

Horizon 2027 Front Ensemble Packet

Our mission is to provide learning and performance opportunities for youth and young adults that develop their character, leadership skills, artistry, musical ability, and selflessness.

Additionally, Horizon Arts strives to build a tradition of excellence that the organization will come to be known for; to appropriately represent the state of Utah and the performing arts nationally and worldwide; and to stimulate interest in the study and teaching of music and the arts.

Everything that we do as a section will be centered around five basic principles:

- **Deliberate** – As an ensemble, we want everything that we do to be a choice: dynamics, rhythms, movements, etc. Communicating clarity of intent is everything. That means having individual and collective attention to detail when we **define, rehearse, and perform** those choices.
- **Uniformity** – “When we think the same, we play the same”. This packet lays the groundwork for our collective mental and physical approach to music, and over the course of the season a constant focus of our rehearsals will be unifying our approach to create a beautiful musical whole out of our different individual contributions. No matter what, **always strive to look and sound the same!**
- **Hard work** – Indoor season is short! We only have a few weekends to put something extraordinary together, so the more we can focus and be efficient both in and out of our rehearsals, the more deliberate, unified and exemplary we can become.
- **Education** – As part of this season, you will learn to be a better musician. Nothing we teach you is exclusive to our show or our ensemble. We will strive for principle-based learning that you can apply to any future endeavor, musical or non-musical. You will not be expected to make zero mistakes in this group. Mistakes are a sign that you are learning and improving, not that you aren't good enough.
- **Fun** – More than anything else, this season is all about **YOU**. Your season is what you put into it, and if you can put 100% effort into becoming great, then you'll have the time of your life. Beyond that, remember that music is about striving for perfection and falling short in wonderful ways. Work hard, but don't ever let the work yet to be done take away from appreciation for and enjoyment of where you are right now.

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Posture & Appearance

Before you've even played a single note, the judge and audience have decided what kind of performer you are. A good rule for the ensemble to live by is **"always look good"**. It doesn't matter if we are rehearsing, performing, or even moving the instruments: we must always look professional.

- Stand straight with your shoulders back and relaxed, and keep your feet a shoulder-width apart.
- Always position your body exactly in the middle of the range that you're playing in, so as to avoid inconvenient or awkward steps.
- Vibraphone players will keep right toes only on the pedal. This is to ensure that your right foot/heel will be providing balance for you as you move behind your keyboard with your left foot.

It's also important to keep the shoulders relaxed and the head up. Look as if you own the instrument (you do!), and are in total control. Though at times in the show visual demands might change slightly, this is our go-to. A relaxed yet confident posture will go a long way, as well as allow you to have the range of motion necessary to perform.

Two-Mallet Technique Grip

The way that we hold the mallets, often called "grip", is very important. It is only when our grip is identical and UNIFIED from player to player that we'll reach the desired sound quality as a section.

- First, grab the mallet (with less than 1 ½ inches sticking out past the pinky) between the first knuckle of the pointer finger and the pad of the thumb. Make sure that your pointer finger and your thumb are directly opposite of one another, with neither higher than the other.
- Next, wrap the other three fingers NATURALLY around the mallet. Avoid squeezing or putting any tension on the mallet.
- Then, turn the wrists 45 degrees inward so that the back of the hand is in between facing the wall and the ceiling

Hand Position

- Slightly angle your wrist so that the mallet heads are close to one another, and so that the mallets form an angle. This is called the **"pizza slice"**. Regardless of whether our mallets are close together or an octave and a half apart, they will always make a "pizza

slice” angle when put together. This allows for a natural motion across the whole keyboard.

Fulcrum

We will utilize what is known as back-fulcrum technique for slow-to-medium tempos and front fulcrum for faster rhythms. The weight of the mallet should be on our back three fingers for back fulcrum and in the pointer and thumb for front fulcrum. The fingers should not squeeze, but merely secure and guide the mallets.

Stroke

If we move together, we play together. If we look and move the same, we will sound the same. Our default stroke is called the “Full Stroke”, in which the mallet returns to the same height it was played from.

