worked closely in collaboration with the composer in developing and realizing the music.

The ideal performance environment for the work is a small space, with the audience seated in a close semi-circle around the performer. The music is intended to serve as a movable sanctuary – a handful of portable instruments that transforms any given environment into a sacred space. The composer encourages this work to be performed in any small, quiet space will suit the work (art gallery, living room, black box theater, etc.), as well as outdoor spaces. The soft dynamics given throughout the piece should not be augmented to fit larger spaces. If the piece is to be performed in a larger setting, the instruments should be played softly and amplified through a PA system, with speakers integrated into the percussionist's setup, so that the music still emanates from a central location (rather than left/right dispersion). In this case, microphones should be placed at close proximity to the instruments, to maintain the attack and often quiet sustain of the instruments.

Much of piece is based upon a series of repeated phrases and isorhythmic systems (some quite apparent and others embedded on a structural level). Repeated phrases should be treated as fixed objects, and played with consistent phrasing and dynamic throughout (unless otherwise indicated). There are two primary isorhythms in the music. The first is the bowed crotale melody, which is based on a 1970s peace song entitled *Singing for Our Lives* by Holly Near. This isorhythm is consistent within each section (section divisions are indicated by thin double barlines), and a new pitch and/or new isorhythmic pattern occurs at the beginning of each new section. The second primary isorhythm is found in the low finger cymbal (at the bottom of each system). This instrument is on an independent isorhythmic pattern throughout the entire piece: (N+.05) + 7 at 60 bpm, meaning that the first attack of the low finger cymbal is 7 beats in duration, the second attack is 7.5 beats, etc. This pattern expands consistently at 60 bpm throughout the entire piece, even when the surrounding material changes tempo.

Instruments/Timbre

Crotales – high octave only. Pitches used (from low-to-high) are C, D, F, G, G, A, A, Bb, as well as the crotale that sounds closest to the pitch of the pair of finger cymbals. (*Note*: if the pitch of the finger cymbals is one of the pitches already listed, then it should be played on an additional crotale, to prevent possible interruptions of the extended bowed notes during the piece.)

Finger Cymbals – the "Tibetan bell" variety, approx. 4-6 inches in diameter. Cymbals should be thick, with longest possible sustain.

Additional Large Finger Cymbal – similar to one listed above, but 6-8 inches in diameter. Cymbal should be as thick as possible, with a noticeably lower and more resonant sounding pitch in comparison to the first pair of cymbals.

Two very small bowls – the bowls in the percussion staff should have a pure and resonant timbre, with a clear fundamental pitch. In the premiere, two individual bells from a bell tree were used (preferably one of the non-chromatic bells from the tree). Other similar instruments may be substituted at the performer's discretion.

Four temple bowls – should be of increasing size, with the fourth bowl (lowest on the staff) being the largest available.

Small gong or tam-tam – approx. 12 inches in diameter. Gong should have a lower pitch and darker timbral quality than all other instruments used.

Mallet Notation

– **triangle beater**

– **hard plastic or brass mallet**

– **soft yarn mallet**

Special Notation

3 – indicates that duration of a given note should be reduced to 2/3rds of its value. (i.e. – a half note under this notation would be worth 4/3 of a beat).

() – indicates that an accent should be particularly subtle.

x – used as a notehead on the Crotale staff. Indicates that the pitch of the given note should be the nearest chromatic equivalent to the strongest pitch of the pair of finger cymbals.

Barlines

Standard thin barline – indicates that measures are to serve as a guide for phrasing (i.e. – downbeat of measure is played with slightly more emphasis, etc.).

Dashed barline – indicates that measures are used only for organizational purposes. Barlines should not serve as a phrasing or dynamic indication.

Thick barline – indicates the end of an isorhythm during *ostinati* sections (i.e. – page 3). These are included in the score to aid in rehearsal and study of the music, and should not be accented or emphasized in the live performance.

Thin double barline – indicates the end of a section. Contrasts between sections are sometimes dramatic (i.e. – page 3) and sometimes subtle (i.e. – page 2).

