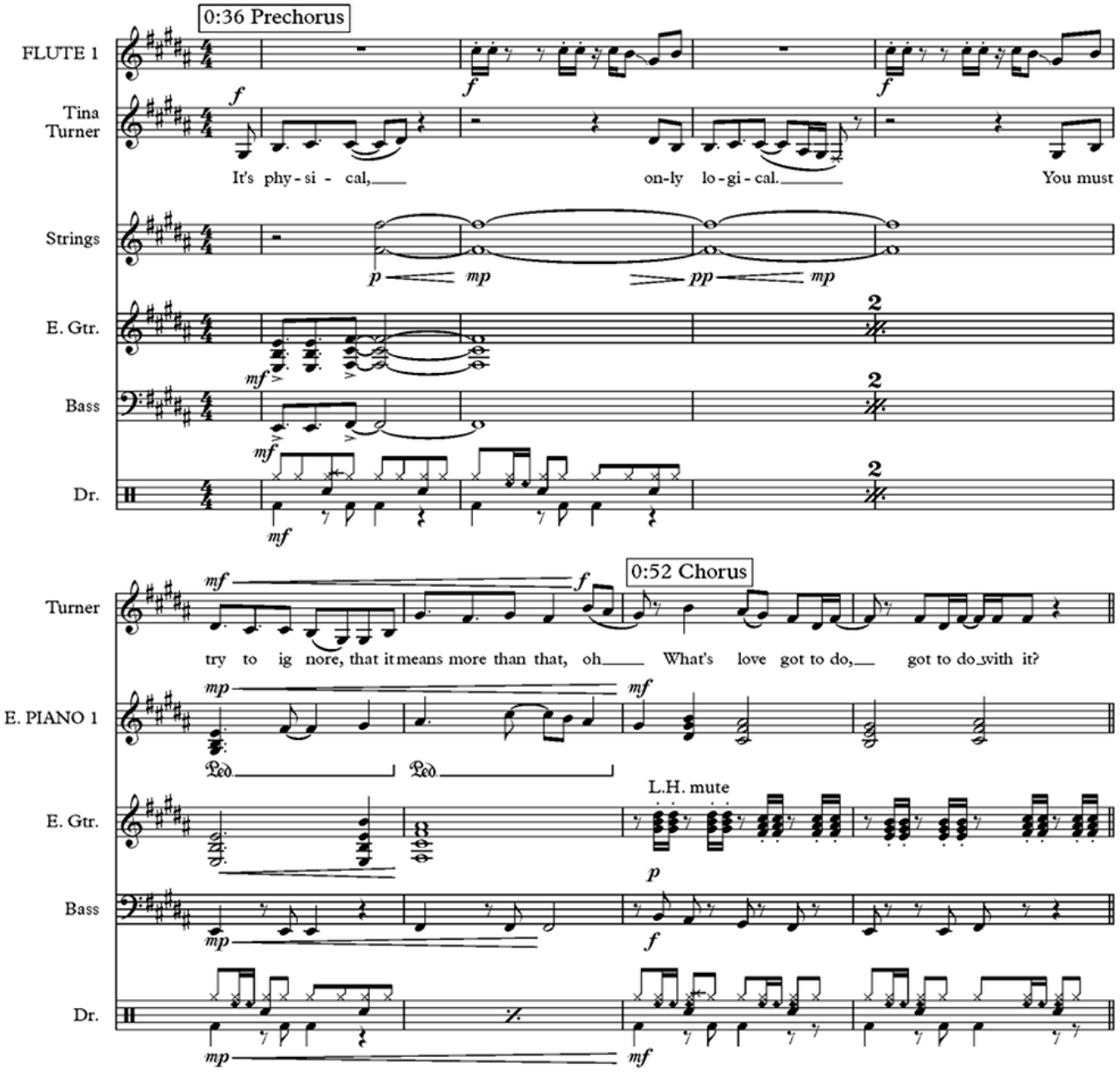
A JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR MUSIC THEORY

