

daniel t lewis

s t r a s u r e

for string trio

strasure

for string trio
2016

duration: 10 minutes (or longer, or much longer)





commissioned by Sound Energy String Trio

program note:
“Strasure” is a portmanteau of “structure” and “erasure.” An environment of abstraction becomes reoriented and defined by concretely musical occurrences. These events (chords from a Robert Glasper tune) structure the spacetime they enter into, and efface the expression of the environment. The environment turns towards the tune. It becomes more like the tune. It was, in fact, already doing so. It was always doing so.

Performance Notes:










Pitch

Pitch inflections are intended to approximate intervals in just intonation. They occur only on unison figures. Practice these figures as a group, estimating the intervals and then tuning them by ear. Typically, the intervals should sound smooth, like a “natural” fit, if a bit dissonant at times. The chords in measure 23 should sound maximally consonant and pure.

- Up or down approximately 14 cents. A very small inflection. Think it, and it will happen.
- Up/down approximately 31 cents. A significant inflection, but not as much as a quarter-tone.
- Down 60 cents (ever so slightly more than a quarter-tone).
- Parenthesis around an accidental indicate an optional inflection up or down, nearby the notated pitch. If the parenthesis are empty, treat it as if it were accompanied by a natural sign.

Articulation and Technique:

The following symbols appear only on the first note of a cell, but all apply to the entire cell. In other words, each individual note in the cell has the same characteristics or options as the first note.

- Dampen the string with one finger just above the fingered pitch, between a Major and minor 2nd away. This produces a hazy, overtone-laden sound. The fundamental should almost always be audible.
- Optional open string.
- Optional turn (literally as one would play it in traditional Baroque performance practice)
- Optional 8va (or 8vb, appearing below the clef).
- Toneless: any sound without pitch, whether on the strings or elsewhere on the instrument. This indication always occurs with an absence of note heads.
- Extra pressure or other kind of force, emphasis and/or a little distortion.
- Unstable and/or discontinuous tone or timbre. This is done with the bow using unsteady speed, irregular pressure, and/or rapidly shifting pow position (like a young beginning student is prone to do).
- Multi- / ricochet: multiple sounds merged into one event (for example: ricochet, finger tapping, or bow clicks)
- Legato, through the entire cell and possibly across repeats of the cell. Connect the rhythms in any grouping, putting any number of notes in the same bow, but always maintain a smooth, sustained sound.

All other markings that appear should be familiar, and should be played in the traditional manner. Any marking that appears in parenthesis is optional.

Any marking that does not appear in parenthesis is not optional.

Cells:

||: :|| Repeat, but always vary by either fragmentation, augmentation, or diminution

- “**steady tempo**” Maintain a steady tempo through the measure, though not necessarily through each repeat of the cell (thought you might keep the tempo consistent throughout the measure if you like).
- “**play through, unison**” The trio plays these figures in rhythmic unison, then continues immediately into the next measure.

Logical Opeators:

← – ○ – → And/or. One or the other, or both overlapping, or both simultaneously (though this is not always possible).

- “often” Play this cell the majority of time (the vast majority if the only other cell is marked “sometimes”).
- “sometimes” Play this cell rarely, only a few times over the course of the measure.

A cell which is not pointed to with text should occur with a frequency somewhere in between “often” and “sometimes.”

Lines:



The red and blue graphic lines - squiggles, cardiograms - are intended to suggest the overall sound of the measure in some way. Each line might represent a parameter of your playing (bow speed, position of the bow on the string), the pitch of the cells below (within a narrow band of variation), dynamics, overall activity... any aspect of your sound can be assigned to these lines.

You might keep these choices fixed through the whole piece, where one color line always represents the same aspect of your sound. You might instead choose to make each measure unique, or to assign parameters based on what the cells in the measure sound like. If you want, you could even make these choices on the fly during performance.

Page Turns:

Pages should be unbound, and moved (not flipped) sequentially from right to left, so that the current page and the next page are visible at the same time. Shift pages at any opportunity, but try to move them when others are playing.

General Notes:

Measures are as long as necessary to fully explore the material within. Measures with fewer cells or less material might be relatively shorter.

Wherever there is a gap in the notation or a symbol in parenthesis, decide what that gap could possibly mean, and make something interesting erupt from the gap. Possibility and difference should explode out of the seams.

At all times:

1. Explore your material, feel it out, grow your sound from within it. Let your eyes wander between cells and lines. Each measure should feel like a discovering of the material.
2. Be open to connections. Explode the gaps and differences within your own materials, and exploit the relation of your material to the other players' materials.

Suggestions:

It can be difficult to learn this piece if you start by immediately trying to take all of the notations into account at once. It is recommended that you learn the piece by acclimating yourself to it one element at a time.

1. Pick one measure, and one cell within that measure. Analyze it, and attempt to play it.
2. Once you feel comfortable with that cell, study and practice the next cell in the measure.
3. Once you have practiced all the cells in the measure in this manner, try to alternate between them following the logical operator in the measure.
4. Once you are comfortable with all the cells and their combinations, try incorporating the graphic lines.
5. Finally, practice exploring the measure, and try to get a feel for how long it takes you to fully develop the ideas within. This will dictate how long the measure will last in performance.
6. Learn each measure by breaking it down in the same way.
7. As a group, you are now ready to make informed decisions about the piece as a whole (form, duration, points of interest, etc).

If you have further questions, please email the composer at: lewis.daniel.t@gmail.com

strasure

daniel t lewis
2016

take time: explore, connect, explode

vn

always:
quiet
♩ = c.60

2

3

va

always:
quiet
♩ = c.60

2

3

vc

always:
quiet
♩ = c.60

2

3

vn

always:
quiet
♩ = c.60

2

3

va

always:
quiet
♩ = c.60

2

3

vc

always:
quiet
♩ = c.60

2

3

4

vln

often

sometimes

va

often

sometimes

vc

often

sometimes

5

often

sometimes

even

sometimes

often

sometimes

play through, unison

play through, unison

play through, unison

7

8

9

7

8

9

10

11

play through,
unison

steady tempo

even

play through,
unison

often

sometimes

play through,
unison

steady tempo

often

sometimes

12

13

play through,
unison

steady

often

sometimes

play through,
unison

steady tempo

even

play through,
unison

steady

often

sometimes

[illegible]

Diagram illustrating the relationship between musical notation and tempo. On the left, a single musical note with a fermata is shown. An arrow labeled "often" points to the right, where a musical staff is shown with a series of notes. Above the staff, a horizontal line with "x" marks indicates a "steady tempo".

becoming

The image displays a musical score for a vocal part, likely a soprano, with a large bracket on the left labeled *va*. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature (C). The melody is written on a five-line staff. A bracket above the staff indicates a five-measure phrase. Above this phrase, the text "play through, unison" is written with an arrow pointing to the right. Below the staff, there are several horizontal lines and a curved line, possibly indicating a breath mark or a specific performance technique. To the right of the musical notation, there is a waveform plot showing the amplitude of the sound over time. The waveform is divided into two sections: a red section on the left and a blue section on the right. The red section shows a relatively flat, low-amplitude signal, while the blue section shows a more complex, higher-amplitude signal with several peaks and valleys. The waveform is enclosed in a dashed rectangular box.

The image shows musical notation for two dynamics: 'often' and 'sometimes'. The 'often' section features a long staff with a series of notes, a fermata, and a final note marked with a cross (X) and a fermata. The 'sometimes' section features a staff with a series of notes, a fermata, and a final note marked with a cross (X) and a fermata. The 'often' section is marked with a fermata and a final note marked with a cross (X). The 'sometimes' section is marked with a fermata and a final note marked with a cross (X).

becoming

[illegible]

The image shows musical notation for two paths from the 'X' symbol. The 'often' path leads to a musical staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 7/8 time signature. It contains a half note on G4 with a fermata, followed by a quarter rest, and then a quarter note on G4. The 'sometimes' path leads to a musical staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 7/8 time signature. It contains a half note on G4 with a fermata, followed by a quarter note on G4 with a fermata, and then a quarter note on G4. Both paths are indicated by dashed arrows originating from the 'X' symbol.

becoming

[illegible]

The musical notation for 'The Rose Tree' in G major is shown. The first ending (marked '1') leads to the second ending (marked '2') via a dashed arrow. The second ending includes a repeat sign and a key signature change to F major (indicated by a flat sign on the F line).

