David Biedenbender

Radiant Spheres

for tenor trombone and piano

PERUSAL COPY

Bent Space Music

Commissioned by Timothy Higgins, Principal Trombonist San Francisco Symphony.

PERUSAL COPY

Performance materials available from Bent Space Music (Publisher):
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Duration: *ca.* 16:00

PROGRAM NOTE

Radiant Spheres was commissioned by Timothy Higgins, Principal Trombonist of the San Francisco Symphony. The inspiration for *Radiant Spheres* centers around the second movement, *for me, time moves both more slowly and more quickly,* the idea for which came to me while on a flight over Lake Michigan in the Spring of 2014. As I boarded the plane, one passenger in particular caught my eye—a woman sitting directly behind me, looking barely strong enough to make the flight, who I quickly gleaned was with her husband on her way home to Michigan following treatment for cancer. My son Izaak, who was about ten months old at the time, sat on my lap during most of the flight, and he kept his eyes on her almost constantly, smiling and giggling at her as she smiled back at him. As we ascended to 35,000 feet, most of the passengers started to become quiet and sleepy, and I found Izaak smiling at her yet again. This time, I turned to find her smiling back but with tears running down her face. I remember looking into her eyes and thinking that, for her, time must move both so slowly and so quickly, as she felt the poignant juxtaposition of her impending departure from this earth alongside her extraordinary pain. She also seemed strangely at peace, and I remember thinking of the hymn "This is My Father's World" as we cruised above the earth:

This is my Father's world,
And to my listening ears
All nature sings, and round me rings
The music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world:
I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas;
His hand the wonders wrought.

On our ascent, I had remembered looking out the window at the shadows of the airplane and the clouds, seemingly dancing on the earth as they rushed over the surface of the uneven ground. As we began to descend, I looked again out the window. But this time, from a much higher vantage point, I saw the gentle glow of the earth, this radiant sphere, where the cerulean water meets the dark blue sky, separated by the reddish-orange glow of the evening sun moving behind the earth. And I felt small and I felt grateful.

REHEARSAL COPY

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Commissioned by Timothy Higgins, Principal Trombone, San Francsico Symphony

Radiant Spheres

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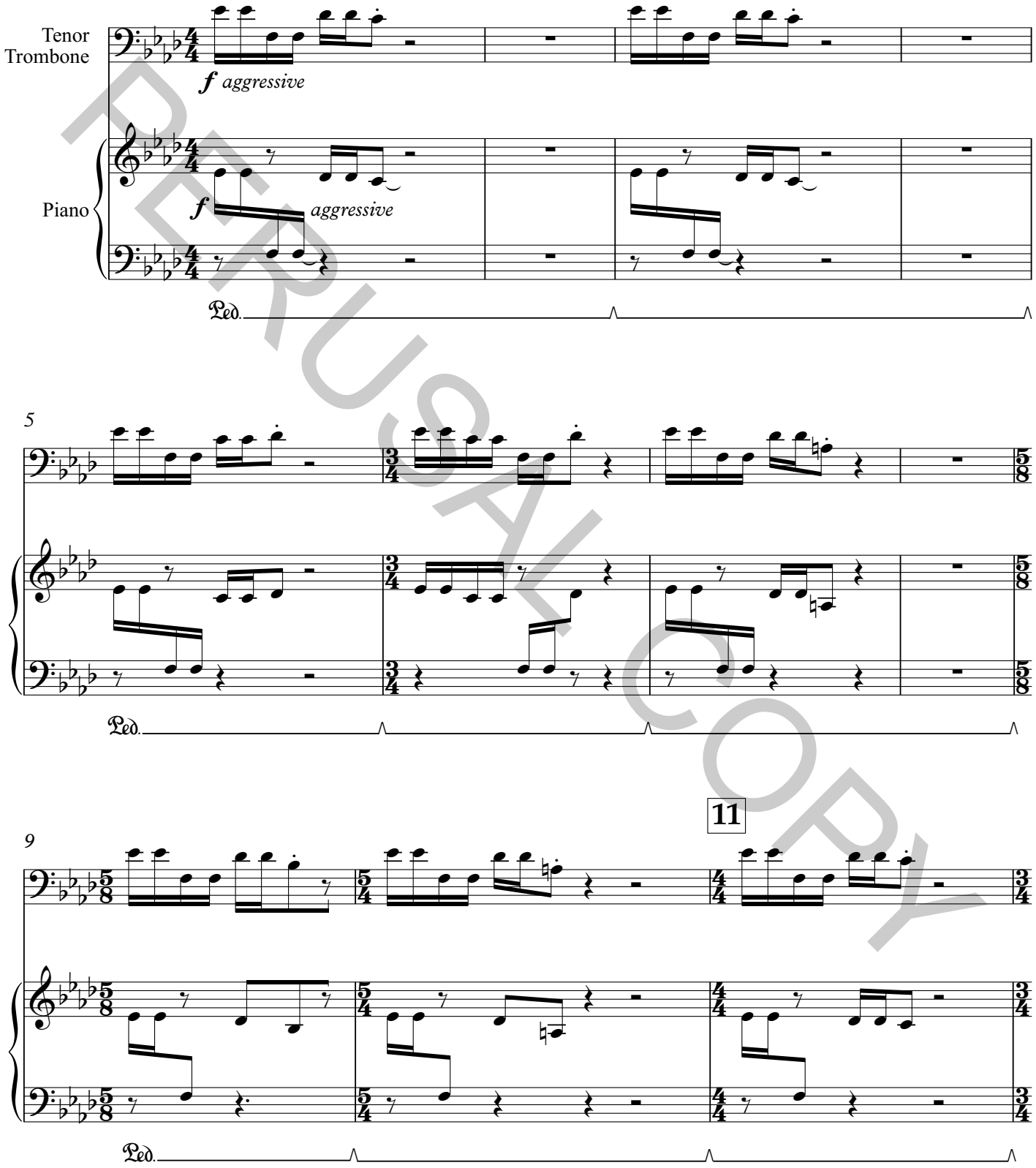
David Biedenbender

I. Shadows

Fluttering, fast, precise ♩ = 120-132



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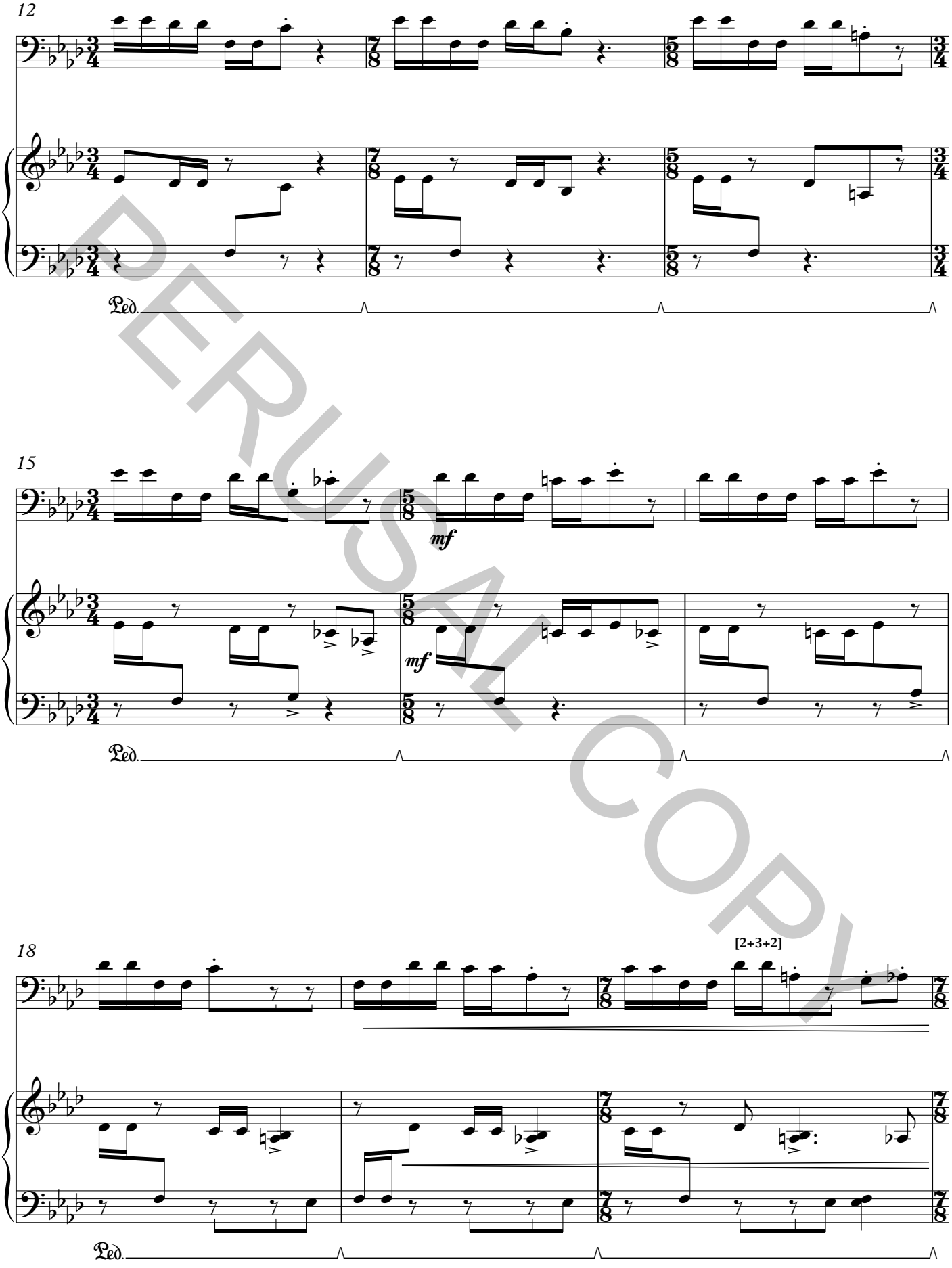

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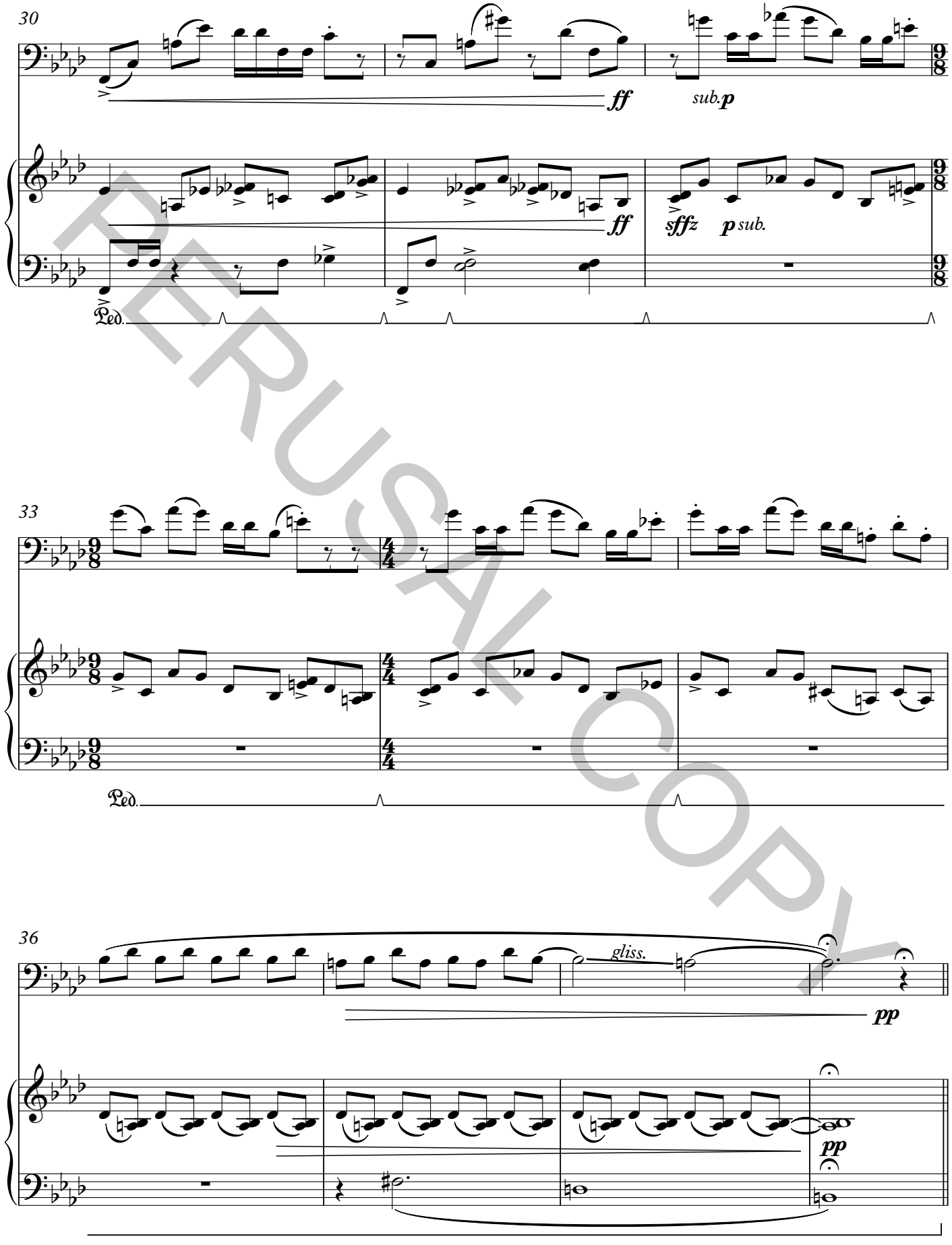

