Speechless

An Opera in Three Acts

For four vocal soloists, Choir and Bass Orchestra

Dedicated to Karl Ockelford.

Legend

The colour squares at the top show the colours featured on the score. The first row are the colours for the vocal soloists and choir.. The choir is divided into four, represented by opaque versions of the same colours, as opposed to the soloists whose parts are always solid.

Yellow: electronics
Purple: Drums as specified
Pink: Cymbals as specified
Blue: Lower strings
Green: Lower winds (stagger breathing at all times)
Red: Lower Brass (stagger breathing at all times)
Orange: Bass Guitars, harp and piano.
Instrumental solos are as marked.

Reading: Glissandi are read as lip gliss in winds and sliding in the strings. Augment wind and brass for lower tones where possible.

hard stick, or Bartok pizz, or staccato with key or tongue slap

soft mallet or standard pizzicato. Different opacities for different timbres, size represents volume.

bowed cymbal

cymbal with chain on (sizzle)

air – crossed circle means make 'close off' sound with mouth.

fragile screams - weak but rich in harmonics.

circles on drum kit or cymbals: use brushes to make circular shapes – one circle per drum/cymbal.

The **interlude** is an electronics solo. A microphone should be placed in the room, and the rooms 'resonant frequency' sampled and manipulated as illustrated by the grey triangles: these are dynamic shapes for control of the room feedback.

All **vocal** sounds continue through the note (ie not just at the start)

All **Radios** are tuned to a.m static, in a different place on each radio. Use volume control to enter and exit sounds.

The width of the line is the volume and density of the sound. Except when used as a 'box' for improvisation – only used then to indicate the parameter of activity.

Orchestration

The four vocal **soloists** should be singers from different stylistic backgrounds, and not feature more than one opera singer, who should follow the BLUE vocal part.

The community **choir** should be of mixed race, age and physical ability. The minimum number is 30. They should all have a battery operated a.m. radio with built in speaker each, turned to static.

No instrument in the Bass Orchestra should ever play above middle C. The following minimum orchestration is required:

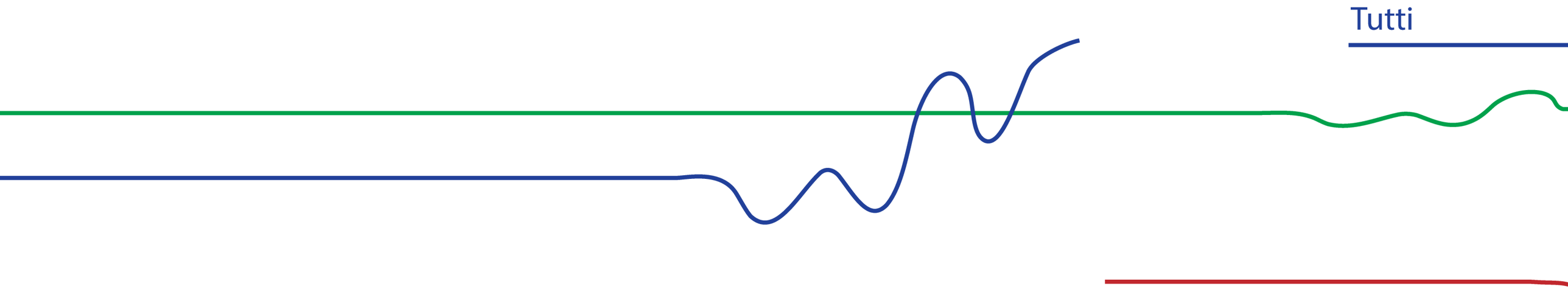
5 double basses
5 celli
2 electric bass guitars (with large amp stacks, freeze, distortion, loop and volume pedals required at a minimum).
2 bass flutes
2 bass clarinets, 2 contra bass clarinets
2 contra bass bassoons
1 electronics musician, with a.m. radio
Theremin (can be created by electronic musician)
2 tubas
2 euphoniums
2 tubas
grand piano
concert harp
1 'rock' drummer (drum kit without snare, all large toms, brushes and soft mallets only)
2 percussionists (**each** with 1 tam tam, 1 bass drum, 1 large timpani, a.m. radio, 2 large floor toms of different sizes, 3 cymbals on stands and 2 bows, range of soft mallets, brushes, trap tables, a range of non-tuned, low frequency 'objects', trap table).

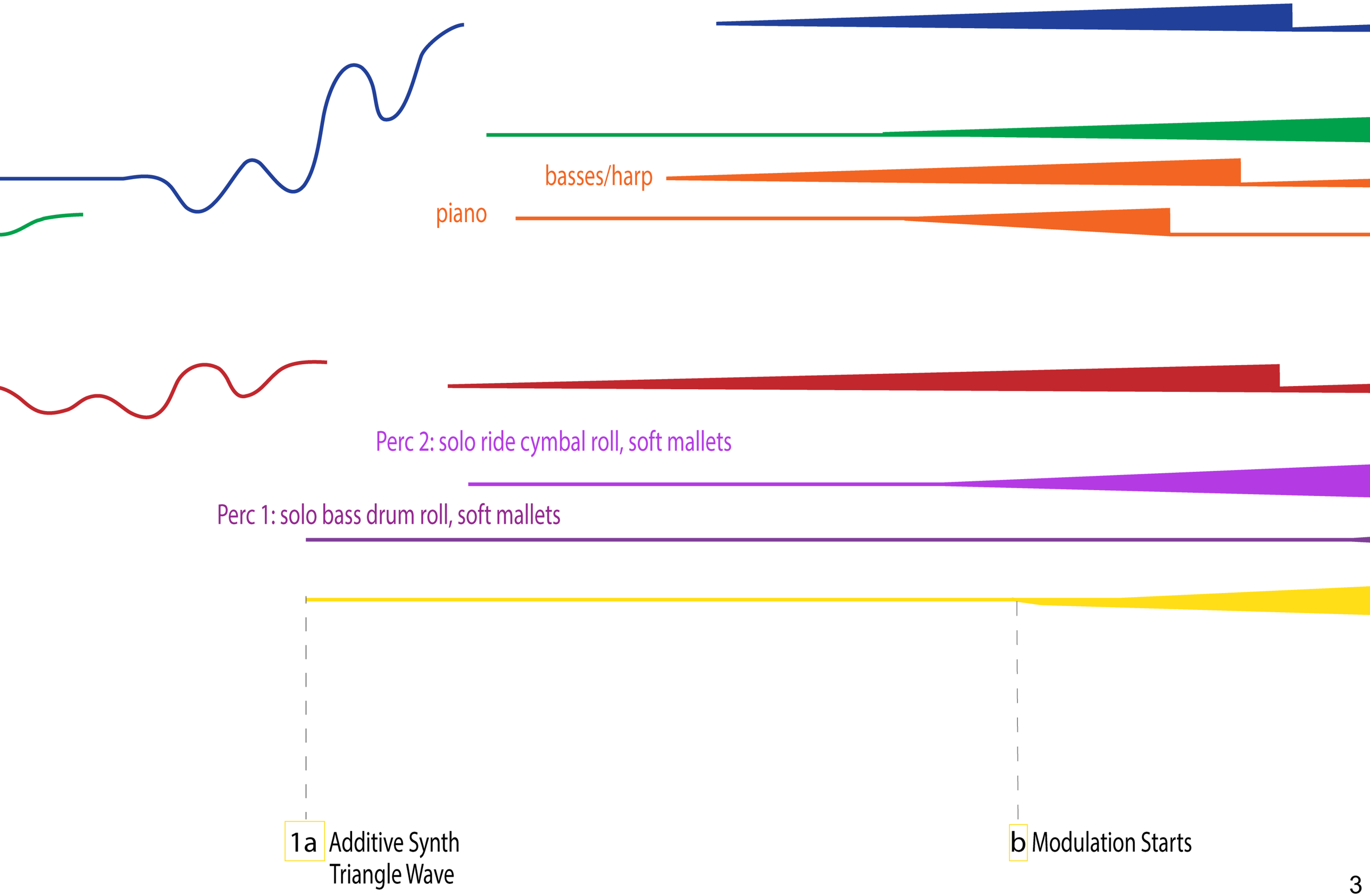
Score

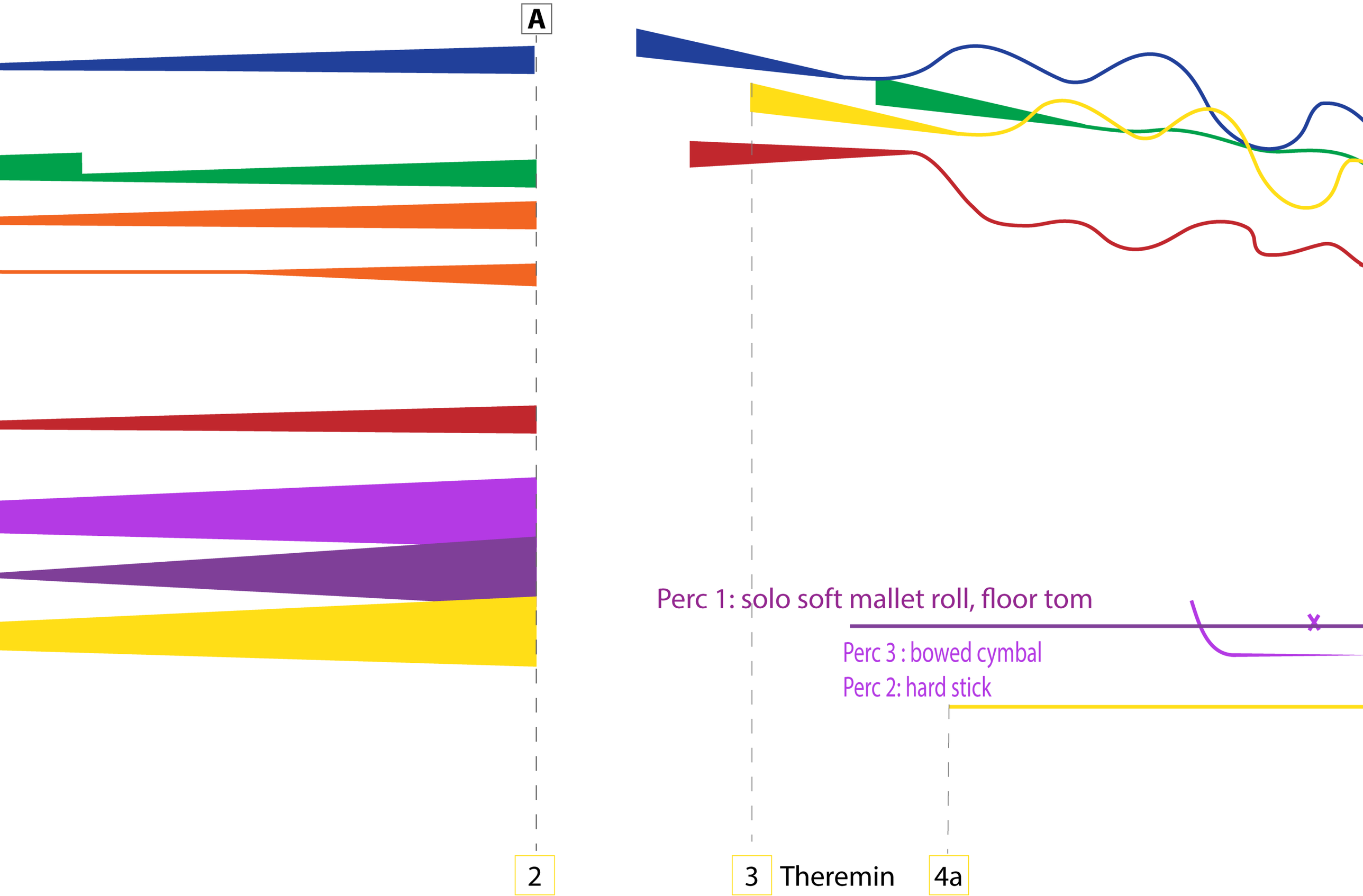
To perform this work, you will need to download the iPad app, the Decibel ScorePlayer, and network the ipads together (instructions in the player). A digital or hard copy of the score is available from Material Press.

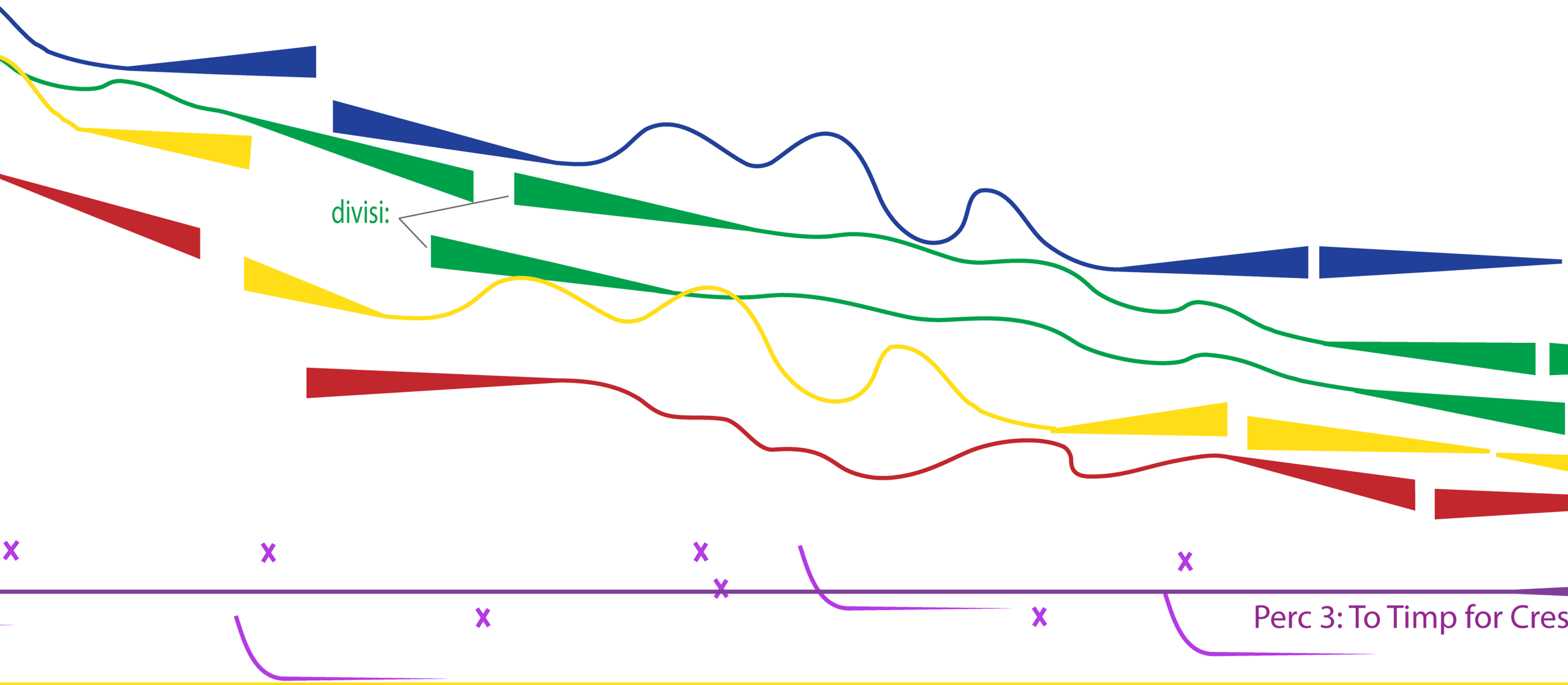
very soft, as continuous as possible.

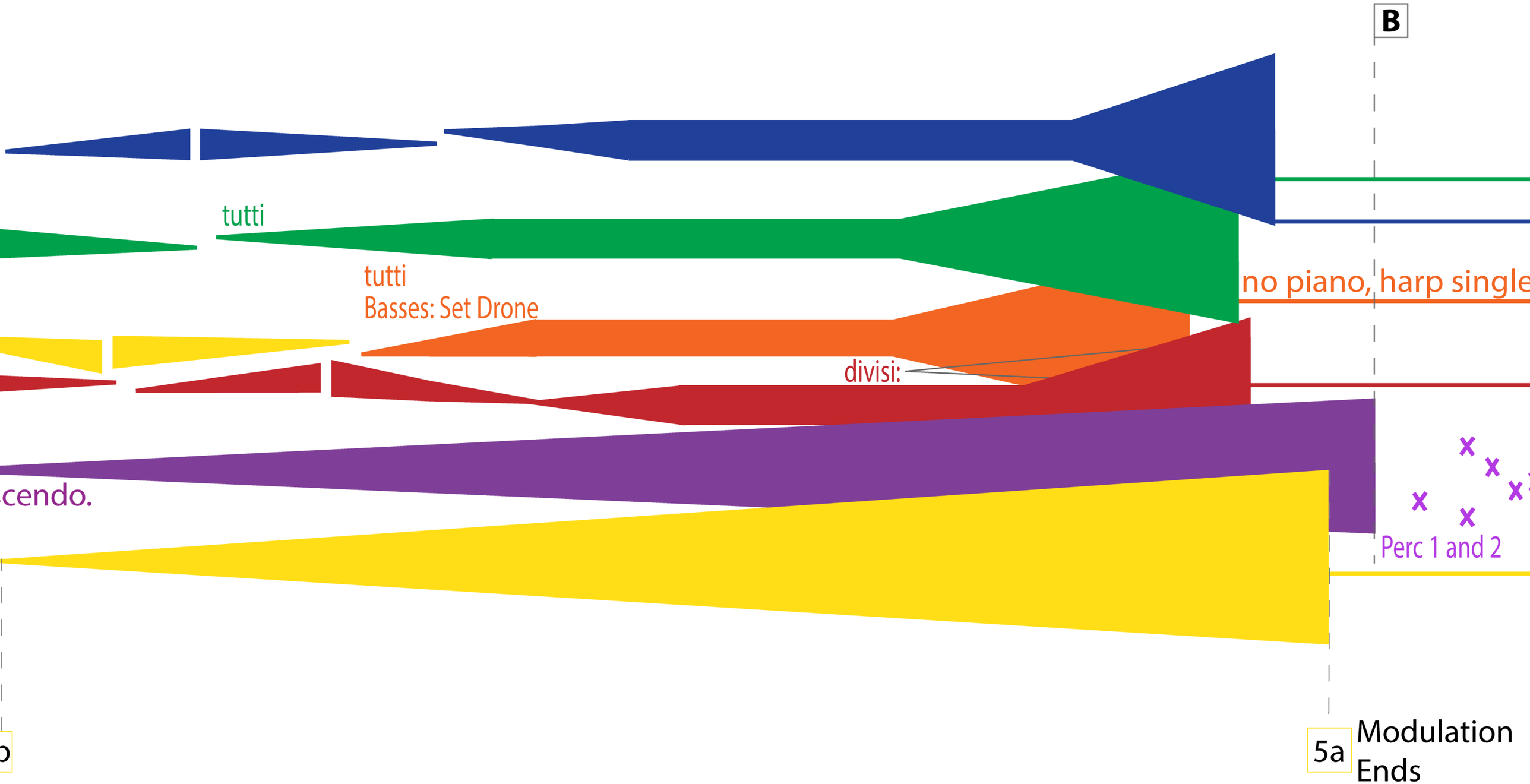
Solo ‘Cello

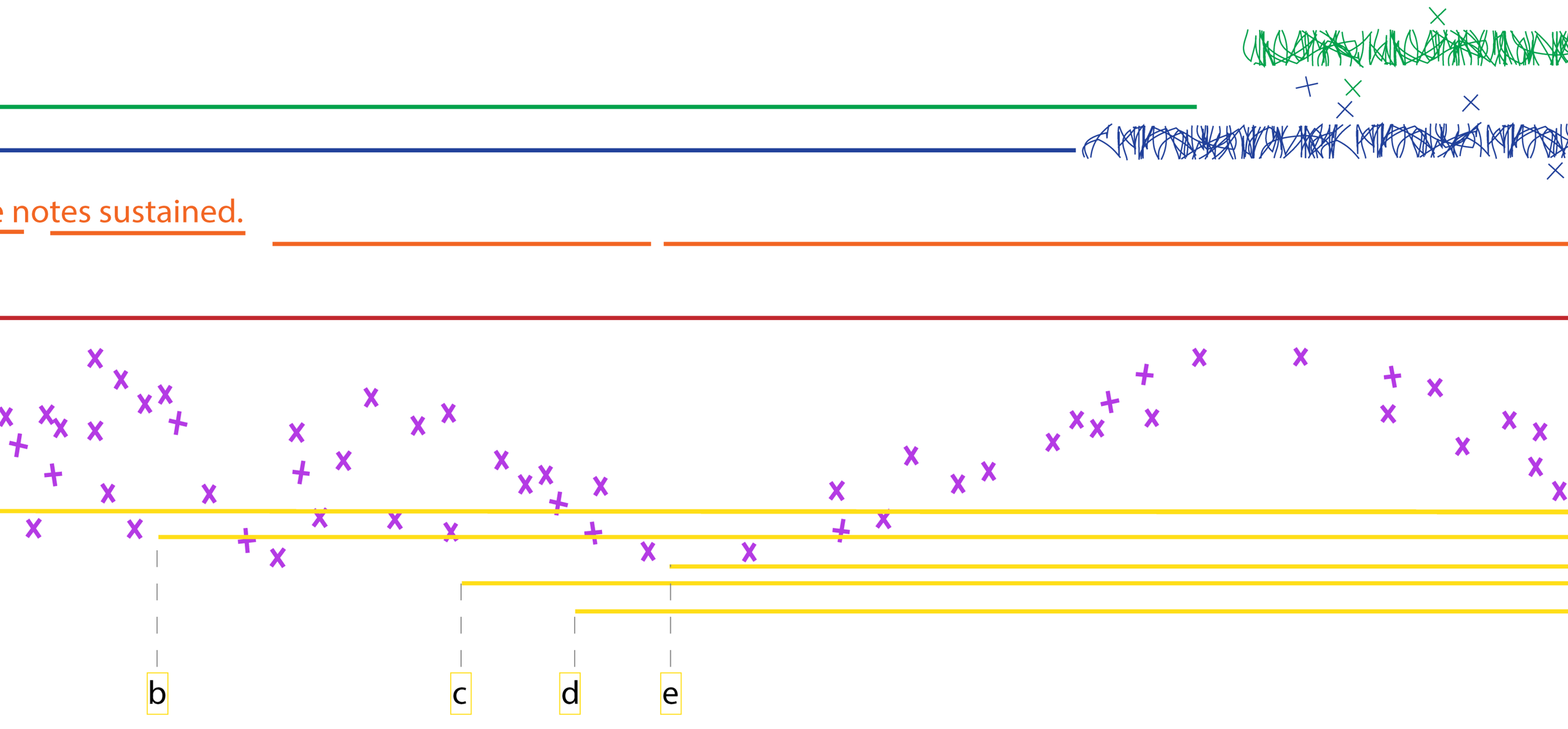

Tutti

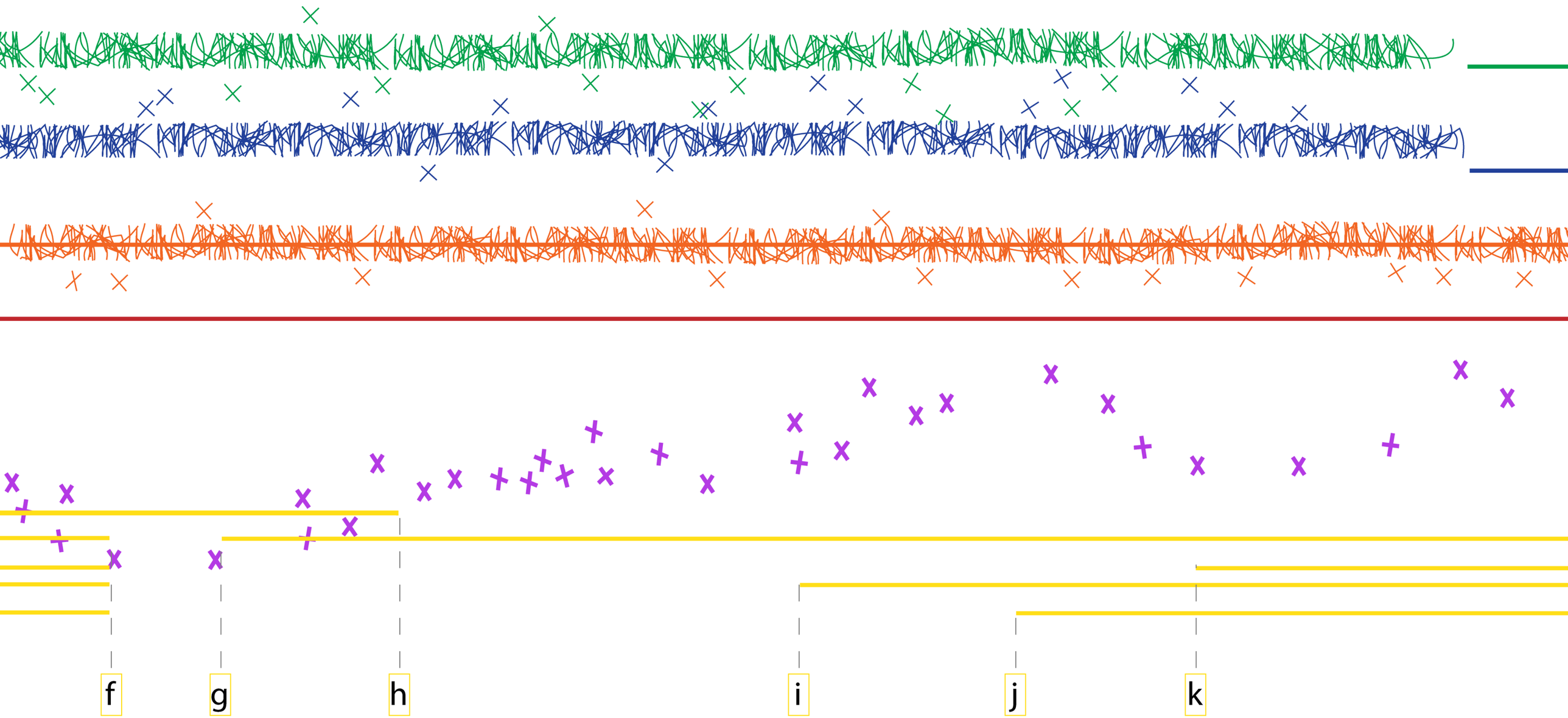

basses/harp
piano
Perc 2: solo ride cymbal roll, soft mallets
Perc 1: solo bass drum roll, soft mallets
1a Additive Synth
Triangle Wave
b Modulation Starts