- All 2-mallet strokes start up and return to this position after striking the bar (imagine a bouncy ball being thrown at the bar and bouncing right back up)
- The path of the mallet is straight up and down
- The stroke is initiated from the WRIST with support from the arm (70/30 split)
- The speed of the rebound always matches the velocity of the stroke
- While moving around the instrument, the WRIST is primarily responsible for vertical motion while the ARM is responsible for horizontal motion (i.e traveling to different pitches)

Note: Different musical passages may call for different stroke types. For example, longer rhythms (half notes, etc.) may not be comfortably connected with one smooth wrist turn. In these instances, we will often “float”, or fill the musical space with a slow, continuous rebound. For now, focus on the basic full stroke.

Moving Around the Keyboard

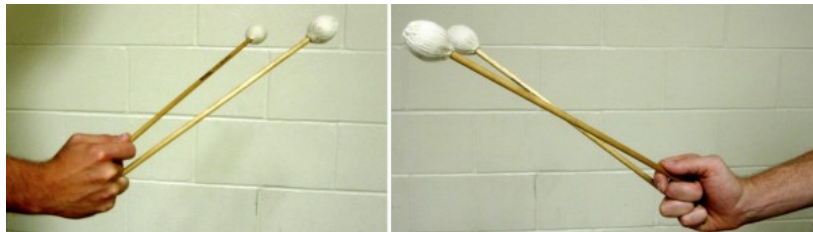
Regardless of stroke type, we always operate on two axes: X & Y. The Y (or vertical) axis motion, which is the up and down of our stroke, is always a primarily-WRIST motion. This motion determines the height and speed of the note. The X (or horizontal) axis motion determines which note you play.

Four Mallet Grip

We will use the “Stevens” grip for all keyboard instruments

Stevens Grip

- Put the hand in “hand-shaking” position, with the thumb facing the ceiling
- Put the “inner mallet” in your hand
 - Place the tip (the end of the wooden part) of one mallet underneath the fleshy part at the base of the thumb in the center of the palm.
 - Rest the mallet on the pointer finger, just behind the first knuckle. This finger should be pointing to the inside and kept away from the palm of the hand.
 - Place the thumb on the mallet, directly opposite of the pointer finger. If the mallet were not in your hand, these fingers should make a lowercase “t”
 - With little tension, put the middle finger on or around the tip of the shaft (wooden part) of the mallet in your palm.
- Put the “outer mallet” in your hand.
 - Wrap your pinky and ring finger around the outside of the mallet.
 - Hold firmly enough that the mallet does not “droop” – the mallet should have a naturally upward angle
 - There should be about ½ to 1” sticking out of the back of your hand.



Four-Mallet Strokes

Going left to right your mallets are numbered 1, 2, 3, 4. This puts mallets 1 and 2 in your left hand and mallets 3 and 4 in your right hand.

Double Vertical Stroke

This is essentially a “double-stop”, but in one hand. In other words, both mallets in the hand strike the instrument at the same time. Like all of our strokes so far, this movement is initiated from the wrist with support from the arm (70/30 split). The stroke should be performed with a relaxed wrist motion.

Single Independent

This stroke is when one mallet plays at a time. When playing single independent strokes with the outer mallets, your hand should be rotating around the inner mallets. When playing single independent strokes with the inner mallets, your hand should be rotating around the outer mallets. The mallets that aren't playing should remain relaxed while the mallets that are playing start and rebound up to execute full strokes.

Double Laterals

This can be thought of as the four-mallet equivalent of a diddle. Each mallet in a hand is played one after the other such that two different notes are played with one motion from the arm. Just as with any other stroke, you should strive for a full stroke when playing double laterals. Different combinations of double laterals with all four mallets are called permutations (1234, 4321, 1243, 2143, etc.)

Note: For faster or more fluid, roll-like material, our approach may change.

Single Alternating

This stroke is achieved by playing the inner and outer mallets continuously one after the other (121212... or 343434...). As opposed to Single Independent strokes, the point around which your hand rotates for this stroke is between the two mallets. Strive for a consistent tone between the two mallets being used. Remember to always strive for full strokes.

Communication

Communication is the key to precision and performance in a front ensemble. In general, we communicate with one another by looking, listening, and pulsing in order to establish and maintain our tempo.

