

Rubato and the Creative Performer: Between Freedom and Structure

Dr Abigail Dolan
King's College, London

Conceptualising Rubato (1):

“[...] a medieval theologian seeking to specify the weight of an angel.” And adds “How right was Leopold Mozart when he wrote: ‘What this stolen time is can more easily be shown than described.’”

(David Blum, *Casals and the Art of Interpretation*, 1977, p. 82)

Conceptualising Rubato (2): Freedom and Spontaneity

“Rubato must emerge spontaneously from the music, it can't be calculated but must be totally free. It's not even something you can teach [...]. Rubato isn't something you can rationalize.”

(Maurizio Pollini interviewed by Carsten Dürer, editor in chief of PIANONews, Deutsche Grammophon, 7/2005.)



à Louis Fleury

SYRINX

CLAUDE DEBUSSY

Trois modérés

The image shows the musical score for 'Syrinx' by Claude Debussy, arranged for flute. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with the tempo marking 'Trois modérés'. The second staff includes a dynamic marking 'p' (piano). The third staff includes a dynamic marking 'p' and a performance instruction 'Ritenu' (ritardando). The music is written in G major and 3/4 time, featuring characteristic Debussy-style chromaticism and flowing lines.

Georges Barrère, (b. 1876, live rec. 1939)

Conceptualising Rubato (3): Structured Rubato

“Look at these trees! [Liszt] said, the wind plays among them, the tree remains the same, that is *Chopinesque rubato*.” (Liszt/Niecks, II, p. 101, quoted in *Chopin pianist and teacher*, J.J. Eigeldinger, p. 51.)

“Fantasy as much as you like — but with order!”
(David Blum, *Casals and the Art of Interpretation*, 1977, p. 85)

Casals: play with ‘rubato which is not a rubato...’
(David Blum, *Casals and the Art of Interpretation*, 1977, p. 85)

“Walking freely on a firm ground.”
(Arthur Schnabel, quoted by Claude Frank)

Method

- Gesture (Leech-Wilkinson, 2009)
- Grouping (Lerdahl and Jackendoff, 1983)
- Expectation (Huron, 2007)
- Directionality (Cohen, 1994)

Suite IV BWV 1010

Prelude
in Allegro con tempo

First system of musical notation, measures 1-4. The notation is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 3/4 time signature. It features a steady eighth-note bass line and a melody of quarter notes in the upper voice.

Second system of musical notation, measures 5-8. The bass line continues with eighth notes, while the upper voice introduces a more active melodic line with eighth-note patterns.

Third system of musical notation, measures 9-12. The piece continues with its characteristic rhythmic patterns, showing a slight increase in melodic activity in the upper voice.

Fourth system of musical notation, measures 13-16. The notation shows a continuation of the eighth-note bass line and the quarter-note melody.

Fifth system of musical notation, measures 17-20. The piece maintains its steady eighth-note accompaniment and quarter-note melody.

Sixth system of musical notation, measures 21-24. The notation concludes the first page with a final cadence.



First system of musical notation on the second page, measures 25-28. The piece continues with its characteristic rhythmic patterns.

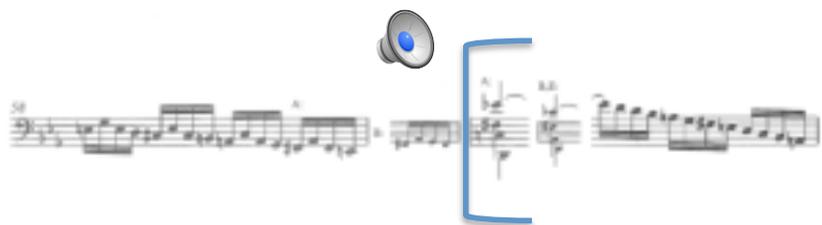
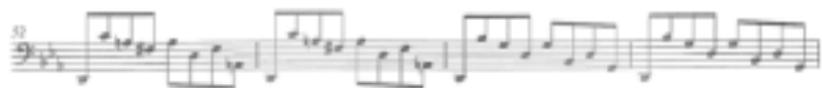
Second system of musical notation on the second page, measures 29-32. The notation shows a continuation of the eighth-note accompaniment and quarter-note melody.

Third system of musical notation on the second page, measures 33-36. The piece maintains its steady eighth-note accompaniment and quarter-note melody.

