HENRY L. DORN

MID MICHIGAN MINIATURES

for saxophone duo

2023

Perusal Score

HLD3 Music (ASCAP)

Perusal Score

Performance Notes

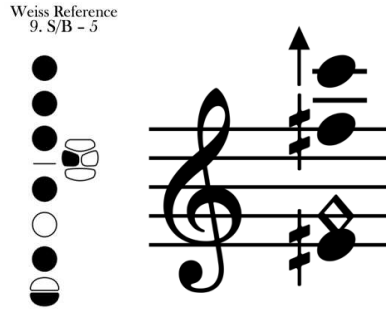
Instrumentation

The "instrumentation" for this work varies from movement to movement. The saxophone duo will cycle through soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone based on the movement.

1. "Grand River" – soprano and tenor
2. "I-94" – alto and alto
3. "127 & I-75" – tenor and baritone
4. "96 or 69" – soprano and baritone

Multiphonics

The multiphonics used in 4. "96 or 69" are (in part) used to mimic the sound of car horns, but they were also chosen for pitch reasons and should be treated knowing they play a harmonic role opposite the somewhat angular, tone-row lines. The multiphonics used comed from Marcus Weiss and Giorgio Netti's *The Techniques of Saxophone Playing* (Barenreiter, 2010) and include reference numbers. The final soprano saxophone mulitphonic may not be as easily produced at the extreme dynamic requested at the end of the movement. The following multiphonic can be used in its place:



Duration

~11-12 minutes

Perusal Score

Program Note

Saxophone in Progress (SiP) Duo – Jacob Nance and Natalia Warthen – approached me about writing a work for them in summer 2022. The product of these talks was months of reflection on my and my family's time in Michigan. My wife, daughter, and I moved to Lansing in 2020 during the height of the pandemic. It was a period that forced us to slow down and really take in the environment around us – *Pure Michigan*, as seen on signs when pulling into the state. I've traveled all over parts of the lower peninsula during my time here and have found many wonderous, beautiful sights. I've also spent a significant amount of time on both I-96 and I-94 in traffic, likely driving from Detroit or Ann Arbor to Lansing or Lansing to Grand Rapids or Chicago. For this work, I settled on writing a series of character pieces related to my travels and time in state.

"Grand River" is a reference to Grand River Ave, which historical ran from the eastern side of the state in Detroit through Lansing – the state capital – to near the western coast in Muskegon, horizontally dissecting the "Mitten." Before it was Grand River Ave, it was a major Native American trail. I thought of this has a historic unification of the state, linking east and west. I also thought of the historic significance of "Music of Motor City" coming out of Detroit. *I94* starts at Port Huron, MI at the Canadian border and runs through northern Indiana, greater Chicago, IL, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, and ends in Montana. It is a major route through southern Michigan (and is often the source of tons of traffic frustration).

127 & I75 are both routes that run north and south through Michigan. US 127 runs almost exactly through the middle of Michigan starting at its southern border, going through Lansing heading north until it combines with I-75 just south of Grayling, MI. I-75 starts as far south as Miami, FL, but enters MI from Toledo, OH, passing through Detroit, joins US 127 and continues to the upper peninsula and to the Canadian border at Sault Ste. Marie, MI. It is a beautiful, colorful drive as you head north-bound, full of life, change across the state's landscape. At the time of this work's completion (January 2023), it is winter in Michigan. I imagine a nostalgic, if not longing/reflective, drive towards the cold, white north.

The final movement, *96 or 69* was so titled because I constantly mixed them up when I first got to Lansing. I-96 runs northwest out of Detroit to near Muskegon, similar to the original route of Grand River Ave (and still somewhat parallel to it between Detroit and Lansing). It is an interstate only found in Michigan. I-69 starts in southern Texas and (with some incomplete segments) travels north entering MI just south of Kinderhook and going northeast to Port Huron, MI, combining with I-94 near the Canadian border. I-96 and I-69 both start in western parts of the "Mitten," intersect and combine – outlining the western side of the Lansing metro-area, and then I-69 continues northeast while I-96 continues southeast, both ending at a Canadian border. I try to recreate a musical version of this by having soprano and baritone both starting at extremes of their ranges, combining to play a unified line, and eventually "intersecting" by swapping roles, ending with the honking of horns before driving off into the distance.

Mid Michigan Miniatures was commissioned by Saxophone in Progress (SiP) Duo
It was premiered by SiP Duo as part of the *Advanced Studies Gateway at FRIB Concert Series*
FRIB Laboratory at Michigan State University on April 28, 2023.

