concert music

the voice opens wide to forget that which you are singing

for String Quartet

peter gilbert

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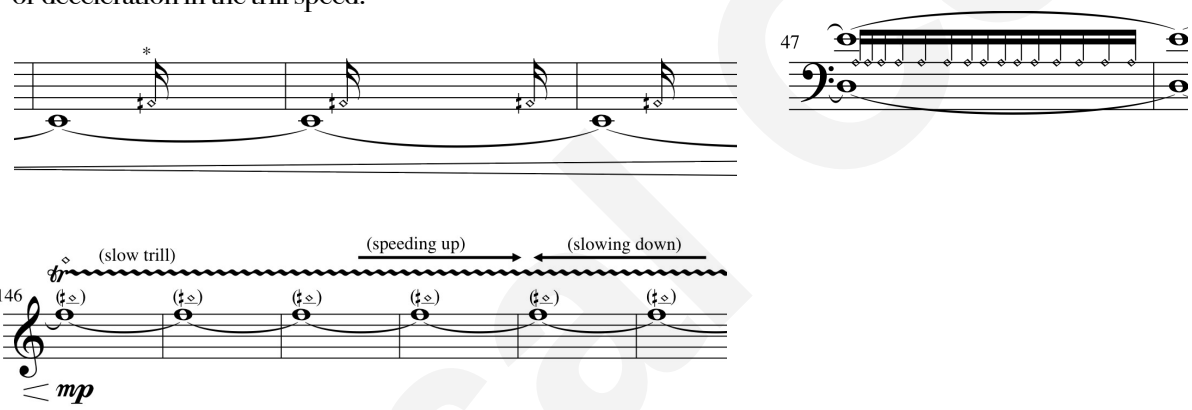
the voice opens wide to forget that which you are singing
for String Quartet

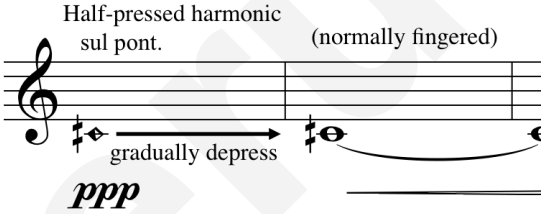
Notes to the Performers:

- This piece uses both the standard quarter-tone notations for 1/4 flat (𝄳), 1/4 sharp (𝄲), and 3/4 sharp (♯), as well as inflected accidentals (𝄫 𝄭 𝄮 𝄯) for pitches that are only slightly altered–approximately an 1/8th of a tone from tempered pitches.

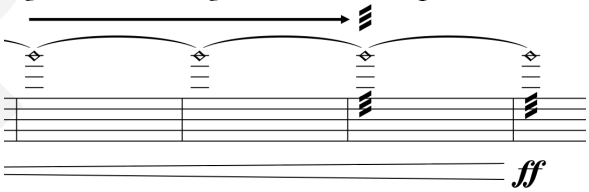
- Several times in the piece a touch-fourth or touch-fifth harmonic is engaged during a sustained, bowed note. For a single 16th note, the harmonic is briefly touched (or rather flicked). Timing is proportional within the bar. In some cases this technique is used during a sustained double-stop. Consistent 16th notes are rather like a slow trill between the sustained note and the harmonic. Later in the piece this same technique is shown as a slow trill between a sustained note and a touch-fourth or touch-fifth harmonic. Arrows indicate an acceleration or deceleration in the trill speed.



- Some notes are half fingered, usually creating a noisy out-of-focus sound which is very slowly changed into a normally fingered note by gradually depressing the finger.



- Arrows above the staff indicated transition from one state to another (from sul pont. to sul tasto, for example). In some cases these indicate a gradual transition from a sustained note into a tremolo. This need not be strictly regular but should give the effect of a spontaneous increase of energy.



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Rilke, Die Sonette an Orpheus, Erster Teil #3 (1922)

(Translated and adapted by Peter Gilbert)

The Everything *can. But how, tell me, should*

one ***follow it through the lyre's strings****?* ***through*** *the lyre's strings*

Its essence is split. And ***at the crossing of two***

hearts' ways *stands no Temple of Apollo.*

Song*, as you have taught it,* ***is not desire****,* *not desire,*

not courtship of ***an end at last attainable****;* *at last attainable;*

Song is existence*. For the Everything* ***a simplicity****.* ***Song*** *existence.* ***a simplicity****.*

But when *is it for us****?*** *And when* ***does it turn*** *when*

the earth and the stars into our essence*?* *the earth* *the stars* *our essence*

This is not, my child, just that you love, even though

the voice opens wide *your mouth—learn* ***the voice opens***

to forget that which you are singing*. That fades.* *you are singing.*

In ***truth****, singing* ***is a different breath****.* ***truth****,* *a different breath.*

A breath of nothing*.* ***An exhalation of the*** ***A breath of nothing****.* *An exhalation of the*

Everything*. A wind.* *Everything.*

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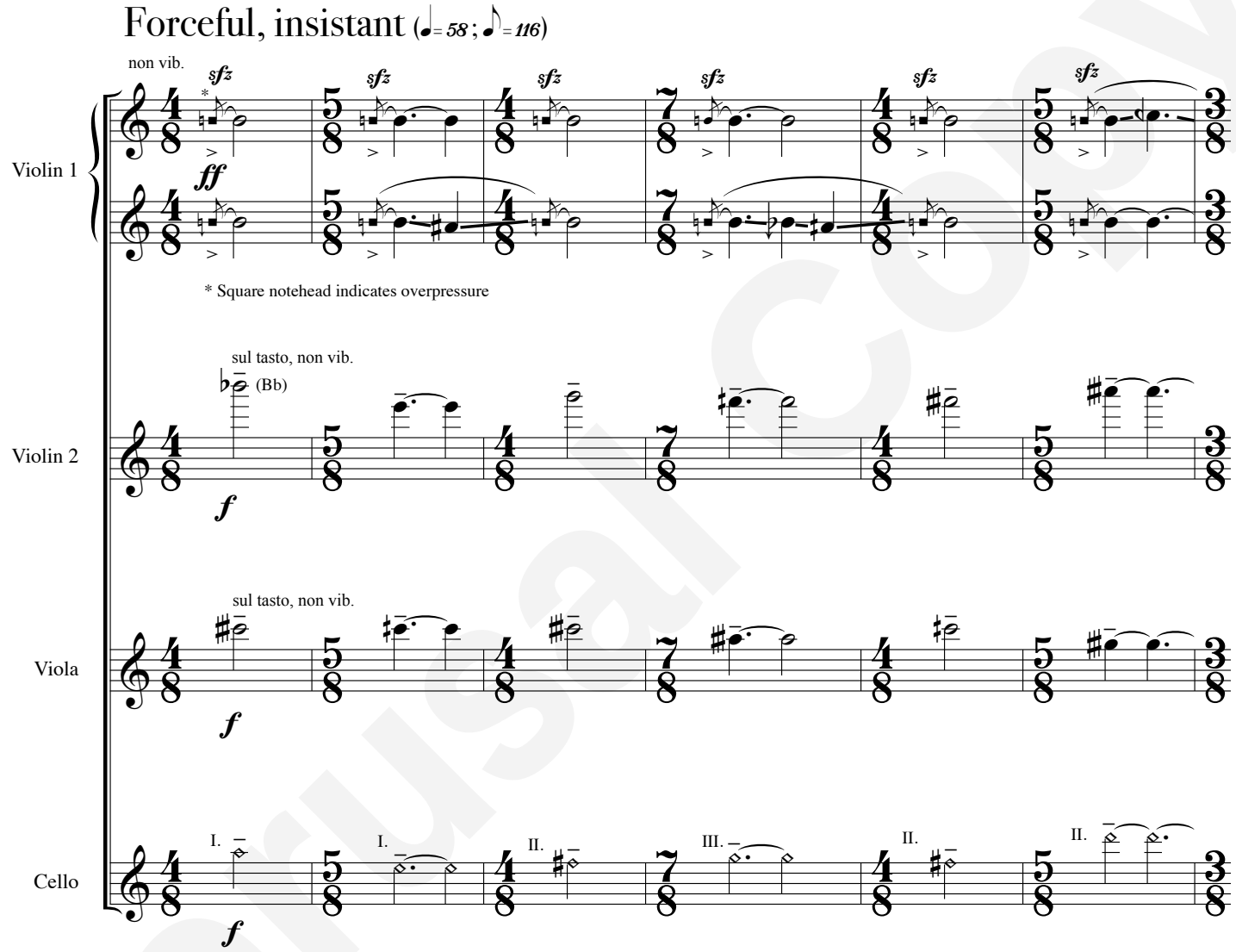

