Insomnia

for violin and harp (1996 rev. 2002)

T A K A H A S H I , Y u j i

written for Gidon Kremer and Yoshino Naoko

notation: pitch: ♯ = about 1/4 tone sharp

♭ = about 1/4 tone flat

duration: longer ○ standing

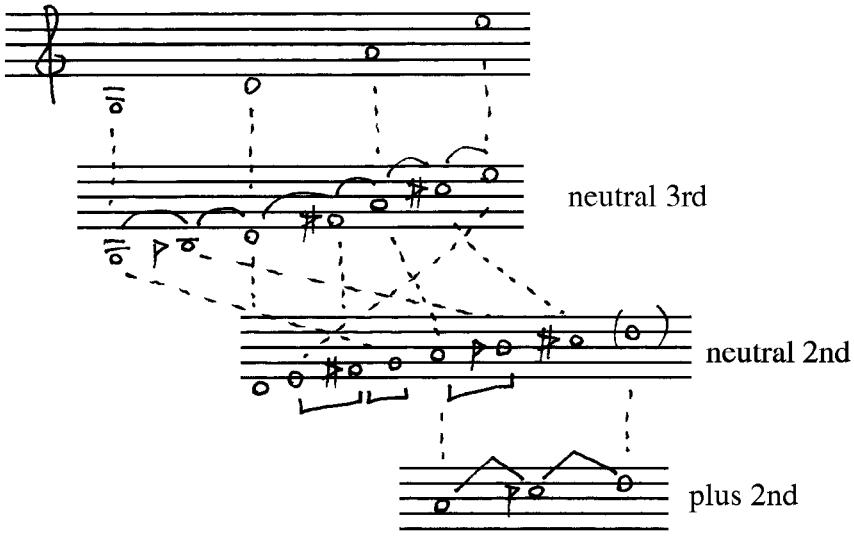
● moving

connecting

shorter cohering

no pulse, uneven

the intervals used



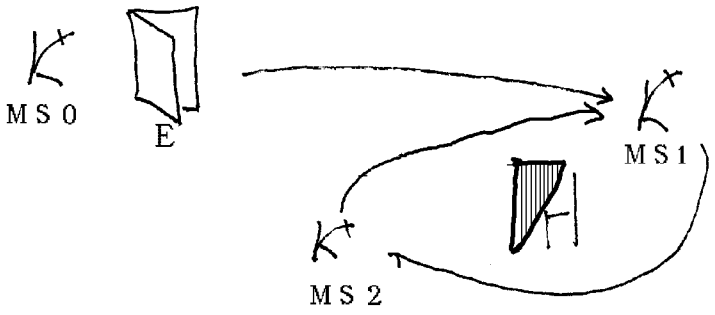
VIOLIN: a loose bow, light and full bowing

The first two lines of Mandelstam's poem "Insomnia" was quoted in Vasily Akshonov's roman "Burn" Years later when I thought of composing something for Gidon Kremer and Yoshino Naoko, I remembered this poem and thought about artists without a place to live safely on the Earth, Mandelstam, Ovid and many Russian underground artists during 1970s.
The first version was written for violin and *kugo*, the ancient East Asian harp. This version is for violin and Western harp.

The harp at the stage center is like Penelope's loom with which she weaved every day and undid every night. Musicians also put various textures together to make music that never is completed. Violin player circles around the harp like Odysseus who never arrives to his true home.

stage set:

prepare 3 music stands, the two in the stage, the one backstage for violin



MS0 = nusic stand backstage
MS1 = music stand 1
MS2 = music stand 2

Бессонница. Гомер. Тугие паруса.
Я список кораблей прочел до середины:
Сей длинный выводок, сей поезд журавлиный,
Что над Элладою когда-то поднялся.

Как журавлиный клин в чужие рубежи –
На головах царей божественная пена –
Куда плывете вы? Когда бы не Елена,
Что Троя вам одна, ахейские мужи?

И море, и Гомер – всё движется любовью.
Кого же слушать мне? И вот Гомер молчит,
И море черное, витийствуя, шумит
И с тяжким грохотом подходит к изголовью.

О. МАНДЕЛЬШТАМ 1915

Insomnia. Homer. Taut sails.
I've read to the middle of the list of ships:
the strung-out flock, the stream of cranes
that once rose above Hellas.

Flight of cranes crossing strange borders,
leaders drenched with the foam of the gods,
where are you sailing? What would Troy be to you,
men of Achaea, without Helen?

The sea - Homer - it's all moved by love. But to whom
shall I listen? No sound from Homer,
and the black sea roars like a speech
and thunders up the bed.