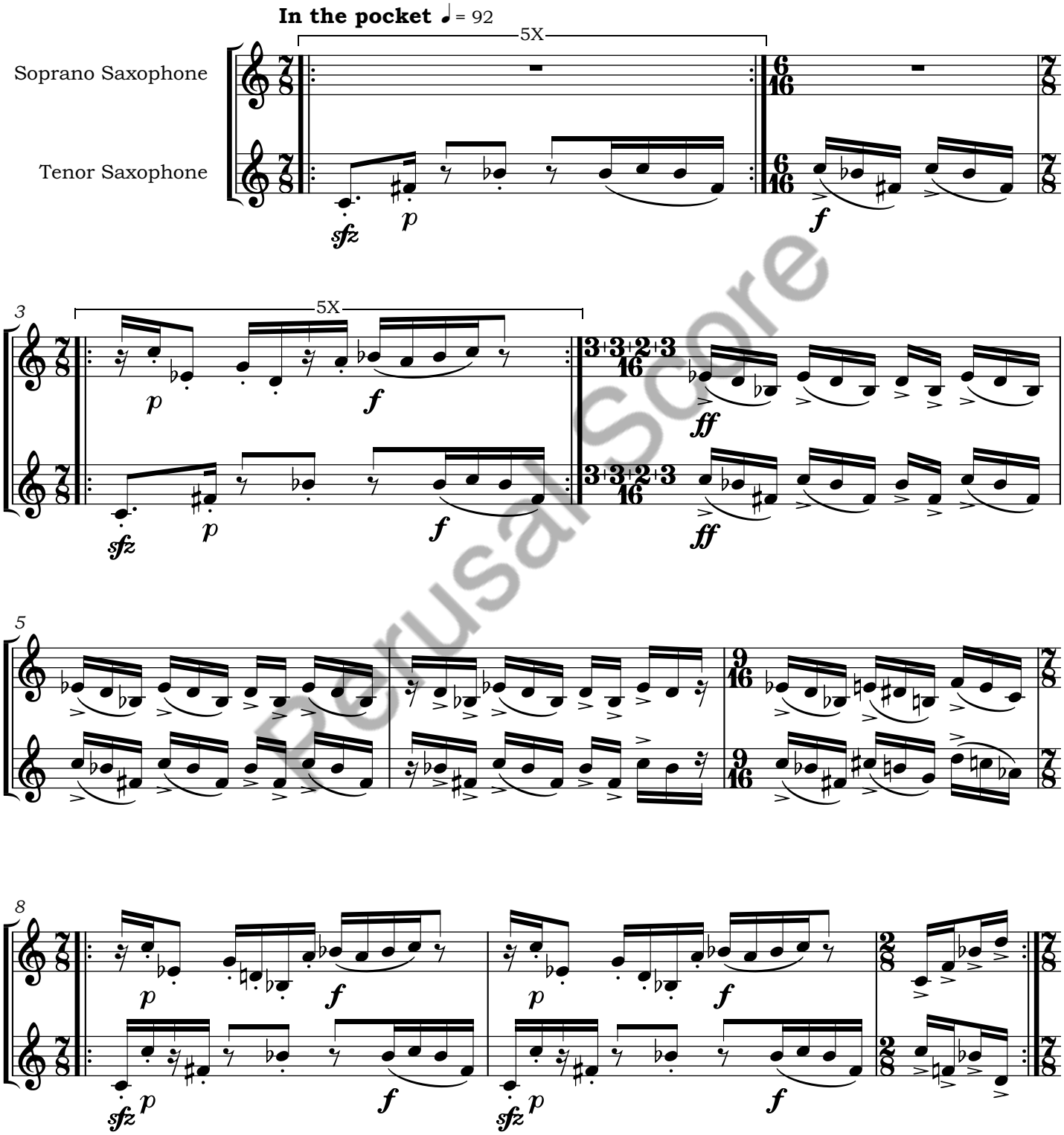
Perusal Score

Commissioned by SiP Duo

Mid Michigan Miniatures

Henry L. Dorn

I. Grand River



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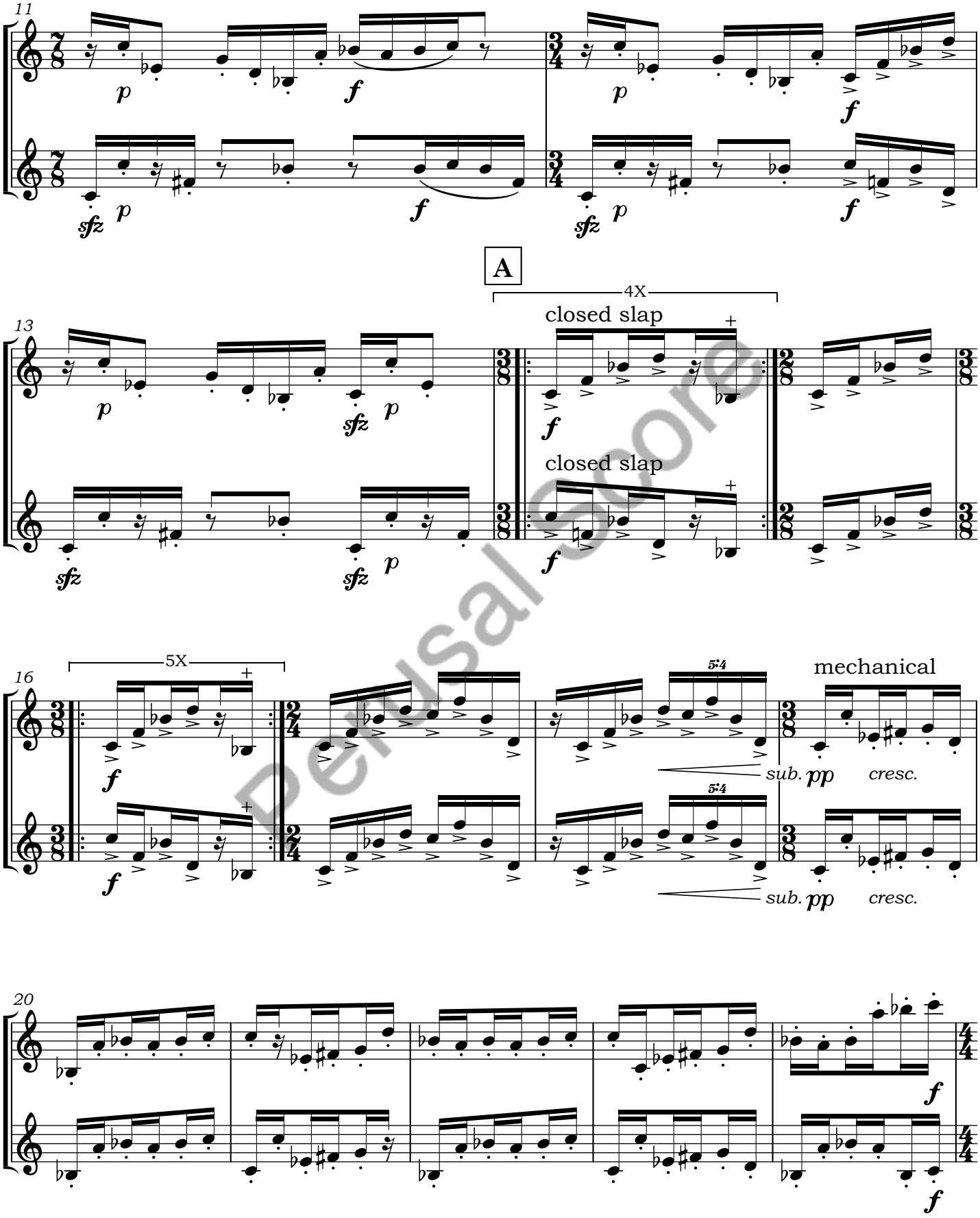

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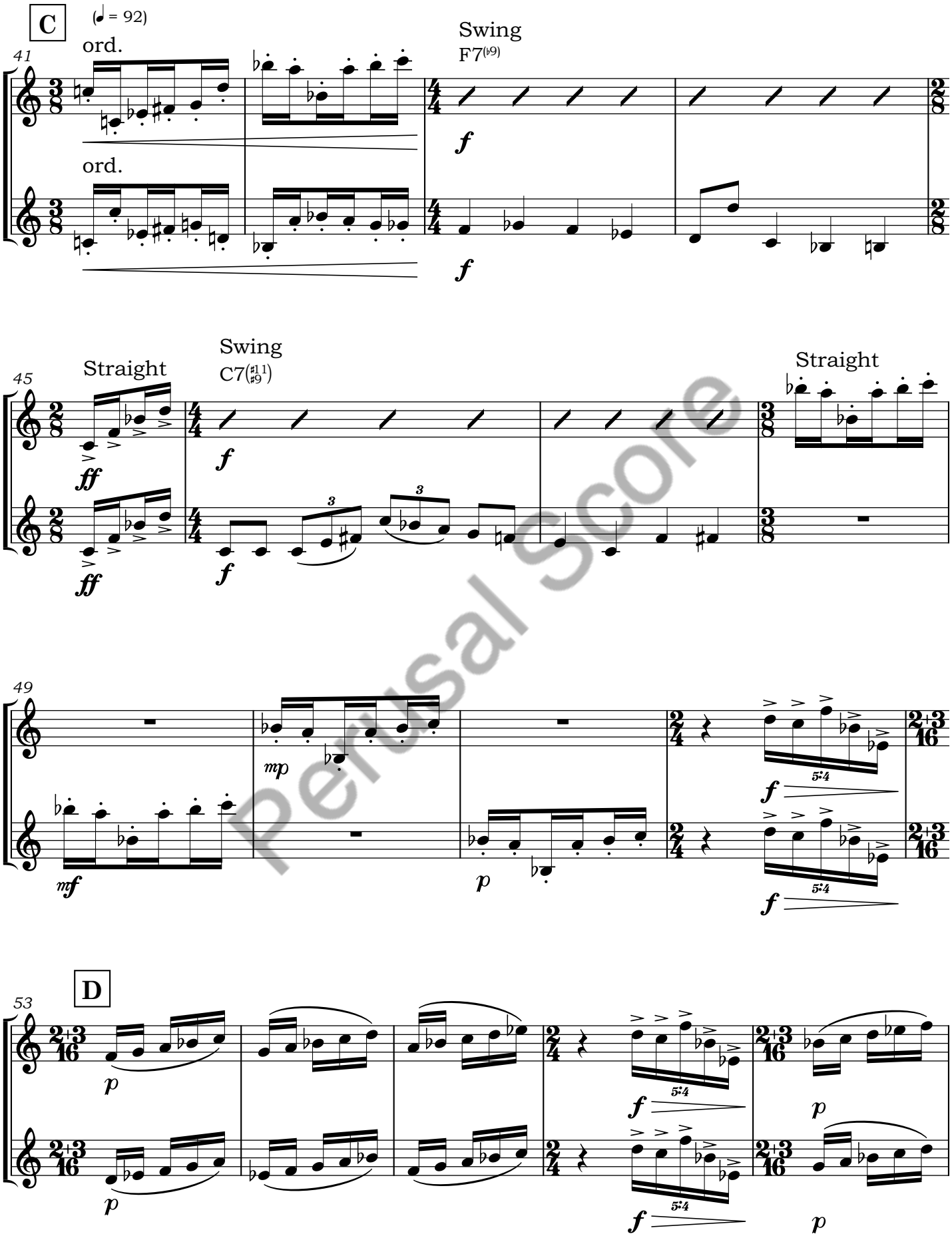

