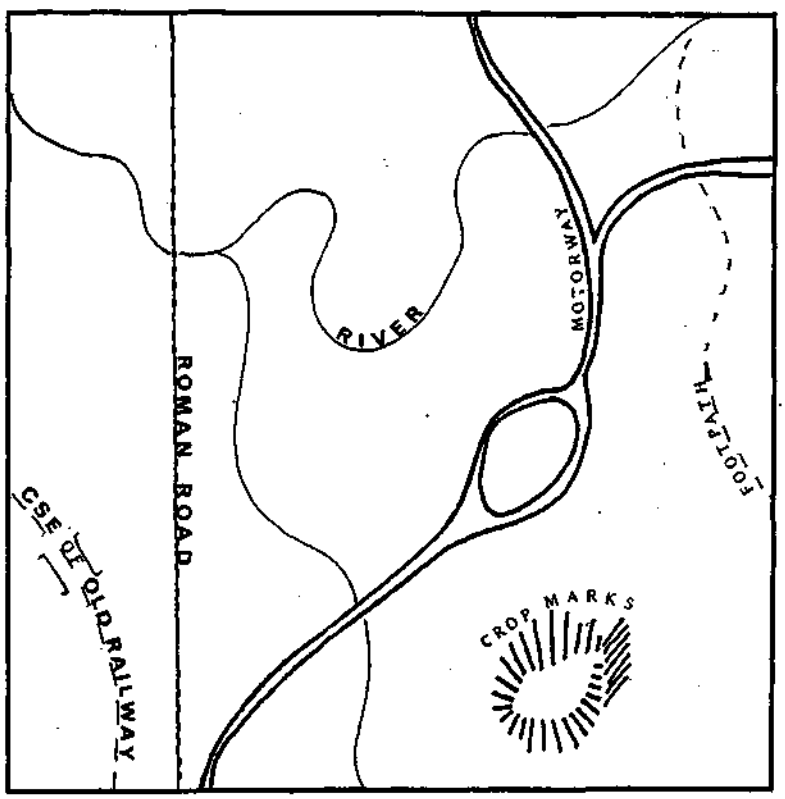
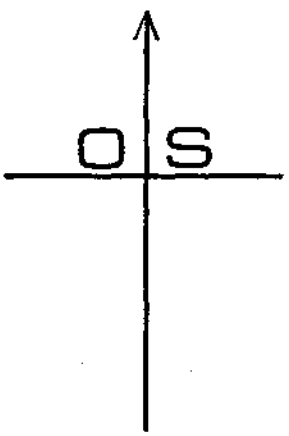
Julia Usher

ORDNANCE SURVEY





Seven Poems mapped for Tenor, Fl, Cl, Va, Vcl

primavera

ORDNANCE SURVEY

A set of poems for a musical setting (tenor, flute, clarinet, viola, cello).

ROMAN ROAD

Road, Roman Road,
Streak from the eyeline.
No swerve of accident,
No curve of predilection.
Only the swift thought that wings direct
The shortest path between two points.

Stone counter stone;
Calibration of Time;
Straightness not in nature;
Human only in its unaccommodation,
The brainish construct that dictates
Undeviating ways to an inflexible goal.

LIFE - LINES

1 RIVER
Artery of the land - body,
Drawn, not pumped by the gravity - heart
Clear plasma fallen from the sky,
Irrigating the land - skin.

2 MOTORWAY
Vesicles erupt on city - limbs
Swelled by metallic platelets.
Constriction in the vein
Brings pulseless arrest.

3 FOOTPATH
Broken line
A running stitch round the rolling borders of the landscape.
Labyrinthine thread,
Unravelling a cryptic web,
Clue to unlighted paths.

4 DISUSED RAILWAY - LINE
Ghostly sleepers,
Shadows in the grass,
Stricken by the signal
To terminate.

Preview File Only

CROP MARKS

Crop marks show the tide - lines,
Shells and detritus of past events.
You may piece together the wrack
If you climb high enough.
On the ground you see
Only the random billowing
Of blown grass.

AERIAL PROJECTION

Take aim, flyer, through your narrow sights,
The target clear below,
Laid out before you, the pattern clean and comprehensible.
At such a height,
You' ll not be held responsible.
You need not see where people stand,
Shading their eyes against the sun,
To catch your passing.
To press the trigger is a simple trick of science,
The target small below,
Too small to see where people stand:
Activate the trigger
    - *to photograph.*

MAP

Easy to plot the footprints of the past,
To frame a matrix,
To catch a life within a grid,
A net of co - ordinates.
Easy to draft the trail our wanderings took,
To lay down the dead ends,
To measure out the mileage;
Draw a metred course,
And at the afterview,
Call it purposeful.

But hard to catch the pre - echo,
The footfall of a stride untaken,
To map the choices yet unmade;
To preview ignorance,
Or hachure* in the drift of inclination
With shades of meaning not intent.
A map is an instant frozen;
A picture of a man always turned
To gaze back over his shoulder.