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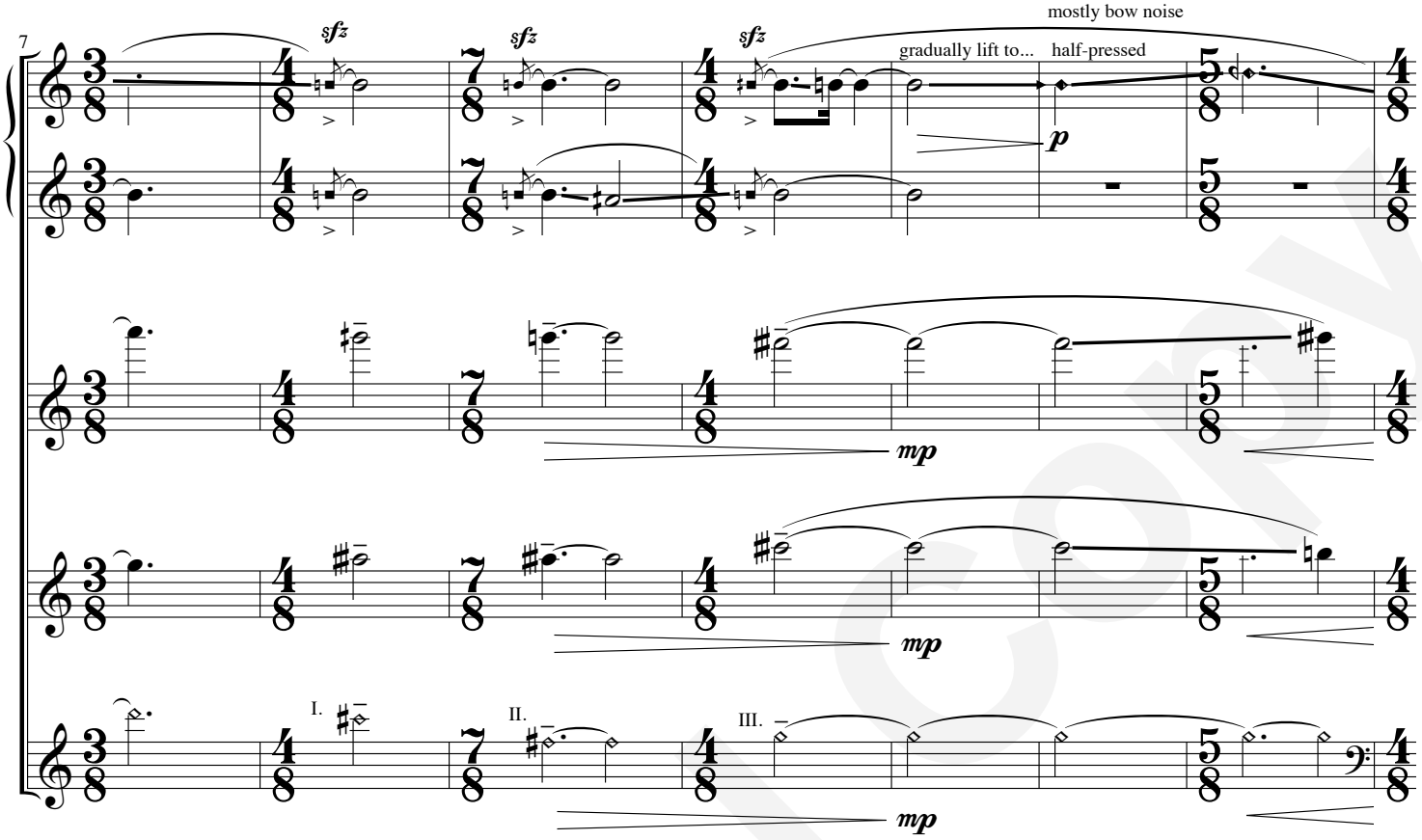
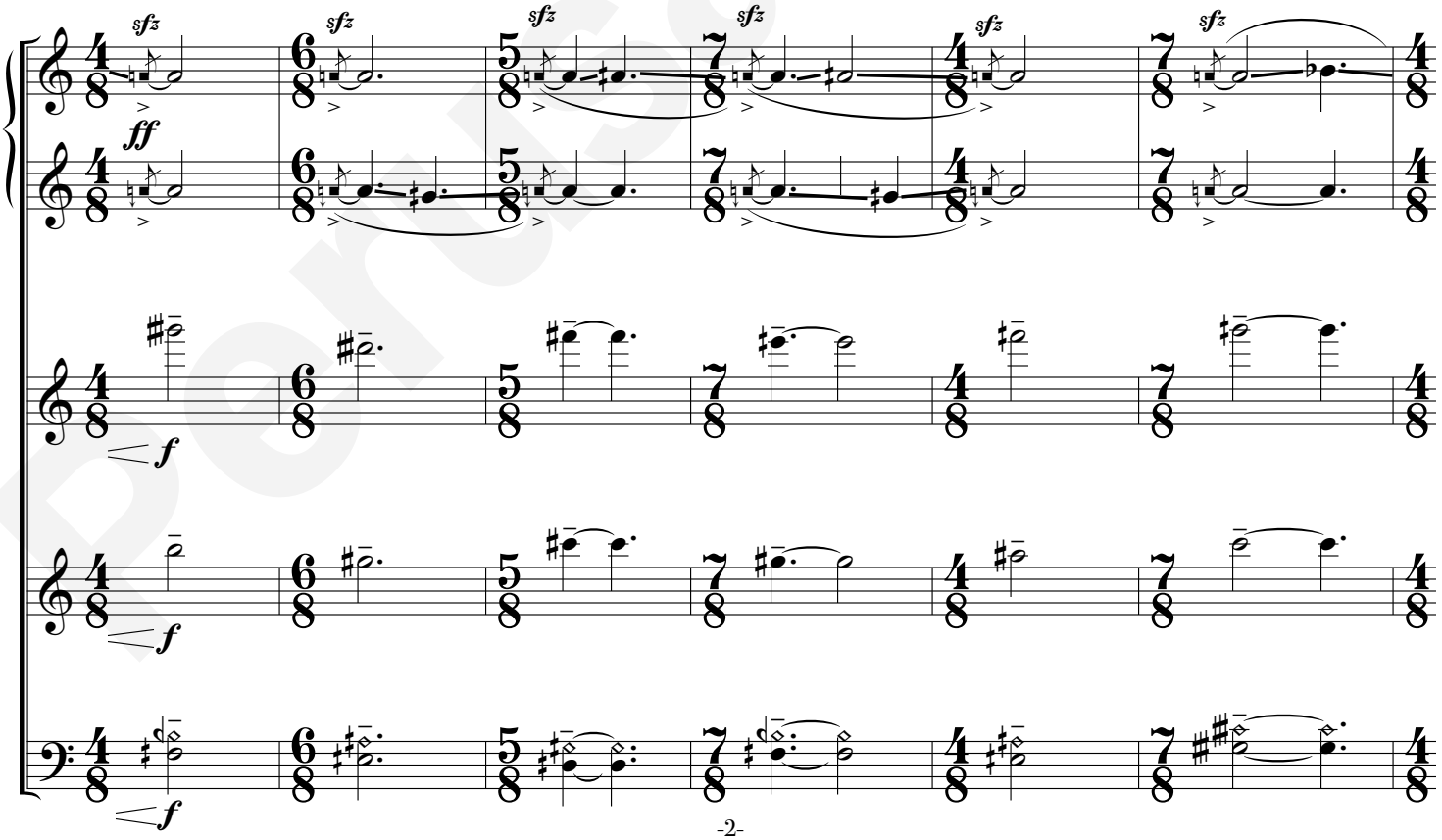
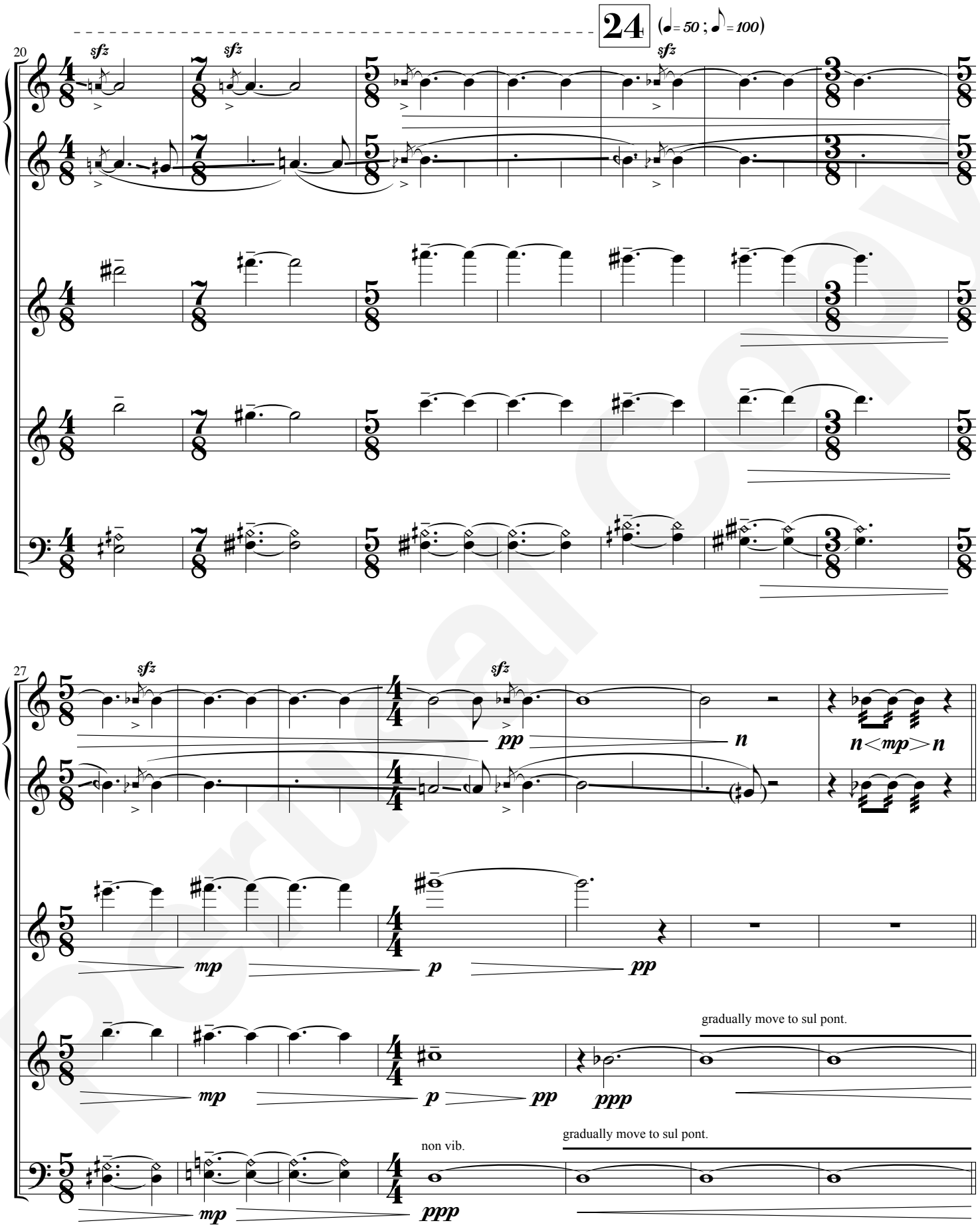


