head down among the stems and bells

solo piano

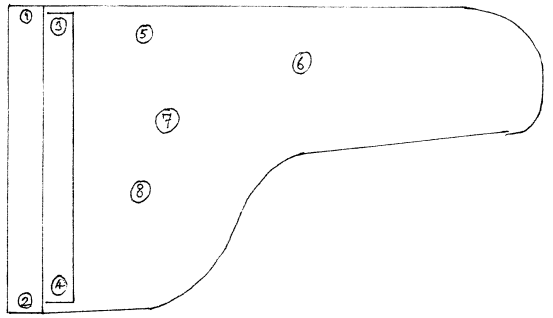
Martin Iddon (2009)

1. Open noteheads (o) denote that the indicated keys should be silently depressed to the point where the key 'bites' audibly with the escapement mechanism. The noisiness of this 'clunk' should be exaggerated as much as possible, without breaking the guidelines in point 4;
2. Closed noteheads (•) denote that keys should be depressed normally. This does not necessarily mean that the written pitches will all sound, as point 4 indicates;
3. The indication ⌐Y denotes that the indicated key(s) and/or pedal should be exaggeratedly and audibly released;
4. Numerals in a square between the staves of a chordal formation and numerals in a circle by an appoggiatura figure denote that the given number of notated pitches should sound. Specificities are at the pianist's discretion;
5. Dynamics should be determined by the physical ramifications of the above, but should, in general terms, be quiet or very quiet;
6. On ⚲ the frame should be struck with a soft mallet to achieve string resonance.

Although head down among the stems and bells may be performed on an unprepared piano, it should preferably be performed using the preparation chart below. Only materials — metal (M), wood (W), cloth, fibre, or rubber (C), plastic, glass, or bone (P) — are indicated; the point(s) on the string of the preparation should be chosen by the pianist. The pianist should feel free to move, but not remove, any preparation at any point in the piece.

A0 C	A3 C	E5 P
Bb0 C	Bb3 P	F5 PM
D1 C	B3 P	F#5 P
F#1 C	C4 MM	G5 M
A1 P	C#4 C	G#5 PP
Bb1 M	D4 P	A5 C
C2 W	Eb4 PC	B5 PM
C#2 P	F4 MP	C6 MP
F2 W	F#4 M	D6 PP
F#2 M	G4 PP	Eb6 C
Bb2 P	A4 C	F#6 MP
B2 PC	Bb4 MP	G6 P
C3 C	B4 PC	Bb6 C
C#3 PP	C5 PM	B6 PP
Eb3 MP	C#5 C	C7 MM
C3 PM	F5 C	

