

APPLES FOR BASIC

a graphical/musical composition (June-Sep. 2007)

by Christopher Williams,
after and including images by Sr. Corita Kent

for (improvising and interpreting) violist and contrabassist

dedicated to Mary Oliver and Rozemarie Heggen and my teachers

Program note

A silly, overgrown garden where one is free to play in many big and small and in-between spaces.

APPLES ARE BASIC is a music/ graphical composition for violist and contrabassist, mostly inspired by radical art-nun Corita Kent and partly inspired by Jacques Tati's film *Playtime*. It was requested by Mary Oliver and Rozemarie Heggen, and is dedicated with love to my teachers.

12 Corita silkscreen prints are incorporated into the score, defining references for 10 measured sections of "free" improvisation. Their texts, colors, directional urgencies, and compositional humour inflect the course of these individual moments, as well as 10 corresponding sections of more strictly notated material. These "through-composed" sections (each in a different tuning) aim to stud or crystallize - without materially directing - the performers' improvised path(s) through the whole of the piece.

Rise of the fall. It's a good sign when you admit you're lost.

General Instructions

The score consists of 10 sections, each containing an image and a postlude of written music. Please play them in order.

Images - Improvisation

Each image acts as a point of departure for a "free" improvisation of specific duration. All elements of a given image may be considered relevant to their evocative/provocative function: text (physical presence, perspective of speaker, tone, subject matter), color (density, brightness, combinations within a single image, continuity or ruptures between successive images), icons (arrows, signs), et al. Though the images should be studied and carefully considered beforehand, performers should not think too hard about them in performance. Real improvisation is primary, and anything demonstrative or "composed" - sounding should generally be avoided.

Each improvisation has a prescribed duration, indicated in the lower corners of adjacent pages of written music. These timings (between 0" and 80") should, like the images, not be considered impositions. They should be present as imaginary spaces - macrorhythms - within which content will be shaped but not dictated... no clocks, please!

[Brackets]

Most through-composed postludes contain a [bracketed] section for each performer. In these sections the performers are to improvise, for the duration given. The improvisations may be commentaries, interventions or accompaniments to the written material, or have no relation to it at all.

Scordatura

Each section requires at least one performer to retune her instrument. Changes may happen at any point within an improvisation, but should be integrated thoughtfully into the musical fabric.

The piece begins with no scordatura; the first section may consist primarily of tuning the instruments to each other.






NOTE: All written music is **nontransposing** - sounding as written - regardless of scordatura.

Summary of overall structure

#	Image	Improvisation	Scordatura	Tempo postlude
I.	<i>Keep Right</i>	60"	(none)	M.M. 120
II.	<i>IN</i>	40"	vla. (I)	M.M. 100
III.	vla.- <i>S</i> cb. - <i>The Rose...</i>	50"	cb. (I)	M.M. 80
IV.	vla. - <i>Tender</i> cb. - <i>M</i>	30"	vla. (IV)	M.M. 80
V.	<i>I go in...</i>	40"	cb. (IV)	M.M. 60
VI.	<i>Wrong Way</i>	20"	cb. (III)	M.M. 20
VII.	<i>Tailspin</i>	0"	vla. (III)	M.M. 40
VIII.	<i>Go Slo</i>	-	cb. (II)	-
IX.	<i>Even though...</i>	65"	vla. + cb. (I-IV)	M.M. 160
X.	<i>Apples</i>	80"	vla. (III)	M.M. 140





Legend

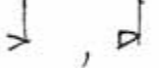




Tuning

	1/4-tone sharp		1/4-tone flat		3/4-tone sharp
	slightly sharper/ flatter (non-tempered)				
	equal to the 7 th natural harmonic (above a tempered note written one minor-7th below)				

Instrumental Technique

Tempi may sometimes render certain technical sequences especially acrobatic, to the point of betraying some aspect of the written word. Go with it - you're improvisors!

