If You're Going To Dance Don't Hide Your Face

(2019/2020)

For two performers on an amplified setup of acoustic guitars, objects, feedback, and electronics

Collaborative composition by Adam Zuckerman and Daniel Meyer-O'Keefe

Score by Adam Zuckerman

If You're Going To Dance Don't Hide Your Face was conceived and concretized through a long collaborative process of composition, improvisation, and performance, all of which culminated in a studio recording that can be heard here: www.adamzuckermanmusic.com/if-you-re-going-to-dance-don-t-hide. This recording consists of an unprocessed studio performance of the piece, after the recording of which a few additional sounds and electronics (sine tones and noise) were layered on top. The score was created to document the resulting piece and to serve as a guide for future performances. The electronics part is optional: it may be reconstructed from the score or simply left out. In general, musical discretion in the particular implementation of details is encouraged, as is the specific timing of events and their duration. Still, the general character of the sound world created should adhere to that represented by the score.

Materials

Both Players require the following:

- an acoustic, steel-string guitar. Guitars can be very cheap.

- a violin, viola, or cello bow.

- a surface audio transducer of the sort that allows one to grip the transducer in one hand and easily manipulate its placement on the surface of the guitar. I recommend this one: *https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00JZT6JZ2/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_search_asin_title?ie=UTF8&psc=1*

- a smart phone with a headphone jack to plug into the transducer. A reverb application should be downloaded. I recommendthe free app 'VoiceRack: FX'

- a contact microphone

- an amplifier and cable into which the contact mic is plugged

- 3 small, hand-held bells each. Ensure that these bells are able to be held and rung all at once, either by holding them between different fingers of one hand or by stringing them together so as to be rung at the same time by one hand.

- a spring clamp to which the almglocken and/or bells are attached. These make it possible to bow with one hand, leaving the other hand free to perform a different action. The clamp should have long, sturdy handles to make it easier to stabilize (see section about this below).

- an assortment of other objects to be placed across the face of the guitar while the feedback is fed through it via the transducer. There are two groups of objects used, and they produce different results. Group One: small objects that rattle and add noise, such as small and medium-size stones, metal chains, nails, shells, etc. Many different objects can be used. Experimentation is encouraged. Group Two: objects that have a hollow cavity that can be blocked by being placed down on the face of the guitar. They rattle when left alone and alter the resonance of the guitar when pressed into it. These objects are already among those listed above and below: namely, the almglockens and bells. There is no need to procure more than these.

In addition, Player One requires:

- a collection of small twigs
- an almglocken of medium-high pitch. The almglocken's pitch should be lower than Player Two's almglocken.

Player Two requires:

- a large terra cotta pot
- a small stone to 'write' on the terra cotta pot
- a small almglocken of high pitch. The almglocken's pitch should be higher than Player One's almglocken.

Basic Setup

Players should appear close to one another, sitting either on the ground or at a table. Guitars are placed flat on the ground/table, amplifiers are slightly offset behind the players. A balance should be sought between the volumes of the transducer, the local amplifiers, and the amplification through the speaker system.

All objects are placed within a comfortable distance around the guitar. There are often several actions to be performed at once, and it will take some practice to coordinate the various simultaneous actions, which sometimes require switching hands mid-action. The most convenient placement of the various objects will become clear through rehearsal.

Notation

Sounds that have a clear pitch are notated with a standard notehead.

Sounds that do not have a clear pitch are notated with an 'x' notehead.

Simple sustained sounds are notated with a line following it that determines its approximate duration.

Sounds with a more distinct rhythmic character are notated with a boxed rhythmic gesture and an arrow following it that determines its approximate duration. This rhythmic gesture should not be taken to indicate a precise rhythm that must be adhered to and repeated. Rather, it is a guide to the general character of the sound and to the action taken to produce this sound. The same principle - a focus on the action of producing a sound rather than a precise rendering of its rhythmic details - applies to all sounds.

In some cases an intensity level indicates the intensity of the action undertaken. This translates to an increase or decrease in the action producing the sound and correspondingly to the sound's rhythmic complexity or density. Intensity level is indicated on a scale from 1-3, where 1 indicates low intensity / very discontinuous and 3 indicates high intensity / nearly continuous. For example, at the beginning of the piece Player two touches their finger to a live, loose cable. An intensity level 3 means an almost continuous action of repeated contact with the cable. Intensity level 1 indicates very sparse, discontinuous interaction with the cable.

