Jeremiah Siochi

Sublimation
for solo harp

Winner of the Composition Contest for the
2016 USA International Harp Competition

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Performance Notes

Although this piece is a continuous unfolding of rhythms and harmonies, with a new theme presented late in the work (m. 213), two important events define the three main sections of the piece. The first section is extremely rhythmic and driving, opening with a 13-measure pattern of percussive knocks on the soundboard of the instrument. Plucked pitches gradually replace and overtake the texture while constantly building in intensity. Following the build to m. 140, a measure of silence gives way to a broader, diatonically grounded gesture. The focus is on arpeggiated, rhapsodic figures more idiomatic to the instrument. This rhapsodic material becomes more dissonant and aggressive, arriving at a discordant *fff* glissando, then abruptly falling into motionless space. Calm, simple, and lyrical, the start of this new section provides a much-needed contrast from the remainder of the work. Slyly, percussive knocks are re-introduced, pushing the coda to a rhythmic and brazen finish.

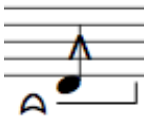
On percussive effects.
The middle line of the staff indicates the percussive "hits" that should be performed. The preferred gesture is to knock on the soundboard. Use of the left or right hand is indicated in the first thirteen measures. This pattern should be generally followed where possible, but there are many places where the "knocking" hand must be determined in relation to which hand is plucking the strings.

On arpeggiating chords. Unless explicitly directed in the score, the following should apply:
In the first section (before m. 141), all chords should be very sharp and defined, so they must be unarpeggiated. Chords should be arpeggiated as normal between mm. 147-180, and in the third section between mm. 205-259. In between those sections chords must be non arp. From m. 260 to the end the chords should be played like the beginning, i.e. non arp.

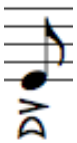
On string muting and laissez-vibrer.
Since the first section needs to be crisp and defined, the plucked pitches should be muted wherever possible. In the absence of other indications, muting is at the player's discretion in mm. 142-202, but should be done in a way that complements the expressive directives. After m. 260, mute as in the beginning.

Harmonics should be fingered so they sound an octave above the written pitch.

Glossary



Scrape wire string upward with coin. Keep coin on bench or stand for easy access.



Pluck string with fingernail

Xylophonic sound - mute string near soundboard and pluck in middle

Sublimation

As fast as you can groove

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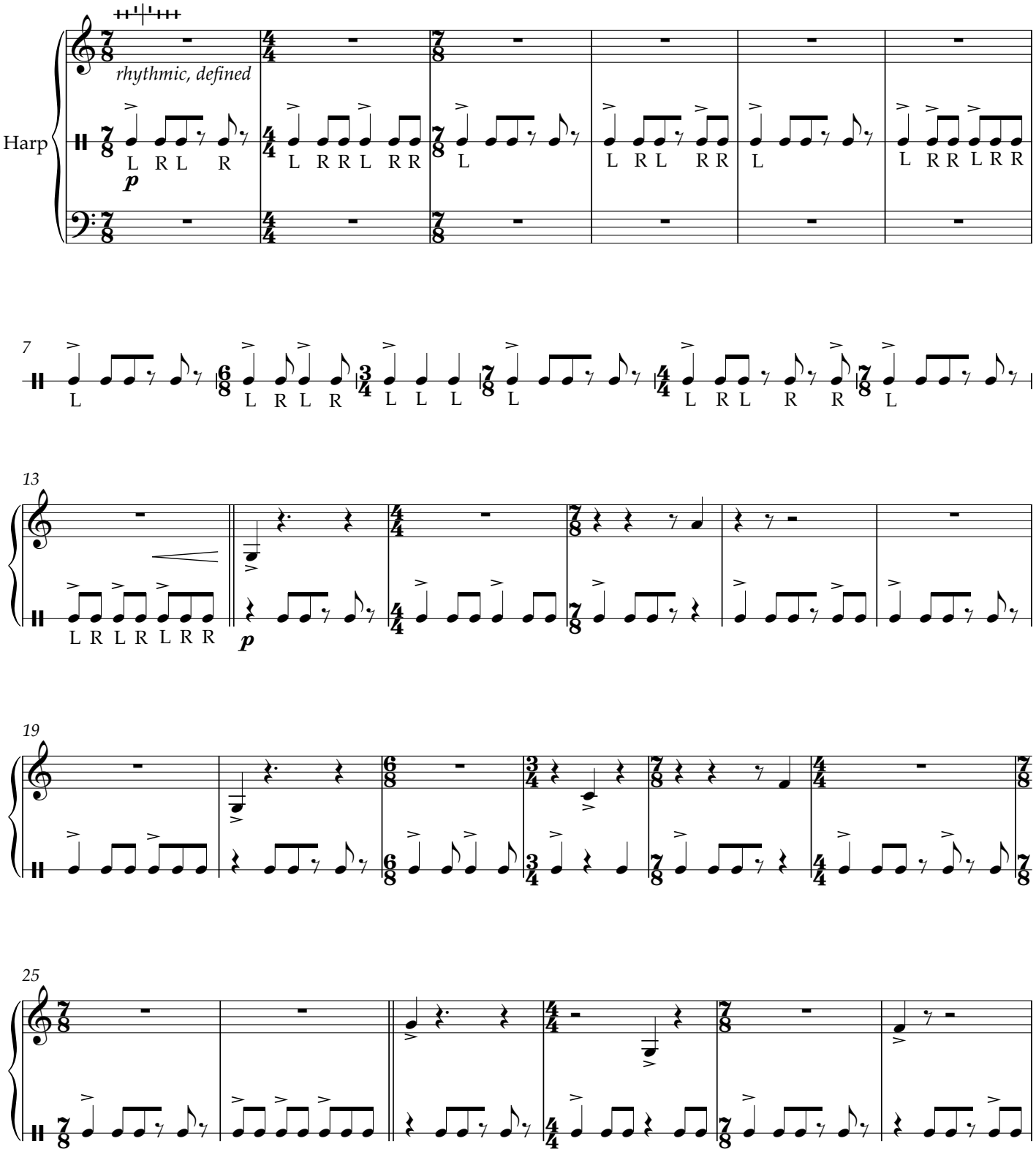
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