

Richard Barrett

***pēktis***

2022

solo harp (+ voice)

performance score

# pēktis

(2020) for solo harp (+ voice)

commissioned by Milana Zarić

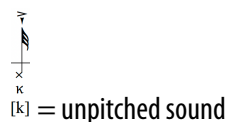
to Brian Ferneyhough on the occasion of his 80th birthday

duration: approximately 9 minutes

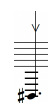
The performer's voice should be amplified using a headset microphone to facilitate freedom of movement. For flexibility in balancing voice and instrument, and so that the overall sound is unified, the harp should also be amplified. If an electroacoustic harp is used, the output may be spread across the stereo panorama so that low sounds appear on the left and high sounds on the right (with the voice in the centre).

The voice and the harp might be thought of as colourations and resonators of one another, rather than one "accompanying" the other. The discontinuities in the voice part aren't brief phrases that begin and end, but are the only remaining fragments of what would originally have been continuous. The voice part is shown throughout in Greek and also in the International Phonetic Alphabet. Glissandi in the vocal part indicate only the beginning and end point of a continuous change in pitch.

Harp harmonics are of two kinds, using either the second or third partial, and are notated as for bowed string instruments, with the pitch (string) to be played as a diamond-headed note, and the resultant pitch as a small note in brackets.



= play with fingernail(s) – this is used only for glissandi where the back of the finger- or thumbnail is used.



= scrape fingernail down the indicated (wound) string

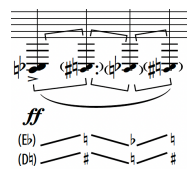


= damp each string in the glissando *immediately* after plucking it, either with the other hand or with an adjacent finger on the same hand as that playing the glissando. The results should be intermediate between a conventional staccato sound and a "xylophonic" sound.

For "xylophonic" sounds, the strings to be damped are shown thus:



] = damp the string(s) to the left of the square bracket



= new pitches generated only by pedal movement, not by plucking the string again



= pedal buzz

B $\flat$ /# = pedal trill

Other notations are explained when they occur in the score.

A large proportion of the surviving poetry of Sappho (c. 630-570 BCE) is preserved in the form of narrow papyrus fragments, resulting from the manuscript being torn into strips for binding mummies in Egypt. The text used in this composition is numbered in the extant works of Sappho as fragments 88a and 88b. Not enough of this poem is preserved for the reader to get an overall idea of its subject matter – not one line is complete, and not all lines contain even a single complete word - and what remains has the quality of disjunct glimpses into intimate secrets, perhaps as if intermittently overheard.

However, the metrical structure of the 28 lines (which may or may not be the complete poem) is known, so that the remaining words and syllables can be fitted into it with a certain degree of accuracy, and this composition is based around these 28 units, each consisting of 16 events (syllables) divided into short and long durations according to the metre, with the fragments of text occurring at their original metrical positions so far as I've been able to work these out. (One complicating factor is that in the metre of this poem, called "acephalus hipponactean with a double choriambic expansion", the first syllable of a line may be short or long...) The durations of the lines are regular at the beginning and become more irregular as the music continues, and the distinctions within them between "short" and "long" durations undergo more complex evolutions, although both categories generally become longer in the course of each line. Against this framework, of 28 lines each of 16 events, is placed a repeating series of 32 times 14 diatonic pitches (each diatonic pitch class twice) distributed through the entire range of the harp, whose actual identity at each iteration is "modulated" by gradual changes in pedal settings, which in turn cycle through all the available modes containing both a cluster of three semitones and a cluster of four semitones. Thus the harmonic colour of the music is always changing but at the same time remaining consistent in character. The 16 events in each line are assigned to a sequence of 16 sound-types (harmonic, glissando, chord, counterpoint and so on) although only 8 of the 16 events in each line follow this scheme, a different selection each time, the others being freely realised. The vocal pitches used for the text generally involve taking the harp pitch assigned to the event corresponding to a particular syllable, and transposing it into the range of the voice, taking into account the tonal character of ancient Greek. Silences between the lines grow very gradually shorter towards the centre of the piece and then expand rapidly.

According to ancient tradition, Sappho was the inventor of an instrument by the name of "pēktis", or the first Greek poet to use this instrument which originated in Lydia, seems to have been a kind of lyre, and is mentioned in one of the fragments, although without any kind of description.



