

RESEARCH
AND
WRITING SKILLS

*How to study a musical work
which includes movements
during the performance*

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During my studies in music degree I had the opportunity of playing a piece which includes different movements during the performance: IN FRIENDSHIP by K. Stockhausen.

The result of my work has been a well-done performance which has rewarded the effort that I made during long time.

Nevertheless, I could realise that the process for practicing this kind of pieces is quite different and all the musicians are not ready for playing it, at least at the beginning of this experience.

My purpose with this written work is to help to everyone who wants to play a work like this and to make shorter and easier the way for achieving the goal of every musician: to perform it.

In friendship de K. Stockhausen

According to my experience each musician should follow the steps that I describe below for carrying out a good study:

Knowledge

- *Composer*
- *Context*
- *Analysis*

Practicing

Movements

Memory

Accuracy

Facial expression

Recording

Physical condition

Performance Experience

KNOWLEDGE

In friendship is, perhaps, a piece that really demands a great commitment of the musician and involves a great challenge. This is the reason why the musician should be ready for the investigation before practicing and should deepen on who the composer is and which kind of music he composes.

KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN (BIOGRAPHY)



A musical pioneer, Karlheinz Stockhausen broke many barriers and taboos. He wrote more than 300 works in various genres from opera and orchestral pieces to electronic music and complex compositions where performers, producers, helicopters, recording equipment, and audiences all together become his instruments.

He was born in the suburb of Cologne, in 1928. His father, Simon, was a school teacher, his mother, Gertrude, was an amateur pianist. He played piano from age 7, showing a perfect pitch and impressive memory. He lost both parents being only twelve years old. At age 16 he was recruited to serve at the war hospital, where he attended hundreds of severely wounded. He studied music at Cologne Musikhochschule, at Cologne University (1945-51), at Paris Conservatory (1951-53) with Olivier Messiaen and Darius Milhaud. At the University of Bonn (1954-56) he studied information theory, acoustics and composition.

Stockhausen began his experiments with live music and recorded sounds in the late 1940s and early 1950s. He played with the tape-recorded sounds of glass, metal, wood and other unconventional sources in Paris Radio Studio and at Cologne Radio (WDR) electronic studio. His experimental work at the West Deutsche Rundfunk (WDR) studio in Cologne was the leading work with recorded sound at that time. His purely electronic compositions made in 1953-54, such as "Electronic Study" (1953), were the first ever written and published works in this new genre. His ground-braking "Klavierstück XI (1956), which features 19

elements to be performed in changing sequences, was one of the early works in aleatoric (controlled chance) music.

In the early 1960s Stockhausen collaborated with Yoko Ono in her New York loft concerts. He also staged happenings with George Maciunas and other avant-garde performers of the "Fluxus" movement. At that time he experimented with cross-genre shows where musicians and audiences all together become performers in a setting that provoked imagination and inventiveness, and various non-musical objects, and even people in the audience were also used as musical instruments. Although details of such experimentations could not be registered in notation, the breakthrough was that any person could come out of the audiences and join the performers in making music.

In 1968 Stockhausen wrote the conceptual "From Seven Days" after living completely alone and without food, being influenced by Sri Aurobindo. In "Ylem" (1972) he instructs 19 musicians to establish telepathic communication with each other while performing this 26-minute happening. His "Helikopter-Streichquartett" (1992-95) was written for 4 musicians performing on 4 flying helicopters with electronic video and sound inter-com technology, and was performed and recorded in 1996 several times by the Arditti Quartet on helicopters provided by the Austrian Army. Stockhausen's largest work took him 25 years to complete. It is the mega-opera consisting of seven operas, one 24-hour opera for each day of the week, is entitled "Licht" (Light, 1977-2003).

In the course of his career spending over 60 years, Stockhausen created over 300 compositions, presenting a conceptual mix of occidental and oriental cultures. His thought-provoking output was cited as an influence by the Beatles, Yoko Ono, Kraftwerk, Miles Davis, Frank Zappa, Herbie Hancock, and Björk. Stockhausen appeared on the cover of The Beatles' album Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band with Paul McCartney, one of his numerous fans across the universe.