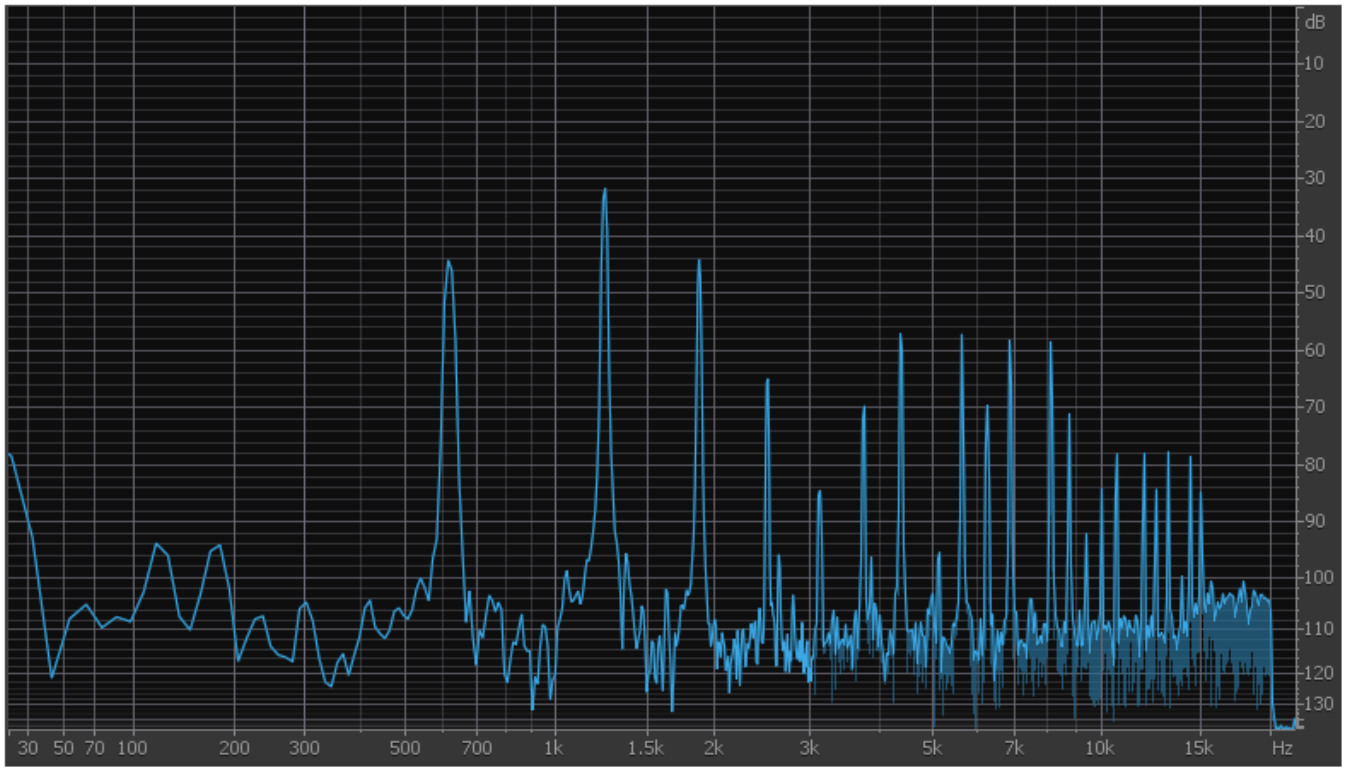
MTO 26.3 Examples: Lavengood, The Cultural Significance of Timbre Analysis

(Note: audio, video, and other interactive examples are only available online)
https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.20.26.3/mto.20.26.3.lavengood.html

Example 1. Prechorus and chorus of "What's Love Got to Do with It" (0:36–0:57)