14 *poco a poco decelerando*





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34 Inexorable (♩= 50)

* Tap the harmonic while sustaining bowed pitch.
Timing is approximate. Overtone response may vary slightly each time.

n < mp > n < mp > n n < mp > n

Half-pressed harmonic
gradually depress
(normally fingered)

ppp

Half-pressed harmonic
sul pont.
gradually depress

ppp

(normally fingered)

sul pont.

pp

gradually move to ord.

sul pont.
II.

p

mp

gradually move to ord.

38

I.

mp

II.

gradually move to ord.

pp

ord.

mp

mp

ord.

mp

mf

ord.

(half-pressed harmonic)
gradually depress

(normally fingered)

mf

44 the voice opens wide to forget that which you are singing

43

mf

47

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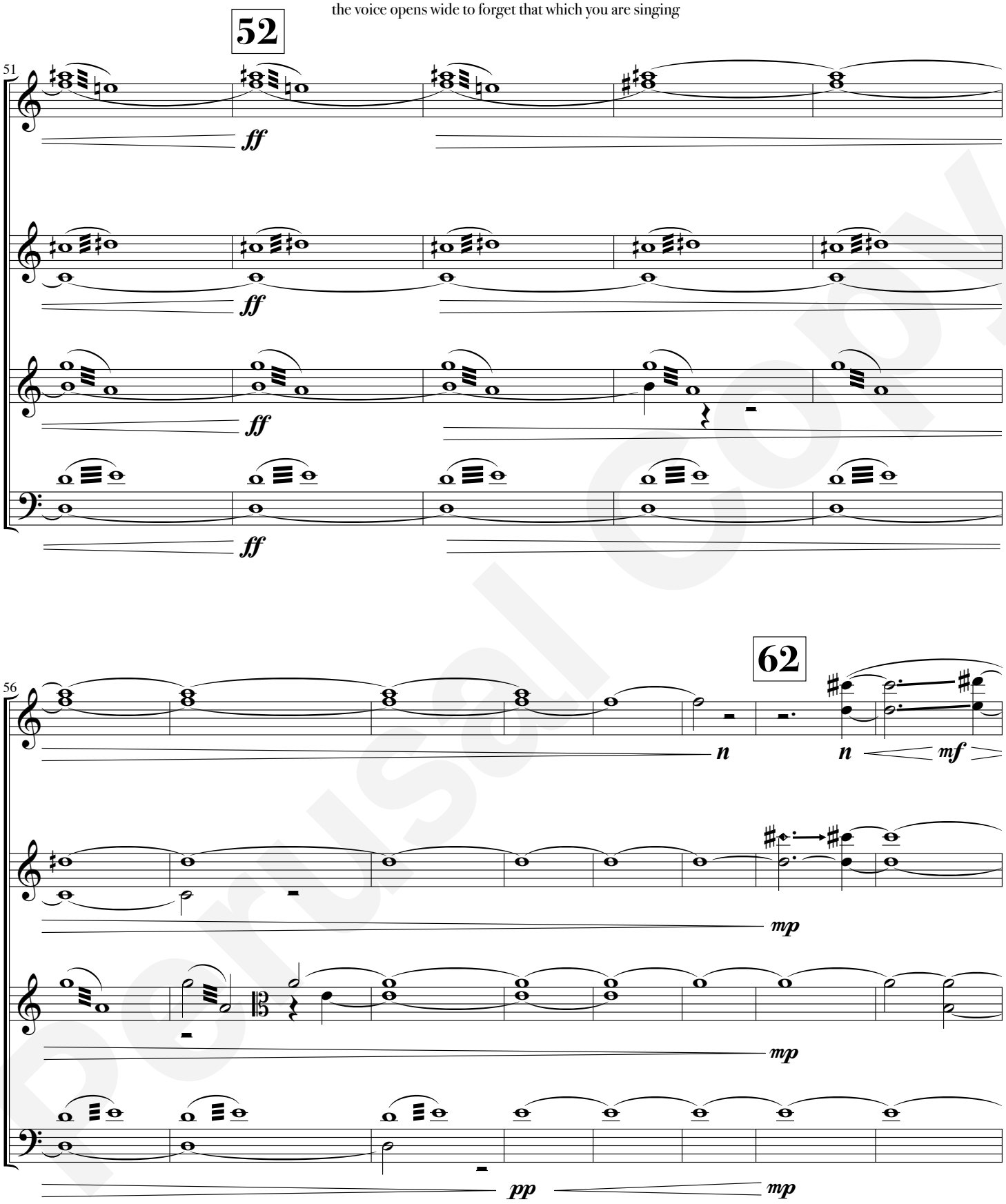

