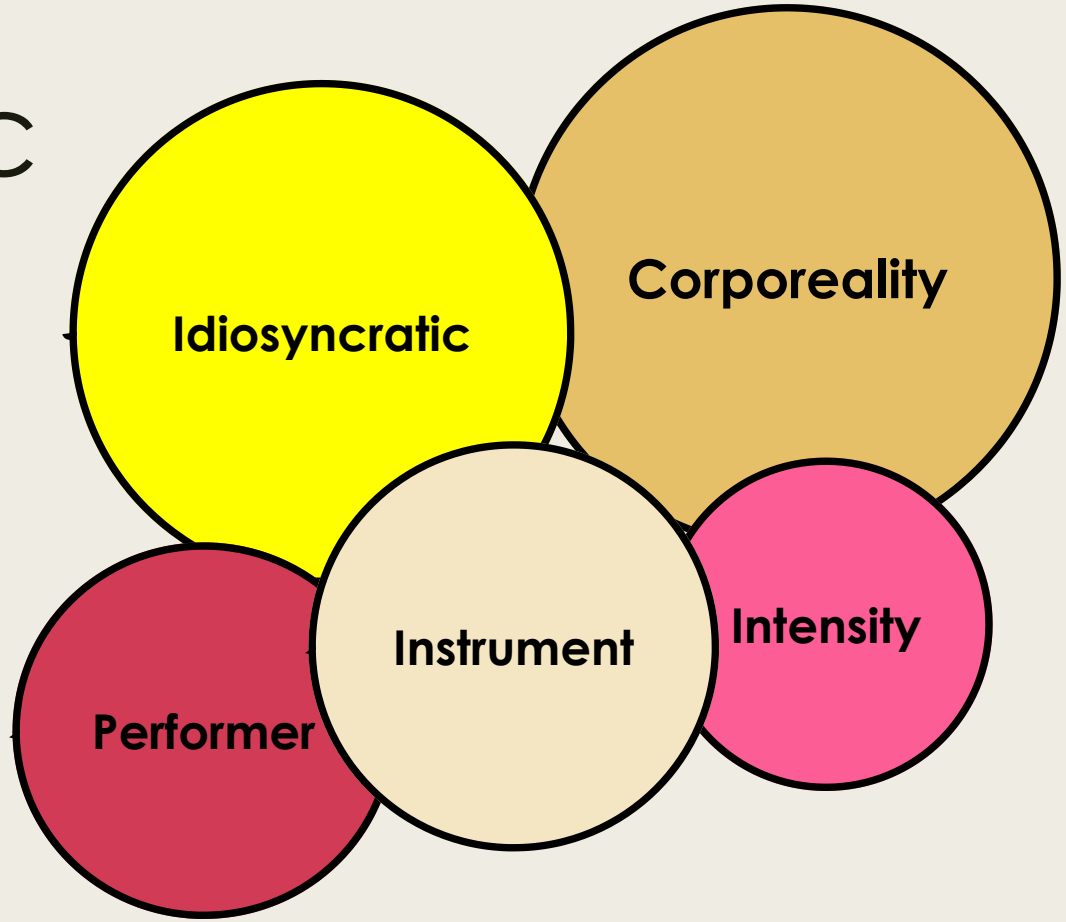
CORPOREALITY AND EMBODIMENT IN CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE

By Fernanda Navarro and Ine Vanoeveren

Corporeality in music



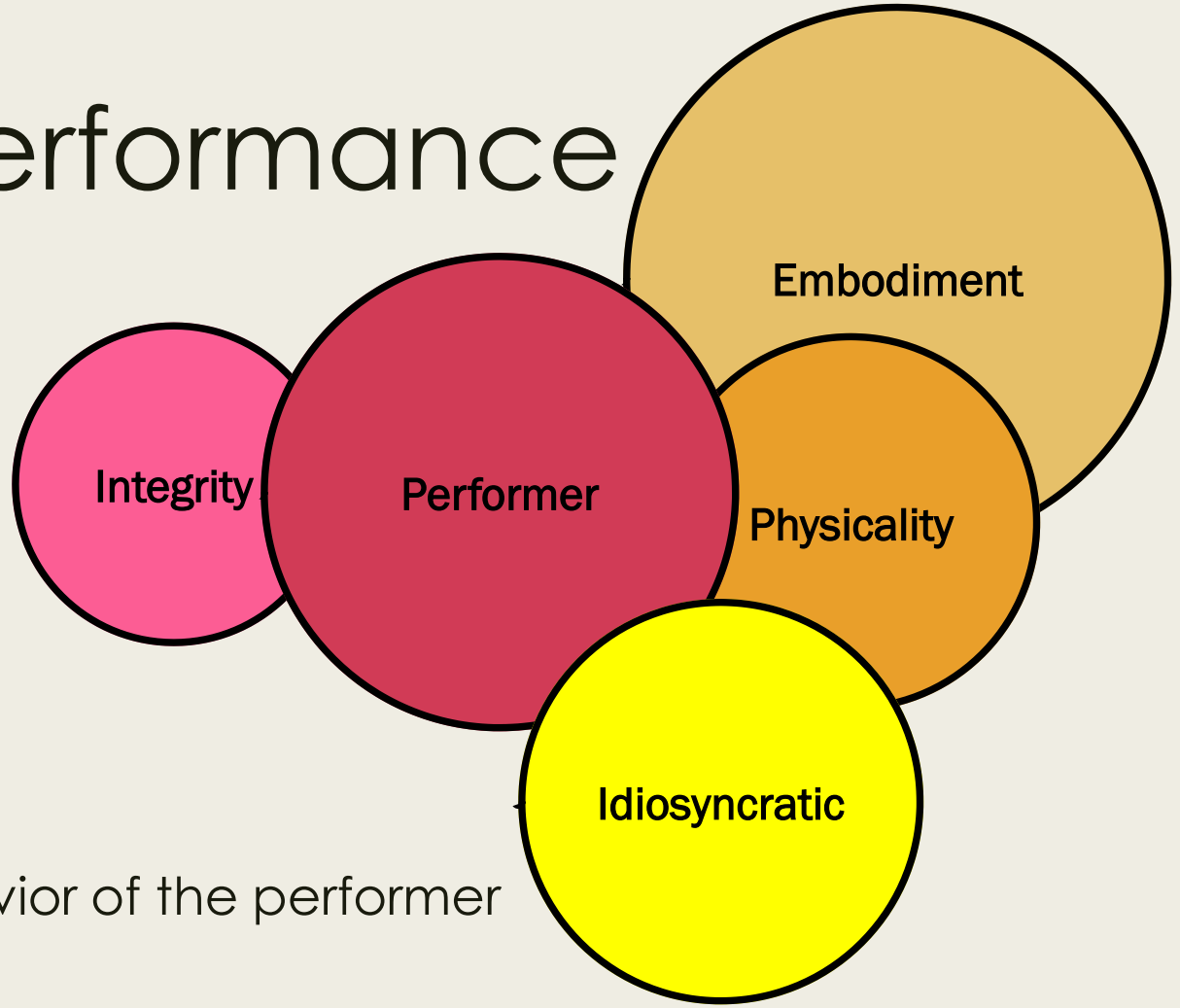
CORPOREALITY

- Incorporation of Idiosyncratic behaviors of the instrument and the performer
- Physicality of the instruments
- Corporeality of the performer
- Communication between composer-music-performer-audience
- Intensity, Rawness, Non-neutrality

