JMU MARCHING ROYAL DUKES

2025 BATTERY PERCUSSION

OVERVIEW

Thank you for your interest in the 2025 JMU Marching Royal Dukes battery percussion section. Our goal as a staff is to create a positive and fun experience as well as give you a well-rounded education in the world of marching percussion. The exercises in this packet will be used throughout the audition process, with an added marching component on the live audition day.

IMPORTANT DATES

June 1st, 2025: Video auditions due

June 28th, 2025: Live audition day

APPROACH

It is important to note that our philosophies are not the right OR wrong way of approaching marching percussion, it is just how we approach it here in the MRDs. In general terms when auditioning, it is important to make sure you are comfortable behind the instrument, play in a natural and relaxed manner to achieve a full sound, and most importantly, have fun!

Please email Josh Sheppard at sheppajc@dukes.jmu.edu for any questions regarding this packet and/or auditions.

INFO. & VIDEO INSTRUCTION

(DUE June 1ST, 2025)

TECHNIQUE

Snare drums use traditional grip.

Tenors and **bass drums** use matched grip.

Cymbals will have their own section dedicated to technique and video requirements.

GENERAL VIDEO REQUIREMENTS

The video should include your **instrument** and **full body**, with an **audible metronome**.

The player must **mark time to everything**. We mark time starting off **the left foot**.

The whole video can be recorded in separate takes (Please take one continuous video per exercise). The staff does ask that you **label each exercise on-screen along with the bpm used**.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY AND FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS EXACTLY!

BY INSTRUMENT VIDEO REQUIREMENTS

(TENORS: Please follow around instructions)

Snare Drum/Tenors:

8-8-16: 1 rep @ 140 bpm, 1 rep @ 155 bpm, 1 rep @ 170 bpm. (All @ Forte) (Tenors on around)

RUDIMENT SHEET:: 1 rep of the first 7 lines @ 130 bpm (Tenors on drum 2)

SUBTLE SHIFTS: 1 rep @ marked tempos (use Tonal Energy metronome file from Facebook page or mp3 file) (Tenors on around)

PARADIDDLES: 1 rep @ 164 bpm (Tenors on drum 2), 1 rep @ 180 bpm (Tenors around)

RLB: 2 reps @ 160 bpm (Tenors around).

FLAMS 25: 2 reps @ 108 bpm. (Tenors on around)

2024 SHOW EXCERPT: 1 rep @ 86 bpm

Bass Drums:

8-8-16: 4 rep @ 160 bpm (1st rep play snare part, 2nd rep play 1s, 3rd rep play 2s, 4th rep play Float Variation) (Split of drum auditioning on).

SUBTLE SHIFTS: 1 rep @ marked tempos (use Tonal Energy metronome file from Facebook page or mp3 file) (Split of drum auditioning on).

PARADIDDLES: 1 rep @ 164 bpm, 1 rep @ 180 bpm (Split of drum auditioning on).

RLB: 2 reps @ 160 bpm (Split of drum auditioning on).

FLAMS 25: 2 reps @ 108 bpm (Split of drum auditioning on).

2024 SHOW EXCERPT: 1 rep @ 86 bpm (Split of drum auditioning on)

CYMBAL TECHNIQUE OVERVIEW:

Because marching cymbals are such a unique and integral color of the battery percussion, we have provided an overview of marching cymbal techniques along with the video requirements.

Set Position:

- Set position is where we hold the cymbals while either standing at “set” or “attention”. There are many different positions that the players will use. This is the first thing people see in the lot or at performances. A line by their set positions can tell a lot. We want these to always look the same.

“Set”

- This is the position you will be in when called to “set” by a staff member or section leader. In this position, your arms will be controlled, but you will have to learn to remain relaxed. Cymbals should not rest on your hips.
- Use your fingers to keep the cymbals straight up and down, and just slightly off your hips. Knots should be in line with the seams of your pants.
- Elbows should be back and will bend slightly.
- The shoulders should be relaxed.
- The cymbals must remain perpendicular to the ground and parallel to each other. They must seem straight and not angled if viewed by a spectator.
- Your cymbal straps should be comfortable and not extremely tight.
- We will use off-hand techniques often so try to have the strap more on the loose side than tight.
- You want your hand to take up as much space on the cymbal as you can and have your fingers spread out.

- ** When beginning from attention, the cymbals will be brought up directly to the position of the first note to be played unless otherwise defined. The cymbals will be brought up on beat three before each exercise begins. You will flip up to all positions except the Klank position. For the Klank position the cymbals will be brought straight up while keeping them parallel.**

Playing Positions:

- There are six positions in which the cymbals will be played:
- 1. Horizontal Playing Position
- 2. High Hat Position
- 3. Vertical Playing Position
- 4. Klank Position
- 5. Tap Position
- 6. Zischen/“Scrape” Position

- Horizontal Playing Position:
    - Cymbals are at a 45-degree angle with the “southeast” edge slightly tilted down. The right cymbal is over top of the left. Cymbals are in the center of your body at waist height. Cymbals should be an inch apart and the edges should be even. Each forearm is at a 45-degree angle. Examples of sounds produced with this position: (Horizontal crashes/crash chokes, Suncoasts)
- High Hat Position:
    - Cymbals are in the center of the body at waist height with the right over the left. They are pressed together, and the edges should be even. The cymbals should be completely flat, not tilted up or down. The back of the cymbal’s edges should be anchored in the belly and played using this area as

a hinge. Think alligator mouth opening and closing. Examples of sounds produced with this position: (High Hat, Dings, Horizontal Sizzles, Sucks)

- Vertical Playing Position:
    - Thumbs should be even with your nose. Cymbals should be an inch apart. The cymbals are both at the same height, so the edges should be even. Elbows are slightly out with each forearm at a 45-degree angle. You should be able to see out of the cymbals, however, we should not be able to see the inside of the cymbals from the audience perspective. Examples of sounds produced with this position: (Vertical crashes/crash chokes, V Sizzles)
- Klank Position:
    - Cymbals are resting on your hip bones and tilted towards each other. Each cymbal should be at a 45-degree angle. The right cymbal should overlap the left cymbal by one inch. The cymbals should be an inch apart. Examples of sounds produced with this position: (Klank “Tap Choke”, Clunk “Muted Tap”, Zipper)
- Tap Position:
    - Left cymbal remains at Vertical Playing Position. The right cymbal is at a 45-degree angle, one inch above the left. The right cymbal is the only one that moves. Examples of sounds produced with this position: (Tap, Tap choke, Double Taps)
- Zischen or “Scrape” Position:
    - The left cymbal remains in the Vertical Playing Position. The right cymbal is at a 45-degree angle. The edge of the right cymbal is contacting the left cymbals just above the bell on the inside. Examples of sounds produced with this position: (Scrapes, Whale Calls)

VIDEO REQUIREMENTS – CYMBALS

- **Must demonstrate 8 reps of these techniques in whole notes @ 120 bpm. Please use the links below to reference the techniques listed.**
    - Horizontal Crash
    - Horizontal Crash Choke
    - Vertical Crash
    - Vertical Crash Choke
    - Suncoast/Sizzsuck
    - Scrape
    - Tap
        - *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZdjoOxCGGZw*
        - *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A66Ag7t0hU*
- 8-8-16: 1 rep @ 140 bpm, 1 rep @ 155 bpm, 1 rep @ 170 bpm, playing part 1
- SUBTLE SHIFTS: 1 rep @ marked tempos (use Tonal Energy metronome file from Facebook group or mp3 file), playing treble clef F part and treble clef B part (Unisons and anything labeled with 1).
- PARADIDDLES: 1 rep @ 164 bpm, 1 rep @ 180 bpm, playing treble clef F part and treble clef B part (Unisons and anything labeled with 1)
- RLB: 1 rep @ 160 bpm, playing treble clef F part and treble clef B part (Unisons and anything labeled with 1)
- FLAMS 25: 1 rep @ 101 bpm), playing treble clef F part and treble clef B part (Unisons and anything with 1)
- CYMBAL AUDITION ETUDE: 1 rep @ 108 bpm.

HEIGHTS

Marching percussion dynamics generally follow a 3 inch height system. As the strokes increase in height, the bead travels around the wrist in an arch that is perpendicular from the playing surface. See the chart below for height definitions.

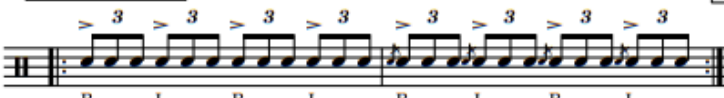
pp	1″	beads as close to the head as possible
p	3″	horizontal stick angle
mp	6″	slightly above horizontal
mf	9″	45 degree stick angle
f	12″	almost vertical
ff	15″	vertical, arm usage
fff	18″+	big lift, arm extension

