Minutiae (2014)

for soprano, bass clarinet, trombone, percussion, and electronics

Lee Weisert

Performance Notes

Full Ensemble

1. Each of the eight movements is precisely one minute in duration and is accompanied by a fixed stereo sound file. To achieve precise synchronization with the electronic sounds, a conductor with a click track should be used. The sound file and click track are available from the composer (leeweisert@gmail.com).

2. Each movement is preceded by a corresponding image. The images were created first using a variety of algorithmic processes, and the musical materials were derived from the images. If possible, the image for each movement should be projected during the performance of the corresponding music.

3. In the score, each movement is given a number (i.e. WR1, WR2, WR3, etc.) for logistical purposes. However, the movements may be performed in any order and in any subset.

4. A quincunx is a custom-made instrument consisting of a flat board with protruding metal pegs. The marbles are dropped into the top of the board, causing them to make unpredictable rhythmic patterns as they hit the pegs on the way down. The marbles and the quincunx will be supplied by the composer on request.

Soprano

1. A straight tone (non espressivo) should be used for all movements.

2. In three movements, the singer is asked to drop marbles into the quincunx. Since the percussionist also performs the quincunx, it is recommended that the singer be positioned on the stage near to the percussionist.

3. In WR4, the singer is asked to sing through a cardboard tube, as can be found in the center of a roll of paper towels. The opening of the tube is to be alternately covered and opened, creating a varying timbre similar to a plunger mute on a trumpet or trombone.

4. In WR5, the singer is asked to place a static noise-generating device such as a small radio inside a teapot and adjust the timbre of the noise by opening and closing the lid of the teapot. If necessary, both the teapot and the radio can be supplied by the composer.

Bass Clarinet

1. In WR5, the clarinetist is asked to ad lib various multiphonics. Due to the noise-based material of this movement, the pitches of the multiphonics are not as important as the ability to perform them clearly and with a wide dynamic range (*pp* to *ff*). The clarinetist is encouraged to experiment with different multiphonics in order to find the ones that sound the best on their instrument.

2. In this same movement (WR5), the reed squeaks should be somewhat delicate and minutely wavering, like a hissing or squeaking old machine.

Trombone

1. In WR1, the trombonist is asked to assist the percussionist by playing a few notes on the vibraphone. Likewise, in WR4, the trombonist is asked to play a small gong. Because of this, it is recommended that the trombonist be positioned on the stage fairly near to the percussionist.

2. In WR5, the trombonist is asked to play "subtones"—an extremely loose embouchure should be used to create a low, noisy effect without any clearly discernable pitch.

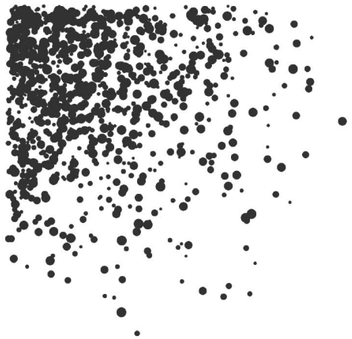
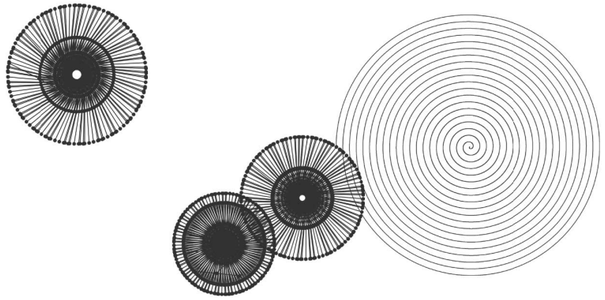
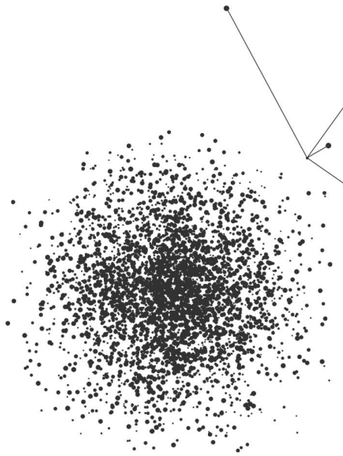
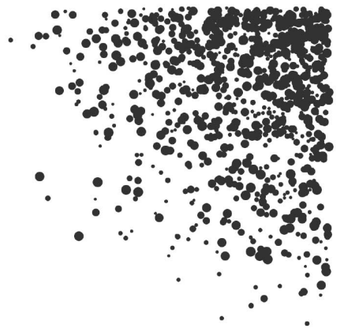
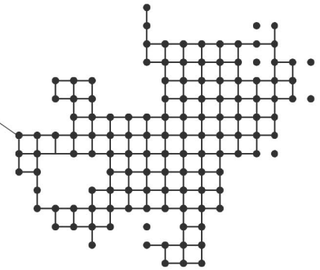
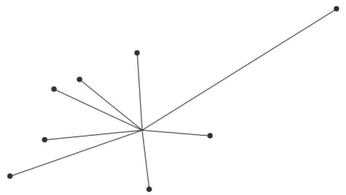
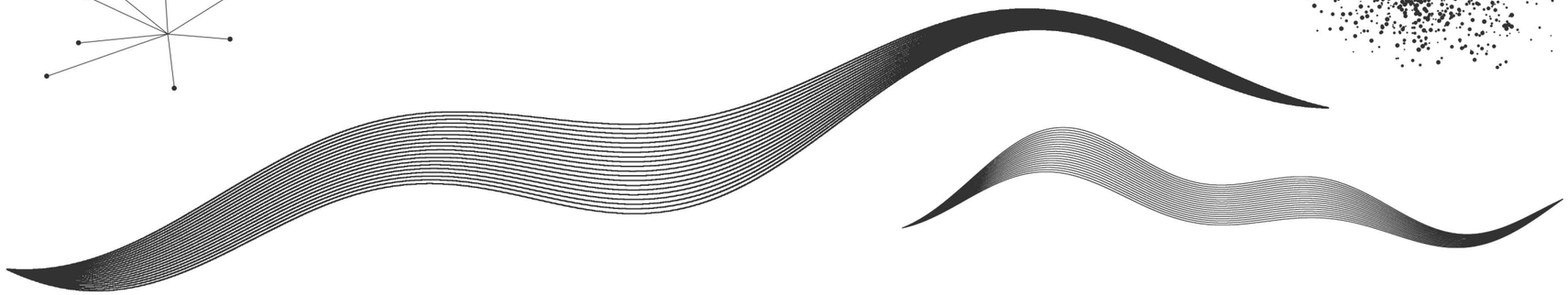
3. In WR7, the "slap tongue" effect is produced by placing the lips on the mouthpiece and creating a sudden pressure impulse with the tongue. There should be no discernible pitch.