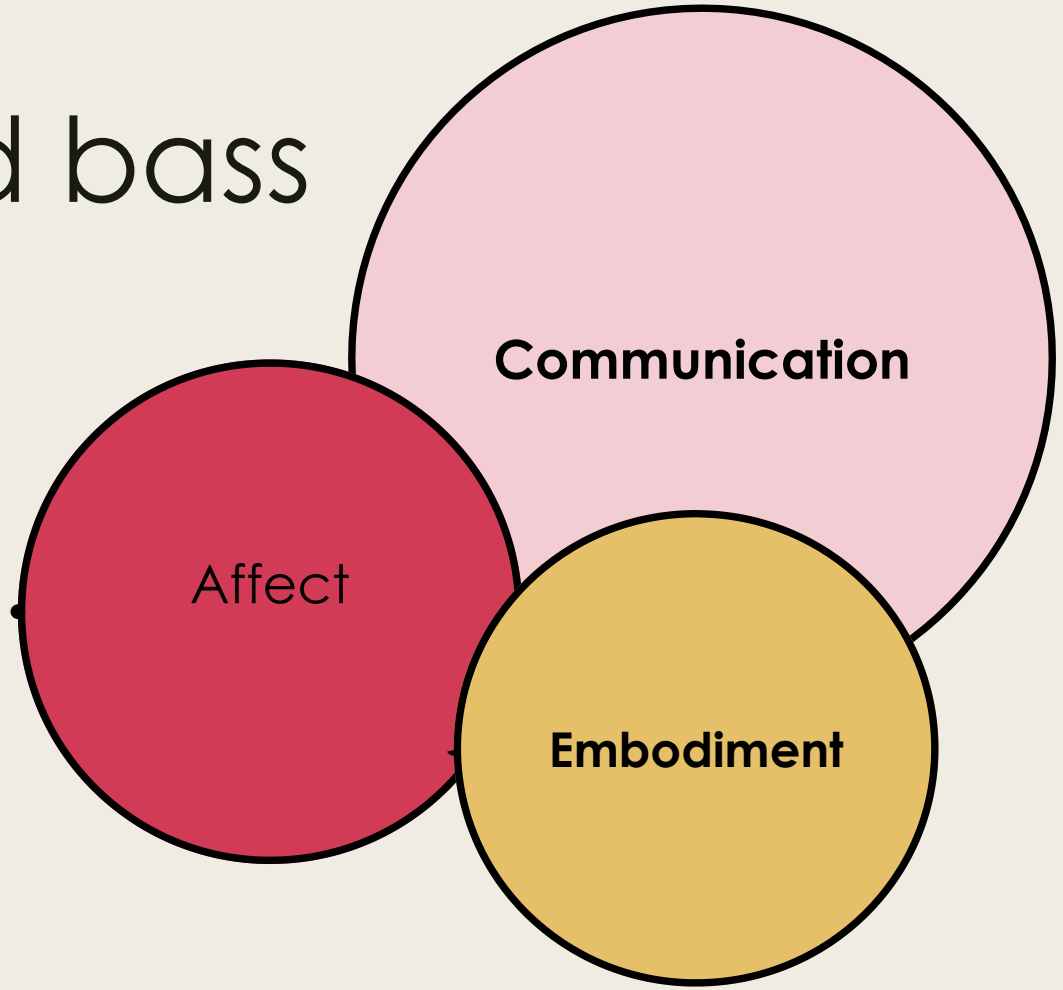
Embodiment in performance

EMBODIMENT

- Integrity towards the music
- Physicality of the performer
- Extra parameter
- Incorporation of Idiosyncratic behavior of the performer
- Intensity, Rawness, Non-neutrality



Through for flute and bass flute solo (2015)



- I. Watching

- Dealing with the idea of being watched
- Caring >< Controlling
- Manipulation of emotional states/affects
- Use of 'iconic material'
- How to 'communicate' without relying on verbal language or body language?
    - music is NOT a language!
    - however, there is some sort of shared/common knowledge in music…

- '**Communication**' via exploring (or exploiting) **iconicity and memory**
    - use of iconic materials: fragments of well known songs:

        I'll be seeing you
        Every breath you take
        The Internationale

- **Affect** trigger?
- Context/ out of context/ recontextualised?

- Analyzed version of the final sketch of *Watching*:

    - **I'll be seeing you** – green: continuous
    - **I'll be seeing you** – yellow: fragmented framework
    - **Every breath you take** - blue
    - **The Internationale** – orange
    - **Fs and As** – pink
    - **'Beauty is Difficult'** – red (bridge to second movement – B, T, F, D, K, T)

= serene, nostalgic

= restless, piercing

= as if you were singing, legato

= worried, agitated, aggressive, percussive

♩ = 110

???

slow cheesy vib.

