christopher stark

the language of landscapes

for cello, percussion, and electronics

(2015)

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S O M M E R S O P U B L I S H I N G

instrumentation

Scene One:

Cello: pickup gain set to *mezzo forte*

Percussion: 5 empty glass bottles, different sizes/pitches

Scene Two:

Cello: pickup gain set to *forte* (watch for feedback)
empty plastic water bottle with lid removed
coffee cup cardboard sleeve to weave into strings

Percussion: empty plastic water bottle with lid removed
styrofoam block
exotic hardwood plank, with contact mic
cardboard box, flattened, with contact mic
plastic grocery bag, with contact mic

Scene Three:

Cello: pickup gain set to *mezzo forte*

Percussion: three styrofoam bowls, different sizes/pitches

Scene Four:

Cello: pickup gain set to *mezzo forte*

Percussion: nine found objects, preferably garbage/waste, arranged like a keyboard
try to find objects whose timbre matches the water samples
styrofoam block
kick drum
oscillating fan

duration

ca. 20’30”

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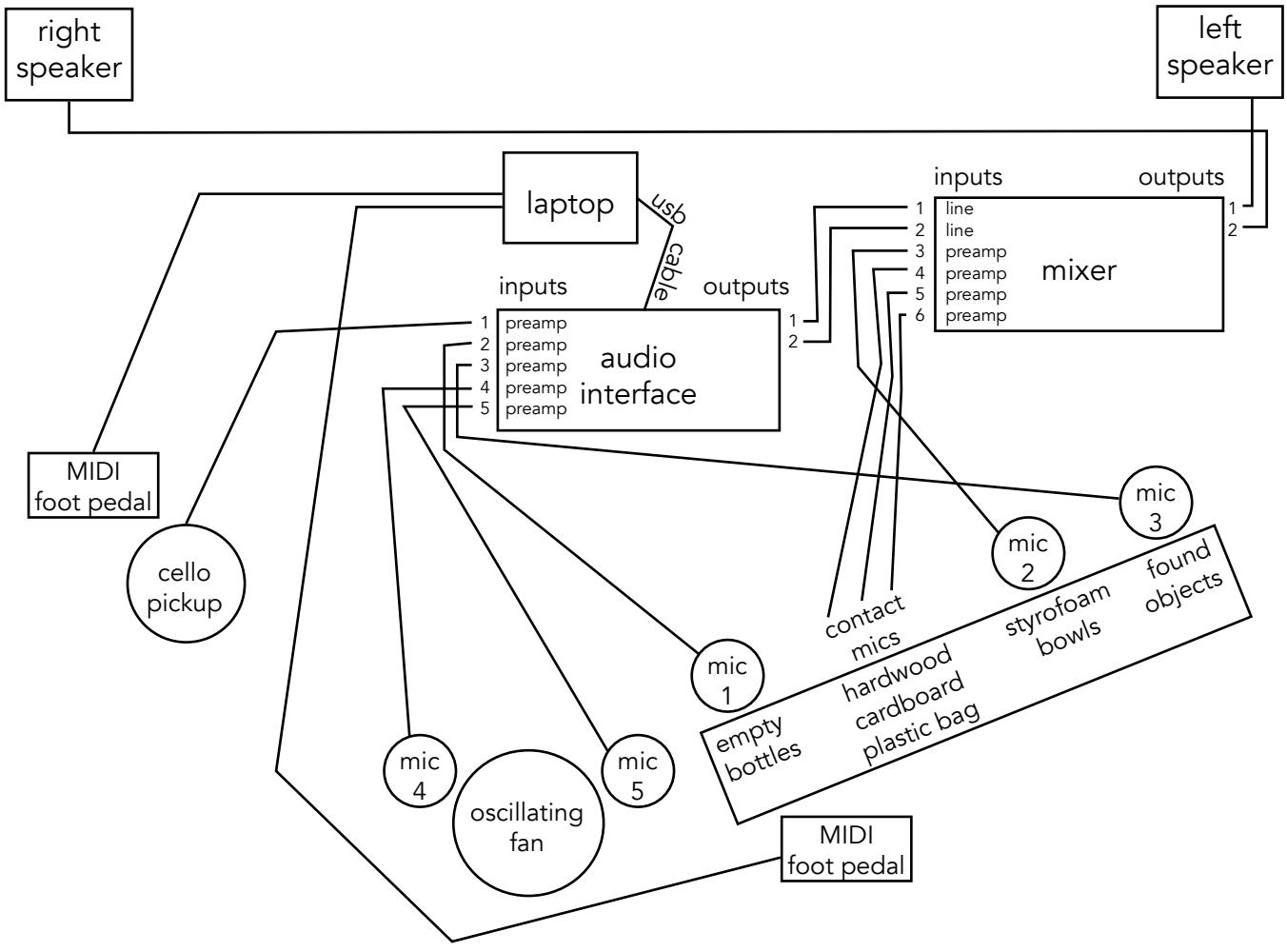
electronic setup

laptop with Max/MSP software
audio interface with 5 preamp inputs and 2 line outputs
mixer with 6 inputs and 2 outputs
two powered speakers
2 MIDI foot pedals (piano sustain pedal), one for each player
2 MIDI to USB converters
DPA pickup mic for the cello
3 contact microphones
    1) exotic hardwood
    2) cardboard
    3) plastic grocery bag
2 dynamic microphones with mic stands
    placed on the left and right sides of the oscillating fan
3 condensor microphones with mic stands
    1) blowing air over empty bottles
    2) styrofoam bowls
    3) found object setup
Necessary cables



commissioned by chamber music america for new morse code

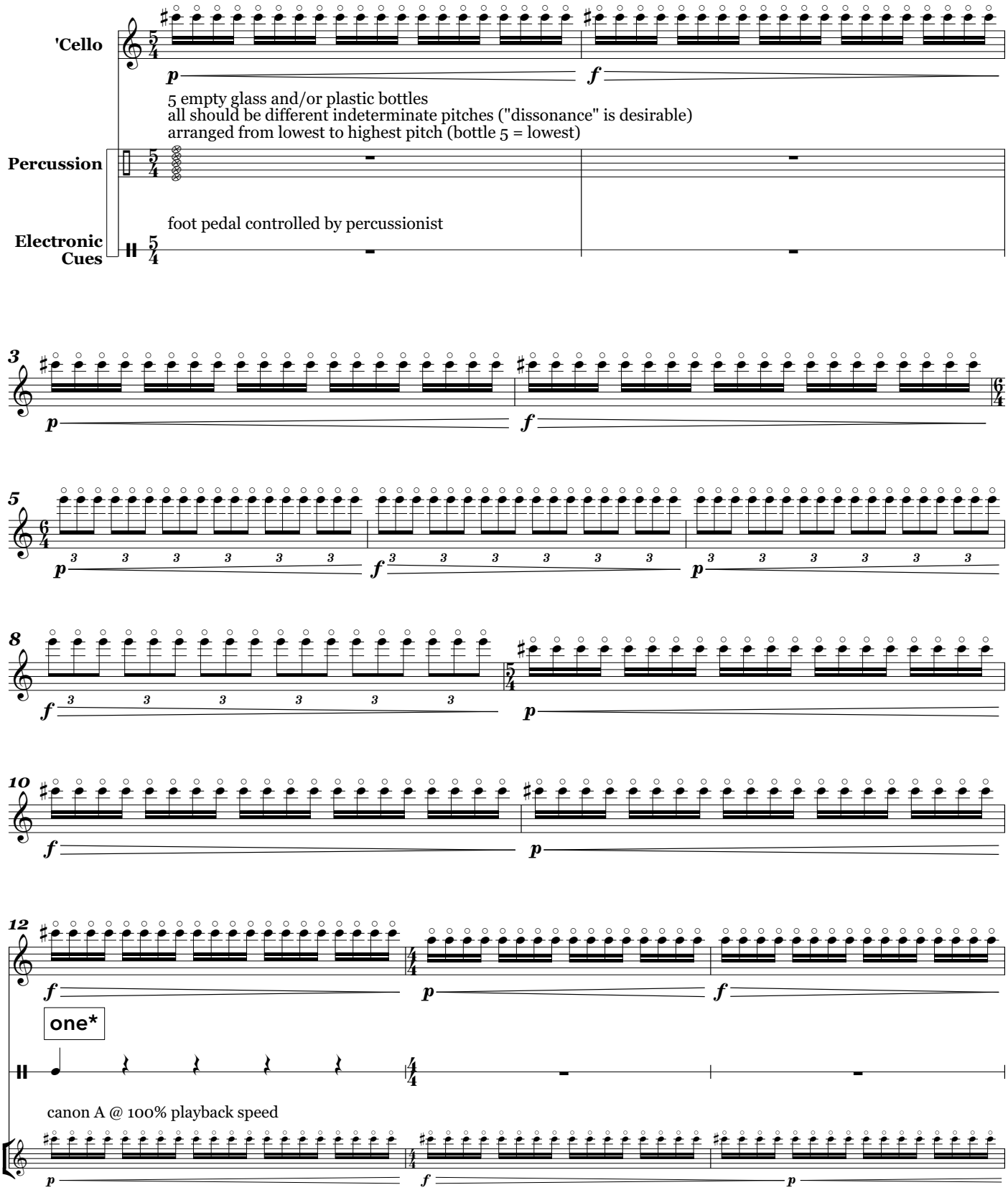
the language of landscapes

scene one

christopher stark

FAST ♩ ≈ 152

sul A, all harmonics are natural, play as evenly as poss., amplified (DPA 4099 preferred)



** although it is theoretically possible to synchronize exactly with the electronic playback, it is neither necessary nor desirable*

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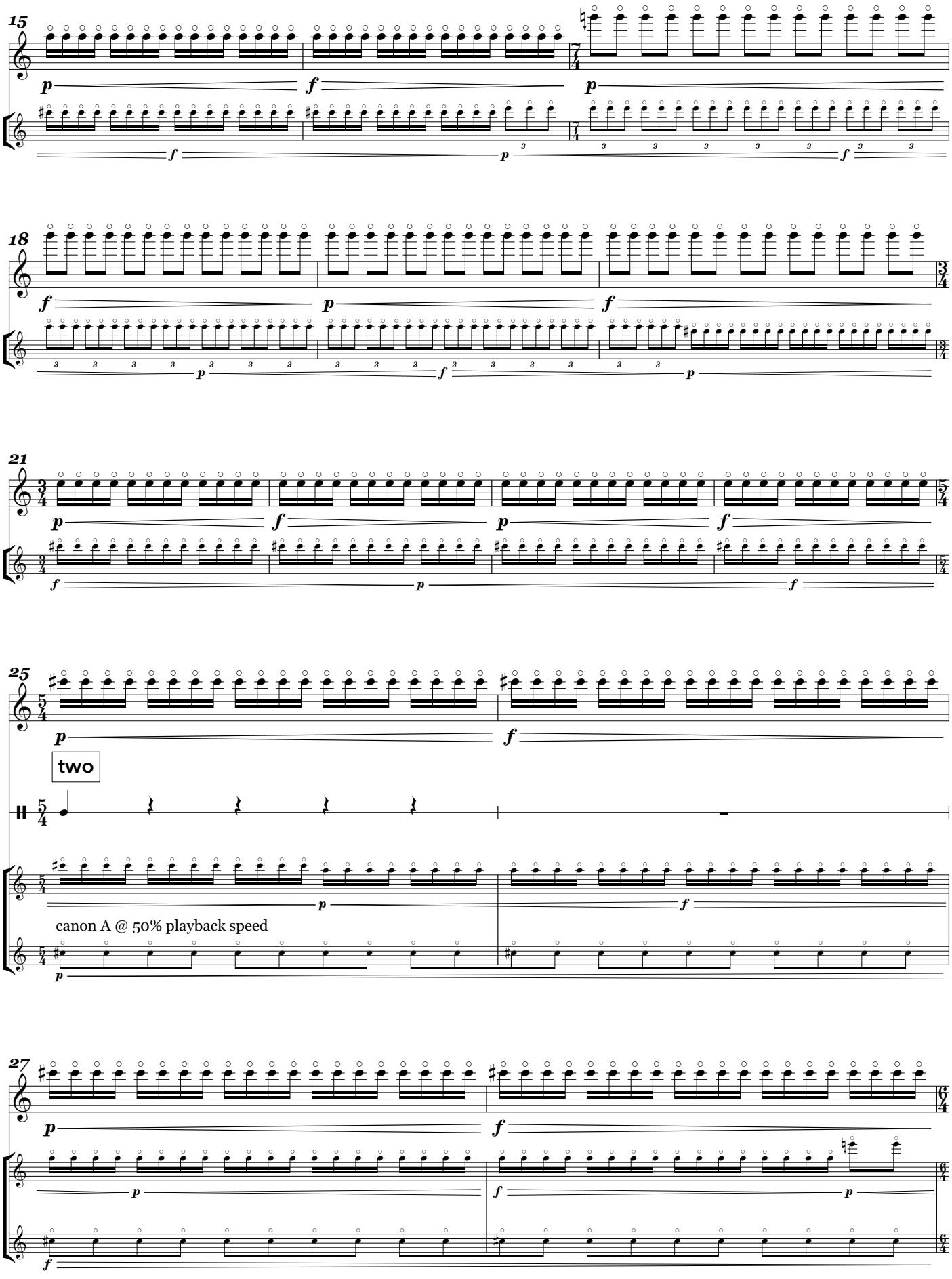
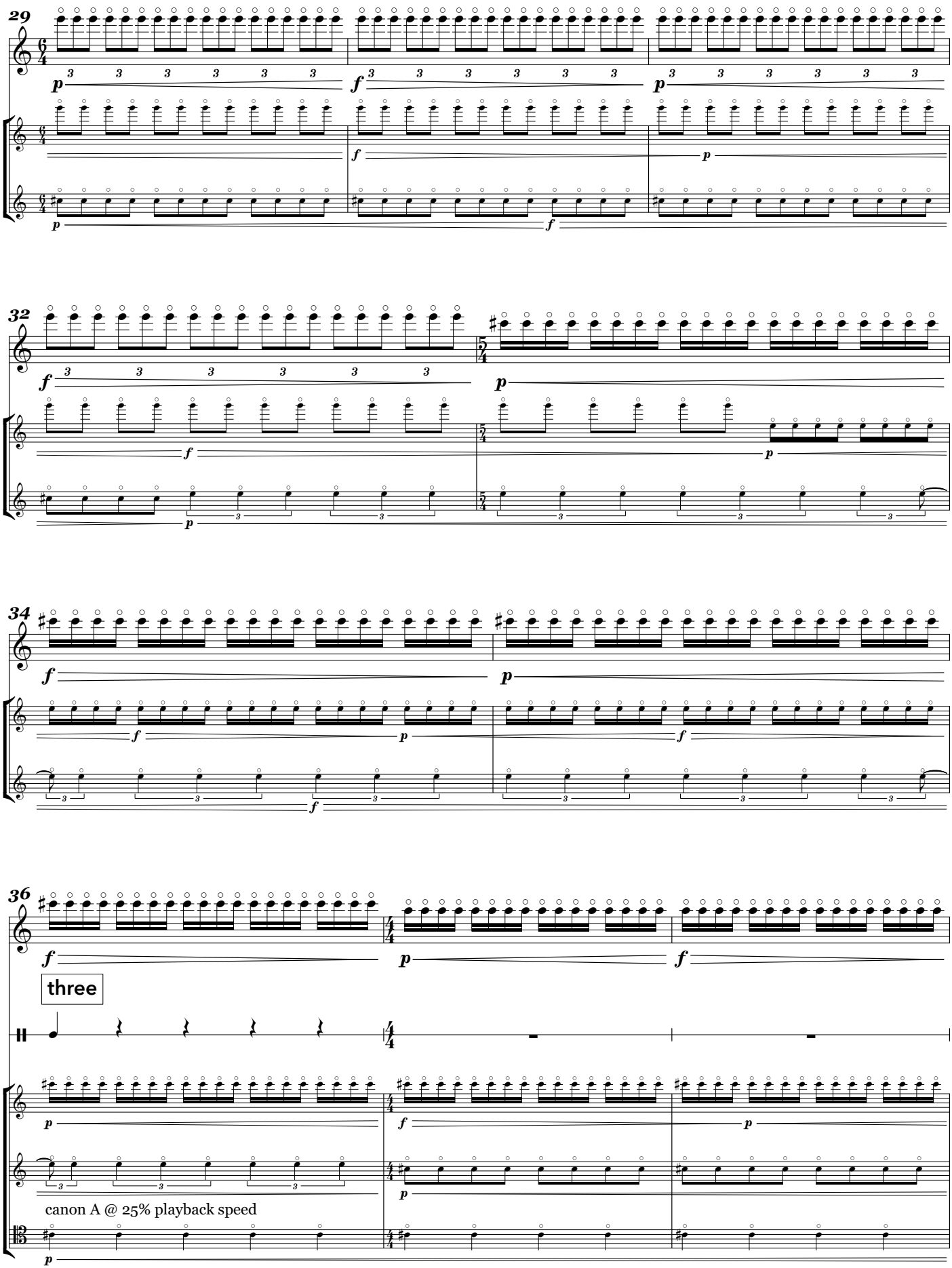
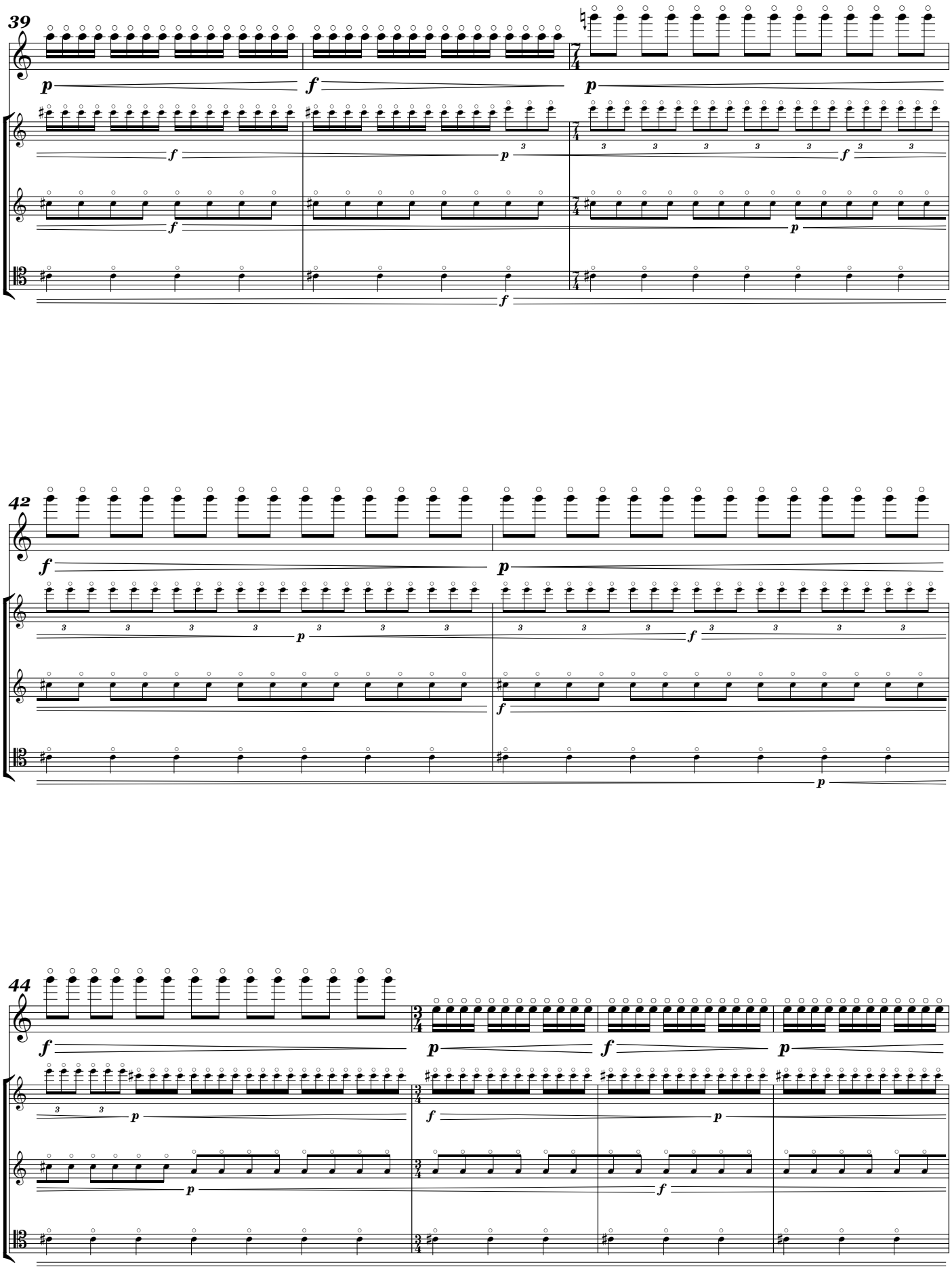

15
18
21
25
two
canon A @ 50% playback speed
27


29
32
34
36
three
canon A @ 25% playback speed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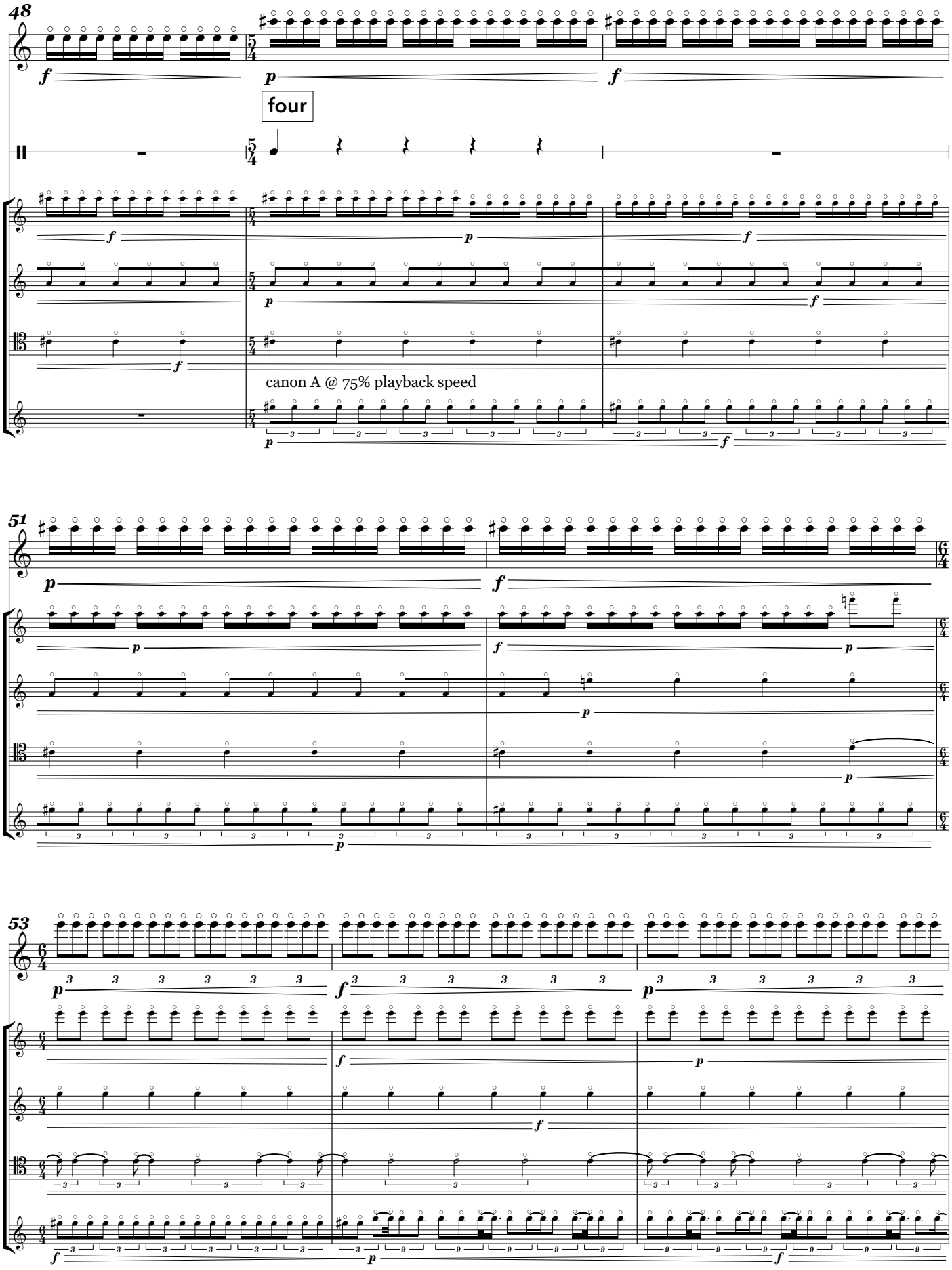
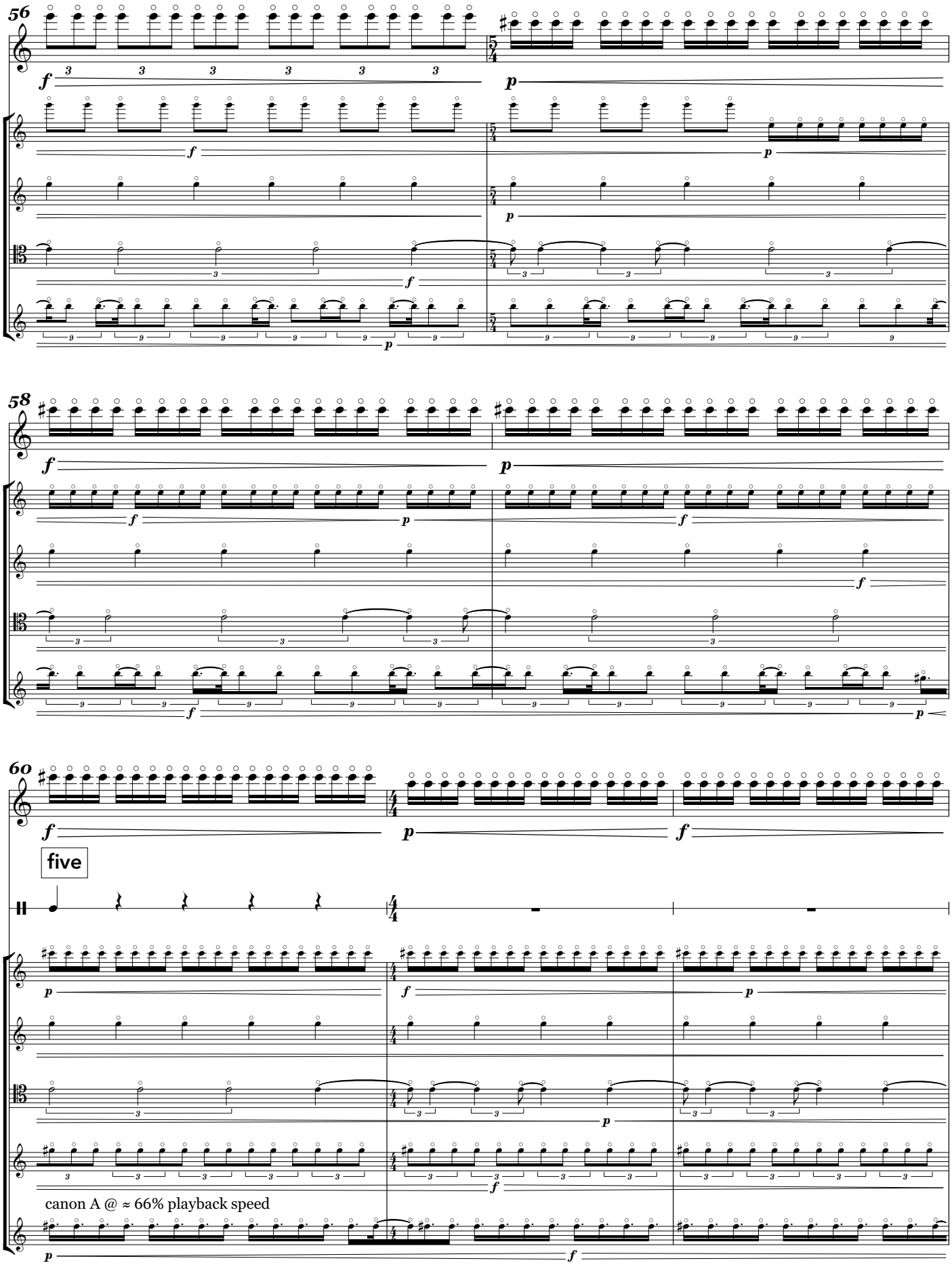
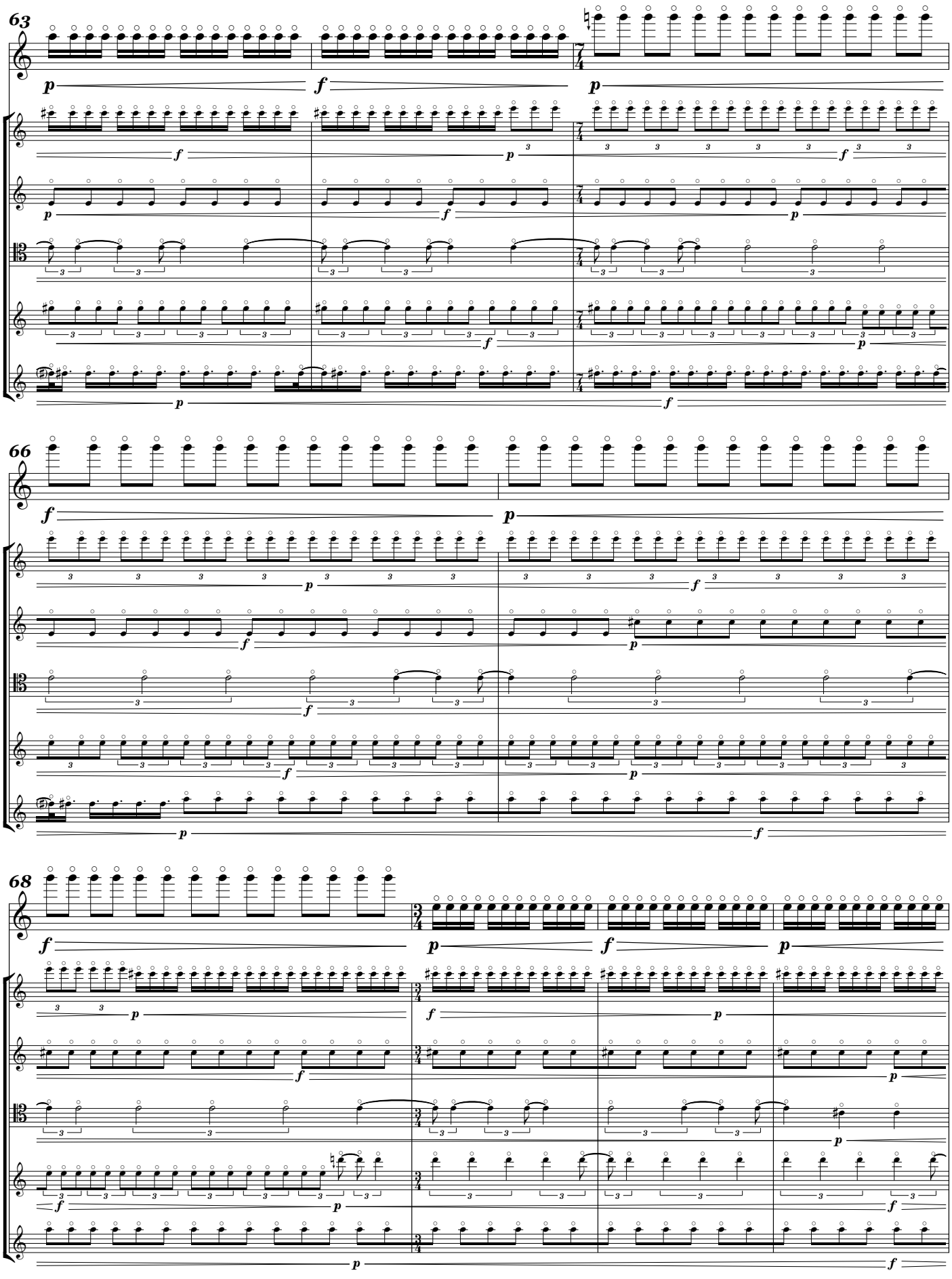
42
44


