**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON**

FACULTY OF LAW, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

School of Humanities

# Portfolio of Compositions

by

**Christopher John Habron**



Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

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The eight pieces in this portfolio constitute an exploration of several aspects of Western musical discourse, drawing mainly on medieval and modernist musical traditions, as well as certain developments in twentieth century visual art and literature. Found materials (such as plainchant, a medieval cantiga, a keen and several nineteenth century operas) and found practices (such as cipher-based and number-based compositional techniques) are transformed to yield hitherto unknown musical syntheses. All the pieces have relationships to text, whether the text remains a silent inspiration or is vocalised and, in the latter case, a wide variety of text-setting strategies and vocal registers is investigated. The pieces also show an engagement with, and exploration of, notation as a vital ingredient of musical discourse. All these aspects of the compositions (historical, transformative, textual and notational) show how the pieces embody the relational and intertextual characteristics of compositional endeavour.

The accompanying commentary presents a broadly phenomenological view of the portfolio, describing my lived experience of making music. In particular, it examines the compositions in terms of four activities, which get to the nub of what I am doing when I compose: transforming, synthesising, provoking and learning. The discussion takes an anti-Cartesian view of knowledge and thus articulates (i) how, through these activities, I engage with the world around me, a world which perforce includes my compositions, and (ii) how the compositions, in turn, relate to others, such as listeners and performers. In essence, it outlines the philosophical and contextual significance of the music: how, and in what ways, the sounds, texts and notations point beyond themselves.

**Contents of the portfolio**

**Commentary**

(this volume)

**Compositions**

(the following are all separately bound)

**Commentary: Contents**

## Acknowledgements

First of all, my thanks go to the Arts and Humanities Research Council, whose financial support has been invaluable.

I would like to thank Rosalind Mizen and Maria Zampeta, as well as members of EXAUDI, Winchester College Contemporary Music Group, CoMA South and The Hola ensemble, all of whom have embraced and performed my music during the last three years. In particular, credit is due to my friends Ignacio Agrimbau, Antonio Cascelli and James Weeks for their superlative performances of my music, for offering me a wealth of intellectual stimulation and emotional support, and for proof-reading this commentary.

Many other friends and members of my family – particularly my parents, brothers and sister – have also provided me with much needed support and unfailing encouragement; I thank them all.

I would also like to take this opportunity to place on record my heartfelt gratitude to two individuals who, although not directly connected with my PhD, have had a seminal influence on my development as a musician and to whom thanks are long overdue: Timothy Slater and Barry Russell.

My last, and biggest, vote of thanks goes to Michael Finnissy for his generosity of spirit and inspirational guidance.

## Introduction

The queer resemblance between a philosophical investigation...and an aesthetic one.

Ludwig Wittgenstein[1]

The world is not what I think, but what I live through.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty[2]

There are, I believe, several ways in which musical composition is like philosophy, at least philosophy as Wittgenstein understood it. One such could be expressed by re-working his observation that 'Philosophy is not a body of doctrine but an activity'.[3] To replace 'musical composition' for 'philosophy' results in an accurate picture of how I experience composition. Or, put the other way around: when I compose, I do not feel as though I am proceeding from or working towards a body of doctrine. Thus, in grasping the essence of composition and philosophy as ongoing activities, open-ended and provisional, their fundamentally exploratory nature is revealed. Indeed, it is more accurate to say that composition is made up of many different types of activity – imagining, sketching, notating, transcribing, playing, editing, inscribing the self, offering an experience to performer and listener, and so on –, which come into play at different stages of the compositional process and which may run concurrently. Here, too, Wittgenstein has intuited a similar thought in relation to philosophy: 'There is not *a* philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, like different therapies'.[4]

In the light of these thoughts, I have identified four activities which, at the time of writing, seem to get to the nub of what it is I am doing when I compose: transforming, synthesising, provoking and learning. Each of these can be considered as an *eidos*, a 'bundle of *essential* properties'[5], and in trying to identify such 'nubs', the approach I

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[1] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, (ed.) G. H. von Wright, (tr.) Peter Winch (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1980) 25e.
[2] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, (tr.) Colin Smith (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1962) xvi-xvii.
[3] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, (trs) D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness (London: Routledge 2000) 4.112.
[4] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, (eds) G. E. M. Anscombe, R. Rhees and G. H. von Wright, (tr.) G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers 1999) section 133.
[5] Trevor J. Saunders (ed.), *Early Socratic Dialogues* (London: Penguin 1987) 21. The emphasis in this and all subsequent quotations is in the original.

take may be loosely termed phenomenological. Wayne D. Bowman writes that phenomenology's '...most distinctive characteristics are a distaste for theoretical distortion and excess and a determination to describe the objects of human experience in their full richness – as they are lived.' He goes on, it '...is the study of presences and appearances, a 'first philosophy' whose concern is to elucidate the primordial ground for human knowledge and experience before it becomes overlaid with conceptualization, systematization, abstraction, and reason. Where other philosophies seek to explain, in other words, phenomenology strives for full description'.[6]

In a similar way this commentary attempts to describe my lived experience as a composer. It is a thoroughly personal account; the knowledge to which it points does not pretend to universal validity but it will nevertheless, for some readers, uncover strong intersubjective commonalities and shared meanings. That is, whilst I may well not be the first to have had the experiences I describe (many of them are quite probably commonplaces), neither do they constitute transcendent or absolute essences.

To reduce my experience as a composer to four types of activity may seem, on the surface, to be rather crude. But to say, in a positivistic or naturalistic way, that composition is reducible to 'only x' is not the same as to say, in an eidetic way, that it is reducible to 'essentially x'; and it is the second approach I attempt here. Such an approach allows that there might be much more to the matter in hand than the current circumstances permit one to discern and, indeed, given my very subjectivity this is not surprising. It is precisely my experience that I have to start from. As Dermot Moran has it: 'Phenomenology aims to describe in all its complexity the manifold layers of the experience of objectivity as it emerges at the heart of *subjectivity*'.[7] Thus, Moran points to one of the fundamental notions of phenomenology: intentionality. That is, experience is always experience *of* something, perception is always perception *of* something; the object is, as it were, locked in with our subjective perception of it. We do not need, therefore, to imagine that the object is illusory. Indeed, to talk of the illusory presupposes the existence of the *non*-illusory.

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[6] Wayne D. Bowman, *Philosophical Perspectives on Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1998) 254.
[7] Dermot Moran and Timothy Mooney (eds), *The Phenomenology Reader* (London: Routledge 2002) 2.

Once we have dispensed with the Cartesian view of the possibility of purely objective knowledge (that is, 'knowledge itself' rather than knowledge *of* something), the primacy of the perceiving subject becomes vitally important, if not exigent. In terms of composition, such a picture demands that a true understanding come from within, from where the action occurs. And whilst such an understanding may benefit greatly from the insight of others (and, as will be seen, this is also my own experience), this will not make the knowledge any more 'objective', given the subjectivity of those other observers; it will however, through the possibility of shared discourse, enrich the description.

The sort of radical reflection advocated by phenomenology is an engagement with the world rather than a retreat to a position of solipsism. Eric Matthews, when outlining Husserl's later phenomenology, writes: '...the human subject becomes, not a detached Cartesian "ego", but human beings who are part of the world that they experience, and who experience it, not in the form of pure contemplation, but in the course of active involvement with it'.[8] This commentary, then, attempts to involve itself actively with, and to describe, my aesthetics and compositional techniques. It also seeks to show how my music itself can be seen as engaging actively with the world around it, through its relationships with tradition and with other people. Last, it must be noted that the four activities I discuss constitute a *post priori* discursive framework and are a consequence of (more or less radical) reflection after the fact. Whilst they in no way 'exhaust' the reality of my composition, they do, however, grasp quite a lot of it.

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The activities of transforming, synthesising, provoking and learning will be discussed individually in the next four chapters. Necessarily, given this thematic structure, the same piece of music will appear in different chapters, depending on the activity under discussion.

Chapter 1 introduces the idea that musical creation is more accurately thought of as transformation and uses the common ground between Ferruccio Busoni's aesthetics and Bruce Ellis Benson's 'improvisational model' of musical activity as a starting

[8] Eric Matthews, *The Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty* (Chesham: Acumen 2002) 29.

point for the following discussion of found materials. The chapter then divides into two parts; one describes how my music has transformed other pieces of music, the other looks at how it has transformed general compositional practices, such as cipher-based techniques. It ends with a discussion of the difference between two 'transcriptional discourses' as they appear in my portfolio: transforming abstract sound structures and transforming notations themselves.

Chapter 2 centres on the idea that music ramifies far beyond its sonic surface and that composition is essentially a synthesis of discourses; the ancient Greek concept of *mousike* is invoked to show that such ways of thinking about music are not new. Whilst there is an infinity of aspects to the synthesis which constitutes any piece of music, this chapter focuses on just two: first, it relates how my music reacts to or integrates text; second, it follows the threads which connect the source materials of the most substantial score in the portfolio, *Untellable Wisdom*, and in so doing it shows how they are embodied in the piece.

Chapter 3 presents a close-up of one of the composer's activities: notating. The discussion proceeds from a general consideration of what notation may accomplish to how it functions specifically in my music, for example, as a stimulation or provocation to varying degrees of improvisation. The chapter also describes my quasi-performative experience of notation itself, especially in relation to graphic or semi-graphic scores, and revisits a topic broached at the end of Chapter 1, namely, the transformation of existing scores as a type of transcription. It ends with a frank examination of the consequences of more open scores for the idea of authorship.

Chapter 4 considers the various sorts of knowledge that may be garnered from the experiences afforded by composition and performance, in particular self-knowledge. Iris Murdoch's comment that 'art mirrors…the disunity' of the self prompts me to invoke another ancient name, *musica speculativa*, as having a meaningful contemporary application. The commentary ends by linking speculation to wonder and, by appealing once again to Busoni as well as to Naomi Cumming and Charles Ives, it offers a view of composition as exploration and as the search for the 'not yet known'.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Most people like it so it must be good* | | |
| *(Selbstbildnis mit Horn)** | (wind 5tet, pno) | 10' |
| *Water is taught by Thirst** | (sop, perc) | 2' |
| *Above the Tempests of* | | |
| *our Weekdays** | (2 vln, pno, glockenspiel) | 9' |
| *Fuego Helado* | (pno) | 8' |
| *Amor es Rey* | (pno) | 7' |
| *Black on White** | (at least 8 performers) | 8' |
| *Con Beso de su Boca* | (SSAATB) | 6' |
| *Claudia Molitor is a Composer* | (speaking accordionist) | 8' |
| *When a Brother* | (sop, pno) | 12' |
| *Anima Christi** | (SATB, org) | 6' |
| *Magnificat** | (TB, org) | 8' |
| *Transformation and Wonder* | (at least 6 performers) | ca 20' |
| *Escucho con mis Ojos* | (pno) | ca 15'-30' |
| *Untellable Wisdom* | (at least 3 performers) | ca 10'-120' |
| *Vaam** | (cl, pno, perc) | 12' |

**Table of Pieces**

These are the pieces I have written during my PhD, in chronological order. Those with an asterisk are not included in the portfolio.

# Chapter 1

# Transforming

## I Found materials: pieces

> After all, every human work is only the
> elaboration of material existent on the earth.
>
> Ferruccio Busoni[9]

> Nothing is created in the operations either of art or nature.
>
> Antoine Laurent de Lavoisier[10]

Busoni offered this insight into 'human work' with regard to musical composition; Lavoisier made his remark with regard to chemistry. Notwithstanding the differences between these two fields of human exploration, both quotes point to something fundamental about the nature of potential and its realisation; that is, both posit that human work is not purely creative but is, in essence, the elaboration or transformation of that which already exists. Certainly Busoni's piano transcriptions constitute an example of this; each is a transformation and elaboration of another piece of music. Yet what may, at first sight, be less clear is just how much composers are engaged in the business of transformation when *not* transforming other pieces as such but when they are, in the broadest sense, drawing on the compositional discourses and traditions of which they are part.

Bruce Ellis Benson understands this phenomenon in terms of improvisation and it is worth quoting him at length on the matter:

> Composers never create *ex nihilo*, but instead "improvise": sometimes on tunes that already exist, but more frequently and importantly on the tradition in which

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[9] Ferruccio Busoni, *The Essence of Music*, (tr.) Rosamond Ley (London: The Rockliff Publishing Corporation 1957) 51.

[10] Quoted in Douglas McKie, *Antoine Lavoisier – The Father of Modern Chemistry* (London: Victor Gollancz 1935) 271. Lavoisier is also often attributed as having said 'Nothing is lost, nothing is created, everything is transformed', which, whether he said it or not, expresses the thought even more clearly.

> they work...The problem here is that neither creation nor discovery seems quite adequate to describe the process of composing either literary or musical works. But *improvisation* very nicely captures both of these aspects. To improvise is to rework something that already exists...and thus to transform it into something that both has connections to what it once was but now has a new identity. "Composing" is not simply a matter of bringing elements together; rather, they are brought together in a way that transforms those elements...Composition is both the improvisation of music and the improvisation on that discourse. Not only do composers provide new ways of applying the conventions of a given discourse but also they may reshape those conventions. By replacing the "creation model" with an *improvisational model*, I think we have a more phenomenologically accurate picture of what actually takes place in making music...[11]

Whether we use 'transformation' or 'improvisation' (and I am happy to stick with the former term), the point is clear: a composer's musical activity is embedded in, and is transformative of, a set of discourses and traditions; it is inevitably intertextual.[12] This is now taken as axiomatic by most disciplines charged with the task of understanding music, including ethnomusicology, musical semiotics, the sociology of music, the New Musicology and, in some recent cases, the philosophy of music.[13] Somebody looking at my music from one of these vantage points (especially, perhaps, the first two), in order to outline the discourses and traditions within and against

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[11] Bruce Ellis Benson, *The Improvisation of Musical Dialogue – A Phenomenology of Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2003) 25, 45 and 52. The interconnectedness of improvisation and composition has also been described from an ethnomusicological perspective by Bruno Nettl: '*Improvisation and composition are frequently regarded as completely separate processes, but they are also two versions of the same*'; Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology – Thirty-one Issues and Concepts* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press 2005) 29.

[12] As Julia Kristeva has it: 'Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another...In the space of a given text, several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another'. See 'Word, Dialogue, and Novel' (1967) and 'The Bounded Text' (1966-67) in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, (ed.) Leon S. Roudiez, (trs) Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine and Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Blackwell 1970) 66 and 36.

[13] An example of the latter: 'In common with everything else, music occupies a conceptual space, not in a vacuum, but at the interstices of an indefinitely large and shifting set of other concerns, each of which it conditions and is conditioned by...It is this embeddedness that gives music much of its richness, as well as accounting, through the fluctuating composition of its conceptual environment, for all of its history. I am convinced that any attempt to understand music which tries to suppress this about it – the fact that it is embedded and historical – will be thin and unsatisfactory at best, and almost certainly worse than that'; Aaron Ridley, *The Philosophy of Music – Theme and Variations* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press 2004) 2.

which the pieces in my portfolio work, would want to take account of, at the very least, such things as the Western polyphonic tradition, the technologies of the piano and staff notation, the development of philosophical aesthetics and the specifics of my biography. It is not my place, however, to offer this sort of 'thick' description of my work.[14] The following account will concern itself, primarily, with my view of the *poietic*, that is, my views of how the pieces are made and thought about during the process of making.[15]

The transformation of, or 'improvisation on', discourse and tradition includes the use of found materials, a felicitous term in the present discussion because it points to the idea that the materials are already there: 'something that already exists' (Benson), 'material existent on the earth' (Busoni).[16] However, my use of found materials is not only explicable with recourse to the inevitability of intertextuality that semiotics and phenomenology uncover; nor is it solely due to the influence of composers such as Busoni, Ives and Finnissy. It also relates to particular currents in visual art, which have emphasised the use of found materials. Significant as an instigator in this regard is Marcel Duchamp but of more personal significance is the work of Kurt Schwitters and Robert Rauschenberg.

This chapter looks at found materials in two ways: how the pieces in my portfolio transform specific pieces and how they transform general practices. Under the former heading come plainchant, folk music, a medieval cantiga and several operas; under the latter come, primarily, cipher-based and number-based compositional processes.

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[14] A 'thick' description, according to Gary Tomlinson, '...would aim to comprehend..."a stratified hierarchy of meaningful structures in terms of which...[behaviours or texts] are produced, perceived, and interpreted, and without which they would not...in fact, exist..."' This is in contradistinction to a 'thin' description, which would only see superficialities in cultural behaviours or texts and thus miss essential meanings and subtleties of context. Tomlinson is here quoting Clifford Geertz (*The Interpretation of Cultures*, London: Fontana Press 1993, 6-7) and notes that 'Geertz's conception of culture...is a semiotic one'; thus, thick description can also be described in terms of the 'constellation of interpretants' (Nattiez) which ramifies from a text, or the 'epistemic nexus' (Monelle) which surrounds and constitutes a text. See Gary Tomlinson, 'The Web of Culture: A Context for Musicology', *Nineteenth Century Music* 7/3 (1984) 351; Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *Music and Discourse – Toward a Semiology of Music*, (tr.) Carolyn Abbate (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1990) 10; and Raymond Monelle, *The Sense of Music – Semiotic Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 2000) 155.

[15] See Nattiez *ibidem*, 10-16 for the introduction of the term poietic. Nattiez contrasts this with esthesis, which is, in very general terms, a description of how music is received.

[16] Hence I now prefer the term 'found materials' to 'pre-existing materials'; if we take it that composers are, in essence, transforming what is already existent then the latter definition is tautological.

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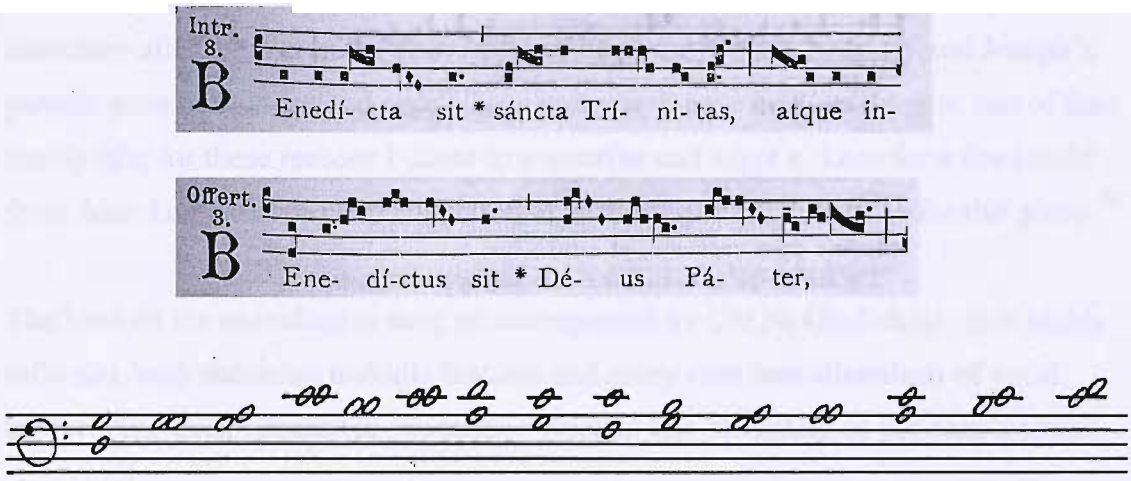
*Con Beso de su Boca*, *When a Brother*, *Transformation and Wonder* and *Untellable Wisdom* use found materials which are specific pieces. *Con Beso de su Boca* shows a very simple transformation of its found materials: the pitches in the tenor and bass parts are derived from the introit and offertory for The Feast of the Blessed Trinity.[17] The first thirty pitches of each melody are superimposed and thus produce a series of dyads and unisons (see Example 1); this series is then assigned to the tenor and bass durations which were already mapped out. The tenor and bass parts therefore combine to form something akin to the tenor part of a medieval or early Renaissance motet; they form a generally slower moving part which underpins the others. The fact that the plainchants are transformed *and* constructed in such a way (for the two are not necessarily linked) shows that the found material here constitutes not only the plainchants themselves (specific pieces) but also the manner of tenor part construction in medieval motet composition (a generic practice).




**Example 1** The sources from *The Liber Usualis* and the first half of the tenor-bass part pitches of *Con Beso de su Boca* (beginning to bar 96). The non-repetition in my version of the offertory's second note is a mistake.

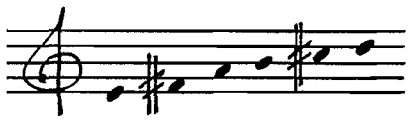
Composition involves other types of transformation besides the conscious manipulation of found materials; one such is the subliminal working through of

[17] *The Liber Usualis* (Belgium: Desclée and Company 1961) 909 and 911.

influences, a process much harder to articulate. Any insights regarding transformations of this type are usually the result of *post facto* reflection and feedback from colleagues. Regarding *Con Beso de su Boca*, two other relevant points of historical contact have come to light in this way. The first relates, again, to early music and is the fact that the use of duos (and their alternation) and the clear-cut changes of texture (such as the cut-offs which leave silence or some other parts on held notes) are not dissimilar to rhetorical tropes found in the motets of composers such as Dufay and Josquin.[18] The second is that some of the treatment of pitch and rhythm and the rather highly charged expressivity have echoes in the particular dissonant lyricism (but not compositional process) of Luigi Nono's choral writing, as seen in pieces such as *Ha venido: canciones para Silvia.*

A more extended reworking of found material can be seen in *When a Brother*. This piece sets fragments of a poem by my great-grandmother, Mary Margaret O'Hara, which recounts the family's joy at welcoming home her brother, Joseph Sykes O'Hara, on leave from the First World War. Joseph went back to France and was killed in 1917. The 'scenario' of this piece is one in which Mary rereads the poem sometime after the war in the knowledge of her brother's death. Mary and Joseph's parents were born in Ireland and folksong may well have been an integral part of their family life; for these reasons I chose to transcribe and adapt a 'keen for a dead child', from Alan Lomax's recorded collection of Irish folksong, as the basis for this piece.[19]

The keen on the recording is sung unaccompanied by Cití Ní Ghallchóir. It is highly inflected, with recurring melodic features and many seamless alterations of vocal timbre. The keen remains in one mode, which is also the extent of the song's range:



**Example 2** The mode of 'keen for a dead child'.

Many of these features are expanded and exaggerated in *When a Brother* but they often retain a lot of their original character. For example, on p.2, the C# which acts as

[18] This observation was made by Ignacio Agrimbau.
[19] *World Library of Folk and Primitive Music* - compiled and edited by Alan Lomax, Vol.2 Ireland, performers various (Rounder CD 1742: 1998).

a 'ceiling' of the registral space and only ascends to D on 'my Brother dear' (last system), is one of the unique harmonic devices from the original which I decided to incorporate, although the length of time it takes to arrive at the D is extended in my piece.

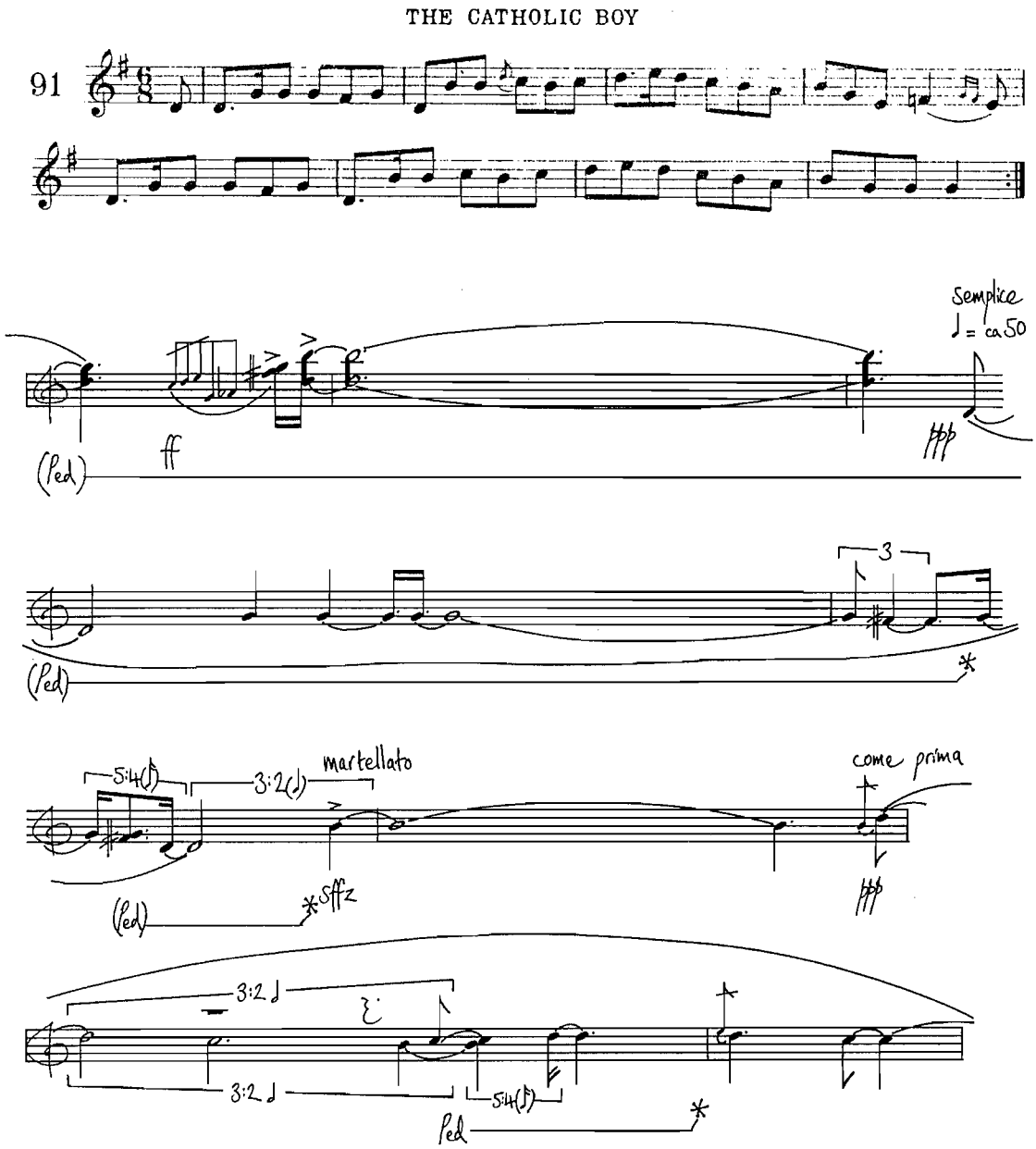
Some other aspects of my transformation of the keen can be seen on p.4: transposition of the mode and extension of the range (second system); microtonal inflection and melodic decoration of a single pitch (also second system); fragmentation of the line (third and fourth systems). The detailed notation also attempts to capture some of the timbral qualities of the original, such as vowels closing onto consonants before the note ends (p.4 second system: 'am') and nasal sounds. British English pronunciation is used as an expedient for the latter; that is, the gradual production of diphthongs (as in 'I', 'wild' and 'inside') produces a timbral quality similar to the recording. Likewise, the microtonal writing in places such as p.4 (systems four and five) has less to do with inflection or ornament and instead is used as a means to capture a 'non-musical' sound, in this case wailing.

*Con Beso de su Boca* does not take into account any particular performance of the plainchants in its reworkings of them; the notation of the melodies provided me with all I required: some pitches. In the case of *When a Brother*, however, the found material is Cití Ní Ghallchóir's unique *performance* of the keen; there is no notation. Any transformation of this piece had, therefore, to be a transformation of a performance. It was a matter of choice whether and to what extent I abstracted from the recording (for example, by abstracting the mode but ignoring the timbre of the voice) or tried to capture it, retain something of it. As the notation attests, I placed myself towards latter pole.

Another found material, *The Catholic Boy* (a double jig)[20], is reworked in one section of *When a Brother*'s piano part. Unlike the keen, this material was taken from a notated source and therefore my treatment of it is a transformation of an abstract sound structure rather than of a performance. The melody of the jig appears unaltered, in terms of the sequence of pitches, on p.5 (starting at *semplice*), until the bottom of the page; the rhythm is greatly altered from the original (see Example 3).

[20] *The Roche Collection of Traditional Irish Music* (Cork: Ossian Publications 1993) Vol.3, 28.

The melody is then subjected to simple aleatoric procedures such as transposing every other note and transposing small groups of pitches.




**Example 3** The double-jig *The Catholic Boy* and the first part of its reworking in *When a Brother*.

The relatively large span of time accorded to the piano during this solo is in part intended to allow the listener time to reflect on the text but, more significantly, to embody an act of remembrance itself. That is, the voice being absent for three minutes should be noticeable, either during its absence or, retrospectively, as soon as

it re-enters; that is, the listener may almost forget that there was a voice at all. The *idea* of absence is, therefore, made manifest by the real absence of the voice.

Both *Con Beso de su Boca* and *When a Brother* use what might be termed 'classic' transcriptional techniques to treat found materials; principally these are alterations to melodies, such as superimposition, transposition, decoration, motivic reworking and rhythmic distortion. In *Transformation and Wonder* however, the found material, one of Alfonso X's *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, is transformed in other ways.[21] One of these operates on the level of continuity; the other on the level of notation.

Continuity: *Transformation and Wonder* maintains the verse-refrain structure of Alfonso's original but interrupts the cantiga or interpolates transformations of it *in medias res*. For example: two interludes (the first of which, in a sense, 'comes too soon') interrupt for significant periods of time the verse-refrain alternation; in the refrains, the underlined words in the voice part act as cues for the rest of the ensemble to interrupt or momentarily obscure the voice; and, indeed, the voice part itself is interspersed with rests (to allow space for the ensemble interjections) and improvisatory digressions (for example Refrain 2).

There is an echo here between Alfonso's poetic technique and the continuity of *Transformation and Wonder*, an echo which came to light after finishing the piece. On reading George D. Greenia's article, 'The Politics of Piety: Manuscript Illumination and Narration in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*', I discovered that one of Cantiga no.346's features was characteristic of much of Alfonso's poetry, specifically his use of a verse-refrain form which results in the linear narrative of the verses being periodically interrupted by the repeating refrain, often in mid-sentence, sometimes even in mid-word. Greenia writes:

> As for the narrative, the progression of the tale is effectively obstructed by this temporal pause during its [the refrain's] recitation...What should be linear is constantly being clipped in mid-stream to return to the devotional leitmotif. The syntactic cutoffs are sometimes shocking, as a line is disrupted in mid-

[21] The cantiga is *Com' a gran enfermidade* (Cantiga No.346), which I transcribed from *Magnificentia Iberica - Music of Medieval Spain*, Florata (ASV Digital, CD GAU 144: 1995). I selected the tune only, not accompanimental features.

> syntagm...not completed until the following strophe after the refrain has been repeated.[22]

Notation: There is a difference between the 'classic' transcriptional discourses mentioned above, such as selecting and abstracting elements of the original (motifs, themes, whole passages and so on) and a reworking of the notation of the original *as* notation, that is, as a physical object, which is defined spatially. For example: my treatment of the jig in *When a Brother*, one could argue, alters the notation of the jig (by distending the rhythms) but that would not be an accurate perception, for what I have done is to abstract an element (pitch) and re-work it rhythmically; my notation is then a *record of the result of that process*. In *Transformation and Wonder*, on the other hand, the transformations are often of the notation of the cantiga *as an object*, that is, I photocopied my notation of the cantiga and then used it as a basis for many subsequent pages of the score: cutting up the staves and pasting them in superimpositions and new concatenations, writing over them, 'graffiti-ing' them and so on.[23] In this case I have not abstracted anything from the cantiga; rather I have redefined the physical disposition of a photocopy of the notation and, in some cases, written over it.

Transformations of the second sort differ depending on the extent to which imagined sounds had any part to play at their birth. This is a complicated aspect of the compositional process because, even in making spontaneous physical alterations to a notation, the eye may still be 'hearing'. Indeed, I think there are very few instances, even in graphic notation, of notations that do not imply something heard. Simon Shaw-Miller does however claim that: 'For Bussotti, musical results, whatever they may be, flow directly from the visual. The ear plays no part until the work is performed'.[24] This is patently not true if one looks at the very first indication of Bussotti's *Piano Piece for David Tudor 1*: 'Tutto nell'orbita del *pp*, sempre', the

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[22] George D. Greenia, 'The Politics of Piety: Manuscript Illumination and Narration in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*', *Hispanic Review* 61/3 (1993) 333.

[23] An analogy from literature would be to compare the plays of Aristophanes (which parody Euripides's style) or Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (which parodies 'literary mores' in general) with Tom Phillips's *A humument: a treated Victorian Novel* (London: Thames and Hudson 1997). Phillips made *A humument* by drawing and painting on the pages of an *extant* book (William Hurrell Mallock's 1892 novel *A Human Document*), which was then mass produced as a book in its own right.

[24] Simon Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds of Music – Art and Music from Wagner to Cage* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2002) 21-22.

actual example that Shaw-Miller uses.[25] It may well be true that, to a very large *extent*, 'the ear plays no part' in some notations (Earle Brown's *December 1952* may stand up to that claim) but not, I would argue, no part whatsoever.

From my experience, the eye does not cease to hear when altering notations in the ways I have described; mark-making is too bound up with hearing for the latter faculty to be easily switched off. One may choose not to make the performers privy to sounds imagined during the writing of the score and, indeed, those sounds may have only been vague imaginings of how one would interpret the score if one were to perform the piece oneself; or they may have only been distantly present as an analogue to the movement of the hand (a sort of automatic mental residue of previous connections between sight and sound, which have long since receded to the back of the mind), but they are, or used to be, imagined sounds nevertheless.

In *Transformation and Wonder* there are many instances in which I altered the notation of the cantiga physically and imagined sounds (at least in a vague sense) simultaneously. For example, Interlude 2 (solo) is a cut-up of a photocopied page of the cantiga, with some arbitrarily added stems and half-coloured note-heads; decisions that accompanied these actions, however, were that it should be solo, that the harmony would be predominantly modal with the possibility of some chromatic alterations and that in performance, as the instructions say, 'tenderness and seriousness should predominate' (see Example 4). To reiterate: one can transcribe an abstract element of a piece of music and use notation to record the result of that process (Busoni's piano transcriptions are good examples of this) or one can take the notation as an object and alter it. In the former, the 'objectness' of the notation plays no part, only the abstract sound structure that it represents.

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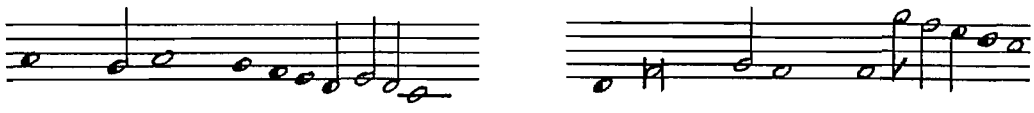
[25] Indeed, it is surprising how prominent such misapprehensions are among respectable scholars. Monelle, whilst presenting a rather nuanced critique of Bussotti's *Pour Clavier* and Haubenstock-Ramati's *Chordophonie I* (linking them, for example, to issues of hypostatisation), nevertheless concludes: 'In this sense, they were never meant for performance at all' (Monelle, *The Sense of Music*, 224). However, as Erik Ulman reminds us, Bussotti insisted that the title of the *Five Piano Pieces for David Tudor* '...was not a dedication but an instrumental indication'; see 'The Music of Sylvano Bussotti', *Perspectives of New Music* 34/2 (1996) 189. Shaw-Miller's solecism (missing the 'heard' aspect of Bussotti's scores) is one thing; to say, in the light of the dedication to Tudor, that Bussotti's scores 'were never meant for performance at all' is quite another.



**Example 4** The opening of the solo part of Interlude 2 from *Transformation and Wonder*.

In *Transformation and Wonder*, then, a high degree of responsibility is afforded to the performers, who are themselves much more active in the transformations of the found material than the performers in *Con Beso de su Boca* and *When a Brother*; the transformations are co-authored. This is *a fortiori* true of *Untellable Wisdom*, which presents transformations of pages from fifteen operas and is a much more open piece than *Transformation and Wonder*. Notwithstanding the fact that both these pieces transform found materials, to describe in further detail the notational transformations that they contain, and which constitute much of their identities, would make little sense without reference to their potential as stimulation for the performers. Therefore, I will leave discussion of these aspects of both pieces until Chapter 3.

## II Found materials: practices

> Take an object, do something to it, do something else to it, do something else to it... One thing made of another. One thing used as another...
>
> Jasper Johns[26]

The found materials discussed in the last section were specific historical utterances and the transformations I made of them were on the level of abstract sound structure (as represented in notation), performance (as recorded on tape) or notation (as an object). In this section I will discuss two other found materials which, whilst being grounded in particular traditions and discourses, are not sound structures, performances or notations but what one might call general practices: number-based and cipher-based compositional processes. Both these types of transformative process are historically embedded; to give an example of the latter: a *locus classicus* of cipher-based techniques is Josquin's *Missa Hercules Dux Ferrariae*. For his mass, Josquin read off solmisation syllables from the vowels in his patron's name to arrive at the cantus firmus (*re ut re ut re fa mi re*), the first known instance of the *soggetto cavato*.[27] There have been many explorations of pitch derivation in this and similar ways.[28] However, even though one can historically locate this technique, those of my pieces which transform it do not transcribe any piece in particular; instead they use and transform the musical cipher as a practice.

Similarly, with regard to numbers, I draw on practices, not pieces. In particular I have found manifold applications for number sequences, often of random numbers.[29] My

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[26] From CD inlay of *John Cage reads Cage – The Text Pieces 1* (mode 84/85: no date). These statements are taken from Mark Rosenthal's *Jasper Johns – Works Since 1974* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art 1988) but no page references are given in the CD inlay.

[27] For an introduction to this mass and a discussion of the appearance of similar solmisation techniques in other pieces by Josquin, see Willem Elders and Andre d'Olerargues, 'New Light on the Dating of Josquin's "Hercules Mass"', *Tijdschrift van de Koninklijke Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 48/2 (1998) 112-149; see also Bonnie J. Blackburn 'Masses Based on Popular Songs and Solmization Syllables' in *The Josquin Companion*, (ed.) Richard Sherr (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2000) 51-87.

[28] See Eric Sams' article 'Cryptography, musical' in The *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, (ed.) Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan 2001).

[29] As a practice, random number usage is referable to a much more recent historical period. Many composers of the second half of the twentieth century have used controlled randomness, John Cage, Iannis Xenakis and Michael Finnissy being exemplary in this regard.

engagement with random numbers extends to a time before this portfolio was begun and, generally speaking, the use of numbers now governs far fewer aspects of my composition than it did in earlier pieces. Some typical uses of numbers in this portfolio are to yield durations or lengths of certain types of material, to specify which pitches should be drawn from certain pre-determined pitch reservoirs and to specify levels of transposition for individual, or groups of, pitches. In all cases, number-derived material is treated as something to work against, as something to be tested; hence, in practice, I oscillate between notational speculation at the desk and checking the results at the piano.

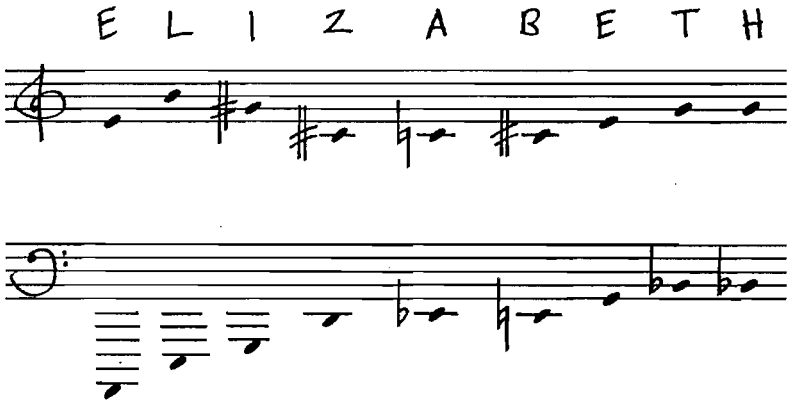
With both cipher-based and number-based processes, my initial attraction was in part a desire to inoculate myself against learned and reified mannerisms and in part to assuage my curiosity (to see what happens when, following Johns, 'one thing [is] used as another'). Depending on the way the processes were set up (and this is always due to a process of choice, which itself can become second nature), such techniques would throw out results which I found more or less amenable to my expressive needs; if less, then I would change the process. In one sense my initial experience of these processes, especially number-based processes, was as a sort of training ground; they taught me to see possibilities which I did not or could not see at the time. Thus, whilst I consider that there is still a place for such processes in my work, it is also true to say that when I am not using them, their influence may still be discerned.

Five of the pieces in the portfolio (*Fuego Helado*, *Amor es Rey*, *Claudia Molitor is a Composer, Con Beso de su Boca* and *Escucho con mis Ojos*) explore cipher techniques; in the last two of these, as well as in *When a Brother*, numbers played a role in the compositional process. Given their inter-relatedness as a trilogy, I will concentrate primarily on cipher-based techniques in *Fuego Helado*, *Amor es Rey* and *Escucho con mis Ojos*. A brief look at *Con beso de su Boca* and *When a Brother* will outline some number-based techniques.

***

***Fuego Helado***

The first piece in which I explored ciphers was *Fuego Helado*. For this piece, a gift for my sister and brother-in-law, I translated their names by assigning the letters of the alphabet to a repeating chromatic scale starting on C (the 'chromatic cipher'). By the workings of serendipity both names have the same number of letters (Elizabeth Louise Habron, Ignasi Rodriguez Ubalde) so, when superimposed, the two ciphers gave a chain of 21 dyads, except when both names yielded the same pitch in the same position (in these cases the note usually became a grace note to the next dyad). A second process was used to extend the pitch content of *Fuego Helado*: by reading off the intervals between successive notes in each cipher and, starting from the lowest note on the piano, working upwards with these intervals, I obtained two more strings of pitches, which I call intervallic ciphers (at this stage the ciphers are considered as pitch-classes and have not been placed in specific registers).[30] The superimposition of the intervallic ciphers appears for the first time on the bottom system of p.1 starting with the grace note A. The following example shows the first part of one of the ciphers and its accompanying intervallic cipher:




**Example 5** The first part of *Fuego Helado*'s Elizabeth cipher with its corresponding intervallic cipher.

However, due to the nature of obtaining intervallic ciphers, the process will very probably yield a different number of pitches in each, even though the original ciphers

[30] Due to the laws of probability, an intervallic cipher will nearly always be a non-octavising scale. The decision to stop reading intervals off the original cipher once one gets to the top of the piano's range is arbitrary; if necessary one could still read the next interval and re-enter the lowest register (for example, by simply counting semitones). This is the approach I took in *Claudia Molitor is a Composer*, given that the range of Claudia's Hohner Regina travel accordion is only two octaves.

contained the same number of pitches. That is, I read off the intervals of the original cipher until I had 'exhausted' the range of the piano; hence, a cipher containing a high proportion of fourths and fifths will ascend the piano's range in fewer steps than one with a high proportion of tones and semitones. In most cases when I have been translating peoples' names into pitches, it has been necessary to begin reading the through the cipher again before the top of the piano range is reached. In the case of *Fuego Helado*, the numbers of pitches in the intervallic ciphers were 26 (Elizabeth Louise Habron) and 24 (Ignasi Rodriguez Ubalde), so I combined the last two notes of the 26-note cipher to make a new dyad (C-B) and thus, by superimposing the first 24 of each and adding the C-B dyad, a 25-note chain of dyads resulted. The piece then proceeds by intercutting the original dyad-chain with that created from the intervallic cipher. The alternation of segments of each dyad-chain does not follow a pattern; it was arrived at by working at the piano and intercutting the two dyad-chains empirically. Decisions regarding durations, voicing, harmonic rhythm and pedalling were also made in this way; weighing the chords in a 'timbral balance' was particularly important.

There is, I believe, something in common between the status of a cantus firmus and the cipher as I have treated it. They are both givens and constantly inform the composition, bringing the composer back to a fundamental element; there is something of the sovereign and the disciplined about both. Notwithstanding the relative intricacy of the cipher transformations in *Fuego Helado*, I would argue that the ciphers are relatively undeveloped; that is, one can imagine much more far-reaching explorations and permutations of them (they are not re-ordered, retrograded, transposed, made into chords larger than dyads, layered with one cipher shifted along by *x* number of notes or otherwise altered[31]). This consistency of pitch generation in *Fuego Helado* also gives the piece a distinctive harmonic colour and, due to the re-use of dyad chains, very subtle repetitions of individual, or small successions of, harmonies occur.

The preference for predominantly mono-textural working and a simple polyphony in *Fuego Helado*, whilst it may relate to early music (compare organa dupla), also has an expressive import; the lightness results from a desire to express tenderness. This

[31] Unlike Josquin himself, who, in the *Missa Hercules Dux Ferrariae*, presents the cantus firmus in retrograde, diminished or augmented note values and canon.

lightness and the rather single-minded treatment of the ciphers result, I think, in a concentrated intimacy which is characteristic not only of some early Ars Nova motets but also some of Morton Feldman or Howard Skempton's music. What these two latter musics share with *Fuego Helado*, irrespective of expressive differences, is an unassertiveness; in a sense they do not extend into the world but require the listener to 'lean forward' into their world.[32]

***Amor es Rey***

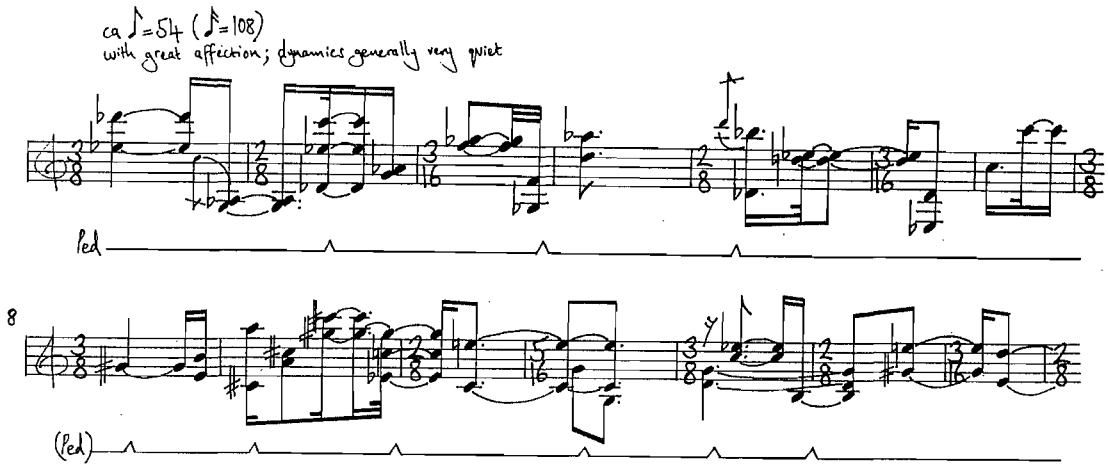
Like *Fuego Helado*, the prevailing expressive property of *Amor es Rey* is one of tenderness (the social functions of the pieces are alike) and the timbral quality is very similar. However, the range for most of the piece is more restricted and the presence of clusters in the lower register results in a clear opposition between high and low. Given that the light, predominantly dyadic, nature of *Fuego Helado* carries over into this piece, and that the clusters are always the preserve of the lowest octave, textural clarity and thickness are also opposed.

As with *Fuego Helado* I derived the raw pitch material from the dedicatees' names using the chromatic cipher but explored it in different ways. For example, instead of using the intervallic cipher, I employed the potential of retrogrades to make four superimpositions of the ciphers: Er-Pp, Ep-Pp, Ep-Pr and Er-Pr (where E=Elizabeth, P=Patrick, p=prime and r=retrograde); I then concatenated these dyad-chains in the order given here. As with *Fuego Helado*, certain superimpositions yielded the same pitch in the same position; in this piece, these became grace notes or a melodic octave, according to a very simple random number process.

Three other new elements are explored in *Amor es Rey* and these can be seen in Example 6: repeated dyads, a feature that had only arisen by chance in *Fuego Helado*; the repetitions are also revoicings (this first occurs in bars 2-3 with the F-Gb dyad). Second: chords greater than dyads; successive iterations are combined in a third

[32] Another common quality between *Fuego Helado* and the musics of these composers is that they are not predicated on teleological assumptions regarding the nature of structure. This has the result that their temporality is more akin to a *musica mundana*, a music that seems to be sounding irrespective of whether anyone is listening to the piece. I am thinking of pieces such as Feldman's *For Bunita Marcus* and Skempton's *Lento*.

sonority. An example of this can be seen in bar 2; the Eb-Db dyad and C grace note of bar 1 are combined and revoiced. If a two-dyad combination contained a repeated pitch-class then the repeated note would be removed and the chord would become a triad. Third: I noticed that the first three notes of each dedicatee's cipher gave E-B-G# and Eb-C-G. These triads are also included in the piece and are scored melodically or as a harmonic interval and a single pitch; the first of these appears in bar 8.




**Example 6** *Amor es Rey* (bars 1-14).

All three of these features were factored into the dyad-chain in one random number procedure which assigned to each dyad one of ten options: 0 = dyad followed by repetition and revoicing, 1 = dyad followed by combination of previous two iterations, followed by repetition and revoicing, 2 or 5 = dyad by itself, 3 = dyad followed by repetition and revoicing, followed by combination of the previous two iterations…9 = dyad followed by combination of previous two iterations, followed by repetition and revoicing, followed by triad. A further number process dictated whether the triad would be E-G#-B or C-Eb-G. These processes together yielded the local repetitions and changes in texture that I desired, although the rhythms were worked on empirically. Indeed, it must be stressed that, as with all my pieces which rely to an extent on aleatoric processes, the results of the process are tested in this way at the piano because the processes often relate only to the parameter of pitch; the emphasis here on deliberate process is simply because it is easier to reconstruct. There is no way to record or reconstruct the many, often very speedy, changes one

makes whilst checking the piece through even though these may be as vital for a piece's character.[33]

The clusters and bass clef activity are agglomerates or revoicings, respectively, of iterations immediately preceding them, reading further back if the same pitch-class appears twice. The monophonic coda of this piece was also inspired by a fortuitous parity between the ciphers. The initials of the dedicatees give: E-C-C and Eb-Eb-G; these pitches, in both their inversions, form the material for the whole coda. It is purely by chance that the first three notes of the ciphers and the dedicatees' initials should give material so rich in major and minor thirds and tonal associations. Indeed, as a result of the triad-rich aspect of this piece, as well as my desire to increase modestly the size of the chords, I decided to emphasise this by using pedalling to 'catch' tonal triads when they occurred fortuitously (that is, not as a result of the above processes), for example bars 24 and 35. Having to work with and react to what is given to one is part of what is attractive about this way of composing (as I imagine it was for those composers who worked with canti firmi); however, in these cases the aleatorically-derived harmonic character also did much to strengthen the expressive properties that I wanted the piece to have.

### *Con Beso de su Boca*

Given that a primary feature of music's ontology is its temporality, I have on occasion mapped out pieces in terms of duration before considering other parameters in detail.[34] In *Con Beso de su Boca*, I first mapped out the relative durations of the duos (soprano and alto) including sections when neither would sing, using a sequence of random numbers from 1-15: 3, 10, 4, 13, 12, 7, 6, 15, 8, 9, 11, 5, 2, 1, 14 (1 = 1 minim); this is adhered to rather consistently. Once I had these durations, I fragmented and alternated the Latin and the Spanish texts in such a way as to create a 'super text' (the duos do not sing simultaneously until p.8). With the text segmented

[33] Nor is there any way to reconstruct one's processual mistakes, of which, I have discovered, there are quite a few in this piece. Human fallibility, it would seem, inevitably mixes another type of randomness with intentionally controlled randomness.

[34] My workings within this discourse have as much to do with my study of medieval isorhythm as with my research into the time plans of, for example, Erik Satie (*Cinéma* from *Relâche*), Edgard Varèse (*Ionisation*) or John Cage (*Sonatas and Interludes*).

in this way, I explored the possibility of using the same number sequence to yield the number of rhythmic iterations per bar (for the soprano duo until it becomes heterophonic and then for the alto duo), primarily to see what would happen if certain words were accorded more or fewer notes than one might have done oneself if setting the text directly. Thus, the soprano duo in bars 3-7 originally had the numbers 3, 10, 4, 13 and 12 (these could be grace notes or 'main' notes).

After playing and reading through these rhythms with pitches added, it became apparent that, whilst this conceit may go some way to achieve my intentions regarding the text (the iterations-per-bar rule automatically produces an ebb and flow of activity and, in combination with my own fashioning of the 'super text', gives rise to a particular manner of text-setting), it would make the texture far busier than I wanted it. Thus, I rewrote the rhythms of the duos; in this way, bars 3-7 in the final version have approximately half the number of iterations (2, 5, 1, 6 and 5) than in the original number sequence.

I used the same number sequence for the bass and tenor durations until bar 90; however, their unit is the dotted crotchet. Some durations are sung to more than one syllable and some are split between note and rest. Furthermore, this sequence was used, like the ciphers and notes-per-bar rule, as something to work against; it is not followed to the letter. This has an interesting link to another aspect of medieval composition, or rather a musicological debate about it; did composers such as Machaut and Dufay compose the different lines of their motets successively or simultaneously?[35] In the case of *Con Beso de su Boca*, there is something of both; the two duos and the tenor-bass part were made successively and then layered; however, they were then played simultaneously at the piano and checked.

The processes I chose in this piece allowed me a higher degree of flexibility with regard to the exact disposition of the counterpoint than in *Fuego Helado*, where the dyads themselves were given. In *Con Beso de su Boca*, I had, at most, four strings of pitches (the two duos) and the tenor-bass part to layer. However, the iterations-per-

[35] The thesis for successive composition is put forward by Bonnie J. Blackburn in 'On Compositional Process in the Fifteenth Century', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 40 (1987) 210-84 and is countered by Daniel Leech-Wilkinson in 'Machaut's *Rose, lis* and the Problem of Early Music Analysis', *Music Analysis* 3/1 (1984) 9-28.

bar rule, which I used for the duos whilst they were heterophonic, besides being more of a proposal than a programme, does not specify which member of the duo should sound the iterations or how these should appear contrapuntally. Thus in a bar with five iterations, such as bar 4, I chose how to share the notes between the sopranos (3-2, 4-1, 5-0, 2-3 and so on) *and* whether soprano 1 would, say, hold a pitch whilst soprano 2 moved through its durations or whether the disposition would be more equal. To take a counterfactual example, bar 4 of *Con Beso de su Boca* could have been split 2 (soprano 1) and 3 (soprano 2); in this case, soprano 1 would have held the B whilst soprano 2 would have moved onto its next G.

***When a Brother***

Except the re-working of the jig, mentioned above, the pitches in the piano part are derived from a number sequence. The sequence is 306345-27111917-7048 (Joseph Sykes O'Hara's private number, date of death and the number of soldiers killed in the same battle who have no grave). It is translated into pitches using the convention 0=C, 1=C#, 2=D and so on; thus, the first few pitches are Eb, C, F#, Eb and E natural. The resulting string is then redeployed in the manner of an intervallic cipher; it was read through twice. Chords of various sizes were derived simply by superimposing successive pitches of this string, and further lines were derived by aleatorically transposing segments of the string (two different segmentations were used). I treated all the resulting pitch material as a stock of possibilities and worked only a few of them into the piece; thus, this material did not have the sovereign feel of the ciphers and is one stage looser again from the approach taken in *Con Beso de su Boca.* This was probably due to the fact that most of the decisions regarding pitch and register in *When a Brother* were motivated by my interpretation of the text (for example, pages 8-10, at 'without expression, as if benumbed', show a drastic slowing of the harmonic rhythm and fixing of the register).

***Escucho con mis Ojos***

*Escucho con mis Ojos* follows on from *Fuego Helado* and *Amor es Rey* as the third and last piece in a series of meditations on the poetry of Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas. It is an ampler piece, not only in terms of duration but also in terms of its use of found materials, text and notational devices. This is, I believe, a result of the sonnet to which it responds being more suggestive of musical possibilities and due to the influence of intervening pieces (twenty months separate the composition of *Amor es rey* and *Escucho con mis Ojos*). Thus, whilst this piece retains the dyad as a principal iterative and harmonic ingredient, the moment-to-moment continuity is loosened and the inclusion of graphic notations and canon give the soundworld a significantly different character.

There is much space in Quevedo's poetry, both in terms of the mental spaces into which it beckons the reader and the actual spaces mentioned, in this case deserts. In *Escucho con mis Ojos*, the obsessive sparseness and the slowness of the tempo are intended, in part, as an analogue of a desertscape. It was also my intention to make the score look spacious, as if the performer had been afforded an open expanse within which to make interpretative choices.

The dyads are a combination of the chromatic cipher of the dedicatee's name and a solfa cipher derived from the sonnet ('**RE**tira**DO** en **LA** paz de estos de**SI**ertos…' and so on). Given that the dedicatee's name yields 18 pitches and the poem 30, the two sequences obviously do not coincide when superimposed. By overlapping them however they produce a series of 90 dyads before the cycle repeats (5 x 18 = 90 and 3 x 30 = 90). With eighteen pages to compose (each page having one pitch of the original cipher as a 'central pitch') I estimated that I needed around ten dyads per page (approximately 180 in total). This number was achieved by combining the intervallic cipher with the sonnet-derived cipher to give another ninety dyads. It was fortuitous that these two sequences, which resulted from the number of letters in my friend's name and the number of solfa syllables to be derived from a Spanish sonnet, should together give me 180 dyads. The central pitches constitute the chromatic cipher in its barest form although, as with the dyads, the registers were chosen in the

act of writing out the dyads (a difference from *Fuego Helado* and *Amor es Rey*, whose voicings were worked through at the piano).

One example of the suggestiveness of Quevedo's text can be found in the lines: 'y en musicos callados contrapuntos, /al sueño de la vida hablan despiertos';[36] this furnished me with the idea of using a quiet contrapuntal texture. The 'fuga irrevocable' of line 12 prompted me to choose canon for this because in Spanish 'fuga' means not only 'it flees' but also 'fugue' and is thus a pun on 'contrapuntos'. The key signatures of the three canons are a translation of the dedicatee's initials (ABS) into German pitch nomenclature: A = A major, B = Bb major and S = Eb major.[37] The durations are derived by reading off numerical values from the sonnet-cipher (do=1, re=2, mi=3 and so on, where 1 = a quaver) and the canon is built up from different re-alignments of these pitches and durations. The canon is hinted at twice and then emphasised in a longer appearance which may throw the piece retrospectively into a different light, coming as it does near the end. That is, the concept of counterpoint (one sound 'against' another), could be read on two levels: the (more local) note-against-note nature of the canons and the dyads, and the (more general) counterpointing of unpitched and pitched sounds (the latter being the central pitch, the dyads, the canons and any pitched interpretations of the graphics).

There is another important aspect to the canon's role in this piece and that is its temporality. Drawing on the work of writers such as Henri Bergson, Victor Zuckerkandl and Thomas Clifton, Raymond Monelle posits two basic temporalities in music; lyric time and progressive time.[38] Lyric time is that of the melody-heard-as-one-thing, a musical experience which, although naturally passing in clock time, gives us the sense of being in the moment. Progressive time, on the other hand, is that of harmonic sequences, modulations and strettos, which gives the sensation of movement, and of the before and after.

In *Fuego Helado* the dyads often present a continuous sense of now, not only due to the harmonic character of the piece but its timbral consistency as well; in *Amor es*

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[36] Translation: 'and in a hushed contrapuntal music, they [the books], awake, speak to this dream-life'.
[37] In this I follow a host of composers, including Fesca, Spohr, Schumann, Glazunov, Berg, Shostakovich and Bussotti, who use Eb as the equivalent of S (in German Eb is spelt Es). See Sams, 'Cryptography'.
[38] Monelle, *The Sense of Music*, especially 84-92.

*Rey*, this sense is broken occasionally by the clusters, which halt the line and therefore give the piece a sense of movement or progression because the line has to *start* again (stopping and starting being basic ingredients of movement).[39] However, because of the importance given in the sonnet to the concept of "fuga irrevocable", the inexorable passing of time, *Escucho con mis Ojos* includes elements which are likely to be heard as once-only, irrevocable events. The graphic notations fulfil this function, as they will produce very few repeated or pulsed rhythmic configurations and, if they did, probably not for long enough to produce a sensation of lyric time (as the repetitive metre of a dance or a march would do). Similarly, the dyads, in contrast to the canons, present a high level of harmonic movement and, in contrast to the unpitched sounds, present timbral change; each patch of dyads is likely to be heard in terms of beginning, ending and transitioning. The canons, especially the third one, are, in contrast, lyrically devised (they never modulate or change formally; there are no articulated formal junctures), and, perhaps paradoxically, give more of a sense of an ever-present now than of time passing.

[39] The coda, however, I would suggest, reinstates lyric time.

# Chapter 2

## Synthesising

### I Texts

> As our sentiments are not aroused by the colors in a painting, so the sovereignty of music over our souls is not the product of sounds.
>
> Jean-Jacques Rousseau[40]

Ciphers, when used in the ways described above, are not heard by listeners *as* ciphers. Primarily they are of poietic, not esthesic, significance. This distinction applies not only to ciphers but to techniques from all periods and places; an early example from Western music would be the pitch-rhythm palindrome in Machaut's *Ma fin est mon commencement*. One does not experience Machaut's rondeau, in real time, in the terms of its palindromic construction and yet, if we wish to do justice to this piece as an instance of *music-making*, at least in a basic sense of the word, then we must take account of how it is made. Two later pieces, Satie's *Sports et divertissements* (which Alan M. Gillmor has called a 'tiny *Gesamtkunstwerk*' due to its combination of aquarelles, ink sketches, musical notation and accompanying text[41]) and Ives's *Concord Sonata* (a 'literary music' according to J. Peter Burkholder, which seeks to represent '...human experience...in all its drama, difficulty, awe, emotional power, and confusion'[42]), also demand to be perceived on levels besides the purely sonic.

These examples, chosen for their relevance to my compositional activity (that is, the 'hidden' technique and materials of Machaut, Satie's visuality and employment of text, and Ives's engagement with, but not setting of, text), bear out Nicholas Cook's observation that: 'Audibility...is not everything in music'.[43] Thus, with all due

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[40] Quoted in John Neubauer, *The Emancipation of Music from Language – Departure from Mimesis in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1986) 98.
[41] Alan M. Gillmor, *Erik Satie* (Boston: Twayne Publishers 1988) 182.
[42] J. Peter Burkholder, *Charles Ives – The Ideas Behind the Music* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1985) 17 and 13.
[43] Nicholas Cook, *Music, Imagination and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1992) 8.

respect, we may amend Rousseau's comment slightly: 'the sovereignty of music over our souls is not *only* the product of sounds'.[44] The thoughts of musicologist Carl Dahlhaus are worth quoting in this regard:

> Limiting the concept of music to the sounding fact – the practice of designating texts, programs, and represented effects as "extramusical" ornaments – is, however, nothing less than obvious. For millennia, the concept of music – that of antiquity and the Middle Ages as well as the modern period up to the eighteenth century – was more broadly defined and included texts, programs, and represented effects.[45]

The concept of music from antiquity to which Dahlhaus is probably referring is *mousike*, a synthesis of music, language and movement. *Mousike* was not merely a sonic phenomenon; the musical, linguistic and physical intelligences were all at play and, most importantly, the process and result were simply not *conceived* as hybrids.[46] The ancient Greeks' more holistic picture stands as a reminder not only that concepts and languages change but also that concepts of 'pure' or 'absolute' music, and the internalist and formalist analytical discourses which support them, are themselves historically located and have become reified; they are woefully inadequate methods with which to describe the totality of human experiences of music-making.[47] Indeed, if following a semiotic or postmodern path, we would need to go far beyond Dahlhaus's 'texts, programs, and represented effects' and include in our concept of music the infinity of interpretants which ramifies from any portion of the all-encompassing Derridean text.[48]

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[44] Indeed, this is, in all probability, what Rousseau himself meant, judging by Neubauer's account of the philosopher's shift from formalist to mimetic aesthetics; *The Emancipation of Music* 98-99.

[45] Carl Dahlhaus, (tr.) Karen Painter, 'Fragments of a Musical Hermeneutics', *Current Musicology* 50 (1992) 10.

[46] Indeed, in other senses *mousike* had an even broader array of signifieds; as Shaw-Miller has written: '...although this is the root of our word *music*, it was first a concept signifying any art form over which the Muses presided: poetry, song, dance, astronomy. *Mousike* did not, therefore, signify in a narrow sense what we now think of as "music"...'; *Visible Deeds of Music* 2. For an account of the disintegration of *mousike* into the separate fields of music and language, see Neubauer, *The Emancipation of Music* 168-181.

[47] There is now a vast non-formalist, non-positivist musicological literature which, in its myriad manifestations, stems ultimately from the disciplines of anthropology, Frankfurt school sociology of aesthetics and literary theory. However, that internalist analytical discourses may not be suitable for describing the totality of music does not mean, as Joseph Kerman reminds us, that they may not illuminate some corner of it; see his *Musicology* (London: Fontana 1985) 155-181.

[48] I refer here to Derrida's famous dictum: 'Il n'y a pas de hors-texte' (there is no outside-of-the-text), quoted in Monelle, *The Sense of Music* 151.

Chapter 1 bore witness to composition as a commingling of different types of poietic transformation, such as the use of historically embedded found materials, as well as the use of different approaches to notation; it also made some speculations as to possible interpretative strategies on behalf of performers and listeners. What was implicit but not spoken there was that, to discuss aspects of music such as these is to point to music as a *synthesis* of discourses (aural, visual, physical and, in the broadest sense, cultural); it is also to see the piece under discussion as fundamentally *relational* rather than as 'music itself', bracketed off from the rest of the world. With this in mind, the current chapter describes in detail two particular aspects of synthesis which are especially relevant to my portfolio: the bringing together of music and text, and music as the focal point of a confluence of thought.

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The use of text in music is a special type of synthesis, not only in the senses shown by the above examples from Satie (quasi-programmatic correlations of music to text) and Ives (more impressionistic responses to particular persons, places and ideas mentioned in texts) but also in the more traditional sense of text-setting. All the pieces in my portfolio engage, on diverse levels, with texts; five pieces transform texts which are 'sounded out' and the other three are responses to texts which remain 'silent'.[49]

The latter three (the piano pieces *Fuego Helado*, *Amor es Rey* and *Escucho con mis Ojos*) are, as has been mentioned, responses to sonnets by Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas. *Fuego Helado*, the most single-minded of the three, takes as its starting point one of the paradoxical images in the poem *Definiendo el amor*: frozen fire. The

[49] This high-level presence of text would be seen by an 'autonomaniac' (Ridley's soubriquet for a (maniacal) promoter of absolute music) as a muddying of the waters, since, as the above quote from Dahlhaus attests, it has been a commonplace of much musical aesthetics of the previous two hundred years or so to view music with text as a lesser form of the art. The crux of Ridley's position is this: '...'the music' of a song cannot be fully specified without reference to its text, and so cannot be understood or assessed in isolation from it. Songs are not a hybrid of words and music. They are a *kind* of music – one that includes words'; *The Philosophy of Music* 86. See also 11, for Ridley's introduction of the concept of autonomania and 1-16 for the entire discussion of the phenomenon. On the synthesis of music and text it is interesting to note that, in ancient Greek musical theory, 'Wordless music is regarded as inferior...'. See Edward A. Lippman, 'The Sources and Development of the Ethical View of Music in Ancient Greece', *The Musical Quarterly* 49/2 (1963) 195.

rhetoric of the piece, which avoids clear beginnings, endings and development, is intended to have something of the static about it (even if this is impossible to achieve in music); this, along with the prevailing warmth of the harmony, is intended to reflect this image. The piece is a highly focussed and concentrated response to one particular image; it is both a sort of meditation on Quevedo's sonnet as well as a focal point for the listener's thought or meditation. Like a candle flame, it provides a very low level of activity and very little change in surface detail. This is a result of what one might call a low level of progressive time; if the piece does give the audience a harmonically articulated series of events to follow, the sense of movement it creates is not often, nor emphatically, heightened or lessened.[50]

There are other important connections here to the visual. The fact that the ciphers are, as I claimed earlier, rather undeveloped may reflect my identification with artists such as Bridget Riley and Naum Gabo. In these artists' work, each piece is an exploration of a very limited number of concerns; the works do one sort of thing, even if this constitutes a limited field of change. *Fuego Helado* has some commonalities with such aesthetics; it is, for example, a piece very much about surface. These characteristics are shared by a piece not included in the portfolio, *Above the Tempests of our Weekdays*, which responds to the svelte and symmetrical nature of Gabo's sculpture *Linear Construction no.2*. The comparison here can be made more explicit by considering that Gabo and Riley do not explicitly refer in their work to other artworks or genres (for example the statue or the portrait) and yet their pieces are transformative and synthetic in relation to the discourses and traditions of which they are part. The references they do make are, therefore, subcutaneous and de-emphasised.

*Amor es Rey* begins to address more of the complexities of Quevedo's poetry, in particular its dialectical nature. In the sonnet *Amor no admite compania de competidor, ansi como el reinar*, the language and imagery of love are interwoven with those of war and slavery; thus, the piece has a more variegated texture by

[50] This piece also has the potential to focus the performer on one particular aspect of performance. One of *Fuego Helado*'s performers, James Weeks, informed me that he felt the dyads had all to be played with one finger from each hand rather than (where possible) with two fingers on the same hand. This had an impact for him not only on the kinaesthetic aspect of the performance but also the psychological; that is, the idea of two hands working in concert in this way has an obvious resonance with the expressive intent of the piece. The performer, as it were, meditates on togetherness through experiencing it, in terms of the physicality of performance, in its barest form.

embodying certain simple oppositions (such as high/low, clear/thick). The polyphony/monophony opposition of the coda was not intended in this way (it was, as discussed above, a result of looking afresh at the ciphers); nevertheless it is one more opposition which became clear *post facto*. The quality of tenderness, which I associate with lighter, clearer sounds, is maintained (low clusters notwithstanding) by the fact that the clusters are few in number and that the harmony has the triad-rich character outlined above.

Of the three however, *Escucho con mis Ojos* is the most multifaceted response to Quevedo's poetry and it synthesises the text (*Desde la torre*[51]) and music in several ways. The piece not only responds to the musical references in the text by referring to the discourse of canonic writing but the score itself also introduces text. In this case I translated the adjectives, adverbs and superlatives of the poem into English and presented them as potential performance instructions (in the Satiean sense) or stimulations to interpretation. Furthermore, that the poem is itself about the phenomenology of reading ('I live in conversation with the deceased, /And I listen with my eyes to the dead') is helpful because it offers another perspective on the transformative nature of composition; that is, composition as dialogue. Composing may be experienced this way if, when transcribing from scores ('listening with the eyes') or transforming practices and texts, one has the feeling that the piece or text suggests a way of proceeding to which one then responds. Dialoguing with and synthesising text and found practices in *Escucho con mis Ojos* is shown most clearly through the use of ciphers, canon and notation. Indeed, the connection with reading is foregrounded from the performer's perspective by the use of non-conventional notation. That is, the performer, when deciding how to interpret less conventional notations is primarily involved in developing a way to read and is thus involved in a sort of dialogue with the score.[52]

The texts of *Con Beso de su Boca* are taken from St Teresa of Avila's meditations on the *Song of Songs* and St Augustine's *Confessions*. My decision to set two texts was

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[51] Also introduced in anthologies with the title *Gustoso el autor con la soledad y sus estudios, escribió este soneto.*

[52] All preparation to perform from musical notation will, in a very general sense, involve finding a way to read; graphic or semi-graphic notations *draw attention to* and problematise this process. In a similar way, all poetry reception involves reading at some stage, yet Quevedo's poem here draws attention to the phenomenology of reading.

intended to refer to the tradition of polytextual motet writing in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, although the texts are not superimposed until bar 47. Both texts share a dialectical attitude based on the necessity of articulating human responses to the divine in human terms, that is, the necessity of the human body and intellect as mediators. Thus, one aspect of the music's structure involves the transformation of one rhetoric into another; a conceptual link to the dialectic pointed to in the texts: the divine as it might be said to exist in potential in each human being and the humanity of God in the person of Christ, as stressed by Christian theology. This rhetorical transformation is played out in the homophonic material of the altos becoming gradually heterophonic and the sopranos doing the reverse.

Whereas in *Con Beso de su Boca* the passionate intensity of the texts is maintained in the setting, Mary Margaret O'Hara's celebratory poem in *When a Brother* has the quality of a lament. This radical alteration of the original meaning of the text is due to my understanding the poem within an imaginary context, not the one in which it was written. The remembering and grief-stricken persona of the song displays her psychological state by not reading the entire poem; one could, for example, imagine her reading a word silently, vocalising a single word from time to time and leaving gaps in her reading. The latter possibility is stretched beyond a realistic limit in a sentence such as '...face...oh...what...a...joyful...hour' (pp.9-10). This re-focuses the listener on a different aspect of language, not necessarily the word-in-context but the connotations conjured up by individual words.

The textual fragmentation of *When a Brother* happens on two levels: certain words and sentences of the O'Hara poem were elided in the very first stages of composition and, on the level of the song, those sentences which are left are sometimes drastically undermined by inserting large gaps between words. Whereas those parts of the text that are used are presented in the order in which they appear in the original poem, in *Claudia Molitor is a Composer*, a whole text is used but it is fragmented into segments containing between one and five words which are then *reordered*.[53] The piecemeal presentation of these decontextualised segments of text is intended to lead

[53] This is not unlike Tristan Tzara's manner of 'automatic' poetry writing: 'He cut newspaper articles up into tiny pieces, none of them longer than a word, put the words in a bag, shook them well, and allowed them to flutter on to a table. The arrangement (or lack of it) in which they fell constituted a "poem", a Tzara poem...' Hans Richter, *Dada – art and anti-art*, (tr.) David Britt (London: Thames and Hudson 1997) 54.

the listener gradually to surmise that they originate from one text, which is being withheld in its original form. Furthermore, the spoken text is fused initially with unpitched tapping according to the rhythm of the words. Gradually the tapping is presented by itself but will be coloured by the context in which began; the immediate repetitions of a tapped rhythm after its appearance with a word or phrase help to concretise the connection (beginning at 'of music' on p.5). Thus, in this piece, the tapping increasingly takes on the 'shadow' of language. Even though the text is never spoken in its original form it is nevertheless used in its entirety, along with conventionally notated rhythms and rests, to articulate the passing of time from the double bar line on p.7 to the end of the piece.

*Claudia Molitor is a Composer* is the only piece in the portfolio for which I wrote the text. It is simple and autobiographical and as such belongs to a 'low' or non-literary class of text compared to the others. As a corollary to this, it is to be delivered in a relatively normal speaking voice; thus, the piece pares down on the levels of textual register and vocal presentation. However, any hint at realism or normality, which these facts may suggest, exists in a tension with the artificiality of the textual fragmentation and the contextualisation of those fragments within the melodies and unpitched tapping. The words may seem everyday but they are also alienated in the context of this piece. A similar tension can be seen, for example, in Kurt Schwitters's collages which, whilst they contain everyday items (such as bus tickets, envelopes and bits of cardboard), are nevertheless carefully arranged.[54]

Unlike *Con Beso de su Boca* and *When a Brother*, in which found pieces (plainchant and keen) were divested of text and re-texted, *Transformation and Wonder* is a transcription of a whole song. Nevertheless, text (as sung and as original text) is synthesised in various ways with other elements of the piece. Three examples will suffice: first, the original relationship of melody to underlay is kept relatively constant until Verse 3 in which the vocalist sings the remembered tune through the 'filter' of the staveless graphic; this *modus operandi* is continued in Refrain 4. Second, verse 4 shows an encroachment of the text into the solo part; the soloist's gestures draw on the text which is directly above them to yield markings which may be interpreted as

[54] A classic example of this is the collage *Mier Bitte*, which is held at the Abbot Hall Art Gallery in Kendal. For a reproduction see Barbara Crossley, *The Triumph of Kurt Schwitters* (Ambleside: Armitt Trust 2005) 61.

dynamics (the 'p of 'pequeno'), articulation (the 'ten' of 'tenpo'), noteheads (the letter 'o') or pitches ('c', 'h', 'a' and 'd' of 'inchado'); these and other letters may also, where appropriate, be vocalised into the instrument. Third, the translation of the cantiga's Galician-Portuguese text is also transformed and forms an integral part of the chorus and wind/brass parts.[55] For the chorus, the nouns of the English translation were taken in the order in which they appear and fragmented syllabically to provide material for vocal improvisation; for the wind/brass, the adjectives of the translated text were used as performance indications.

This play of textual fragmentation and recombination is explored further in *Untellable Wisdom*. The vocalist-instrumentalists perform up to four types of vocal declamation, the texts of which are all derived from Walt Whitman's *Starting from Paumonok*.[56] The texts of the chants are fragmentations not according to syllable but across words; thus: 'I will make the poems of material' becomes: iwill, ma, kethep, oemso, fma, terial and the resulting words are re-ordered. The material for the poems was derived in a similar way but the newly created words were arranged according to simple poetic tropes such as versification, repetition and half-rhymes, and they were assigned particular fonts and punctuational characters. The grooves are made out of phonemes, thus from '...prairies...down...Indiana...and Minnesota...' were derived: pra, dow, di, dm, ta and so on. Here the selection was based on finding a set of phonemes with some shared characteristics which could suggest different sounds on the vocalists' instrument/s.[57] The songs leave the words intact and re-order them such that they may be sung in any order and with repetitions.

The phonemes in the grooves constitute a play of sounds which, as in Schwitters' *ursonate*,[58] is a non-semantic vocalisation and whose meaning, if any, will derive from the psychological affect of certain phonetic units and types of intonation and other factors such as rhythm and volume. Their structuring in *Untellable Wisdom* is,

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[55] The text (Alfonso X 'el sabio') and translation (Professor N. G. Round) are taken from the inlay of the CD cited in note 21.
[56] *Walt Whitman – The Complete Poems*, (ed.) Francis Murphy (London: Penguin 2004) 50-63.
[57] One could, for example, imagine the percussionist assigning different timbres to each of these phonetic units.
[58] There seems to be no standard spelling of Schwitters's title. In *Kurt Schwitters – Das literarische Werk* Vol.1, (ed.) Friedhelm Lach (Cologne: Verlag M.DuMont Schauberg 1973) 214, it appears as 'ursonate' whereas in *Kurt Schwitters – PPPPPP – Poems, Performance, Pieces, Proses, Plays, Poetics* (eds) and (trs) Jerome Rothberg and Pierre Joris (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 1993) 52, it is rendered 'Ur Sonata'.

however, given over to the performer, so they are not subject to the composerly control of *ursonate*. Compared to the grooves, the poems and chants have a more obvious quasi-linguistic nature given that their rhetorical presentation is more generic as opposed to a composed, abstract play of sounds. However, the poems and chants do not need to be imagined as pseudo-languages in order to be effective. Compared to the chants, the poems have a higher level of artificiality as they are more akin to a composed ode than the sort of chant that can be repeated *ad libitum*. The songs are the only vocalist-instrumentalist material to include whole words. Thus these different types of utterances embody various aspects of, or possibilities for, human vocality: non-linguistic sounds abstracted to a high degree from their original context and rhythmicised; quasi-linguistic chant and poetry, the second of which retains some features of spoken English; and recombinations of whole words and phrases from English.

The pseudostic (pseudo-mesostic), so called because the letters in bold which read vertically do not actually form a vertical, is made from four sources: Walt Whitman's *Of the Terrible Doubt of Appearances*, Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, Erik Satie's 'Private Writings' in Ornella Volta's edition of *A Mammal's Notebook* and *The Times* newspaper of 17 March 2006.[59] The result is a collage of registers (poetic, philosophical, philosophical-humorous and informative) which creates 'patches' of one discourse or another depending on the aleatoric interspersion of sources. This exploration of mesostic-like texts is referable to the writings of John Cage, especially *I-VI*, although my aleatoric methods for selecting words are much cruder than his.[60]

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[59] Whitman, *The Complete Poems* 153; Wittgenstein, *Investigations* sections 1, 19, 43, 75, 77, 88, 107, 109, 133, 123, 124, 206, 255, 527 and 531; Erik Satie *A Mammal's Notebook* ed. Ornella Volta (London: Atlas Press 1996) 146 and 148-152.

[60] John Cage, *I-VI – The Charles Eliot Norton Lectures 1988-89* (Hanover NH: Wesleyan University Press 1997). For these text pieces Cage used a specially designed computer programme which simulated the coin oracle of the *I Ching*.

## II Thinking through *Untellable Wisdom*

> Reconnecting music to the original aspirations of *mousikē* has an advantage for us today insofar as it allows us to recognize music's broad philosophical and political significance...
>
> Lydia Goehr[61]

The second sort of synthesis I wish to discuss grows naturally from the preceding discussion of text; it is music as the focal point of a confluence of thought. This has been alluded to already with regard to the connections between text and musical structure in pieces such as *Escucho con mis Ojos* and *Con Beso de su Boca.* However, a synthesis of 'broad philosophical...significance' (Goehr) is more richly demonstrated in *Untellable Wisdom.* This piece, both in terms of the choice of textual sources and their musical treatment, embodies and refers to some common strands of thought, perhaps unlikely at first glance, which exist between the ideas and poetry of the early Dadaists, Wittgenstein's philosophy and Whitman's poetry. Besides this triangulation of source materials, the piece also manifests a smaller nexus of connections between Wittgenstein's idea of philosophy-as-medicine and the transformation of a Native American song; this will be discussed at the very end of the chapter.

In the non-semantic and quasi-linguistic vocalisations of *Untellable Wisdom*, especially the grooves, chants and poems, there are echoes of those manifestations of Dada poetry which betoken an anti-logocentrism, that is, the view that language has a primary role to play in the formation of our worldview and is essentially distortional.[62] In the second decade of the twentieth century this sceptical view of language resulted in a variety of approaches to poetry and vocal production in the artistic (or anti-artistic) outputs of, among others, Hugo Ball, Hans Arp, Tristan Tzara and Raoul Hausmann, outputs normally assembled under the headings 'phonetic

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[61] Lydia Goehr, *The Quest for Voice – Music, Politics and the Limits of Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press 1998) 1.

[62] See Rudolf E. Kuenzli, 'The Semiotics of Dada Poetry' in *Dada Spectrum: The Dialectics of Revolt*, (eds) Stephen C. Foster and Rudolf E. Kuenzli (Iowa: The University of Iowa 1979) 51-70.

poetry', 'sound poetry' or 'sound-text poetry'. Notwithstanding their differences, what these Dadaists shared was the desire to undermine conventional linguistic discourses. Says Kuenzli: 'In their poetry and their art the Dadaists act as semioticians by analyzing the mechanism, the codes, and systems of cultural representation in order to be able to manipulate and displace them'.[63] In *Untellable Wisdom*, this spirit of displacement is seen not only in the chants, grooves, poems and songs but also in the pseudostic. Here we have a text that could be described as linguistically liminal, given that it is made up of recognisable English words and syntagms, which, when re-ordered, often produce grammatical 'impossibilities'.

The poems and chants (but less so the grooves and much less so the pseudostic) in *Untellable Wisdom* also share something of the Dada poets' search for a 'language of presence'[64], a more immediate language, which attempts to fuse sign and signified so that the sign-signified relationship eventually dissolves. This may produce a 'nonsense' which nevertheless aims to communicate by transcending the modes of conventional linguistic discourse; vocality, in such cases, precedes linguistic representation. In this way, the different vocalisations rely on some of the same assumptions held by the Dadaists; one such is described by Erickson: '...this emotive, intonational language is seen as being more true for the human condition than signifying language because its expression is that of the body, active and reactive, not distracted by any cognitive split'.[65] The cognitive split is that created by a language of signification which makes us aware of the lack of correspondence between things and their representations; it results in a self-conscious use of language, a language which, therefore, points to what is absent. However, a language of presence:

> ...should be incantatory, summoning forth the power of presence within every fiber and organ and nerve of the human being, uniting the spiritual with the physical, tapping into dormant and primal creative energies, and emanating outward to connect with the listener; it is a sounding of one's human space and the establishing of a resonating field, creating a harmonious sub- or pre-linguistic communication between poet and auditor.[66]

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[63] *Ibidem*, 53.
[64] Jon Erickson, 'The Language of Presence: Sound Poetry and Artaud', *boundary 2* 14 1/2 (1985) 280.
[65] *Ibidem*.
[66] *Ibidem*.

An attempt of this sort of incantatory language is made in the vocalist-instrumentalist parts of *Untellable Wisdom*; my belief is that any unity of the spiritual and physical will more likely be achieved if the whole body is engaged in performance. Hence these parts are simultaneously vocal and instrumental; the performers' voices should ideally synthesise with their instrumental actions and thus their whole bodies should be occupied in reacting to the notation, so that they are 'not distracted' (Erickson). Furthermore, the notation is not split into vocal and instrumental layers; the word (sometimes with modification symbols or limited pitched material) serves as the principal stimulus. In this way it is hoped that the performers will sound out their 'human space' in as full a manner as possible.

During the same period that the Zurich Dadaists were undermining conventional linguistic discourses, Wittgenstein was writing the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, which ends with the following lines:

> There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They *make themselves manifest*. They are what is mystical...What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence.[67]

The admonition that language may not suffice for all our needs is a theme that runs throughout Wittgenstein's early work. In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein's conclusion, if it can be so termed, is '...an answer which consists in the vanishing of the problem'.[68] For, as Jonathan Lear characterises it: 'Wittgenstein's dilemma is that he wants, as a philosopher, to communicate transcendental insights, but he recognizes that there is no language in which to communicate them. When the philosopher, in the hope of saying something philosophical, tries to stretch beyond the bounds of language, he lapses into nonsense'.[69] And, according to Wittgenstein, this lapse is exactly what happens when the philosopher tries to talk about aesthetics, ethics, religion or the meaning of life. However, in posthumous publications, especially *Philosophical Investigations* (which provides one of the sources for the pseudostic), Wittgenstein

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[67] Wittgenstein, *Tractatus* 6.522 and 7.
[68] B.F. McGuinness, 'The Mysticism of the Tractatus', *The Philosophical Review* 75/3 (1966) 315.
[69] Jonathan Lear, 'Leaving the World Alone', *The Journal of Philosophy* 79/7 (1982) 383. Lear is of course referring to the end of the *Tractatus* 6.54: 'My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical...'.

returns to the problem of linguistic expressibility and looks at it from a different perspective. Now the problem is couched not in terms of language's inability to refer to the world but in terms of a different picture of language, one in which meaning is understood from language use. Thus, his stance could also be seen as anti-logocentric but in a different way; it is not language's potential for lying[70] that he exposes but the false uniformity of purpose which is ascribed to language. For example, when he tells us 'Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intellect by means of language'[71], he is warning us not to expect language to operate in the same way in all contexts (not to confuse, for example, the 'is' of identity with the 'is' of equality).

It is in Wittgenstein's intuitions (both the early and late[72]) about the limits of language that I find a striking parallel to the semioses of early Dada, as exemplified by Ball's mention of '...strata...untouched and unreached by logic':

> The word "dada" does not only occur in many languages, it is also one of the child's earliest utterances, and therefore it has, according to Ball's re-creation of an old myth, emerged from those "primeval strata untouched and unreached by logic." In his "Dada Manifesto" he even states that "Dada is the very heart of words," probably referring to the magic spell and power of primeval, adamic language. Through his break with the cultural sign system Ball certainly puts the cultural system of signs into question. But at the same time his "sound poems" indicate his rather desperate search for a new beginning by attempting to go back to *the* origin, the logos, the magical world of the child...[73]

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[70] Umberto Eco has written '*...semiotics is in principle the discipline studying everything which can be used in order to lie*' (quoted in Kuenzli, 'The Semiotics of Dada Poetry' 54). It should be remembered that the Dadaists themselves stress that their early manifestations were a reaction to the First World War, the experience of which would perforce have included propaganda. However, the Dadaists' attack on linguistic codes was also, according to Kuenzli, an attack on cultural codes: 'This anthropomorphic language system constitutes the structure of social values, which, because men forget that they have created these fabrications, is held to be an absolutely valid and not an arbitrary interpretation of the world'. See Rudolf Kuenzli, 'Hans Arp's Poetics: The Sense of Dada "Nonsense"' in *New Studies in Dada. Essays and Documents*, (ed.) Richard Sheppard (Driffield: Hutton Press 1981) 49.

[71] Wittgenstein, *Investigations* section 109.

[72] Lear, 'Leaving the World Alone' 384-385: 'The shift from the *Tractatus* to the *Investigations* has been much discussed, but one important theme remains constant: the insight that philosophy provides will be nonempirical'; Ray Monk, *How to Read Wittgenstein* (Granta: London 2005) 64: 'Wittgenstein never repudiated the remarks about philosophy quoted earlier from the *Tractatus*. Rather, he began to understand better what was required in order to do justice to the insights that those remarks expressed...'.

[73] Kuenzli, 'The Semiotics of Dada Poetry' 69. Kuenzli's first quote is from Ball's *Flight Out of Time: A Dada Diary*.

Whereas Wittgenstein's *modus operandi* is a dispassionate philosophical investigation, the Dadaists' investigation was predicated on an attack on existing values, which was simultaneously an exploration of new values. Whereas Wittgenstein's later philosophy may broadly be termed descriptive[74], the Dada poets strove to create new forms of communication, which aimed at the atavistic and primeval. However, both point to a profound concern with the nature of language, be it in the search for philosophical insight or adamic language itself.

The third member in this triumvirate of reference is Whitman. The following lines are from the poem which is one of the sources for the pseudostic and which gives the piece its title:

> When the subtle air, the impalpable, the sense that words
> and reason hold not, surround us and pervade us,
> Then I am charged with untold and untellable wisdom, I am
> silent, I require nothing further,
> I cannot answer the question of appearances or that of
> identity beyond the grave,
> But I walk or sit indifferent, I am satisfied,
> He ahold of my hand has completely satisfied me.[75]

Here, the 'untold and untellable' echoes Wittgenstein: 'When the answer cannot be put into words, neither can the question be put into words. The *riddle* does not exist'.[76] Thus we see a similarity in all three cases; the early Dada poets, Wittgenstein and Whitman all seem to recognise that language has limits. Their differences lay in how they respond to these limits.

Wittgenstein responds with the famous Tractarian envoi and the thoughts that follow from it in his later writings. Whitman's response ('I am silent...I cannot answer') is very similar to Wittgenstein's. This turn towards silence can be described in terms of

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[74] ...or even 'anthropological', as Leon Botstein has it in 'Returning to a Different Philosophical Tradition', *The Musical Quarterly* 82/2 (1998) 227.
[75] Whitman, 'Of the Terrible Doubt' lines 12-16.
[76] Wittgenstein, *Tractatus* 6.5.

the 'doubled discourse' of philosophy which, as understood by Goehr, '...renders the valuable part of philosophy a silent discourse and, once this is established, not subject to further investigation'. Yet, as she notes, '...philosophy continues: it does not cease to speak'.[77] This is true for both Wittgenstein and Whitman; their injunctions to remain silent are nevertheless given voice, through signifying language, in their written work. On the other hand, the Dadaists speak in 'non-speech'; as Arp put it: 'Our replies are sighs of love, volleys of hiccups, poems, moos, and miaowing of medieval *Bruitists*...'.[78] In their poetry the Dadaists tread the fine line between the negation of signifying language and the creation of a language of presence which signifies more directly. Not all the Dadaists responded with 'moos and miaowing' however; the move towards to silence is also represented. That is, it was the seeming irreconcilability of these two options ('language of presence' and 'language of absence') which led Hugo Ball away from language altogether and into what Erickson calls 'a state of monastic silence'.[79]

Thus, Wittgenstein, Whitman and the Dadaists (especially Tzara, Arp and Ball) all manifest the desire to speak, as well as the recognition that, in order to grasp certain aspects of human experience or to achieve certain artistic (or anti-artistic) goals, it may be impossible to speak in a 'sense-ful' manner. This double-bind is pointed to consciously in the various uses of the voice in *Untellable Wisdom* and perhaps as well on the level of form and rhetoric which, being so open, may themselves seem only to speak nonsensically. It is also, however, intimately linked to the relationship between sound and the written word or sound and musical notation. As has been noted by Erickson: 'Any sound poetry that truly seeks to divorce itself from symbolic meaning, yet is structured so that its performance can be repeated, even in the loosest form, has become a pseudo-language. Structured *like* a language while trying not yet to *be* a language'.[80] The point is that to ensure repeatability of a piece, one relies very heavily on notation; even if one sets out to make a very open score and leave the notation relatively loose, the performers nevertheless become accustomed to approaching the notation in a certain way and this can easily become reified during the rehearsal process. Thus, vocal spontaneity may decrease as the 'cognitive split'

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[77] Goehr, *The Quest for Voice* 29.
[78] Kuenzli, 'The Semiotics of Dada Poetry' 59.
[79] Erickson, 'The Language of Presence' 285.
[80] *Ibidem*, 286.

widens. This seems an ineluctable difficulty for the repertoire of Dada poetry and for pieces such as *Untellable Wisdom*; this difficulty will form part of the creative struggle for the vocalist-instrumentalists.[81]

As with Wittgenstein, Whitman, in *Of the Terrible Doubt of Appearances*, apprehends the limits of language but this does not lead him to metaphysical doubt; he talks of a 'sense which words and reason hold not'. Nor does Wittgenstein make what could be a possible next move from his description of language games to a proto-postmodern view that there is *only* language.[82] Thus we see a lack of interference at a metaphysical level; as is made clear in the *Philosophical Investigations*: philosophy, Wittgenstein writes, '...leaves everything as it is'.[83] Description takes the place of speculation; there are facts and philosophy's job, as Wittgenstein would have it, is to describe them. Nevertheless, as we have seen, Wittgenstein does warn us that we must remain vigilant against the 'bewitchment of our intelligence' by those very descriptions.[84] Ray Monk writes that falling prey to this possibility is:

> ...the mistake we *all* make when we want to counter behaviourism with some suggestion of the sort that thoughts, desires, etc. are not *nothing*. No, they are not nothing, and they are not identical with behaviour either. But neither are they *things*, and the only reason we want them to be things is that we are

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[81] I experienced this difficulty first-hand in my capacity as a vocalist when I learnt and performed the 'preacher' part of Ignacio Agrimbau's *Luz* (2006). The vocalisations in this piece should aim very much at a language of presence but over time I felt the notational signs taking on a materiality which gave them a pseudo-linguistic quality. (This was due as much to my own inexperience in this field of performance as it was to the ineluctable difficulty just outlined.) To borrow a phrase from Steve McCaffrey, I came to a point where I was imagining '...a this standing for a that...' rather than vocalising the 'that' immediately; see Erickson 'The Language of Presence' 280. However, 'thatness' may be a question of degree, for Erickson does acknowledge that: 'Sound poetry is not devoid of signification, it is just widening and making less definite what is being signified, through the performance of various emotional states'; *ibidem*, 288.