I'll be seeing you

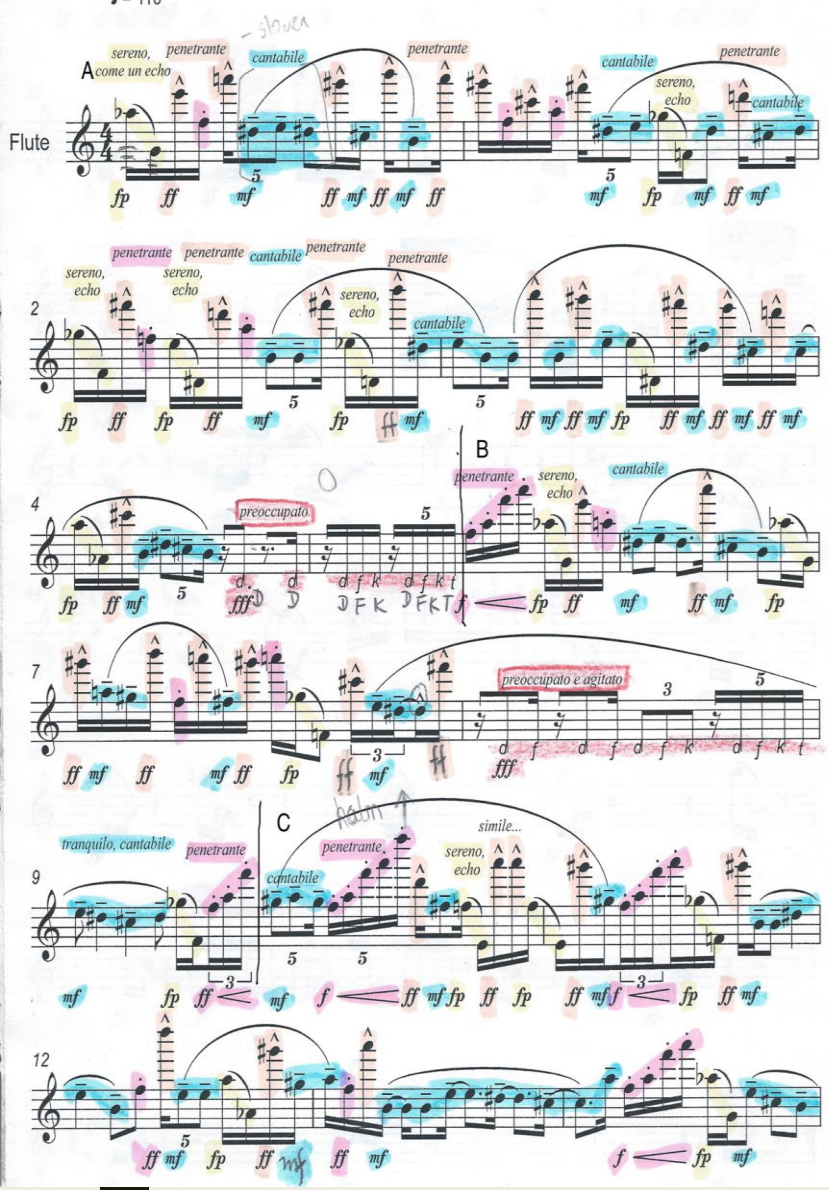
Every breath you take

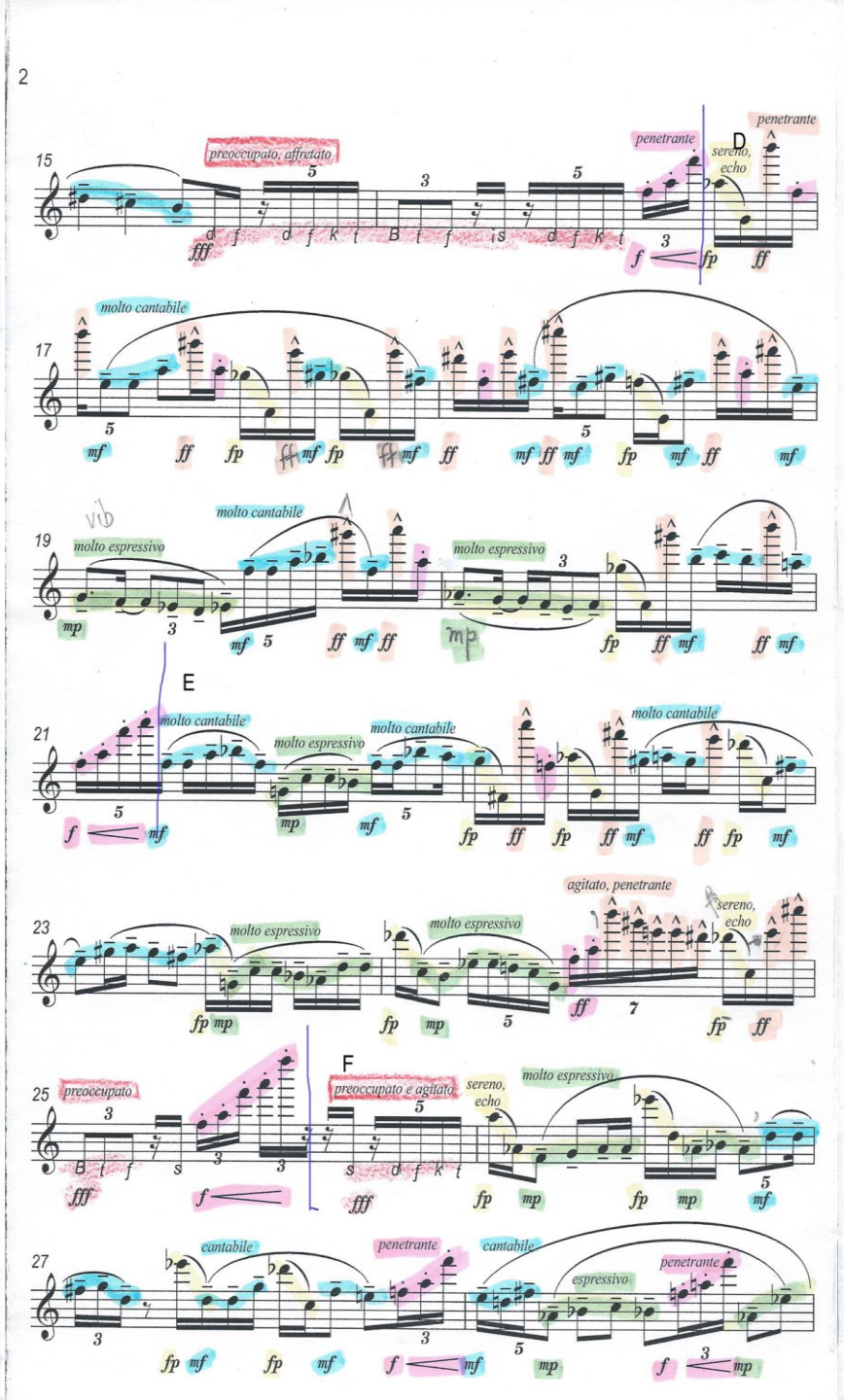
Internationale

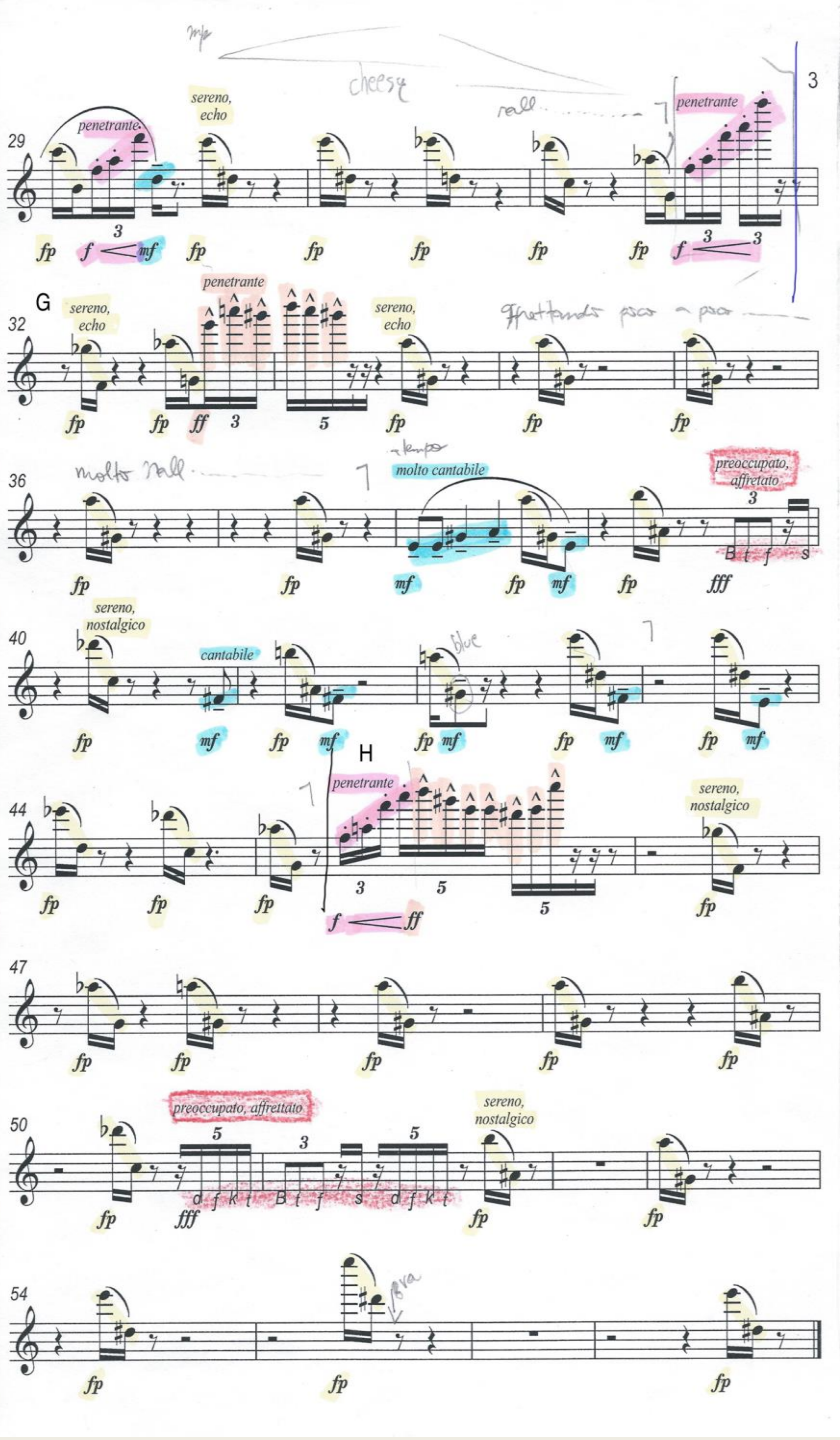
F & A

Beauty + is + difficult

Fernanda Aoki Navarro







Performing Through *Watching*

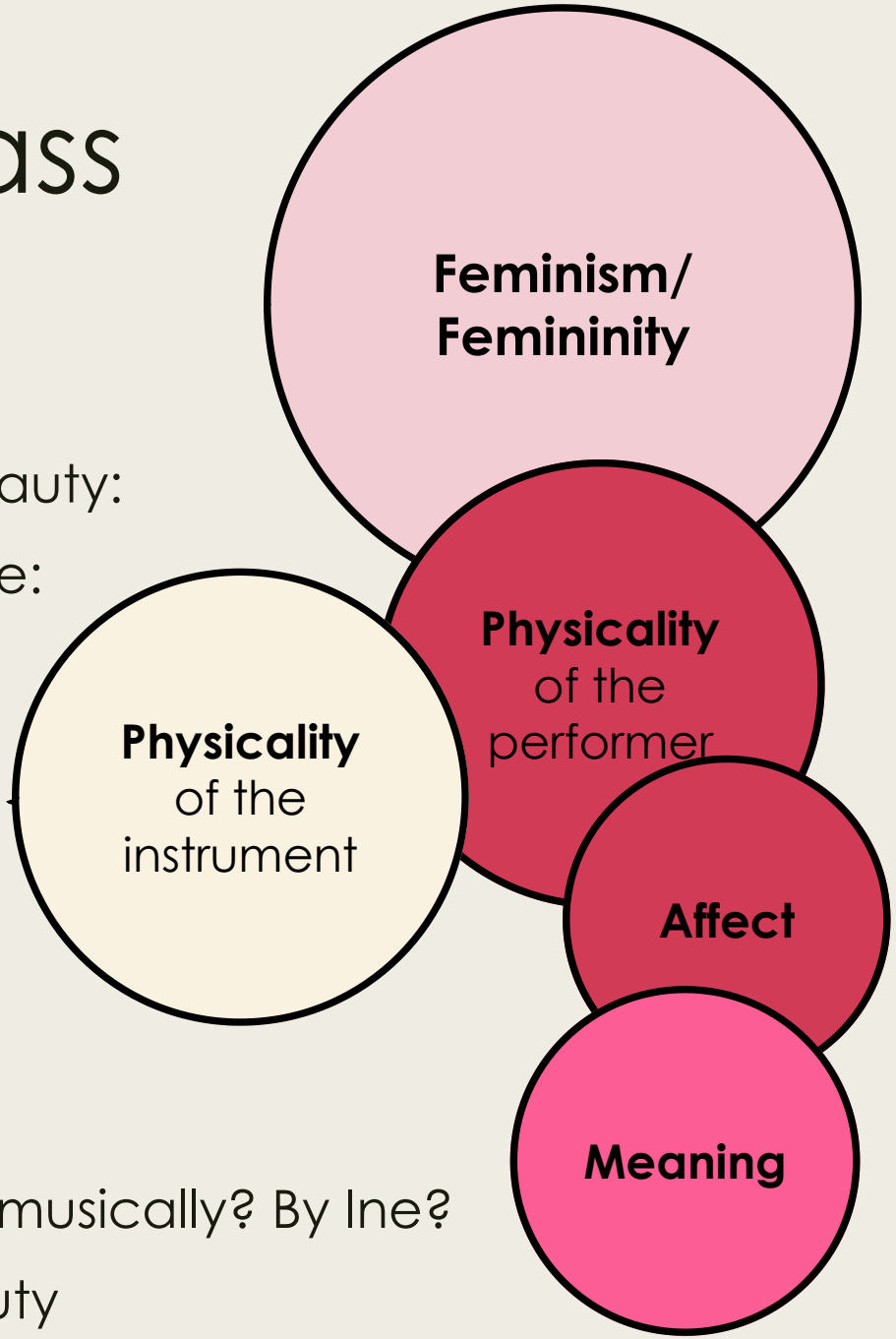
- Remote control
- Digesting different affects
- Not about technique, about discomfort
- Discomfort is the key for an embodied performance
- Extra parameter
- Discomfort – Espionage – Engagement - Result

