rama gottfried

spindle (2012) *for acoustic guitar and amplification*

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Performer's notes:

The instrumentation for the piece could be also called, for guitar and two hands, as all sound-techniques were selected based on the possibility of being played by one hand alone. Each hand in the piece is considered as an independent performer on the single instrument of the guitar; each moving between synchronous and asynchronous relationship to the other.

While the choreography of the physical motions and pitch patterns in the piece are crucial for the desired entrancing atmosphere created by the performance, the exact gesture and frequency are left to the performer, and instrument, to decide.

Each type of notehead used in the piece indicates a specific sound/technique, to be performed resulting in the relative pitch height of the note indicated by the vertical placement on the stave. In some (but not all) cases this can be also interpreted as indicating the relative placement of the finger along the length of the string, with the bridge (or mid point) being the top, and nut being the bottom of the stave.

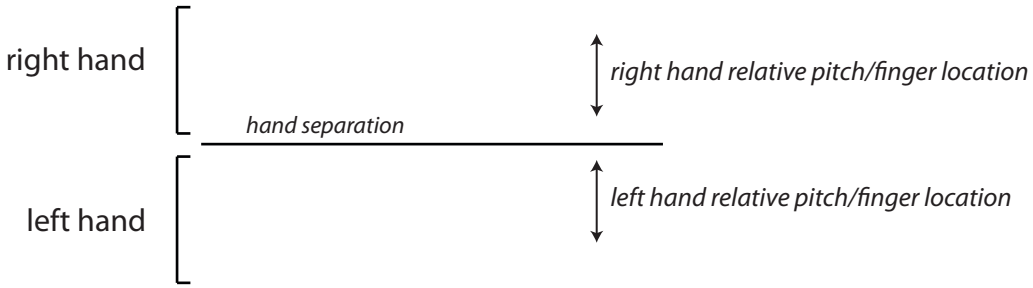
Meter markings are used to indicate the duration of phrase segments, however the exact rhythms are largely left open to the performer and physical limitations.

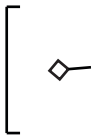
Where vertical dotted lines connect notes between staves, attacks should be synchronized at the relative rhythmic marking for the figure.

When working on the piece, study the score for repeated patterns. There is a lot of motivic repetition of gesture in the piece -- inversions, mirror images, elongations, compressions etc. The key to making the piece musically is to try to make the motivic repetition audible. Many of the techniques used are not completely controllable, and so it is understood that repetitions will not be exact, however try to make them as close as possible!

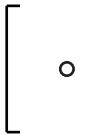
Sound Engineer's notes:

Two microphones should be used, a pair of Neumann KM 184s or similar high quality small condenser mics, one placed towards the bridge of the instrument, and the other at the nut. I leave the choice of gain and EQ to the sound engineer, however it should be noted that there is a high degree of detail in the sound, and should be maybe slightly boosted in the high range, also, in the middle / late section of the piece, there are low / mid range sustained tones that occur from under a dominant rough noise field -- these sustained pitches are kind of magical and should be emphasized while not loosing the aggressive top layer if possible.

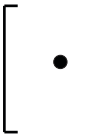




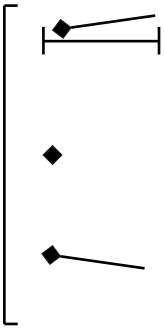
Swipe with the flesh of finger tip with extremely light pressure along surface of the string. The duration of the sound is noted by the length of the line attached.



Soft, percussive strike with the flesh of finger tip with light pressure, without pressing the string to the fretboard. The resulting sound should be a soft dead note.



Strike with flesh of finger tip with firm pressure, pressing the string to the fretboard to make a sounding contact with the fret. This should be on the nut side of the mute preparation, so that the resulting sound is the pitch between the fret and the nut. For this reason, it is important to play towards the *back* of the fret rather than the front (opposed traditional guitar technique), so that the maximum vibration is created on the nut side of the fret. The placement of the fingers (and resulting pitches) is here left open, except that neighboring notes should not be played on the same fret, so as to avoid fourths; the most desirable area of the fret board for this technique is between the 10th and 2nd frets.

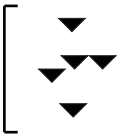


"Bow" with extreme pressure, using several fingers on one or more strings in a "tremolo" fashion along a very small area of the string. In the right hand this is done on the lower two strings somewhat close to the bridge where there is higher string tension. Using the first and second fingers (or thumb and first finger) on the 5 and 6 strings, press down on the string with extreme pressure so that the fingers are barely able to move at all. Then, with great force, use the arm to force the fingers back and forth in the direction of the length of the string, almost as quickly as possible, so that the pressures on the fingers cause them to chafe along the surface of the string. The resulting sound should be very short, low pitched noise sounds. Importantly, the distance that the fingers move along the string is very small, but the force with which they move is very strong, so the sound is as low pitched as possible.

In the left, hand two or three fingers on the same string work well to achieve the same sound (or as close as possible); since the angle is different with the left hand, pressure is provided by the thumb on the neck of the guitar, and more arm motion is required to force the fingers to sound.

Where notated on a stave line, the line represents the bridge; above the line is behind the bridge.

The length of the "tremolo" action is notated by the duration of the line attached to the notehead, however, the duration of the sounds are very short and necessarily somewhat sparse due to the high pressure on the fingers and string. Where no line continues the tremolo, each notehead is one click.



Drag finger nails extremely slowly along string, the result should be distinct perforated sounds, with a low pitch. Care should be taken to move slowly, or else higher pitches will result. This works best on the lowest strings, and more than one finger may be used on a given string. Each triangle is approximately one click.

= ca. 80

spindle

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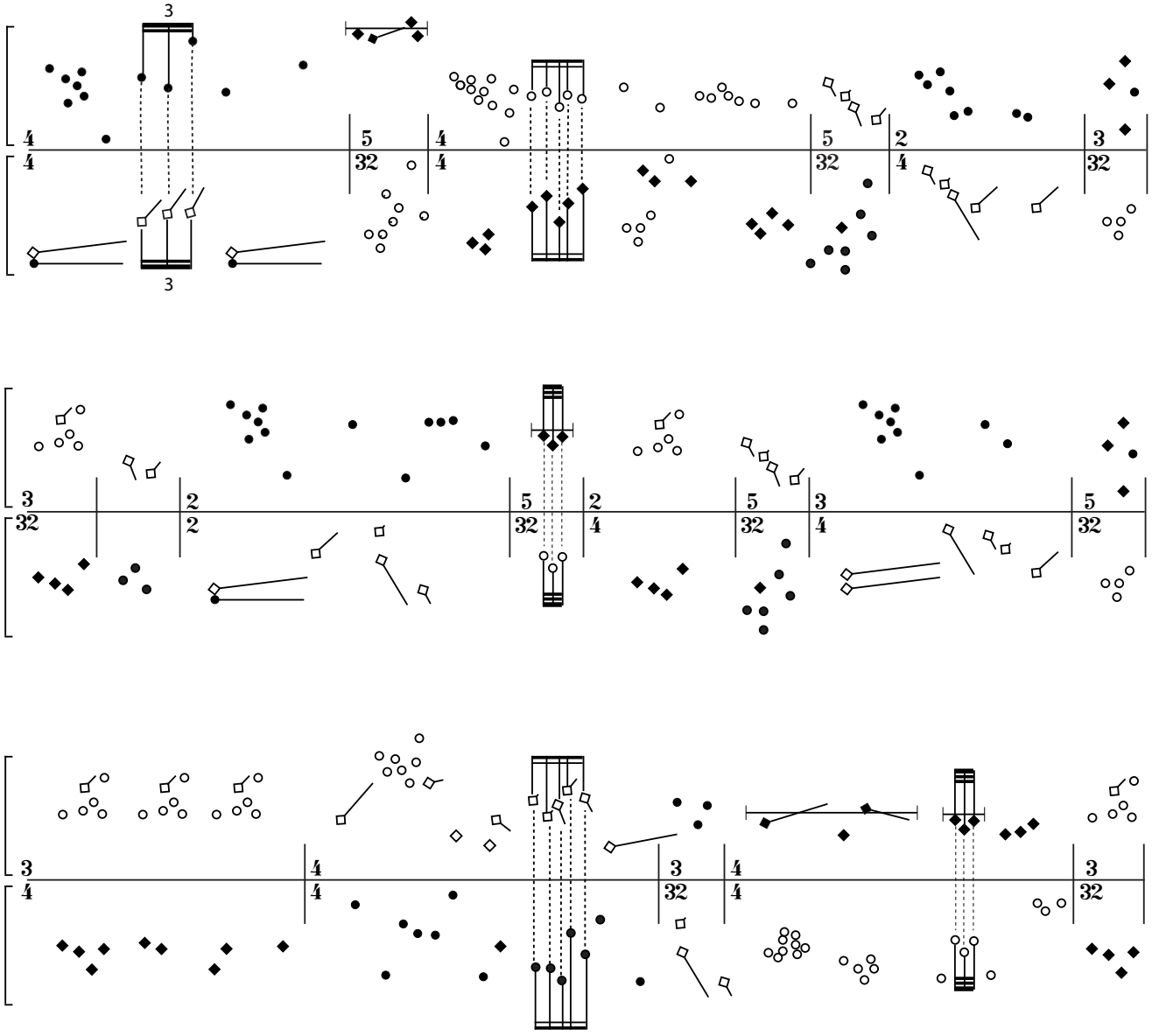

