DNA

for solo guitar

Mark Applebaum, 2004

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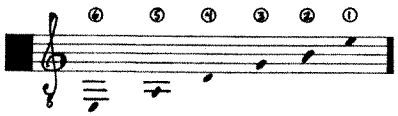
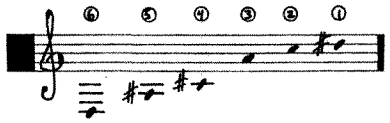
Dedicated to Magnus Andersson.
Duration: approximately 7 minutes.

We have more similarities than differences.

The guitar is tuned in the traditional manner:



However, tuning changes are made during the performance:



The player may be relieved to discover that, although the piece is seven minutes in duration, there are only two minutes of material to learn. These two minutes consist of a cyclic, 78-second "theme"—of which a different 53-second excerpt is heard on seven occasions—and six brief tuning codas. In each tuning coda, a particular string is retuned. As such, the form of the piece is:

PAGE 1:
A (a 53-second excerpt from the cyclic theme, starting from the beginning)
T1 (a tuning coda in which string 5 is tuned up to A#)

PAGE 2:
B (a slightly different 53-second excerpt from the cyclic theme, starting at a later point in the theme)
T2 (a tuning coda in which string 1 is tuned down to D#)

PAGE 3:
C (another 53-second excerpt from the cyclic theme, starting at yet a later point in the theme)
T3 (a tuning coda in which string 4 is tuned down to C#)

PAGE 4:
D (another 53-second excerpt from the cyclic theme, starting at yet a later point in the theme and looping back to the beginning)
T4 (a tuning coda in which string 2 is tuned up to C)

PAGE 5:
E (another 53-second excerpt from the cyclic theme, starting at yet a later point in the theme and looping back to the beginning)
T5 (a tuning coda in which string 3 is tuned up to A)

PAGE 6:
F (another 53-second excerpt from the cyclic theme, starting at yet a later point in the theme and looping back to the beginning)
T6 (a tuning coda in which string 6 is tuned down to D)

PAGE 7:
G (again the first 53-second excerpt from the cyclic theme, starting from the beginning)

The pages should be played without pause.

The theme, which does not vary in its specification (of string number, fret number, dynamic, rhythm, articulation, etc.), will, however, produce different pitches as the result of the tuning changes made during each tuning coda. As such, the physical gestures must remain the same.

④ Every articulation should be played on the given string (appearing in a circle).

XII Every articulation should be played at the given fret (appearing as a roman numeral).

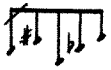
PAGES 8 & 9—*The Performance Score:*

Once the piece is learned, the player may choose to perform from the "Performance Score" so as to obviate page turns. In this shorthand score the player reads from a starting point (given in a triangle) to a stopping point (given in a hexagon), and then plays the associated tuning coda (given in a square). A formal scheme appears at the bottom of page 9.

Because specific resulting pitches would be misleading, noteheads and accidentals were omitted from the performance score. Furthermore, bi-tones, harmonics, and hammered notes have a different notational symbol in the performance score (as explained later).

Accidentals apply only to the notes to which they immediately adhere. Additional "courtesy" natural signs are occasionally supplied.

An additional staff, appearing below the main staff, is employed to illustrate activities undertaken by the right hand on the fretboard. (The only exception is at the end of page 4 in which the lower line simply illustrates the tuning of string 2.)


A grace note figure to be played as fast as possible.

Quarter-tone sharp.

Quarter-tone flat.

Sul ponticello; plucked at the bridge.

Sul tasto; plucked over the fretboard.

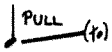
Ordinario; cancels sul ponticello and sul tasto.

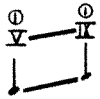
Vibrato.

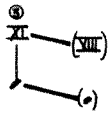
The vibrato speed changes.

Harmonics are notated at the sounding pitch.

Artificial harmonics are also notated at the sounding pitch. Because artificial harmonics involve the right hand over the fretboard they are notated on the lower staff. The fretted notes (played by the left hand) are given above the upper staff; the fret number of the harmonic "touch point" (played by the right hand) is given below the lower staff.


Bend pitch upward by pushing or pulling string.


Glissando; slide to the given fret and pluck the destination pitch.


Glissando; slide to the given fret but do not pluck it; the destination pitch is heard only as the result of the slide.

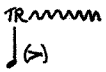
The highest pitch—well above the fretboard.

Snap pizzicato; the string rebounds against the fretboard.

A "pull off"; the second note is produced by pulling the finger off the string (a left hand pizzicato from a given note).

Bi-tone produced by plucking the portion of the string between the fretted note and the nut. (The string number is provided; the fretted note is always the result of a prior articulation whose fret number is given.) The given bi-tone pitches are approximate.

Hammered note produced by audibly fretting the string. Although two pitches result, the notated pitch corresponds to the lower string portion.


A "hammer trill" involving the alternation of a hammered note and a pull-off. The base note is plucked only once; the trilled note, given in parentheses, is played by hammering the string, whereas repetitions of the base note are played by pulling off from the hammered note.

String scratch; quickly scratch the string horizontally with the nail. The given pitch sounds along with high overtones.

Dead stroke; the string is only depressed (fretted) halfway by the left hand resulting in a short, muted sound with limited focus of pitch.

Rasquead (*Flamenco*) strum.

Percussive sound produced by tapping or knocking on the body of the guitar.

Mute the sound.

Some alternate notational symbols are employed in the *Performance Score* (pages 8-9):

Harmonic.

