

Fer Feria's

Conversations

with the Straw-man

for prepared electric guitar, pedals, and lights.


Dur: c. 20 min.

Performance Notes

General Remarks.

There are two important aspects for the performance of this piece: the corporal motions of the performer, and the behavior of the light. Both of which are further explained in their own sections.

The dotted barlines show the phrasing of the melodic lines.

The arrows coming out of some rhythmic figures or some other notation indicates that you should play that figure during the whole event. i.e: 

Any other indication that isn't specified in this pages, is marked with boxed texts coming above or under of the staves.

About the guitar preparation.

Place a plastic **straw** between the neck and the strings of the guitar exactly **on the V fret** (so that there be a sounding harmonic). The straw must be c.5mm in diameter, and between 25 and 30 cm in lenght.

It is recomendado to have at least 2 straws, one for experimentation and rehearsal of the piece, and one for the presentation.

About the lights.

It is very important that the performance of this piece be in an stage where (when the lights are turned off) the performer is hardly visible.

The performer must have a spotlight pointing at him, preferably coming from the floor up.¹

In an ideal scenario, the performer should have a device that allow him to easily control when the light is turned on and off; this could be achived by modifying an ordinary desktop lamp with a pedal switch on the cable that goes to light socket.¹

The control of the light is indicated in a boxed text below the staff, which contains the abbreviation "L.P"(light pedal) and the indication ON or OFF. i.e: L.P.-ON

If it's unviable for the performer to control the lights, there could be another person helping with the activation of the light.

It is unspecified the color and the intensity of the light, however I really encourage you to experiment and have fun with this idea, explore with different tones, intensities, even patterns or directions of light. White light would do just fine, nonetheless I really like shades of red for this piece.

All the lights of the venue must be turned off, at the start of the piece.

¹.See diagram at the end of the performance notes for further illustration.

About the guitar pedals.

There are three type of pedals that you'll need for this piece, a delay pedal, a distortion pedal, and a reverb pedal.

Recomended pedals²:

- Electro-harmonics Deluxe Memory Boy (delay).
- Suhr Riot (Distortion).
- Boss Fender FRV-1 (Reverb).

The abbreviations of the pedals and their settings (control knobs) will be as follows:

Pedals		Control knobs		
Delay = Del.		blend = b.	distortion = di.	mixer = mix.
Distortion = Dist.		gain = g.	level = l.	dwel = dwell
Reverb = Rev.		rate = rt.	tone = t.	
		depth = dp.		
		feedback = fb.		
		delay = del.		

The level of the settings of the pedals is marked by percentages.

knob to the maximun left \curvearrowright =0%

knob to the maximun right \curvearrowleft =100%

The indications for any pedal event is marked inside a boxed text with the indication of the pedal, followed by the control knob, and the percentage to which to move the control knob. i.e: Del./b. \longrightarrow c.68%

The motion of the knob must be gradual, similar to the length of the arrow.

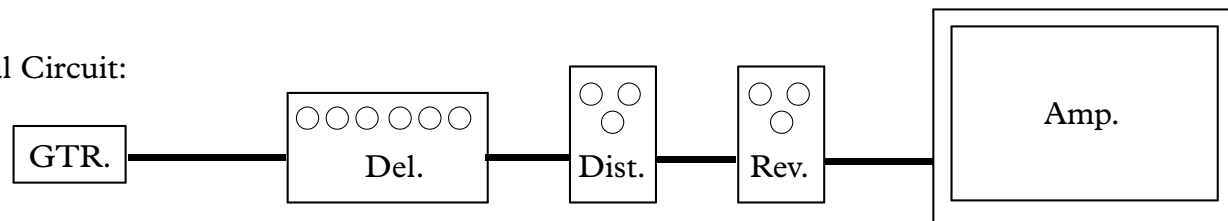
The starting settings of the pedals are:

Del./b = c.53%
 Del./g. = c.51%
 Del./rt. = c.52%
 Del./dp. = c.50%
 Del./fb. = c.67%
 Del./del. = c.58%

Dist./di. = c.10%
 Dist./l. = c.40%
 Dist./t. = c.50%

Rev./mix. = c.50%
 Rev./dwell. = c.50%
 Rev./t. = c.50%

Pedal Circuit:



².If it is unviable to use this specific pedals, it is recommend further research, and find pedals with similar features.

iii About the performance.

