Asylum

for violin, violoncello, and piano

Jocelyn Morlock

Vancouver 2010

Commissioned by the CBC
and the Tuckamore Chamber Music Festival

Asylum, for violin, violoncello, and piano

Co-commissioned by the CBC and the Tuckamore Chamber Music Festival, for the tenth anniversary of the Festival, and the 200th anniversary of Robert Schumann's birth. Premiered August 6, 2010 at the Tuckamore Chamber Music Festival by Nancy Dahn, violin; Vernon Regehr, violoncello, and Timothy Steeves, piano.

General Notes on *Asylum* and Schumann

The first four piano notes of *Asylum* are a very slow-motion quote from Schumann's *Mondnacht* (the fifth song in his Liederkreis, Op. 39.) The mood of the opening section (mm. 1 - 33) is reminiscent of the ethereal mood of Mondnacht, though there is a general descent into something more disturbed. The next two sections of the piece (mm. 34 - 56, mm. 57 - 96) both start similarly; the first of these again dissolves into a mood of disquiet but the second time there is a more expansive and calmer transition. (The harmonic underpinning of this second transition is another Mondnacht quote; it is based on the harmonies of the last line of the song *als flöge sie nach Haus* where there is a sort of ambiguous IV-I cadence.)

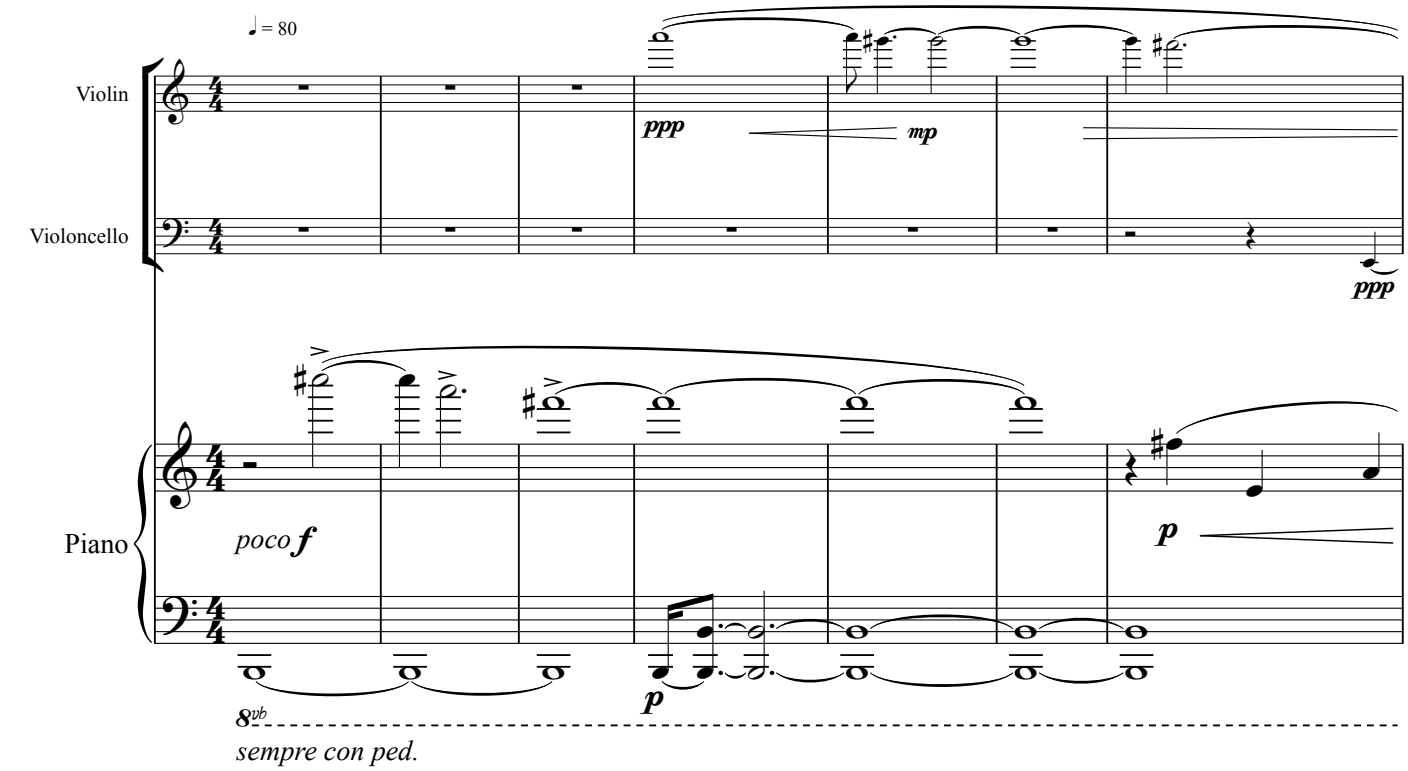
The end of the piece has a relatively direct quote of the first vocal line of the song at m. 104 in the violin. M. 116 to the end combines fragments of the melodic line of the words *als flöge* and that of the first line of text (*Es war, als hätt' der Himmel*) so as to seem like a fleeting recollection of the past.

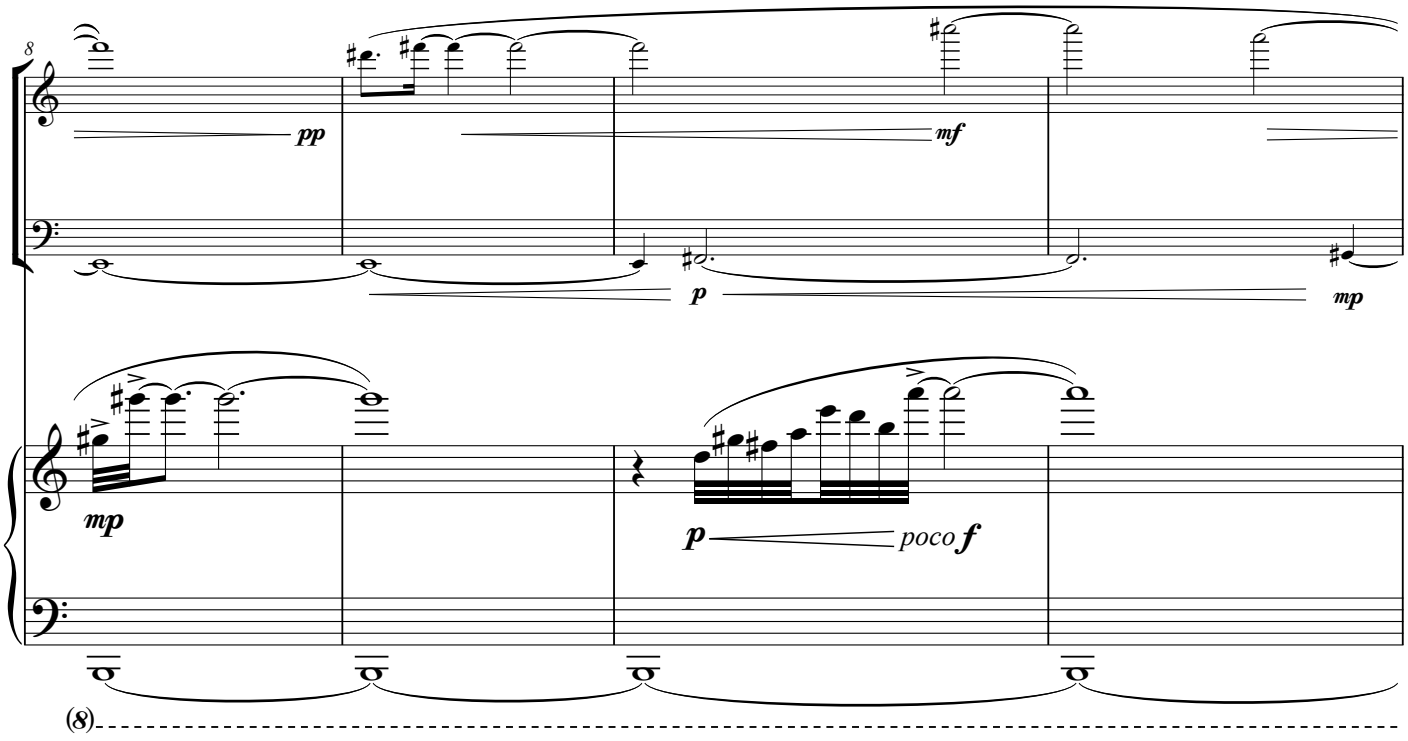
Asylum is inspired by Schumann in several ways - I am very interested in the emotional landscapes of his music, and his dual characters Florestan and Eusebius. This piece tends toward the introverted but has various outbursts, before crawling back into its shell. (A good example of this "outburst" would be mm. 30-33.) The other source of inspiration is the combination of ecstasy and horror experienced by Schumann himself, and that whole range of emotions, often veering from one to another.

The name *Asylum* refers to both the asylum that Schumann found himself in at the end of his life (I imagine him having moments of calm where he recollects his life and hears his music), and perhaps more significantly to the idea of an asylum as a place of refuge, which I imagine and hope that music could be for Schumann, and which it certainly is for me.

