Conductor's Score

J. S. Bach

FANTASIA and FUGUE

in C minor

BWV 537

arranged for Clarinet Choir by John Morrison

The Fantasia and Fugue in C minor, BWV 537, was composed for the organ by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) during his period of residence at Weimar, possibly in 1723. Nearly two hundred years later it was transcribed for full orchestra by Sir Edward Elgar (1857-1934). My arrangement for clarinet choir was closely modelled on Bach's work but influenced by the lively spirit of Elgar's arrangement.

Instrumentation:
There are parts for

- E♭ Clarinet
- 1st, 2nd & 3rd B♭ Clarinets
- Alto Clarinet in E♭
- Bass Clarinet in B♭
- Contra-alto Clarinet in E♭ (optional)
- Contrabass Clarinet in B♭ (optional, not written in score)

There may be more than one player to each part.

The Fantasia commences with solos from each section over a held pedal note, and there is a solo B♭ Clarinet cadenza at the end. There are liberal dynamic, phrasing, articulation and expression markings where Bach used none. I have added a few octave doublings, decorative semiquavers and trills. At the final bars of the Fugue, following Bach's custom, the four-part harmony has been thickened. The parts are occasionally doubled at the octave, e.g. occasionally by the E♭ Clarinet, and at bars 63-5. For playing convenience Bach's 6/4 time signature of the Fantasia has been changed to 3/4. The conductor's score and parts have bar numbers. The bold rehearsal numbers in the score correspond with Elgar's but are not in the parts.

The playing time is between 7 and 8 minutes.

For a satisfactory performance it needs an understanding director and competent players of at least ABRSM Grade 6 standard.

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Notes on this arrangement of Bach's Fantasia and Fugue in C minor

Parts are often alternated between voices. The E flat clarinet in particular often doubles at the octave and has trills and semiquaver runs. The basses should be able to manage all of the long pedal note: if they can not they are probably playing too loud. With respect for Bach's marvellous four-part writing, very occasionally an extra part (or two) is added,

There are liberal dynamics. The staccato dots indicate separation from the note following. Attention should of course be given to dynamics, for example noting where there is a sudden *p* after *f*. The accents on the second subject quavers of the Fantasia indicate that the second note of the pair should die away rather than much force on the first note.

The tempi should be regular: directors should be aware that the Fantasia may tend to be too fast (it can be slower than indicated) and the Fugue too slow (it can be faster). Three-in-a-bar at whatever tempo is right for the Fantasia, and a lively two-in-a-bar as indicated (never 4) is right for the Fugue. If preferred a "flat" performance can be tried with the dynamics ignored and the whole played at a mezzo-forte, but that was not the intention of this arrangement.

Fantasia bars	
1-20/23	Solo voices against pedal
19-20	Broken chord effect in quavers, 5 parts
21	Second subject
30-31	Close imitation of voices
42 on	Recapitulation
63-65	Second subject inverted, octave doubling in 3 parts
83	Coda
94-96 (end)	Solo

Fugue bars	
1	First subject, 3 voices in unison
58	Second subject, chromatic scale
106-124	Recapitulation: as bars 6-24
110-113	Extra voices
120-123	Accents to different beats of the bar, with echo effect in top part
124	Extra voices
125	Coda
126-132 (end)	Extra voices and parts divided

John Morrison, February 2018

J. S. Bach

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J. S. Bach, BWV 537

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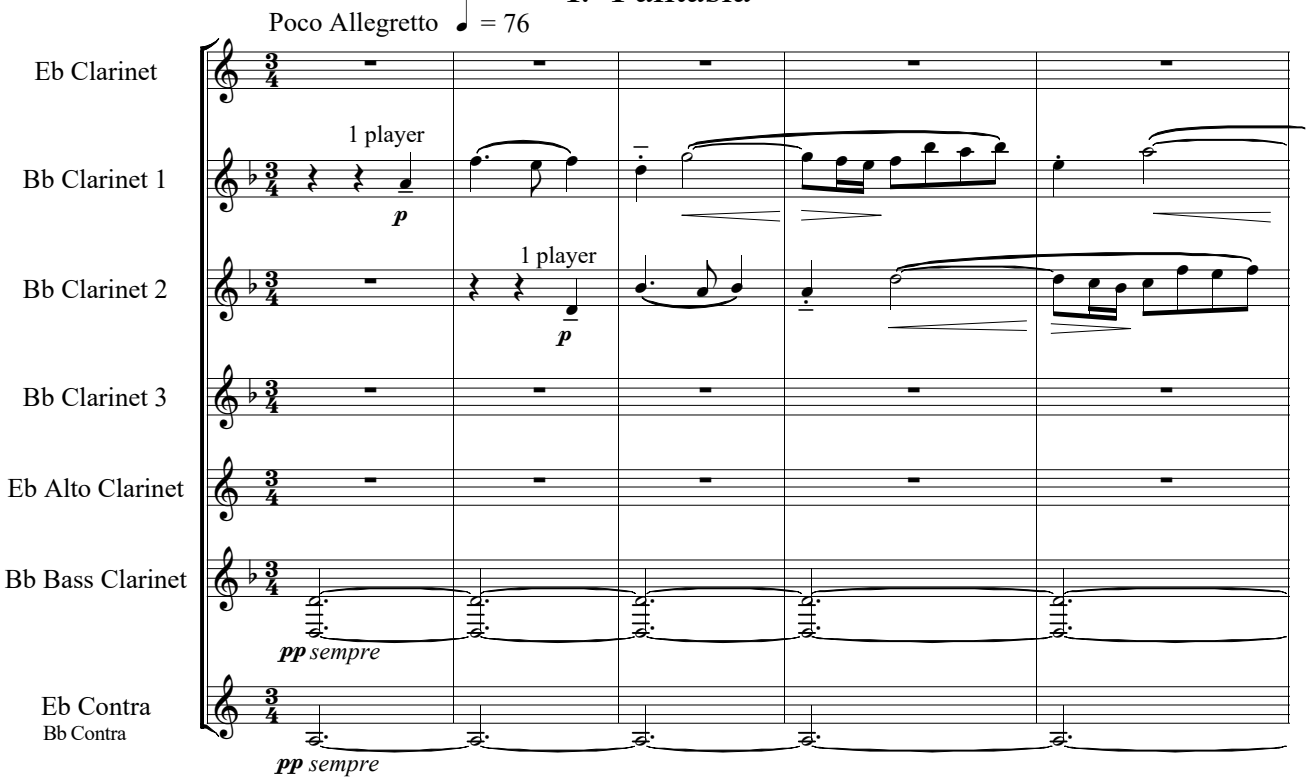
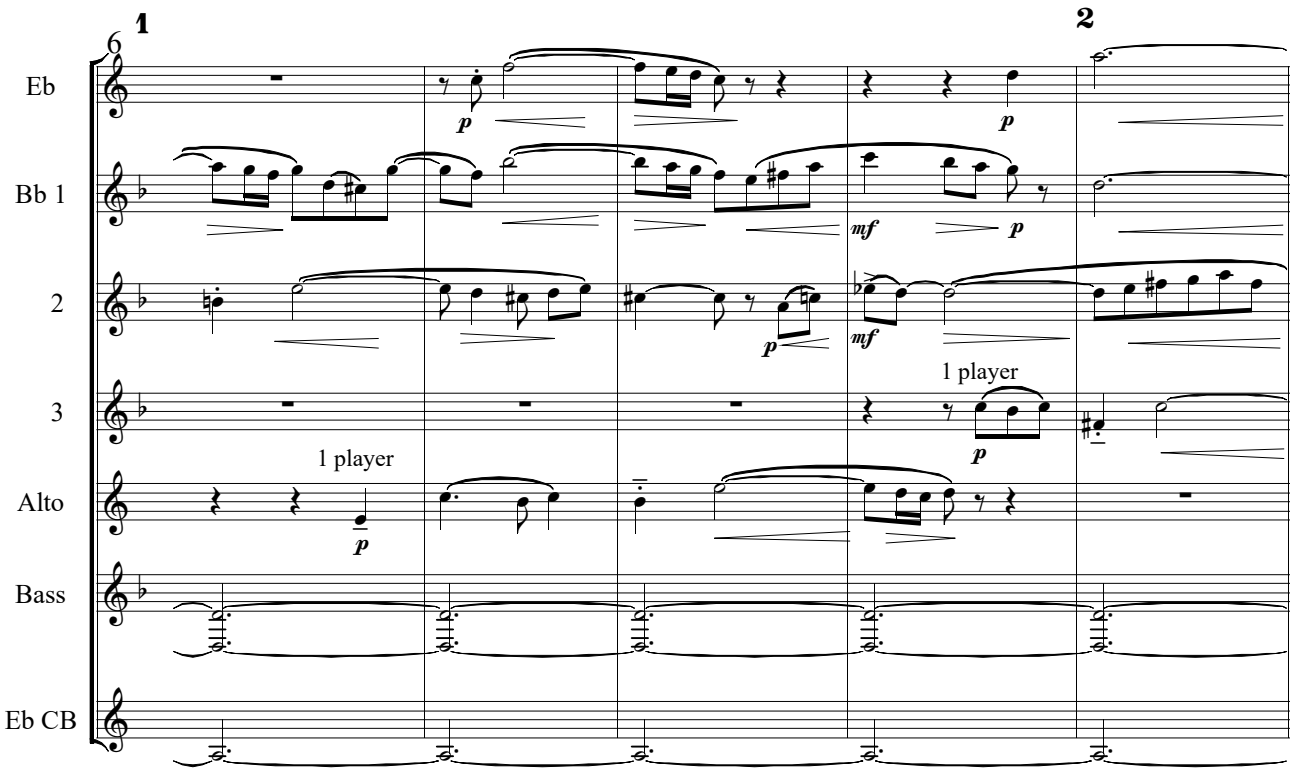
I. Fantasia





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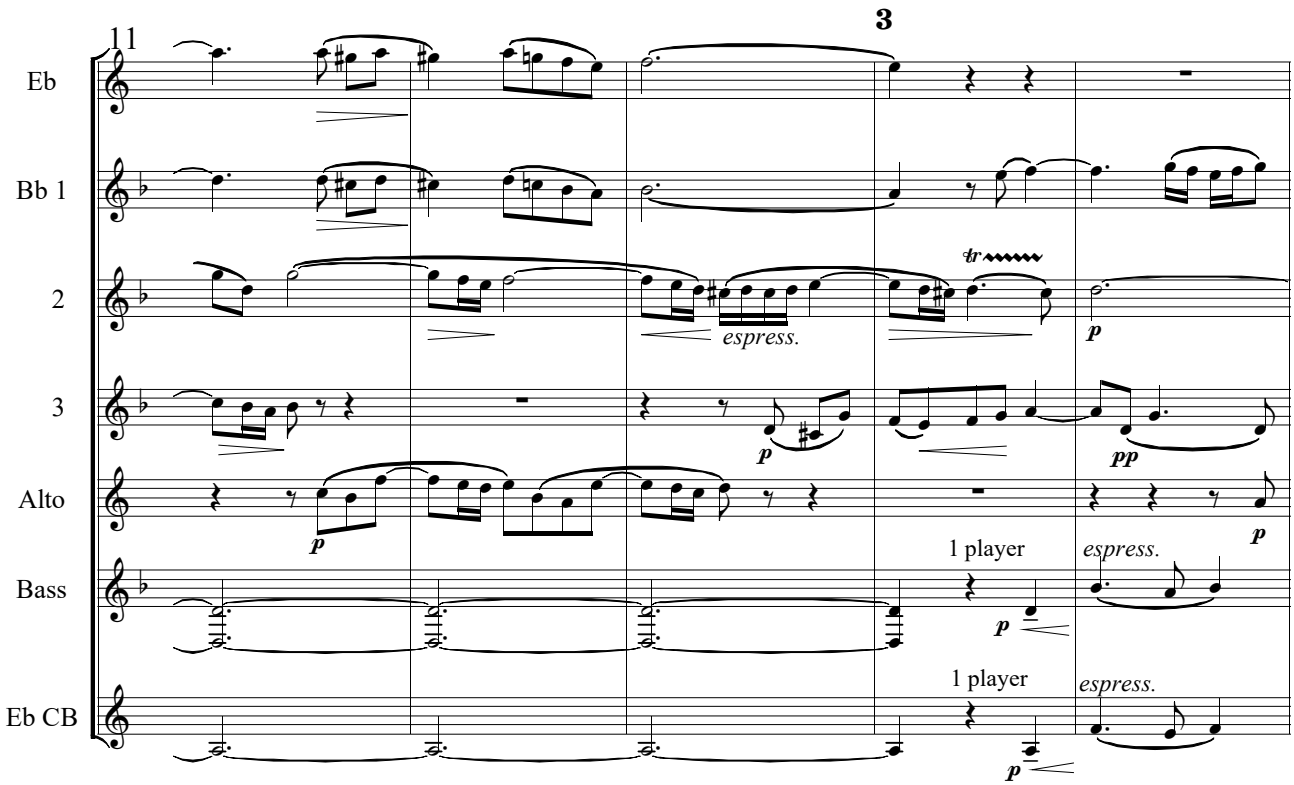

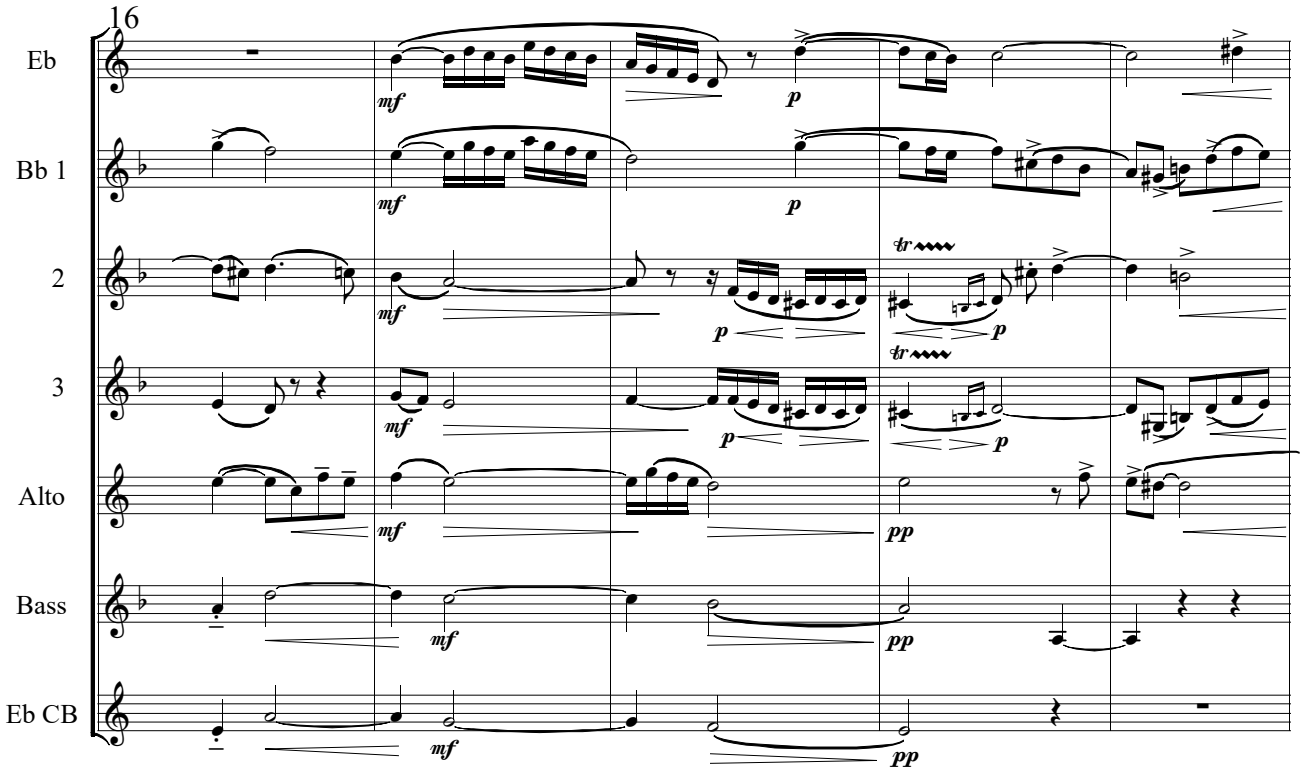

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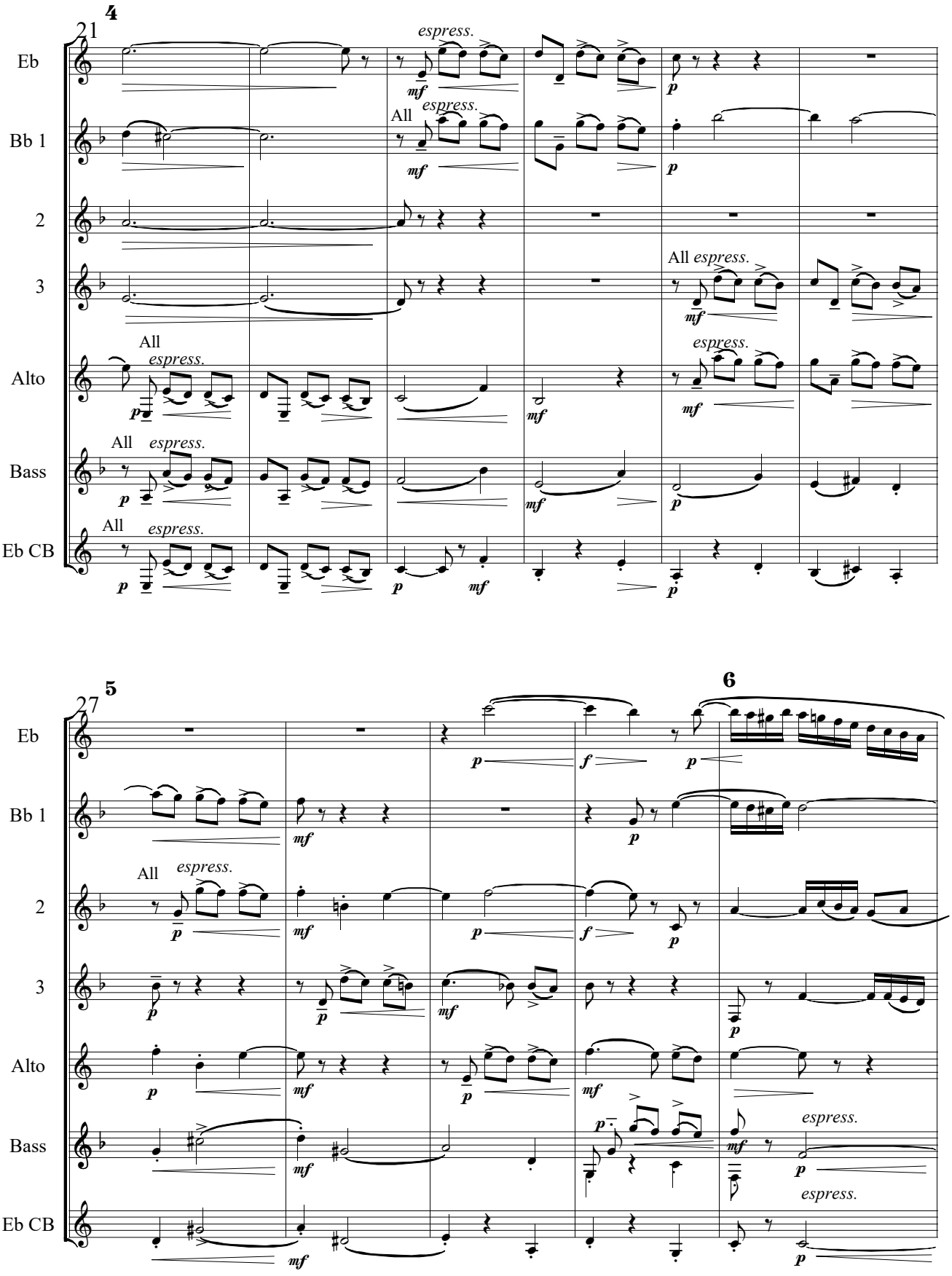