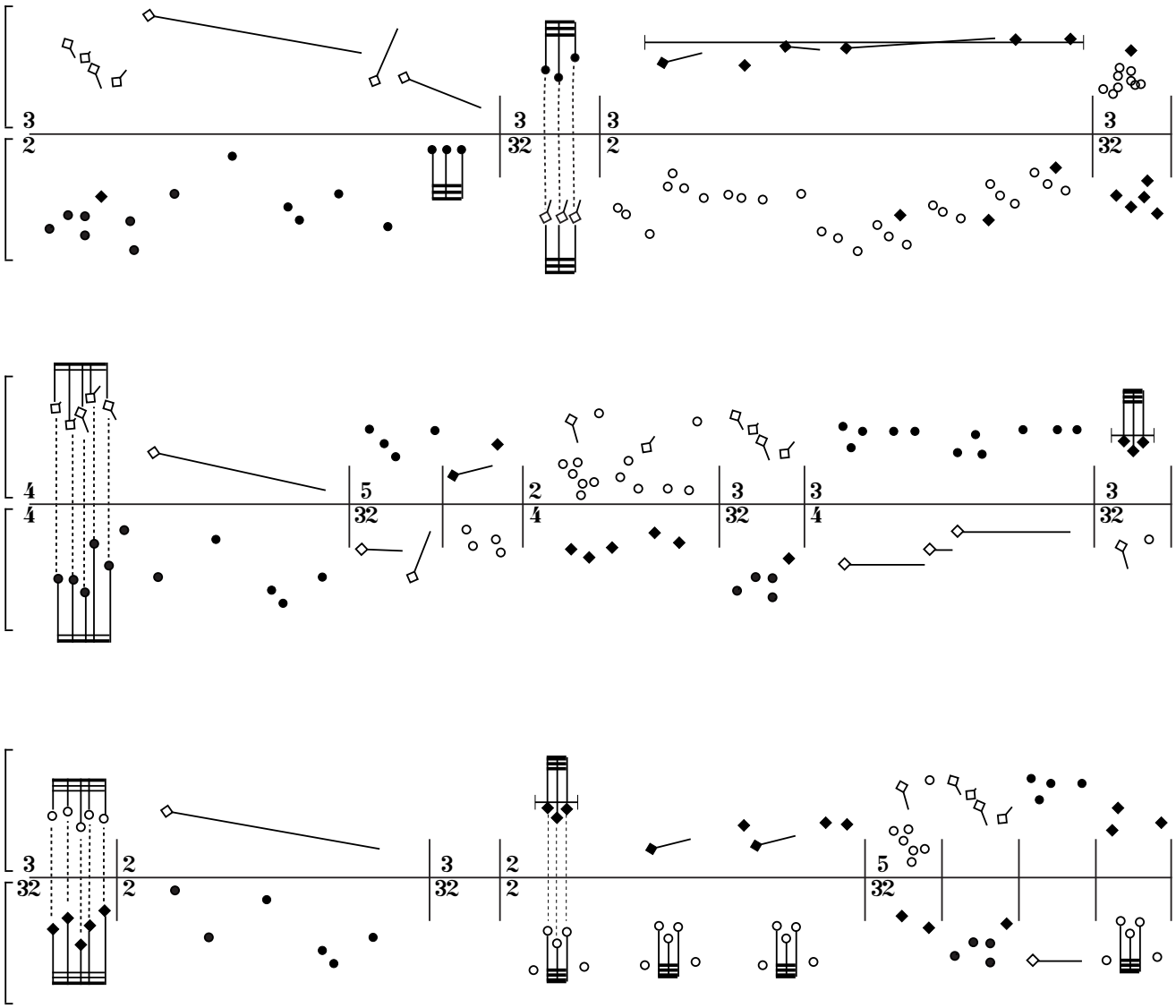

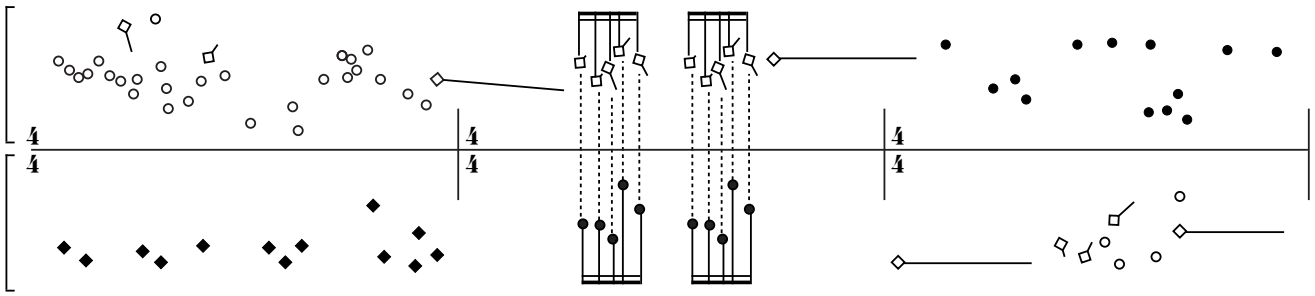
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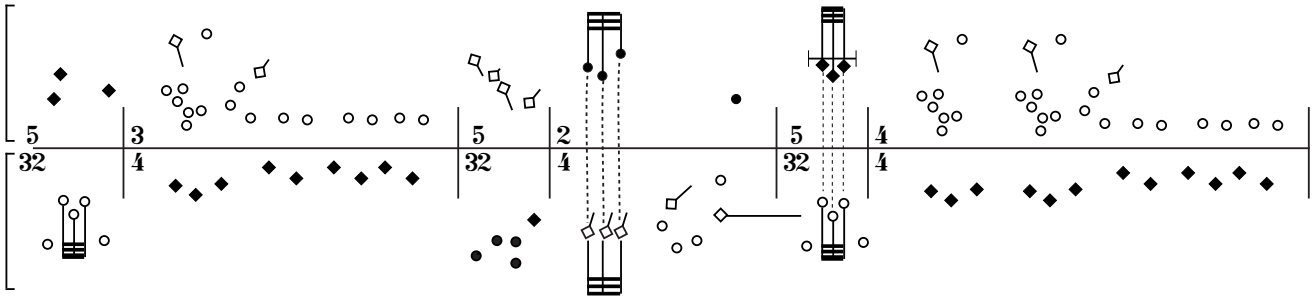
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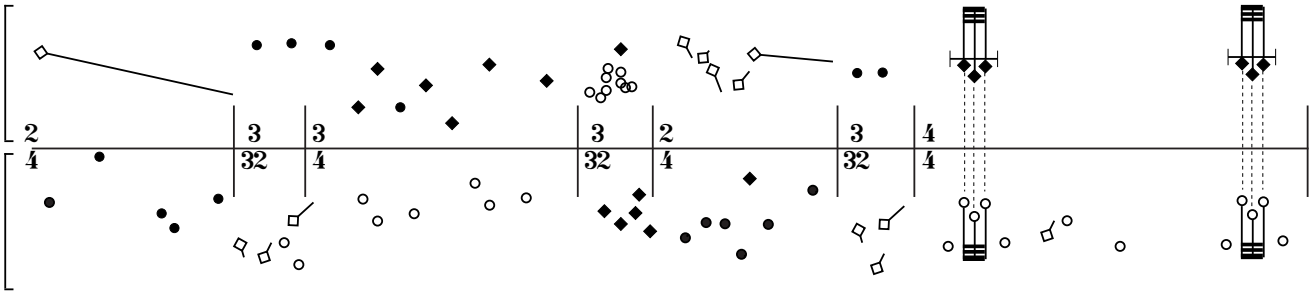
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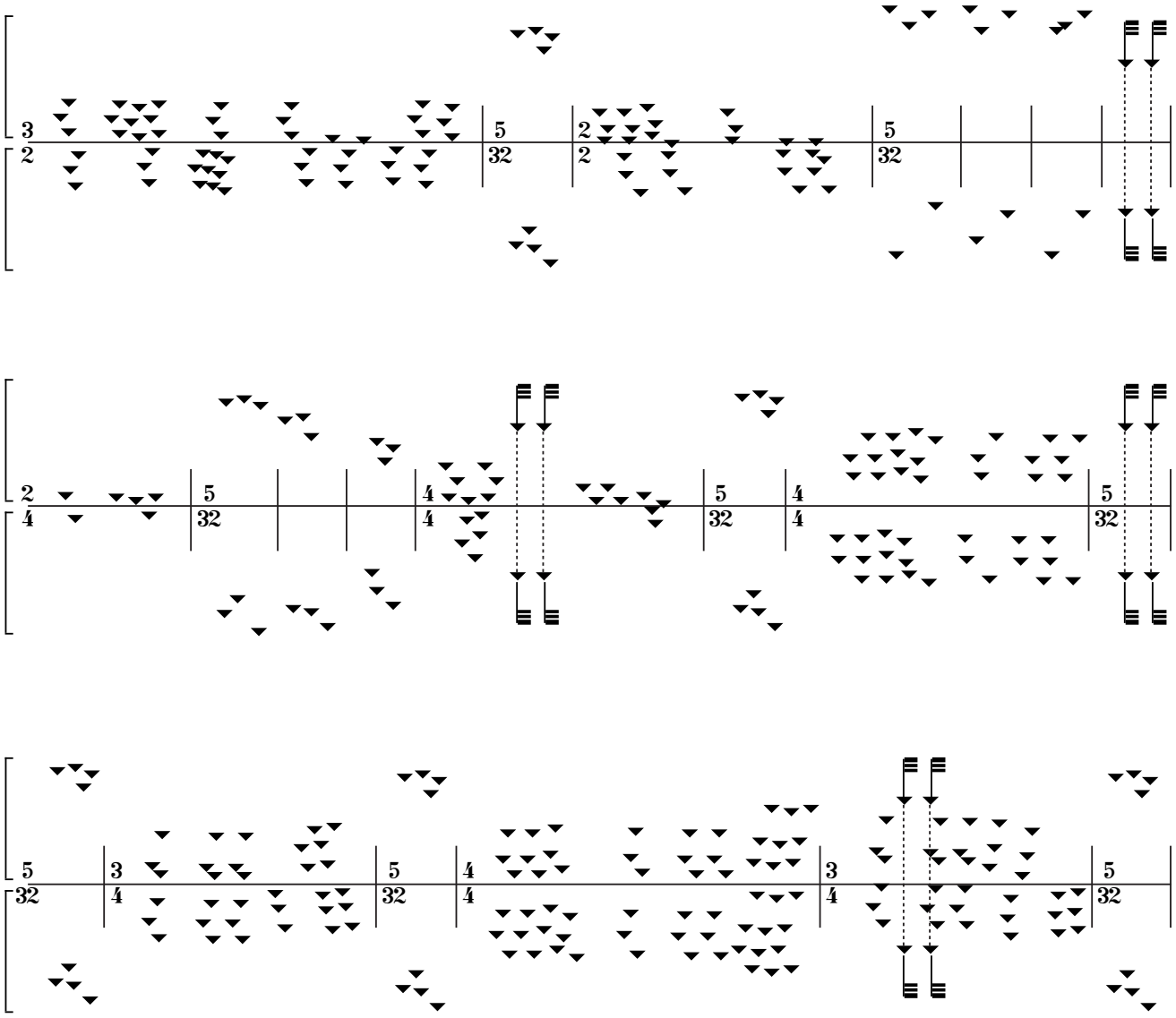

