DEMON STAR

by LOIS V VIERK

for cello and marimba

For The Maya Beiser/Steven Schick Project

The commissioning of Demon Star was made possible by a grant from the Meet The Composer/Reader's Digest Commissioning Program, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund.

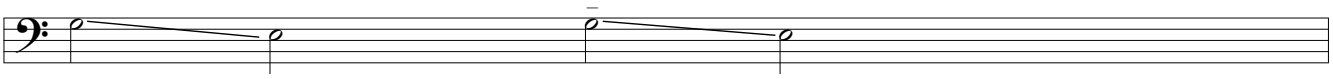
Both instruments

Trills and tremolos are measured 32nd notes until measure 259.
From m. 259 to the end, they are unmeasured, fast as possible.

Bring out all glissandi.

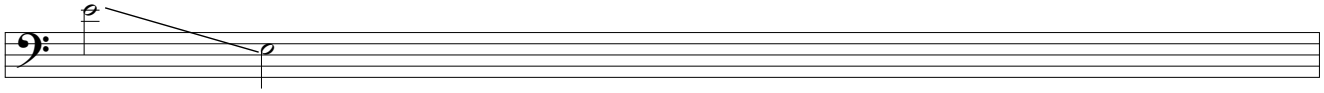
Cello

NON VIBRATO, entire piece



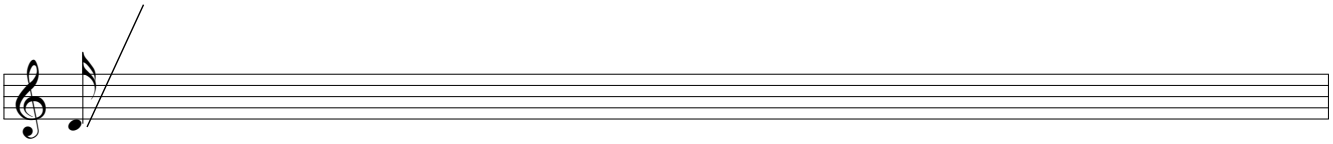
Begin glissando immediately

Hold G briefly,
then begin glissando



Do not cross strings on a glissando.
For example, this glissando is to be played entirely on the D string.

Marimba



If endpoint of glissando is not marked,
gliss approximately 2 octaves or more, ad lib.

A high quality stereo sound reinforcement system is required, with both instruments close-miked. The object is clarity of sound (not a high volume level).

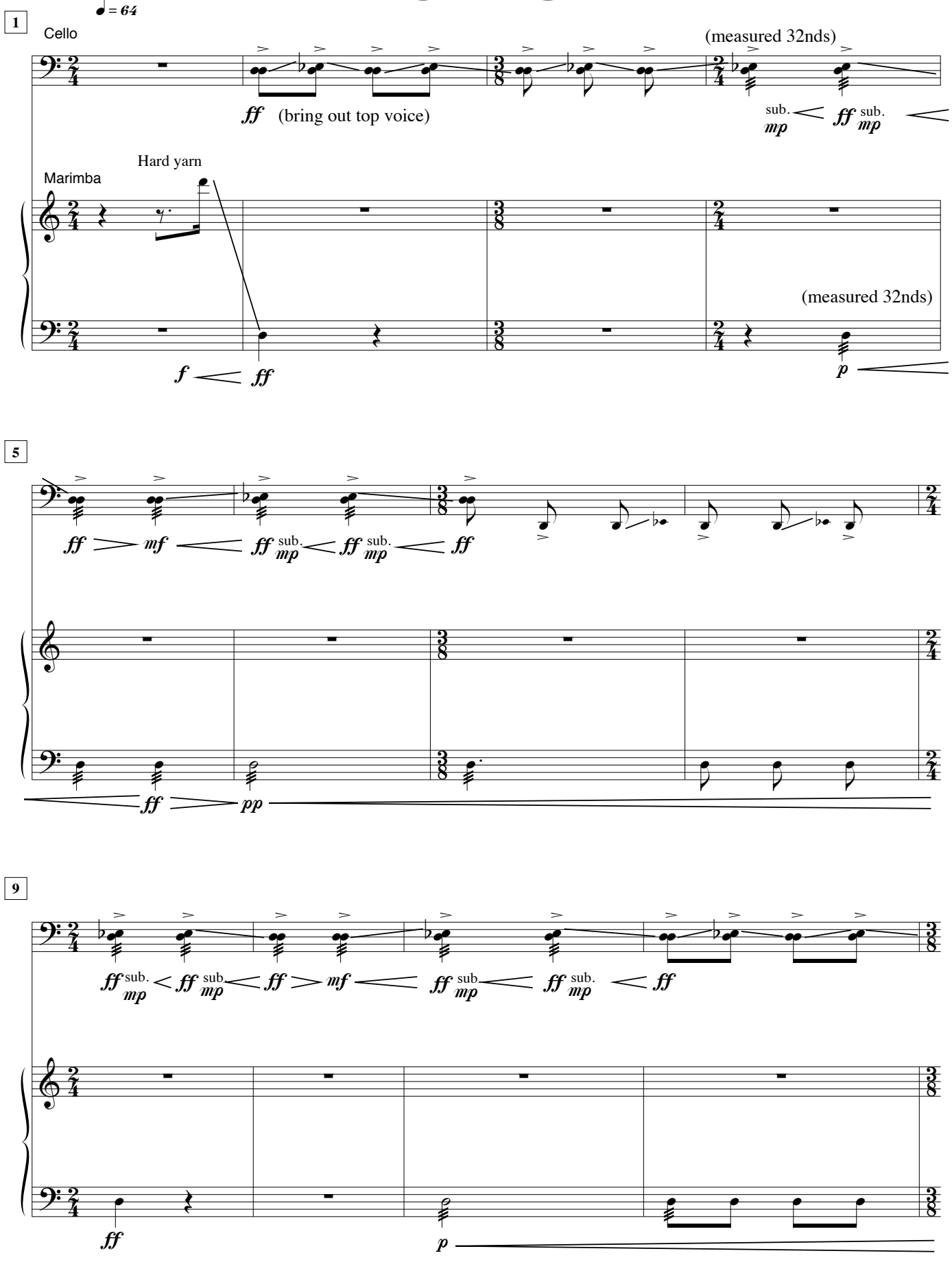
Demon Star

The demon star is Algol in the constellation Perseus. Algol (literally "the demon's head") was observed for over a century to periodically get bright, then suddenly dim, but no one knew why. It wasn't until 1782 that the astronomer John Goodricke offered the explanation that Algol is really a pair of stars orbiting around a common center. Approximately every 69 hours the dimmer star passes in front of the brighter star, partially blocking its light, to someone watching on earth. About 100 years later Goodricke's explanation was confirmed by more sophisticated scientific observation. He had made the first identification of an "eclipsing binary" star. Astronomers now know of over 50 eclipsing binaries. This is the imagery that inspired my piece *Demon Star*.

This work sometimes brings one or the other of the instruments to the foreground, eclipsing the other, as it were, contrasting their sounds. At other times it blends and intertwines the instruments to form new timbres. In places I've asked the two players to make the cello sound more like a marimba and the marimba more like a cello--no easy task! I've asked them to be extremely sensitive to attacks of notes, to the sound envelopes, to the way in which sounds are accented, articulated or sustained, to the way dynamics are played, and so on. Throughout the piece, dynamic patterns, pitch slides in the cello, and harmonic and rhythmic materials are constantly being developed. As the work progresses, it changes from highly energetic, rhythmic, dynamic music, to a gentler, lyrical ending.