SP	sul ponticello	ST	sul tasto
clt	col legno tratto	clb	col legno battuto
1/2 cl	1/2 col legno (1/2 hair) - tratto		
batt.	battuto - one stroke		
balz	balzando - bow dropped on string, left to continue bouncing naturally (exact number of iterations not specified)		
	LH pizz.		
HP	Harp pizz. - finger note (harmonic) with thumb, pluck with index or middle finger.		
(±)	natural harmonic, written where played. In case of confusion, the sounding note is indicated in parentheses. (8va or 15ma above a sounding harmonic refers only to note in parentheses, except where indicated otherwise.)		
	multiphonic - light overpressure with the bow, slight underpressure with the LH to produce a harmonically complex combination of adjacent overtones, open string, and noise.		
	overpressure, as even as possible! In combination with ST, a note one octave below the written note should sound.		
	Pull string (IV) to side of fingerboard, causing vaguely pitched buzz.		

	bitone - "hammer" LH to fingerboard without help from RH, producing notated pitch (between fingering and bridge) plus a secondary pitch sounding between fingering and nut.
	bitone, followed by pizz. between fingering and nut.
	percussion/ string mute, with specific indications in context
	pictograph clef, indicating bow/ pizz. placement between bridge and tailpiece
	string clef (I - II - III - IV), referring only to area between bridge and tailpiece.

Credits

Reproduction rights for all Corita images were generously granted by the Corita Art Center, Los Angeles. Special thanks to Sasha Carrera for her help and enthusiasm. Official names and archival information as follows:

I. left Corita, serigraph, 1967 photograph by Joshua White	V. <i>I go in to come out</i> (67-27) Corita, serigraph, 1967
II. in (64-07) Corita, serigraph, 1964	VI. right (67-5) Corita, serigraph, 1967 photograph by Joshua White
IIIa. <i>S my favorite symbols</i> (66-49) Corita, serigraph, 1968	VII. <i>feelin groovy</i> (67-11) Corita, serigraph, 1967
IIIb. <i>somebody had to break the rules</i> (67-12) Corita, serigraph, 1967 photograph by Joshua White	VIII. <i>luke 2.19, 51</i> (63-39) Corita, serigraph, 1963
IVa. <i>tender be, pt 1</i> (64-22) Corita, serigraph, 1964 photograph by Joshua White	IX. <i>you hang on so savagely</i> (64-31) Corita, serigraph, 1964
IVb. <i>M however measured</i> (68-43) Corita, serigraph, 1968	X. <i>apples are basic</i> (66-18) Corita, serigraph, 1966

KEEP



THAIA



THE ROSE IS A
ROSE AND W.
AS ALWAYS A ROSE
BUT THE THEORY NOW
DOES THAT THE APPLE'S A ROSE,
AND THE PEAR IS AND SO THE PLUM, I
SUPPOSE. THE DEAR ONLY KNOWS
WHAT WILL NEXT PROVE A ROSE.
YOU OF COURSE ARE A ROSE.
BUT WERE ALWAYS A ROSE.

ROBERT
FROST



& AMUSING



© 1999
Crown

ose which I didn't understand.

ES

My favorite symbols were the

HIGHLY INSTRUCTIVE

Handwritten musical score for a woodwind section, featuring multiple staves with complex notation, including triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Staff 1 (Top): Includes markings such as *+ (I only)*, *I cl balz.*, *II mp*, *♩=80*, *3:2d*, *arco ord*, *ST*, *(b) + arco ST*, *3 quasi balz.*, *arco SP*, *5:6d*, *pizz*, *dec.*, *7:8F*, *clt*, *II*, *III*, *mf*, *mp*, *f*, *f (chiaro)*.