The diagram illustrates the process of musical transcription. At the top, a spectrogram shows a complex waveform (blue) with a red line indicating a specific frequency component. Below the spectrogram, a musical score is shown on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The score includes a sequence of notes and rests, with a '7' and '3' indicating a specific rhythmic pattern. A dashed line connects the spectrogram to the score, labeled 'even'. Below the score, a dashed line connects the score to a simplified musical score, which shows a sequence of notes and rests, with a '3' indicating a specific rhythmic pattern. A dashed line connects the simplified score to a final musical score, which shows a sequence of notes and rests, with a '3' indicating a specific rhythmic pattern. A large grey arrow points from left to right, indicating the direction of the transcription process.

The graph displays a time series with a noisy blue signal. A smooth red line represents the trend, which is relatively flat but shows a slight downward slope. A dashed black horizontal line is positioned at the top of the plot area.

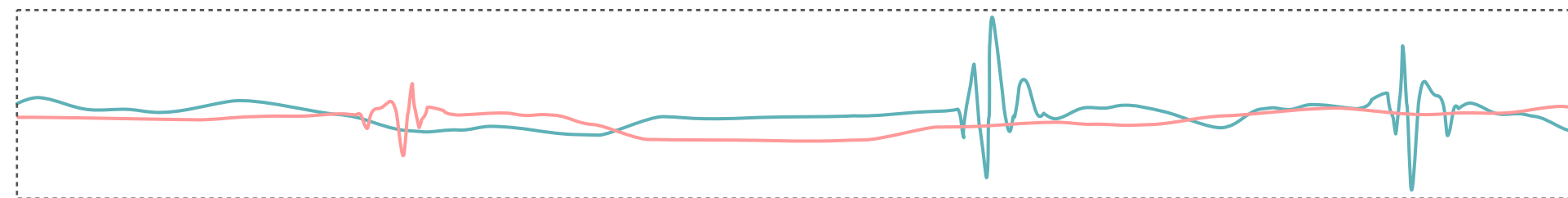
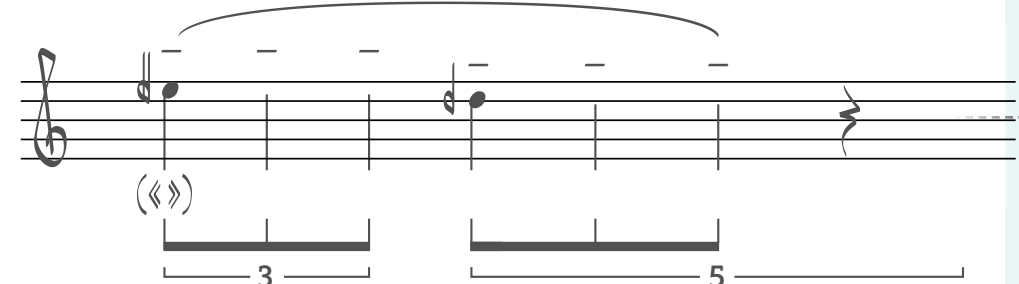
The graph displays a blue line representing a noisy signal. A smooth red line indicates the underlying trend, which is slightly downward sloping. A dashed horizontal line is positioned at the top of the plot area.

The musical notation for the word "even" consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The notes and their ornaments are as follows:

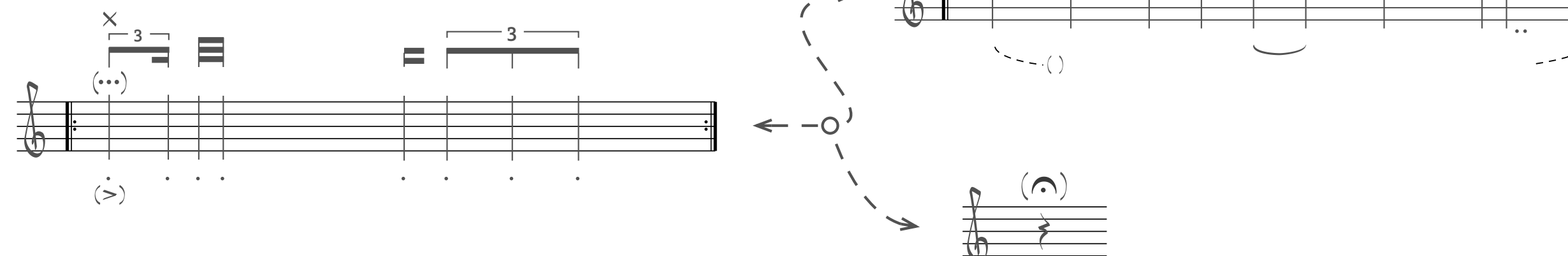
- First note (E4):** An 'x' above the staff, a fermata above the note, and a slur below the staff.
- Second note (F4):** A slur above the note.
- Third note (G4):** A slur above the note.
- Fourth note (A4):** A slur above the note.
- Fifth note (B4):** A slur above the note.
- Sixth note (C5):** A slur above the note.
- Seventh note (D5):** A slur above the note.
- Eighth note (E5):** A slur above the note.
- Ninth note (F5):** A slur above the note.
- Tenth note (G5):** A slur above the note.
- Eleventh note (A5):** A slur above the note.
- Twelfth note (B5):** A slur above the note.
- Thirteenth note (C6):** A slur above the note.
- Fourteenth note (D6):** A slur above the note.
- Fifteenth note (E6):** A slur above the note.
- Sixteenth note (F6):** A slur above the note.
- Seventeenth note (G6):** A slur above the note.
- Eighteenth note (A6):** A slur above the note.
- Nineteenth note (B6):** A slur above the note.
- Twentieth note (C7):** A slur above the note.
- Twenty-first note (D7):** A slur above the note.
- Twenty-second note (E7):** A slur above the note.
- Twenty-third note (F7):** A slur above the note.
- Twenty-fourth note (G7):** A slur above the note.
- Twenty-fifth note (A7):** A slur above the note.
- Twenty-sixth note (B7):** A slur above the note.
- Twenty-seventh note (C8):** A slur above the note.
- Twenty-eighth note (D8):** A slur above the note.
- Twenty-ninth note (E8):** A slur above the note.
- Thirtieth note (F8):** A slur above the note.
- Thirty-first note (G8):** A slur above the note.
- Thirty-second note (A8):** A slur above the note.
- Thirty-third note (B8):** A slur above the note.
- Thirty-fourth note (C9):** A slur above the note.
- Thirty-fifth note (D9):** A slur above the note.
- Thirty-sixth note (E9):** A slur above the note.
- Thirty-seventh note (F9):** A slur above the note.
- Thirty-eighth note (G9):** A slur above the note.
- Thirty-ninth note (A9):** A slur above the note.
- Fortieth note (B9):** A slur above the note.
- Forty-first note (C10):** A slur above the note.
- Forty-second note (D10):** A slur above the note.
- Forty-third note (E10):** A slur above the note.
- Forty-fourth note (F10):** A slur above the note.
- Forty-fifth note (G10):** A slur above the note.
- Forty-sixth note (A10):** A slur above the note.
- Forty-seventh note (B10):** A slur above the note.
- Forty-eighth note (C11):** A slur above the note.
- Forty-ninth note (D11):** A slur above the note.
- Fiftieth note (E11):** A slur above the note.
- Fifty-first note (F11):** A slur above the note.
- Fifty-second note (G11):** A slur above the note.
- Fifty-third note (A11):** A slur above the note.
- Fifty-fourth note (B11):** A slur above the note.
- Fifty-fifth note (C12):** A slur above the note.
- Fifty-sixth note (D12):** A slur above the note.
- Fifty-seventh note (E12):** A slur above the note.
- Fifty-eighth note (F12):** A slur above the note.
- Fifty-ninth note (G12):** A slur above the note.
- Sixtieth note (A12):** A slur above the note.
- Sixty-first note (B12):** A slur above the note.
- Sixty-second note (C13):** A slur above the note.
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- Sixty-seventh note (A13):** A slur above the note.
- Sixty-eighth note (B13):** A slur above the note.
- Sixty-ninth note (C14):** A slur above the note.
- Seventieth note (D14):** A slur above the note.
- Seventy-first note (E14):** A slur above the note.
- Seventy-second note (F14):** A slur above the note.
- Seventy-third note (G14):** A slur above the note.
- Seventy-fourth note (A14):** A slur above the note.
- Seventy-fifth note (B14):** A slur above the note.
- Seventy-sixth note (C15):** A slur above the note.
- Seventy-seventh note (D15):** A slur above the note.
- Seventy-eighth note (E15):** A slur above the note.
- Seventy-ninth note (F15):** A slur above the note.
- Eightieth note (G15):** A slur above the note.
- Eighty-first note (A15):** A slur above the note.
- Eighty-second note (B15):** A slur above the note.
- Eighty-third note (C16):** A slur above the note.
- Eighty-fourth note (D16):** A slur above the note.
- Eighty-fifth note (E16):** A slur above the note.
- Eighty-sixth note (F16):** A slur above the note.
- Eighty-seventh note (G16):** A slur above the note.
- Eighty-eighth note (A16):** A slur above the note.
- Eighty-ninth note (B16):** A slur above the note.
- Ninetieth note (C17):** A slur above the note.
- Hundredth note (D17):** A slur above the note.
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- Hundred-seventh note (A26):** A slur above the note.
- Hundred-eighth note (B26):** A slur above the note.
- Hundred-ninth note (C27):** A slur above the note.
- Hundred-tieth note (D27):** A slur above the note.
- Hundred-first note (E27):** A slur above the note.
- Hundred-second note (F27):** A