(a)  
 ].[  
 ]ν πρρ . .[  
 ]νωσ πρὸς πότ[  
 ]. ατον χάλα[  
 ]. θέλοις . οὐδυ[  
 ]. άσδοισ' ὀλιγα[  
 ]. ένα φέρεσθα[ι  
 ]. φια τισ . . .[  
 ]. δ' ᾄδιον εισορ[  
 ο]ῖθθα καῦτα·  
 λέ]λαθ' ἄλλονιά[  
 ]. αν· τираδ[  
 ]αί τισ είποι  
 ]. σαν· ἔγω τε γαρ[  
 ]μ' ᾄς κεν ἔνηι μ' [  
 ]αι μελήσην·  
 ]φίλα φαῖμ' ἐχύρα γέ[νεσθαι  
 ]ενα[ . ]αις· ᾄτ[  
 ] . . δ' ὄνιαρ[ . ]σ[  
 ]. πίκρος ὑμ[  
 ]. [ . ]τα . θάδ[  
 ]. α τόδε δ' ἴσ[θ  
 ]. ὡττι σ' ἔ . [  
 ]α φιλήσω[  
 ]τω τι λο[  
 ]σσον γὰρ . [  
 ]σθαι βελέω[ν  
 ] . . [

(b)  
 ἐμ[  
 τοῦ[  
 κ[  
 σε[  
 ἦ[  
 α[  
 φιλη[  
 κάλ . [  
 ἔστ . [  
 . ]χα[

A translation of what remains of the text might be something like:

*you might wish... a little... to be carried away... sweeter... you yourself know... forgotten... someone might say... yes... for I shall love as long as there is breath in me... and care... I say I have been a strong lover... grievous... bitter... but know this... I shall love... for it is better... weapons...*

pēktis

Richard Barrett

6/8  $\text{♩} = 56$  7/8 3/8

[intake of breath] *pp*

[a]

14:13 8:10 5:4

table 8:9 nat *ff* *pp* *ff* *fff* *ff* *pp* *ppp* *ff* *fff* *ppp* *pp*

E $\flat$ F#G $\sharp$ A $\flat$  B#C#D $\sharp$  *tr* *8va* *table* *nat* *8va*

3/8 5:6 3/16 9/16 6:7 15:11 11/16

xyl 11:12 *fff* *fff* *pp* *ppp* *pp* *p* *pp*

6/16 16:15 6/8 p 3/16

v  $\pi\rho$  [n] [prɔ]

12:14 16:15 9:10 15:11 8:7 7:5

tamb *pp* *fff* *pp* *fff* *pp* *fff*

3/16 6/8 18:12 4/8

*f* *ff* *ff* *f*

A#

10

4/8 6/8 3/16 7/16

v

pp 11:13 p

νωσ — πρὸς — πὸτ —  
[no] — [s] [prɔ] — [s] [pɔ] — [t]

hp

ff

11:13 17:14 6:4

table

8<sup>va</sup> pp p pp

13

7/16 13/16 6/8

v

f 9:11 6/8

α — τον —  
[a] — [tɔ] — [n]

hp

5:6 6:4 12:9 13:11

table 19:14 8<sup>va</sup> nat

p mp p ff p f

15

6/8 3/16 4/8

v

mp 8:9

χα — λα —  
[xa] — [la]

hp

(nat) 6:5 11:10 8:10

table (nat) fff

p ff

17  $\frac{4}{8}$

v

12:15 9:8

7 16 *ppp* *pp* *f* 11 16

θέ — λους  
[tʰɛ] — [lois]

οὐ  
[u]

hp

*f* *ff* *ppp* *f* *fff*

17:13 15:10

*ppp* xyl  
(except E# & C)

G# E# *pp* *f*

19  $\frac{3}{8}$

v

11 *ppp* 16 6:7

δυ —  
[dy]

7:5 16:15 (both hands) *fff* *f*

6:7 *f*

6:5

hp

*ppp* *pp* *fff* *pp*

5:4 4:5

*pp* *ppp*

16:15 11:10

*ff*

22  $\frac{11}{16}$

v

*mp* 5 8

άσ — δοις' ο — λι — γα —  
[a] — [sdɔ] — [is] [ɔ] — [li] — [ga]

6:7 8<sup>va</sup> 8<sup>va</sup>

21:24

hp

*fff* *p* *mp* *pp* *p* *mp* *pp*

8:7

4  
24

5  
8

3  
16

3  
8

9:11

*p*

9  
16

έ-να φε-  
[ε]-[na]-[fε]-

*mp* *fff*

*pp* *mp* *p* *ff*

11:12

5:4

4:5

8<sup>va</sup>

9:11

5:4

table

*ff*

*mf* *pp* *f* *mf*

*p*

Ab

F#

27

9  
16

3  
8

11  
16

3  
16

*pp*

ρεσ θαι  
[rε] [st<sup>h</sup>a] [i]

xyl (nat)

