W. Jay Sydeman

Trio

for Flute, Oboe and Bassoon

(c. 1987)

Arts Aeternum

I like woodwinds very much. Never understood why the French horn is part of a woodwind quintet (of which, however, I have written three!). Also the clarinet (a somewhat later development) can get a bit gooey sounding (great when you want it). But the flute and double-reeded oboe and bassoon have a special charm. So, in 1987 I wrote such a piece.

What I especially like about this combination is that it doesn't blend well (say like a string quartet), so writing chordal sort of music (which I rarely do anyway) would be counterproductive. Now if you glance at these two movements you will never (or rarely) see the instruments playing the same rhythms. Movement 1 dances along contrapuntally, and is gay and light and fun. Not so with movement 2, which is quite acerbic with jabbing staccatos abounding in all parts… not that it doesn't have a certain charm.

– W. Jay Sydeman, January 2013

W. Jay Sydeman's life mirrors the breadth and variety of his music. Born in New York in 1928 and educated at Manhattan's Mannes School of Music, he quickly became one of the most sought-after and honored composers of his generation, receiving commissions from such prestigious groups as the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, the Tanglewood Music Center, and the Boston Symphony, which premiered his orchestral work in memory of John F. Kennedy in 1966. "Sydeman uses a whole battery of far out techniques," wrote the *New York Times*, "but he has an uncanny ability to throw in the whole avant-garde machinery as if it were the simplest, most normal way of making music in the world ... More than many of his colleagues, he seems to know what will sound well, and he works for some remarkably attractive, pure textures. His sounds seem to grow from a physical sense of exactly what material is right."

In 1970, after a heady period that included awards from the National institute of Arts and Letters, the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Library of Congress, Sydeman left New York – and composition – to begin a journey of personal and artistic exploration.

"Around 1980," he has written, "I returned to composition – at first a large number of choral works which reconnected me to the source of all music – the human voice. Out of this new lyric impulse have evolved all of my works since that time – more romantic, more accessible. I create music for the musician."

– Howard Hersh,
Artistic Director of "Music Now"

Sydeman is part of a composers' group in Nevada City annually producing the "Wet Ink Festival of New Music." He now lives in Mendocino and hosts a bi-weekly program on KZYX, "The Mind of a Composer," 10 am to noon on Mondays, introducing and commenting on contemporary music.