Bowing With Spring Clamp

Spring clamps are used to enable bowing a bell or almglocken with one hand, leaving the other hand free to perform a different action. The spring clamps should have long, sturdy handles so that it can be stabilized on the floor. There are several ways to stabilize it: one can use heavy tape, or one's foot, or push it against another surface and use the back of the other hand to stablize it, or some combination of these. In all cases, make sure there is sufficient room to use a full bow.

The two bells that are bowed in minute 3 should ideally be very close in pitch.

Feedback / Transducer

Both Players should download the free reverb application named on the previous page. Another reverb app may be used, but it should be able to produce a dynamic range of feedback, and it should ideally have a mute button that can quickly mute and unmute the sound without severing the feedback loop. The phone is plugged straight into the transducer, and a feedback loop is creating by the phone/reverb and the transducer when the volume on the phone is turned up.

When the transducer is not affixed to anything (i.e. the speaker is open to the air) it should produce very high, piercing tones. When it sits on the guitar it should produce a wider range of tones lower in register and resonating through the body of the guitar. Explore the different settings on the reverb app to find the most dynamic setting and explore where on the guitar's body to place the transducer so that it produces maximal resonance.

Feedback / Transducer (cont.)

At first, the transducer is placed upside down on the floor so that the speaker part of the transducer is facing up. In this position the speaker is not being transduced through any solid medium, and the result is high, piercing tones. The volume is gradually raised and the transducer is picked up and gradually transitioned to the body of the guitar. A significant amount of time is taken in balancing and alternating between these two, where part of the transducer is emitting sound straight into the air and part of it is touching and resonating through the body of the guitar. In this state it should alternately produce high, piercing tones, as before, and lower, resonant tones. Balance between these two positions, moving between them. Finally the transducer is allowed to rest completely on the guitar and resonate through it. All of the other objects are then gradually placed on the guitar. Objects both rattle and change the resonance of the guitar and thus influence the feedback loop. The sound of the transducer is abruptly cut out, either by turning it off or unplugging it.

It is difficult to predict what will happen with the feedback, and how it will respond to the objects on the guitar. Experiment with ways to manipulate and increase the resonance of the feedback and to create and emphasize different sounds within it to create dynamic shaping of the sound. Some attentive listening and responsive playing is called for. Interacting with the sounds in real time is preferable to simply following the prescribed actions.

Almglocken used to manipulate feedback

The almglockens are used to intentionally alter the resonance of the feedback. Taking the almglocken in hand, oscillate between pressing it fully into the guitar, tilting it on its side at various angles so that the air column is not closed, and holding it aloft so that it just barely touches the face of the guitar and rattles. Experiment with different places on the guitar to perform this action and find the place with the maximum impact. This action is performed continuously, at first, and then periodically in between or simultaneous to other actions.

Electronics

Dynamics are provided for all electronic sounds.
When hairpins are notated, the sound should fade in/out. When only a dynamic is given, the sound should cut in.

The pitches given for the sine tones are relative to one another. The first sine tone is found in relation to Player Two's terra cotta pot. Subsequent pitches are relative to the tone immediately preceding it - even when, for example, tone 4 is longer than tone 5, tone 6 is still relative to tone 5 (and not tone 4). Relations between pitch are established by intervals, indicated as follows:

'M' stands for major, e.g. M2 above = major second above previous tone.

'm' stands for minor, e.g. m6 below = minor sixth below previous tone.

'P' stands for perfect, e.g. P8 + P5 = an octave and perfect fifth below previous tone.

In some cases an interval is indicated that is between two equally tempered intervals, e.g. m3/M3 above = somewhere between a minor and major third above previous tone.

Basic instructions are given for configuring the layers of noise. Strive for a rich sound with a lot of internal movement, using various methods to achieve this, such as automating equalizer plugins. For the two layers of noise that emerge towards the end and finish the piece, incorporate sporadic 'blips' into the sound by inserting a noise for a fraction of a second that cuts in and out without fades. It should sound as though the signal is on the threshold of breaking. This parallels the sound of the loose, live cable used by Player Two at the beginning of the piece.

Subtle stereo panning of the electronics part is encouraged.

0'

One

Two

Electronics

Both Players:

Turn on transducer and place in initial position (off of the guitar, speaker up).
Make sure phone is set to airplane mode, and the screen is set to remain on.
With the volume on the phone all the way down, open the reverb application, and magnify the volume control (on the iphone this is achieved by opening the control center and holding down on the volume scale).

Immediately prepare to bow almglocken.

Hold position . . .

Immediately stabilize the almglocken in the spring clamp. Prepare the non-bowing hand to take hold of the loose cable, but don't grab it just yet.

