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Specialized Slide Techniques

Above-the-Fretboard Slide Tones

Very high pitches can be obtained by stopping a string with a slide between the end of the fretboard and the bridge [▶ Media 5.46]. In contrast to using the fingers, slide tones above the fretboard sound with the same clarity and sustain as notes stopped over the fretboard. Of course, there are no frets to offer visual guidance for intonation. For accuracy, colored chalk can be used to mark these locations on the strings. Panayiotis Kokoras makes ample use of this region of the strings in his work *Slide* (2002). In this score excerpt in Figure 5.34, the performer slowly and continuously moves the slide from the 39th to the 37th virtual fret while plucking specific strings to pull out a melody along the way.

Indeterminate Portamento Gestures

A slide circumvents the frets and allows for an endless variety of smooth portamento gestures. While it is possible to notate such contours with precision, it may be sensible to treat them indeterminately, allowing the player to focus primarily on the articulation



Figure 5.33
Standard slide notation [▶ Media 5.45].

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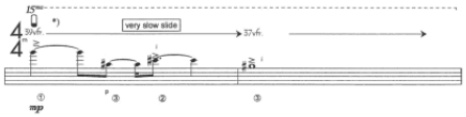


Figure 5.34
Score excerpt from Panayiotis Kokoras's *Slide* (2002).

*) The noted pithes are not neccsary to be played exactly on pitch. The slide should not stop its slow and smooth downwards motion up to bar 100 and then from bar 101 to 114.

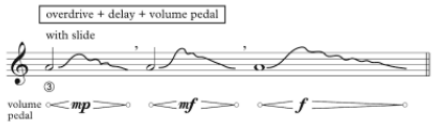


Figure 5.35
Notation for indeterminate portamento gestures using a slide in conjunction with a volume pedal, overdrive, and delay [▶ Media 5.47].



Figure 5.36
Sympathetic resonance in Peter Maxwell Davies Sonata (1984).

and expression of the gesture without having to worry about targeting specific notes and rhythms. Trajectories can simply be outlined using a curved line on the staff, with the line's relative height providing an approximation of the pitch contour. Figure 5.35 shows slide gestures paired with a volume pedal.