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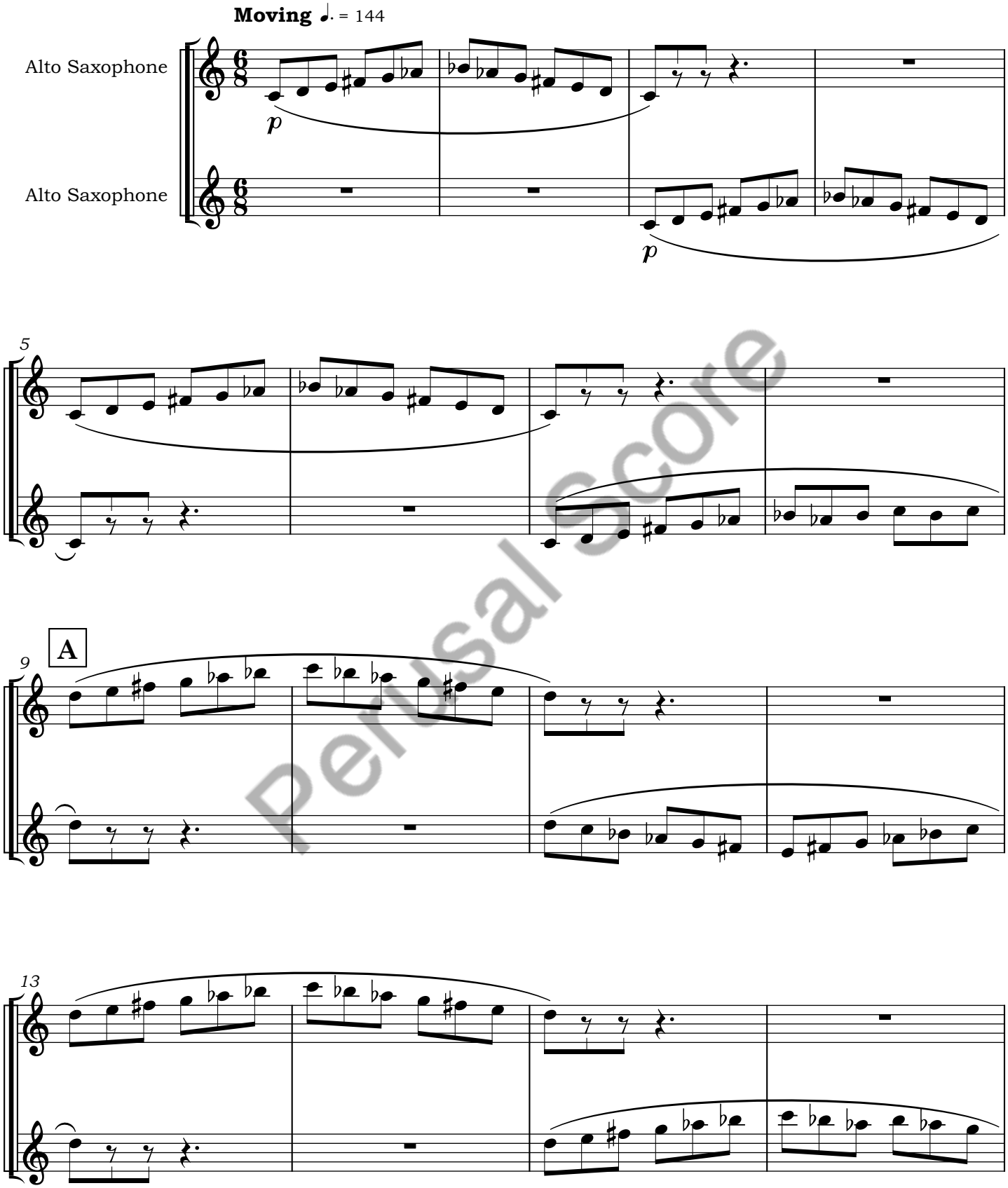
II. I-94



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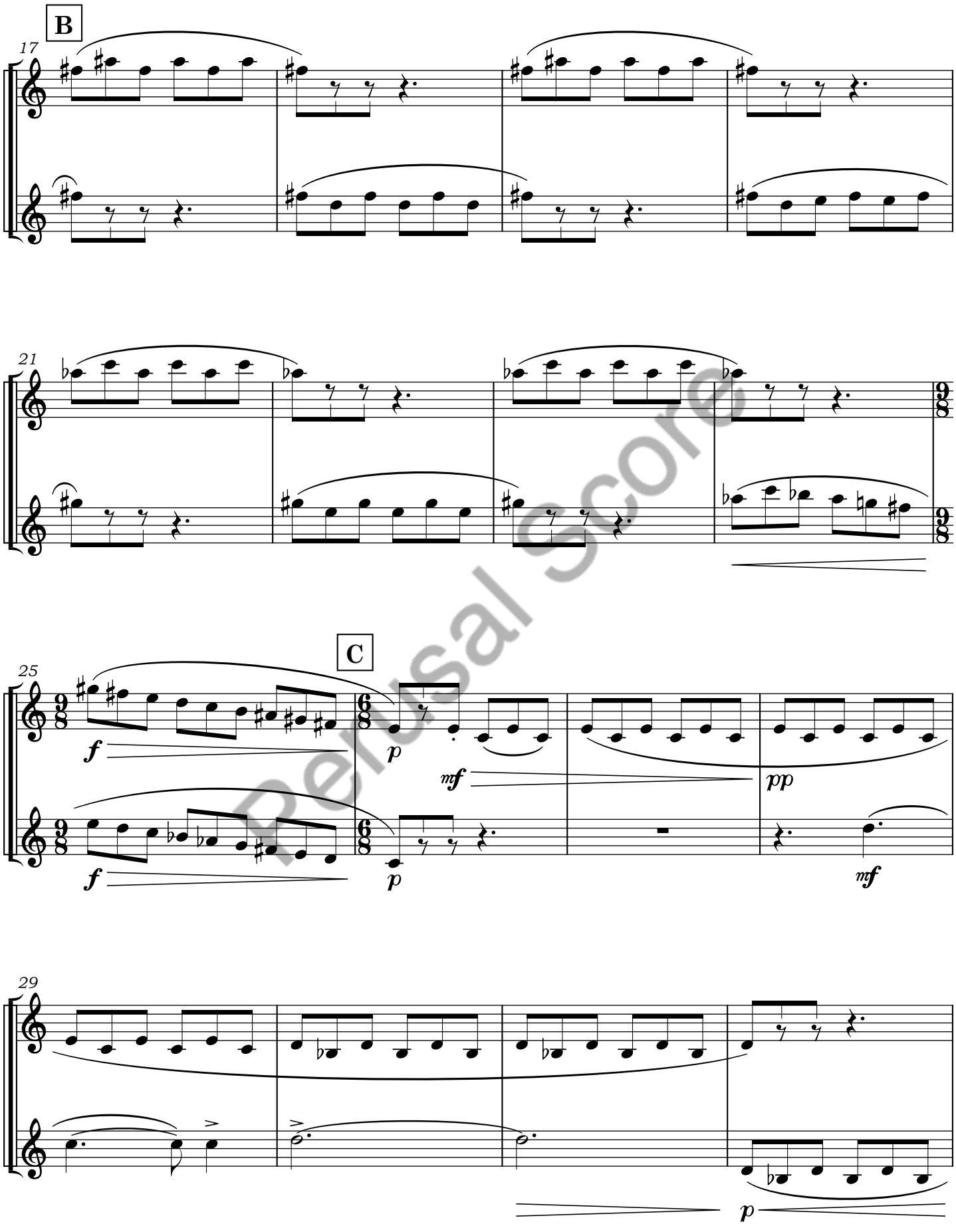

