A Different Story of O

Dina Koston

written for Phyllis Bryn-Julson

Performance Notes

The stage directions are on the score. Directions are in parentheses.

Bars ① through ㉙ should be done from memory.

"Irregular" rest marks:

V = breath or a slight delay in the next beat

𝄾 = a short pause

(𝄾𝄾) = a longer pause

← means to hold back the tempo ; → means to go back to the tempo

𝄀 = a breath in the sound

PBJ carries a largish open bag - decorative - containing a cell phone, her phone/address book, an engagement calendar - or a largish wall calendar - a small, fold-up ~~style~~ umbrella, some 8½"x11" or 14" pieces of paper, and three scores:

~~Schoenberg: Second String Quartet, Op. 10~~

Boulez: First Improvisation on Mallarmé

Kurtág: Attila József-Fragments, Op. 20 (No. 16)

Stage "set": □ chair

music stand ■ small table with glass of water

set height

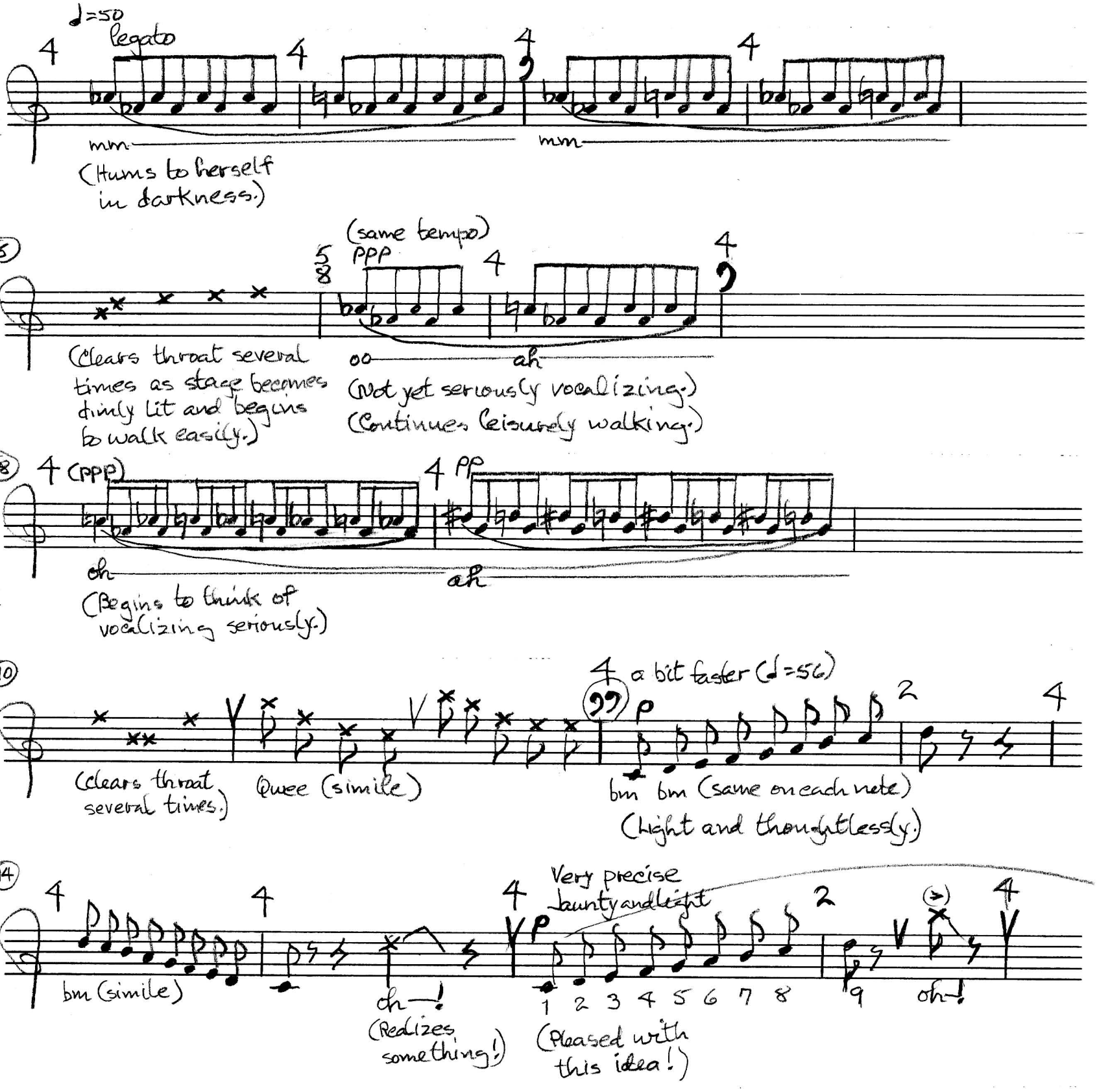
The phone numbers are the actual numbers, except for Boulez and for Kurtág.

