Joseph Klein

Der Heroszupfer

(The Hero-tugger)

character study after Elias Canetti

for solo trombone

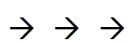
(2019)

- for Andrew Glendening -

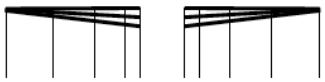
duration: c. 6'30"

Performance Notes

senza misura

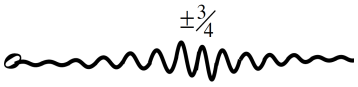


gradual change from one mode of play to another



accelerando/ritardando

portamenti



oscillating portamento: width at peak indicated (ranging from 1/4 to 3/4 tone above/below central pitch).

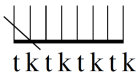
fermata continuum (shortest to longest)

durational continuum in *senza misura* sections: arranged from shortest to longest (precise durations *ad libitum*).

continuum of rests/breaks within *senza misura* section: values arranged from shortest to longest (precise durations *ad libitum*).

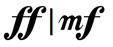
slide trill/tremolo

lip trill/tremolo



rapid double-tonguing

flutertongue



sudden dynamic change

Accidentals apply only to the notes they immediately precede, with the exception of repeated pitches.

It is important to adhere to the timings indicated in the *senza misura* sections in order to achieve the proper pacing of the music: each line of music should be approximately 17 to 18 seconds duration, and should never be less than 15 nor more than 20 seconds in duration.

Straight mute and plunger required; all mute changes must be made with as little disruption to the musical flow as possible.

Program Note

Der Heroszupfer (*The Hero-tugger*) is the eighteenth in a series of short works for solo instrument based upon characters from *Der Ohrenzeuge: Fünfzig Charaktere* (*Earwitness: Fifty Characters*), written in 1974 by the Bulgarian-born British-Austrian novelist Elias Canetti (1905-1994). Canetti's distinctive studies incorporate poetic imagery, singular insights, and unabashed wordplay to create fifty ironic paradigms of human behavior. This collection of works, begun in 1997, was inspired by the vividly surreal depictions of Canetti's characters and includes works for contrabass, violin, bass flute, ocarina, contrabassoon, glass harmonica, alto saxophone, trumpet, percussion, bass saxophone, guitar, piccolo, organ, basset horn, and violoncello, among others. In Canetti's

depiction of this character, "the hero-tugger potters around monuments and tugs on the trousers of heroes.... [He] jumps out, heaves himself skillfully onto the pedestal, and stands next to the hero.... He senses the greatness passing over to him and he shudders. But if he works hard... the day will come, the radiant day, when he will heave himself up in a powerful surge and, in front of the whole world, he will scornfully spit on the hero's head."

Der Heroszupfer was composed in July 2019 for trombonist Andrew Glendening, who first performed the work at Northern Illinois University on 23 January 2020.

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Der Heroszupfer

(The Hero-tugger)

The hero-tugger potters around monuments and tugs on the trousers of heroes. They may be of stone or of bronze, but in his hands they come alive. Some get up in the middle of traffic, they had best be left alone. But the ones in parks are the very ones we need. He sneaks around them or else he lurks in the bushes. When the last visitor has gone away, the hero-tugger jumps out, heaves himself skillfully onto the pedestal, and stands next to the hero. He remains there a while, mustering his courage. He is full of respect and does not reach in right away. He also thinks about where the best place would be. It is not enough to put his hand on a curve, he has to hold something in his fingers, otherwise he cannot tug: he needs folds. When he has one, he does not let go for a long time, he feels as if he had it in his teeth. He senses the greatness passing over to him and he shudders. Now he knows what he really is and what he could do. Now he makes up his mind again, now he tugs hard, now he glows with strength, he will begin tomorrow.

The hero-tugger does not climb any higher, that would be inappropriate. He could heave himself up to the stone shoulder and whisper something into the hero's ear. He could pull his ear and reproach him for various things. That would be the height of infamy. He contents himself with the modest place that is proper for him. He is still clutching folds in the trousers. But if he works hard, never misses a night, and tugs more and more firmly, the day will come, the radiant day, when he will heave himself up in a powerful surge and, in front of the whole world, he will scornfully spit on the hero's head.