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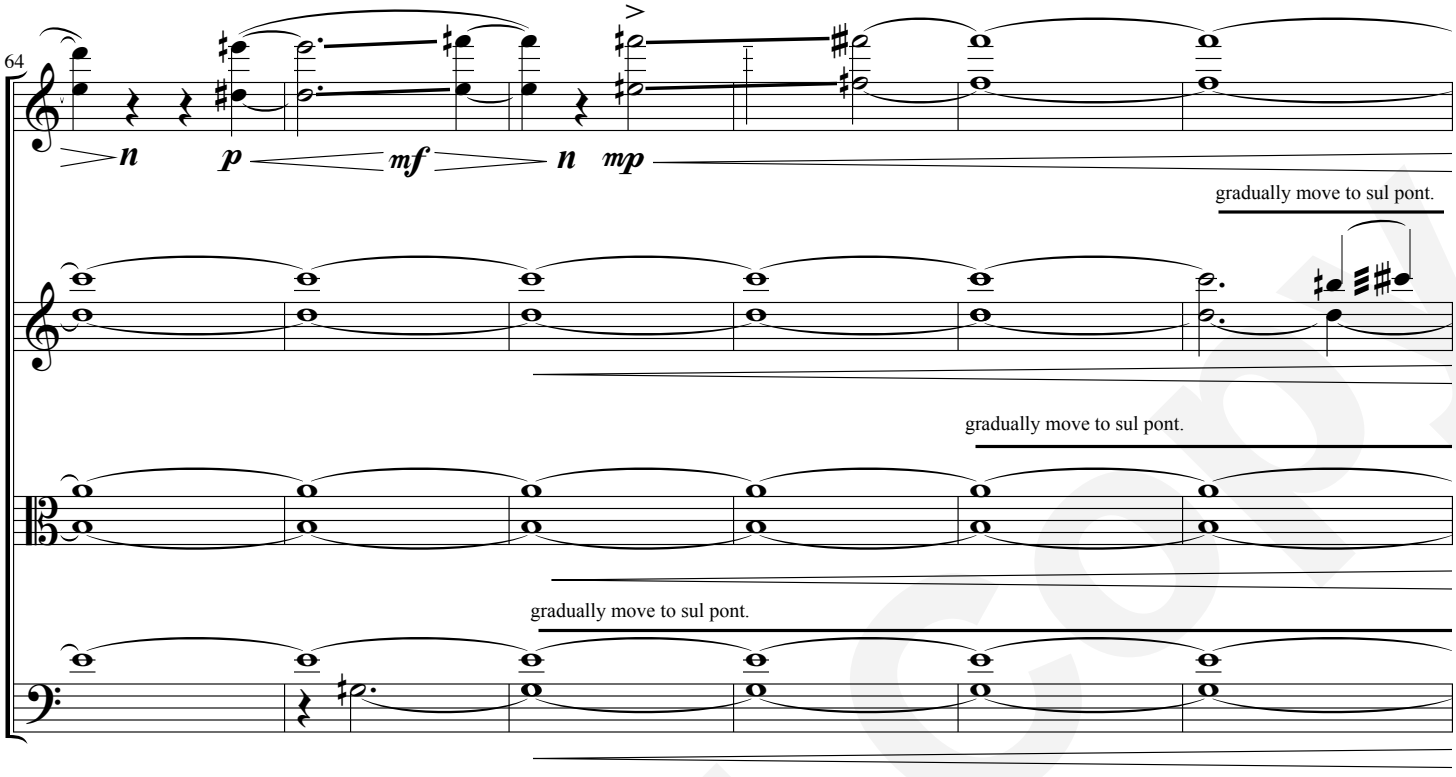
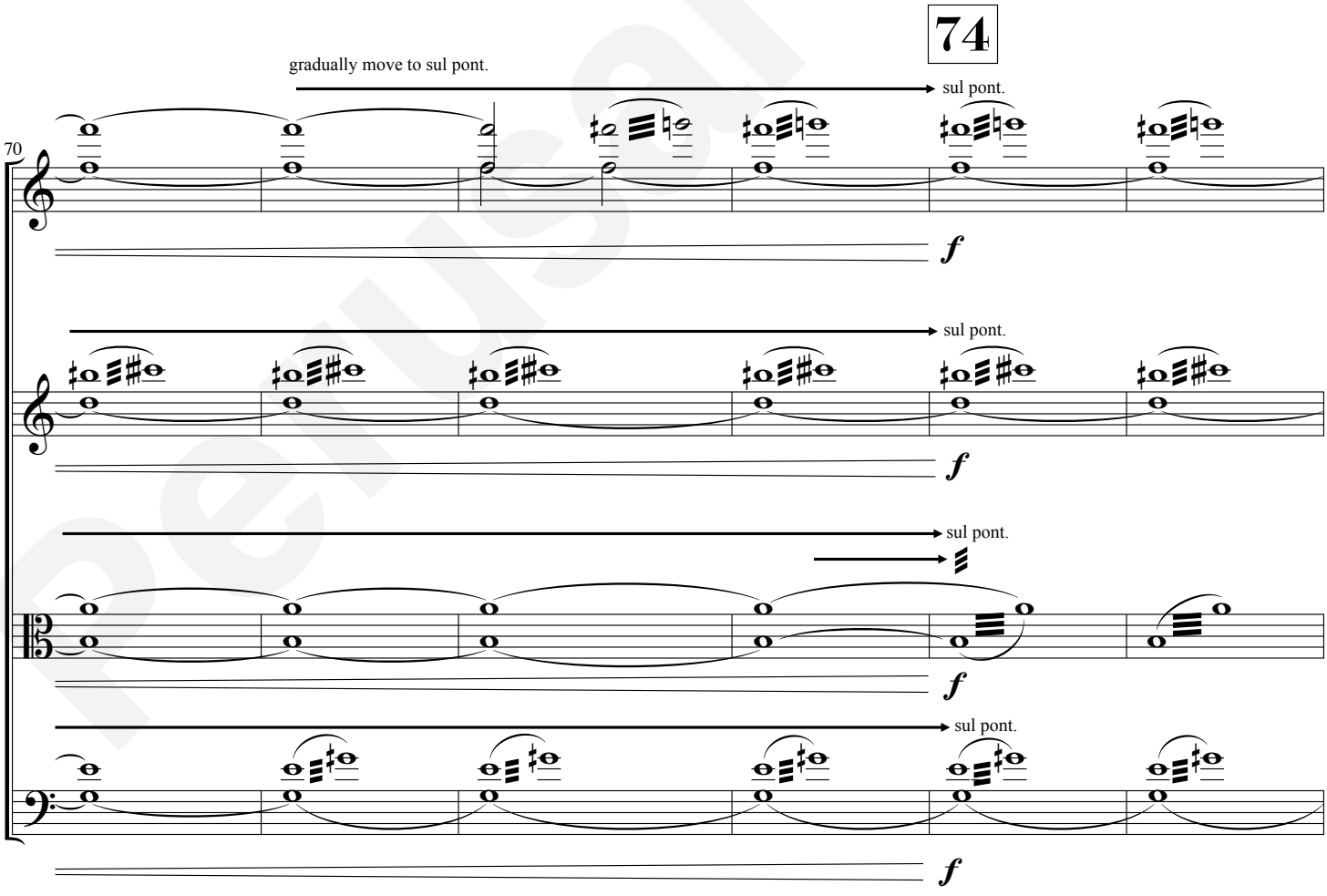
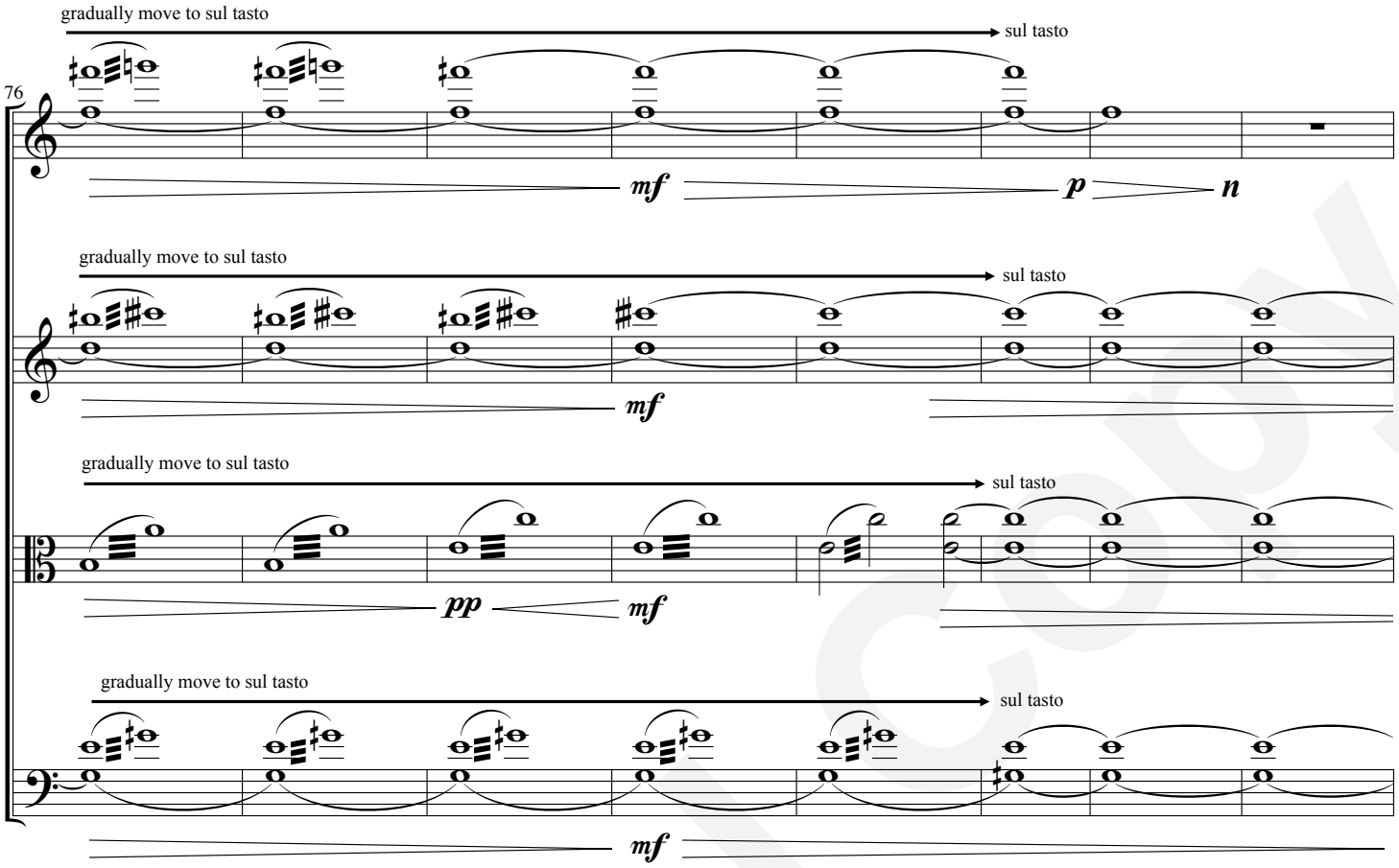
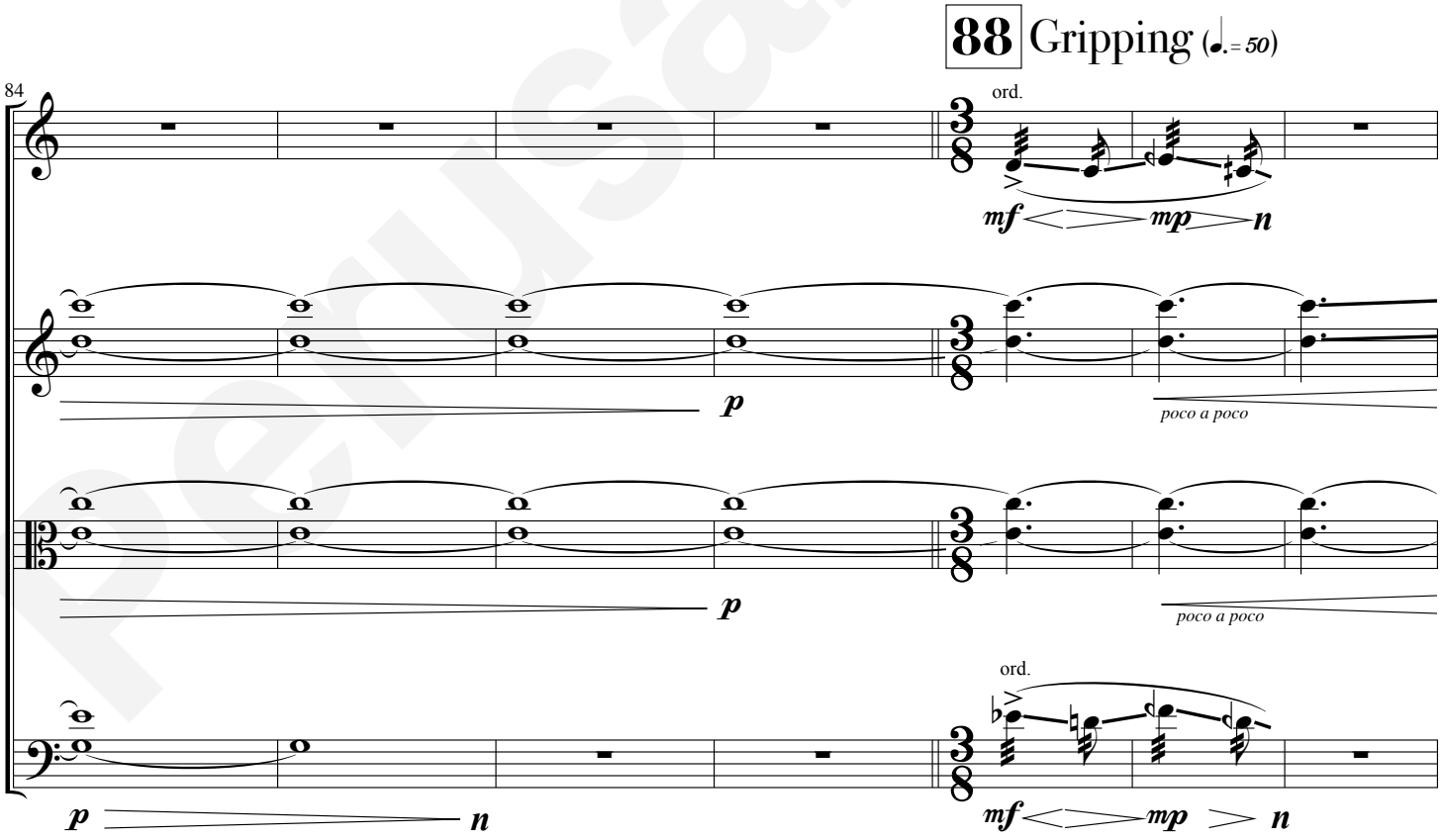