Asylum

Jocelyn Morlock





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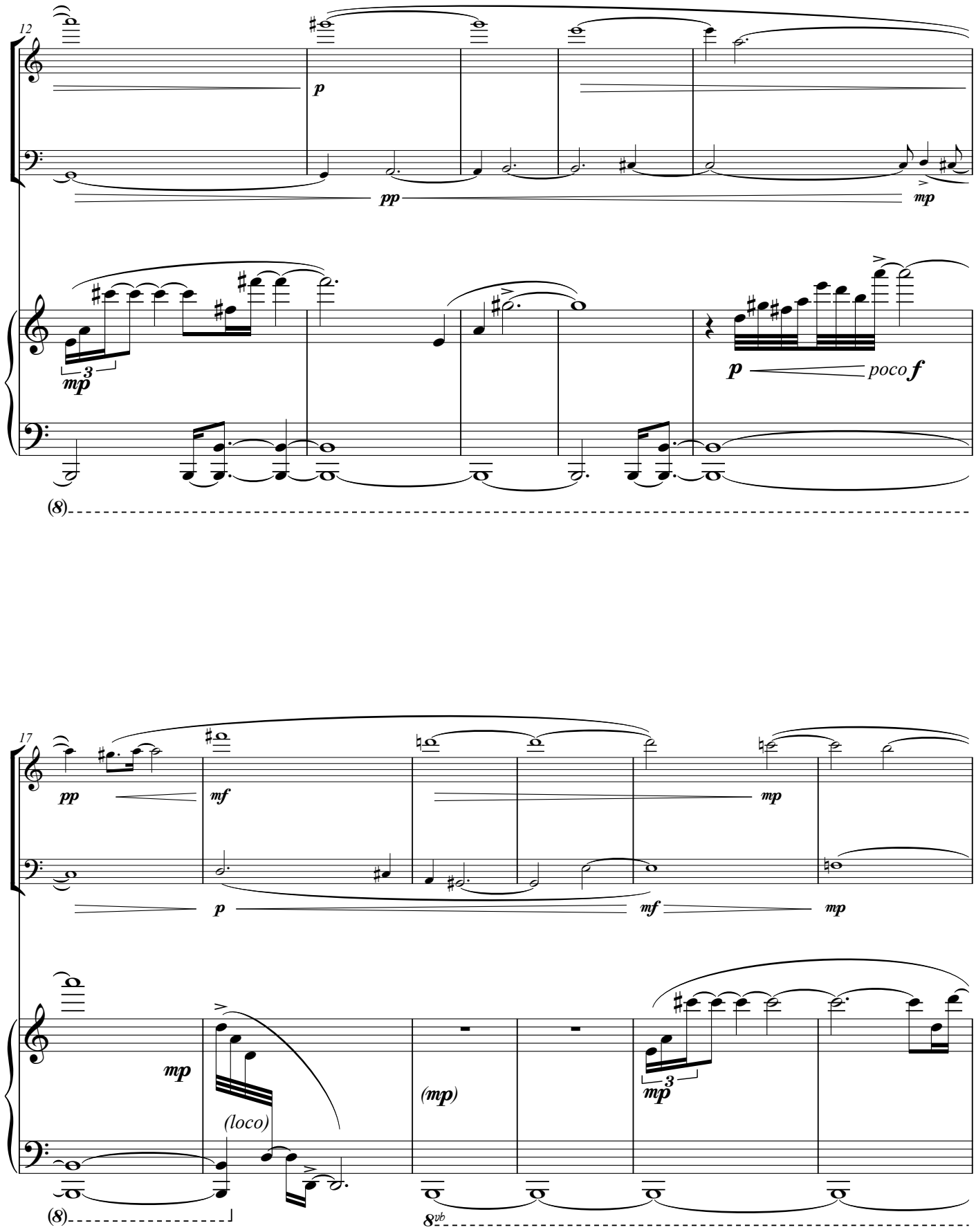
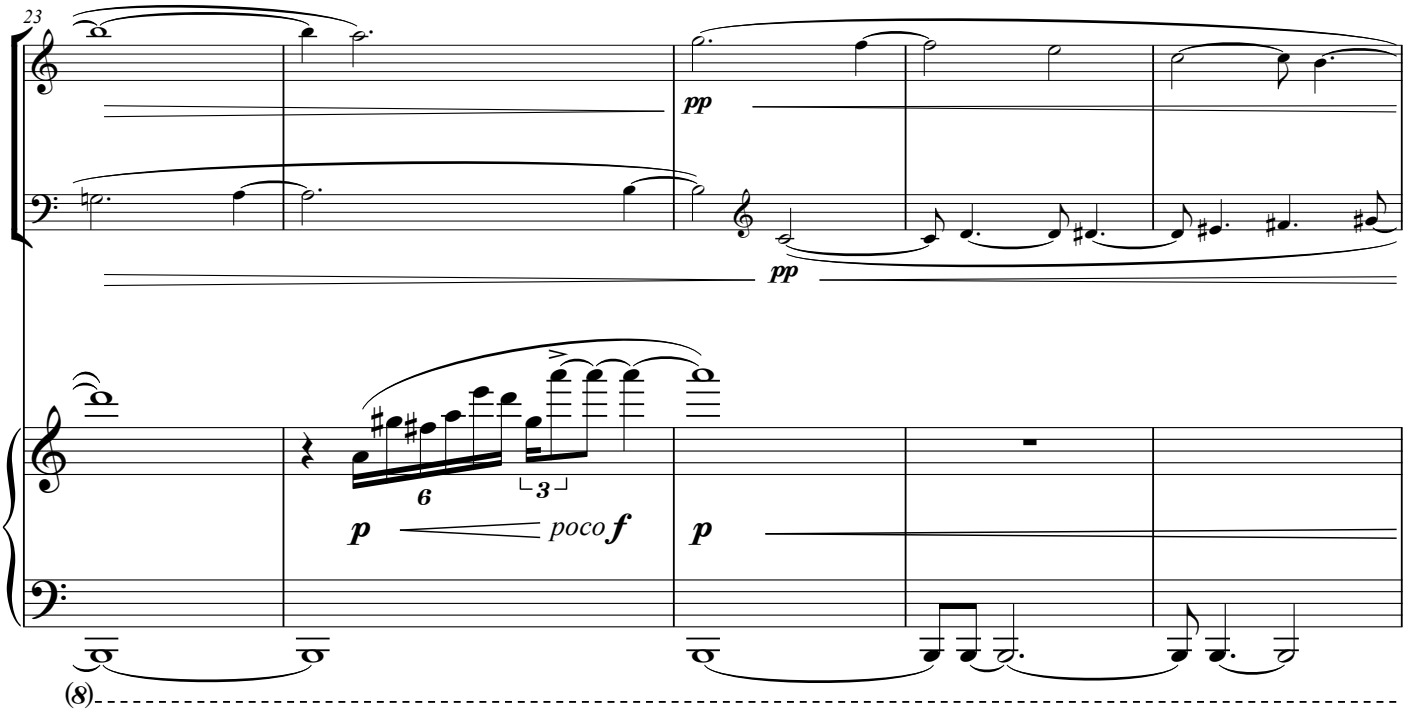
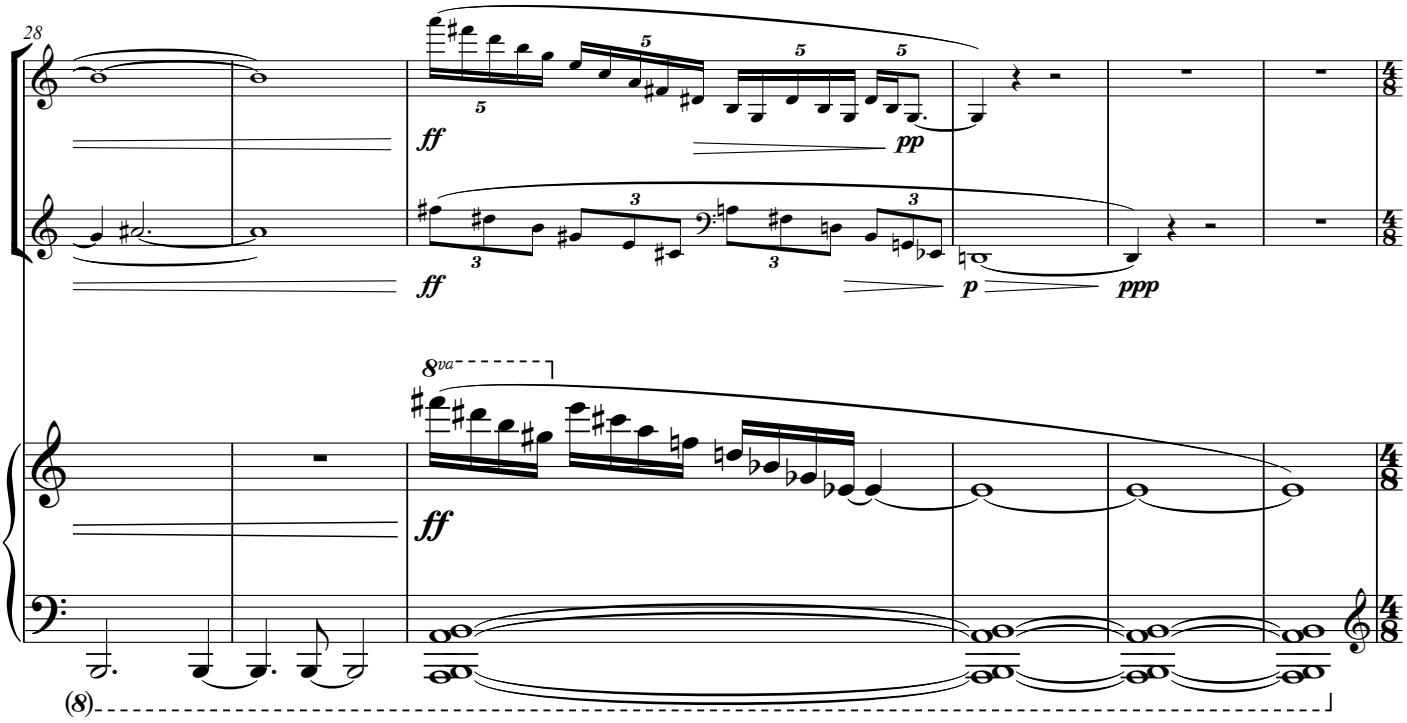
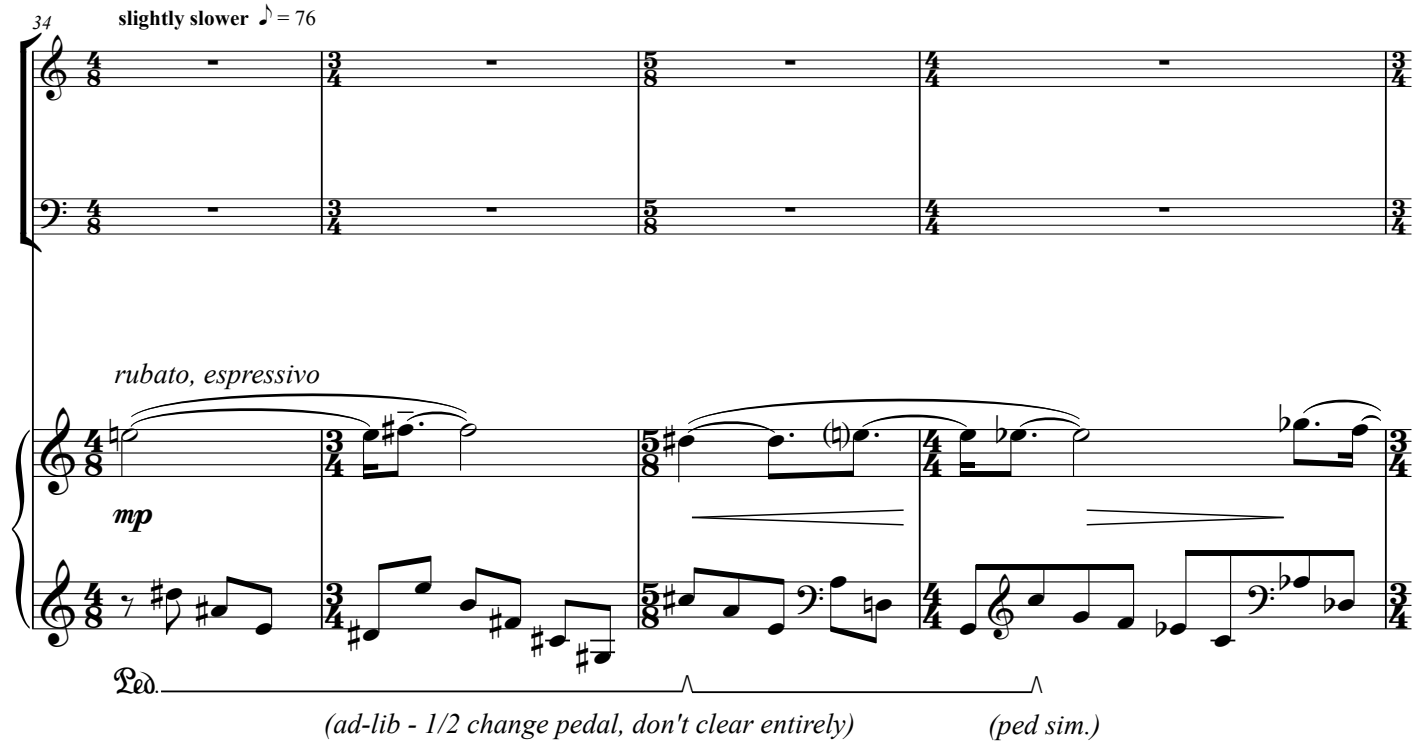
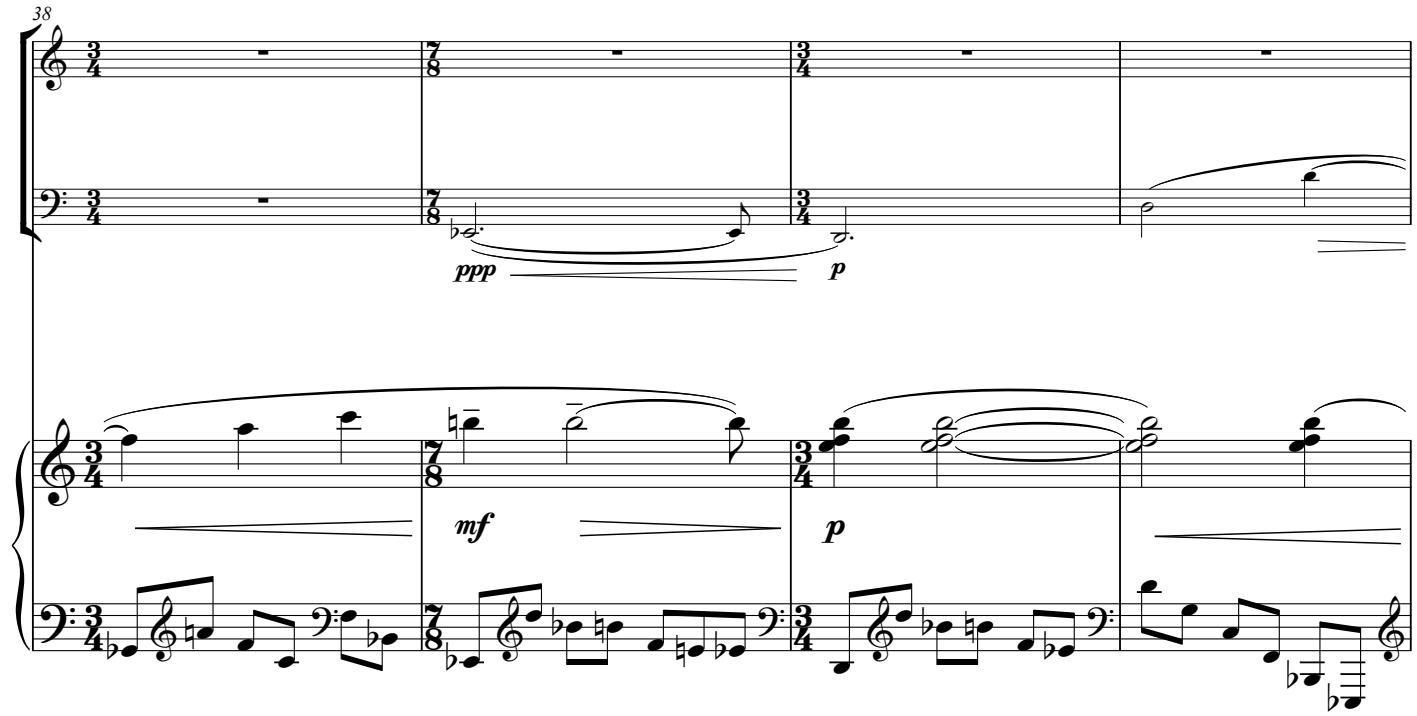
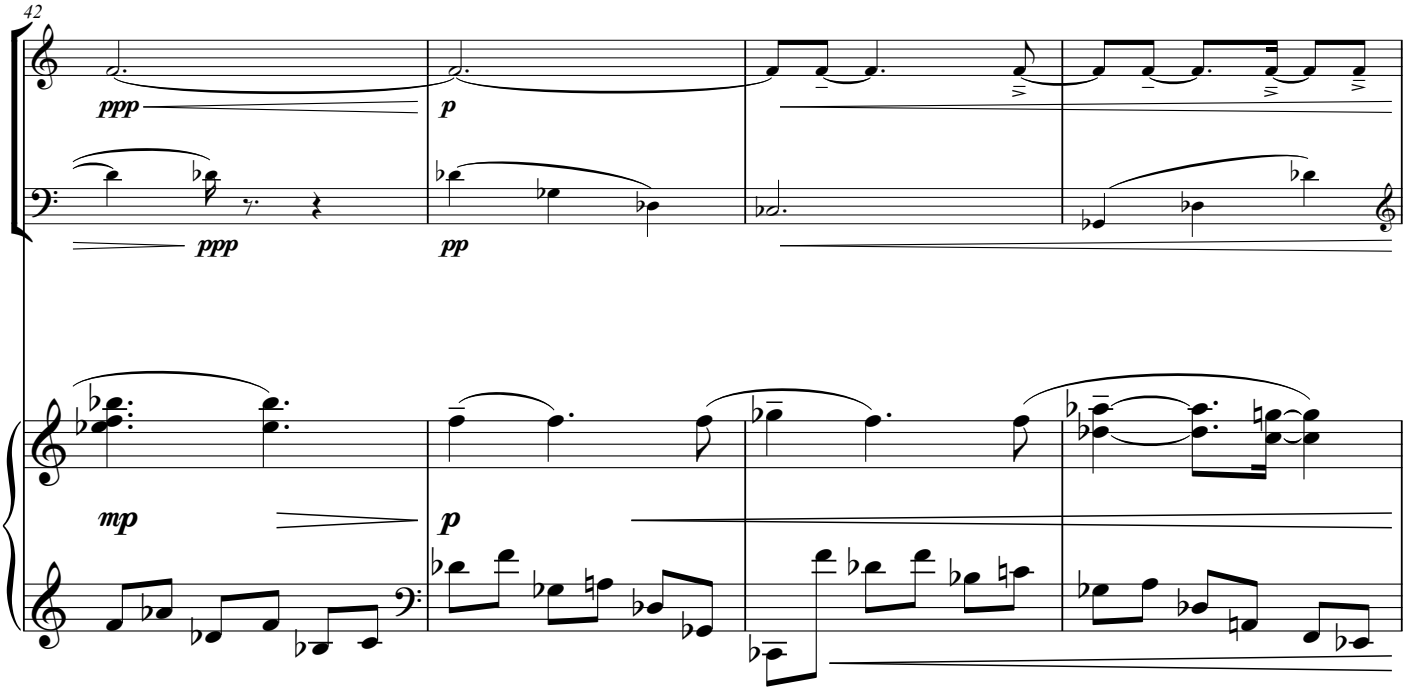