♩=120-176

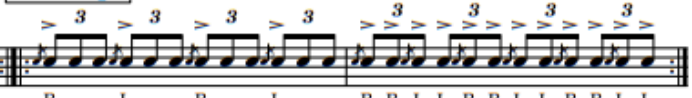
RUDIMENT SHEET

Snares

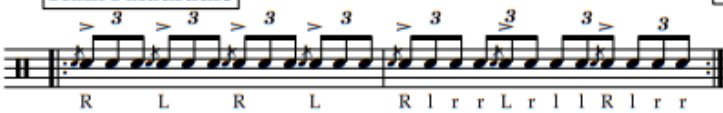
Flam Accents



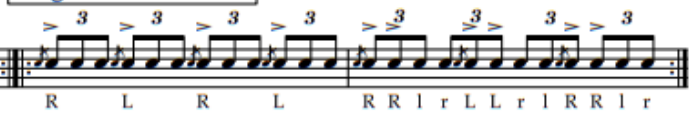
Flam Taps



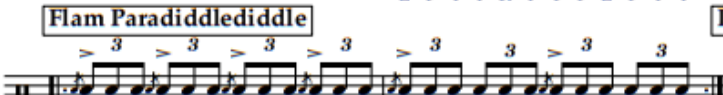
Flam Paradiddle



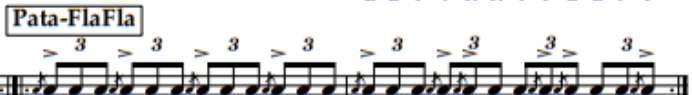
Single Flammed Mill



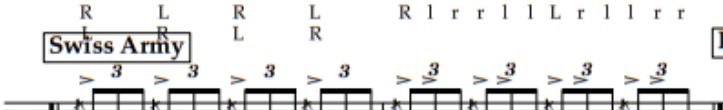
Flam Paradiddlediddle



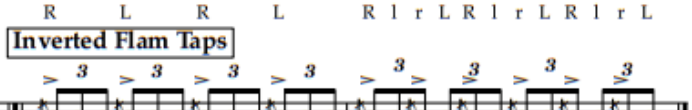
Pata-FlaFla



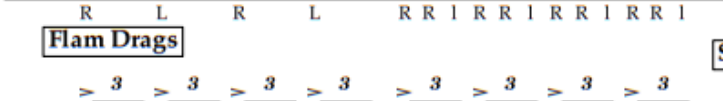
Swiss Army



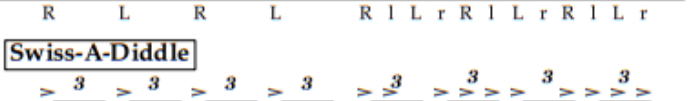
Inverted Flam Taps



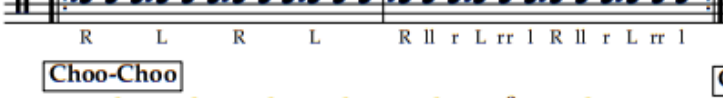
Flam Drags



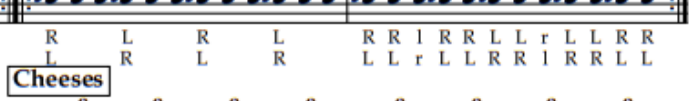
Swiss-A-Diddle



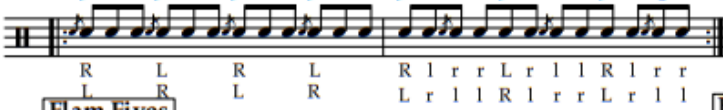
Choo-Choo



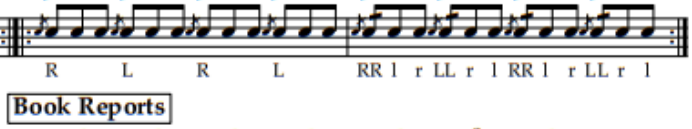
Cheeses



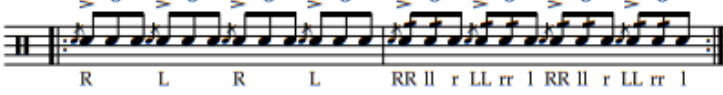
Flam Fives



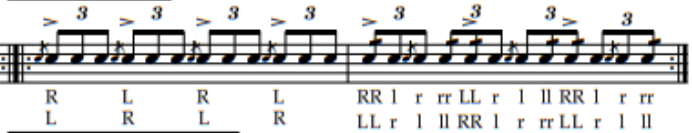
Book Reports



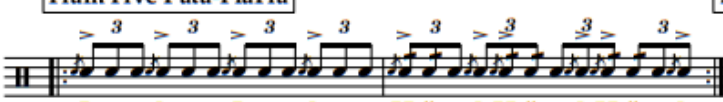
Flam Five Pata-FlaFla



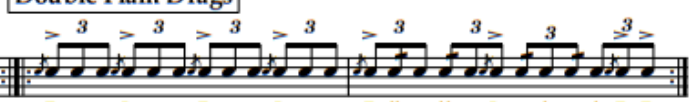
Double Flam Drags



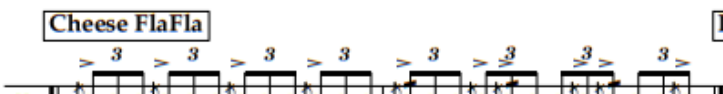
Cheese FlaFla



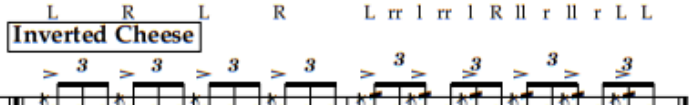
Inverted Cheese



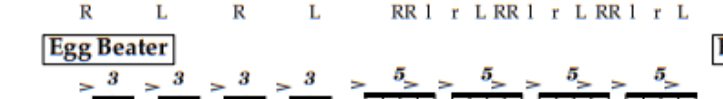
Egg Beater



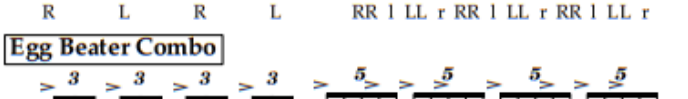
Egg Beater Combo



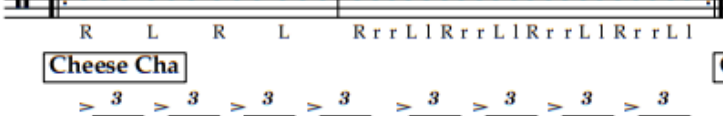
Cheese Cha



Cheese Combo

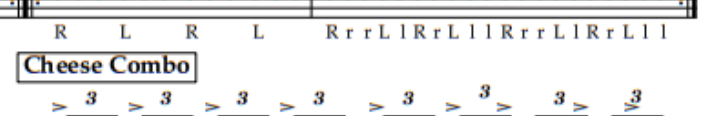


Hertas



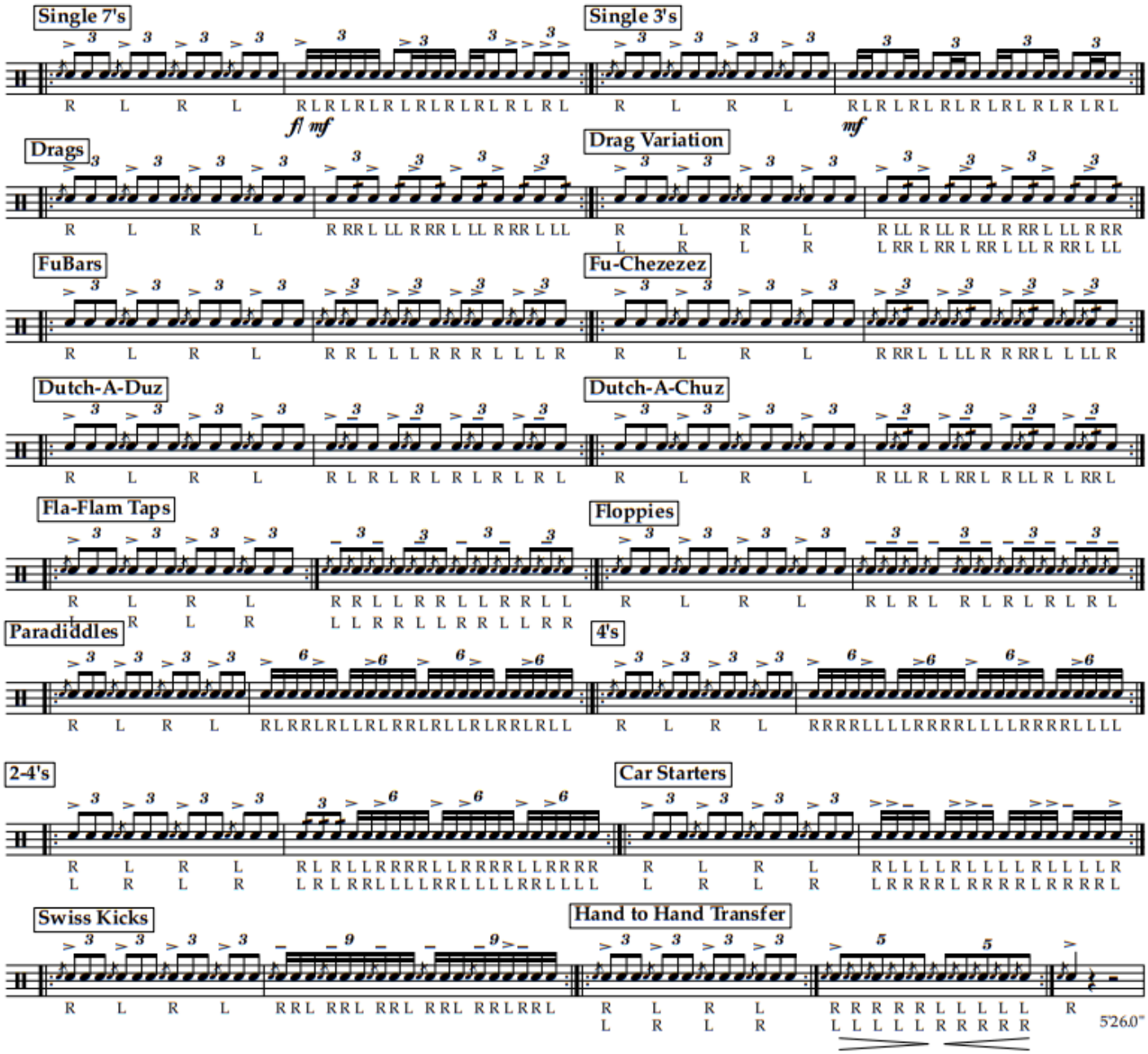
mf

Herta-Combo

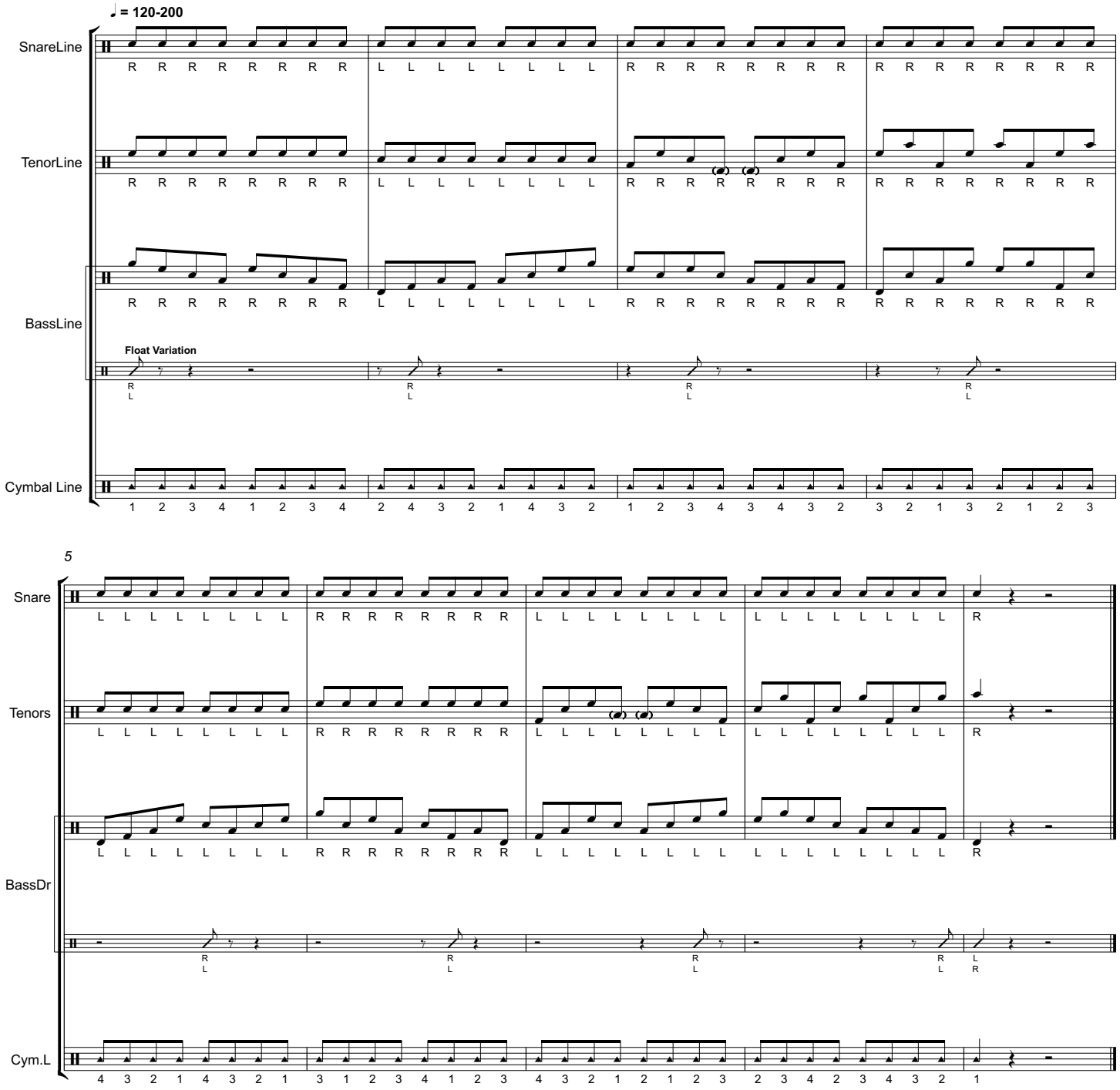


mf

Full Score


Single 7's
Single 3's
Drags
Drag Variation
FuBars
Fu-Chezezez
Dutch-A-Duz
Dutch-A-Chuz
Fla-Flam Taps
Floppies
Paradiddles
4's
2-4's
Car Starters
Swiss Kicks
Hand to Hand Transfer
5'26.0"

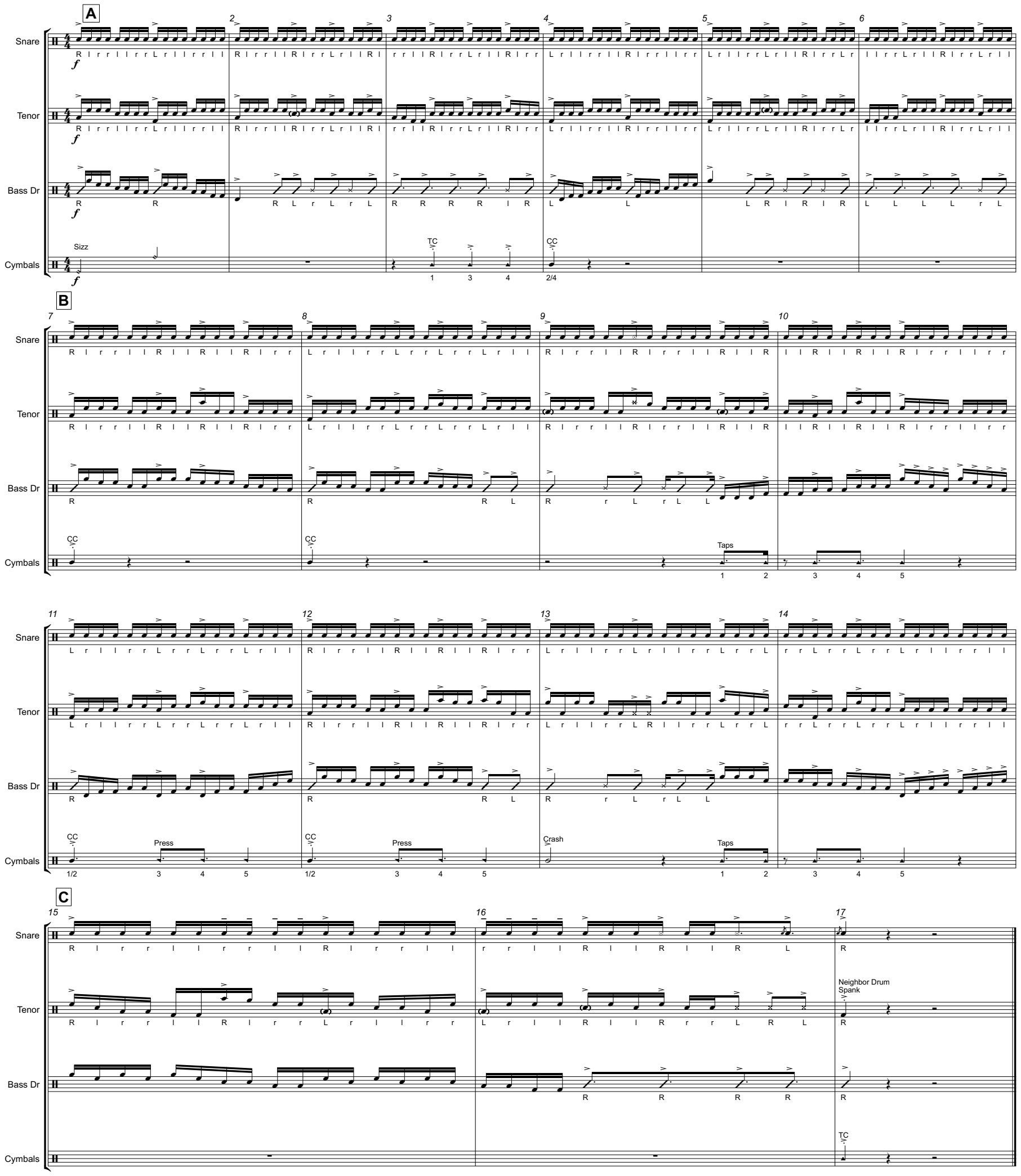
8-8-16



Be prepared to play at a large variety of tempos, dynamic levels, and shapings (crescendo/decrescendo).
Bass Drums should be prepared to play unisons, 2's, 3's, 4's with their splits as well as the Floats Variation below.