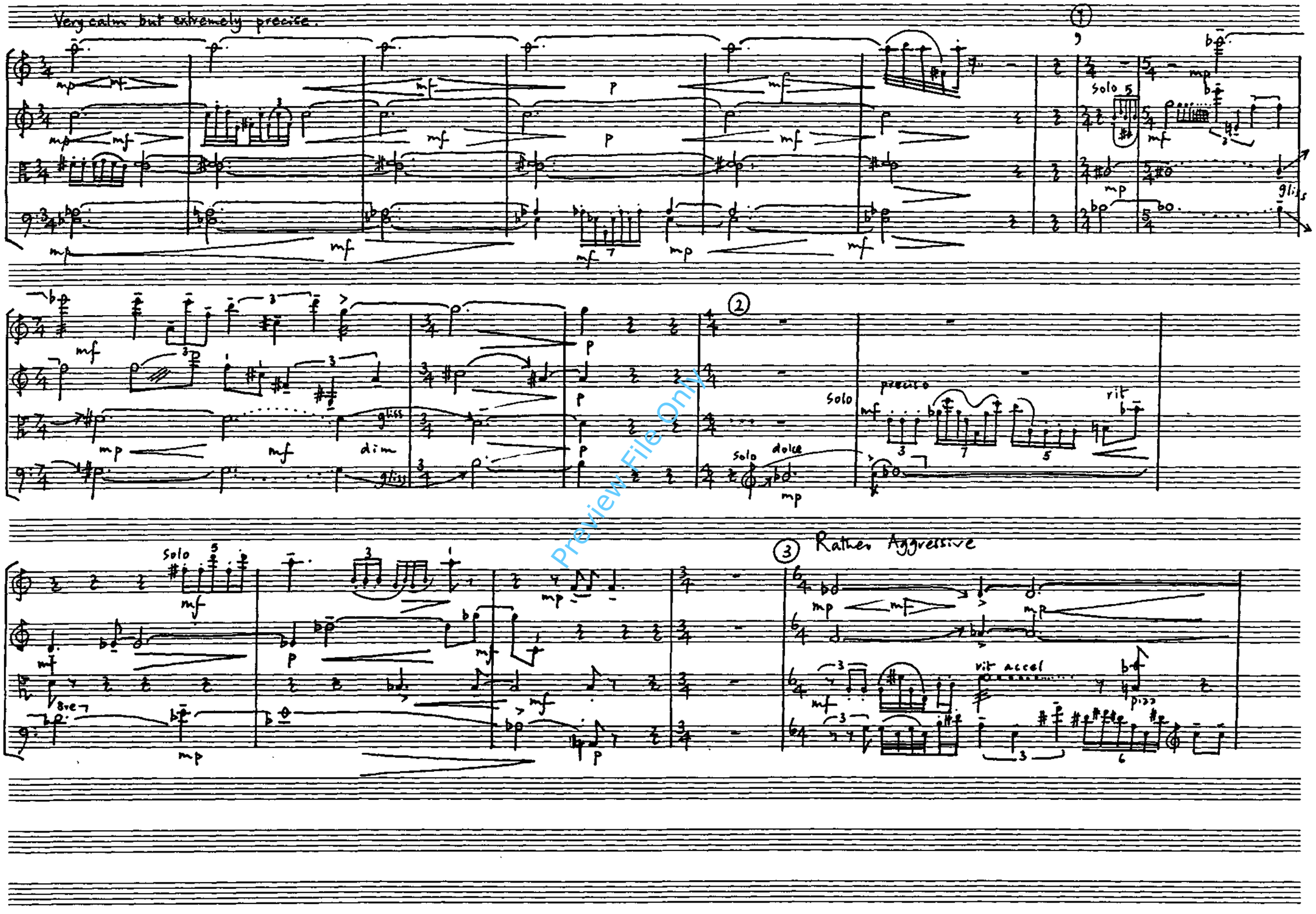
* hachuring = a shading device used to suggest contours.