Ghost Music

Matthew Sargent

Let all instruments ring freely throughout

BOW

♩ = 60 ***Bow*** *as lightly as possible, with the longest possible bowstroke. L.V. throughout. Dynamics and contour simile throughout.*

**** X notehead indicates that the player should strike the crotale that is the closest chromatic pitch to the strongest sounding partial of the finger cymbals on the percussion staff. This note should determined before the performance and consistent in all occurrences of the X notehead throughout.*

ARCO
Crotales
MALLET
PERC
Finger Cymbals
High Bell
Medium-High Bell
Triangles Small Med Large
Low Finger Cymbal
Temple Bowls/ Small Gong Bowl 1 (high) Bowl 2 Bowl 3 Bowl 4 (low) Gong

Very light

** Alternate between left and right cymbals throughout, to allow for both cymbals to ring for as long as possible.*

*** Tenuto marking implies that the second note of the phrase should be very slightly accented and longer than the previous note. This should be an extremely subtle effect -- do not exaggerate it! Consistency in gesture over the many repetitions of this phrase will bring out the difference.*

** Indicates that left and right finger cymbals should be struck together*

Crt.
Perc.
Tri.
F.C. 2

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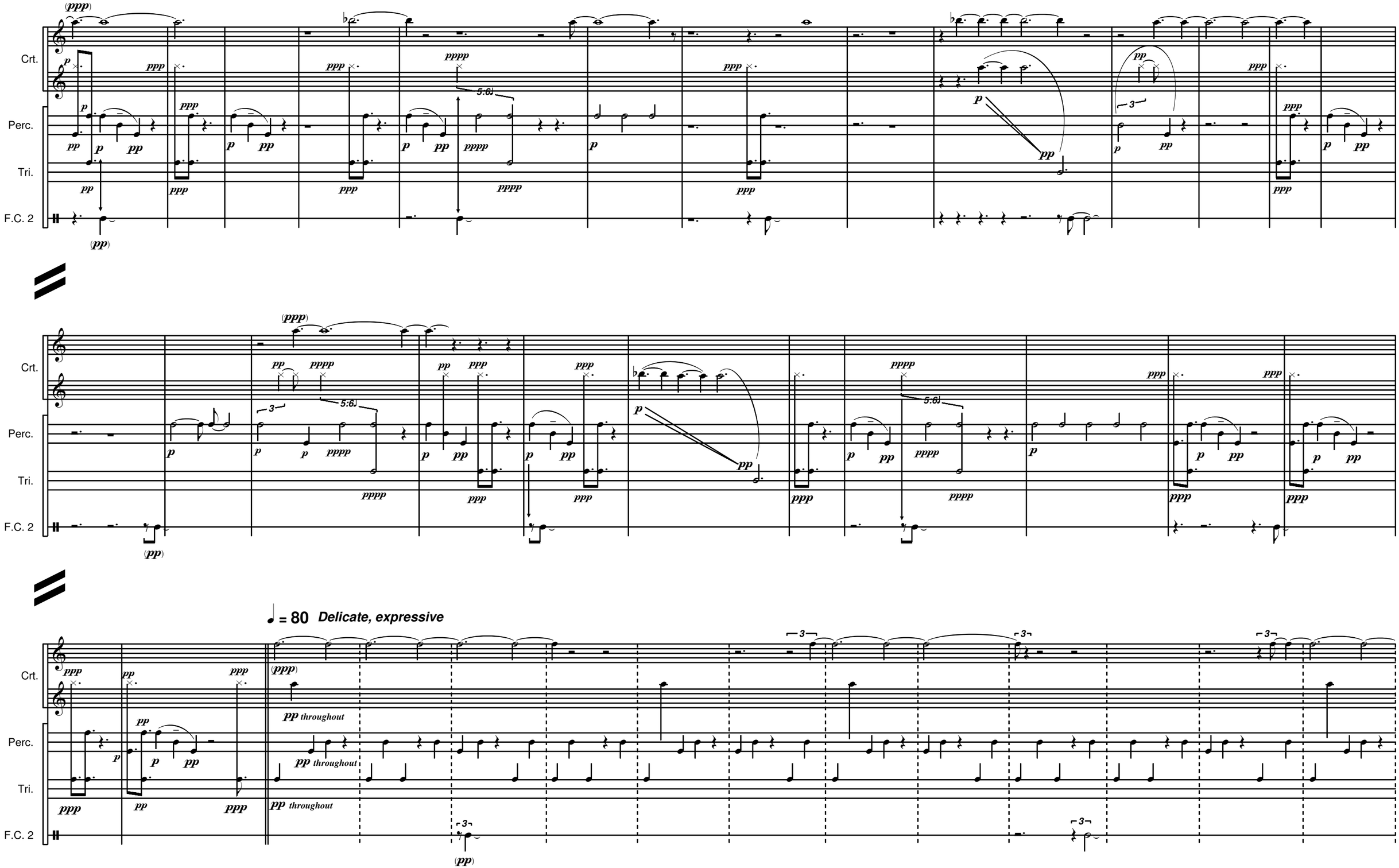
2

