

Improvisación en el Brazo de Orión

[Orion's Arm Improvisation] Nicolás Arnáez  
2015

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**PROGRAM NOTES**

The concepts of space and time are questioned on this musical improvisation. Performers are requested to record themselves when playing during seven pre-concert improvisational sessions, each session explores the expressive capacity of a different musical parameter (pitch, rhythm, harmony, etc.), each session represents a different day of the week as well. These recordings, are played on a circular sound system the emulates the location and trajectory of our solar system, following the name of the day of the week which represent the planet: improvisation of Monday for Moon circulating the Earth (who are live performers), improvisation on Tuesday for Mars and next to the Earth, Wednesday for Mercury, Thursday for Jupiter, Friday for Venus, Saturday for Saturn and Sunday for Sun.

**INTRODUCTION**

The following is an improvisatory piece, for any amount of players and any kind of instruments (including traditional instruments as well as electronics, etc.). Here, performers decide the musical material to perform based on indications given by the composer. Performers play with space and time, improvising with themselves in a solar system based composition.

**REALIZATION**

**Previous to concert day**

Any amount of performers must organize seven improvisational sessions, each one will be based on a given score, this score uses text-based as well as graphic and traditional notation.

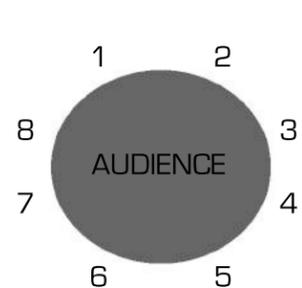
- Each one of the seven sessions must be recorded monophonically, always using the same recorder (with the same settings, preferably 48.000Hz and 24 bits) and the same microphone/s and miking technics. At the same time the recording of the day before must be played on a sound system while performers are recording the new day (see table on the right), meaning that the new improvisation will be recorded and a reminiscence of the early sessions will be re-recorded by the microphone.

	Record's name	Play while improvising
Session 1	Monday (Moon)	—
Session 2	Tuesday (Mars)	Monday (Moon)
Session 3	Wednesday (Mercury)	Tuesday (Mars)
Session 4	Thursday (Jupiter)	Wednesday (Mercury)
Session 5	Friday (Venus)	Thursday (Jupiter)
Session 6	Saturday (Saturn)	Friday (Venus)
Session 7	Sunday (Sun)	Saturday (Saturn)
Concert day	—	All

- It is crucial that live performers follow the musicality of the playback, creating a musical textures and answer/response with early sessions, listening and musical taste is crucial for this piece to become meaningful.
- The length of the piece will be pre-defined by the performers before start with Session 1, once the length is set, all the sessions must last the same (few seconds before starting and after ending are allowed, but at the end of session 7, they must be deleted).