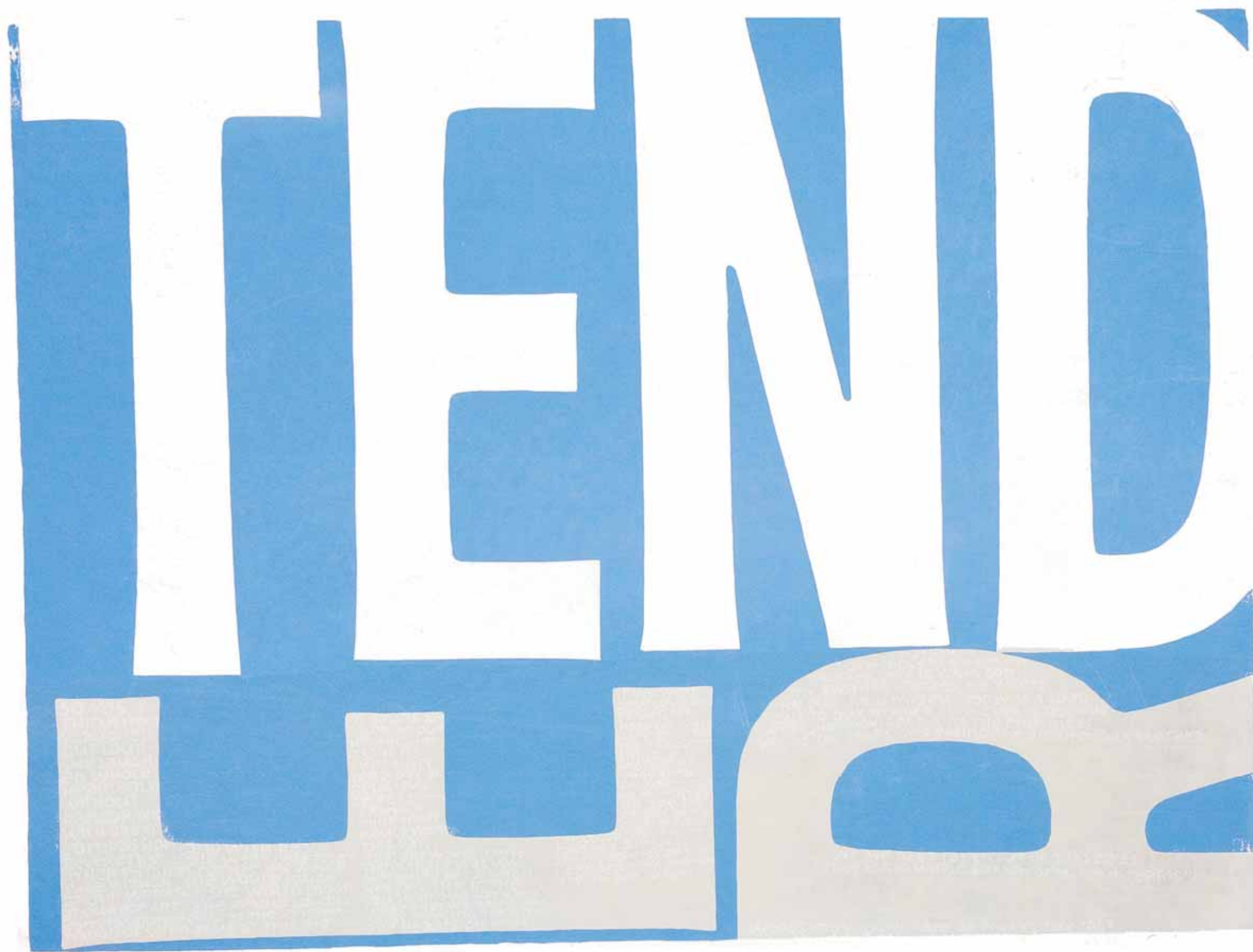
Staff 2 (Middle): Includes markings such as *4b / 3,33"*, *arco ST*, *1/2 clt*, *3*, *arco*, *ST*, *IV*, *mp*, *f*, *pull IV to side (senza arco!)*.

Staff 3 (Bottom): Includes markings such as *3:2d*, *poco SP*, *ord*, *vib!*, *(c.l.) p*, *I mf*, *clt*, *15 mar*, *arco poco SP*, *5:6d*, *ord*, *arco batt*, *to tympani mallets!*, *IV*, *III*, *II*, *p*, *6*, *mp*, *f*, *3*.