Julia Usher

Preview File Only

NO 1 MAP 1

♩=56



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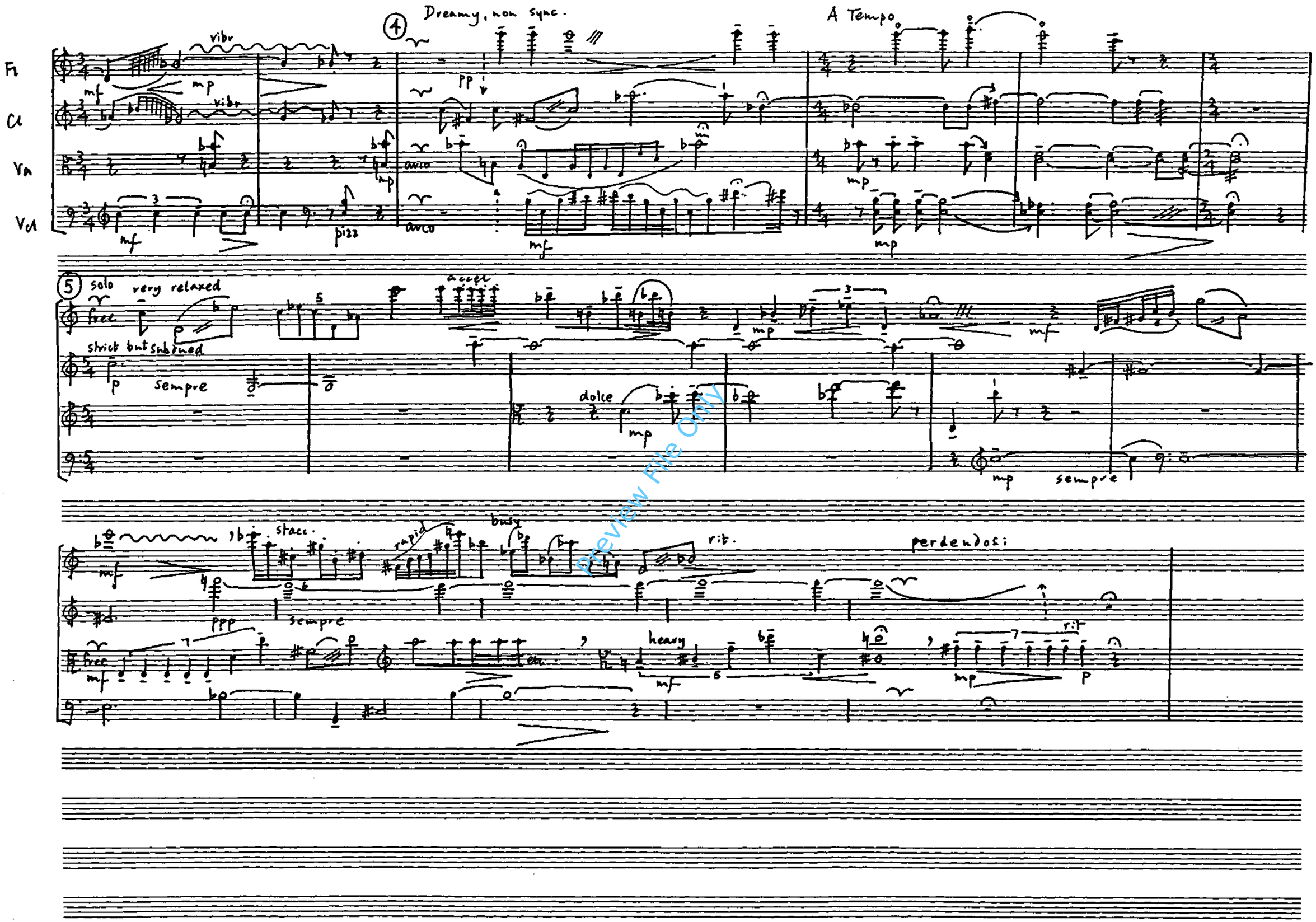


Preview File Only

Very static effect, with surface disturbances only.

(6) Tempo Imo

mp sempre

(7)

poco f

(8)

Segue no 2

Preview File Only

No 2 Roman Road

♩=92

Marcato, andante

Ten

Fl

Cl

Va

Vcl

Road, Ro-man road,

Poco f

pizz

pizz

Pesante

8va

Streak——— from the eye line(nn)———

mp

f2

dim

①

free

mf

No swerve——— of ac-ci-dent,

arco

mf

arco

f2

cresc

No curve——— of pre-di-

Ten

mp

lic——tion;

②

rapid recit.

mp

on-ly the swift thought that wings di-rect the shor-test path be-tween two points.

poco rit

col' parte

mf

mp

mf

mf

mp

rit

pizz

mf

pizz

③

Verse Two

ss Stone coun-ter stone

mf

pizz

mp

pizz

mf

cal——i——bra——tion

flutter

dim

off time

not

④

Free

Straightness not in na——ture

Solo

mf

3

fl

not.