Duration: I. Moderato – circa 3:00
II. Allegro – circa 1:30

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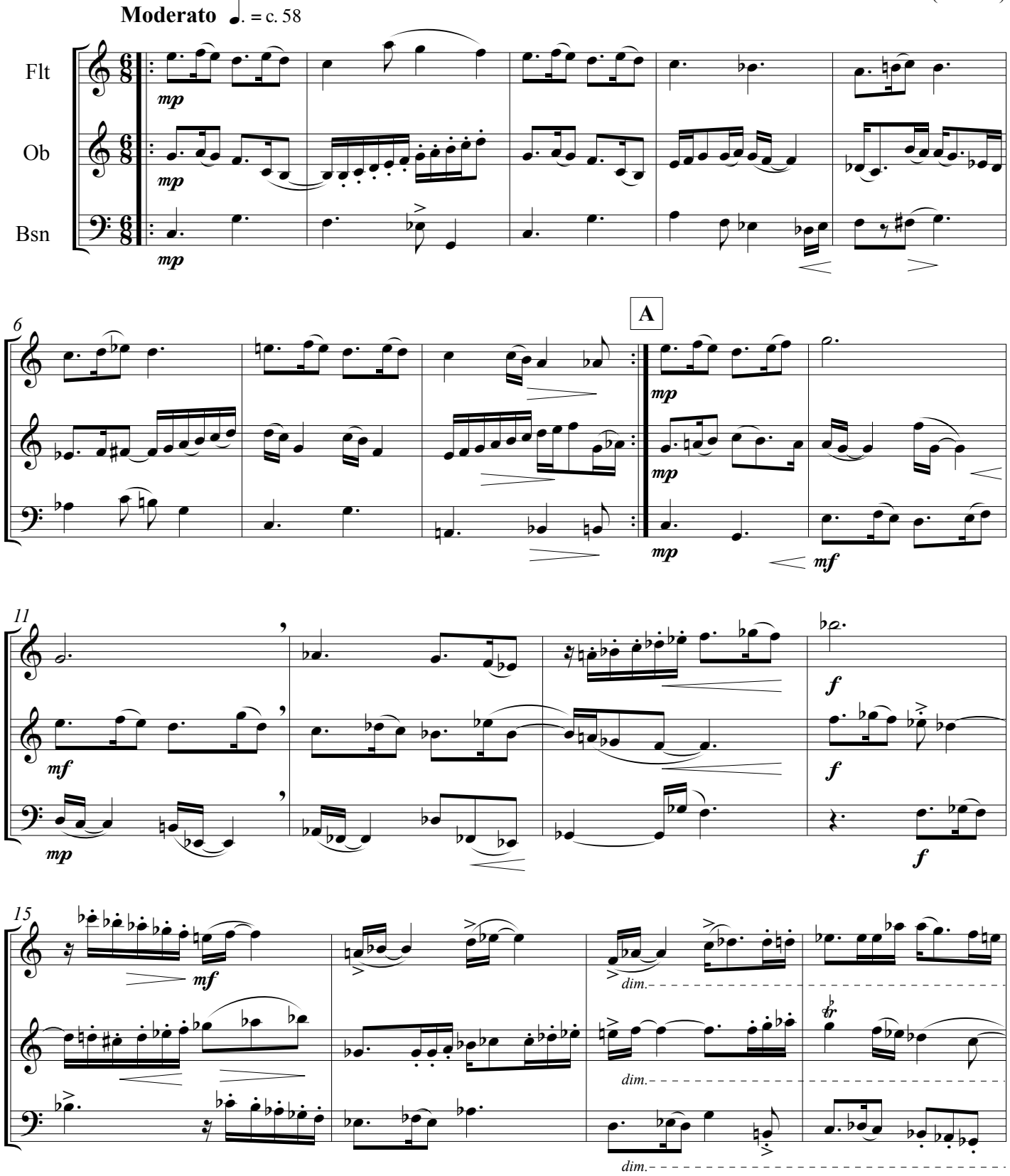
Edited and engraved by Rick Shinozaki (Albany, CA), consulting with the composer.

Trio
for Flute, Oboe and Bassoon
I.

