

PREScriptive NOTATION AS PERFORMATIVE INTERFACE

Djordje Marković

PhD student, Academy of
Arts, University of Novi Sad,
Serbia
getmoll@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This paper approaches musical notation not as a representational system for sound, but as a prescriptive interface that organizes instrumental action and conditions the emergence of musical events. Drawing on the performative turn in music, improvisation studies, and Gilles Deleuze's concept of virtuality, it argues that increased prescriptivity often intensifies rather than reduces interpretative openness. By examining prescriptive layers embedded within classical notation – such as articulation, ornamentation, and instrumental instructions – the paper challenges the opposition between descriptive and prescriptive notation. Prescriptivity is understood as operating below the level of sound, at the level of embodied action, allowing sonic outcomes to remain contingent and immanent to performance. The argument is grounded in the author's compositional practice, with examples from trumpet notation that employ minimally extended classical notation to prescribe complex actions while resisting stable sonic representation. The paper concludes by proposing prescriptive notation as a catalyst for musical *becoming* rather than a blueprint for musical objects.

1. INTRODUCTION: NOTATION BEYOND REPRESENTATION

Musical notation has traditionally been understood as a representational system whose primary function is to describe sound. In this view, the score operates as a visual encoding of musical parameters – most notably pitch, duration, and dynamics – serving as a stable intermediary between compositional intention and sonic realization. Such an understanding presupposes that the musical work exists, at least in principle, as an identifiable sound structure that can be adequately captured, transmitted, and reproduced through notation. This characterization should not be taken to imply that traditional notation lacks prescriptive or action-oriented dimensions. On the contrary, articulation, phrasing, and technical indications already encode forms of instrumental action. However,

within a representational paradigm, these elements typically remain subordinated to the specification of sonic outcomes, rather than constituting the primary object of notation. Although this model has proven historically resilient and remains foundational for large parts of the Western art music tradition, where concepts such as the “musical idea” or structural coherence continue to play a central role. The present argument does not seek to dismiss this framework, but to identify the conditions under which its underlying assumptions become insufficient.

However, this representational paradigm becomes increasingly problematic when confronted with musical practices that foreground performance, embodiment, and sonic instability. Improvisation, extended instrumental techniques, and process-oriented compositional approaches all expose a fundamental tension between notation understood as a description of sonic results and music understood as an event that unfolds through action. In these contexts, sound cannot be treated as a fixed object to be represented; rather, it emerges as a contingent outcome of situated interactions between performer, instrument, and environment.

This paper argues that musical notation should therefore be reconsidered not primarily as a representational medium, but as a performative interface: a system that prescribes actions, constrains possibilities, and organizes the conditions under which sound can occur. In this context, the notion of interface does not refer to a technological device, but to a relational structure that mediates between the performer's body, the instrument, and the unfolding sonic process. From this perspective, notation does not merely encode (pre-existing) musical objects; it actively participates in their production by shaping modes of performance, bodily engagement, and instrumental behavior.

Central to this argument is the distinction between descriptive and prescriptive aspects of notation. Descriptive notation aims to specify sonic outcomes – what should be heard – while prescriptive notation focuses on actions and procedures – what should be done. While this distinction is often presented as a modern opposition between traditional notation and experimental or graphic scores, this paper contends that prescriptivity has always been an integral, if frequently naturalized, component of Western art music notation. Articulation marks, technical instructions, ornaments, and performance conventions already operate prescriptively by directing bodily and

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instrumental actions without fully determining their sonic results.

Rather than treating prescriptive notation as a deviation from or supplement to an otherwise descriptive system, this study proposes to understand prescriptivity as a latent structural dimension of notation that becomes explicit under certain historical and aesthetic conditions. In contemporary music, particularly in practices that engage with improvisation and unstable sound production, this prescriptive dimension becomes central. Here, notation no longer aims to fix sound identities, but to articulate regimes of action whose sonic outcomes remain open and immanent to the act of performance.

This shift resonates with broader theoretical developments often described as the performative turn in music and the arts. Influenced by philosophical accounts that emphasize process, becoming, and event over representation and objecthood, these approaches reconceptualize music as something that happens rather than something that is. Within such a framework, the musical work is not a stable entity preceding its realization, but an emergent configuration that takes shape through performance.

