Rebekah Driscoll

# Testing the Second Breath

for flute, bassoon, and fixed media

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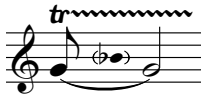
## About This Piece

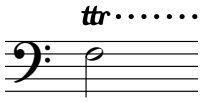
*Testing the Second Breath* refers to the maxim that half the Earth's oxygen is generated by marine life. "Take two breaths," conservationists say. "The second comes from the ocean." Of course, we could attribute the first breath to the ocean's phytoplankton and the second to trees and other land plants; the sentence structure illustrates our tendency to prioritize the things we can most easily see, and the environment where we spend the most time.

The voices on the recording describe various ways human beings have affected the ocean: overfishing, acidification, plastics pollution, contamination from construction, oil and nuclear spills. These activities have created a "quiet crisis" which endangers many lifeforms, on land as well as in the sea, and yet is not obviously felt by most people in developed countries. Solutions will require sustained attention to the consequences of our lifestyles—especially in areas that are difficult to see.

## Performance Notes

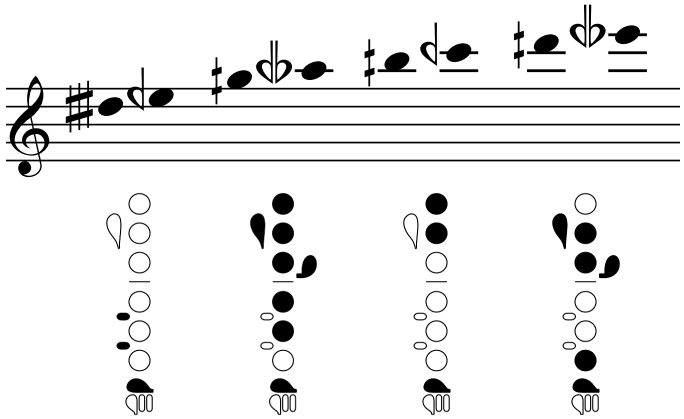


Trill to the note in parentheses.



Timbre trill: alternate between different fingerings of the same pitch to add and remove harmonics. It is usually effective to start with the basic fingering and trill the F key (adding A ring for intonation as needed); best fingerings will vary by instrument.

Recommended flute quartertone fingerings:



Accidentals, including quartertones, carry through the bar.

Duration: 9 minutes.

## Recording Credits

*Flute*: Izumi Nikaido; *Bassoon:* Leung Tak-wing.
*Voices:* Erik Ramirez, Sophia Yan, Dina Shabalina, Izumi Nikaido, Caleb Woo, Barnaby Kendall.
Additional thanks to Julia Tang and Anna Smirny for translating and proofreading.

