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Sylvia Lim

unless it dies, it remains alone

for 11 musicians

(2018)

PERFORMANCE NOTES

I was struck by how certain plants, such as the lodgepole pine, *Eucalyptus* and *Banksia*, require fire to germinate. Their cones or fruits are sealed with resin, which melts in the fire and allows the plants to disperse their seeds.[1] The work explores this notion of death being fruitful, and even necessary for life.

The work's title is a shortened version of an existing plant metaphor, used purely for its clarity in describing this concept: '...unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.'[2]

The work is for flute, clarinet in B flat, horn in F, trumpet in B flat, trombone, piano, violin 1, violin 2, viola, violoncello and double bass.

Each performer will require a stopwatch. When using stopwatches on phones, please set the screen light to stay on.

The parts are transposing.

Duration: 20'

Score accurate as of 4th January 2019

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1 Melissa Petruzzello (Encyclopædia Britannica), https://www.britannica.com/list/5-amazing-adaptations-of-pyrophytic-plants, accessed 3/1/19

2 John 12:24. Scripture quotation is from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version ®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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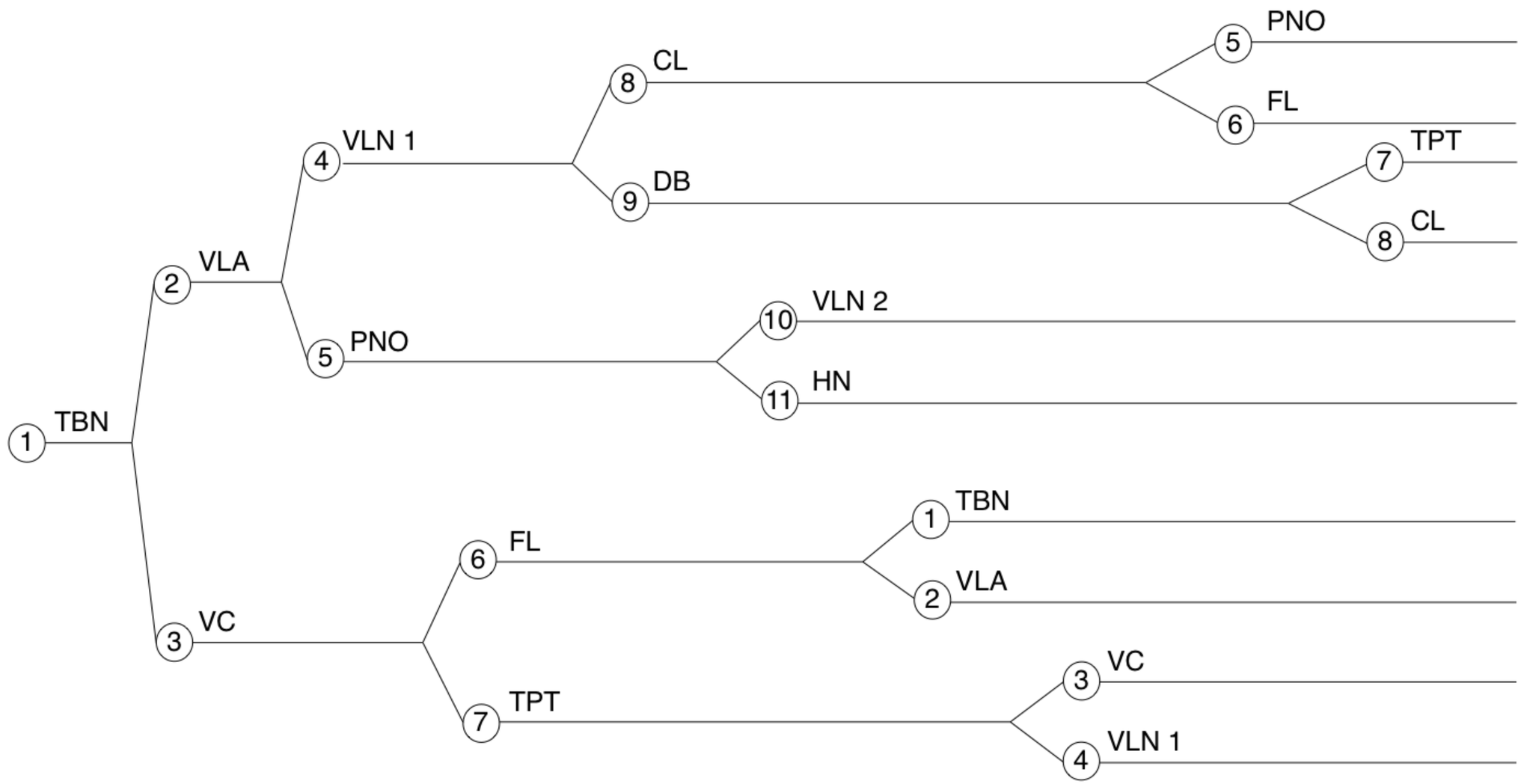