DEMON STAR

Lois V Vierk



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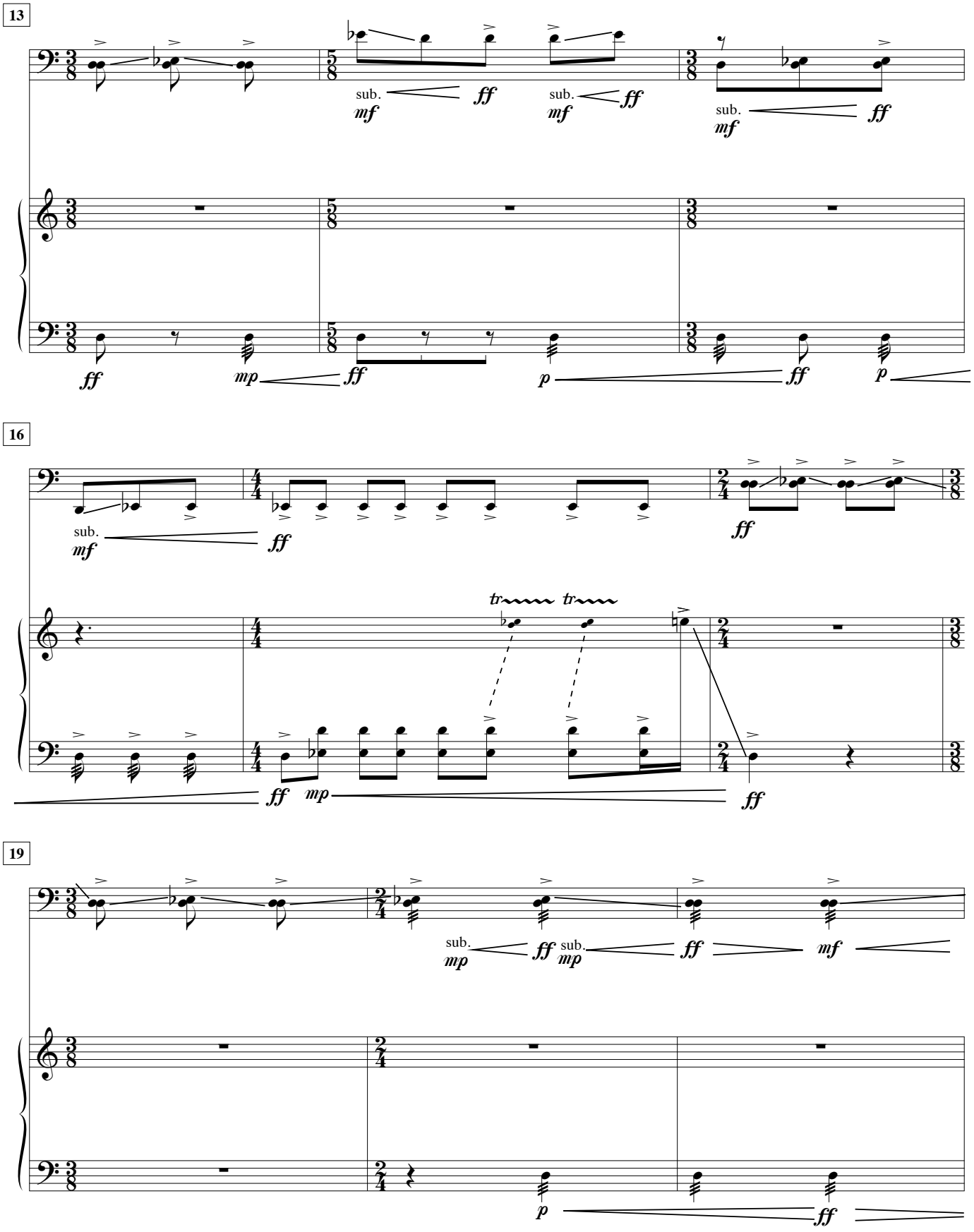
2014July2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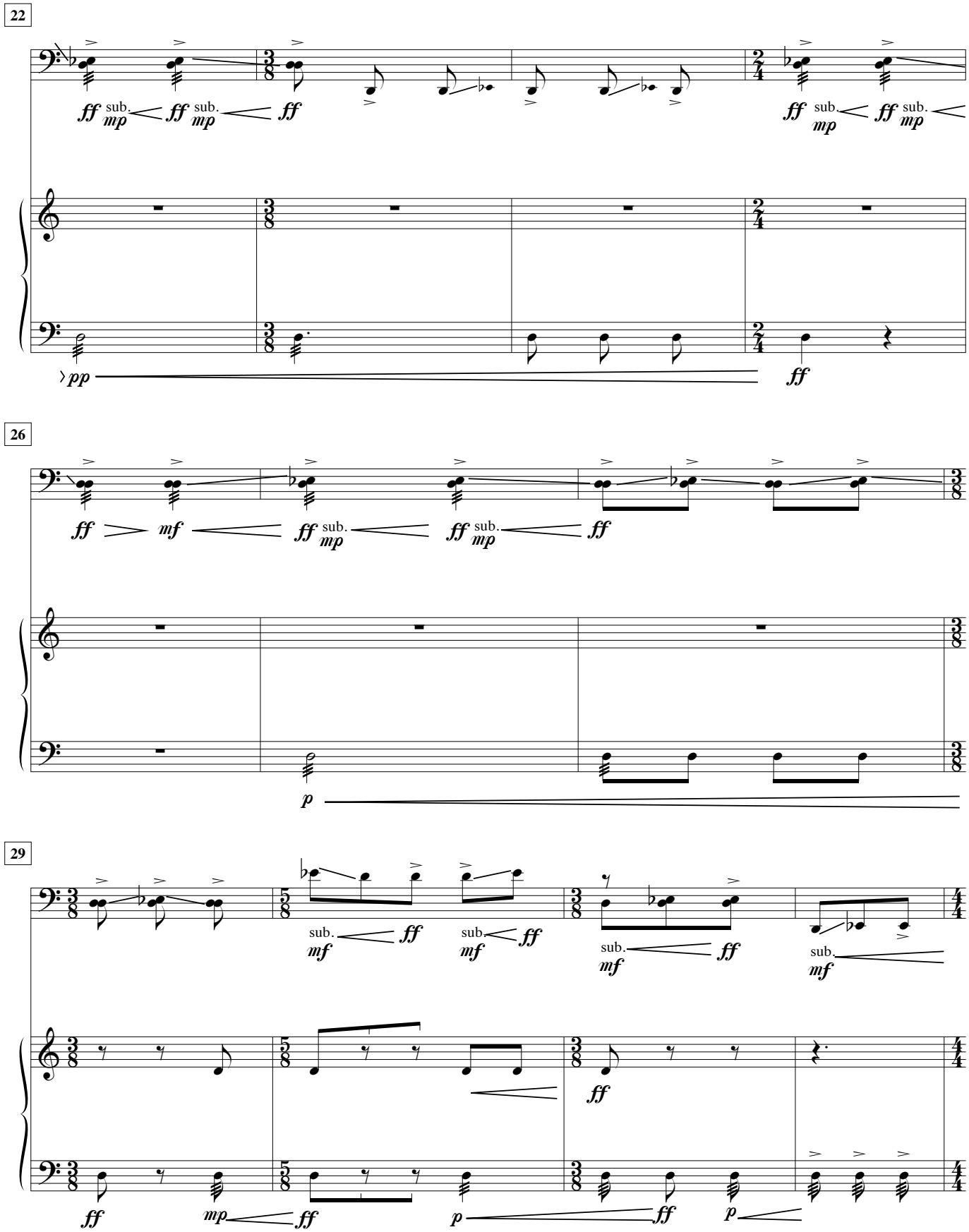
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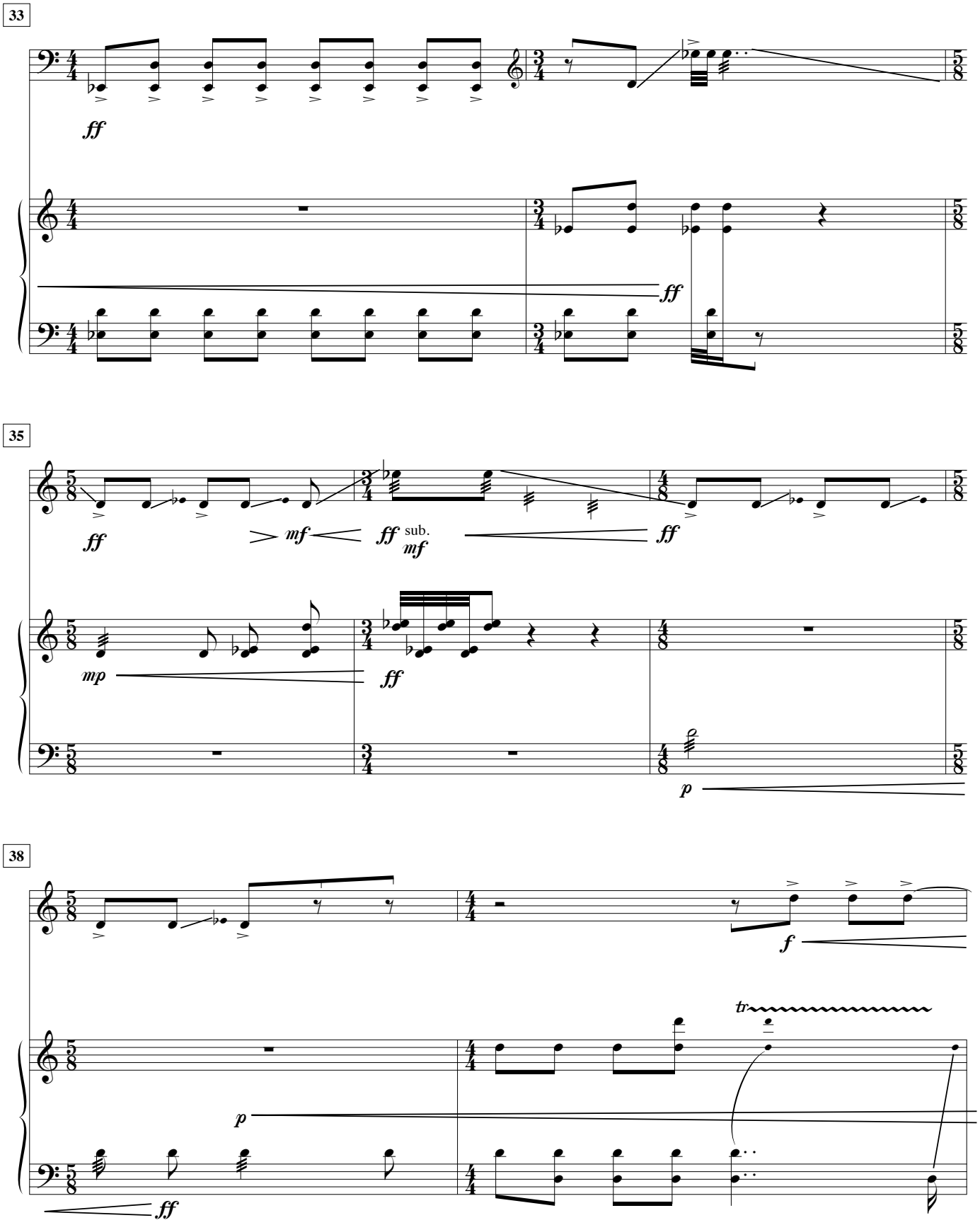
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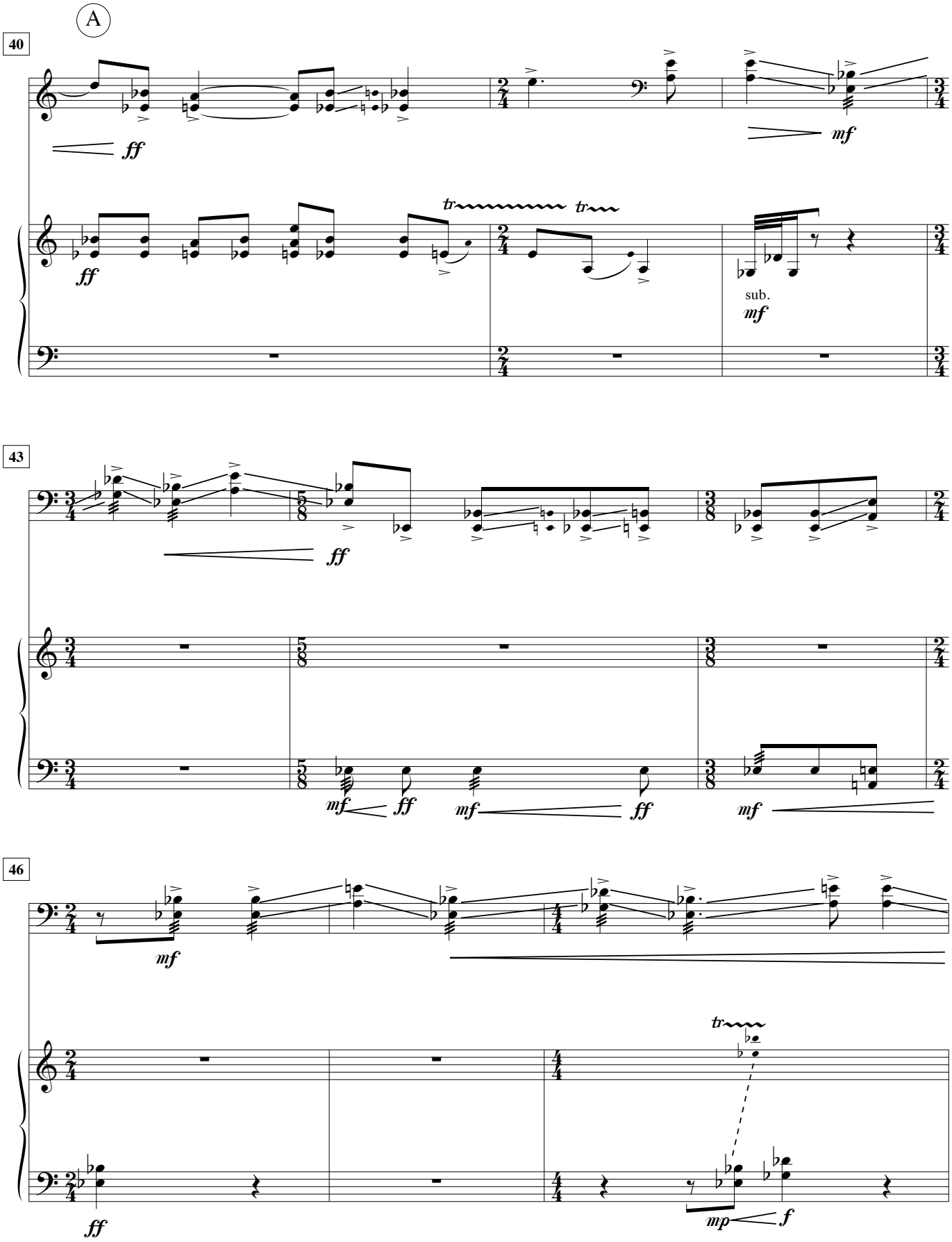
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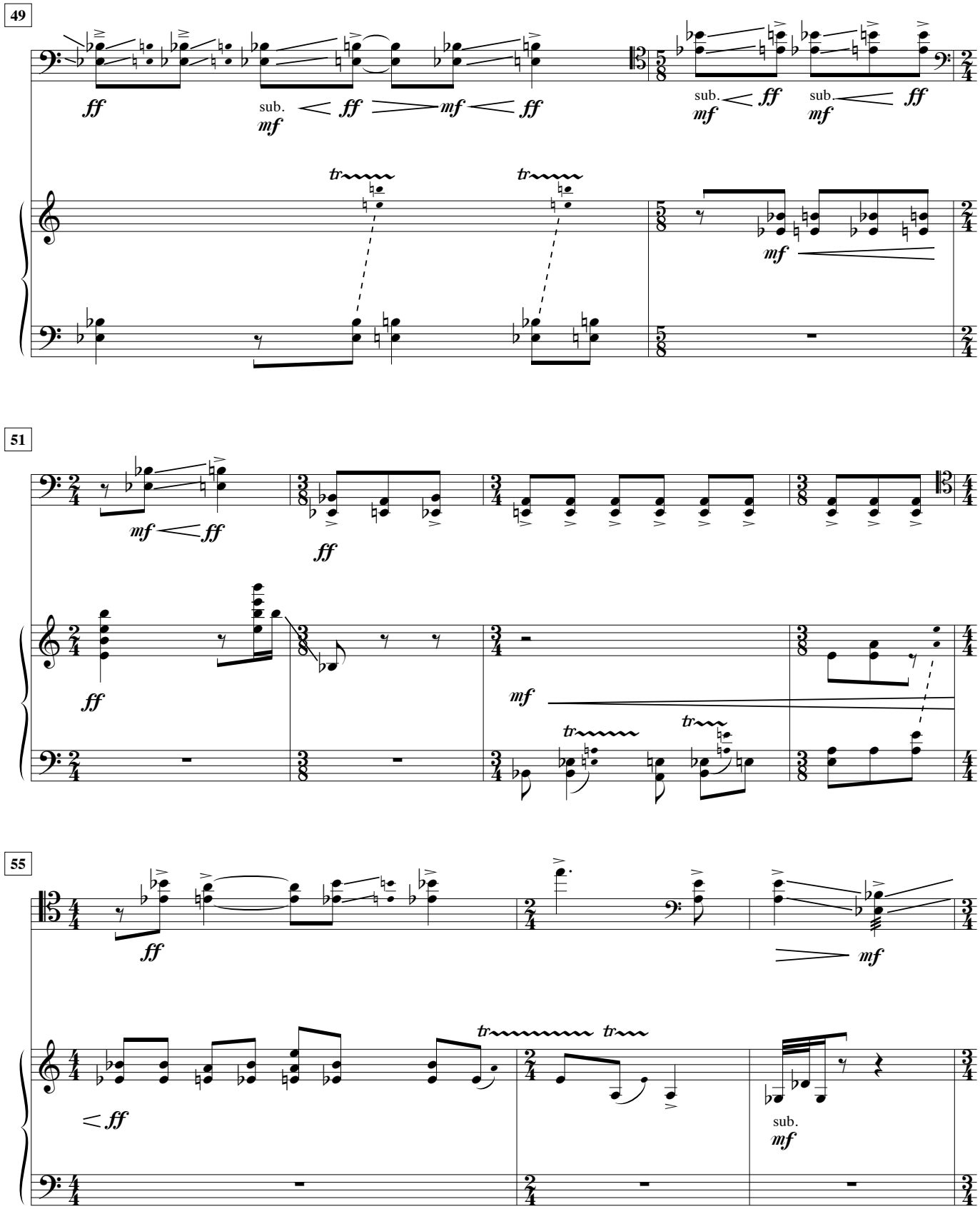
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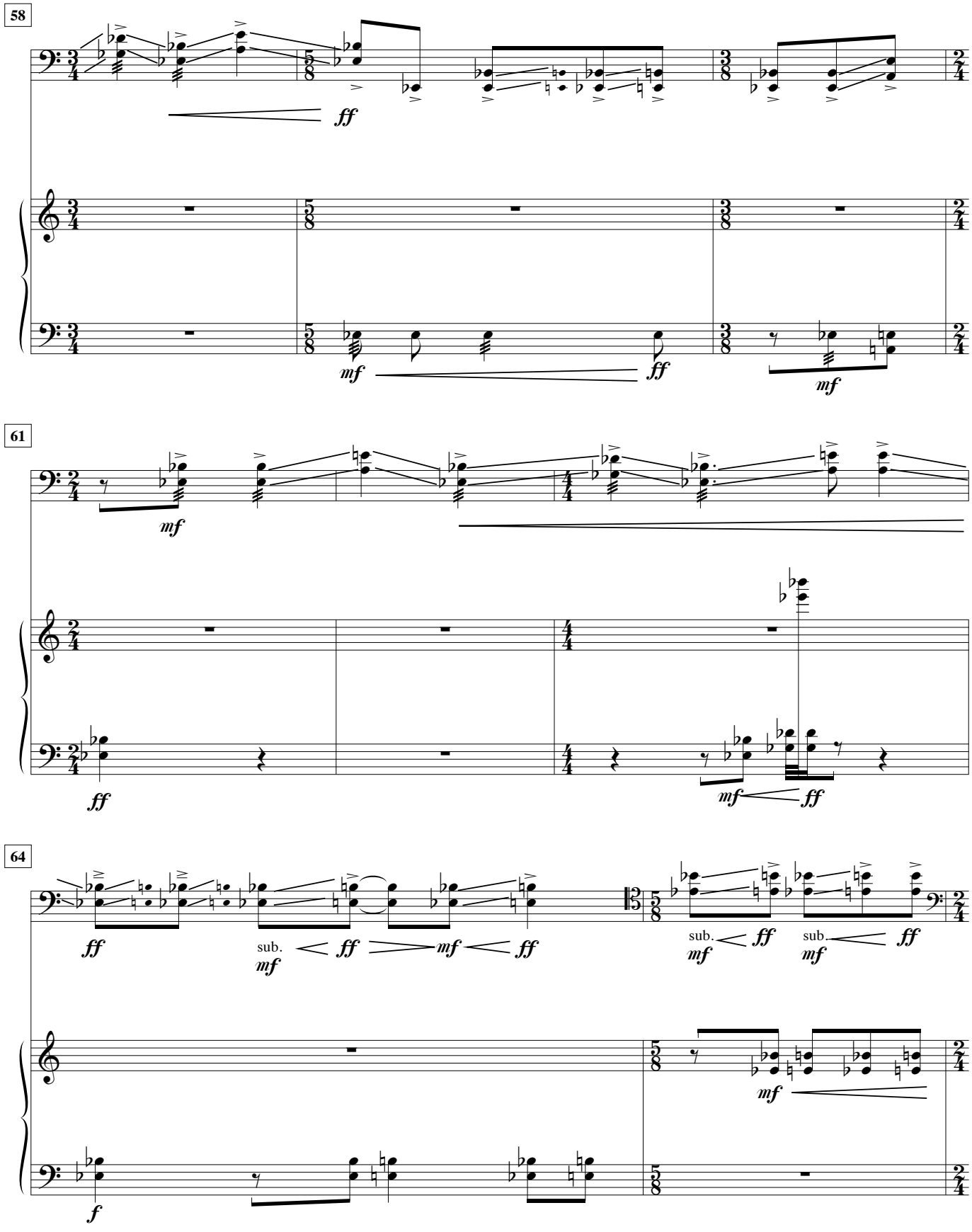