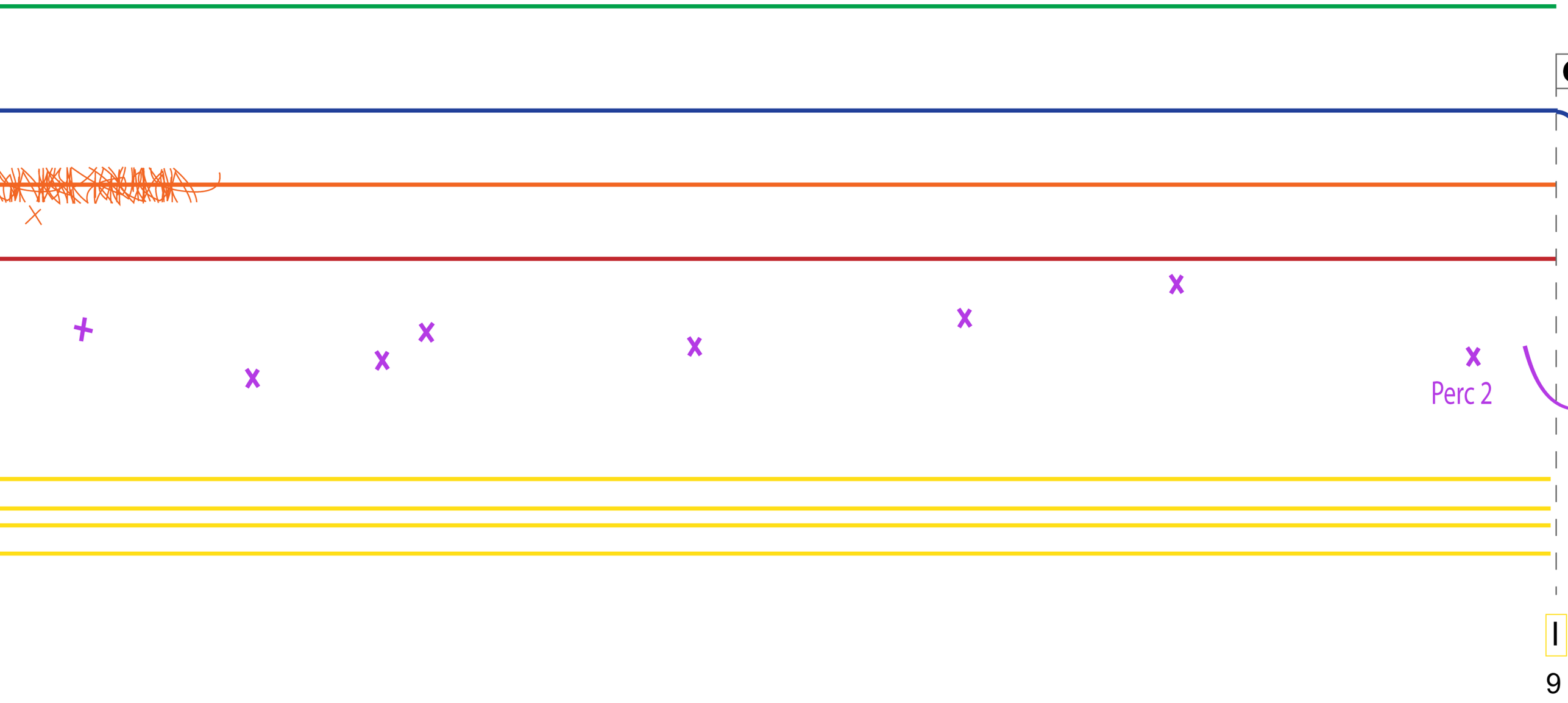

A
Perc 1: solo soft mallet roll, floor tom
Perc 3 : bowed cymbal
Perc 2: hard stick
2
3
Theremin
4a

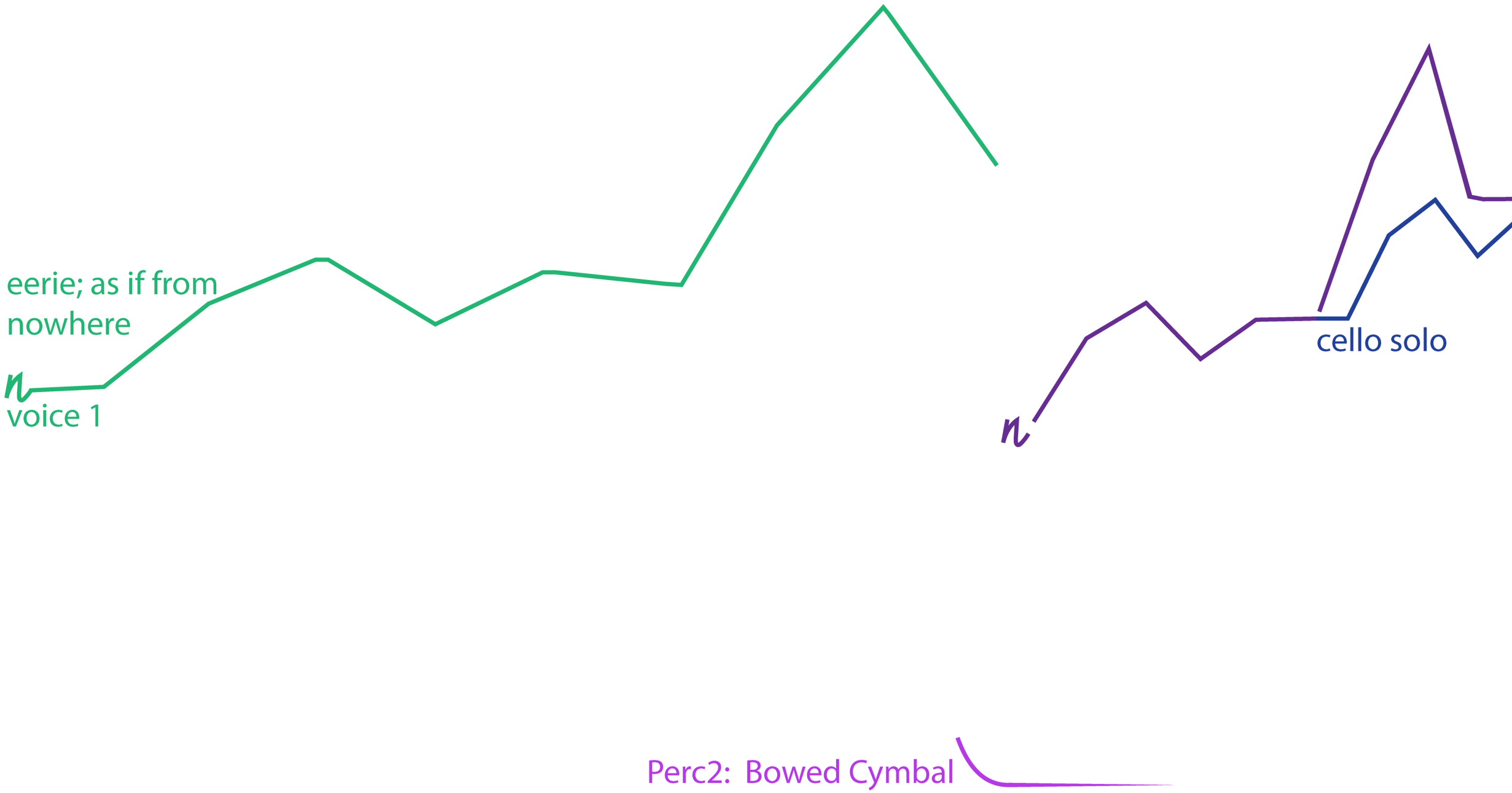

divisi:
Perc 3: To Timp for Cres

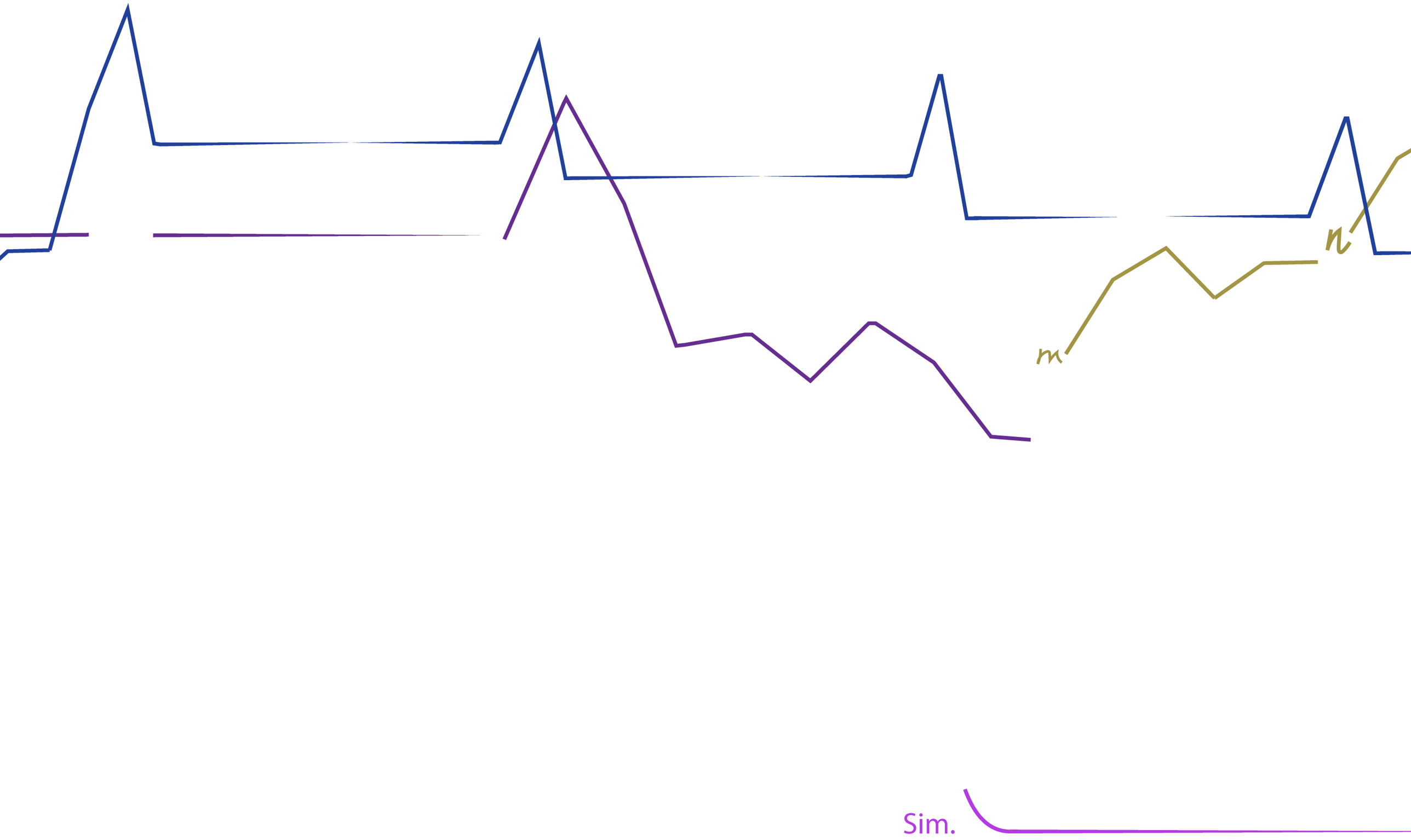

B
tutti
tutti
Basses: Set Drone
no piano, harp single
divisi:
cendo.
Perc 1 and 2
o
5a
Modulation
Ends

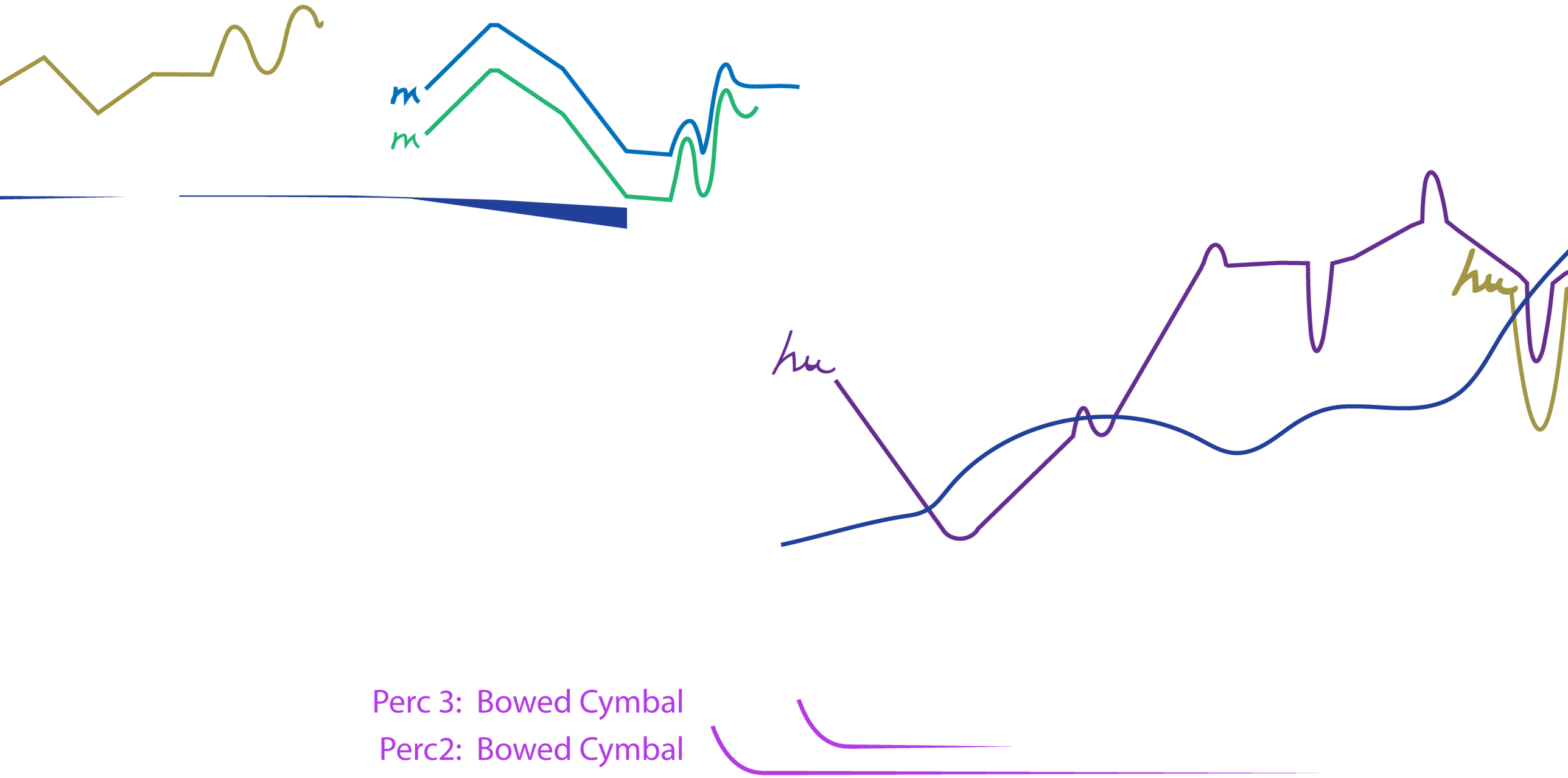

e notes sustained.
b
c
d
e

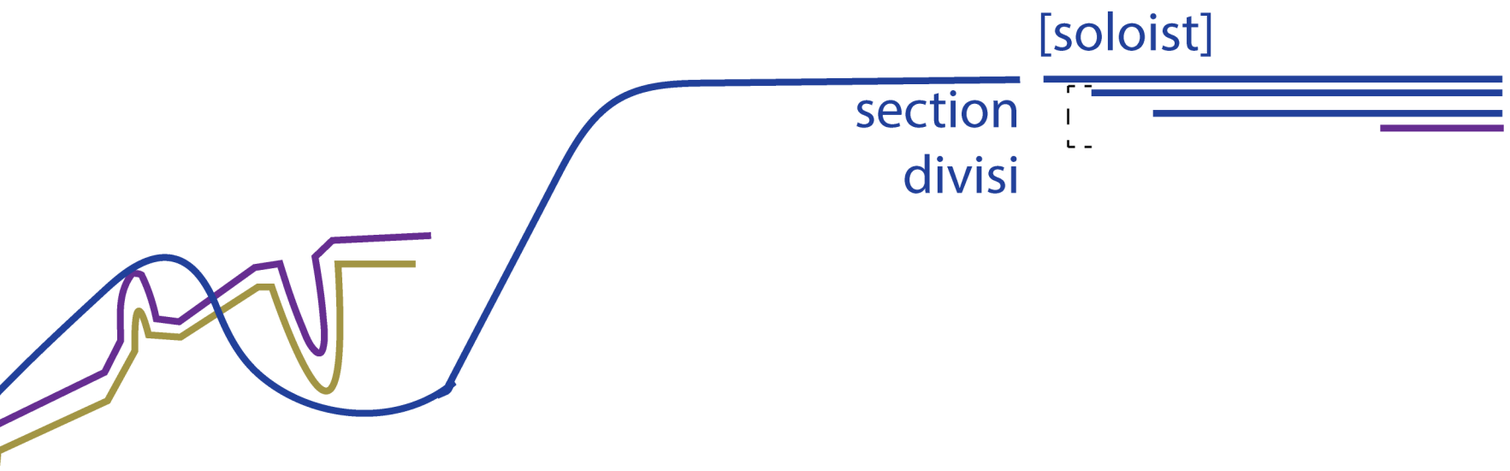

f
g
h
i
j
k

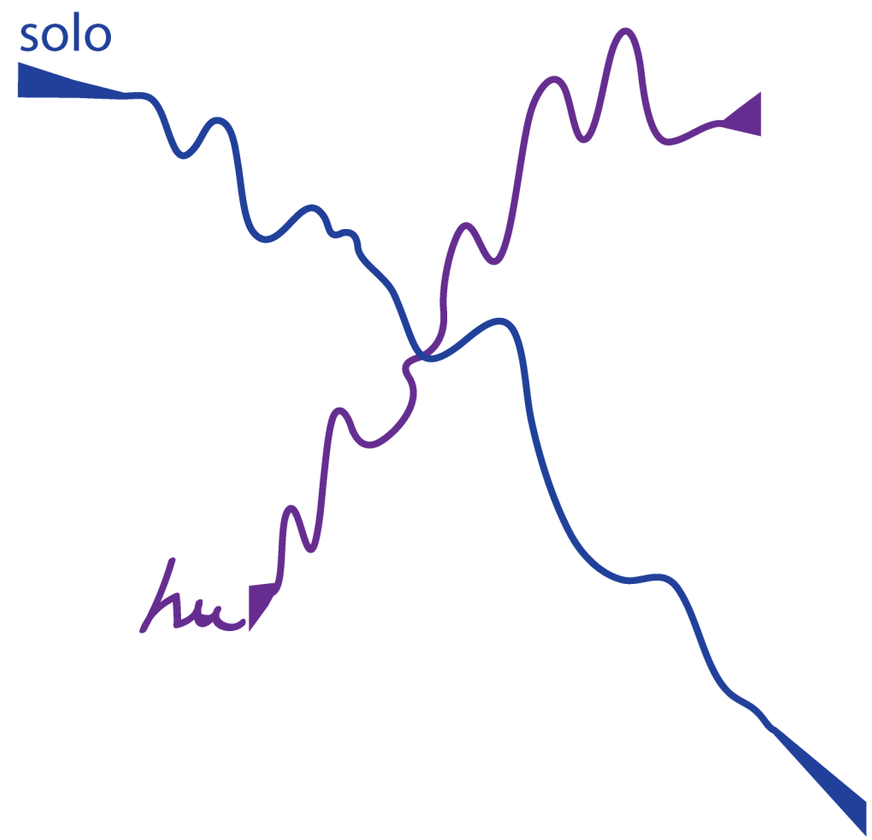

Perc 2


eerie; as if from nowhere
voice 1
cello solo
Perc2: Bowed Cymbal

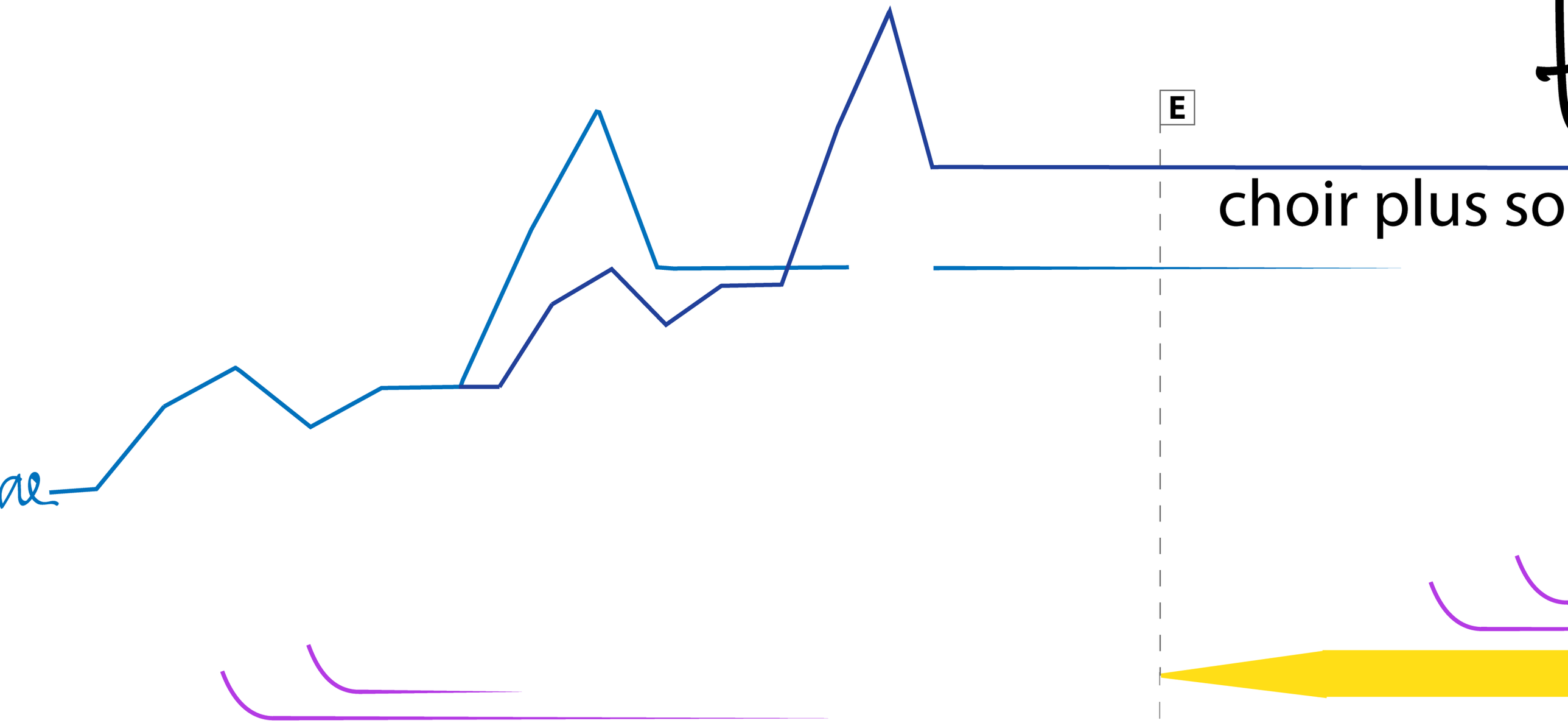

m
n
Sim.


m
m
hu
hu
Perc 3: Bowed Cymbal
Perc2: Bowed Cymbal


[soloist]
section
divisi


solo

Sim.