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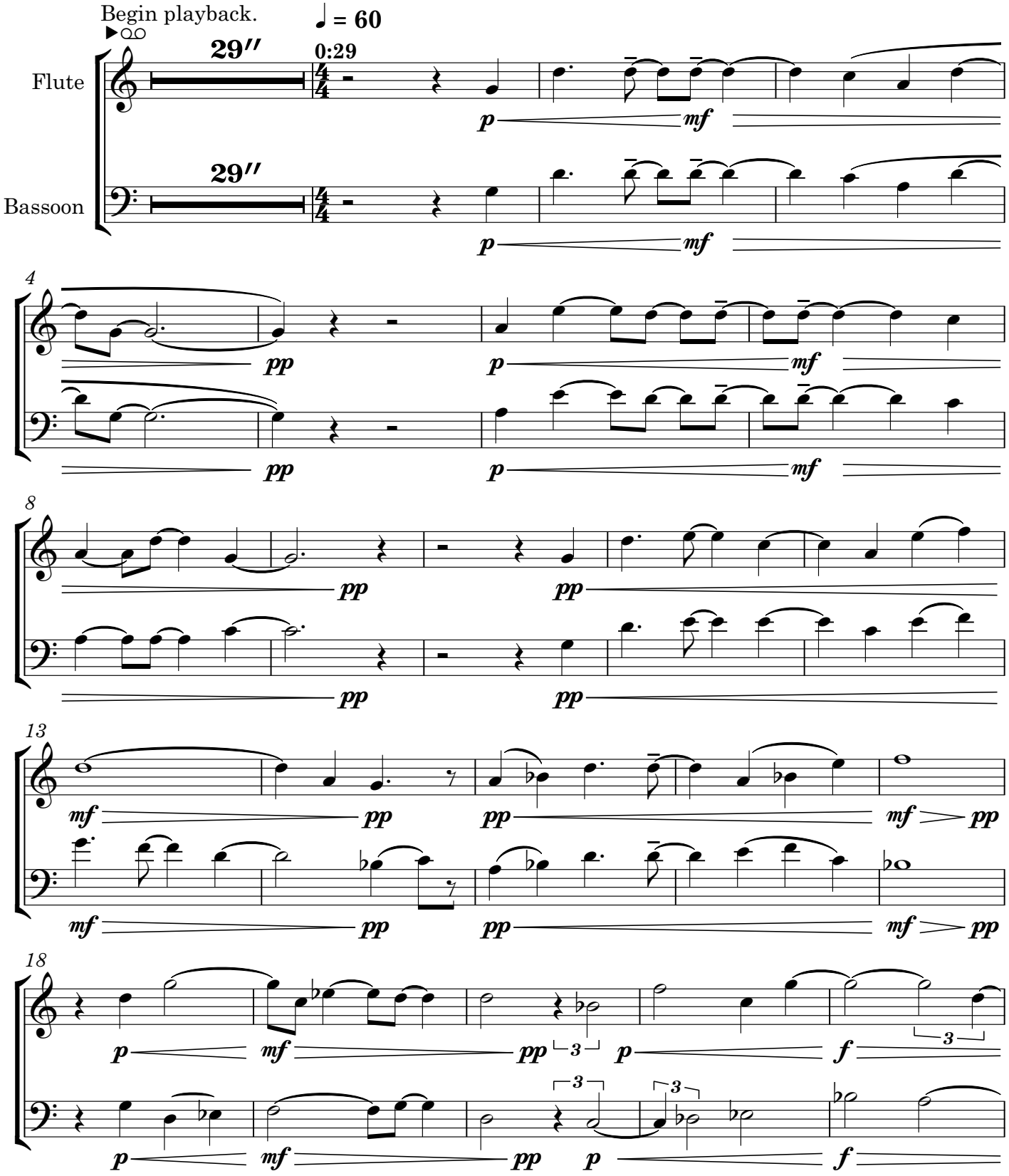