[82] Although Christopher Norris claims that the philosopher's disciples may have done just that: '...this cultural-relativist appropriation of late Wittgenstein amounts to a failure of intellectual nerve, a refusal to accept that we might on occasion have reasons – adequate justificatory reasons – for counting certain beliefs erroneous or certain practices morally repugnant by any defensible standard. Indeed, the chief effect of Wittgenstein's thinking on various academic disciplines – philosophy of science among them – has been to disarm rational debate by constantly adverting to the 'internal' (culture-relative) character of all such judgments, and hence the arrogance of any claim to criticize beliefs and practices belonging to cultures other than our own'. This is not the place to pursue the troubling issues raised by Norris as they do not bear directly on my choice of sources for *Untellable Wisdom*. However, for this criticism see *Deconstruction and the 'Unfinished Project of Modernity'* (London: Athlone Press 2000) 184-185.

[83] Wittgenstein, *Investigations* section 124.

[84] See Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* 11e: 'We are struggling with language. We are entangled in a struggle with language'.

> committed to a faulty view of language, one that thinks that to every meaningful word there must correspond some object.[85]

For Whitman, his move away from metaphysical doubt comes from thinking in a different vein; he says that his doubts are 'curiously answer'd by my lovers, my dear friends'.[86] Whitman's radical and overwhelming humanity and his valuation of love show an overcoming that is not predicated on linguistic ratiocination; in holding the hand of his lovers or friends he senses the reality of things and is satisfied. This finds a resonance in the mystic's '...acceptance of the sort of world that there is, so that we cease to ask what the purpose of life or the world is'. This quote comes not from a critique of Whitman but from McGuinness's discussion of the mysticism of the *Tractatus*, where he also cites one of the characteristic beliefs of mysticism as '...a belief in an insight into reality, an insight which is superior to and quite different from sense and reason, an insight common to the mystic and the poet...'. He goes on: 'In the pseudo-propositions of the *Tractatus* we see how things really are and are intellectually satisfied, though we cannot explain why; in the quasi-experience of mysticism we experience what the point of everything is, though we cannot afterwards put it into words'.[87] Whilst I would not agree with McGuinness that mysticism is a 'quasi-experience', this comment does seem tailor-made to describe the intuitions of both poet and philosopher.

Given the number of Dada poets and their differing natures and backgrounds, there is no unified stance towards metaphysical doubt which would fit neatly into this part of the discussion. Indeed, the Dadaists show widely diverging views in this regard. Richard Sheppard articulates the profoundly dialectical nature of Dada thus: 'At one pole, some Dadaists regard the flux of Nature as hopelessly absurd – but at the other pole, other Dadaists affirm the secret patterning of that flux, the coexistence of dynamic chaos with elusive order'.[88] Notwithstanding differences in their affinities to mystical or quasi-mystical ideas, some of the Zurich Dadaists' similar intuitions

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[85] Monk, *How to Read Wittgenstein* 93.
[86] Whitman, 'Of the Terrible Doubt' line 10.
[87] B. F. McGuinness, 'The Mysticism of the Tractatus' 315, 306 and, again, 315.
[88] Richard Sheppard, 'Dada and Mysticism: Influences and Affinities' in (eds) Stephen C. Foster and Rudolf E. Kuenzli, *Dada Spectrum* 98. This picture accords exactly with B. F. McGuinness's view of the mysticism in the *Tractatus*. He writes: '...it seems possible that there are two answers that the mystic may find, only one of which is final: he may find that the sense of life becomes clear to him, or he may remain a prey to doubt whether life has any sense'; 'The Mysticism of the Tractatus' 316.

regarding language are, nevertheless, along with those of Wittgenstein and Whitman, embodied to varying degrees in *Untellable Wisdom.*

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The second triangulation in *Untellable Wisdom* is that which exists between one of Wittgenstein's favourite similes, the adaptation of a Native American song and Whitman's democratic politics. One of the most striking characteristics of Whitman's poetry is its inclusivity and his mention of 'the red aborigines' prompted me to research into the possibility of adapting Native American musical notations for some of the vocal scores in *Untellable Wisdom.*[89] In the end, the piece only includes a simple use of modification symbols (suggested by syllabaries such as that of the Cree) in the grooves and, after an unsuccessful attempt at creating pictographs on the model of an Ojibwa birch bark manuscript, some hieroglyphs of my own invention in the chants. During this research however I came upon a Havasupai narrative medicine song which suggested to me a synthesis, for a common trope in Wittgenstein's writings is the configuration of philosophy in medical or therapeutic terms.[90] Thus, in what is the most controlled aspect of the piece's continuity, and also its highest point of synthesis, a de-texted and transformed Native American melody with a new underlay of fragments of Wittgenstein is contextualised within the distorted strains of the overtures to Wagner's *Tannhäuser* and Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots.*[91]

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[89] 'On my way a moment I pause, /Here for you! and here for America! /Still the present I raise aloft, still the future of the States I harbinger glad and sublime, /And for the past I pronounce what the air holds of the red aborigines'. Whitman, 'Starting from Paumonok' lines 236-240.

[90] It is true that Wittgenstein was fond of similes; see *Culture and Value* 1e: 'A good simile refreshes the intellect'. For his understanding of philosophy-as-medicine see *Investigations* sections 133, 255 and 593, and also *Culture and Value* 44e.

[91] This specific synthesis occurs at least once in the piece. The aphorisms that the speaker-vocalist sings at these points are taken from Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* (8, 11, 16, 18, 25, 36, 49 and 50) and treat of some of the philosopher's favourite topics: language, mysticism, religion and the non-hedonic aspects of art. The choice of operatic sources for these moments does not have any poietic significance. However, my overall decision to treat nineteenth century operas does have an obvious biographical link to the piece's dedicatee.

# Chapter 3

## Provoking

### I Notation as technology

> ...[a musical graphic]...makes no pretense to be anything but what it is, a kind of agitation, stimulation, a provocation to improvisation...
>
> Roman Haubenstock-Ramati[92]

A cursory glance at my portfolio reveals the adoption of a relatively wide range of notational strategies. This results from my alignment with Busoni when he observed: 'The very intention to write down the idea, compels a choice...'.[93] That is, there is not a 'default' way to notate music; notational givens do not exist. There are, however, plenty of conventions and resources from which the composer is able to choose; 'The notation of music is a creative (or synthetic) activity...' writes Cornelius Cardew.[94] The choice to settle on one approach (or one set of approaches) is, for me, an integral part of the early stages of composition and normally includes consideration not only of actions to be performed and sounds to be made but also of the sort of relationship I want to foster between score and performer. In these ways, notation can be thought of as toolbox, a set of technologies, which allows the composer to prioritise and facilitate certain aspects of the musical discourse whilst omitting or obfuscating others.[95] For example, in *Escucho con mis Ojos*, the dyads are determined quite specifically, whereas directionality and the overall sequence of events are not priorities and are, except for the canonic writing, left underdetermined to a large degree.

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[92] 'Notation – Material and Form', (tr.) Katharine M. Freeman (1965), in *Perspectives on Notation and Performance*, (eds) Benjamin Boretz and Edward T. Cone (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc. 1976) 98.

[93] Ferruccio Busoni, 'Sketch for a New Esthetic of Music' in *Three Classics in the Aesthetic of Music* (New York: Dover 1962) 85.

[94] Cornelius Cardew, 'Notation: Interpretation, etc.', *Tempo* (New Series) 58 (1961) 2.

[95] On a basic level, even pen and paper are technologies; Janáček: 'Do not allow a musical genius manuscript paper, notes, or a pen – and he will compose nothing more than a folksong'; Zdeněk Skoumal, 'Janáček's Folk Settings and the Vixen' in *Janáček Studies*, (ed.) Paul Wingfield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999) 129.

Any technology has inherent limits, however, and notation is no exception. There are limits to what one can communicate to a performer (for example, the extent to which one can specify the timbral quality of the voice in *When a Brother*) and, on a more fundamental level, the notations one chooses may themselves guide and delimit the composition (for example, in those pages of *Transformation and Wonder* which rely on cut-ups, certain possibilities were debarred by virtue of that very way of working; even when a fragment is turned upside-down, the position of the note-heads on the stave is fixed). This is something that several composers have noted, one of whom is Cardew: 'Notation and composition determine each other...A musical notation is a language which determines what you can say, what you want to say determines your language'.[96] Thus, there may be something dialogical about the experience of notating if, for example, the notation suggests, even subliminally, a way to proceed which one would not have considered independently of the reflection that only comes by virtue of seeing one's notations. Indeed, for Shaw-Miller, notation simply is '...the creative reflection on sounds through a visual medium...'.[97]

Once again, we find a link here to the synthetic nature of composition, for the visual is one important aspect of musical discourse, one which composers may transform and synthesise as much as, say, found materials or texts. Notational practices are also found materials. Dahlhaus's critique, seen in the last chapter, of an over-emphasis on the 'purity' of music at the expense of 'texts, programs, and represented effects' has its complement in the following quote in which he speaks of the marginalisation of notation:

> The suspicion arises that audible music is becoming overgrown by "paper music" whose structure is visible in the notation without becoming acoustically phenomenalized...One is almost made to believe that notation in music is an evil. The most frequent topic in the criticism of new music is the reproach that precisely the elements believed to form the substance of the composed piece remain inaudible. The reproach is based on the premise that anything merely

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[96] Cardew, 'Notation' 21. See also Busoni, 'Sketch' 84: 'How strongly notation influences style in music...[it] fetters imagination...' and Morton Feldman, *Give My Regards to Eighth Street – Collected Writings of Morton Feldman*, (ed.) B. H. Friedman (Cambridge, MA: Exact Change 2000) 144: 'The degree to which a music's notation is responsible for much of the composition itself, is one of history's best kept secrets'.

[97] Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds of Music* 18.

> thought through but not audibly realized has no aesthetic validity. Yet the criterion of audibility, in the crude version in which it circulates, is thoroughly questionable.[98]

Dahlhaus's observations may apply as much to 'old' as 'new' music; the inaudible structures he is defending reside in Machaut's *Ma fin est mon commencement* as well as in Boulez's *Structures 1a*. These pieces, whilst listeners will inevitably hear them in terms of some sort of structure, have poietic structures which are only recoverable from score study. However, I think Dahlhaus can also be read as defending augenmusik (as in Baude Cordier's chordiform score for *Belle bonne*, the shape of which has no bearing on the aural result) and, indeed, any notation which problematises the performer-score relationship. That we cannot hear a performer-score relationship seems incontrovertible; one can, at best, hear the result of it. But the possibility of problematising this relationship is real and is part of many musical discourses and traditions.[99]

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[98] Carl Dahlhaus, (tr.) Siegmund Levarie, *Analysis and Value Judgment* (New York: Pendragon Press 1983) 53-54. Thus, Dahlhaus's criticism chimes with Adorno's comment that: 'Notes are of course more than just directions for performance; they are music objectivized as text. This is why they exert a gravitational pull towards being read silently'; *Quasi una Fantasia – Essays on Modern Music*, (tr.) Rodney Livingstone (London: Verso 1998) 296.

[99] I use the word 'problematise' in a very general, and not perforce negative, sense, which makes it applicable to many notations from different eras and cultures; figured bass notation and shakuhachi notation, I would argue, are just two examples of the problematisation of the performer-score relationship. (For an excellent discussion of some of the issues raised by the performer-score relationship in Western music, see Leo Treitler, 'Beethoven's "Expressive" Markings' in *Beethoven Forum 7*, (eds) Lewis Lockwood, Christopher Reynolds and Elaine R. Sisman (London and Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 1999), 89-111.) Furthermore, it is worth noting in this regard that the word 'problem' comes from the Greek *proballein*: 'put forth' (*pro* 'before' + *ballein* 'to throw'). The 'problematic' aspect of notation can, therefore, be seen as that part of it that 'puts something forth' or 'throws something before' the performer. One implication of this is that the performer must then react to what is put forth in a *productive*, rather than reproductive, way; see Busoni, 'Sketch' 84: 'But the lawgivers require the interpreter to reproduce the rigidity of the signs; they consider his reproduction the nearer to perfection, the more closely it clings to the signs. What the composer's inspiration *necessarily* loses through notation, his interpreter should restore by his own'. Not surprisingly, Benson considers this aspect of performance to be essentially improvisatory: 'A score is itself limited in terms of defining the limits of the musical work...Not only do performers have *room* for improvisation but also it is *required*: for there can be no performance without filling in these *Unbestimmtheitsstellen*' and 'What the score presents us is no more than a trace of the other's presence. In order for the sign to become a *living* presence, it must be transformed'; *The Improvisation of Musical Dialogue* 82 and 182.

## II Stimulation

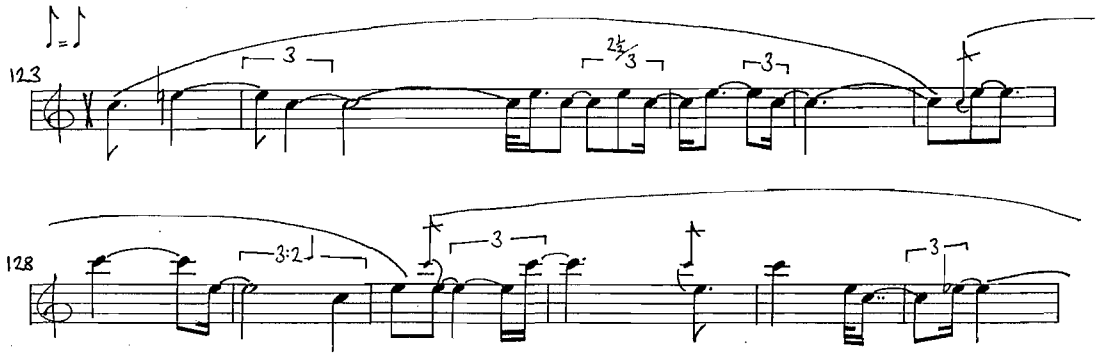
Some simple transformations of notational discourse can be seen in *Fuego Helado* and *Amor es Rey*. In the former, the initial absence of bar lines remove from the performer's mind, or at least de-emphasise, the concept of stress; the total absence of metre erases that element of rhythmic discourse. Once the bar lines do enter (p.4), the concept of stress is gradually re-activated (even though approximately as many iterations do not fall on a downbeat as those that do) and, as they become more frequent, they will very likely, along with the introduction of triplets (pp.7-9), increase the tension felt by the performer. But this is not intended to be drastic or overwhelming; rather, it is intended to vary the performer's experience of a piece which, as noted previously, does not contain significant changes of rhetoric or texture.

The Tchaikovskian dynamic marking in *Fuego Helado*, whilst obviously indicating that the performer should play very quietly, does however suggest subtle gradations of quietness within those limits. Given that all notations underdetermine the pieces for which they stand, decisions must be made here regarding such gradations or, at least, which dynamic should be chosen, if the performer wishes to play at the same level throughout. In *Amor es Rey* the dynamics are left similarly free but the rhythmic notation is more active; the notation is metrical and the metre itself changes very frequently. Furthermore, the frequent ties over the bar lines make the bar lines as active as the durations themselves. The choice of metronome mark prevents the piece from looking too slow; this is intended to put the performer in an alert, rather than soporific, frame of mind.[100] Likewise, a level of rhythmic tension is maintained for the performer in the last section by the use of ties over bar lines, syncopations and some fractional rhythms (see Example 7).

These are, however, relatively mild examples of notation as stimulation; indeed, in the case of the rhythmic notations mentioned (bar lines, metronome marks, ties and the like), it is only the performer's thought and bodily experience that are affected. Much

[100] A good example of this technique is the first of Messiaen's *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jésus*, whose 75.5 crotchets' worth of music take around eight minutes to perform. This is a simple example of what Richard Rastall calls 'psychological notation'; see *The Notation of Western Music – An Introduction* (Leeds: Leeds University Press 2000) 245-246. Although in a different way, psychological notation also has a modest role to play in *Con Beso de su Boca*, whose symbolic antithesis of homophony and heterophony is emphasised visually by the use of unrhythmicised durations for the latter.

more is 'put forth', however, in a piece such as *Escucho con mis Ojos* whose notation, whilst unavoidably having a certain psychological affect on the performer, is also more straightforwardly exigent in terms of sonic realisation. Due to its relative unconventionality, the notation demands that the performer first learn the piece's rules of interpretation and then realise the score in sound. Thus, the piece presents a task of a very different sort than the notations of *Fuego Helado* and *Amor es Rey*, which instead rely on comparatively stable and long-established performance practices.




**Example 7** *Amor es Rey* (bars 123-133).

In addition to those aspects of notation already discussed (such as the sparseness of the layout and the incorporation of words from the sonnet's translation), *Escucho con mis Ojos* offers others for interpretation: free-hand orthographical shapes (which are improvisatory tracings over various magnifications of Quevedo's signature), numbers (which correspond to those used for the durations of the canons), unpitched durations (which derive from putting the numbers through different rhythmic filters or from the canonic rhythms themselves) and unstemmed note-heads (which are read off the canons, ignoring ties). These notations are disposed variously in relation to the ever-present central pitch and to one another. Indeed, the relative proximity of notations is varied in such a way as to provoke different sorts of response (compare, for example, the potential influence of the central pitch on pp. 5-6). Besides disposition, some rules for interpreting the graphics are given but these are relatively indeterminate (for example, 'The central pitch must inform or somehow affect some or all of the events on that page…'). However, as with all the pieces in this portfolio which use elements

of graphic notation, some other aspects of the music are delimited quite specifically (for example, 'In general loud dynamics should be avoided').

## III Transcribing: imagined sounds and folk song

*When a Brother* is a good example of a piece for which empirical transcription was important. By this I mean the sort of composition which is primarily the 'direct' transcription of imagined or improvised sounds onto paper. In *When a Brother*, this applies to the vocal line, which I sung to myself as I wrote it, and also to the overall rhetoric and pacing of events. Thus, Busoni's aperçu that 'Every notation is, in itself, the transcription of an abstract idea'[101] leads me to suggest that there is a spectrum of transcription, from the transcriptions of very detailed imaginings or sung phrases (the first page of *When a Brother*) to more speculative transcriptions (the first page of *Transformation and Wonder*).

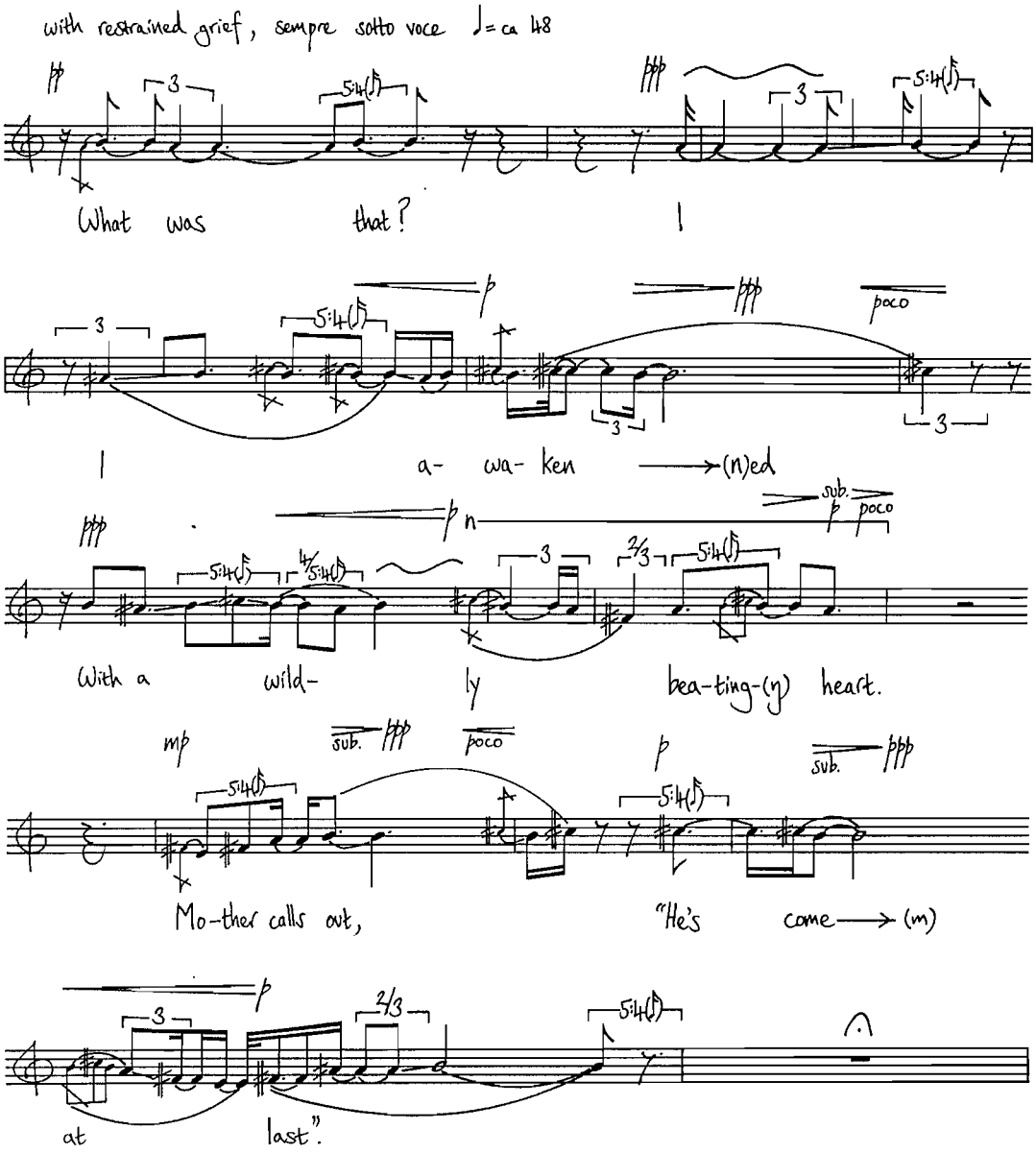
However, transcription played another part in the composition of *When a Brother*, given that the vocal part is adapted from a CD recording. I chose not to transcribe actual changes in timbre and inflections but, after repeated listenings, worked from my memory of these aspects of the keen. In terms of duration, I initially composed using time-space notation, as I thought this would capture the keen's improvisatory quality (the song does not fall into a metre) whilst being amenable to the soprano. However, the page lacked definition; it did not seem to put forth much substance to which the vocalist could react productively. In short, the experience it offered looked 'thin'. Therefore, I decided on a relatively precise rhythmic notation, which although harder to learn could, once learnt, be *transcended*. Cardew has described this process as follows:

> The notation should put the player on the right road. He can rise above the notation if he works through the notation. Interpreting according to the rules should lead him to the identity of the piece; this grasped, he may slough off the rules and interpret freely, secure in the fact that he knows what he is doing – he 'knows' the piece.[102]

In the case of *When a Brother*, I wanted my original notational solution to present a sufficiently clear picture of the 'right road', in order that the soprano would then have something to 'slough off'. Indeed, a more precise notation (see Example 8) may,

[101] Busoni, 'Sketch' 85.
[102] Cardew, 'Notation' 31.

paradoxically, produce a more improvisatory sound by virtue of its being transcended (or its *not* being transcended[103]), and it is the improvisatory element of the original that I wanted to recreate to a fairly high degree.




**Example 8** The opening of *When a Brother*.

[103] My thanks to James Weeks for pointing this out.

## IV Improvising with the pen

One noteworthy sensation I experienced whilst composing *Transformation and Wonder* was the improvisatory aspect of writing itself. The piece was written relatively quickly and, as I worked, it seemed as though I was improvising with the pen, notation thus becoming a sort of performance in its own right. The transformation of the title refers, among other things, to the transformation I felt had come over me as I wrote the piece, that is, the transformation of the relationship between thinking and writing. A similar sensation of immediacy, or at least of bypassing the careful deliberation of sketches and preparatory material, has been described by Bussotti who, in the preface to *Due voci*, writes: 'For the first time in his life the composer disposes with memoranda, sketches, and the usual preliminary studies, and writes [almost every page] directly onto the transparencies (which are then used to reproduce the manuscript)'.[104]

*Transformation and Wonder* was written for CoMA South[105] and as such the notations are designed to suit performers of varying abilities as well as the changing constitution of CoMA ensembles. In terms of the latter, the score has an element of openness regarding possible instrumental combinations; the piece is still conceived sonically in terms of certain instrumental families but within these there are a lot of possible realisations.[106] In terms of the notations themselves, these are intended to stimulate improvisation, often in certain ways and within some general limits. For example, the keyboard part in Refrains 2, 3 and 4 has relatively specific gestural and, possibly, pitch content (the notes to the score suggest that filled and open note-heads refer to black and white keys), the registers are still suggested by the vertical axis and the horizontal bias of standard Western notation, reading left to right, is maintained. On the other hand, the percussion/string parts in Refrains 2, 3 and 4 are less directional and are more suggestive of intricate and timbrally variegated textures, perhaps mixing pitched and unpitched sounds. In both these cases, however, the overall volume and length of the improvisation is governed by the voice, the obliteration of which must be avoided, and whose cue words will dictate that the

[104] Ulman, 'The Music of Sylvano Bussotti' 188.
[105] A regional branch of Contemporary Music Making for Amateurs; see www.coma.org.
[106] There is indeed a parity here between my piece and Alfonso's cantigas, which, by virtue of medieval performance practices, would rarely have been performed with the same instrumentation twice.

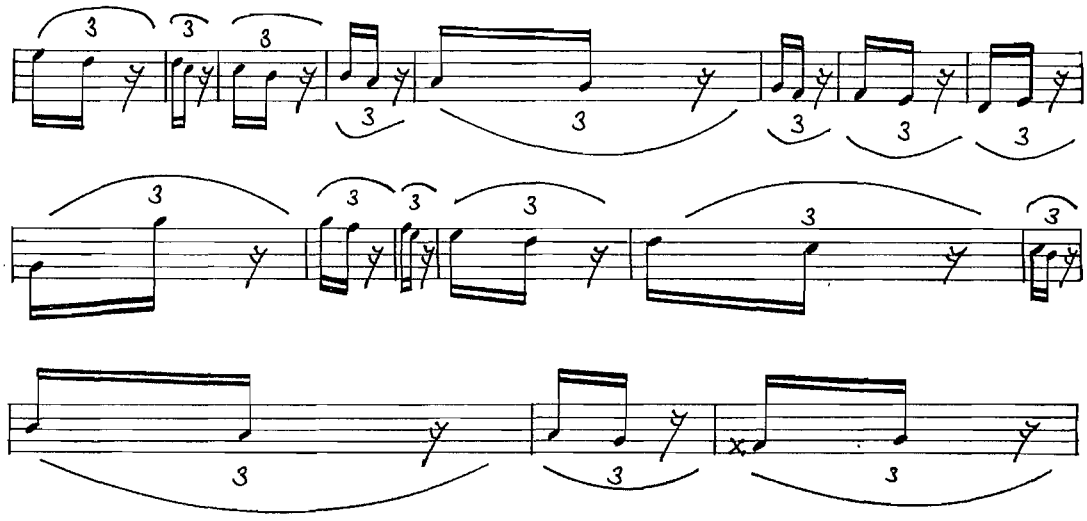
players move onto another graphic. The notes to the piece will also go some way to defining the character of improvisation and interpretation in general: '...tenderness and seriousness should predominate...'.

A similarly provocative approach to notation can be seen in *Untellable Wisdom*. However, there are no specified instrumental families beyond 'piano' (instead, the number of performers for each score is specified: solo, duo, tutti) and, in any case, 'piano' can also be interpreted as 'celesta, tuned percussion, harp, guitar, chamber organ etc.'. In terms of formal continuity, the score is also much more open than *Transformation and Wonder*. Not all the pages need be performed and only one moment of continuity and specific layering is guaranteed; that is, when the speaker-vocalist moves from the pseudostic to the melody, which in turn is accompanied by a tutti.

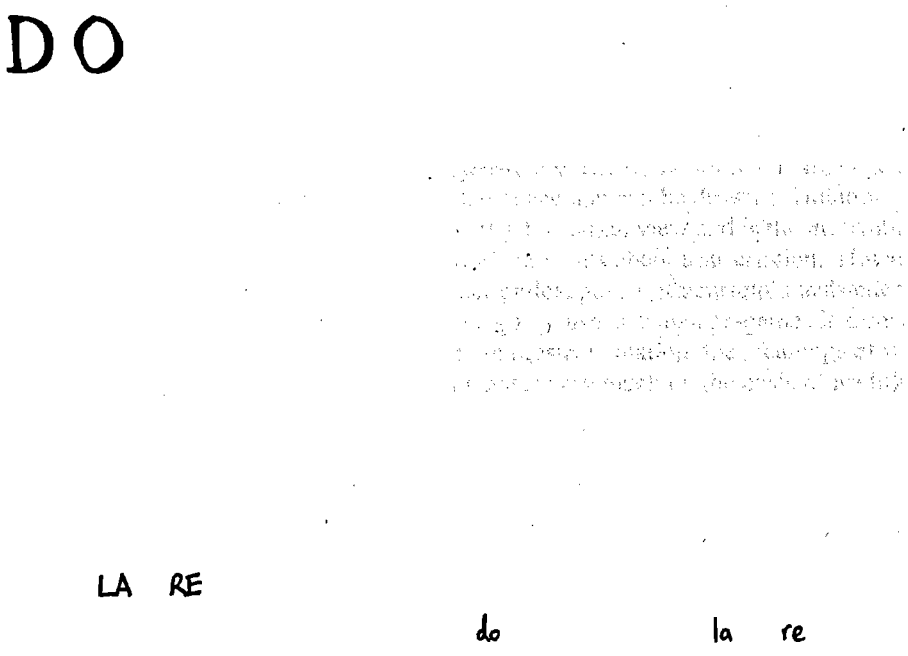
In *Untellable Wisdom*, the notion of improvising with the pen is taken further, both qualitatively, given that I decided to transform notations primarily as visual objects, and quantitatively, given that I chose to transform fifteen sources. Each of the solo, duo and tutti scores is a re-presentation of some notational elements of the first page of a nineteenth century opera; in some cases the same page yielded up to eight transformations, as was the case with Borodin's *Prince Igor*. At one end of the spectrum, there is the simple repetition of most of the source notation; for example, the ten bars of melody from *Les Huguenots* is a verbatim copy but for the dynamics and the alteration of the horizontal spacing of the notes (p.2). At a slight remove from this is the *Brillante* solo from *Don Carlo* (p.1); here much is retained but some of the pitches are de-rhythmicised or altered rhythmically to become grace notes. Slightly removed again is the solo from *Tannhäuser*, which is without clef and dynamic but which retains the position of the note-heads on the stave (with accidental) and the triplet groupings, albeit within altered bar lengths (see Example 9).

At the other end of the spectrum, the transformations are more radical. For example, one treatment of *Don Carlo* is a tracing over of any combination of letters which could be read as solfa syllables and any numbers which appear on the page (see Example 10). Another example is the solo (p.11) taken from *Cavalleria Rusticana*, which, amongst other 'notational improvisations', translates some pitches into letters,

presents boxed note-heads and superimposes melodic figures on a twelve-line stave. Yet another example shows the transformation extended arbitrarily to 'extraneous matter', such as numbers or words from the facing page of the source score which happened to get caught on the photocopied page of it (in each case I transformed a photocopy of the score). This can be seen on pages 10 and 44.



**Example 9** One of the *Tannhäuser* treatments from *Untellable Wisdom.*




**Example 10** Part of one of the *Don Carlo* treatments from *Untellable Wisdom.*

Whether a more or less radical transformation has taken place, it is more akin to a Rauschenberg sculpture than a Liszt piano transcription. The analogy here is between the re-assembly of note-heads, stems, rests, dynamics, textual elements and extraneous material primarily *as visual objects* and Rauschenberg's re-assembly of motley collections of objects without altering the objects themselves (sculpture as construction or assemblage rather than moulding or carving). One noteworthy by-product of this approach is the visual commonality between many of the scores in *Untellable Wisdom*. Due to my reconfiguration of the sources' notations, much of the conventionality of their notational codes is retained. Most of the symbols in these scores are still recognisable as conventional musical symbols and other symbols which appear, such as numbers and letters, also originate from their own 'symbolic repertoires'. In this way, the piece taps into performers' knowledge of existing codes and may be suitable for those musicians used to reading music but not used to reading semi-graphic notation. Indeed, for musicians familiar with nineteenth century orchestral, operatic or piano music, there will inevitably be some sort of psychological reaction to the notation, prompted by conventionality in an alien context. The familiar 'look' of an octave tremolo, a cantabile melody or an accompanimental bass line may build an immediate connection with the performer, even if the context is disorientating and demands further negotiation. [107]

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[107] One possible interpretative connection which has come to my mind since composing the piece is that between the undermining of *linguistic* sign systems and the turn to nonsense discussed in Chapter 2, and the undermining of *symbolic* sign systems (such as musical notation) with its consequent turn towards a sort of visual nonsense. Just as Wittgenstein writes of the limits of language to express thought, so Cardew writes: 'There is a limit to the music that can be drawn'; 'Notation' 30. Both sign systems fail at certain points. This is, of course, the Tractarian view and is the motivating force behind Cardew's *Treatise*; it is also at the base of Busoni's thoughts about transcription. However, the analogy can be extended further by using the later philosophy: Wittgenstein's insistence on meaning as context-driven and his emphasis on describing language use or language-games in terms of usefulness rather than exactness has a possible complement in musical notation, the meanings of which are also context-driven and which, if it operates at all, operates very much on the basis of usefulness rather than exactness. Therefore, I do not think it is too fanciful to posit the idea of 'notation-games' on the model of Wittgenstein's language-games, which are found amongst any specific community of speakers with a shared 'form of life'; *Investigations* section 23. According to this picture, the way one might learn the notation-games of, say, Cage's *Concert for Piano and Orchestra* or Wolff's *For One, Two or Three People* (or, indeed, *any* notational system), would be analogous to the way might learn the language-games of, say, reporting, thanking or joke-telling. Naomi Cumming makes a related point, although with a much broader repertoire and cast of musical 'agents' in mind, when, in an imaginary dialogue she writes: 'Vagueness in defining the boundaries of a community of language users never prevented a language from functioning before, so long as the language is connected with a shared 'form of life,' as the late Wittgenstein puts it. A community of those who compose, perform, critique, theorize and write histories of Western classical music in the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries is closely enough defined for practical purposes'; *The Sonic Self – Musical Subjectivity and Signification* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2000) 265.

## V Authorship and community

As was noted in Chapter 1, *Transformation and Wonder* charges the performers themselves with a high level of responsibility for transforming the cantiga upon which the piece is based. This is due to the piece's low level of technical manipulation of sound structure, as shown in the cut-up technique and the non-specific nature of much of the notation. Situations in which the performers must make quite a few decisions are, for example: the wind/brass tunes in Refrains 2, 3 and 4 (reading uncleffed segments of the cantiga in any clef or transposition and in the light of the accompanying adjectives), the piano part in Interlude 2 (choosing, through optional accidentals, to what extent the 'modality' of the melody is preserved) and the solo voice in Refrain 5 (improvising on and embellishing the cantiga). This decision-making process is made more complex in *Untellable Wisdom*, as the performers have to agree on much more fundamental aspects of the music before performance: which pages to perform and in which order, how to interpret the more open graphics, who is to perform the duos, how long the piece should last and so on.

This brings up the issue of authorship; should not the performers in these pieces, and indeed in *Escucho con mis Ojos*, be acknowledged as co-composers? I would be happy for this to be so because the performers potentially bring so much to the pieces.[108] Indeed, as a performer of various types of open score, I have experienced the mutual influence which may exist between ensemble members, which is not a result of the notation but which may have a profound affect on the sound and experience of the piece. For example, one may be provoked into acting by another performer, even when one had resolved to remain silent (when one cannot resist the allure of another voice[109]) or, in the final moment of mental and physical preparation

[108] The word 'potentially' here cannot pass without comment. Of course, one takes a risk in presenting such an open piece, a bigger (but not a different) risk than what is inaccurately called a 'fully notated' piece. There is no accounting for this except to say that one accepts that some performances will satisfy one less than others (although this would be to forget the enrichment that performers may garner from learning the 'notation-game' of the piece, irrespective of the 'product'). One can only hope that musical directors are intelligent people. Much damage has been, and still is, done to Cage's reputation, for example, through the lazy preparation of performances. (I have benefitted from discussions with Ignacio Agrimbau on this topic.)

[109] When Cardew writes, under the heading 'Music is Erotic', 'Postulate that the true appreciation of music consists in emotional surrender, and the expression music-lover becomes graphically clear and literally true', I think this could also apply to my experience of performing improvised or semi-improvised music. See 'Towards an Ethic of Improvisation' in *Treatise Handbook* (London: Hinrichsen Edition/Edition Peters 1971) xviii.

before performing a particular action, one's intention may, at the very last fraction of a second before execution, be modified by an event which comes from another performer or the environment.[110] In these cases the performers are not only reacting to the notation but to the context, and the composer cannot take much, if any, credit for this. Jean-Charles François has noted, with regard to graphic notation, that:

> The object-score, in the absoluteness of its graphic visuality, opens an abyss of orality (corporeality? physicality?) in the sense that the actual doing in the moment of the present becomes the primary substance authorizing the piece (the performer becomes the temporary author at the time of performance)...[111]

In terms of *Untellable Wisdom*, this applies more to some notations than others. That is, some pages will most likely yield relatively similar realisations from performance to performance, whereas others will most likely not. In this piece, then, there is a spectrum of specificity: the structural elements authored by the composer (the minimum requirements for performance and the instructions regarding the tutti and speaker-vocalist's melodies) guarantee the piece a distinct identity, whilst much is left open to the performers, who become co-authors to a very large extent.

In pieces like *Transformation and Wonder* and *Untellable Wisdom*, then, there is an implicit emphasis on the existence of a community of performers, which has to come to a common understanding of the piece in question and negotiate mutually supportive strategies for its realisation, even if these are mediated through, or arbitrated by, a musical director. This is what I understand by Cardew's use of the word 'ethic' in his article 'Towards an Ethic of Improvisation'. Not surprisingly Cardew quotes Wittgenstein – 'And to imagine a language is to imagine a form of life'[112] – but does not tease out the connection I wish to make here. That is, to imagine a musical context, primarily improvisatory or otherwise, is also, I believe, to imagine a form of life, as long as the community of musicians has some sort of shared ethic (some

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[110] An example of the latter happened in a performance of *Transformation and Wonder*, when a cough from the audience was incorporated by Richard Thomas (cellist) and me into the strings/percussion part for Interlude 2.

[111] Jean-Charles François, 'Writing without Representation, and Unreadable Notation', *Perspectives of New Music* 30/1 (1992) 16. It is a question of degree to what extent performers are also composers. There is not a definitive line that separates the decision-making processes of the performers of *Untellable Wisdom* from the performers of, say, Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*; both groups must make many decisions in order to realise these pieces.

[112] Cardew, 'Notation' xvii.

shared 'form of musical life'), which may, and to ensure any sort of collective action probably should, be under constant review during rehearsal and open to adjustments during performance itself. In this way, the community of performers results from collective and individual dialogue with the notation as well as dialogue with one's fellow performers on a radical level. As Benson puts it: 'Since music making is something that we inevitably do with others (whether they are present or not), musical dialogue is *fundamentally* ethical in nature'.[113]

[113] Benson, *The Improvisation of Musical Dialogue* 164.

# Chapter 4

# Learning

## I Coming to know

> Like the weaver, the writer works on the wrong side of his material. He has only to do with language, and thus it is that he suddenly finds himself surrounded by meaning.
>
> Maurice Merleau-Ponty[114]

Composition may be considered as an ongoing process of coming to know certain corners of the 'realm of music'.[115] As one learns various ways of thinking about sound, notation and performance, one acquires what Charles Seeger calls 'music-knowledge' of music (as opposed to 'speech-knowledge' of music[116]). Music-knowledge is largely unmeasurable, intangible and born of *doing* as much as, if not more than, rational deliberation; it is the know-how of the composer or performer's everyday reality. As a composer, one may also come continually to understand the contextual and philosophical significance of one's work, as one learns to examine the discursive aspect of one's music and how, as in this commentary, to frame it within the discourses of speech-knowledge about music. However, there is a third type of learning which the process of composition may afford and that is coming to know oneself. Like the first two types of knowledge just outlined, this is not an aesthetic value – it is a use-value – but one which is nonetheless worthy of comment.

Learning about oneself through music is rarely, if ever, instantaneous. That is, I have often had the experience of coming to understand the personal import or content of a piece only a while after its composition and first performance. One example from my portfolio relates to *Con Beso de su Boca*, whose expressive interiority (a major part of its identity) I did not discern until some weeks after the piece had first been performed and I listened to a recording. This aspect of the music suddenly struck me as if I had

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[114] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, (tr.) R. C. McCleary (Illinois: Evanston 1964) 45.
[115] Busoni, *The Essence of Music* 188-189.
[116] Quoted in Kerman, *Musicology* 158.

come to the piece 'cold'. Such insights are examples of the phenomenon articulated by Merleau-Ponty in his observation, above, on the experience of authors; there comes a moment when one is suddenly 'surrounded by meaning'. Or, more accurately, there are likely to be many such moments, some during and some after, perhaps long after, the composition.

Depending on one's predilections, such cases as these may prompt one to ask Why does this piece sound this way? or Why did I make it in this way? One may try to relate the answers, if any is forthcoming, to traits in one's own personality and thus the process may skirt the edge of self-psychoanalysis. Certainly, this would seem to have been the case for other composers. For example, W. H. Mellers writes of Busoni: 'Now we have it on his own avowal that the one aim of his music was spiritual autobiography...His art was a process of increasing self-discovery, and incessant self-probing'.[117] However, such self-probing is never achieved through pure, noumenal consideration but is always intentional, always related to some object of perception, be it a score, a recording, the words of a friend or even non-objects in the ideal realm, such as one's own thoughts. In terms of my own experience, it is in discussing, performing and listening to my music with friends and colleagues that I gain the most valuable insights into my musical self. Naomi Cumming's words, although written with reference to performers, are therefore apt: 'Musical selfhood...is not, then, surrounded by irremediable boundaries, isolating the individual "self" as the origin of insight, but is formed in shared activities, which ensure modes of connection with others'.[118]

[117] W. H. Mellers, 'The Problem of Busoni', *Music and Letters* 18/3 (1937) 243.
[118] Cumming, *The Sonic Self* 60. The similarities between this view and the method of phenomenology, which is opposed to the Cartesian view of an isolated 'I' are clear.

## II Pointing

It should not be thought, however, that any self-knowledge acquired through composition will be exhaustive or will reveal a unified self. The ramifications that extend from any art object towards others of all types (the dialogical nature of artistic work) finds an analogue in the connections which bind the self to other selves, to society, culture and nature. Neither in music nor in the self do we find the autonomous, bounded whole, even though we may construct or intuit such a thing. Iris Murdoch has written on these matters and she brings in the concept of value to claim that good art does not pretend to autonomy or wholeness:

> We seek in art of all kinds for the comforting sense of a unified self, with organised emotions and fearless world-dominating intelligence, a complete experience in a limited whole. Yet good art mirrors not only the (illusory) unity of the self but its real disunity. The pseudo-object need not mislead: though in a sense complete it proclaims its incompleteness and points away. Good art accepts and celebrates and meditates upon the defeat of the discursive intellect by the world. Bad art misrepresents the world so as to pretend there is no defeat...The art object points beyond itself, the world is seen beyond it...The art object is porous or cracked, another reality flows through it, it is in tension between a clarified statement and a confused pointing and is in danger if it goes too far either way.[119]

There is no articulation of the artist's reality with which I identify more profoundly than this. Music mirrors the self, reflecting back the composer's assumptions and peculiarities; no matter what one's intentions, it draws one out of oneself. Music also proclaims its incompleteness; pieces are interconnected with, and point to, other pieces, to other traditions, discourses and to other people.[120] And last, music-making may be undertaken with mental clarity but it will also point confusedly; one does not have a God's-eye view on one's work, one does not know fully one's intentions. These qualities, Murdoch goes on to say, are not fixed absolutes but exist on a

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[119] Iris Murdoch, *Metaphysics as a guide to Morals* (London: Vintage 2003) 88.

[120] There is also an interesting comparison to be drawn here with graphic or semi-graphic notation. In his introductory notes to *Autumn 60* Cardew writes: 'Thus the criterion of a good performance is not completeness (*i.e.*, perfection), but rather the lucidity of its incompleteness'; (London: Universal Edition 1960) 3.

spectrum ('either way'), each being present in different degrees in any one piece, or in any one moment of a piece.

If we accept that music may mirror the disunified self and point, more or less confusedly, towards music's own incompleteness and interconnectedness, then, in these senses I would advocate the rehabilitation of another term, slightly less ancient than *mousike*: *musica speculativa*.[121] According to Albert Seay, 'Here, the function of music was not one derived from its use as a sounding art, but from its metaphysical possibilities, wherein it could act as a *speculum* or "mirror" of the universe...'.[122] One does not have to accept wholesale the theological or pedagogical baggage which comes with this name to see it as a distant but kindred relation of Murdoch's philosophy.

[121] The term *musica speculativa* originates in the sixteenth century re-naming of Johannes de Muris's treatise *Musica* (1323); see Susan Scea, *A Critical Edition of Johannes de Muris's "Musica (speculativa)"* (PhD thesis for the University of Iowa, published by University Microfilms International 1990); especially 1-27.

[122] Albert Seay, *Music in the Medieval World* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall 1965) 3. For a detailed account of the concept of *speculatio* as it applies to the *Speculum Musicae* of Jacques de Liège, see F.J.Smith, 'The Division and Meaning of the Speculum Musicae', *Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Nederlandse Muziekgeschiedenis* 21/1 (1968) 5-24, especially 13-17. The concept of *musica speculativa* has also been used in descriptions of early Indian writings on music theory: Lewis Rowell, 'Early Indian Musical Speculation and the Theory of Melody', *Journal of Music Theory* 25/2 (1981) 217-244.

## III The not yet known

There is a second sense in which the term *musica speculativa* may have a contemporary application. To speak, as I have done, of coming to know presupposes the existence of the unknown; Busoni once more: 'There is no new and old. Only known and not yet known'.[123] Any search for the latter would, in turn, seem to require some sort of wonder or curiosity – a starting place of *speculation* rather than assertion.[124] It is through speculating and exploring the implications of those speculations that one may uncover something hitherto unknown, not only about self, and not only about individual found materials and sources, but also about what may result from a previously unconsidered synthesis of discourses, practices or sources; pieces, such as *Con Beso de su Boca*, *When a Brother* and *Transformation and Wonder* are examples of this. Even in a piece such as *Fuego Helado*, in which the raw pitch material is generated mechanically, the piece itself does not constitute a mere exemplification of the ciphers but a focussed and limited exploration of them for certain expressive ends. Furthermore, in the performance of a piece such as *Untellable Wisdom*, in which a 'higher degree of interest and involvement is demanded of the musicians',[125] it is more likely that the sonic and bodily explorations of the performers will themselves reveal unknown and unnotatable music.

A continual search for the unknown means embracing a plurality of concerns and allowing only very temporary satisfaction at the results of one's endeavours. Certainly, if we accept the Busonian/Bensonian picture that all music is essentially made from, and grows out of, other music, then this also entails a continual research into the musical heritages which surround one and in which one abides. Busoni is clear about this when he speaks of the Young Classicism, which he characterised as '...the mastery, the sifting, the turning to account of all the gains of previous experiments and their inclusion in strong and beautiful forms'.[126] If as composers we

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[123] Busoni, *The Essence of Music* 47.
[124] A sense of such a starting point is not confined to composition but is fundamental to many human pursuits, such as science and philosophy. For two examples from the latter, see Aristotle: 'For it was because of wonder that men both now and originally began to philosophize'; *The Metaphysics*, (tr.) Hugh Lawson-Tancred (London: Penguin 2004) 9; and Eric Matthews on Merleau-Ponty: 'Philosophy, as he conceives it...is not a discovery of transcendent or eternal truths, but the adoption of an attitude of wonder..."True philosophy consists", he says, "in relearning to look at the world."'; *The Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty* 41.
[125] Cardew, *Autumn 60* 3.
[126] Busoni, *The Essence of Music* 20.

are to turn to account *all* the gains of previous experiments, then we are surely following an unattainable ideal, yet, at the same time, there is no other option available for the composer who, like Busoni, believes that music is essentially a oneness and for whom composing means composing with (essentially) everything.[127]

As this portfolio shows, I have explored quite a few different aspects of composition in a short period of time (all eight pieces were written in a two-year span). Although the music it contains could be described as new, it does not stem, I believe, from a desire for newness for its own sake. The relatively diverse nature of the pieces (the highly concentrated statements of *Fuego Helado*, *Amor es Rey* and *Claudia Molitor is a Composer*, the carefully transcribed lines and textual play of *Con Beso de su Boca* and *When a Brother*, and the provocation of accident in *Transformation and Wonder* and *Untellable Wisdom*) is motivated, if anything, by a restless desire to research into and to find something hitherto unknown, to inhabit another corner of music. In this regard I identify with Cumming when she recounts her experience, albeit as a performer:

> In the process of questioning my musical capacities, I gain a self-reflexive knowledge, a new ability to refute the beliefs implicit in my social behaviour, and a possibility of entering freely into an expressive domain that had been "foreign" to me. On its "inward" side, self-identity is minimally a reflexive awareness of one's own patterns of choice, and the beliefs that govern them. For a musician, it includes a knowledge of the self as having the effective power to...[enter] imaginatively into new worlds'.[128]

If the exploration of unknown or new worlds is to be taken as a desirable compositional value, then the opposite is outlined in Charles Ives's warning against the false consolation that the composer may find in a too narrowly defined manner of working:

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[127] It may be that one of the reasons I am attracted to Busoni, and to the philosopher, (anti-)artists and poets mentioned in Chapter 2, is their shared, yet differently hued, proximity to mysticism. Mellers would certainly see the similarity with regard to the former: 'I want to suggest that the peculiar greatness which belongs to Busoni's larger works is the result of an intense spiritual discipline, a self-contemplation which becomes...something that is almost identical with the mystic's contemplation of the Logos. Certainly there is much...justification for calling Busoni a "mystic"...'; Mellers, 'The Problem of Busoni' 243-244.

[128] Cumming, *The Sonic Self* 11.

> It may be that when a poet or a whistler becomes conscious that he is in the easy path of any particular idiom,- that he is helplessly prejudiced in favour of any particular means of expression,- that his manner can be catalogued...in a word, when he becomes conscious that his style is "his personal own,"- that it has monopolized a geographical part of the world's sensibilities, then it may be that the value of his substance is not growing,- that it even may have started on its way backwards,- it may be that he is trading an inspiration for a bad habit and finally that he is reaching fame, permanence, or some other under-value, and that he is getting farther and farther from a perfect truth.[129]

It is not for me to claim the presence of Ivesian substance in my music but the vision of his outlook and the demands to explore which it implicitly contains are things with which I empathise strongly.

In sum, the avoidance of self-cataloguing and monopoly of 'sensibilities' when wedded to Busoni's injunction to turn to account 'all the gains of previous experiments' demand a lifelong and self-rejuvenating exploration which will be rooted in wonder. This portfolio, I believe, explores modestly in similar ways, a fact shown by its very incompleteness, disunity and its pointing away from itself (Murdoch). If, then, it embodies any knowledge at all, it is the knowledge that the apodictic viewpoint is an impossibility; as Bowman has it:

> ...a pure, noncorporeal consciousness presumed simultaneously capable of all points of view is actually no point of view at all. Far from defining a wholly explicit knowledge, it yields no knowledge. A wholly objective knowledge is knowledge of a barren world, completely uninhabited by and irrelevant to human beings.[130]

That is, my search is elsewhere. It is neither for the objective truth of scientism, which leapfrogs the immanence and plenitude of everyday perception, nor for the objective truth of the solipsist who knows only 'I'. Instead, it is a search grounded in

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[129] Charles Ives, 'Essays before a Sonata' in *Three Classics in the Aesthetic of Music* (New York: Dover 1962) 175-176.
[130] Bowman, *Philosophical Perspectives* 263.

my lived experience which, I hope, may uncover, through continual dialogue with traditions, discourses and with others, some of the richness of the 'realm of music' and something of myself.

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# *Fuego Helado*

**For piano**

**John Habron**

*Fuego Helado*

**Notes for performance**

Accidentals apply only to the notes which they precede.

Duration: ca 8'

**Programme note**

Dyads: one of the simplest forms of musical togetherness. The notes of this piece are all derived from the letters: elizabethlouisehabronignasirodriguezubalde. The piece is dedicated to my sister and brother-in-law and was written for Maria Zampeta.

'Fuego Helado' (frozen fire) is taken from a sonnet by Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas (1580-1645), which defines love in terms of opposites:

Definiendo el amor

Es hielo abrasador, es fuego helado,
es herida, que duele y no se siente,
es un soñado bien, un mal presente,
es un breve descanso muy cansado.

Es un descuido, que nos da cuidado,
un cobarde, con nombre de valiente,
un andar solitario entre la gente,
un amar solamente ser amado.

Es una libertad encarcelada,
que dura hasta el postrero parasismo,
enfermedad que crece si es curara.

Éste es el niño Amor, éste es tu abismo:
mirad cuál amistad tendrá con nada,
el que en todo es contrario de sí mismo.

from Francisco de Quevedo
Antología Poética
(Espasa-Calpe Mexicana, 1943)

Defining Love

It is burning ice, it is frozen fire,
It is a wound, which hurts but is not felt,
It is a beautiful dream but a harsh reality,
It is a very tiring rest.

It is a moment of carelessness, which protects us,
A coward with the name of courage,
A solitary walk among the crowds,
A lovingness, which is only to be loved.

It is an imprisoned freedom,
Which lasts until the very last breath,
A sickness, which grows as it is cured.

This is the child Love, this is your abyss:
See, he will have a friendship with nobody,
He who in everything is the opposite of himself.

(translation John Habron)

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**To Louise Habron and Ignasi Rodriguez Ubalde, on the occasion of their first wedding anniversary (20 September 2004)**

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**For Maria Zampeta**

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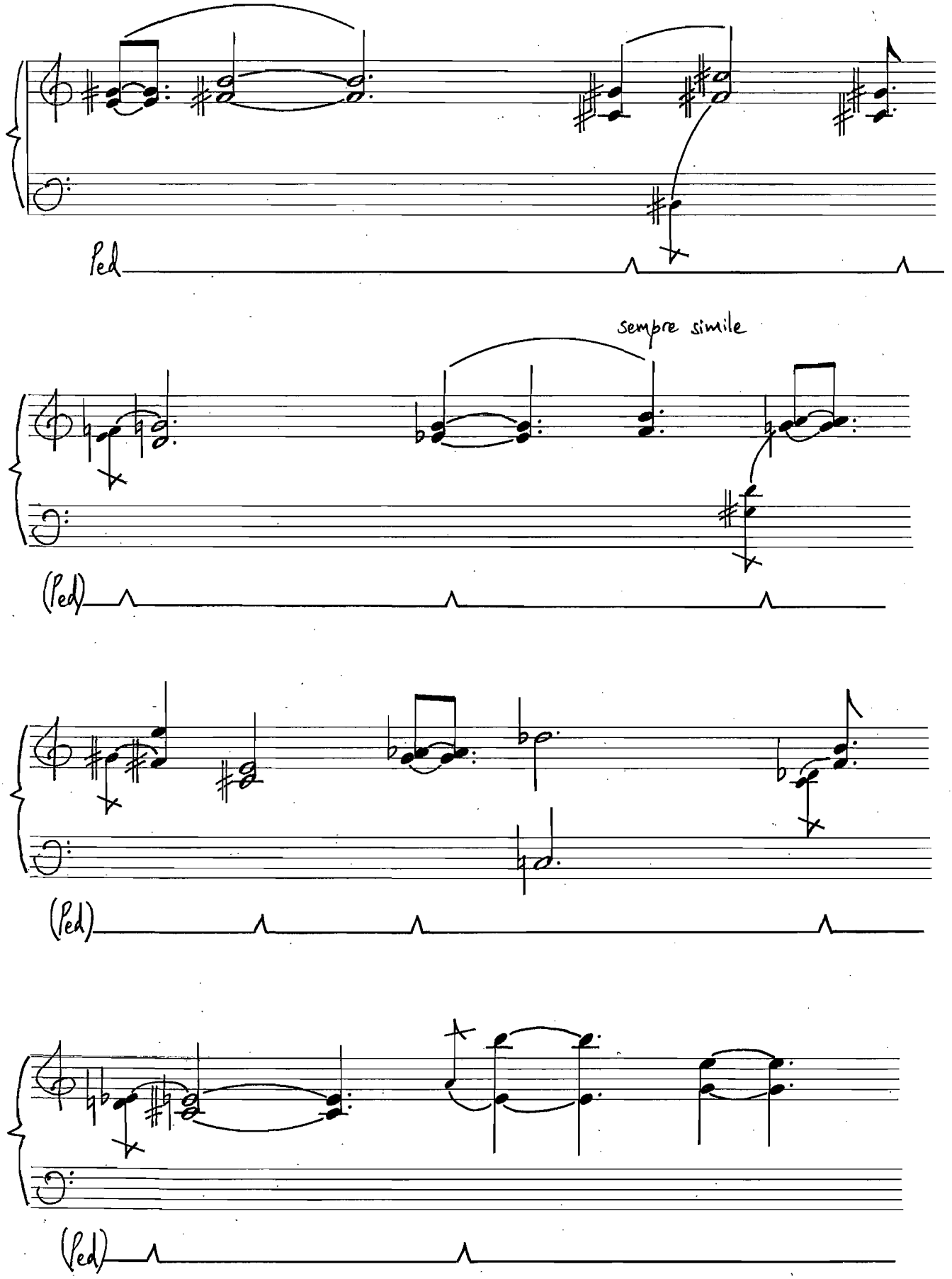
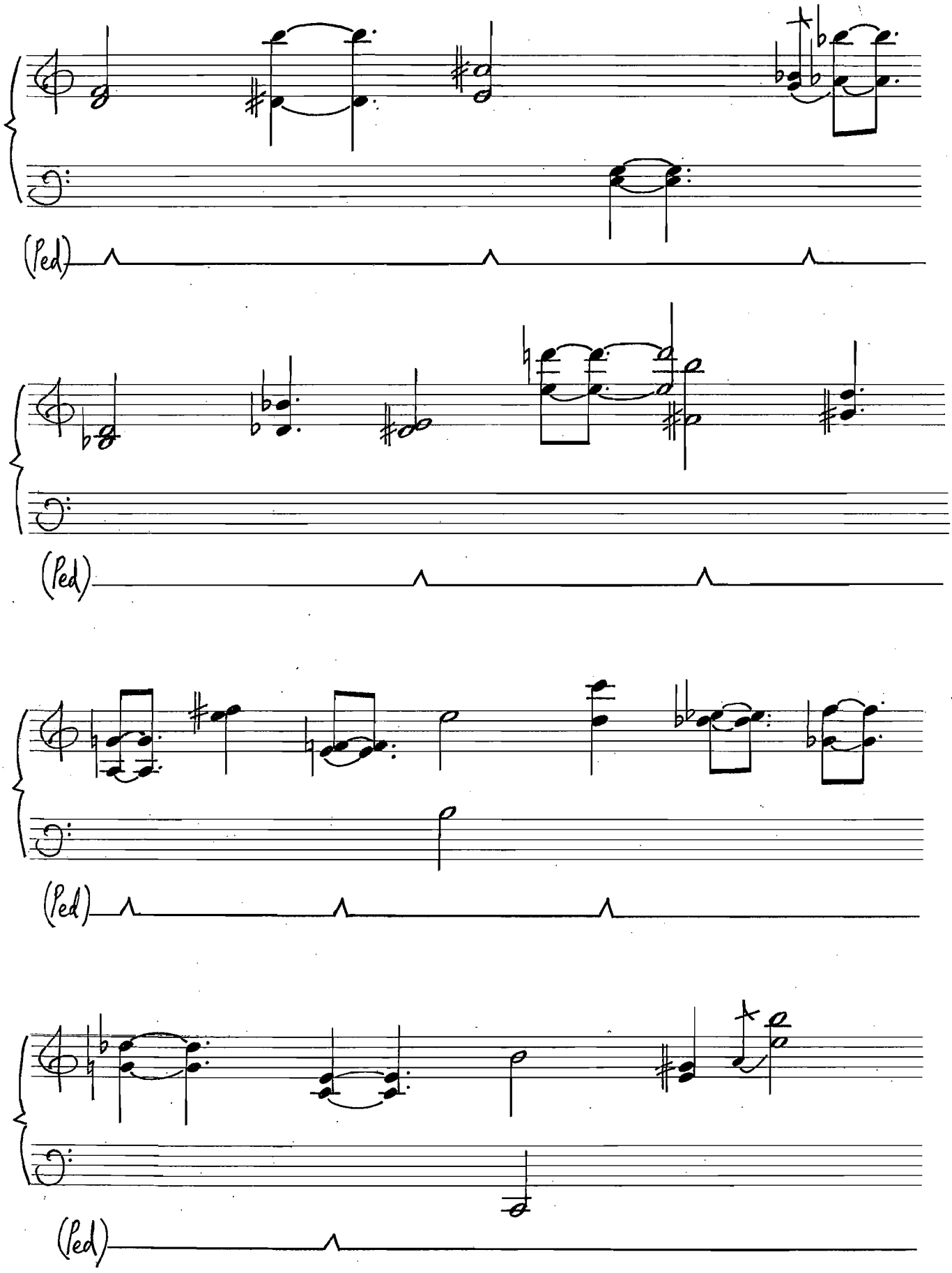
ca ♩ = 48 (𝅗𝅥𝅮 = 192)

with the utmost tenderness and affection; dynamics between *p* and *pppppp*

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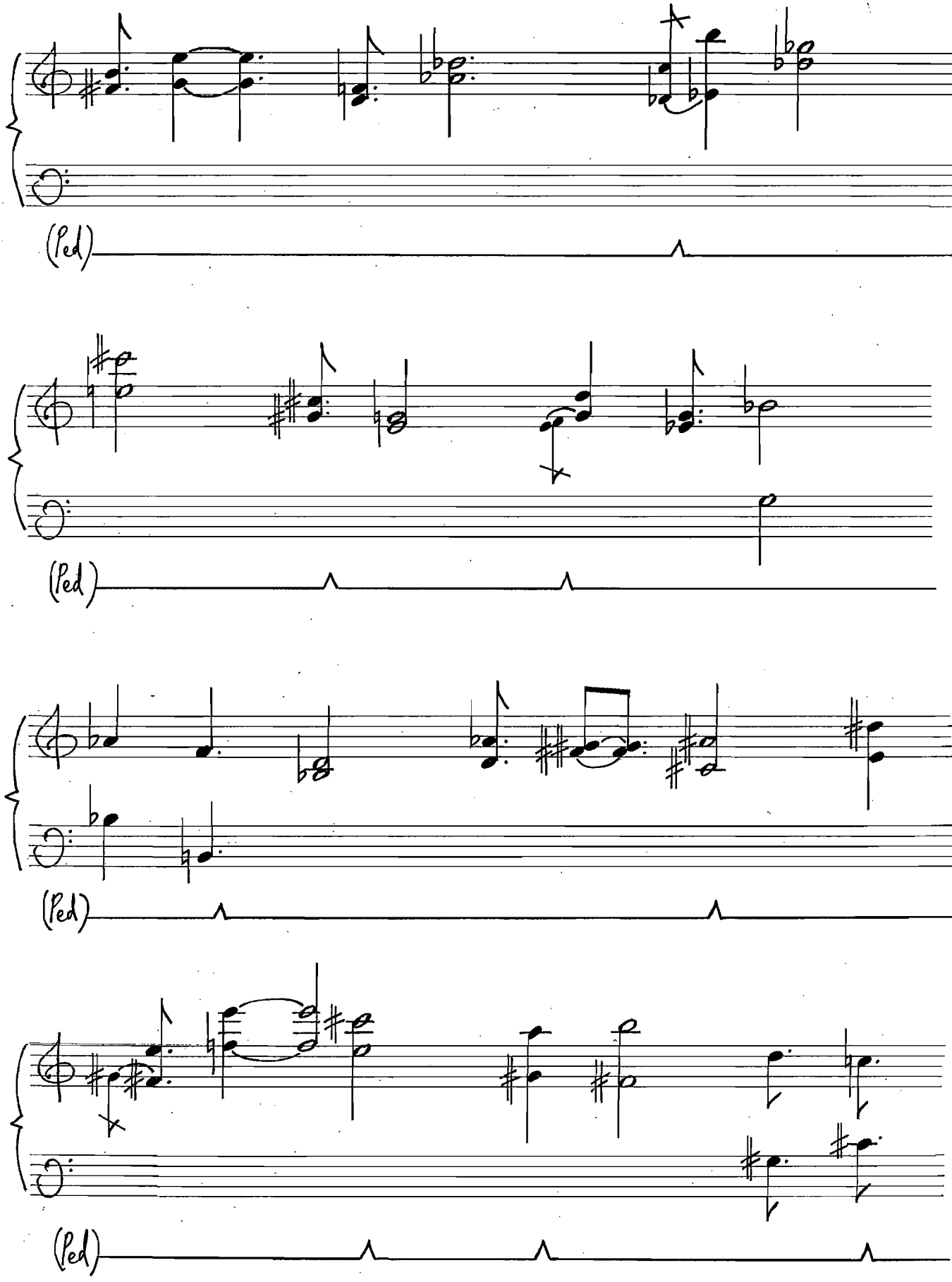
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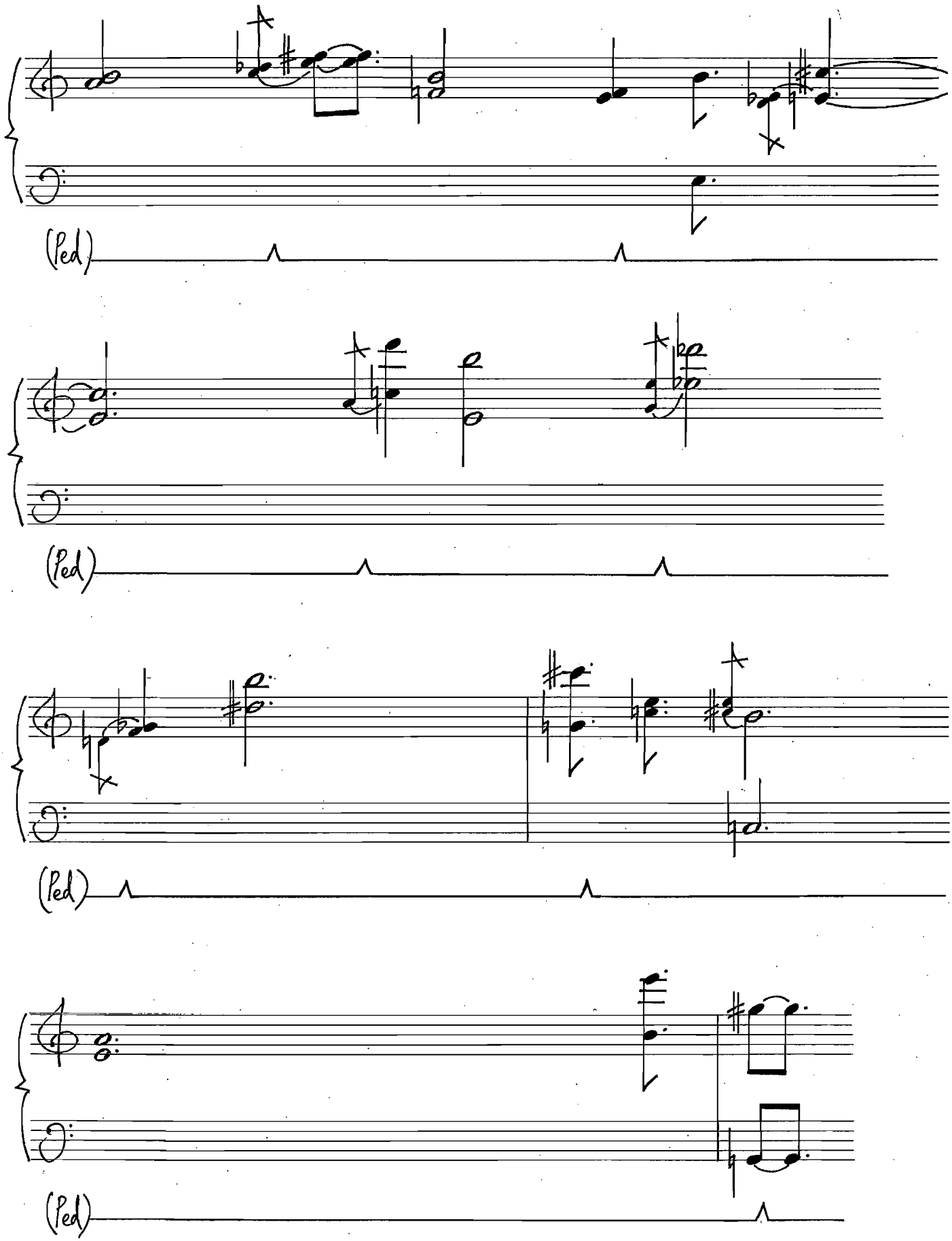
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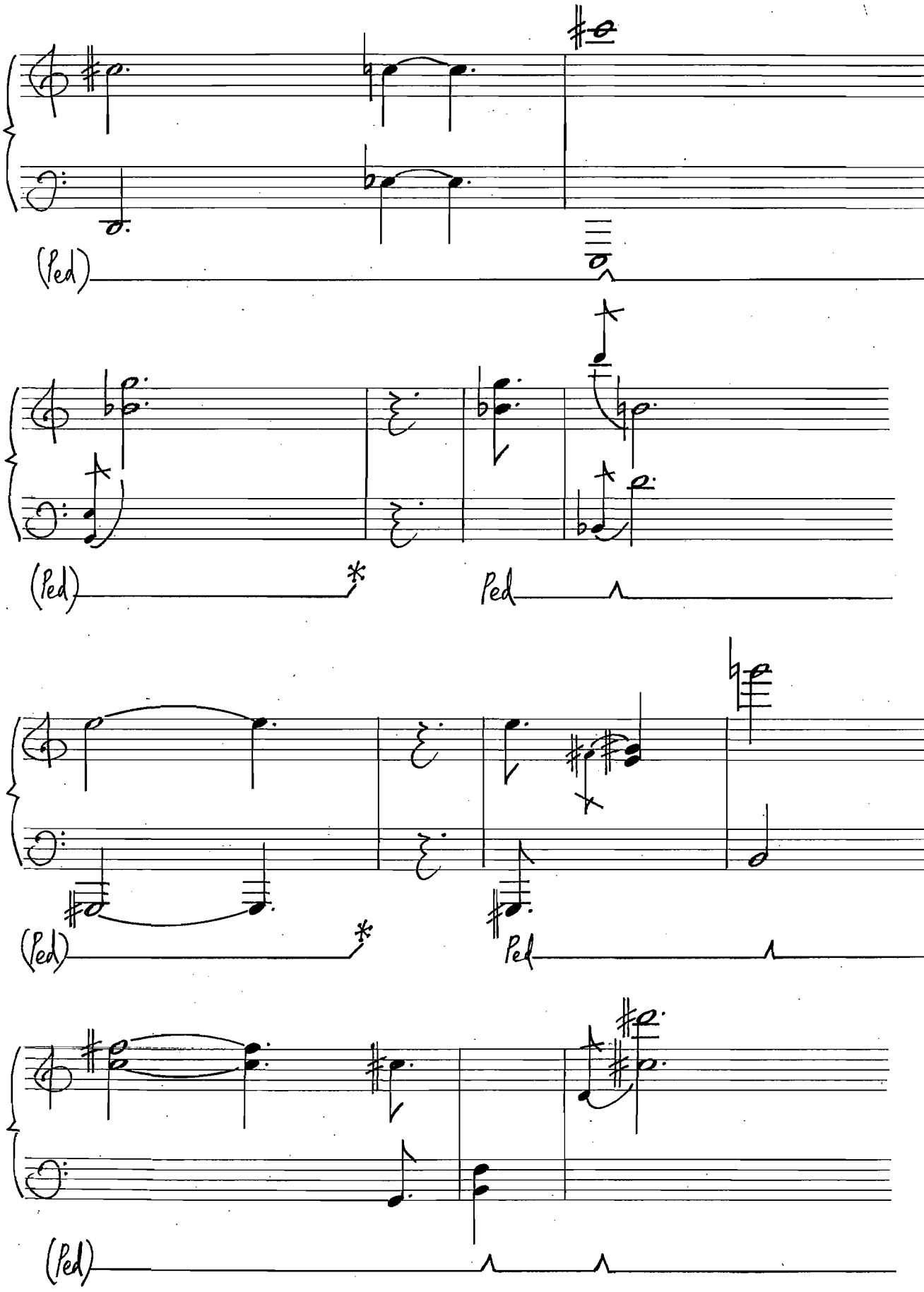
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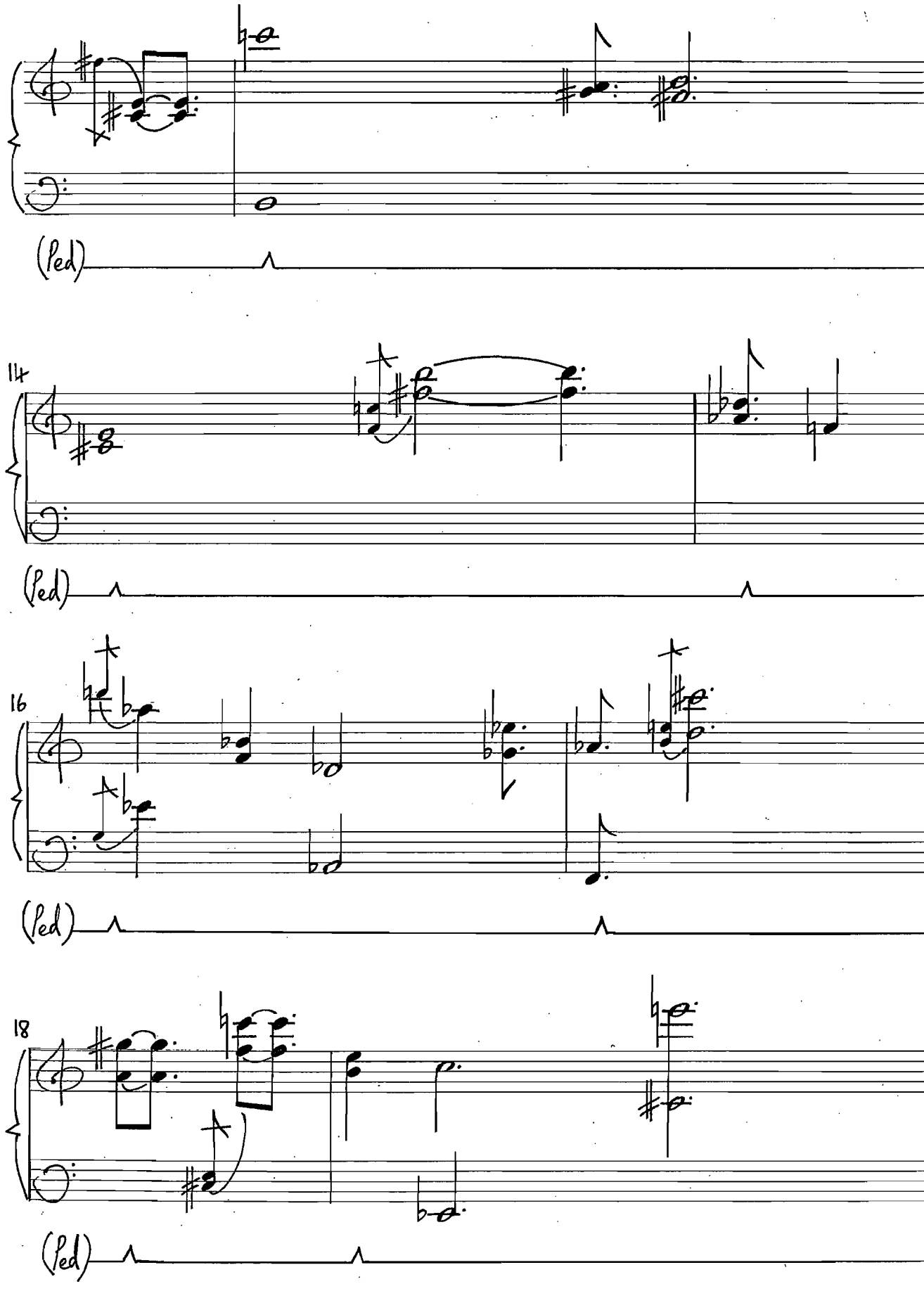
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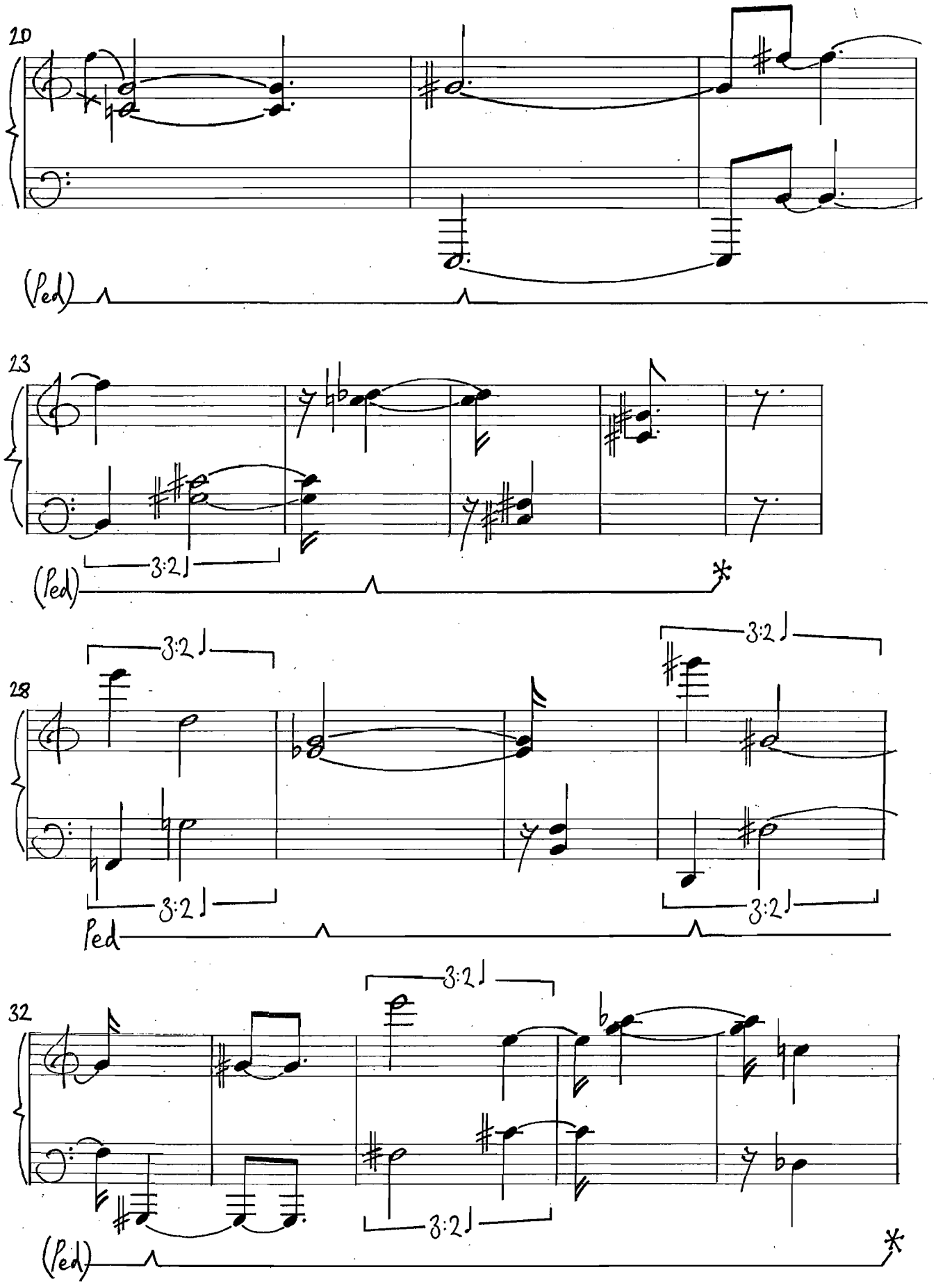
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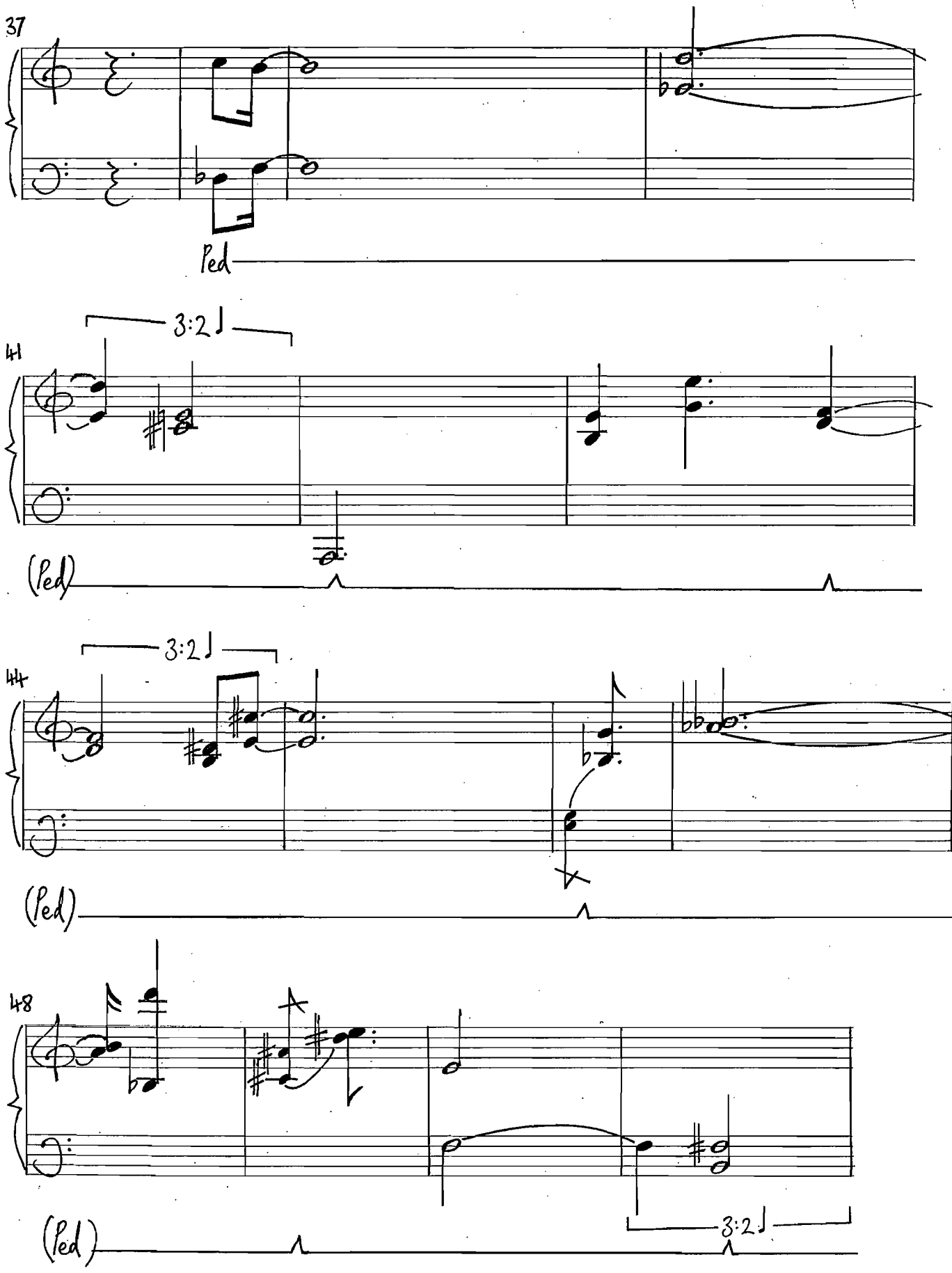
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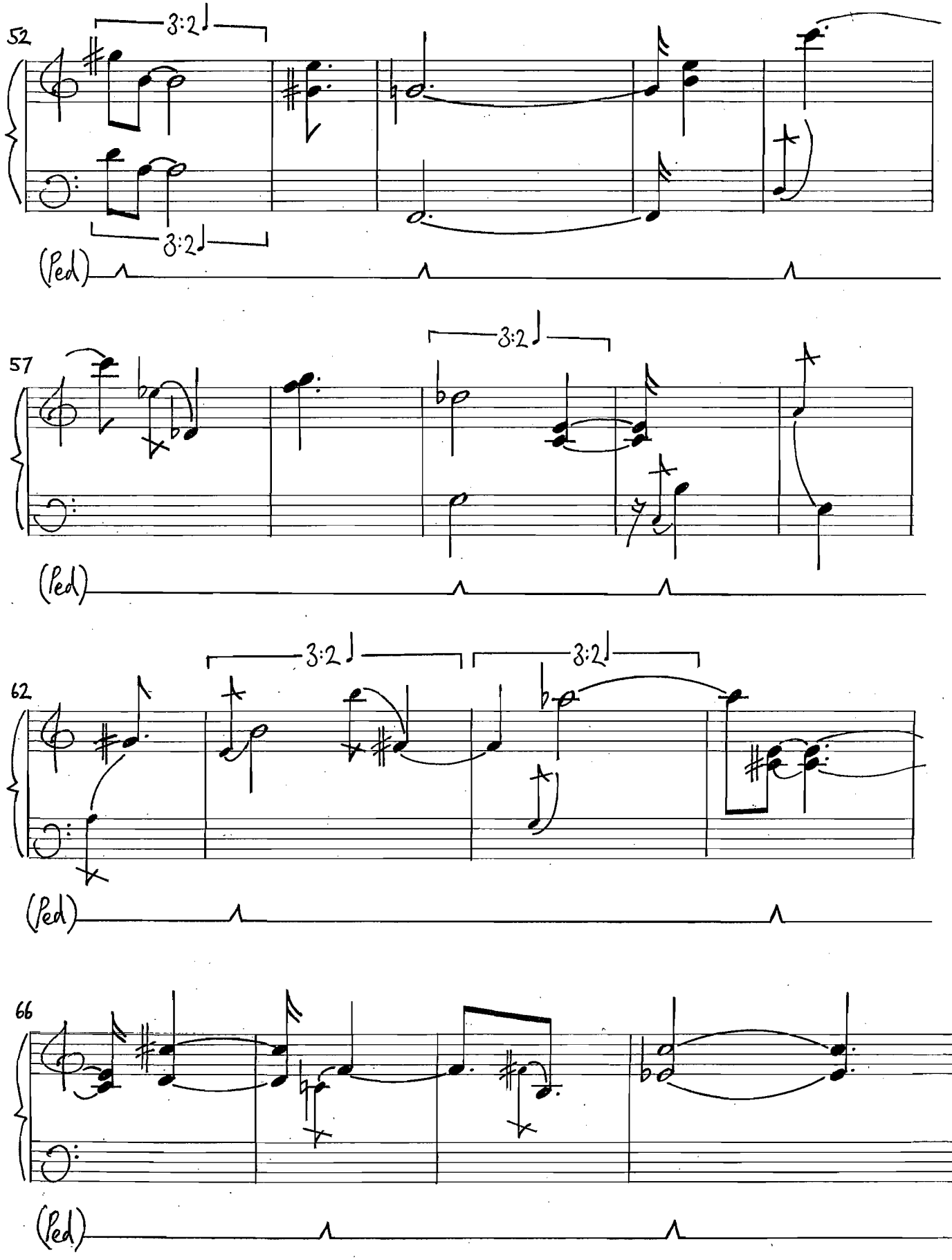
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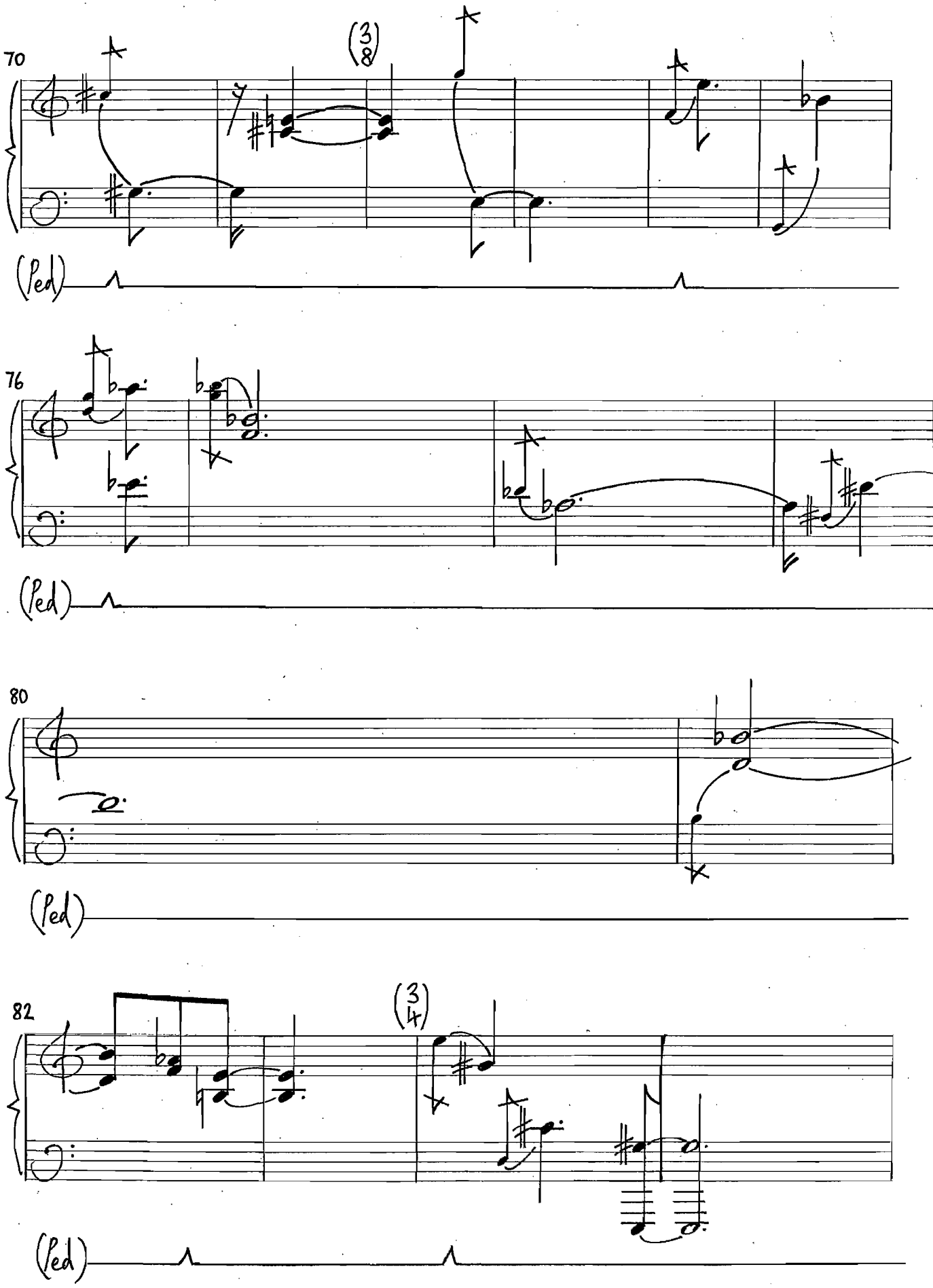
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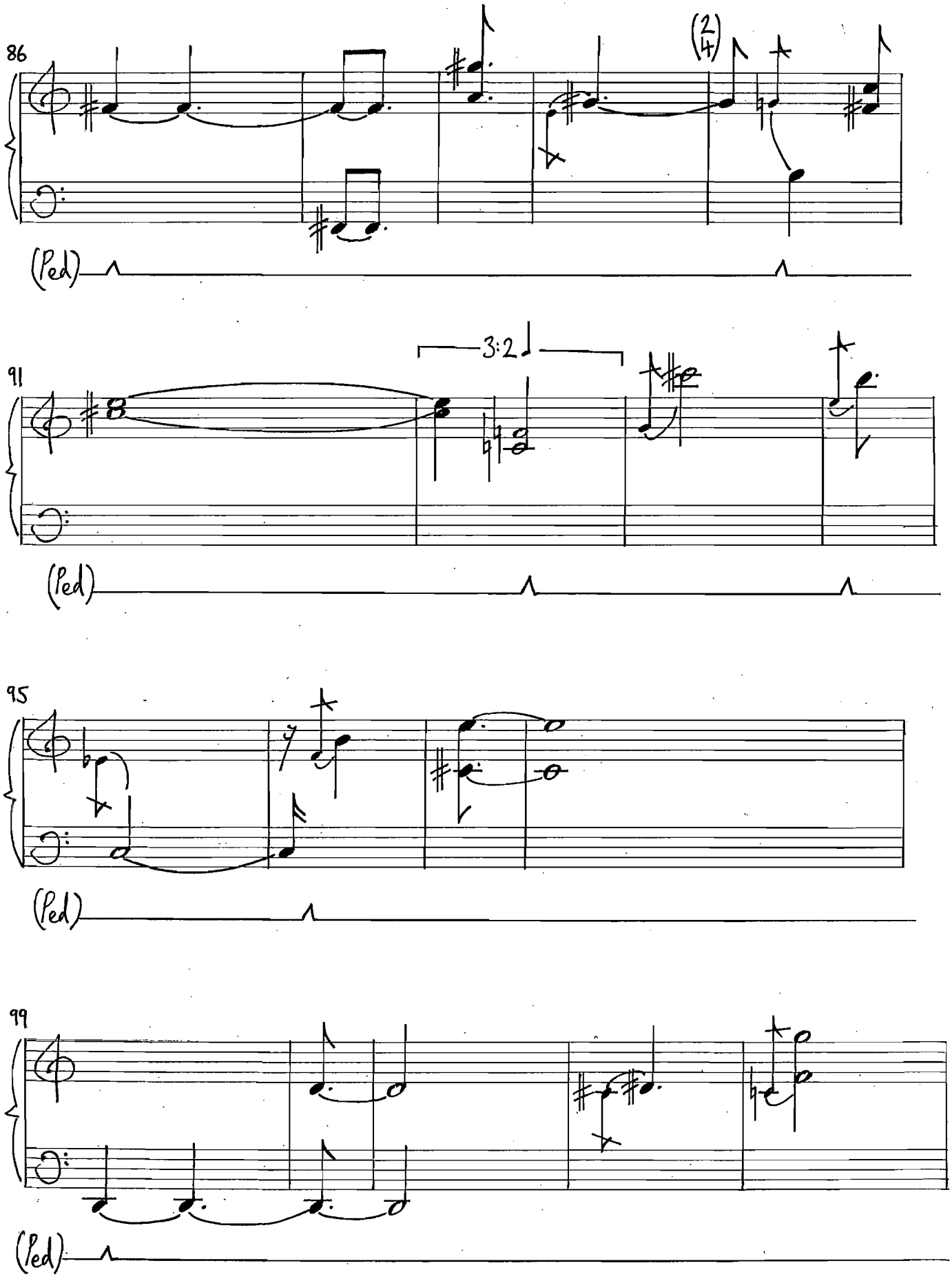
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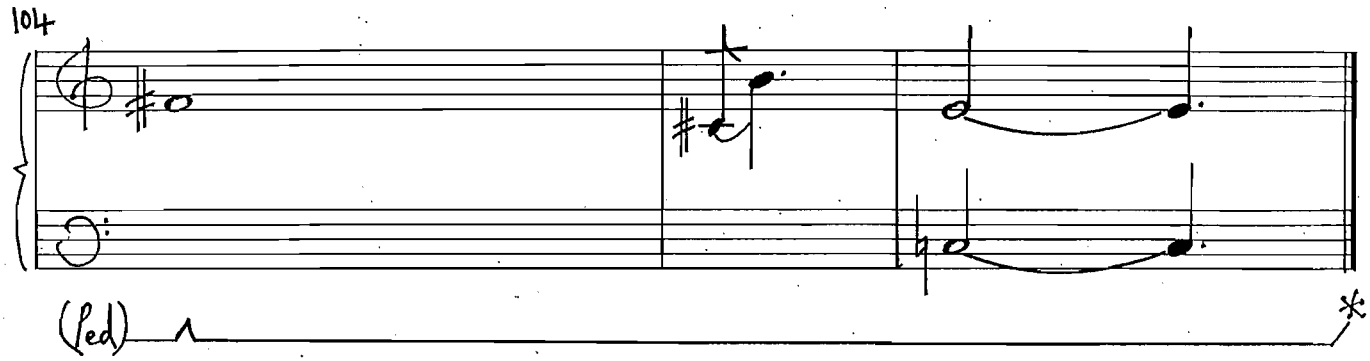
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# *Escucho con mis Ojos*

**For piano**

**John Habron**

*Escucho con mis ojos*

**Notes for performance**

*Lent(issim)o, sostenuto assai e teneramente possibile*

Each page of the score has a pitch at its centre (the central pitch). The central pitch must inform or somehow affect some or all of the other events on that page; for example, it may be (i) sounded (at least once, alone or in combination with other events), (ii) interpreted in the light of graphics on the same page, (iii) not sounded directly but interpreted conceptually (for example, it could act as a registral designation for sounds produced using the piano interior, it could be a pitch to be avoided/not reached etc.) or interpreted otherwise. Combinations of these strategies are perfectly acceptable, even within the same page. Besides the central pitch there are three other materials: graphic notations, two-voice counterpoint and dyads.

