Joseph Klein

Rubber Angels

for woodwind quintet

(1987)

(July-December, 1987)

Duration: c.15'

Movement I:

All players are to remain frozen in playing position throughout the entire movement, their physical motion kept to an absolute minimum. Attacks and releases should be made as subtly and unobtrusively as possible (with the exception of the sffz attacks beginning in bar 78) so that there is no visual indication as to which instruments are playing at any given time. Except for the sffz attacks and the subsequent thirty-second-note murmurs, every pitch within each part is to be considered a completely free and independent entity with regard to both its linear and vertical position in the texture; therefore, it is not the concern of the performers to attempt to achieve a sense of linear cohesion (as in the expression of a melodic phrase), but rather to allow each sound to exist on its own as an individual unit. However, the accumulation of these sonic units must result in as uniform a texture as possible, given the timbral variety and the often extreme registral placement of pitches. Such a homogeneity can be achieved if the performers play at a constant dynamic level (though mezzo-forte is indicated, some adjustments may be required in order to accomodate the discrepancies between the various instruments; nevertheless, the resulting dynamic level should be no greater than mezzo-forte so that the punctuating effect of the sffz attacks is not diminished), and without expression (thus eliminating a sense of interlinear polyphony and producing a grayish sound wall).

The performers may assume a relaxed position only at the conclusion of the movement (i.e., after the final fermata).

Movement II:

This movement consists of three levels:

The first is a slow, meandering texture which continues throughout the movement, gradually ascending from the lowest register of the ensemble to the highest. The instruments are to blend as much as possible within this level, always piano (or as soft as possible given the idiosyncrasies of the various instruments in their disparate registers) and molto legato. When playing on this level, the instrumentalists are to remain frozen in a neutral position for the duration; however, unlike the previous movement, performers may relax during rests or may assume a different physical attitude when moving to another level.

The second level is interruptive in character, and consists of a rapidly itterated, sharply articulated series of attacks. Though marked fortissimo, these should be played as loudly as possible without disturbing the balance between the five instruments (if the horn has difficulty balancing with the other instruments, the part may be played stopped within these section, but under no circumstances may the result be cuivre). The physical attitude of the players within this level must be one of authoritative intensity.

The third level consists of melodic fragments, and is the most expressive of the three levels. The physical gestures of the performers within this level must be at least equal to the dynamic expressiveness of the parts, perhaps even overdone.

The microtonal intervals used throughout the movement (which should approximate quarter-tones, though a precise tuning of these intervals is neither necessary nor feasible) may be executed by either altered fingerings, embouchure adjustments, or a combination of the two, at the discretion of the individual performer; however, regardless of which method is used for their production, the microtones must be articulated instantaneously (i.e., without any kind of bend or portamento in their approach or release).

Movement III:

The opening flurry should be executed in a single sweeping gesture, as quickly and smoothly as possible.

Beginning in bar 3, there are two levels of activity, one soloistic and the other accompanimental. The first level consists of a single melodic line which is continuously passed around the five instruments of the ensemble. This line is to be played in a very expressive manner, almost ostentatiously, and the physical gestures which accompany this level should be equally flamboyant, if not more so. Unlike the first movement, the emphasis here is on the linear element; therefore, the melodic lines must be passed among the instruments as smoothly and fluently as possible.

The second level in this movement is an accompanimental texture consisting of rapidly moving sixteenth-notes. This murmuring texture must be sempre piano and molto legato throughout, and it is absolutely essential that a proper balance between the parts is maintained at all times. In addition, the changes in timbre resulting from the constantly shifting instrumentation must be made as smoothly and evenly (almost unnoticeably) as possible. This level should always be perceived as a murmuring undercurrent to the overtly expressive soloistic level, and must in no instance draw attention to itself.

Beginning in bar 36 is a series of aural gaps or silences which, though fleeting at first, gradually overtake the entire movement. These silences are indicated by heavy boxes, the boundaries of which are delineated by broken lines. All of the material within the boxes is to be mimed precisely by the performers (including the appropriate physical attitudes), just as if the music were continuing throughout. The desired effect is similar to turning the power control of a stereo suddenly off then on again, and must be executed exactly together and instantaneously (i.e., without a diminuendo or crescendo). In addition, the re-entry from out of the silence should be made with the breath rather than with the tongue in order to avoid a sharply articulated entrance.

In the final bar, the performers must suddenly freeze in place for the duration of the fermata, as in the first movement; the work is concluded by the performers' subsequent relaxation and return to a rest position.

accelerando

long fermata (duration is indicated above)

short fermata

slight break in sound, or clear release

allow sound to continue for its full value, seemingly uninterrupted

silence (material within box is to be mimed)

approximately $\frac{1}{4}$-tone above sharp pitch

approximately $\frac{1}{4}$-tone below sharp pitch

approximately $\frac{1}{4}$-tone above natural pitch

approximately $\frac{1}{4}$-tone below natural pitch

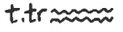
gradual change from one playing mode to another

portamento

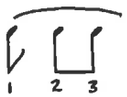
fluttertongue

multiphonic built around pitch indicated

timbral trill



double timbral trill



alternate fingerings of the same pitch (the number "1" always represents the ordinary or most frequently used fingering)

key slap

horn: stopped tone
all others: covered sound (fingers added below specified pitch)

horn: hand completely removed from bell (unfocused tone)
all others: harmonic

horn: $\frac{1}{2}$-valve depression

overblown (raucous) sound

flute: tongue stop

flute: jet whistle

Accidentals apply only to those pitches which they immediately preceed, except in the case of repeated pitches.

If a single (F) horn is used in performance, those $\frac{1}{2}$-valve tones intended for play on a double horn may be substituted by stopped tones.

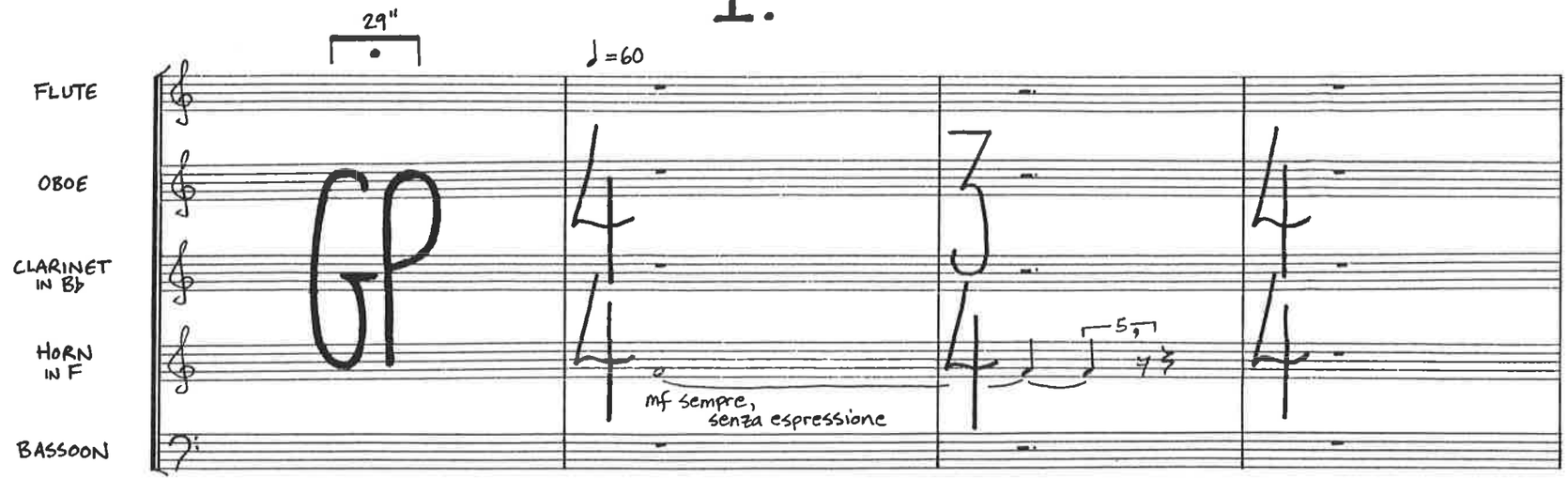
The fingerings of multiphonics, microtones, and other effects are left to the discretion of the performer; however, it is suggested that the performers (particularly those unfamiliar with such sonorities) consult one of several sources available concerning such contemporary performance techniques, such as Bruno Bartolozzi's New Sounds for Woodwinds, Robert Dick's The Other Flute, Phillip Rehfeldt's New Directions for Clarinet, etc.

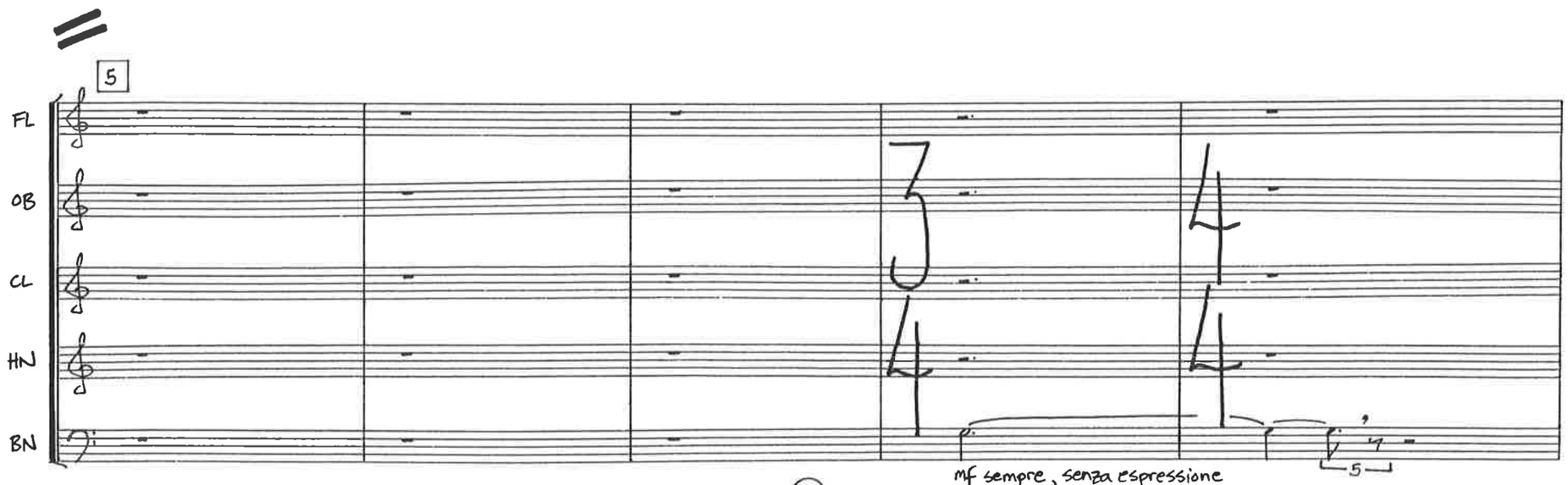
TRANSPOSED SCORE

RUBBER ANGELS

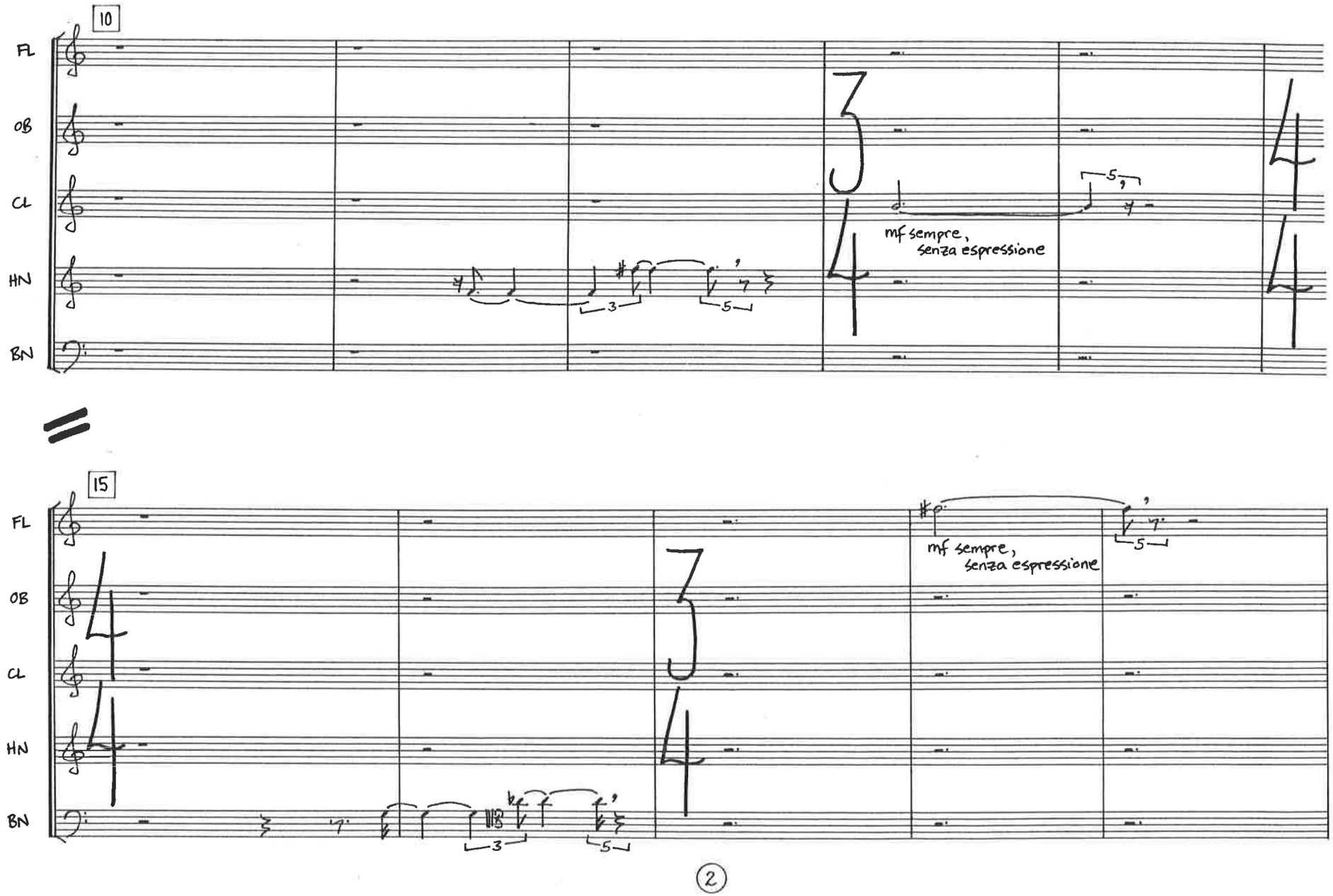
I.

JOSEPH KLEIN
(1987)





