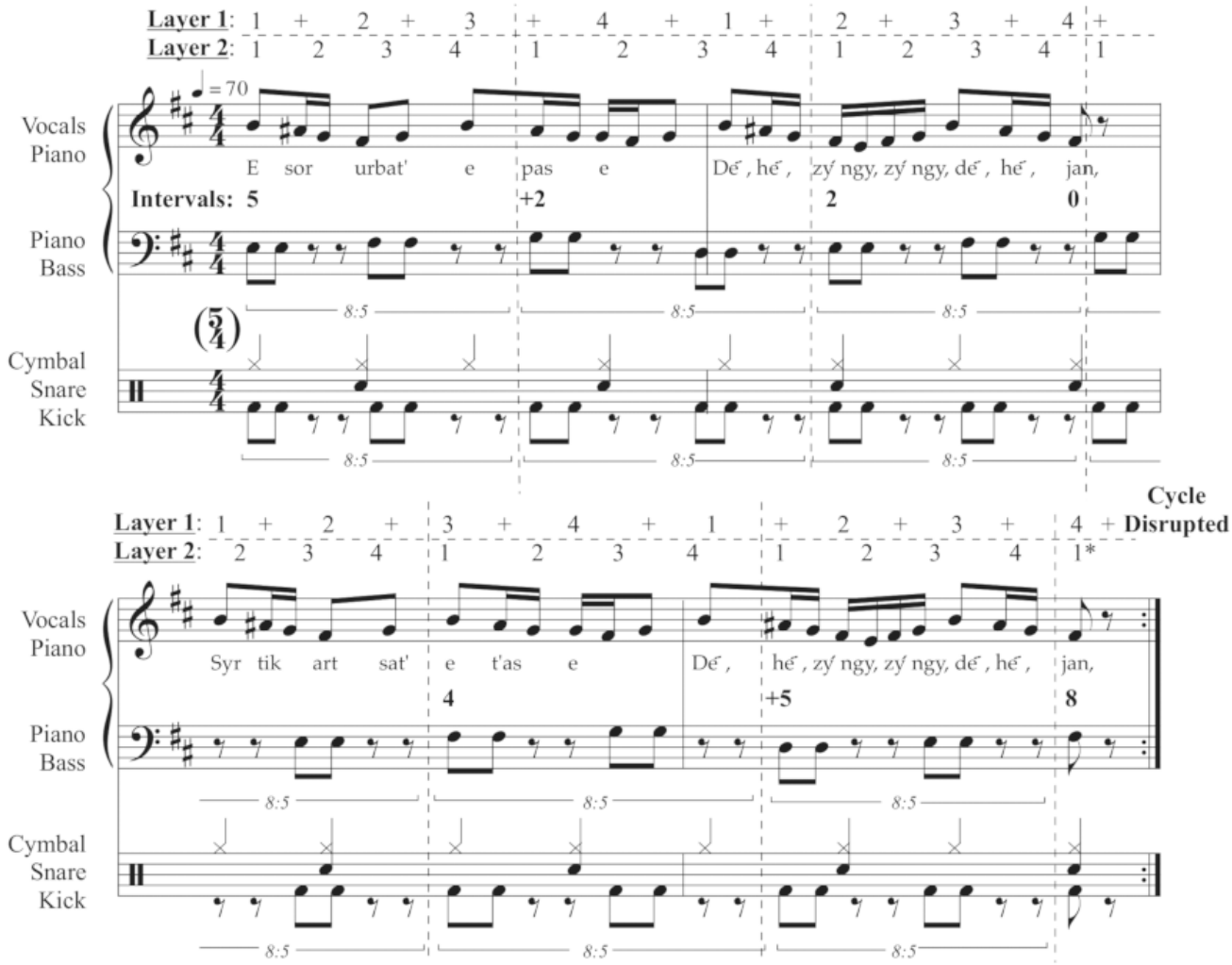
A JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR MUSIC THEORY

MTO 27.2 Examples: Schumann, Asymmetrical Meter, Ostinati, and Cycles in the Music of Tigran Hamasyan

(Note: audio, video, and other interactive examples are only available online)
https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.21.27.2/mto.21.27.2.schumann.html

Example 1. "Drip"—Track 4 on *Shadow Theater* (2013). Incomplete cycle at 1:32–1:58.



Jur kuga verin saren,
Saren olorelen,
Kyt'ap'i marmar k'aren,
Kat'-kat' tsorelen

Esor urbat' e pas e
De´, he´, zy'ngy, zy'ngy, de´, he´, jan,
Syrtik artsat'e t'as e
De´, he´, zy'ngy, zy'ngy, de´, he´, jan,

The water comes (down) from the mountain above.
From the ice it flows
It pours from the marble stone
Drop by drop it runs

Today is Friday, a fasting day
Ding Ding, hey, my friend
Your heart is like a silver cup
Ding Ding, hey, my friend[1]

[1] Translation provided by Fr. Yeprem Kelegian, Pastor Emeritus St. Mesrob Armenian Church; Racine, WI (2/8/2019). Thanks to Joshua Albrecht (Kent State University) for helping me obtain this translation.

Example 2. Form Diagram for "Drip"—Track 4 on *Shadow Theater* (2013)

Section	Intro	A	B	A	B	C	A	D	E	F	G	A'	G
# Bars	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	8	12	8	8	4	8
Layer 1	4/4												
Layer 2								5/4 (8:5)					
Time	0:00–0:13	0:13–0:26	0:26–0:39	0:39–0:52	0:52–1:06	1:06–1:19	1:19–1:32	1:32–1:58	1:58–2:38	2:38–3:04	3:04–3:30	3:30–3:43	3:43–4:13

Example 3. List of studio albums featuring Hamasyan as the primary artist/composer/arranger

Album Title	**Year**	**Label**
World Passion	2006	Plus Loins Music
New Era	2007	Plus Loins Music
Red Hail	2009	Plus Loins Music
A Fable	2011	Verve Records
EP No. 1	2011	Verve Records
Shadow Theater	2013	Verve Records
The Poet	2014	Sunnyside Records
Mockroot	2015	Nonesuch Records
Luys i Loso	2015	ECM Records
An Ancient Observer	2017	Nonesuch Records
For Gyumri	2018	Nonesuch Records
They Say Nothing Stays The Same	2019	SEEBEDON Records
The Call Within	2020	Nonesuch Records

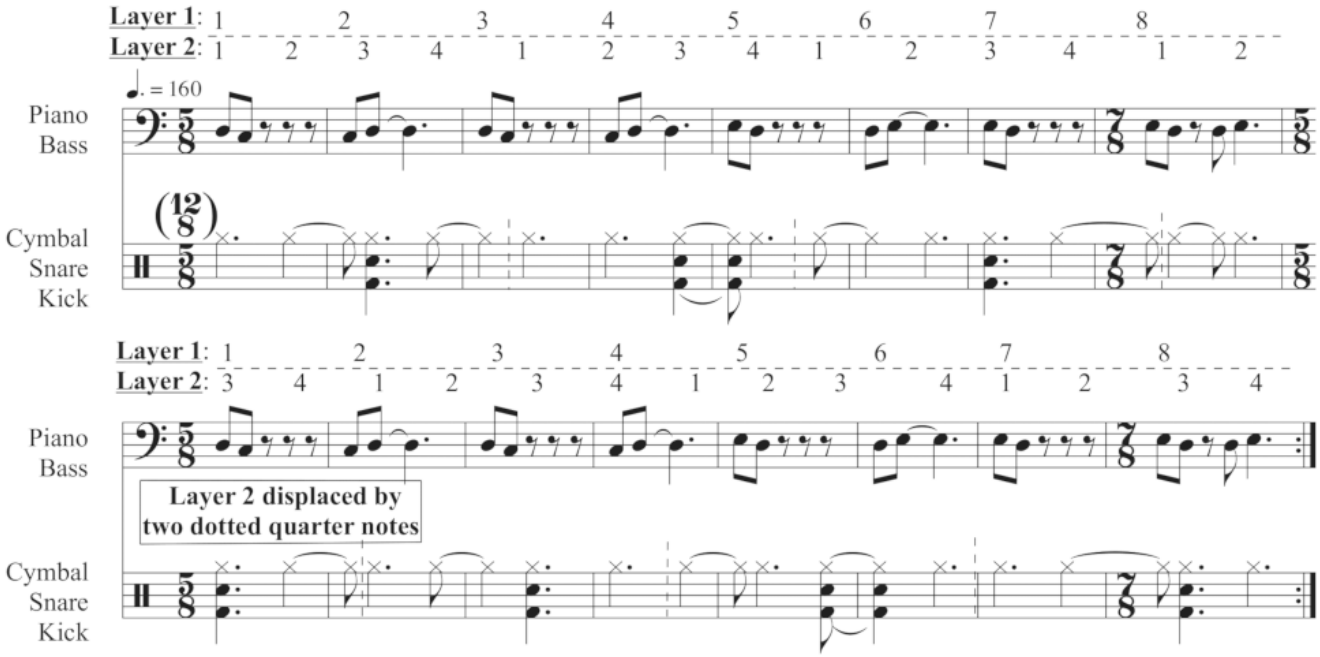
Example 4. Known instances of cycle types in Hamasyan's studio albums