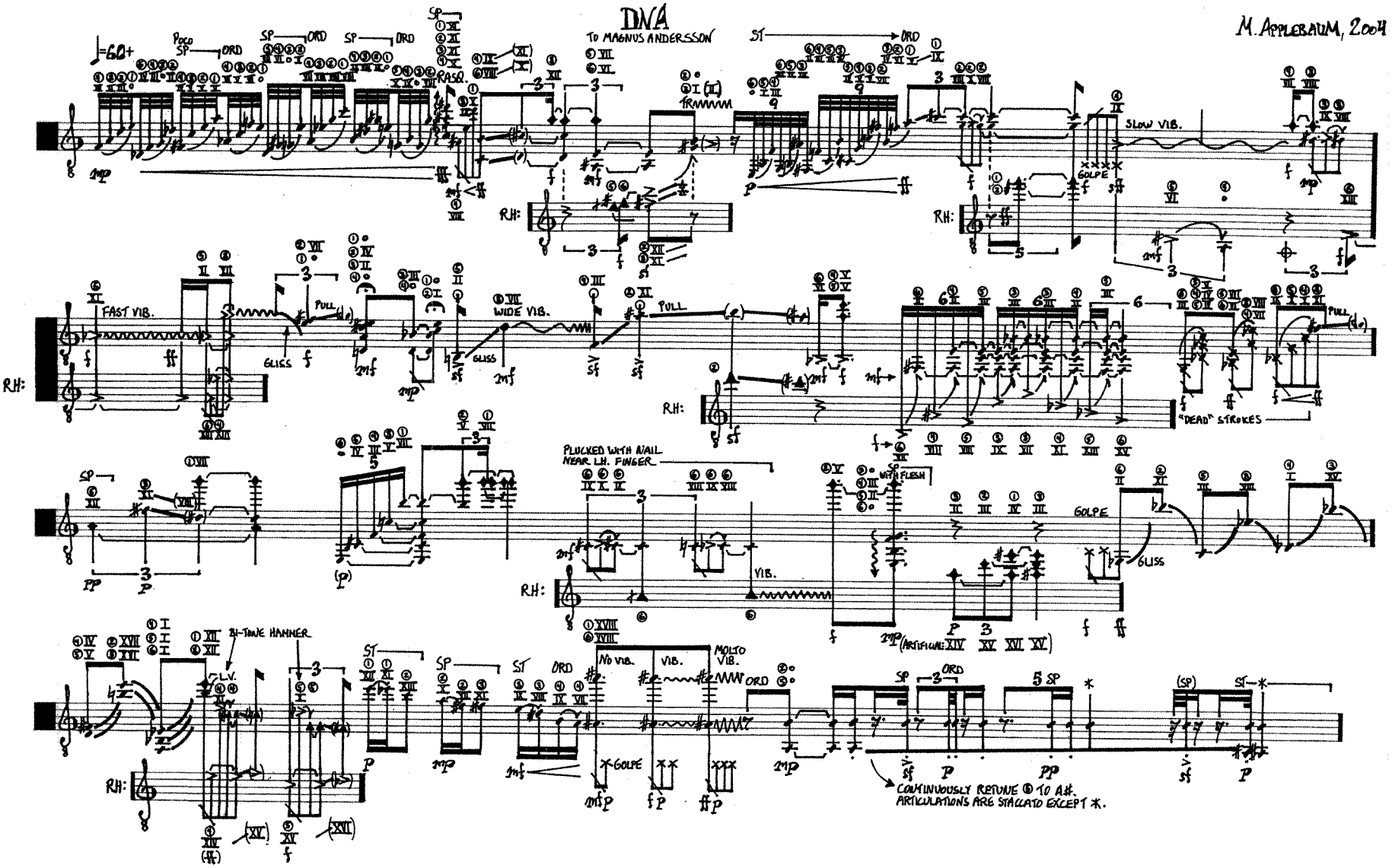
Bi-tone.