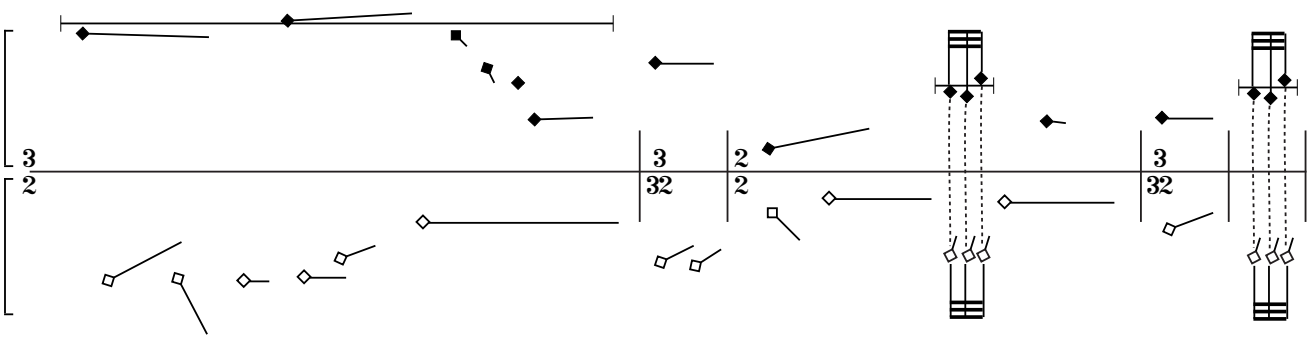
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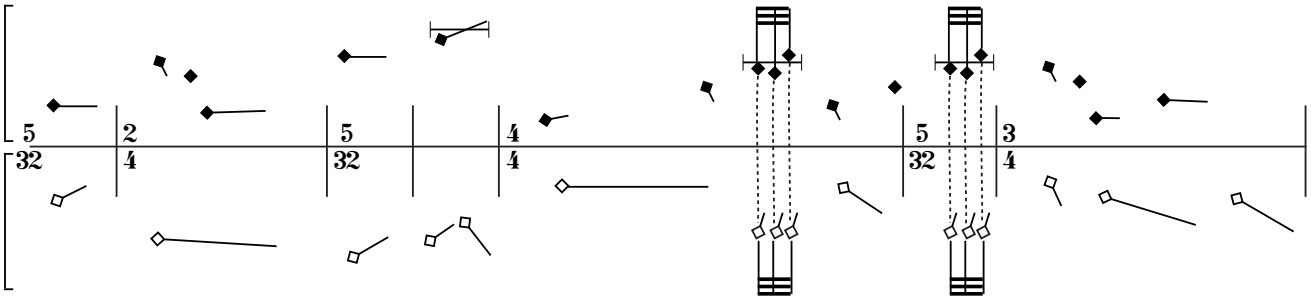
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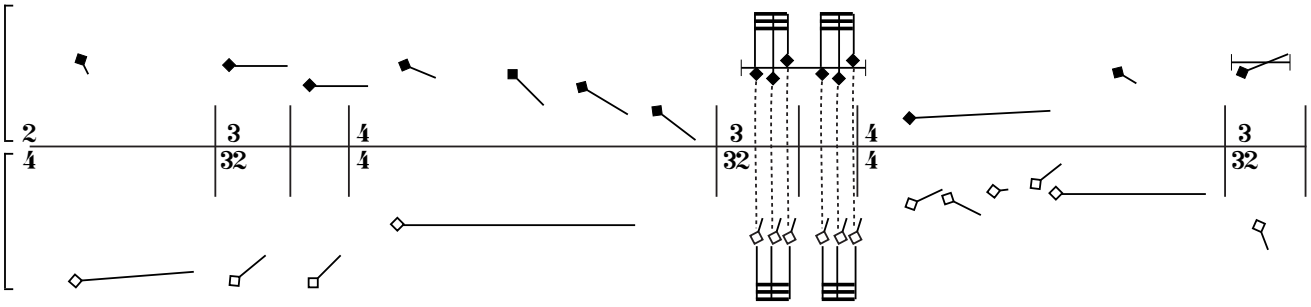
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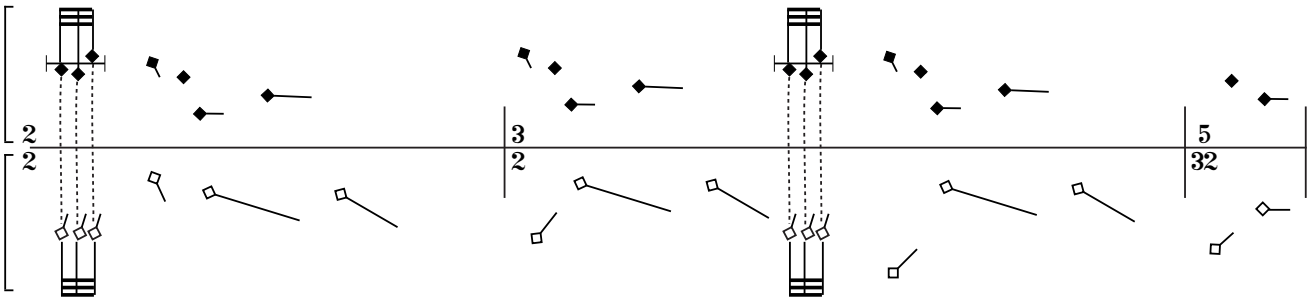
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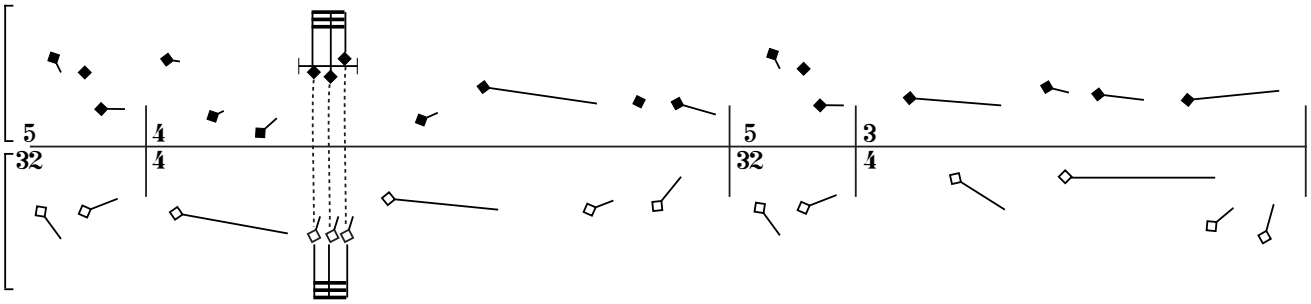
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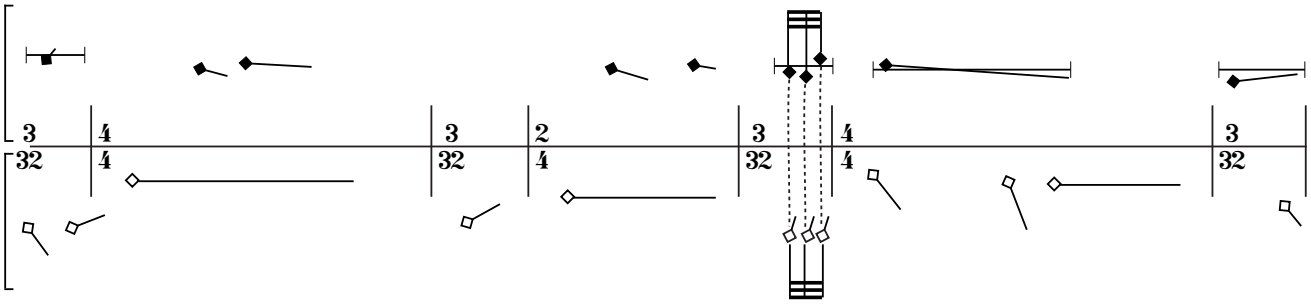
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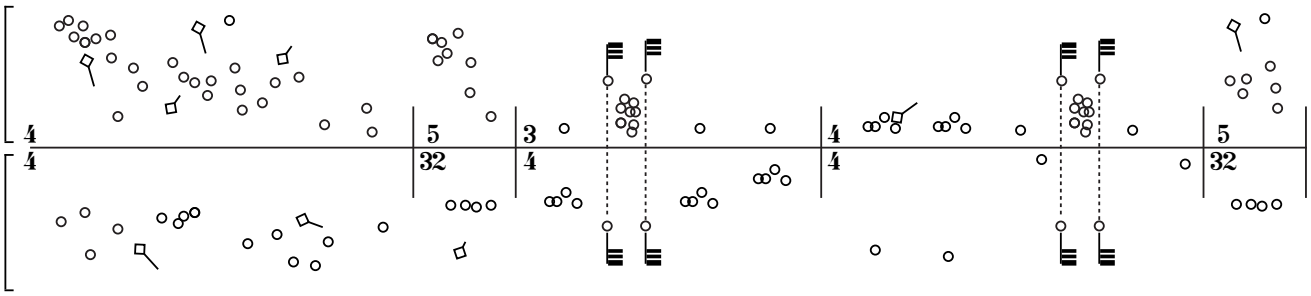