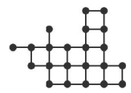
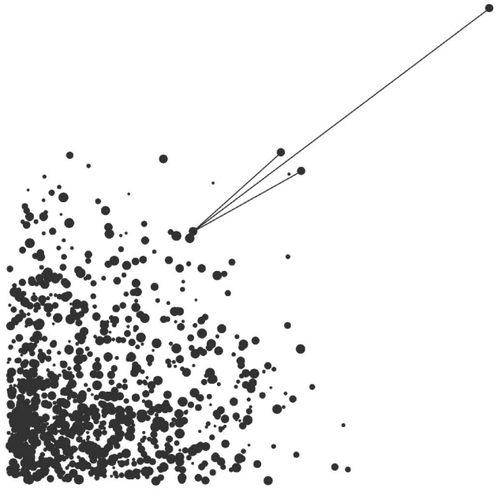
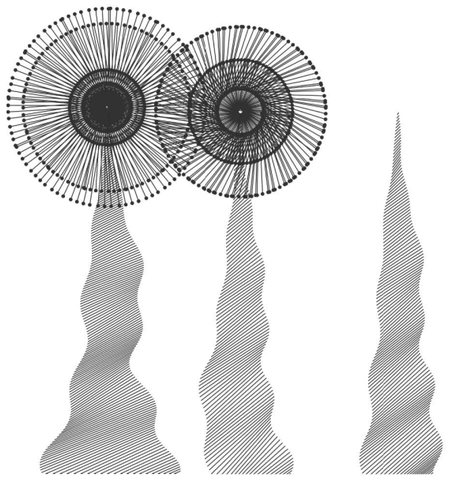
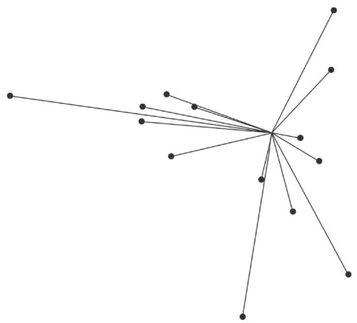
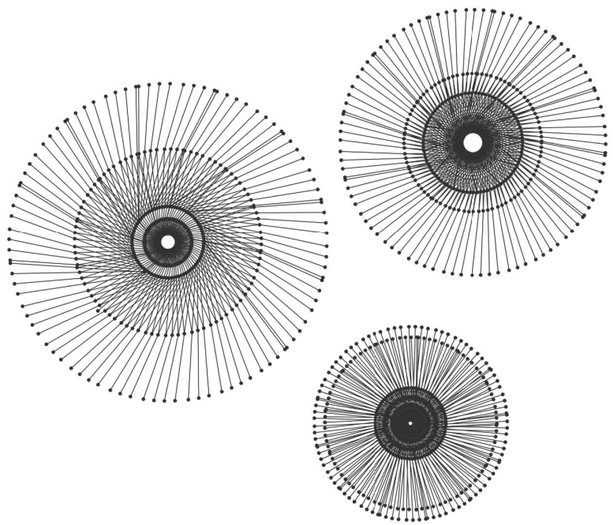
Percussion

1. The percussion equipment consists of a vibraphone (bowed and struck), a glockenspiel, a seed rattle, a quincunx (see above, supplied by composer), a snare drum (with vibrating object), a woodblock, and a small gong.

2. The vibrating object in WR5 will be supplied by the composer. The percussionist should experiment with the speed of vibration as well as the pressure applied to the drum in order to get a relatively loud snare-like drone.

This piece is dedicated to Wild Rumpus.

♩ = 60

Straight tone, non espressivo (for all movements)

Sop.

p

3

buh bah-ee bee bee-ooh buh bee

B. Cl.

Bell-like

mf *mf*

Tbn.