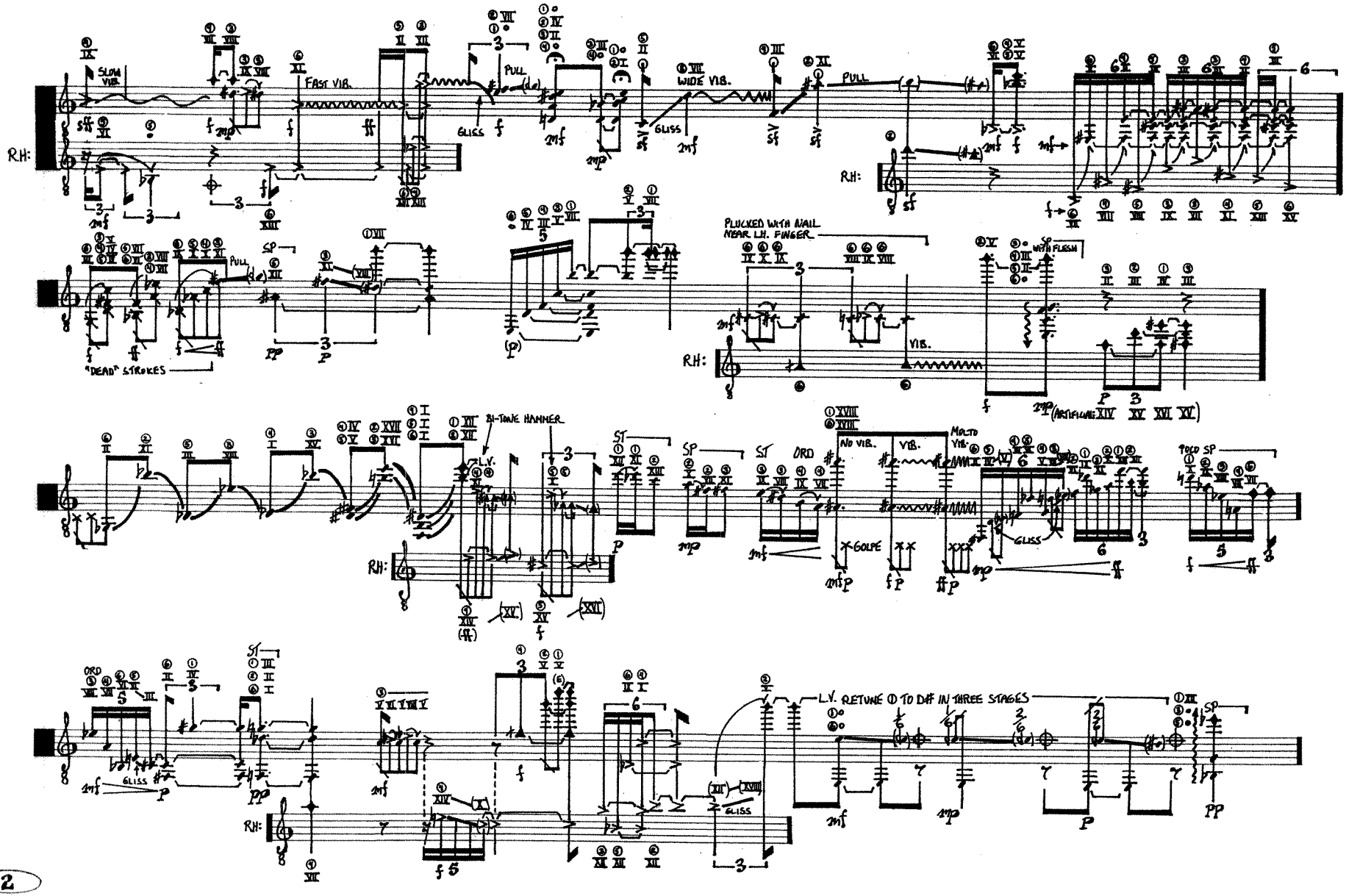
Hammered notes.