The graphic notations consist of unpitched rhythms, proportional rhythms, orthographical shapes, words and numbers. Generally speaking these should be interpreted using the piano interior/exterior; unpitched (sounds with indefinite pitch) and pitched sounds are welcome. The words may be regarded as performing directions but must not be vocalised. Any ambiguities which remain after reading these notes are left to the performer to resolve, incorporate into the performance, ignore etc.

The two-voice counterpoint, which occurs three times, must be played with the minimum of pedalling and the two voices must be as equal as possible in terms of volume and sense of line. Whilst the dyads may at times be considered to be in counterpoint with graphic notations and/or the central pitch, the contrapuntal texture must be played only as it is written, with no other elements. Pedalling may be used however to overlap it with what precedes or follows it.

The pages must be played in the order given and all notations should be interpreted (even in, in some cases, as rests or silences); each of the contrapuntal textures must be performed only once. Furthermore, all events, whilst they may follow one another at any time interval, must nevertheless be performed with the tempo indication (see above) in mind at all times. The exception to this is the contrapuntal texture, which should be performed at ♩ = ca 96.

There is no absolute proportionality intended in terms of space=time or blank space=silence/non-activity but the disposition of the elements within each page is intended to be suggestive in terms of interpretation. No particular sense of directionality is intended (except for the two-voice counterpoint, which must be read left-to-right and top-to-bottom).

The *sostenuto* pedal should be used liberally. However, it should be changed frequently in predominantly dyadic moments; large 'washes' of resonance should be avoided.

In general loud dynamics should be avoided.

An accidental applies only to the note which it precedes.

An x above a note means that it can be read as ♭♭, ♭, ♮, ♯ or ×.

Duration variable; probably 15'-30'

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**For Alicia Barra Salinas, on her birthday (7 March 2006)**

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**Programme note**

This piece is the third in a series of meditations upon the sonnets of Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas (1580-1645). The sonnet from which the title of this piece is taken is given here as it appears in Price, R. M. ed. *An Anthology of Quevedo's Poetry* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1969) and with my translation, which was made with the invaluable assistance of Alicia Barra Salinas.

Retirado en la paz de estos desiertos,
con pocos pero doctos libros juntos,
vivo en conversación con los difuntos,
y escucho con mis ojos a los muertos.

Si no entendidos, siempre abiertos,
enmiendan o fecundan mis asuntos,
y en músicos callados contrapuntos,
al sueño de la vida hablan despiertos.

Las grandes almas que la muerte ausenta
de injurias de los años vengadora
libra, oh gran don Joseph, docta la imprenta.

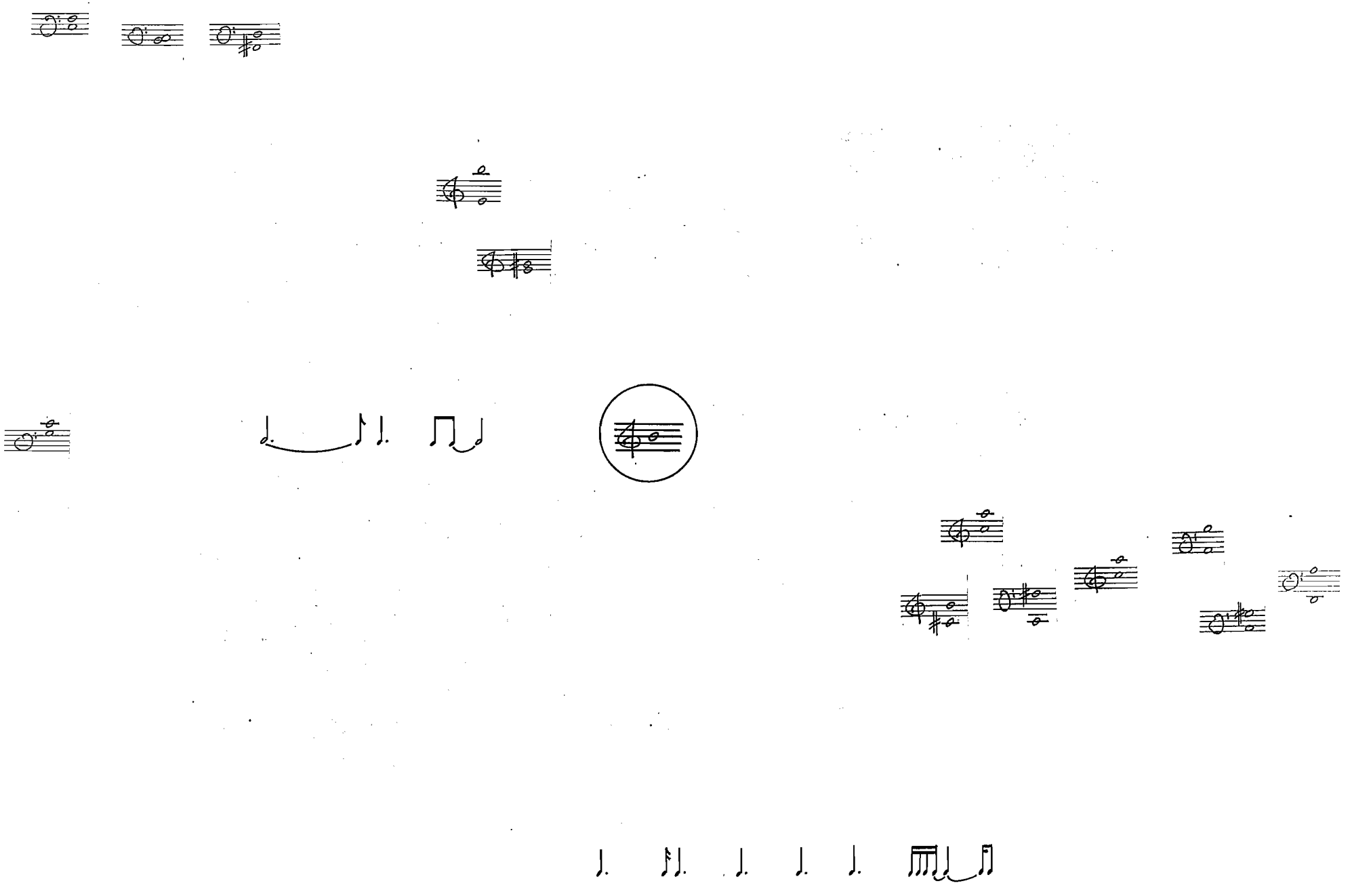
En fuga irrevocable huye la hora,
pero aquélla el mejor cálculo cuenta,
que en la lección y los estudios nos mejora.

Withdrawn into the peace of these deserts,
With few yet learned books about me,
I live in conversation with the deceased,
And I listen with my eyes to dead men.

If not always understood, always open,
The books nourish or correct my ideas,
And in a hushed contrapuntal music,
They, awake, speak to this dream-life.

The great souls, which death,
The avenger of years of insults, makes absent,
Are freed ("Oh great Sire Joseph") by the learned printing press.

In irrevocable flight, the hours flee,
But that escape is reckoned best,
Which, in reading and studying, makes us better.



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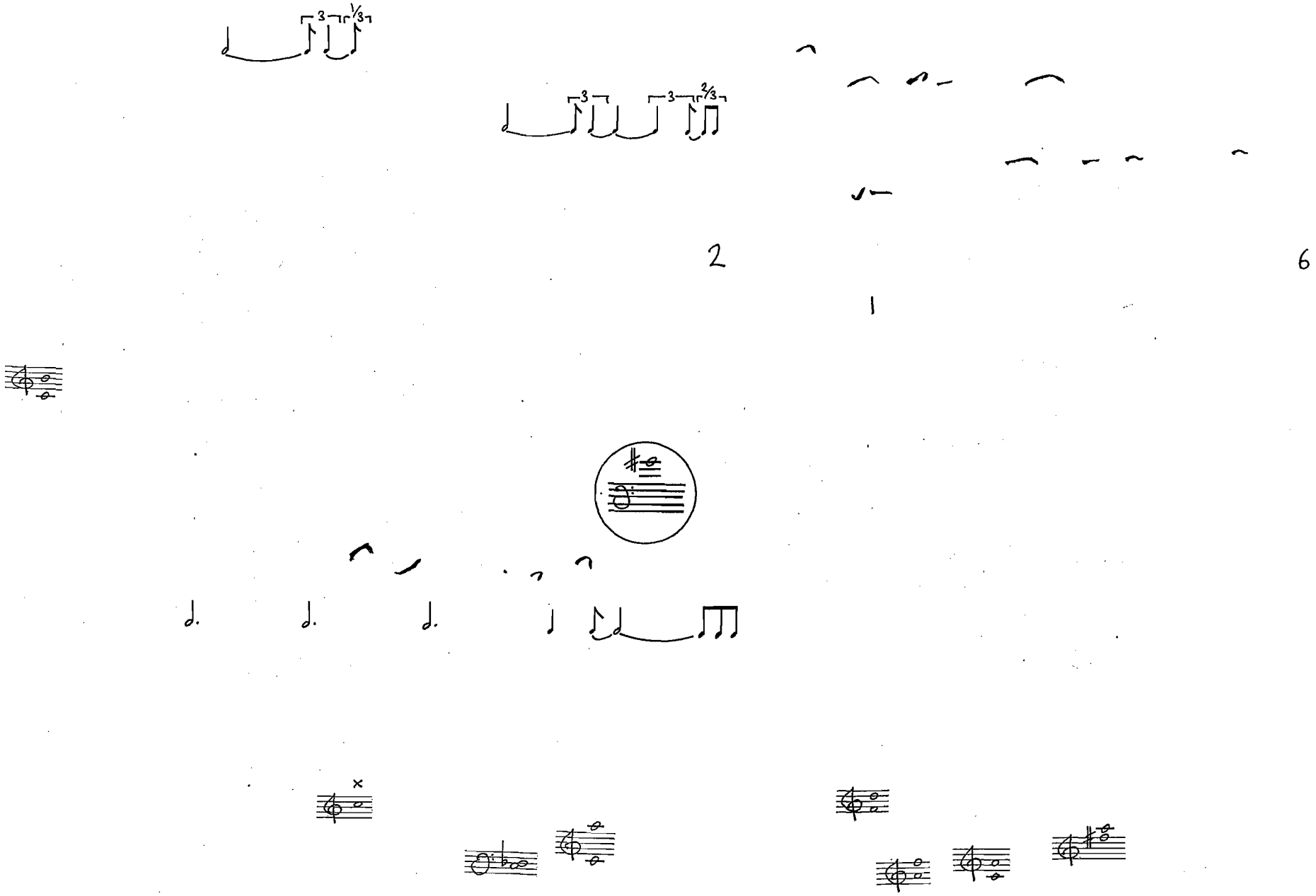
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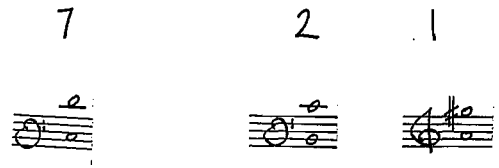
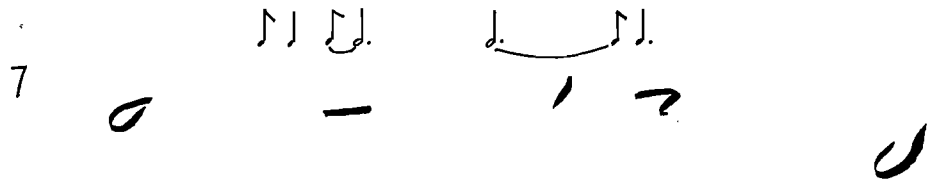
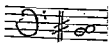
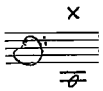
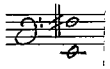


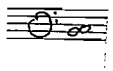



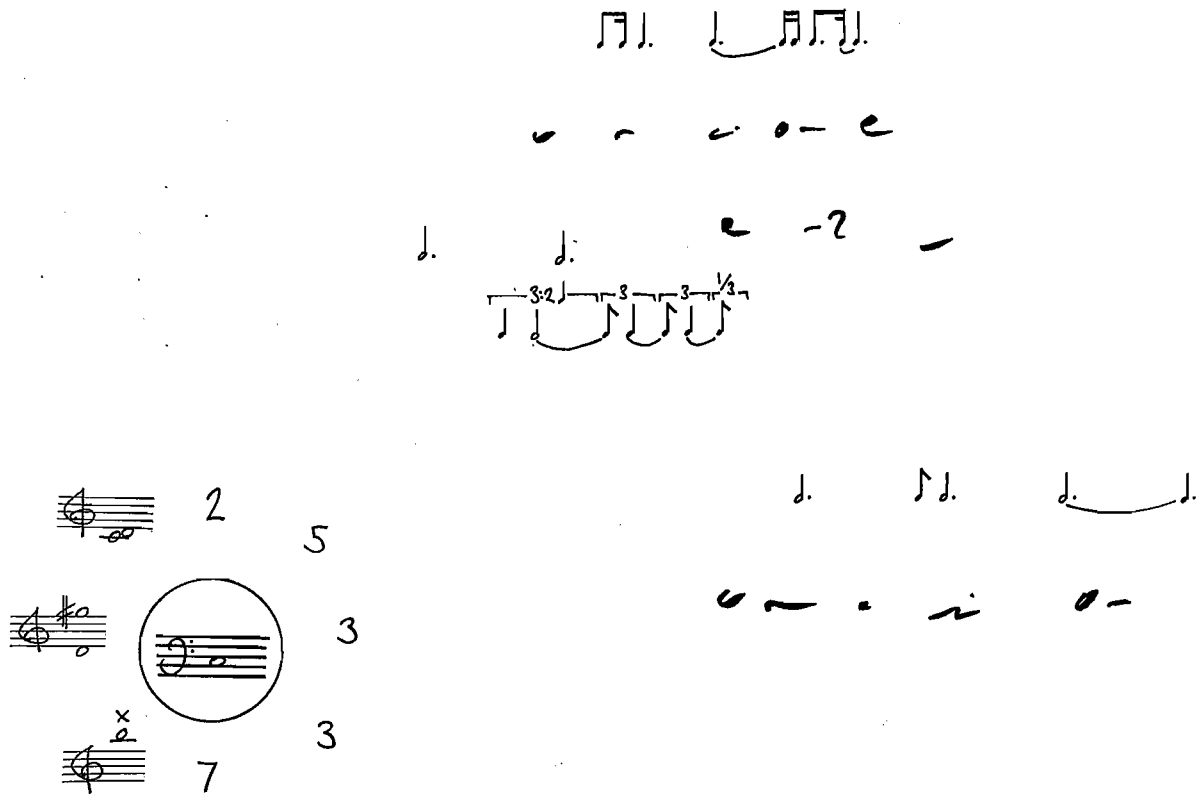




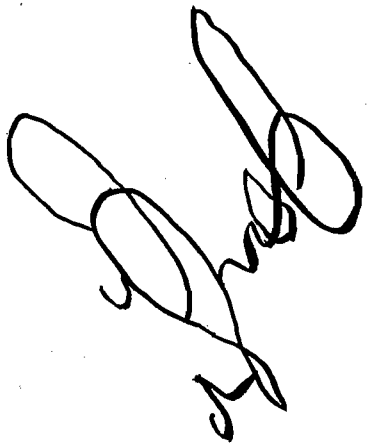


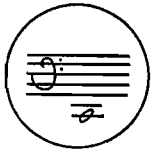


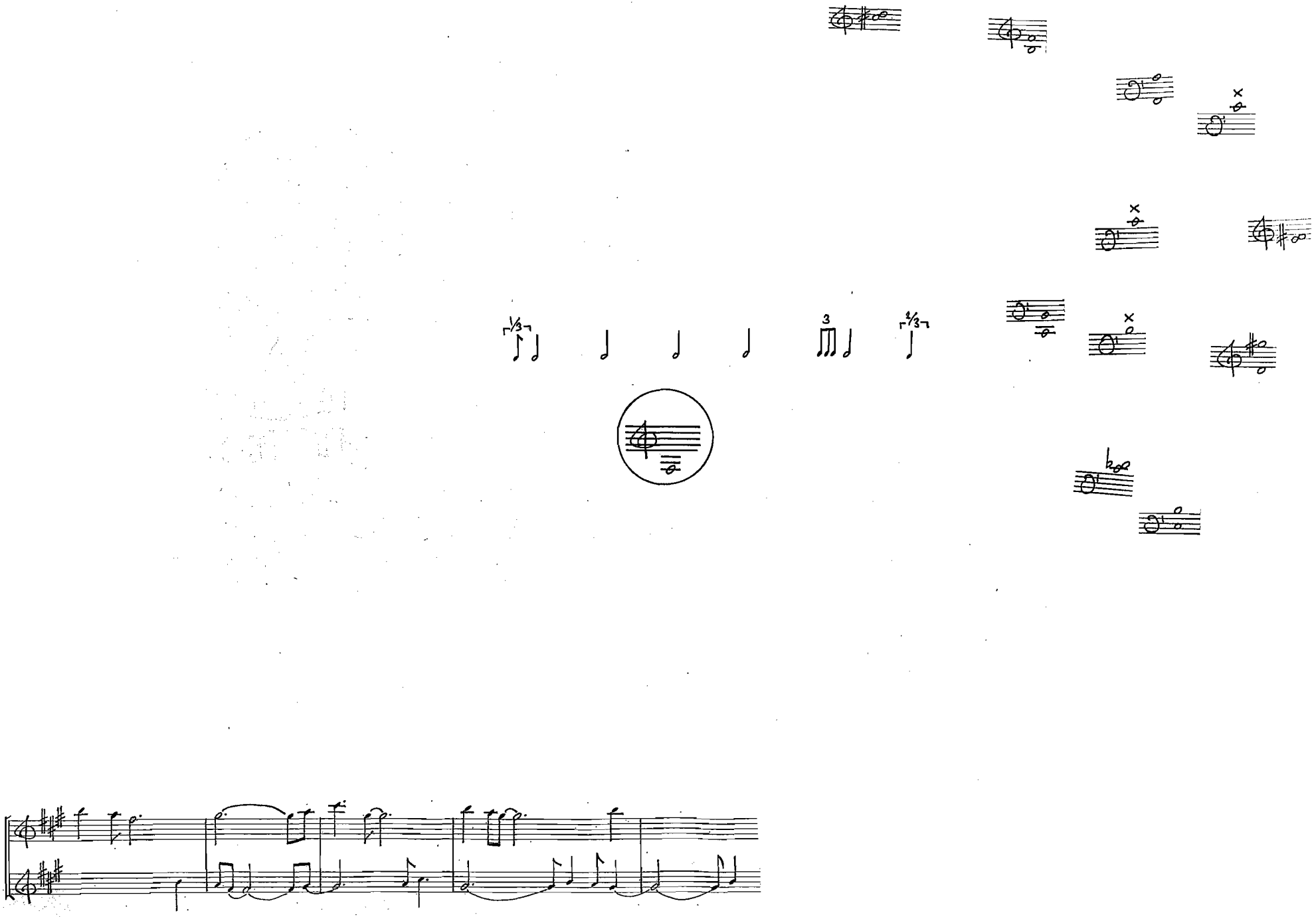


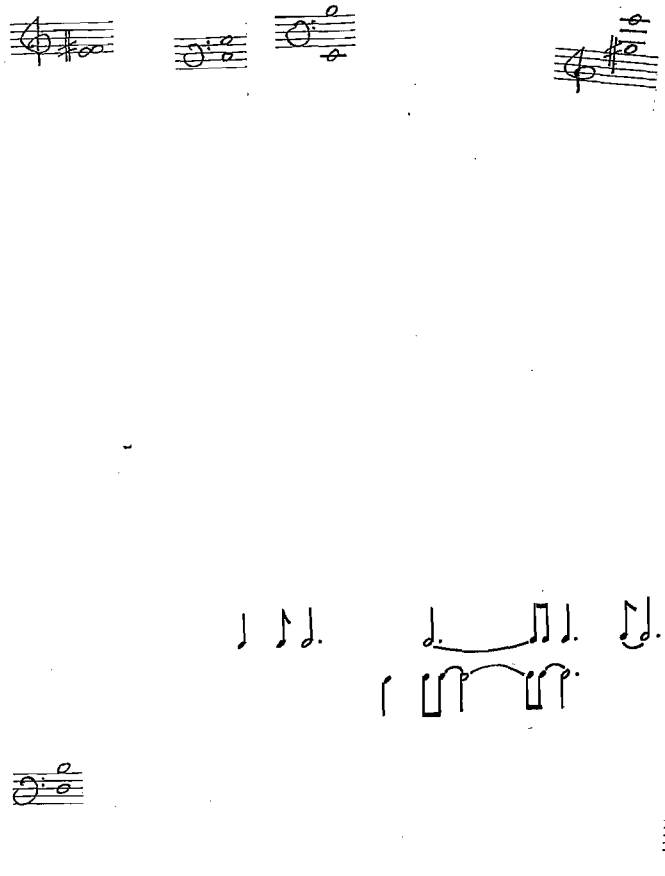

2
5
3
3
7

learned



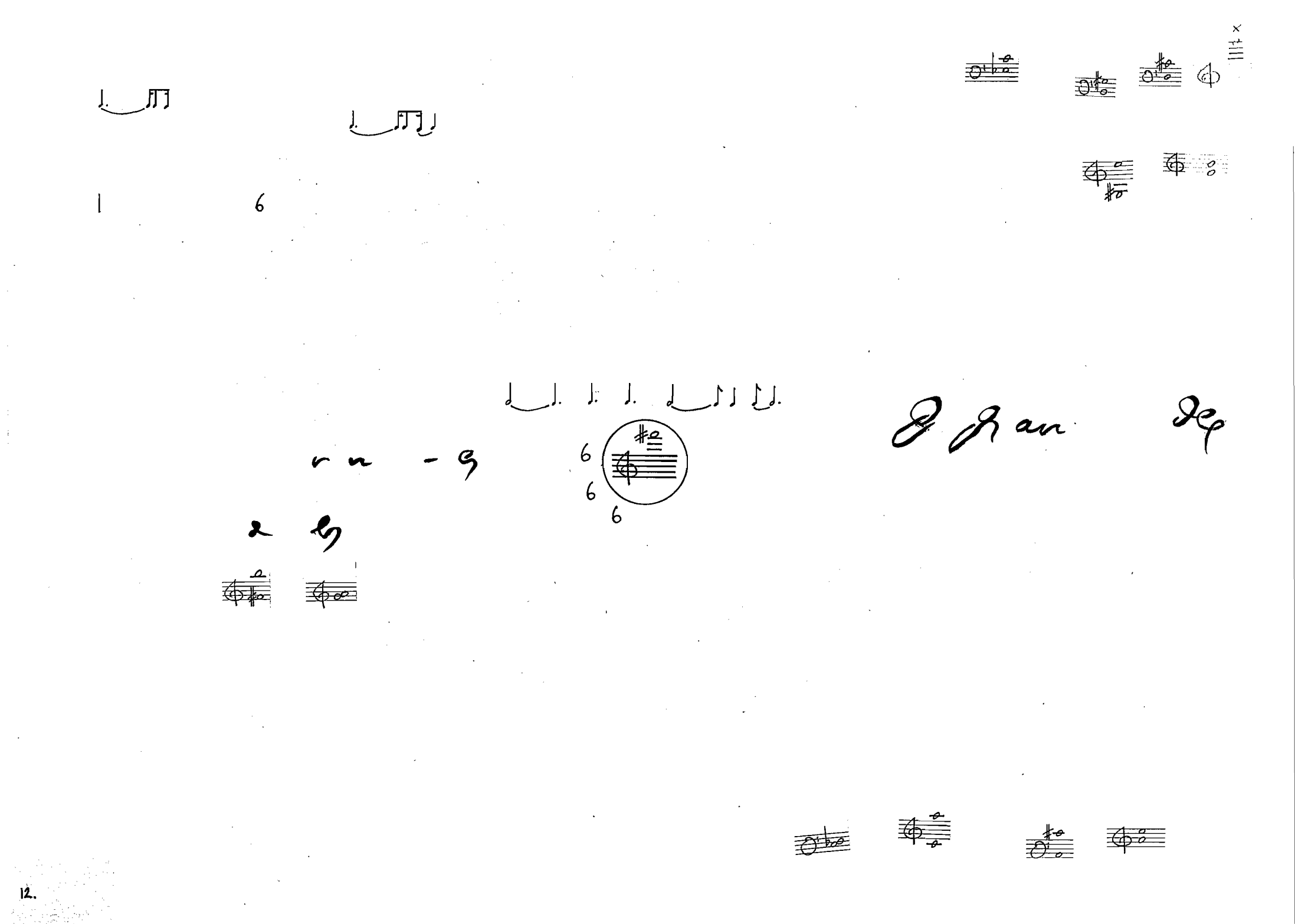


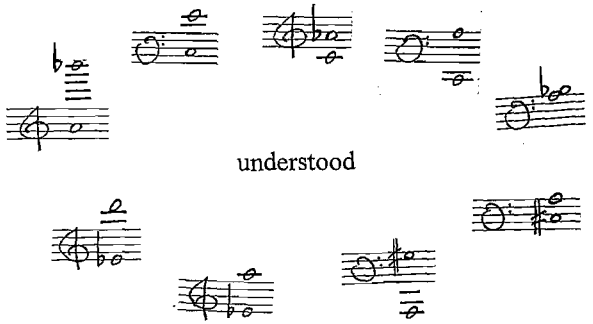





hushed

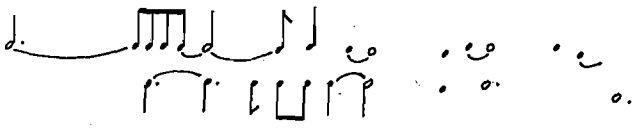
few



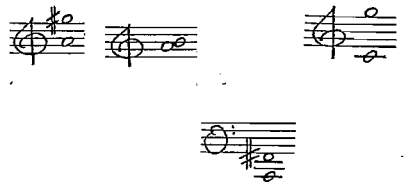


understood

big



always



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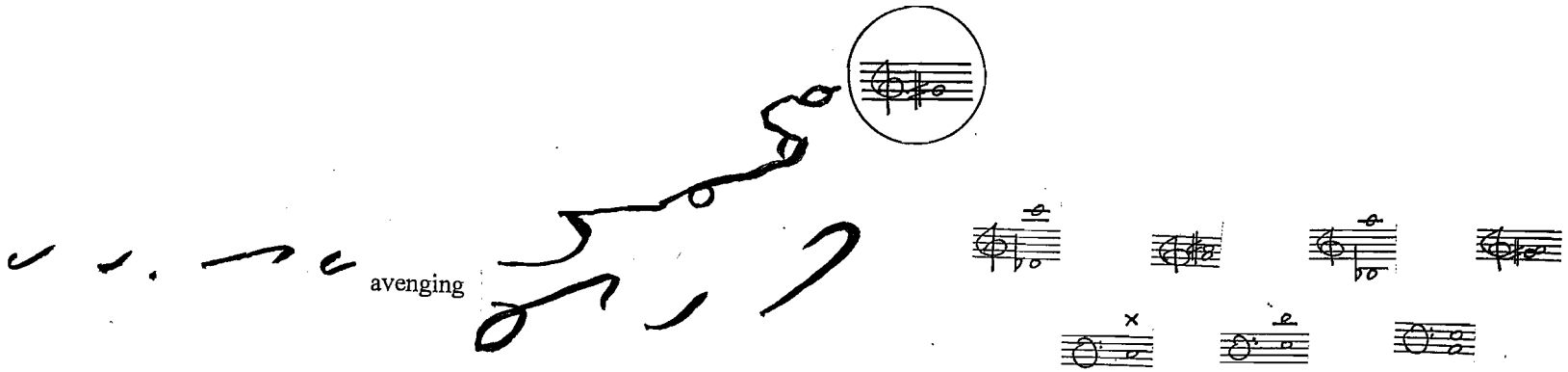
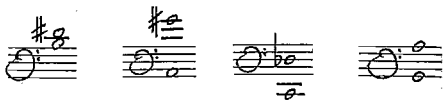
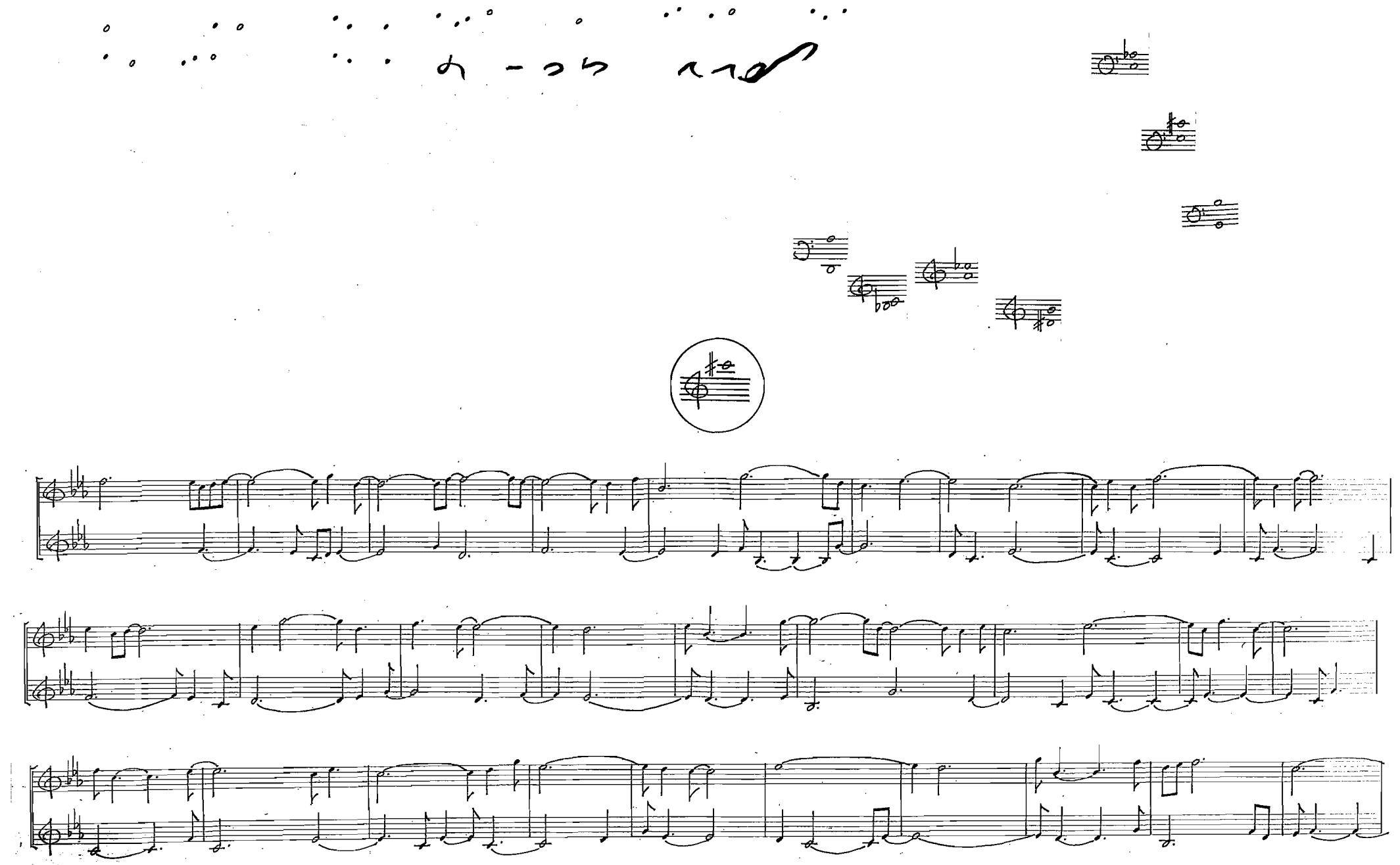
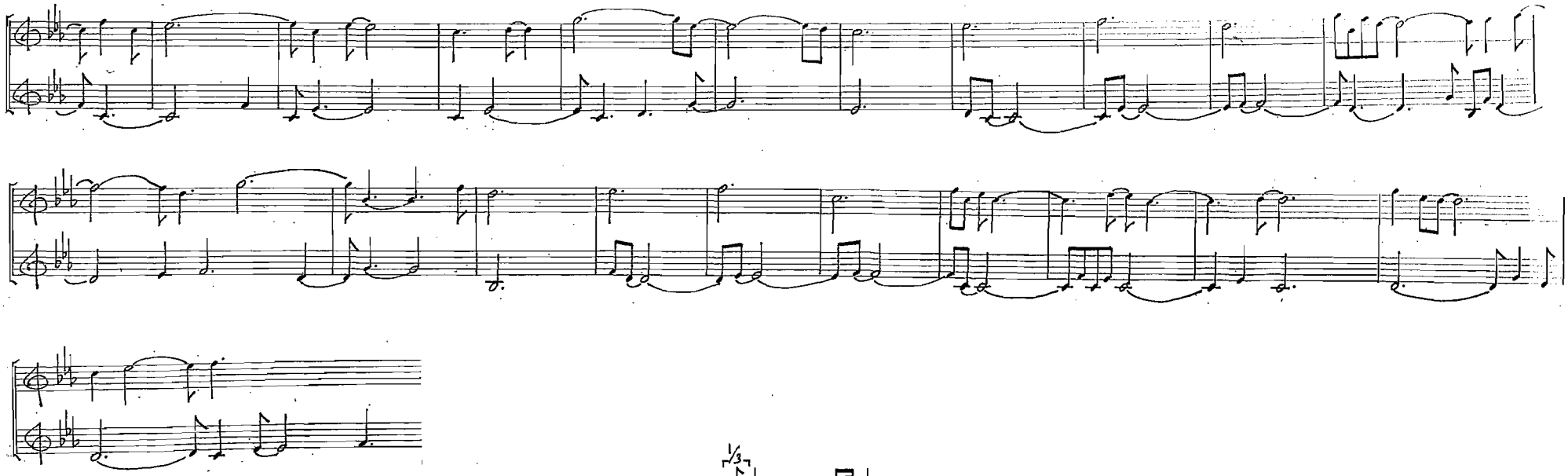
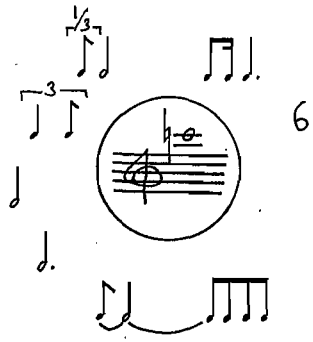
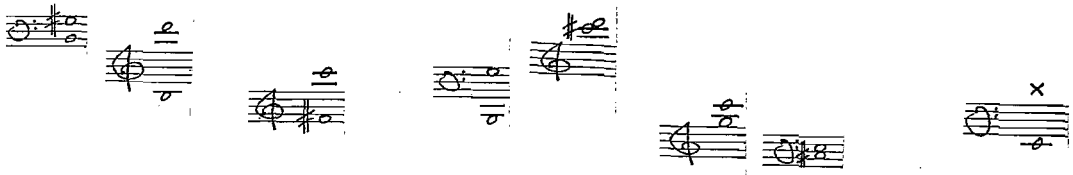


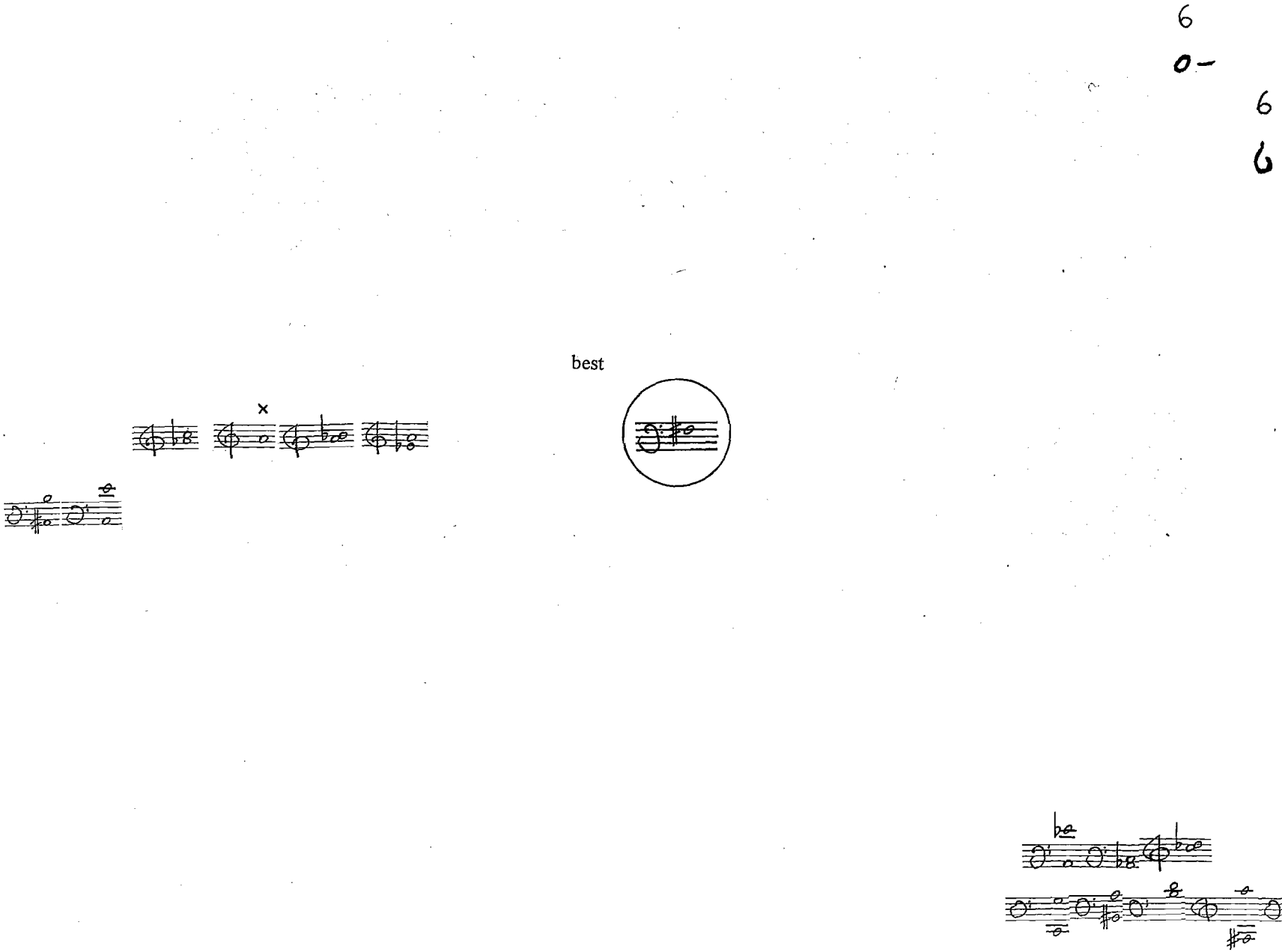








1/3
3
6




6
6
6
best
×

# *When a Brother*

**For soprano and piano**

**John Habron**

*When a Brother*

**Notes for performance**

The voice should hardly need any support, most of the notes should be 'floated'. The mouth should generally be more closed than usual and vibrato should be minimal. Consonants and glottal stops should not be over articulated.

Grace notes should be performed quickly, as if they were spontaneous ornamentations. Indeed, the general impression given by the voice should be one of 'keening' around a limited set of melodic possibilities.

allow the diphthong to sound gradually

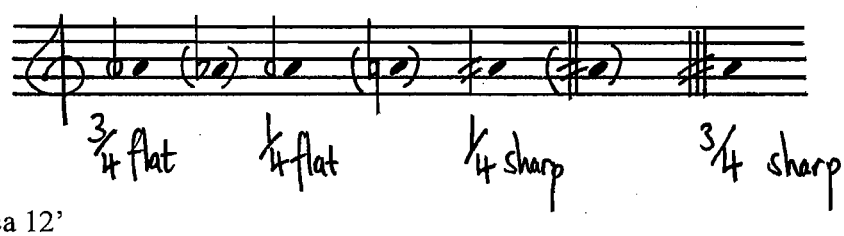
n a more nasal sound → n a gradual change to a more nasal sound

come → (m) close the mouth gradually onto an 'mmm' sound

come – (m) close the mouth immediately onto an 'mmm' sound

(>) poco >

Quarter tones




Duration ca 12'

**The text**

This is a transcription of the original manuscript. Following is the abbreviated text which I have used in my setting, with some alterations to the punctuation.

*When a Brother comes on Leave* Mary Margaret O'Hara

What was that? A knock at the door
I awakened with a start
And quickly sliding to the floor
With a wildly beating heart.

Mother calls out. He's come at last
I waited to hear no more
But fled down stairs so fast
To open wide our cottage door.

He steps inside. My brother dear
And gives me a kiss so warm
Since he left us it seems a year
How glad I am he's come to no harm.

Here comes Father. I don't know when
He tripped down stairs so sharp
To hear our Josie's voice again.
T'was sweeter than any harp.

Mother comes next her dear face
Is like an april shower.
For smiles and tears are having a race.
Oh what a joyful hour.

Hello old boy the brothers meet
Each grip the other's hand
The soldier's joy is nigh complete
Surely a fairy has waved her wand.

Here is Auntie dear, How are you lad?
Her kind heart is swelling too.
I'm sure you don't look bad?
Oh I'm alright. How are you?

So brother dear I close my rhyme.
We miss you every one
But we trust + pray for a happy time
When this cruel war is done.

What was that?...
I awakened…
…
With a wildly beating heart.

Mother calls out, "He's come at last".
…
…
…

He steps inside, my brother dear,
And gives me a kiss so warm.
Since he left us it seems a year,
How glad I am he's come to no harm.

Here comes Father…
…
To hear our Josie's voice again.
…

Mother comes…her dear face
…
…
Oh what a joyful hour.

…the brothers meet,
Each grips the other's hand.
The soldier's joy…
…

Here is Auntie…"How are you lad?"
…
…
…

…brother…
…
…we trust and pray for a happy time,
When this cruel war is done.

**Programme note**

The text for this piece is a poem by my great-grandmother Mary Margaret O'Hara, which tells of the family's joy at welcoming home her brother, Joseph Sykes O'Hara, on leave from the First World War. Joseph went back to France and was killed, aged 23, on 27 November 1917 during the battle of Cambrai.

This piece transcribes an imaginary scenario of Mary re-reading the poem sometime after the war, in the knowledge of her brother's death. Thus, the quality of the vocal writing is often that of a lament, which serves to contradict the original meaning of the text. A further layer of interpretation is inevitably added from the composer's perspective given our knowledge today of what has happened since 1917. In these ways, rather than being merely the telling of a particular family story or even an allusion to the 'war dead', the piece attempts to point to grief and remembrance in general.

The piano acts as a resonator of Mary's interior; an emotional and psychological sounding-board for what the voice cannot or doesn't want to express (in this scenario, Mary's is a restrained and dignified grief).

The vocal line is adapted from a 'keen for a dead child', sung by Cití Ní Ghallchóir, which was recorded by Alan Lomax in 1951; see *World Library of folk and primitive music* – compiled and edited by Alan Lomax, vol.2, Ireland (Rounder CD 1742). A keen is an Irish folksong, traditionally sung at wakes.

---

**For Rosalind Mizen and Antonio Cascelli, in the year of Michael Tippett's centenary**

---

with restrained grief, sempre sotto voce ♩= ca 48

pp

What was that?

ppp

a- wa- ken → (n)ed

p ppp poco

With a wild- ly bea-ting-(g) heart.

ppp n sub. p poco

mp sub. ppp poco

Mo-ther calls out,

p sub. ppp

"He's come → (m)

at last".

p

ppp pp

He steps in- side,

mf (non troppo) espress. n

my bro-ther dear,

tacet colla voce

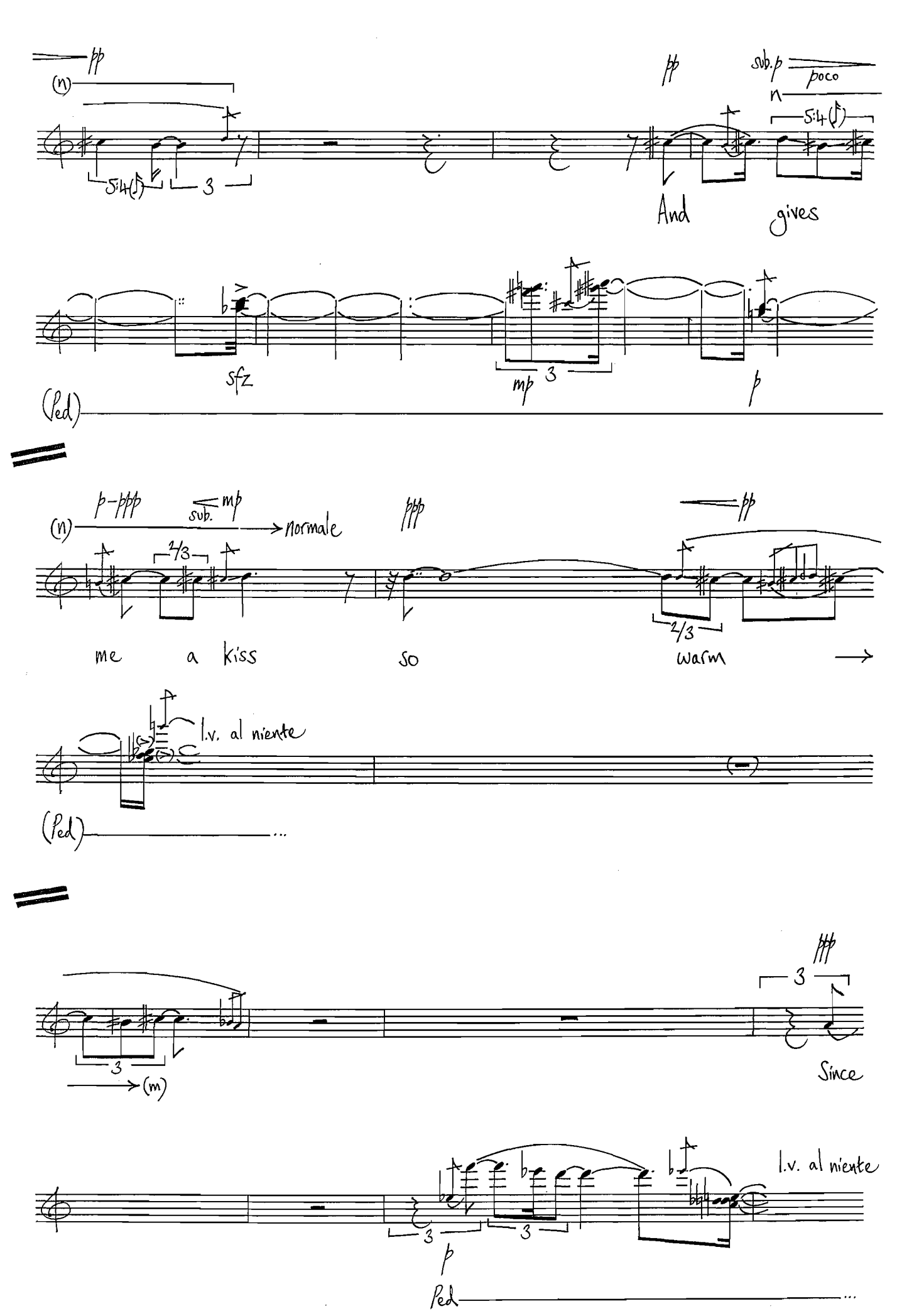
piano

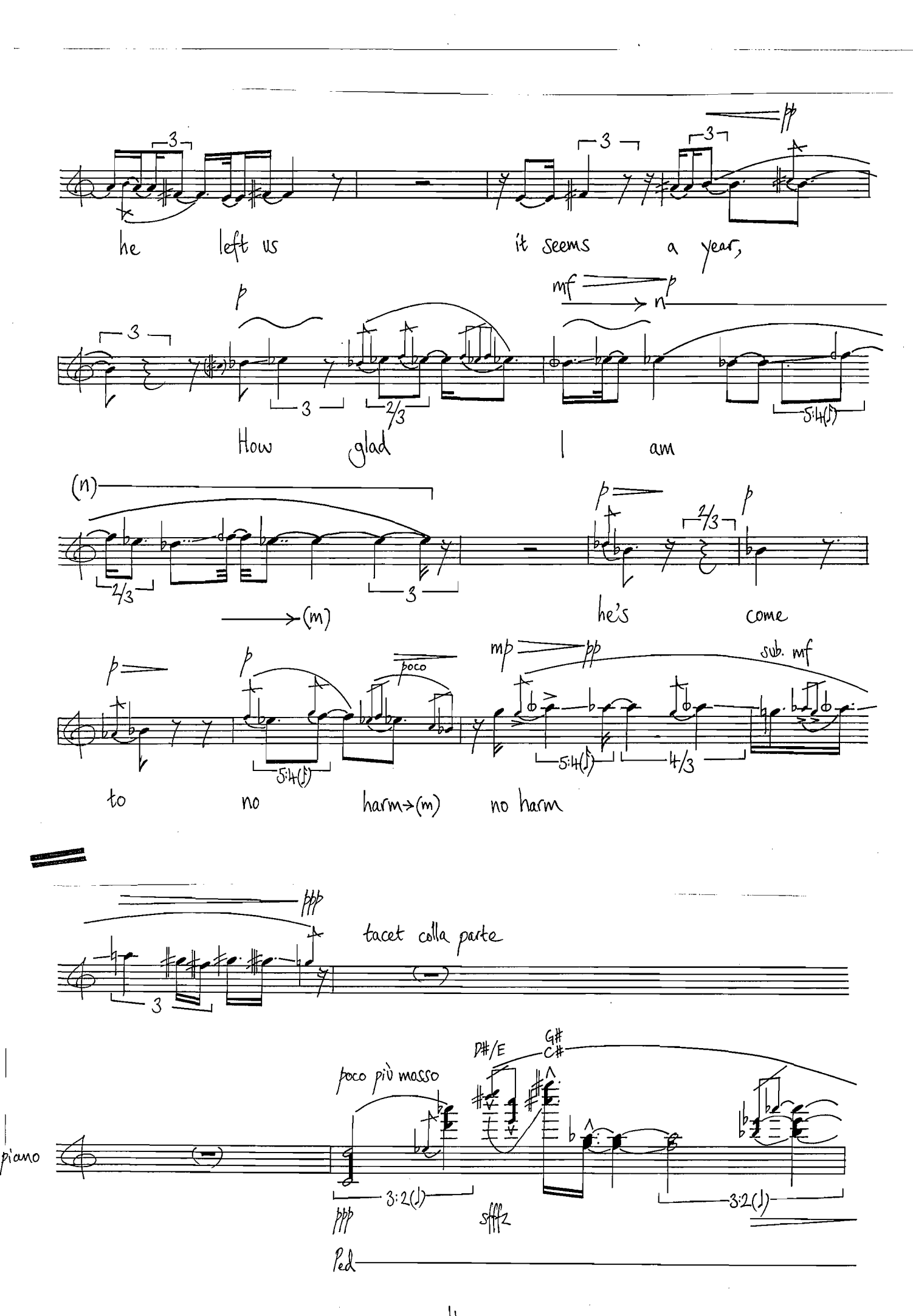
con violenza

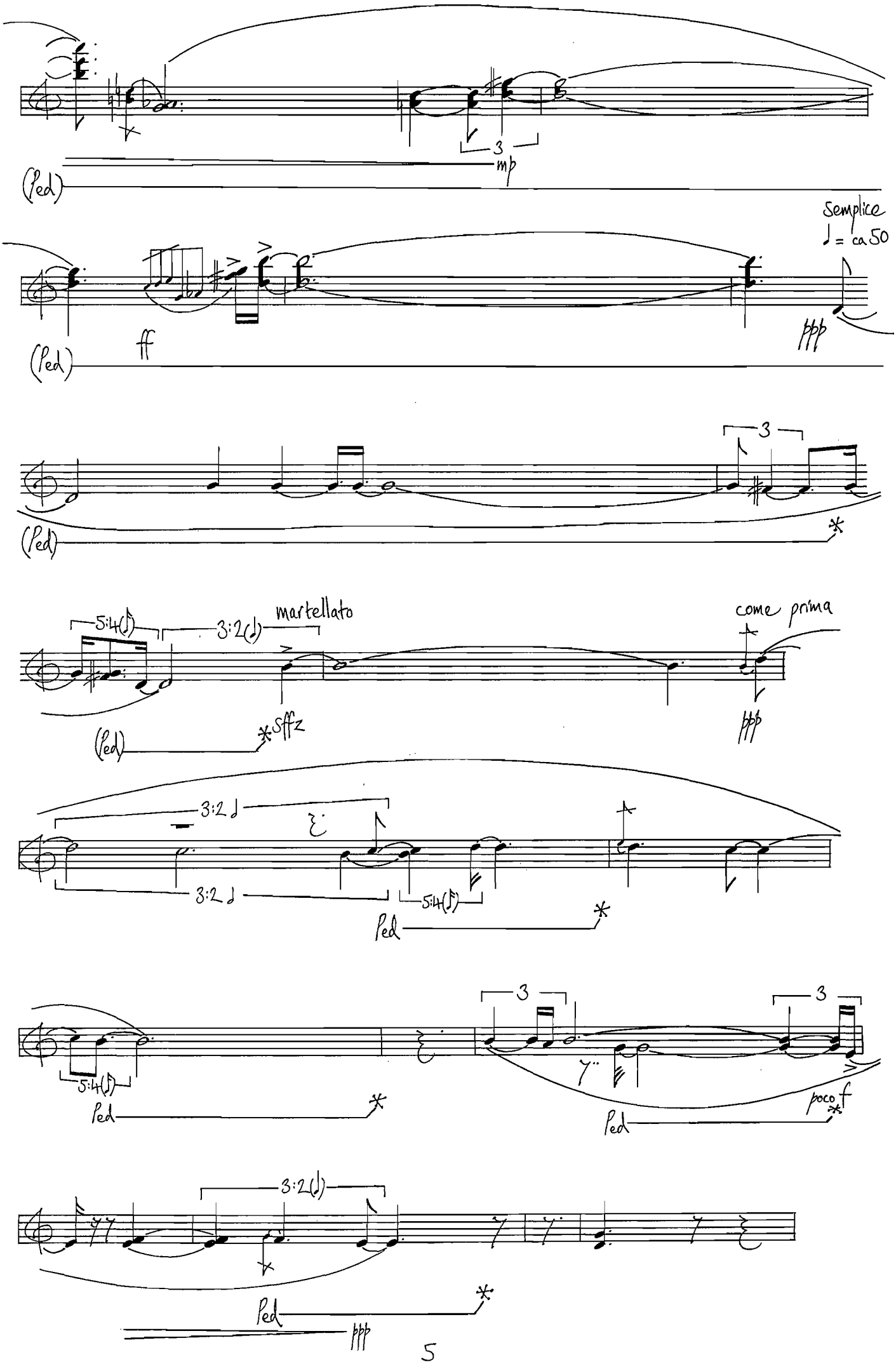
sffffz

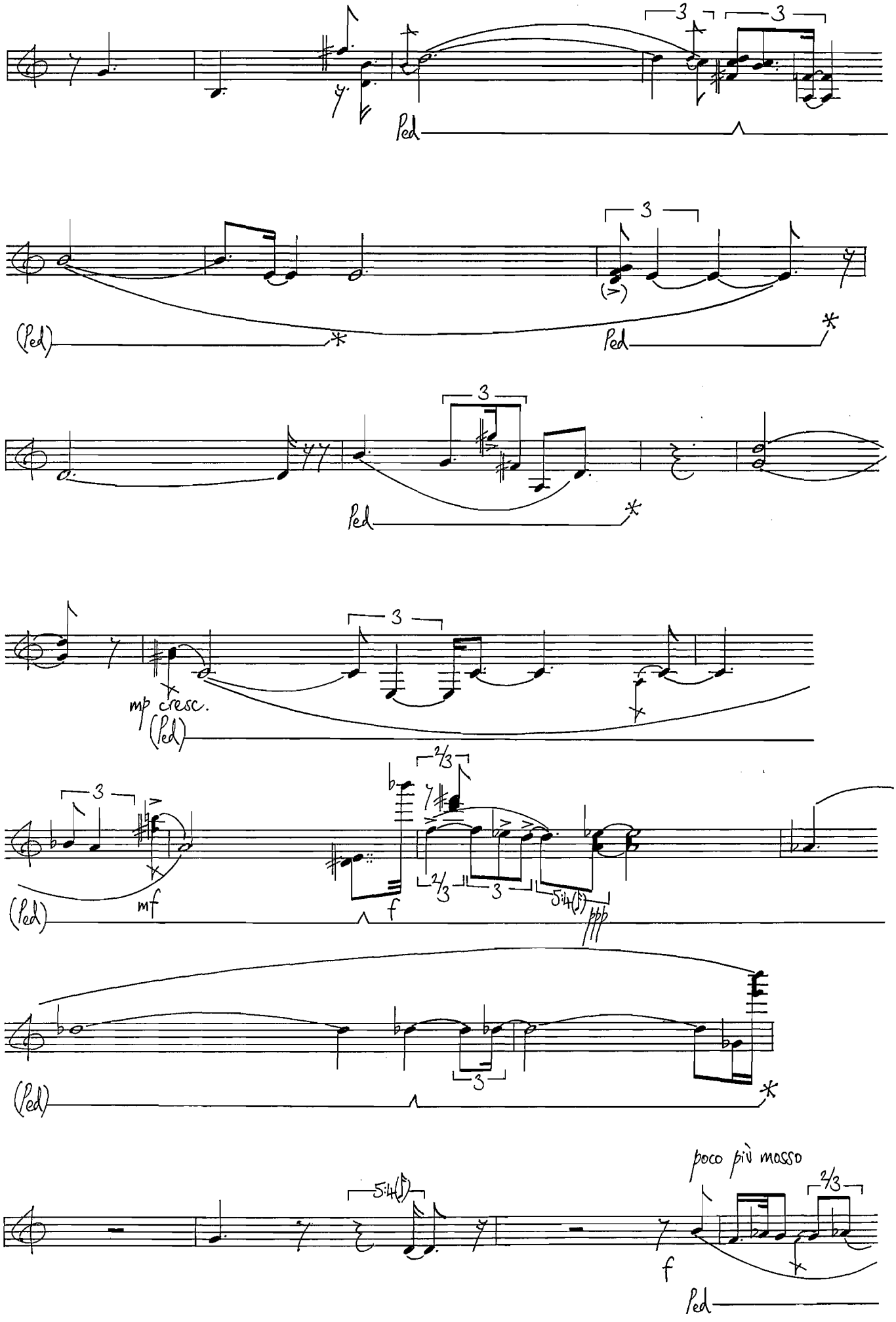
p

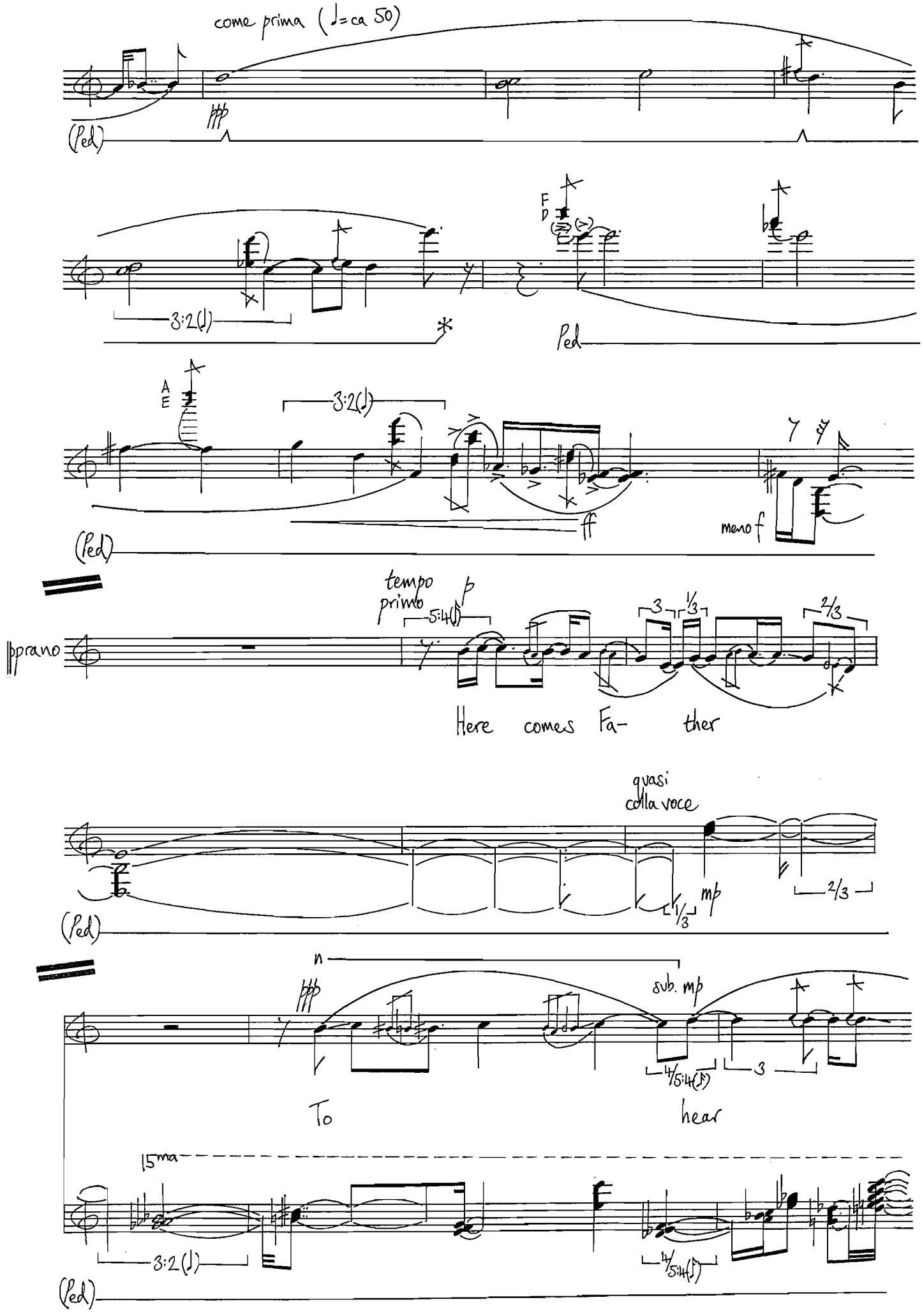
Ped

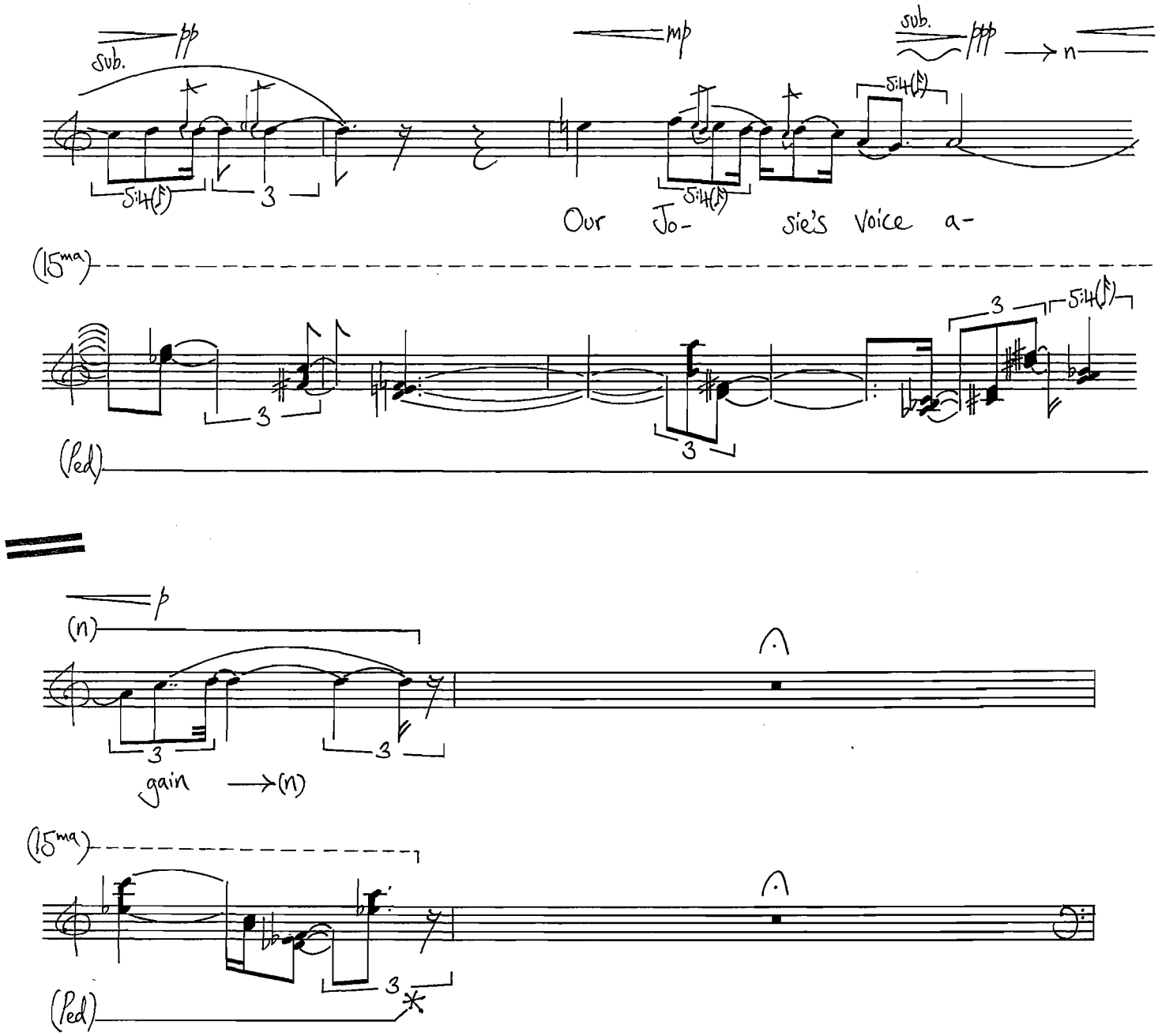

pp
(n)
5:4
3
pp
sub.p
poco
n
5:4
And
gives
sfz
mp
3
p
(Ped)
p-ppp
sub.
mp
normale
ppp
pp
2/3
2/3
me
a
kiss
so
warm
l.v. al niente
(Ped)
ppp
3
3
(m)
Since
l.v. al niente
3
3
p
Ped

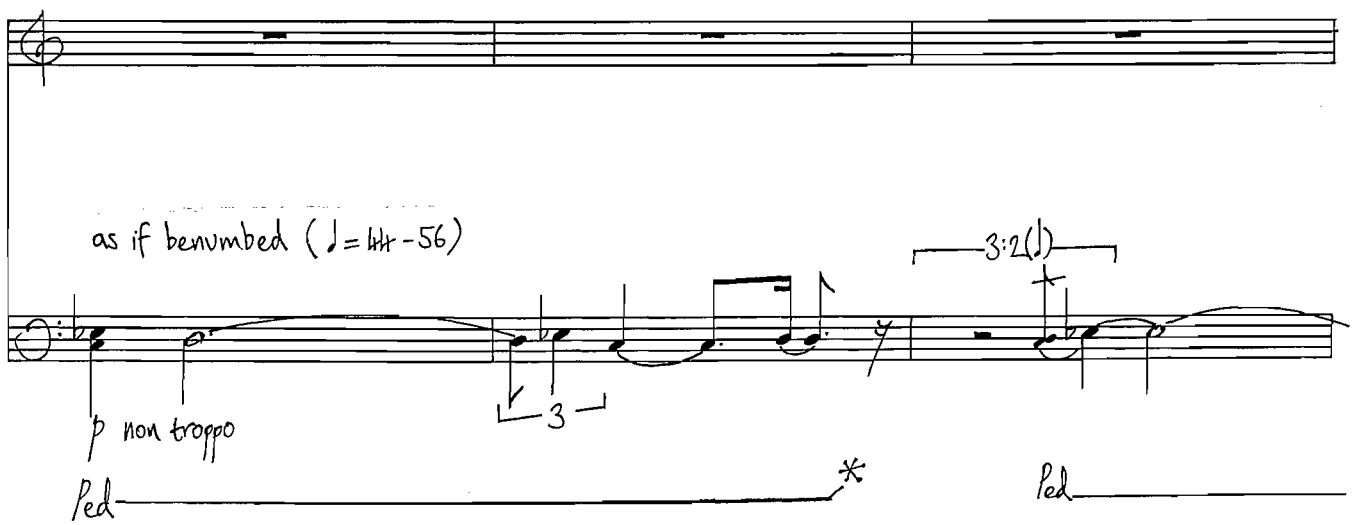

pp
he left us
it seems a year,
p
mf
p
n
How glad I am
(n)
p
p
(m)
he's come
p
p
poco
mp
pp
sub. mf
to no harm→(m) no harm
ppp
tacet colla parte
poco più mosso
D#/E
G#
C#
piano
ppp
sfffz
Ped

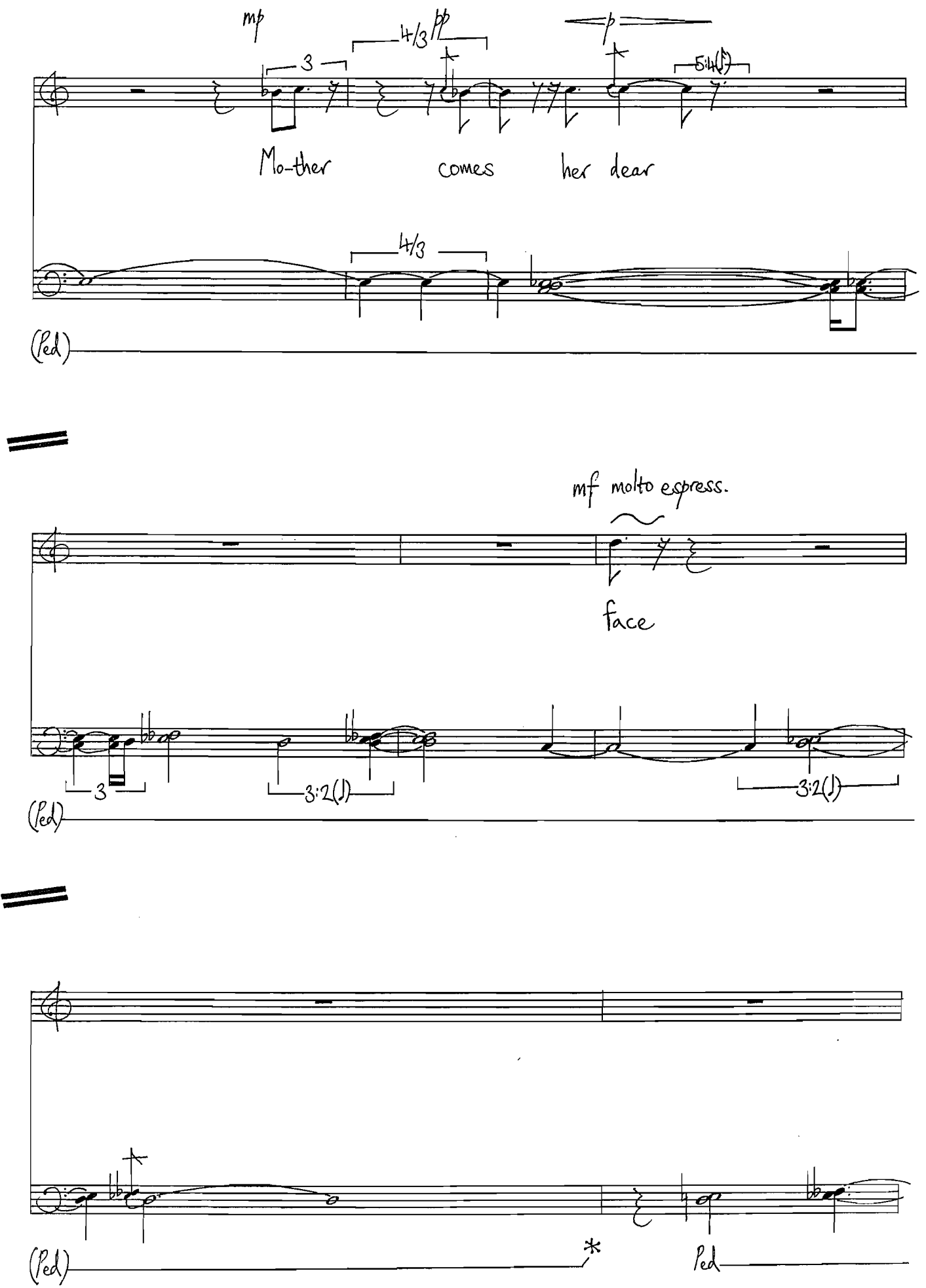

3
mp
(Ped)
Semplice
♩= ca 50
ff
ppp
(Ped)
3
(Ped)
5:4(♪)
3:2(♩)
martellato
come prima
(Ped)
sffz
ppp
3:2 ♩
3:2 ♩
5:4(♪)
Ped
5:4(♪)
Ped
3
3
poco f
Ped
3:2(♩)
Ped
ppp

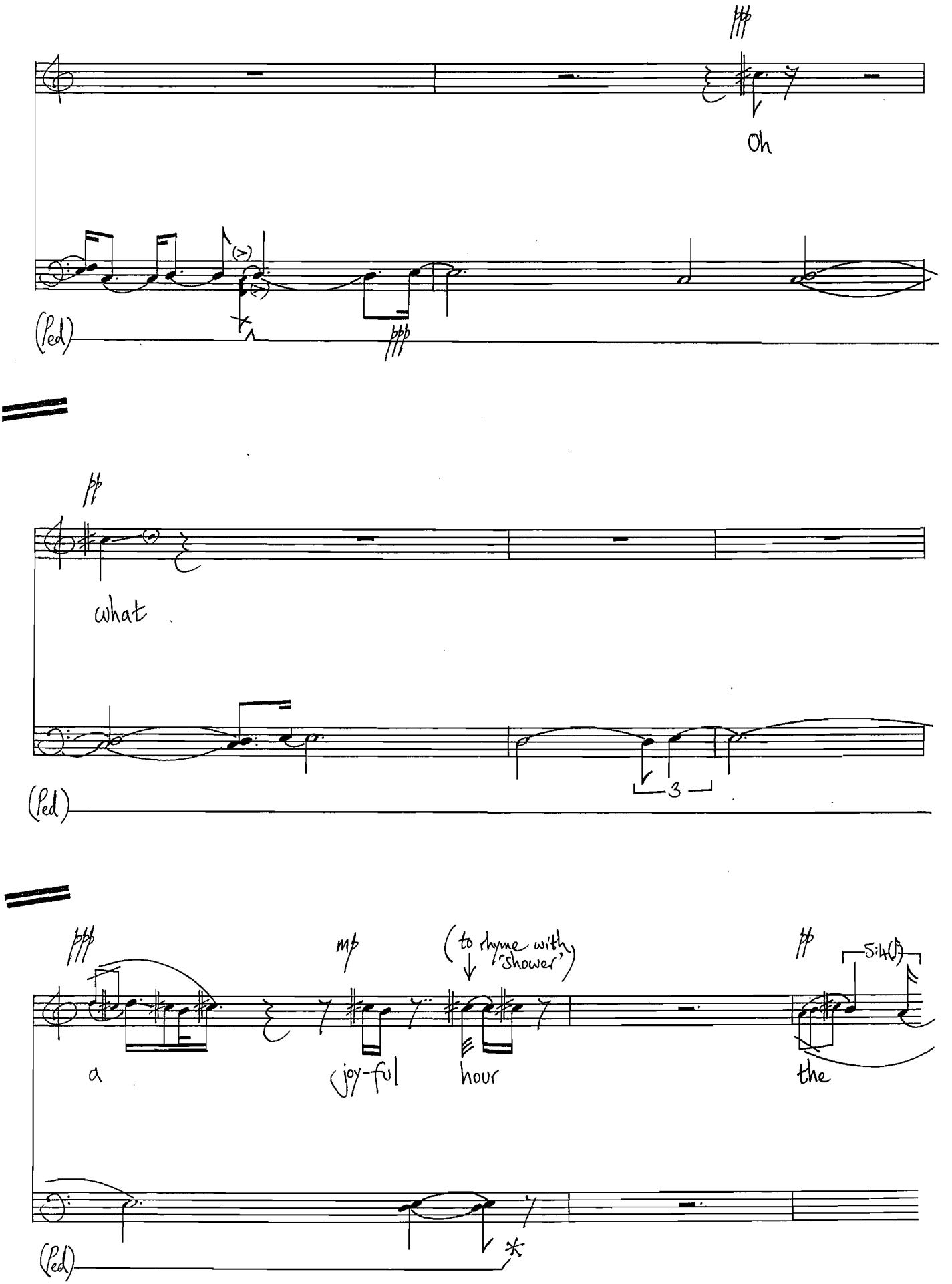

Ped
(Ped)
Ped
Ped
mp cresc.
(Ped)
mf
f
ppp
(Ped)
poco più mosso
f
Ped


come prima (♩=ca 50)
ppp
(Ped)
3:2(♩)
F
D
Ped
A
E
3:2(♩)
ff
meno f
(Ped)
tempo primo
p
5:4(♩)
3
1/3
2/3
pprano
Here comes Fa- ther
quasi colla voce
mp
1/3
2/3
(Ped)
n
ppp
sub. mp
4/5:4(♩)
3
To
hear
15ma
3:2(♩)
4/5:4(♩)
(Ped)


pp
sub.
mp
sub.
ppp
n
5:4(♪)
3
Our Jo- sie's voice a-
(15ma)
(Ped)
p
(n)
gain
(n)
(15ma)
(Ped)


as if benumbed (♩= 44-56)
3:2(♩)
p non troppo
3
Ped
Ped


mp
3
4/3
pp
p
5:4(♪)
Mo-ther
comes
her dear
4/3
(Ped)
mf molto espress.
face
3
3:2(♩)
3:2(♩)
(Ped)
(Ped)
*
Ped


ppp
Oh
(Ped)
ppp
pp
what
(Ped)
3
ppp
mp
(to rhyme with 'shower')
pp
5:4(f)
a
joy-ful
hour
the
(Ped)
*

mp

4/3 5:4(♪) 3

bro-thers meet

ppp p

3 4/5:4(♪)

Each grips

poco

3 2/3

the o-

tacet colla voce

mp poco

5:4(♪)

ther's hand

p n

The

semplice

(>) (>)

5:4(♪) 3

ppp

Ped

ppp

(n)

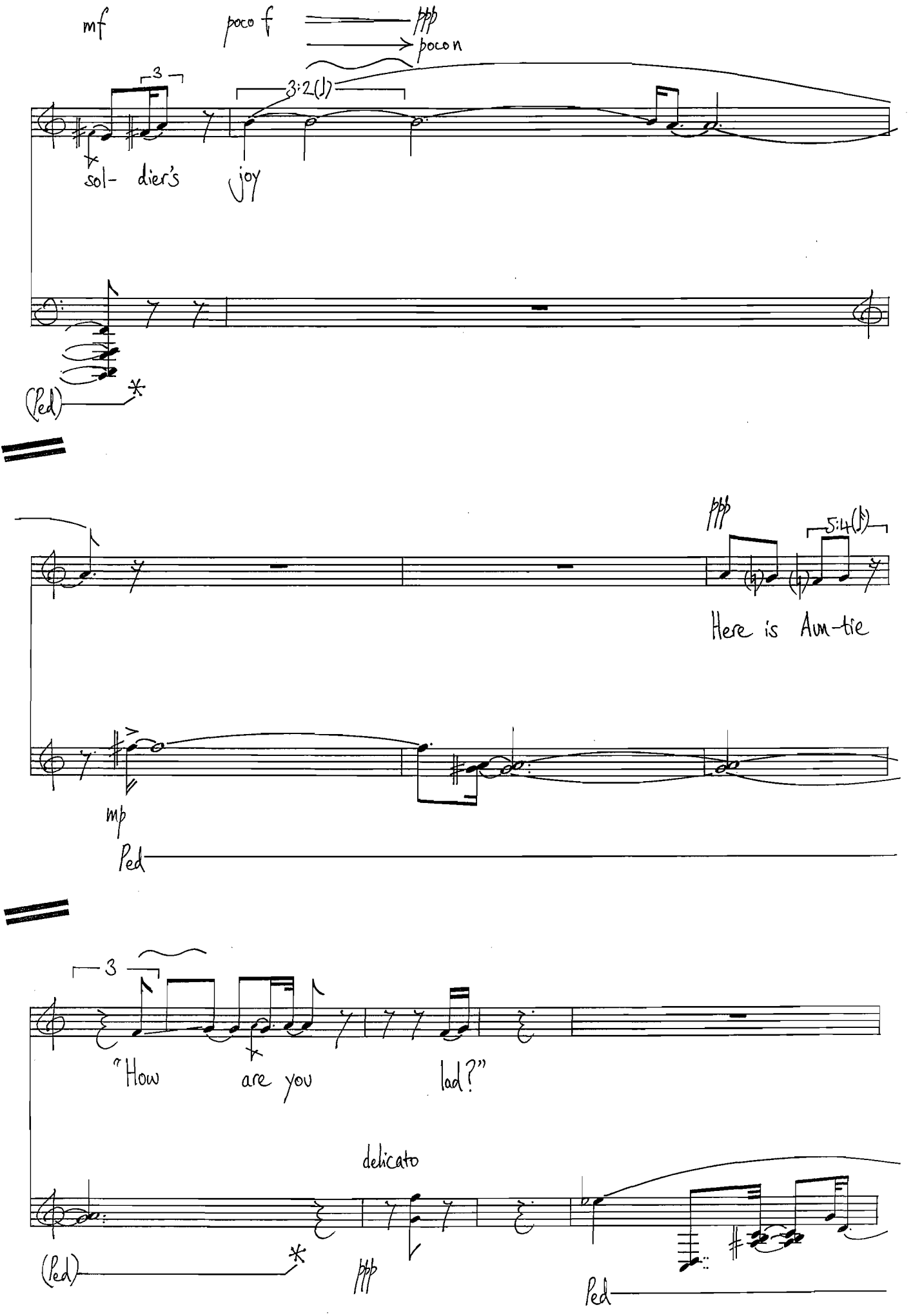
3

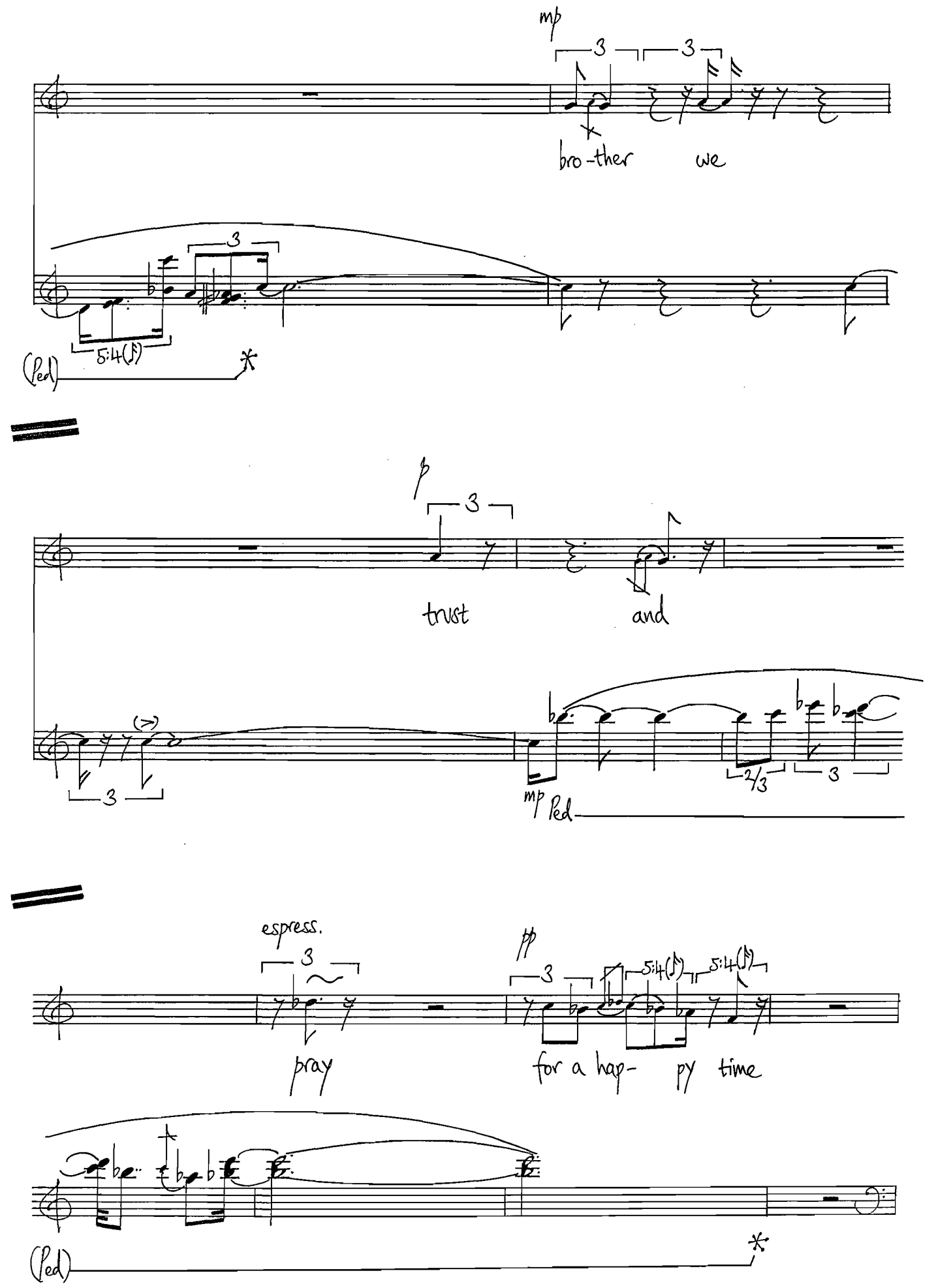
(>)

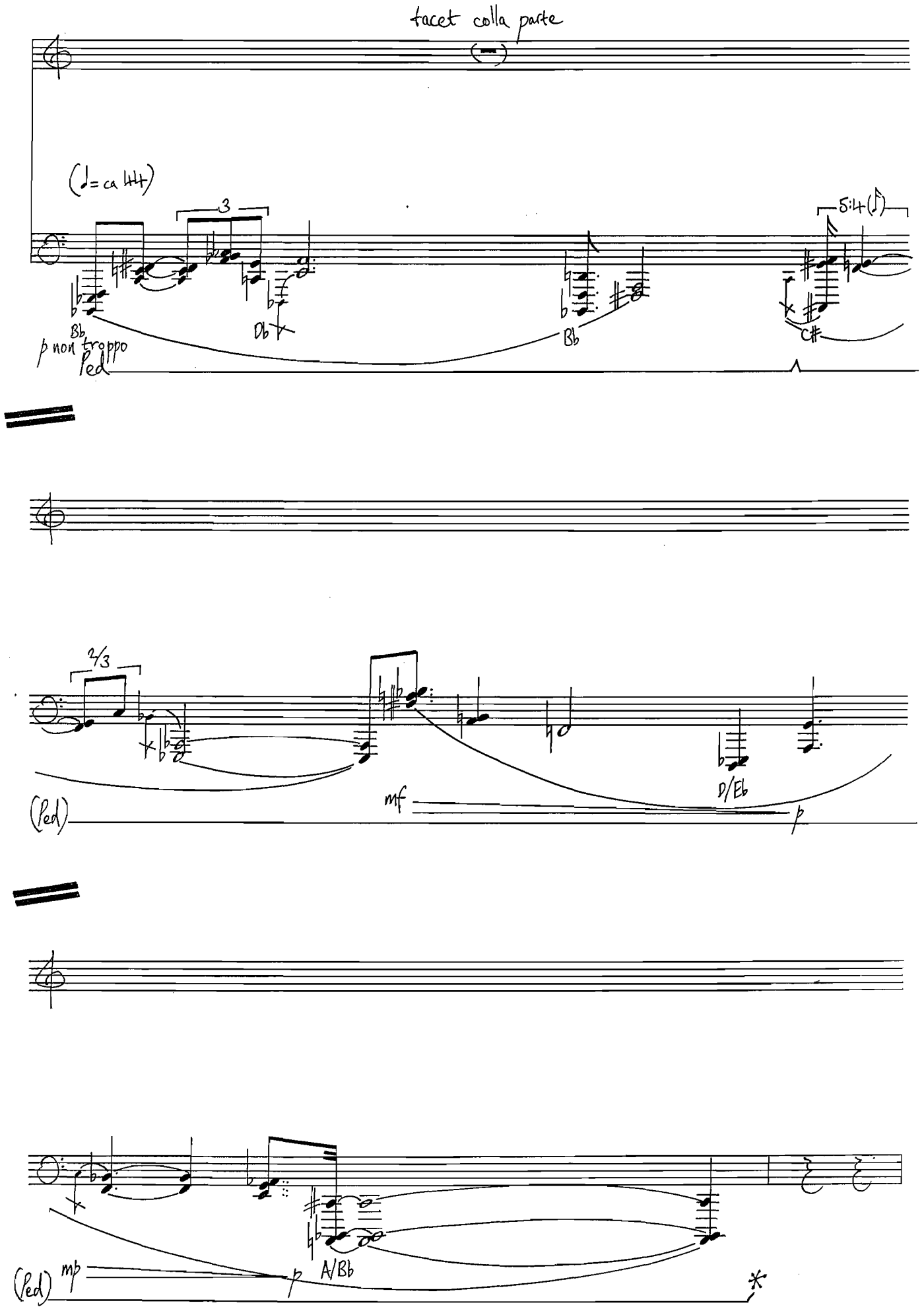
3

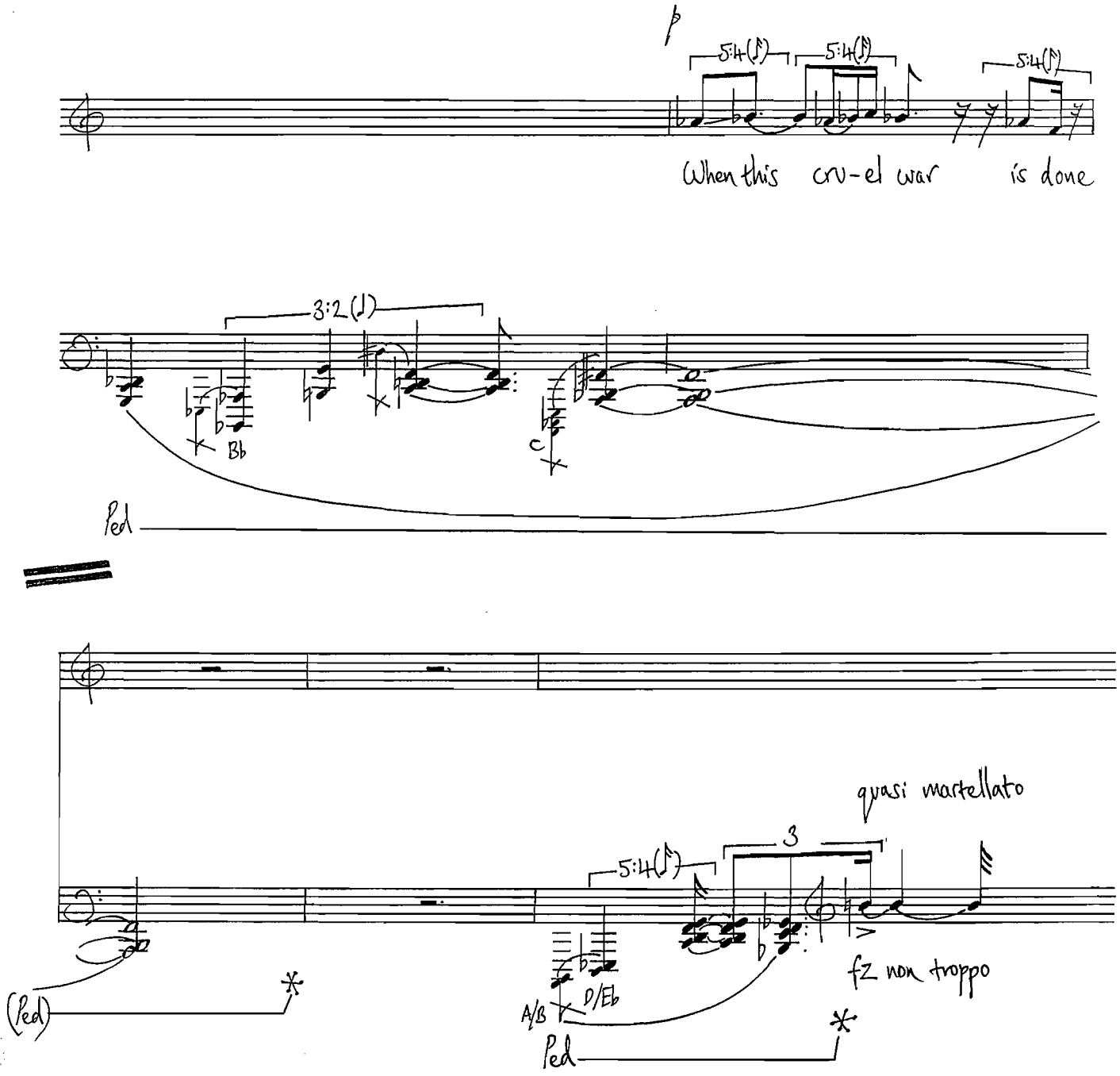
mf Bb/C

(Ped)


mf
poco f
ppp
poco n
3
3:2(♩)
sol- dier's
joy
(Ped)
*
ppp
5:4(♪)
Here is Aun-tie
mp
Ped
3
"How
are you
lad?"
delicato
(Ped)
*
ppp
Ped


mp
3
3
bro-ther
we
3
5:4(♪)
(Ped)
*
p
3
trust
and
(>)
3
mp
Ped
2/3
3
espress.
3
pray
pp
3
5:4(♪)
5:4(♪)
for a hap-
py
time
(Ped)
*


tacet colla parte
(♩= ca 144)
3
5:4 (♪)
Bb
Db
Bb
C#
p non troppo
Ped
2/3
D/Eb
mf
p
(Ped)
A/Bb
mp
p
(Ped)
*


p
5:4
5:4
5:4
When this cru-el war is done
3:2
Bb
C
Ped
quasi martellato
3
5:4
fz non troppo
(Ped)
A/B
D/Eb
Ped

# *Transformation and Wonder*

**For at least six performers**

**John Habron**

*Transformation and Wonder*

**Notes for performance**

**The ensemble**

Voice — a solo voice

Solo — a solo instrument (preferably a treble-oriented wind or string instrument, possibly piano or a multi-percussion set-up which includes a tuned 'keyboard' instrument such as vibraphone; the graphic elements employed in the different solo parts may help to decide between such possibilities)

Tutti — at least one of each of the following:

- wind/brass
- strings/percussion (including guitar, harp, piano interior, junk percussion etc.)
- keyboard (including tuned 'keyboard' percussion)
- chorus (one or more vocalists)

The piece is performable without a director; however, if necessary, performers may take on this role at certain points.