Fourth system of musical notation on the second page, measures 37-40. The notation shows a continuation of the eighth-note accompaniment and quarter-note melody.

Fifth system of musical notation on the second page, measures 41-44. The piece continues with its characteristic rhythmic patterns.

Sixth system of musical notation on the second page, measures 45-48. The notation concludes the piece with a final cadence.



Casals: bars 1-8



Grouping

Timing (Sec.)

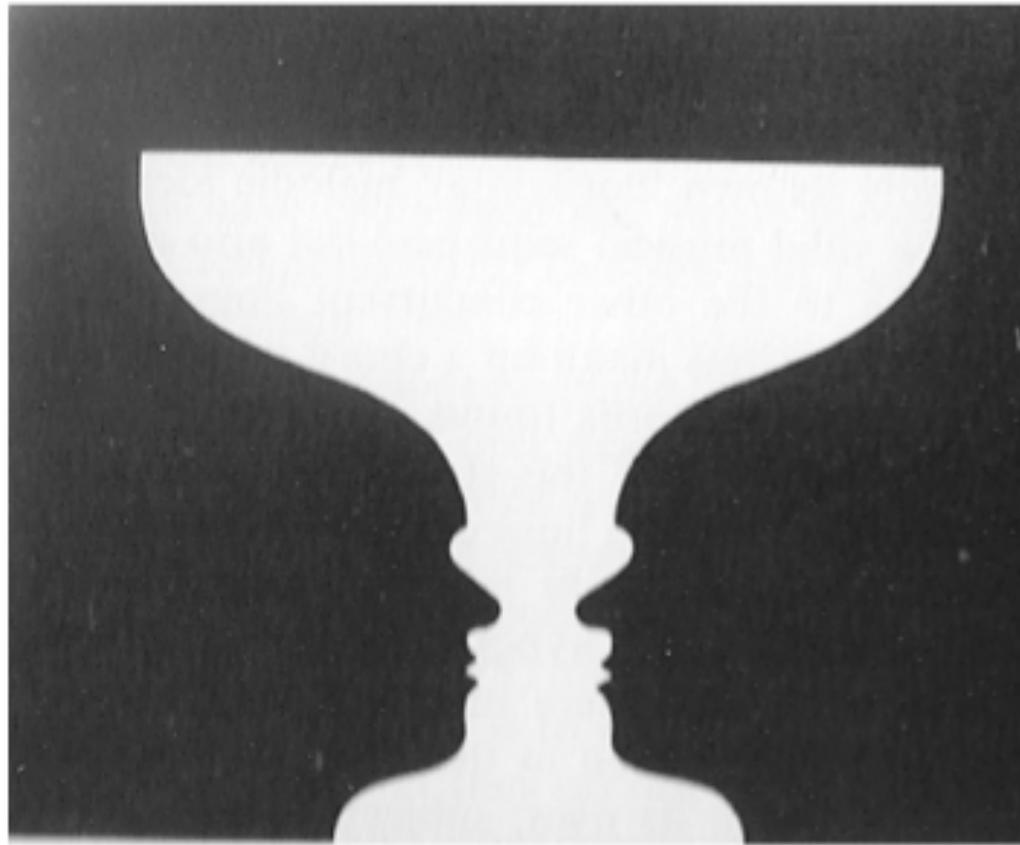
2'53"	1'14"	2'02"	1'10"	2'13"	0'99"	1'98"	0'94"
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Ratio: 2 : 1

5

2'08"	0'97"	1'92"	0'95"	1'74"	0'85"	1'74"	0'97"
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Rubin: Vase-Faces



Bars 59-61

59

Violoncello

Violoncello

60

Vc.

Vc.



Casals: bars 59-61

Grouping

59

Timing (Sec.)

1'59" 3'55" 1'98" 1'11" 0'55" 1'57" 1'95" 2:1 2:1

III,IV

7'17" (2 pulses) *II,III*

61 62

2:1 2'54"

Bars 86-91

86

Violoncello

Musical notation for Violoncello, bars 86-91. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats and a common time signature. The music features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the lower register and a melodic line in the upper register. A slur covers the final two bars, which end with a double bar line.

89

Vc.

Musical notation for Violoncello, bars 89-91. The staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats and a common time signature. The music features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the lower register and a melodic line in the upper register. A slur covers the first two bars, and a trill (tr) is marked above the third bar. The music ends with a double bar line.