— Elias Canetti, *Der Ohrenzeuge: Fünfzig Charaktere*
(translated by Joachim Neugroschel)

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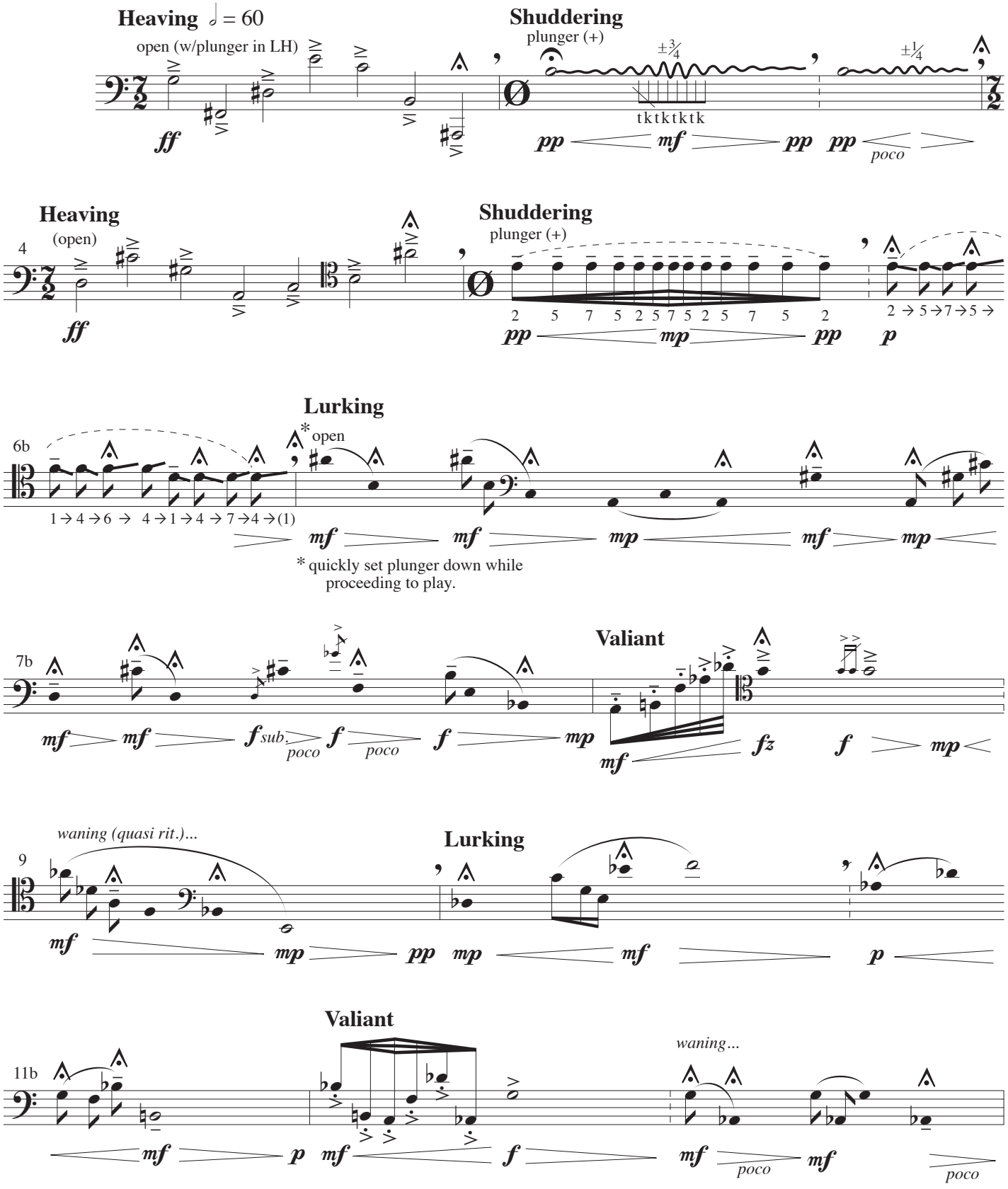