Listening Points and Listening Responsibility

Our main priority is to stay in time and together as a front ensemble. To achieve this, we focus our communication **inwards** and **forwards**. At any given moment, one player (called the **listening point**) is generally responsible for listening back and maintaining tempo with the battery. The rest of the ensemble looks towards and listens in towards that player to stay with them. The listening point, generally the center marimba or drum set player, may change depending on the musical environment - but each player **ALWAYS** has a **listening responsibility**.

In the example below, Player 1 is the listening point. Players 2 and 3 will listen/look to player 1 for tempo. Player 4 will listen/look to Player 2, and Player 5 will listen/look to player 3.

	2	1	3	
4				5

Active Listening

It is expected that you will **always** be **ACTIVELY** listening to your listening responsibility. Active listening is best described as "looking" with your ears. Think about the difference between seeing and looking. If you stop right now, you can probably see a lot of things in your peripheral and main vision. However, you're most likely only looking at one particular thing. Instead of passively hearing, strive to find whatever it is you're supposed to be listening for, and actively adjust your playing accordingly.

Looking In

In addition to listening, we look inwards/forwards towards our listening responsibility, or at the listening point themselves (if possible) to start every exercise or new musical phrase.

BE PREPARED TO START EACH EXERCISE LOOKING IN TOWARDS THE CENTER, INSTEAD OF DOWN AT THE INSTRUMENT.

Sound

Dynamics/Heights

Our dynamics, or the volume that we play at, change based on the height we play at. To change height, turn your wrist more or less far back. The final decision on mallet height is determined by group uniformity, listening, and musical situations. These heights are as follows:

p - 3 inches or parallel to the keyboard

mp - 6 inches above the keyboard

mf - 9 inches above the keyboard

f - 12 inches above the keyboard

ff - 12+ inches above the keyboard (look in for specifics)

Full Sounds/Velocity

In order to make sure that we project a full sound, it is important that we play with the same velocity at all different heights (unless musical considerations call for something else). To play with velocity is to play with extra speed into the bar. Note that it isn't the same as playing as hard as possible. Experiment on your own. Play a few notes as HARD as possible without increasing height, and then start to back off the velocity slowly, until you find a full sound.

FE Movement Exercises

Before you can play on a keyboard you must be able to move your mallets.

Play these with a met at various tempos, starting slow.

8, 8, 16

R R R ... L L L ... R ...

5

L ... R ... L ... R

10 Accent Tap

R R R ... L L L ... R ...

14

L ... R ... L ... R

19 Upbeat Builder

R R R R R R R R L L L L L L L L

23

R R R R L L L L R R R R L L L R

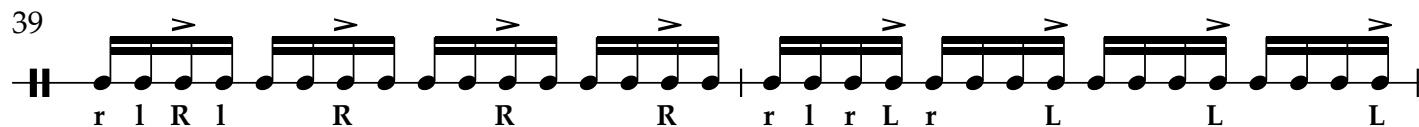
28 Jedi Eights (various stickings)

R R R R L L L L R R R R L L L R

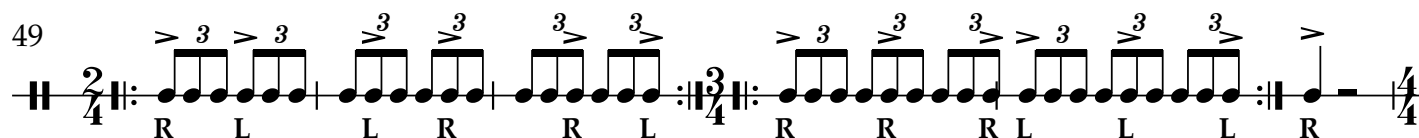
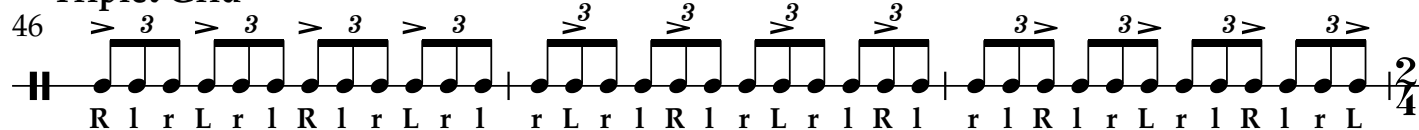
32