Casals: bars 86-91



Grouping

86

Violoncello

88 *I* *II*

Timing (sec.)

1'40" 1'97" 2'03" 1'96"

90

Ve. *III* *IV* *I, II*

4'00" 3'71"

Detailed description: This image shows musical notation for Casals' bars 86-91. The top staff is for Violoncello (Cello) and the bottom staff is for Viola (Ve.). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 2/2. The notation includes various note values, rests, and articulation marks. Above the notes, there are groupings labeled with Roman numerals I, II, III, IV, and I, II. Below the notes, there are timing annotations in minutes and seconds, such as 1'40", 1'97", 2'03", 1'96", 4'00", and 3'71". A speaker icon is located to the left of the first staff.

Et clair, par-delà les confins de l'éther bleu,
Monte enchanter les astres et les dieux?
Mais voici que Pan de sa flûte recommence
A jouer ...

LA NAIADE

Prodige! Il semble que la nuit ait dénoué
Sa ceinture et qu'en écartant ses voiles
Elle ait laissé, pour se jouer,
Sur la terre tomber toutes les étoiles ...
Oh! comme, dans les champs solennels du silence,
Mélodieusement elles s'épanouissent!
Crois-tu que l'amant d'Eurydice
Faisait vibrer de plus touchants
Et plus sublimes chants
Les cordes d'airain de sa lyre?
Non, n'est-ce pas?

L'ORÉADE

Tais-toi, contiens ta joie, écoute.

LA NAIADE

Si tu savais quel étrange délire
M'enlace, me pénètre toute!
Si tu savais ... je ne puis pas te dire
Ce que j'éprouve. La douceur
Voluptueuse éparse en cette nuit m'affole ...
Danser, oui je voudrais, comme tes sœurs,
Danser ... frapper de mes pieds nus le sol
En cadence et, comme elles, sans effort,
Avec d'harmonieuses poses,
Eperdûment livrer mon corps
A la force ondoyante et rythmique des choses!
Celle-ci qui, dans sa grâce légère,
Elève vers le ciel là-bas
Ses beaux bras,
Ressemble, aux bords des calmes eaux
Où elle se reflète, un grand oiseau
Impatient de la lumière ...
Et celle-là que des feuilles couronnent
Et qui, si complaisamment, donne
Aux lèvres de la lune à baiser ses seins blancs
Et l'urne close de ses flancs ...
Et cette autre tout près qui, lascive, sans feinte,
Se roule sur ce lit de rouges hyacinthes ...
Et cette autre dont on ne voit plus que les yeux
Étrinceler, telles deux taches
De soleil, dans la frondaison de ses cheveux
Qui l'enveloppent et la cachent ...
Par la chair d'elles toutes coule un feu divin
Et de l'amour de Pan toutes sont embrasées ...
Et moi, la même ardeur s'insinue en mes veines;
O Pan, les sons de ta syrinx, ainsi qu'un vin
Trop odorant et trop doux, m'ont grisée;
O Pan, je n'ai plus peur de toi, je t'appartiens! ...

*Cependant la musique enchanteresse s'est tue.
Les nymphes se sont toutes tournées du côté de Pan encore invisible; elles sont allées au-devant de lui, elles
l'entourent, lui font cortège.*

LA NAIADE

de plus en plus troublée.

Ne m'abandonne pas ... Il vient.
Quand il passera près de moi,
O dieux, vais-je mourir de joie! ...

FIN

Très modéré
[mf]

Retenu ... (s)

Un peu mouvementé (mais très peu)
p

Cédez Rubato
p p p p p p

en animant peu à peu
(s) (s)

au Mouv (très modéré)
mf

dim.....

En retenant jusqu' à la fin
p marqué

Très retenu
perdus!