mp

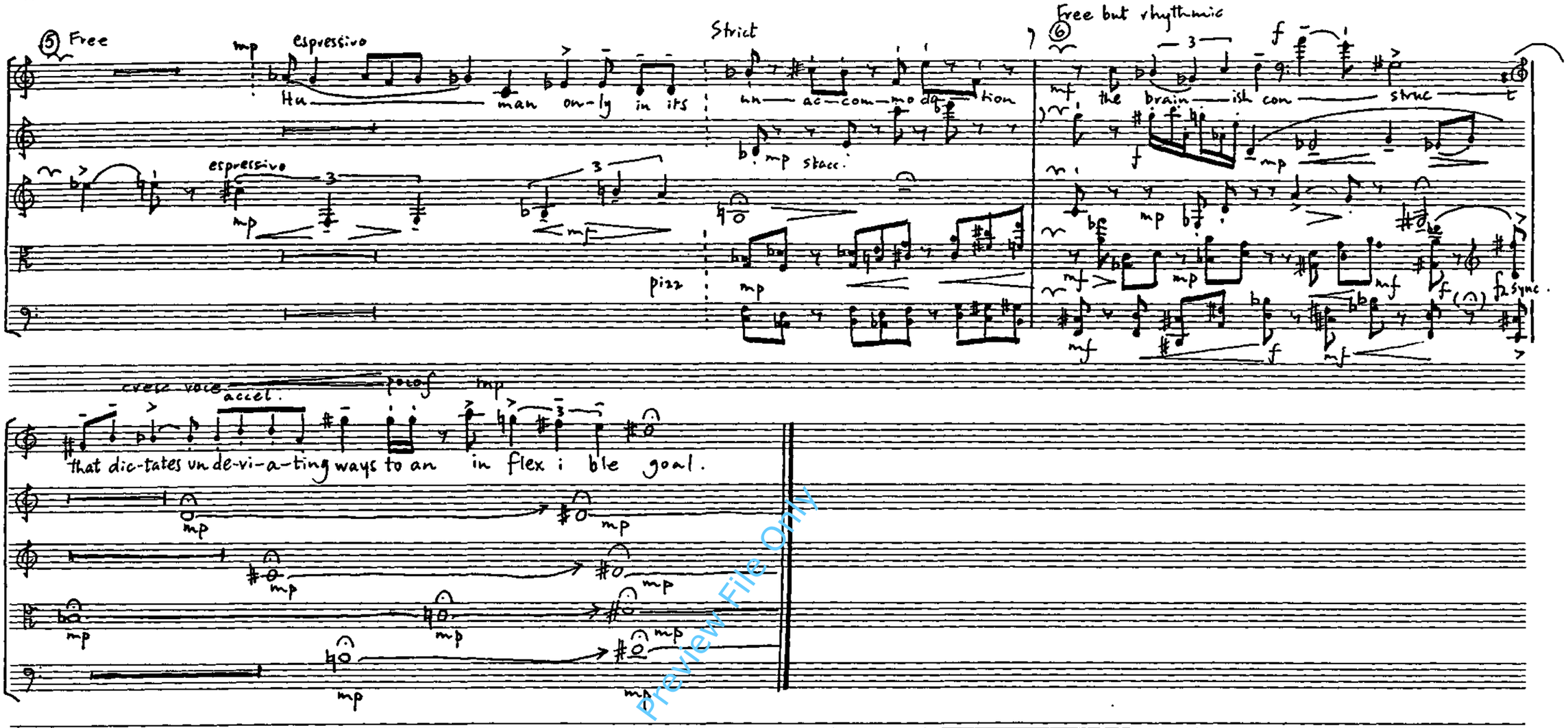
arco

mp

rit

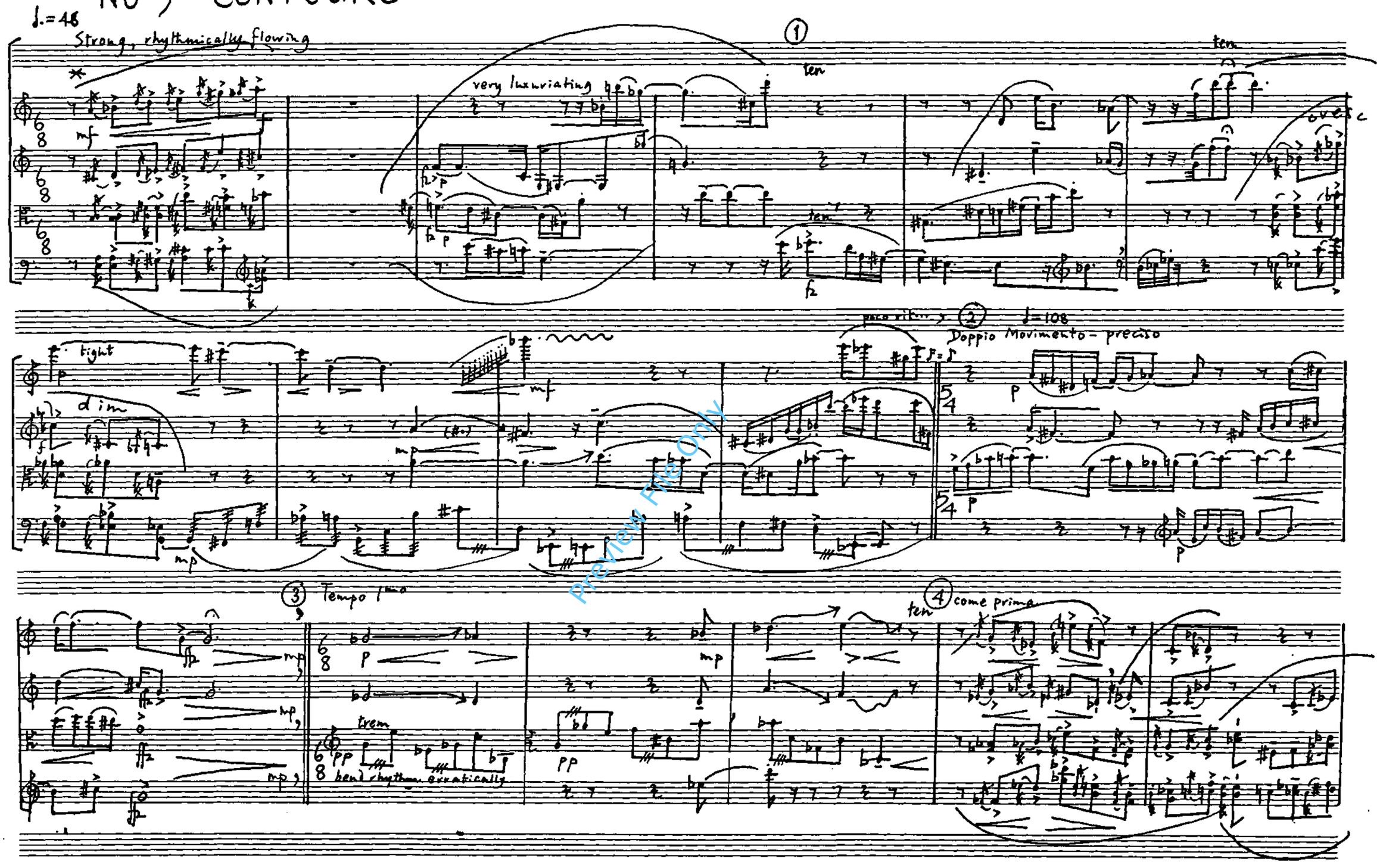
5

Preview File Only



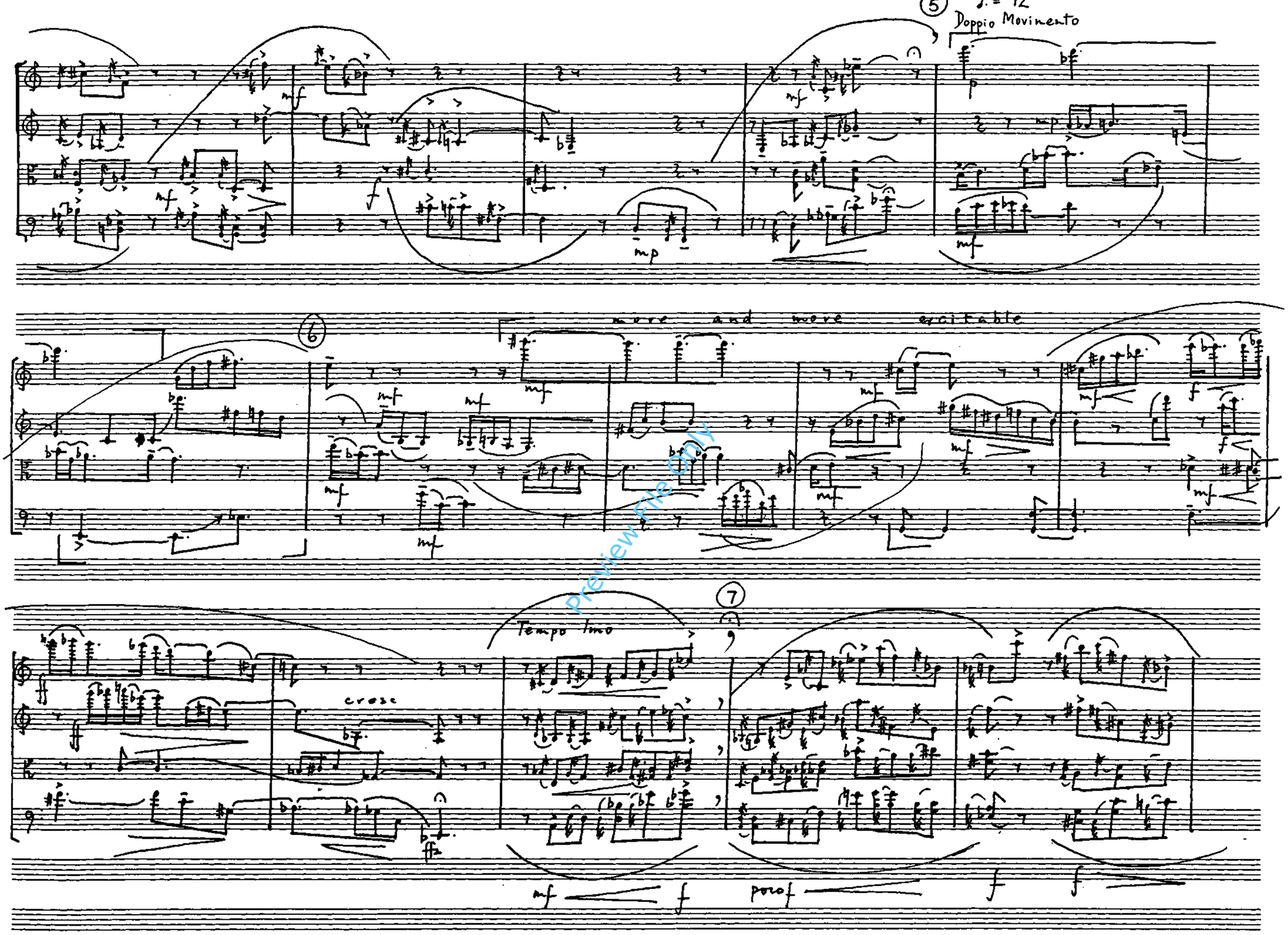
Preview File Only

NO 3 CONTOURS



* the graces are a rapid but heavy shudder before the beat, a 'pre-echo'. Make sure the note proper is well-sustained, not staccato, so that the total effect is legato and weighty.