The present paper situates prescriptive notation within this performative and process-oriented ontology of music. Drawing on concepts from Deleuze's philosophy of immanence and transcendental empiricism, it argues that prescriptive notation operates at the level of the virtual: it does not define actual sounds, but configures fields of potential actions and tendencies that are actualized differently in each performance. Precision at the level of action thus coexists with openness at the level of sonic result, challenging the assumption that notational determinacy necessarily entails sonic determinacy.

Methodologically, the paper combines theoretical reflection with analysis of compositional practice. Alongside a conceptual discussion of notation, improvisation, and musical ontology, it examines examples from the author's own work, focusing particularly on the use of minimally extended classical notation to prescribe instrumental actions – especially on the trumpet – while leaving the resulting sound partially indeterminate. These case studies serve not as illustrations of pre-existing theory, but as sites where theoretical and practical concerns intersect and inform one another.

By reframing musical notation as a performative interface rather than a representational code, this paper contributes to ongoing discussions in music theory, aesthetics, and notation studies concerning the ontology of musical works, the role of performance, and the limits of representation. It aims to show that prescriptive notation is not a retreat from precision, nor a mere strategy of indeterminacy, but a means of articulating music as an event whose identity resides in processes of action and becoming rather than in fixed sonic forms. While the Deleuzian framework provides a productive vocabulary for articulating these processes, the argument developed here does not depend exclusively on this philosophical model, and may also be understood in more practice-oriented or phenomenological terms.

2. THE PERFORMATIVE TURN IN MUSIC

The notion of a performative turn in music designates a broad shift in theoretical and artistic thinking away from the conception of music as a fixed object and toward an understanding of music as an event, a process, or an activity that unfolds in time. Rather than treating the musical work as an autonomous structure that precedes its realization, performative approaches emphasize the constitutive role of performance, embodiment, and situational context in the emergence of musical meaning.

Historically, Western art music has largely been grounded in an object-centered ontology, in which the musical work is identified with a notated structure whose identity remains stable across performances [1]. Performance, within this paradigm, is understood as the execution or interpretation of a pre-existing work, and notation functions as the primary guarantor of that work's identity [1, 6]. The performative turn challenges this hierarchy by questioning the assumption that the work exists independently of its enactment.

In this alternative perspective, performance is no longer a secondary act that realizes an already defined musical object, but a primary site where music comes into being [2]. Sound is not the reproduction of a pre-given form; it is the outcome of situated actions involving bodies, instruments, gestures, and acoustic conditions. Music thus appears less as an entity to be represented and more as a dynamic process of emergence.

Improvisation occupies a particularly important position within this shift. Beyond its status as a stylistic or genre-based practice, improvisation foregrounds the temporal contingency and irreversibility of musical action [3, 4]. In improvisatory contexts, musical decisions are made in real time, without the mediation of a fixed score, and the identity of the music is inseparable from the concrete circumstances of its production. What is crucial in this context is not simply spontaneity, but the irreversibility of the temporal process: once an action is performed, it cannot be retracted or fully pre-specified. This irreversibility challenges the assumption that musical form can be entirely determined in advance through representation. Improvisation therefore exemplifies a mode of musical thinking in which action precedes representation and sound emerges directly from embodied interaction.

This does not imply that improvisation is opposed to structure or constraint. On the contrary, improvisatory practices often rely on highly developed technical vocabularies and implicit rules. What distinguishes them is not the absence of organization, but the fact that organization is enacted rather than pre-inscribed. From the perspective of notation, improvisation exposes the limits of descriptive systems that presuppose stable sonic targets, highlighting instead the primacy of procedural knowledge and performative competence.

Philosophical accounts associated with process-oriented ontologies provide a conceptual framework for understanding this shift. According to the work of Gilles Deleuze, music can be approached not as a collection of fixed forms but as a field of becoming, where events

actualize virtual tendencies rather than realize predetermined identities [5]. The distinction between the virtual and the actual is particularly relevant here: the virtual is not unreal or abstract, but a structured field of potentialities that are actualized differently in each concrete situation.

Within such a framework, a musical work cannot be reduced to a set of sonic properties. Its identity resides instead in a configuration of forces, tendencies, and constraints that give rise to multiple possible realizations. Performance is not the execution of an ideal model, but the site where these virtual structures are actualized through material action. Music, in this sense, is fundamentally performative.