**Orchestration**

Depending on taste and/or availability, instruments such as accordion and pipe organ may be assigned to both/either 'wind/brass' and/or 'keyboard'. Similarly, tuned 'keyboard' percussion may be assigned to both/either 'keyboard' and/or 'strings/percussion' etc.

The solo part may be shared among several instrumentalists over the course of the piece. The differing graphic elements in certain sections may suggest choices in this matter.

The tutti sections, for example the lower two staves in Verse 1, do not have to be consistently orchestrated throughout the piece, or even within one particular section.

The strings/percussion parts of Refrain 1 and Interlude 2 should be unpitched (strings, harp, guitar using the body of their instruments, piano playing the interior etc.). At all other times, the string/percussion performers are free to choose in this regard.

**Structure, continuity and co-ordination**

There is no score for this piece. The materials following these notes contain all the parts necessary for performance. The structure is as follows:

Refrain 1
*Interlude 1*
Verse 1
Refrain 2
Verse 2
Refrain 3
Verse 3
*Interlude 2*
Refrain 4
Verse 4 (duet)
Refrain 5 (duet)
Verse 5
Refrain 6
Verse 6
Refrain 7

Refrain 1: (i) the D natural at the end of the opening solo should blend seamlessly into the drone, which may be played by any suitable instrument/s (*accompagnato*); (ii) 'colla voce' in the strings/percussion part indicates that very simple rhythmic configurations conforming to/'filling out' a 6/8 metre (at ♩. = ca 52) should be set up for the voice to 'lock into' once it enters.

Except for Refrain 1 to Interlude 1, Verse 5 to Refrain 6 and Verse 6 to Refrain 7, the joins between sections are left intentionally vague. The ensemble and/or director should decide the level and types of continuity preferred. For example, the cued graphics after "Virgen" in Refrain 4 may overlap with the beginning of Verse 4 or they may be left to fade out before Verse 4 begins.

Interlude 1, which should grow gradually denser, though not necessarily louder, should be cut off abruptly by the director or an ensemble member before Verse 1 is started. It is intended, especially towards the end of the right hand page of this Interlude, that the performers dwell on or explore the graphics somewhat; the horizontal time axis is not constant. As a rough guideline however, the whole Interlude should last 1'-2'.

In Refrains 2, 3 and 4 the tutti groups perform their materials immediately after the vocalist has performed the corresponding cue (the word/s in quotation marks). The performers may decide how minimal or extended their interpretation of each graphic will be (performers should not feel obliged to 'exhaust' each graphic). Furthermore, they should ensure that they do not miss their next cue (if applicable) and that the voice is not obliterated. If it is their final graphic, it should be decided whether this stops before, or overlaps with, the next section.

"Enfermidade" in Refrain 4: this word should cue a complex of attacks which is heard as one unit. After the initial attack the chorus may continue as before (improvising around the voice's melody until the next cue).

In Refrain 6, in order to aid co-ordination, the voice should give a signal to the chorus at the start of each box of pitches.

In Verse 6 and Refrain 7 the tutti should create the effect of a (more or less) clumsy pulse. On the last page of the tutti, the performers peel off, following one of the lines which lead from the (clumsily) pulsed attacks to the melodic fragments. These fragments are repeated *ad libitum* and *accompagnato*. Once the chorus and solo have stopped, the performers finish the fragments they are on; this is the end of the piece.

**Notation**

Most of the notation is intentionally multivalent. It may be found, over the course of rehearsal, that performers begin to prefer to concentrate on interpreting certain symbols when there are many to choose from, for example in Interlude 1. This may be as a result of knowing that their specific parts (wind/brass, strings/percussion etc.) often make use of limited sets of similar symbols at other points in the piece.

Clefless staves may be read in any clef and/or transposition and performers are free to change, at any point, between staves and/or clefs. The important thing in sections where there is an obviously 'colla voce' *modus operandi* (the tutti parts in Verse 1 et seq.) is that all the pitches on the lower two staves of each system should be attempted, however they may be orchestrated.

In the piano parts which use open and filled-in note-heads (for example Refrains 2, 3 and 4), it is suggested that the former refer to white notes and that the latter refer to black notes. In all other cases, and with regard to all performers, no suggestions regarding open/filled-in note-heads are made. The voice and the chorus are exceptions to this rule: note-heads are to be read according to the clef and key signature.

It is suggested that half filled-in note-heads may be read as ♭♭, ♭, ♮, ♯ or 𝄪.

The dotted lines for the solo voice (Refrain 2 et seq.) and the arrows for the solo instrument in Verse 5/Refrain 6 are intended to provoke or show various possible melodic pathways, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

In Refrains 2, 3 and 4 the wind/brass should perform their cued material, as far as this is possible, in the manners suggested (for example "GREAT", "FIERCE AND STERN" etc.).

In Verse 3 and Refrain 7 (continued) the straight black lines take the performer from a 'cue moment' to a small graphic. In some cases, different lines arrive at the same graphic, in which case the graphic may be interpreted more than once by the same or different instruments.

All other symbols (and their dispositions) which are unconventional or ambiguous demand creative solutions.

**Stage layout**

Depending on the acoustic/the use of amplification, the solo voice and chorus may need to be near to each other to facilitate sections such as Refrain 7.

**Atmosphere**

It is important that the piece is not pompous or aggressive; tenderness and seriousness should pre-dominate; opportunities for the grotesque should not be exploited, and satire and the 'easy laugh' etc. should be avoided. These instructions do not mean however that the piece should be devoid of loudness, gesture or humour.

Some knowledge of Hispanic medieval performance practices and of the background to Alfonso X's *Cantigas de Santa Maria* may help to inform interpretation on several levels.

Overall, it should not be forgotten that the cantiga on which this piece is based (and whose performance may still function, in some senses, as a spiritual act, even in this transformation of it) is a song of devotion and praise. The solo voice should consider itself to be a *conduit* of meaning, prayer, expression etc. (however the performer wishes to understand its role) rather than as an *origin*. The voice is free to be virtuosic (indeed, this would be ideal) but should never sound egotistically or expressionistically virtuosic; that is, the audience should not be forced to consider the vocalist as a personality (as far as this is possible).

Any other information regarding possible emotional/psychological attitudes and approaches towards one's own instrumental/vocal performance practices may be inferred from the title.

**Duration**

No more than 20'

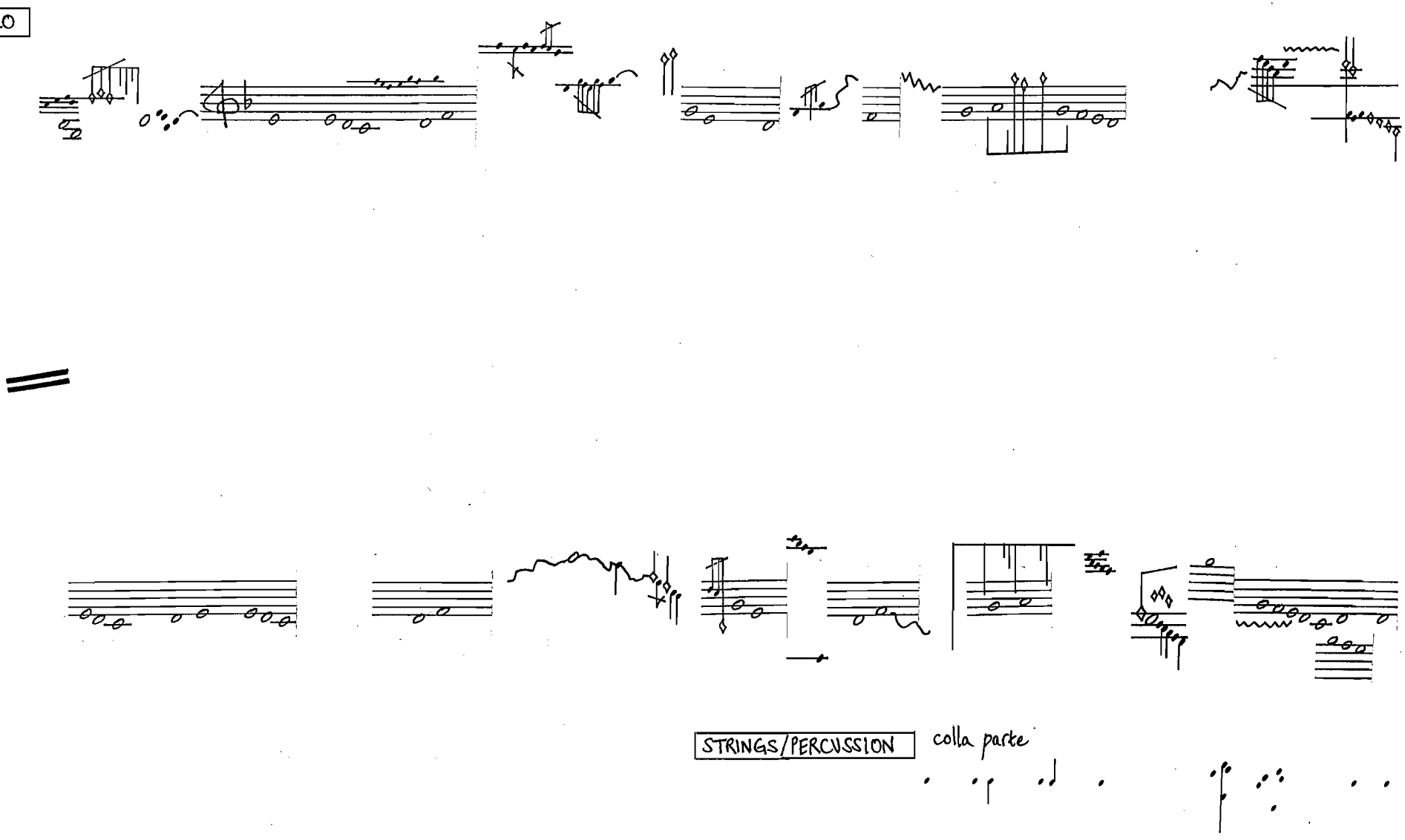
**Programme note**

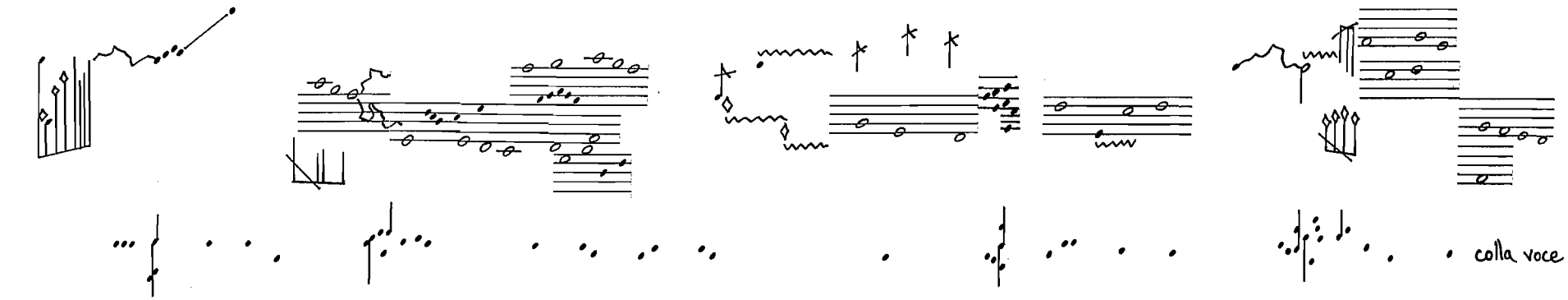
This piece is based on one of the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* by Alfonso X 'El Sabio' (1221-1284). It is dedicated to Ignacio Agrimbau.

**Dedicated, with affection, to Ignacio Agrimbau**

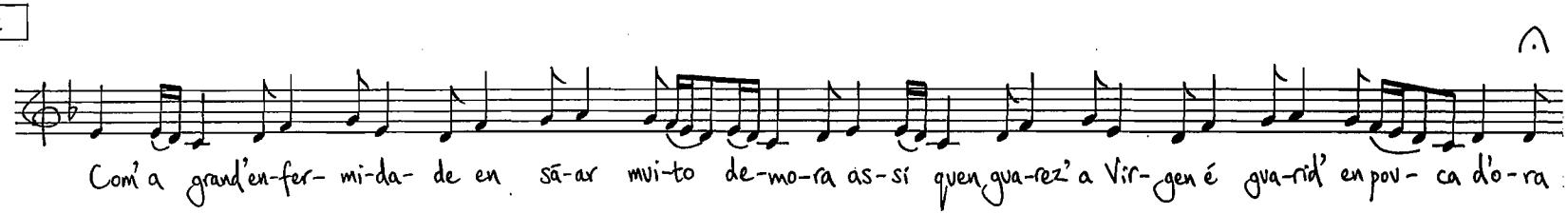
# REFRAIN 1

SOLO

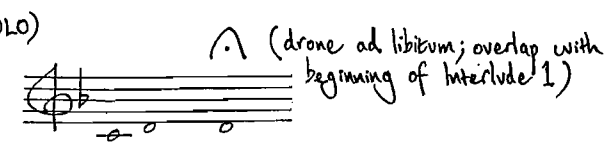





VOICE



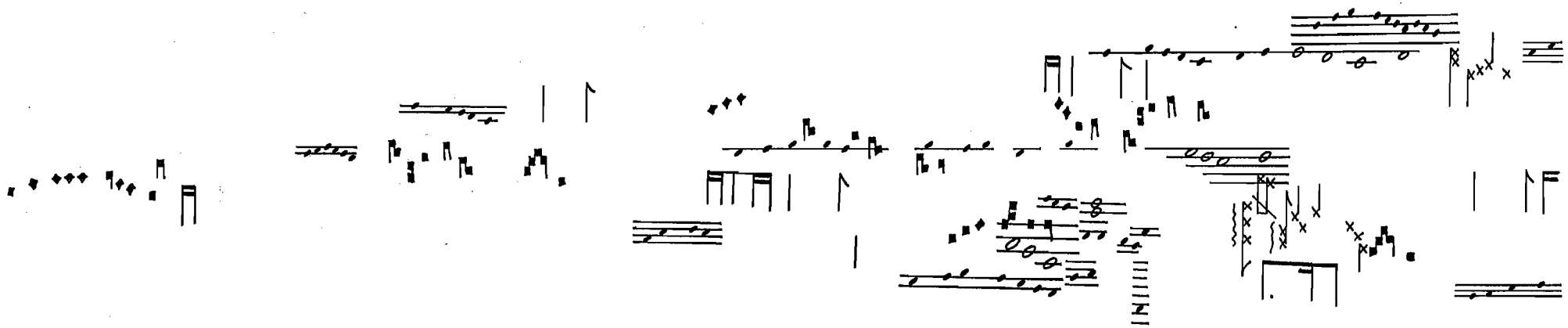

(SOLO)

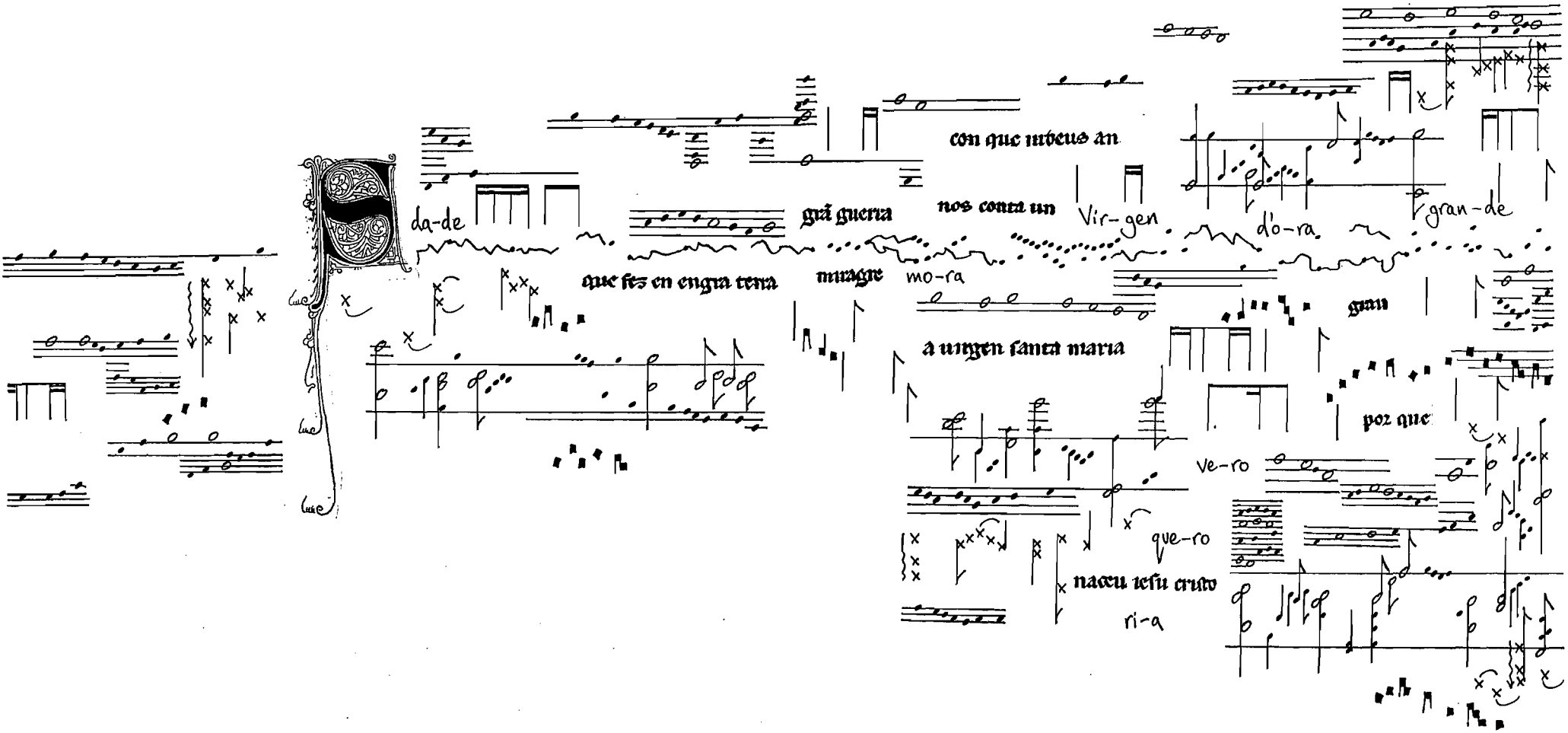



(STRINGS/ PERCUSSION)

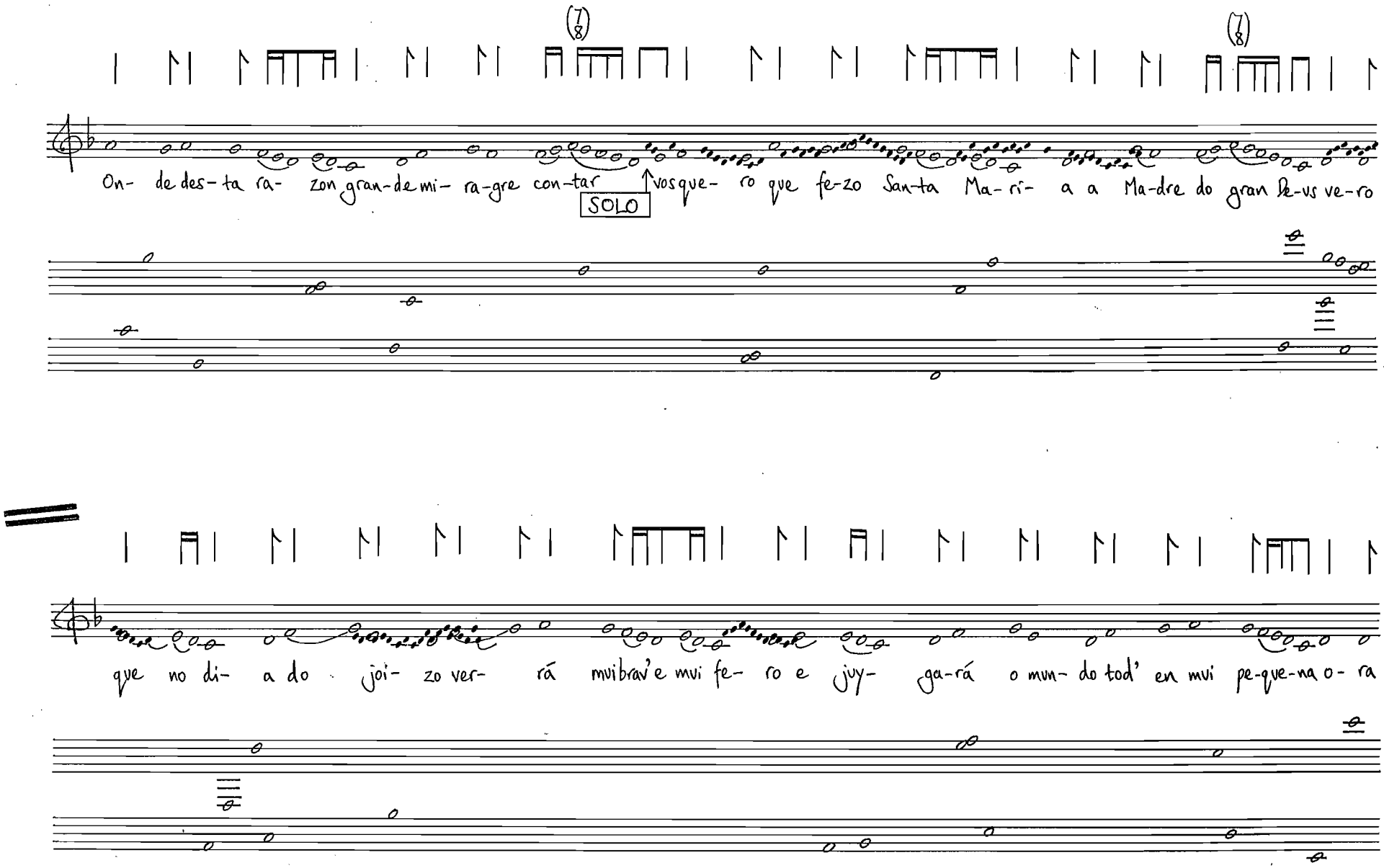
ancora colla voce

INTERLUDE 1 TUTTI



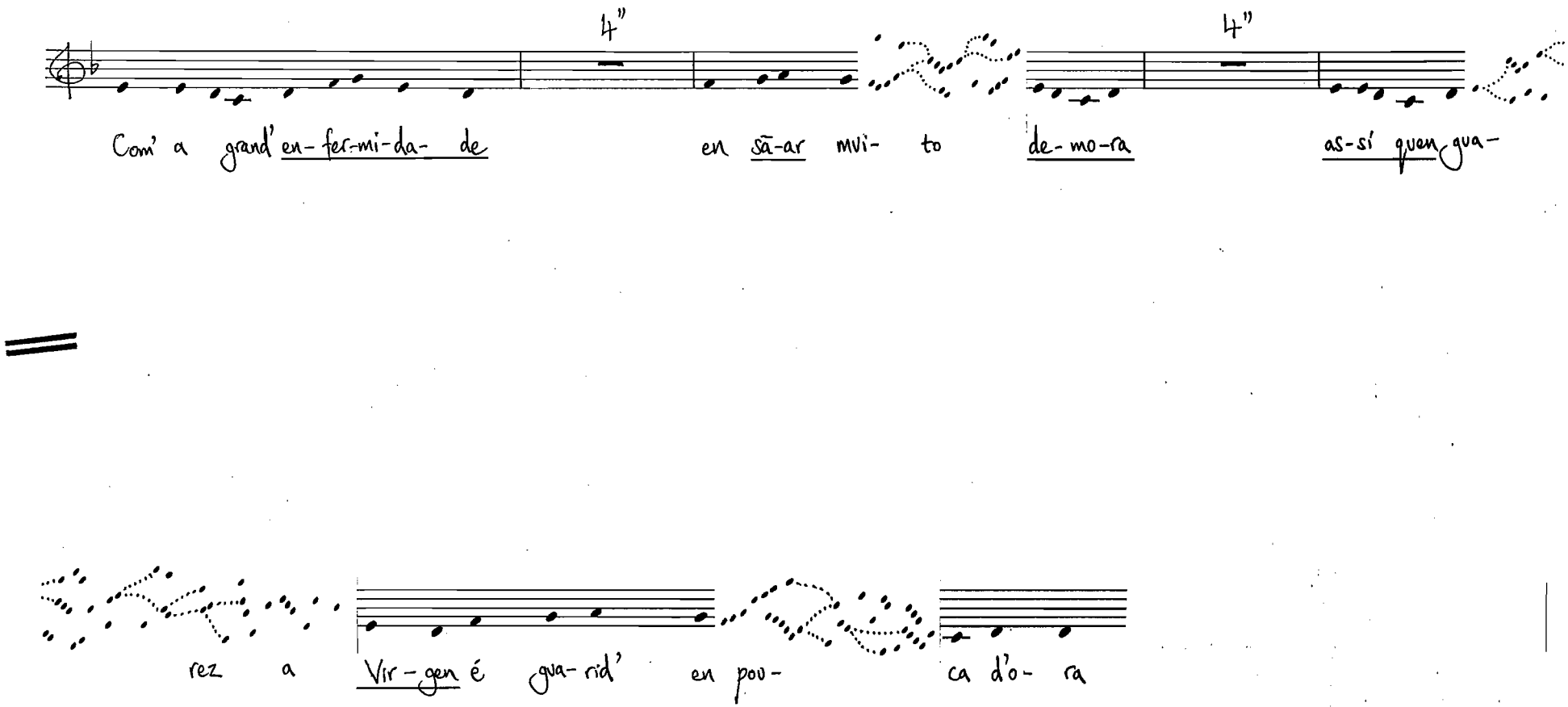

da-de
grã guerra
nos contra un
Vir-gen
d'o-ra
gran-de
que fez en engra terra
muagre
mo-ra
gran
a uirgen santa maria
por que
ve-ro
que-ro
nacen iesu cristo
ri-a

VERSE 1 [VOICE] AND [TUTTI]



REFRAIN 2

VOICE the underlined text must be clearly audible to the ensemble



REFRAIN 2

CHORUS

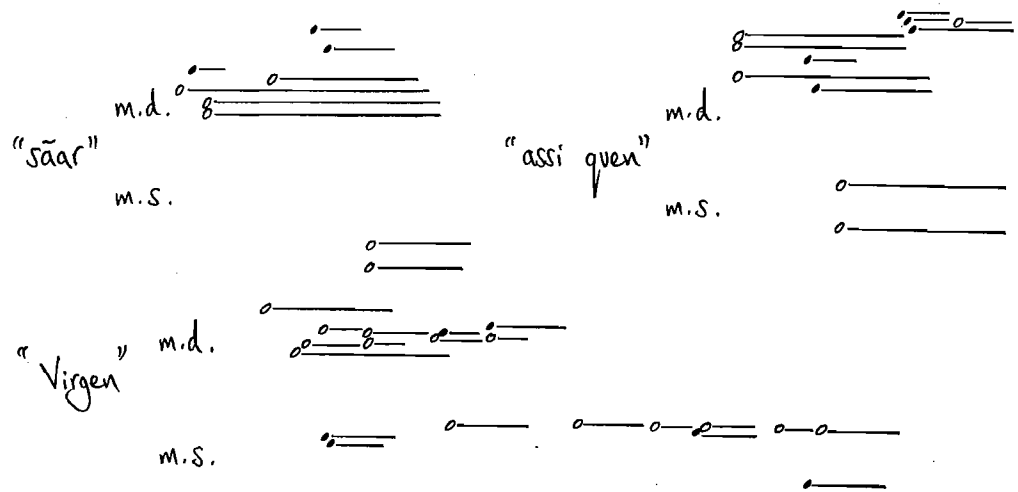
improvise around the voice's melody (including, but not necessarily, when it has stopped vocalising) using these syllables/words

"assi gven"

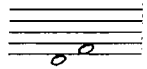
| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | TIME | | |
| MA | LA | DY | |
| | | LA | DY |
| | | SUB | |

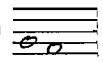
REFRAIN 2

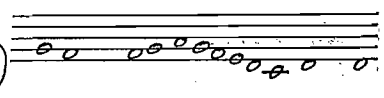
KEYBOARD



REFRAIN 2 WIND/BRASS

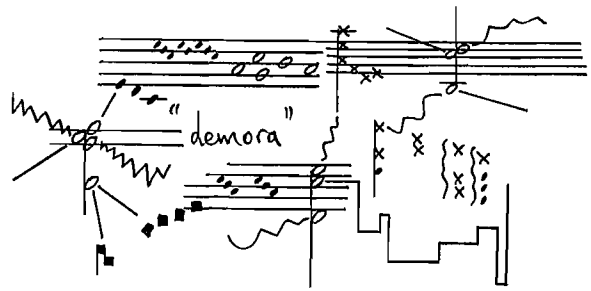
"sāar" (GREAT) 

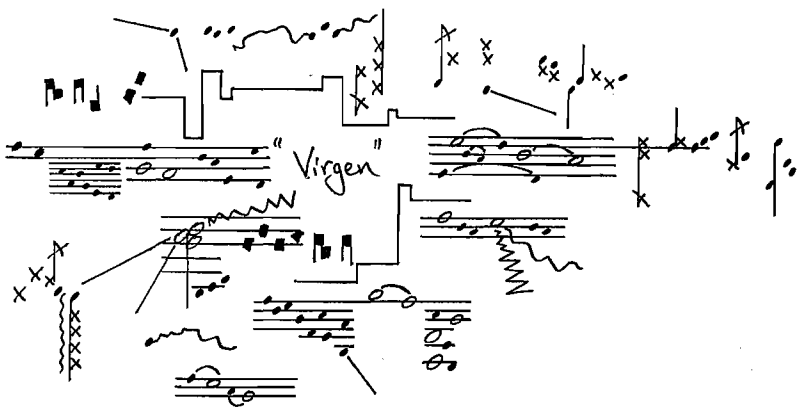
"demora" (TRUE) 

"Virgen" (FIERCE AND STERN) 

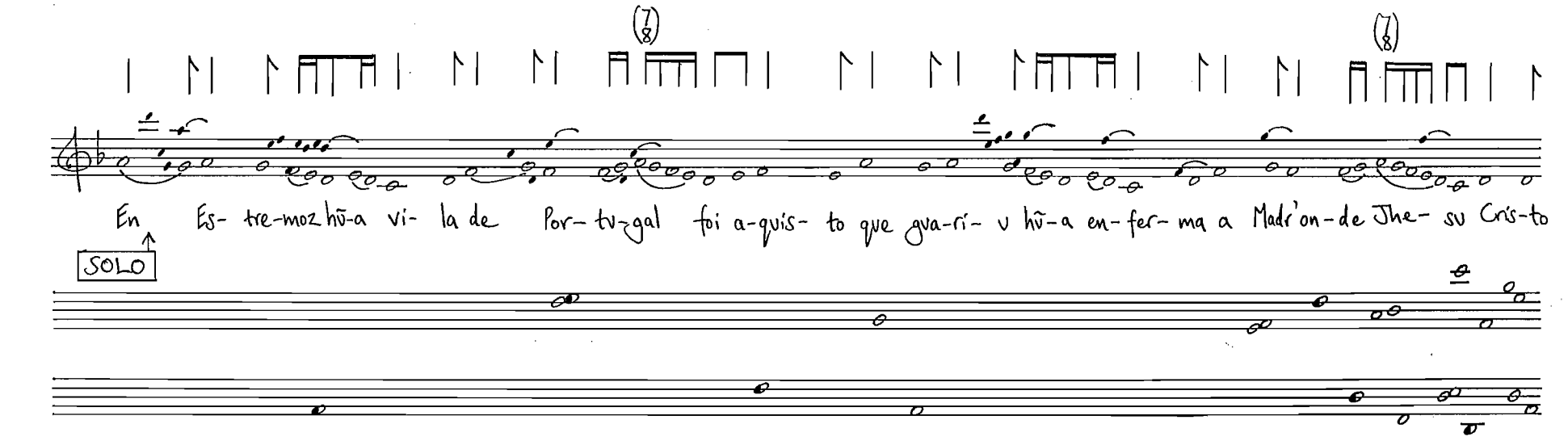
REFRAIN 2

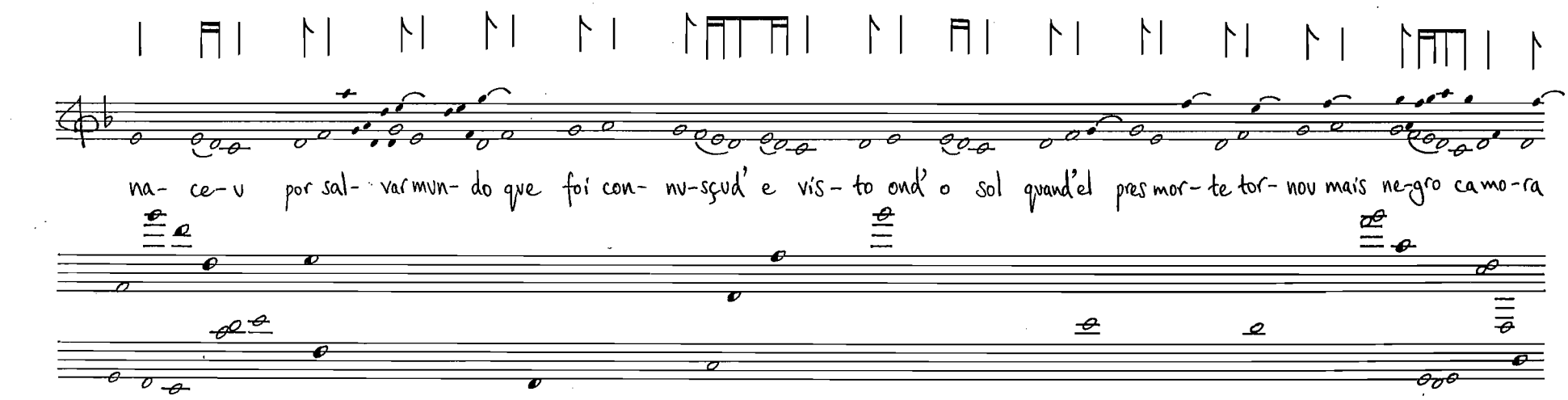
STRINGS / PERCUSSION

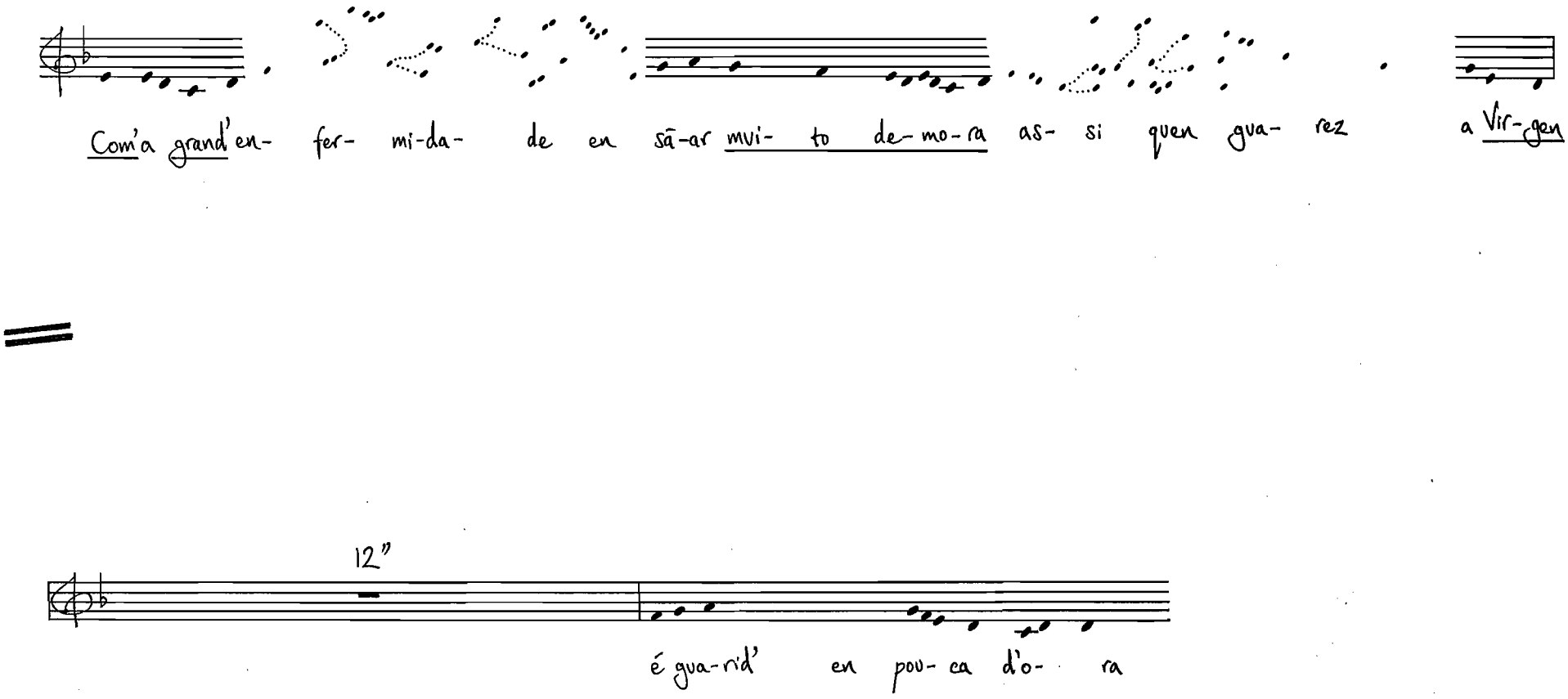
VERSE 2 VOICE AND TUTTI



REFRAIN 3

VOICE



REFRAIN 3 CHORUS

"Com'"

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | JECT | | |
| MI | RA | CLE | |
| | SAINT | MA | RY |
| MO | THER | GOD | |

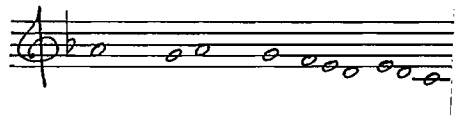
"muito"

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | DAY | | |
| | JUDGE | MENT | |
| WORLD | IN | STANT | |
| ES | TRE | MOZ | |
| | POR | TU | GAL |
| WO | MAN | JE | SUS |

REFRAIN 3 KEYBOARD

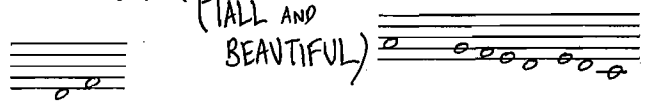
REFRAIN 3 WIND/BRASS

(SICK)

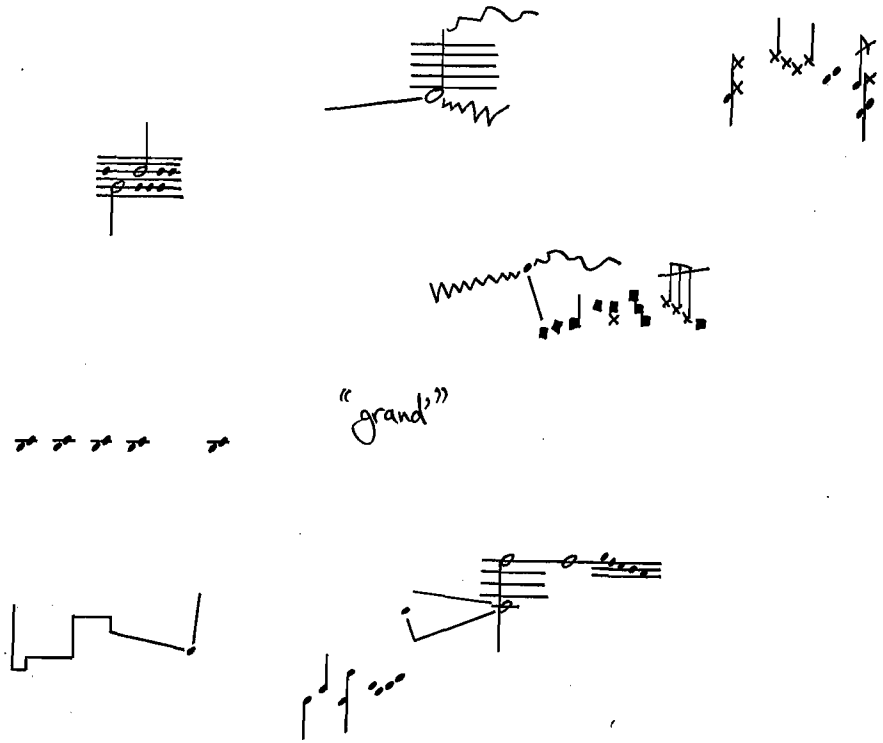


"demora" (TALL AND BEAUTIFUL)

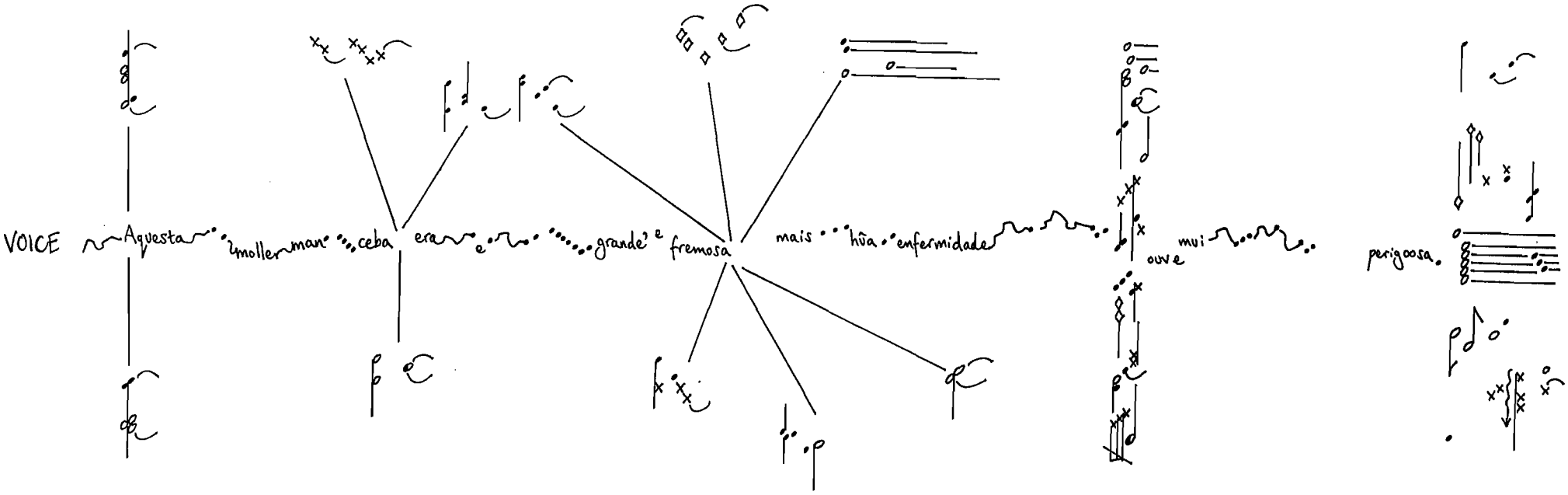
(YOUNG)

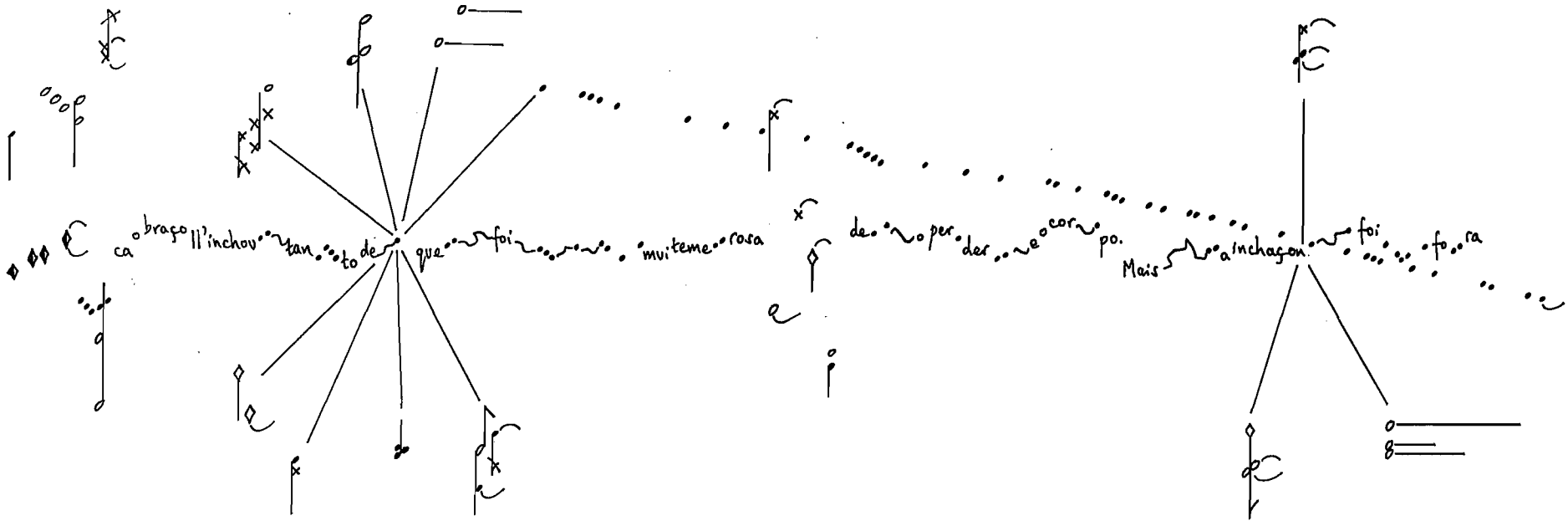


REFRAIN 3 | STRINGS/PERCUSSION

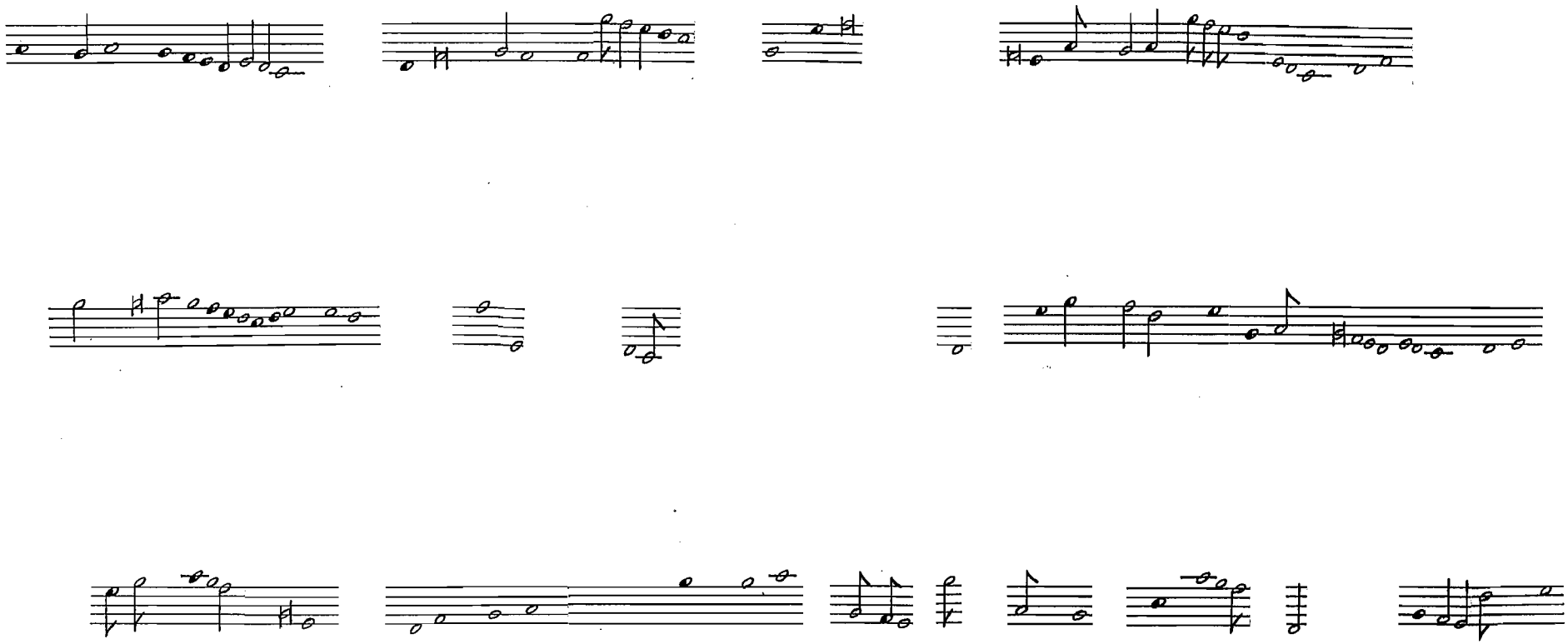


VERSE 3 VOICE AND TUTTI voice: sing the tune of the verse according to this graphic

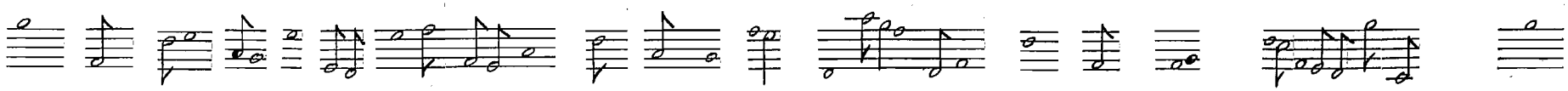


INTERLUDE 2 SOLO

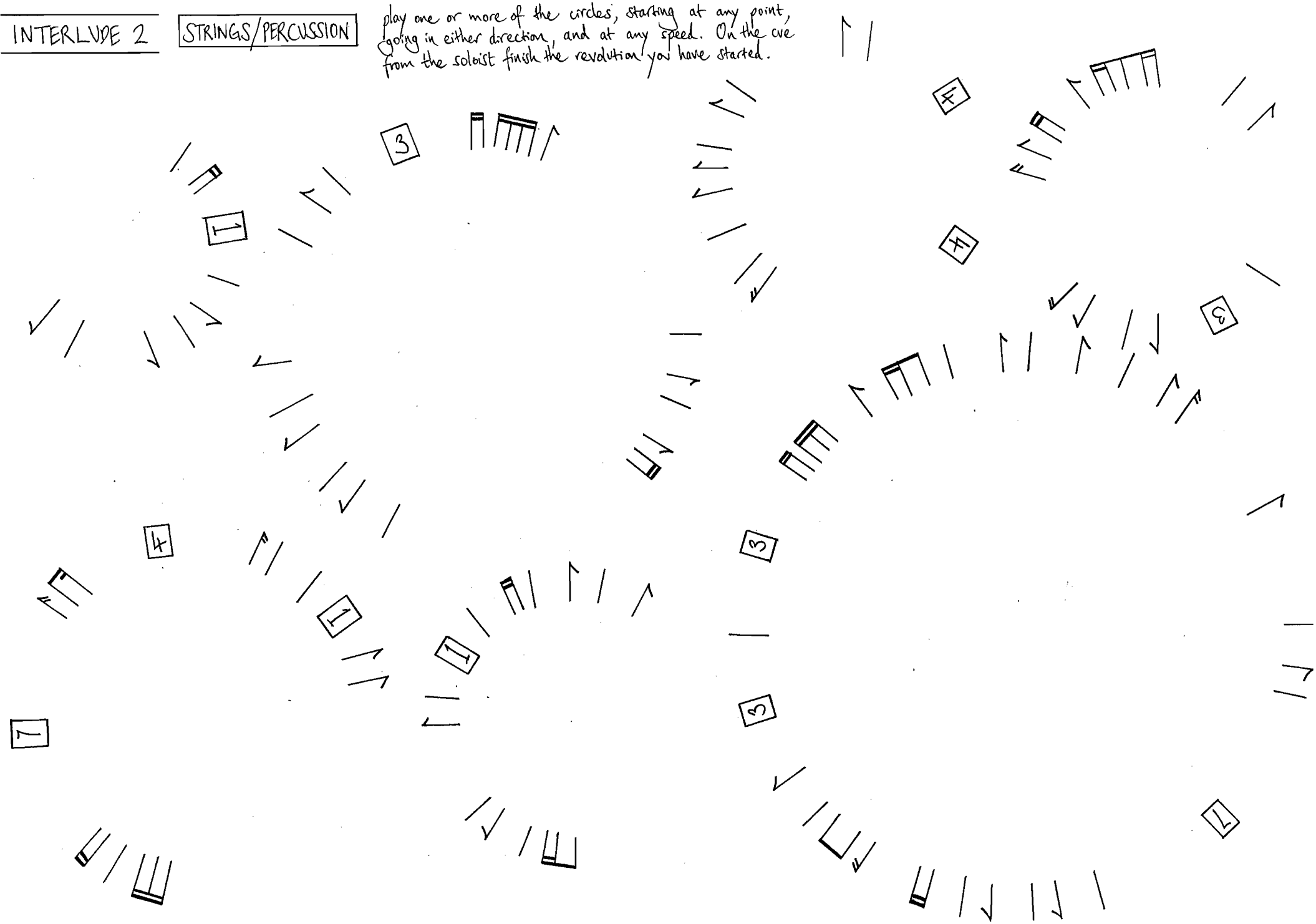


CUE (devise a cue at this point for STRINGS/PERCUSSION)



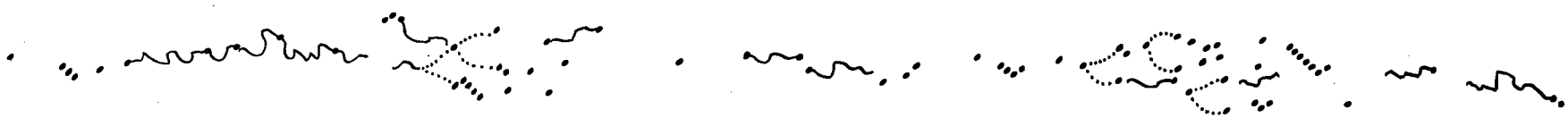
INTERLUDE 2 STRINGS/PERCUSSION

play one or more of the circles, starting at any point, going in either direction, and at any speed. On the cue from the soloist finish the revolution you have started.



REFRAIN 4 VOICE sing the tune of the refrain according to this graphic

Com' a grand' en- fer- mi-da- de en sã- ar mvi-to de- mo- ra



as- si qven gva-rez' a Vir- gen e' gva-rid en pov-ca d'o- ra

REFRAIN 4 SOLO imitate the voice a lot

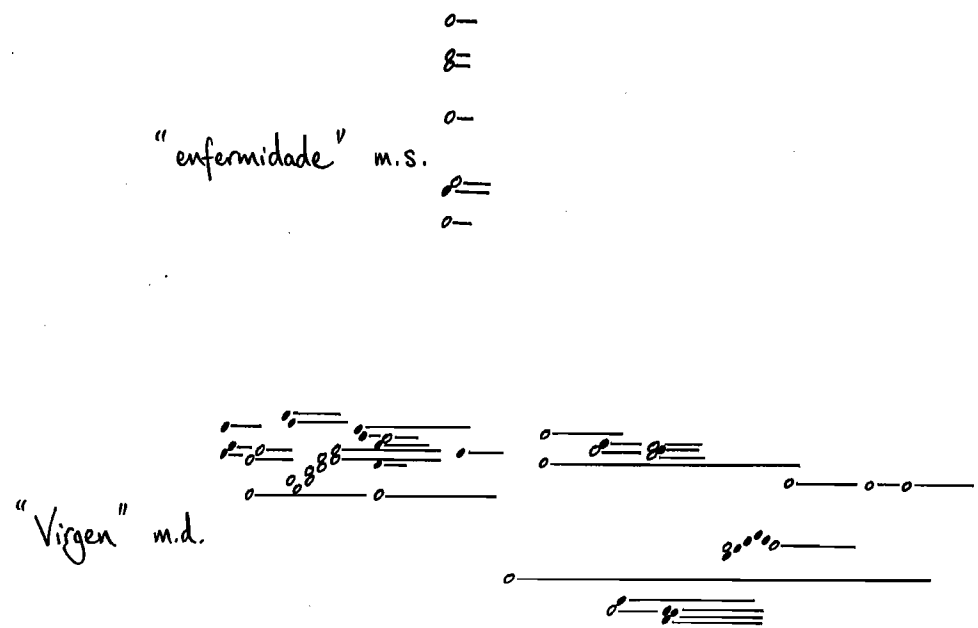
REFRAIN 4 CHORUS

"enfermidade" CHRIST

"Virgen"

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| SUN | DEATH | | |
| BLACK | BER | RY | |
| ILL | NESS | ARM | BO |
| | DY | SWEL | LING |
| BLIS | TERS | | MEAT |

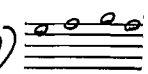
REFRAIN 4 KEYBOARD



REFRAIN 4 WIND/BRASS

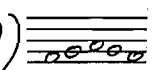
"enfermidade" (DANGEROUS)

(RED)

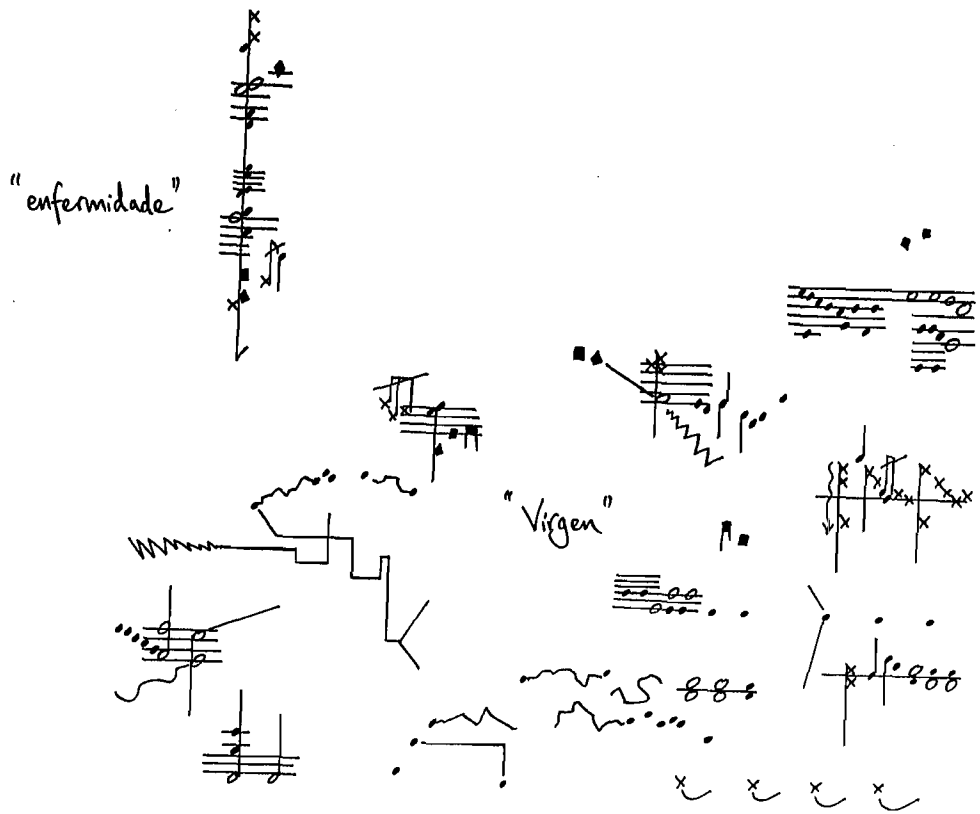


"Virgen"

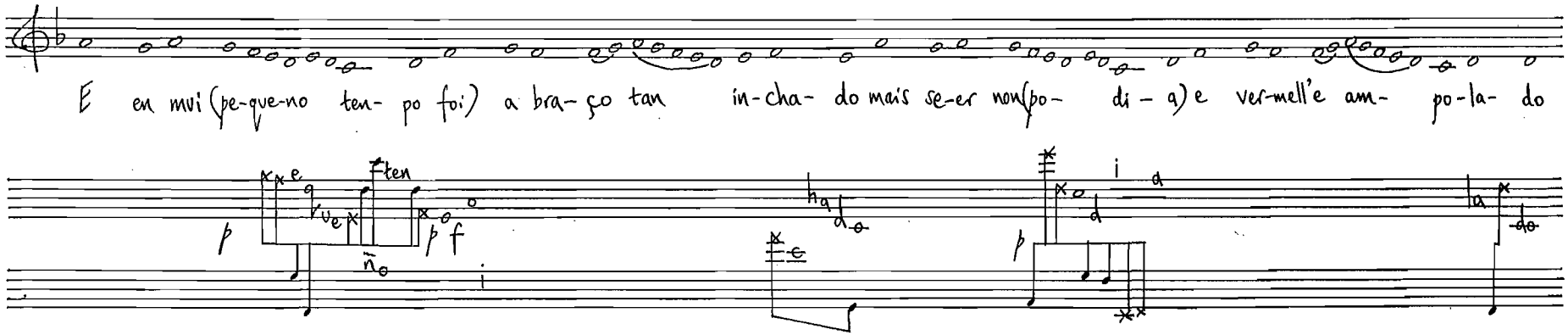
(AFRAID)

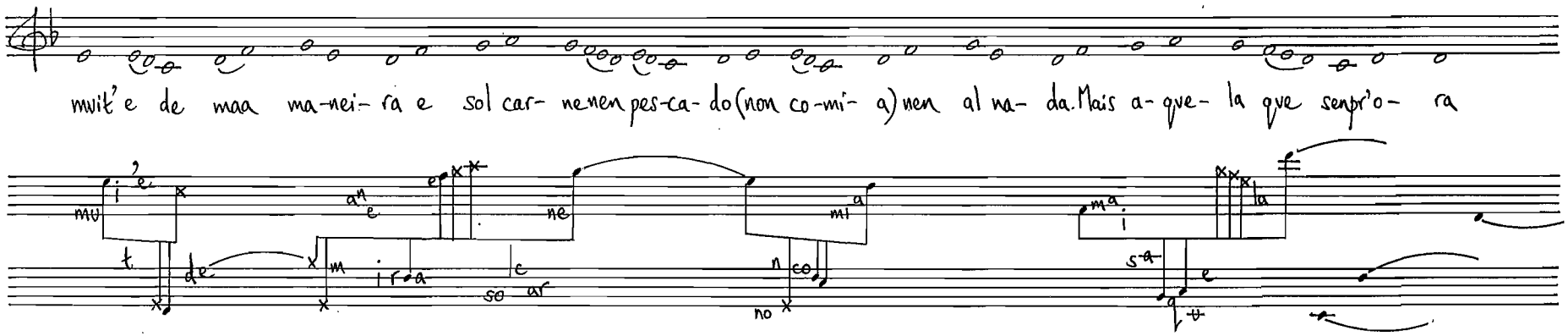


REFRAIN 4 | STRINGS/PERCUSSION

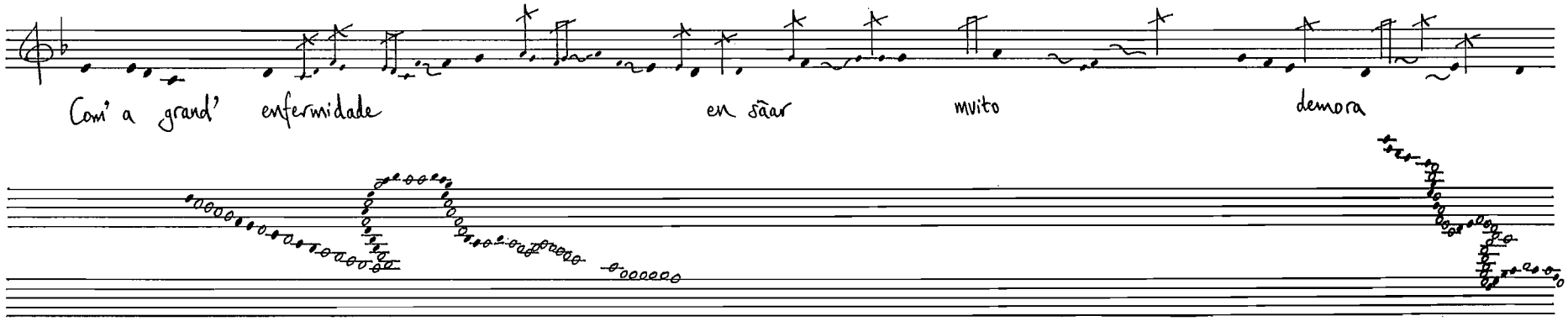


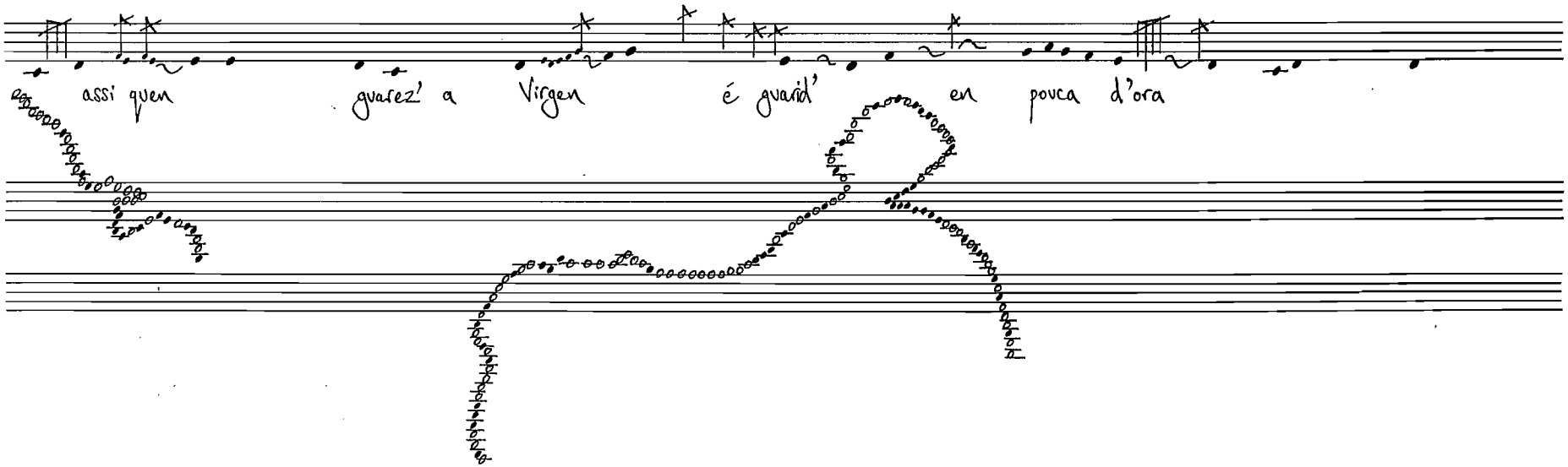
VERSE 4 VOICE AND SOLO (duet)



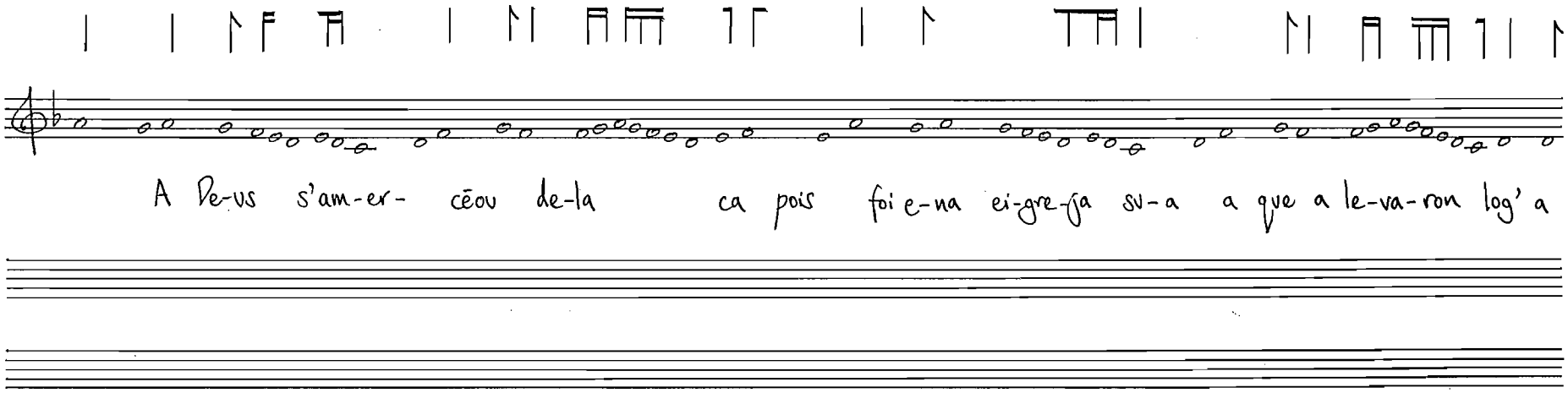



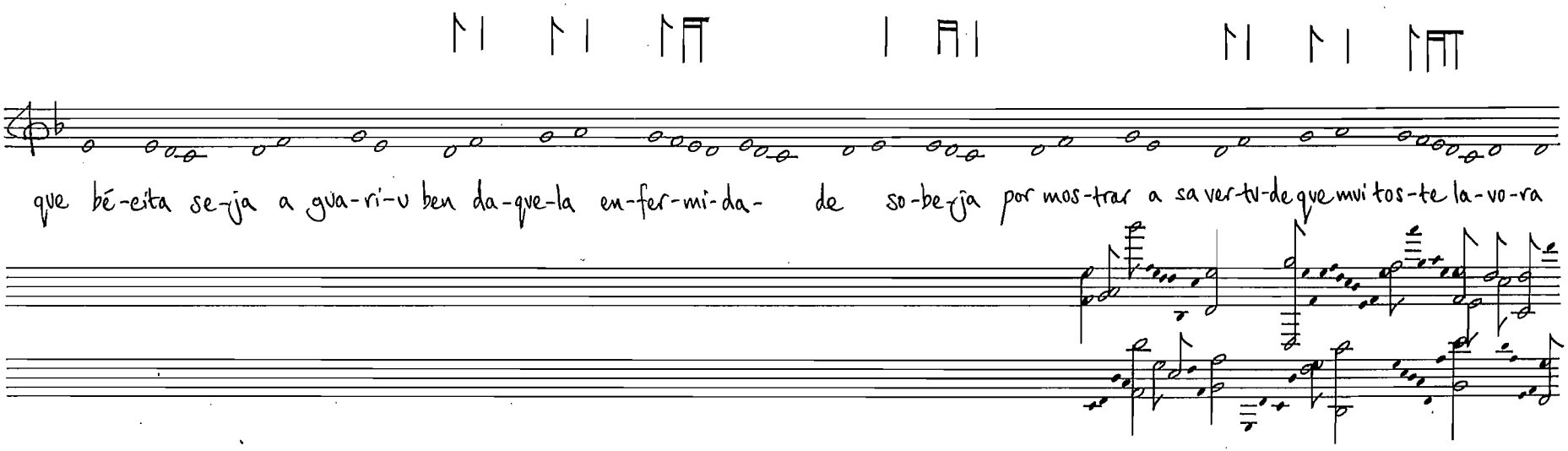
REFRAIN 5 VOICE AND KEYBOARD (duet)



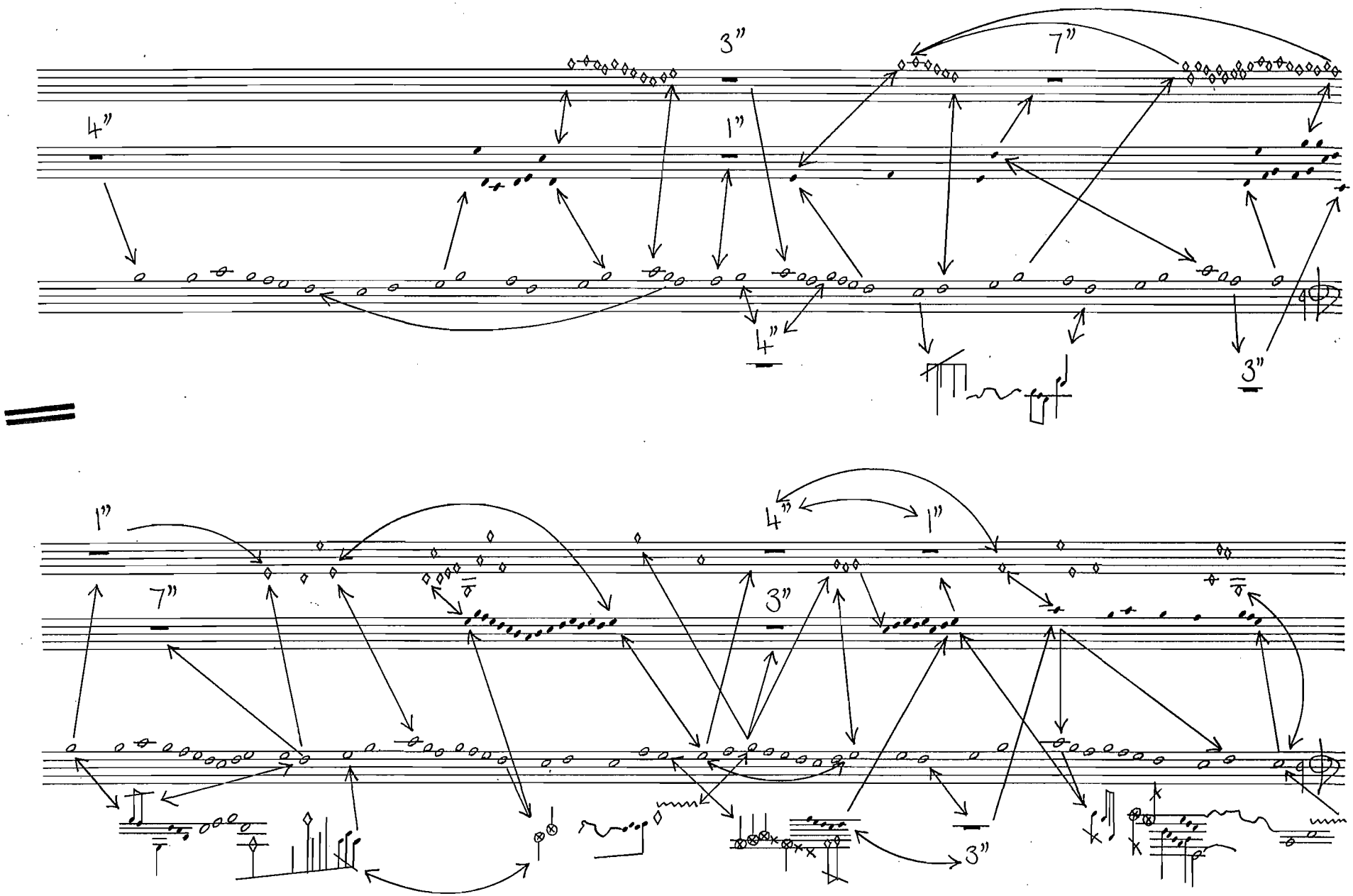



VERSE 5 VOICE AND TUTTI



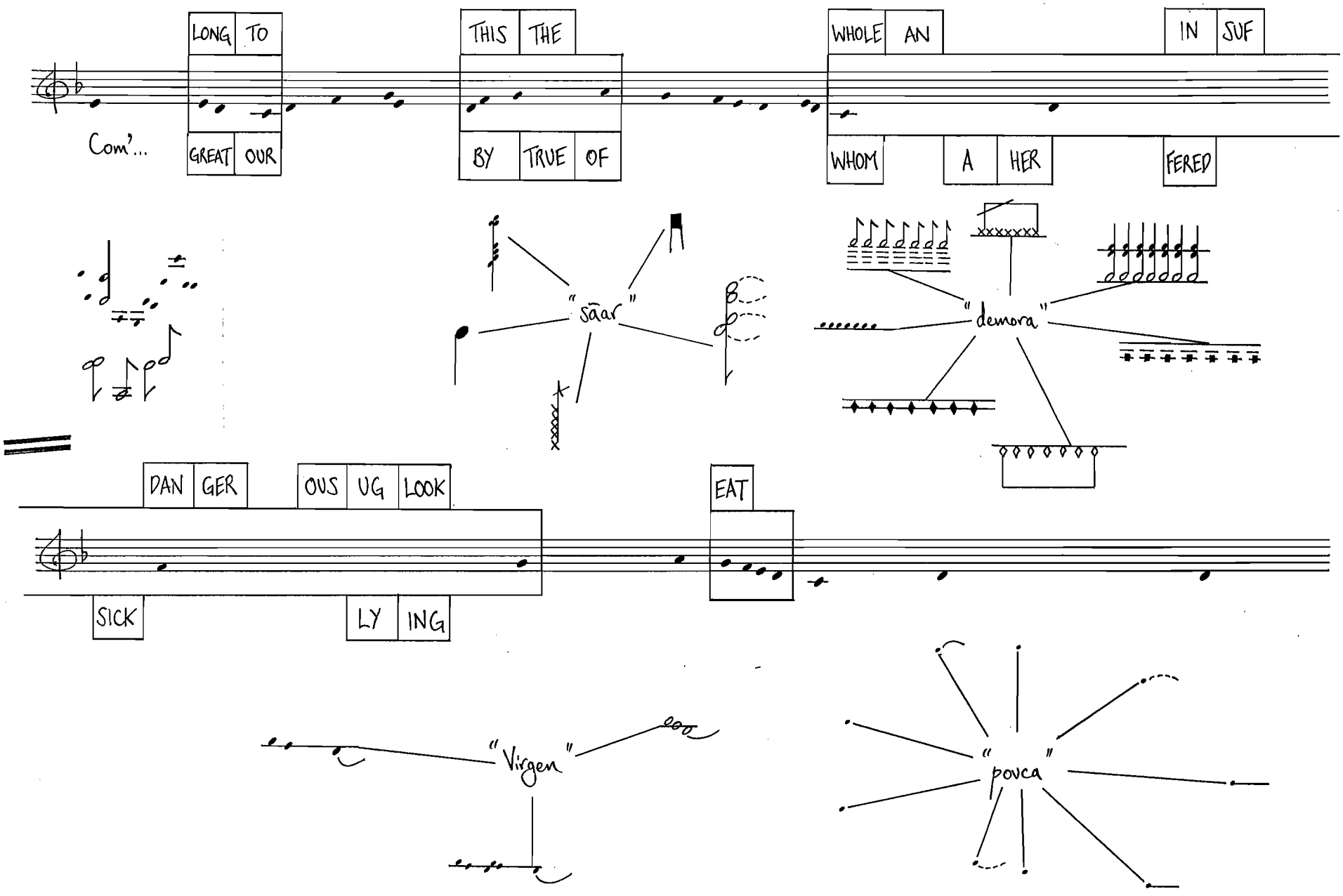



VERSE 5 | REFRAIN 6 | SOLO

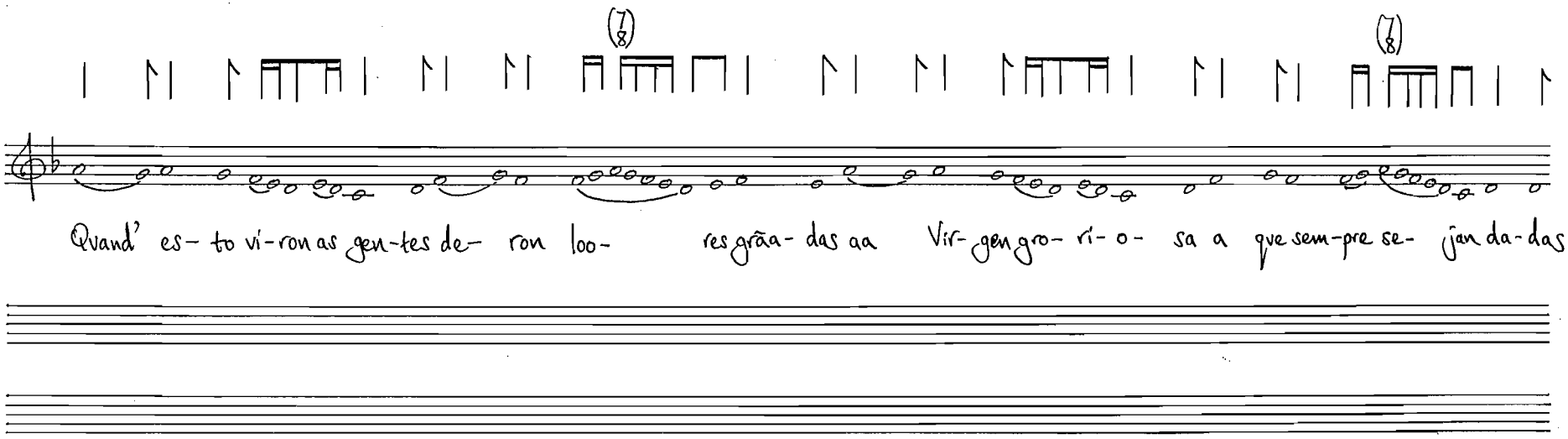


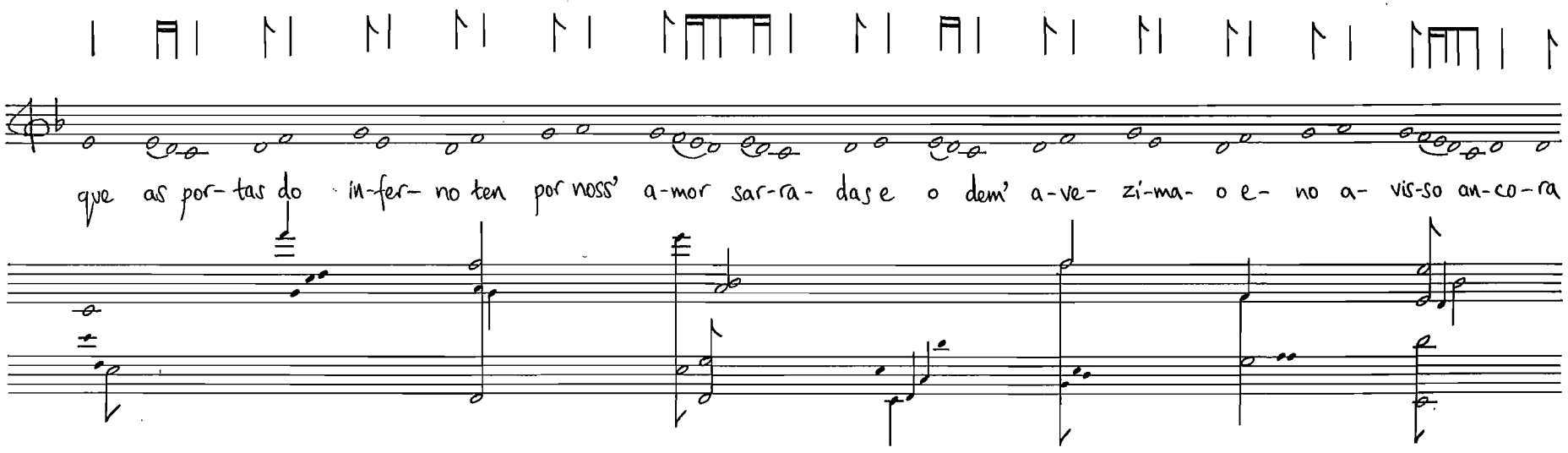
REFRAIN 6 VOICE AND TUTTI

chorus: improvise around the boxed pitches (as soon as the voice has begun the box) using the syllables/words
voice: text as before; ensure the cue words are audible to the ensemble

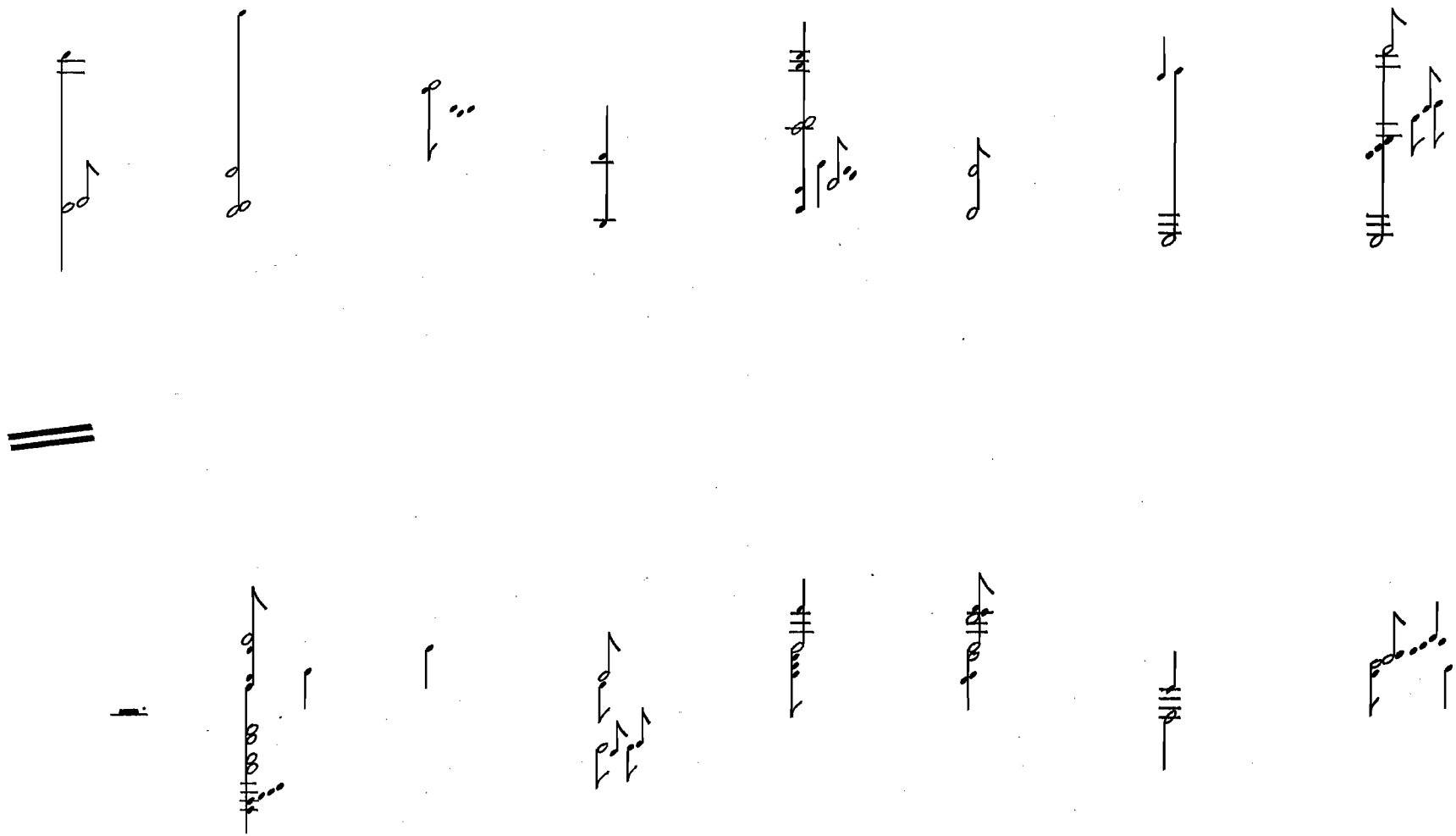


VERSE 6 VOICE AND TUTTI

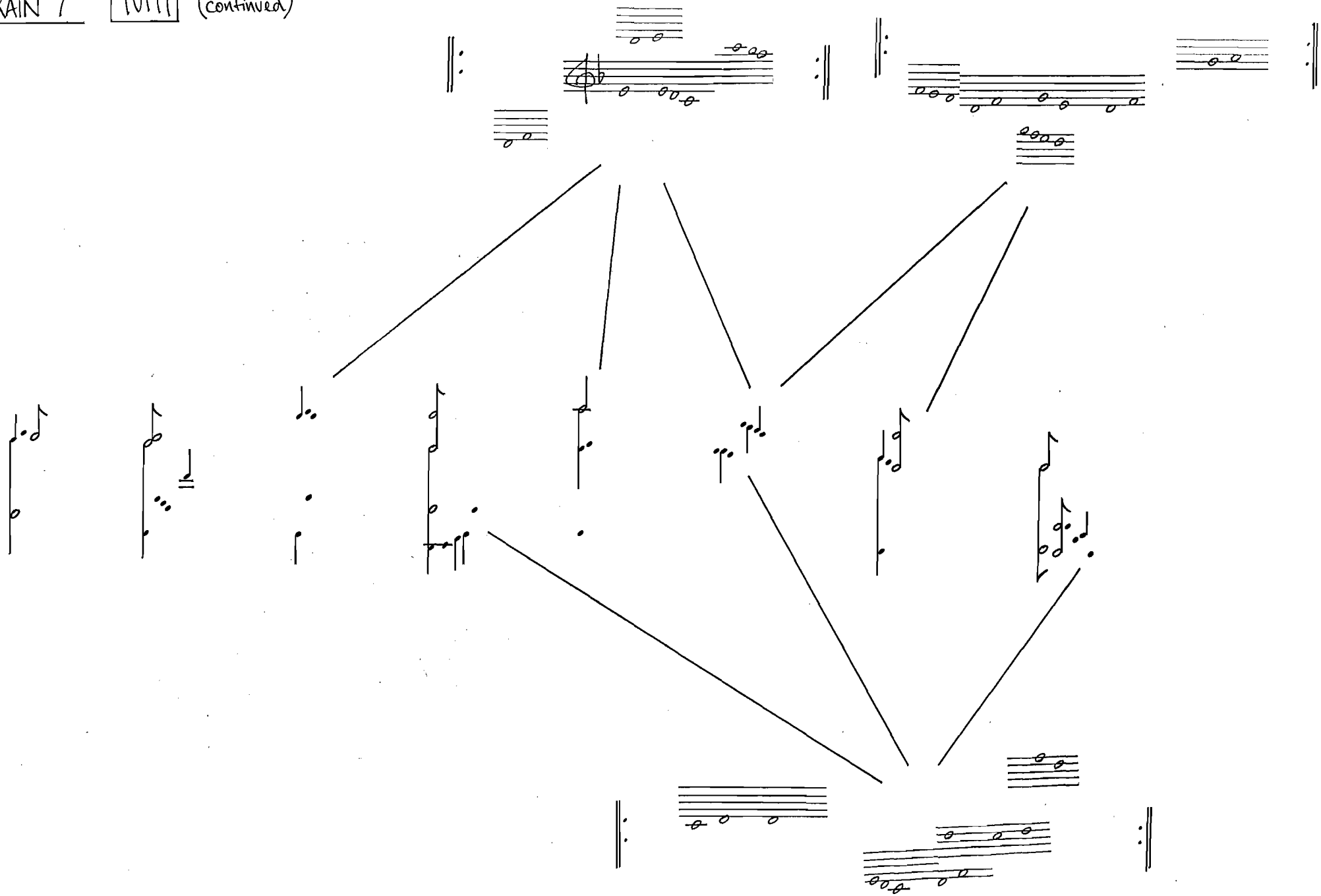


REFRAIN 7 TUTTI

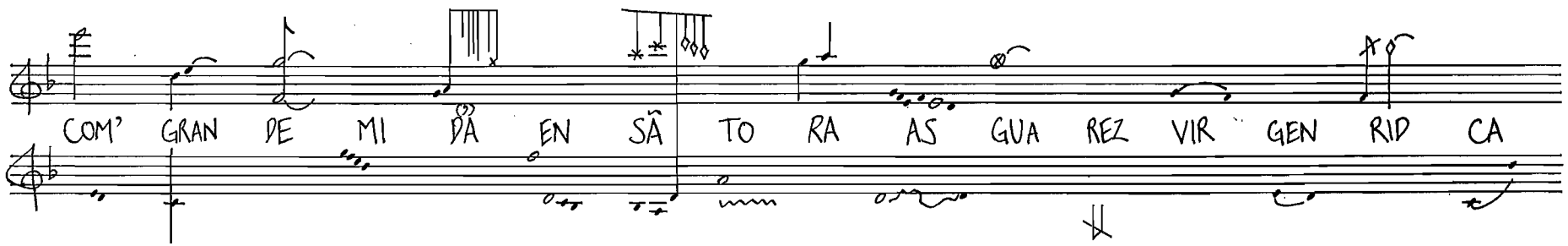


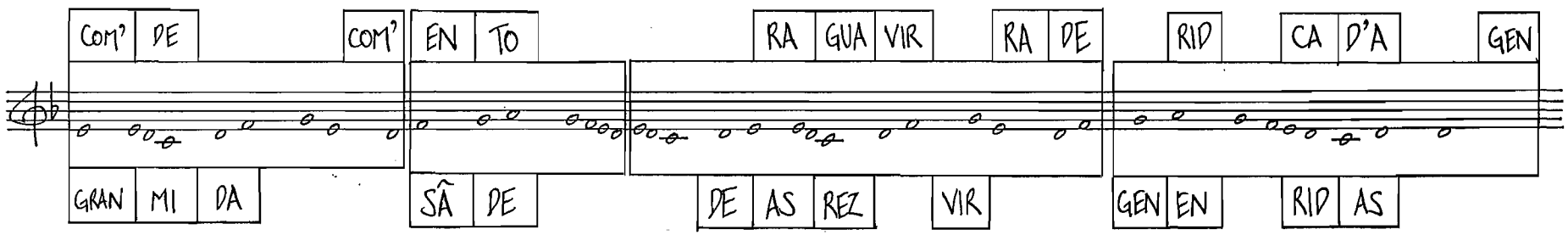
REFRAIN 7 TUTTI (continued)



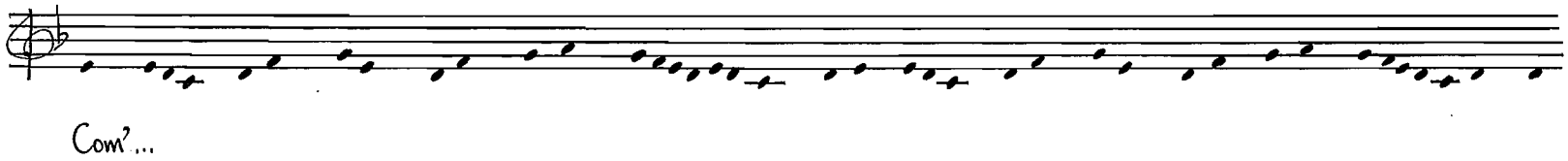
REFRAIN 7 SOLO AND CHORUS

wait until members of the ensemble begin to break away from the TUTTI before starting this graph
chorus: improvise around the boxed pitches using the syllables
solo: play materials whenever you hear the corresponding syllable



REFRAIN 7 VOICE



# *Amor es Rey*

**For piano**

**John Habron**

*Amor es Rey*

**Notes for performance**

Accidentals apply only to the notes which they precede.