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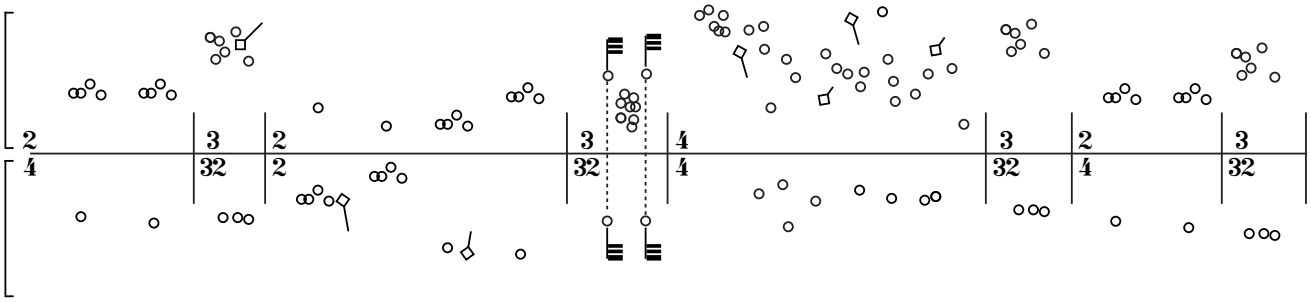
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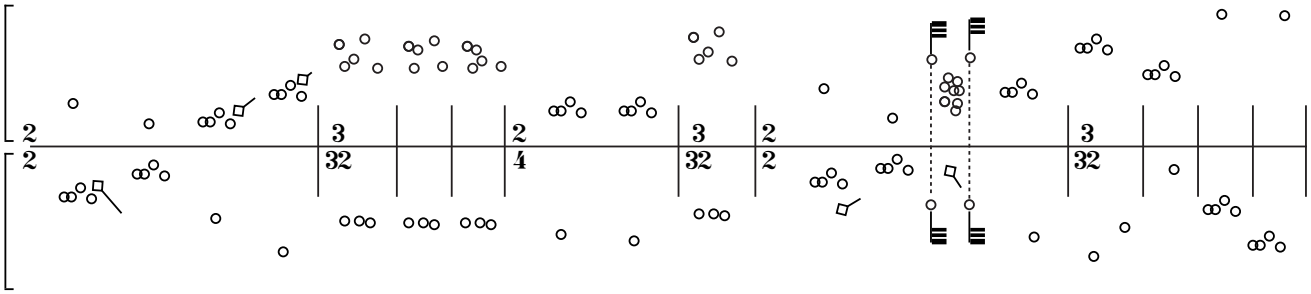
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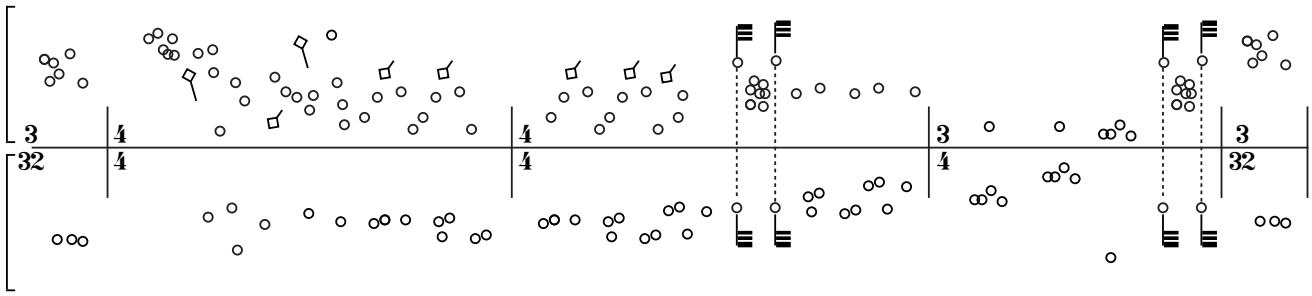
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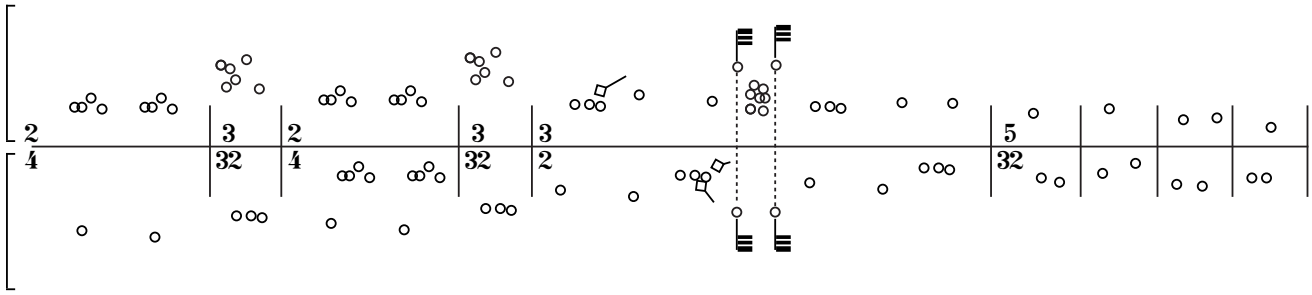
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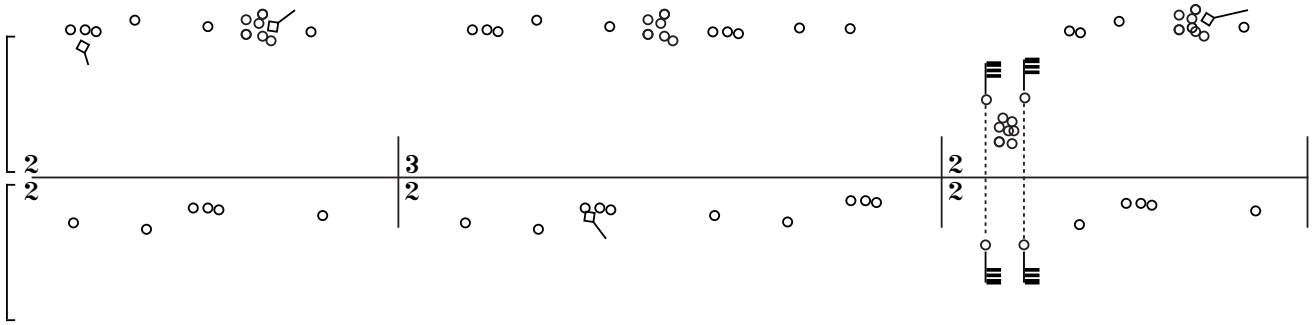
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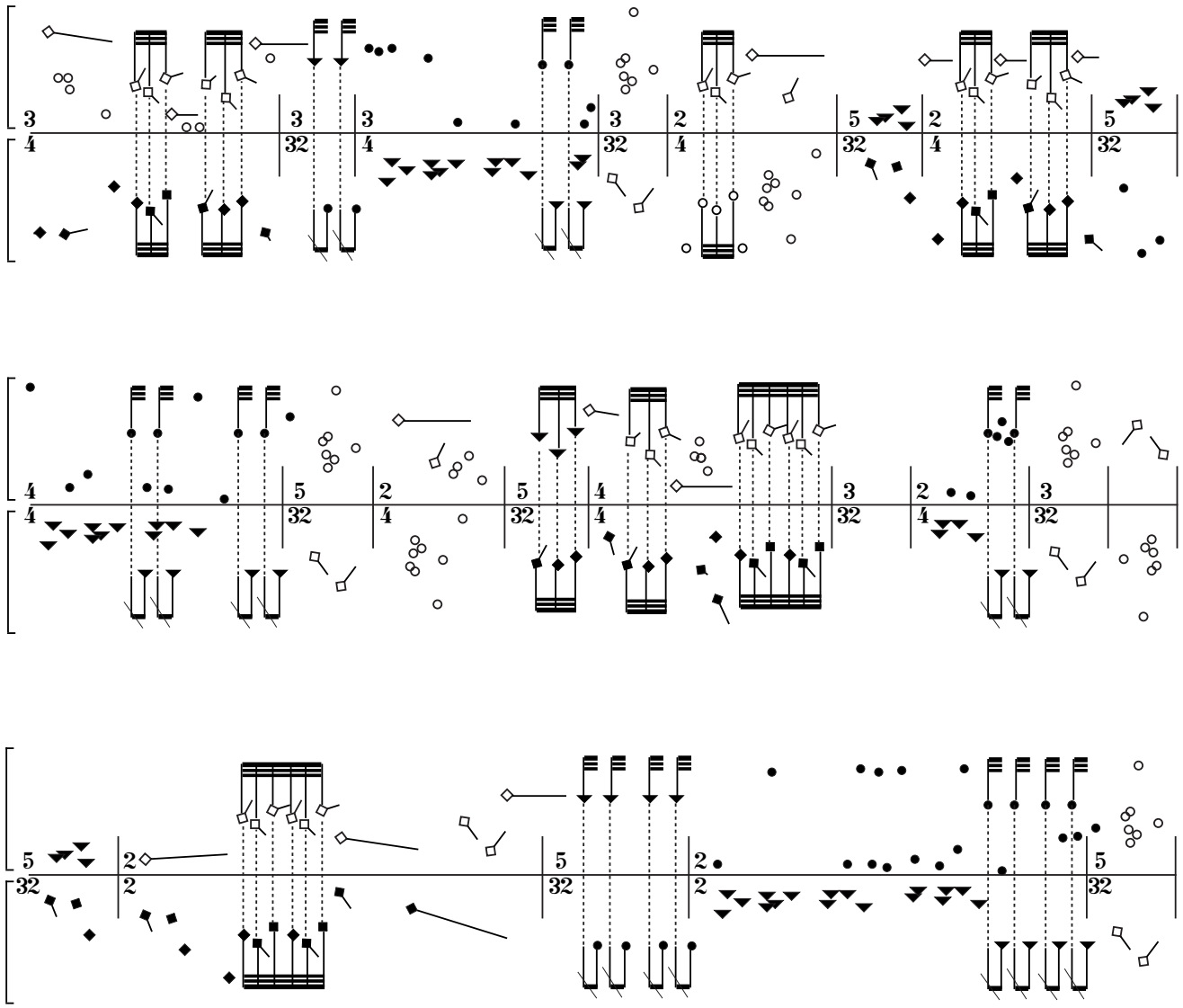