© 1987 Joseph Klein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mf sempre,
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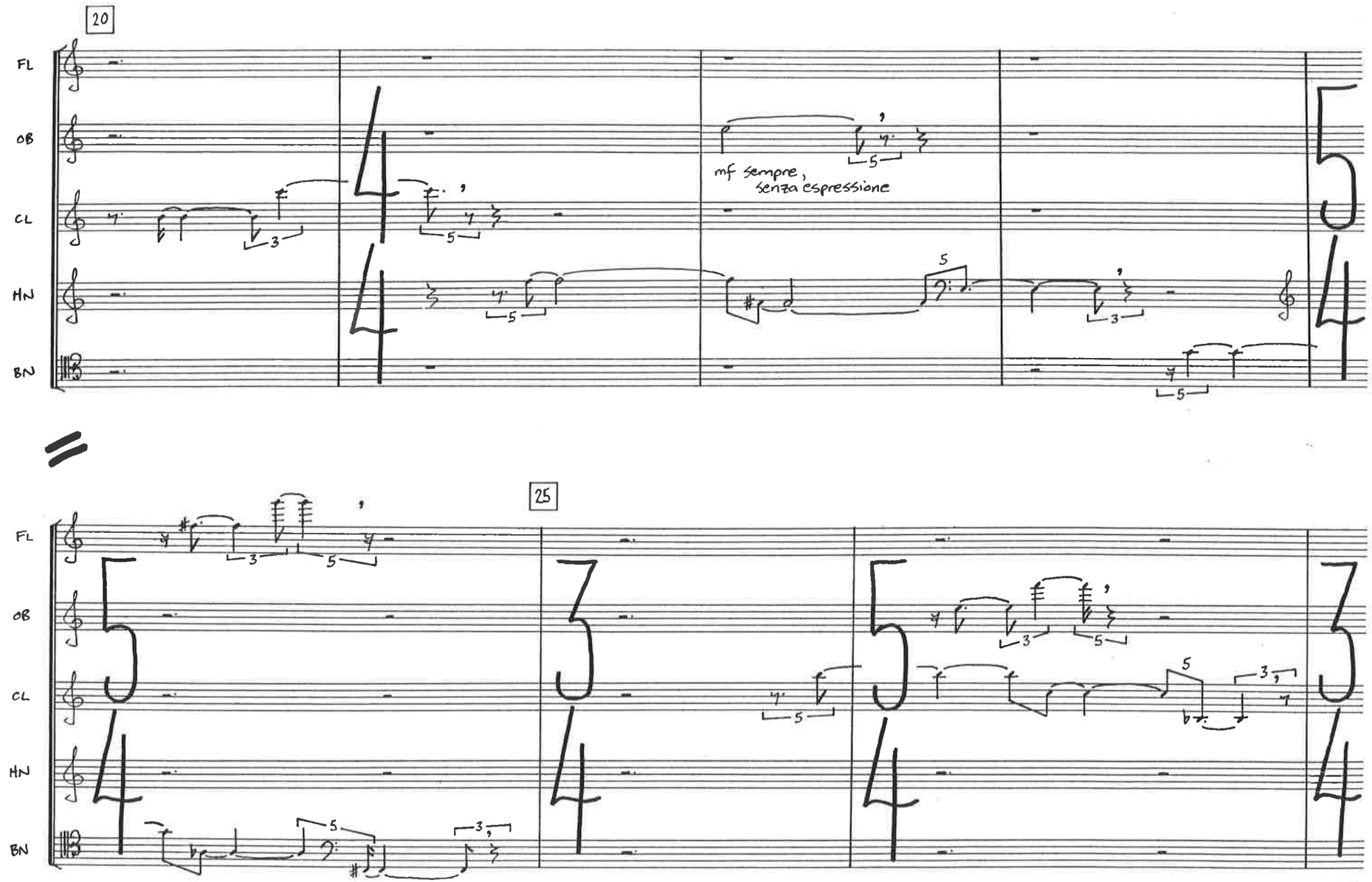
mf sempre,
senza espressione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senza espressione
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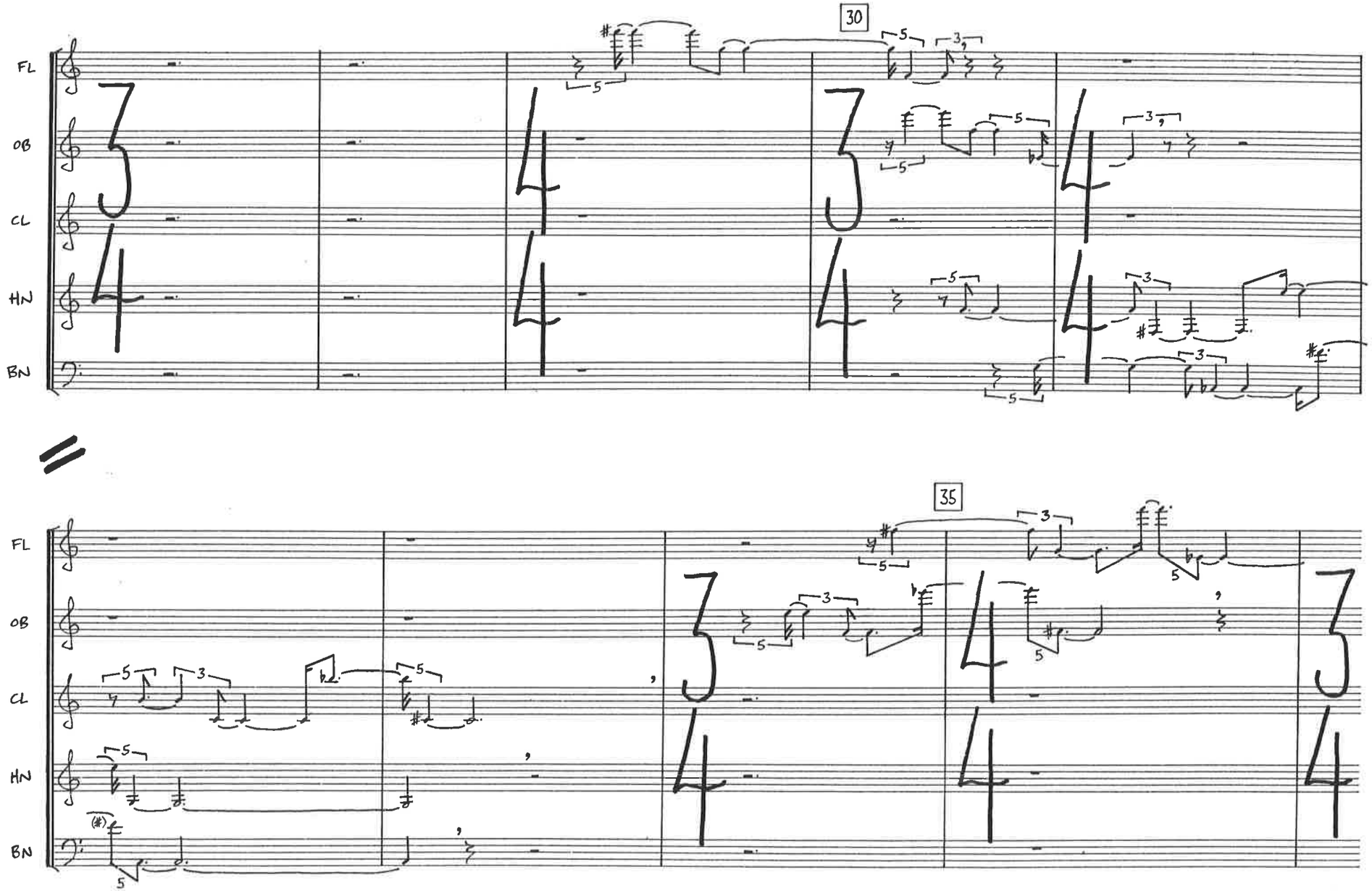
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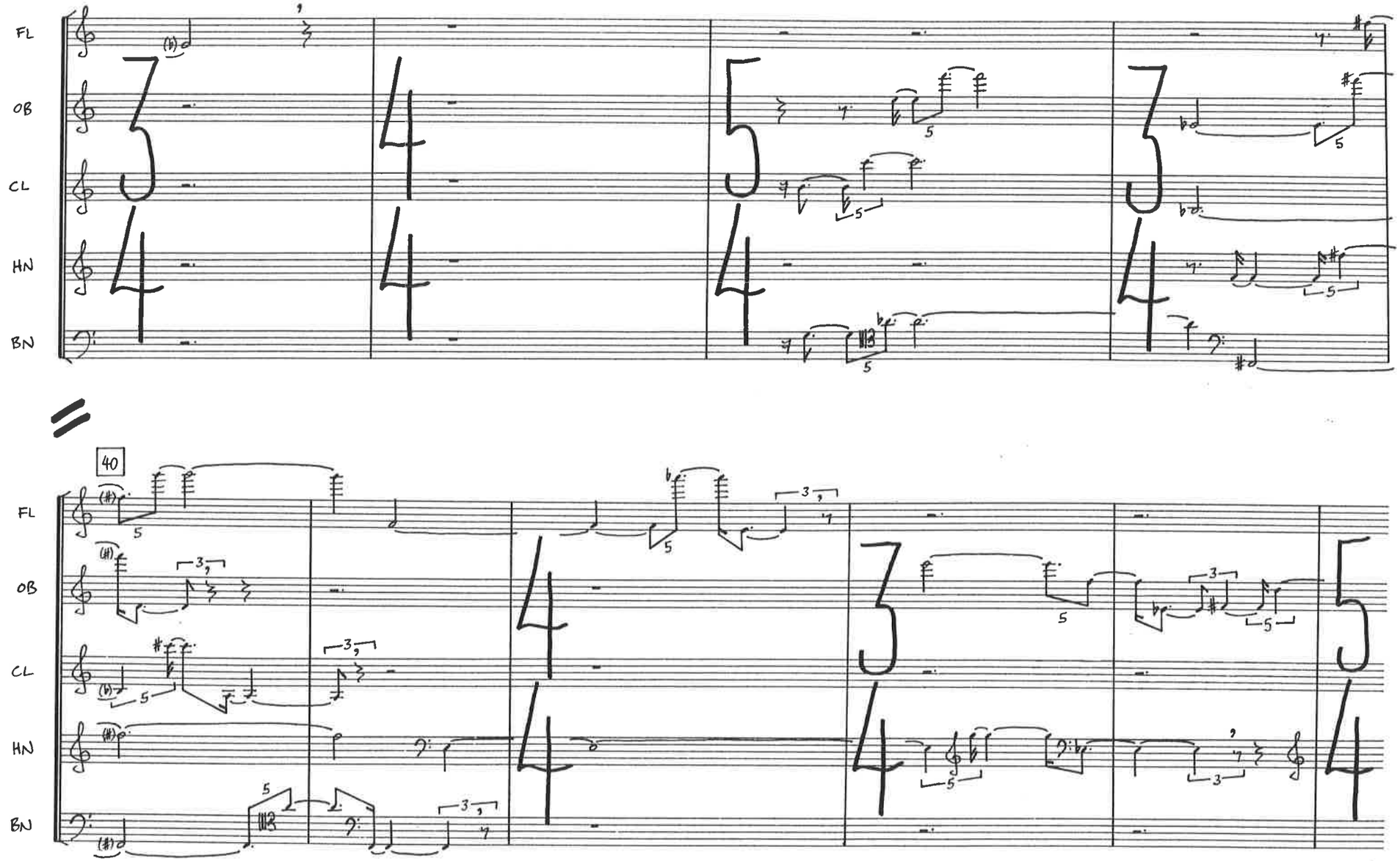
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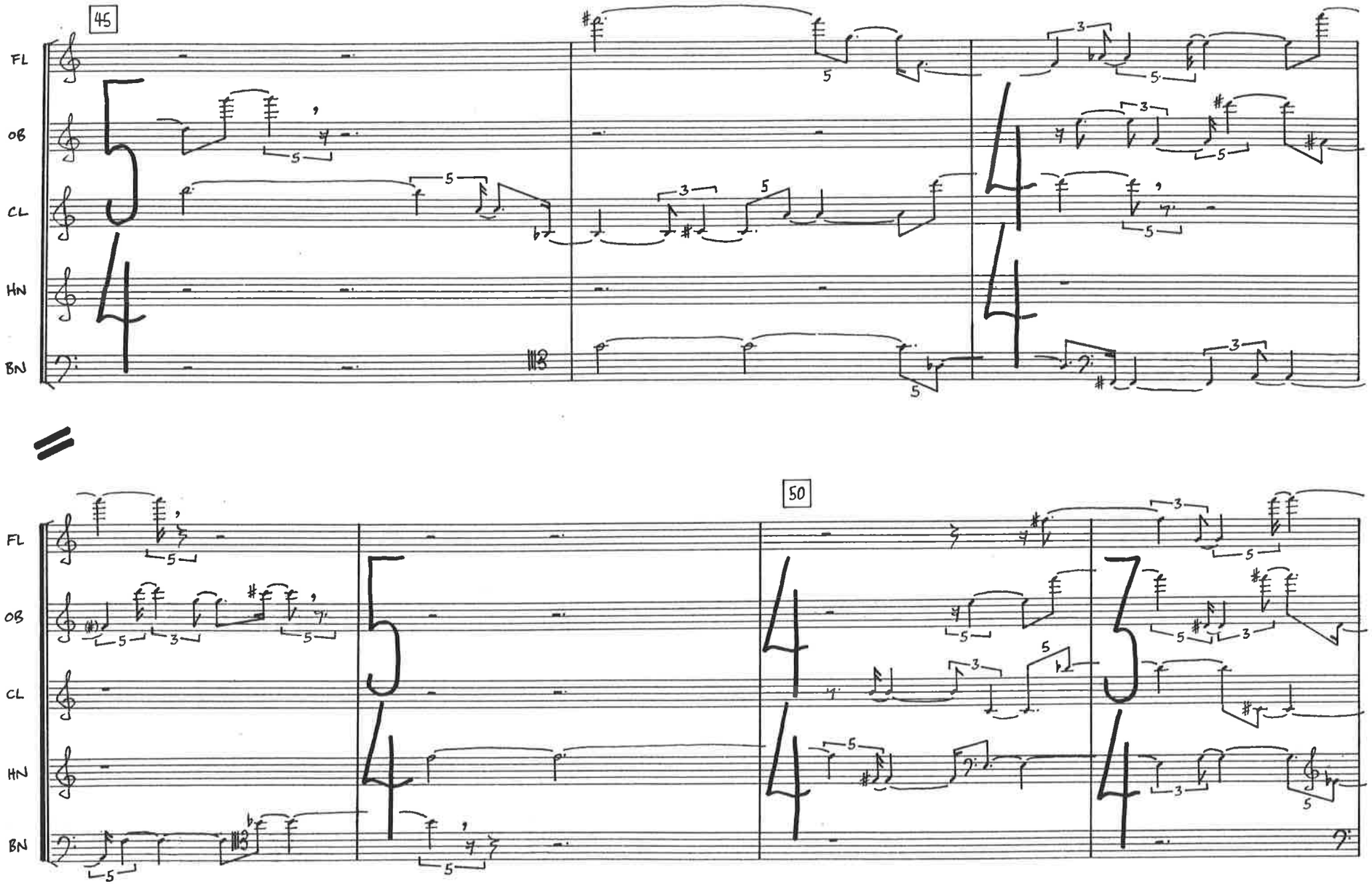