The performative turn thus destabilizes the traditional role of notation as a repository of musical identity. If music is understood as an event rather than an object, then notation can no longer be conceived solely as a means of representing sound. Instead, it must be understood in relation to the actions and processes through which sound emerges. This reconceptualization does not render notation obsolete; rather, it invites a rethinking of its function and scope [6].

From this perspective, the question is no longer how accurately notation can describe sound, but how it participates in shaping musical action. Notation becomes a tool for organizing performative conditions rather than a blueprint for sonic outcomes. This shift lays the conceptual groundwork for a prescriptive understanding of notation, in which the score specifies procedures, gestures, and constraints while leaving the sonic result open to the contingencies of performance.

By situating notation within the performative turn, this paper prepares the ground for a re-evaluation of the relationship between composition, improvisation, and musical ontology. The distinction proposed here should therefore not be understood as a strict opposition between notation and improvisation, but as a shift in emphasis from reversible representational structures toward irreversible processes of action unfolding in time. The following section builds on this framework by examining improvisation more closely as a practice that exposes the limits of descriptive notation and points toward alternative, prescriptive modes of musical inscription.

3. IMPROVISATION AND THE LIMITS OF DESCRIPTIVE NOTATION

Improvisation poses a fundamental challenge to musical notation understood primarily as a descriptive system. If notation aims to represent sound by specifying pitch, duration, and dynamic relationships in advance, improvisation exposes the limits of such representation by foregrounding musical action as a real-time, irreversible process. In improvisatory contexts, sound is not the realization of a pre-existing structure but the immediate outcome of decisions made in performance. The question that emerges is not how to notate an improvised result, but how notation can meaningfully relate to a practice in which musical identity is inseparable from action.

From the perspective of descriptive notation, improvisation appears as a problem of

underdetermination. The more music depends on contingent interactions between performer, instrument, and moment, the less adequately it can be captured by a system designed to encode stable sonic outcomes. Attempts to fully describe improvisation through traditional notation often result either in excessive abstraction – reducing music to schematic outlines – or in an illusion of control that obscures the performative reality of the practice [3].

Historically, this tension is already visible within the canon of Western art music itself. One of the most prominent examples is the solo cadenza in the classical concerto. Traditionally positioned near the end of the first movement, the cadenza marks a suspension of orchestral time and a transfer of compositional agency to the soloist. While formally integrated into the work, the cadenza was for a long period not fully notated, but rather indicated by a fermata or a conventional cue, leaving its realization to the performer's improvisatory skill.

The cadenza thus functions as a liminal space within an otherwise highly regulated notational system. It reveals that even within a predominantly descriptive framework, certain musical situations resist full inscription. What is left unnotated in the cadenza is not the sound itself, but the sequence of actions, gestures, and decisions through which sound comes into being. The eventual practice of composers writing out cadenzas in the nineteenth century can be understood as an attempt to reassert control over this indeterminate zone, effectively transforming an action-based practice into a descriptive object.

A similar tension characterizes the relationship between improvisation and extended instrumental techniques in contemporary music. Many such techniques – multiphonics, unstable timbres, noise-based sounds – cannot be reliably specified in terms of fixed sonic parameters. Their realization depends on fine-grained bodily actions, micro-adjustments, and instrument-specific behaviors that exceed the descriptive capacity of traditional notation. As a result, composers often resort to verbal instructions, diagrams, or hybrid notational strategies that shift the focus from sound description to action prescription.

This shift highlights a crucial point: improvisation does not simply fall outside notation; it reveals a different ontological layer of musical practice. Improvisation operates at the level of how sound is produced rather than what sound should result. From this perspective, the inadequacy of descriptive notation is not a technical limitation, but a conceptual one. Descriptive notation presupposes that sound can be abstracted from the actions that produce it, whereas improvisation insists on their inseparability.

The limits of descriptive notation thus become visible precisely where musical meaning is grounded in performative causality rather than in sonic identity. Improvisation foregrounds the fact that many musical parameters – timbre, instability, intensity, resistance – are not properties of sound objects but effects of action. These parameters cannot be fully captured by symbolic representation; they must be enacted.

This realization does not imply that improvisation necessitates the abandonment of notation altogether.