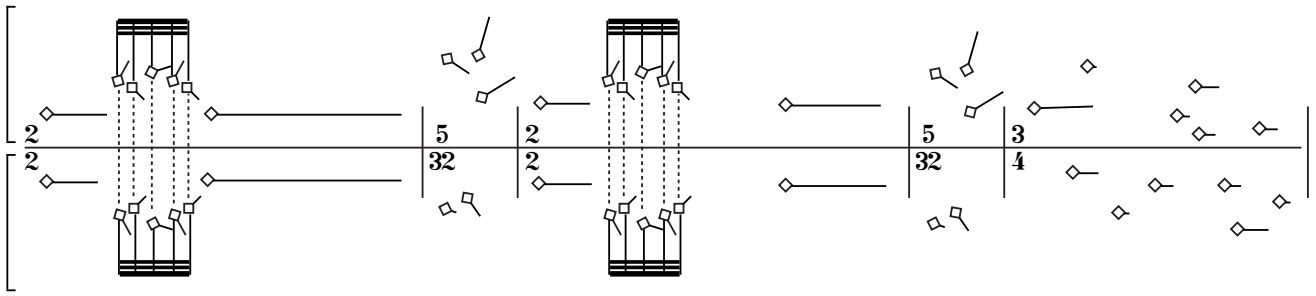
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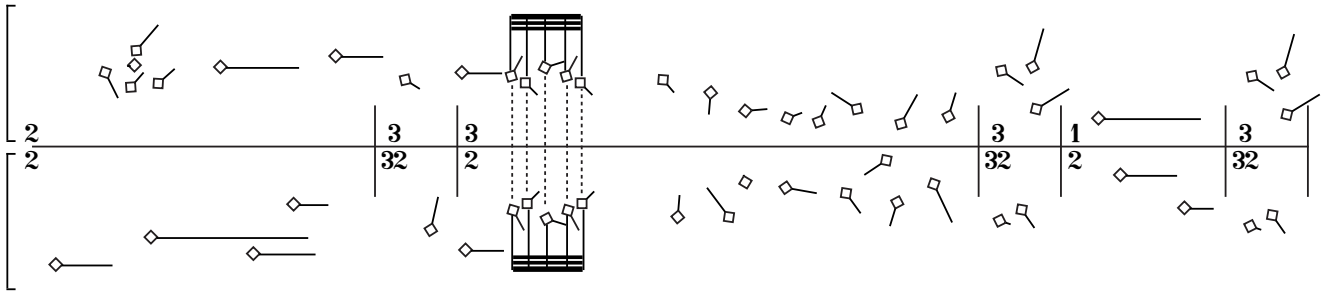
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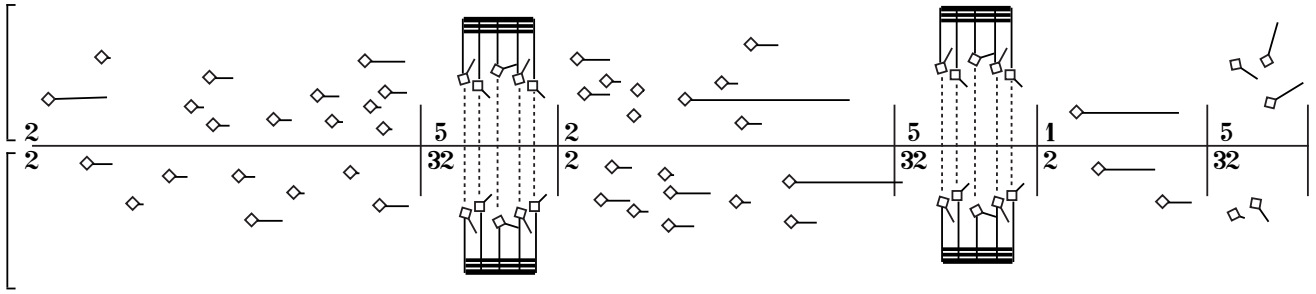
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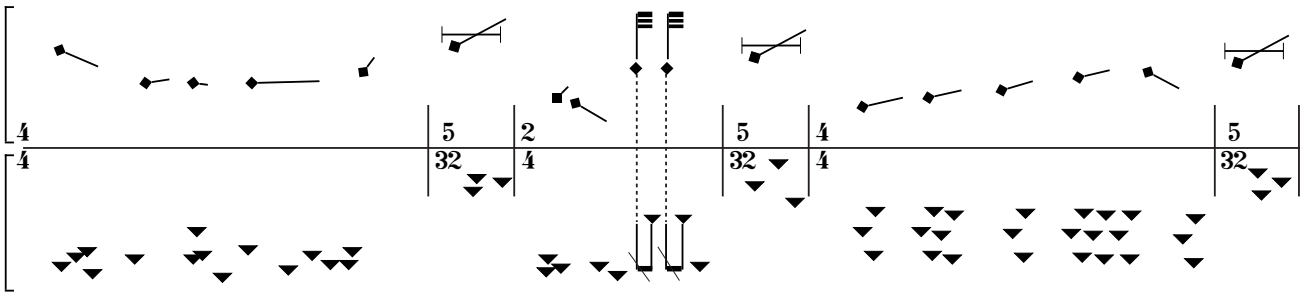
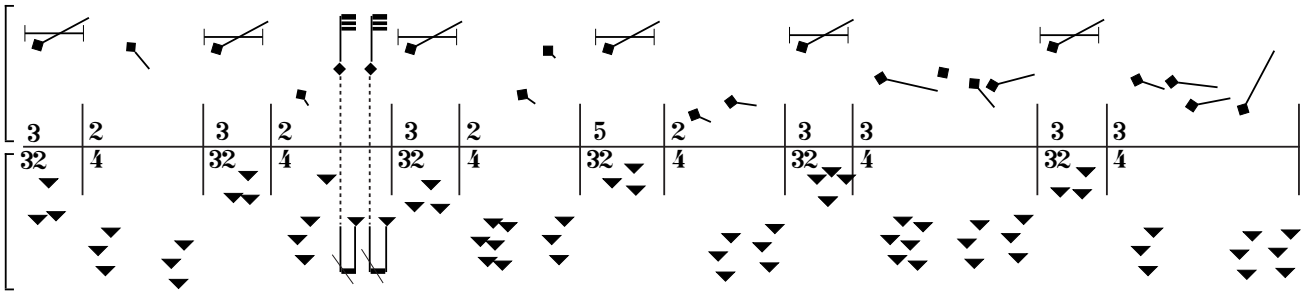
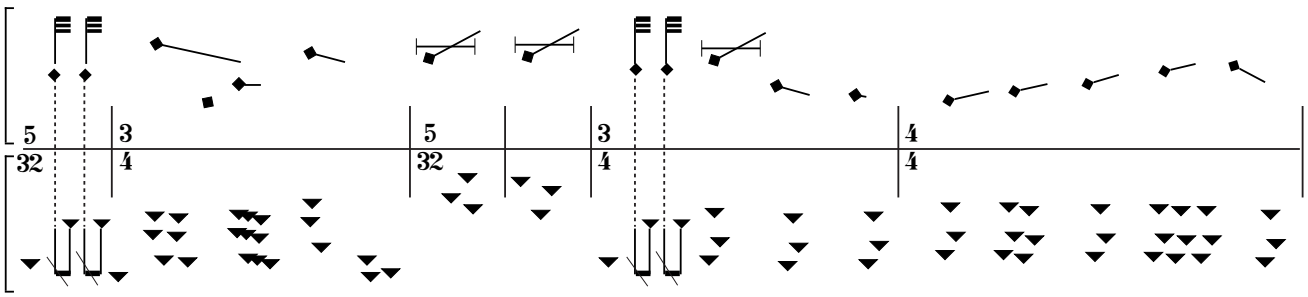