Paradiddles

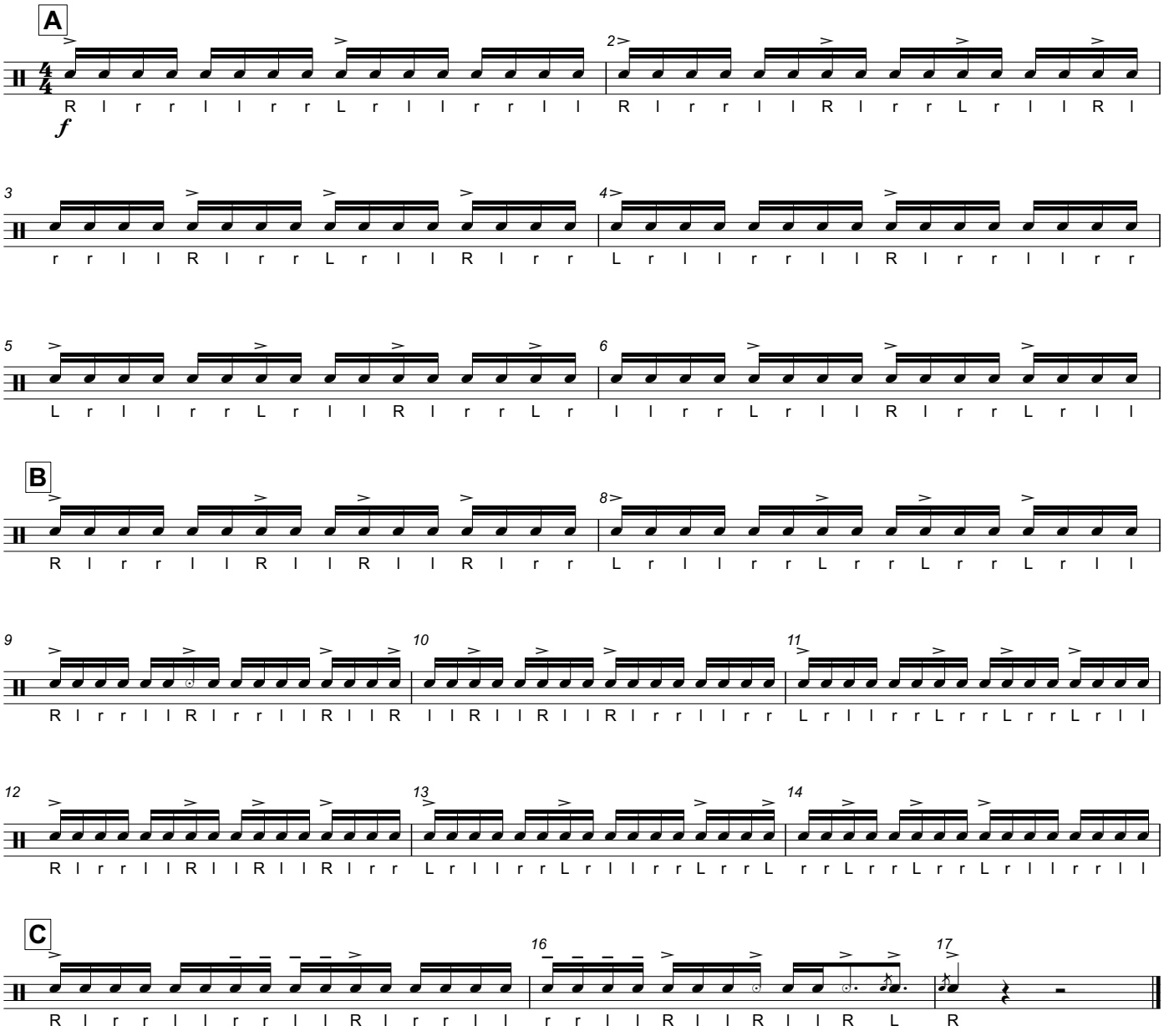
Nate Fuerst



Snare

Paradiddles

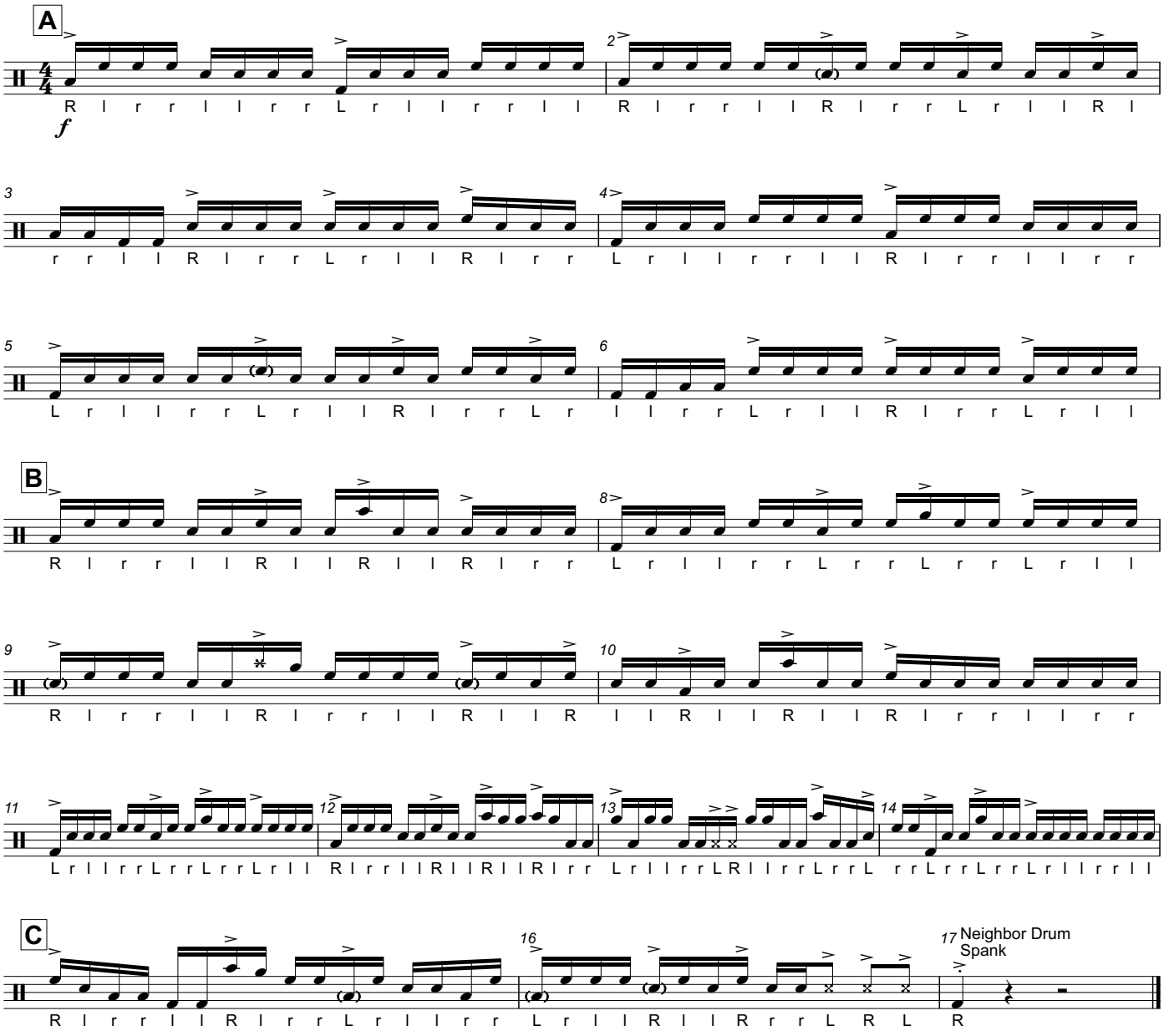
Nate Fuerst



Tenor

Paradiddles

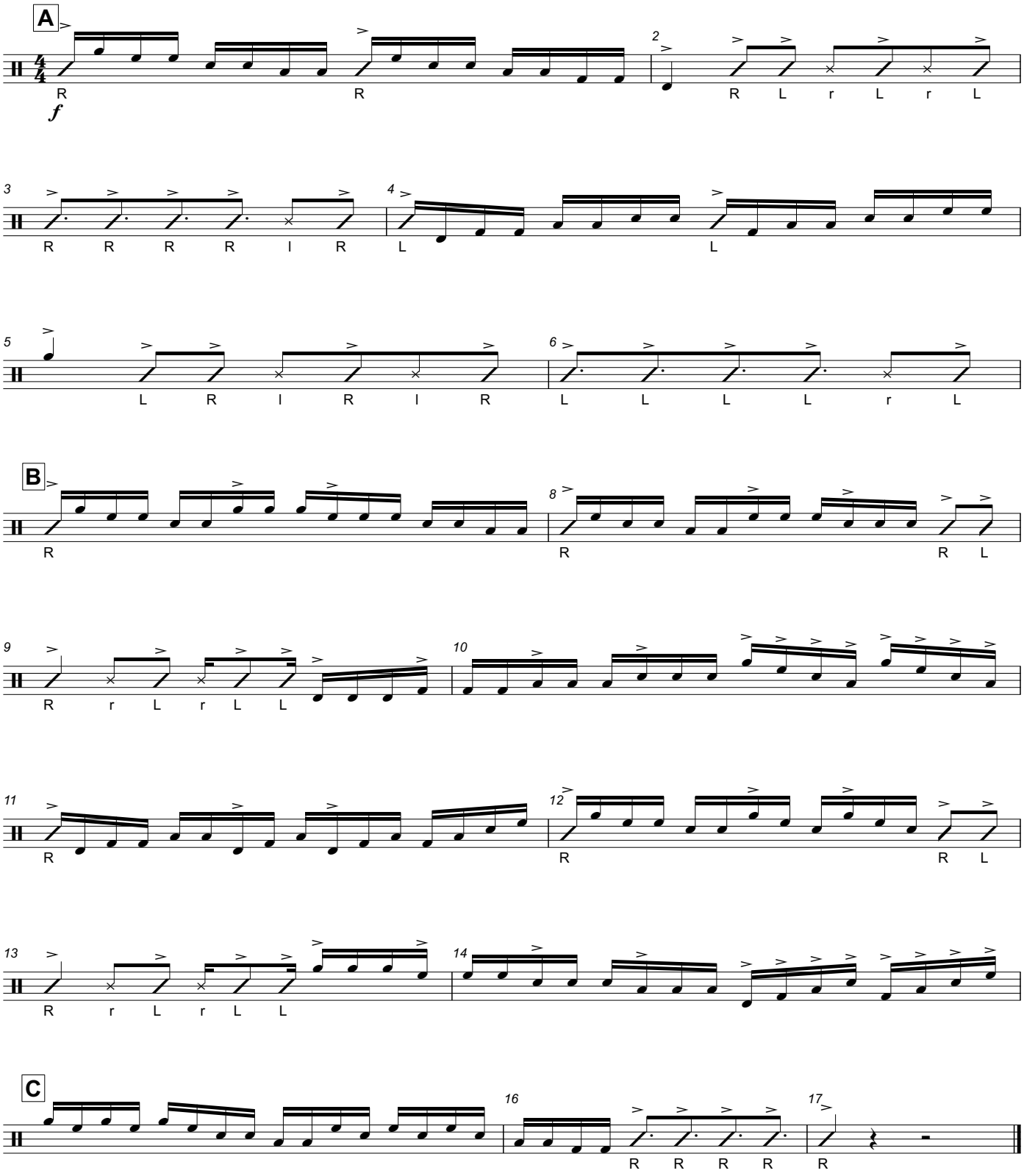
Nate Fuerst



Bass Dr

Paradiddles

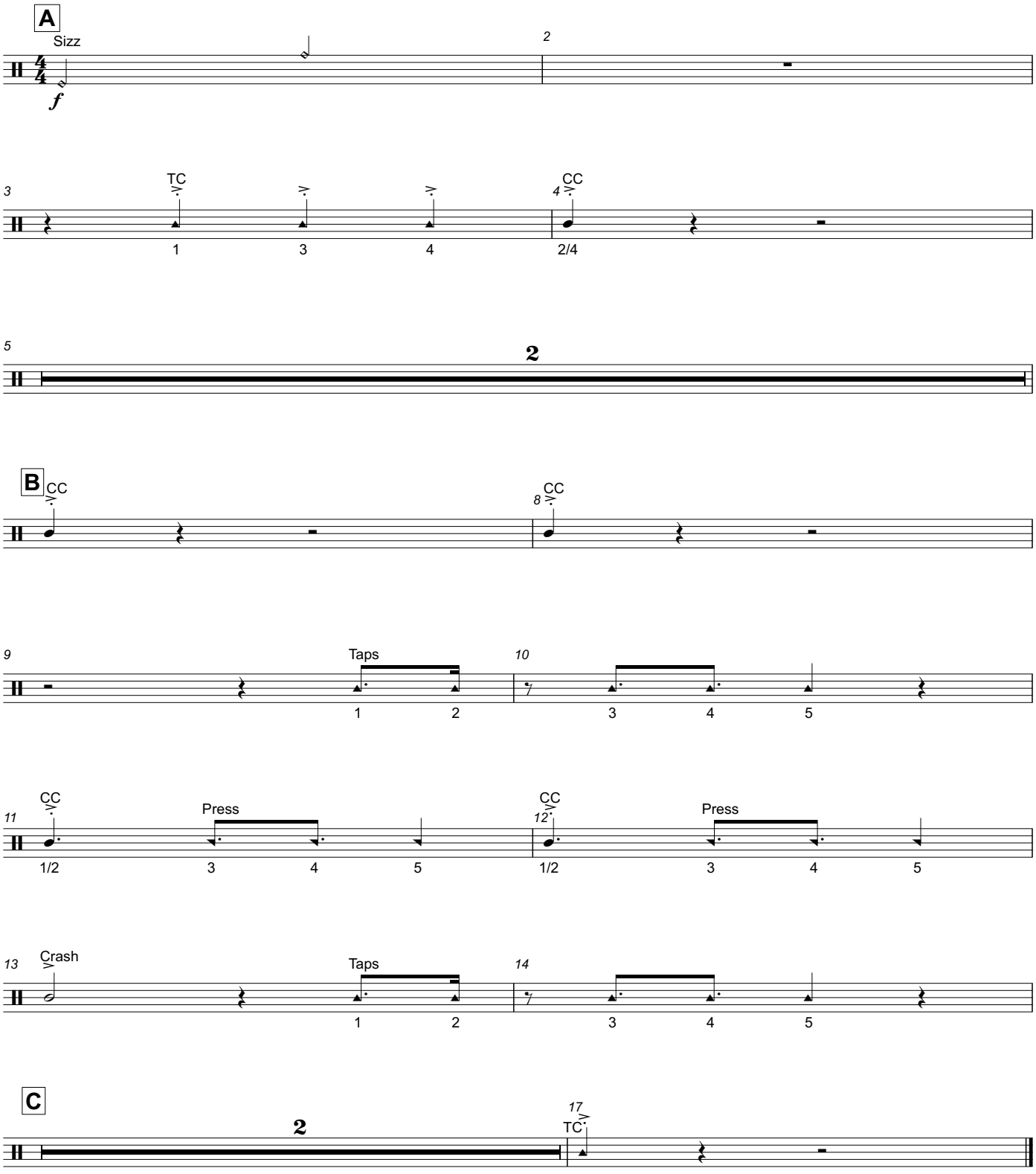
Nate Fuerst



Cymbals

Paradiddles

Nate Fuerst



Subtle Shifts

Josh Sheppard

♩ = 95

Snare
Tenor
Bass Dr
Cymbals

A

Diggits

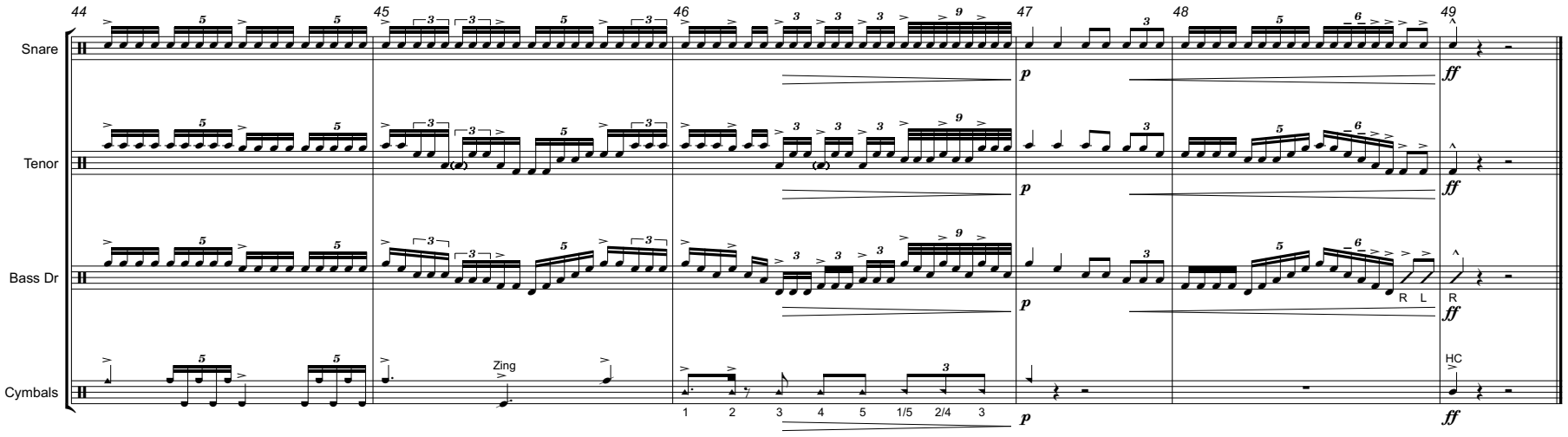
B

♩ = 190

C

D

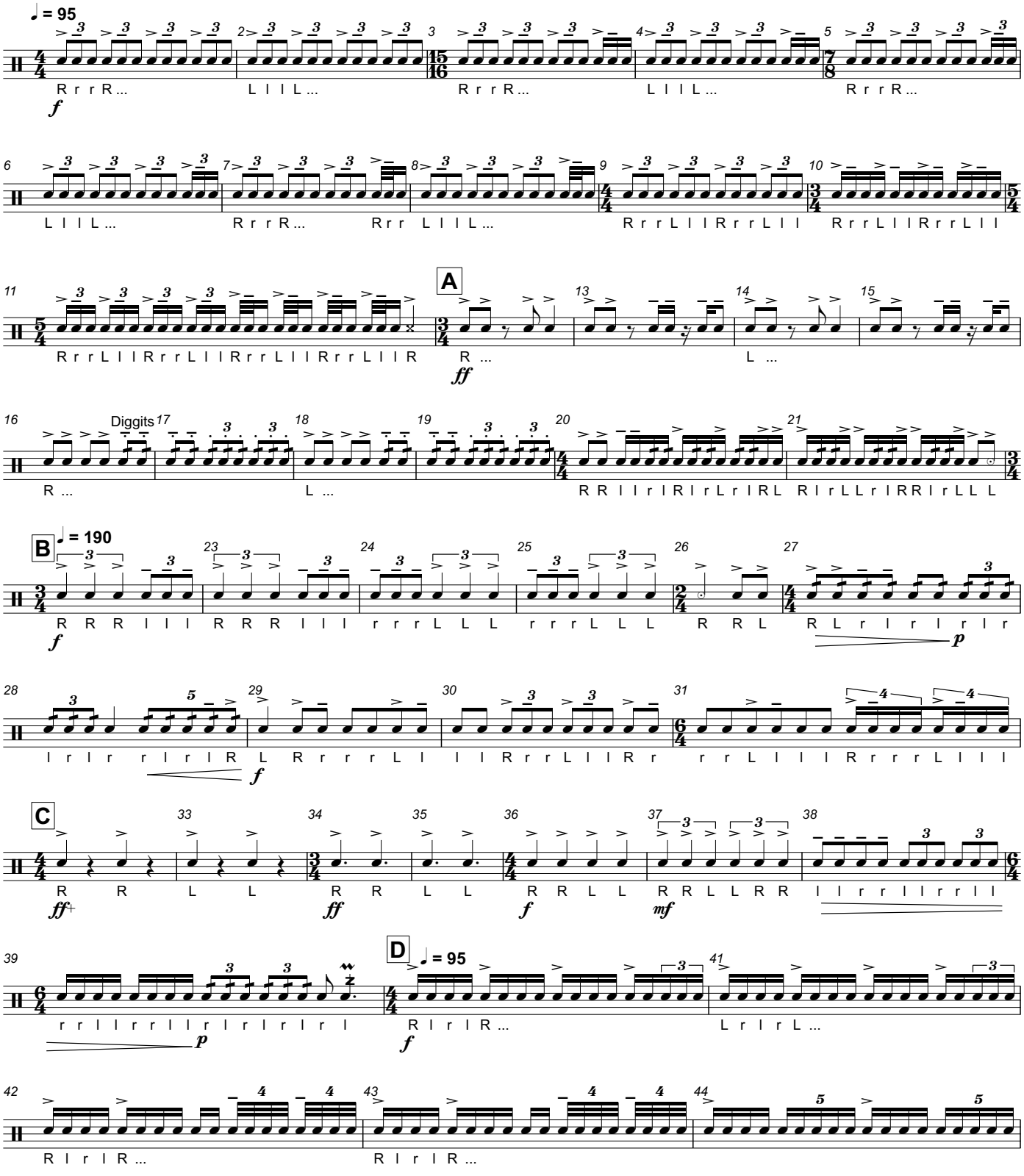
♩ = 95


44
45
46
47
48
49
Snare
Tenor
Bass Dr
Cymbals
Zing
HC
R L
R
1 2 3 4 5 1/5 2/4 3
p
ff