48
four
canon A @ 75% playback speed
51
53


56
58
60
five
canon A @ ≈ 66% playback speed


63
66
68

72

A always played on open string

*gliss.***

blow over top of bottle 5 as evenly as poss.
into microphone 1 (with digital delay)

"f"

75

simile

** *glissandi should create subtle bending-in-and-out-of-tune effect*

78

simile, bottle 1

six

canon B @ 100% playback speed

81

84

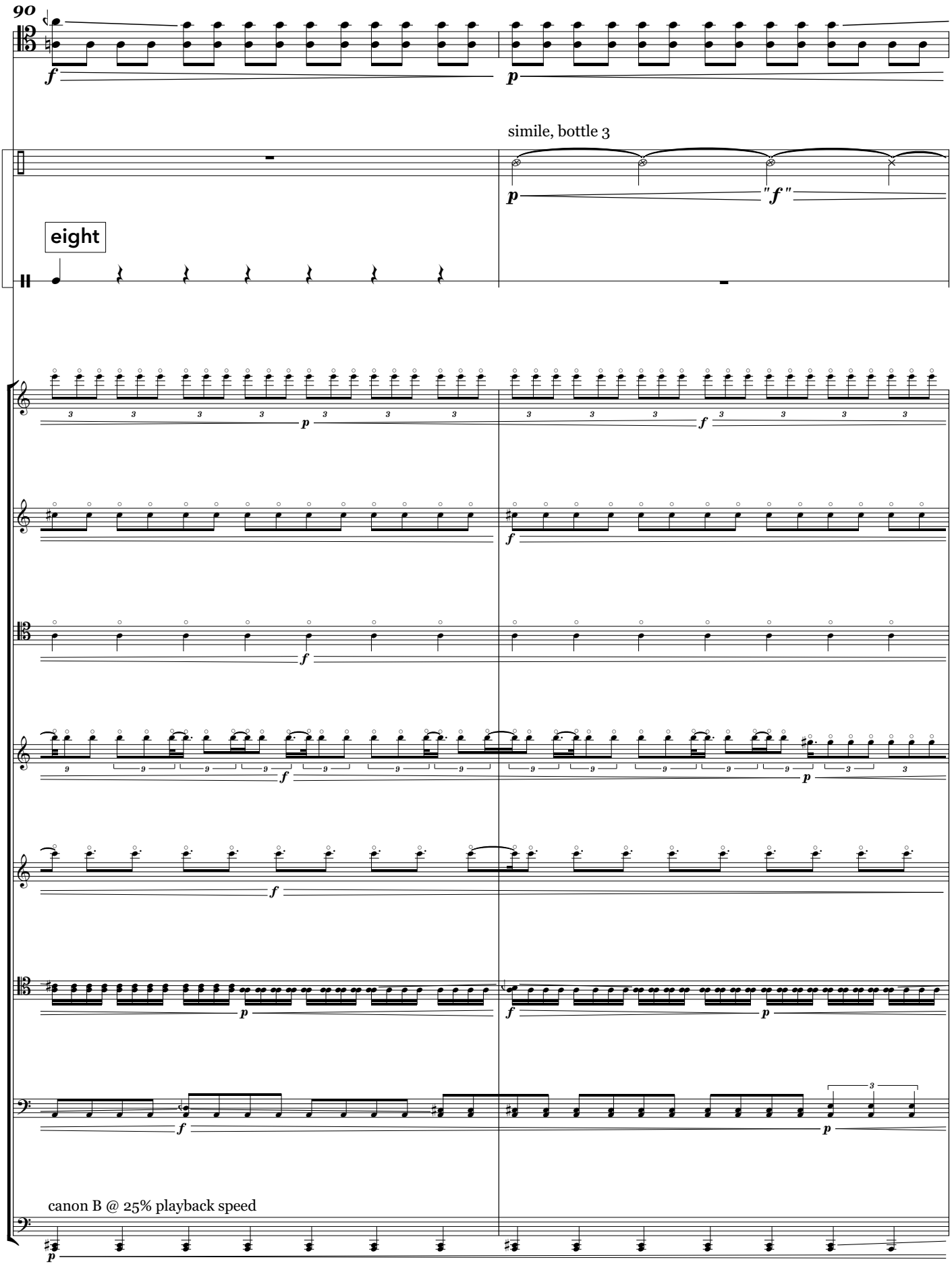
simile, bottle 4

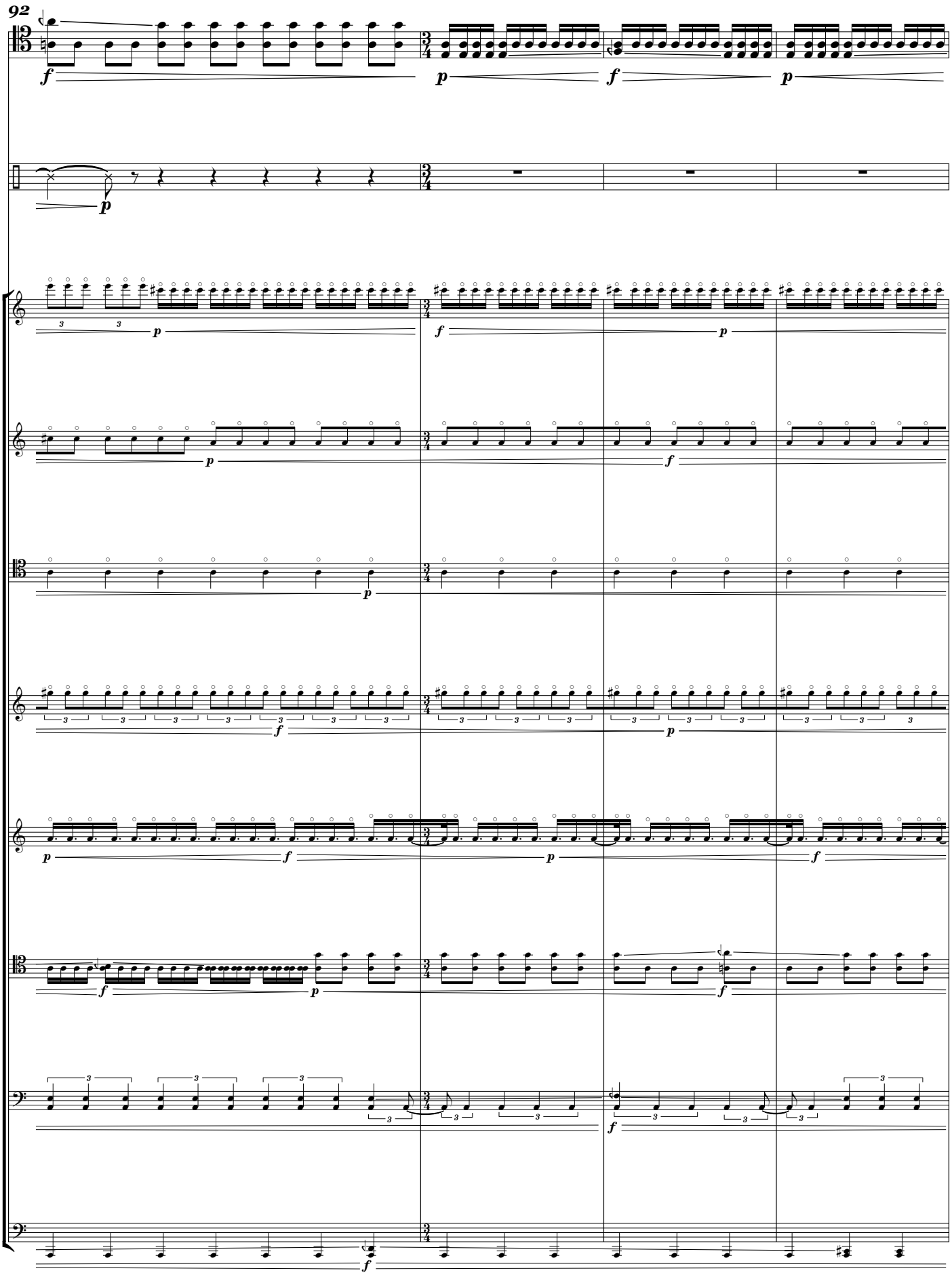
seven

"f"

canon B @ 50% playback speed

87


90
simile, bottle 3
eight
canon B @ 25% playback speed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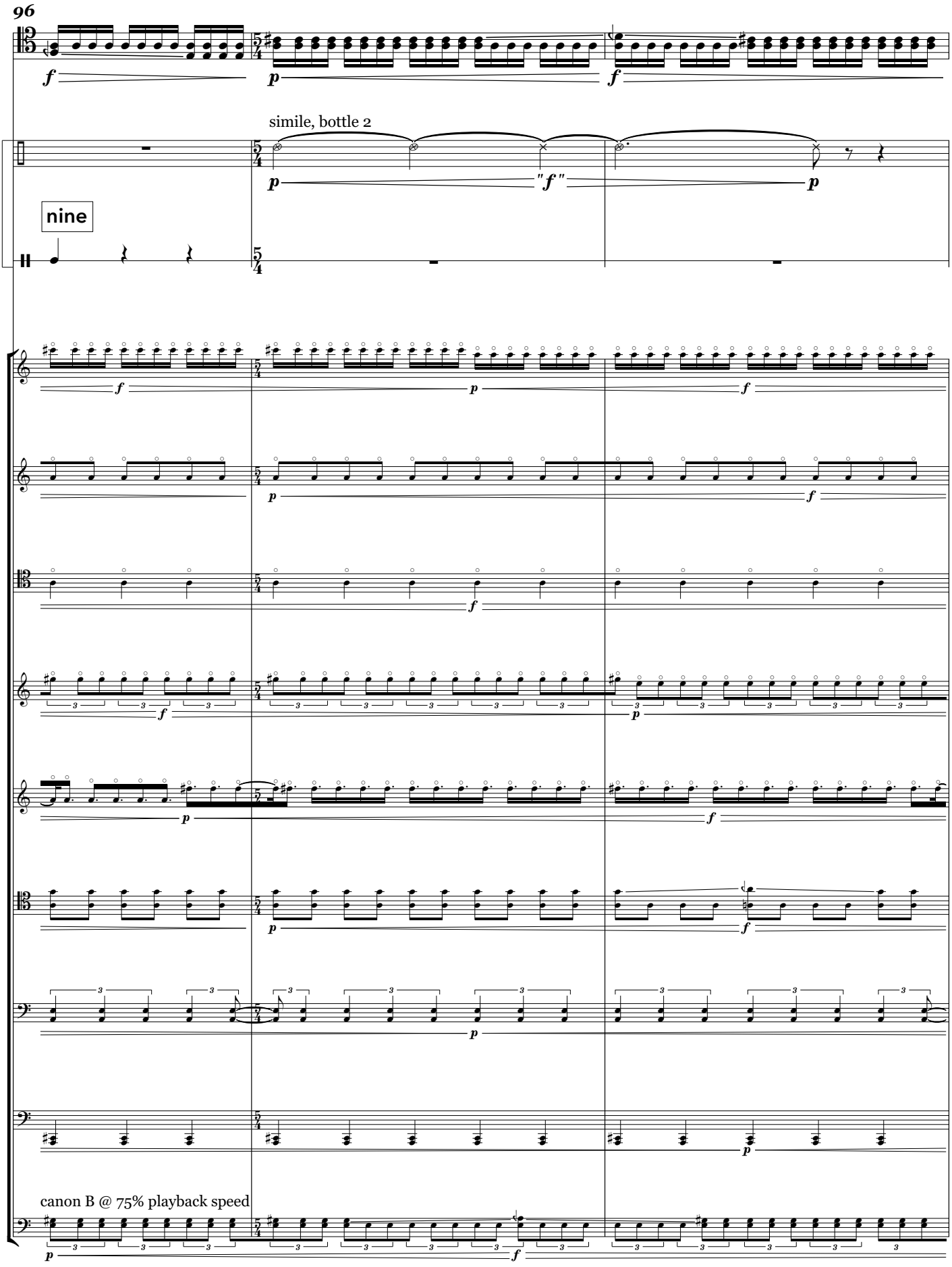
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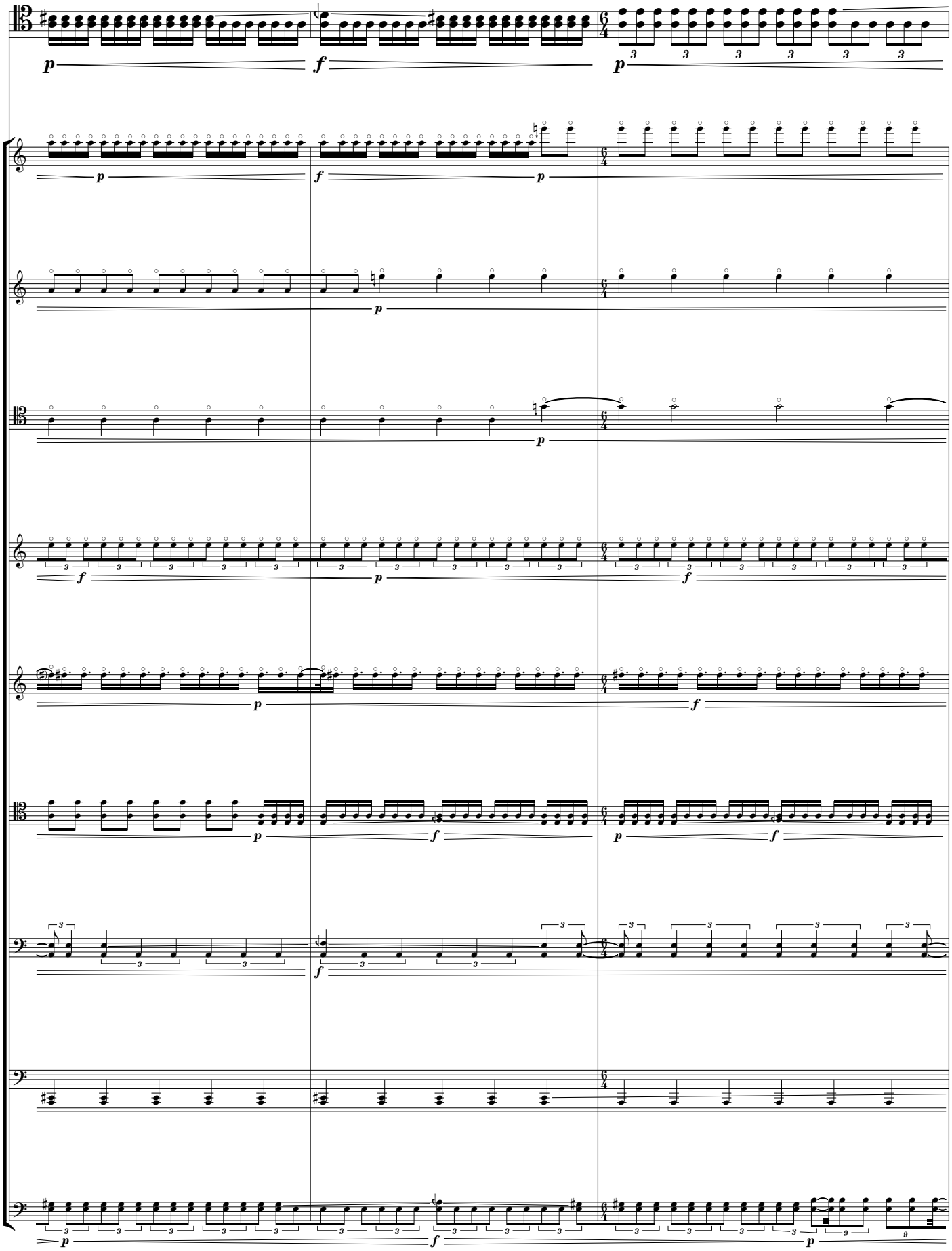
simile, bottle 2
nine
canon B @ 75% playback speed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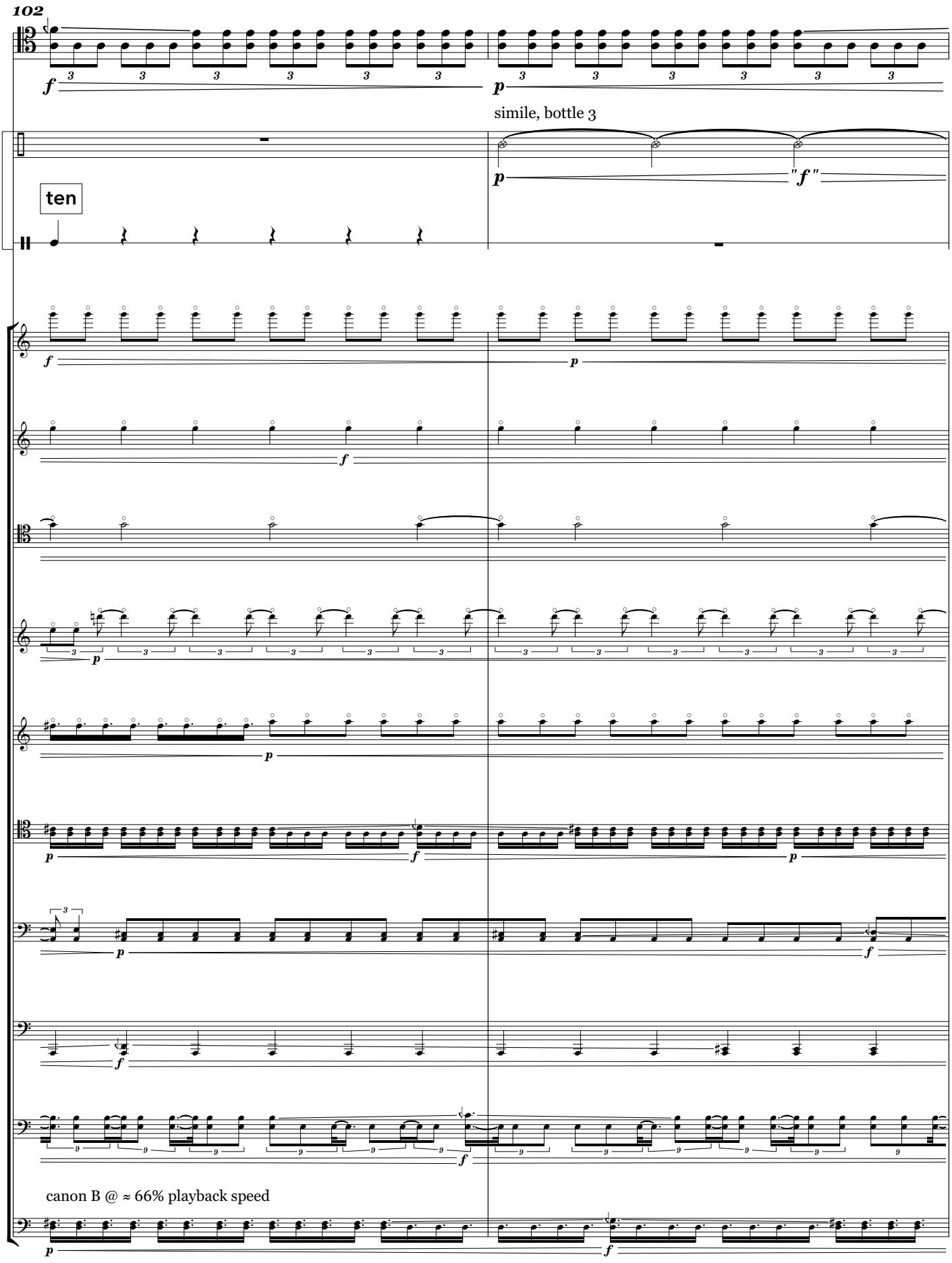
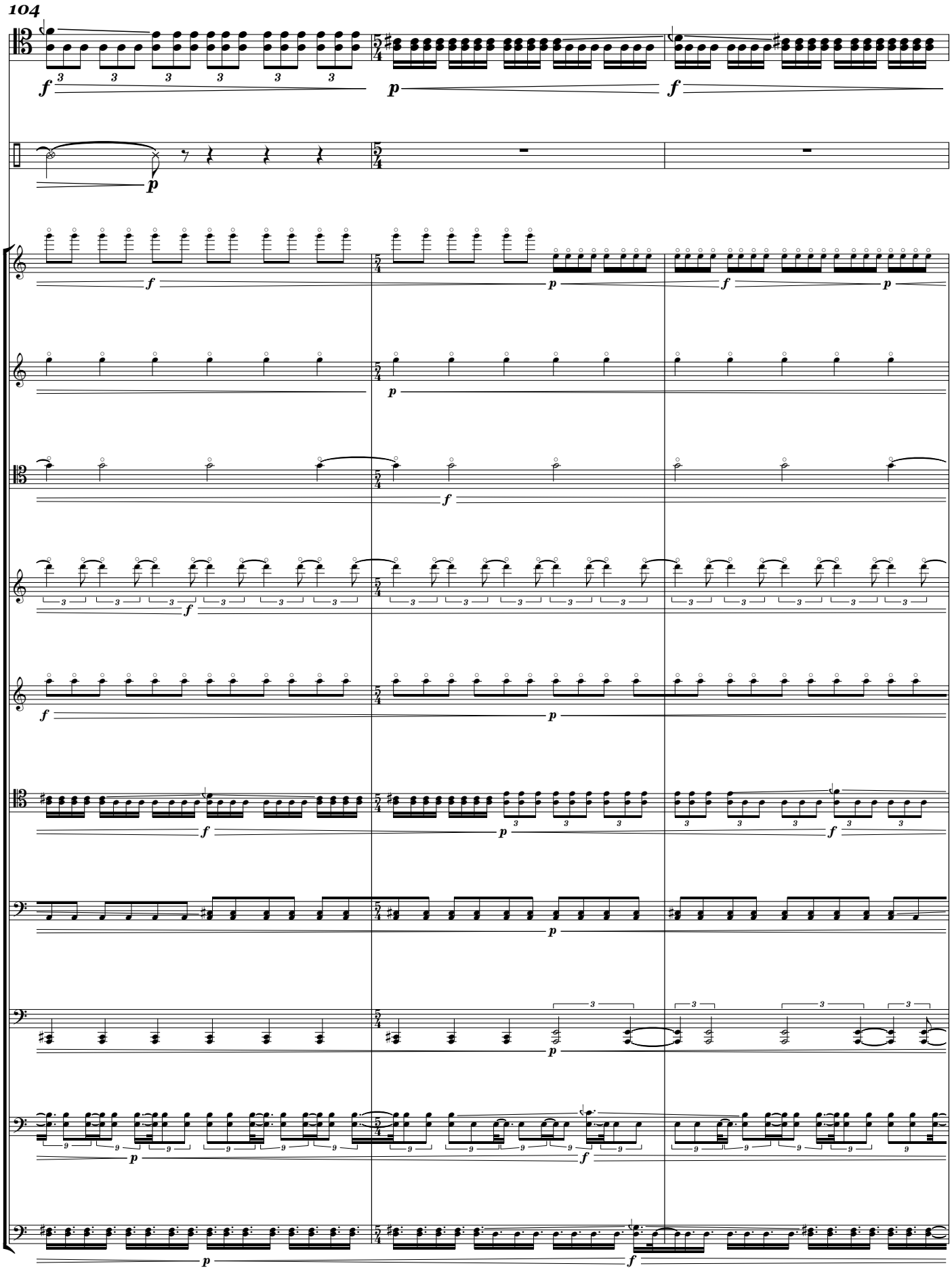