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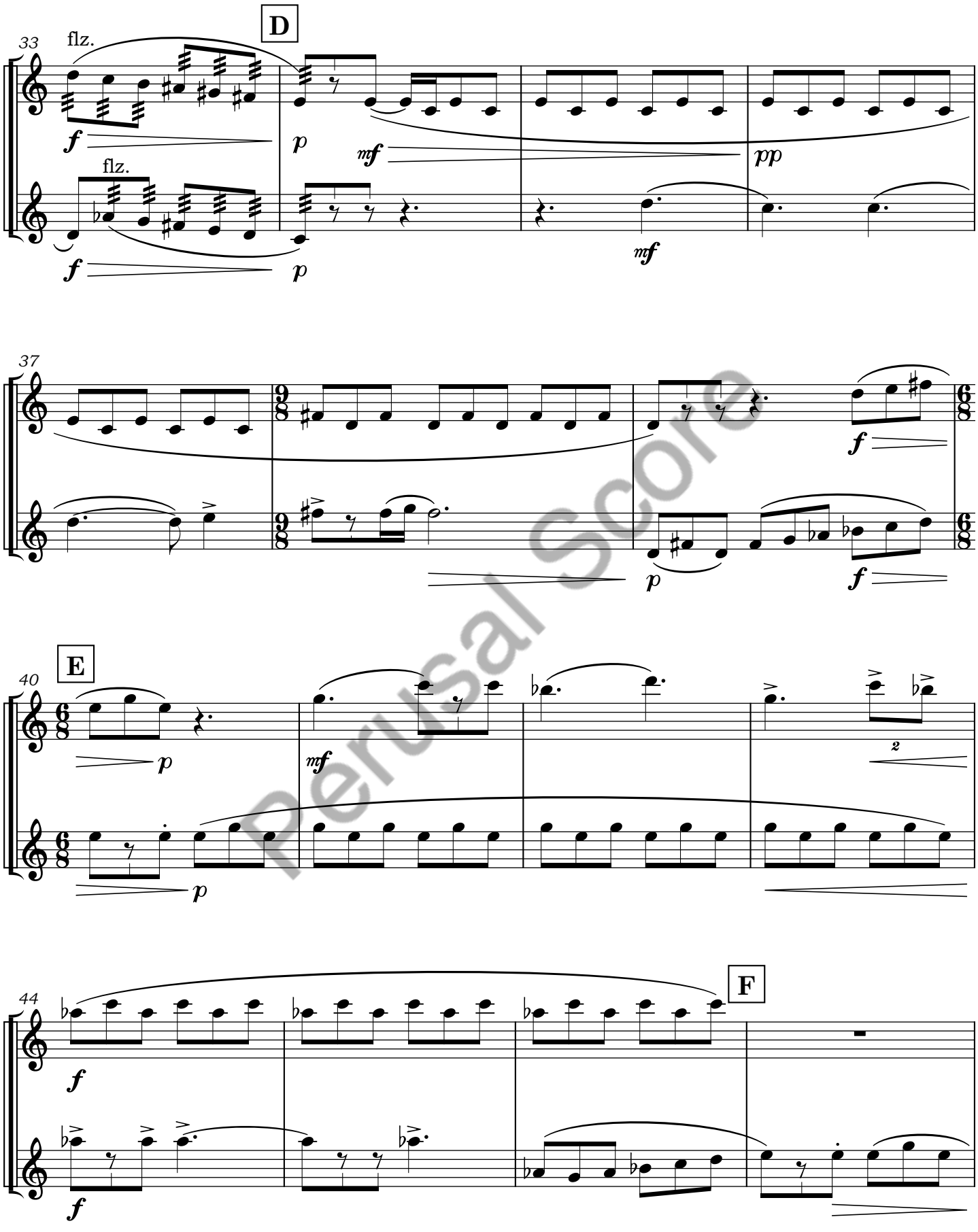

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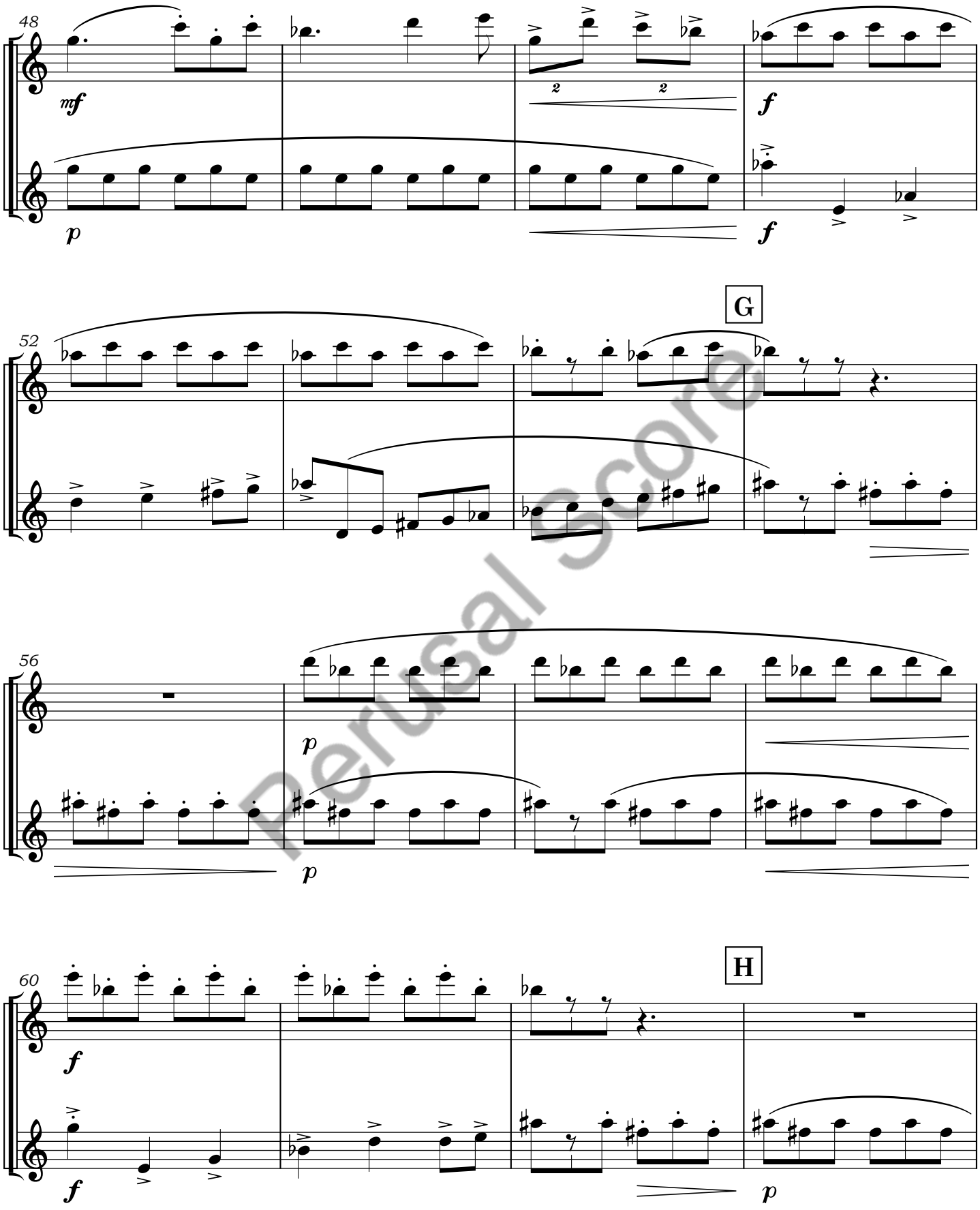

