Karlheinz Essl

on common ground

for cello and piano
2020

Dedicated to Emanuele Torquati & Francesco Dillon

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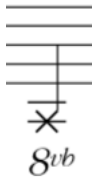
Throughout the entire piece, a "drone" based on c is held in the 3rd pedal. This pitch and its harmonic components create a shimmering background that represents the "common ground" which forms the basis of the harmonic structure. In the very beginning, the pianist presses the 5 octaves of this note (using the nose as well) silently and holds it with the sostenuto pedal until the end of the performance.

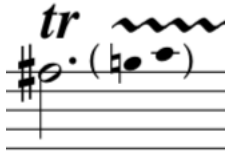
The compositions lives from the interaction between cello and piano – a kind of discours which encompasses a broad variety of expressions and reactions. Besides the obvious dialogic aspect, both players with their individual instruments are part of an uncommon "hyper-instrument" which they shape and modify together.

Playing instructions



prepared key: damp C0 with tuning wedges on both sides of the string

pluck string inside the piano with finger nail



quasi trillo: irregular permutation of the three notes

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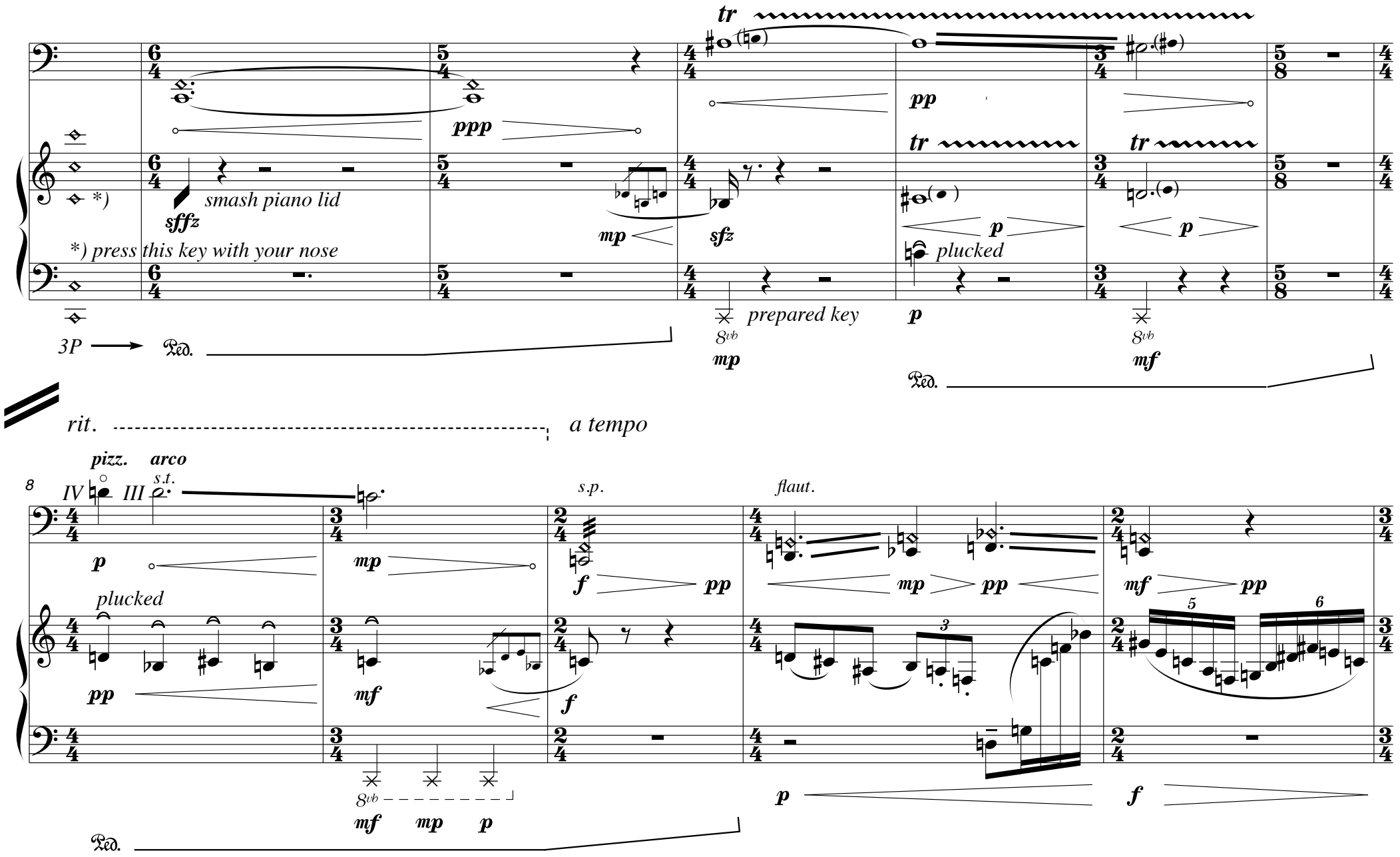
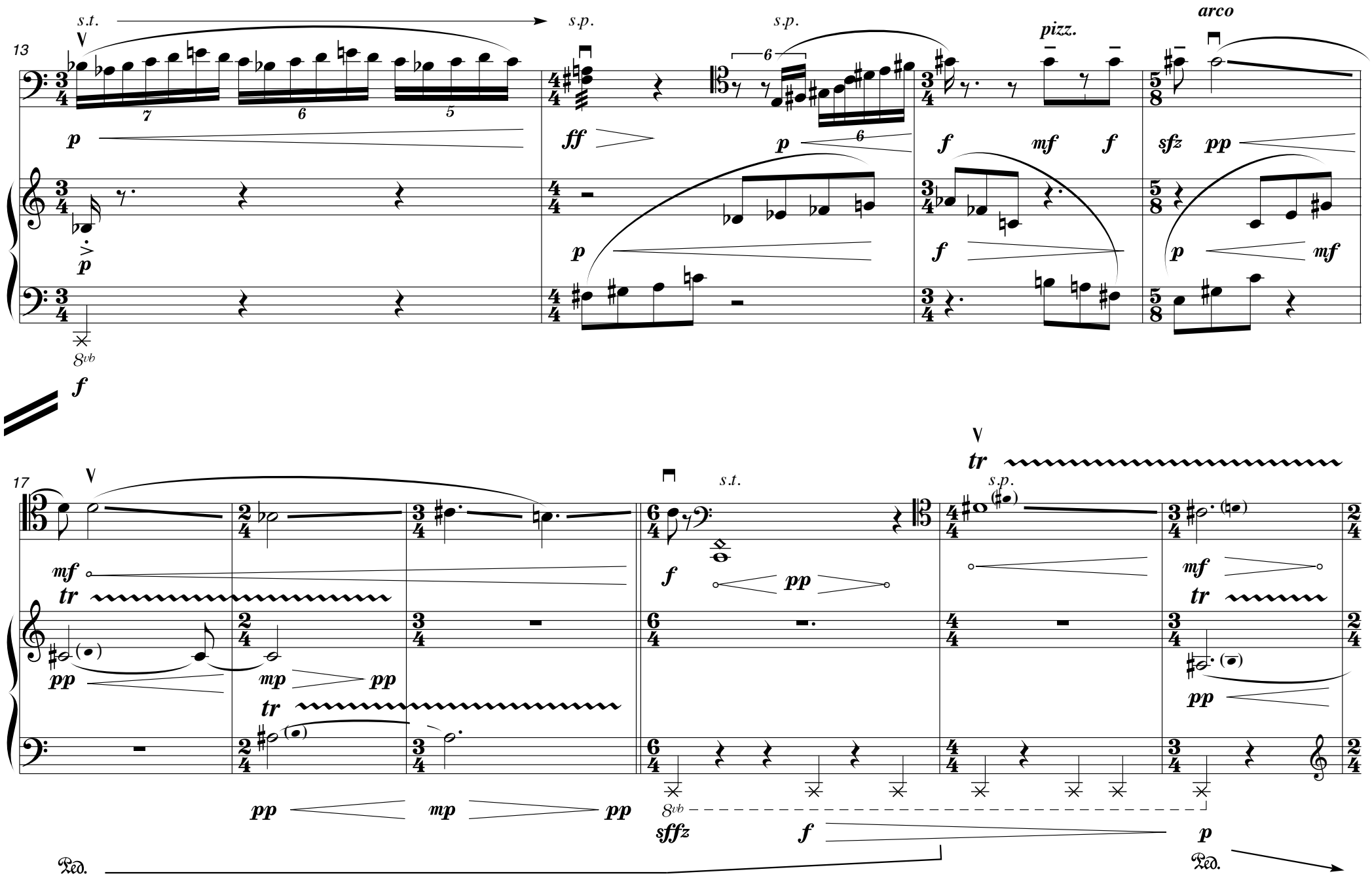
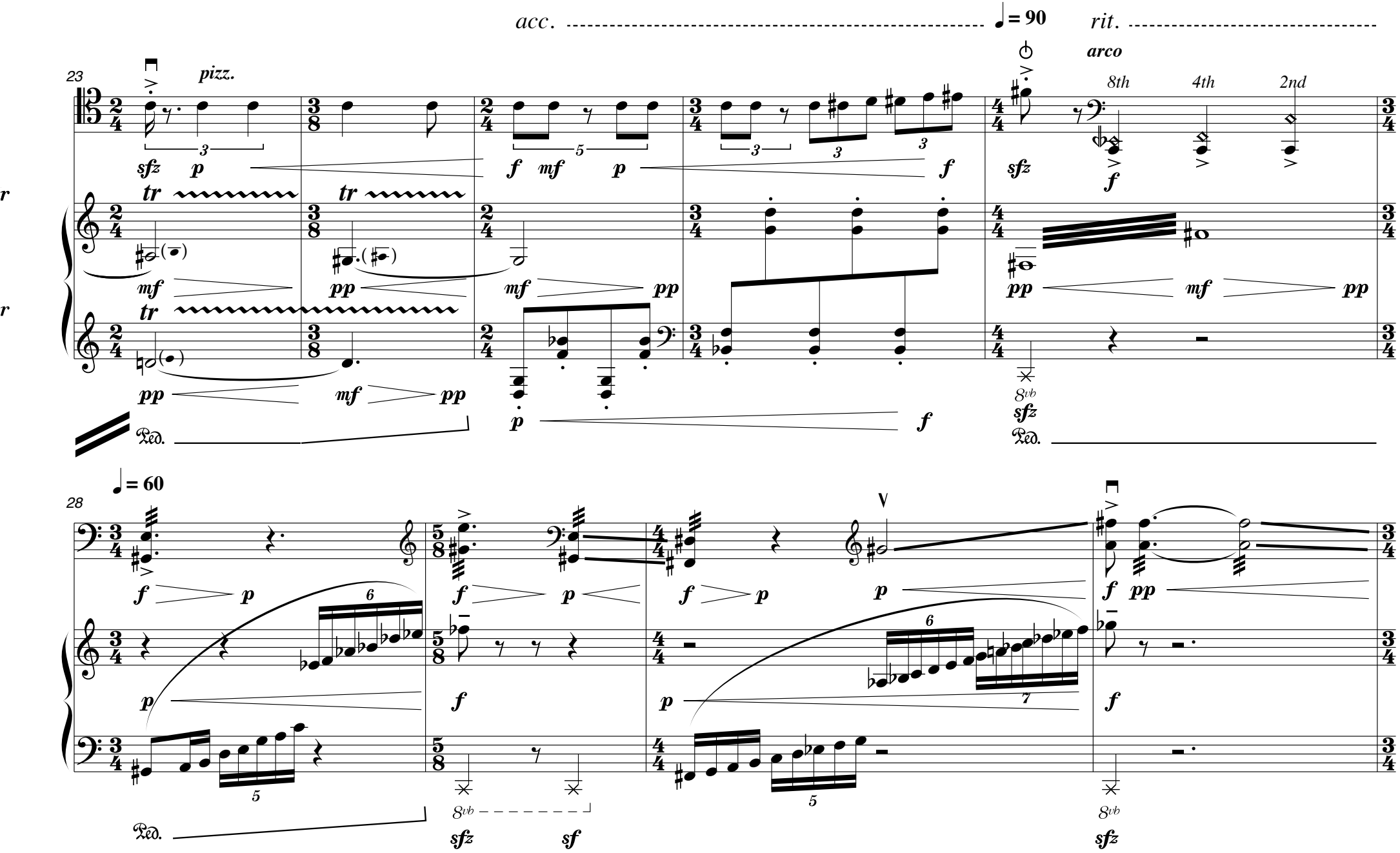
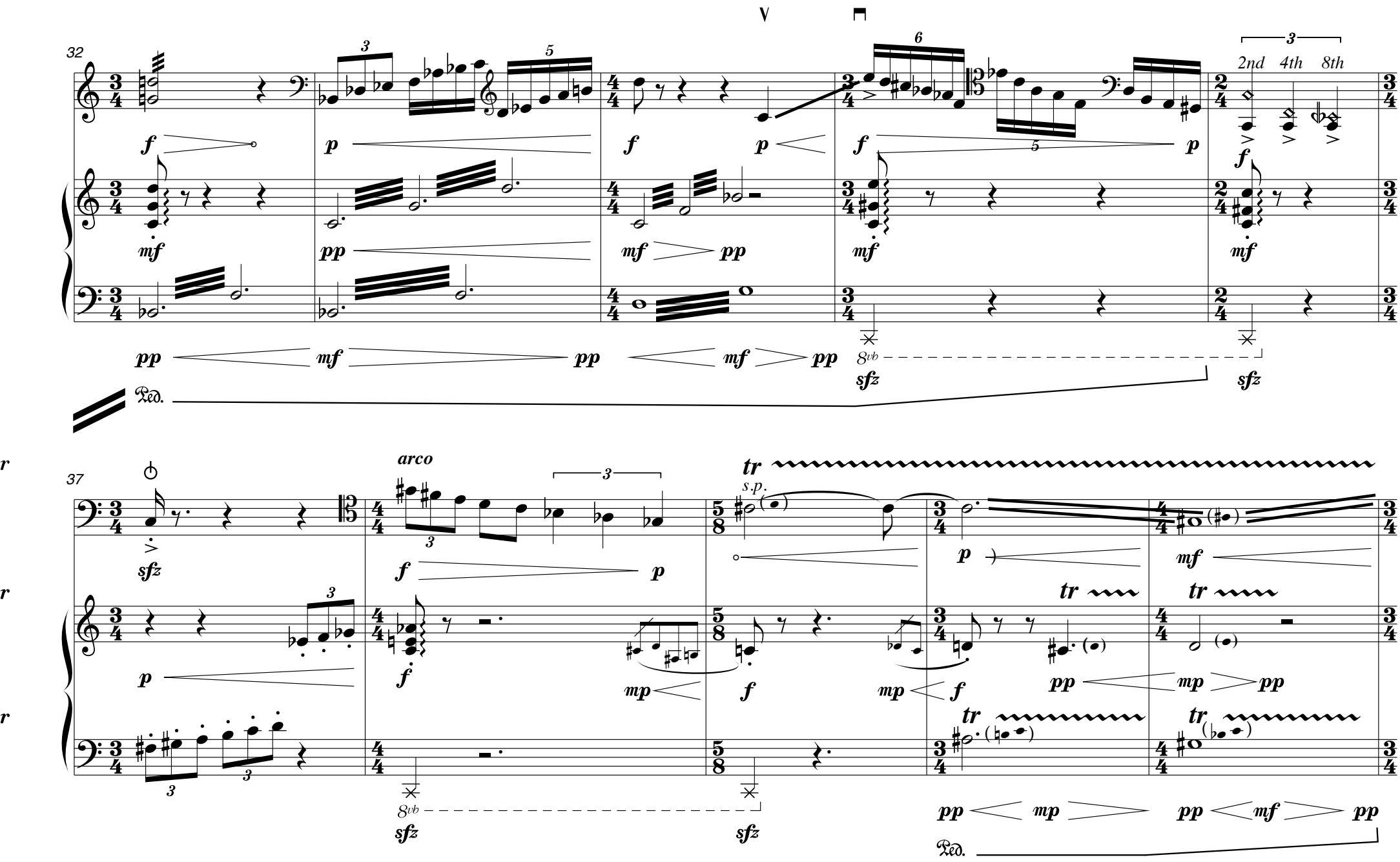
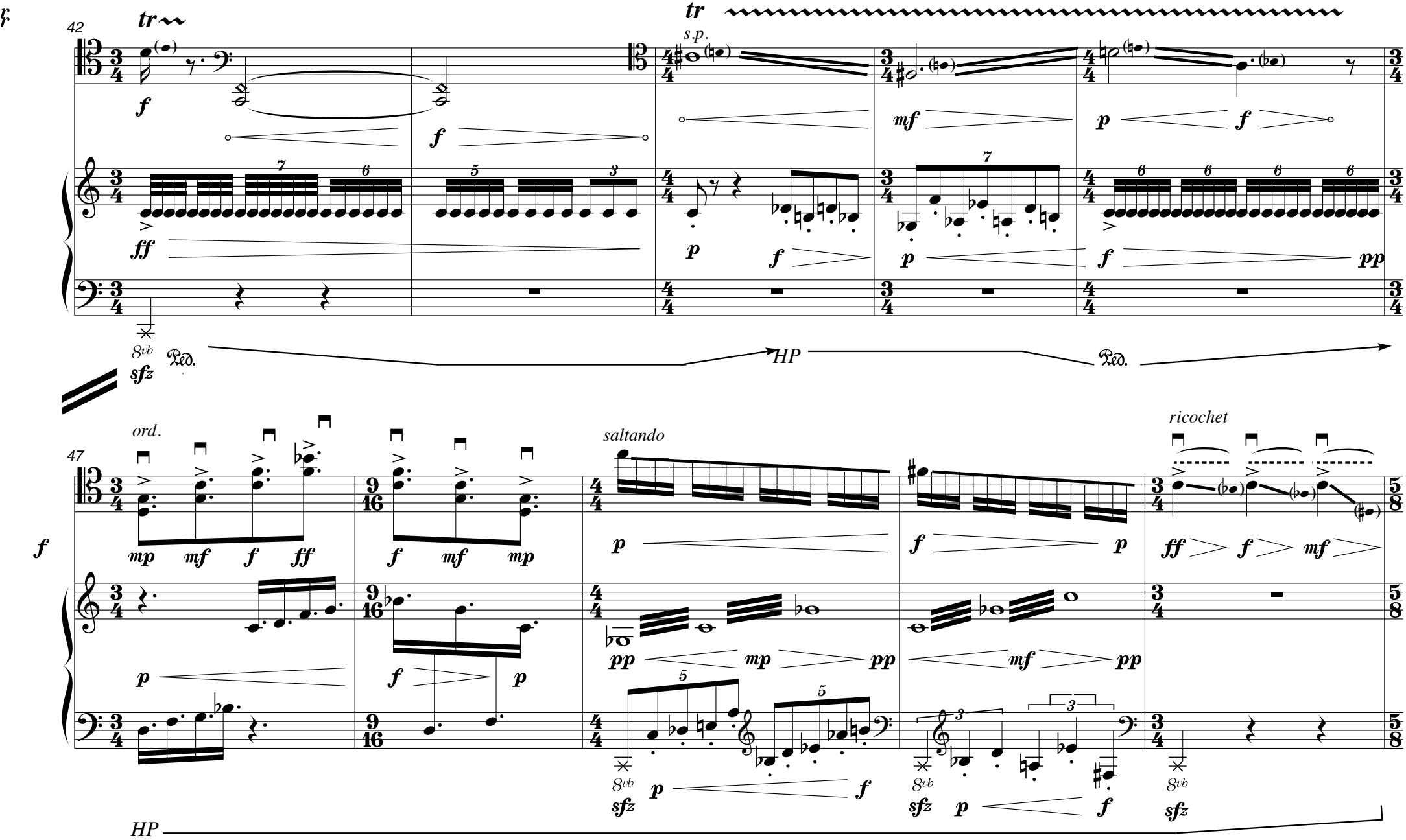
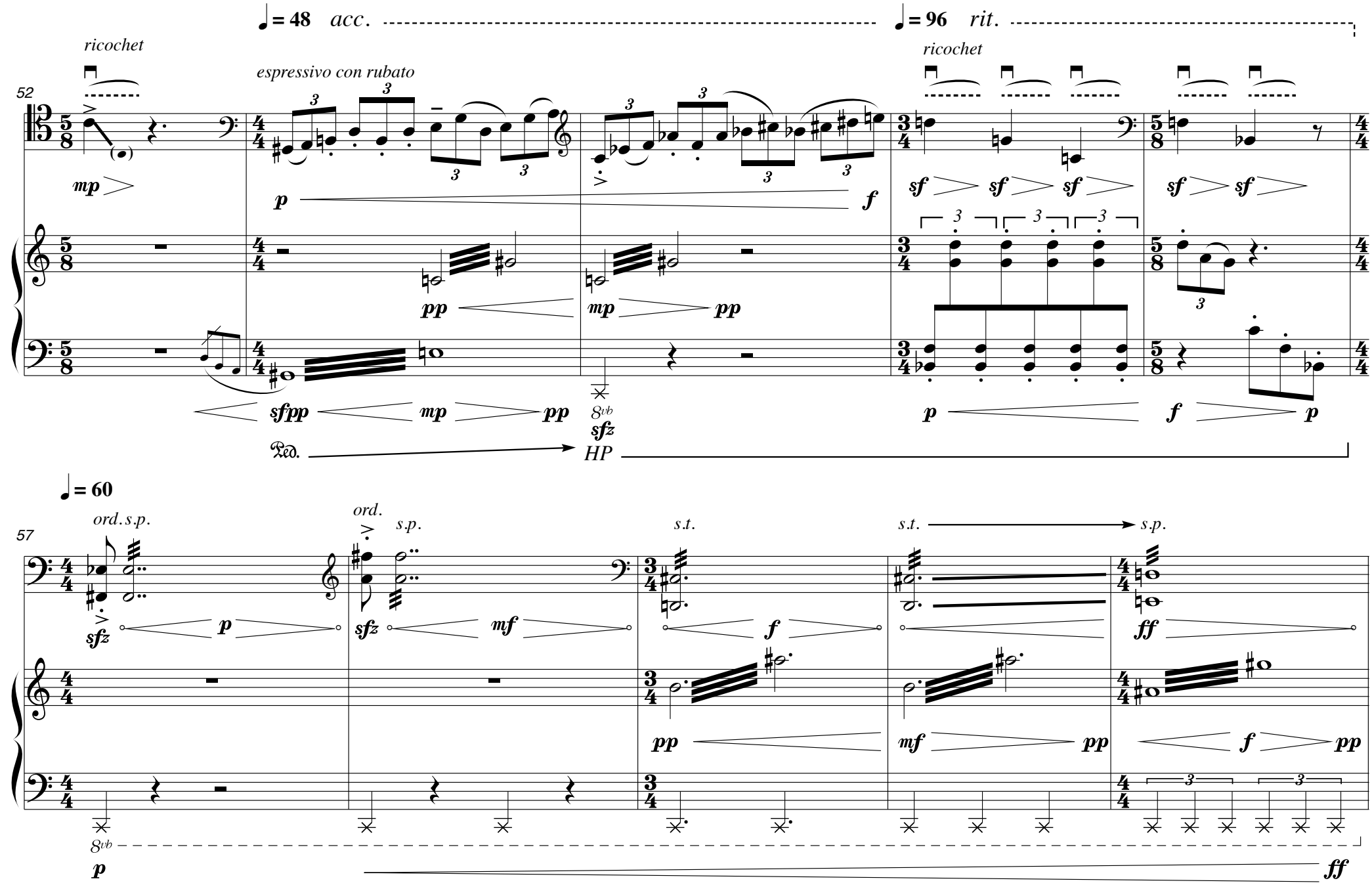


