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In Other Words,

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Soprano saxophone, prepared piano and live electronics. [ca. 9′] Premiered by Eliot Gattegno (sax) and Chryssie Nanou (piano) at Stanford University on November 2, 2006. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.

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Bruno Ruviaro

In Other Words,

music for soprano saxophone, prepared piano and live-electronics

(2006)

http://ccrma.stanford.edu/~ruviaro

Instructions for the Performers

PIANO PREPARATION

C4 = Middle C

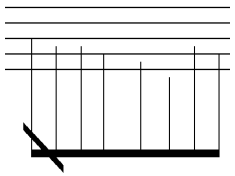
The strings of the piano should be prepared with a duct tape or similar. The goal is to dampen the entire sound of the piano: it will become less bright and less resonant. The high two octaves will lose almost completely the sense of pitch, becoming a highly percussive sound. As one progresses from the high octaves to the middle range of the piano, the notes should gradually recover their sense of pitch and part of their natural sustain/decay time. Octave C6 to C5 is approximately where this transition occurs. From C5 to C4 (middle C), notes should resemble a normal piano, but with a shorter sustain and a less pronounced timbre. From C4 down to C1, the sustain time should gradually increase. Notes in the middle and low register should sound darker (with less harmonics); also they should not last as long as they would in a normal piano. As a general guideline, here are some suggested sustain/decay times for each C across the piano (when played *forte*):

C7 = dies immediately
C6 = dies immediately
C4 (middle C) = 4-5 seconds to die out
C5 = 2-3 seconds to die out
C3 = 5-7 seconds to die out
C2 = 8-10 seconds to die out
C1 = 11-12 seconds to die out

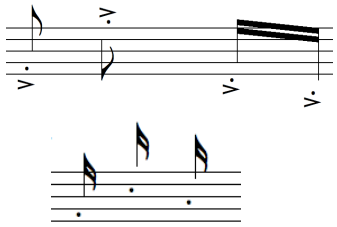
In order to achieve this, pieces of tape should be positioned on the strings at appropriate distances from the dampers and hammers. The exact positioning and size of these pieces of tape will vary according to different pianos. Tips:

- For the highest strings—which do not have dampers—, one single piece of tape is generally enough to produce the percussive effect.
- For the middle range, pieces of tape can be cut in different widths as necessary. It is also useful to experiment with tape positioning: increasing the distance from the dampers increases decay time and pitch definition.
- The low register usually requirer one single narrow piece of tape.
- Never put tape where the hammers hit the strings, since the glue may stick to the felt or to the strings.
- Find pictures and sound examples of this preparation at http://eamusic.dartmouth.edu/~bruno/comp_inotherwords.html

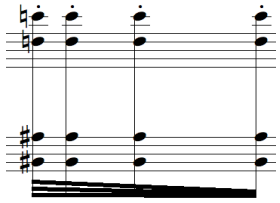
NOTATION



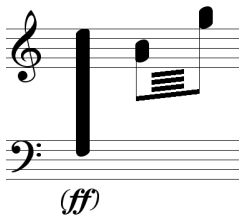
[PIANO] Indeterminate number of notes played as fast as possible. Pitches are also indeterminate: move fingers very rapidly and "travel" with the hand within the octaves suggested by the figure.



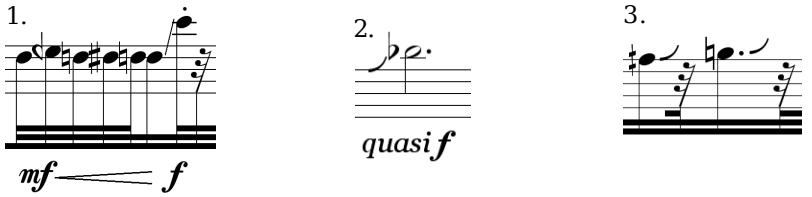
[PIANO] Isolated notes of indeterminate pitch. These notes should stand out from the otherwise continuous flow of indeterminate notes. Although they are written using specific note values (such as 32nd-, 16th- or 8th notes), their actual durations are not strict and should be determined by the player.



[PIANO] Four repetitions of this chord in a gradual *rallentando*.

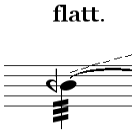


[PIANO] Clusters always include black and white keys. The approximate register is indicated by the upper and lower limits of the cluster sign. Larger clusters are played with the arms (even when "rolled"). Small clusters are the size of a hand.



[SAX] Glissandi: the first example shows a normal glissando between two specified notes (ex. 1). Second and third examples show short glissandi to be realized right before (ex. 2) or after (ex. 3) the specified pitch, that is, reaching the note or abandoning the note with a short glissando.

[SAX] Slap tongue pizzicato (usually pitched). Occasionaly, the player may choose to play a more aggressive, unpitched slap, according to the context.



[SAX] Flatterzunge: flutter tongue.

[SAX & PIANO] Long, medium and short fermatas.

Flute tone [SAX]: Without the mouthpiece, play directly on the neck imitating the sound of a Western-style flute. Alternatively, the player may choose to keep the mouthpiece and try to achieve a very weak tone, without many harmonics.
Saxnay [SAX]: Without the mouthpiece, play directly on the neck imitating the sound of an oriental nay flute. Alternatively, the player may choose to keep the mouthpiece and try to achieve a very nasal tone.
Tempo lines [SAX]: On pages 1 and 2, the Tempo for the saxophone part fluctuates according to the "Tempo line" (staff above the sax). The oscillation takes place between "as fast as possible" and "quarter note equals 100". Thus, the player has to modulate the continuous sequence of 32nd notes with phrase-by-phrase *rallentando* and *accelerando* as indicated by the contour of the line.
Growl [SAX]: Make a growling sound in the throat as you play. The result is a very noisy, distorted tone.

SYNCHRONIZATION OF THE TWO INSTRUMENTS

For the first five systems (pages 1-3), the saxophone and the piano run largely independent from each other. The only places in which the two must be strictly aligned are the beginning and the end of each system (line):

- After the two players have attacked together the beginning of the piece (a cluster for the piano, a high D for the sax), they should not worry about the synchronization of the following events in that system. By the end of this first system, it is mandatory that the piano reaches its left-hand trill just before the sax arrives at the quarter-note rest with fermata. The pianist then waits on the trills until the sax is ready to move to the next system.
- They attack the beginning of the second system together, and follow the same procedure (no synchronization until the end of the line). Now, by the end of the second system, the pianist should start its ascending scale just after the sax has finished its phrase. Note that now the sax waits the pianist's scale in order for them to attack together the beginning of the third system (p. 2).
- They attack together the beginning of the third system. Same procedure of non-synchronization thereafter. By the end of the third system, the pianist's repeated chords will serve as a sort of "pick-up beat" for them to enter together at the beginning of the fourth system.
- They attack together the beginning of the fourth system. Same procedure as above. The pianist waits for the last note of the sax on that line to strike his lower cluster at the beginning of the fifth system. Note that there is no corresponding attack in the sax part at the beginning of the fifth system. The pianist is thus allowed to play that cluster a little earlier or later.

From the sixth system onwards (p. 3), piano and saxophone should finally synchronize beat by beat in the traditional way. The only exception is a short Free Tempo passage in mm. 30-31.

IMPORTANT: At specific points, the saxophone has long fermatas interrupting the regular temporal flow. These fermatas should be rather long (several seconds), creating a real suspension in the piece. On these moments, the piano should always wait for the saxophone to resume the regular Tempo. These fermatas appear on measures 5, 7, 11, 31, 33 and 37.

LIVE-ELECTRONICS

- Use separate microphones for saxophone and piano. The sounds will be processed and returned to a 2-channel system to be diffused through loudspeakers.
- One person should be responsible for the live-electronics, triggering different sections of the Max/MSP patch according to the instructions provided in the patch (alternatively, the saxophone player may use a MIDI pedal to trigger these changes, with no need for a third person). The score is divided into six parts, each with a different live-electronics processing: Section A – mm. 1-5; Section B – mm. 6-18 (fermata on 7 and 11); Section C – mm. 19-31; Section D – mm. 32-36; Section E – mm. 37-46 (fermata on 37) and Section F – mm. 47-61. For further information, please check the following webpage:
  http://eamusic.dartmouth.edu/~bruno/comp_inotherwords.html