1915

Osip Madelstam
translated by Clarence Brown and W.S.Merwin

眠れない　ホメーロス　張りつめた帆
船の名簿を半分読んでしまった
雛鳥の長い行列　鶴の群れ
むかしギリシャの空高く昇ったそれを

鶴の楔は 異国へむかう－－
王たちの頭には神々の泡－－
どこへ漕いでゆく　ヘレネーがいなければ
トロイアが何だ、アカイアの男たちよ

海もホメーロスも－－すべては愛にうごかされる
だがだれにたずねようか　ほら　ホメーロスは沈黙して
黒い海は　雄弁に　ざわめき
重くとどろき　枕辺に迫る

VIOLIN: backstage music stand

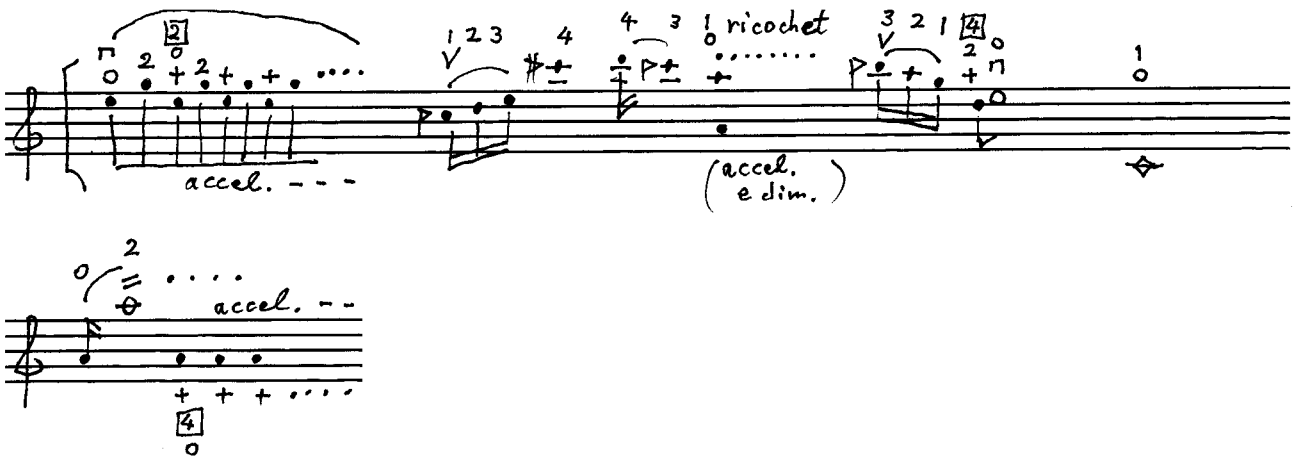
listen to KUGO for a while,
then start playing backstage and go to MS1 on the stage.

A

modulate: gradually relieve the control over pitch, exact figure, etc.
at MS1, start **B**(see another page).

---

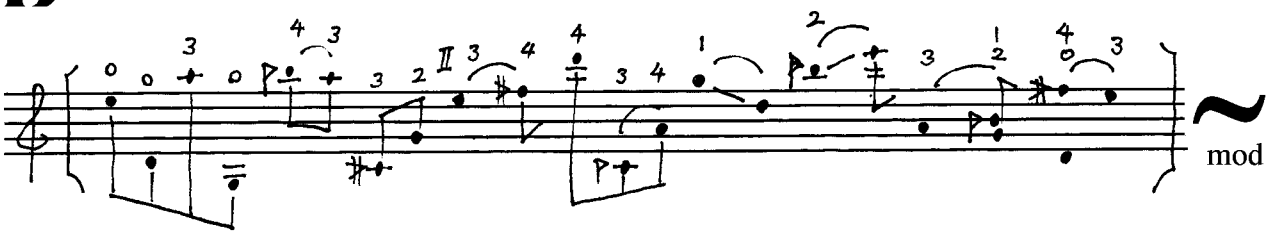
exit playing **A**
and here play the beginning of **E**



The END

from backstage playing **A**
here change to **B**

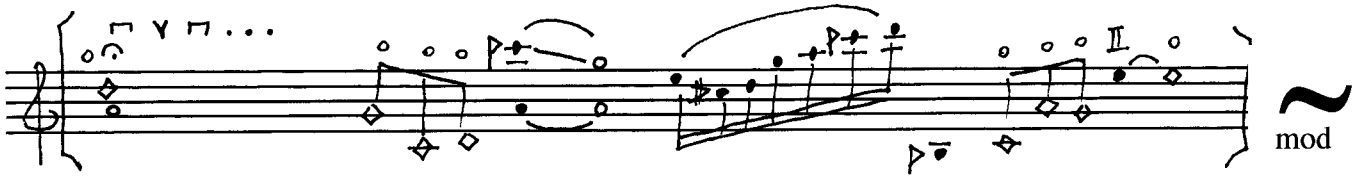
B



modulate: keep fingering, freely change strings and positions

then change to A, go to MS2

A



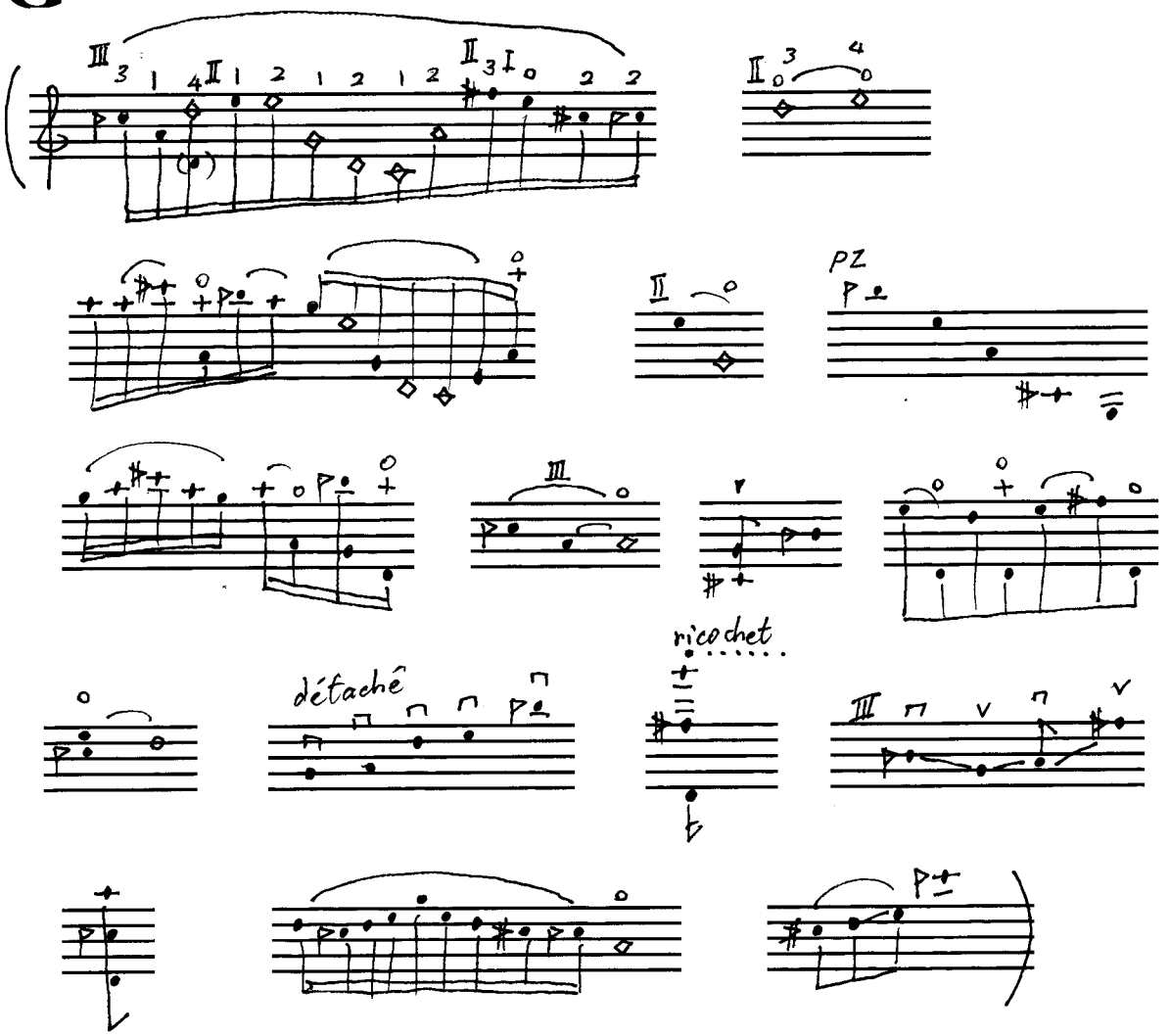
modulate: gradually relieve the control over pitch, exact figure, etc.

