Transit Of Venus

for flute(s)

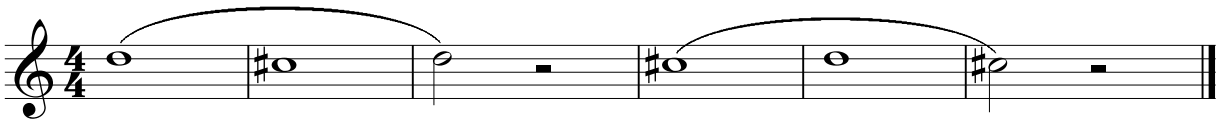
John Wesley Barker

2004

Transit Exercise

David Cubbin

flute



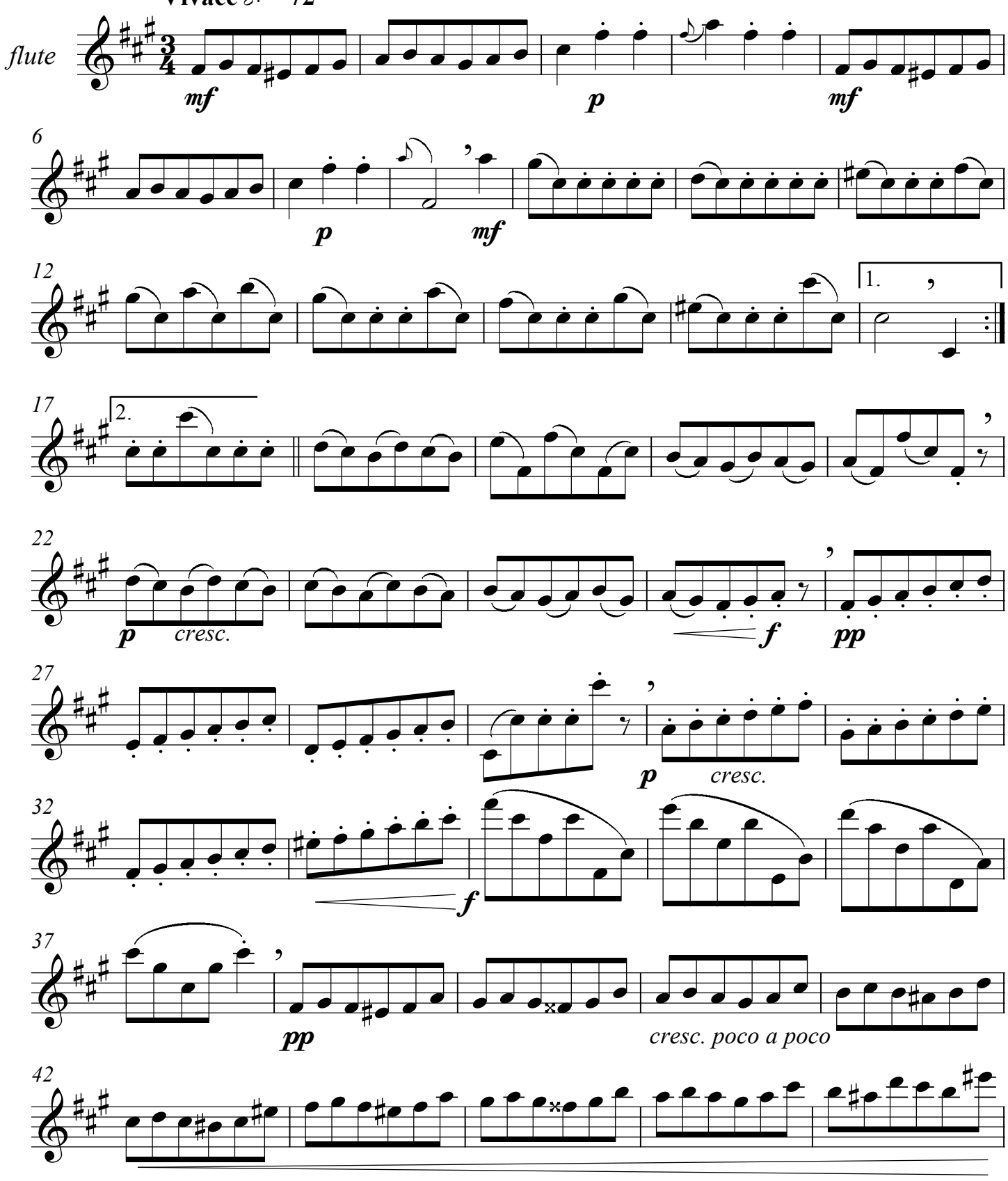
"Aim to match the timbre of each note using the natrual timbre of one or the other."

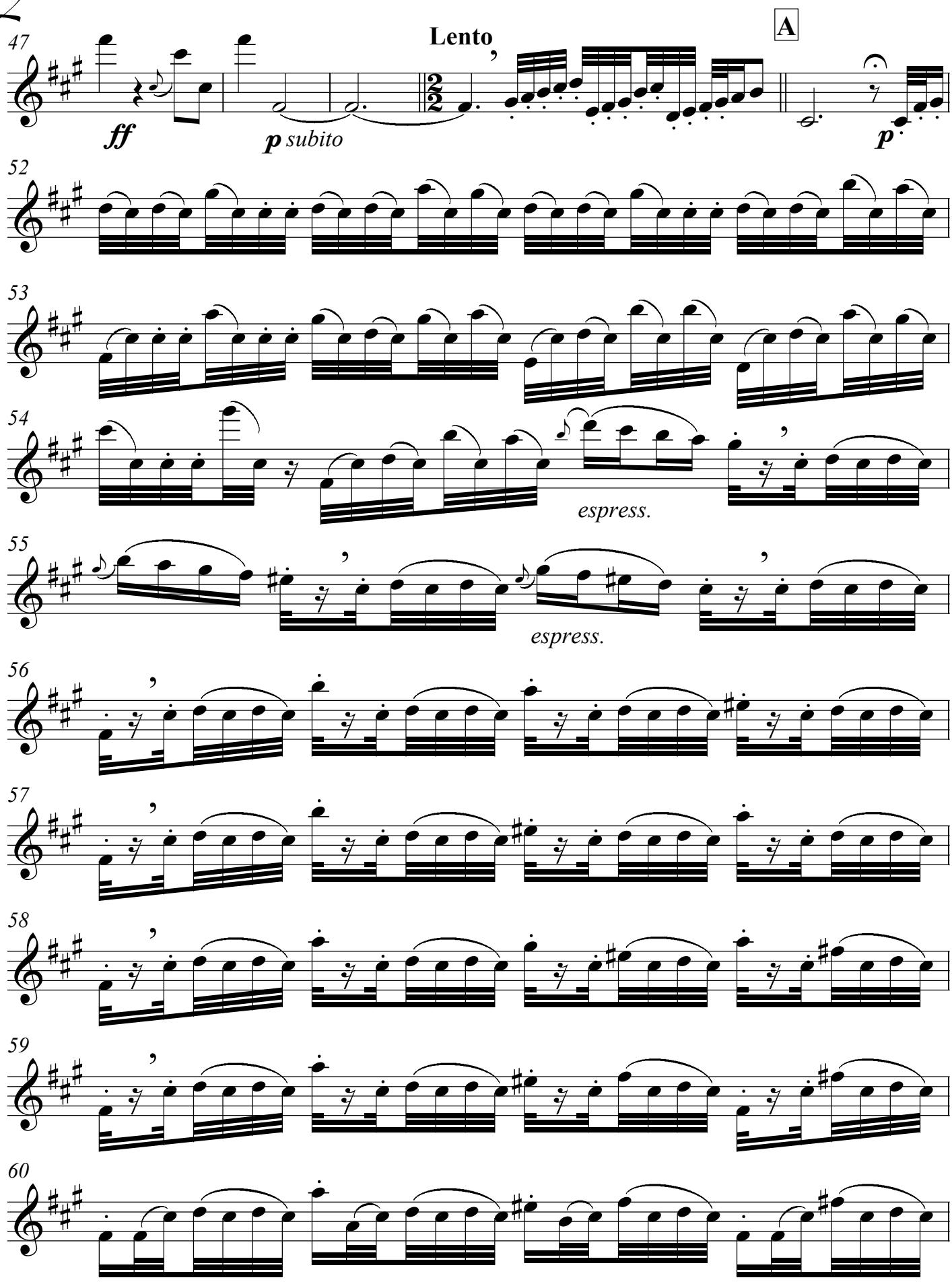
Transit Of Venus

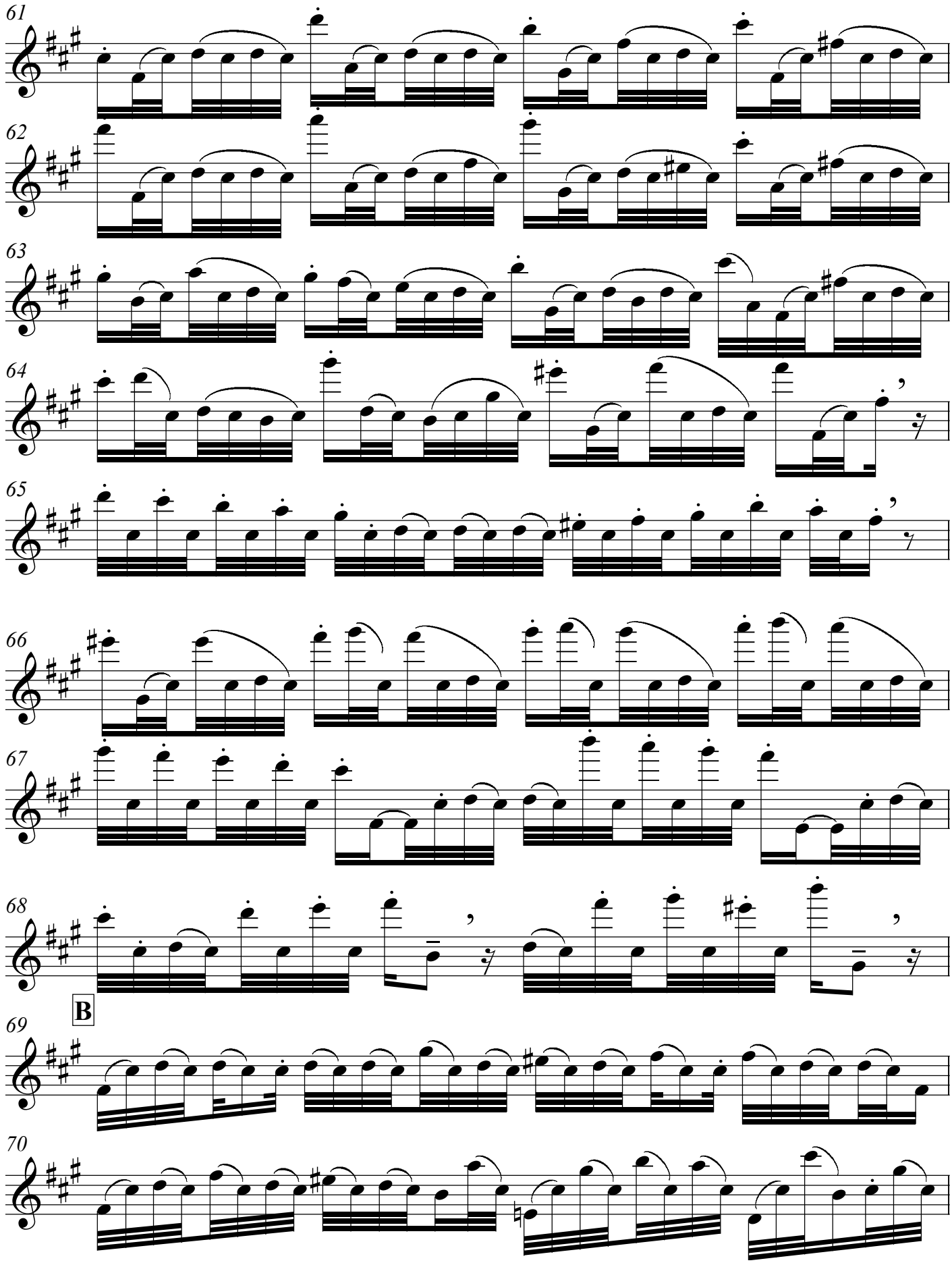
John Wesley Barker

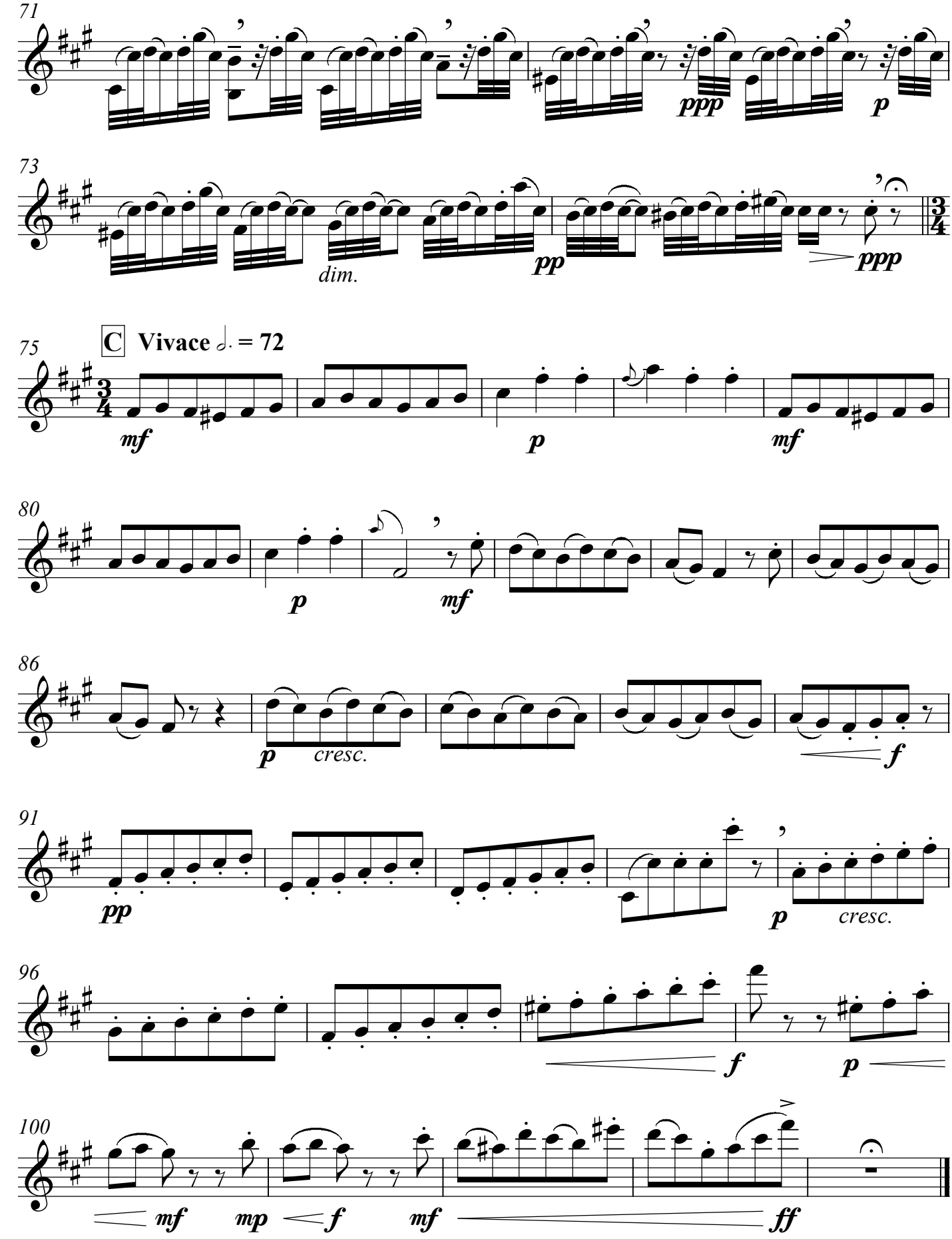
Vivace ♩. = 72

flute




47
Lento
A
ff
p subito
p
52
53
54
espress.
55
espress.
56
57
58
59
60


61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
B
69
70


71
ppp
p
73
dim.
pp
ppp
75
C Vivace ♩. = 72
mf
p
mf
80
p
mf
86
p
cresc.
f
91
pp
p
cresc.
96
f
p
100
mf
mp
f
mf
ff

