Kevin Michael Kay

The World is Sound

Percussion Piano Quartet

Instrumentation

Percussion 1
- tam-tam (friction mallets and mallets for rolling)
- large gong (friction mallets)
- tom-tom drum (friction mallets)
- vibraphone (cello bow and medium vibraphone mallets)

Percussion 2
- tam-tam (friction mallets and mallets for rolling)
- large gong (friction mallets)
- tom-tom drum (friction mallets)
- bass drum (friction mallets and mallets for rolling)
- crotales (cello bow)

Piano 1 (fish-line bow with rosin is needed)
Piano 2 (fish-line bow with rosin is needed)

NOTE for percussionists: The large gong, tam-tam, and tom-tom drum are shared. They should be arranged in a way such that both players can access them. Every time friction mallets are used, percussionists may use two instead of one to achieve desired dynamics. At certain moments in the piece, percussionists may have to roll the tam-tam with mallets in one hand while using the fricion mallet in the other hand. These moments are notated.

Percussion Techniques

The large gong, tam-tam, and bass drum are all played solely using a friction mallet.
The head of the friction mallet is dragged along the surface of the instrument.
The motion of this dragging is depicted using one of four diagrams, shown below:

Drag in circular motion close to the perimeter of the instrument

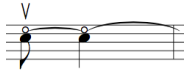
Drag in circular motion about halfway between perimeter and center of the instrment

Drag in circular motion starting near the perimeter and swirling inwards towards the center

Drag from the top of the instrument down through the center and towards the bottom

Bowed vibraphone and crotales are notated with standard string bowing articulations.

Example: Up bow followed by a quick change to down bow without a break in the sound

Vibraphone harmonics: 

Play the indicated note but touch the bar right in the center.

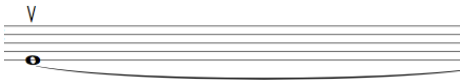
Vibraphone pedal is always held for the entirety of the phrase until the stop sign.

Piano Techniques

Written for the Yarn/Wire Institute 2017

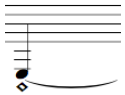
Tremolos should not just be played as block chords. Play all the notes within the chord one at a time, but very quickly. A random and rapidly changing sequence is preferred, but it is OK if the succession falls into a natural pattern, like fingers 5-4-3-2-1 (in a 5 note chord).

An up bow is used to notate a bowed string. The bowing does not have to be in one continuous motion; you can bow back and forth just do not cause a break in the sound.

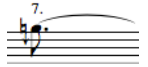


Piano 1 needs the following strings prepared with bows: C2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, E3
Piano 2 needs the following strings preapred with bows: A1, D2, G2,, E3

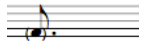
A diamond notehead indicates that the player should place a finger on the string(s) of the indicated note right in front of the damper (but very close to it), and strike the note on the keyboard. The resulting sound is a fluorish of harmonics.



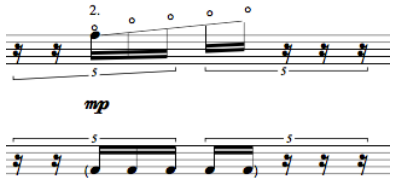
Piano harmonics are notated with the fundamental pitch in the left hand (which is the note that will be struck on the keyboard), and the resulting pitch in the right hand, as well as the corresponding harmonic number. The example shown is bass clef in the left hand (A2) and the resulting pitch is in treble clef (G5, slightly flat).



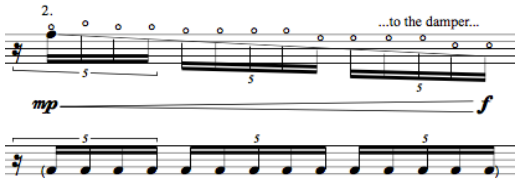
It is suggested that the pianist mark finger placement for harmonics.



The following notation is used to show that the pianist is to drag their finger along the string(s) of the note shown in the left hand, from one place on the string to another. The most commonly used marker is the 2nd harmonic, which is halfway down the string. The pianist may drag their finger towards the damper or away from the damper, depending on if the glissandi notation goes down (towards) or up (away). The pianist is to strike the keyboard in the rhythm of the glissandi.



Example: From the second harmonic away from the damper to an unspecified end location



From the second harmonic towards the damper

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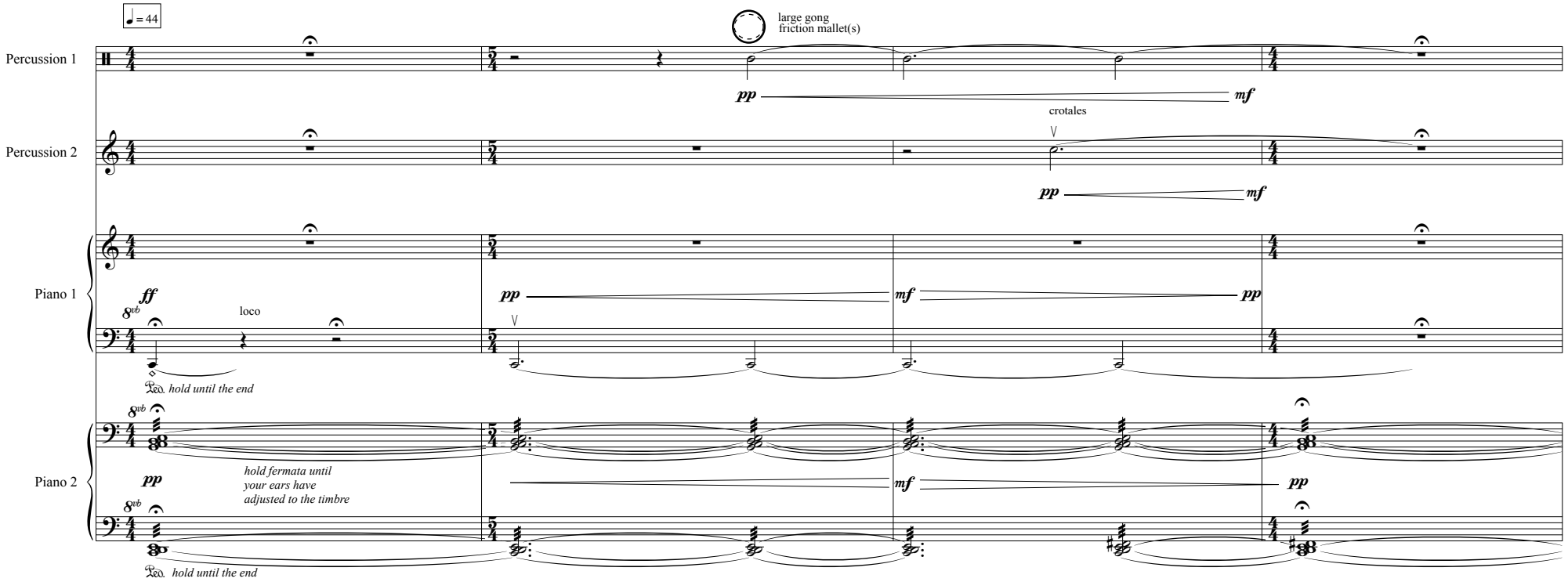

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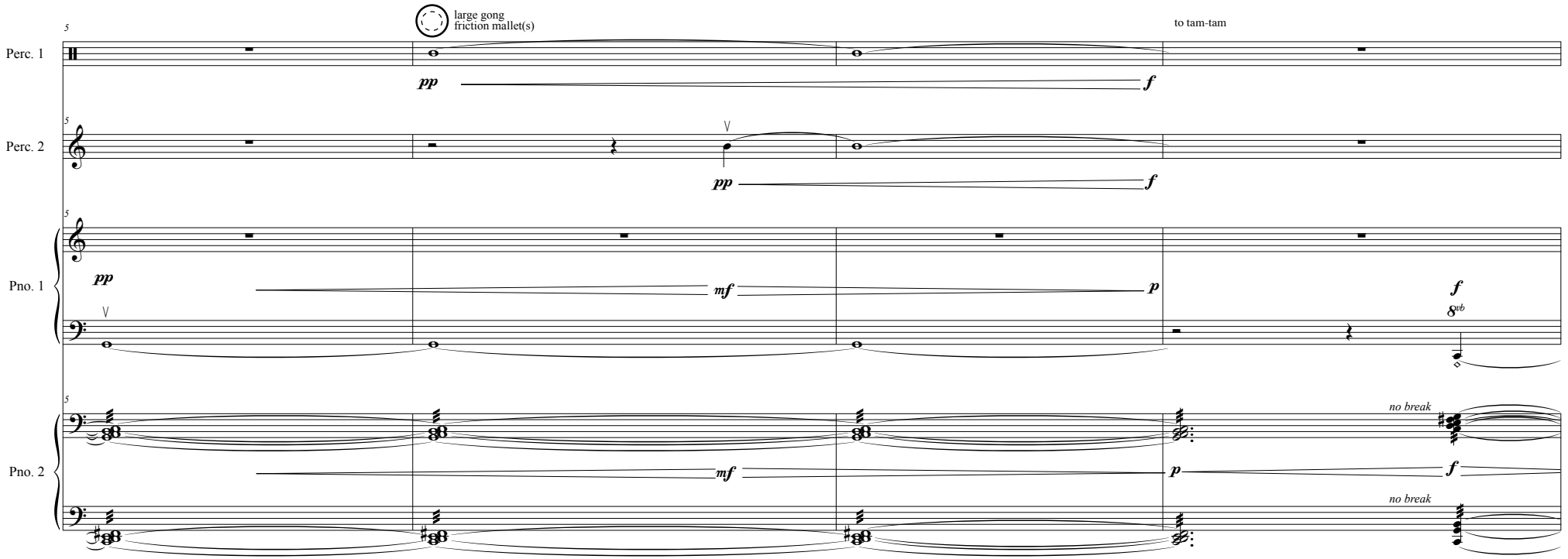