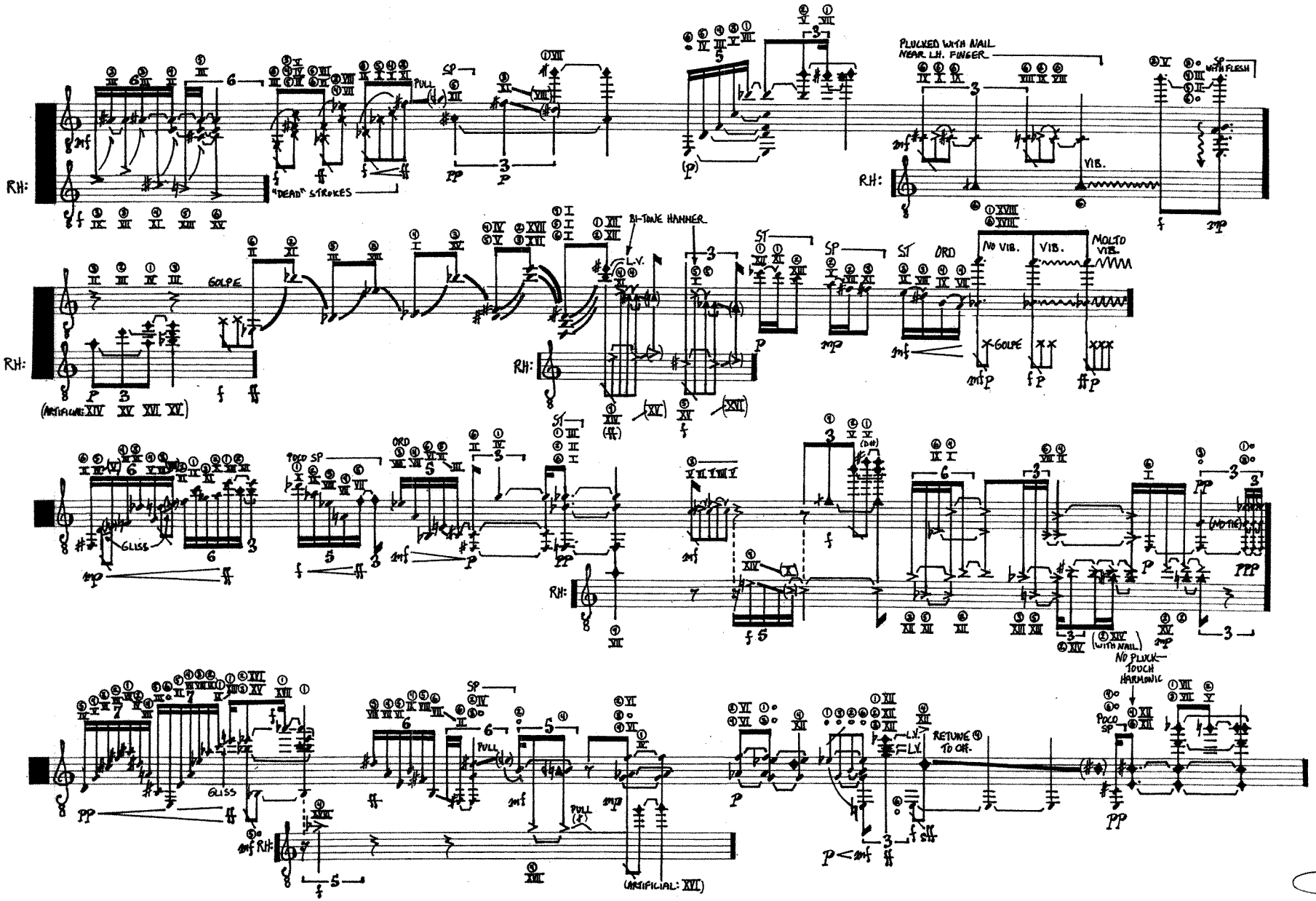
DNA

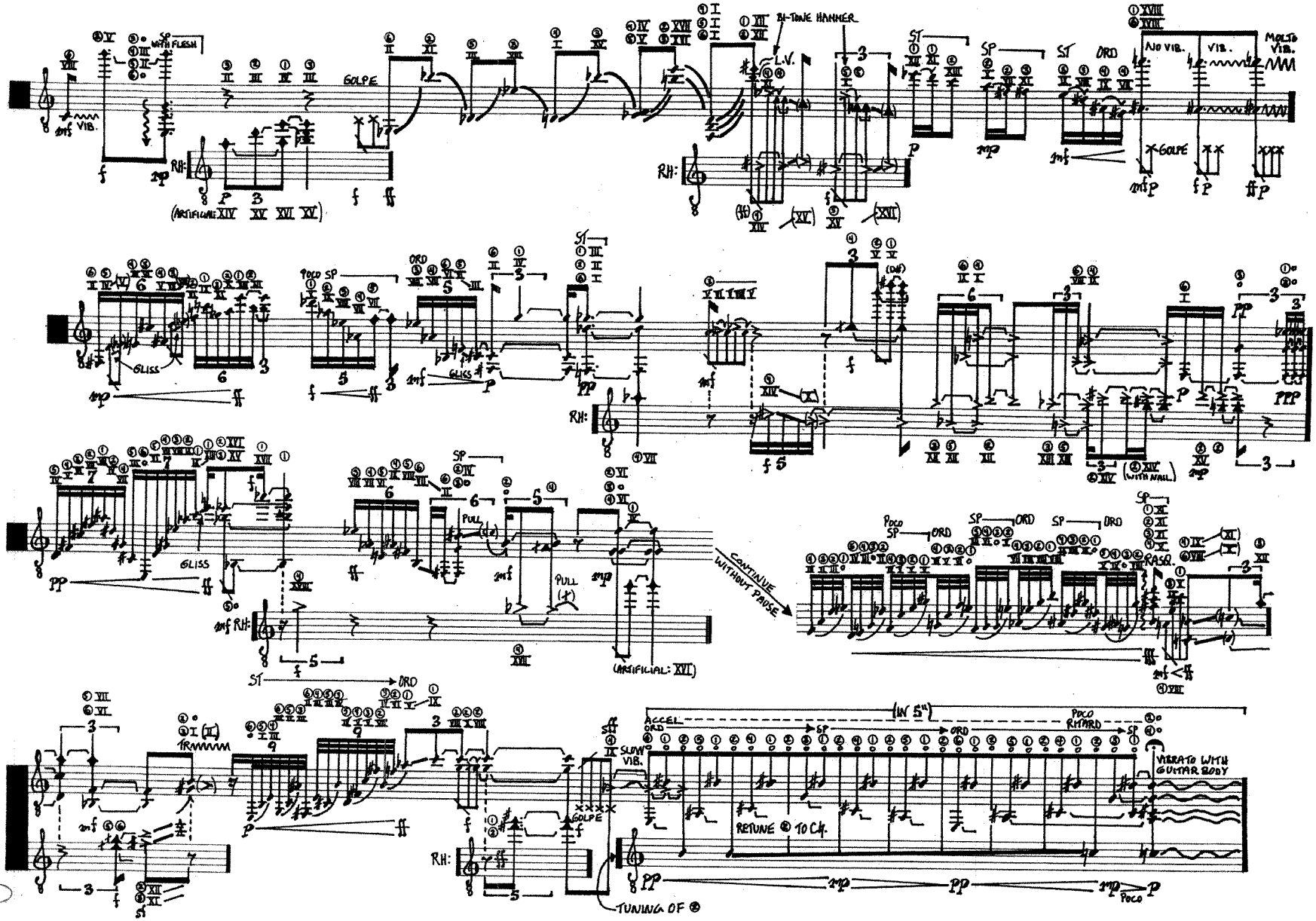
TO MAGNUS ANDERSSON

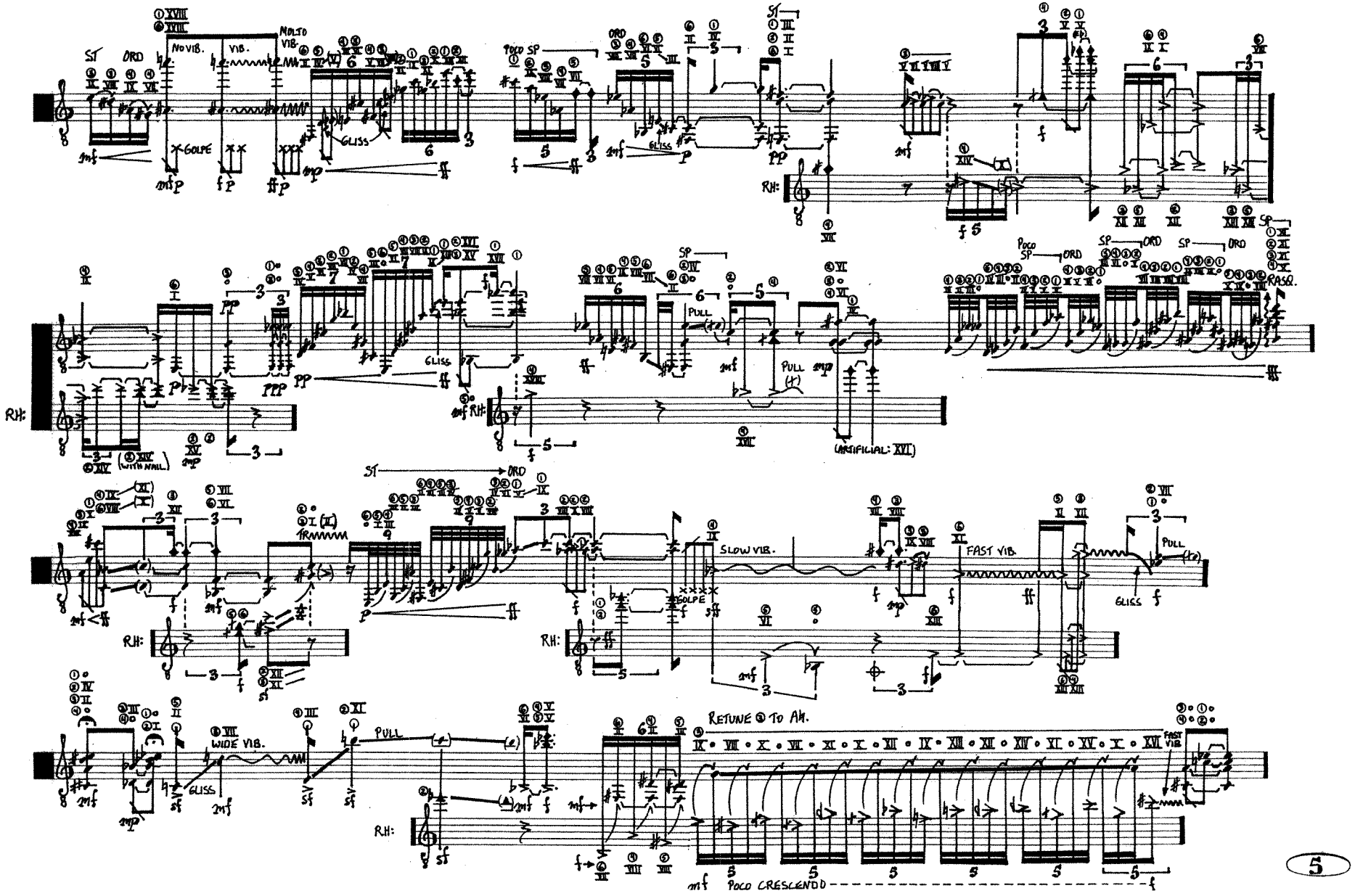
M. APPLEBAUM, 2004

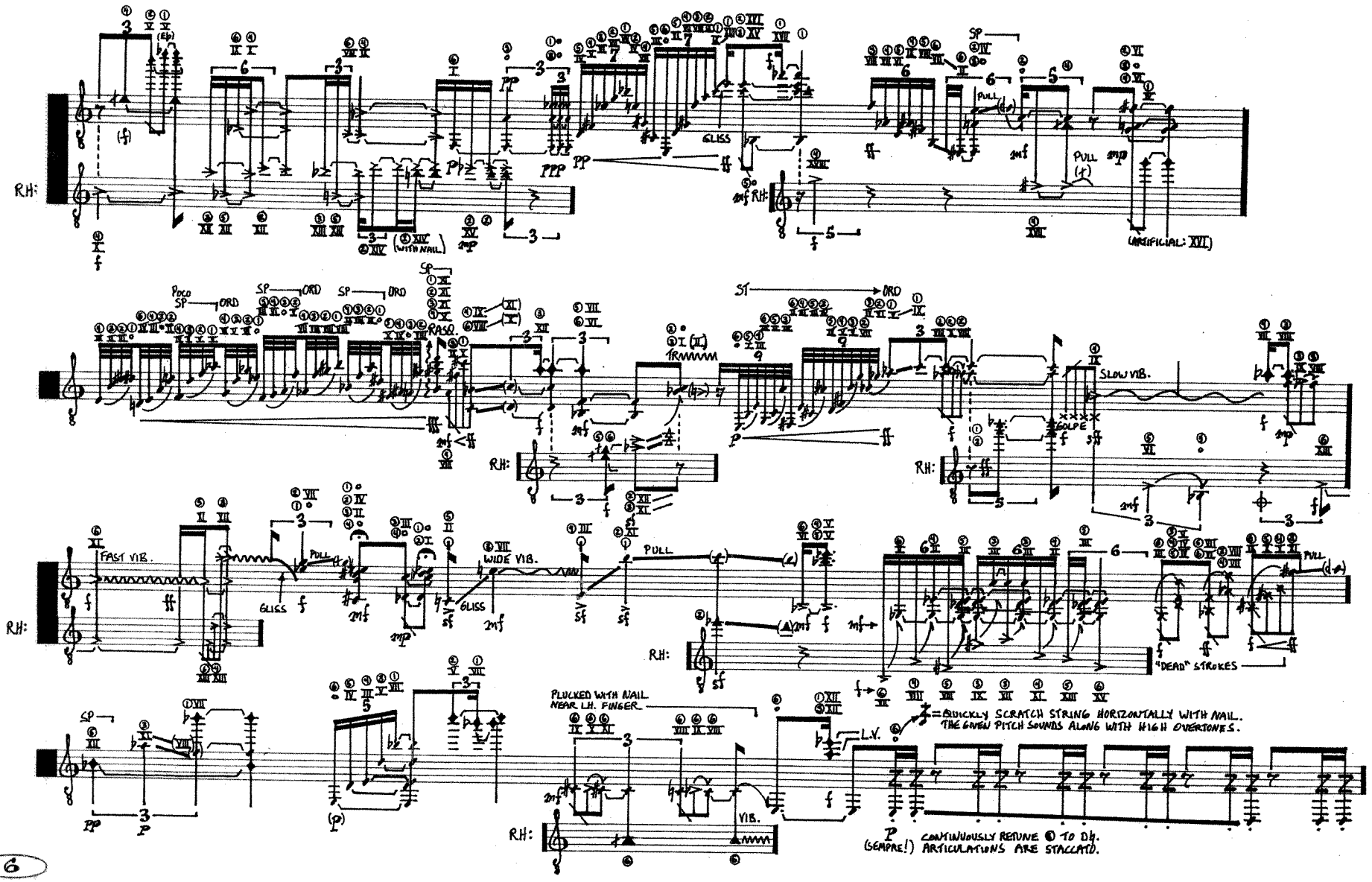