**On concert day**

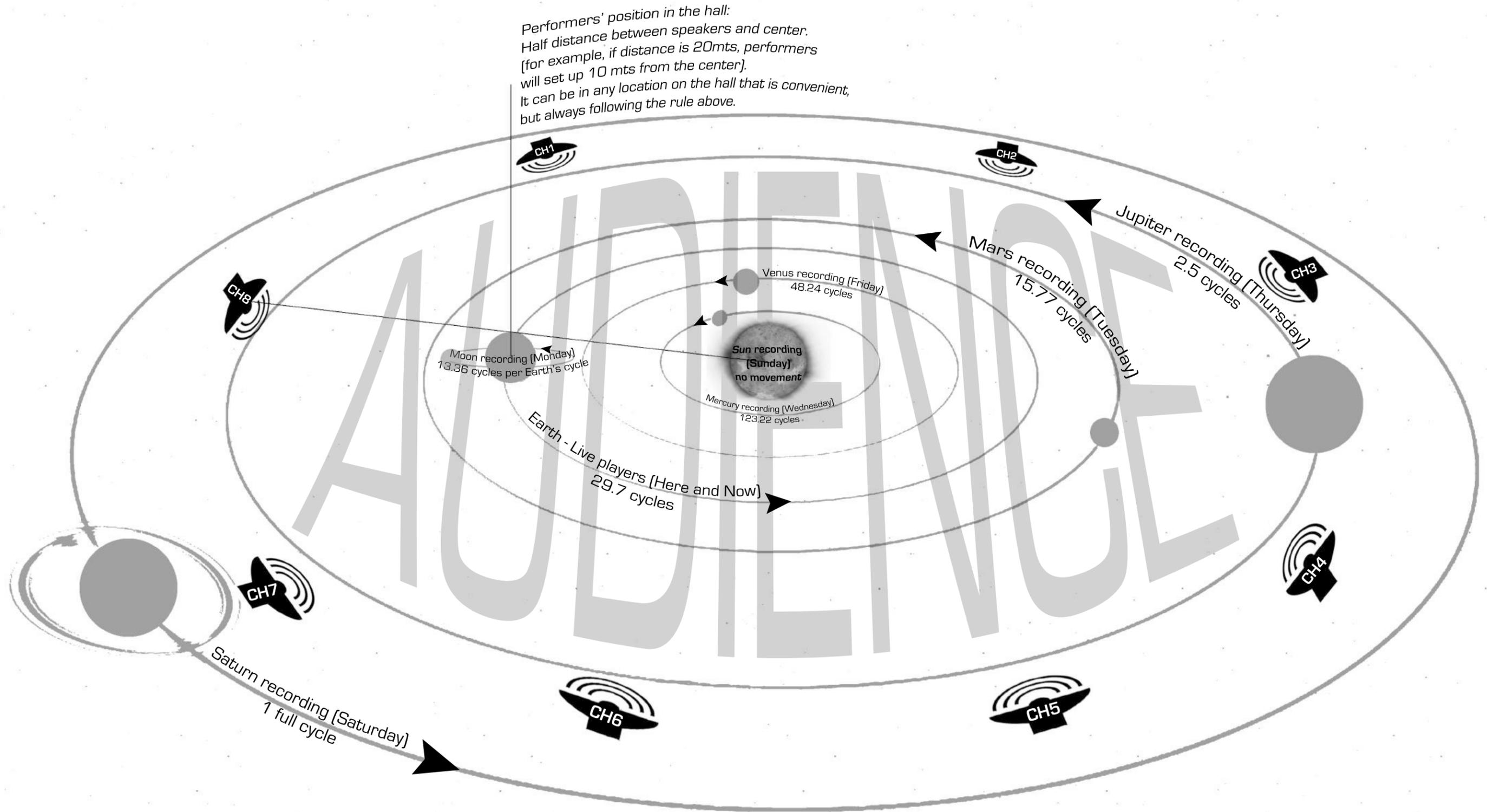
- Once all seven recordings are finished, audio edition will be necessary, beginnings and ends with undesired sounds must be chopped out, synchronization amongst audio files is encouraged but not mandatory.
- This seven files, on concert day will be performed by the attached Max patch, a sound operator will be necessary to set up a sound system, start and stop the patch on the concert. Performers will play improvisatory material live on top of the seven sessions playback, following the indications given on the sheet Nro. 8 called "Here and Now".
- This performers will use microphones, how many and miking technics will be decided by the sound operator and performers, despite any decision made all signals will go to a mixer (if more than two mics are decided to be used). All the channels used on the mixer will be set up to an even intensity on 0dB mix, with no-panning nor EQing applied, one of the two main outputs will be connected to the audio interface's channel 1.
- To have the Max patch running, the sound operator will set up a circular octophonic sound system (an audio interface able to manage eight outputs will be needed), channels will be routed as shown below, each recording file will be dragged and dropped to the indicated slot on the patch.



- The Max patch is pre-programed to move the recordings around the audience according to our solar system, it will calculate automatically the total length of the longest recording, this length will be assigned to the orbit of Saturn (the farthest planet on the total used here) will complete a full azimuth cycle (a circle throughout the audience), all other internal planets will adjust their cycles to this one. Live performers sounds will be duplicated: the electronic signal sent via microphones will move on the Earth's position amongst the speakers, the live-acoustic sounds of the performers represent the immobile real present.
- The live performers on concert day will be located between the audience, in any azimuth point on the half of the radius between center and speakers (see graphic below).
- The graphic on next page, will help understand the concept and set up

