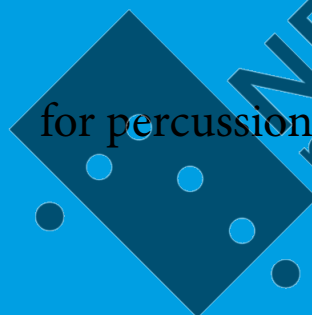


Kjell Samkopf

# Amelioration Études

No. 1 - 5

for percussion players of all levels



Score and parts

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noter

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No. 1 - 5

for percussion players on all levels



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**amelioration** → noun

the act of making something better; improvement: progress brings with it the amelioration of the human condition;  
change for the better, betterment, enhancement, help, benefit, boost, raising, amendment, refinement, reform; relief, easing, mitigation; rectification, correction, righting, putting right, setting right, putting to rights, sorting out, clearing up, remedy, repair, fix, cure, healing, mending, making good, resolution, settlement, redress; informal tweaking, patching up.  
opposite: worsening.

**Amelioration Études** is a set of nine études for percussion players on all levels.

Amelioration Étude No. 1 - Hitting

Amelioration Étude No. 2 - Moving

Amelioration Étude No. 3 - Rubbing

Amelioration Étude No. 4 - Shaking, dragging, bowing or rolling

Amelioration Étude No. 5 - Seven Actions

Amelioration Étude No. 6 - Solo for Circular Shaped Instrument

Amelioration Étude No. 7 - Solo for Polygon Shaped Instrument

Amelioration Étude No. 8 - Quartet for keyboard percussion instruments

Amelioration Étude No. 9 - Trio for one marimba

**Amelioration Études** was commissioned by Sisu Percussion Trio with financial support from the Arts Council Norway.

# Work Comments

**Amelioration Études** are written with the intention to help the player develop attention and awareness; to explore the connection between movement and sound, and to inspire the player to focus on subtle sound properties, in traditional percussion instruments as well as everyday objects. It is also a hope that the études can function as an aid to develop the skill of listening; to oneself, to the fellow players and to the surroundings.

**Amelioration Études** consists of nine études: Études 1 - 5, which can be played by any number of players, Étude 6 and 7 for solo instruments, Étude 8 for a keyboard percussion quartet, and Étude 9 for three players playing on one 5-octave marimba.

The études can be performed separately. They can also be combined, overlapped, or played simultaneously, to create a larger work. The duration of the études are left to the performers.

**Amelioration Études 1 - 5** can be played by any number of players, also by a single performer. When performed by an ensemble, the players do not have to stand together, or on the stage.

Any traditional percussion instrument can be used, but also any soundmaking object, site specific objects and everyday objects not usually connected with sound production.



## The Count

**Amelioration Études 1 - 5** are organized according to a series of numbers, derived from converting the 18 letters in the title *Amelioration Études* into numbers:

A	M	E	L	I	O	R	A	T	I	O	N	É	T	U	D	E	S
1	4	5	3	9	6	9	1	2	9	6	5	5	2	3	4	5	1

These 18 numbers are used as an underlying structure, organizing the various actions of the études.

The 18 numbers are to be counted in a slow and even pace, in the following manner, and are repeated for the entire length of the étude:

1, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4 5, 1 2 3, 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9, 1 2 3 4 5 6, 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9, 1, 1 2, 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9, 1 2 3 4 5 6, 1 2 3 4 5, 1 2 3 4 5, 1 2, 1 2 3, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4 5, 1

The intention of the number sequence is as a guiding track for the various actions of the études. It should always be in the background, and never be a dominating part of the sound picture.

The Count can be performed and combined in various ways:

- The number sequence can be read silently and individually by every performer.
- It can be spoken softly, as if talking to oneself, individually or in unison, by some of, or all, the performers.
- It can be spoken out, clearly audible, by one central player.
- The number sequence can also be played, using three different percussive sounds, by a single player or a group of players.
- The number sequence can also be played as a melody.
- The melodies and the bass notes may be transposed up or down one or two octaves.
- Any instrument can be used to play the melodic lines (melodic percussion, piano, strings, wind or electronic instruments).