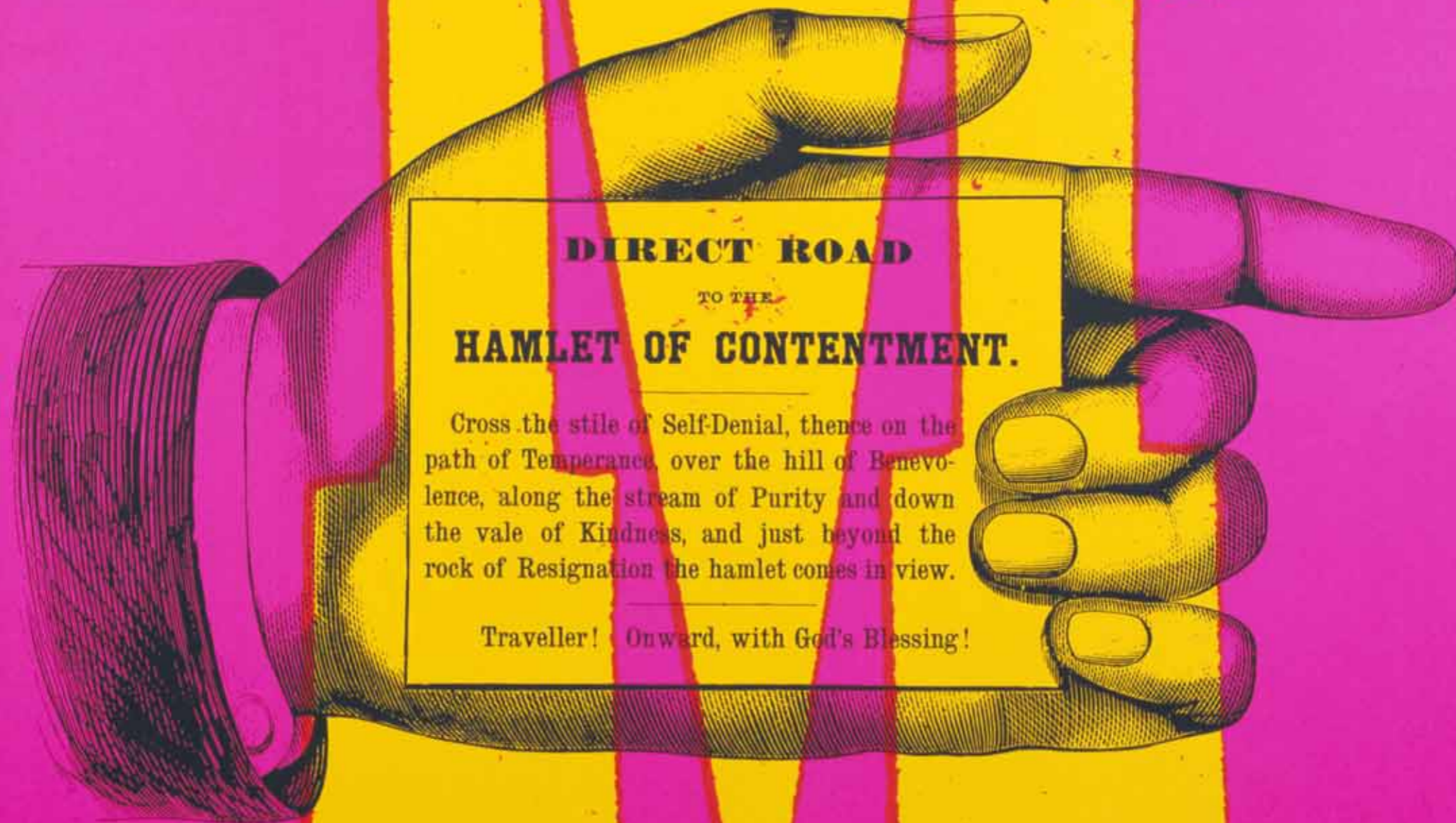
Staff 4 (Bottom): Includes markings such as *4b / 3,33"*.