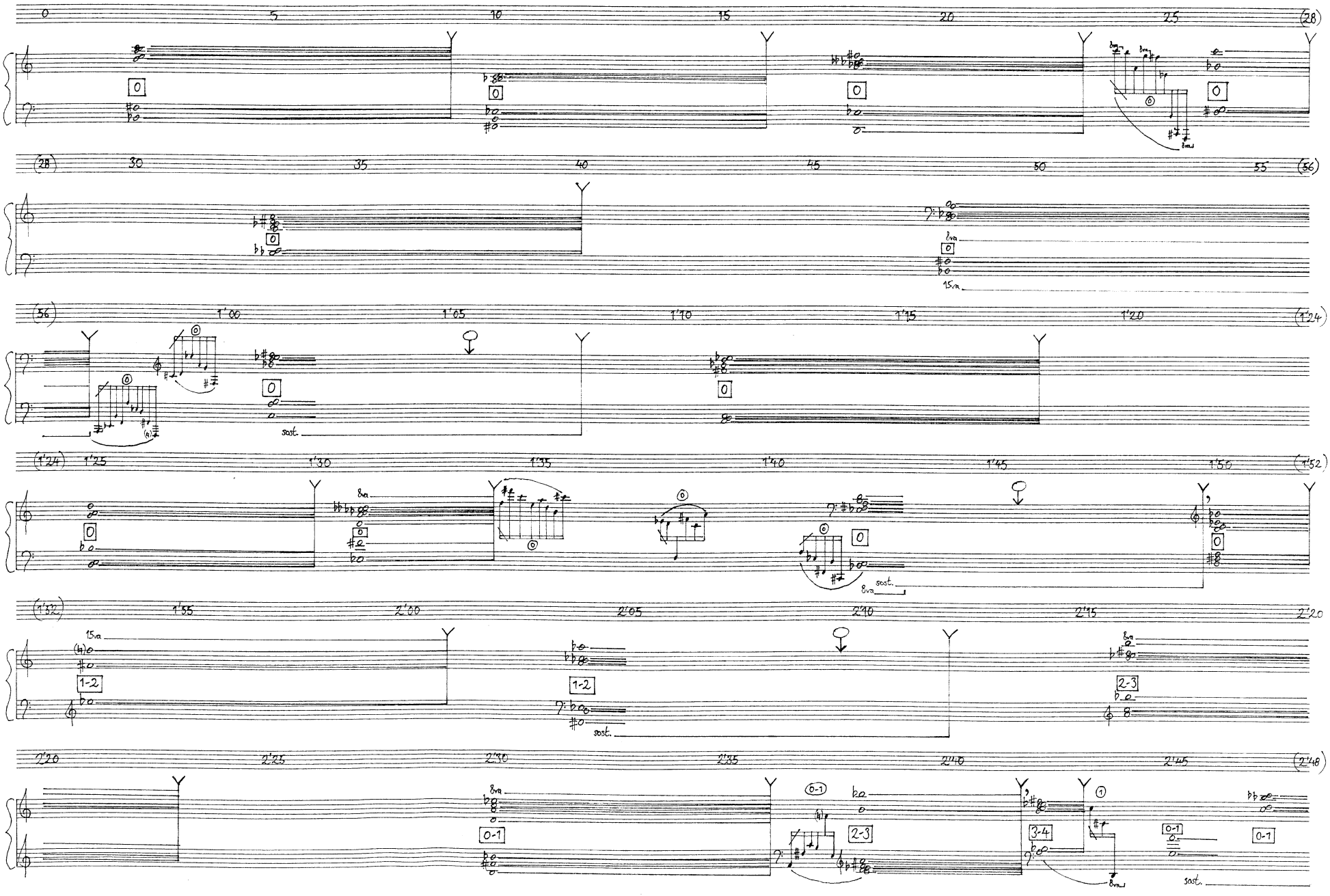
The piano should be amplified using as many as eight pencil-style condenser microphones. Two microphones should be positioned at either end of the keyboard to pick up keyboard noise; two microphones should be used to amplify the hammers and the piano action; up to four microphones should be used to amplify the piano strings themselves. In each case, the microphones should be angled to maximise the level of intended signal they receive, especially in the case of the keyboard and hammer microphones.



① keyboard mic 1
② keyboard mic 2
③ hammer/action mic 1
④ hammer/action mic 2
⑤ string resonance mic 1
⑥ string resonance mic 2
⑦ string resonance mic 3
⑧ string resonance mic 4

It is here one would lie down. In a hollow bedded with dry heather, and fall asleep, for the last time, on an afternoon, in the sun, head down among the minute life of stems and bells, and fast fall asleep, fast farewell to charming things.