Vibraphone (l.v. always)
medium mallets

mf

Trombone
Bell-like

mf *mf*

Perc.

Bowed vibraphone (l.v. always)

mf

8

p

3 3 5 3

bih boo-ih bee-ooh bee buh bih boo-ih boo bay-ee buh

p

dee

3 5

doo dee duh

Bell-like

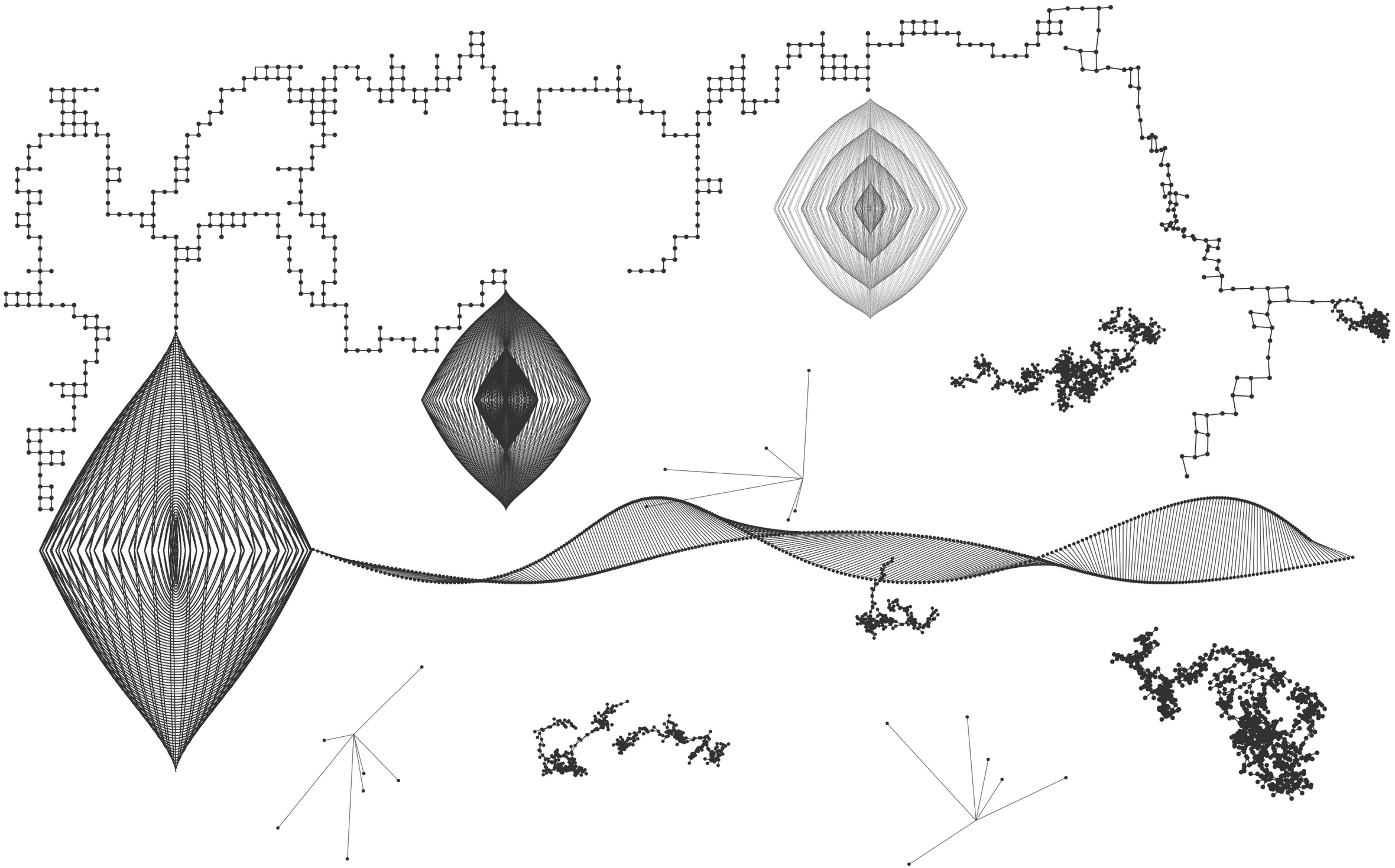
mf

Bell-like

mf

Bean/seed rattle string
Vary density & timbre with each attack

mp *mf*



♩ = 60

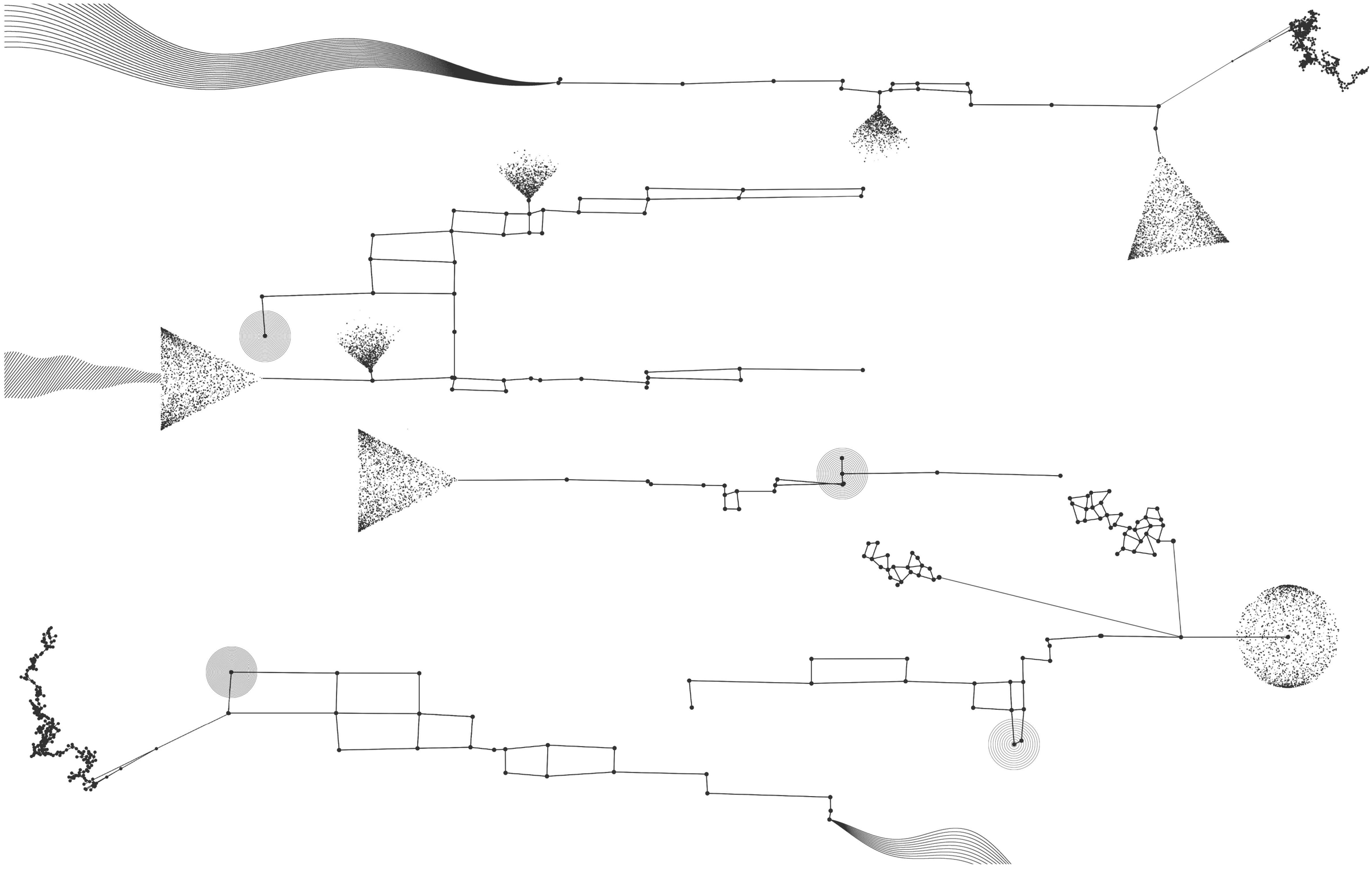
Sop.

gliss.

n *mf* *pp*

ooh

pp < *mf* > < > < >



♩ = 60

Sop.

B. Cl.

Tbn.

Perc.

ee

Ghost tones (pitches should be faintly audible).
Play pitches in random order, as fast as possible.

Steady tone, non vib.

Key tremolo: use an alternate fingering to
rapidly alter the tone without changing pitch.

Glockenspiel ("mellow" mallets)

Vibraphone (l.v. always)