Album (Year)	Track #/Title	Cycle Type
Red Hail (2009)	#2: "Red Hail (of Pomegranate Seeds)"	Structural
	#3: "The Glass-Hearted Queen"	Developmental
	#6: "Sibyalla"	Phrasal
	#7: "Corrupt"	Structural
	#8/#9 "Part 1: Serpentine"/"Part 2: Moneypulated"	Developmental
A Fable (2011)	#2: "What The Waves Brought"	Phrasal
	#5: "Samsara"	Phrasal
	#10: "Kakavik (The Little Partridge)"	Phrasal
	#12: "A Fable"	Phrasal
	#14: "Looking For The Block"	Phrasal
EP No. 1 (2011)	#3: "A Crane From Van"	Phrasal
	#5: "Vardavar"	Developmental
Shadow Theater (2013)	#1: "The Poet"	Phrasal
	#2: "Erishta"	Developmental
	#4: "Drip"	Phrasal
	#7: "The Court Jester"	Phrasal
	#9/#10: "Pt1 Collapse"/"Pt2 Alternative Universe"	Developmental
	#12: "Road Song"	Phrasal
Mockroot (2015)	#2: "Song for Melan and Rafik"	Phrasal
	#3: "Kars 1"	Phrasal
	#4: "Double-Faced"	Structural
	#7: "Entertain Me"	Structural
	#10: "To Negate"	Phrasal
	#11/#12: "The Grid"/"Out of the Grid"	Developmental
Luys I Loso (2015)	#10: "Voghormea Indz Astvats"	Phrasal
An Ancient Observer (2017)	#4: "Nairian Odyssey"	Phrasal
	#6: "Etude No. 1"	Structural
	#8: "Fides Tua"	Phrasal
	#10: "An Ancient Observer"	Phrasal
For Gyumri (2018)	#3: "The American"	Phrasal
	#4: "Self - Portrait"	Phrasal
The Call Within (2020)	#1: "Levitation 21"	Phrasal
	#3: "Ara Resurrected"	Structural
	#5: "Space of Your Existence"	Phrasal
	#8: "Vortex"	Phrasal
	#10: "New Maps"	Developmental

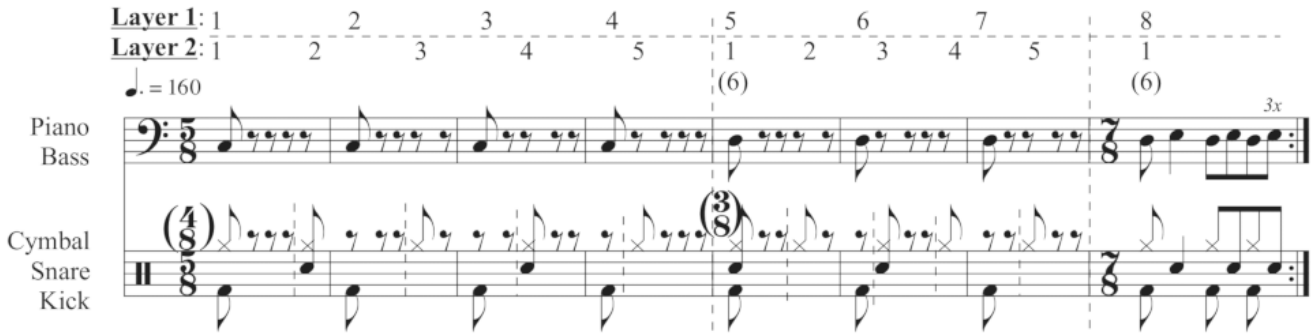
Example 5. Form Diagram for "Song for Melan and Rafik"—Track 2 on *Mockroot* (2015)

Section	Intro	A	B	C	D	E	D'	D"	D"'	F
# Bars	16	64	16	40	80	64	64	32	32	52
Layer 1	5/8+5/8+5/8+5/8+5/8+5/8+5/8+7/8									12/8+12/8+12/8+14/8
Layer 2								12/8	4/8 & 3/8	
Time	0:00–0:10	0:10–0:53	0:53–1:04	1:04–1:31	1:31–2:21	2:21–3:02	3:02–3:44	3:44–4:05	4:05–4:25	4:25–5:57

Example 6. "Song for Melan and Rafik"—Track 2 on *Mockroot* (2015). Complete cycle at 3:44–4:05.



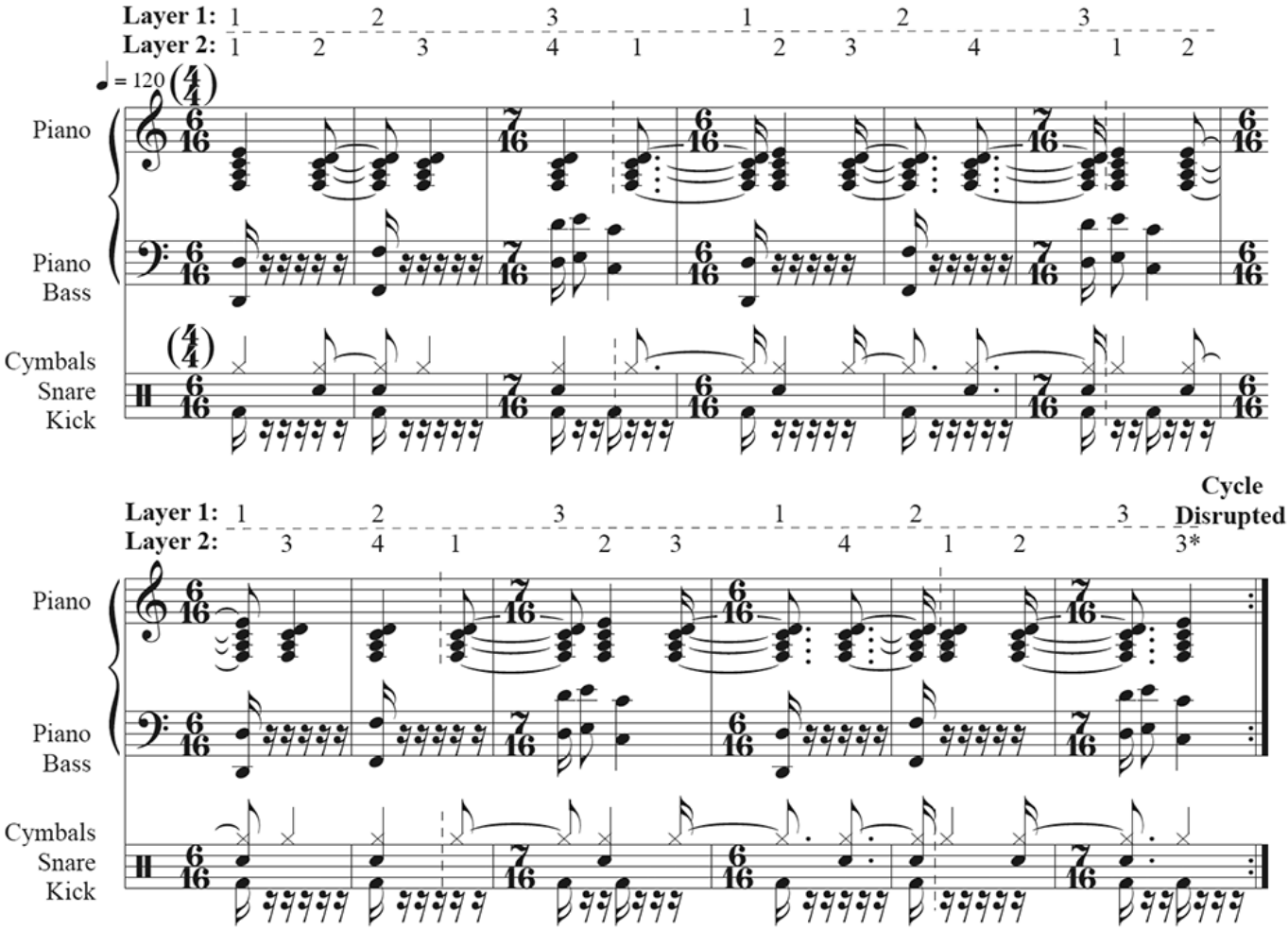
Example 7. "Song for Melan and Rafik"—Track 2 on *Mockroot* (2015). Complete cycles at 4:05–4:25.



Example 8. Form Diagram for "A Crane Came From Van"—Track 3 on *EP No. 1* (2011)

Section	Intro	A	B	A'	A"	C	C'	D	E
# Bars	40	80	40	20	30	24	24	60	12
Layer 1	5/16+5/16+5/16+4/16+5/16					6/16+6/16+7/16			7/4+9/4
Layer 2				4/16			4/16		
Time	0:00–0:20	0:20–1:00	1:00–1:20	1:20–1:30	1:30–1:45	1:45–2:03	2:03–2:21	2:22–3:05	3:05–3:59

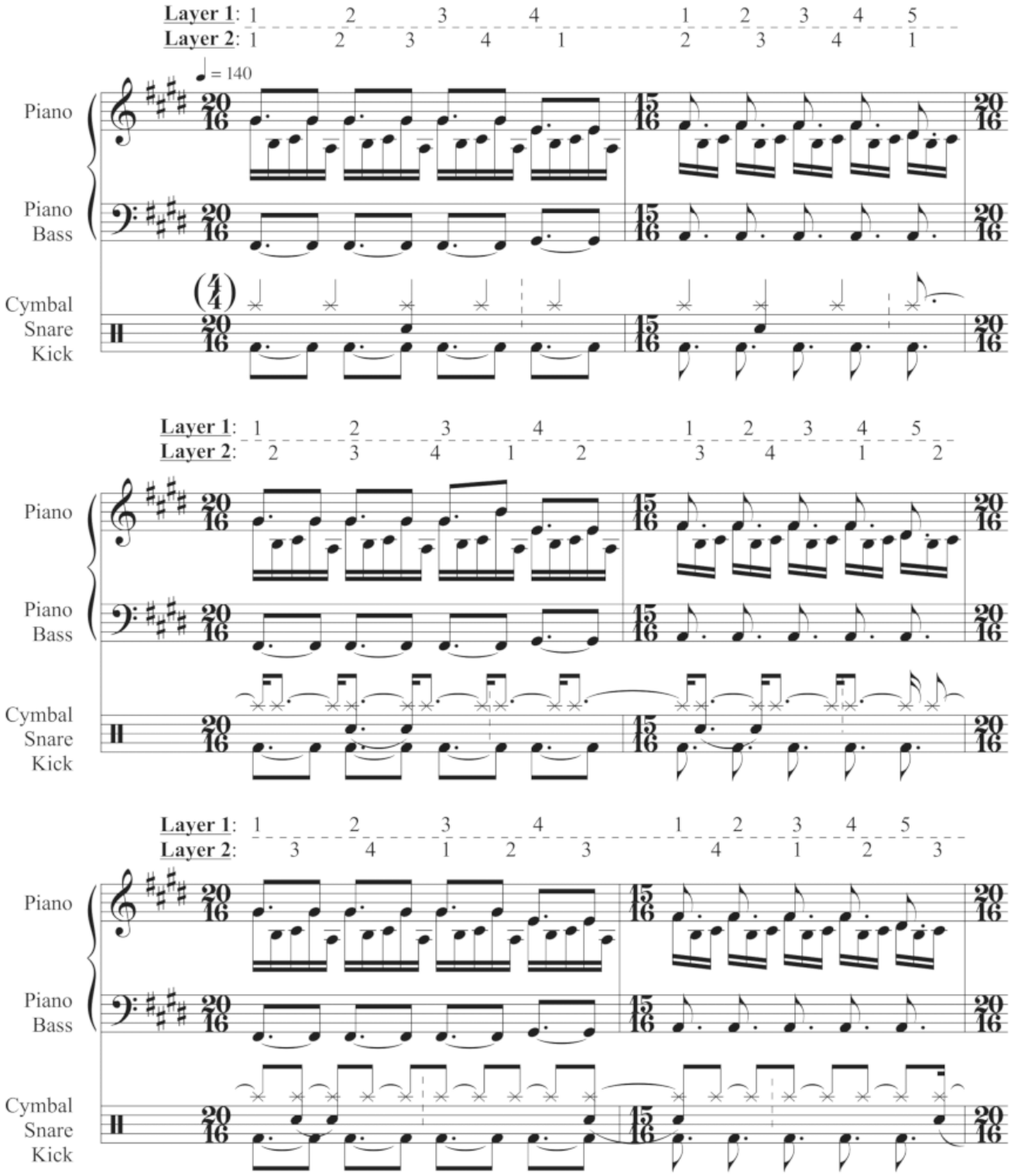
Example 9. "A Crane Came From Van"—Track 3 on *EP No. 1* (2011). Incomplete cycle at 2:03–2:21

