

"ESSAYS IN IDLENESS"

guitar solo

Paul Newland.

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## Essays in Idleness

guitar solo

dur : c. 19 mins.

The "*Tsurezuregusa*", (*Essays in Idleness*), is a classic Japanese text written by the Buddhist priest Kenko between 1330 and 1332. The work consists of a collection of 243 observations and anecdotes ranging in length from a few lines to several pages. The opening lines of the text roughly translate into, "With nothing better to do I sit and jot down whatever comes into my head...".

Rather than depicting in music particular stories or thoughts I was more interested in exploring the aesthetic embodied by the work. The quality which particularly attracted me is known in Japanese as *zuihitsu* (follow the brush). This form or lack of form appealed to Japanese writers at the time, it has been suggested, because it was seen as being less "dishonest" than creating fiction. The formlessness of the *zuihitsu* did not impede the enjoyment of readers; indeed, they took pleasure not only in moving between the great variety of subjects treated but in tracing subtle links between successive episodes. Other qualities include the Japanese appreciation of beauty in impermanence. "The most precious thing in life is its uncertainty", believes Kenko, and a fondness for incompleteness and irregularity. "In everything, no matter what it may be, uniformity is undesirable. Leaving something incomplete makes it interesting, and gives one the feeling there is room for growth." He continues, "It is typical of the unintelligent person to insist on complete sets of things. Imperfect sets are better." Understatement and suggestion are best served by incompleteness and simplicity which allow the mind freedom to imagine.

At the foot of each page of the score is a short poem. Though not taken from the "*Tsurezuregusa*" they are in keeping with its spirit and more directly relate to the music. There are nine Chinese and two Japanese poems. They may be translated as follows:

Sitting quietly doing nothing,  
Spring comes, grass grows of itself.

Those who know, speak not  
Those who speak, know not.

Leaves fallen on a rock beneath the water.

There is no place to seek the mind;  
It is like the footprints of the birds in the sky.

Where the interplay of "is" and "is not" is fixed,  
Not even the sages know.

The frog  
Rises up with the same force  
With which it jumps in.

Many words injure virtue  
Wordlessness is essentially effective.

Truth is not pleasant to hear. Pleasant-sounding words are not true. Good men do not argue. Argumentative men are not good. He who knows is not learned. The learned man does not know.

From now on, my eyes were one with my ears, my ears with my nose, my nose with my mouth.

If you do not get it from yourself  
Where will you go for it.

Water not disturbed by waves settles down of itself. A mirror not covered with dust is bright and clear. The mind should be like this. When what beclouds it passes away its brightness appears. Happiness must not be sought for; when what disturbs passes away, happiness comes of itself.

# ESSAYS in Idleness - 徒然草

Paul Newland

$\downarrow=192$

IV V VI

guitar

(sounding one octave lower than written)

兀然無事坐  
春來草自生。

Sitting quietly doing nothing,  
Spring comes, grass grows of itself.

♩ = 76 bend x

VII-X

gliss. ②

molto (continue vib. even after note dies)

molto vib.

gliss.

molto vib.

gliss.

molto vib.

①

gliss.

molto vib.

molto vib.

molto vib.

bend.

Those who know, speak not.  
Those who speak, know not.

知者不言，言者不知。

$\text{♩} = 192$

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, featuring a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a tempo marking of 192. The notation includes a series of notes with stems, some marked with accents and slurs, and a dynamic marking of *grace*.

Empty musical staff.

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, similar to the first staff, with notes, stems, and a dynamic marking of *grace*.

Empty musical staff.

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, with notes, stems, and a dynamic marking of *grace*.

Empty musical staff.

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, with notes, stems, and a dynamic marking of *grace*.

Empty musical staff.

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, with notes, stems, and a dynamic marking of *grace*.

Empty musical staff.

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, including notes, stems, and circled fingerings (1-6).

Empty musical staff.

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, featuring triplets and circled fingerings (1-6).

Empty musical staff.

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, including notes, stems, and circled fingerings (1-6).

Empty musical staff.

Handwritten musical notation on a single staff, including notes, stems, and circled fingerings (1-6).

Empty musical staff.