Through for flute and bass flute solo (2015)

- II. About Beauty

Conversation between Fernanda and Ine about beauty:

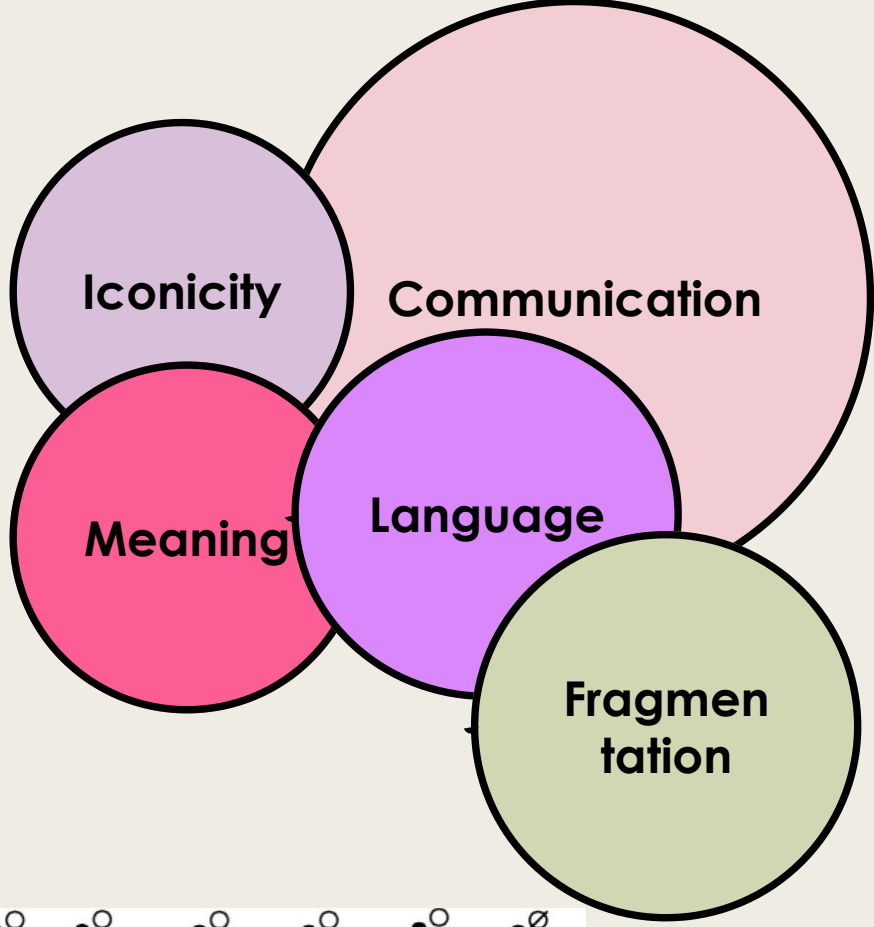
- In regards to Ine's body, corporeal presence:
  - on stage?
  - femininity in Ine's music making?
- In regards to the flute:
  - 'beautiful' sounds?
- In music, in life, in art:
  - stereotype: 'beautiful music'
  - How would 'beauty' be manifested musically? By Ine?
  - Sharing/negotiating notions of beauty



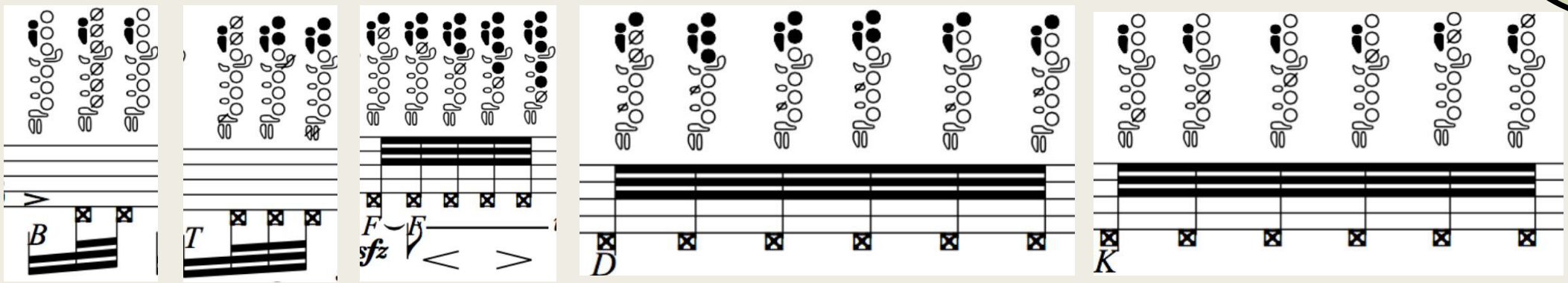
- Iconicity: Debussy – beginning of trio for flute, viola & harp

- Melodic contour of Ine saying:
  'beauty' – 'beautiful' – 'full' – 'difficult' – 'difficulty'

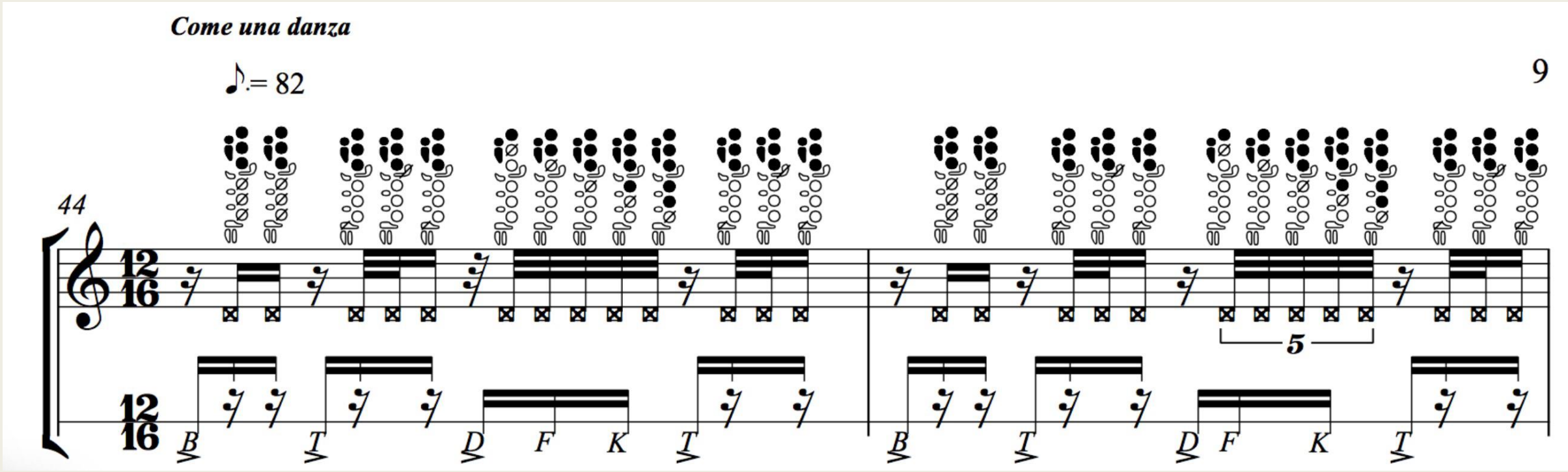
  'Beauty is difficult'



- Deconstruction of these words into phonemes
- Reconstruction of these words by associating musical and physical gestures to the phonemes