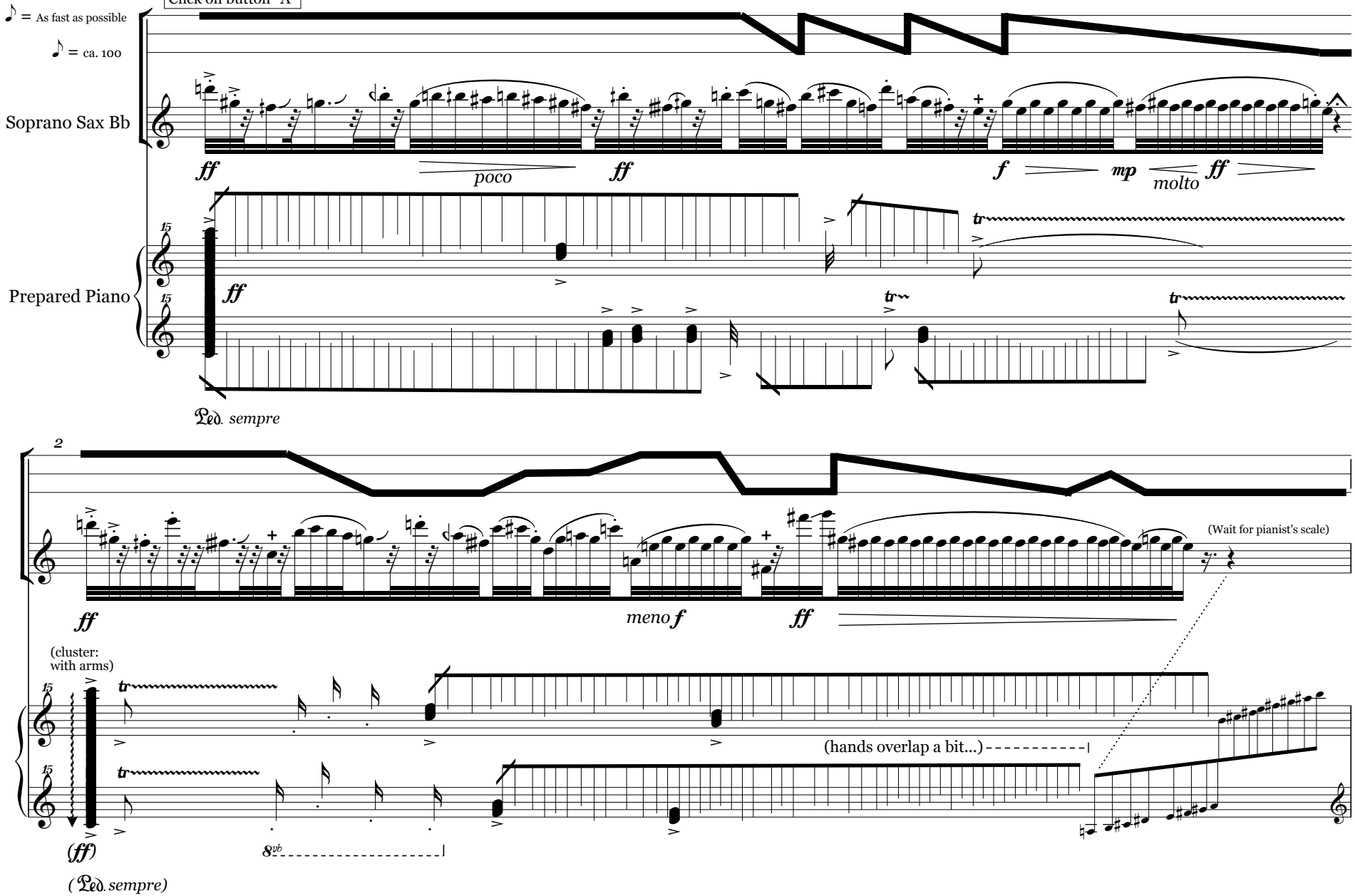
In Other Words,

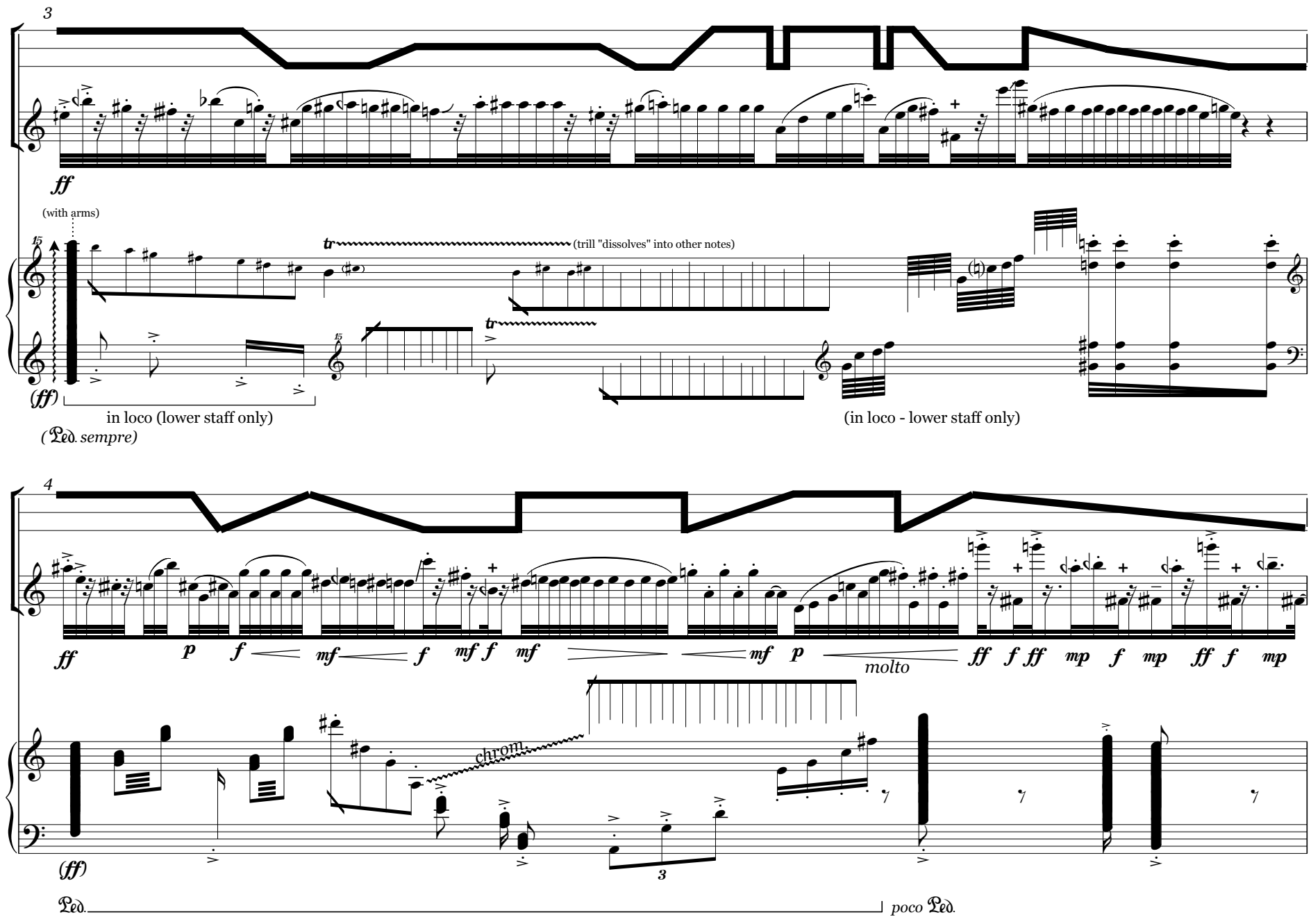
soprano saxophone, prepared piano and live-electronics