Mercier and Camier,
Samuel Beckett


0
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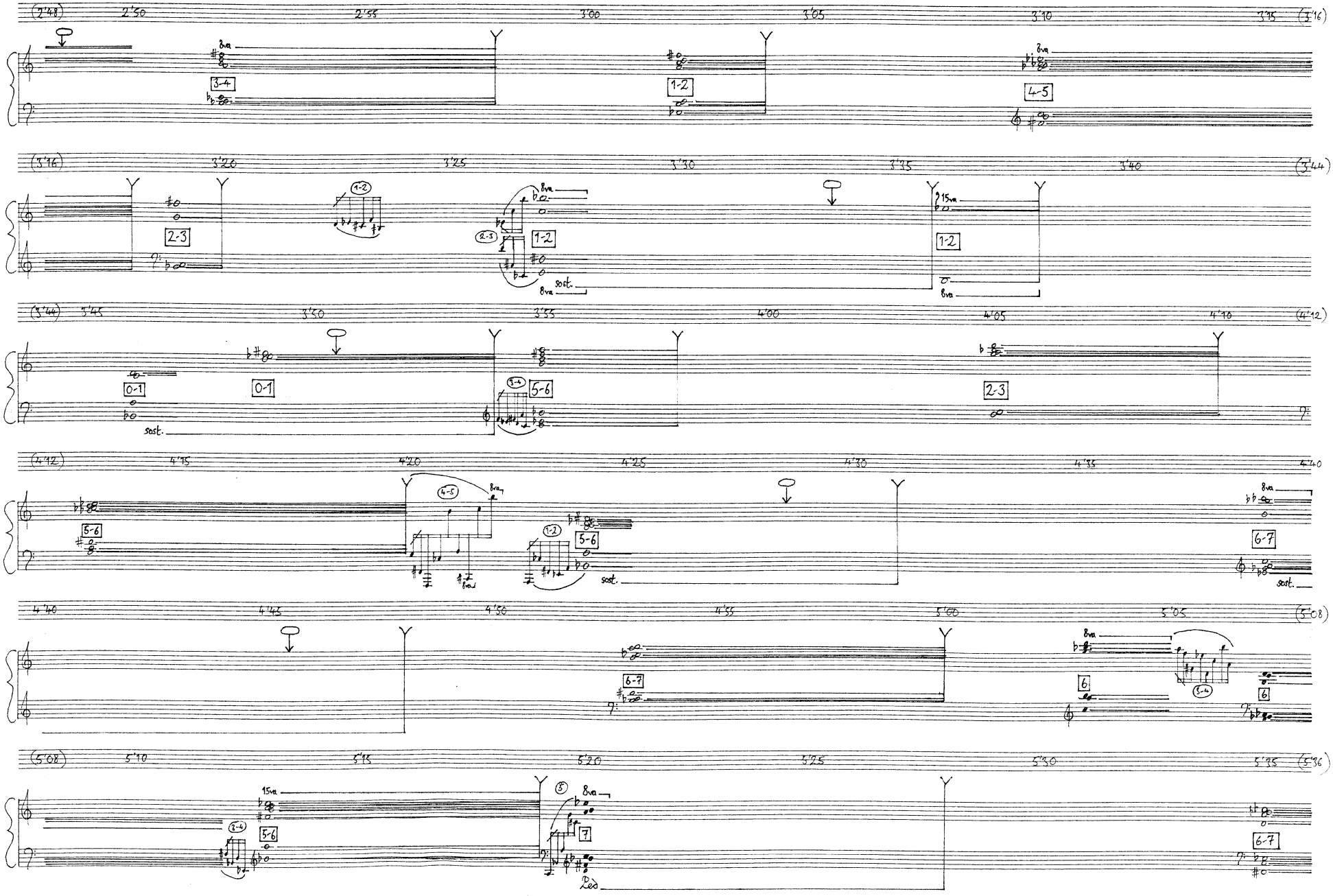
2'15
2'20
2'20
2'25
2'30
2'35
2'40
2'45
2'48
sost.
8va
15ma
1-2
2-3
3-4
0-1


2'48
2'50
2'55
3'00
3'05
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3'16
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3'35
3'40
3'44
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5'15
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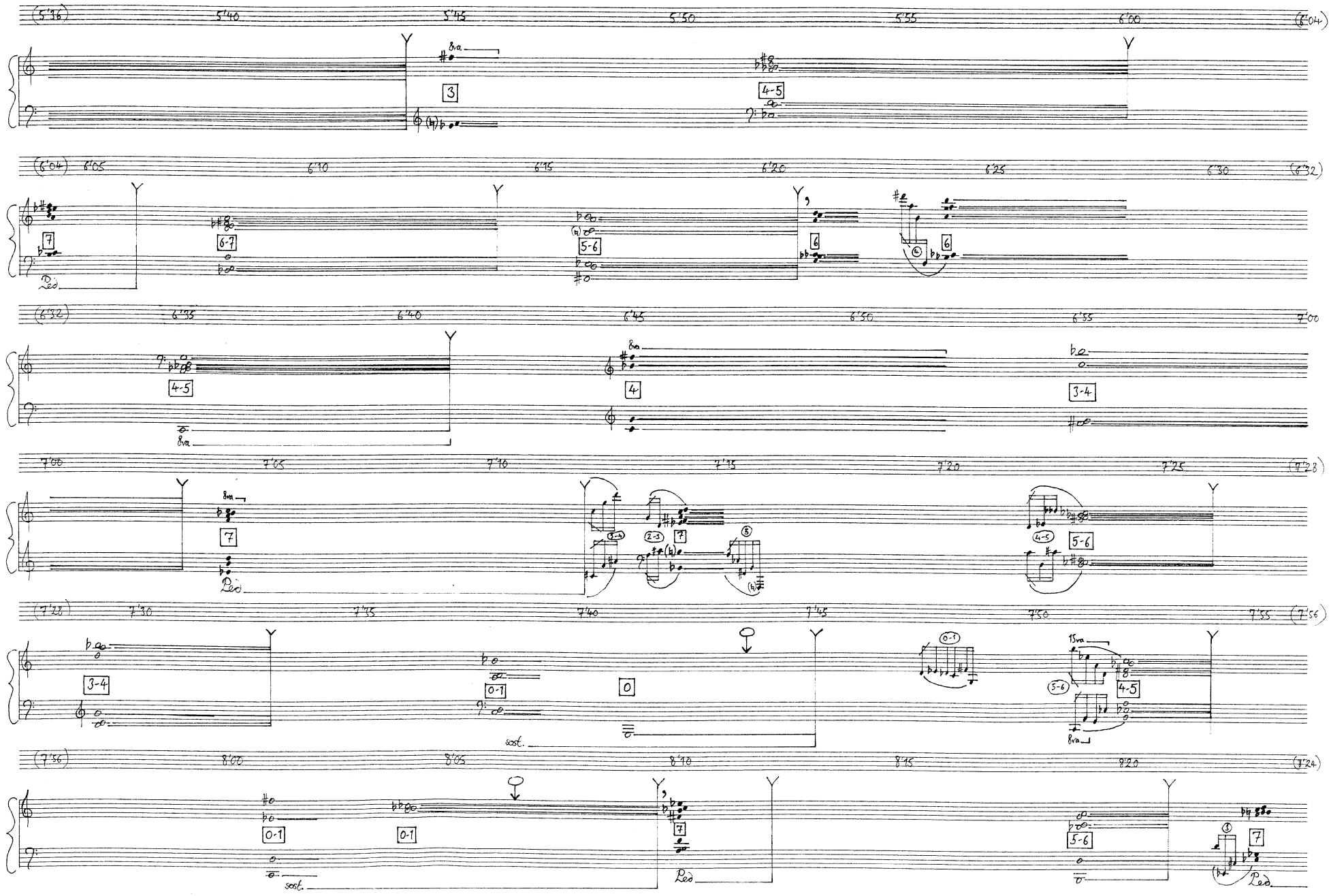
5'25
5'30
5'35
5'36
8va
15va
sost.
Led