8:7

20:22

8:7

*pp*

*ff*

17:16

15:16

*p* *mf*

D#

B#

C#

30

3  
16

5  
8

5  
16

15  
16

φι α τις  
[f] [i] [a] [ti]

*mf*

12:10

11:10

*ff* *mp* *mf*

*p*

*mp* *mf*

Bb/#

G#/#

D#

C#/#

33

15  
16

8:9

3  
16

7  
16

[s]

11:12

8:9

9:8

11:13

9:10

8<sup>va</sup>

11:10

9:8

*mp* *ff* *p*

Db

B#

35

v

7 16 *ppp* 13:14

5 16 *ppp* 8:7 11 16 9:7 11:13

έμ [ε]-[m] δ'α-δι-ov [da]-[di]-[on] εἰ [ε] σαρ [i] [sar]

hp

13:14

table 8:7 10:7 11:13 4:5

*ppp* *ff* *fff* *ppp* *fff* *ff*

38

hp

9:8 9:10 3 16 13 16

7:8 11:10

*ppp*

40

v

13 16 *ff* 18:15 10:11 2 8

του [tu] ο [o]

hp

18:15 9:8 7:8 table 10:11 12:11

*ff* *p* *ff* *p* *ff* *pp*

*8va* *tr*

41

v

2 8 *pp* 11 16 *p* *pp* 1 8 5 8

ἰ [i] σθα [st<sup>h</sup>a] καὺ [ka] τα [u][ta]

hp

5:6

*p* *pp*



44

v  $\frac{5}{8}$  *mf*  $\frac{16:15}$   $\frac{7}{16}$   $\frac{17:14}$  8

κ [k] λέ—λαθ' [lɛ] [la] ἄλ [ta] λο [lo]

hp *p* *f* *mf* *p* *f* *p* *mf* *p*

table nat xyl  $\frac{4:5}$   $\frac{4:3}$   $\frac{16:15}$   $\frac{4:5}$   $\frac{17:14}$

(tap soundboard) (tap) D $\sharp$  D $\sharp$

46

v 8 *mf*  $\frac{14:16}$  3 1 4  
16 8 8

νι [ni] ἄ [a]

hp *mf* *p* *f* *p* *f* *mf* *f* *p*

table nat  $\frac{14:16}$   $\frac{11:9}$   $\frac{5:6}$

49

v  $\frac{4}{8}$  *mf* *f* 5 4  
8 8

σέ [sɛ] αν [a] τι [ti]

hp *f* *mf* *f* *mp* *mf* *f* *mf* *mp* *f* *mf* *f* *f*

table nat  $\frac{9:10}$   $\frac{8:6}$   $\frac{10:9}$   $\frac{5:4}$   $\frac{10:11}$   $\frac{3:2}$

A $\sharp$  B $\flat$  B $\flat$  C $\sharp$

51

v  $\frac{4}{8}$  *mp*  $\frac{19:16}$  1 6 7  
8 8 16

ραδ [ra] [d] η [e]

hp *mp* *f* *p* *pp* *p* *ppp* *ff* *pp* *fff* *ppp*

table nat  $\frac{19:16}$   $\frac{7:6}$   $\frac{4:3}$   $\frac{6:7}$

B $\flat$  C $\sharp$

54  $\frac{7}{16}$   $\frac{13}{16}$   $f$   $p$   $pp$   $ppp$   $\frac{1}{8}$   $\frac{13}{16}$

v  
 αί [ai] τις [tis] εἶ [ei] ποι [poi]

hp  
*p* *f* (nat) table *fff* *ff* *f* *pp* *ppp*

6:5 15:14 12:13 (half-whispered) 6:7

xyl nat

A#

57  $\frac{13}{16}$  *mp*  $\frac{16}{15}$  *mp*

v  
 α [ʔa] σάν [sa] [n]

hp  
*fff* *p* *f* *pp* *mp* *f* *mp*

8<sup>va</sup> 16:15 5:6

A# D<sub>b</sub>

58  $\frac{14}{15}$   $\frac{6}{8}$  *pp* *ppp*  $\frac{1}{16}$

v  
 ξ [ε] γω [go] τε [te] γαρ [ga] [r]

hp  
*pp* *ppp*

3:2 14:15 5:6 table 5:4 10:13 14:13

C<sub>6</sub> C<sub>4</sub>

60  $\frac{1}{16}$   $\frac{7}{16}$  *ppp* *p*  $\frac{9}{8}$

v  
 φι [fi] λη [le]

hp  
*ppp* *p* *mf*

4:5

62

v  $\frac{9}{8}$

hp

table

$f$   $ppp$   $p$   $f$   $pp$   $mf$

$12:13$   $6:7$   $6:5$   $9:8$   $14:15$   $14:15$

$\mu'$   $\alpha\zeta$   $[m]$   $[a]$   $[s]$

$F\sharp/\#$

63

v  $\frac{4}{8}$   $\frac{11}{16}$   $\frac{12:13}{16}$   $\frac{1}{16}$

hp

$f$   $p$   $mf$   $ppp$

$5:4$   $9:8$   $12:13$   $10:9$

table

(nat)