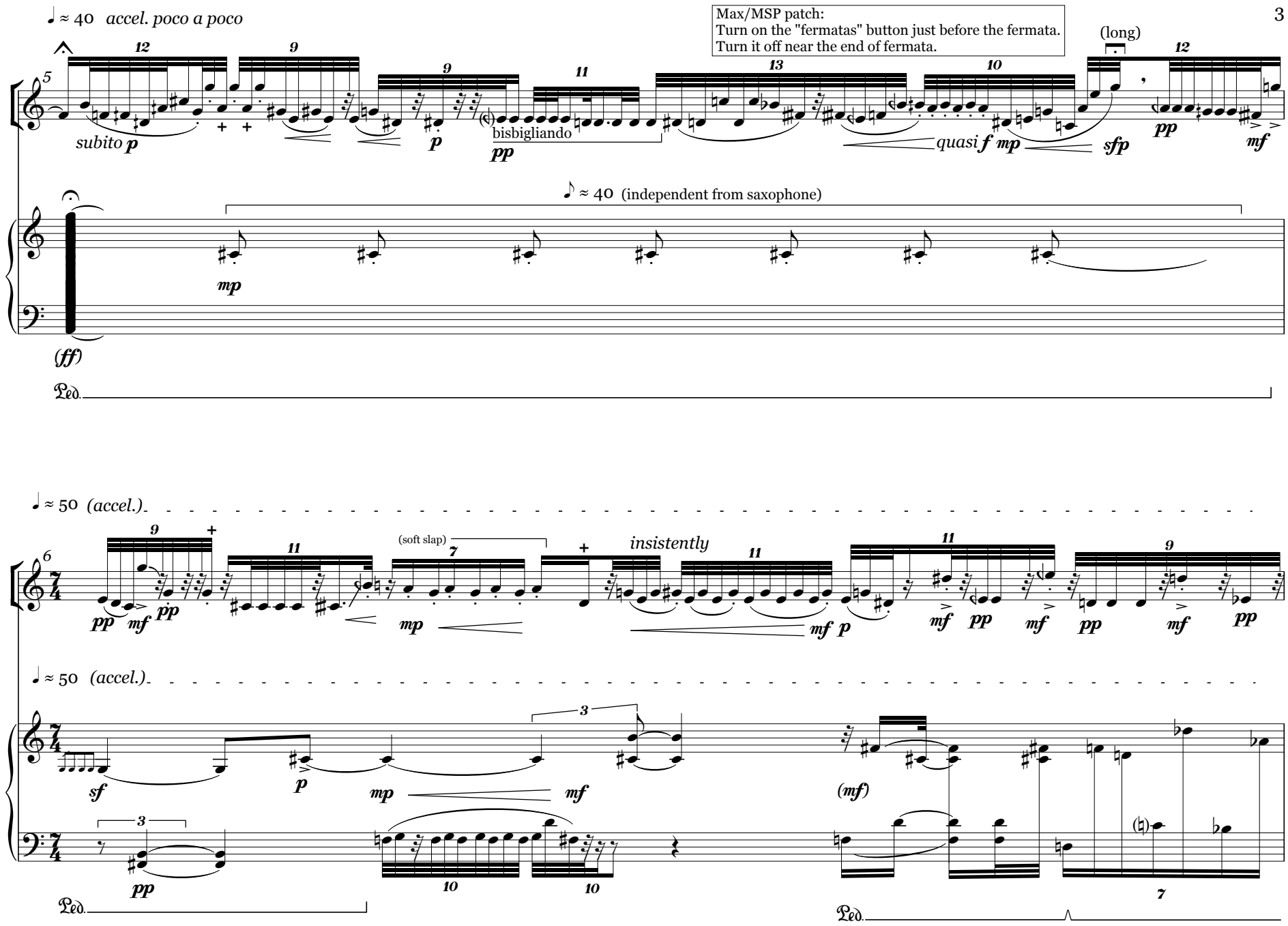
Bruno Ruviaro
Oct/2005 - Jan/2006

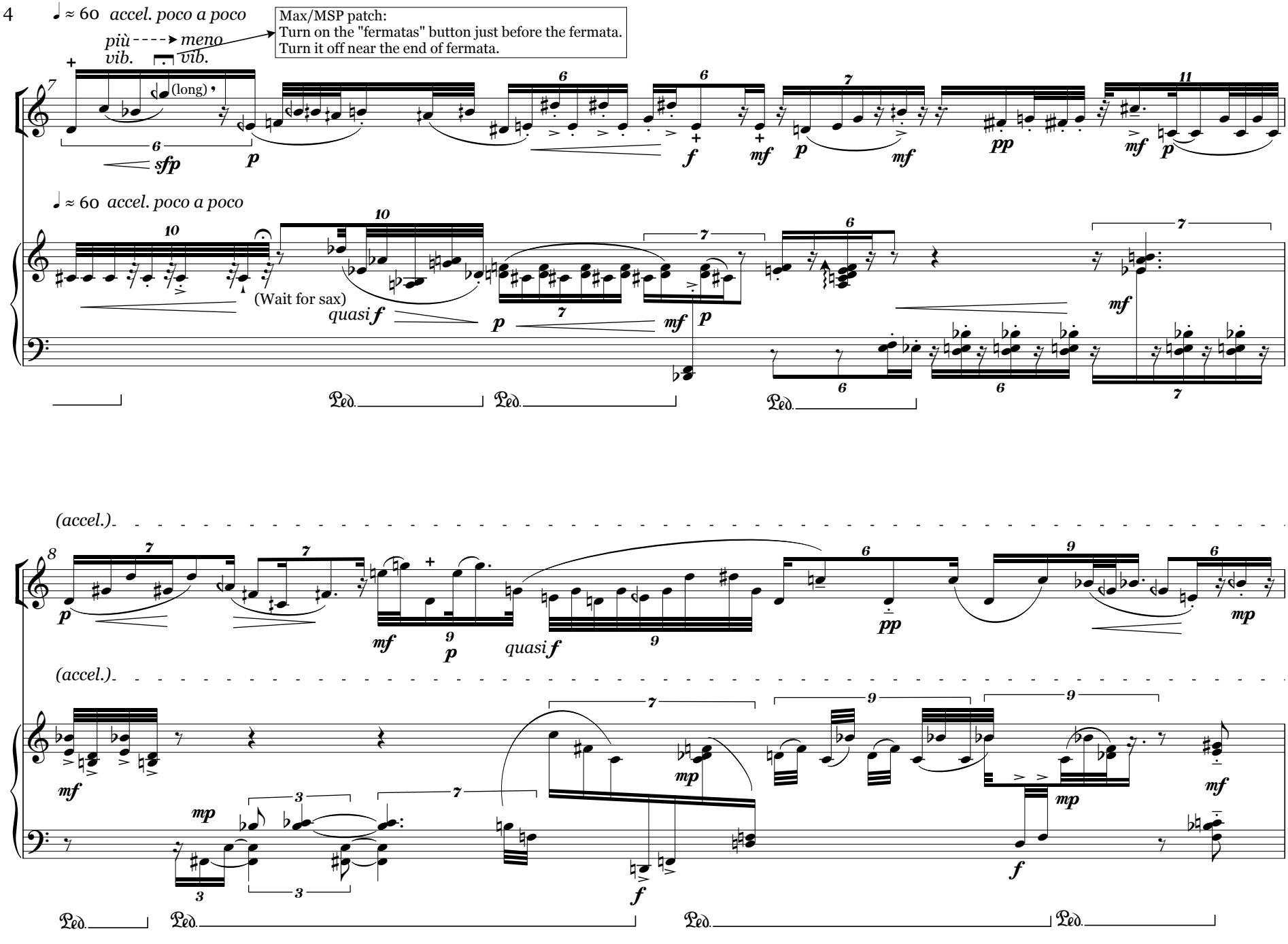
SECTION A

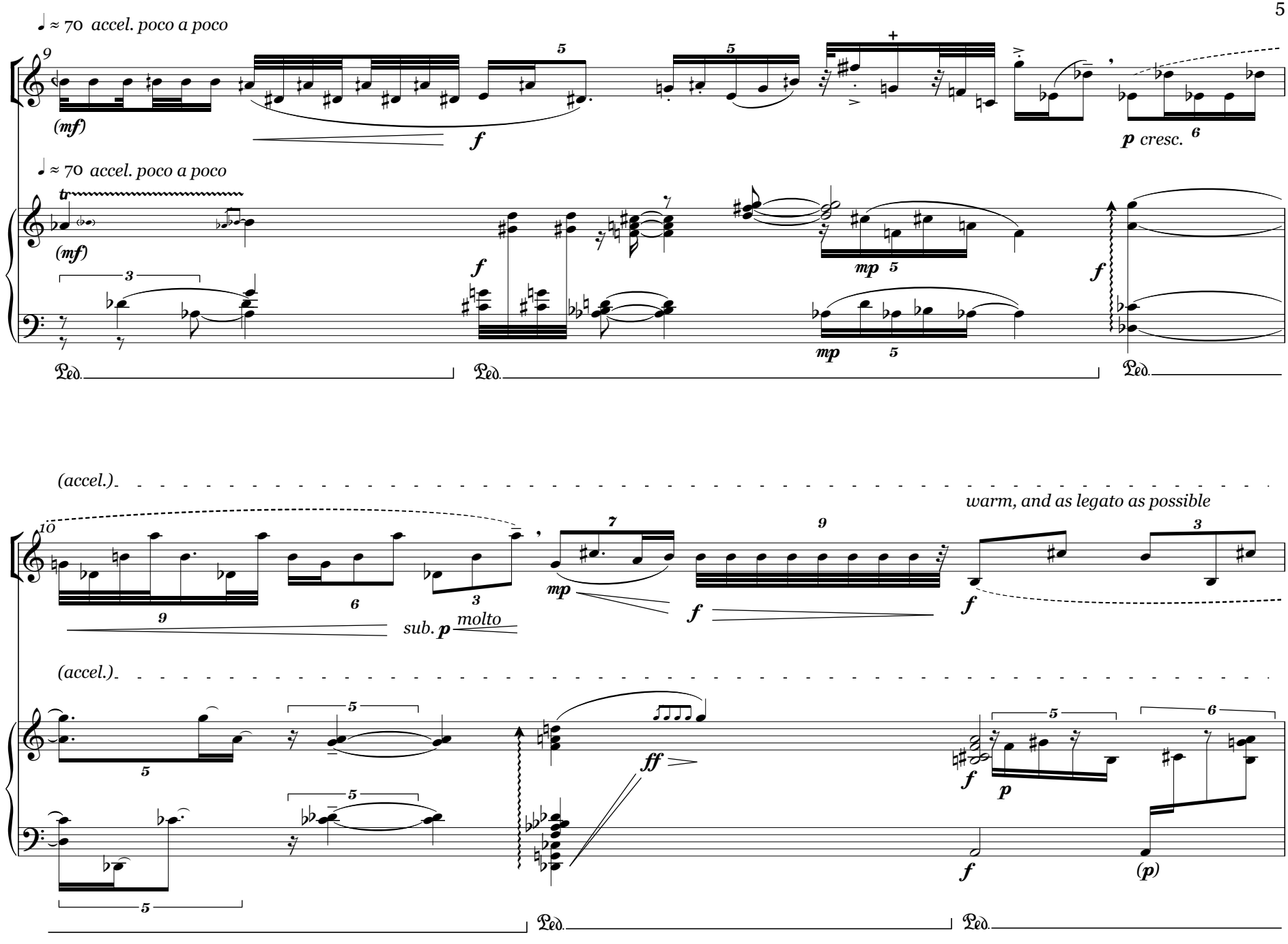
Max/MSP patch:
Click on button "A"