13a Filtered Square Wave

becoming free

tk

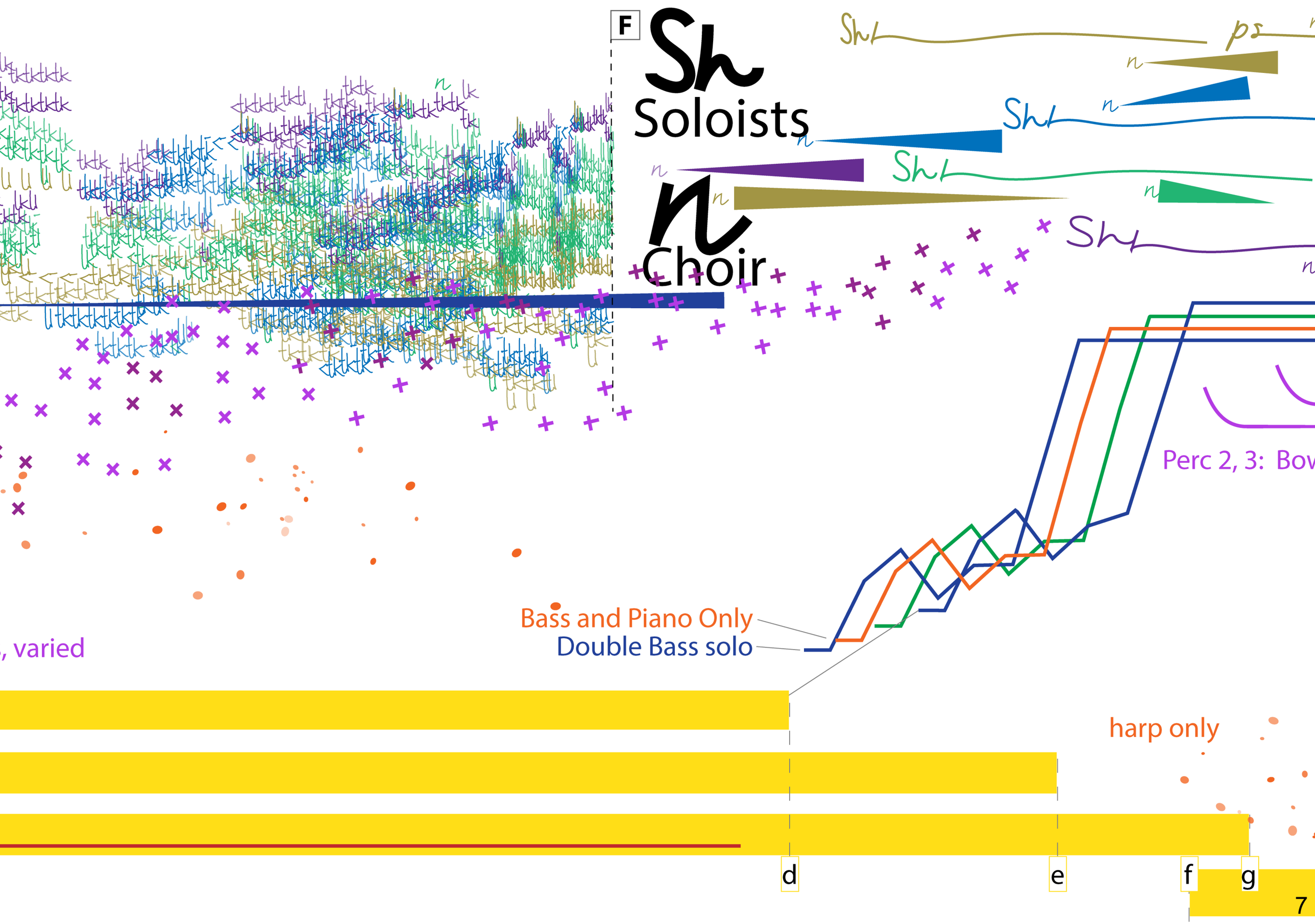
loists

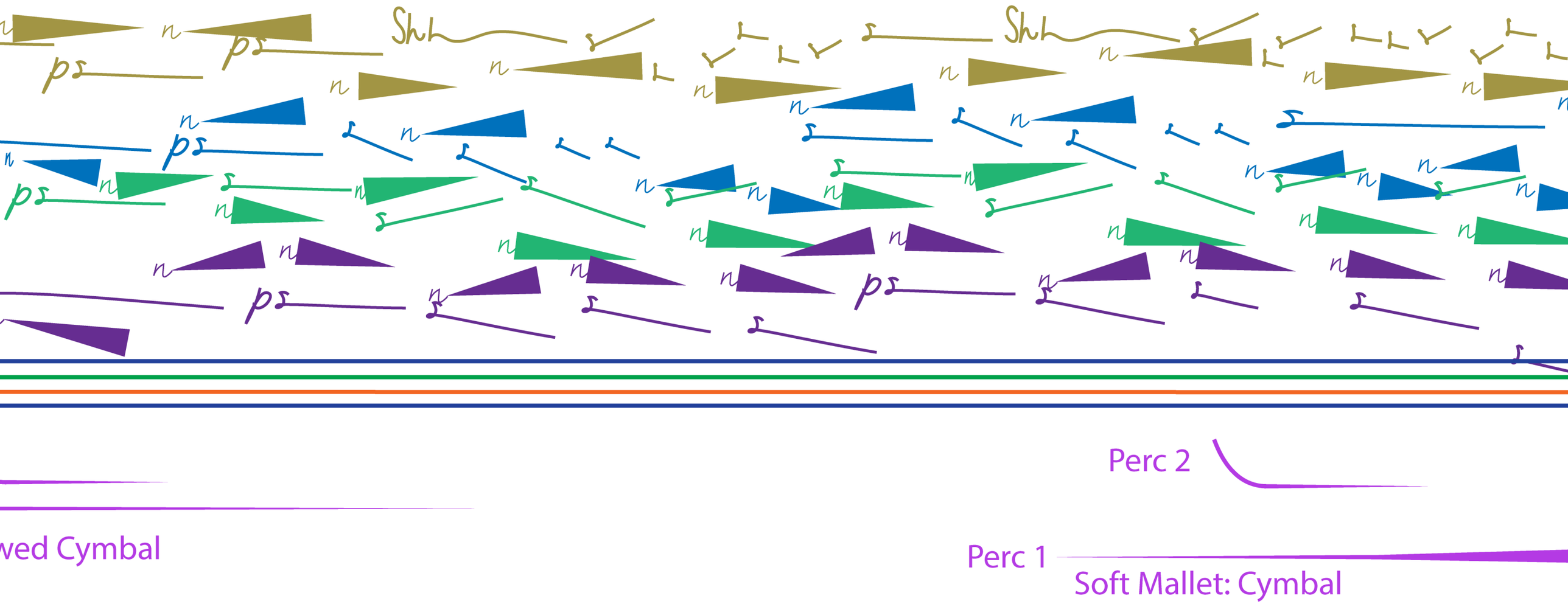
harp only

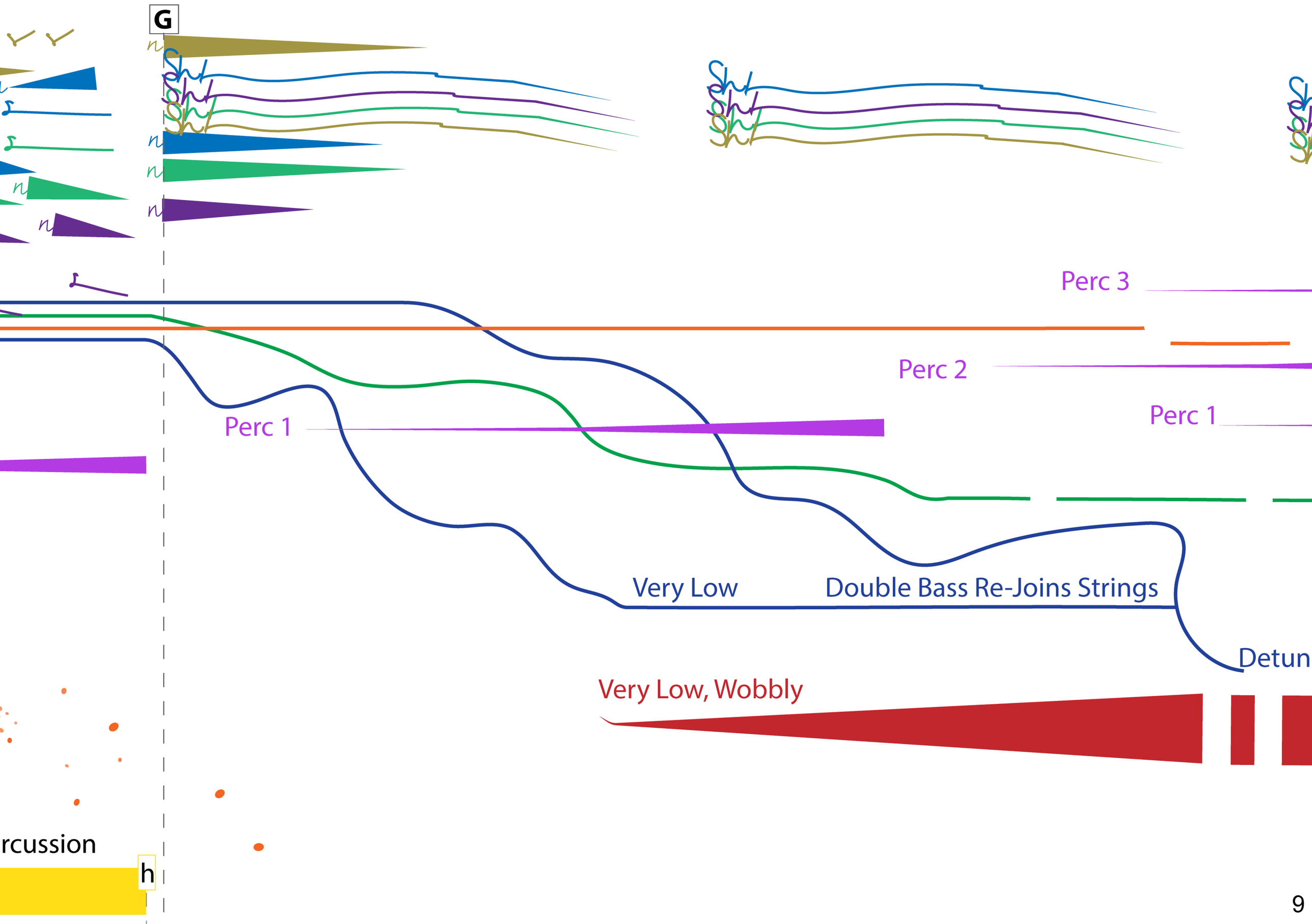
Perc 1, 2 - any instruments

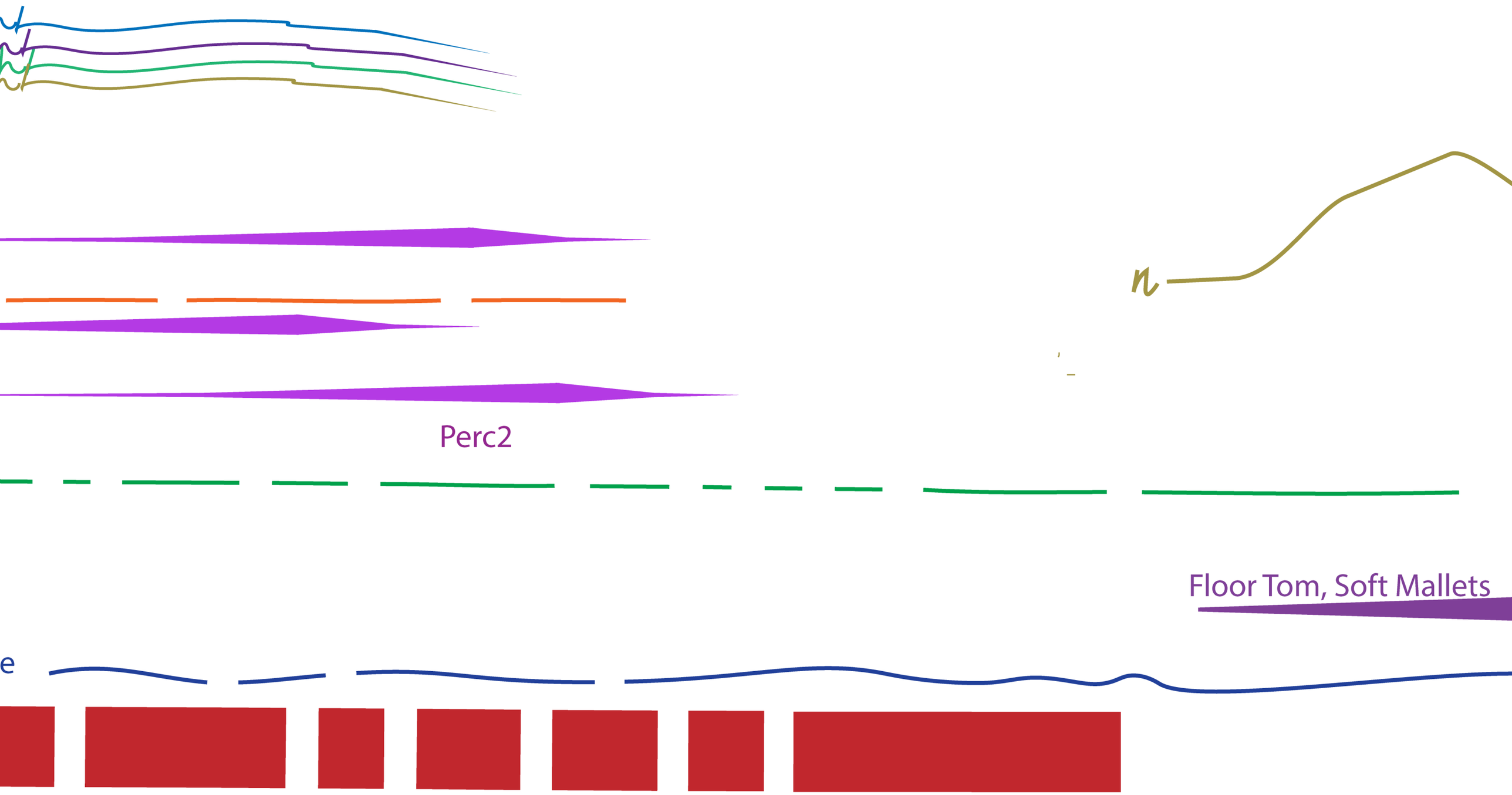
b

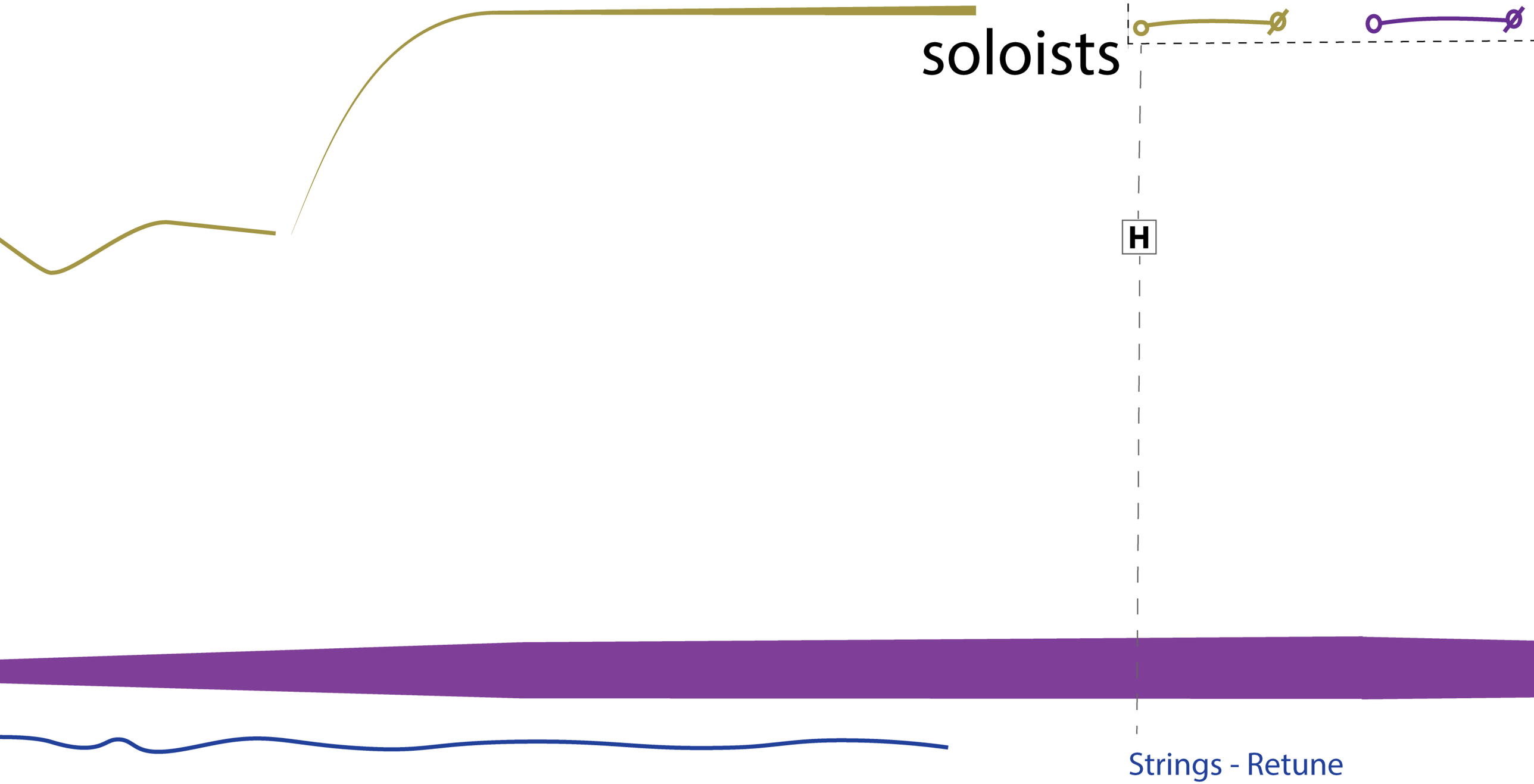
c

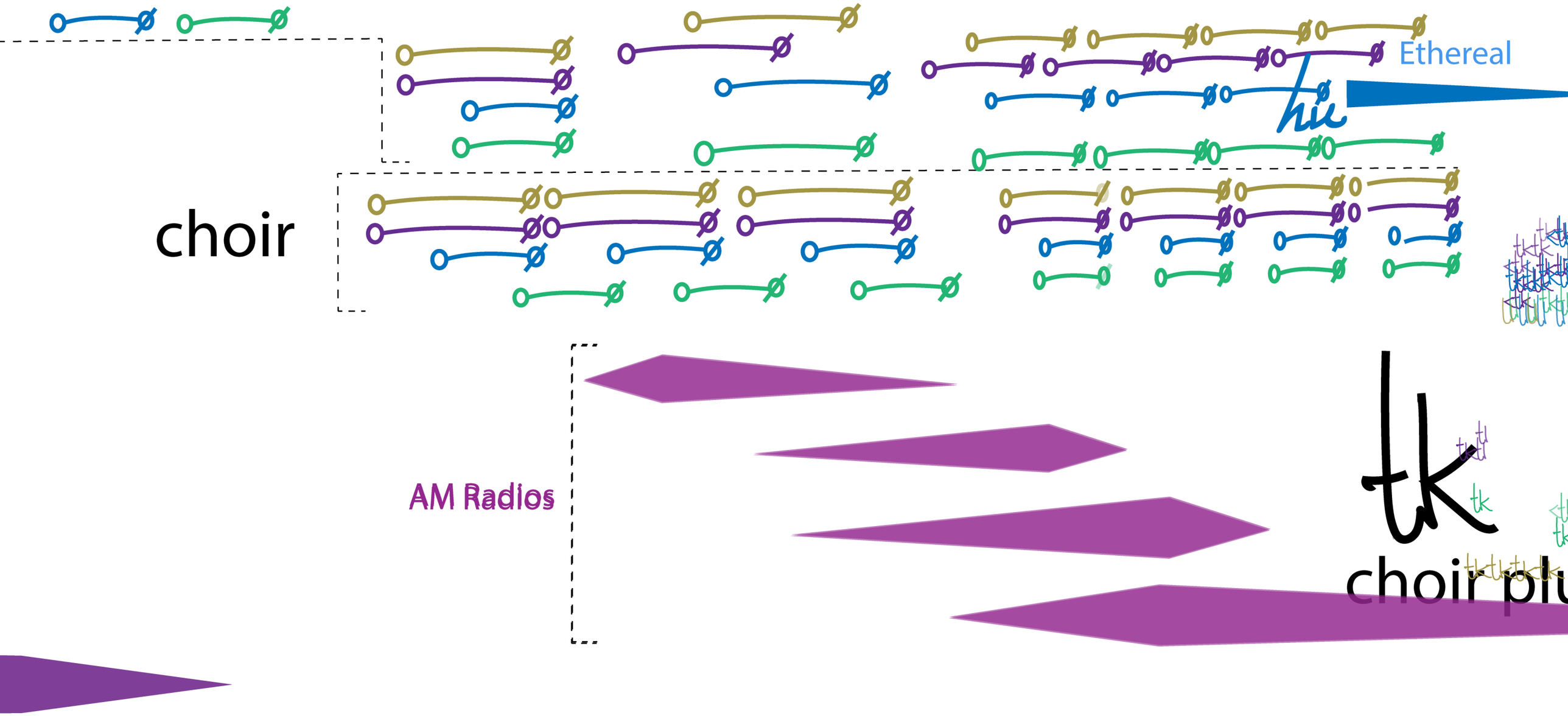

F
Soloists
Choir
Perc 2, 3: Bow
, varied
Bass and Piano Only
Double Bass solo
harp only
d
e
f
g
7


Perc 2
wed Cymbal
Perc 1
Soft Mallet: Cymbal

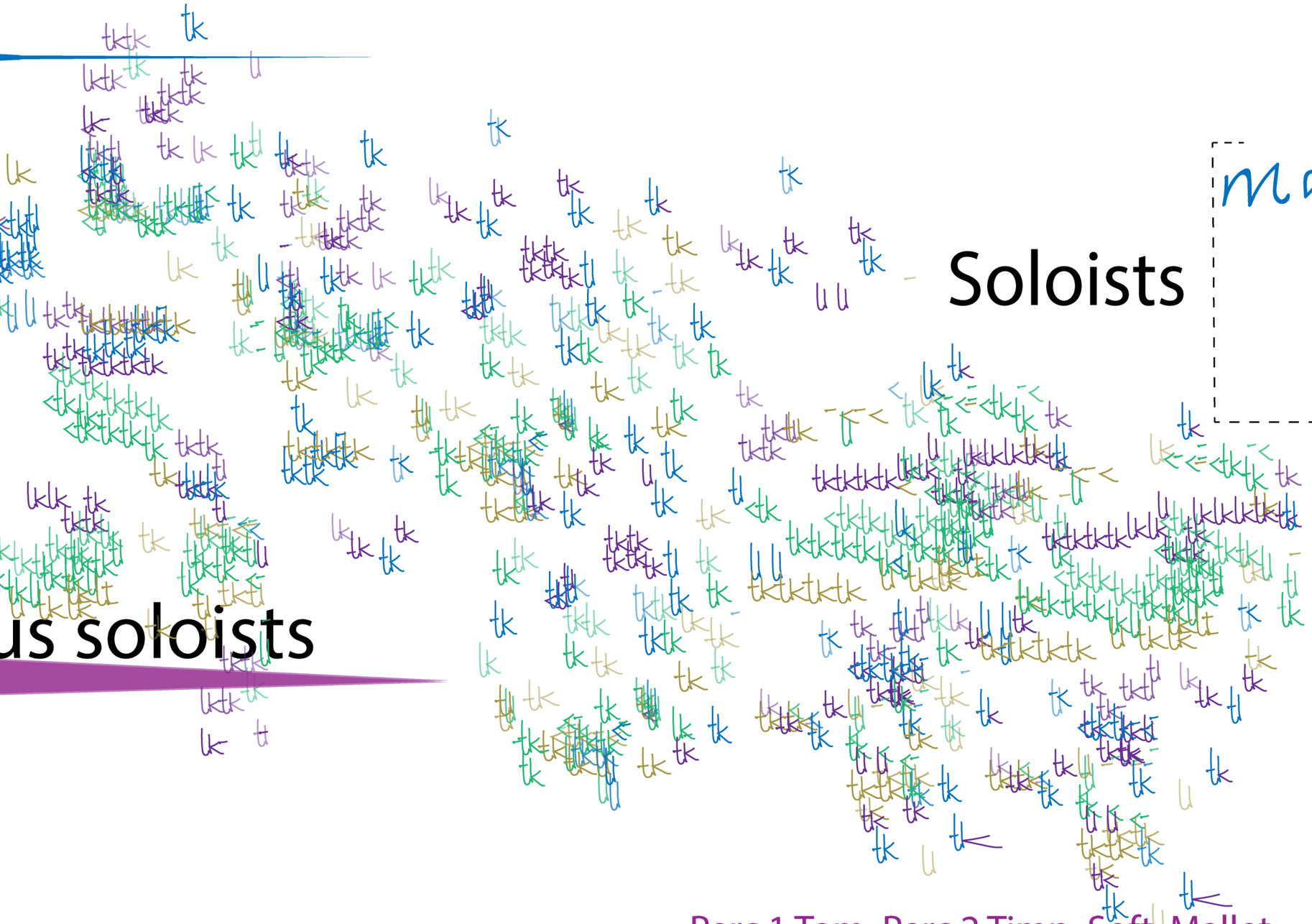

G
Perc 3
Perc 2
Perc 1
Perc 1
Very Low
Double Bass Re-Joins Strings
Detun
Very Low, Wobbly
rcussion
h