ah

Glockenspiel

Vibraphone

7

ooh

ee

ah

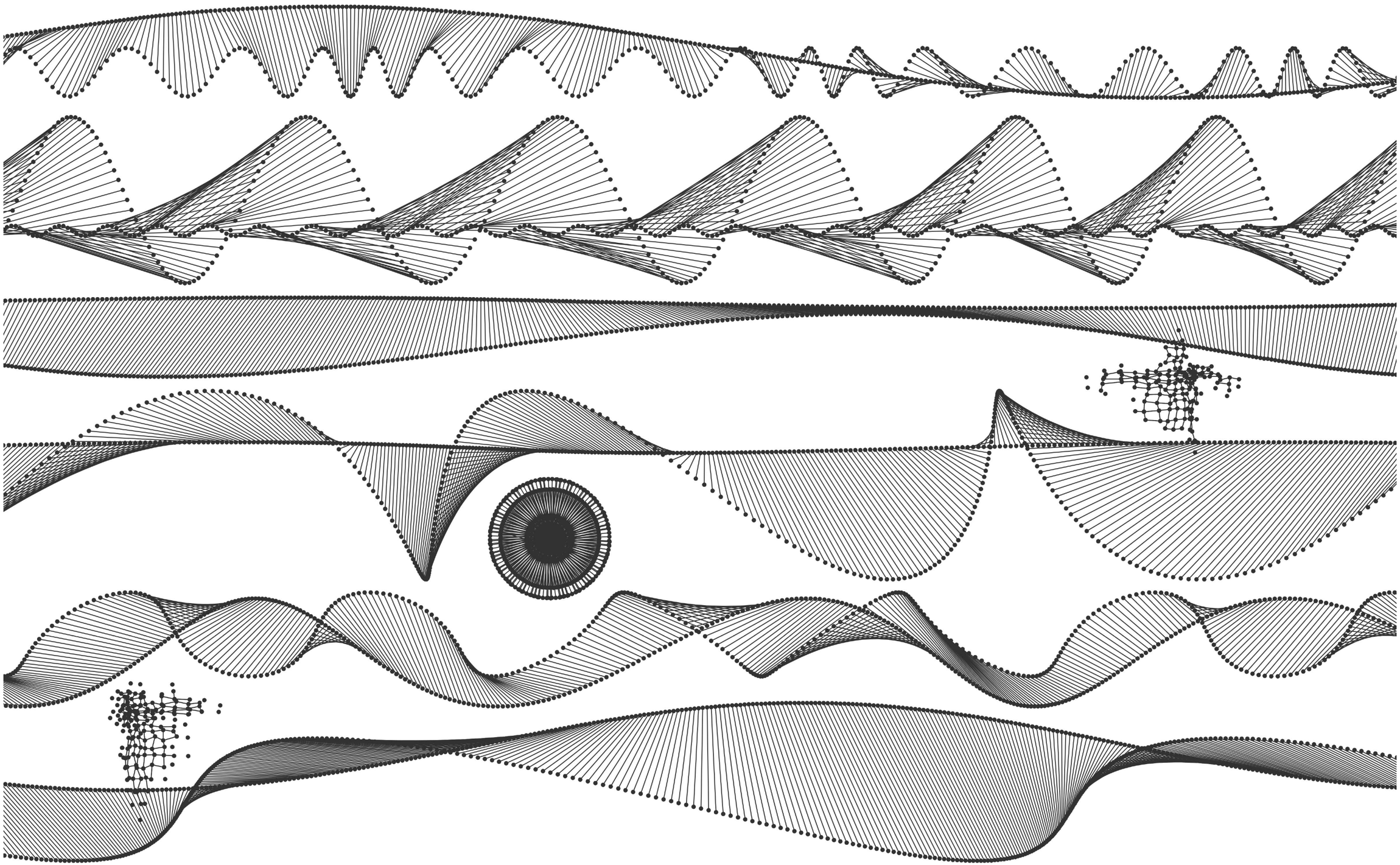
ee

Ghost tones (pitches should be faintly audible).
Play pitches in random order, as fast as possible.

Vibraphone

Bowed vibraphone

l.v.



Sing into cardboard tube
X = tube fully closed with hand, O = tube fully open
Gradually transition between degree of tube covering

♩ = 60

Quincunx (2 marbles)

Sop.

ooh

ah

B. Cl.

Plunger mute
X = horn fully muted
O = horn fully unmuted

Tbn.

Small gong

Vibraphone
motor on medium speed

motor on low speed

Perc.

8

Ord. (without cardboard tube)
Gradually transition between vowel sounds

Sop.

ee

Quincunx (2 marbles)

ooh

ee

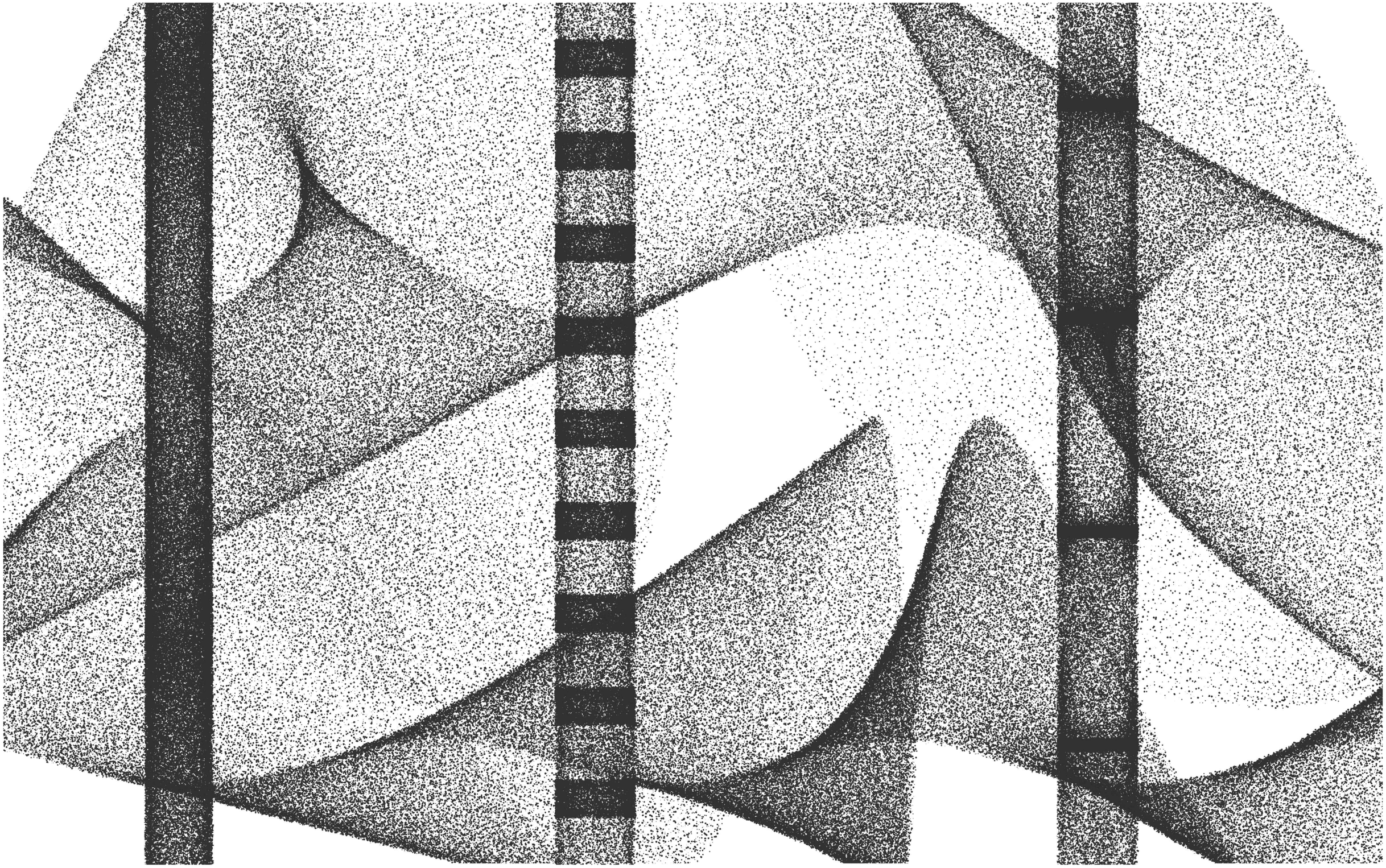
B. Cl.