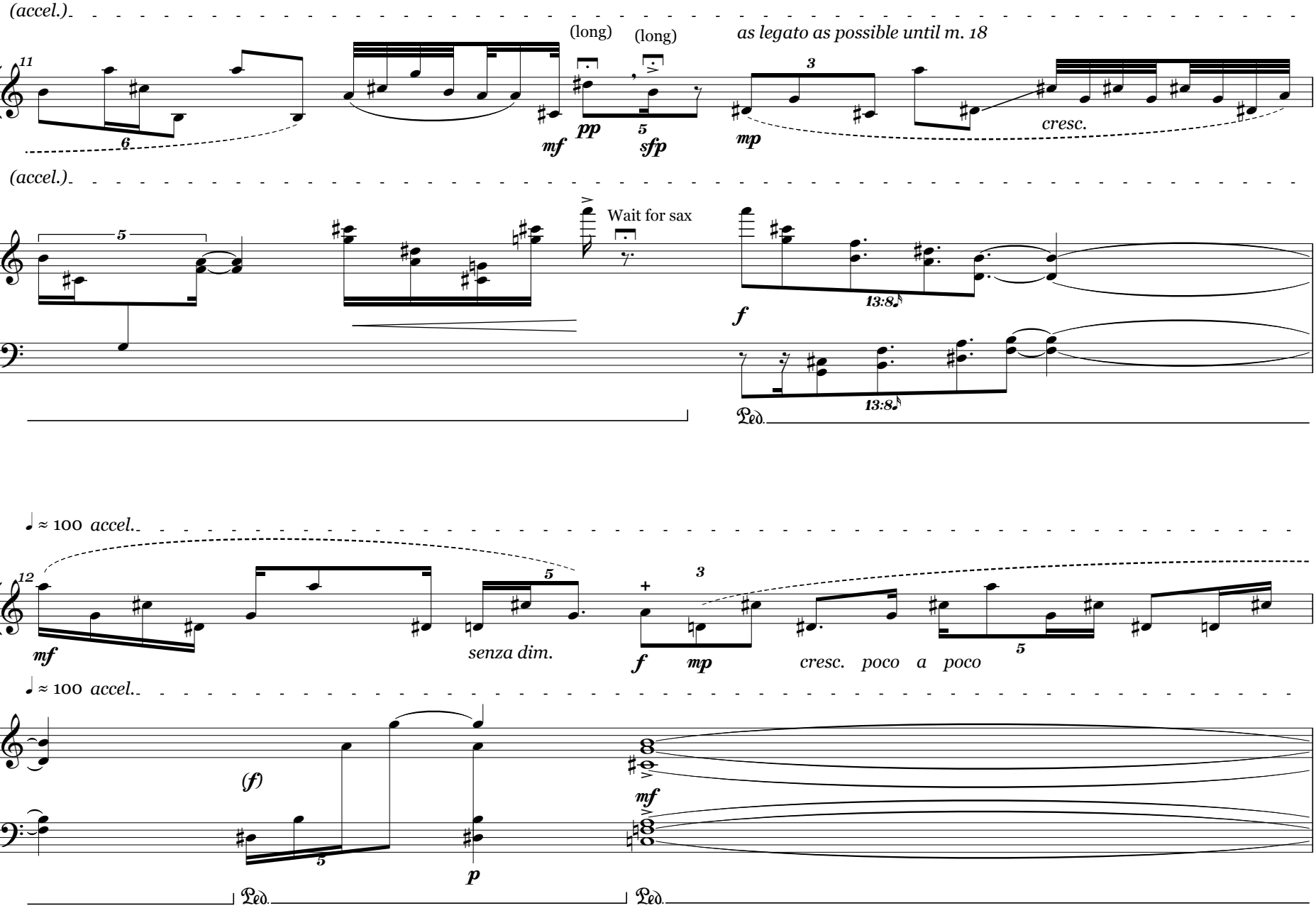

3
ff
(with arms)
15
tr
(trill "dissolves" into other notes)
(ff)
in loco (lower staff only)
(Ped. sempre)
(in loco - lower staff only)
4
ff
p
f
mf
f
mf f
mf
mf
p
molto
ff
f ff
mp
f
mp
ff
f
mp
chrom.
(ff)
3
Ped.
poco Ped.

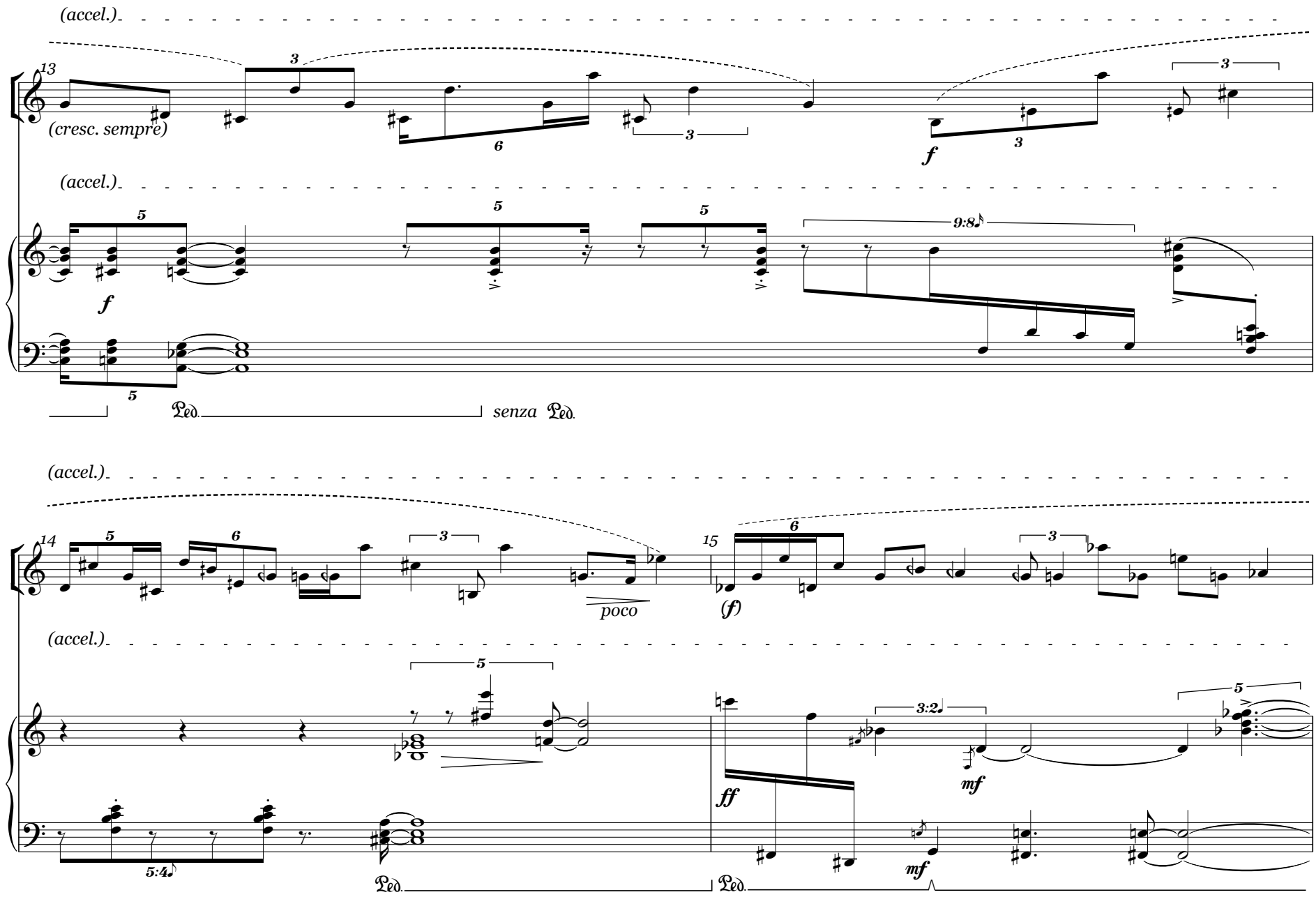

♩ ≈ 40 accel. poco a poco
Max/MSP patch:
Turn on the "fermatas" button just before the fermata.
Turn it off near the end of fermata.
(long)
subito p
bisbigliando
pp
quasi f mp
sfp
pp
mf
♪ ≈ 40 (independent from saxophone)
mp
(ff)
Ped.
♩ ≈ 50 (accel.)
(soft slap)
insistently
pp mf pp
mp
mf p
mf pp mf pp mf pp
♩ ≈ 50 (accel.)
sf
p
mp
mf
(mf)
pp
Ped.
Ped.

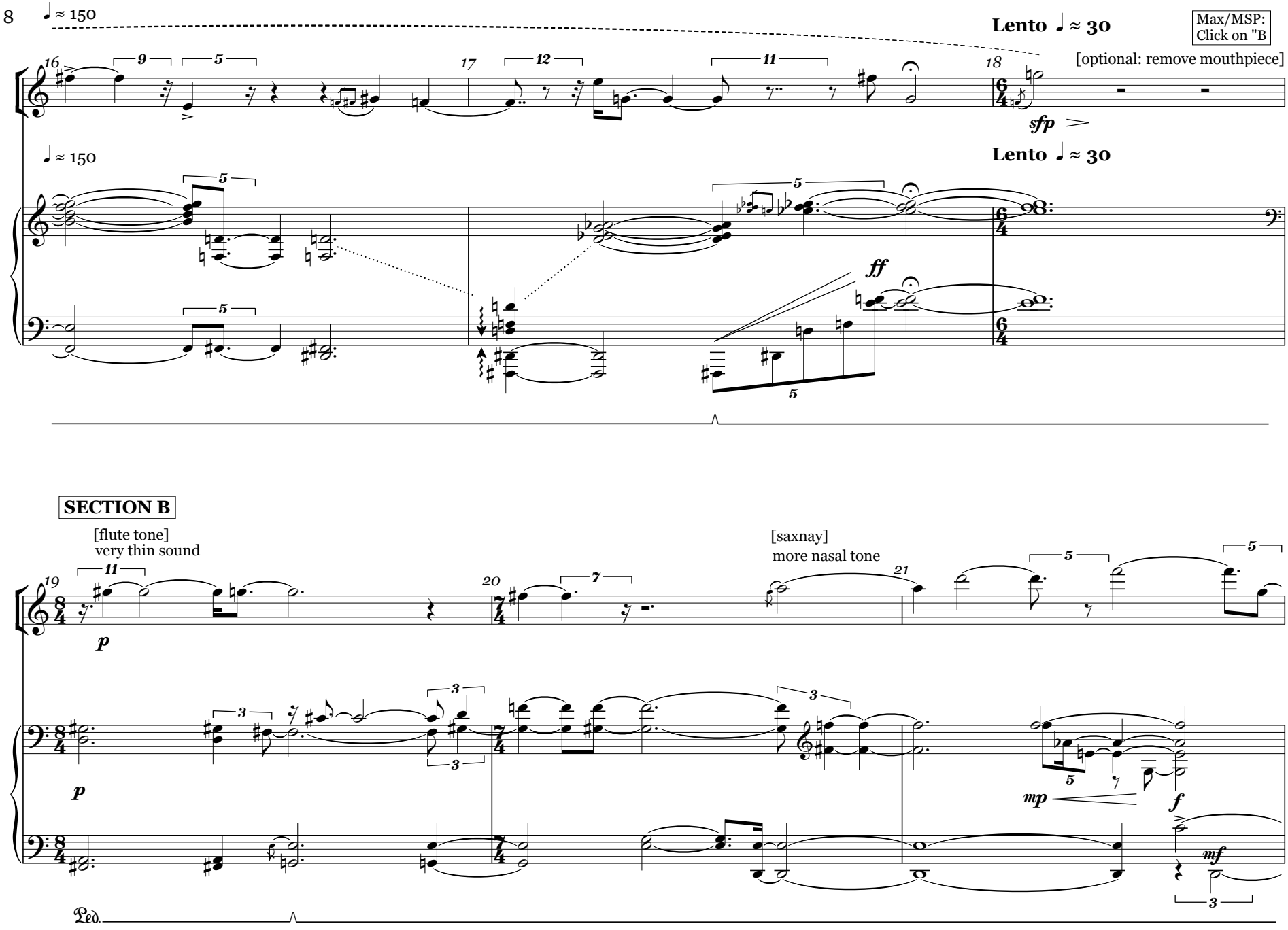

♩ ≈ 60 accel. poco a poco
più vib. meno vib.
Max/MSP patch:
Turn on the "fermatas" button just before the fermata.
Turn it off near the end of fermata.
(long)
sfp
p
f
mf
p
mf
pp
mf
p
♩ ≈ 60 accel. poco a poco
(Wait for sax)
quasi f
p
mf
p
mf
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
(accel.)
p
mf
p
quasi f
pp
mp
(accel.)
mf
mp
mp
f
mp
mf
f
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.