65

v  $\frac{1}{16}$   $\frac{6}{8}$   $\frac{9}{16}$   $\frac{3}{8}$

hp

$f$   $mp$   $pp$   $ff$   $p$   $mf$   $pp$   $f$   $p$   $ff$

$7:8$   $9:10$   $12:11$   $3:2$

table

nat

xyl

$3:2$

$B\flat/b$   $F\sharp$   $G\flat$   $table$

68 *mp* *p* *f* *pp*

3/8 6:4 9/16 7:8 10:9 1/16 13/16

v αι [a] [i] με [me] λή [le] σην [se] [n]

hp nat 5:4 6:4 7:8 10:9

*mp* *p* (damp lightly with palm) *mf* *f* *pp*

71 *mp* *mf*

13/16 3:2 3:2 8:7

v έστ [es] [t]

hp *mp* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

72 *mf* sempre

17/16 12:11 13:15 5/8

v φί [fi] λα [la] φαῖμ' [fa] έ [i] χύ [xy] ρα [ra]

hp *mf* sempre D#

73 *mf*

5/8 13:14 1/16 7/16

v γέ [ge] νεσ [ne] θαι [st'hai]

hp *mf* *mp*

75 **v** 7 *f* 16 *p* 12:11 13 *p* 16 *f* 16

$\chi\alpha$  [x]-[a]  $\epsilon$   $\nu\alpha$  [e] [na]  $\alpha\iota\varsigma$  [ai] [s]  $\acute{\alpha}\tau$  [a]-[t]

**hp** nat table (tap on soundboard) 14:12 8:9 11:9

*f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f* *p* *f*

77 **v** 1 16 4 8 5 *pp* 8 7:8 7 8  $\delta'ο$  [do]  $\nu\iota$  [ni]  $\alpha$  [a]  $\rho$  [r]  $\sigma$  [s]

**hp** table nat sim... 17:16 8<sup>va</sup> xyl 4:3

*pp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp*

$A\sharp/\#$   $B\flat/\flat$

80 **hp** 7 8 5:6 16:13 3:2 1 16 3 8

*pp* *ff* *pp* *ff* *pp* *ff*

$G\sharp$   $F\sharp/\#$

82 **v** 3 8 11 *fff* 16 11:9 *ppp* 6 8  $\pi\iota\kappa$  [pi]  $\rho\omicron\varsigma$  [kros]  $\upsilon\mu$  [y] [m]

**hp** 7:8 8<sup>va</sup> 3:2 5:4 11:9 xyl/table 7:5

*ppp* *fff* *ppp*

84  $\frac{6}{8}$  *tr*  $\frac{16:13}{11}$   $\frac{16}{16}$

hp  $E_b$  *ppp* *fff*  $\frac{16:13}{11}$   $\frac{16}{16}$

*ppp* *fff*

85  $\frac{11}{16}$   $\frac{4:3}{16:15}$   $\frac{5:6}{8:7}$   $\frac{9:7}{1}$   $\frac{1}{8}$   $\frac{4}{8}$

hp  $\frac{11}{16}$   $\frac{4:3}{16:15}$   $\frac{5:6}{8:7}$   $\frac{9:7}{1}$   $\frac{1}{8}$   $\frac{4}{8}$

*ppp*

87  $\frac{4}{8}$   $\frac{9}{16}$  *mp*  $\frac{11:10}{f}$   $\frac{7}{16}$

v  $\frac{4}{8}$   $\frac{9}{16}$  *mp*  $\frac{11:10}{f}$   $\frac{7}{16}$

$\tau\alpha$   $\theta\alpha\delta$

[ta] [t<sup>h</sup>a] [d]

hp  $\frac{8^{va}}$   $\frac{6:4}{15:16}$   $\frac{7:8}{11:10}$   $\frac{4:3}{10:7}$   $\frac{8^{va}}$   $\frac{4:5}{3:2}$