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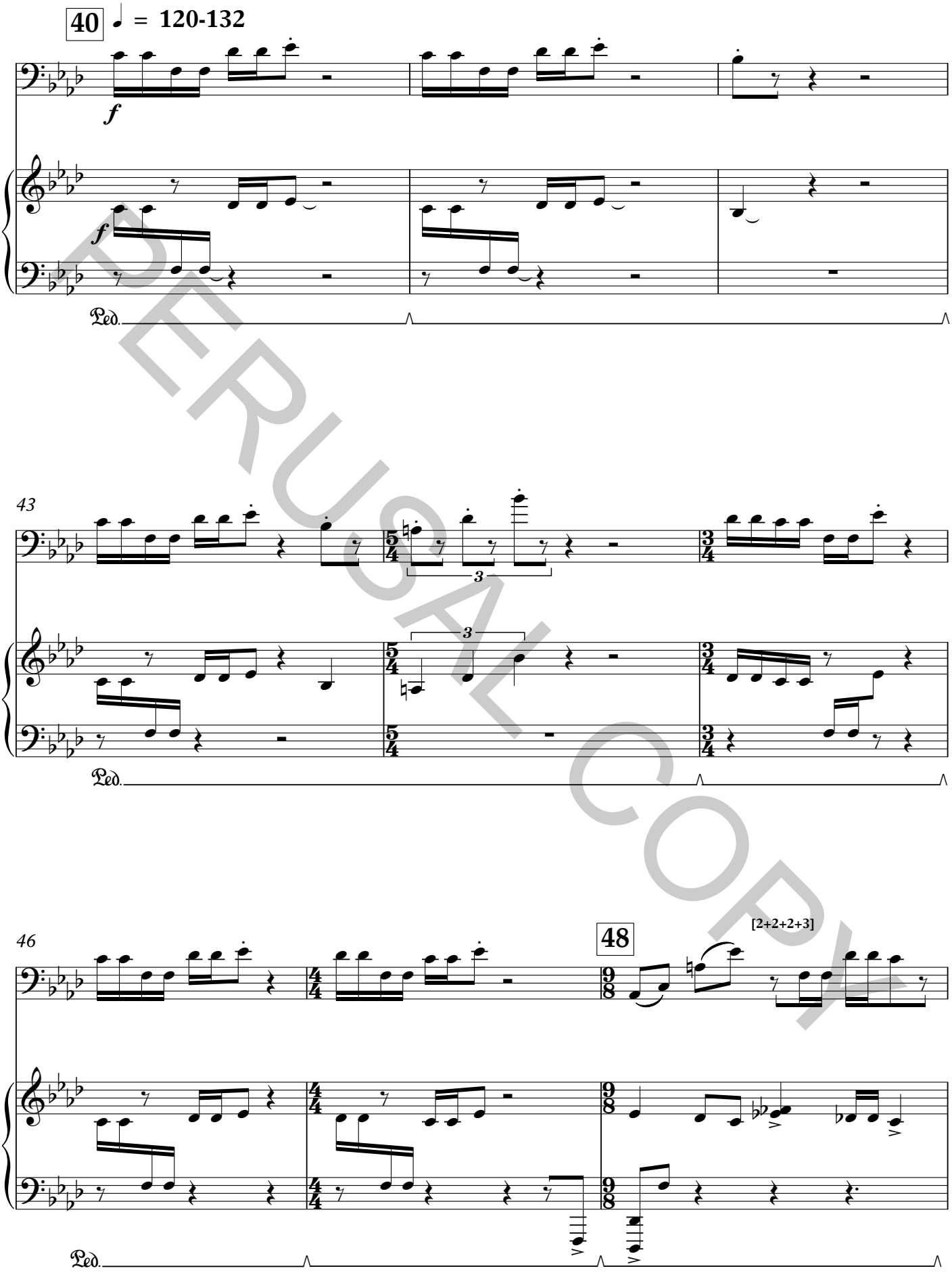

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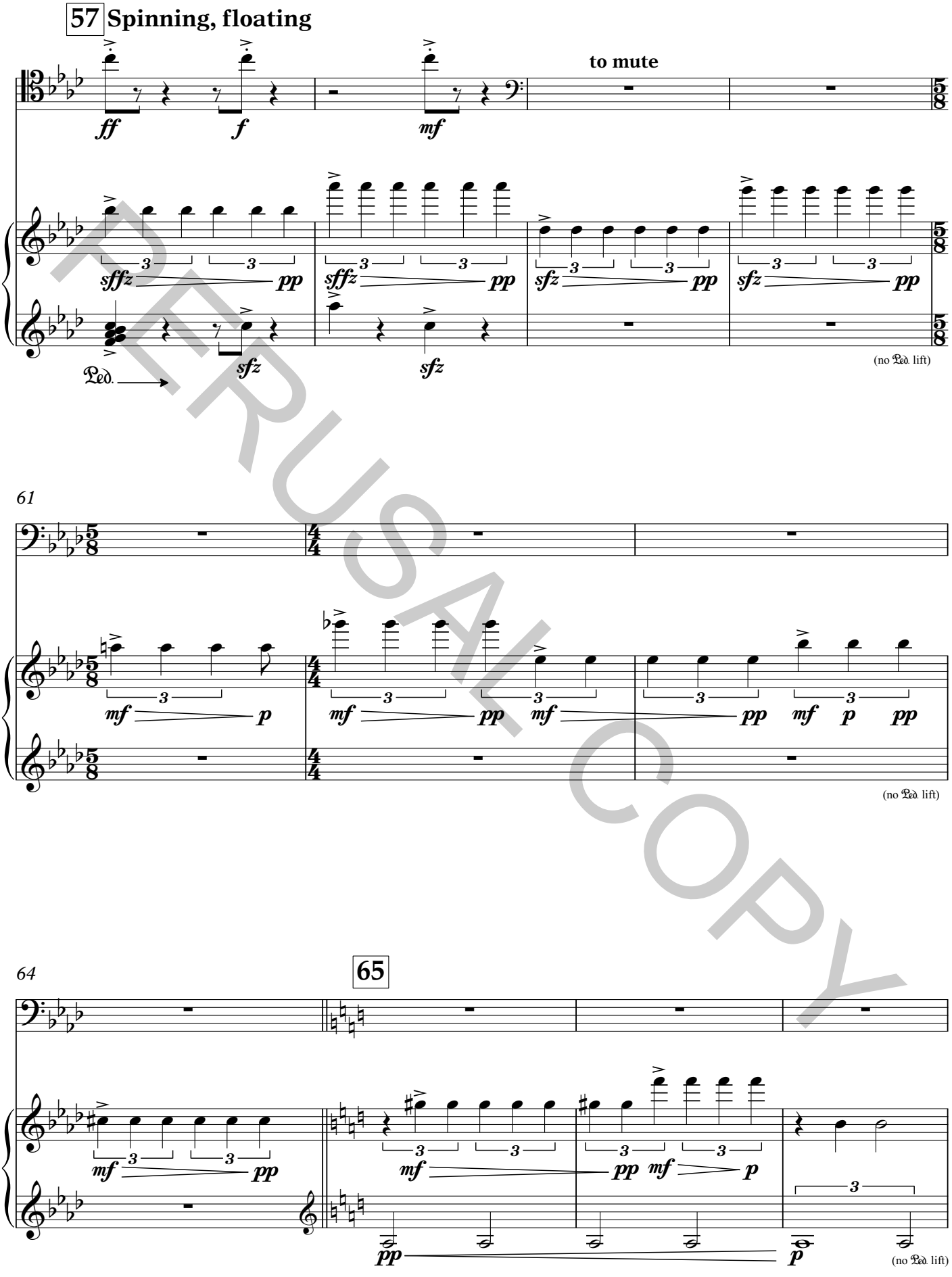

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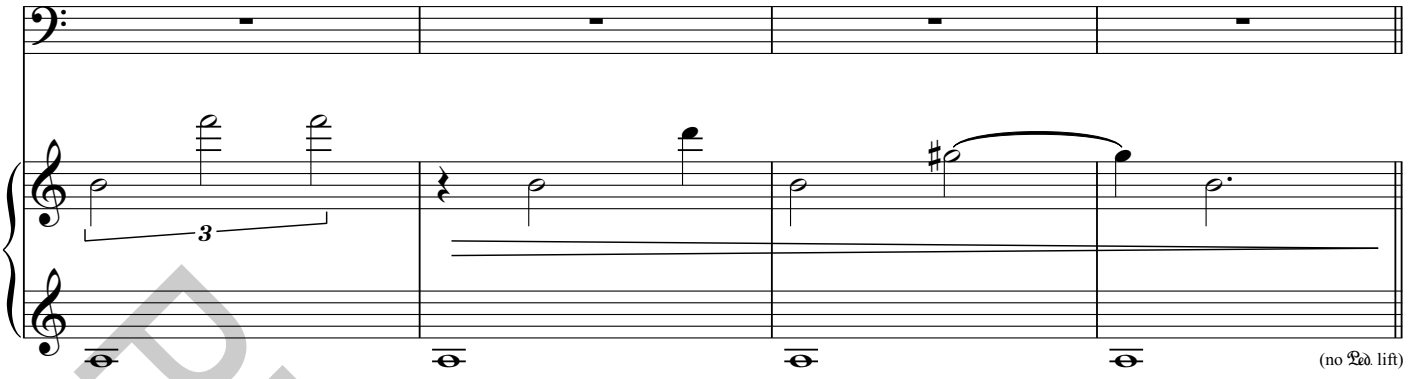
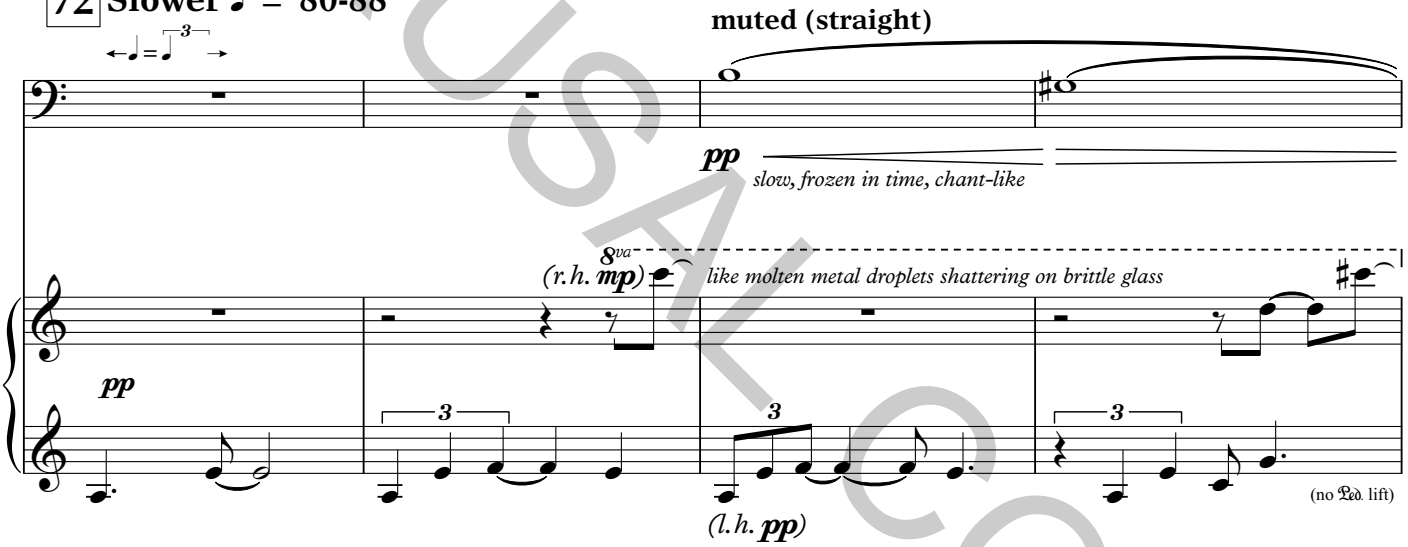


72 **Slower** ♩ = 80-88



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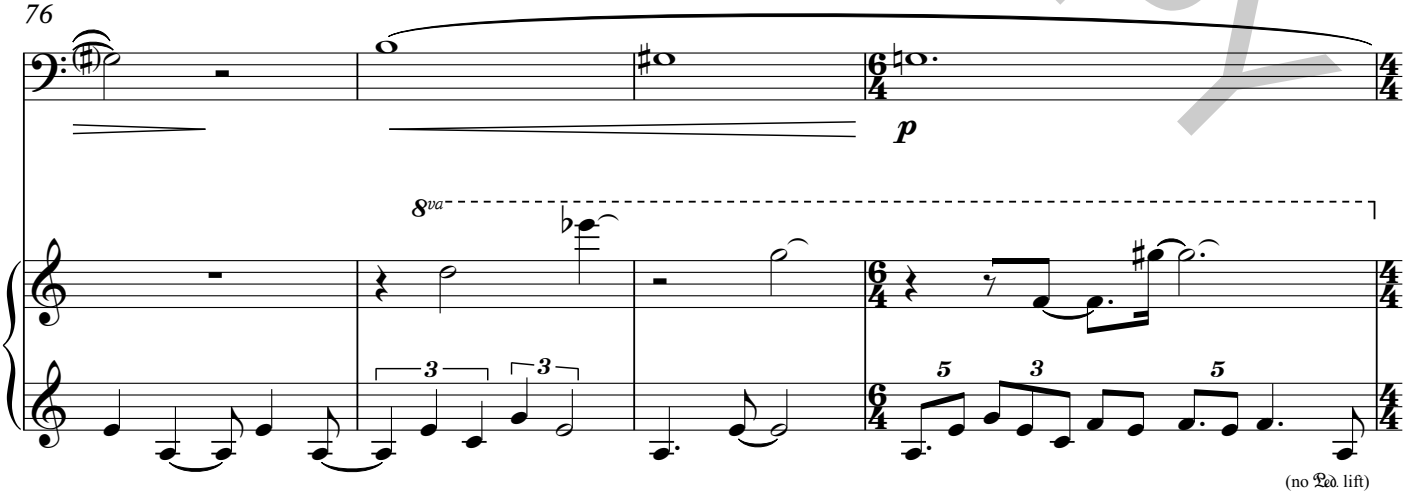

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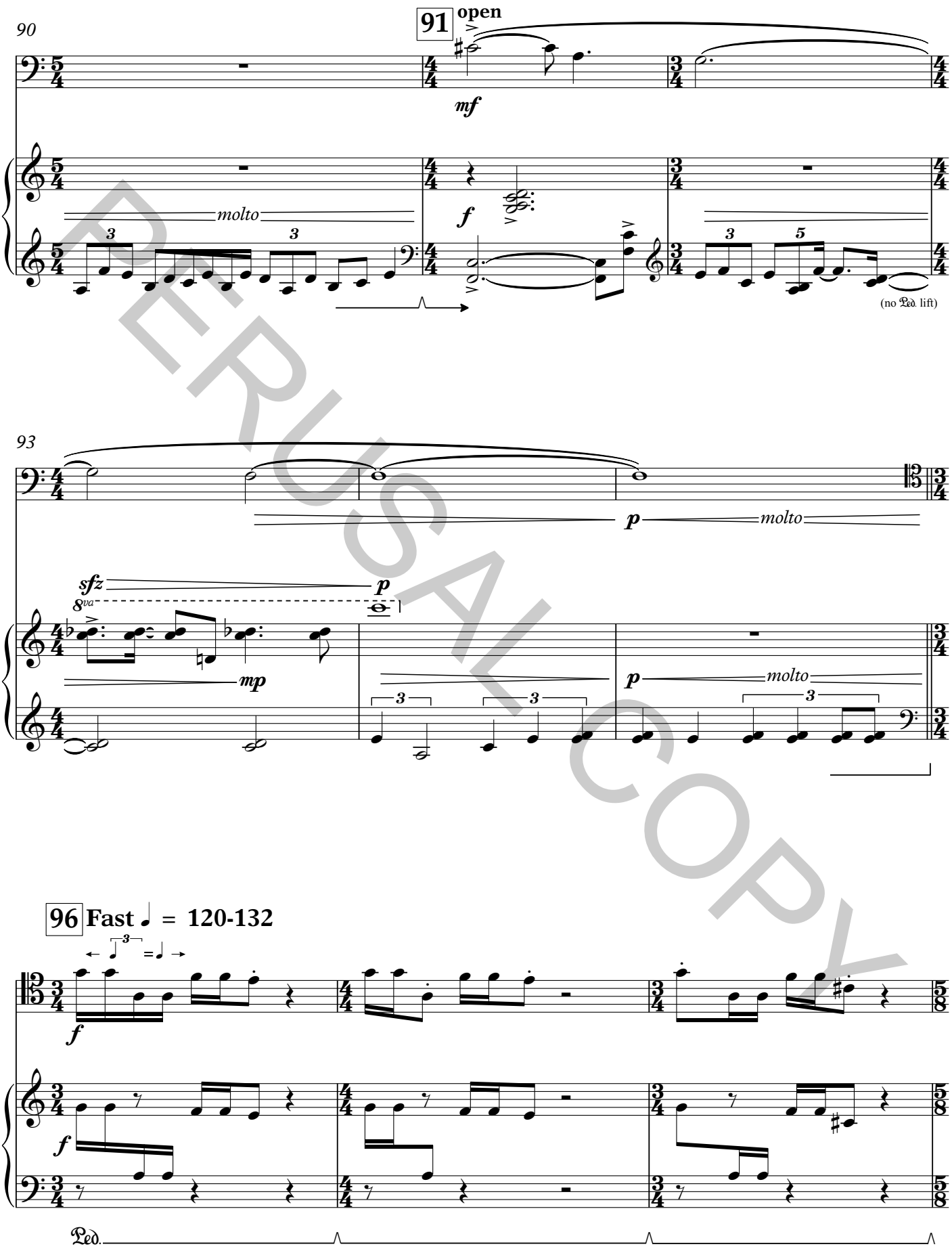