Rather, it invites a rethinking of notation's function. If notation is understood not as a mirror of sound but as a mediator of musical action, then its role in improvisatory contexts can be reconfigured. Instead of prescribing sonic results, notation can specify constraints, tendencies, or action-spaces within which improvisation unfolds [7, 8].

In this sense, improvisation and notation are not opposites but exist in a productive tension. Improvisation exposes the limits of descriptive notation, while notation, reconceived prescriptively, can articulate conditions that shape improvisatory behavior without eliminating its openness. This perspective paves the way for understanding prescriptive notation as a means of engaging with improvisation without reducing it to a fixed object.

At the same time, the relationship between prescriptivity and sonic indeterminacy must be specified more precisely. Not all forms of action-based notation lead to unstable or unpredictable results. In many cases, clearly defined actions produce relatively stable and reproducible sonic outcomes, particularly when the causal relationship between gesture and sound remains linear and well-controlled. The situation addressed in this paper concerns a different regime of instrumentality, in which increased prescriptive precision does not stabilize the sonic result, but rather intensifies its ontological instability. The unpredictability that emerges is therefore not a matter of interpretative freedom, but produced by the interaction between precisely prescribed actions and the physical limits of the instrument.

The following section develops this argument by examining prescriptive notation more closely – not as an experimental deviation from tradition, but as an extension of practices that have long existed within classical notation. By tracing the prescriptive layers embedded in descriptive systems, it becomes possible to rethink notation as an interface that operates at the level of action rather than representation.

4. PRESCRIPTIVE LAYERS WITHIN CLASSICAL NOTATION

While musical notation is often characterized as a descriptive system that specifies sonic parameters, a closer examination of classical notation reveals a dense network of prescriptive elements embedded within it. These elements do not describe sound as such, but rather instruct performers how to act upon their instruments. They operate at the level of gesture, technique, and bodily engagement, and their sonic consequences remain only partially predictable.

From this perspective, classical notation already functions as a hybrid system in which descriptive and prescriptive dimensions coexist. Pitch, duration, and dynamics may form the structural backbone of the notational system, but they are continually supplemented by instructions that prescribe instrumental actions without fully determining their sonic outcome. These prescriptive layers are often treated as secondary or auxiliary, yet they play a decisive role in shaping musical sound.

One of the most evident examples can be found in string techniques such as *sul ponticello*, *sul tasto*, *col legno*, or

flautando. These indications do not describe a specific timbre in acoustic terms; rather, they prescribe a spatial relationship between bow and string. The resulting sound – richer in overtones, noisier, thinner, or more unstable – emerges from the action itself and varies depending on the instrument, performer, and context. The notation specifies an action, not a sound object.

Articulation marks such as *staccato*, *legato*, *spiccato*, *tenuto*, or *marcato* further illustrate this prescriptive dimension. These symbols do not correspond to fixed acoustic profiles but to families of gestures that shape the temporal and energetic character of sound production. Their interpretation relies on embodied performance traditions rather than on precise sonic definitions. As such, articulation marks operate as interfaces between notation and bodily technique.

Ornamentation provides an especially revealing historical example. Baroque ornaments – trills, mordents, turns, *appoggiaturas* – were initially not fully specified in notation but relied on shared performance conventions and improvisatory elaboration [9]. Even when standardized symbols were introduced, they functioned less as descriptions of exact pitch sequences than as prompts for gestural procedures. Ornamentation thus represents an early form of prescriptive notation that mediates between structure and improvisation.

Breath marks, bowings, fingerings, and pedaling indications extend this logic further. These markings explicitly address the performer's body and instrumental interface rather than the sonic surface of the music. Fingerings, in particular, reveal the instrument-specific nature of prescriptive notation: the same pitch sequence can be realized through multiple physical strategies, each producing subtle differences in timbre, articulation, and resistance. By prescribing a fingering, the notation intervenes directly in the performer's bodily technique.

Crucially, these prescriptive elements are rarely perceived as undermining the determinacy of classical notation. On the contrary, they are often understood as contributing to precision and control. Yet this precision operates at the level of action rather than sound. The more precisely an action is prescribed, the more clearly the composer articulates a field of performative causality – while simultaneously acknowledging that the sonic result cannot be entirely fixed in advance.