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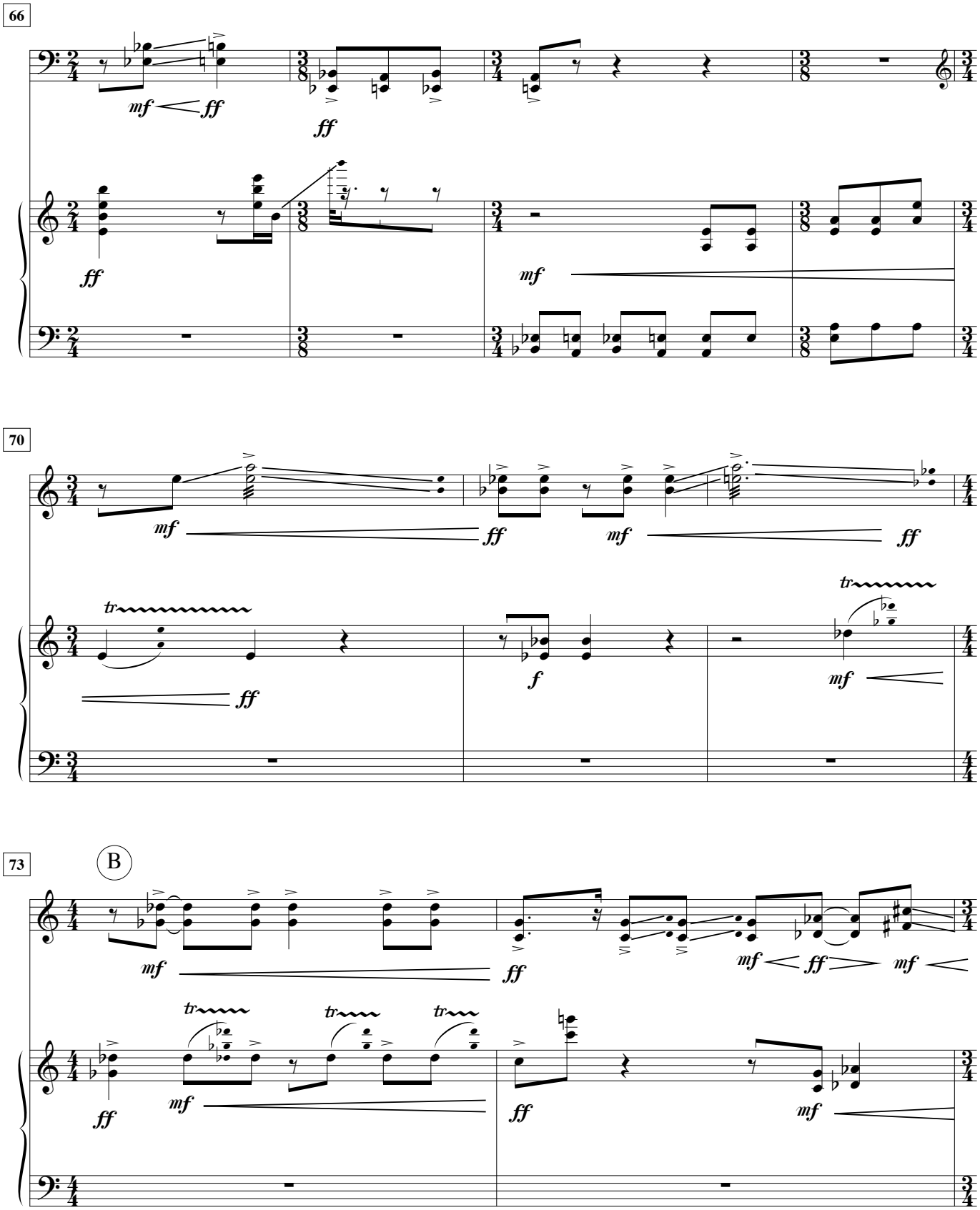
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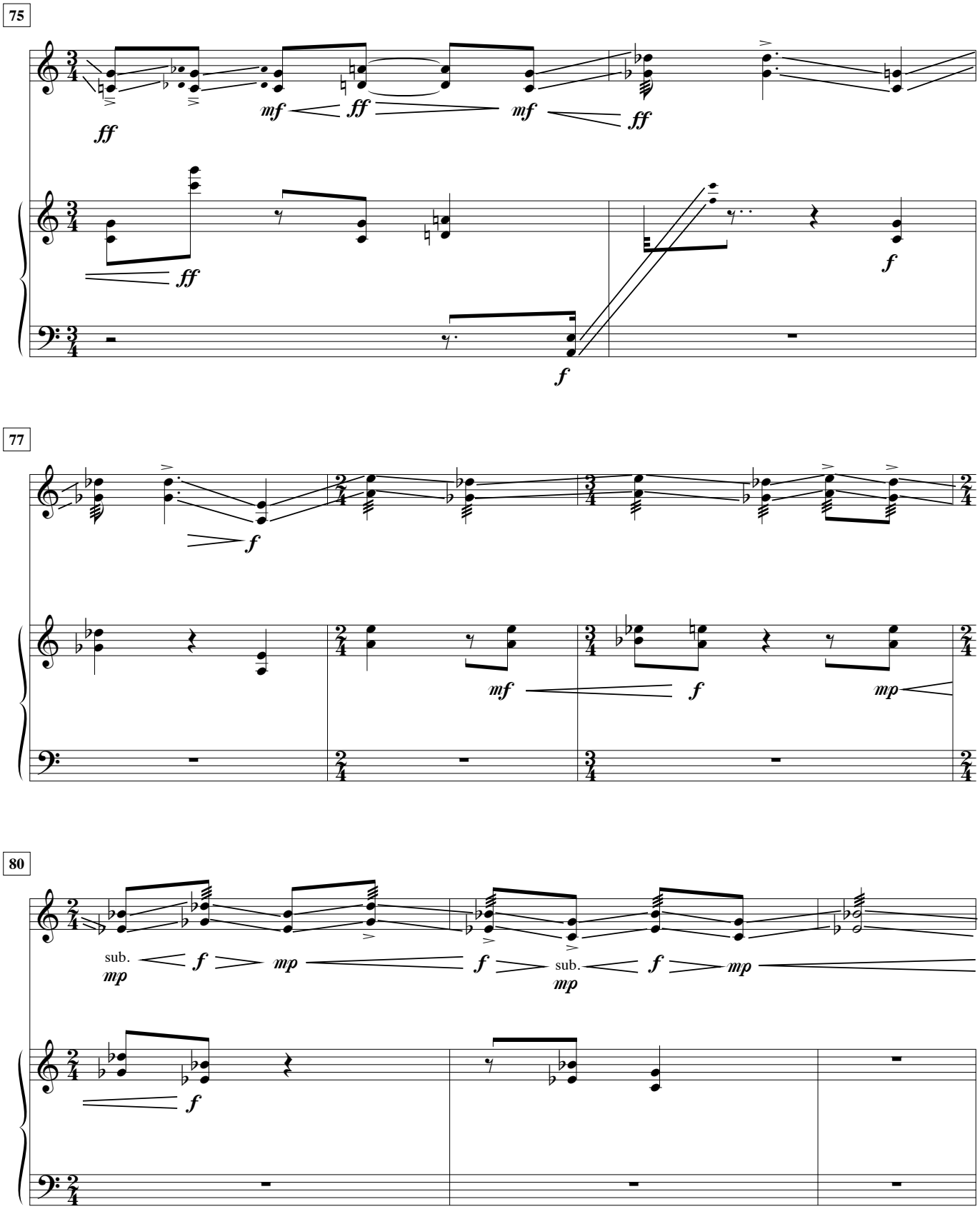
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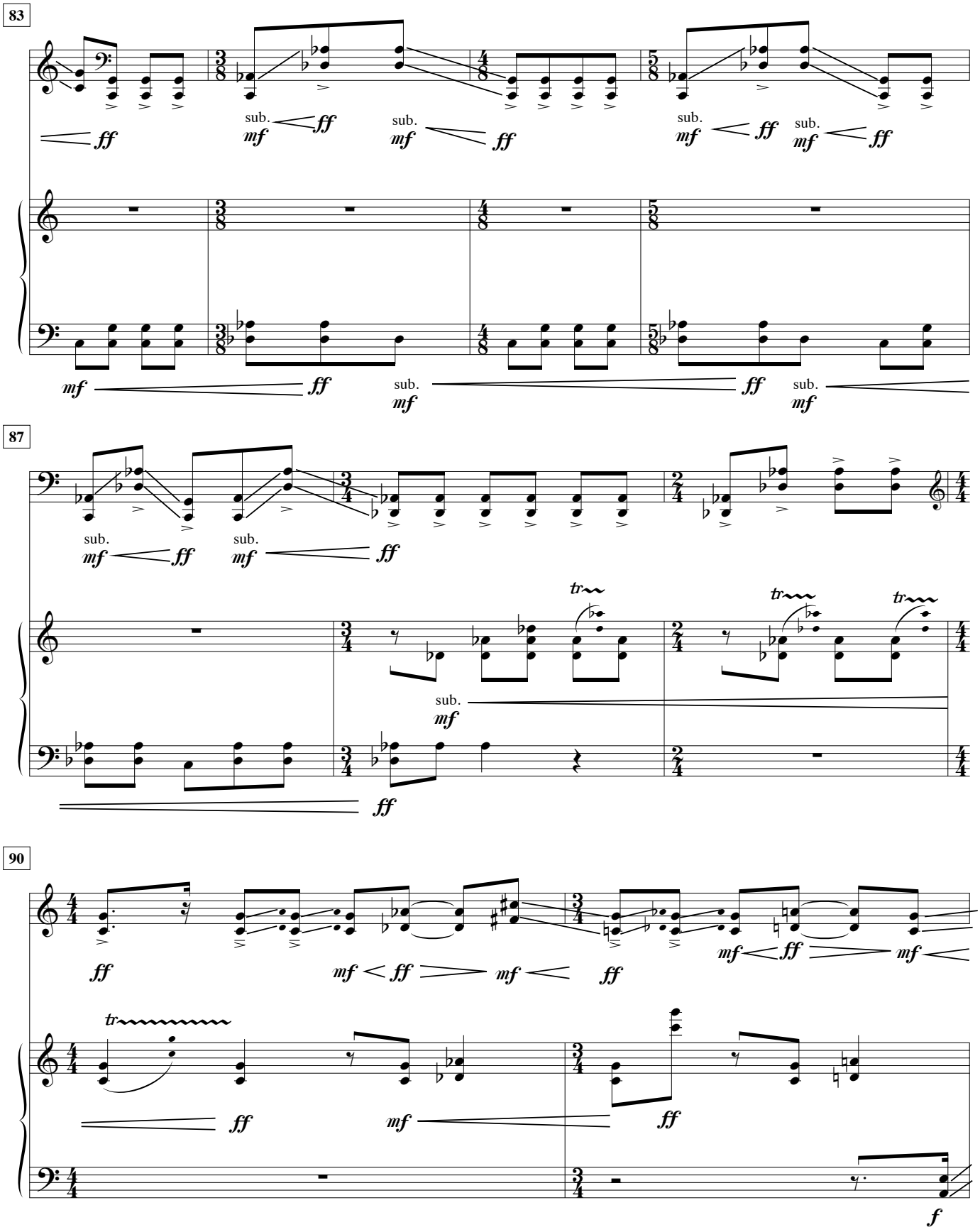
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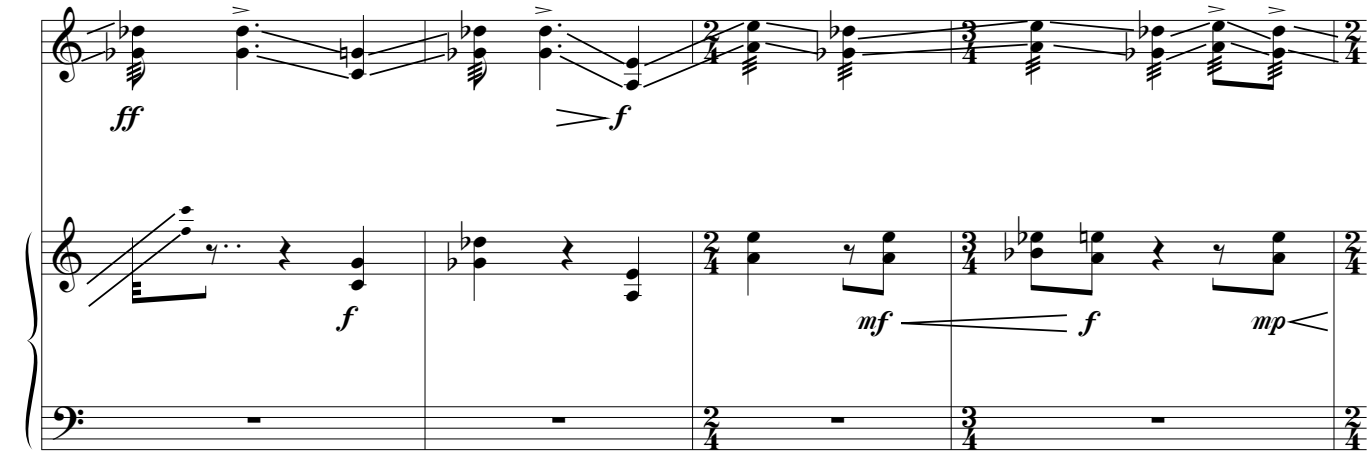
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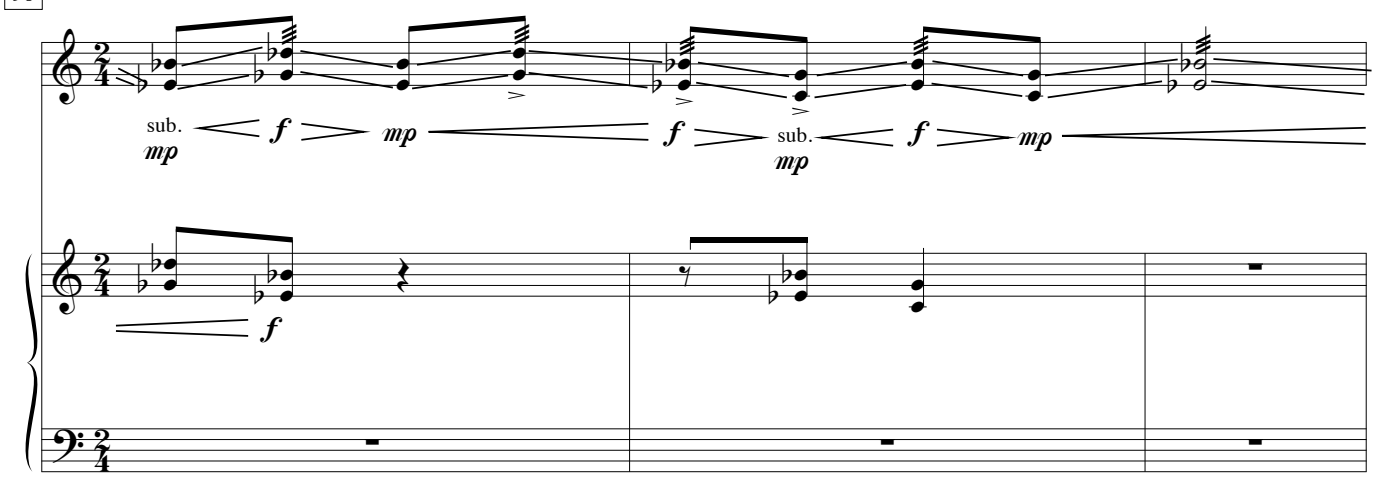
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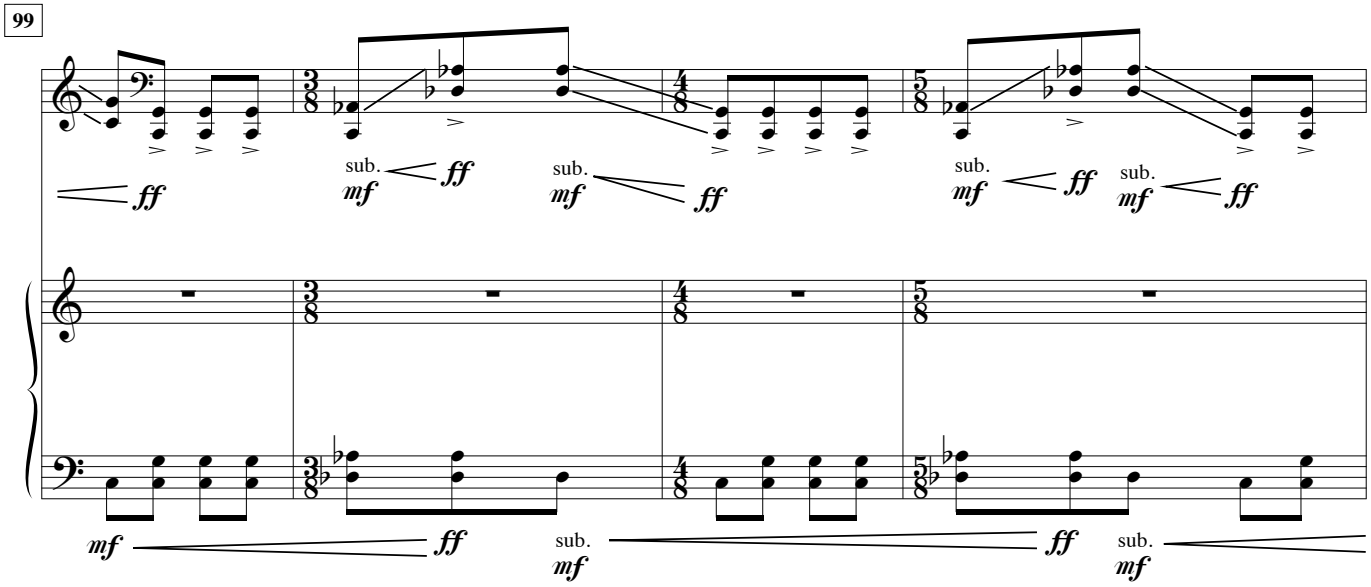