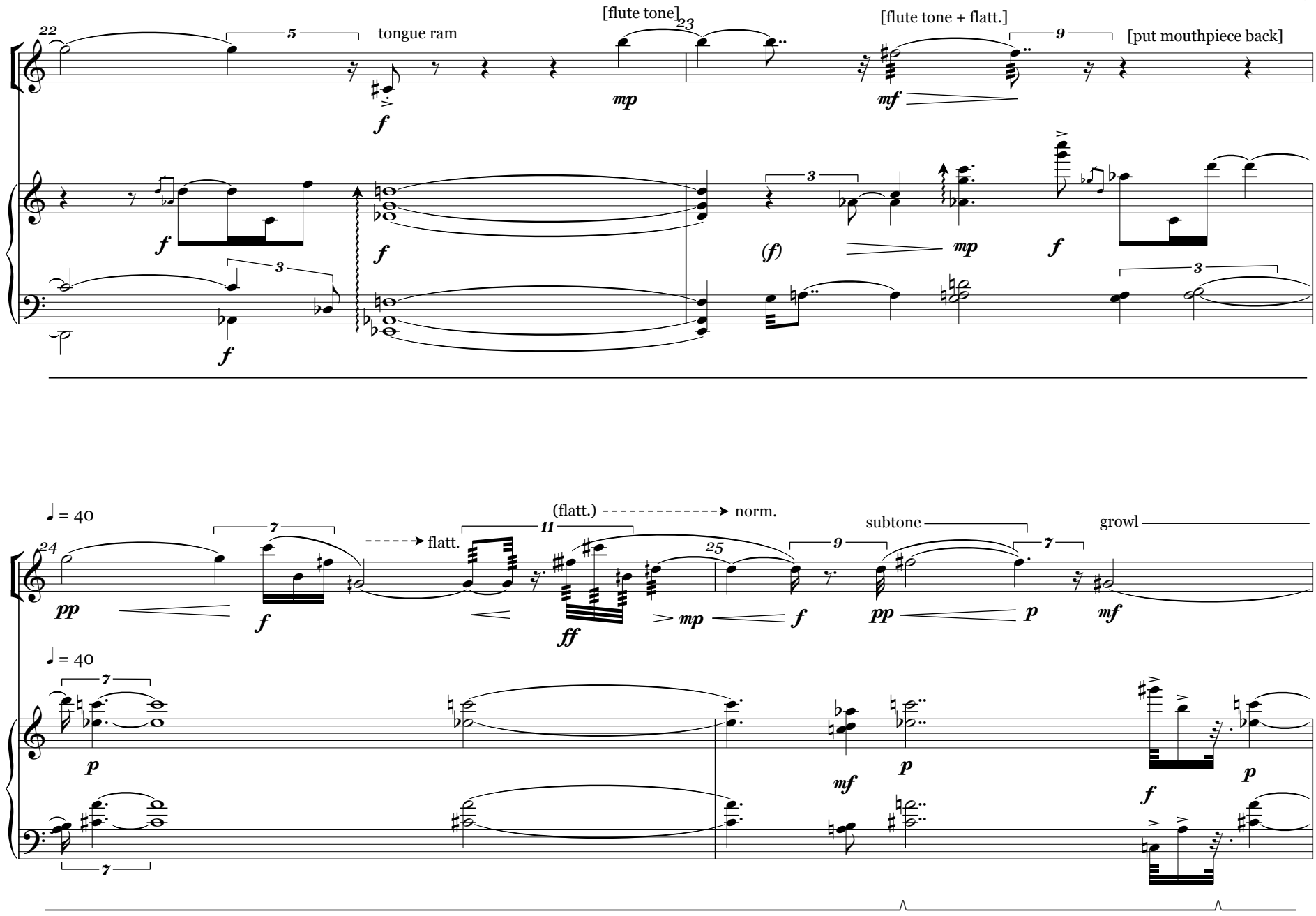

♩ ≈ 70 accel. poco a poco
9
(mf)
f
5
5
+
p cresc.
6
♩ ≈ 70 accel. poco a poco
tr
(mf)
3
f
mp
5
mp
5
f
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
(accel.)
warm, and as legato as possible
10
9
6
3
mp
7
f
9
f
3
sub. p molto
(accel.)
5
5
5
5
ff
f
5
p
6
f
(p)
Ped.
Ped.

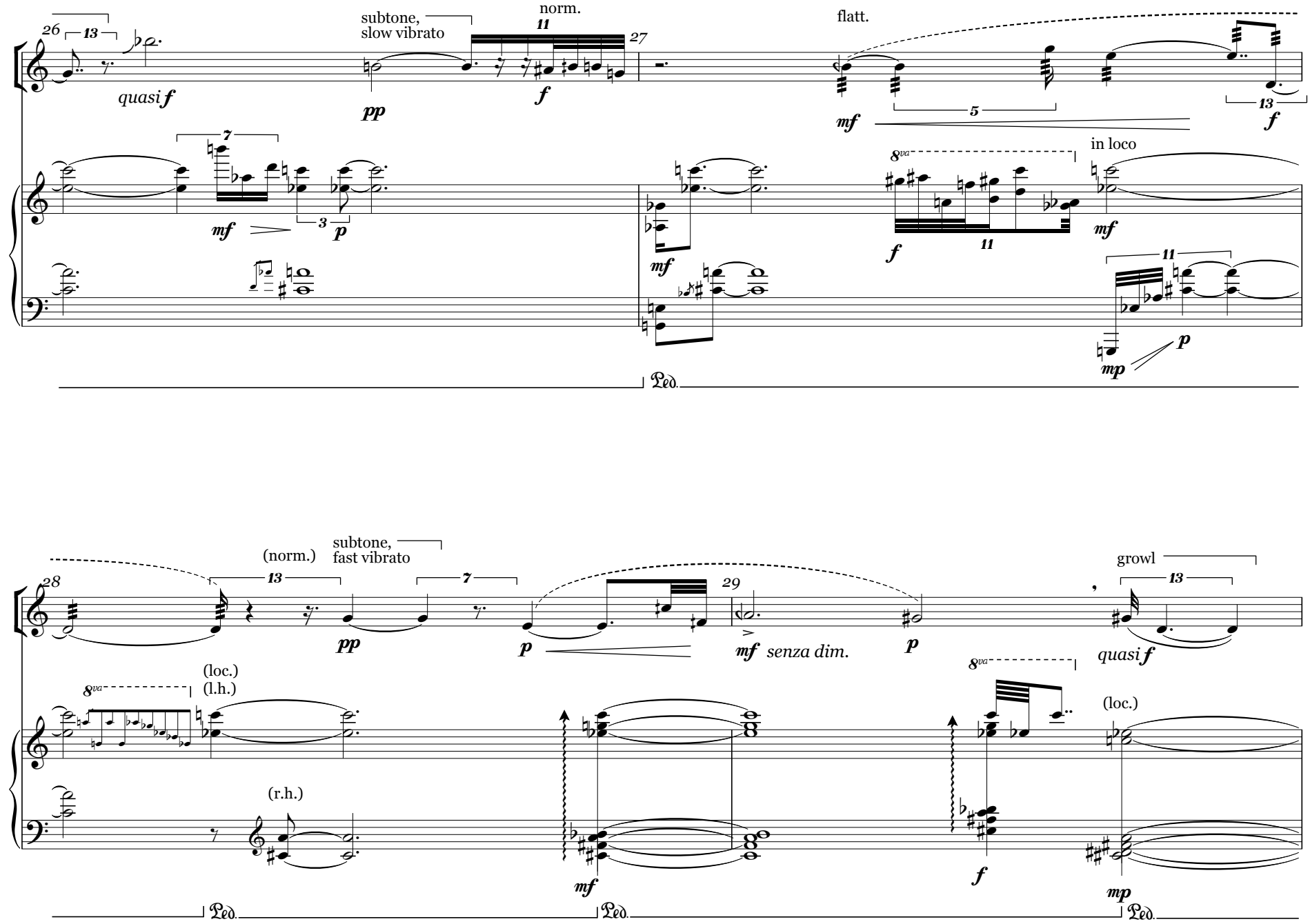
Max/MSP patch:
Turn on the "fermatas" button just before the fermatas.
Turn it off near the end of the three fermatas.