Crt.

Perc.

Tri.

F.C. 2


Crt.
Perc.
Tri.
F.C. 2
♩ = 80 Delicate, expressive
pp throughout

Crt.

Perc.

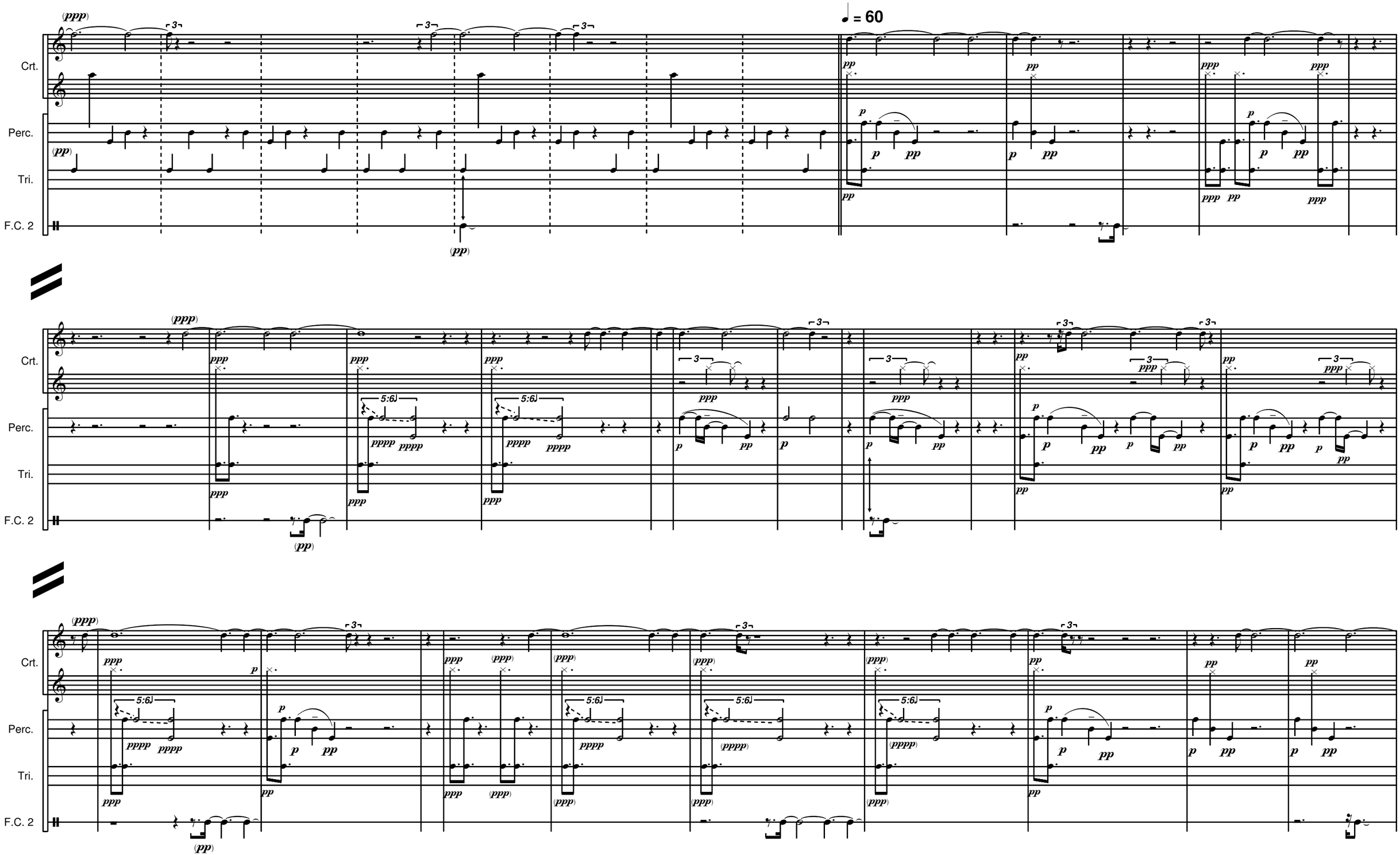
Tri.

