Harry Sdraulig

Volume I – Folio of Compositions
Master of Music

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
of the degree of Master of Music

Melbourne Conservatorium of Music
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Declaration of Originality

This is to certify that:

- The folio comprises of only my original work towards the degree of Master of Music, except where acknowledged in the preface
- Due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used
- The folio is between 50 – 60 minutes in length, as approved by the Research Higher Degrees Committee

Harry Sdraulig
Date: 12-04-2017
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My friends and family, for their persistent support and enthusiasm.

And finally, my fiancé Kim, whose unwavering love and patience makes it all possible.
Folio Introduction

The works in this folio constitute a significant portion of my compositional output across 2015 and 2016. Although these works are not connected in any conscious way, they are all representative of my wide-ranging and evolving approach to pitch organisation and tonality. In recent years, I have been predominantly concerned with the challenge of incorporating elements of both functional diatonicism and atonality into a single work, whilst exploring a notional continuum of tonal coherence which exists between these extremes. The chief motivation of this approach is to widen the expressive and harmonic range of my music through the use of an expansive approach to pitch. These works seek to respond to this challenge in different ways and to varying degrees.

*Visions of Judgement, for tenor and piano,* was commissioned by tenor Leighton Triplow, a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne, and specialist in renaissance and baroque music. Over coffee, Leighton presented a selection of dramatic, god-fearing texts by 17th-century bishop William Fuller, from which I chose three to set to music. Each text had been previously set by Henry Purcell, and the idea was floated that Purcell’s works could be presented alongside my new work in concert. However, I was unaware of these pieces and remained determined not to hear them, lest they prejudiced my own interpretation and intuitive understanding of Fuller’s words. Though I am not a religious person, I found Fuller’s texts to be a raw and deeply powerful portrayal of anxiety and struggle, full of mood swings and dramatic imagery. For this reason, they provided an immediate spark to my musical imagination, and my three chosen texts (A Morning Hymn: *Thou wakeful shepherd;* *In the black, dismal dungeon of despair;* and An Evening Hymn: *Now that the sun hath veil’d his light*) crafted an emotional narrative for the protagonist – an arduous psychological journey, from uncertainty and despair to eventual peace and solitude.

The first movement begins with a depiction of sunrise. A gentle, flowing ostinato on D flat is the heartbeat of this substantial piano introduction, and an important thematic element throughout the work. However, it is not immediately clear whether D flat is the tonic – the slowly evolving harmonic material re-contextualises the role of this pitch. Even at this early stage, there is a sense of brooding – the apparent enriching of harmonic material from bar 11 quickly escalates into an eight-note dissonance, suggesting that not all is well
Visions of Judgement – Mvt. I (bars 7 – 18): The emergence, peak, and recession of dissonance

The first text is a troubled expression of fear and uncertainty, the protagonist constantly mulling and questioning himself. However, my desire for the second movement to be the emotional climax of the overall piece made me mindful not to over-dramatise the first. Hence, my setting emphasises the first text’s reflective and introspective qualities, progressing through a sequence of initially gentle, rocking piano ostinato which steadily grow in intensity. The second movement is the climactic heart of the piece, encompassing by far the most volatile and dramatic expressive range of the three movements. My harmonic language is also more expansive - the movement’s opening stanzas present some of the most atonal, angular writing in my compositional output. Here, the music is highly responsive and adaptive to the meaning of each individual line and phrase, necessitating frequent and rapid contrasts in texture and dynamics. The third and final movement employs a different approach, prioritising the holistic meaning and mood of Fuller’s words and providing the clarity and solace so desperately sought-after by the protagonist. The eventual return of the gentle ostinato which opened the first movement – this time on G flat – suggests a vague dominant to tonic relationship across the work as a whole, and re-characterises the motive in a brighter, more optimistic light. Visions of Judgement is highly representative of my stylistic approach to pitch and encompasses the full tonal continuum. The incorporation of such an expansive range of melodic and harmonic material is something which I felt to be particularly crucial in setting such a wide-ranging and emotional text.