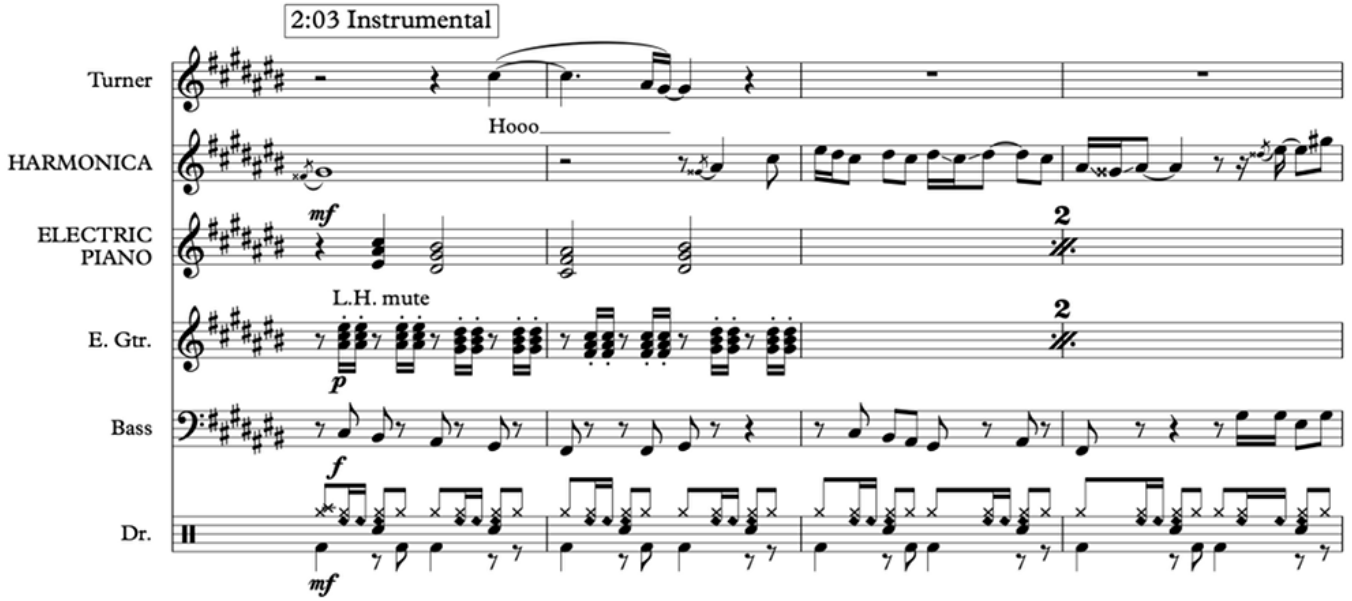
Example 2. A spectrum plot showing a single moment of time



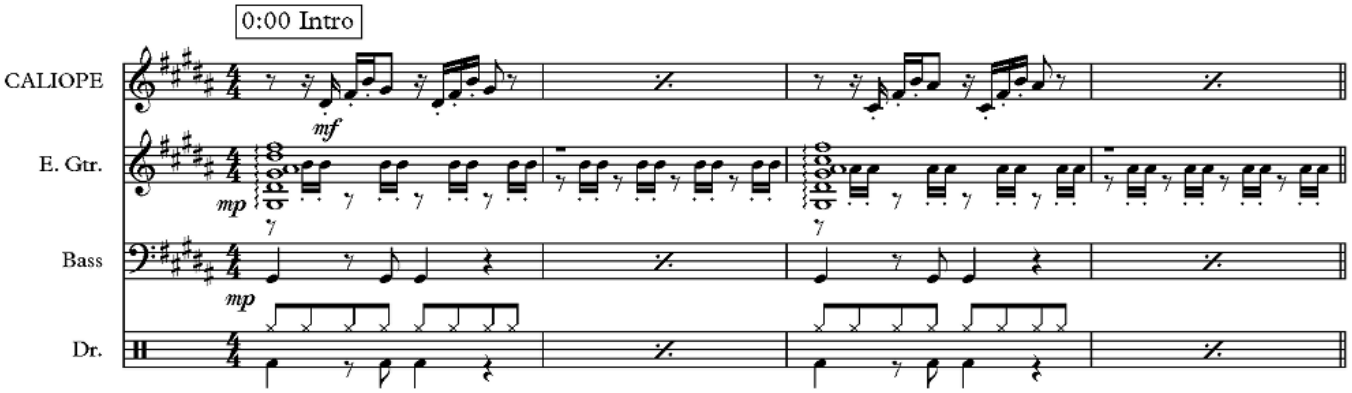
Example 3. An opposition table comparing two sounds

– / + OPPOSITION	BASS 1	MARIMBA
Spectral components - sustain		
bright / dark	–	–
pure / noisy	–	–
full / hollow	–	+
rich / sparse	–	+
beatless / beating	–	–
harmonic / inharmonic	–	+
Spectral components - attack		
percussive / legato	–	–
bright / dark	+	+
Pitch components		
low / high	–	Ø
steady / wavering	–	+

Example 4. Instrumental break of "What's Love Got to Do with It" (1:57–2:10)