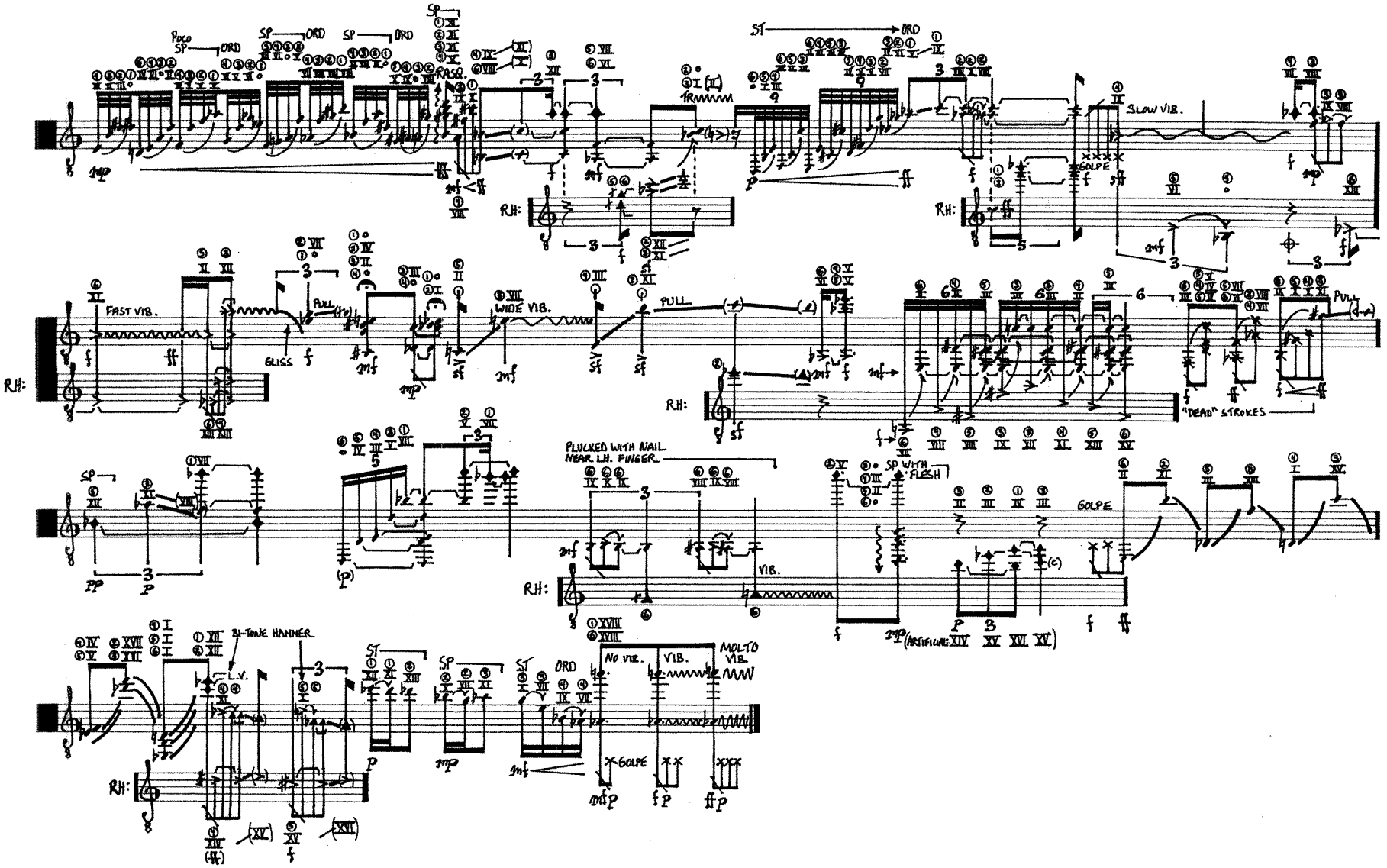

RH:
SLOW VIB.
FAST VIB.
PULL
GLISS
WIDE VIB.
"DEAD" STROKES
PLUCKED WITH NAIL NEAR LH. FINGER
WITH FLESH
VIB.
BI-TONE HAMMER
L.V.
NO VIB.
MOLTO VIB.
GOLPE
ORD
SP
L.V. RETUNE ① TO D#F IN THREE STAGES


RH:
"DEAD" STROKES
PLUCKED WITH NAIL NEAR L.H. FINGER
WITH FLESH
VIB.
GOLPE
BI-TONE HAMMER
L.V.
NO VIB.
MOLTO VIB.
ORD
POCO SP
GLISS
PULL
RETUNE ④ TO OR.
NO PLUCK—TOUCH HARMONIC
(ARTIFICIAL: XVI)