*Elegy ‘In Memoriam Peter Sculthorpe’, for strings and percussion,* was written for conductor Fabian Russell, and paired with Gustav Mahler’s Symphony No. 5 in a concert given by the University of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Several listeners have remarked upon the Mahlerian quality of my piece – perhaps I was subconsciously aware that a majority of the audience at the premiere would be admirers of
the great composer. Nevertheless, the melodic and harmonic language is undoubtedly different, and perhaps bears a closer connection to the music of the work’s dedicatee, Peter Sculthorpe. As in some of my other works, the *Elegy* begins with an apparent tone row (albeit of ten pitches: D, E flat, A flat, G, B, C sharp, F sharp, F, A, E) thundered out in unison by most of the enlarged string orchestra:

![Elegy 'In Memoriam Peter Sculthorpe' – Beginning: The tone-row](image)

The purpose of this row is not to abolish any sense of tonal centre. Rather, it is to establish an unpredictable variety of pitches and intervallic combinations melodically, motivated by an underlying desire for continuous movement and progress in the pitch material. While this ‘row’ recurs throughout the work in various guises, its treatment is not serialist.

The harmony tends to get knottier and more chromatic as the intensity increases, and more triadic and pure in the soft, reflective moments, embracing the tonal continuum. Expressive solos for the violin and cello are included, while the percussion are used very sparingly. *Elegy* is a heartfelt tribute to one of the most influential Australian composers of the last seventy years.

*Winter, for flute and cello,* is the lightest and most intimate in character of the works in this folio. The pitch material is more modal, and greater emphasis is given to the linearity and independence of the individual parts. Predominantly, *Winter* is an exploration of bimodality. The flute and cello parts often occupy different tonal spaces – one part will 'fill in the gaps' of the pitches not present in the mode of the other part, an effect often achieved through semitone displacement between the two modes. However, there are numerous points of combined arrival, usually on a minor third or implied minor triad, which serve as tonal anchors from which the players can once again pursue their own wiry paths. In the following example of bars 13 to 18, the modes of the flute [F, G, A, B, C sharp, D] and cello [initially A flat, B flat, D flat] sound foreign to one another, but as the cello line progresses it begins to incorporate pitches of the flute mode (e.g. D, F and G) and the bimodal independence between the parts disintegrates in preparation for the arrival of E minor at Figure C.
Winter (bars 13 – 22): The arrival and departure of E minor after the disintegration of bimodal independence

On the whole, Winter explores the tonal continuum in a less abrupt or dramatic way than in Visions of Judgement, and structural coherence is achieved in a different way. The clearest example of more functional tonality in Winter is saved for the climax at Figure 1 where the music seemingly bursts into C major before undergoing a number of standard, diatonic modulations:

Winter (bars 85 – 91): The climax

Through the piece, I have attempted to emphasise the lyrical qualities of the two instruments, as well as their potential for colouristic combination (achieved, for example, through the combination of senza vibrato flute and cello harmonics at Figure 1). However, I have recognised their obvious differences too and, on occasion, the virtuosic and soloistic potential of the flute is supported by the earthier, more harmonious sounds of the cello.
Evocations, for violin, clarinet and piano, was commissioned by Melbourne-based trio PLEXUS. Unlike Visions of Judgement, the terms of the commission were very open-ended — only an approximate length (of eight to twelve minutes) was prescribed. I was aware that the typical audience of PLEXUS concerts are highly-knowledgeable new music enthusiasts, and felt the freedom to compose a more personal, introspective work suitable for the intimate acoustics of the Salon at the Melbourne Recital Centre. The multi-movement structure of the work is somewhat unusual: the first and third movements are ‘incantations’, containing expressive, soloistic lines for the violin and clarinet interspersed with stark, declamatory piano gestures (these gestures may be considered analogous to the casting of spells, hence the titles Incantation I and II). The second and fourth movements (entitled Dance and Lullaby, respectively) form the main body of the overall work and embrace contrasting compositional challenges.

The Dance is primarily an exploration of rhythmic momentum, sustained at a high-tempo without respite across its three-minute duration. The writing is highly conversational, featuring close-range imitation between the parts and rapid, unpredictable changes in texture and implied rhythmic meter. Harmonically, the piano alternates between rich chordal figurations and more percussive, linear octaves as roles in the texture are constantly swapped and transferred around the ensemble. Rarely is any great volume attained, and the music eventually fragments and bubbles away into silence.