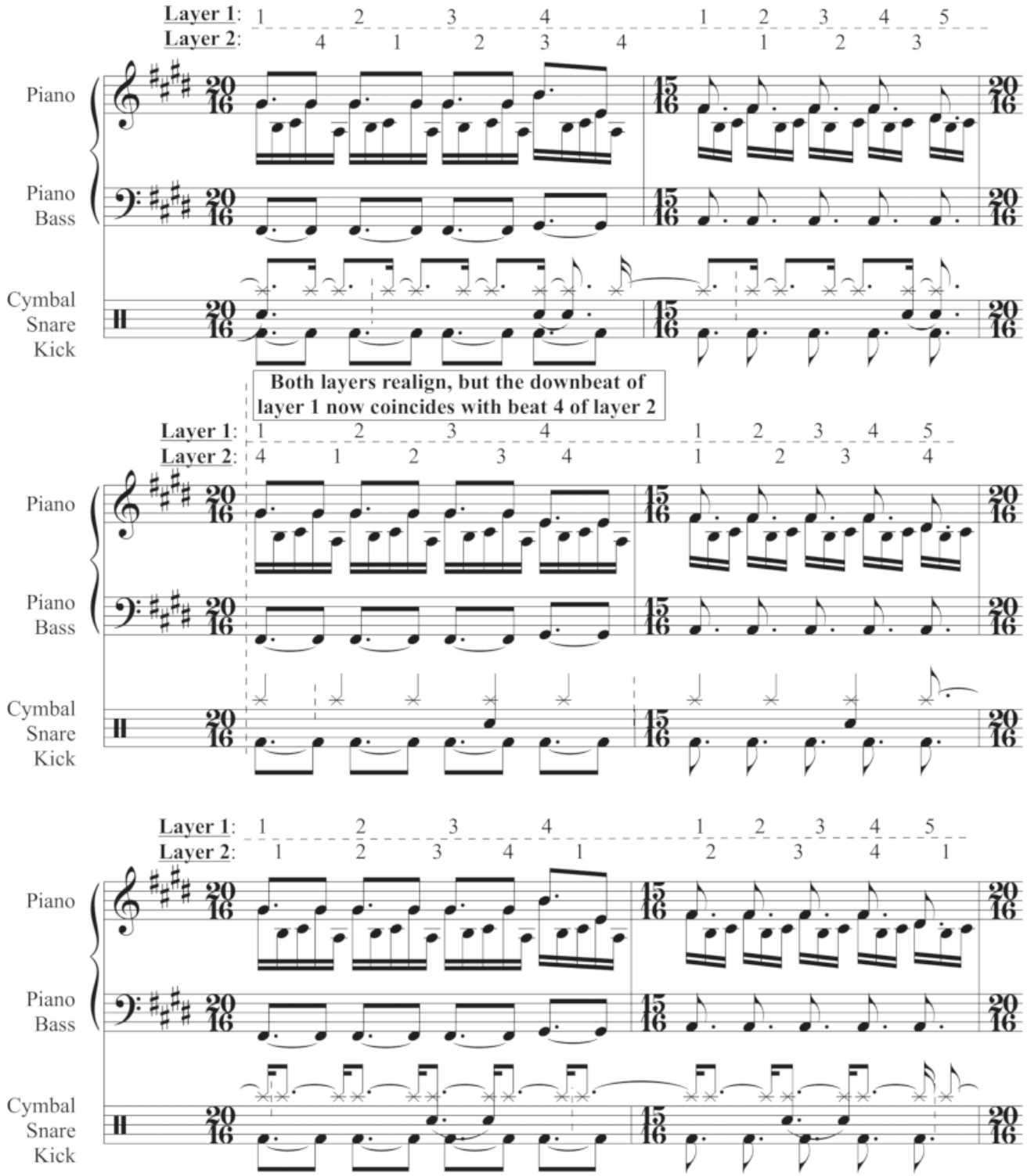


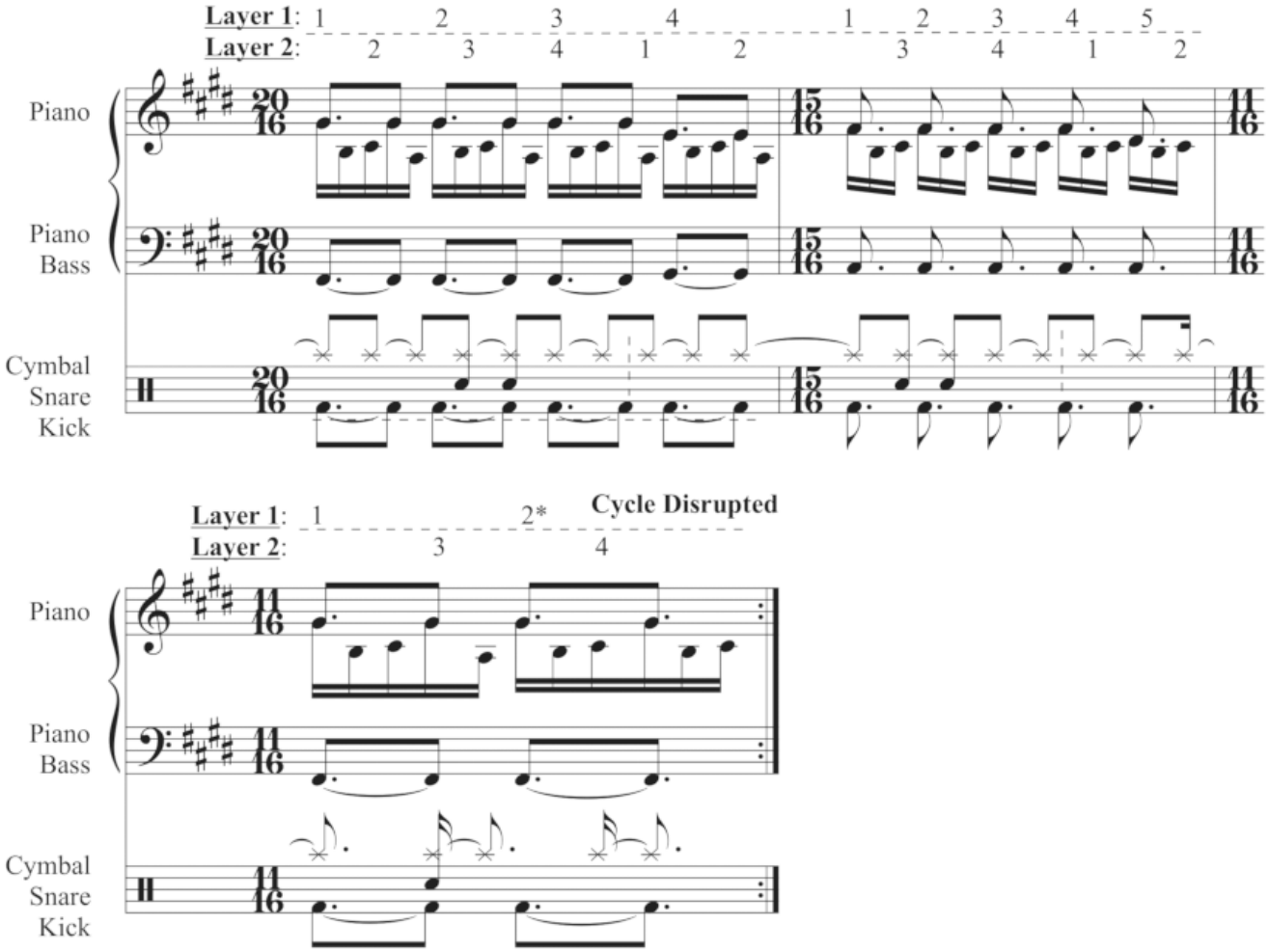
Example 10. Form Diagram for "Entertain Me"—Track 7 on *Mockroot* (2015)

Section	A	B	C	C'	C	A	Outro
# Bars (4/4)	32	16	16	8	8	16	8
Layer 1	20/16+15/16						
Layer 2	4/4						
Time	0:00–0:59	0:59–1:28	1:28–1:58	1:58–2:13	2:13–2:28	2:28–2:57	2:57–3:20

Example 11. "Entertain Me"—Track 7 on *Mockroot* (2015). Incomplete cycle at 0:00–0:59