*pp* *mf* *f* *p* *mp* *p* *ff* *pp* *f*

(F<sub>b</sub>)  $\frac{17:14}{16}$  *ppp* *mp* *table* *nat*

$\frac{8^{va}}$   $\frac{4:3}{11:10}$   $\frac{10:7}{10:7}$   $\frac{4:5}{3:2}$

(E<sub>b</sub>) (D<sub>b</sub>)

89  $\frac{7}{16}$   $\frac{6:4}{17:14}$   $\frac{3}{16}$   $\frac{9}{16}$  *mp* *sempre*  $\frac{9:11}{13:11}$   $\frac{5:4}{16}$

hp  $\frac{7}{16}$   $\frac{6:4}{17:14}$   $\frac{3}{16}$   $\frac{9}{16}$  *mp* *sempre*  $\frac{9:11}{13:11}$   $\frac{5:4}{16}$

*mf* *ppp* *p* *f* *pp* *p* *sempre*

*table*

92

v

10:12

*ff*

*p* 11

*mp*

16

*mf* 15

*f* 16

α [ʔa]

το [tɔ]

δε [dɛ]

δ'ισ [di]

θι [stʰi]

hp

(*mp*)

10:12

6:5

*p*

*ff*

*p*

*mp*

6:4

9:10

6:4

*mf*

94

15

16

8:10

12:9

5

16

5

8

11:10

*fff*

*f*

*p*

*ppp*

*mf*

*mp*

table

hp

G<sub>b</sub>

96

5

8

6

8

5:4

*ppp*

*mf*

*p*

*ff*

8

8

ωτ [o]

τι [ti]

σ'ε [s]

[ε]

hp

*mp*

*mf*

*p*

*ff*

*fff*

*mf*

*ff*

*mp*

6:7

7:6

5:4

6:7

7:8

xyl. (except C<sub>b</sub>)

*ppp*

*mf*

*p*

*pp*

*fff*

C<sub>#</sub>

98

8

8

4:5

17:14

7:5

6:5

4:3

14:18

4:3

4:3

3

8

7

16

*f*

*mp*

*ff*

hp

xyl. (except F)

(except D<sub>#</sub>)

(exc. E)

(except C<sub>#</sub>)

C<sub>#</sub>

100

v  $\frac{7}{16}$   $\frac{5}{8}$

hp *ppp* *fff* *pp* *ff* *f* *p* *mf*

table nat  $8^{va}$  table nat  $9:10$

$\alpha$   $\phi$   
[a] [fi]

A $\natural$

103

v  $\frac{5}{8}$   $\frac{18:20}{5:4}$   $\frac{9}{16}$

hp  $\frac{18:20}{7:6}$   $\frac{3:2}$  *p* *f* *pp* *mf*

sim... (random order of the three strings)

A $\flat/\sharp$   
B $\flat/\natural$

(mf)

105

hp *p* *fff* *ppp*

sim...

F $\sharp$

$\frac{4}{8}$   $\frac{3}{8}$

107

v  $\frac{3}{8}$   $\frac{4}{8}$   $\frac{10:8}{10:7}$   $\frac{11}{16}$

hp  $\frac{3:2}{6:4}$   $\frac{3:2}{8^{va}}$   $\frac{3:2}{7:6}$   $\frac{7:5}{10:7}$  *f* *sempre* *G $\sharp$*

$\tau\omega$   $\tau\iota$   $\lambda\omicron$   
[to] [ti] [lo]

D $\sharp/\natural$  F $\natural/\flat$

(as much like a whisper as possible)



109

v

11/16 5/8 14:15 9/16 13/16

*p* sempre

σσον γαρ  
[s] [on] [ga] [r]

hp

*p* sempre

3:2 14:15 13:15 9:10

A# Ab Eb

112

hp

13/16 10:9 4:5 6:7 12:10 7/8

*p*

7:5 6:7

D#

113

v

7/8 4/8 6/8

hp

*fff* *p* *ff* *ppp*

8<sup>va</sup> table

[s]

115

v

6/8 15:14 9/8 15

θατ βε λέων  
[t<sup>h</sup>ai] [be] [le] [o] [n]

nat xyl

8<sup>va</sup> 15:14 10:8 5:4 5:6 3:2

*f* *ff* *mf* *ppp* *ff* *ppp* *fff*

7:8 5:4

C#

117

15  
16

*ppp*

(sigh)

[a]

13:16

13:9

11  
16

v

8<sup>va</sup>

13:16

nat

4:5

3:2

10:11

8<sup>va</sup>

hp

table

*ppp* sempre

B#

F#

Ab

G#