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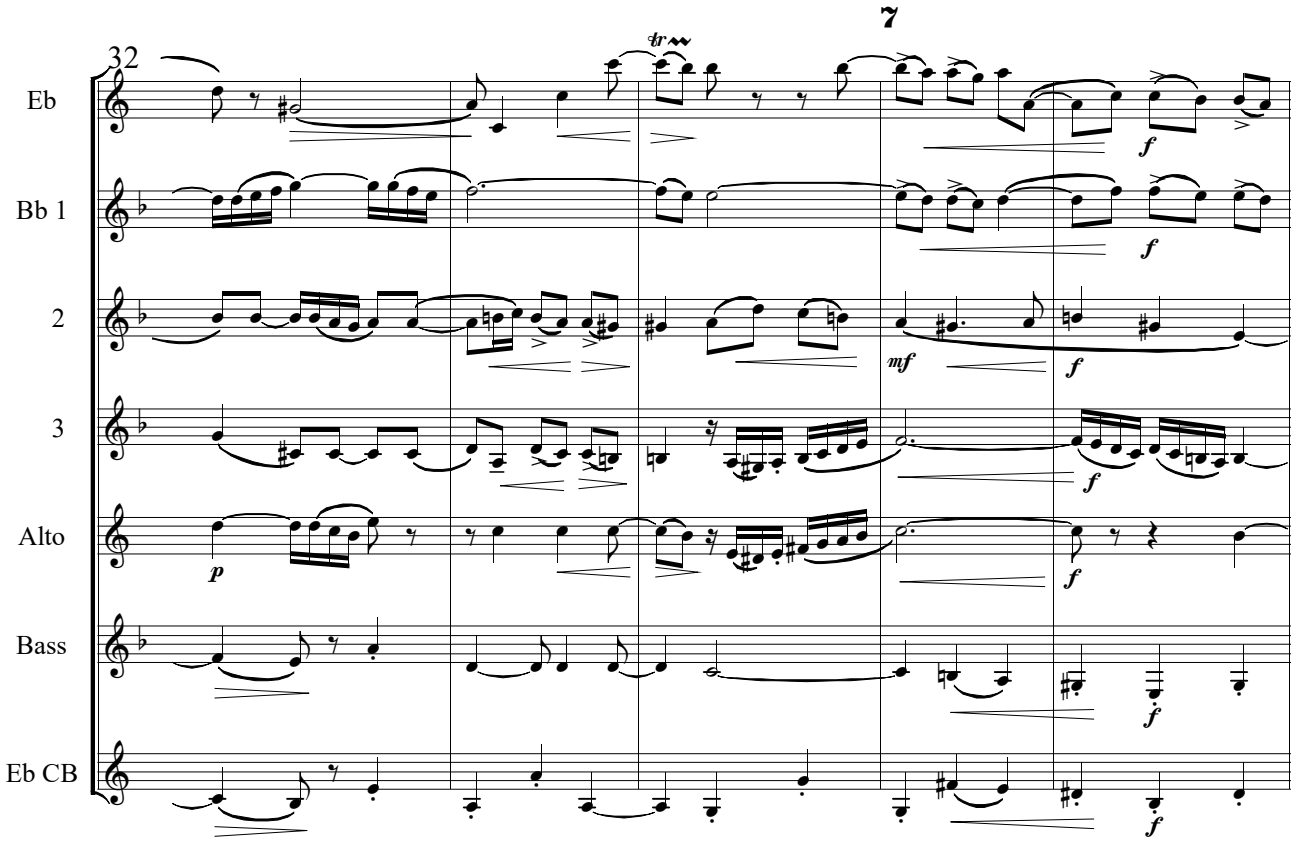

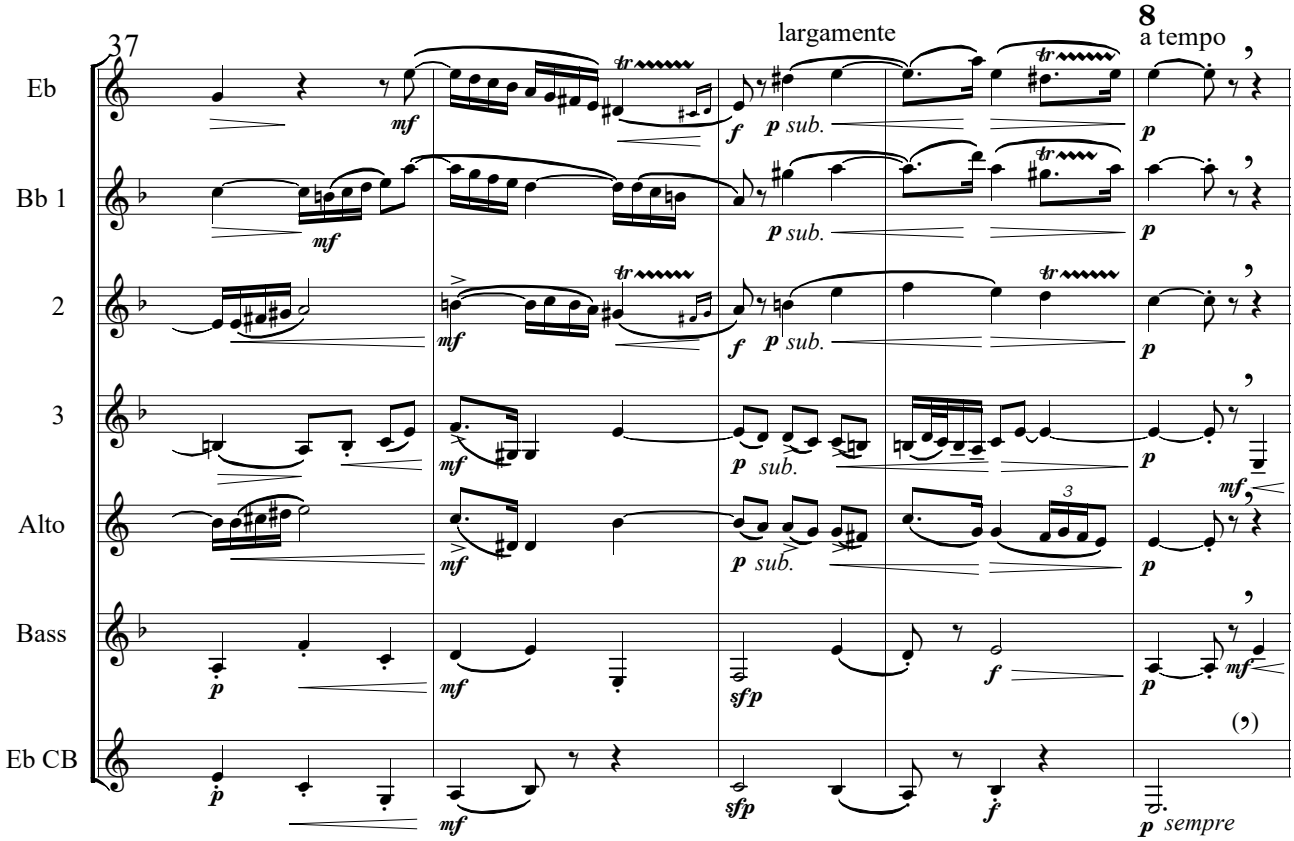

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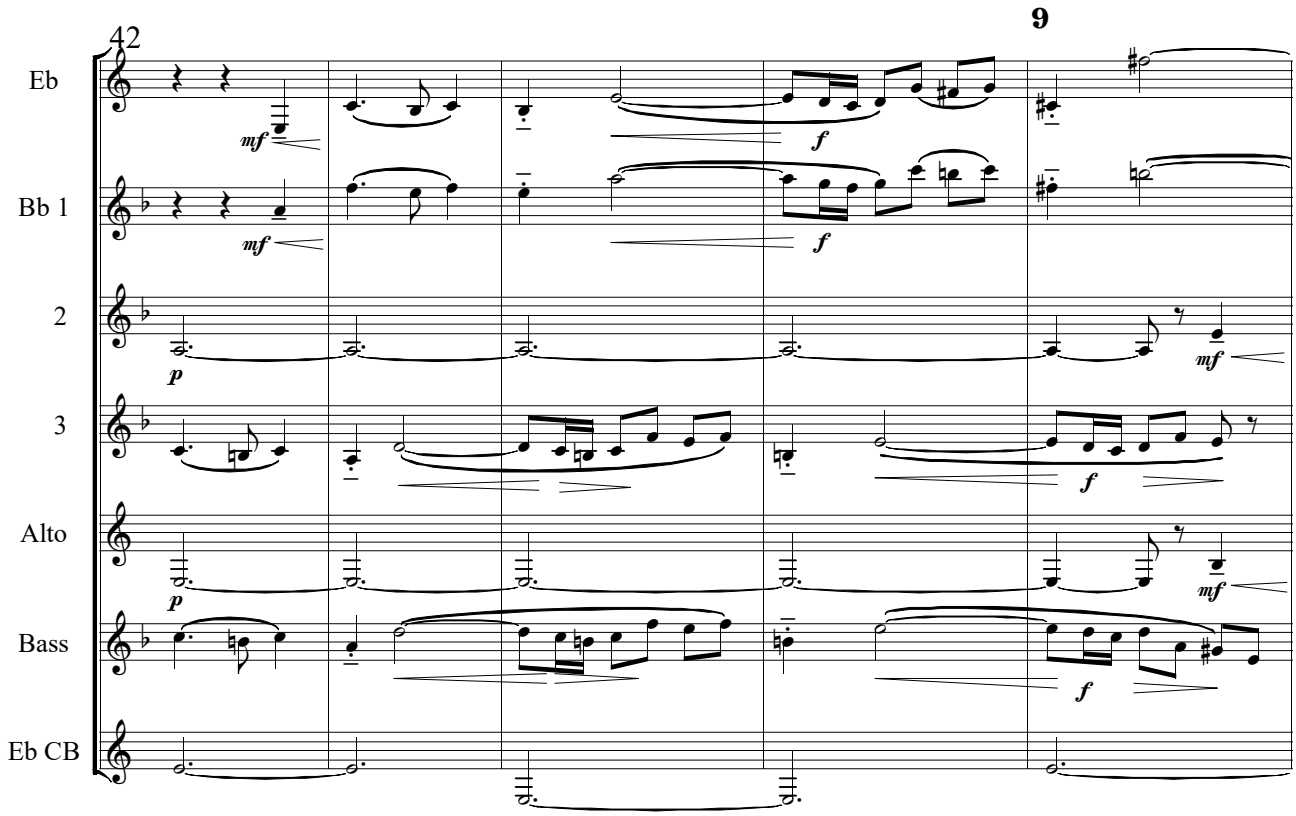

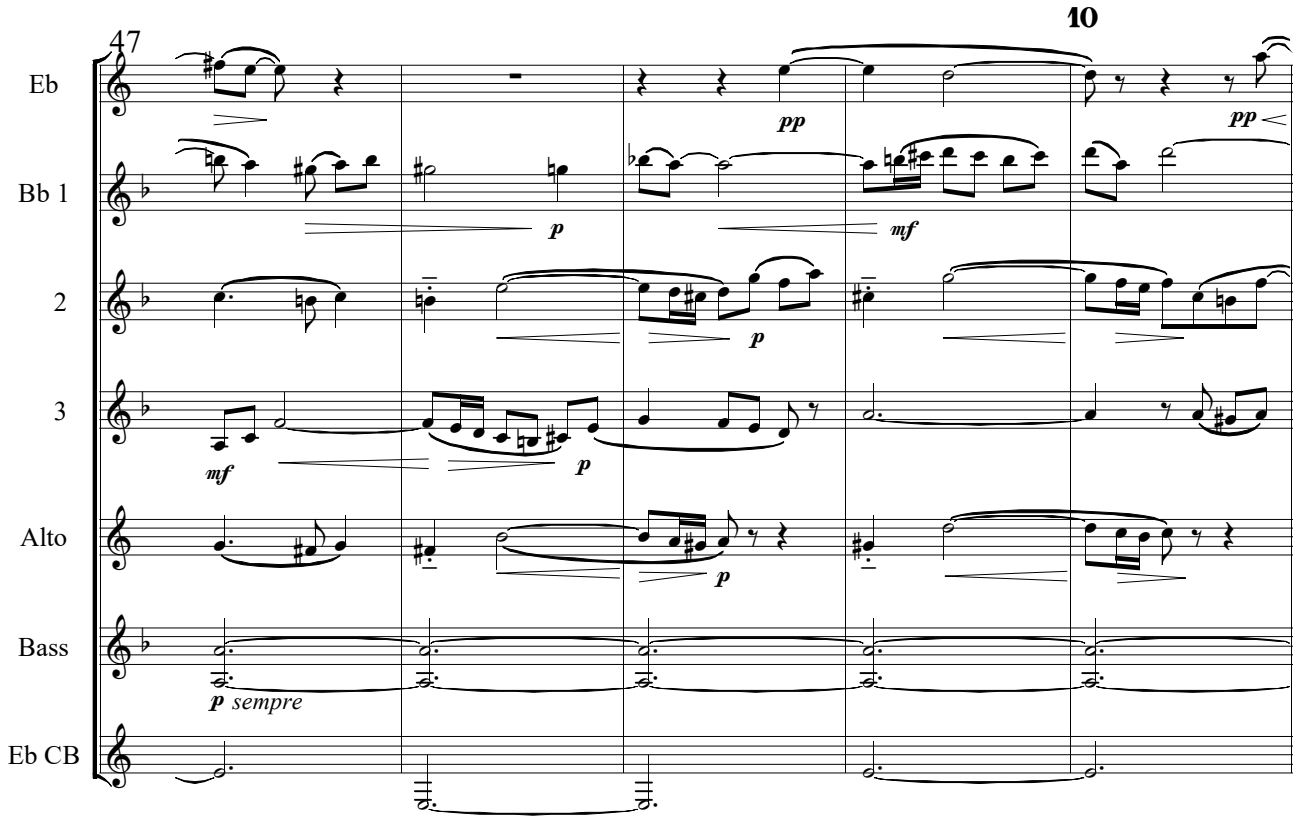

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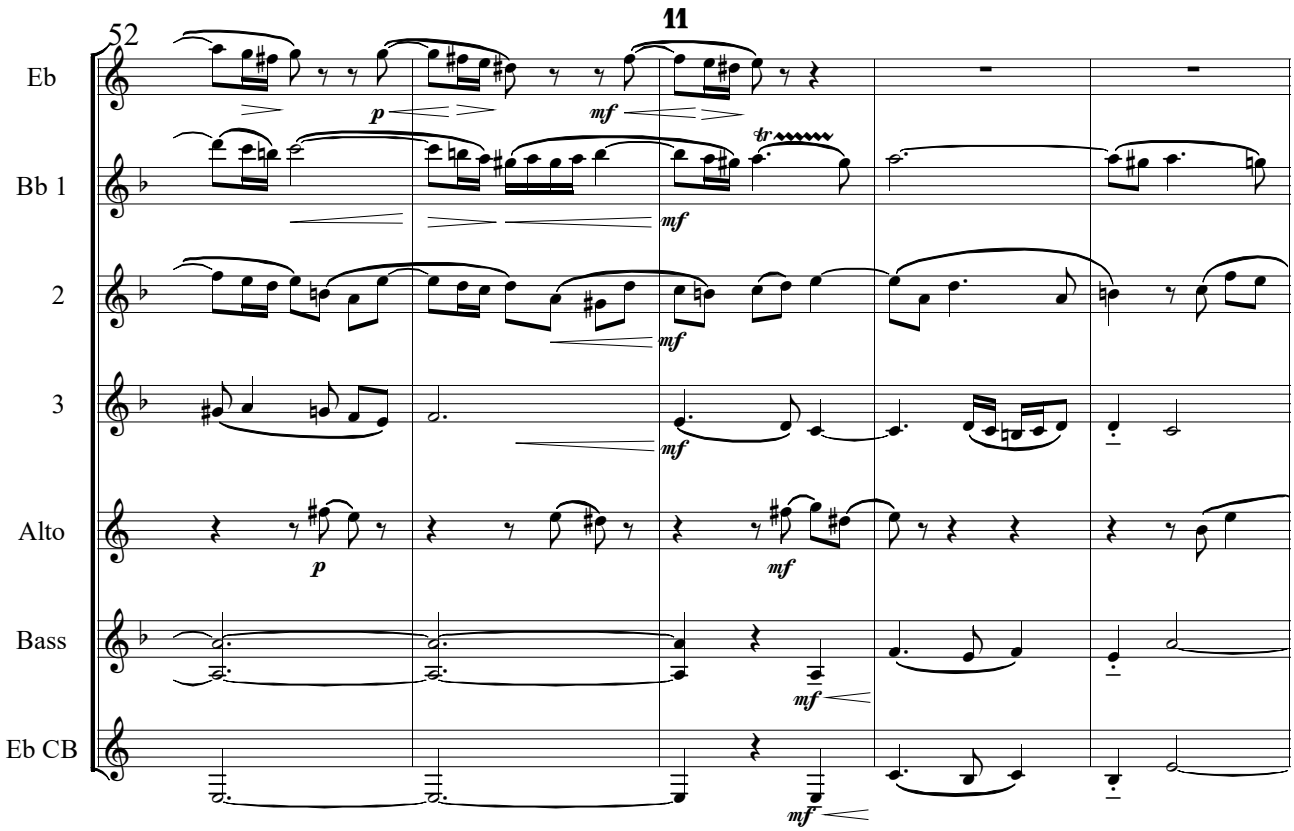