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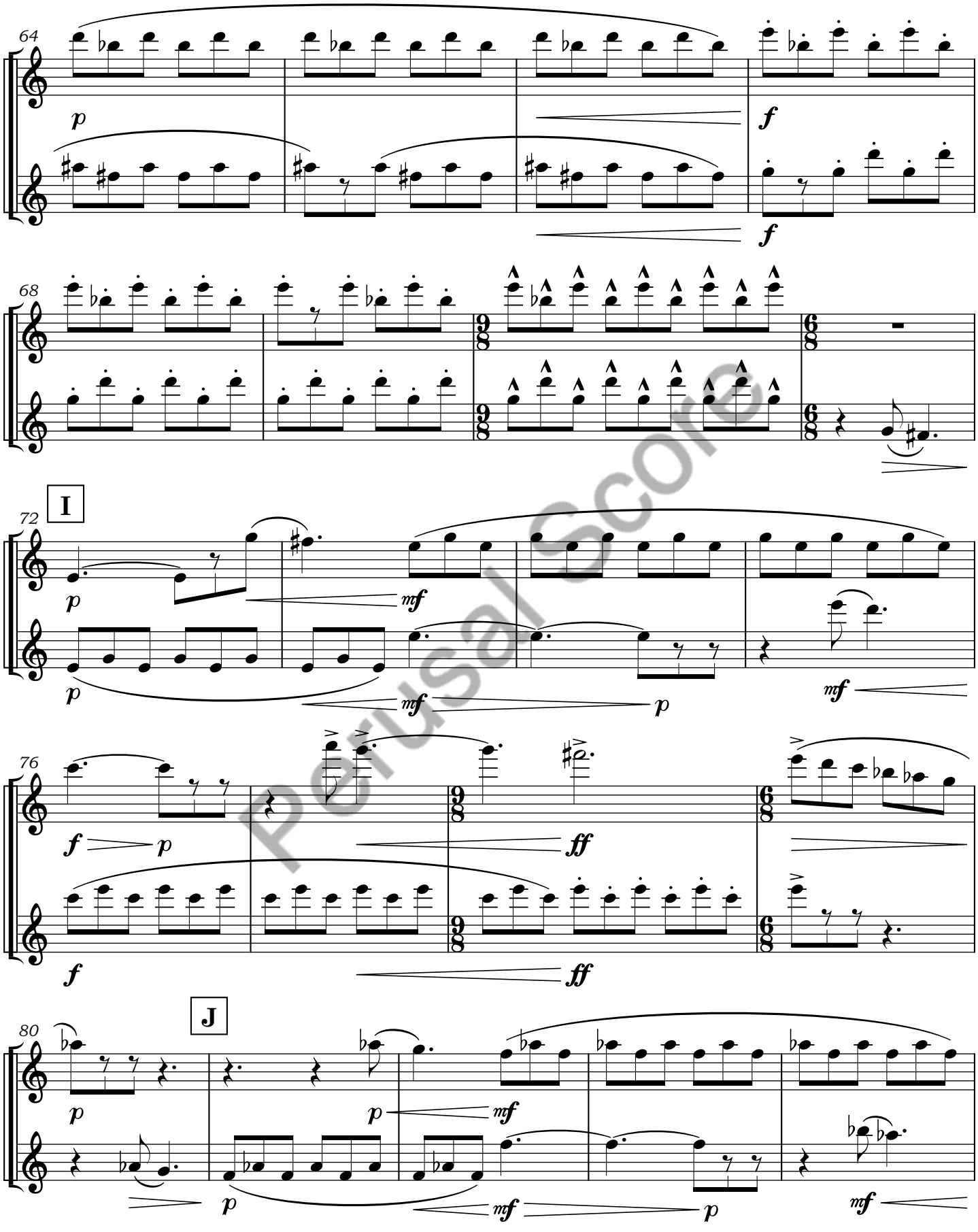

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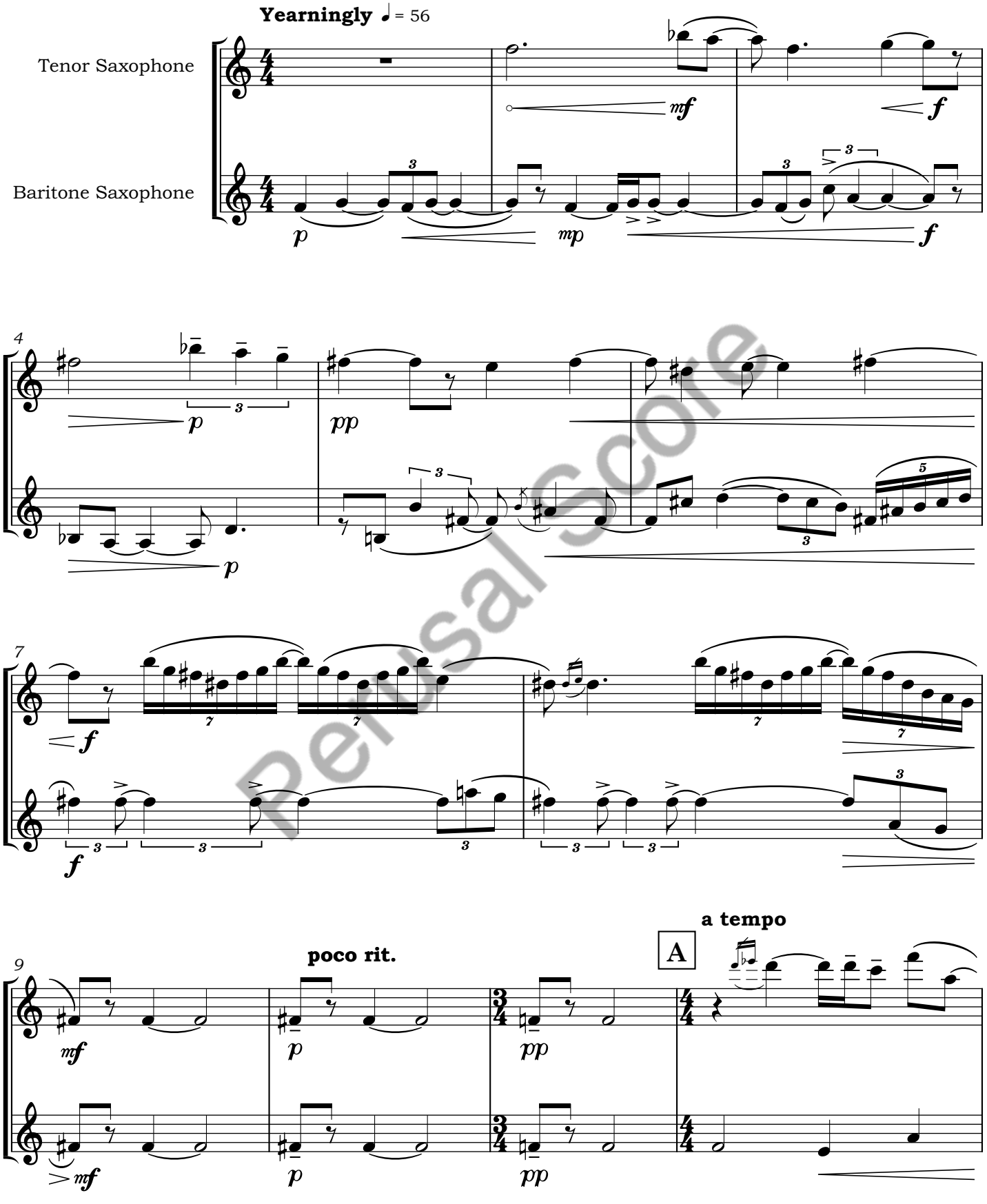
Mid Michigan Miniatures