Hold posiition . . .

1'

bow almglocken continuously ; gradually move bow from edge to edge to.bring out different partials

p *mp*

One

bow almglocken, sounding about the length of a bow, repeat intermittently

mp

erratically touch finger against the end of the loose cable ; static noises and 'pops'

2 (intensity level) *3* *2*

Two

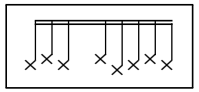
Elec.

2'

One

(alm.)

grind small twigs together against contact mic (one hand)



2 (intensity level) *3*

mp

p

Two

(alm.)

bow terra cotta

f

(finger / cable) *3* *1* *2*

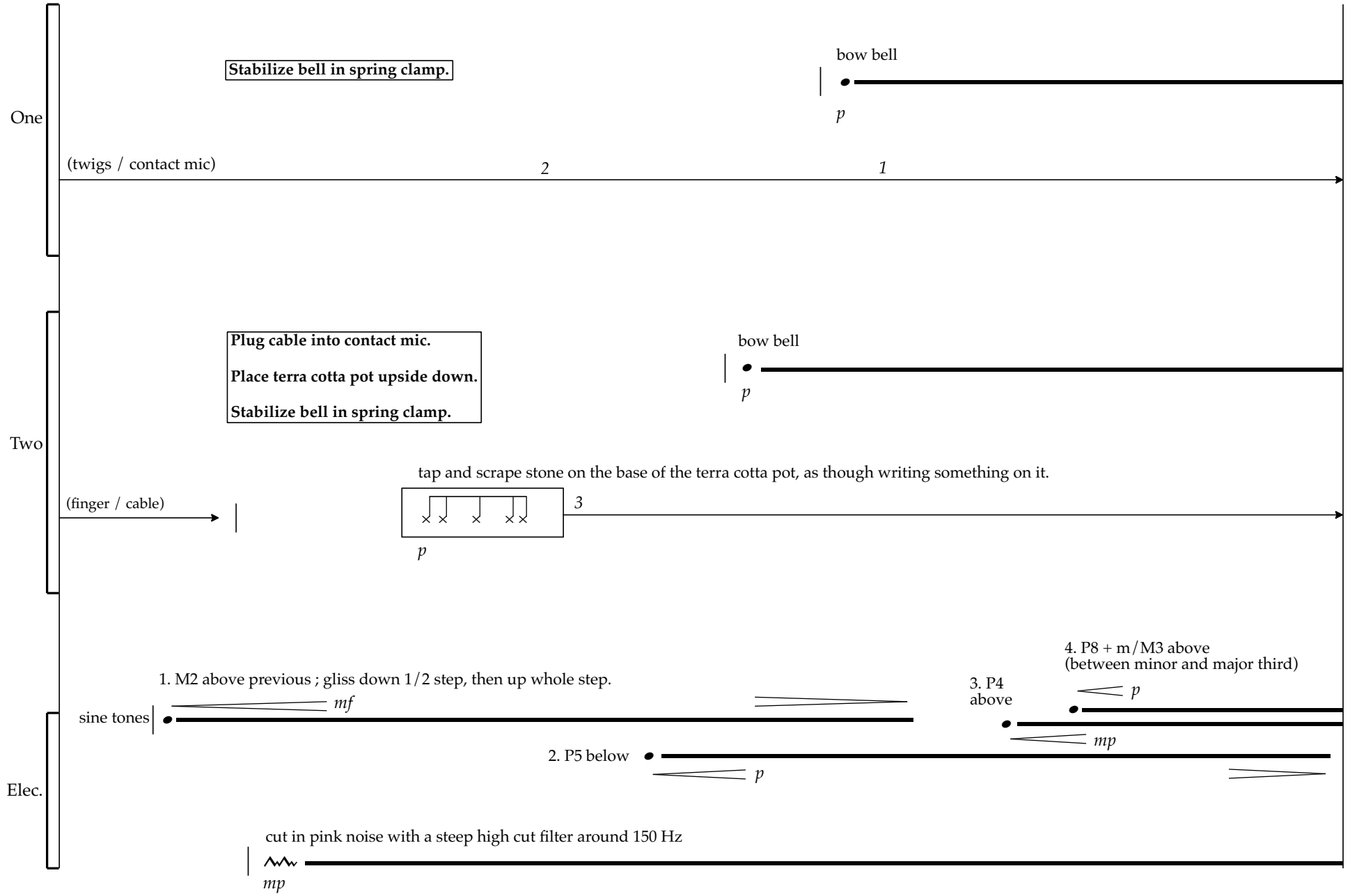
Elec.