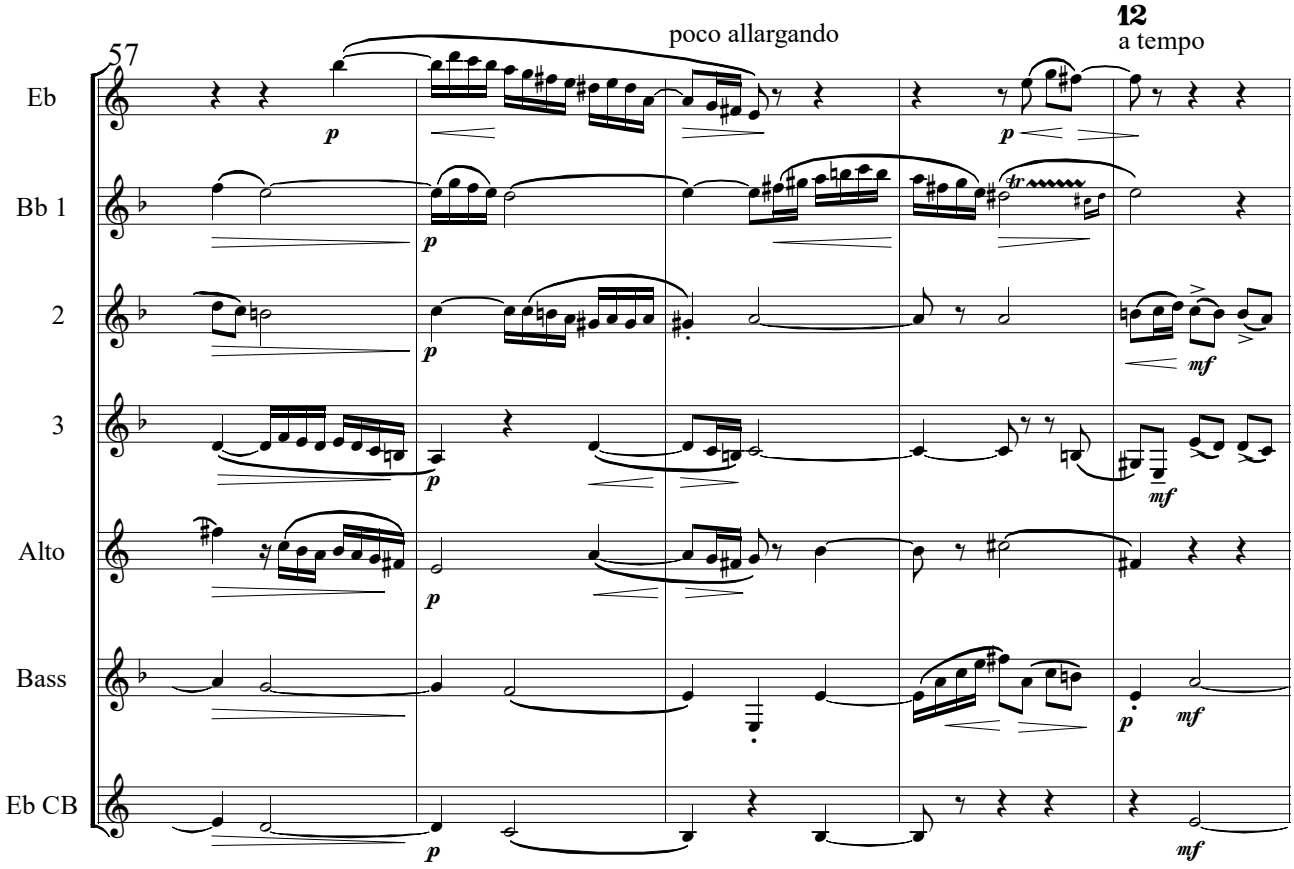

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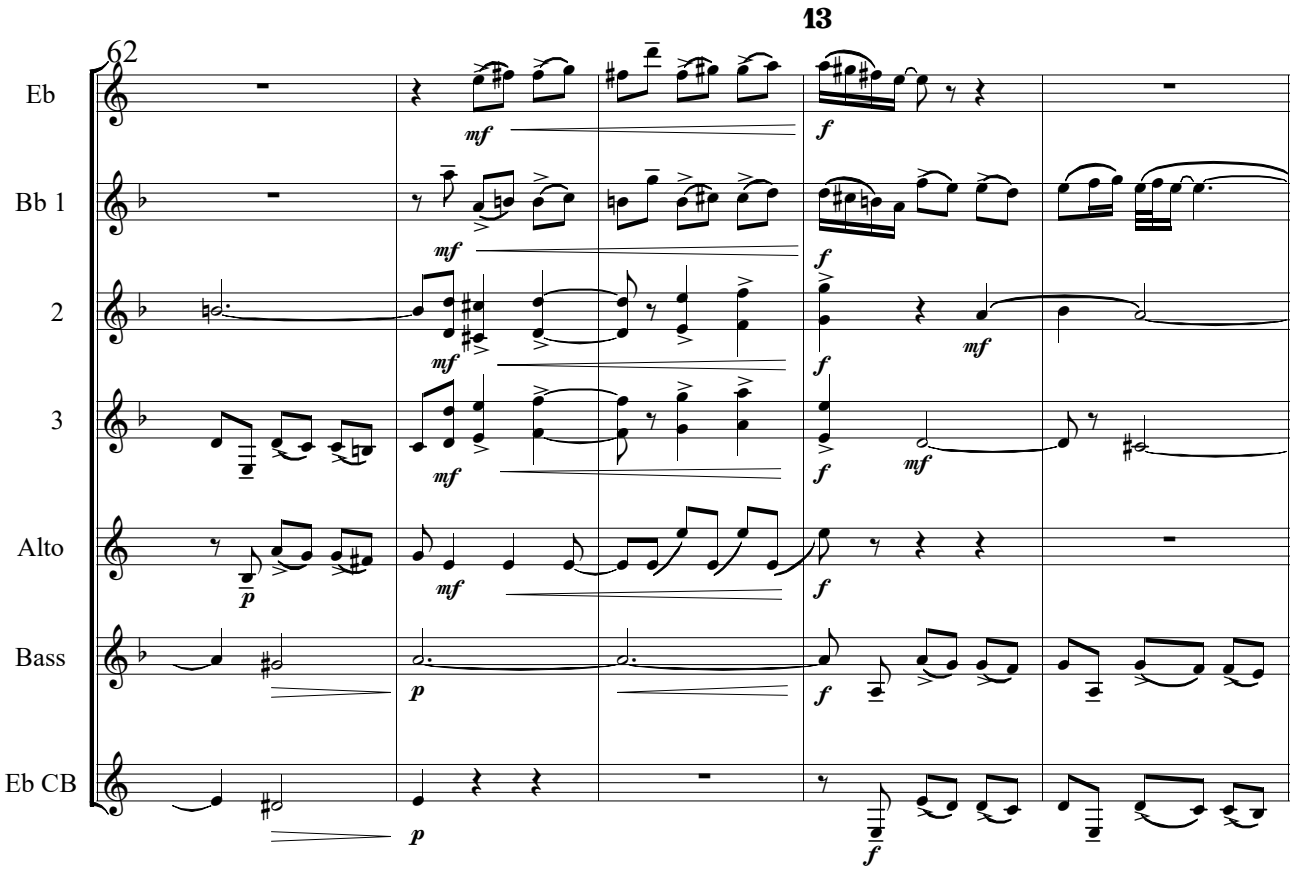

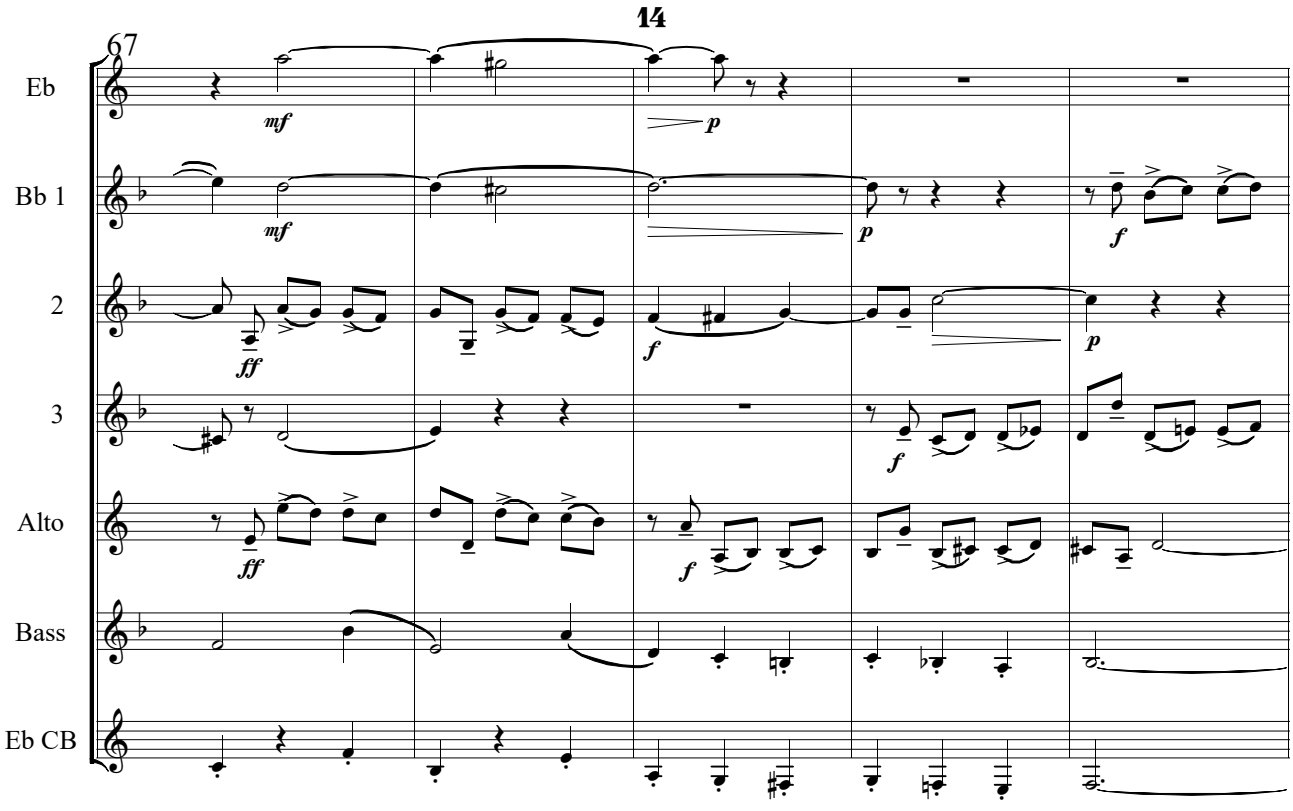

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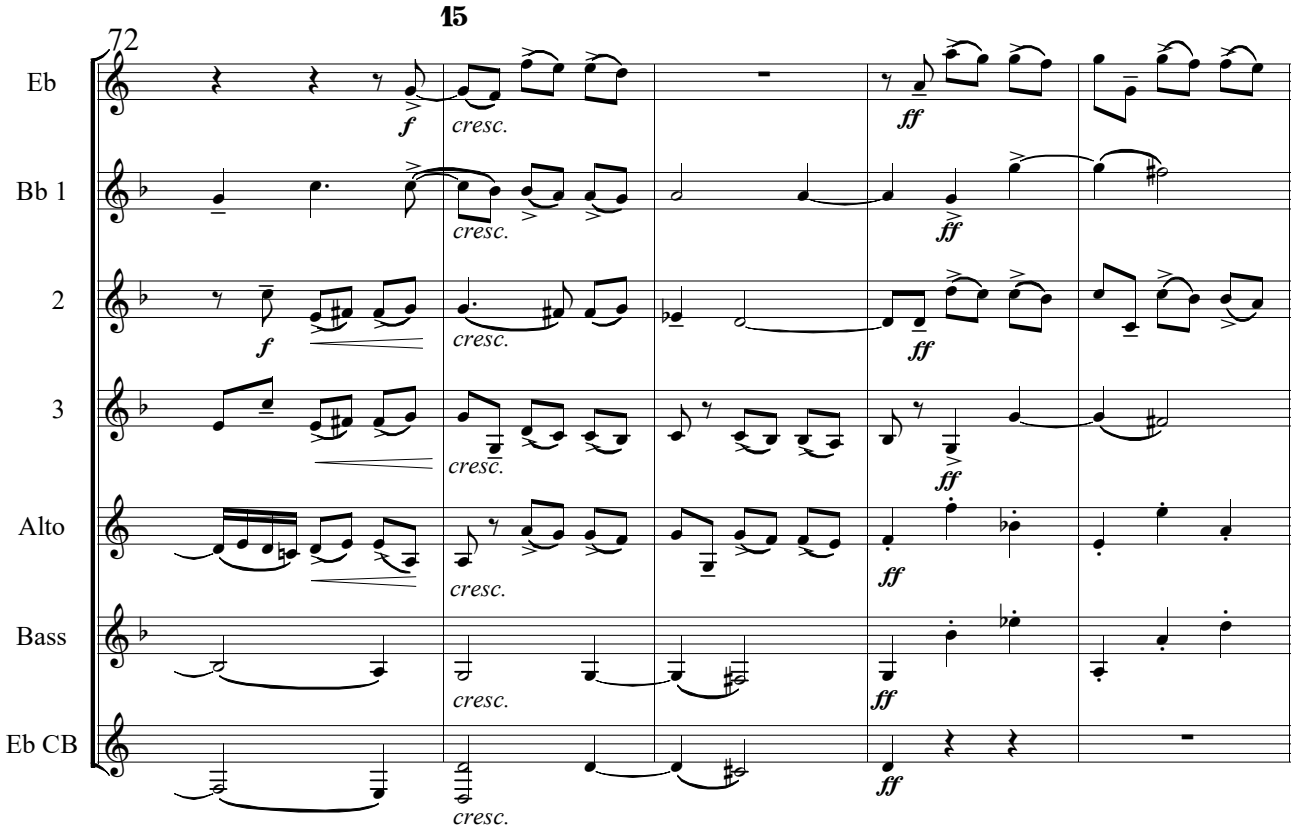