- Fluidity, Fragmentation

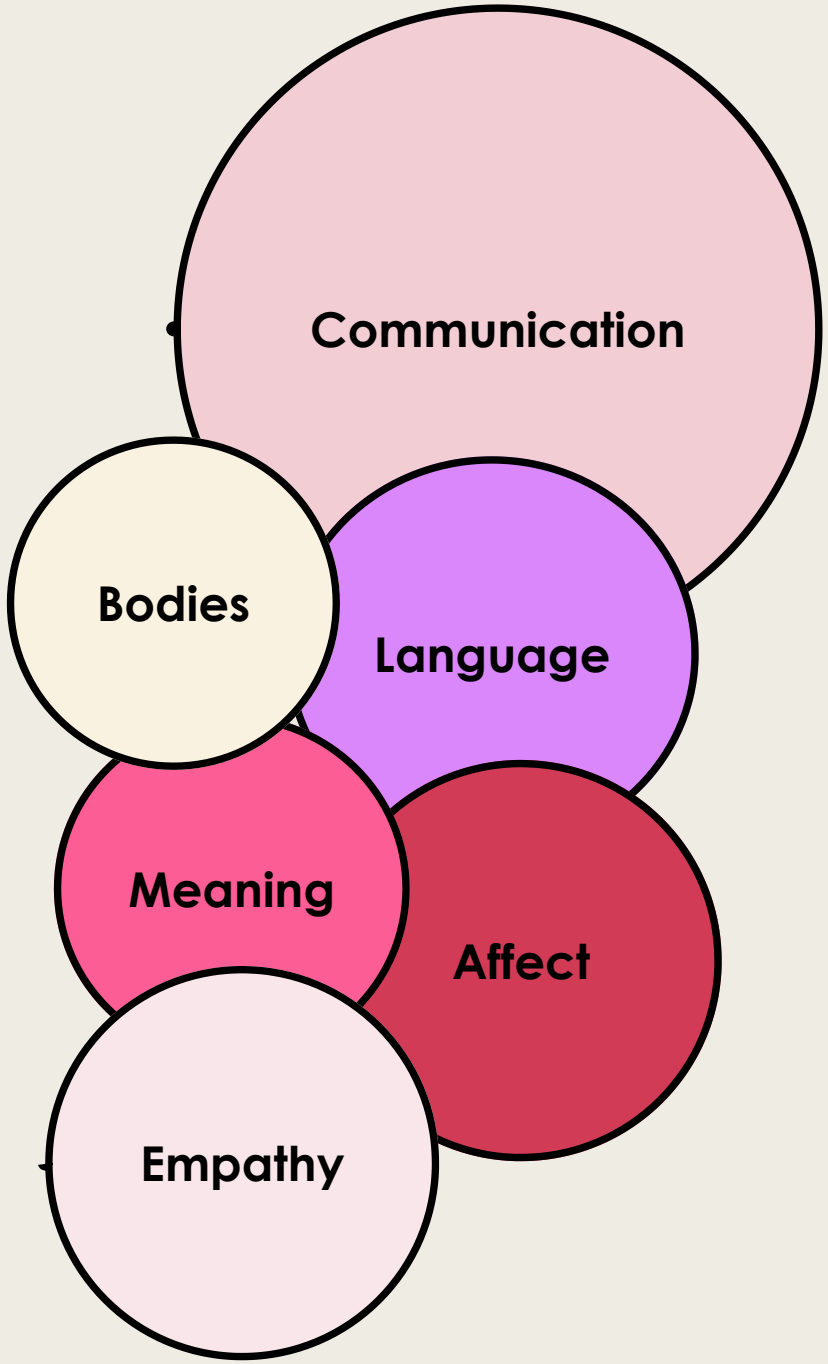

Come una danza
♪.= 82
9
44
5
B
T
D
F
K
T
B
T
D
F
K
T

- Dream and nightmare: to create 'musical phonemes' that can be recognizable
  Then connect the phonemes to create 'musical words'
  Then 'communicate' musically, but without words, without actual verbal communication

- Empathy – through the body

- Exhaustion of the body – triggers affects, communicates?

- Body movement (not through musical gestures!) – non verbal communication



12

14 curiosa e ingenua infastidita

16 conflitta infastidita conflitta infastidita assertiva!

***text inside a box should be interpreted and said as words, not phonemes

C resistente

18

19 Come una danza

21 conflitta infastidita assertiva resistente

D

23 curiosa e ingenua dolce e calma penetrante e irritata

24 Come una spiegazione

27 infastidita testarda

29

E

30 "D" "D" "D" "F" "K"

31 Come una spiegazione

33 Come una danza

35

37

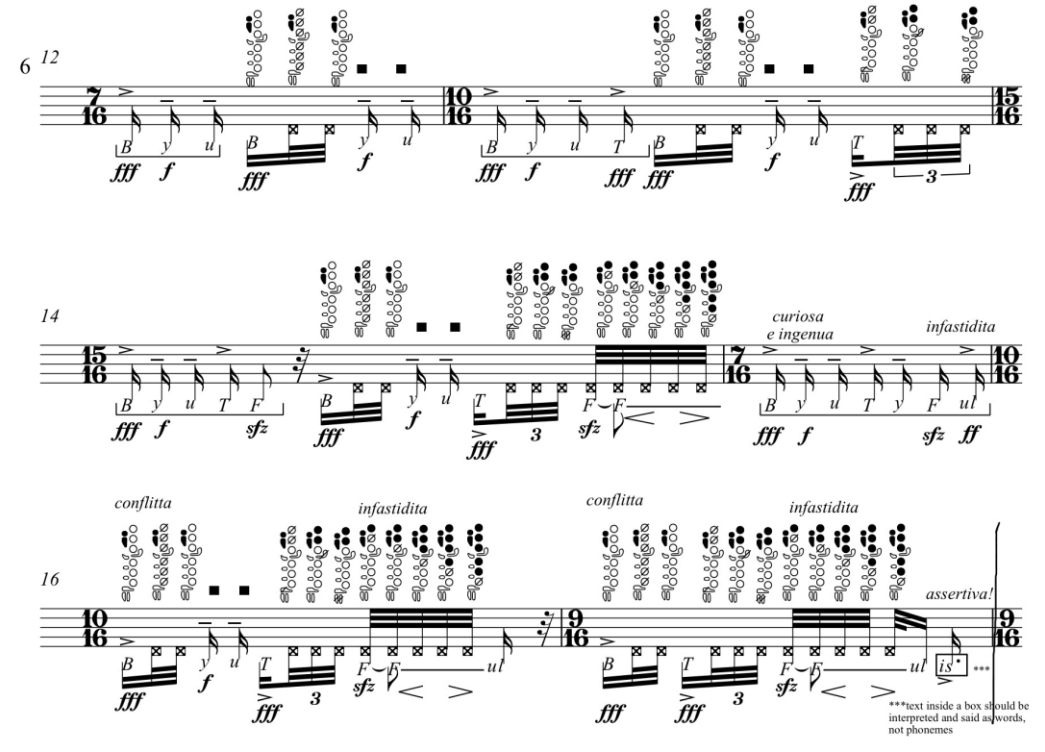
39 melincolicamente leggiero

41 Come una spiegazione disperata...

Performing Through *About Beauty*

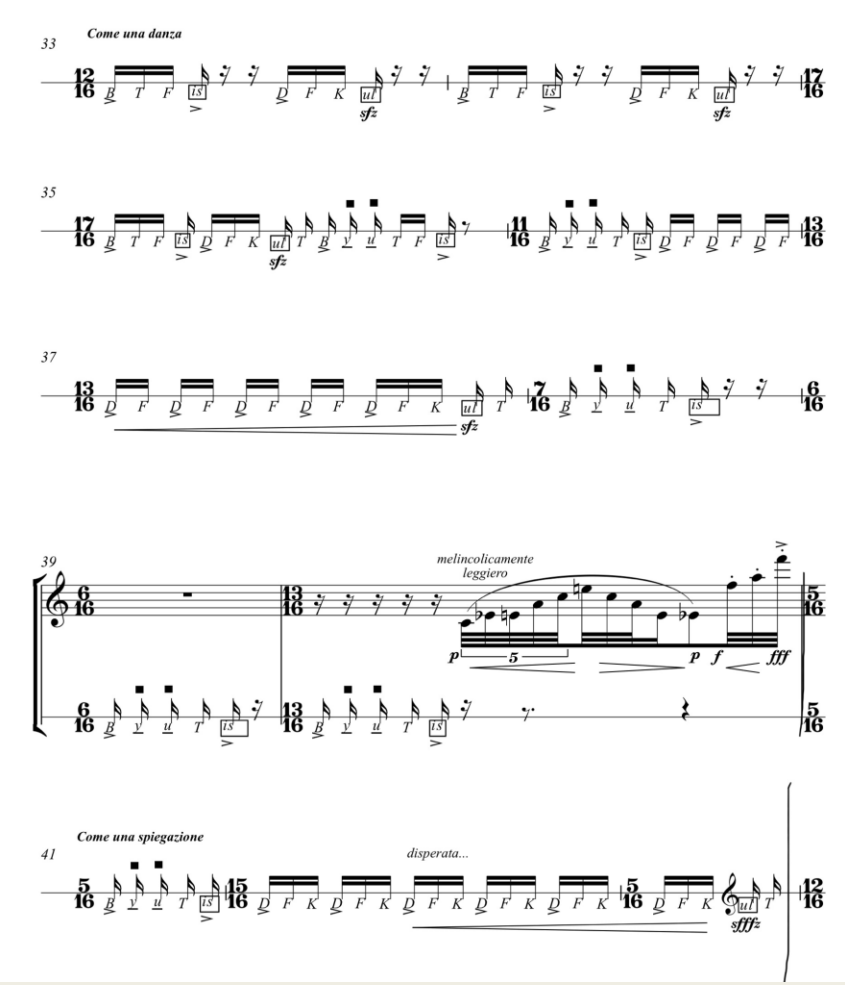
- Physicality
- Embodiment
- Body is extra musical parameter
- Endurance
- Discomfort with a purpose is not torture
- Physical pain serves the performance
- Absorption into the piece – trance