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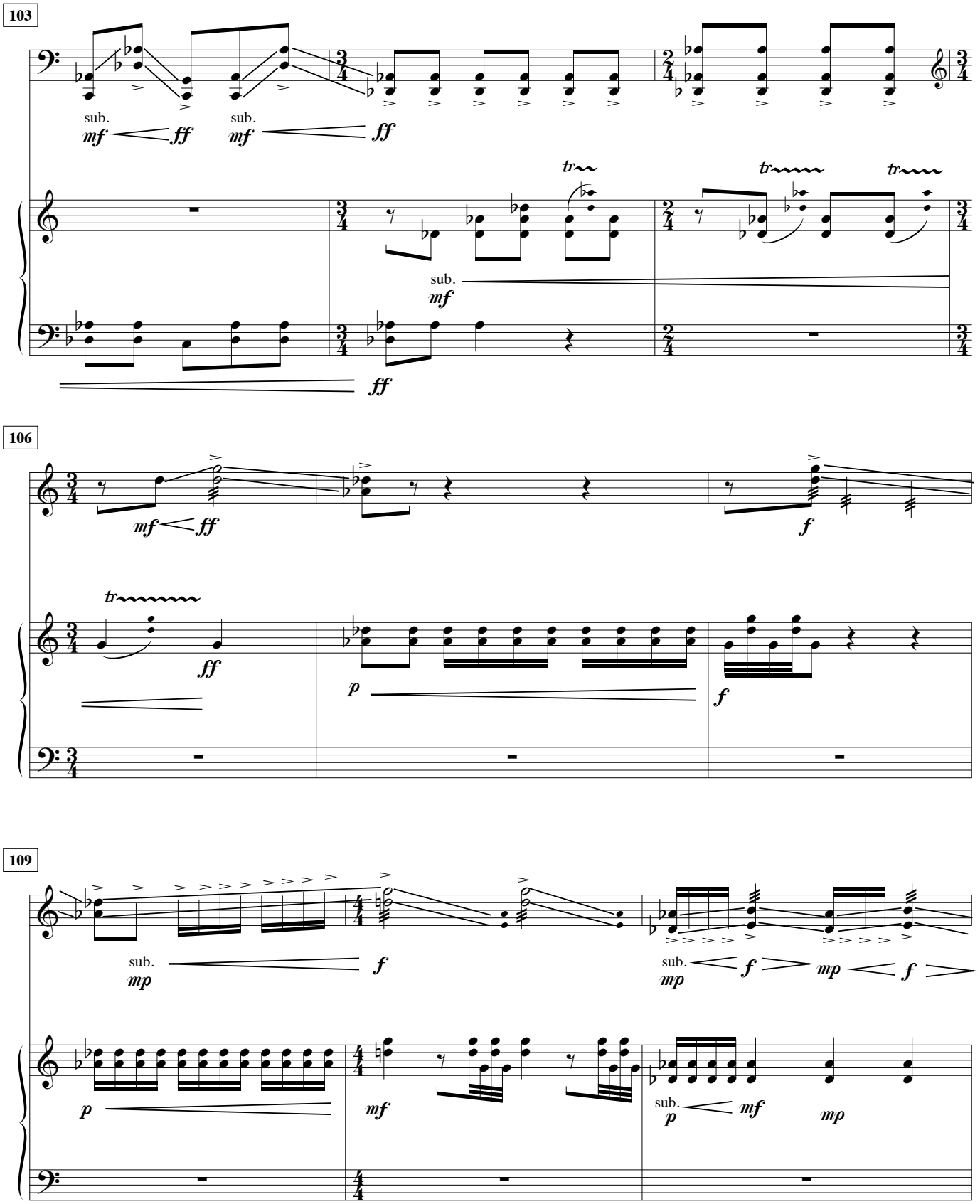
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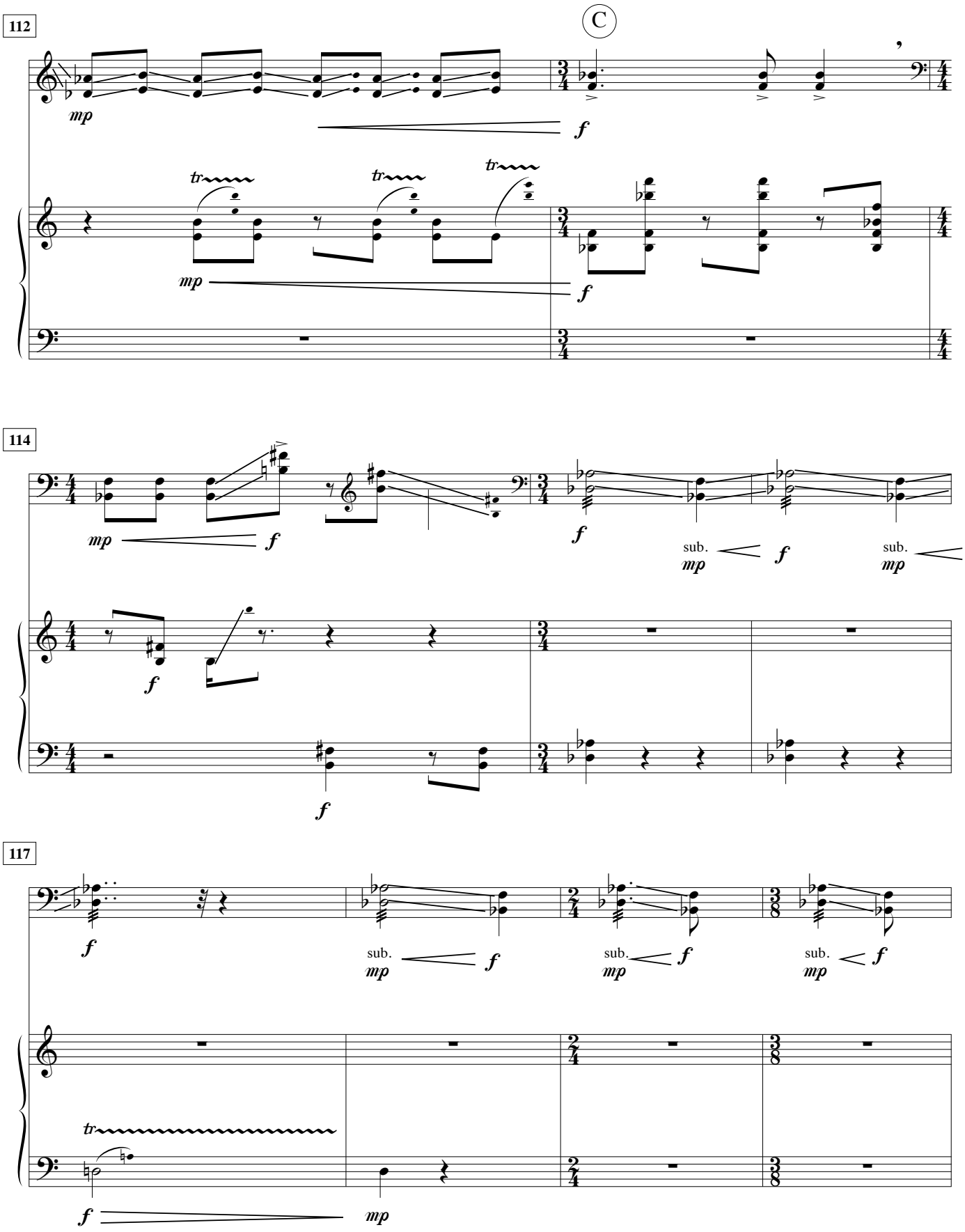
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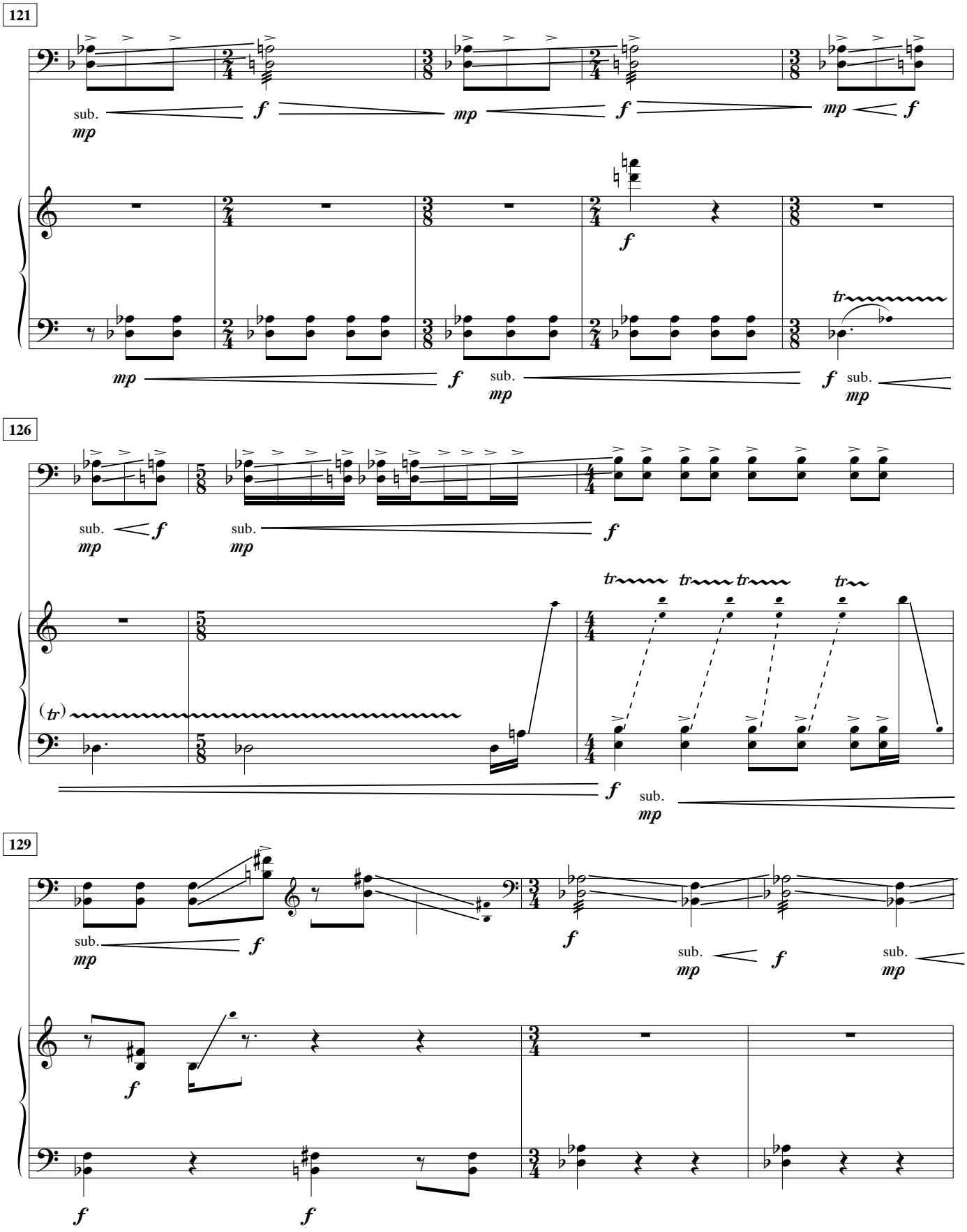
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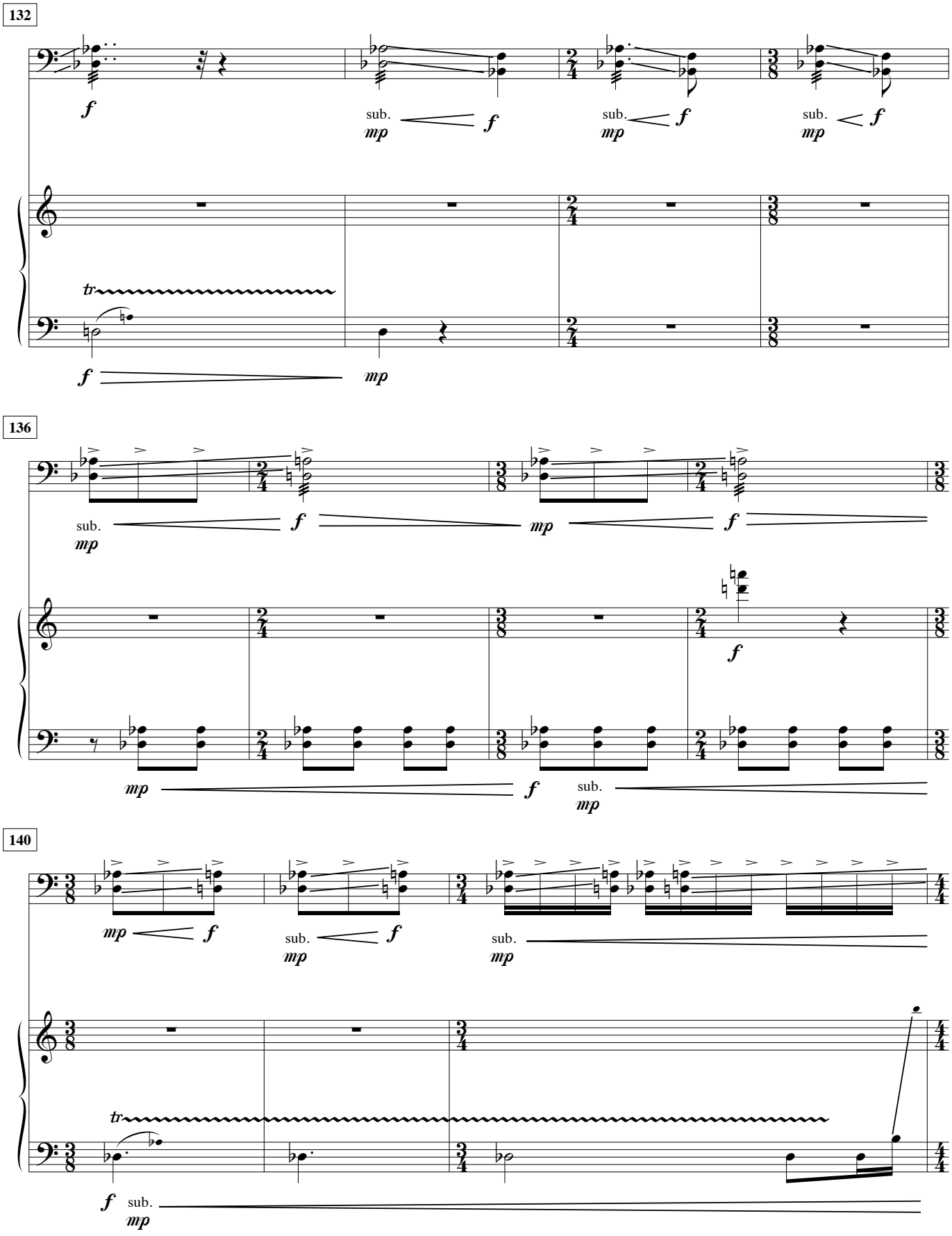
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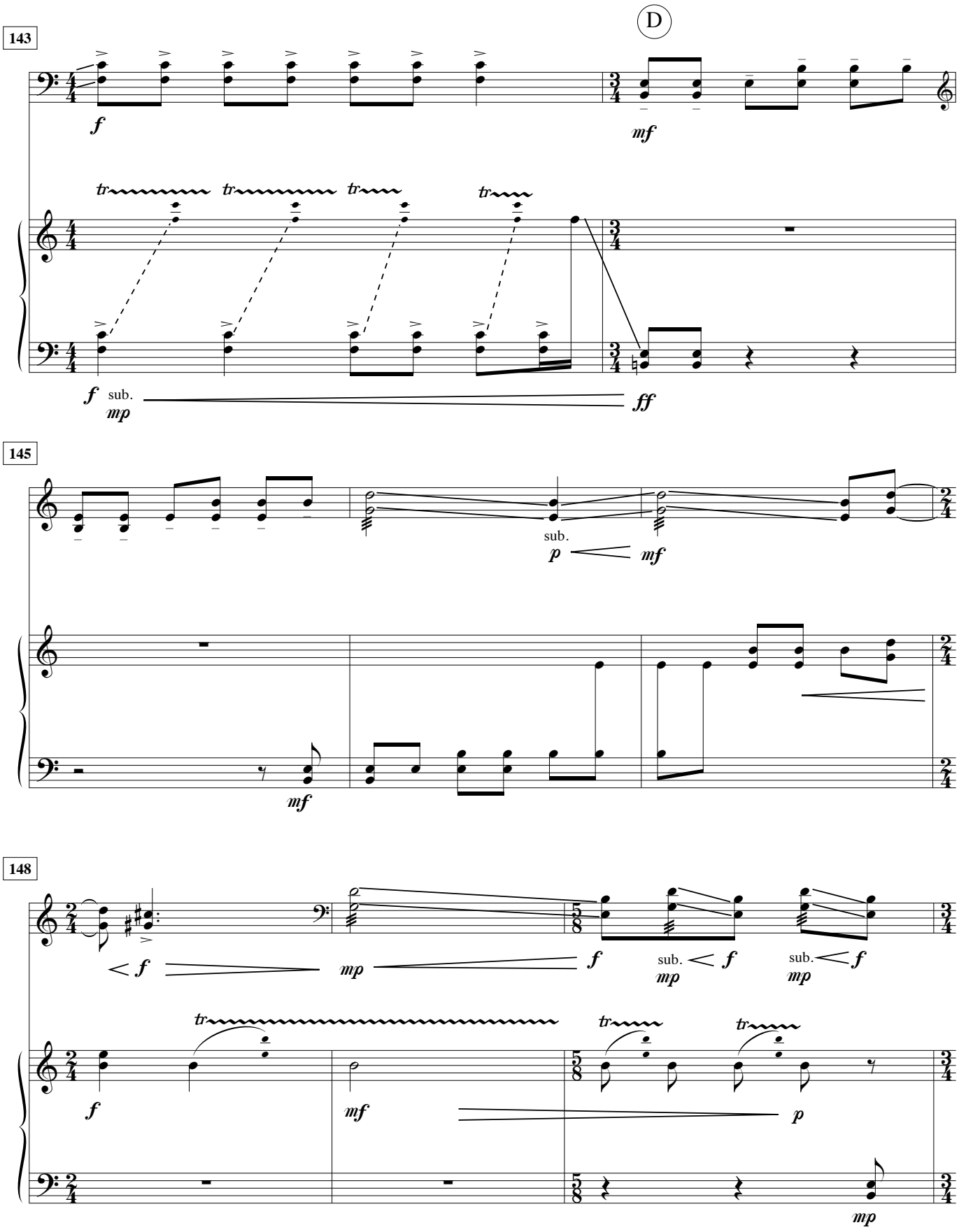
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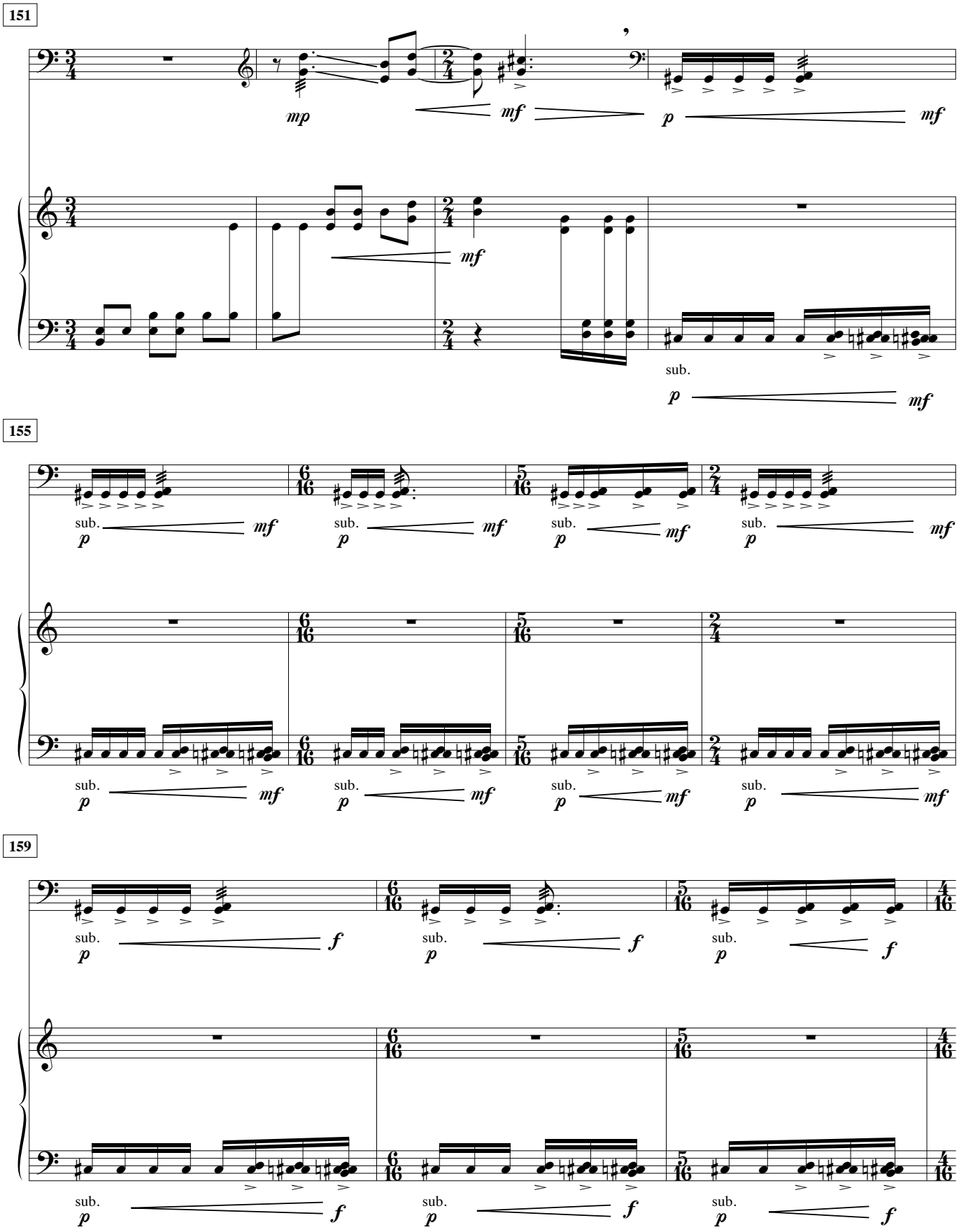
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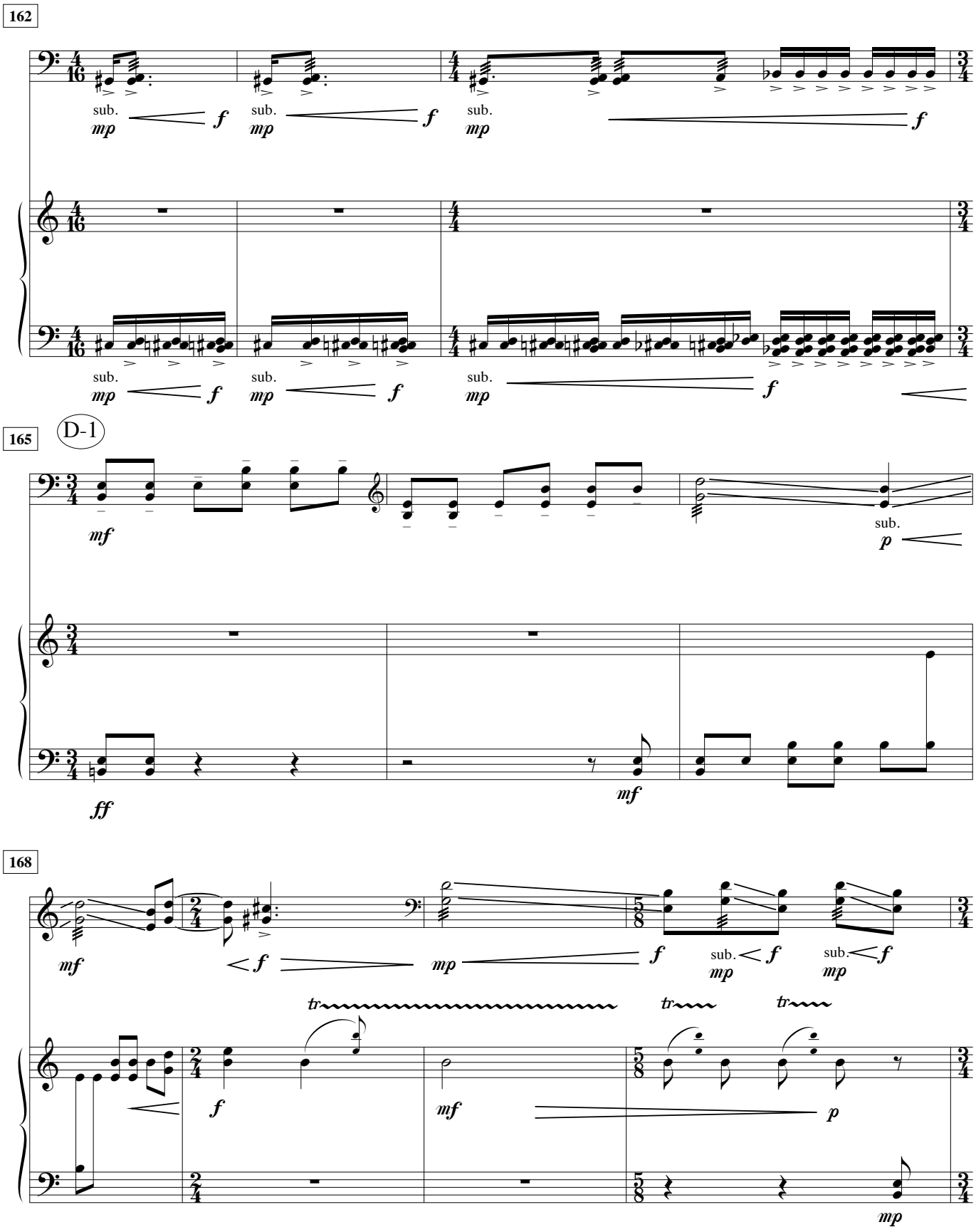