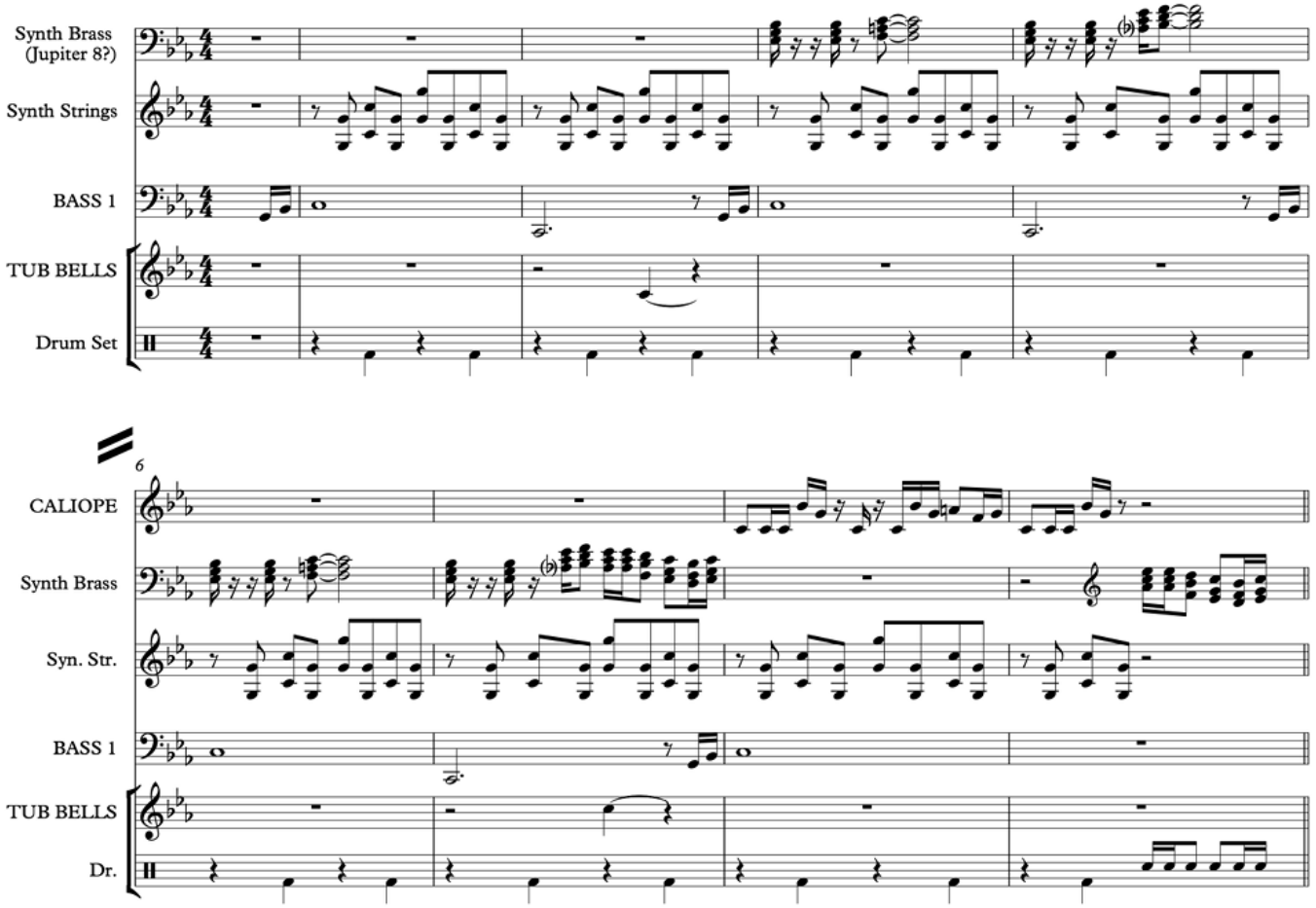
Example 5. Introduction of "What's Love Got to Do with It" (0:00–0:08)