Some corporal aspects for the performer are notated as a sketch. The sketches are self explanatory.

About the mouth with straw.

The "mouth with straw" staff is played by blowing or sucking on the straw. The notation is as follows:

↗ :arrow going up, indicates to inhale.

↘ :arrow going down, indicates to exhale.

when there is no arrow indication you may inhale or exhale ad. lib.

F.T. : "finger tap", block the opposite side of the straw of which you are blowing, thus generating a percussive sound. Continue blowing while tapping the straw.

S.T. : "slap tongue", slap the straw with your tongue as you keep blowing. Similar to the saxophone technique.

The rhythmic figures written above the staff refer to the attacks of the F.T. or the S.T.

About the guitar notation.

L.H. : Left hand.

R.H. : Right Hand.

P.M. : Palm Mute.

S.P. : Sul Ponticello.

S.P.M. : Sul Ponticello Molto.

S.T. : Sul Tasto.

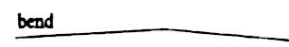
S.T.M. : Sul Tasto Molto.

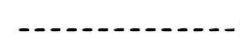
p : thumb finger

i : index finger

l.v. : let vibrate

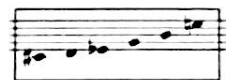
The strings are notated by a circled number: ①②③④⑤⑥

 : bend, always written above the staff

 : dashed white arrows, indicates a continuous change of timbre; i.e. : going for S.P. to S.T.



: crossed notehead, indicates a percussive sound, **do not palm mute**, play the written note behind the straw.



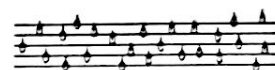
: group of notes inside a box, indicates to quickly alternate between that collection of notes, without a distinguishable pattern.



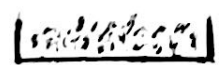
: play different pitches of different durations, alternate with short and long glissandi in different strings in different directions.



: with the R.H. play a tremolo on all the six strings while on the L.H., with a finger capo, play a continuous glissandi to the highest possible register.



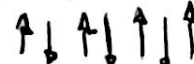
: bartok pizzicatos in different strings of indeterminate pitch.



: mute the strings near the bridge with R.H., while with the same hand play irregularly any of the strings.



: do circular motion with the pick on all six strings (sul ponticello to sul tasto).



: heavy and fast strumming.



: scratch noise, scratch the indicated strings with fingernail or pick.

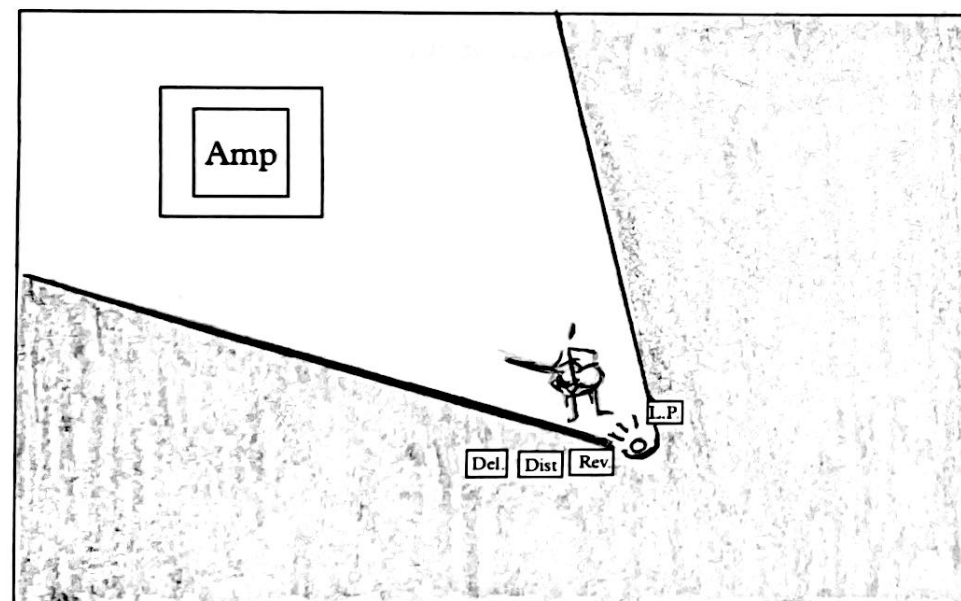
About the Noise Machine.