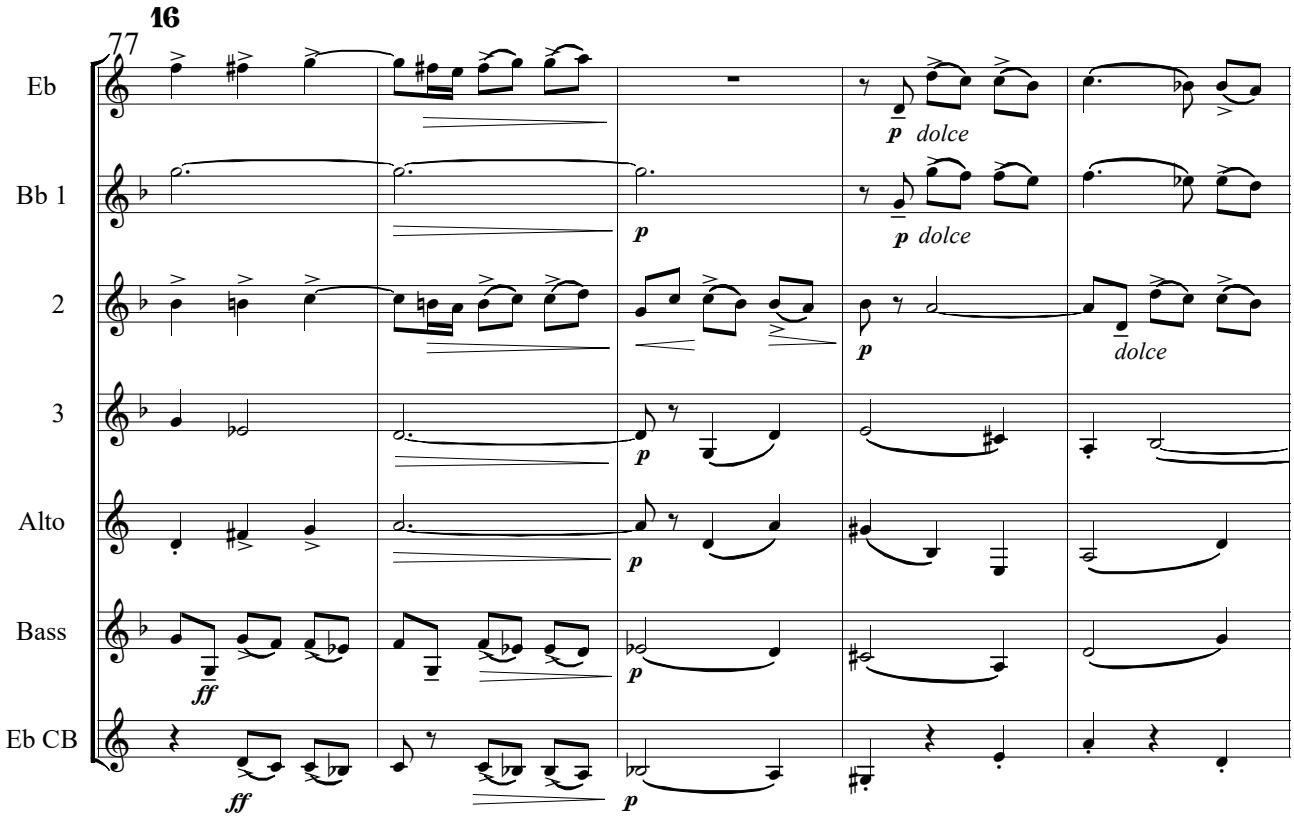

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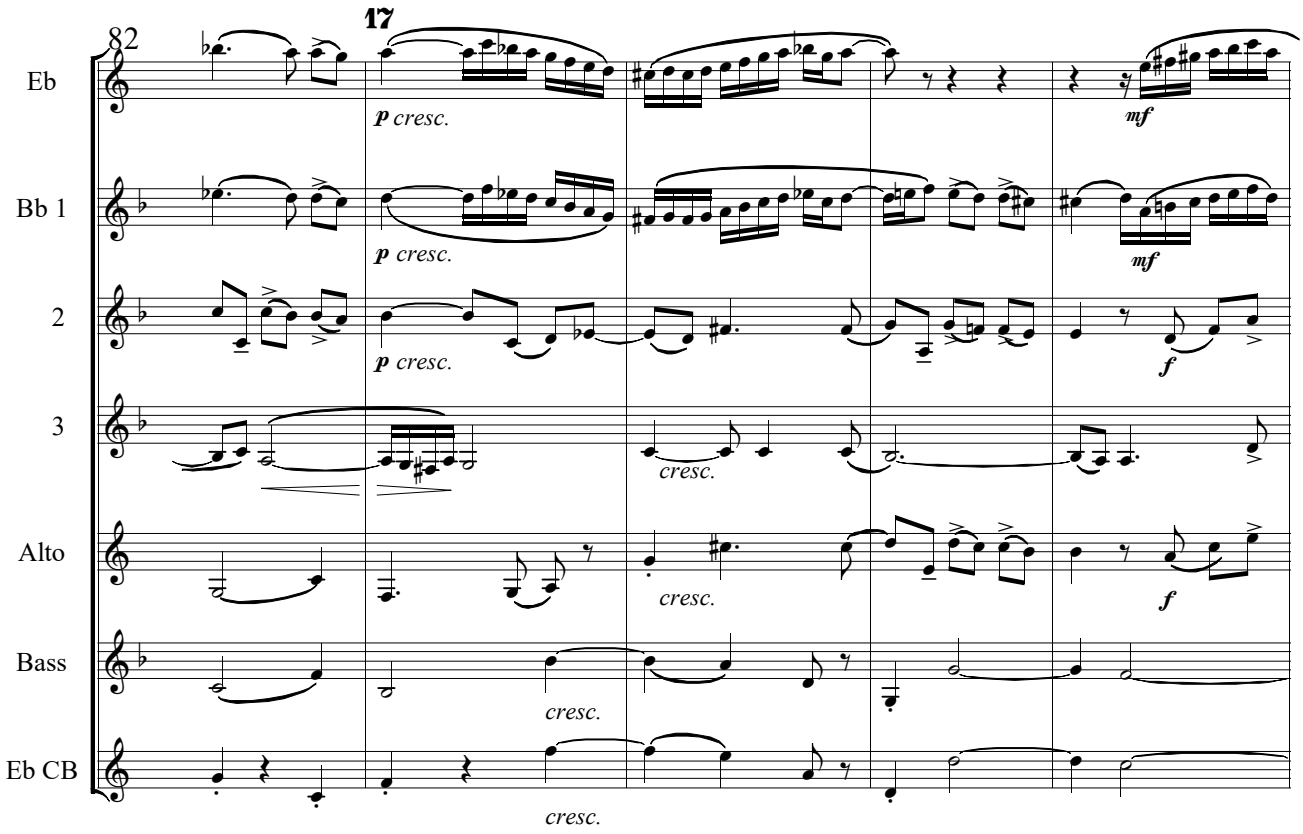

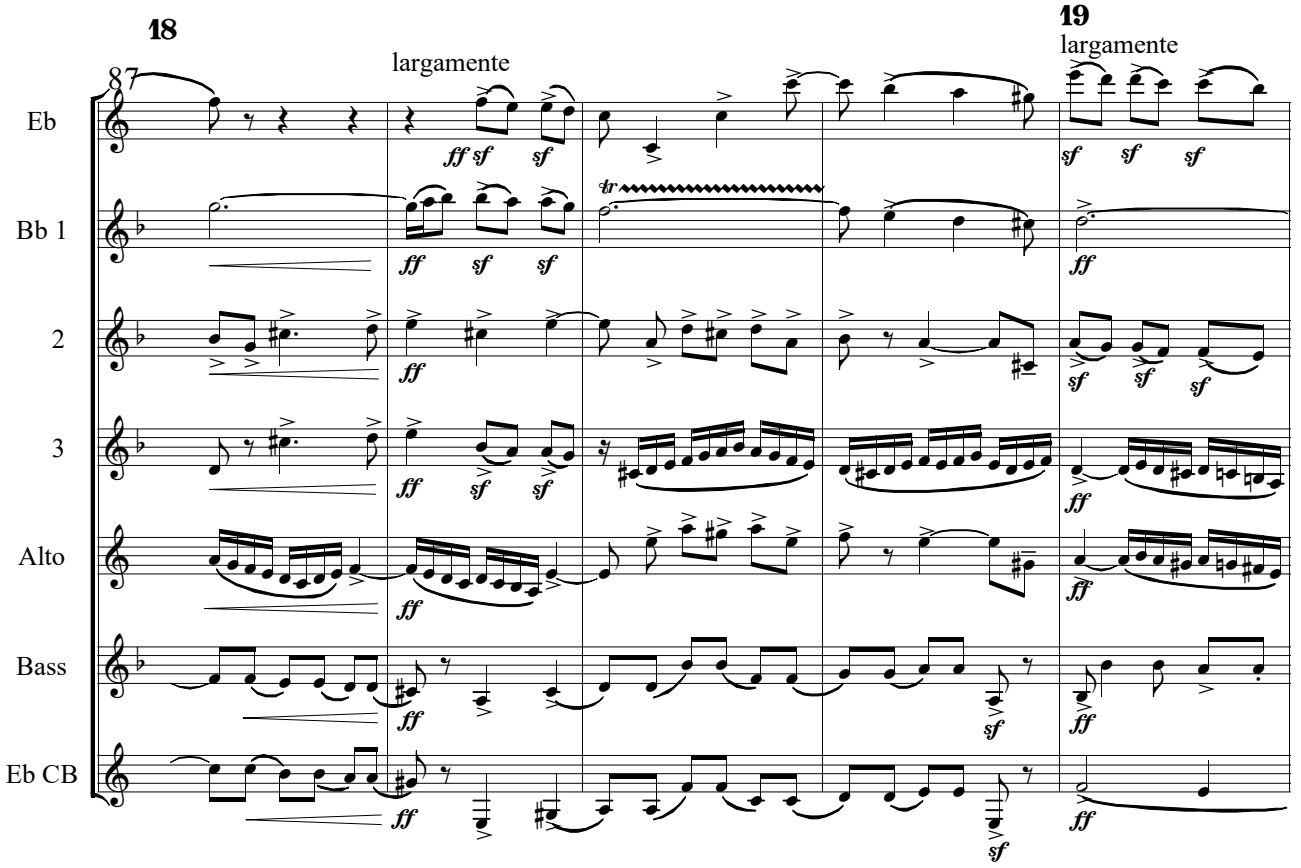

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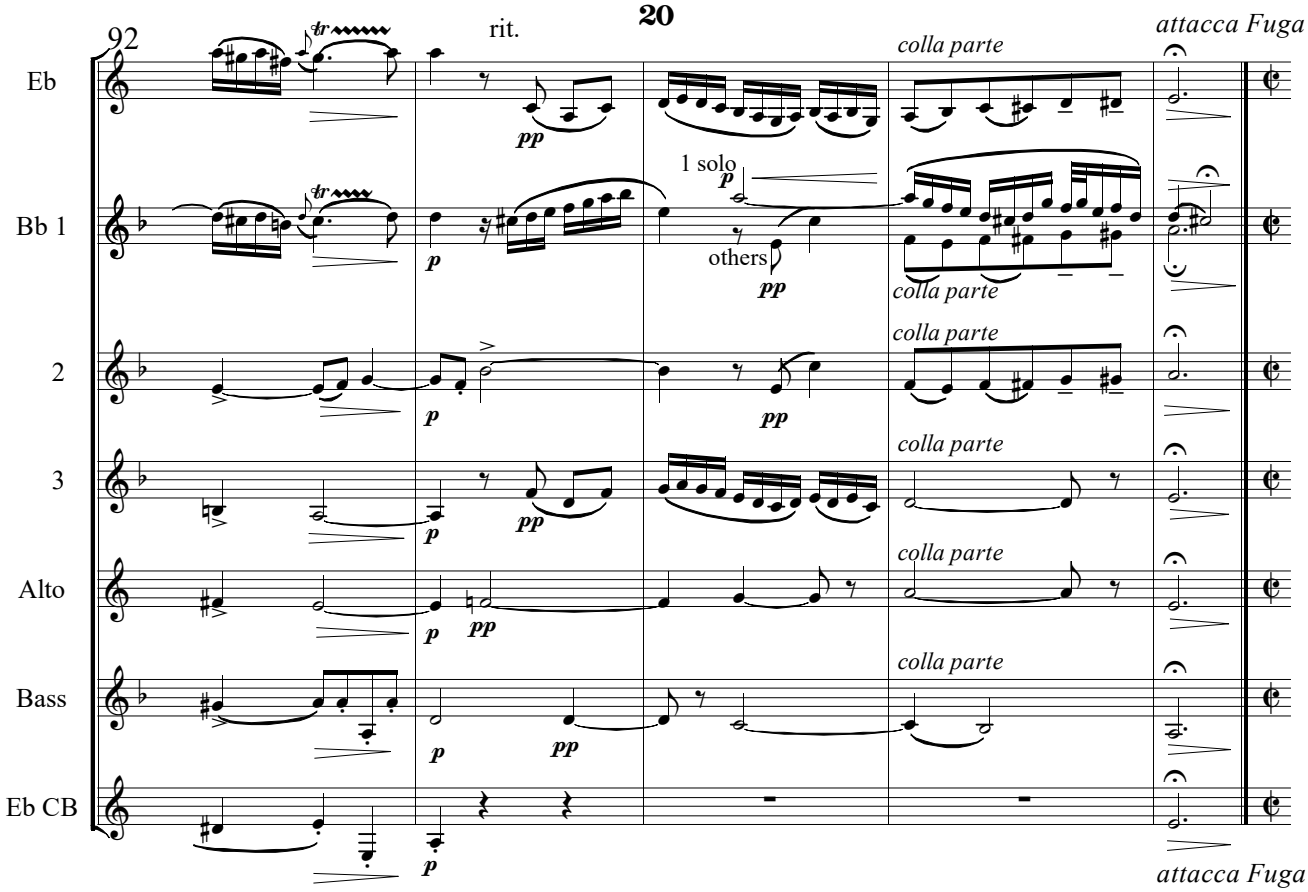

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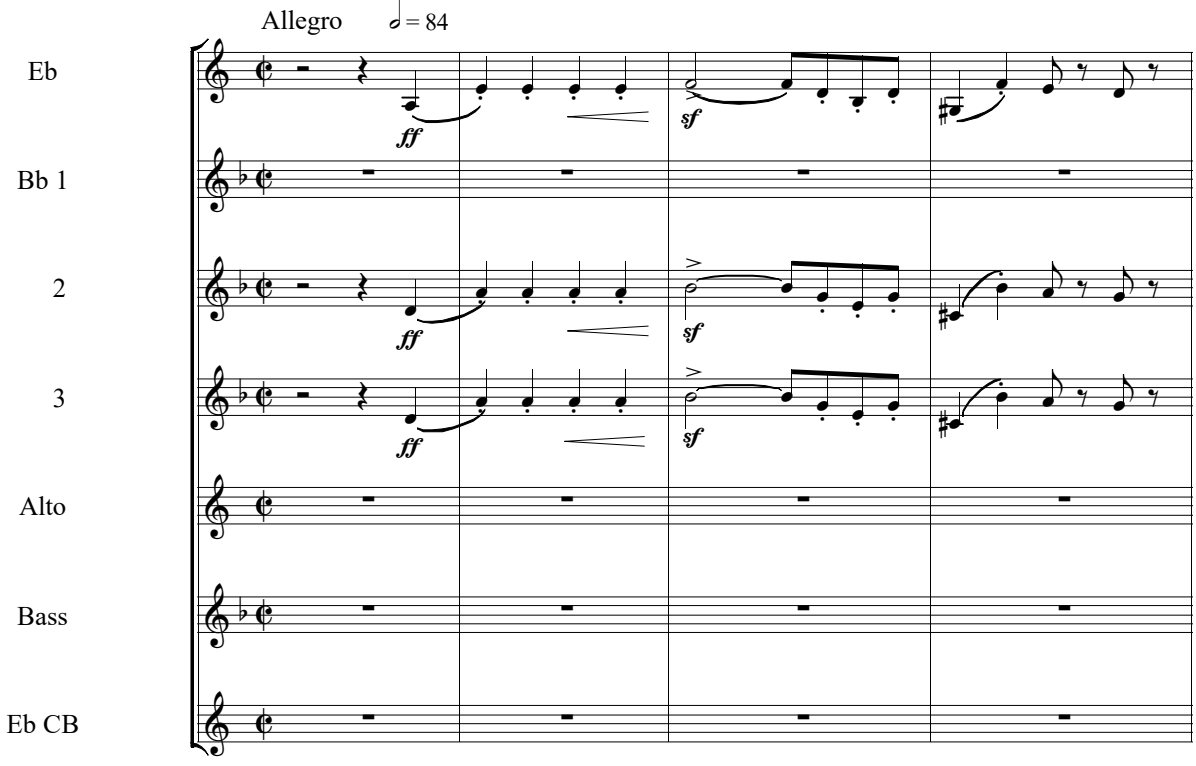
II. Fugue



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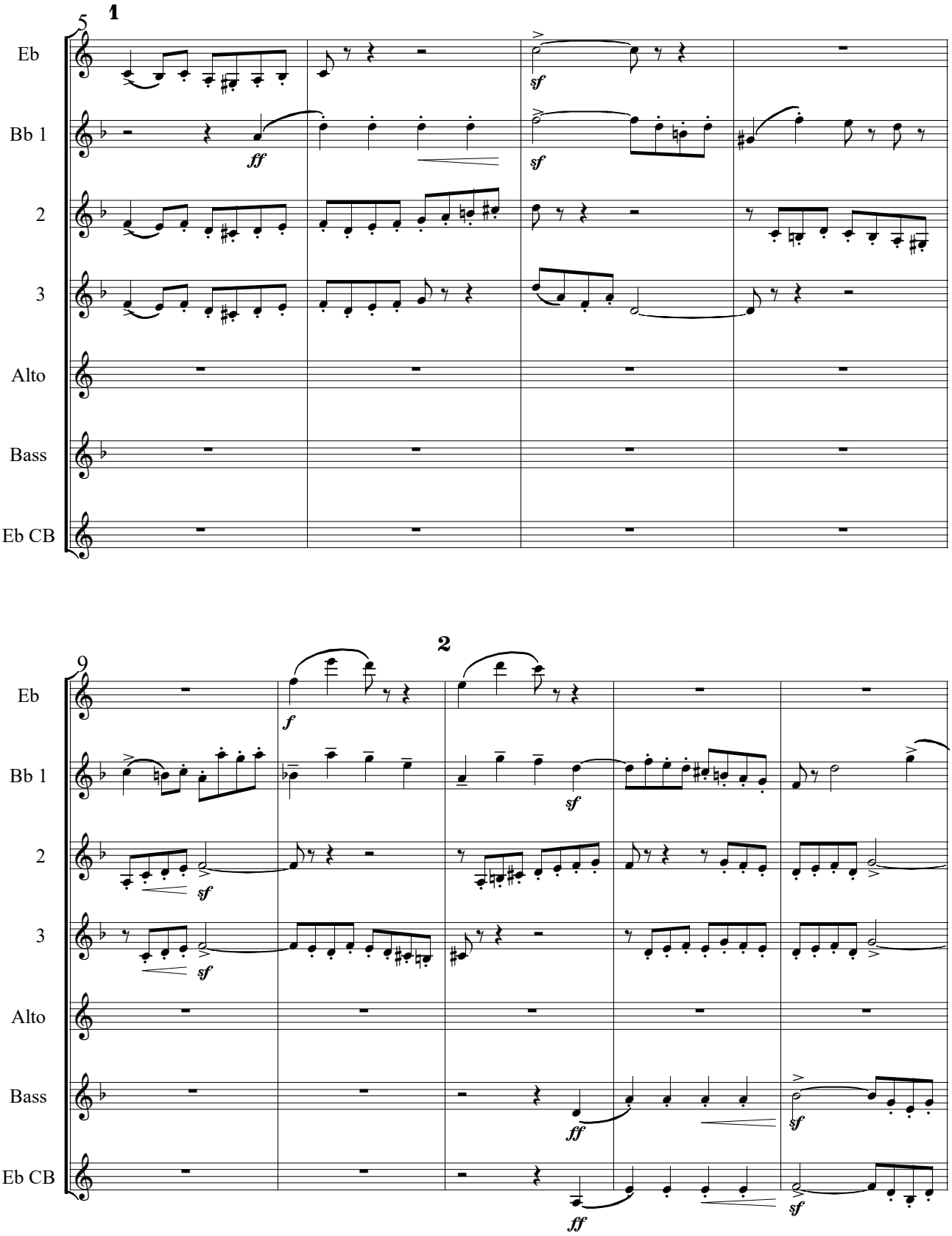