W. Jay Sydeman
(c. 1987)



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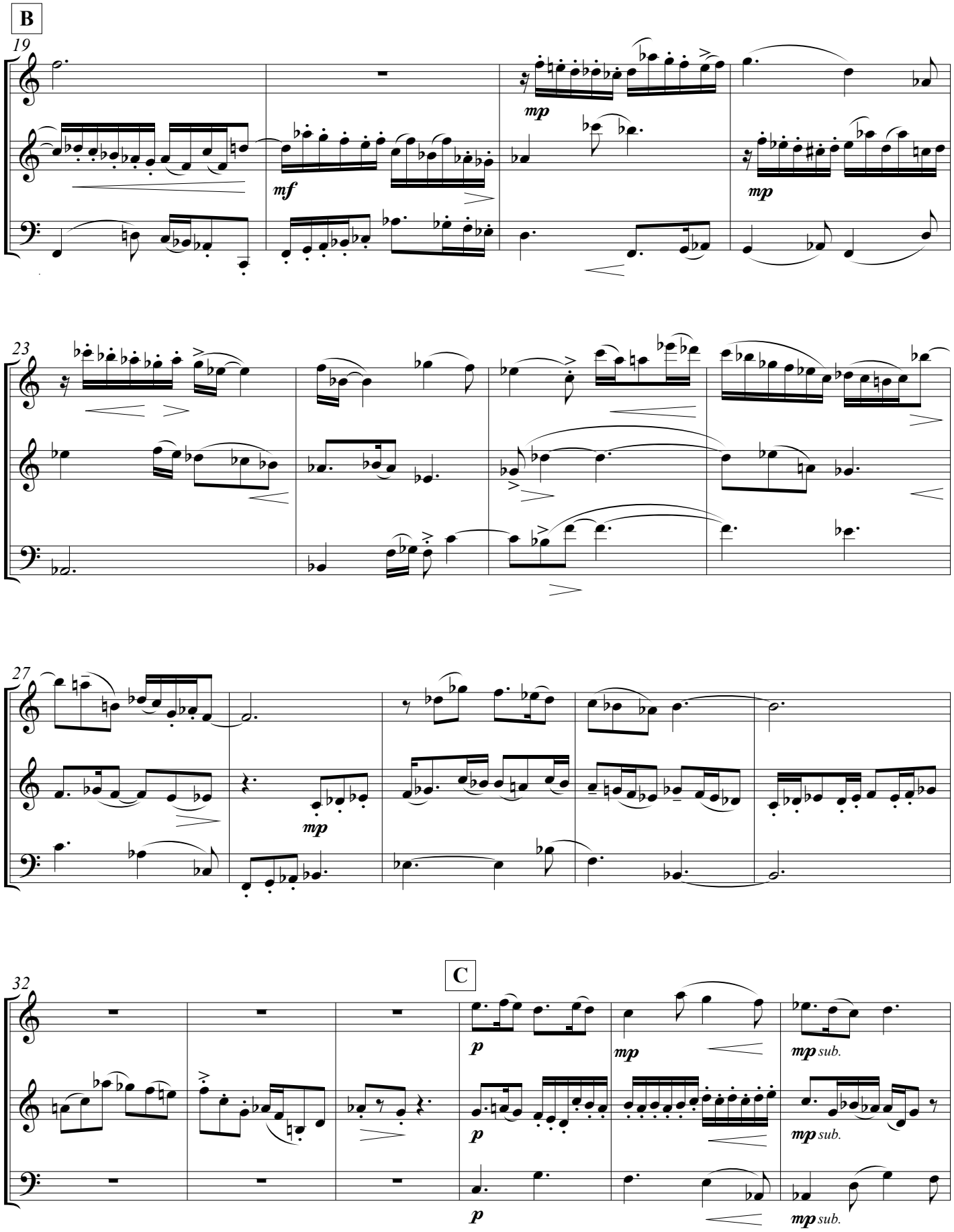