Duration: ca 7'

**Programme note**

Dyads: one of the simplest forms of musical togetherness. The notes of this piece are all derived from the letters: elizabethannmonoogianpatrickdavidhooper.

'Amor es Rey' (love is king) is taken from a sonnet by Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas (1580-1645):

Amor no admite compañía de competidor, ansí como el reinar

No admiten, no, Floralva, compañía,
amor y majestad siempre triunfante:
solo ha de ser el rey, solo el amante,
humos tiene el favour de monarquía.

El padre ardiente de la luz del día,
no permite que muestre su semblante
estrella presumida y centelleante,
en cuanto reina en la región vacía.

Amor es rey tan grande, que aprisiona
en vasellaje el cielo, el mar, la tierra,
y única y sola majestad blasona.

Todo su amor un corazón lo cierra,
la soledad es paz de su corona;
la compañía, sedición y guerra.

from Francisco de Quevedo
Antología Poética
(Espasa-Calpe Mexicana, 1943)

**To Paddy Hooper and Lizzie Monoogian, on the occasion of their wedding (21 August 2004)**

ca ♪=54 (♪=108)
with great affection; dynamics generally very quiet

Ped

8

(Ped)

15

8va bassa

(Ped)

21

(Ped)

28

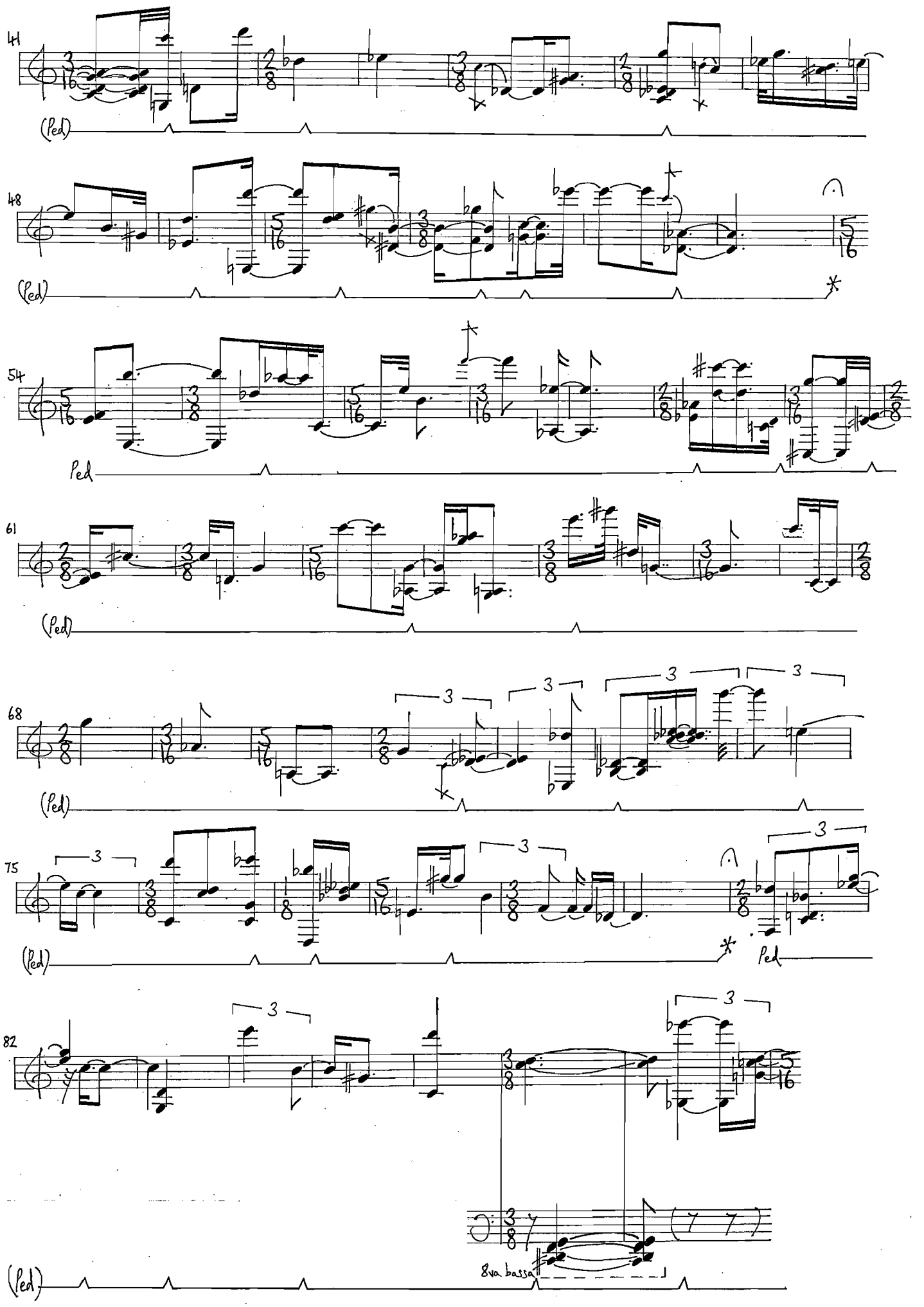
8va bassa

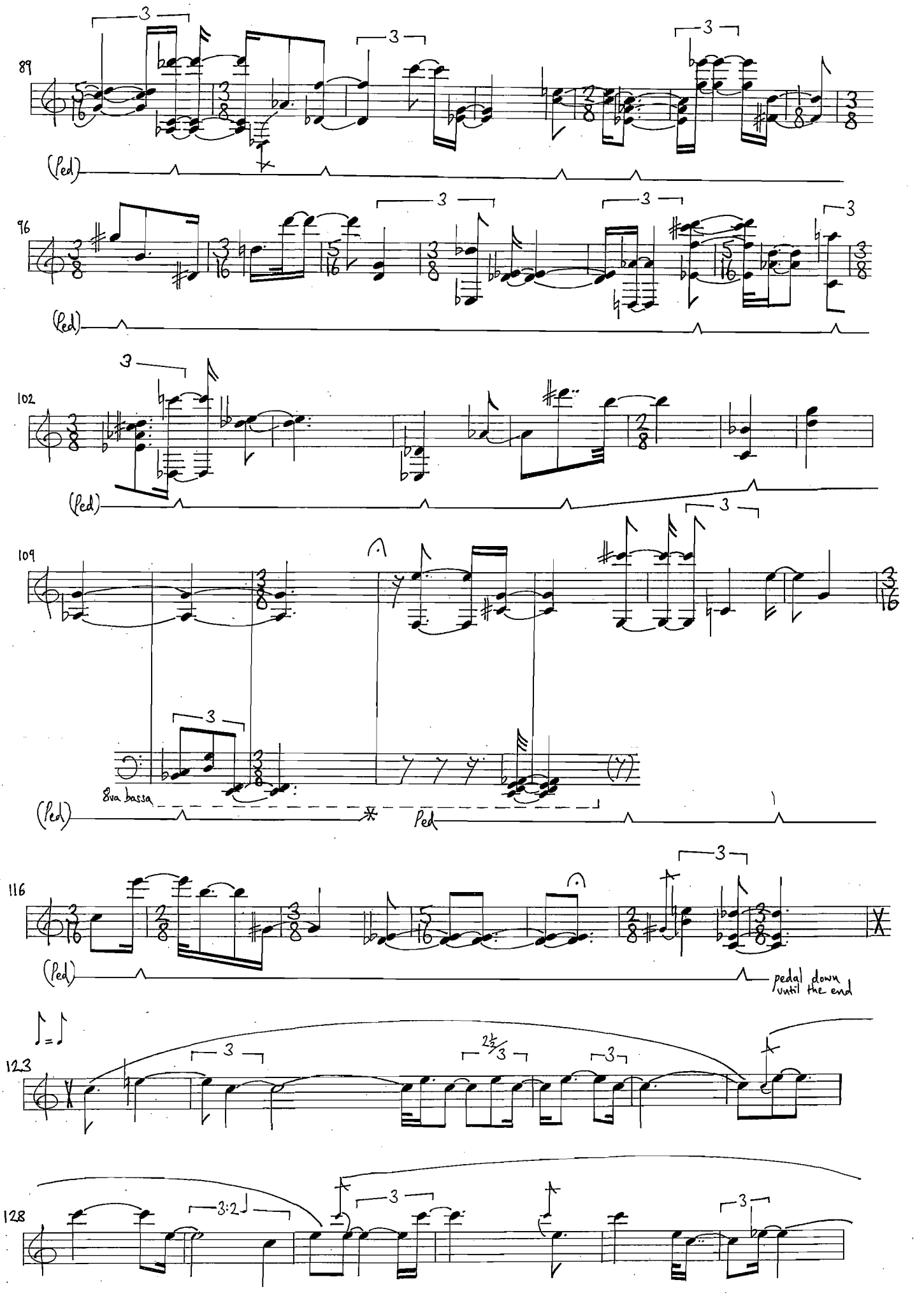
loco

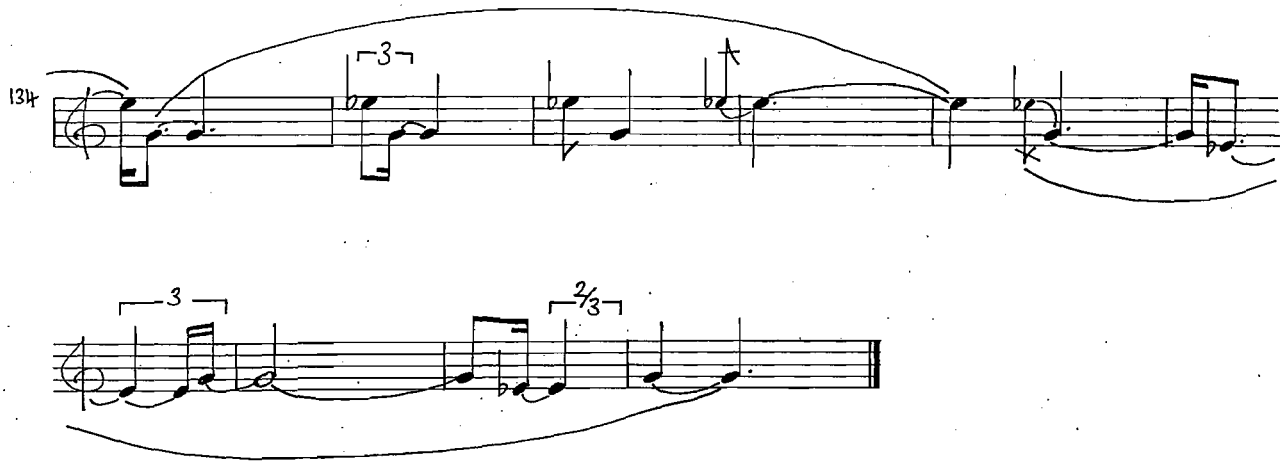
(Ped)

34

(Ped)


41
(Ped)
48
(Ped)
54
Ped
61
(Ped)
68
(Ped)
75
(Ped)
Ped
82
8va bassa
(Ped)


89
(Ped)
96
(Ped)
102
(Ped)
109
8va bassa
(Ped)
Ped
116
(Ped)
pedal down until the end
123
128


134
3
3
2/3

# *Con Beso de su Boca*

**For SSAATB**

**John Habron**

*Con Beso de su Boca*

**Notes for performance**

An accidental applies only to the note which it precedes.

Unrhythmicised durations should be judged proportionally with reference to the constant bar lengths; the conductor will continue to beat.

It is important that the disposition of the counterpoint is kept to as strictly as possible, even if the overall rhythmic configurations change from performance to performance.

An unrhythmicised duration is to be held until (i) the next note, (ii) a comma or (iii) a rest.

Duration ca. 6'

**Text and translations**

St Augustine of Hippo – *Confessions* (X/27)

*Sero te amavi, pulchritudo tam antiqua et tam nova, sero te amavi!...Vocasti et clamasti et rupisti surdidatem meam, coruscasti, splenduisti et fugasti caecitatem meam, flagrasti, et duxi spiritum et anhelo tibi, gustavi et esurio et sitio, tetigisti me, et exarsi in pacem tuam.*

Late have I loved you, O Beauty, so ancient and so new, late have I loved you!...you called, and cried out to me and broke open my deafness; you shone forth upon me and you scattered my blindness: You breathed fragrance, and I drew in my breath and I now pant for you: I tasted and I hunger and thirst; you touched me, and I burned for your peace.

(translation: Mary T. Clark in *Augustine of Hippo – Selected Writings* [London: SPCK 1984])

~

St Teresa of Avila – *Meditaciones sobre los cantares* (Chapter 1, sections 11 and 12)

*"Béseme con beso de su boca"...Señor mío, si significa paz y amistad, ¿por qué no os pedirán las almas la tengaís con ellas?; ¿qué mejor cosa podemos pedir que lo que yo os pido, Señor mío, que me deis esta paz con "beso de vuestra boca?"*

"Kiss me with the kiss of your mouth"...My Lord, if this means peace and friendship, then would not all souls ask this from you? What better thing can we ask, O Lord, than that which I ask you; that you give me this peace with "the kiss of your mouth"?

(translation: Louise and John Habron)

**Programme note**

This piece uses two texts; part of St Teresa of Avila's Meditation on the *Song of Songs* and part of St Augustine's *Confessions*, both of which treat of the dialectical relationship of the divine (metaphysical) and the human (physical). The title, from St Teresa, translates as 'with the kiss of your mouth' and refers to her craving for the kiss of God. The two lower parts use pitches from the introit and offertorium of Trinity Sunday.

---

**To A. C. and C. L. M.**

---

**For James Weeks and EXAUDI**

---

Con beso de su boca

♩= ca 48 heartfelt, with yearning; always legato but rhythmically well defined

S pp te a-

S pp te

A pp 3:2 "Bé- se- me

A pp 3:2 "Bé- se- me

5

S mp ma- vi

S mp a- ma- vi

A

A

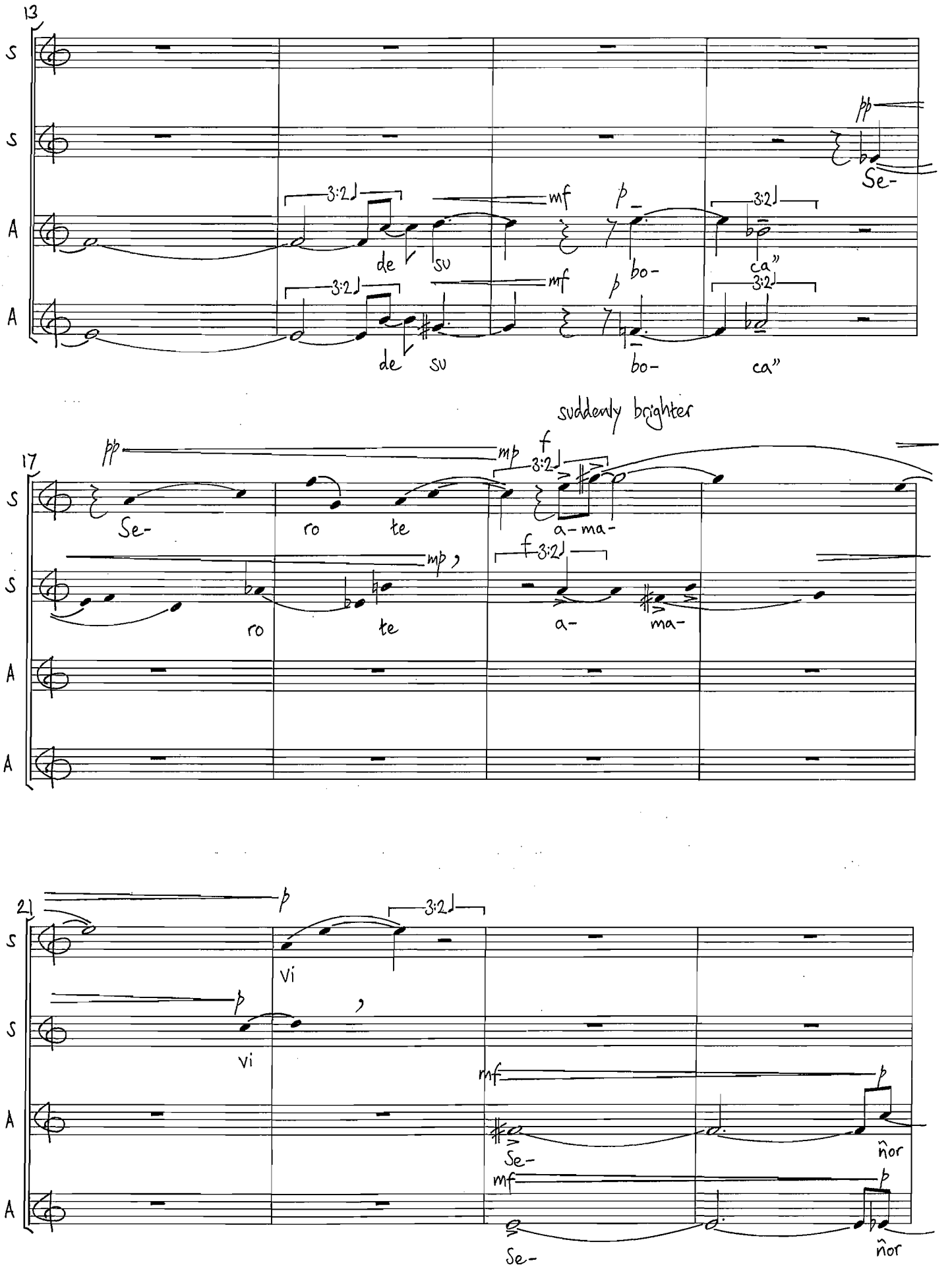
9

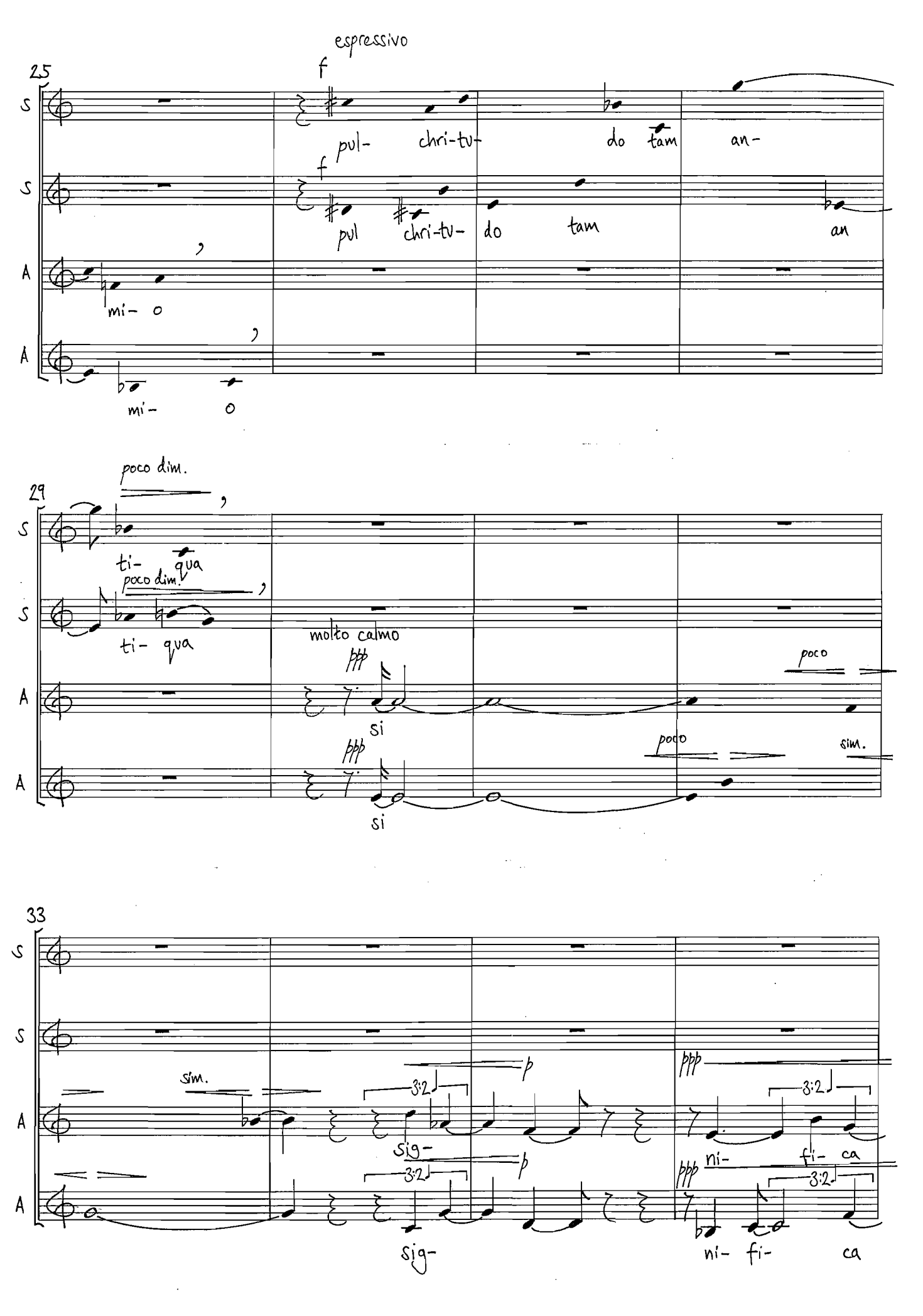
S

S mp>pp

A pp 3:2 3 "Bé- se- me con be- so

A pp 3:2 3 "Bé- se- me con be- so mp>pp


13
S
S
A
A
pp
Se-
3:2
mf
p
de
su
bo-
ca"
17
suddenly brighter
mp
f
a-ma-
ro
te
a-
ma-
21
vi
Se-
ñor


25
espressivo
f
S
pul- chri-tu- do tam an-
S
f
pul chri-tu- do tam an
A
mi- o
A
mi- o
29
poco dim.
S
ti- qua
poco dim.
S
ti- qua
molto calmo
ppp
A
si
poco
A
ppp
si
poco
sim.
33
S
S
sim.
p
ppp
A
3:2
sig-
3:2
ni- fi- ca
A
p
ppp
3:2
3:2
sig-
ni- fi- ca

37

mp molto f

bright, espressivo

S: et tam no- va

S: f tam no- va

mf 3:2

A: mf 3:2

A:

41

non dim. 3:2

S: non dim. 3:2

S: calmo pp paz 3:2 y poco 3:2 a- mi- stad

A: pp paz 3:2 y a- poco mi-

45

S: f se- p ro

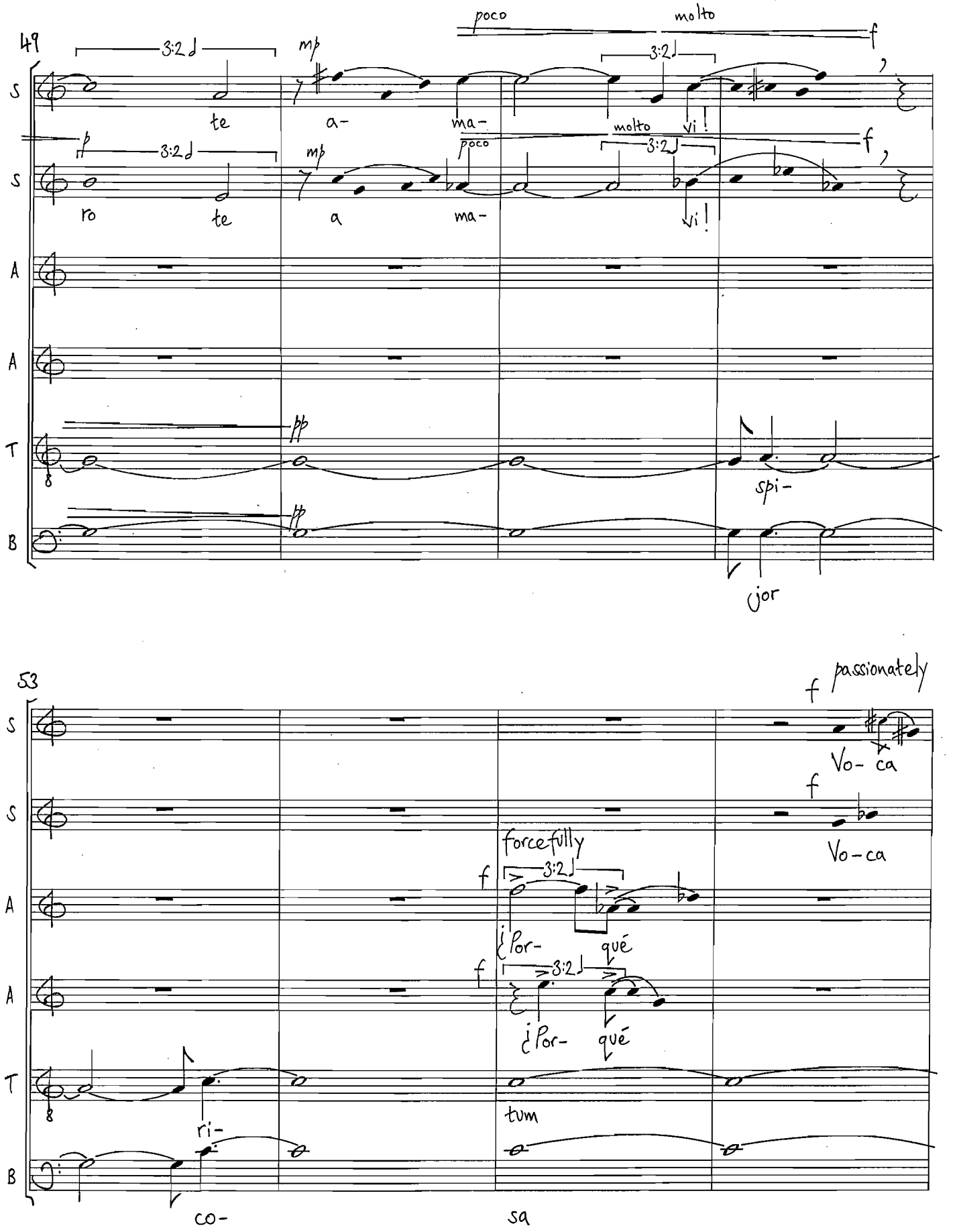
S: f se-

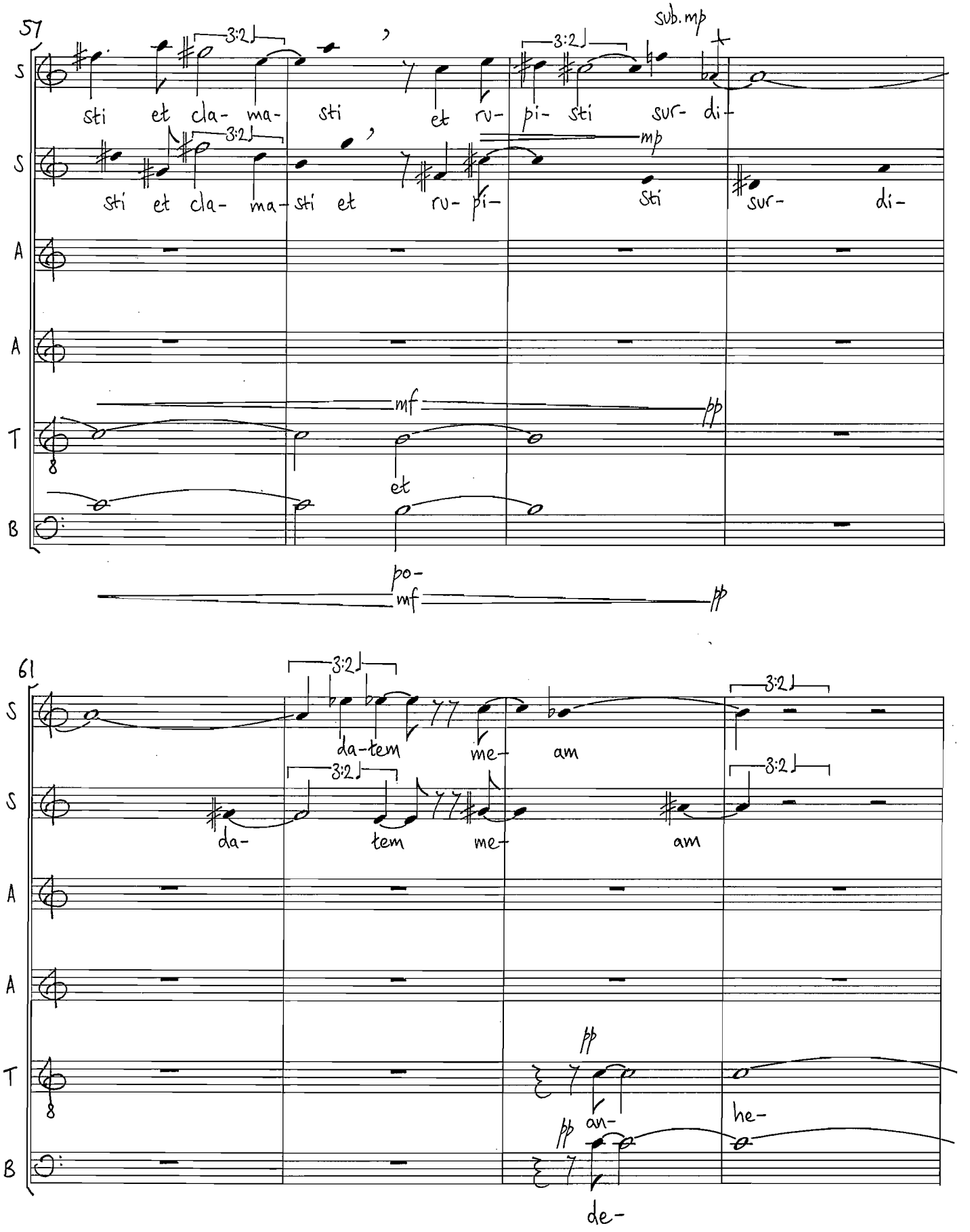
A:

A: stad

T: p du- f xi

B: p ¿qué f me-


49
poco
molto
f
3:2
mp
S
te
a-
ma-
vi!
p
ro
a
S
A
A
T
pp
spi-
B
jor
53
passionately
Vo- ca
Vo-ca
forcefully
¿Por-
qué
¿Por-
qué
ri-
tum
co-
sa


57
S
sti et cla- ma- sti et ru- pi- sti sur- di-
3:2
sub. mp
S
sti et cla- ma- sti et ru- pi- sti sur- di-
mp
A
A
mf
pp
T
et
B
po-
mf
pp
61
S
da-tem me- am
3:2
S
da- tem me- am
A
A
pp
T
an- he-
pp
B
de-

tutti: passionately

65

S: f — ff; 3:2; co- ru- sca- sti; pp; splen-

S: f — ff; co- ru- sca- sti; pp; splen-

A: f; no os; ff; pe- di- rán; delicato pp; 3:2; las al-

A: f; no os; ff; pe- di- rán; delicato pp; 3:2; las al-

T: fpp; lo

B: fpp; mos

69

S: 3:2; molto f; du- i- sti

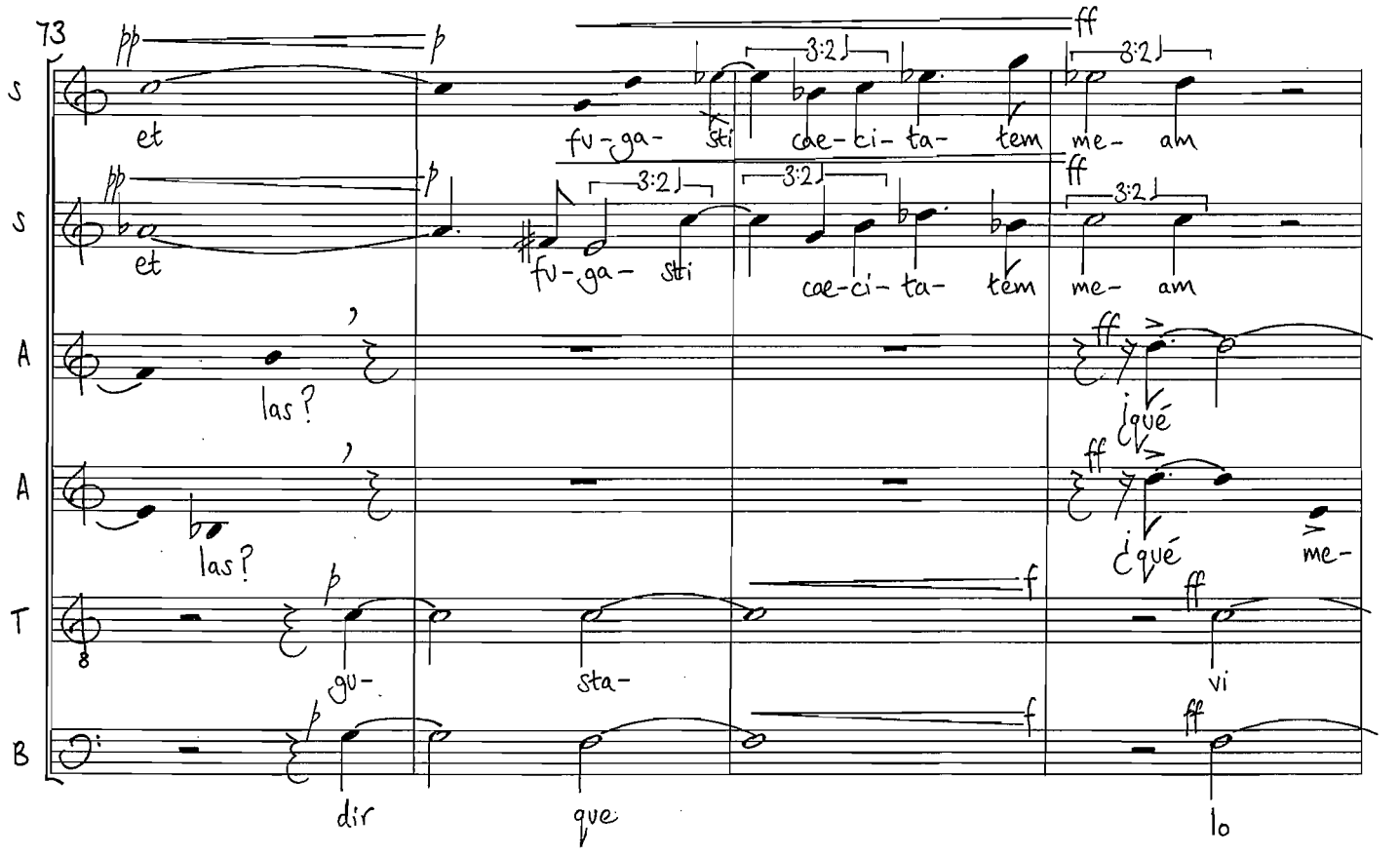
S: 3:2; molto f; du- i- sti

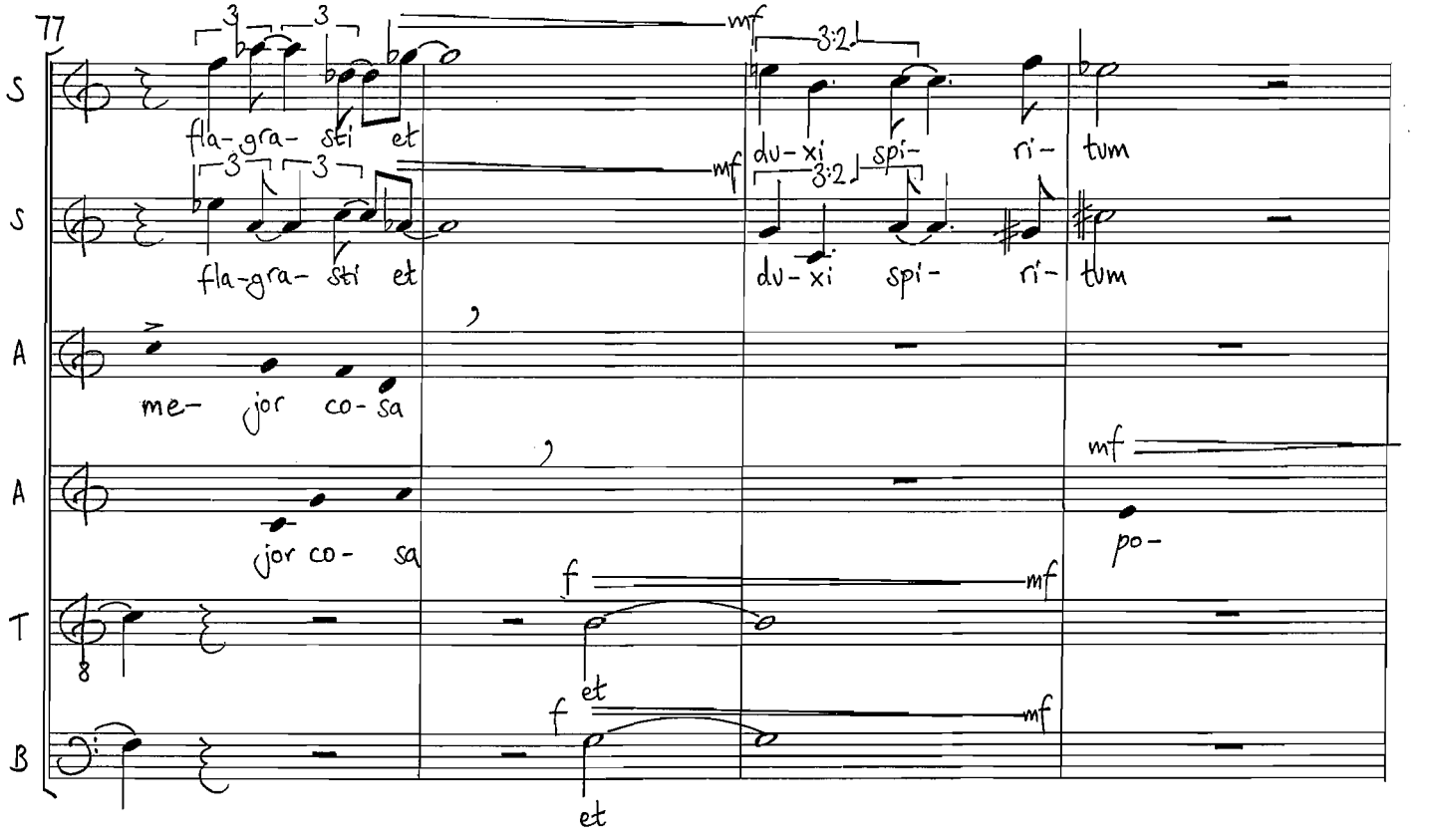
A: mas; pp sim.; 3:2; la ten- gais con el-

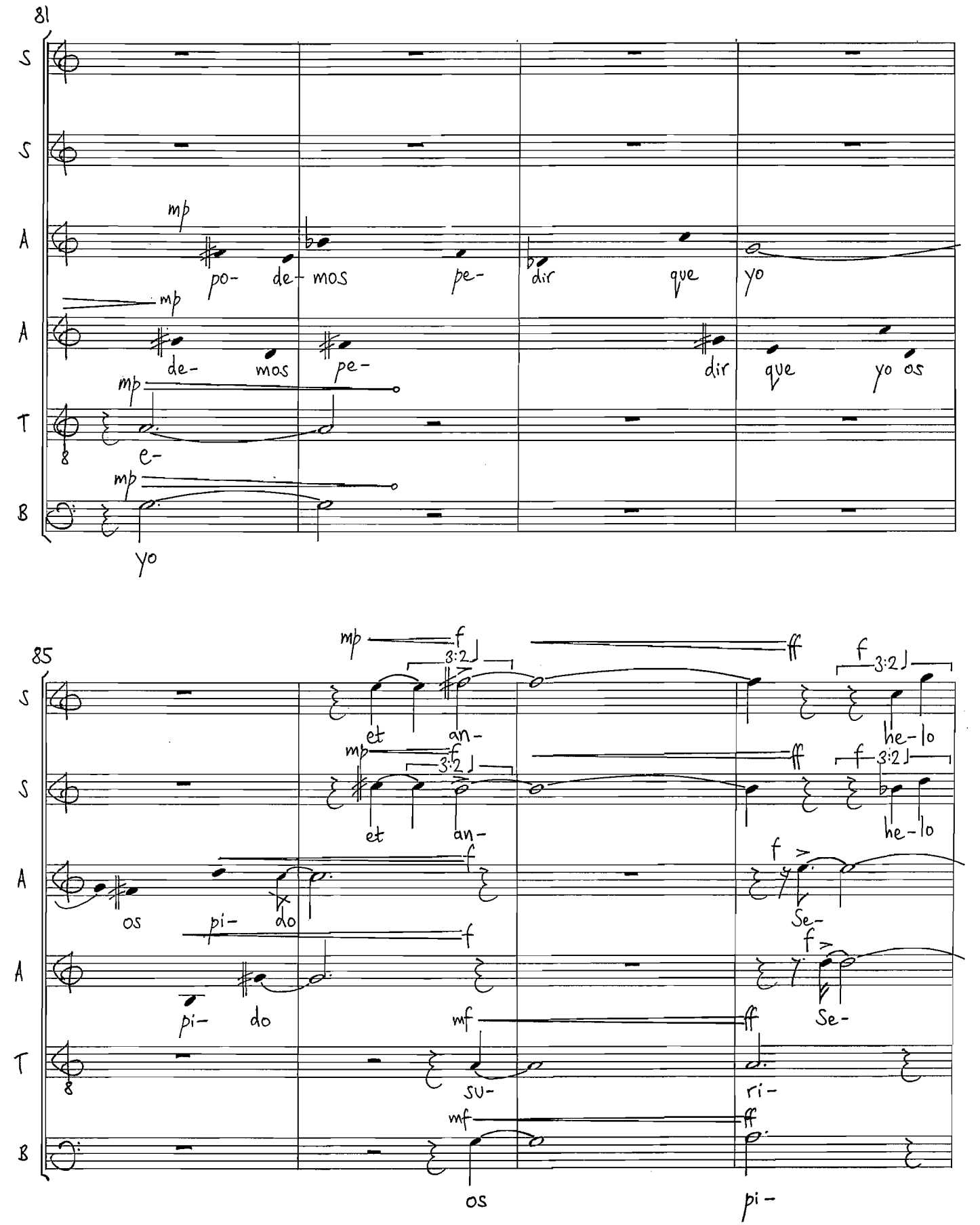
A: mas; pp sim.; 3:2; la ten- gais con el-

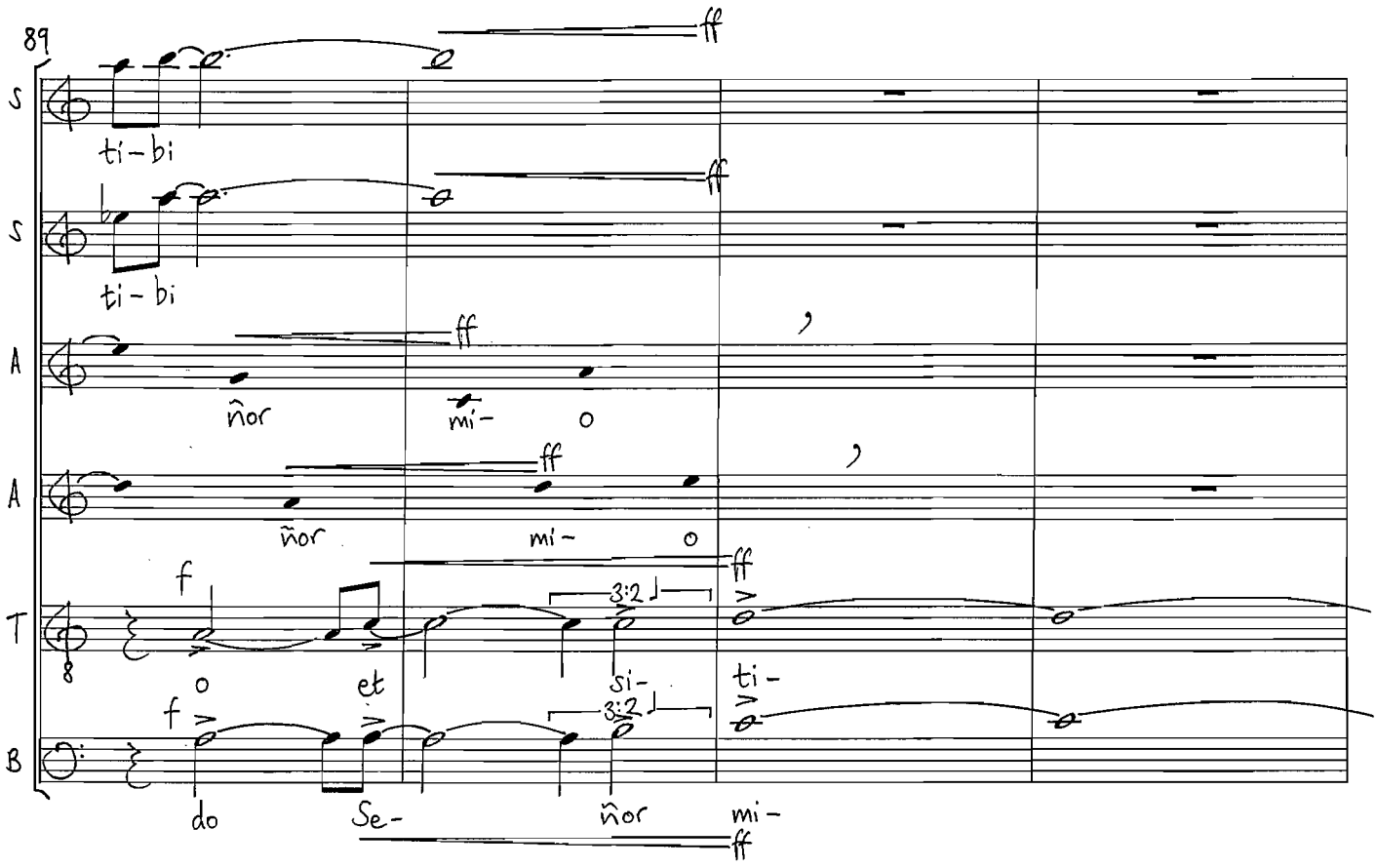
T: pp; ti- bi

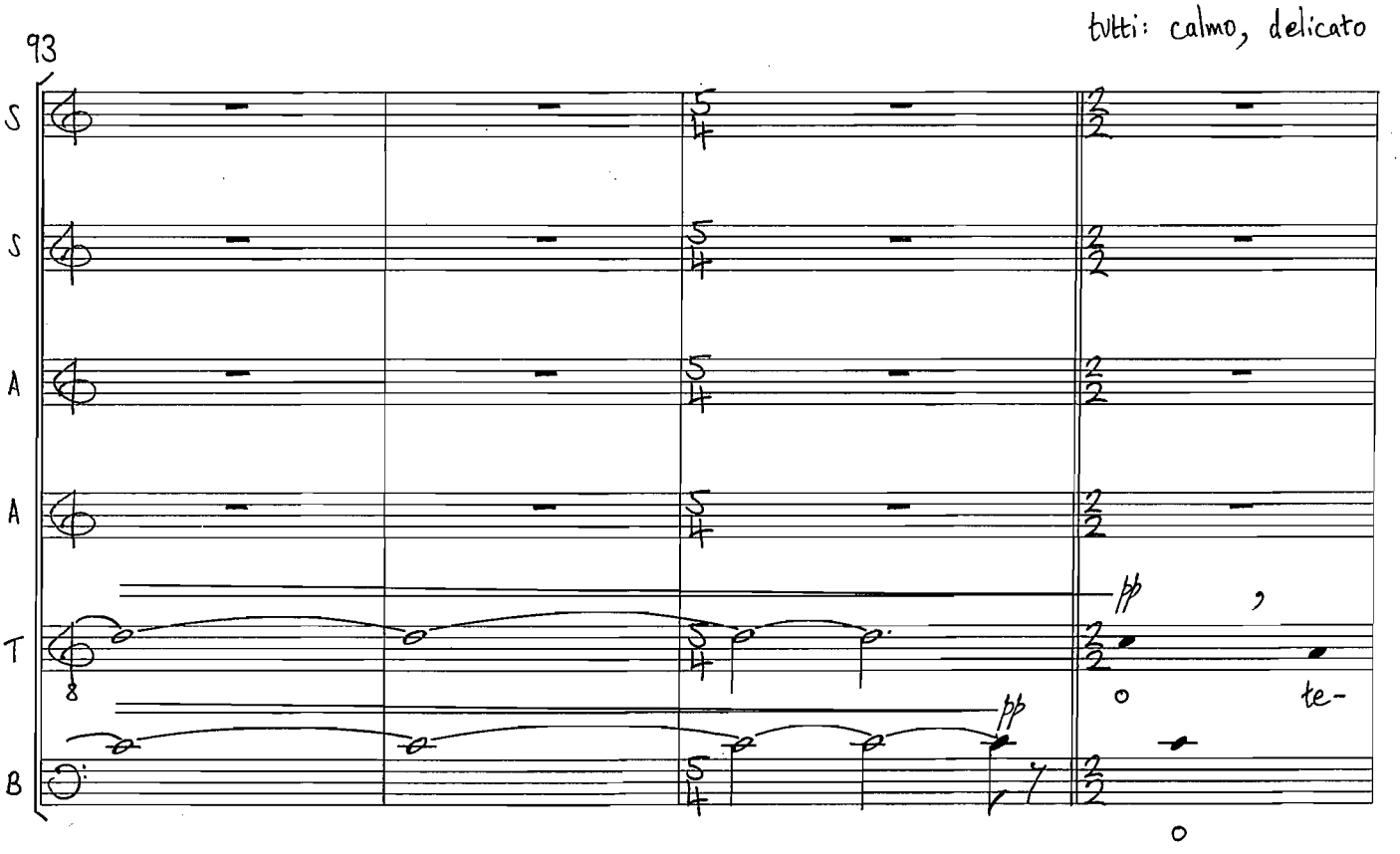
B: pp; pe-

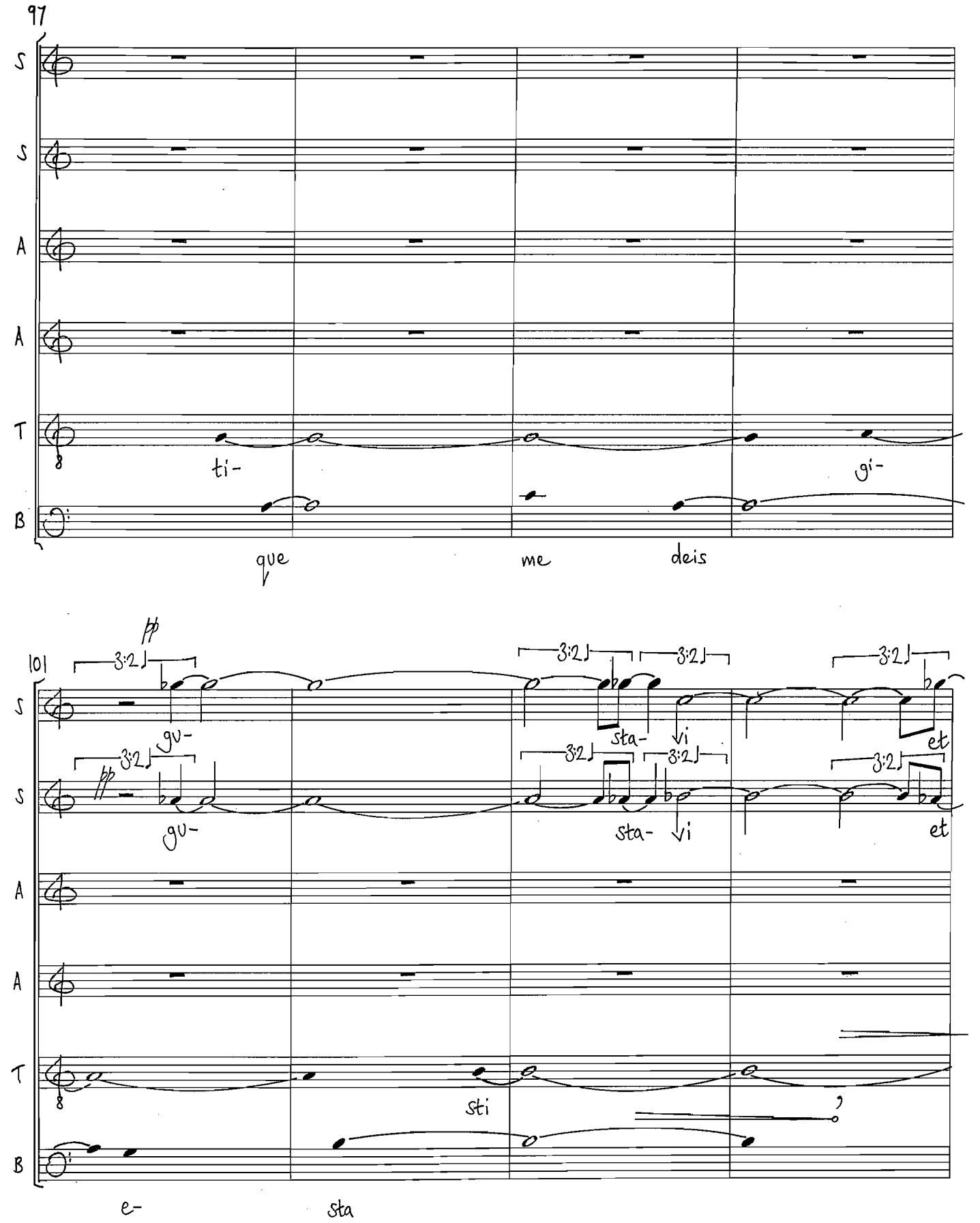

73
S
et
fu-ga- sti
cae-ci- ta- tem
me- am
S
et
fu-ga- sti
cae-ci- ta- tem
me- am
A
las?
¿qué
A
las?
¿qué
me-
T
gu-
sta-
vi
B
dir
que
lo


77
S
fla-gra- sti et
du-xi spi- ri- tum
S
fla-gra- sti et
du-xi spi- ri- tum
A
me- jor co- sa
A
jor co- sa
po-
T
et
B
et


81
S
S
A
A
T
B
mp
po- de- mos pe- dir que yo
mp
de- mos pe- dir que yo os
mp
e-
mp
yo
85
mp f 3:2 ff f 3:2
et an- he-lo
mp f 3:2 ff f 3:2
et an- he-lo
f
os pi- do
f
f
Se-
f
pi- do
f
Se-
mf ff
su- ri-
mf ff
os pi-


89
S
ti-bi
S
ti-bi
A
ñor
mi-
o
A
ñor
mi-
o
T
o
et
si-
ti-
B
do
Se-
ñor
mi-
ff
f
3:2


tutti: calmo, delicato
93
S
S
A
A
T
o
te-
B
o
pp


97
S
S
A
A
T
B
ti-
gi-
que
me
deis
101
pp
3:2
gu-
sta-
vi
et
sti
e-
sta

105

S

e- su- ri-

S

e- su- ri-

A

A

T

pp

me

B

109

S

S

A

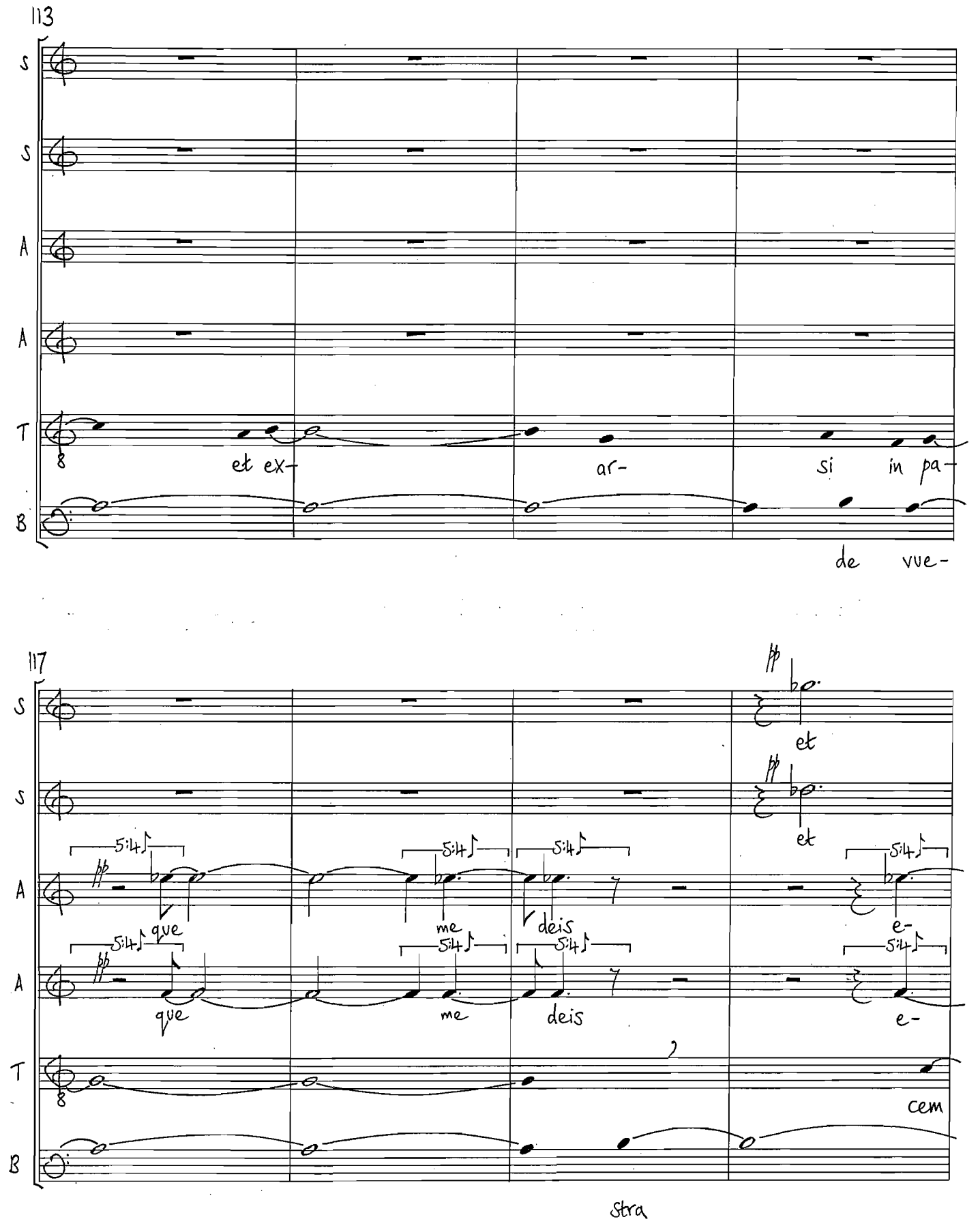
A

T

pp

B

paz con "be- so


113
S
S
A
A
T
B
et ex-
ar-
si in pa-
de vue-
117
S
S
A
A
T
B
et
et
que
me
deis
e-
que
me
deis
e-
cem
stra

121

S

si- ti- o

S

si- ti- o

A

sta paz

A

sta paz

T

B

125

S

te-

A

A

T

tu-

B

bo-

129

S: ti- gi- sti me

A: con

T: am

B: ca"?

133

S

A: be- so de vve- stra bo- ca"?

B

137

S: et ex- ar- si in.

A

141

S: pa- cem

145

S: tu- am

13/02/05

# *Claudia Molitor is a Composer*

**For speaking accordionist**

**John Habron**

*Claudia Molitor is a Composer*

**Notes for performance**

The text should be spoken slightly slower than normal conversational speed. Diction should be clear but the voice itself should not be over-projected; in very large spaces amplification may be necessary.

It is important to follow the punctuation and cadences of the text. Thus, in "composer. This is the first", the first word should have the intonation of the last word of a sentence and the second word should sound like the beginning of a new sentence.

Claudia is pronounced [klɔ:diə]

All underlined text is to be spoken. Text in square brackets is not to be spoken but must be read silently. All unrhythmicised durations should copy the speech patterns of the accompanying text, whether or not this is read aloud.

Durations of air-box noise are notated conventionally or using ; in the latter case, the cut-offs (which synchronise with the text) are shown by the end of the line.

× strike the most resonant part of the instrument with finger

⋇ strike the most resonant part of the instrument with two or more fingers

An accidental applies only to the note which it precedes.

Duration: ca 8'

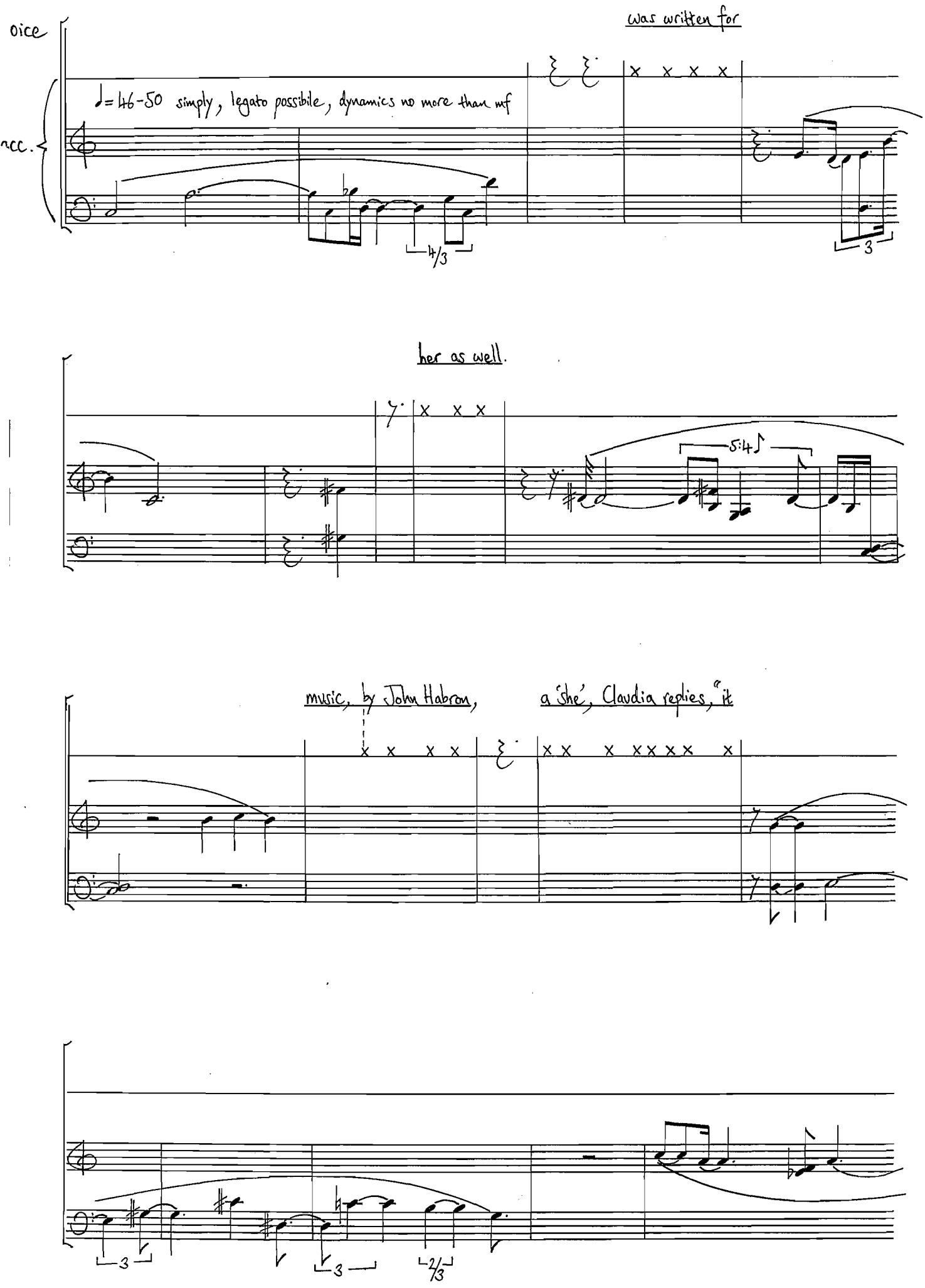
**Programme note**

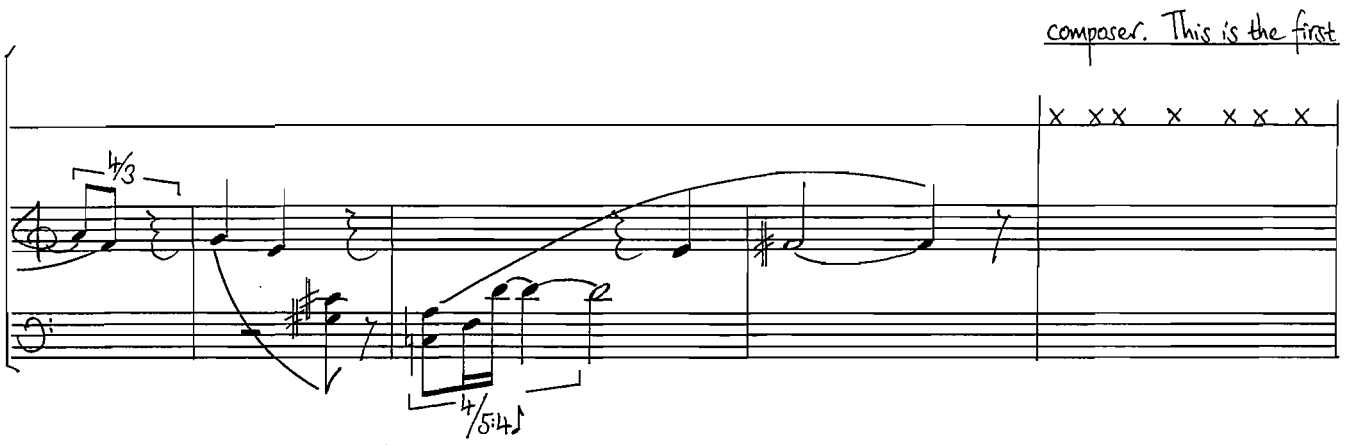
This piece of music was written for Claudia Molitor and her little accordion.

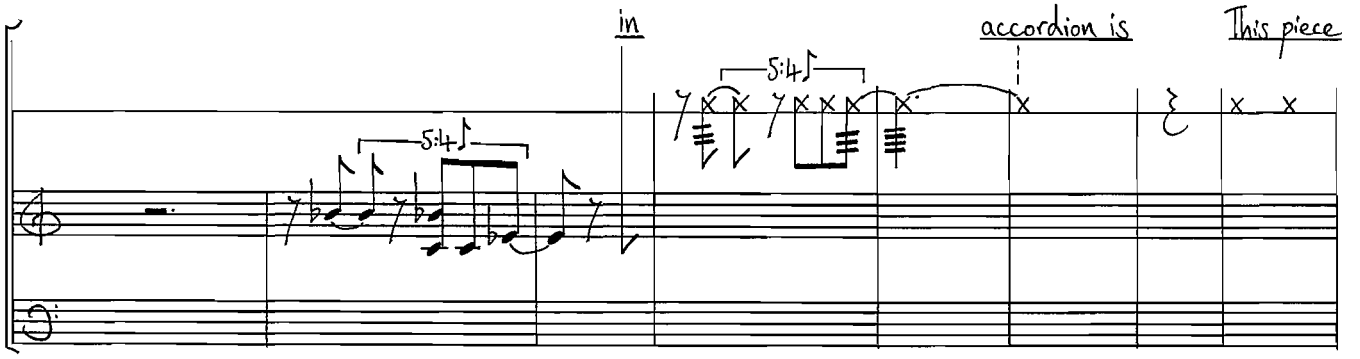
---

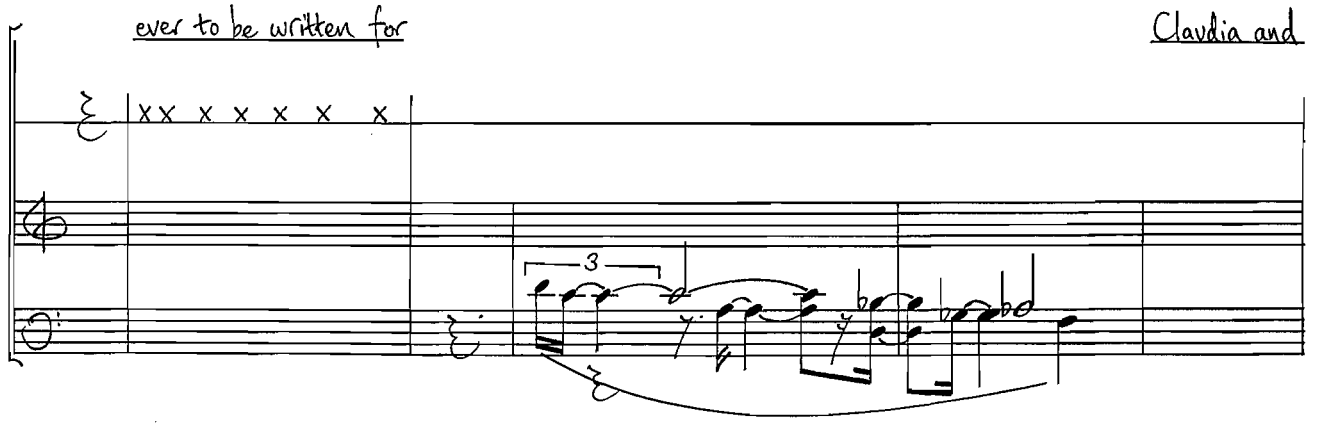
**Dedicated to Claudia Molitor**

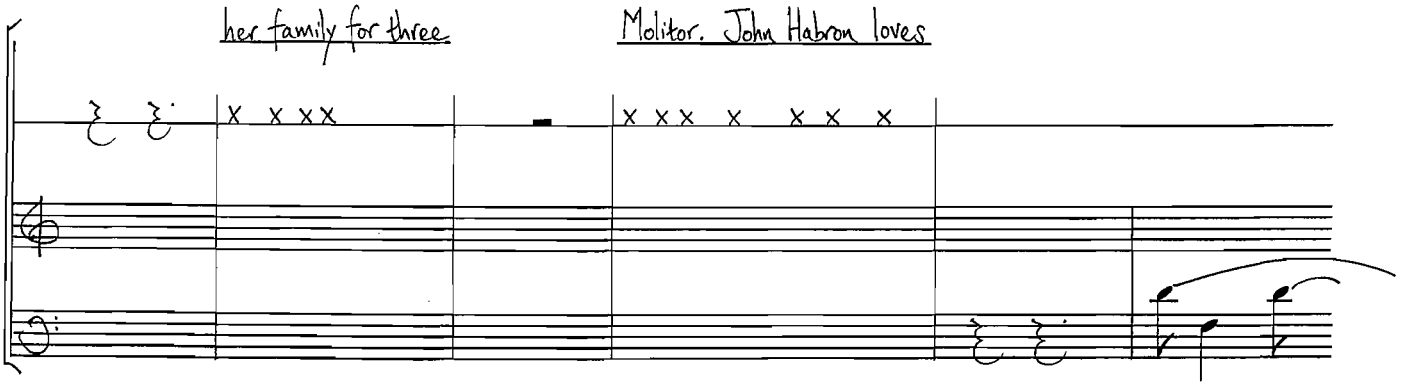
---

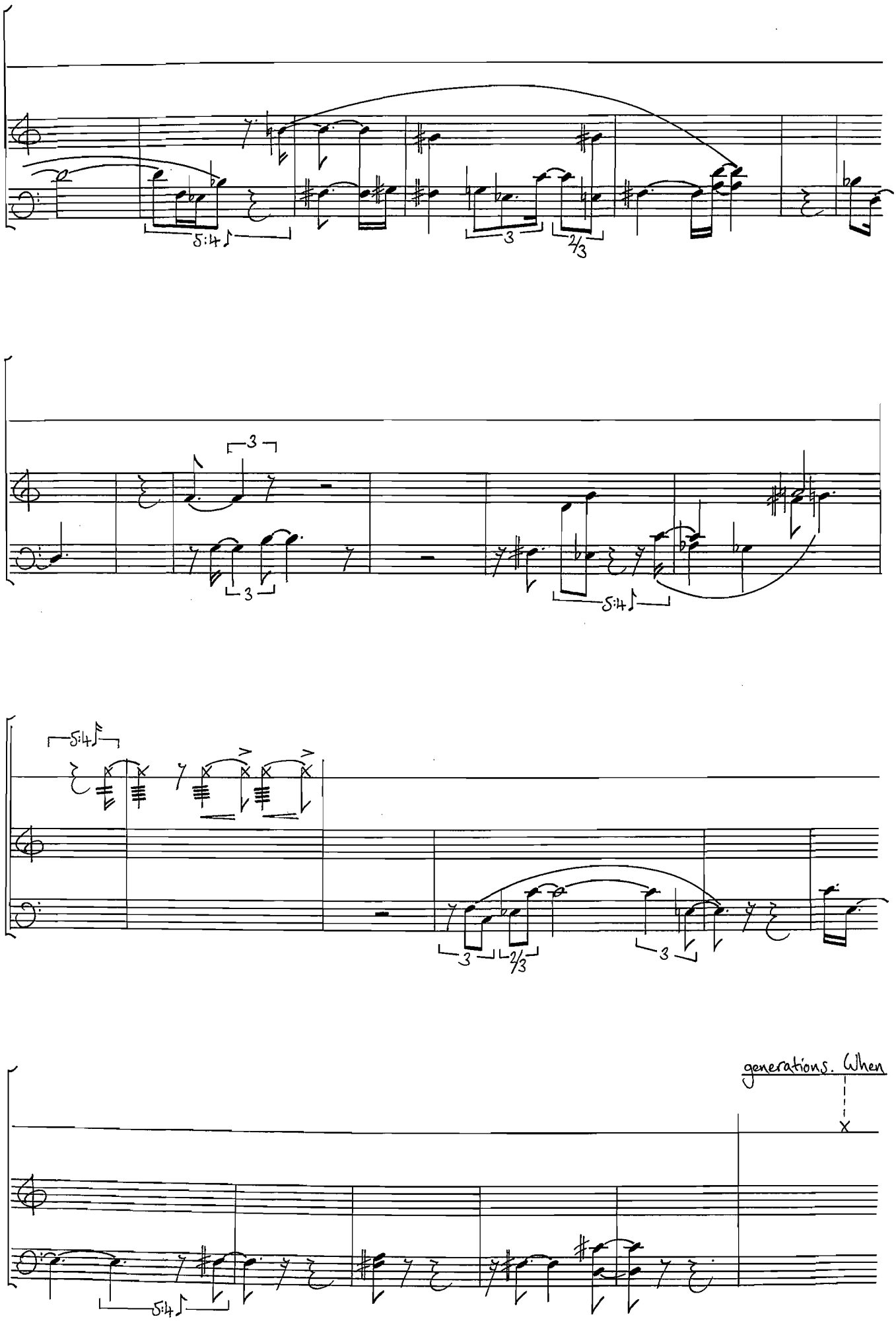

oice
rcc.
was written for
♩= 46-50 simply, legato possibile, dynamics no more than mf
4/3
3
her as well.
5:4
music, by John Habron,
a 'she', Claudia replies, "it
3
3
2/3


composer. This is the first
4/3
4/5:4


in
accordion is
This piece
5:4
5:4


ever to be written for
Claudia and
3


her family for three
Molitor. John Habron loves


5:4
3
2/3
3
3
5:4
5:4
3
2/3
3
generations. When
5:4

asked if her little accordion. Many people is a 'he' or and her

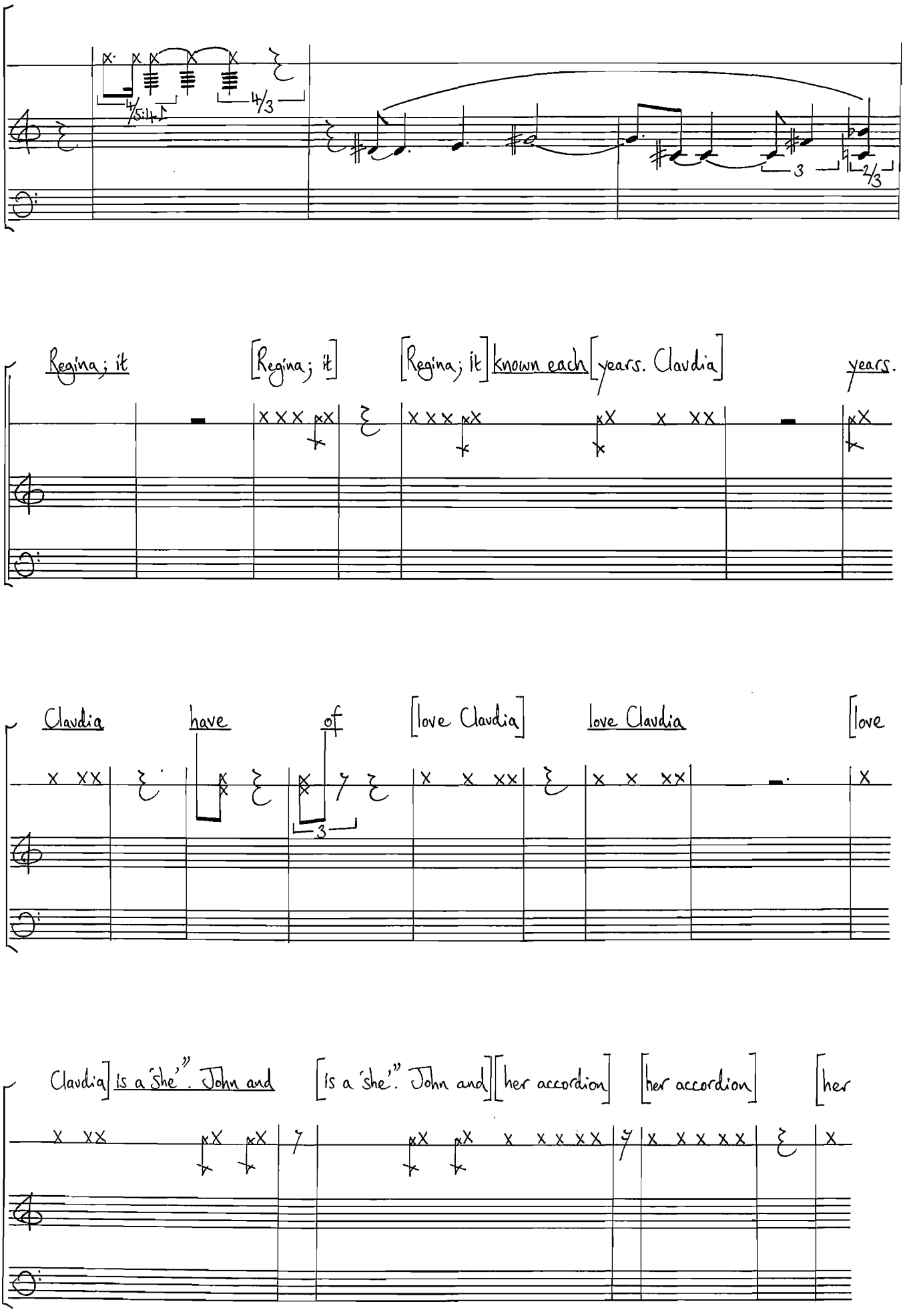
little accordion. Claudia's

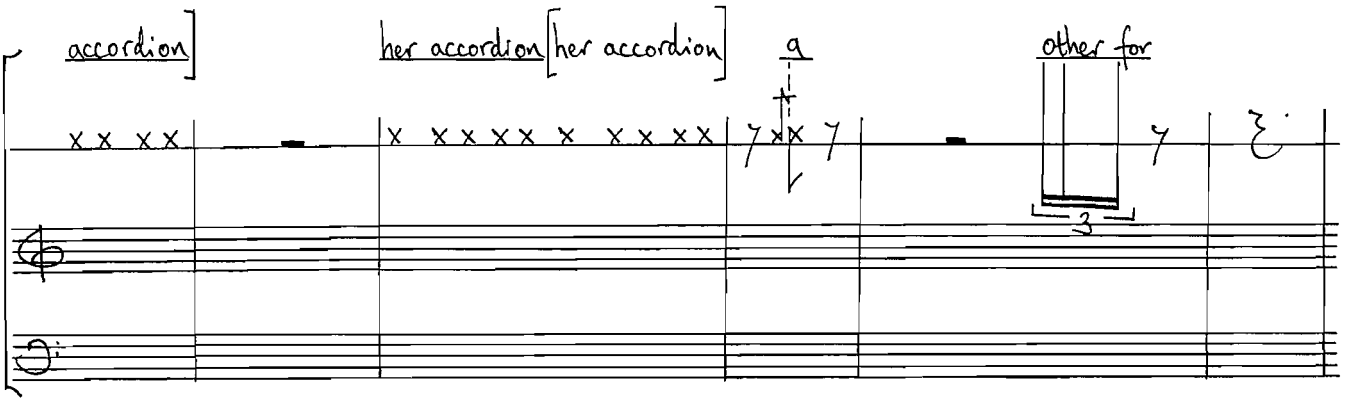
4/3 3 3 4/3

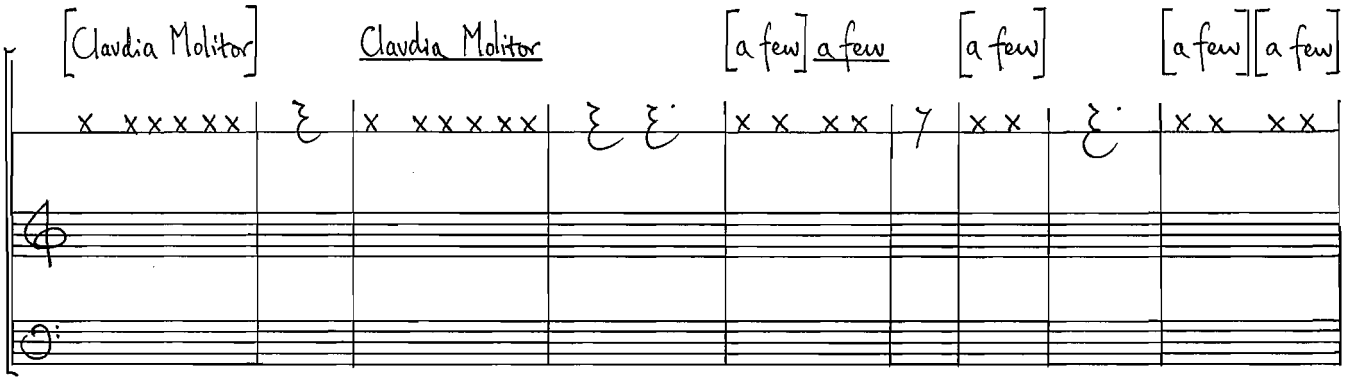
of music [of music] [of music] Molitor is

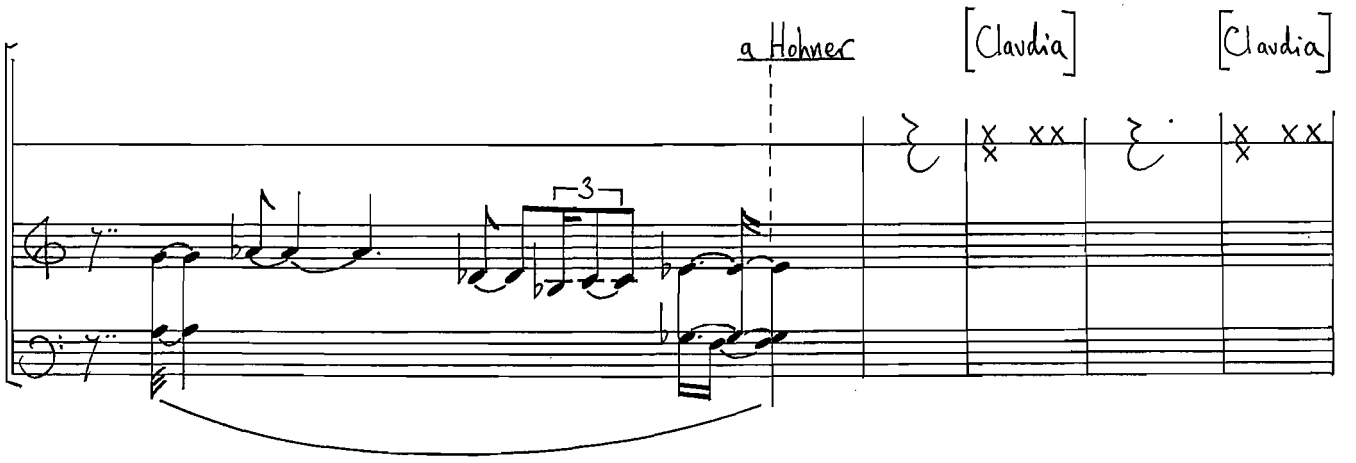
[has been] has been [has been] piece

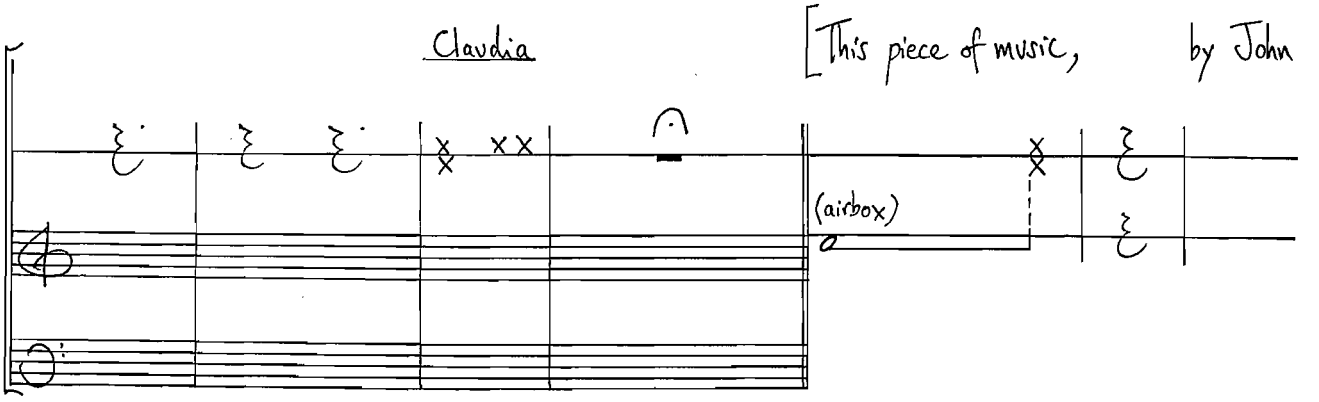
4/5:4 3 5:4

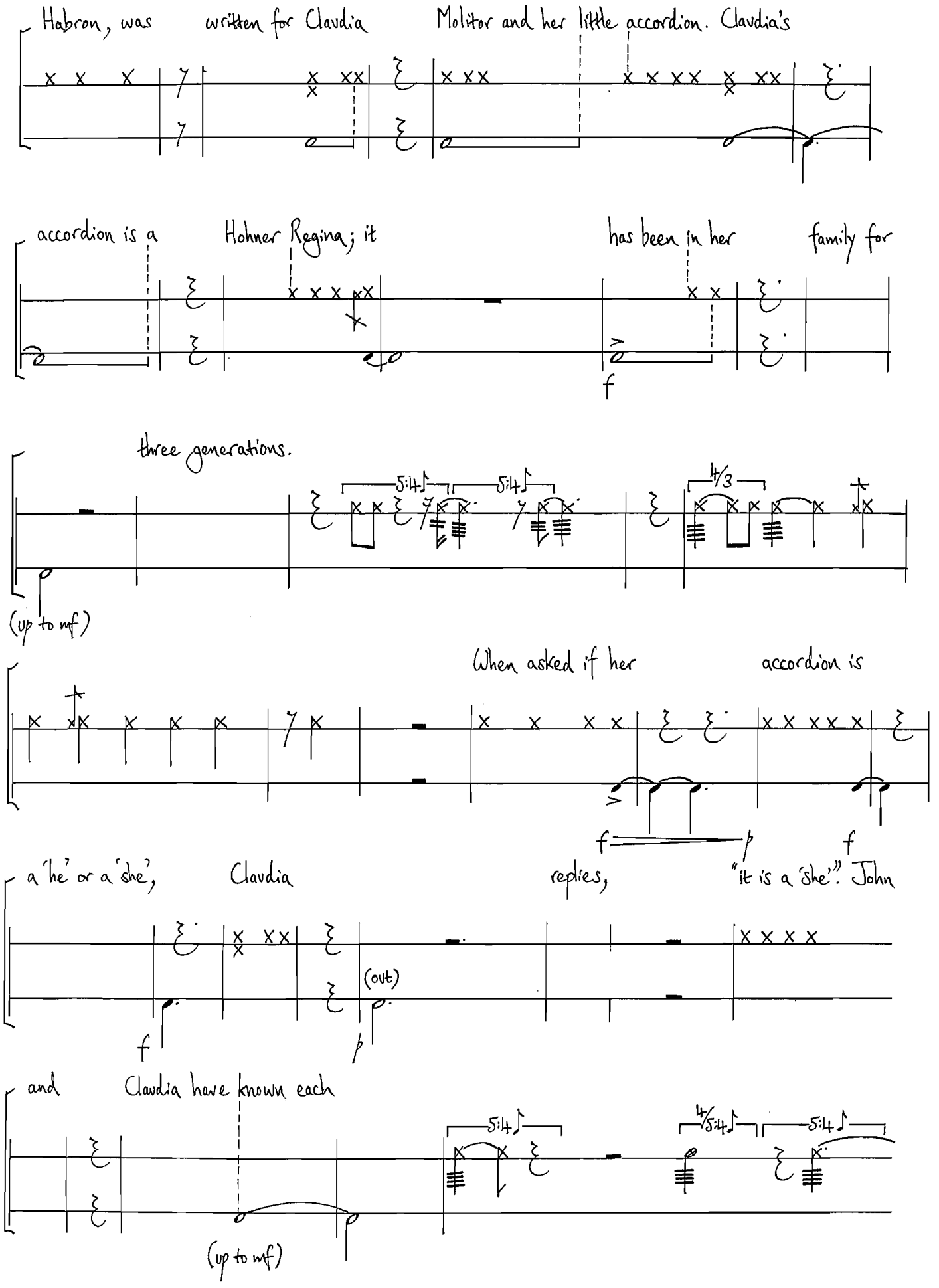

Regina; it
[Regina; it]
[Regina; it] known each [years. Claudia]
years.
Claudia
have
of
[love Claudia]
love Claudia
[love
Claudia] is a 'she'." John and
[is a 'she'." John and] [her accordion]
[her accordion]
[her


accordion
her accordion
her accordion
a
other for
3


Claudia Molitor
Claudia Molitor
a few
a few
a few
a few
a few


a Hohner
Claudia
Claudia
3


Claudia
This piece of music,
by John
(airbox)


Habron, was written for Claudia Molitor and her little accordion. Claudia's
accordion is a Hohner Regina; it has been in her family for
f
three generations.
5:4
5:4
4/3
(up to mf)
When asked if her accordion is
f
p
f
a 'he' or a 'she', Claudia replies, "it is a 'she'." John
f
(out)
p
and Claudia have known each
5:4
4/5:4
5:4
(up to mf)

other for a few years. Claudia Molitor is a composer. This is

f p

the first piece of music ever to be written for Claudia and her little accordion.