Leaves fallen on a rock beneath the water

水底の岩におちつく木の葉かな

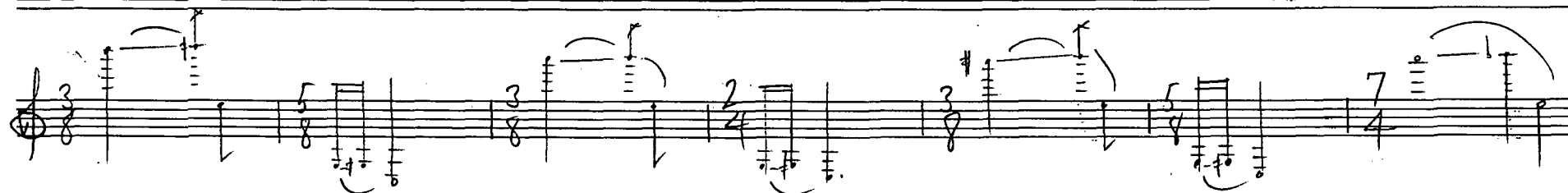
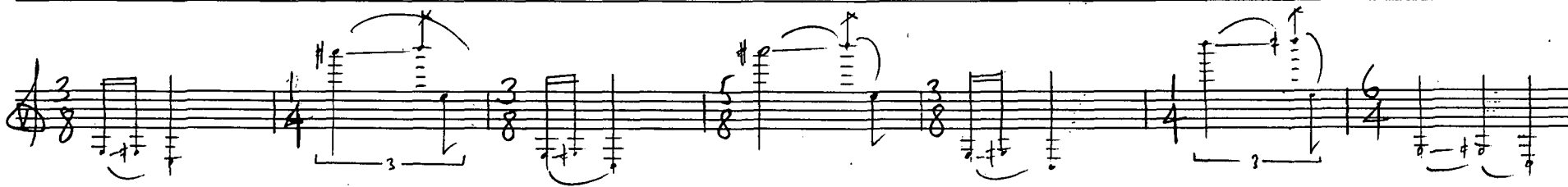
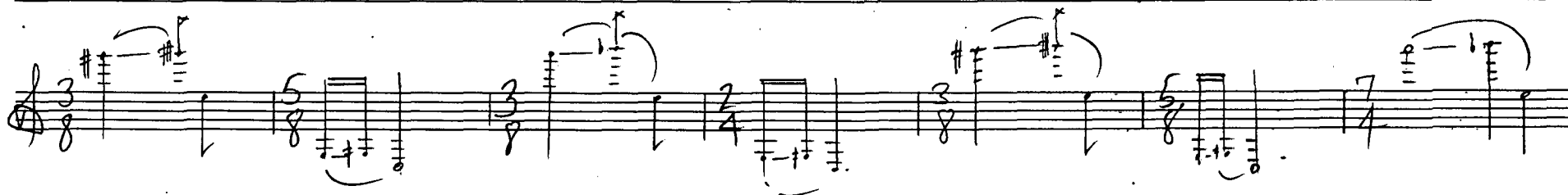
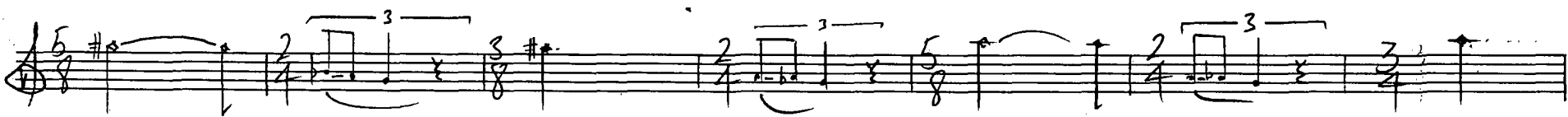
Handwritten musical score for guitar on a single staff. The score consists of 11 lines of music. It features various guitar techniques such as triplets, slurs, and grace notes. Fingering numbers (1-5) are written above the notes. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

There is no place to seek the mind;

It is like the footprints of the birds in the sky.