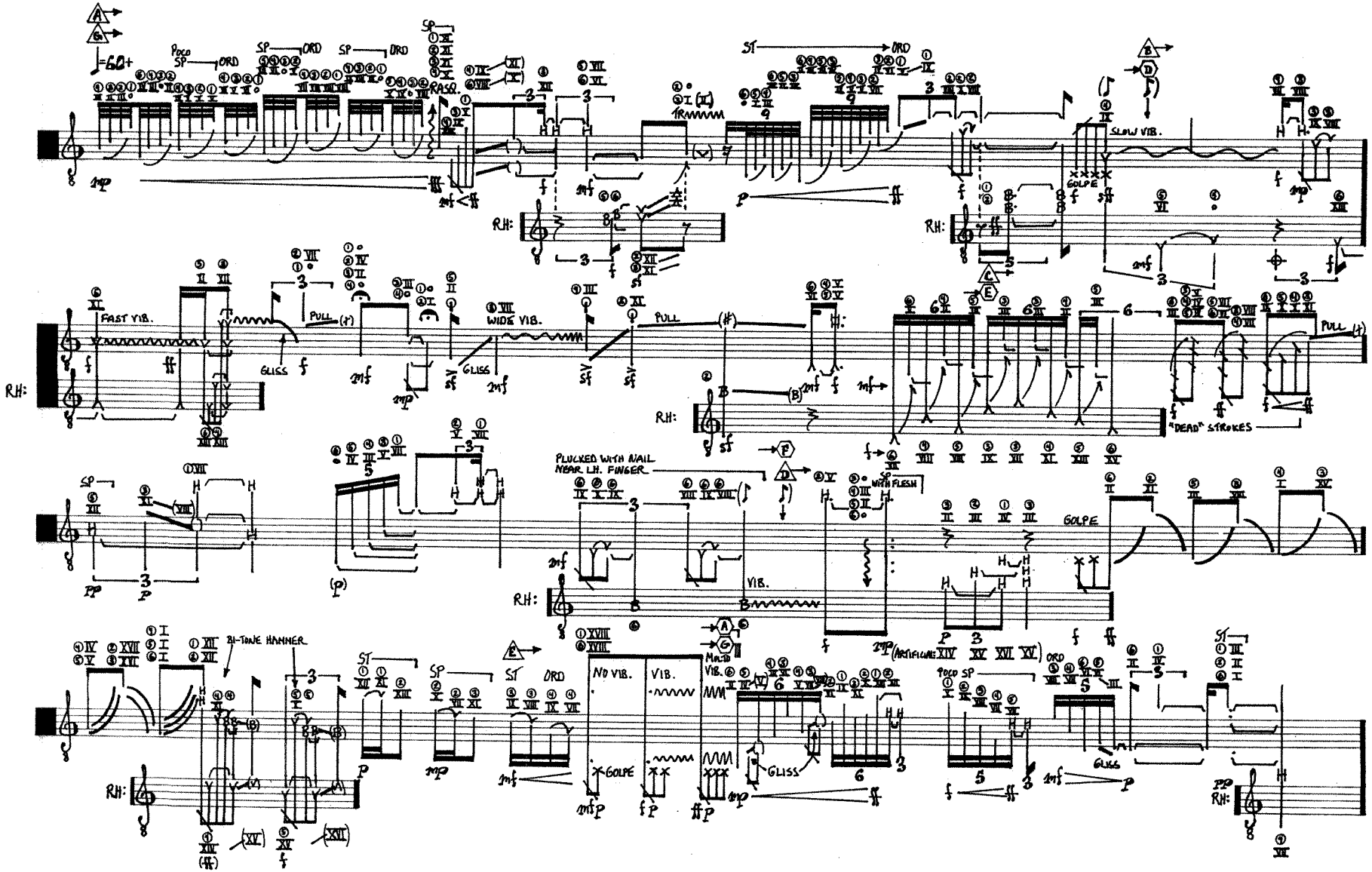

SP WITH FLESH
VIB.
GOLPE
RH:
(ARTIFICIAL: XIV XV XVI XV)
BI-TONE HAMMER
L.V.
(XV)
(XVI)
SP
ORD
NO VIB.
VIB.
MOLTO VIB.
GOLPE
GLISS
POCO SP
PULL
CONTINUE WITHOUT PAUSE
POCO ORD
RASG.
(ARTIFICIAL: XVI)
SLOW VIB.
ACCEL
(IN 5")
POCO RITARD
VIBRATO WITH GUITAR BODY
RETUNE ⑥ TO C#
TUNING OF ⑥


ST
ORD
NO VIB.
VIB.
MOLTO VIB.
GOLPE
GLISS
POCO SP
SP
PP
PPP
RH:
PULL
(ARTIFICIAL: XVII)
RASG.
SLOW VIB.
FAST VIB.
WIDE VIB.
RETUNE ⑤ TO Ah.
POCO CRESCENDO

