Ajax is all about attack 2

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2019

Performance notes

Commissioned and premiered by the Arête Duo (Doug O'Connor and Jacob Harpster),
with generous funding from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities

General

Rhythms should be flexible and free throughout. The slow general tempo can shift *ad libitum,* with non-metric extensions indicated through short, medium, and long fermatas. The emphasis should be on melodic shaping (saxophone) and richness of instrumental timbre/resonance (percussion), rather than metronomic precision. Continuity and smoothness are essential, particularly in the percussion. At all times, both players should aim for a close balance between the instruments, seeking a fusion between the timbres of metallic percussion and the saxophone.

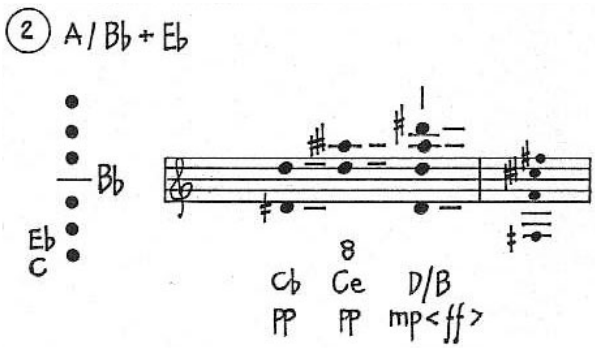
Percussion

The compact percussion set up consists of vibraphone (motor off), with three metal resonating instruments arranged behind the vibraphone in left-to-right order:
1. suspended cymbal (low) or tam-tam
2. suspended cymbal (medium)
3. suspended cymbal (high)

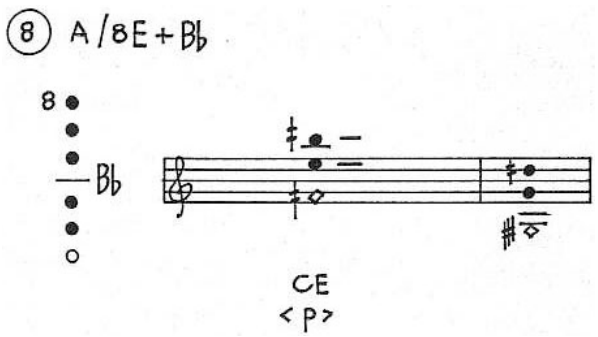
Instruments should be chosen for long resonance and richness of tone colour. Use of softer mallets is recommended to favour sustained rolls and highly controlled crescendo/decrescendo rather than sharp attacks. Always allow the sound to die away naturally (*laisser vibrer*). Though tremolos are marked throughout the score, the speed of the tremolo is flexible and the resonance of the instruments can be used instead of rearticulation to create the desired effect: a continuous, virtually unbroken sounds with a blend of timbres between vibraphone and cymbals/tam-tam.

Saxophone

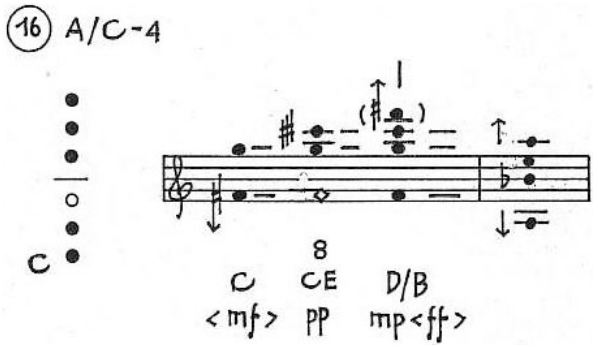
Multiphonic fingerings are based on Marcus Weiss and Giorgio Netti's *The Techniques of Saxophone Playing* (Bärenreiter, 2010). For reference, the fingerings and resulting pitches below include tunings (measured in semitones, C = 0.00) from test recordings by O'Connor and Weiss.



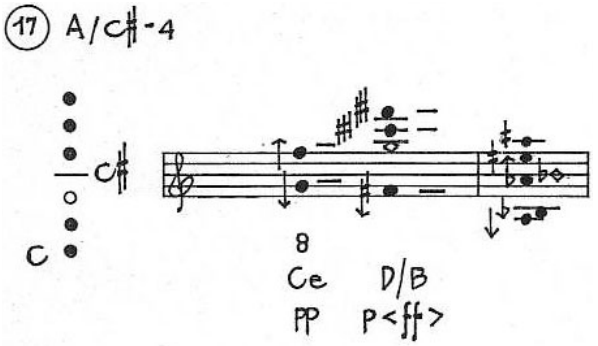
2c, 116"
E6 = 3.95 / inaudible
C#+6 = 1.42 / inaudible
A#5 = 10.05 / inaudible
F#5 = 6.16 / 6.05
C#+5 = 1.42 / 1.30
G4 = 6.82 / inaudible
F+3 = 5.49 /5.33



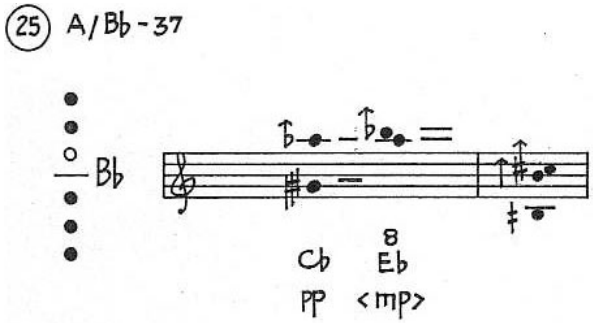
8, 506"
D+5 = 2.54 / 2.46
G4 = 7.06 / 7.00
G#+3 = 8.42 / inaudible