更無尋覓處鳥跡印空中。





是非交結處聖亦不能知

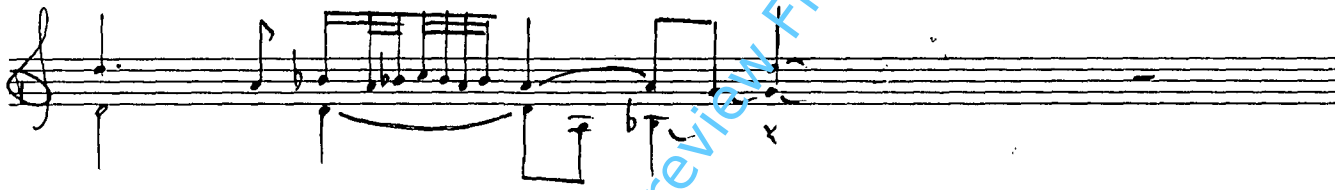
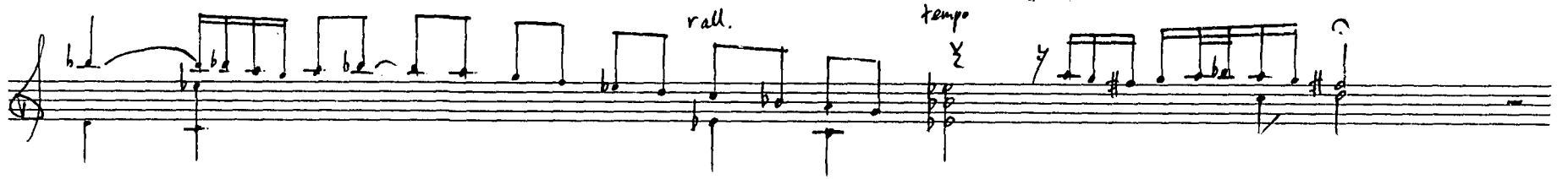
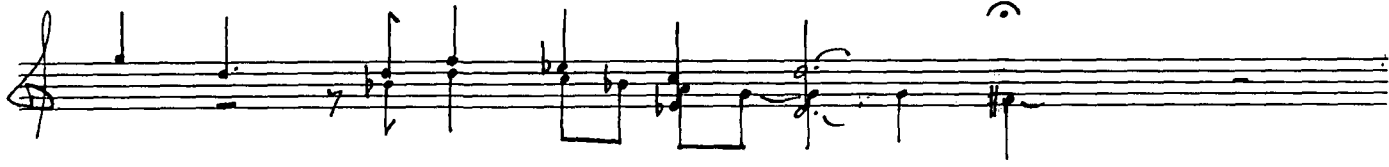


飛込んだカブがぶ蛙おな。

The frog  
Rises up with the same force  
With which it jumps in.