à Louis Fleury

SYRINX

Très modéré

CLAUDE DEBUSSY



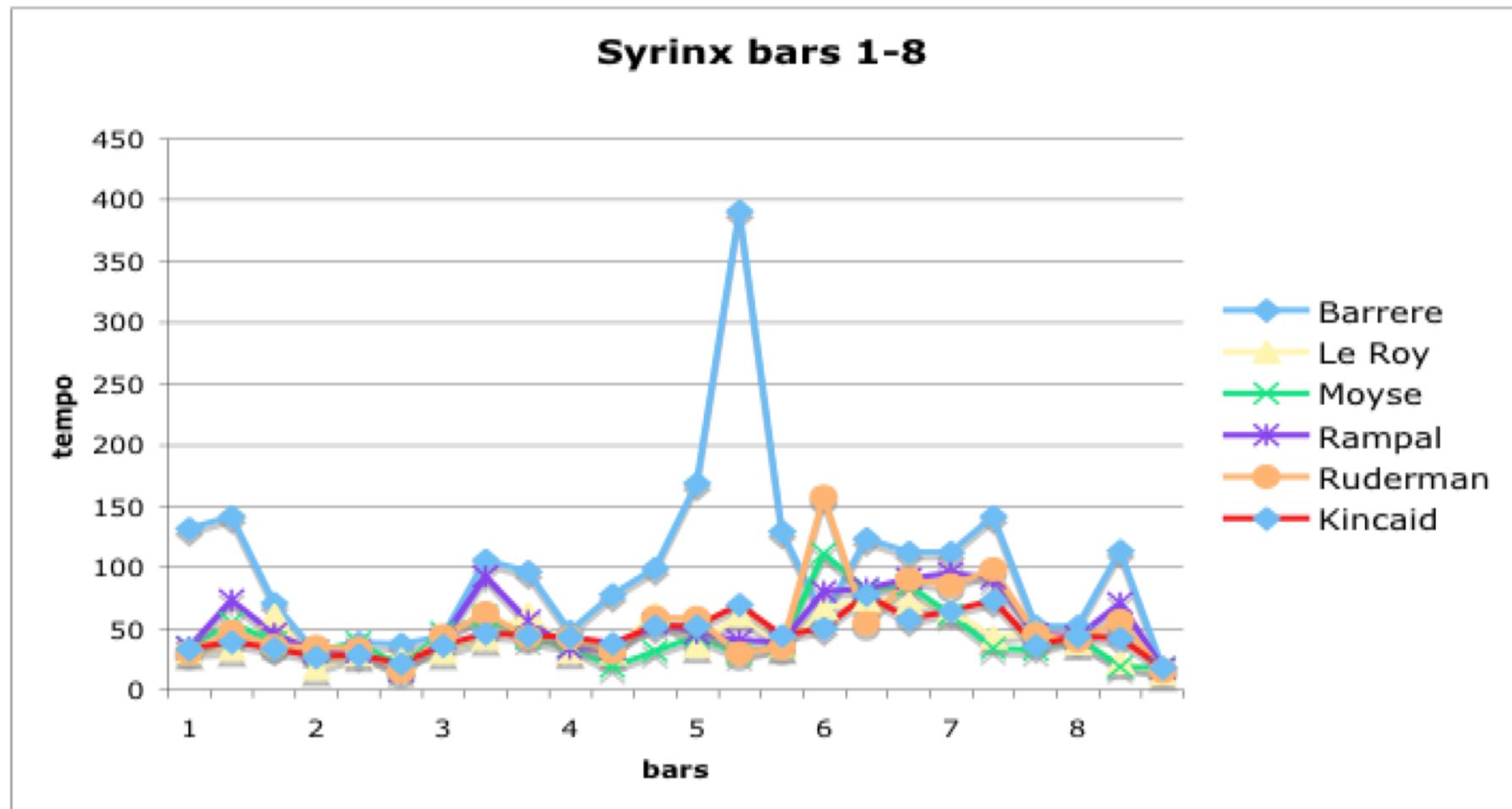
Cédez Rubato



En retenant jusqu'à la fin

Très retenu





Marcel Moyse (France, 1889-1984), rec. 1928.

Jean-Pierre Rampal, (France, 1922-2000), rec. 1949.