On rehearsal letter **H**, there is a flow chart on how to create a noise machine, which is a device of continuous sound that generates noise, feedbacking itself.

The original signal for this machine must come from the previous event, so there must be no silence between that event and the noise machine.

There is no specific duration for **H**.

Stage Diagram.



Audience

Special Thanks.

Finally, I really want to thank you, the performer, for taking your time to learn this piece. I hope it's as fun for you to perform it, as it was for me to compose it.

-Fer Feria.

Conversations with the Straw-man

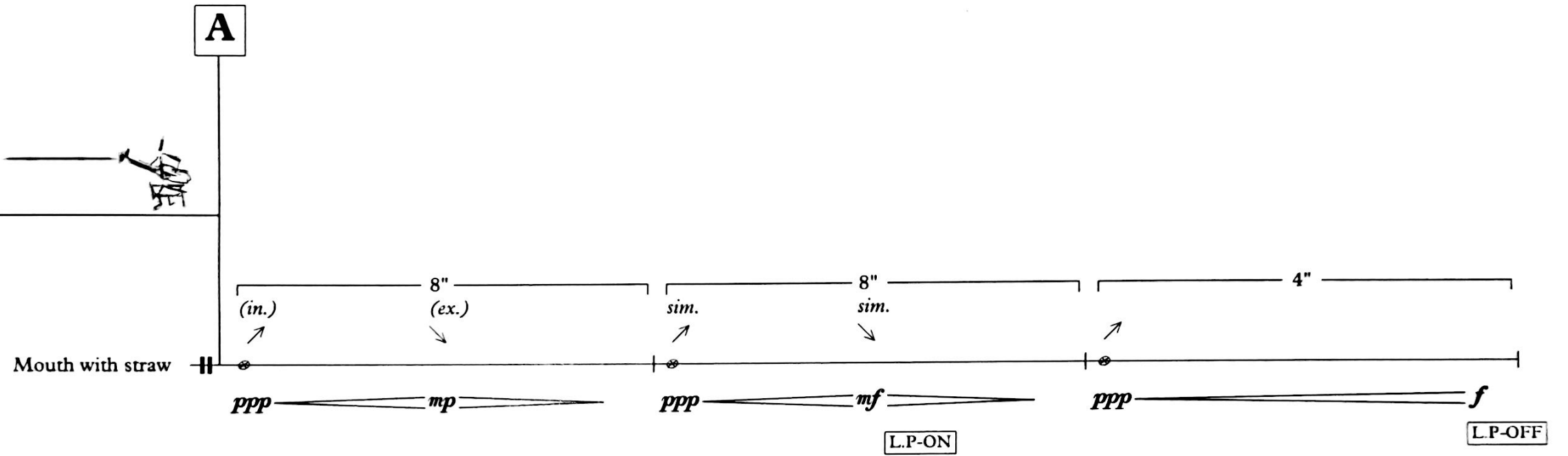
Dedicated to Emiliano Cruz, great friend and musician.