The charge card numbers are made up.

Since there is no definite pitch equivalent for zero (or O) there is considerable freedom for the sound of it (oh).

A Different Story of O

House and stage to dark - completely dark.
PBJ slips on stage upon darkness, waits about 5 beats at the opening tempo (♩=50) and begins to hum bars ① through ④ (not attempting to walk!).
The stage gets dimly lit during bar ⑤.



(18)

4 mp

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ze-ro!

ff

6 mf

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 oh—!

4

(Pleased.)

(20)

4 a bit sad (♩=50)

p

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

2

4 mp

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 oh—

2

oh—
(Breathy)

(24)

mf

(clear throat.)

4 mp light and jaunty

1 3 2 4 3 5 4 6 5 7 6 8 7 9

4

(26)

4 mf

9 7 8 6 7 5 6 4 5 3 4 2 3 1

2 f

oh!

mf

To work!
(spoken)
(Move toward music stand)
(Lights begin to go up—)

f

yes, to work!!

(29)

3

p

quee quee qee (simile)
(Drops bag next to chair.)

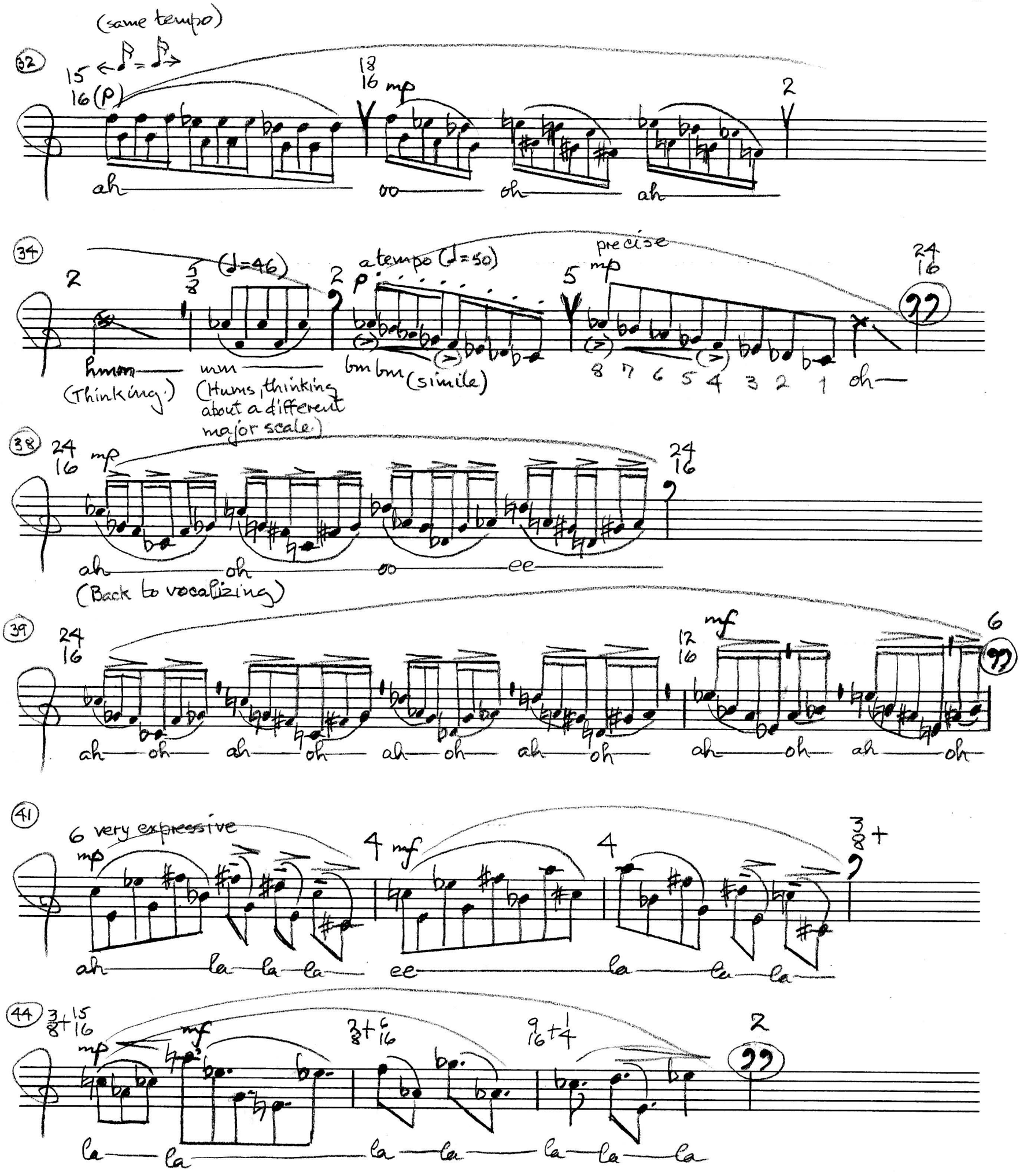
3

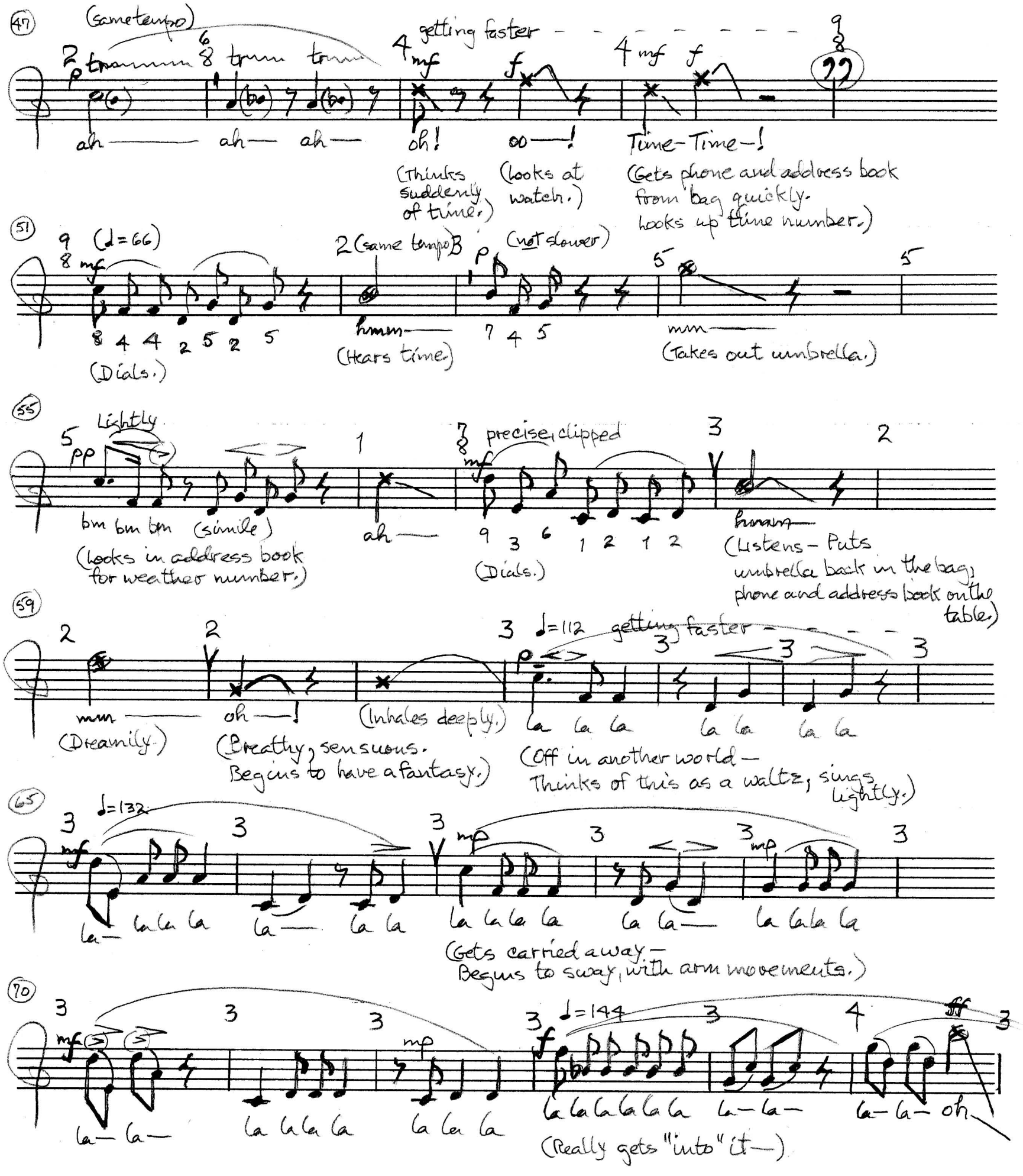
ee

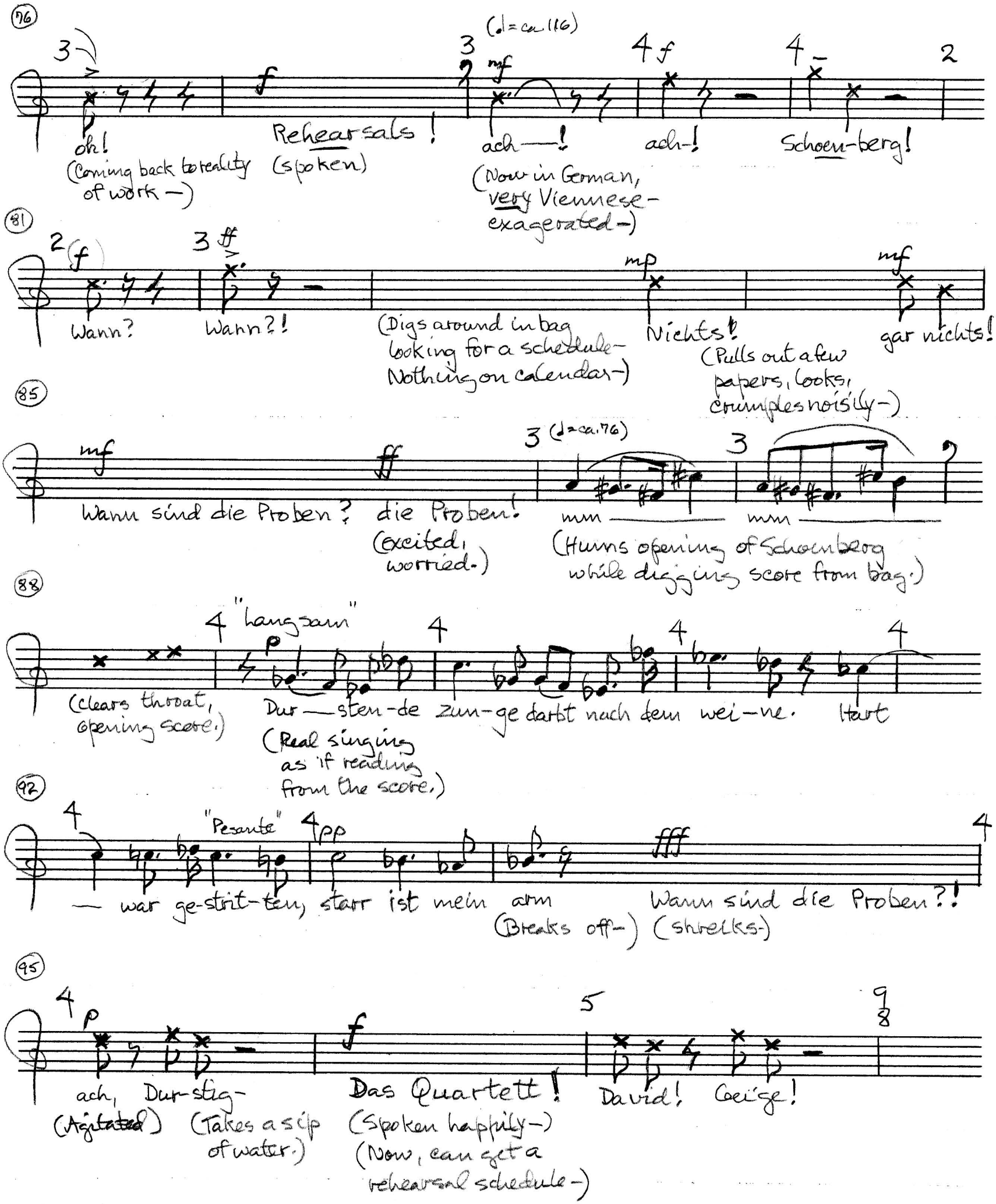
la

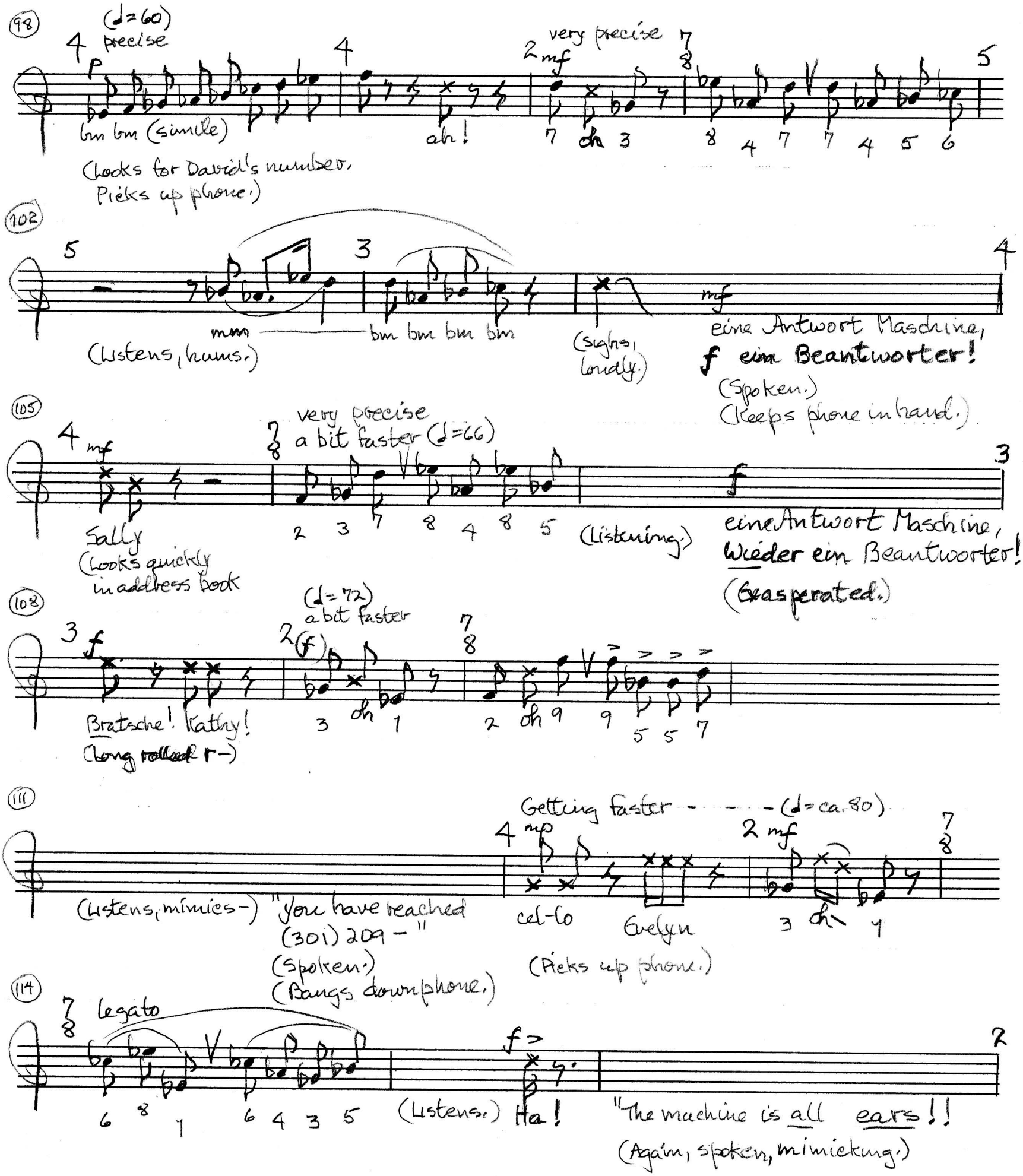
(At the music stand.)
(Real vocalizing, as lovely as possible.)
(Lights are up full.)

