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Kjell Samkopf

12 Orchestrations and Interludes on Rachmaninoff

for 2 pedal timpani

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Performance notes

My aim of making this work was to make a piece which includes and uses the traditional orchestral way of timpani playing, as well as contemporary techniques of special sound production.

This work is based on a well known cymbal passage (at least among orchestra percussionists) from the Second Piano Concerto in C minor of Sergei Rachmaninoff. The rhythmic structure of this delicate cymbal passage is orchestrated for two timpani. No rhythmic alterations or tempo changes are made with the rhytmic structure always being clearly audible through all the orchestrations. I have used calculations from nummerology to determine various aspects of the work. The name "Rachmaninoff" consists of 12 letters. Thus, there are 12 orchestrations and interludes.

The interludes are based on a string of numbers which are the result of the conversion of the word "Rachmaninoff" into numbers: 9, 1, 3, 8, 4, 1, 5, 9, 5, 6, 6, 6. It is advised that the player learn this string of numbers by heart. This will facilitate the learning and understanding of the interludes.

R	A	C	H	M	A	N	I	N	O	F	F
9	1	3	8	4	1	5	9	5	6	6	6

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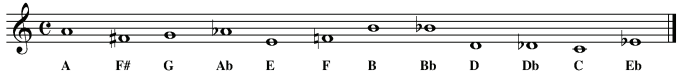
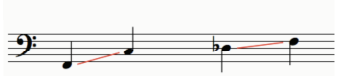
The interludes make an extensive use of different sound qualities. Both the description of the various striking positions and their notation is taken from Elliott Carter *Eight Pieces for Four Timpani*.

The timpani tunings of the 12 orchestrations follow the 12-tone row of Anton Webern Symphony op. 21.



Timpani
This piece is written for the two standard middle timpani: 26" and 29" (or 25" and 28"). Two pedal timpani are needed, covering the following range:



Sticks
No sticking indications are given. Choice of sticks is left to the performer. The player is encouraged to make use of a variety of sticks to achieve a maximum of articulation and clarity.

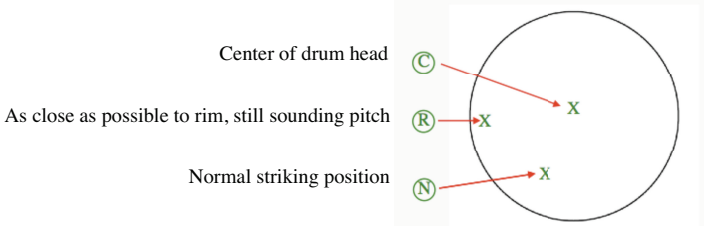
Striking positions on the drum head
To produce a variety of different sound qualities, various striking positions are suggested. They are notated as follow:

Normal striking position on head

Striking on head very near the rim

Striking at center of head

Change gradually, from center to rim of head



Each of these positions should produce a distinctly different sound. Where nothing is suggested, the choices of striking positions are left to the discretion of the player.

Form

The form of this piece is that of a 12 x 12 squares chess board: an alternating sequence of two different elements. The piece should be performed *semi attacca*, with a slight pause between the orchestrations and the interludes.

The 12 Interludes

Interlude 1: Using the right hand mallet, play a series of single strokes while making a circular movement across the timpani head from one side to the other (suggested by the graphic picture). Start and end at the extreme rim. Tune the timpani to the highest pitch possible.

Interlude 2: It is suggested to play using one hand on each drum.

Interlude 3: The staccato notes in the center of the timpani, may be played using a dead stroke.

Interlude 4: Use one hand for each figure. Make a slight *accel.* or *rit.* in every figure, simulating a bouncing ball effect. The figures should be seperated by short pauses.

Interlude 5: Play the rhythm with one hand. With the other hand, let the wooden handle of the timpani stick (or a drumstick) rest on the timpani head to make a rattling noise.

Interlude 6: It is suggested to play using one hand on each drum.

Interlude 7: This interlude should be played with the rhythmic drive of Igor Stravinsky´s *The Rite of Spring*.

Interlude 8: Play with the left hand on the low drum, using the right for the accented notes.