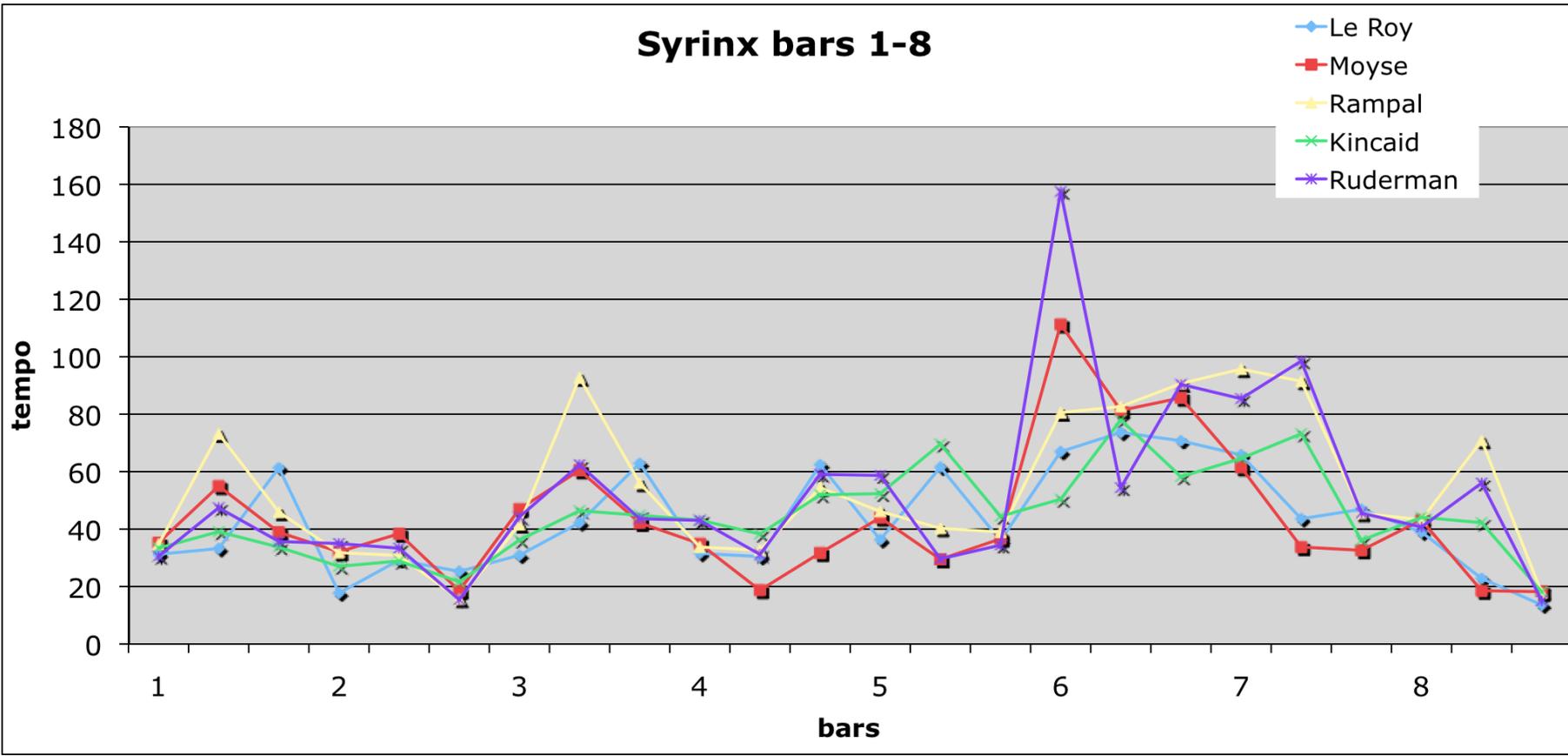
René Le Roy ((France, 1898-1985), recorded in 1939.

Martin Ruderman (USA, 1907-1994), rec. 1947-8.

Georges Barrère (France, 1876-1944), live rec. 1939.

Kincaid, William (U.S.A., 1895-1967), rec. 1950.

Syrinx bars 1-8





Syrinx: Rampal

Claude Debussy

1 *Très modéré*

mf

timing (sec.) 1'74 0'82 1'28 1'88 5.75

p

1'42 0'63 1'06 1'79 1'82 1'10

p *Retenu*

1'30 1'48 1'52 0'73 2'67 1'31 2'25 3'36



Syrinx: Rampal

Claude Debussy

Très modéré

The musical score is divided into three systems, each with timing annotations in seconds (sec.) and performance markings:

- System 1 (Measures 1-5):**
 - Measure 1: *mf*, timing 1'74
 - Measure 2: timing 0'82
 - Measure 3: timing 1'28
 - Measure 4: timing 1'88
 - Measure 5: timing 5.75
- System 2 (Measures 6-10):**
 - Measure 6: timing 1'42
 - Measure 7: timing 0'63
 - Measure 8: timing 1'06
 - Measure 9: timing 1'79
 - Measure 10: timing 1'82
- System 3 (Measures 11-15):**
 - Measure 11: timing 1'30
 - Measure 12: timing 1'48
 - Measure 13: timing 1'52
 - Measure 14: timing 0'73
 - Measure 15: timing 2'67

Performance markings include *mf*, *p*, and *Retenu*. The score also features various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic hairpins.