sine tone

M2 below the pitch of Player Two's terra cotta

p

3'

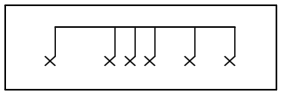

One
Stabilize bell in spring clamp.
bow bell
p
(twigs / contact mic)
2
1
Two
Plug cable into contact mic.
Place terra cotta pot upside down.
Stabilize bell in spring clamp.
bow bell
p
tap and scrape stone on the base of the terra cotta pot, as though writing something on it.
(finger / cable)
3
p
Elec.
1. M2 above previous ; gliss down 1/2 step, then up whole step.
sine tones
mf
4. P8 + m/M3 above
(between minor and major third)
3. P4
above
p
mp
2. P5 below
p
cut in pink noise with a steep high cut filter around 150 Hz
mp

4'

One

(bell)

Periodically grind almglocken along rim of terra cotta: short and some longer squeaks, silence between



p

1 *2* *3*

(twigs / contact mic)

Two

(bell)

(stone / terra cotta)

Elec.

(tone 4)

(tone 3)

(cut out)

5. P8 + M2 below

mf

(noise)

5'

One

(bell) continue to bow bell, but gradually transition to bowing parts of the guitar, such as the strings near the nut, the pins behind the bridge

(alm. / terra cotta) 2 1 3 2

(Transducer is on the floor, speaker in the air)
Find moments here and there to pause alm. / terra cotta.
Very gradually raise volume on phone to the threshold at which the transducer just begins to emit very high frequencies; ocassionally 'mute' the sound and quickly 'unmute' it.

Two

(bell) continue to bow bell, but gradually transition to bowing parts of the guitar, such as the strings near the nut, the pins behind the bridge

(stone / terra cotta)

(Transdcuer is on the floor, speaker in the air)
Find moments here and there to pause stone / terra cotta.
Very gradually raise volume on phone to the threshold at which the transducer just begins to emit very high frequencies; ocassionally 'mute' the sound and quickly 'unmute' it.

Elec.

(tone 4) *pp*

(cut out)

(tone 5)