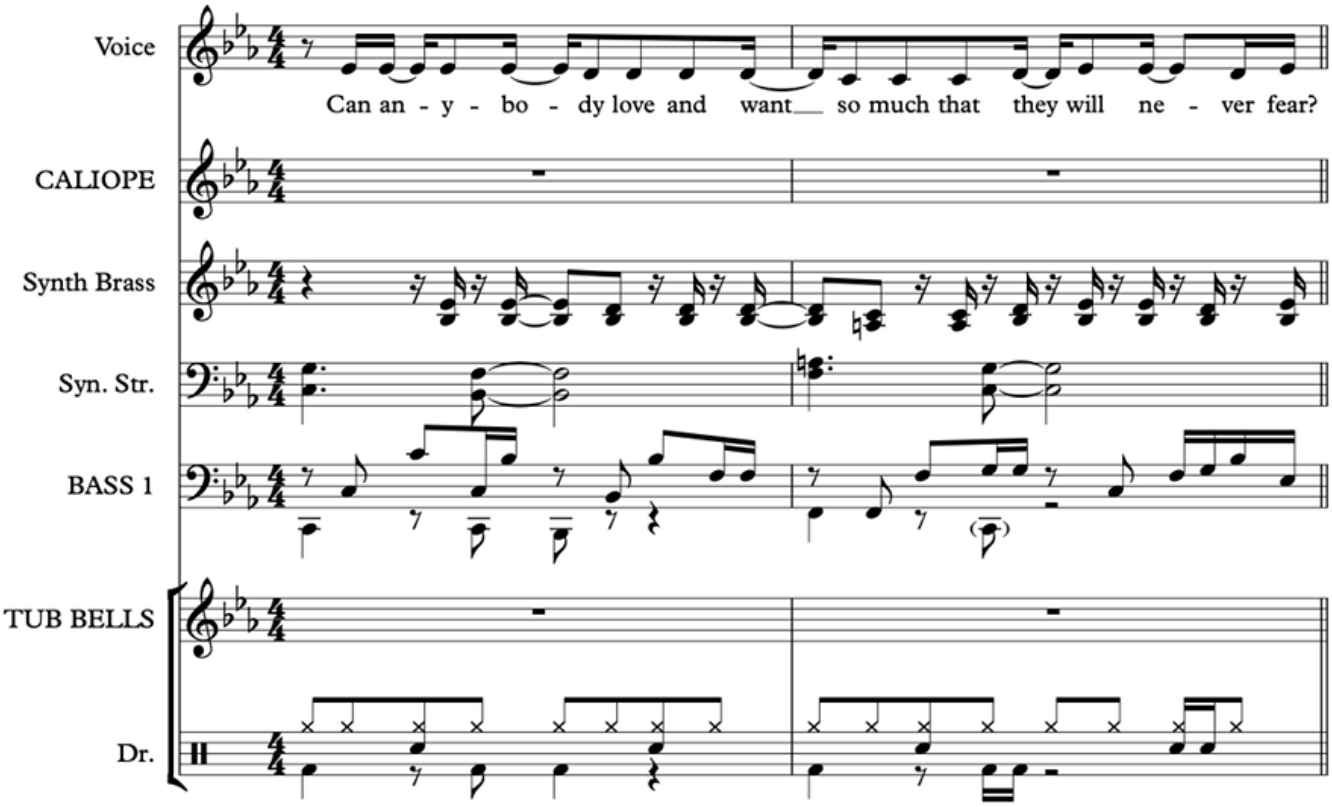
Example 6. Opposition table for "What's Love Got to Do with It"

– / + OPPOSITION	E. PIANO 1	HARMONICA	FLUTE 1	CALLIOPE
Spectral components - sustain				
bright / dark	+	+	+	+
pure / noisy	–	–	+	+
full / hollow	+	+	–	+
rich / sparse	+	–	+	+
beatless / beating	+	–	–	–
harmonic / inharmonic	–	–	+	+
Spectral components - attack				
percussive / legato	–	+	+	+
bright / dark	+	Ø	Ø	Ø
Pitch components				
low / high	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø
steady / wavering	–	–	–	–

Example 7. Introduction of "What Is Love?" (0:00–0:20)