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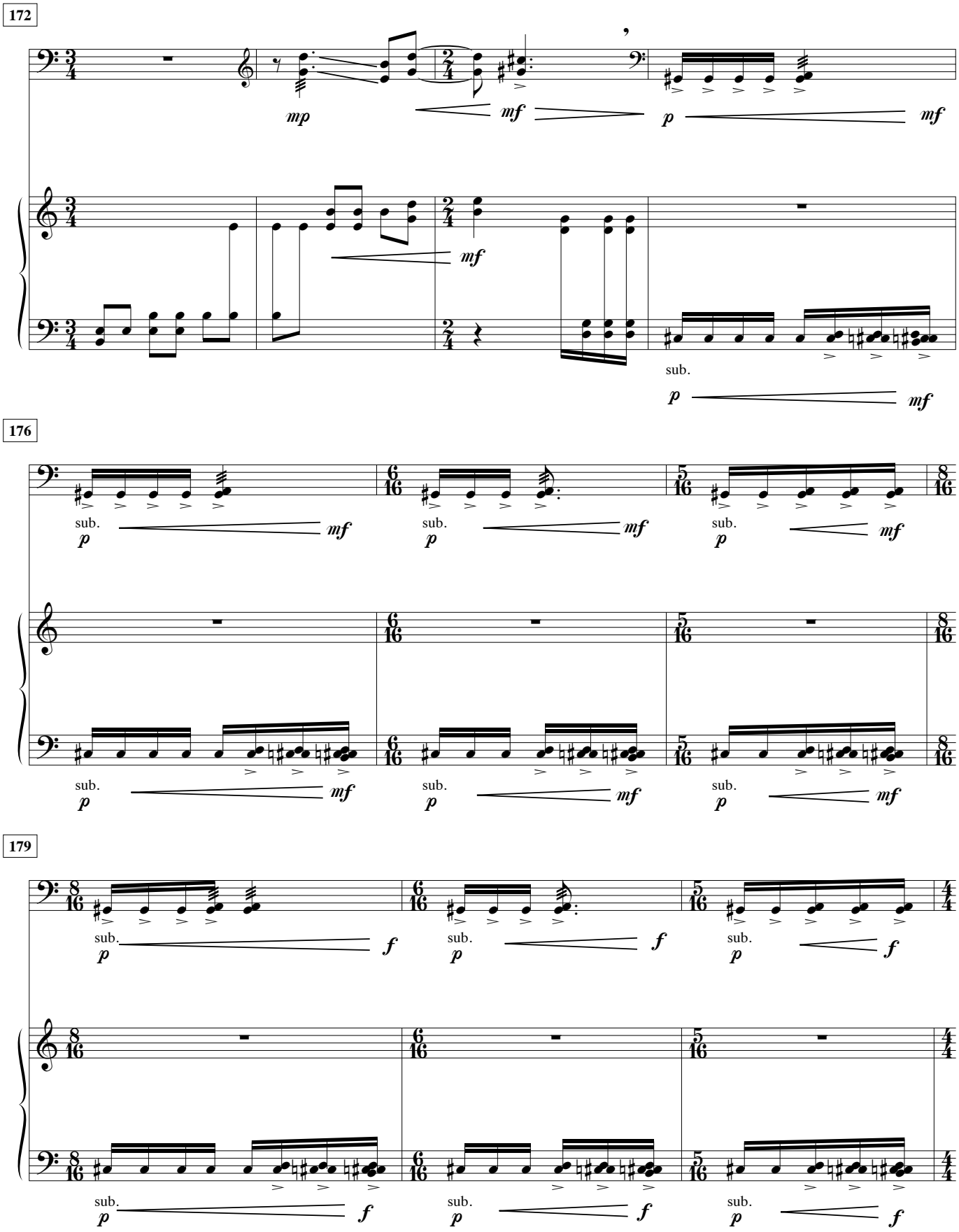
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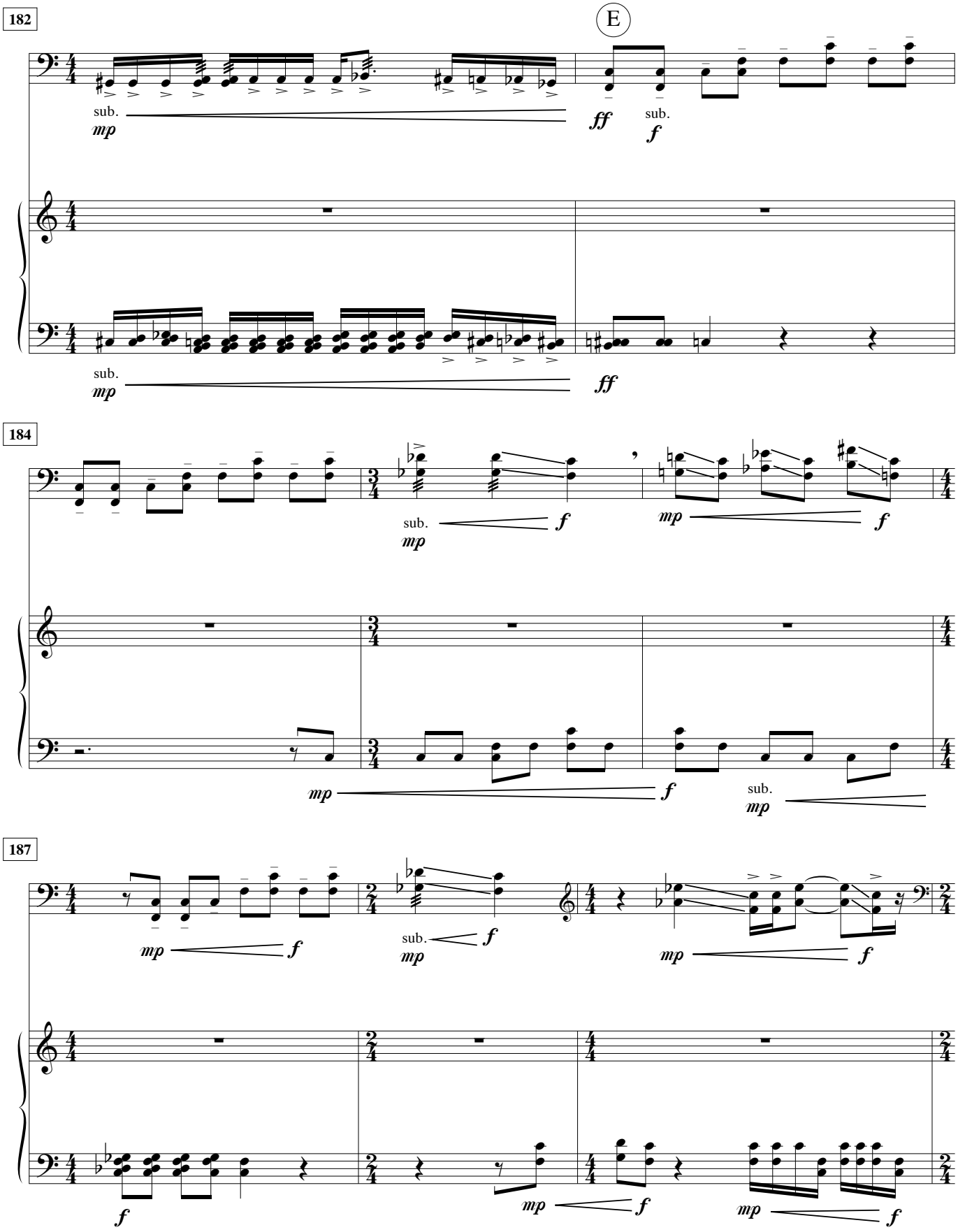
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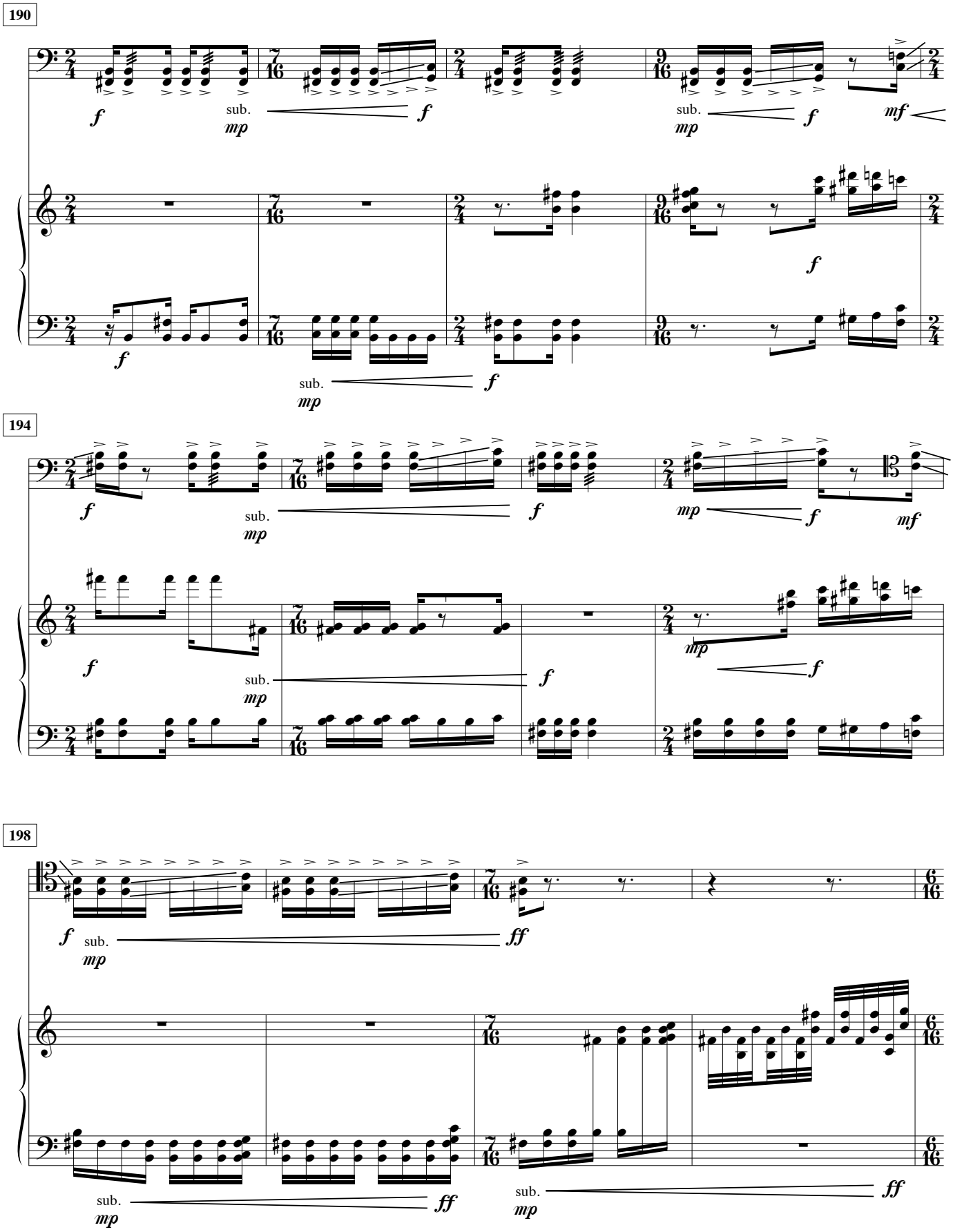
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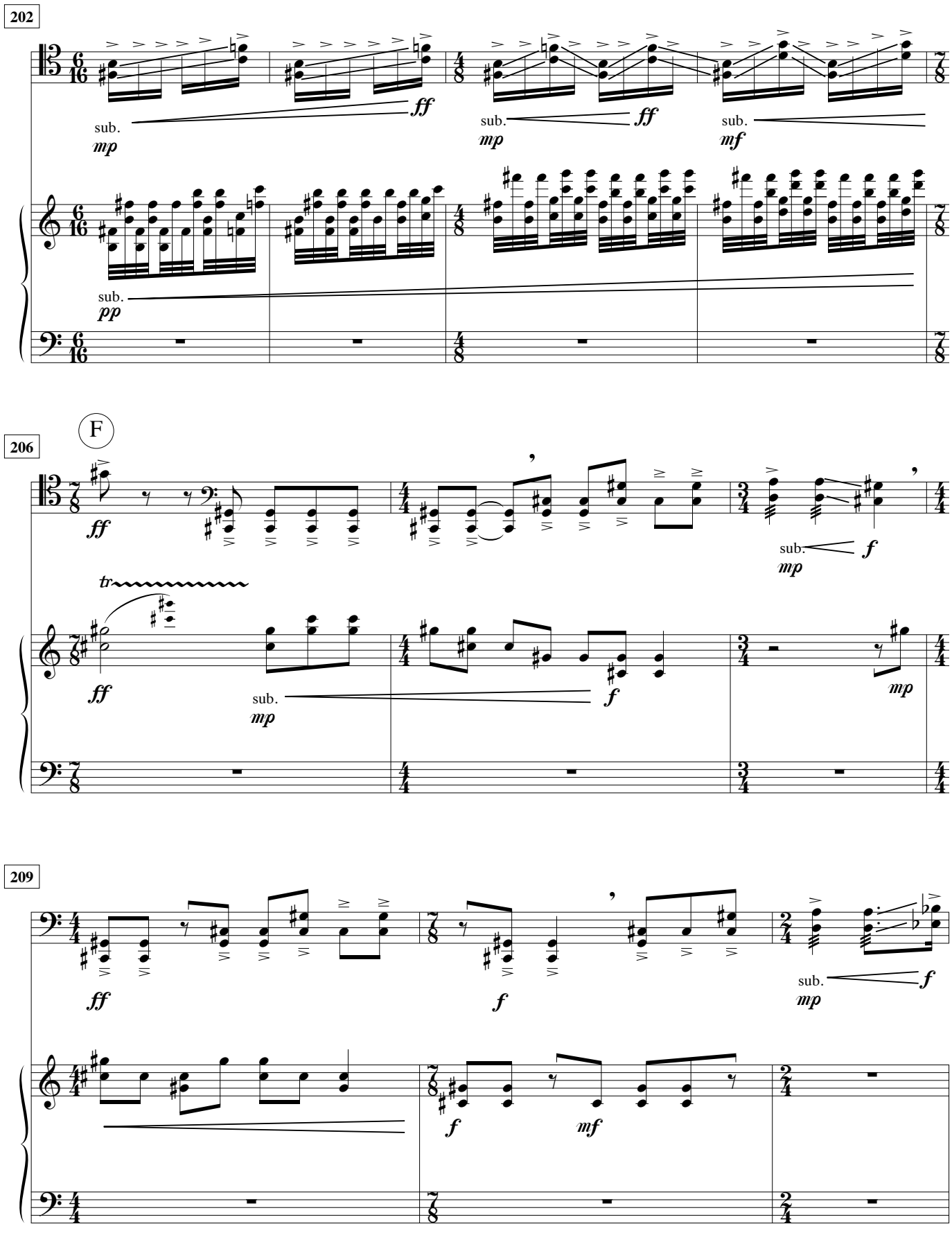
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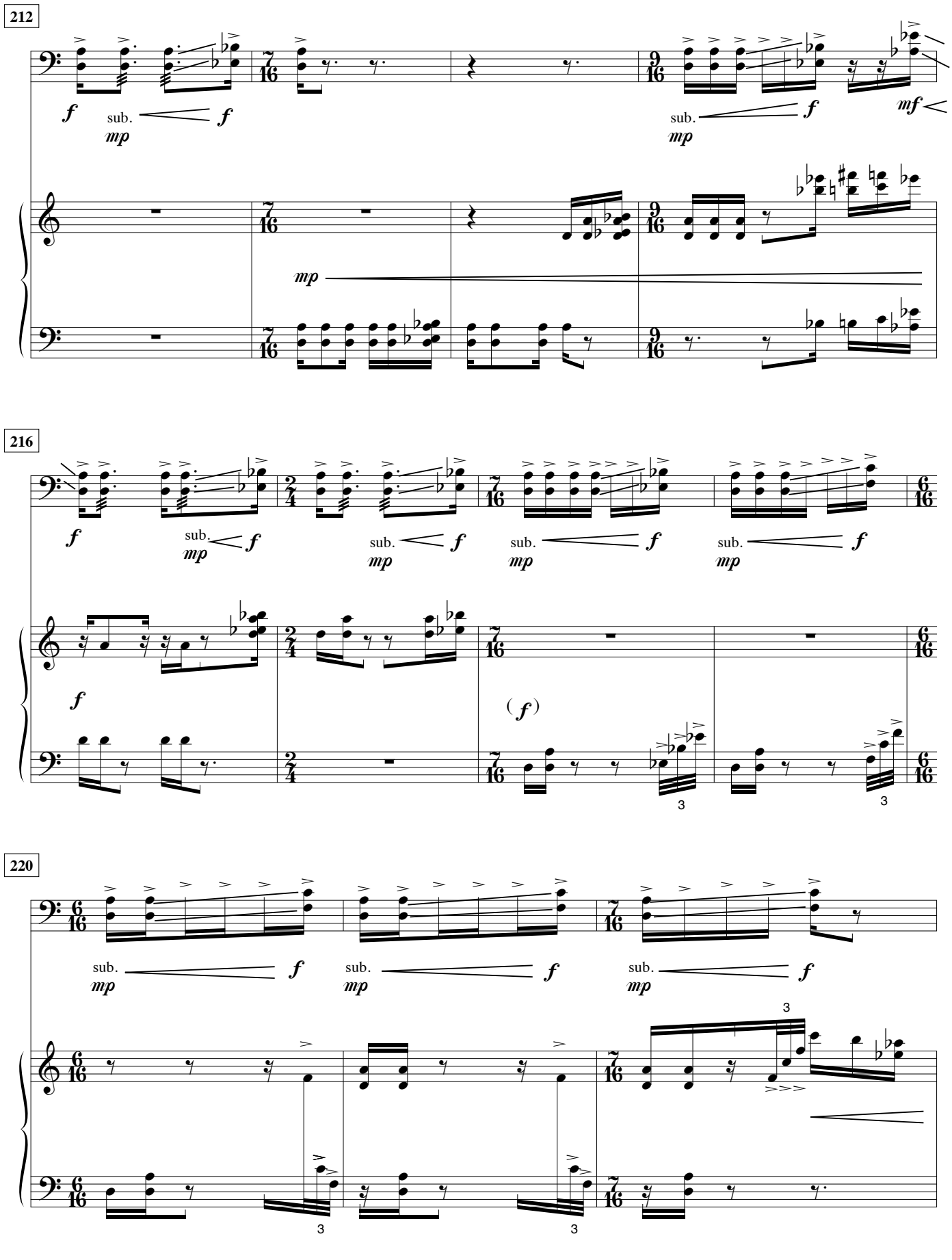
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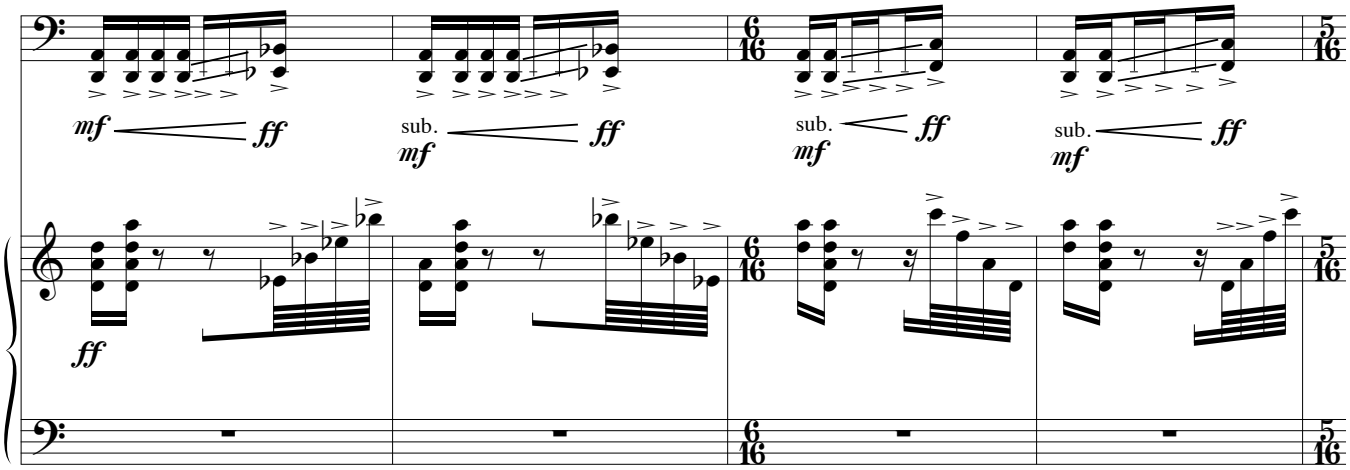