102
simile, bottle 3
ten
canon B @ ≈ 66% playback speed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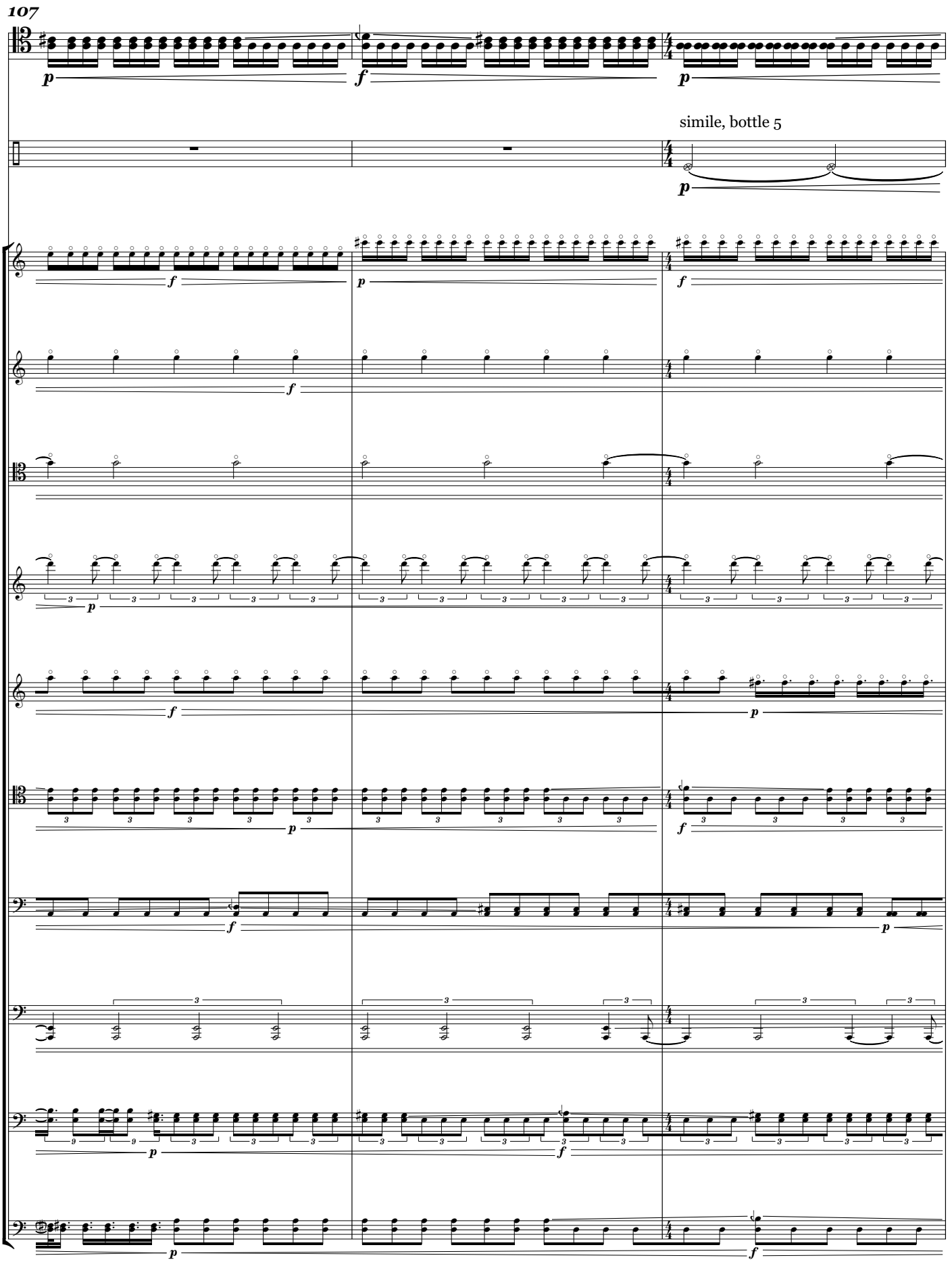
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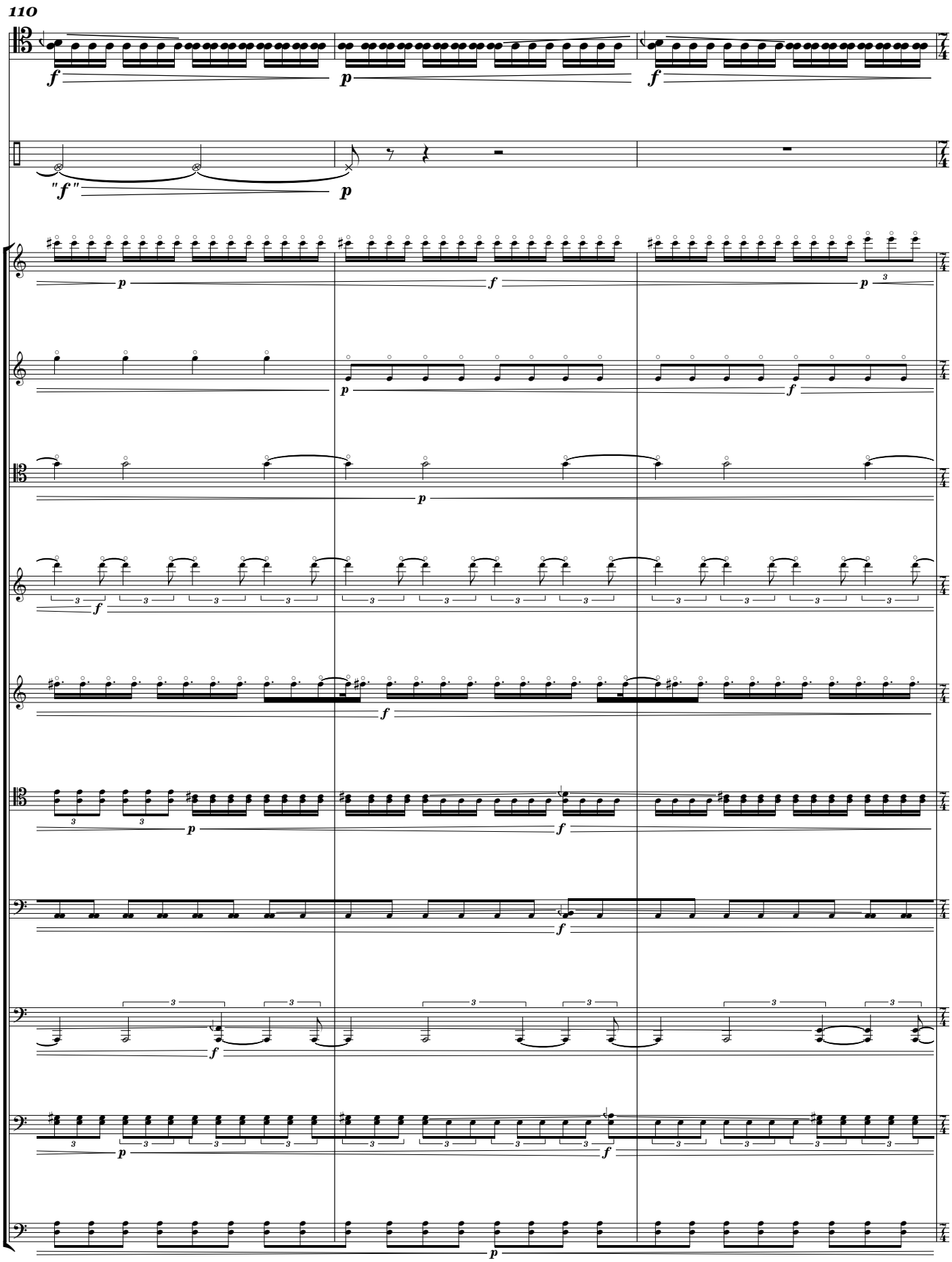
simile, bottle 5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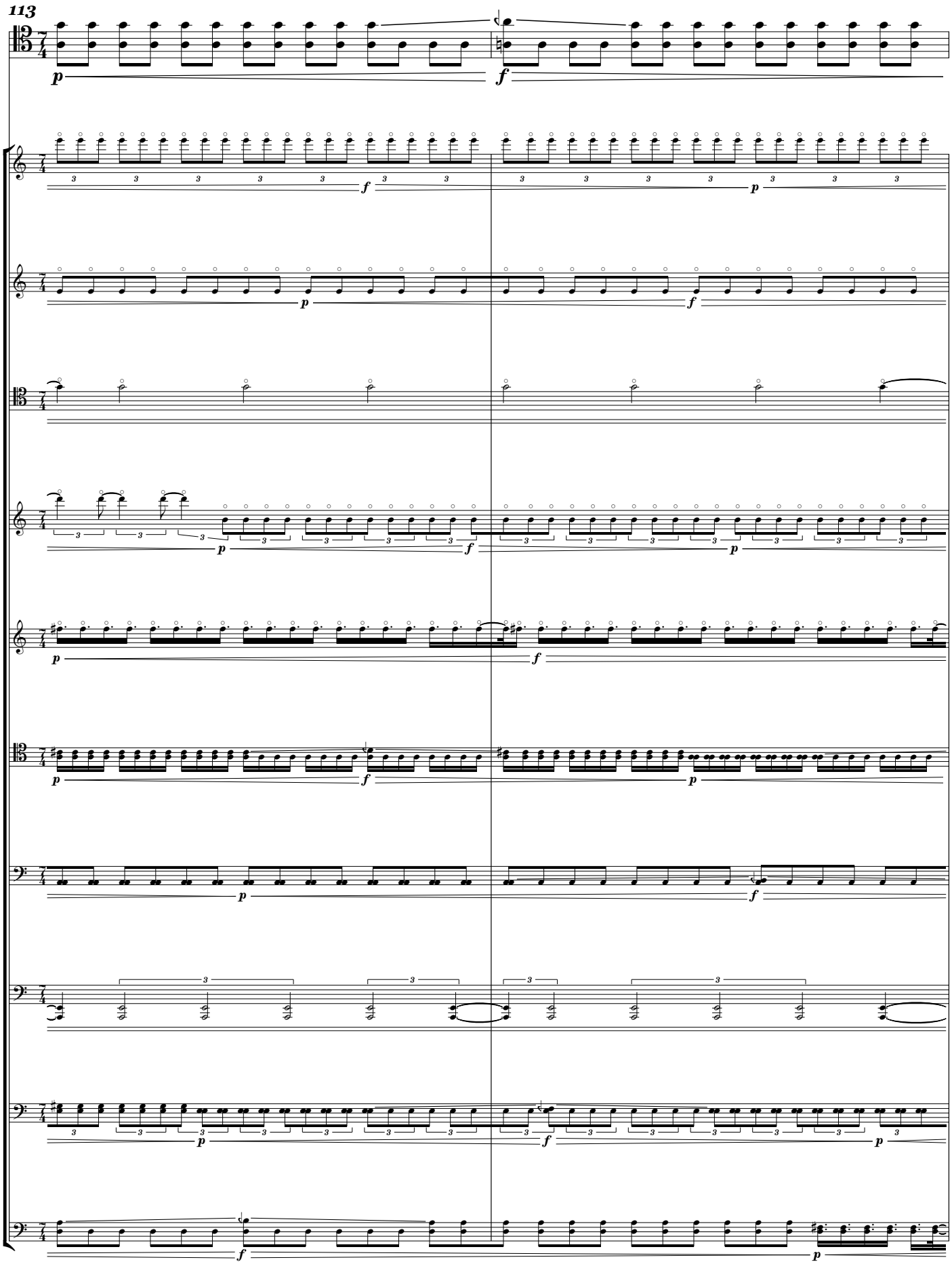
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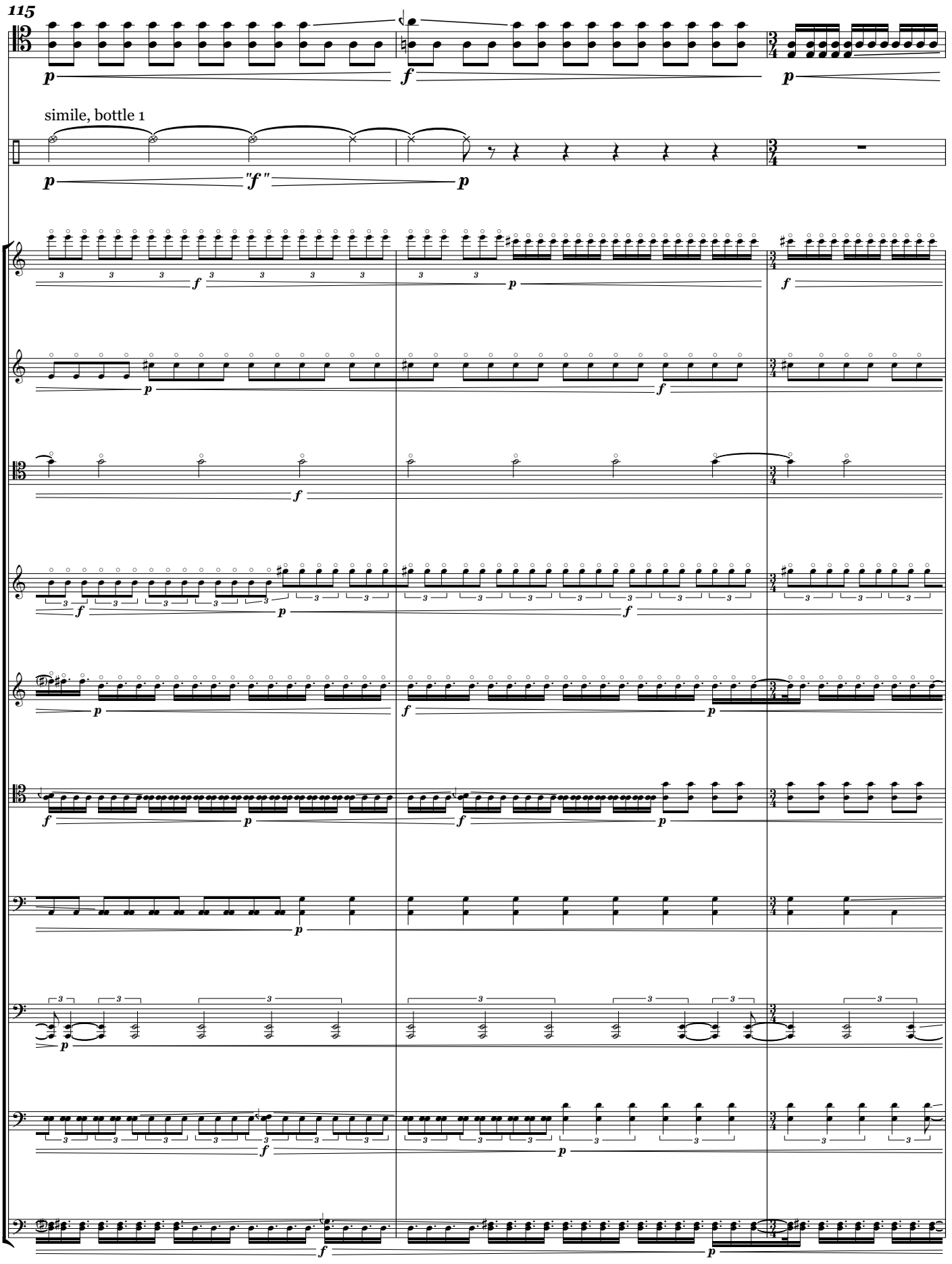
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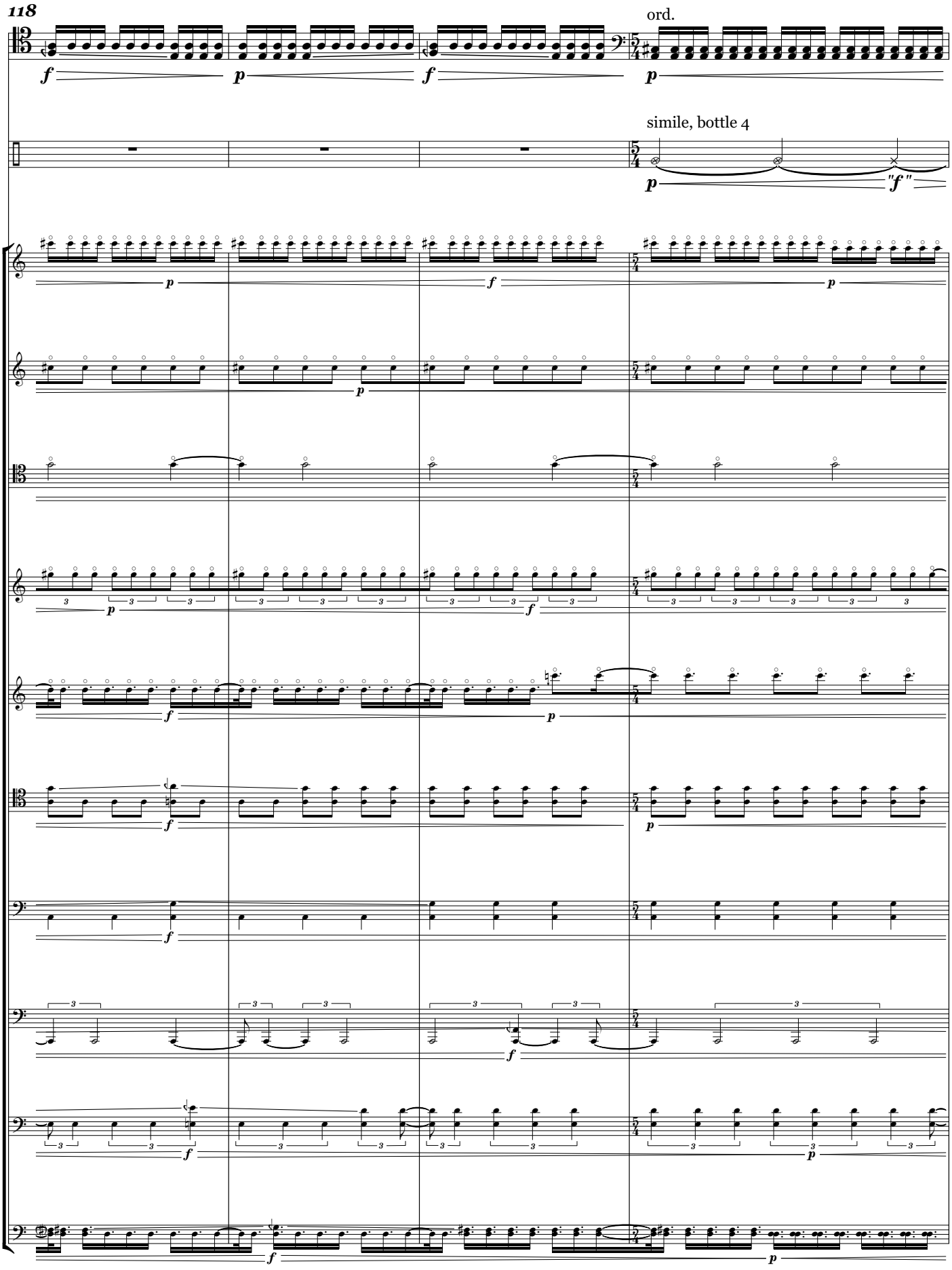
simile, bottle 1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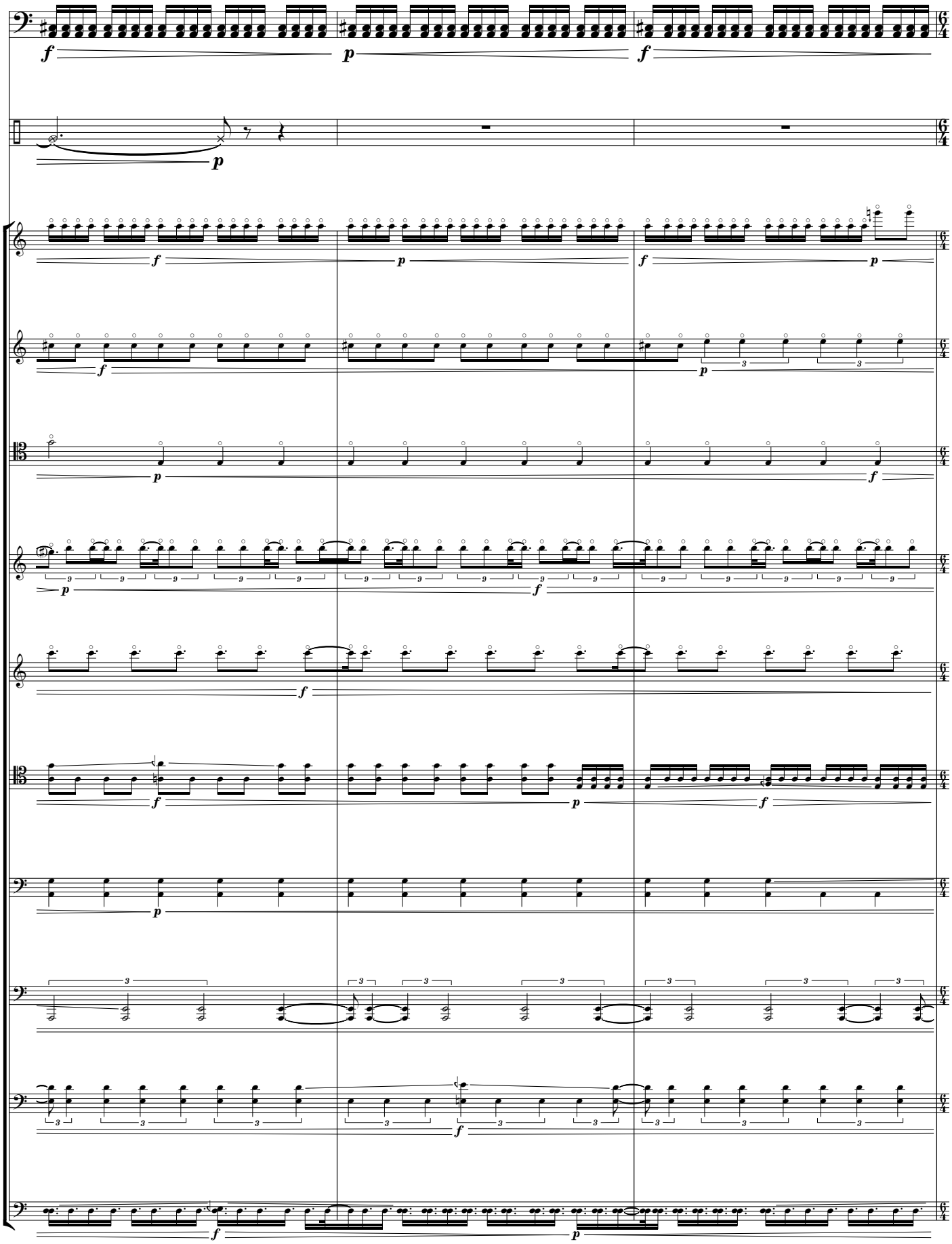
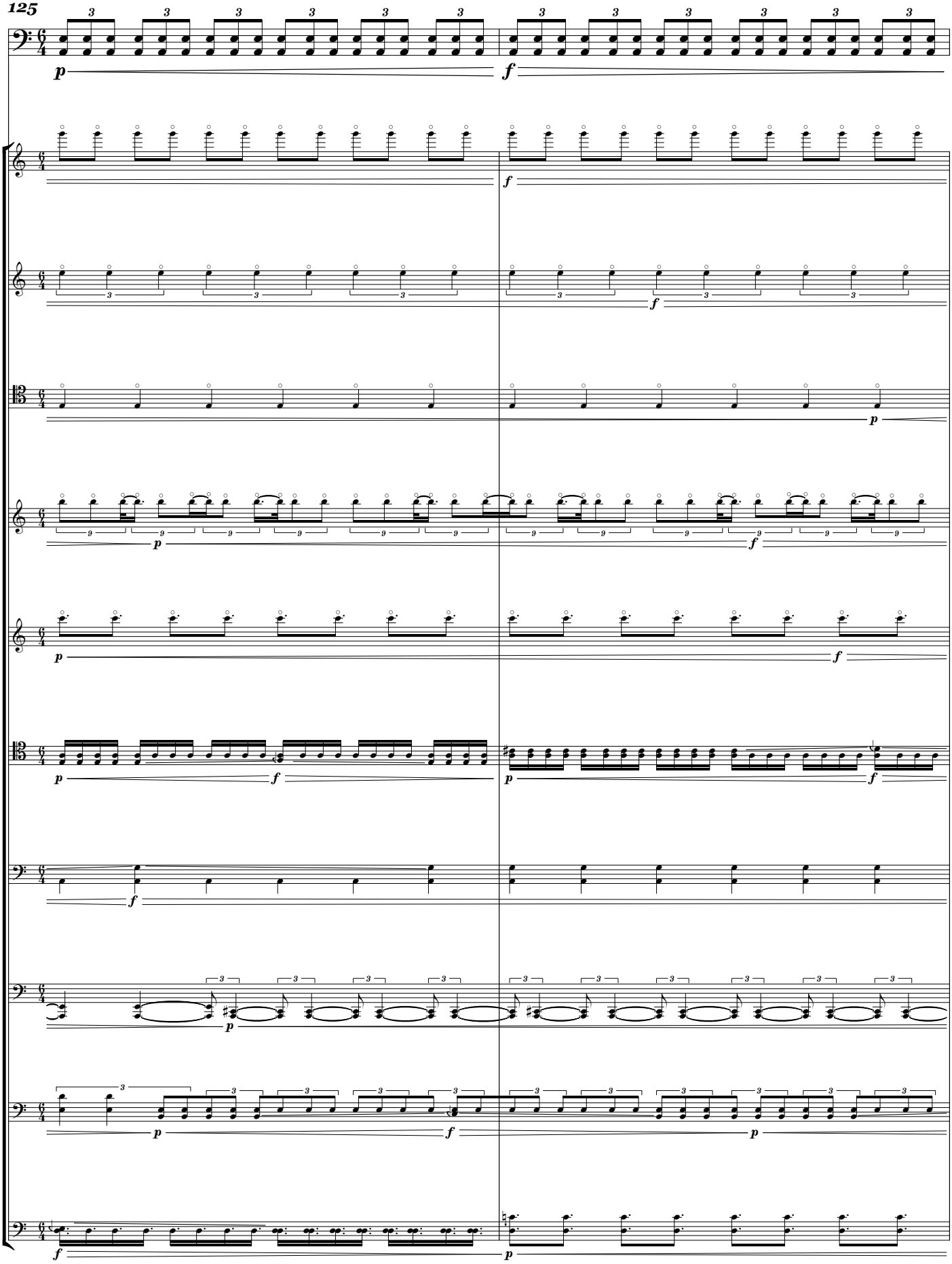
ord.
simile, bottle 4

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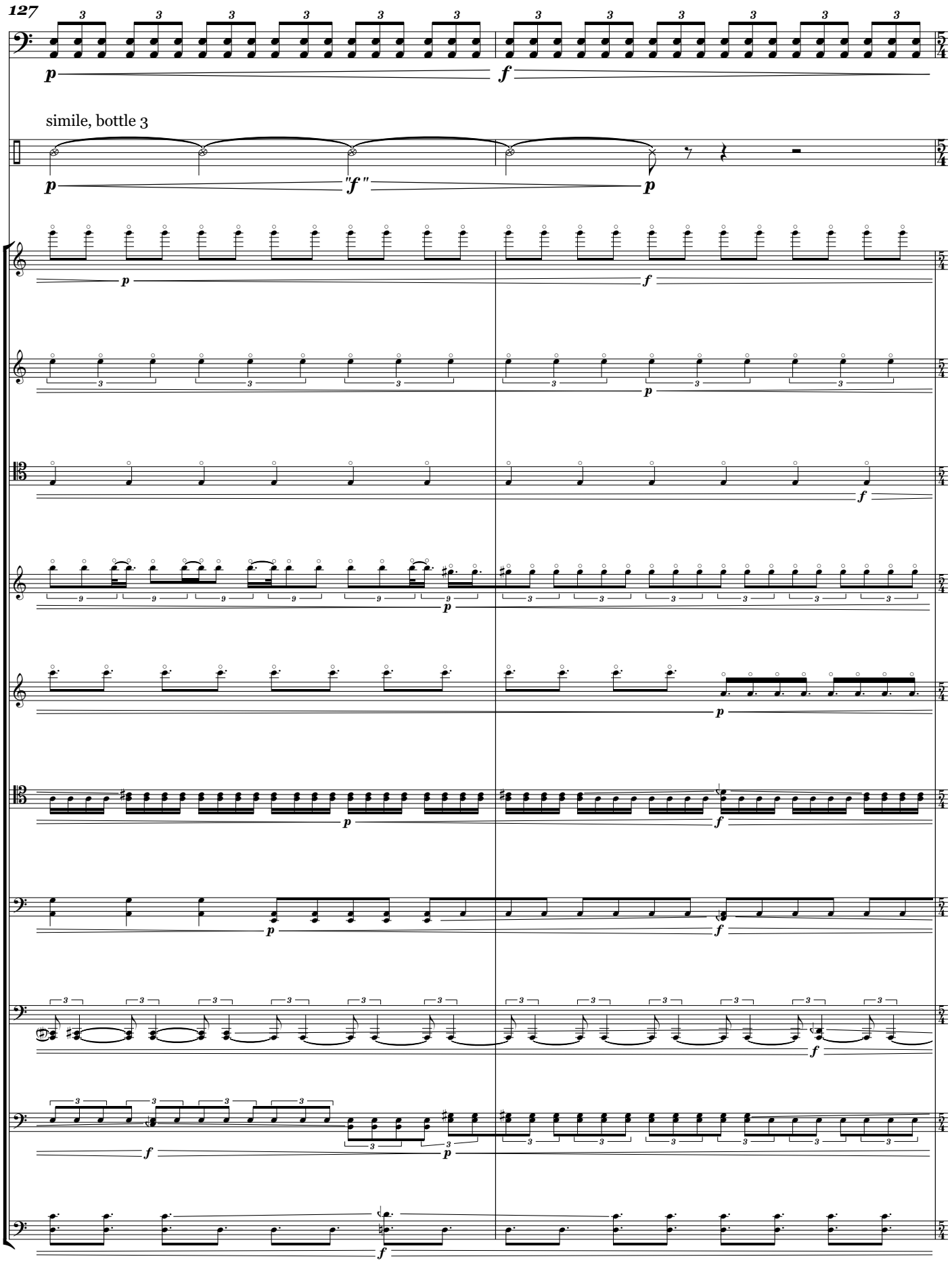
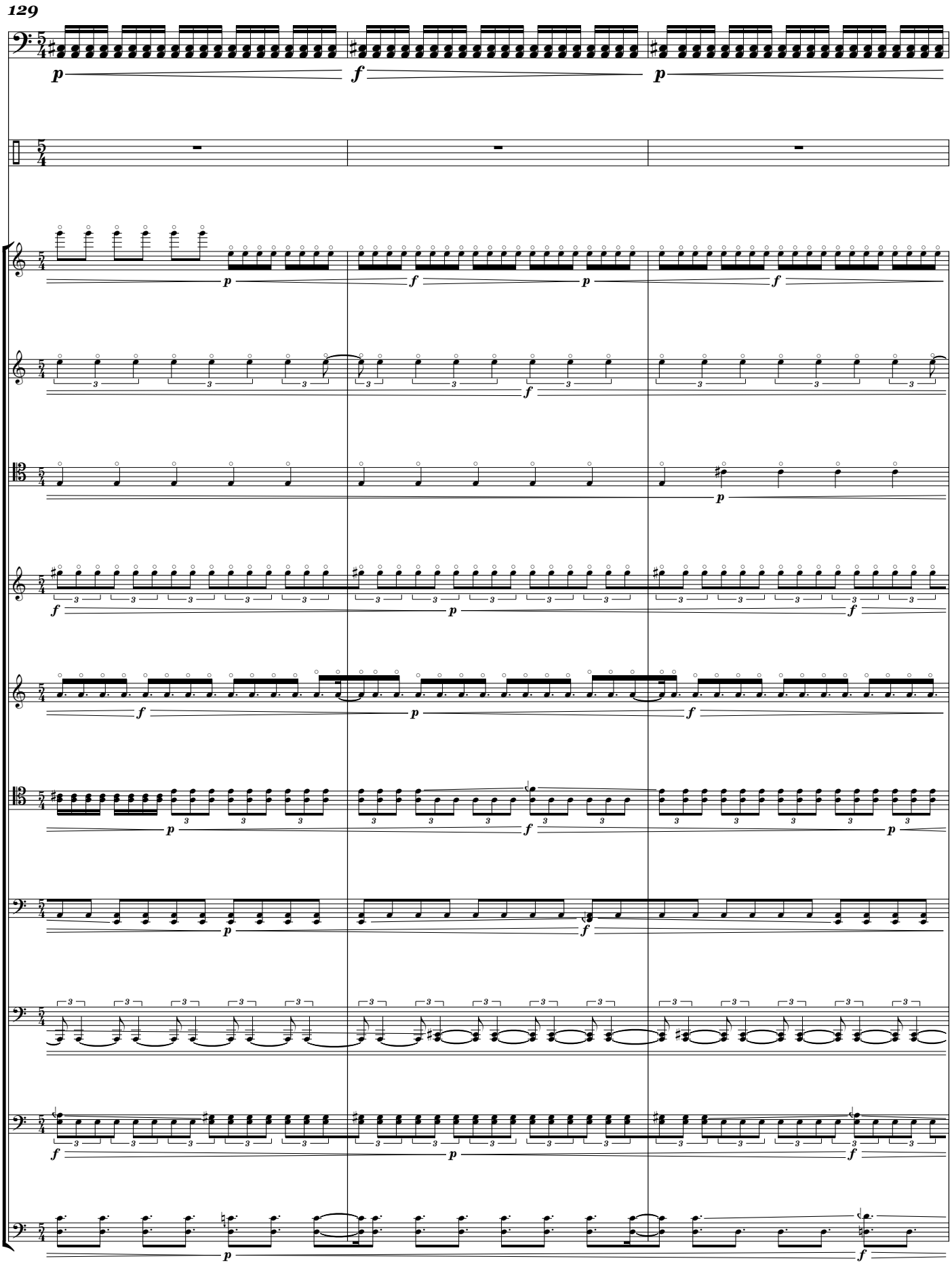