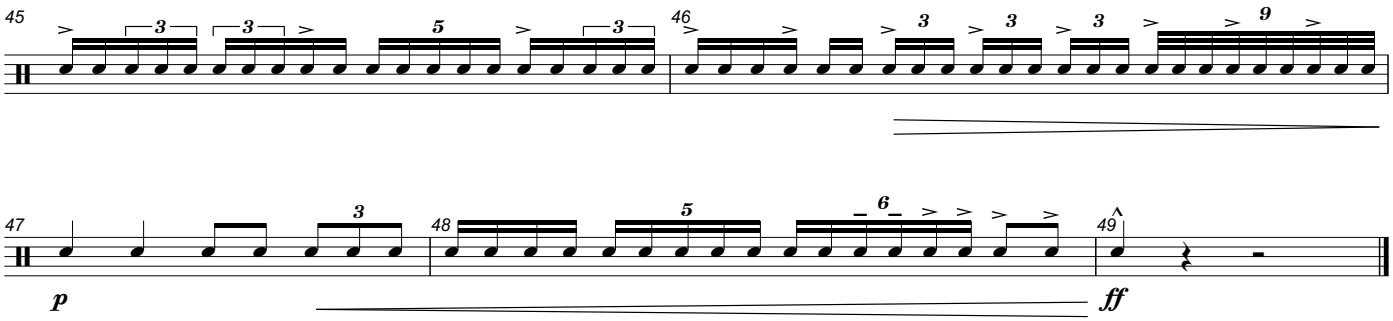
Snare

Subtle Shifts

Josh Sheppard



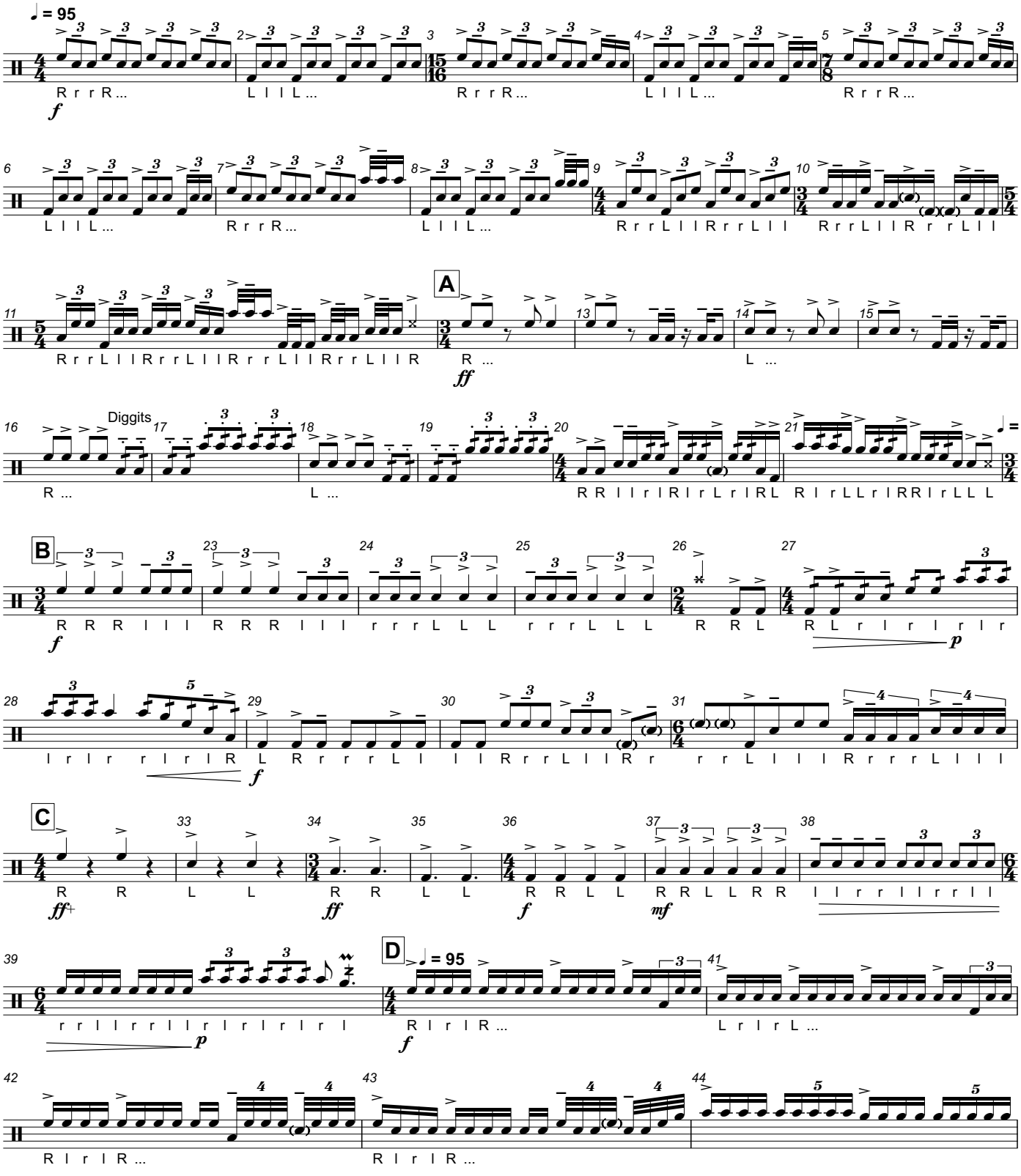
Snare



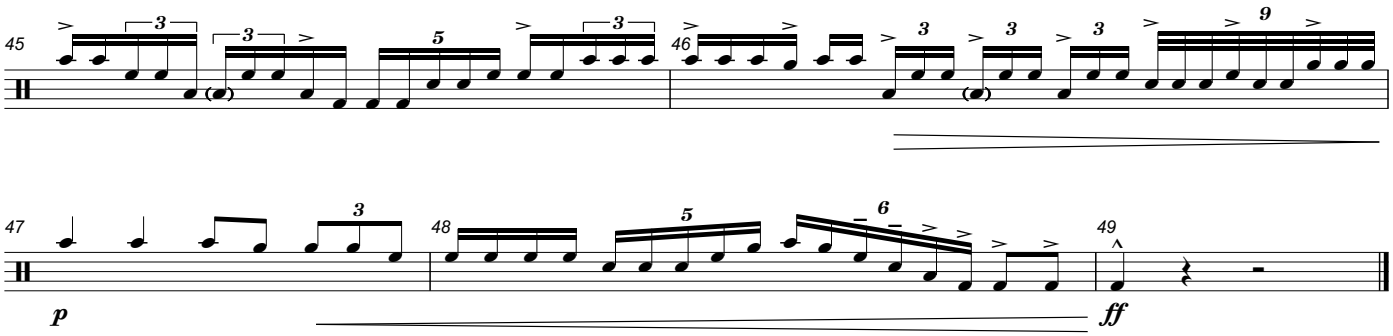
Tenor

Subtle Shifts

Josh Sheppard



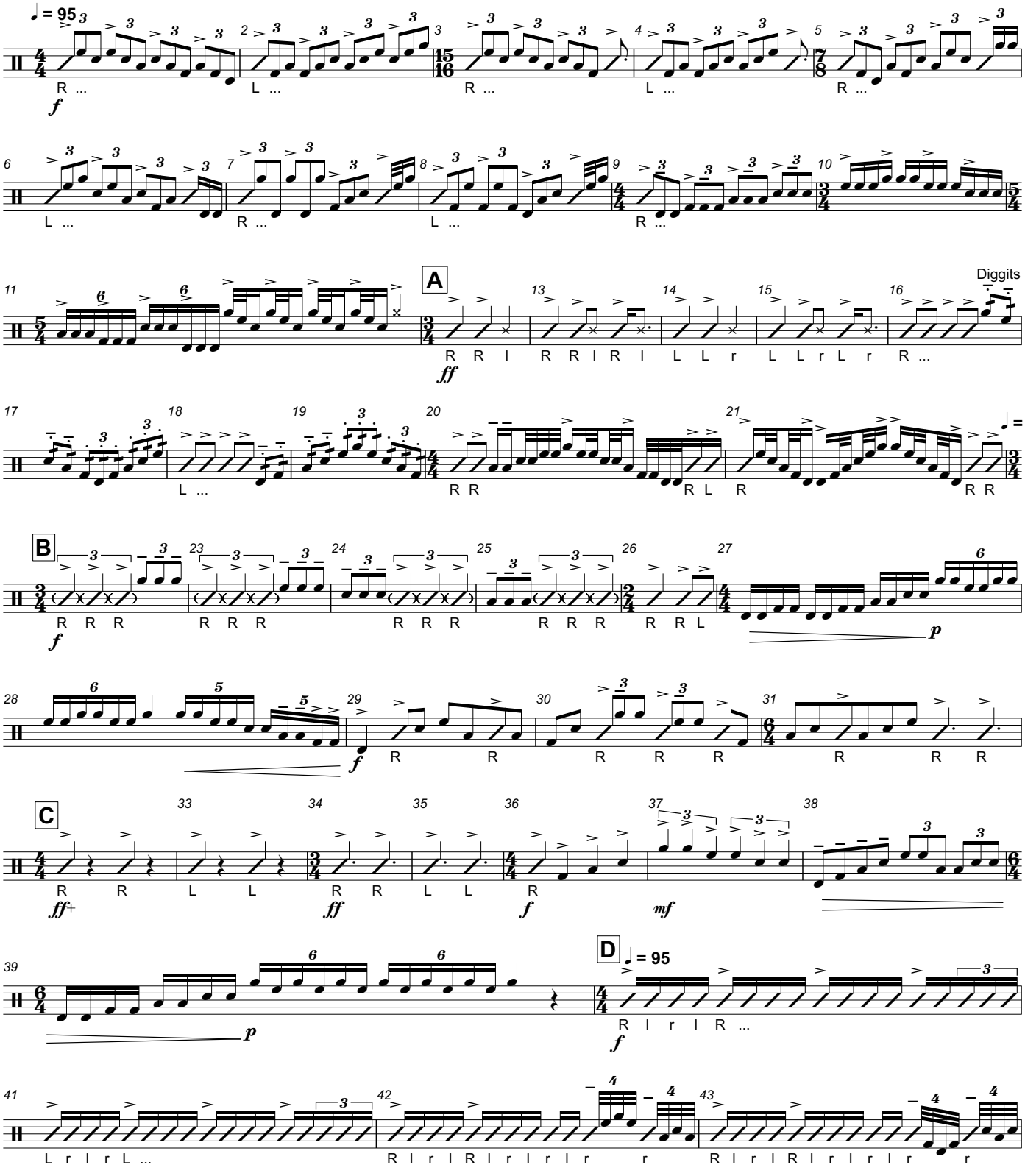
Tenor



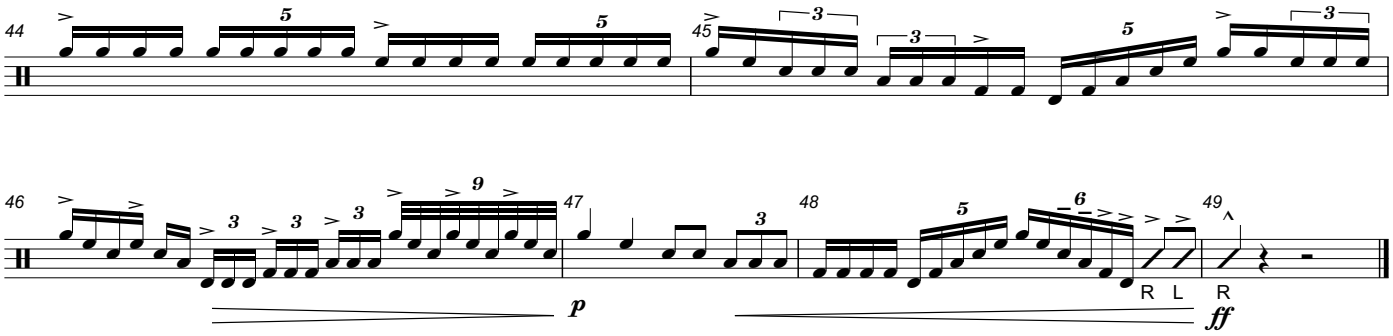
Bass Dr

Subtle Shifts

Josh Sheppard



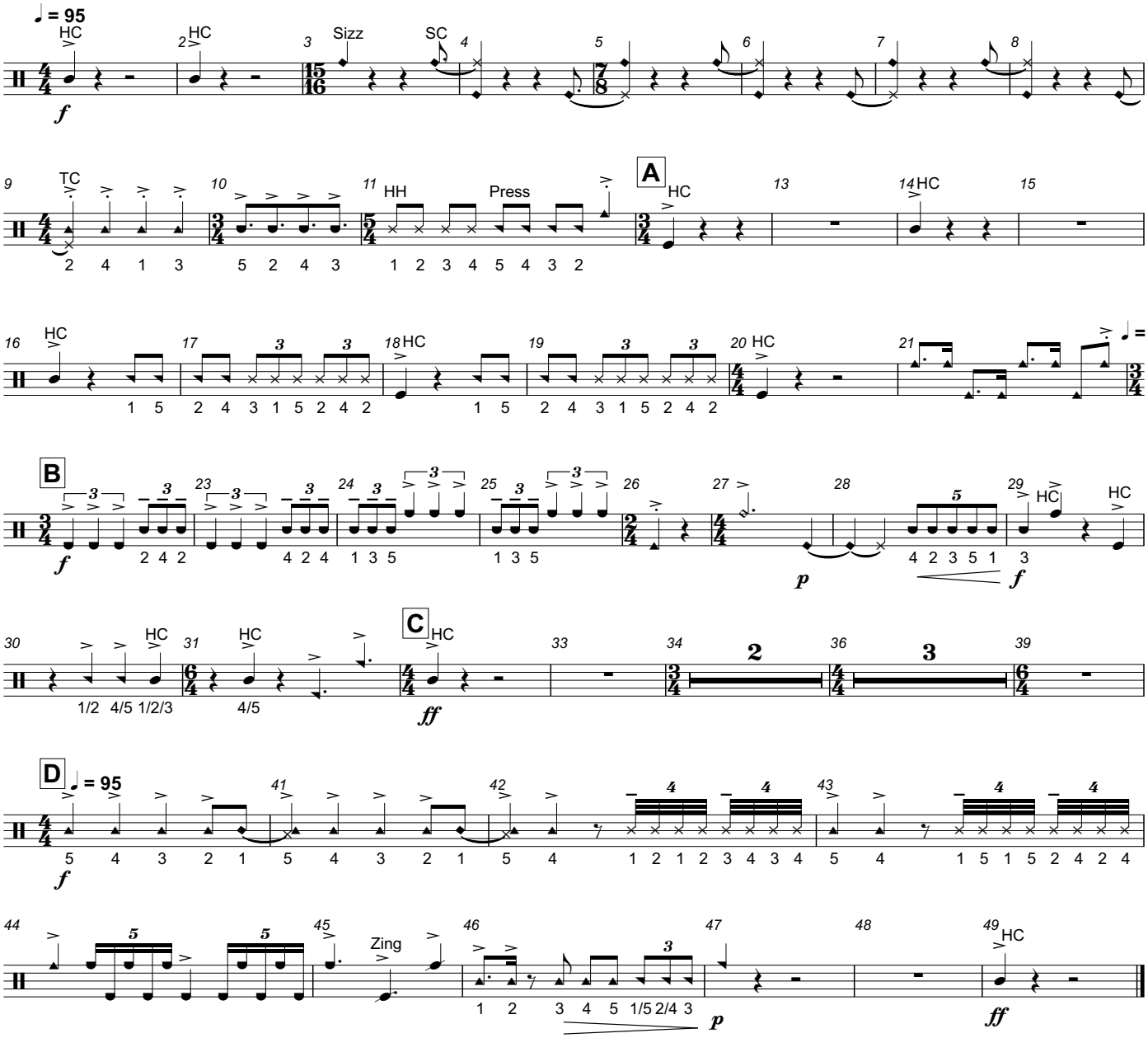
Bass Dr



Cymbals

Subtle Shifts

Josh Sheppard



RLB

Josh Sheppard

A ♩ = 160

Edge

Snare

Tenor

Bass Dr

Visual Sequence

Cymbals

Guts

Center

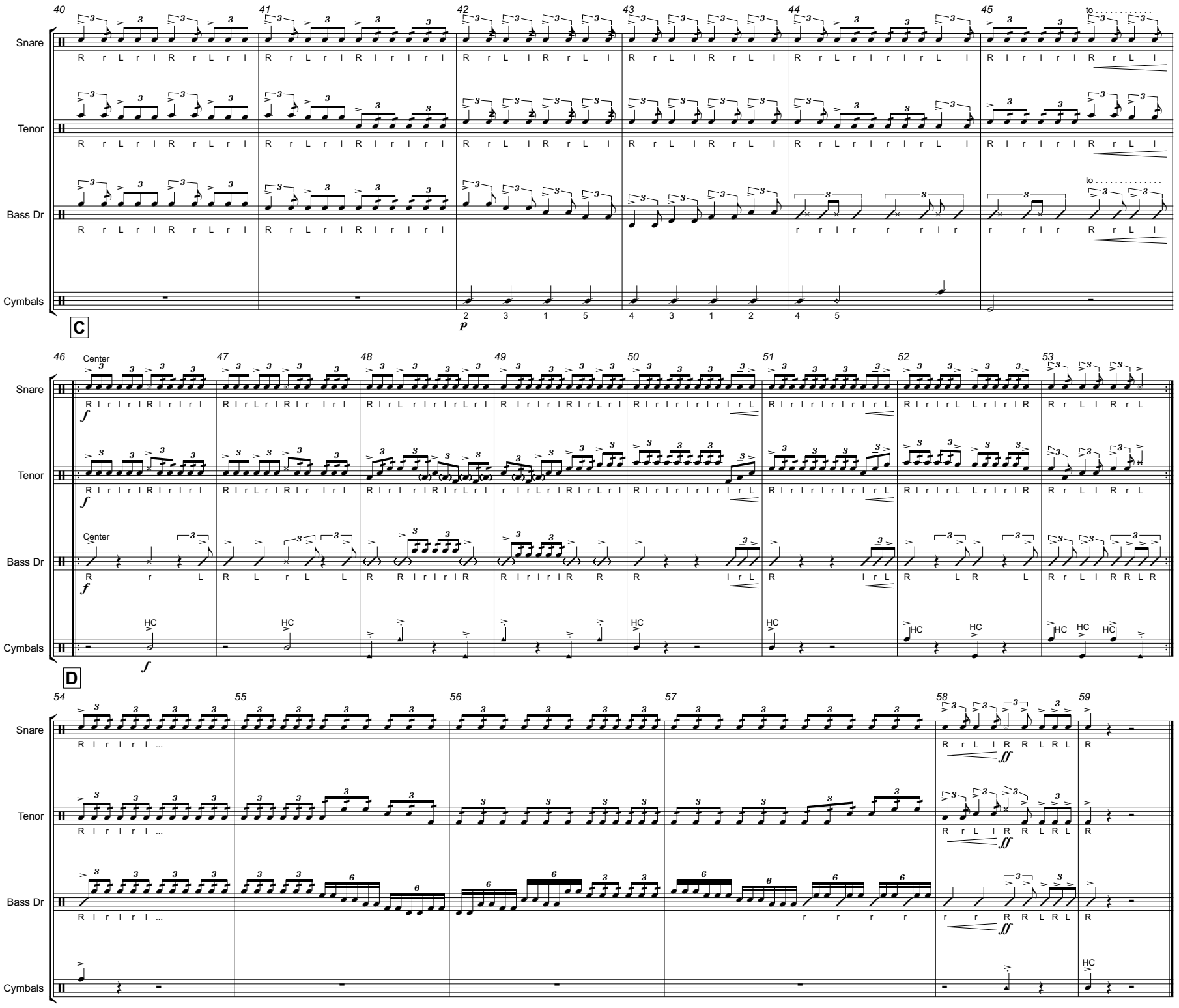
B

HC

Sizz

Tap

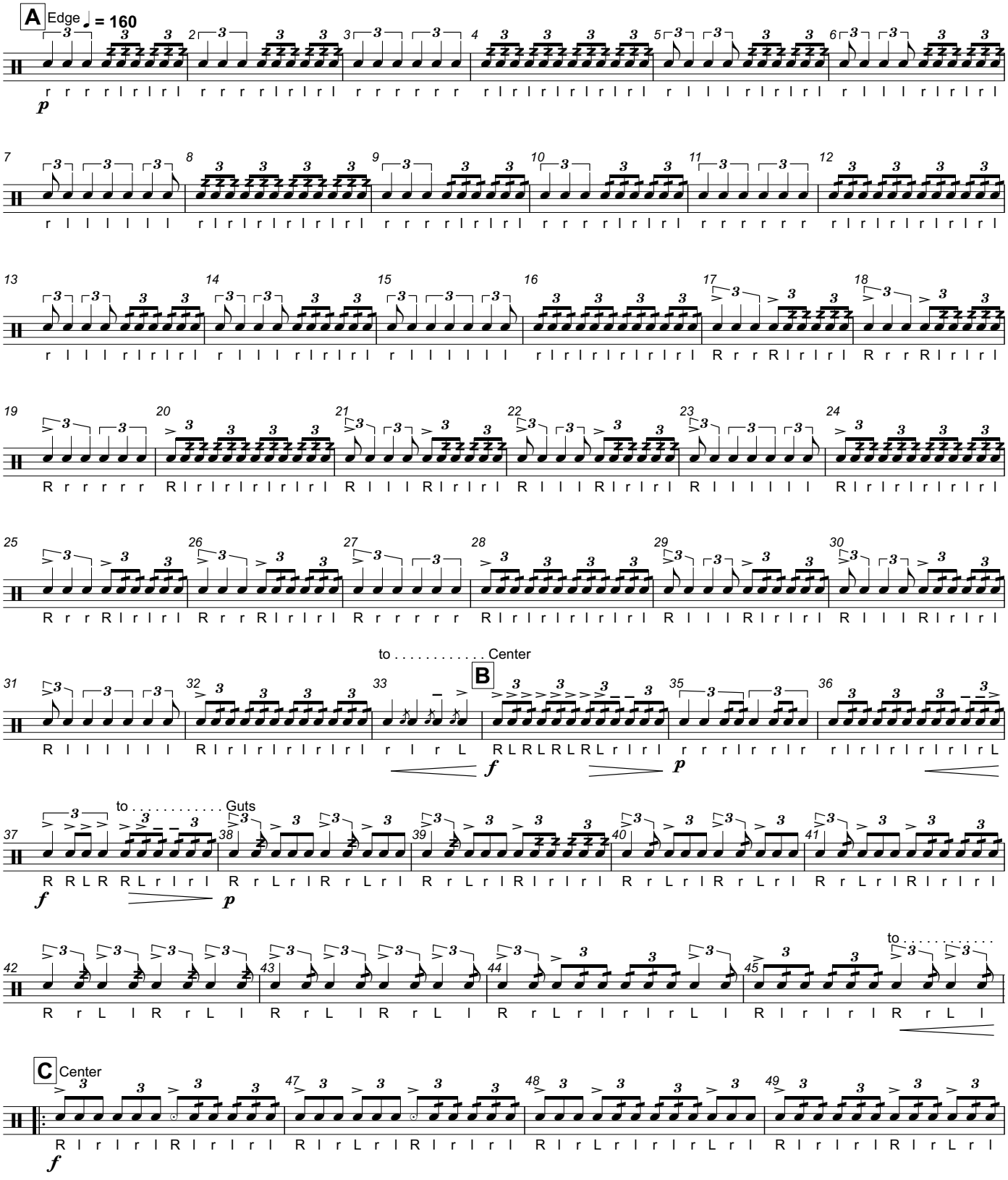
SC


40
41
42
43
44
45
to
Snare