at MS2, start **C**(see another page).

---

from MS2 playing **F2**(pz)
here change to **G**(cadenza)
mix: play fragments within ( ) any order, any times

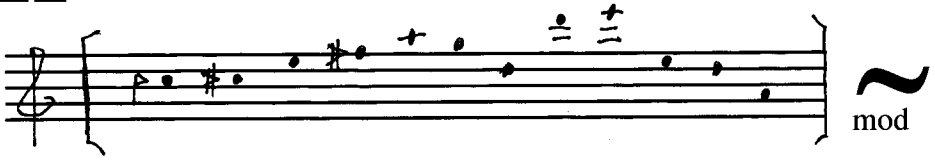
G



then go to MS2, playing **H**

H

mix arco, +, pz change for each note



from MS2, playing **I**
here change to **A** and walk off stage playing

A

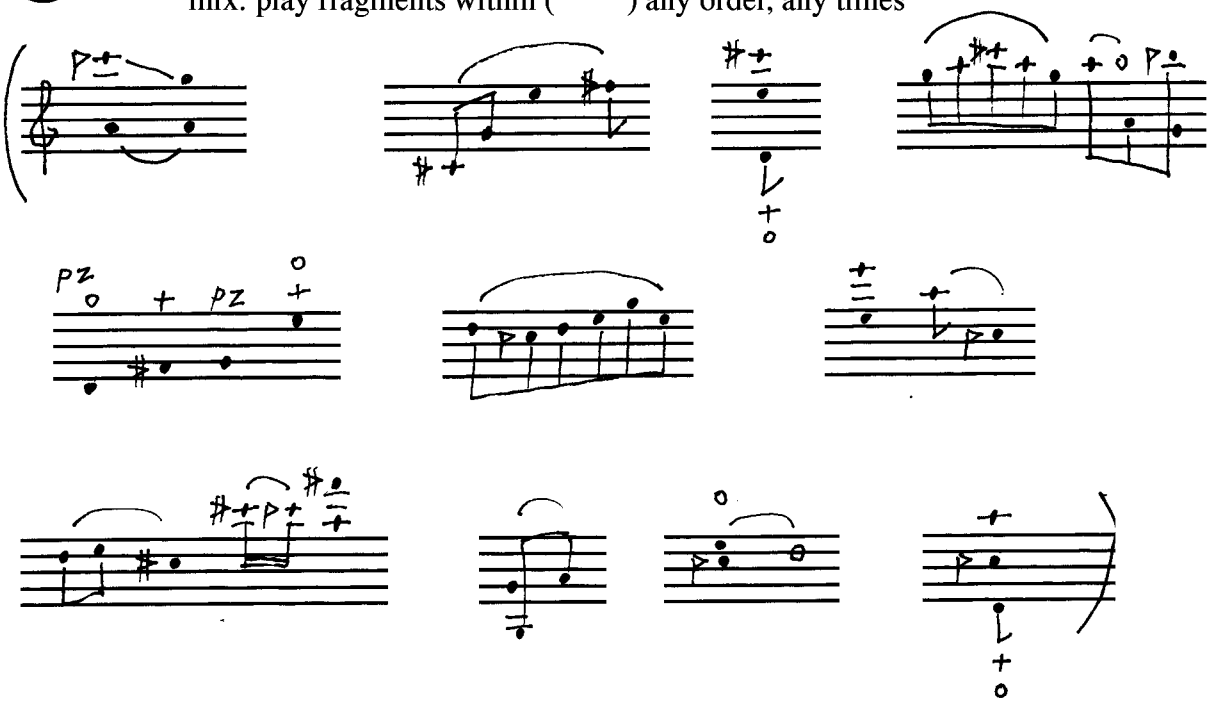
modulate: gradually relieve the control over pitch, exact figure, etc.