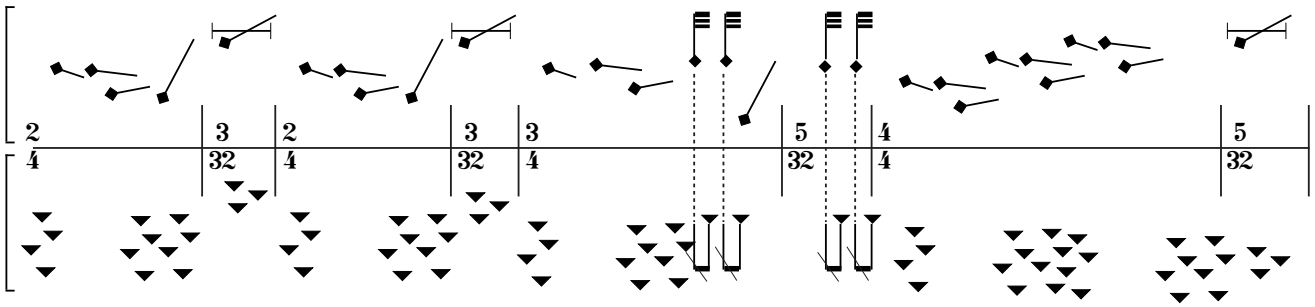
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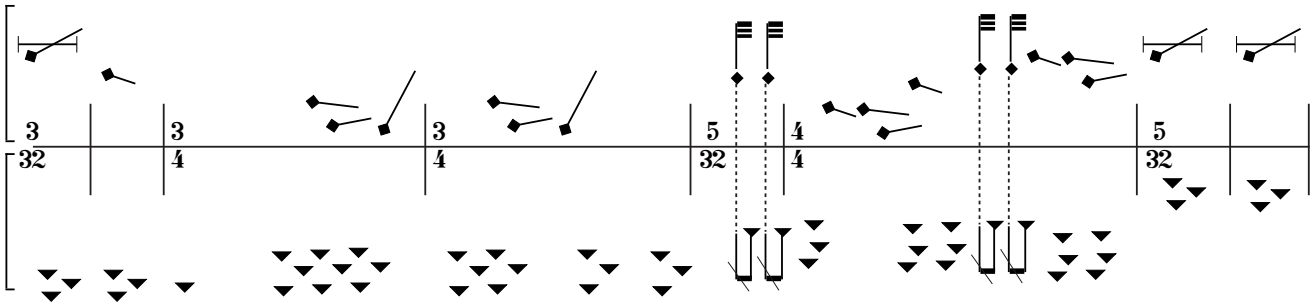
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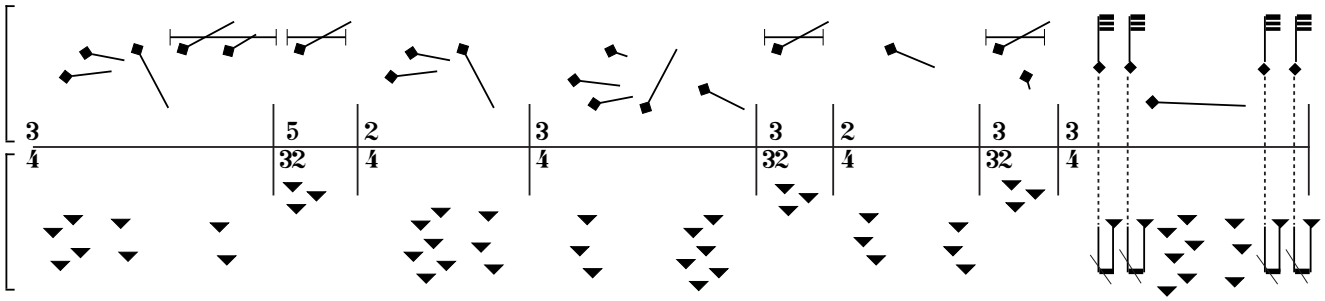
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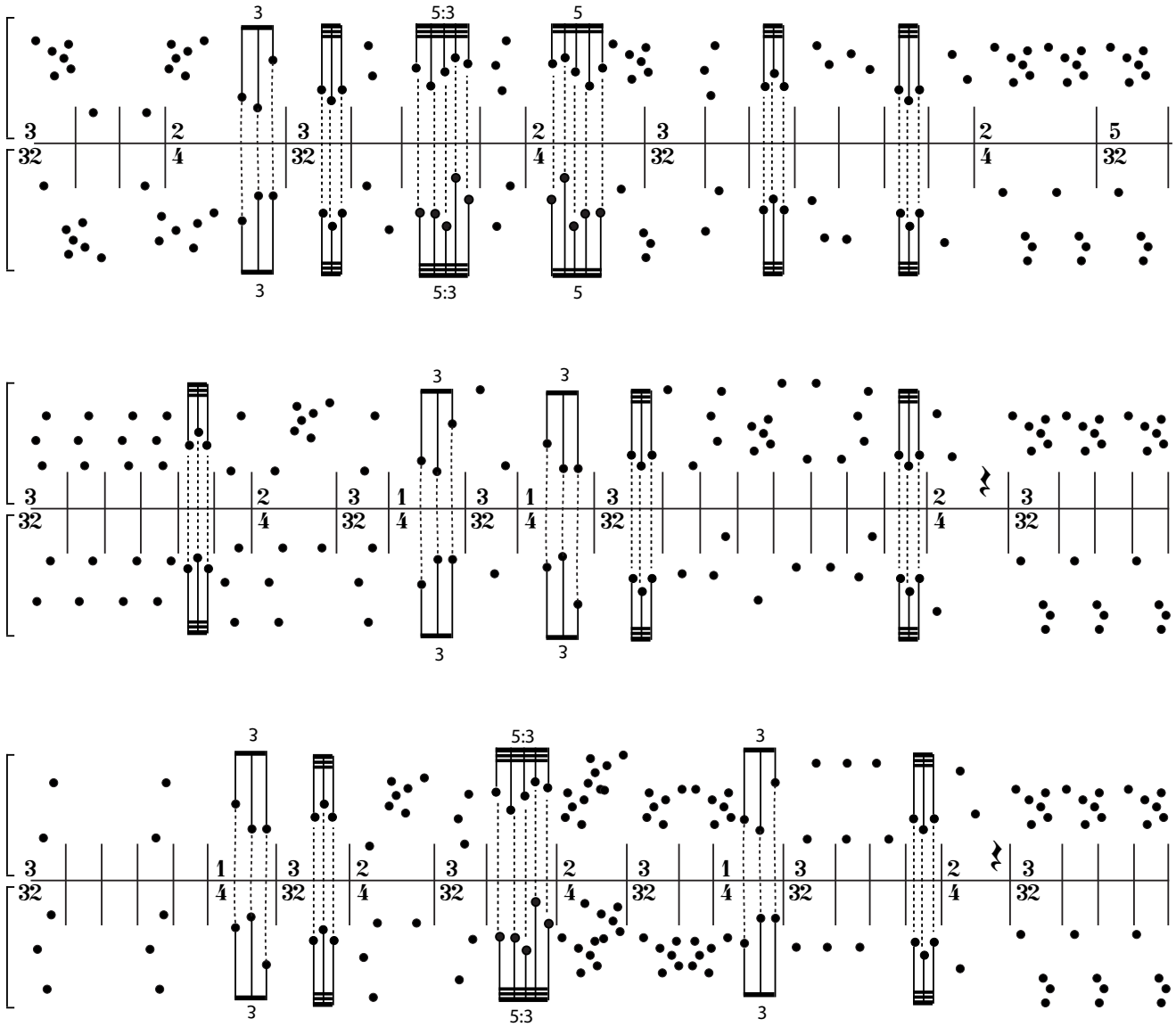
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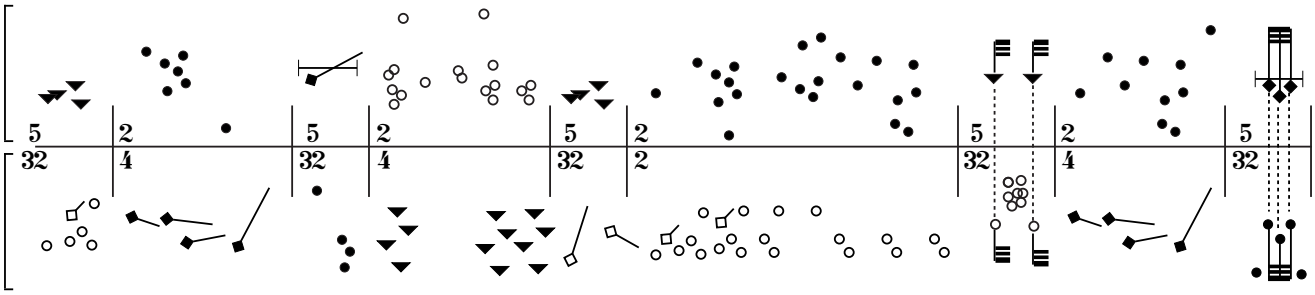
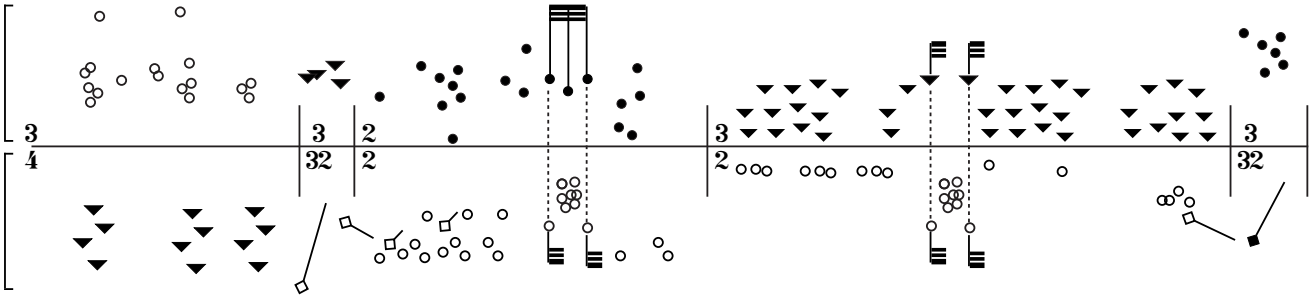
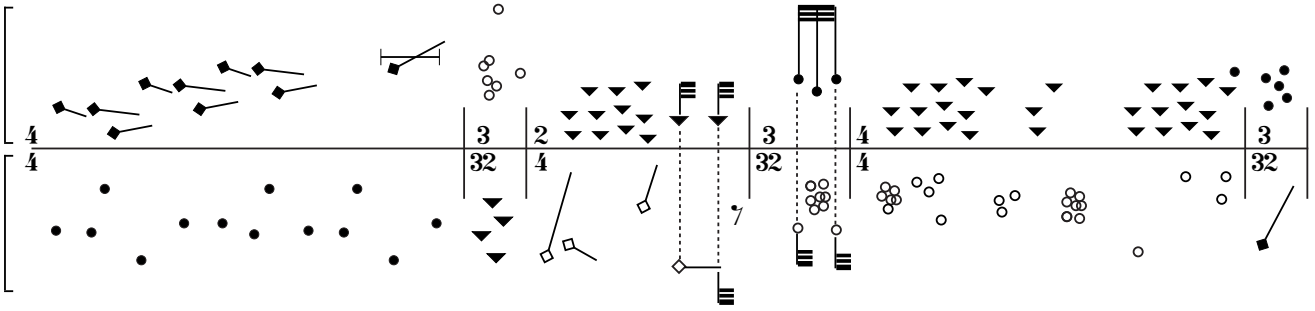