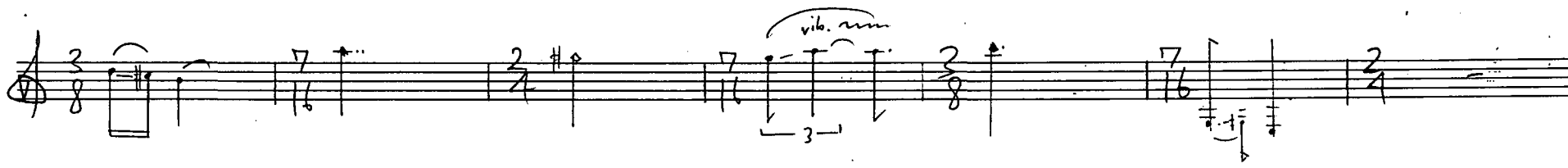
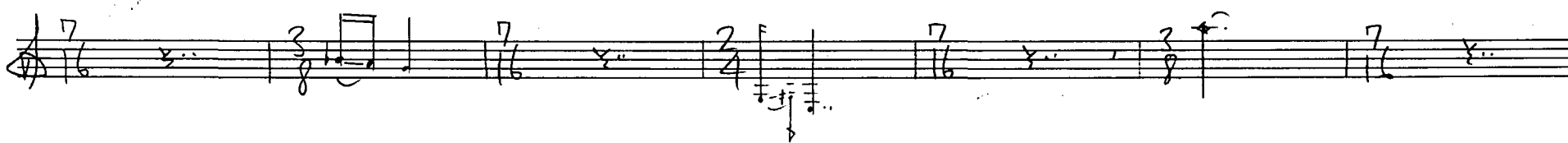
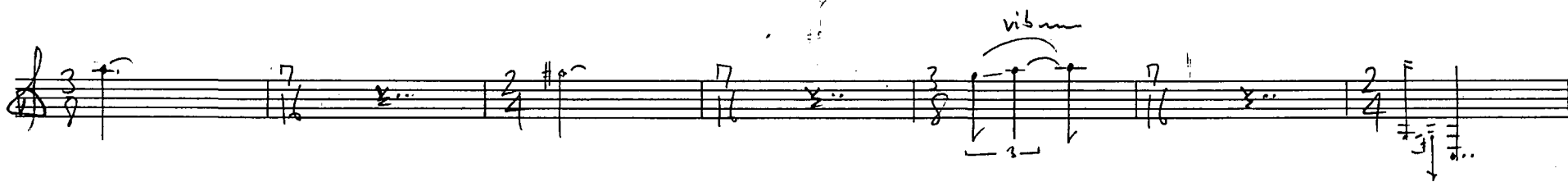
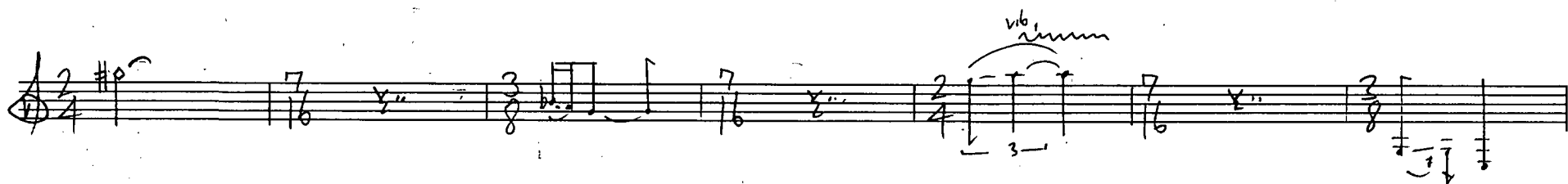
$\downarrow = 42$

*very softly, like a memory, (drifting in and out).*



Many words injure virtue  
Wordless men is essentially effective

叮嚀損君德  
無言固有功



Truth is not pleasant to hear. Pleasant-sounding words are not true.

Good men do not argue. Argumentative men are not good.

He who knows is not learned. The learned man does not know.

博知辯善美信  
者者者者者  
不知不不不不不  
知博善辯美信

$\text{♩} = 112$

Handwritten musical score for guitar, consisting of six systems of two staves each. The notation includes treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and various time signatures (2/4, 7/16, 4/8, 3/8). The music features complex rhythmic patterns with triplets and slurs, and includes a "bend." instruction at the beginning. A "Preview File Only" watermark is visible diagonally across the middle of the page.

From now on, my eyes will  
see with my ears, my ears  
with my nose, my nose with  
my mouth.

而後眼如耳、耳如鼻、鼻如口。

♩=96

I  
bend

♩=76

♩=96 II  
gliss. gliss. vib. bend vib. bend vib.

♩=76. IV  
bend gliss. gliss. vib. pull gliss. gliss. gliss. pull

bend. 6 5 bend.

1 2 gliss. gliss. vib. lv. 2 gliss. 1 2 3 4 pull 4 3 4 5

4 6 6 vib. vib. bend.

lv. lv. bend.

If you do not get it from yourself  
Where will you go for it?

不向自己會  
向什麼處會。

♩ = 52

Handwritten musical score for guitar, consisting of five systems of staves. The notation includes various chords, arpeggios, and rhythmic markings such as 3/8, 7/16, and 3/8. The piece begins with a tempo marking of ♩ = 52 and a dynamic marking of *l.v.* (piano). The score concludes with a double bar line and a fermata.

Water not disturbed by waves settles down of itself.

A mirror not covered with dust is bright and clear.

The mind should be like this.

When what beclouds it passes away its brightness appears.

Happiness must not be sought for; when what disturbs passes away, happiness comes of itself.

水不波則自定  
 鑑不翳則自明  
 故心無可清  
 去其混之者而清自現  
 樂不必尋  
 去其苦之者而樂自存。

P.N. Hiroshima City  
02/11/01