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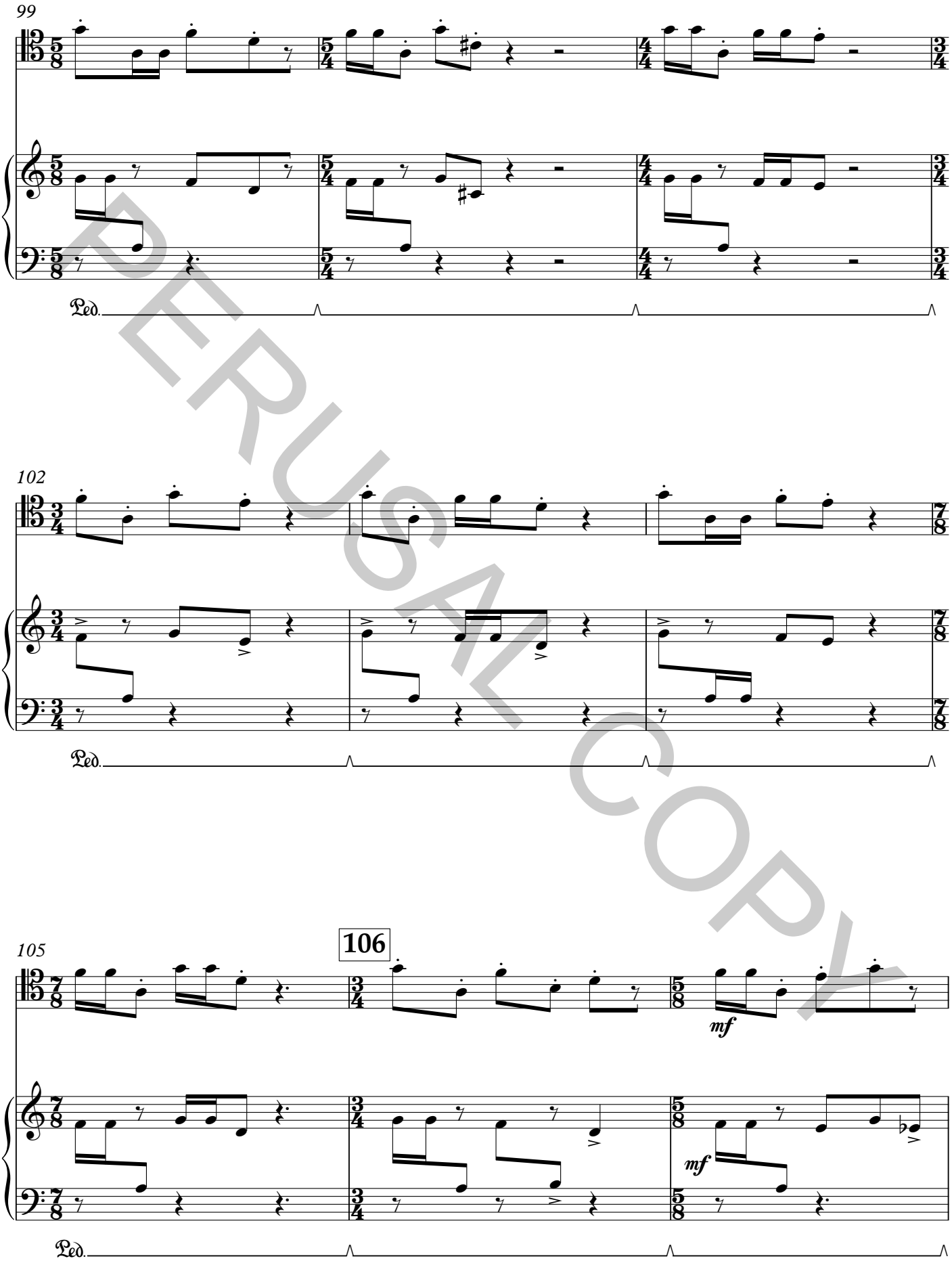

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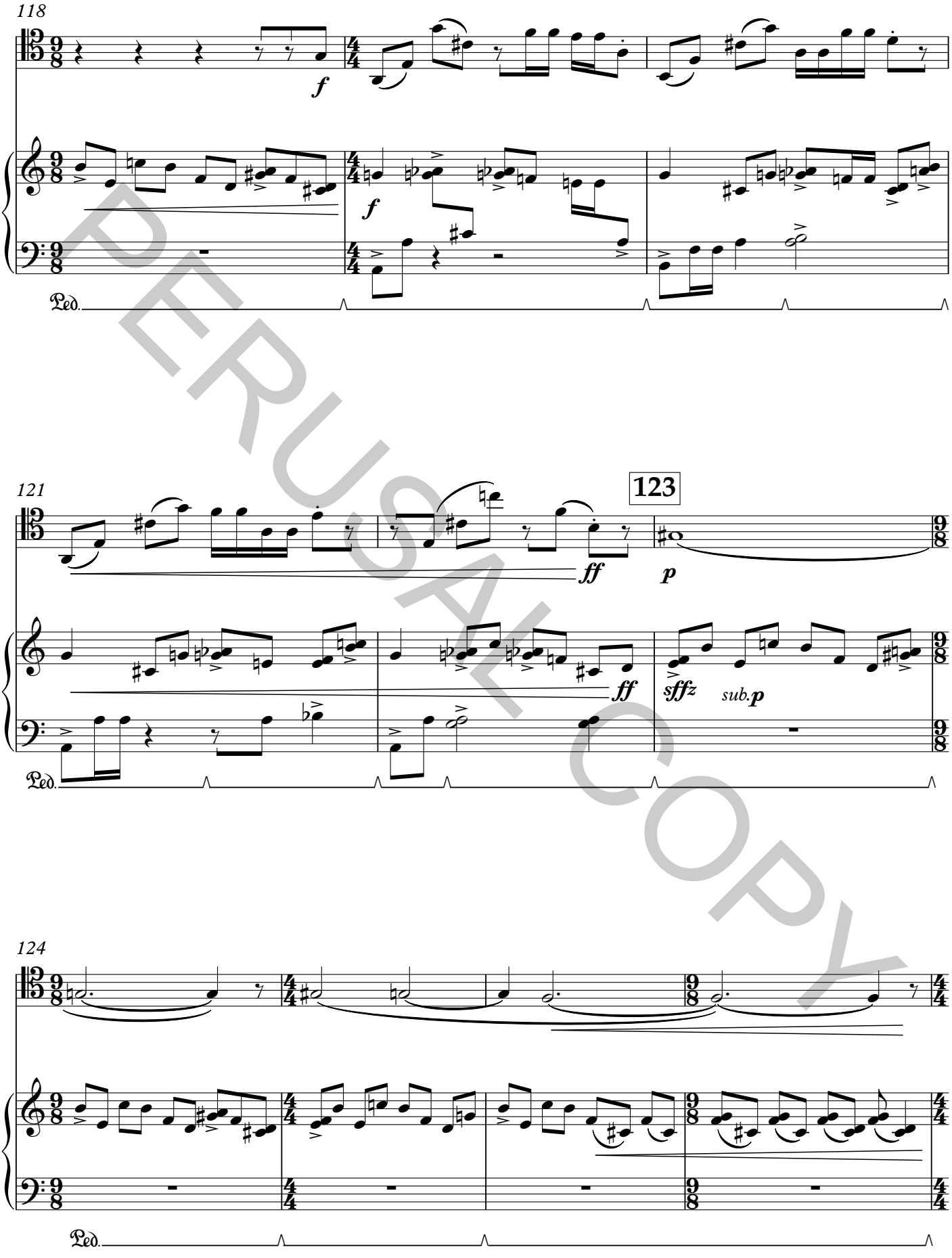

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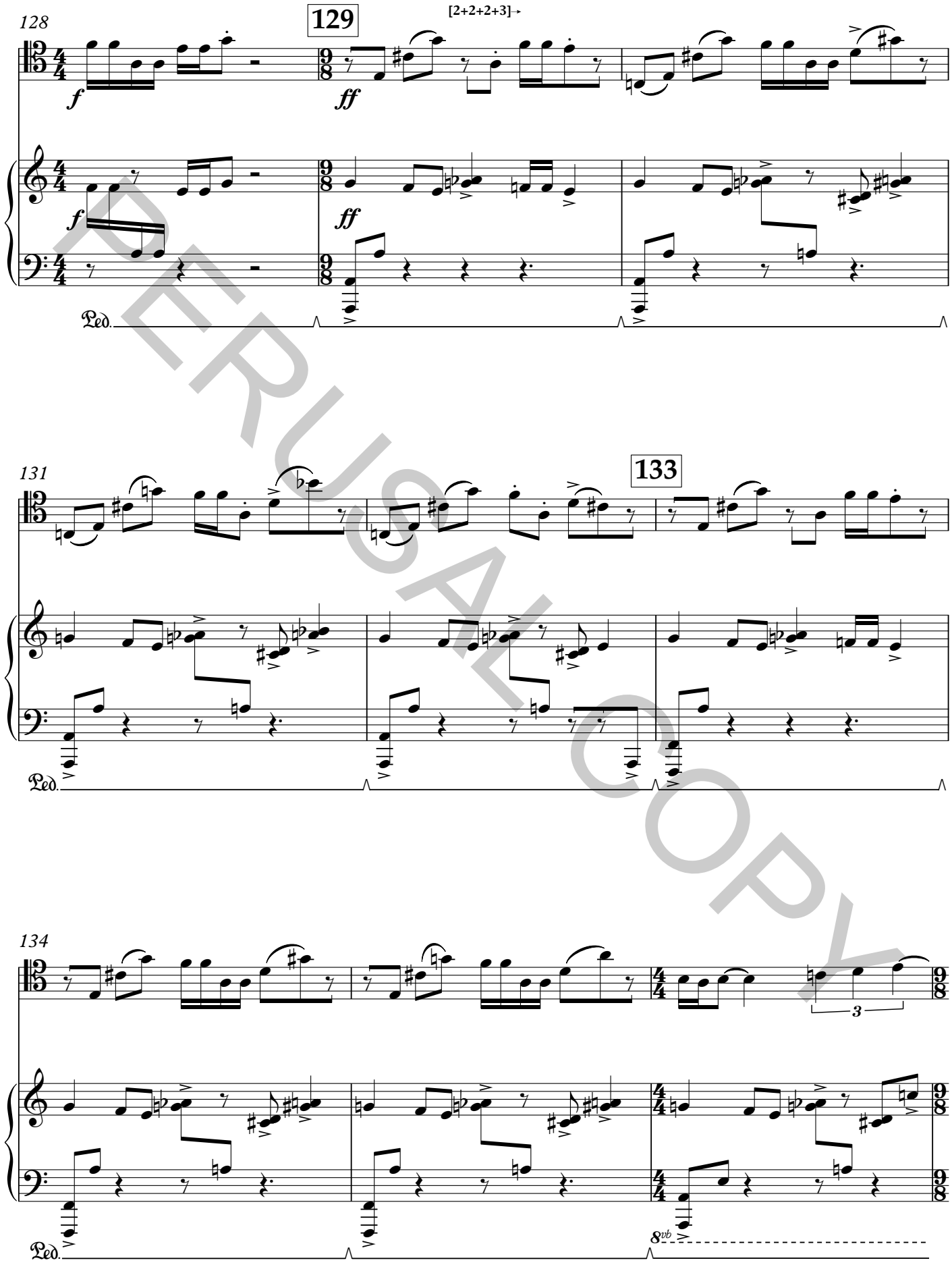

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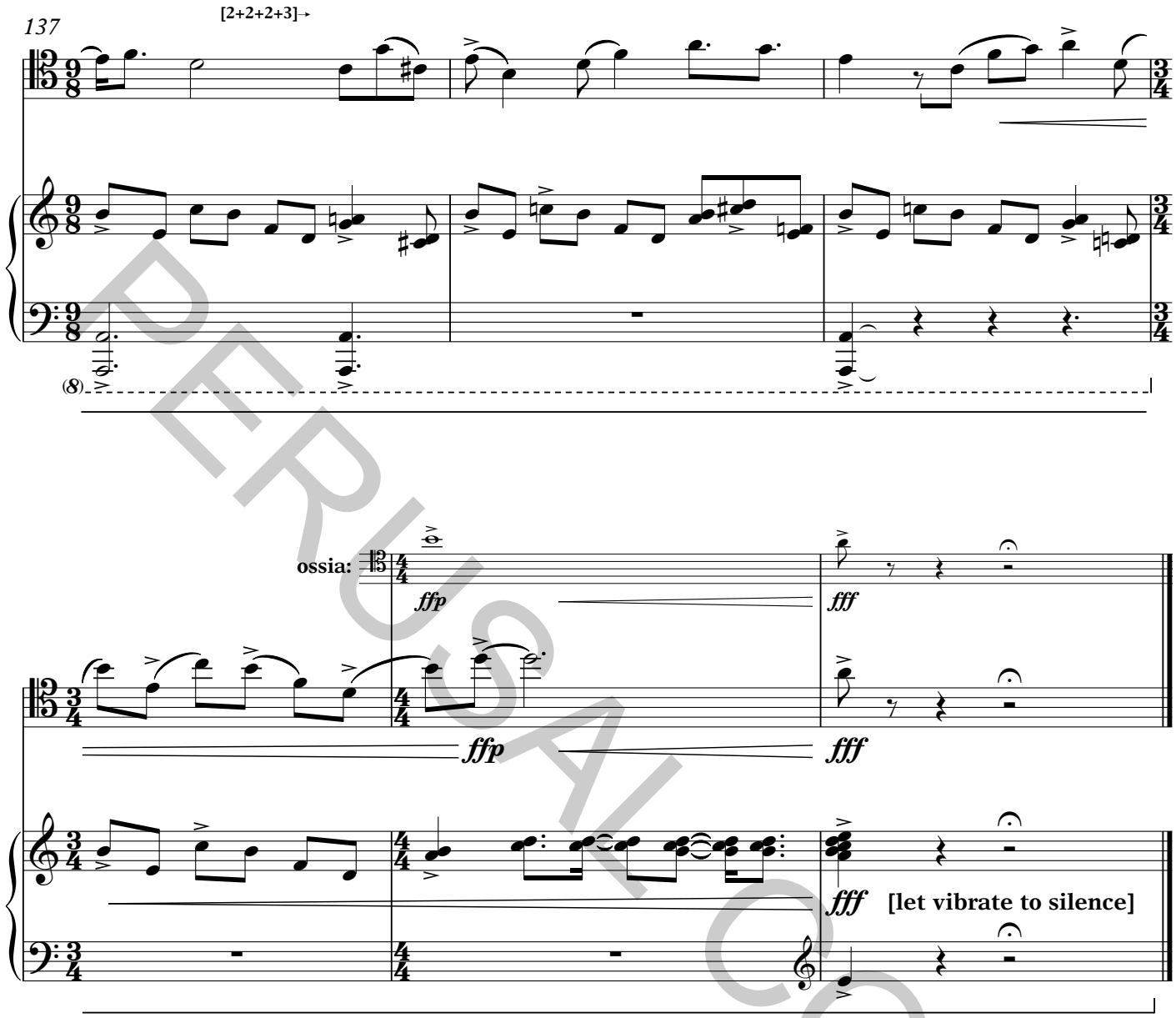