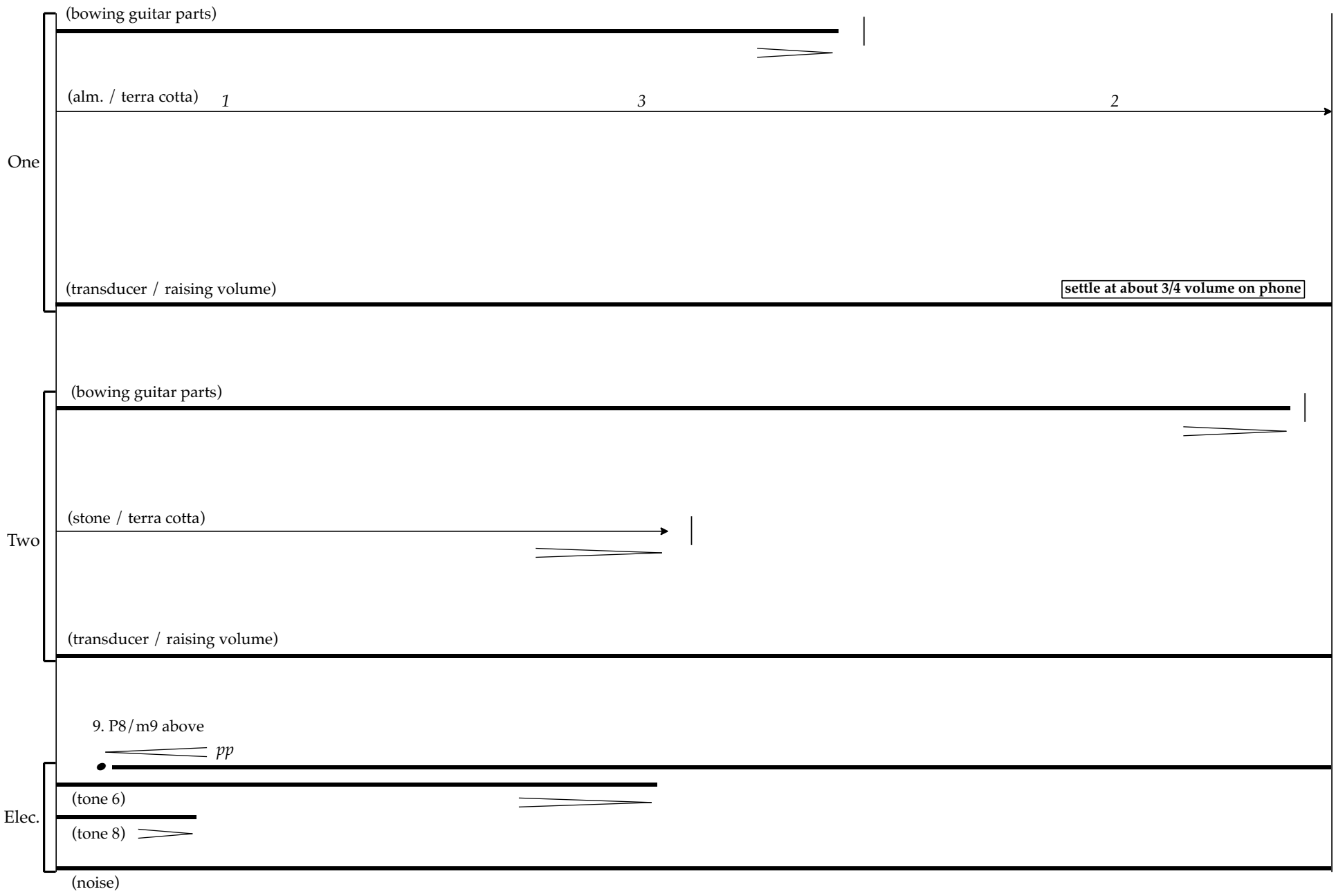
6. P4 above *mp*

7. P1 / m2 below *p* *n* *mp*

8. m3 below *p*

(noise)

6'

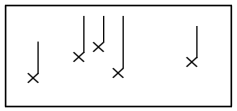

(bowing guitar parts)
(alm. / terra cotta)
1
3
2
One
(transducer / raising volume)
settle at about 3/4 volume on phone
(bowing guitar parts)
(stone / terra cotta)
Two
(transducer / raising volume)
9. P8/m9 above
pp
(tone 6)
(tone 8)
Elec.
(noise)

7'

One

(alm. / terra cotta) 1 2

sporadically pluck strings behind nut



1

mp

Pick up transducer, move intentionally around the air (tones swirl). Eventually move towards guitar, very slightly making contact with it, still mostly high, piercing tones.

(transducer)

Two

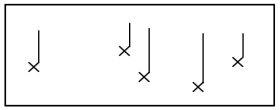
Ring one bell ; somewhat regular, but erratic, rhythms

mp

2

Ring second bell (same hand)