Preview File Only



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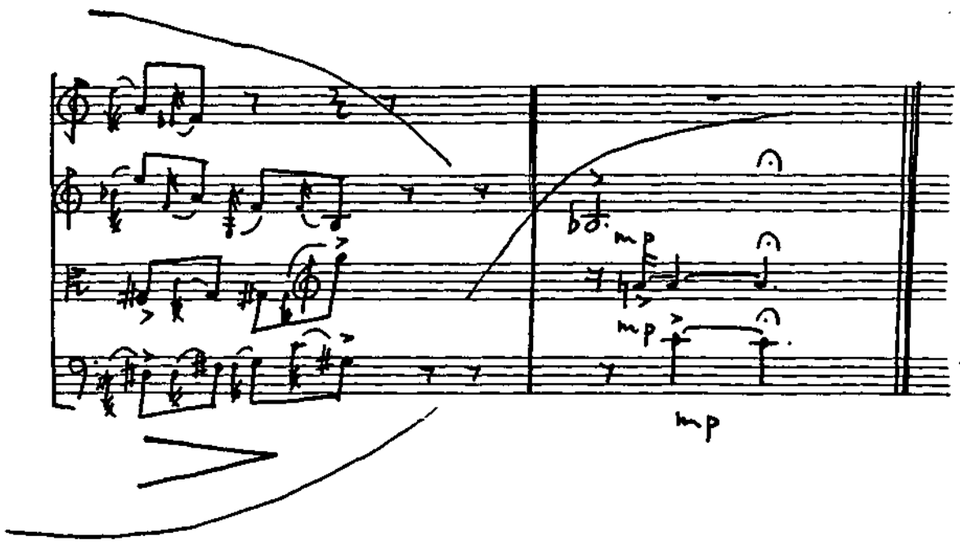
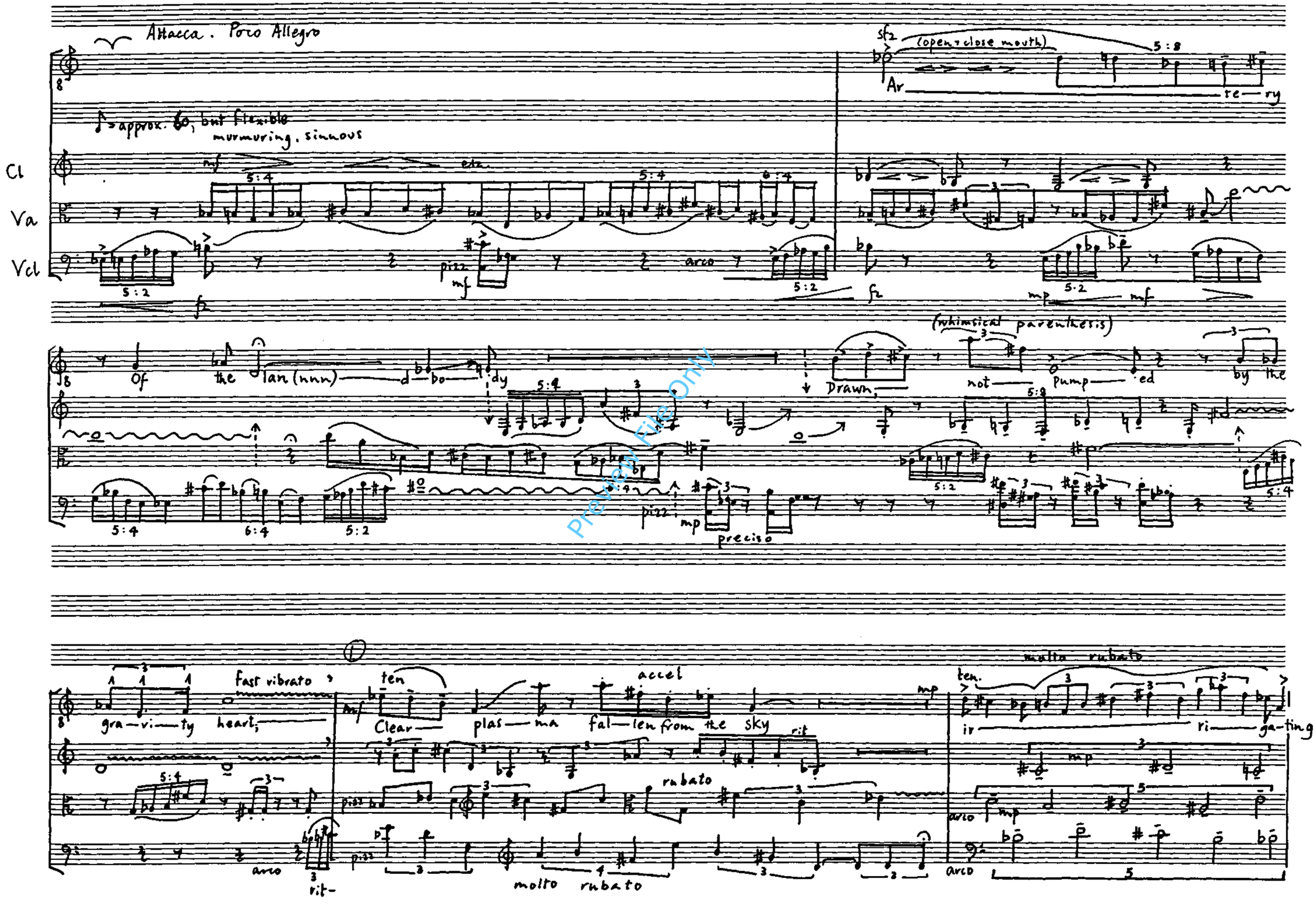


Preview File Only

NO 4 LIFE-LINES 1) River



Preview File Only

② 2) Motorway ♪= c.144

Cl
Va
Vcl

rit
the lan — (d)- skin.
Erratic, aggressive
poco f Ve-si- cles
impression of tension + Speed.
sul C
propor.
sul G
mf f mf
mp e-rupt
f
on ci — ty
Sim - violent dynamics
sim

Fl
Cl
Va
Vcl

mf dim
limbs
much faster
somewhat hard tone
swell'd by met-tal-ic plate — lets.
col parte
hard tone
slower smoother
pizz mp
strong
molto
cresc
mf mp mf molto

Very light throat
increasingly dry
con(nu) — stri — ction(un) in the vein brings
stacc. rit
pulse — less ar — rest.
Segue

Preview file only

3) Footpath

Andante ♩= c.50

Mysterious and a little uncertain.