$\mathcal{V}\mathcal{H}$ 

play through,
unison



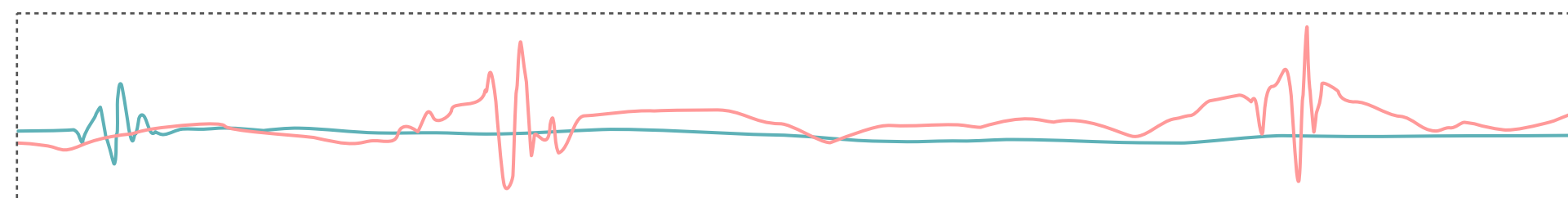
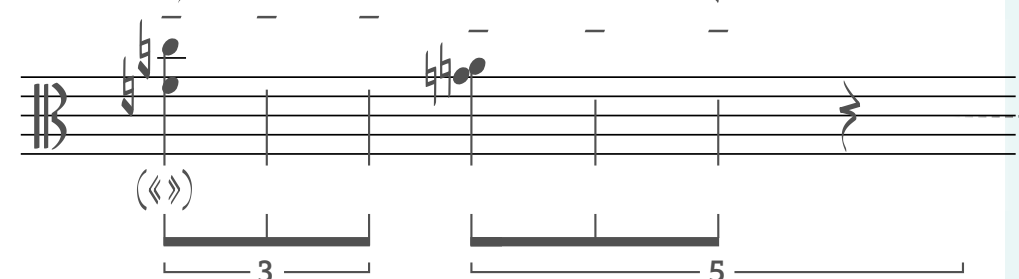
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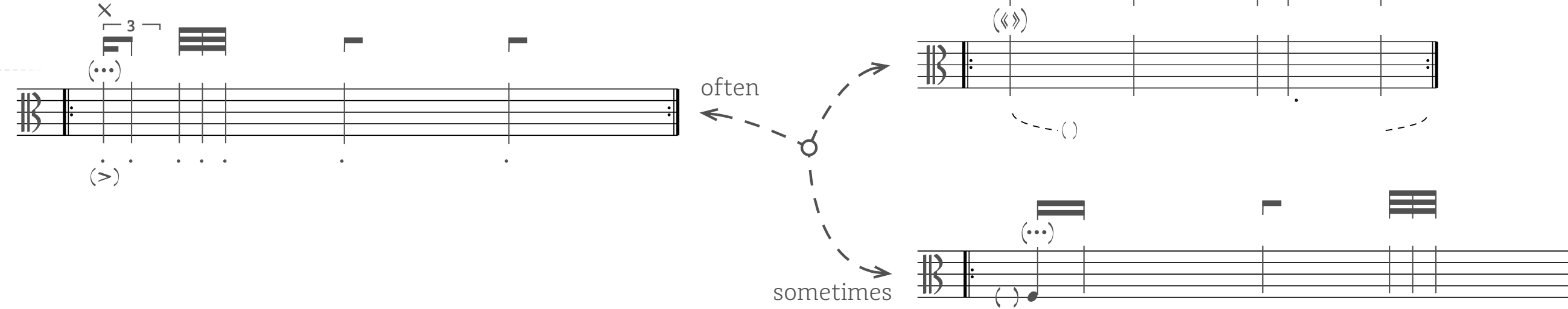
becoming

 νa 

play through,
unison



often

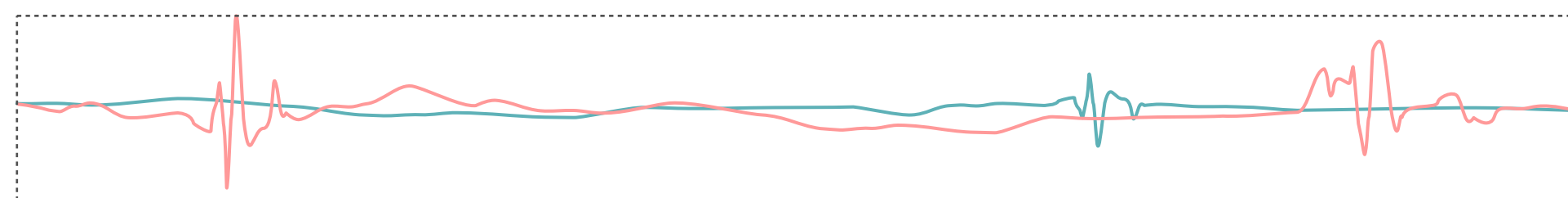
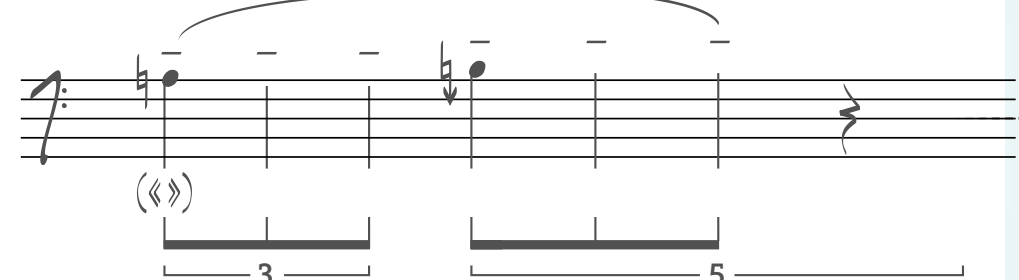