Tbn.

motor on medium speed

motor on high speed

Perc.



♩ = 60

Filtered noise; achieved via radio or walky-talky receiver playing
static, placed in teapot or other similar container with a lid.
Top line = lid fully open, bottom line = lid fully closed.

Sop.

mf

B. Cl.

Multiphonics ad lib. (different multiphonic for each attack)
Rich, microtonal sonority
Pressure tremolo throughout

pp *f* *pp* *f*

Reed squeak (sustained yet unsteady tone)

p

Multiphonics

pp *f*

Tbn.

Subtones; lowest possible note(s)
Rough and granular tone, unclear pitch
Breathe as necessary, alter tone & pitch in a chaotic yet restrained manner

mf

Multiphonic (sing the top note and play the low note)

p

Subtones

mp

Perc.

Vibrating object on snare drum (snares on)
Top line = edge of drum, Bottom line = center of drum
Vary sound ad lib. by altering amount of pressure applied to object

mf

8

Sop.

B. Cl.

Reed squeak

p

Multiphonics

pp *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp* *f* *pp*

Tbn.

Multiphonic

p

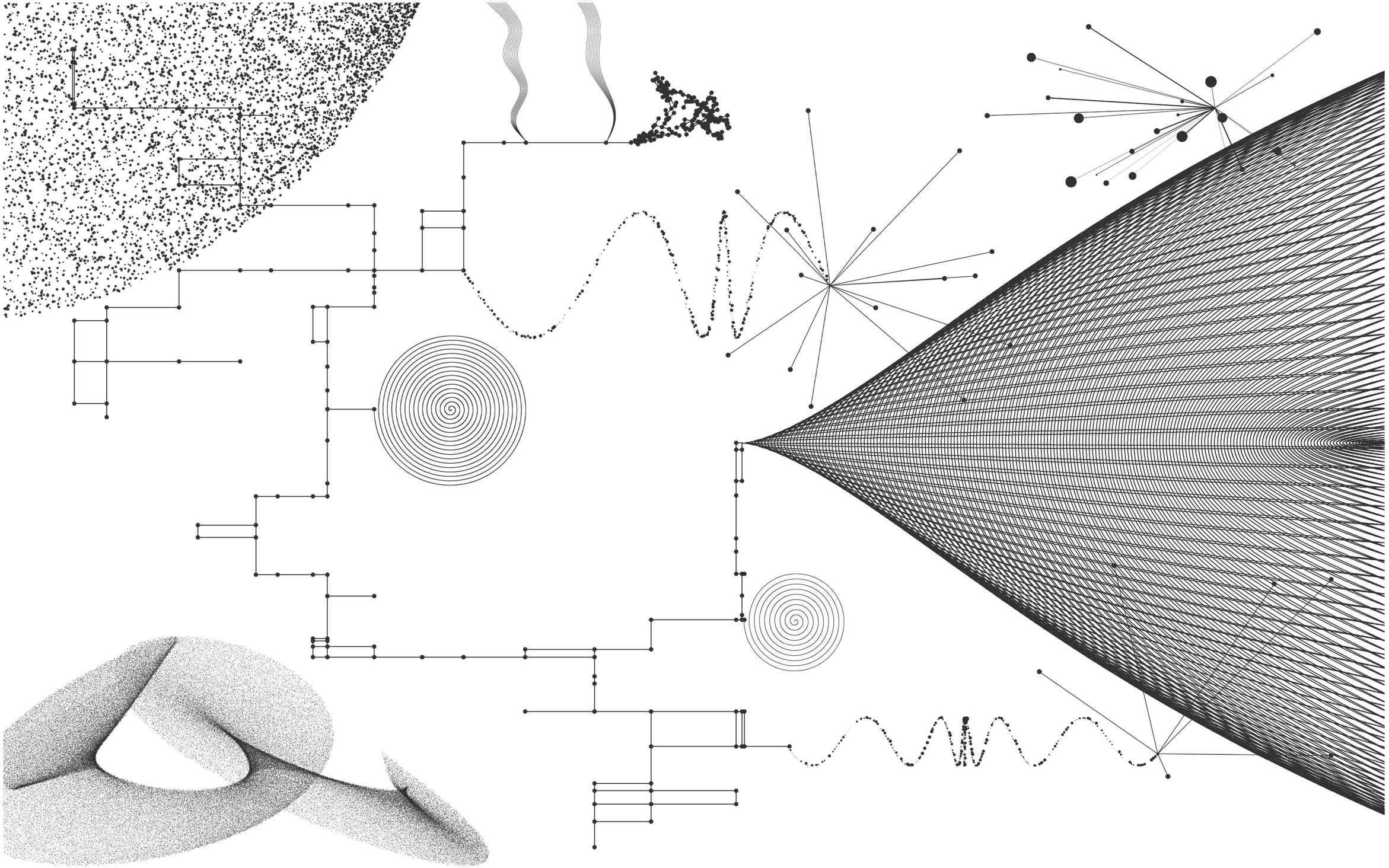
Subtones

mf

sub p

mf

Perc.



♩ = 60

Sop.

B. Cl.

Tbn.

Perc.

Vibraphone (l.v. always)

ah ooh

mute in

Small gong (l.v.)

Sing

ee

ah

Quincunx (1 marble)

8

Sing

Small gong (l.v.)