Sporadically pluck strings behind nut



mp

2 1

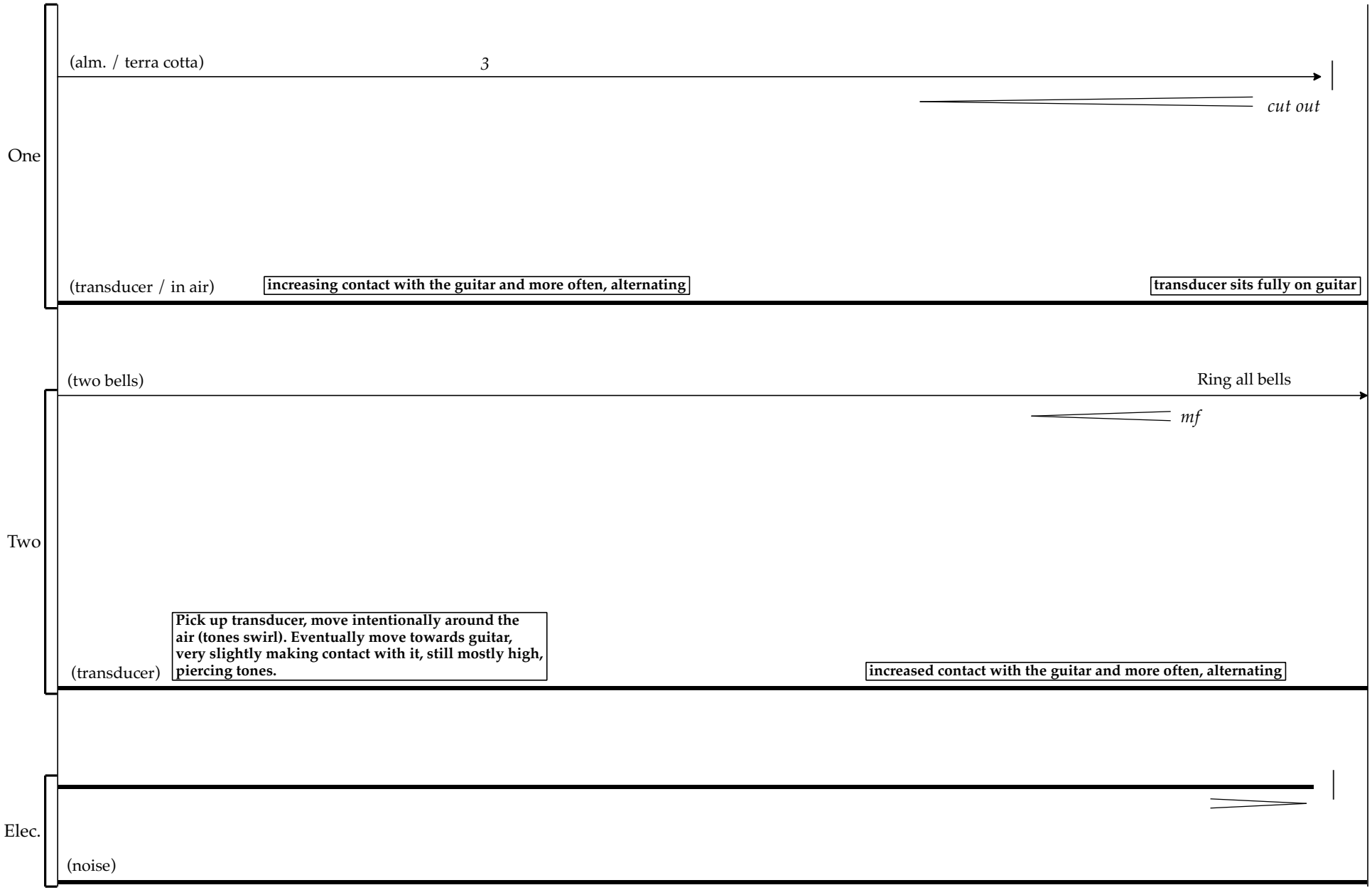
(transducer) **settle at about 3/4 volume on phone**

(tone 9)

Elec.

(noise)

8'


One
(alm. / terra cotta)
3
cut out
(transducer / in air)
increasing contact with the guitar and more often, alternating
transducer sits fully on guitar
Two
(two bells)
Ring all bells
mf
(transducer)
Pick up transducer, move intentionally around the air (tones swirl). Eventually move towards guitar, very slightly making contact with it, still mostly high, piercing tones.
increased contact with the guitar and more often, alternating
Elec.
(noise)

9'

Ring all bells (one hand) ; somewhat regular, but erratic, rhythms

mf

3

f

One

(transducer / on guitar)

Place rattling objects (Group One) on guitar, one by one

(bells)

3

f

Two

(transducer /
in air and touching guitar)

transducer sits fully on guitar

Place rattling objects (Group One) on guitar, one by one

Elec.

(noise)

10'

One

(bells)

(transducer / placing Group One rattling objects)

use almglocken to manipulate resonance:
- pressing into guitar
- pressing and tilting on its side
- dangling so it just touches the guitar

Two

(bells)

(transducer / placing Group One rattling objects)

use almglocken to manipulate resonance:
- pressing into guitar
- pressing and tilting on its side
- dangling so it just touches the guitar

Elec.

(noise)

11'

One

(bells) 2 1

(transducer / alm.)

Discreetly place contact mic underneath guitar

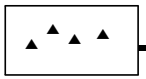
Two

(bells) 2

(transducer / alm.)

Elec.