Outside of his entertainment profession, Stockhausen was a highly unusual and sometimes controversial figure. His comment about the tragedy of 9/11 as "the work of art" attracted much controversy. He later apologized for the reaction to the comment, but said that he was misquoted and misunderstood. Stockhausen was married twice and had six children. He died of natural causes on December 5, 2007, in Kuerten, and was laid to rest in the Forest cemetery in Kuerten, Germany.

FORMULA COMPOSITION

Stockhausen used this technique in *Mantra* in 1970, and became the central focus of Stockhausen's music up to 2003. Stockhausen's opera cycle *Licht* is based on a three-strand "super-formula".

There are two kinds of formula composition in Stockhausen's works prior to *Licht*:

- Formula compositions in which the form results from projection of the formula.
- Works in which melodies in themselves possess many internal characteristics of formulas, but where the formal idea itself does not originate from the formula(s) used in their realisation.

Works of the first type include *Mantra* (1970), *Inori* (1973–74), *Jubiläum* (1977), and *In Freundschaft* (1977); works of the second type comprise *Alphabet für Liège* (1972), the “Laub und Regen” duet from *Herbstmusik* (1974), *Musik im Bauch* (1975), *Harlekin* (1975), *Der kleine Harlekin* (1975), and *Sirius* (1975–77). Other works from the 1970s, such as *Sternklang* (1971), *Trans* (1971), *Ylem* (1972), the first three parts of *Herbstmusik*, *Atmen gibt das Leben* (1974/76–77), *Tierkreis* (1974–75), and *Amour* (1976) do not employ formula technique, though the composer includes uses "formula complexes" (Stockhausen 1989).

CONTEXT

After this information the musician should continue investigating on the piece especially when it is contemporary music since it is more difficult to understand.

Knowing in which context it was written and who it was dedicated to, it can help to the understanding of the composition.

“In friendship” was written to be performed on different instruments.

It was composed the 24th of July, 1977, in Aix-en Provence for the birthday of the clarinetist Suzanne Stephens. It was premiered on July 28th at the beginning and again at the end of a private birthday party by two flutists – friends of Suzanne Stephens.

The title does not only mean that the piece is dedicated to Suzanne Stephens in friendship, but also that many other friendships among musicians have developed through this music. It has always been one of Stockhausen’s goals to compose something for the various instruments and voices that could be played or sung by all.

“In friendship” is a composition that is suitable for almost any orchestral instrument and can be used by musicians as a basis for discussions of structure and of musical and technical issues. It has been published for clarinet, flute, oboe, basset-horn or bass clarinet, violin, violoncello, bassoon, horn, trombone, saxophone, trumpet, tube and recorder.

Thus this composition is not associated with a specific instrument. It has a range of almost three octaves and can be played on any instrument that has this range.

ANALYSIS

The analysis is a fundamental tool for this kind of compositions and the musician needs to spend time on it. In fact, it is a step towards understanding of the work because it is indispensable for playing this music.

FORMULA

“In friendship” was composed with a formula, which Stockhausen wrote first.

The image shows a musical score for the formula of "In friendship". It consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 40$. The lower staff is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a dynamic marking of ff . The score is divided into five sections, each labeled with a circled number from 1 to 5. Above the upper staff, the durations of the limbs are indicated: 1, 4, 2, 7, 3(-,f), 2, 5, 11, and 8(+,f). The notes in the upper staff are connected to the numbers 1-5 in the lower staff by lines, showing the sequence of pitches used in each limb.

The upper layer (in the upper staff) of the formula consists of 5 “limbs” (whose function is analogous to that of the “limbs” of a body). Each limb has its own number. Once the musician has found five limbs, he can analyze the numbers of pitches that has every part, the durations of the limbs, the durations of the pauses and the pitch intervals.

INTRODUCTION

The upper layer of the formula is stated at the beginning of the composition one octave lower than Stockhausen drew. In addition only 5 of the 8 pitches in the 5th limb are used.

The image shows a musical score for the introduction of "In friendship". It is a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a tempo marking of $\text{♩} = 40$. The score is labeled "dancingly - cheerful" and "molto rit.". The dynamic markings are $\text{mp} (<)$, f , ff , mf , and pp . The score is divided into five sections, each labeled with a circled number from 1 to 5. Below the staff, the durations of the limbs are indicated: 1, 3, 2, 5, and 8. The notes in the upper staff are connected to the numbers 1-5 by lines, showing the sequence of pitches used in each limb.