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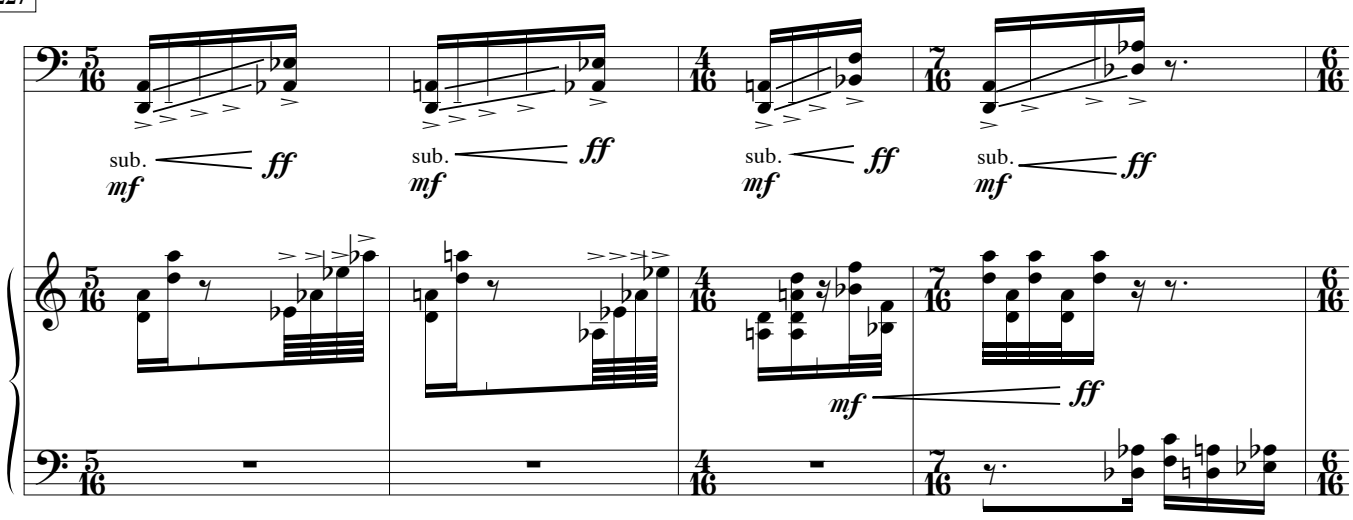
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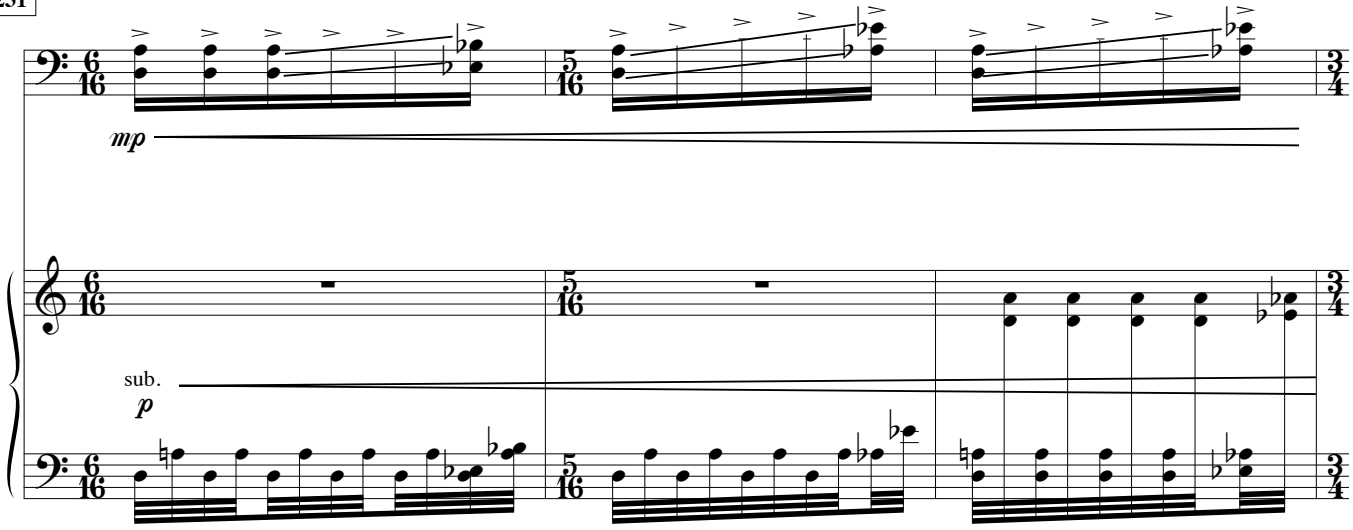
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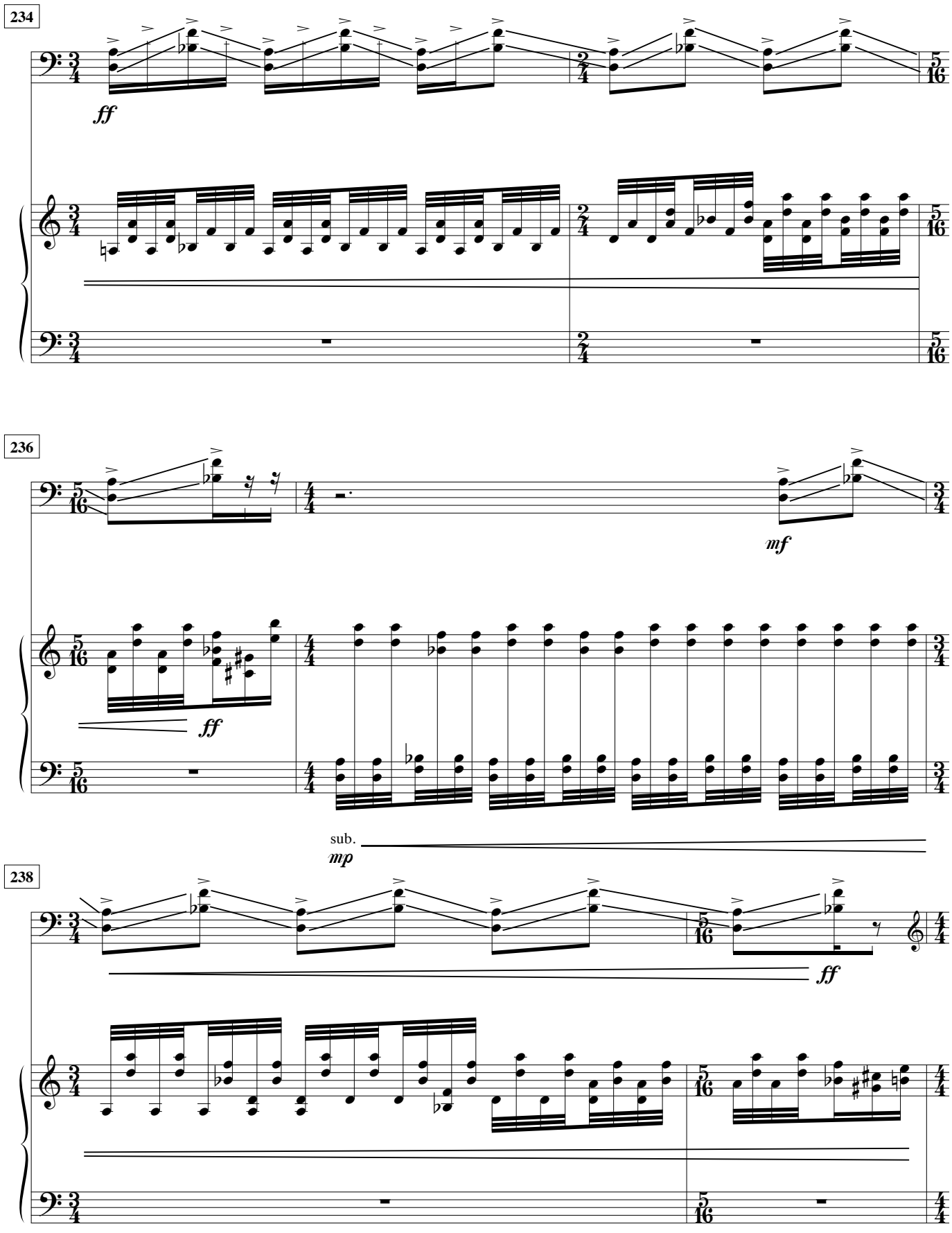
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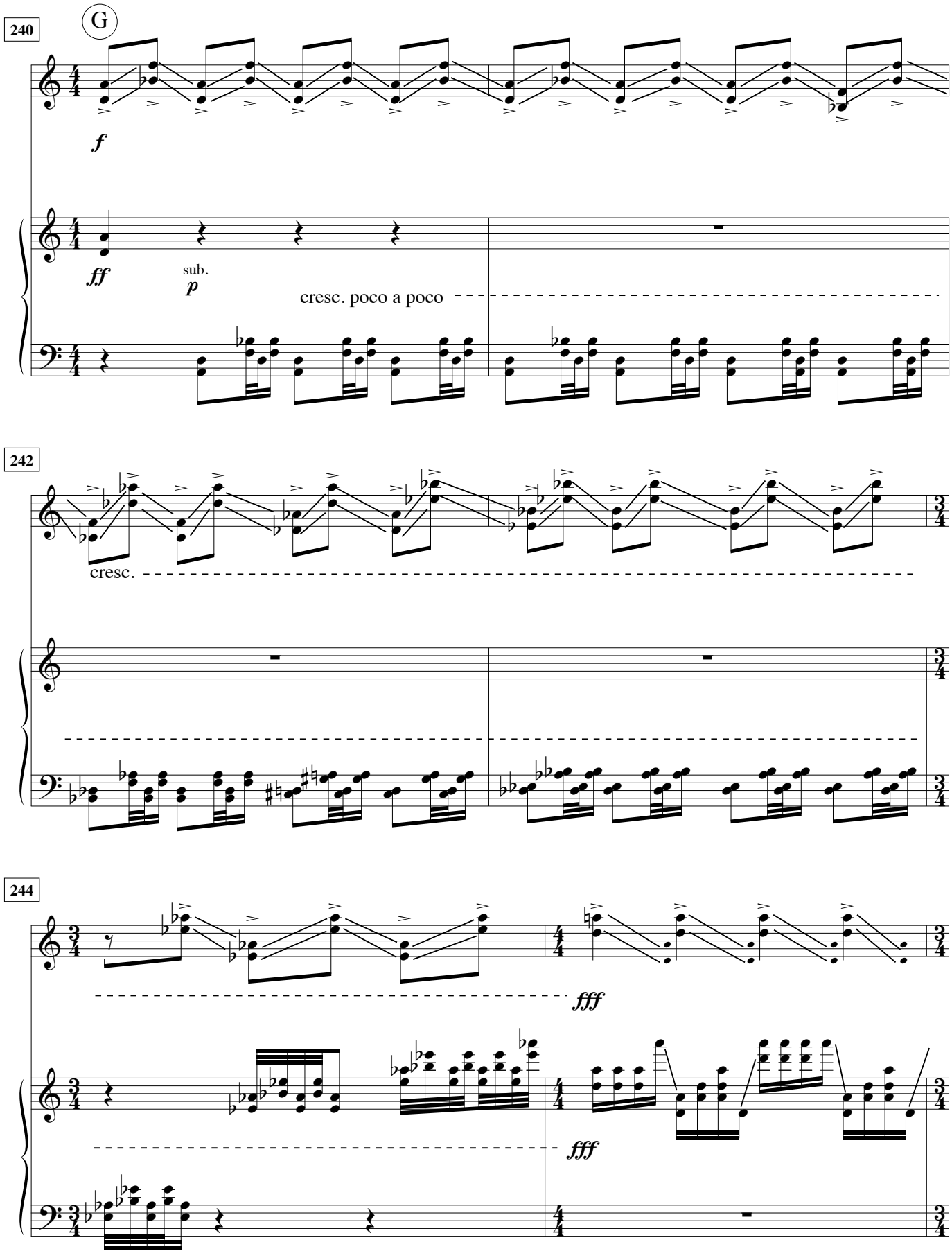
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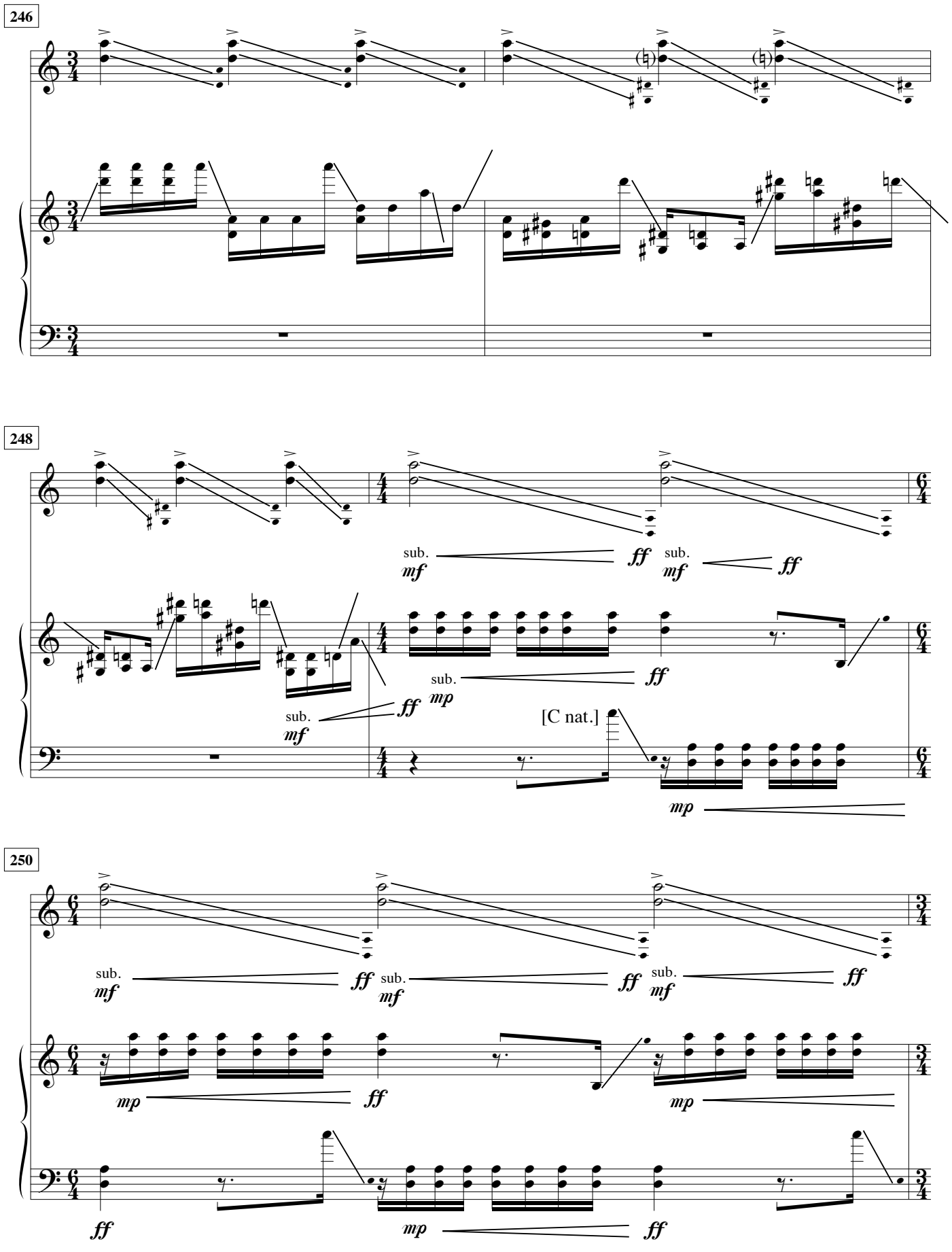
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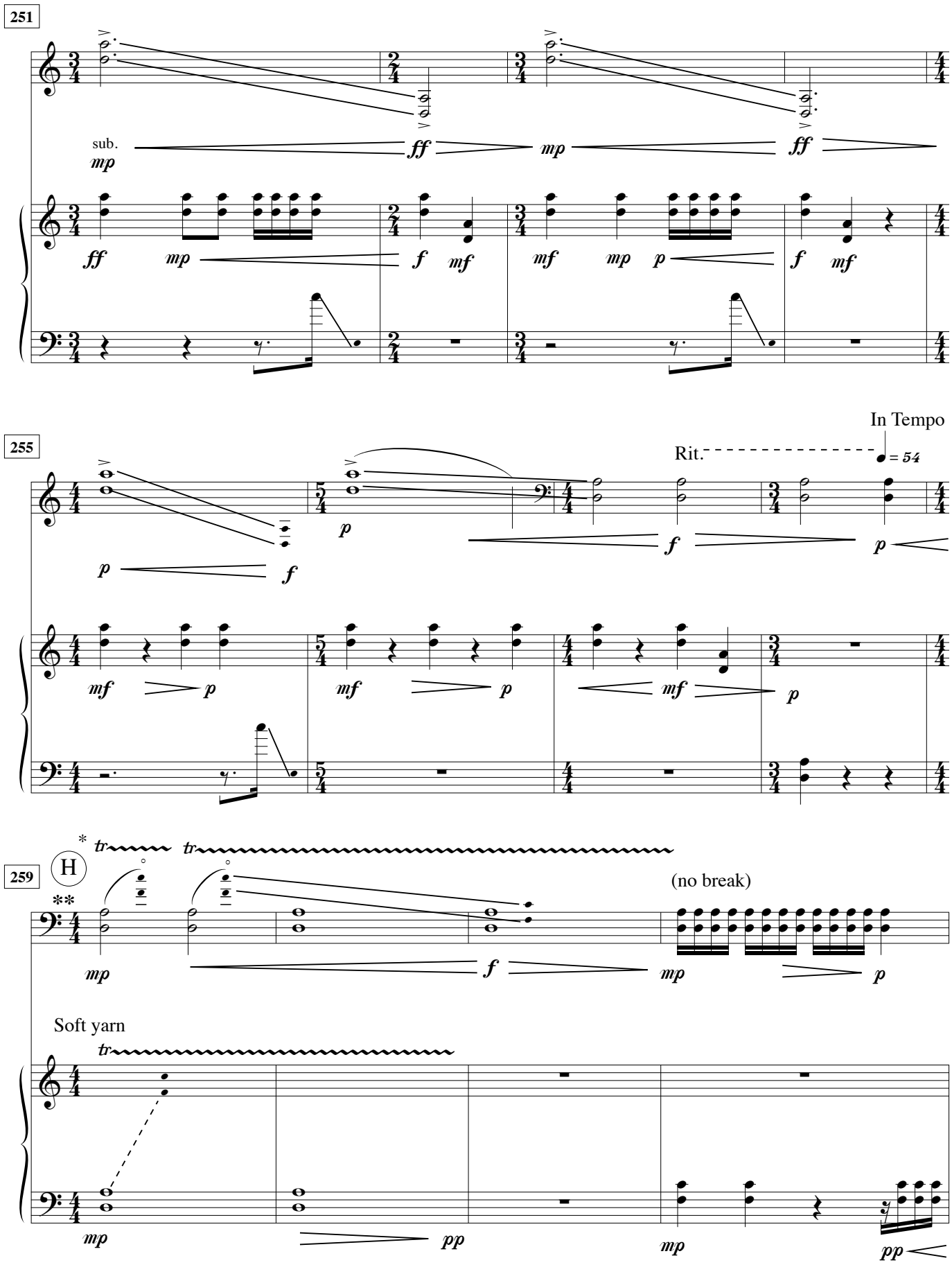
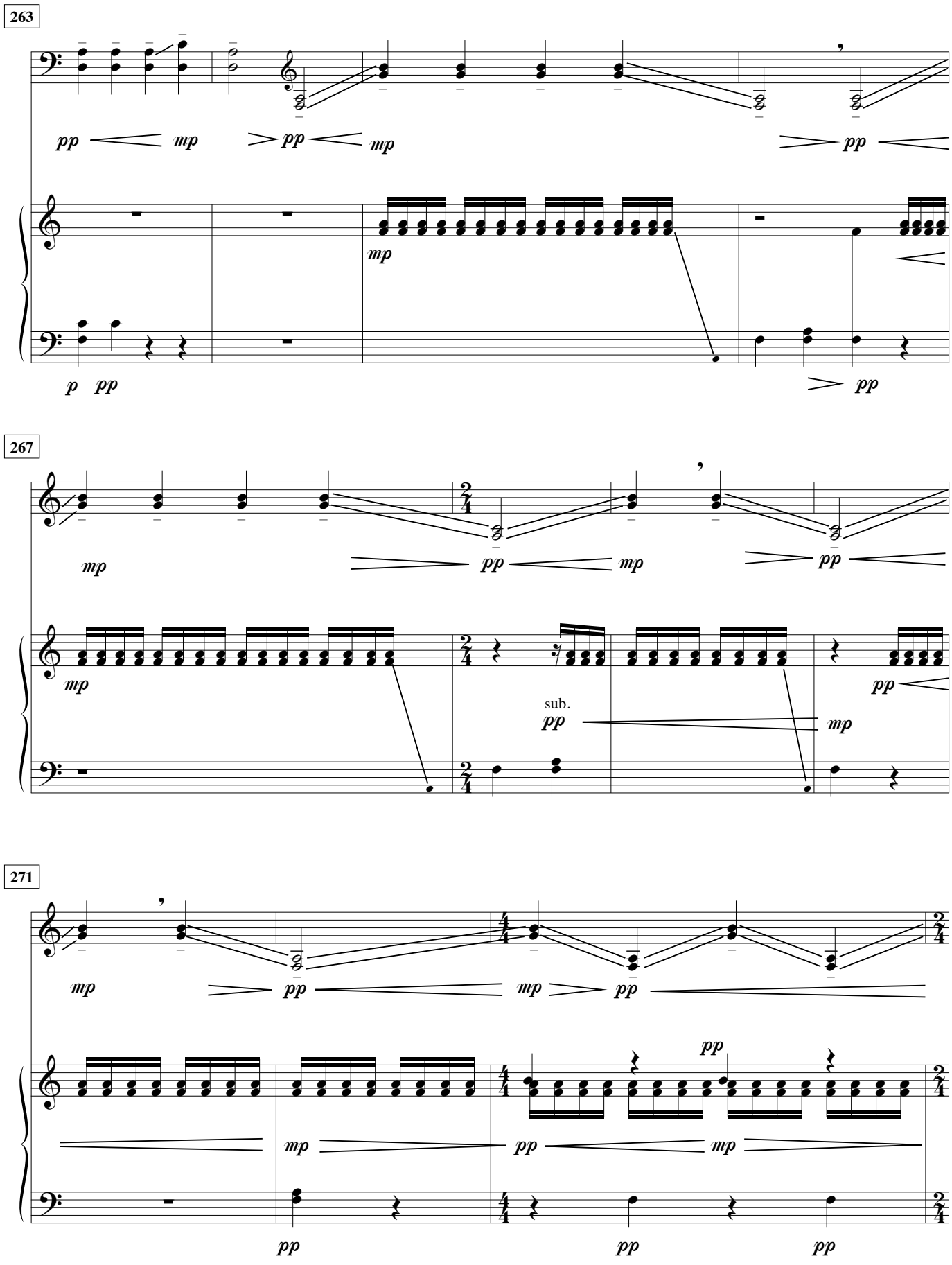