sometimes

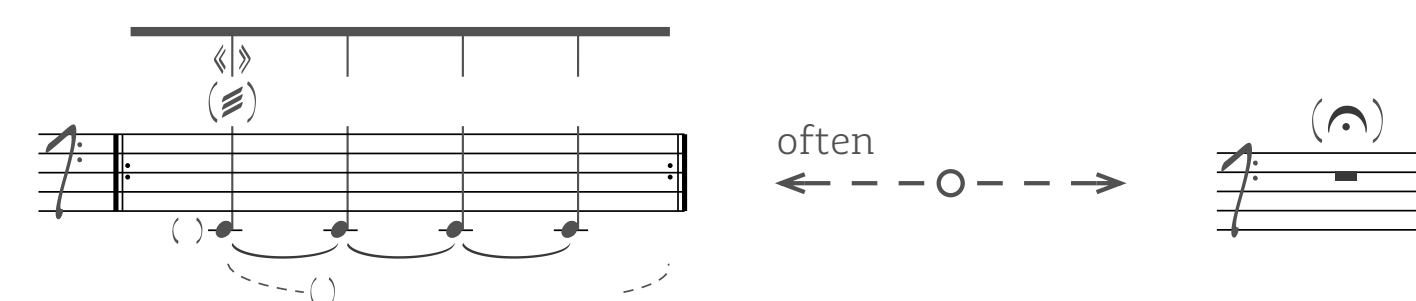
becoming

 $\mathcal{V}\mathcal{C}$ 

play through,
unison



often



becoming

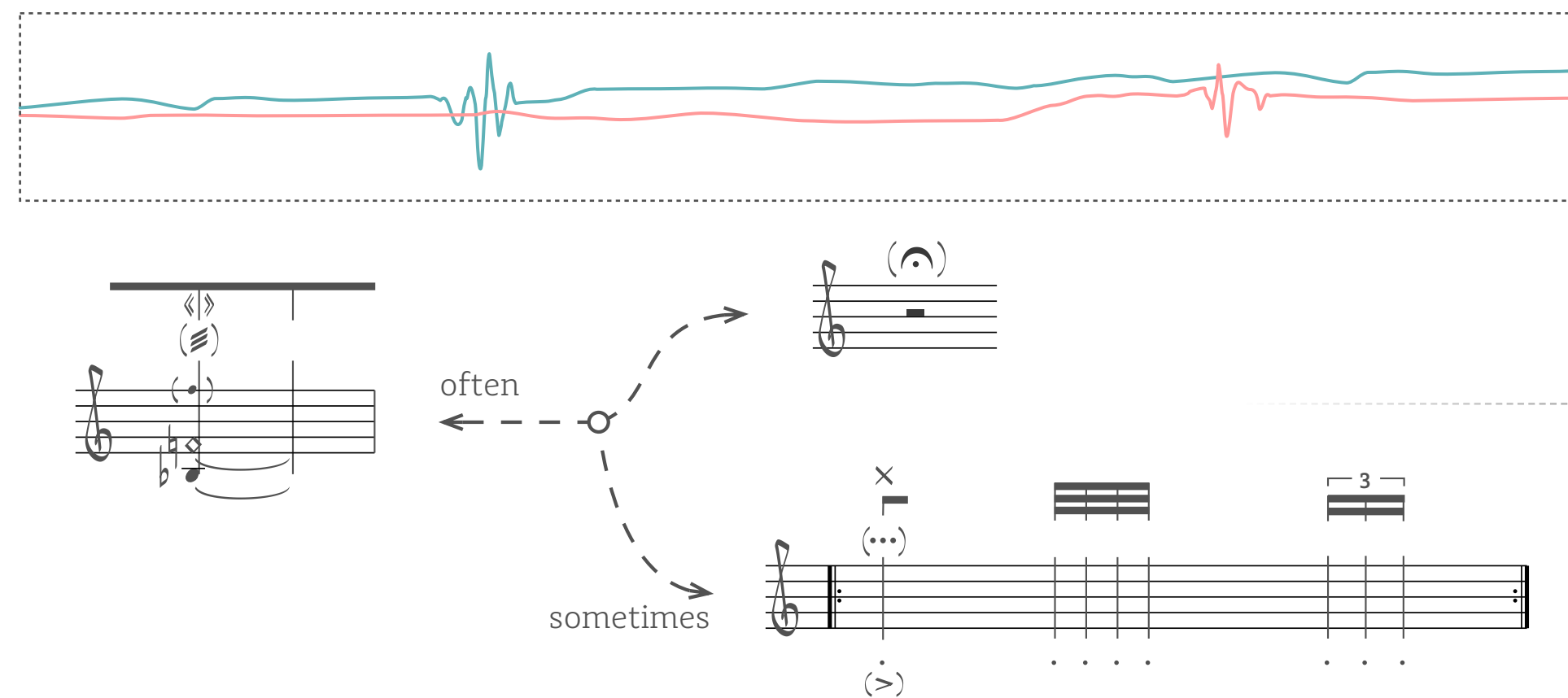


Diagram illustrating the concept of becoming:

- A large curly bracket on the left.
- The text va is positioned next to the middle of the bracket.
- A horizontal arrow points to the right from the middle of the bracket.
- The word "becoming" is written above the arrow.