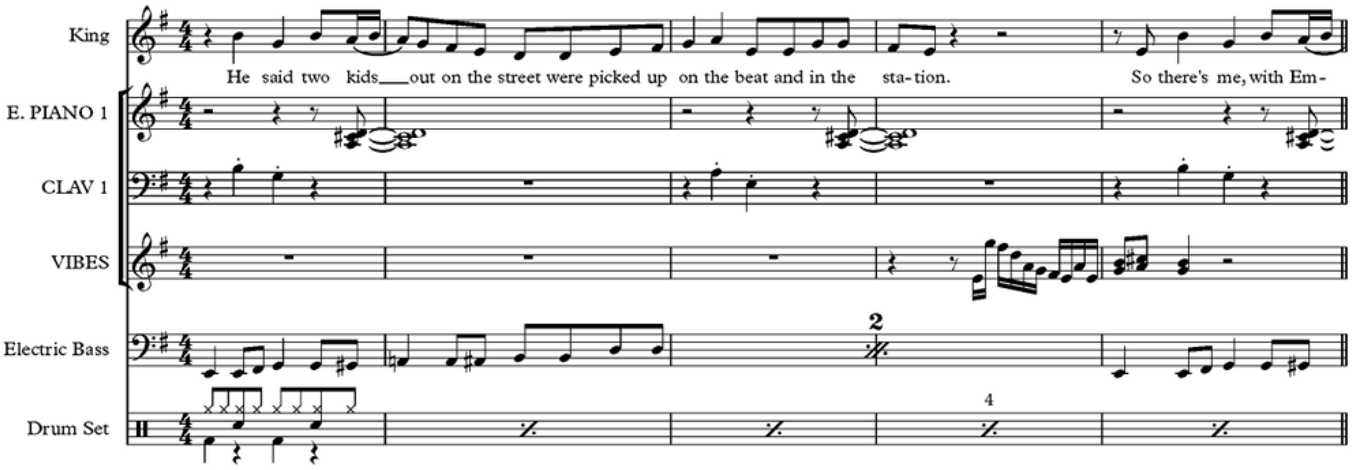
Example 8. Verse 2 of "What Is Love?" (1:07–1:17)



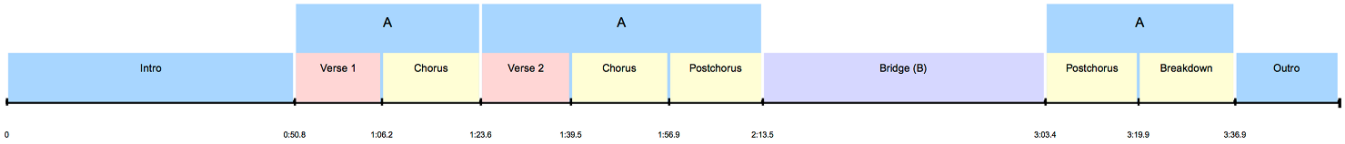
Example 9. Opposition table for the sounds used in "What Is Love"

– / + OPPOSITION	BASS 1	BRASS 2	CALIOPE	TUB BELLS
Spectral components - sustain				
bright / dark	–	–	+	+
pure / noisy	–	–	+	–
full / hollow	–	–	+	+
rich / sparse	–	–	+	+
beatless / beating	–	–	–	+
harmonic / inharmonic	–	–	+	+
Spectral components - attack				
percussive / legato	–	+	+	+
bright / dark	+	+	Ø	–
Pitch components				
low / high	–	Ø	Ø	Ø
steady / wavering	–	+	–	–

Example 10. Verse 2 of "Running in the Family" (1:46–1:57)



Example 11. Formal diagram for "When I Think of You"



Example 12. Opposition table for the presets used in "When I Think of You"

– / + OPPOSITION	BASS 1	MARIMBA
Spectral components - sustain		
bright / dark	–	–
pure / noisy	–	–
full / hollow	–	+
rich / sparse	–	+
beatless / beating	–	–
harmonic / inharmonic	–	+
Spectral components - attack		
percussive / legato	–	–
bright / dark	+	+
Pitch components		
low / high	–	Ø
steady / wavering	–	+

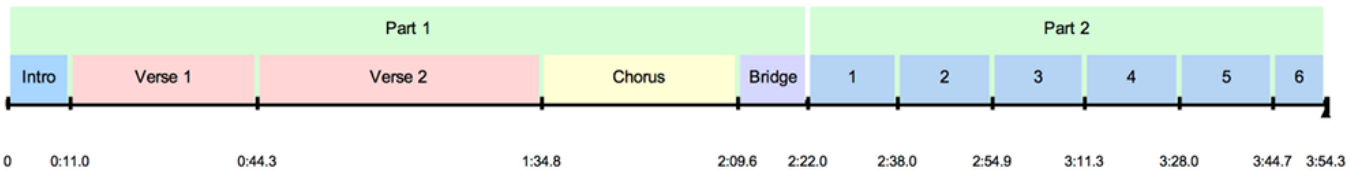
Example 13. DX7 presets and their typical functional layers