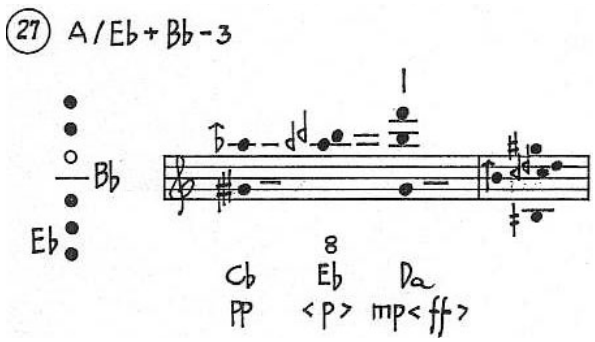
16*c*, 200"
Bb5 = 9.98 / 9.73
E+5 = 4.50 / 4.36
Bb4 = 9.96 / 9.73
G#+3 = 8.51 / 8.55



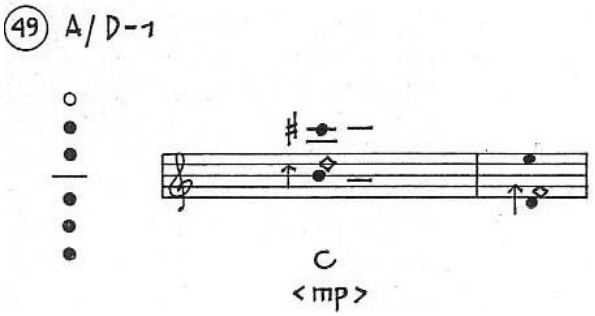
17*b*, 250"
A+5 = 9.37 /9.40
E+5 = 4.54 / 4.59
A#4 = 9.73 / 9.85
A3 = 8.94 / 8.95



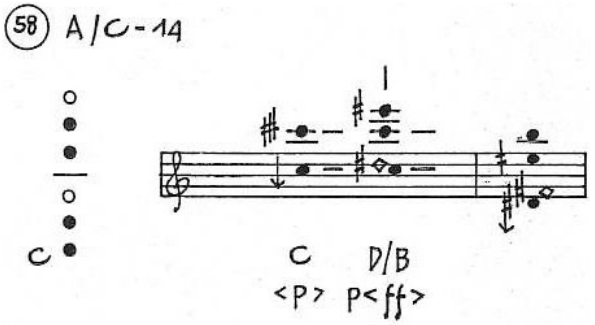
25*b*, 585"
C#+5 = 1.42 / 1.40
B+4 = 11.52 / 11.43



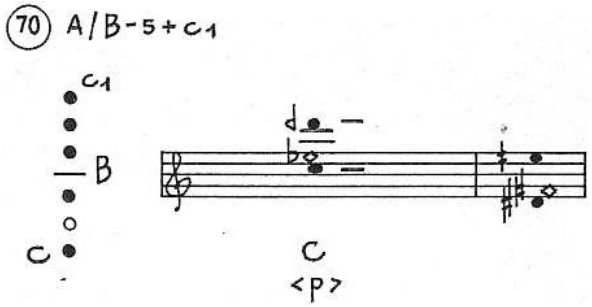
27*c*, 700"
F6 = 5.12 / 5.05
C+6 = 0.68 / 0.63
A+5 = 9.28 / inaudible
G#5 = 8.04 / 7.96
C#+5 = 1.65 / 1.57
B+4 = 11.67 / inaudible
D#+4 = 3.41 / inaudible
B+3 = 11.69 / 11.60



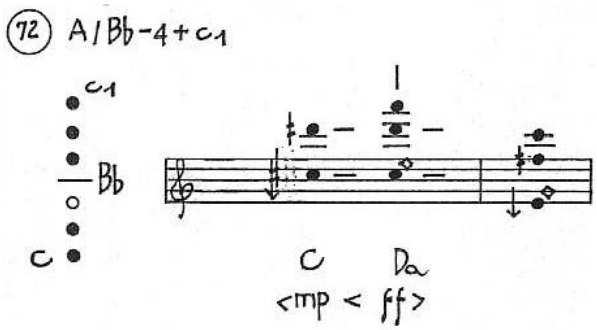
49, 1845"
E5 = 4.02 / 4.04
D+5 = 2.41 / 2.32
F+4 = 5.50 / 5.62
D+4 = 2.41 / 2.31



58, 2085"
E+6 = 4.49
B5 = 11.00 / 10.83
E+5 = 4.49 / 4.26
F#4 = 5.95 / 5.66
D#4 = 2.94 / 2.85
[#70 is a possible substitute for #58]

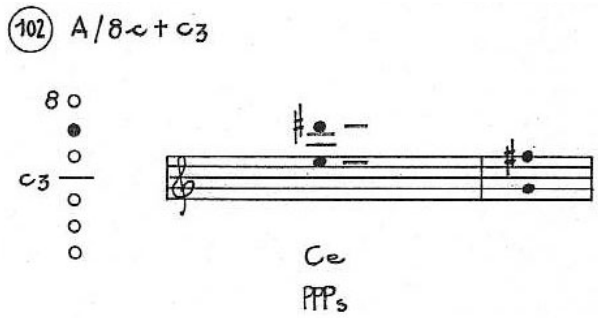


70, 2485"
E+5 = 4.56 / 4.38
F#4 = 5.98 / 5.76
D#4 = 3.02 / 2.88
[#70 is a possible substitute for #58]