R R R R L L L L R R R R L L L R

37 16th Note Grid



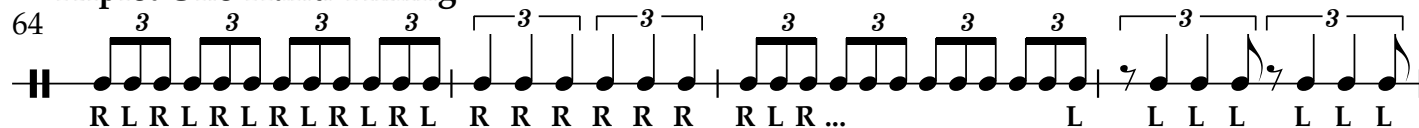
Triplet Grid



55 16th Note One-Hand Timing



Triplet One-Hand Timing



Greens Exercises

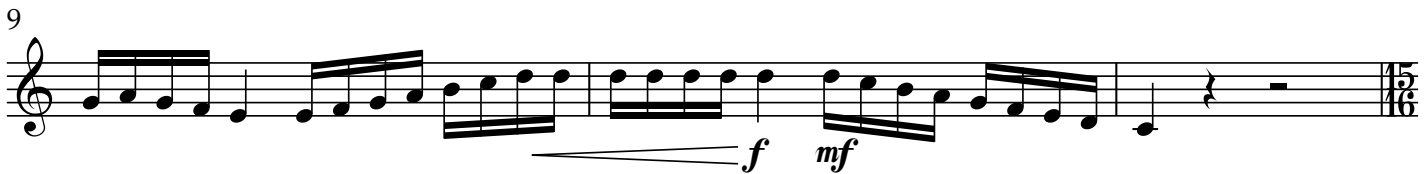
Learn in all 12 keys

Greens



Presto

Speed Greens



Arpeggios



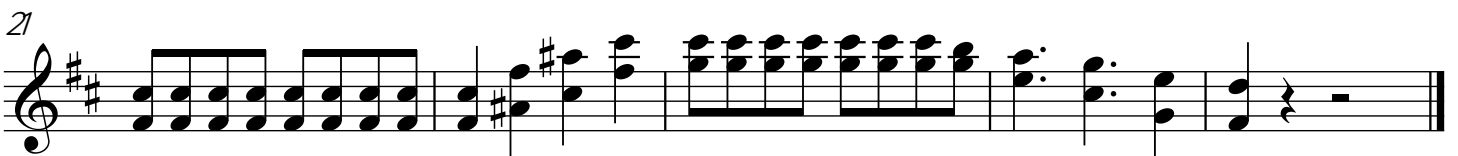
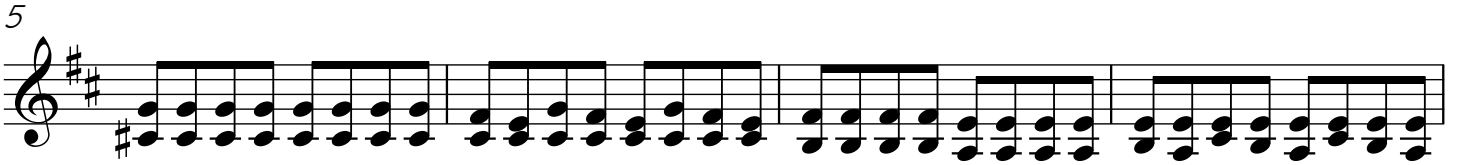
Double Stops