Many people love Claudia Molitor. John Habron loves her as well.

f mf p f mf poco f p

This piece of music, by John Habron, was written for Claudia

Molitor and her little accordion. Claudia Molitor is a composer.

3

This is the first piece of

2/3

music ever to be written for Claudia and her little accordion. Claudia Molitor is a composer.]

02/04/05

# *Untellable Wisdom*

**For at least 3 performers**

**John Habron**

*Untellable Wisdom*

## Performance Notes

There are three main elements to the piece:

1. Instrumental solos, duos and tutti
2. Solos for vocalist-instrumentalists (grooves, chants, songs and poems)
3. Solos for speaker-vocalist (pseudostic and melodies)

## 1. Instrumental solos, duos and tutti

### The instrumental ensemble

There are sixty parts in total: 13 for piano, 34 solos, 10 duos and 3 tutti. The minimum requirement for a performance of *Untellable Wisdom* is that one from each category should be performed. Except for the tutti, a part may be played more than once. NB: solo, duo and piano parts are not bound by their designations; for example, a solo part may be played as a duo if the notation is taken to suggest it. Similarly, some of the piano parts may be performable by celesta, tuned percussion, harp, guitar, chamber organ etc. In terms of the make-up of the ensemble, a *range of timbres* should be sought.

The 34 solos comprise: 10 in treble clef, 5 in bass clef and 19 without clef. The 10 duos comprise: 4 in treble clef, 2 in bass clef and 4 without clef. Any two suitable instruments can play a duo. The relevant duo page/s should be photocopied as the two performers read from the same part. All performers should have copies of the tutti pages.

Some parts take up two pages and are marked, for example, E1.1 and E1.2.

There is no upward limit to the size of ensemble. The minimum requirement is that it should comprise three performers, at least one of whom plays a polyphonic instrument which is capable of reaching those pitches of the tutti not reachable by the others (that is, all pitches in the tutti should be 'covered') and at least one of whom could take the role of vocalist-instrumentalist (see below); one of these three should take the part of the speaker-vocalist. In this case, it is desirable, in order to widen the ensemble's timbral mix, that the speaker-vocalist is also an instrumentalist.

### Notation

The instrumental material is notated in many different ways. Generally speaking, the more conventionally notated material (usually anything on a five-line stave) should be played in a more refined manner (the sound should be articulate and supple, the tone 'pure', recalling the grace and strength of the operatic orchestra) and the more unconventionally notated parts may move towards unpitched sounds, 'impure' sounds, even movement, mime and so on, although this need not be the case.

Generally speaking, empty bars should be read as bars rest; however the context or the presence, in some cases, of contradictory/ambiguous symbols may be taken to suggest resonance/sustain or something else.

**Duos and tutti**

A duo may be cued by one of its members or a conductor. In most cases it is not intended that the two performers of a duo synchronise (the notation will often render this impossible) but, within the texture as a whole, the duos will sound like concerted efforts to play together (the sound, in some cases, of (near) unison will make this clear, as will duos with bars rest which may be easier to co-ordinate than the gestures themselves).

The tutti (between one and three in number, depending on the performance) are cued by the speaker-vocalist (who has three corresponding melodies) or a conductor. The tutti may be played in any order as long as tutti 1 corresponds to melody 1 and so on. The ensemble plays through the tutti, whilst the speaker-vocalist continues to sing; there is no co-ordination between them. Bars rest/cut offs may be cued by a performer or a conductor. A tutti need not be played through without breaks; for example, it may be punctuated with other materials.

As with the duos, the ensemble here should play in concert (not necessarily synchronise); that is, attention should be paid to balance (the ensemble should not overpower the voice), intonation, the general pace of events, and the cut-offs should be obvious, even if some instruments (such as piano, plucked strings, glockenspiel, vibraphone etc.) resonate for a while through the bars rest. All the notes in the tutti should be played but they can be shared out in any way between the performers.

**2. Solos for vocalist-instrumentalists**

There is a maximum of three vocalist-instrumentalists. Each should be as capable with the voice as their instrument and any voice-type may be used. The three parts are:

- Voice/Percussion: the percussion should be 'untuned' (smaller Western orchestral instruments, small drum kit, tabla, junk percussion etc.)

- Voice/Bowed string instrument: any bowed string instrument, including bowed electric guitar. This soloist does not have to keep strictly to bowing; plucking, percussion on the body of the instrument etc. are to be welcomed when the notation, or the improvisatory context, suggests. However, the bow should be seen as the 'default' manner of performance.

- Voice/Plucked string instrument: guitars, harp, any bowed string instrument used without the bow etc. (not piano interior).

There are four types of performance material: groove, chant, song and poem. The minimum requirement for a performance of *Untellable Wisdom* is that a song or a poem is performed during the piece.

The **grooves** should be built out of the phonemes which are not contained within a boundary. The groove should be a percussive, ostinato-like pattern (using primarily indefinite pitches) and is to be considered as the 'ground' of these sections; any tempo or sense of metre (if any) may be chosen. The groove patterns may be built up gradually or started abruptly, maintained strictly or continuously subjected to small variations etc. The 'stock phonemes' may be repeated and/or combined in any way.

The 'escape arrows' allow for momentary excursions from the groove into freer 'out of time' improvisation, with more irregular rhythms etc. The performer must return, even if only for a short time, to the groove (or a variant of it) before the next escape; this way, the sounding result will be an ebb and flow between pulsed and non-pulsed material.

Three modification symbols are used: • , ▬ and ▬ . These are placed above and below certain phonemes and should be read as modifying the phoneme and its accompanying instrumental sound; the modification could be one of dynamic, timbre, articulation etc.

The **chants** should be repetitive and use few pitches (however, a two-note chant could still include slides and plenty of microtonal inflections); generally, a sustained sound should be adopted. The performers may imagine their chants as ancient performance practices: essential, autochthonous.

The hieroglyphs that accompany each chant may be read as suggestions for ornamentation, articulation, changes to timbre/mouth shape, pitch inflections etc.

The **songs** should tap into the vocalists' fundamental facility for and knowledge of melody: folk tunes, hymn tunes, pop tunes and so on (the performers may consider themselves as resources: 'full of melodies', so to speak). The manner of singing should be unselfconscious and should tend towards an untrained, relaxed way of singing. Each song should be particularised, in the performer's own 'style'. The words may be combined in any order and repeated *ad libitum*. Not all the words have to be sung.

The melodic suggestions are starting points for improvisation (or points to return to when inspiration fails); they may, however, be ignored. The performers should pitch their melodies in a range which projects well and/or which tallies with the prevailing tonality (if there is one).

The **poems** should be delivered with style, an obvious command of the 'language' and some dramatisation (as if reading on radio, reading to a lecture, etc). The accent used should not differ significantly from the performer's own. The prosody and intonation will very much depend on how the performer reacts to the associations created by the words (some words may feel like adjectives, nouns, verbs, conjunctions etc. – some combinations may suggest proper names, exclamations, direct speech, jokes, rhetorical questions, statements, commands, lists, numerals etc.). Thus, the performers may want to imagine some sort of content, or at least intentionality, for the poem. Unorthodox punctuation may be interpreted instrumentally.

## General approach

It is essential for all these materials that each soloist considers his/her voice and (non-vocal) instrument *as one*; wherever possible, the impulse to sound a notation should be satisfied simultaneously by the voice and the instrument. Furthermore, and most importantly, the two sound sources should be akin in some way. This could mean vocalising/playing homophonically, in unison (lots of singing/playing in unison is to be welcomed), copying or supporting the voice rhythmically with 'untuned' sounds etc. Therefore, the modification symbols for the grooves and the hieroglyphs for the chants should, for the sake of efficiency, be read as modifying the 'super-instrument', not just one of the two.

NB: a preparation of this piece may include moments in which two or three vocalist-instrumentalists vocalise the same score or adapt performances of different scores to each other. Furthermore, the vocalist-instrumentalists do not need to restrict themselves to this role; they may also play solos, duos and piano parts, as desired.

## 3. Solo for speaker-vocalist

The speaker-vocalist has a pseudostic (pseudo-mesostic), fifteen pages in length. The pseudostic may be performed as a separate piece, in which case all pages should be performed. In *Untellable Wisdom*, at least one page must be performed. The performer may perform the pages in any order and may insert pauses between any of the verses and any of the pages; however, no fewer than three verses should be read in any one stint. The text should be delivered without dramatisation, in a well projected but normal reading voice; the speaker should sound very much 'like himself' or 'herself'. In general, the verses should not be read as if they were long sentences (the punctuation will suggest pauses, alterations to tone etc.) although, in some cases, longer phrases may be inferred from the lack of punctuation. Otherwise, the intonation and prosody are left to the performer. NB: the letters in bold are not to be emphasised in any way; they are the 'performer's reward' (Erik Satie).

Whenever a melody is sung, it should follow very soon after a section of pseudostic. These melodies must be sung at the written pitch for women/male altos, down the octave for baritones etc. In a performance which includes only one melody, it does not matter which, as long as it is accompanied with the corresponding tutti.

The singing should be clear, solemn and respectful (but not pompous or hieratic), as if singing a sacred text to a small congregation (if necessary, the performer may imagine him/herself as a cantor but not a priest). It should be expressive but rarely, if ever, passionate; dynamics *p – f*. The rhythm may be read from the relative placing of the note-heads or the text (or a mixture). The bars rest with pauses should last between 5"-15". Melodies 1 and 2 should last between 1'-2', melody 3 between 3'-4'.

The melody itself may act as a cue to the instrumental ensemble to begin the corresponding tutti; alternatively, this may be cued by a conductor. The performer continues singing the melody as the tutti is performed (the melody may continue beyond the end of the tutti).

The speaker-vocalist need not be confined to this role but could also be a vocalist-instrumentalist and/or perform solos, duos and piano parts, as desired.

**Notes for all musicians**

**Preparation**

Judging from experience, a successful performance of *Untellable Wisdom* will most likely result from careful preparation, which is not to say that the piece should sound neat and tidy but that the performers will have thought out, and tried out, different combinations of materials and agreed some ground rules (other than those given here), or some sort of continuity plan, for the ordering and layering of events. Notwithstanding this, there may be those whose strengths lay in not preparing and a performance with such performers should accommodate them. The onus is on the director or facilitator to think through what this piece has to offer and present the performers with clear instructions, *which draw the best out of each performer.*

As with other more open scores of this type, the improvisatory context is paramount and it is expected that performers are constantly aware of possible convergence and interaction with other performers. Indeed, certain textures or rhetorics, such as the pulsed grooves, could at certain moments pervade the whole ensemble.

If any electronic instruments are used, the amplification should be balanced with the rest of the ensemble.

**The end**

The piece ends when all performers have completed their material.

**Duration**

Variable; probably 10'-120'

**Sources**

The instrumental music is derived from fifteen operas written between 1830 and 1890 (only the first page of each opera was transformed; in most cases from a piano reduction): *La Sonnambula* (Bellini), *Les Huguenots* (Meyerbeer), *Ruslan and Lyudmila* (Glinka), *Tannhäuser* (Wagner), *Don Pasquale* (Donizetti), *La Damnation de Faust* (Berlioz), *Don Carlos* (Verdi), *Boris Godunov* (Mussorgsky), *Prince Igor* (Borodin), *Carmen* (Bizet), *Samson et Delila* (Saint-Saëns), *Eugene Onégin* (Tchaikovsky), *May Night* (Rimsky-Korsakov), *Lakmé* (Delibes) and *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Mascagni).

The phonemes and words of the vocalist-instrumentalist parts are derived from Walt Whitman's *Starting from Paumanok* (*The Complete Poems* Penguin, London 2004).

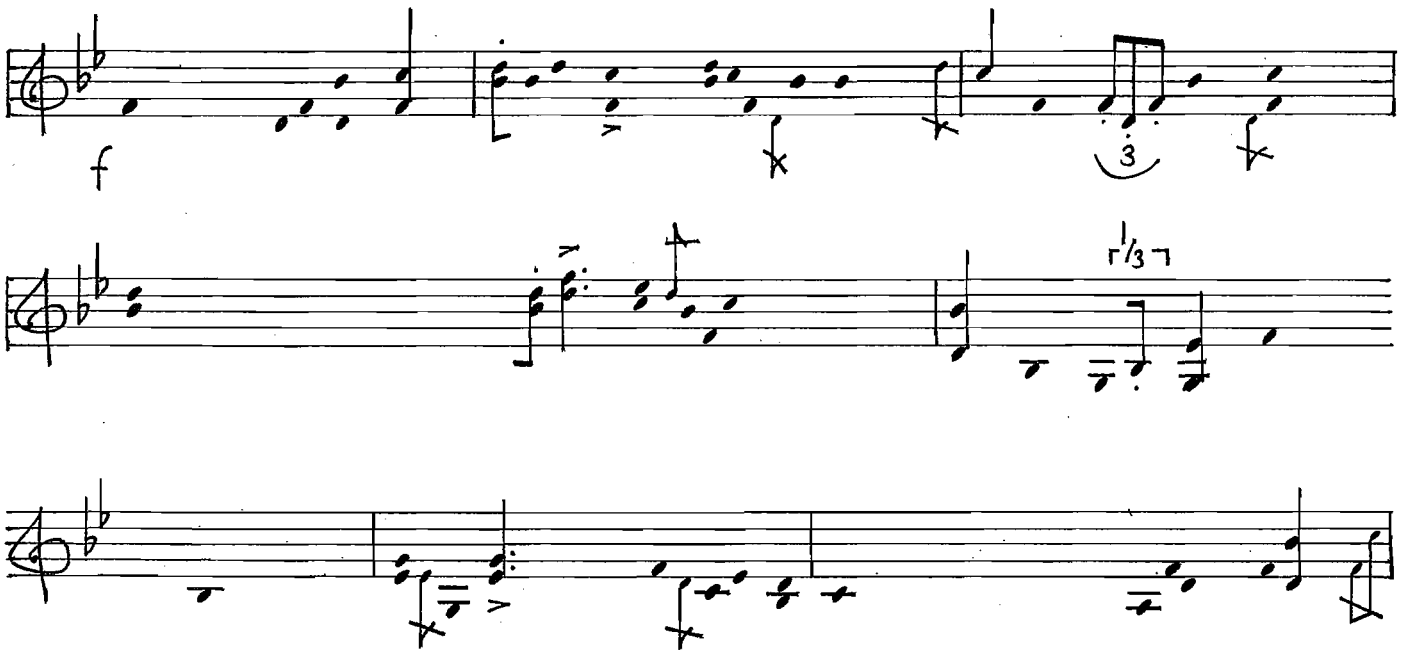
There were four source texts for the pseudostic. Fifteen quotes were chosen from Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* eds Anscombe, G.E.M., Rhees, R. and von Wright, G.H. (Blackwell, Oxford 1999) and fifteen from Erik Satie's 'Private Writings' in Ornella Volta's edition *A Mammal's Notebook* (Atlas Press, London 1996). Walt Whitman's poem *Of the Terrible Doubt of Appearances* (ibid.) was divided into fifteen lines, and fifteen sentences were derived aleatorically from *The Times* newspaper of 17 March 2006. The pseudostic was then created by submitting these sixty sources to aleatoric procedures.

The speaker-vocalist's melody is derived from *The White Horse Song*, a Havasupai narrative medicine song, which can be found on p.186 in *Writing American Indian Music – Historic Transcriptions, Notations, and Arrangements* ed. Levine, V.L. (A-R. Editions Inc., Wisconsin 2002). The text is made up of eight quotes, in the original German, from Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Culture and Value* ed. von Wright, G.H. (University of Chicago Press 1984).

**For Michael Finnissy, on his birthday (17 March 2006)**

SOLO

Brillante



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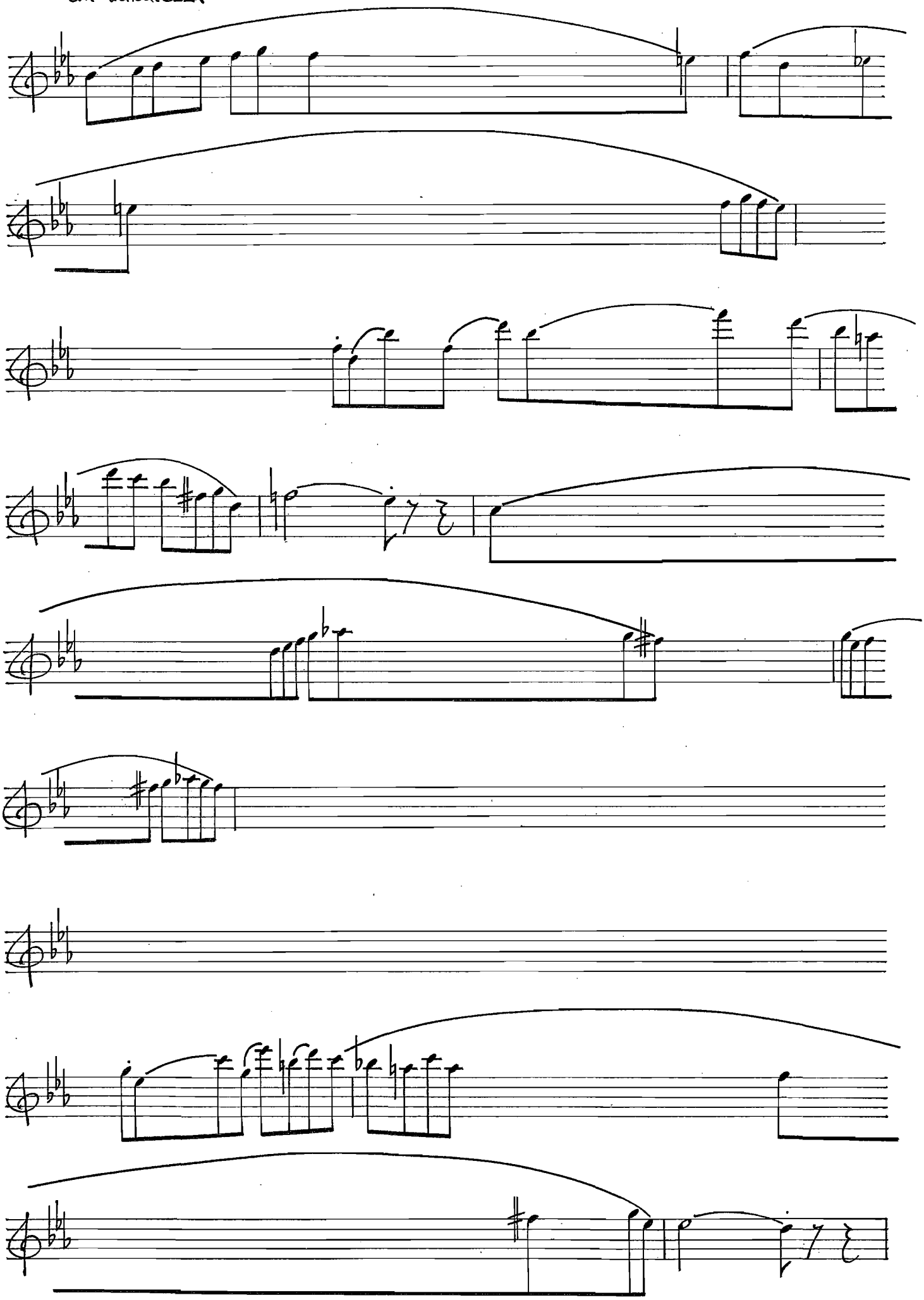

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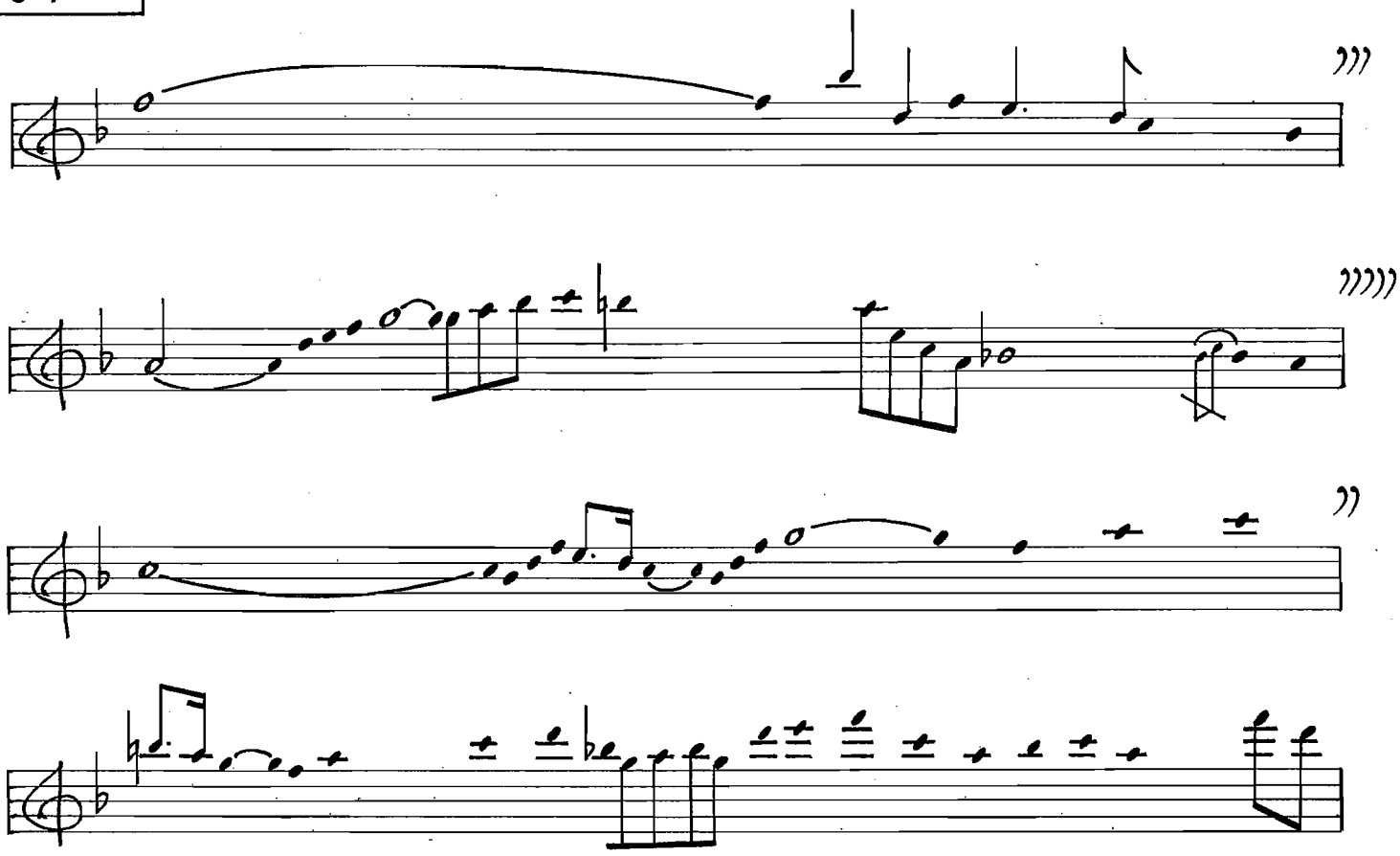

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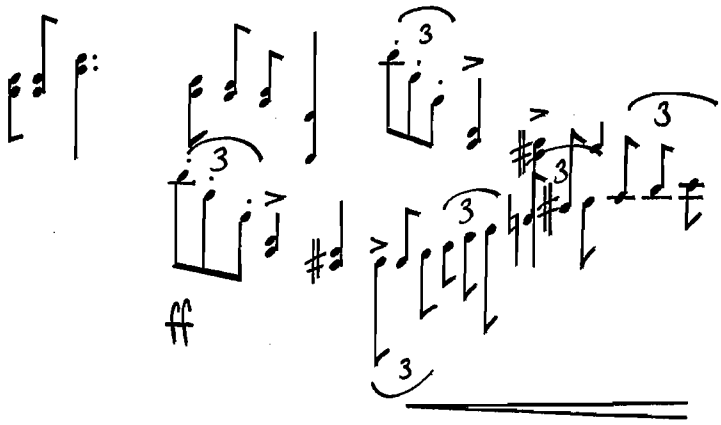


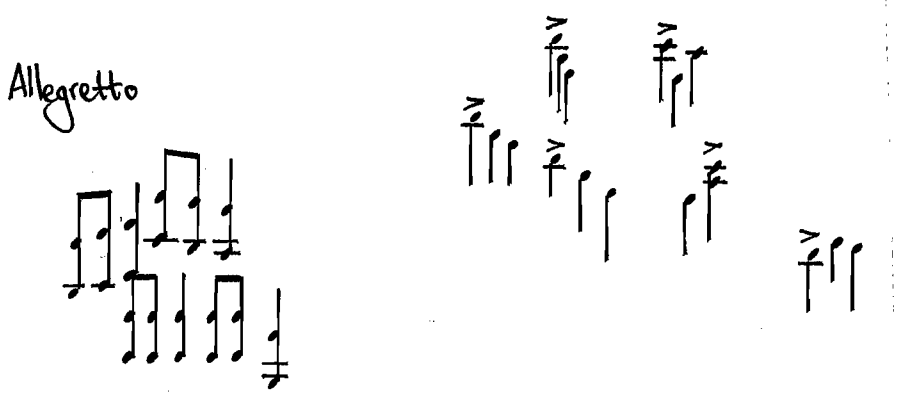

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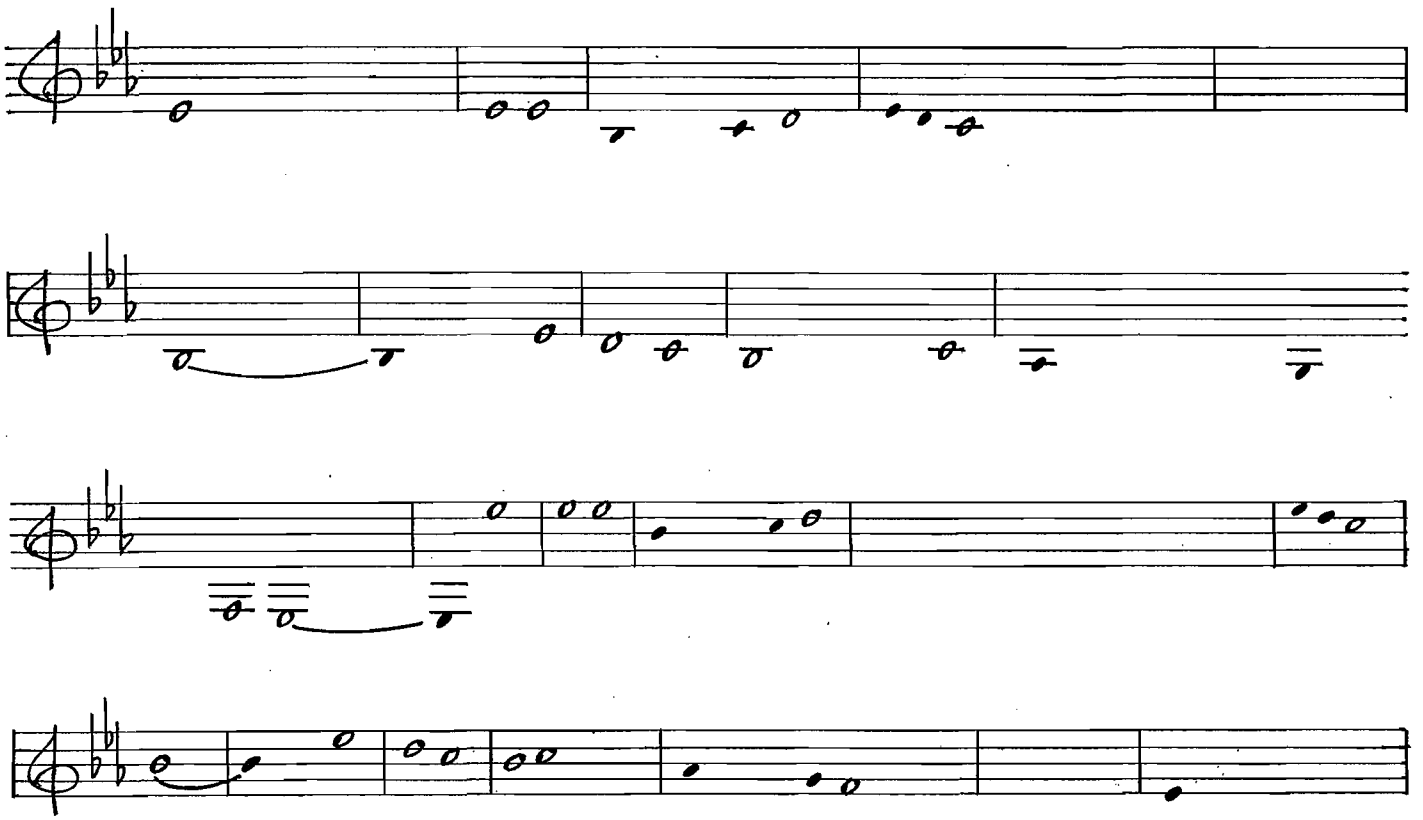

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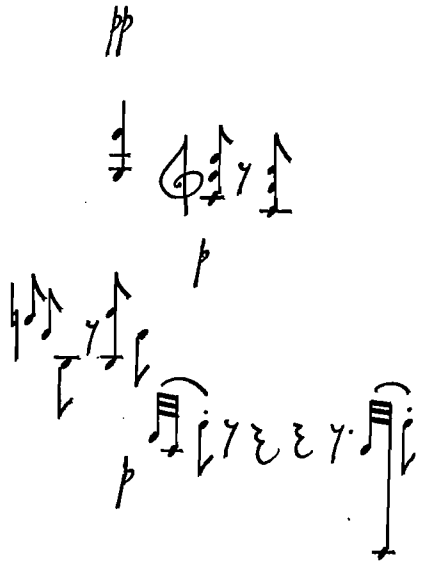
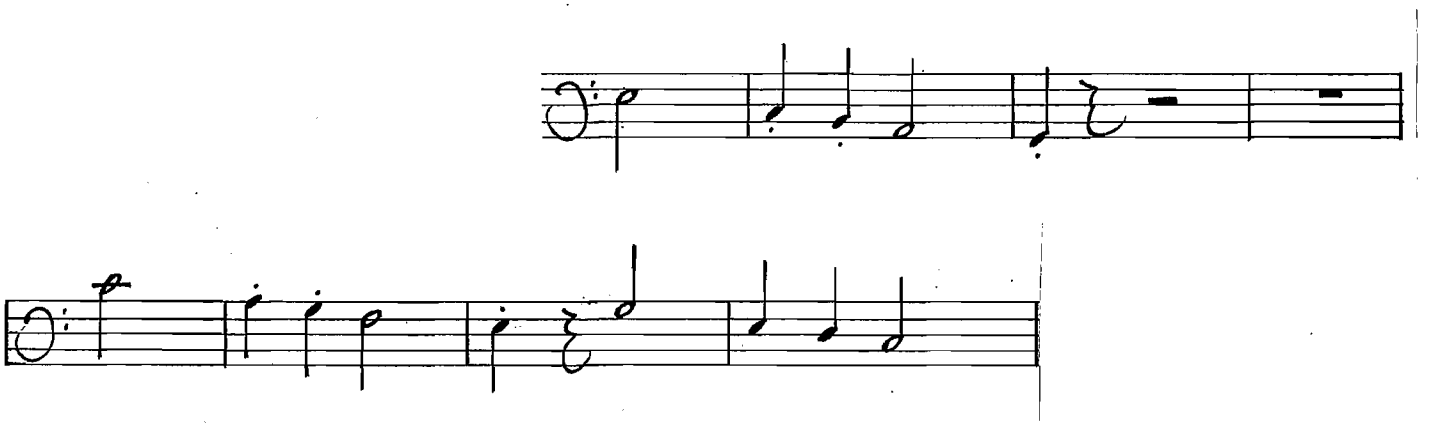
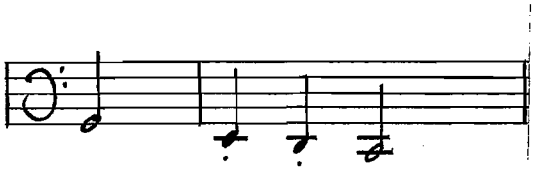


Poco andante





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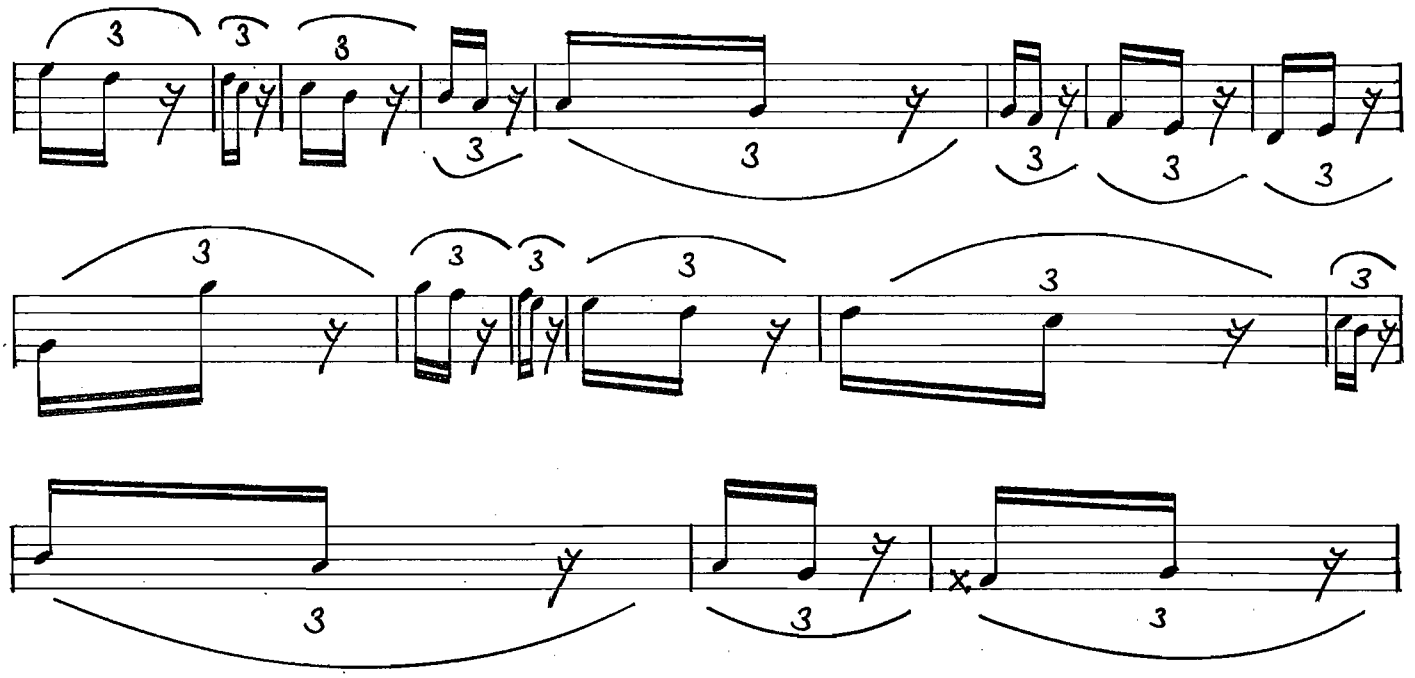

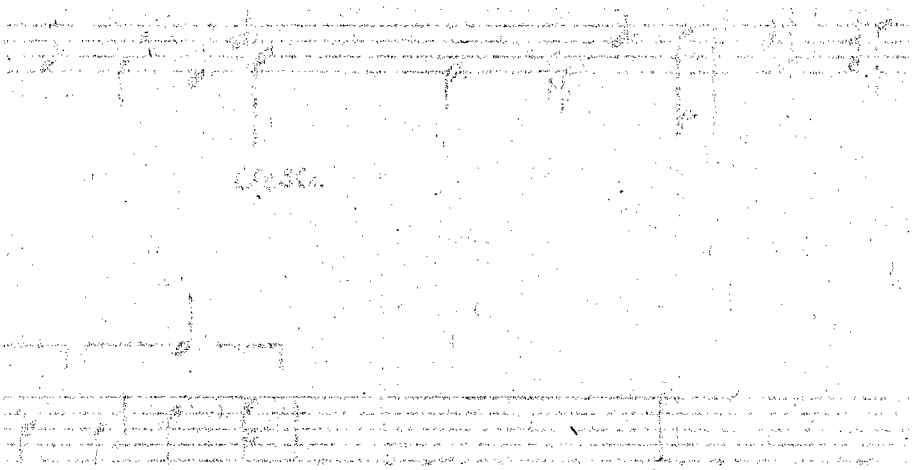

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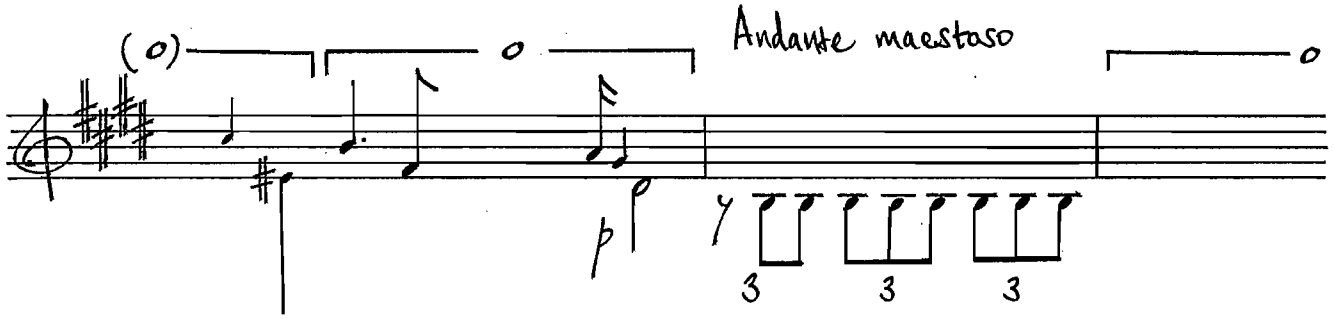


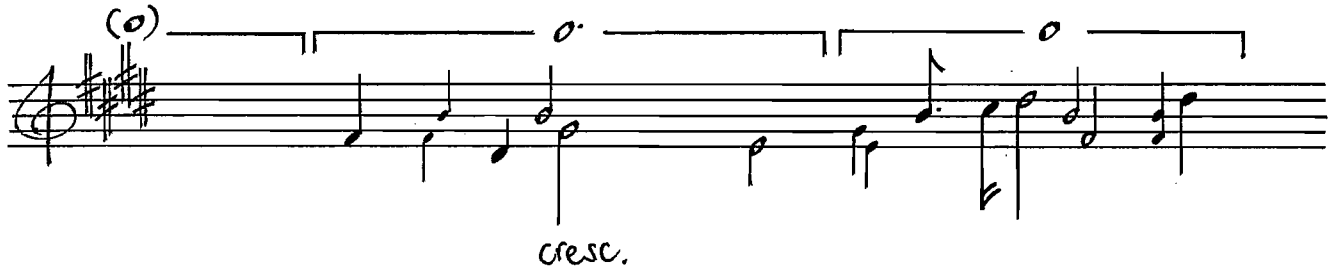


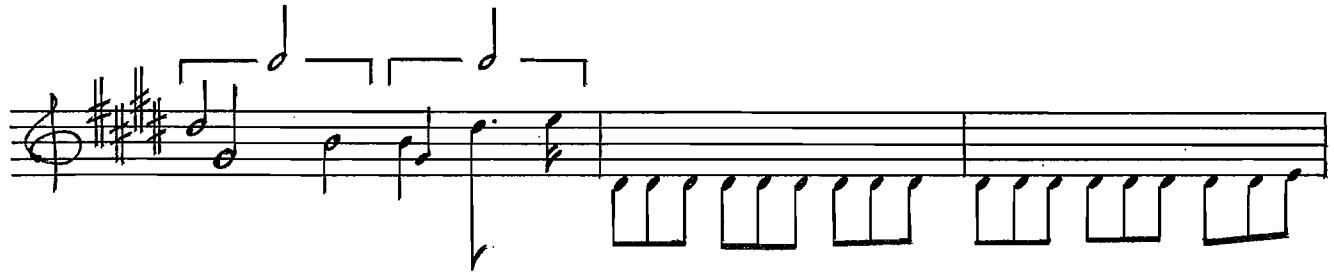

SOLO

Sirens.

of earth
train,
of men
weary of
life, With
a valley
gratitude
him,
and
, and
say,
to
for the
repent.
, awaits
them;
He tells
Pope,
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by all,
vain to
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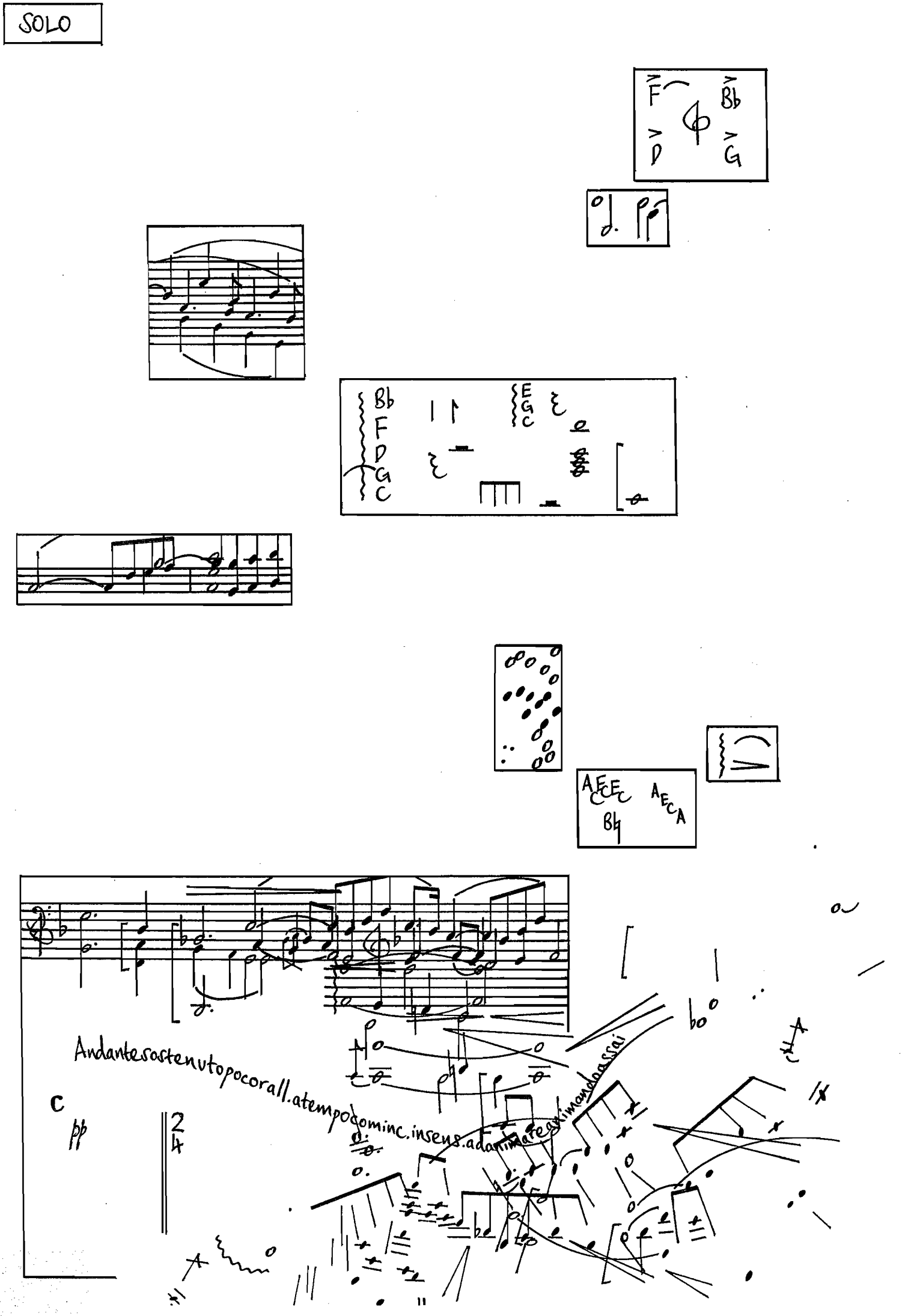
SOLO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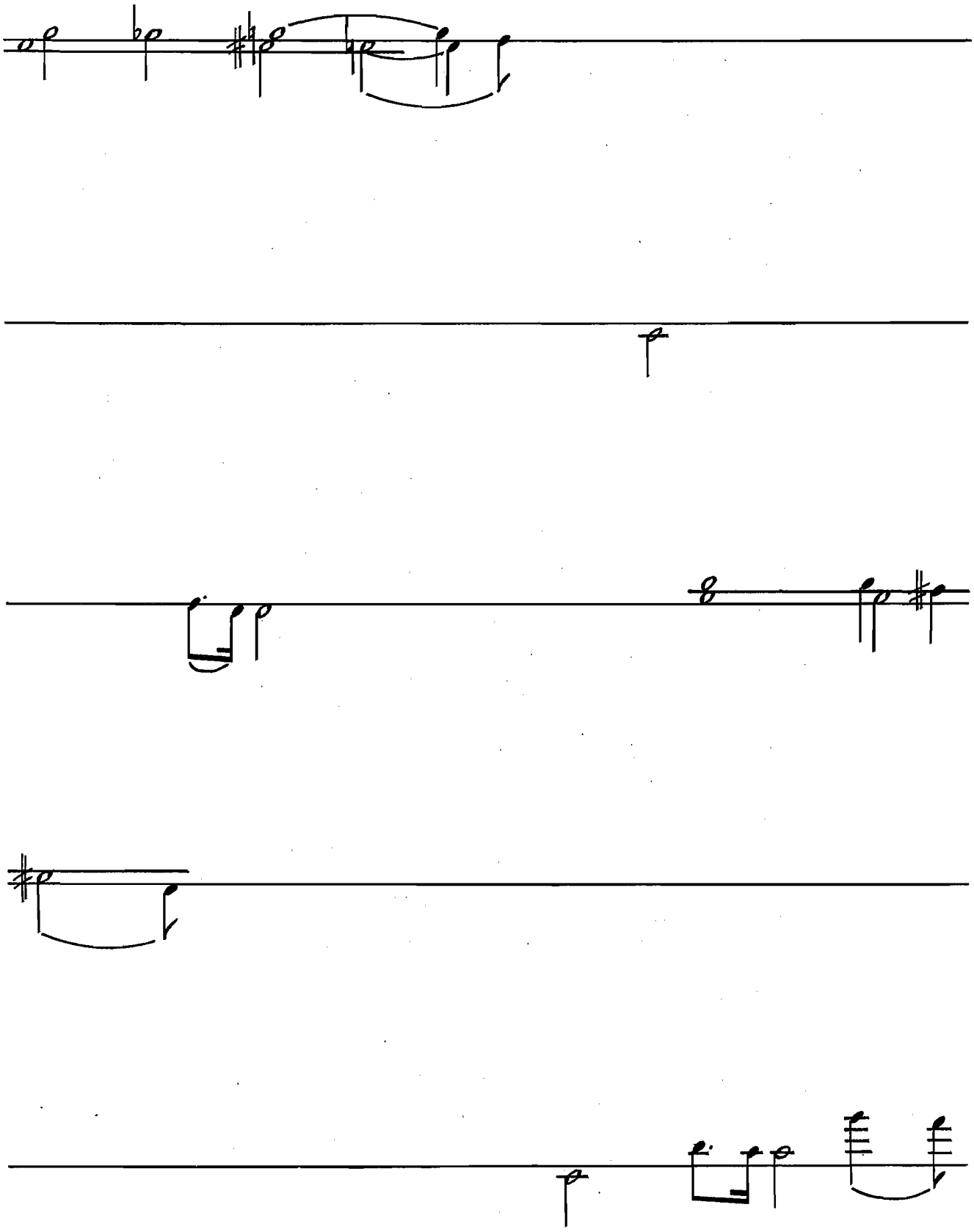

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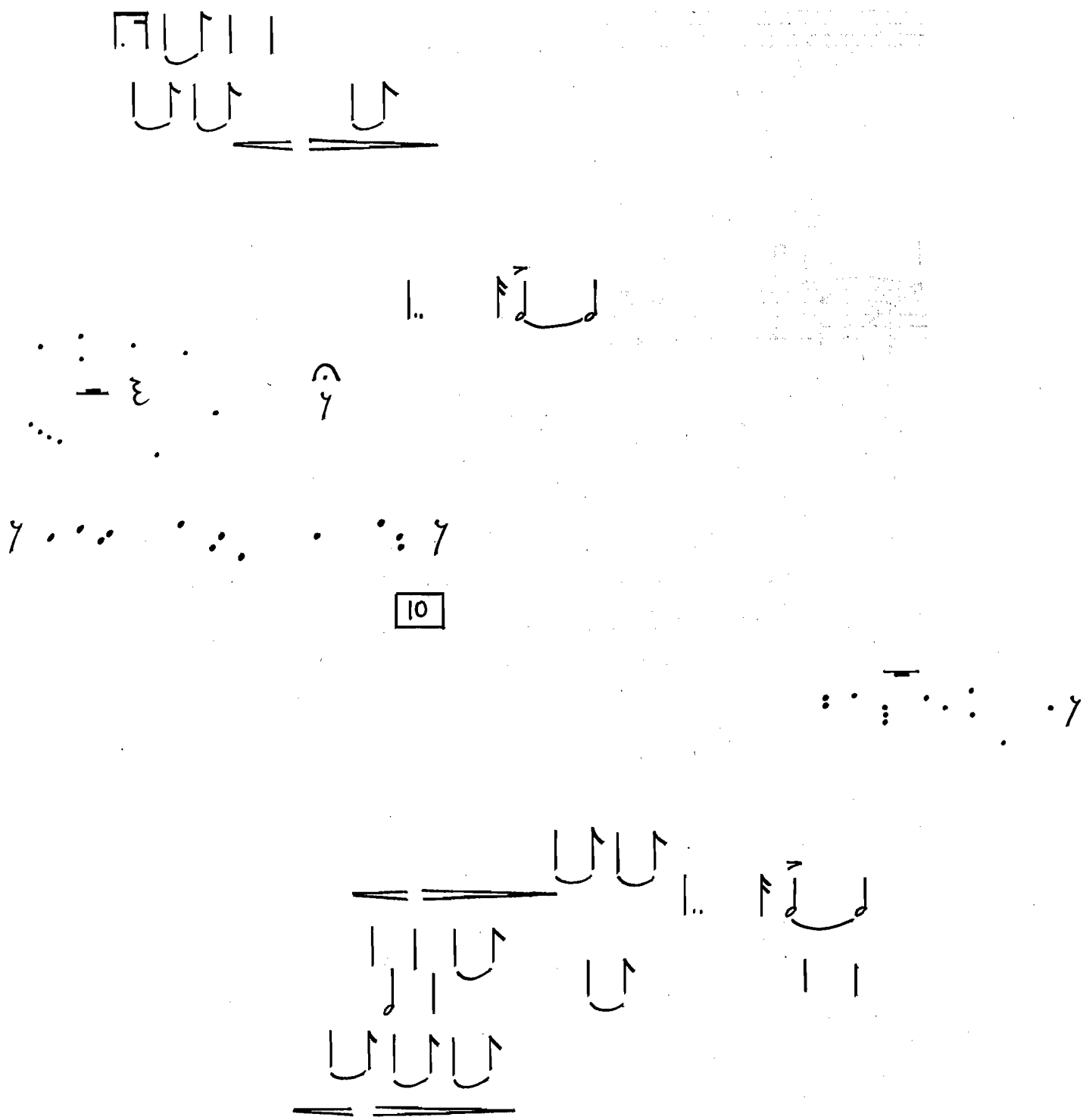
Molto andante



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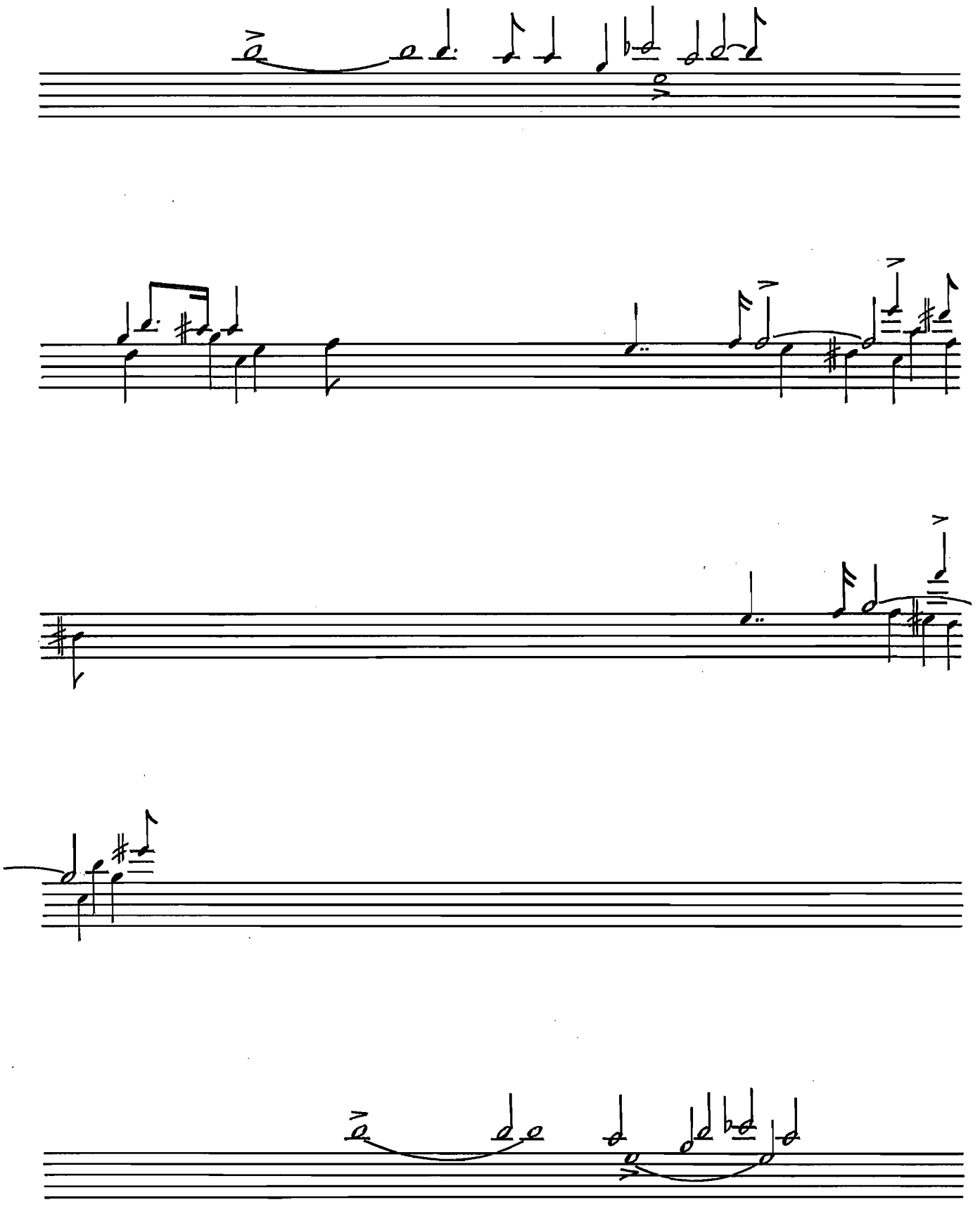

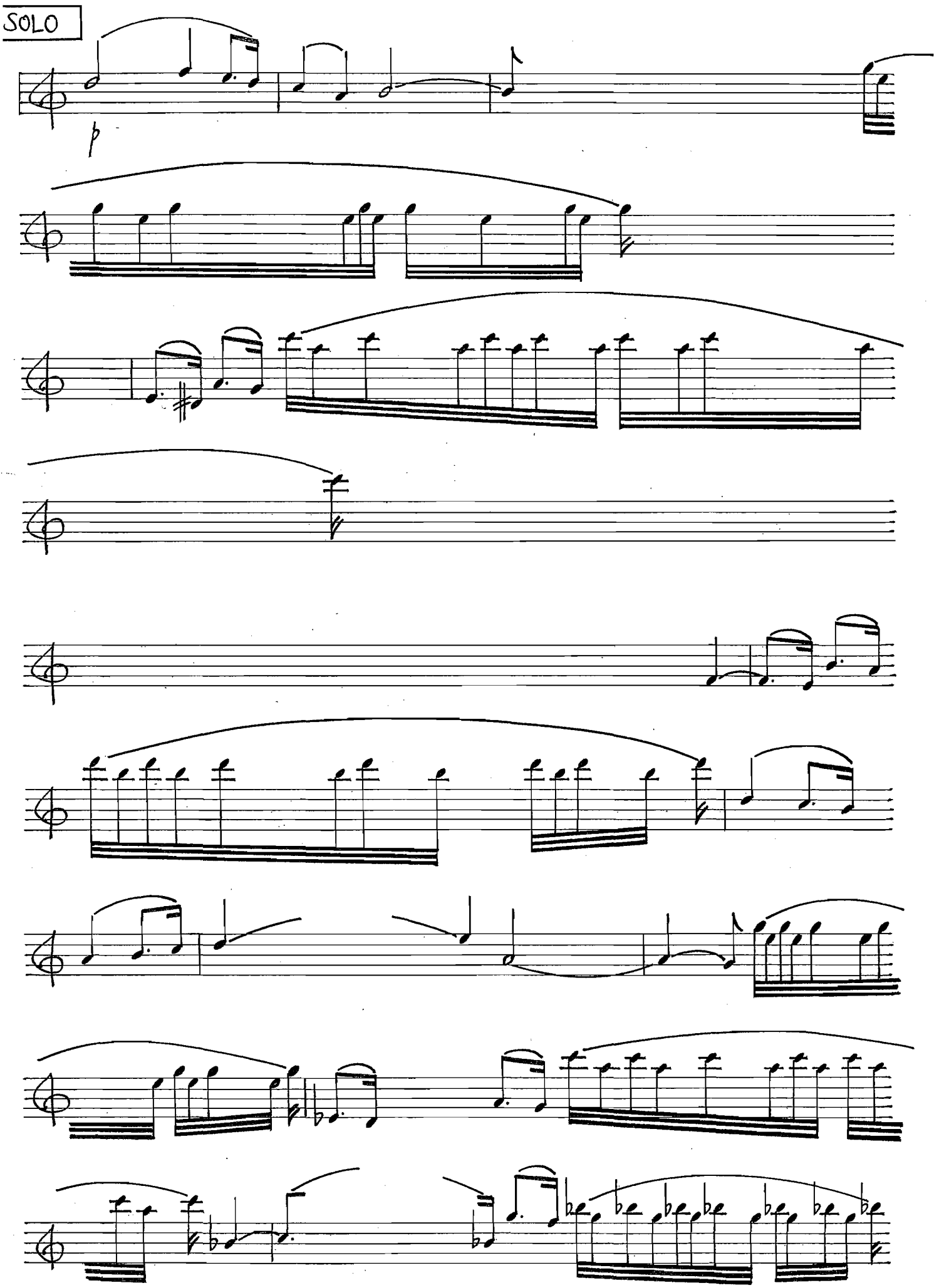
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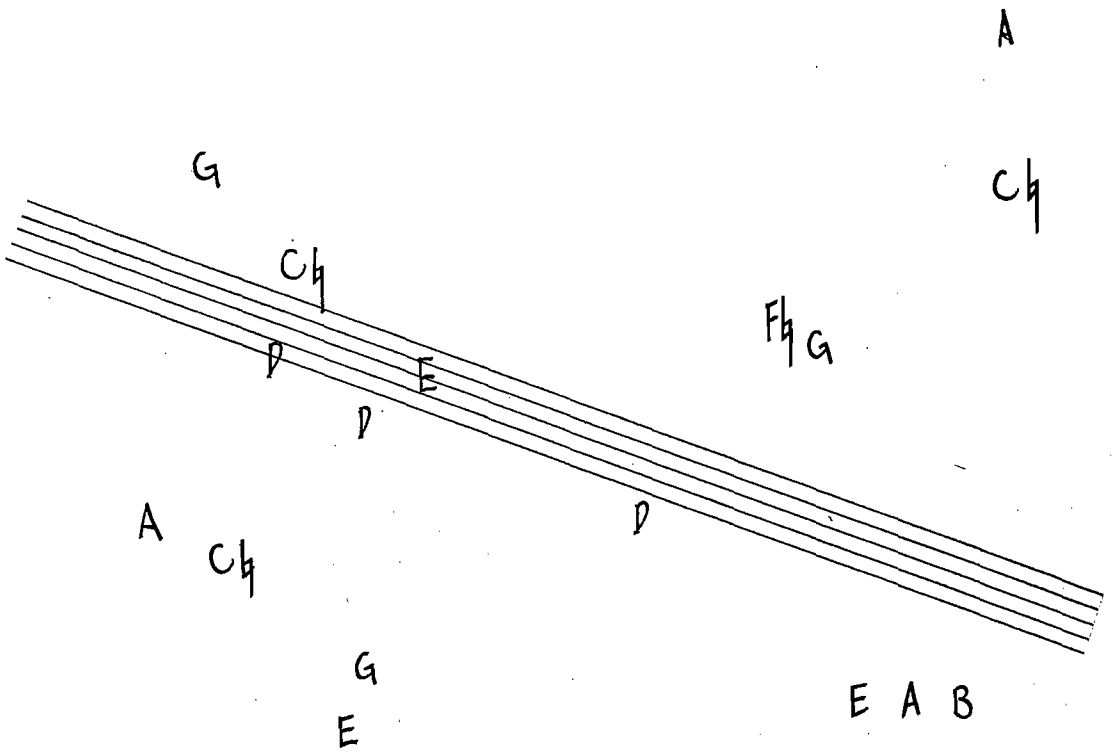


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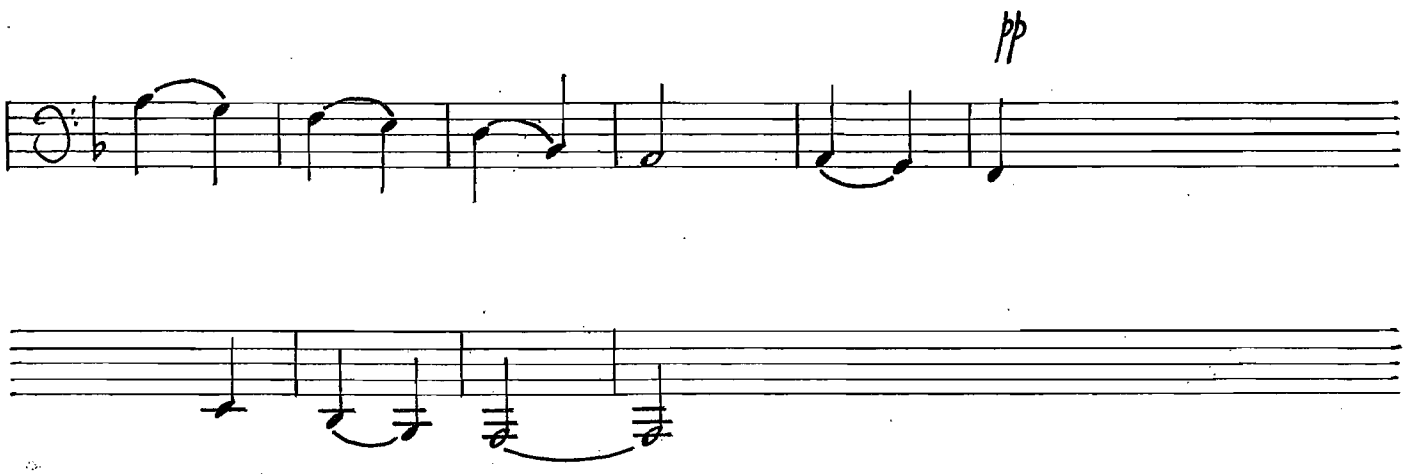

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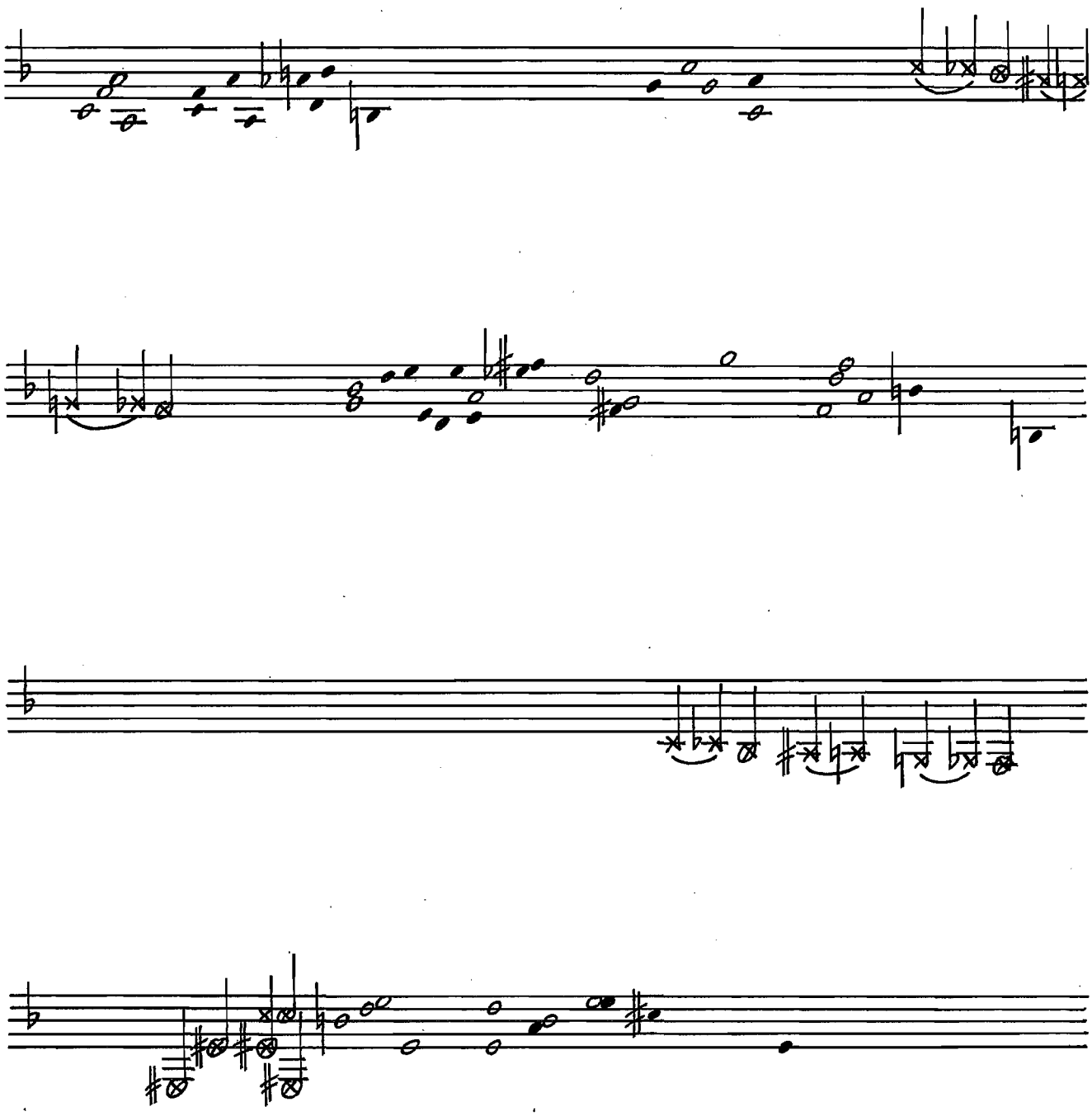

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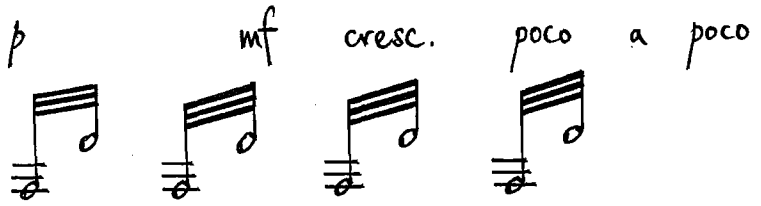


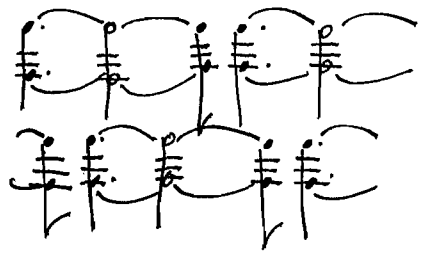

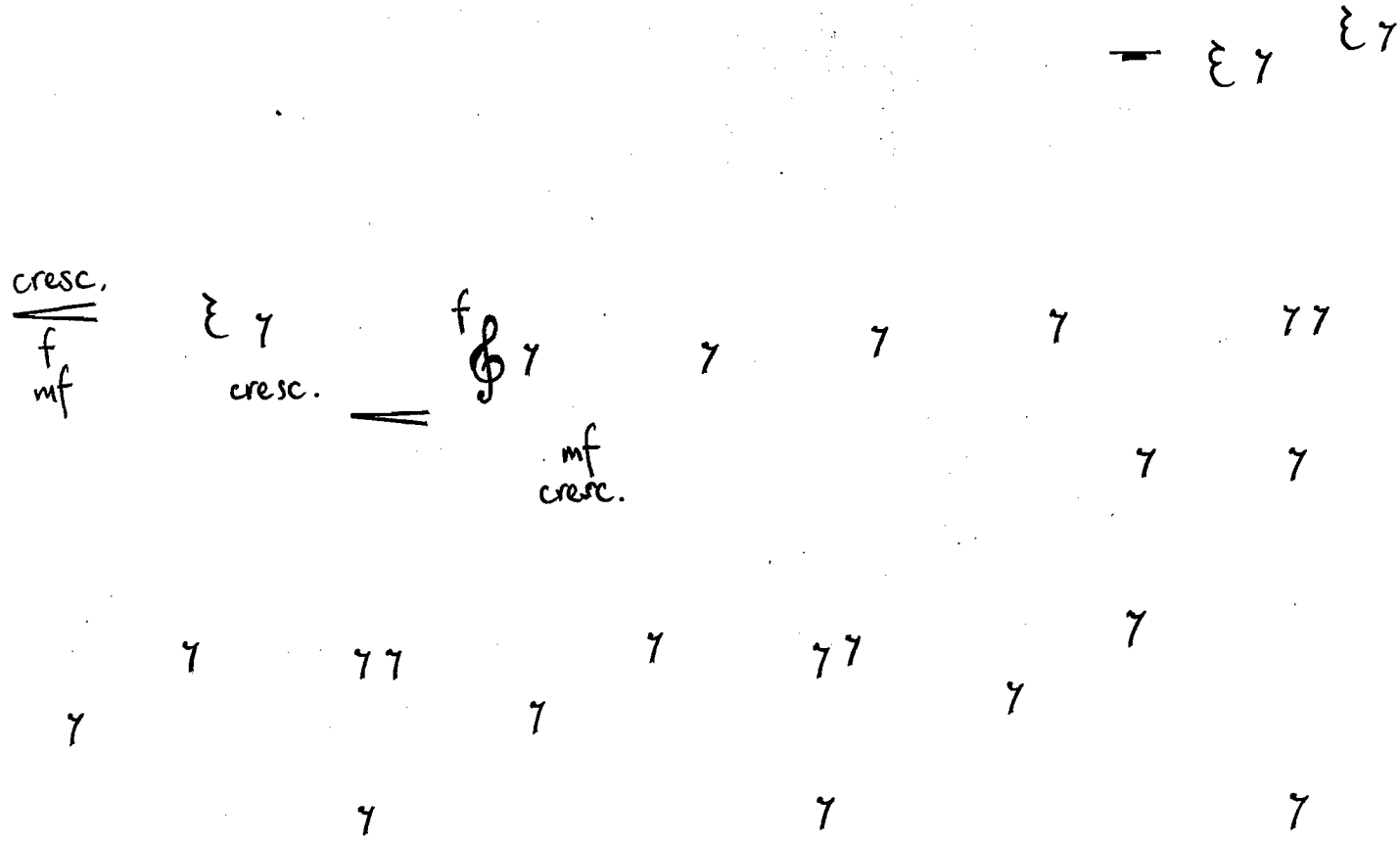

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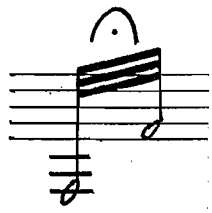

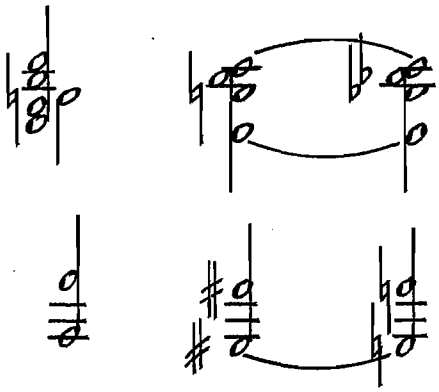

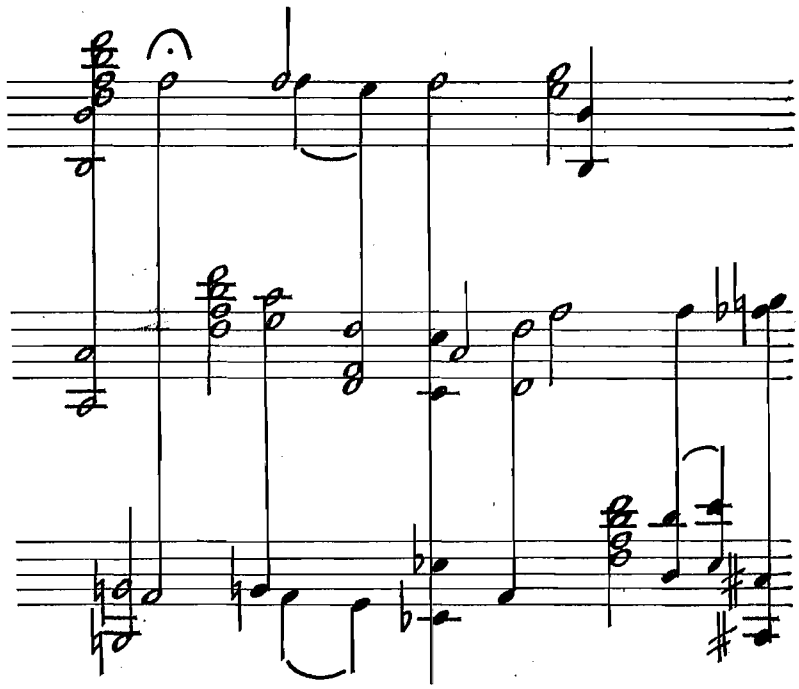

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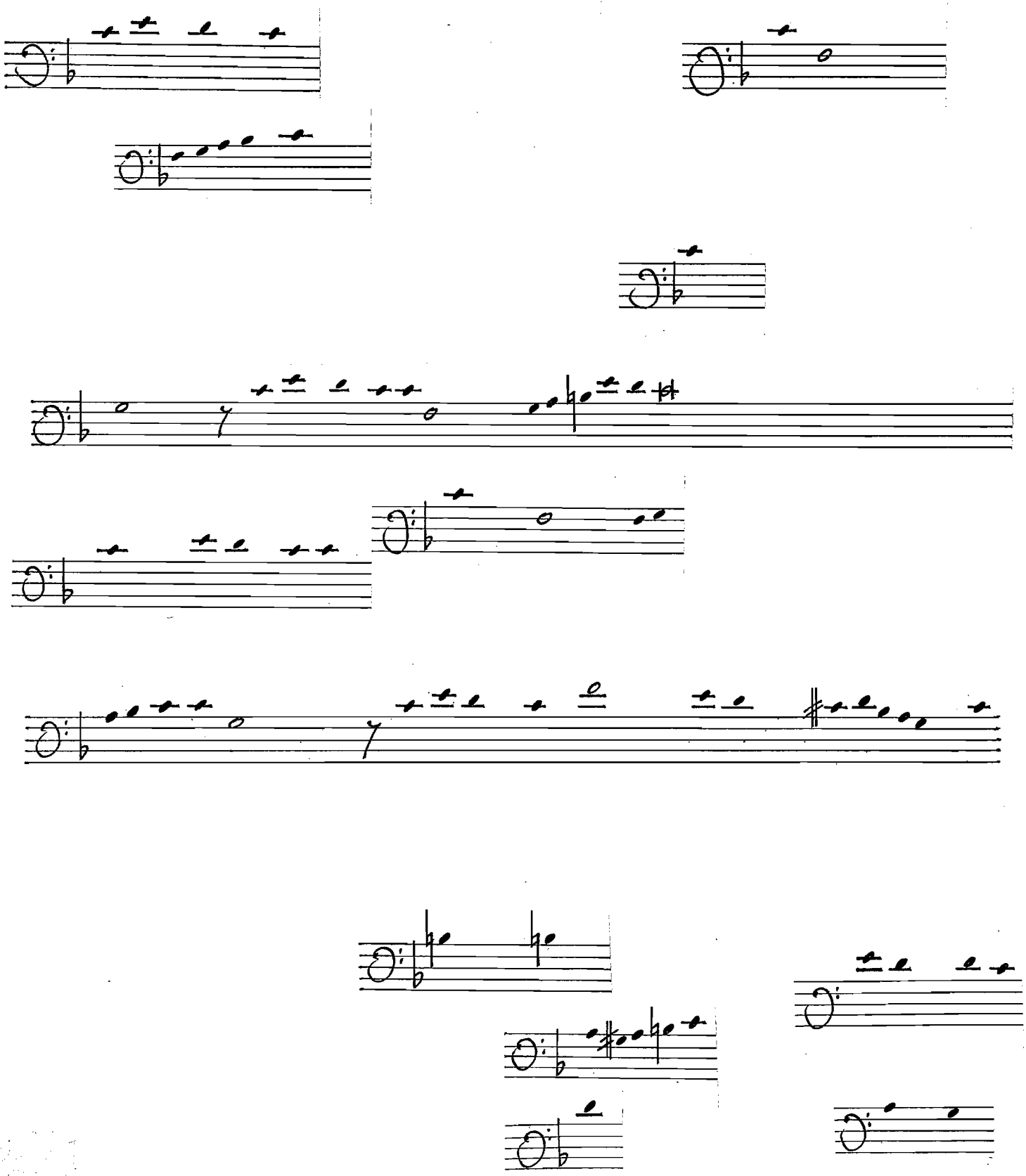


SOLO

Andante

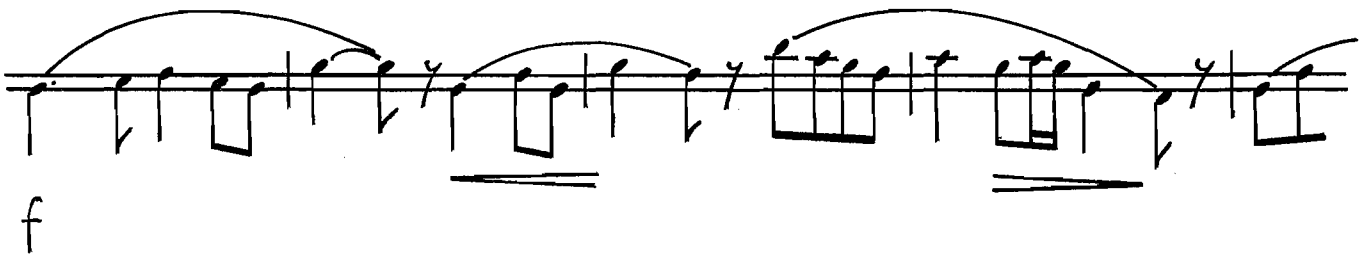
dolce

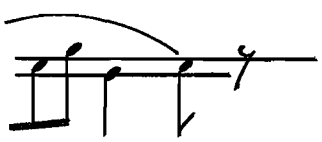
*p*

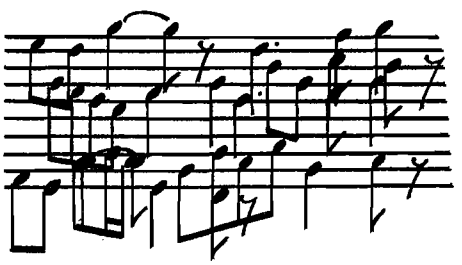
*p*

SOLO

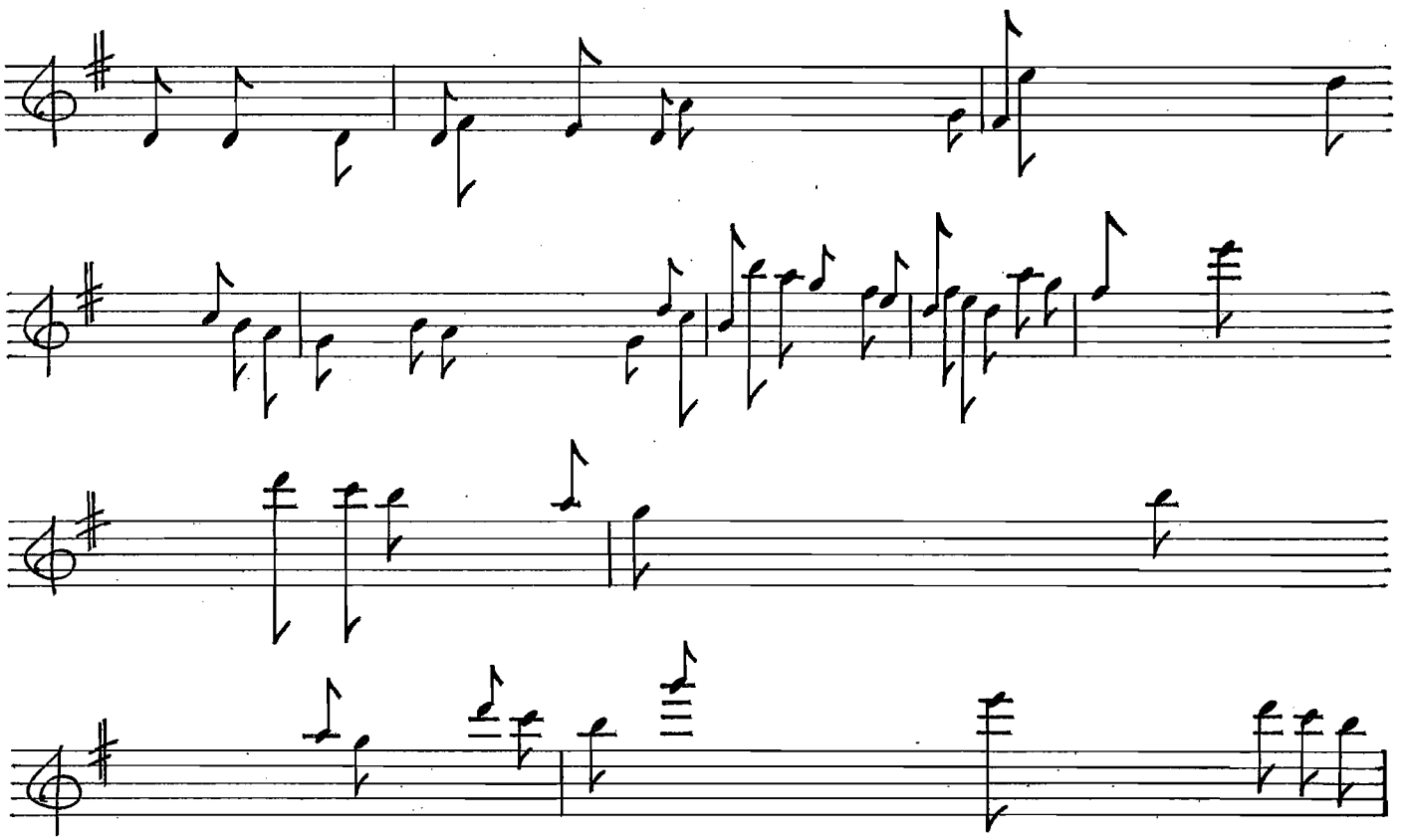
Andante





SOLO



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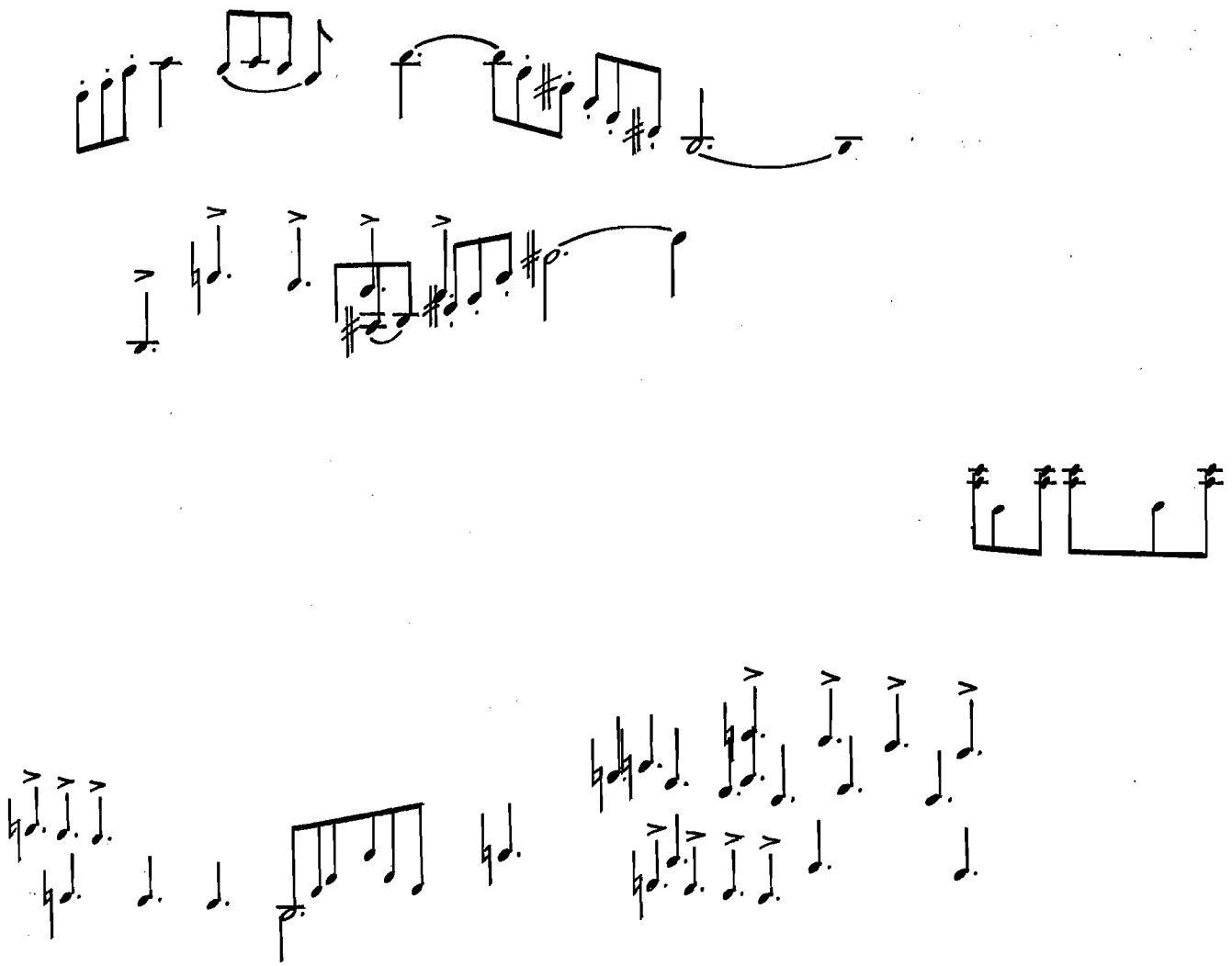
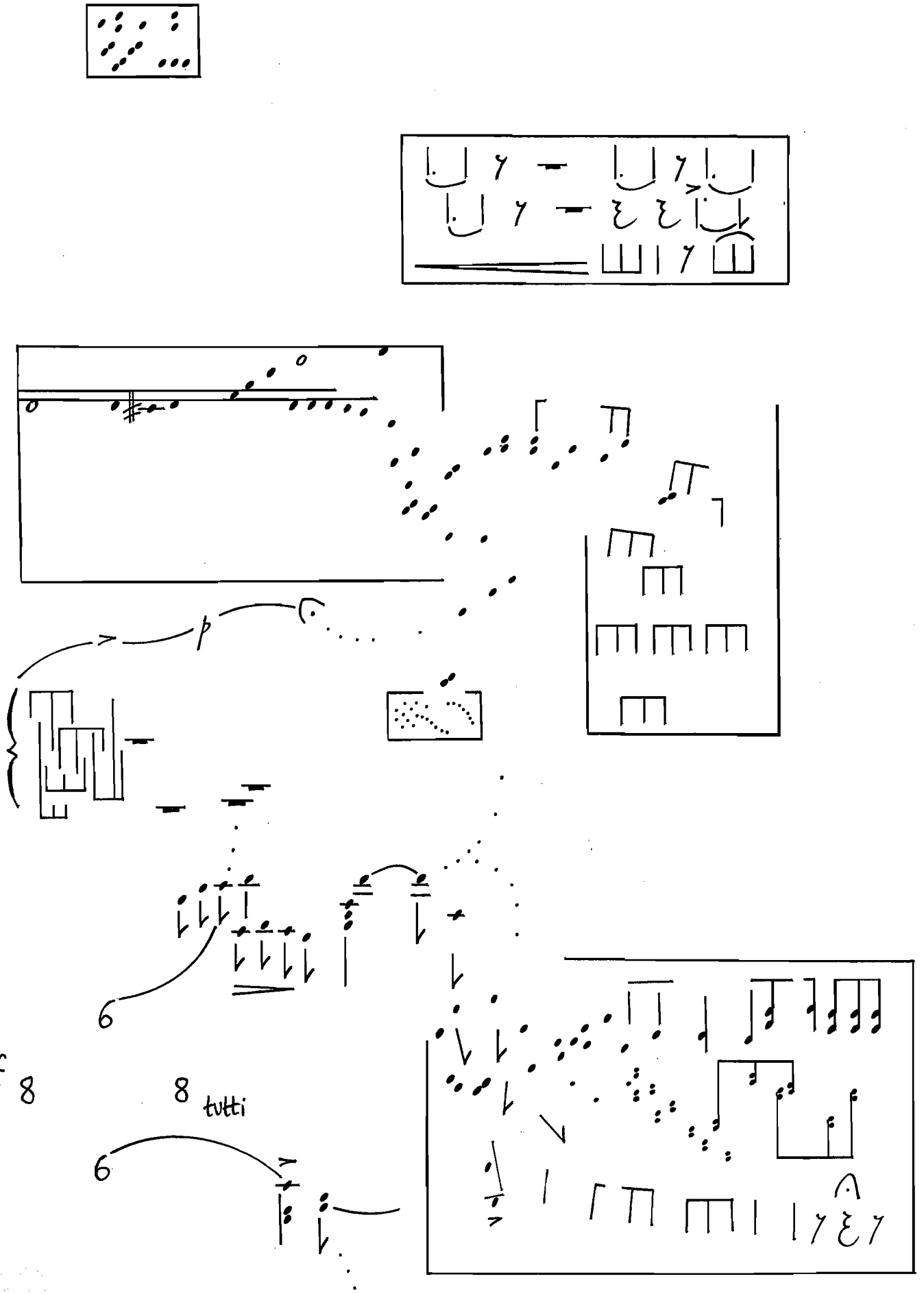
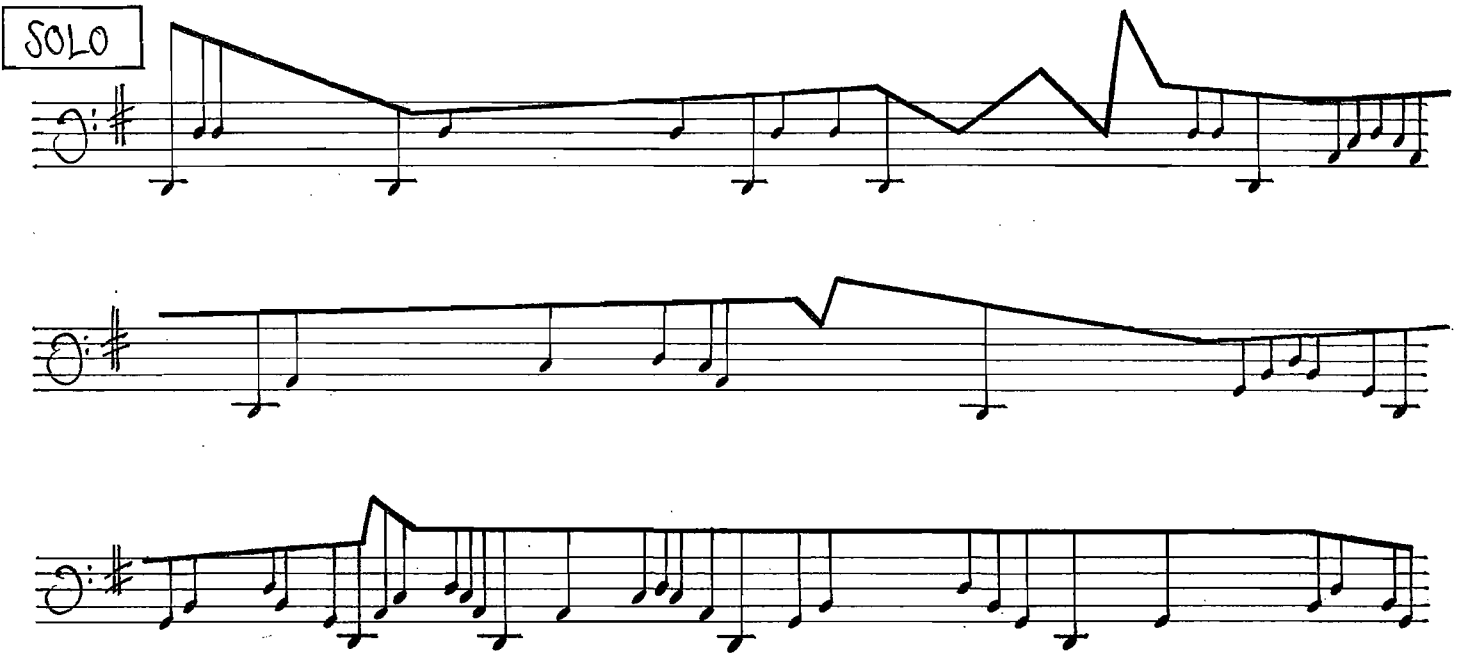


SOLO

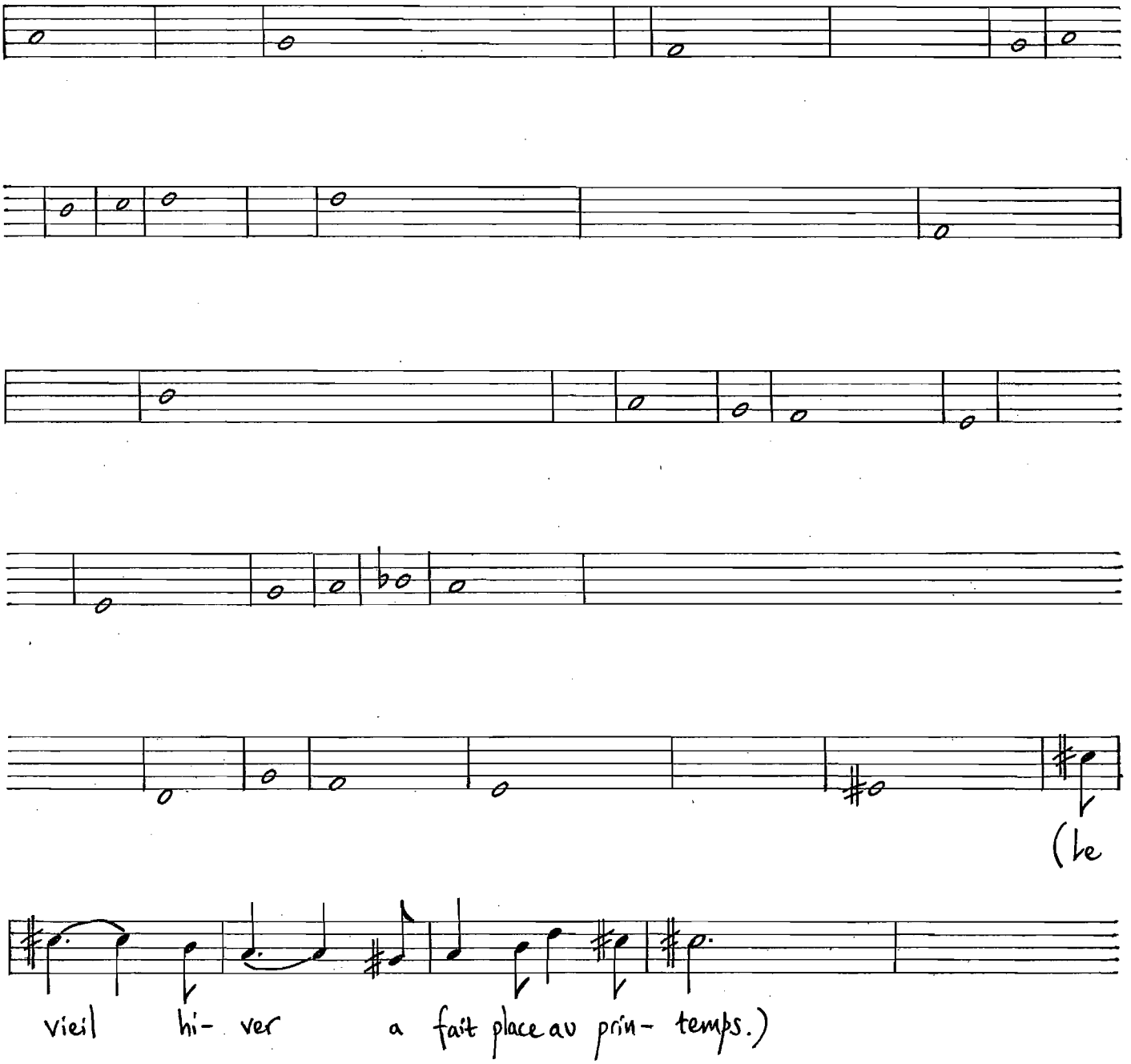
The stage represents the outskirts of a Swiss village: in the foreground, on the one side, an inn; on the other side, a portion of a mill, the wings of which stretch toward the background. The prospect is closed by mountains.