Fer Feria

Senza Misura

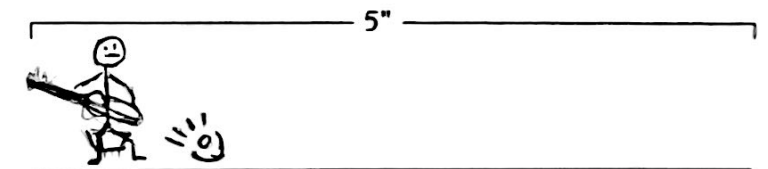
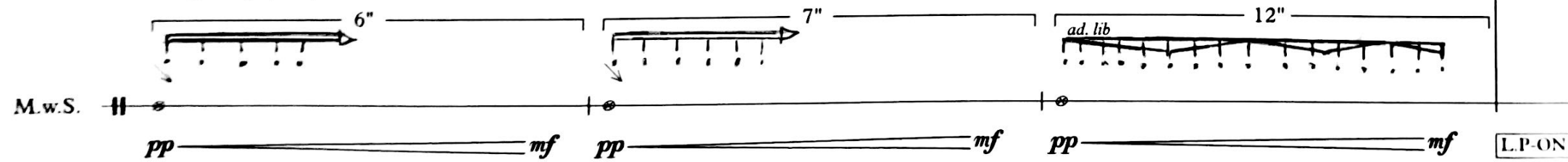


Performer walks on stage, and grabs the guitar.



=

Finger Tap (F.T.)



Performer looks with perplexity at the audience

Electric Guitar

to S.T. Ord. to S.P. to S.P.M Ord. to L.H. S.P.M Ord. to S.P.M

ppp p calmodo f p ff PP ff

pp ff p mp p

Dist.-ON

Move the straw slowly to fret VII. Be careful to maintain the straw always in a vertical position.

RALL.....

Move the straw slowly to fret XII.

L.P-OFF

C

Mecánico Sempre

♩=68

Electric Guitar

3" bend Ord. to S.P.M to Ord. S.P.

mp f p

Rev./ 100% L.P-ON

Rev./ 100%

Del./b. 0%

D

Electric Guitar

2" 30" 10" 5" 3" 4"

S.P. ↔ Ord. S.P. l.v.

Del./b. slowly 100%

Take off the straw slow and gradually during this event.

f PP

L.P-OFF L.P-ON

Rhythmic improvisation with the elements shown in **C**. You may explore the settings of the Delay pedal. By the end of the improvisation the settings should be:

- Del./b. = 0%
- Del./g. = c.48%
- Del./rt. = c.45%
- Del./dp. = c.55%
- Del./fb. = c.77%
- Del./del. = c.70%

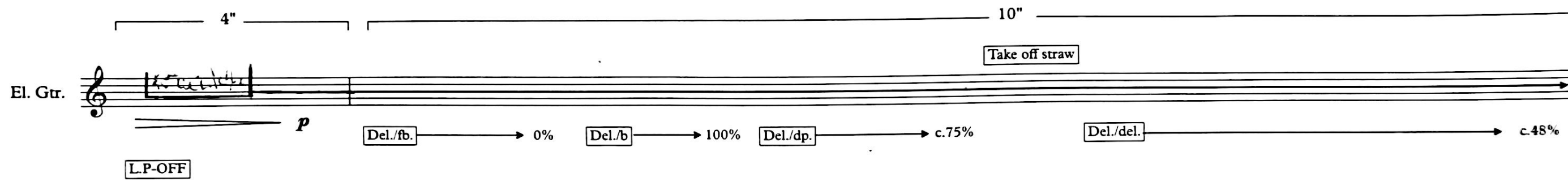
Alternate between Light ON and OFF in an intermittent irregular pattern