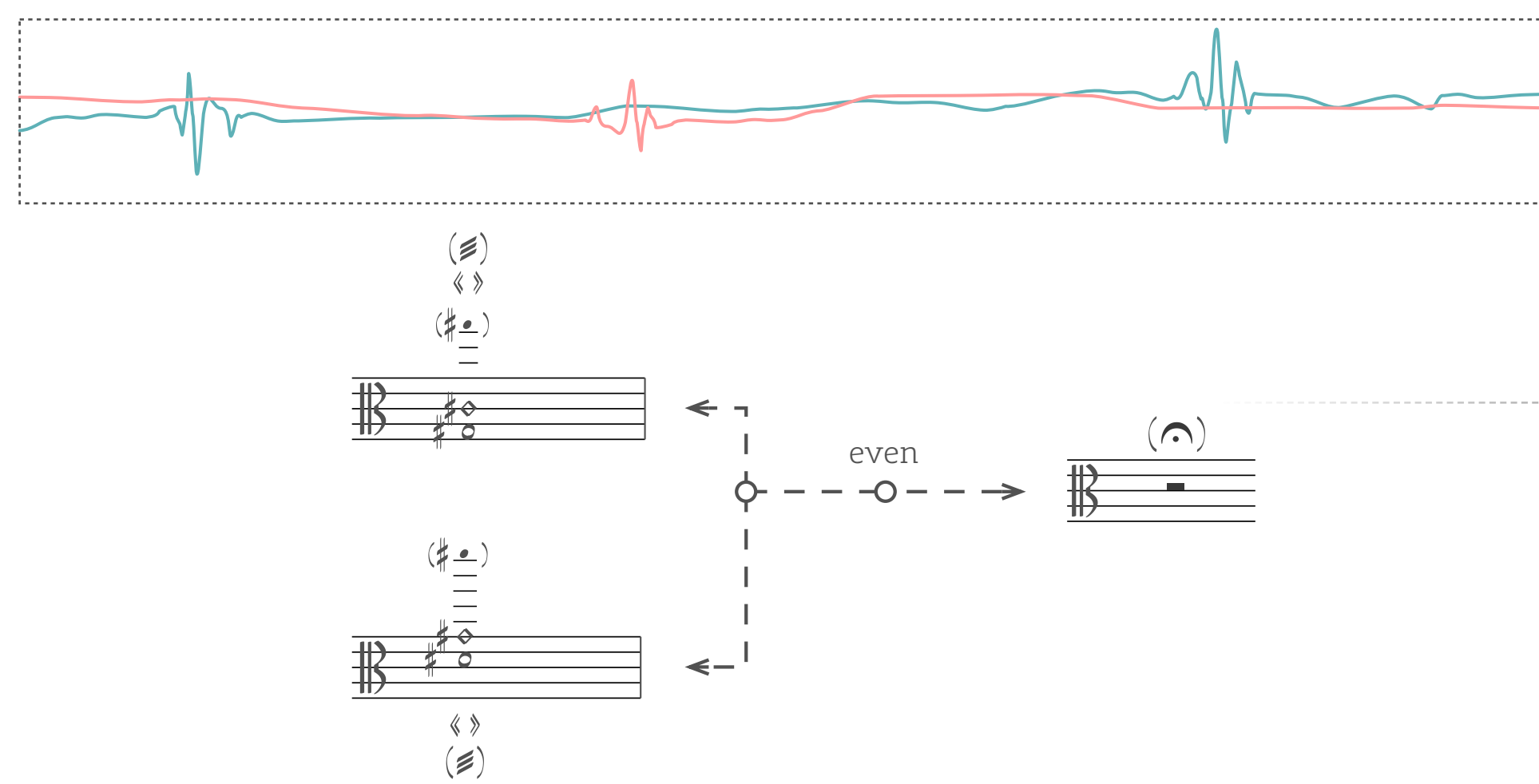
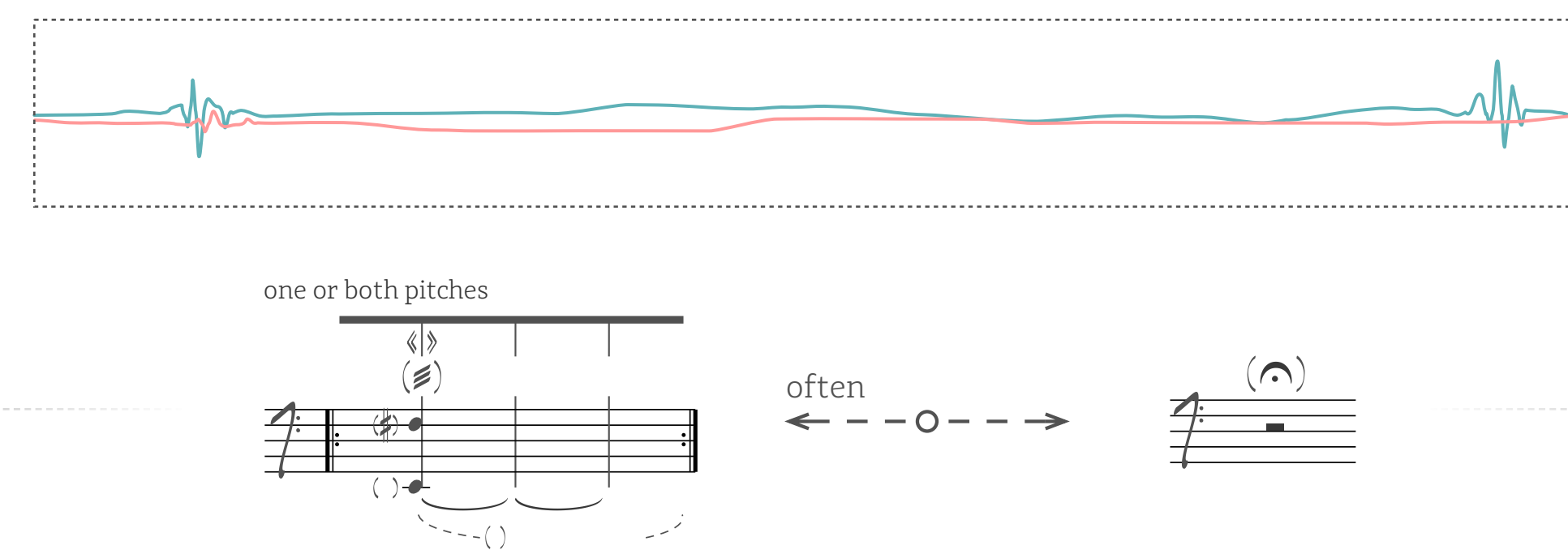
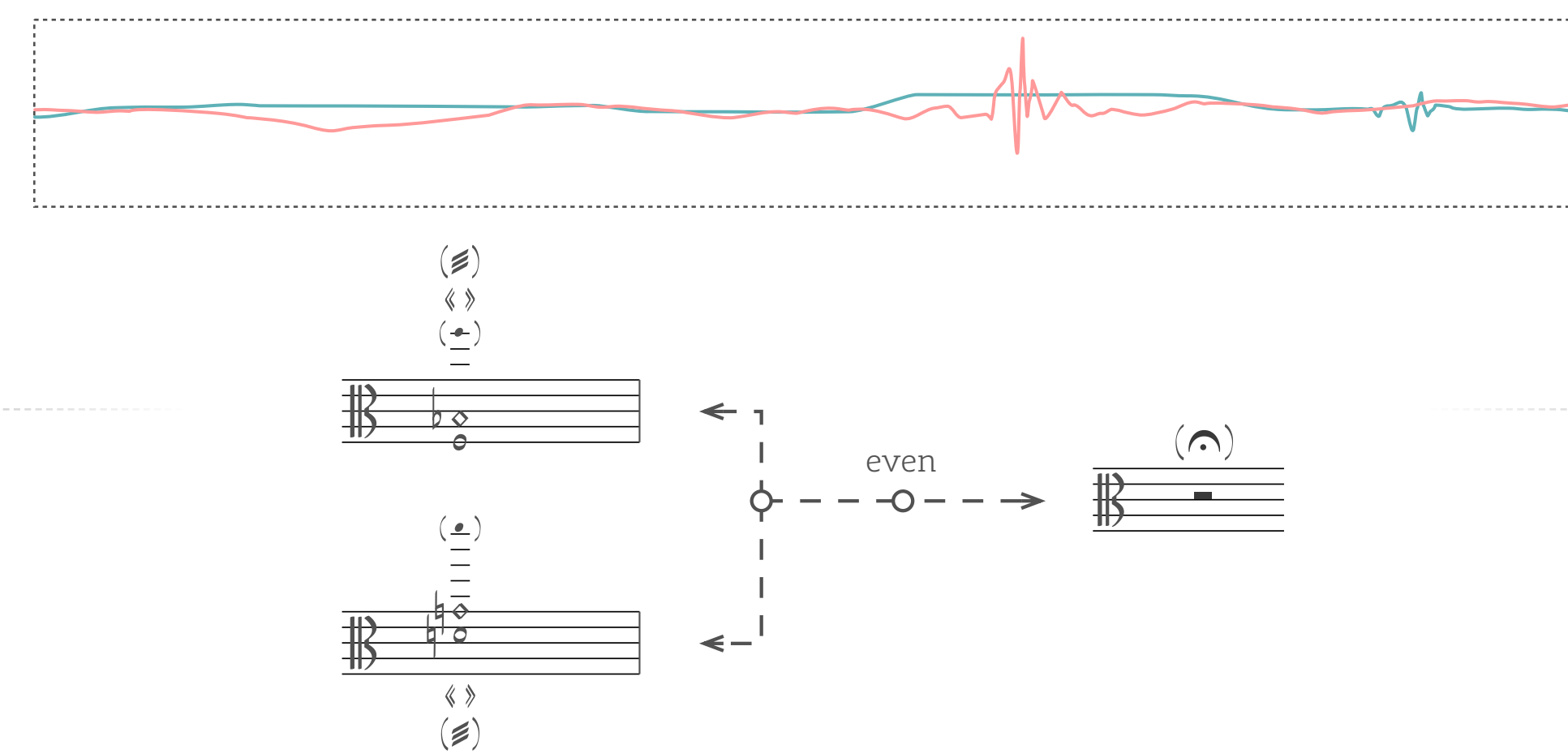
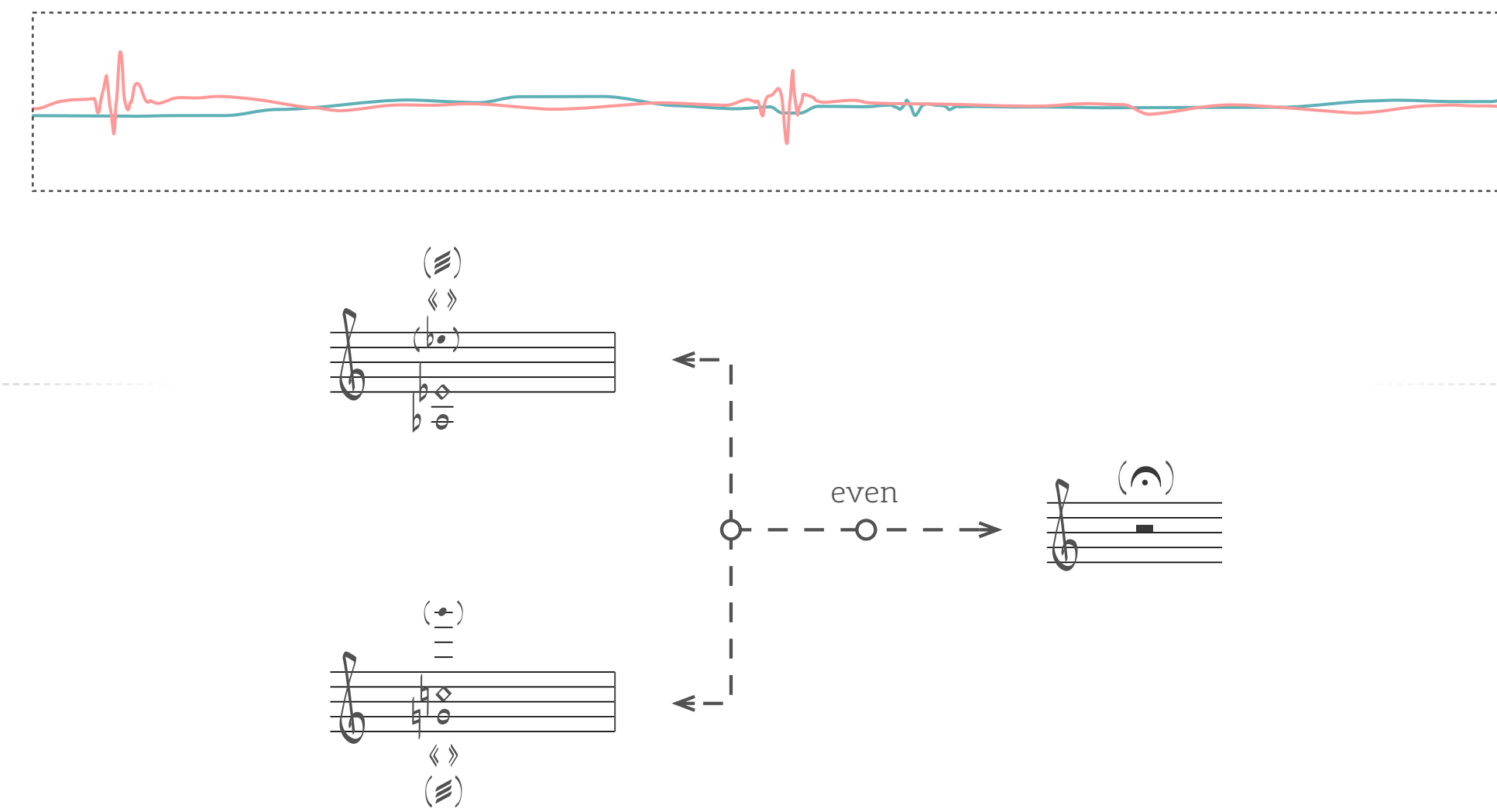
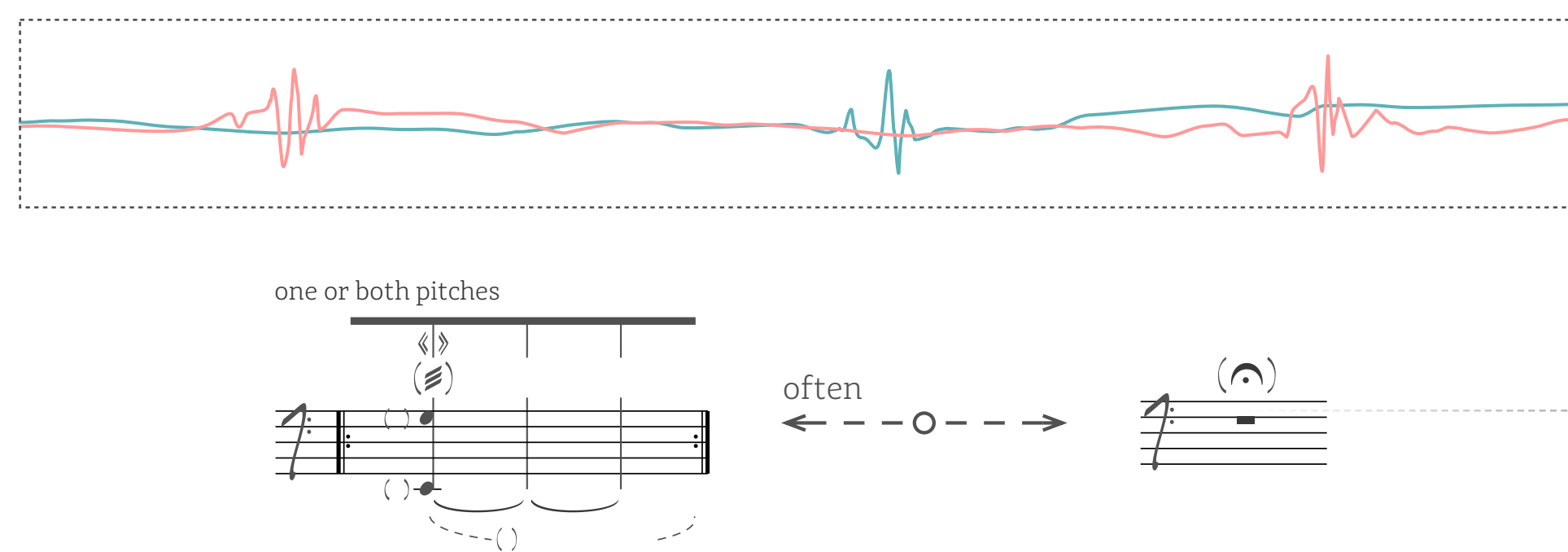