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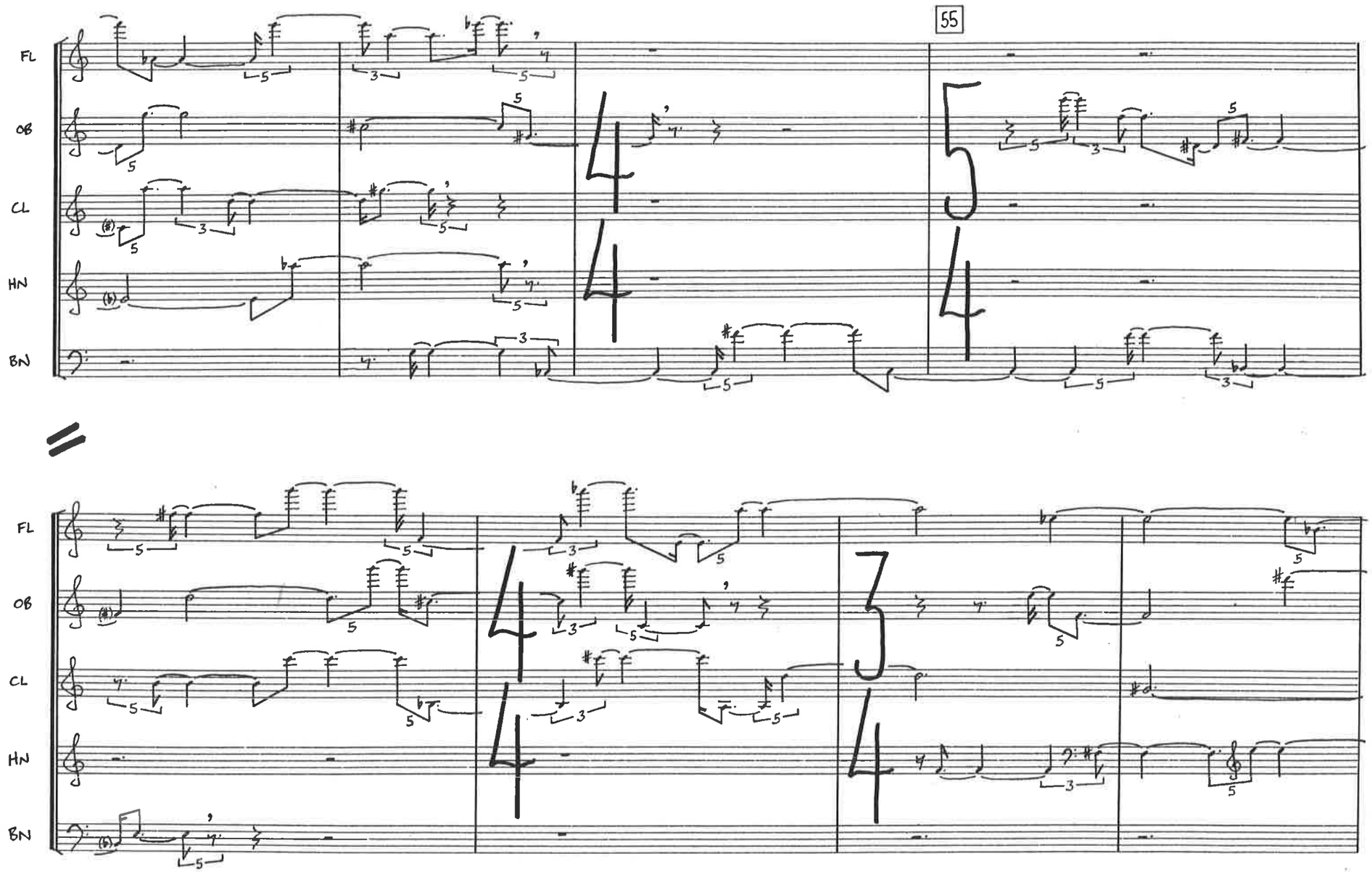
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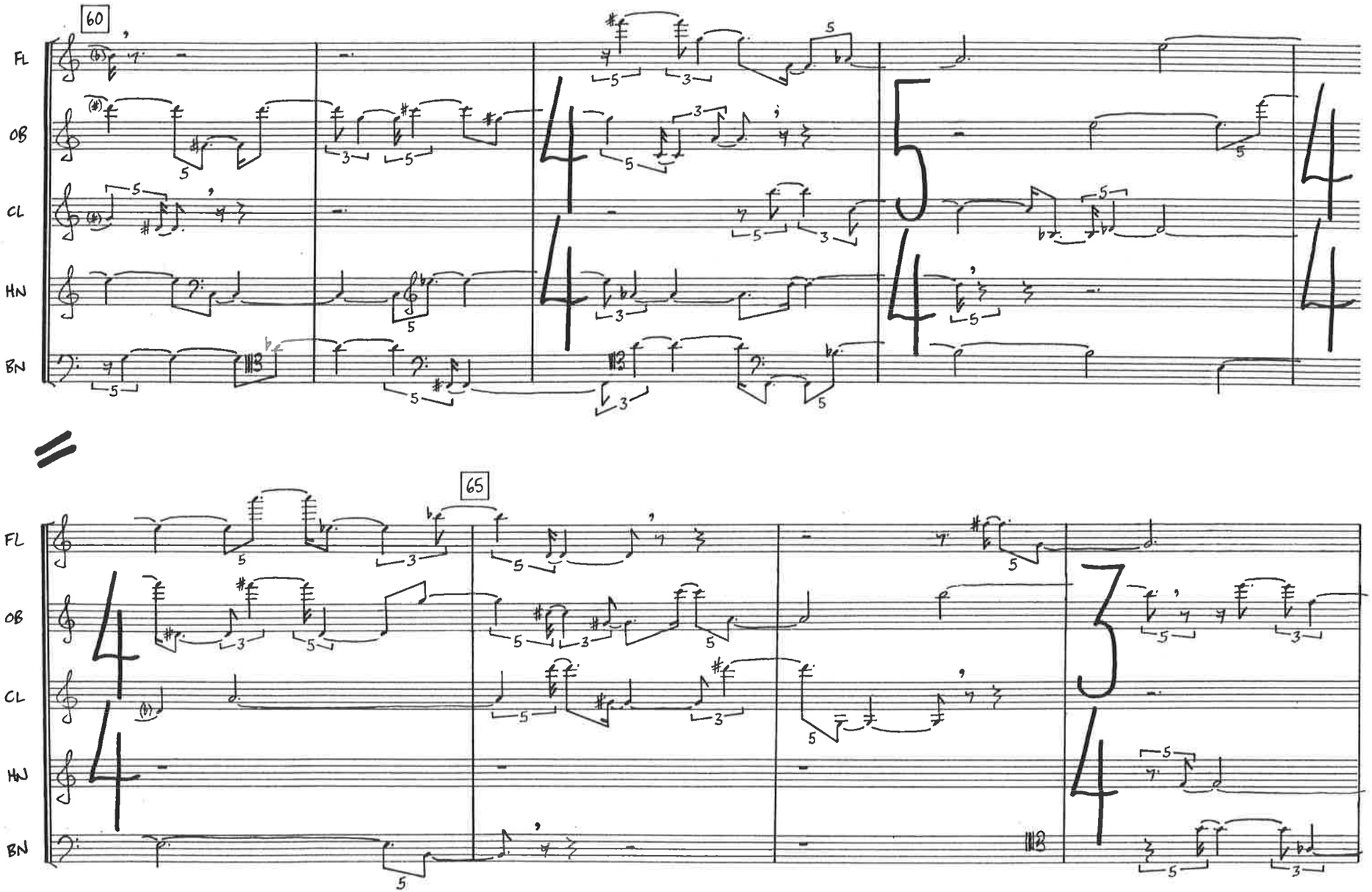
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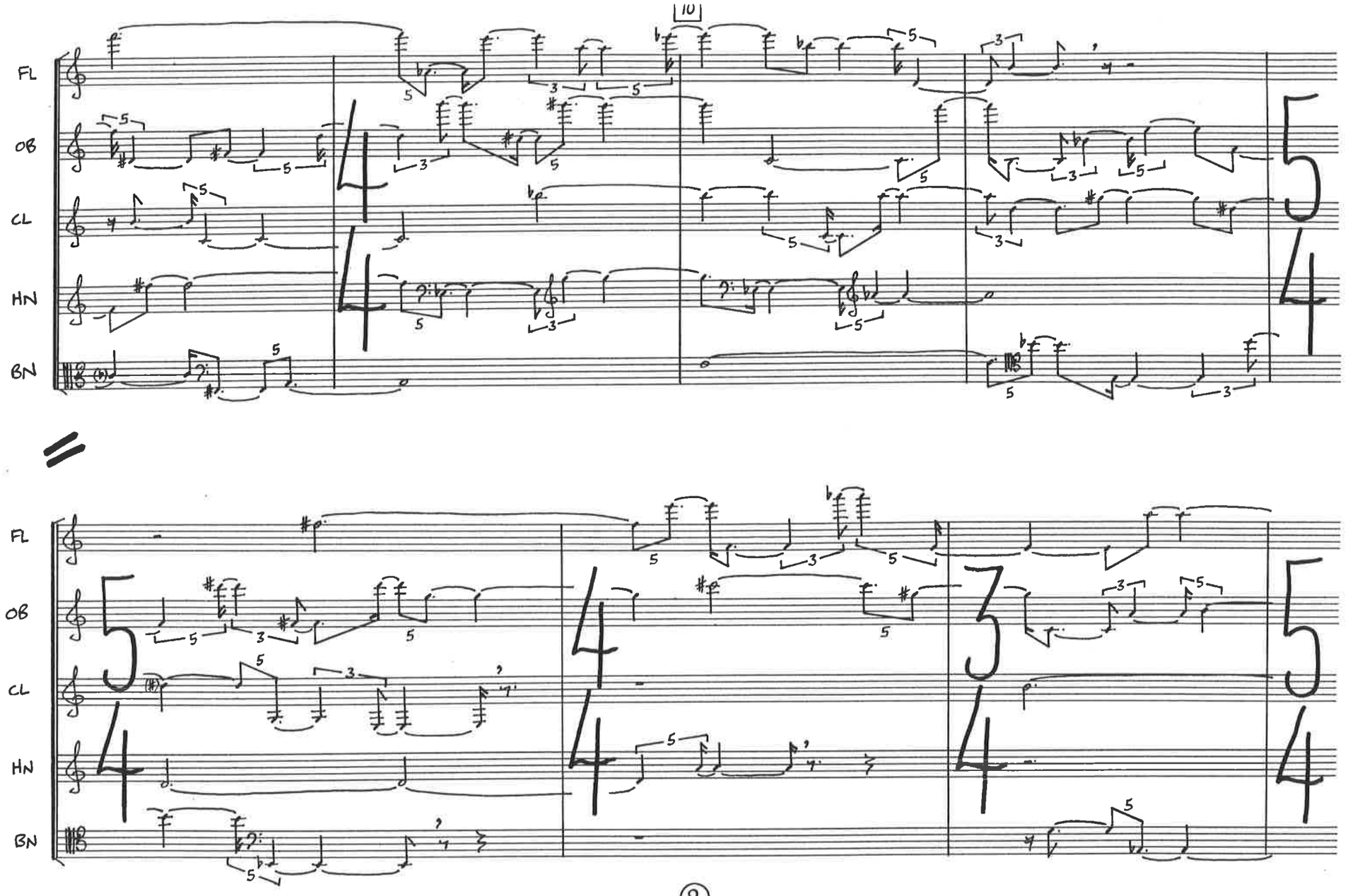
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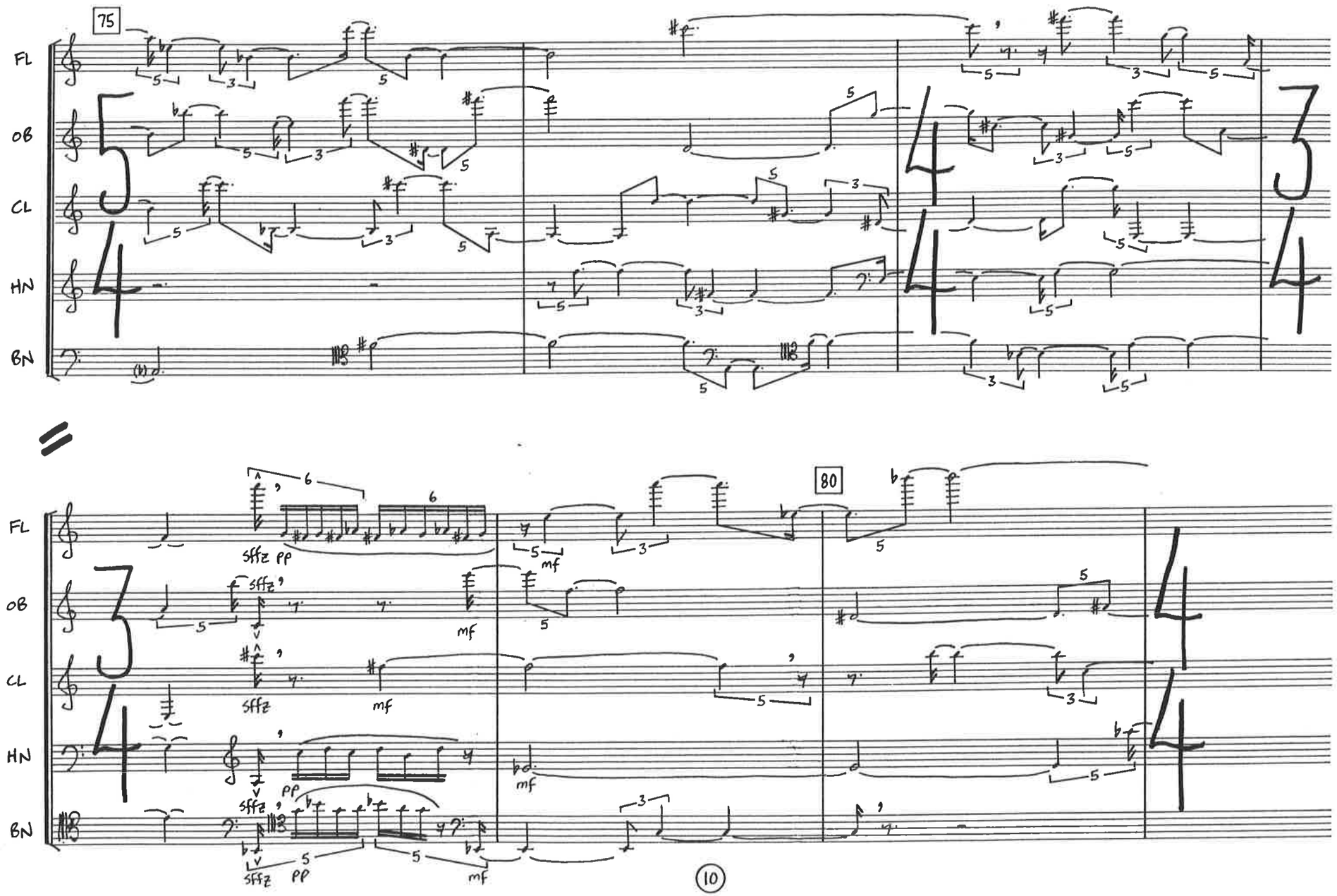
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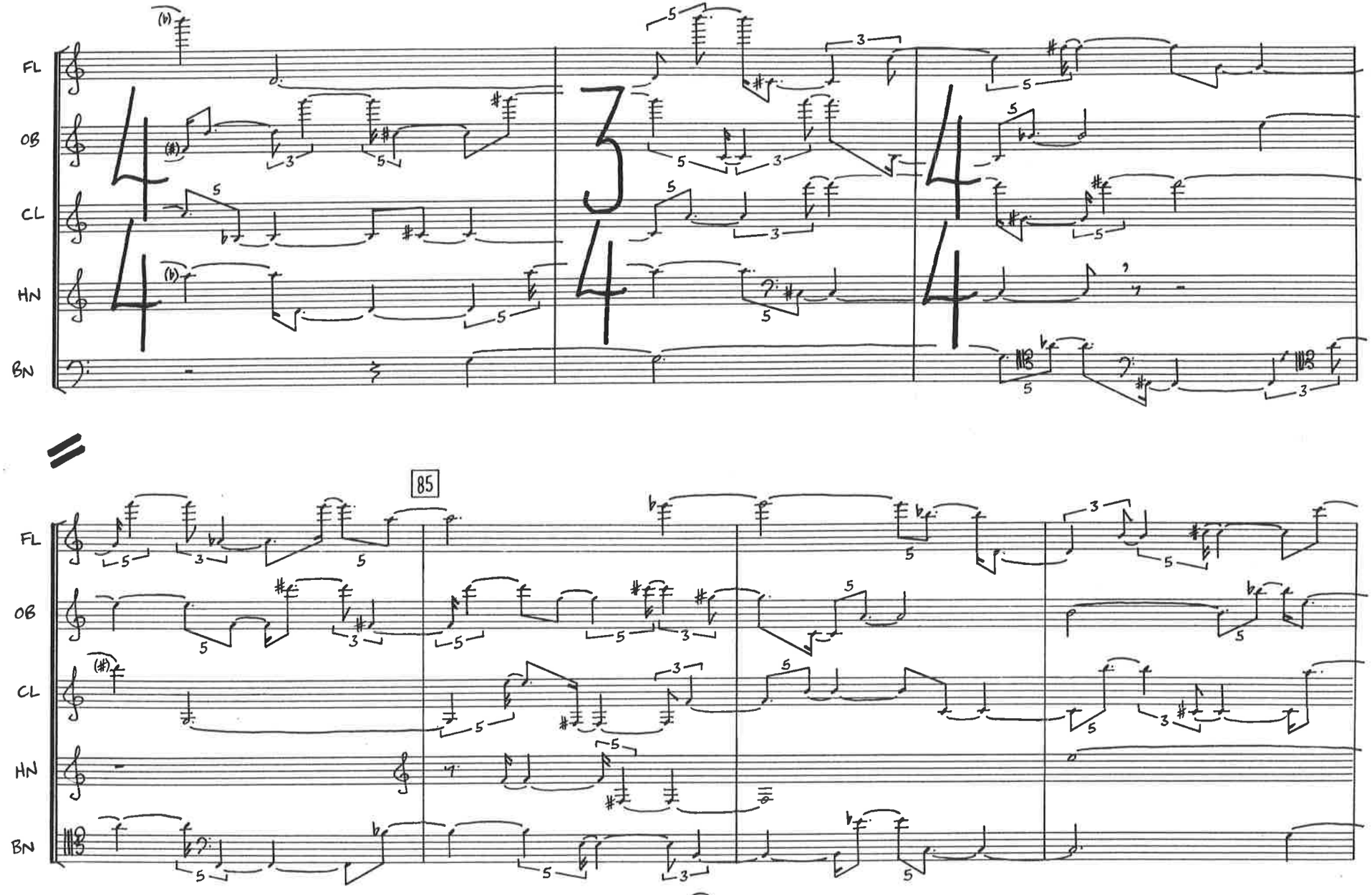
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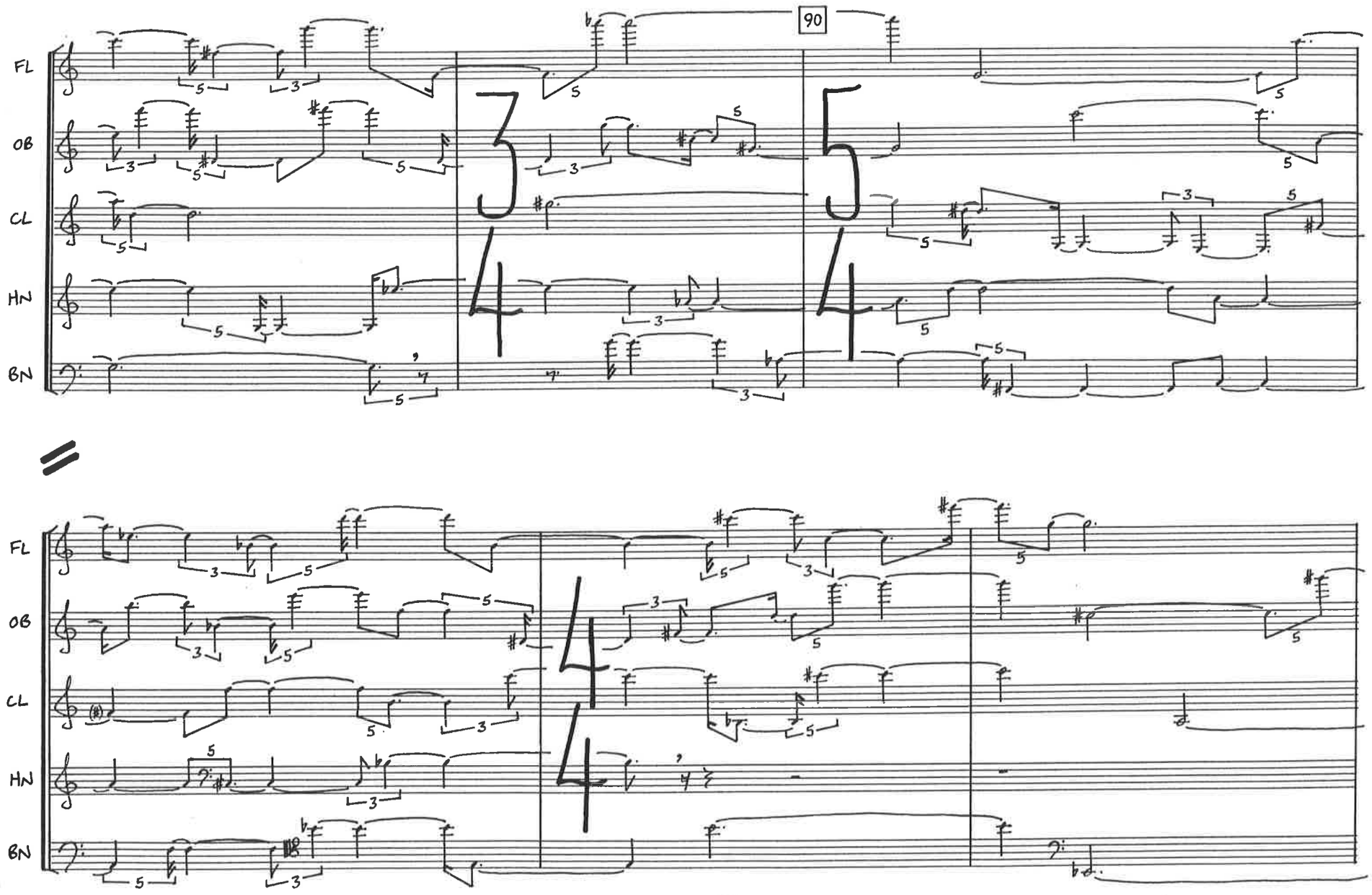