*Harmonic-tremolo-glissando.
Tremolo while sliding L.H. along strings, playing harmonics.

**both instruments, unmeasured tremolos, m. 259-end.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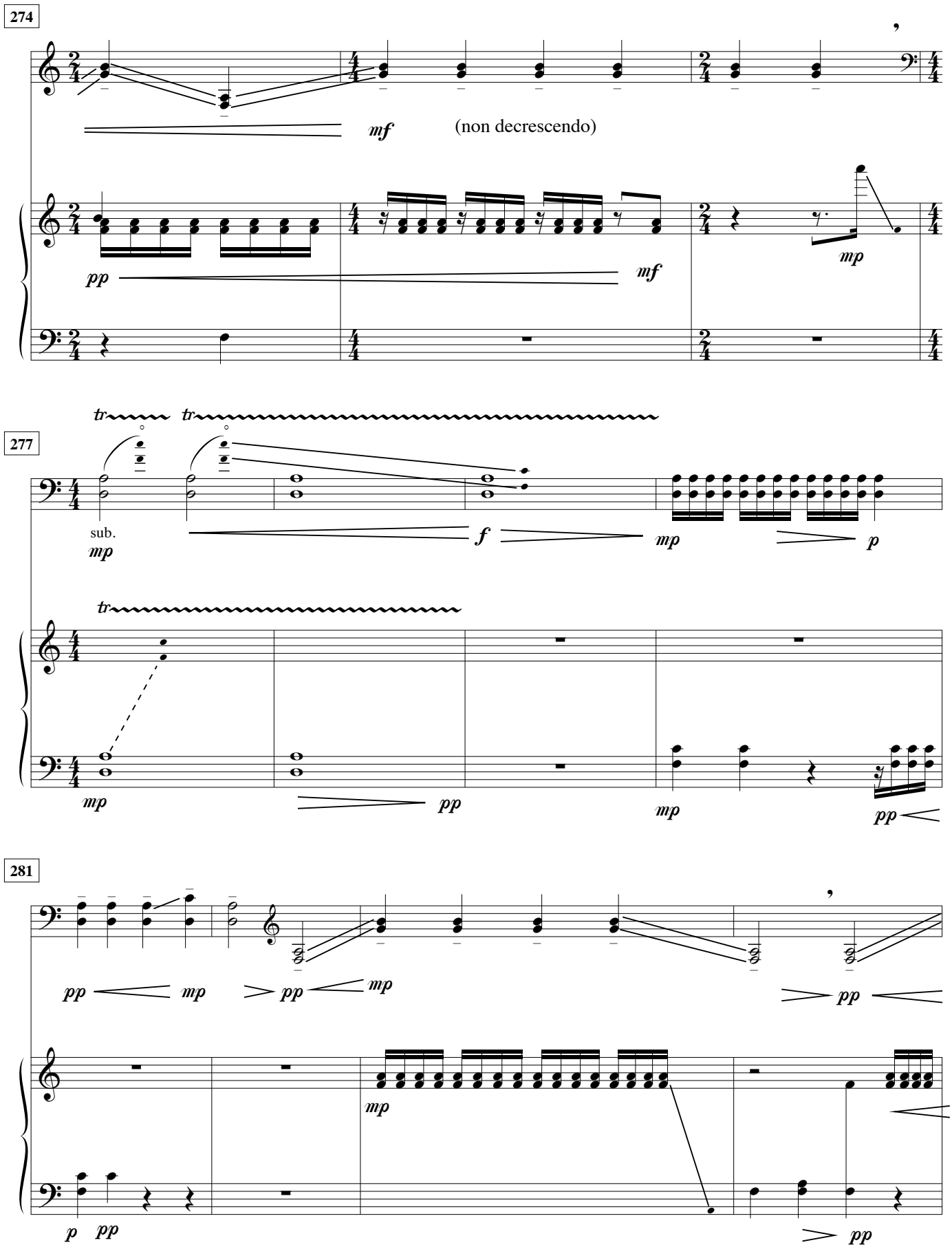
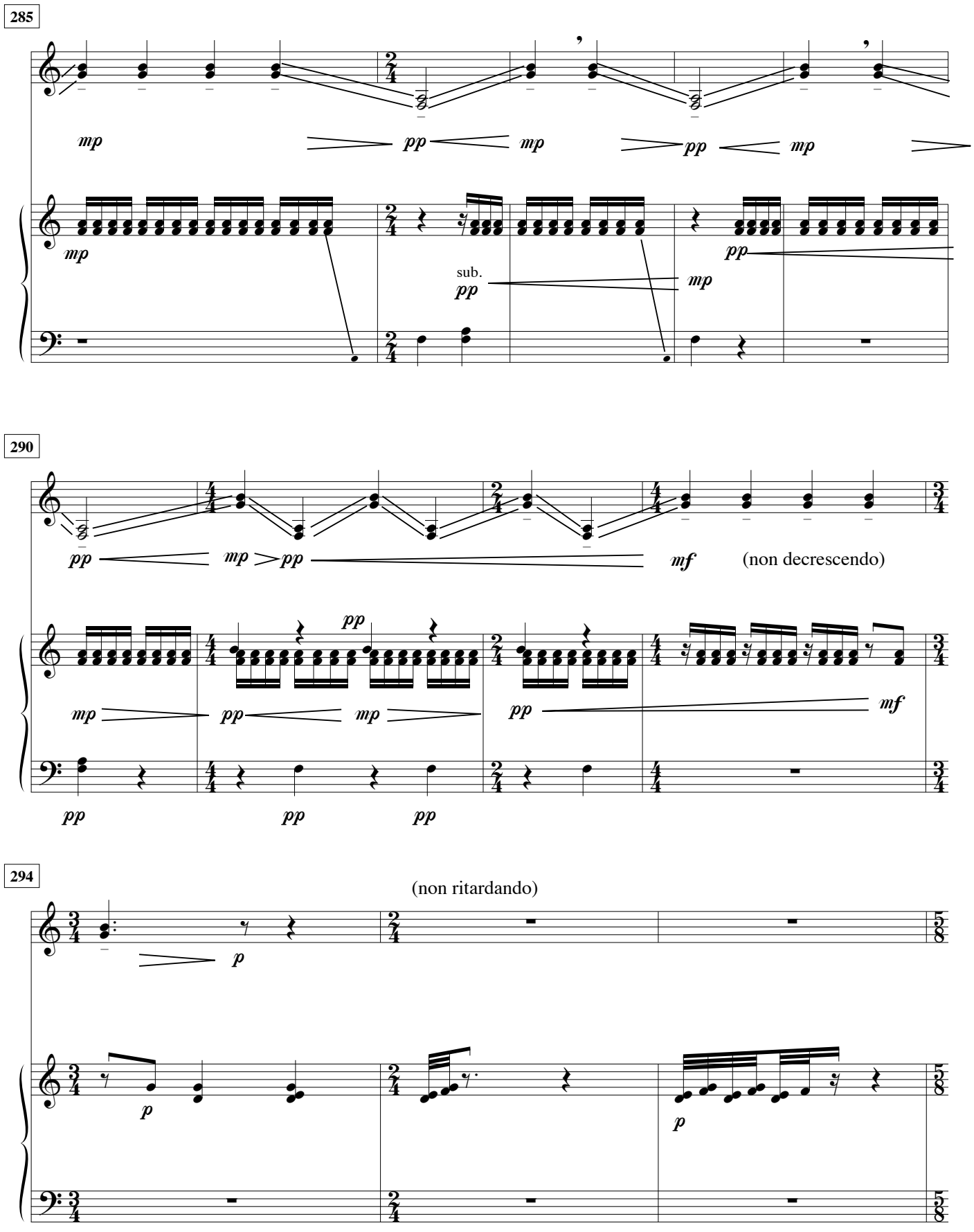
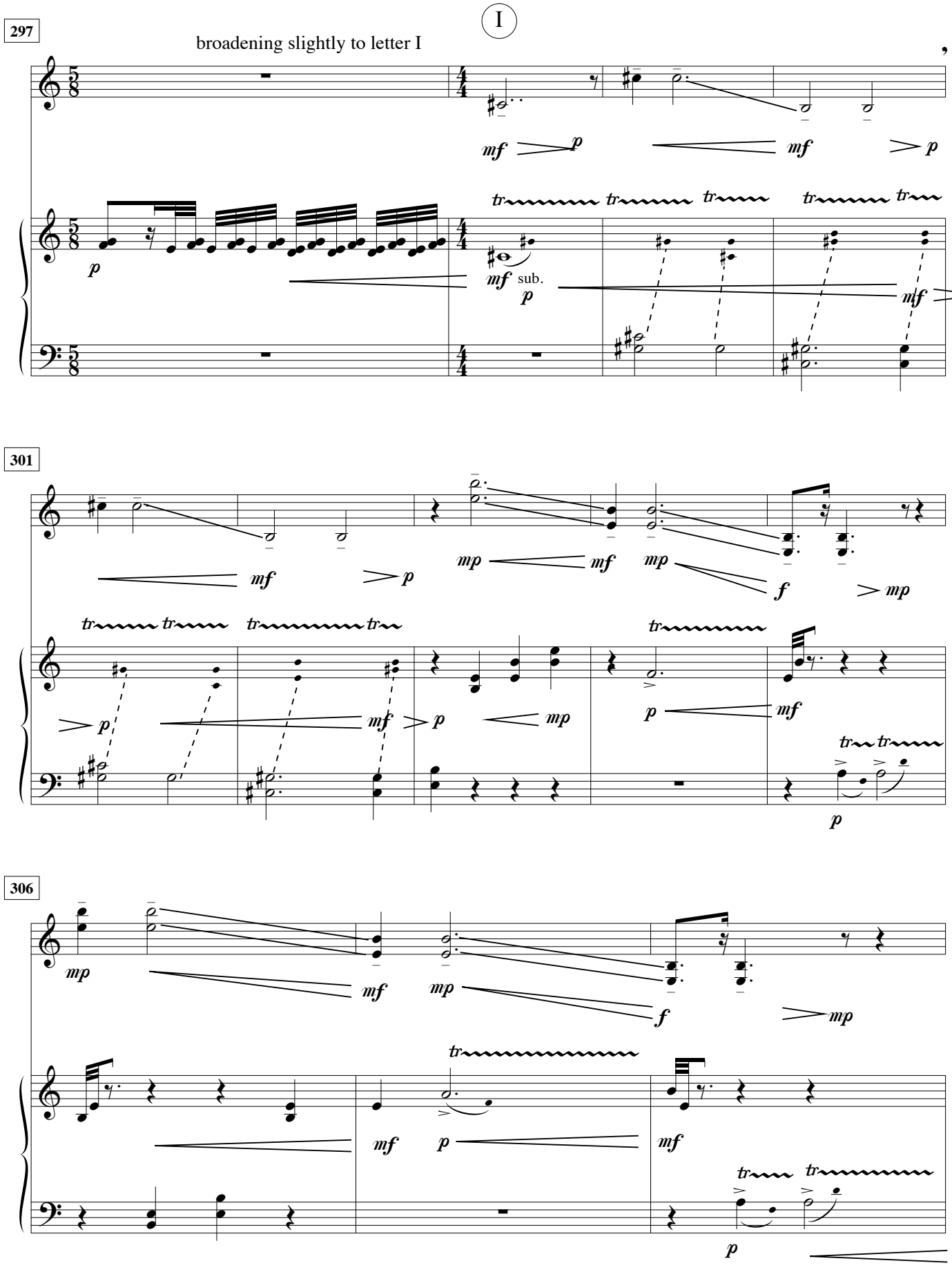
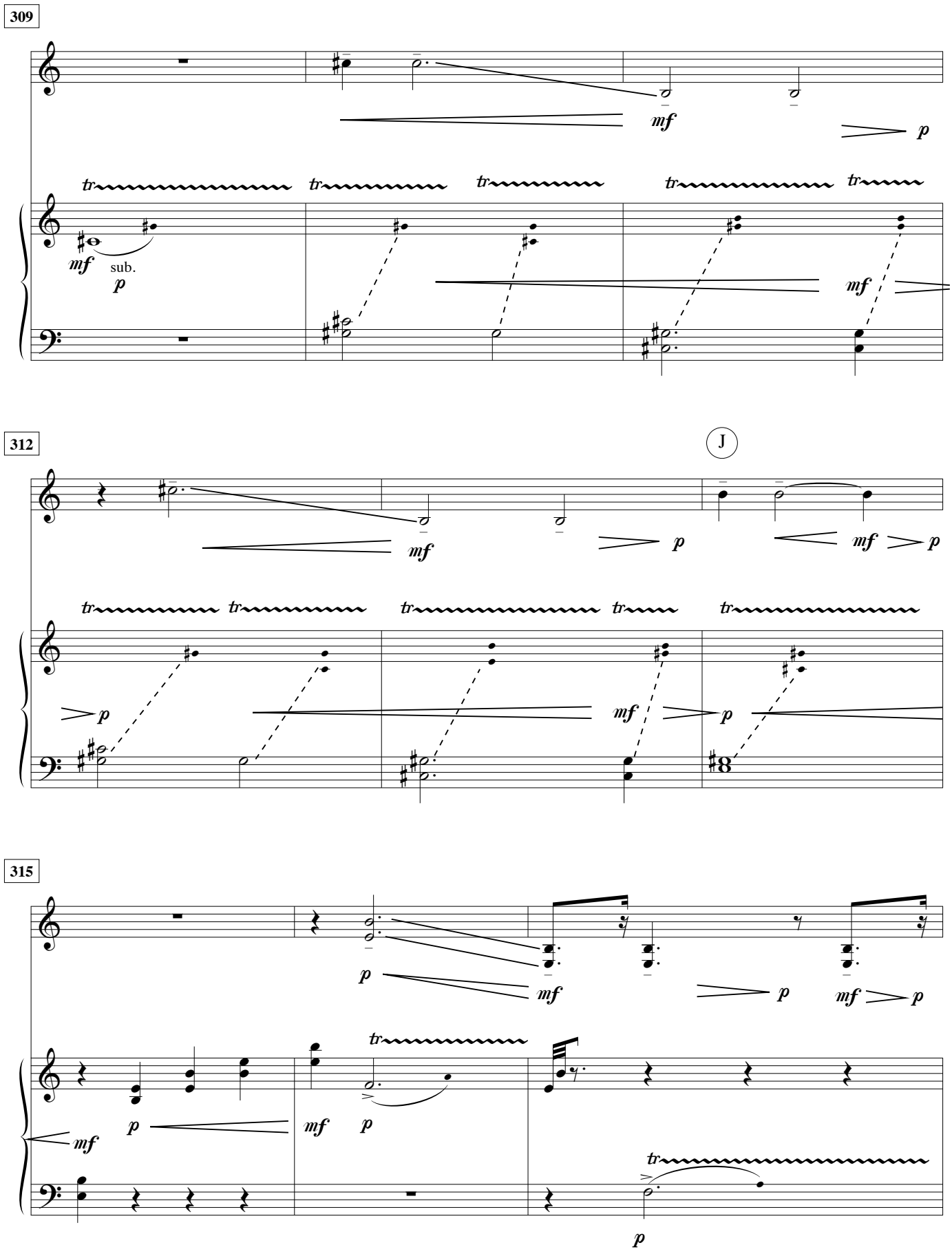
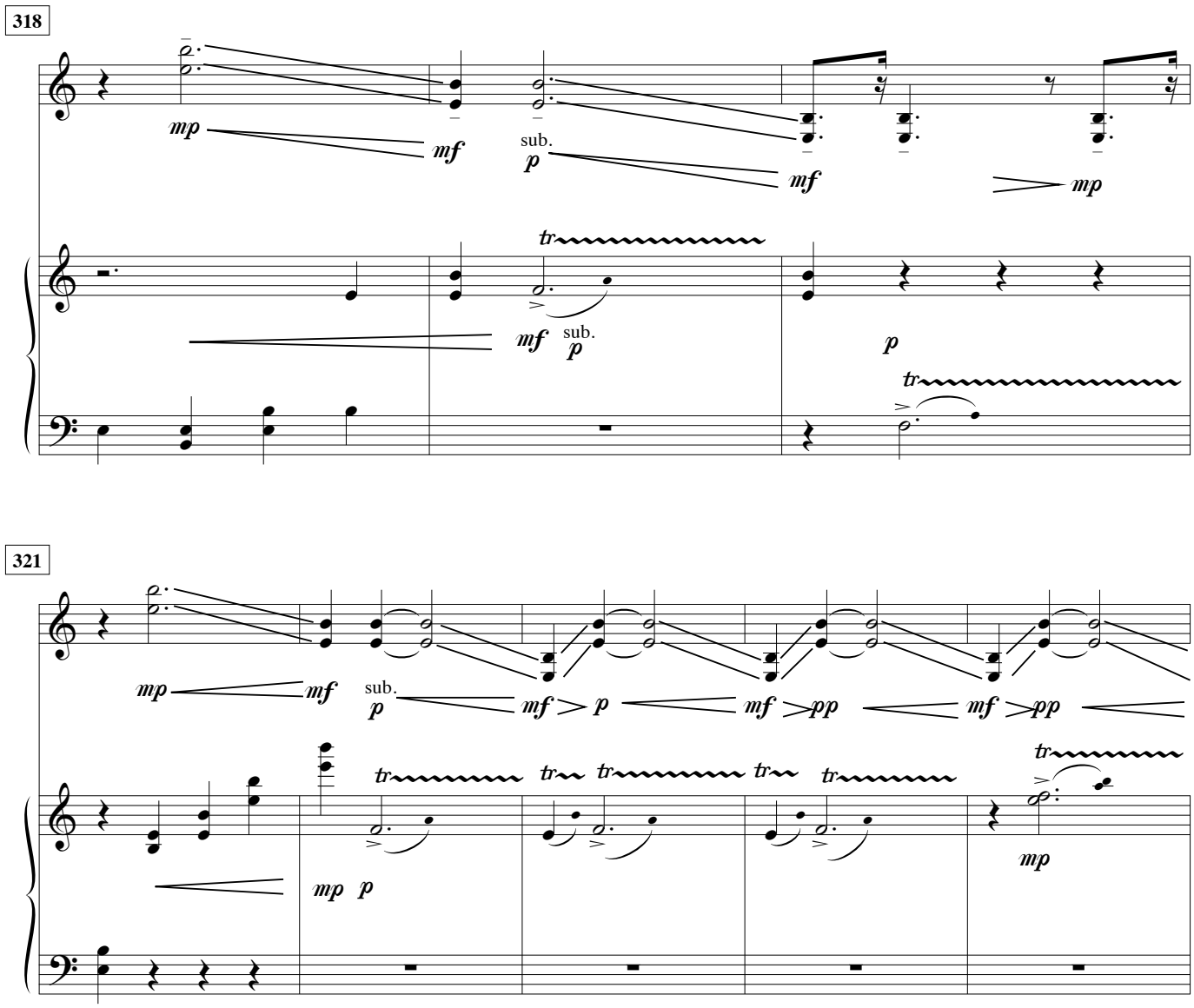
mp
pp
mp
pp
mp
p
pp
pp
267
mp
pp
mp
pp
mp
sub.
pp
mp
pp
271
mp
pp
mp
pp
pp
mp
pp
mp
pp
pp
pp