Tenor
Bass Dr
Cymbals
C
p
46
Center
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
f
HC
D
54
55
56
57
58
59
ff

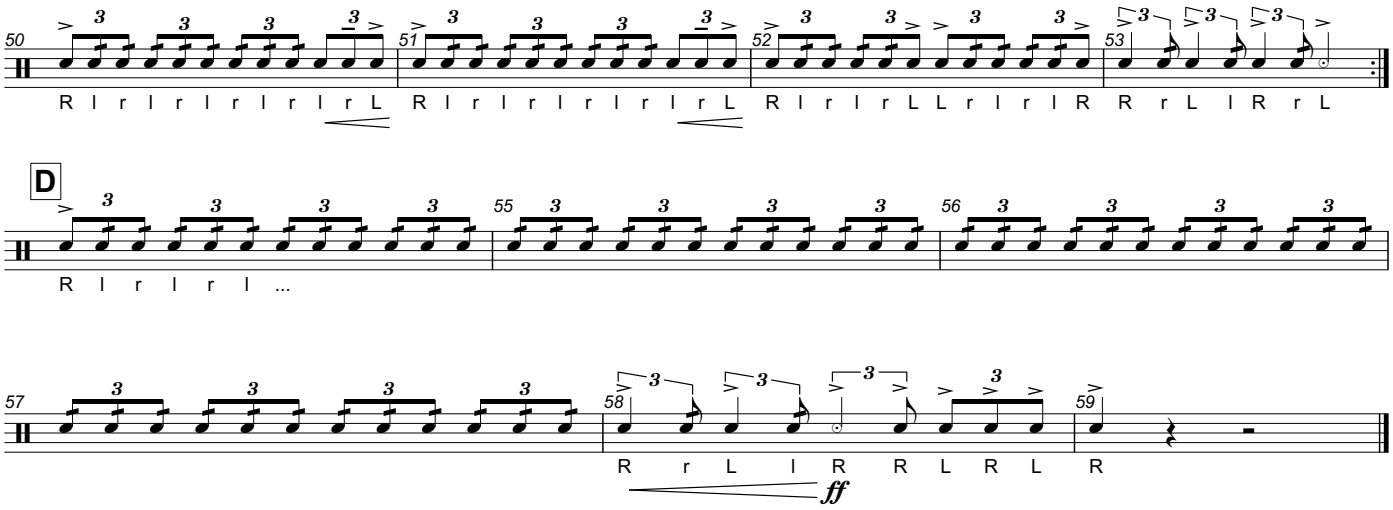
Snare

RLB

Josh Sheppard



Snare


50
R l r l r l r l r l r L
51
R l r l r l r l r l r L
52
R l r l r L L r l r l R
53
R r L l R r L

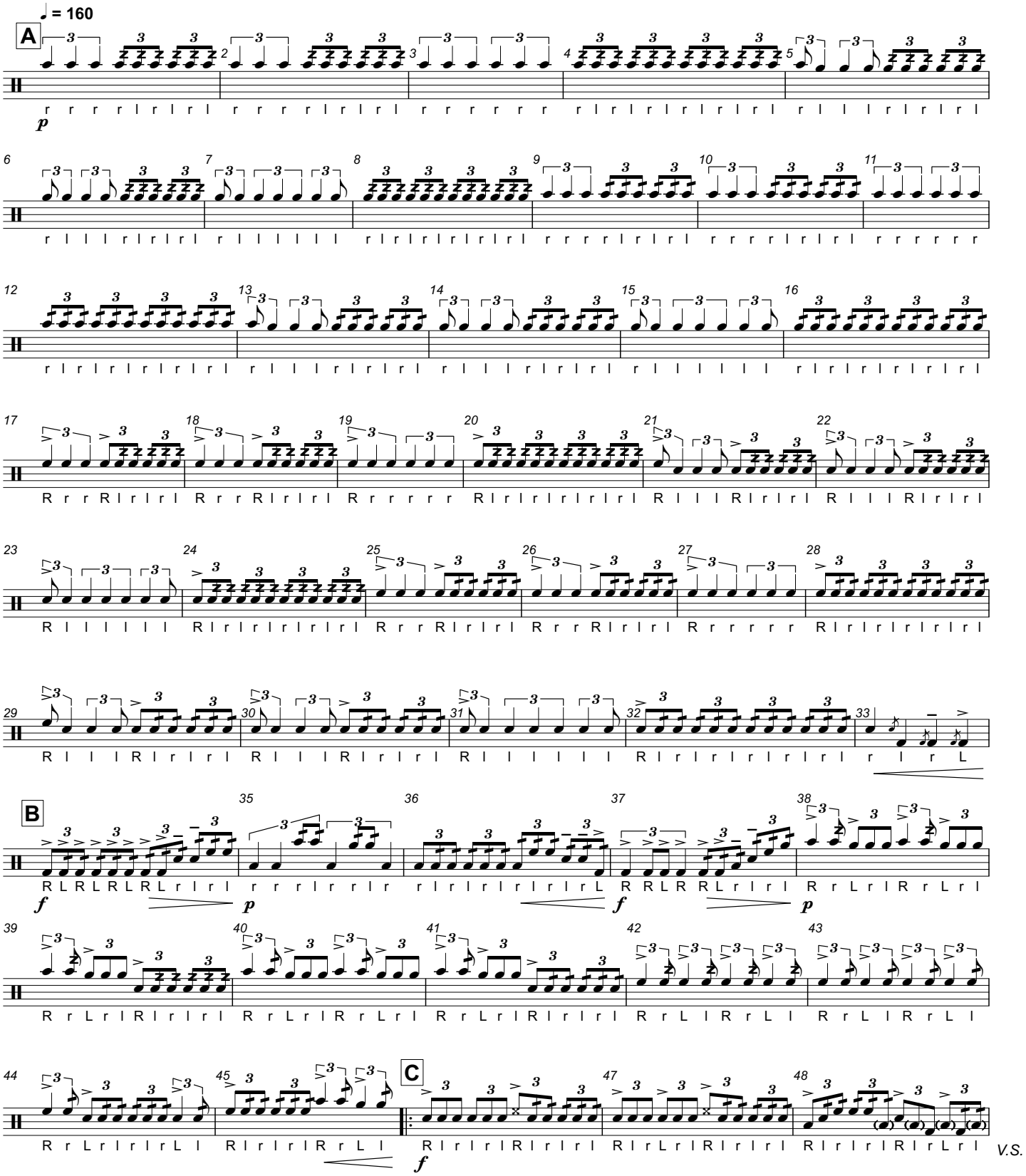
D
55
56
R l r l r l ...

57
58
59
R r L l R R L R L R
ff

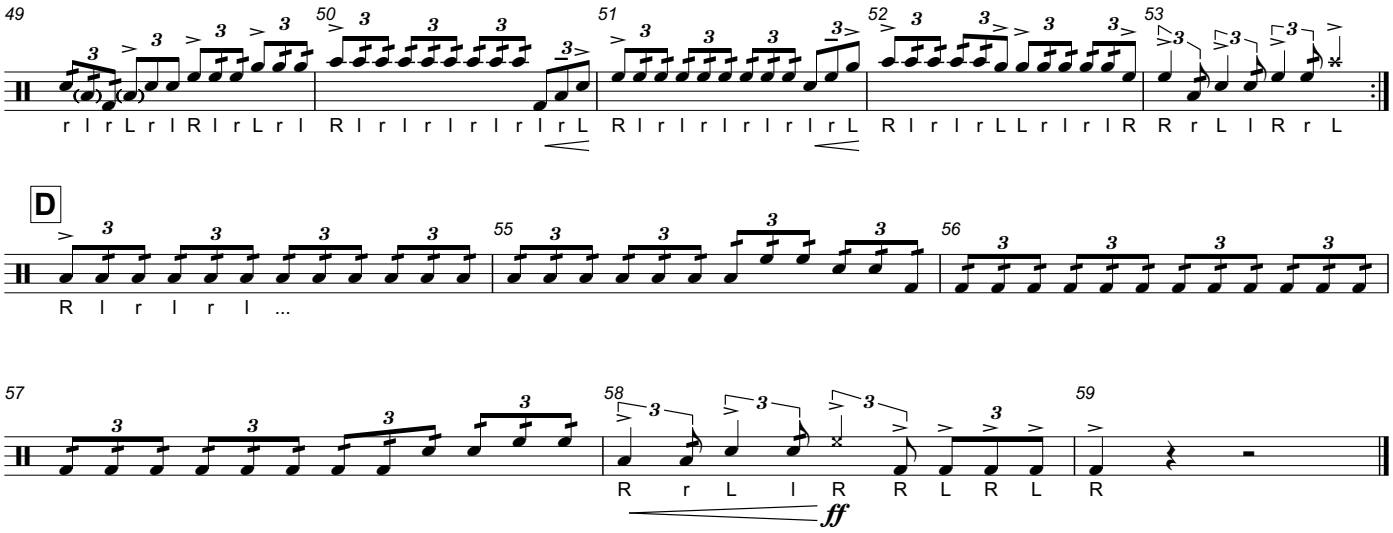
Tenor

RLB

Josh Sheppard



Tenor


49
50
51
52
53
r l r L r l R l r L r l R l r l r l r l r l r L R l r l r l r l r l r L R l r l r L L r l r l R R r L l R r L

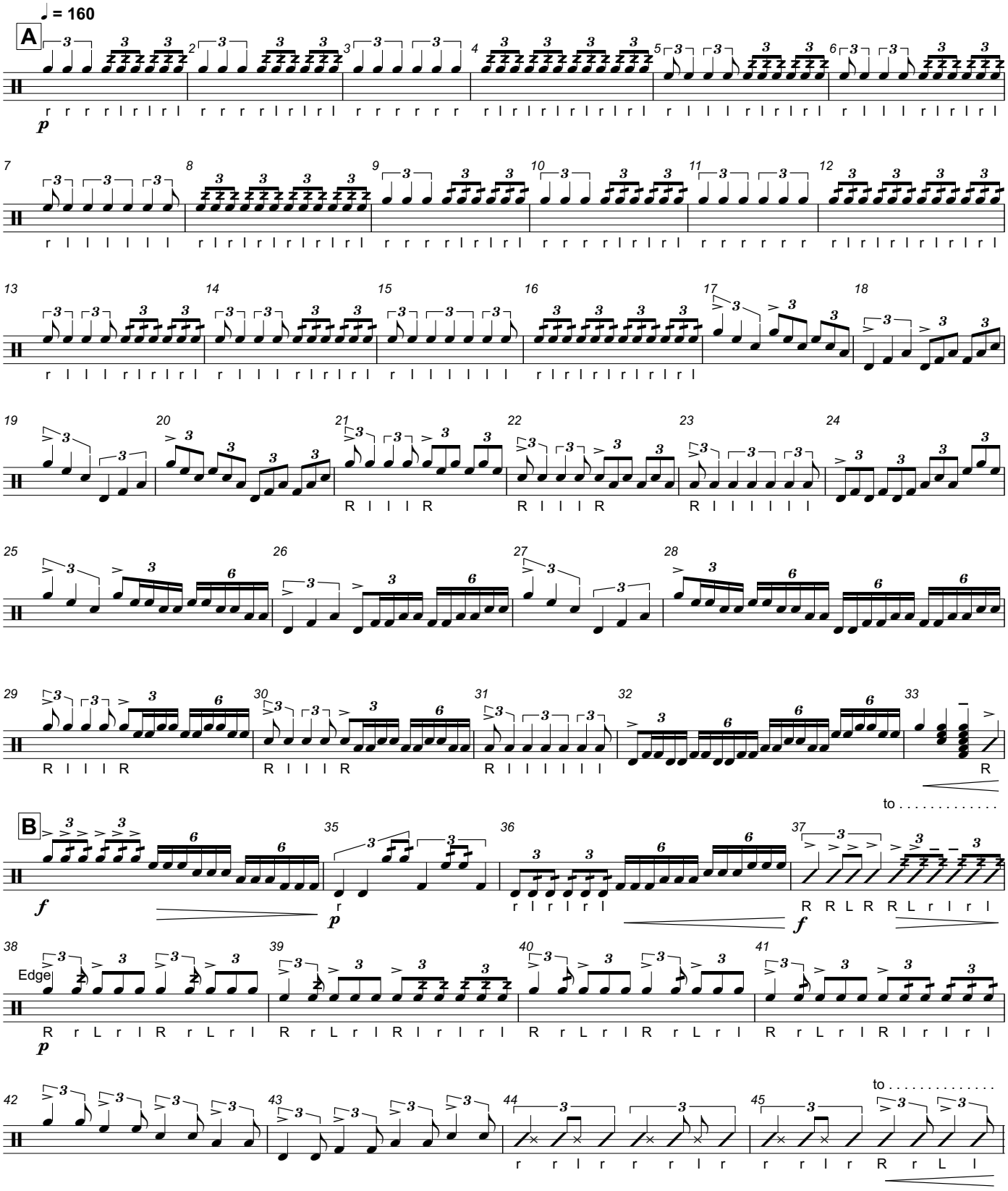
D
55
56
R l r l r l ...