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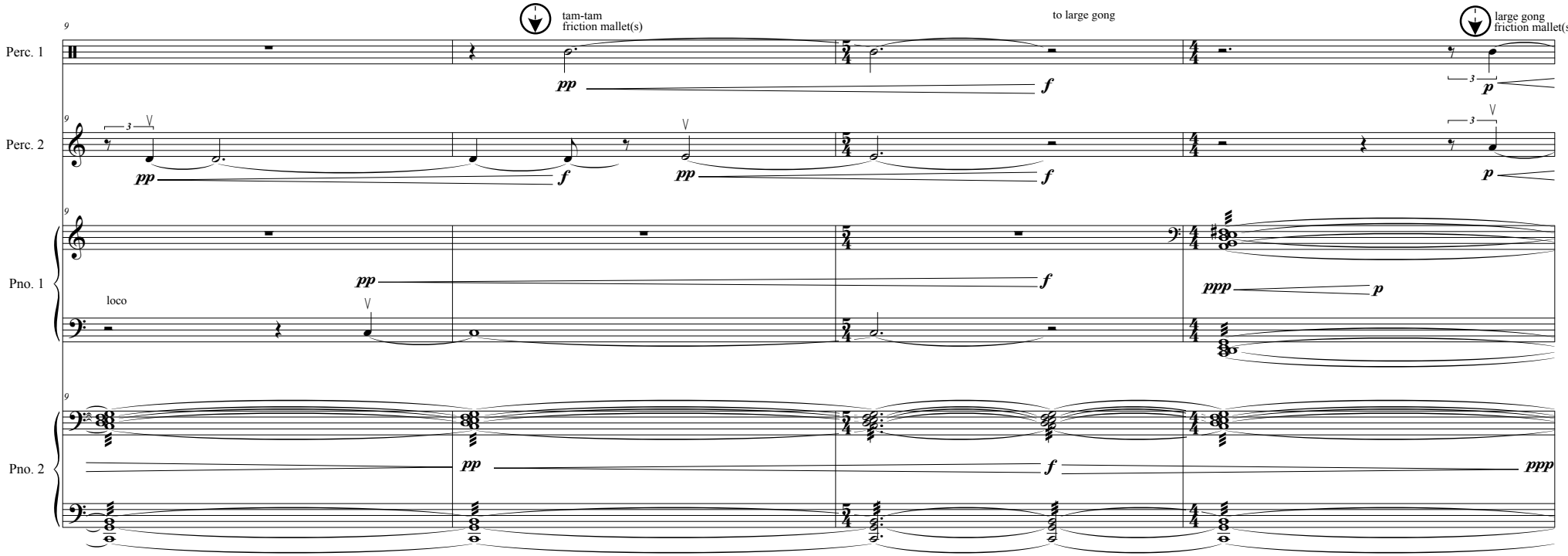

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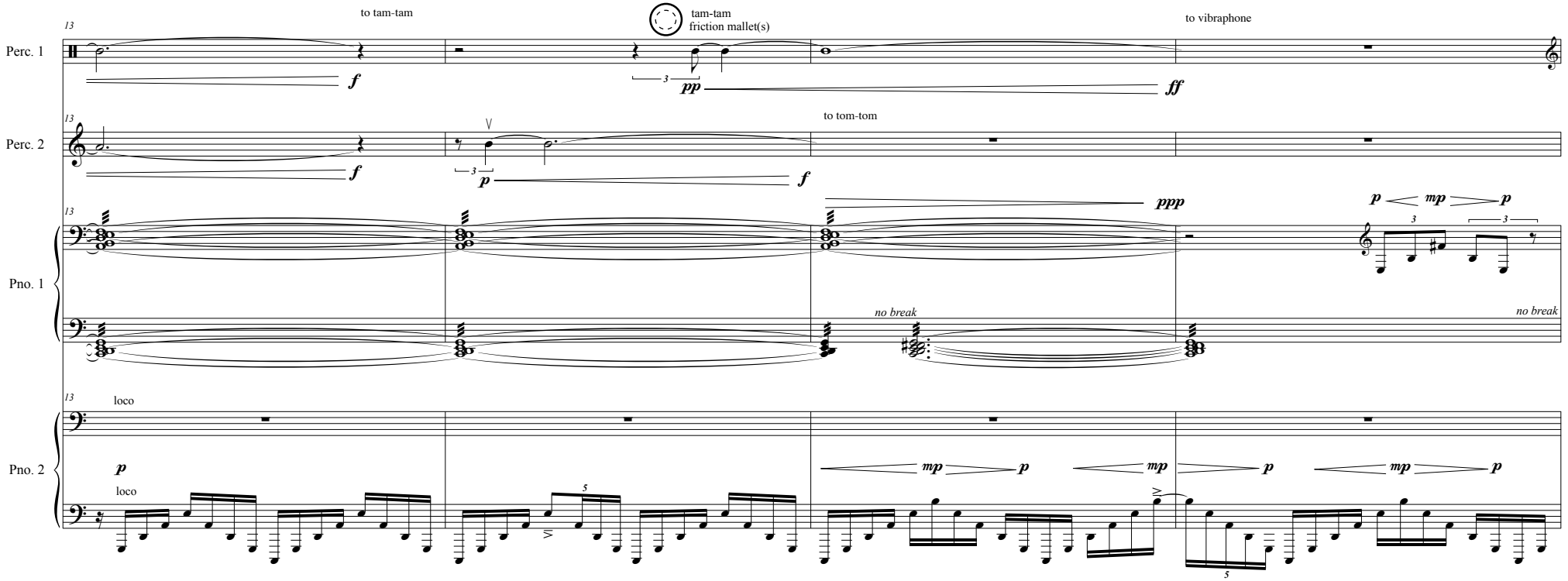