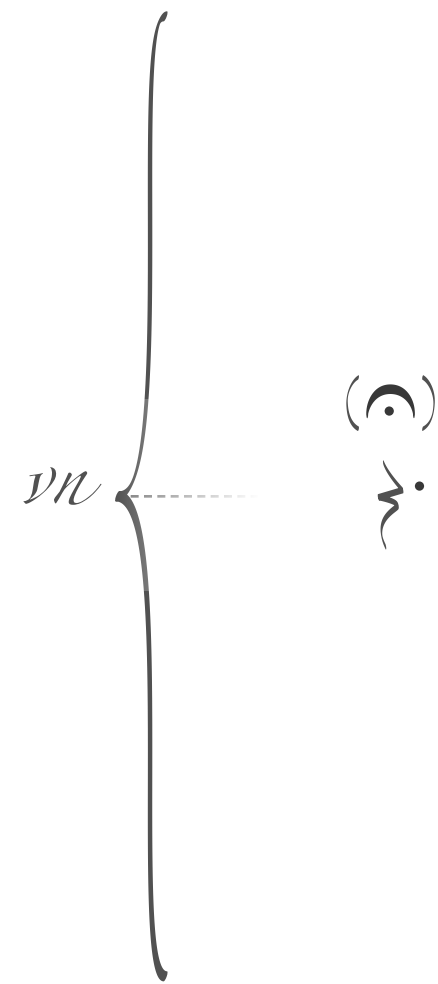
Diagram illustrating the concept of becoming:

A large curly brace on the left is labeled ν_C . A large gray arrow points to the right from the center of the brace, with the word "becoming" written above it.

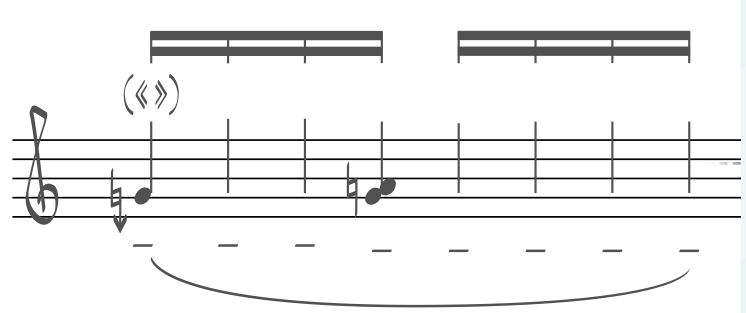


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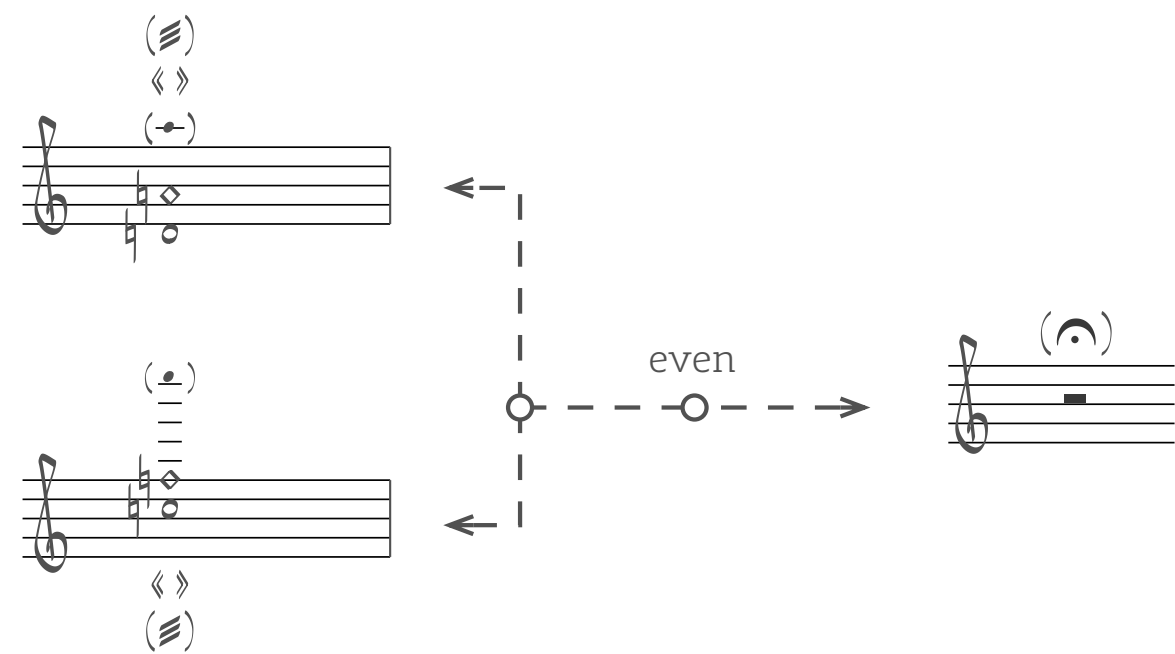
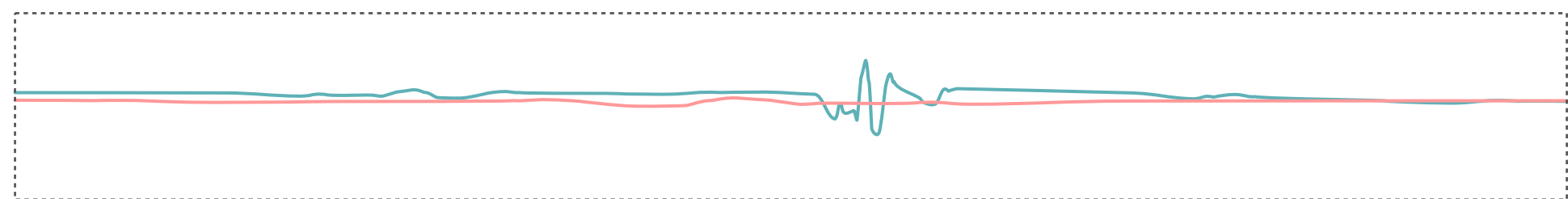
vn