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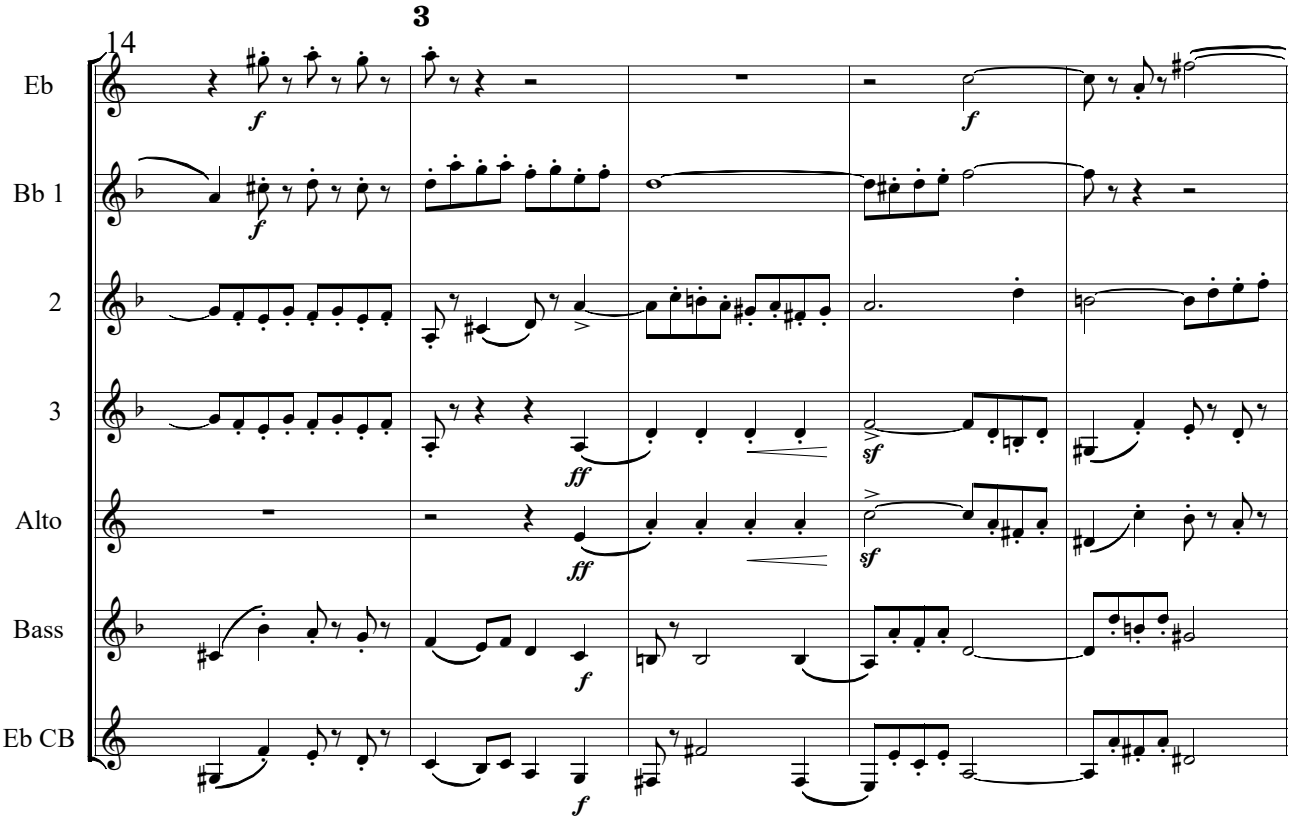

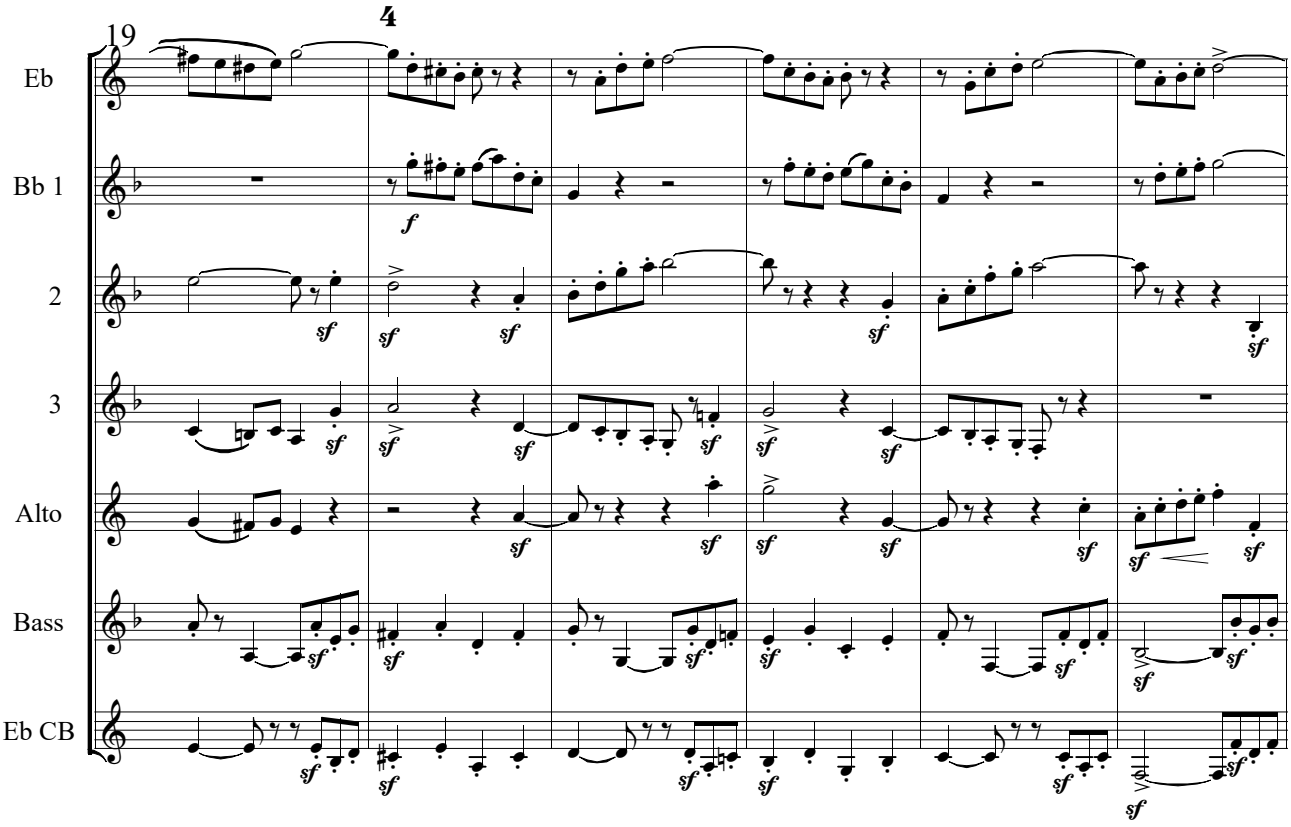

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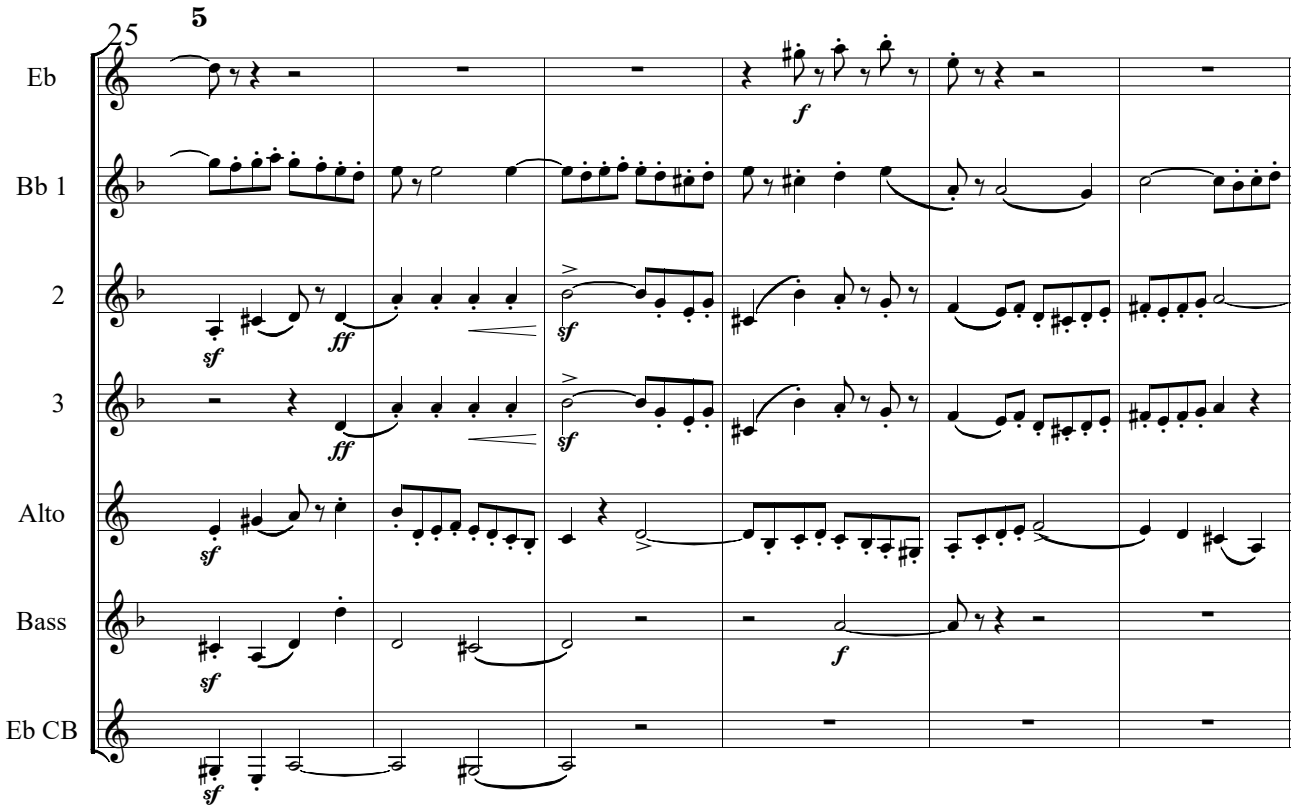

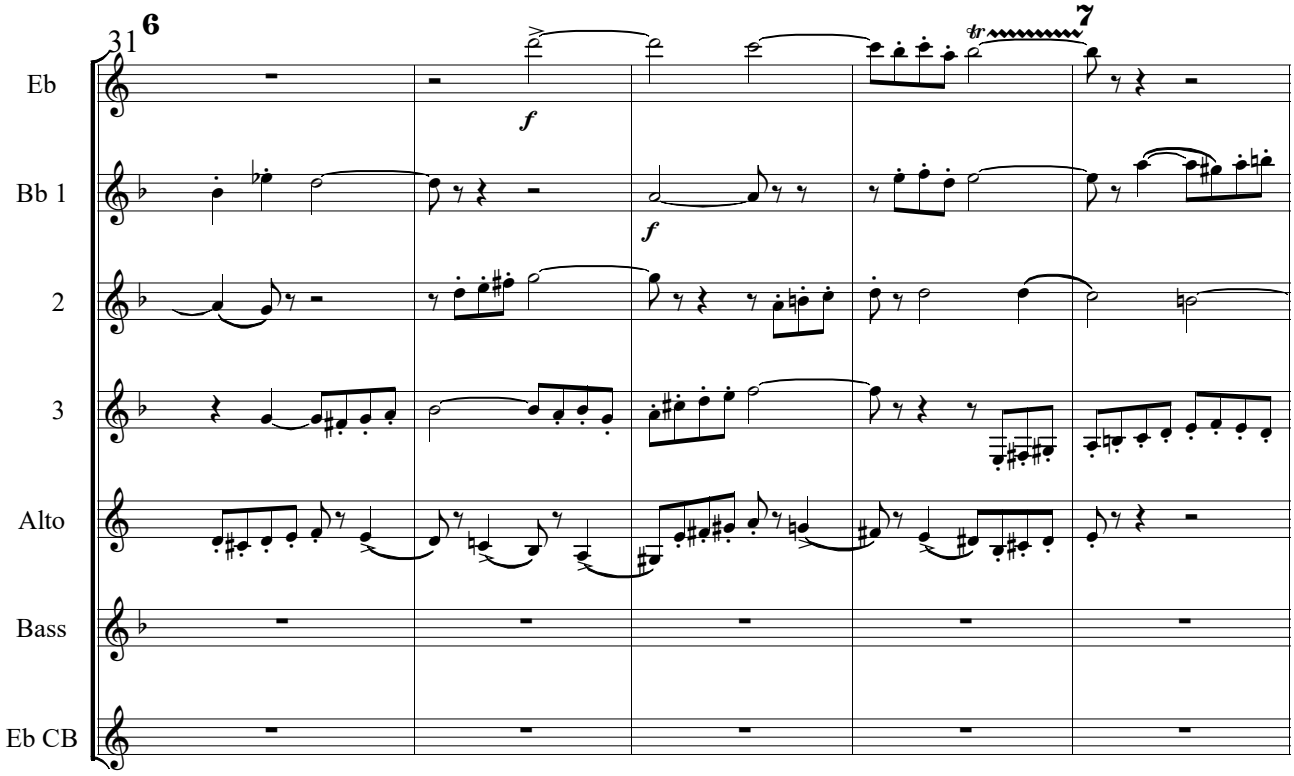

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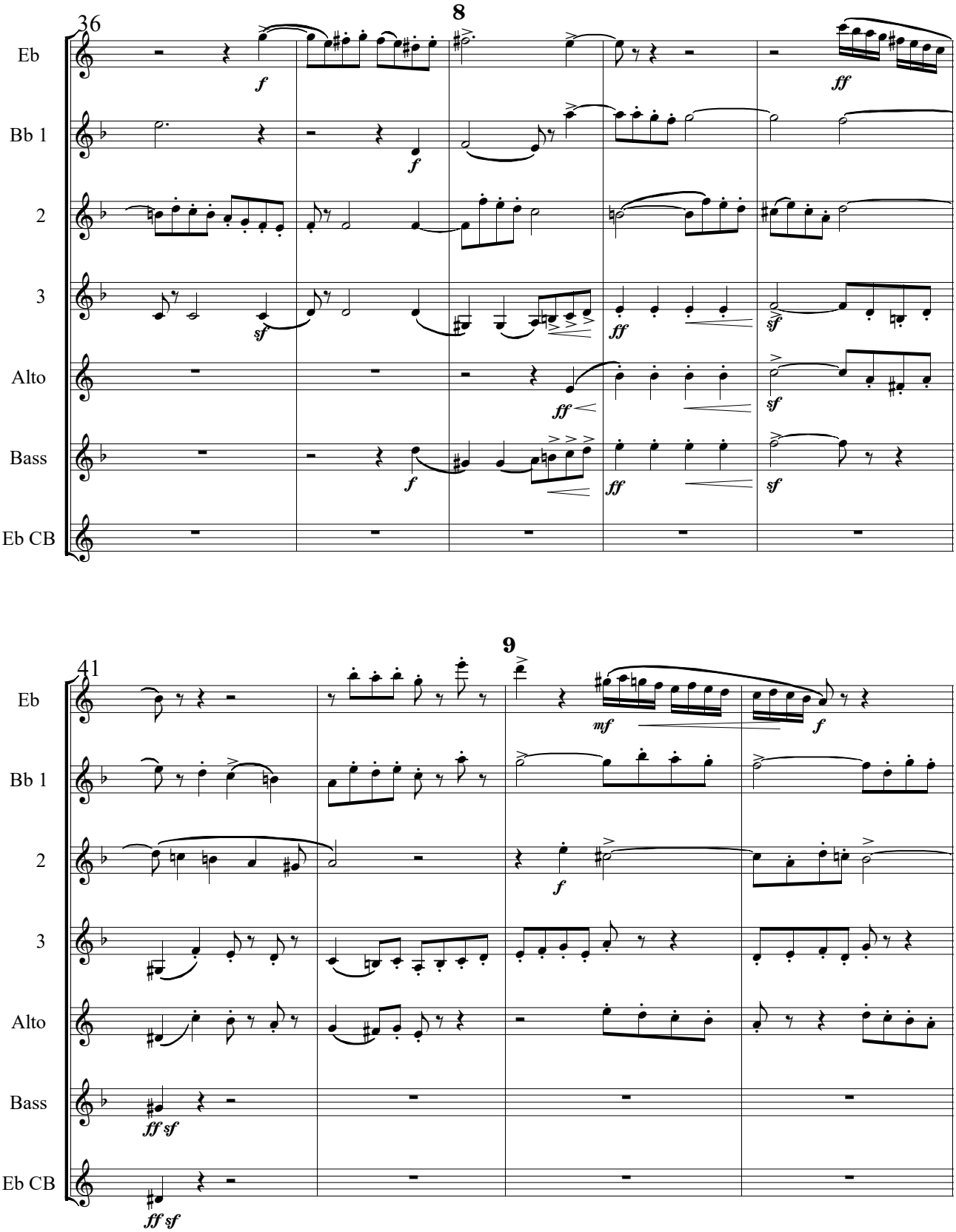

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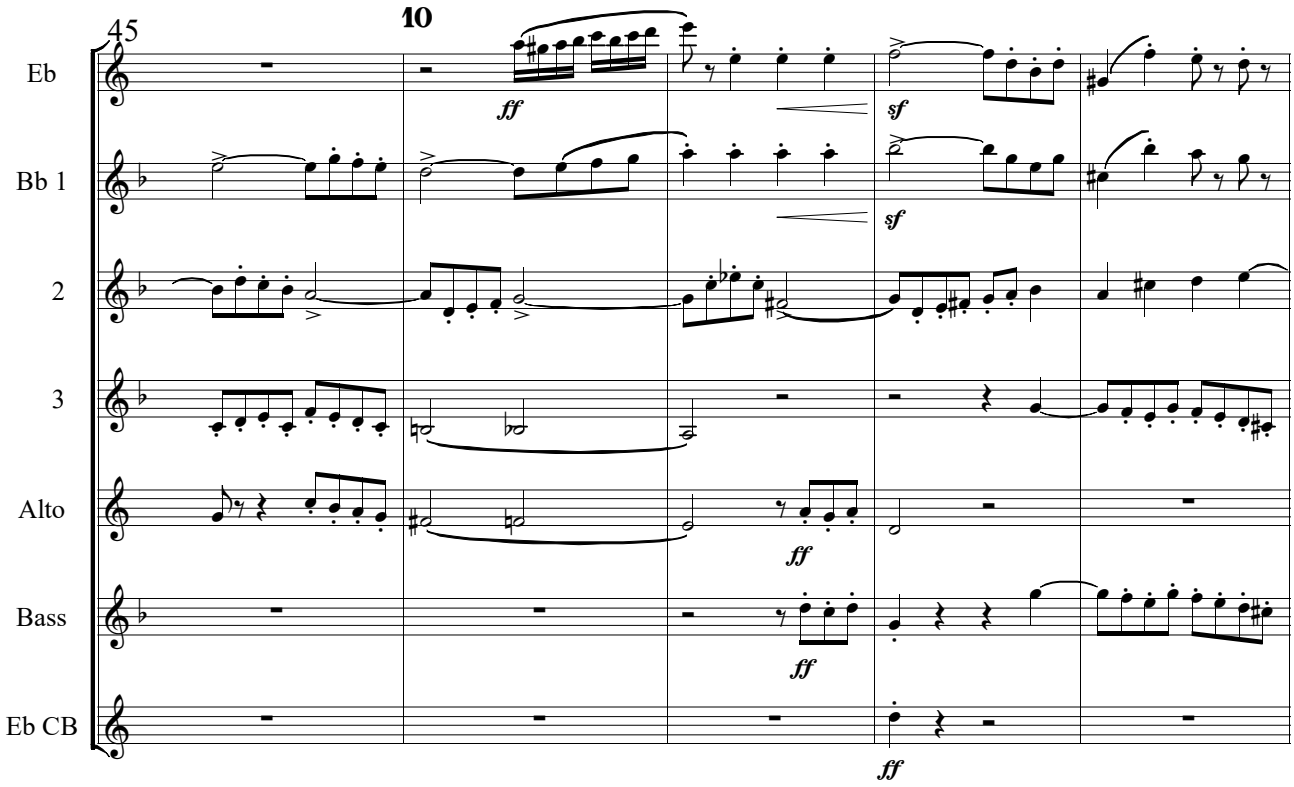