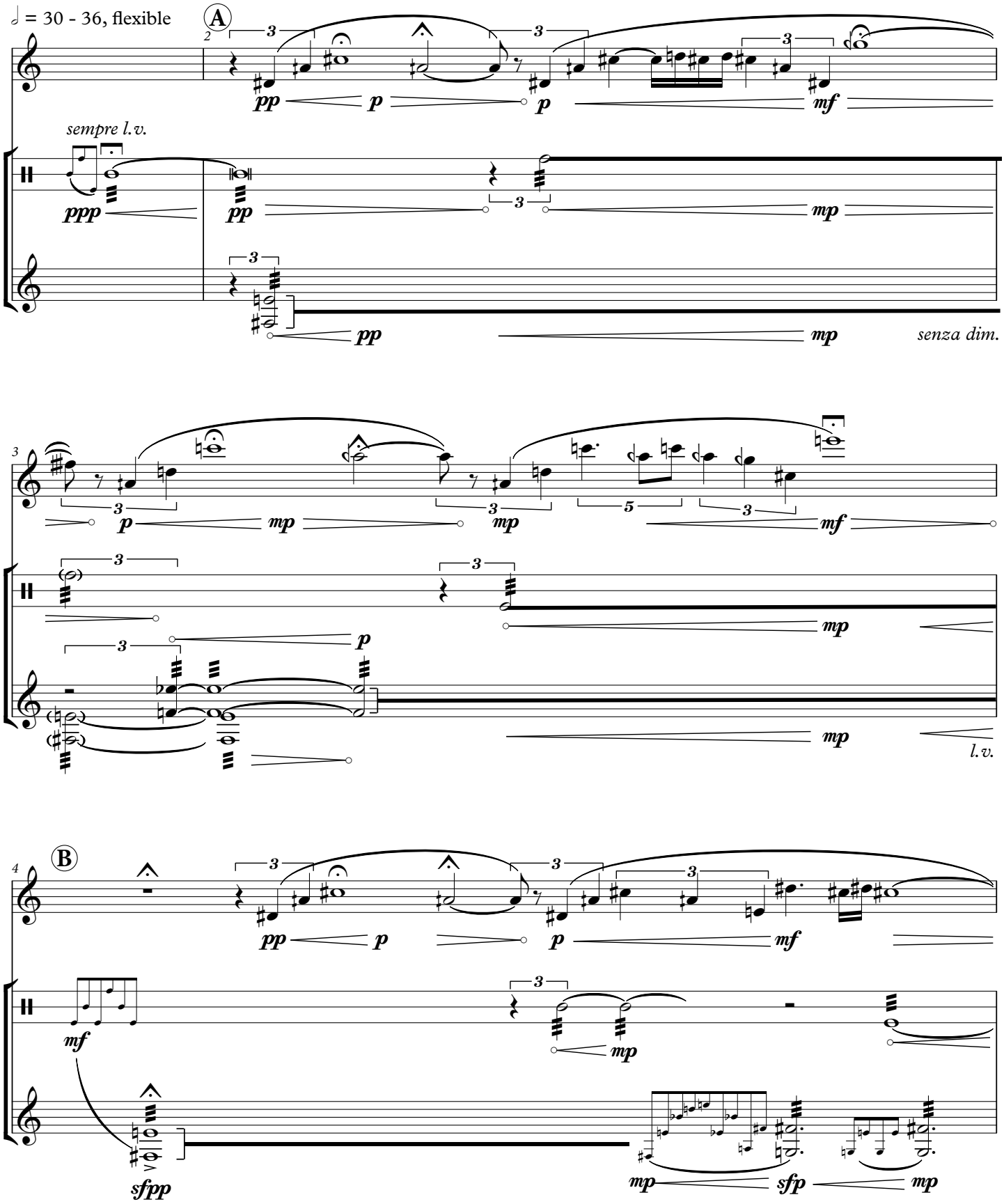


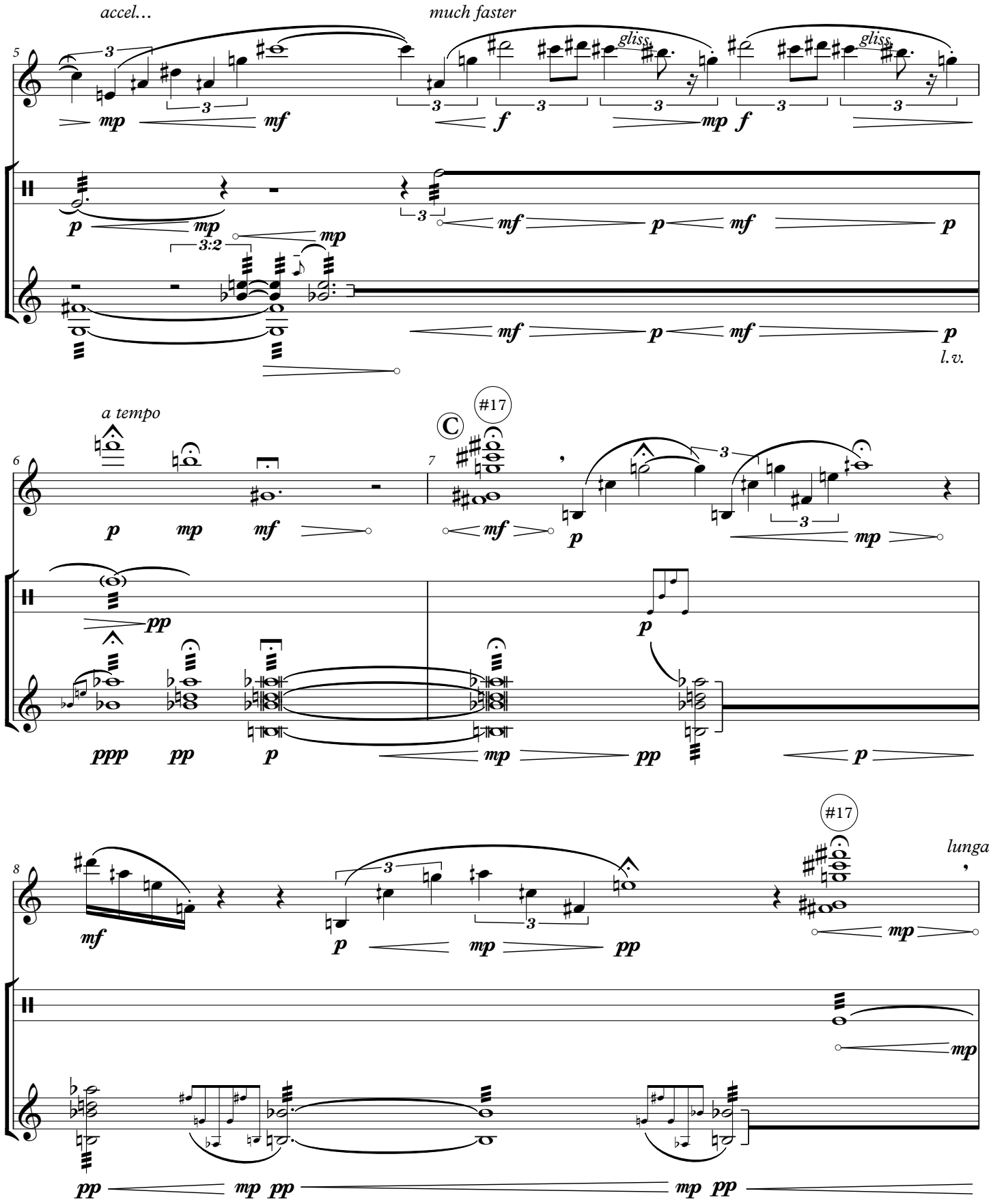
72*a*, 2565"
F+5 = 5.54 / 5.51
G4 = 6.99 / inaudible