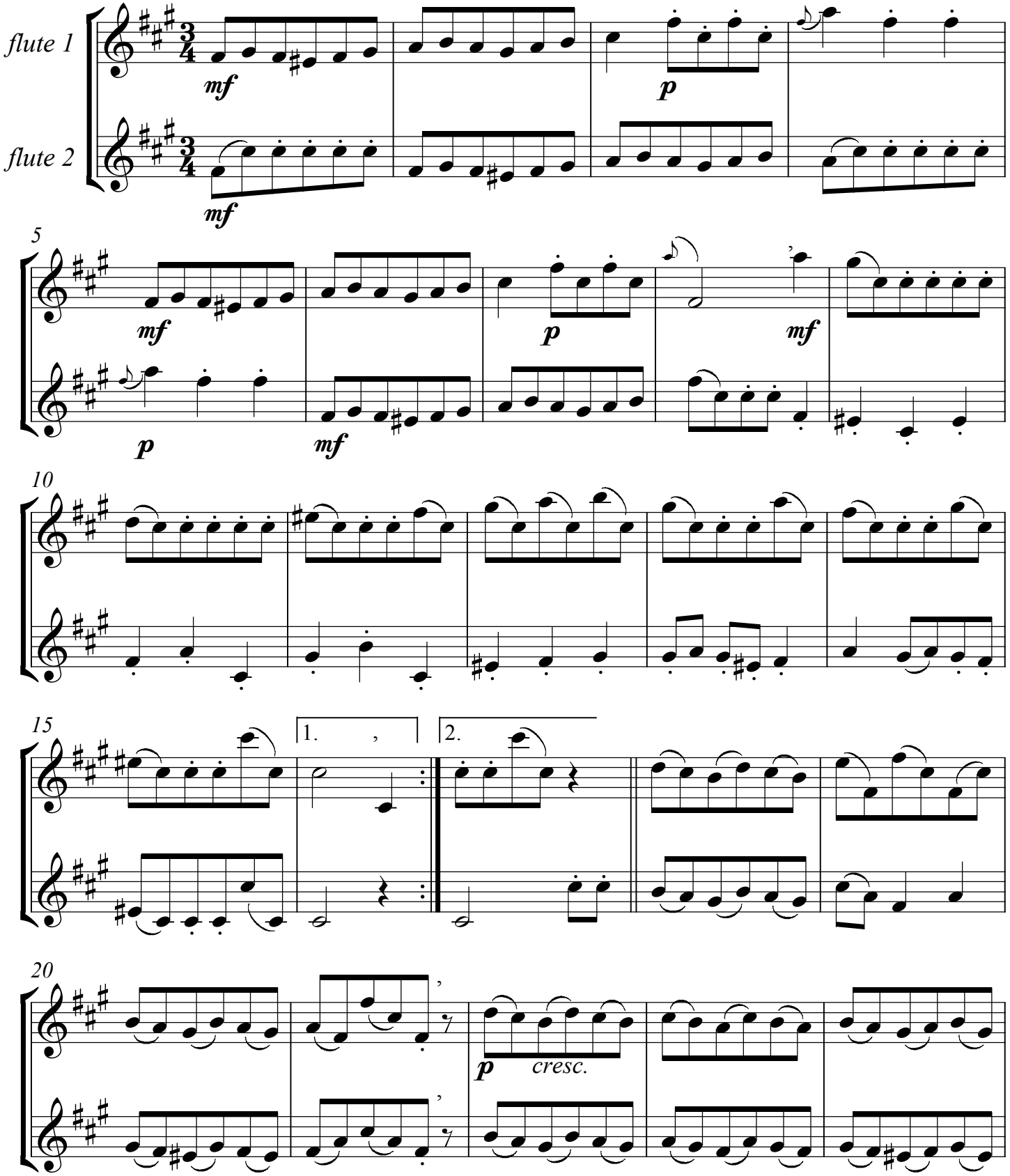
Transit Of Venus 2

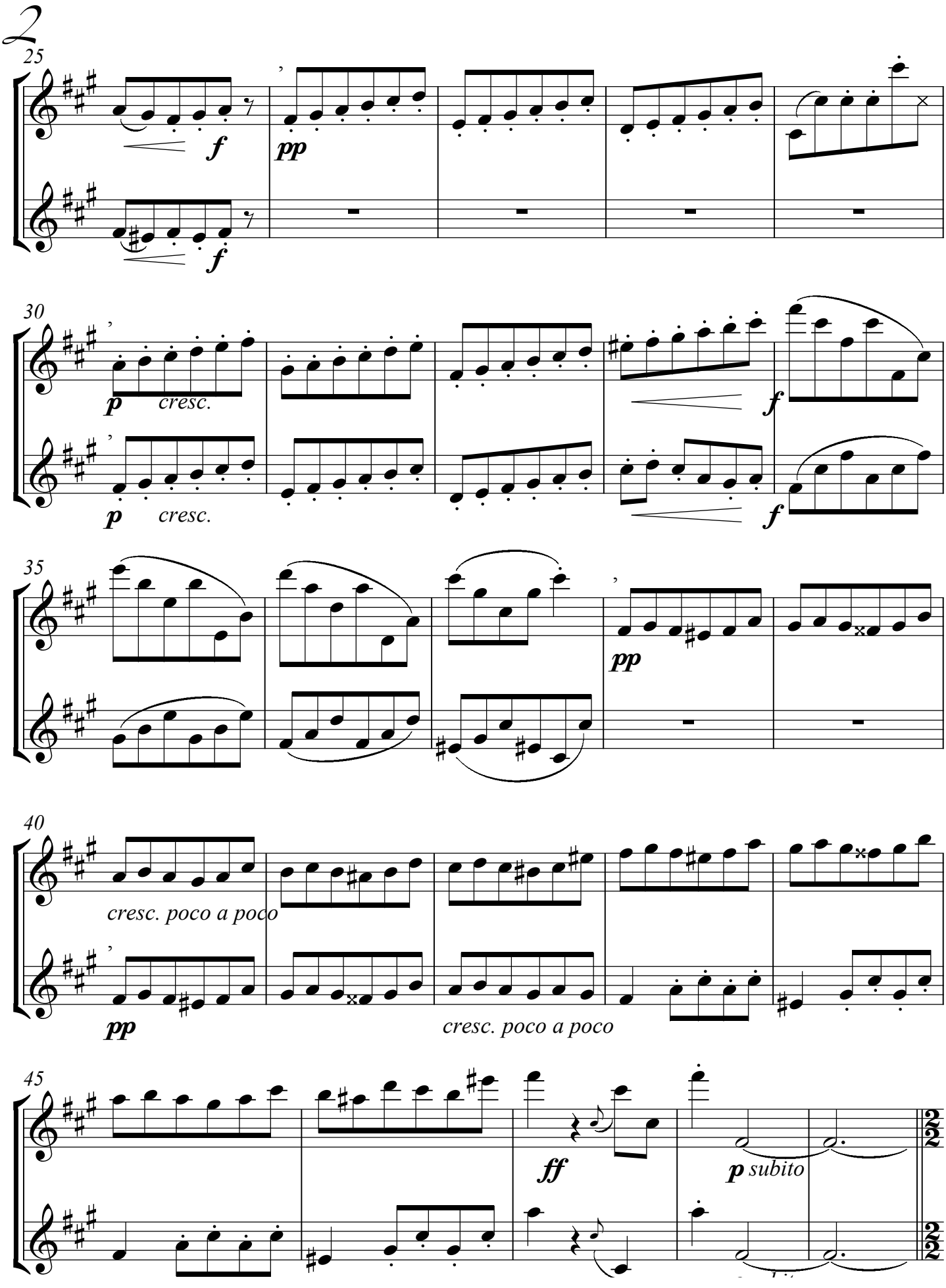
John Wesley Barker

Vivace ♩. = 72

flute 1

flute 2

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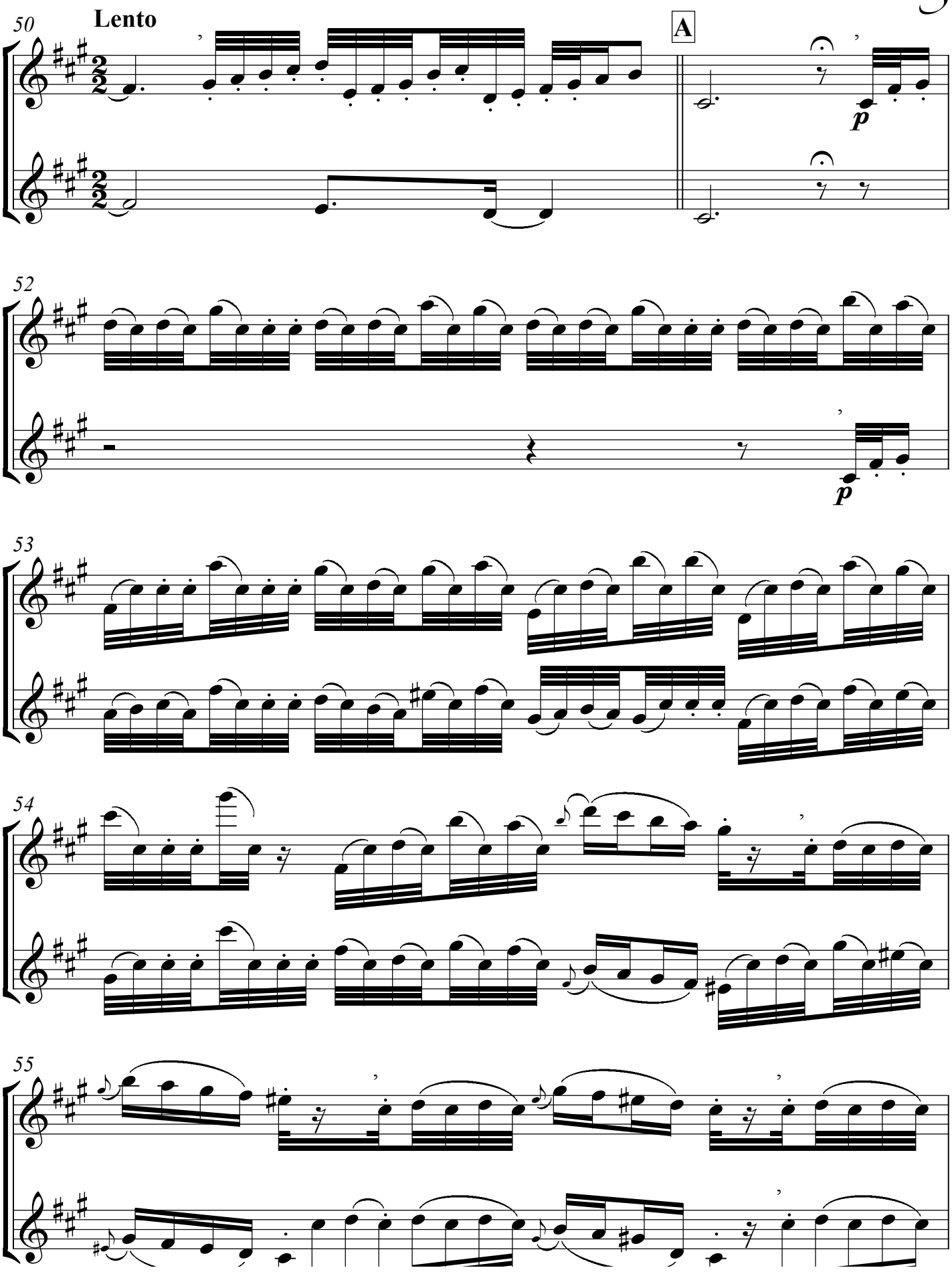
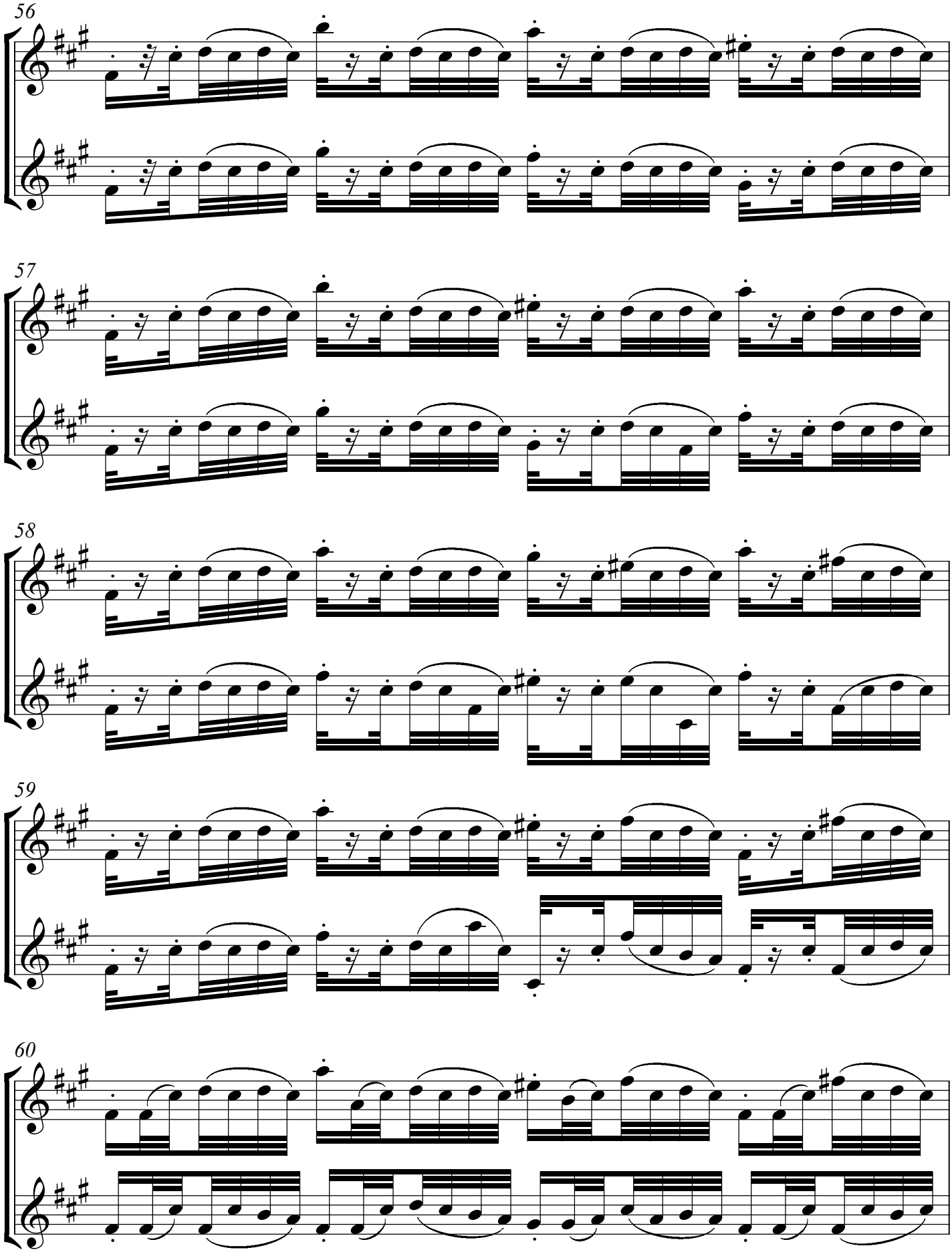
f
pp
f
30
p
cresc.
p
cresc.
f
f
35
pp
40
cresc. poco a poco
pp
cresc. poco a poco
45
ff
p subito