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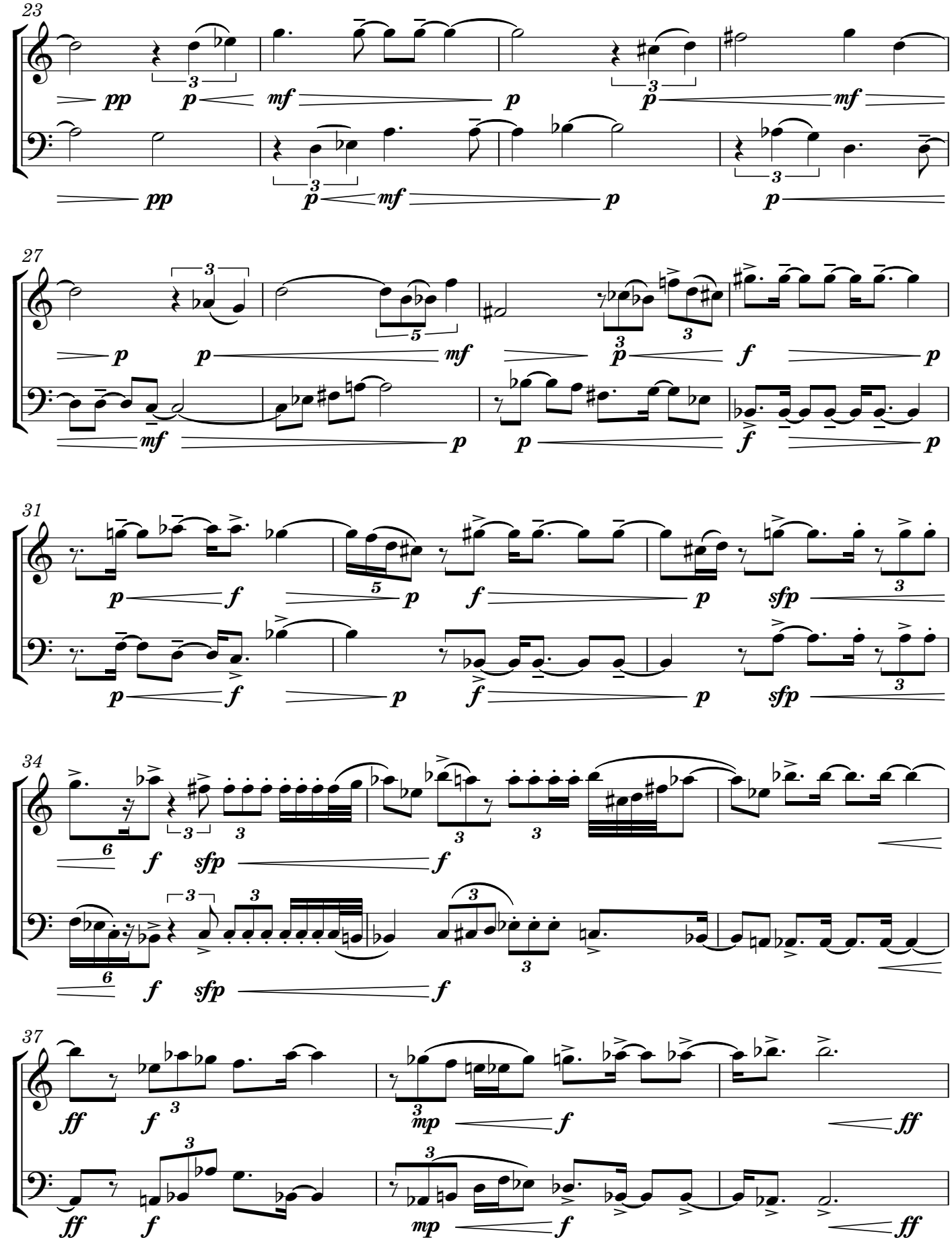
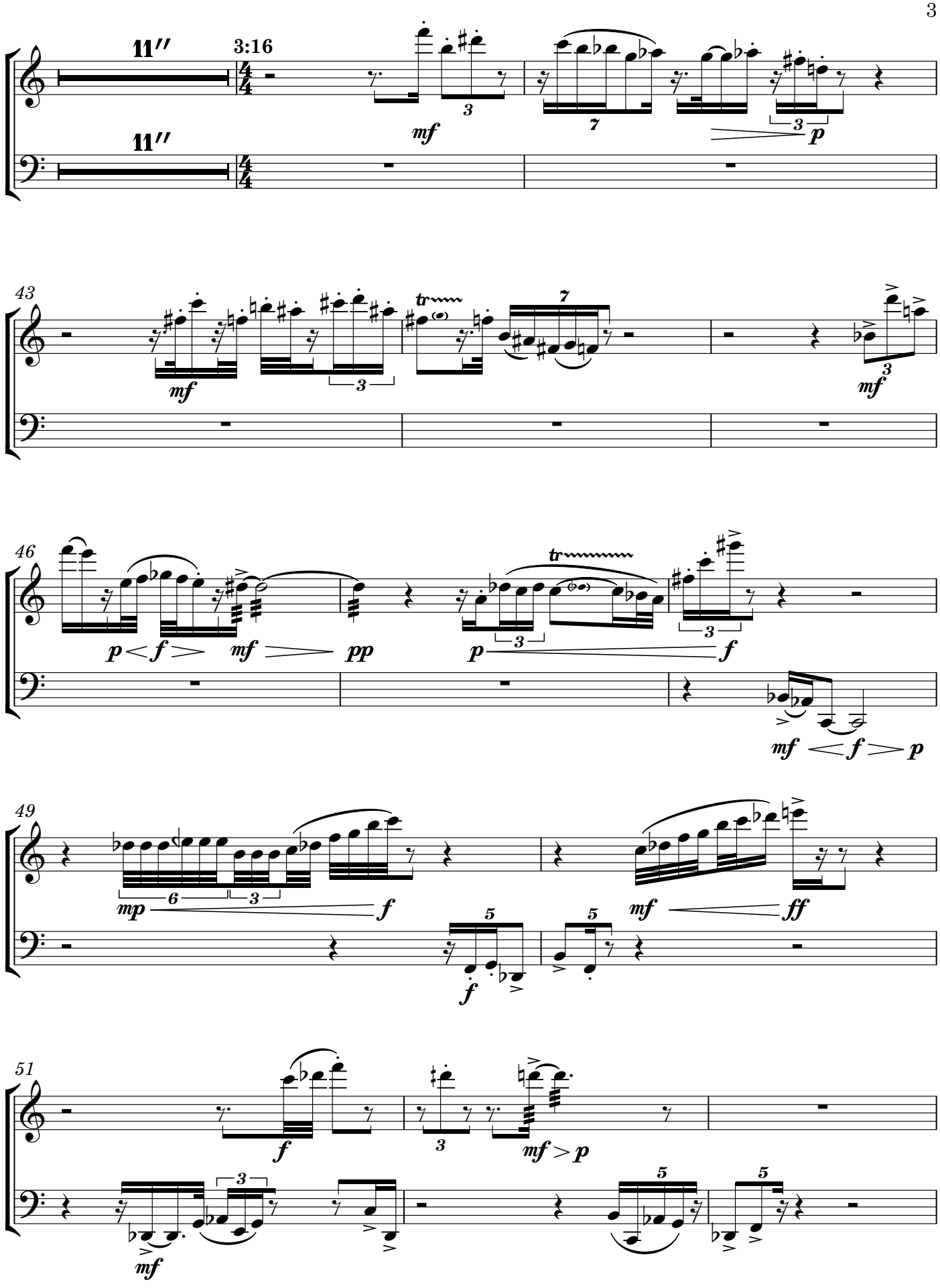
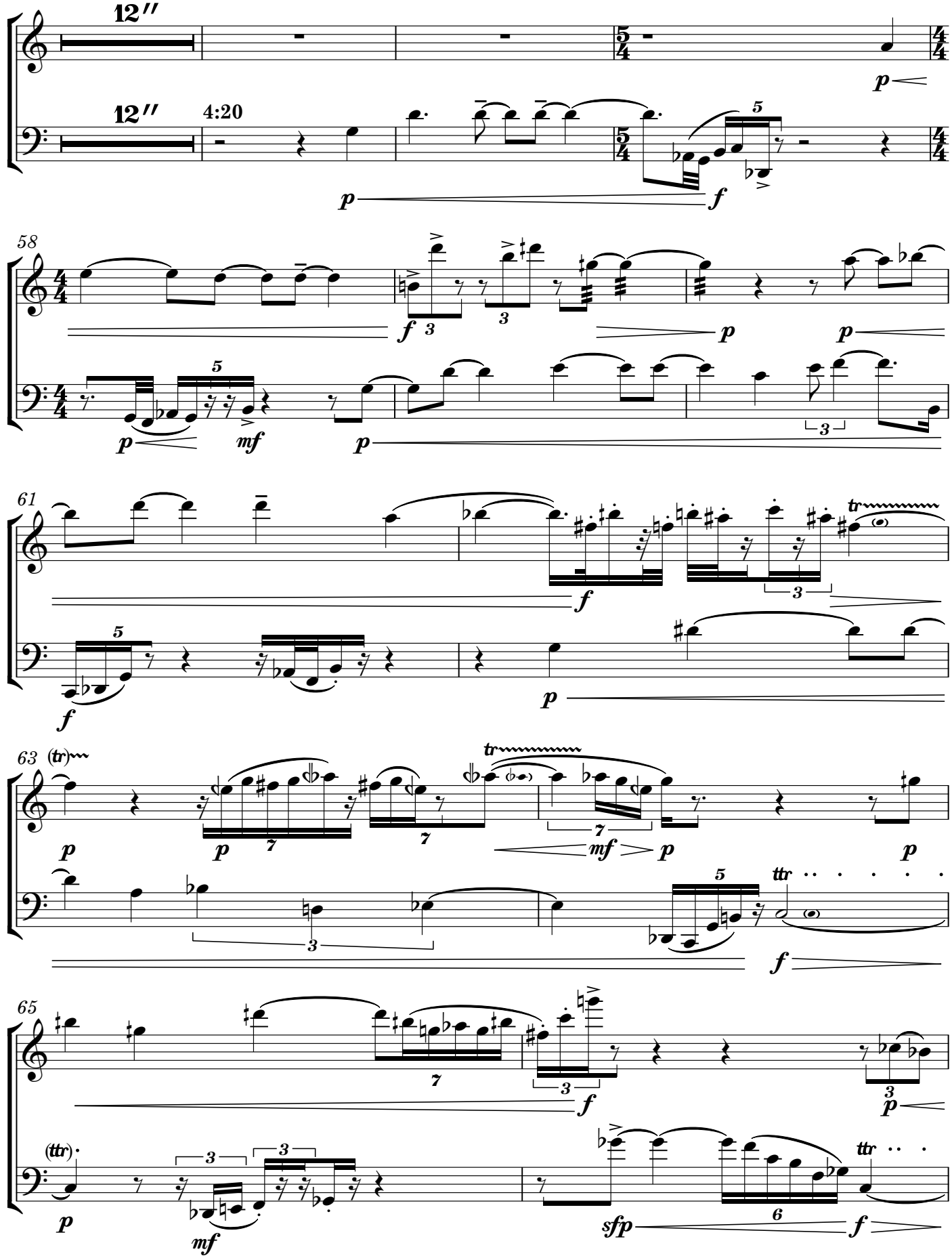