127
simile, bottle 3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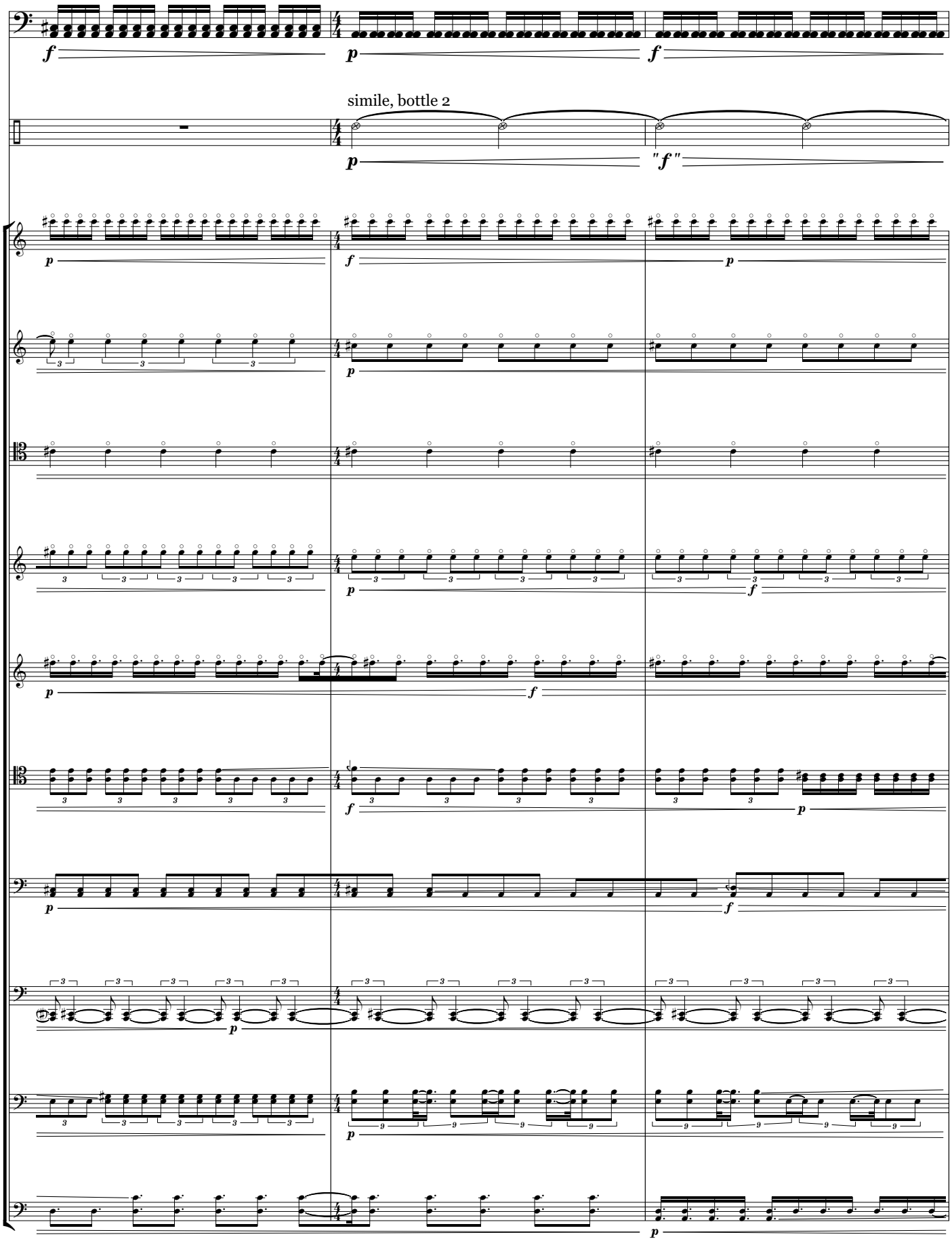
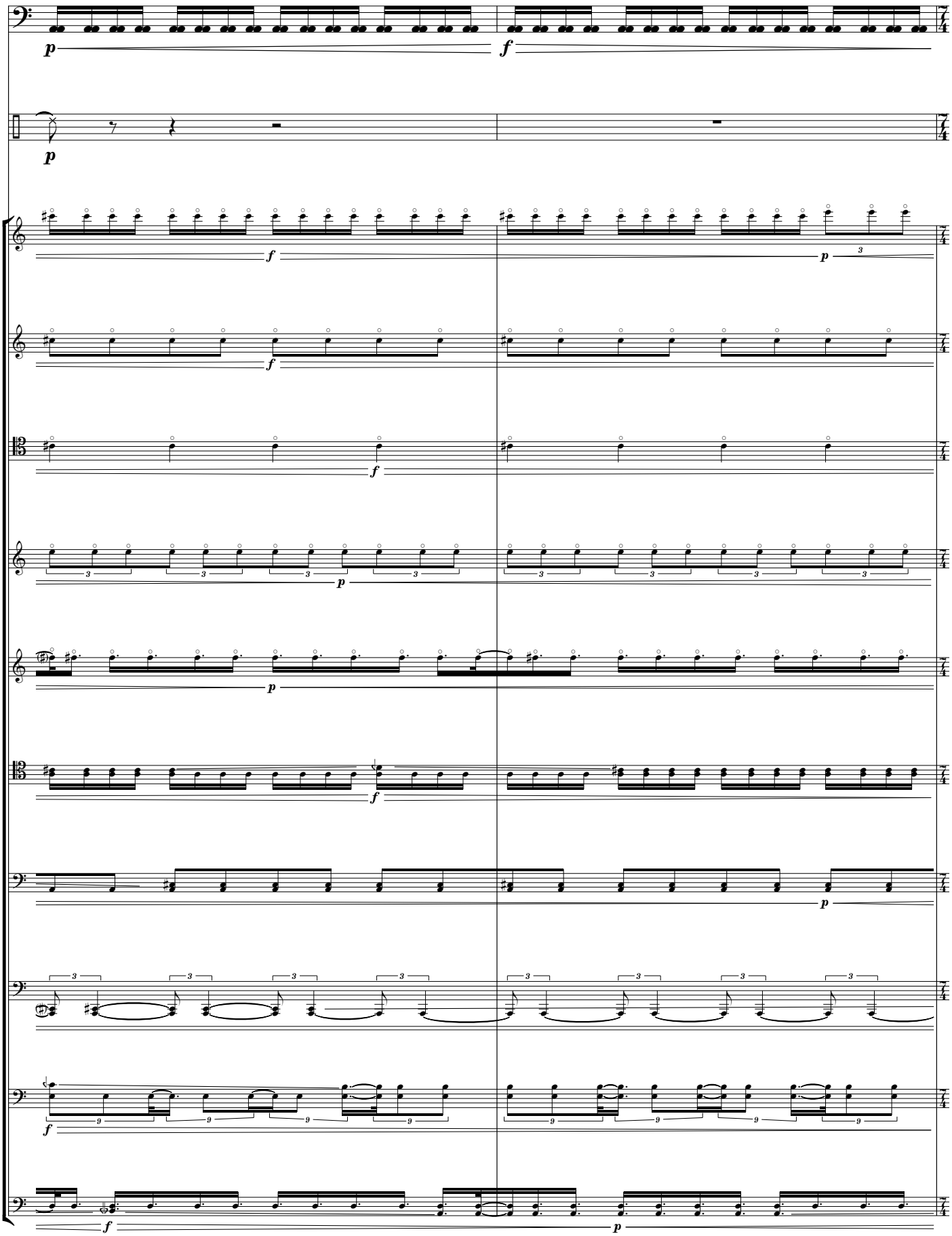
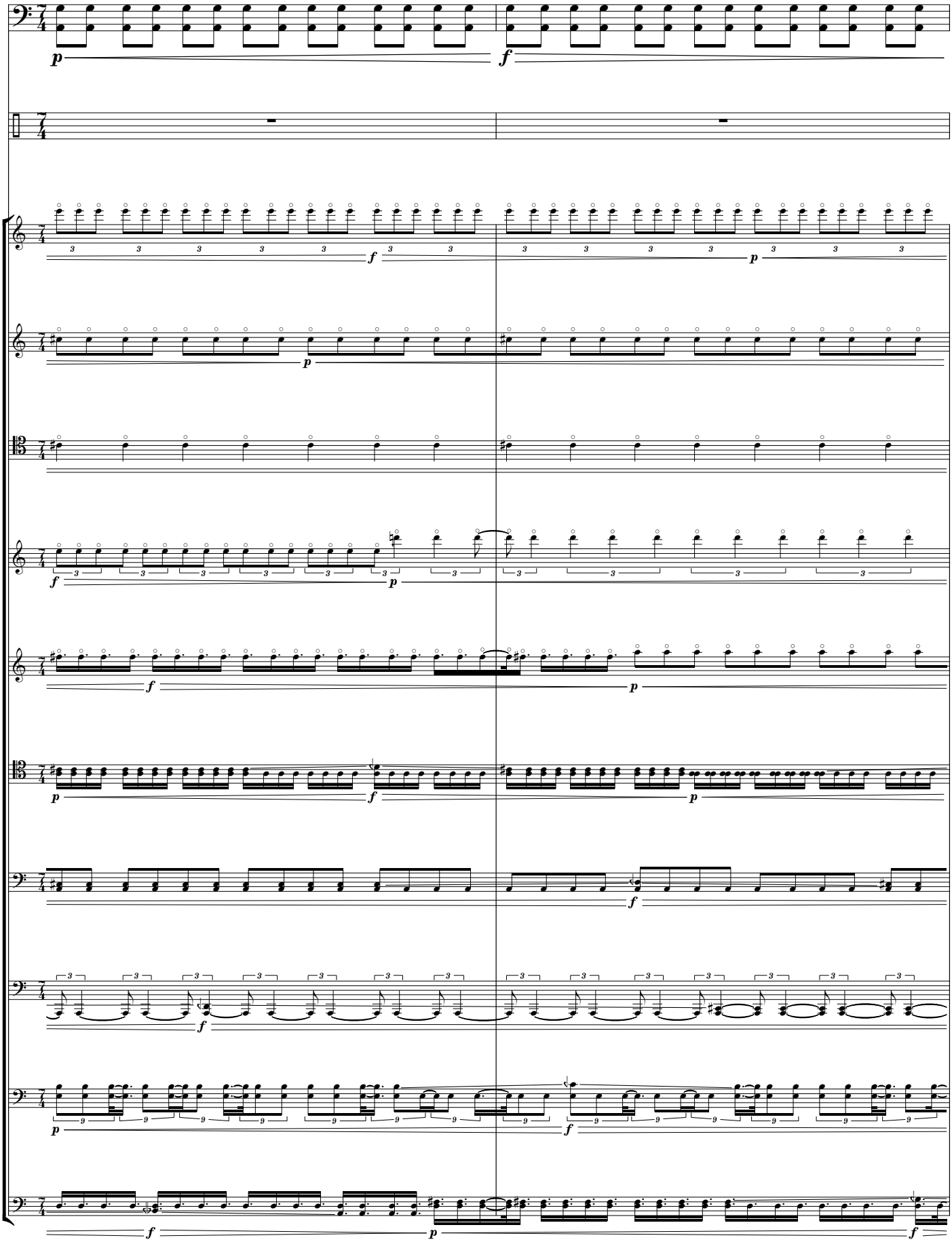
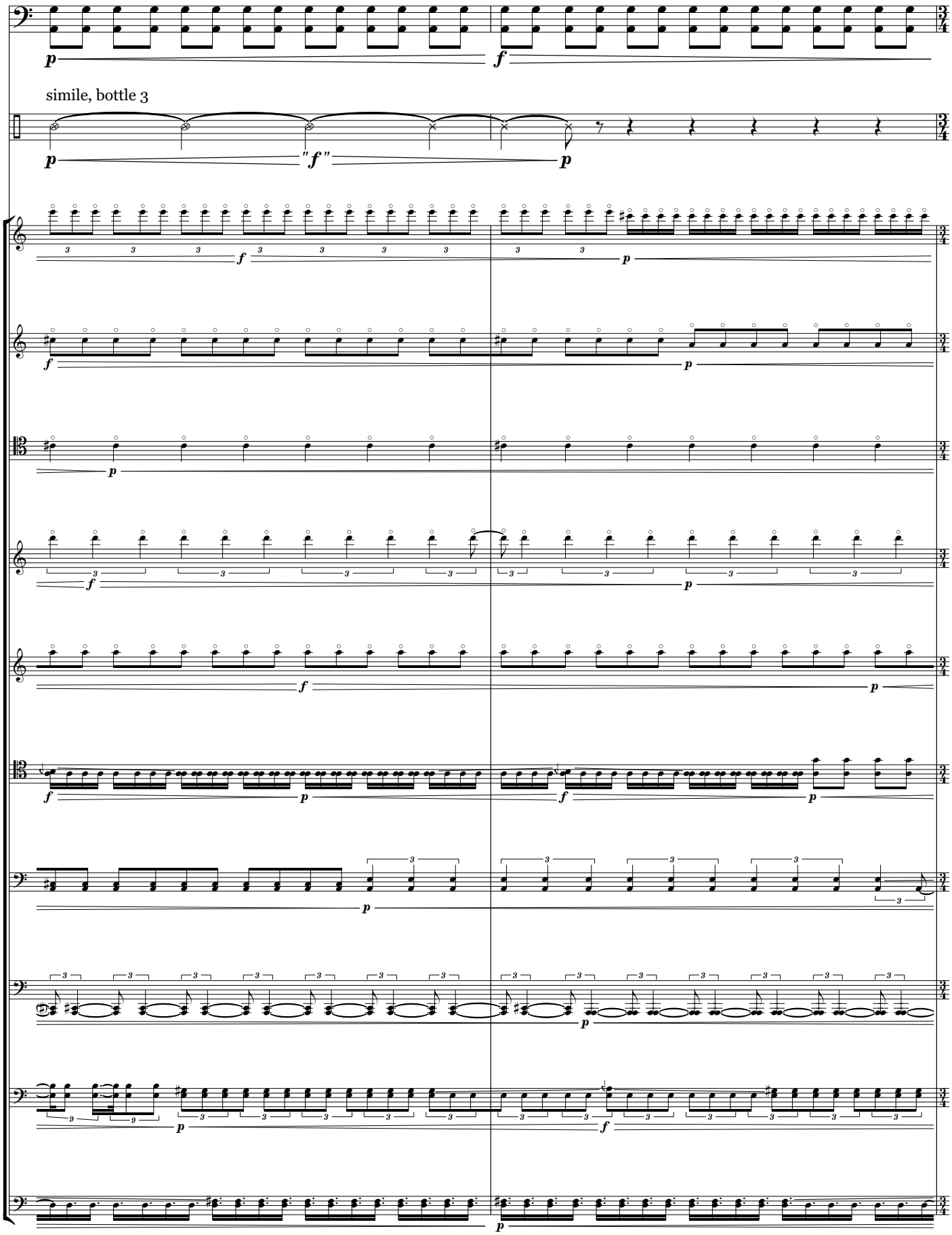
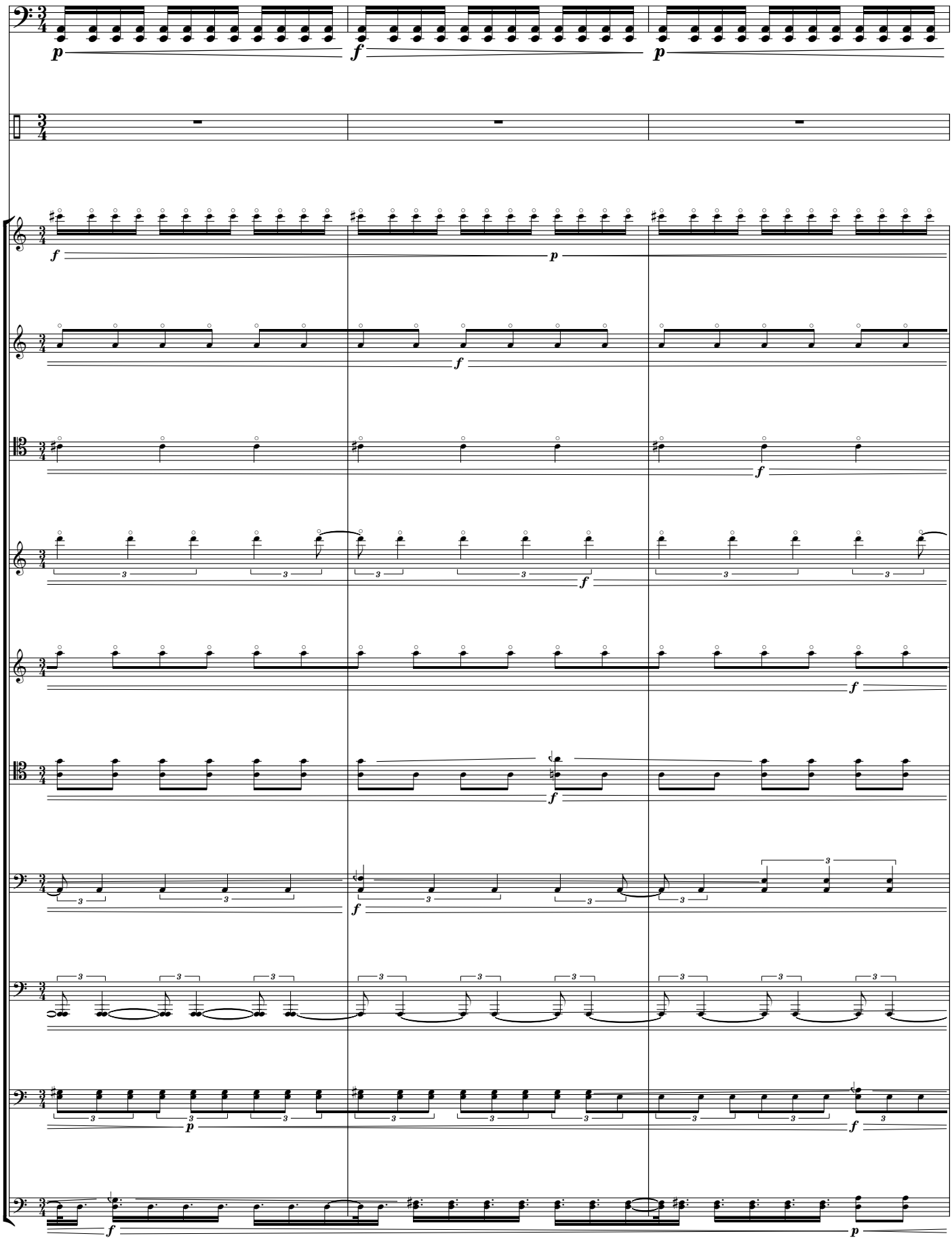

simile, bottle 2

135






simile, bottle 3



144

ATTACCA

≈ 1'00"

ff poss., l.v.

eleven

≈ 1'00"

synth bass

ff

river sample with resonance filters tuned to A harmonic series

fff

ABRUPT, STATIC, PEACEFUL YET DISTURBING ♩ = 60

sul C, mute with coffee sleeve woven between strings near the scroll (see picture on left)
extremamente sul pont., "toneless," bow slowly & freely

'Cello

pp *sempre (= intensity of performance, the amplification will create a louder dynamic)*
with lid removed, crush bottle & hold, do not allow bottle to crackle after crushing

Empty Plastic Bottle

ff *poss.*
very slowly, rub flat surface of styrofoam block on flat surface of exotic hardwood plank**
as much surface contact as poss. between objects

Percussion

pp *sempre (= intensity of performance, the amplification will create a louder dynamic)*
with lid removed, crush bottle & hold, do not allow bottle to crackle after crushing

Empty Plastic Bottle

ff *poss.*

twelve*

Electronic Cues

Plastic Bottle Sample

ff

Geneva, NY: 06/2015

Wind Samples

faint thunder *simile*

2

Vc.

n!
crackle bottle slowly in hand, like the sound of a record player

p *sempre*

Perc.

n!
crackle bottle slowly in hand, like the sound of a record player

p *sempre*

thirteen

Plastic Bottle Sample

ff

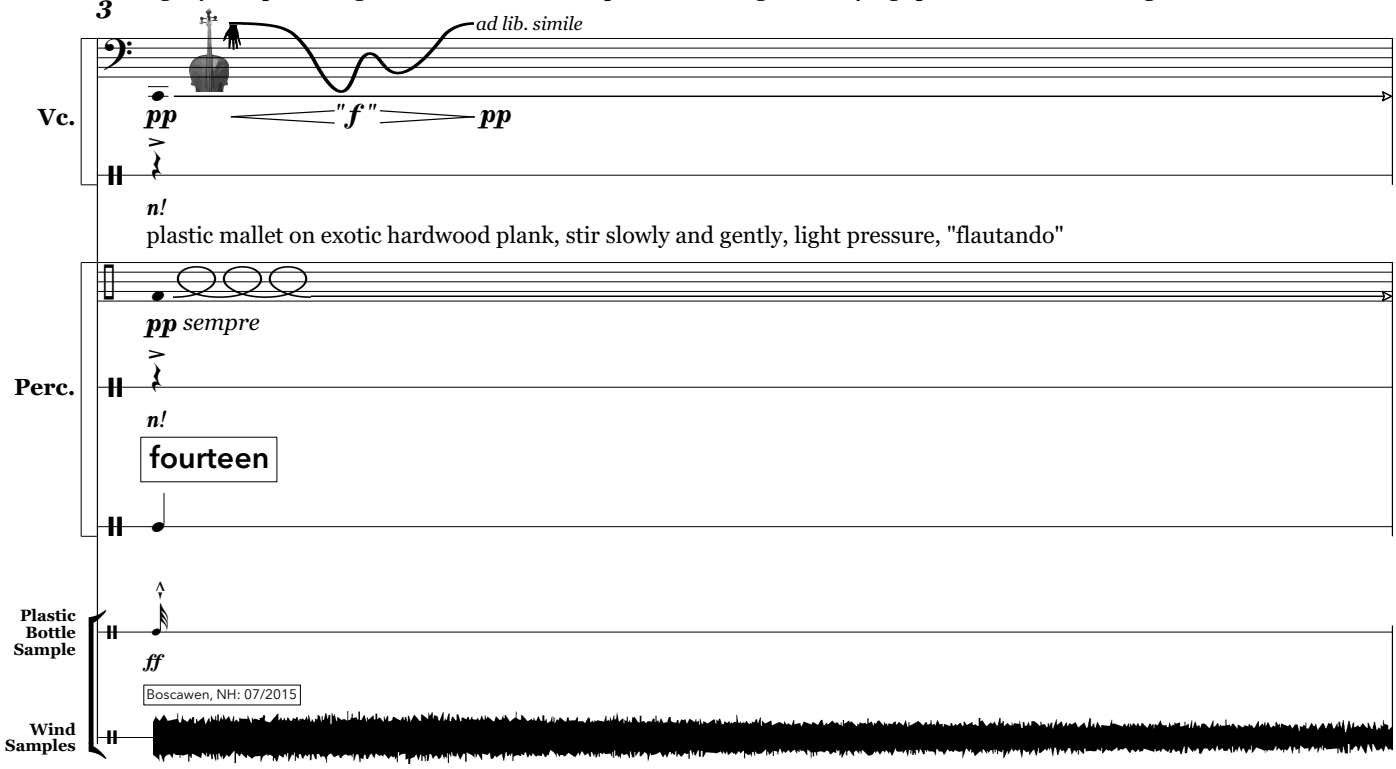
Polson, MT: 07/2015

Wind Samples

** wait for the river sample, which will repeat indefinitely at the end of Scene One, to become disturbingly loud before triggering Scene Two*
*** exotic hardwood plank amplified with a contact microphone*

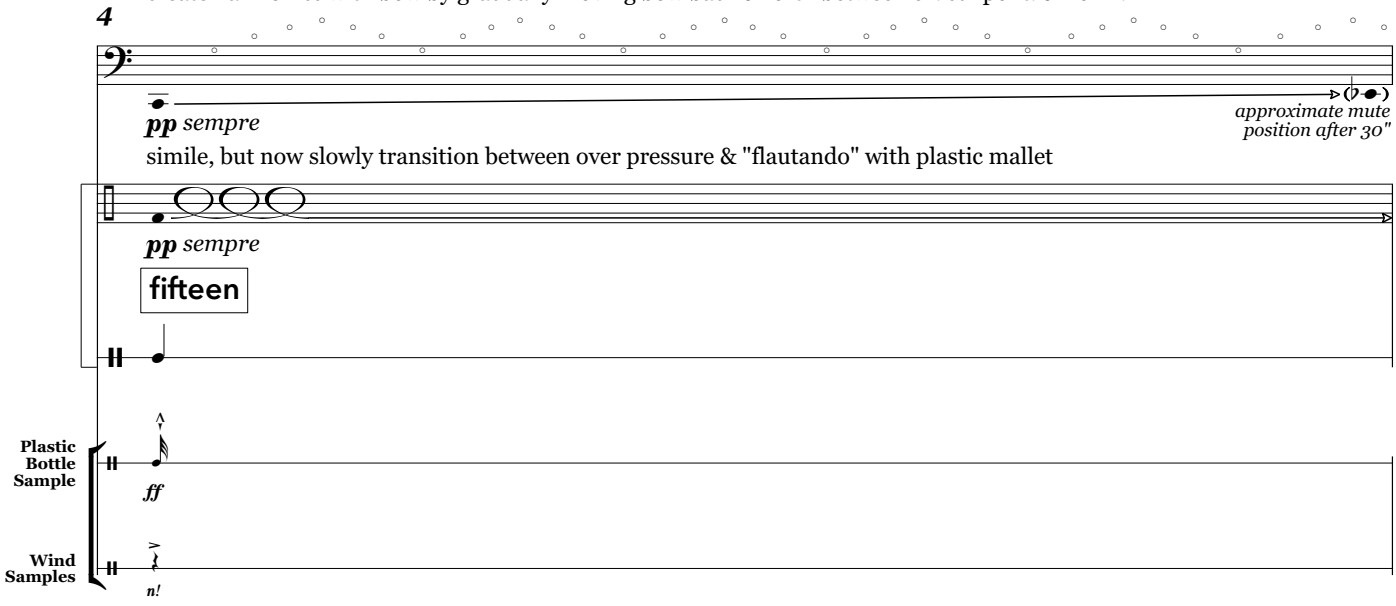
sul C, with coffee sleeve mute, ex. sul pont.
lightly dampen string with L.H., slide hand up & down string with varying speed to create "filtering" effect

3



sul C, with coffee sleeve mute
very slowly & evenly slide the coffee sleeve up the fingerboard, gradually raising the pitch
create harmonics with bow by gradually moving bow back & forth between ex. sul pont. & norm.

4



simile, continued

5

approximate mute position after 30"

pp *sempre*

wire brush on exotic hardwood plank, gentle & quick bursts of rustling

pp *sempre*

sixteen

Plastic Bottle Sample

ff

Boscawen, NH: 07/2015 - Resynthesized

Wind Samples

simile, continued

6

approximate mute position after 30"

pp *sempre*

wire brush on surface of cardboard***, stir slowly & gently

pp *sempre*

seventeen

Plastic Bottle Sample

ff

Polson, MT: 07/2015 - Resynthesized

Wind Samples

simile, continued

7

approximate mute position after 30"

pp *sempre*

arco, col legno, on smooth corner of the cardboard, bow freely & as continuously as poss.

pp *sempre*

eighteen

Plastic Bottle Sample

ff

Geneva, NY: 06/2015 - Resynthesized

Wind Samples

*** *cardboard amplified with contact microphone*

8 simile, continued

senza sord., continue bowing harmonics

remove mute at highest point possible

pp *sempre*

mf *sub.*

arco, norm., bow very slowly with extreme pressure on smooth corner of the cardboard creating a "gritty" sound

pp *sempre*

nineteen

Plastic Bottle Sample

ff

Boscawen, NH: 07/2015 - Resynthesized with partials removed

Wind Samples

9 with palm of L.H., rub the body of the cello, top surface only, slowly & continuously

pp *sempre*

simile, but now on perforated edge of cardboard

pp *sempre*

twenty

Plastic Bottle Sample

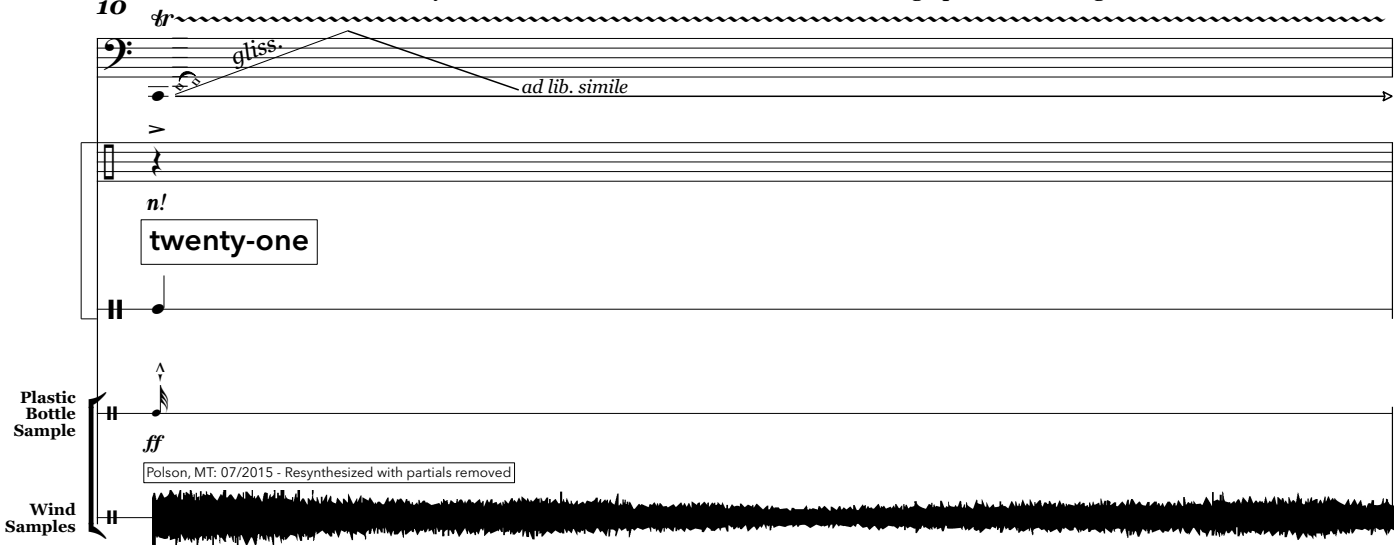
ff

Geneva, NY: 06/2015 - Resynthesized with partials removed

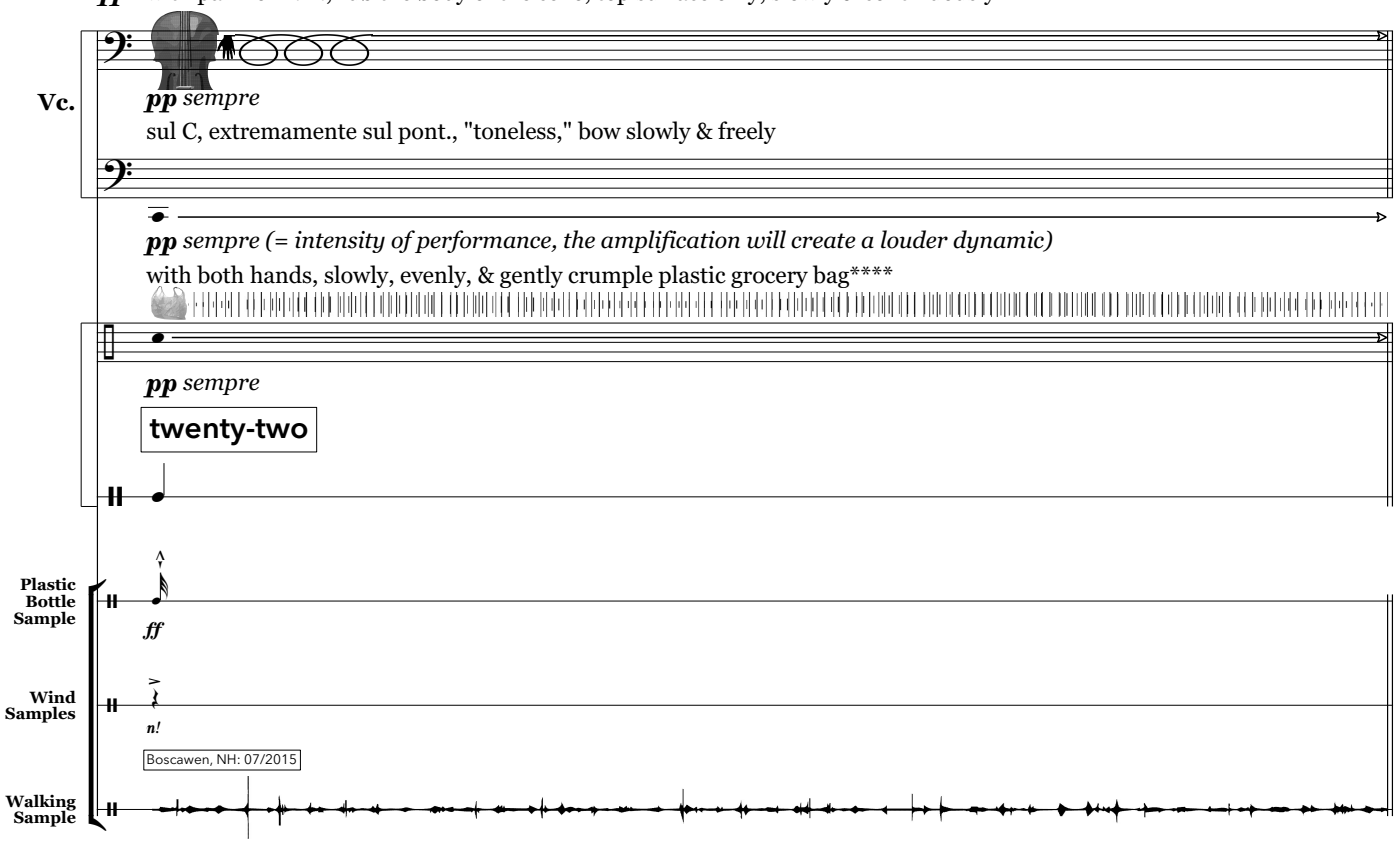
Wind Samples

sul C, arco, norm., constantly trill between different harmonics while sliding up & down string