Together with the first two pitches of the 5th limb this melody contains all 12 chromatic pitches in one octave.

From the final minor second a trill is now formed by gradual acceleration: the time-intervals between the two pitches grow smaller until a separation can no longer be sensed and a continuous trill results which then decelerates, “dissolves”. This trill will later become a line of orientation throughout the composition.

During the gradual acceleration a high and a low pitch are occasionally heard and increasingly often. These are the highest and lowest pitches in the piece. In this way the tonal space is demarcated as though with a frame.

Both pitches of the trill are exactly in the middle, between these frame pitches. Throughout the rest of the piece the intervals between this continuing middle line and all of the pitches above and below it are fairly easy to recognise.

THREE LAYERS

This introduction is followed by the complete three-layered formula. The upper layer is gentle, melancholic: high, quiet, slow, legato and usually descending. The lower layer is forceful, energetic, optimistic: low, loud, fast, staccato and usually ascending. The two characters are opposites. The musician can begin to understand why the composition is called “In friendship”.

The same material of the upper layer is used for the lower layer but it is accelerated or decelerated and retrograded.

The trills form a middle layer and the limbs of the formula are partitioned or grouped by the trills.

While the upper layer is pianissimo and the lower layer fortissimo, the trills are played at all dynamic levels as well as with crescendo and decrescendo.

FORMAL PROCESS

The structure of the piece is a formal process in seven cycles. The formula is repeated six times: each time the upper and lower layers move toward one another by a semitone and the limbs transfer to different range.

There are two explosions: The first takes place after cycle III, the second after cycle VI. In traditional terminology one might refer to these passages as cadenzas; however, in the context of “In friendship” the word explosion points much more clearly to the fact that at these moments the strict processual framework of cyclical transpositions and exchange of limbs is broken open.

When the musician has researched on this information, the perception about the piece changes suddenly. Furthermore, the feeling, when the musician is going to practice this work, is altered and the fear or respect of the unknown disappears.

PRACTICING

The study process about “In friendship” should to be slow, patient and methodical.

Studying this work does not mean to play it all the time. The musician needs time for reading the score and reflecting on it, in conclusion, to have a clear mental practice.

One of the first steps when the musician starts the practice it is to identify the elements that Stockhausen uses on the work and focus on each of them. They are: notes, rhythm, dynamic, articulation and body movements. The musician needs to know the development of these elements for a better understanding.

Other important point is the experimentation. The performer should play this music in different ways and try every kind of possibility in order to be flexible and have an open mind, that way he can be ready for every change.

MOVEMENTS

The work that the musician should develop with the body is another of the main elements of the piece. It can be so difficult that sometimes the musician has to be more focus on movements than on the technique of the clarinet. Simply, because musicians are not used to work with their body.

For getting a good coordination is necessary to analysis the body movement. Attend to theatre classes, yoga or dance lessons are advisable. In this kind of activities the body became as important as the instrument and the musician starts to familiarize with it. This way, every experience that includes some kind of body movement can be quite important for the performance.

Musicians needs get the feeling of freedom and can do whatever they wants with the instrument.

Obviously, the goal is not to become a professional dancer or mime, just we need a constant experimentation about our body. A problematic, that at the beginning is quite common to be separated, is to play the instrument in one side and the body movement in the other. This is a link that, perhaps, is obvious but in the occidental classical music appears as a divorce.

The Stockhausen's wish during "In friendship" is that the three musical layers (high melody, low melody, trills in the middle) has to be elucidated by the directions of playing the instrument: to one side, to the other side and in front of the body (i.e. each trill should occur at a different position, with sudden changes of position inside of a quasi-circular, relatively narrow space).

In so doing, energetic passages should be played with appropriate emphasis and animation while the quieter fragments should be played with a corresponding calmness.

Furthermore, the intervals and melodic lines should be drawn in the air with proportional upward and downward movements of the instrument.