Winter Air

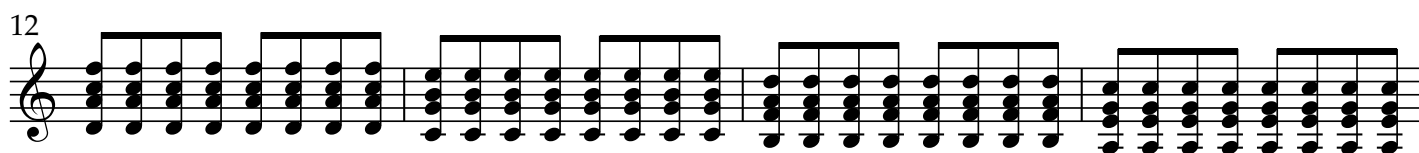
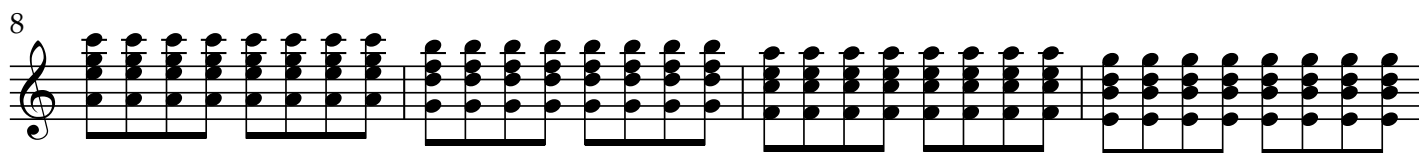
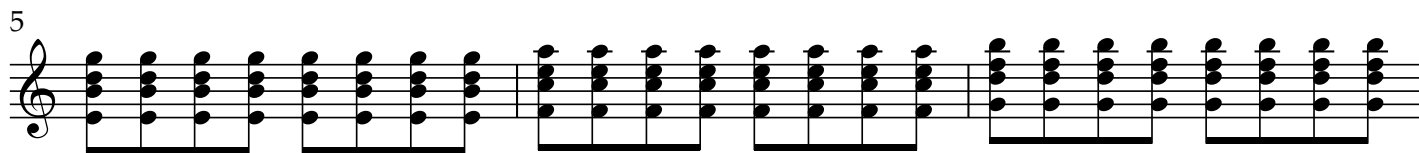
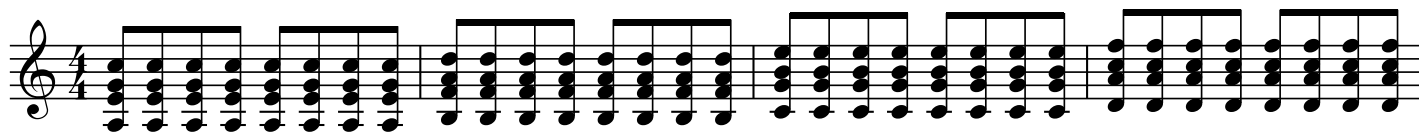
Move your mallets in a checkmark motion between notes.
Play both hands at the same height and exactly together

2 Mallets or Inner Mallets



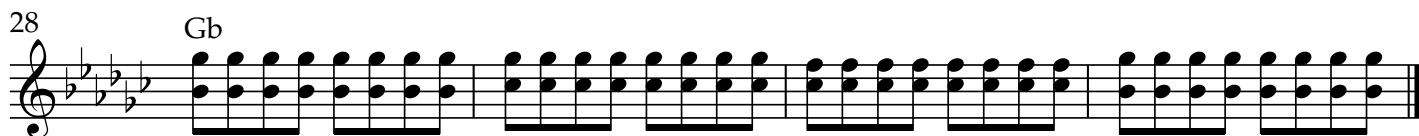
Broccoli

Be able to play in permutations: 1234, 2341, 3412, 4123, 4321, 3214, 2143, 1432, out-in, 13-24, single independent, etc.