64
n
p
mf
n
mp
gradually move to sul pont.
gradually move to sul pont.
gradually move to sul pont.


74
gradually move to sul pont.
sul pont.
70
f
sul pont.
f
sul pont.
f
sul pont.
f





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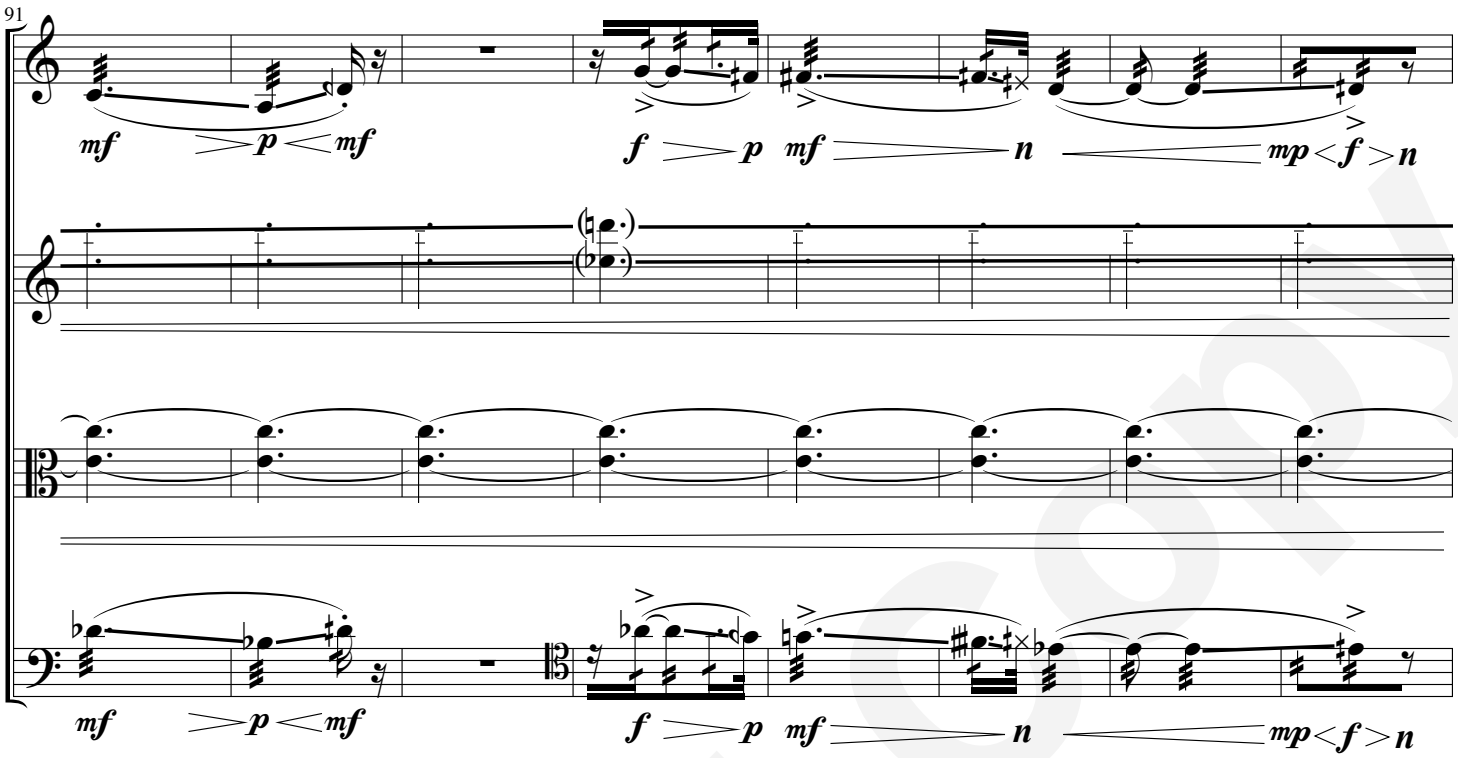