# Amelioration Études

## The Count

The image displays three staves of musical notation, each featuring a series of eighth notes. The time signatures and counts for each staff are as follows:


- Staff 1:**  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{4}{4}$ ,  $\frac{5}{4}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ,  $\frac{9}{4}$ ,  $\frac{6}{4}$ ,  $\frac{9}{4}$ . Counts: 1, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4 5, 1 2 3, 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9, 1 2 3 4 5 6.
- Staff 2:**  $\frac{9}{4}$ ,  $\frac{4}{4}$ ,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ,  $\frac{9}{4}$ ,  $\frac{6}{4}$ ,  $\frac{5}{4}$ . Counts: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9, 1, 1 2, 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9, 1 2 3 4 5 6.
- Staff 3:**  $\frac{5}{4}$ ,  $\frac{2}{4}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ,  $\frac{4}{4}$ ,  $\frac{5}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$ . Counts: 1 2 3 4 5, 1 2 3 4 5, 1 2, 1 2 3, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4 5, 1.


A large, semi-transparent watermark is overlaid on the center of the page, reading "NB Noter" and "This music is copyright protected".


# Amelioration Études

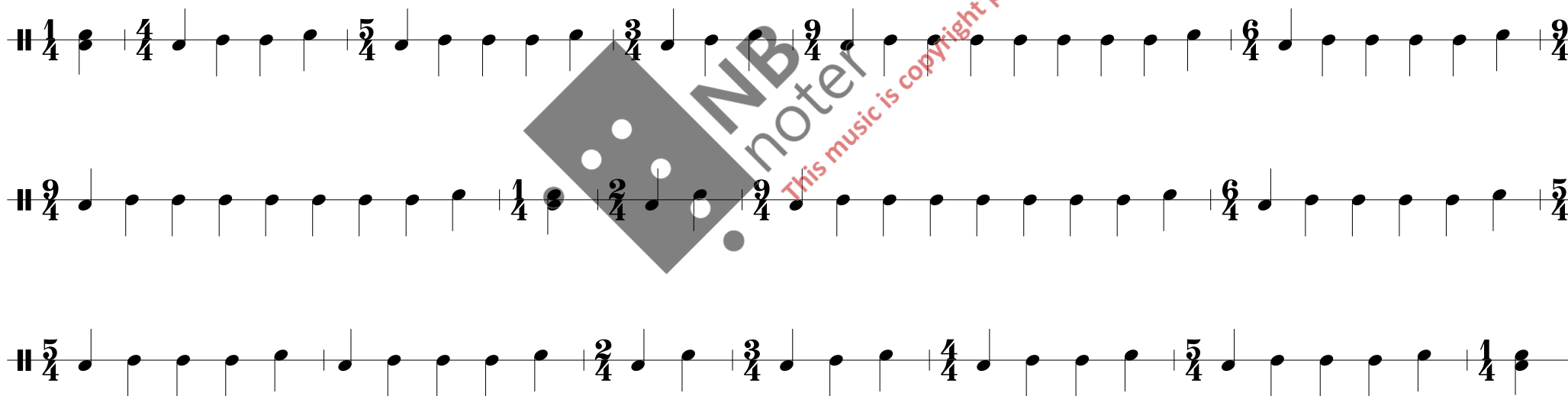
## The Count

Define three sounds:

 a sound for the first beat in the bar

 a sound for the middle beats in the bar

 a sound for the last beat in the bar



The musical notation consists of three staves, each representing a different rhythm exercise. The first staff starts with a double bar line and a 1/4 time signature, followed by a sequence of notes and rests. The second staff starts with a double bar line and a 9/4 time signature, followed by a sequence of notes and rests. The third staff starts with a double bar line and a 5/4 time signature, followed by a sequence of notes and rests. The notation is written in a simplified style, using vertical lines and dots to represent notes and rests.



## Amelioration Études

### The Count

12

Sharps in parenthesis over a note indicate that the note may be altered.

It is advised that the player(s) make frequent use of alterations, in order to create variation in the melody line.

If played by more than one player, the players should make their alterations independently from each other, and not try to synchronize the alterations.

Melody - inversion

## Amelioration Études

### The Count

Flats and naturals in parenthesis over a note indicate that the note may be altered.

Flats and naturals in parenthesis over a note indicate that the note may be altered.