III.
S / The Rose...
[50"]

IV.
Tender / M
[30"]



If a man does not keep pace with
his companions perhaps it is because
he hears a different drummer. Let
him step to the music which he hears
however measured or far away.
Thoreau



$\text{♩} = 80$ *clt* $\rightarrow \frac{1}{2} \text{cl}$
ST
pizz $\{ \text{cl} \}$
pizz trem
pizz
1st x only
clt
arco ord
gua
 IV I II IV I II III IV
sempre mp

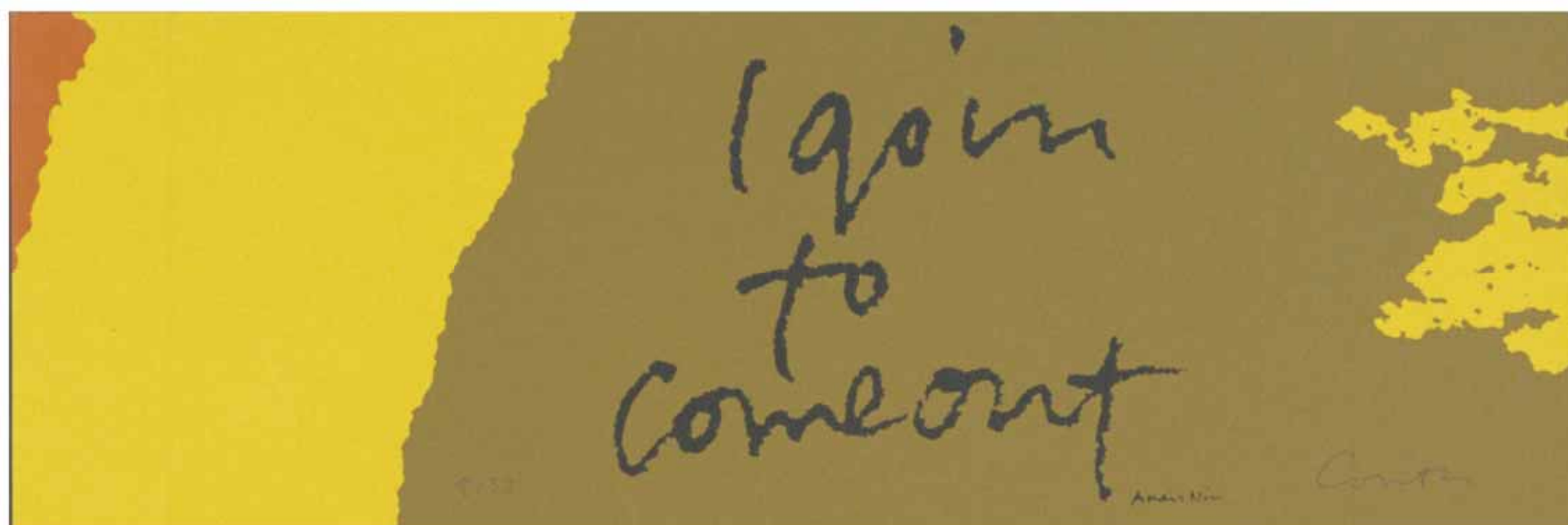
$4 \downarrow / 3, 33''$ *ridendo*

$\text{♩} = 120$
rit $\rightarrow \text{♩} = 80$
arco ST, quasi batt
pizz $\{ \text{cl} \}$
pizz SP $\rightarrow \text{ST}$
 $4 \downarrow / 3, 33''$

arco sp qua
 III II I IV
pizz arco batt
 $3:2 \downarrow$
pizz
arco esp, 4:3
 $4:3 \downarrow$
 $3:2 \downarrow$
arco
 II III

I V
go in...
 $[40'']$

IV.
 Tender / M
 [30'']



Handwritten musical score for two staves, featuring various performance instructions and fingering.

Staff 1 (Top):

- Measure 1: *pizz* (pizzicato), *mf with bow screw* (medium-forte with bow screw).
- Measure 2: *pizz ord* (pizzicato order) → *ST* (Sustained Tremolo).
- Measure 3: *mf* (medium-forte), fingering: IV, III, IV, III, IV.
- Measure 4: *f* (forte), *arco ord* (arco order), *3:2* (3:2 ratio), *with screw (I+II)* (with screw, first and second fingers).
- Measure 5: *pizz* (pizzicato), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *arco batt* (arco battuto), *3:2* (3:2 ratio).
- Measure 6: *pizz* (pizzicato), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *arco batt* (arco battuto), *3:2* (3:2 ratio).