No. of ins.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Time (min)	0	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18

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Flute

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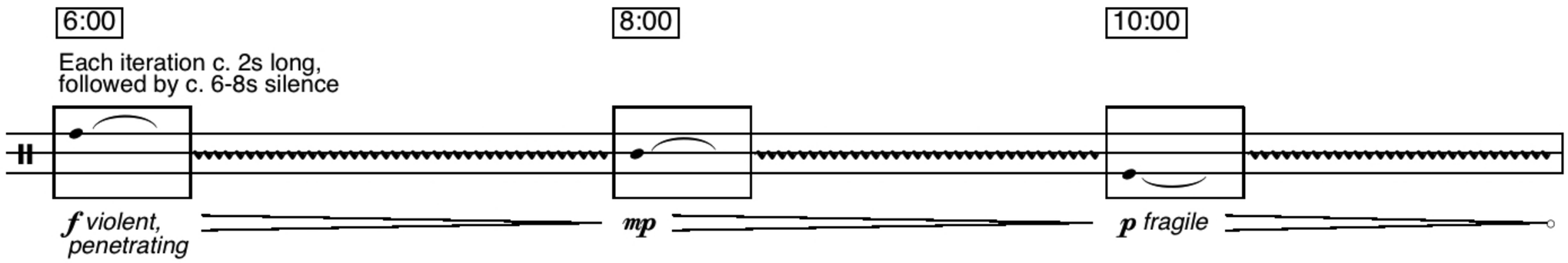
You will require a stopwatch. Detach head joint from flute.

1 Silence (0:00 - 6:00)

2 Play (6:00 - 11:15)

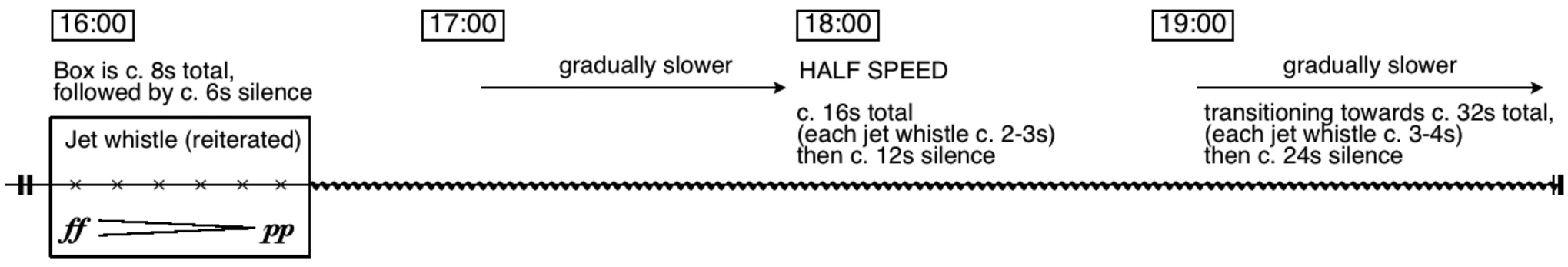
Use head joint only. Always cover bottom of tube with hand. Loose embouchure.
Allow inherent pitch fluctuations and instability to emerge within each gesture. The pitch will naturally get lower as it gets quieter.



3 Silence (11:15-16:00)

Attach head joint to flute.

4 Play (16:00-20:00) - Finish at a natural point between 19:55-20:00 (avoid abrupt ending).



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Clarinet in B♭

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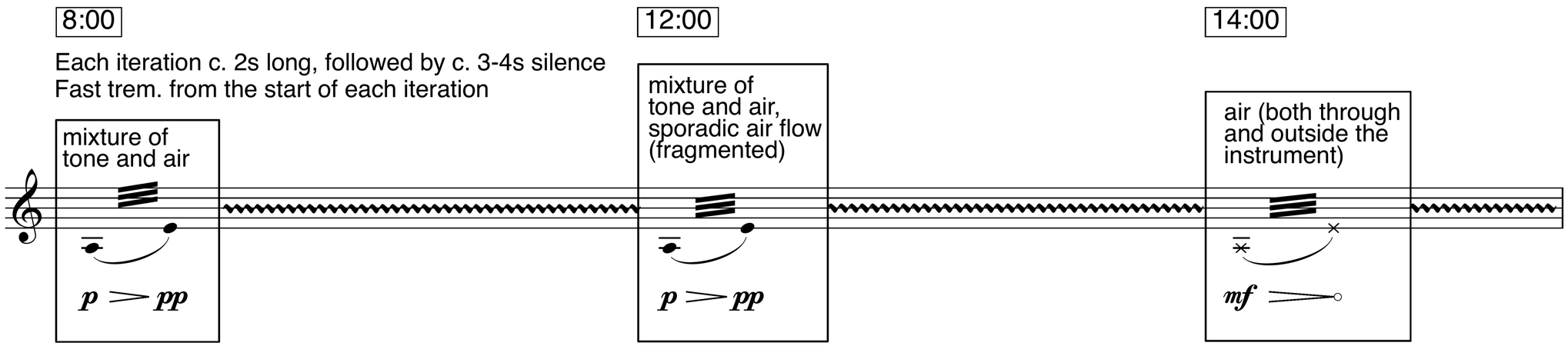
You will require a stopwatch.