50
Lento
A
p
52
p
53
54
55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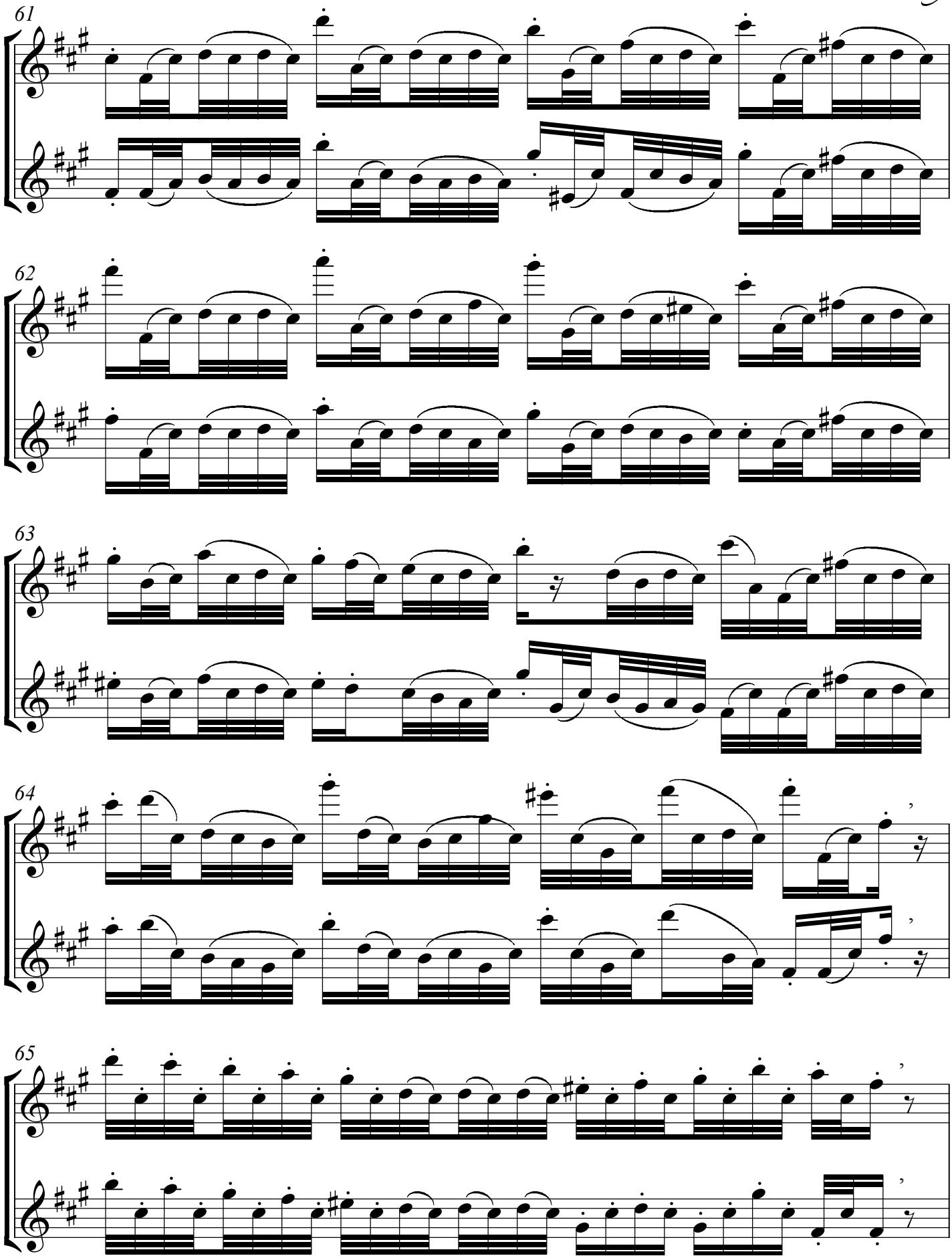
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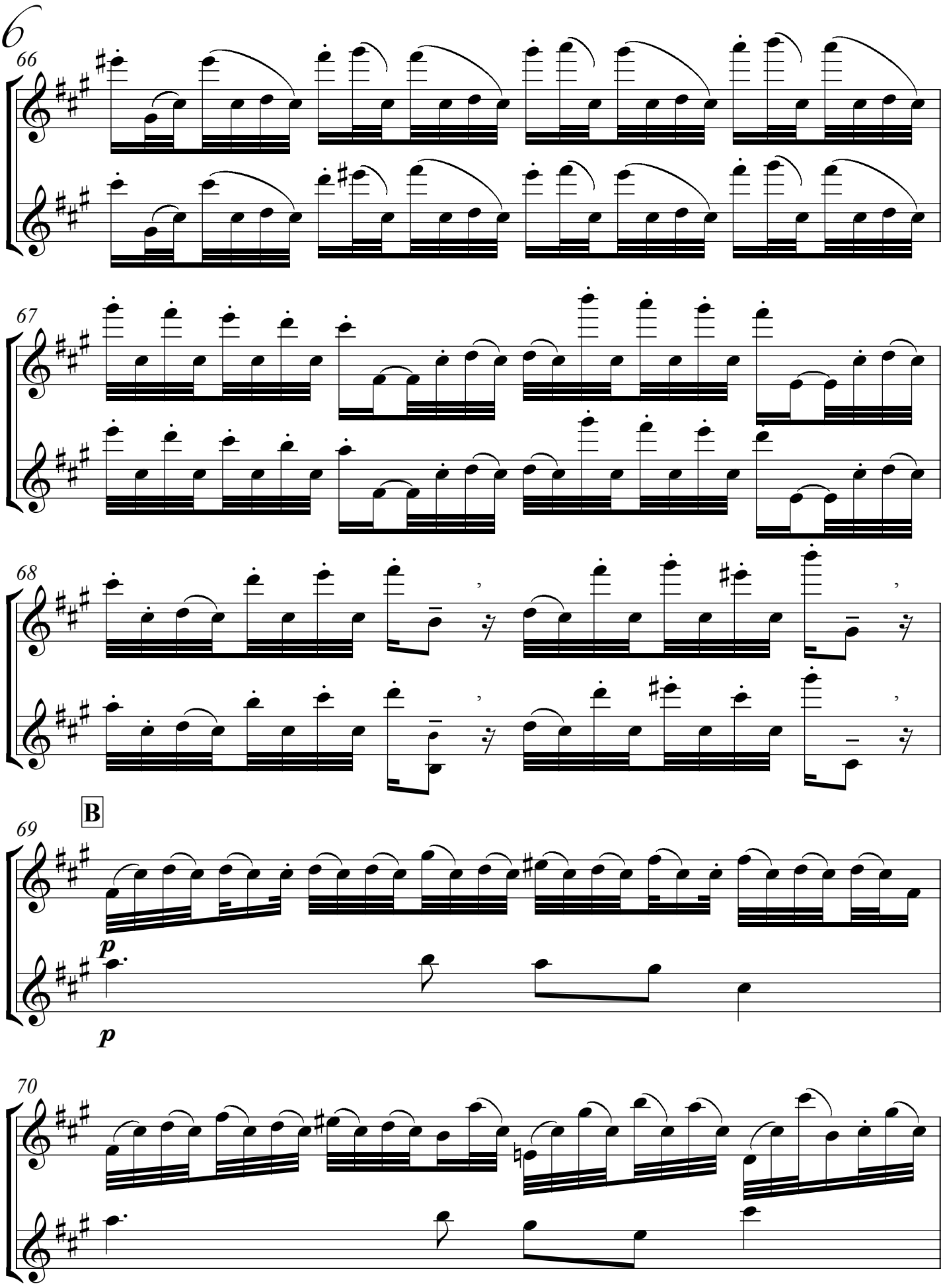
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67
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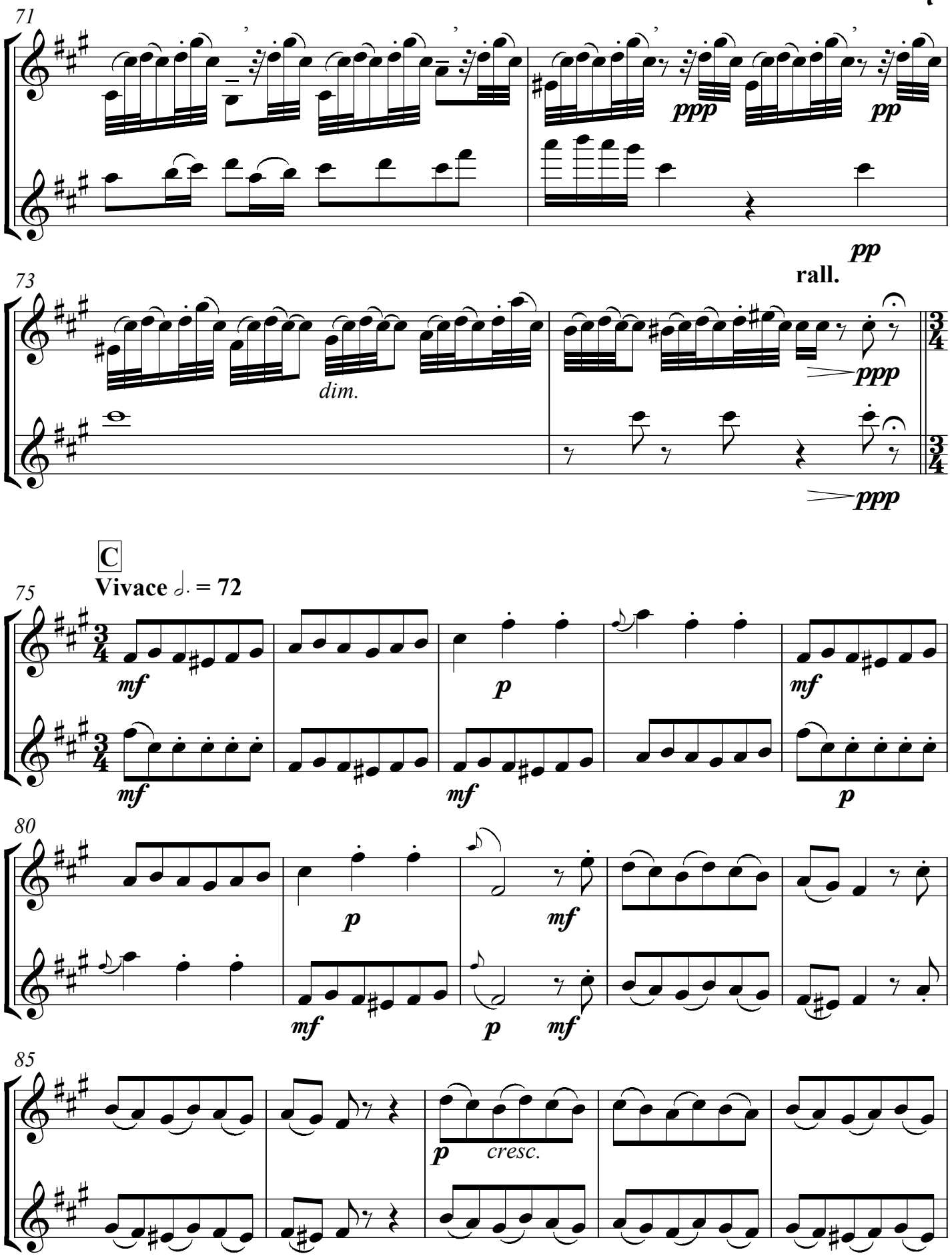
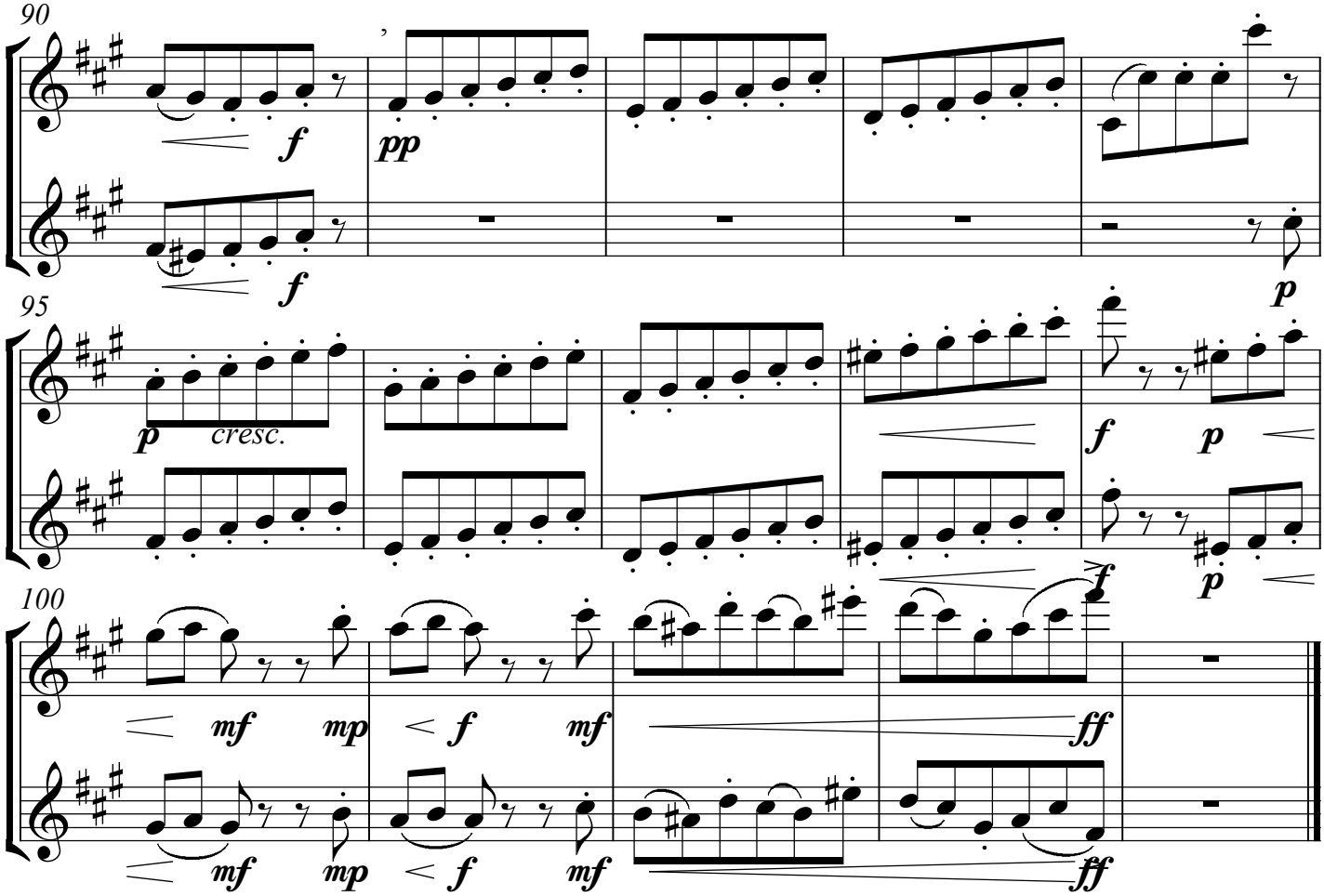
B
69
p
p
70