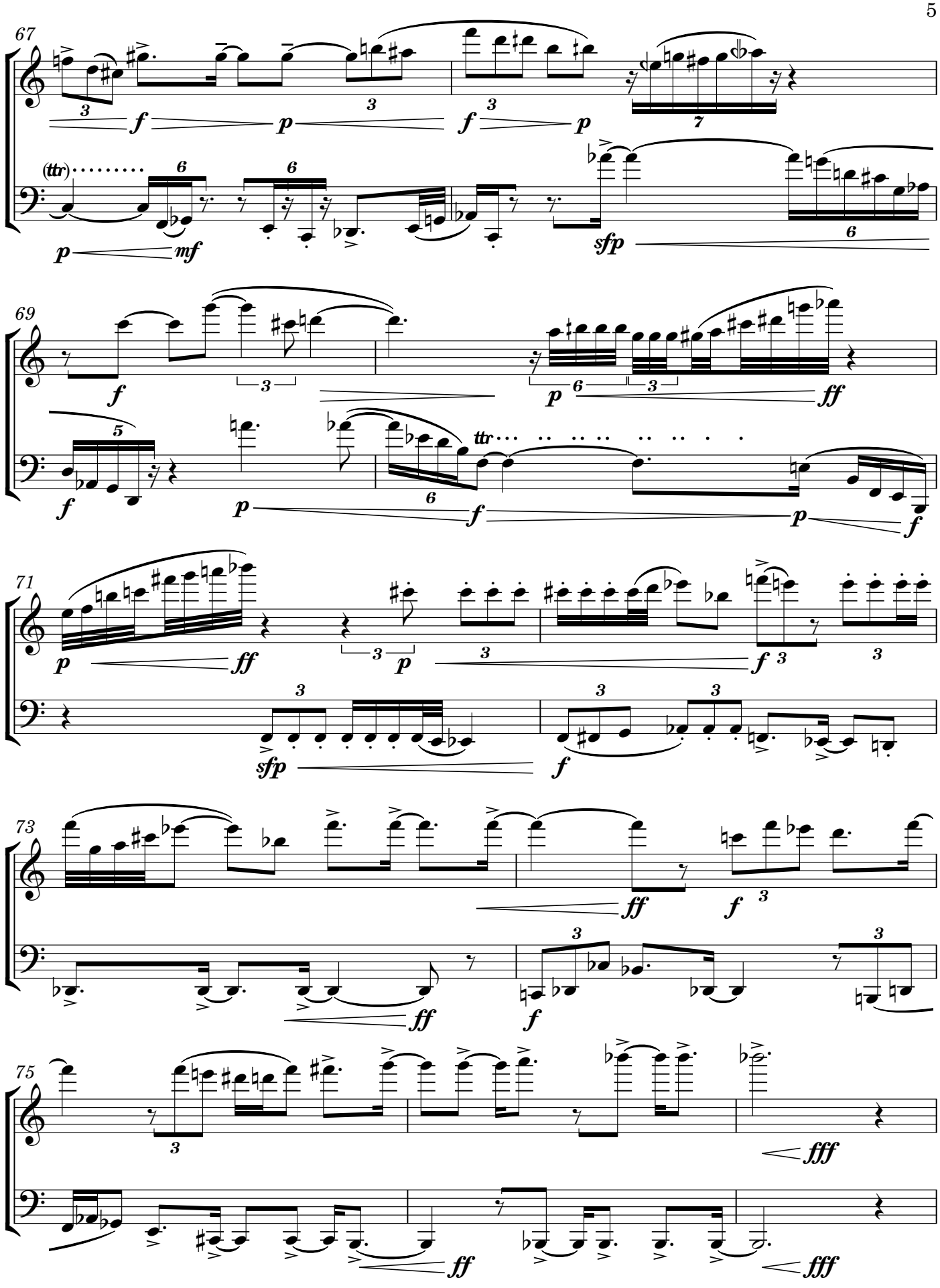
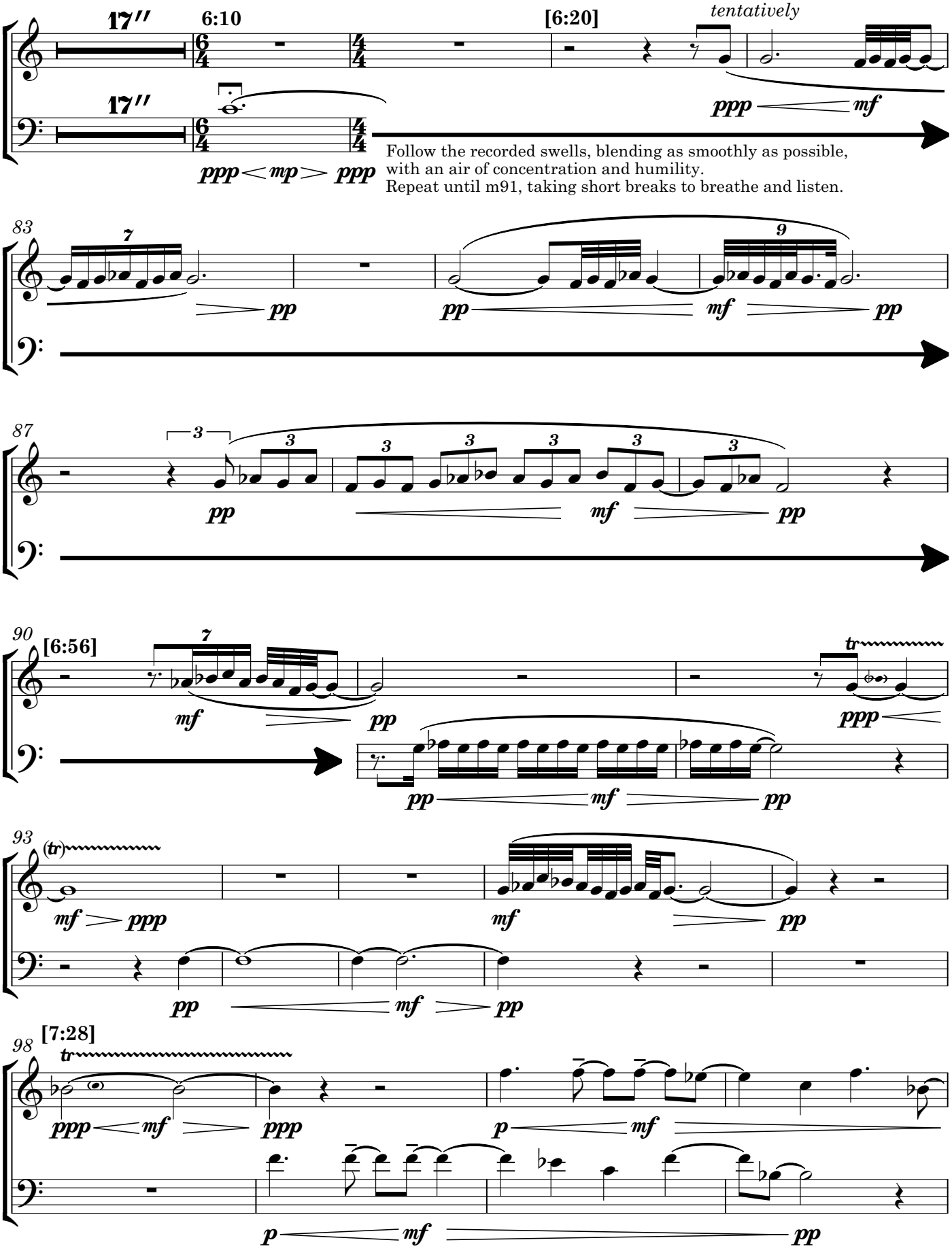
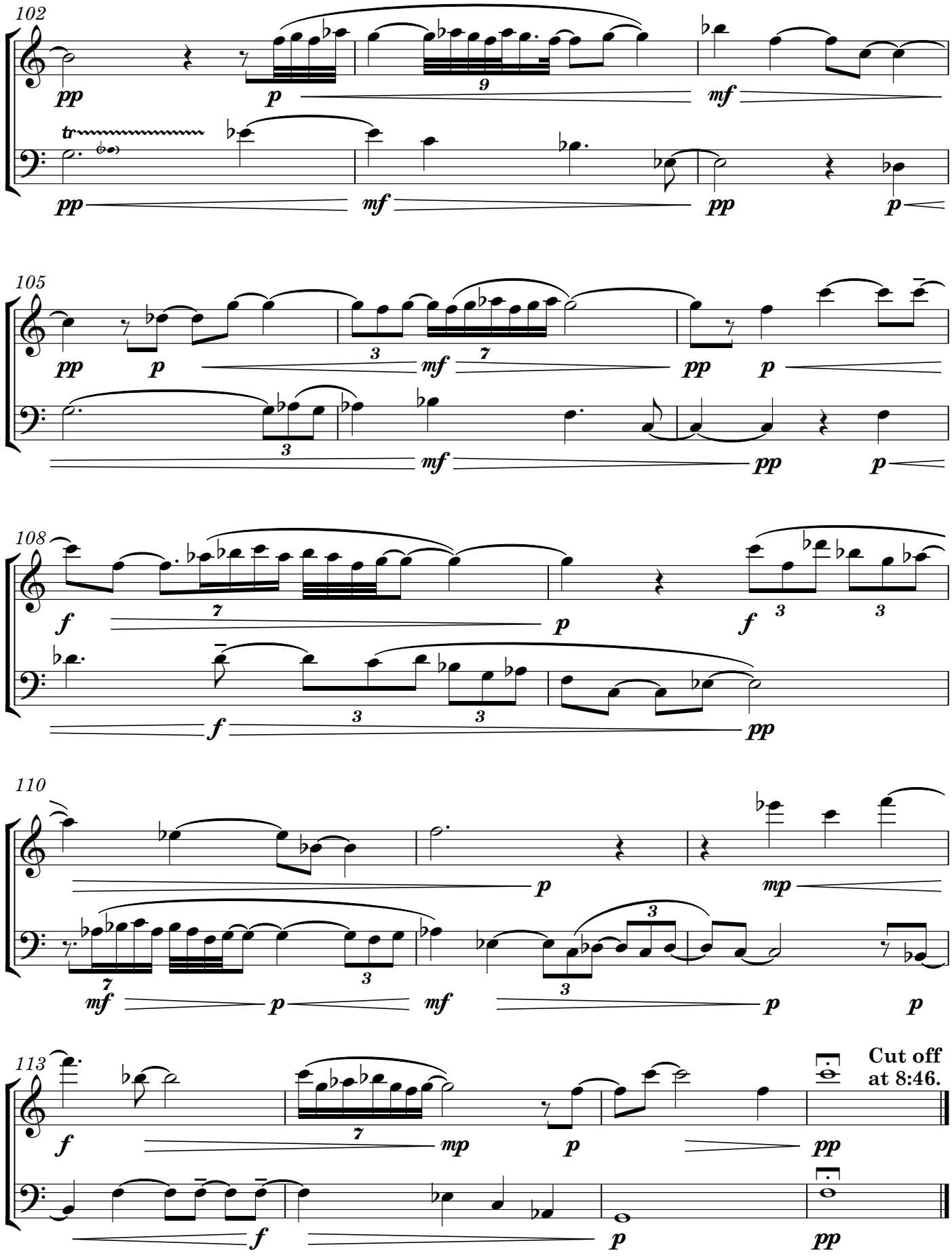

23
pp p mf p p mf
pp p mf p p
27
p p mf p mf p f p
mf p p f p
31
p f p f p sfp
p f p f p sfp
34
f sfp f
f sfp f
37
ff f mp f ff
ff f mp f ff


11''
3:16
11''
mf
p
43
mf
mf
46
p < f > mf
pp
p
f
mf < f > p
49
mp
f
mf
ff
f
51
f
mf > p
mf


12″
12″
4:20
58
61
63
65


67
(ttr)
p
mf
f
p
f
p
sfp
69
f
p
ff
f
p
ttr
f
p
71
p
ff
p
f
sfp
f
73
ff
f
ff
75
fff
ff
fff


17″
6:10
[6:20]
tentatively
ppp mf
17″
ppp < mp > ppp
Follow the recorded swells, blending as smoothly as possible,
with an air of concentration and humility.
Repeat until m91, taking short breaks to breathe and listen.
83
pp
pp mf pp
87
pp
mf pp
90
[6:56]
mf pp
ppp
pp mf pp
93
(tr)
mf ppp
mf pp
pp mf pp
98
[7:28]
tr
ppp mf ppp
p mf
p mf pp


102
105
108
110
113
Cut off at 8:46.