Go with the Flow
Timing is Everything!

Hangin' with the Harp, 2021
sunita@sunitaharp.com

Music is sound in motion.
Think of it as elastic and every sound is a reflection of the last. Arpeggios grow from the first note. You can pause on the first note and let the next notes grow out of it.

Phrases have a push and pull, crescendo and decrescendo, notes with more importance and less. Music breathes. Music is a language. Make up your own words to add texture and accents or breathe poetry into the music.

Sing your phrases or melody (in your head or out loud) and listen for the stronger and more important notes. Where is your phrase going?

Play with the timing. Imagine that rhythm is alive and breathes.

Timing is both playing notes and creating space between them. Magic is created with nuance. Passion is created with contrast. Timing propels both. Play music that is simple enough so that you can control the timing. Simple, but with good timing, can be much more powerful and impressive than lots of clumsy notes.

Let the melody be a bit less strict, as if you are singing or speaking. Play as if you can still shape the sound after your finger has left the string. Stretch timing without losing track of the main beats. Don't land your last note too soon and control when you release the string. Timing the last note in a phrase is easier if you squeeze the string, or play the last arpeggio out of order (fingers 4,2,3,1) to create a swirl and then place the last note as if you are setting it on the table.

On the harp, many notes sound as if they are the same. We must create the illusion of the difference between longer and shorter notes by the nuance in timing and accents. Our hands and arms should move at a similar speed as the music. Change your levers and raise in time to the music. Don't raise your arms too quickly and lose the beat. Raises /gestures can keep the entire body in sync with the rhythm and reflect the length of the note.

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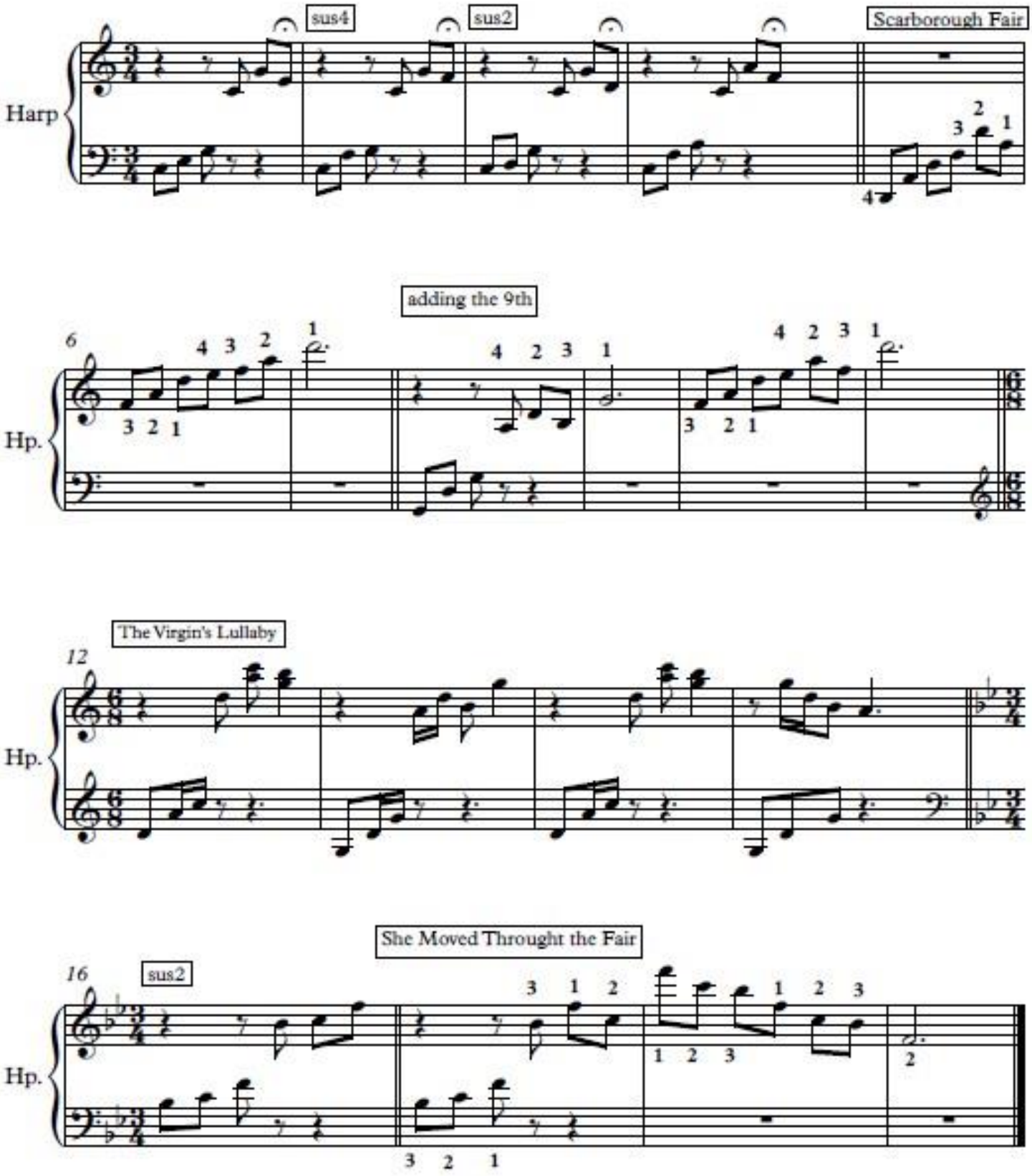
Sunita Staneslow