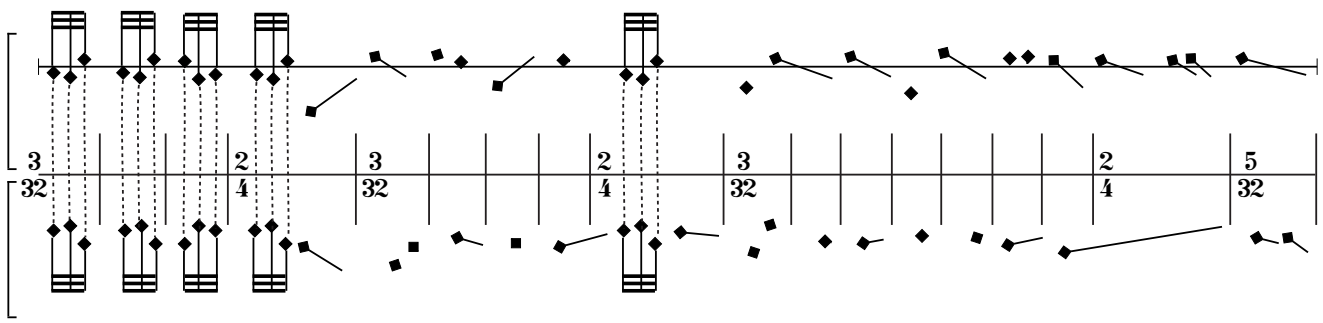
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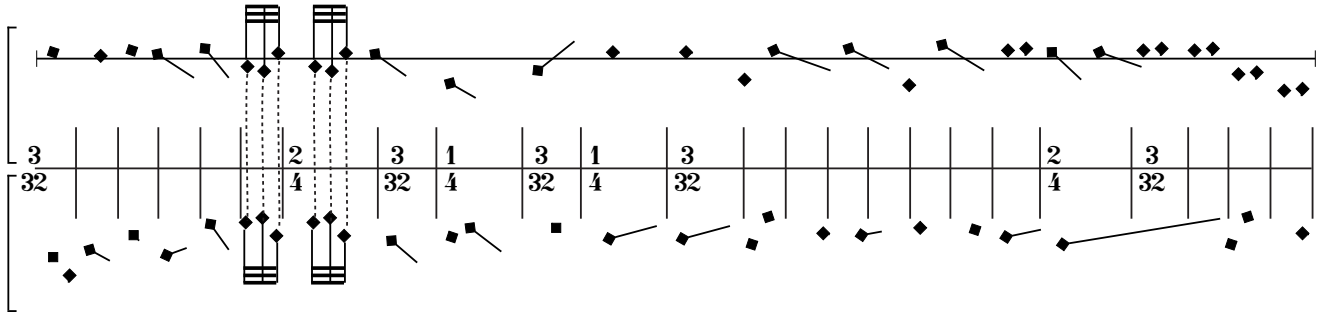
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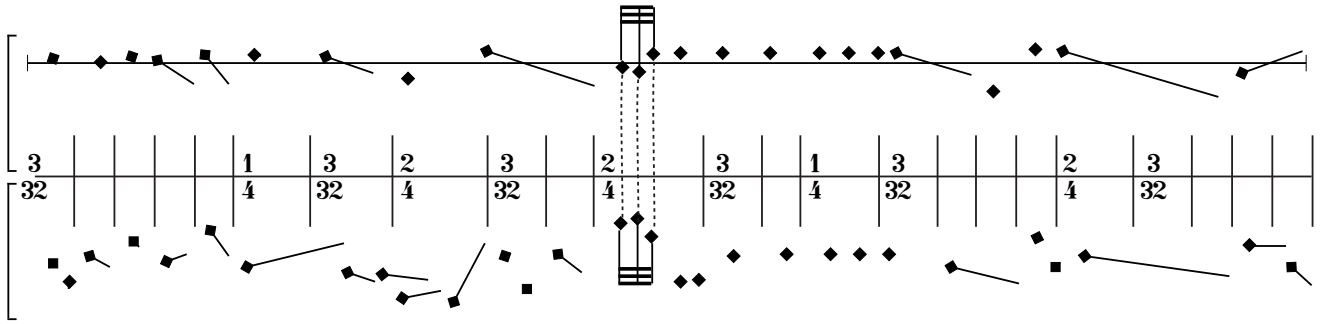
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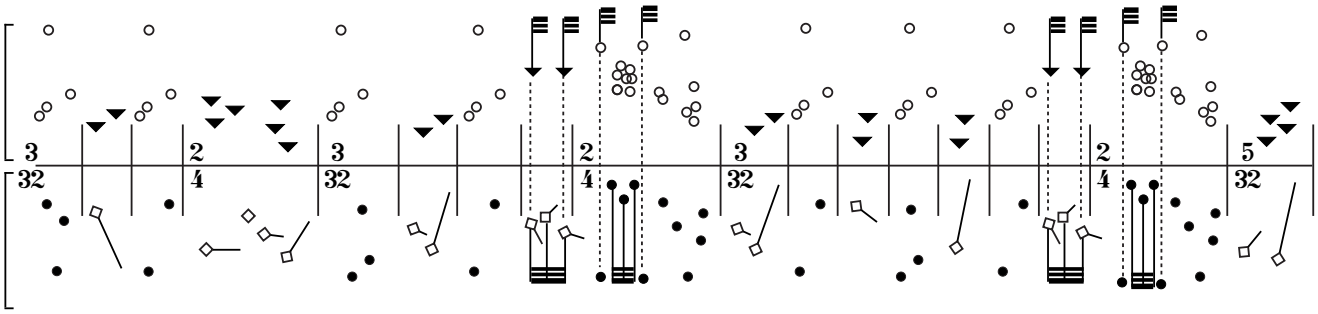