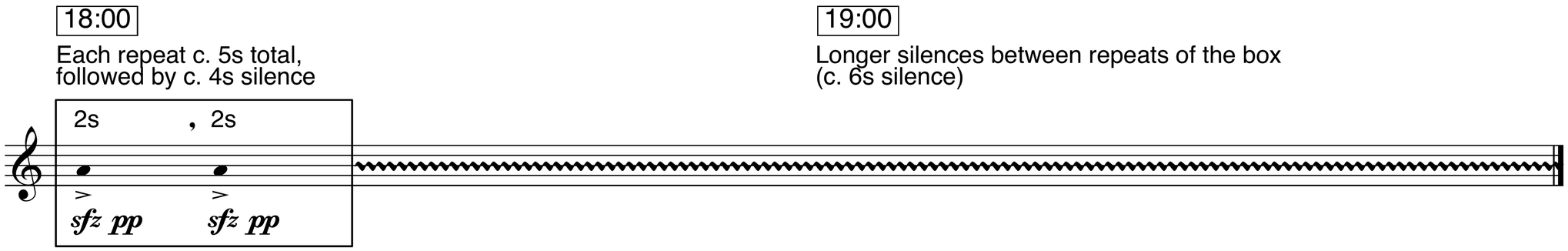
1 Silence (0:00 - 8:00)

2 Play (8:00-15:05)



3 Silence (15:05-18:00)

4 Play (18:00-20:00) - Finish at a natural point between 19:55-20:00 (avoid abrupt ending).



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Horn in F

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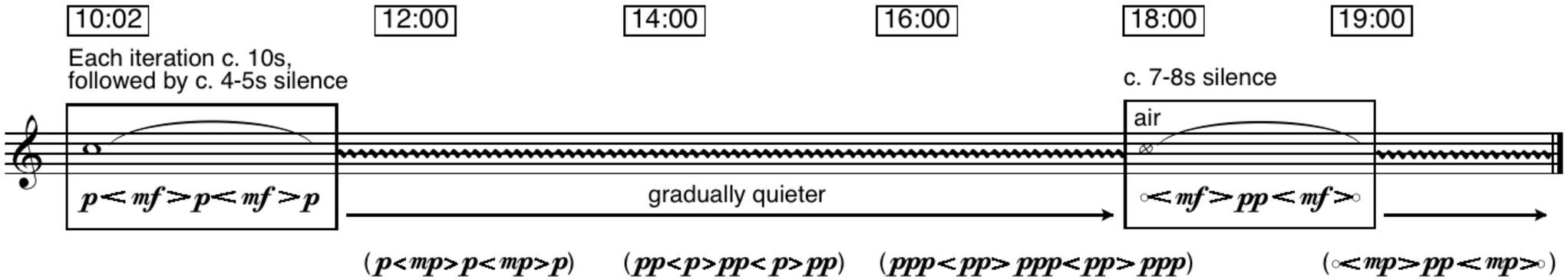
You will require a stopwatch.

1 Silence (0:00 - 10:02)

2 Play (10:02 - 20:00) - Finish at a natural point between 19:55-20:00 (avoid abrupt ending).



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Trumpet in B♭

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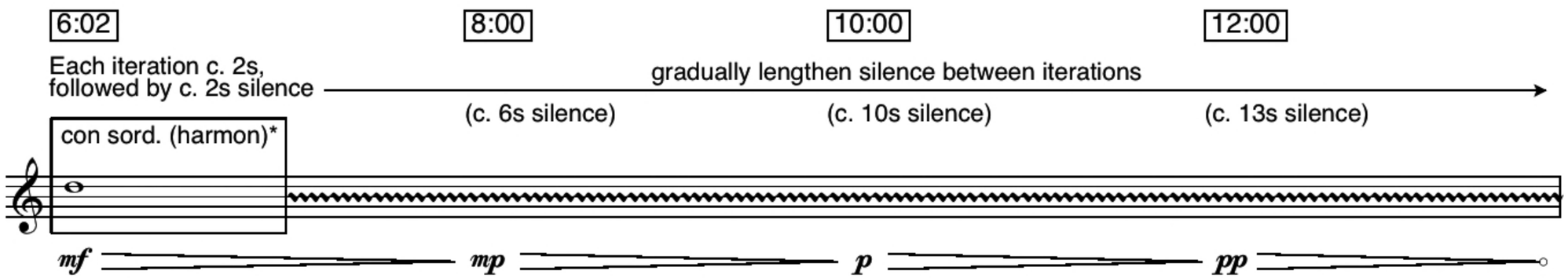
You will require a stopwatch. Attach harmon mute (stem in).