Perc2
Floor Tom, Soft Mallets

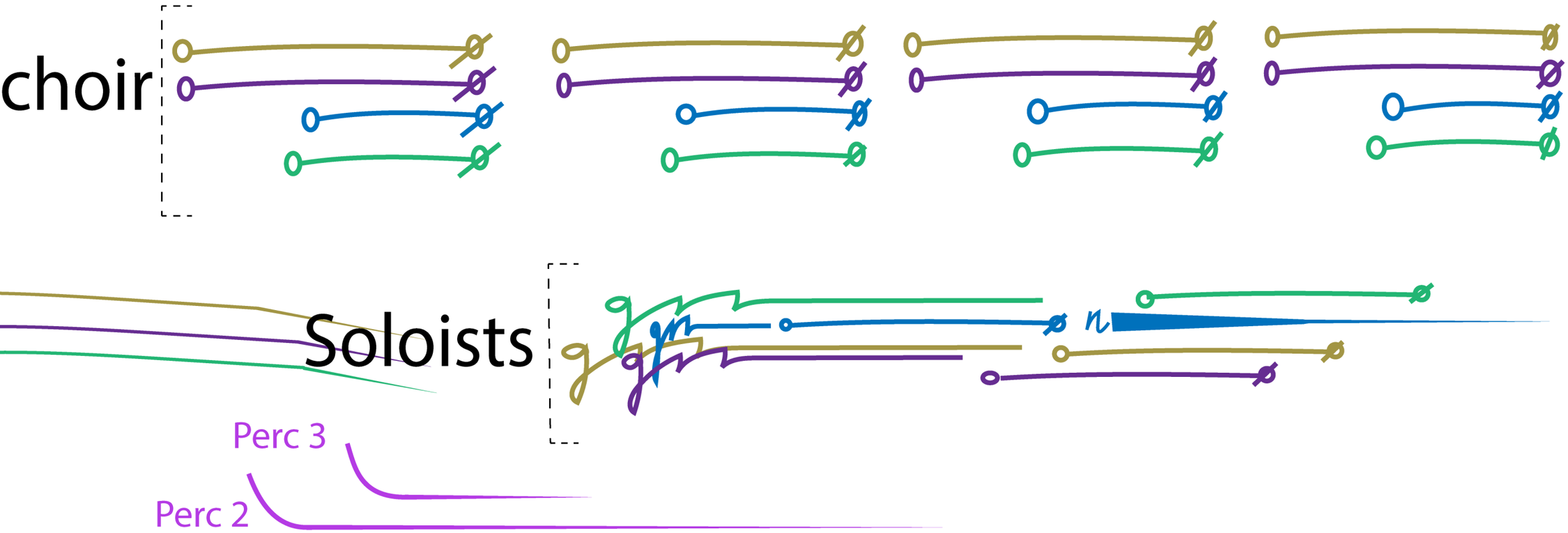

soloists
H
Strings - Retune

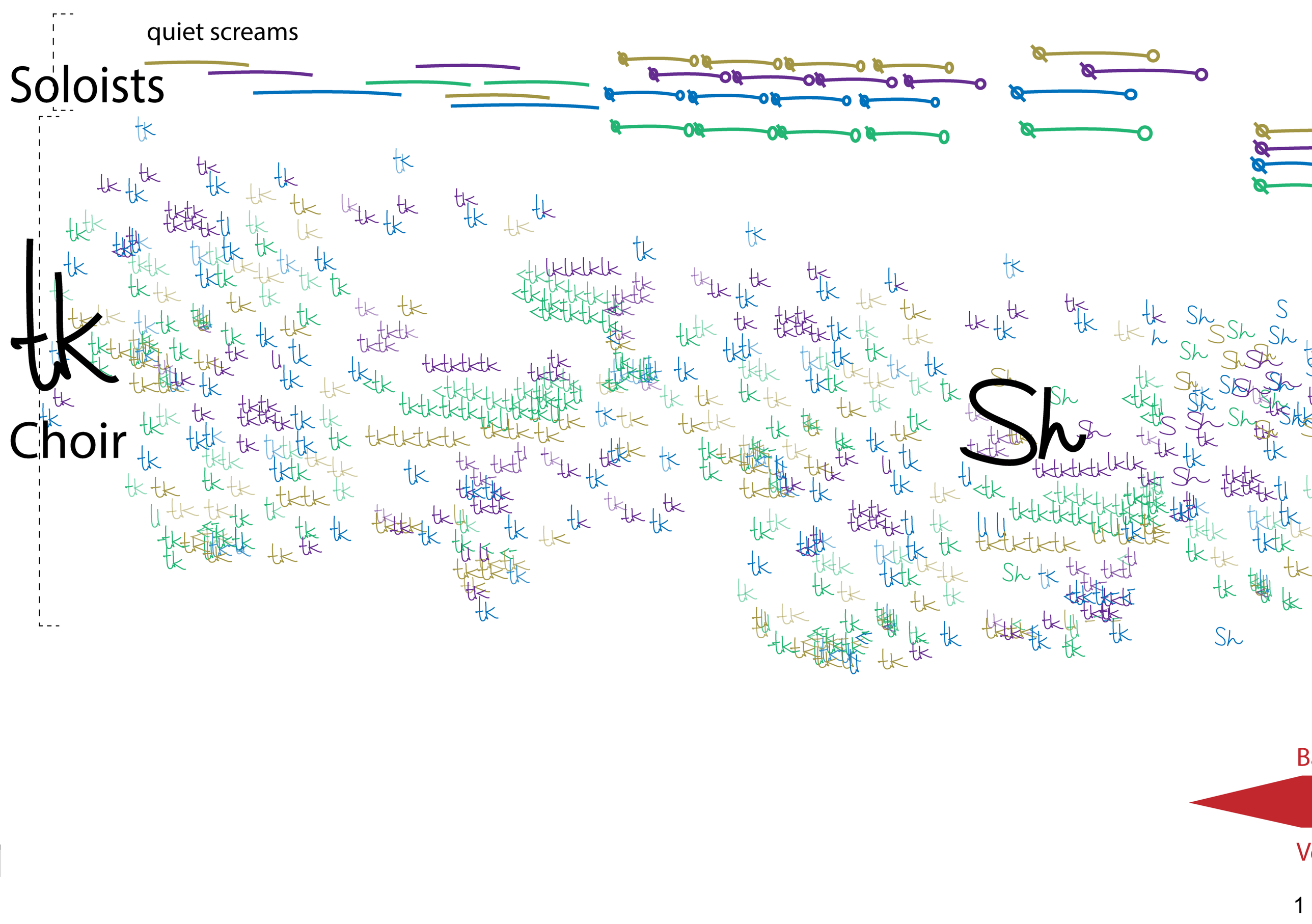

Ethereal
choir
AM Radios
tk
choir plu

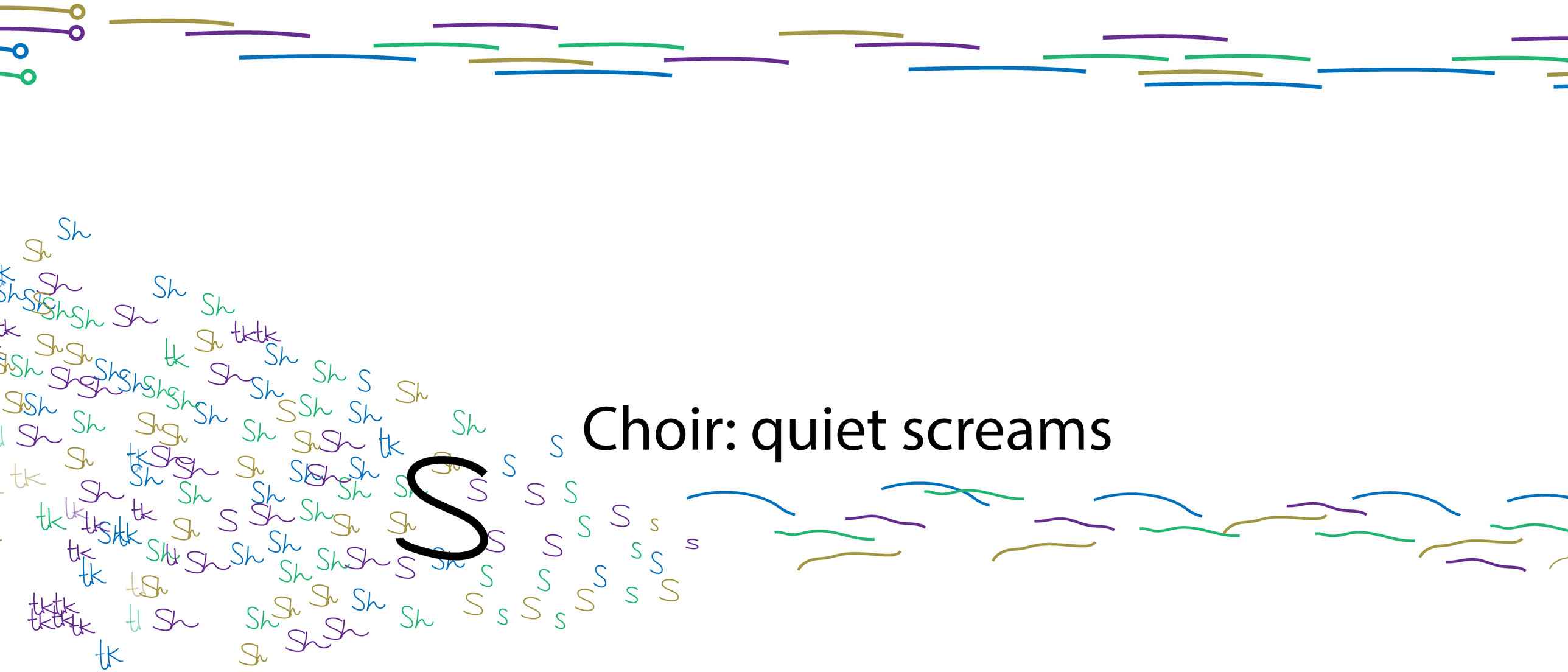
Soloists



Perc 1 Tom, Perc 2 Timp Soft Mallet


choir
Soloists
Perc 3
Perc 2


quiet screams
Soloists
tk
Choir
Sh



ass Trombones

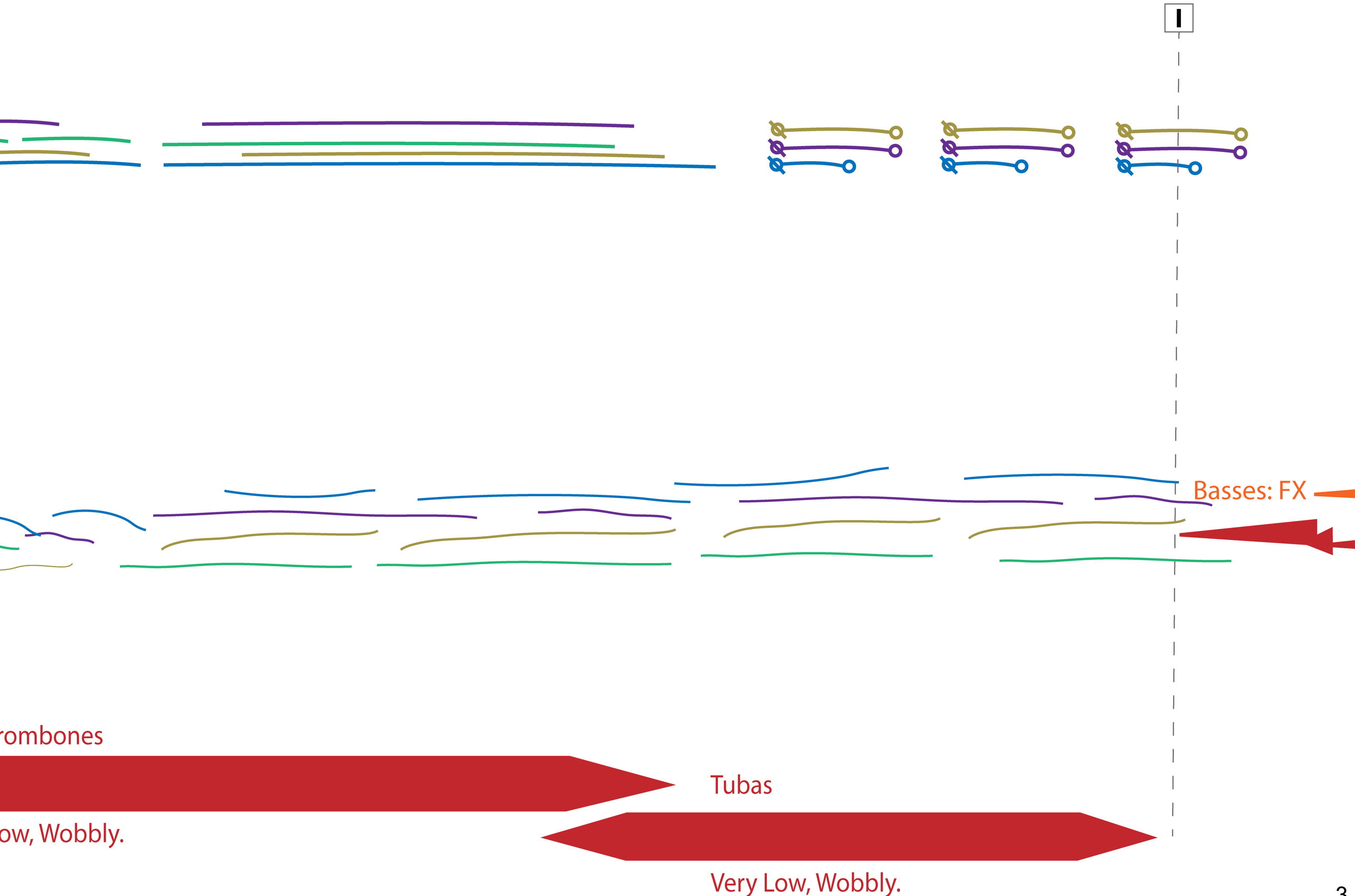
ery Low, Wobbly.

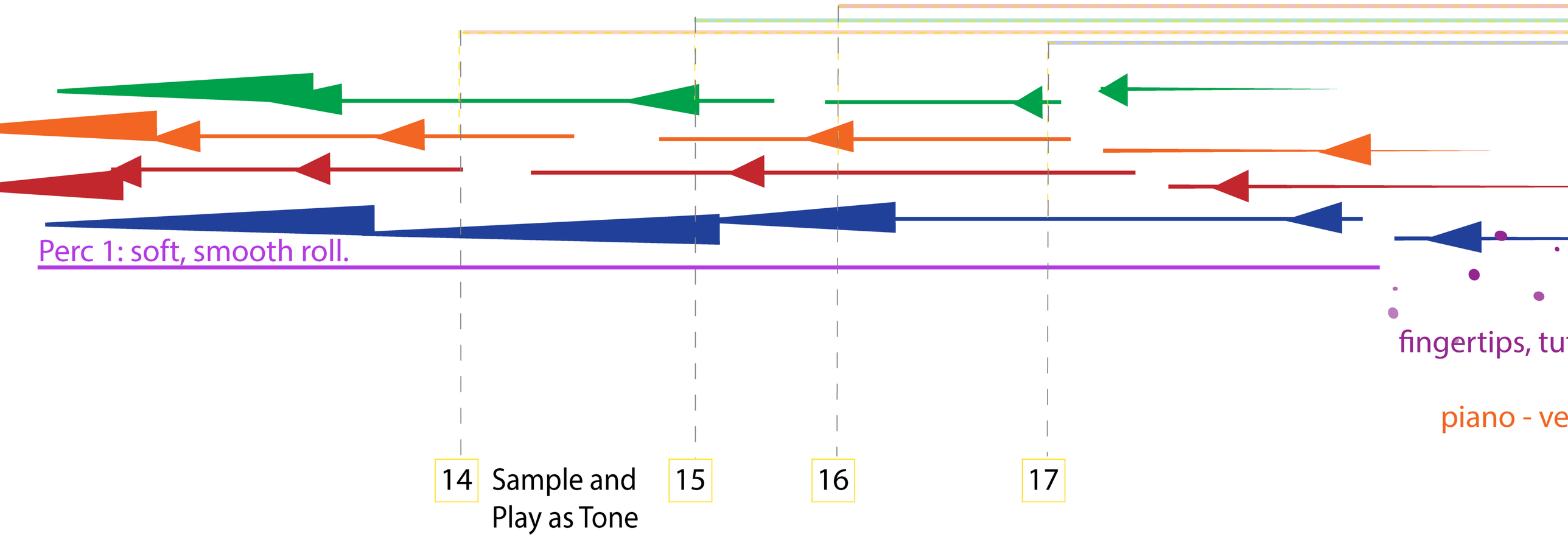
Tubas

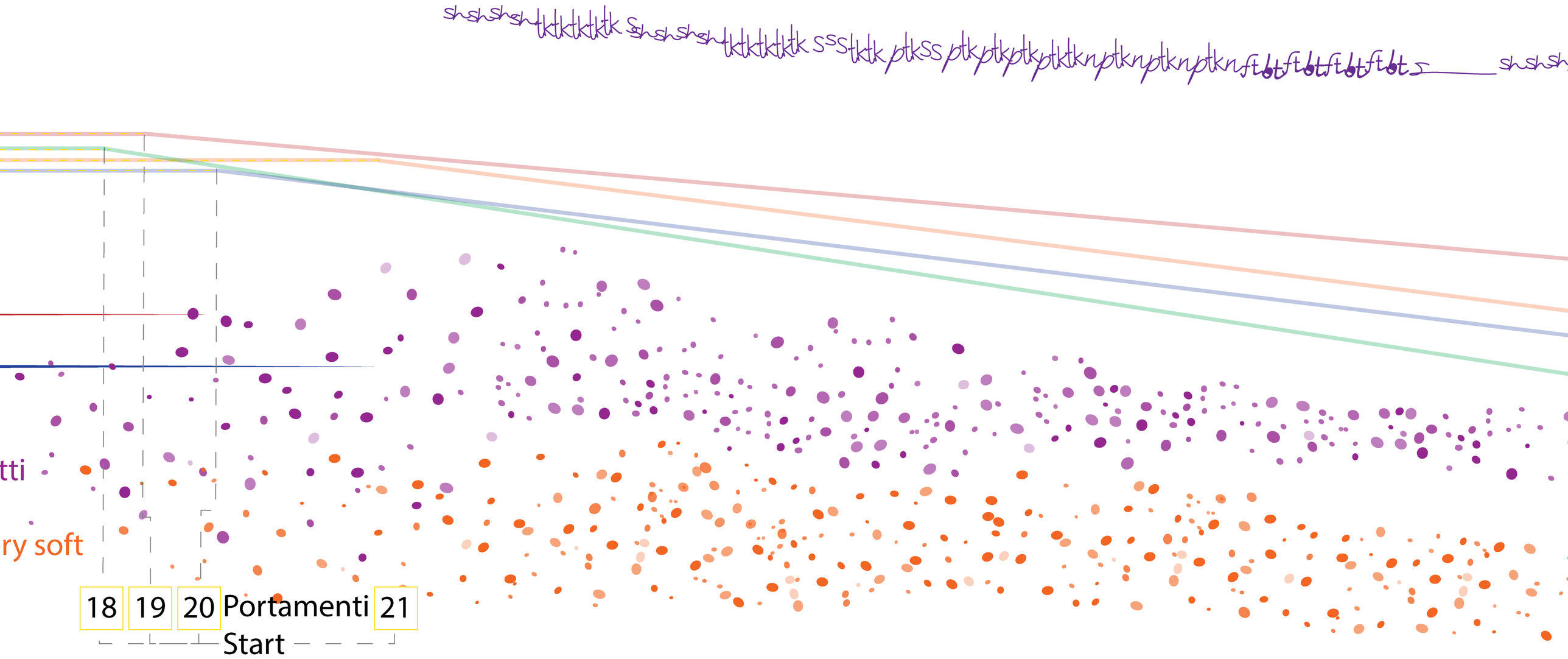
Very Low, Wobbly.

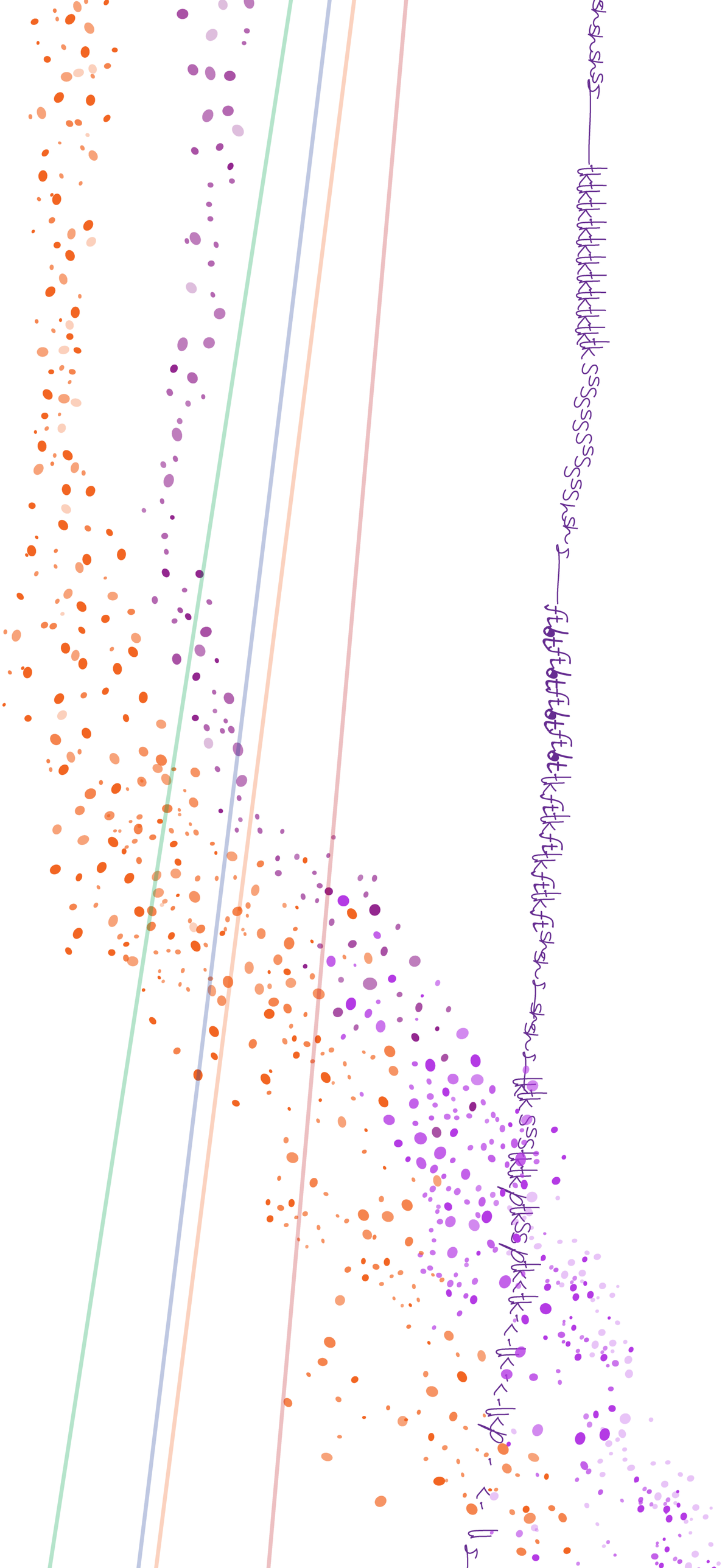
Bass Tr

Very Lo


I
Basses: FX
rombones
ow, Wobbly.
Tubas
Very Low, Wobbly.

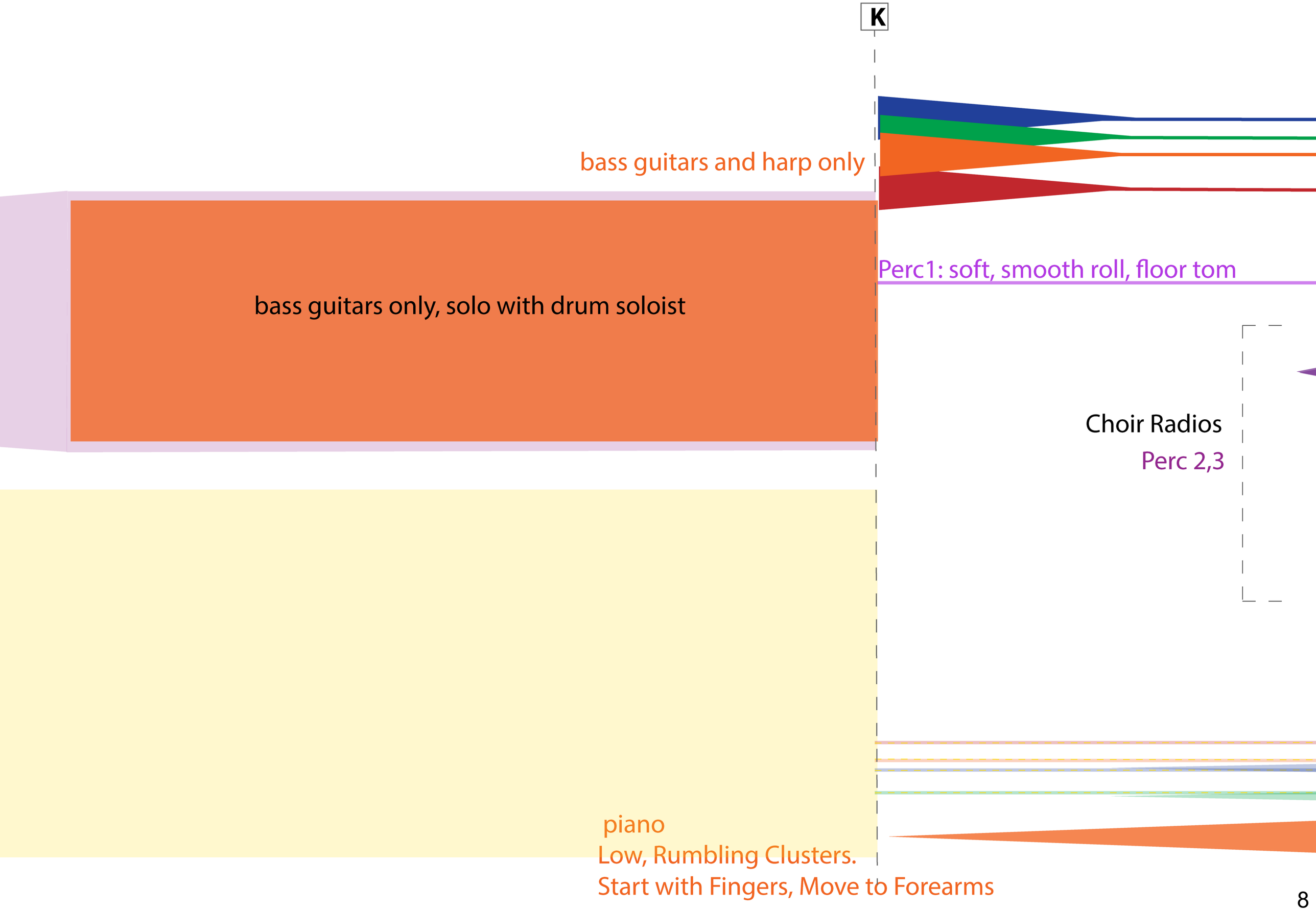

Perc 1: soft, smooth roll.
fingertips, tu
piano - ve
14
Sample and
Play as Tone
15
16
17