15
16


(same tempo)
32
15
16 (p)
18
16 mp
2
ah
oo
oh
ah
34
2
5/8
(♩=46)
2
p
a tempo (♩=50)
precise
5 mp
24
16
hmm
(Thinking)
mm
(Hums, thinking about a different major scale)
bm bm (simile)
8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
oh
38
24
16 mp
24
16
ah
oh
oo
ee
(Back to vocalizing)
39
24
16
12
16 mf
6
ah
oh
ah
oh
ah
oh
ah
oh
ah
oh
ah
oh
41
6 very expressive
mp
4 mf
4
3/8 +
ah
la
la
la
ee
la
la
la
44
3/8 + 15/16
mp
mf
2/8 + 6/16
9/16 + 1/4
2
la
la
la
la
la
la
la


(47)
(same tempo)
getting faster
ah — ah — ah —
oh!
oo —!
Time-Time-!
(Thinks suddenly of time.)
(Looks at watch.)
(Gets phone and address book from bag quickly. Looks up time number.)
(51)
(♩=66)
(same tempo)
(not slower)
(Dials.)
(Hears time.)
(Takes out umbrella.)
(55)
Lightly
precise, clipped
bm bm bm (simile)
(Looks in address book for weather number.)
ah —
(Dials.)
(Listens - Puts umbrella back in the bag, phone and address book on the table.)
(59)
♩=112
getting faster
mm —
oh —!
(Dreamily.)
(Breathy, sensuous. Begins to have a fantasy.)
(Inhales deeply.)
la la la la la la la
(Off in another world - Thinks of this as a waltz, sings lightly.)
(65)
♩=132
la — la la la la — la la la la la la la la la la la la la la
(Gets carried away - Begins to sway, with arm movements.)
(70)
♩=144
la — la — la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la la — la — la — la — oh
(Really gets "into" it —)


76
(♩= ca. 116)
3
3
4
4
2
f
mf
f
ok!
(Coming back to reality of work –)
Rehearsals!
(spoken)
ach —!
(Now in German, very Viennese – exagerated –)
ach-!
Schoen-berg!
81
2
3
f
ff
mp
mf
Wann?
Wann?!
(Digs around in bag looking for a schedule – Nothing on calendar –)
Nichts!
(Pulls out a few papers, looks, crumples noisily –)
gar nichts!
85
mf
ff
3
(♩= ca. 76)
3
Wann sind die Proben?
die Proben!
(excited, worried.)
mm
mm
(Hums opening of Schoenberg while digging score from bag.)
88
4
"Langsam"
4
4
4
p
(Clears throat, opening score.)
Dur — sten-de zun-ge darbt nach dem wei-ne.
Hart
(Real singing as if reading from the score.)
92
4
"Pesante"
4
pp
fff
4
— war ge-strit-ten, starr ist mein arm
(Breaks off –)
Wann sind die Proben?!
(shrieks –)
95
4
p
f
5
9
8
ach, Dur-stig-
(Agitated)
(Takes a sip of water.)
Das Quartett!
(Spoken happily –)
(Now, can get a rehearsal schedule –)
David! Geige!