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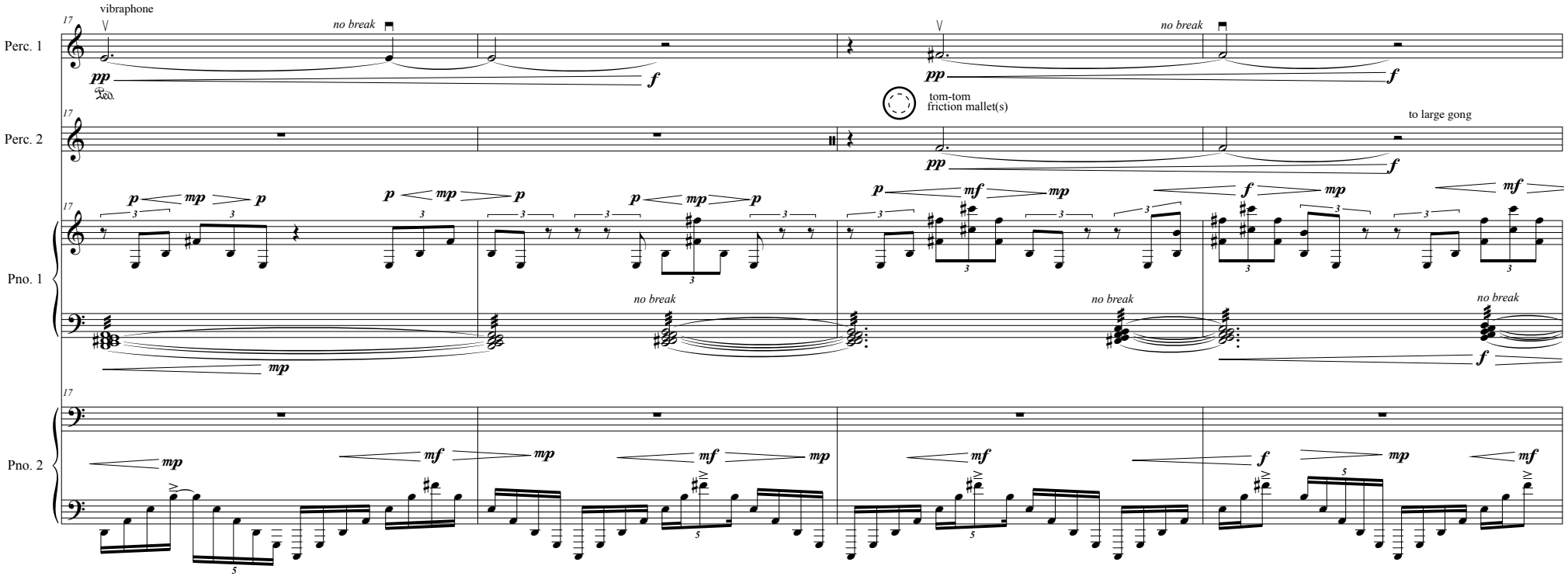
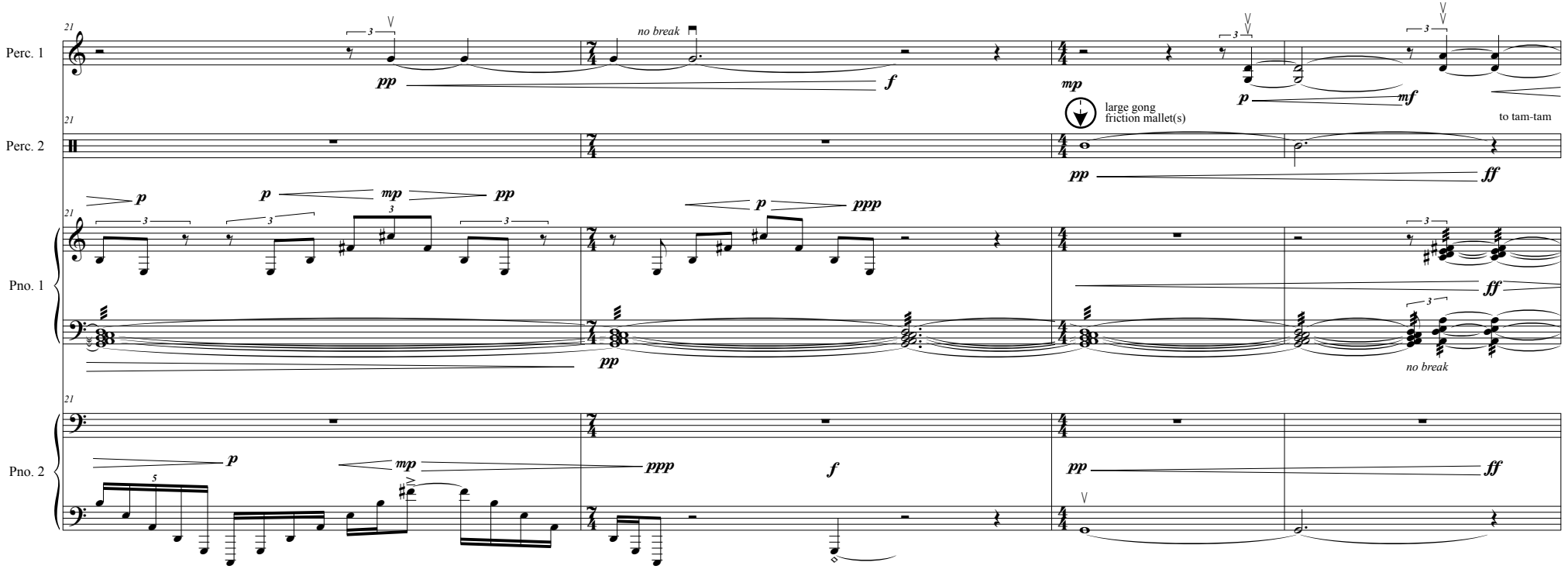
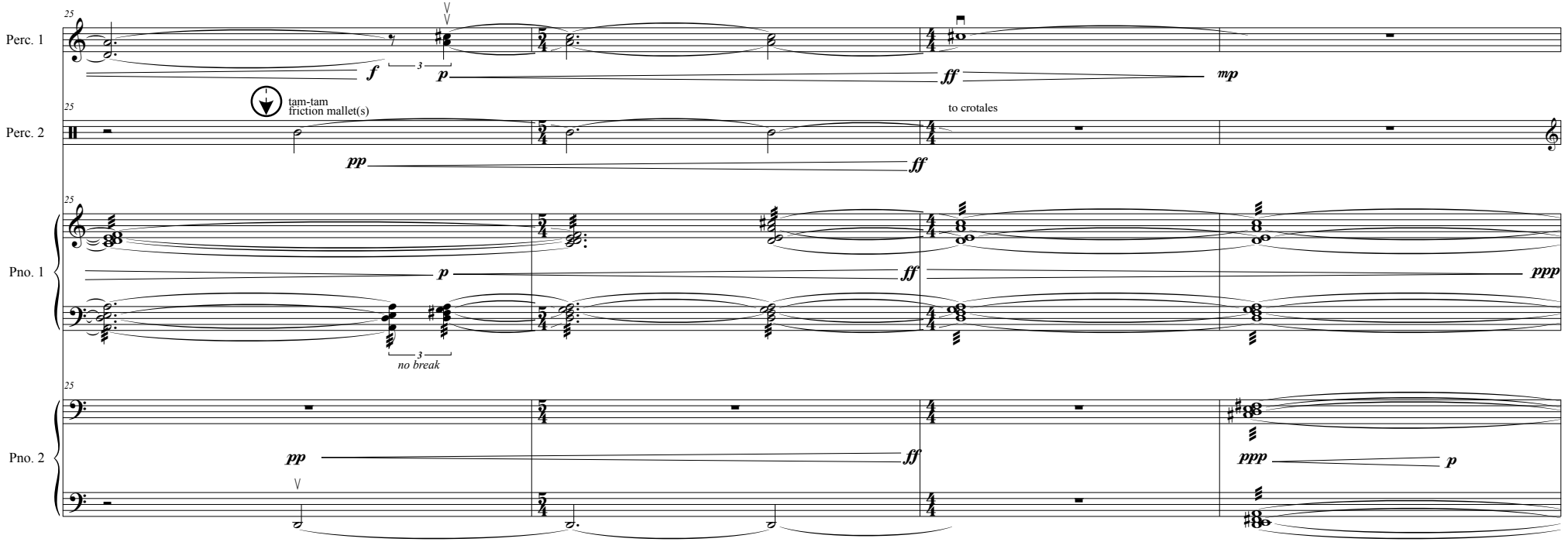



Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
21
pp
f
no break
mp
p
mf
large gong
friction mallet(s)
to tam-tam
ff
ppp
mp
no break


25
Perc. 1
f
3
p
ff
mp
25
Perc. 2
tam-tam
friction mallet(s)
pp
ff
to crotales
25
Pno. 1
p
ff
ppp
3
no break
25
Pno. 2
pp
ff
ppp
p

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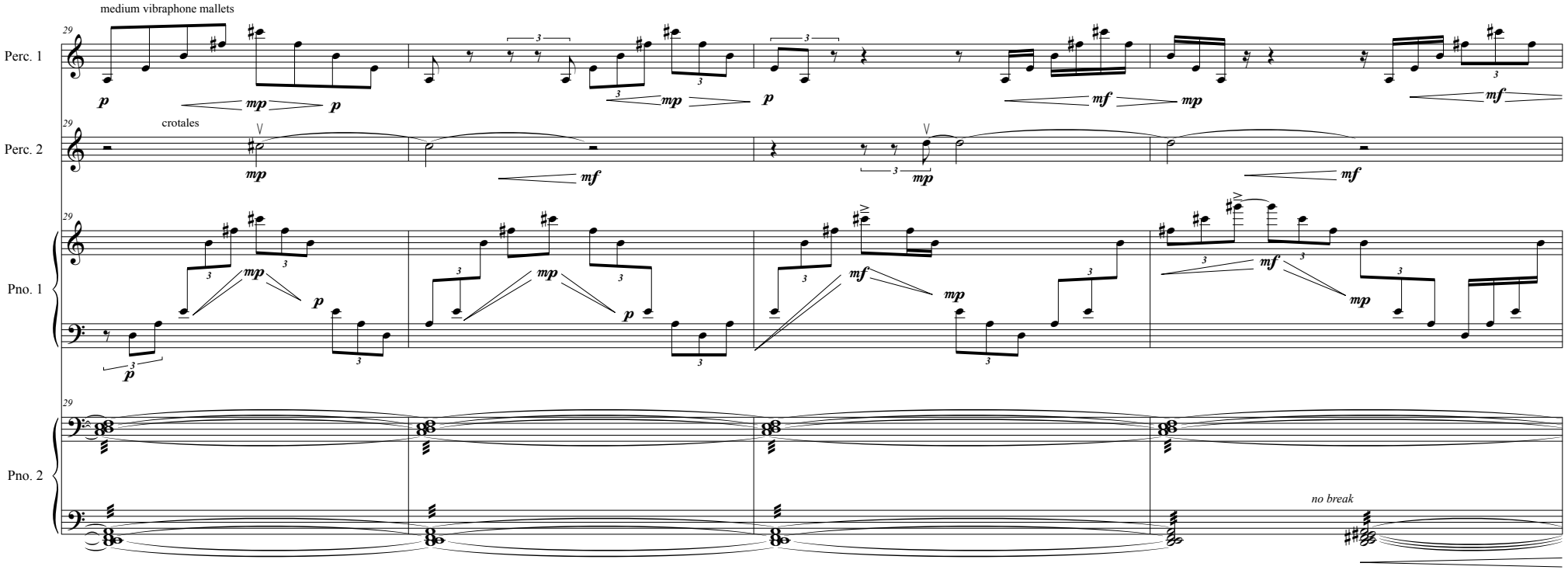