---

from MS1 playing **A**

C

mix: play fragments within ( ) any order, any times



while playing, recite the word fragments now and then (any order):

1) пена—одна—не Елена—над Элладою
2) молчит–черное– и море—и Гомер
3) на головах—к изголовью
4) тугие паруса—в чужие—поднялся
5) журавлиный—до середины—сей длинный

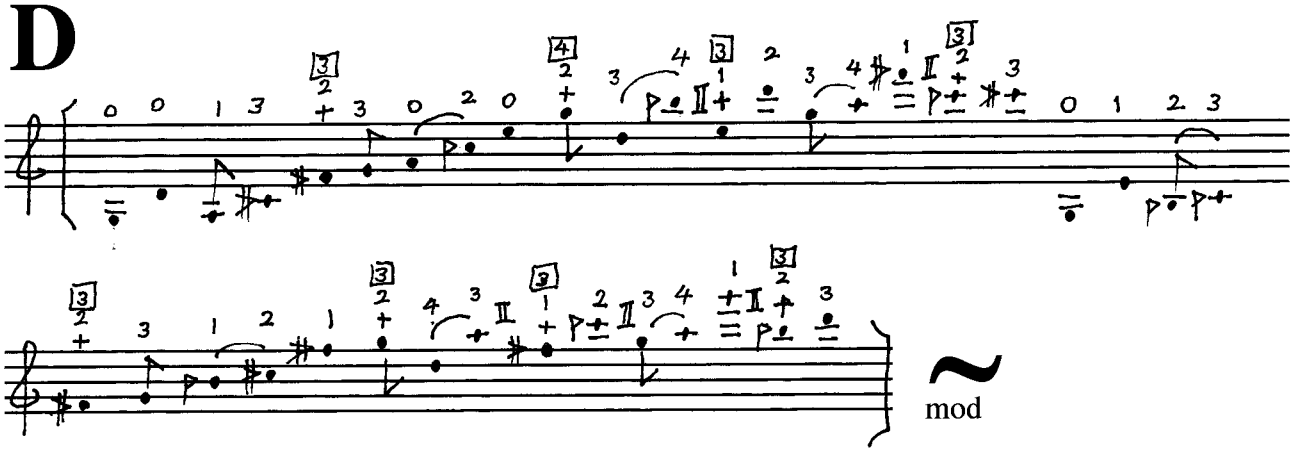
when KUGO change to **section 3**
stop and listen for a while,
then recite the first stanza of Mandelstam (see next page):

recite:

Бессонница. Гомер. Тугие паруса.
Я список кораблей прочел до середины:
Сей длинный выводок, сей поезд журавлиный,
Что над Элладою когда-то поднялся.

眠れない　ホメーロス　張りつめた帆
船の名簿を半分読んでしまった
雛鳥の長い行列　鶴の群れ
むかしギリシャの空高く昇ったそれを

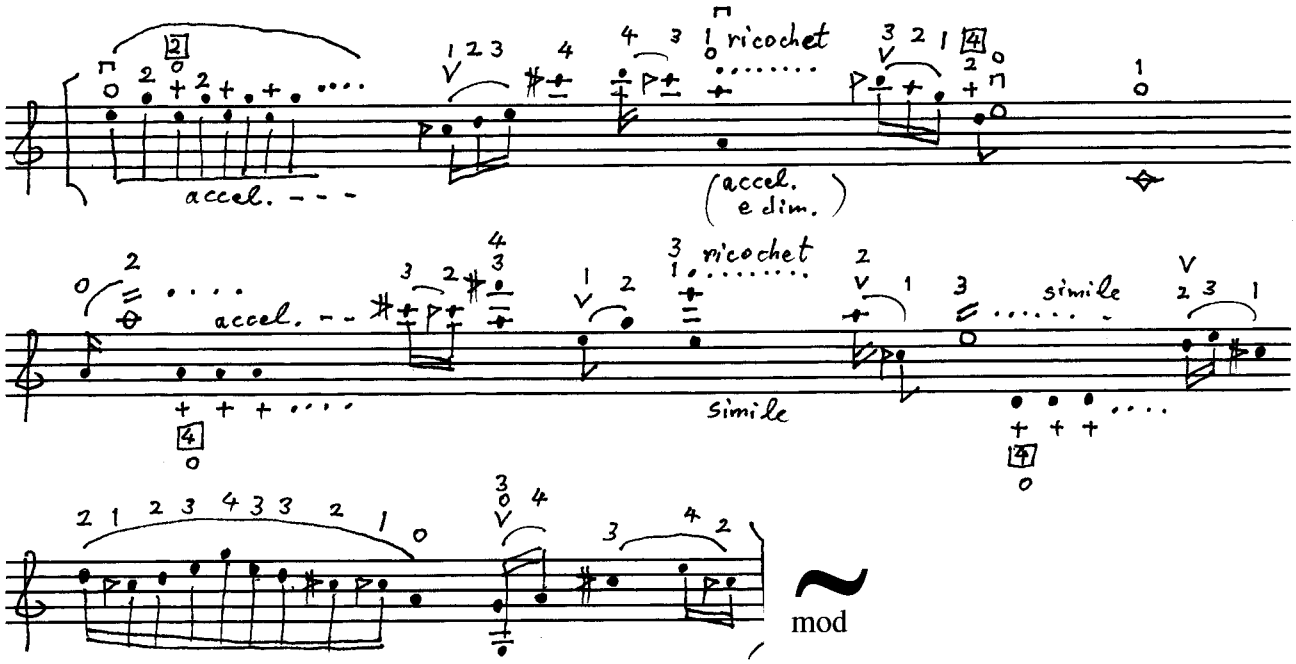
then play **D**



modulate: keep fingering, and gradually deviate to higher positions.

then play **E** (see next page)

E (start together with KUGO **section 4** but in own tempo)



modulate: gradually relieve the control over pitch, exact figure, etc.

while playing, insert the recitation twice:

1)

Как журавлиный клин в чужие рубежи –
На головах царей божественная пена –

鶴の楔は 異国へむかう－－
王たちの頭には神々の泡－－

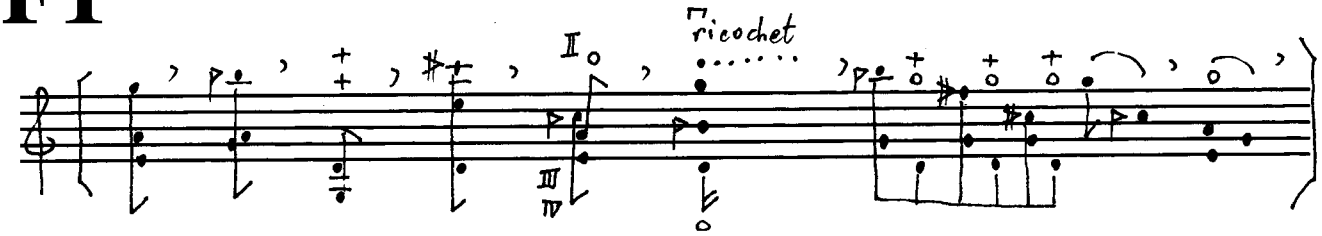
2)

Куда плывете вы? Когда бы не Елена,
Что Троя вам одна, ахейские мужи?