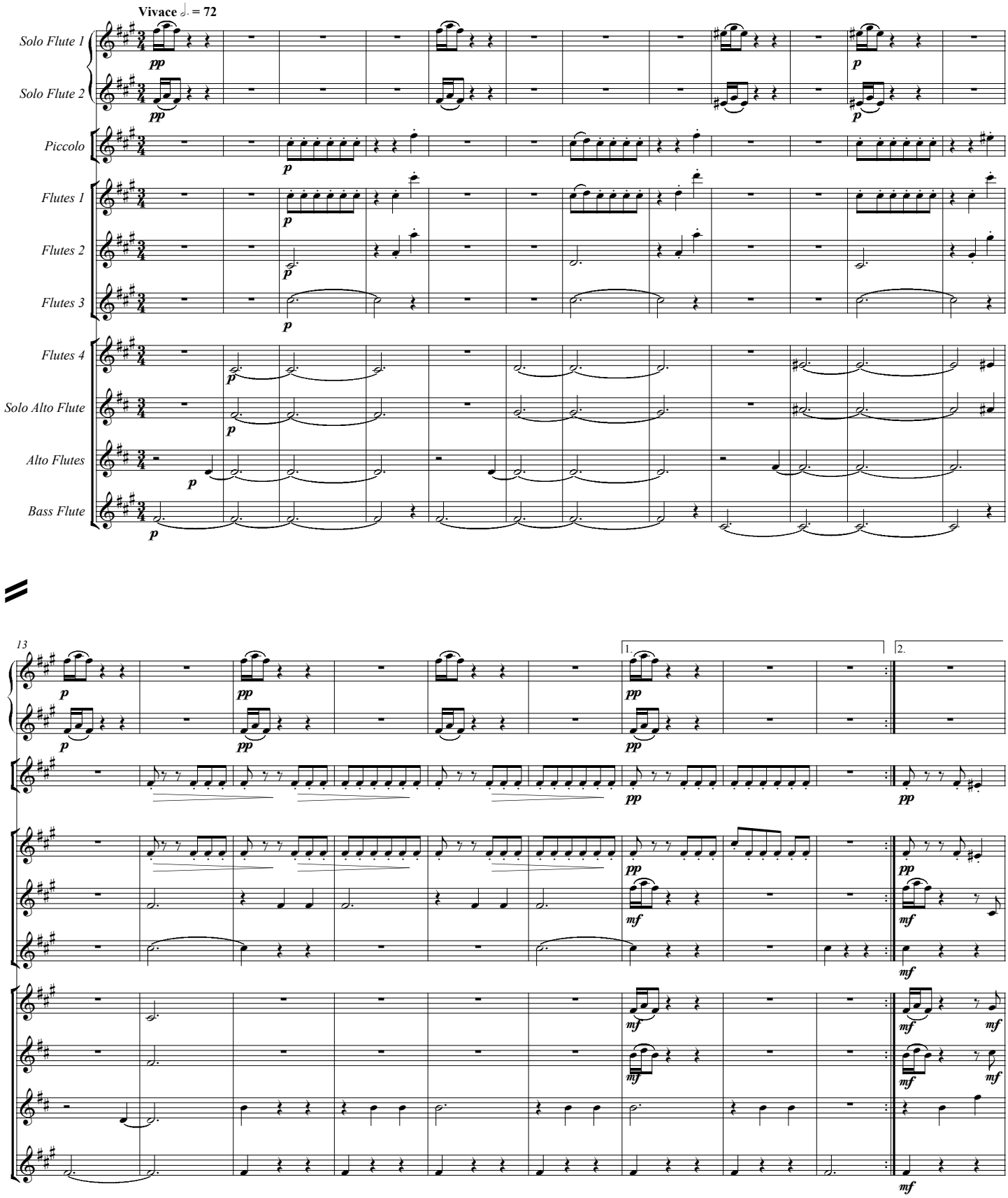

71
ppp
pp
rall.
pp
73
dim.
ppp
ppp
C
Vivace ♩. = 72
75
mf
mf
p
mf
mf
p
80
p
mf
mf
p
mf
85
p
cresc.