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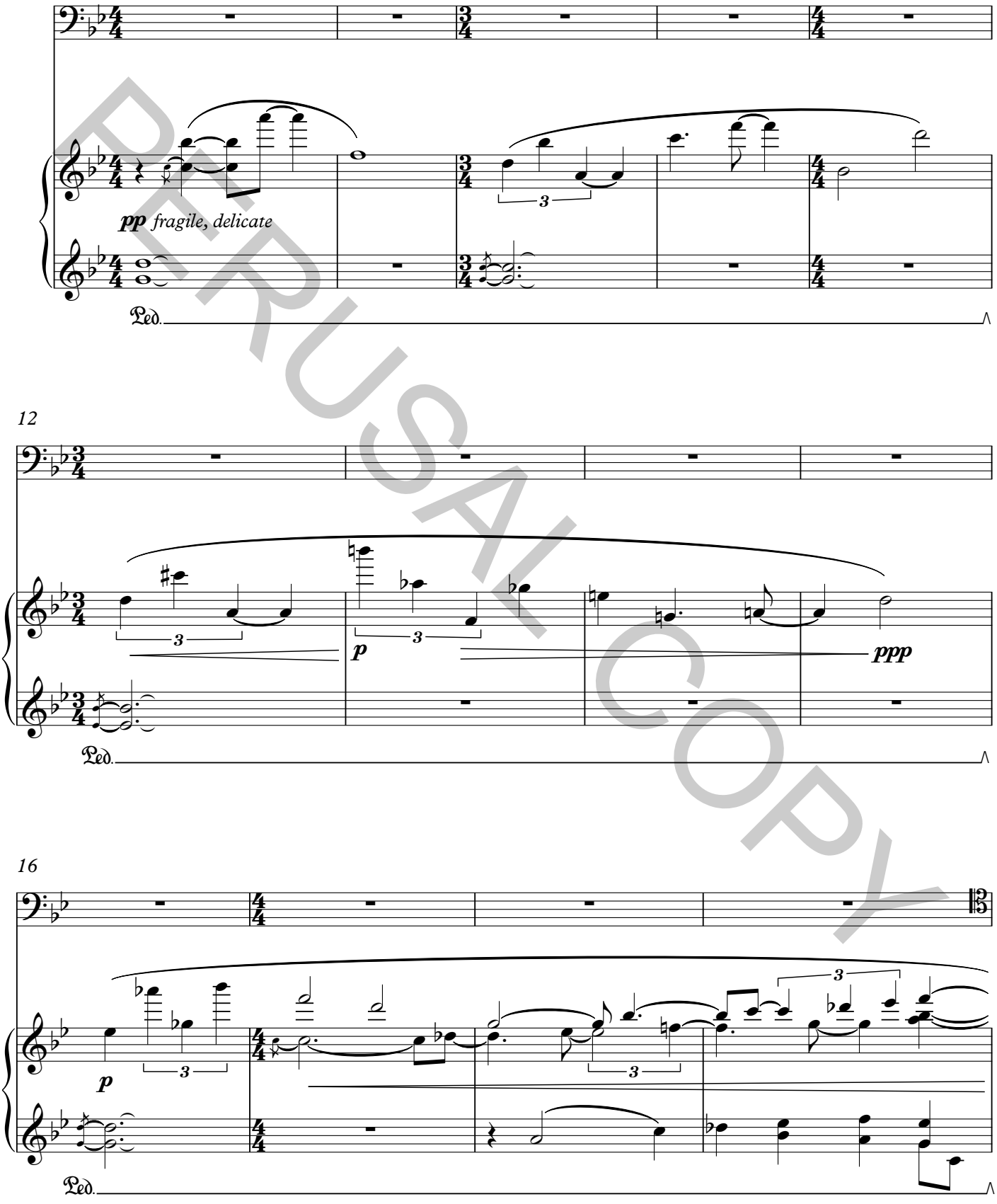
II. for me, time moves both more slowly and more quickly

Slowly, still ♩ = 52



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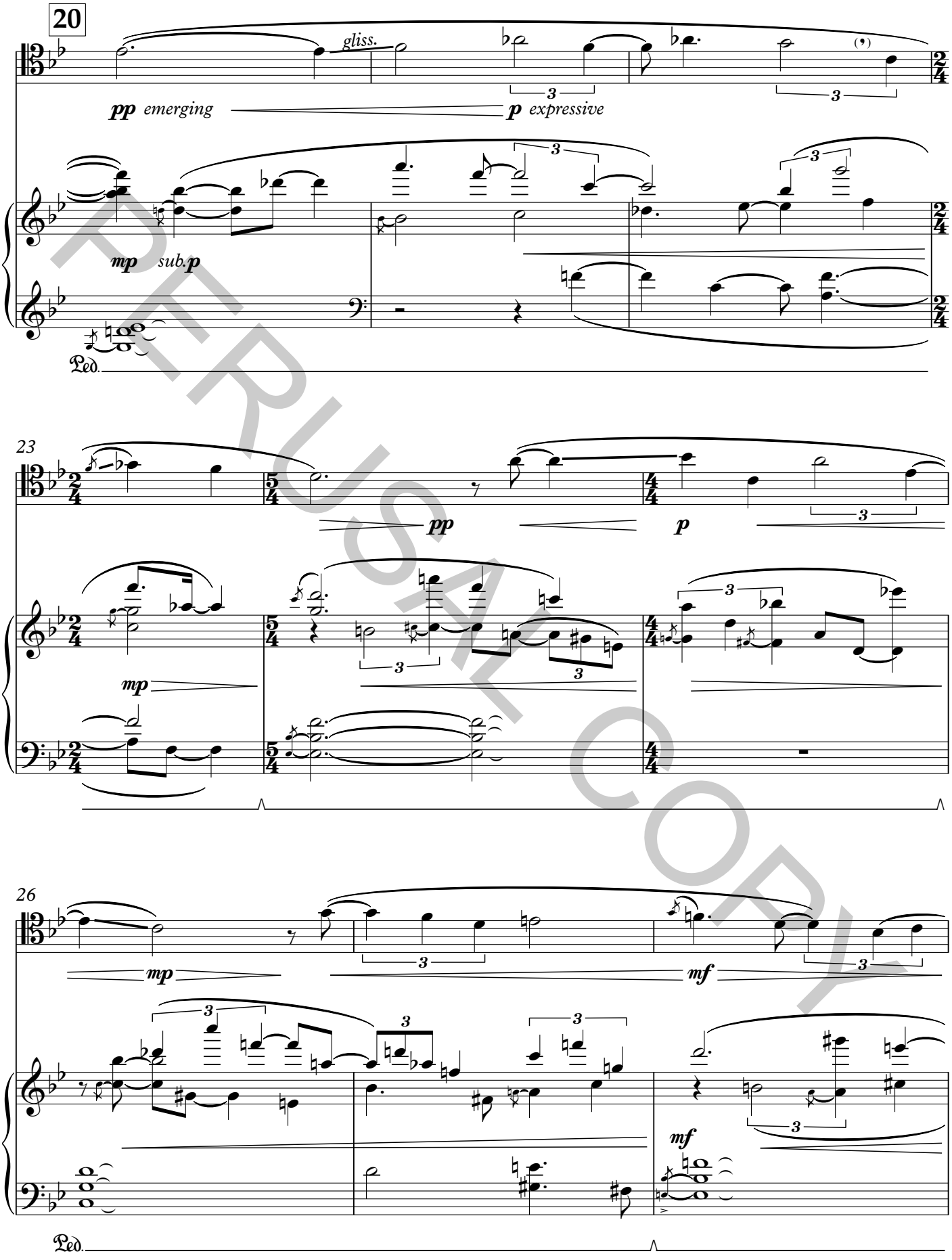

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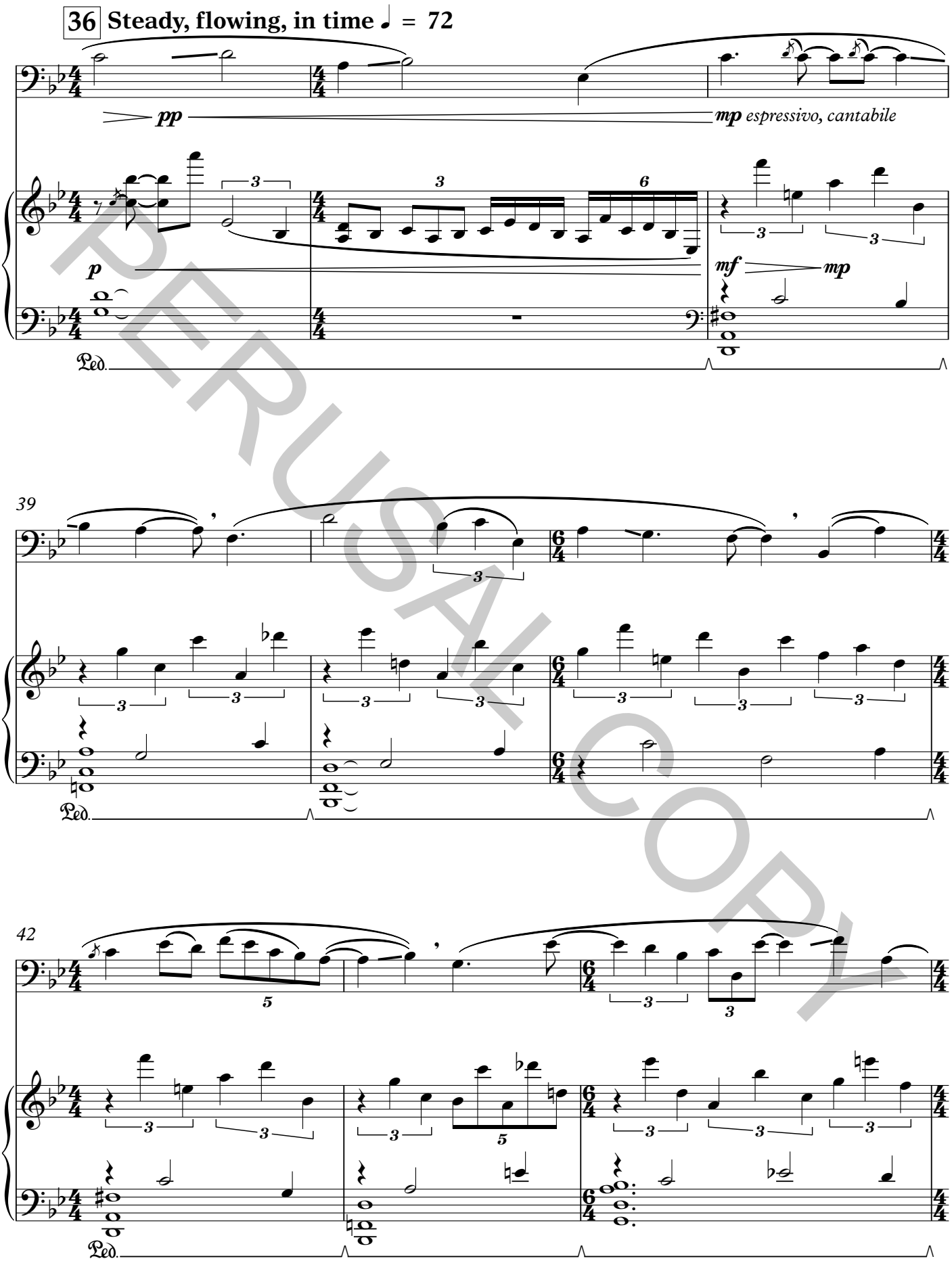