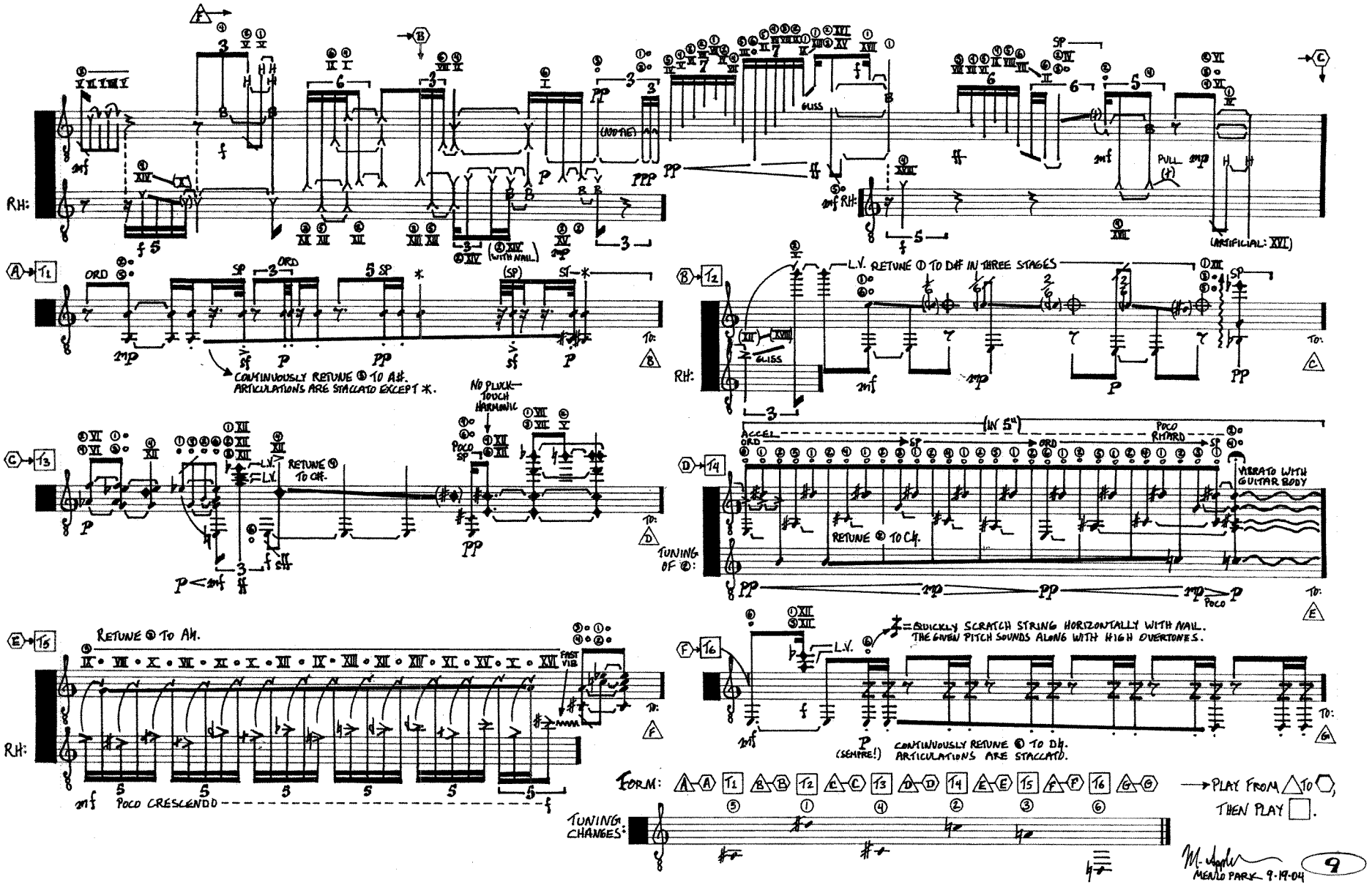

RH:
(WITH NAIL)
GLISS
PULL
(ARTIFICIAL: XVI)
POCO SP ORD
SP ORD
SP ORD
RASQ.
ST ORD
SLOW VIB.
GOLPE
FAST VIB.
WIDE VIB.
"DEAD" STROKES
PLUCKED WITH NAIL NEAR LH. FINGER
L.V.
VIB.
= QUICKLY SCRATCH STRING HORIZONTALLY WITH NAIL. THE GIVEN PITCH SOUNDS ALONG WITH HIGH OVERTONES.
P (SEMPRE!) CONTINUOUSLY RETUNE ⑥ TO D♮. ARTICULATIONS ARE STACCATO.



Poco SP ORD
SP ORD
SP ORD
SP
RASQ.
ST ORD
SLOW VIB.
GOLPE
RH:
FAST VIB.
GLISS
PULL
WIDE VIB.
PULL
"DEAD" STROKES
PULL
SP
PLUCKED WITH NAIL NEAR LH. FINGER
SP WITH FLESH
GOLPE
VIB.
(ARTIFICIAL: XIV XV XVI XV)
BI-TONE HAMMER
L.V.
ST
SP
ST
ORD
NO VIB.
VIB.
MOLTO VIB.
GOLPE



SLOW VIB.
GOLPE
FAST VIB.
GLISS
PULL
WIDE VIB.
"DEAD" STROKES
PLUCKED WITH NAIL NEAR LH. FINGER
WITH FLESH
VIB.
BI-TONE HAMMER
NO VIB.
MOLTO VIB.
RH:


RH:
(NOTE)
GLISS
PULL
(ARTIFICIAL: XVI)
(WITH NAIL)
ORD
SP
CONTINUOUSLY RETUNE ⑤ TO A#.
ARTICULATIONS ARE STACCATO EXCEPT *.
L.V. RETUNE ① TO D# IN THREE STAGES
NO PLUCK—TOUCH HARMONIC
POCO SP
RETUNE ④ TO C#.
ACCEL
POCO RITARD
VIBRATO WITH GUITAR BODY
RETUNE ② TO C♮.
TUNING OF ②:
RETUNE ③ TO A♮.
FAST VIB
POCO CRESCENDO
= QUICKLY SCRATCH STRING HORIZONTALLY WITH NAIL.
THE GIVEN PITCH SOUNDS ALONG WITH HIGH OVERTONES.
(SEMPRE!)
CONTINUOUSLY RETUNE ⑥ TO D♮.
ARTICULATIONS ARE STACCATO.
FORM:
→ PLAY FROM △ TO ⬡,
THEN PLAY □.
TUNING CHANGES:
MENLO PARK 9-19-04
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