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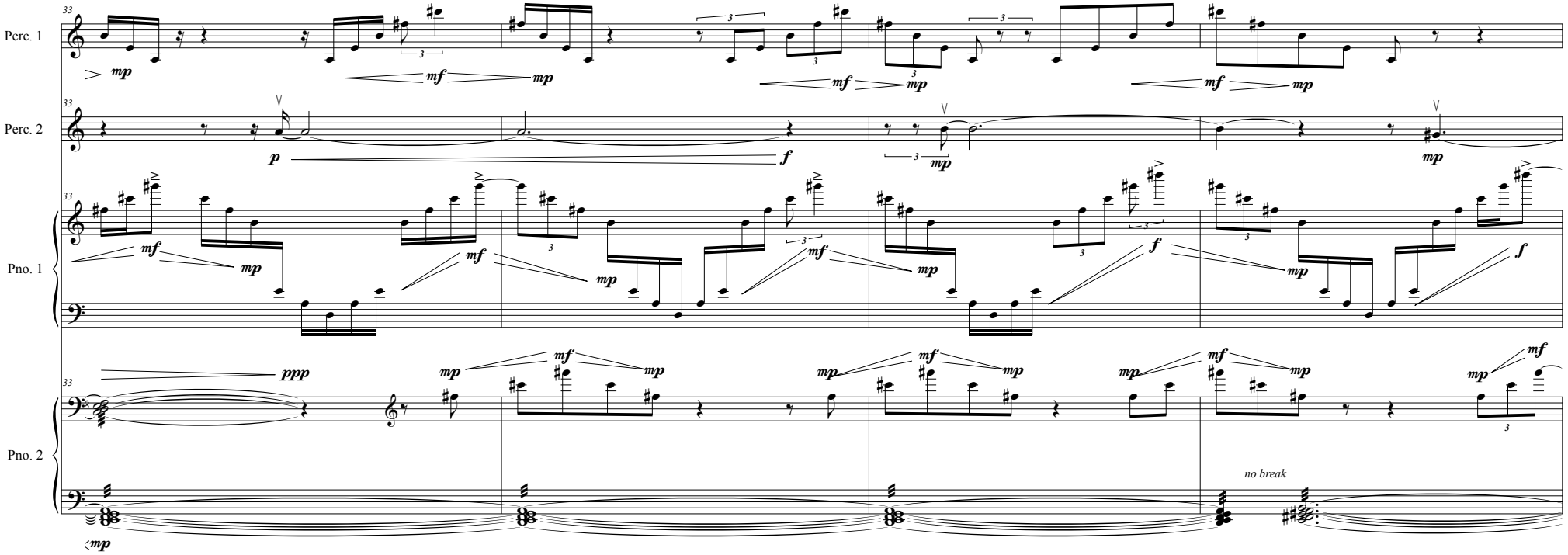

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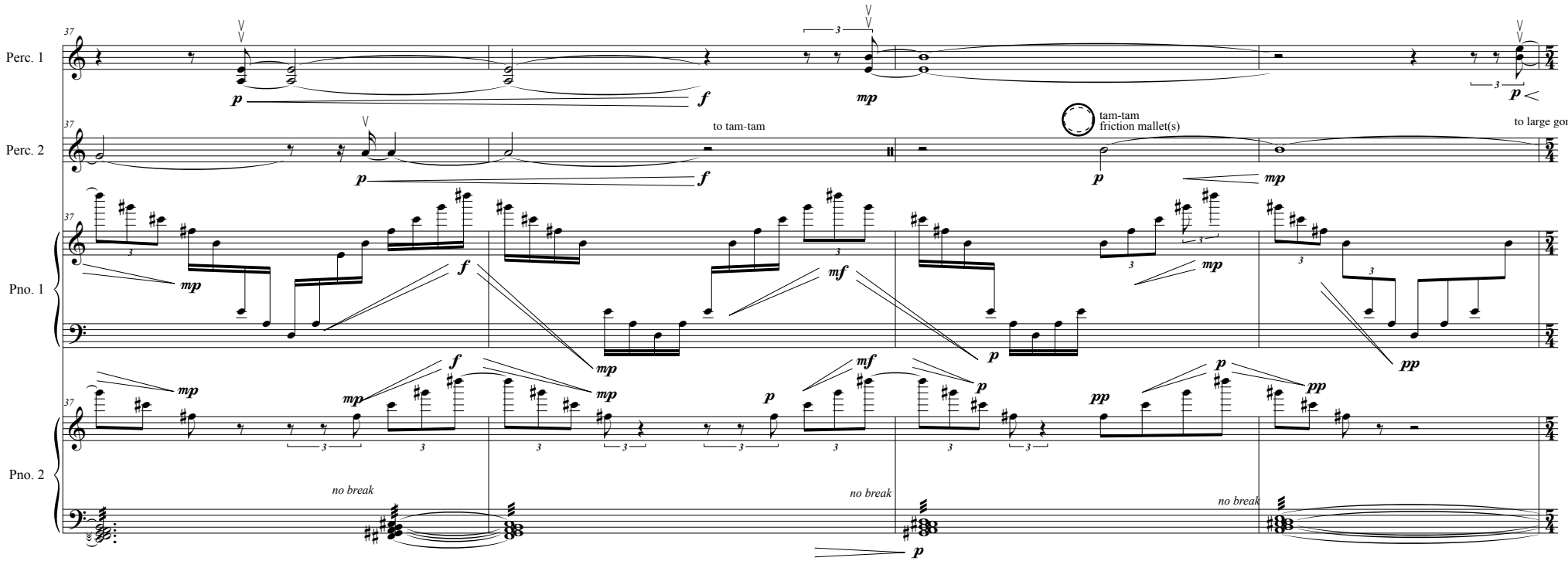

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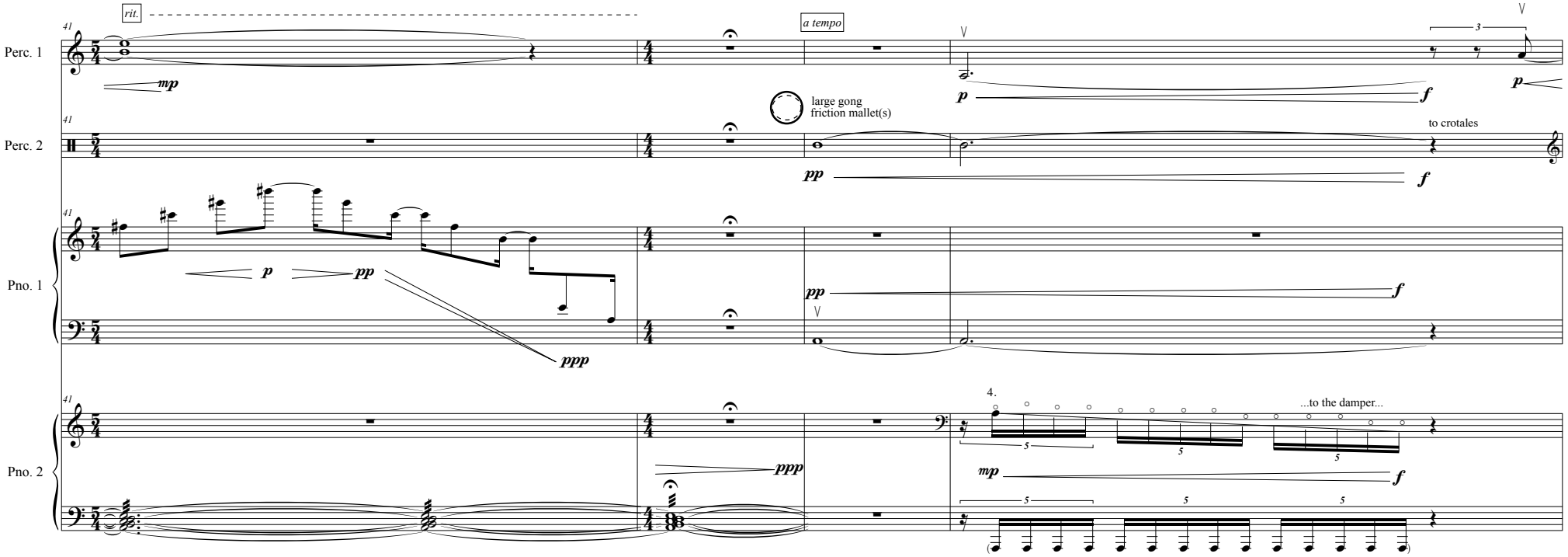