SOLO




SOLO

SOLO



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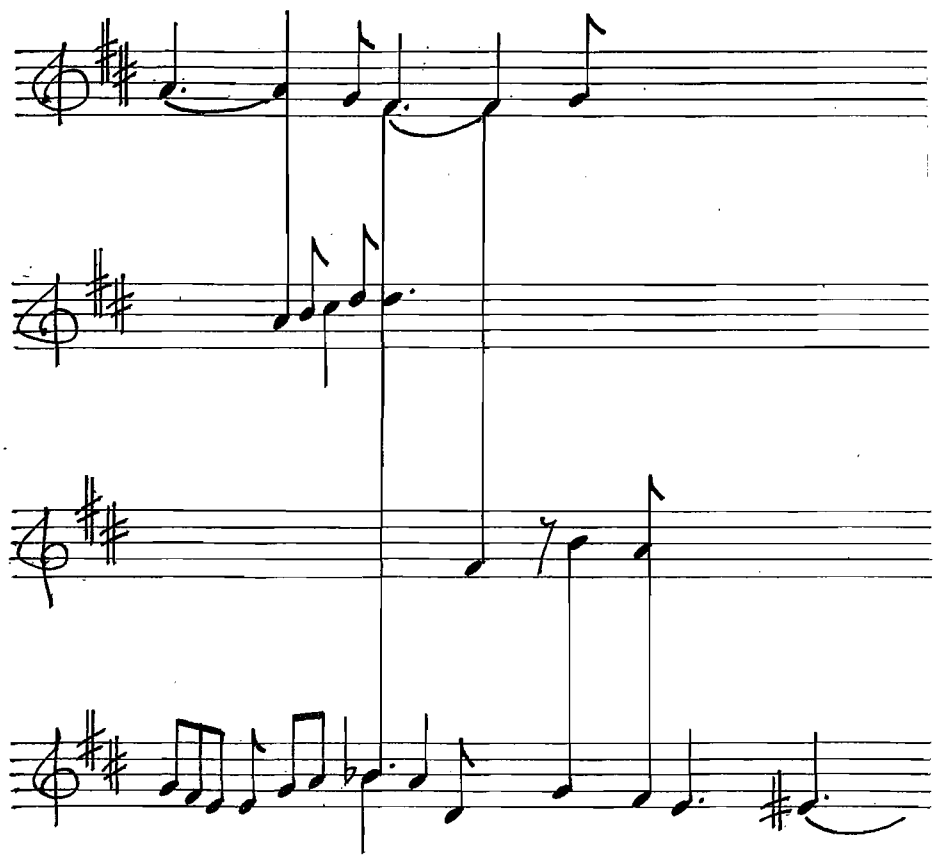

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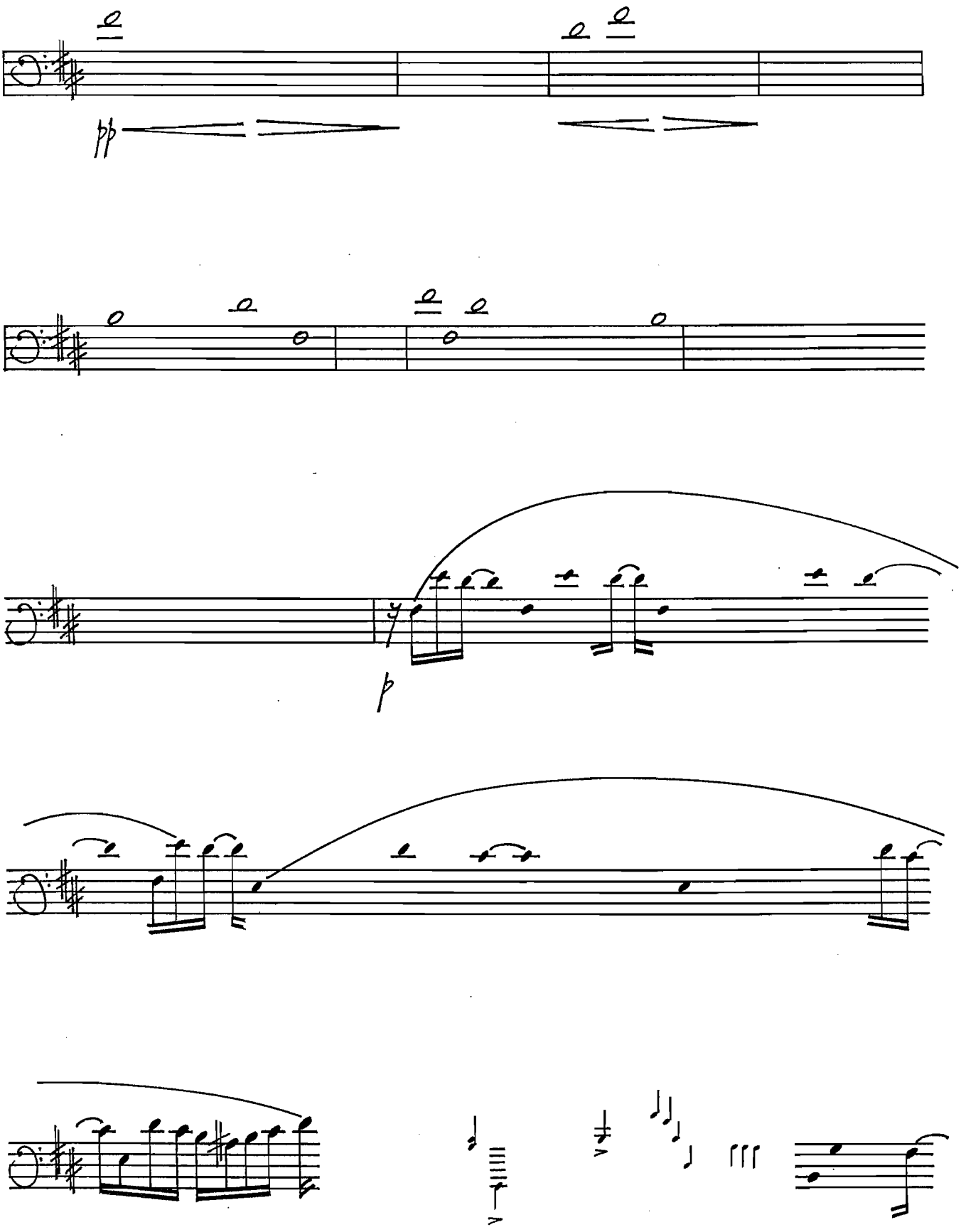

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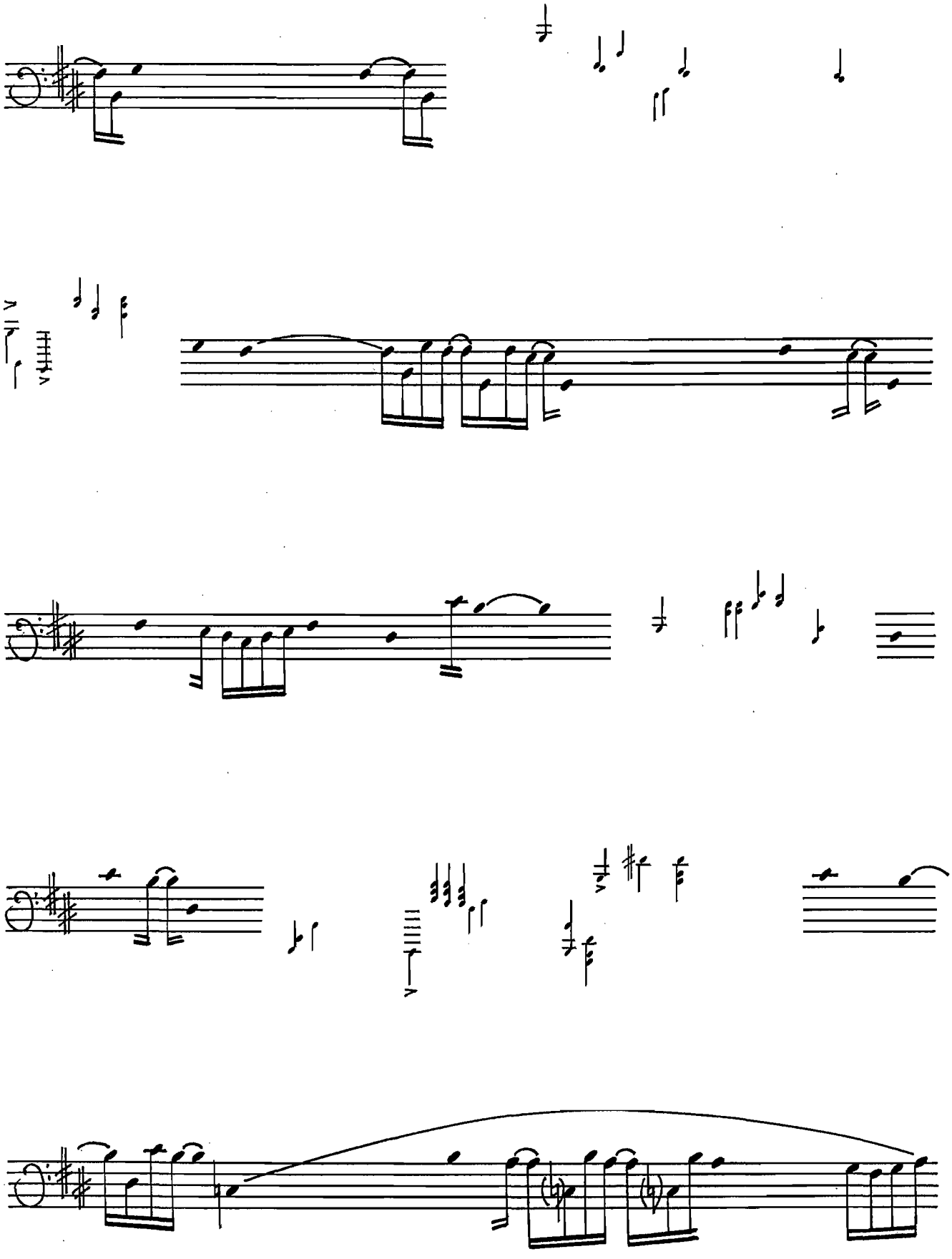
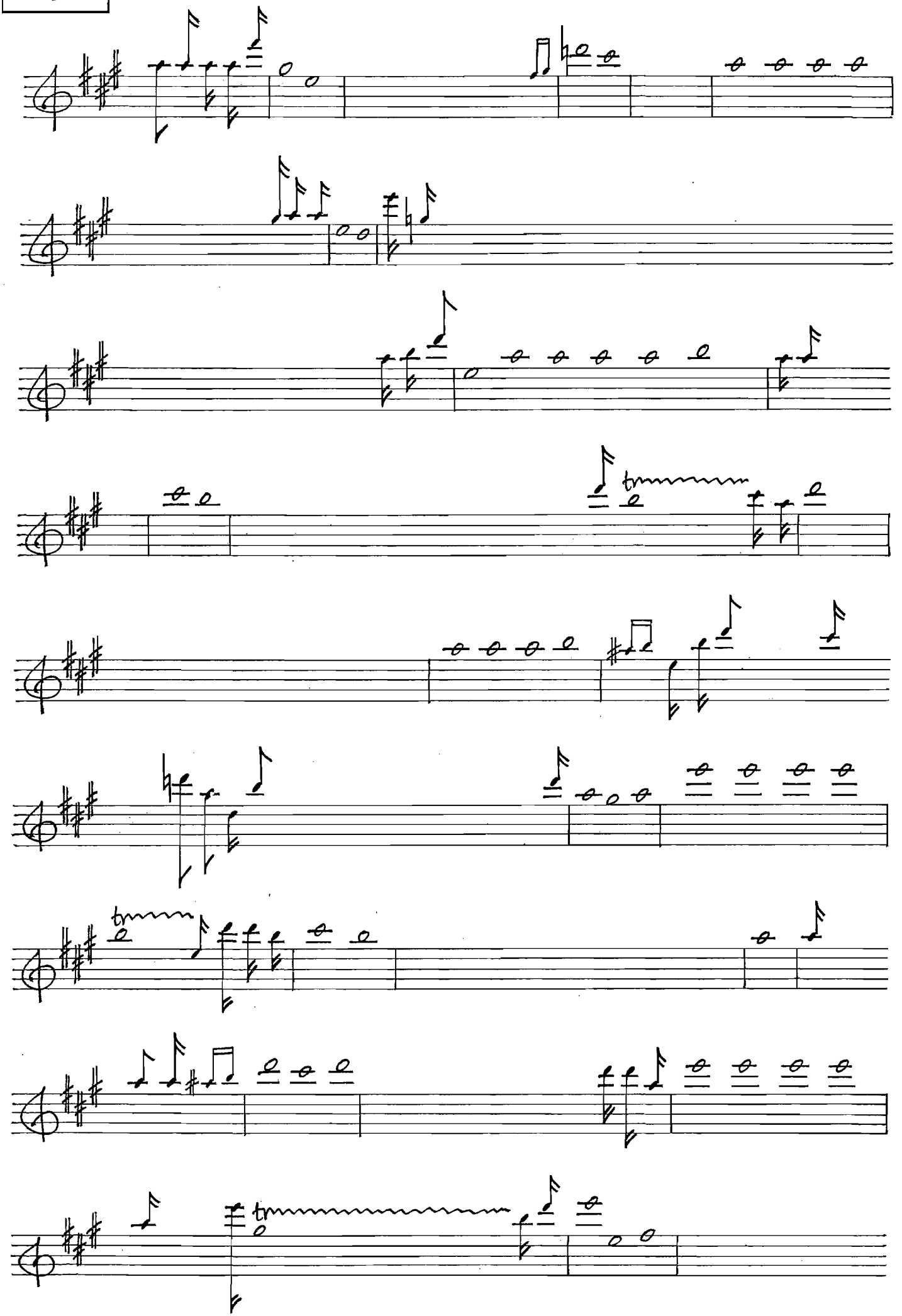


SOLO



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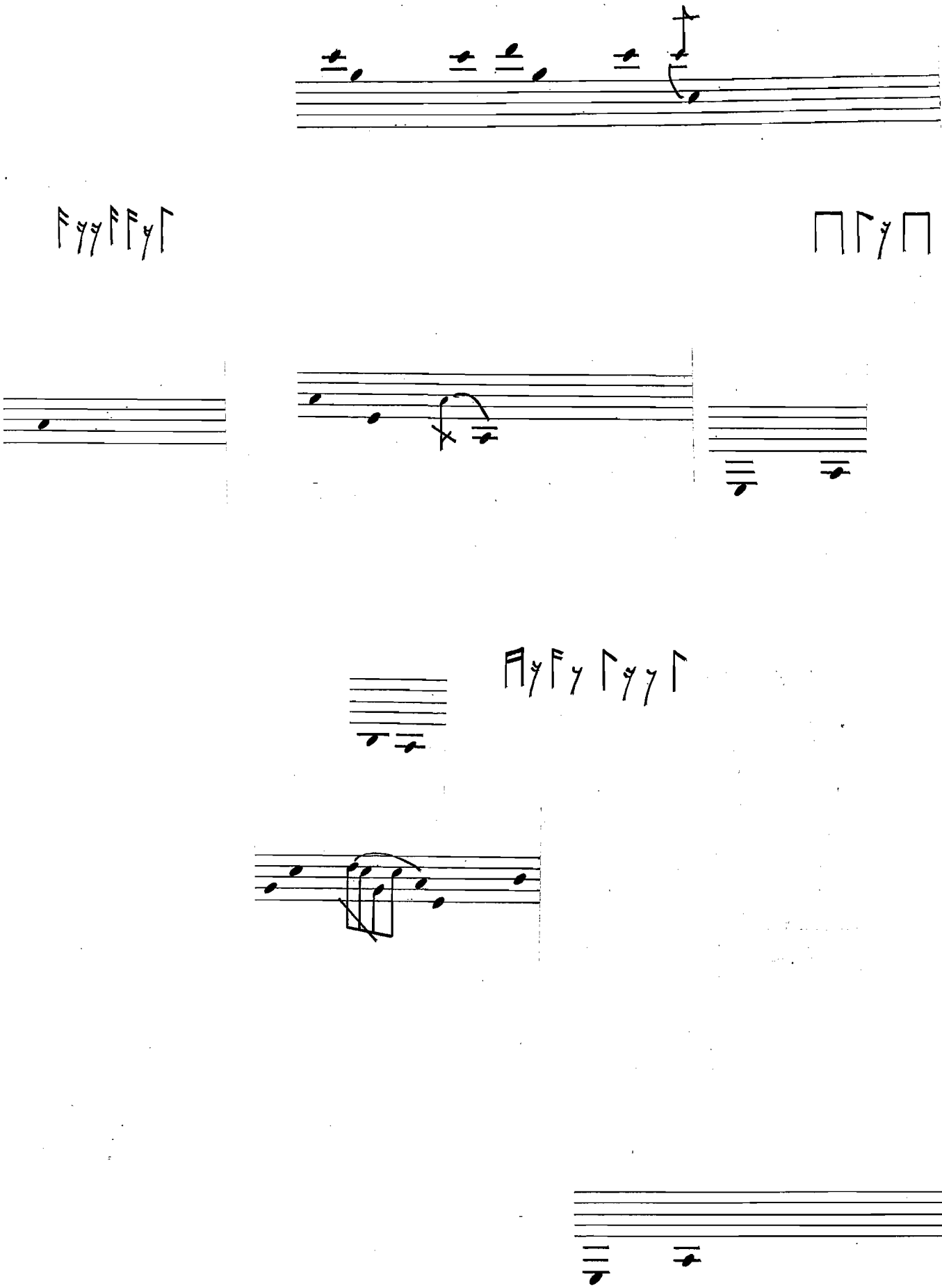

SOLO

pp

cresc. molto

ff

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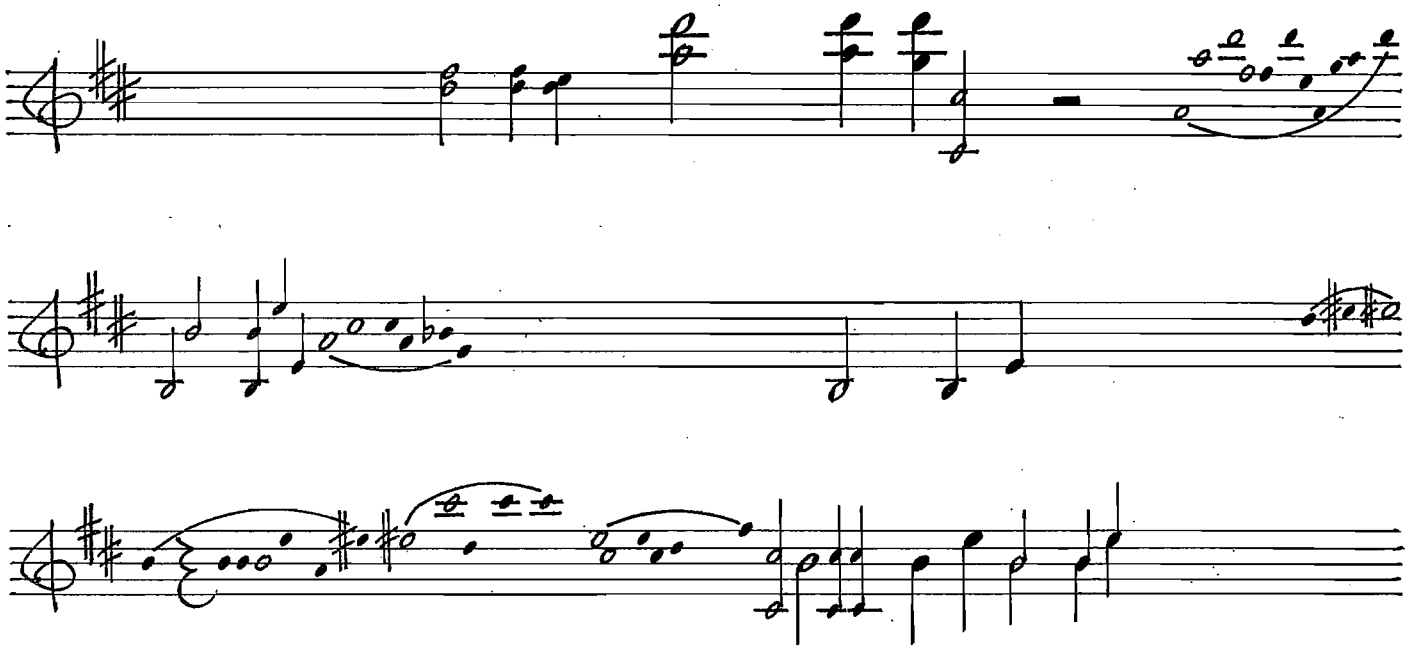
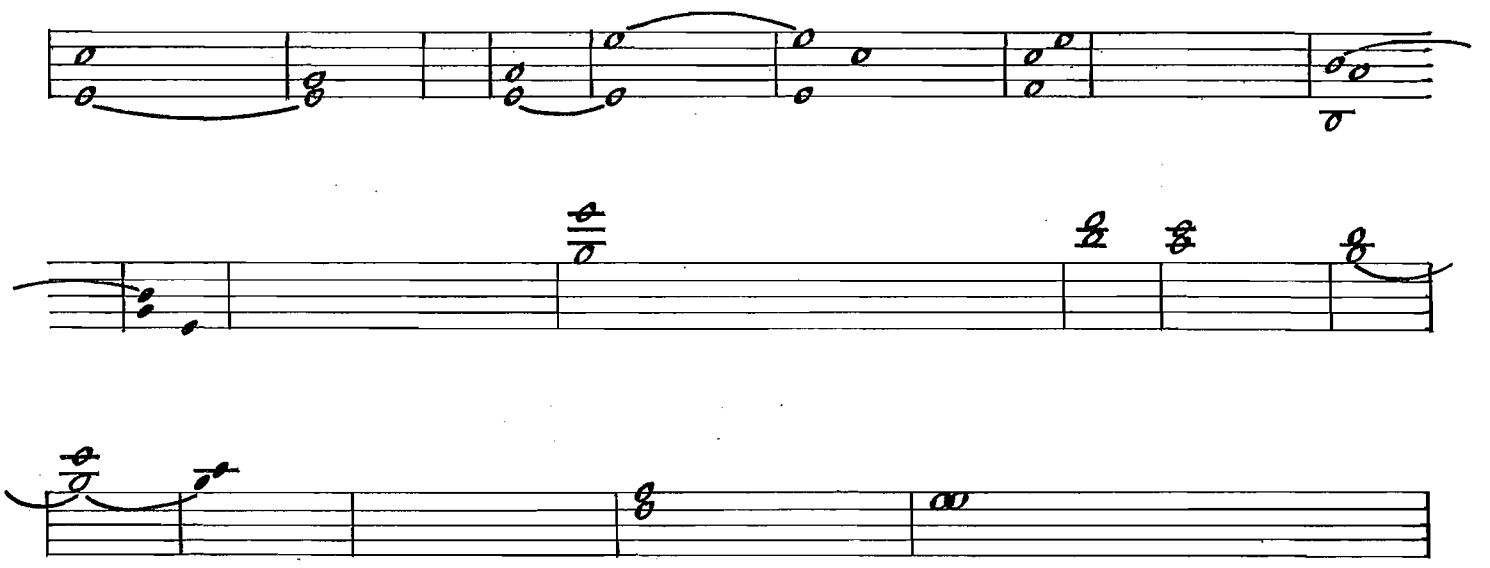
116

12117

SOLO



DUO



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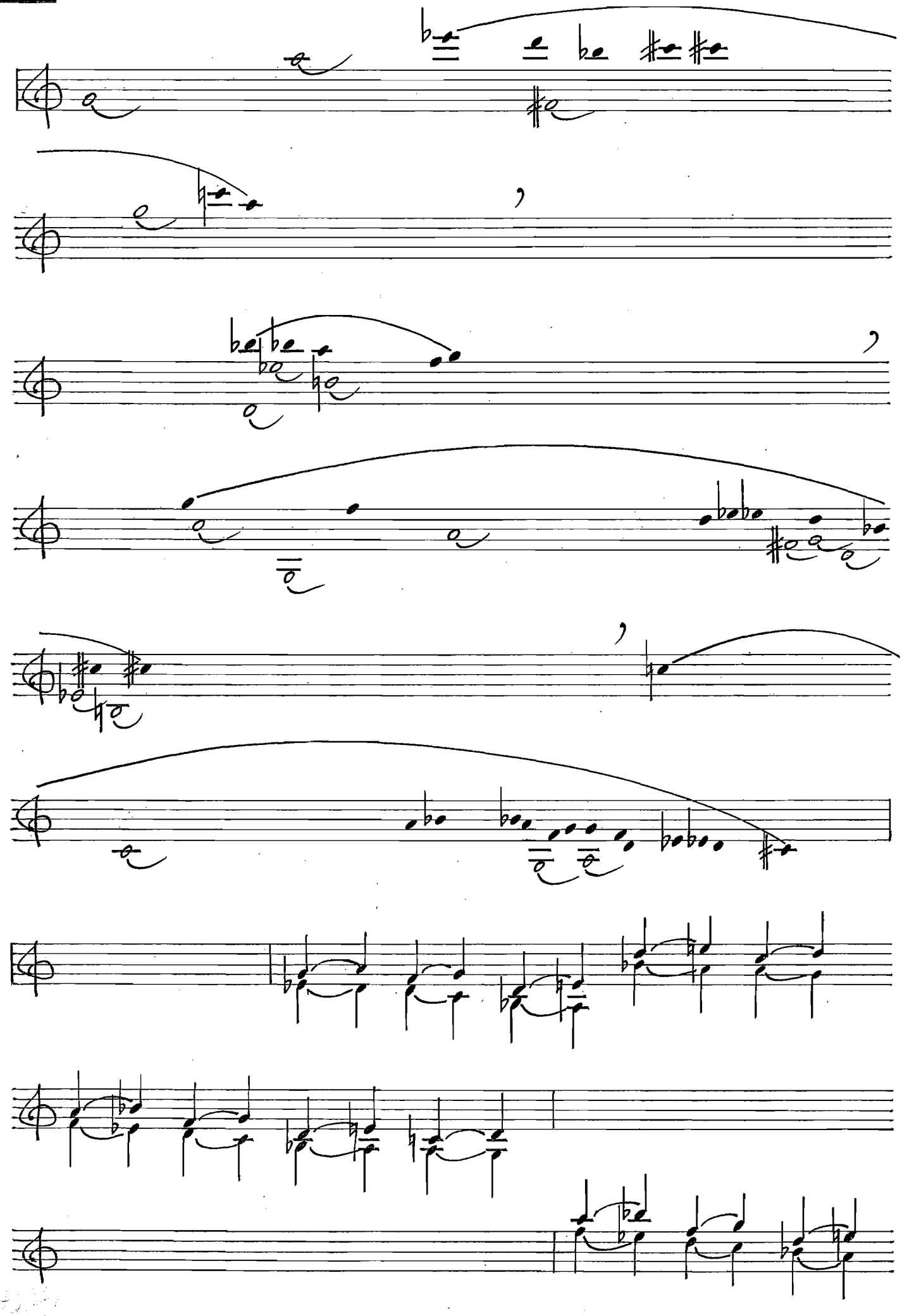

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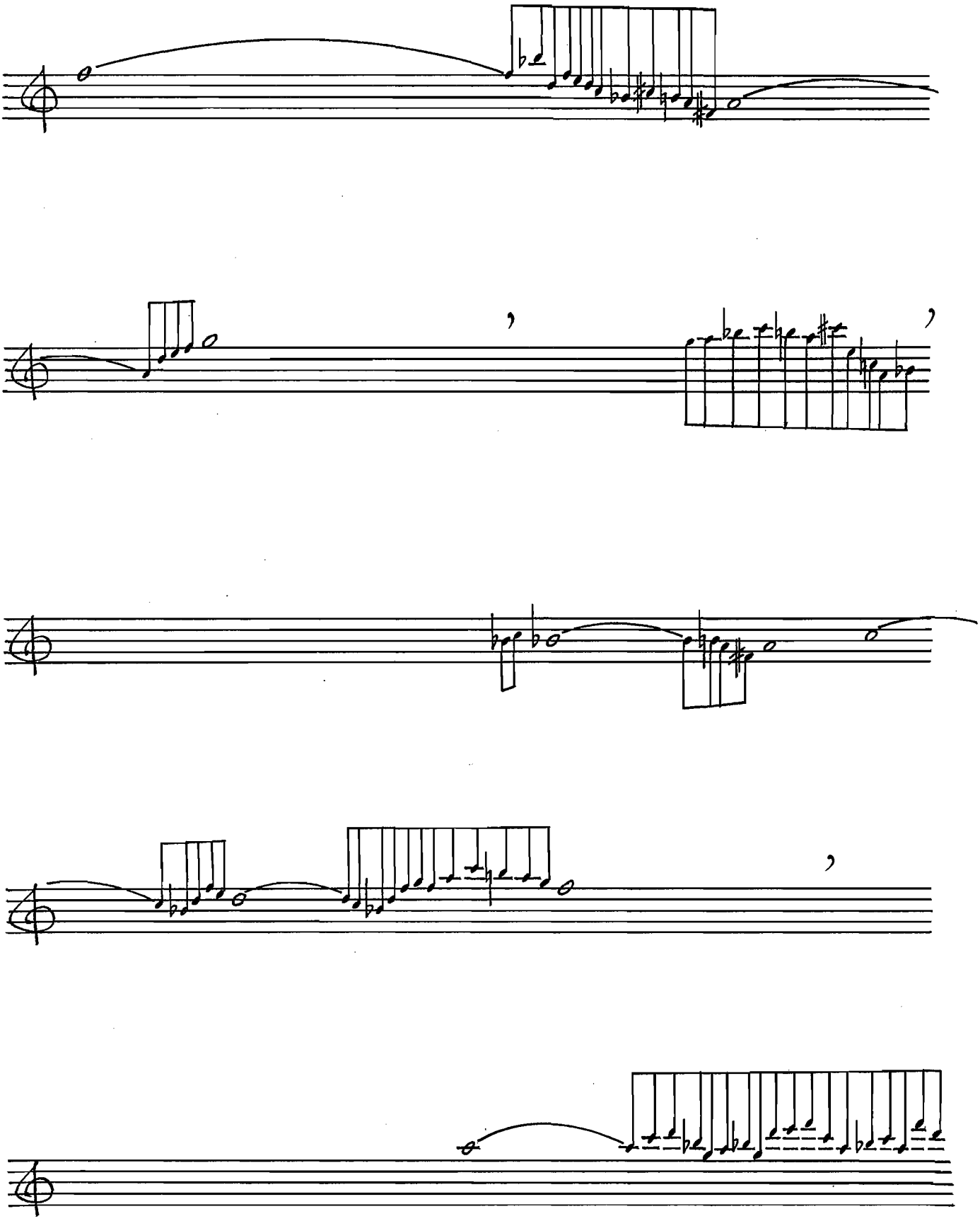

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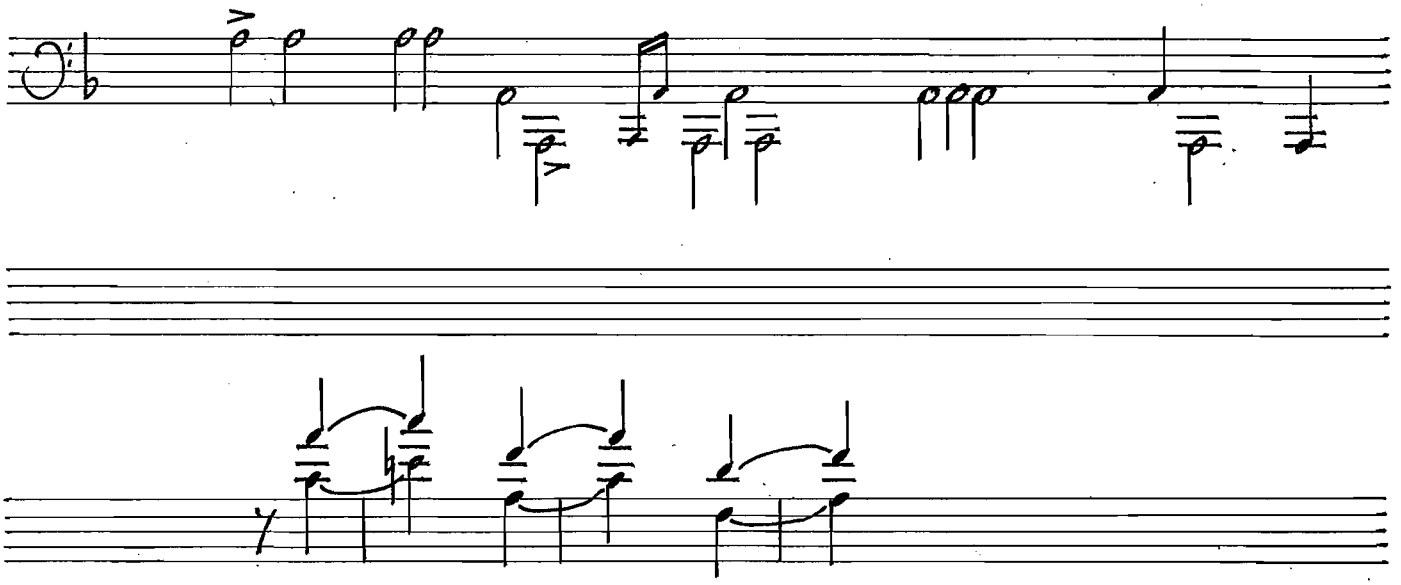

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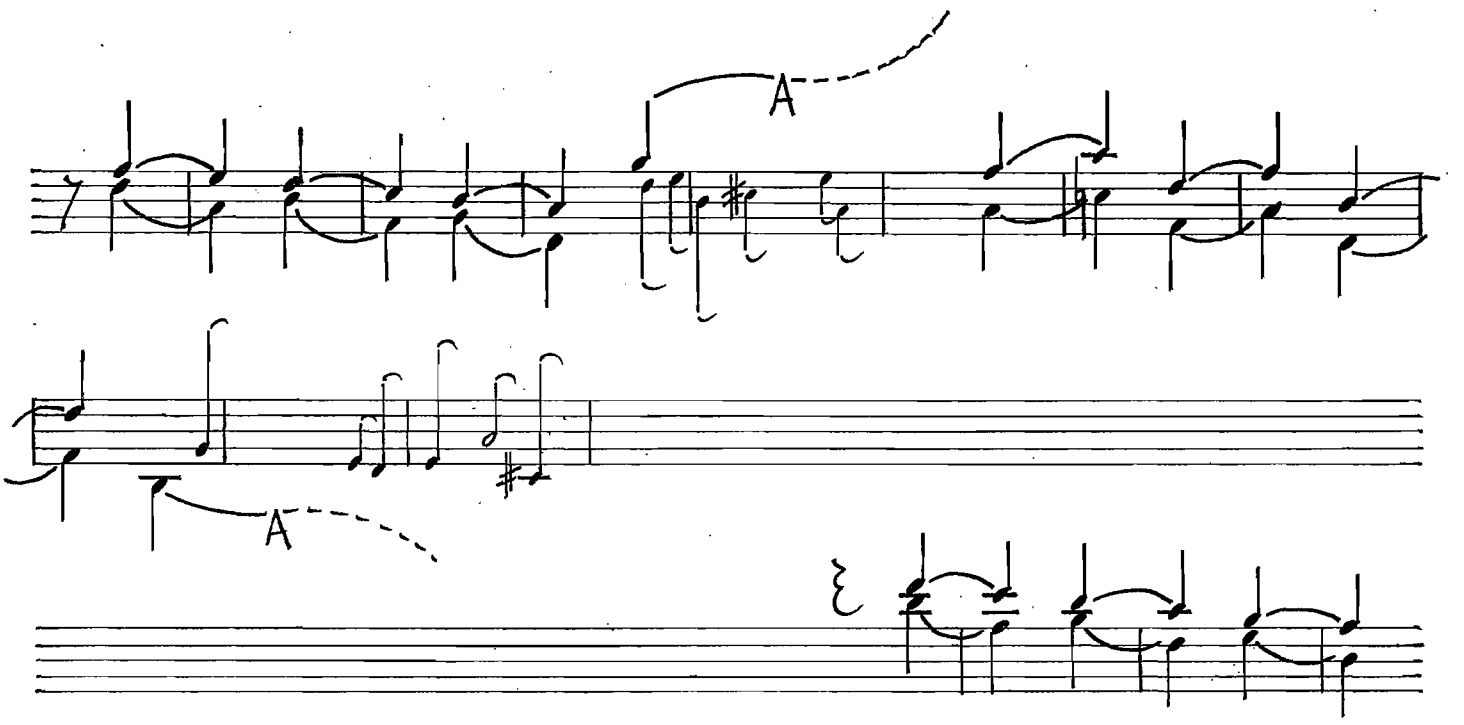
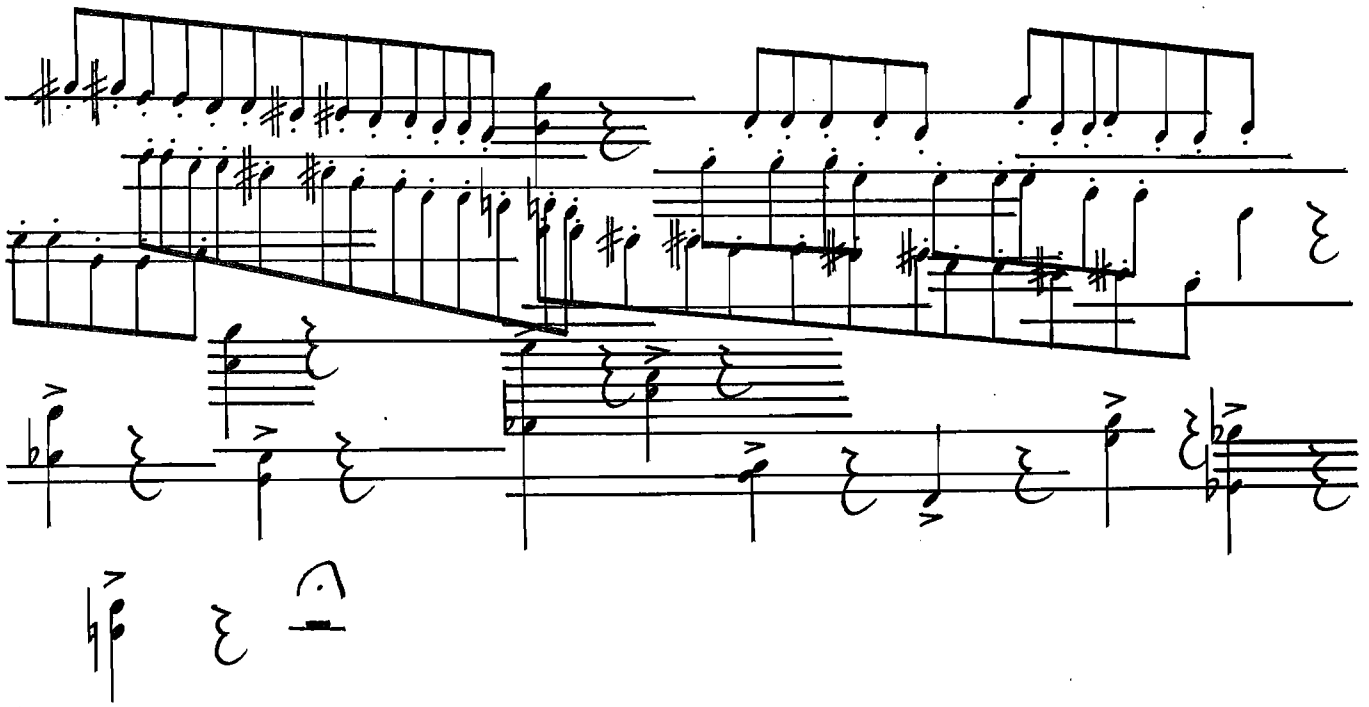
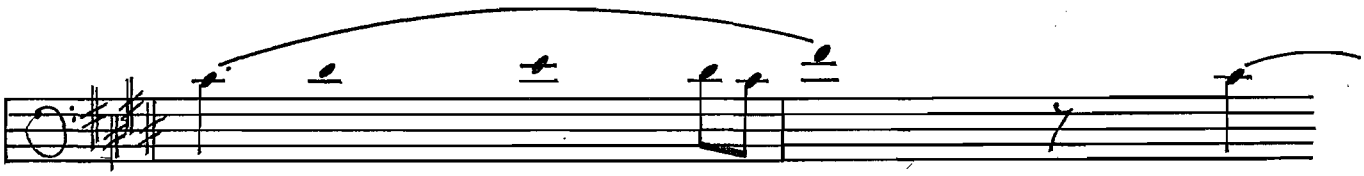


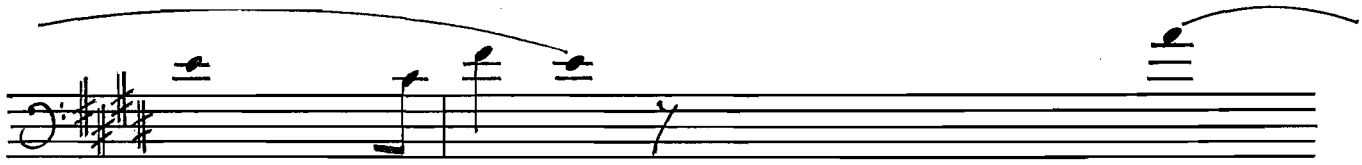
DUO

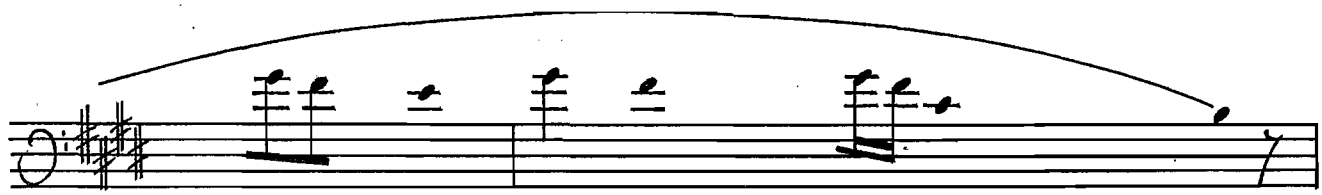
Allegro (ff)



DUO







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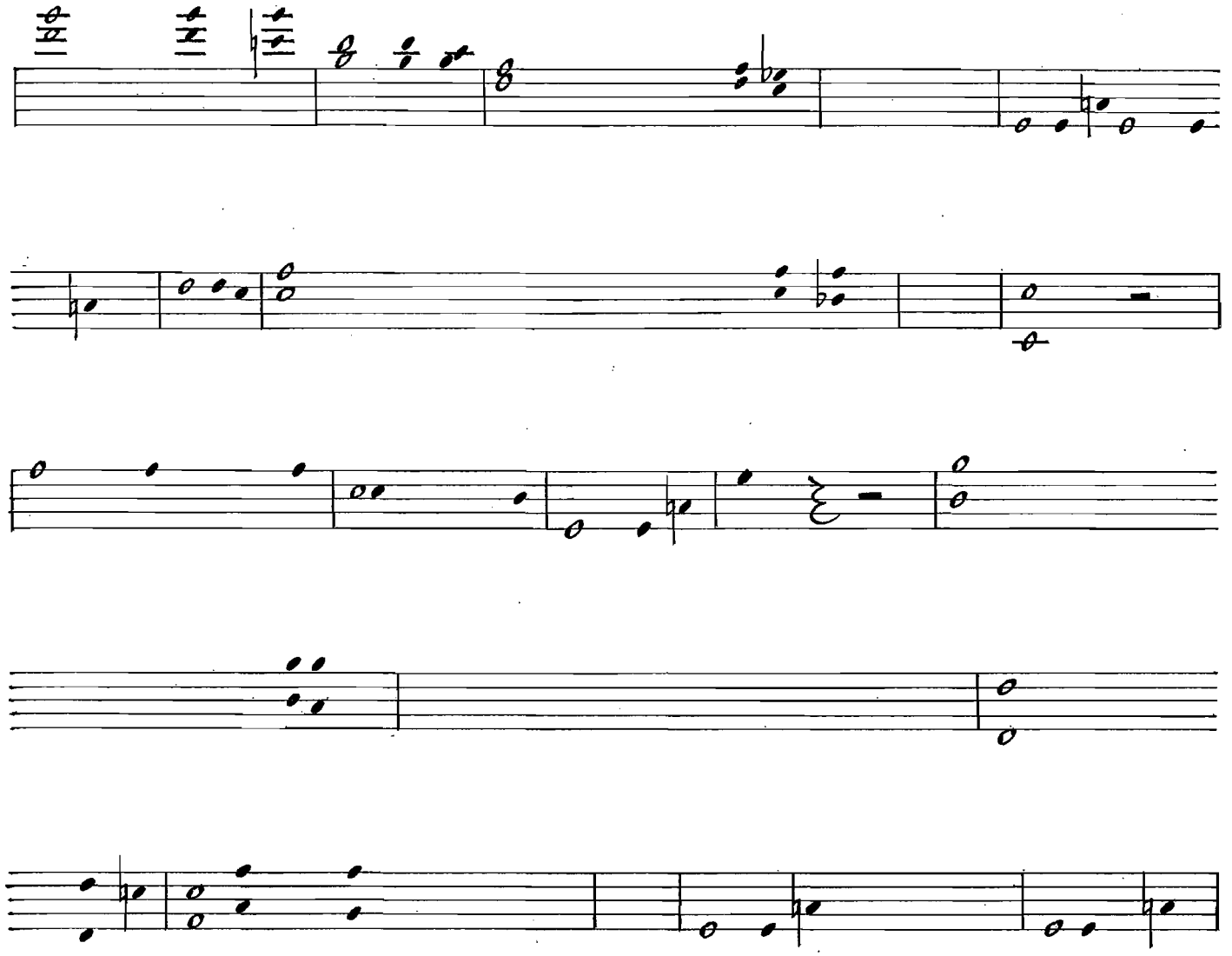

DUO

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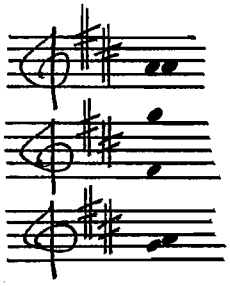

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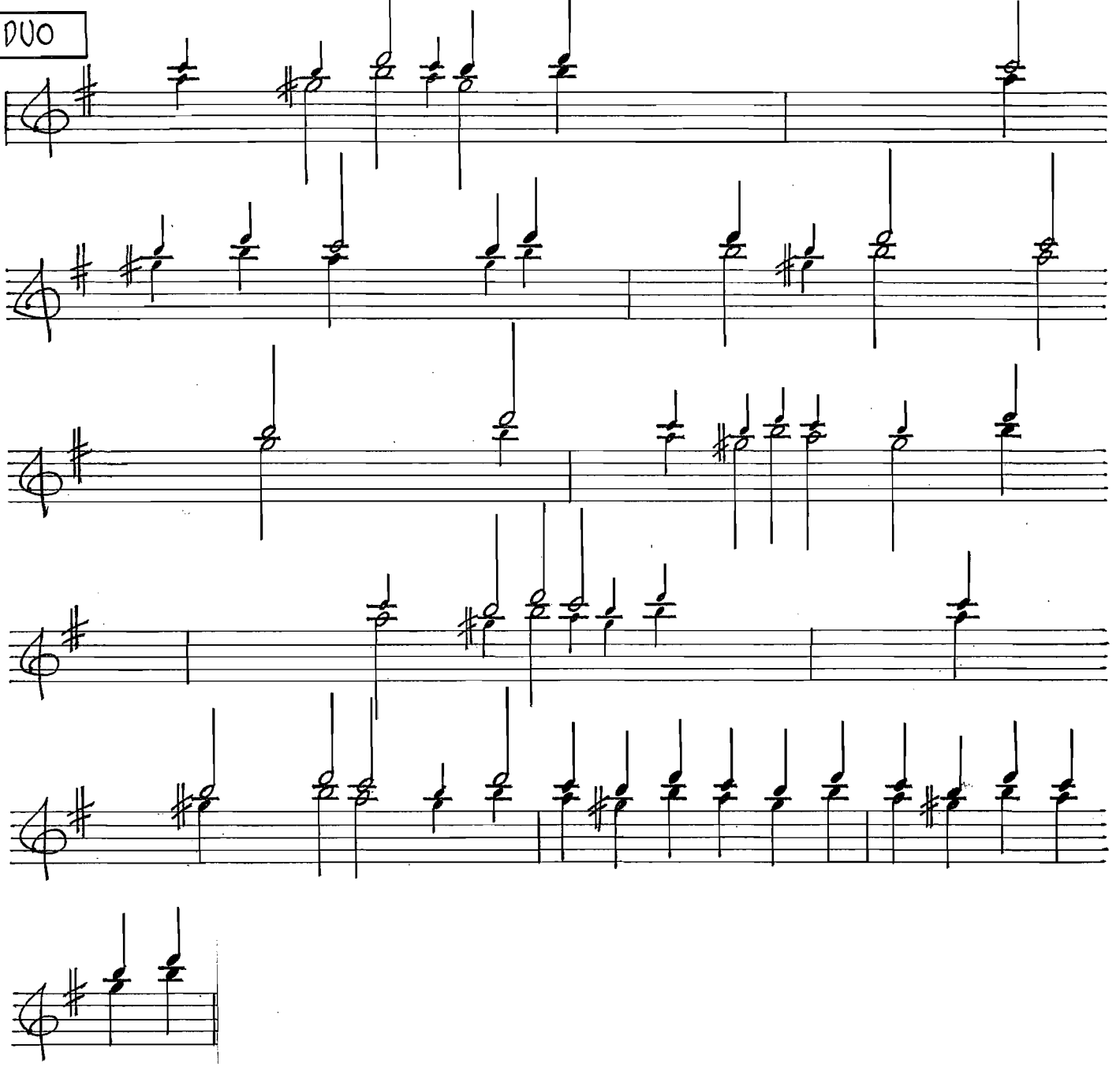
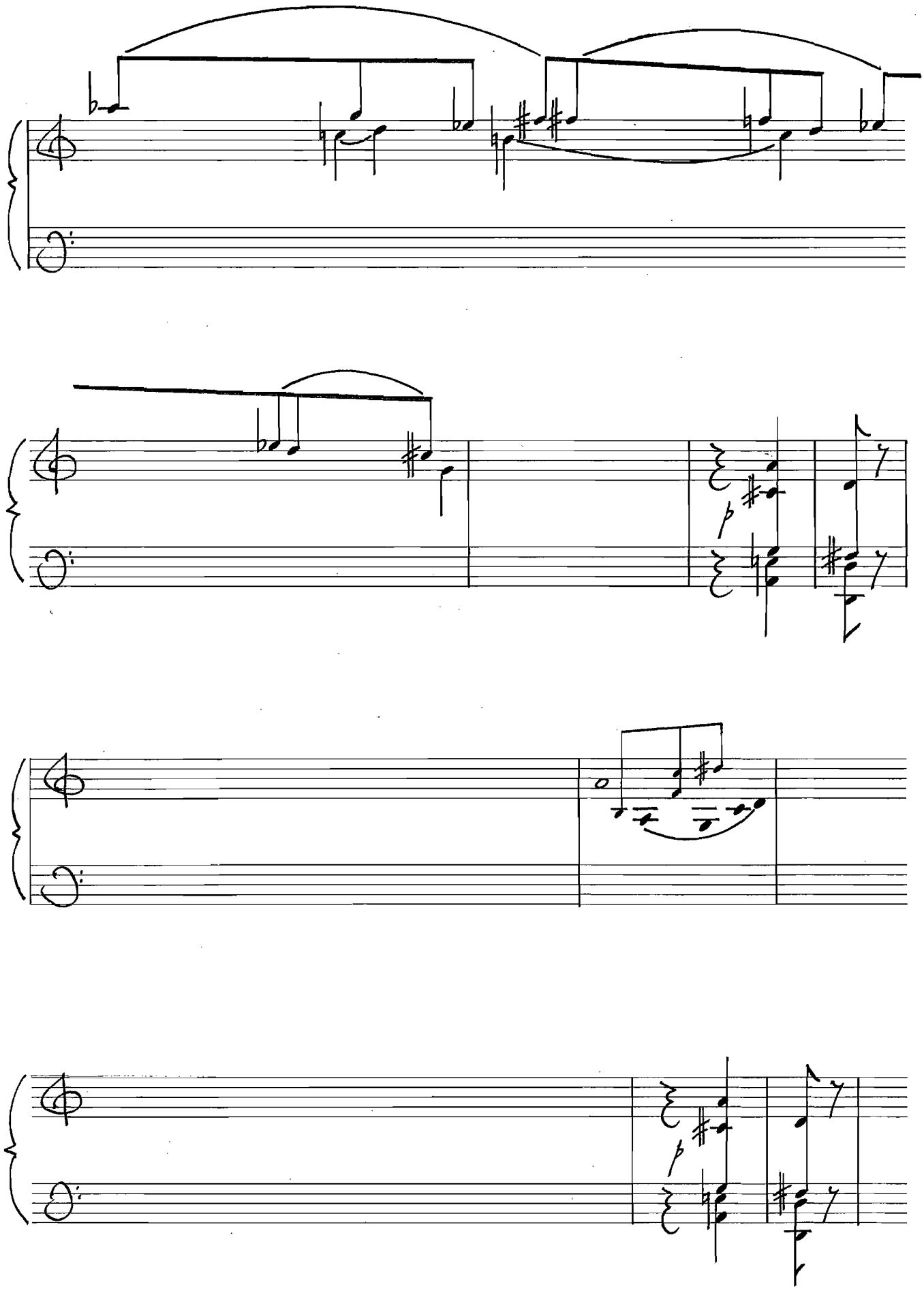
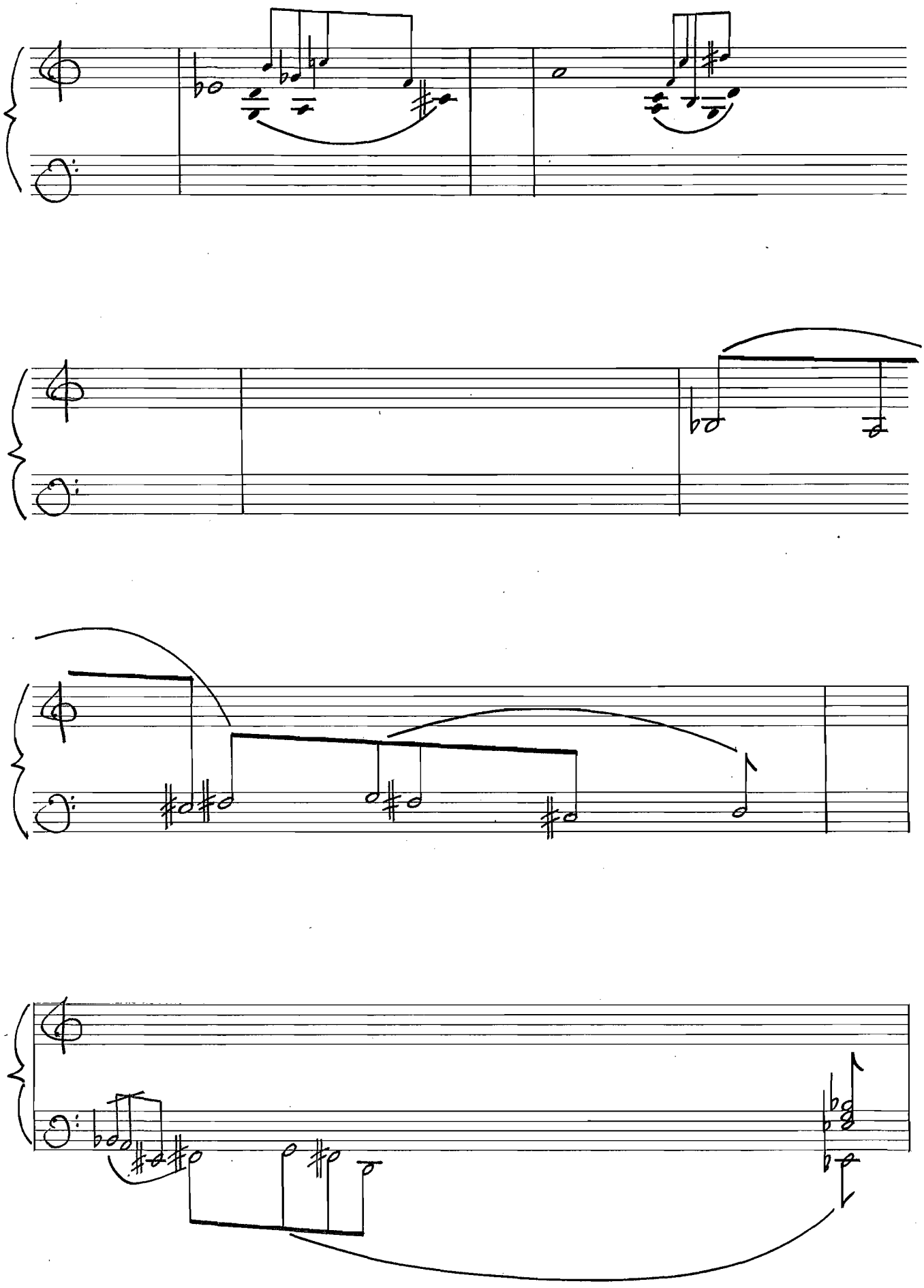


PIANO E 1.1



PIANO E 1.2



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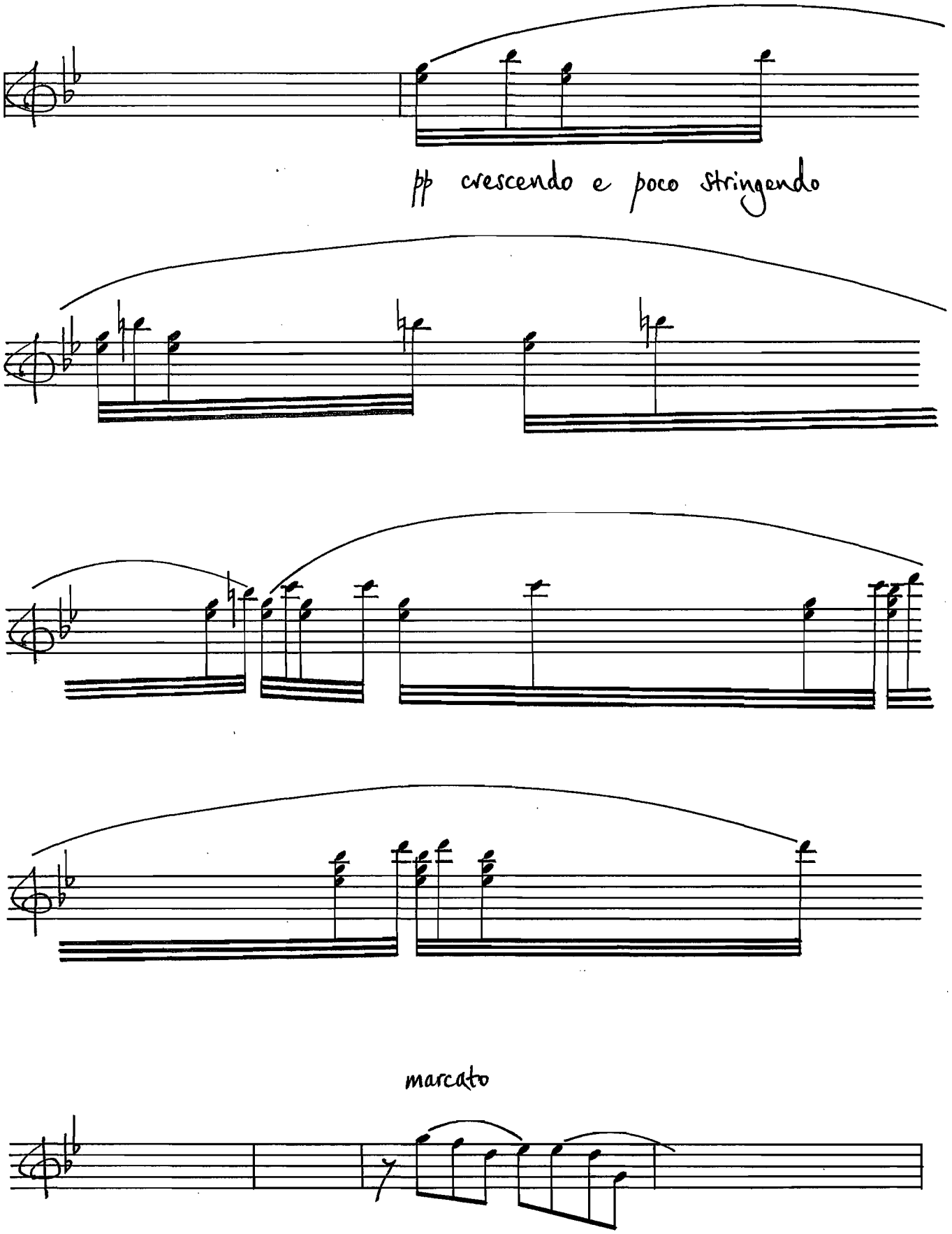

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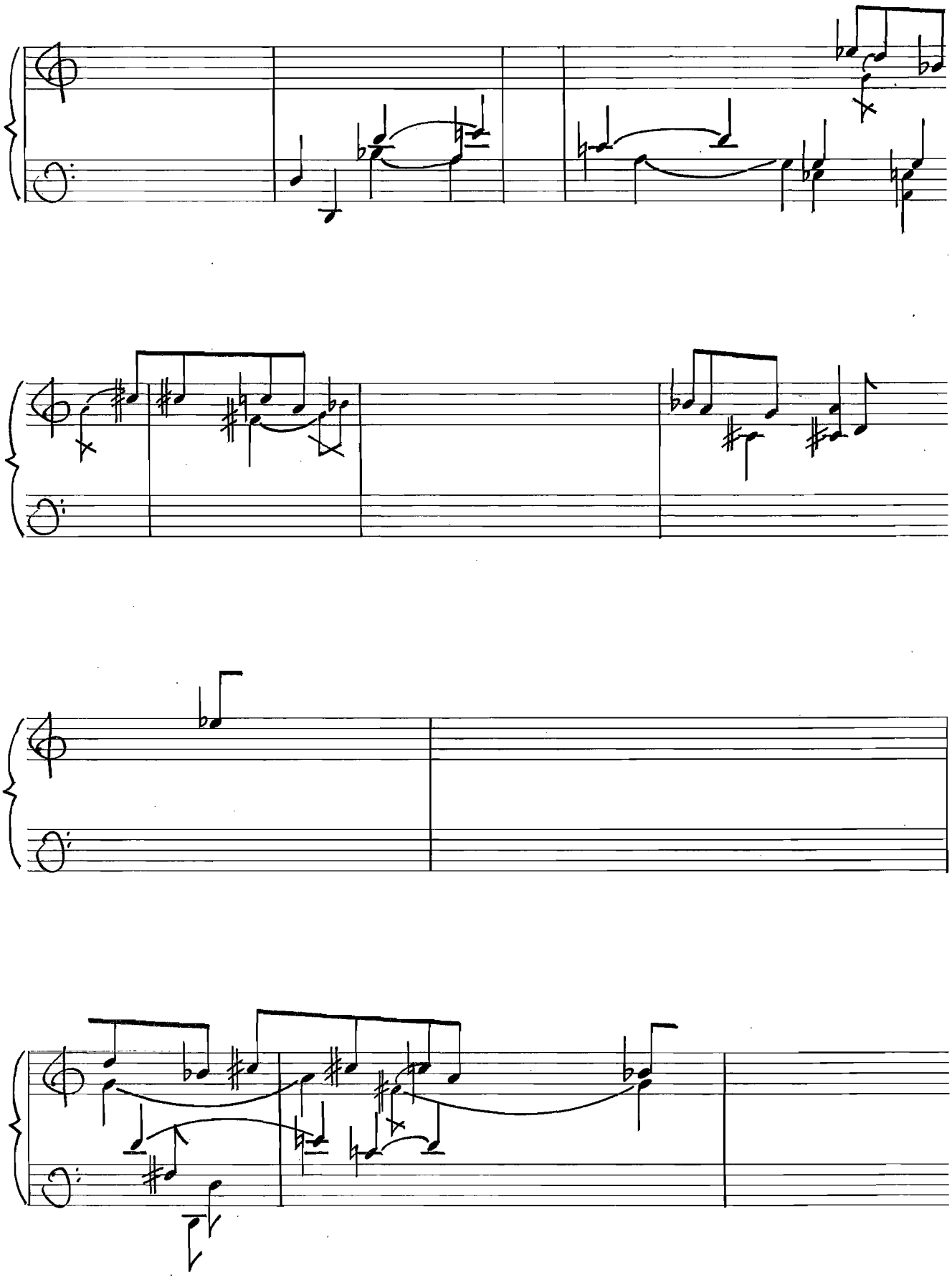

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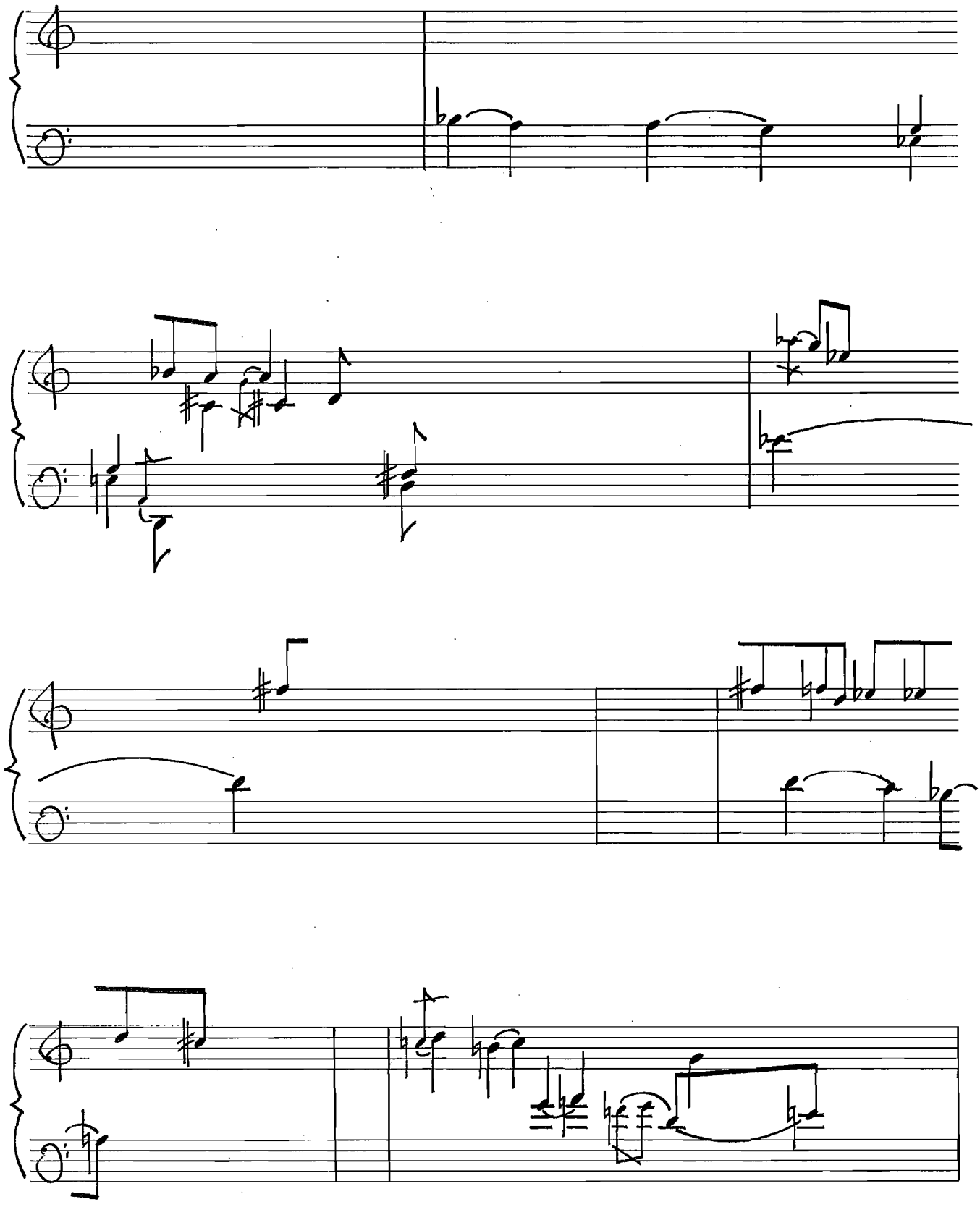

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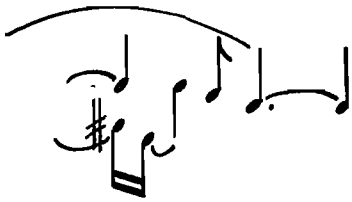
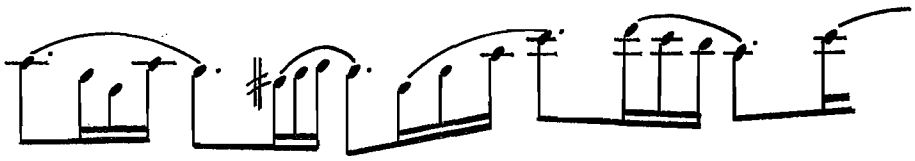
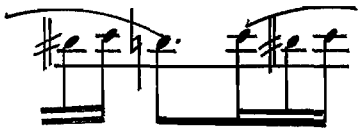
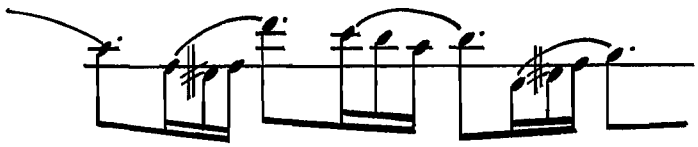
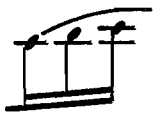
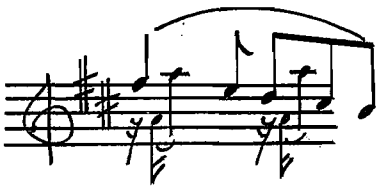




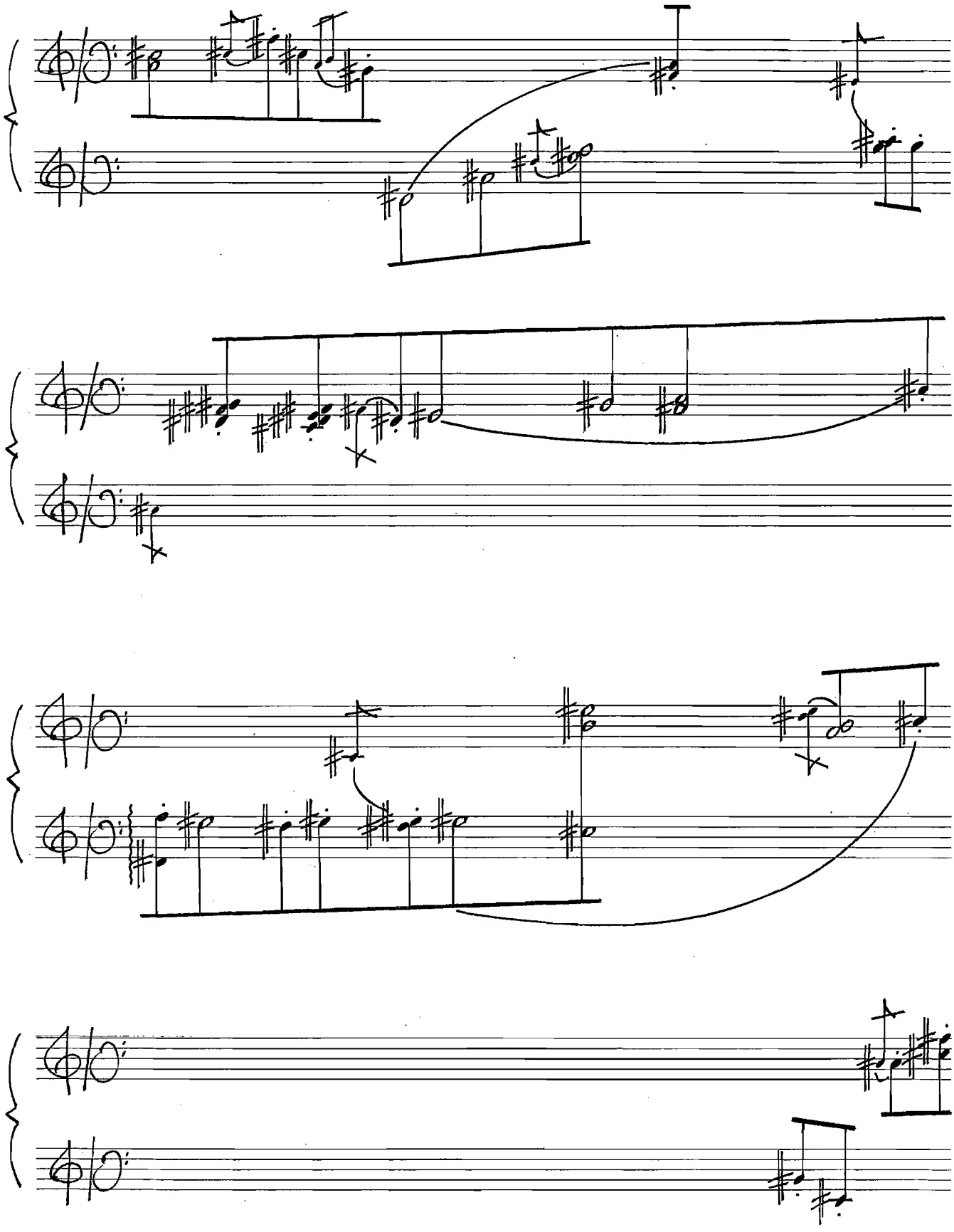




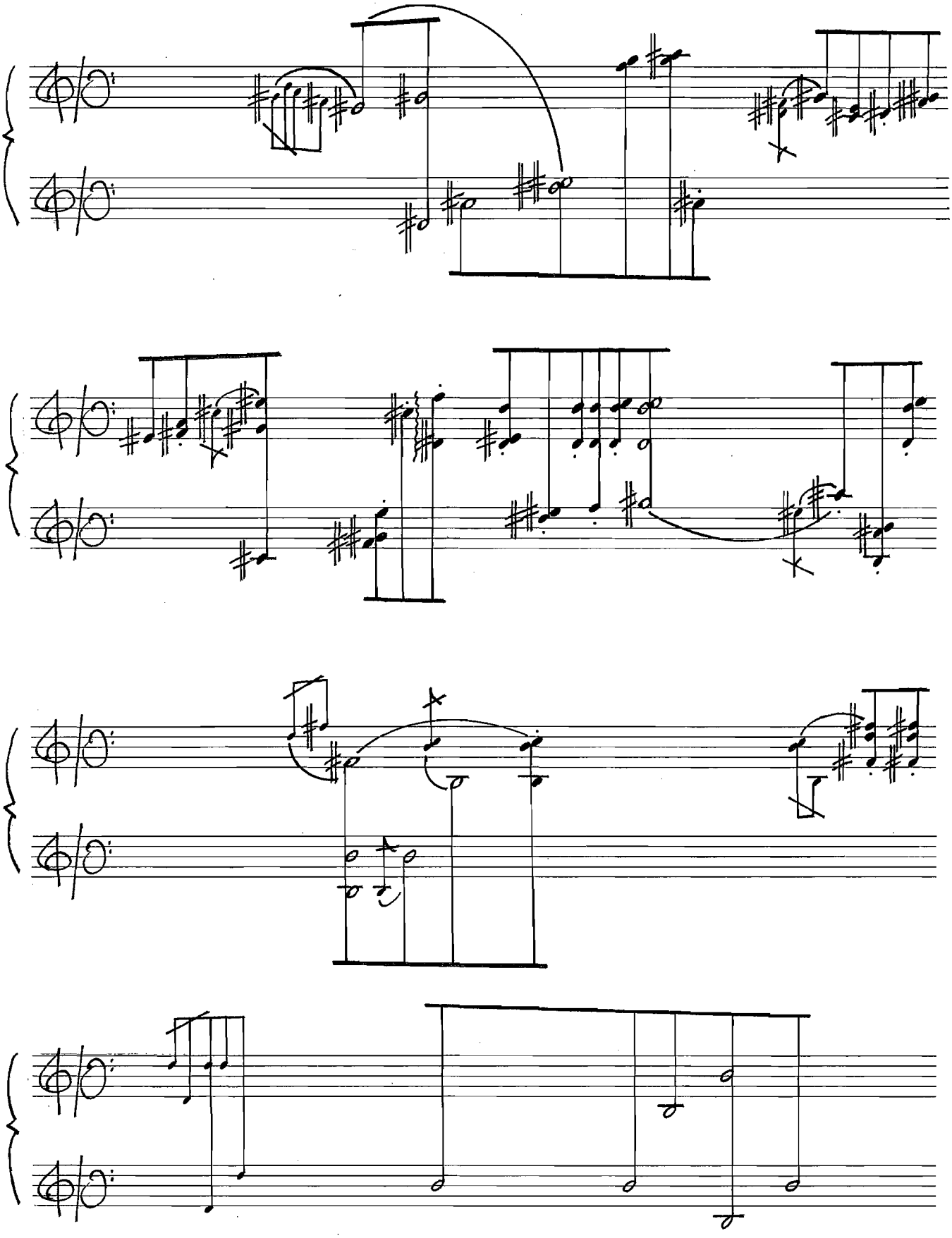




PIANO C 1



PIANO C2



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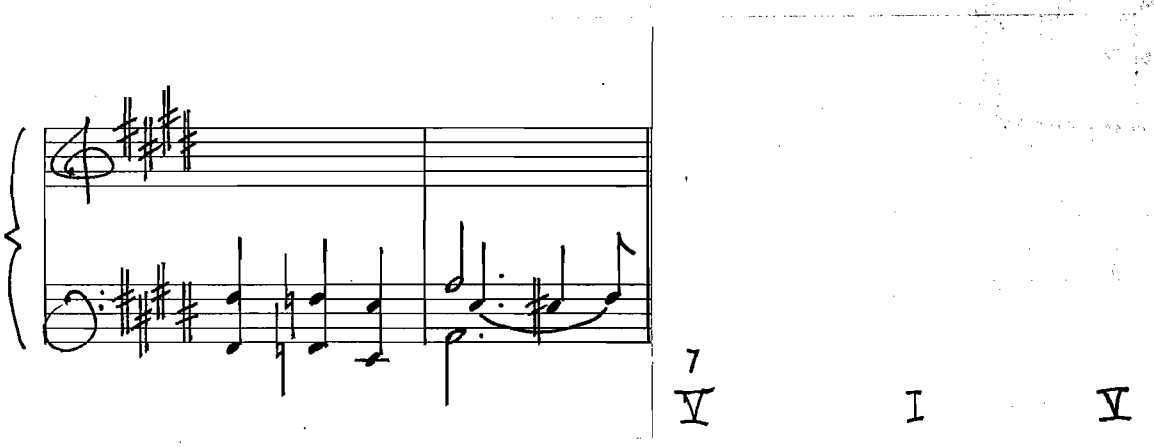
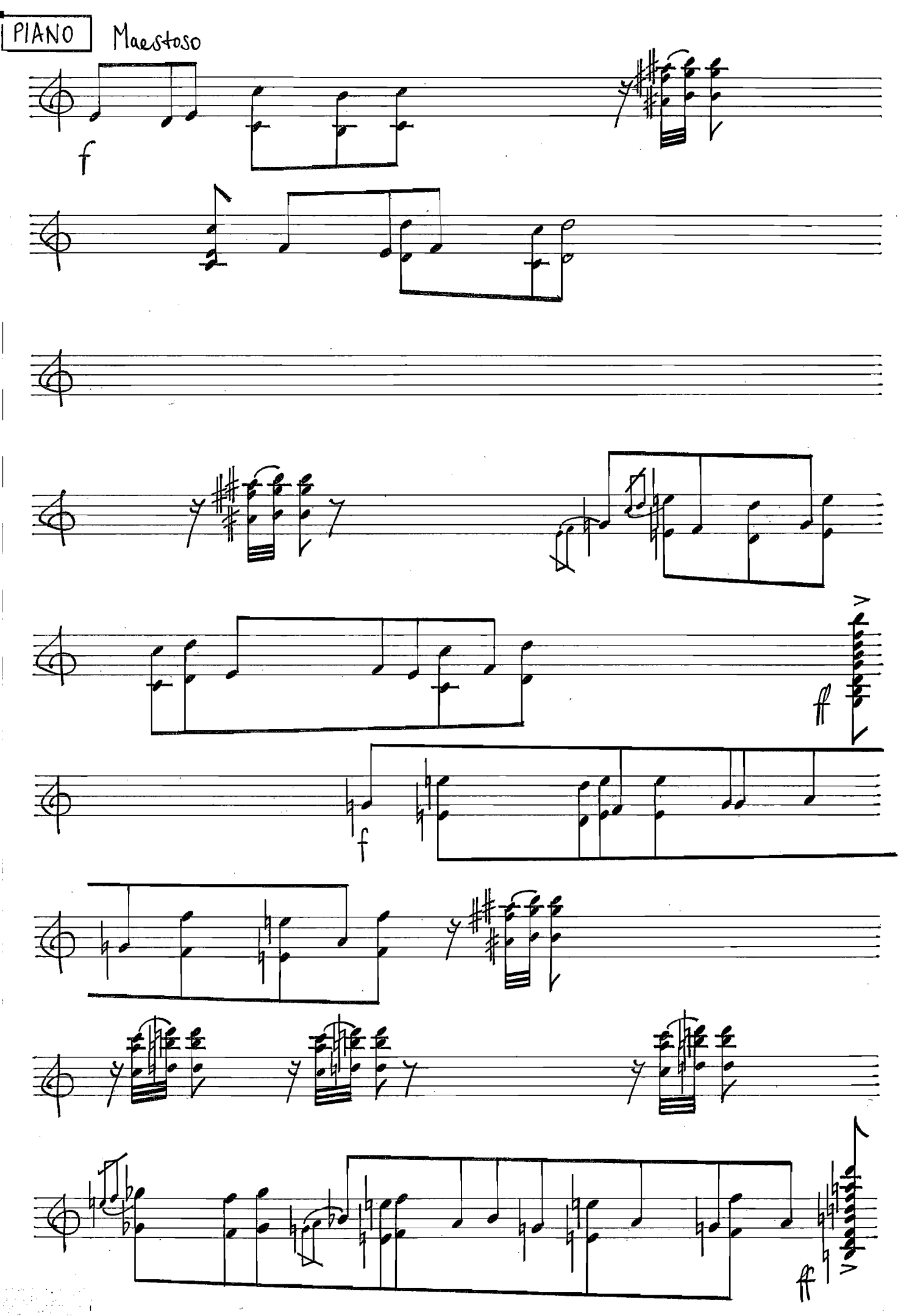