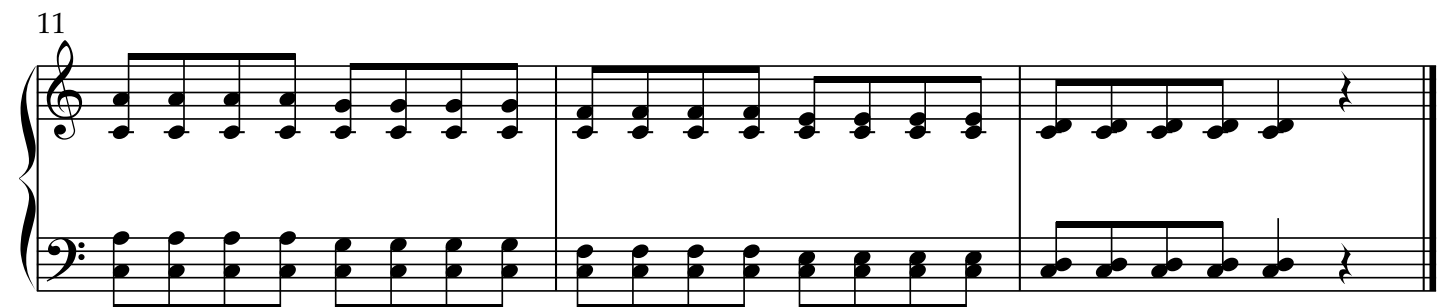
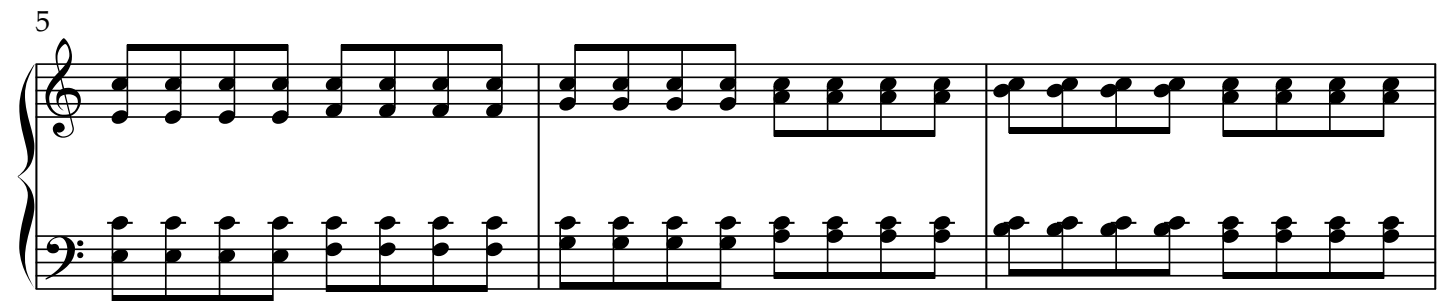
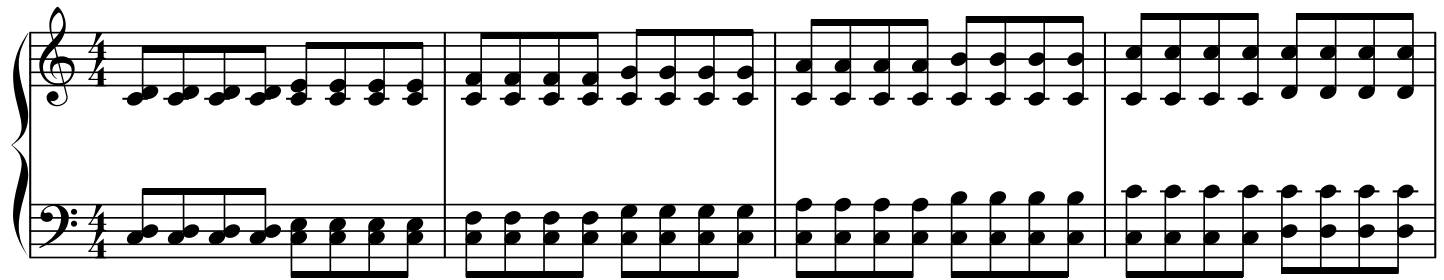
Beluga

All 12 keys and permutations



Interval Changes

One hand at a time, then both, then play with permutations



Intermodal

Woods

Slow
Block Chords

p cresc.

5

f dim.

9

Octave Block Chords

mp f mf f

13

>mp f p fp

17

Double Laterals (add accents for variation)

p cresc.

20

f dim.