10



11 with palm of L.H., rub the body of the cello, top surface only, slowly & continuously

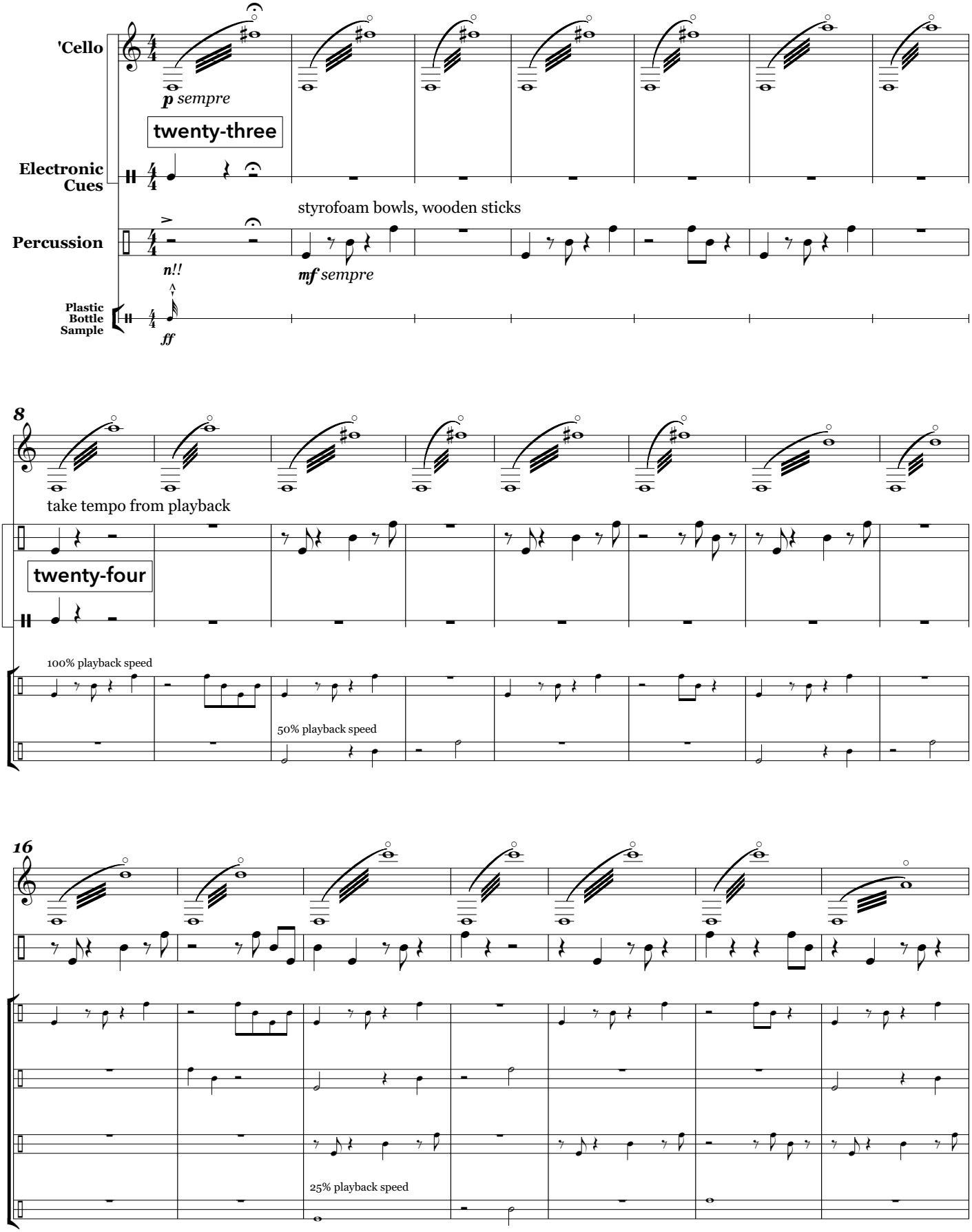


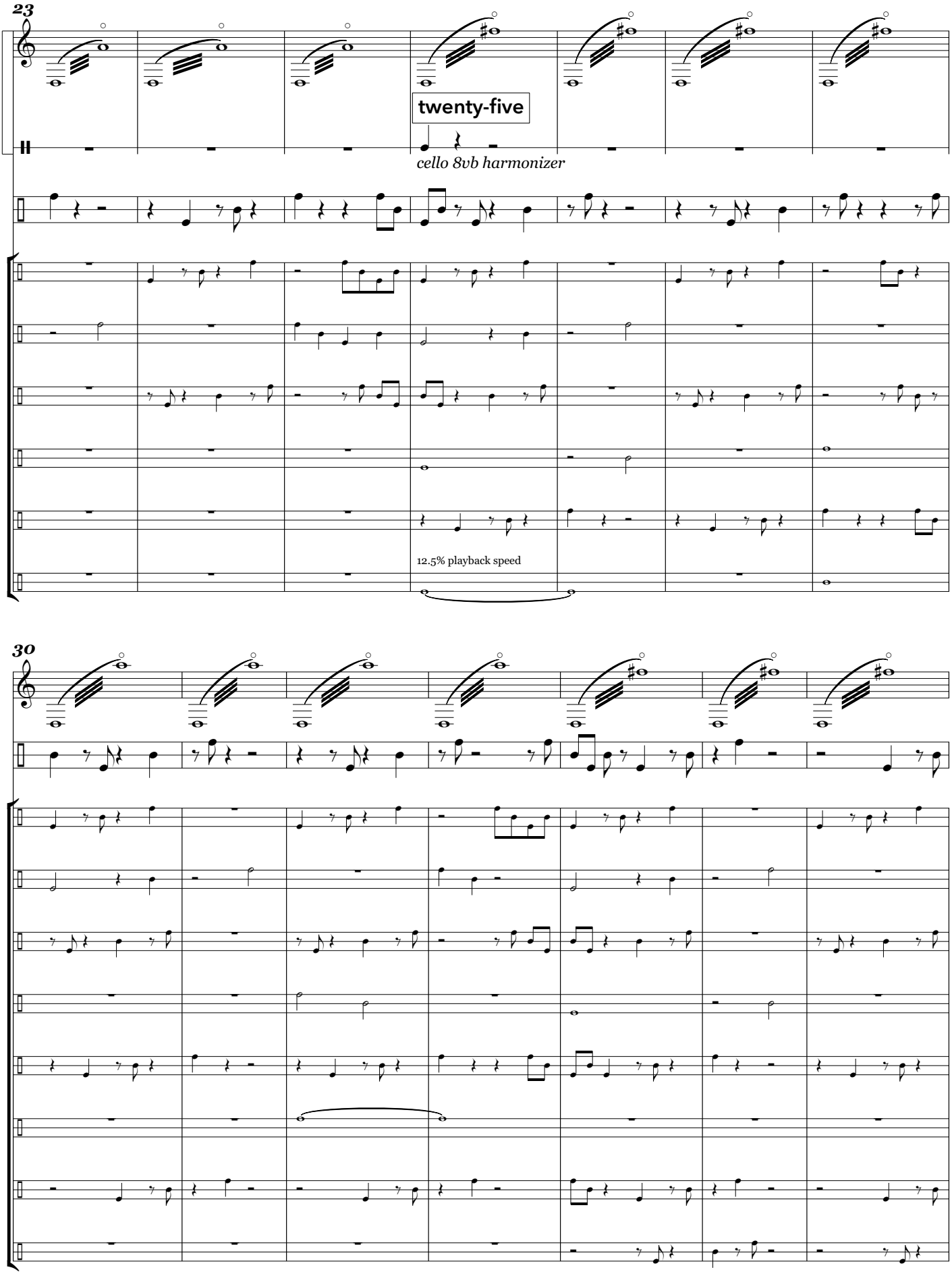
**** *grocery bag amplified with contact microphone*

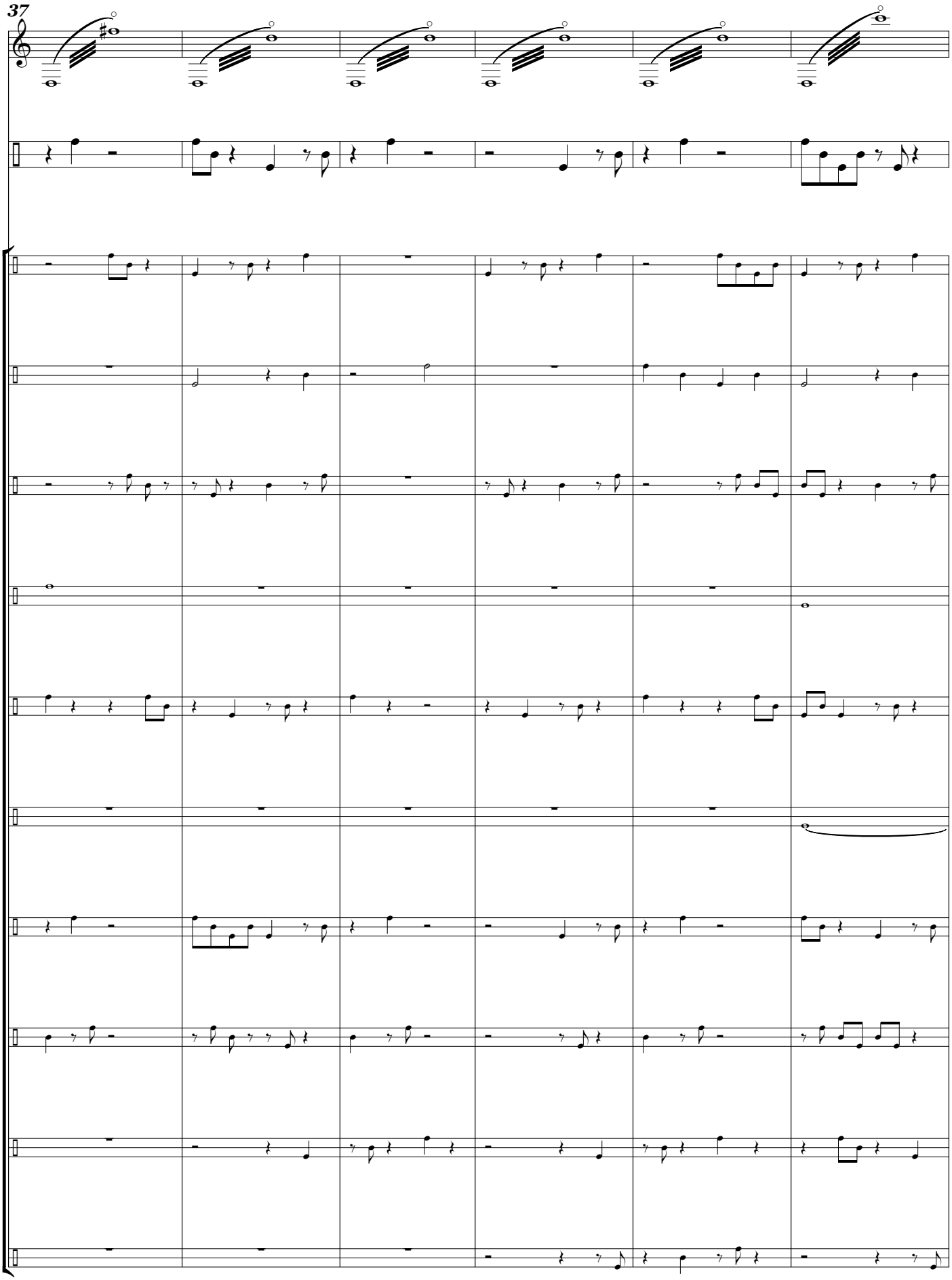
scene three

METRONOMIC, ATMOSPHERIC ♩ = 154

sul D, sul pont., bow freely, like flickering light




23
twenty-five
cello 8vb harmonizer
12.5% playback speed
30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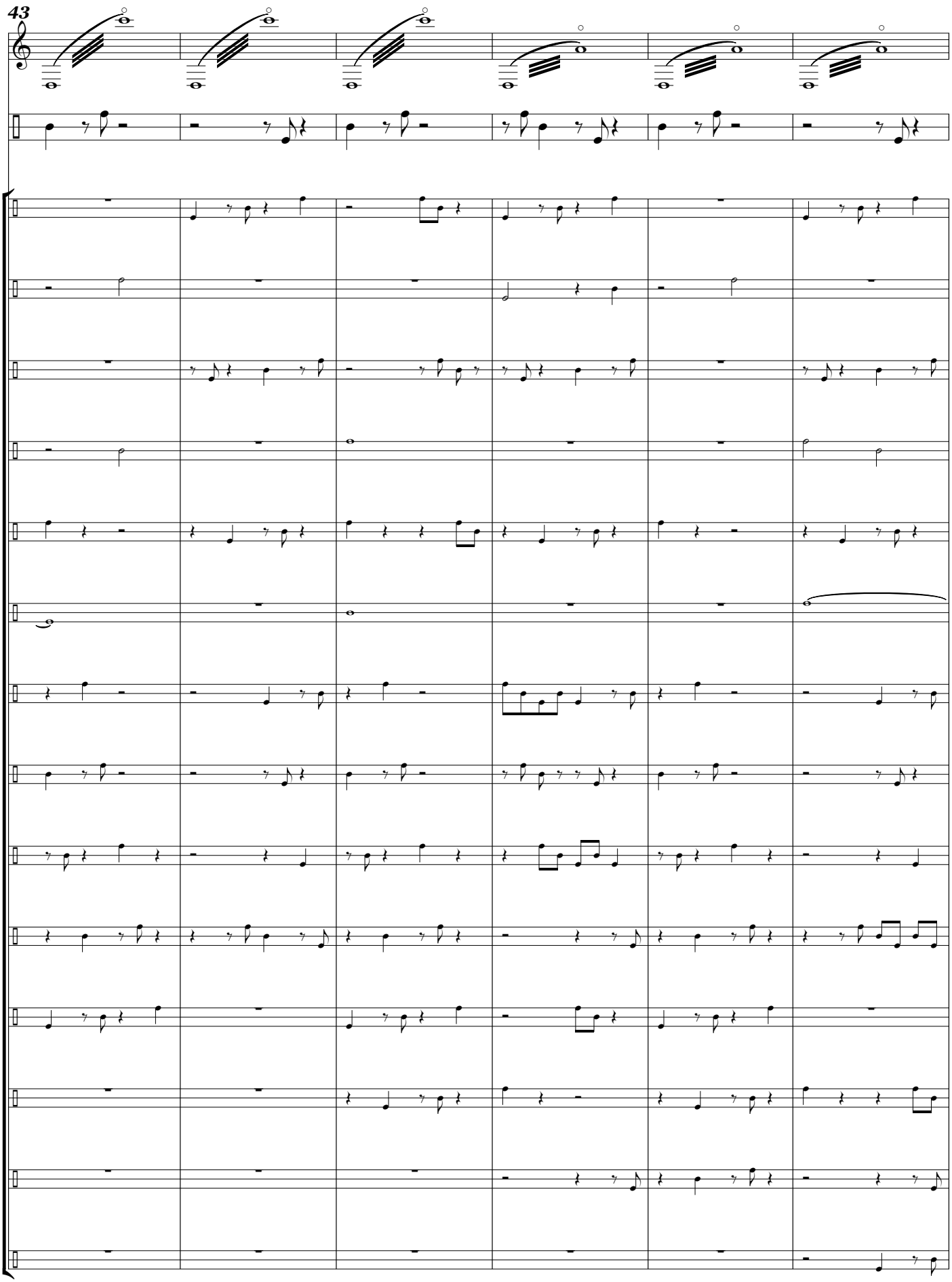
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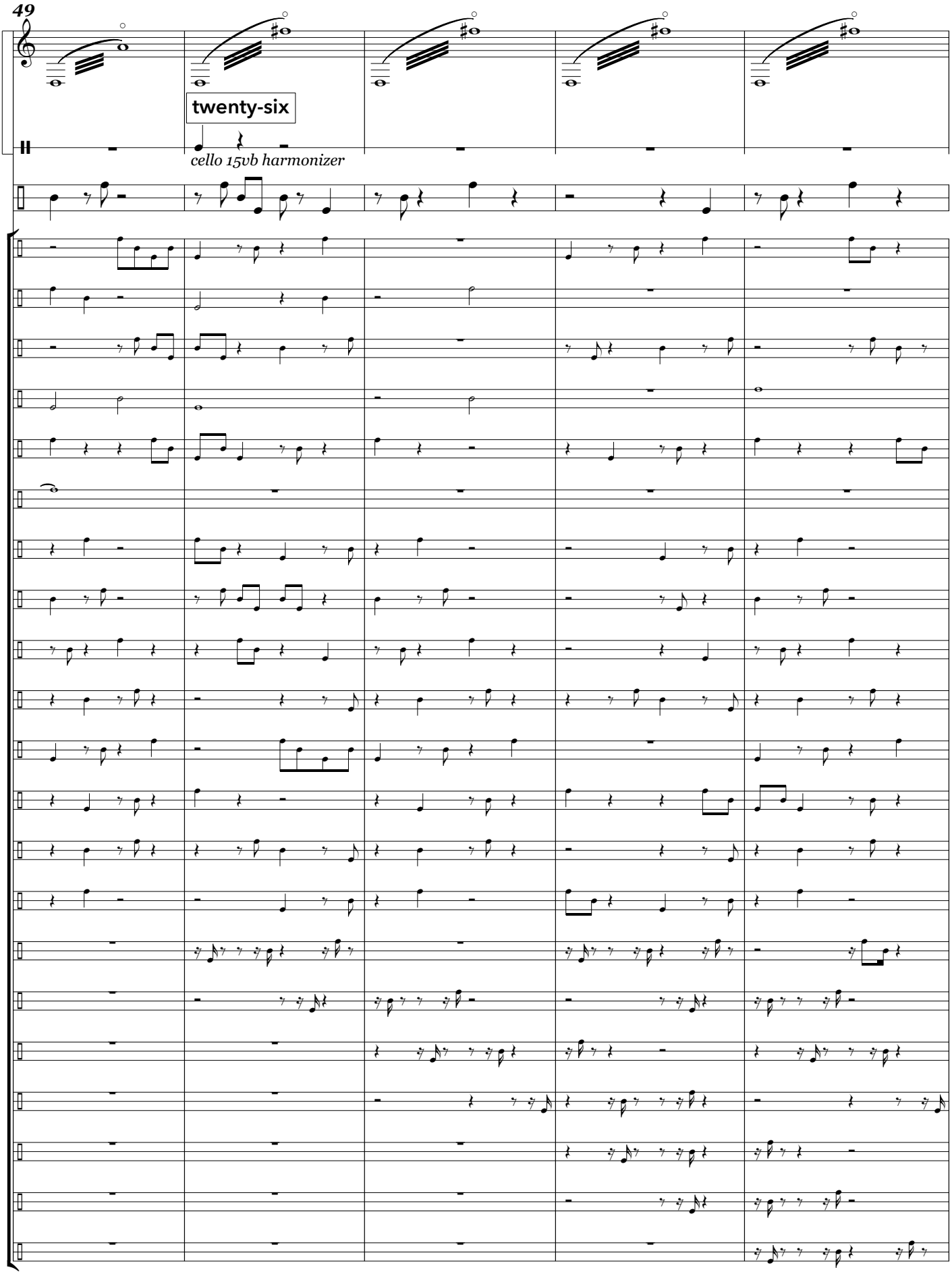
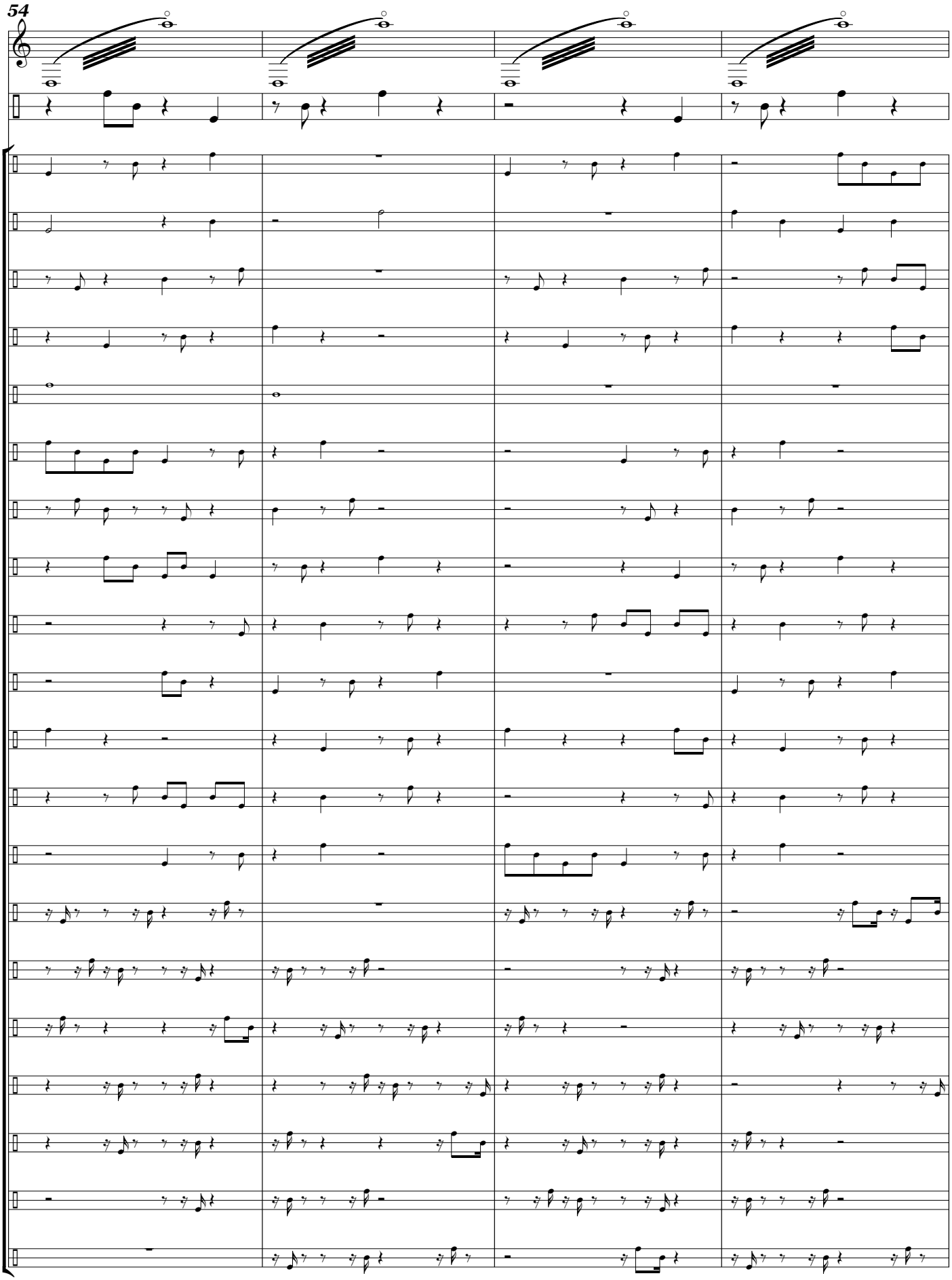