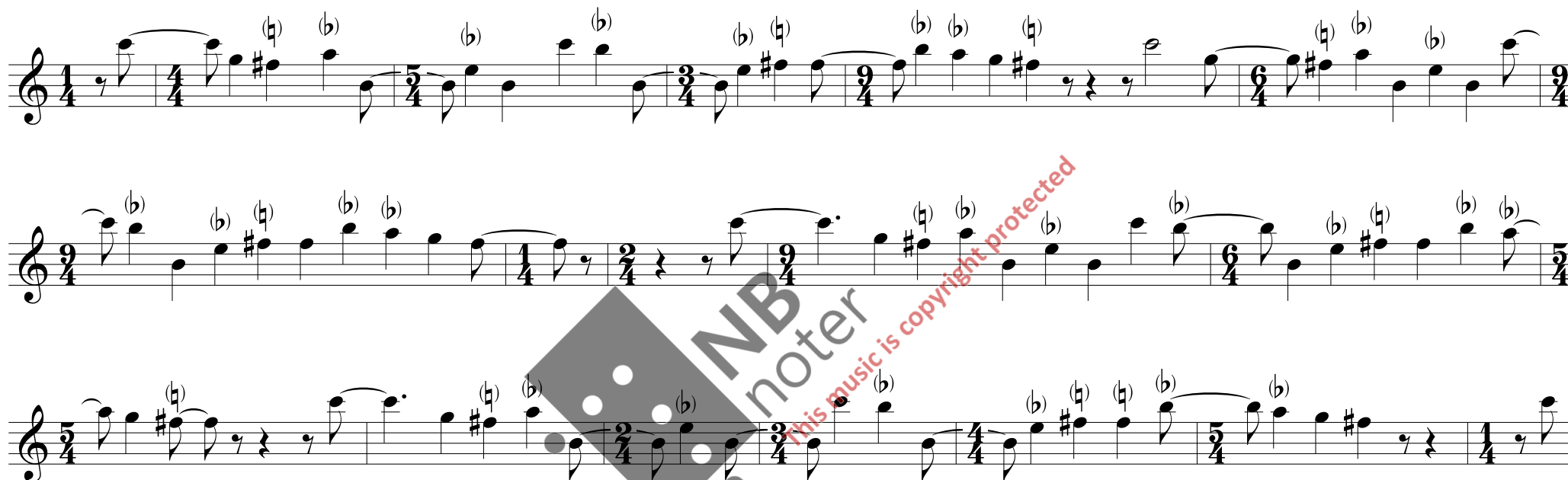
It is advised that the player(s) make frequent use of alterations, in order to create variation in the melody line.

If played by more than one player, the players should make their alterations independently from each other, and not try to synchronize the alterations.

Melody - inversion - off-beat

## Amelioration Études

### The Count



Flats and naturals in parenthesis over a note indicate that the note may be altered.

It is advised that the player(s) make frequent use of alterations, in order to create variation in the melody line.

If played by more than one player, the players should make their alterations independently from each other, and not try to synchronize the alterations.

Bass notes

## Amelioration Études

### The Count

The musical score consists of three staves of bass notes. Each staff contains a sequence of notes with time signatures and sharp alterations indicated by a sharp symbol in parentheses above the note. The time signatures vary across the staves, including 4/4, 5/4, 3/4, 9/4, 6/4, 2/4, 5/2, 1/4, and 3/2. A large, semi-transparent watermark is overlaid on the score, reading "NB notes" and "This music is copyright protected".

Sharps in parenthesis over a note indicate that the note may be altered.

It is advised that the player(s) make frequent use of alterations, in order to create variation in the melody line.

If played by more than one player, the players should make their alterations independently from each other, and not try to synchronize the alterations.

## Amelioration Études

### The Count

The musical notation is presented in three staves, each containing a series of measures with varying time signatures and notes. The notes are primarily quarter notes, with some measures containing eighth notes. Alteration symbols (flats and naturals in parentheses) are placed above specific notes, indicating that these notes can be altered. The time signatures change frequently, including 4/4, 5/4, 3/4, 2/4, 9/4, 6/4, and 5/2. A large, semi-transparent watermark is overlaid on the middle staff, reading 'NB: This music is copyright protected'.

Flats and naturals in parenthesis over a note indicate that the note may be altered.