98
(♩=60)
precise
very precise
bm bm (simile)
ah!
ah
(Looks for David's number.
Picks up phone.)
102
mm
bm bm bm bm
(Listens, hums.)
(Sighs, loudly.)
eine Antwort Maschine,
f ein Beantworter!
(Spoken.)
(Keeps phone in hand.)
105
very precise
a bit faster (♩=66)
Sally
(Looks quickly in address book
(Listening.)
eine Antwort Maschine,
Wieder ein Beantworter!
(Exasperated.)
108
(♩=72)
a bit faster
Bratsche! Kathy!
(Long rolled r-)
111
Getting faster - - - - (♩=ca. 80)
(Listens, mimics-) "You have reached (301) 209 -"
(Spoken.)
(Bangs down phone.)
cel-lo
Evelyn
(Picks up phone.)
114
legato
(Listens.) Ha!
"The machine is all ears!!
(Again, spoken, mimicking.)

(117) slower pulse (♩=50)

2 ff 2 mf 22

ach! EARS! la la la la la la la (Puts phone on table.) la- la- la- la- (Exasperated sound.) whoo — (Exasperated blowing out of air.) (Puts Schoenberg in bag.)

(121) mp 4 (♩=72 – not faster) 2 mf 3

Pierre! la musique de Pierre! (Spoken, pleased, a new idea –) (Looks in bag for Boulez score.) bm bm bm (Finds the score.) Boulez (Reads from score.) Pierre Pierre Boulez

(125) 3 mp p 3

au-jour-d'hui Va-t-il nous dé-chi-rer a-vec un coup d'aile i-vre. Quand ? (Rather "flat" affect.)

(129) p mp

Quand sont' ils les répétitions ? (Spoken quietly.) (Looks for schedule. Again pulls out of bag a piece of paper, crumples it. Same with another (repeat.) Mon Dieu! (Spoken.) Rien!

(131) (♩=56) p precise

Pierre (Spoken.) bm bm (smile) (Looks in address book.) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 (Picks up phone.)

(134) 2 (p)

1 1 3 3 1 6 3 3 5 7 8 6 2

(138)

P V V V

(listens-) Nothing- Rien- Personne! pas de réponse-
(spoken quietly-) (Still rather quietly.) (Resigned)

(139)

pp 3

bm bm (similar)
(A memory, wistful-)

(A long silence-)
(Puts music in bag.)
(Puts phone on table.)

(141)

p cresc. - - - V - - - V ff

Kurtág, yes, yes! igen, igen! Kurtág! igen!
(Spoken - growing more and more excited.)

(Takes the large Kurtág score from bag.)

(143)

Con slancio

f p

Nem! Nem! Rel-le-ne ki-ál-toz-nom sart sut-to-gom;

(147)

(p) f ff

i-gen, i-gen, i-gen!

Questions! Always questions!
(spoken, excitedly-)

(153)

5/8 (♪=126) 4/8 3/8 4/8 3/8 3/8

f ff cresc.

Nem! Nem! Nem! i-gen! Nein! Ja! No! Yes! Yes! Yes! i-gen! Ja! Ja! Ja!-
(Beginning to go crazy.)

159

fff f

Questions! Mindig vannak kérdeséik! Always **more** questions — and rehearsals!!
(shouting—) (Spoken quickly.) (Still shouting—)

161

8 (♩=69) very clear
8 mp

Mikor vannak próbák?! 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Igen 2
(Picks up phone—) (Looking up number.) (Spoken.)