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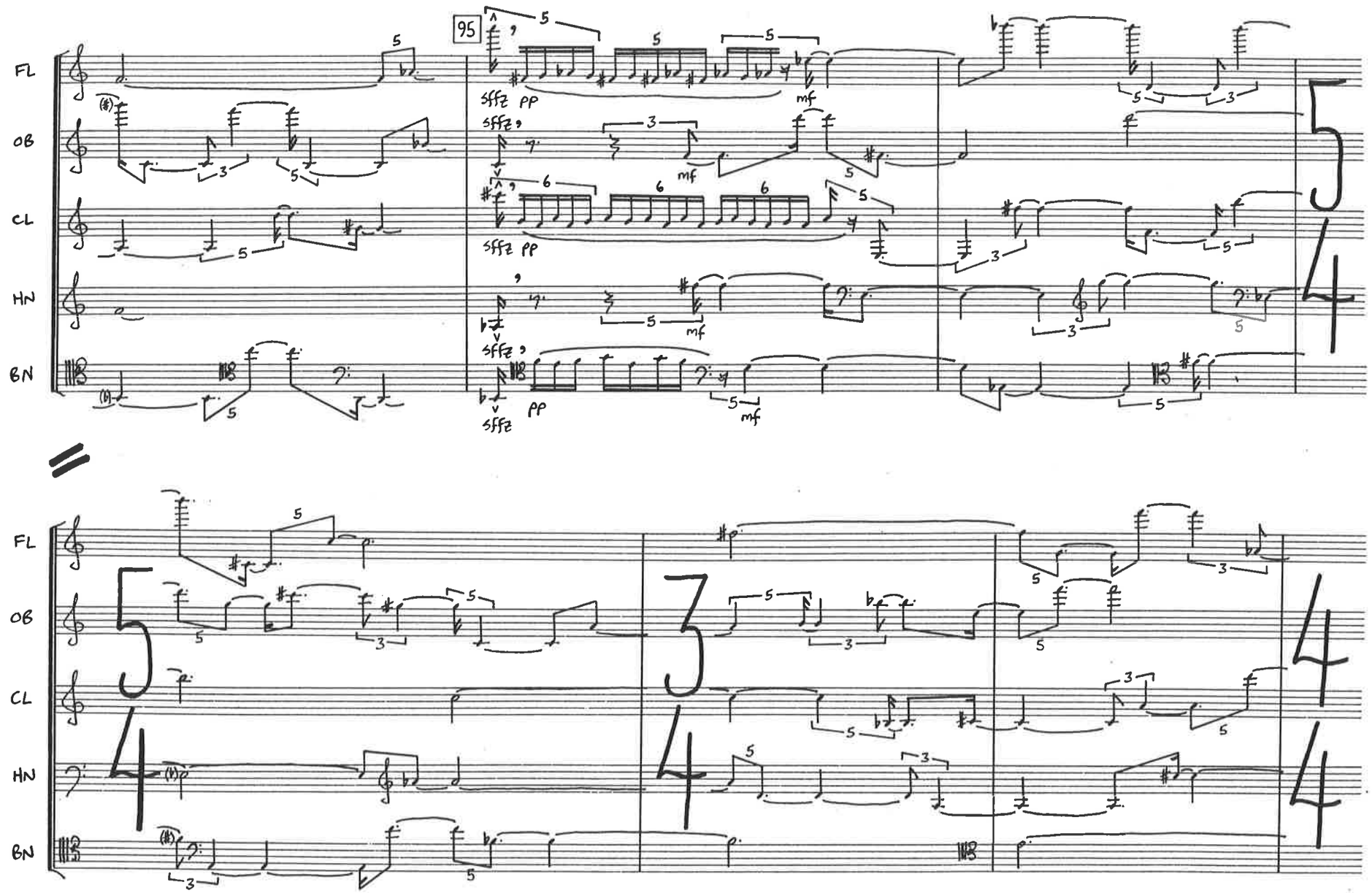
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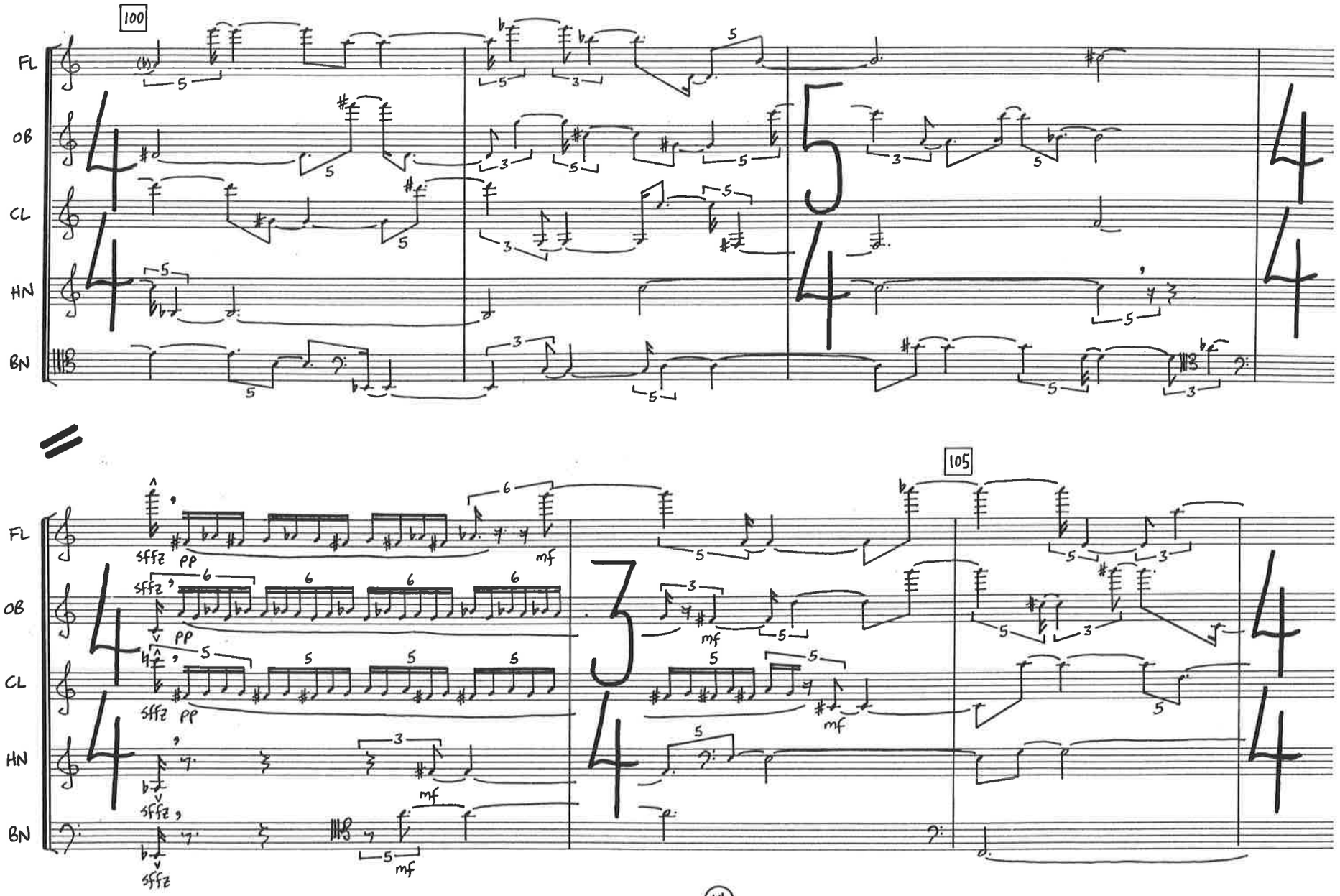
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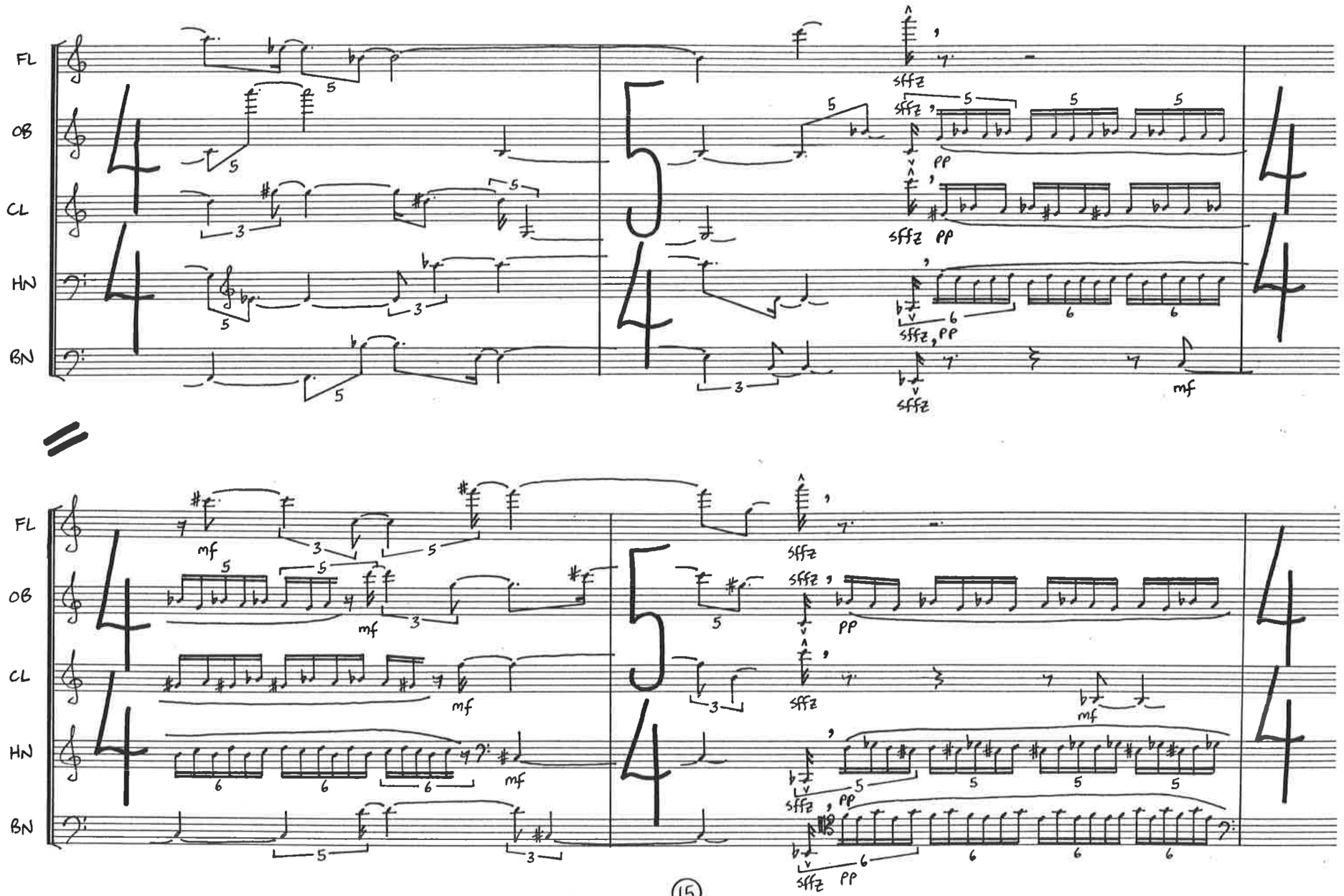
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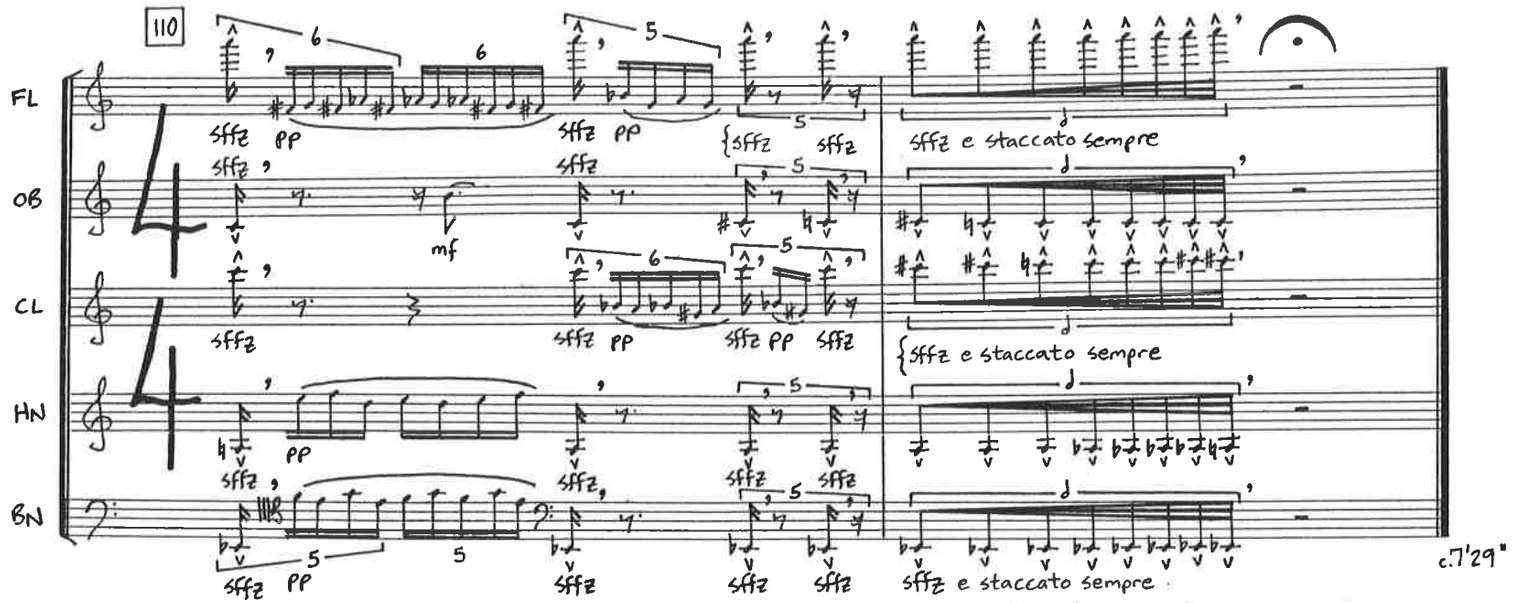
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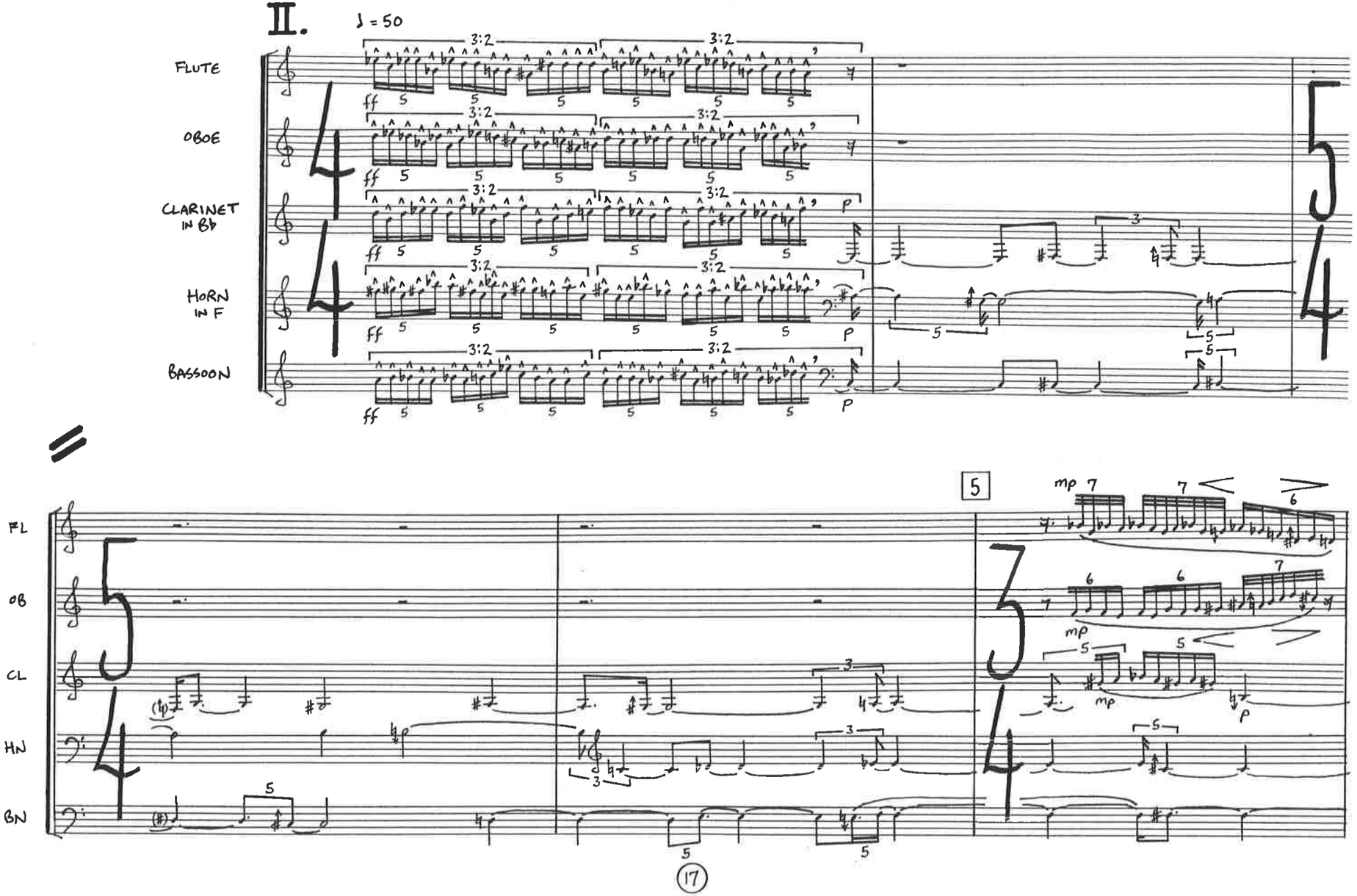
sfffz e staccato sempre
c.7'29"