Core layer	*Novelty layer*
BASS 1	TUB BELLS
E. PIANO 1	CALIOPE
VOICE 1	FLUTE 1
BRASS 2	MARIMBA
HARMONICA	VIBES
CLAV 1	STEEL DRM
VOICE 1	

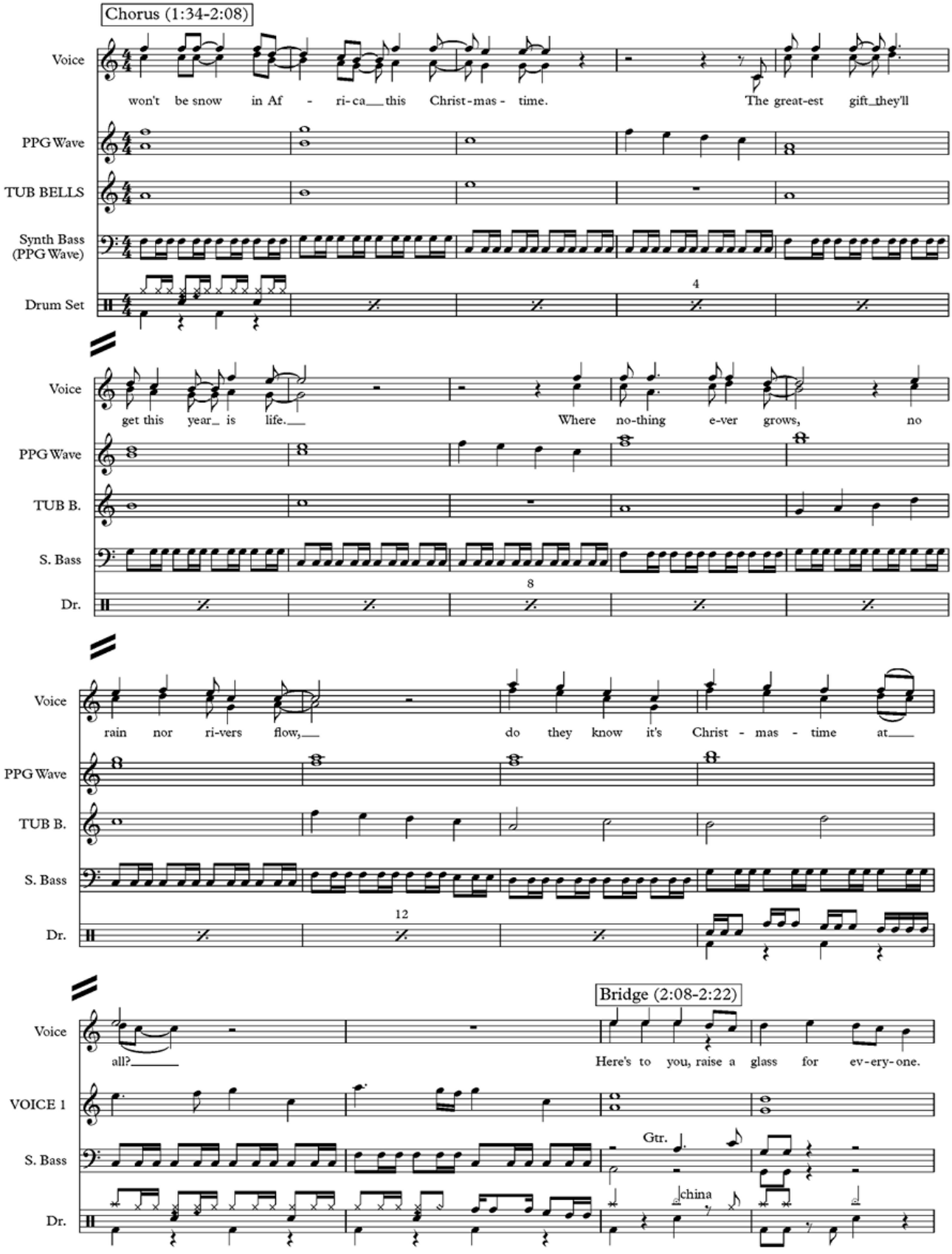
Example 14. Opposition table for twelve DX7 presets