1 Silence (0:00-6:02)

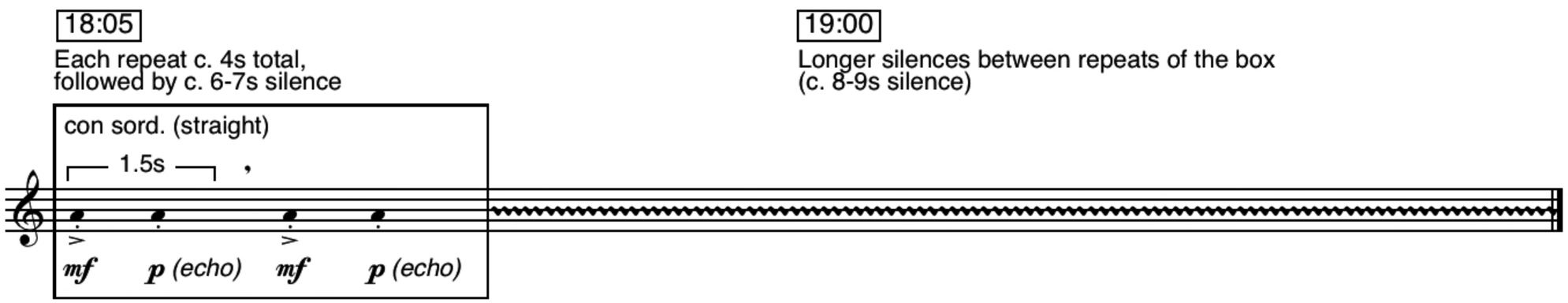
2 Play (6:02-13:10)



* Begin the first iteration by covering the harmon mute (stem in) with two fingers. As you play, gradually lift one finger. For subsequent iterations, gradually move between three fingers and no fingers covering the stem, across several iterations (moving one finger per iteration). The result is a slowly but noticeably shifting timbre, like the wah-wah effect in very slow motion, but more ambiguous.

3 Silence (13:10-18:05) Change to straight mute.

4 Play (18:05-20:00) - Finish at a natural point between 19:55-20:00 (avoid abrupt ending).



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Trombone

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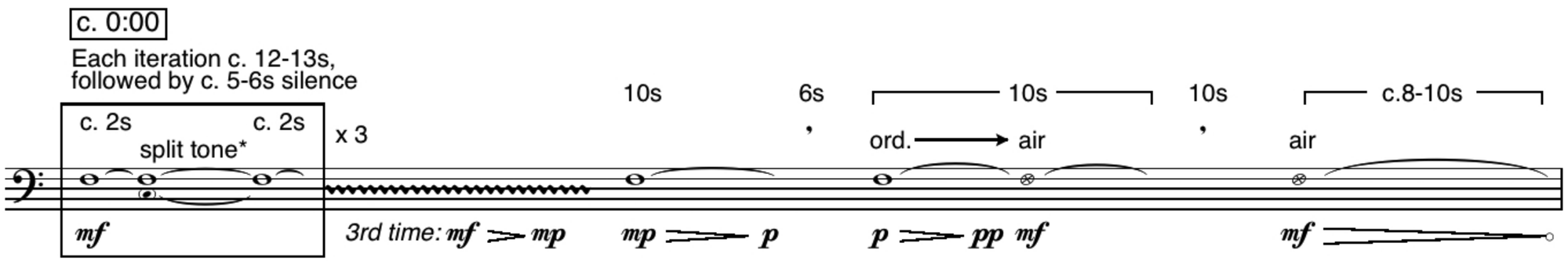
You will require a stopwatch.