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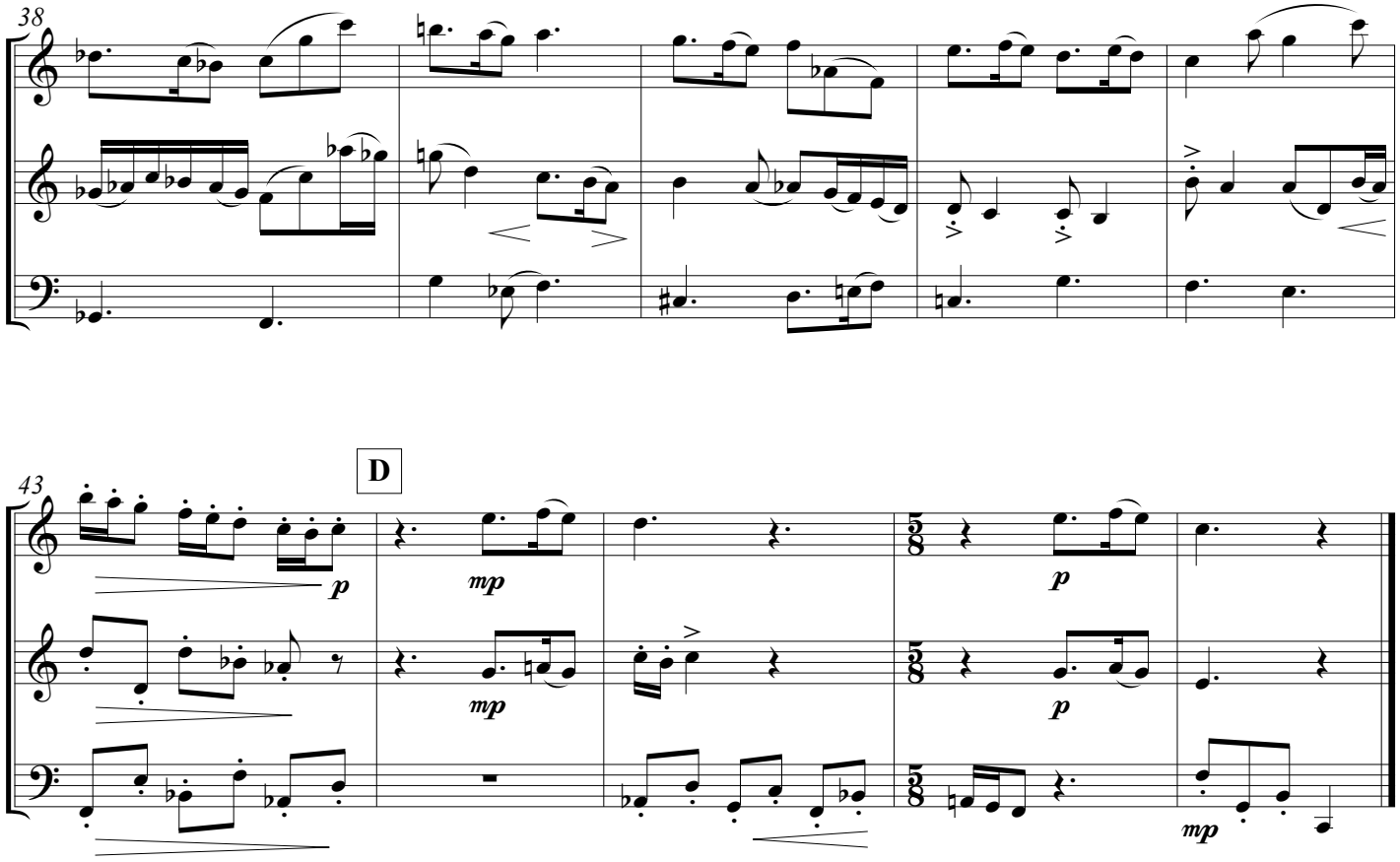