E4 = 4.00 / 3.76

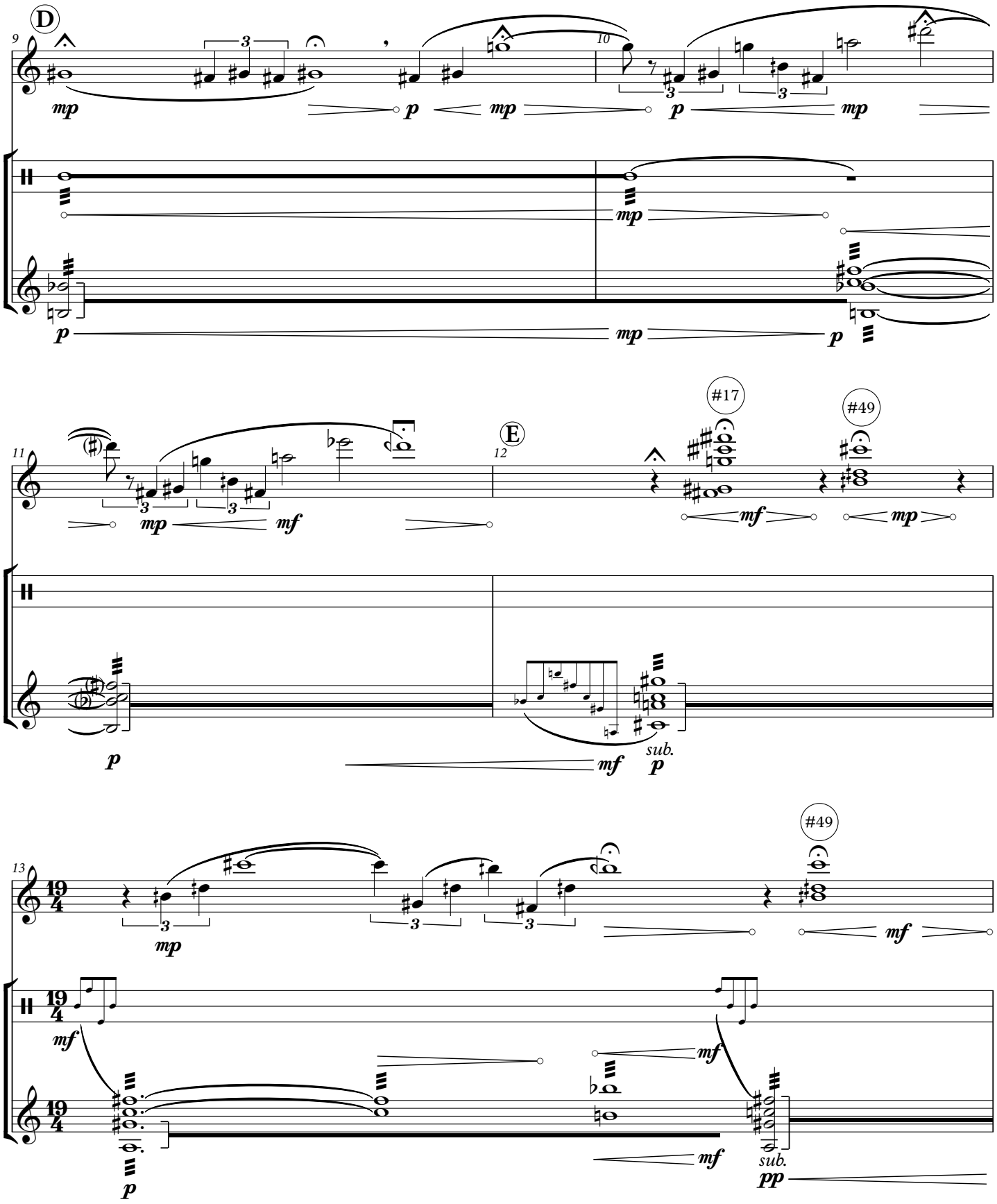
72*b*, 2580
C6 = 0.11 / 0.03
F+5 = 5.54 / 5.47
G4 = 6.99 / 6.76
E4 = 4.00 / 4.05