play through,
unison

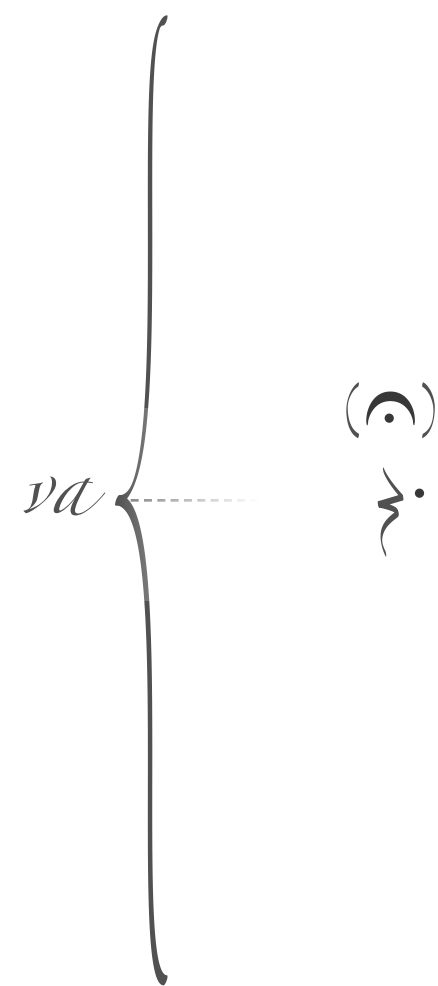


22

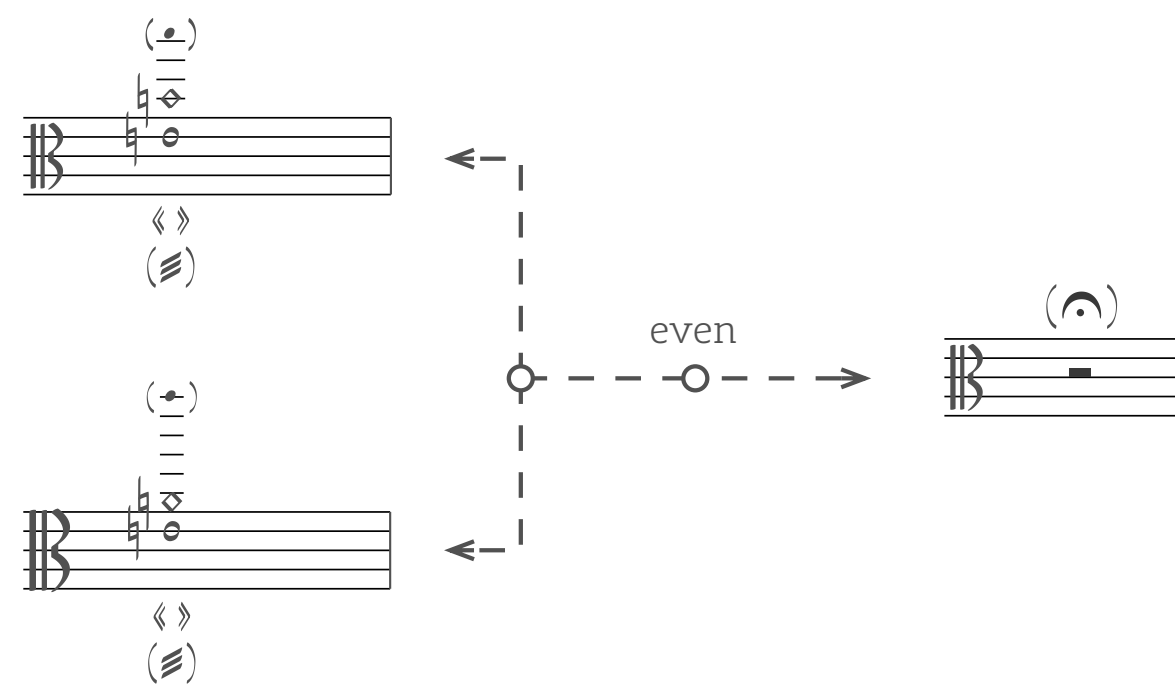
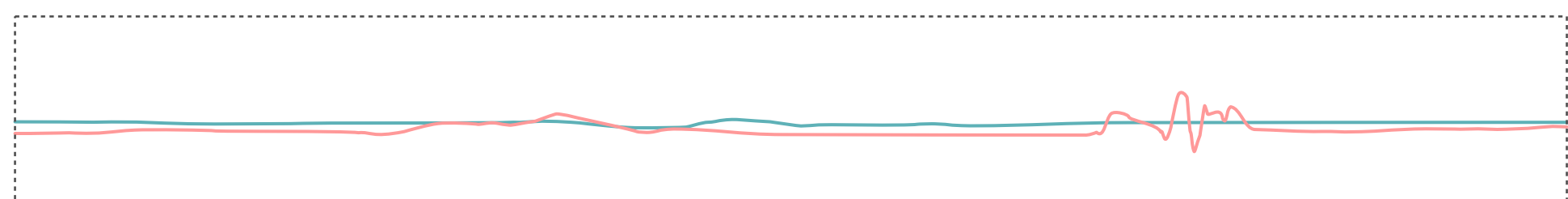
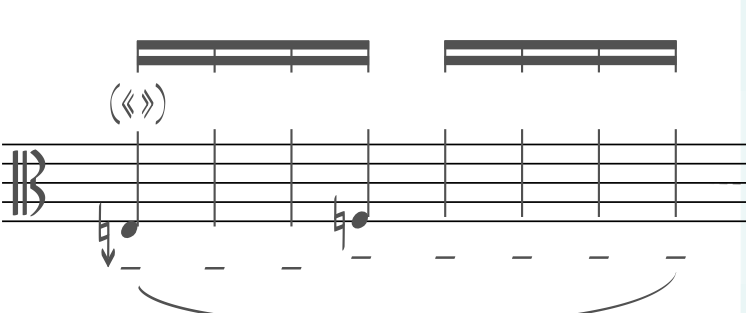