F.C. 2

(ppp)

(pp)

3


♩ = 60
Crt.
Perc.
Tri.
F.C. 2

Crt.

Perc.

Tri.

F.C. 2

(* - Half note version of the X crotale notehead.)

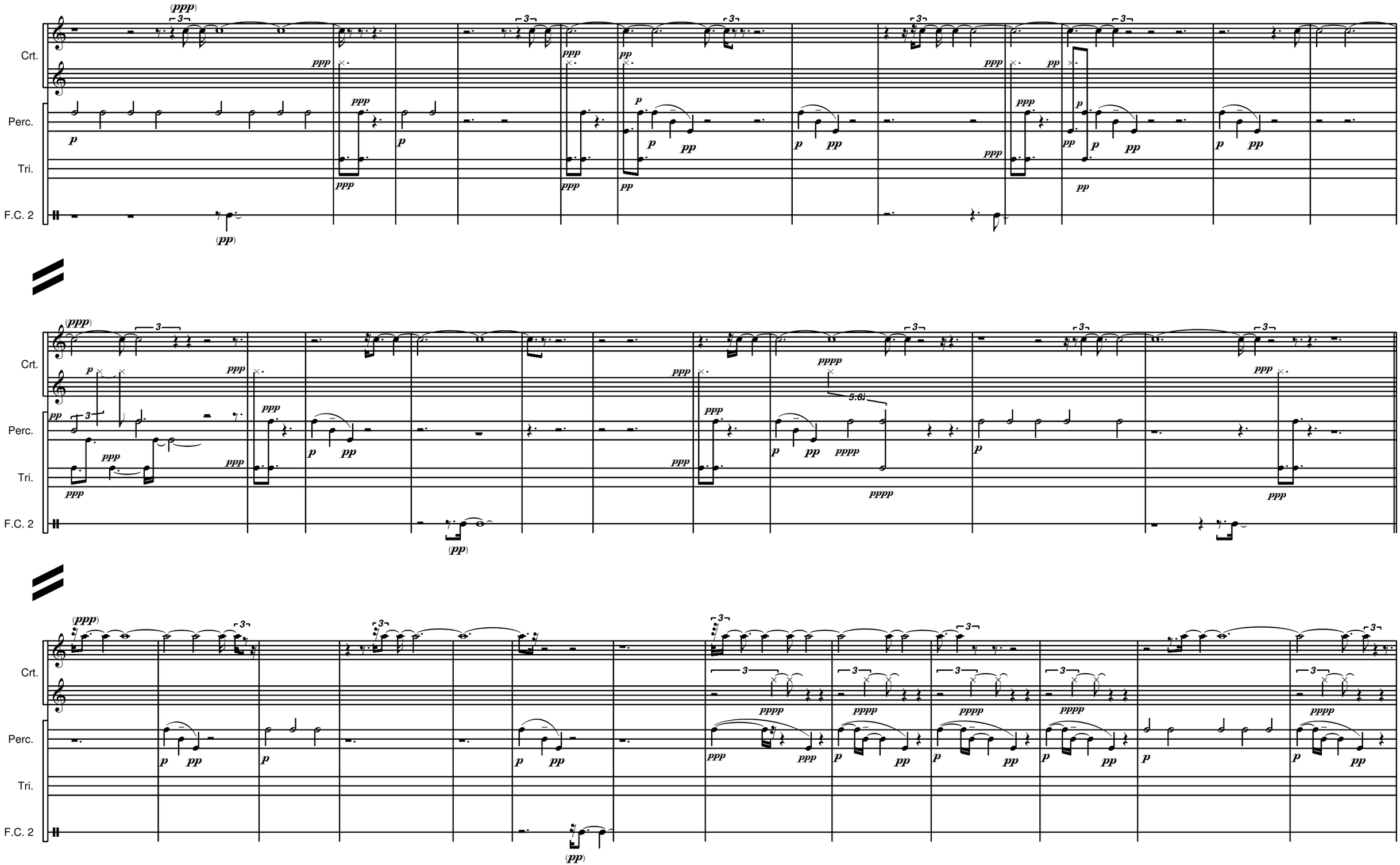
Crt.