Staff 2 (Bottom):

- Measure 1: *arco balz* (arco balzato), *f* (forte), fingering: I, II, III.
- Measure 2: *pizz* (pizzicato), *ff* (fortissimo), *pp* (pianissimo).
- Measure 3: *arco SP* (arco sostenuto), *8va* (8va), *spext.* (spextato), *ord* (order) → *ST* (Sustained Tremolo).
- Measure 4: *arco balz.* (arco balzato), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *arco flaut.* (arco flautato), *mp* (mezzo-piano).
- Measure 5: *mp* (mezzo-piano), *arco flaut.* (arco flautato), *mp* (mezzo-piano).

V.
I go in...
[40"]

VI.
Wrong Way
[20"]

KRON

And if only we arrange our life
according to that principle
which counsels us that we must always
hold to the difficult, then that which now
seems to us the most alien will become what we most trust
and find most faithful. How should we
be able to forget those ancient myths that are
at the beginning of all peoples, the myths
about dragons that at the last moment
turn into princesses; perhaps all the dragons
of our lives are princesses who are only waiting

to see us once beautiful
and brave.
Perhaps everything terrible
is in its deepest being
something
that wants help
from us.
Rilke

WAYS

lets
Prop
of bo

(dynamics free)

Handwritten musical score for Section VI. The score is written on three staves. The top staff is in treble clef, the middle in alto clef, and the bottom in bass clef. The tempo is marked $\text{♩} = 20$. The key signature has one flat. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Specific annotations include "pizz", "arco", "ord", "heel on bridge", "sp", "batt", "clt", "circ. bow", "STspSTsp", and "5". A measure rest is marked "6 / 18". A large bracketed section is labeled "(24)".

Handwritten musical score for Section VII. The score is written on three staves. The top staff is in treble clef, the middle in alto clef, and the bottom in bass clef. The tempo is marked $\text{♩} = 40$. The key signature has one flat. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. Specific annotations include "HP", "circ. bow", "STspSTsp", "pizz", "arco", "sp", "batt", "cl", "ord", "heel on bridge", "clt", "5", "3", "6", "3:2", and "3". A measure rest is marked "6 / 18".

VII.
Tailspin
[0"]
attacca $\text{♩} = 40$

VI.
Wrong Way
[20"]

the tailspin
going into a tailspin
in those days meant curtains.
No matter how hard you pulled
back on the stick
the nose of the plane wouldn't come up.

Spinning round,
headed for a target of earth,
the whine of death in the wing struts,
instinct made you try to pull out
of it that way, by force,
and for years aviators spiraled
down and crashed.

Who could have dreamed
that the solution
to this dreaded aeronautical problem
was so simple?

Every student flier learns this
nowadays:

You move the joystick in the
direction of the spin

and like a miracle the plane
stops turning

and you are in control again
to pull the nose up out of the dive.

In panic we want to push the stick
away from the spin,

wrestle the plane out of it,
but the trick is, as in everything,
to go with the turning willingly

rather than fight, give in,
go with it,
and that way come out
of your tailspin whole.

Edward Field

DO NOT
ENTER

WRONG
WAY

SLOW DOWN
YOU MOVE TOO FAST

SIPICH • HARTMAN

Handwritten musical score for a string instrument, featuring various techniques and dynamics.

First System:

- Tempo: $\text{♩} = 40$
- Techniques: *arco*, *stacc.*, *SP*, *pizz*, *arco*
- Dynamic: *mf*
- Measure markings: $3 \text{♩} / 4, 5''$

Second System:

- Tempo: $\text{♩} = 48$
- Techniques: *arco*, *poco ST*, *ord*, *SPext.*, *vib*, *bow screw*, *bow heel on bridge*
- Dynamic: *mp*, *cresc.*

Third System:

- Techniques: *pizz SP*, *ST*, *arco ST (in one bow)*, *pizz poco SP*, $\frac{1}{2} \text{clt}$, *clt*
- Dynamic: *ff*, *mp*, *mf*, *cresc.*, *più f*, *meno*
- Tempo: $\text{♩} = 40 \rightarrow 48$

Fourth System:

- Techniques: *arco*, *guar*, *ST*, *arco ST*, *pizz*, *arco SP*, *clb*
- Dynamic: *mf*, *f*, *mp*, *cresc.*
- Tempo: $\text{♩} = 48 \rightarrow 20$

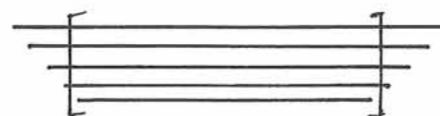
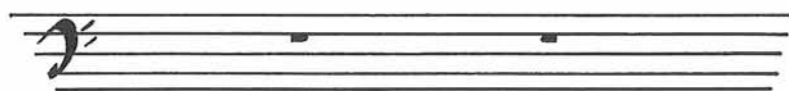
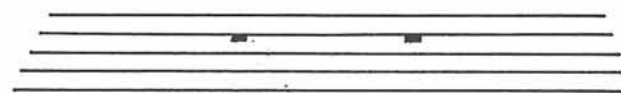
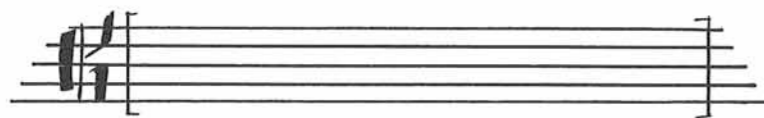
VII.
Tailspin
[0"]

VIII.
Go Slo
[]



GO
SLO





VIII.
Go Slo
[]



IX.
Even though
[65"]

EVEN THOUGH ITS DIFFICULT
FOR YOU TO SORT IT ALL OUT,
THERE'LL BE A KEENER EYE
WHEN THE TIME COMES. EVERY
THING WILL BE SORTED OUT;
AND UTILIZED. THE IMPORTANT
THING IS THAT YOU'VE FOUGHT
BRAVELY. AS FOR THE REST...
HAVE FAITH ! PRIDE. WHY DO YOU
WANT EVERYTHING ? HAVE FAITH...
AT A CERTAIN POINT, BE LIKE A CHILD
WHO'S PLAYED HARD ALL DAY; AND
AT NIGHT, WARM WITH SLEEPINESS,
HE'S PICKED UP IN HIS FATHER'S ARMS AND
CARRIED TO BED. HAVE FAITH. WHY MUST
YOU HANG ON SO SAVAGELY ? UGO BETTI

8♩ / 3"

♩ = 160

even

arco SText

pp → p

1/2 cl poco ST → ord

f

mp

difficult

1/2 cl

mf

mp

pizz poco SP (fingernail)

f

how heel on bridge

"ff"

arco SPext

Keener

HP

p

pizz SP → ord

mf

clb SPext.

pizz (LH)

bravely

important

1/2 cl ord

mf

pp

ff

"fff"

pizz

mp

clt

pizz

pizz (near tailpiece)

clb (at tailpiece!)

like a child

8♩

mf

f

pp

ff

IX.
Even though
[65"]

X.
Apples...
[80"]

APPLES AND RASPS

Rise
of
the
fall

It's a good sign
when
you admit
you're
lost

Handwritten musical score for two staves, featuring various performance instructions and musical notation.

Staff 1 (Top):

- Key signature: One sharp (F#).
- Tempo: $\text{♩} = 140$.
- Measure 1: *with bow screw*, *mp*.
- Measure 2: *clt poco ST*, *f*.
- Measure 3: *pizz*, *mf*.
- Measure 4: *7:5!* (rhythm), *db*, *mp*.
- Measure 5: *clt*.

Staff 2 (Bottom):

- Key signature: One sharp (F#).
- Measure 1: *clt* → $\frac{1}{2}$ *cl*, *p*.
- Measure 2: *arco batt*, *mf*.
- Measure 3: *arco SP*, *f*.
- Measure 4: *gua.*, *3:2* (rhythm), *poco dec.*, *mf*.
- Measure 5: *with bow screw*, *mp*.
- Measure 6: *thumb pizz*, *mf*.
- Measure 7: *pizz ord*, *mf*.
- Measure 8: *arco*, *p*.