どこへ漕いでゆく　ヘレネーがいなければ
トロイアが何だ、アカイアの男たちよ

then play **F1** (see next page)

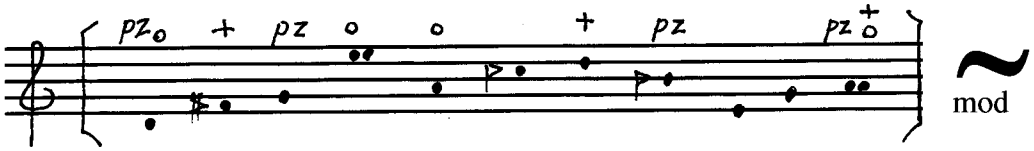
F1



gradually change to

mod

F2



mod

go to MS1, playing **F2**

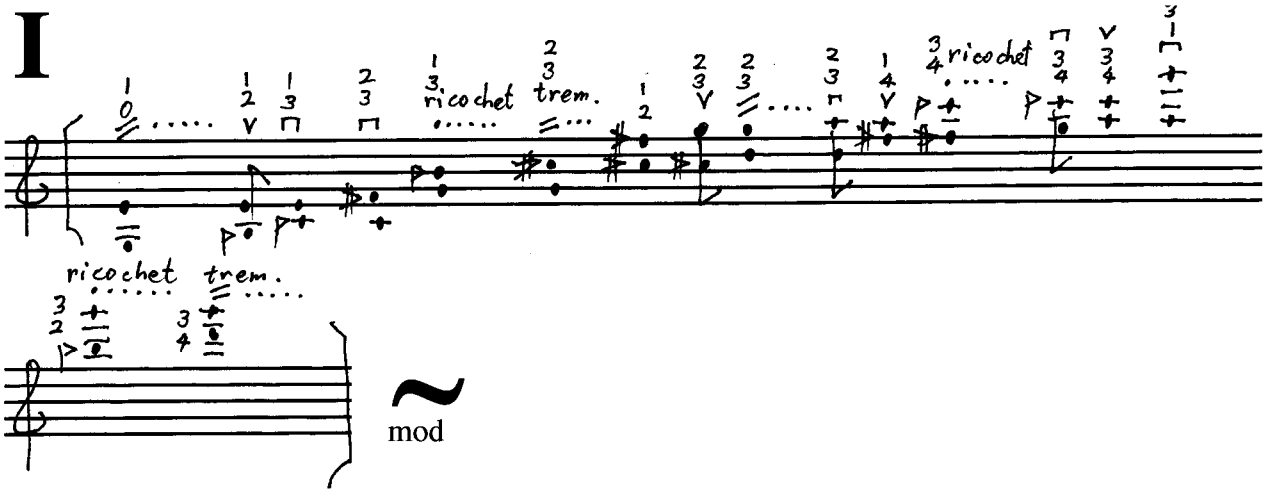
---

from MS1, playing **H**
here at MS2, recite (while still playing):

И море, и Гомер – всё движется любовью.
Кого же слушать мне? И вот Гомер молчит,
И море черное, витийствуя, шумит
И с тяжким грохотом подходит к изголовью.

海もホメーロスも――すべては愛にうごかされる
だがだれにたずねようか　ほら　ホメーロスは沈黙している
黒い海は　雄弁に　ざわめき
重くとどろき　枕辺に迫る

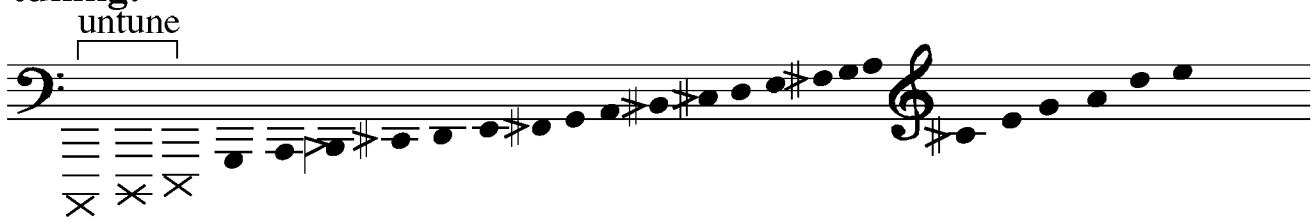
then play **I** (see next page)



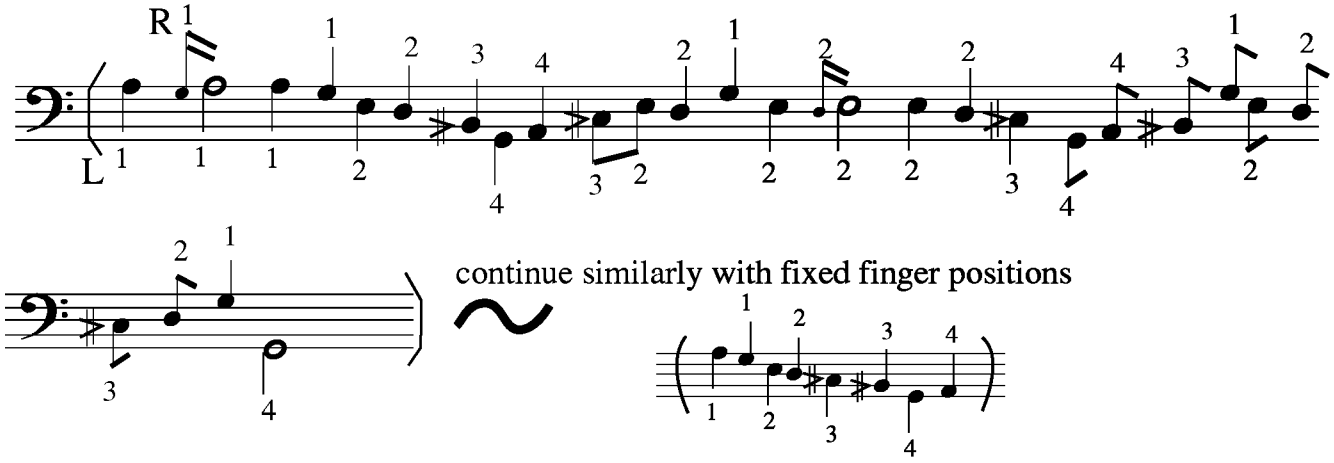
modulate: keep fingering, and gradually deviate to higher positions.