sine tones

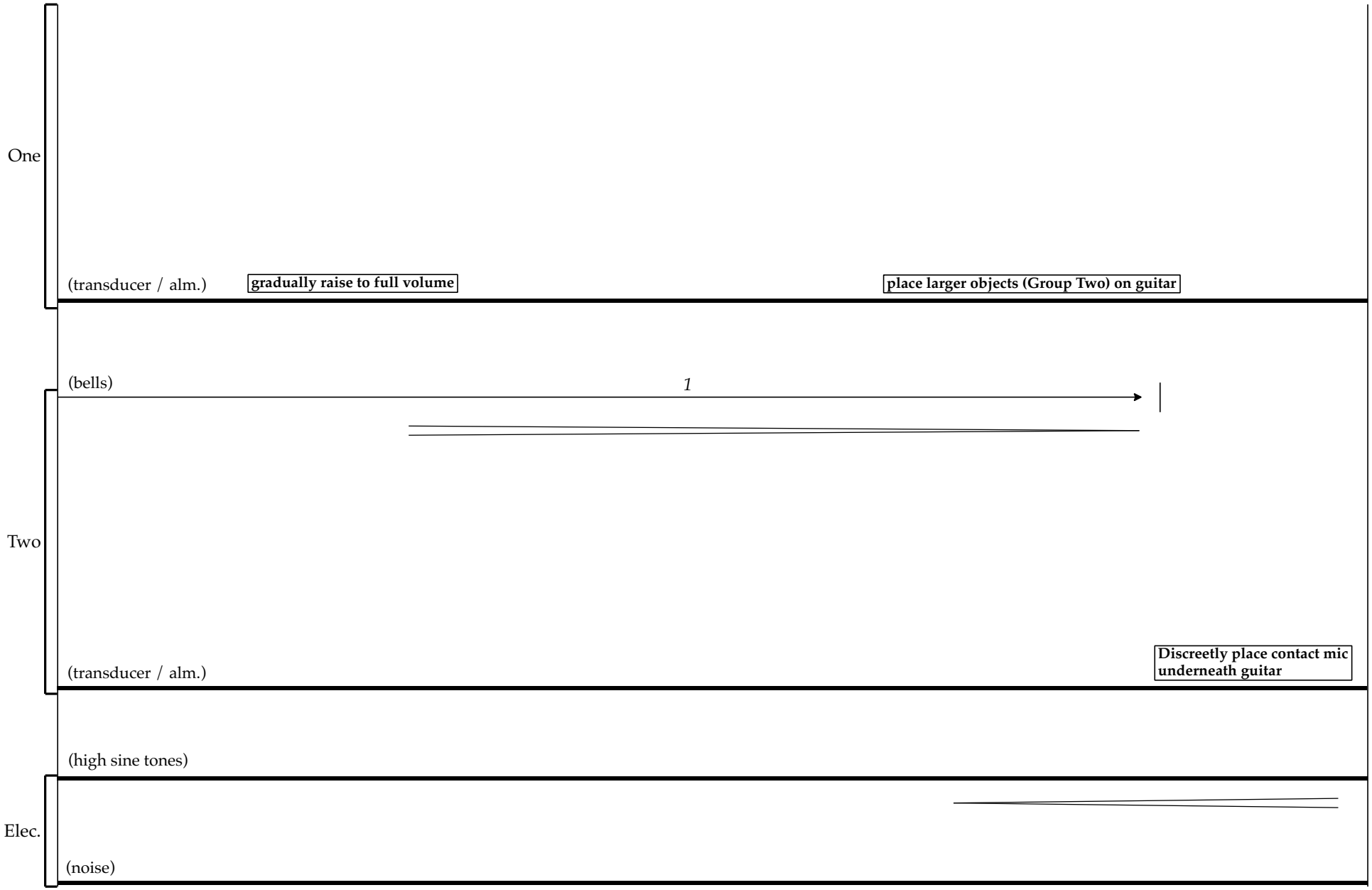


p

3-5 very high sine tones that glissando imperceptibly ; exact pitch is not important, but they should interact with the bells and feedback

(noise)

12'


One
(transducer / alm.)
gradually raise to full volume
place larger objects (Group Two) on guitar
(bells)
1
Two
(transducer / alm.)
Discreetly place contact mic underneath guitar
(high sine tones)
Elec.
(noise)

13'

One

(transducer / alm. / raising volume / placing Group Two objects) **move objects around guitar, with intention, pressing on larger objects to change resonance** **take Group One rattling objects off, one by one**

Two

(transducer / alm.) **gradually raise to full volume** **place larger objects (Group Two) on guitar** **move objects around guitar, with intention, pressing on larger objects to change resonance**

(high sine tones)

Elec.

(noise) automate high cut filter to adjust up very gradually, settling around 600 Hz by the time it fades out

14'

One

(transducer / alm. / moving objects around and pressing / take Group One objects off)

Two

(transducer / alm. /
moving objects around and pressing)