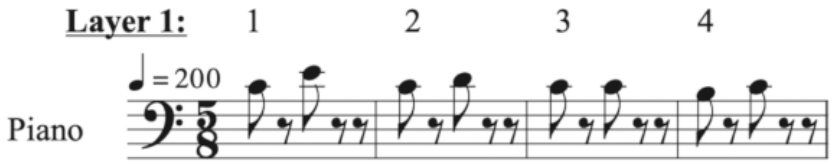

Layer 1: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 5
Layer 2: 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3
Piano
Piano Bass
Cymbal
Snare
Kick
Both layers realign, but the downbeat of layer 1 now coincides with beat 4 of layer 2
Layer 1: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 5
Layer 2: 4 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
Piano
Piano Bass
Cymbal
Snare
Kick
Layer 1: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 5
Layer 2: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 1
Piano
Piano Bass
Cymbal
Snare
Kick



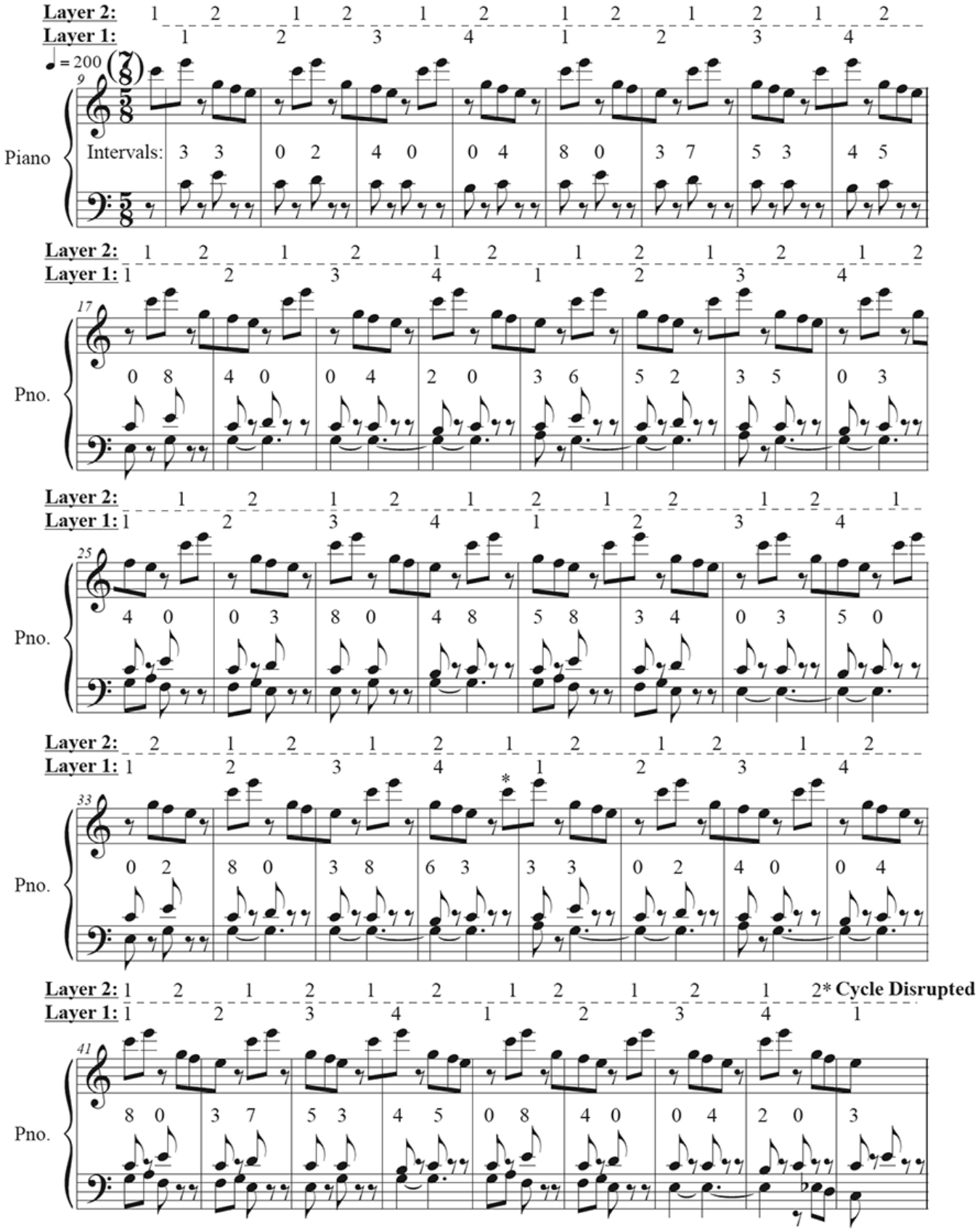
Example 12. Form Diagram for "Etude No. 1"—Track 6 on *An Ancient Observer* (2017)

Section	A	B	A	B'	B"	B"'	A	C	A
# Bars	8	40	4	32	16	24	4	32	8
Layer 1	5/8								
Layer 2		7/8		7/8					
Layer 3					3/8				
Time	0:00–0:05	0:05–0:36	0:36–0:39	0:39–0:51	0:51–1:04	1:04–1:23	1:23–1:27	1:27–1:53	1:53–2:08

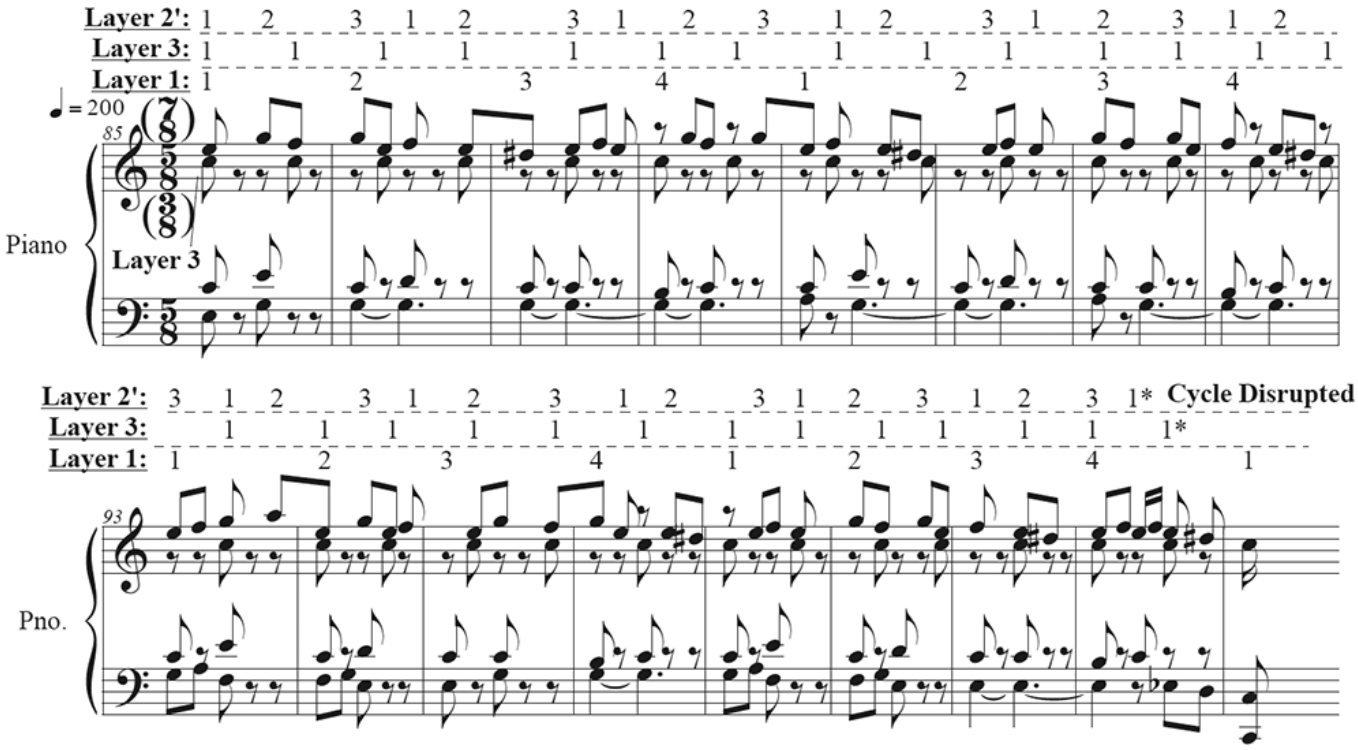
Example 13. "Etude No. 1"—Track 6 on *An Ancient Observer* (2017). Layer 1 introduced at 0:00.