The Lullaby is broadly based on the same, two-chord motive which begins the Dance, but presented in a vastly different context. Despite the harmonic radiance of the opening chords, the rhythmic strictness and employment of palindromic structures creates a detached, somewhat icy atmosphere. The first five bars of the piano introduction to the Lullaby form a rhythmic palindrome, with the third bar being a strict palindrome across all musical elements:

![Evocations – Beginning of Mvt. 4 (Lullaby): Palindromic structures](image)

As the movement progresses, greater expressive freedom emerges but the music remains soft and introspective, as appropriate to the mood of a lullaby. The employment of very simple rhythmic figurations only serves to delineate the Lullaby further from the preceding movements, and its relatively lengthiness makes it the undeniable heart of the piece. The music eventually fades into silence on a sombre, B flat minor chord – one of the first instances of triadic harmony in the entire work.
The Concerto for Trombone and Wind Symphony was written for and premiered by trombonist Don Immel, accompanied by the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music Wind Symphony with Kevin Cameron conducting. In planning what would become my longest and largest work to date, I was especially mindful of the particular challenges and expectations of writing for wind symphony. While I felt it was important to provide a work which would bring out the strengths of the soloist and ensemble, I also wanted to avoid the excessive doublings characteristic of wind band music as much as possible, and to treat the ensemble in a more orchestral manner. The resulting work is in two movements, the first being a brief introduction to the much larger, multi-sectional second movement.

The work begins quietly and mysteriously with many layers of bustling ostinati which create the effect of a distant buzzing of insects. The work’s primary theme— the fanning out of two or more lines in contrary motion— is crystallised by this opening, as the winds generate a murky cloud around the central pitch of G natural:

![Sheet Music](image)

*Trombone Concerto – Part 1 (Bars 13–16): Wind ostinati*

The soloist enters only in the central *Subito meno mosso* of the first movement at Figure 1. Similarly to the opening ostinato texture, the melodic line in the trombone fans out like a wedge from a central pitch (this time C sharp), taking time to spread its wings. Soon, wind soloists begin to join the trombonist in lyrical contrapuntal dialogue before the opening fast music returns, lifting for a brief climax before fragmenting into silence.

The second movement constitutes the major body of the work, and is itself divided into three sections: an *andante cantabile*, a short cadenza, and a concluding *presto ritmico*. As in the Elegy ‘In Memoriam Peter
Sculthorpe’, the opening flute solo of the second movement begins with an apparent tone-row [F, E, F sharp, D sharp, G, C#sharp, A, B flat, C, B, A flat] fanning out from F natural as an initial pitch:

![Trombone Concerto – Beginning of Part 2: The tone-row](image)

Yet almost immediately, this ‘tone-row’ connects to music of tonal purity as the flute is joined by clarinet and saxophone soloists at Figure 1 to play a gentle, lyrical melody in D flat major. This moment is another exemplification of rapid traversal across the tonal continuum – only a brief arpeggiated descent in the flute solo in the bar before Figure 2 connects the two passages. The andante cantabile continues to grow in expressive intensity, culminating in a forceful climax at Figure 3 before receding to greater calm. Brief interactions between the soloist and the flute, piano and first trombone continue to occur before a soft, martial timpani accompaniment heralds the beginning of the short cadenza.

The finale, marked presto ritmico, is announced in dramatic fashion by the percussion following the cadenza – an effect which pays homage to a passage from Peter Racine Fricke’s Rapsodia Concertante. Above all else, it is intended as a virtuosic showpiece for the soloist, providing an insistent and powerful rhythmic drive to conclude the work. The overall shape of the finale is in rondo form. Loosely, the opening tonality is A, though the angular trombone writing disguises any real sense of tonal centre beyond the assertions of the timpani. The B sections of the rondo offer respite in rhythmic energy through a halving of meter, although quaver ostinati continue to bubble. The work implicitly closes in A flat, completing a vague, ‘fanning out’ tonal structure across the work: G for movement I, F for the beginning of movement II, A for the beginning of the finale and A flat for the conclusion.