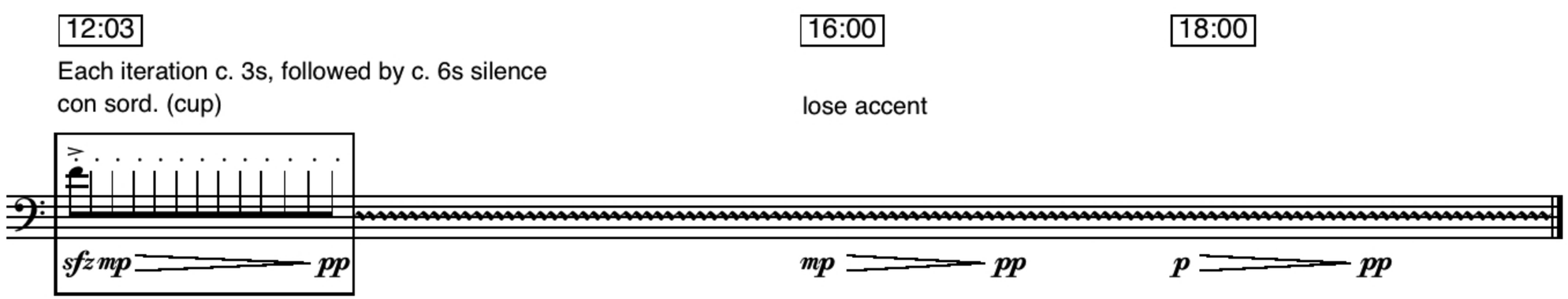
1 Play (c. 0:00 - 1:40)



* Overfocus the embouchure to produce two adjacent overtones simultaneously. Aim for a rich, resonant, harmonic sound. Avoid too much roughness, distortion or noise. Retake the split tone if it ends unexpectedly, after a few seconds silence.

2 Silence (1:40-12:03) Attach cup mute.

3 Play (12:03-20:00) - Finish at a natural point between 19:55-20:00 (avoid abrupt ending).



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Piano

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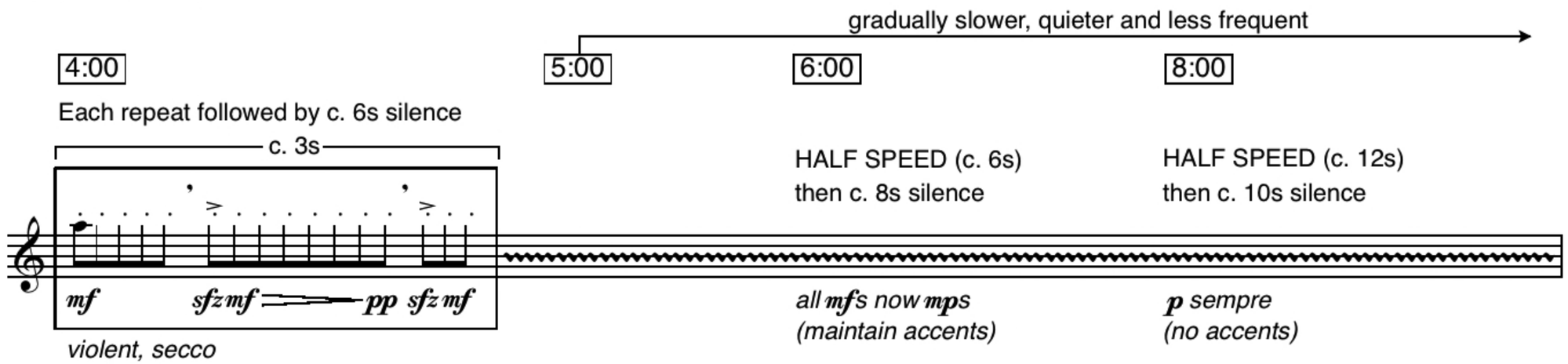
You will require a stopwatch. Wearing a latex glove, wrap a large amount of white-tack very securely around the strings shown below, so that the first sound is bright and wooden, and the second is rich, resonant and almost gong-like.

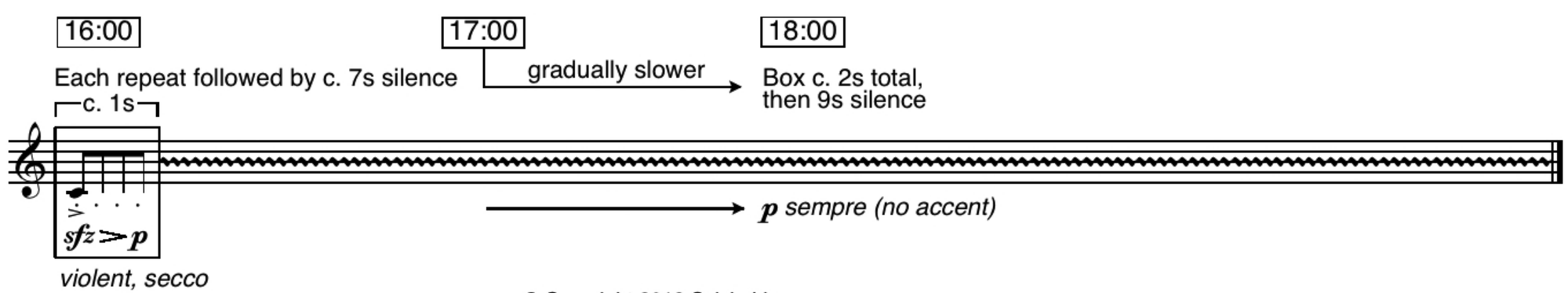
1 Silence (0:00-4:00)