Interlude 9: The timpani may be dampened or not in the rest bars. Whatever is chosen, this should remain consistent throughout the interlude.

Interlude 10: The staccato notes in the center of the timpani, may be played using a dead stroke.

Interlude 11: Play rhythmically, like a machine.

Interlude 12: Make a slight *accel.* or *rit.* in every figure, simulating a bouncing ball effect. The figures should be separated by short pauses.

Dur. appr. 11 min.

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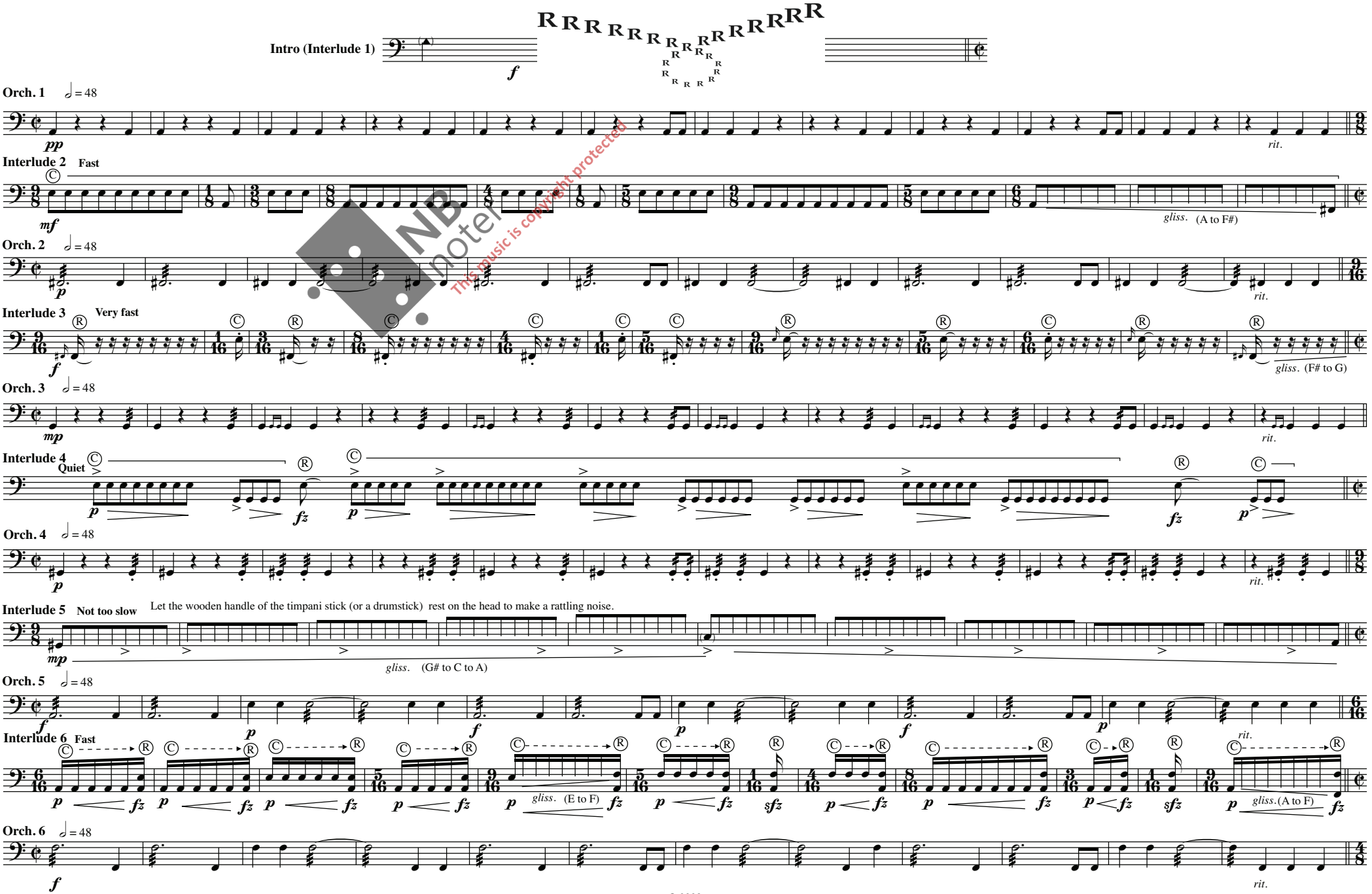