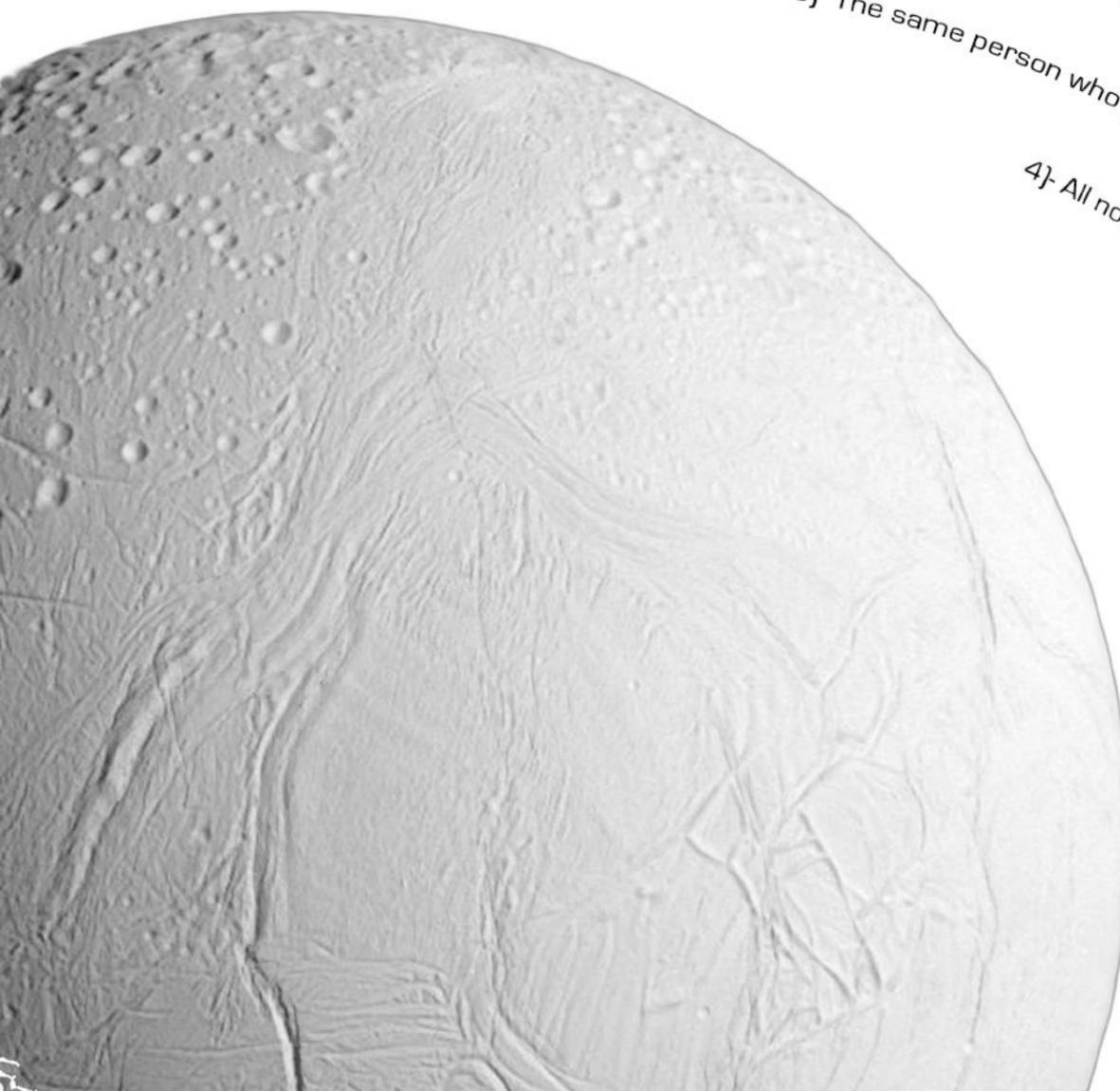
**SPACIALIZATION AND SET UP DIAGRAM**

The diagram below shows the amount of cycles that each recording does during the entire concert, this trajectories are automatized on the Max patch. Also, it explains the position where musicians have to set up during the concert and a clearer description of the speakers order.