III. 127 & I-75



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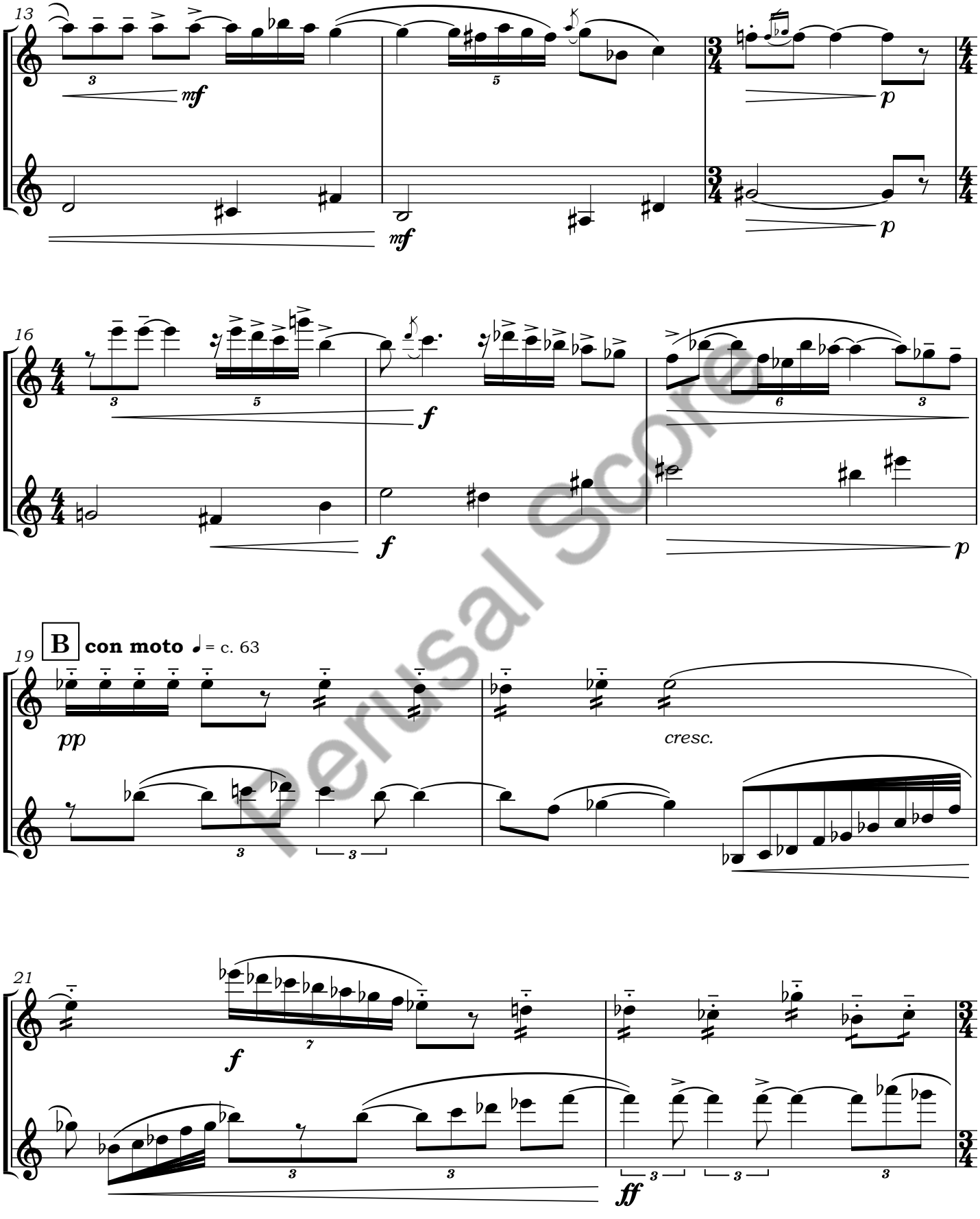

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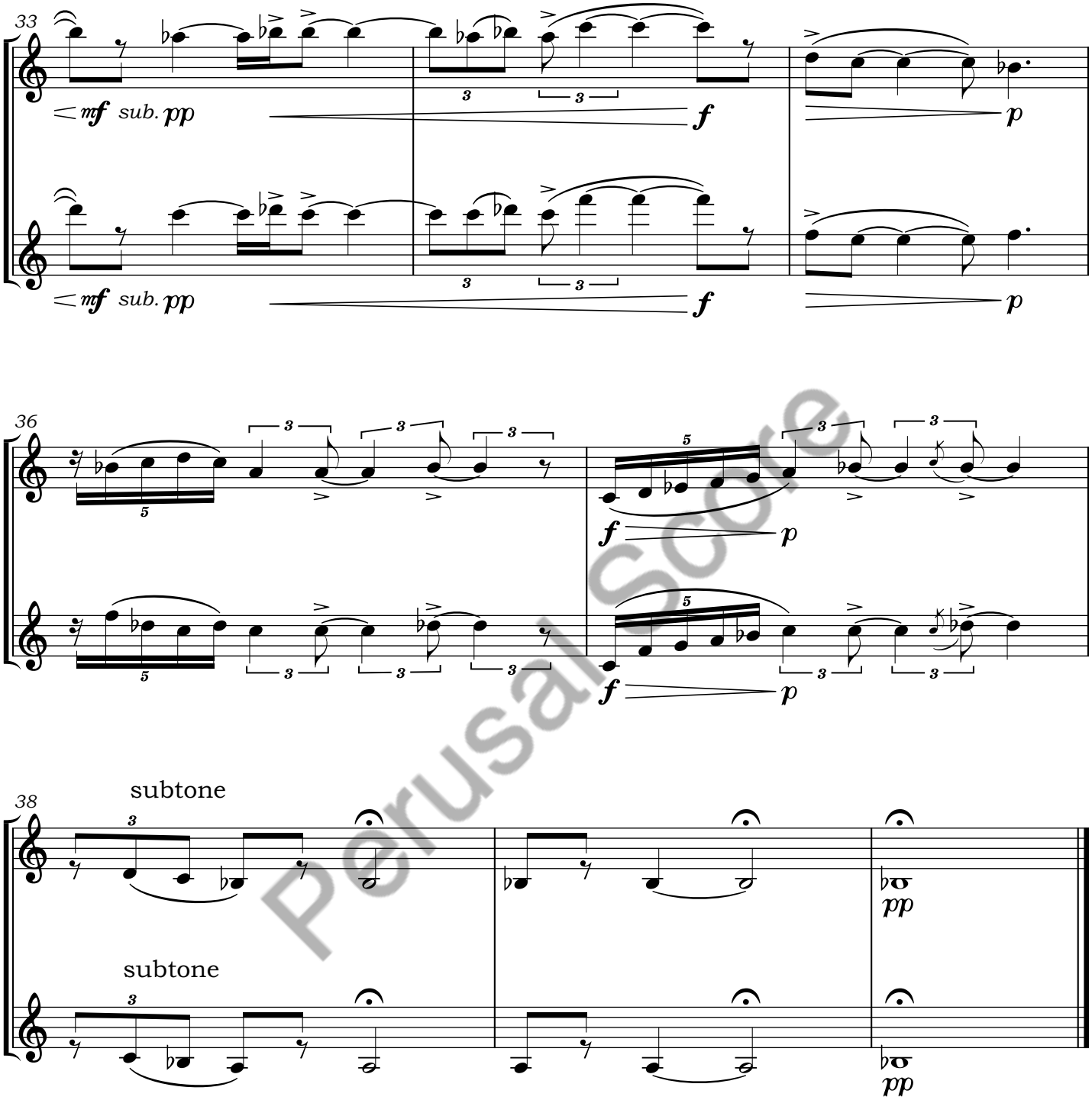
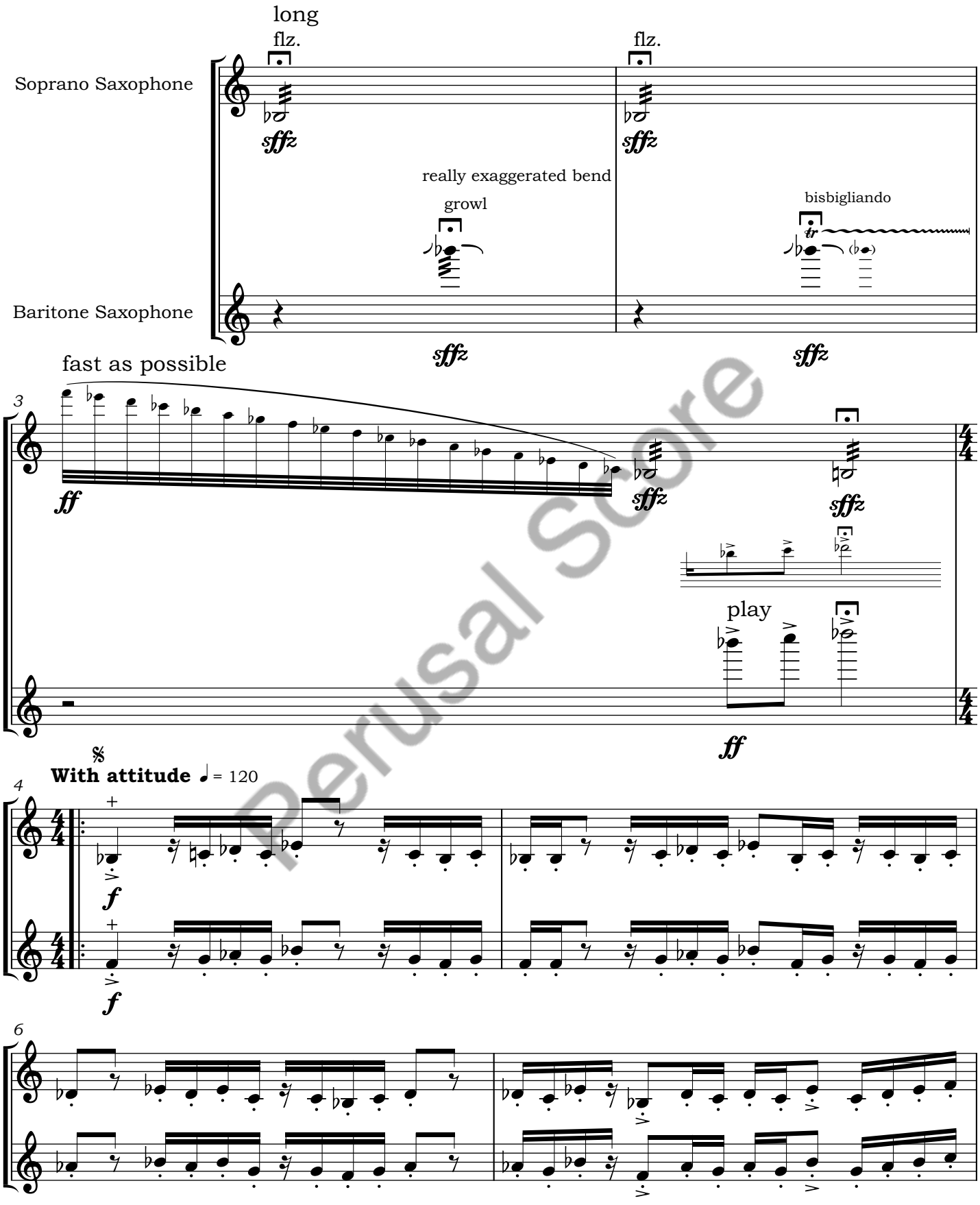


