

grace

open score for chamber ensemble or string orchestra

Jordan Nobles

Dedicated to Ensemble Mujirushi
North Vancouver, September 2009

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ABOUT THE PIECE

- *grace* was written for, dedicated to and premiered by Ensemble Mujirushi on their 2009 European tour

PERFORMANCE NOTES

- players proceed independently performing any cell in any order (all cells are in the treble clef)
- players can pause briefly between cells or proceed directly with a different one
- all notes should be soft and quiet throughout the piece
- each performer plays in his/her own time but conscious of, and responsive to, the other players
- avoid playing any recognizable pulse
- cells can be played in any octave as long as they can be played softly and quietly
- on polyphonic instruments notes should be allowed to ring as much as possible, for instance, on the piano, the sustain pedal should be down throughout

GRACE NOTES

- grace notes can be slow or fast
- the speed at which one plays a grace note should vary throughout the piece
- the grace notes should be performed as if they were bubbles breaking on the still surface of a pond

HELD NOTES

- each held note should only last as long as a single bow
- do not stop a held note abruptly but rather place a diminuendo at the end
- very little to no vibrato should be used at all, if used it should be very slow

DURATION

- the duration of the piece can be as long or as short as desired
- players can decide ahead of time how long to play and how to end; whether stopping all together or dropping out one at a time
- players can decide how many cells to play each and the stop playing when after performing them drop out one at a time

ALTERNATIVE PERFORMANCE SUGGESTIONS

- players can perform either together on stage or spatially separated throughout the performance space
- or players can enter unto the stage and begin playing one at a time. Also they can end the piece this way in reverse with each player gracefully exiting the stage after finishing
- if conducted then the conductor can choose, on the spot, who enters and when, by cueing musicians to start or stop playing

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*any cell, in any octave, in any order
softly and quietly throughout*

The musical score consists of 18 individual melodic cells arranged on staves. The first cell is a single staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 4/4 time signature. It contains a sequence of notes: G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, with a fermata over the final G5. The remaining 17 cells are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with some having multiple staves. Each cell is a variation of the first cell, featuring different rhythmic patterns, note groupings, and octave placements. The notes are consistently B-flat, C, D, E, and F, often with a fermata over the final note. The cells are designed to be played in any order and in any octave.

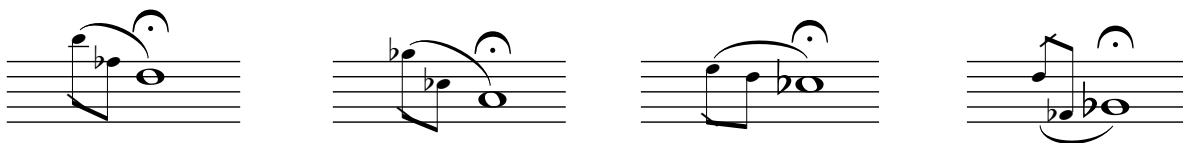
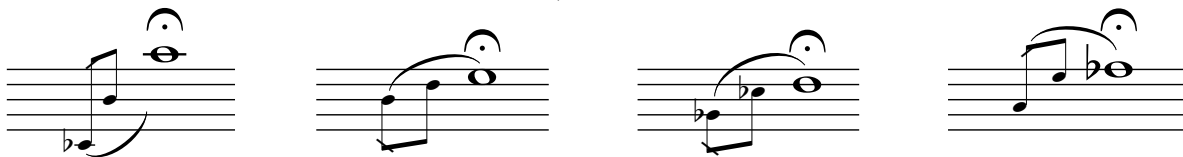
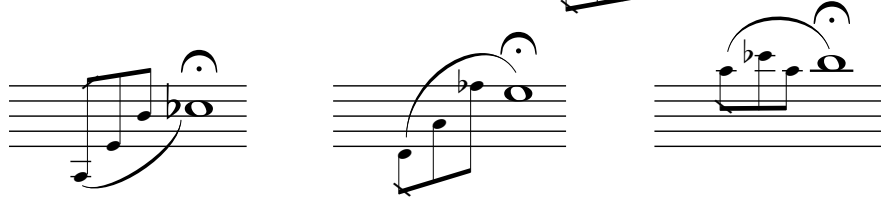
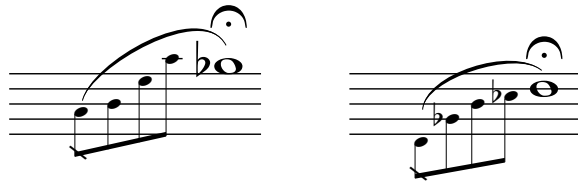
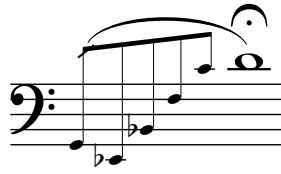
C Score (bass clef)