It is advised that the player(s) make frequent use of alterations, in order to create variation in the melody line.

If played by more than one player, the players should make their alterations independently from each other, and not try to synchronize the alterations.

## Practicing and performing suggestions

Concentrate and focus on your own sound.

Observe the connection between the body movement needed to produce the sound, and the sound itself. Notice how small adjustments in your body movement affect the sound.

Avoid unnecessary and additional movements.

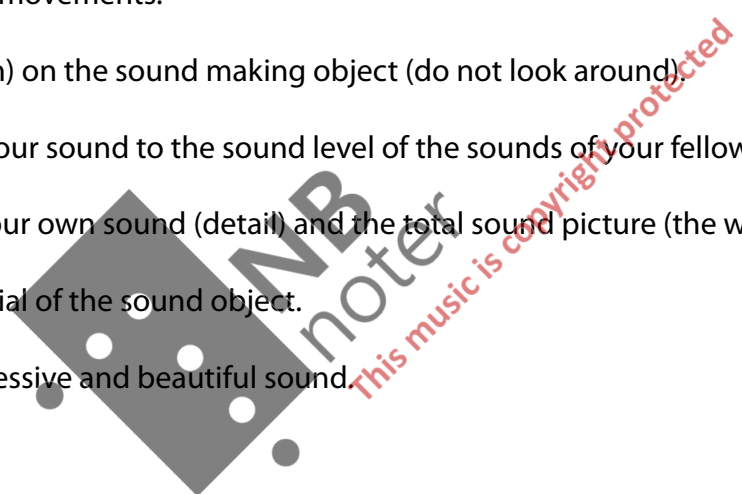
Keep your eyes (and your attention) on the sound making object (do not look around).

Try to balance the sound level of your sound to the sound level of the sounds of your fellow players.

Divide your listening to listen to your own sound (detail) and the total sound picture (the whole).

Try to present the full sonic potential of the sound object.

Make an effort to produce an expressive and beautiful sound.



## Amelioration Étude No. 1

### Hitting

A	1								
M	1	2	3	4					
E	1	2	3	4	5				
L	1	2	3						
I	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
O	1	2	3	4	5	6			
R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	1								
T	1	2							
I	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
O	1	2	3	4	5	6			
N	1	2	3	4	5				
É	1	2	3	4	5				
T	1	2							
U	1	2	3						
D	1	2	3	4					
E	1	2	3	4	5				
S	1								

## Amelioration Étude No. 1

# Hitting

Playing instructions:

A	M	E	L	I	O	R	A	T	I	O	N	É	T	U	D	E	S
1	4	5	3	9	6	9	1	2	9	6	5	5	2	3	4	5	1

Select a sound making object.

Any sound making object may be used, as well as traditional instruments.

For pitched instruments: choose one pitch, and stick to this pitch for the entire piece. Choose a different pitch for each pitched instrument.

Count the number sequence slowly in your head in an even pace.

Read through all the numbers and hit the sound object on every 9.

On the next reading through hit the sound object on every 8,

then continue in this manner, hitting on every 7, then on every 6, then on every 5, 4, 3, 2, until 1.

Then keep on hitting on 1 and start counting aloud in your native language, softly, as if you are talking to yourself.

After doing this one, two or three times, start hitting the sound object on every number and stop counting aloud.

Make a long diminuendo to a complete fade out.

Do not try to play in the same tempo as someone else. Count independently, in your own pace. It does not have to be in a strickt tempo. Do not overplay.

The players do not have to sit together, or on the stage.

The players do not have to start or stop together.



## Amelioration Étude No. 2

### Moving

↑	silence	↓	silence	→	silence	↑	silence	↓	silence	→	silence	↑	silence	↓	silence	→	silence	STOP
<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	

silence	↑	silence	↓	silence	→	silence	↑	silence	↓	silence	→	silence	↑	silence	↓	silence	silence	STOP
<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	

→	silence	↑	silence	↓	silence	→	silence	↑	silence	↓	silence	→	silence	↑	silence	↓	silence	STOP
<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	

silence	→	silence	↑	silence	↓	silence	→	silence	↑	silence	↓	silence	→	silence	↑	silence	silence	STOP
<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	

↓	silence	→	silence	↑	silence	↓	silence	→	silence	↑	silence	↓	silence	→	silence	↑	↓	END
<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	