12
p
pp
mp
3
mp
p
poco f
(8)
17
pp
mf
mp
p
mf
mp
mp
(loco)
(mp)
3
mp
(8)
8vb

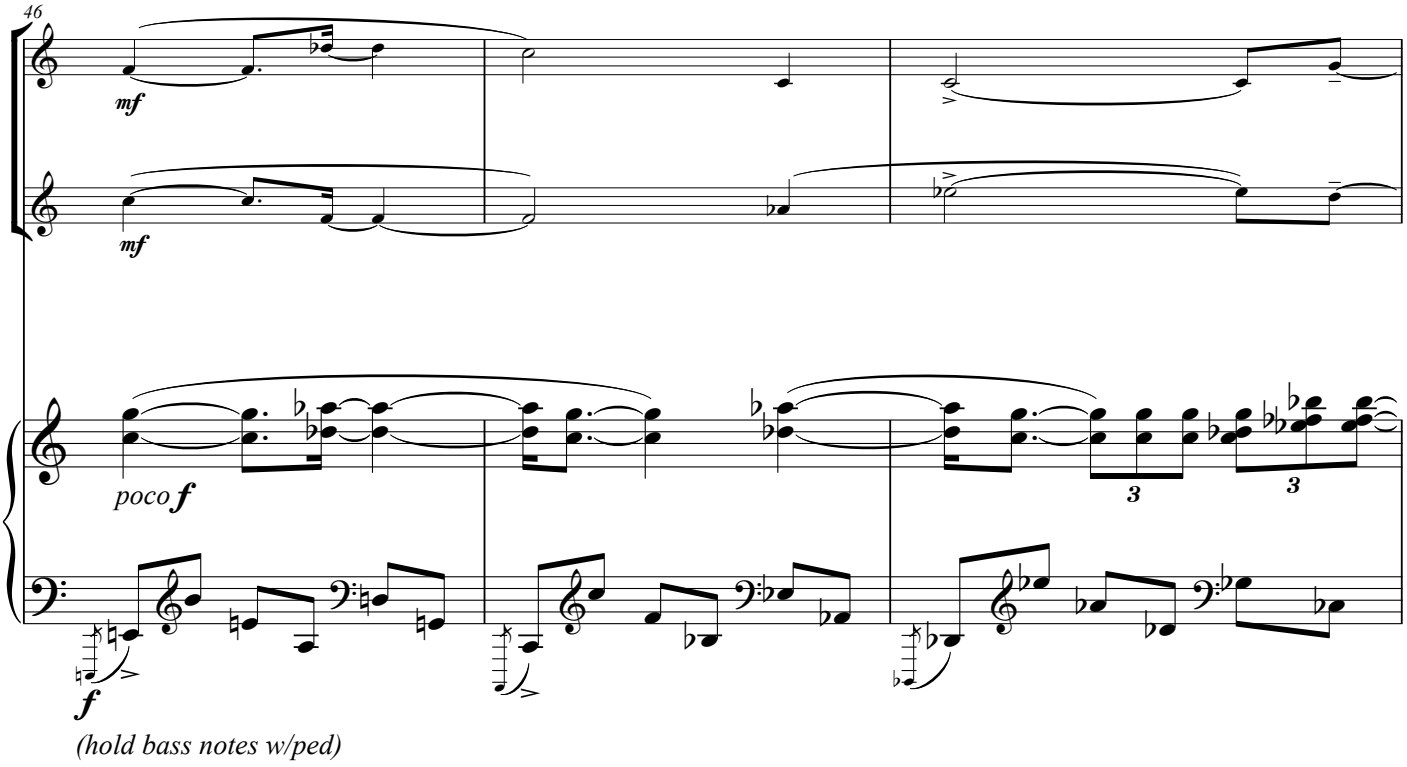

23
pp
pp
6
3
p
poco f
p
(8)


28
ff
pp
ff
p
ppp
8va
ff
(8)

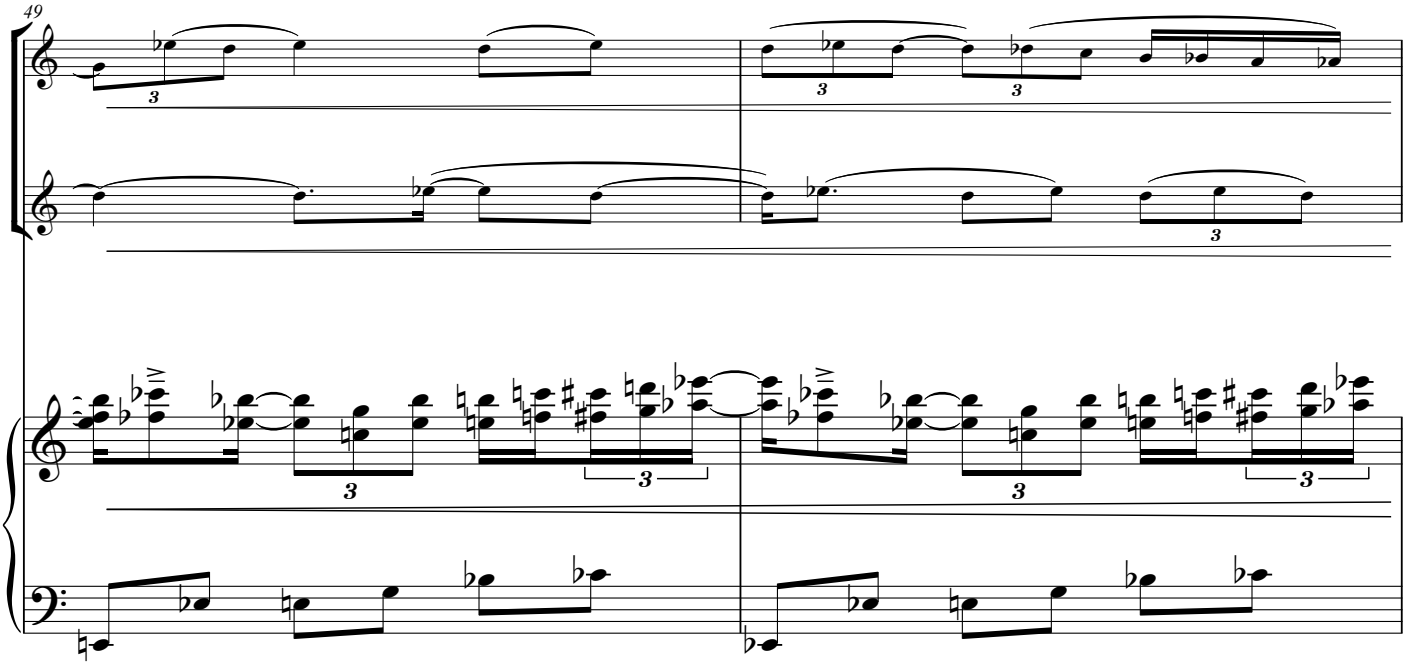

34
slightly slower ♪ = 76
rubato, espressivo
mp
Ped.
(ad-lib - 1/2 change pedal, don't clear entirely)
(ped sim.)