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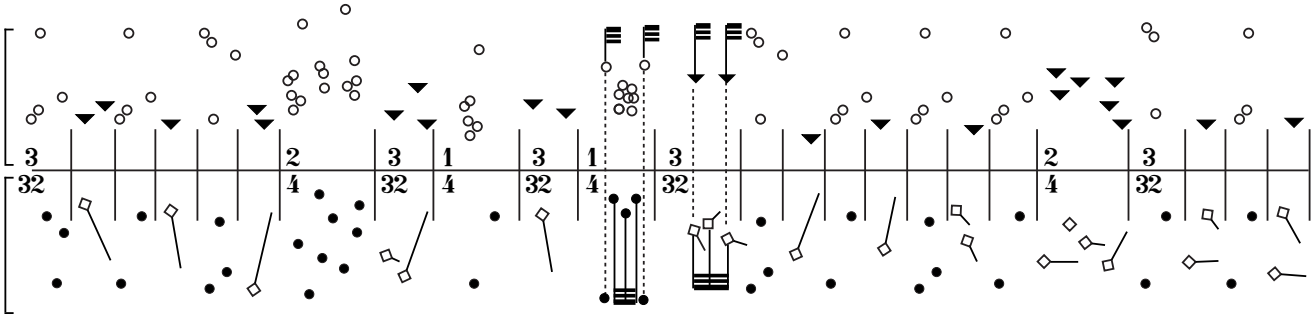
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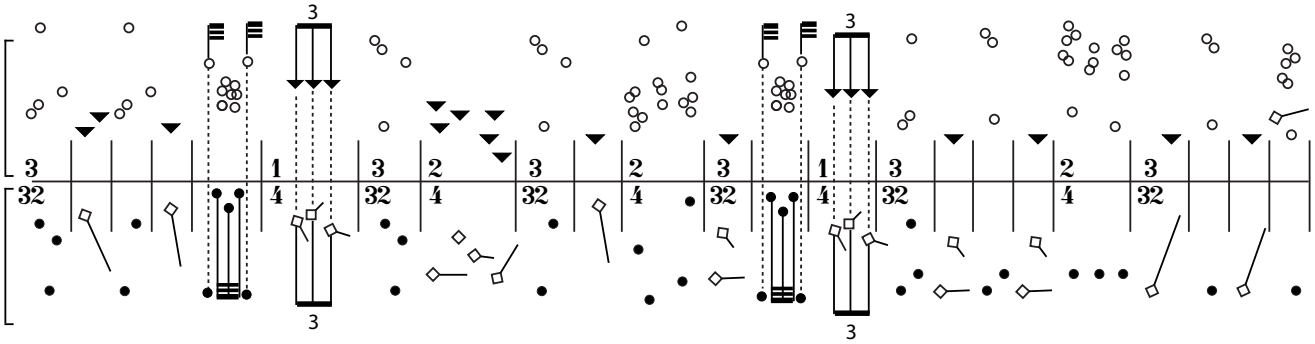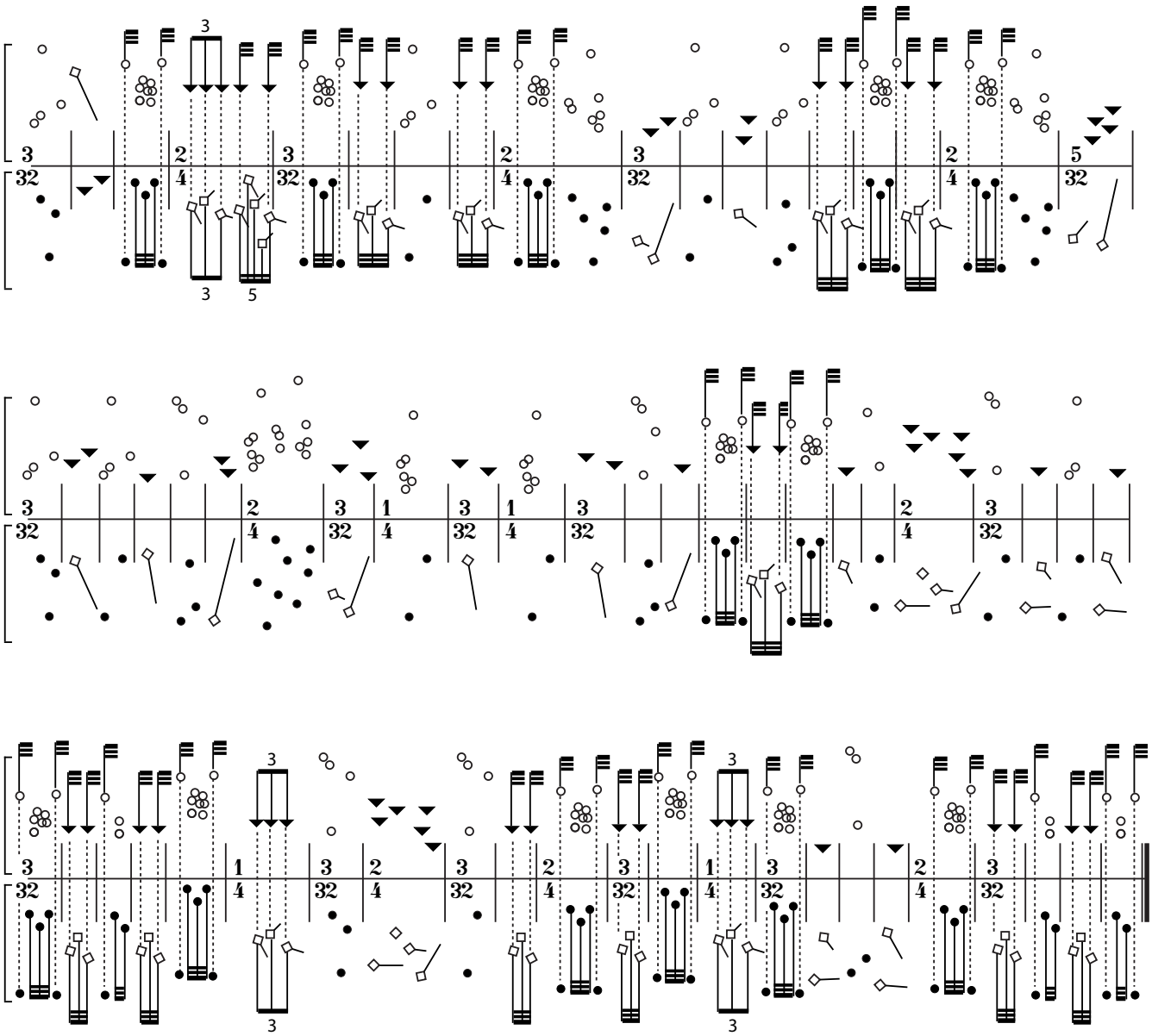
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