Physicality in performance
Effort



- Full effort
- At the edge of physical limits
- During practice: increasing power, muscles, dynamics, techniques, etc…
- During performance: takings risks, no safety net
- Embodiment necessary for affect and meaning
- Power >< femininity
- Internal >< external
- Act >< guts
- Musical integrity

Physicality in performance
Endurance

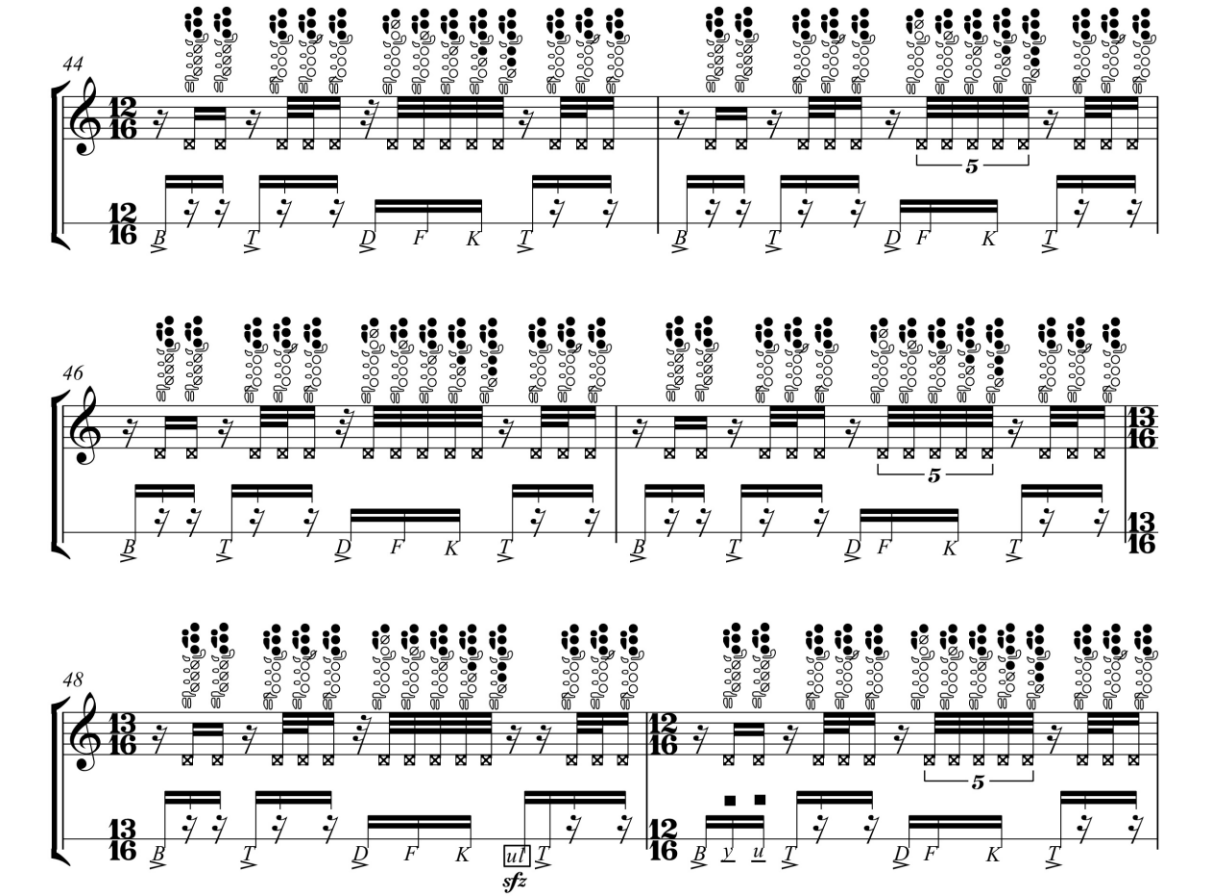


- Only possible during performance
- Going through time-limits
- Endurance makes performance worth it
  Not the same as a trance