In my future compositional and research output, I hope to explore in greater depth the potential of the tonal continuum as a means of discovering new ways to expand the harmonic and expressive range of my music. It is my belief that composers who utilise tonality in the present day must find new ways to reinvigorate its relevance and power as a tool for pitch organisation. My use of the tonal continuum represents my best efforts to respond to this challenge.
Harry Sdraulig

Visions of Judgement
for tenor and piano

(2015)

Duration: c. 12 minutes

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Note

*Visions of Judgement* was commissioned by my friend and fine tenor Leighton Triplow. It sets three texts by the 17th-century bishop William Fuller. The three movements (one for each text) run continuously and form an overall structure, both musically and lyrically.

*Harry Sdraulig*
*June 2015*

**I.**
Thou wakeful shepherd, that does Israel keep,
Rais'd by thy goodness from the bed of sleep,
To thee I offer up this hymn
As my best morning sacrifice;
May it be gracious in thine eyes
To raise me from the bed of sin.
And do I live to see another day?
I vow, my God, henceforth to walk thy ways,
And sing thy praise
All those few days
Thou shalt allow.
Could I redeem the time I have misspent
In sinful merriment,
Could I untread
Those paths I led,
I would so expiate each past offence
That ev'n from thence
The Innocent should wish themselves like me
When with such crimes they such repentance see.

With joy I'd sing away my breath,
Yet who can die so to receive his death?

**II.**
In the black dismal dungeon of despair,
Pined with tormenting care,
Wracked with my fears,
Drowned in my tears,
With dreadful expectation of my doom
And certain horrid judgement soon to come:
Lord, here I lie,
Lost to all hope of Liberty,
Hence never to remove,
But by a miracle of love,
Which I scarce hope for or expect,
Being guilty of so long, so great neglect.
Fool that I was, worthy a sharper rod,
To slight thy courting, O my God.
For thou didst woo, entreat and grieve,
Didst beg me to be happy and to live;
But I would not; I chose to dwell
With death, far from thee, too near to hell:
But is there no redemption, no relief?
Thou savedst a Magdalen, a thief -
O Jesu! Thy mercy, Lord, once more advance;
O give me such a glance
As Peter had! Thy sweet, kind, chiding look
Will change my heart, as it did melt that Rock.
Look on me, sweet Jesu, as thou didst on him!
'Tis more than to create, thus to redeem.

**III.**
Now that the sun hath veil'd his light
And bid the world goodnight;
To the soft bed my body I dispose,
But where shall my soul repose?

Dear, dear God, even in Thy arms,
And can there be any so sweet security!
Then to thy rest, O my soul!
And singing, praise the mercy
That prolongs thy days.

Hallelujah!
Visions of Judgement
for tenor and piano

Harry Sdraulig, Op. 20
Text by William Fuller (1608 - 1675)

A Morning Hymn: Thou wakeful shepherd

Tenor

Piano

Very tranquil \( j = 60 \)

© Harry Sdraulig 2015
To thee I offer up this hymn as my best morning sacrifice; may it be gracious.
in thine eyes To raise me from the bed of sin.

And do I live to see another day? I

vow, my God, hence forth to walk thy ways, And sing

rit.

Very slightly broader $\dot{=} 42$

thy praise All those few
days Thou shalt allow. Could I redeem the time

I have mispent In sinful merriment,

rit. . . . . . . . . . [F] A little quicker $\frac{j}{4} = 44$

pp poco a poco cresc. Could I untread Those paths I

led, I would expiate each past of fence That ev'n from thence the innocent should
wish themselves like me. When with such crimes they such repentance see.

With joy I'd sing away my breath,
Yet who can die so to receive his death?

Freely

Attacca
In the black, dismal dungeon of despair

Fast, with energy $j = 144$

dun-geon_ of des-pair, Pined with tor-ment-ing care, Wracked with my fears,
Drowned in my tears, With dreadful expectation of my doom.

And certain horrid judgment soon to come.