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softly and quietly throughout*



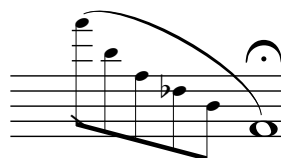
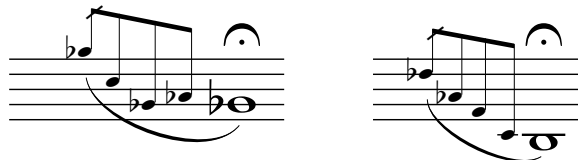
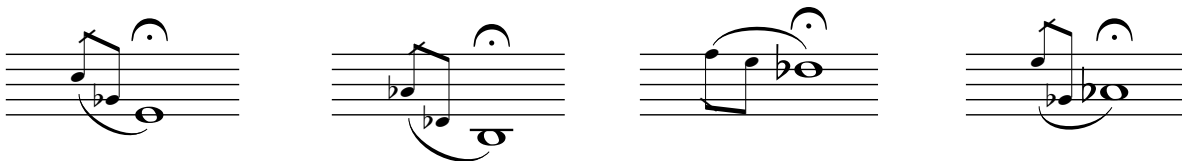
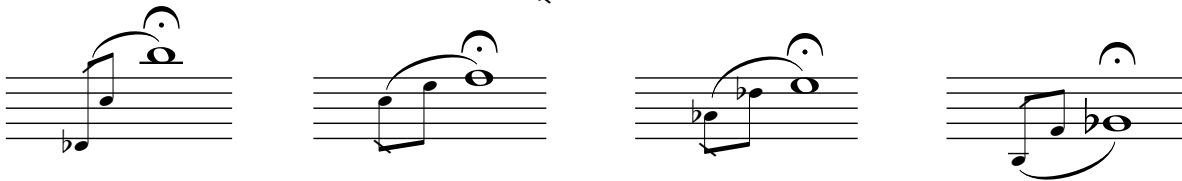
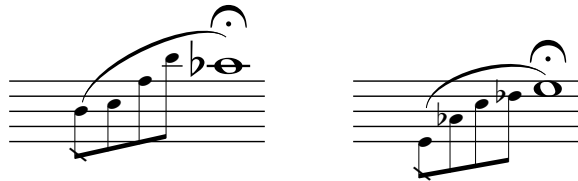
C Score (alto clef)

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softly and quietly throughout*



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The musical score consists of 18 individual melodic cells arranged on staves. The cells are organized as follows:

- Row 1: One cell on a single staff.
- Row 2: Two cells on two staves.
- Row 3: Three cells on three staves.
- Row 4: Four cells on four staves.
- Row 5: Five cells on five staves.
- Row 6: Four cells on four staves.
- Row 7: Three cells on three staves.
- Row 8: Two cells on two staves.
- Row 9: One cell on a single staff.

The cells are melodic fragments, often consisting of a quarter note followed by an eighth note, or a quarter note followed by a half note, with various accidentals and phrasing slurs. The notes are distributed across the staves to demonstrate flexibility in pitch and rhythm.

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