Perc.

Tri.

F.C. 2

Change to very thin triangle beaters


Crt.
Perc.
Tri.
F.C. 2
(ppp)
(pp)
5:6

Crt.

Perc.

Tri.

F.C. 2

(ppp)

(pp)

BOW

BOW OFF

Delicate, Mechanical (let all instruments ring freely)

Bowls

with soft yarn mallet

Crt.

Perc.

Tri.

F.C. 2

Return to standard triangle beaters

= 96

(BOW)

All notes should be even throughout the section -- do not accent barlines.

Crt.
Tri.
F.C. 2

(ppp)
(pp)
(pp)

(ppp)
(pp)
(pp)
(l.v.)

BOWL NOTATION
top ledger line - same instrument as bottom line of Percussion staff.
highest four staff lines - four temple bowls (low to high)
lowest staff line - small gong or tam-tam (played with soft yarn mallets)

♩ = about 60

F.C. 2
Bowls
- throughout on all temple bowls

5-7"
Duration simile for all other fermatas in this section.

p *

** Dynamics may be free throughout this section, unless otherwise notated.*
In general, attacks should be soft and calm throughout.
*Gong should be struck very softly (**ppp**) with a soft yarn mallet.*

F.C. 2
Bowls

(pp)
(p)
(ppp)
(3)

F.C. 2
Bowls

(p)
(ppp)
(pp)
ppp

F.C. 2

Bowls

(pp)

(p)

(ppp)

F.C. 2

Bowls

(pp)

(=)

F.C. 2

Bowls

Let all instruments ring out into silence

BOW

= 96-100 *Calm, persistent*

Crt.

(ppp)

Perc.