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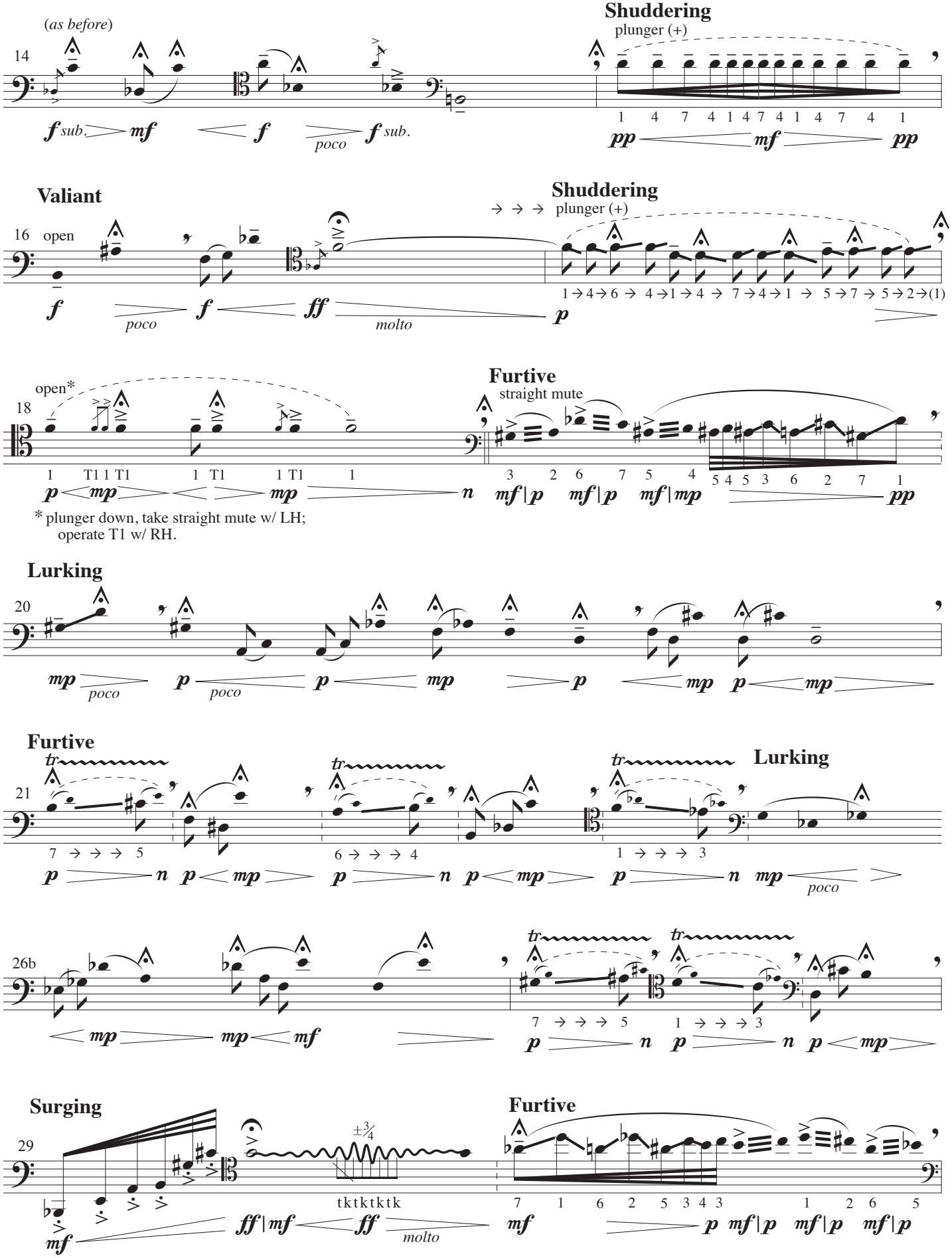
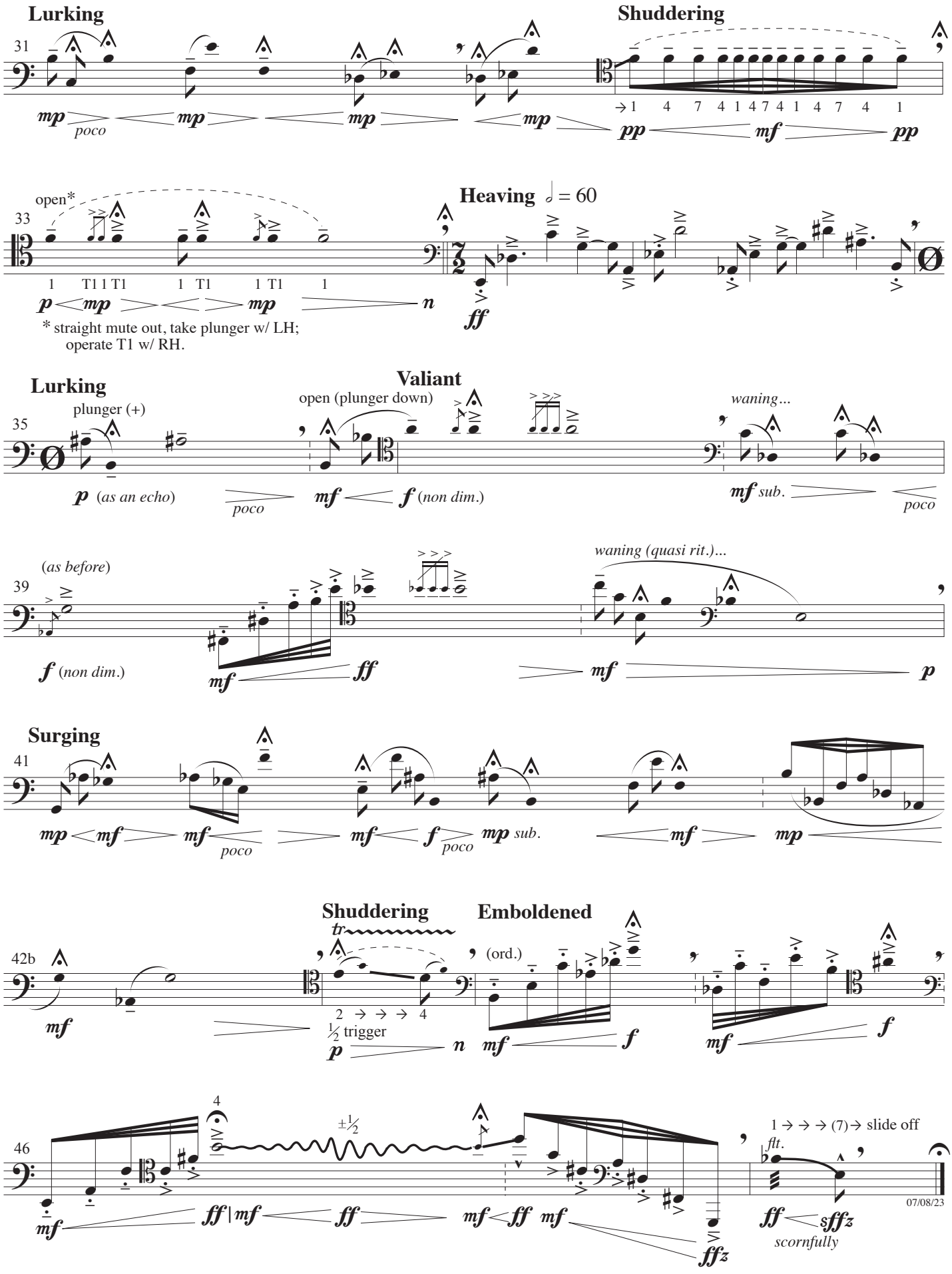

(as before)
14
Shuddering
plunger (+)
Valiant
16
open
Shuddering
plunger (+)
open*
18
Furtive
straight mute
* plunger down, take straight mute w/ LH;
operate T1 w/ RH.
Lurking
20
Furtive
21
Lurking
26b
Surging
29
Furtive
tktktktk


Lurking
31
mp poco
mp
mp
mp
Shuddering
→1 4 7 4 1 4 7 4 1 4 7 4 1
pp
mf
pp
open*
33
1 T1 1 T1 1 T1 1 T1 1
p mp mp n
* straight mute out, take plunger w/ LH; operate T1 w/ RH.
Heaving ♩ = 60
ff
Lurking
plunger (+)
35
p (as an echo)
poco
Valiant
open (plunger down)
mf f (non dim.)
waning...
mf sub.
poco
(as before)
39
f (non dim.)
mf ff
waning (quasi rit.)...
mf p
Surging
41
mp mf mf poco mf f poco mp sub. mf mp
Shuddering
tr
Emboldened
42b
mf
2 → → → 4
½ trigger
p n
(ord.)
mf f
mf f
4
±½
46
mf
ff | mf ff
mf ff mf
ffz
1 → → → (7) → slide off
flt.
ff sffz
scornfully
07/08/23