Lord, here I lie, Lost to all hope of Liberty, Hence
never to remove, But by a miracle

mysteriously

of love,

Which I scarce hope for or expect,

Being guilty of so long, so great neglect.
Fool that I was, worthy a sharper rod,

A little broader, mysteriously $\beta = 132$

To slight thy court ing, O my God. For thou didst woo, en treat and

grieve, Didst beg me to be hap py and to live; But I would not; I
chose to dwell
With death, far from thee,
too near to Hell:
But is there no re-
demp-tion, no re-

Je su-

more ad-

As before \( \frac{J}{=} \) = 144

As before \( \frac{J}{=} \) = 144

more ad-

As Pe-

mer- cy, Lord,

mer- cy, Lord,

mer- cy, Lord,

mer- cy, Lord,

mer- cy, Lord,

mer- cy, Lord,

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mer- cy, Lord,

mer- cy, Lord,
Thy sweet, kind, chiding look Will change my heart, as it did melt that Rock.

Slower, freely

f regretfully

Look sweetly on me, sweet Jesus, as thou didst on him!

Even slower

Tis more than to create, thus to redeem.
III

An Evening Hymn: Now that the sun hath veil'd his light

Quietly and steadily $j = 56$

Now, now that the sun hath veil'd his light
And bid the world good-night;

To the soft bed my body I dis-pose,

ppp always smoothly

pp warmer

pp

pp

pp

p staccato

B
But where shall my soul re- pose?

A little quicker \( J = 60 \)
molto rit.

Dear God, e- ven in Thy arms,

And can there be a ny so sweet se- cu- ri- ty!

Then to thy rest, O my soul! And sing- ing, praise the
That prolongs thy days.

A little quicker $j = 63$
Elegy ‘In Memoriam
Peter Sculthorpe’
for strings and percussion

(2015)

Duration: c. 10 minutes

© Harry Sdraulig, 2015
Note

This piece was composed at the request of Fabian Russell for the University of Melbourne Orchestra. It is scored for full strings, timpani and percussion (including anvil and vibraphone).

_Elegy ‘In Memoriam Peter Sculthorpe’_ was written in commemoration of one of Australia’s most inventive and influential composers, whose passing on August 8, 2014 was deeply felt by the countless musicians and audiences to have been touched by the integrity, humanity and beauty of his music. I feel very humbled to have been given the opportunity to compose a piece in memory of such a significant icon of Australian music.

Though this piece contains a few deliberate references to Peter Sculthorpe’s music, especially through the use of percussion (reminiscent of _Earth Cry_) and the desolate spirituality of the cello solo at the work’s heart, I have avoided any attempt at imitation or pastiche, instead composing a work true to my own individual language. It is nevertheless written with heartfelt respect for a man whose influence on the landscape of Australian art music is unparalleled.

_Harry Sdraulig_

_August 2015_
Più mosso con poco rubato $\dot{=}$ 63

Con moto $\dot{=}$ 72
molto rit.

Più tranquillo  \( j = 66 \)
Molto misterioso \( j = 58 \)

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Timp.

\( \text{senza espr.} \)

\( \text{unis. con sord.} \)

\( \text{pp senza espr.} \)

\( \text{pp senza espr.} \)

\( \text{pp senza espr.} \)

\( \text{ppp} \)

\( \text{pp} \)

\( \text{ppp} \)

\( \text{ppp} \)

\( \text{pp sempre} \)

\( \text{ppp} \)

\( \text{div.} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{pp} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{pp} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{pp} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{mp} \)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Solo Vc.
Vc.
Cb.
poco rit.
Piu largo e tranquillo \( \dot{=} 54 \)

\[ \]

Solo Vln.

p espr.

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Solo Vc.
Vc.
Cb.

\( \dot{=} 31 \)

Vibraphone (motor off)

\[ \]

\( \dot{=} 50 \)

con sord.

p espr.

altri.

div.

solo senza sord.

solo senza sord.

con sord.
Harry Sdraulig

Winter
for flute and cello
(2016)

Duration: c. 9 minutes

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Note

Though conceived as a gentle and often meditative piece, *Winter* has moments of both sunlight and shadow. The title carries no specific programmatic significance, but the overall journey of the work can be likened to a winter stroll through the woods, with many twists and turns along the way. The flute and cello converse and interact in bi-modal conversation throughout, at times with considerable passion, but eventually achieve solitude in a soft and peaceful conclusion.