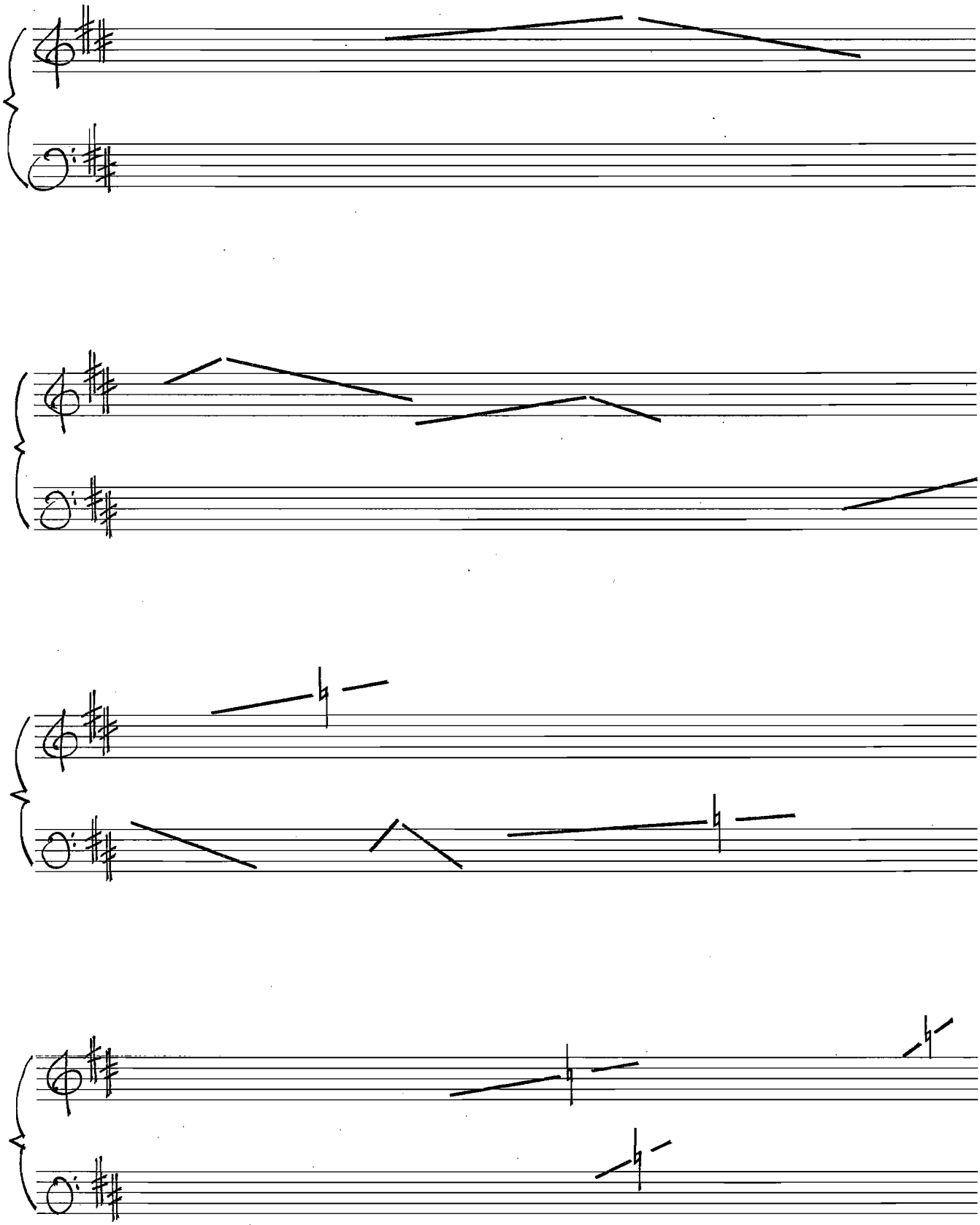

III I 6/3 II # V 7 I I 6/3 VI

I 6/4 II 6/4 I 6/3

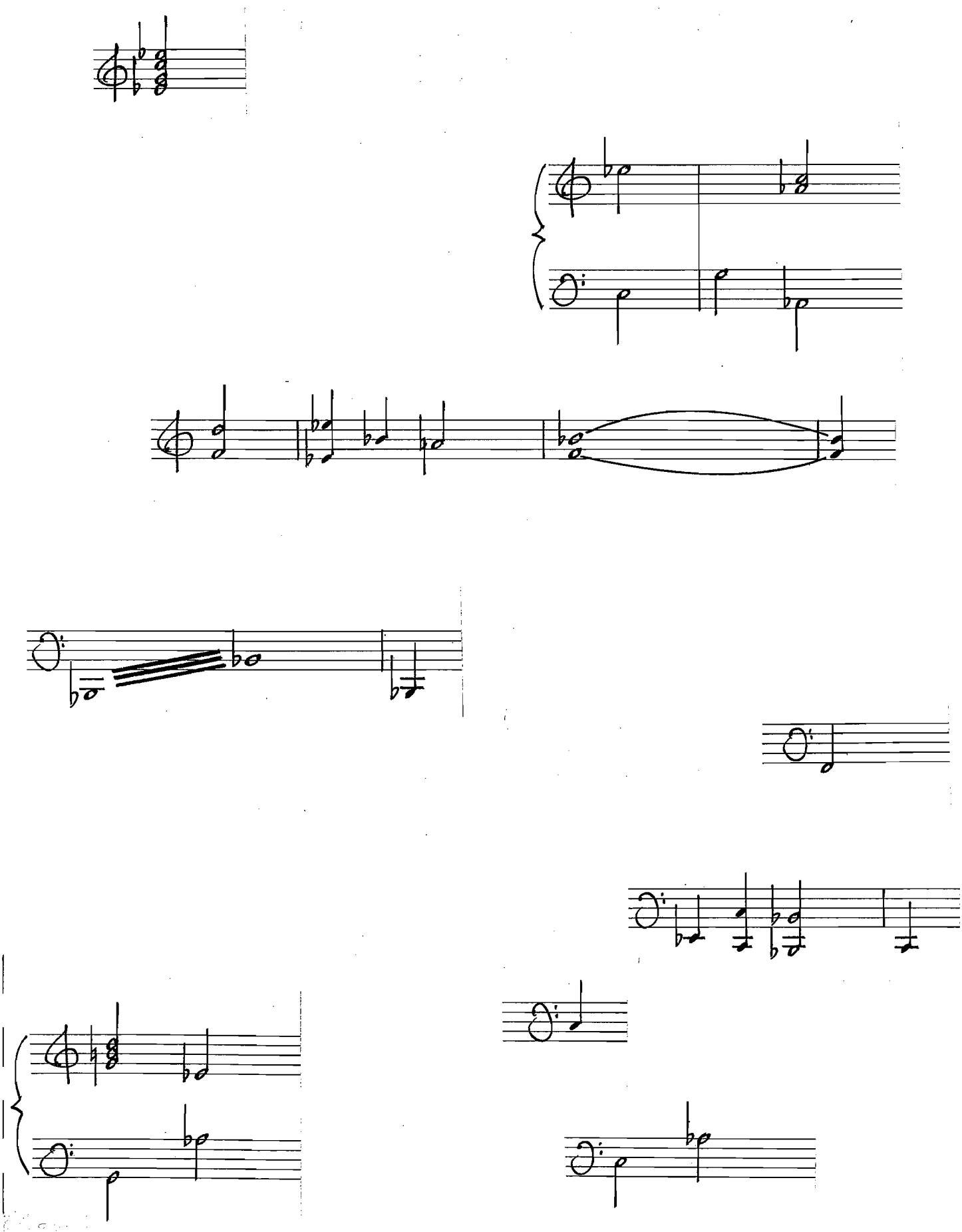

PIANO
Maestoso
f
ff
f
ff

PIANO

Presto



PIANO H1



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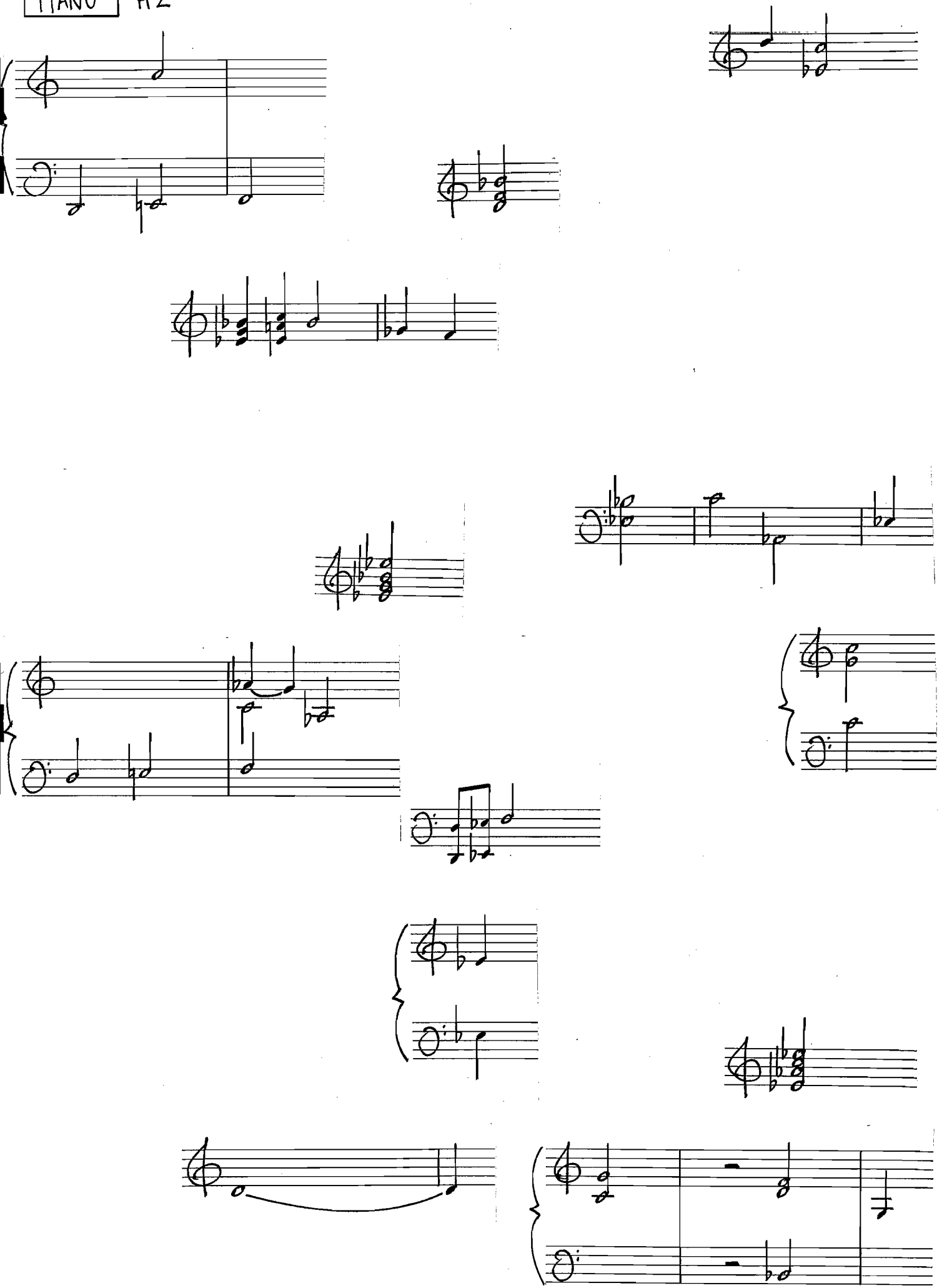

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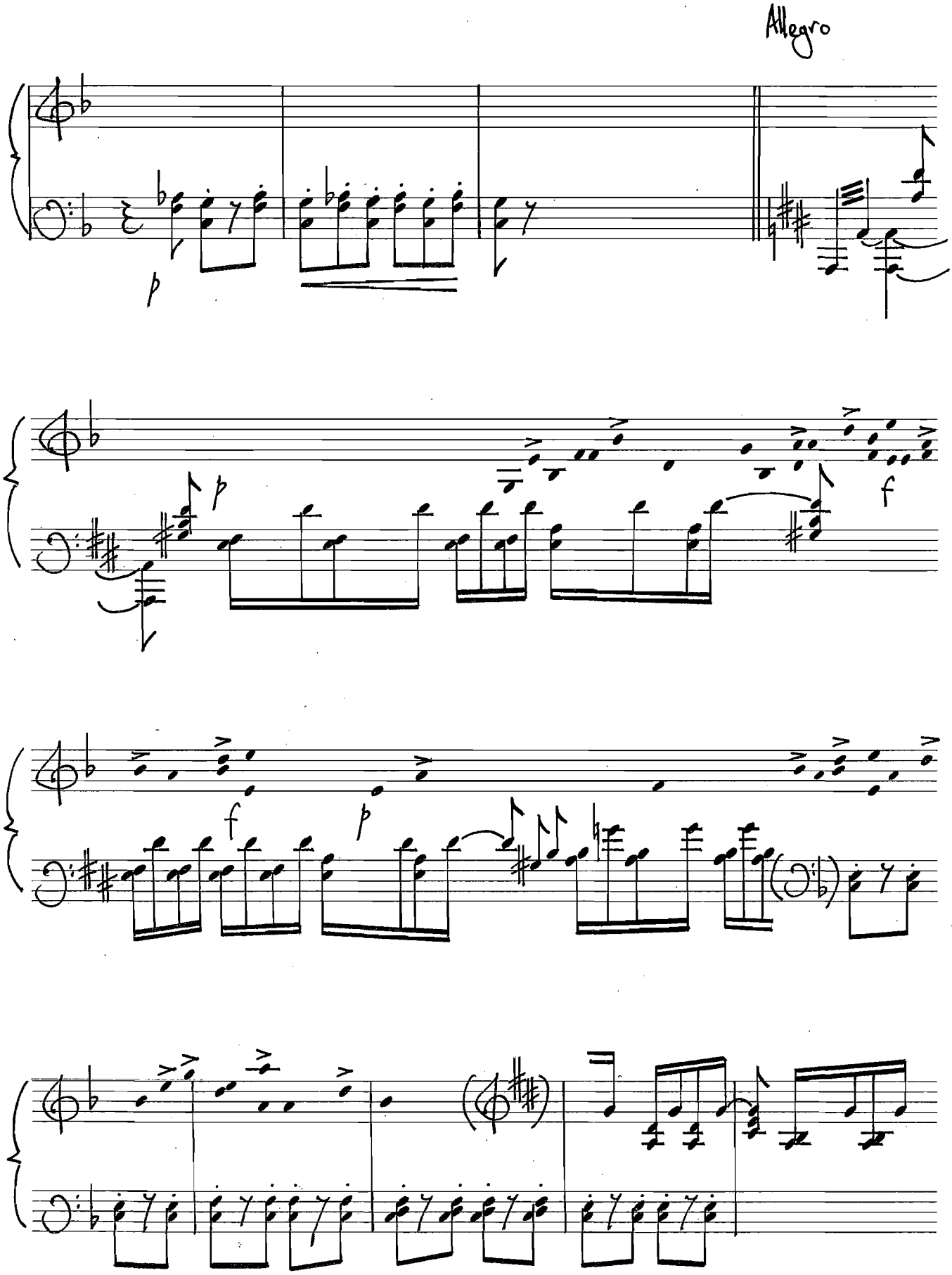

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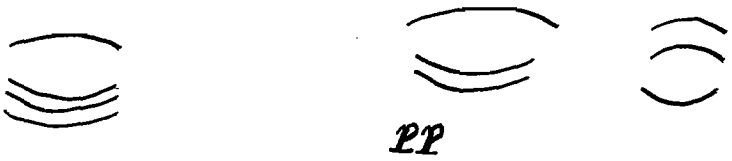
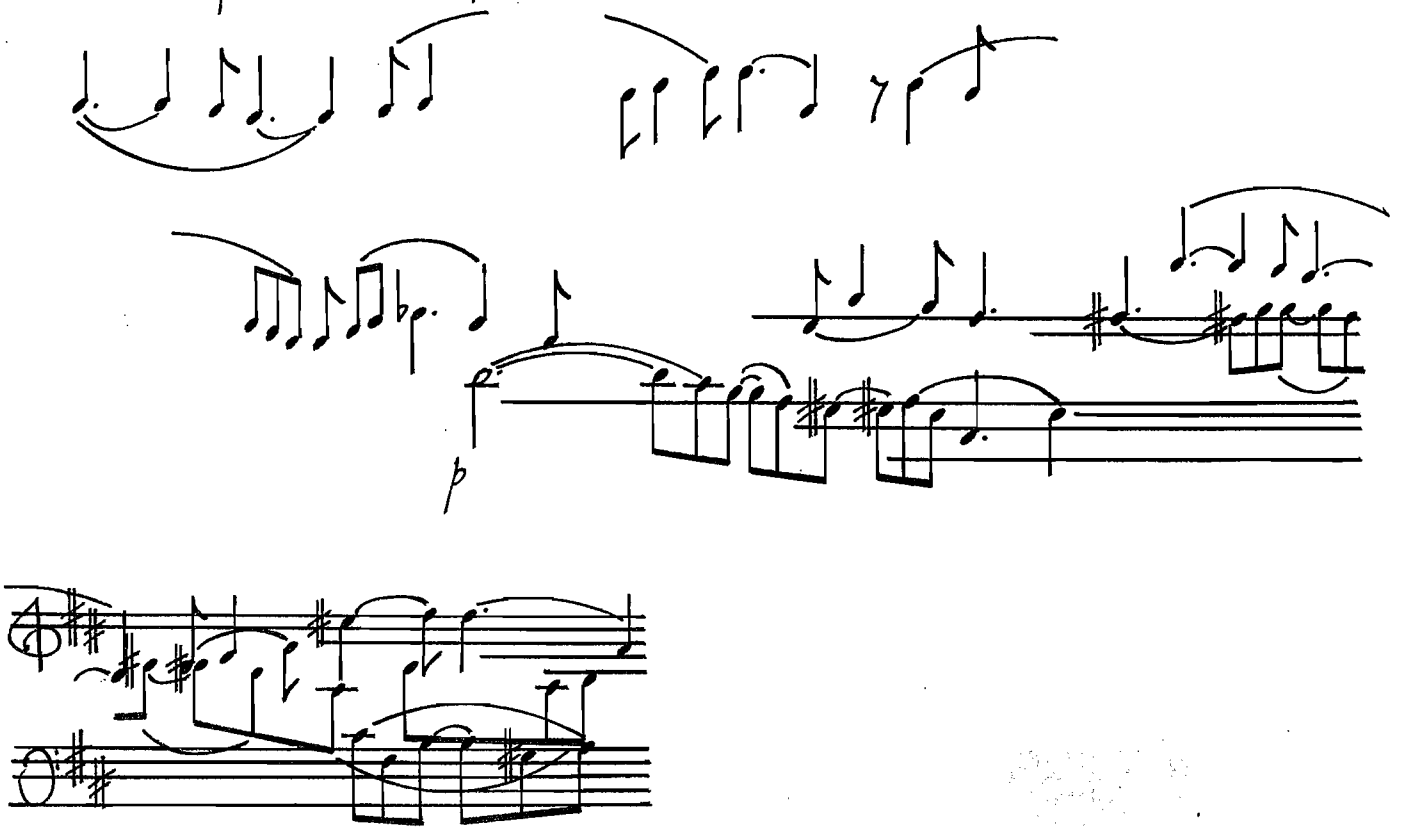


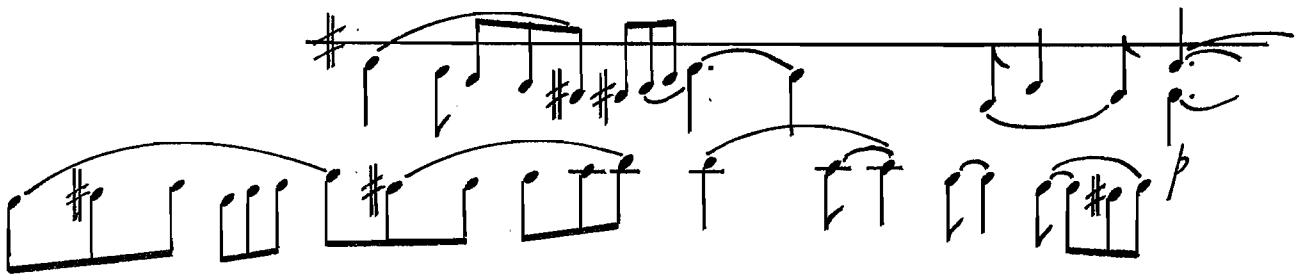

1. take an octave dyad
2. make it into a second inversion chord (minor)
3. add a little dissonance (and an accent)
4. change into a root position chord (major)
5. play the lowest note of the octave by itself
6. play a minor chord (root position) and change clef if you like
7. add the same dissonance as before (and an accent again!)
8. play a first inversion chord (major)

PIANO

Andante placido, non troppo lento




p dolce ed espressivo



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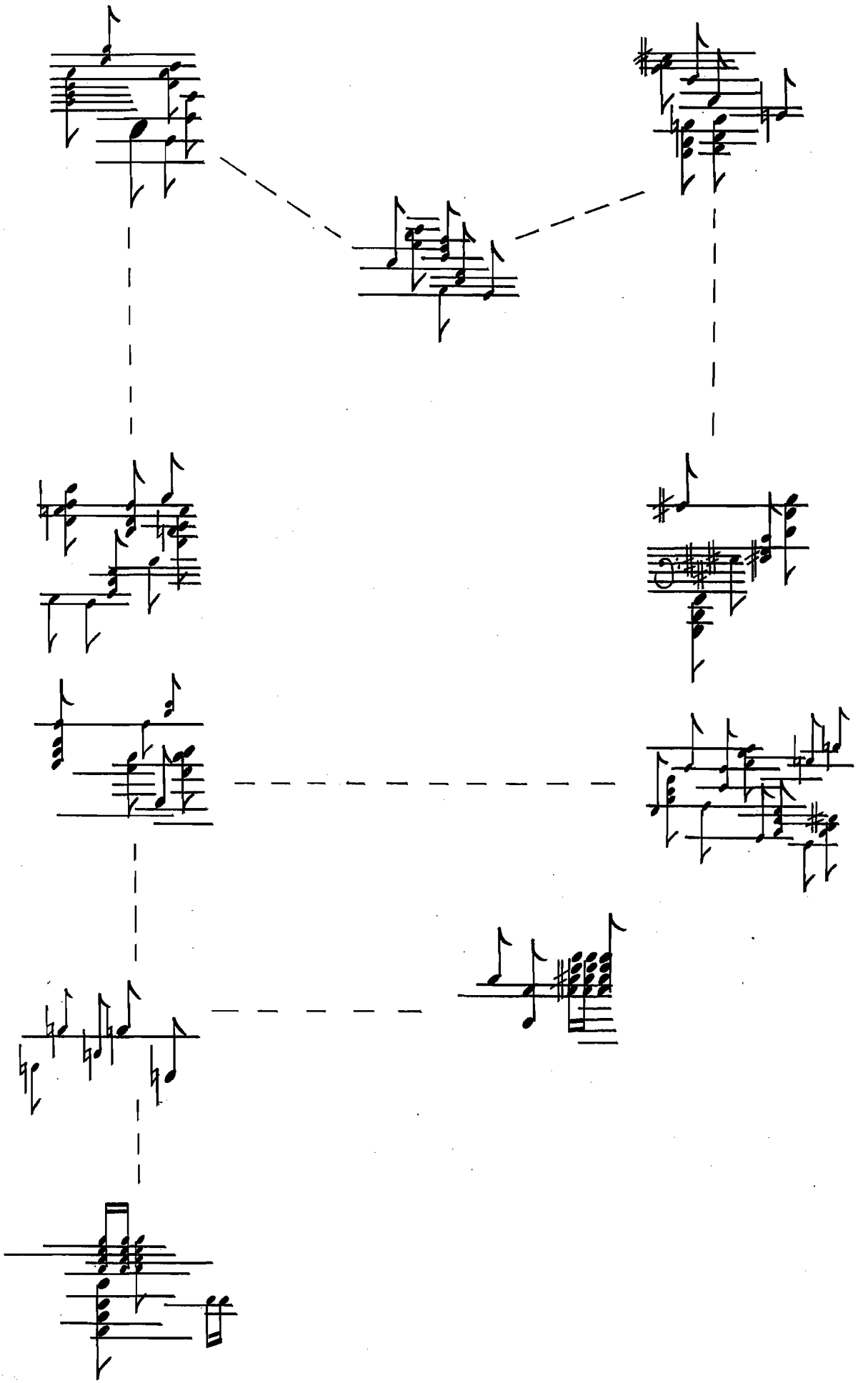
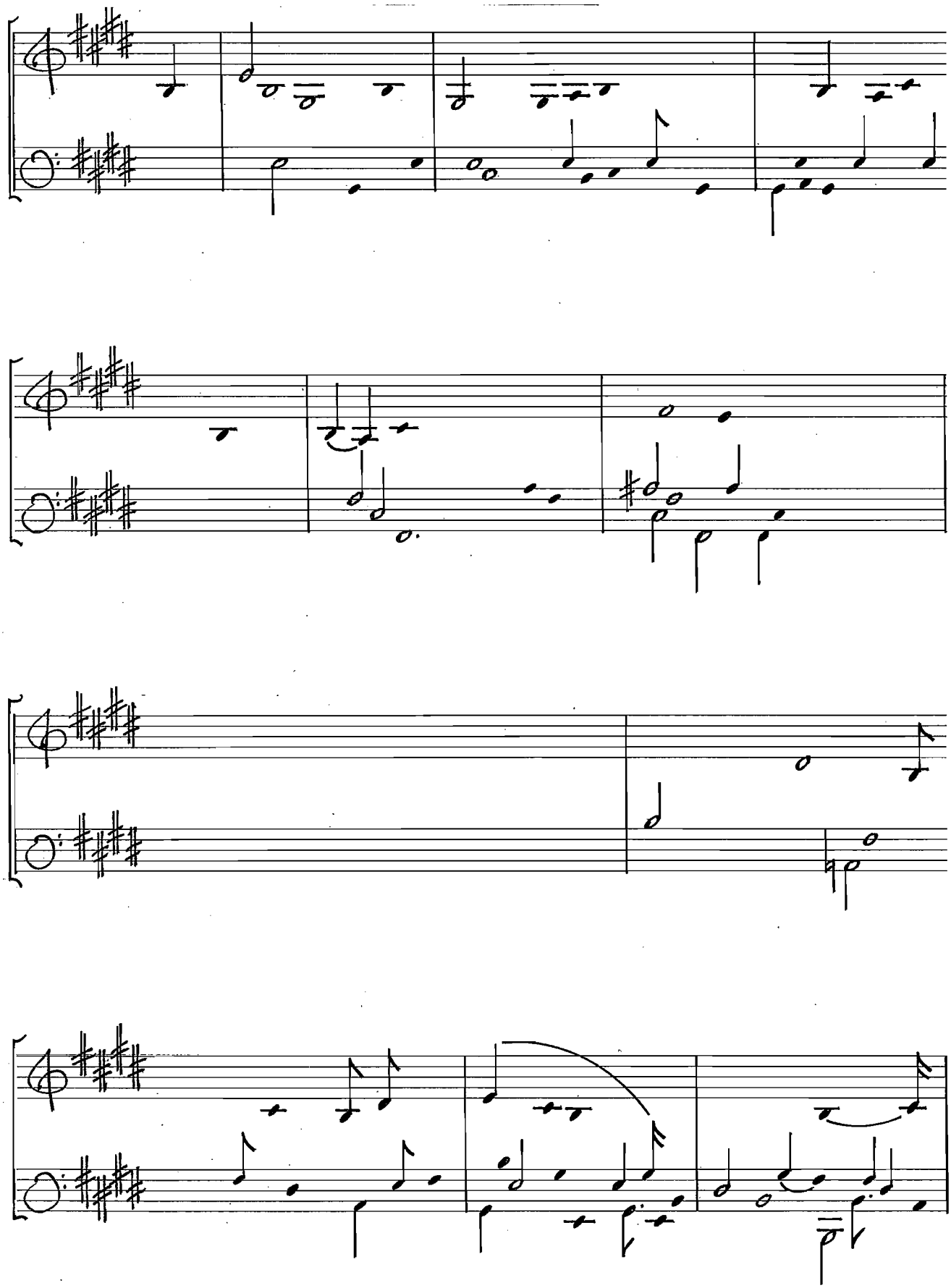


TUTTI

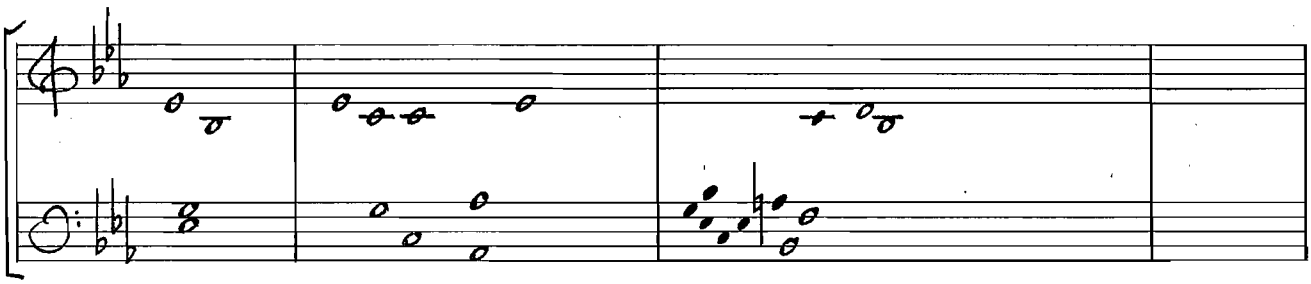
1.

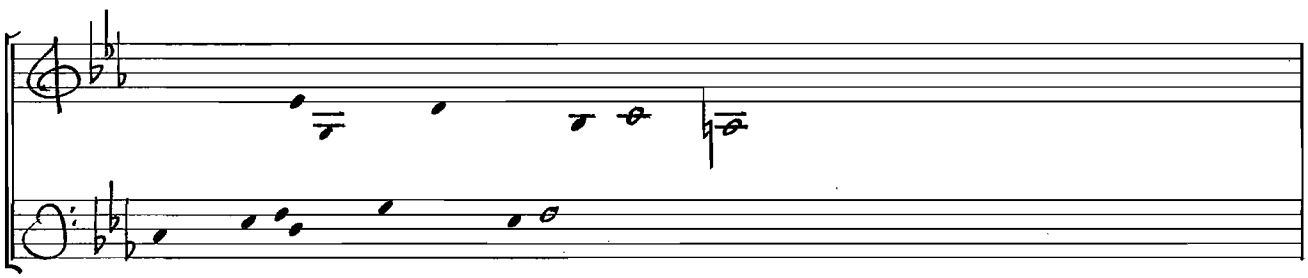
very sustained, p

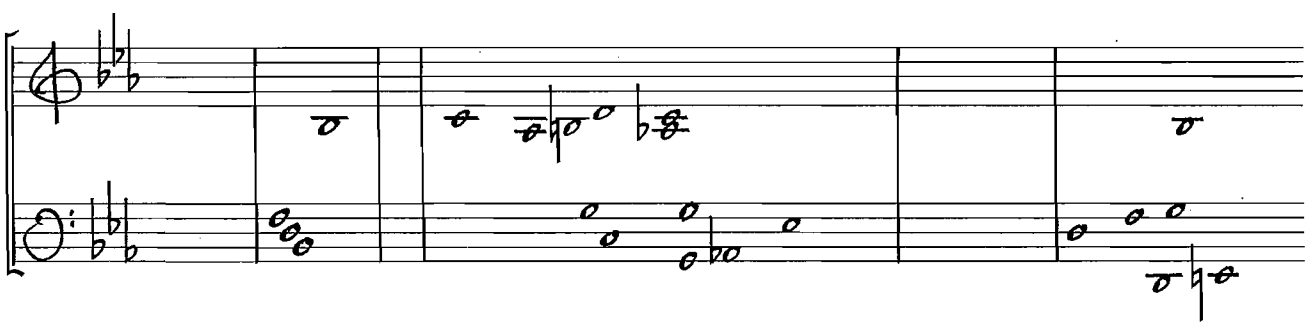


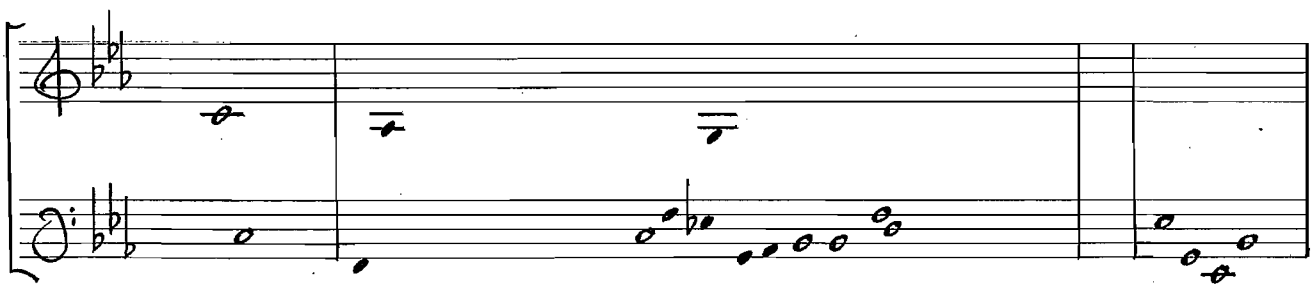
TUTTI

2.







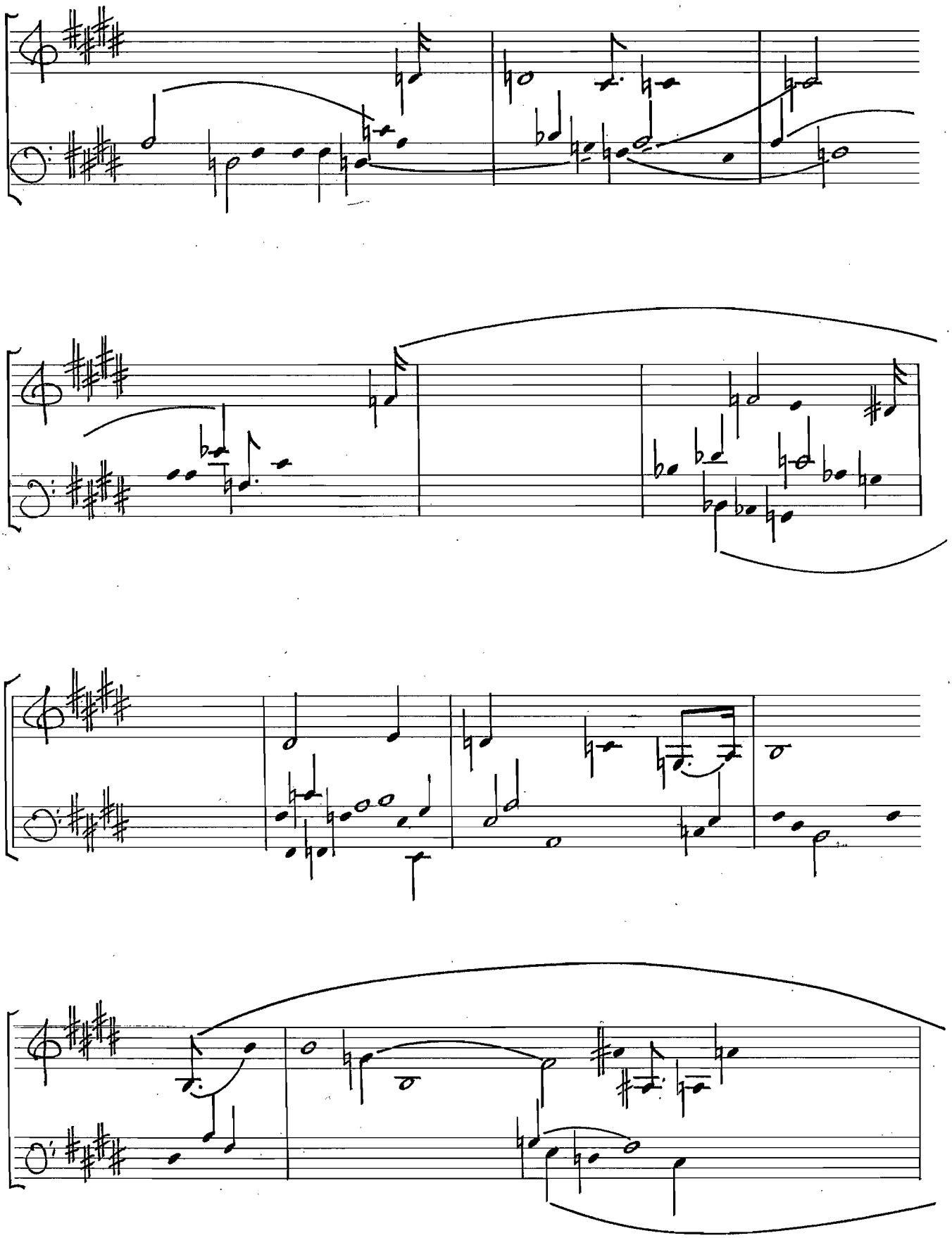


TUTTI T1

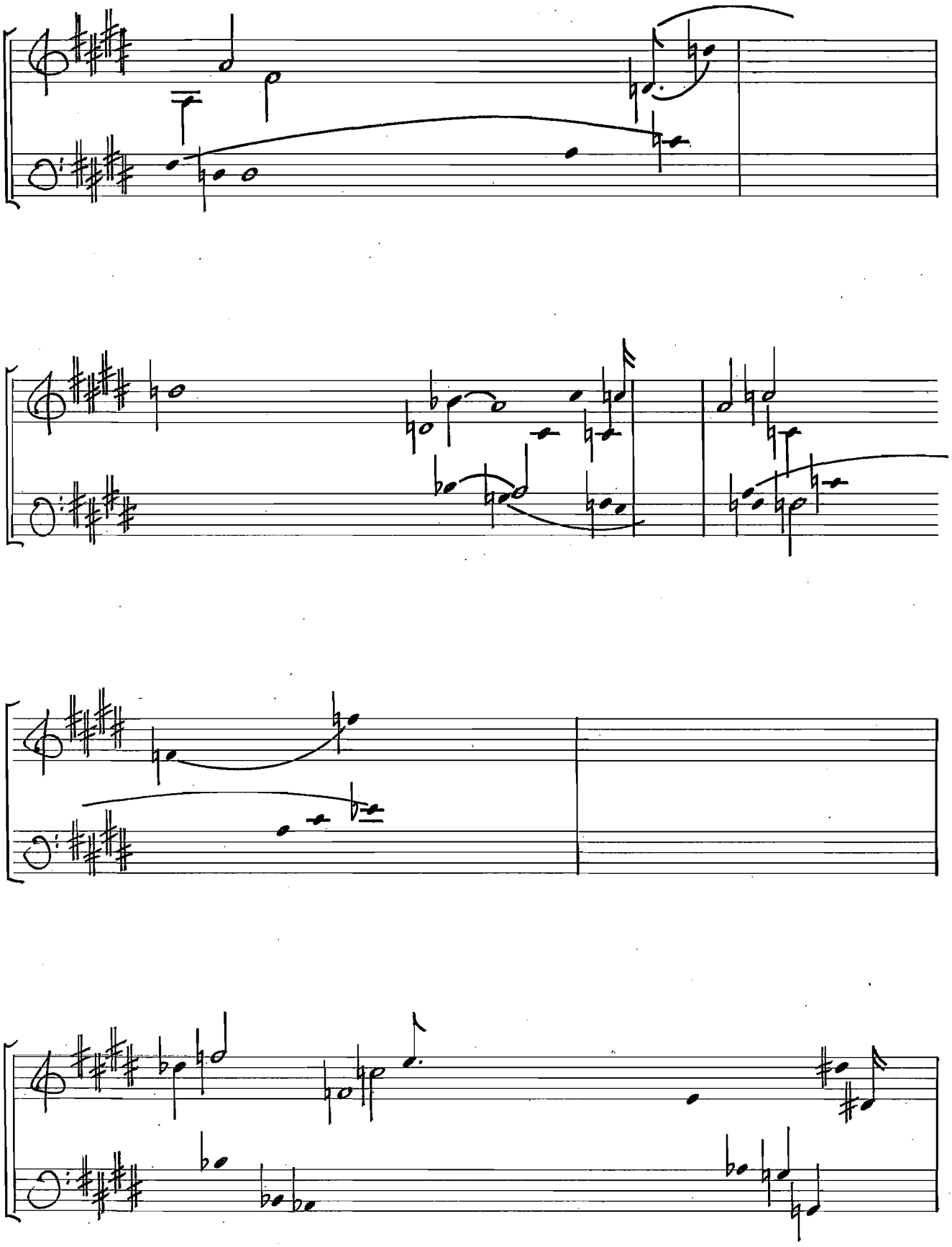
3.

very sustained, p

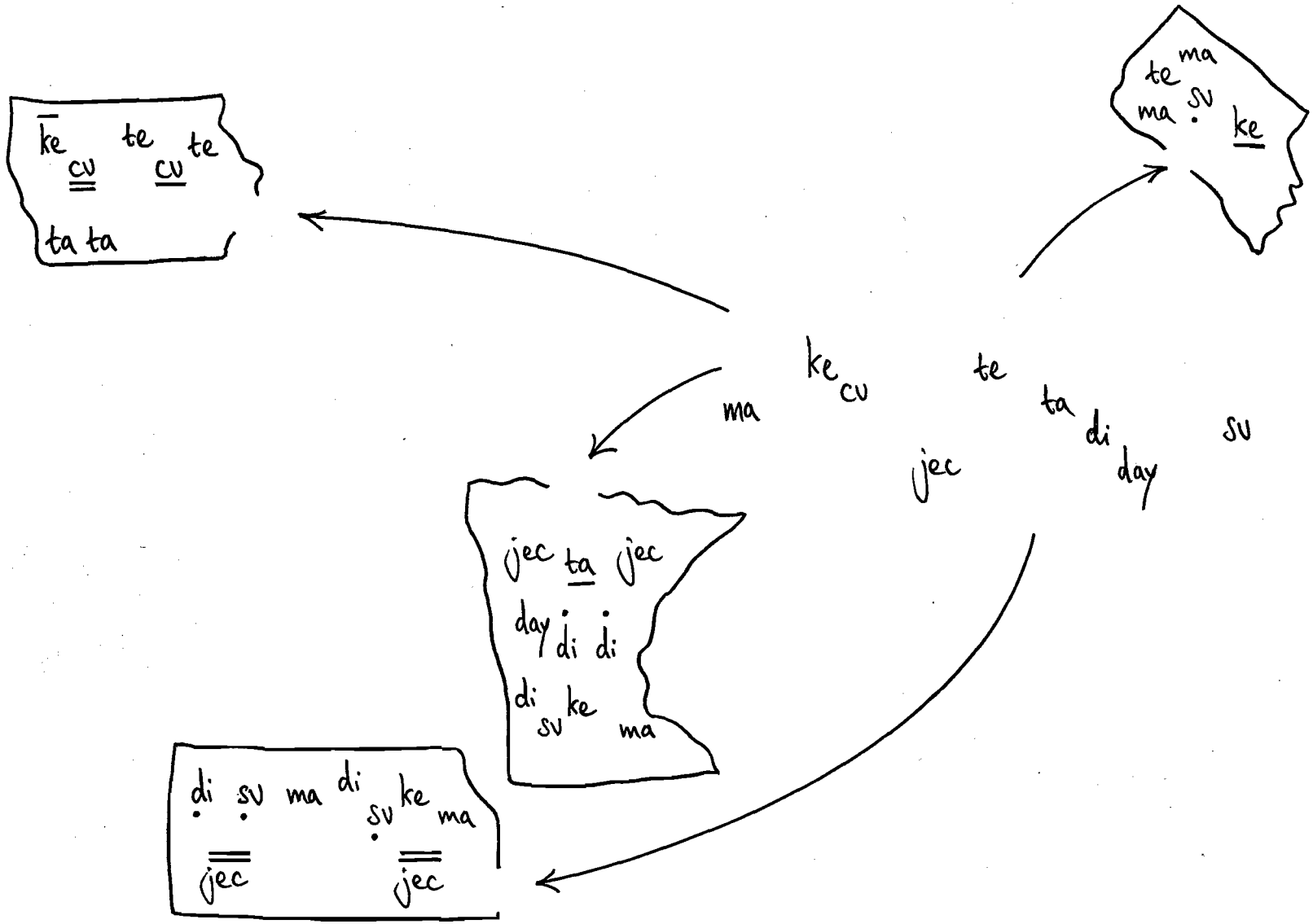
TUTTI T2



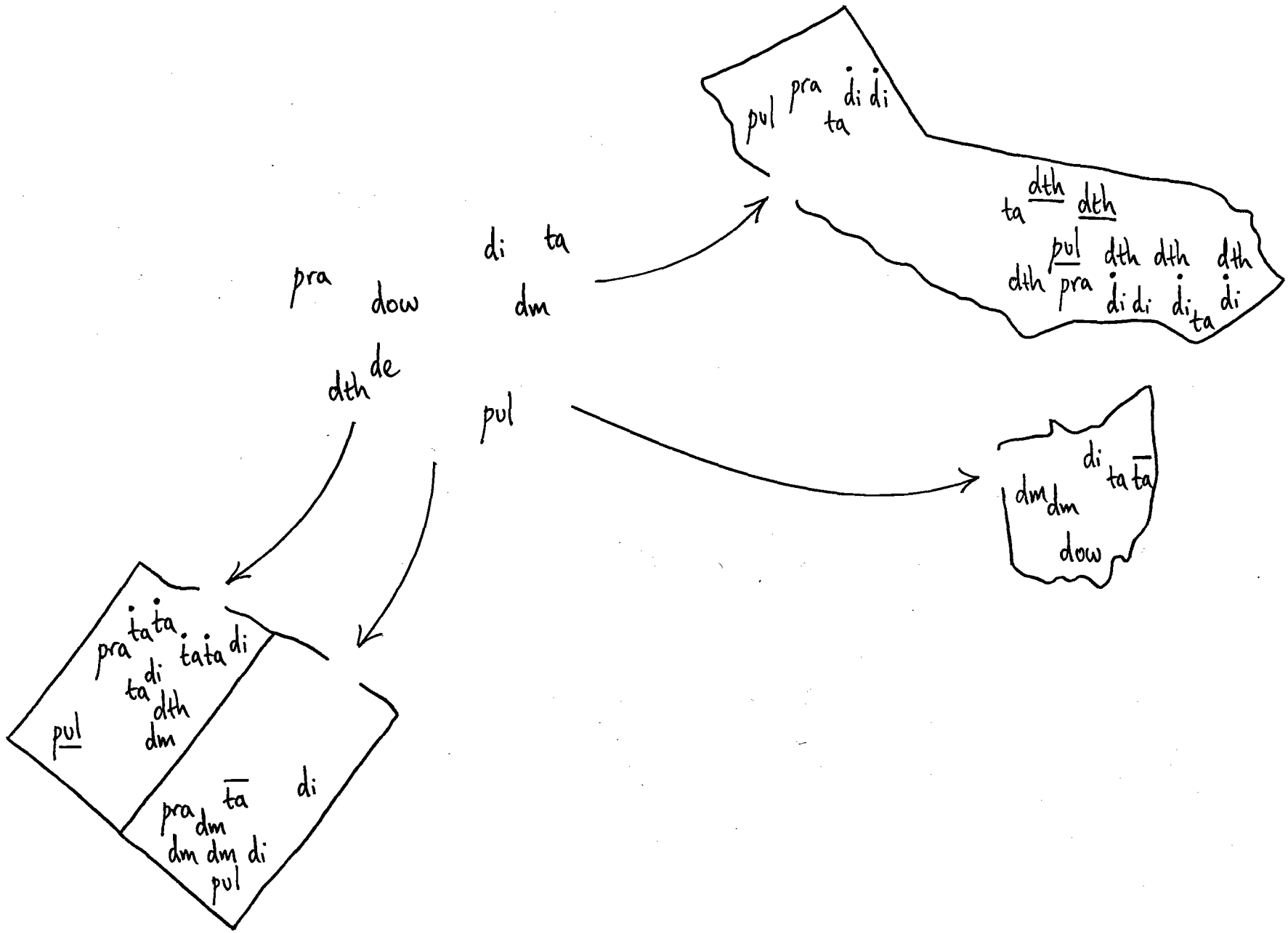
TUTTI T3



VOICE / PERCUSSION | GROOVE



VOICE/PERCUSSION | GROOVE



VOICE / PERCUSSION | CHANT

terial sfo iwill oemso

kethep heya ritu oems

ethem fma rith spi ma inkt retob alp ost

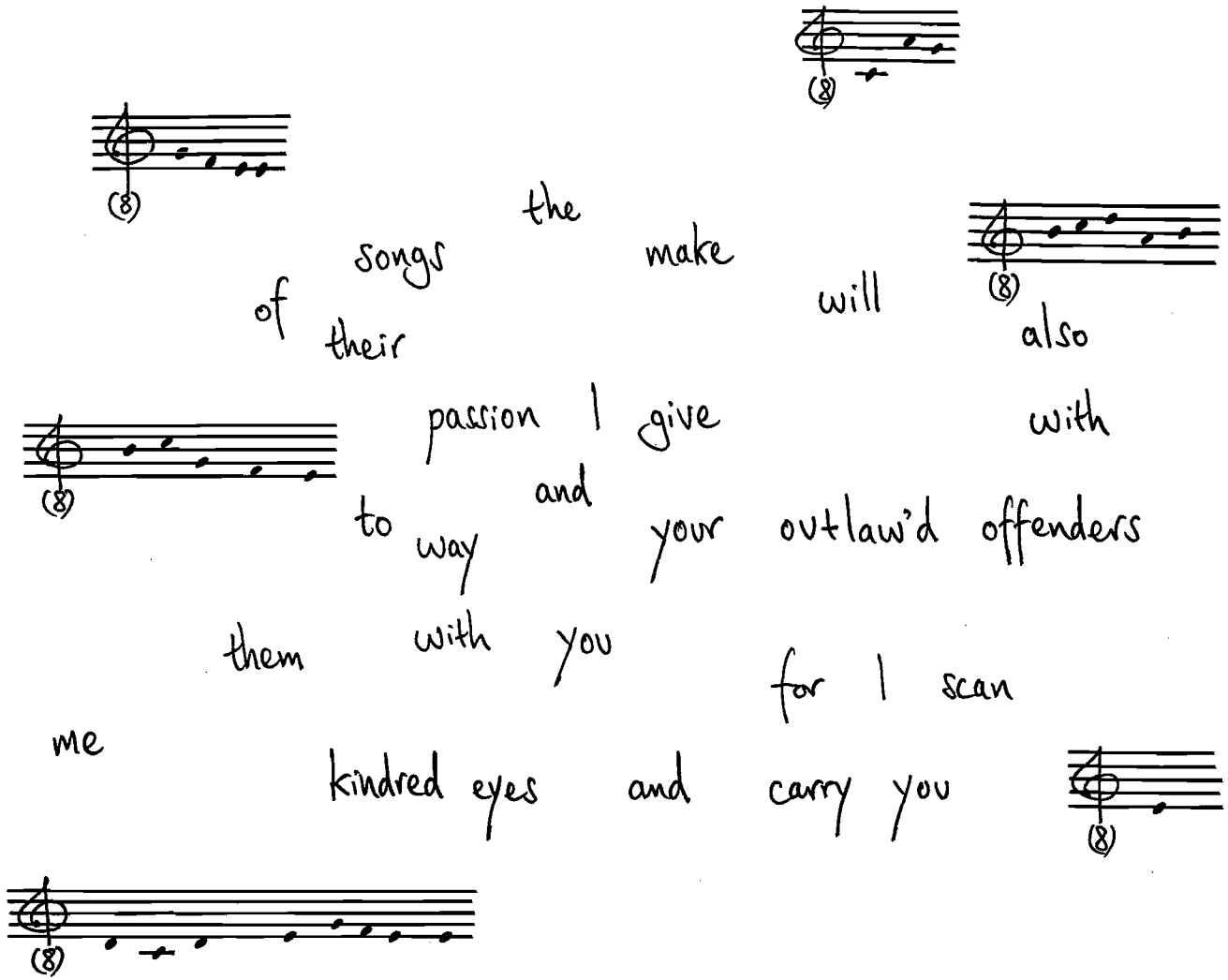
VOICE / PERCUSSION | CHANT

tsi unres vilal par talso mem hereis

ngs tric oemofe thep wha orateth fa imak

ted at ith soicom

VOICE / PERCUSSION | SONG

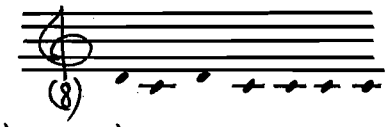


VOICE/ BOWED STRING | CHANT

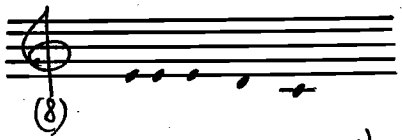
them gth two forth of these

the ongf that

VOICE / BOWED STRING | SONG



Chants of the chants



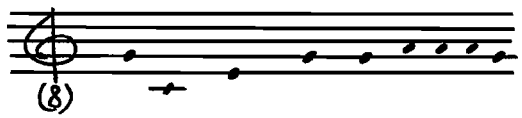
singing

in the West of chants

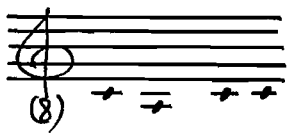
the

For you of chants

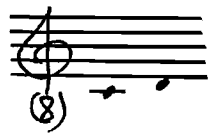
of Ohio



VOICE / BOWED STRING | SONG



And sing

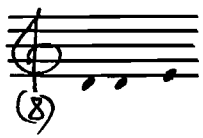


reference a day

but with |

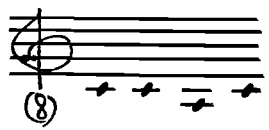
to not

to

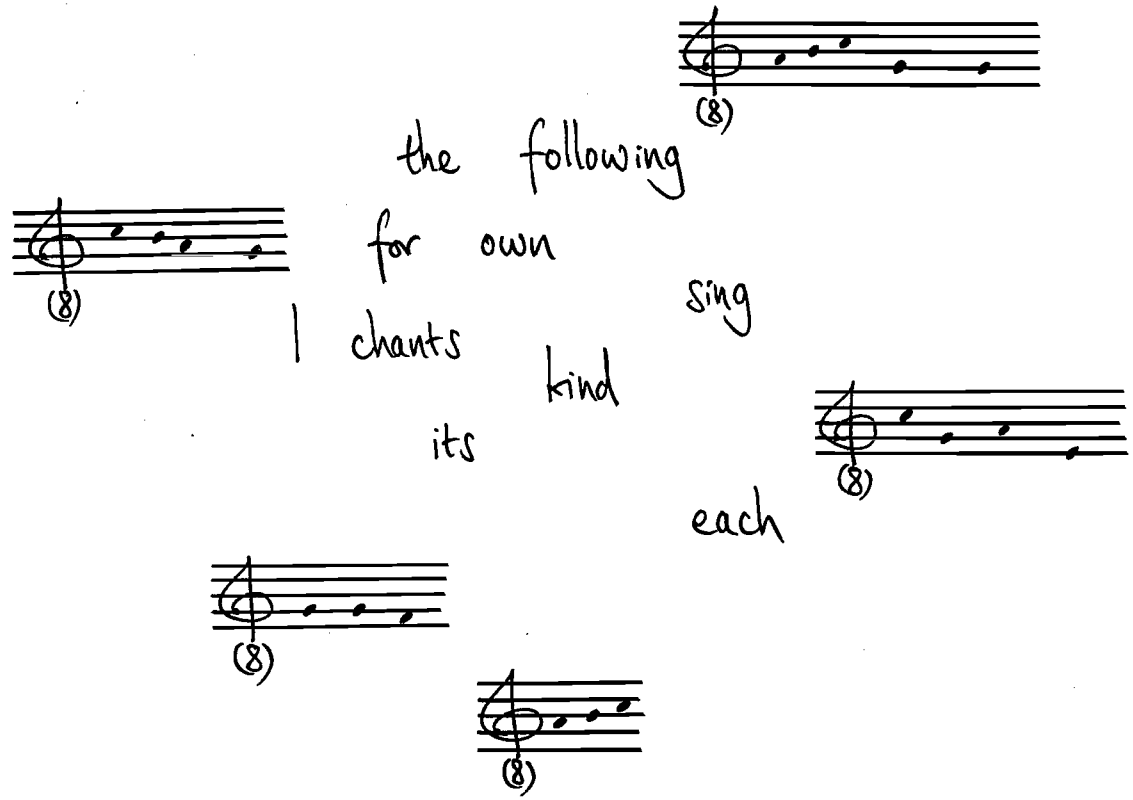


will with all days

reference



VOICE / BOWED STRING | SONG



VOICE / BOWED STRING | POEM

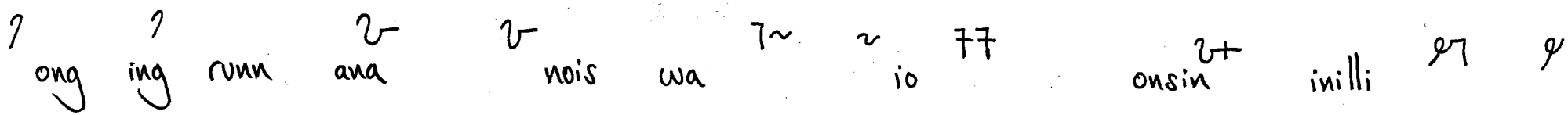
*énsup ysél , fwith oëmso*
*mort hep dófim hallth ta*
*dófim ep órith , ty , dyán*
*énsup andí , tyf , ty-fm*

*áketh **plym** ,, tá li*
*ýbo **thep** ,, tá li*
*fwith **dofím** ,, tá li*
*énsup **lan** ,, tá li*

*ínkis hallth , dof oëmso*
*willm ep órith dofím*
*ýsou plym , mor fm ta*
*énsup li , oëmso ty-fm*

***áketh táli***
*áketh táli*

VOICE / PLUCKED STRING | CHANT



VOICE / PLUCKED STRING | SONG

should

the poet

be

and love of

will the evangel-poem I

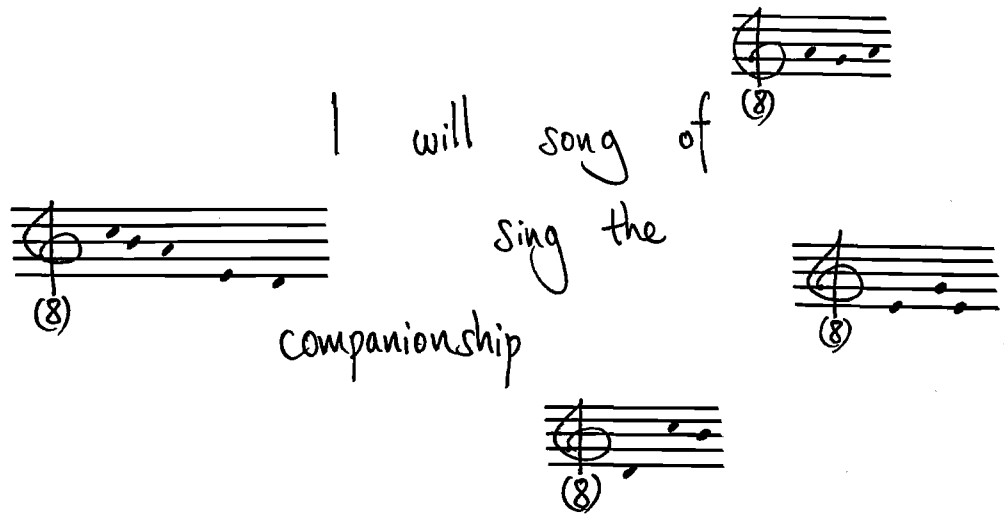
write

of comrades

of

who but I comrades?

VOICE / PLUCKED STRING | SONG



VOICE / PLUCKED STRING | POEM

tma Théle 'tofap
ast par oëmbu Féren ("art sbu oëmso")
.ngs thas oëmnor ceto
.ngs thas oëmnor oëmnor
top kep: "tma kéap"

~

embléan diwíllno Théle ("art sbu oëmswithre")
'swíthre ens tma thesoi
.ens: "Théle oëmnor?"
.ceto ught: "kep oëmnor"
'tofap Théle
thesoi tho "

~

tma Théle tofap
'swíthre ~ par oëmbu
re thesoi re ceto re .ngs .ngs
"kep ~ tma ~ "
Féren~Féren

Féren~Théle ("art sbu oëmnor")

willno ..
.iwíllma

VOICE / PLUCKED STRING | POEM

thépre .. thépre .. ebárdo ..
étruep . fri . díwill .. ebárdo ..
m'~do .. chésan . ma . lófwe ..
étruep .. fri . dáso . ebárdo .. ..

li . fórthee . int . oëmo ..
keth .. keth .. keth ..
ng . keiöf .. ng . úto .
thmenác . beth .. beth ..

keäso .. keiöf .. keth ..
dáso . diwill . fper ..
ma-ma-sóna-ty ..
néfor . dísent . pons .. ..

fall . wi . ársof . iwíll ..
keth . fall . théo . iwíll ..
íngpo . keäso .. m'~do ..
ful .. néfor .. ma ..

POEM (FIRST PAGE)

fagréa terrél, cau séha
ok'dat,, theg
Féren tesán cau séif
tésan cau séif Ferén

(.)todro todro theg(...)

thas oul thas
cirms kéas ghállsta
thémank Féren eísno
"Vínglo Níver Níver" theü

(dáno-dáno ... cómini)

fagréa nowý cau lésy
theg - arth - eísno
"jec-jec Rányp,
jec Ranýp"
leöfo ma ígion cirms

tónceh at céto
Rányp oul ouso
artic - thëoh

POEM (SECOND PAGE)

seíf ind seíf

(nébu . óneno
)... (todro theg)... (

pínthee eísno thes oul céto
ongth "esháll?",
tsof "esháll?",
twee - na - érmso
érmso ma nébu

ongth tesán thérte cómini
ghállsta leöfo thas
úlbe ok'dat
ánwill kéas
ther at ígion - todro)..)

pínthee dáno thes:
dáno( . )cómini

nébu(.. ..)óneno

POEM

óran dápro únany
tref shoo álliwill ngínses
ásor tésno icánse
upf sle álliwill ngínses

frómcen
ófrec
icánse icánse
ínneso tésno
svífy

wíscan dápro síssip worl
ófrec éa-sle innéso .. upf
rómka rómka ásor-dápro-ting
upf sle álliwill ngínses

óran
wíscan
grámachan
tíngsasan

svífysvífy
onésta-icánse-gram

equínt énce .. únany piänd
temáy.ew.tref.achán..
shoo.ófrec.éa

.tóex

.tésno

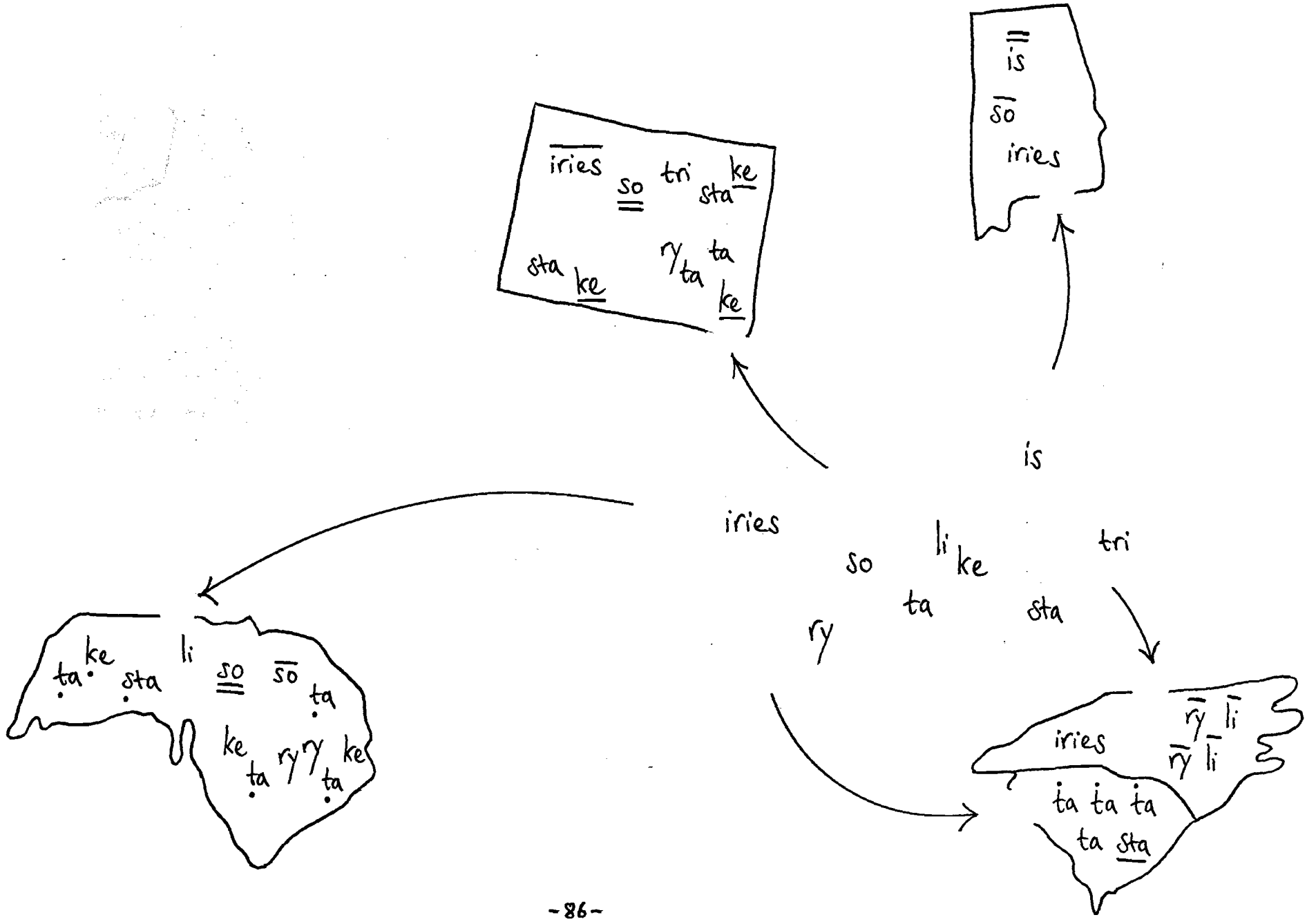
síssip..

síssip

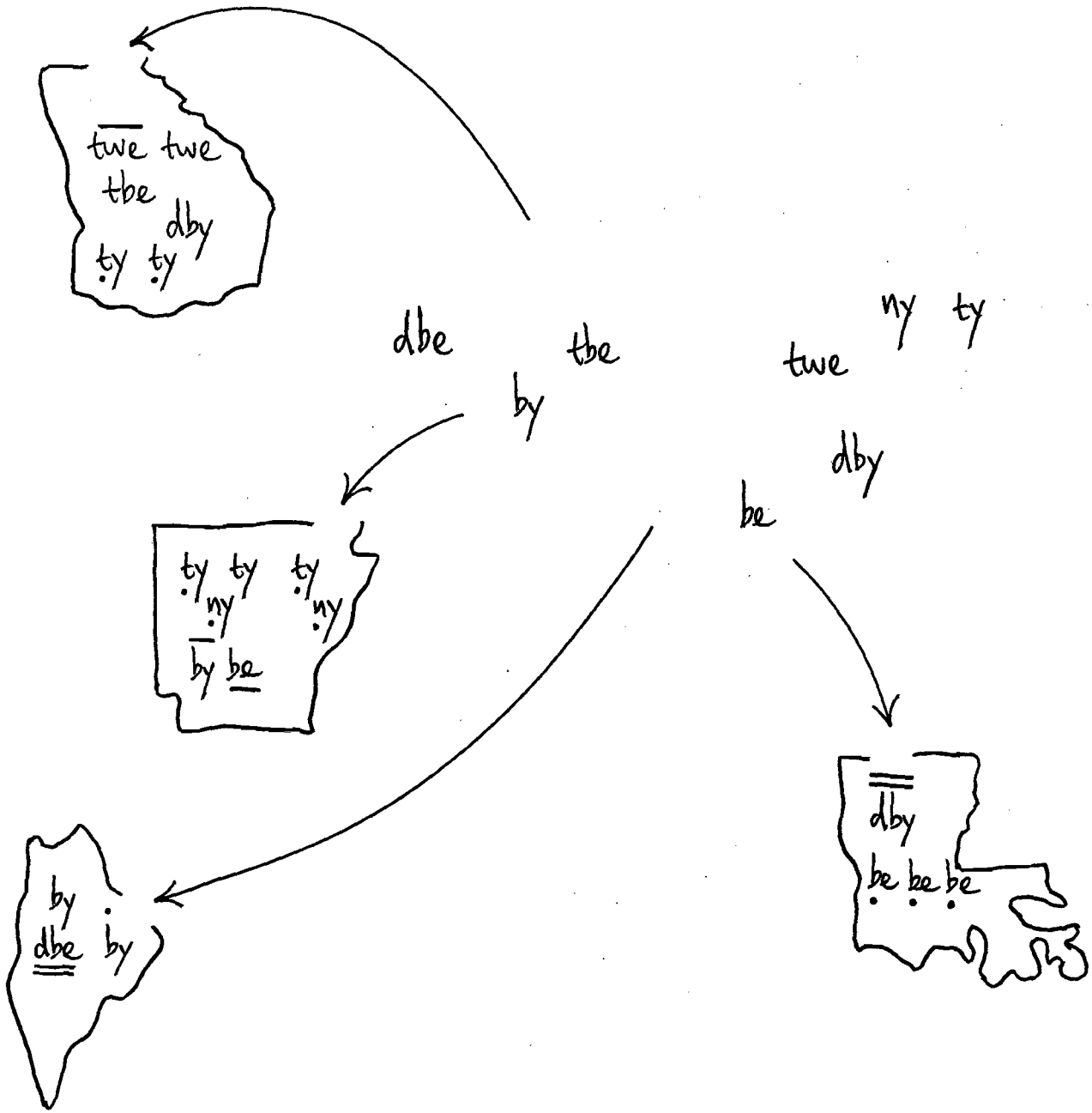
shoo.tref

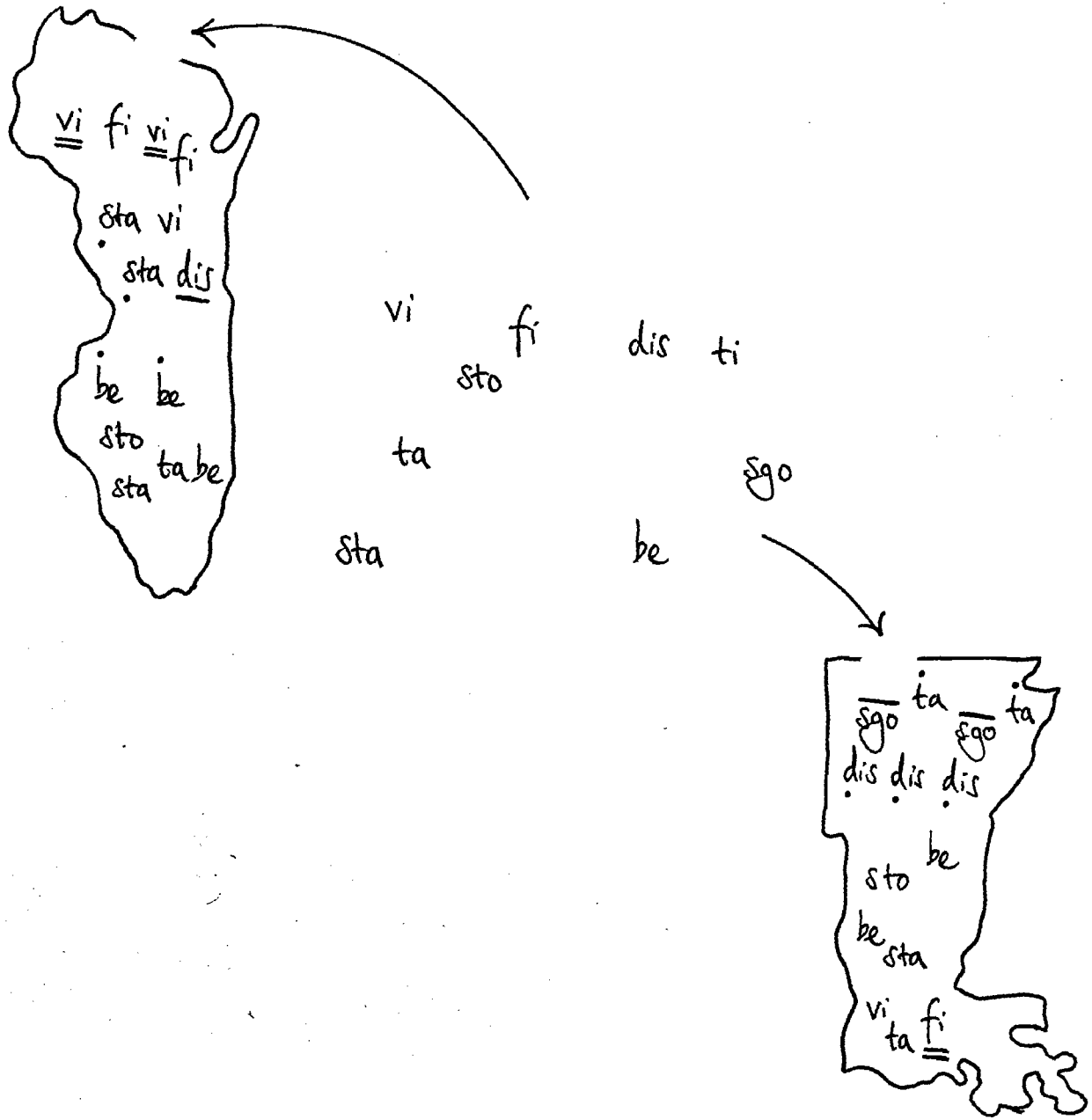
shoo.

..
. mémis


iries so tri ke sta
sta ke ry ta ta ke
is so iries
is
iries so li ke tri
ry ta sta
ta ke sta li so so ta
ke ta ry ry ke ta
iries ry li ry li
ta ta ta
ta sta

GROOVE


twe twe
tbe
dby
ty ty
dbe
tbe
by
twe
ny ty
dby
be
ty ty ty
ny ny
by be
by
dbe by
dby
be be be


vi fi vi fi
sta vi
sta dis
be be
sto
sta ta be
vi
fi
dis
ti
sto
ta
go
sta
be
go ta go ta
dis dis dis
be
sto
be sta
vi
ta fi

PSEUDOSTIC

witHout Art.
meAns to
comPosers.
Pills
uncertaintY after

Be replaced by another.)
satIsfied, He ahold of my hand has
tReatment of a question is
difficulTy always ask yourself: How did
THe philosopher's treatment of
holDing me by the
Artists without trying.
theY

iMagine
hardshIp and mounting debt after chaos and
unCertainty after all, that we
Hired Morgan Stanley to advise on a $15 billion
understAnding a
thE uncertainty after
reaL something has yet

oF which we interpret an
ExplanatIons come to an end somewhere.
tryiNg.
coNcept of a game, completely expressed
goIng on a bender
hardShip
truthS which regulate Art? Who?
MaY-be the things I perceive,

tHe dumps.
Artists without trying.
SPain is going
Plants, men, hills, shining and flowing waters, The skies
MaY-be the things I perceive, the animals, plants, men,

By means of
wIthout trying.
yeaRs, but at long last Jonny Wilkinson has
That
tHat of
supposeD to imagine under
Akin to understanding
VirtuositY.

aM 50. I haven't seen anything.
AttrItion 4.00 Drombeag 4.40
philosophiCal method, though there are indeed
wHen you are 50
thAt we may be deluded, That
appEarances,
aLong

coFfin in a
Is only because my voice is not strong
aN end somewhere.
haNd has completely satisfied me.
If to
themSelves as if to
firmS,
emploY the

tHird suit.
lAid down; we do not know what we
aPparitions, and the real something has yet to
interPret an unknown language.
onlY,

Battle against
requIre
eveRything as it is.
To
He
olD for
hAs yet to be known,
tapestrY I can now

DroMbeag 4.40 SHARP RIGGING 5.20 Grande Jete
Impalpable, the sense that
Completely satisfied me.
tHese and
And our requirement.
scalpEd him.
Leaves everything

beautiFul fable only,
It
seemiNg to me
haNd,
In
cheSt.
hiS own teenage years as
tYpes of rebid after opening a suit

tHe explanations that I
A weightlifter preparing
Pictorial evolution.
Plans for a £118 million rights
Yourself: How did we

By means of language.
savIngs from investors.
oR that of identity
The form: "I don't know my
Him.
Don't know my way about".
Animals, plants, men,
tapestrY I can now add the experience

coMe to an
stIrring race of the festival
Course they would) nought of what they appear, or
tHey are preparing for Vodafone's Japanese
philosophicAl problem has the
vEry old for their age.
terribLe doubt of appearances.

myselF, it is only
everythIng as it is.
Nothing further,
speculatioNs after all,
meanIng of a word
waS young people said
inStrument burst, snapped his spine & completely
paYments

**H**ired Morgan Stanley to advise on a $15
St**A**nley to advise on a $15 billion
S**P**ain is going on
conce**P**t of a game, completely expressed in
five-**Y**ear high after

may-**B**e these
the**I**r
**R**eplaced by another.)
wi**T**hout trying.
t**H**e Rural Payments Agency, which has failed to
bi**D**
**A**n end somewhere.
**Y**ourself: How did we learn the

Ra**M**a was never
sh**I**ning and flowing waters,
a**C**tual language, the sharper becomes the conflict between it
t**H**e
Expl**A**nations come to an end somewhere.
thr**E**e.
**L**ike Music as do most of our composers.

di**F**ficulty ask yourself: How did we
Mus**I**c as do most of our composers.
differe**N**t therapies.
ca**N** get by without Art.
Explanat**I**ons come to an
a**S** do most of our composers.
ha**S**
entirel**Y** changed points of view;

bewitc**H**ment of our intelligence by means of language.
w**A**ry of Art:
**P**reparing for Vodafone's
dum**P**s.
b**Y**

**B**ut seem)
"**I** don't know my
th**R**ee.
**T**his head – unless you yourself lay down what is
t**H**ey are) only apparitions, and the real something has
respon**D**er. (iii) Repeat of his own
m**A**y-be identity beyond the grave is a beautiful
m**Y** dog.

treat**M**ent of
wh**I**le holding
bewit**C**hment of our intelligence by means of language.
t**H**e explanations that
s**A**tisfied, He ahold
Th**E** philosopher's treatment of a
po**L**itical

**F**ailed to issue $3 billion in
**I**s the system of reference
ca**N** now add the experience of watching
RIGGING 3.15 War Of Attrition 5.20 Grande Jete
**I** haven't seen anything.
payment**S**
dump**S**.
m**Y** dog.

**H**ave a
e**A**rthy, earthly, Earth?
a**P**pearances
inter**P**ret an unknown language.
b**Y** any other.

**B**ehind pictorial evolution.
h**I**s young fans.
pe**R**ceive, the animals, plants, men, hills, shining and
augh**T** of them.
wit**H**out Art.
shoul**D** be wary of
est**A**blished the truths which regulate Art? Who?
alwa**Y**s a hundred years behind pictorial

**M**usical
countrys**I**de has *its own colour*.
**C**harged with untold and untellable
t**H**ree.
**A**n excellent *harmonic* exercise.
n**E**ither
me**L**ody will

**F**or the student, be an excellent *harmonic* exercise.
explanat**I**ons
goi**N**g on a bender tonight.
lo**N**g last
**I** know, nor any man knows, aught of
a**S** it is
alway**S**, for
the**Y** would) nought of what they appear

tHe maker of
Art? Who?
Perched on a coffin in a disused
tyPes of rebid after opening a
mY

Burst, snapped his spine & completely scalped him.
Impalpable, the sense that reason and words hold
tRied, in 1875, to use
afTer all, that we may be deluded,
tHere are indeed methods, like different therapies.
pervaDe us
yeArs I was young, people said to me:
CitY 4.00 Drombeag

Most rancorous.
establIshed the truths in Art? Who?
Charged with untold
witHout Art
As do most of our composers.
Everything as it is.
earthLy, Earth?

aFter all,
CapIta, the blue-chip support services group, have been charged
imagiNe a form of life.
Nelson Mandela regaled the
Is not *a* philosophical method, though there are indeed
Somewhere.
haS
tYpes of rebid

mucH more akin to understanding a theme
As trade commissioner yesterday when European
dumPs.
interPret an unknown language.
Yesterday with

But what
SpaIn is going on a bender
hundRed years behind pictorial evolution
undersTanding a theme in music
bewitcHent of our
chargeD with untold and untellable wisdom, I am silent,
Art: it
SYphon in C; following the execution of a trill,

wisdoM: they know everything.
If to confound me
Children have natural wisdom: they know everything.
tHe Syphon in
(As doubtless they indeed but seem) as from
Evolution is always a hundred
phiLosophical method, though there are

oF his own suit. (iv)
savIngs from
thiNk to myself, it is only because
thaN one musical theme can be
pIg thief.
againSt the bewitchment of our
iS much more akin to
maY-be reliance and hope

tHe grave,
wAr
rePlaced by any
Perceive
StanleY to

douBt of appearances.
wIth Australian Institute of Sport
hundRed years behind pictorial evolution.
To be known,
His first major political victory as trade commissioner
anD our actual requirement.
Artists without
saY out loud that

Made his apologies to one of his young
mIllion rights issue to bolster its
Curiously answer'd by my lovers, my dear friends,
pHilosopher's treatment of
Aught of them,)
fEderal Sports Minister, said that unidentified
mereLy Virtuosity.

From my
lIke the treatment of
upoN this earthy, earthly, Earth?
explaNations
bewItchment of
appearanceS or that
diSused Birmingham bank.
PaYments Agency, which has failed to issue £3 billion

tHeft of savings from investors
clAss of
comPletely satisfied
interPret an unknown
trYing.

Birmingham bank.
In which we employ the word
aRe curiously answer'd by my
To an end somewhere.
somewHere.
Did I come to do
Air, the impalpable, the sense that
onlY,

forMs, may-be these are
wIll be
Course they
ricH
Alleged theft of savings from investors.
Examination of a melody will always, for
foLlowing the execution of a trill, the instrument

Firms, Cerberus Capital
everythIng.
thiNk to myself, it is only because my
loNg last
VIenna tried, in 1875, to use the Syphon
dumpS.
doeS not have *its own harmony*, any more
countrYside has *its own colour*.

**H**is first major political
regul**A**te Art? Who?
Sy**P**hon in
conce**P**t of a
uncertaint**Y** after all,

**B**irmingham bank.
perce**I**ve, the animals, plants, men, hills, shining
bende**R** tonight.
**T**o do upon
t**H**us: the meaning of a word is
han**D** has completely satisfied me.
**A**ny man knows, aught of them,)
ver**Y** old for their age.

beco**M**es the
the**I**r age.
repla**C**ed by any other.
t**H**at we may be deluded,
w**A**ry of
m**E**lody does not
estab**L**ished the truths which regulate Art? Who?

**F**or the student, be an excellent *harmonic* exercise.
*harmon**I**c* exercise.
a**N**swer'd by my lovers, my dear
ha**N**d has completely satisfied me.
mus**I**c than one may think.
know**S**, aught of them,)
i**S** often merely
tapestr**Y** I can now add the

SHARP RIGGING 3.15 War of
MAndela regaled the cast of an Oscar-winning gangster
conceP t
aPologies to one of
SYphon in C; following the execution of

Becomes the conflict between it and our requirement.
tonIght.
aRe curiously answer'd by my lovers, my dear
DeTroit City 4.00
PHilosophy
laiD down; we do
And the
theY are preparing

eMployees of Capita, the blue-chip support
countrysIde
Charged with untold and untellable wisdom, I am silent,
tHe dumps.
Am
nEver down in the dumps.
phiLosophical method, though there are

oF appearances or
whIle holding me by the hand.
thiNk to myself, it is only because
iN the explanations that I could give?
terrIble doubt of
Suit: (i)
NelSon Mandela regaled the cast of an
five-Year high after the maker of electronics and window

tHese are (as doubtless they are) only apparitions, and
hAve natural wisdom: they know everything.
sharPer becomes the conflict between it
emPloyees of Capita, the blue-chip support
bY means of which we interpret an unknown

Bender tonight.
I could give?
somewheRe.
Trying.
everytHing.
beyonD the grave is a beautiful fable only,
sAid to me: "You will see when you are
bY without Art.

Most stirring
wIthout trying.
KetChum 4.40
Has made
Australian Institute of Sport accommodation in Canberra occupied by
bE wary of Art: it is often merely Virtuosity.
ALl the years

oF a question is like
Identity beyond
beeN charged after a police
raNcorous.
tonIght.
Say
Satisfied me.
maY think.

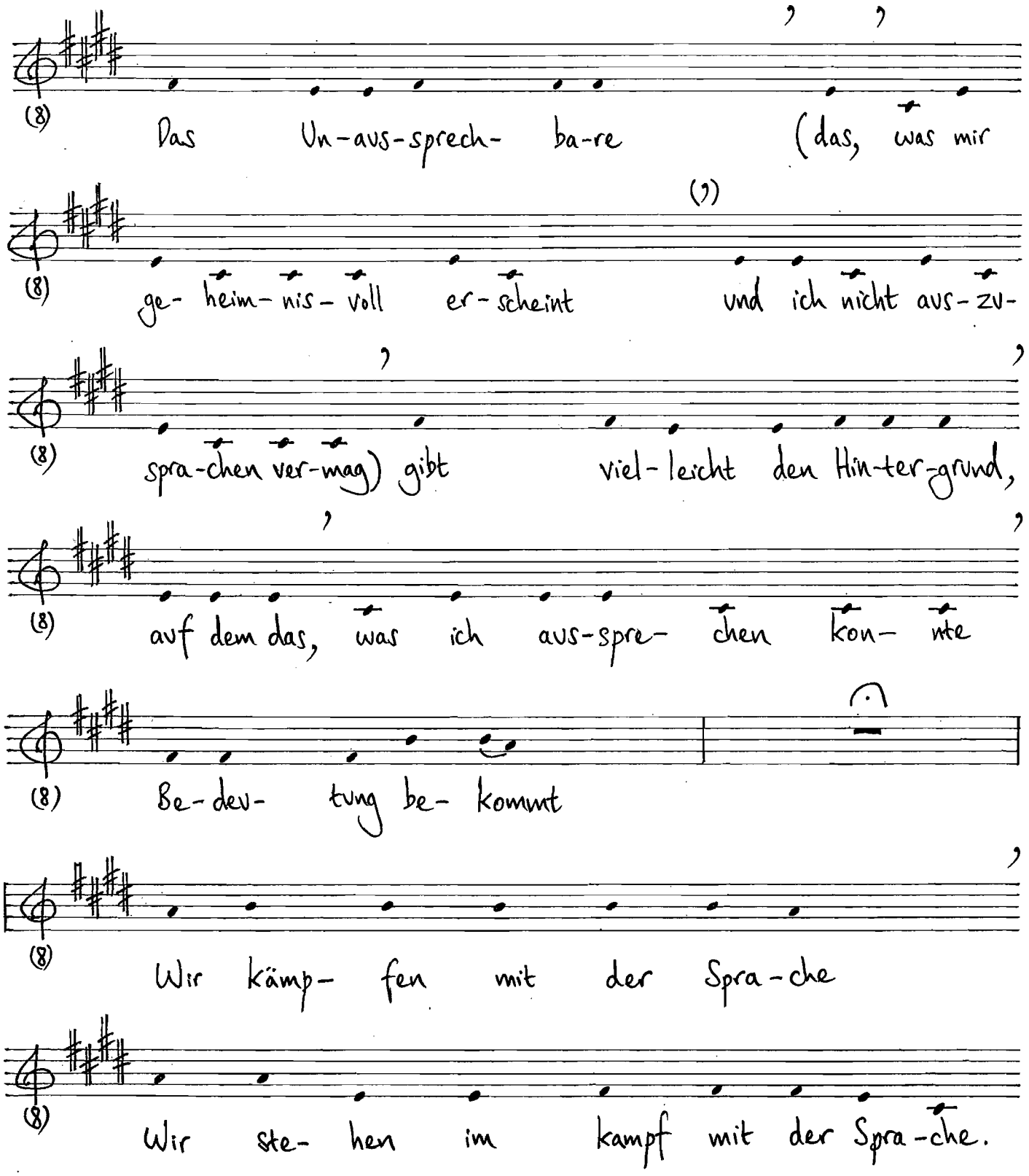
Has been
An end
aPparitions, and the real something has yet to be
Pig thief.
sYringes and vials in Australian

proBlem has the form: "I
theIr age.
expRessed in
Trying.
tHeft
anD
After all, that
everYthing

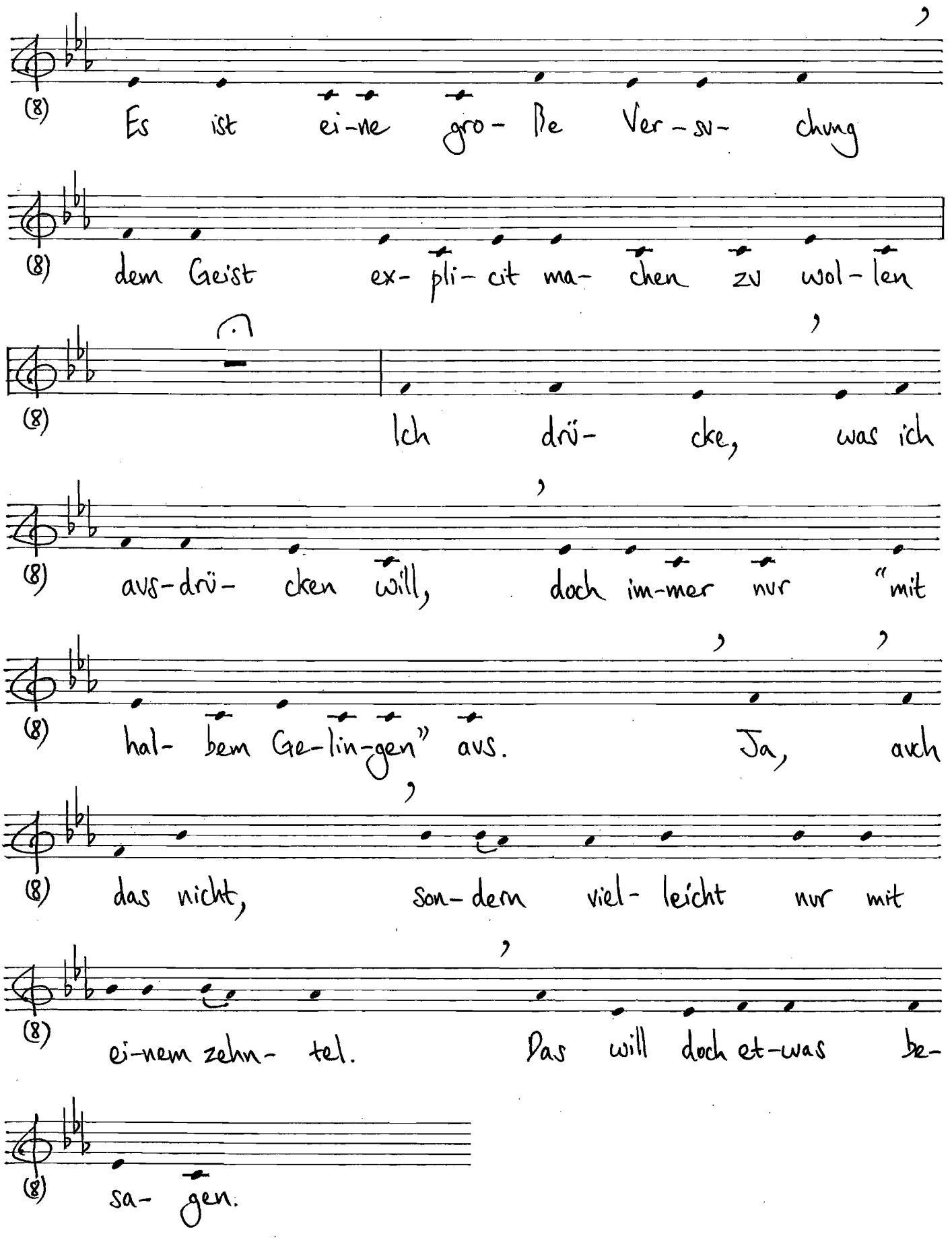
Most
theIr age.
ProvidenCe Equity Partners, have hired Morgan
Has made his
whAt did I come to do upon
pEople, young people, are very old for their age.
Let us be artists without

Forms, may-be these are (as doubtless
uncertaInty after all, that we may be
studeNt, be an excellent *harmonic* exercise.
akiN to understanding a theme in music than
Ideas
thingS I
uSe the Syphon in C; following the execution of
anY man knows, aught of

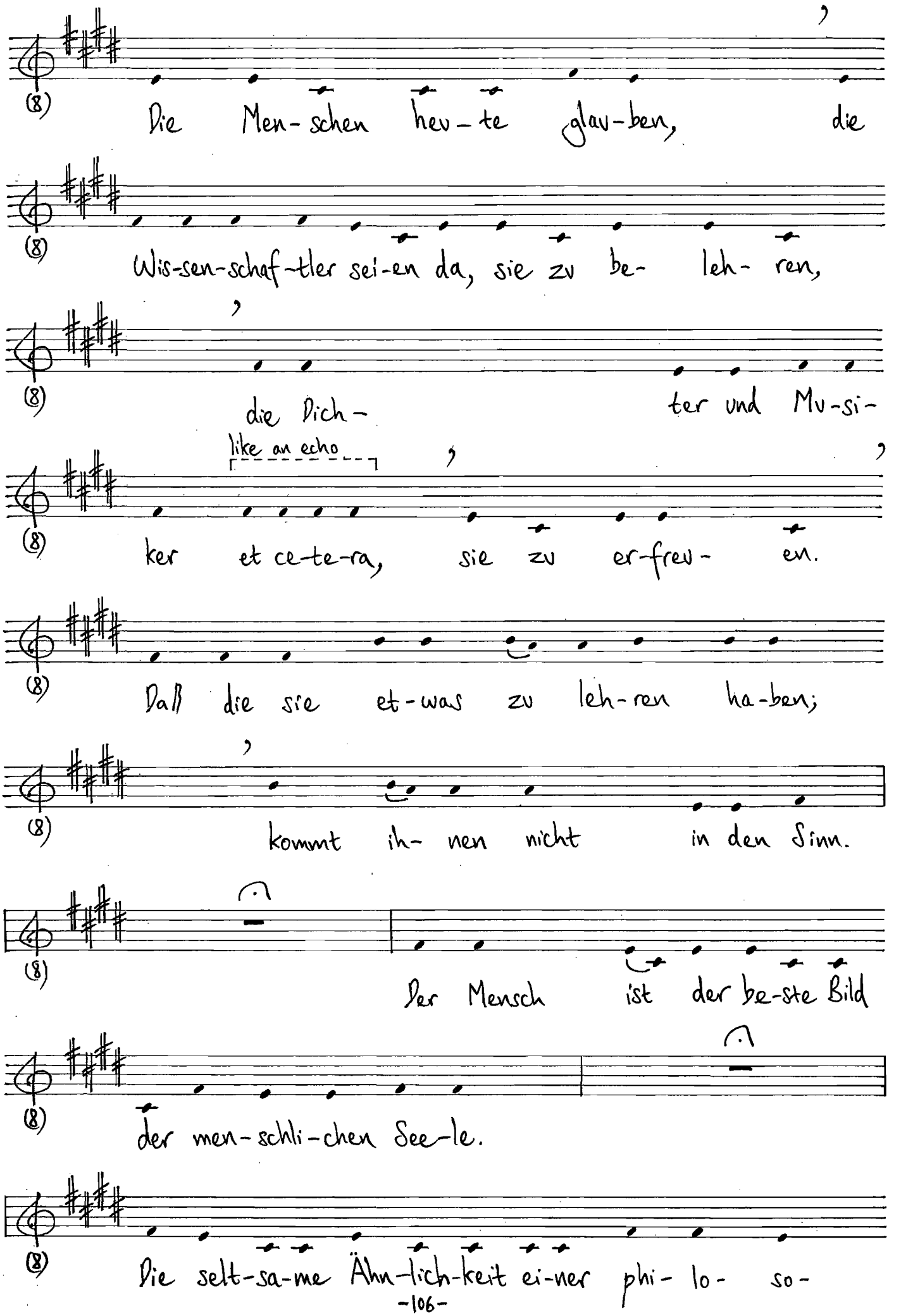
MELODY 1


Das Un-aus-sprech- ba-re (das, was mir
ge- heim- nis- voll er- scheint und ich nicht aus- zu-
spra-chen ver-mag) gibt viel- leicht den Hin-ter-grund,
auf dem das, was ich aus-spre- chen kon- nte
Be-deu- tung be- kommt
Wir kämp- fen mit der Spra-che
Wir ste- hen im kampf mit der Spra-che.

MELODY 2


Es ist ei-ne gro- Be Ver-su- chung
dem Geist ex- pli- cit ma- chen zu wol- len
Ich drü- cke, was ich
aus-drü- cken will, doch im-mer nur "mit
hal- bem Ge-lin-gen" aus. Ja, auch
das nicht, son- dern viel- leicht nur mit
ei-nem zehn- tel. Das will doch et-was be-
sa- gen.

MELODY 3


Die Men-schen heu-te glau-ben, die
Wis-sen-schaf-tler sei-en da, sie zu be- leh- ren,
die Dich- ter und Mu-si-
like an echo
ker et ce-te-ra, sie zu er-freu- en.
Daß die sie et-was zu leh-ren ha-ben;
kommt ih- nen nicht in den Sinn.
Der Mensch ist der be-ste Bild
der men-schli-chen See-le.
Die selt-sa-me Ähn-lich-keit ei-ner phi- lo- so-

MELODY 3 CONT'D