Perusal Score

Mid Michigan Miniatures

IV. 96 or 69



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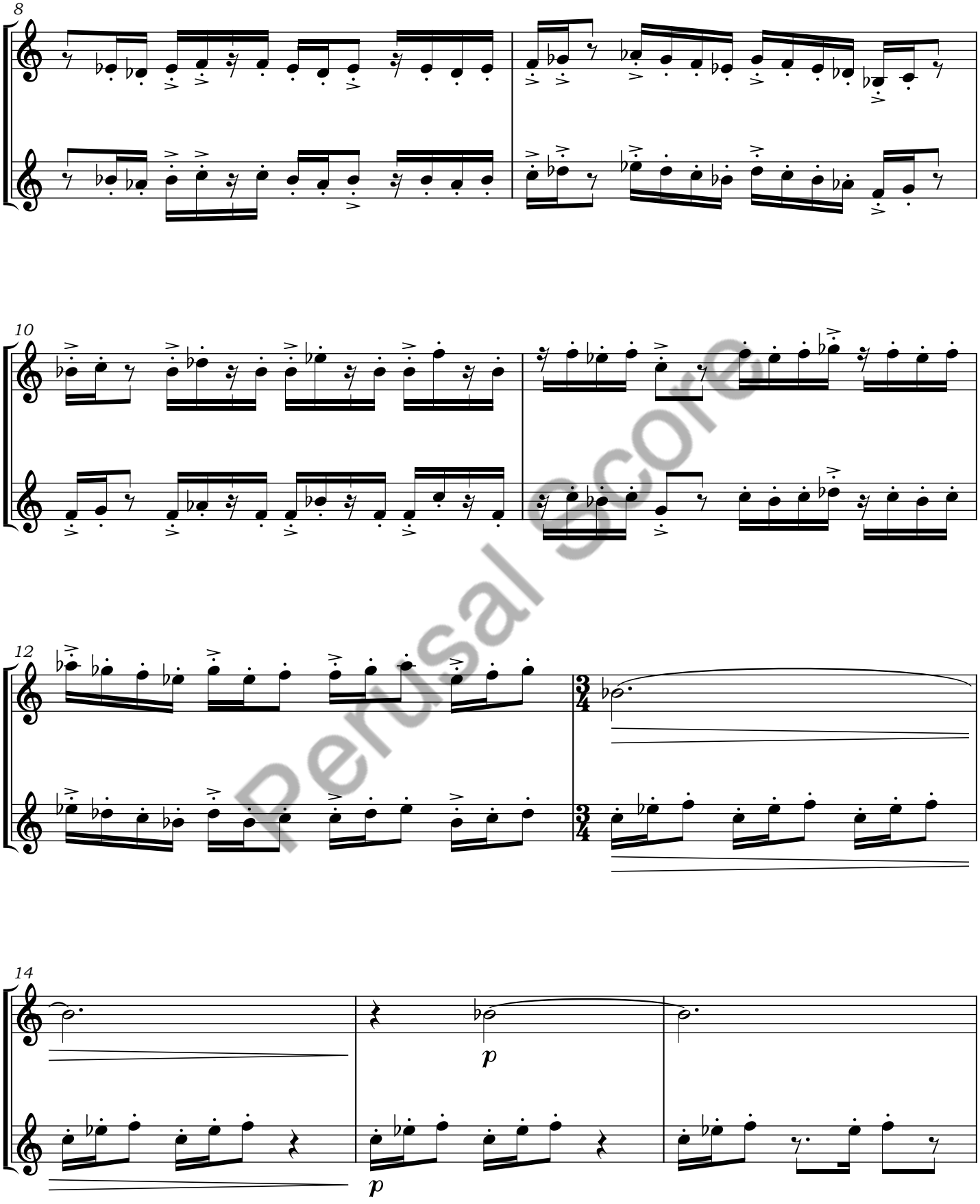

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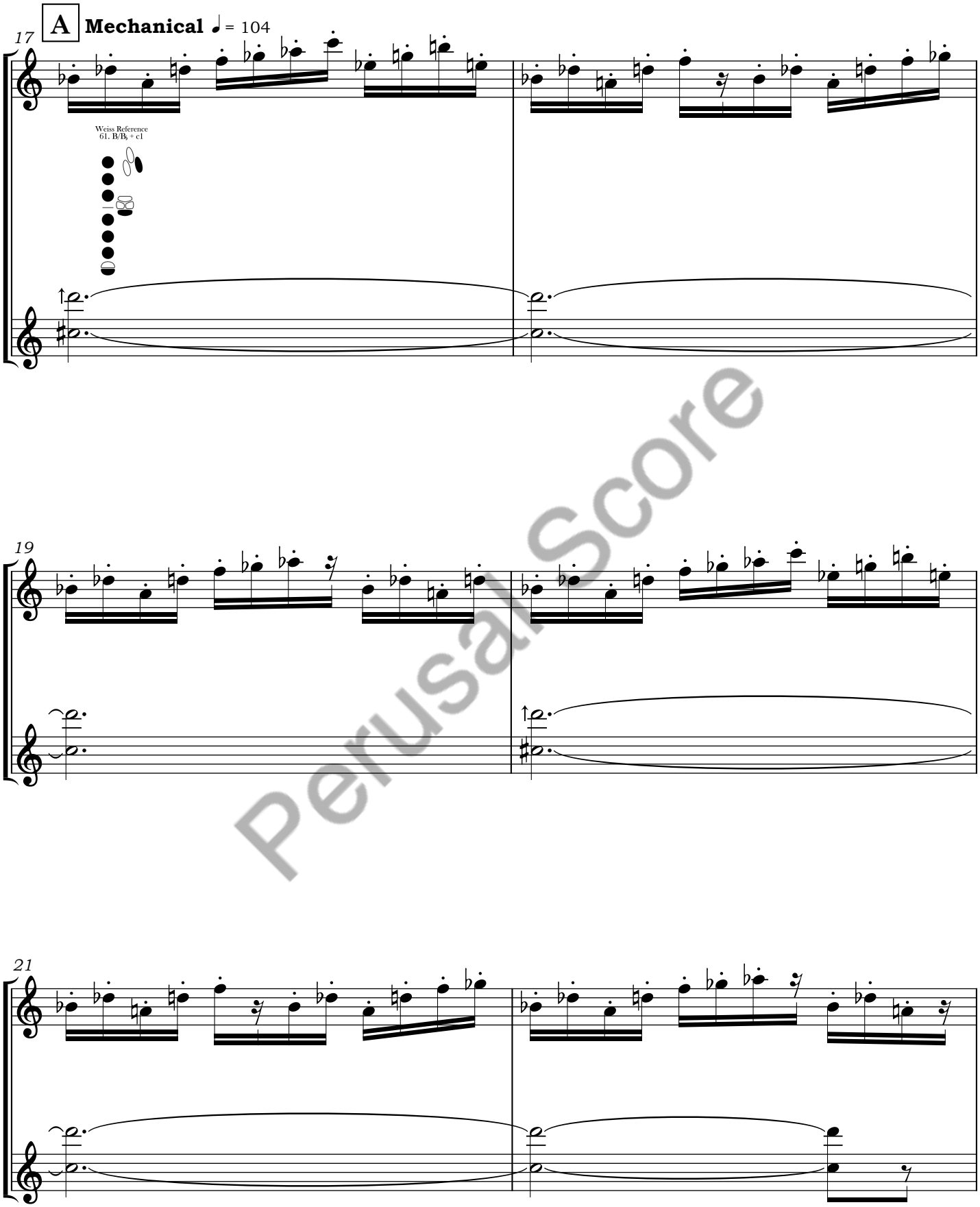