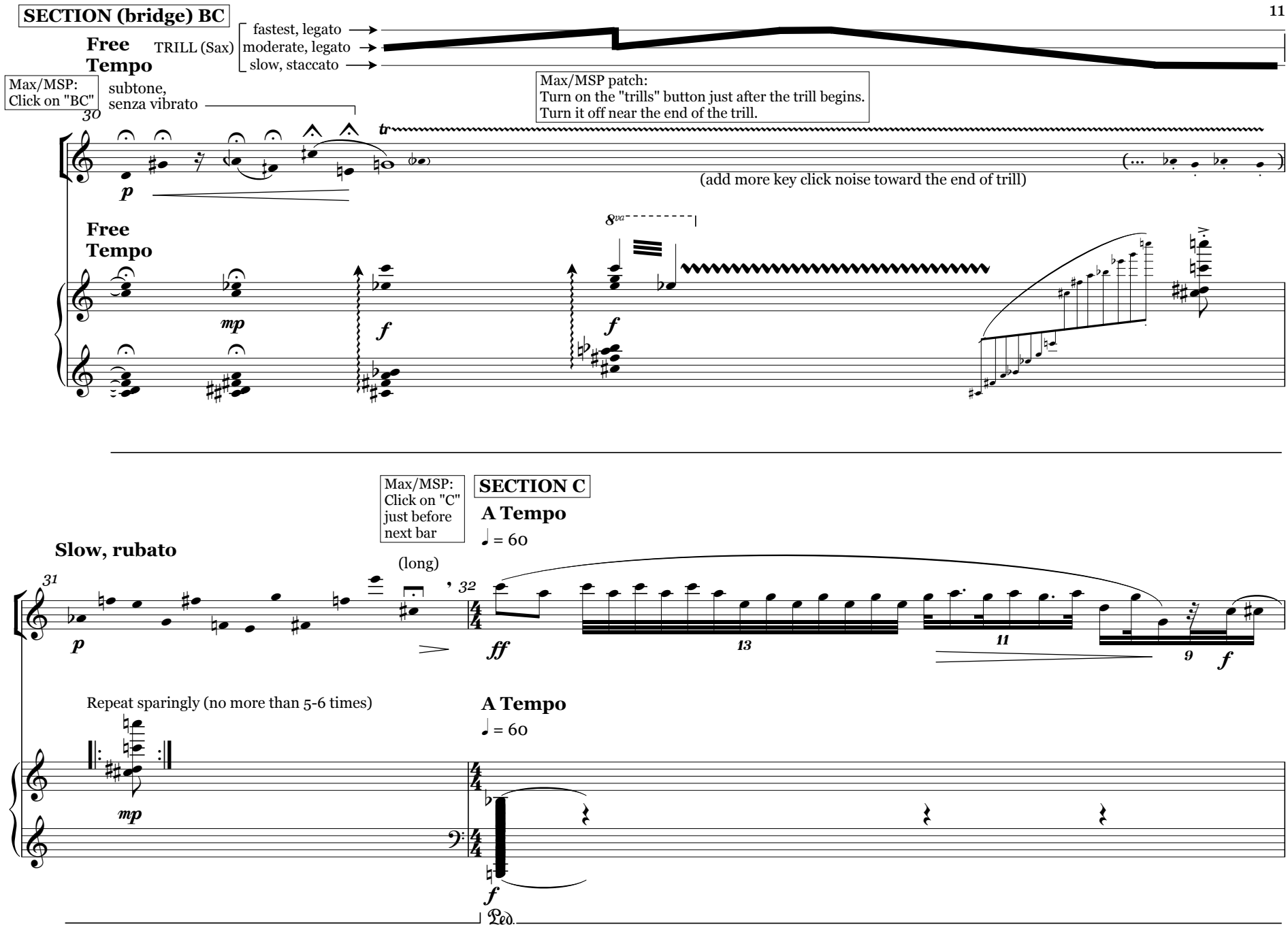


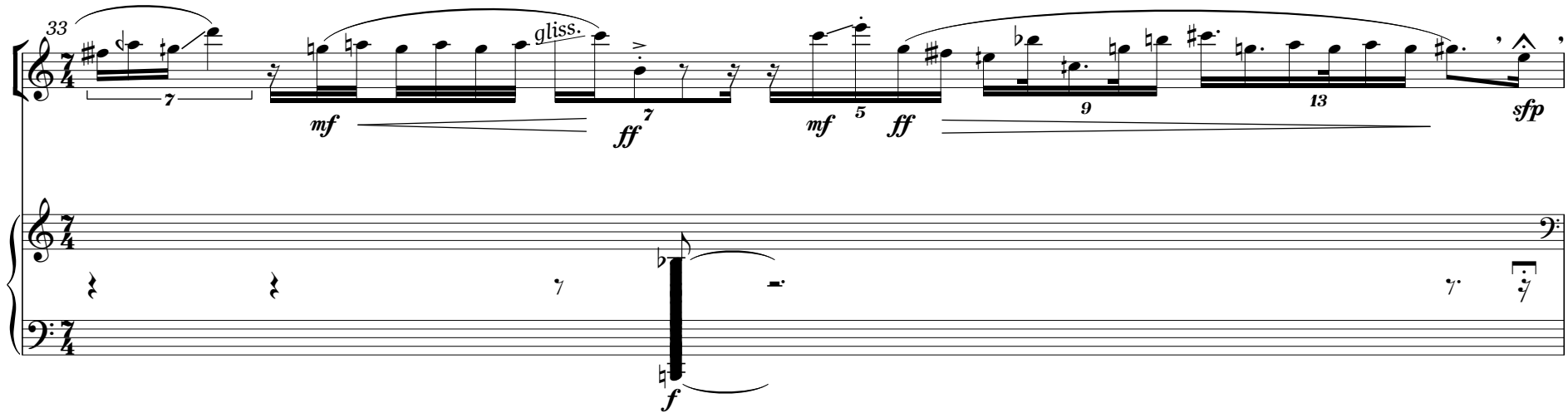

(accel.)
13
(cresc. sempre)
f
(accel.)
senza
(accel.)
14
poco
15
(f)
(accel.)
ff
mf
mf

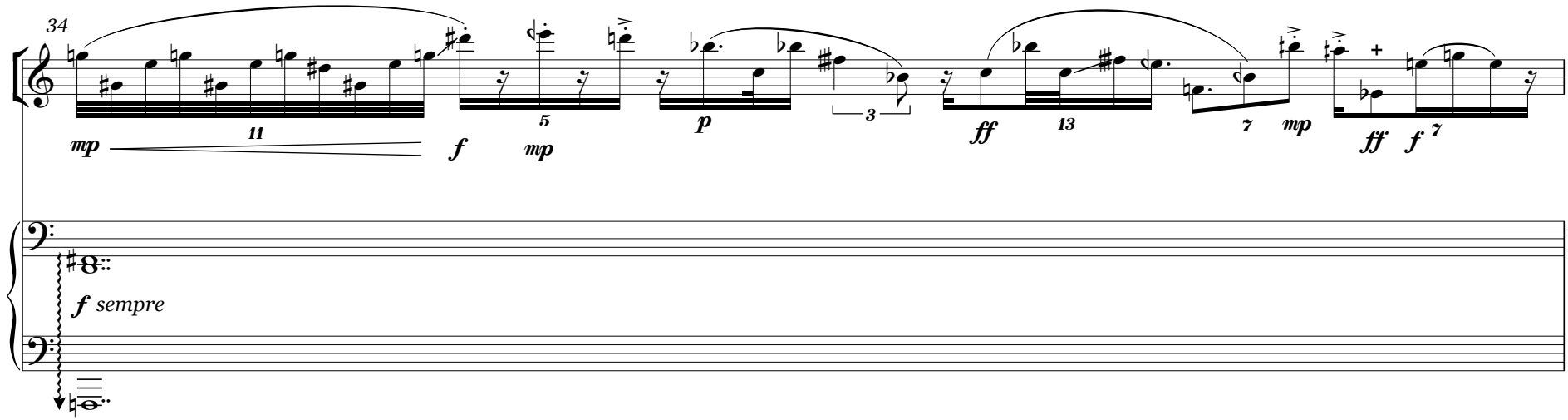

♩ ≈ 150
Lento ♩ ≈ 30
Max/MSP:
Click on "B
[optional: remove mouthpiece]
16
17
18
9
5
12
11
sfp
♩ ≈ 150
Lento ♩ ≈ 30
ff
SECTION B
[flute tone]
very thin sound
[saxnay]
more nasal tone
19
20
21
11
7
p
mp
f
mf
Ped.