**SCORES**

[one set per musician]

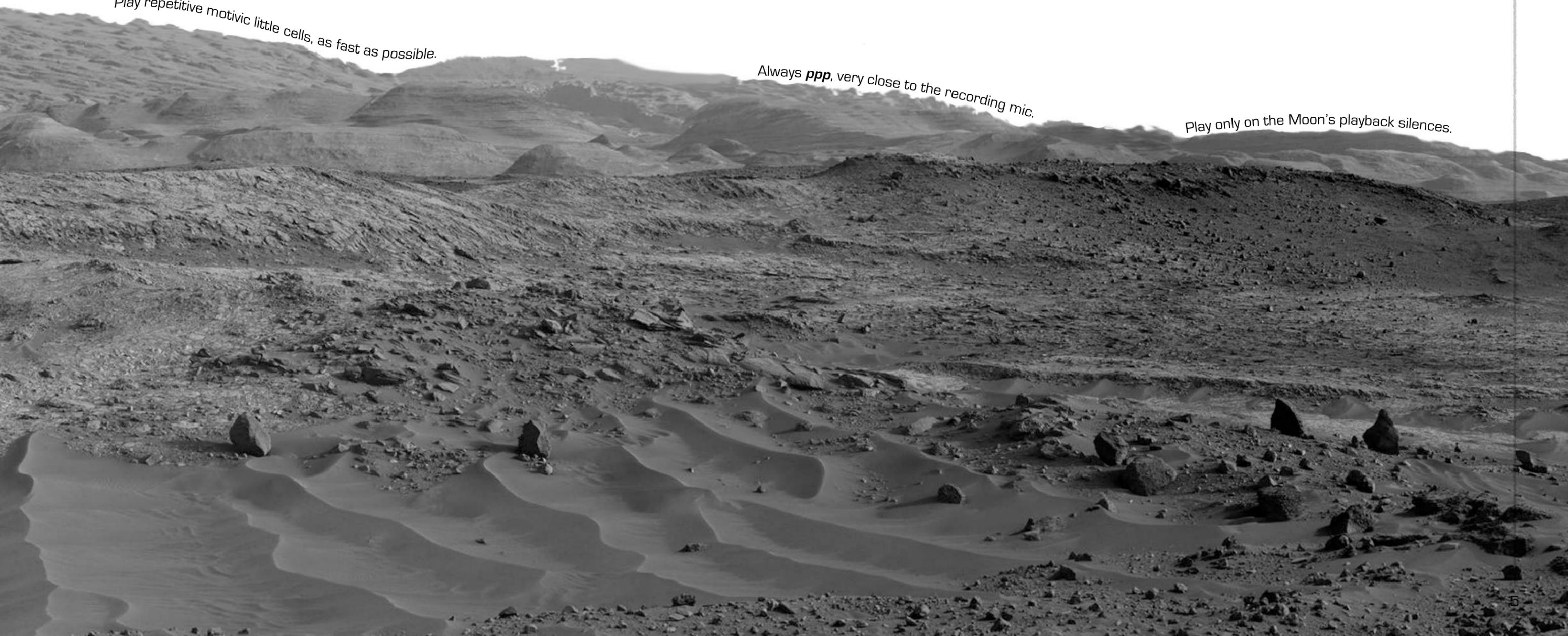
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- 1)- Anybody in the group will give a cue to the rest to begin playing a long note (or a couple of notes).
  - 2)- Everybody will begin playing a random long note/s and hold it (if somebody is playing a wind instrument, circular breathing is ideal, if not possible, short silences are allowed). Do not pre-establish notes within the group.
  - 3)- The same person who gave the first cue will cue the ending of the playing.
  - 4)- All notes will be played between p and mf. While playing do not change dynamics.

- Repeat the process as many times as needed during the session
- Allow silences between the chords.
- Use a different register on your instrument in each iteration.