II.
♩ = 50
FLUTE
OBOE
CLARINET IN B♭
HORN IN F
BASSOON
FL
OB
CL
HN
BN
3:2
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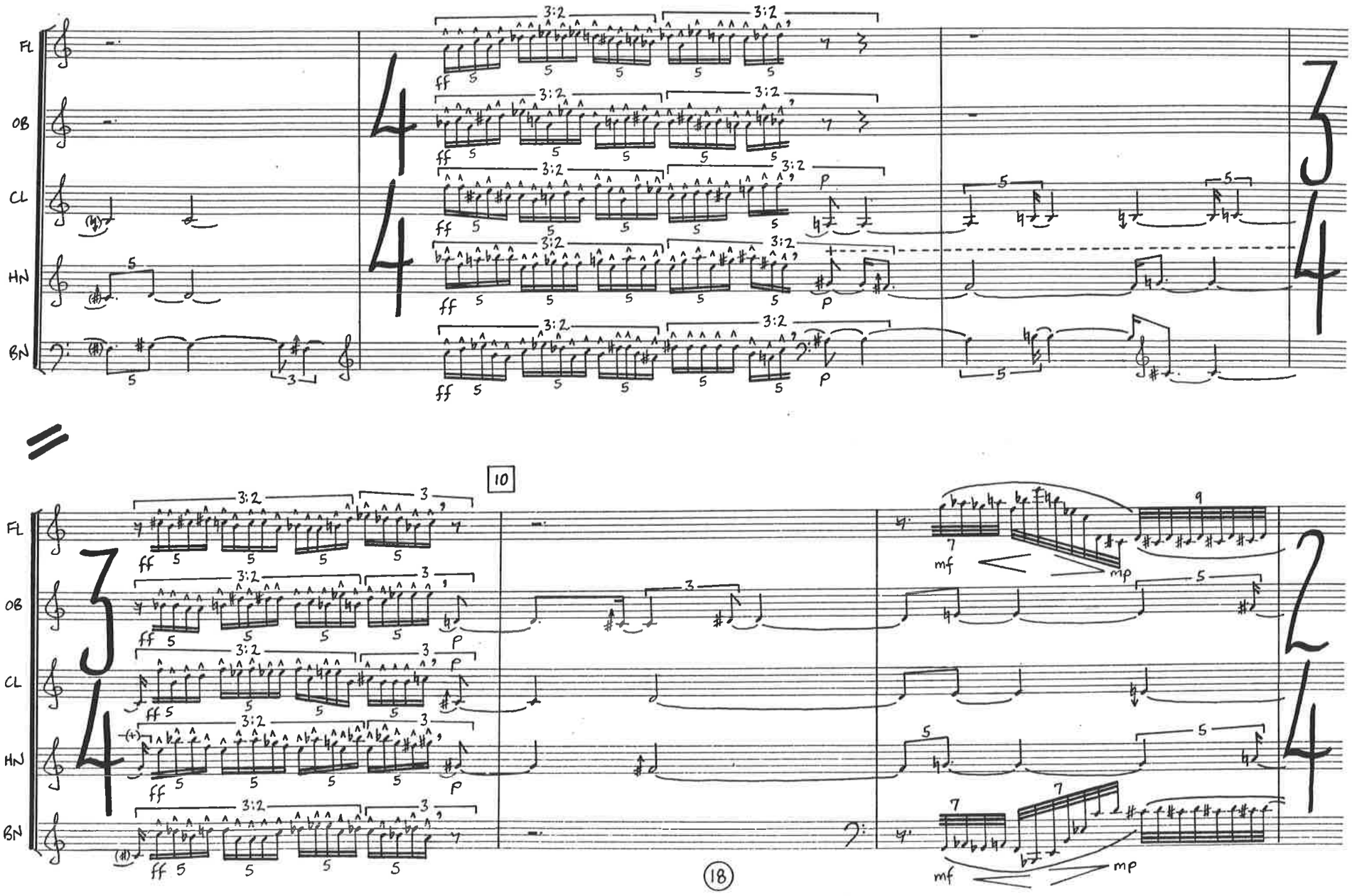
p
mp
5
17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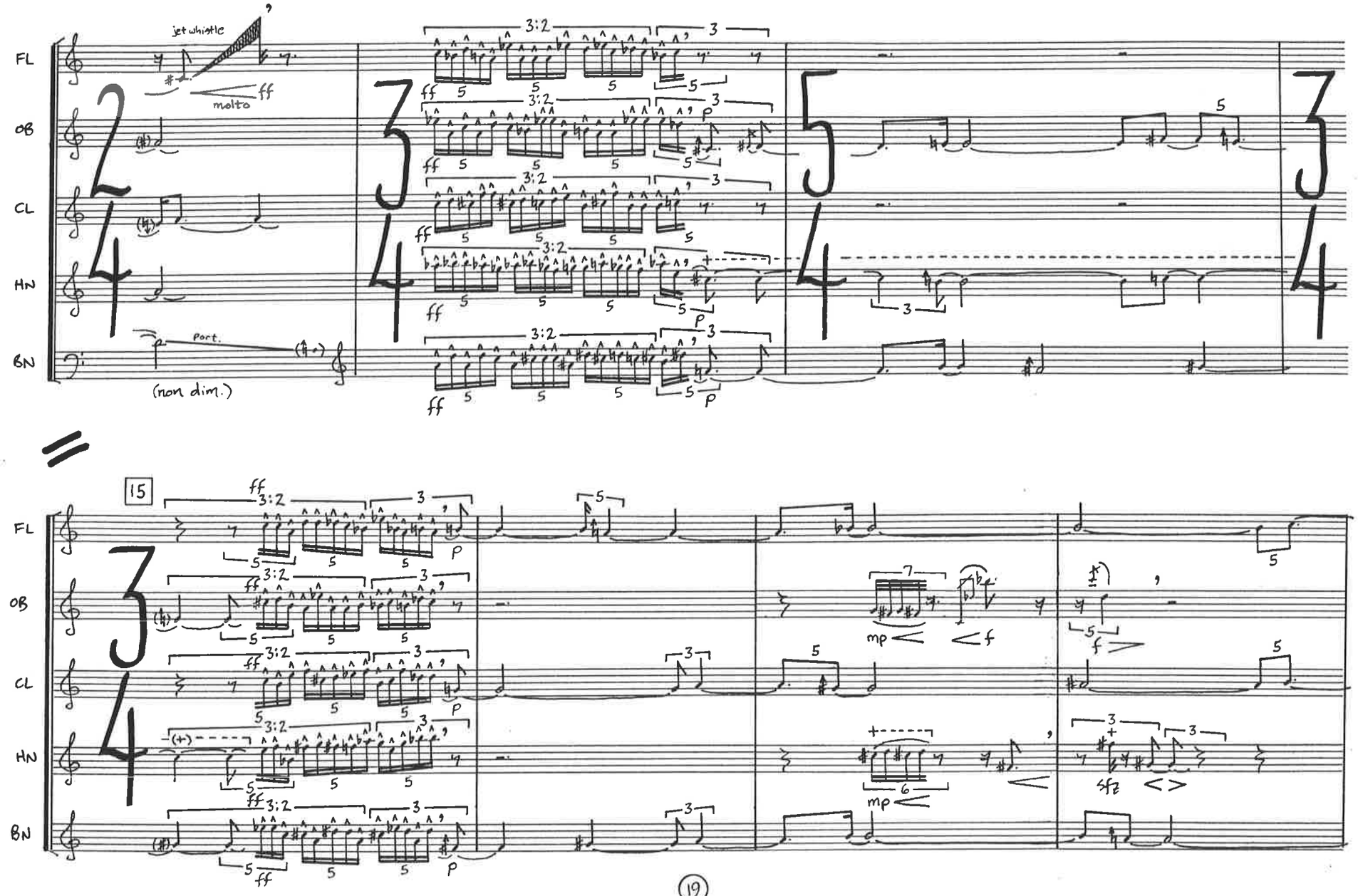
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OB
CL
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BN
jet whistle
molto
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port.
(non dim.)
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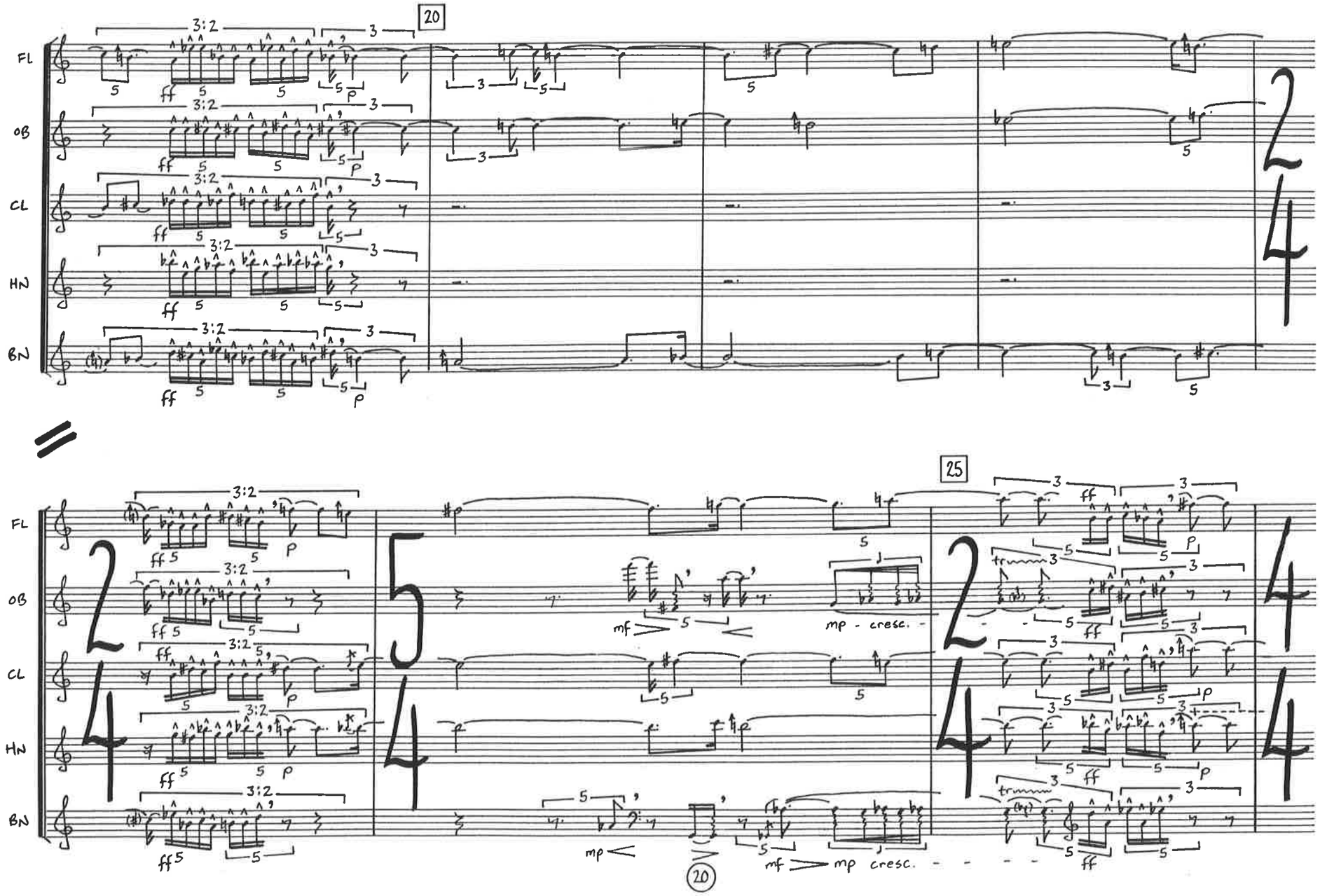
f
sfz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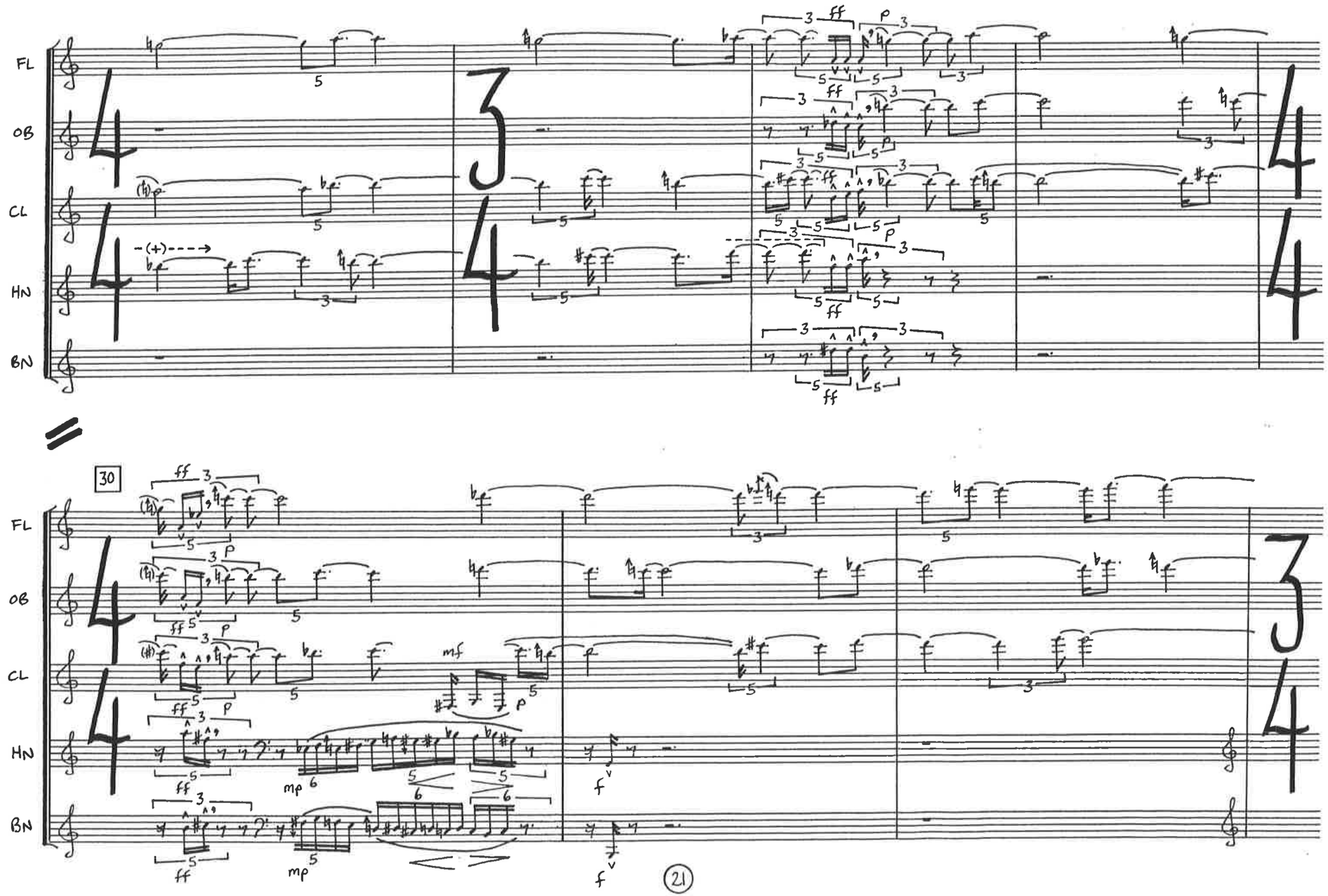
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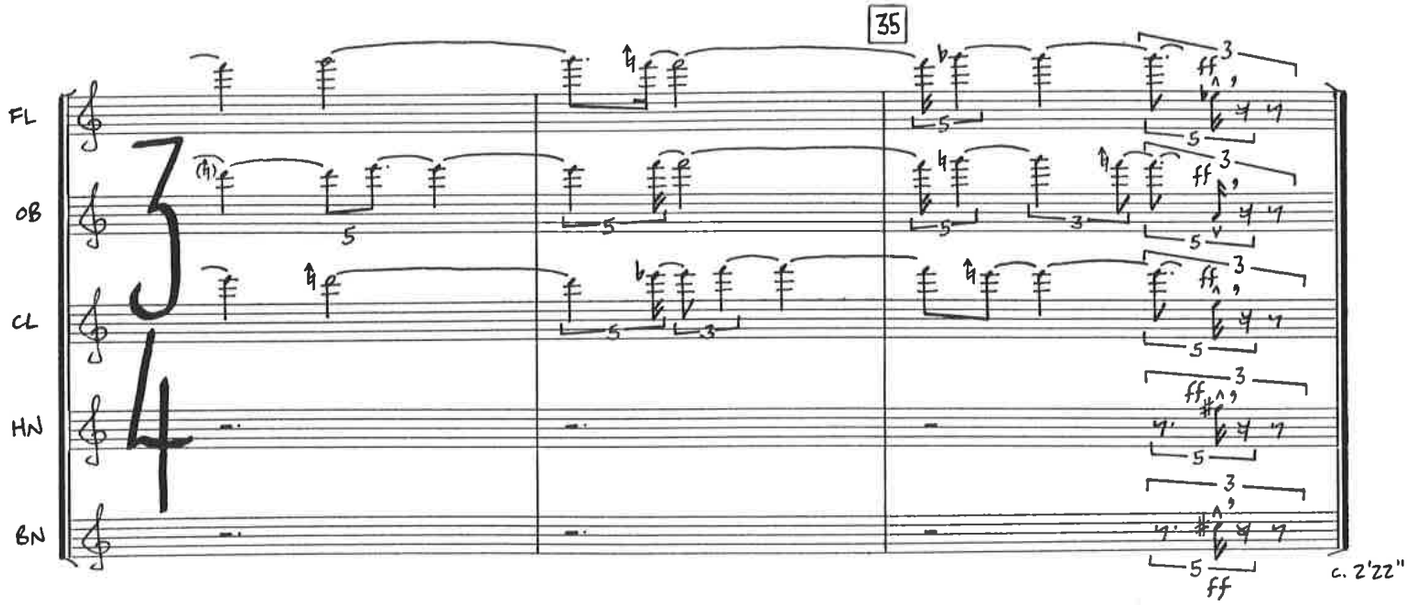
35
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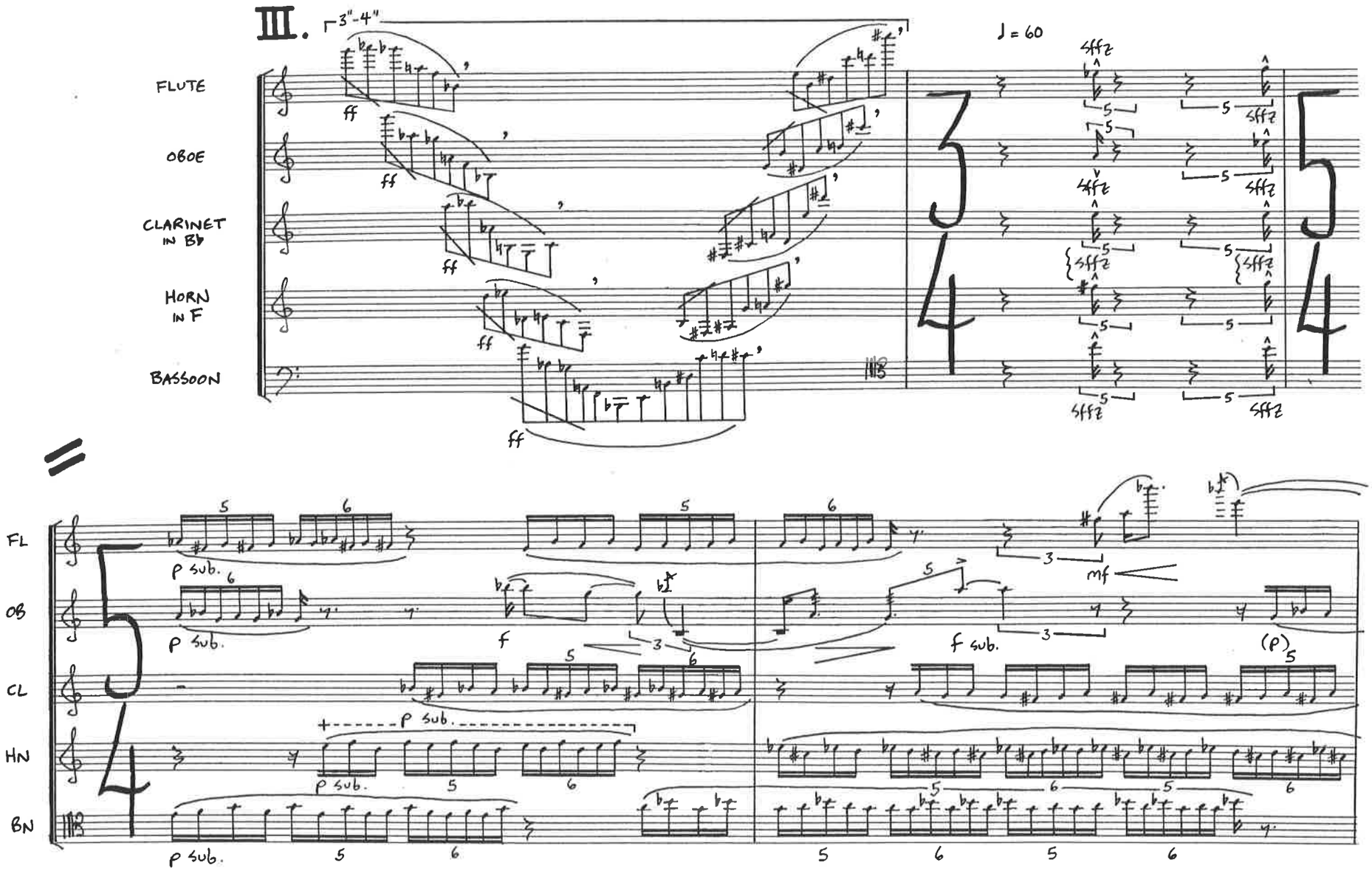
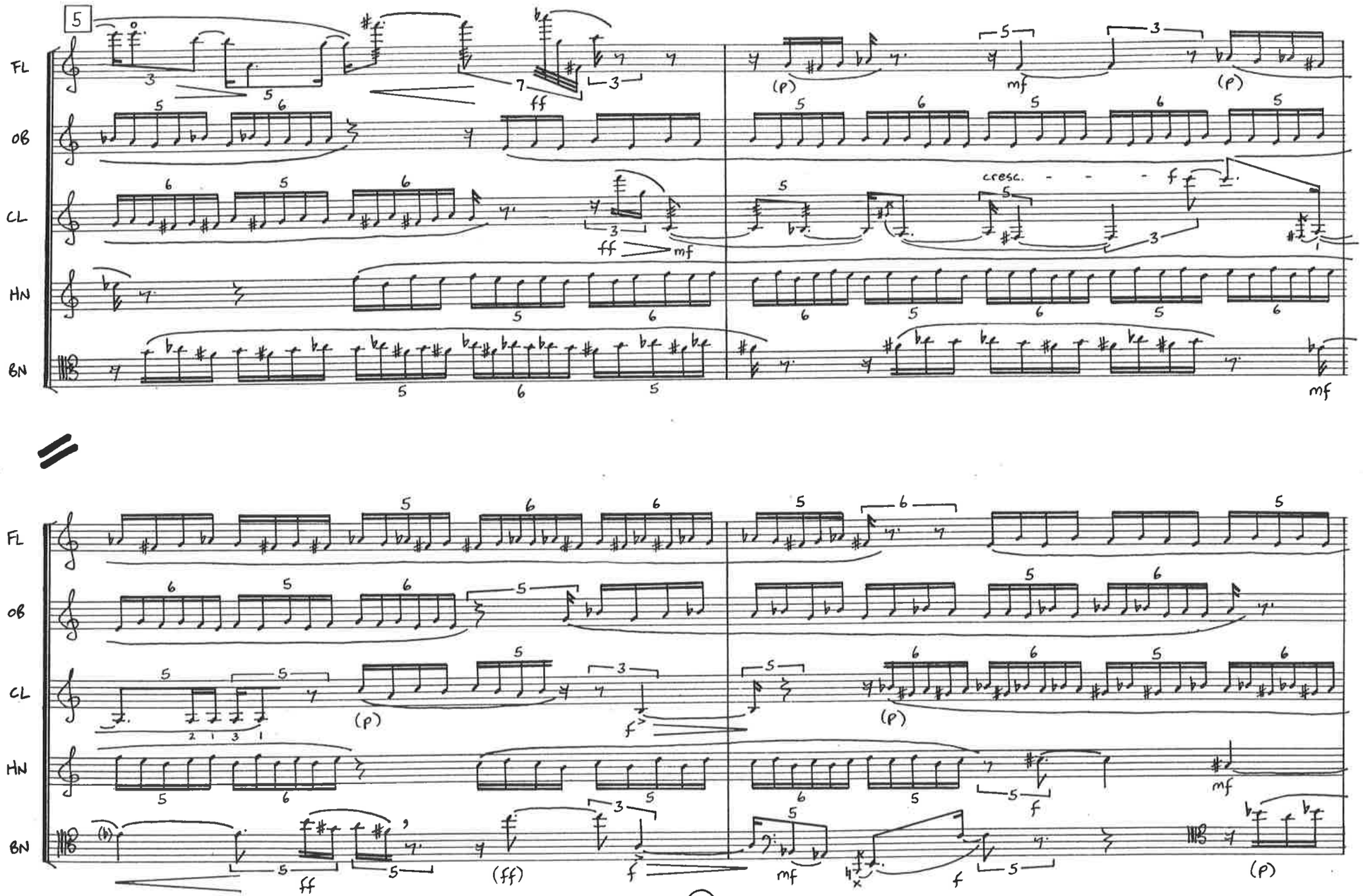
c. 2'22"