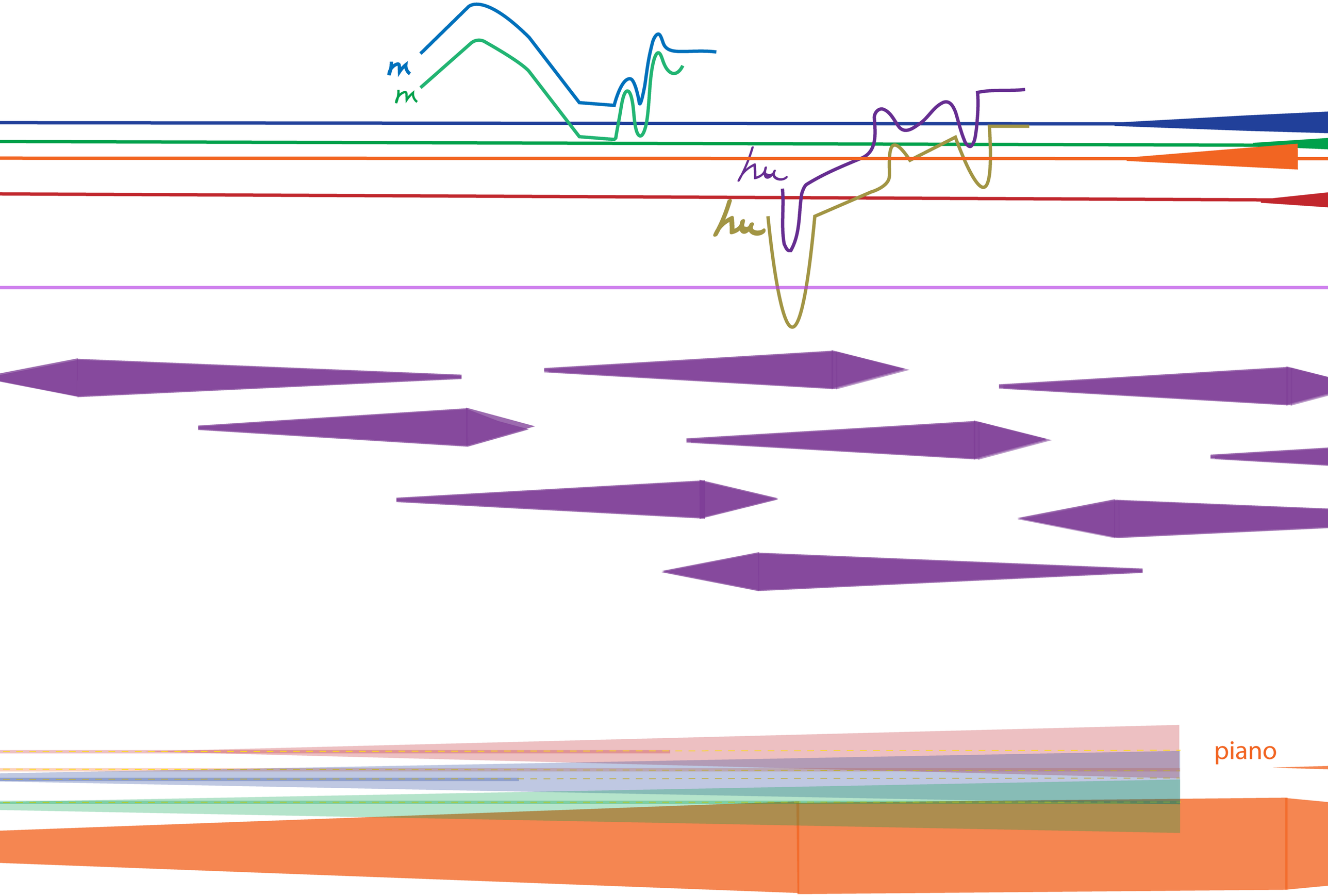

tti
ry soft
18
19
20
Portamenti
21
Start

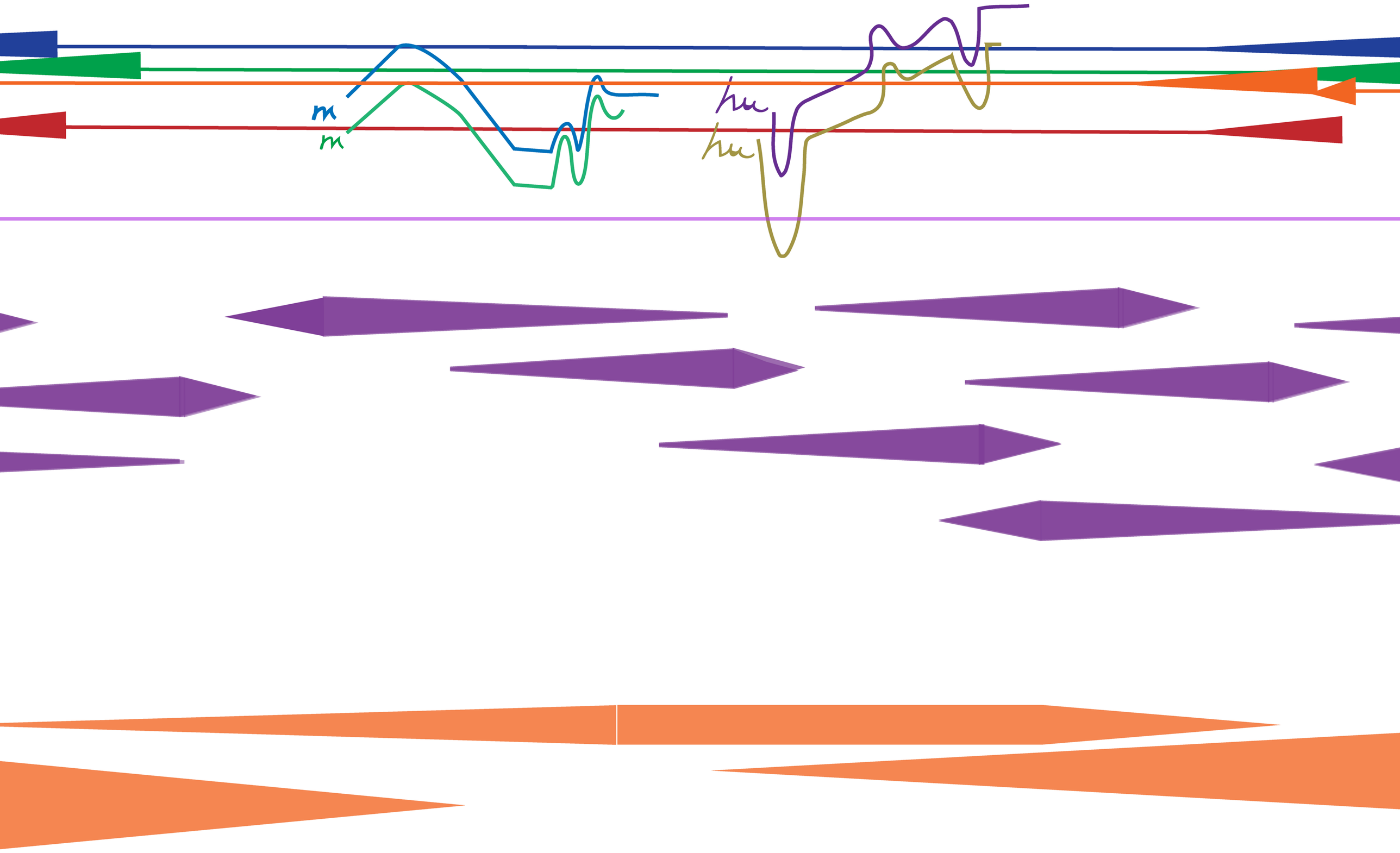


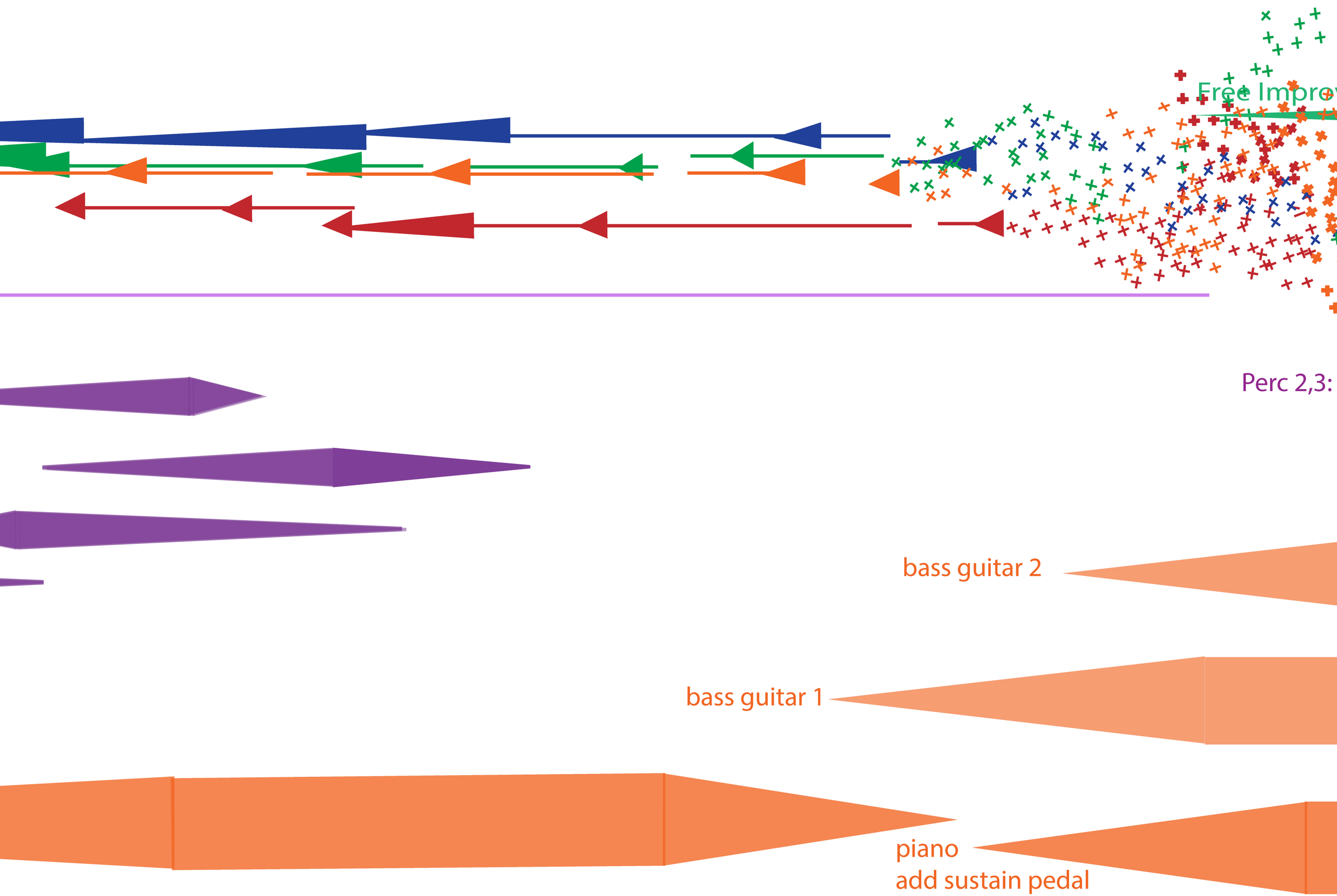
drum kit free improv

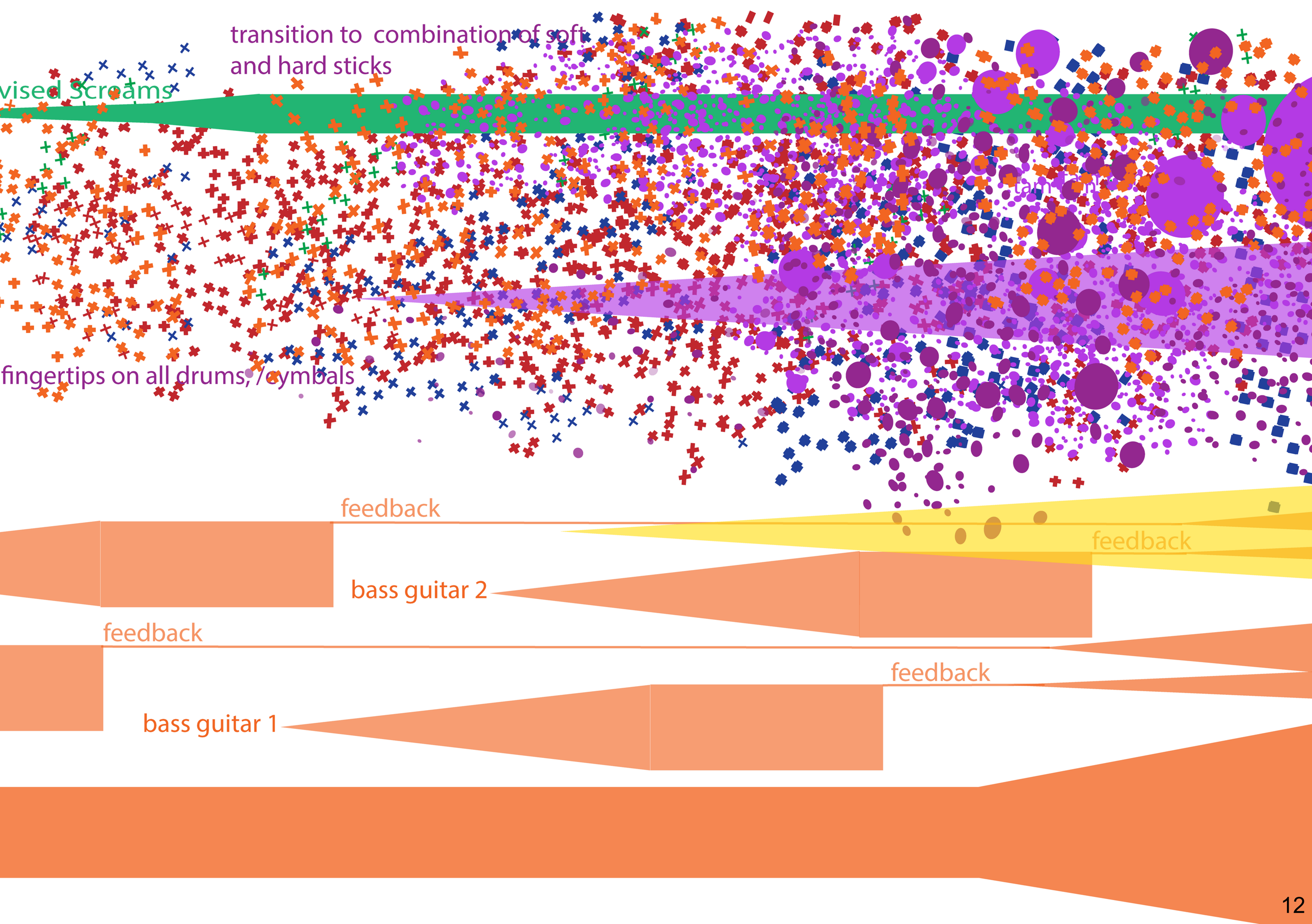
Electronics Free Improvisation:
Noise and Glitch


K
bass guitars and harp only
bass guitars only, solo with drum soloist
Perc1: soft, smooth roll, floor tom
Choir Radios
Perc 2,3
piano
Low, Rumbling Clusters.
Start with Fingers, Move to Forearms


piano


m
m
hu
hu


Free Improv
Perc 2,3:
bass guitar 2
bass guitar 1
piano
add sustain pedal


transition to combination of soft
and hard sticks
vised Screams
fingertips on all drums, /cymbals
feedback
feedback
bass guitar 2
feedback
feedback
bass guitar 1

K.1 tam tam cuts off crescendo at K.1,
L.v. for duration of circle

ghost like, solos (each take one)

tutti: tapping on cheeks

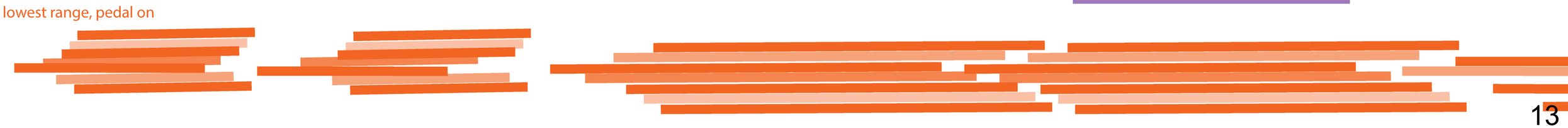
soloist:
tapping on cheeks

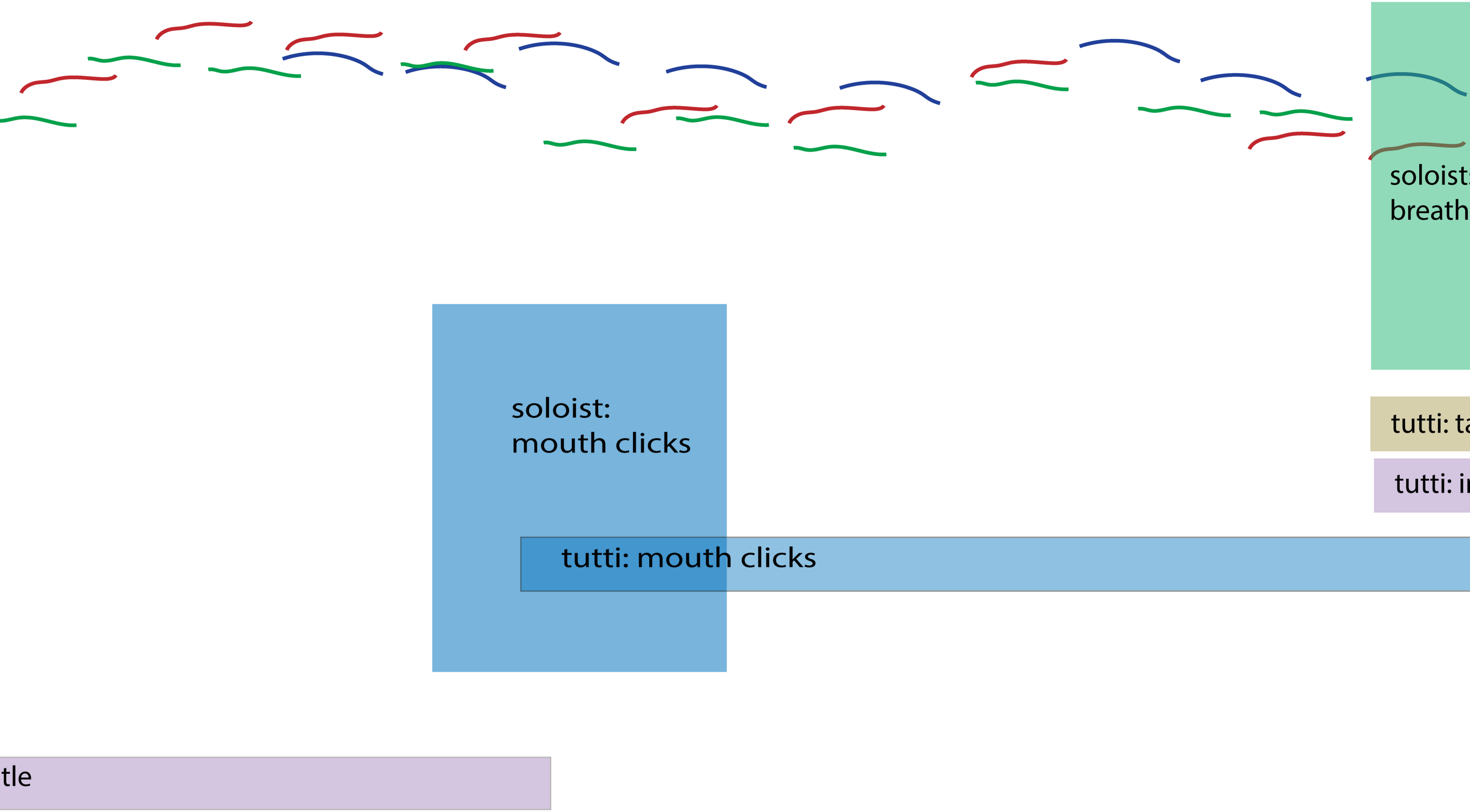
Basses: Kill! Reset.

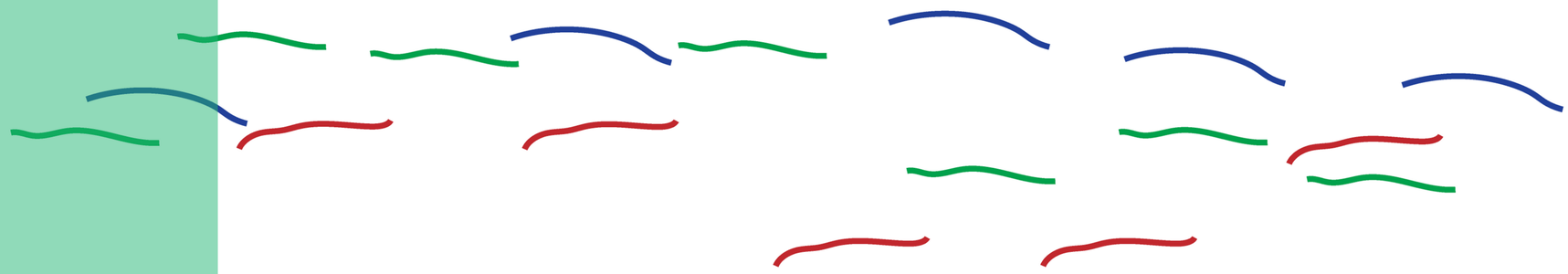
soloist:
inside mouth whistle

tutti: inside mouth whis

lowest range, pedal on




soloist:
breath
soloist:
mouth clicks
tutti:
tutti:
tutti: mouth clicks



s:
ing, panting

tutti: breathing, panting

apping on cheeks

nside mouth whistle

attacca electronics

pick up tone of the room
electronic feeback
always smooth, different
pitch each time