This observation allows for a redefinition of prescriptive notation that departs from its common association with experimental or graphic practices. Prescriptivity does not imply vagueness or indeterminacy per se. Instead, it designates a mode of notational thinking in which the primary object of inscription is instrumental action. Sound, in this framework, appears as an emergent phenomenon rather than a pre-specified target.

Seen in this light, classical notation already contains the conceptual tools required to engage with unstable, noise-based, or process-oriented sounds. What changes in contemporary practice is not the presence of prescriptivity, but its degree and emphasis. When sound production becomes more unstable or when instrumental techniques operate at the limits of control, the prescriptive dimension of notation moves from the background to the foreground.

This shift sets the stage for the use of minimally extended notational strategies that intensify prescriptive instruction without abandoning the logic of classical notation. Rather than replacing descriptive notation with alternative systems, such approaches work from within the tradition, exploiting its latent prescriptive layers. The following section examines how this strategy can be conceptualized philosophically, and how prescriptive notation can be understood as operating within a process-oriented, immanent ontology of music.

5. PRESCRIPTIVITY, ACTION, AND VIRTUALITY

The prescriptive dimension of musical notation acquires its full conceptual significance when considered within a process-oriented ontology of music. If sound is understood not as a fixed object but as an emergent event, then the function of notation cannot be limited to the representation of sonic outcomes. Instead, notation operates at the level of action, configuring the conditions under which sound may occur. This shift can be productively articulated through Gilles Deleuze's philosophical distinction between the virtual and the actual.

In Deleuzian terms, the virtual is not an abstract or unreal domain, but a structured field of potentialities that are real insofar as they condition what can become actual [5]. The actual, by contrast, is the concrete manifestation of these potentials in a specific situation. Crucially, the relationship between the virtual and the actual is not one of execution or resemblance: the actual does not represent the virtual, but actualizes it through processes of differentiation.

Applied to musical notation, this distinction allows for a rethinking of prescriptivity beyond the opposition between determinacy and indeterminacy. Prescriptive notation, as understood in this paper, does not specify actual sounds; it articulates a virtual field of instrumental actions. These actions – fingerings, contact points, pressure, airflow, resistance – constitute real tendencies that shape what kinds of sounds may emerge, without fixing their precise sonic identity in advance.

This perspective clarifies an apparent paradox that has been identified in existing accounts of prescriptive notation. As Mieko Kanno has convincingly argued, no musical notation can be purely prescriptive or purely descriptive, and the balance between these dimensions is historically variable [10]. One of the most significant contributions of her work is the observation that the more prescriptive notation becomes, the more interpretative labor it demands from the performer. In this view, notation is not a transparent set of instructions, but a site of negotiation between compositional intention, instrumental affordances, and performative realization.

This paper fully endorses this diagnosis. However, rather than treating this paradox primarily as a pragmatic or epistemological tension within notational practice, it proposes an ontological rearticulation of the problem. The increased interpretative demand associated with prescriptive notation is not accidental, nor does it result from insufficient specification. It is a structural consequence of notation operating at the level of action rather than sound.

From a Deleuzian perspective, prescriptive notation structures a virtual field of instrumental actions whose actualization cannot be predicted in advance. The more precisely these actions are prescribed, the more clearly the virtual field is articulated – yet without collapsing it into a single actualization. Interpretative work, in this context, does not consist in choosing between predefined sonic outcomes, but in actualizing action-based potentials whose sonic consequences remain immanent to the performance situation.

In this sense, the paradox identified by Kanno – the more prescriptive the notation becomes, the more interpretative work it demands – is not a contradiction, but a necessary consequence of action-based notation engaging directly with the virtual. Precision at the level of action does not reduce openness at the level of sound; on the contrary, it intensifies processes of differentiation. The notation prescribes what to do, not what will be heard.

This ontological framing also allows for a refinement of the notion of notation as a site of negotiation. While negotiation can be understood pragmatically as a dialogical process between composer and performer, it can also be conceived more fundamentally as an immanent process in which sound emerges through the differential actualization of prescribed actions. In this latter sense, negotiation does not take place about sound, but within the process of its becoming.

Prescriptive notation, therefore, does not negotiate sonic meaning in advance, nor does it aim to stabilize musical identity. Instead, it activates conditions under which sound can arise as an event. The openness associated with such notation is not the result of ambiguity, under-specification, or reduced precision, but of the impossibility of fully predicting the sonic consequences of precisely prescribed instrumental actions.