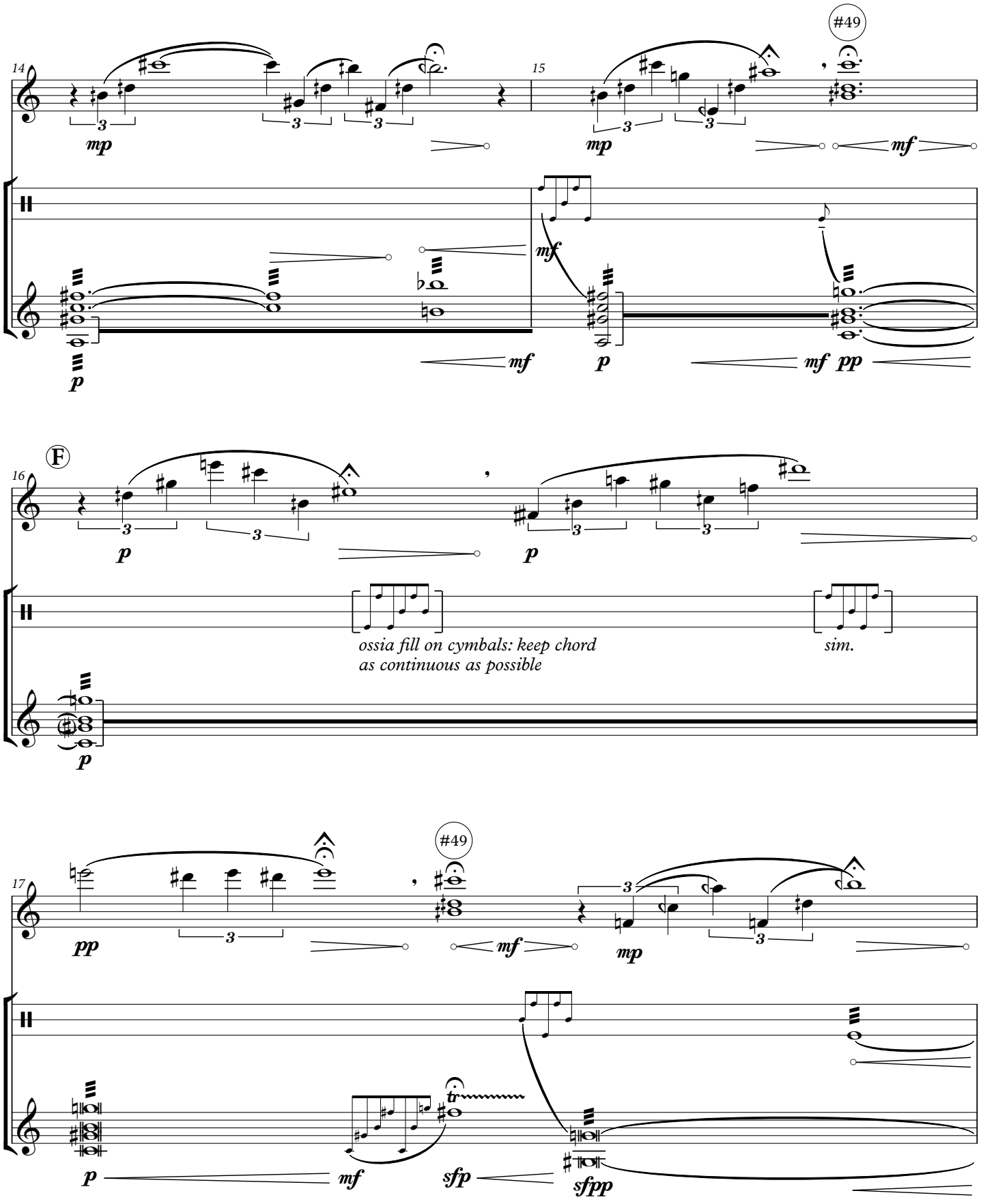


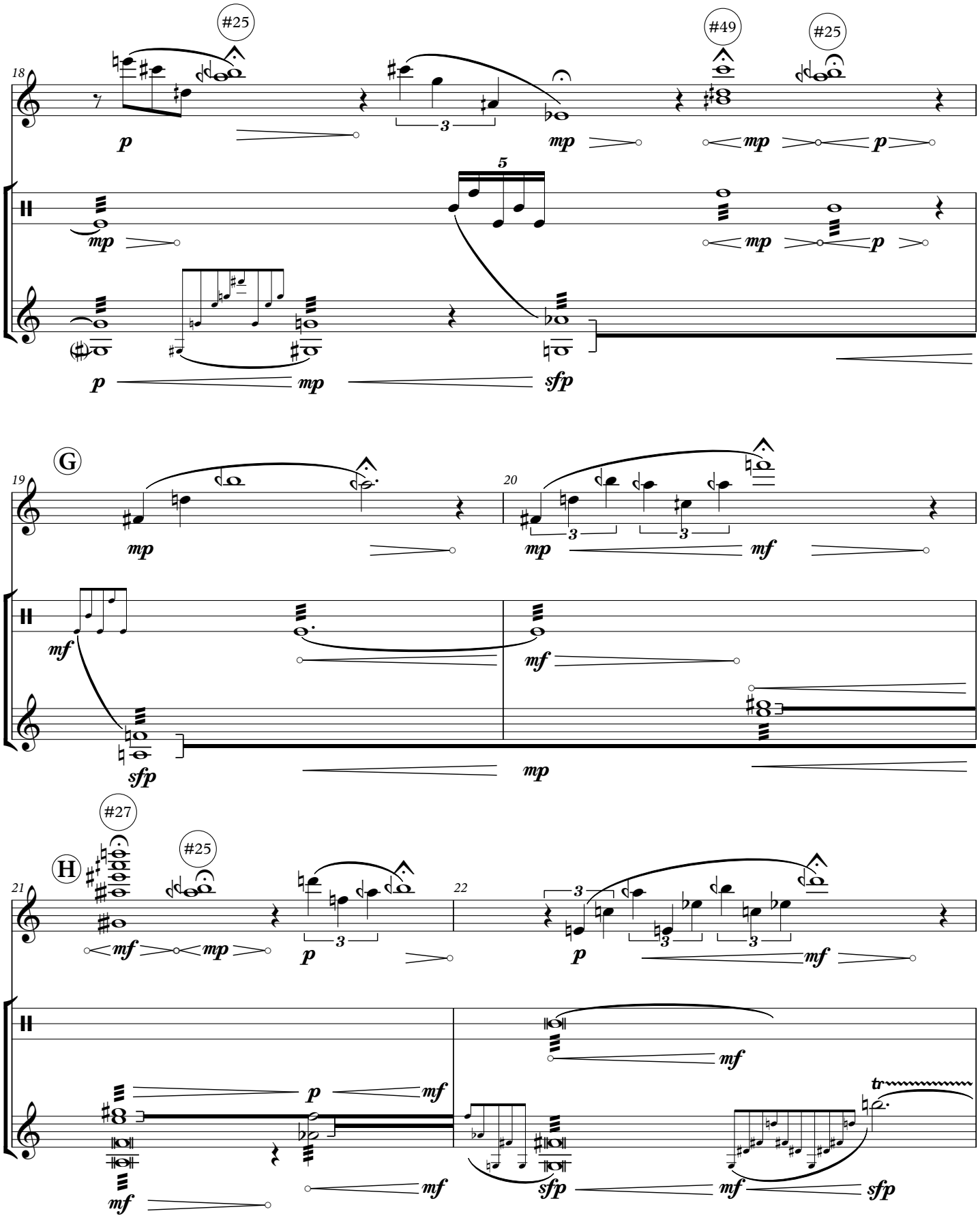
102, 3241"
F#5 5.98 / 6.10
G+4 7.39 / 7.03