*Play repetitive motivic little cells, as fast as possible.*

*Always **ppp**, very close to the recording mic.*

*Play only on the Moon's playback silences.*

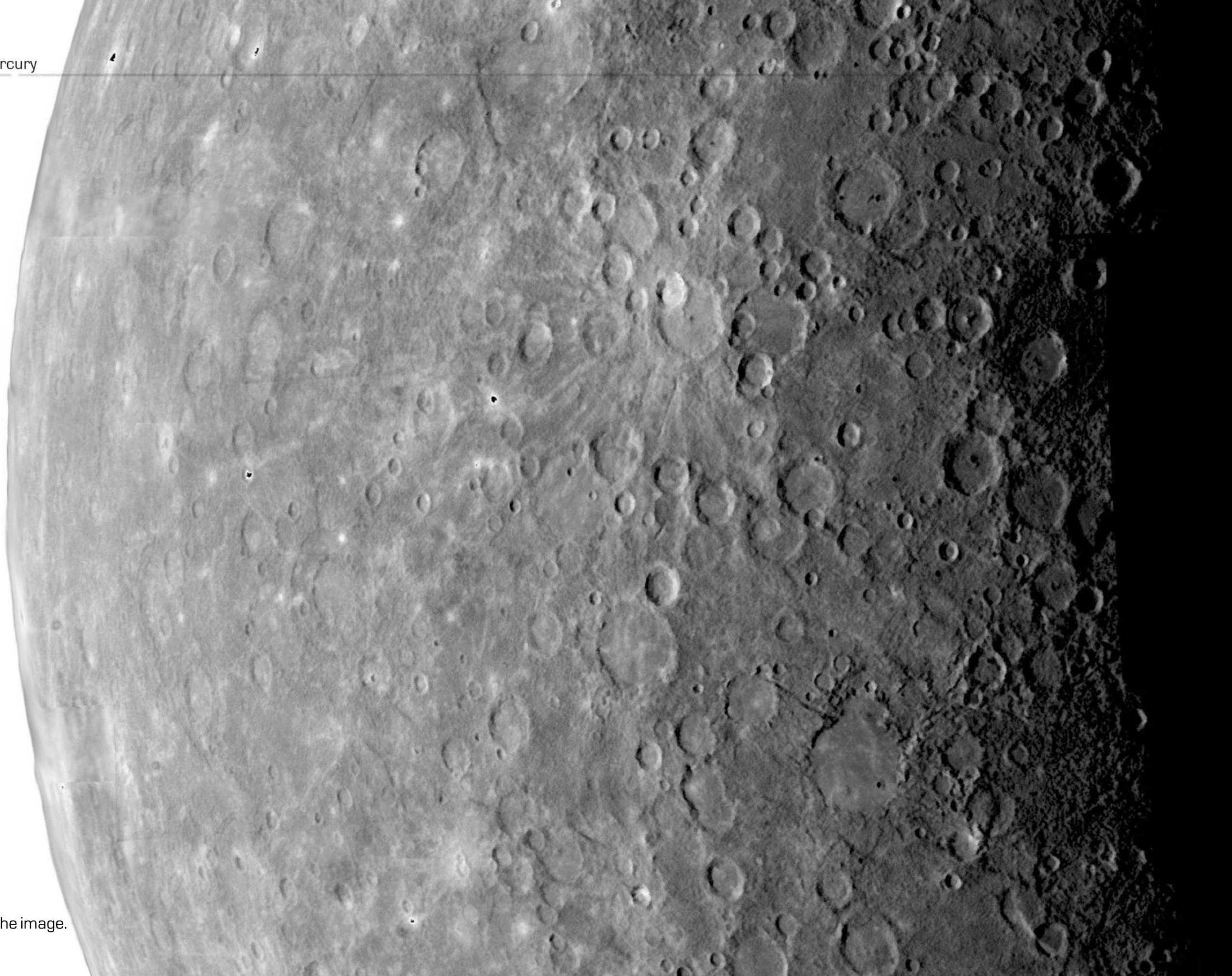


SESSION 3 - Wednesday - Mercury

*Music parameter: Drones*

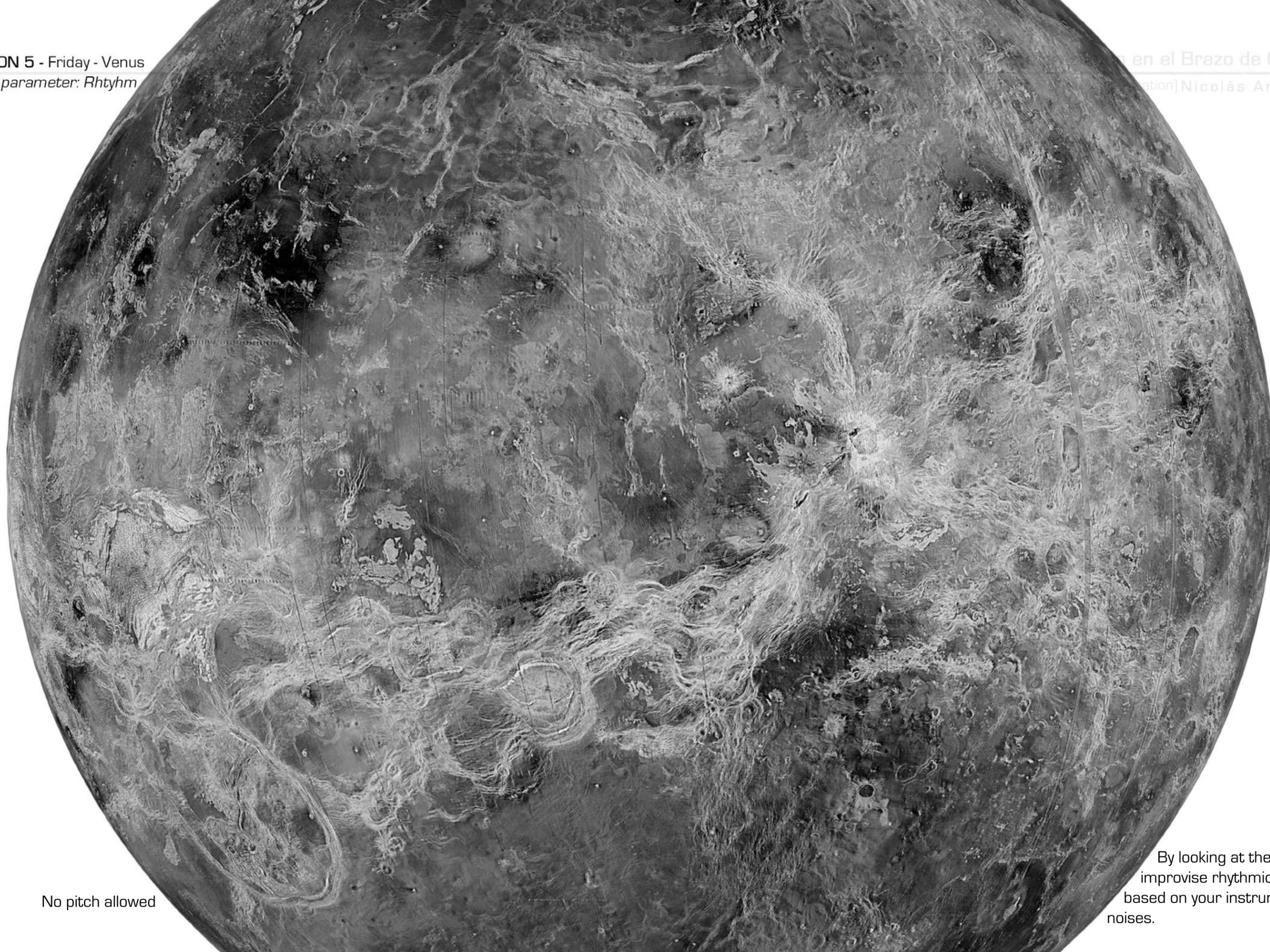
Play any kind of drones . . .

. . . be inspired by the image.



- Improvise melodies based on the following rhythmic cells, interpret notation as you wish.
- You can choose dynamics, articulations and slurs when not indicated.
- The group can play in rhythmic sync, or not.
- They are not in any particular order.
- You can repeat cells if you want.
- You decide tempo.