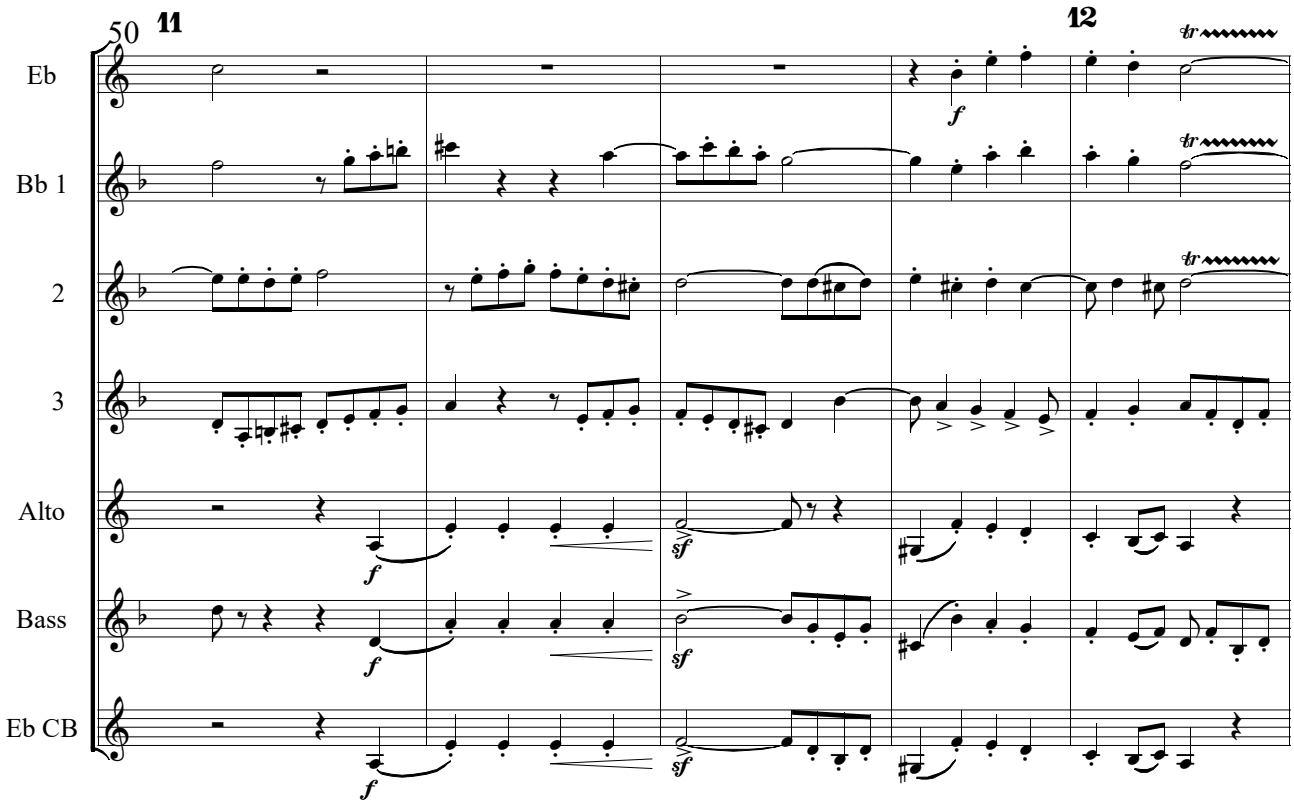

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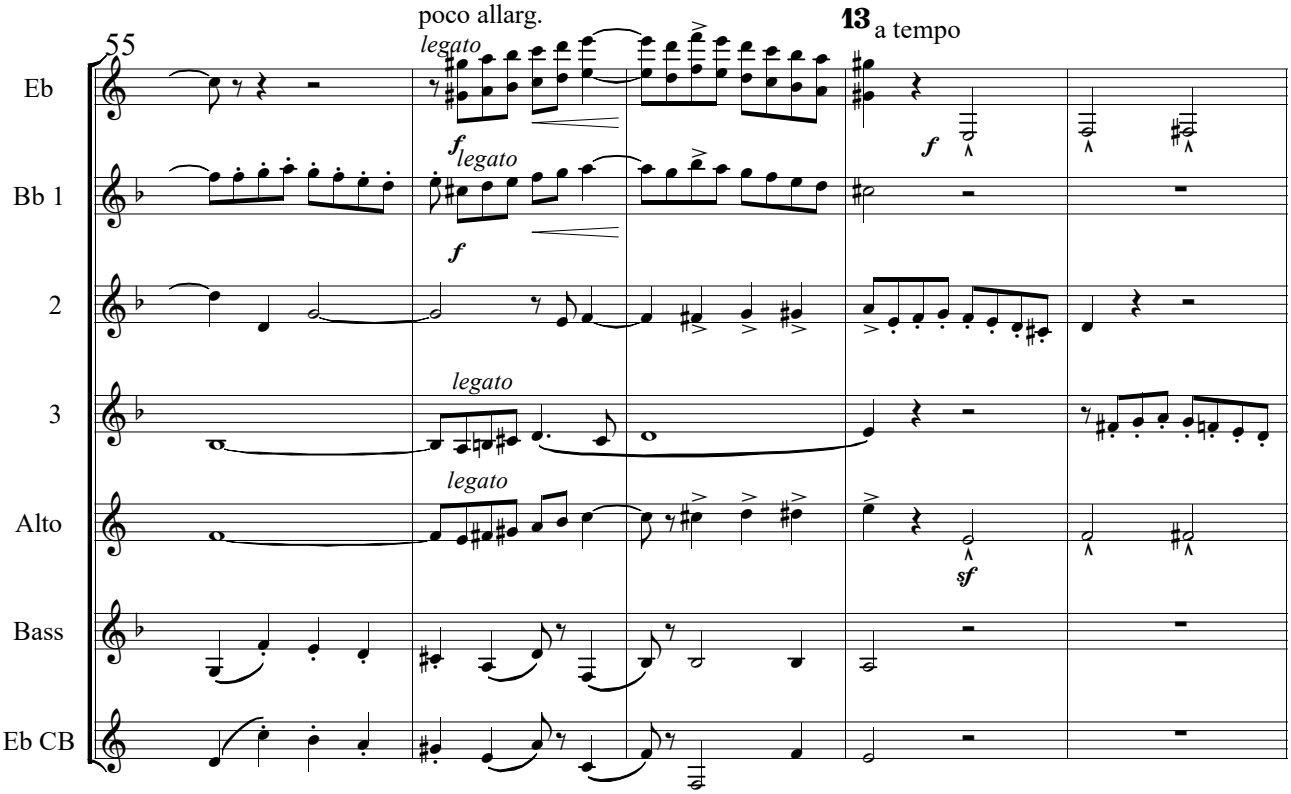

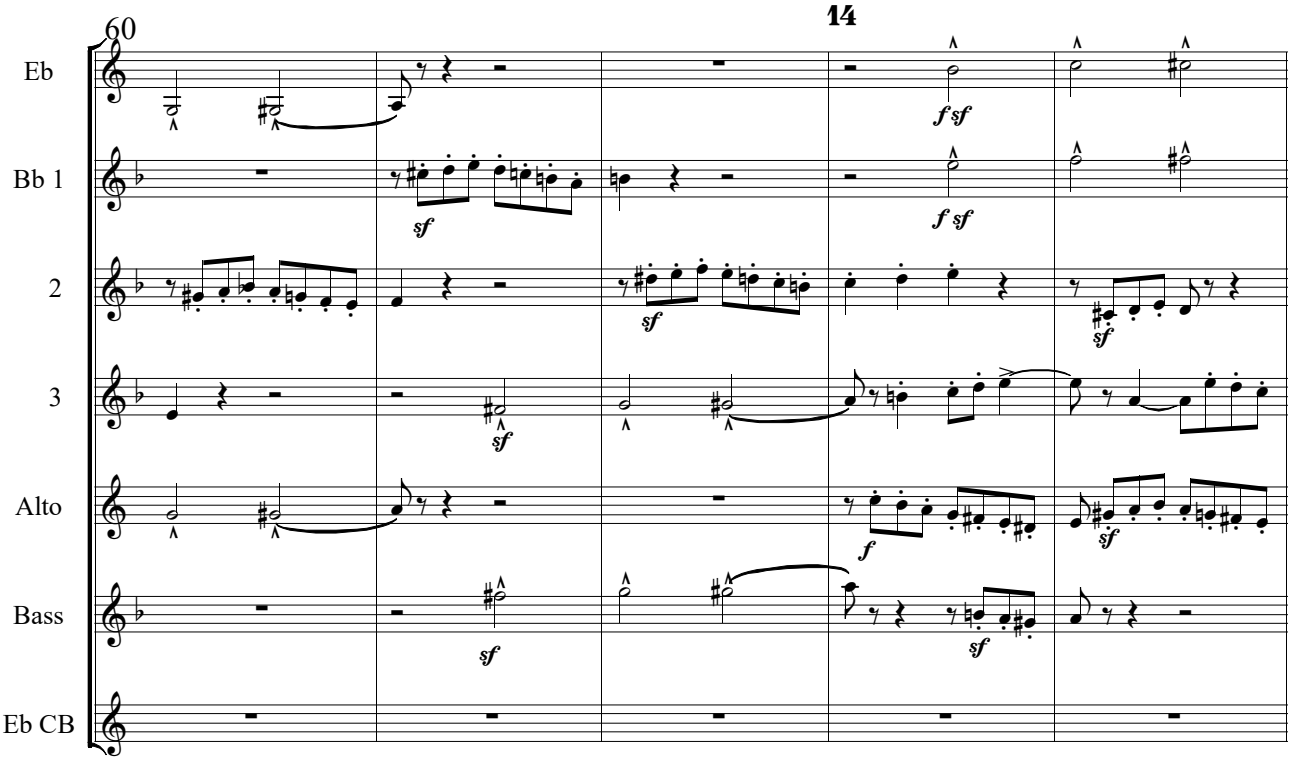

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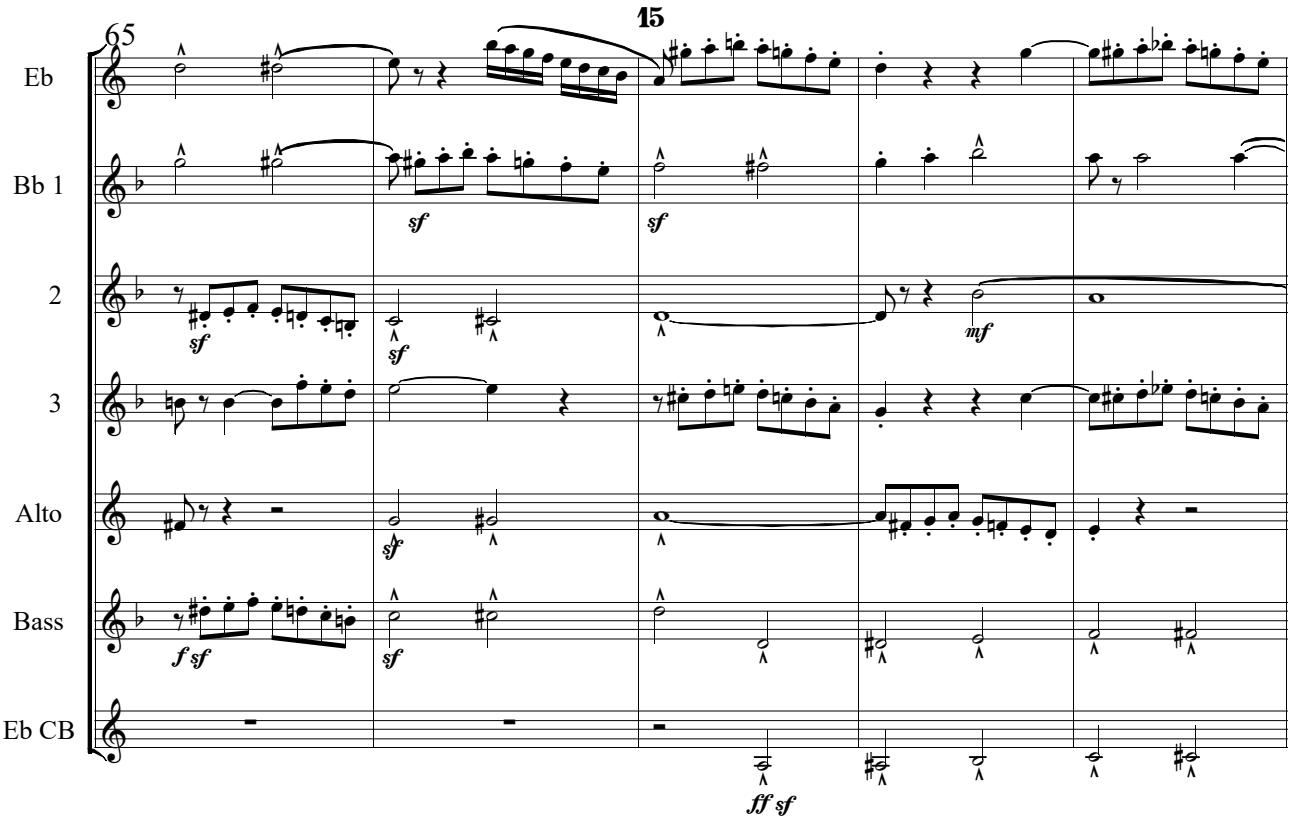

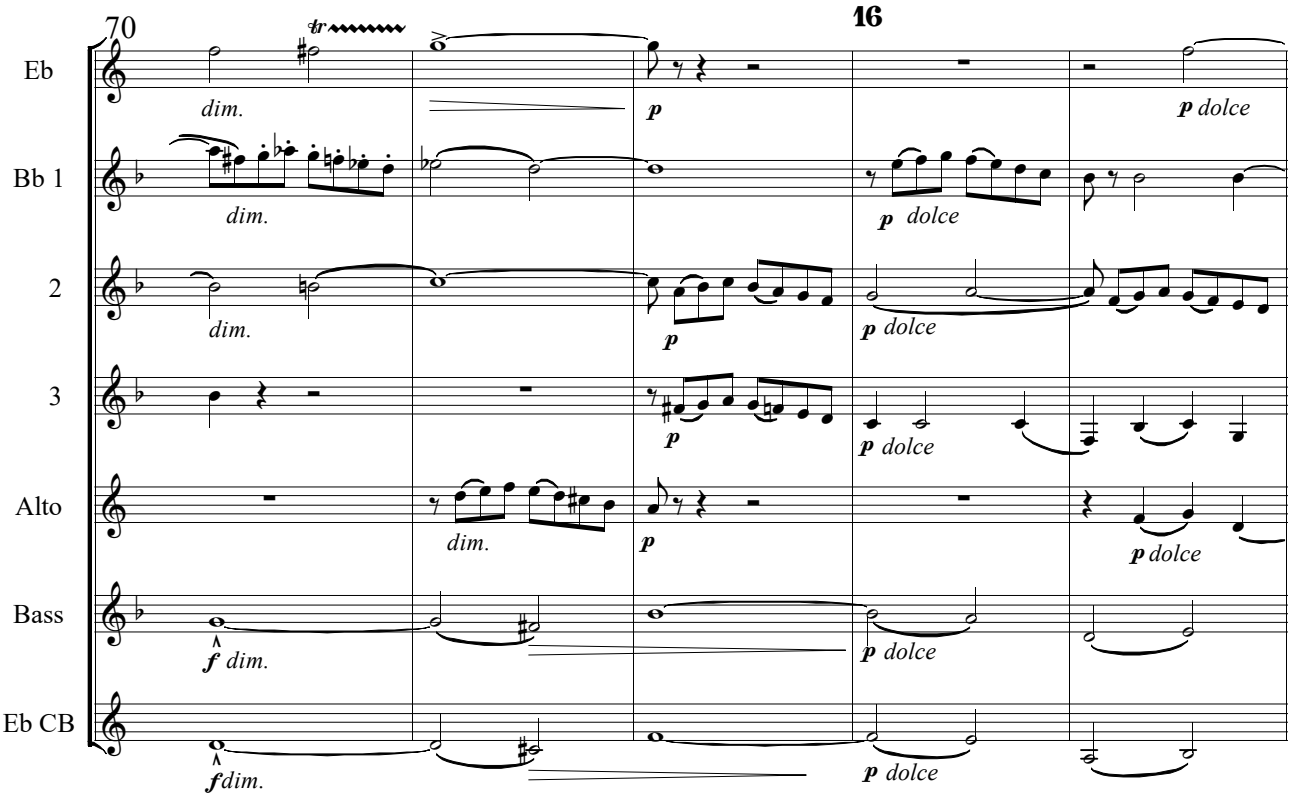

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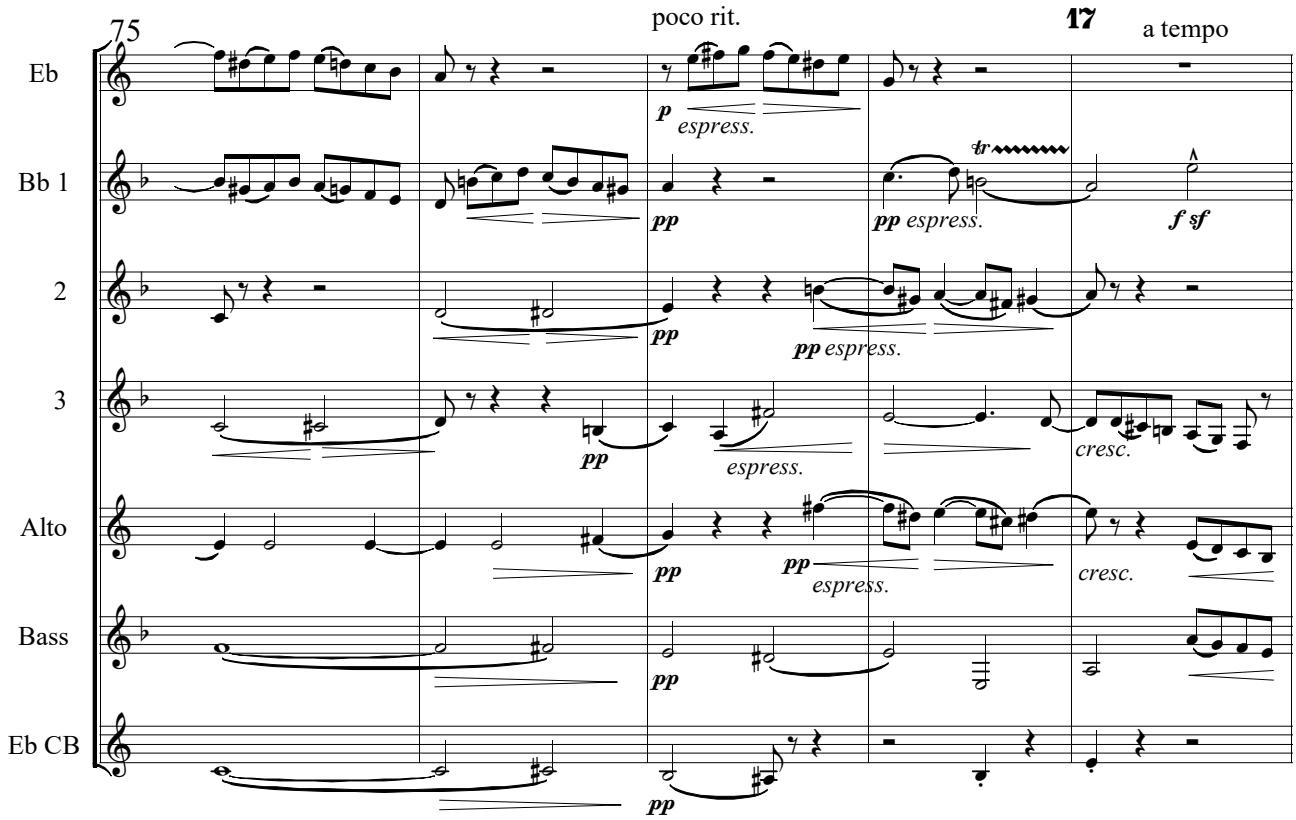