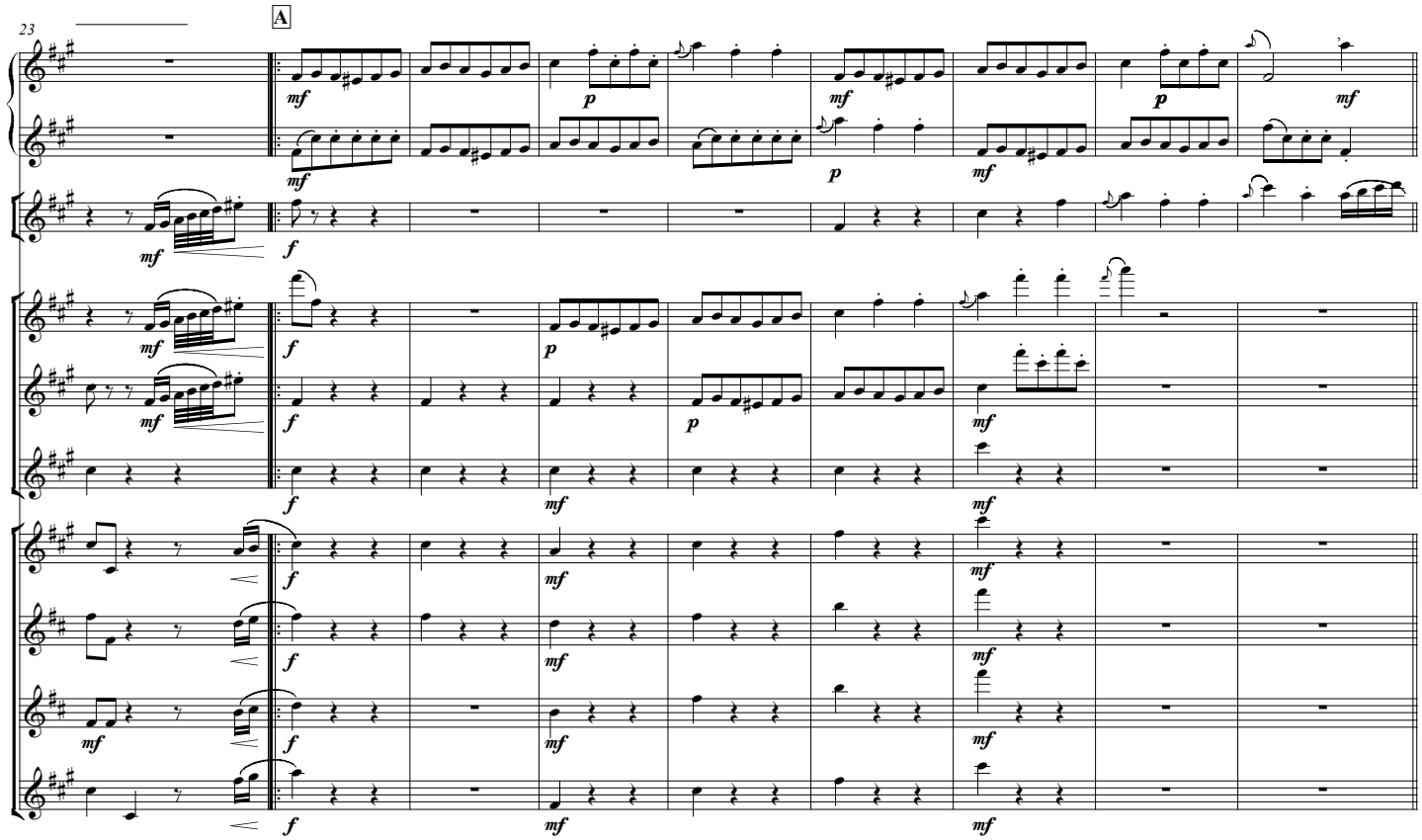

90
f
pp
f
p
95
p
cresc.
f
p
f
p
100
mf
mp
f
mf
ff
mf
mp
f
mf
ff

Transit Of Venus 3

John Wesley Barker

to David Cubbin

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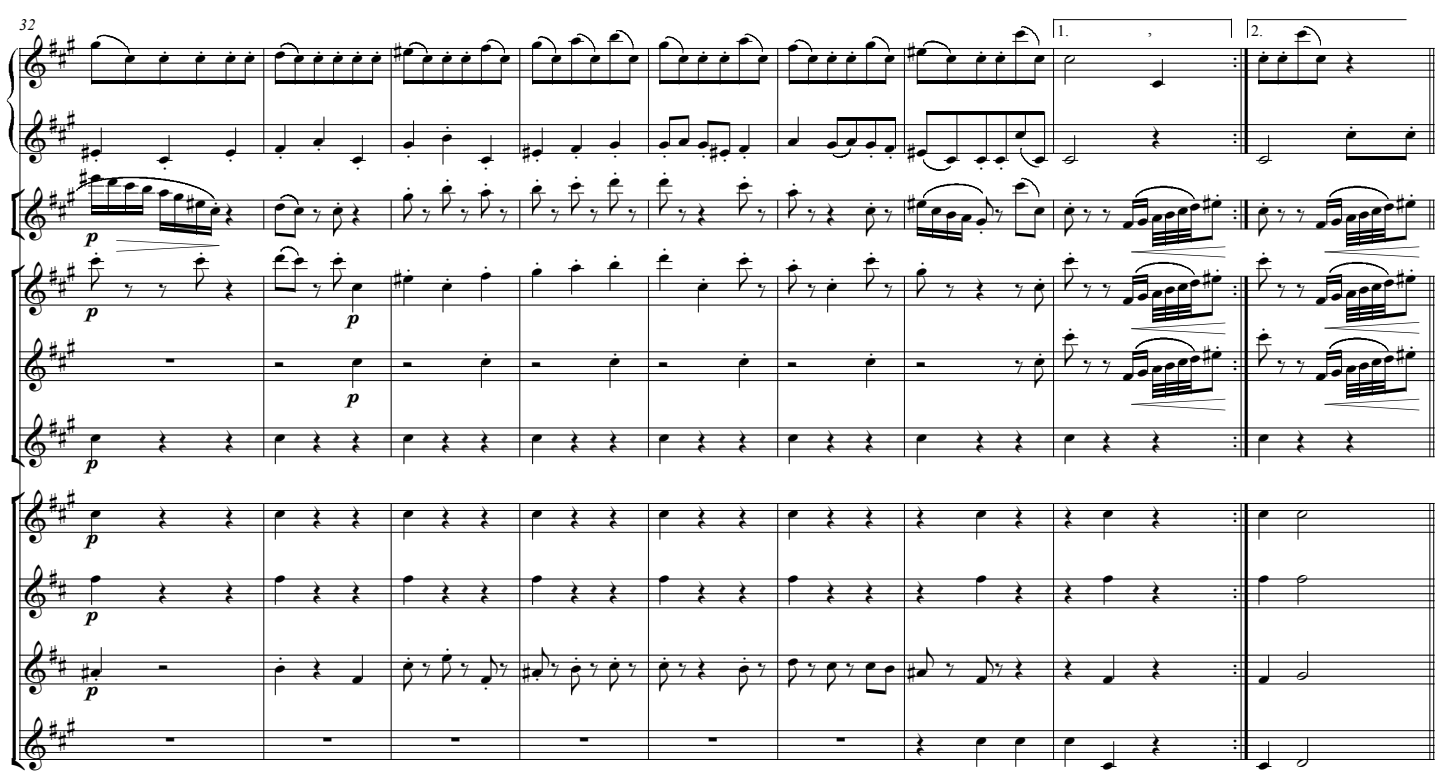
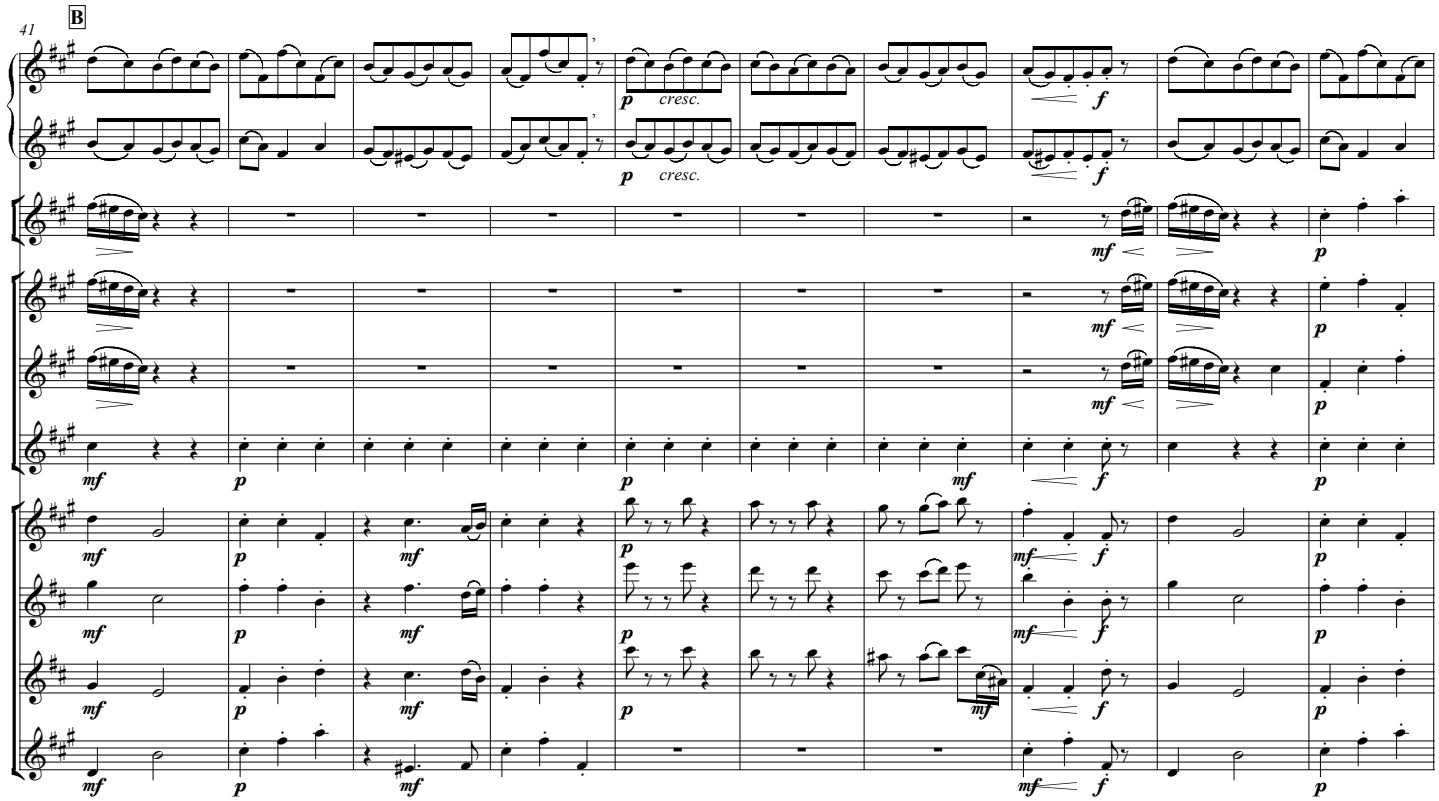
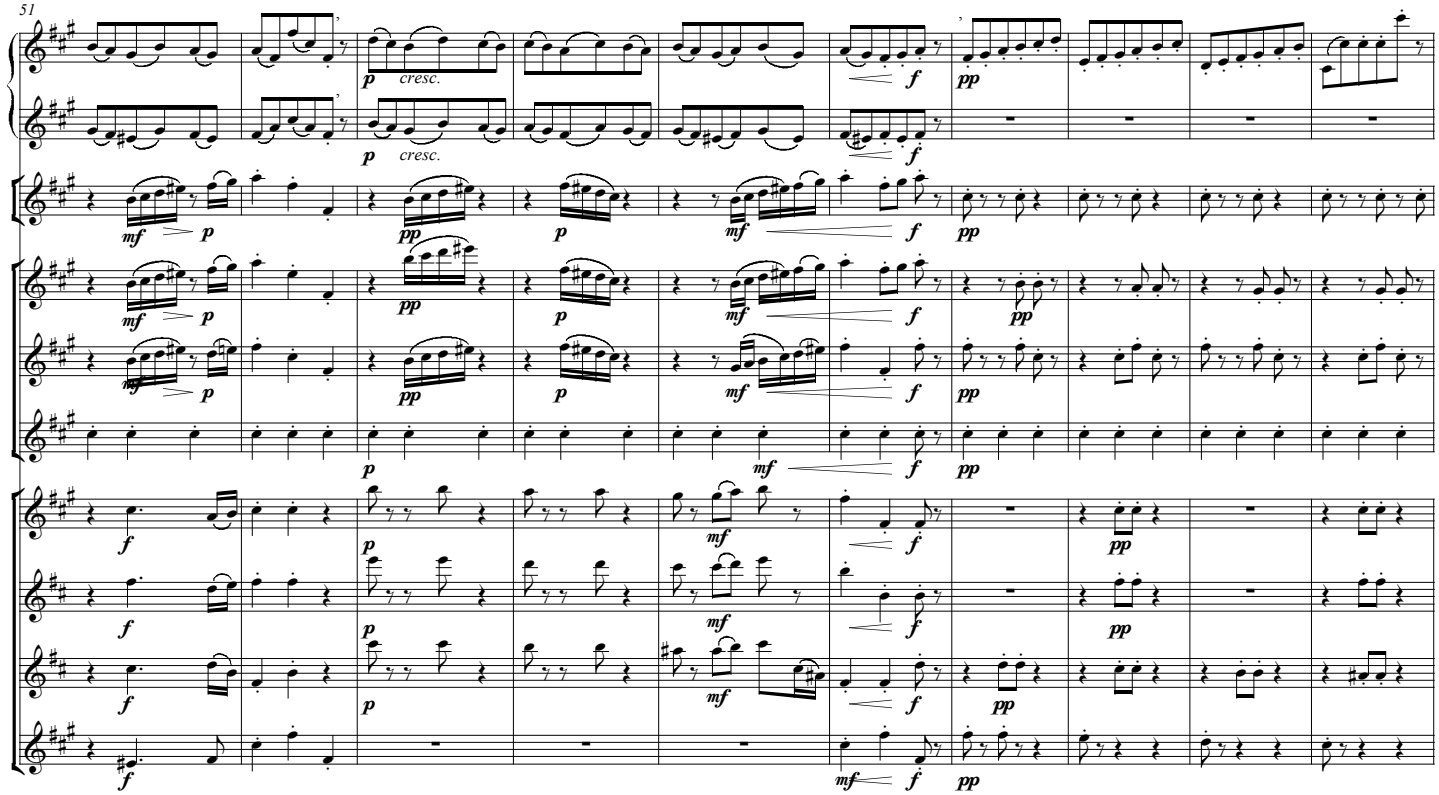
A
mf
p
f