5'36
5'40
5'45
5'50
5'55
6'00
6'04
8va
3
4-5
6'04
6'05
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7
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6
Ped.
6'32
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7'00
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8va
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7'00
7'05
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7'15
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7'25
7'28
8va
7
Ped.
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5
4-5
5-6
7'28
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7'35
7'40
7'45
7'50
7'55
7'56
3-4
0-1
0
sost.
0-1
15va
5-6
4-5
8va
7'56
8'00
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7
Ped.
5-6
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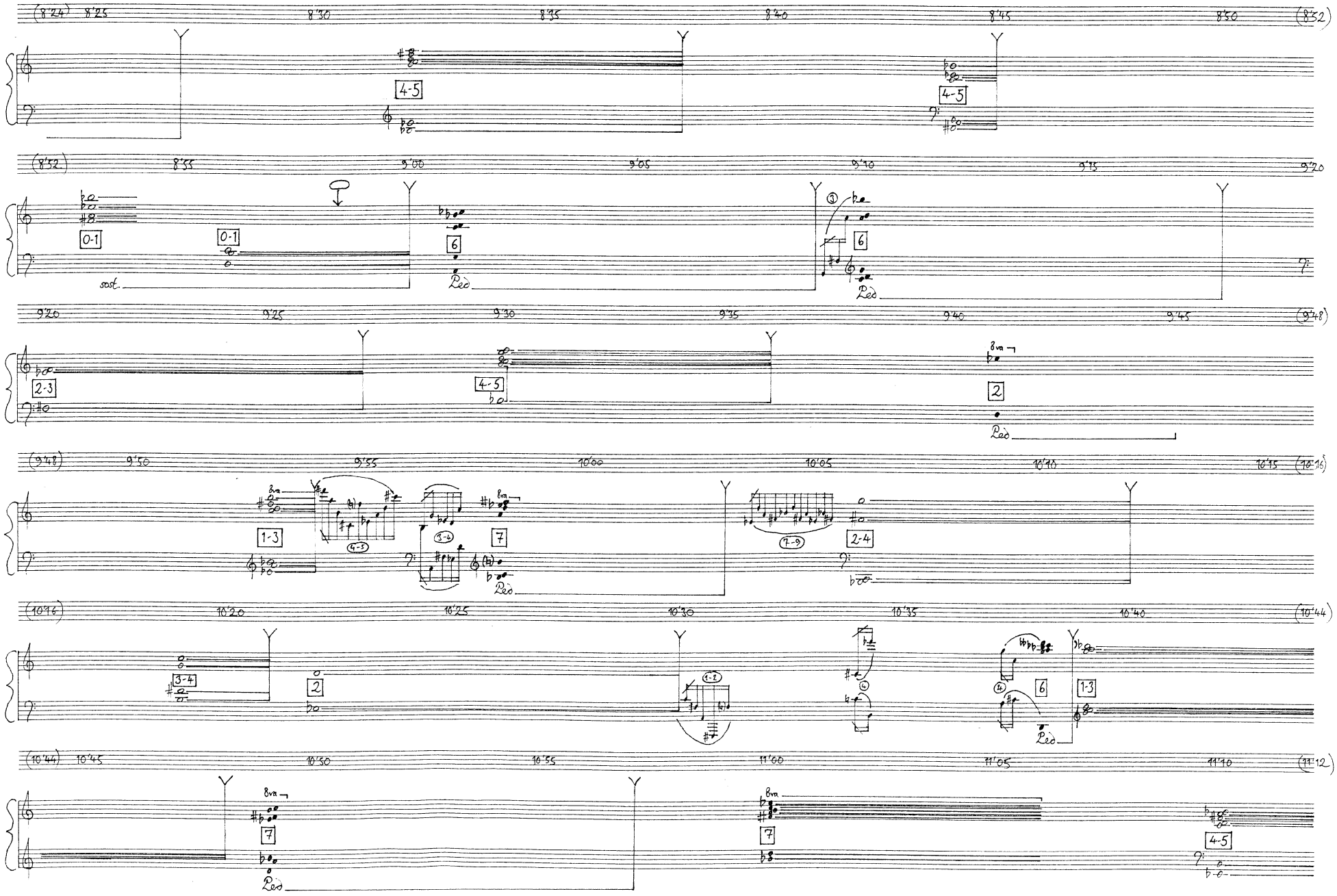
7
Ped.