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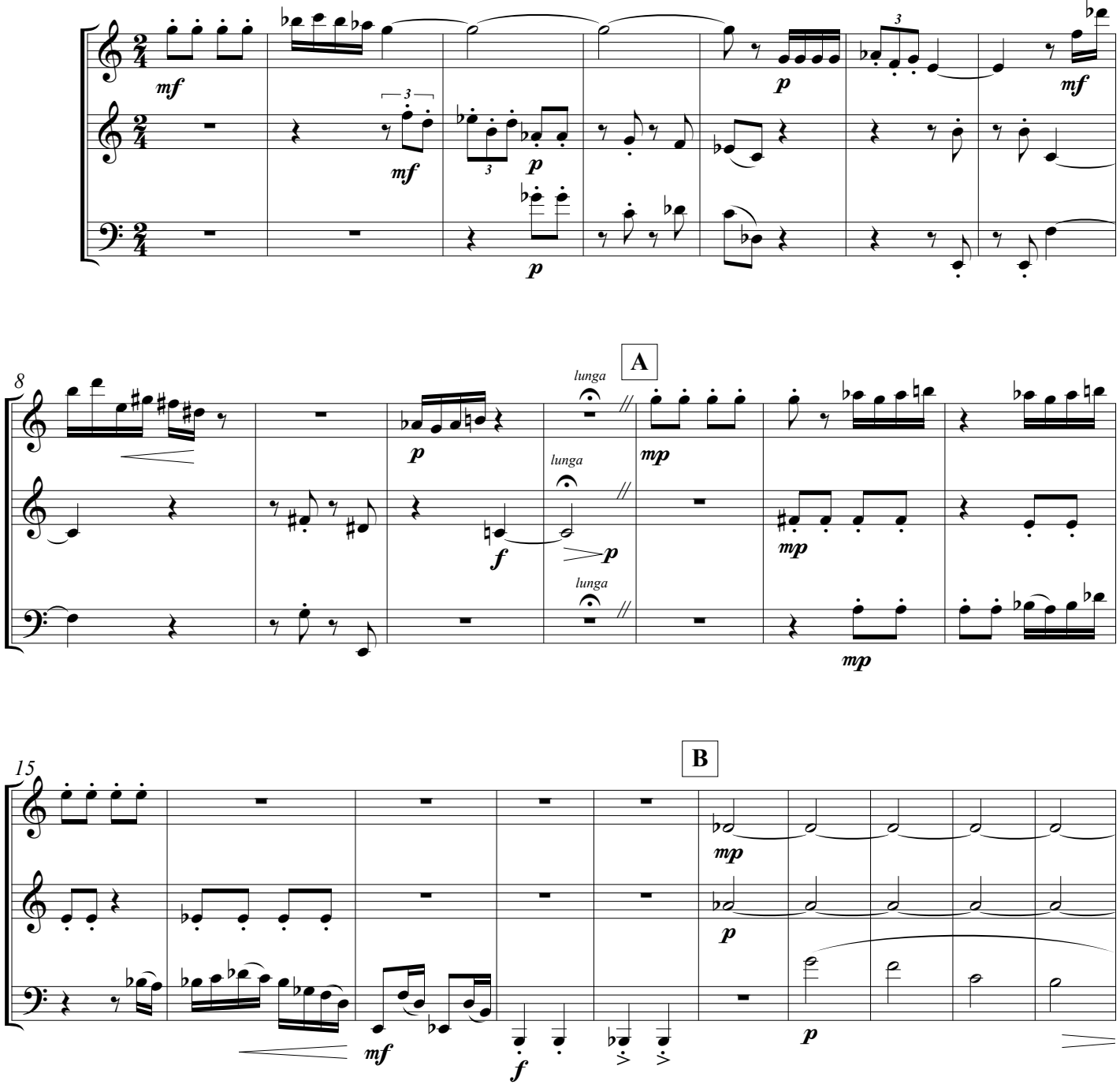
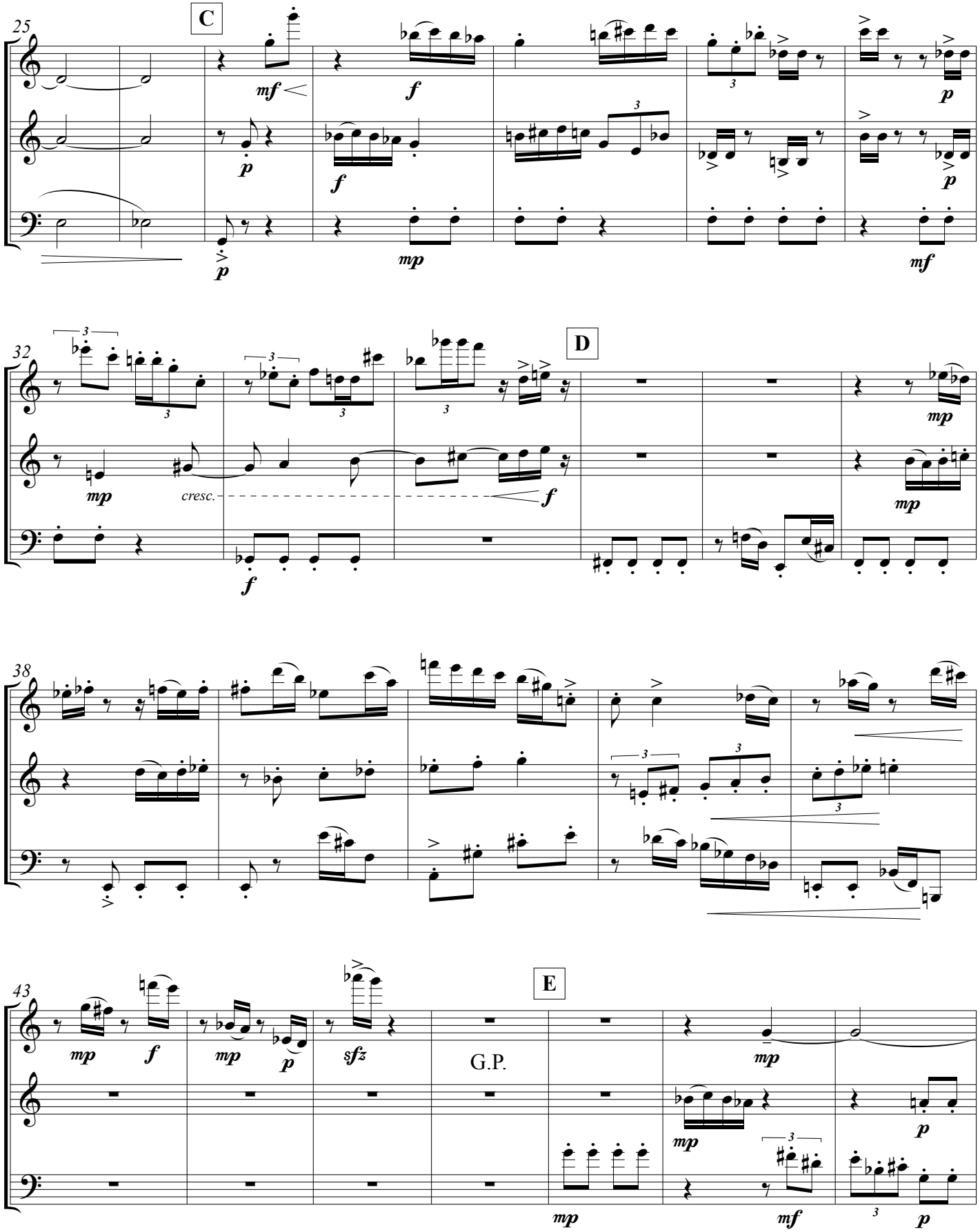
II.