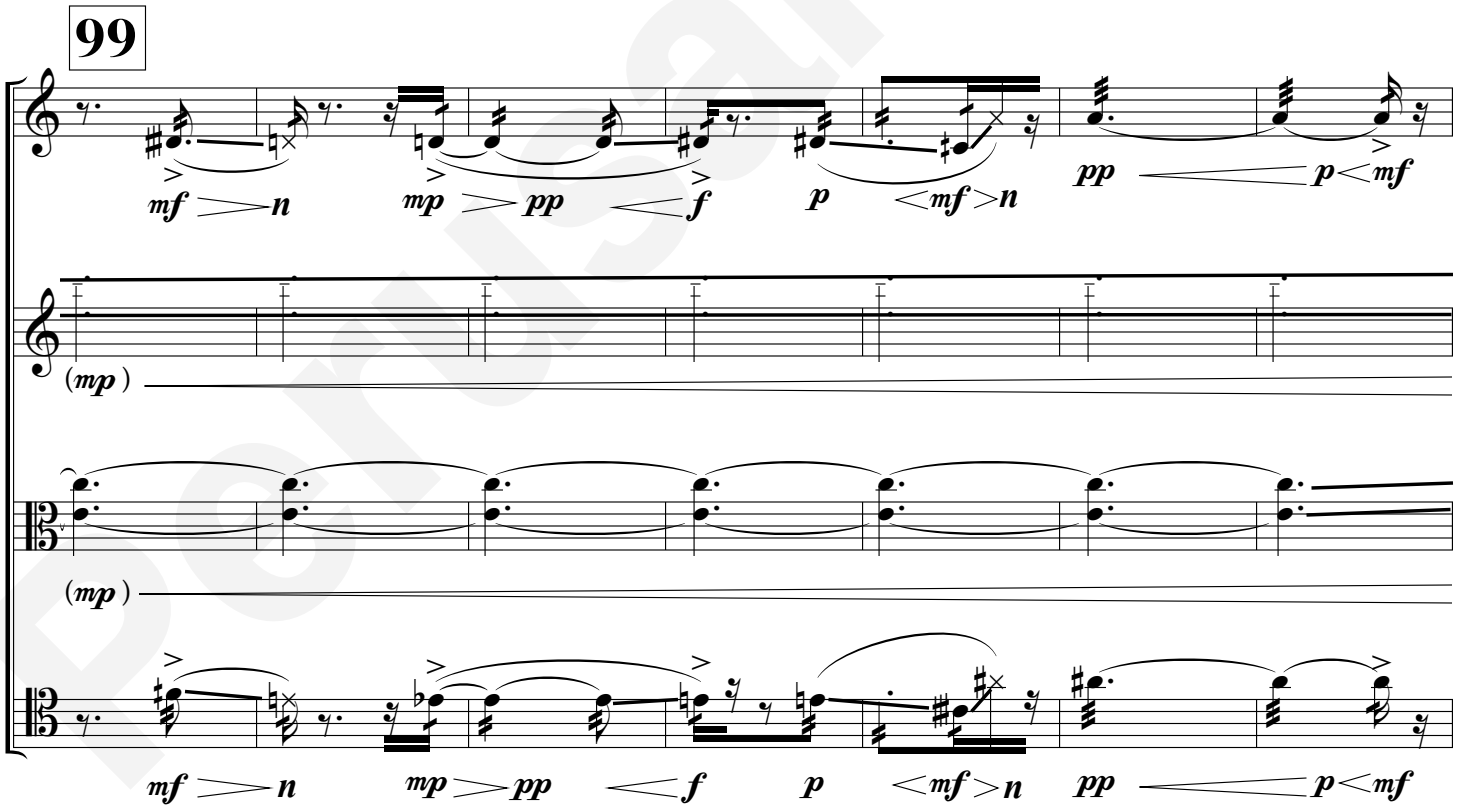

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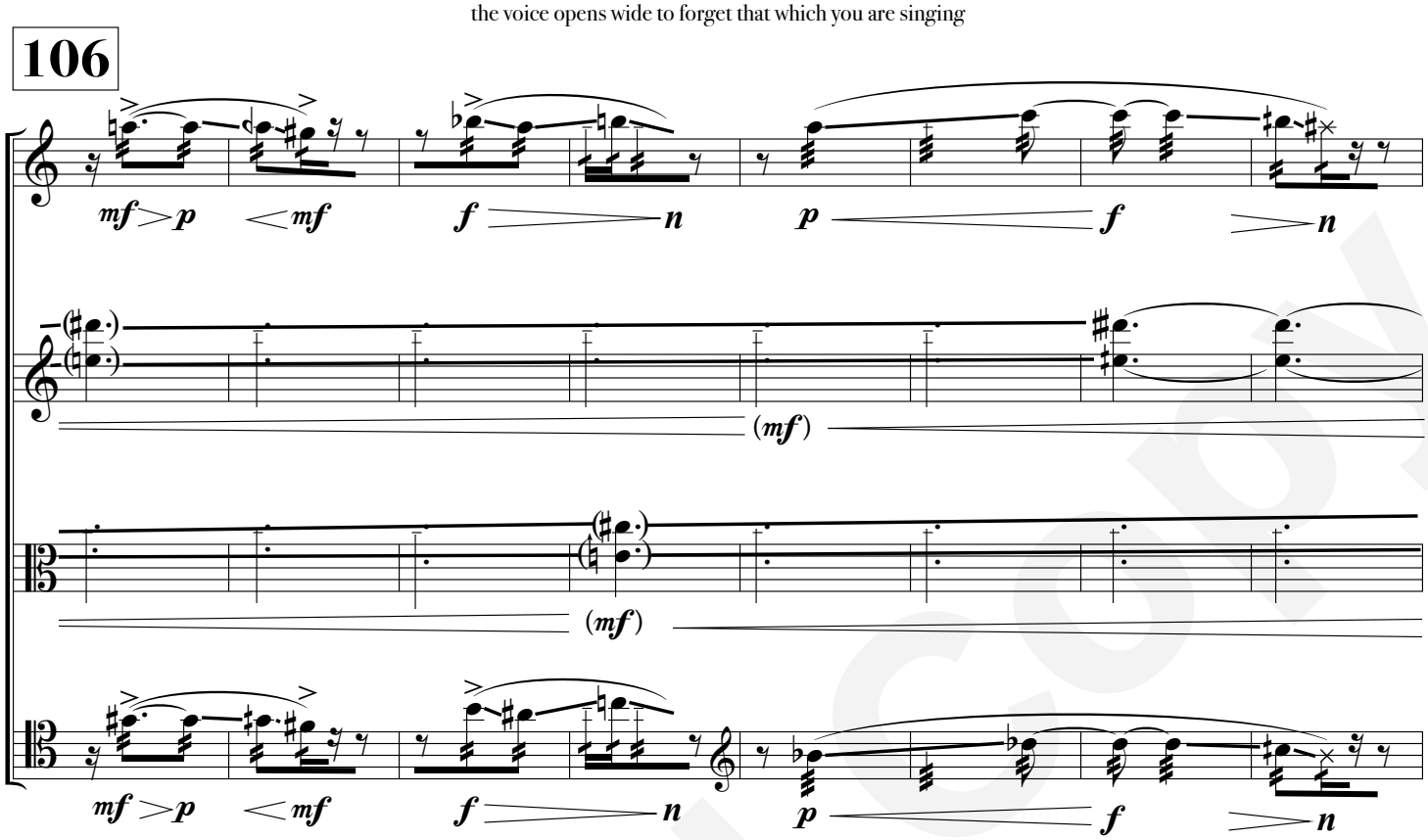