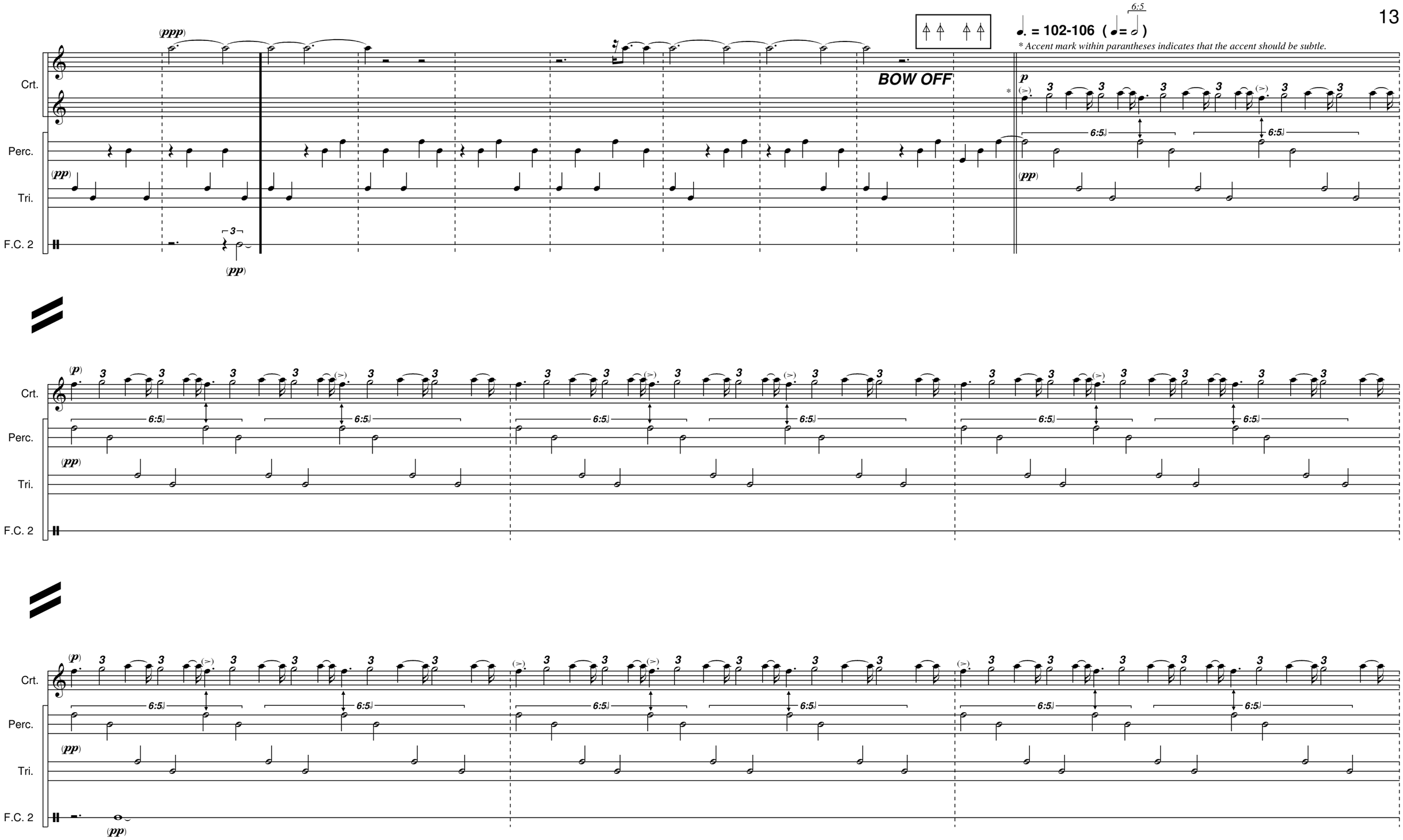
pp throughout

Tri.

pp throughout

F.C. 2

* *Alternate between right and left finger cymbal throughout this section.*



♩. = 102-106 (♩ = 𝅗𝅥)
6:5
* Accent mark within parantheses indicates that the accent should be subtle.
BOW OFF
Crt.
Perc.
Tri.
F.C. 2
(ppp)
(pp)
p
(p)
6:5

Crt.

Perc.

Tri.

F.C. 2

**** All accented notes should be struck on the additional G crotale**
Accents should be slightly louder than those in parantheses in the previous measures.

Gradual Rit. to ♩.= 80

***** All accented notes should be struck on the additional A crotale**

Gradual Rit.(cont.)

Crt.

Perc.

Tri.

F.C. 2

Gradual Rit.(cont.) ♩. = 80

Crt.

Perc.

Tri.

F.C. 2

= about 60

F.C. 2

- throughout on all temple bowls

Bowls

5-7"

F.C. 2

Bowls

** Dynamics may be free throughout this section, unless otherwise notated.*
In general, attacks should be soft and calm throughout.
Gong should be struck very softly (ppp) with a soft yarn mallet.

All upper voices *pppp* throughout this section.

Crt.

F.C. 2

Bowls

Perc.

Tri.

NO PAUSE

Move immediately to next section,
let all instruments ring freely.

♩ = 120 (♪ = ♩)

MOVE HIGHEST TEMPLE BOWL TO TABLE DIRECTLY UNDER TRIANGLES

Crt.

F.C. 2

ppp

* ***With hard mallet (plastic or brass).***

p ***Accented A should be played on an additional crotale through end of piece.***

(***ppp***)

3

(***pp***)

(***p***)

(***ppp***)

(***pp***)

Tri.

ppp

** ***Alternate evenly between both G crotales (on set and additional crotale) through end of piece.***

Crt.

Tri.

F.C. 2

Bowls

(pp)

(p)

ppp

(ppp)

No decresc. L.V.

3/29/08
Hartford, CT