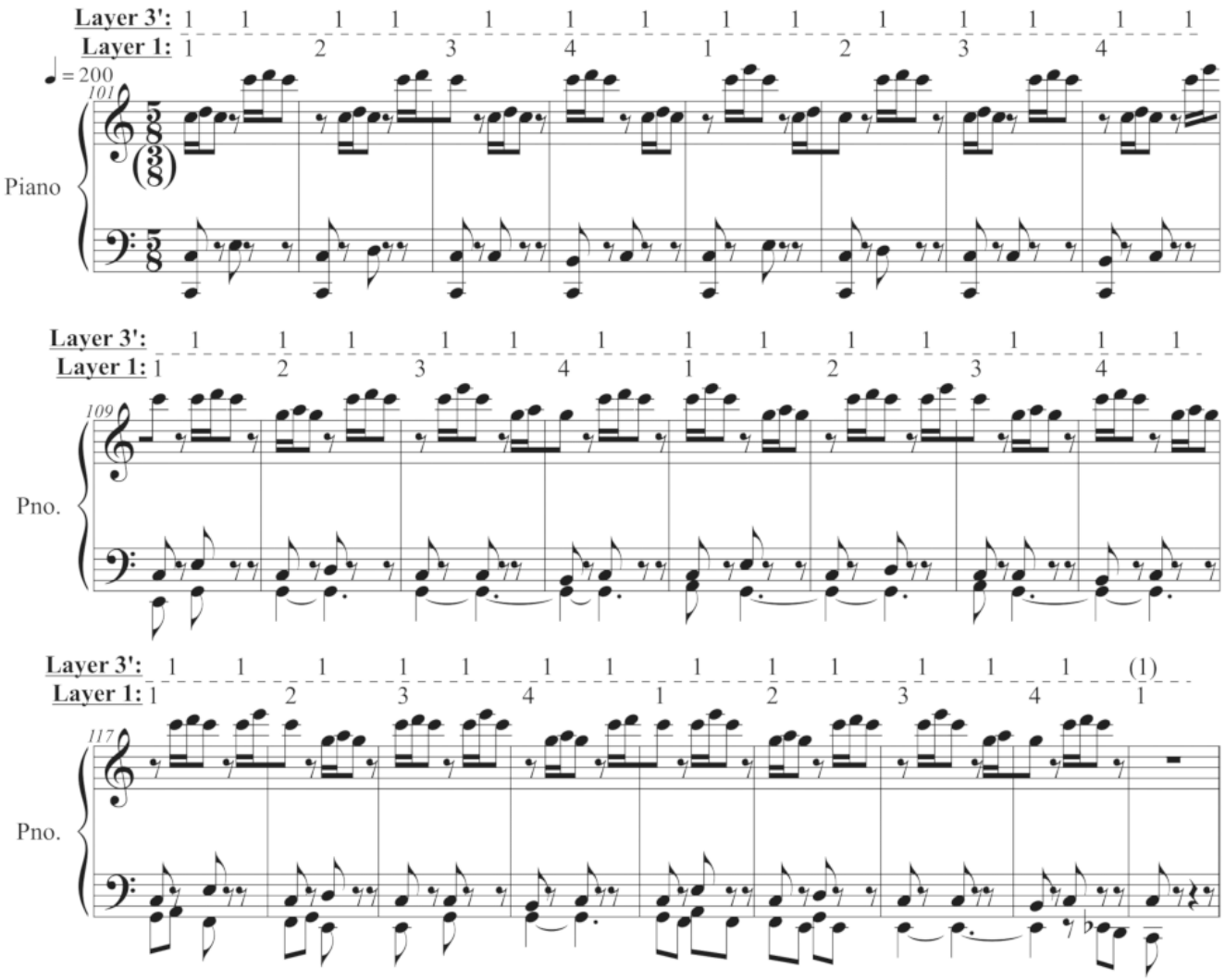
Example 14. "Etude No. 1"—Track 6 on *An Ancient Observer* (2017). Incomplete cycle at 0:05–0:36.



Example 15. "Etude No. 1"—Track 6 on *An Ancient Observer* (2017). Incomplete cycle at 0:51–1:04.



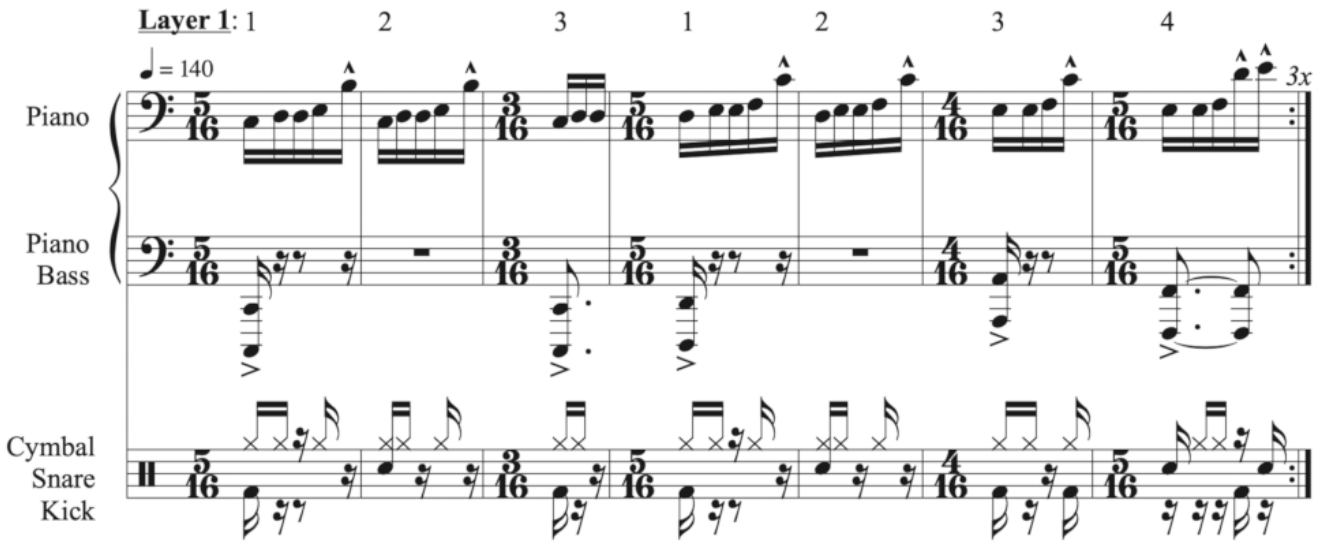
Example 16. "Etude No. 1"—Track 6 on *An Ancient Observer* (2017). Complete cycle at 1:04–1:23.



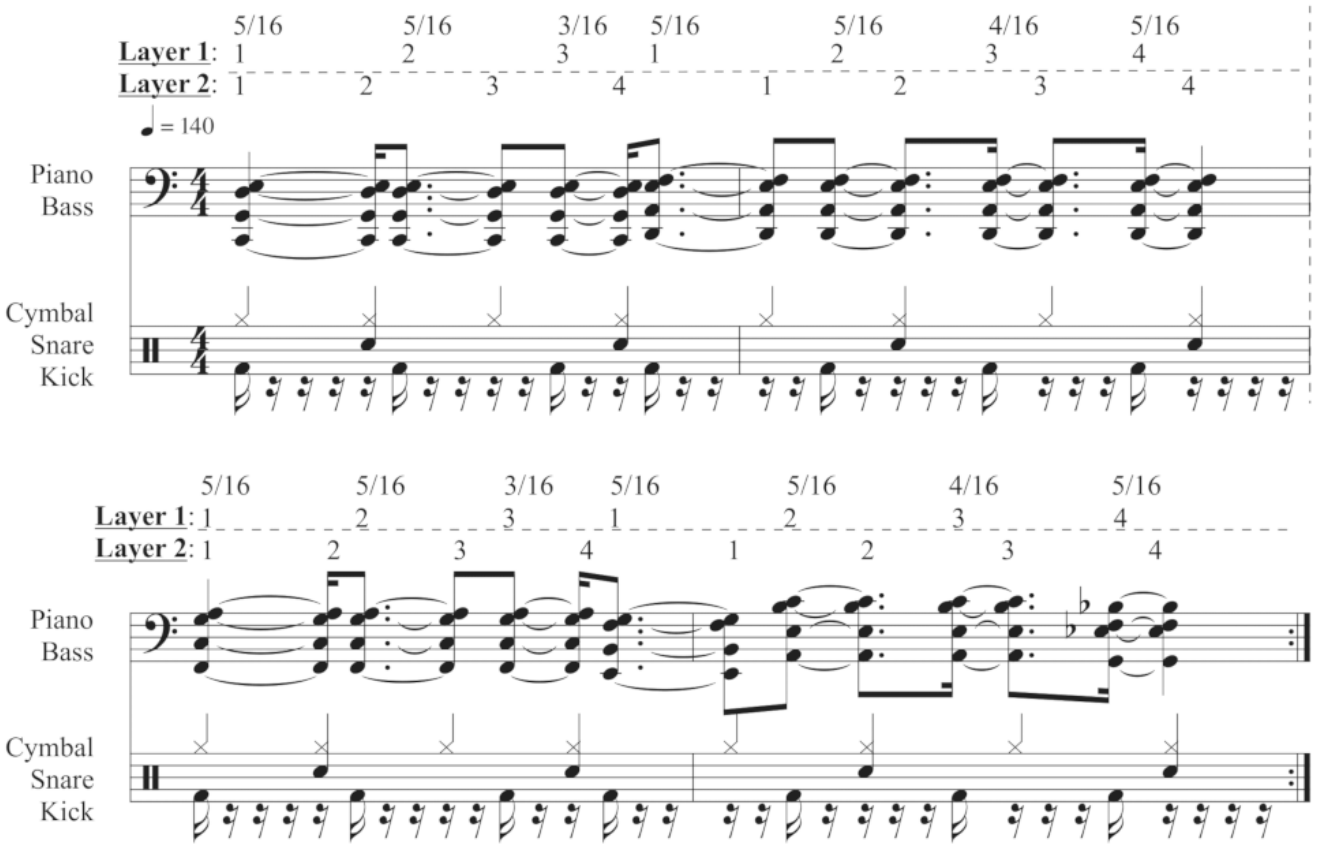
Example 17. Form Diagram for "Vardavar"—Track 5 on *EP No. 1* (2011).

Section	A	A	A	B	A	C	A'	A	A''
# Bars	56	112	56	42	56	70	28	84	126 (fade out)
Layer 1	5/16+5/16+3/16+5/16+5/16+4/16+5/16								3/16+3/16+2/16+3/16+3/16+2.5/16+1.5/16
Layer 2							4/4		2/4
Time	0:00–0:28	0:28–1:22	1:22–1:50	1:50–2:11	2:11–2:38	2:38–3:12	3:12–3:26	3:26–4:07	4:07–5:09

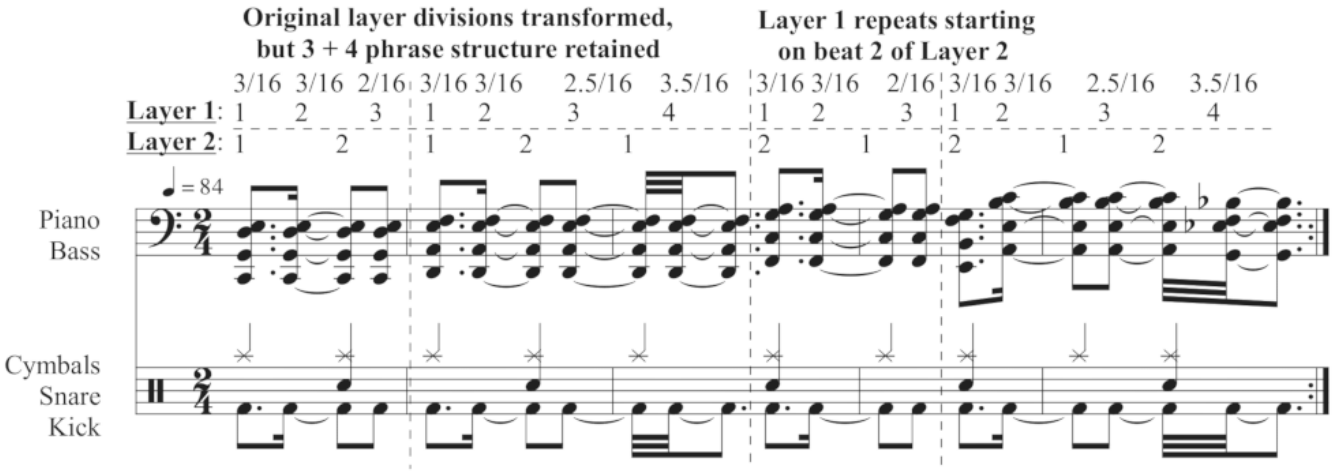
Example 18. "Vardavar"—Track 5 on *EP No. 1* (2011). Layer 1 at 0:00–0:28.