III.
3"-4"
♩ = 60
FLUTE
OBOE
CLARINET IN B♭
HORN IN F
BASSOON
ff
sfffz
FL
OB
CL
HN
BN
p sub.
f
f sub.
mf
(p)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FL
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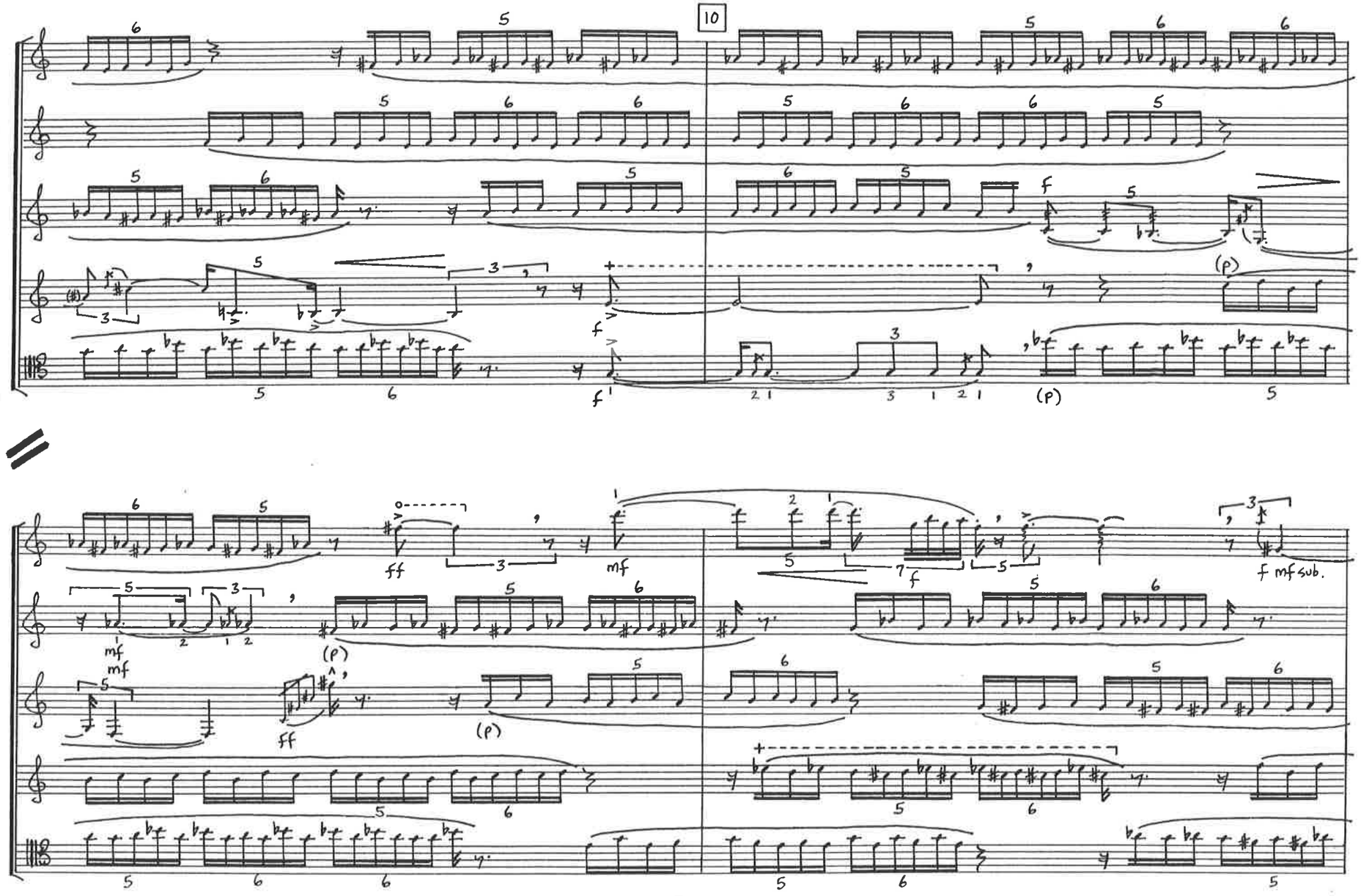
(ff)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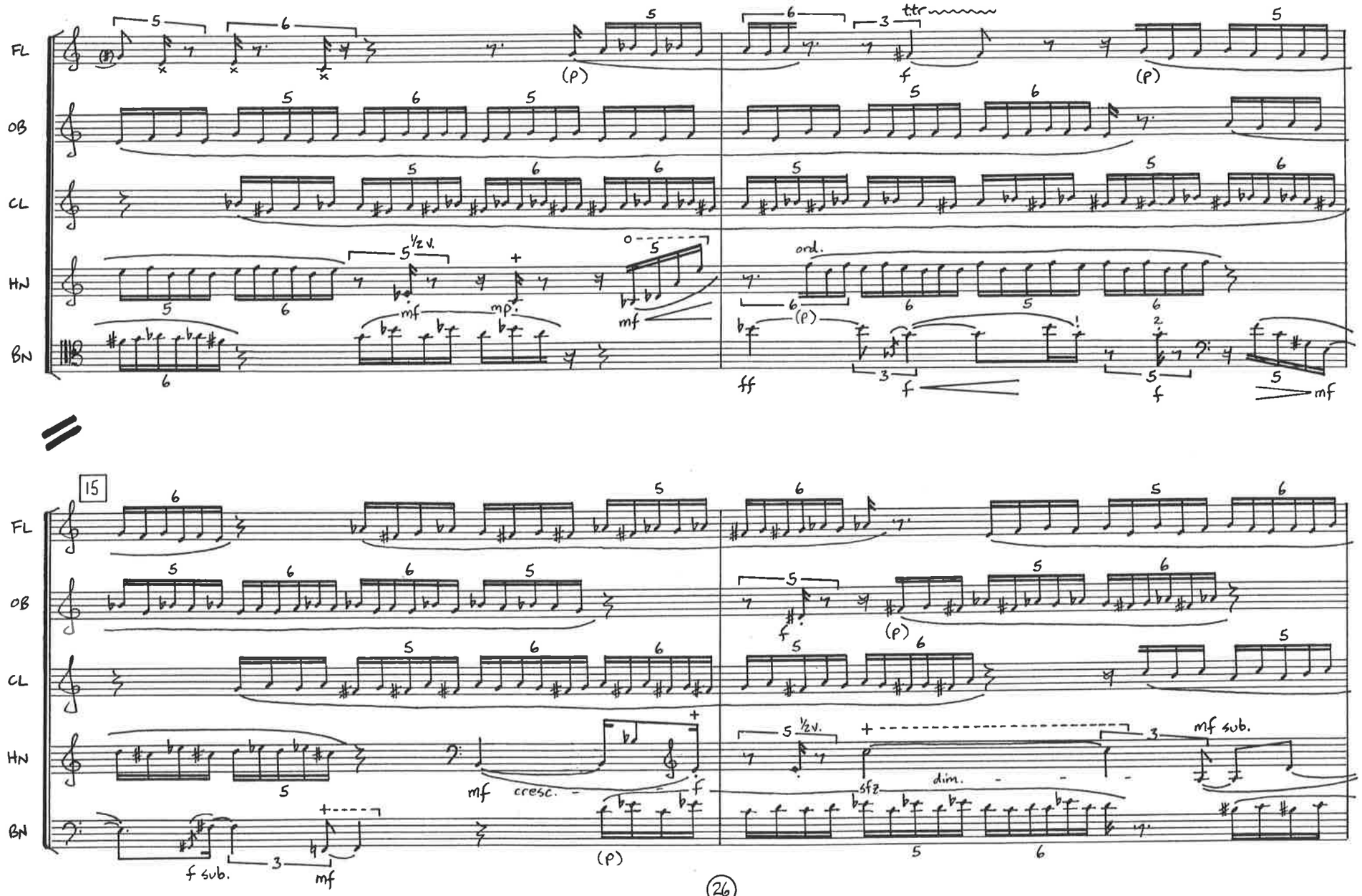
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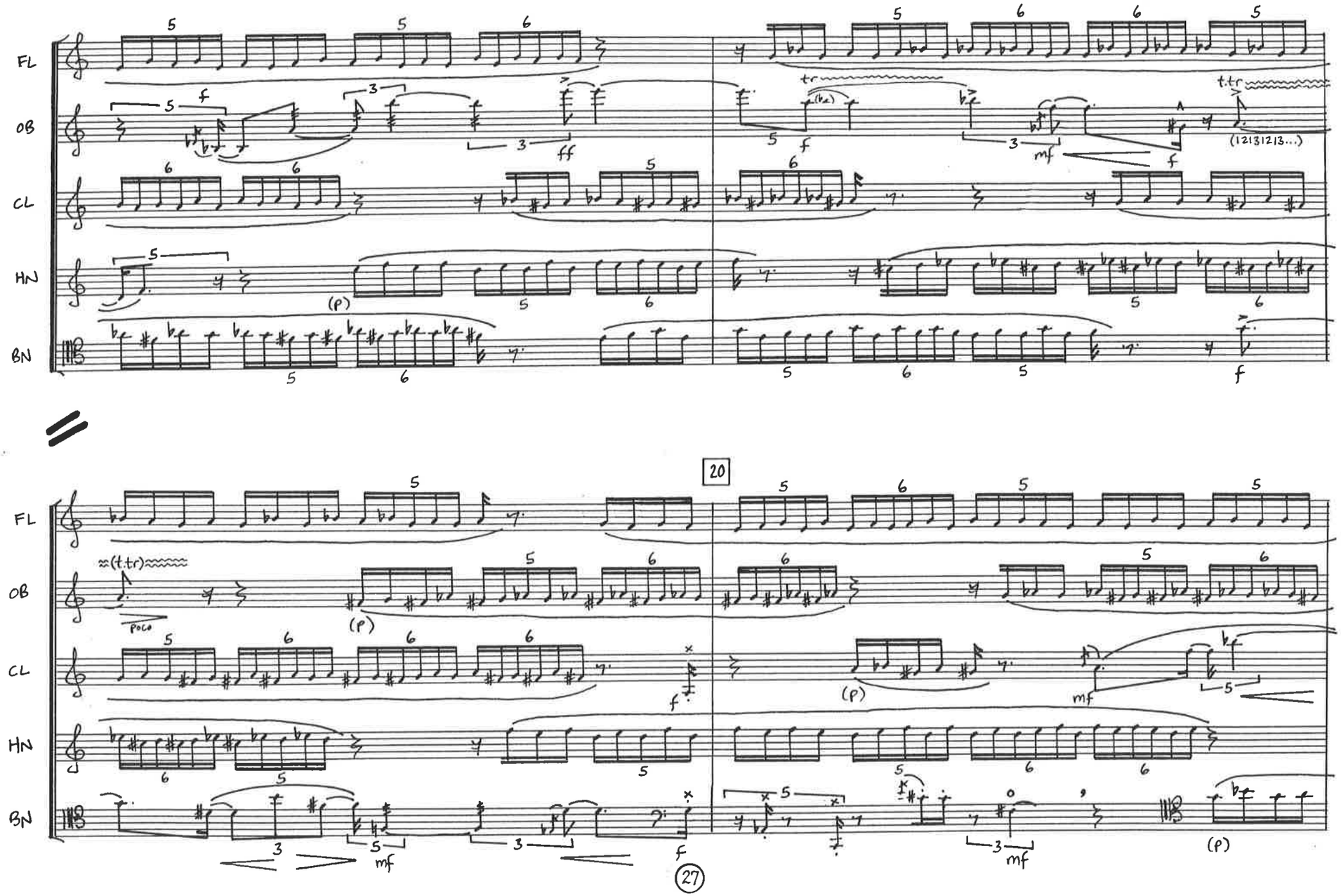
FL
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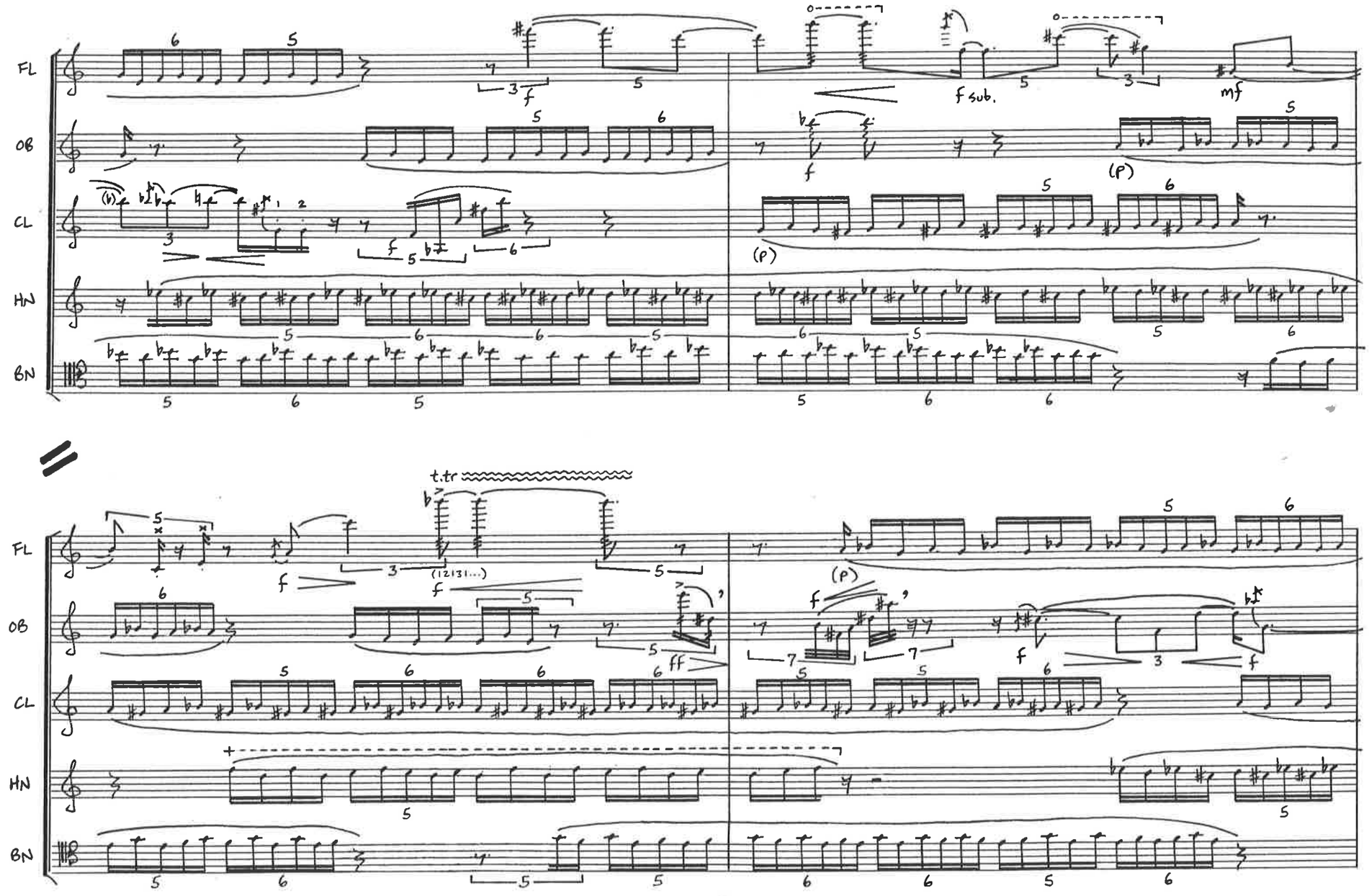
(12131213...)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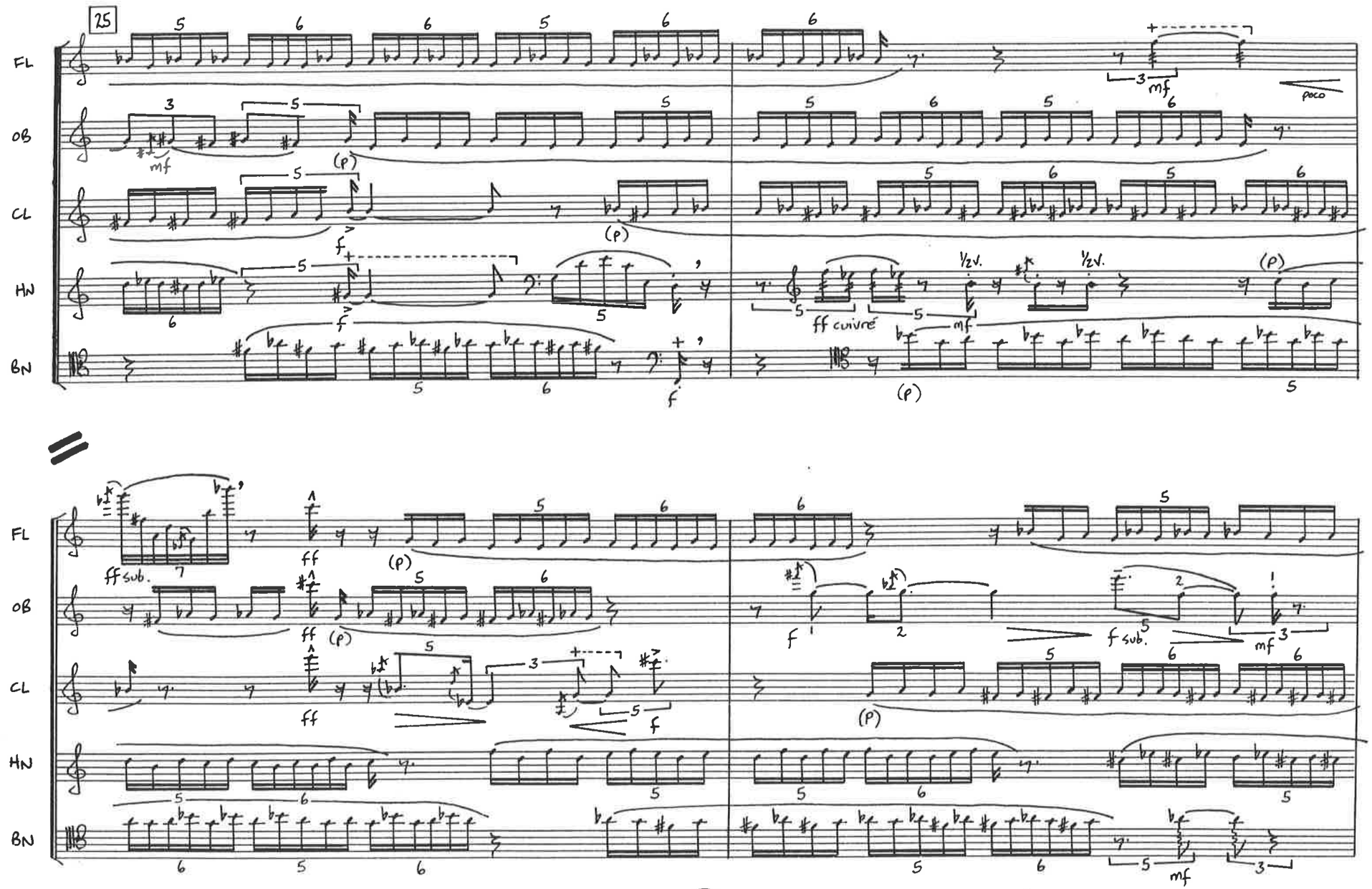
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FL
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mf
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mf
ff sub.
ff
f sub.
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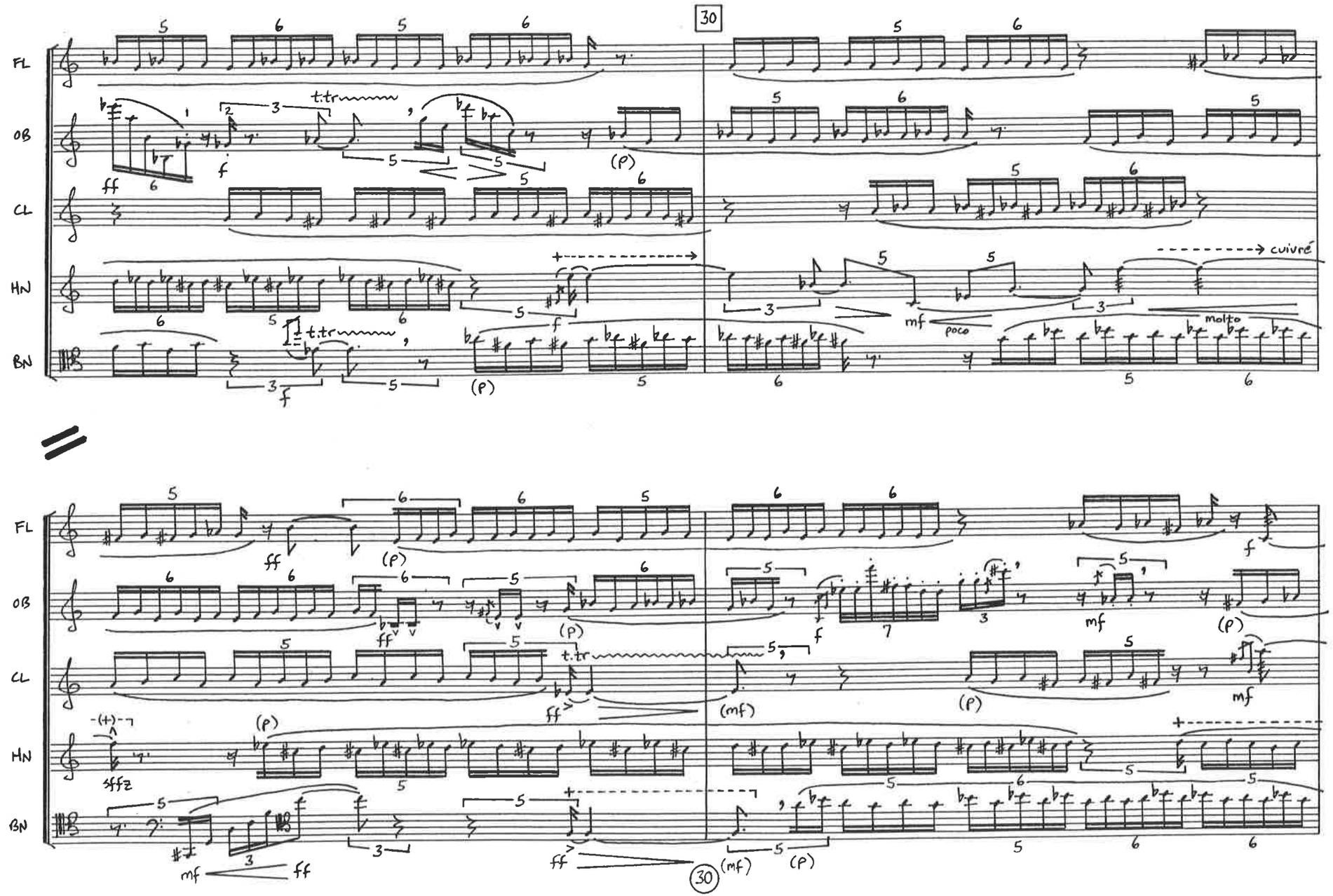
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HN
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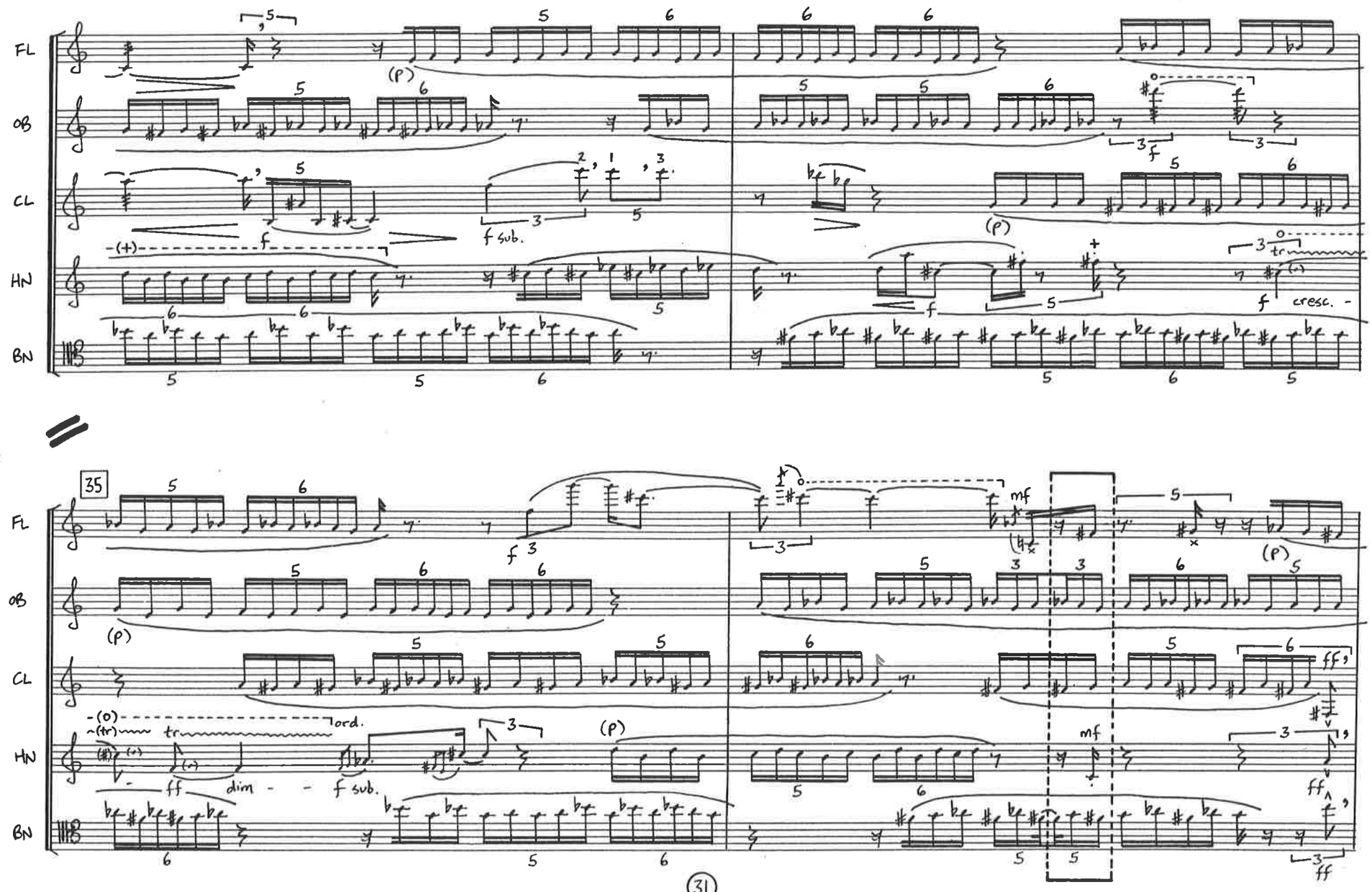
t.tr
cuivré
poco
molto
sffz
30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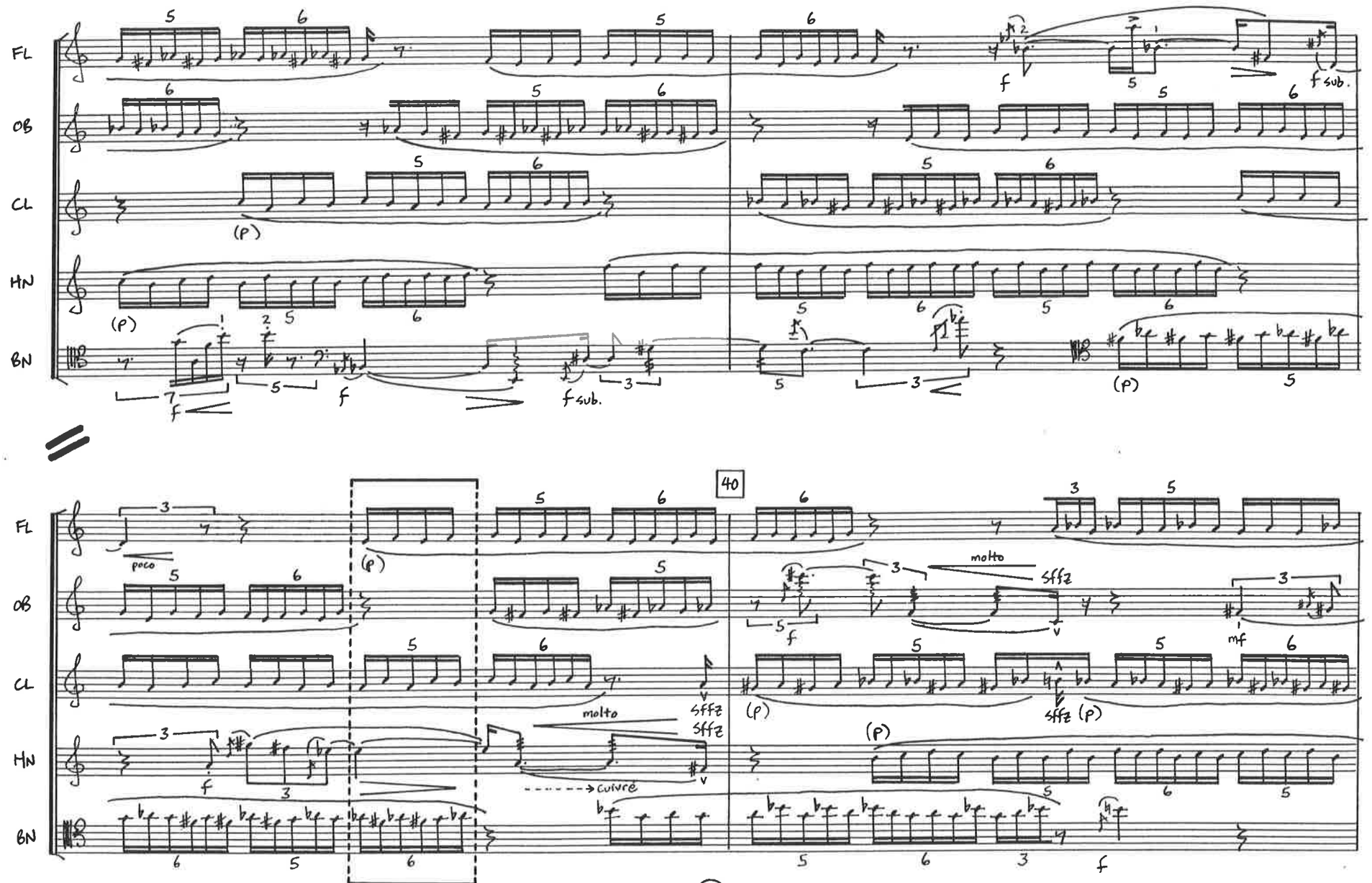
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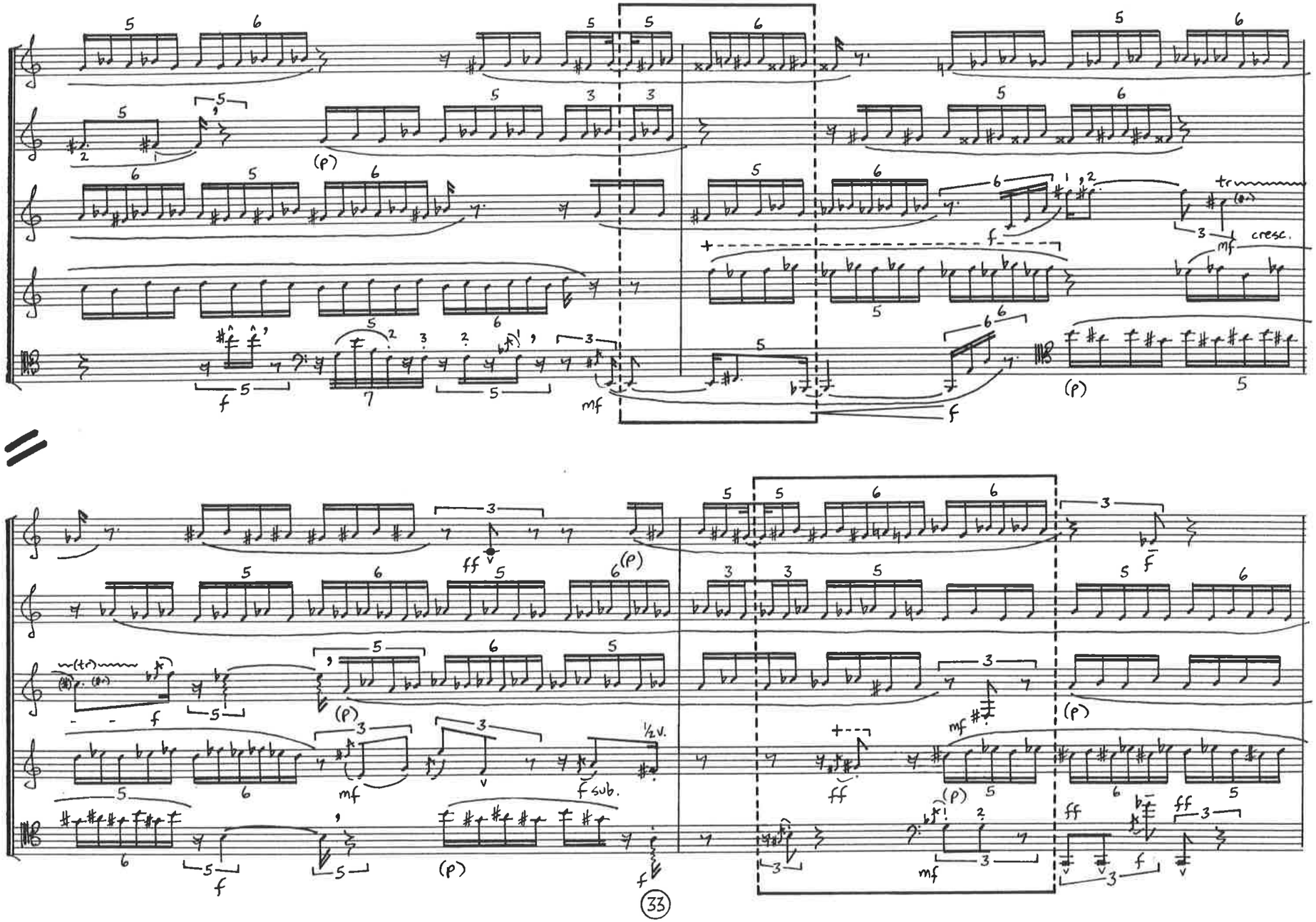
f sub.
poco
molto
sffz
cuivré
mf
40