164

very precise
2 mf faster (♩=76) 9/8

Oh 1 1 3 6 1 4 7 What?! ff Charge number?! 4/8
(Broken off-Shrieks—)

167

4/8 (♩=63)
Very precise
mp

4 7 5 Oh 5 6 3 6 4 (seven) 2 1 3 Oh Oh
(Exaggerated pronunciation) (a cry of distress—)

170

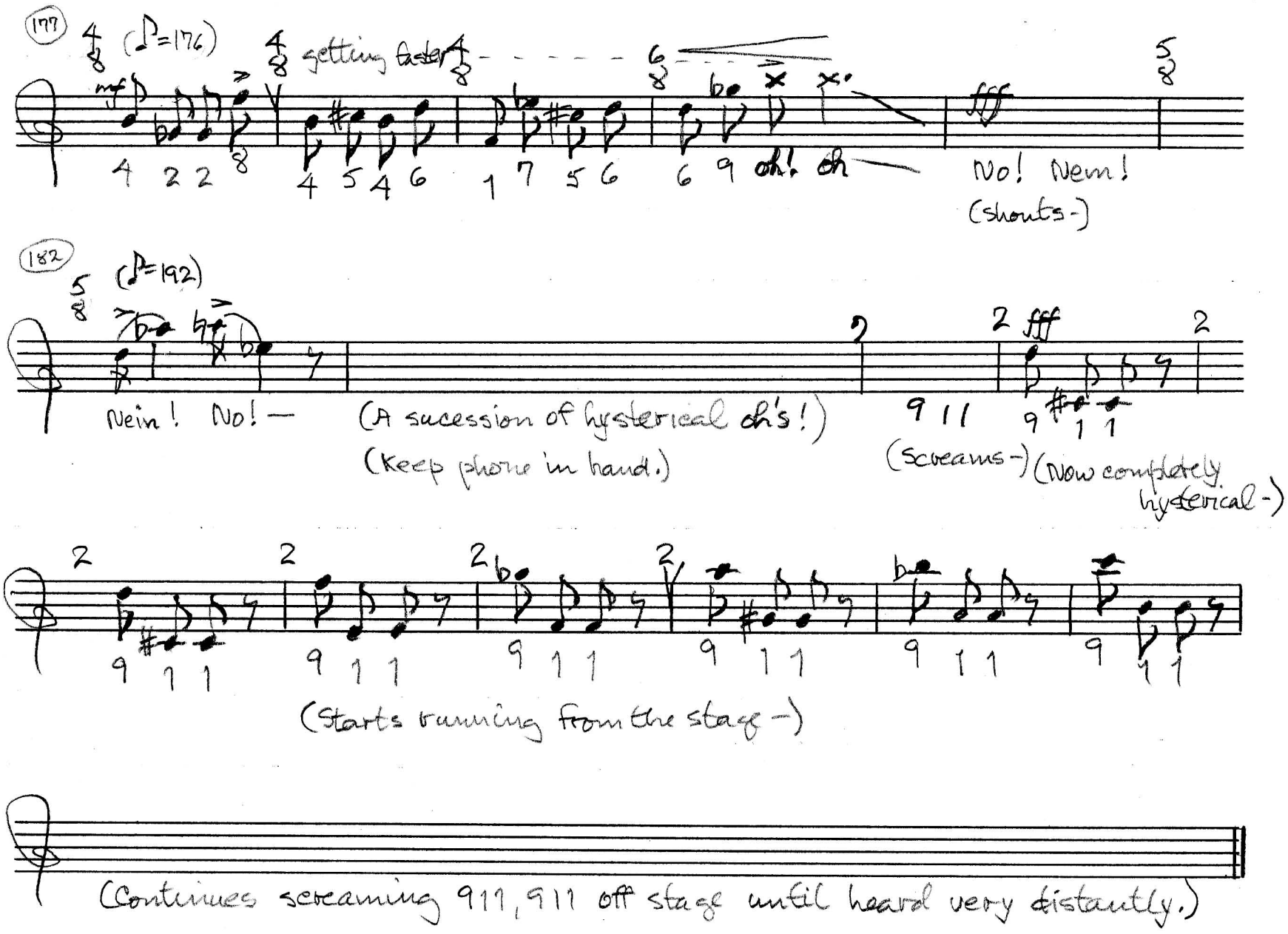
fff

(Waits—) Social Security number!! Nein! Nein! No! Ha ——
(Shouting, angry) (glissando) (Breathy sound of exasperation Giving in—)

174

5/8 (♪=160)
mf

4 7 7 4 8 4 Oh 2 2 99 fff Another charge number!!!
(Screaming, beside herself—)



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Dina Koston

ca. 8½-9 min.