2 Play (4:00-9:20)



3 Silence (9:20-16:00)

4 Play (16:00-20:00) - Finish at a natural point between 19:55-20:00 (avoid abrupt ending).



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Violin 1

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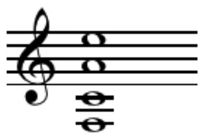
You will require a stopwatch. The third and fourth strings are re-tuned as follows. The harmonics below are written at **sounding pitch.**

Scordatura

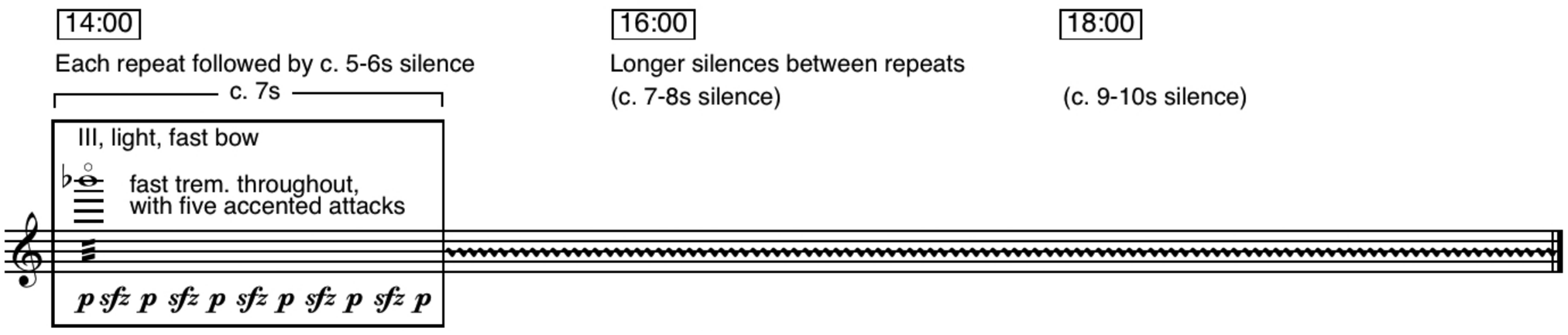


1 Silence (0:00-4:00)

2 Play (4:00-7:25)

3 Silence (7:25-14:00)

4 Play (14:00-20:00) - Finish at a natural point between 19:55-20:00 (avoid abrupt ending).



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Violin 2

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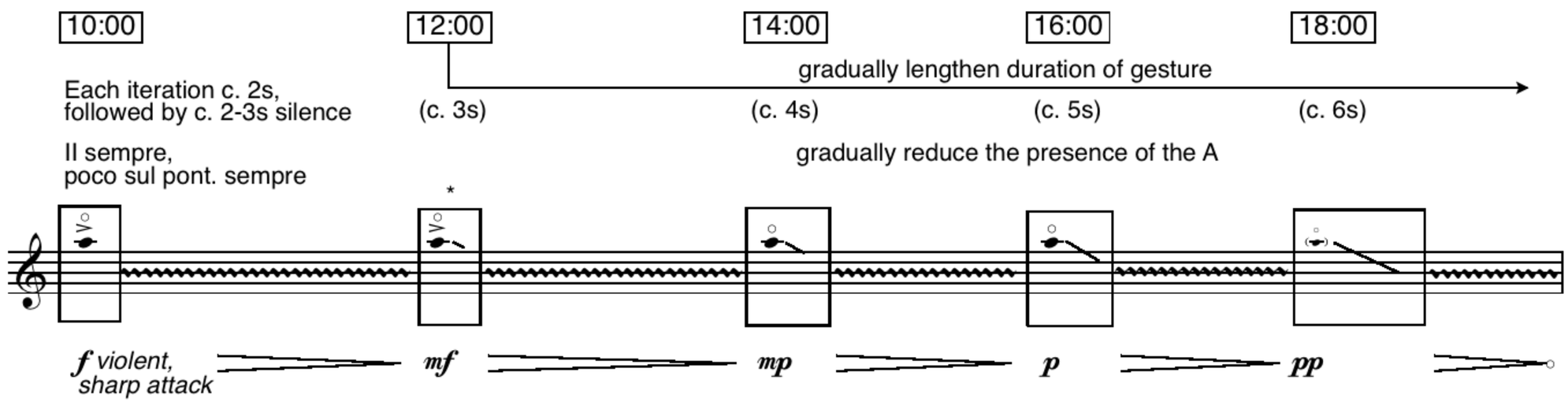
You will require a stopwatch.