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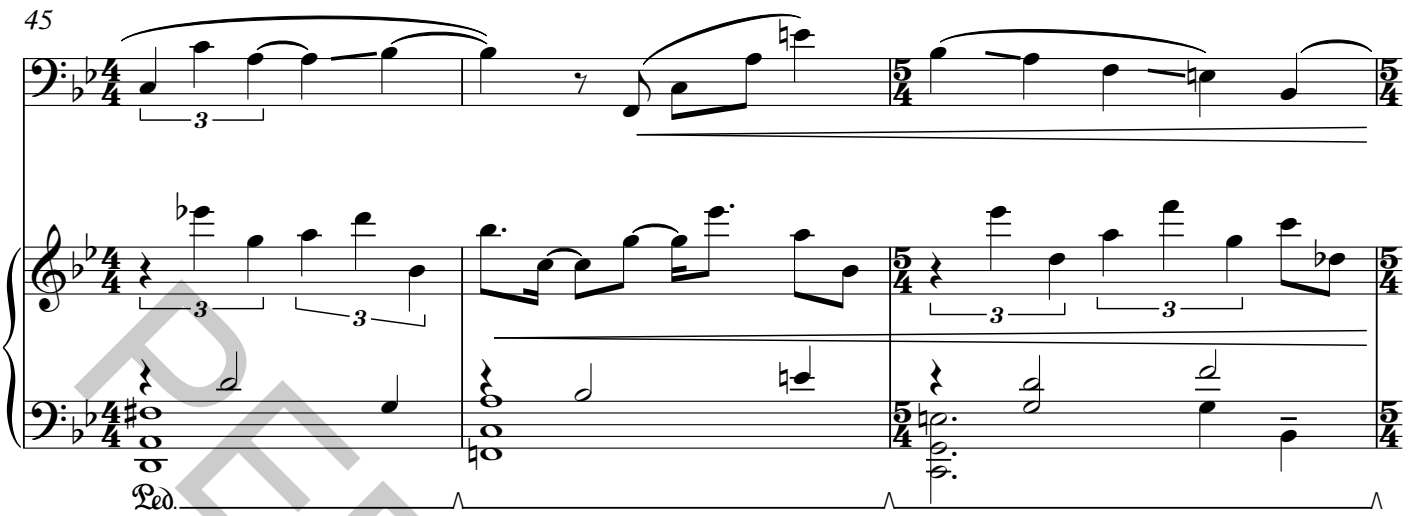
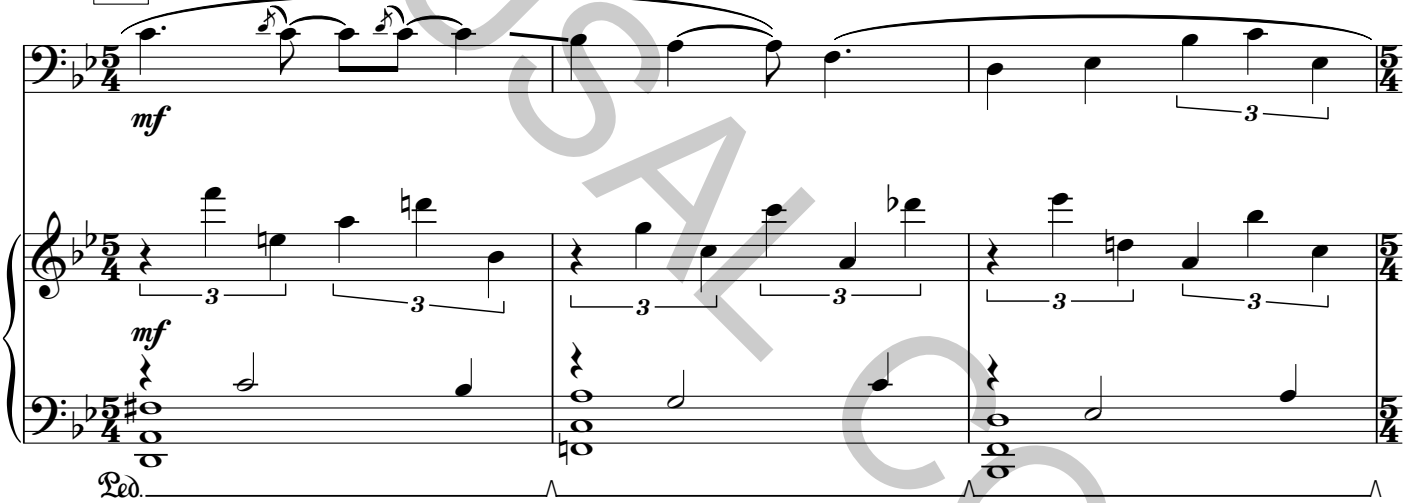
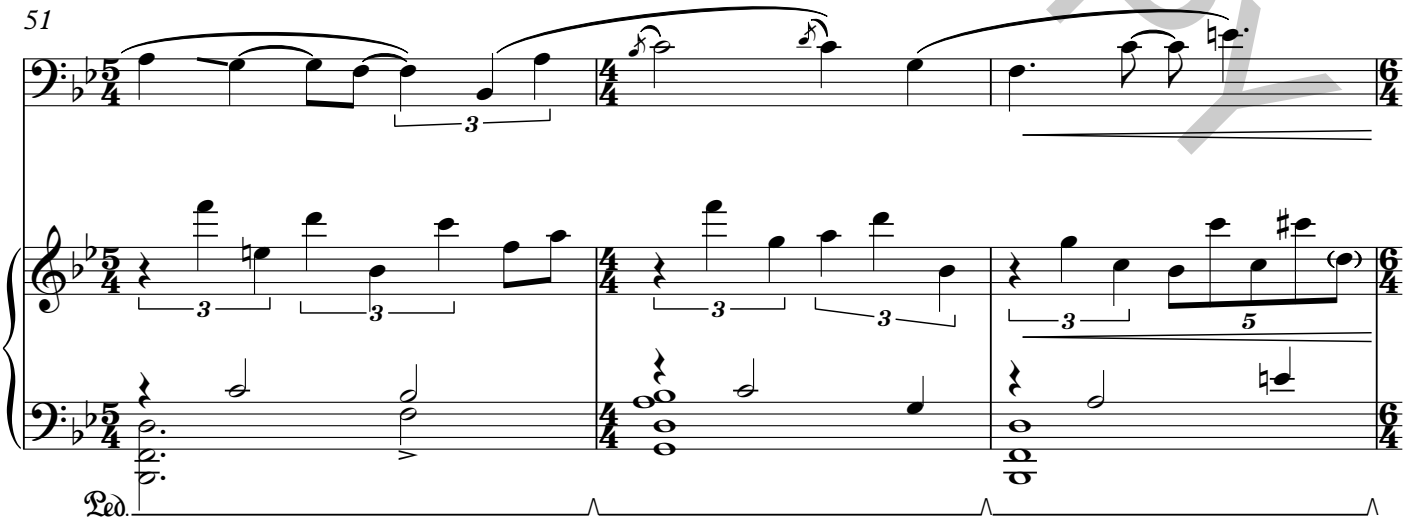


48 **Building intensity**





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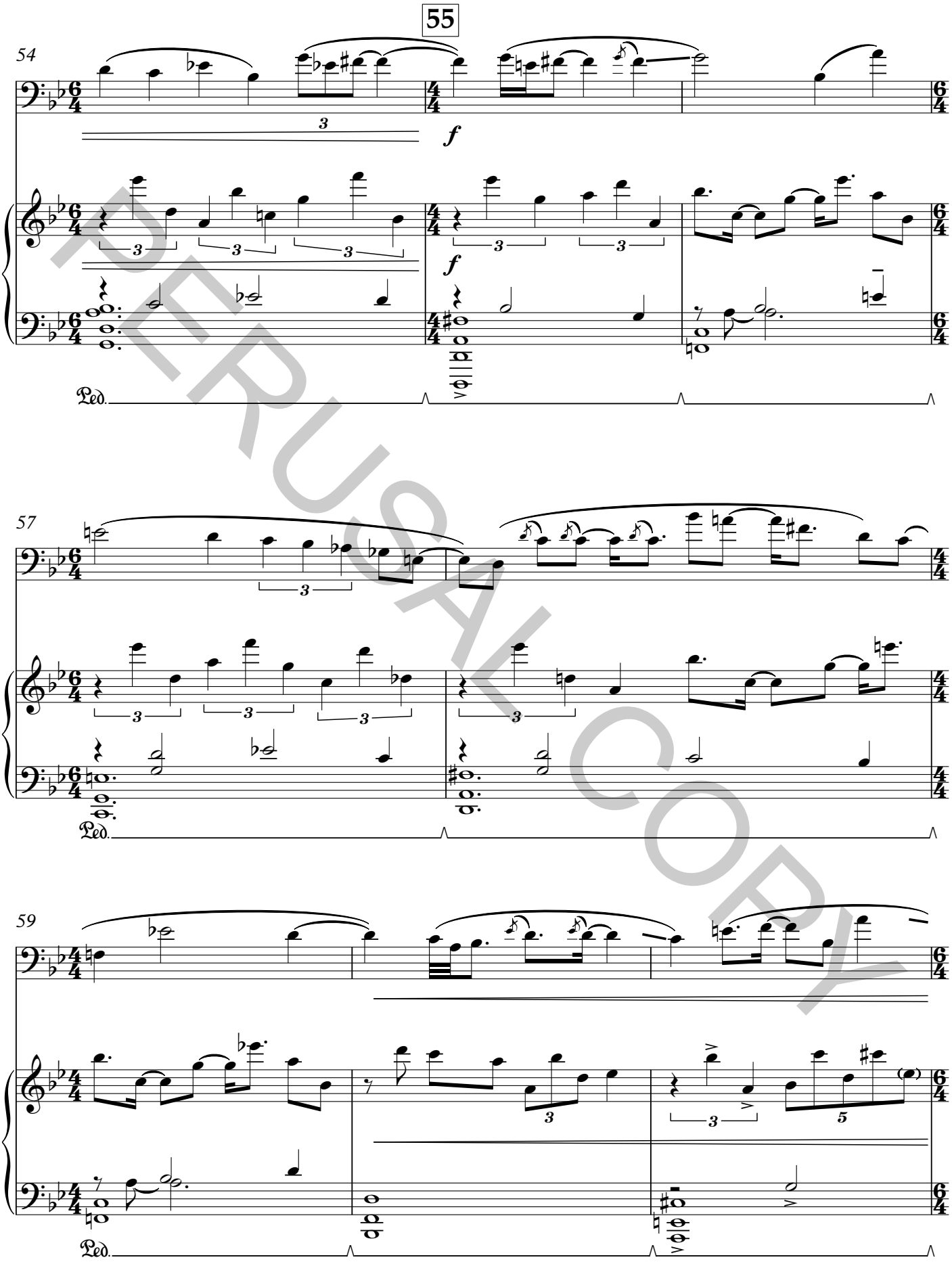

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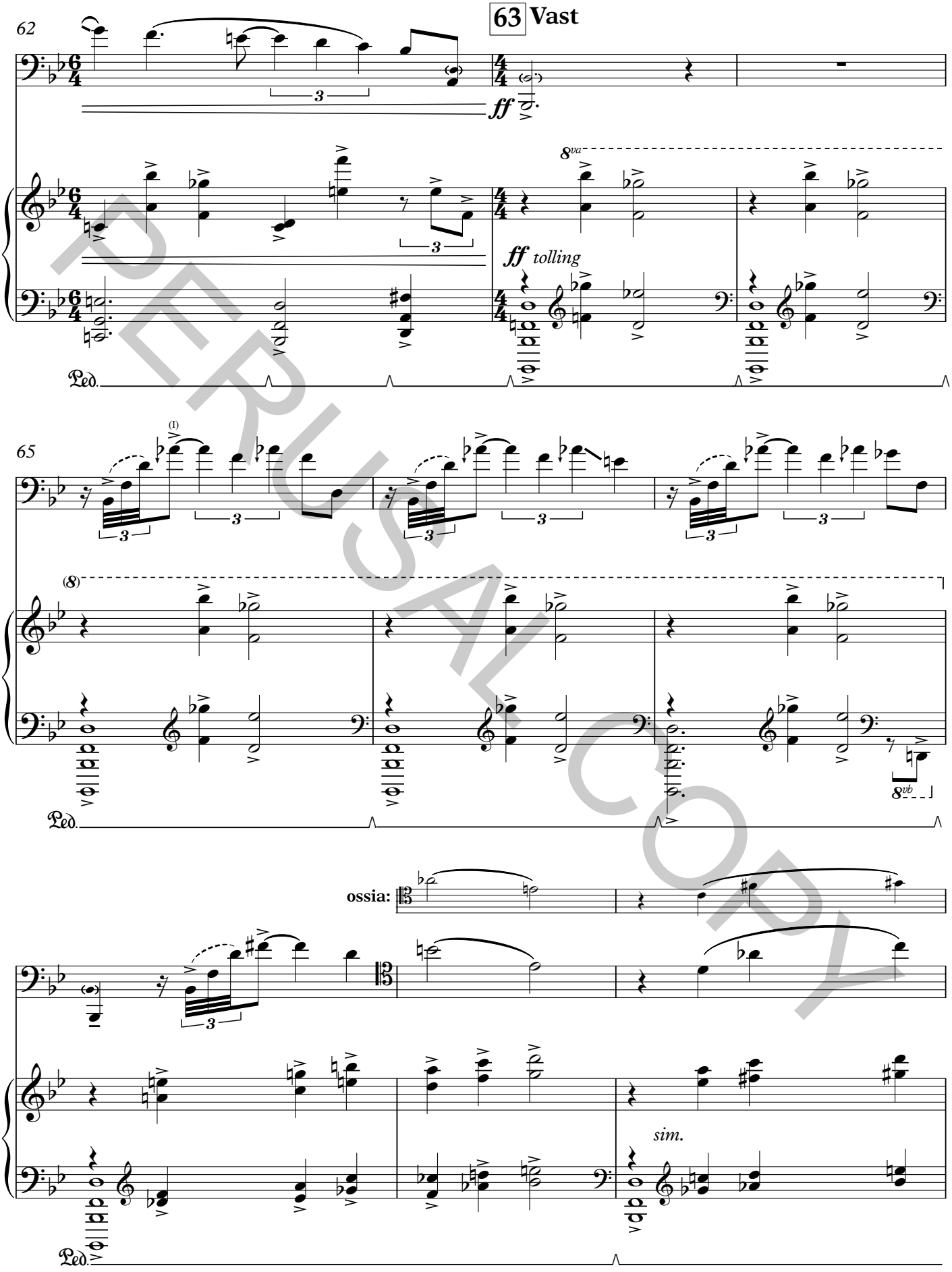

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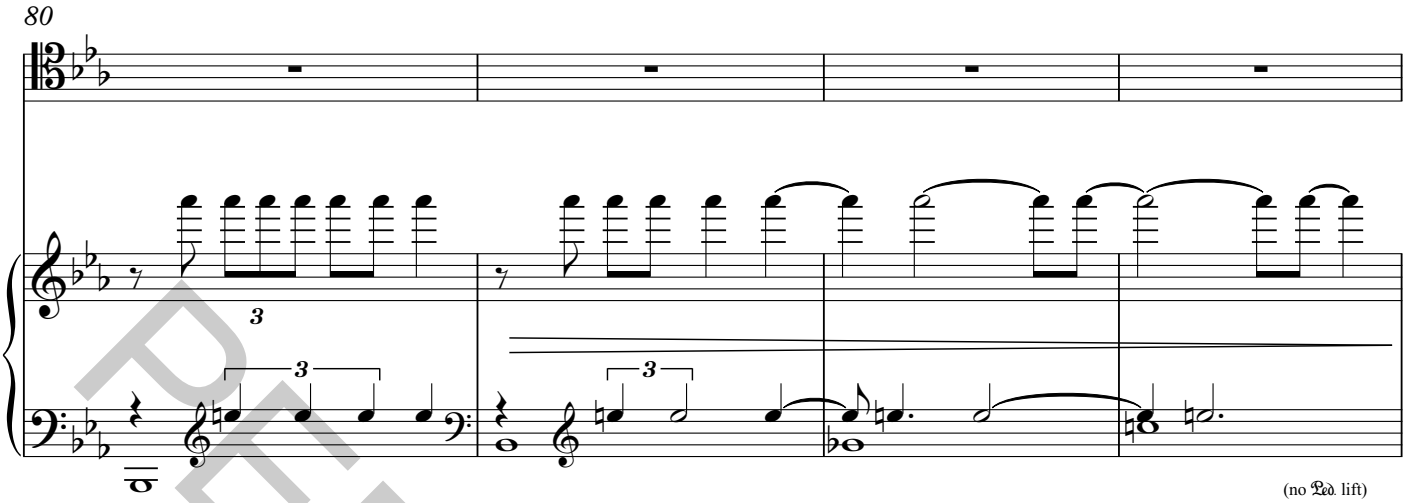