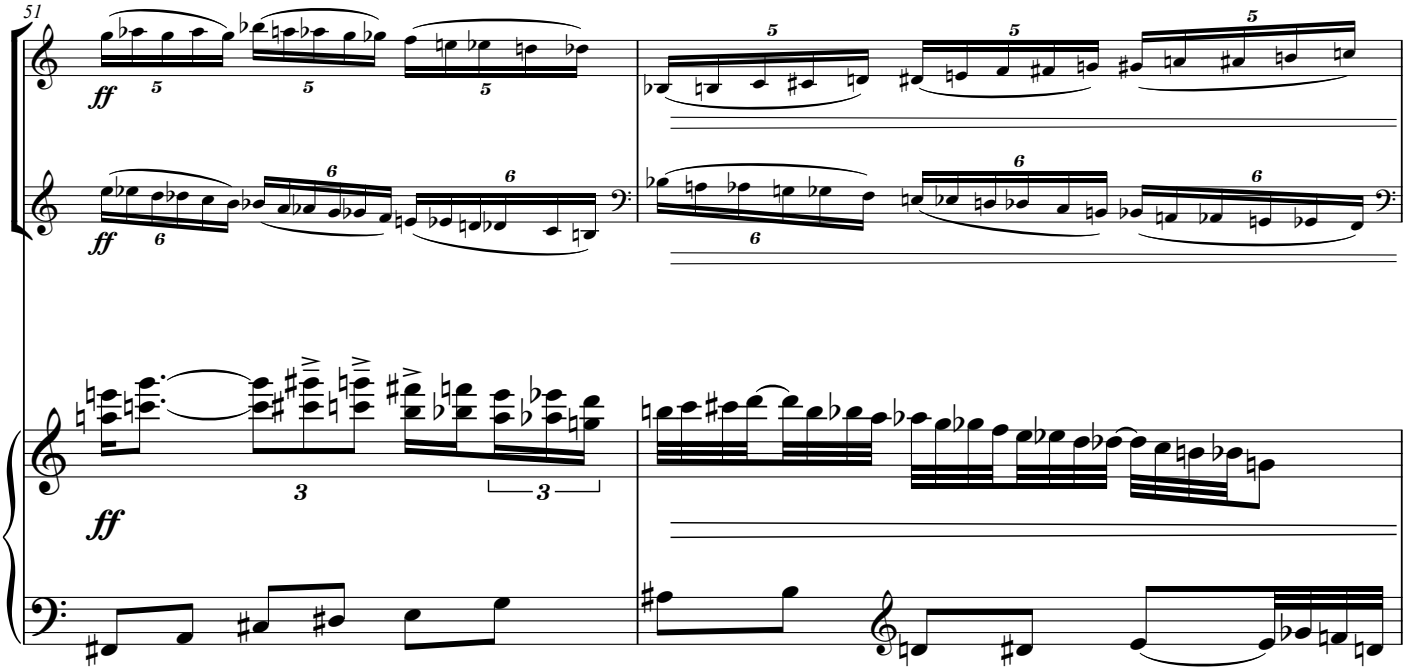

38
ppp
p
mf
p

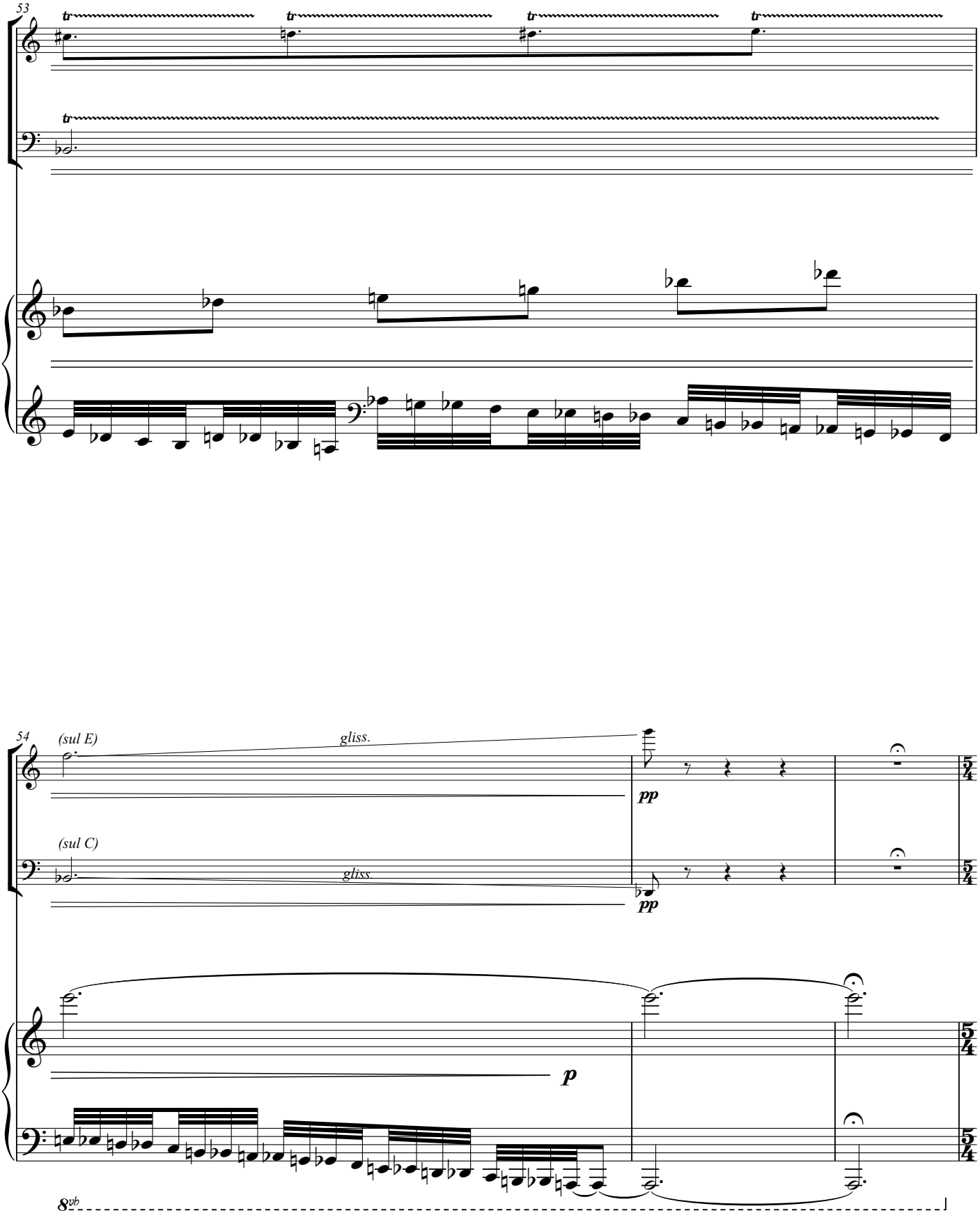


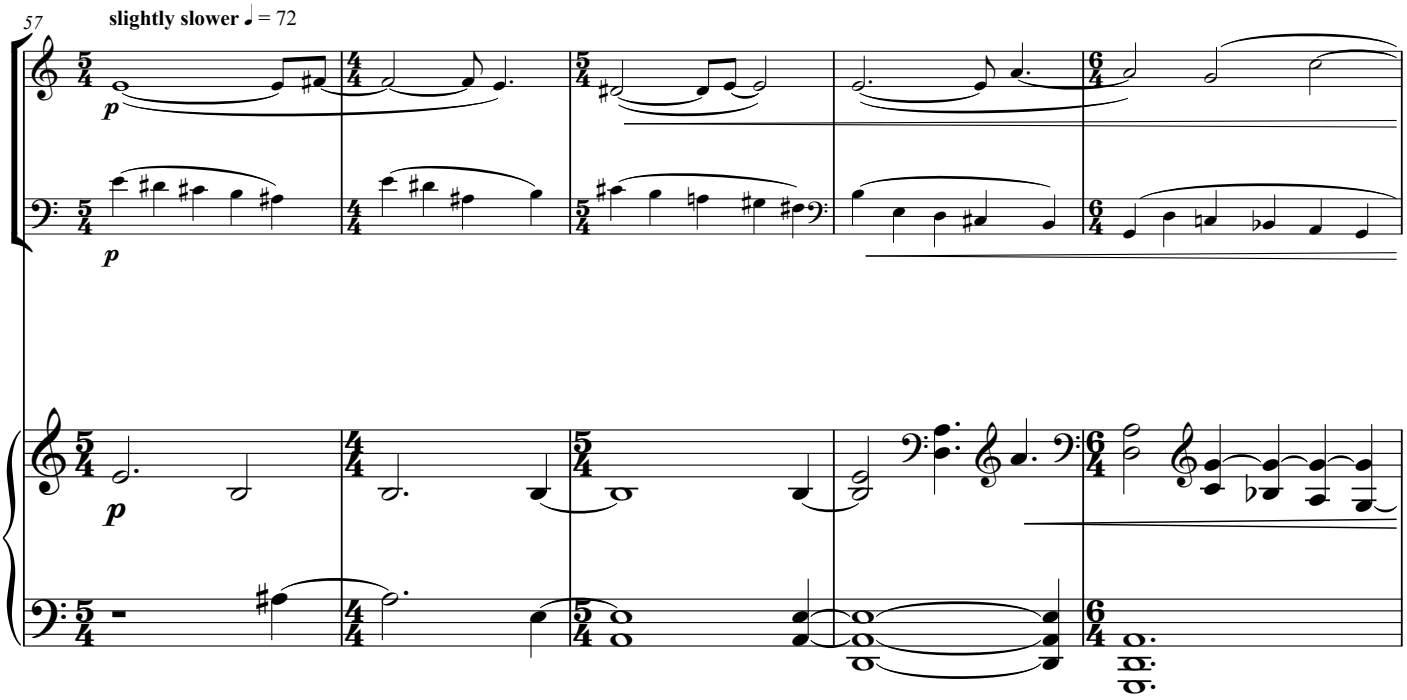


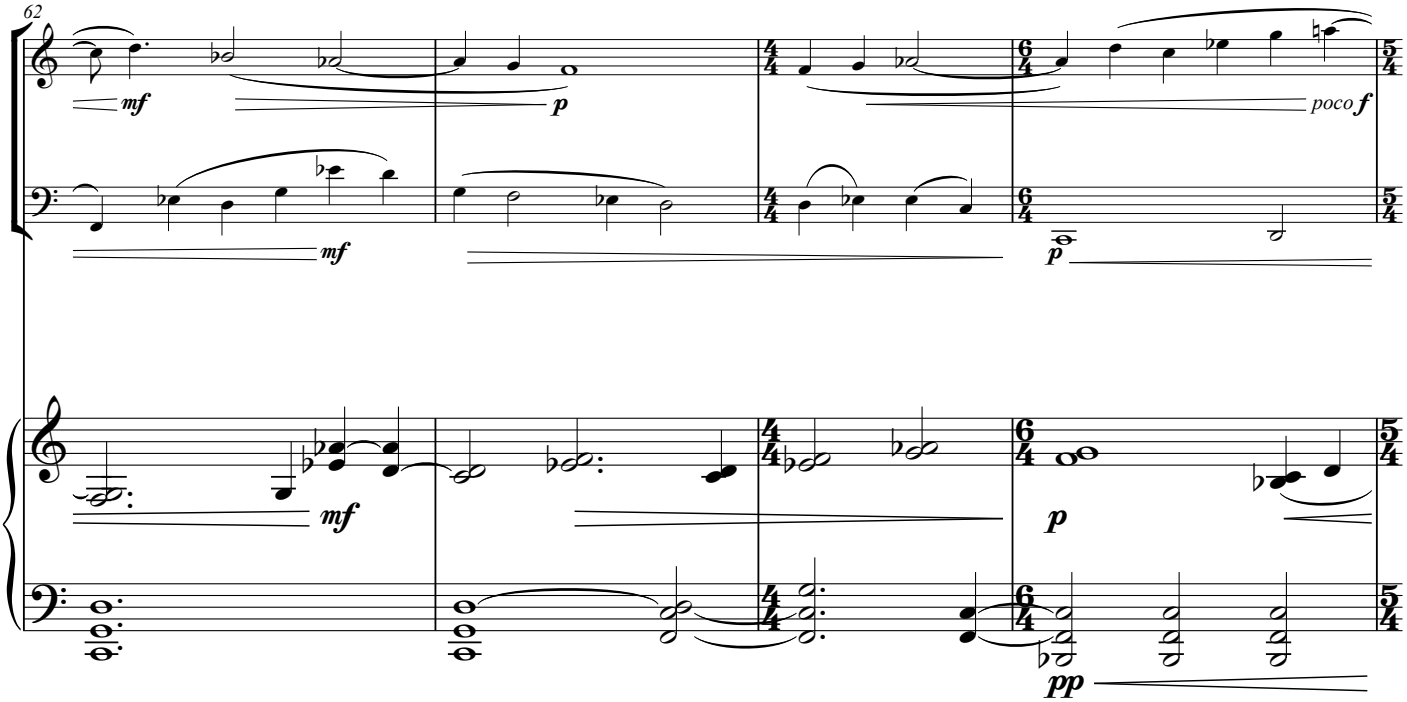
(hold bass notes w/ped)