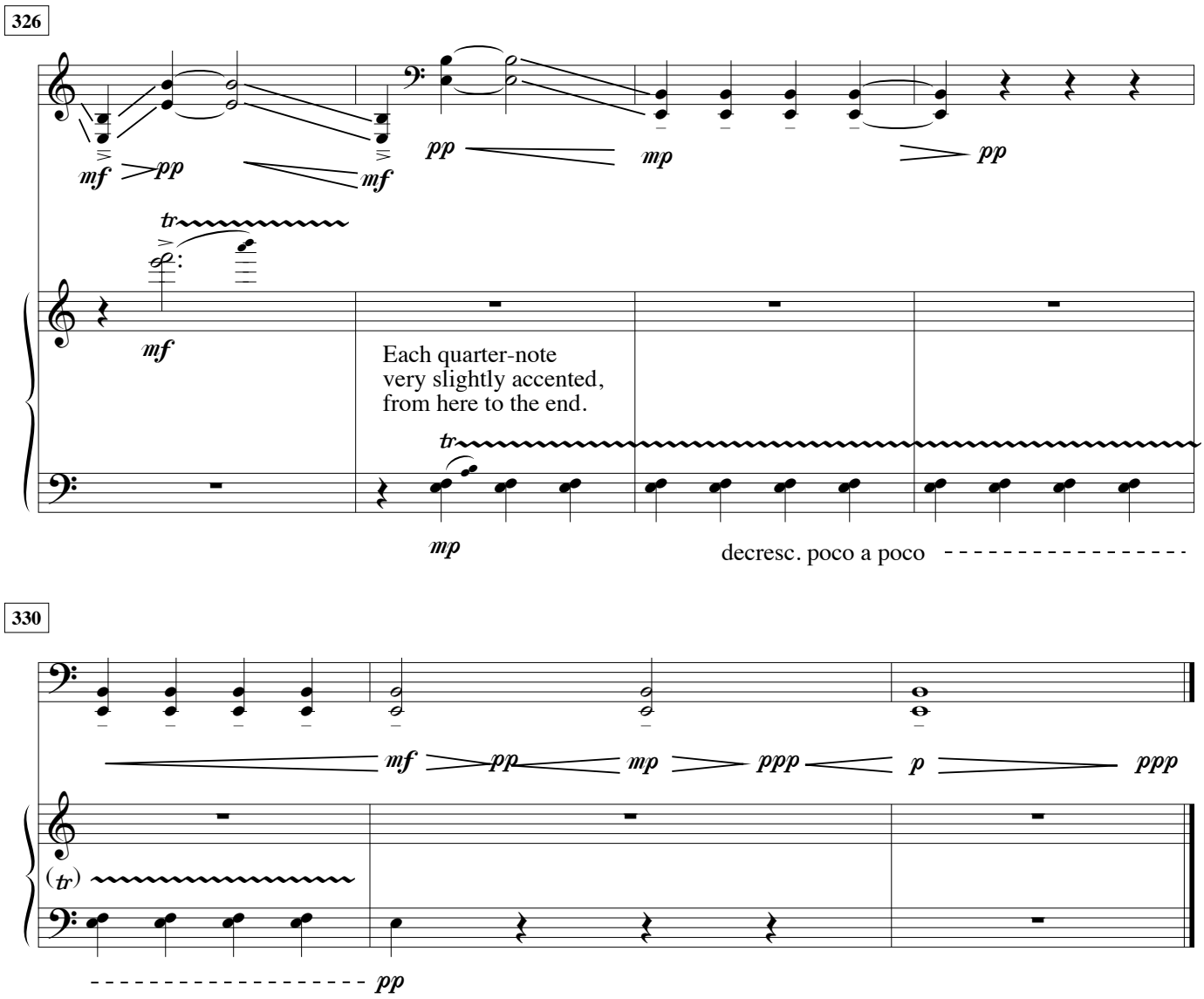

274
mf
(non decrescendo)
pp
mf
mp
277
tr
tr
sub.
mp
f
mp
p
tr
mp
pp
mp
pp
281
pp
mp
pp
mp
pp
mp
p
pp
pp


285
mp
pp
mp
pp
mp
mp
sub.
pp
mp
pp
290
pp
mp
pp
mf
(non decrescendo)
pp
mp
pp
mp
pp
mf
pp
pp
pp
294
(non ritardando)
p
p
p


297
broadening slightly to letter I
I
301
306


309
mf
p
tr
mf
sub.
p
mf
312
J
p
mf
p
mf
p
tr
p
mf
p
315
p
mf
p
mf
p
tr
mf
p
mf
p
tr
p


318
mp
mf
sub.
p
mf
mp
tr
mf
sub.
p
p
tr
321
mp
mf
sub.
p
mf
p
mf
pp
mf
pp
tr
tr
tr
tr
tr
mp
p
tr
mp


326
mf
pp
mf
pp
mp
pp
tr
mf
Each quarter-note
very slightly accented,
from here to the end.
tr
mp
decresc. poco a poco
330
mf
pp
mp
ppp
p
ppp
(tr)
pp

for performance questions please contact the composer:

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