ah ee ooh ah ooh ee aah

Bell-like

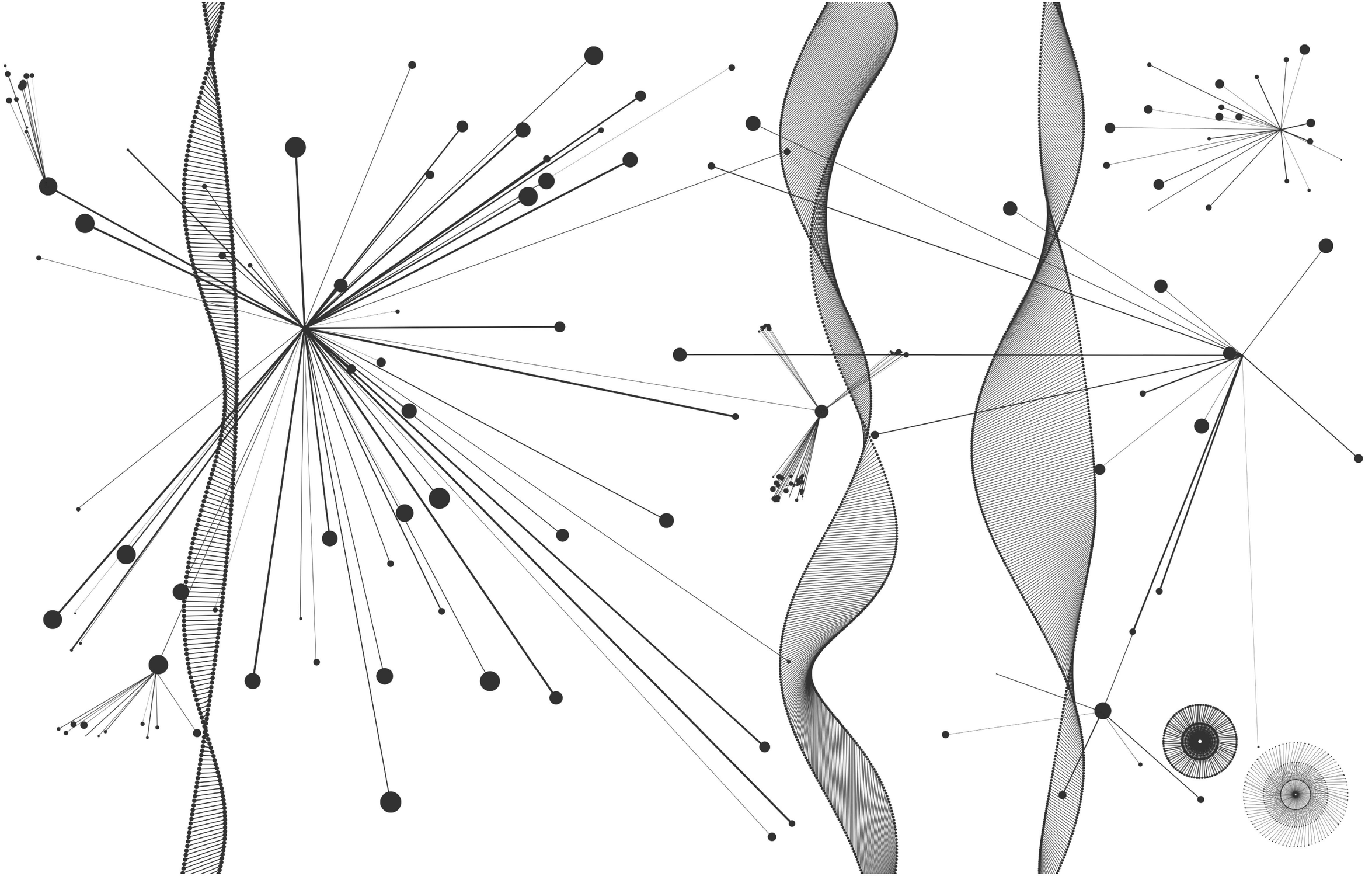
mute out

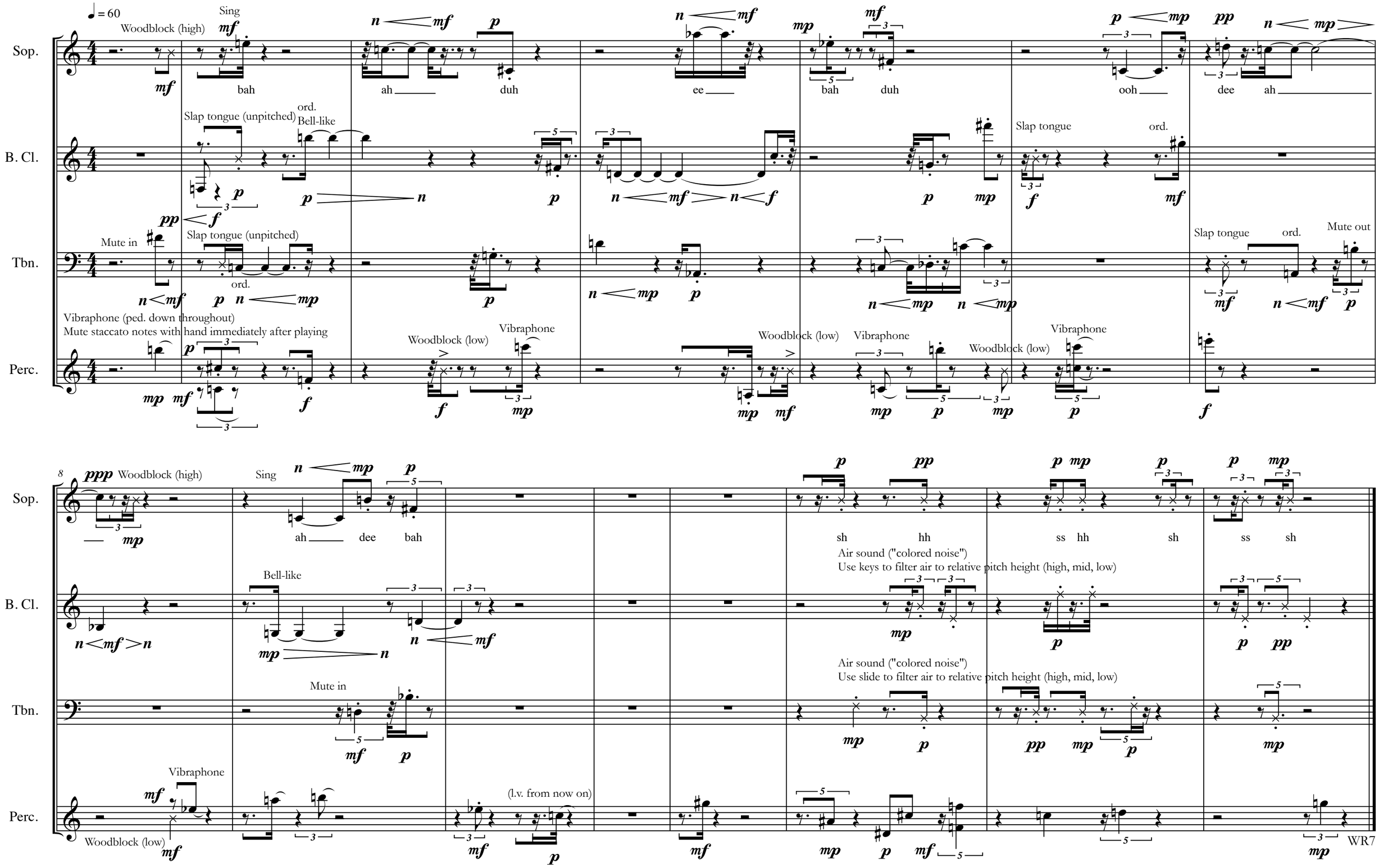
Bell-like

Glockenspiel
soft mallets

hard mallet (F5 only)
soft mallets

hard mallets




♩ = 60
Sop.
B. Cl.
Tbn.
Perc.
Woodblock (high)
Sing
bah
ah
duh
ee
bah
duh
ooh
dee
ah
Slap tongue (unpitched)
ord.
Bell-like
Slap tongue
ord.
Mute in
Slap tongue (unpitched)
ord.
Slap tongue
ord.
Mute out
Vibraphone (ped. down throughout)
Mute staccato notes with hand immediately after playing
Woodblock (low)
Vibraphone
Woodblock (low)
Vibraphone
Woodblock (low)
Vibraphone
8
Woodblock (high)
Sing
ah
dee
bah
sh
hh
ss
hh
sh
ss
sh
Air sound ("colored noise")
Use keys to filter air to relative pitch height (high, mid, low)
Bell-like
Air sound ("colored noise")
Use slide to filter air to relative pitch height (high, mid, low)
Mute in
Vibraphone
(l.v. from now on)
Woodblock (low)
WR7

♩ = 60

Sop.

B. Cl.

Tbn.

Perc.

Small gong

Plunger mute

Mute open on attack, then immediately closed

Gradually open mute

bom bom bom bom bom ooh bom bom bom ooh ooh

deem deem deem ooh ooh deem deem deem ooh deem deem