This framework also allows for a re-evaluation of the relationship between notation and improvisation. Improvisation, rather than standing in opposition to notation, can be understood as operating within a virtual field structured by technical knowledge, embodied habits, and situational constraints. Prescriptive notation externalizes and formalizes aspects of this field, translating tacit instrumental knowledge into explicit performative instructions. In doing so, it establishes a continuity between composed and improvised practices without reducing either to the other.

Seen through this lens, prescriptive notation should not be positioned at one extreme of a spectrum ranging from control to indeterminacy. Rather, it constitutes a distinct mode of notational thinking in which determinacy is relocated from sound to action. This relocation explains why prescriptive notation can be simultaneously rigorous and open, demanding and unstable, precise and unpredictable.

This conceptualization provides the theoretical foundation for the compositional strategies discussed in the following section. By employing minimally extended classical notation to prescribe instrumental actions while allowing sonic outcomes to remain immanent to performance, the works examined here enact prescriptivity not as negotiation over representation, but as a catalyst for musical becoming.

6. PRESCRIPTIVE NOTATION IN COMPOSITIONAL PRACTICE: CASE STUDIES

The prescriptive approach to notation outlined in the preceding sections is grounded in the author's compositional work for trumpet, where classical notation is employed as a primary framework while being minimally extended to articulate action-based instrumental processes. Rather than introducing alternative or graphic notational systems, this practice intensifies prescriptive elements already latent within the traditional five-line staff, allowing instrumental actions to be specified with high precision while leaving their sonic outcomes inherently open.

Across the following examples, notation consistently operates at the level of instrumental action rather than sonic description. Pitch, rhythm, and articulation retain their conventional functions, but they are strategically reoriented to serve as reference points for the coordination of bodily gestures, airflow, valve technique, and spatial manipulation of the instrument. Sound emerges as an immanent consequence of these actions rather than as a pre-specified object.

6.1. Example 1: Bell Manipulation as a Prescriptive Continuum

In several works, manipulation of the trumpet bell – either by hand or using a plunger mute – is notated using simple prescriptive symbols placed above the staff. The symbols “o” and “+” indicate a fully open and fully closed bell respectively, while arrows between them prescribe gradual transitions between these states. Intermediate degrees of openness are indicated by partially shaded symbols (see Figure 1).

Crucially, these symbols do not describe timbre or dynamic change; they prescribe spatial and physical actions. The resulting colorations of sound depend on numerous contingent factors, including air pressure, embouchure stability, and acoustic feedback. In extended tones, the same symbols are sometimes rhythmically articulated using note stems without heads, allowing the opening and closing of the bell to be precisely coordinated in time independently of pitch specification.



Figure 1. Prescriptive notation of gradual bell opening and closure on trumpet.

Here, notation functions as a temporal organization of continuous action. The sound produced cannot be fixed in advance, yet the performer's actions are highly constrained and structured. This example demonstrates how prescriptive notation can articulate a process of becoming rather than a static sonic state

6.2. Example 2: Action Layering Through Slide, Trill, and Approximate Pitch

A second prescriptive strategy involves rapid directional motion within the harmonic series, produced through controlled overblowing while simultaneously executing valve trills. In these passages, notation specifies a clearly defined starting pitch, followed by a slide line leading toward an arrow-shaped notehead indicating an indeterminate extreme register rather than a fixed target pitch. The entire gesture is embedded within a strictly defined rhythmic duration and marked with a trill indication above the staff (see Figure 2).

This notational configuration coordinates multiple layers of action: directional airflow modulation through the harmonic spectrum, rapid valve alternation, and temporal precision. The slide does not represent a glissando in the conventional sense; it prescribes a process of overblowing from one register toward another while the trilling action destabilizes pitch identity. The approximate pitch notation explicitly suspends descriptive accuracy at the level of sound while maintaining prescriptive clarity at the level of action.

Interpretation in this context does not involve expressive shaping of a stable sound, but continuous regulation of unstable instrumental behavior. The performer must negotiate resistance, feedback, and threshold states in real time, actualizing a virtual field of action structured by the notation.