49
twenty-six
cello 15vb harmonizer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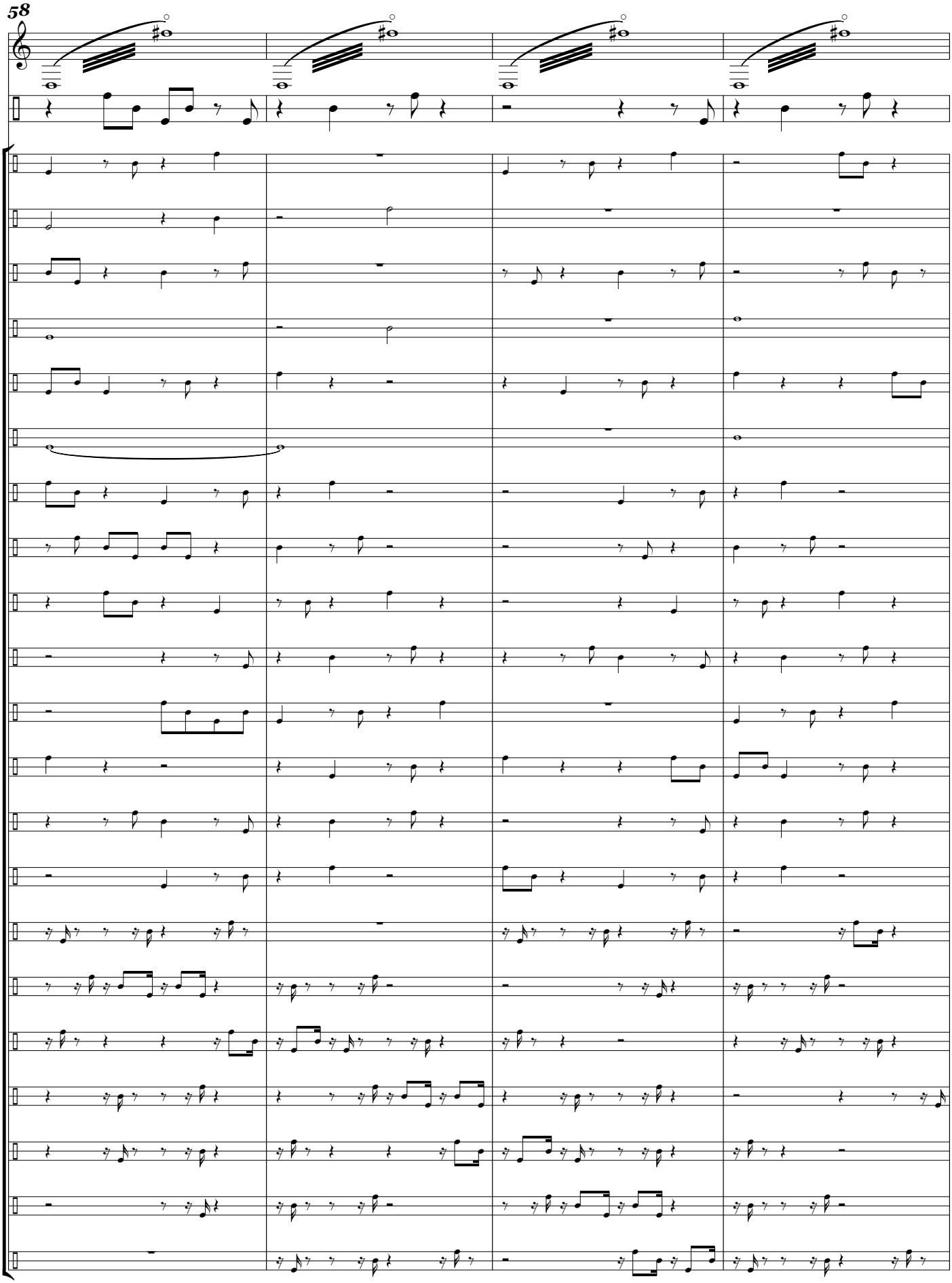
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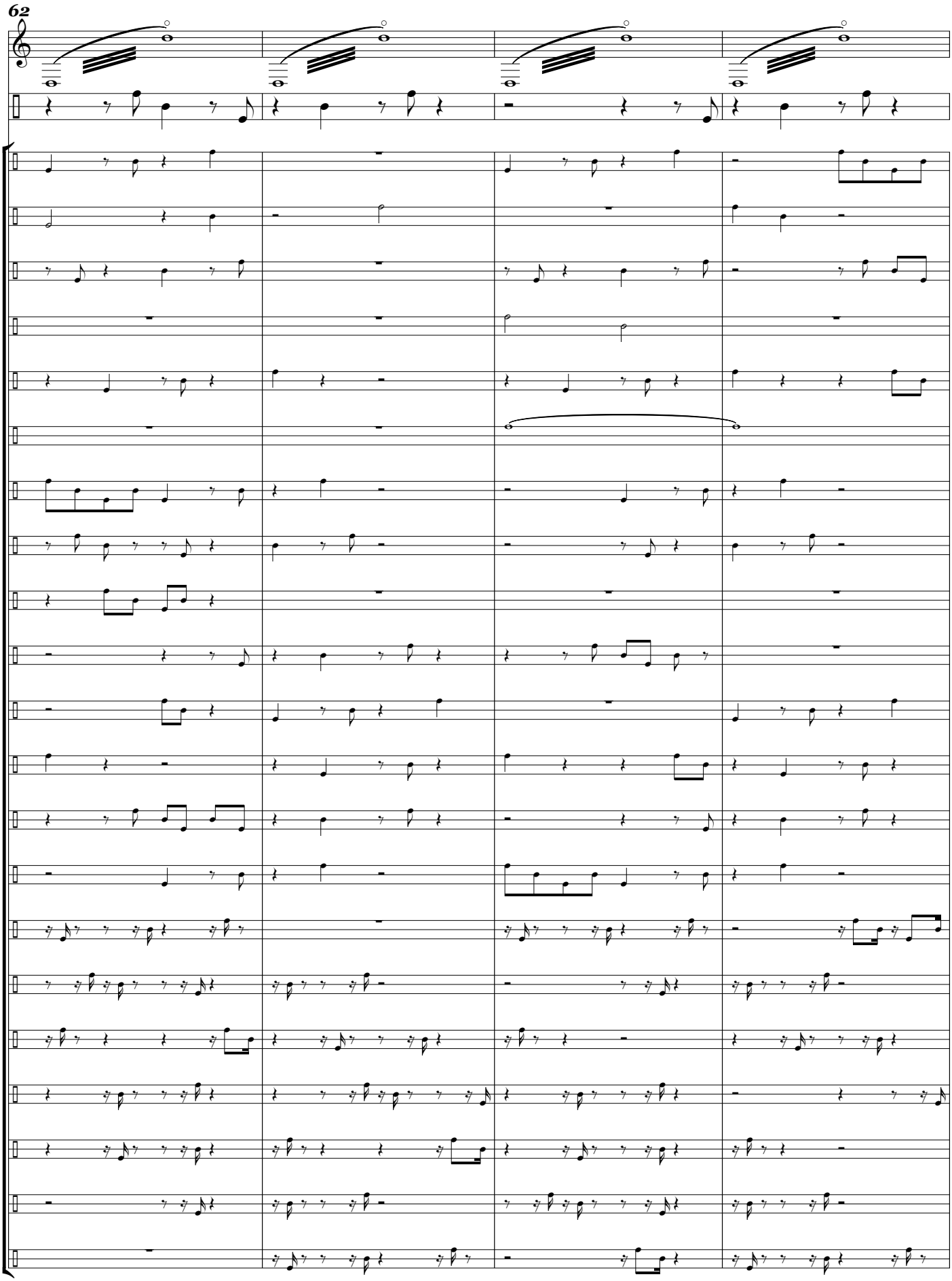
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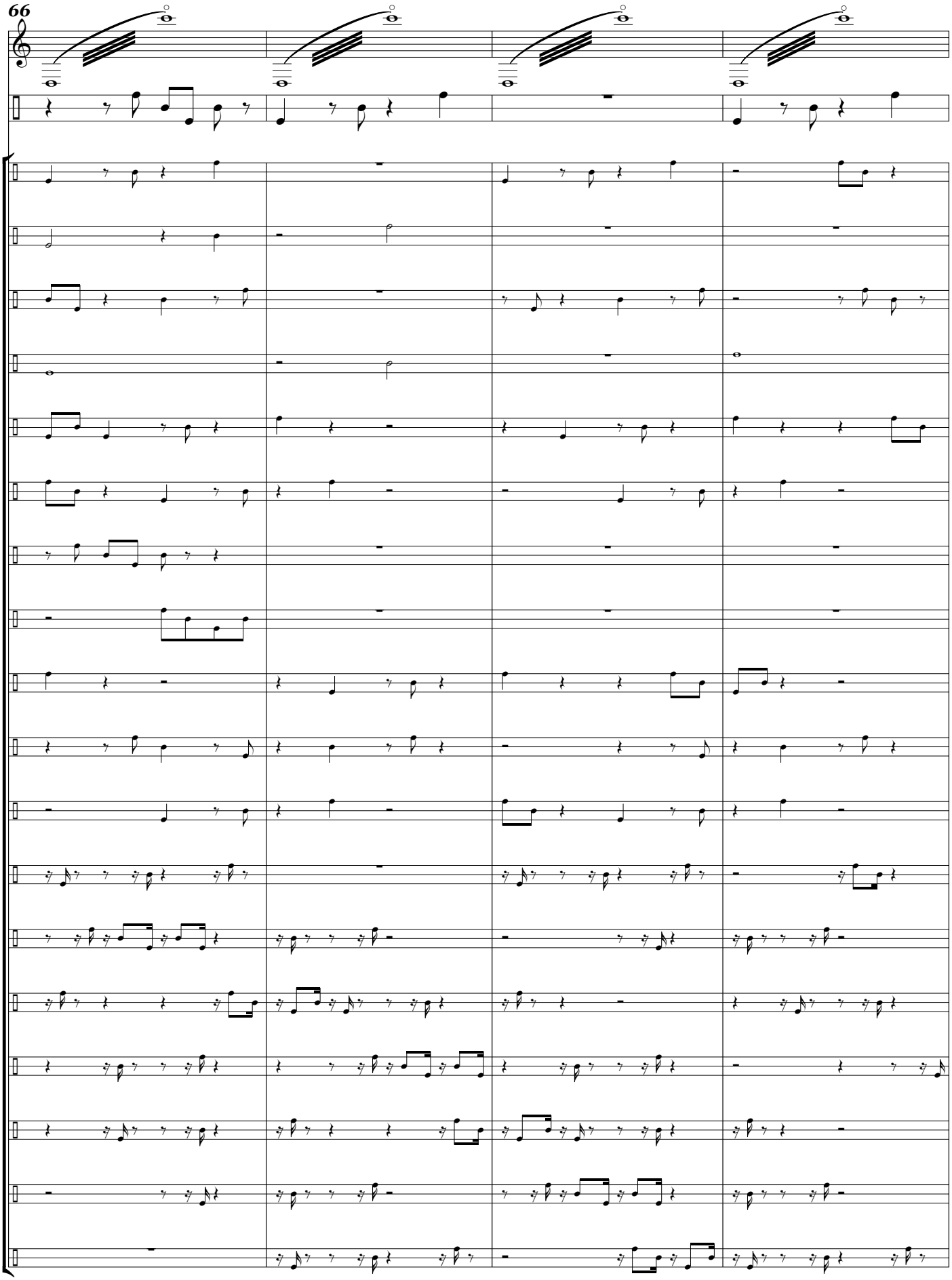
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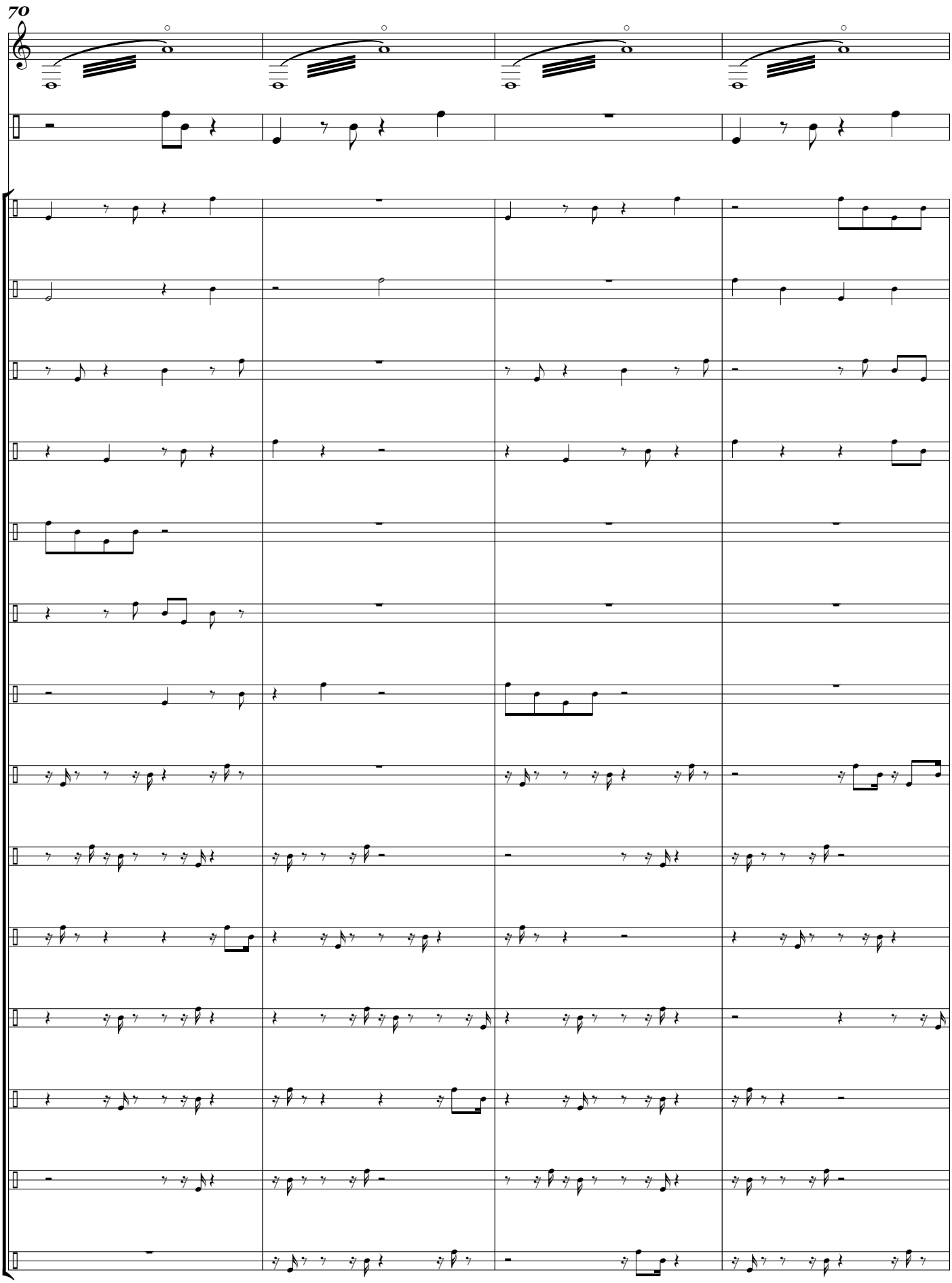
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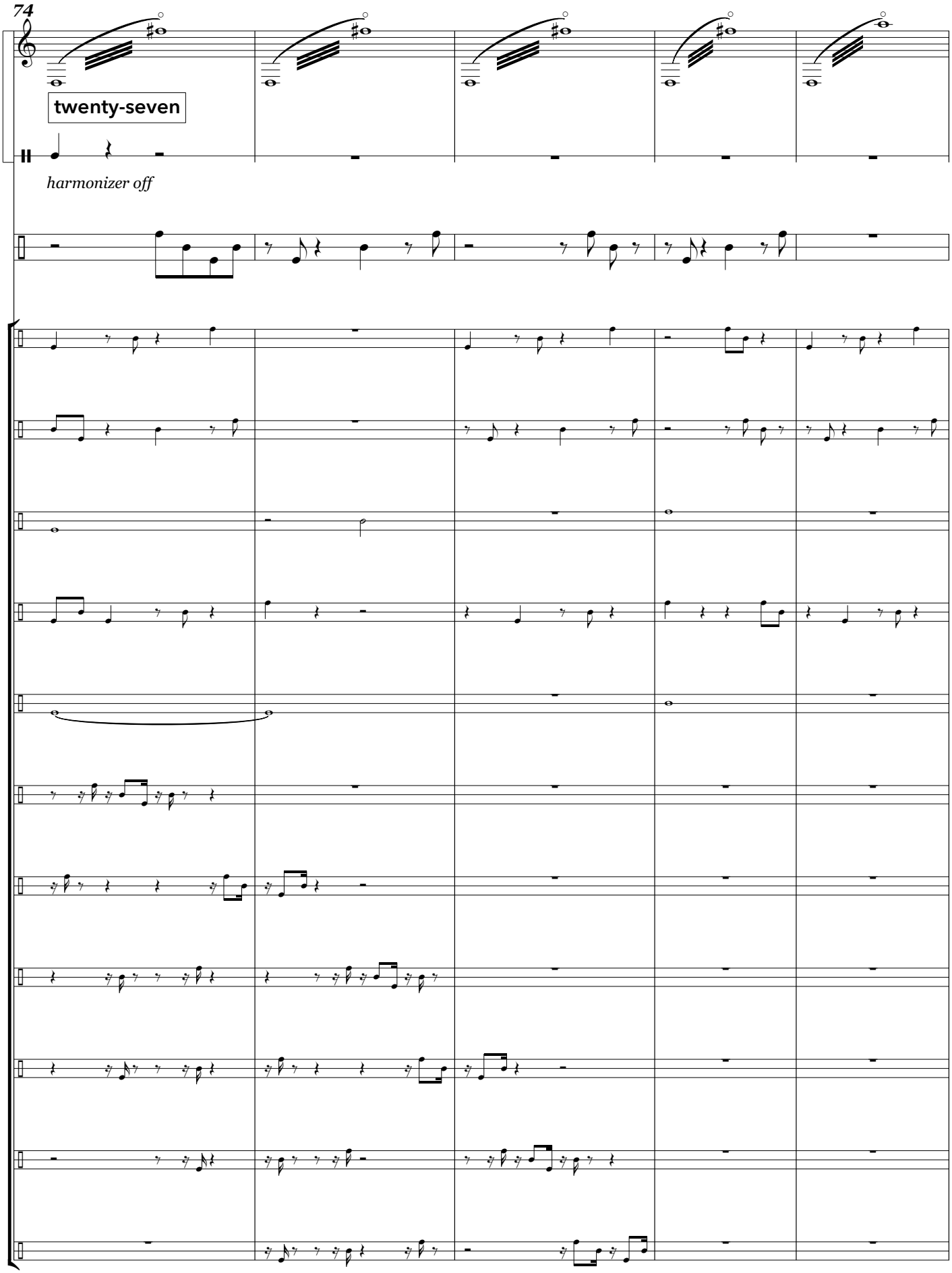
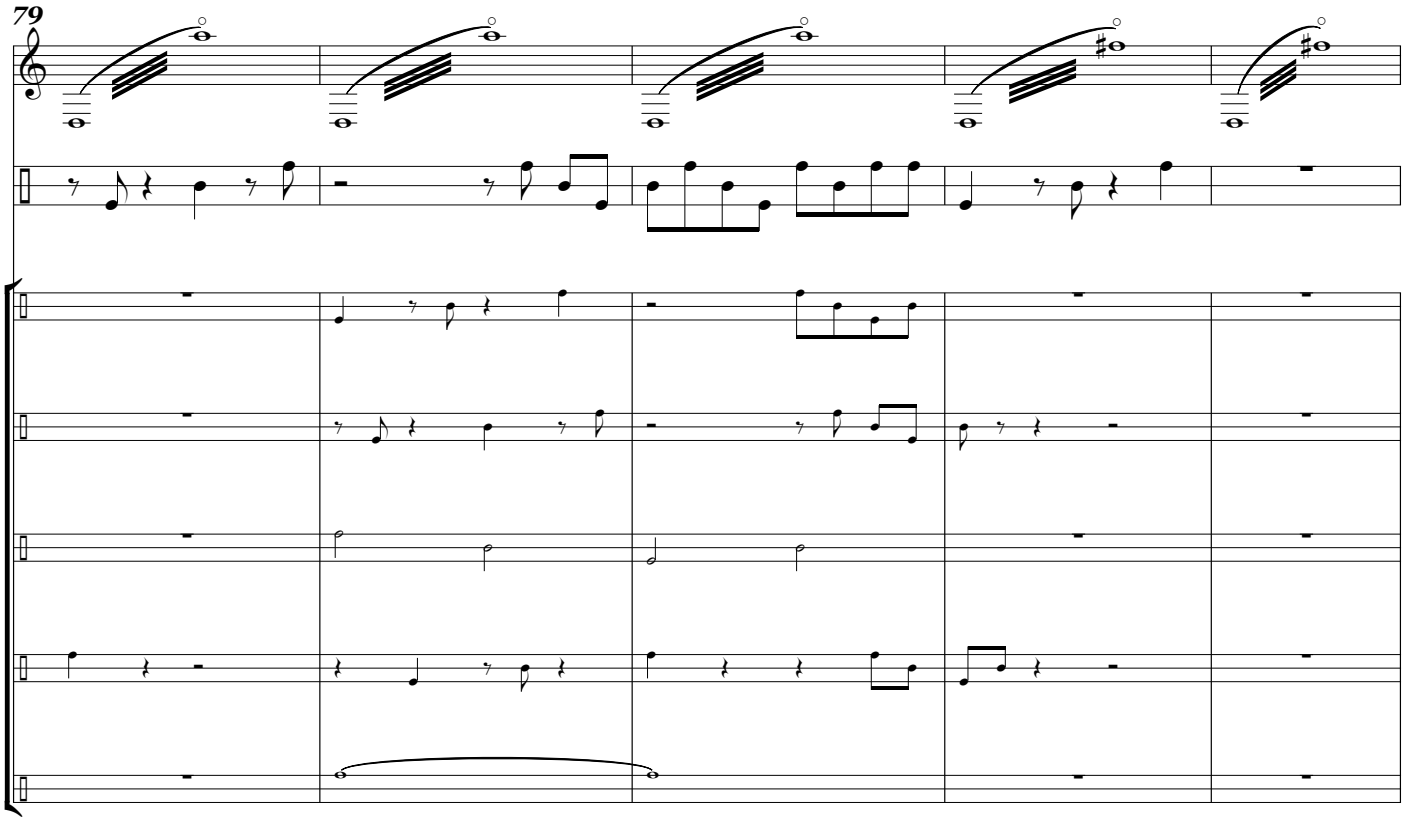
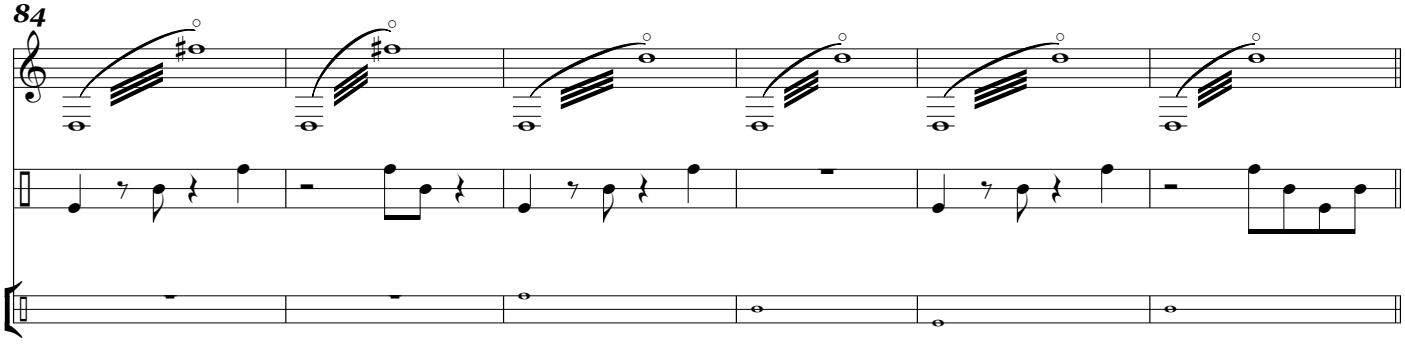
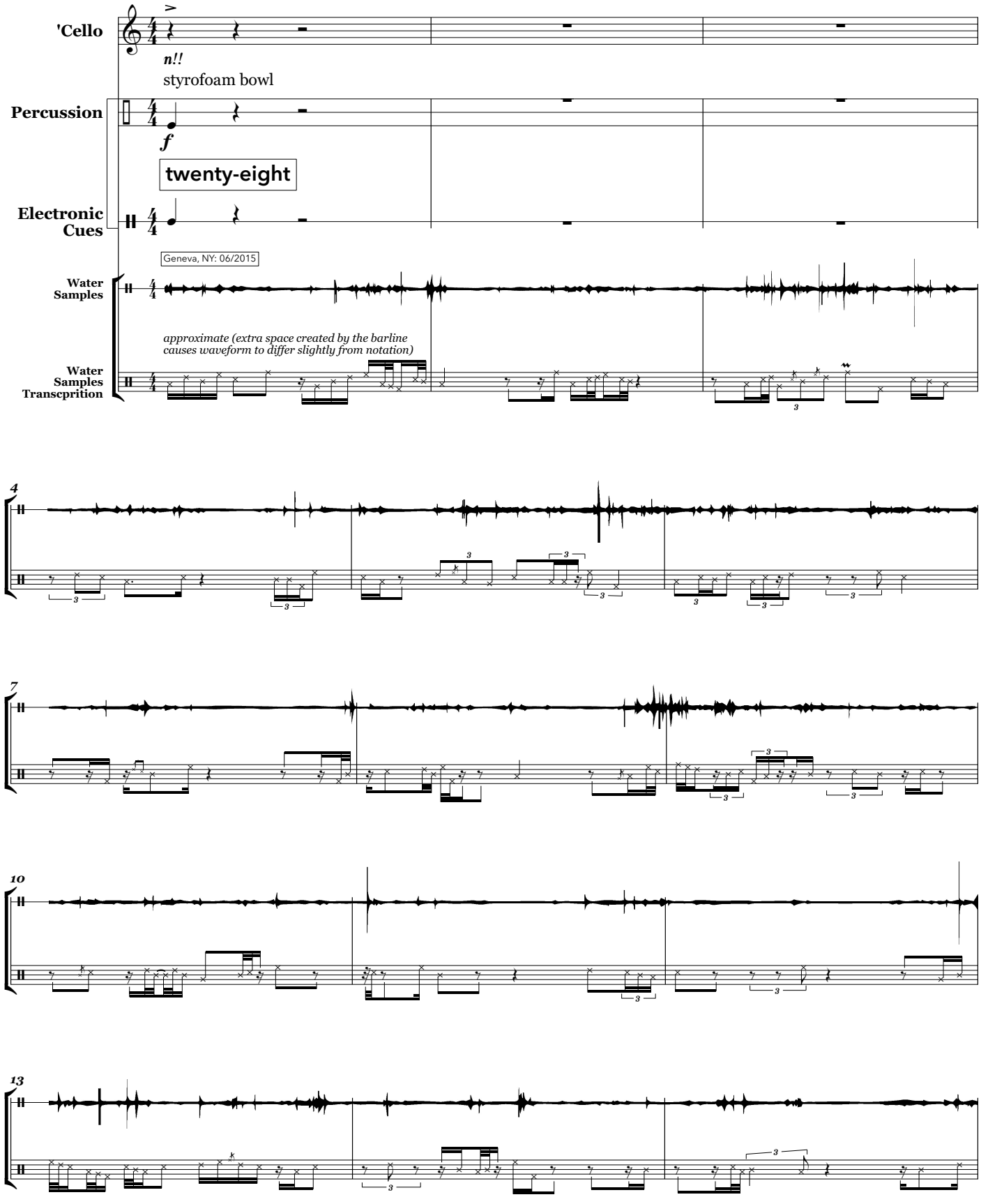
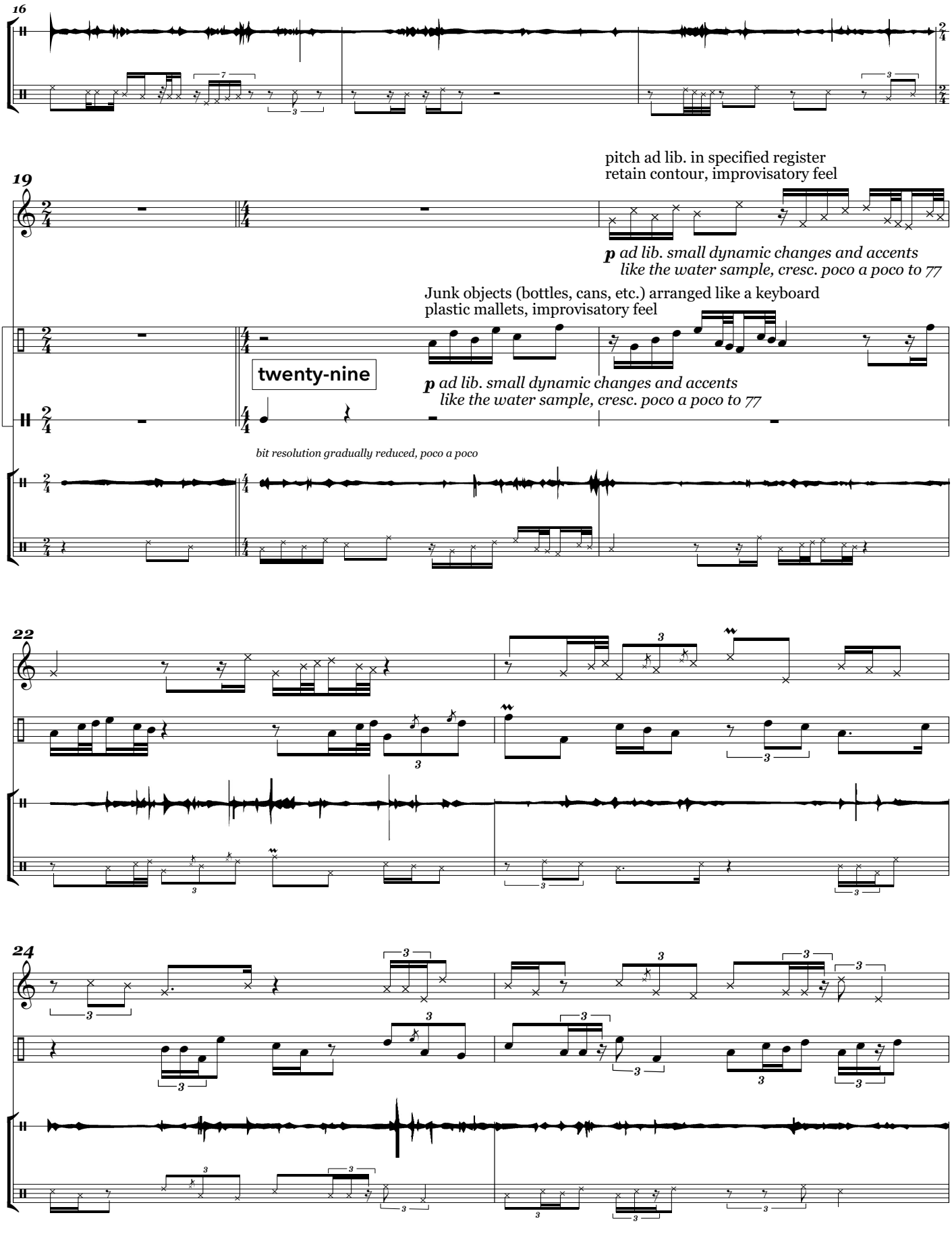