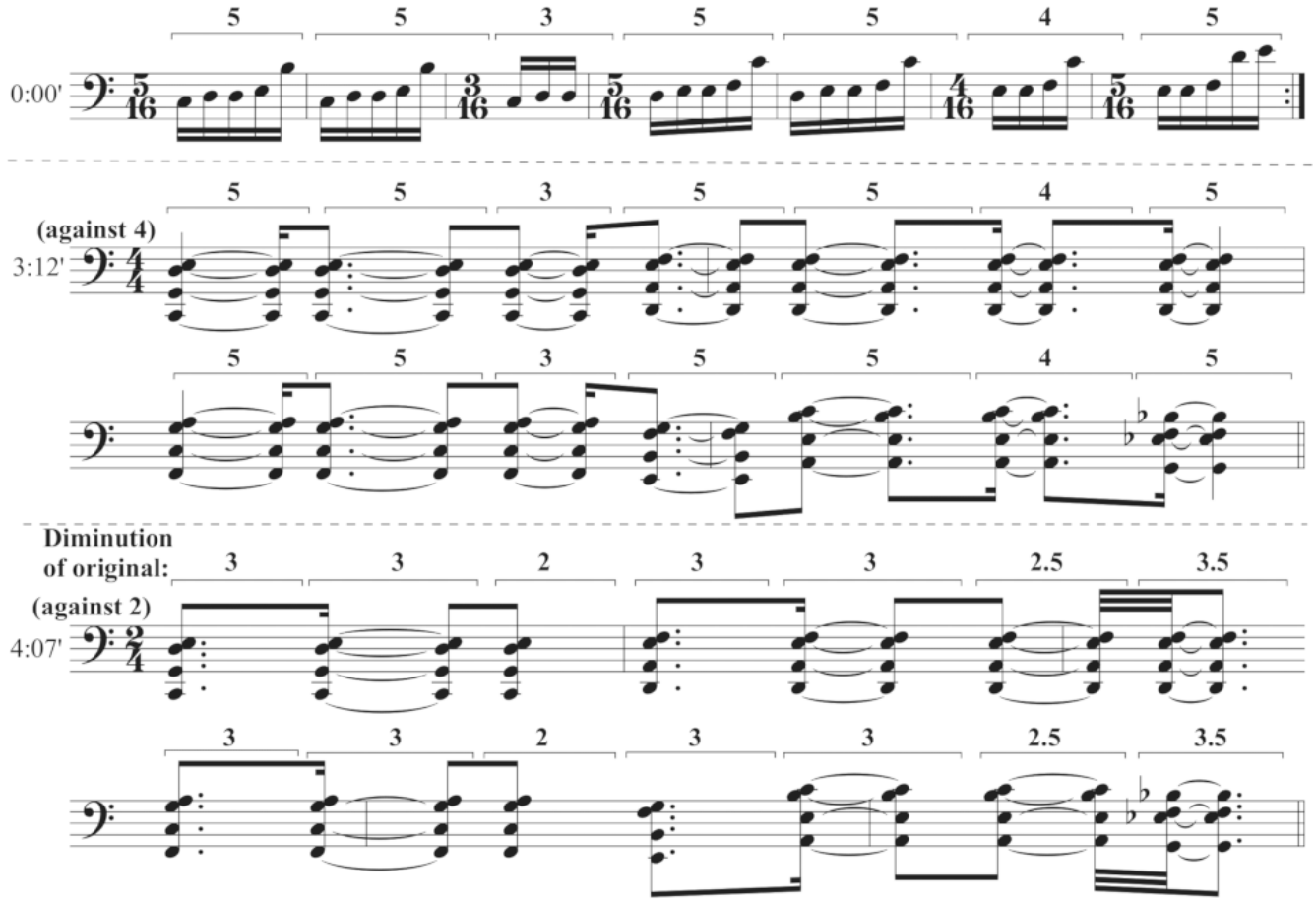
Example 19. "Vardavar"—Track 5 on *EP No. 1* (2011). Complete Cycle at 3:12–3:26.



Example 20. "Vardavar"—Track 5 on *EP No. 1* (2011). Complete Cycle at 4:07–5:09.



Example 21. Development of original layer 1 in "Vardavar."



Example 22. Form Diagram for "The Grid" & "Out of The Grid"—Tracks 11 & 12 on *Mockroot* (2015).

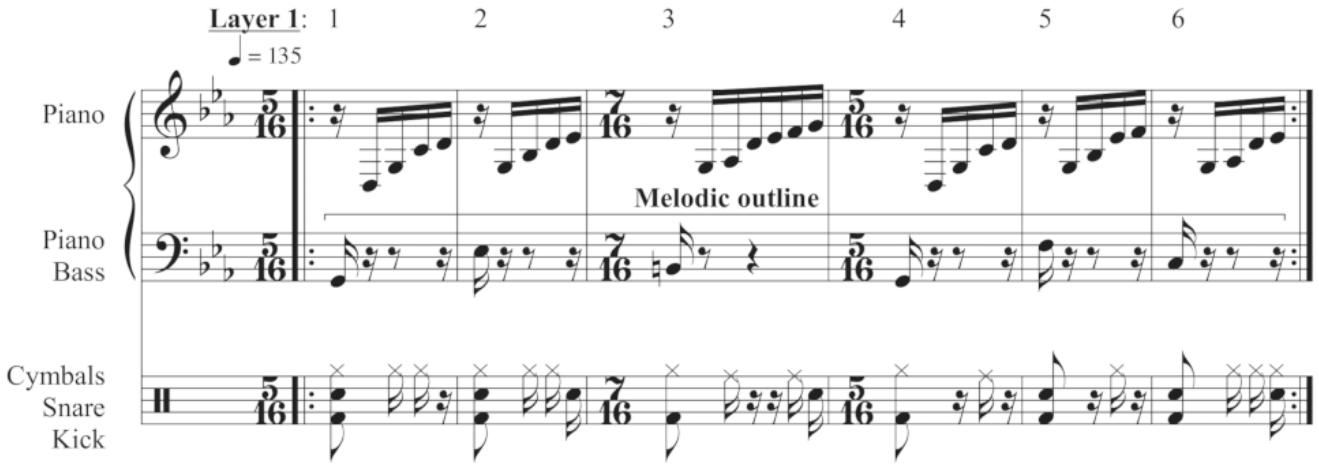
"The Grid"

Section	A	B	C	B	C	A	D	E	F	Tr	Solo	G	H
# Bars	60	24	24	24	24	24	48	24	48	12	204	24	48
Layer 1	5/16+5/16+7/16+5/16+5/16+5/16												
Time	0:00–0:35	0:35–0:50	0:50–1:05	1:05–1:20	1:20–1:34	1:34–1:48	1:48–2:17	2:17–2:32	2:32–3:00	3:00–3:08	3:08–5:10	5:10–5:25	5:25–5:57

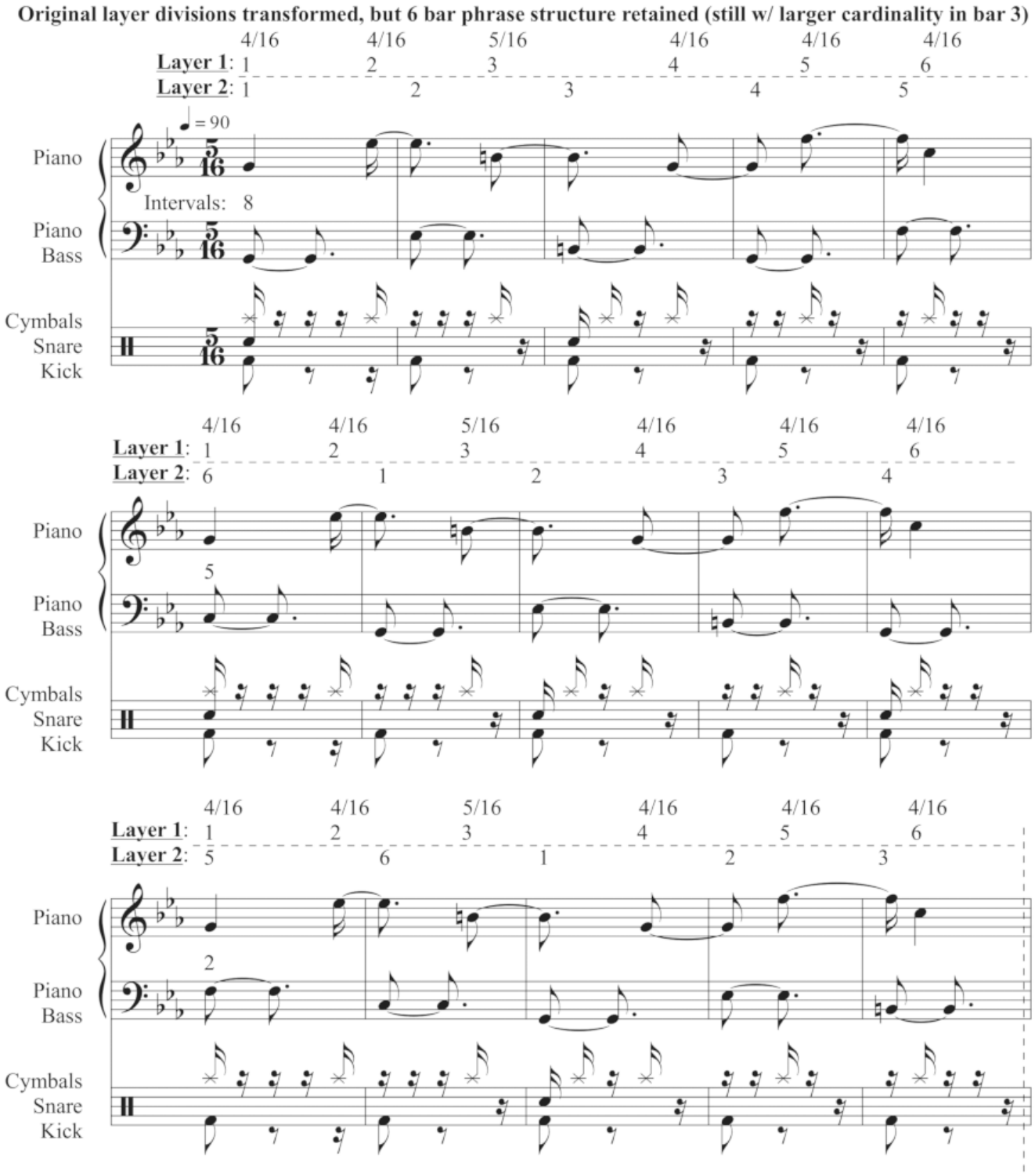
"Out of the Grid"