In the rests, movement is to be avoided, although there are some exceptions. Movements of the performer that are usually "free" are associated with musical functions and they should serve to elucidate the composition.

This is another important element during the piece: the composer's instructions, so the audience can see and read what the musician is playing. The musician does not only show every pitch but also the dynamic.

Excessive concentration on how the musician is doing the body movements can modify the precision of tempo and the accuracy of rhythm. It is pretty important that the musician never forget these important elements or exclude any of them.

After analyzing and working on the body, the musician will understand the importance that movements imply for Stockhausen being as precise as every single note.

Furthermore, the musician can feel the result of this experimentation: more free and natural movements in every kind of music style.

MEMORY

Stockhausen said "In friendship should be played by memory" (It usually happens in almost his whole works). It is not a sign of virtuosity; it is the process of a well-done study and understanding of the structure of the piece.

Therefore, musicians do not have too many options for performing it with the help of score. They must join note by note and memorise every bar, every section, every movement and every description.

The memorising of the music must include, in the majority of the cases, the body movement, because both transmit the same message. For this reason, it can be a waste of time if the musician learns the music first and adds the body movements later. According with my experience, it has no sense.

Memorise a work that lasts fifteen minutes seems, a priori, a difficult task, especially for musicians who are not used to it. Nevertheless, it can be an easier task for the following reasons:

- Firstly, the exercise of analysis that appears previously in this written work helps to the process of memorising unconsciously. The time that the musician spent through this work has a double function: an understanding and memorising of the piece.
- Secondly, every musician has to use their own tools and make different kind of diagrams or drawings that can help to memorise. As an example, I include two of my diagrams that I have made for learning the piece.

DIAGRAM I

This diagram helps to memorise the trills part which is situated at the beginning of the score.