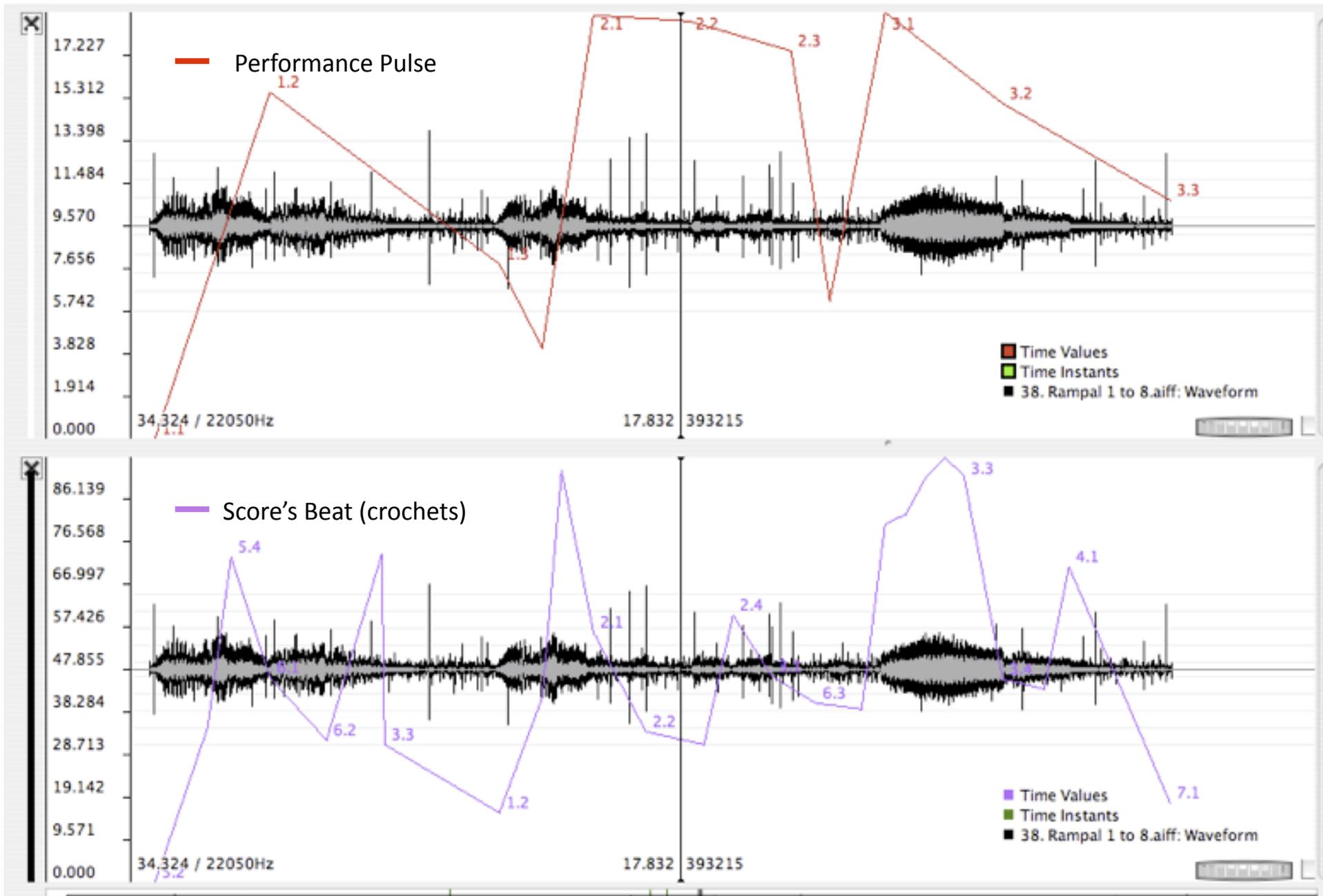
Duration:

Crotchets: 0.63''-1.88'' (300% difference)

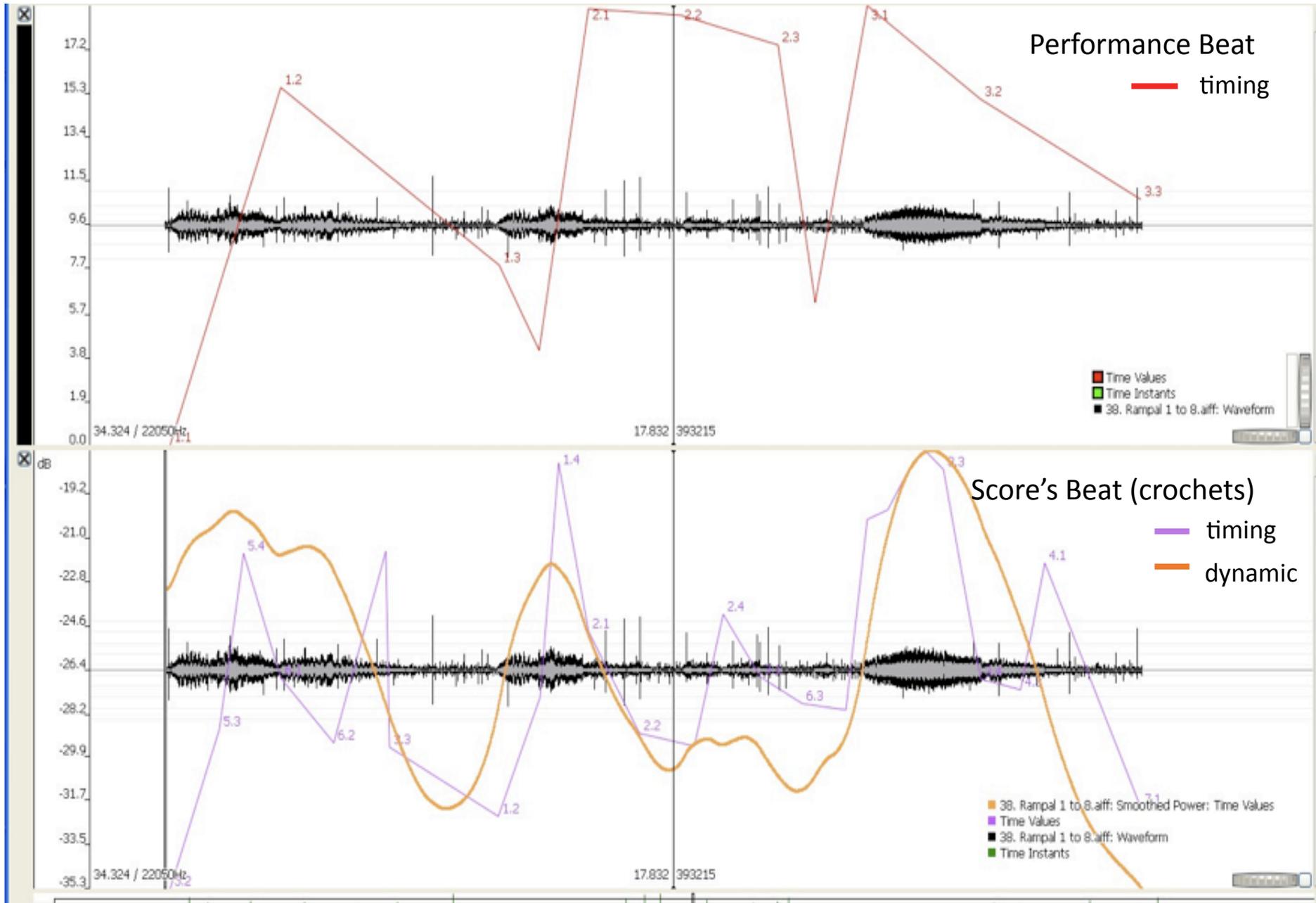
Level 1: between 3.08'' - 3.90'' (26% difference)

Level 2: between 9.85'' - 12.7'' (22% difference)

Rampal: Score/Performance Beats



Rampal: Dynamic/Tempo Changes



Thank you for listening

abigail.dolan1@mac.com