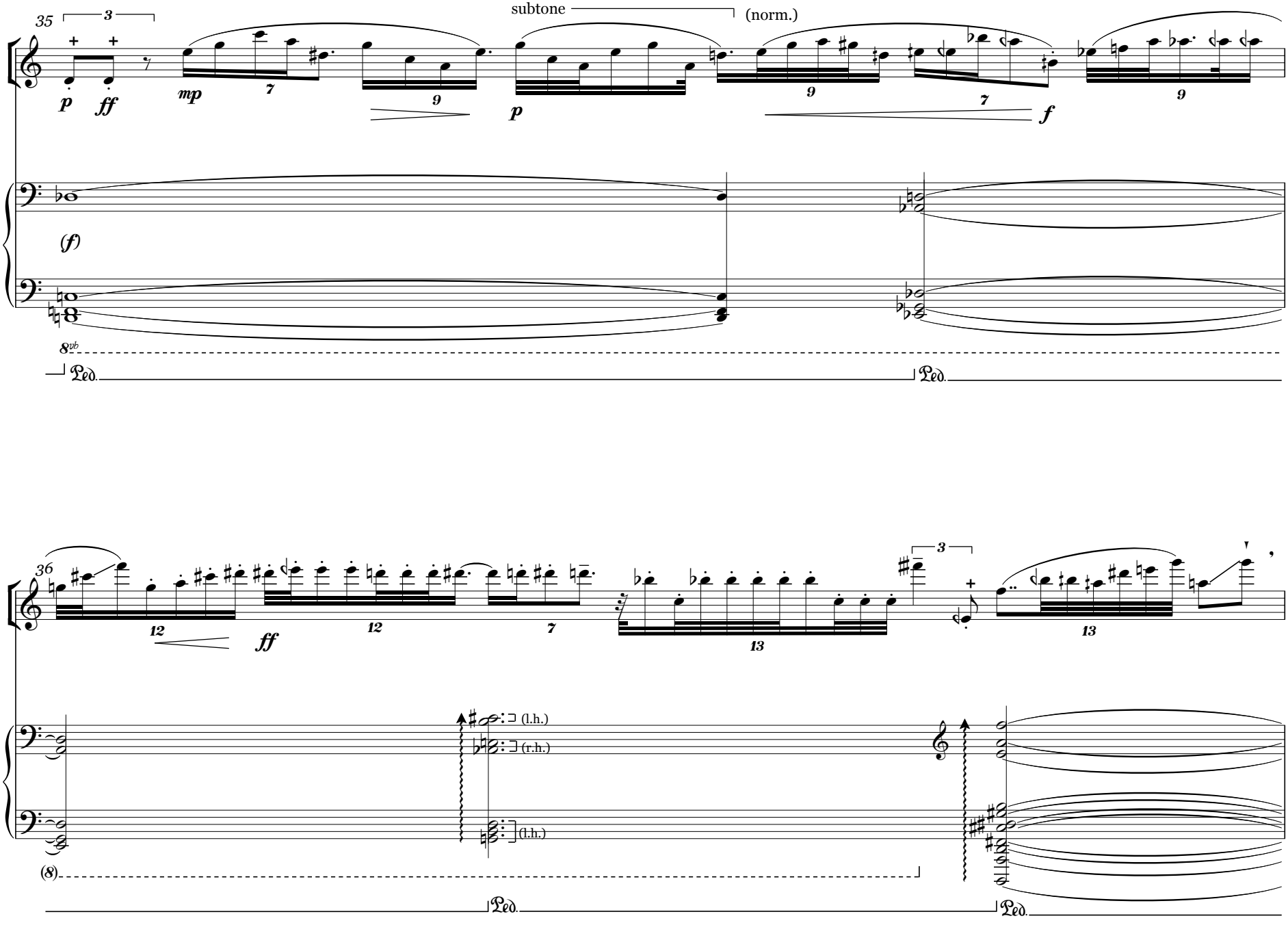

22
23
24
25
tongue ram
[flute tone]
[flute tone + flatt.]
[put mouthpiece back]
flatt.
(flatt.)
norm.
subtone
growl
♩ = 40
♩ = 40


26
13
quasi f
subtone,
slow vibrato
norm.
11
27
pp
f
flatt.
mf
5
13
f
7
mf
3
p
in loco
8va
f
11
mf
11
mp
p
Ped.
28
(norm.)
13
subtone,
fast vibrato
7
pp
p
29
mf senza dim.
p
growl
13
quasi f
8va
(loc.)
(l.h.)
(r.h.)
mf
f
(loc.)
mp
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.


SECTION (bridge) BC
Free Tempo
TRILL (Sax)
fastest, legato
moderate, legato
slow, staccato
Max/MSP: Click on "BC"
subtone, senza vibrato
Max/MSP patch: Turn on the "trills" button just after the trill begins. Turn it off near the end of the trill.
30
tr
p
(add more key click noise toward the end of trill)
Free Tempo
8va
mp
f
f
Max/MSP: Click on "C" just before next bar
SECTION C
A Tempo
♩ = 60
Slow, rubato
(long)
31
32
p
ff
13
11
9
f
Repeat sparingly (no more than 5-6 times)
A Tempo
♩ = 60
mp
f
Ped.


33
gliss.
mf
ff
mf
ff
sfp
f


34
mp
f
mp
p
ff
mp
ff
f
f sempre


35
3
subtone
(norm.)
p
ff
mp
p
f
(f)
8vb
Ped.
Ped.
36
12
ff
12
7
13
3
13
(l.h.)
(r.h.)
(l.h.)
(8)
Ped.
Ped.

SECTION D

Max/MSP:
Click on "D"

Very slow ♩ = 30-40

(long)

more breath,
less pitch

37

p *pp* *mp* *mp* *pp*

f *meno f*

accel. ♩ = 45 *accel.*

38

ppp *p* *f* *p* *mp* *p*

affrettando un poco

39

pp *f*

accel. ♩ = 45 *accel.*

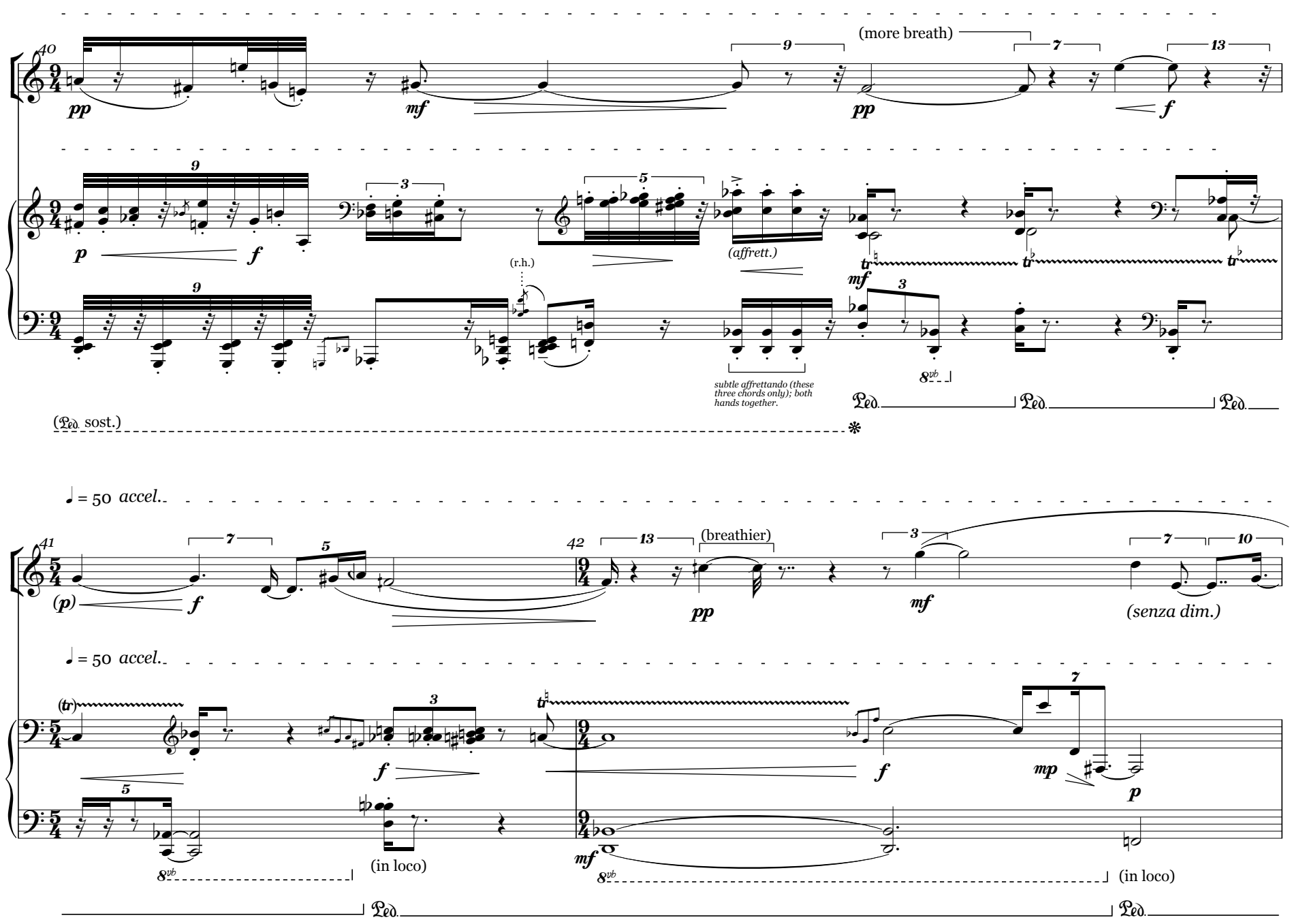
mf *ppp* *f*

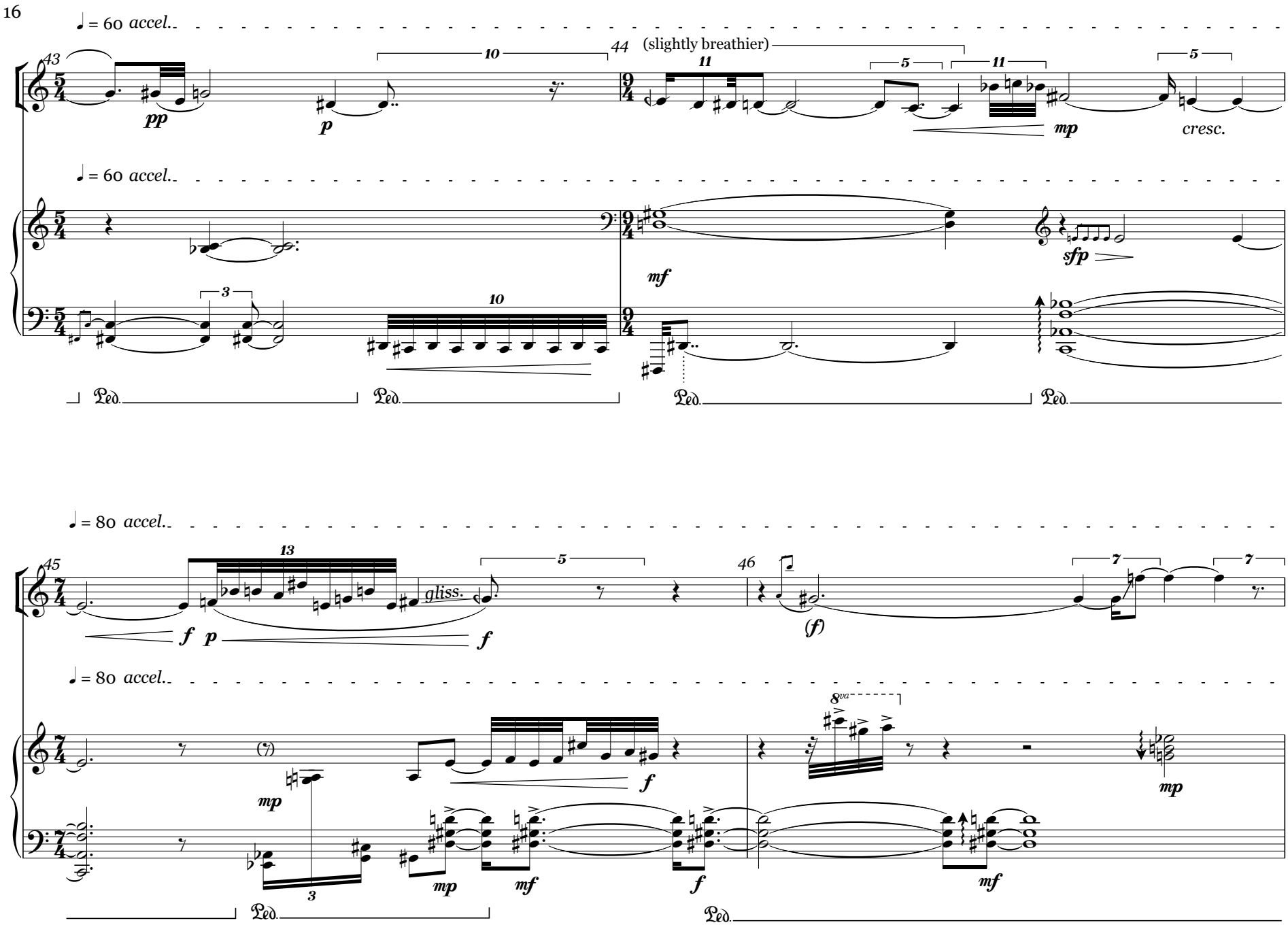
l.h.