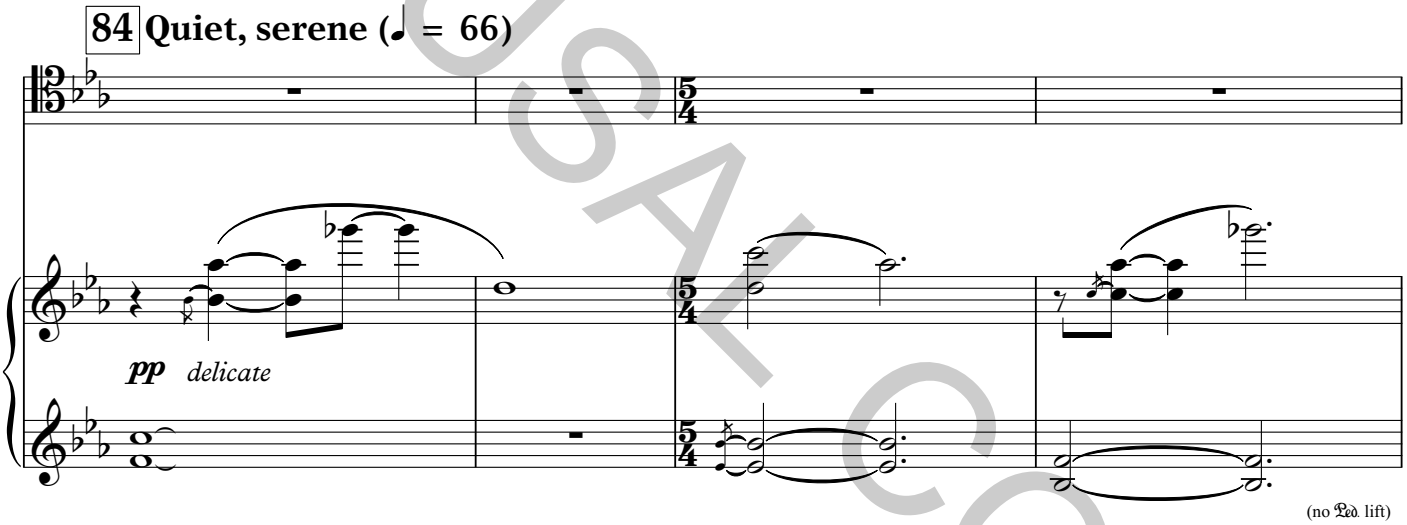

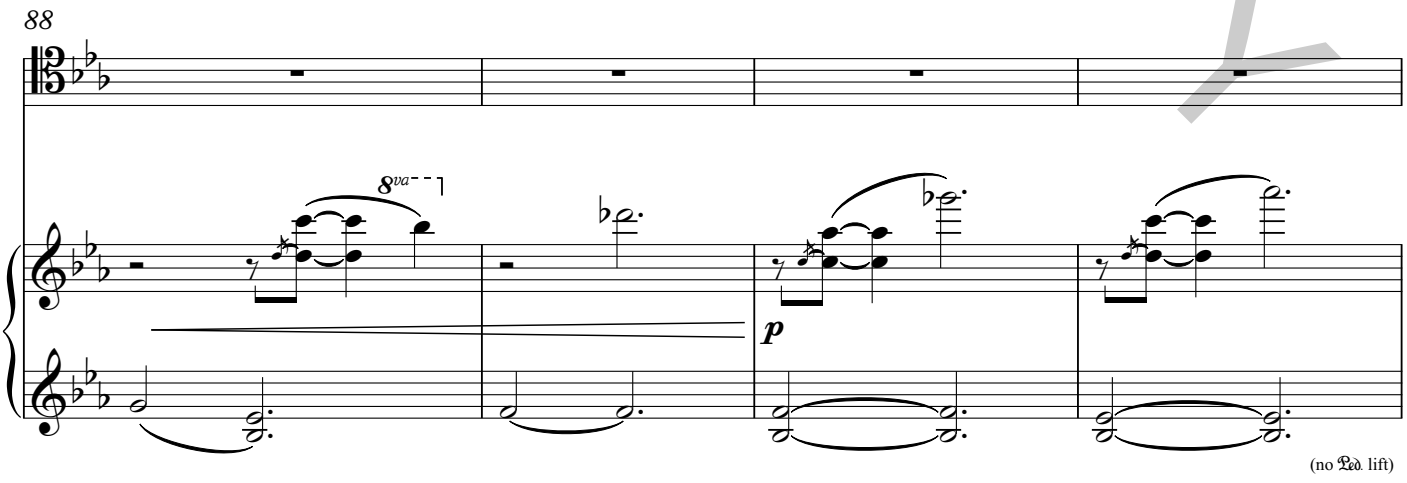

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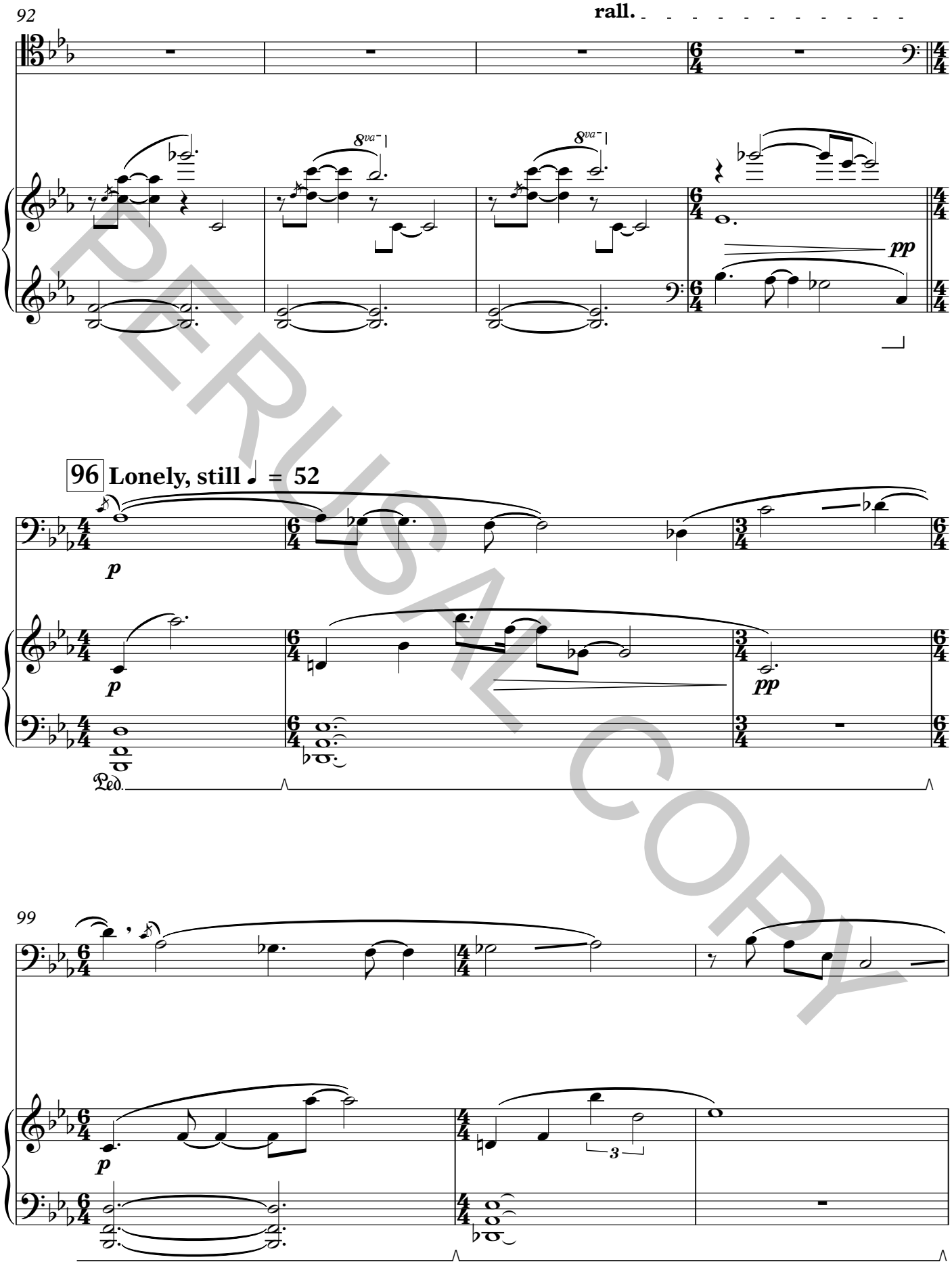

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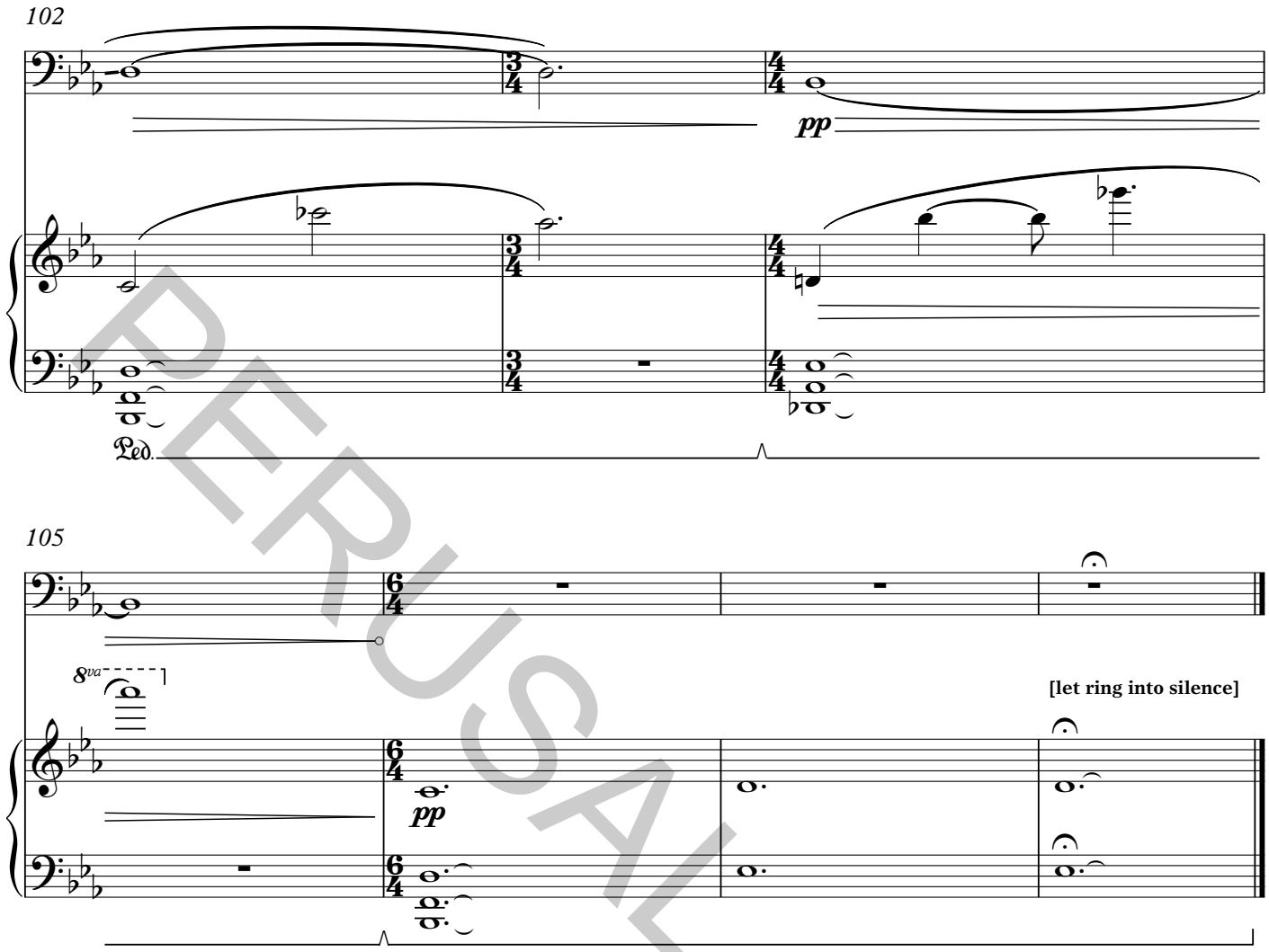

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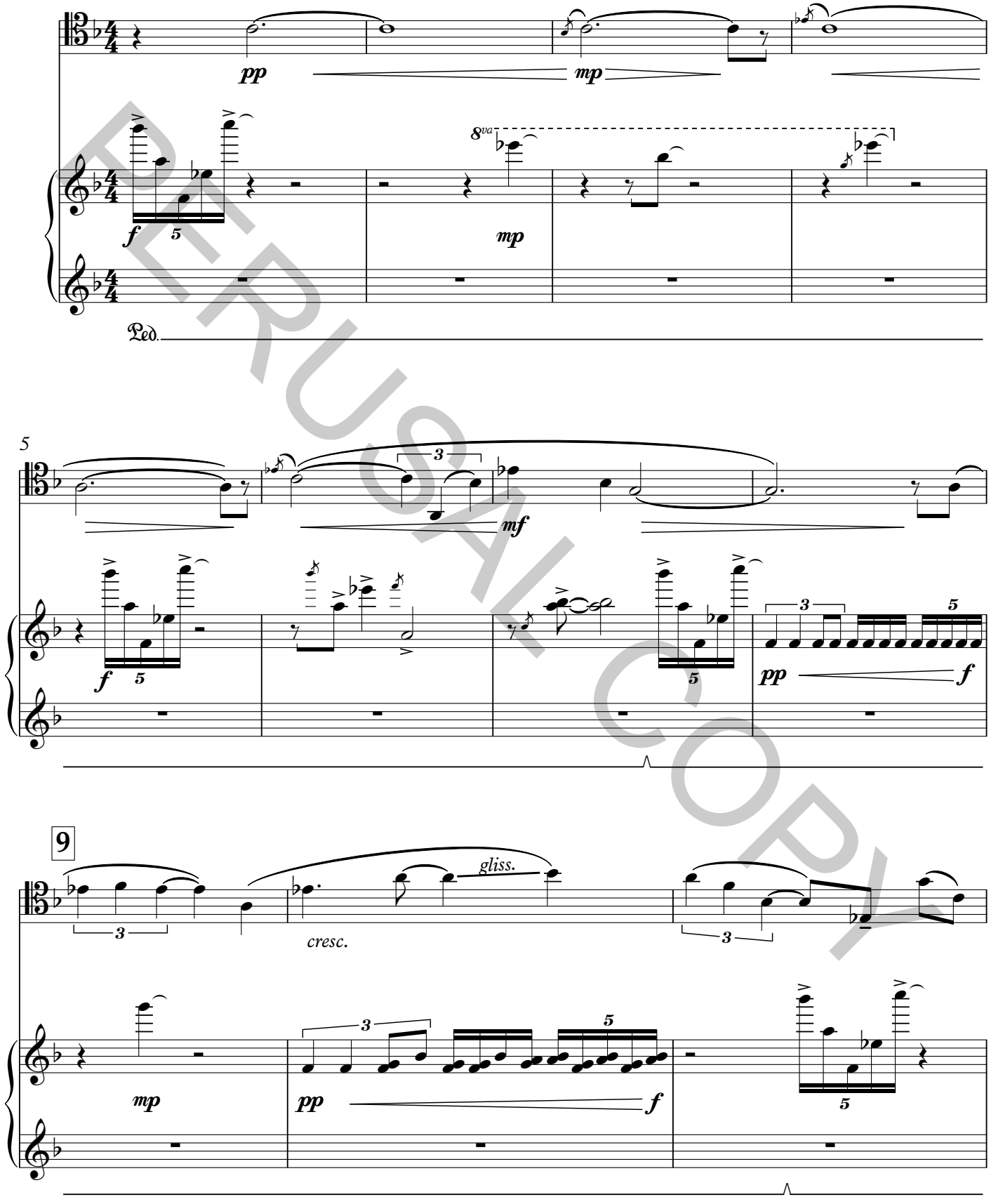
III. Radiant Spheres