8'24
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sost.
Leo
Leo
9'20
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8va
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8va
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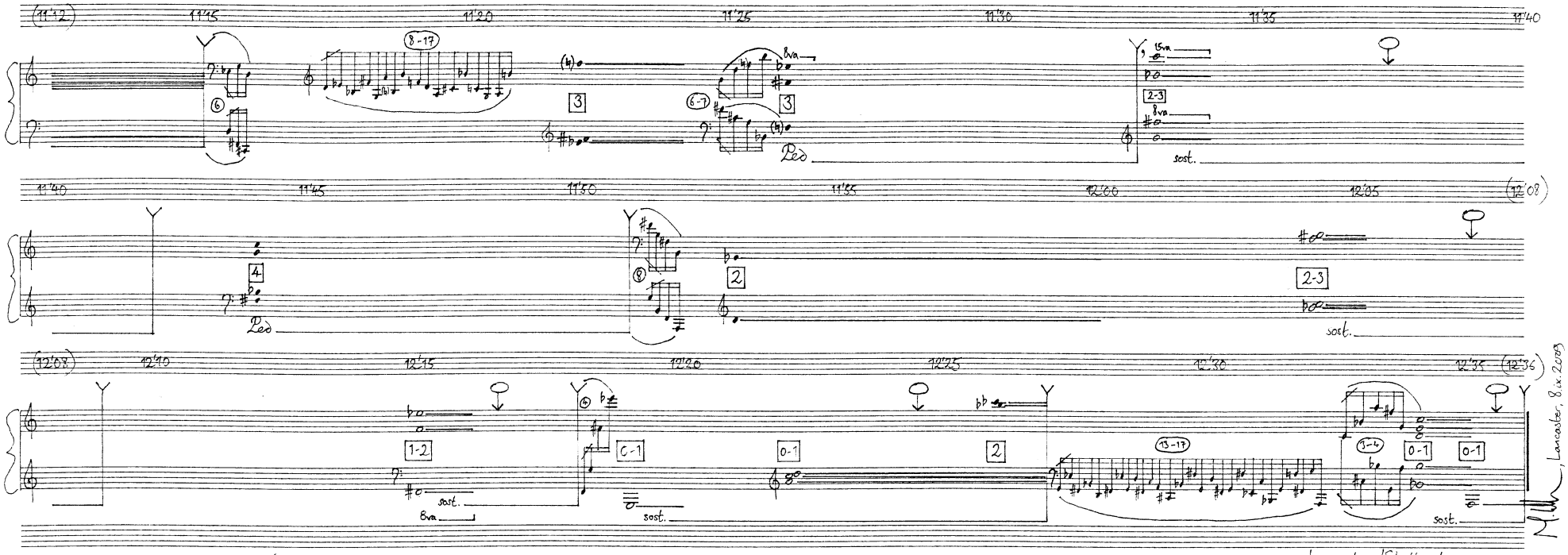
4-5
Leo



Lancaster / Stuttgart,
August - September 2009