even

va

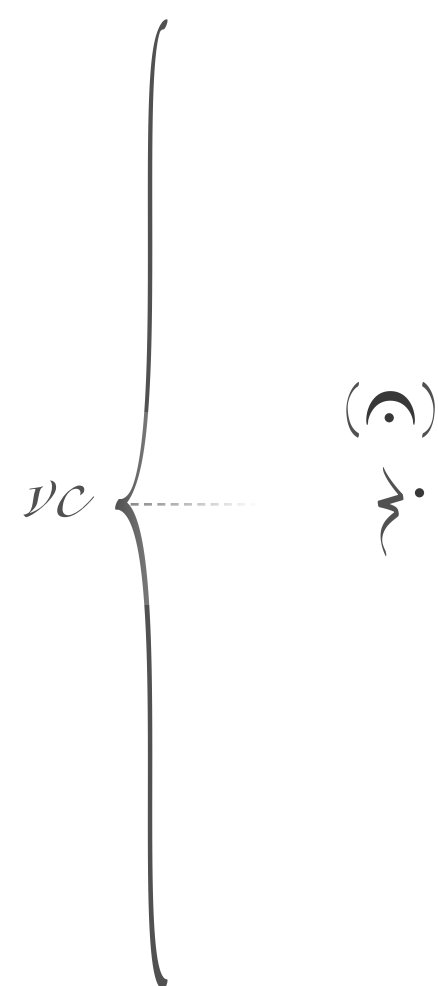


play through,
unison

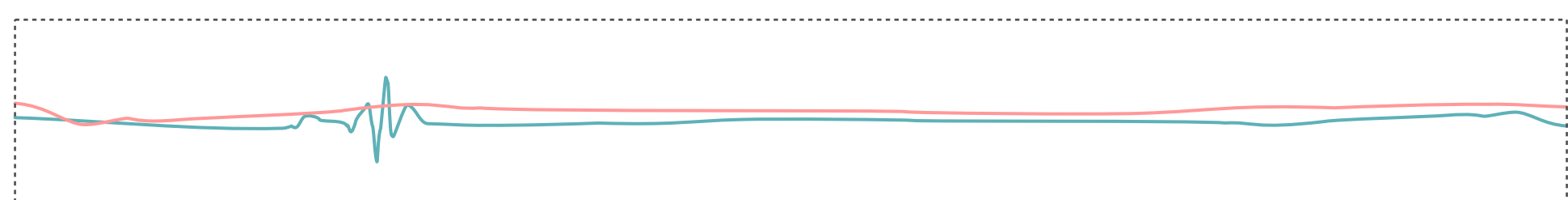
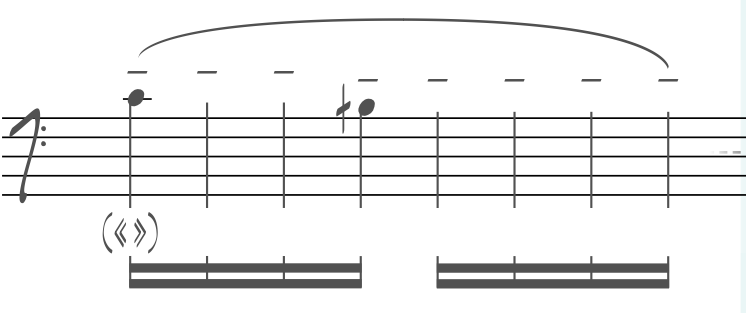


even

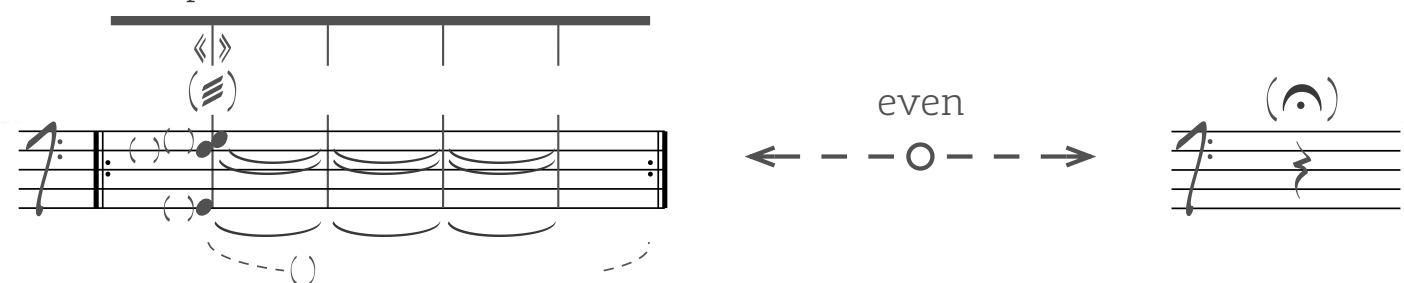
vc



play through,
unison



one or two pitches

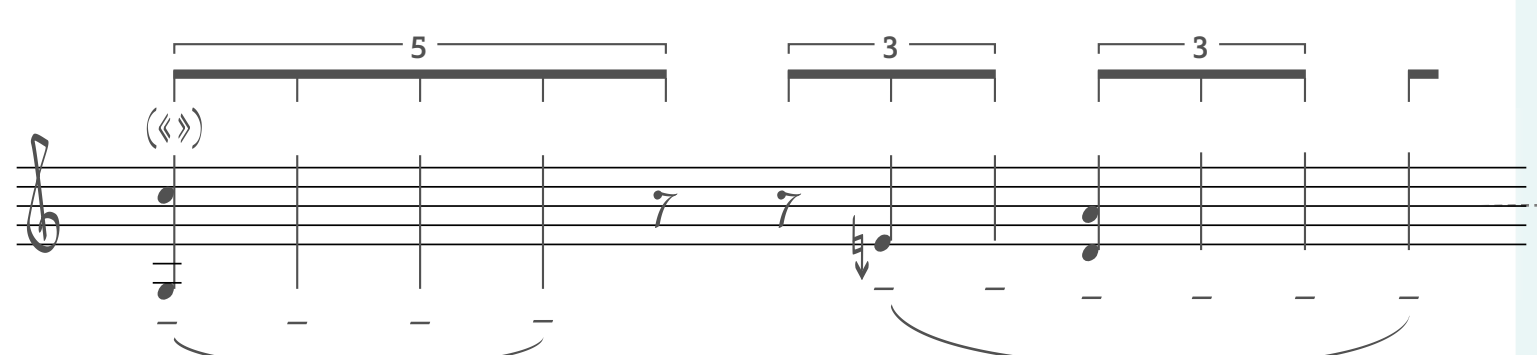


even

23



play through,
unison



play through,
unison



play through,
unison



vn

steady

often

sometimes

cut off in unison

va

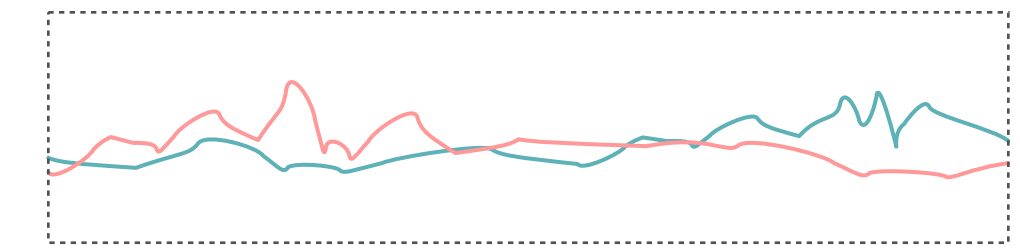
cut off in unison

vc

cut off in unison

becoming but never arriving

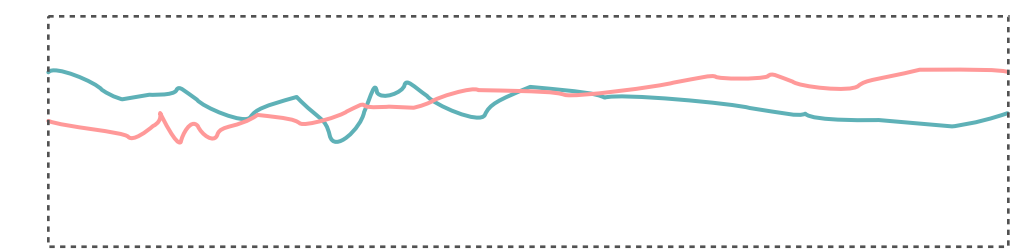
cut off in unison



cut off in unison

becoming but never arriving

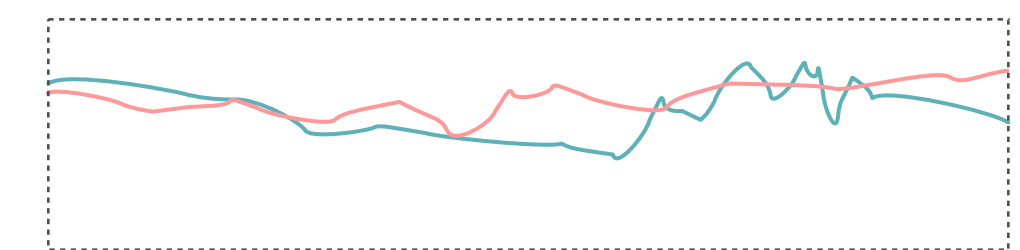
cut off in unison



cut off in unison

becoming but never arriving

cut off in unison



cut off in unison