32
1.
2.
p


41
B
p
cresc.
f
mf
p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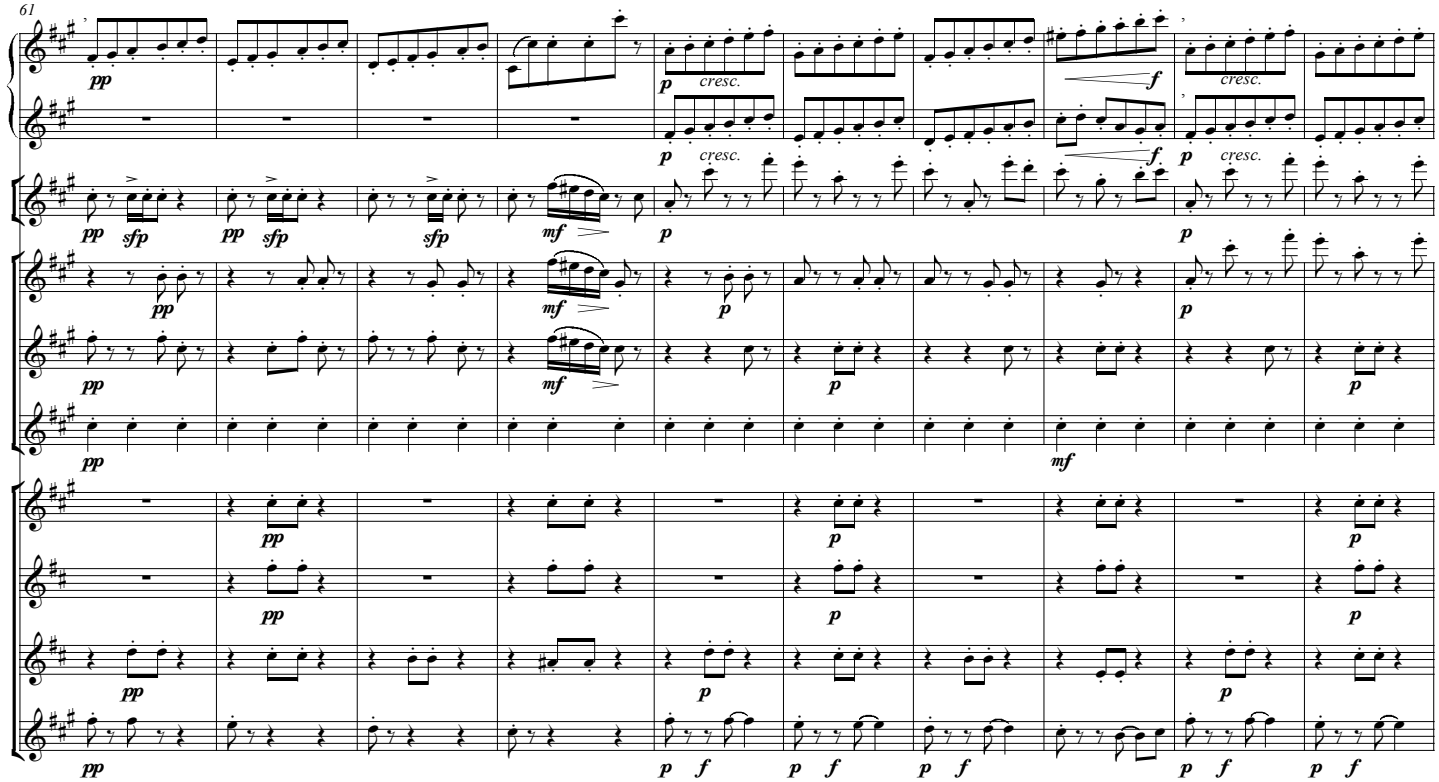
cresc.
f
pp
mf
p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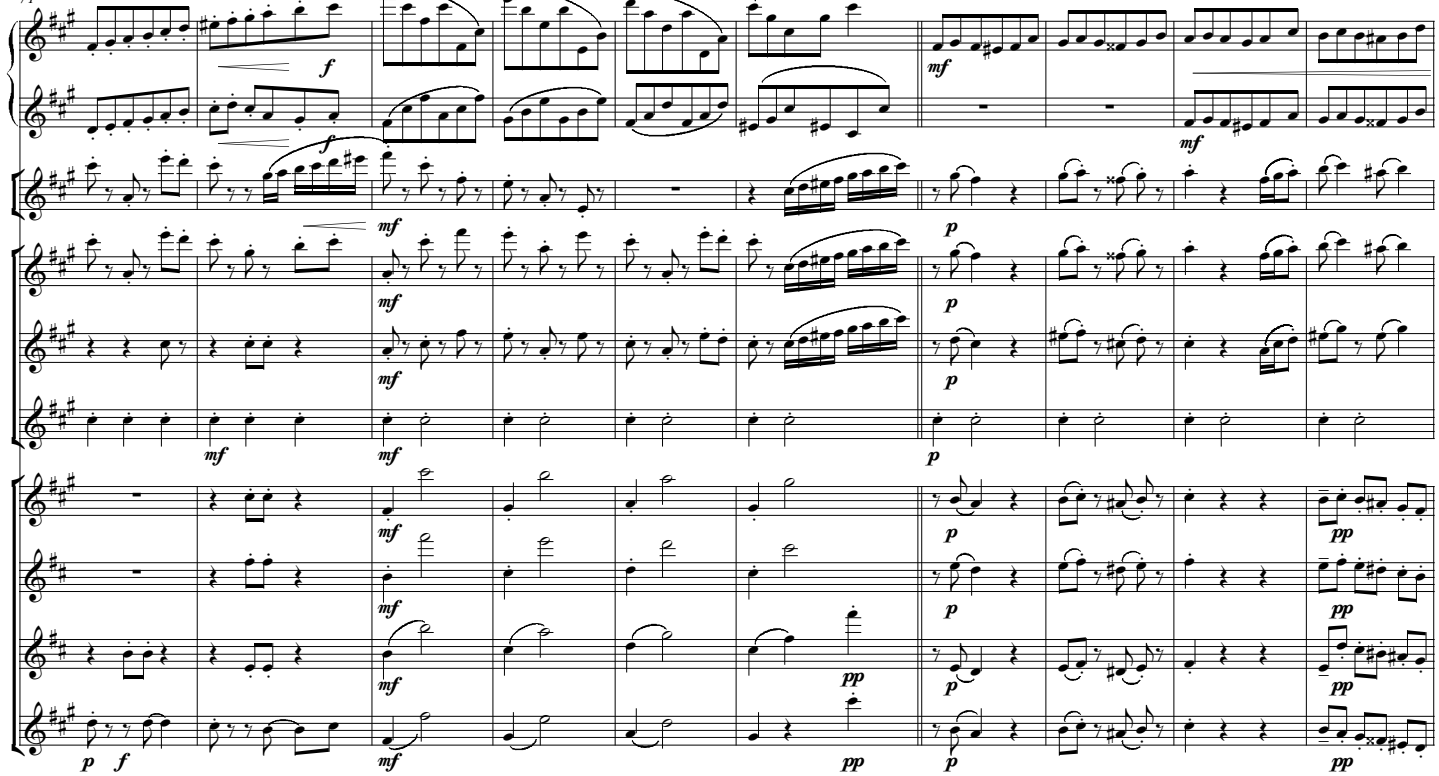
cresc.
f
sfp
mf
p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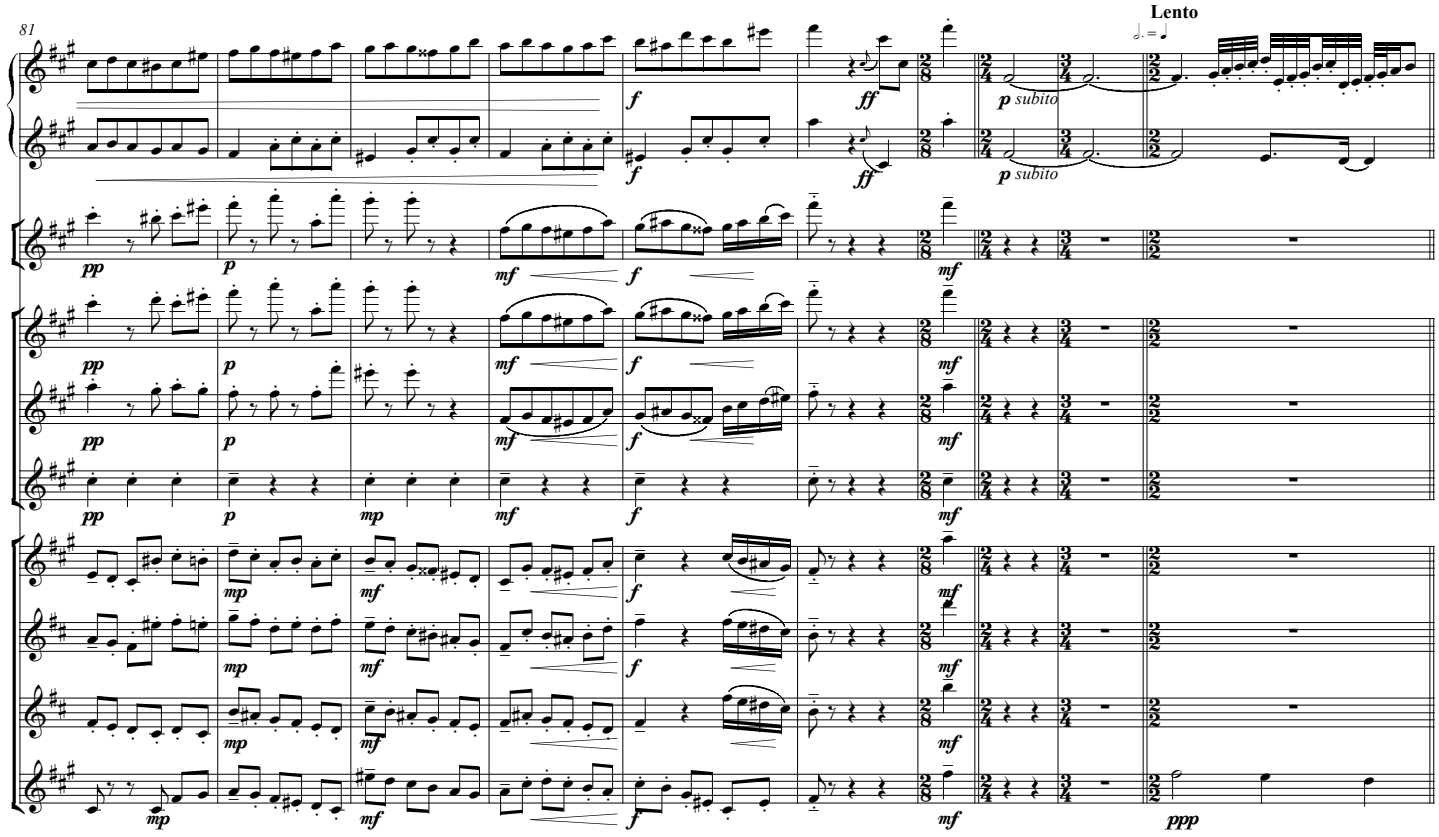
f
mf
p
pp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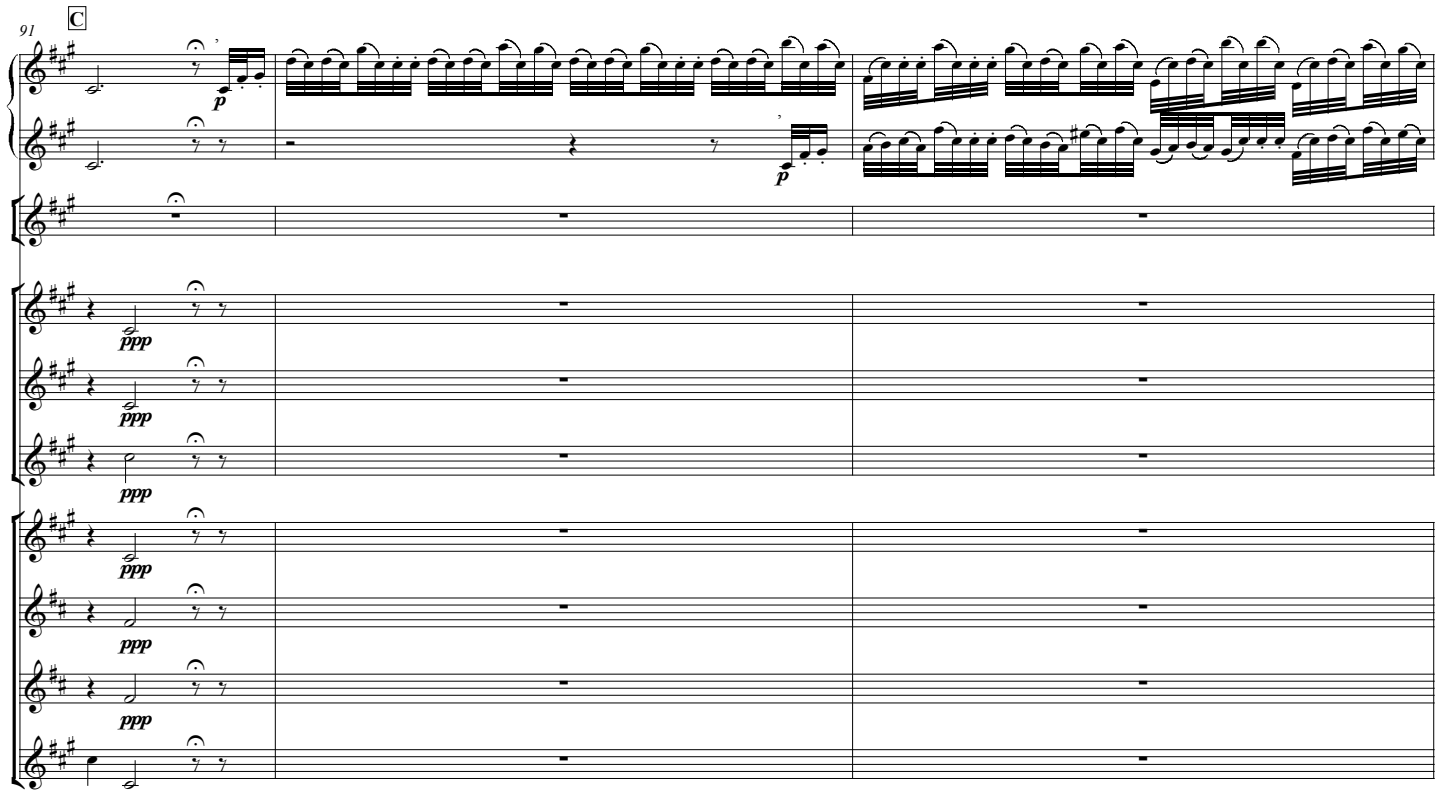
Lento
p subito
p subito
ppp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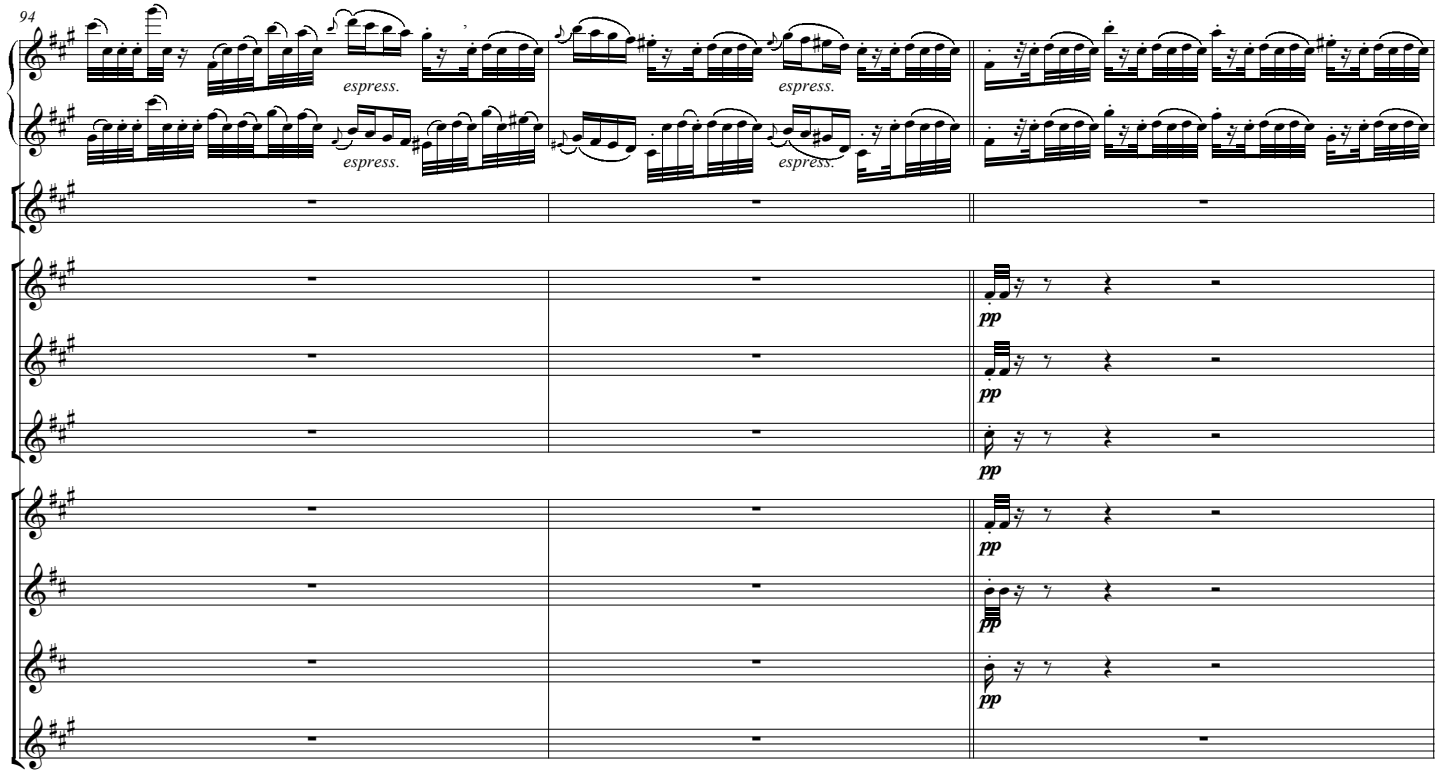
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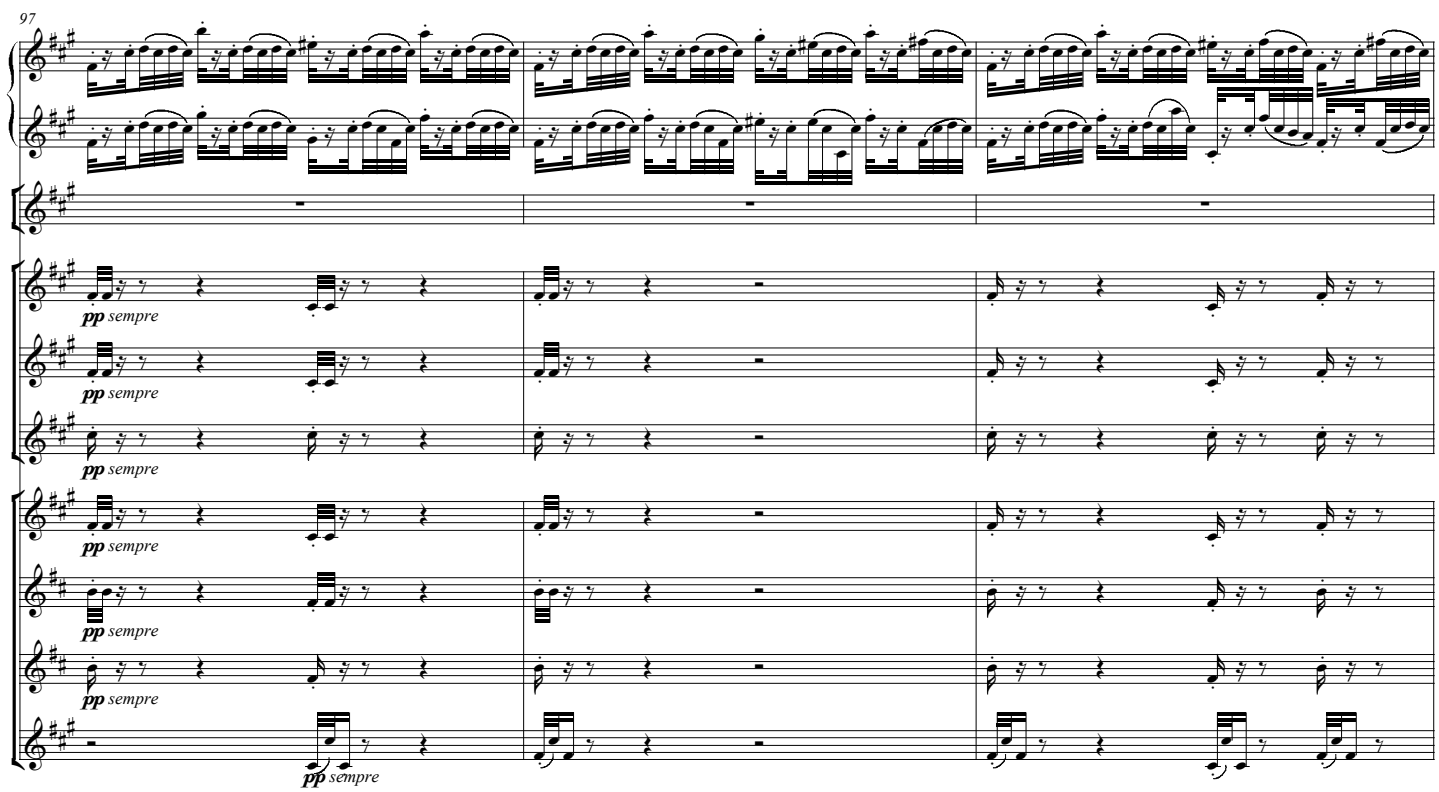
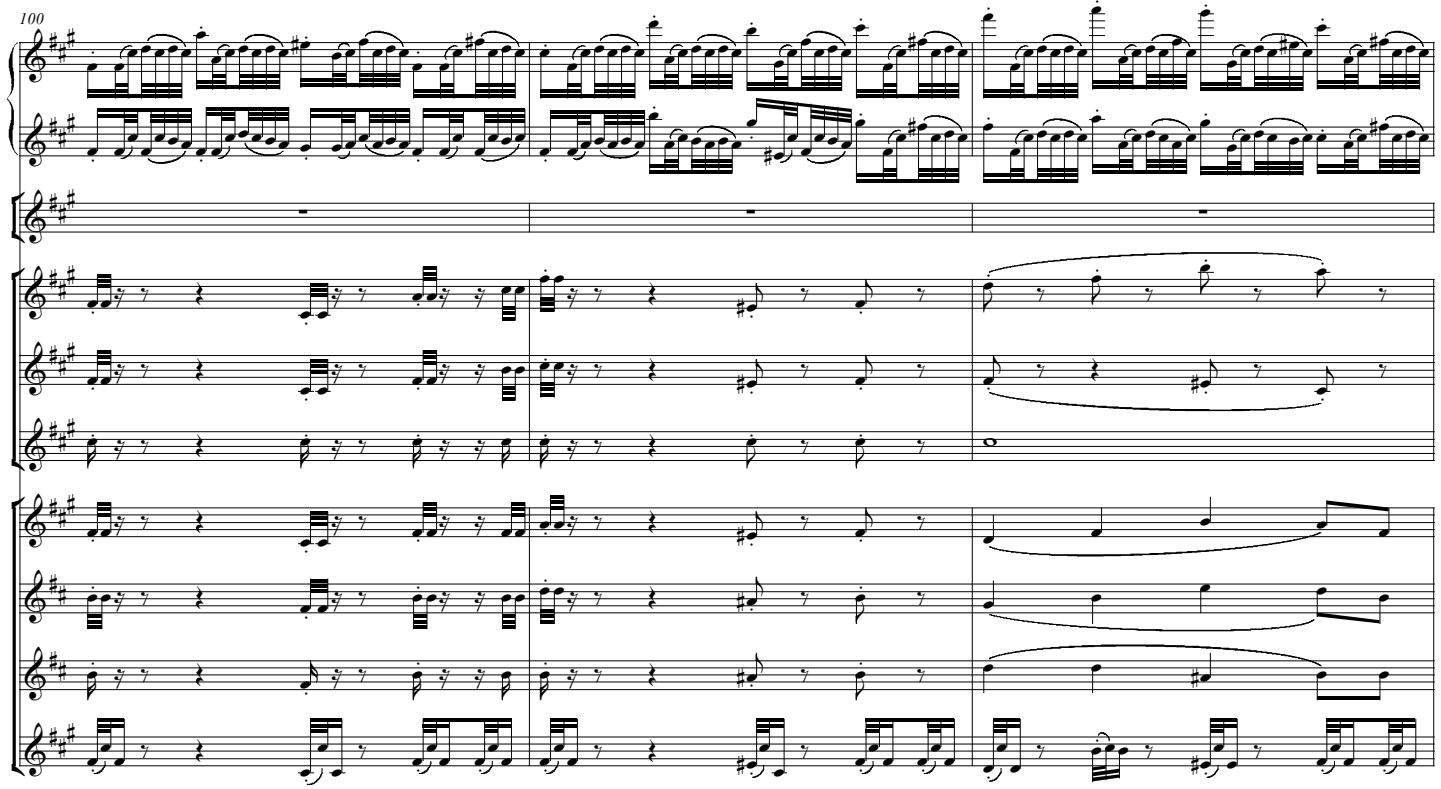
espress.
espress.
espress.
espress.
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp


97
pp sempre
pp sempre
pp sempre
pp sempre
pp sempre
pp sempre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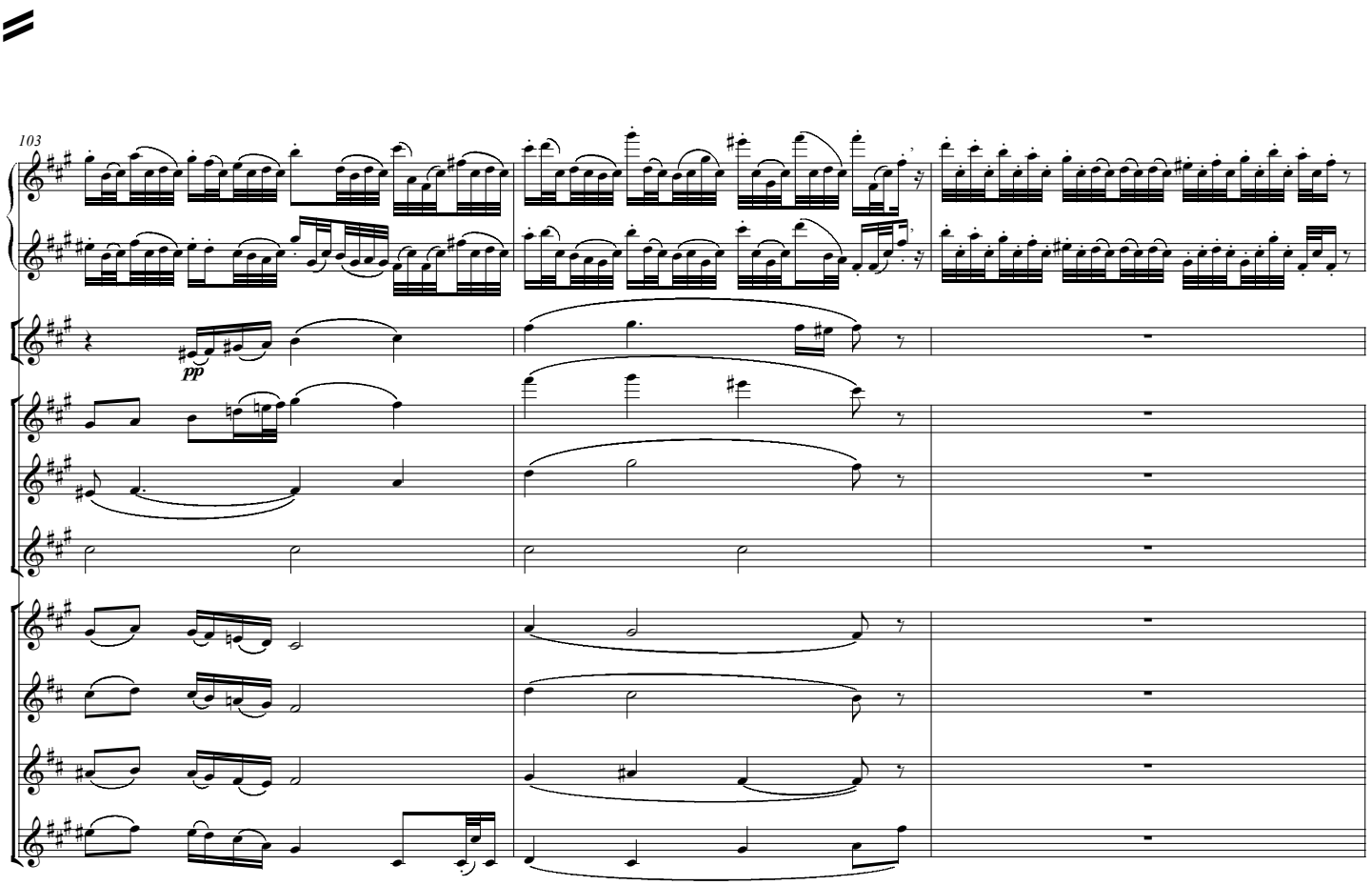
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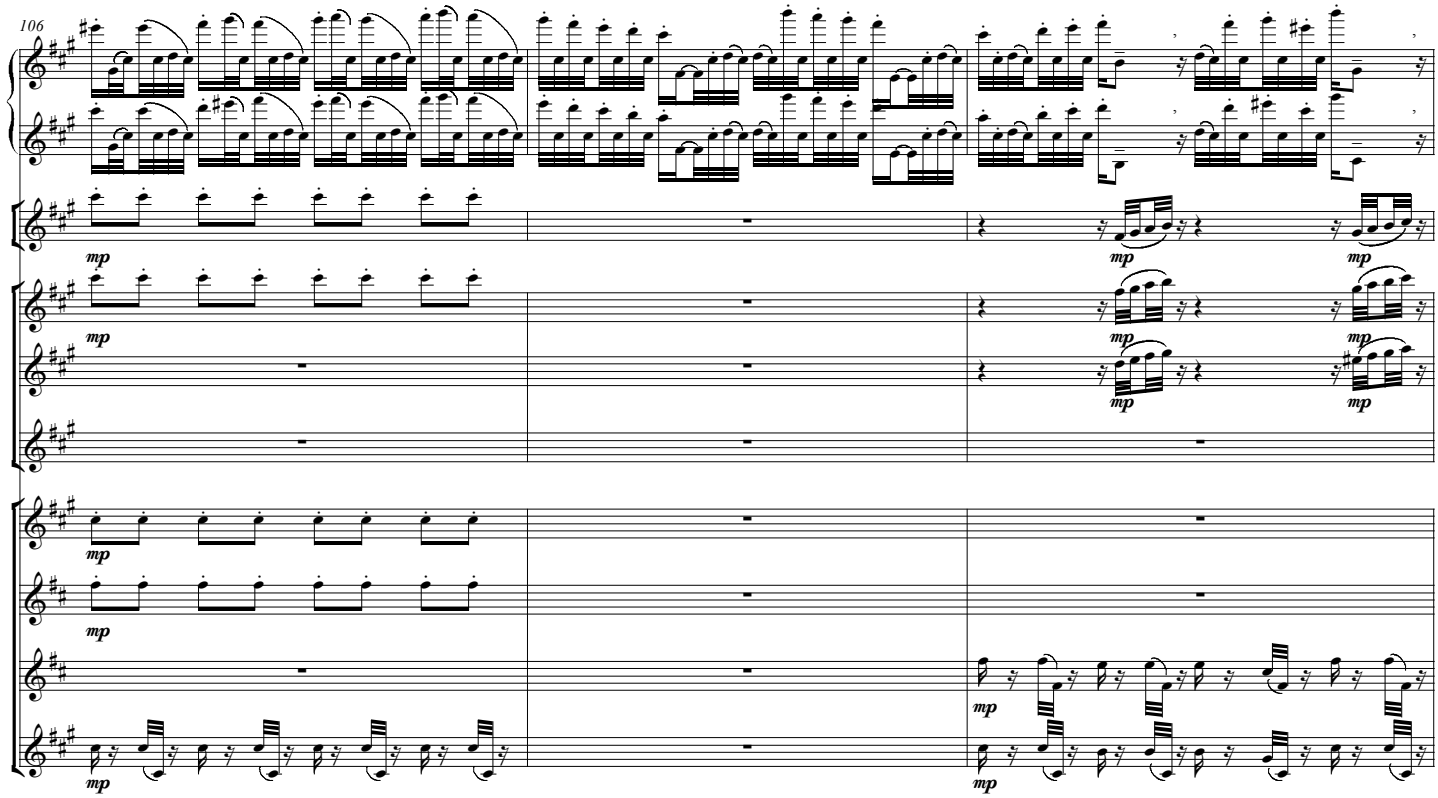
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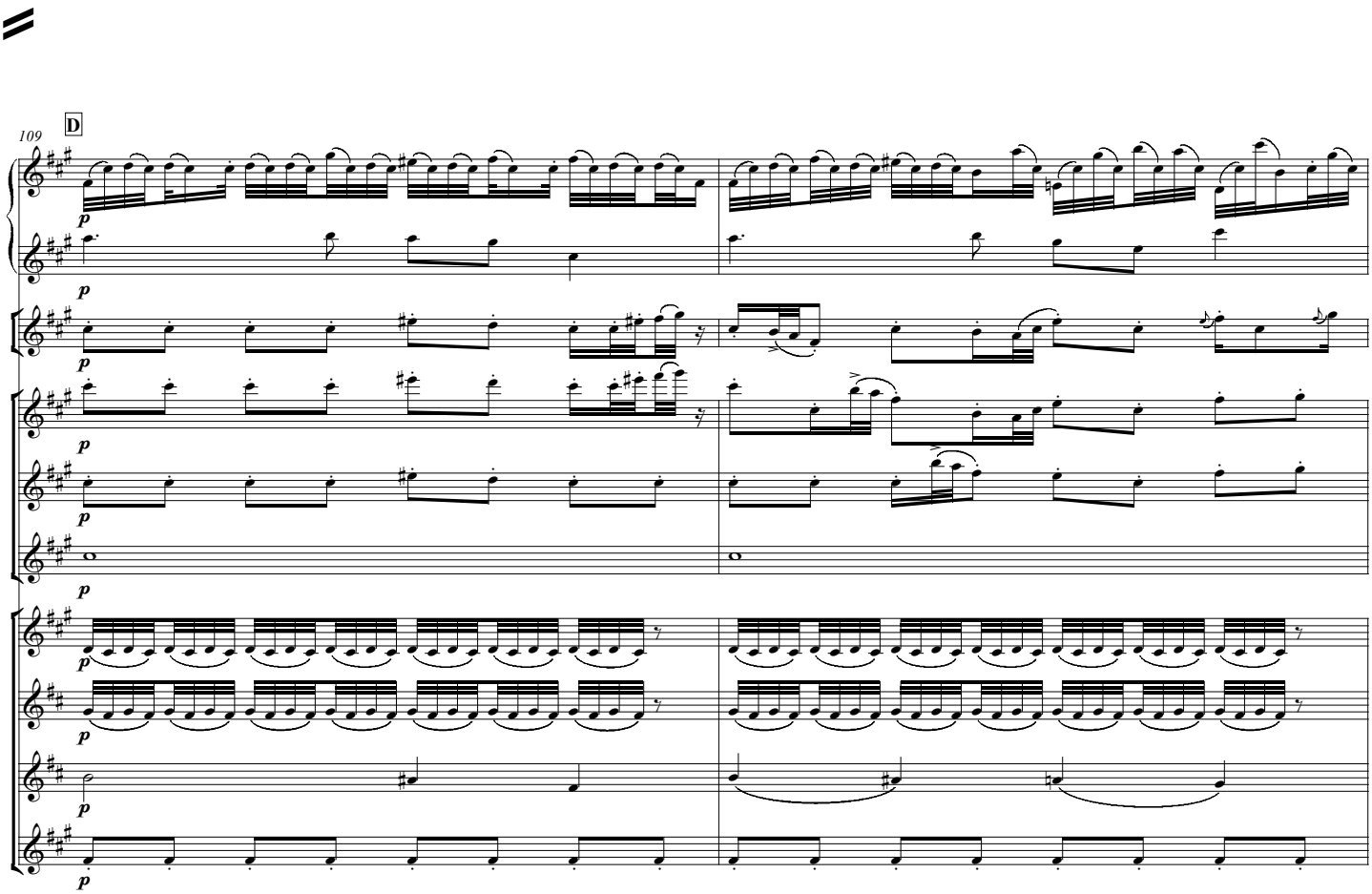
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D
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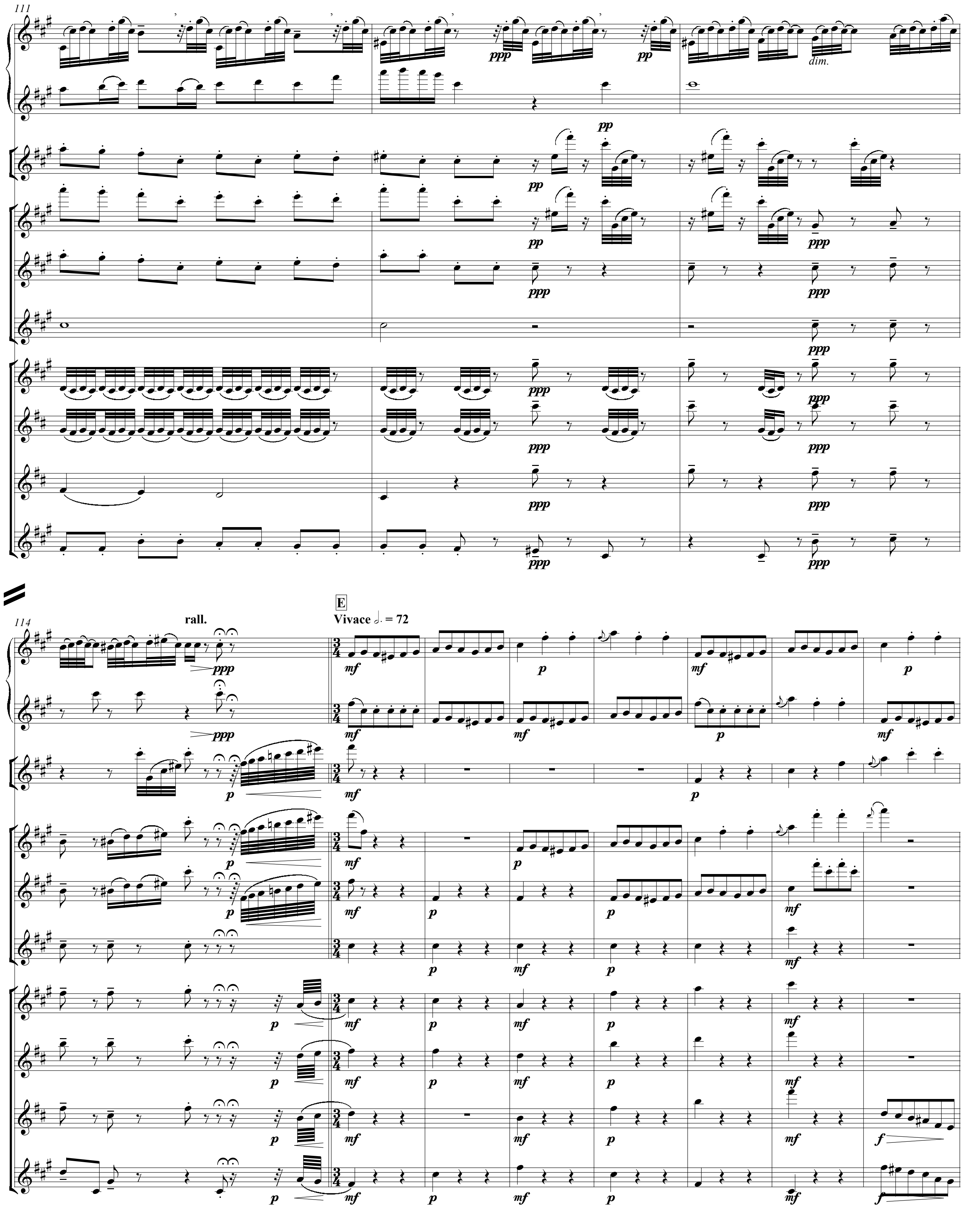
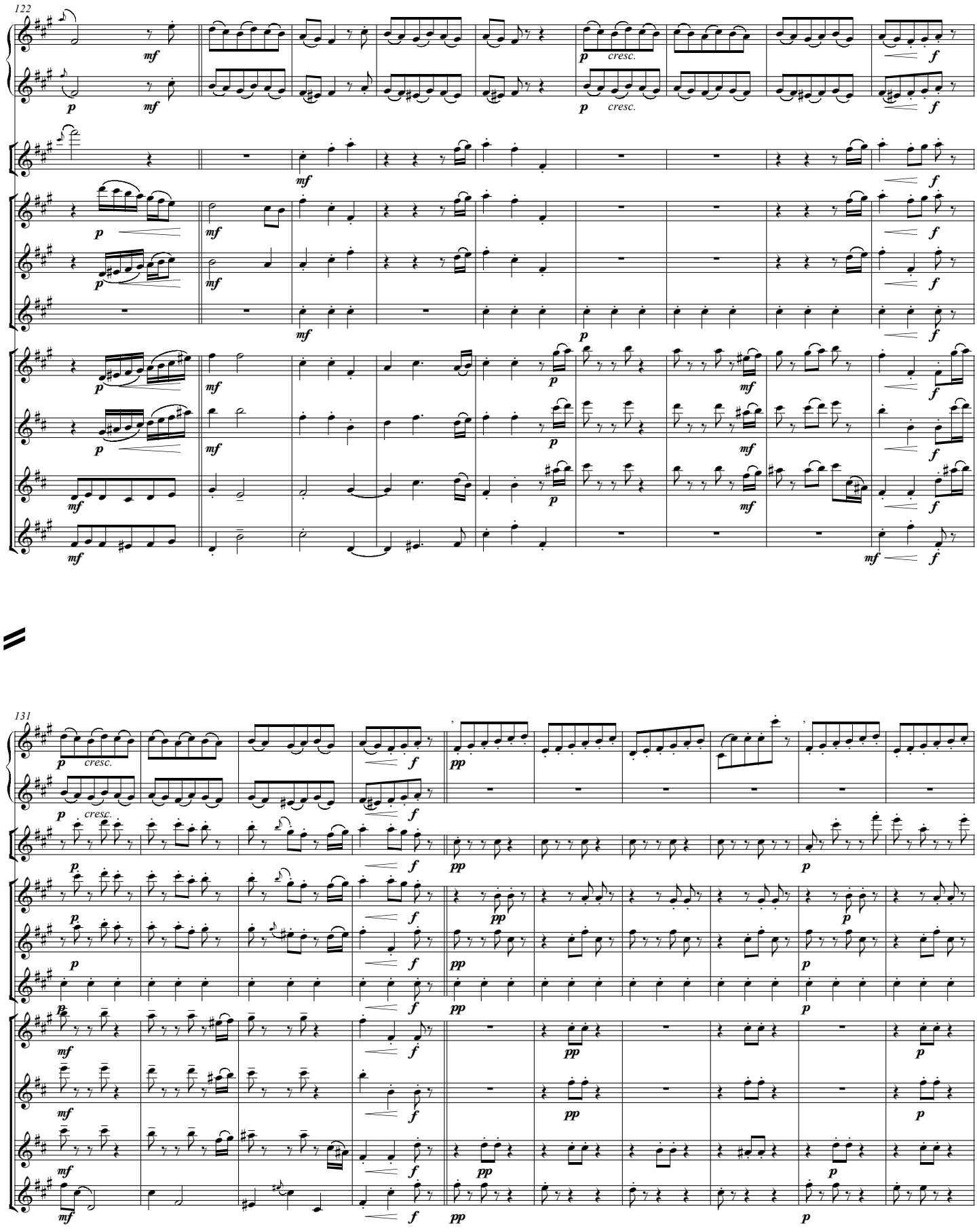
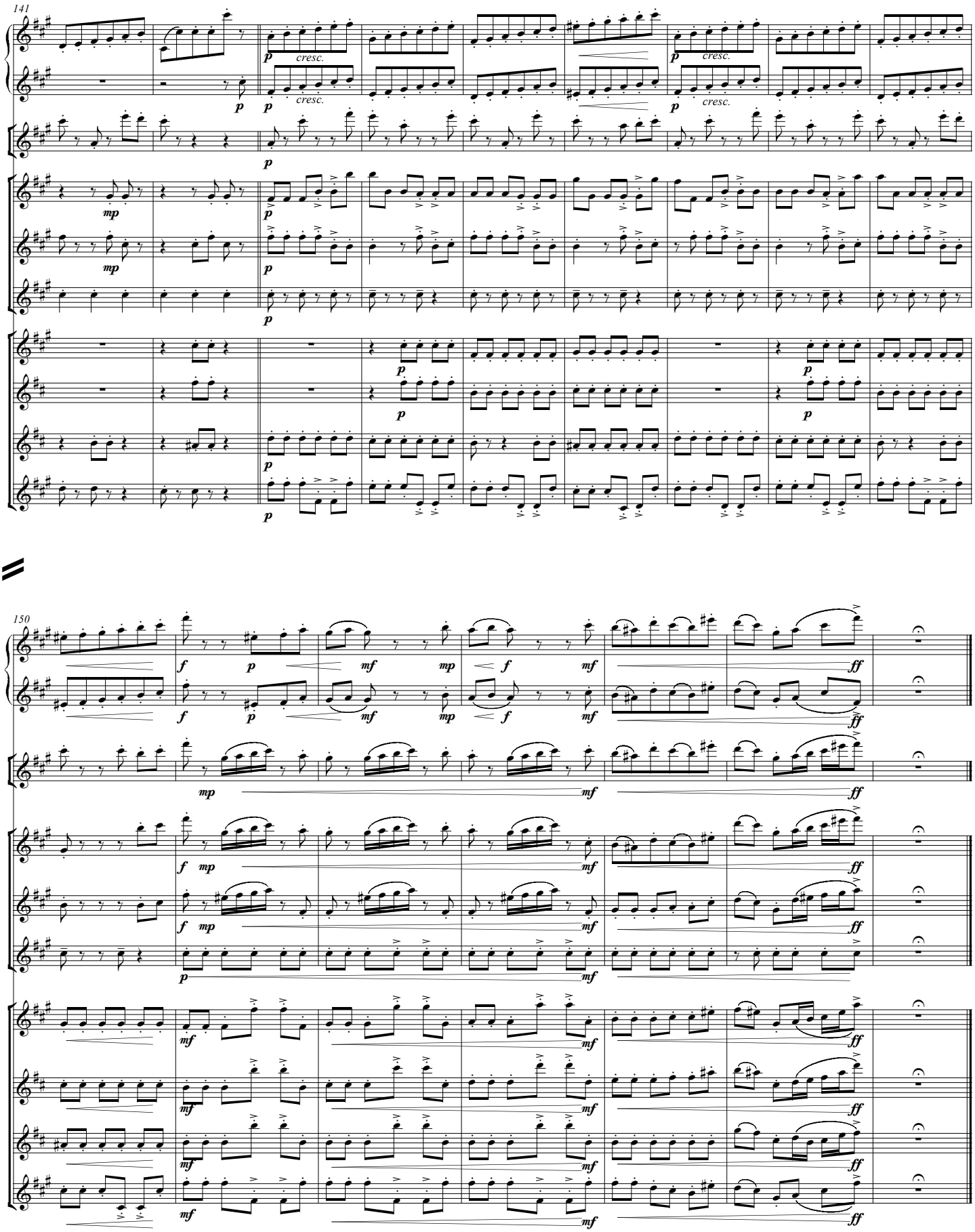