8ve mp B- b—br bro—ken line(nnn)— a run-ning stitch— round—the

p pp mp arco stacc. mp pizz mp p pizz arco pizz

mp rol—ling bor—ders of the land—scape, la—by-rin-thine thread, un-ra-vel-ling a cryp—tic web,

mp mp arco pizz arco arco mp mp p p

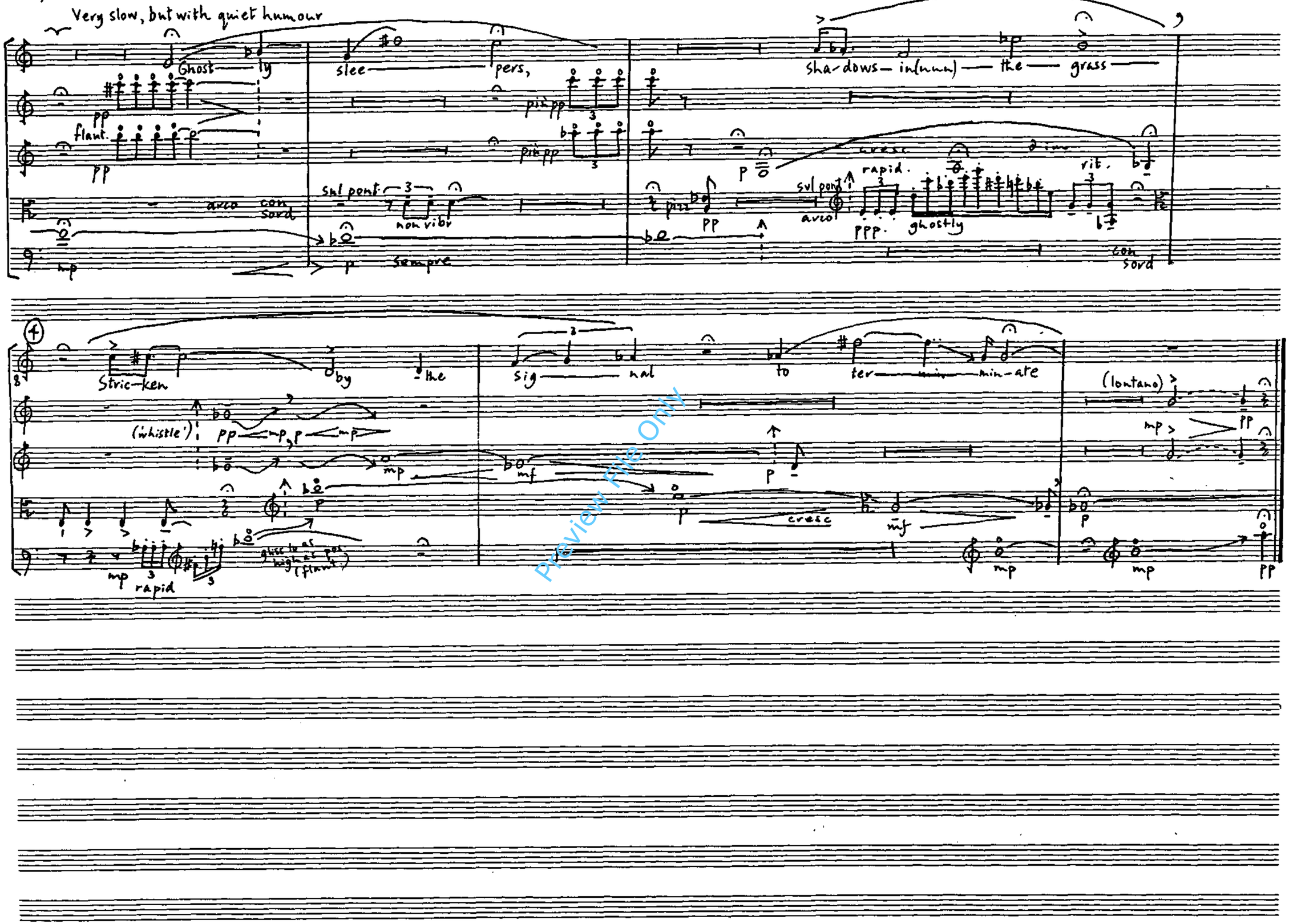
8ve clue— to un—ligh—ted paths.

p p pizz mp p mp

Segue

Preview File Only

4) Disused Railway Line



Preview File Only

No 5 Crop Marks

Tenor

falsetto — marc. — f — From far thoms — a — bove (vvvv) — p — nat. mp — strict — Crop marks show — cresc — mf — poco f — the tide — 5 — lines (nnn) — mp

mp — gentle — Shells and de — bi — tus — mp — of past — e — vents. — mf — You may piece — to — ge-ther the

cresc — Wrack, if you — accel. — 3 — climb — 3 — cresc — rapido — 6 — high e-nough. — Slower. — mp — On(nn) the ground, you see — mf — on(nn) — ly

mp — ran — dom — p — bil — low — ing — rit dim. — rapid accented vibrato. — mp — of blown — grass.

Preview File Only

NO 6 AERIAL PROJECTION

A Tempo, incisive ♩= c.116

Fl

Cl

Brilliante

Take aim, fly-er through your nar-row sights;

The tar-get clear be-low, the pat-tern

bend

1 A tempo, enticing

clean— and com-pre-hen— si-ble

at such a height,

you'll not be held— re- spon-si-ble

2 smooth, effortlessly slower

you need not see where peo— ple stand,

legato

(freer) withdrawn

sha—ding their eyes a—gainst the sun

(hard)

to catch your pas—sing.

Preview File Only

A.P.

(3) very light, tempting

mp to press the trig—ger is a sim—ple trick of Sci— ence,

Fl Irregular tremg murmuring any order p

any order mp sim

Cl any order p

(4) (at pitch) mp, light

The target small be-low, too small to

tr

va

vcls

(5) Attacca, very aggressive

cresc

See where peo— ple stand sim etc.