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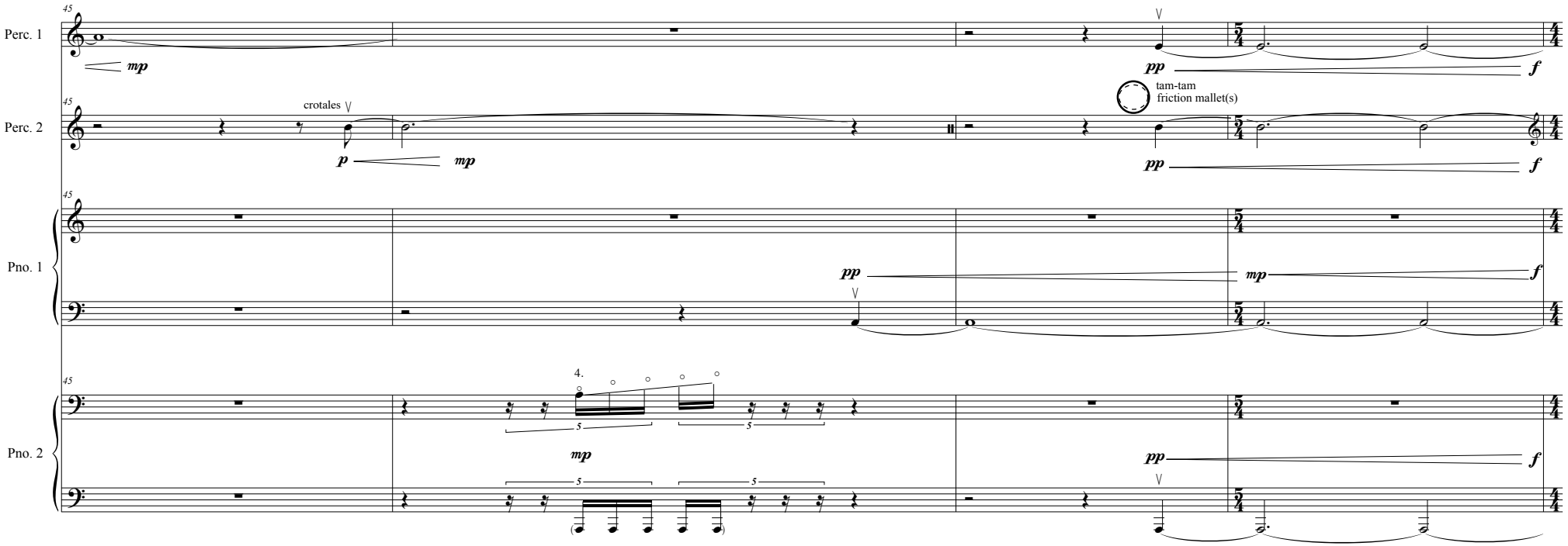

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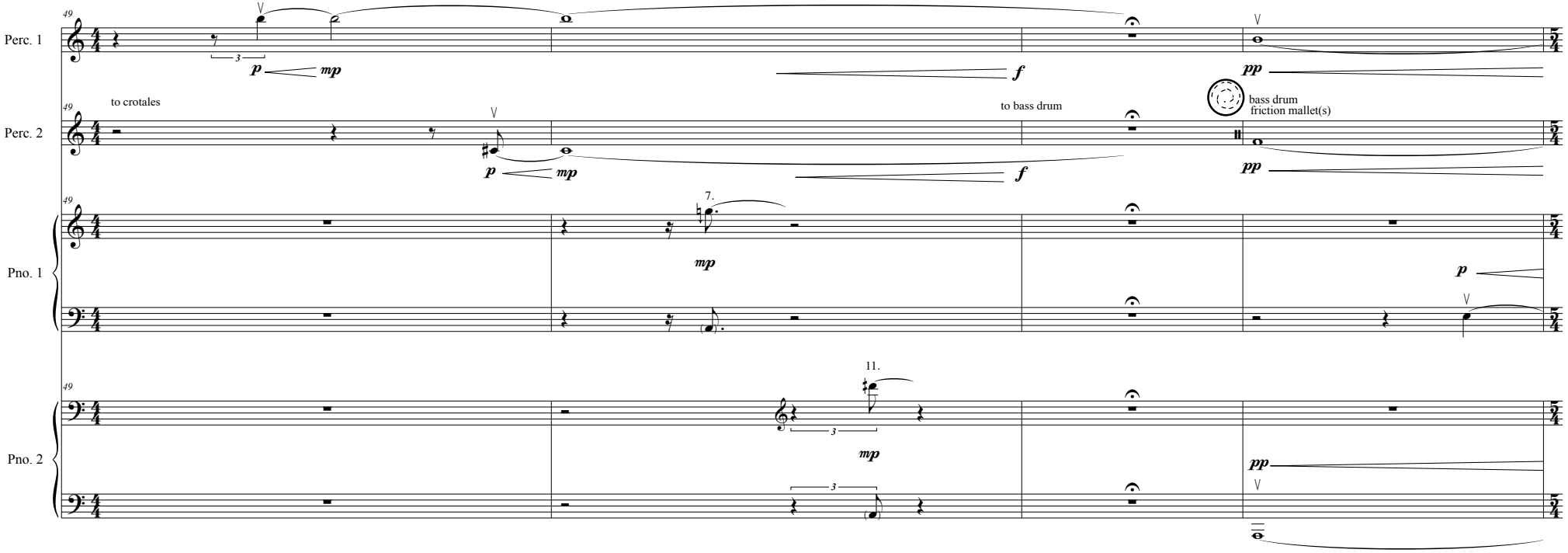

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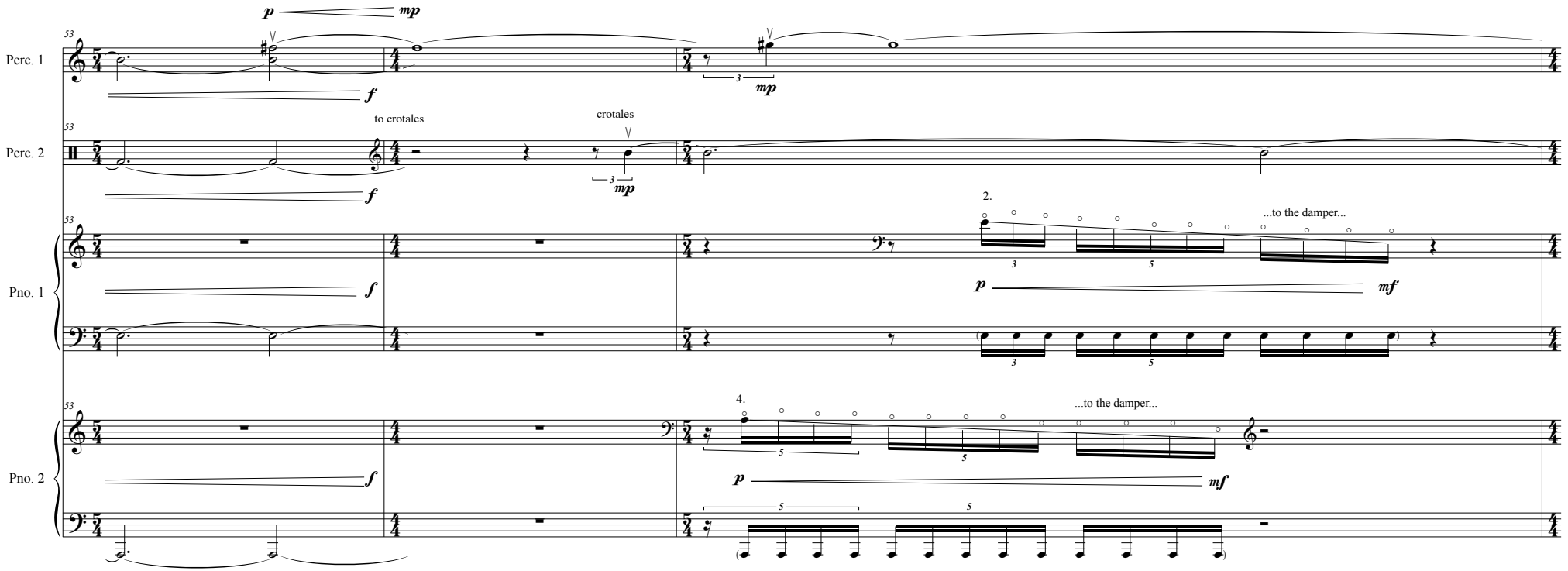

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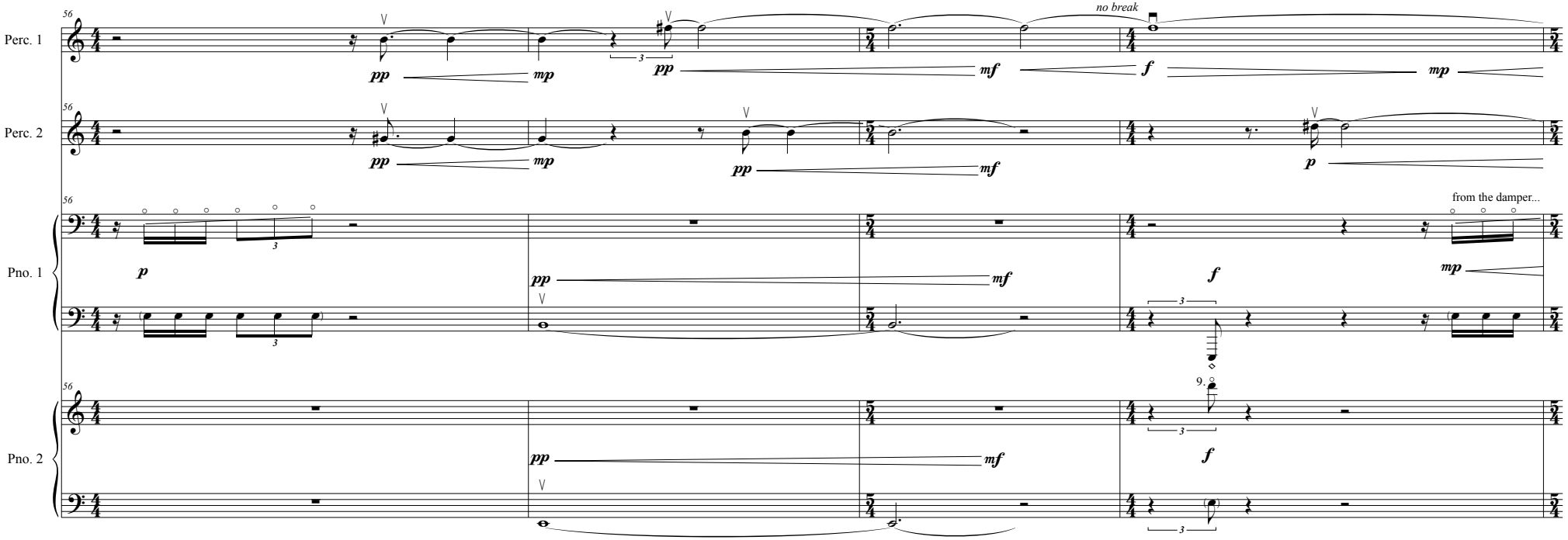