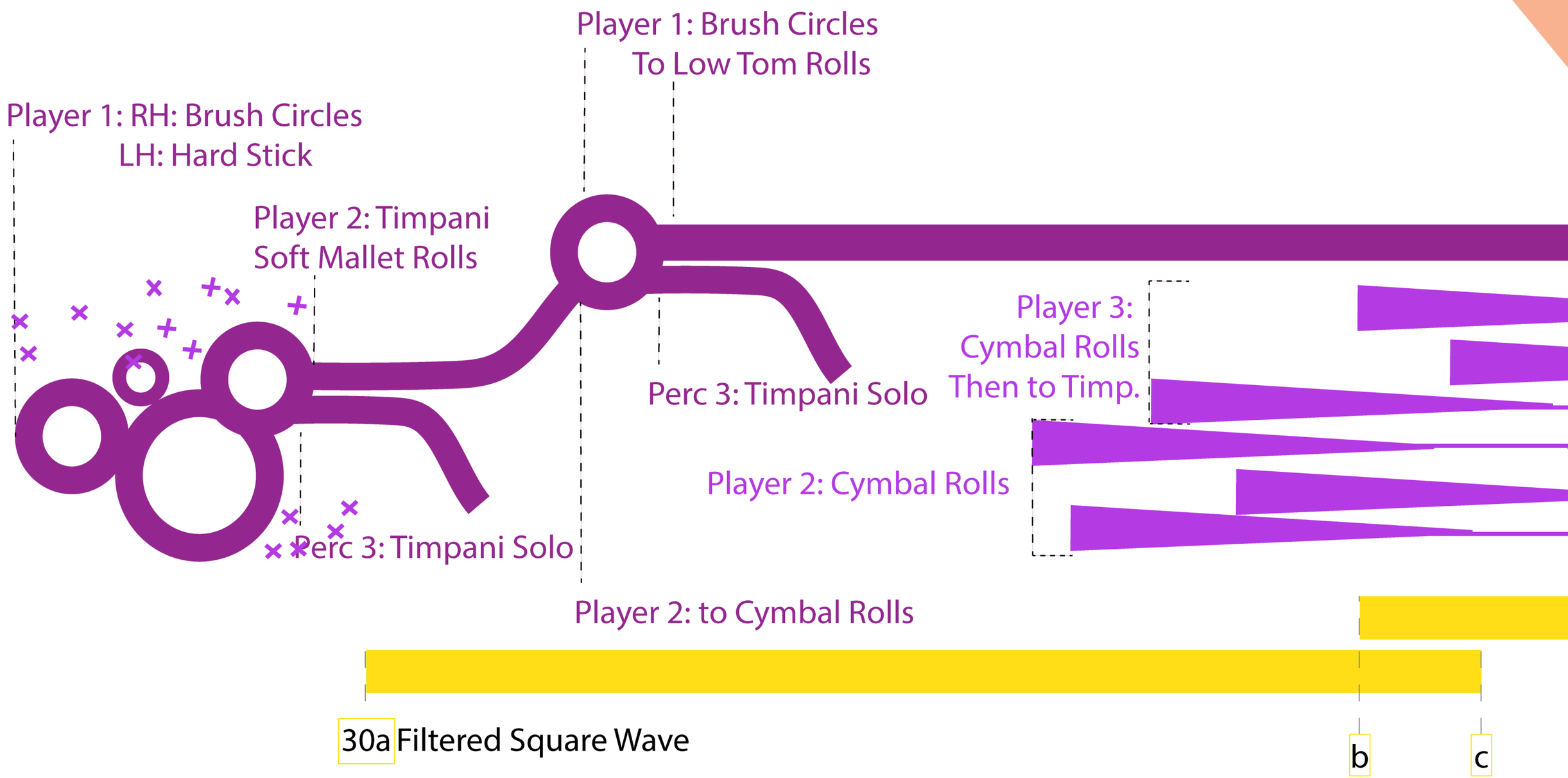
Abrasive

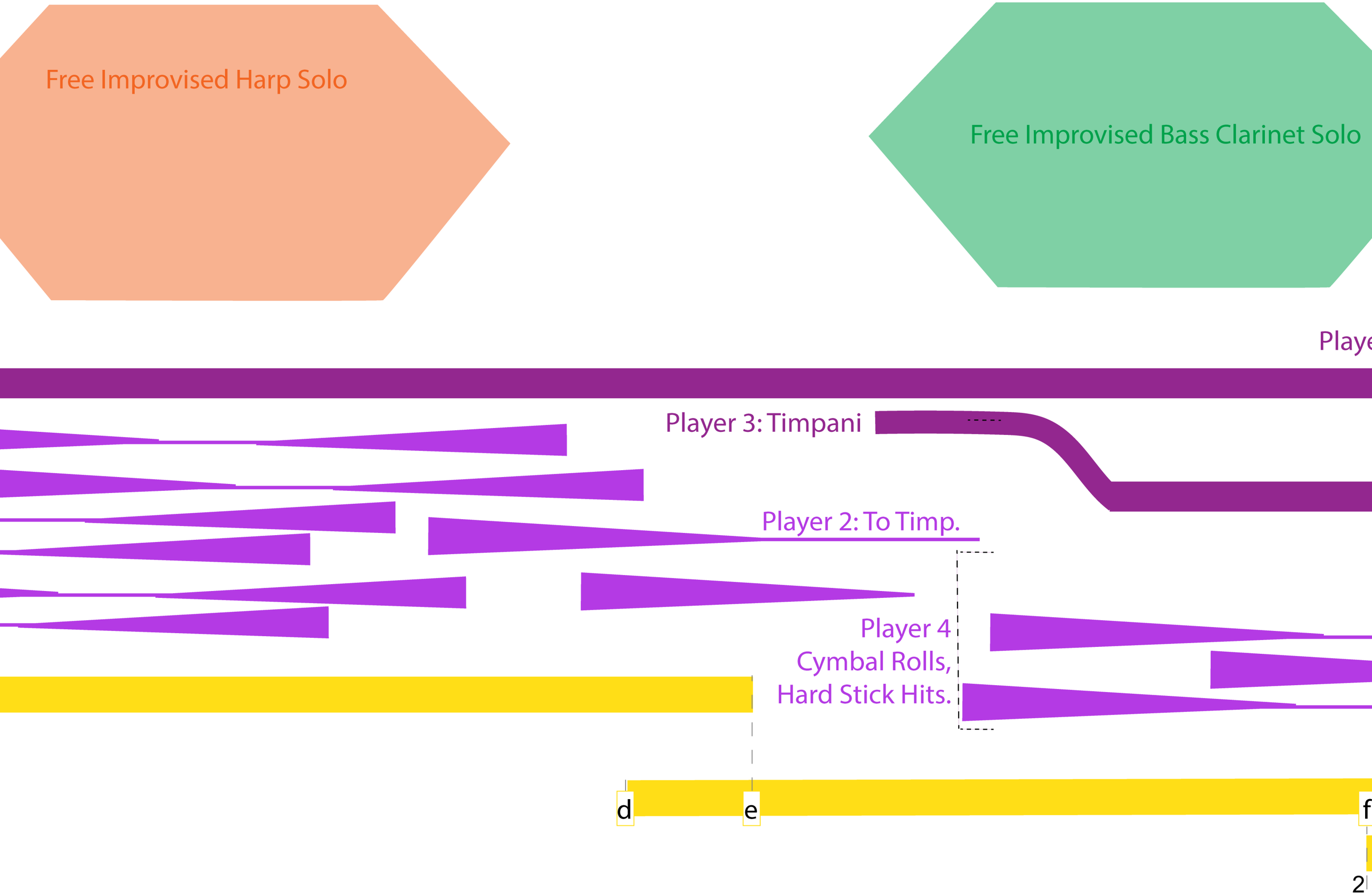
tom,

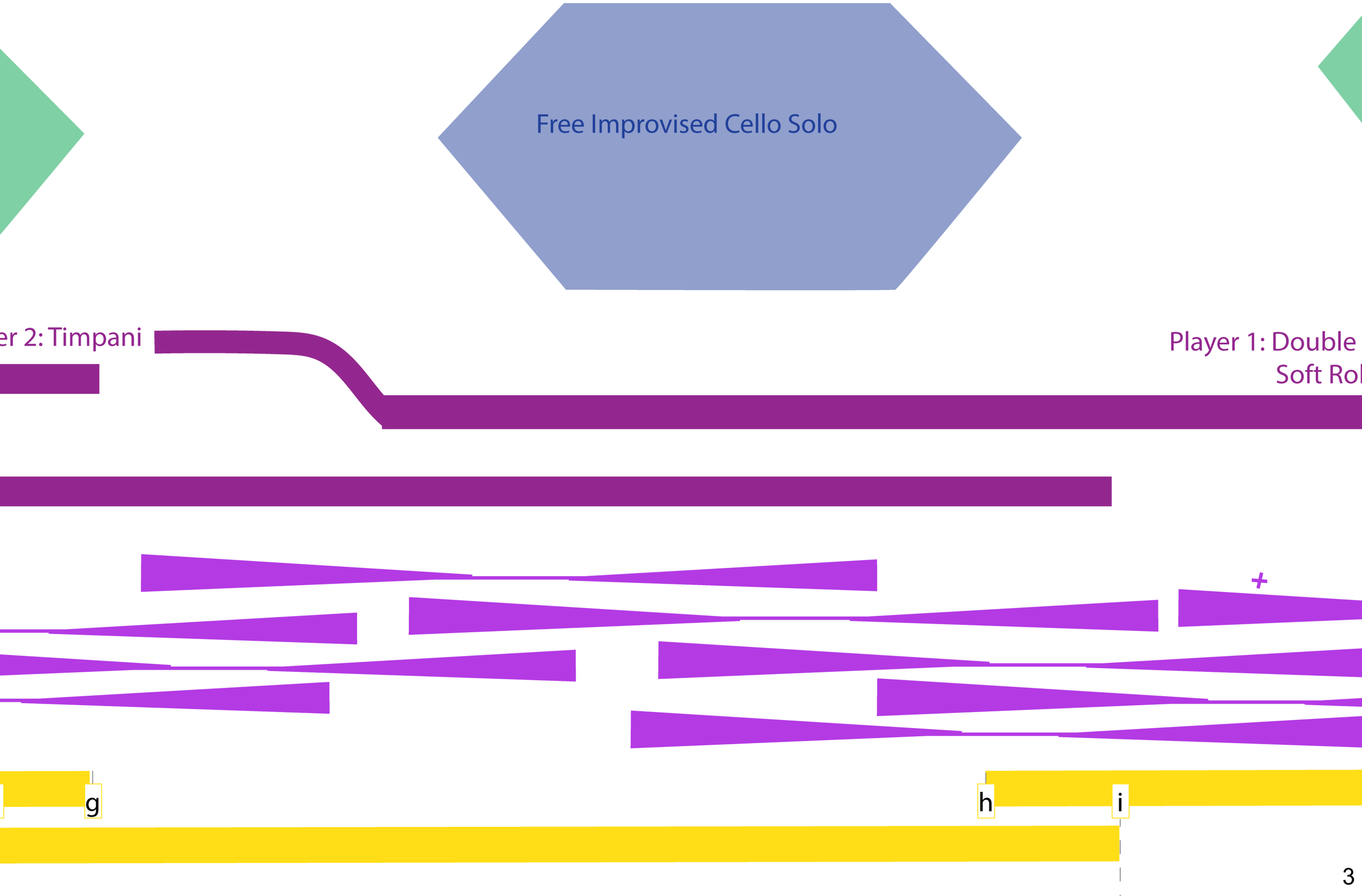
LOUD
abrasive
vocal so

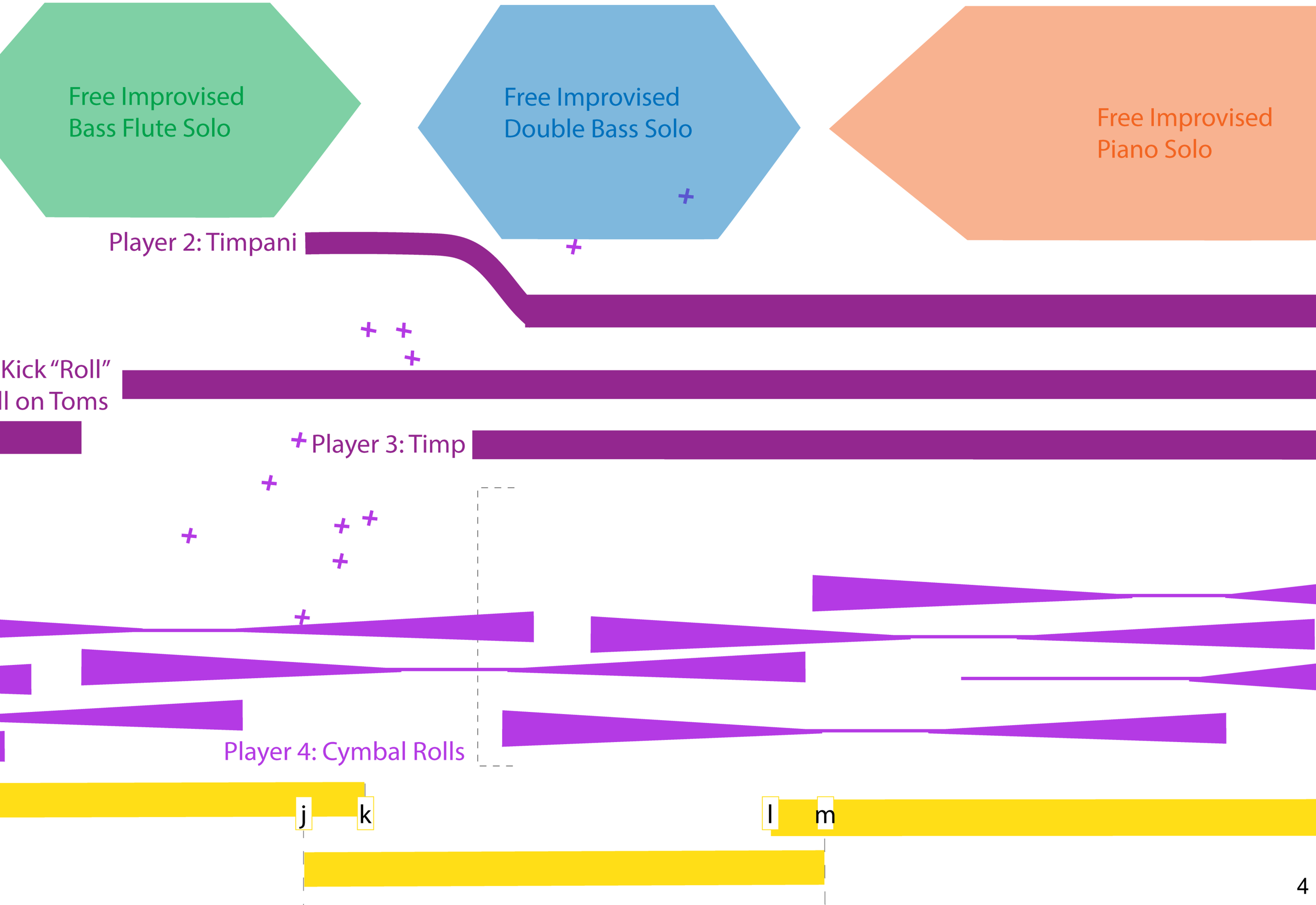
timp and tam tam roll, soft mallet

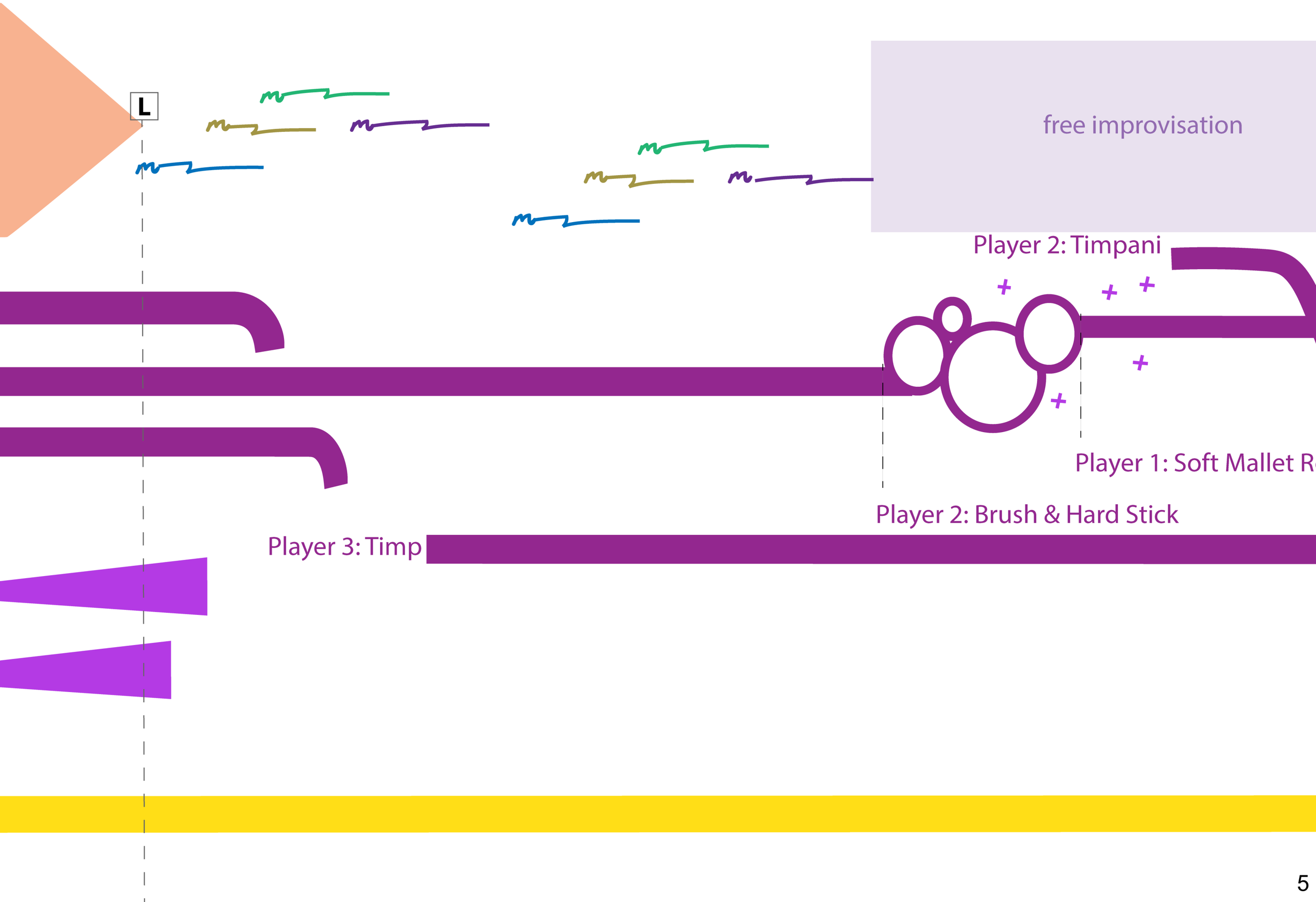
e
oloists

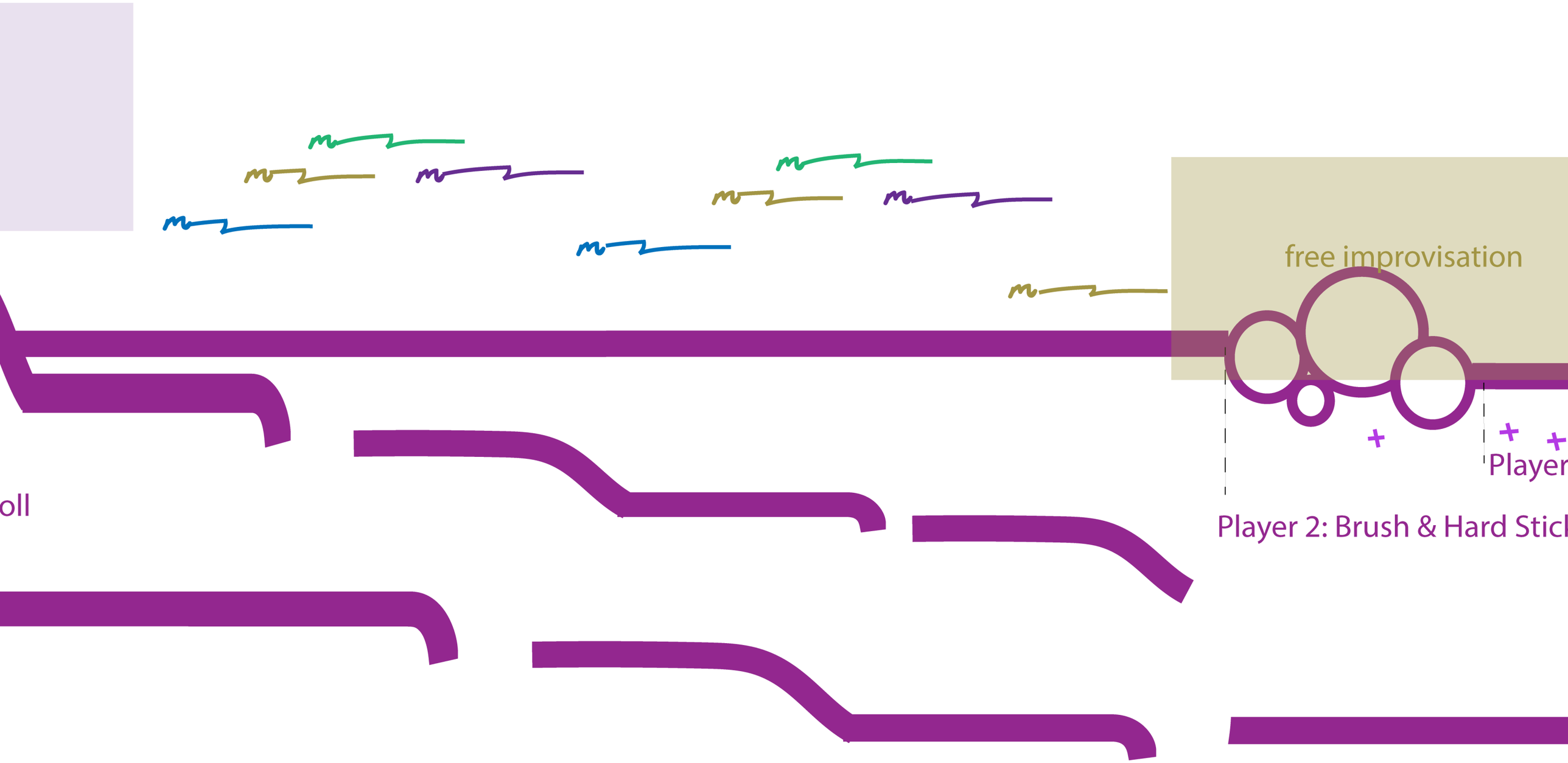

Player 1: Brush Circles
To Low Tom Rolls
Player 1: RH: Brush Circles
LH: Hard Stick
Player 2: Timpani
Soft Mallet Rolls
Perc 3: Timpani Solo
Player 3:
Cymbal Rolls
Then to Timp.
Perc 3: Timpani Solo
Player 2: Cymbal Rolls
Player 2: to Cymbal Rolls
30a Filtered Square Wave
b
c

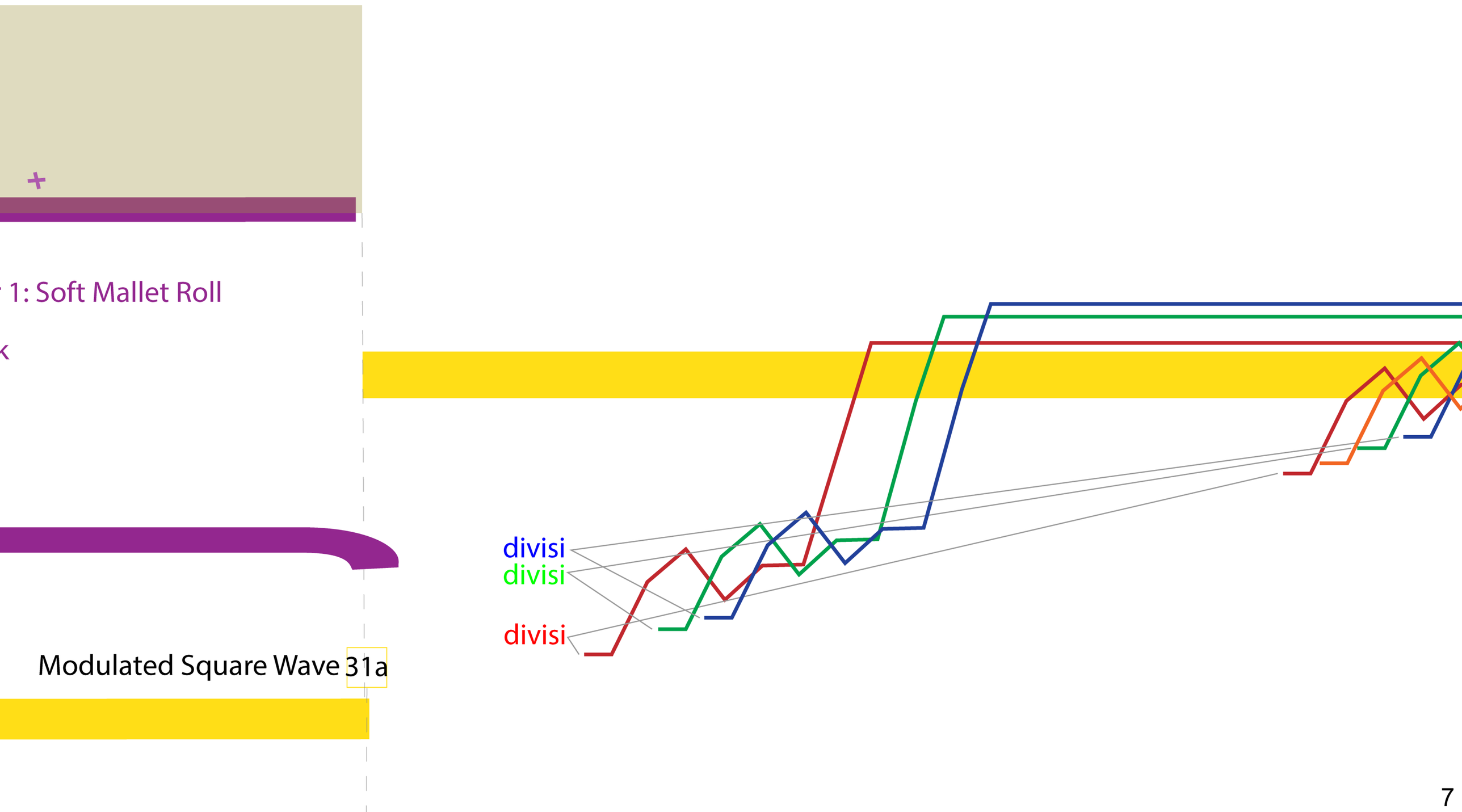

Free Improvised Harp Solo
Free Improvised Bass Clarinet Solo
Player
Player 3: Timpani
Player 2: To Timp.
Player 4
Cymbal Rolls,
Hard Stick Hits.
d
e
f
2


Free Improvised Cello Solo
er 2: Timpani
Player 1: Double
Soft Rol
+
g
h
i
3


Free Improvised
Bass Flute Solo
Free Improvised
Double Bass Solo
Free Improvised
Piano Solo
Player 2: Timpani
Kick "Roll"
ll on Toms
Player 3: Timp
Player 4: Cymbal Rolls
j
k
l
m


L
free improvisation
Player 2: Timpani
Player 1: Soft Mallet R
Player 2: Brush & Hard Stick
Player 3: Timp