57
58
59
R r L l R R L R L R
ff

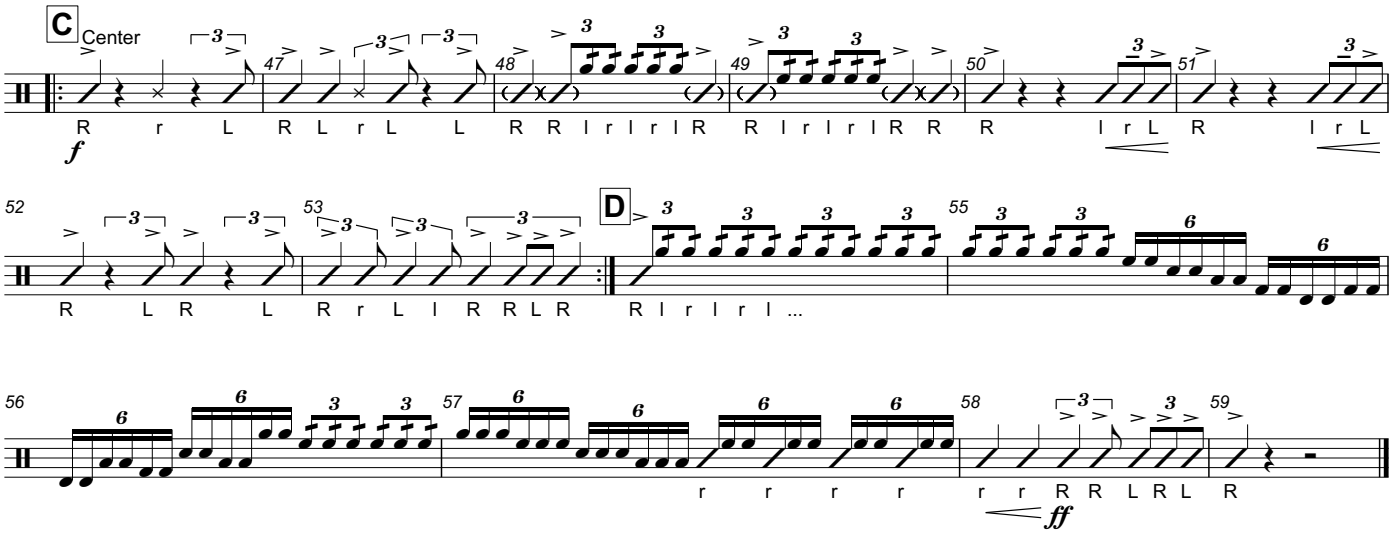
Bass Dr

RLB

Josh Sheppard



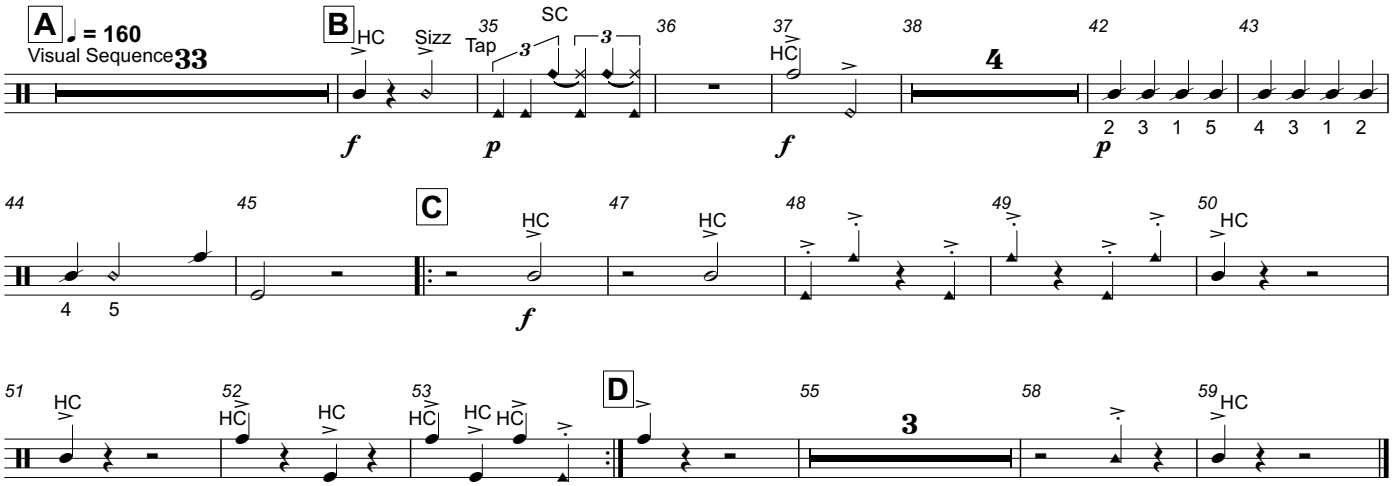
Bass Dr



Cymbals

RLB

Josh Sheppard



Flams 25

Josh Sheppard

A

♩ = 108

Snare
Tenor
Bass Dr
Cymbals

B

C

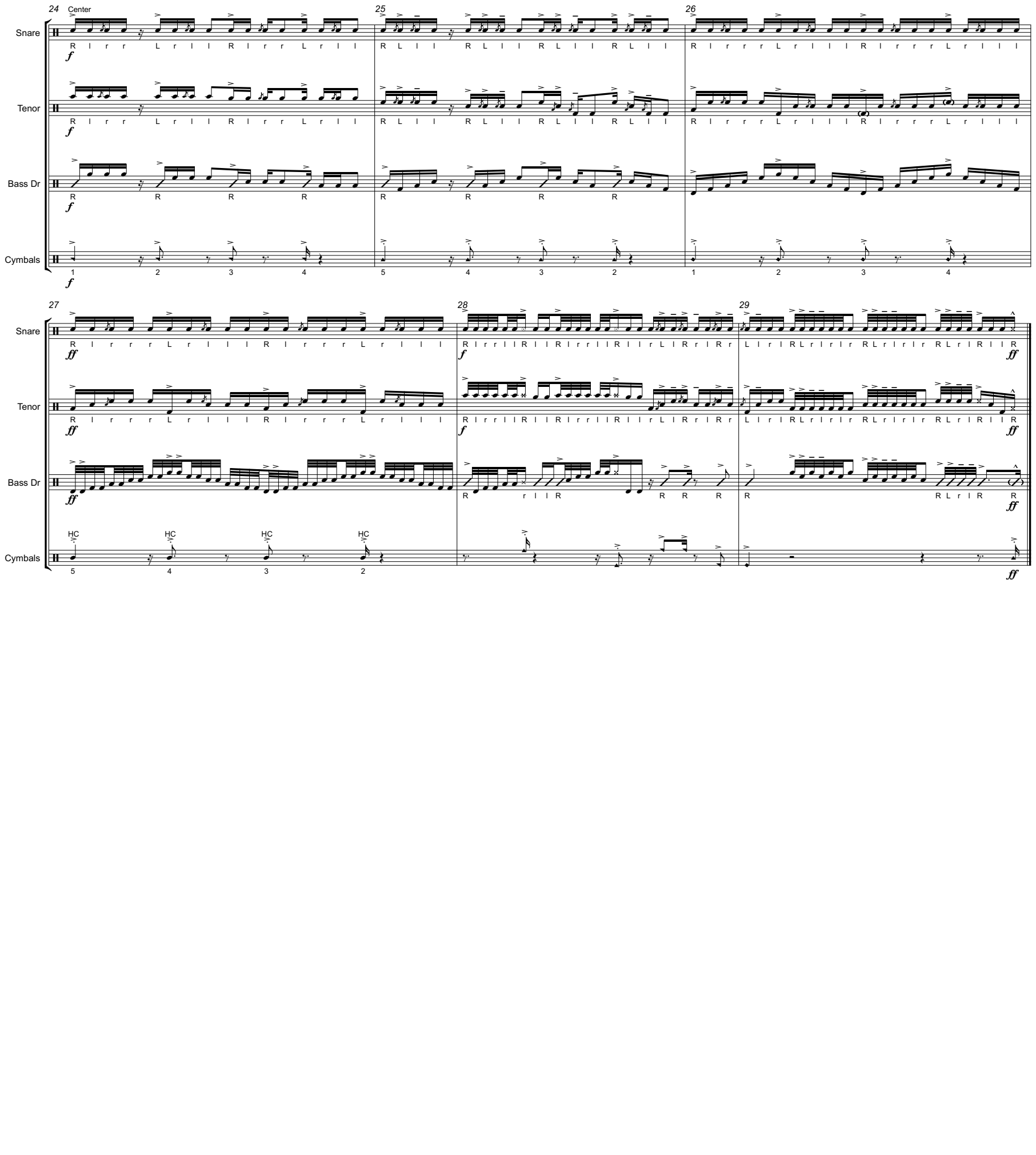
Edge

RH Pancake

Top = Odds
Bottom = Evens

Press
Sizz
Klunk
Tap
to . . . . . .

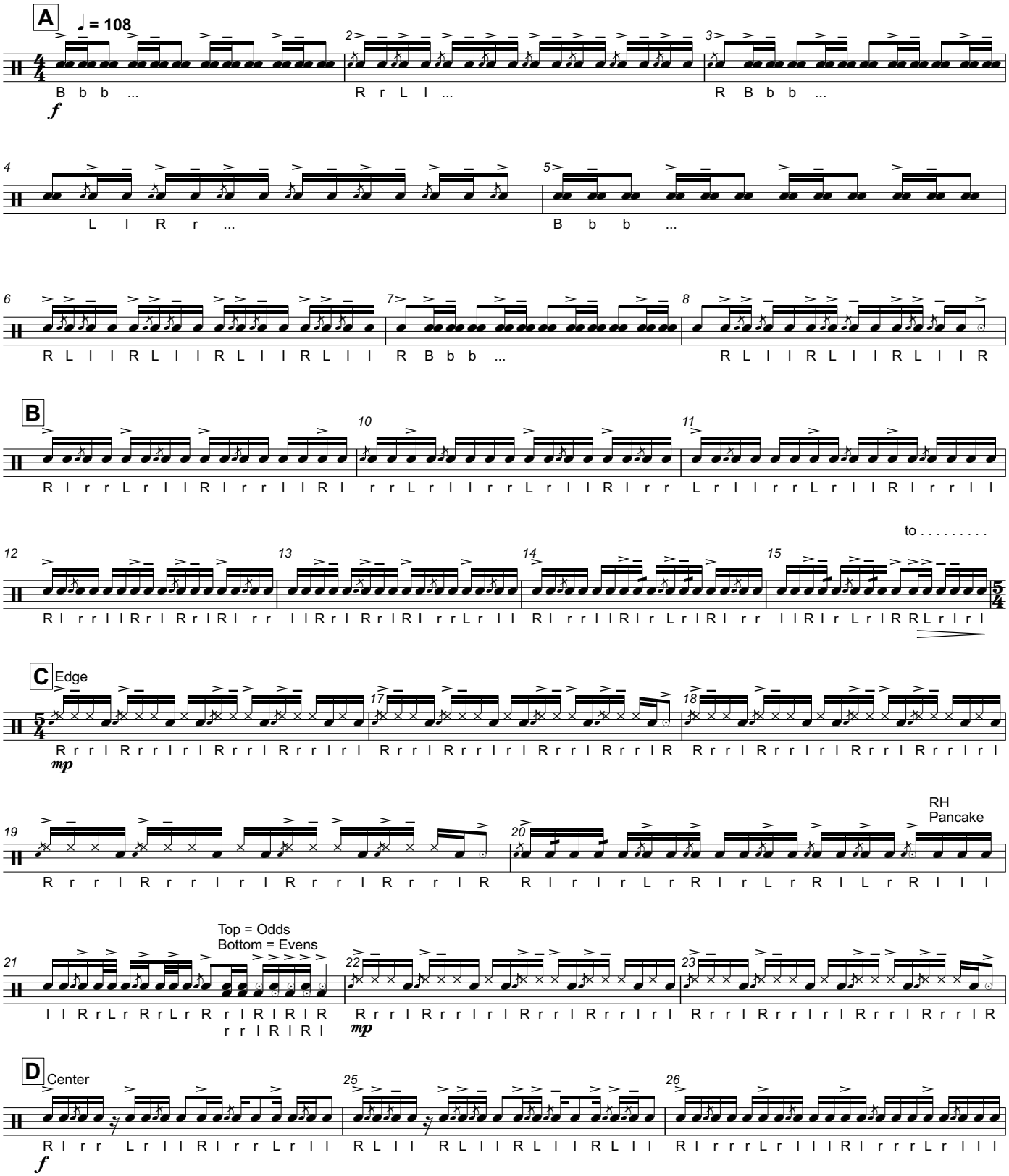
D



Snare

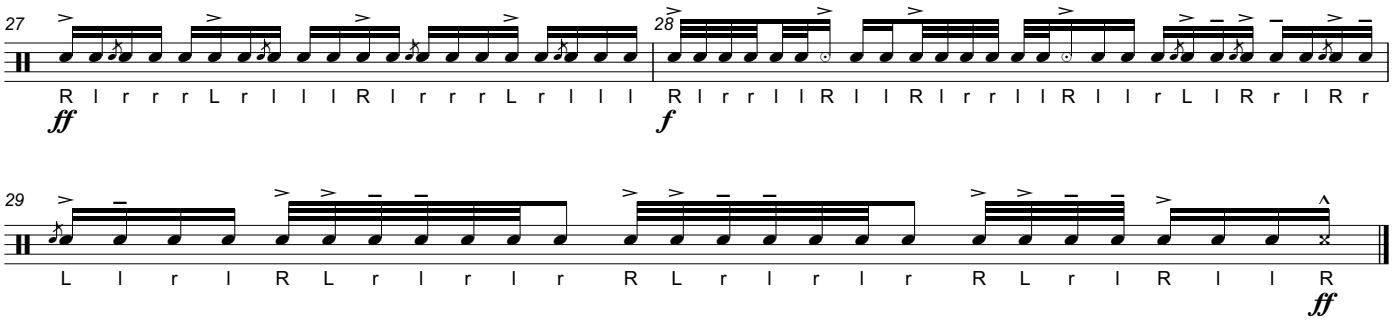
Flams 25

Josh Sheppard



V.S.