FL
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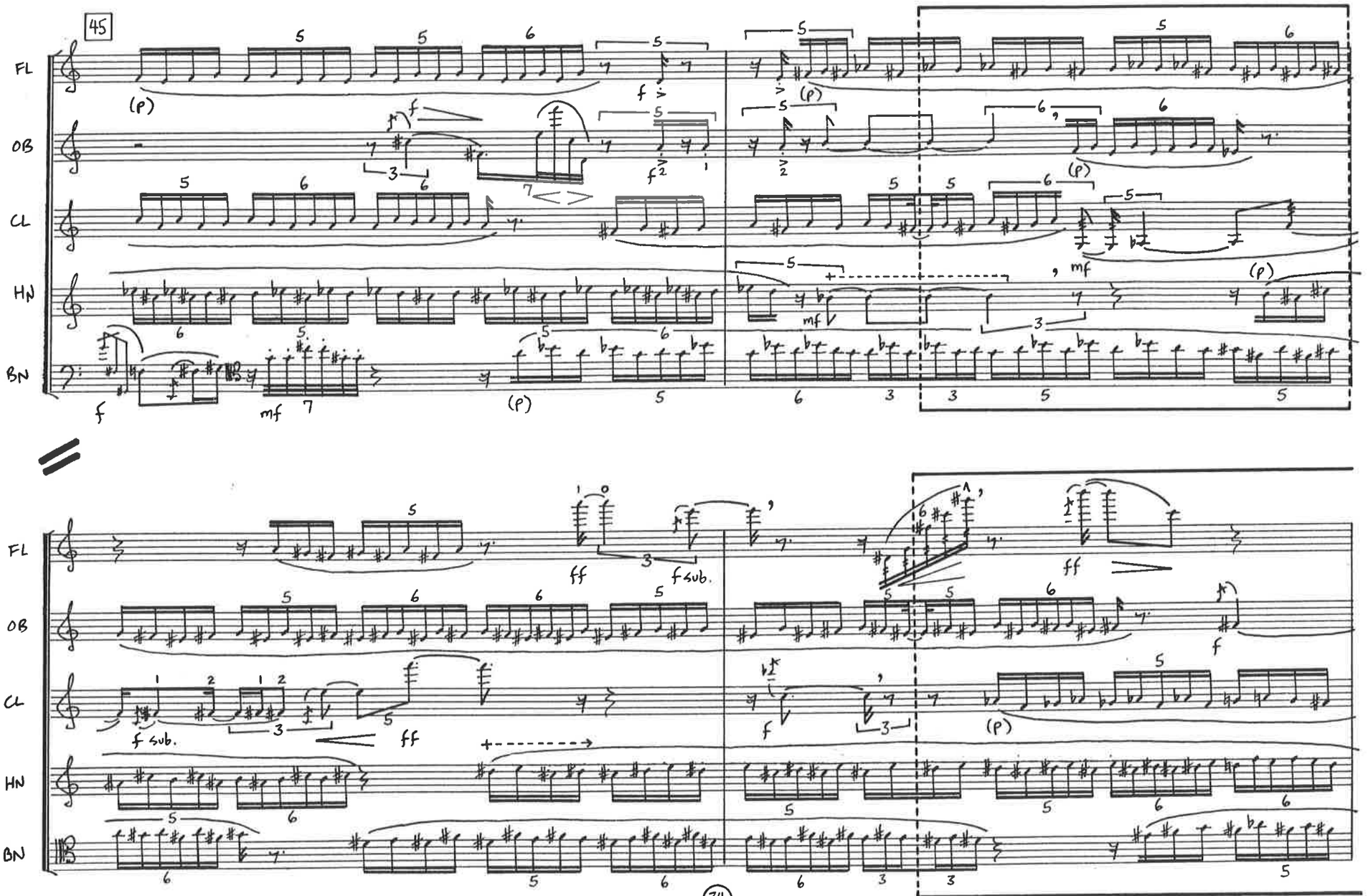
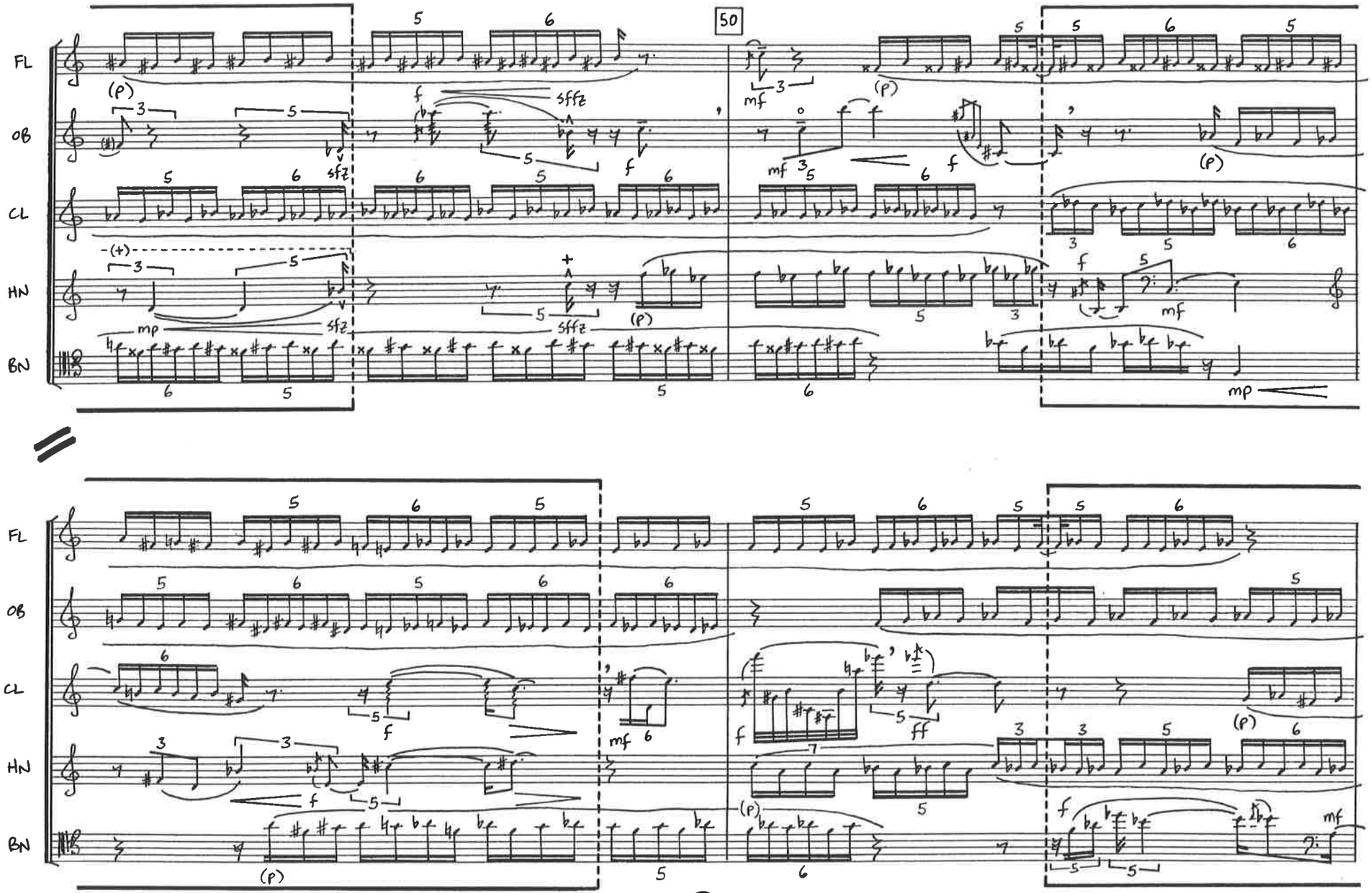
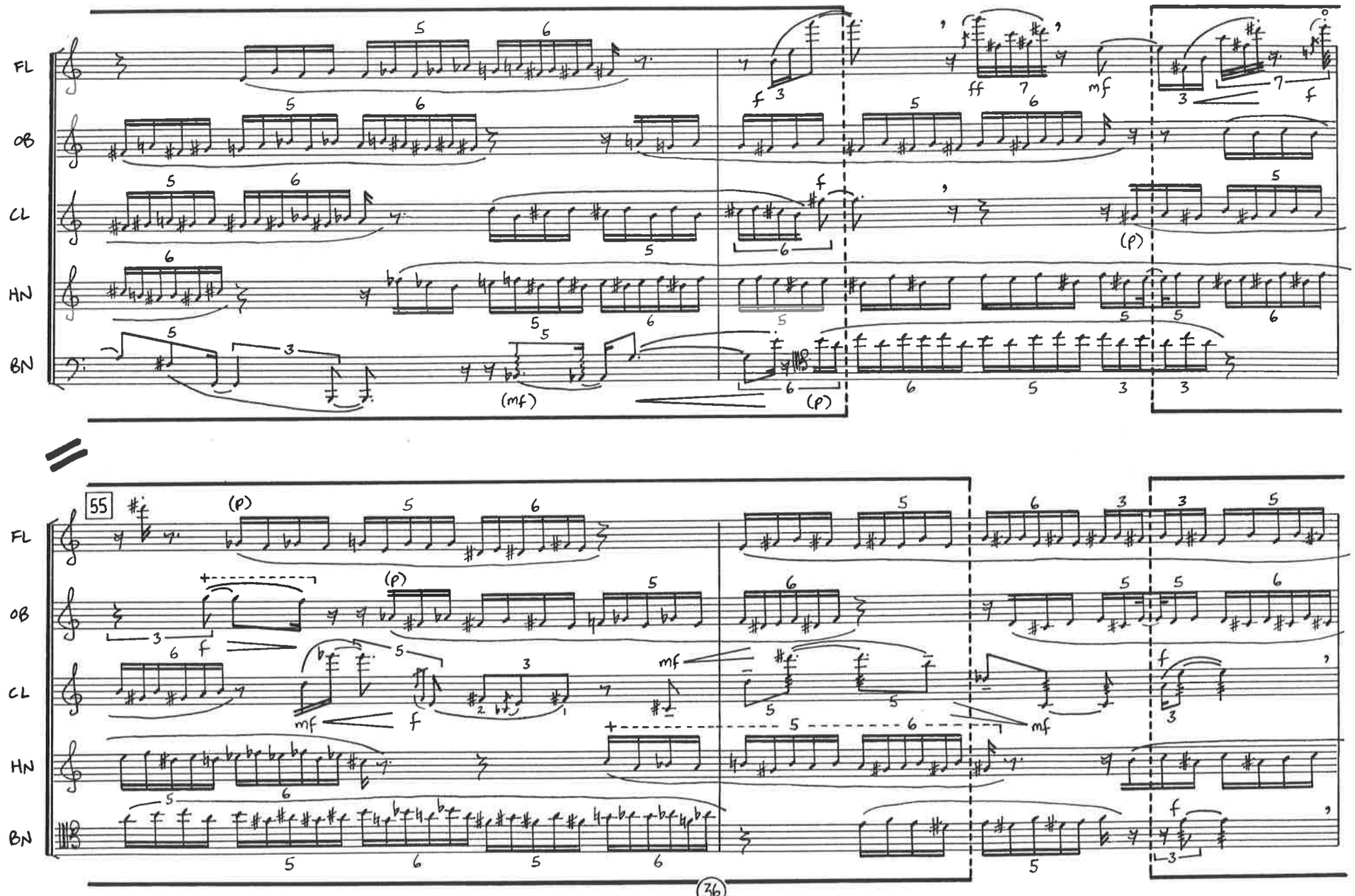
BN
cresc.
½v.
33