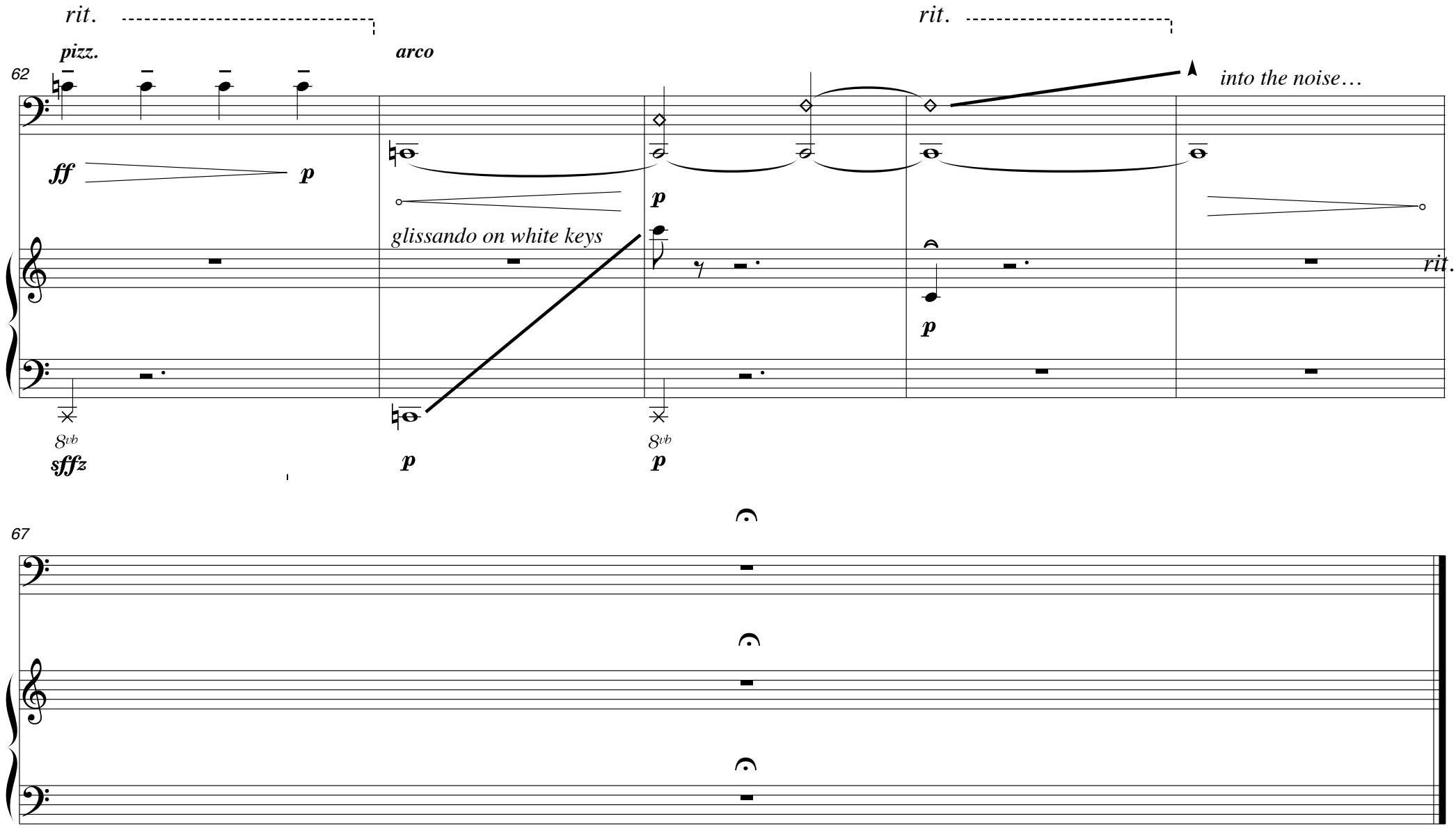

13
s.t.
s.p.
s.p.
pizz.
arco
p
ff
p
f
mf
f
sfz
pp
p
f
p
mf
8vb
f
17
s.t.
s.p.
tr
mf
tr
f
pp
mf
tr
pp
mp
pp
tr
pp
mp
pp
8vb
sffz
f
p
Ped.
Ped.


acc.
♩= 90
rit.
23
pizz.
arco
8th
4th
2nd
tr
Ped.
28
♩= 60
8vb
sfz
sf


32
2nd 4th 8th
arco
s.p.
tr
Ped.


42
tr
s.p.
8vb
sfz
Ped.
HP
47
ord.
saltando
ricochet
HP


♩= 48 acc.
♩= 96 rit.
ricochet
espressivo con rubato
ricochet
52
mp
p
f
sf
pp
mp
pp
sfpp
mp
pp
8vb
sfz
Ped.
HP
p
f
p
♩= 60
ord.s.p.
ord.
s.p.
s.t.
s.t.
s.p.
57
sfz
p
sfz
mf
f
ff
pp
mf
pp
f
pp
8vb
p
ff


rit.
pizz.
arco
rit.
62
into the noise…
ff
p
p
glissando on white keys
rit.
p
8vb
sfffz
p
8vb
p
67