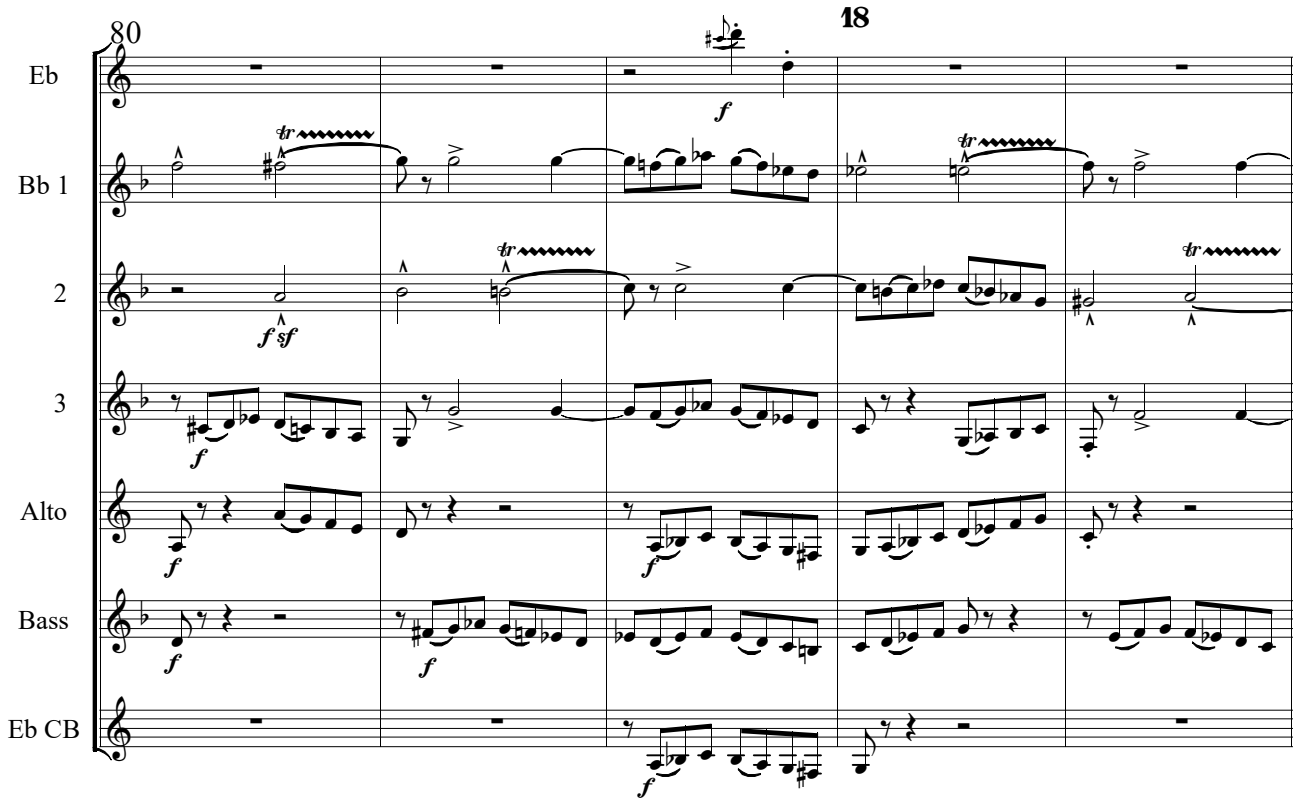

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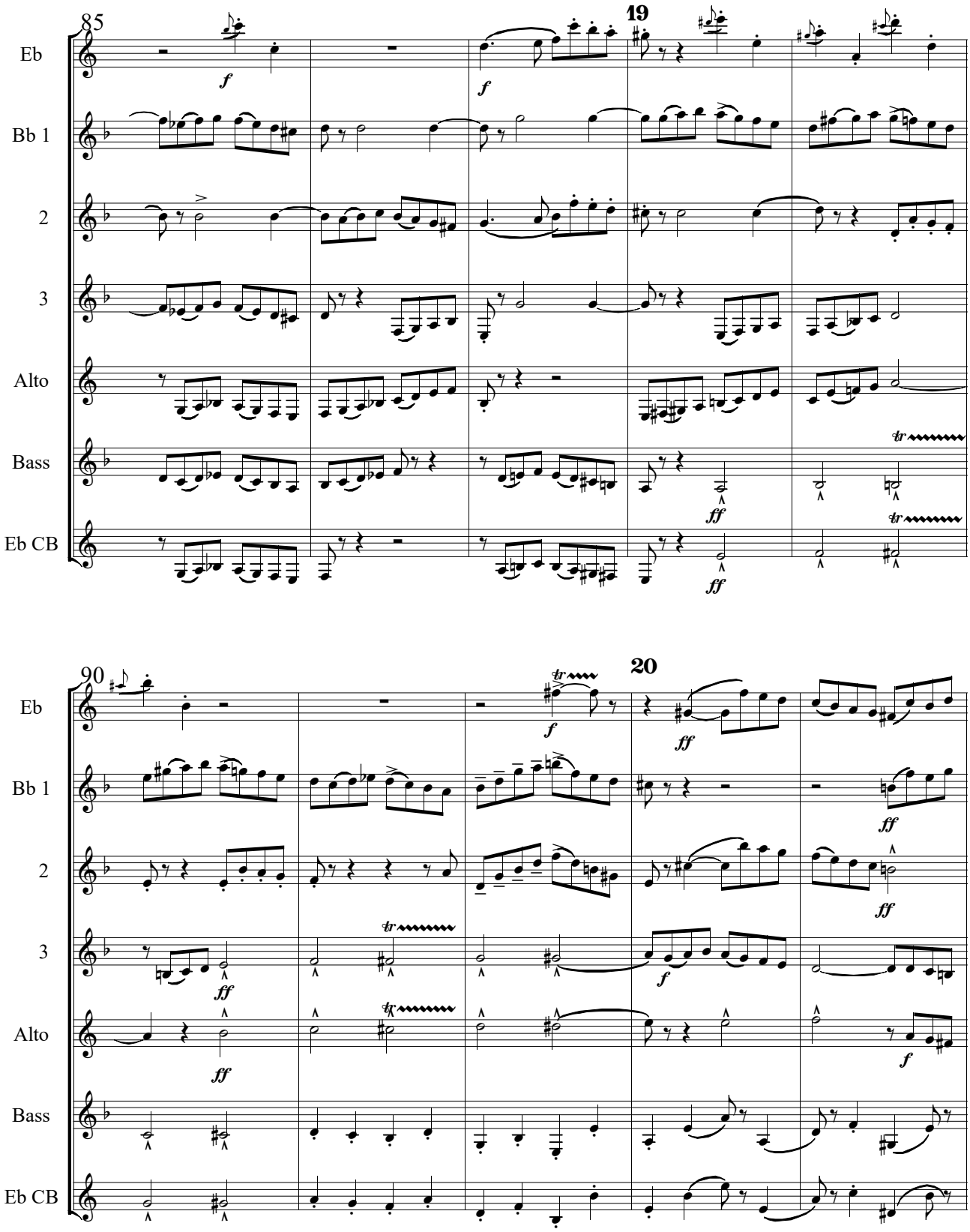

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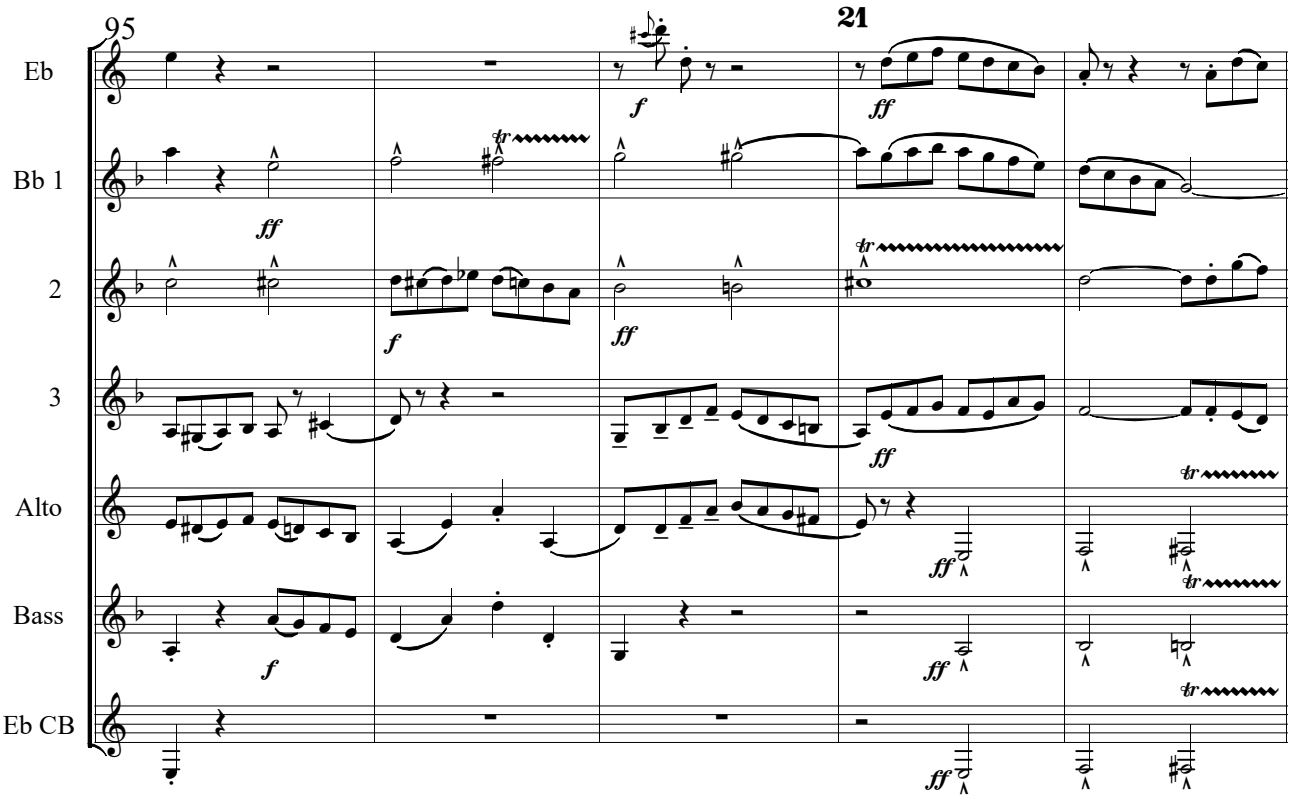

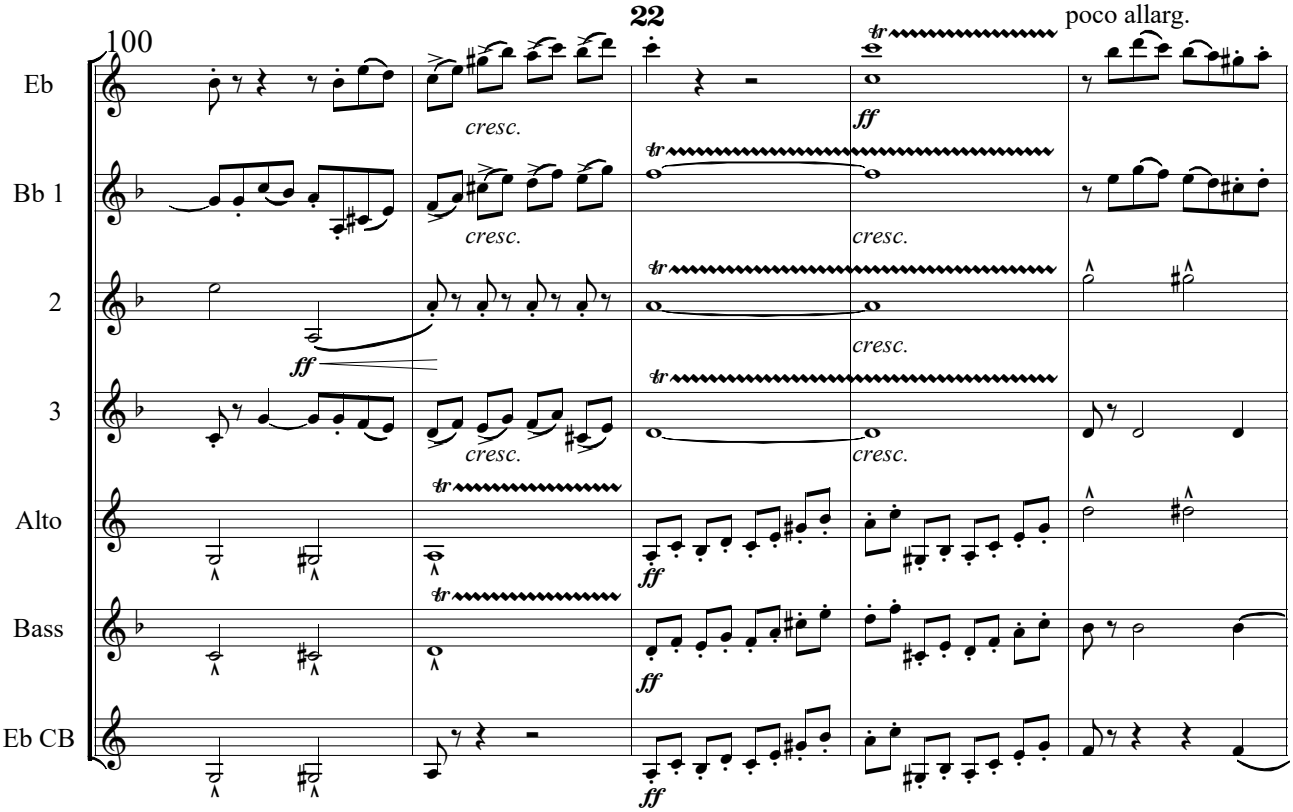

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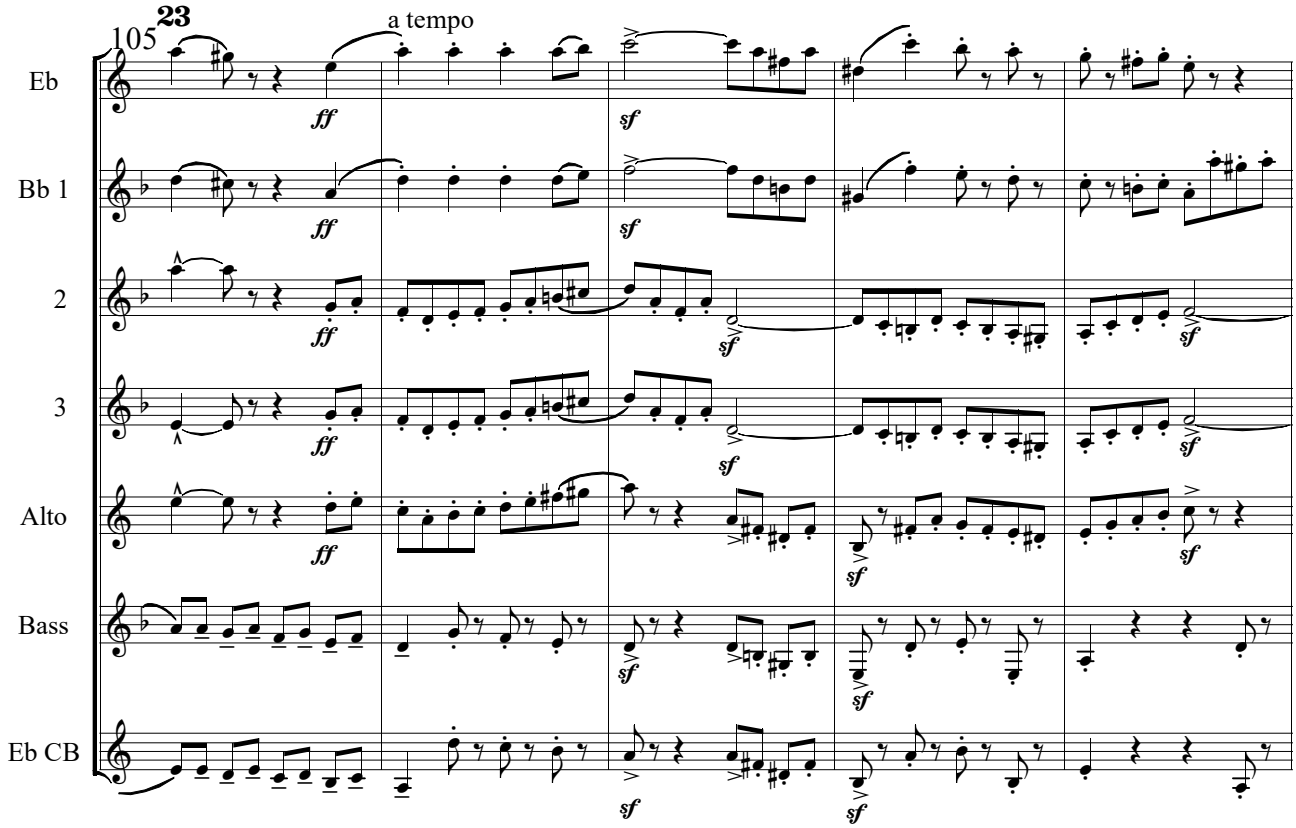