74
twenty-seven
harmonizer off

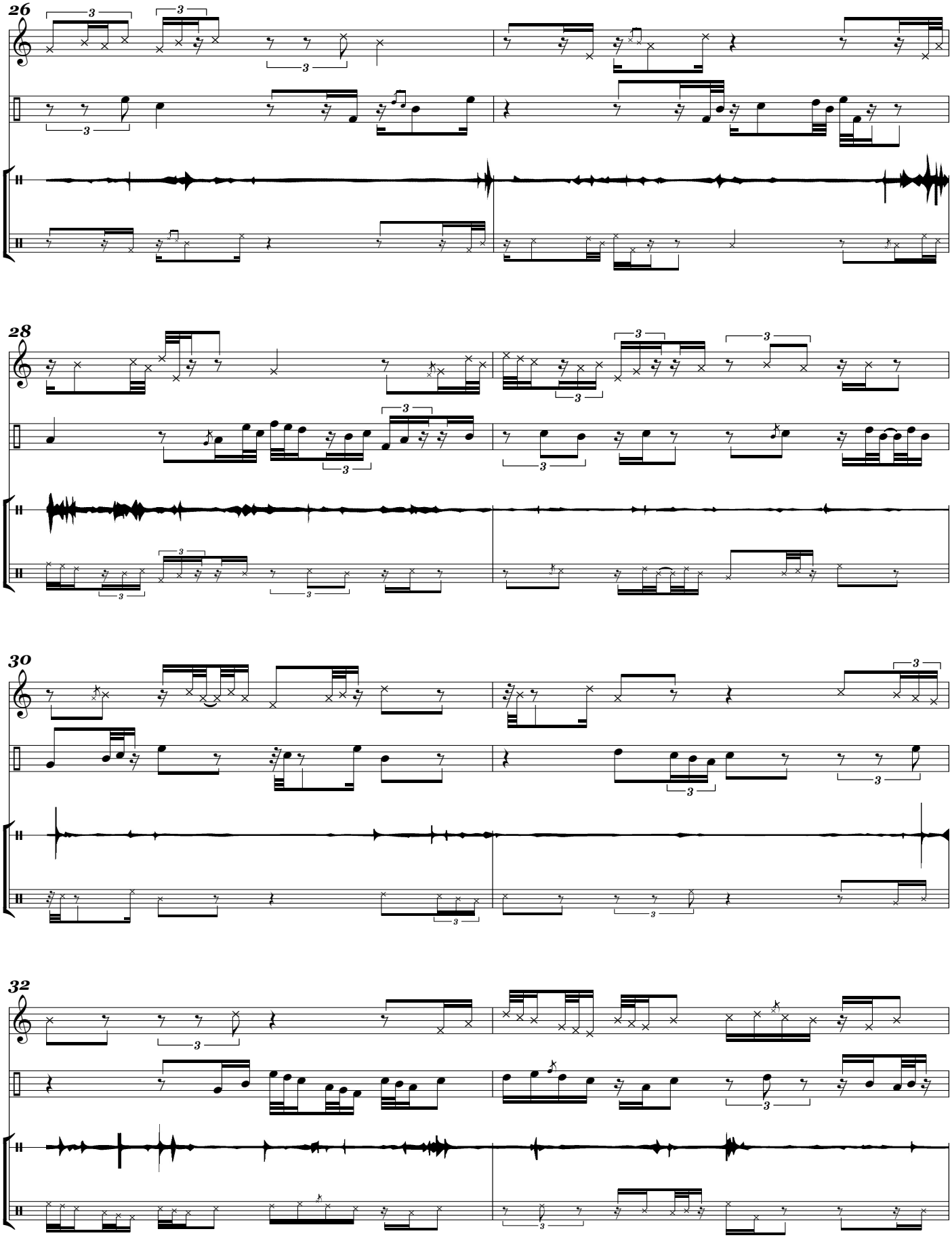

79

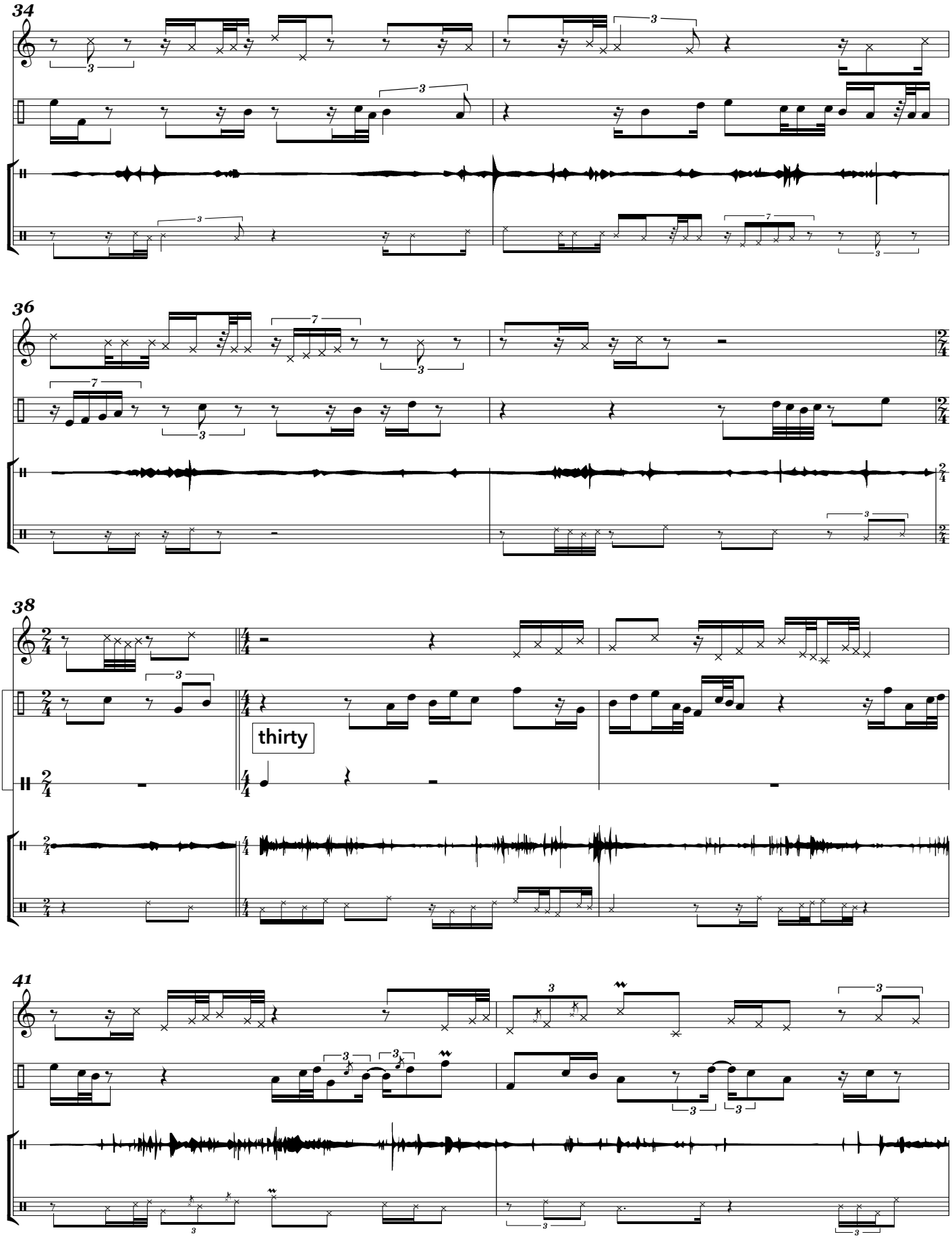

84

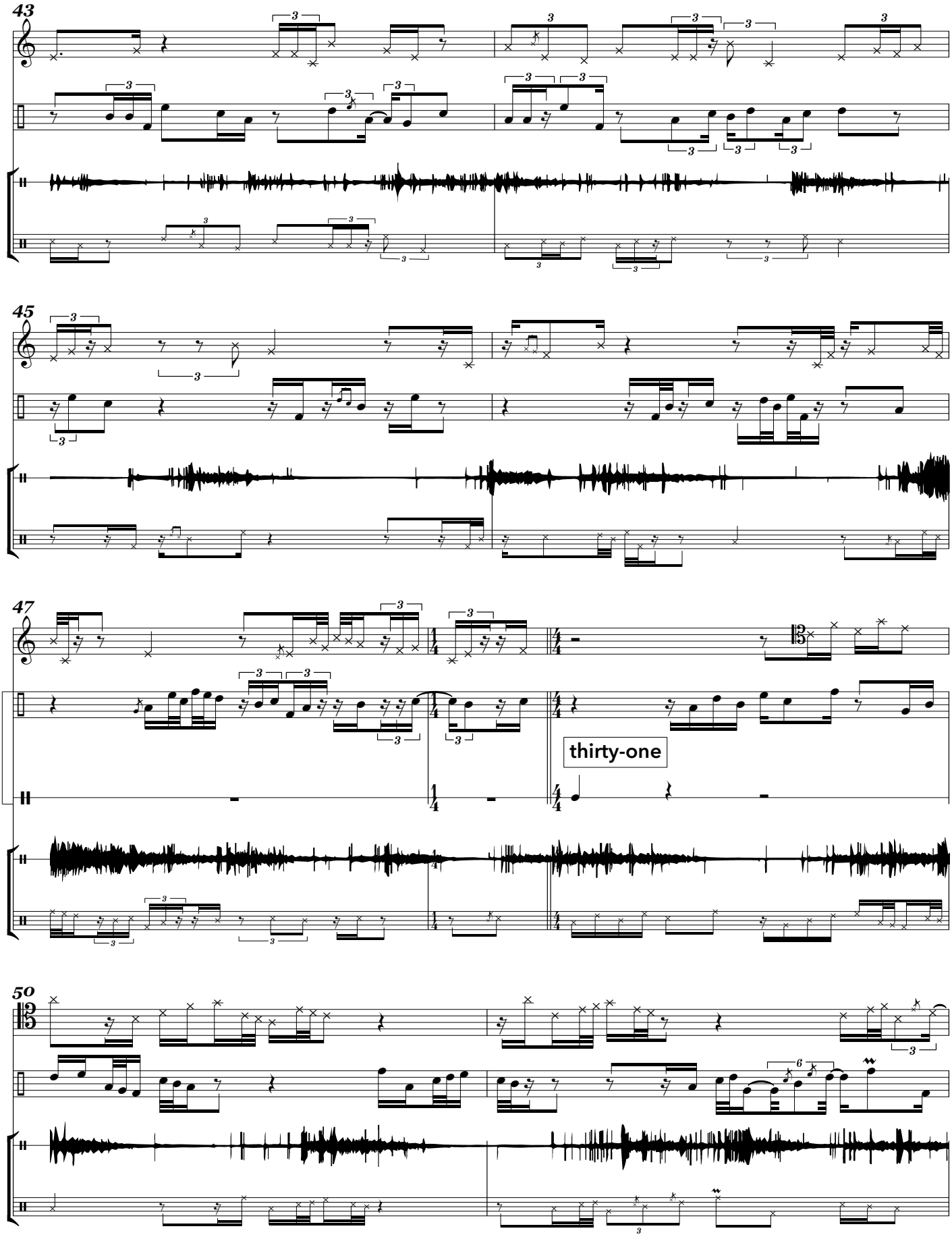
PLAYFUL, SLOWLY BECOMING FRANTIC ♩ = 74 (TAKE TEMPO FROM SAMPLE)

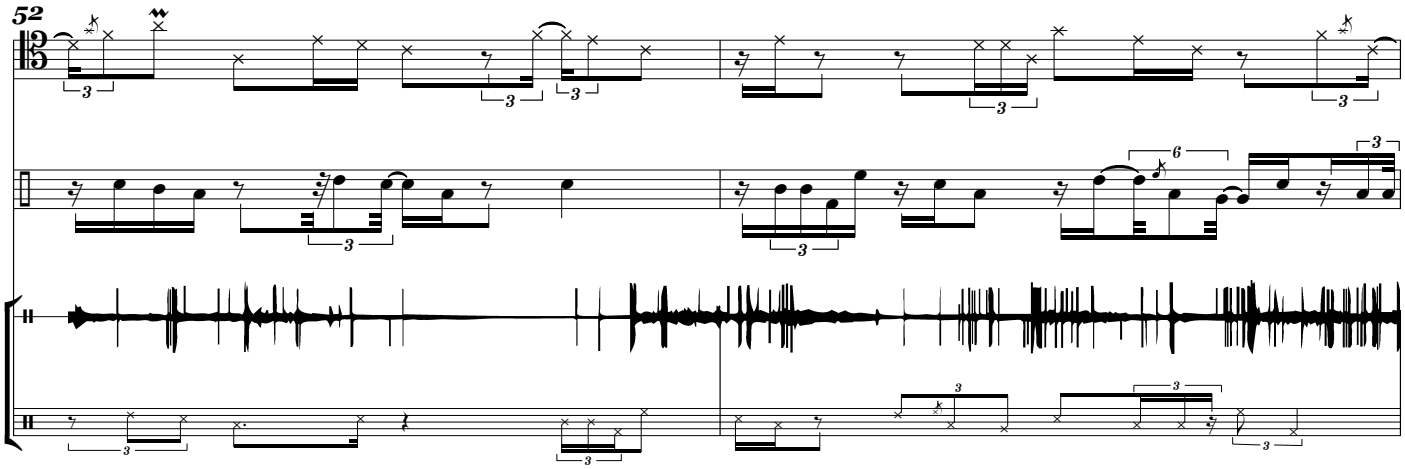


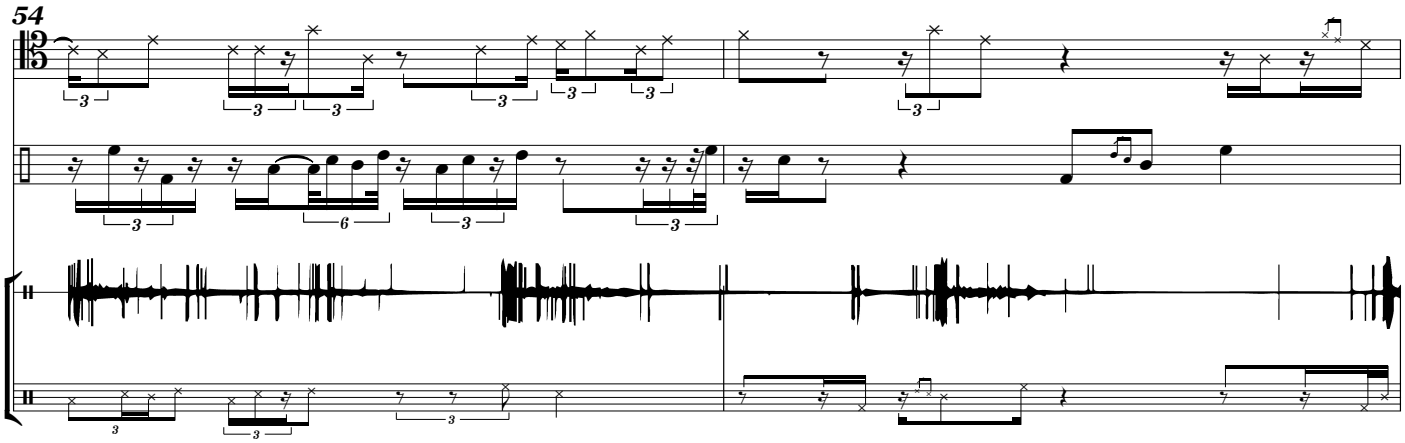

16
19
pitch ad lib. in specified register
retain contour, improvisatory feel
p ad lib. small dynamic changes and accents
like the water sample, cresc. poco a poco to 77
Junk objects (bottles, cans, etc.) arranged like a keyboard
plastic mallets, improvisatory feel
twenty-nine
p ad lib. small dynamic changes and accents
like the water sample, cresc. poco a poco to 77
bit resolution gradually reduced, poco a poco
22
24

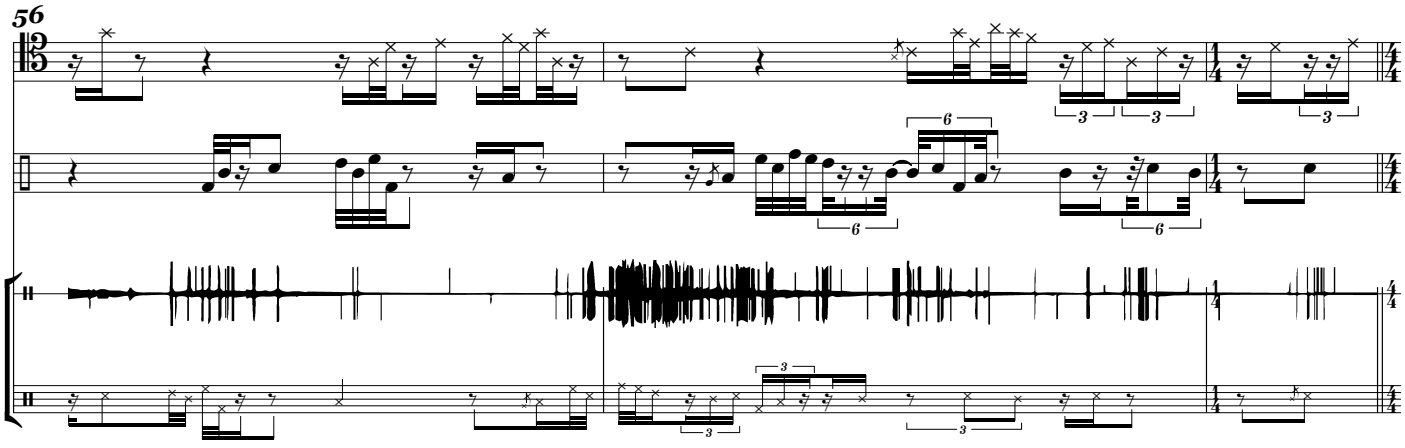

26
28
30
32

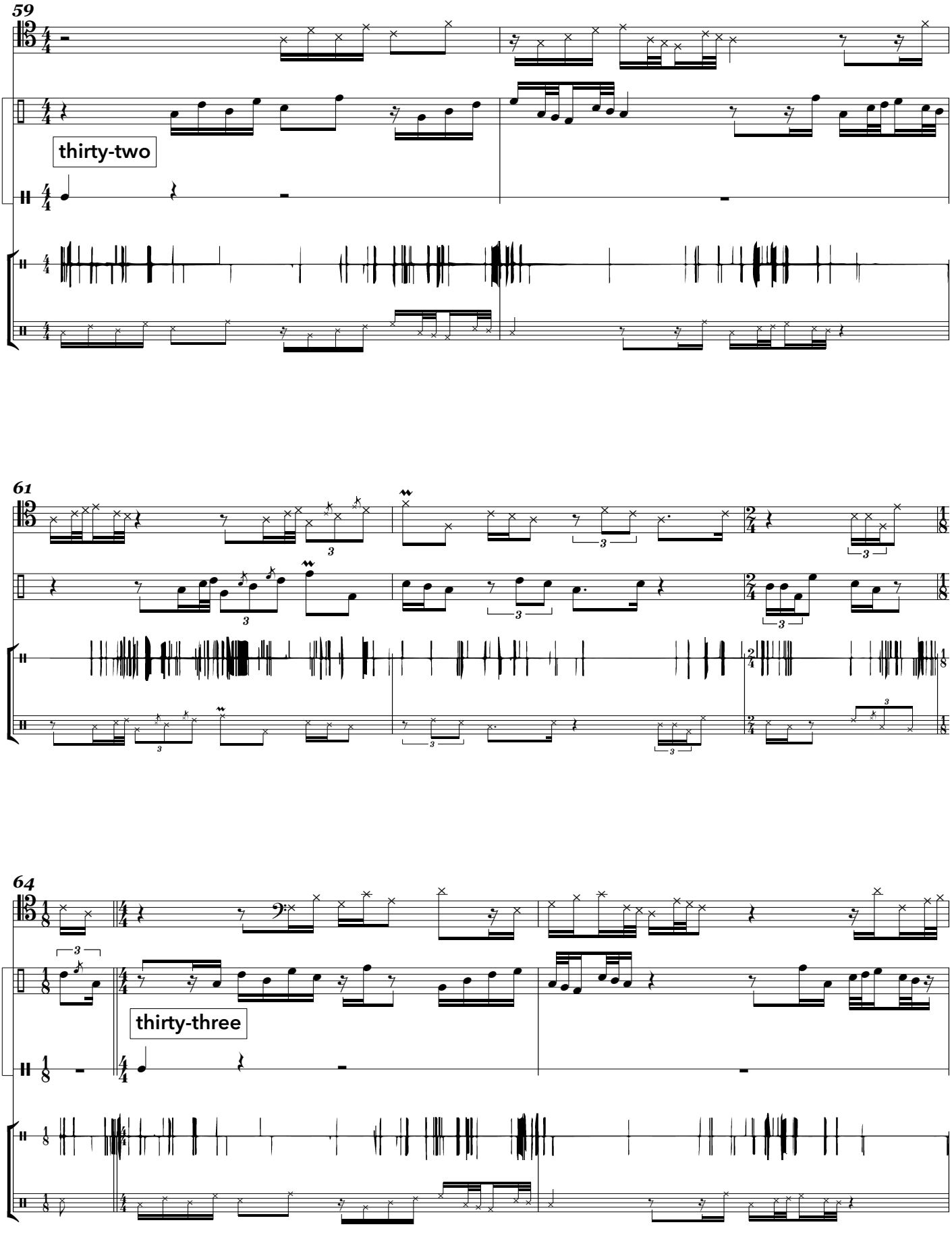

34
36
38
thirty
41

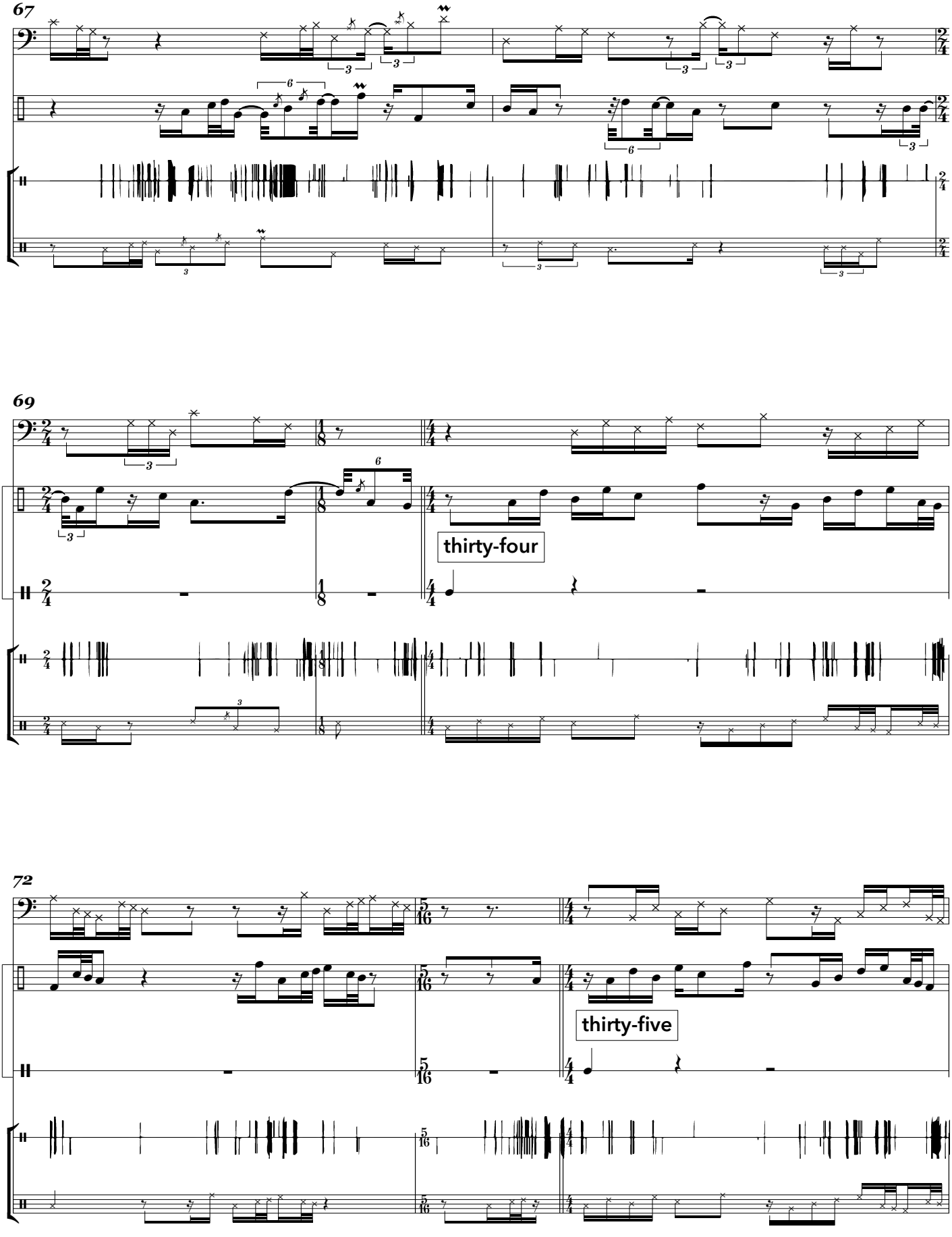

43
45
47
thirty-one
50


52


54


56


59
thirty-two
61
64
thirty-three


67
69
thirty-four
72
thirty-five

75

ff poss.

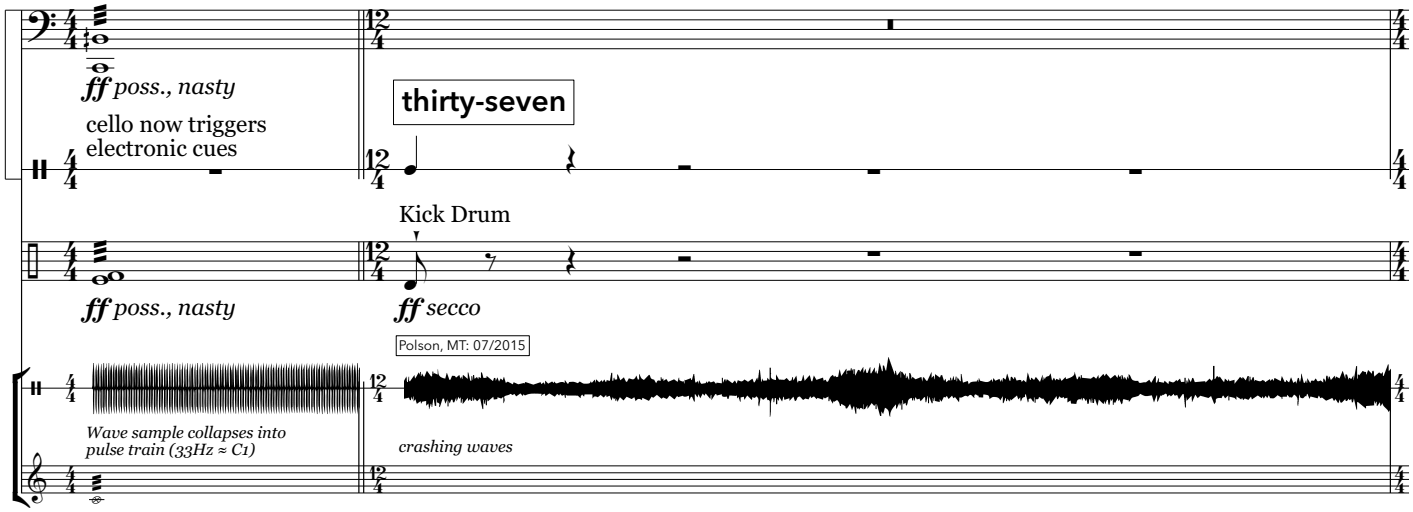
ff poss.

thirty-six

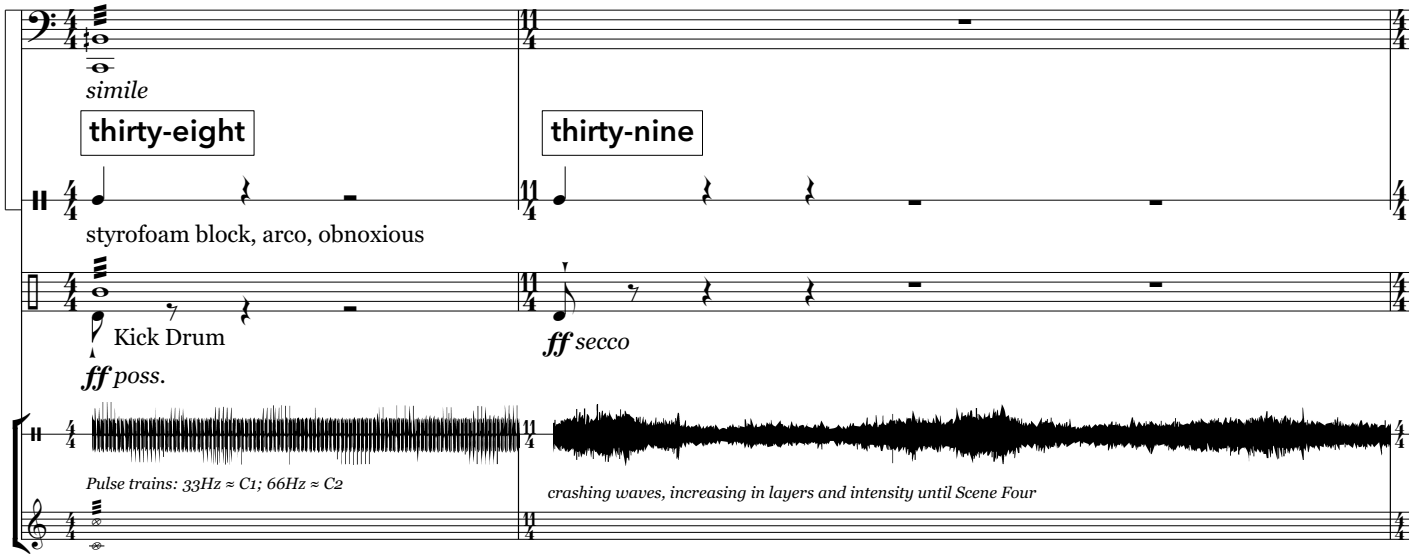
78

82

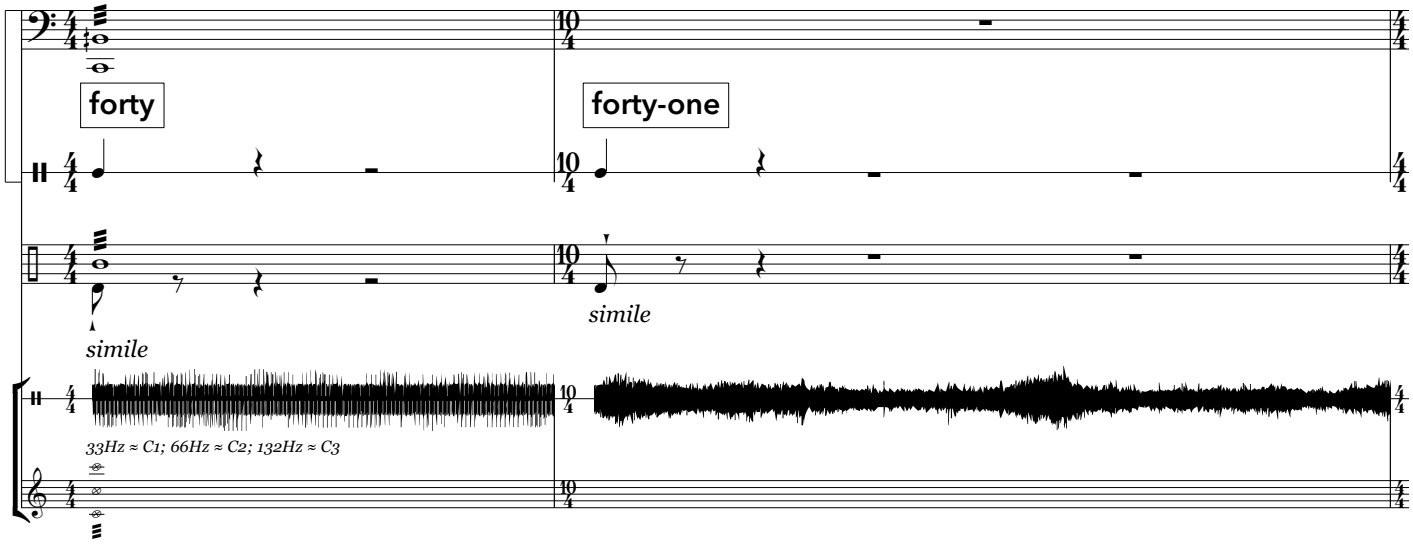
90 dissonant octave, create strong beating