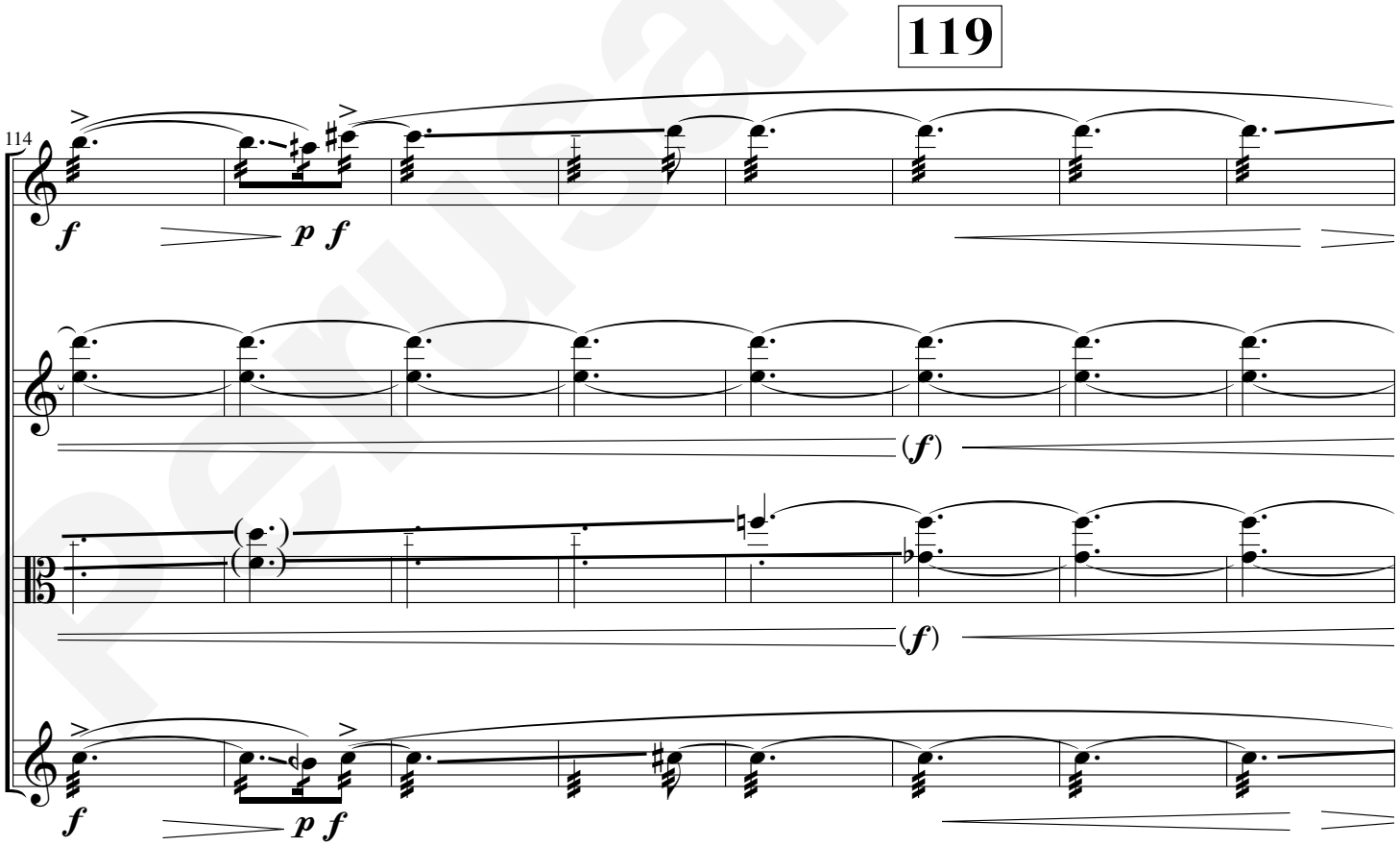

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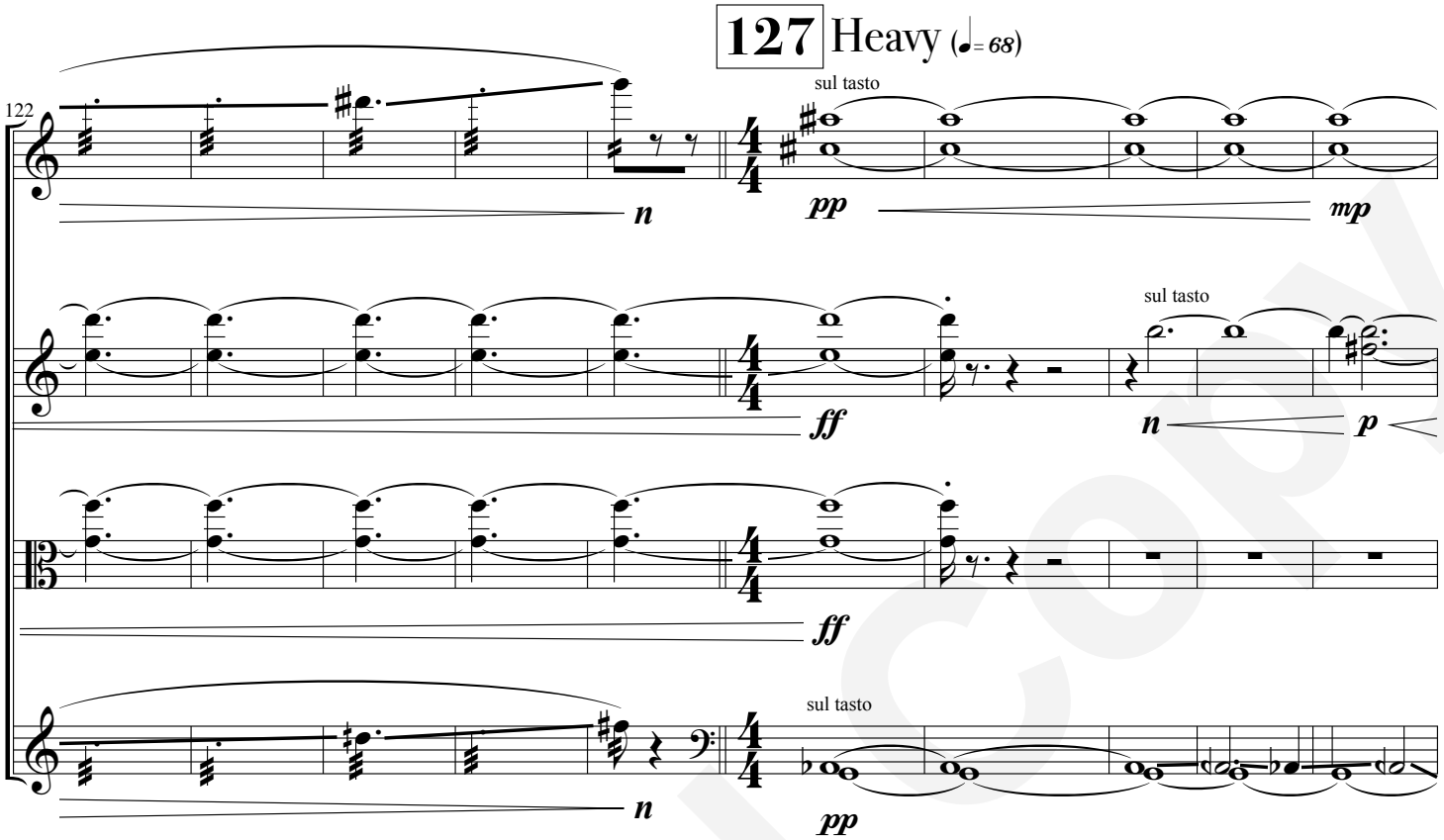

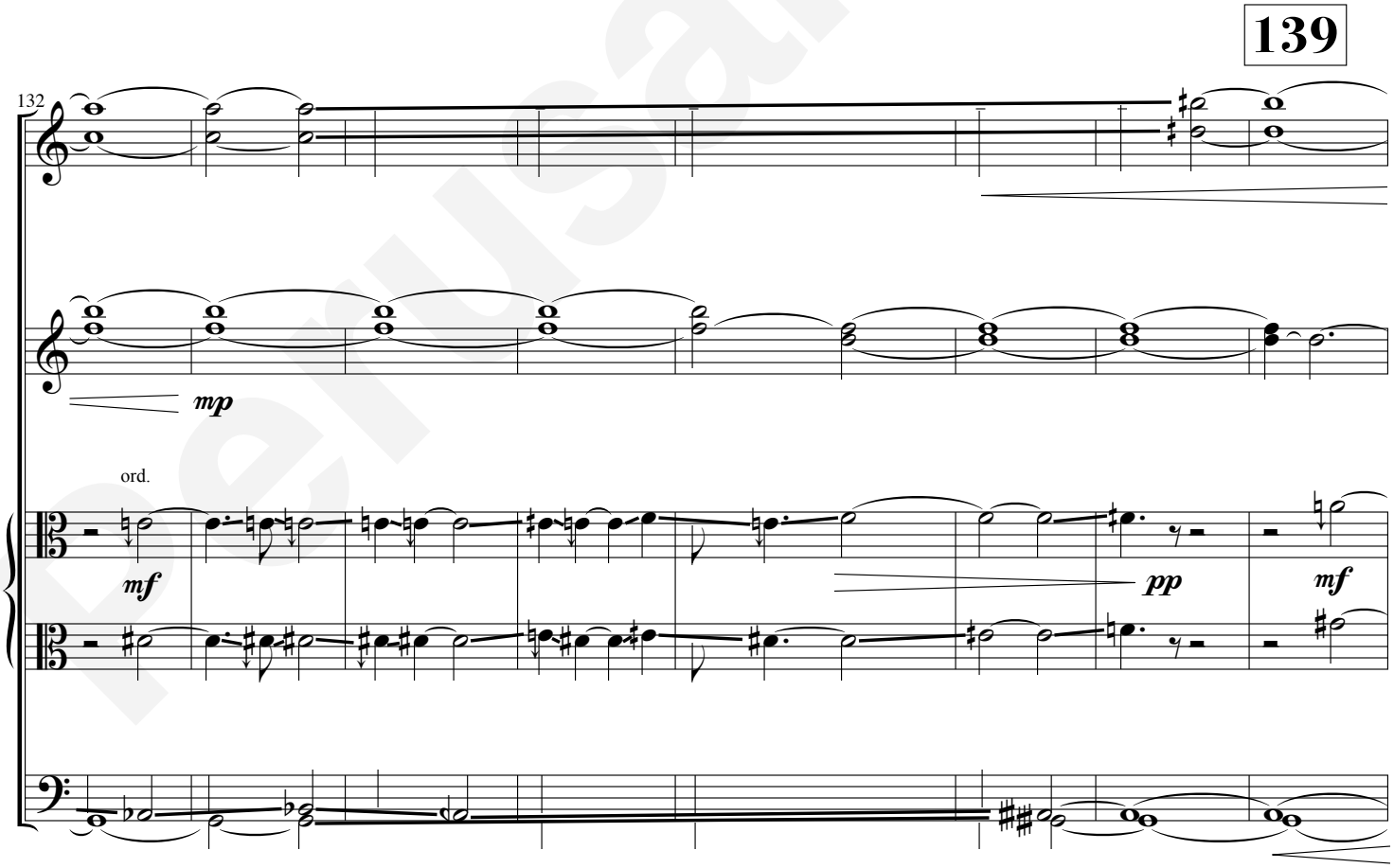

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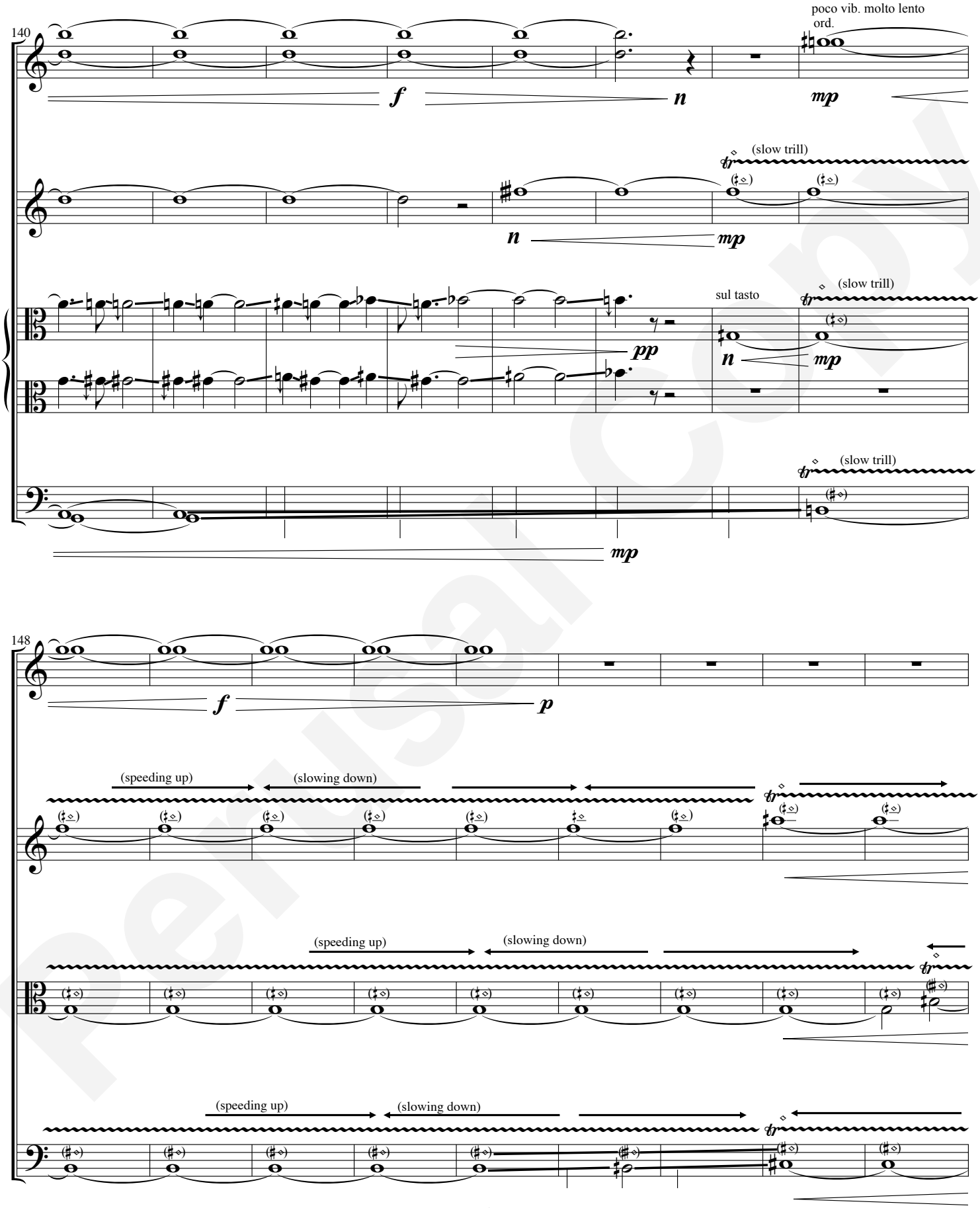