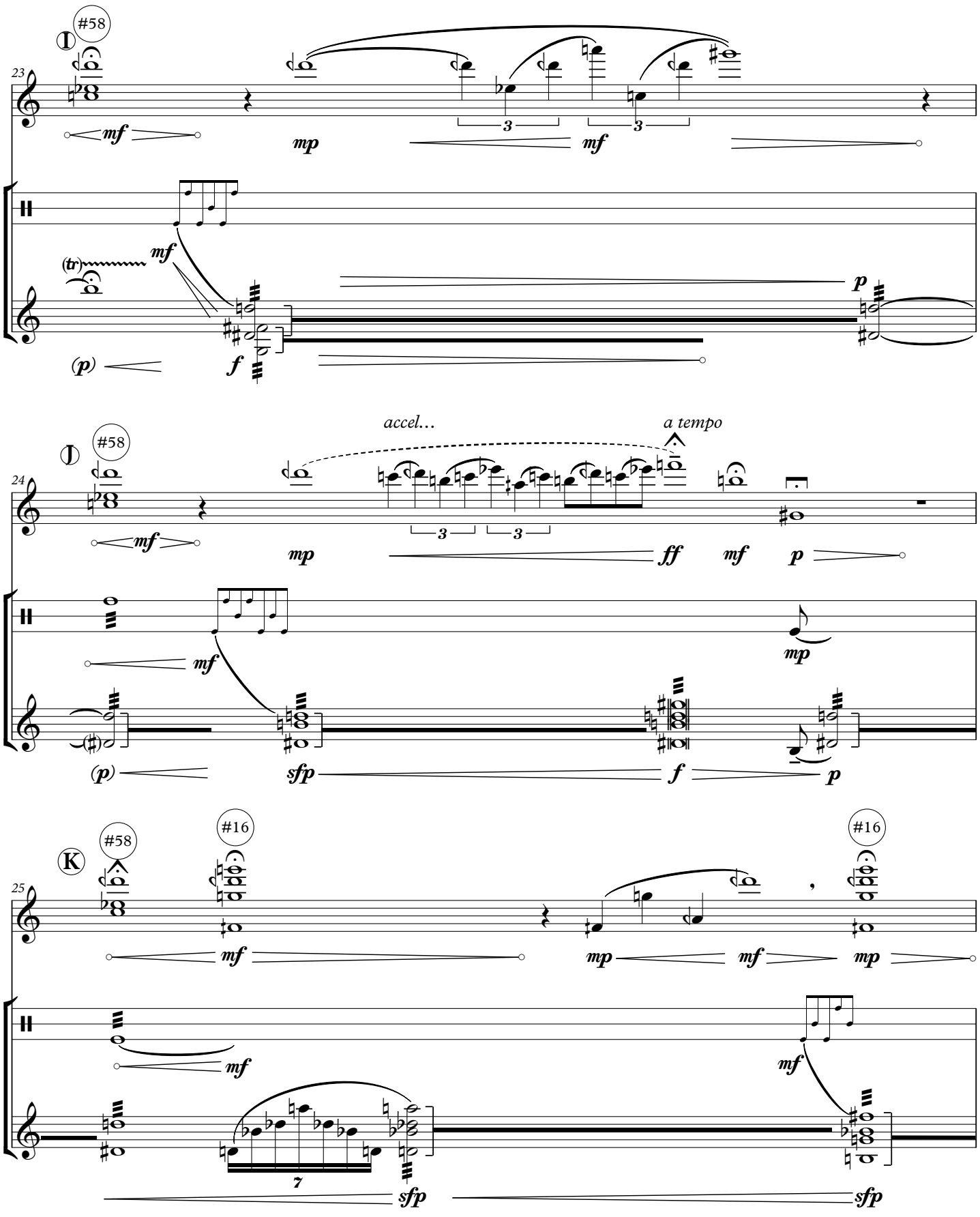

𝅗𝅥 = 30 - 36, flexible
A
2
sempre l.v.
senza dim.
3
l.v.
4
B

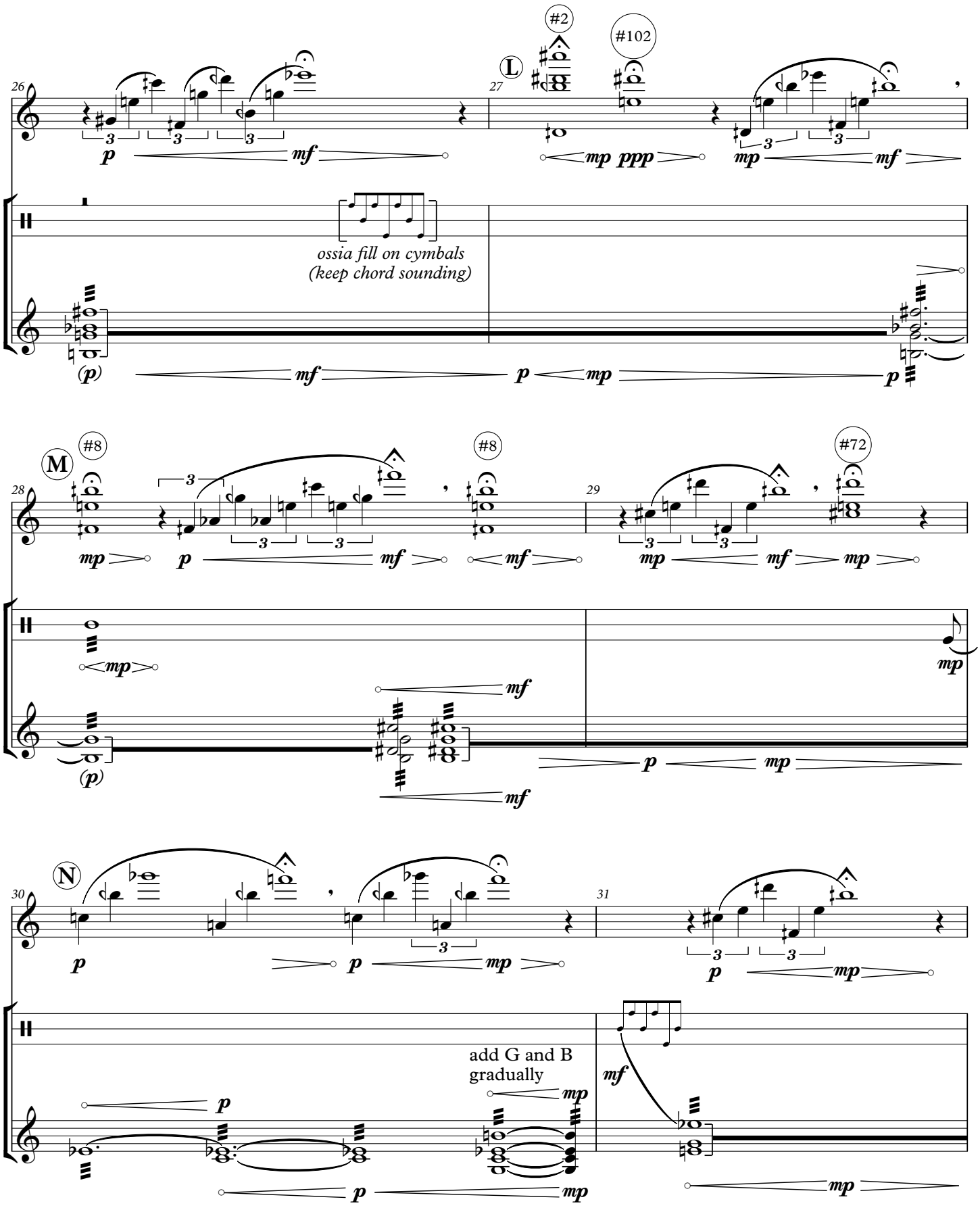

accel…
much faster
gliss.
gliss.
l.v.
a tempo
#17
C
#17
lunga

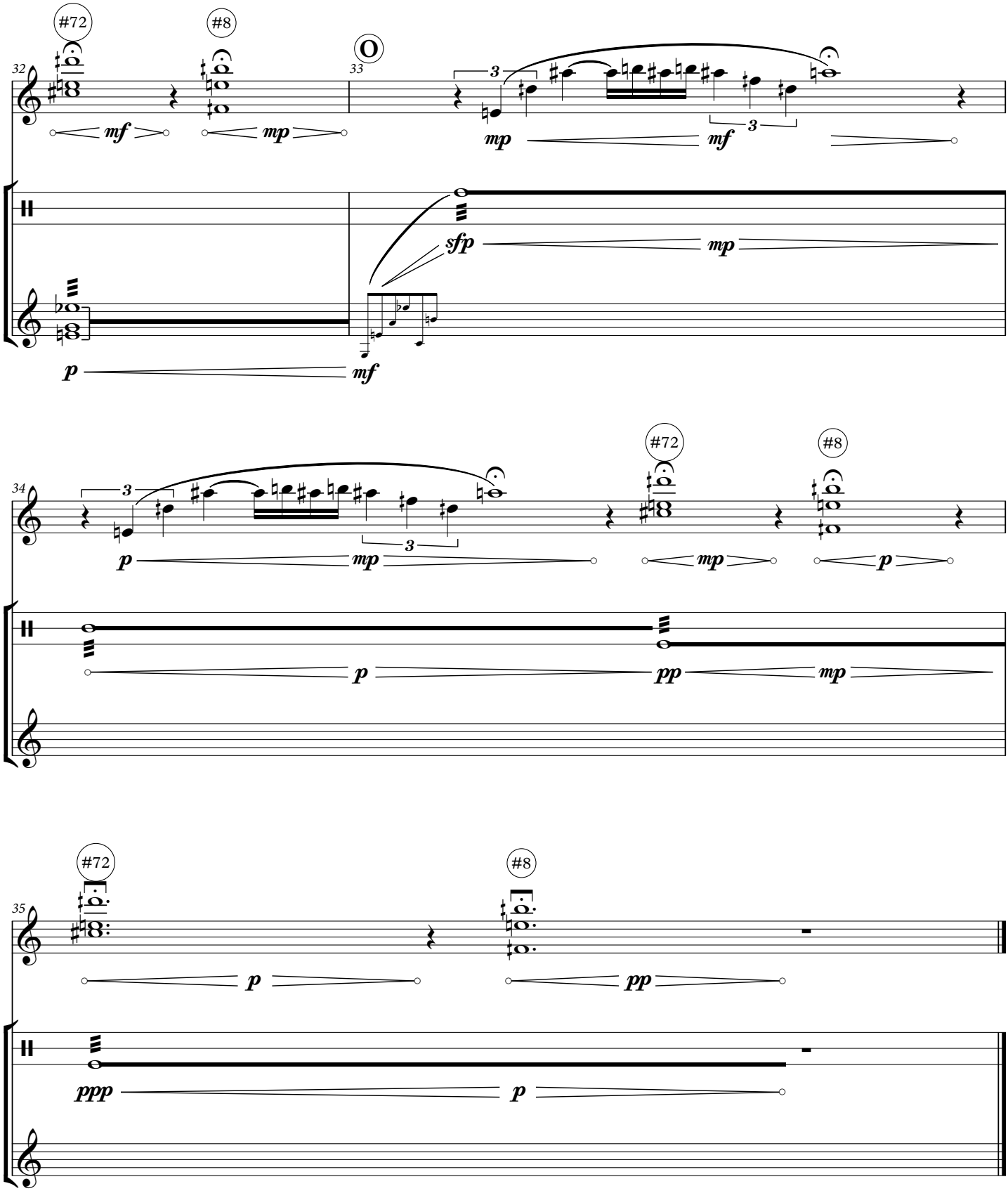

D
9
10
mp
p
mp
p
mp
mp
p
mp
p
11
12
E
#17
#49
mp
mf
mf
mp
p
mf
sub.
p
13
#49
19/4
mp
mf
mf
mf
mf
p
sub.
pp


14
15
#49
mp
mp
mf
mf
p
mf
p
mf
pp
16
F
p
p
ossia fill on cymbals: keep chord
as continuous as possible
sim.
p
17
#49
pp
mf
mp
p
mf
sfp
sfpp


#25
#49
#25
18
p
mp
mp
p
5
mp
mp
p
p
mp
sfp
G
19
mp
20
mp
3
3
mf
mf
mf
sfp
mp
#27
#25
H
21
mf
mp
p
3
22
3
3
3
p
mf
mf
p
mf
mf
sfp
mf
sfp
tr


I
#58
23
mf
mp
3
3
mf
(tr)
mf
p
(p)
f
J
#58
accel…
a tempo
24
mf
mp
3
3
ff
mf
p
mf
mp
(p)
sfp
f
p
K
#58
#16
#16
25
mf
mp
mf
mp
mf
mf
7
sfp
sfp


26
27
#2
#102
L
ossia fill on cymbals
(keep chord sounding)
M
#8
#8
#72
28
29
N
30
31
add G and B
gradually



Montreal, 31 May 2019