go back to MS1, playing **I**

tuning:

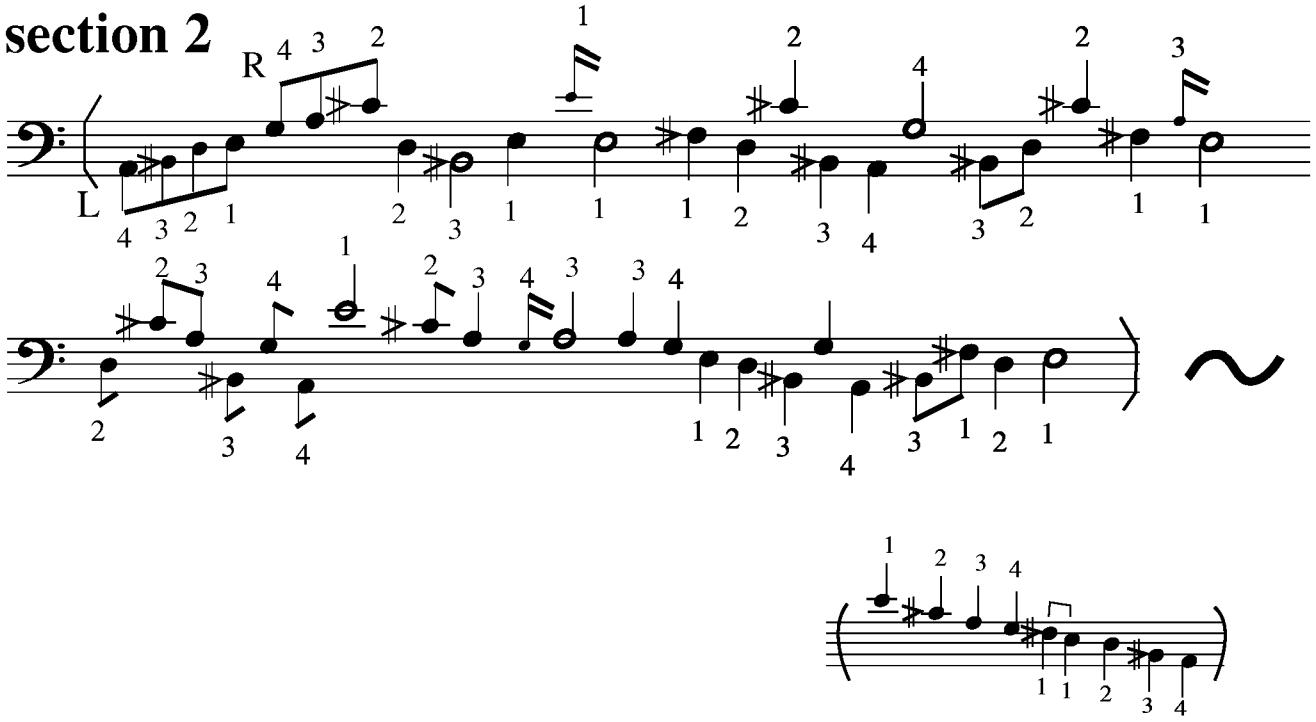


section 1

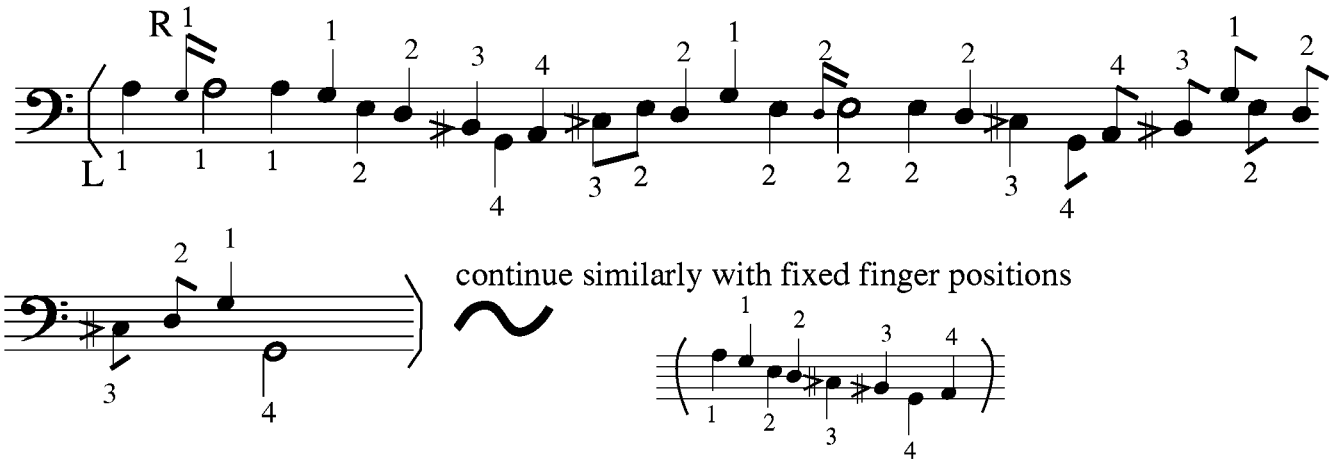


(**VIOLIN**: start playing backstage and enter)
when **VIOLIN** arrives at **MS1**, change to:

section 2



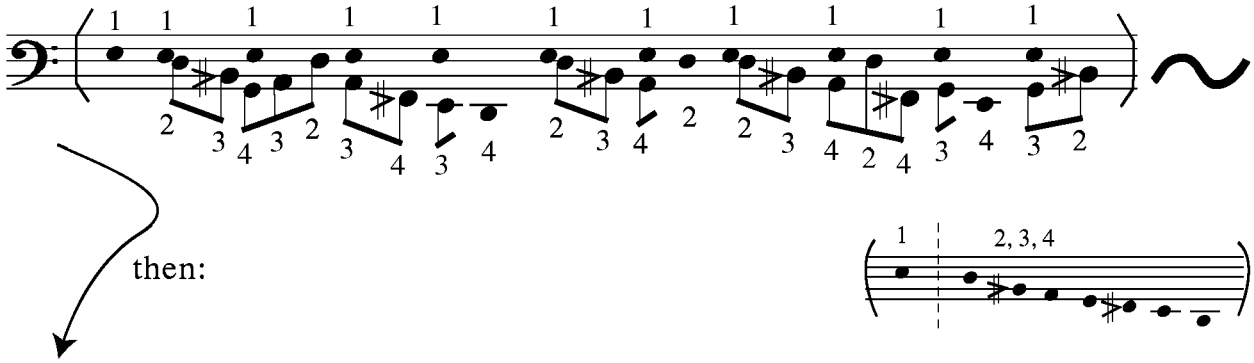
(**VIOLIN**: go to **MS2**, play and recite word fragments)
when **VIOLIN** arrives at MS2, change back to **section 1**:



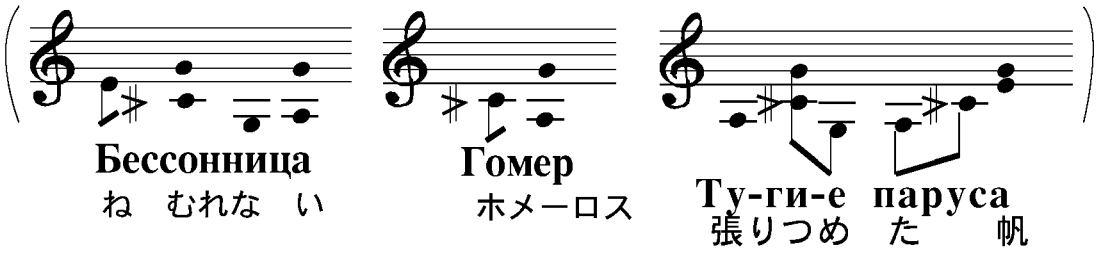
when **VIOLIN** tacet, change to:

section 3

Left hand:

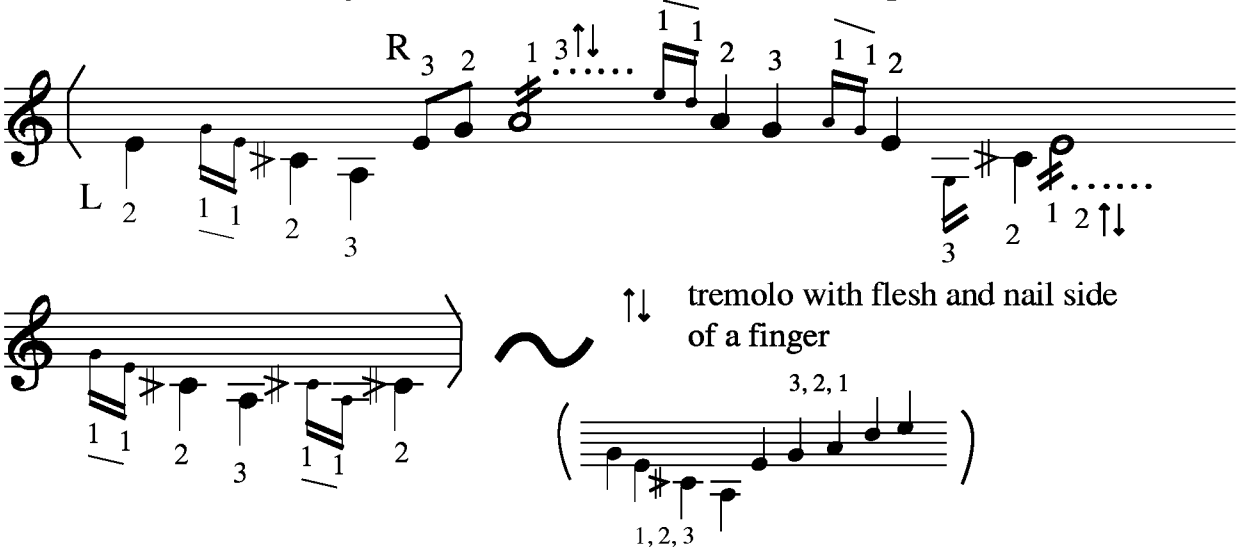


Right hand: independently now and then



intone with right hand figures with the rhythm of the words
(**VIOLIN**: recite the first stanza - see next page)

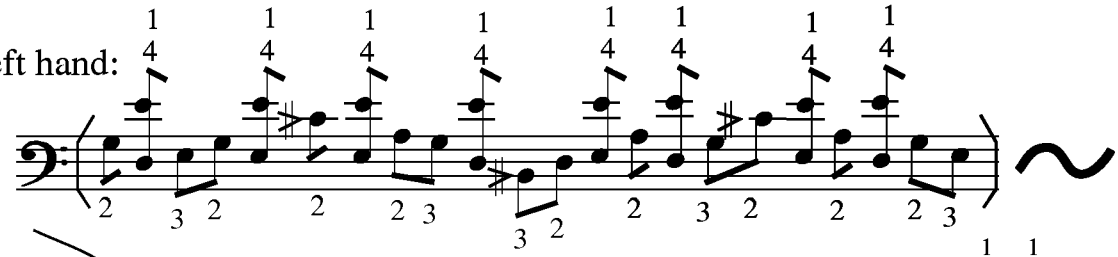
section 4 (start together with **VIOLIN E**, but in own tempo)



when **VIOLIN** leaves **MS2**, change to:

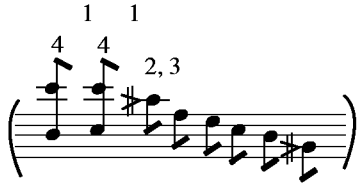
section 5

Left hand:

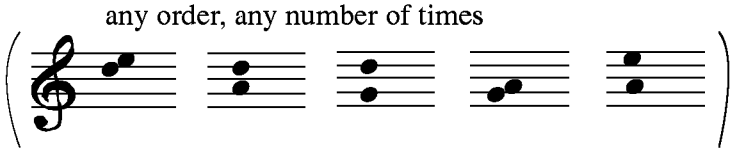


then:

Right hand: independently now and then



any order, any number of times



when **VIOLIN** arrives at **MS1**, stop playing
then
when **VIOLIN** leaves **MS1**, play:

section 6

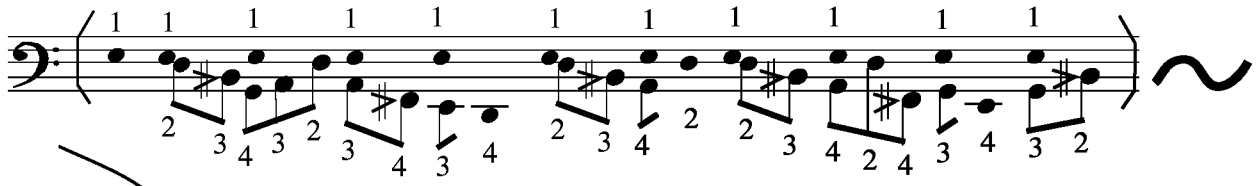
listen to **VIOLIN** and play the same or nearby pitch in any octave
no need to play after every note of **VIOLIN**

(see next page)

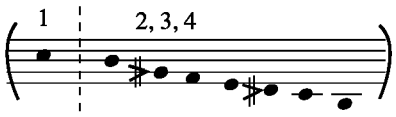
when **VIOLIN** starts playing **I** leaving **MS2**, change to:

section 7

Left hand:

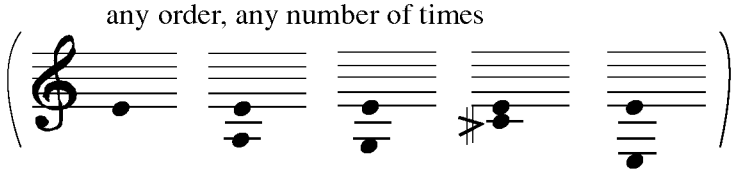


then:



Right hand: independently now and then

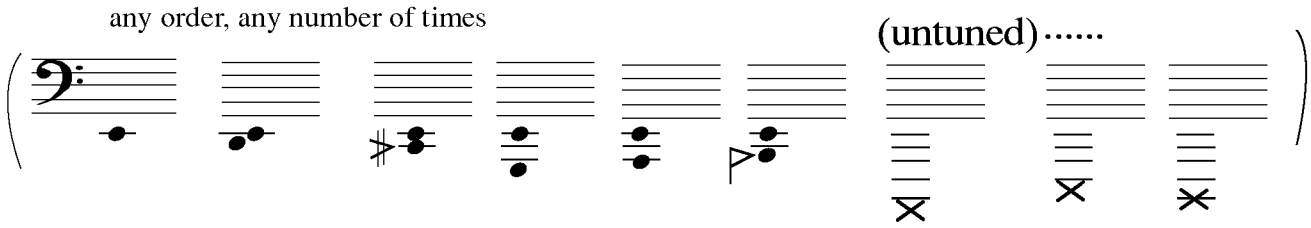
any order, any number of times



after a while change to:

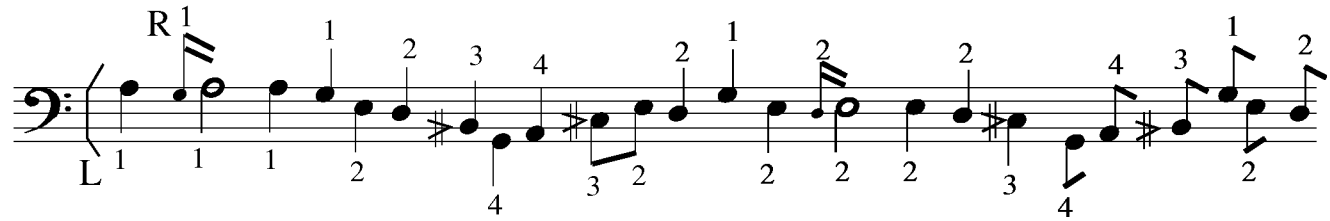
Left hand only

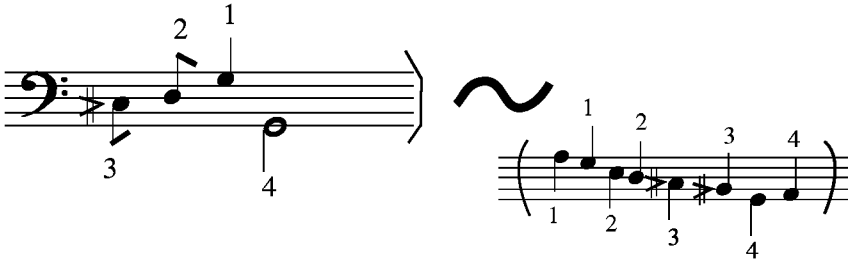
any order, any number of times



then to **section 1**

during the exit of **VIOLIN** with diminuendo al niente





The END