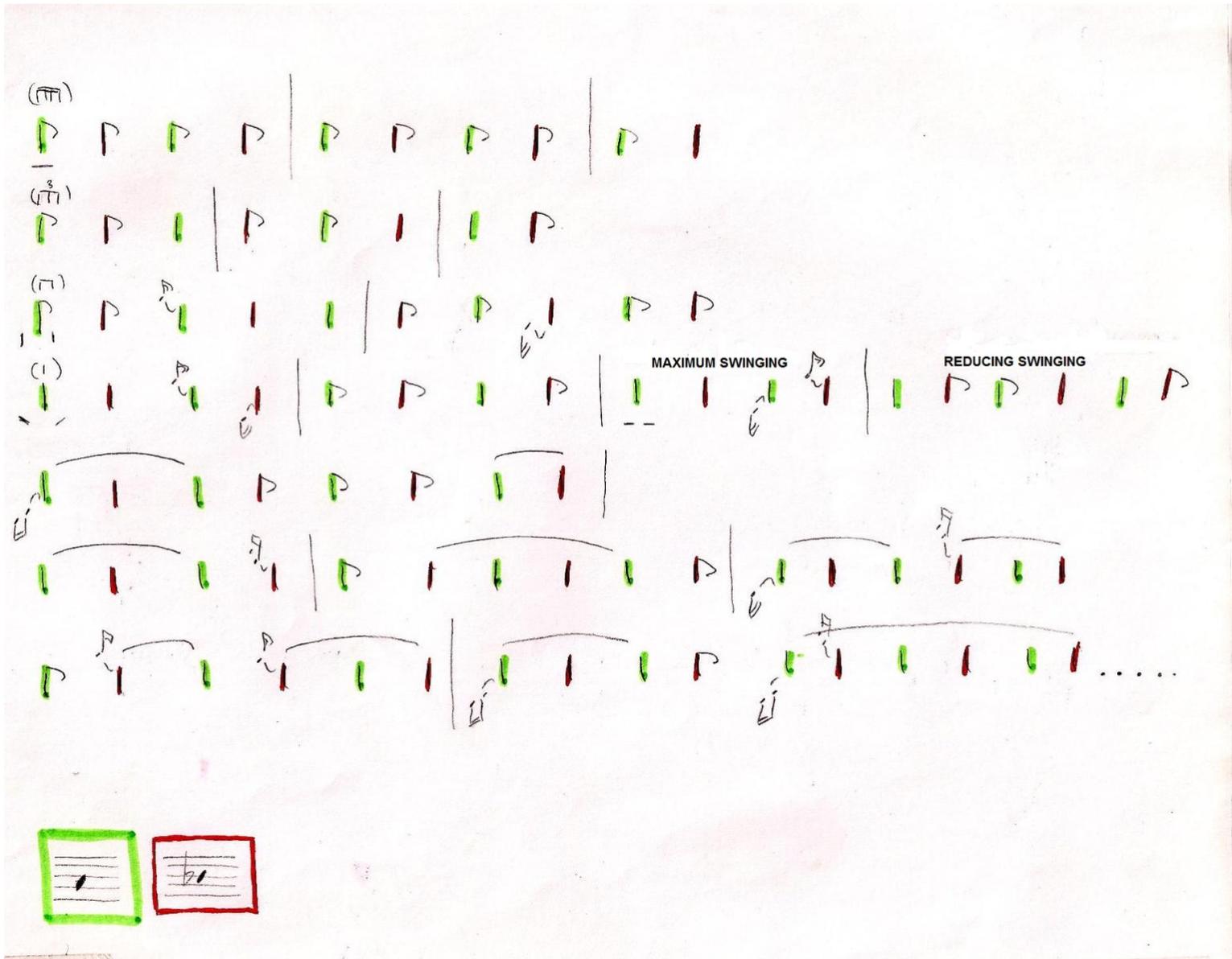


DIAGRAM II

This diagram helps to memorize the trills part that appears in every cycle. You can check its development through the piece.

Diagram II illustrates the development of trills through four systems, each with two staves of notation. The notation includes dynamic markings (P, PP, PPP, mp, mf) and articulation symbols (accents, slurs, and trill symbols) to guide performance.

System 1: The first staff shows a trill starting with a *P* dynamic, followed by *PP*, and then a trill symbol. The second staff shows a trill starting with a *p* dynamic and ending with a *P* dynamic.

System 2: The first staff shows a trill starting with *mp*, followed by *PPP*, and then a trill symbol. The second staff shows a trill starting with *PPP* and ending with a trill symbol.

System 3: The first staff shows a trill starting with *mp*, followed by a trill symbol, and then *P* and *PP*. The second staff shows a trill starting with a trill symbol, followed by *f*, *mp*, and *pp*.

System 4: The first staff shows a trill starting with *pp*, followed by *mp*, and then a trill symbol. The second staff shows a trill starting with *mf* and ending with a trill symbol.

Handwritten musical score for 'In friendship' by Stockhausen. The score consists of several staves with notes, dynamics, and performance markings. The first system is labeled '5)' and the second '6)'. Dynamics include mp, pp, ppp, and mf. Performance markings include accents, slurs, and hairpins. The third system is divided into sections A, B, and C, with notes and fingerings. The fourth system is labeled 'D' and includes fingerings and notes.

- Finally, it is a process daily and constant that demands effort and patience. The musician needs to know that it will require time for assimilating and internalizing all this information. In my case, it took me seven months practising “In friendship” almost every day in one or another way.

ACCURACY

In almost every work of Stockhausen, the musician needs to check meticulously each written musically element on the score: notes, tempos, dynamics, rhythms and articulations.

According to Stockhausen all of them must not be played as an approximation execution. The composer wants accuracy during the performance of his pieces and the musician must try to respect his decision. This is the reason why every element gives shape to the general structure of the work.

The musician has to know that his pieces live of these smallest and important details. “In friendship” is one of these pieces that is plenty of details. The performance of this work is not a easy task and demands concentration in every bar of the score.

FACIAL EXPRESSION

The whole expression of our face (look, eyebrow, frown) is also important during the performance of this work.

The extreme concentration that demands the performance of “In friendship” involves in frowning excessively or changing the facial expression most of the time. Because it is really difficult to keep a relax expression while the musician is playing and at the same time he has to remind about every pitch, rhythm or exact tempo.

One way for working this aspect is playing in front of a mirror. The performer needs to check all the time what the face is doing and to try to relax it in every moment, even if the passage is difficult or if he has not enough air.

Another way for practicing it consists of playing the piece stopping suddenly in any point of the score. At this moment, the musician can check how the expression of the face is and modify it if the gesture is not the correct.