23

mp —————

26

R-1-2

f ————— *mf* ————— *f* —————

29

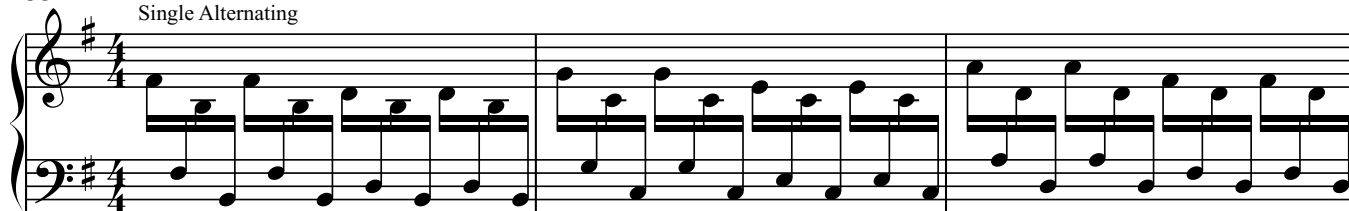
mp ————— *f* —————

31

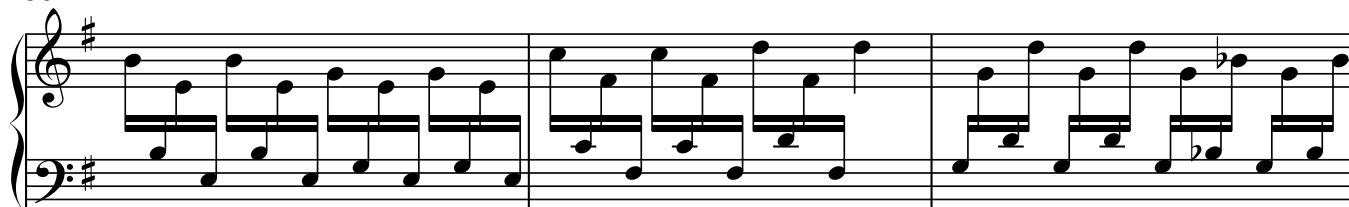
p ————— *fp*

33

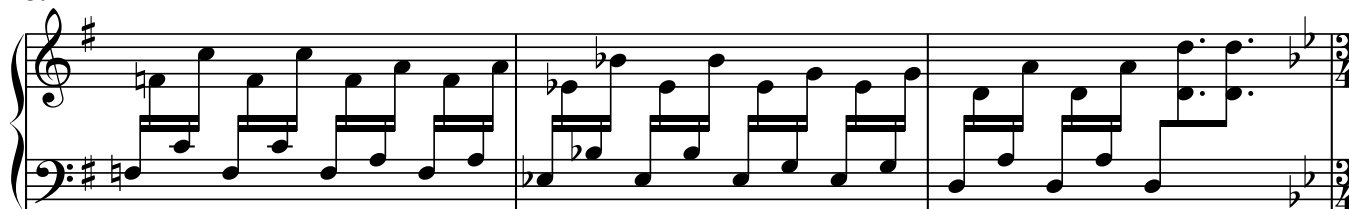
Single Alternating

*p cresc.*

36

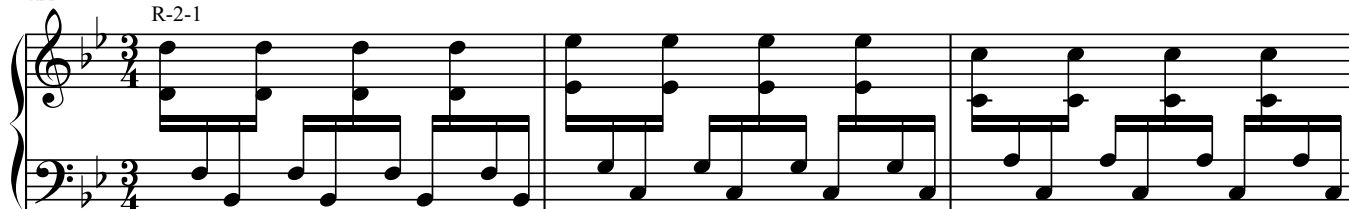
*f dim.*

39

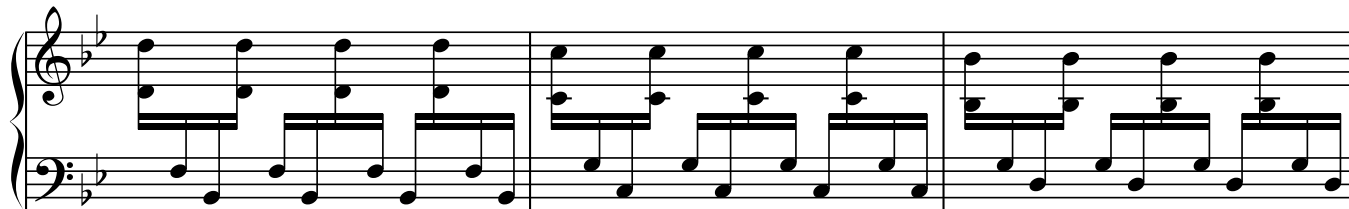
*mp* —————

42

R-2-1

*f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* —————

45

*mp* ————— *f* —————

48

*p* ————— *f* —————

Intermodal

Slow
Block Chords

p cresc.

5 *f dim.* *mp*

10 Octave Block Chords *f* *mf* *f*

13 *mp* *f* *p* *fp*

17 Double Laterals (add accents for variation) *p cresc.*

20 *f dim.*

23 *mp*

2 26

R-1-2

Metals

f *mf* *f*

Musical staff 26-28 in treble clef, key of D major, 3/4 time. It features a melody with eighth and quarter notes, some beamed together. Dynamic markings are *f* at the start, *mf* in the middle, and *f* at the end. The word "Metals" is written above the staff.

29

mp *f* *p* *fp*

Musical staff 29-32 in treble clef, key of D major, 3/4 time. It continues the melodic line with various dynamics: *mp*, *f*, *p*, and *fp*.

33

Single Alternating

p cresc.

Musical staff 33-35 in treble clef, key of D major, 4/4 time. It features a "Single Alternating" pattern with eighth notes. The dynamic marking is *p cresc.*

36

f dim.

Musical staff 36-38 in treble clef, key of D major, 3/4 time. It continues the melodic line with a *f dim.* dynamic marking.