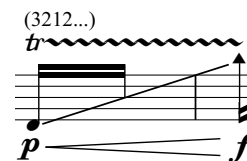


Figure 2. Combined prescriptive notation of slide motion and trilled articulation within a fixed duration, emphasizing action-based control over approximate pitch outcome.

6.3. Example 3: Hyperkinetic Prescriptivity and Sonic Instability

The most extreme application of this approach occurs in a section characterized by sustained hyperkinetic motion. Here, the trumpet part unfolds in continuous rapid activity, notated within the traditional staff using dense rhythmic groupings such as sextuplets and quintuplets at fast tempi. Only selected pitches – marked with noteheads in parentheses – appear as points of directional inflection, indicating moments where the motion reverses from ascending to descending within the harmonic space, or vice versa. Between these points, slide lines indicate continuous motion through the overtone spectrum.

Simultaneously, valve actions are precisely specified using numerical valve indications aligned with the rhythmic structure. As a result, the performer executes two tightly coordinated layers of action: rhythmically articulated valve movements and continuous pitch-space traversal through overblowing (see Figure 3). Despite this high degree of prescriptive precision, the resulting sound is highly unstable, noisy, and resistant to identification in terms of traditional pitch-based musical categories.

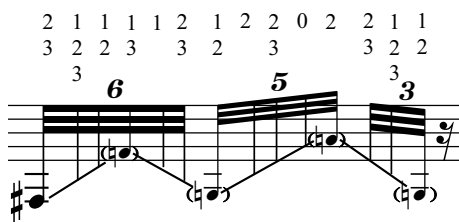


Figure 3. Highly prescriptive rhythmic notation coordinating valve actions with continuous pitch movement across the harmonic spectrum, producing unstable sonic results.

This section exemplifies the central claim of the present study. Maximal prescriptive determination at the level of action produces minimal stability at the level of sonic identity. The notation functions as a machine for generating events rather than reproducing sounds. Importantly, the precise rhythmic articulation also enables close coordination with other instrumental parts, which engage in similarly rapid, complementary motions, establishing a form of contrapuntal interaction based on action rather than pitch.

6.4. Prescriptive Precision and Immanent Openness

Across these examples, prescriptive notation does not reduce interpretative freedom but relocates it. The performer's task is not to realize a predefined sonic object, but to sustain a dynamic relationship with unstable sound-producing processes. Interpretation becomes a matter of managing thresholds, resisting collapse, and navigating instrumental limits.

By maintaining the logic of classical notation while selectively extending its prescriptive capacity, these works demonstrate that action-based notation can operate with high precision without sacrificing openness. Sound remains immanent to performance, emerging through the actualization of virtual action-fields structured by the score.

This compositional practice thus embodies the ontological framework developed earlier in the paper. Prescriptive notation is neither a deviation from tradition nor a strategy of indeterminacy, but a means of articulating music as an event whose identity resides in processes of action and becoming rather than in fixed sonic forms.

7. CONCLUSION

This paper has proposed a rearticulation of musical notation beyond its conventional representational function, approaching it instead as a prescriptive interface that organizes instrumental action and enables the emergence of sound as an event. By examining the prescriptive layers embedded within classical notation and situating them within a performative and process-oriented ontology of music, the study has argued that precision in notation need not imply determinacy at the level of sonic outcome.

Drawing on improvisation, historical practices, and contemporary philosophical frameworks – particularly Deleuze's concept of virtuality – the paper has shown that prescriptive notation operates at the level of action rather than sound. The paradox identified in existing literature,

whereby increased prescriptivity intensifies interpretative labor, has been reframed not as a contradiction but as a structural consequence of action-based notation engaging with unstable sound-producing processes.

Through case studies drawn from the author's compositional practice for trumpet, the paper has demonstrated how minimally extended classical notation can prescribe highly specific instrumental actions while leaving sonic results immanent to performance. These examples illustrate that prescriptive notation does not negate compositional control, nor does it collapse into indeterminacy; rather, it relocates determinacy from sonic representation to performative causality.

By maintaining continuity with the logic of traditional notation while intensifying its prescriptive dimension, this approach offers an alternative perspective on the relationship between composition, improvisation, and performance. It suggests that notation can function not as a blueprint for musical objects, but as a catalyst for musical becoming – one that activates virtual fields of action whose actualizations remain contingent, situated, and irreducible to fixed sonic identities.

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