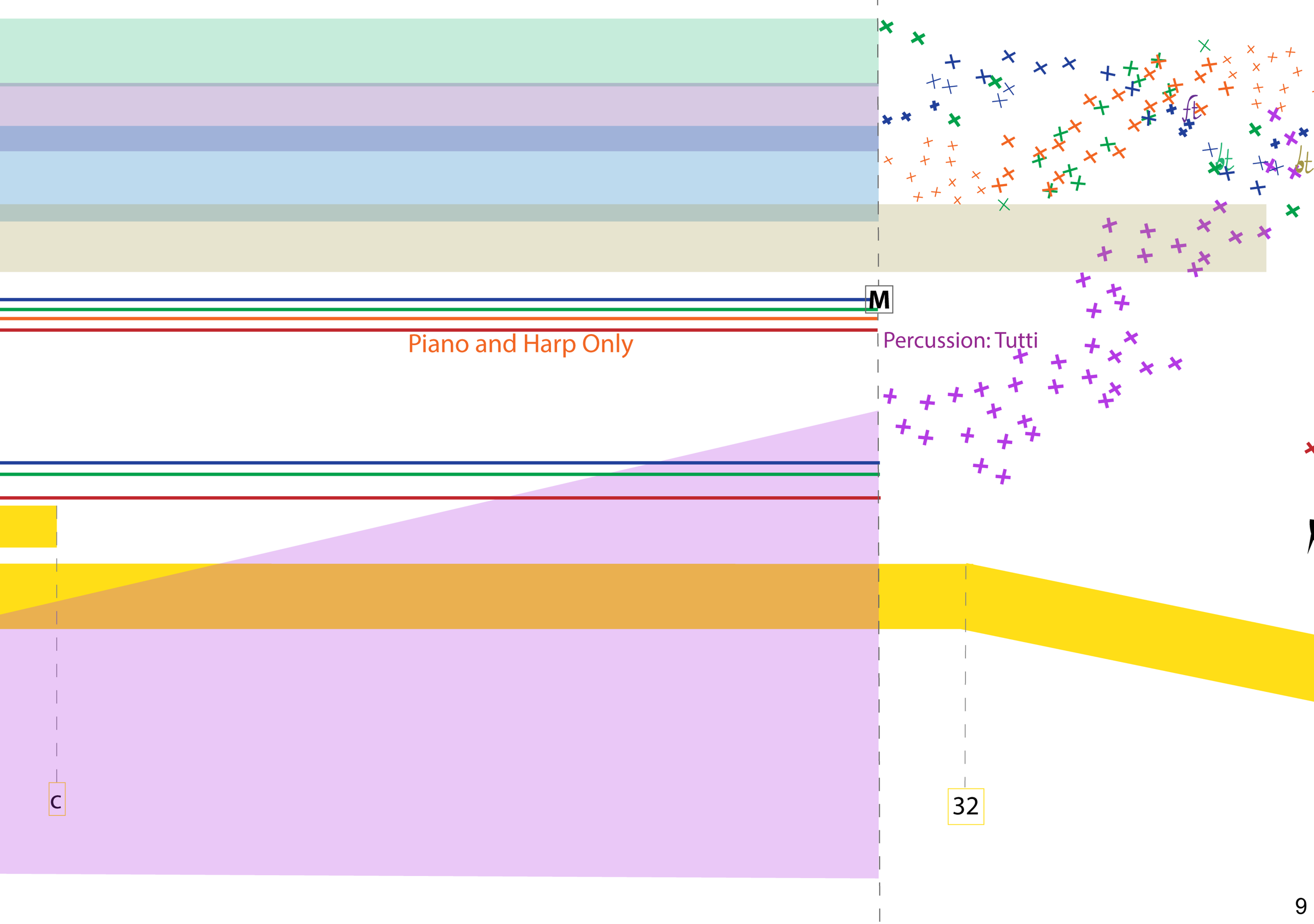

free improvisation
Player
Player 2: Brush & Hard Stick
oll

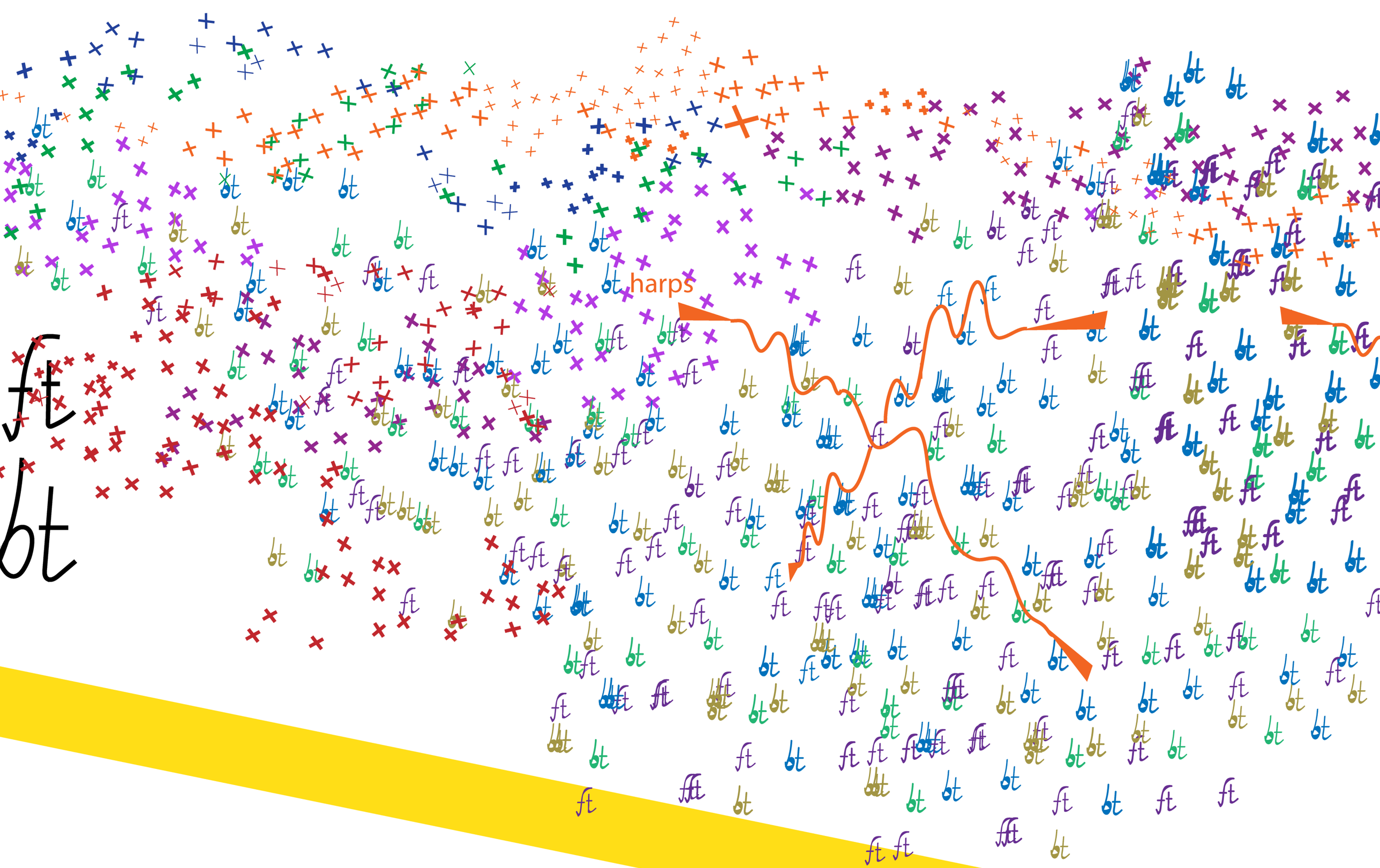

1: Soft Mallet Roll
k
divisi
divisi
divisi
Modulated Square Wave 31a

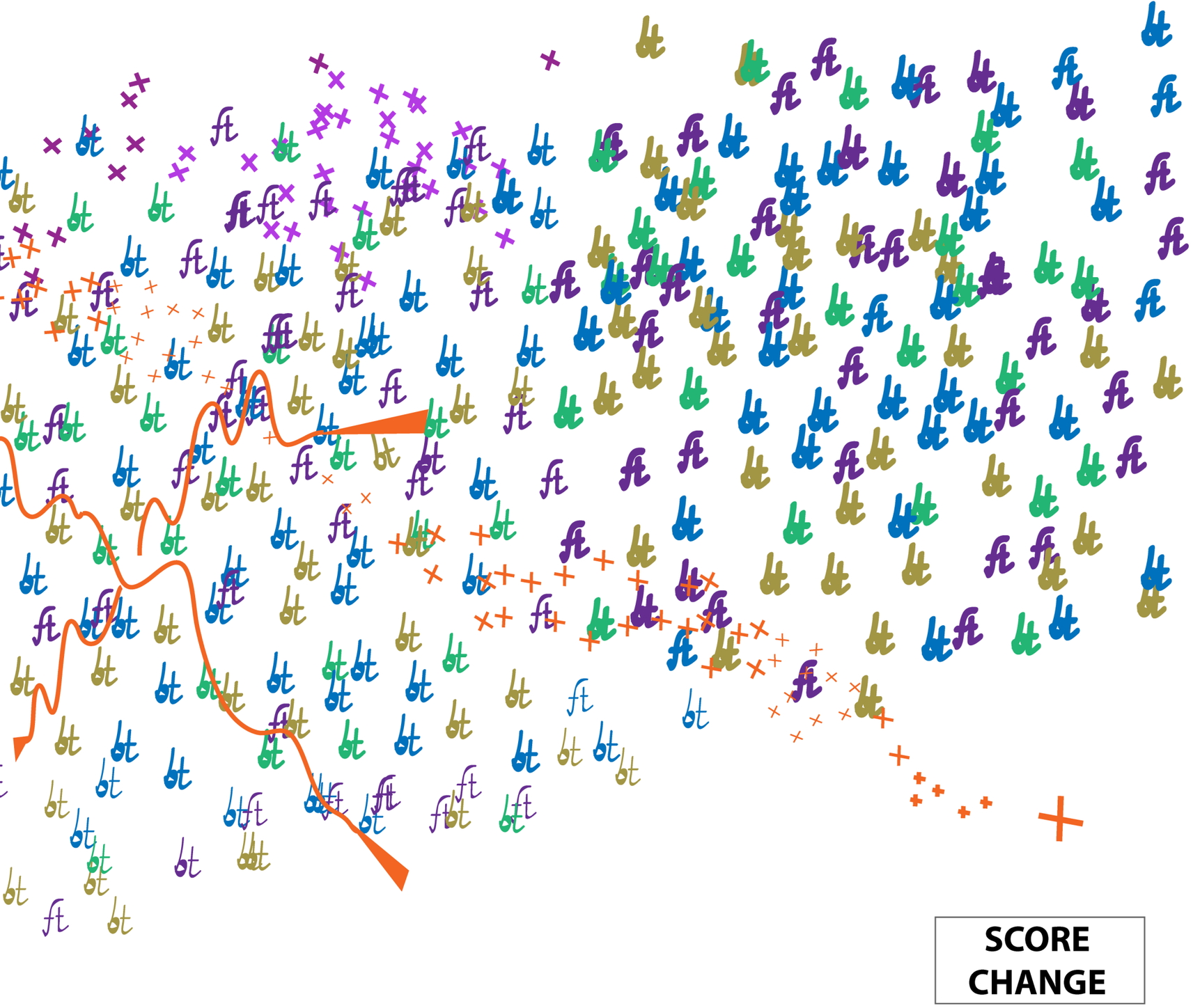
all solo voice free improv

b

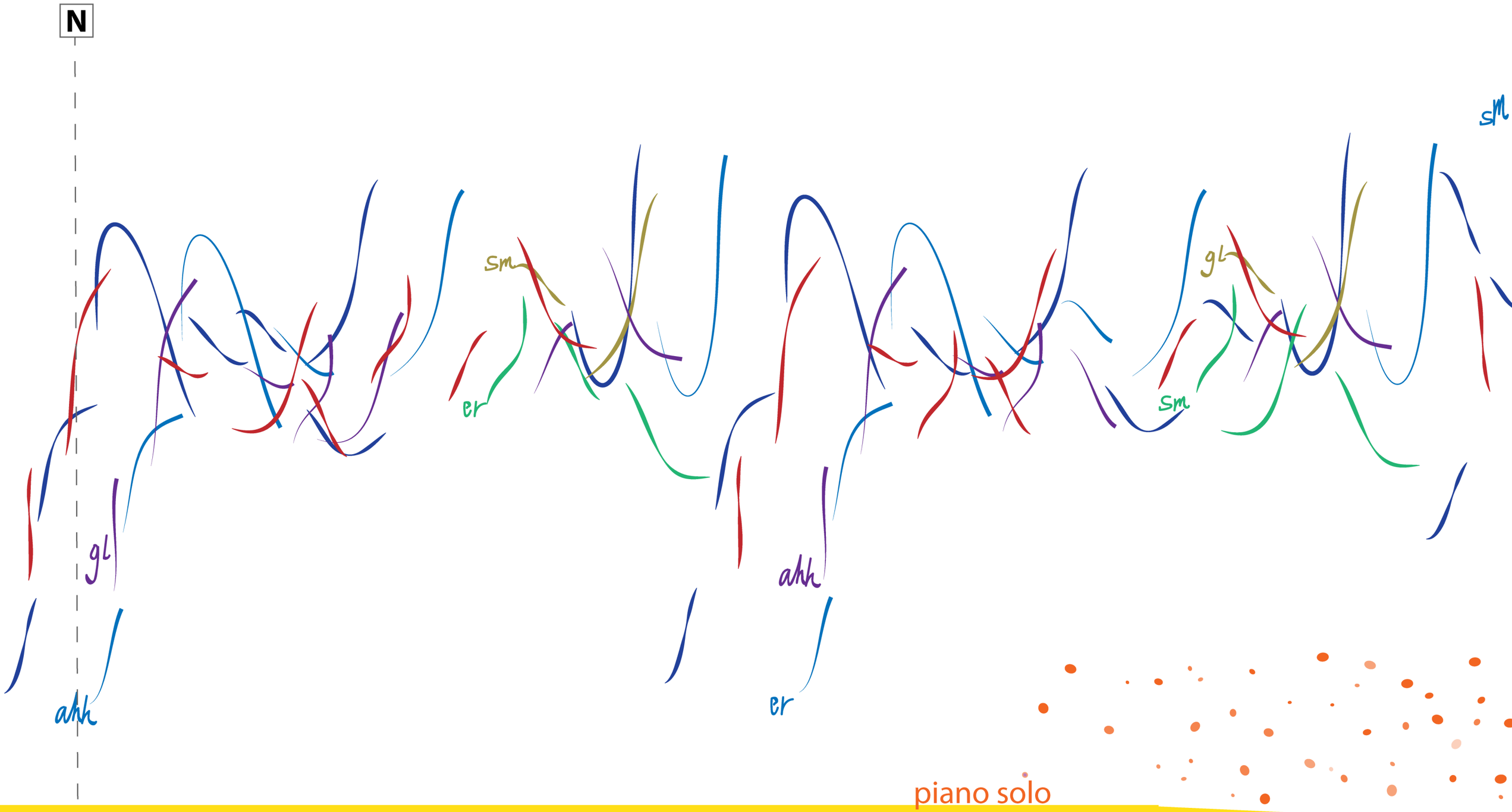
all percussion free improv


M
Piano and Harp Only
Percussion: Tutti
C
32

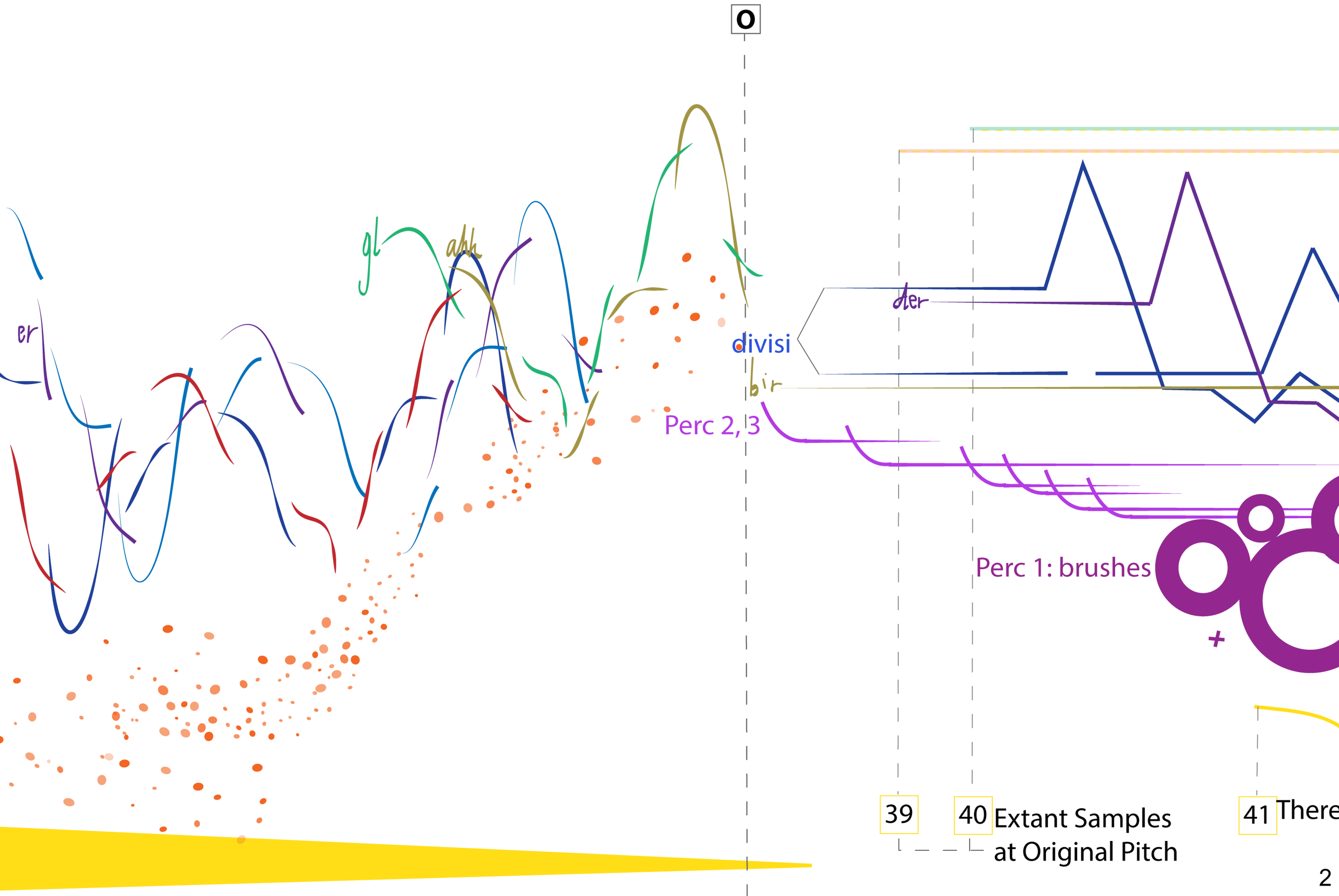

harps

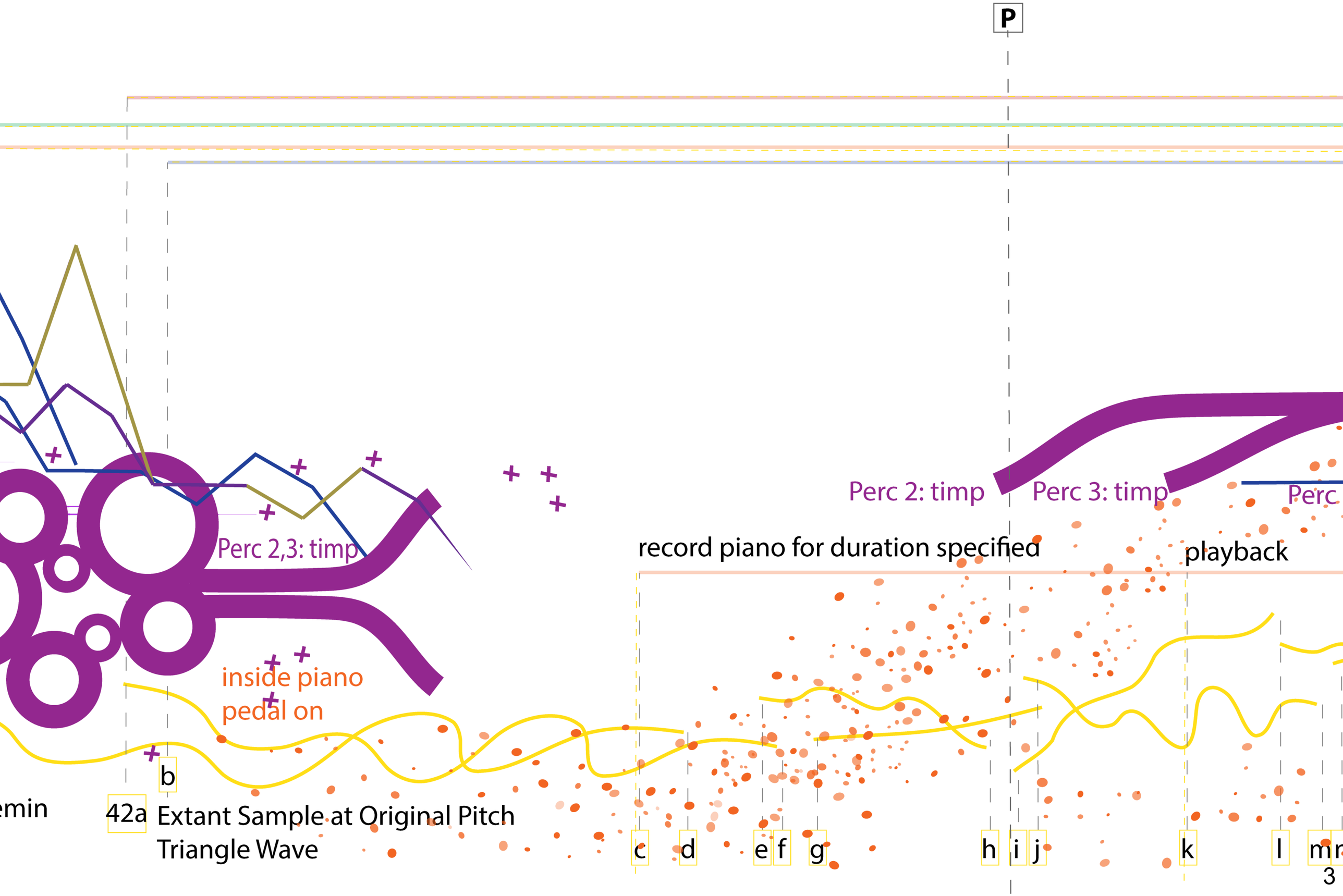


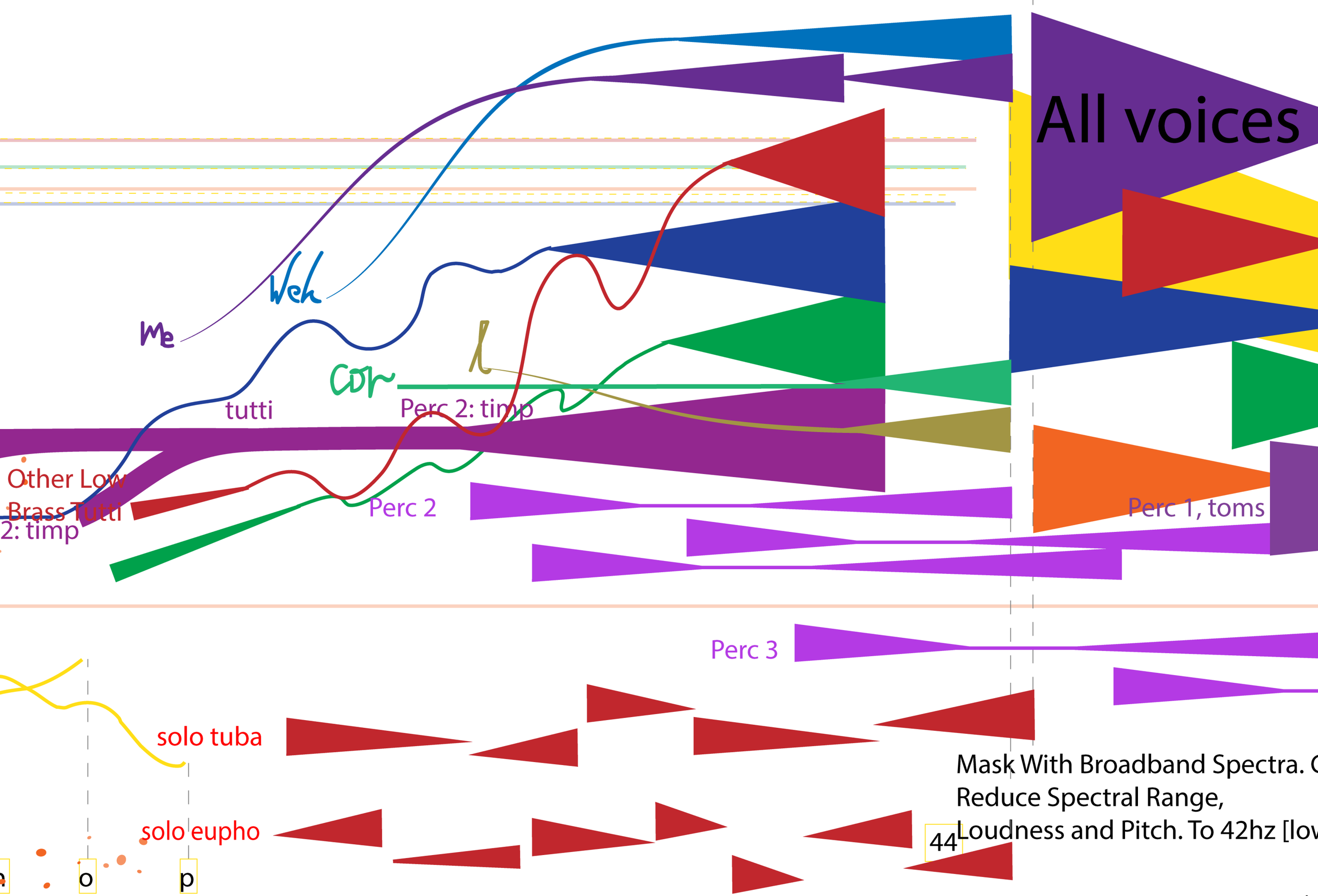
segue to next part

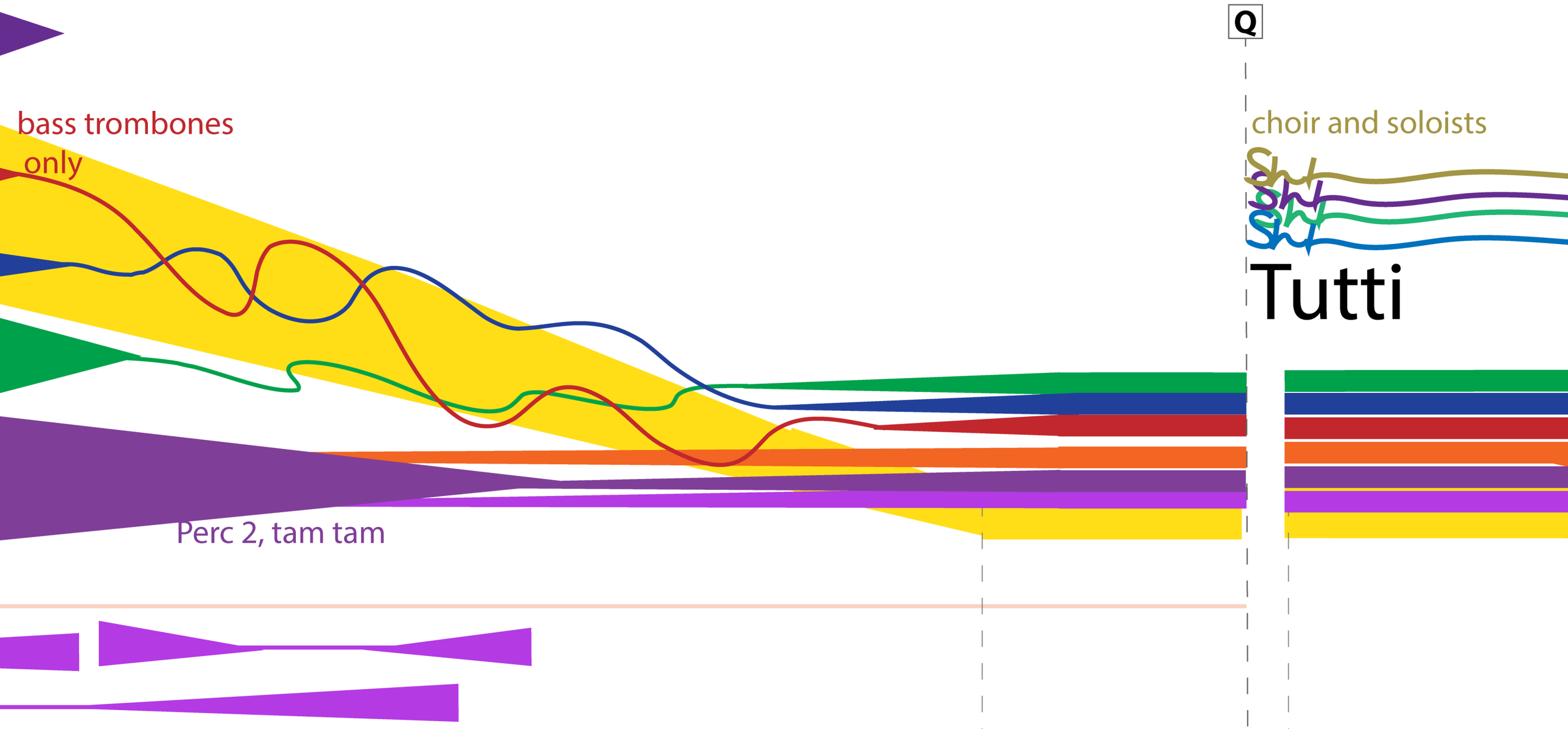


piano solo


0
er
gl
ahh
der
divisi
bir
Perc 2, 3
Perc 1: brushes
39
40
Extant Samples
at Original Pitch
41
There


P
Perc 2,3: timp
Perc 2: timp
Perc 3: timp
Perc
record piano for duration specified
playback
inside piano
pedal on
b
emin
42a
Extant Sample at Original Pitch
Triangle Wave
c
d
e
f
g
h
i
j
k
l
m


All voices
Weh
Me
l
Cor
tutti
Perc 2: timp
Other Low
Brass Tutti
2: timp
Perc 2
Perc 1, toms
Perc 3
solo tuba
solo eupho
o
p
Mask With Broadband Spectra. C
Reduce Spectral Range,
Loudness and Pitch. To 42hz [low
44