*Harry Sdraulig*

*May 2016*
For Kim and Eliza

Winter
for flute and cello

For Flute:

Freely (\( \text{\texttt{\textit{d}} \approx \text{c.} 60\))

In time rit.

A little slower (con rubato)

For Cello:

A

flautando

rit.

normale

p delicato

B

More agitated, becoming quicker

poco a poco cresc.

accel.

C

Lively (\( \text{\texttt{\textit{d}} \approx \text{c.} 80\))

rit.

Tempo I (\( \text{\texttt{\textit{d}} \approx \text{c.} 60\))

f

\( f \) intensivo

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molto accel. . . D Very quiet, distant (freely)

E Measured ($= c. 66$)

Moving forward
40

42

F Dragging

rit.

46

Slower (\( \approx 50 \))

rit.

G Calmer (\( \approx 56 \))

51

Slower (\( \approx 46 \))

56

H Freely

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{\textit{Dragging}} \\
\text{\textit{F}} \\
\text{\textit{rit.}} \\
\text{\textit{Calmer}} (\text{\( \approx 56 \)}) \\
\text{\textit{G}} \\
\text{\textit{Slower}} (\text{\( \approx 50 \)}) \\
\text{\textit{rit.}} \\
\end{array}
\]
molto rit.  

Very tranquil (\( \dot{q} = c. 56 \))

rit.  

Slow \( \dot{q} = 50 \)

A little quicker (\( \dot{q} = c. 56 \))
Evocations
for clarinet, violin and piano

(2016)

Duration: c. 11 minutes

© Harry Sdraulig, 2016
Note

*Evocations* was commissioned by Monica Curro, Philip Arkinstall and Stefan Cassomenos of the outstanding Melbourne-based trio, PLEXUS.

The work is scored for clarinet, violin and piano and is in four movements:

1. Incantation I
2. Dance
3. Incantation II
4. Lullaby

The title of this work has no specific programmatic significance. Nevertheless, I have attempted to evoke in musical terms a dreamlike sense of mystery and drama. The two *Incantations*, characterised by stark and declamatory insistence, may be considered musically analogous to the casting of spells.

The *Dance* is lively and energetic, though often bubbling with the music rarely attaining any great volume. Sections of extended polyphony contrast with ever-changing rugged rhythmic elements and the overall movement places considerable demands on the virtuosity of the performers.

The *Lullaby* is unwaveringly gentle and, in many ways, a self-contained response to the often frantic or unsettled nature of the earlier movements. At times, the stillness and veiled dissonance in the piano recall harmonic textures of Messiaen, though deployed within a different context and harmonic language. The final pages eventually fade into tranquil silence, albeit with a sense that not all is resolved.

*Harry Sdraulig*  
*July 2016*
Evocations
for clarinet, violin and piano

Harry Sdraulig
Op. 25 (2016)

INCANTATION I

Strictly rhythmical \( \frac{\text{dolce}}{\text{q} = 50} \)

More freely (c. \( \frac{\text{dolce}}{\text{q} = 50} \))

As before

© Harry Sdraulig 2016
More freely

As before

In time (senza rit.)

attacca
DANCE II

Fast and lively $\mathbf{q} = 144$

\begin{musicstaff}
\begin{music}
\text{pizz. arco}
\text{pizz. arco}
\text{pizz. arco}
\text{pizz. arco}
\text{pizz. arco}
\text{pizz. arco}
\text{pizz. arco}
\text{pizz. arco}
\end{music}
\end{musicstaff}
Mysteriously

sul pont.

142
As before $j = 50$

INCANTATION II

As before $j = 50$

More freely

III

More freely

In time ($j = 50$)

More freely

rit.

ppp let ring

ppp let ring
In time

More freely

LULLABY

Very quietly and steadily $q = 72$

*follow pedal markings to allow certain harmonies to overlap
rit.

As before \( \dot{f} = 72 \)

A little slower \( \dot{f} = 60 \)
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