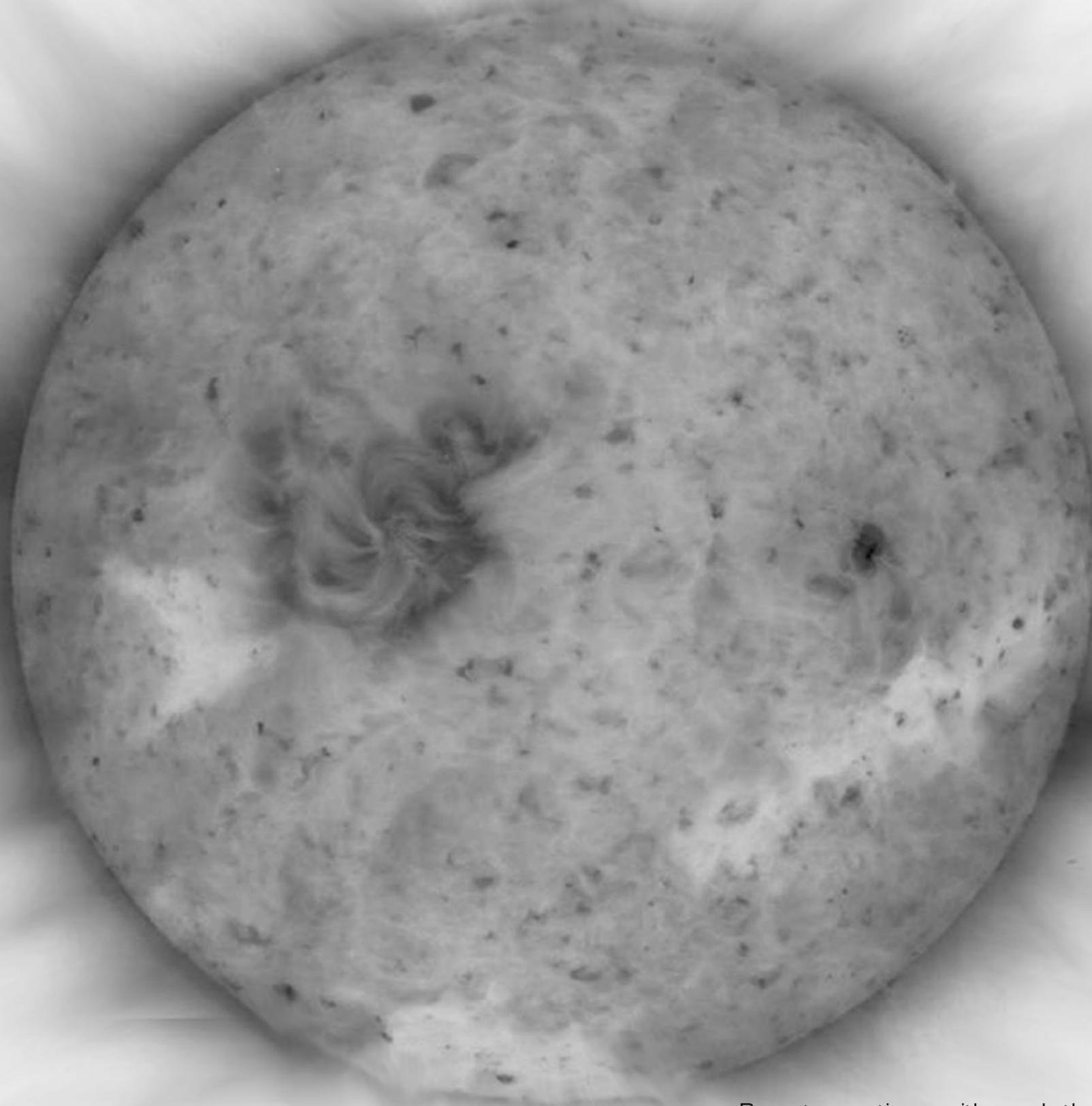
The image displays a variety of musical notation examples for guitar improvisation. At the top right, a long, sweeping line of notes is marked with 'molto acell' and 'morendo'. Below this, several rhythmic cells are shown, including a five-note pattern with a '5' below it, and a six-note pattern with a '6' below it. Other examples include triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings like 'molto espresivo e cantabile'. The notation is spread across multiple staves, illustrating different melodic and rhythmic possibilities.



No pitch allowed

By looking at the image,  
improvise rhythmic material  
based on your instrument's  
noises.





Repeat many times, with any rhythm, what you randomly hear on the playback (single pitches, rhythms, gestures, phrases, motifs, etc.). Do not play new material.



Listen carefully and find yourself on any of the playbacks around you. When you recognize something you can easily reproduce do it, elaborate it for a while, stop and start over.