PP

Ac ti vate the trig—ger to

mart. det.

Subito, throw-away mf mp dim

pho— to— graph

Segue no 7

p

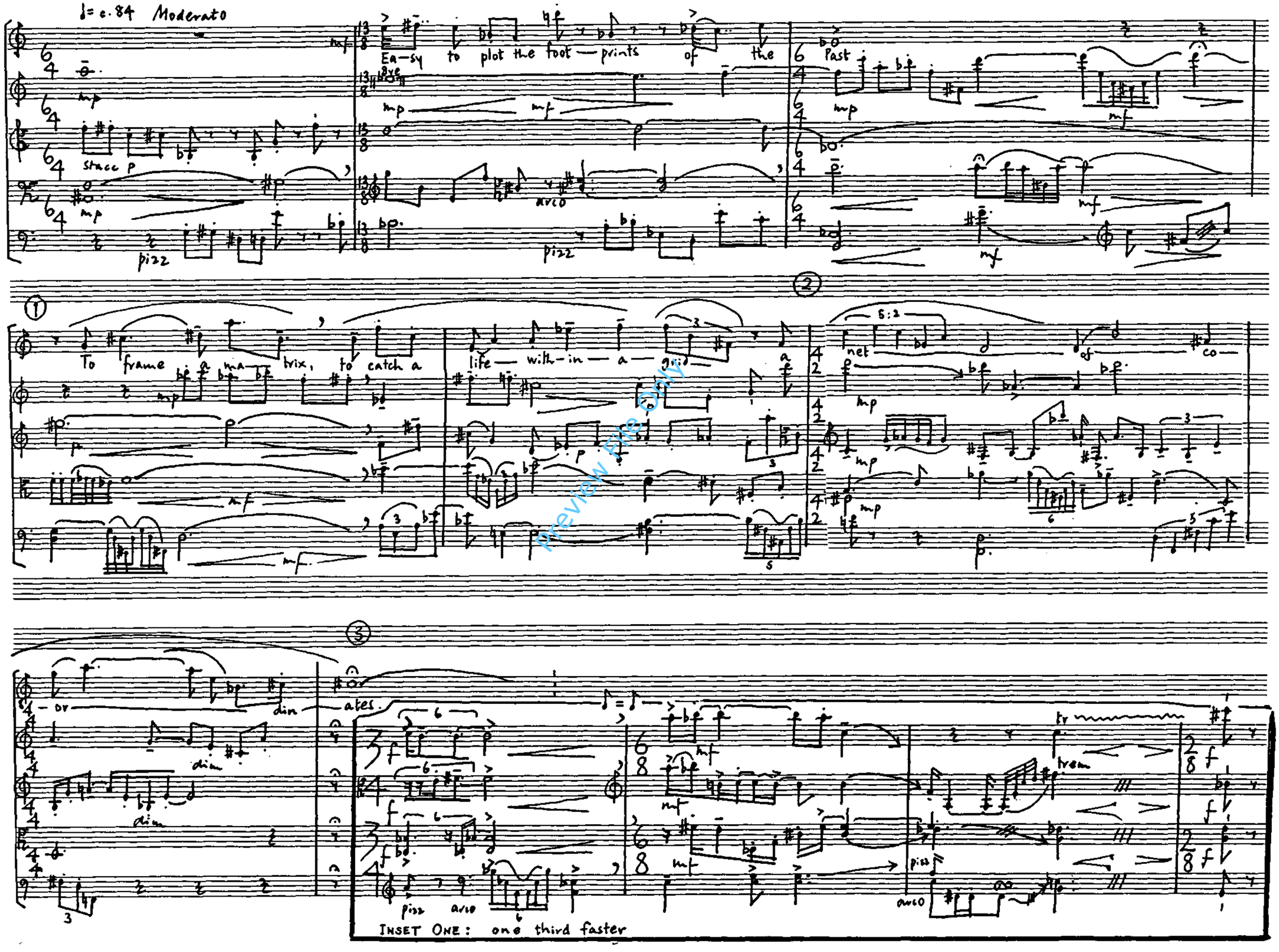
sul pont PP sim ad lib, flickering etc.

rapid these notes, erratically

mart. det.

Preview Purposes Only

NO 7 MAP 2, with Insets



Preview File Only

all approx at previous tempo, but free sync.

④

Ea-sy to draft the trail our wan d'rings took To lay down the dead- ends

⑤

to mea-sure out the mile- age

Draw a me- tred course, not at the af-ter-view, call it finished.

⑥

jerky, hesitant ad lib rhythm

flutter

⑦

Tempo Imo, move tentative

strict, a tempo

(ur) pose-ful drifting, imprecise

Inset Two

Accents on graces reversed this time.

Preview Only

Almost sotto voce

But hard— to catch the pre— e— cho, the foot— fall of a stride— nn— ta— ken; to map the

choi— ces yet un— made;

a tempo

ad lib

To pre— view

nor— ance

or

ha— chure in— the drift

in— clin— a— tion with shades— of mean ing not in— tent.

dim

dim

CODA

ad lib

rich but quiet.

a map— is an

Preview File Only

in start

mp

fro zen: (nn)

non vibr

mp non vibr vibr

a pic ture of a

Solo

man, al ways turn'd to

gaze back o ver his shou der

non gliss niente

Preview File Only

Julia Usher

June - July 1978

Streatham