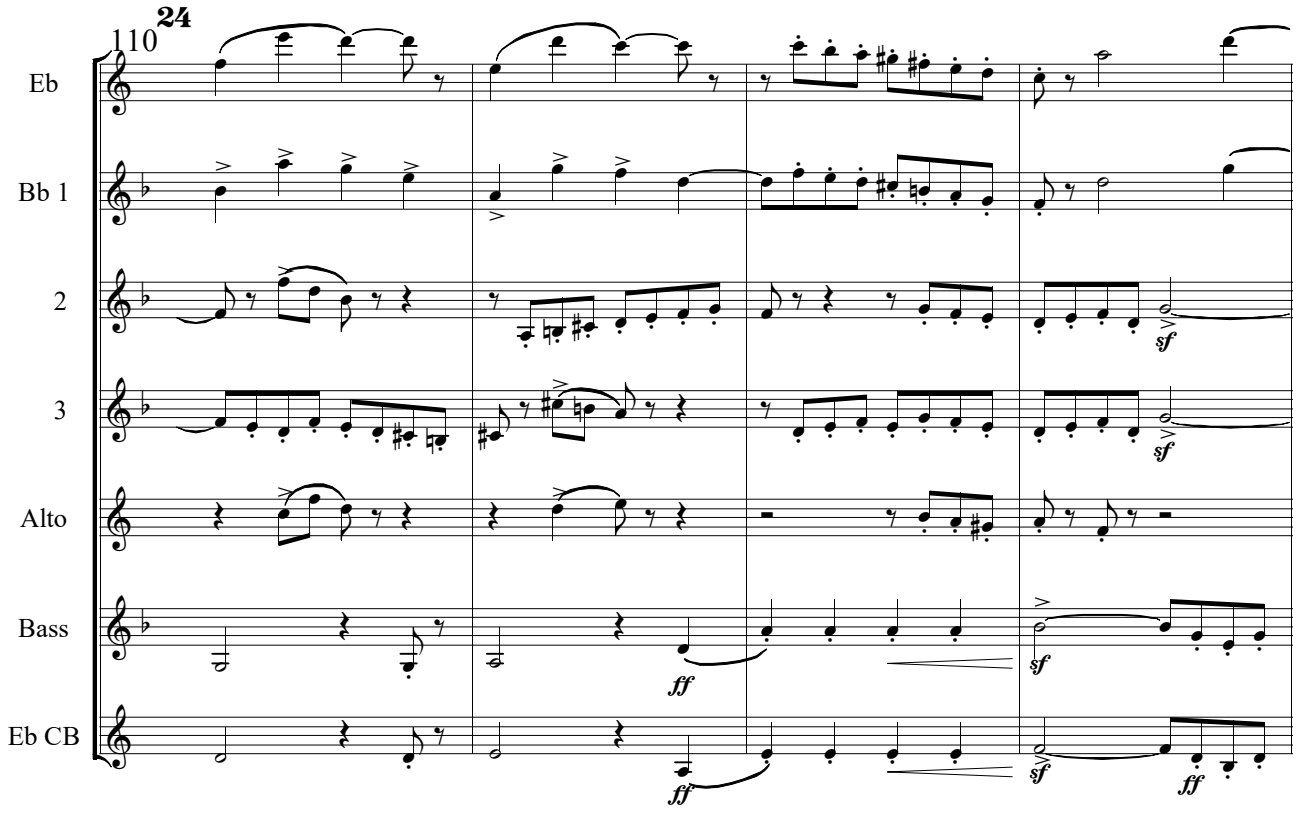

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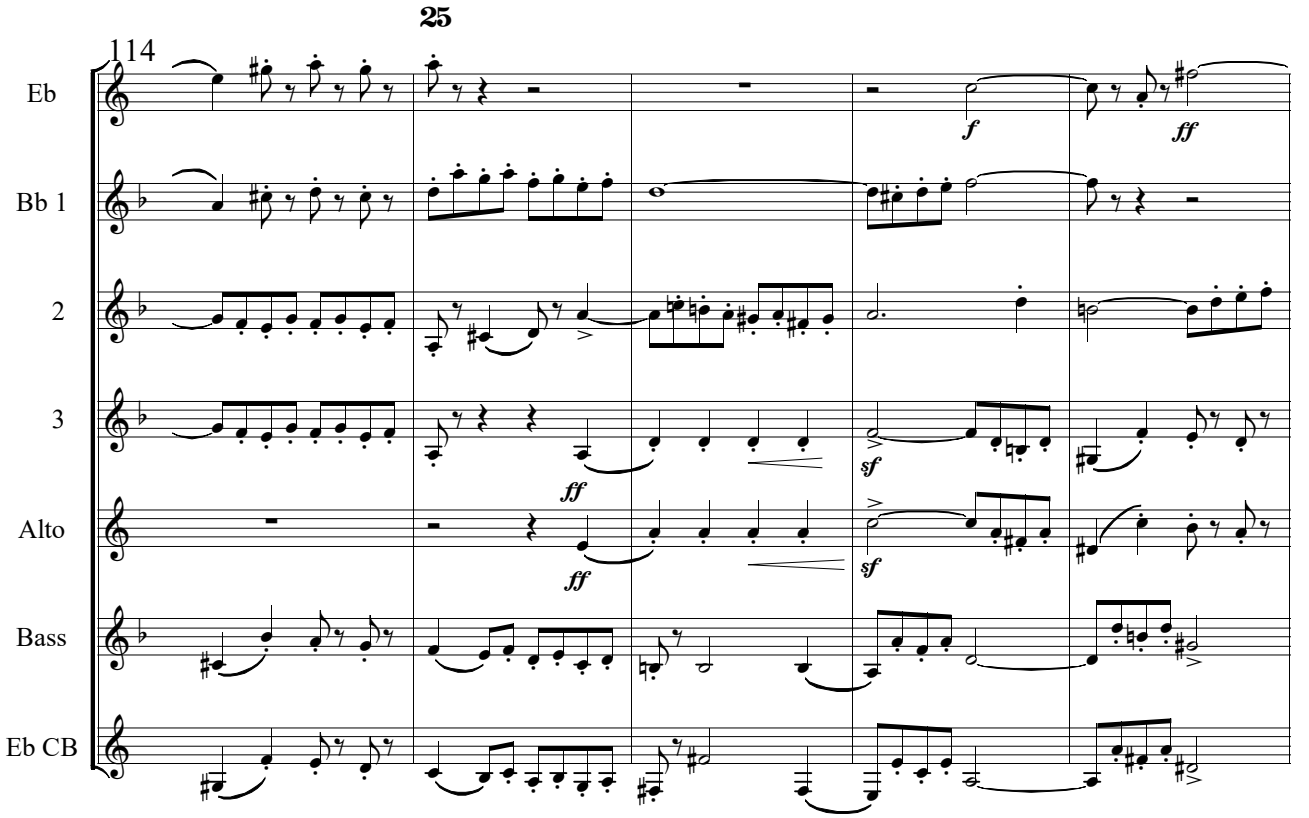

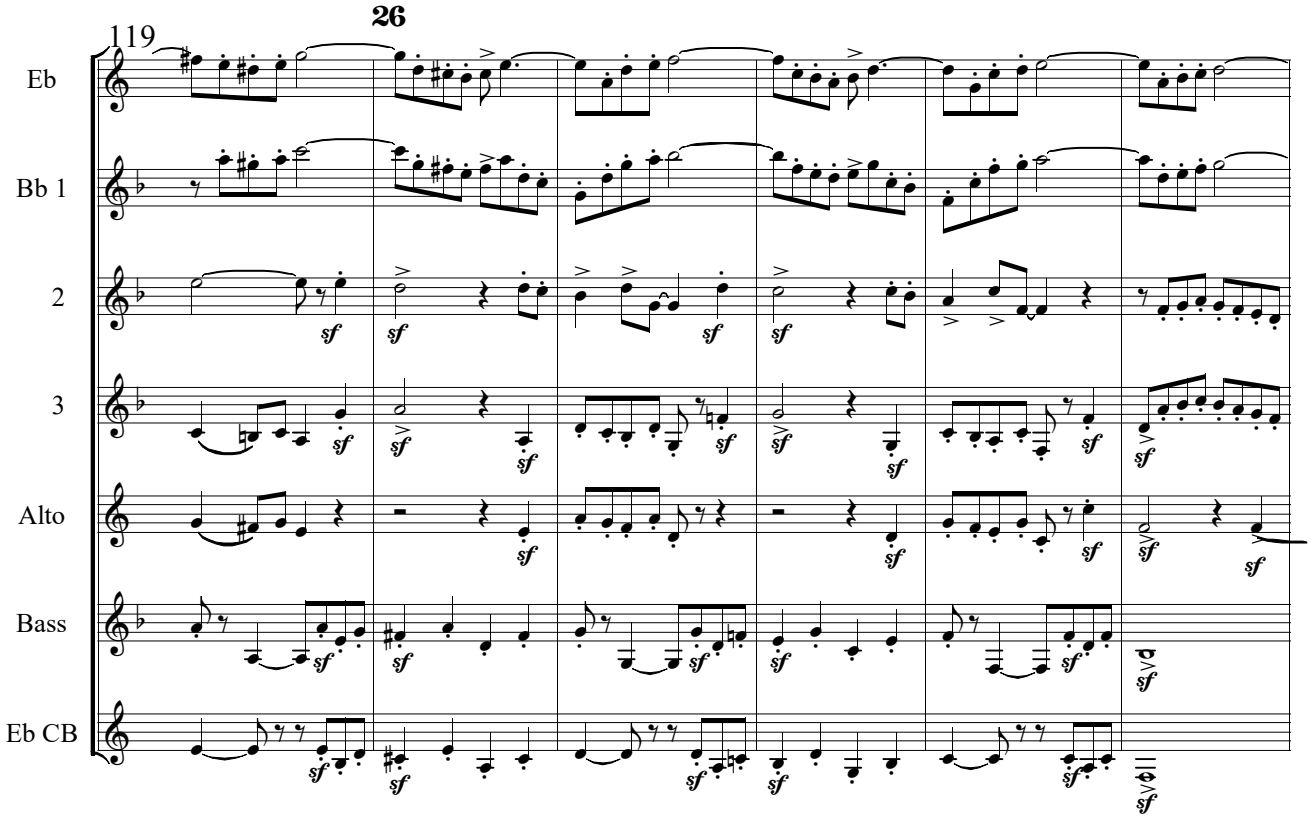

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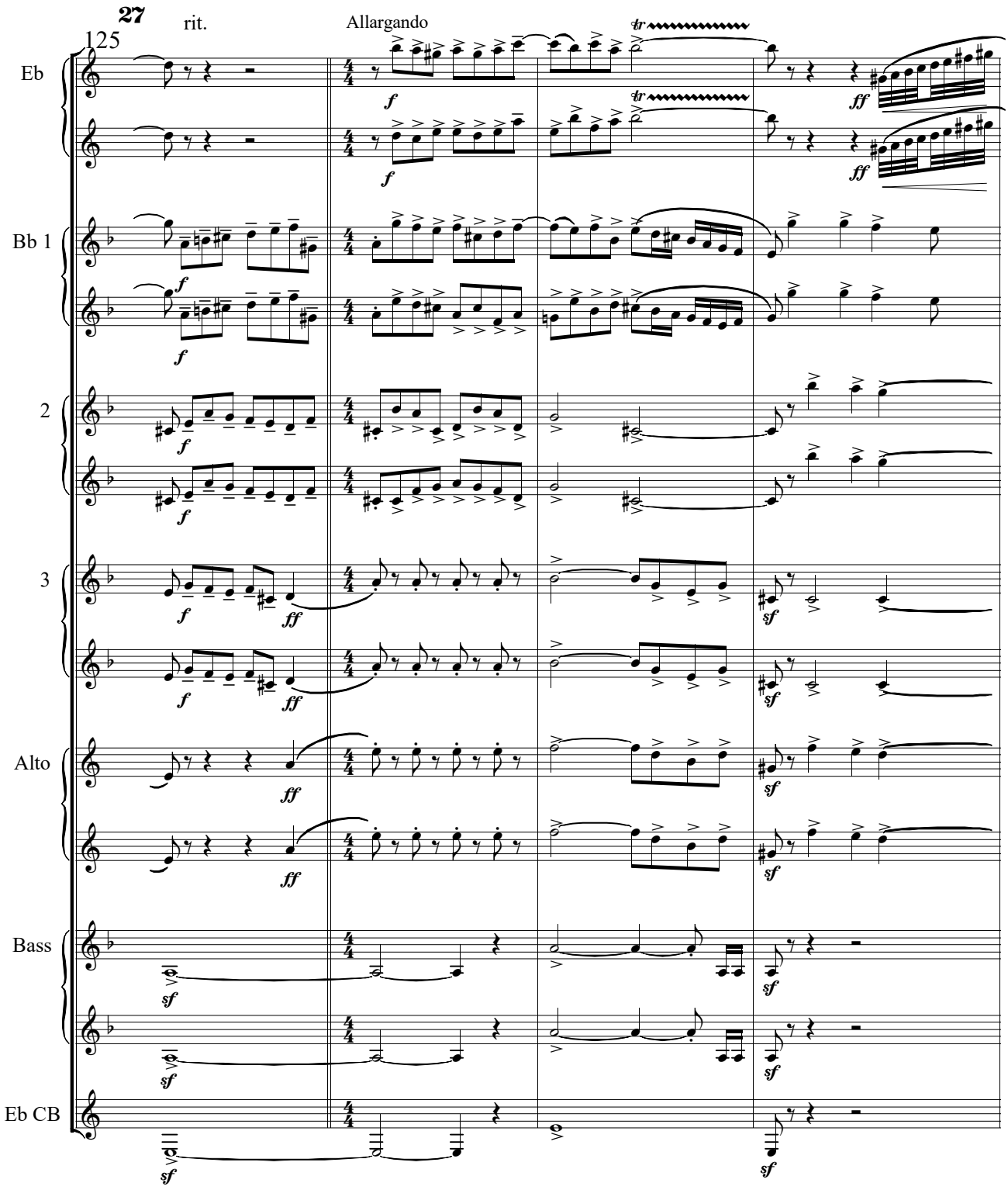

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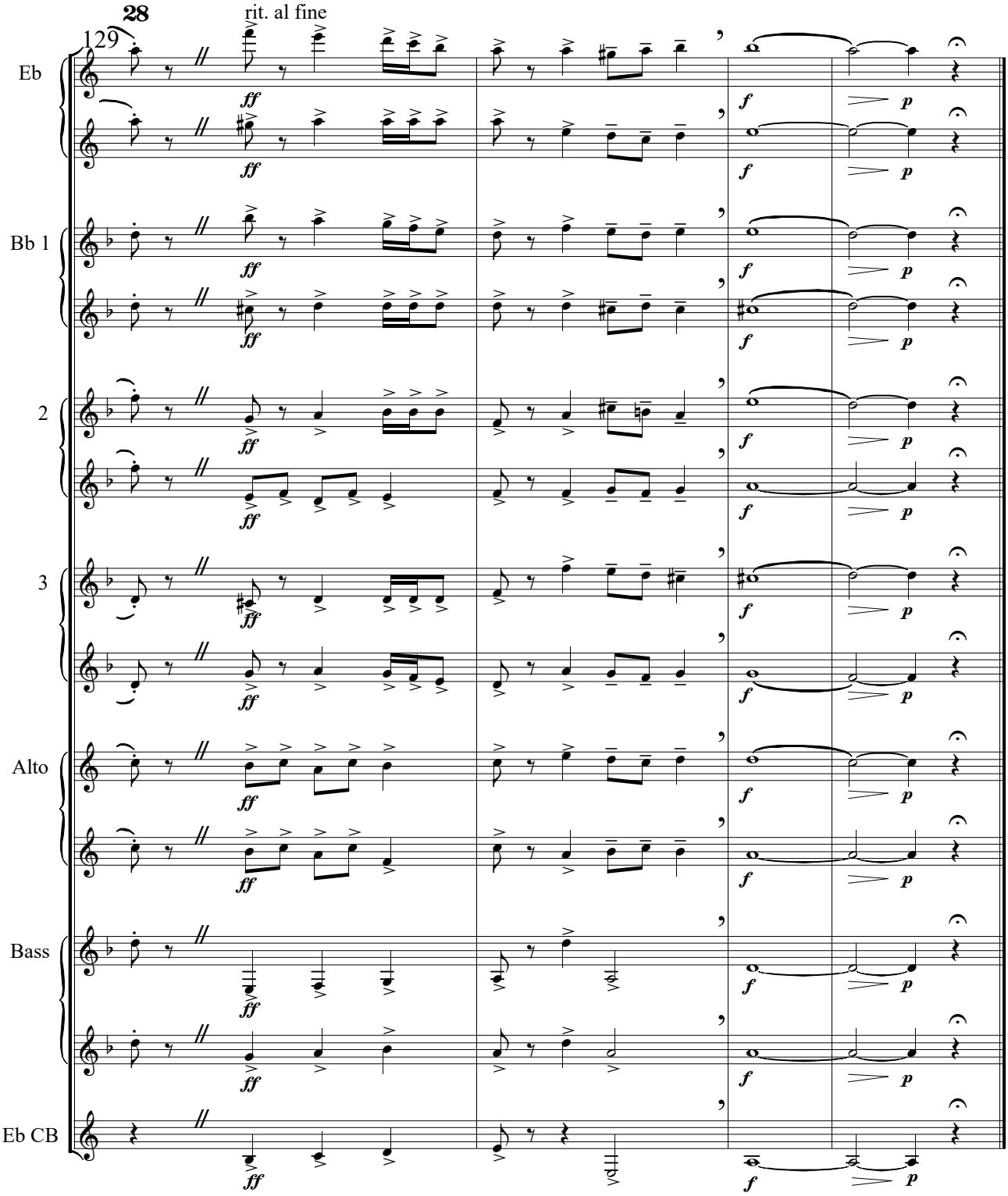

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