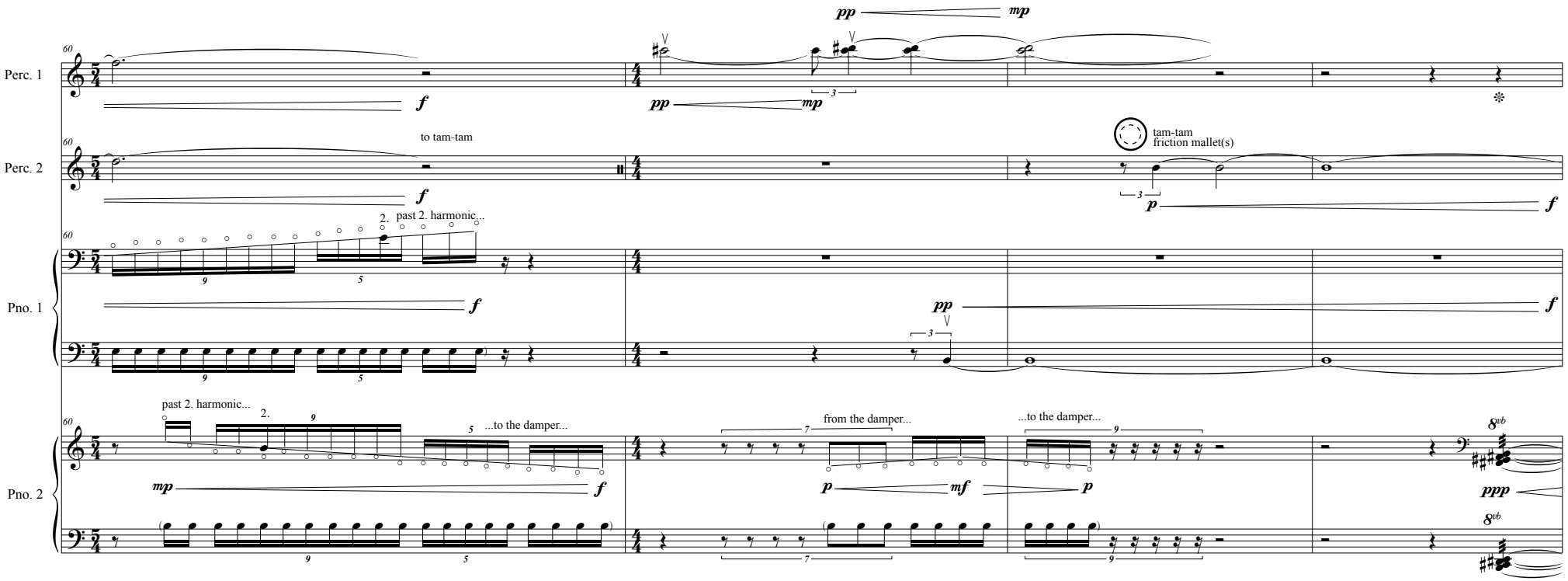
Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
to tam-tam
tam-tam
friction mallet(s)
past 2. harmonic...
...to the damper...
from the damper...