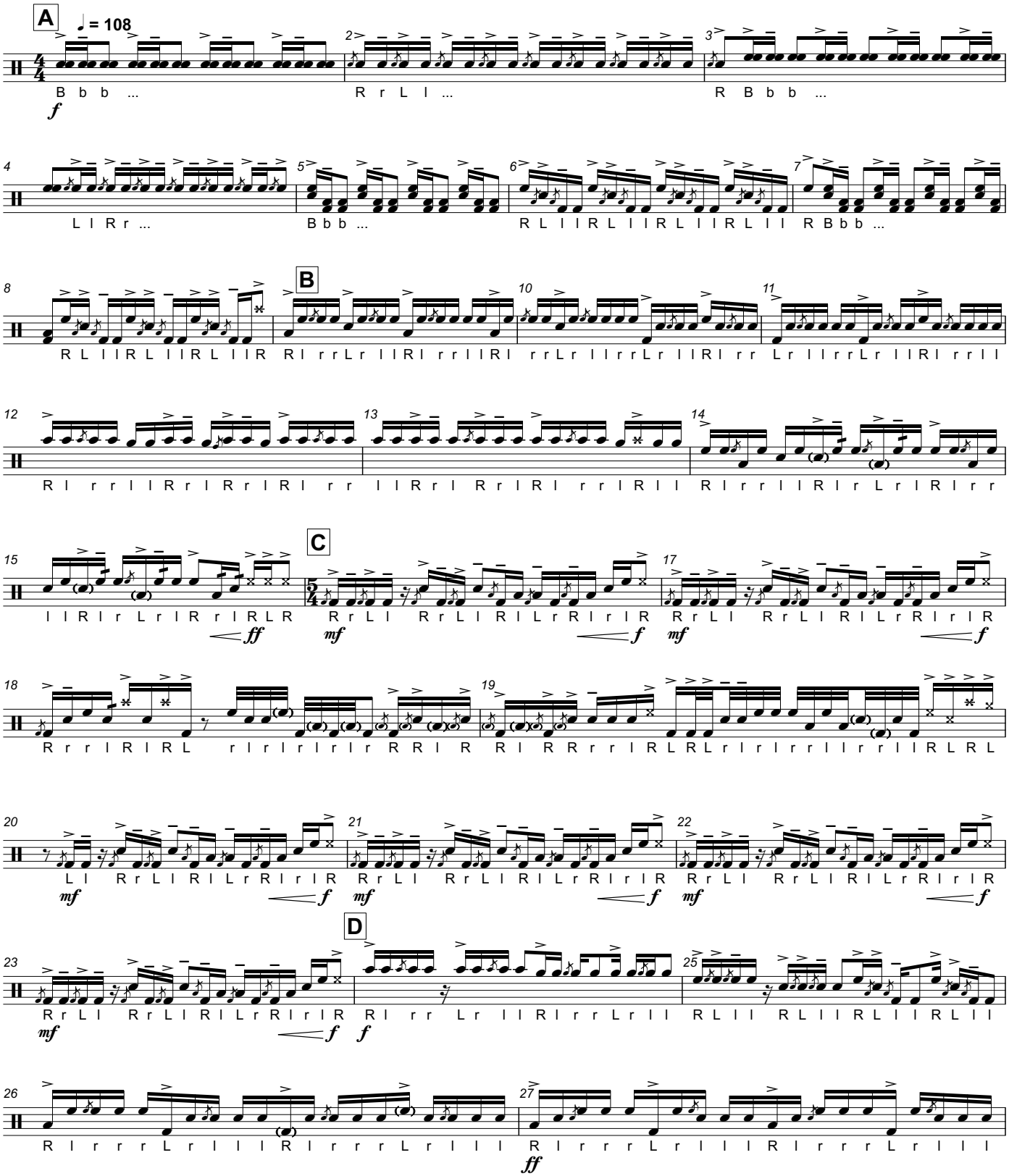
Snare



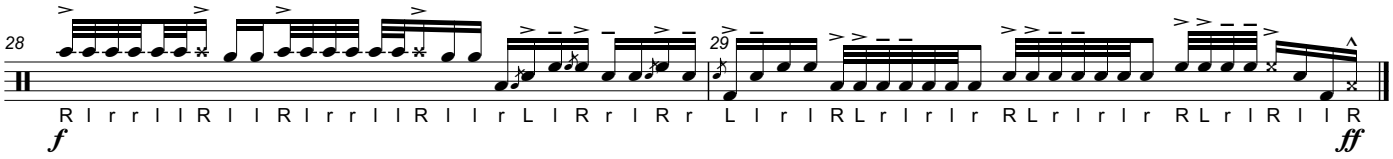
Tenor

Flams 25

Josh Sheppard



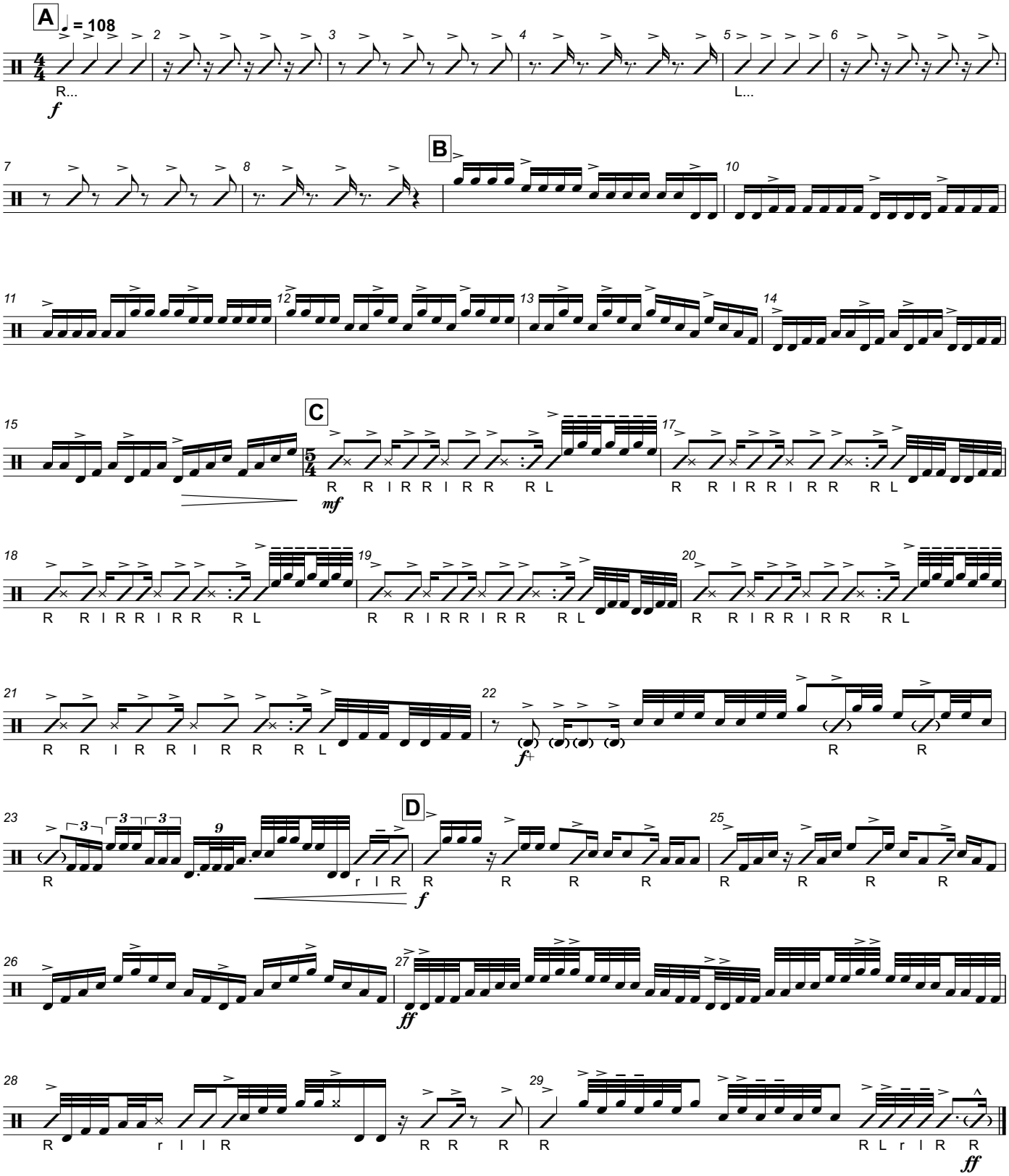
Tenor


28
29
R I r r I I R I I R I r r I I R I I r L I R r I R r
L I r I R L r I r I r R L r I r I r R L r I R I I R
f
ff

Bass Dr

Flams 25

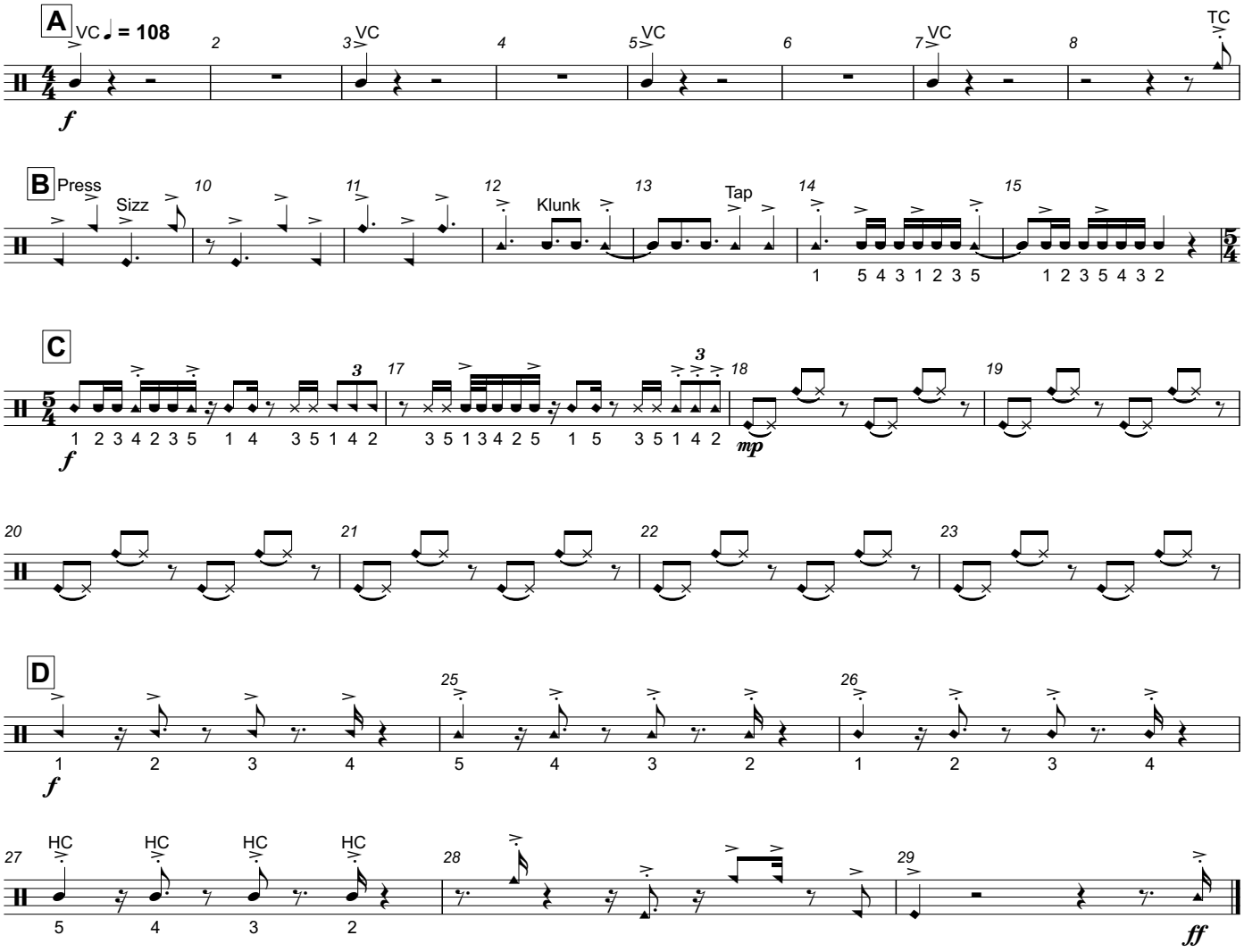
Josh Sheppard



Cymbals

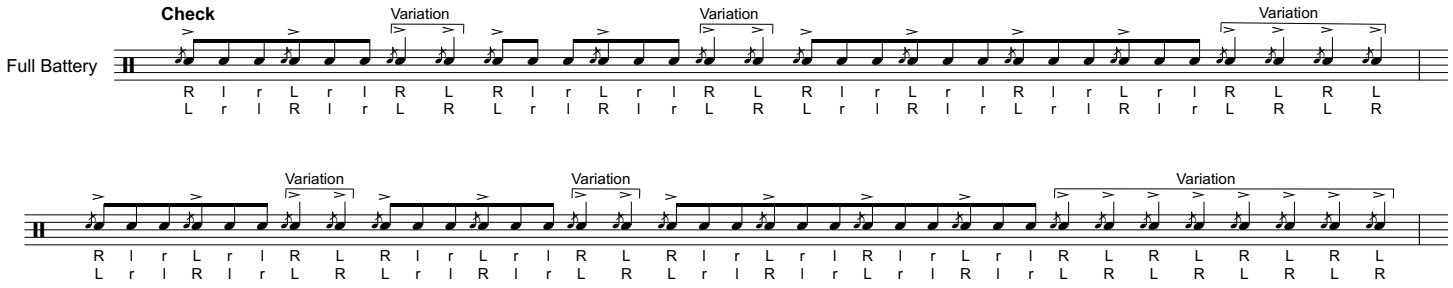
Flams 25

Josh Sheppard



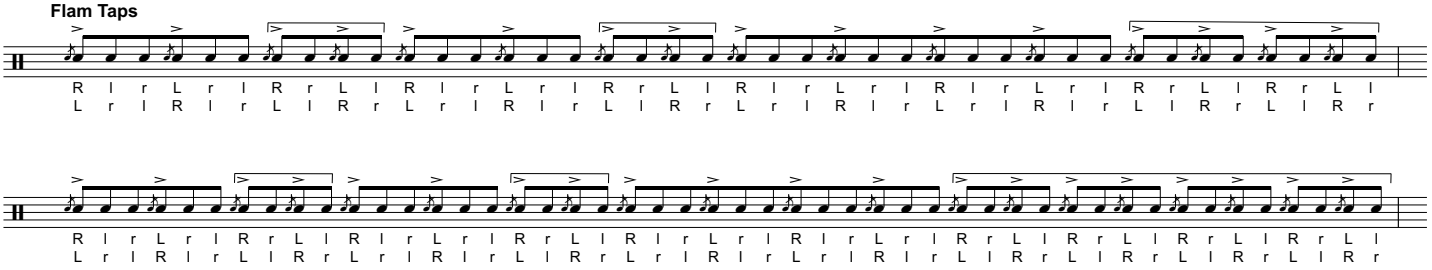
Icecream Floats

Tom Float

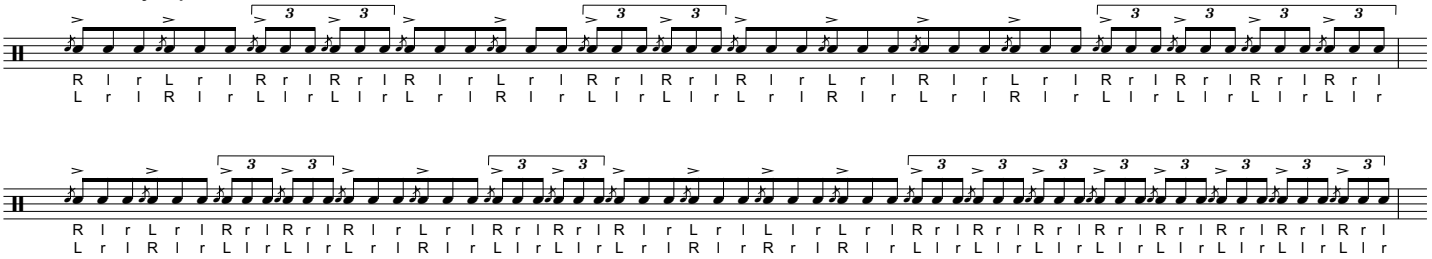


Icecream Floats is a classic exerise that allows us to fill in the check and create countless variations.
A few examples of variations are below but be prepared to fill-in with anything and everything.
(Quads and basses be prepared to add arounds/splits)