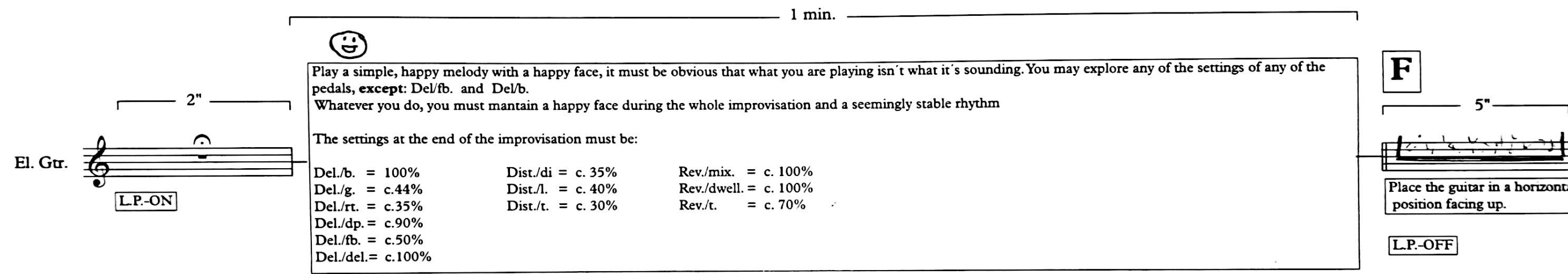
El. Gtr.

4" 3" 2" 2" 4" 3" 2" 5"


simile p mp pp PPP mf

S.P.M

El. Gtr. 

El. Gtr. 

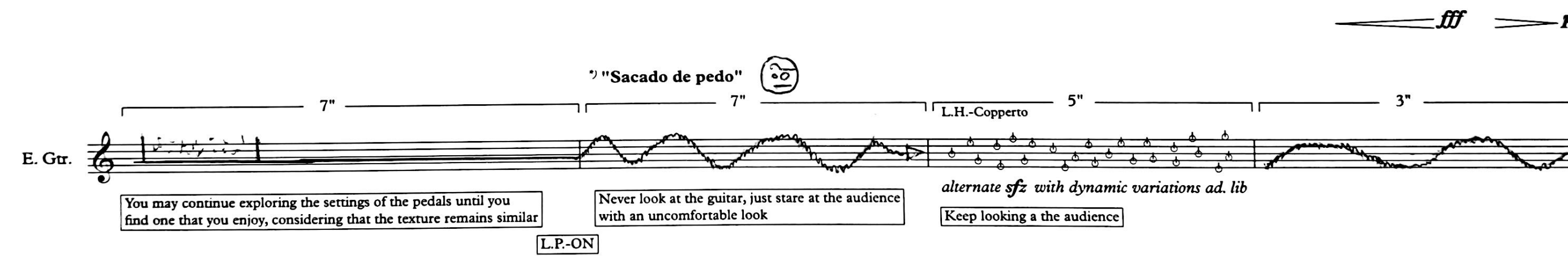
1 min.



Play a simple, happy melody with a happy face, it must be obvious that what you are playing isn't what it's sounding. You may explore any of the settings of any of the pedals, **except**: Del./fb. and Del/b. Whatever you do, you must maintain a happy face during the whole improvisation and a seemingly stable rhythm

The settings at the end of the improvisation must be:

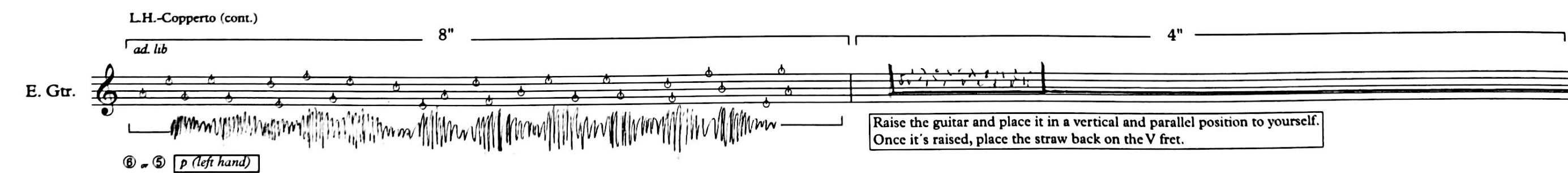
Del./b. = 100%	Dist./di = c. 35%	Rev./mix. = c. 100%
Del./g. = c.44%	Dist./l. = c. 40%	Rev./dwell. = c. 100%
Del./rt. = c.35%	Dist./t. = c. 30%	Rev./t. = c. 70%
Del./dp. = c.90%		
Del./fb. = c.50%		
Del./del. = c.100%		

E. Gtr. 

You may continue exploring the settings of the pedals until you find one that you enjoy, considering that the texture remains similar

Never look at the guitar, just stare at the audience with an uncomfortable look

alternate *sfz* with dynamic variations *ad. lib*
Keep looking a the audience

E. Gtr. 

⑥ = ⑤ *p* (left hand)

Raise the guitar and place it in a vertical and parallel position to yourself. Once it's raised, place the straw back on the V fret.

*) "Sacado de pedo" is mexican expression that refers to a state of mind in which you are uncertain of what it's happening, as if your mind isn't processing the information.

5.T. 13" 5.T. 17" **ANGRILY TAKE OFF THE STRAW!!!**

M.w.S. *ad. lib*

E. Gtr. *fff* **L.P.-OFF**

**"Tololoche"-like

G 1 min.

E. Gtr. **NOISY! CHAOS! STRIDENT! LOUD!!!** *l.v.*

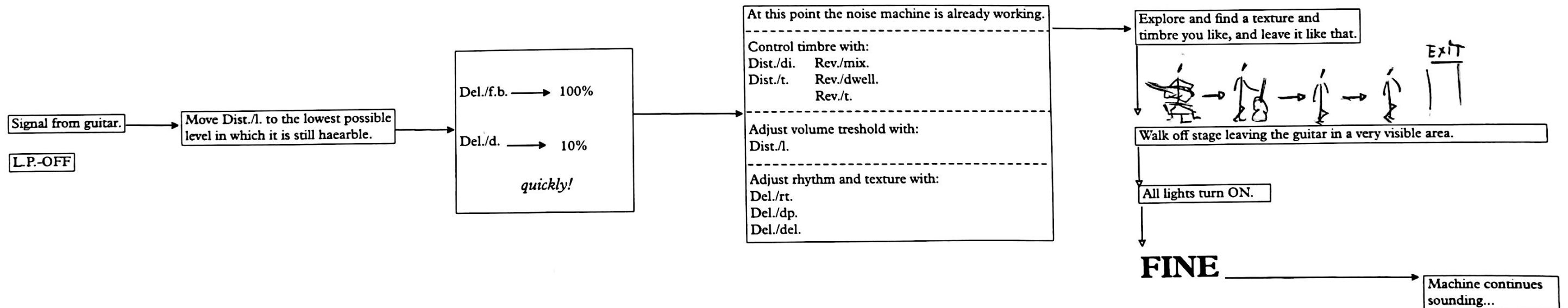
Start in *fff*, then you could make some dynamic changes *ad. lib*, considering the ending to be in...

Free improvisation! Develop gradually to a rhythmically dense texture. You may explore the settings of:

Del./del.	Dist./di.
Del./dp.	Dist./t.
Del./rt.	

Alternate between Light ON and OFF in an intermittent, irregular pattern.

H Noise Machine



***) Also known as "Chicoteado", the "Tololoche" is an instrument used in a lot of traditional mexican music; it is similar to the upright bass, but a little smaller and the sound is more percussive. The tololoche is played without bow, pretty much playing every note like a Bartok Pizzicato. For further reference check northern traditional mexican music or "música norteaña".