Section	I	J	K	A	A'	L	A"	A	A	M	A	N	M
# Bars	24	48	60	36	30	20	47	15	60	24	24	24	12
Layer 1	5/16+5/16+7/16+5/16+5/16+5/16				4/16+4/16+5/16+4/16+4/16+4/16			5/16+5/16+7/16+5/16+5/16+5/16					
Layer 2					5/16		4/16						
Time	0:00–0:14	0:14–0:47	0:47–1:19	1:19–1:43	1:43–2:08	2:08–2:25	2:25–2:56	2:56–3:06	3:06–3:44	3:44–3:59	3:59–4:14	4:14–4:30	4:30–4:39

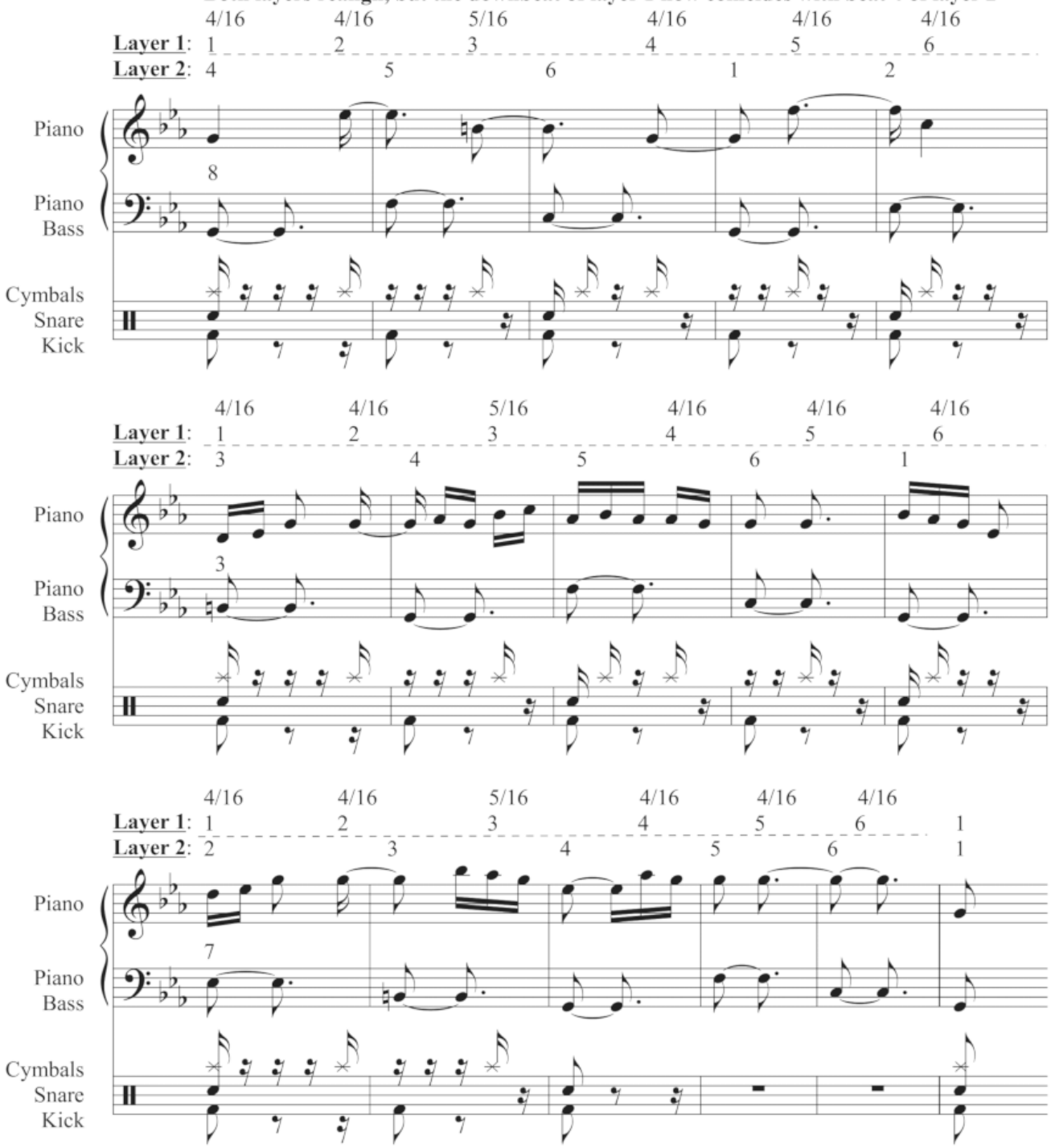
Example 23. "The Grid"—Track 11 on *Mockroot* (2015). Layer 1 at 0:00–0:35.



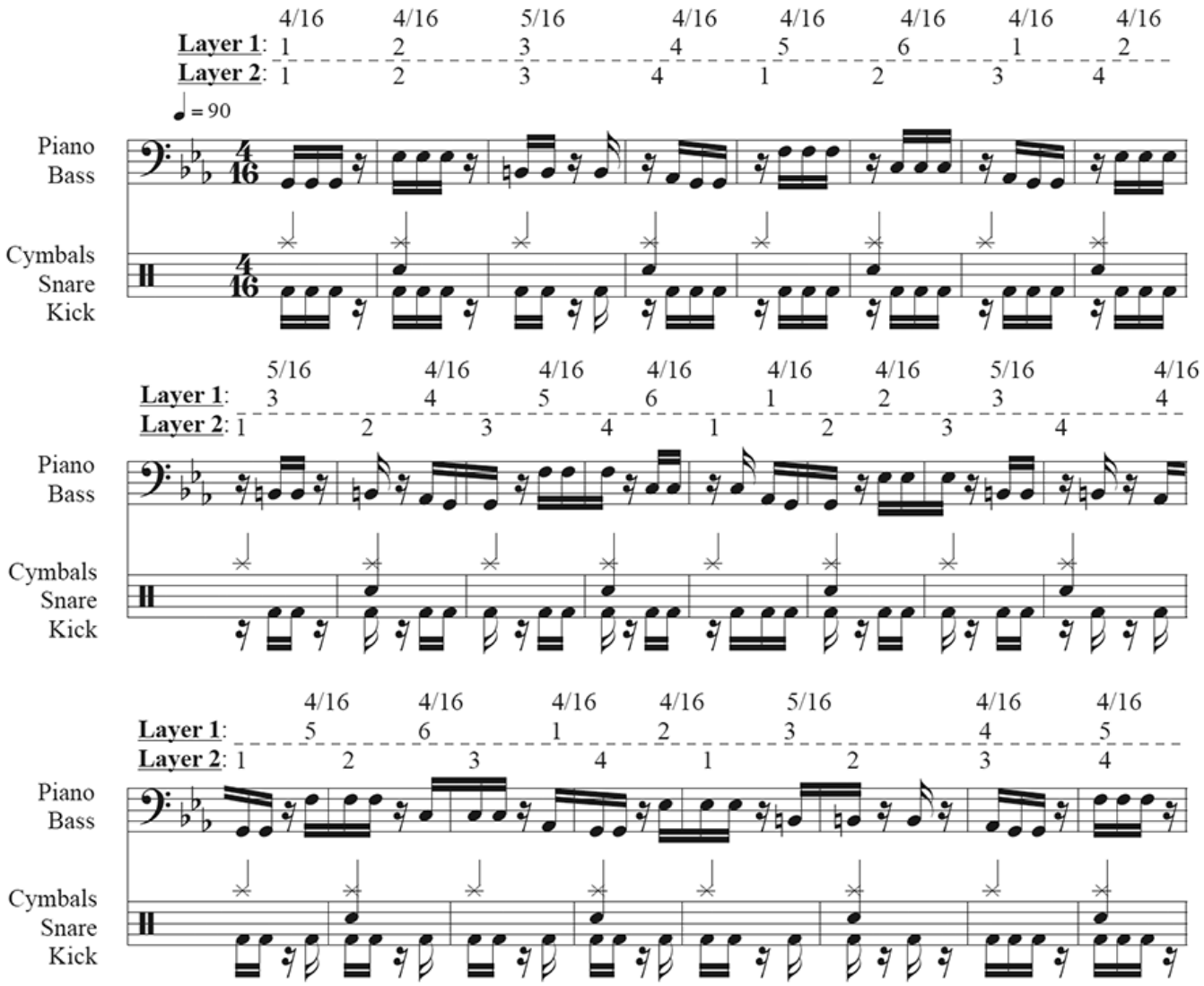
Example 24. "Out of The Grid"—Track 12 on *Mockroot* (2015). Complete Cycle at 1:43–2:08.