Stirring, emerging ♩ = 96

trombone quasi-cadenza



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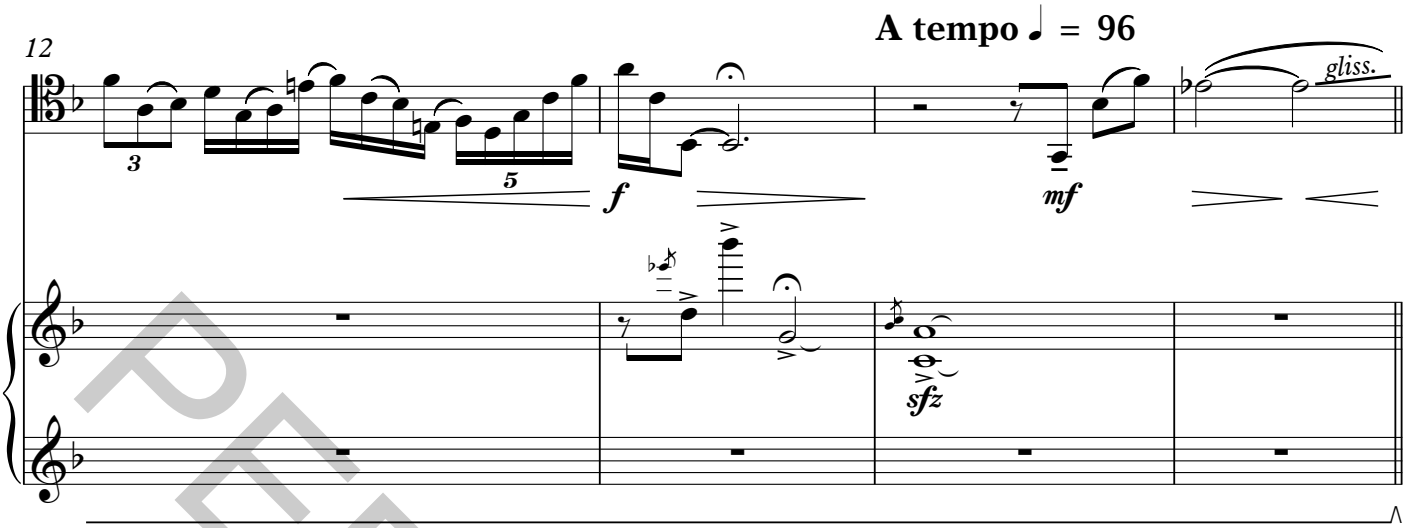
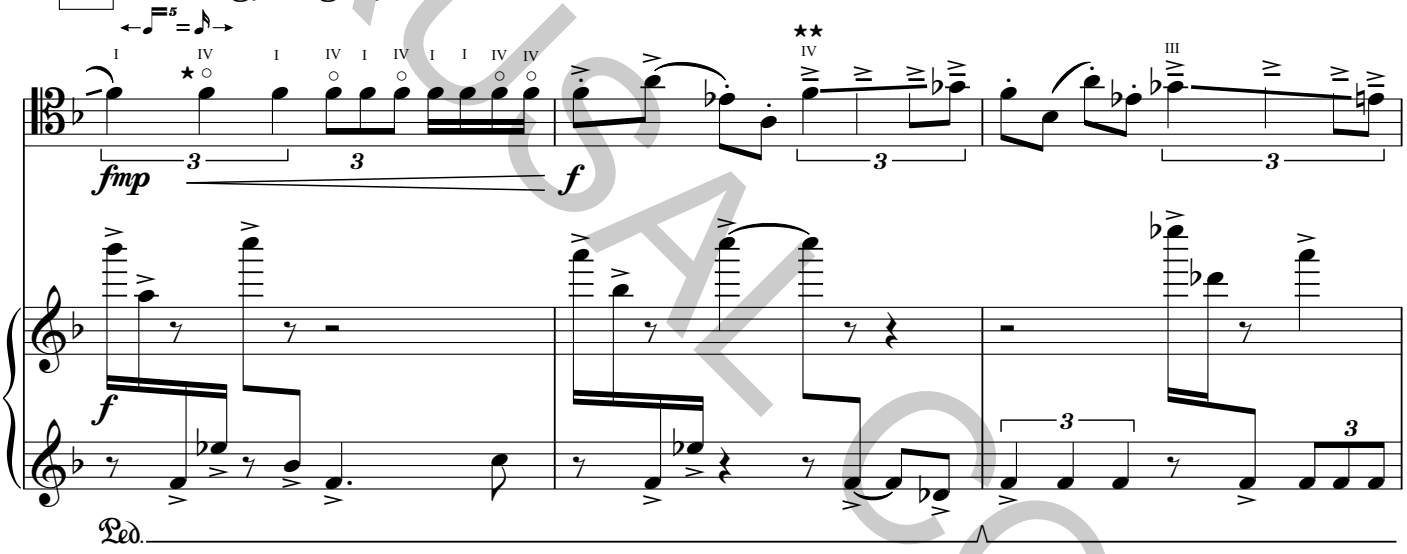
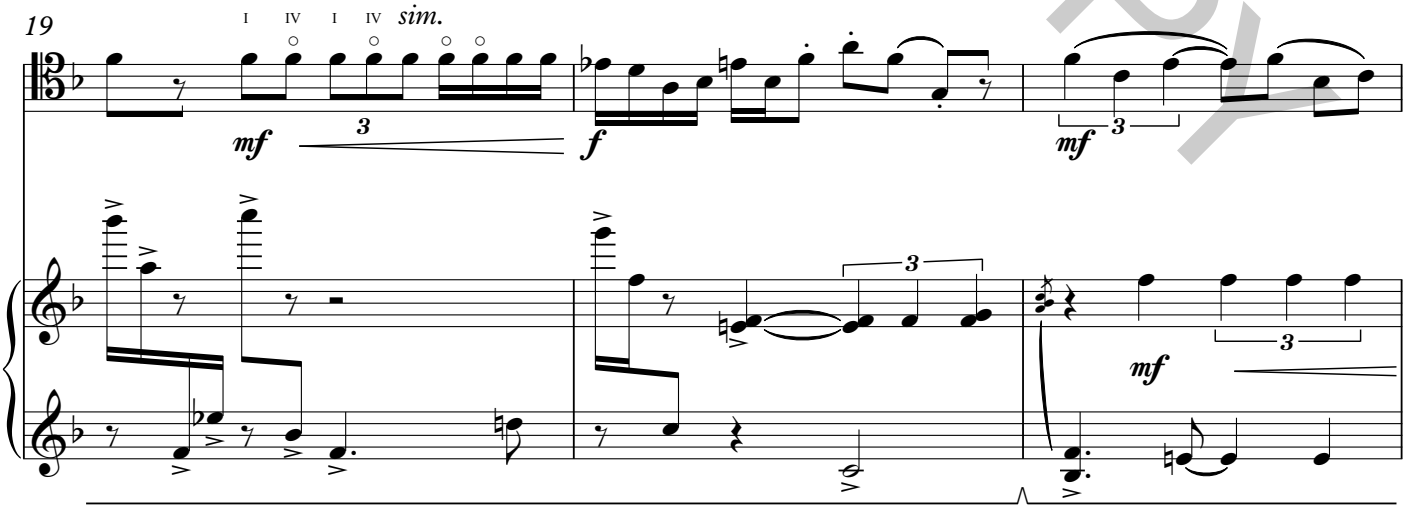




*** ○ =bisbigliando (timbral trill), use different slide position**
****articulate through the gliss.**



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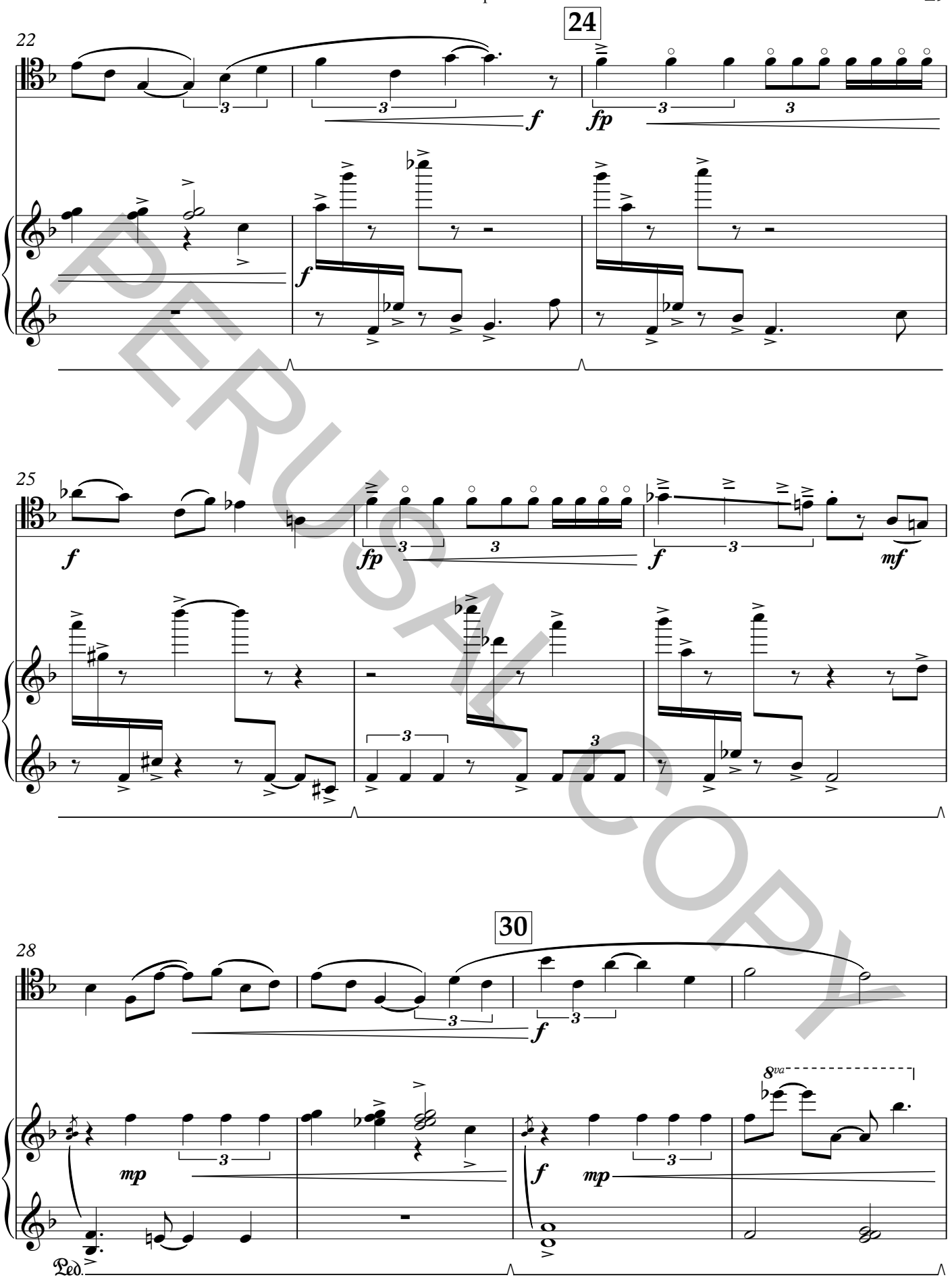

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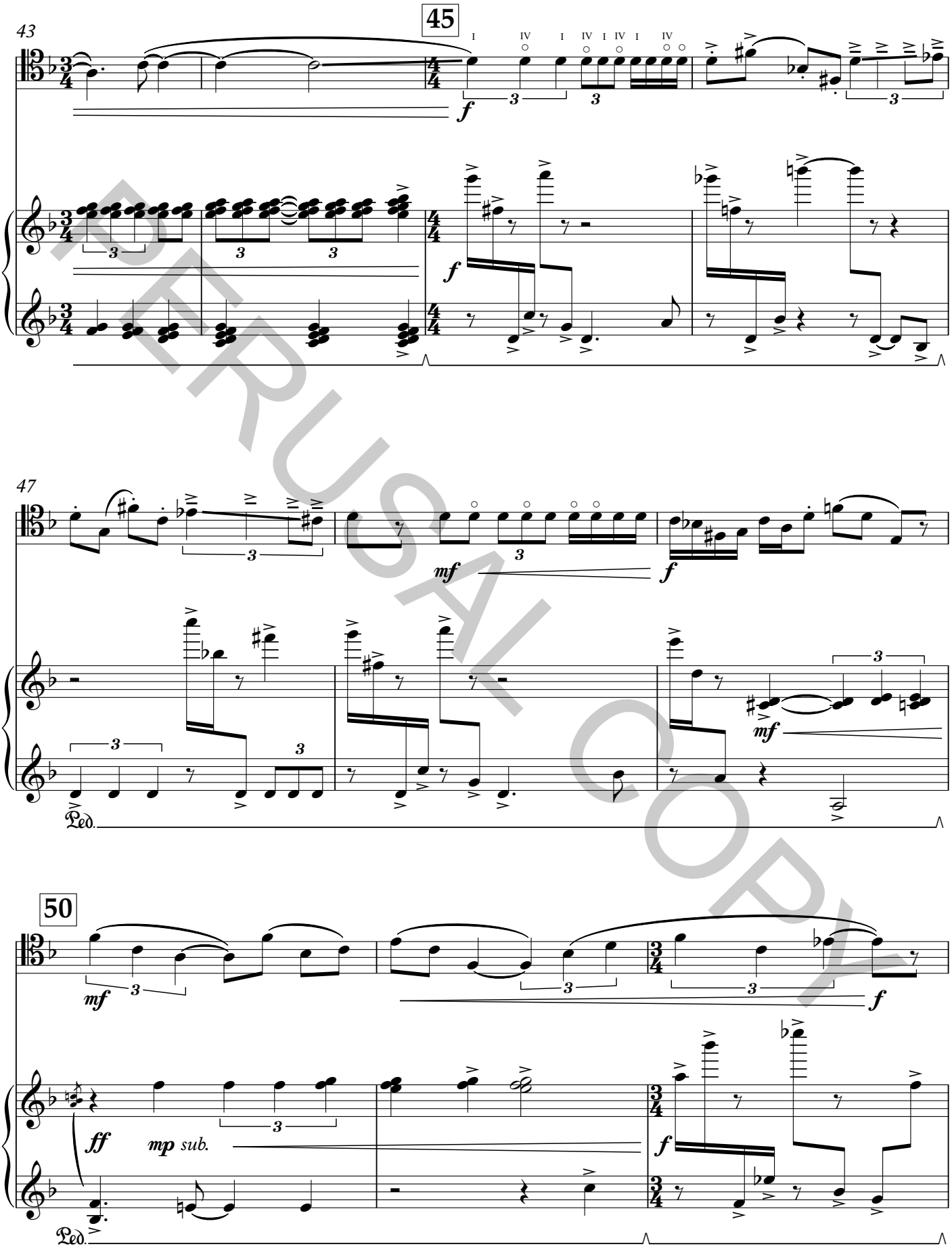