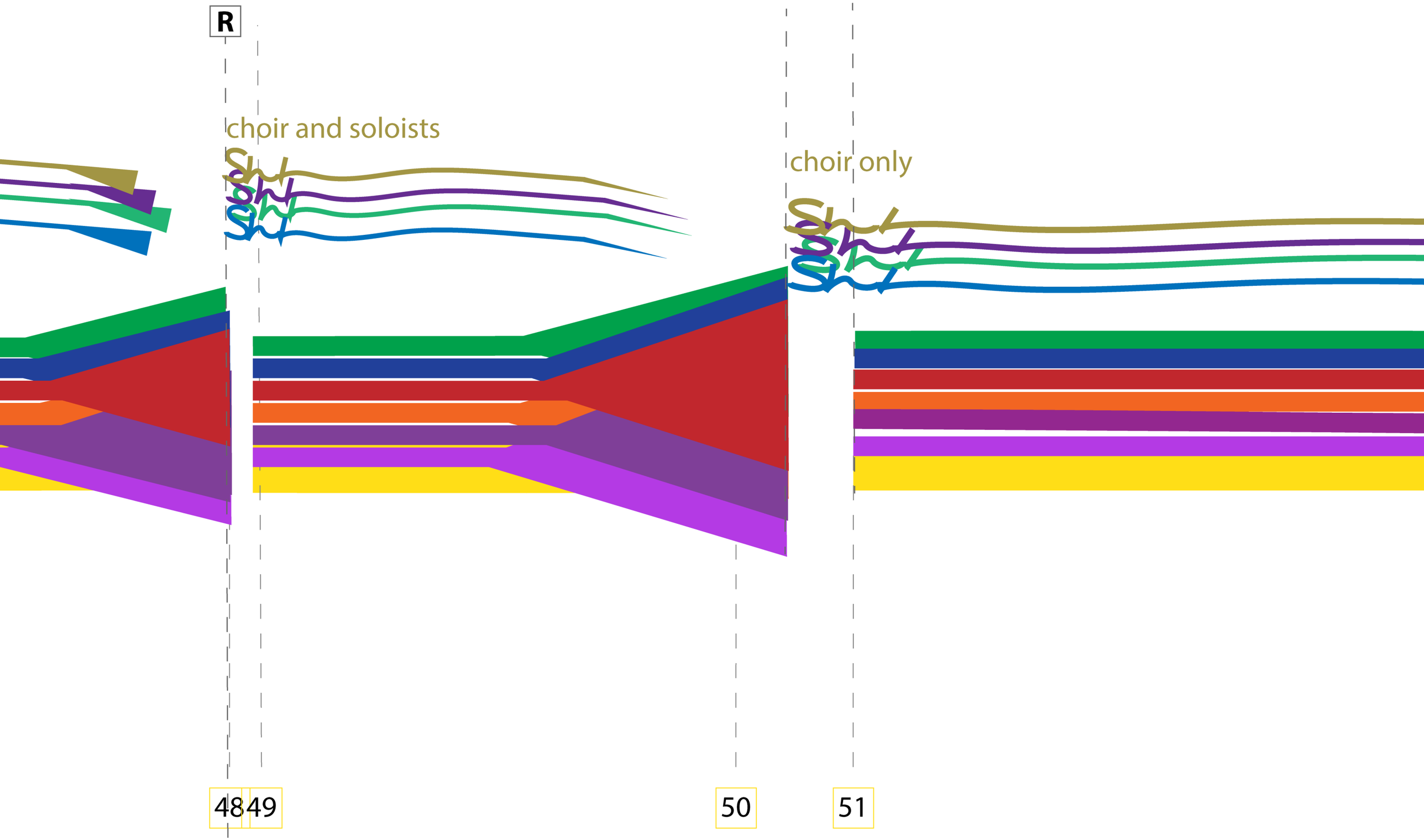


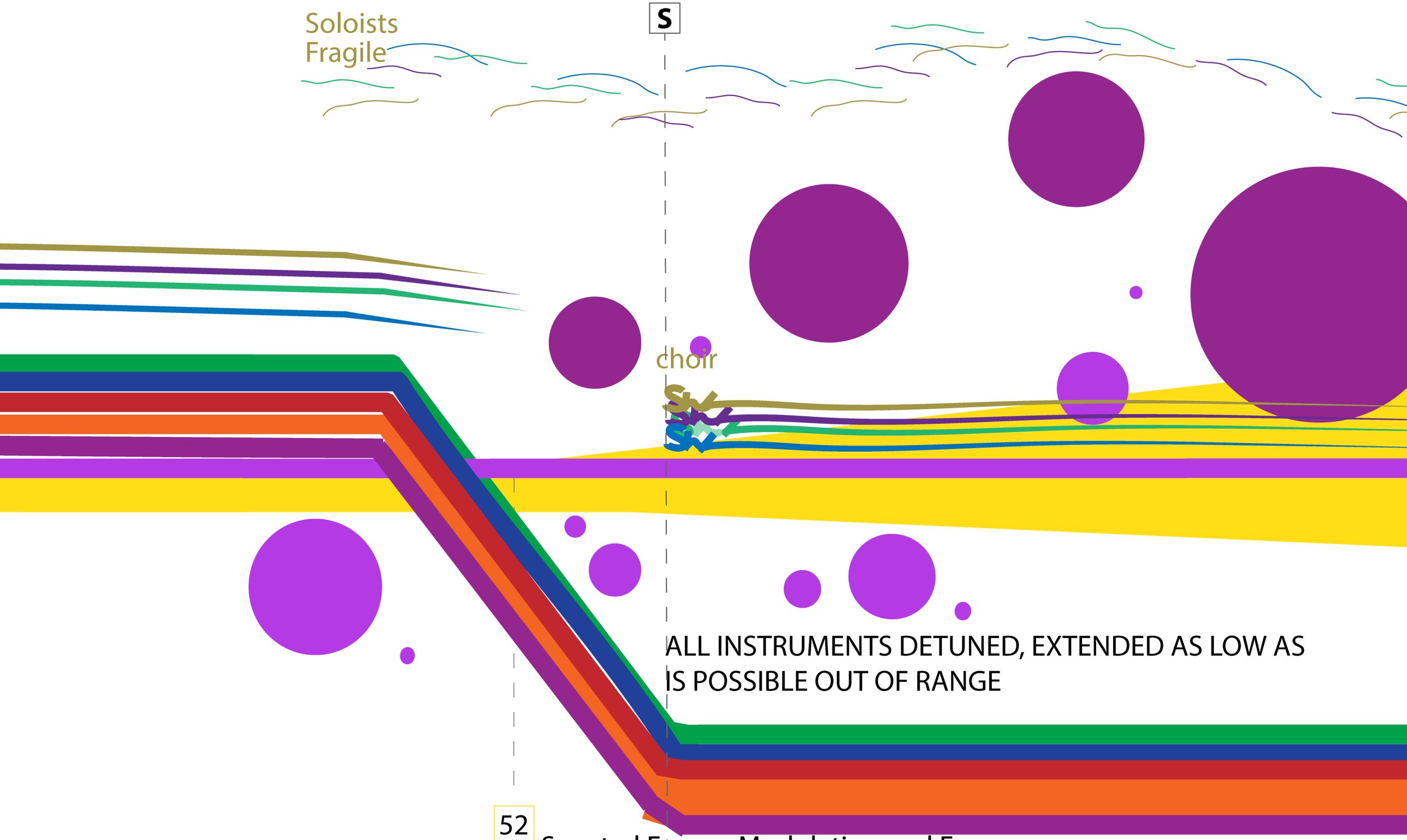
Gradually

west E].

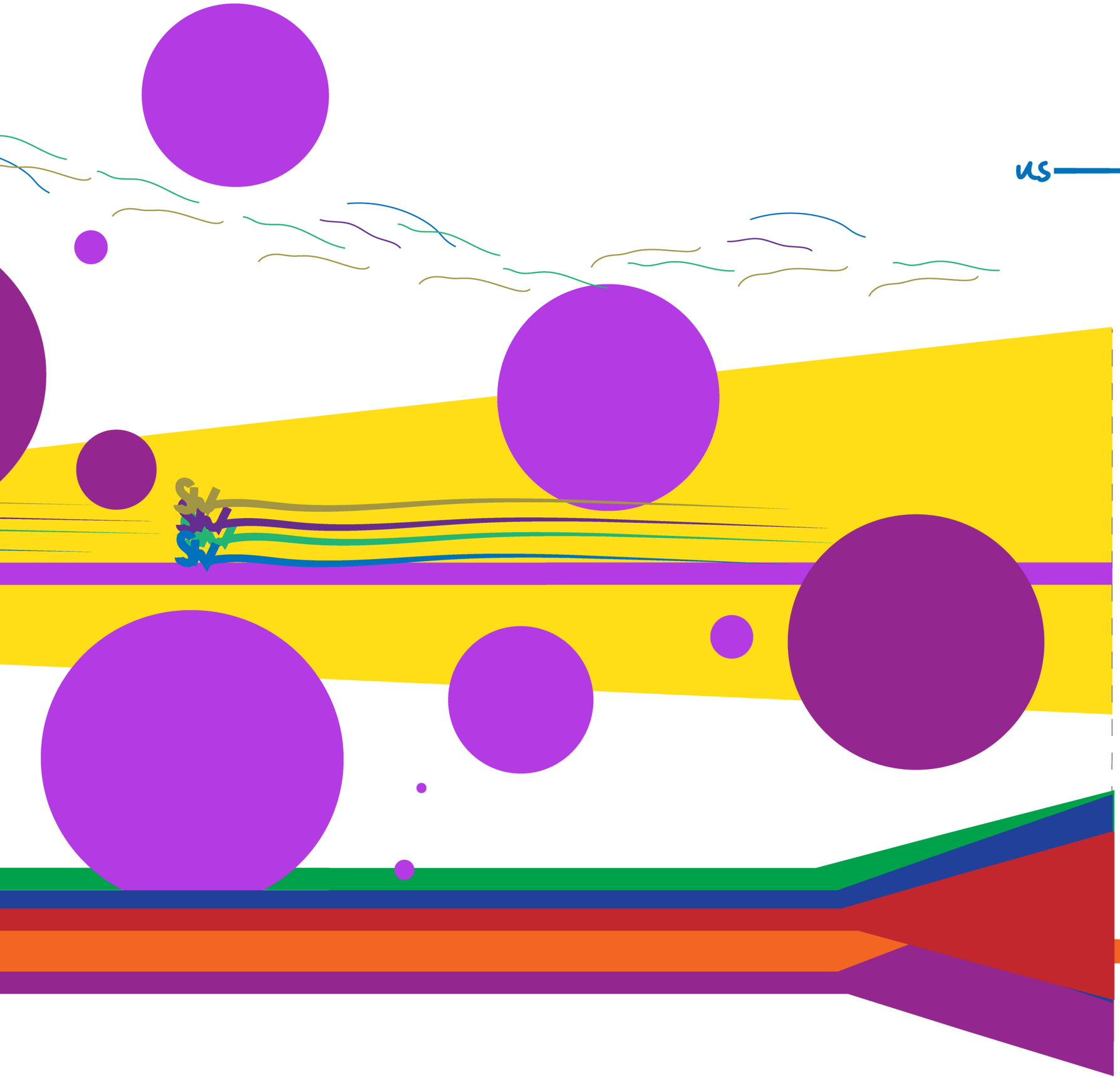
45 42hz [Lowest E].

46 47

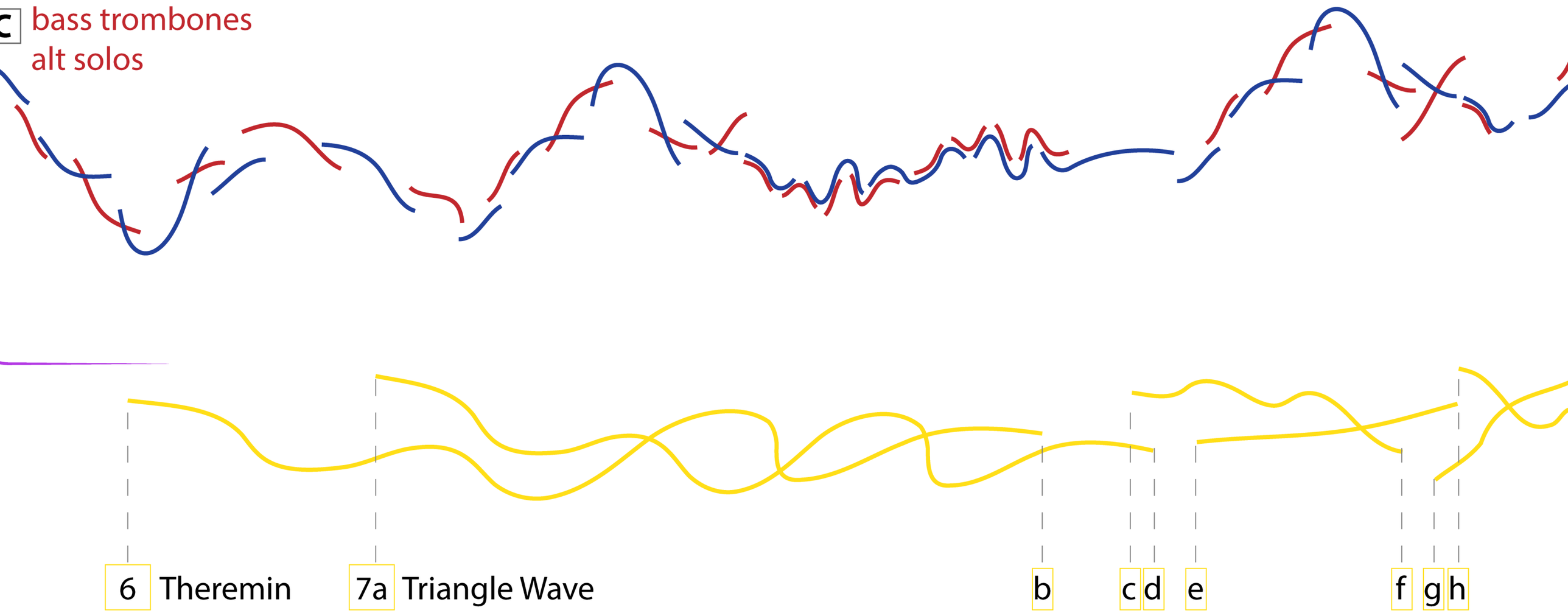

R
choir and soloists
choir only
48
49
50
51

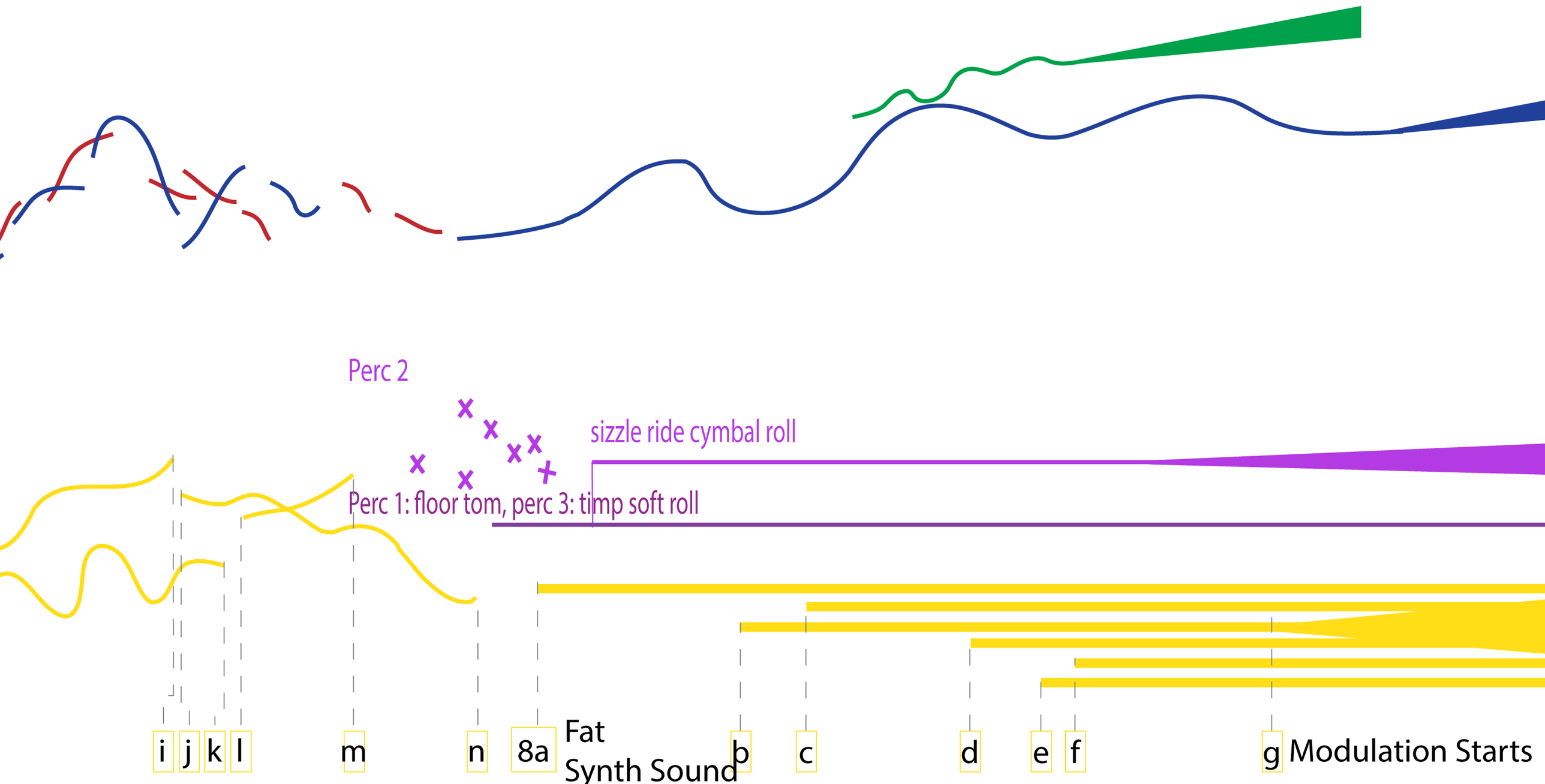

S
Soloists
Fragile
choir
ALL INSTRUMENTS DETUNED, EXTENDED AS LOW AS
IS POSSIBLE OUT OF RANGE
52
Spectral Freeze, Modulation and Free
Improvisation al fine

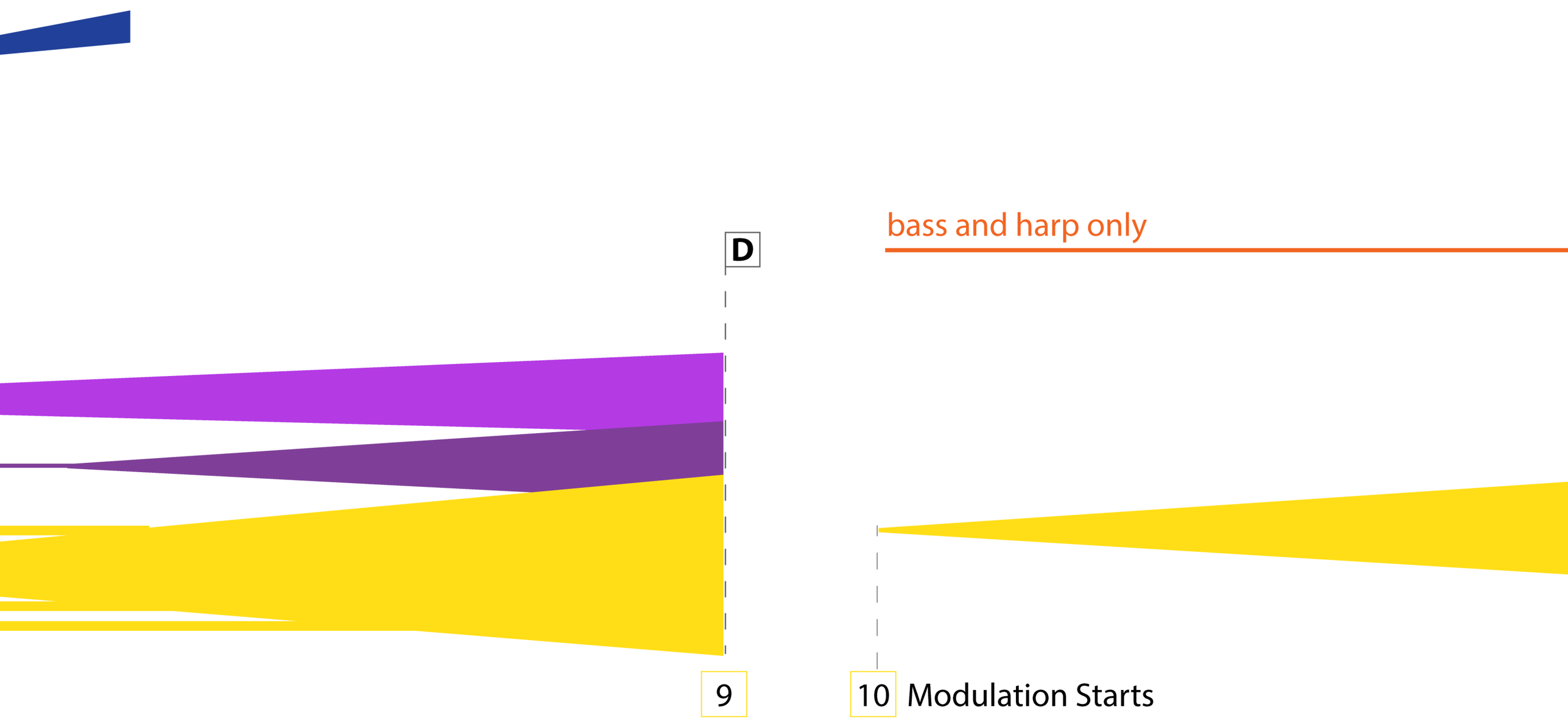
until your breath runs out

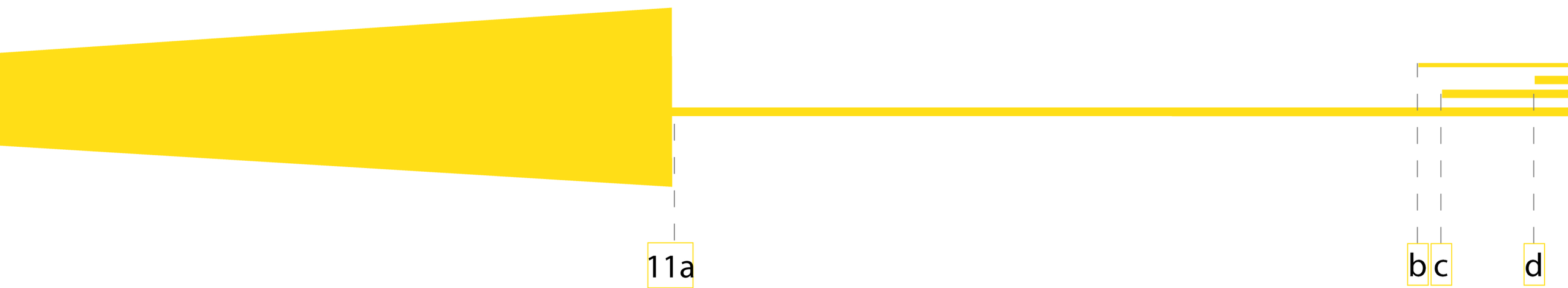


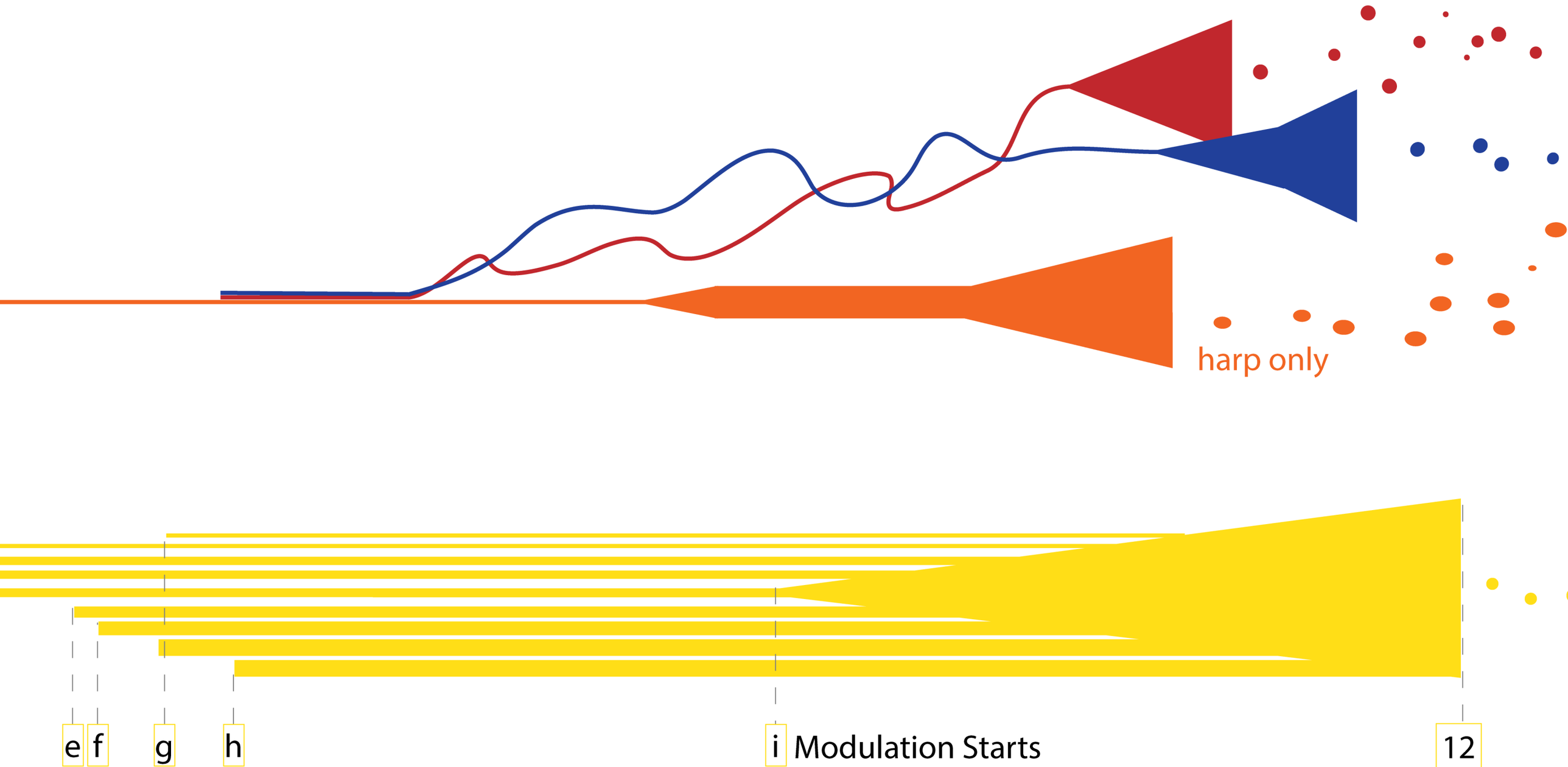
SOLO bass flute: thin sound, until your breath runs out


C
bass trombones
alt solos
6
Theremin
7a
Triangle Wave
b
c
d
e
f
g
h


Perc 2
sizzle ride cymbal roll
Perc 1: floor tom, perc 3: timp soft roll
i
j
k
l
m
n
8a
Fat
Synth Sound
b
c
d
e
f
g
Modulation Starts


bass and harp only
D
9
10
Modulation Starts


11a
b
c
d


harp only
e
f
g
h
i
Modulation Starts
12