1 Silence (0:00-10:00)

2 Play (10:00-18:55)



* Gradually elongate the harmonic glissando. The speed of the glissando is always very slow.
Allow some harmonics to sound so that it shimmers slightly, but aim for an impure, grainy sound.

3 Silence (18:55-20:00)

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Viola

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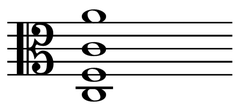
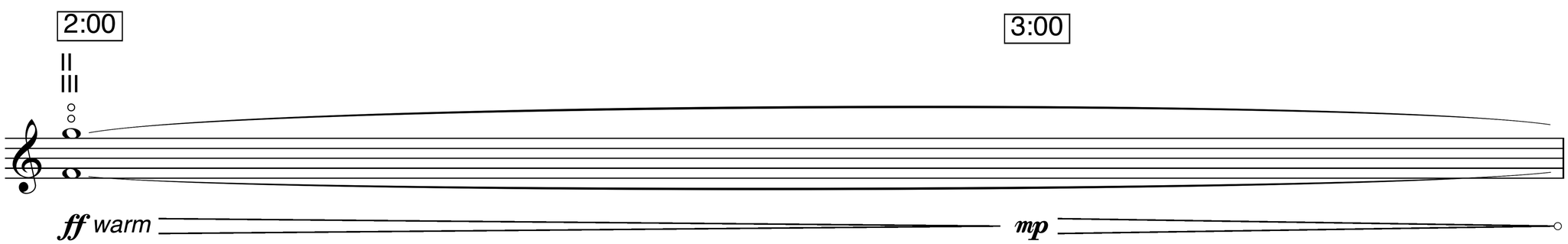
You will require a stopwatch. The second and third strings are re-tuned as follows. The harmonics below are written at **sounding pitch**.

Scordatura



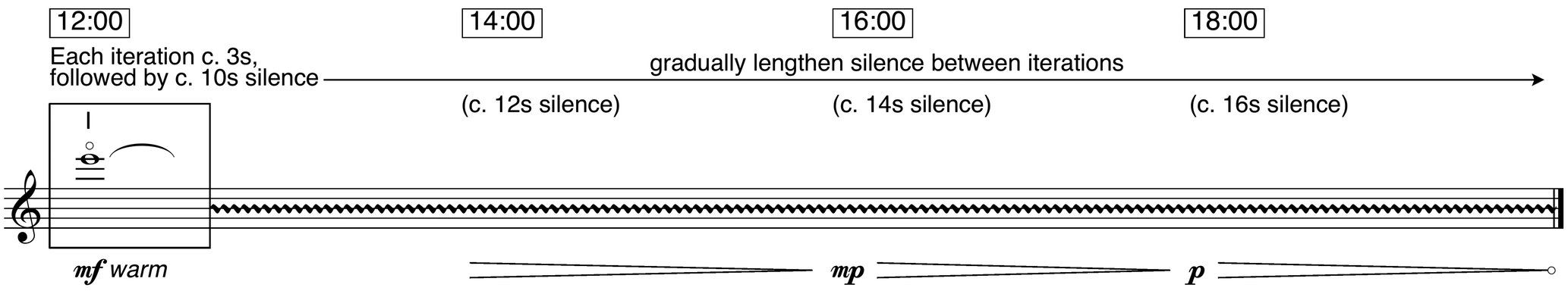
1 Silence (0:00-2:00)

2 Play (2:00-3:25)



3 Silence (3:25-12:00)

4 Play (12:00-20:00) - Finish at a natural point between 19:55-20:00 (avoid abrupt ending).



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Violoncello

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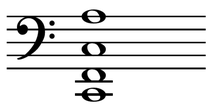
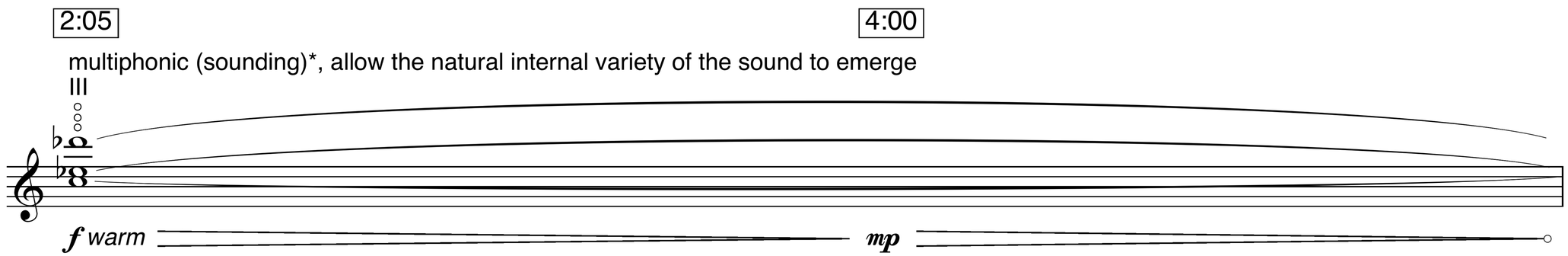
You will require a stopwatch. The second and third strings are re-tuned as follows:

Scordatura

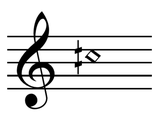


1 Silence (0:00-2:05)

2 Play (2:05-5:25)



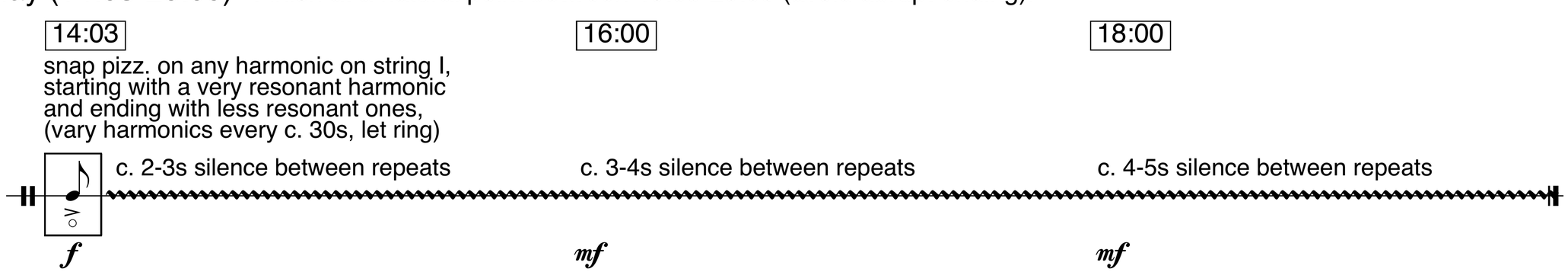
* This can be produced by bowing close to the bridge, with flat hair on the following pitch (notated at non-scordatura pitch).



This fingering was taken from Cello Map and adjusted to accommodate the different string tension due to scordatura.
(Fallowfield, Ellen and Resch, Thomas, www.cellomap.com/index/the-string/multiphonics-and-other-multiple-sounds/fingeringcharts.html, accessed 4/11/18)

3 Silence (5:25-14:03)

4 Play (14:03-20:00) - Finish at a natural point between 19:55-20:00 (avoid abrupt ending).



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Double bass

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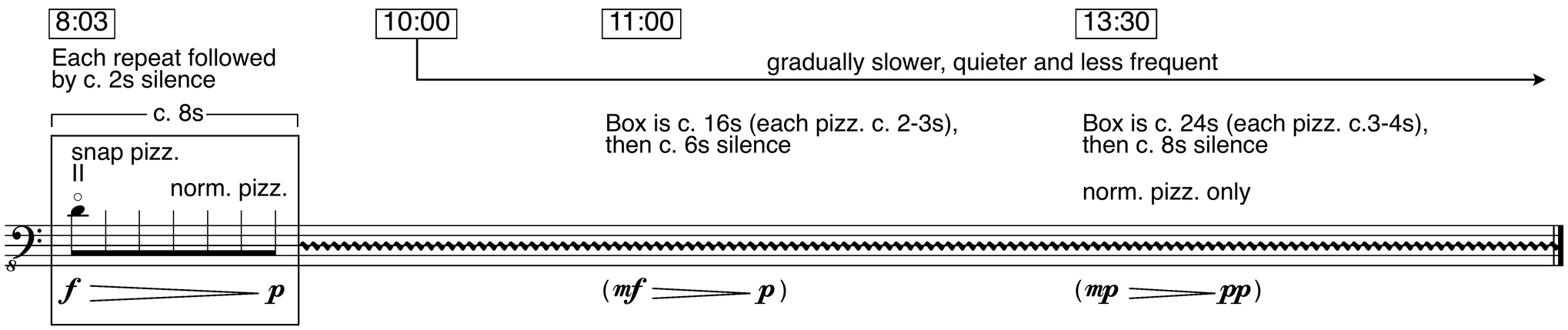
You will require a stopwatch.

1 Silence (0:00-8:03)

2 Play (8:03-15:05)



3 Silence (15:05-20:00)

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