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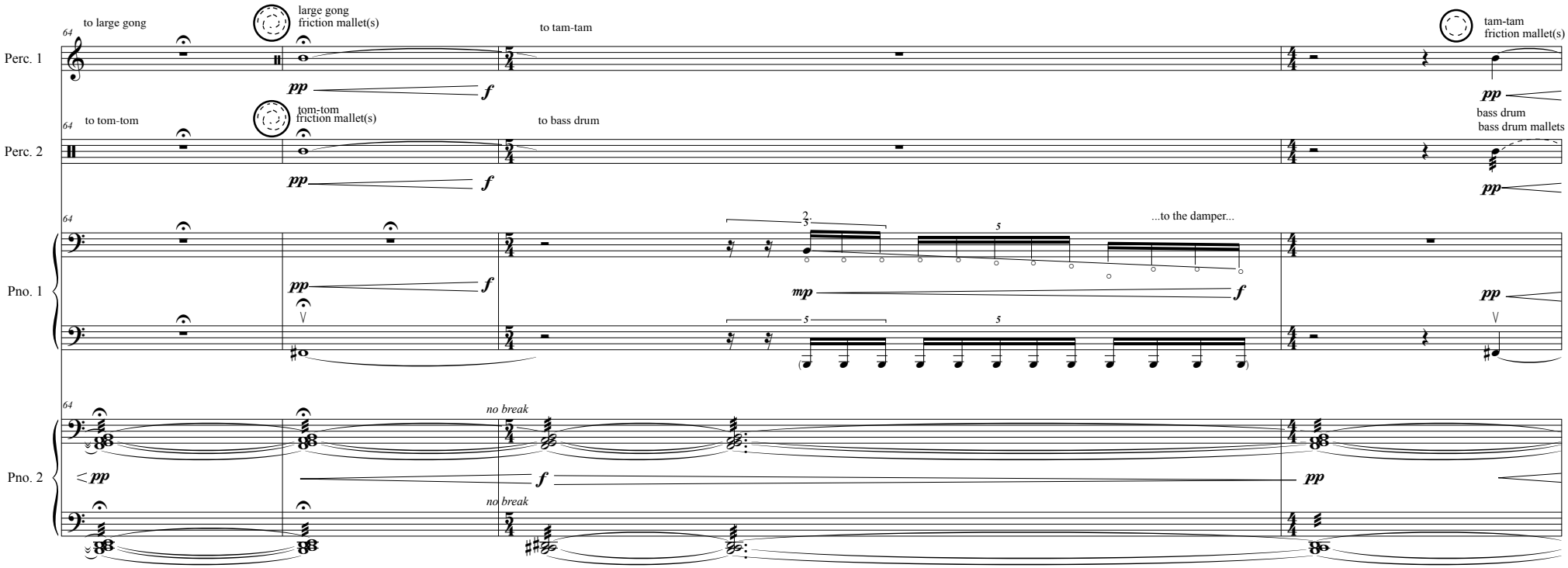
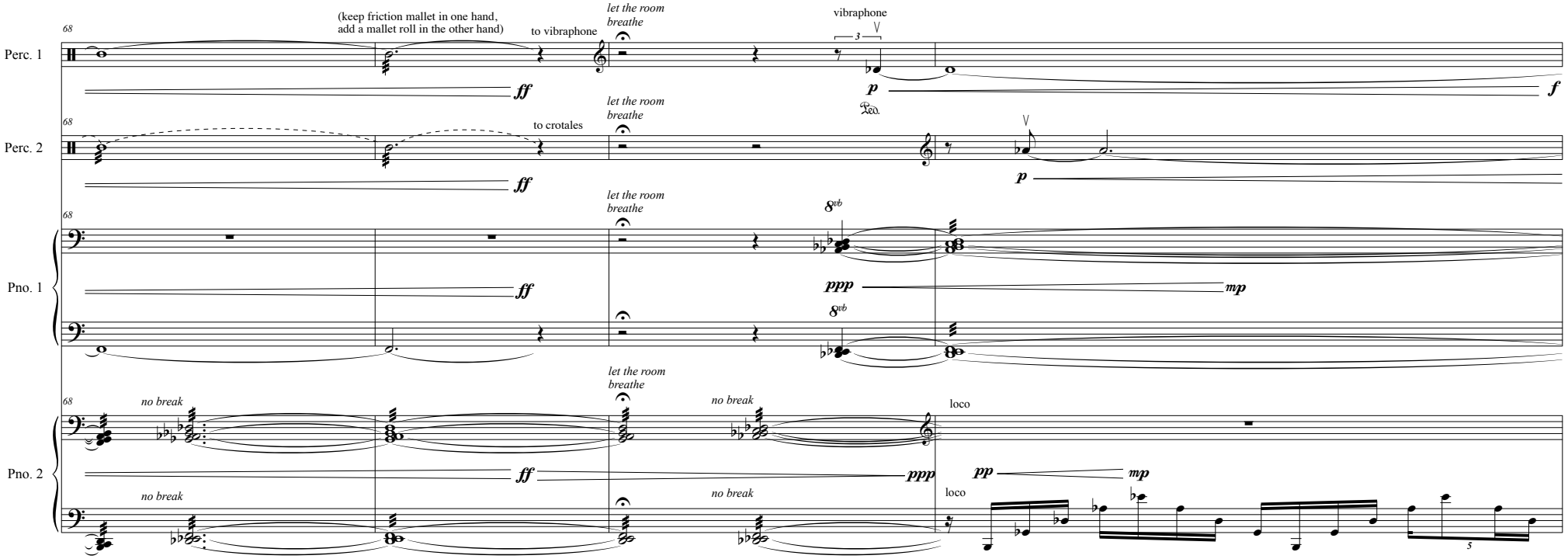
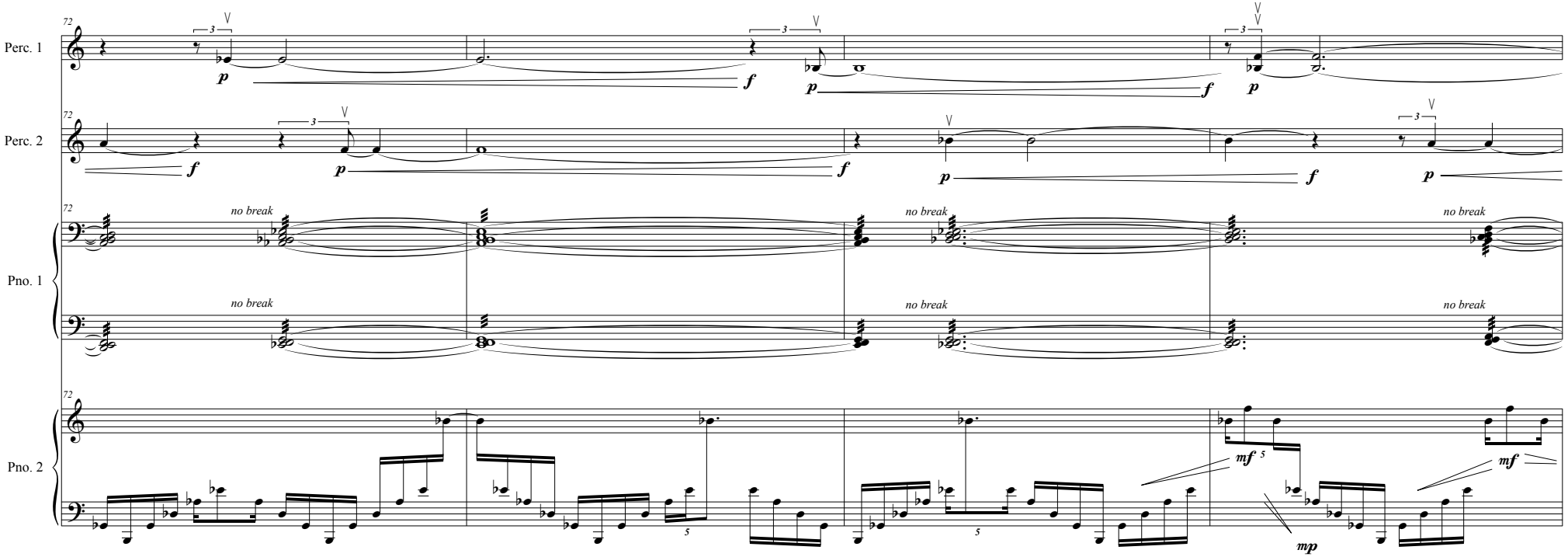
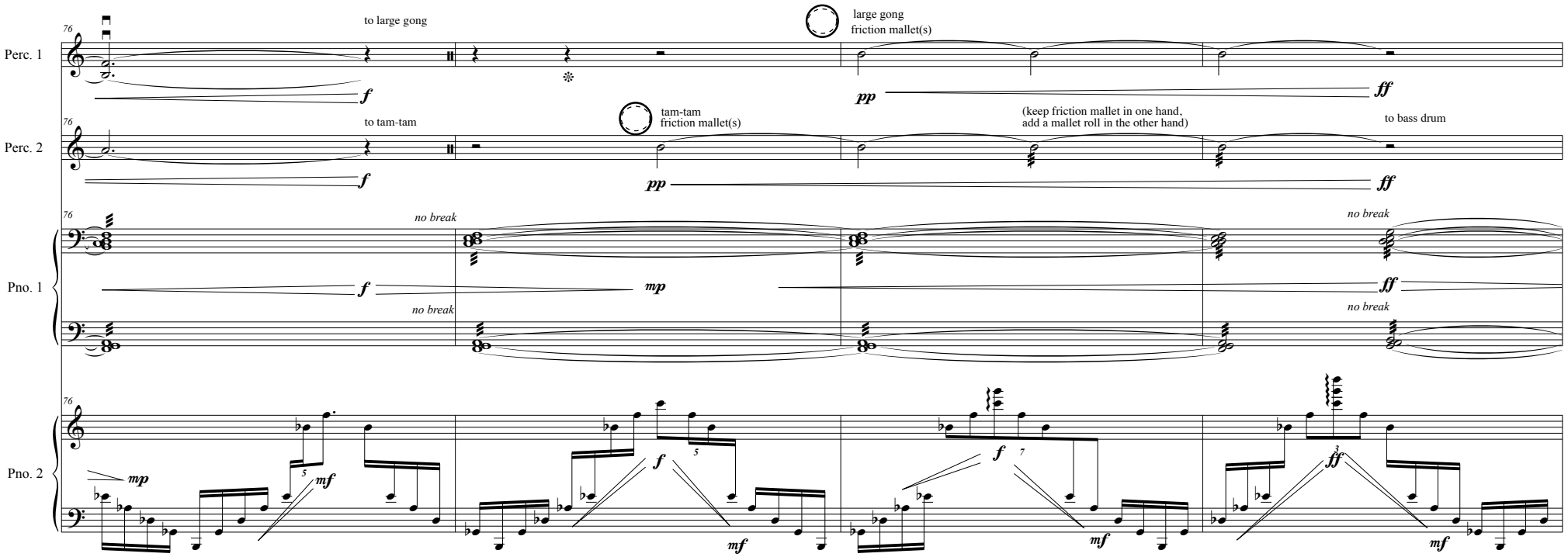



68
Perc. 1
(keep friction mallet in one hand, add a mallet roll in the other hand)
to vibraphone
let the room breathe
vibraphone
3
ff
p
f
Ped.
Perc. 2
to crotales
let the room breathe
ff
p
Pno. 1
8vb
ppp
mp
Pno. 2
no break
loco
pp
mp
5


Perc. 1
Perc. 2
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
72
p
f
mf
mp
no break


76
Perc. 1
to large gong
f
large gong
friction mallet(s)
pp
ff
Perc. 2
to tam-tam
f
tam-tam
friction mallet(s)
pp
(keep friction mallet in one hand,
add a mallet roll in the other hand)
to bass drum
ff
Pno. 1
no break
f
mp
ff
Pno. 2
mp
mf
f
mf
f
mf
ff
mf

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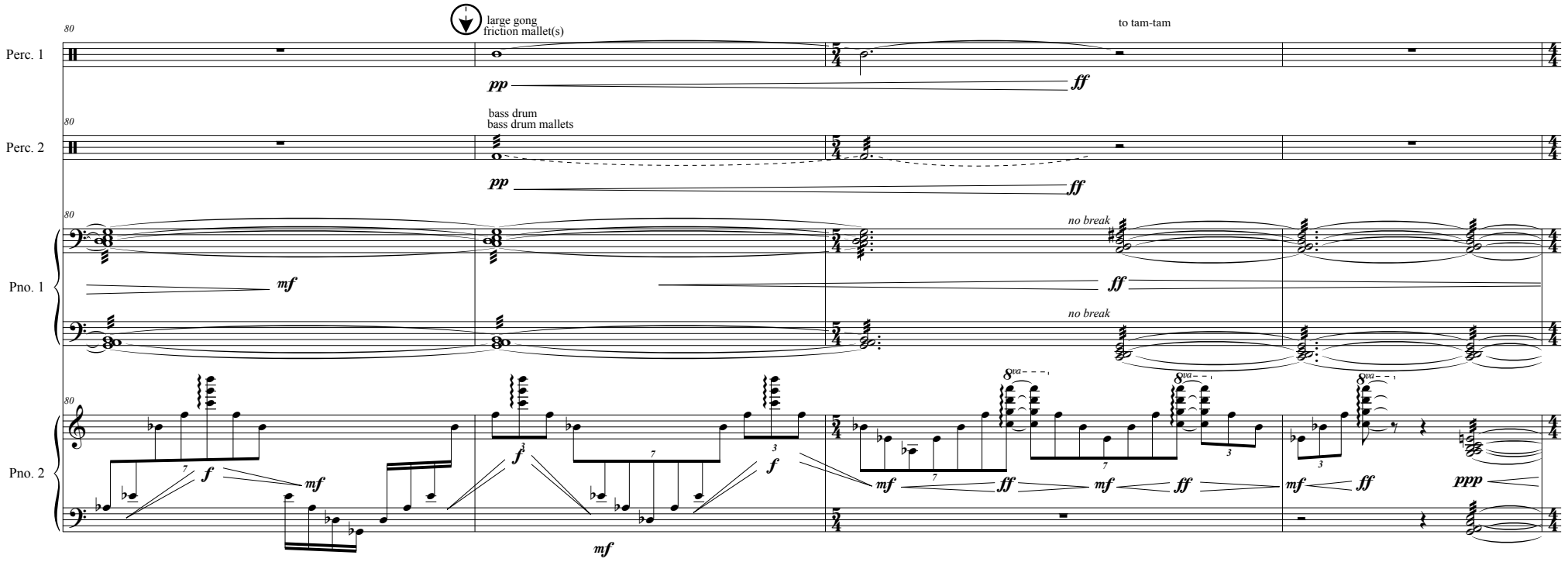