Allegro ♩ = c. 132

all unslurred 16ths are stacc.

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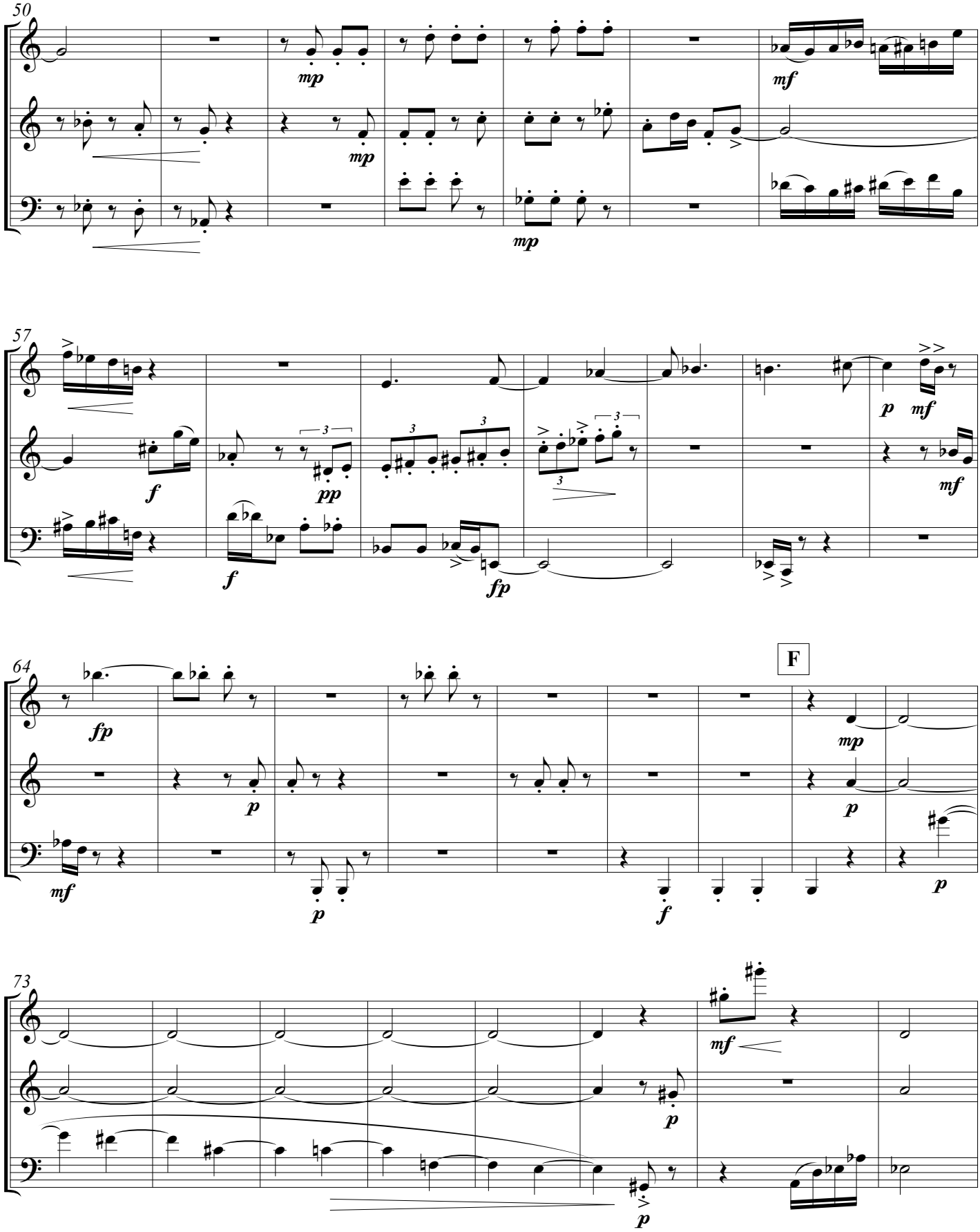