39

mp

Musical staff 39-41 in treble clef, key of D major, 3/4 time. It continues the melodic line with an *mp* dynamic marking.

42

R-2-1

f *mf* *f* *mp*

Musical staff 42-45 in treble clef, key of D major, 3/4 time. It features a "R-2-1" pattern with eighth notes. Dynamic markings are *f*, *mf*, *f*, and *mp*.

46

f *p* *f*

Musical staff 46-48 in treble clef, key of D major, 3/4 time. It continues the melodic line with dynamic markings *f*, *p*, and *f*.

Intermodal

Drum Set

Slow
Block Chords

cresc.
p

5

f dim.

9

Octave Block Chords

mp ***f*** ***mf*** ***f***

13

>mp ***f*** ***p*** ***fp***

17

Double Laterals

cresc.
p

19

22

f dim.

24

mp

2

Drum Set

26

R-1-2

f *mf* *f* *mp* *f*

31

Single Alternating

>mp *p* *fp* *p cresc.*

34

37

f dim.

40

mp

42

R-2-1

f *mf* *f* *mp* *f*

47

p *f*

Intermodal

Bass Guitar

Slow

Block Chords

b min C D e min D b7 g min F Eb d min

cresc.
p *f dim.* **mp**

10

Octave Block Chords

Bb c min F/C Bb c min g min Gb

f **mf** **f** **mp** **f** **p**

17

Double Laterals

b min C D e min D b7

cresc.
p

22

g min F Eb d min

f dim. **mp**

26

R-1-2

Bb c min F/C Bb c min g min Gb

f **mf** **f** **mp** **f** **p**

33

Single Alternating

b min C D e min D b7

cresc.
p

38

g min F Eb d min

f dim. **mp**

42

R-2-1

Bb c min F/C Bb c min g min F Bb

f **mf** **f** **mp** **f** **p** **f**