RECORDING

Once the work has been practiced musicians can still continue internalizing and maturing the piece. And the video recording is an advisable way for this purpose.

Now musicians can become audience and check how they are doing every movement, every passage, every small detail.

This way is enormously enriching, especially in works like this, because they can realise that, perhaps, the movements are not like they wanted or if they should emphasize some gestures which are not so visible.

PHYSICAL CONDITION

Playing “In friendship” demands a good physical condition. For that reason, musicians should pay attention on how they manage the energy in every note, movement and passage in order to reach the end and not to feel exhausted.

PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE

Depending on the level of personal effort that musicians can devote to a musical work, the wish for playing the first performance can vary. As we have seen previously “In friendship” needs a lot of time and effort, so when the piece is ready, every musician wish to perform it, wish to show their work to the audience. Although, the best point is that the audience is also wishing to listen to it and the moment of the performance could be unforgettable for everyone.

When the musician performs this piece, he needs to be ready for some unexpected situation. It could happen that the memory could not remind every note, dynamic or movement or the performer could not play a really good passage, but he must continue playing the piece and always try to do the best performance.

Each performance is different and unique having the musician a great opportunity to learn from it. Recording the performance is really necessary for analysing it, checking what was wrong and trying to improve it.

Finally, after performing the piece many times, the musician is able to see his development as artist. For this reason, “In friendship” will mark on his professional career and he will always have the piece on his heart.

vibr. ————— *molto rit* ———— | *a tempo* tr

pp mf ff pp ppp

tr (non stacc.) tr tr tr tr tr tr

ff p ff p <#> pp

tr tr tr *molto rit* ———— | *a tempo*

ppp ff pp ff pp

tr vibr. accel. Fly tr tr tr

ff mp pp ff ff p pp

tr tr tr tr tr tr tr tr

pp ff f mp pp

molto rit ———— | *a tempo* *libre* *muy fuesado muy largo into*

no acelerar pp ff pp ff

muy largo *rit* ———— *largo* *en varias direcciones dilatadas*

pp mf ff

äußerst schnell - poco rubato (Vo espina)

ff

una a otra (elegia)

rit. ————— *molto rit.*

pp

Detailed description: This staff begins with a tempo marking 'una a otra (elegia)' and a double bar line. The music consists of a series of notes with various dynamics including *pp* and *f*. A 'rit.' marking is followed by a dashed line and 'molto rit.'. The staff ends with a fermata and a *pp* dynamic.

a tempo (ca 40)

mf *pp* *ff* *pp* (*pp*) *ff* (*f*) *mf* *pp*

gato inquieto

Detailed description: This staff is marked 'a tempo (ca 40)'. It features a variety of dynamics from *mf* to *pp* and *ff*. The text 'gato inquieto' is written below the staff. Trills and triplets are indicated with 'tr' and '3'.

p *mf* *f* *ff* *pp* *ff* *mf* *p* *pp*

molto rit. | a tempo *molto rit.*

Detailed description: This staff continues the musical piece with dynamics ranging from *p* to *ff*. It includes markings for 'molto rit.' and 'a tempo'. Trills and triplets are present.

pp *ff* *pp*

rit. ————— | a tempo

Detailed description: This staff starts with a 'rit.' marking and a dashed line, followed by 'a tempo'. Dynamics include *pp* and *ff*. Trills are marked with 'tr'.

pp *ff* *pp* *ff* (*ff*)

vibr.

Detailed description: This staff features a 'vibr.' marking and dynamics from *pp* to *ff*. Trills and triplets are used throughout.

pp *f* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ppp*

molto rit.

Detailed description: This staff includes a 'molto rit.' marking and dynamics from *ppp* to *ff*. Trills and triplets are present.

mf *ff* *pp* *ppp*

a tempo

Detailed description: This staff is marked 'a tempo' and contains dynamics from *ppp* to *ff*. Trills and triplets are used.

ff *pp* *p* *ff* *pp* *ff*

concupiscentia

Detailed description: This final staff on the page includes dynamics from *pp* to *ff*. The text 'concupiscentia' is written at the bottom. Trills and triplets are present.