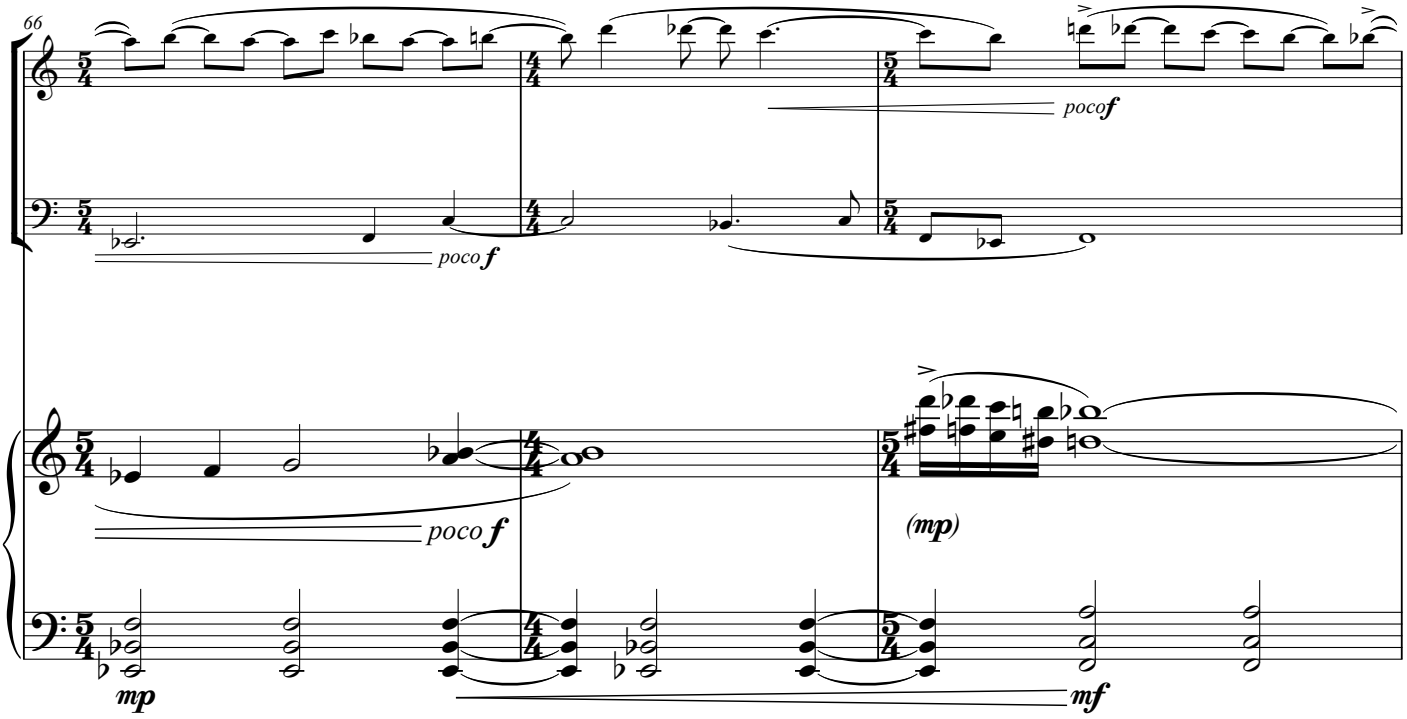

49

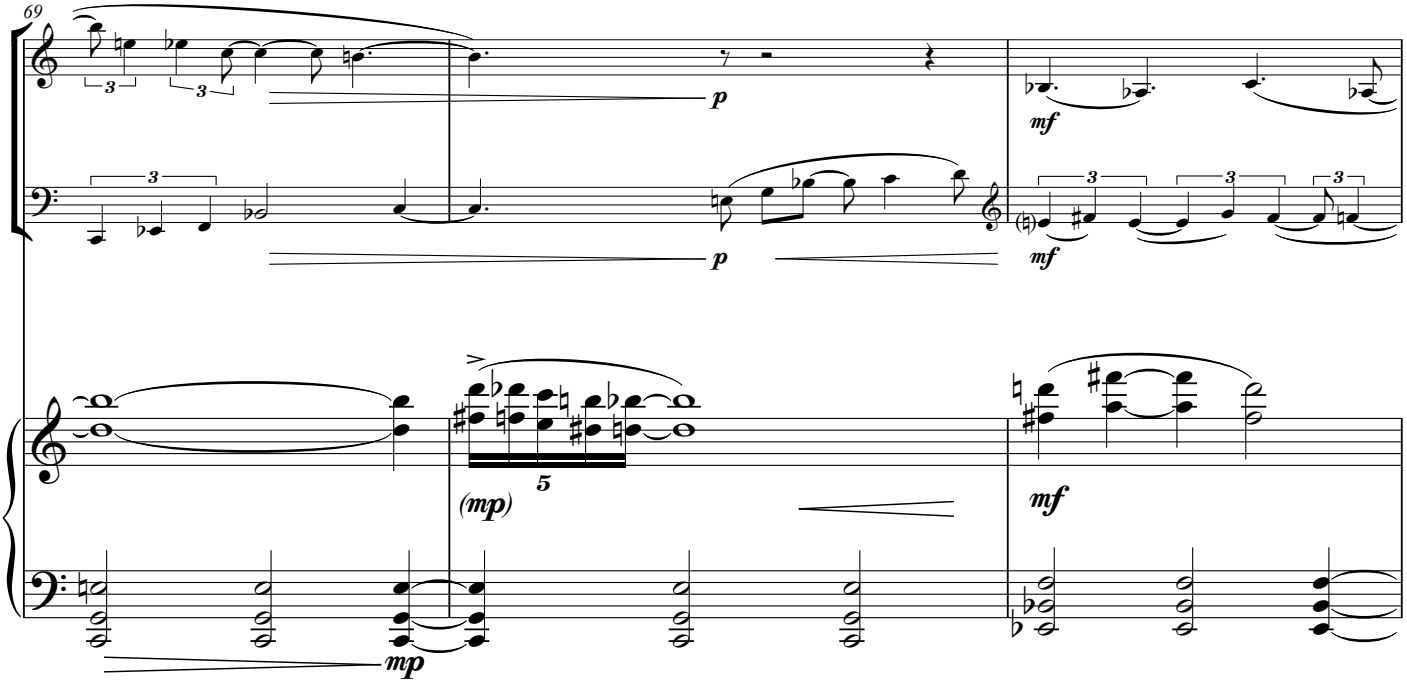

51
ff
ff
ff

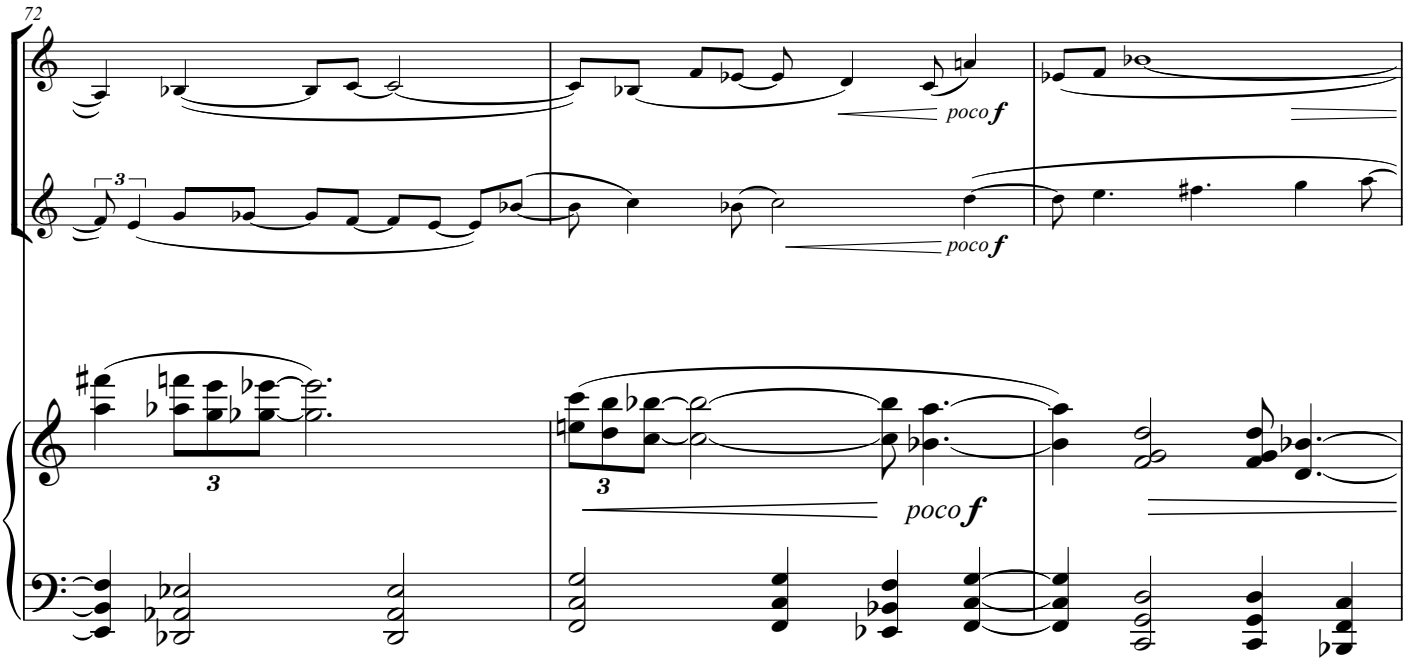

53
54
(sul E)
gliss.
(sul C)
gliss.
pp
pp
p
8vb

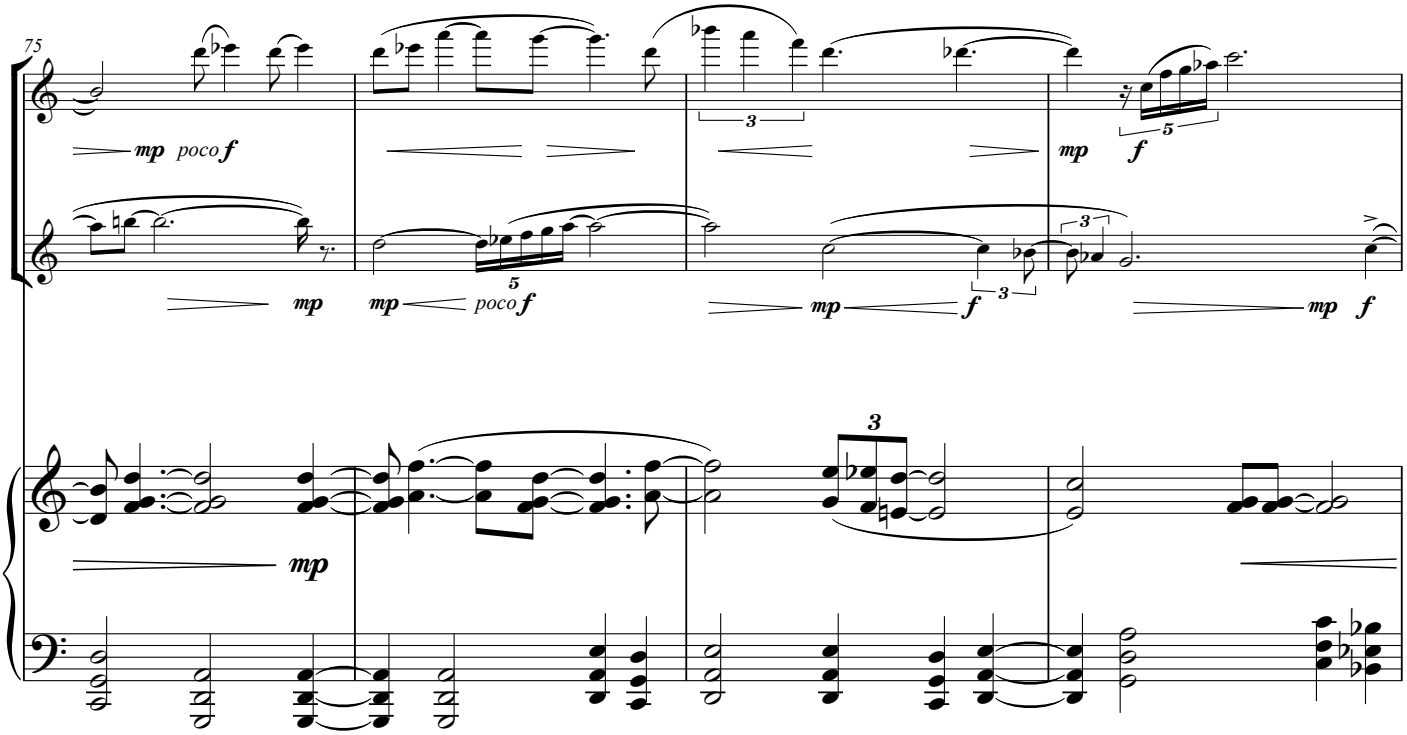

57
slightly slower ♩ = 72
p
p
p

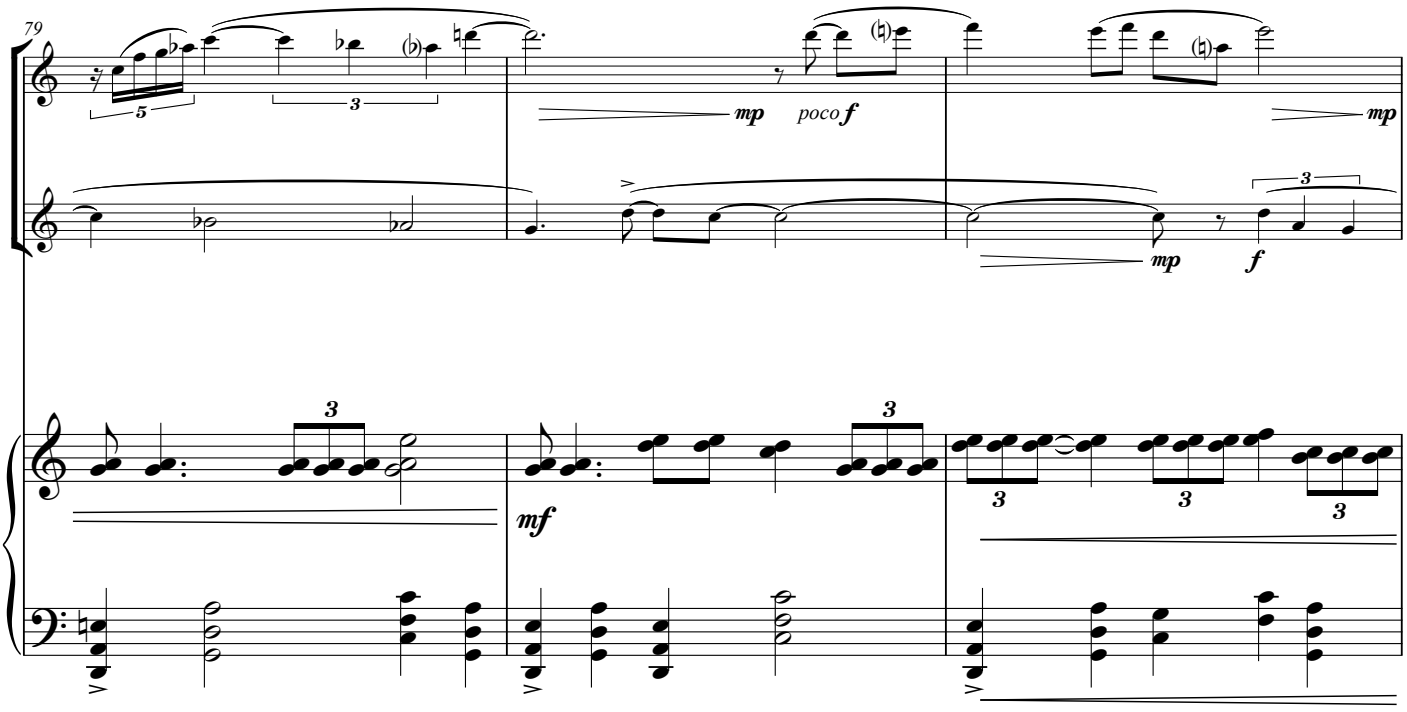

62
mf
p
poco f