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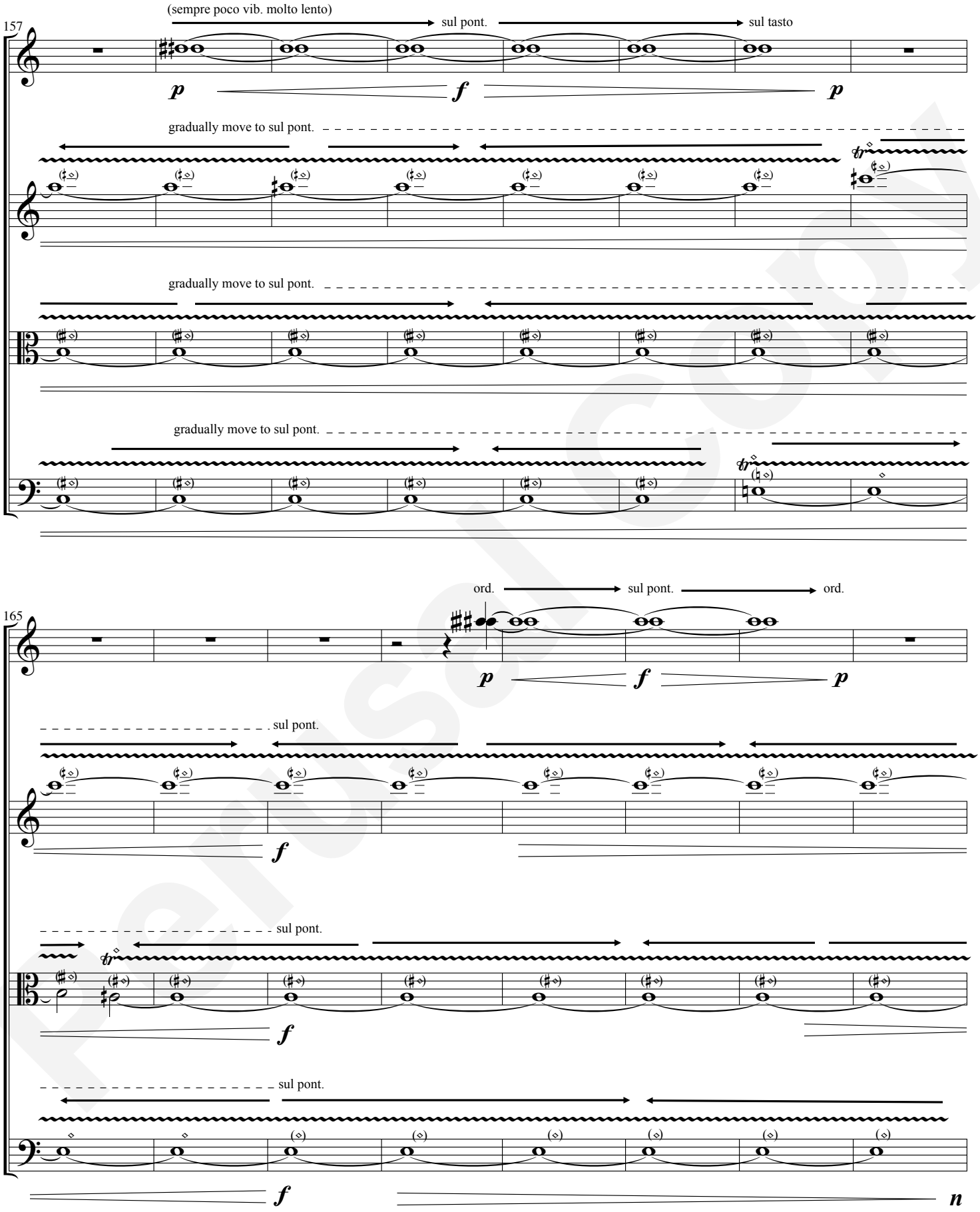

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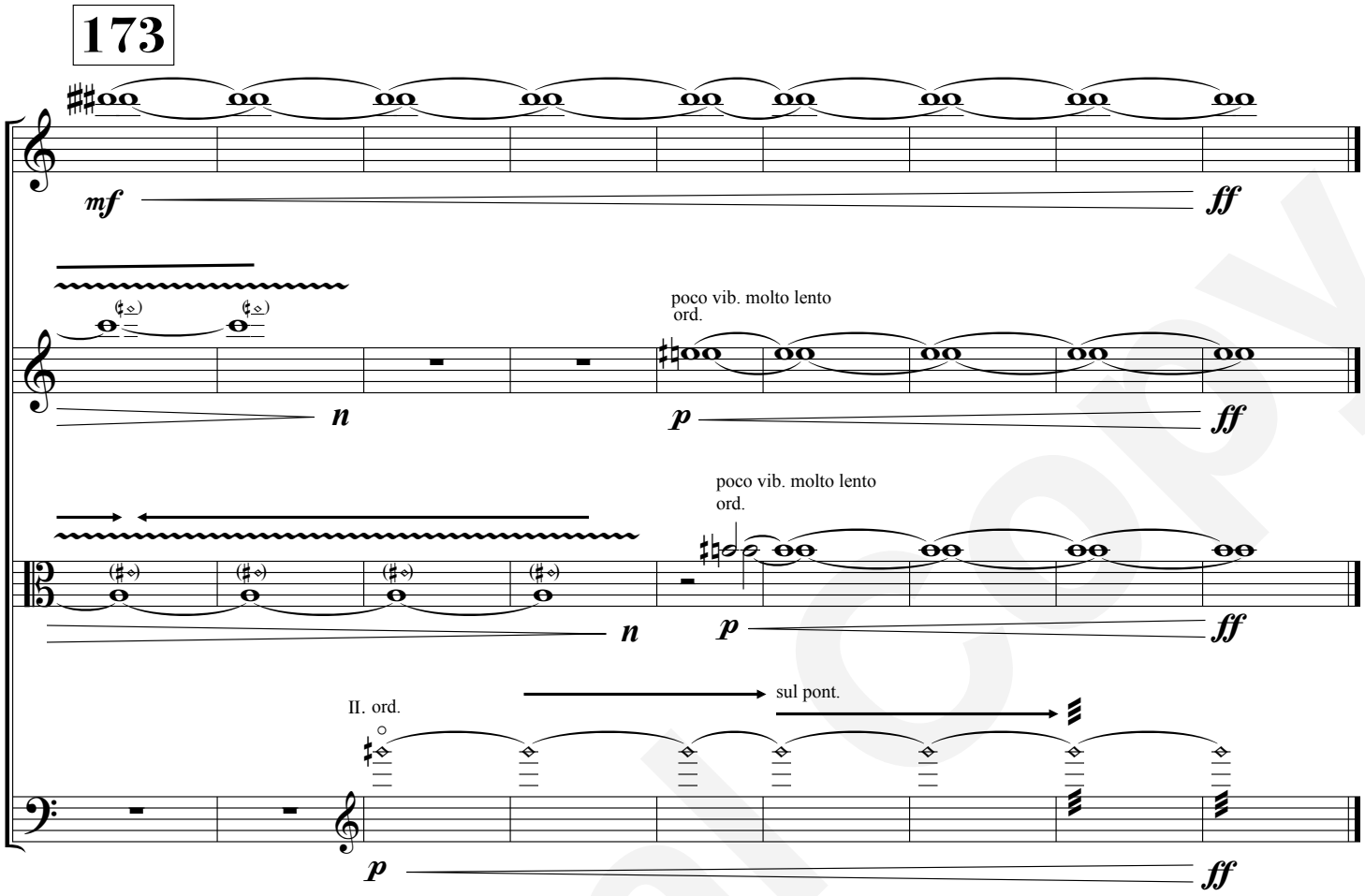

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