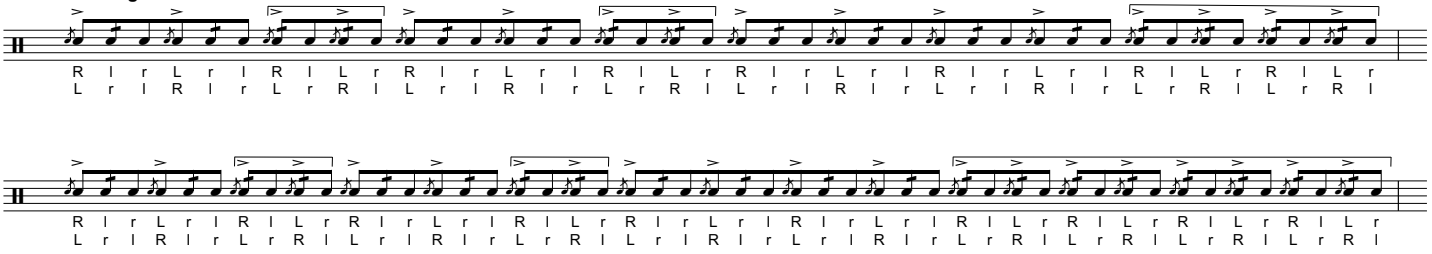
Flam Taps



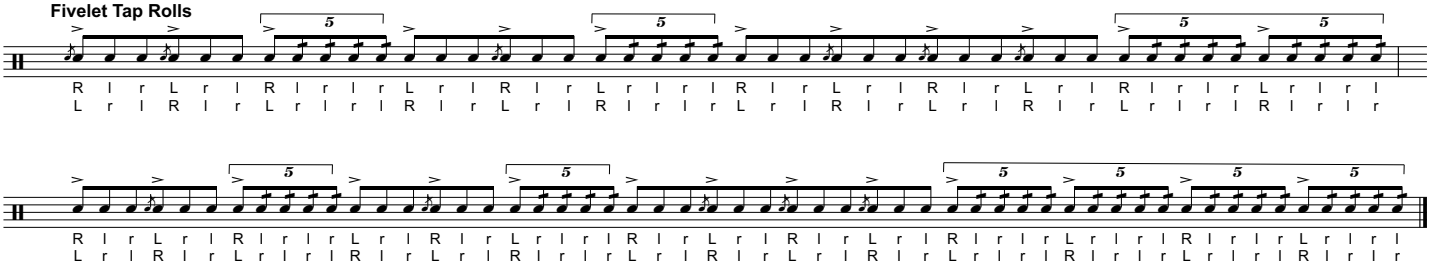
Swiss Army Triplets



Flam Drags/Cheese Inverts



Fivelet Tap Rolls

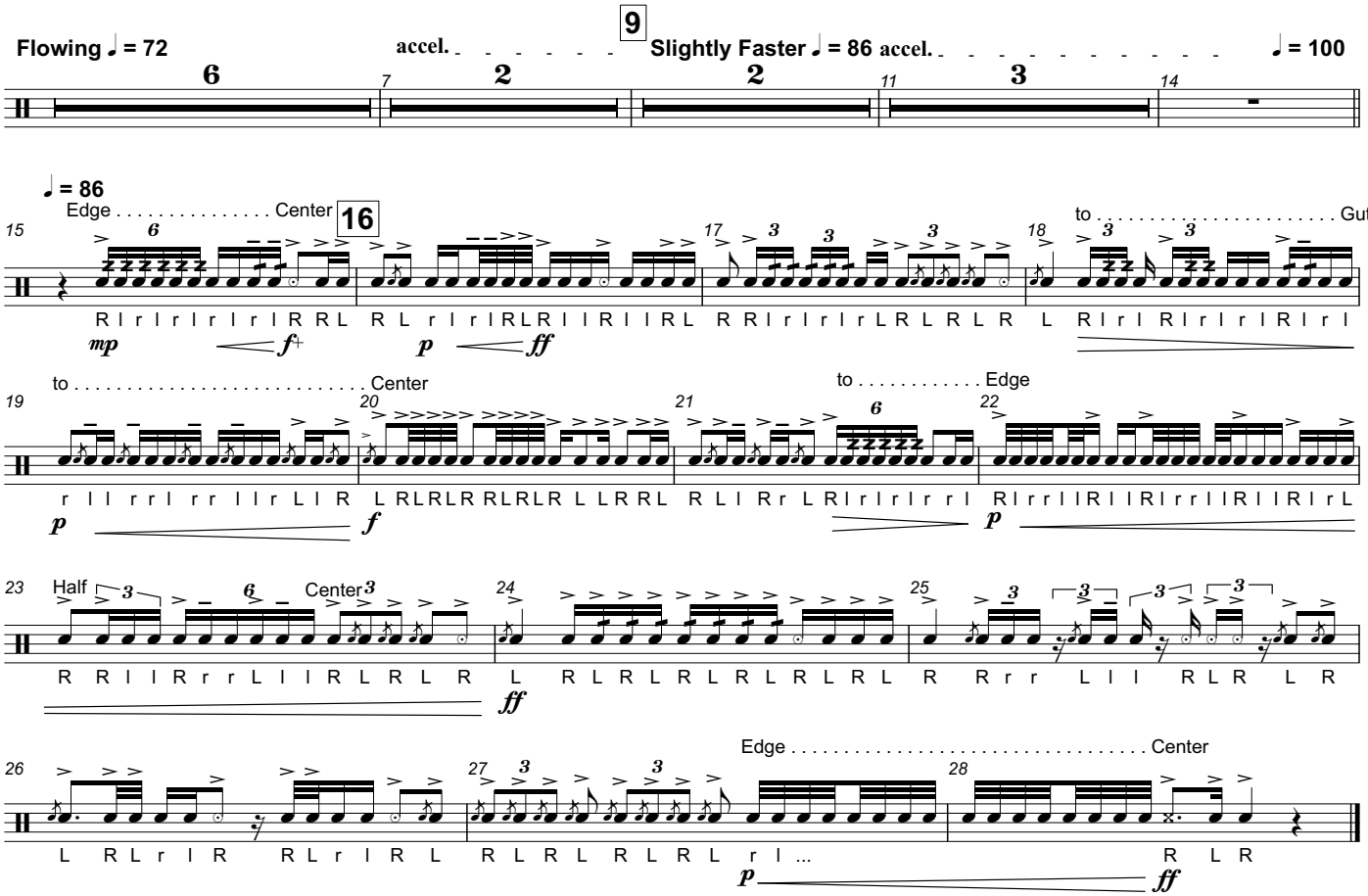


Snare

JMU MRD 2024

INTRO: OVER THE RAINBOW

LEIGH HARLINE
Arr. Chris DeVona
Perc Arr. Josh Sheppard

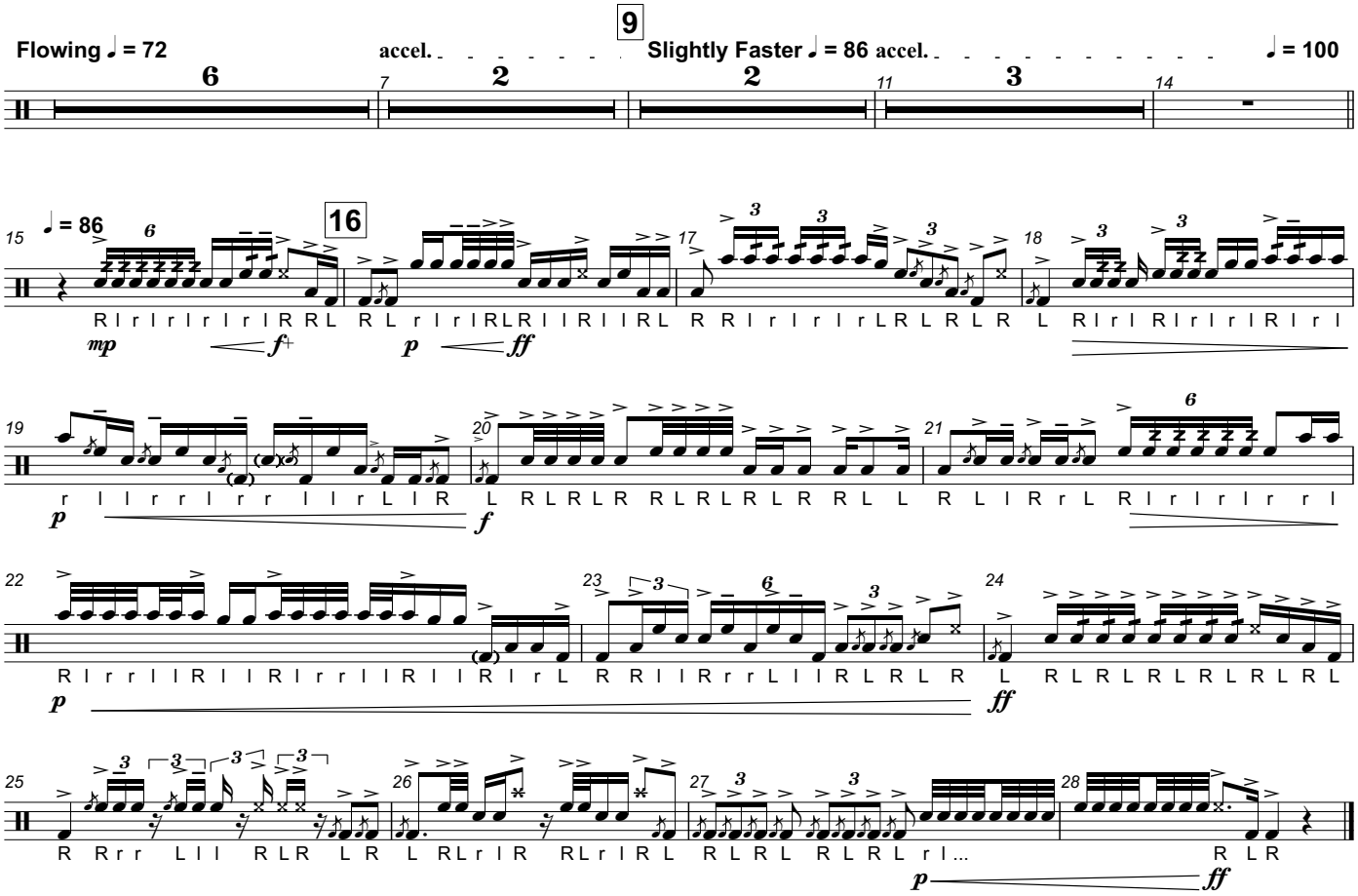


Tenor

JMU MRD 2024

INTRO: OVER THE RAINBOW

LEIGH HARLINE
Arr. Chris DeVona
Perc Arr. Josh Sheppard

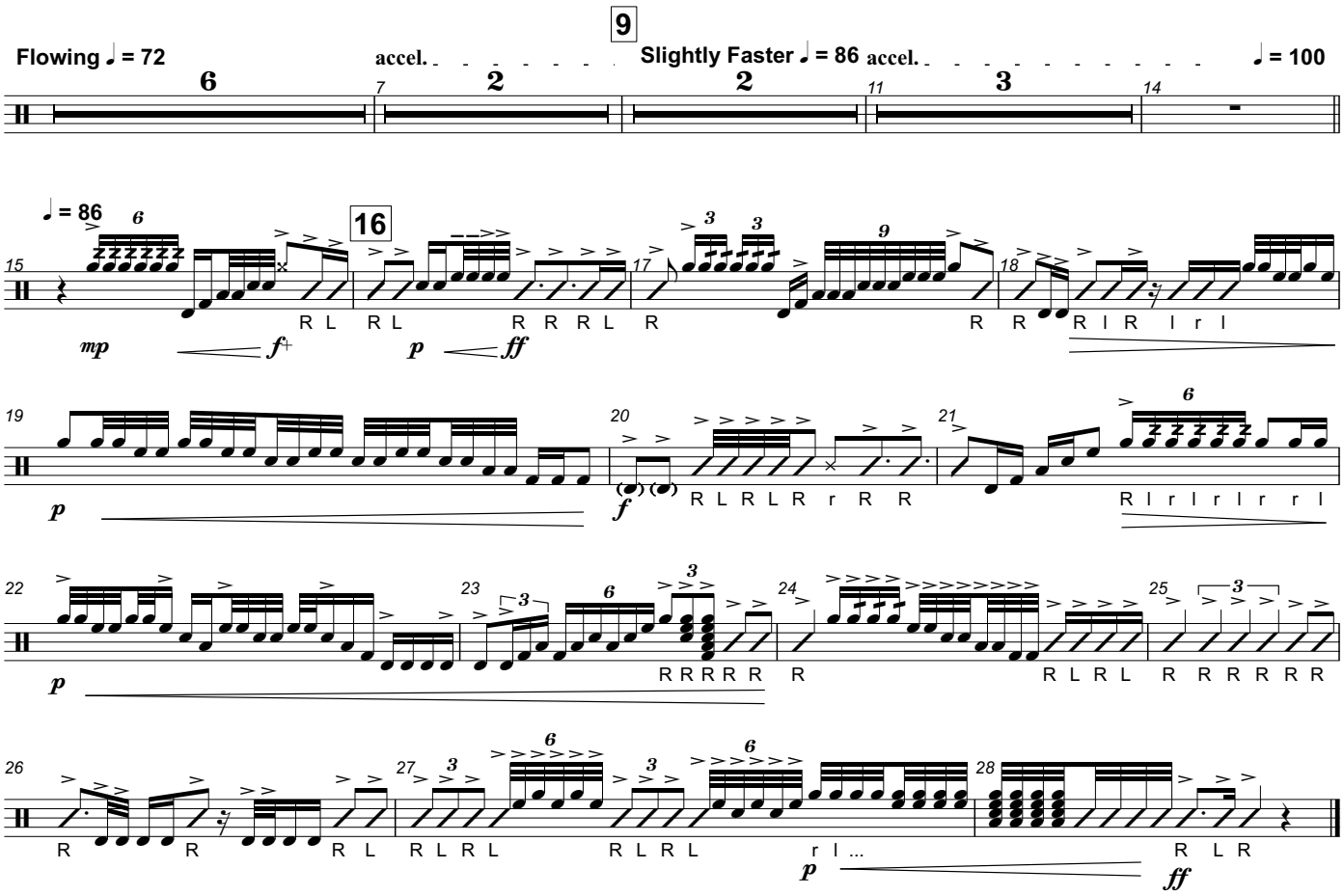


Bass

JMU MRD 2024

INTRO: OVER THE RAINBOW

LEIGH HARLINE
Arr. Chris DeVona
Perc Arr. Josh Sheppard

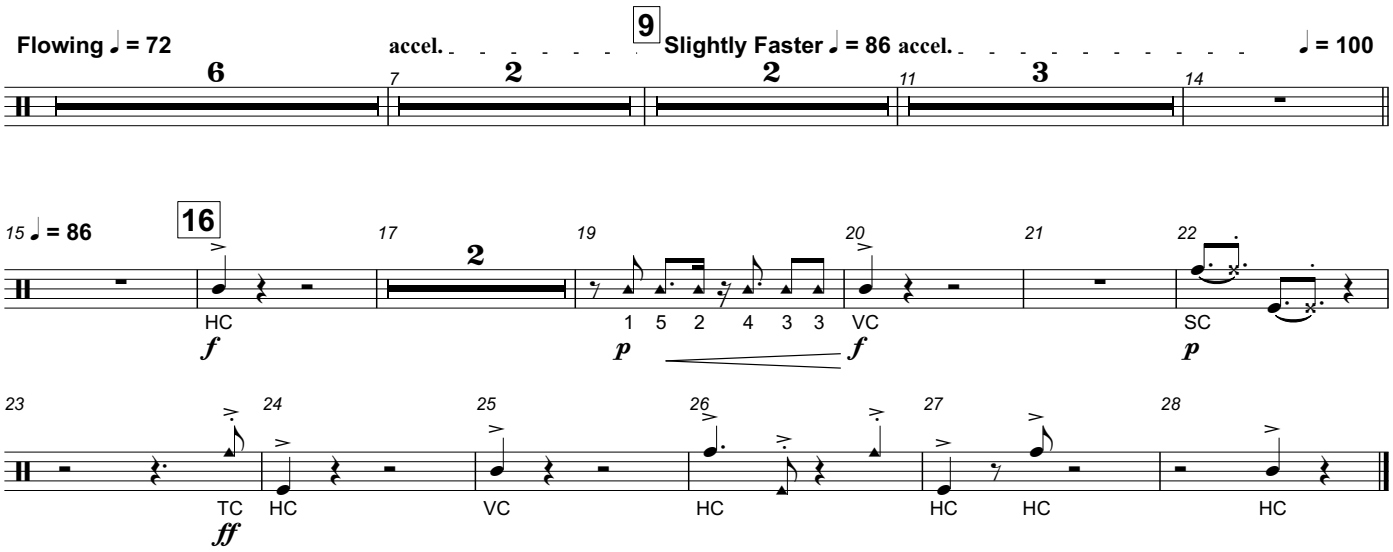


Cymbals

JMU MRD 2024

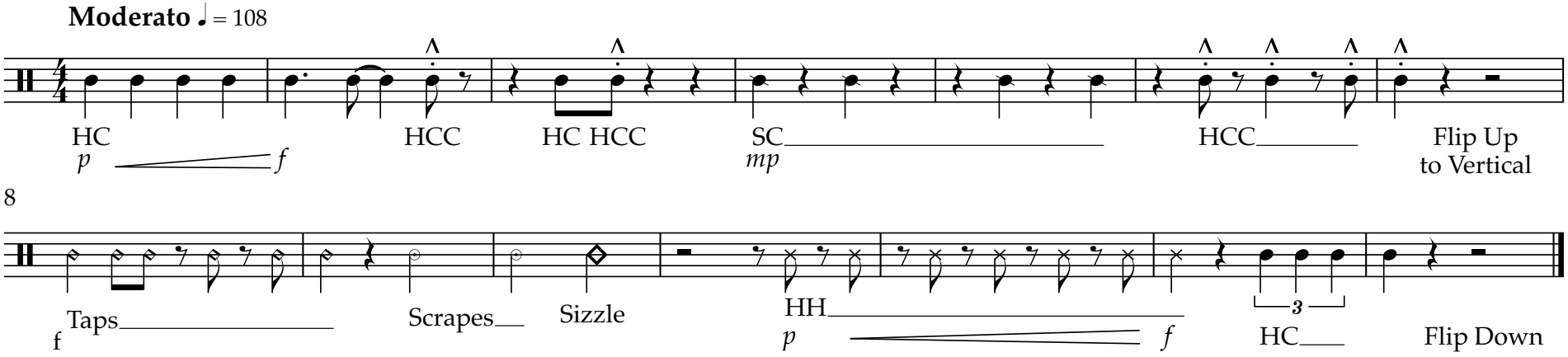
INTRO: OVER THE RAINBOW

LEIGH HARLINE
Arr. Chris DeVona
Perc Arr. Josh Sheppard



JMU Cymbal Audition Etude

Berkeley Harner



Technique Abbreviation Key:

HC = Horizontal Crash HCC = Horizontal Crash Choke

SC = Suncoast HH = High Hat

Attention:

Please begin the etude in set position. There should be four beats on the meternome before you begin playing.

Make sure to flip up to the horizontal playing position on the third beat and prep on beat four to begin the etude.

You should also flip down to set position at the end of the etude.