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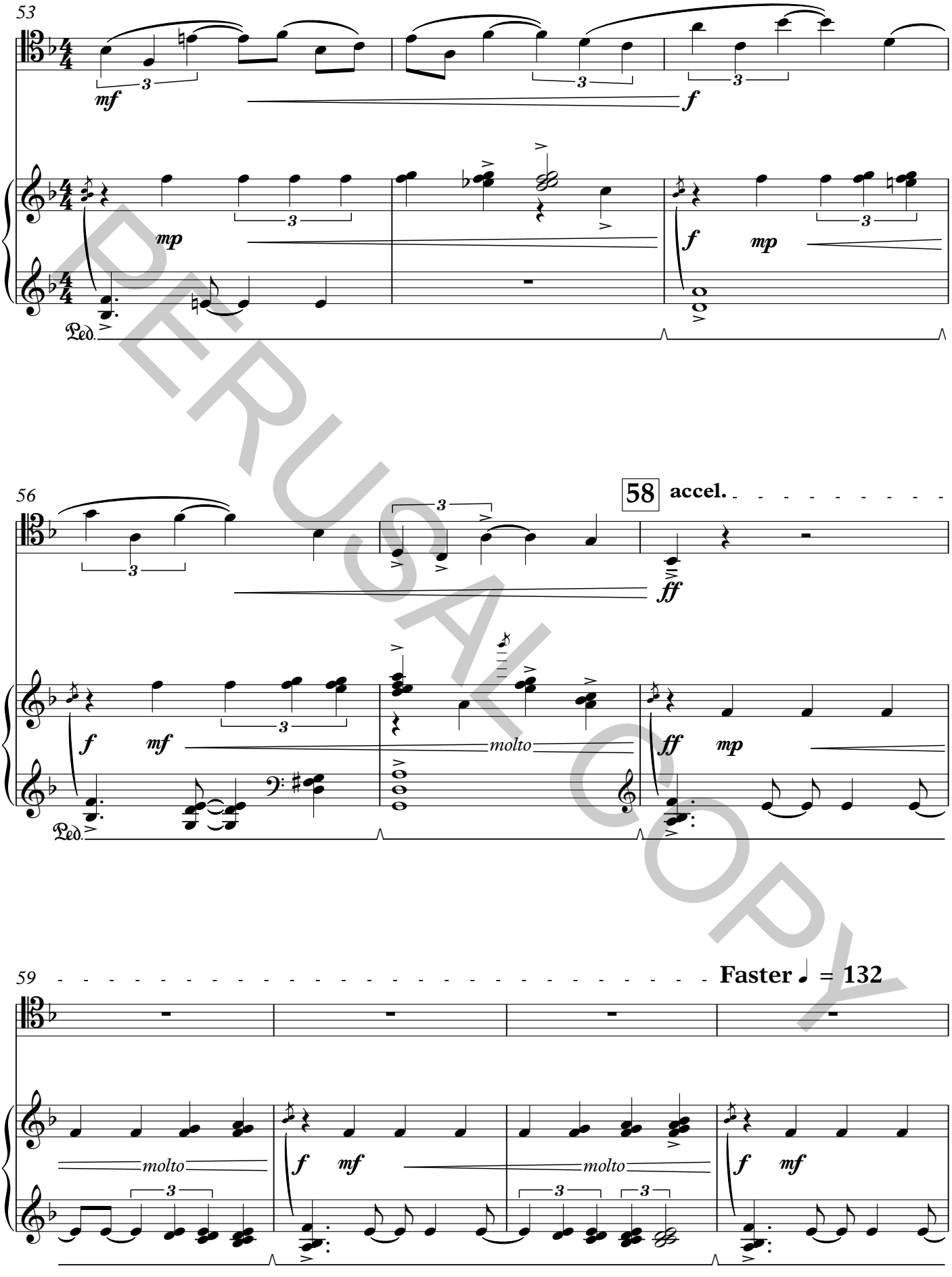

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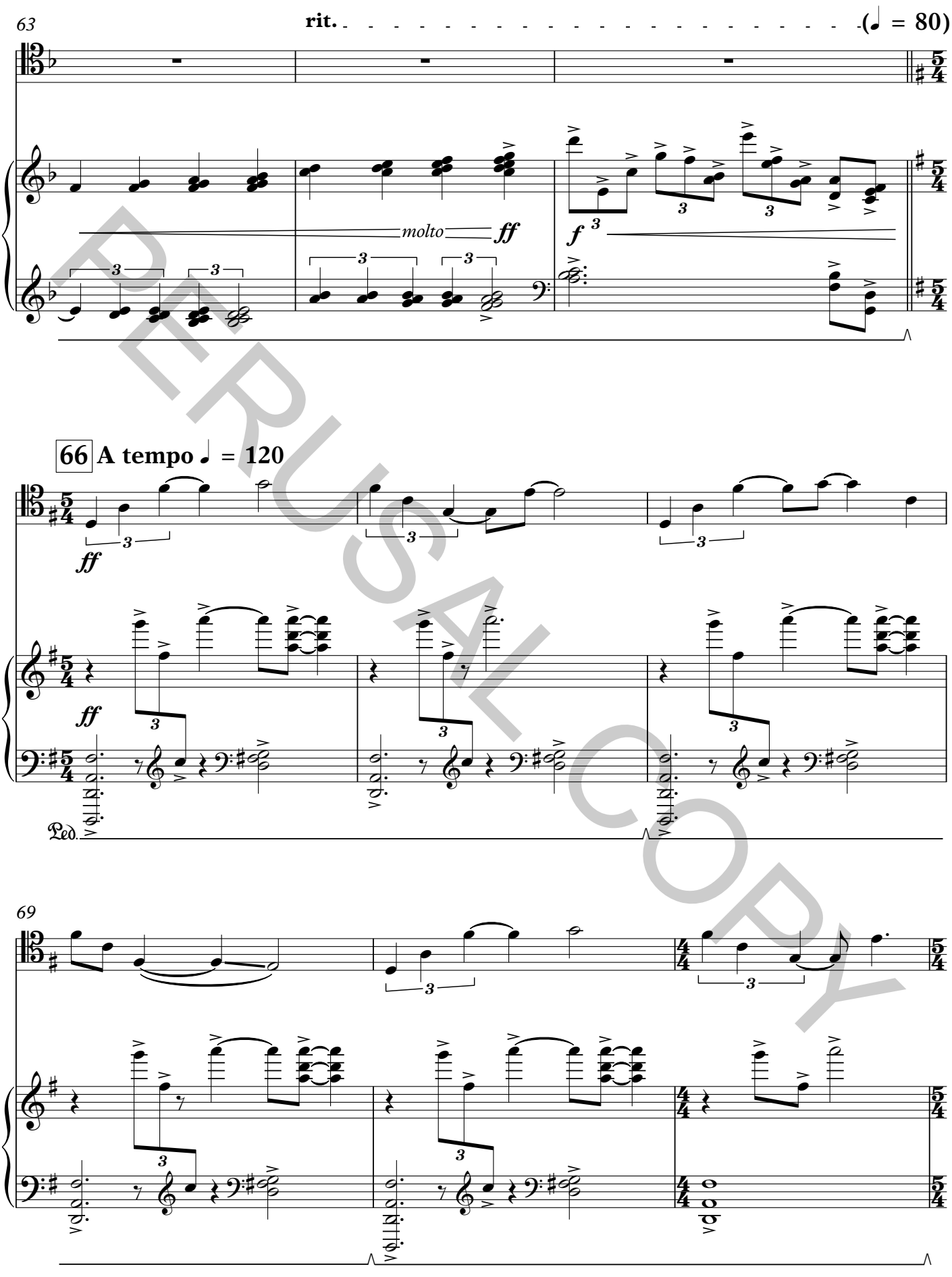

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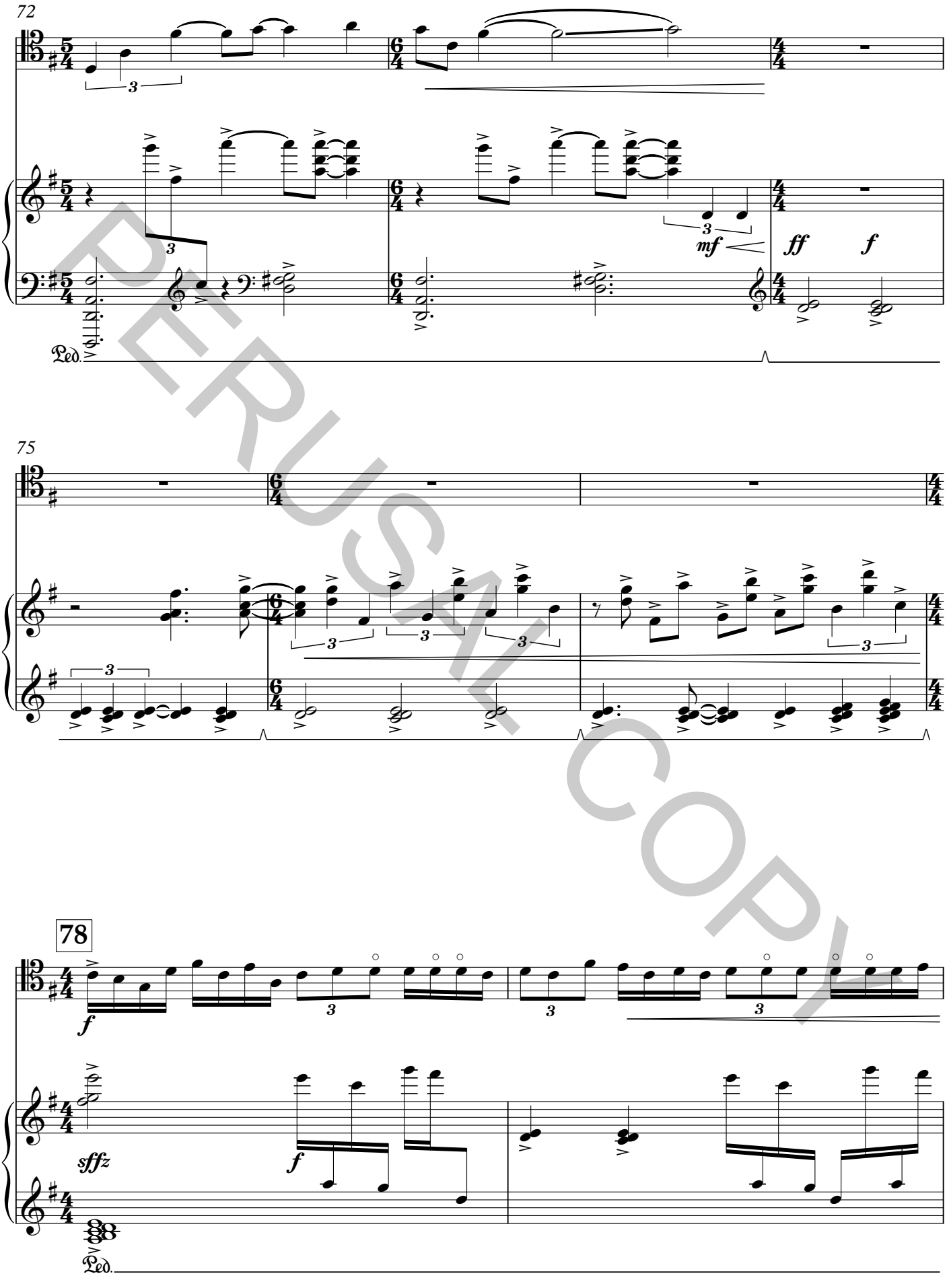

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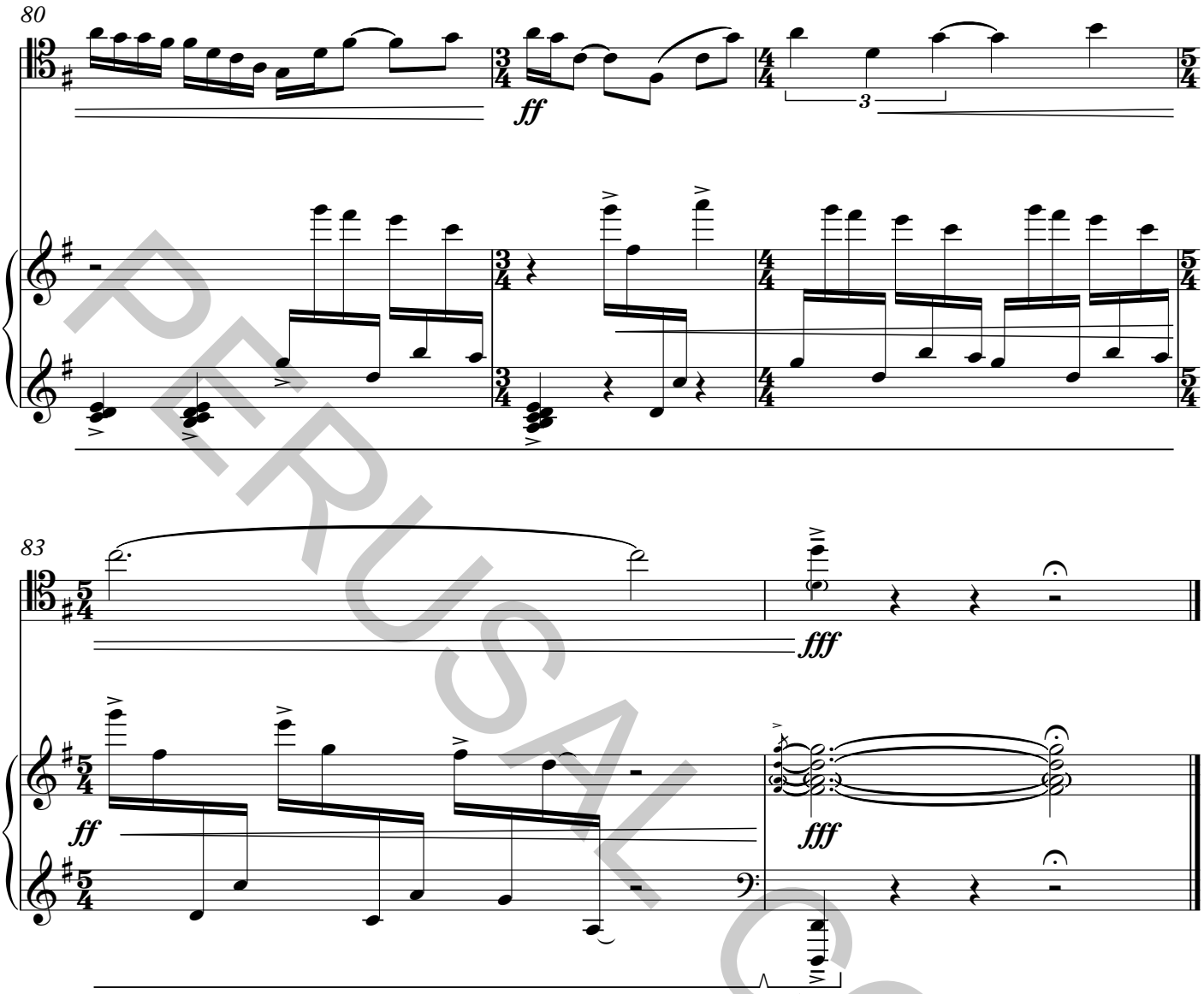

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