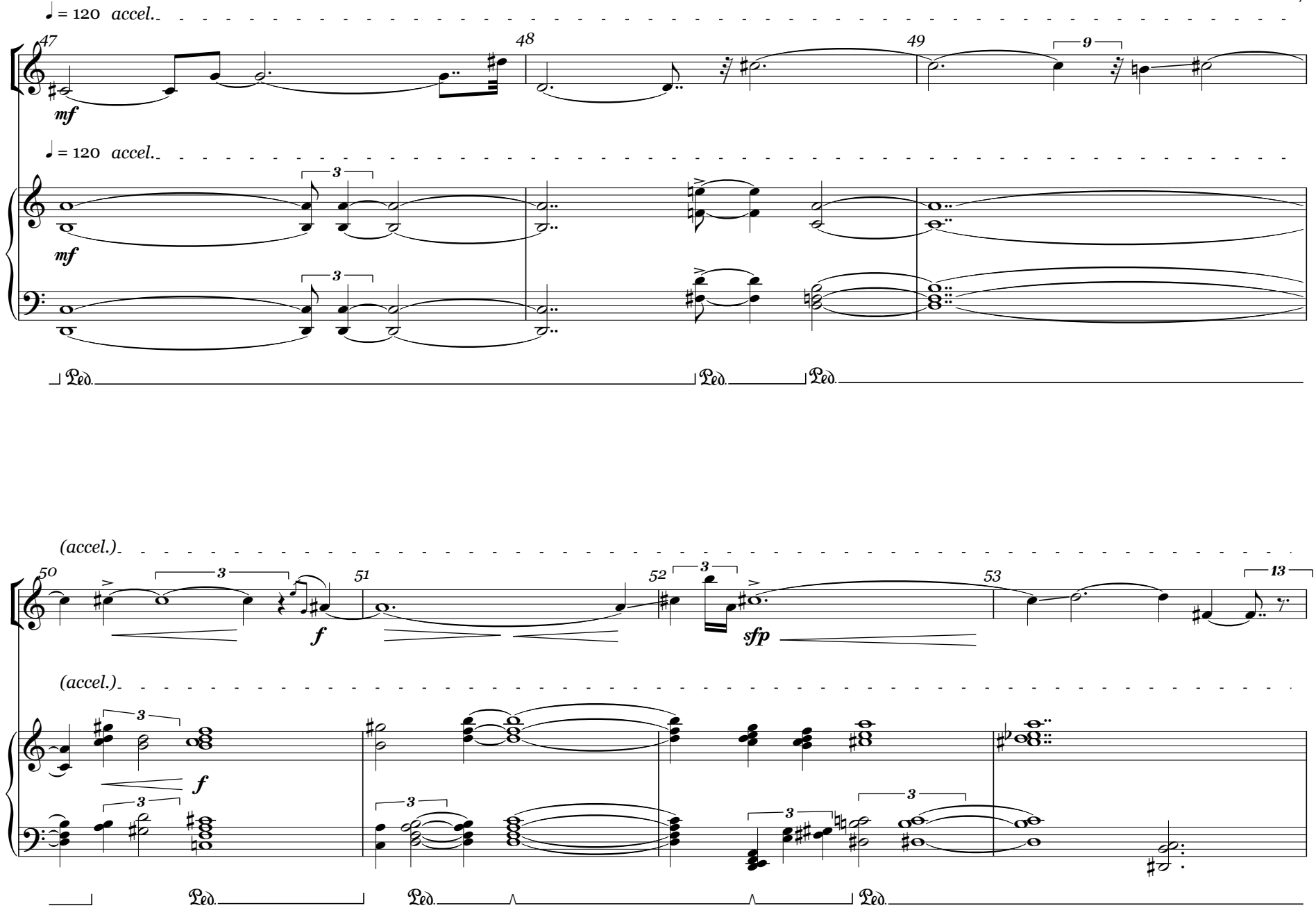
mp *f* *p* (molto) *f*

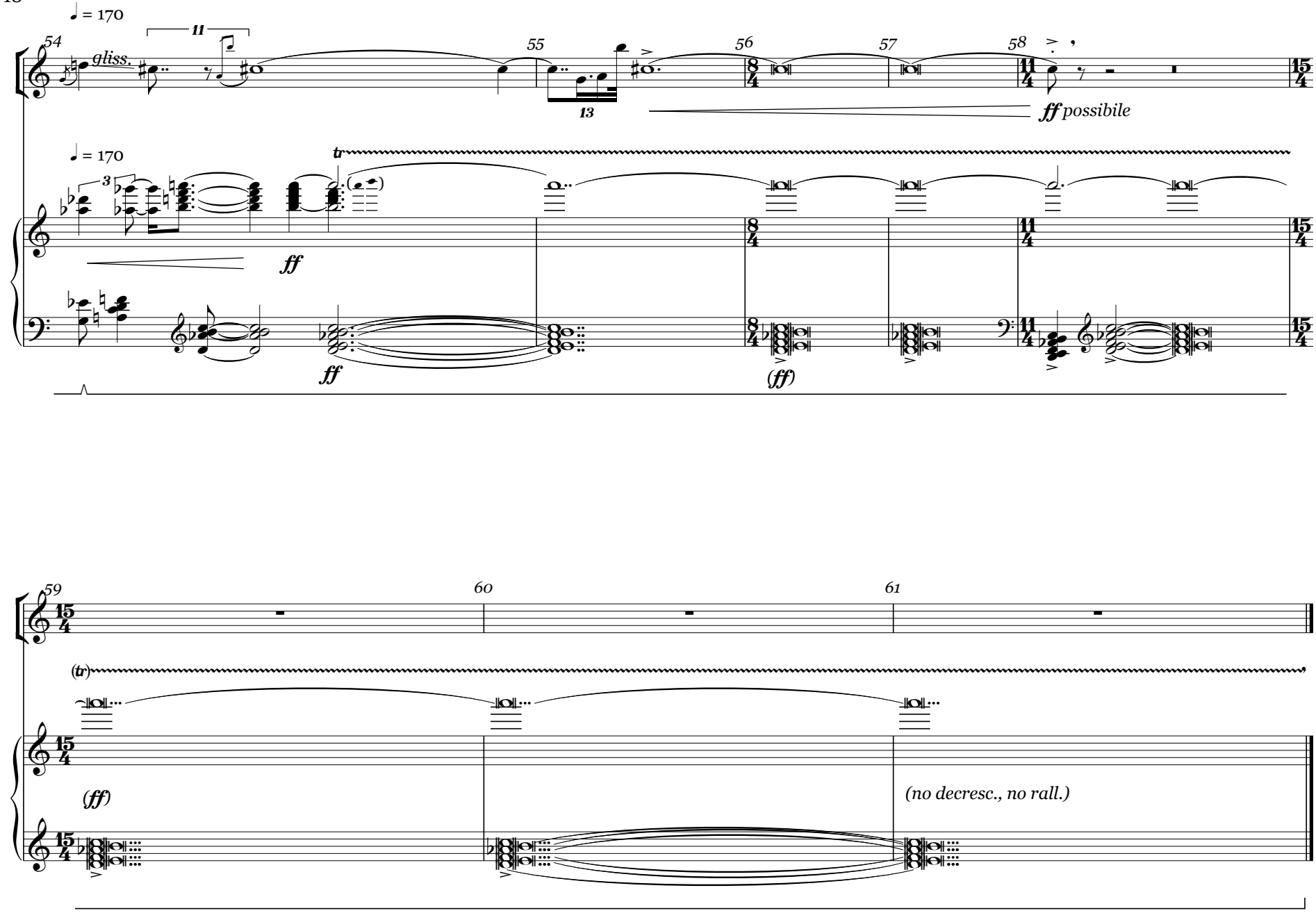
(r.h.)

Ped. Ped. sostenuto


40
(more breath)
pp
mf
pp
f
p
f
(r.h.)
(affrett.)
mf
8vb
subtle affrettando (these three chords only); both hands together.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
(Ped. sost.)
♩ = 50 accel.
41
42
(p)
f
(breathier)
pp
mf
(senza dim.)
♩ = 50 accel.
(tr)
f
f
mp
p
mf
8vb
(in loco)
8vb
(in loco)
Ped.
Ped.


♩ = 60 accel.
43
44
(slightly breathier)
pp
p
mp
cresc.
mf
sfp
Ped.
♩ = 80 accel.
45
46
gliss.
f
(f)
mp
mf
8va


♩ = 120 accel.
47
48
49
mf
3
9
Ped.
(accel.)
50
51
52
53
f
sfp
13


♩ = 170
54
11
gliss.
55
13
56
57
58
ff possibile
♩ = 170
3
tr
ff
ff
(ff)
59
60
61
(tr)
(ff)
(no decresc., no rall.)