## Amelioration Étude No. 2

# Moving

Explanation of score symbols:

A	M	E	L	I	O	R	A	T	I	O	N	É	T	U	D	E	S
1	4	5	3	9	6	9	1	2	9	6	5	5	2	3	4	5	1

↑
↓
→
silence
STOP

lift up object

set down object







move object across a chosen surface (table, floor, instrument etc.), in one continuous movement

sit or stand still while counting the number







make a stop of individual length

## Amelioration Étude No. 3

# Rubbing

Position	T → M			T			M			T → M			M → T			M → T		
Speed	M			M			S			S			F			F		
Rubbing																		
Count	1	4	5	3	9	6	9	1	2	9	6	5	5	2	3	4	5	1

Position	M				T				M → H				T → M				H → M				M → T			
Speed	S				M				M				F				S				M			
Rubbing	///				///				///				///				///				///			
Count	1	4	5	3	9	6	9	1	2	9	6	5	5	2	3	4	5	1						




Position	M → H				M → H				H → T				H → T				T → M				T → M			
Speed	S				S				M				M				S				M			
Rubbing																								
Count	1	4	5	3	9	6	9	1	2	9	6	5	5	2	3	4	5	1						

## Amelioration Étude No. 3

# Rubbing

Explanation of score symbols:

A	M	E	L	I	O	R	A	T	I	O	N	É	T	U	D	E	S
1	4	5	3	9	6	9	1	2	9	6	5	5	2	3	4	5	1

Rubbing		rub back and forth on a chosen surface, using a chop stick or thin wooden stick
Speed	F	fast
	M	medium
	S	slow
Position	T	tip 
	M	middle 
	H	close to hand
	T → M	move from tip to middle position while rubbing

## Amelioration Étude No. 4

### Shaking, dragging, bowing or rolling

Action	→		→		→		→		→		→		→		→		→	
Count	1	4	5	3	9	6	9	1	2	9	6	5	5	2	3	4	5	1

Action		→			→			→			→			→			→	
Count	1	4	5	3	9	6	9	1	2	9	6	5	5	2	3	4	5	1

Action			→			→			→			→			→			→
Count	1	4	5	3	9	6	9	1	2	9	6	5	5	2	3	4	5	1

## Amelioration Étude No. 4

# Shaking, dragging, bowing or rolling

Explanation of score symbol:

A	M	E	L	I	O	R	A	T	I	O	N	É	T	U	D	E	S
1	4	5	3	9	6	9	1	2	9	6	5	5	2	3	4	5	1



Shake, drag, bow or make a roll for the length of the number



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## Amelioration Étude No. 5

## Seven Actions

Count	1	4	5	3	9	6	9	1	2	9	6	5	5	2	3	4	5	1
Action 1						X	X							X				
Action 2		X													X			
Action 3			X							X								
Action 4				X				X										
Action 5	X				X				X									X
Action 6												X					X	
Action 7											X		X			X		

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## Amelioration Étude No. 5

# Seven Actions

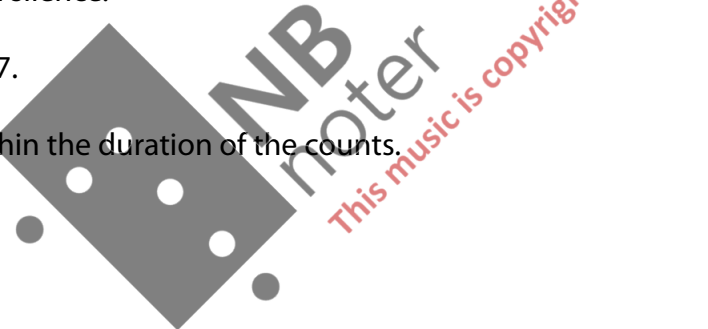
Playing instructions:

A	M	E	L	I	O	R	A	T	I	O	N	É	T	U	D	E	S
1	4	5	3	9	6	9	1	2	9	6	5	5	2	3	4	5	1

Define seven actions: i.e. hitting, rubbing, moving, dragging, shaking, rolling or any sound producing action.  
At least one action should be a silence.

Number the actions from 1 to 7.

Perform the actions gently within the duration of the counts.







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