111
dim.
114
rall.
E
Vivace 𝅗𝅥. = 72


122
131
cresc.


141
cresc.
150

Transit Of Venus

for flute(s)

Programme Notes

The series of Transit Of Venus pieces were conceived in a pedagogical sense at an astronomical time. While waiting for pupils in a cold reverberant school practice room as the planet Venus was crossing the face of the Sun. Making use of this time by doing some practice using an exercise, (see **Transit Exercise**) introduced to me by *Professor David Cubbin*, my inspirational flute teacher in Adelaide from 1967 to 1970. I remembered a lesson in which after listening to my playing of a *Marcel Moÿse* Sonorité exercise, he focussed my attention on a particular range of the flute's timbre, namely the 'natural' colour change that occurs when pivoting between 2 pitches the 'open' c# and the adjacent 'closed' d. As an aim of this my practice, I used this simple Sonorité exercise is to try to match the timbre of c# to the adjacent d, and vice versa, while at the same time building resonant capacity and regular breath control. After doing this exercise for many minutes, I began to improvise phrases on the length of my breath, breaking of at intervals to write down and compose **Transit Of Venus**, as a study for solo flute.

I had in mind some phrases of bansuri master *Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia* who I had heard in an all night Raga concert in Edinburgh, particularly the phrases which contain leaps during the c# to d oscillations to other notes to create the illusion of more than one part, as in the solo violin *3 Sonatas & 3 Partitas* by *Johann Sebastian Bach* (1685-1750). The title was chosen as the 2004 Transit Of Venus took place, this is when the planet Venus crosses the face of the sun. The opening section is an energetic waltz melody, this reminded me that a visit of Hailey's Comet was celebrated in a composition by the the television astronomer and virtuoso xylophone soloist Patrick Moore, who wrote a concert waltz for xylophone and orchestra.

Later I found there were other interesting associations arising from the title.

- The term 'Transit Of Venus' is used in astrology as an attribute of a persons horoscope.
- In December 2004 I travelled to New Zealand to visit my family, in 1769 *James Cook* travelled to Tahiti to observe Transit Of Venus, he then sailed on exploring the South Seas and discovered New Zealand and Australia.

Transit Of Venus 2 for flute duet was composed a few days after the solo piece, in order to play with flautist *Karen Thornton* who liked the solo study and suggested we each have our own part to play. It takes quite a bit of energy and breath control to keep steady, we also find it easier to play from memory.

I then made **Transit Of Venus 3** by adding a spacious introduction and expanding some phrases. Scored for two solo flutes and flute choir comprising piccolo, 4 flutes, 2 alto flutes and bass flute. This 3rd piece completes a series of pieces with a unifying theme suitable for a 'flute convention' or similar. From the solo study to the duet who then 'guest' in the 3rd piece with flute choir.

Level of Difficulty

The solo parts require smooth facility in the key of F# minor. Most of the phrases fit easily under the fingers on a Boehm flute. The 2nd flute part of **Transit Of Venus 2** may be played on a flute with a low B. Intermediate to Advanced players, e.g. Associated Board Grade 8 for the solo parts.

In **Transit Of Venus 3**, the flute choir parts are written for a choir comprising players of 'mixed' ability. The 3rd choir flute part uses only one note - 'open' c# and may be played by a Beginner with Intermediate reading skills. The solo alto flute 1 may also be played by 4th flute making it possible to play with only one alto flute and one bass.

Visit web pages: www.johnwesleybarker.co.uk