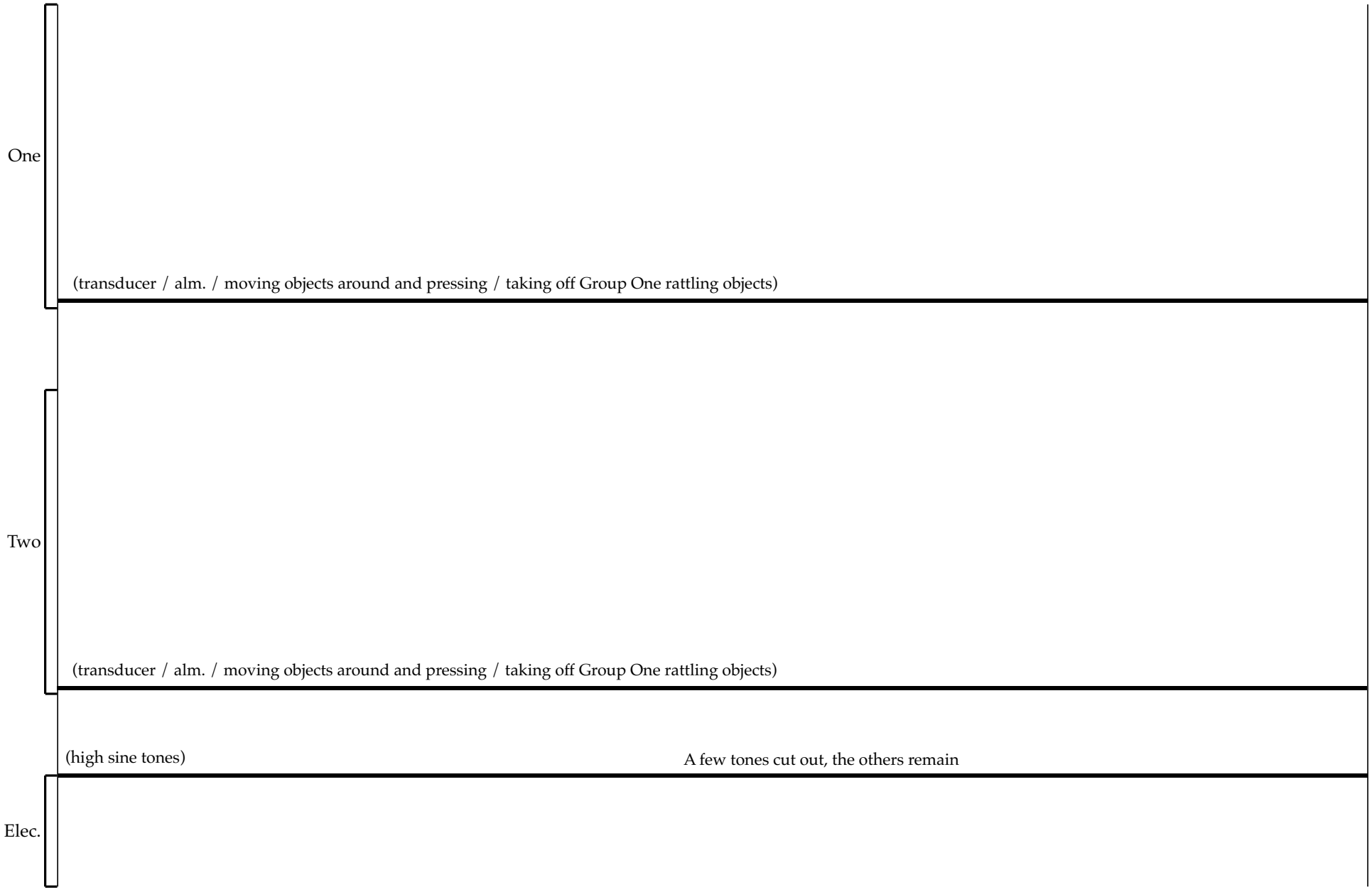
take Group One rattling objects off, one by one

(high sine tones)

Elec.

(noise)

15'


One
(transducer / alm. / moving objects around and pressing / taking off Group One rattling objects)
Two
(transducer / alm. / moving objects around and pressing / taking off Group One rattling objects)
(high sine tones)
A few tones cut out, the others remain
Elec.

16'

Very heavily bow almglocken, starts and stops ; return to objects / transducer

f

One

(transducer / alm. / moving objects around, pressing / taking off Group One objects)

Two

(transducer / alm. / moving objects around, pressing / taking off Group One objects)

(high sine tones)

Elec.

White noise with a low and high cut, boosted in the middle register around 1250 Hz.
Automate the boost to very gradually descend, settling around 1080 Hz.

n

17'

One

(transducer)

abruptly cut out

Two

(transducer)

abruptly cut out

(high sine tones)

cut out

Elec.

(white noise)

f

Pink noise with a high cut and several tones boosted between 25 Hz and 45 Hz for a heavily pulsing cluster.
Automate boosts to move around very slightly.

f

18'