45
FL
OB
CL
HN
BN
(p)
f
mf
ff
f sub.
(34)


50
FL
OB
CL
HN
BN
FL
OB
CL
HN
BN


FL
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(p)
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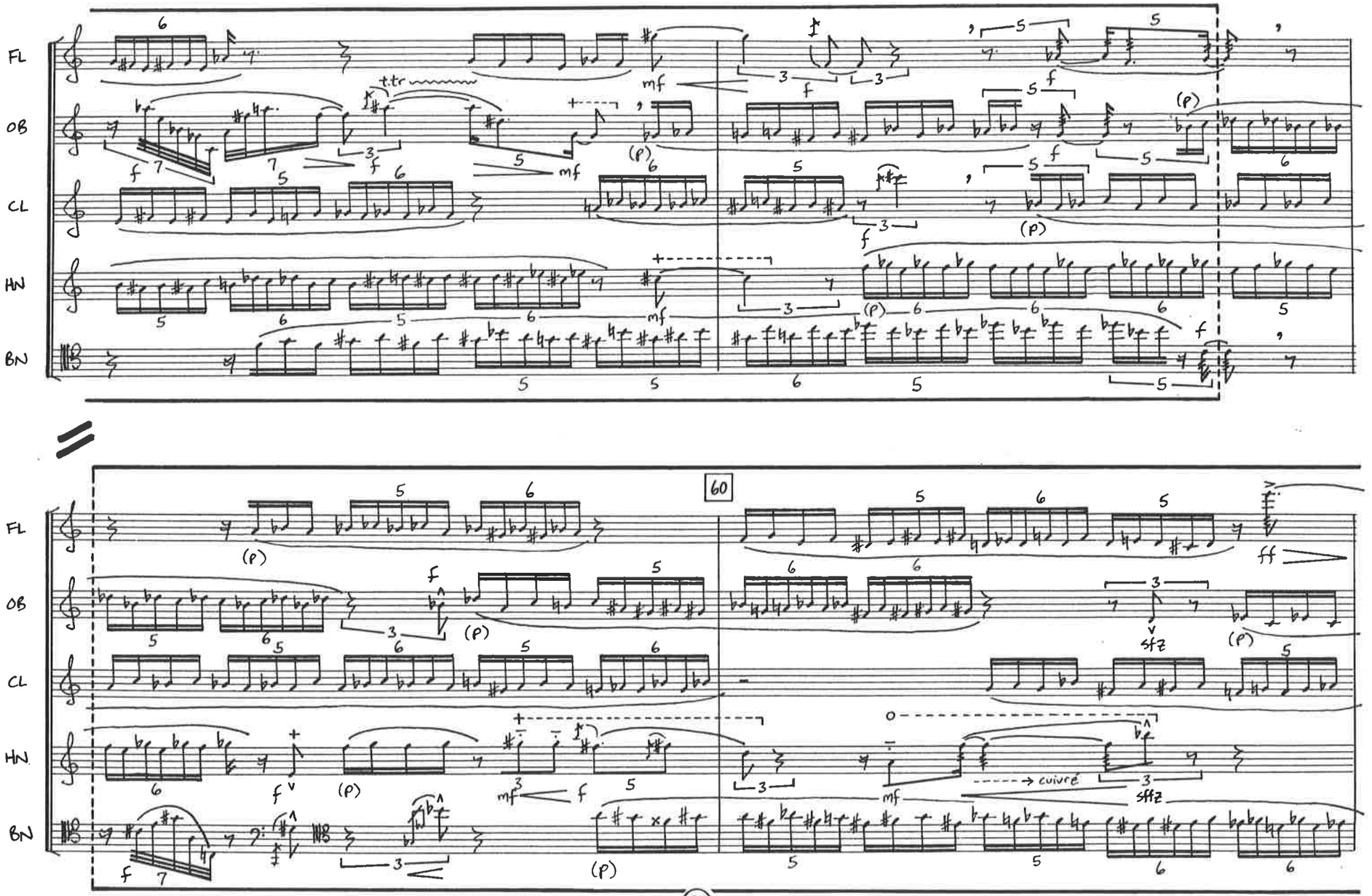
(p)


FL
OB
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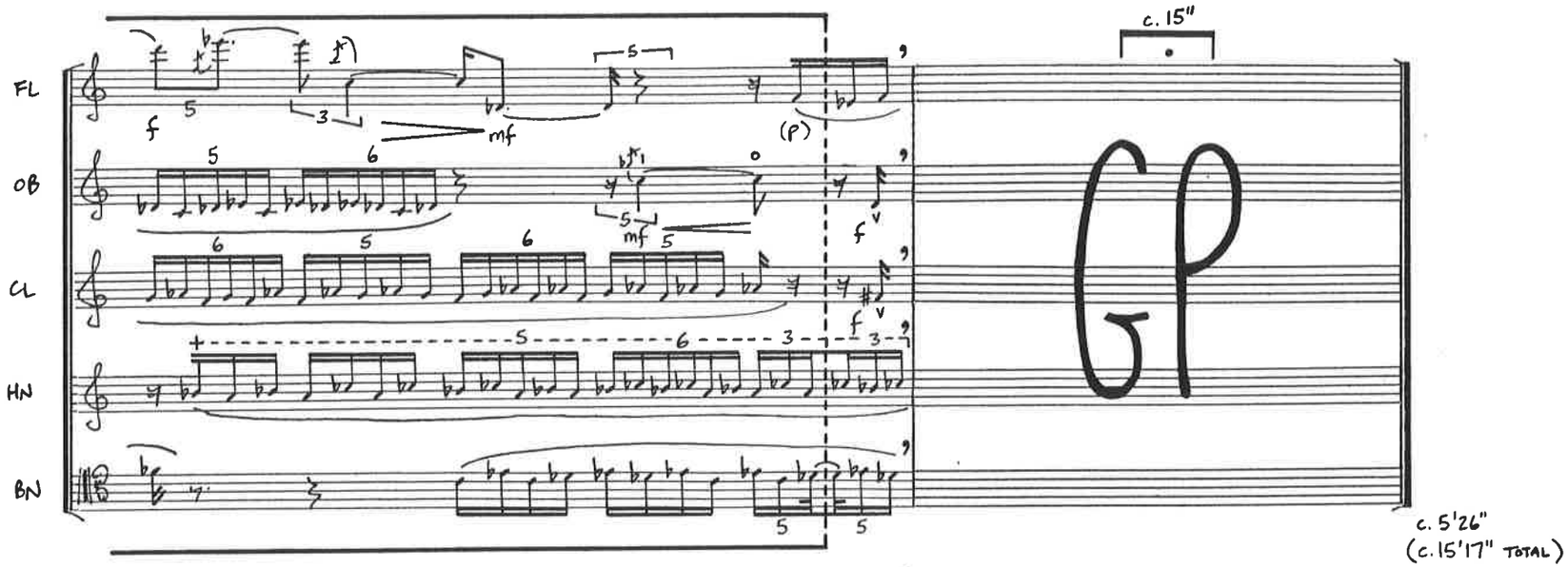
BN
t.tr
60
cuivré


FL
OB
CL
HN
BN
c. 15"
GP
c. 5'26"
(c. 15'17" TOTAL)