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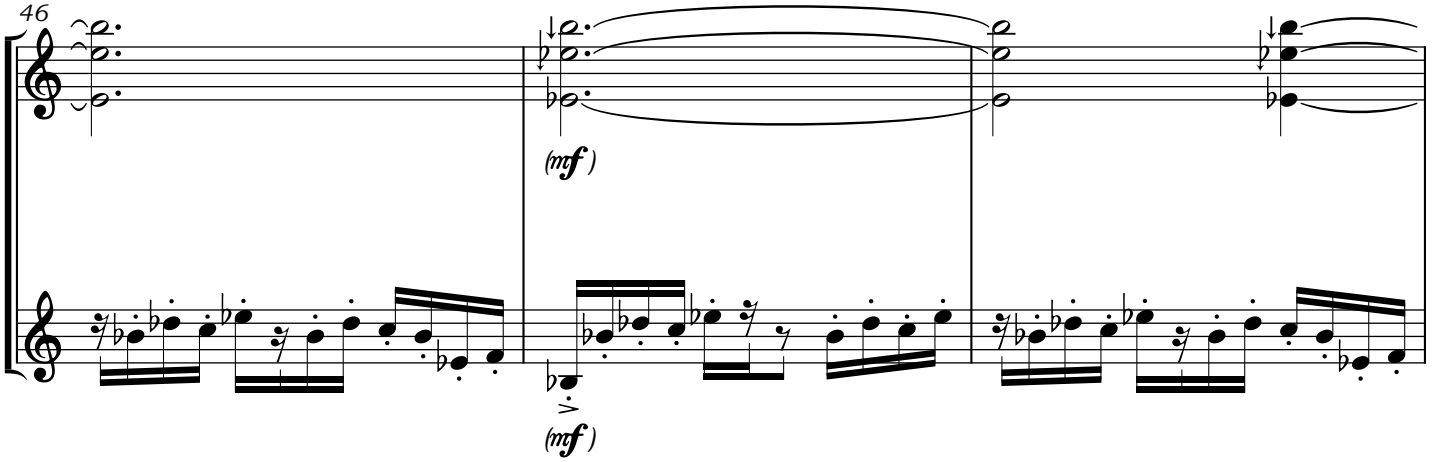

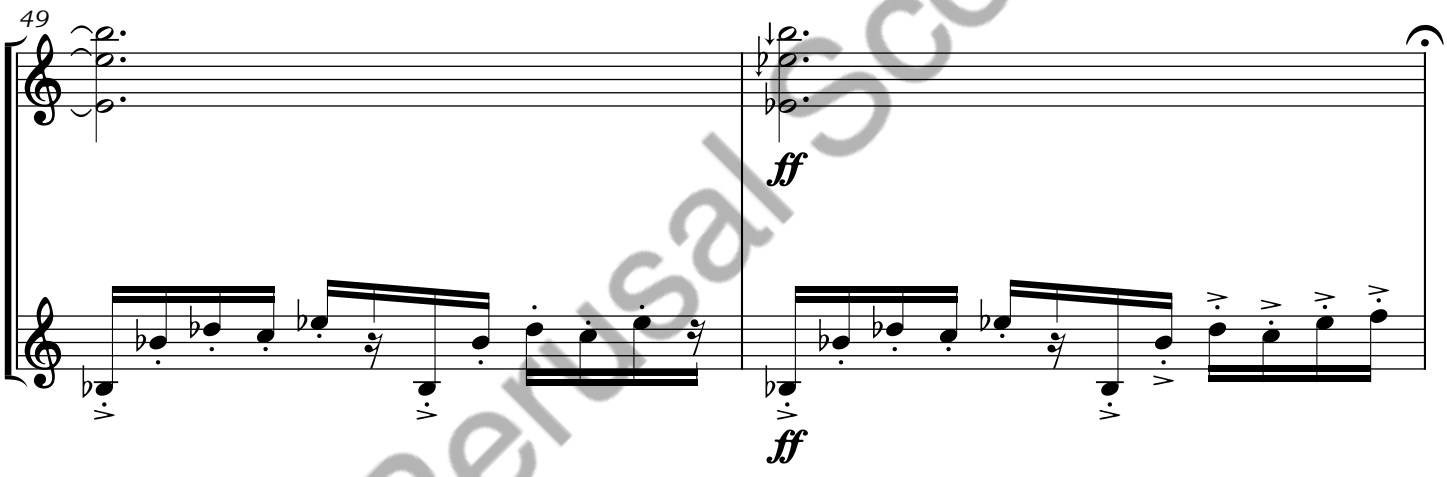

Perusal Score

♪ = c. 40

*Not played together

E

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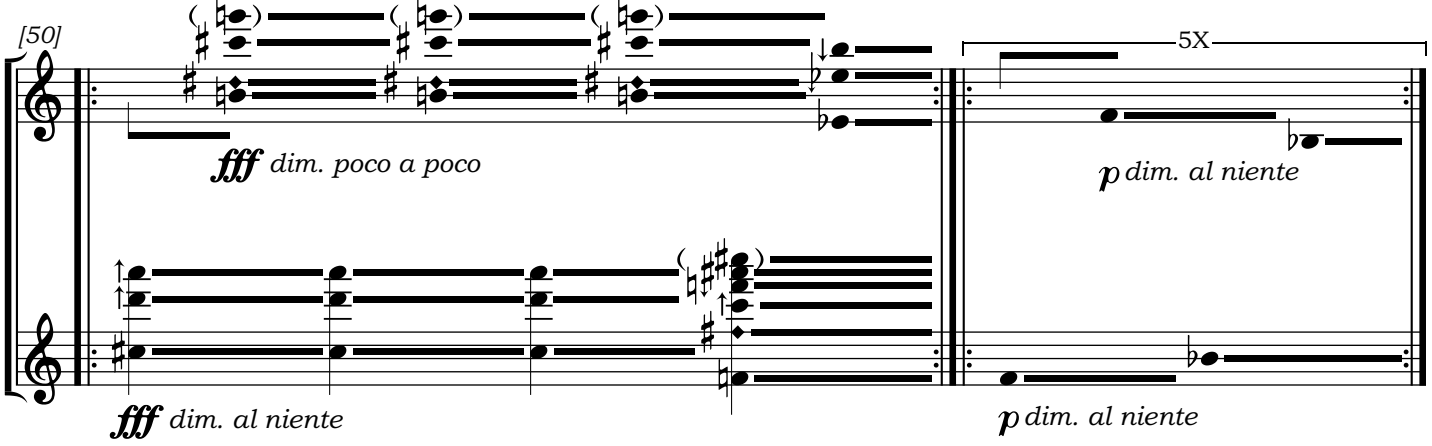
*alternate multiphonic in preface