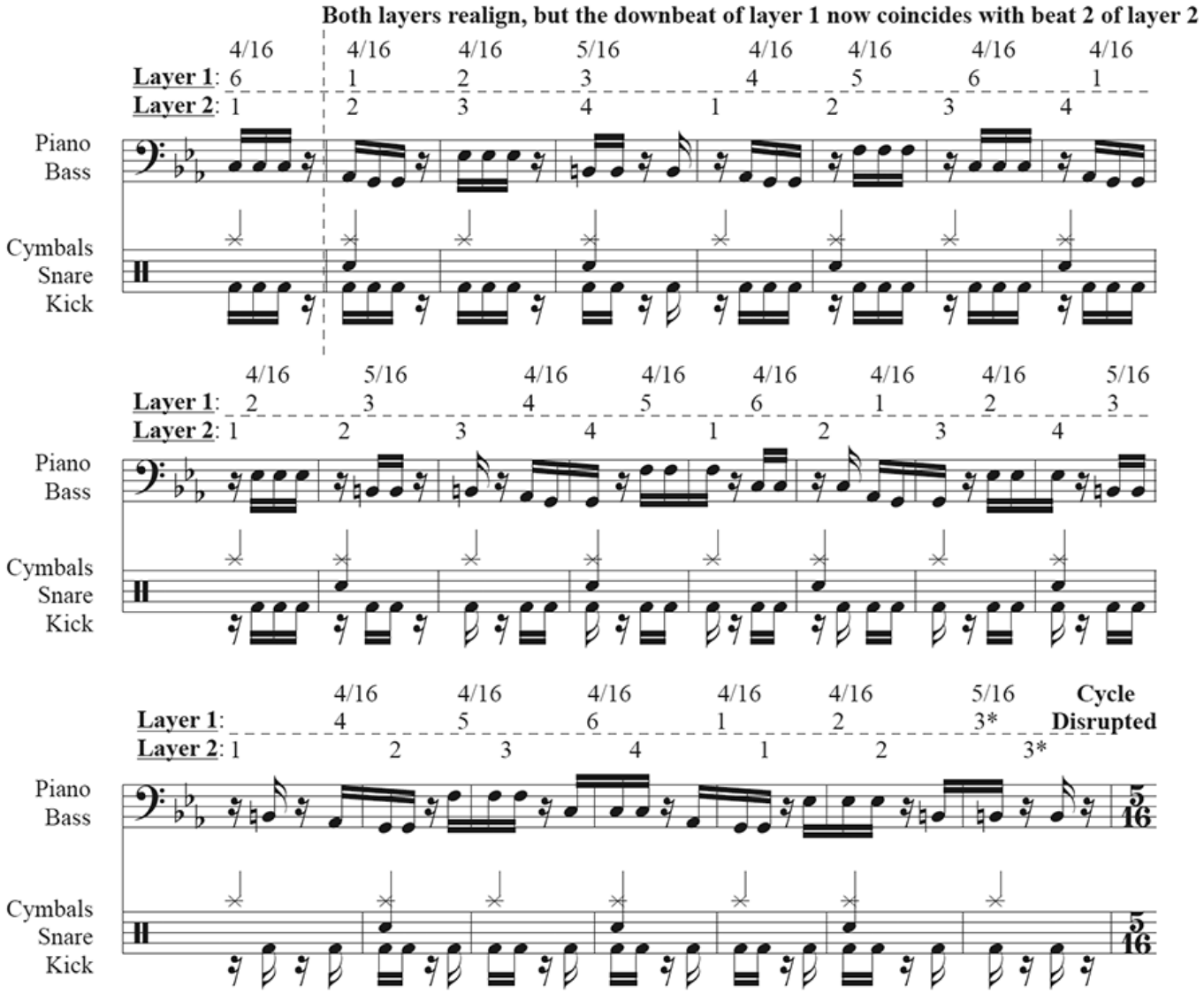


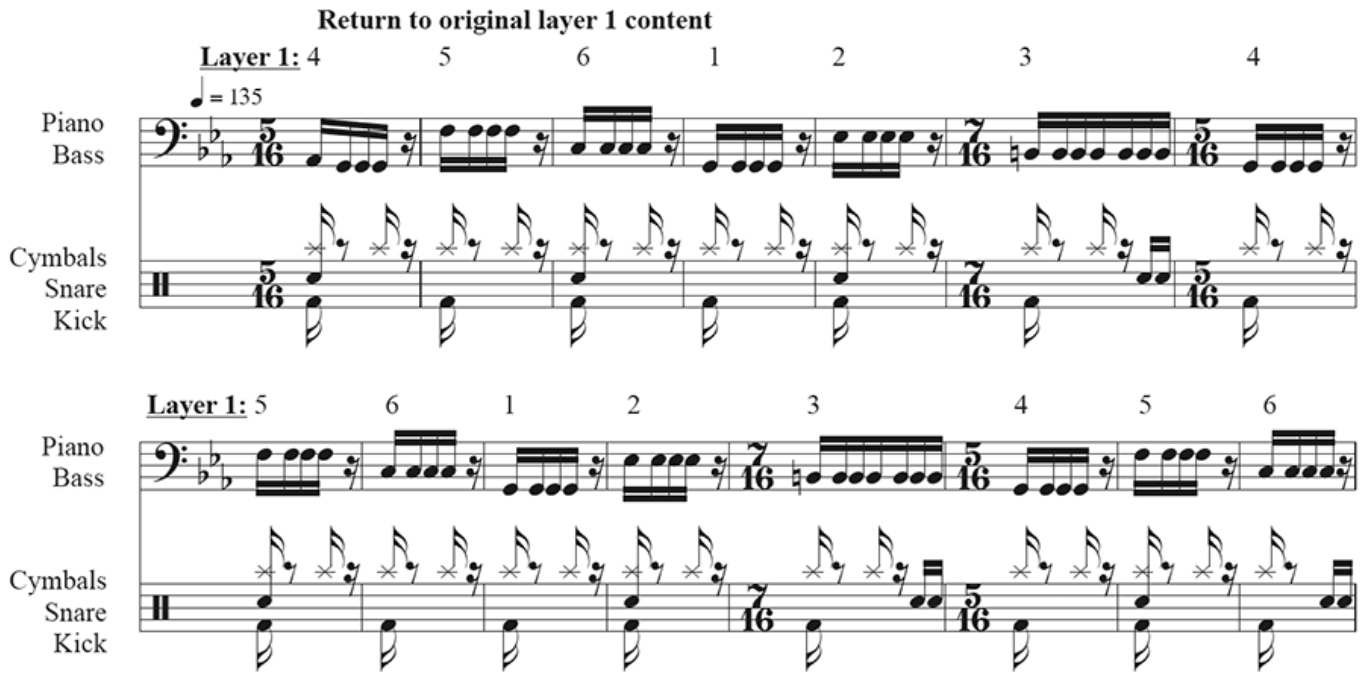
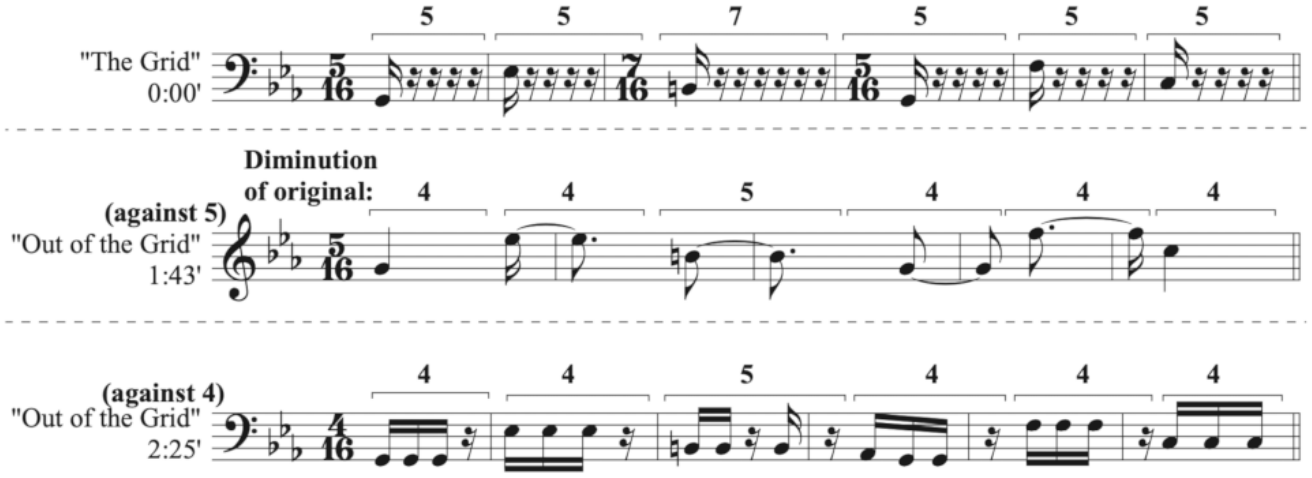
Both layers realign, but the downbeat of layer 1 now coincides with beat 4 of layer 2



Example 25. "Out of The Grid"—Track 12 on *Mockroot* (2015). Incomplete Cycle at 2:25–2:56.




Both layers realign, but the downbeat of layer 1 now coincides with beat 2 of layer 2
4/16 4/16 4/16 5/16 4/16 4/16 4/16 4/16
Layer 1: 6 1 2 3 4 5 6 1
Layer 2: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
Piano
Bass
Cymbals
Snare
Kick
4/16 5/16 4/16 4/16 4/16 4/16 4/16 5/16
Layer 1: 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3
Layer 2: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4
Piano
Bass
Cymbals
Snare
Kick
4/16 4/16 4/16 4/16 4/16 5/16 Cycle
Layer 1: 4 5 6 1 2 3* Disrupted
Layer 2: 1 2 3 4 1 2 3*
Piano
Bass
5/16
Cymbals
Snare
Kick
5/16



Example 26. Development of original layer 1 in "The Grid"/"Out of The Grid."