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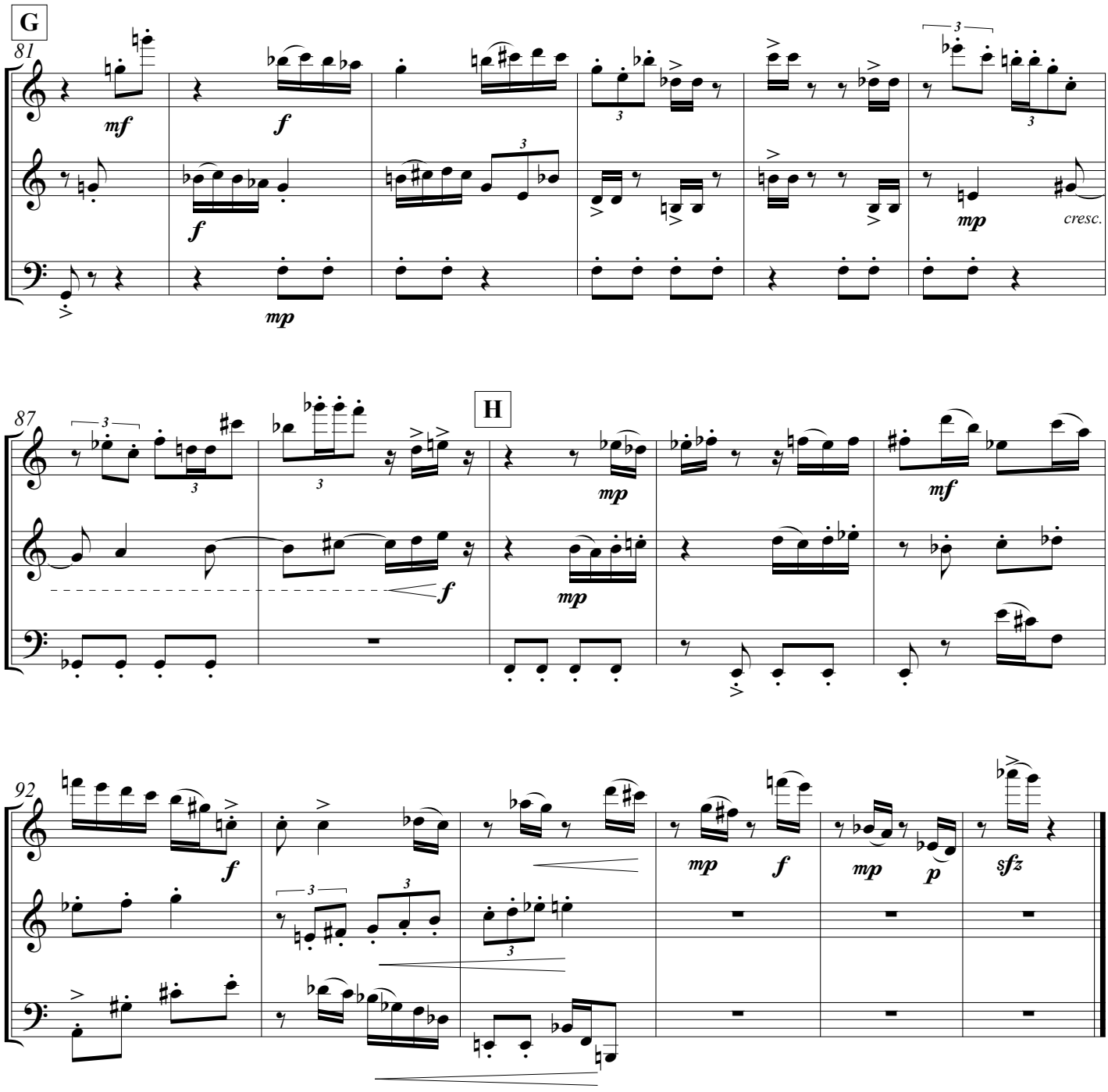
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