	CORE						NOVELTY					
- / + OPPOSITION	E. PIANO 1	BASS 1	VOICE	BRASS 2	HAR-MONICA	CLAV 1	TUB BELLS	FLUTE 1	CALI-OPE	VIBES	MA-RIMBA	COW-BELL
Spectral components - sustain												
bright / dark	+	–	+	–	+	–	+	+	+	–	–	+
pure / noisy	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	+	+	–	–	–
full / hollow	+	–	–	–	+	–	+	–	+	+	+	+
rich / sparse	+	–	±	–	–	–	+	+	+	+	+	+
beatless / beating	+	–	–	–	–	–	+	–	–	–	–	–
harmonic / inharmonic	–	–	–	–	–	–	+	+	+	–	+	+
Spectral components - attack												
percussive / legato	–	–	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	–	–	–
bright / dark	+	+	Ø	+	Ø	–	–	Ø	Ø	+	+	–
Pitch components												
low / high	Ø	–	+	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	Ø	+	Ø	Ø
steady / wavering	–	–	+	+	–	–	–	–	–	–	±	–

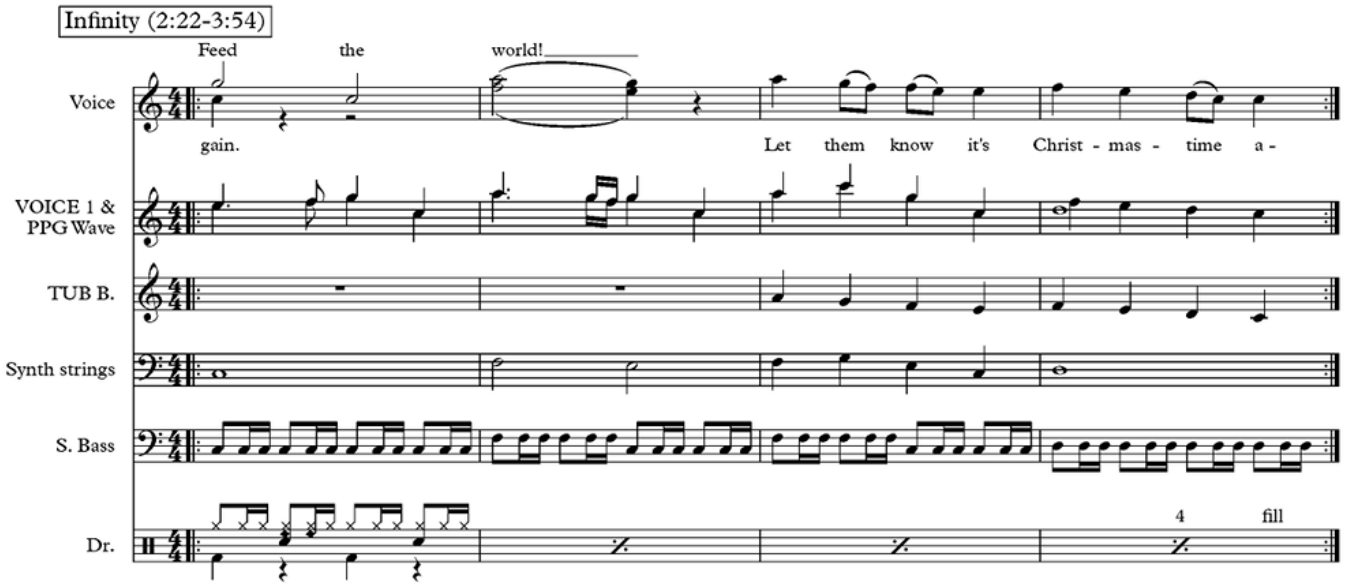
Example 15. Form chart of "Do They Know It's Christmas?" (1984)



Example 16. Transcription of the chorus going into the bridge of "Do They Know It's Christmas?" (1:34–2:10) [audio starts at 2:01]



Example 17. Transcription of the infinity section of "Do They Know It's Christmas?" (2:16–3:12) [audio includes representations 2, 3, and 5]



Example 18. Entry of each line of the cumulative texture in the infinity section

Repetition Number	*New Addition*
1	drumset, synth bass, VOICE 1
2	TUB BELLS
3	Vocals mm. 1–2 only ("Feed the world")
4	n/a
5	PPG Wave, vocals mm. 3–4 ("Let them know...")
6–11	n/a