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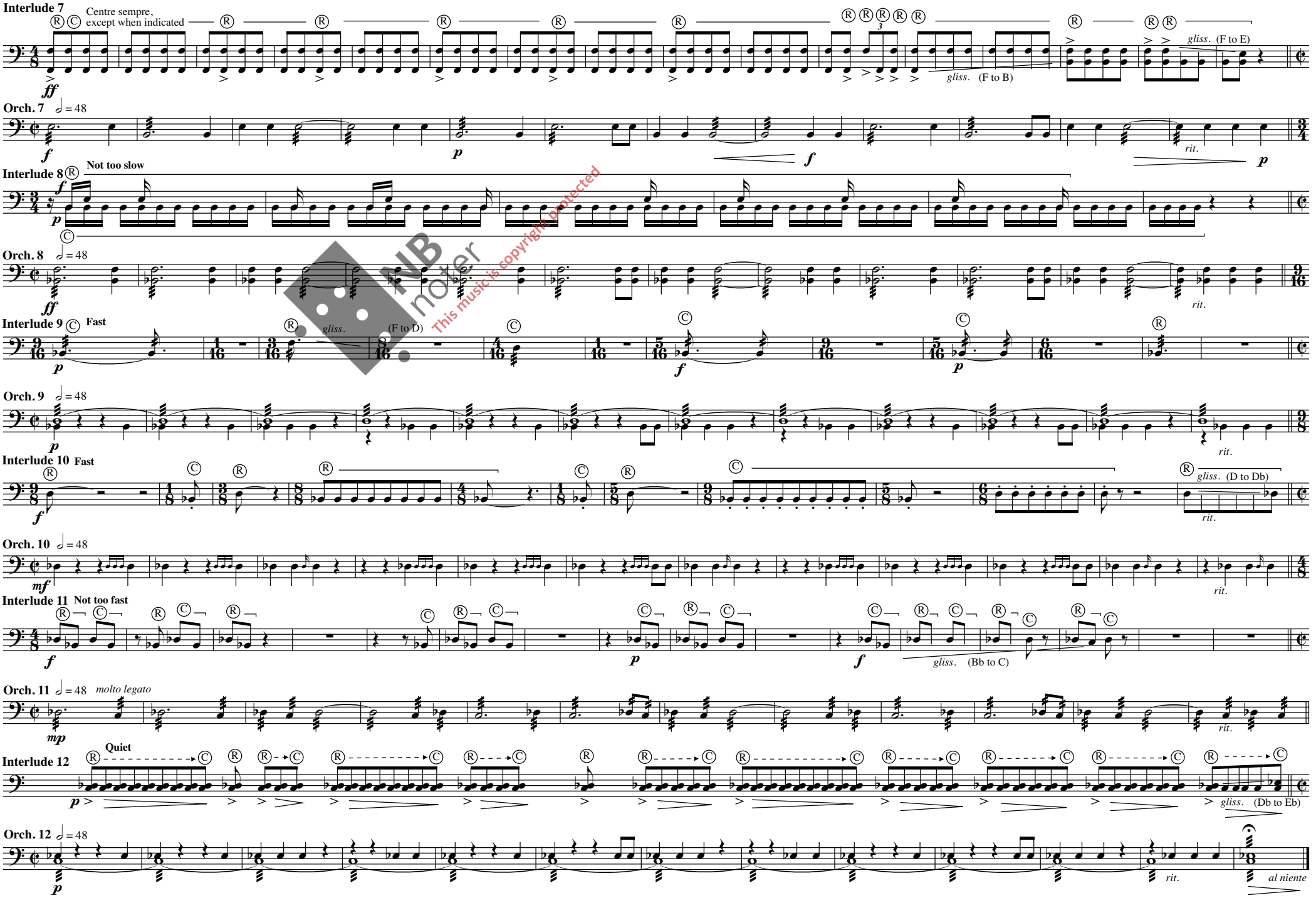

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