  Trance: meditation
  Endurance: perseverance

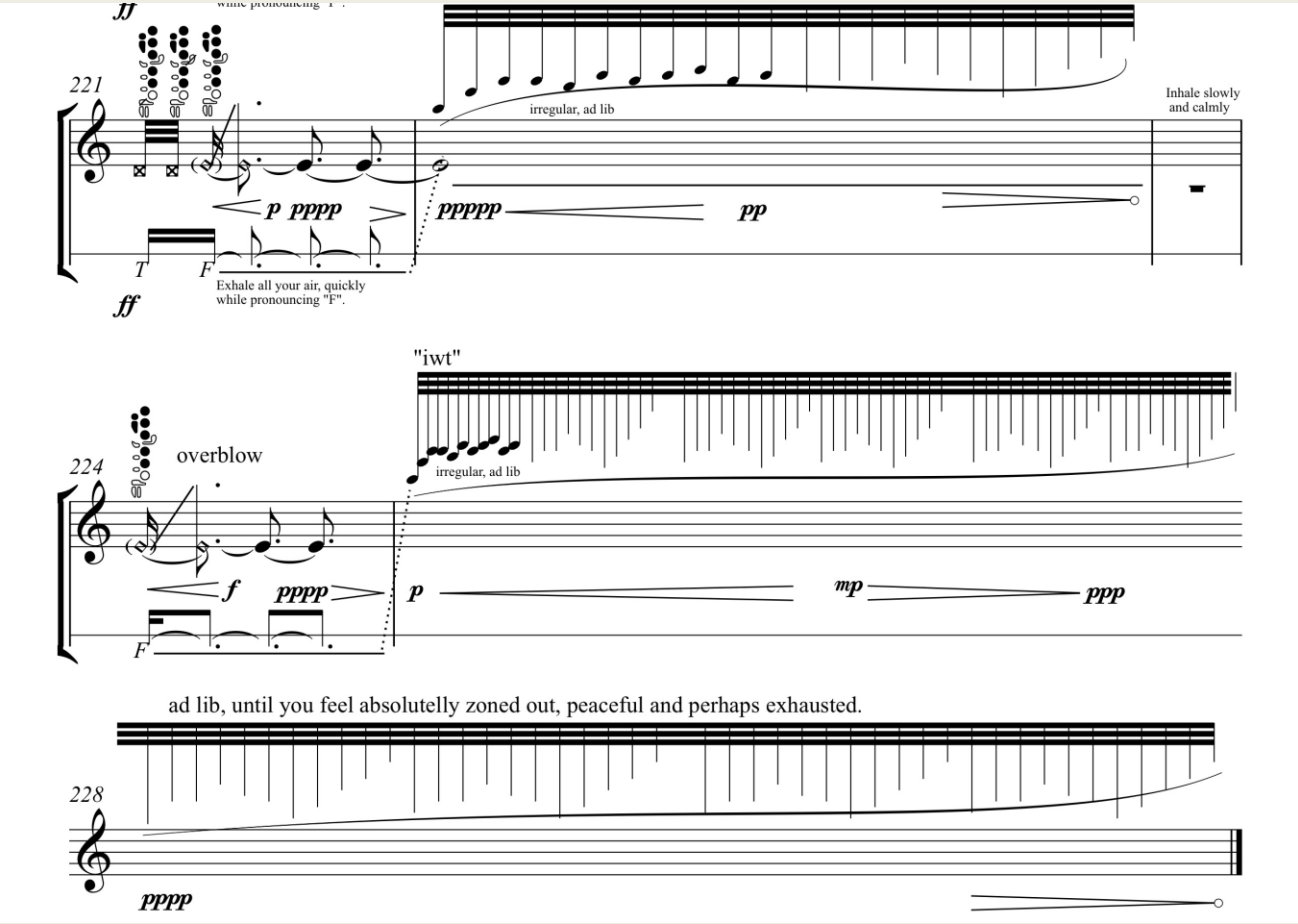
- Exhaustion shapes the affect

Physicality in performance *Technique*



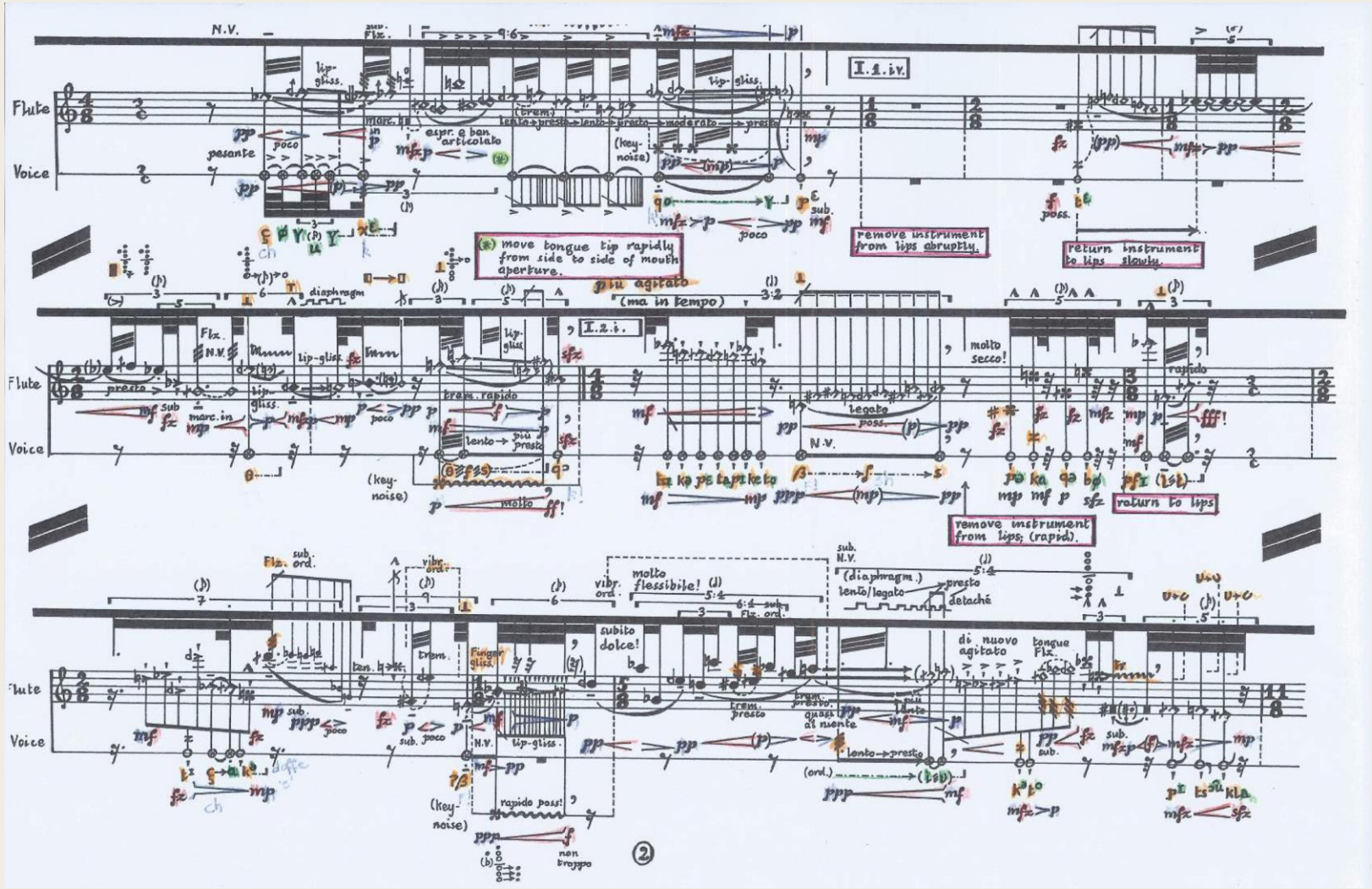
- Awkward density, counterpoint
- Disconnection of 'standard' technique, combination of parameters
- Development of personalized technique, appropriate for the music
- Exaggeration in classical and extended techniques
- Help of the body

Physicality in performance
Limits



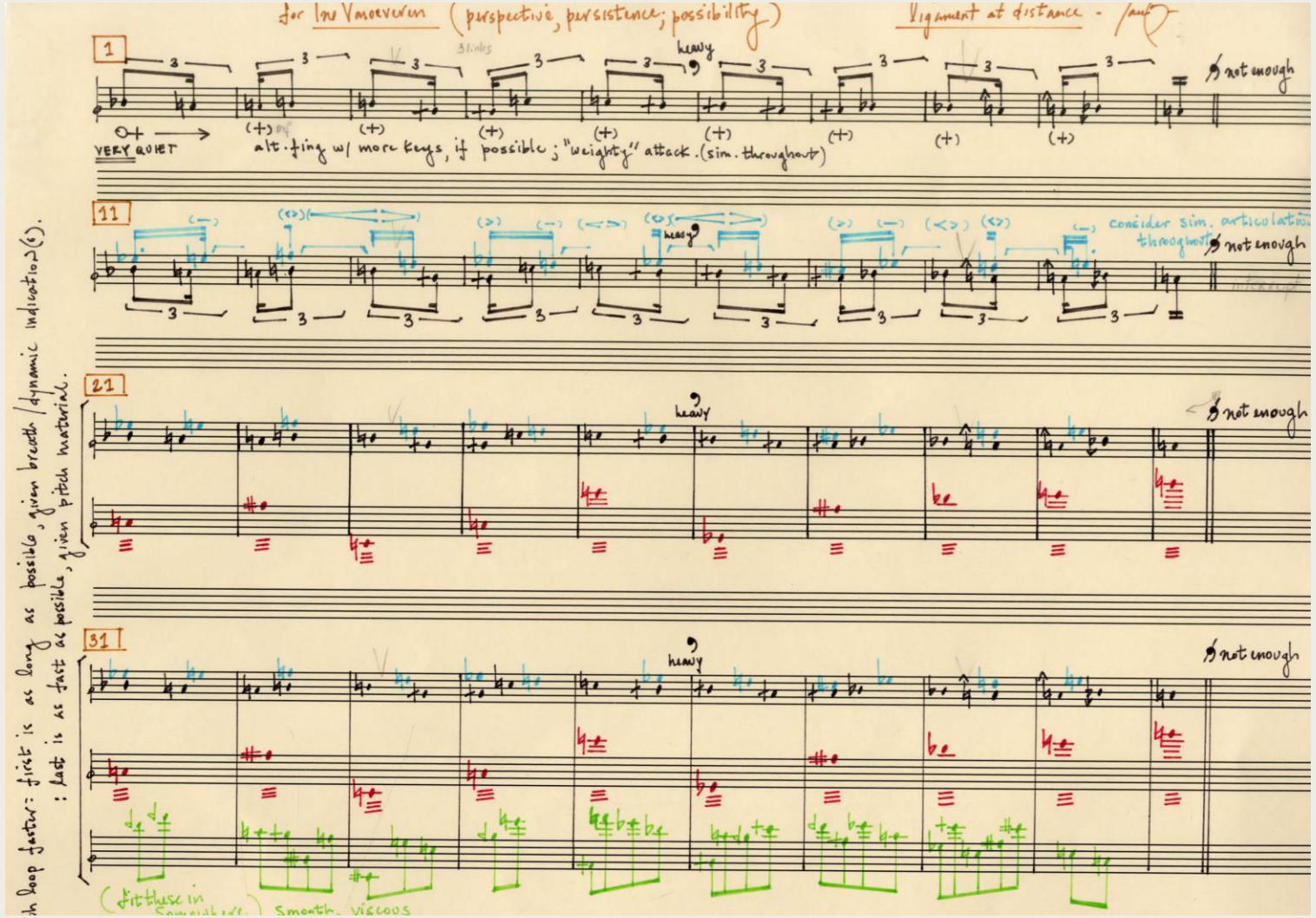
- Fighting natural reflections
- Extreme control of the body
- Playing with pain
- Transporting physical effort towards the audience
- Expanding limits on stage, not in the practice room