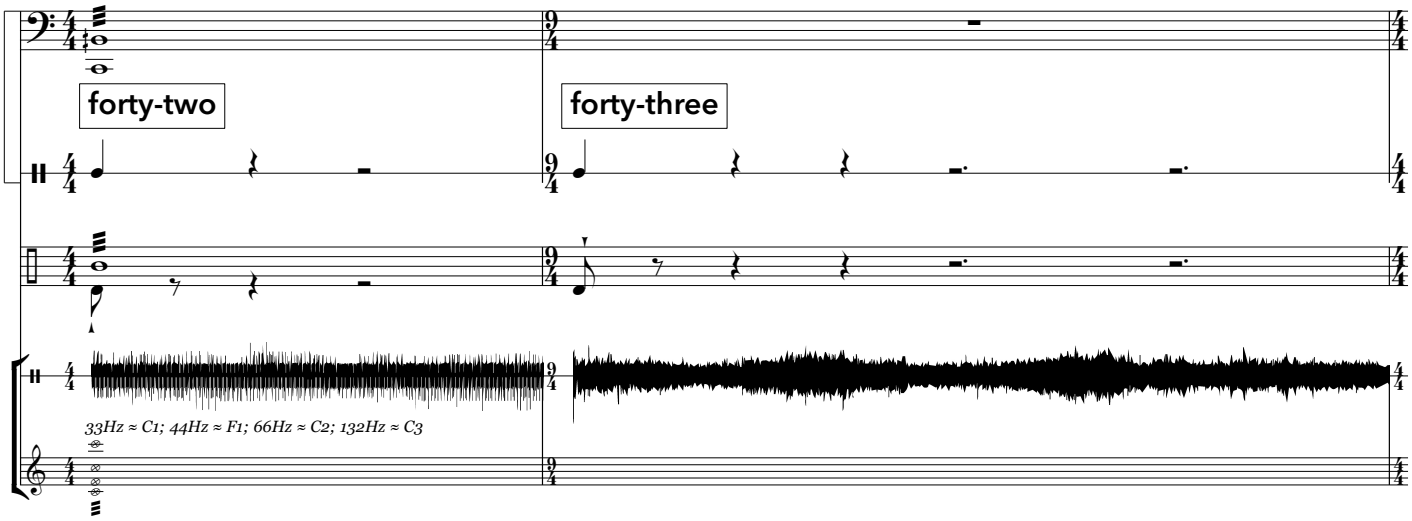
92



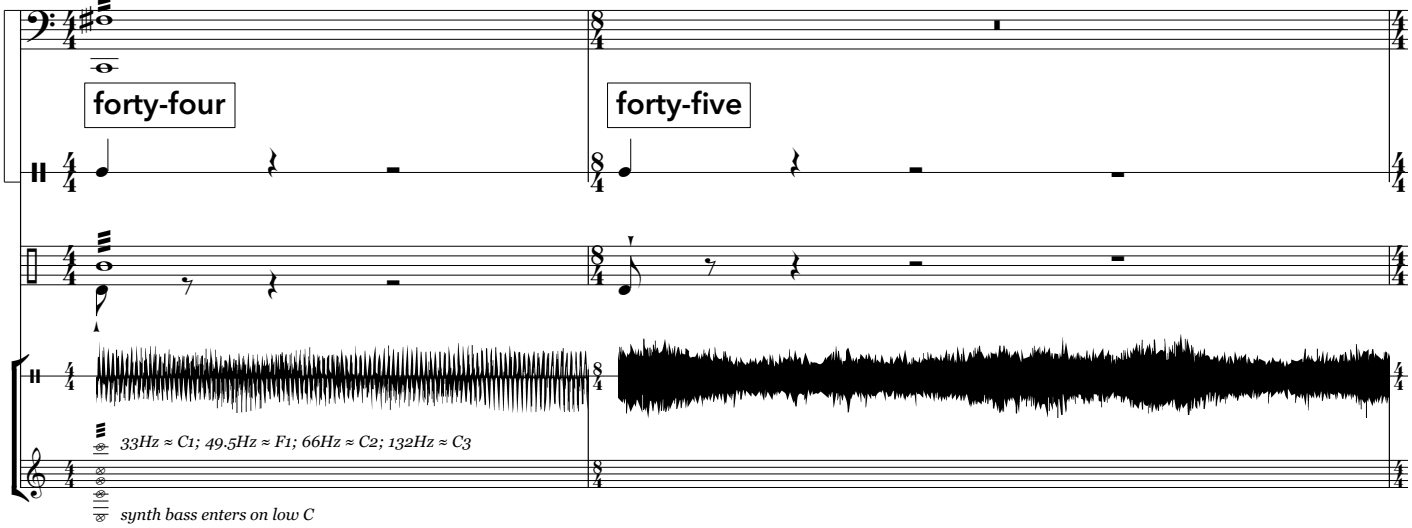
94



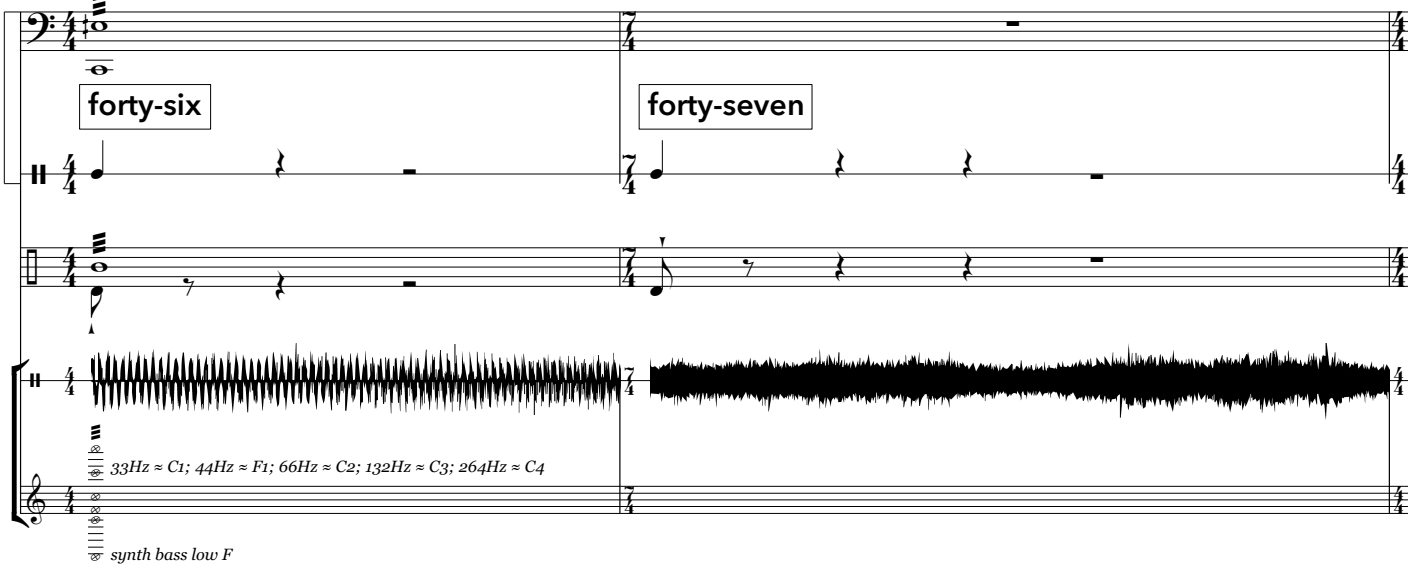
96

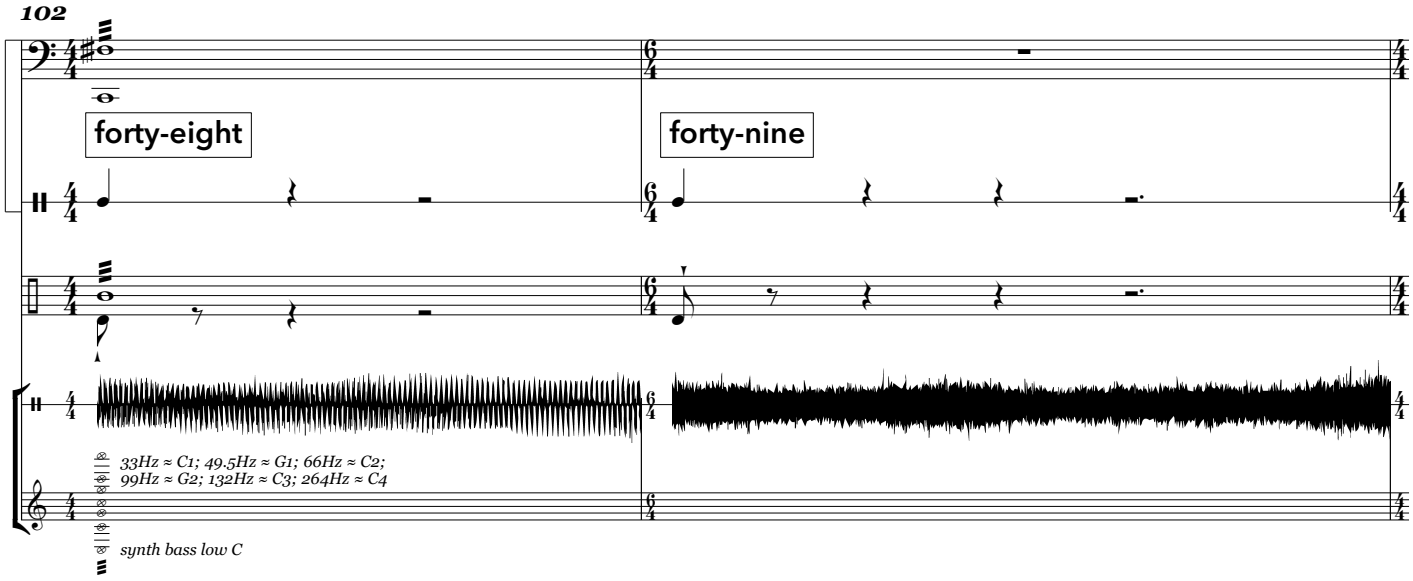


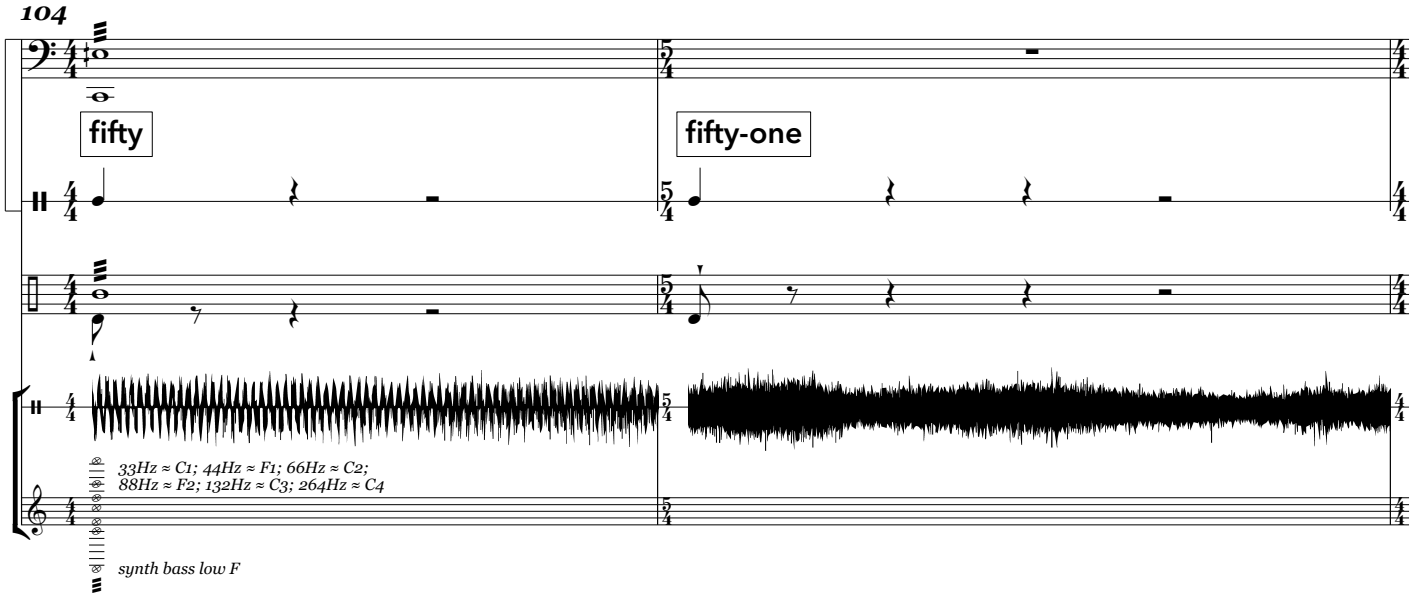
98 dissonant twelfth

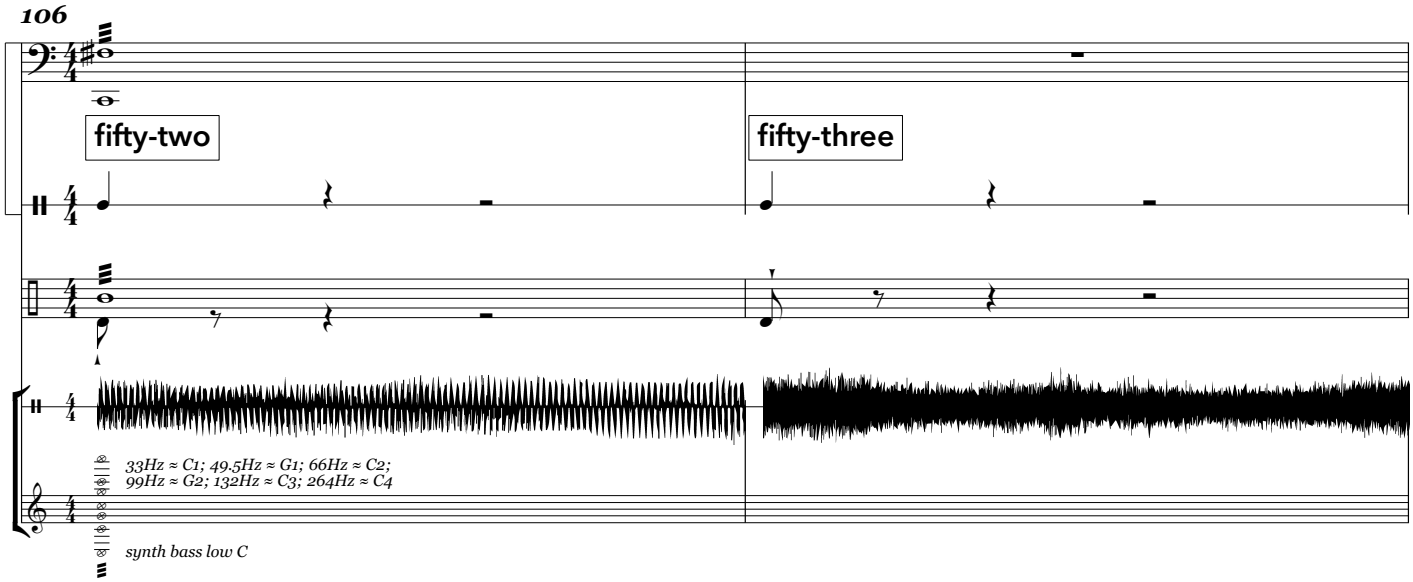


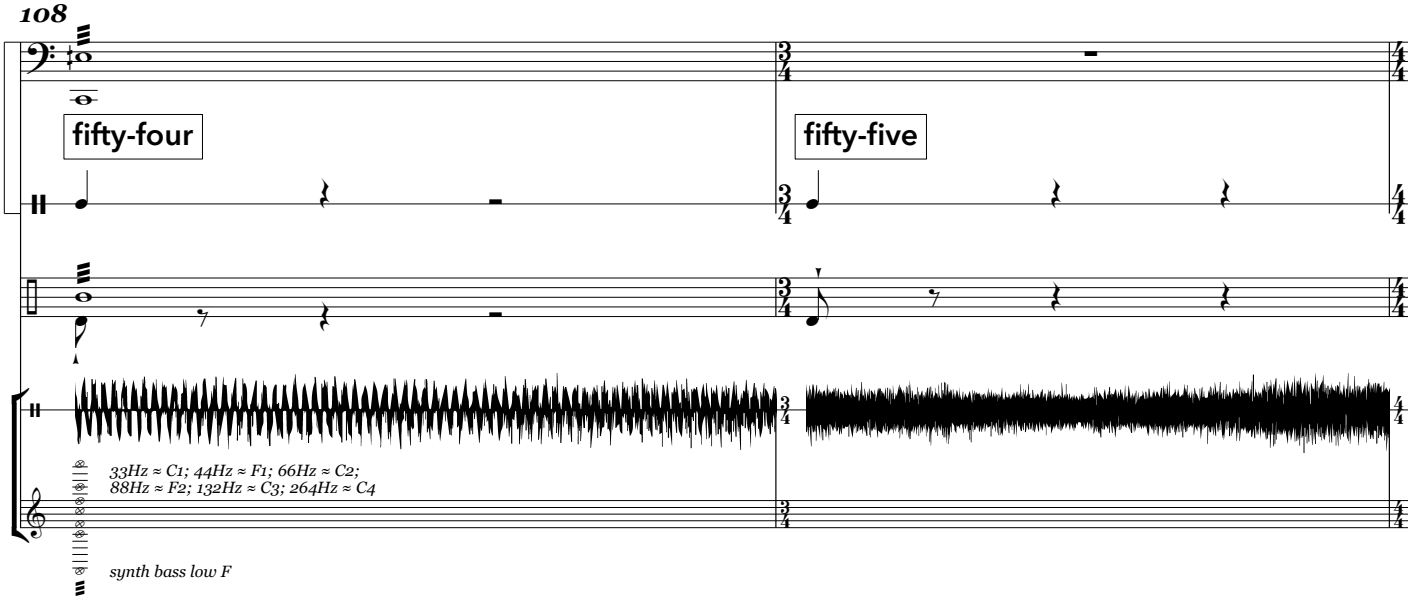
100 dissonant eleventh

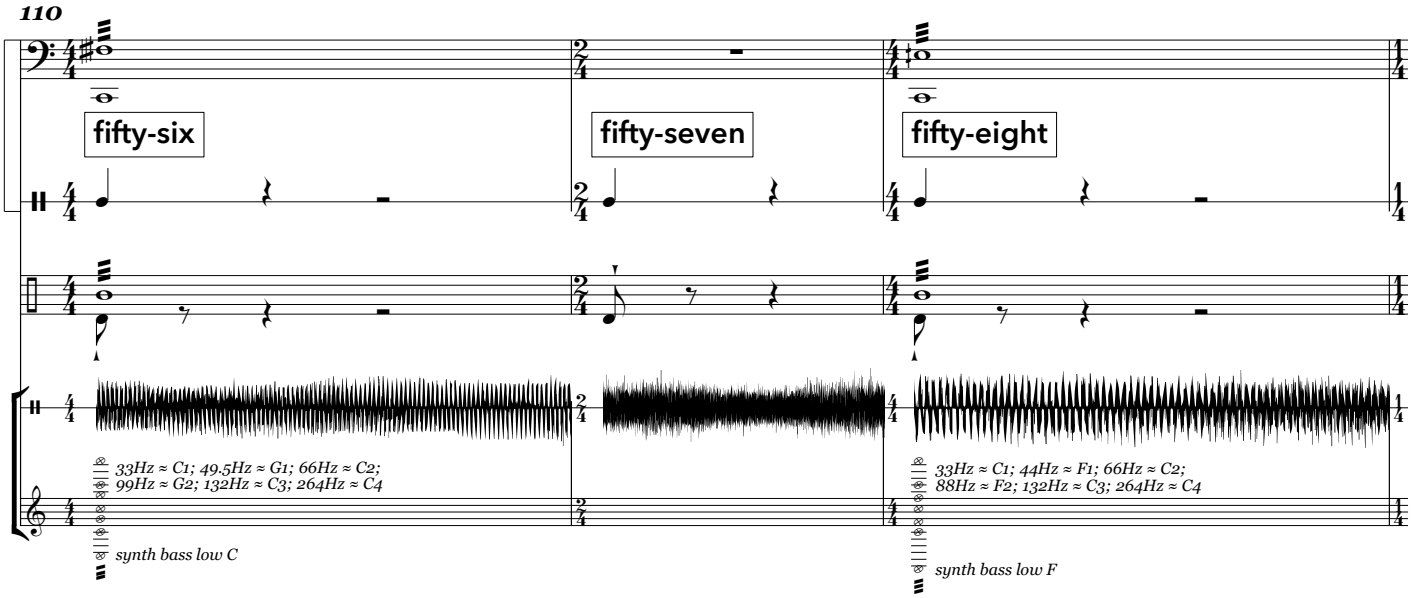


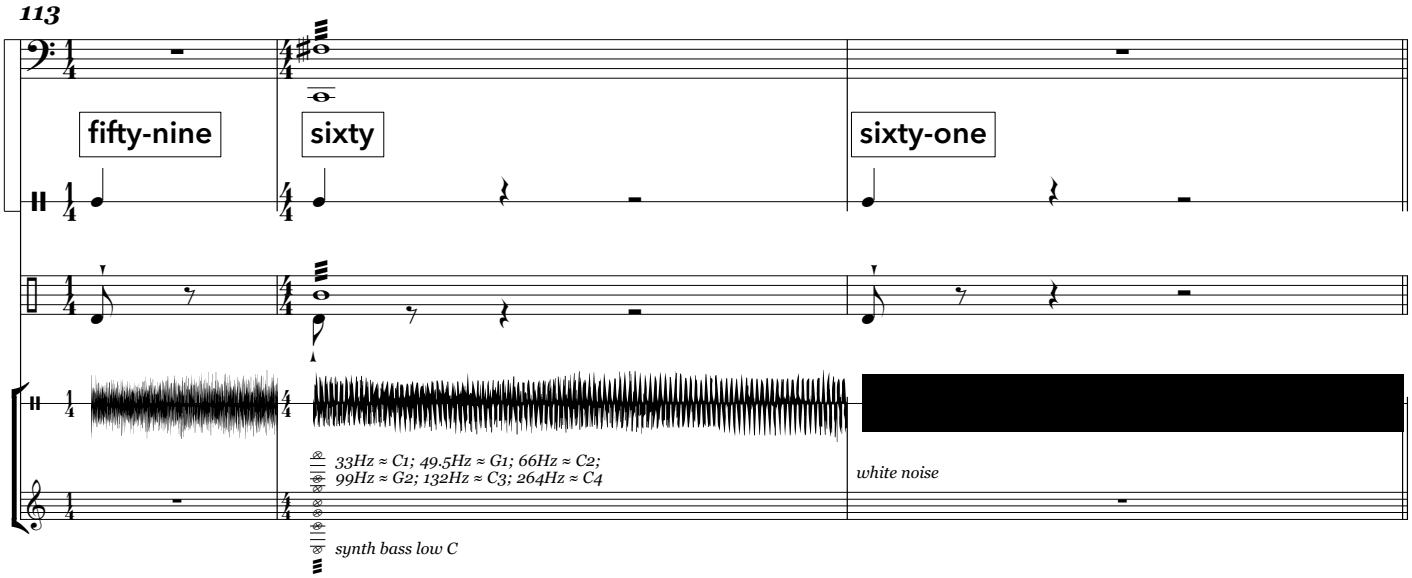
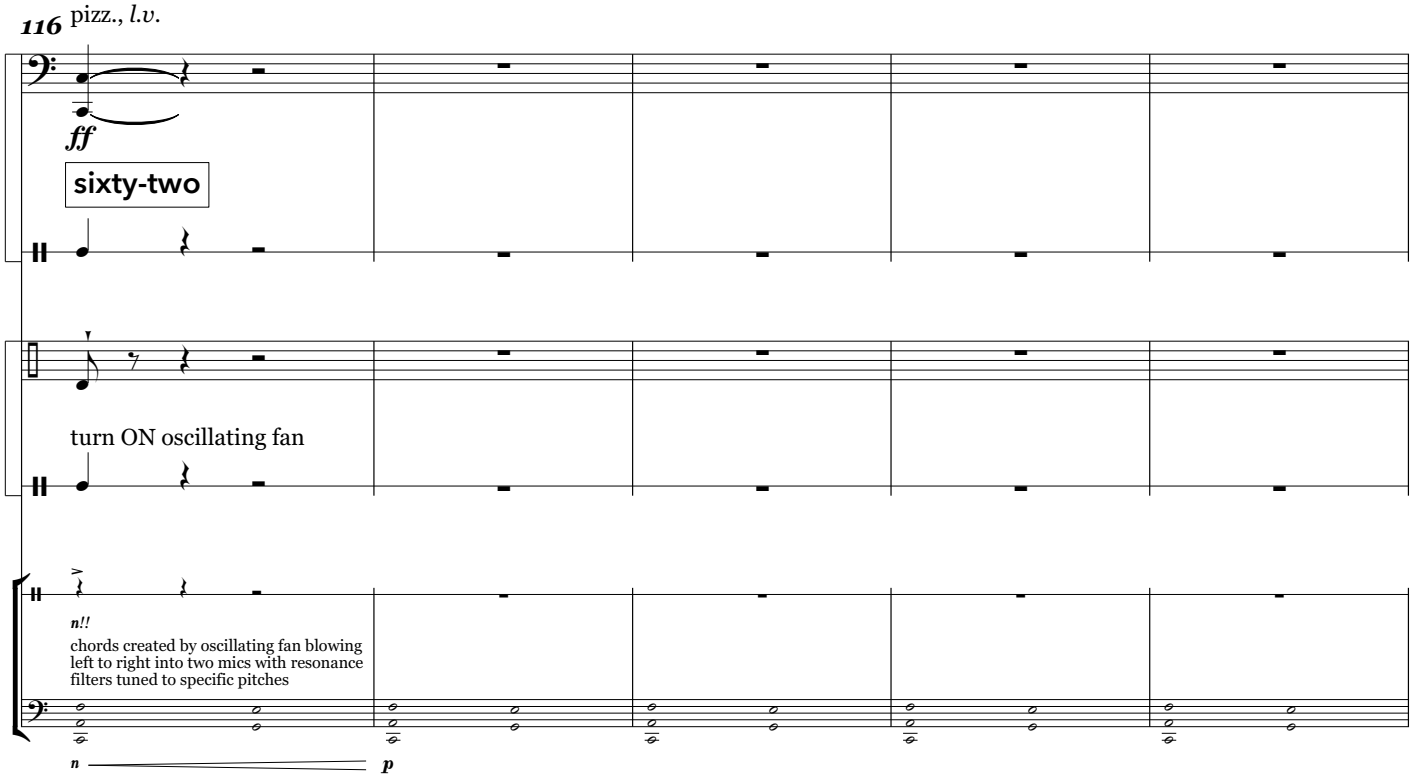
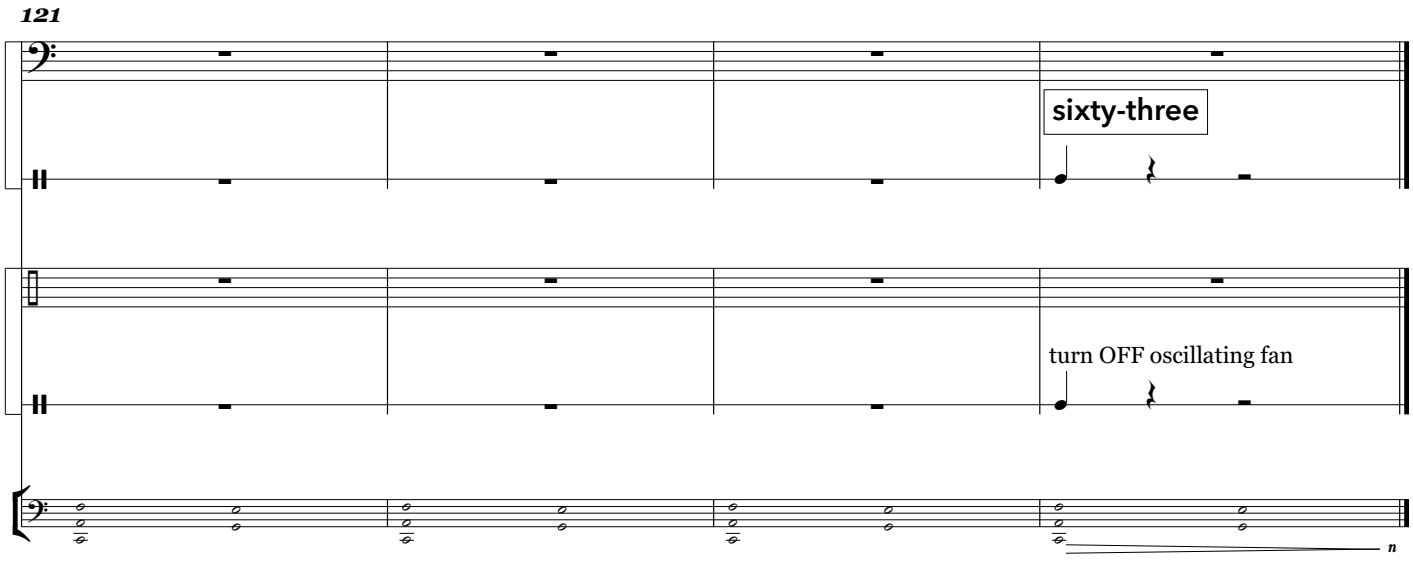

102
forty-eight
forty-nine
33Hz ≈ C1; 49.5Hz ≈ G1; 66Hz ≈ C2;
99Hz ≈ G2; 132Hz ≈ C3; 264Hz ≈ C4
synth bass low C


104
fifty
fifty-one
33Hz ≈ C1; 44Hz ≈ F1; 66Hz ≈ C2;
88Hz ≈ F2; 132Hz ≈ C3; 264Hz ≈ C4
synth bass low F


106
fifty-two
fifty-three
33Hz ≈ C1; 49.5Hz ≈ G1; 66Hz ≈ C2;
99Hz ≈ G2; 132Hz ≈ C3; 264Hz ≈ C4
synth bass low C


108
fifty-four
fifty-five
33Hz ≈ C1; 44Hz ≈ F1; 66Hz ≈ C2;
88Hz ≈ F2; 132Hz ≈ C3; 264Hz ≈ C4
synth bass low F


110
fifty-six
fifty-seven
fifty-eight
33Hz ≈ C1; 49.5Hz ≈ G1; 66Hz ≈ C2;
99Hz ≈ G2; 132Hz ≈ C3; 264Hz ≈ C4
synth bass low C
33Hz ≈ C1; 44Hz ≈ F1; 66Hz ≈ C2;
88Hz ≈ F2; 132Hz ≈ C3; 264Hz ≈ C4
synth bass low F


113
fifty-nine
sixty
sixty-one
33Hz ≈ C1; 49.5Hz ≈ G1; 66Hz ≈ C2;
99Hz ≈ G2; 132Hz ≈ C3; 264Hz ≈ C4
synth bass low C
white noise

TEMPO OF THE OSCILLATING FAN