mf
p
mf
p
pp

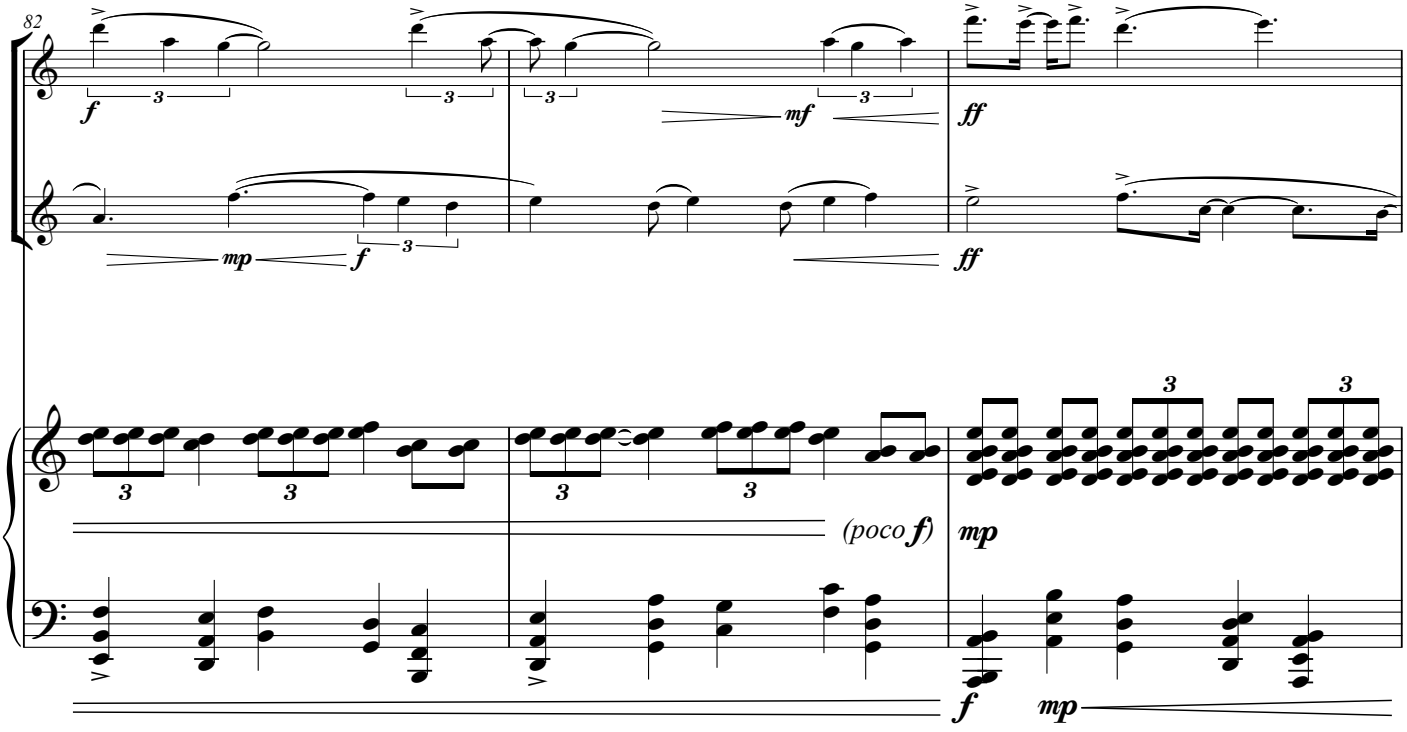

66
poco f
poco f
poco f
(mp)
mp
mf

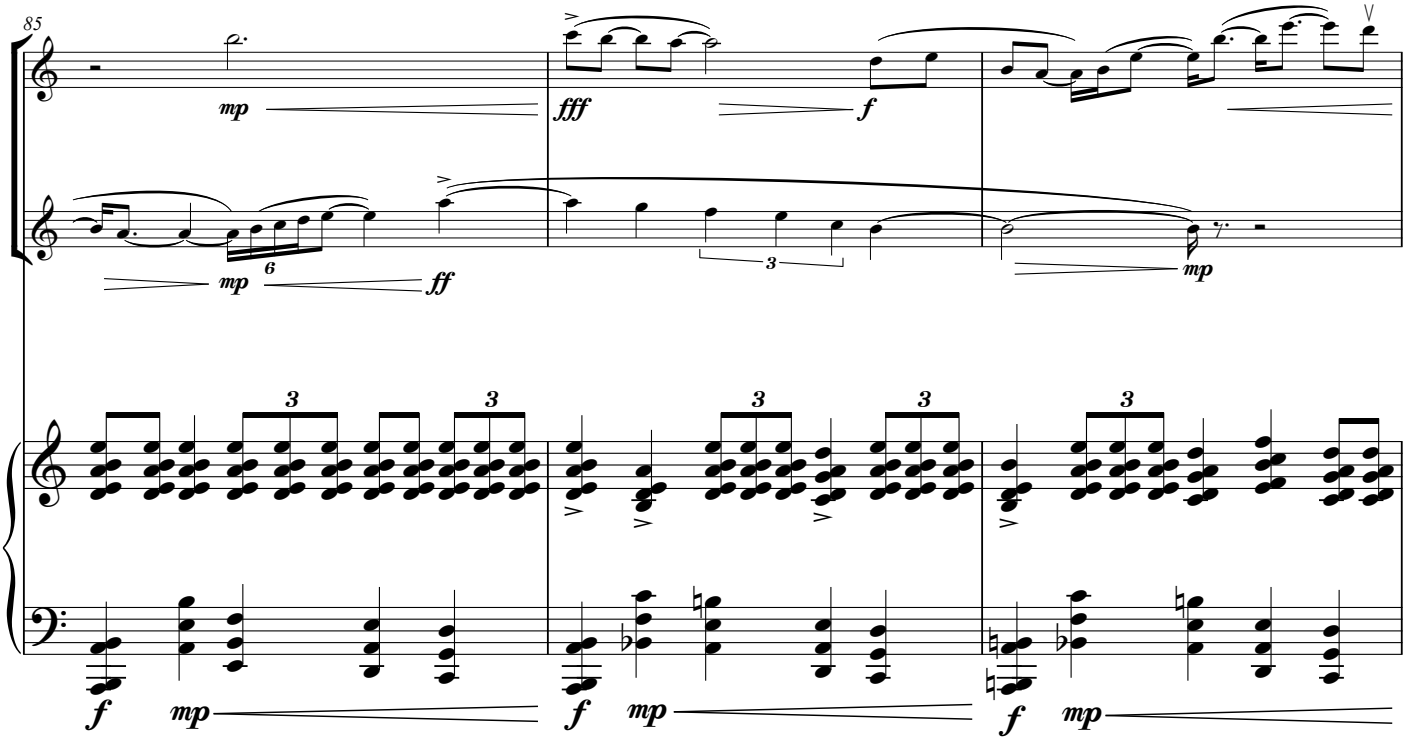

69
p
p
mf
mf
(mp)
5
mf
mp

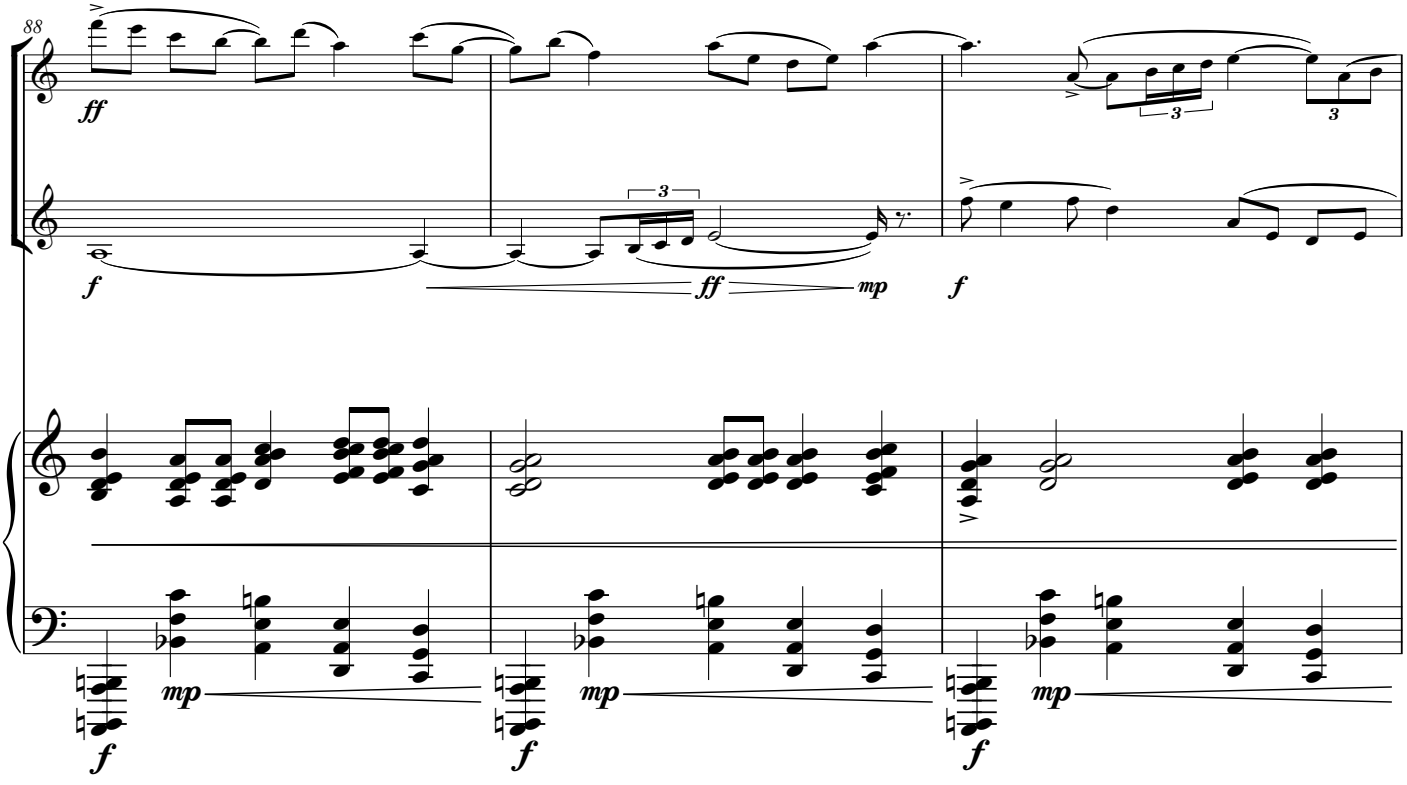

72
poco f
poco f
poco f

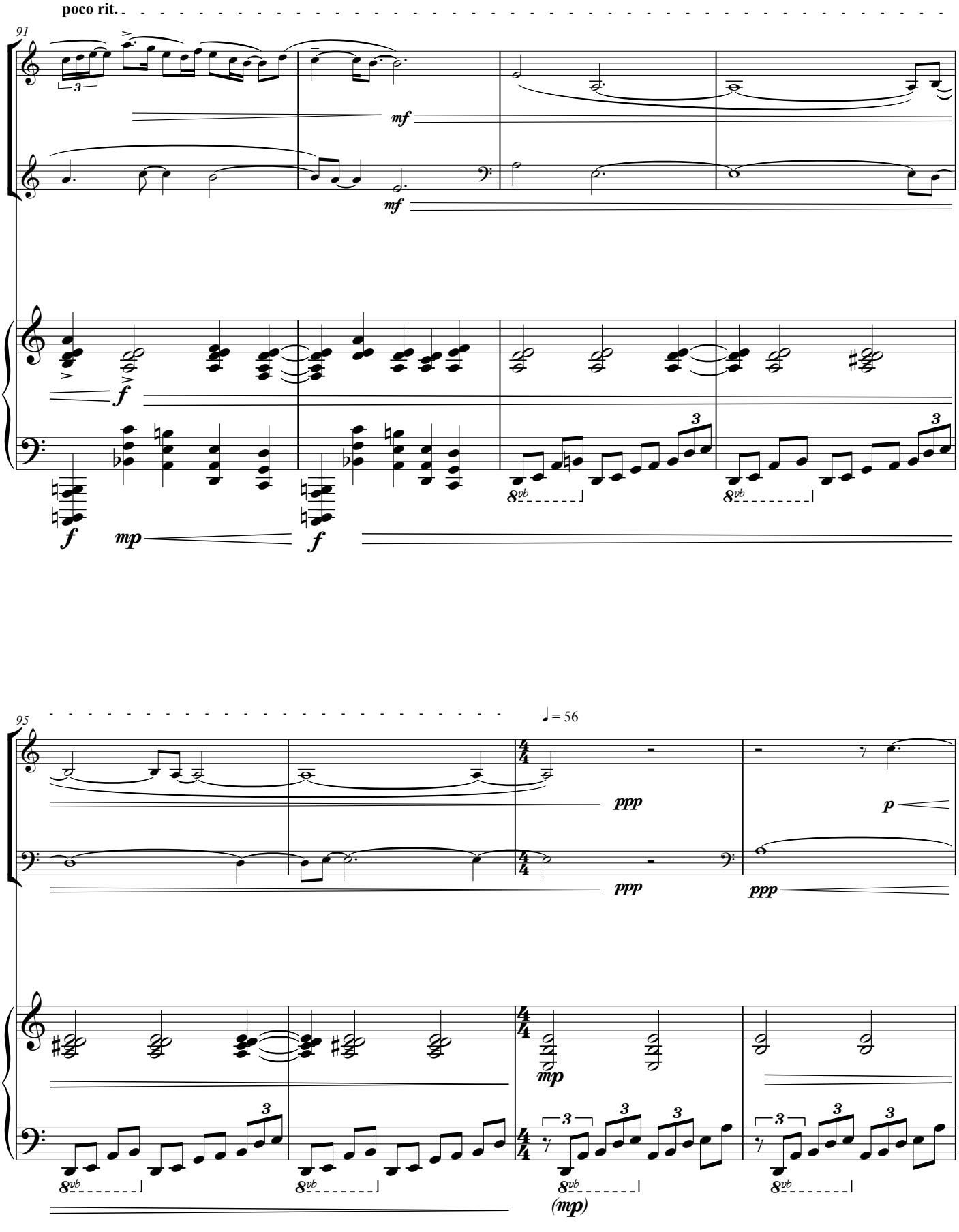

75
mp poco f
mp
mp poco f
mp
f
mp
f
mp
mp