Additional examples



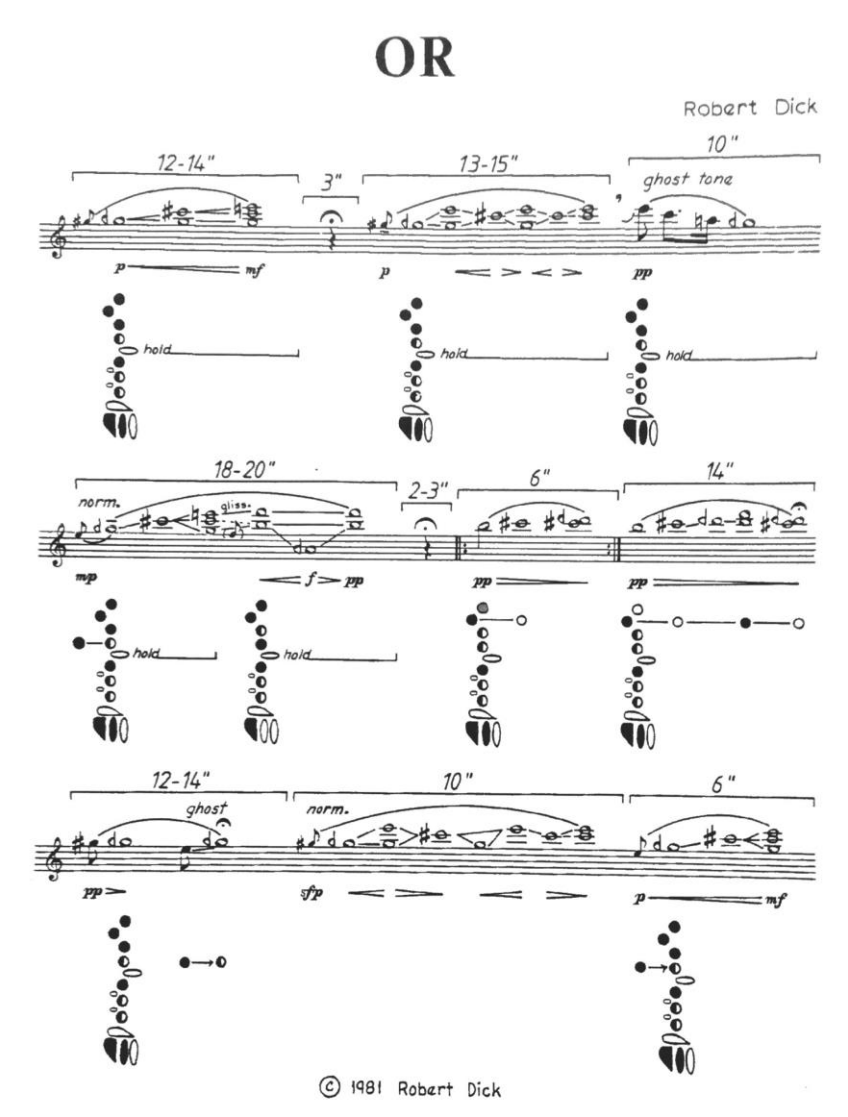
Unity Capsule – B. Ferneyhough

Additional examples



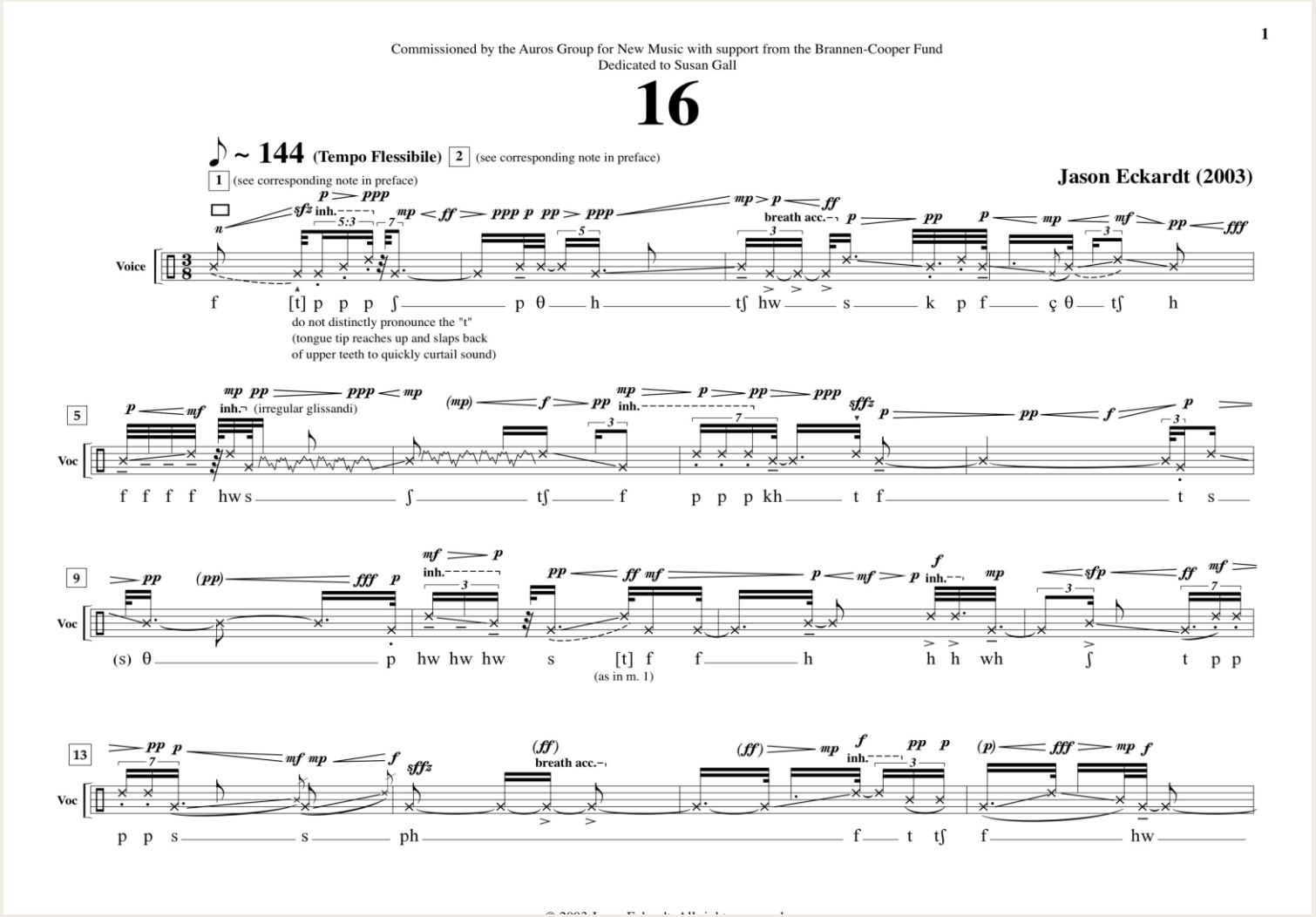
ligament at distance – J. Bean

Additional examples



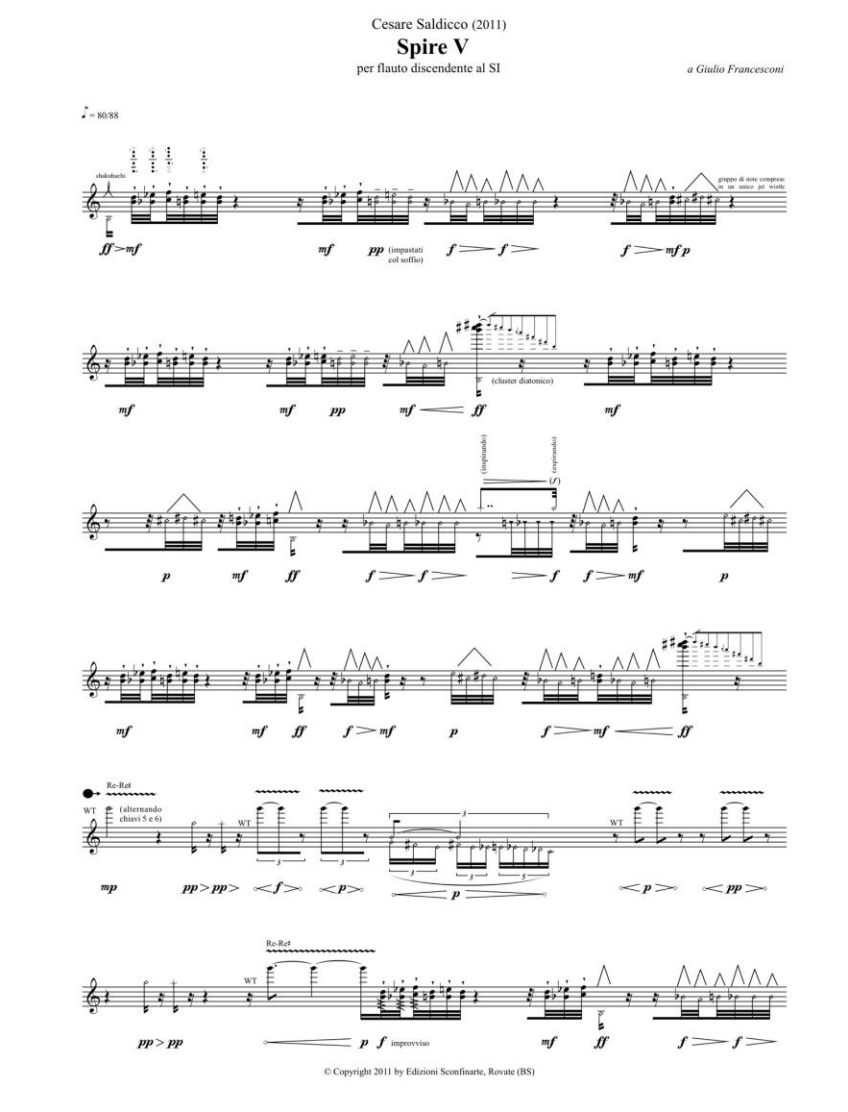
OR – R. Dick

Additional examples



16 – J. Eckardt

Additional examples



Spire V – C. Saldicco

THANK YOU!

Fernanda Navarro and Ine Vanoeveren