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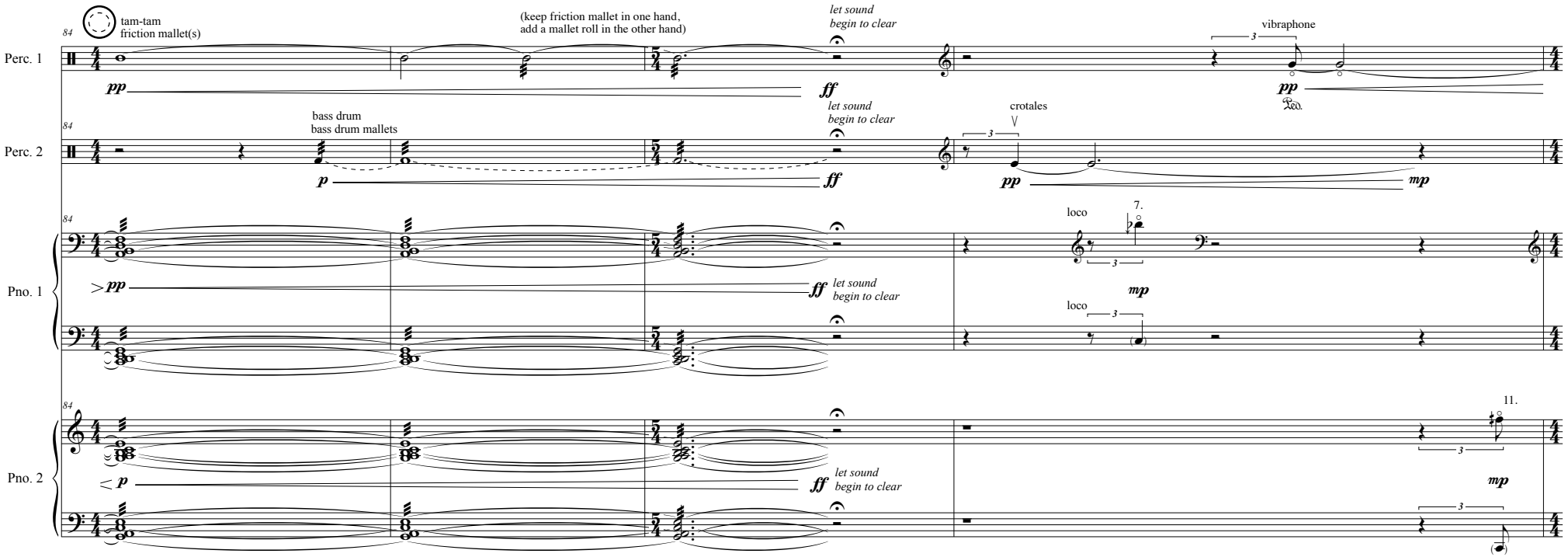

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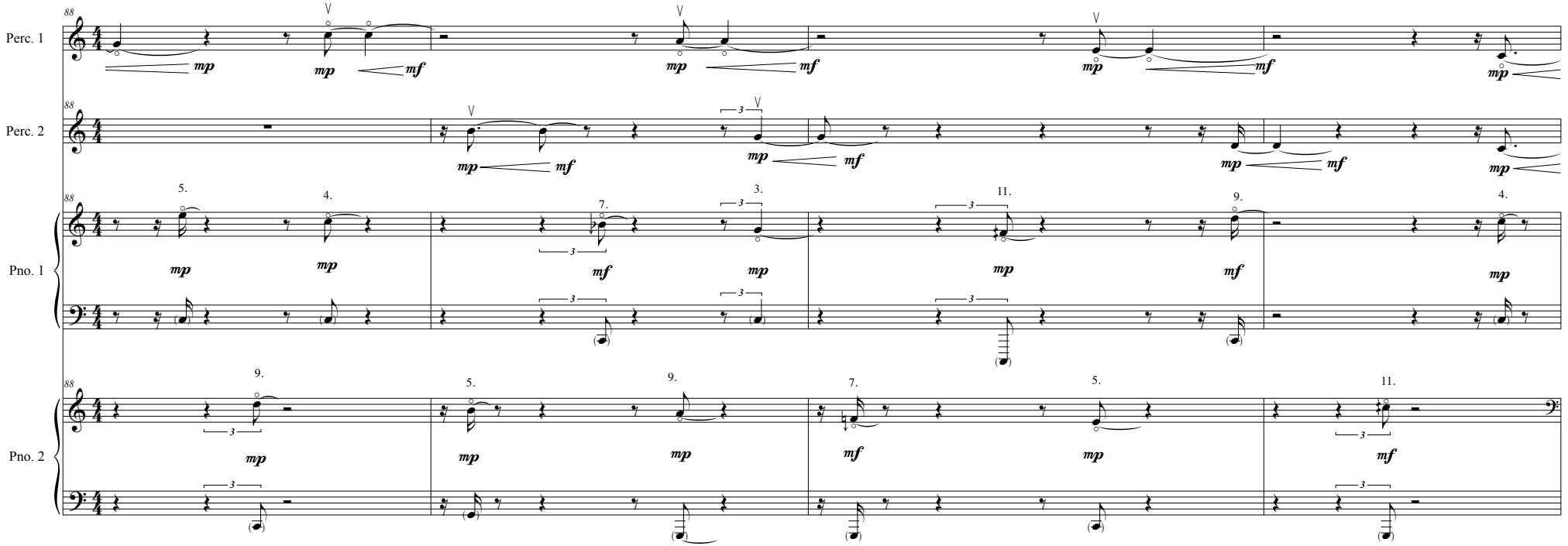
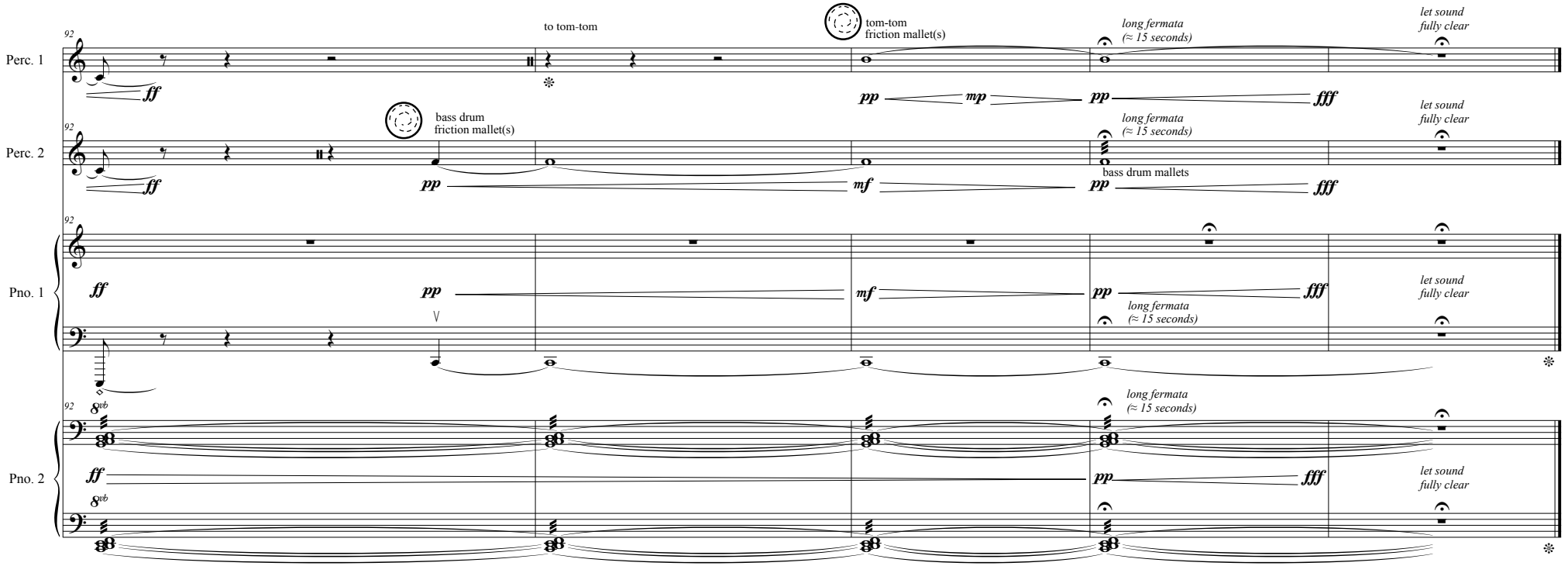
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