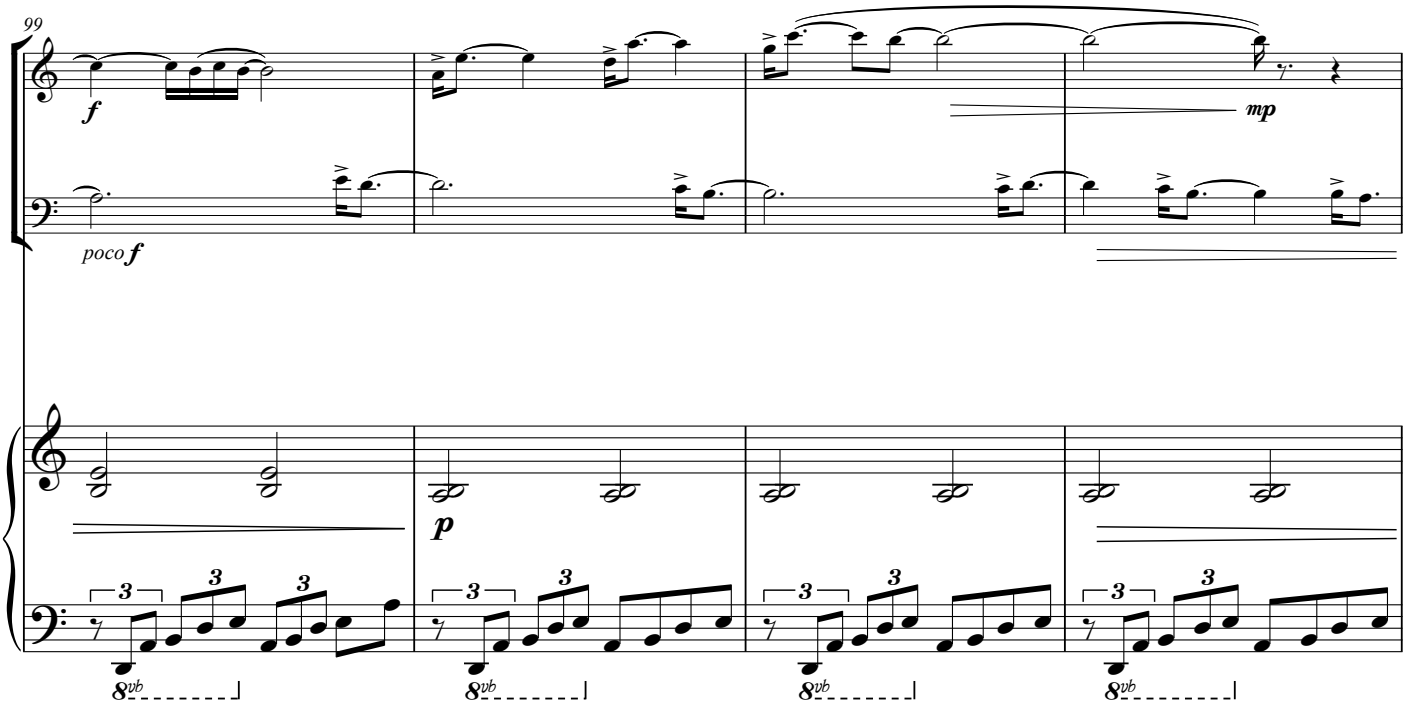

79
mp
poco f
mp
mp
f
mf

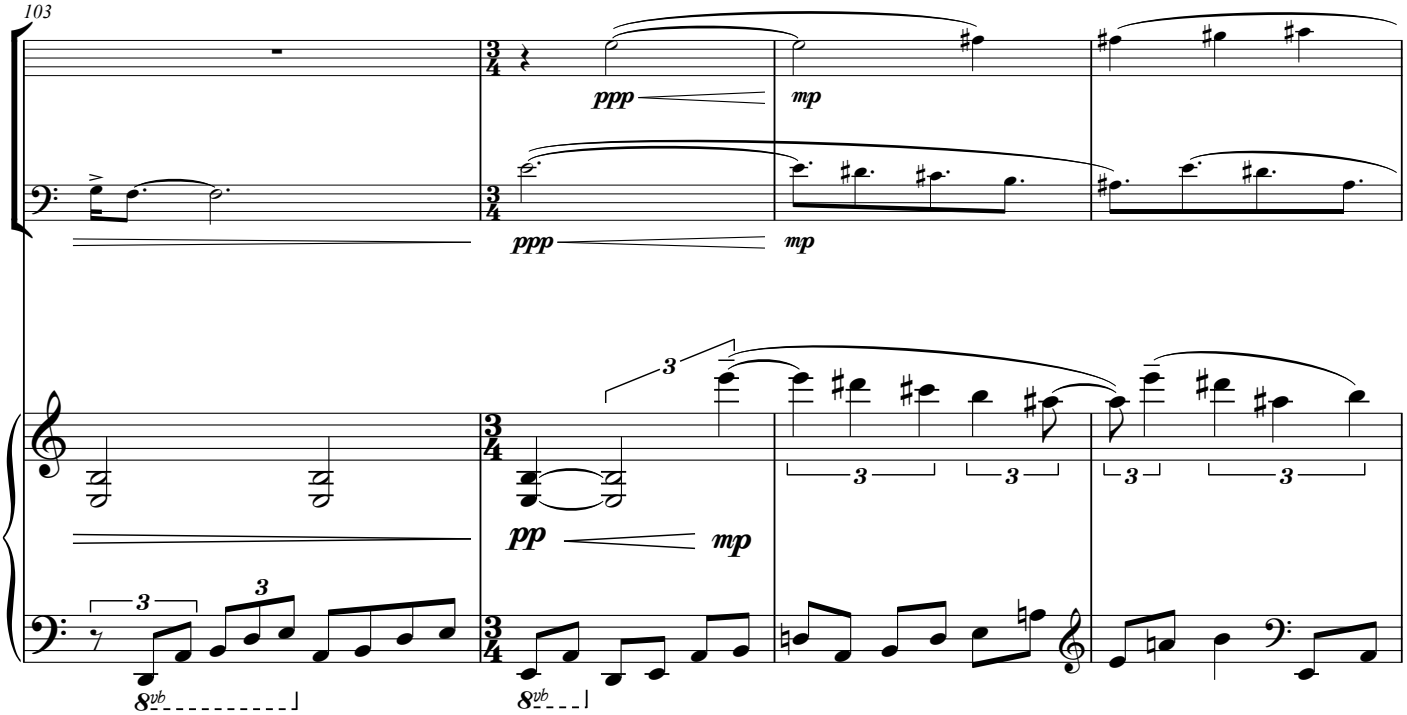

82
f
mf
ff
mp
f
ff
(poco f)
mp
f
mp

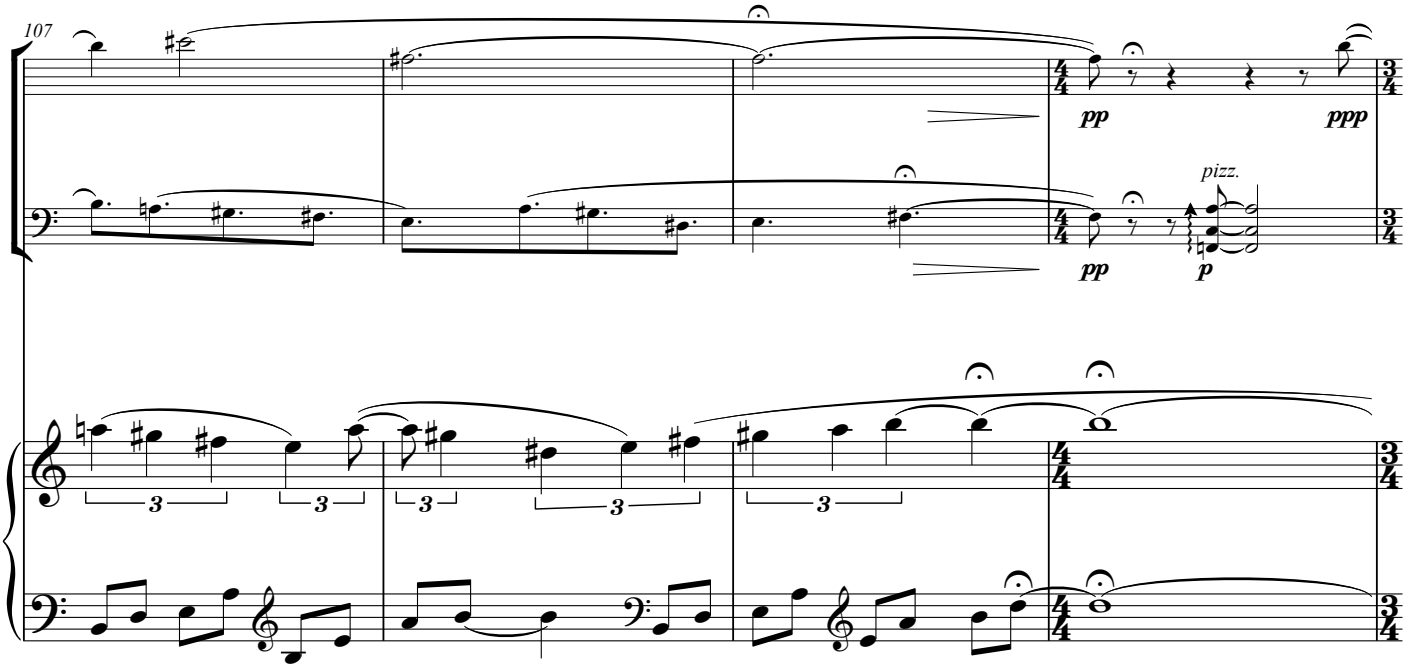

85
mp
fff
f
mp
ff
mp
f
mp
f
mp
f
mp


88
ff
f
ff
mp
f
f
mp
f
mp
f
mp

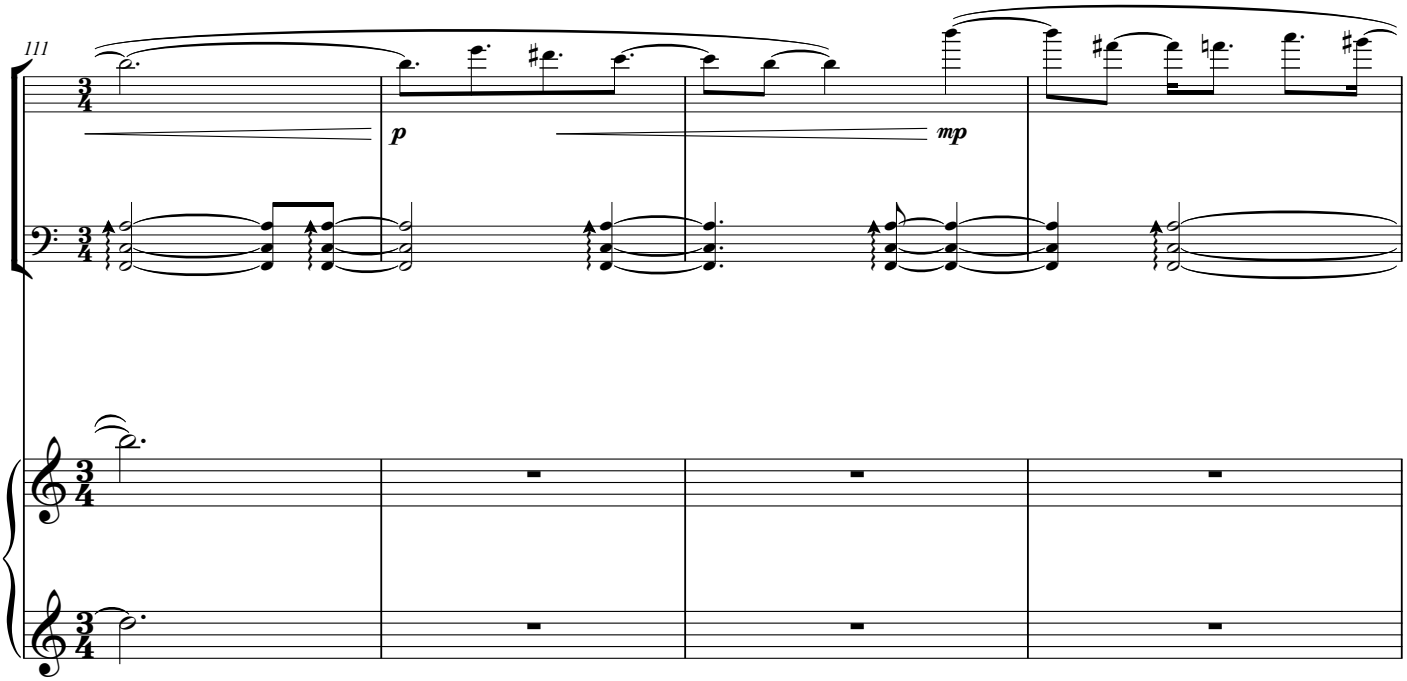

poco rit.
91
mf
mf
f
f
mp
f
8vb
8vb
95
♩ = 56
ppp
ppp
p
ppp
mp
8vb
8vb
8vb
(mp)
8vb

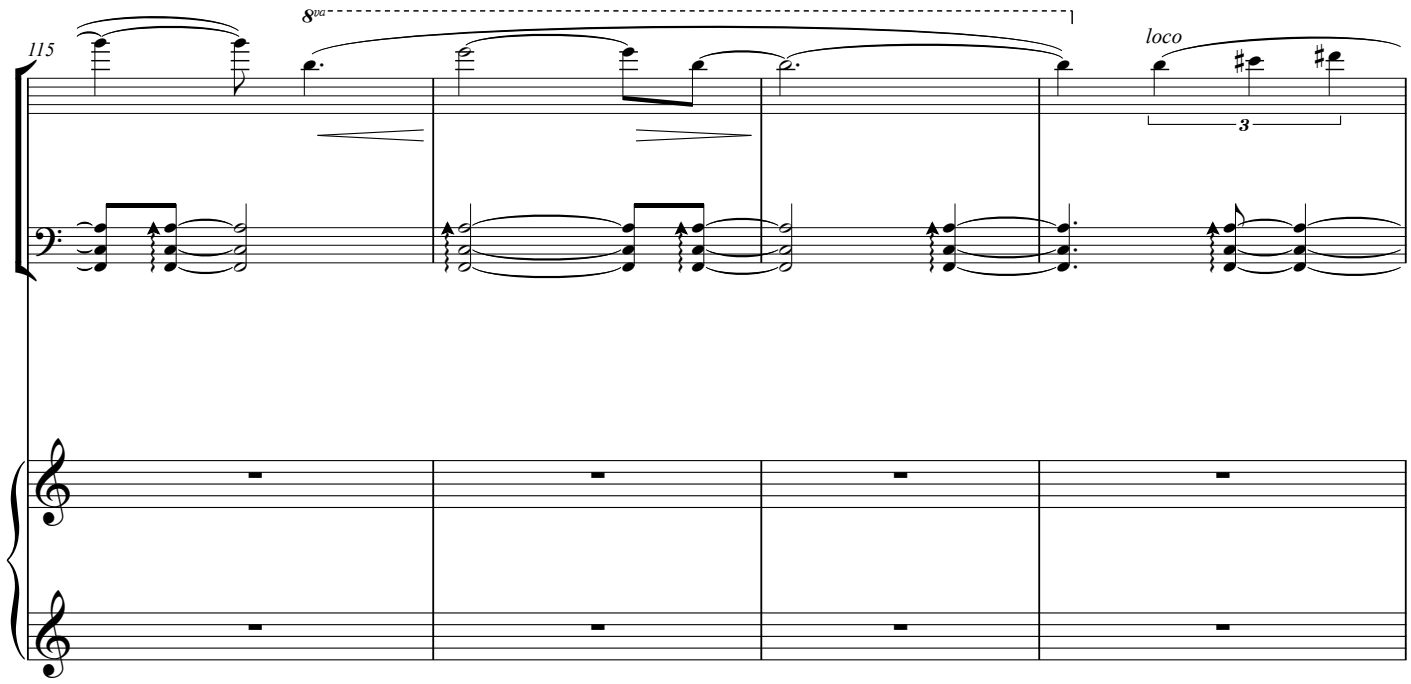

99
f
poco f
p
mp
8vb

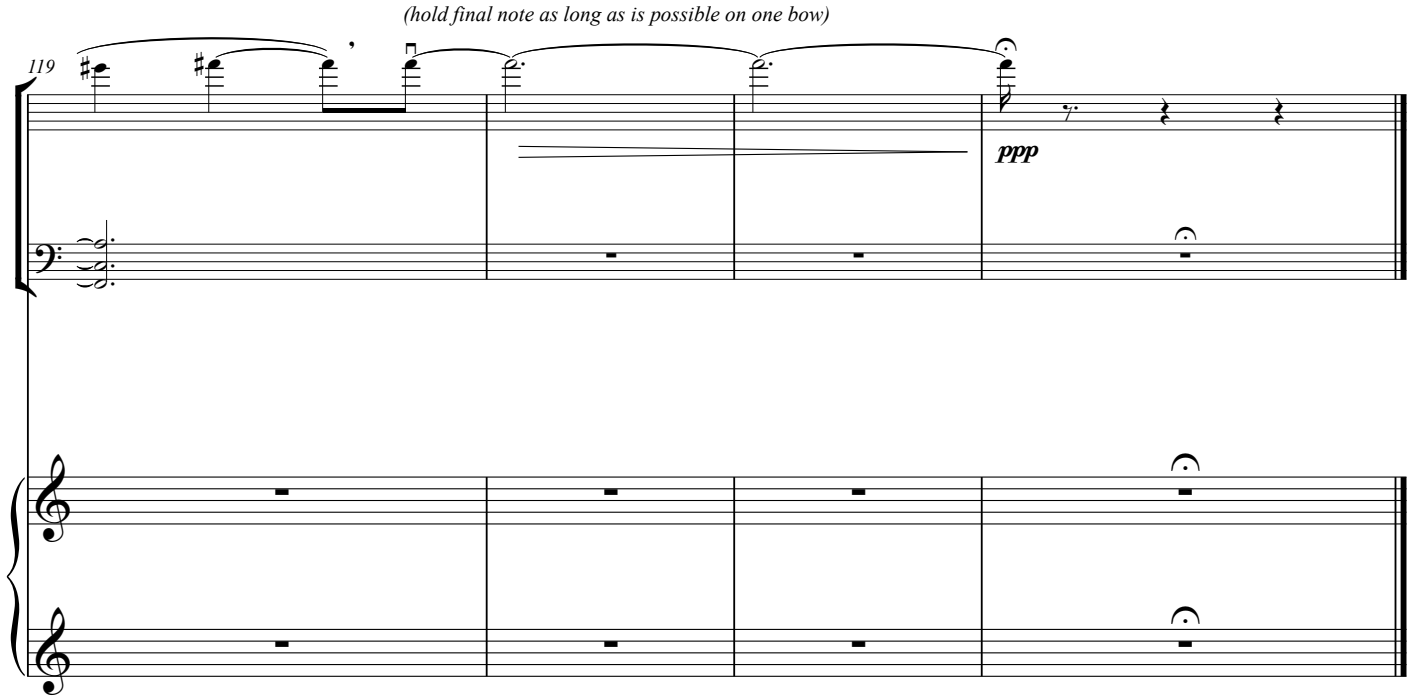

103
ppp
mp
pp
3
8vb



(hold sonorities w/pedal, keep pedal down until end of piece)




115
8va
loco
3


(hold final note as long as is possible on one bow)
119
ppp