fivefingers

for piano trio

Jan Martin Smørdal

2019/20

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commissioned by the Cikada Pianotrio with support from The Norwegian Composers' Fund
premiered by the Cikada Pianotrio, February 28th 2020, at Cafeteatret in Oslo

About the piece

fivefingers has 5 parts, all with interlacing motives and sounds; they are similar but not the same. A collection of actions and images, of movements and still lives.

pick
point
peel
(palm)
toss

Limited to only a few gestures, I've tried to create a piece without obvious edges, as if plastic.

Performance details

Dynamics in quotation marks indicates effort rather than actual dynamics. The resulting dynamics might be quite soft, despite an indicated forte.

Strings

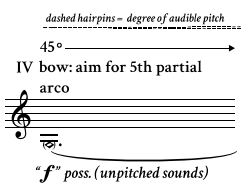
45° / 60° / 90° — Angle of bow on string. Normal playing angle is around 90°. At 60° the result is almost without pitch, and at the most ca. half pitch and half noise/bow sounds. At 45° angle the result is strictly noise, and no pitch whatsoever.

e.d. harm. gliss. — Equidistant harmonic glissando. The result of this technique is a chirpy kind of scooping/diving harmonics – related to the much used "seagull sound". This is not the same sound, as it is both played a bit different, sounds very different, and is performed a lot faster. To achieve this the performer holds the index finger/thumb and the pinky as a double harmonic on the same string, with the distance of ca. 1,5 breadth of the palm. This distance between the two fingers must remain equal throughout all glissandi, and not to be adjusted during the glissando, which intuitively is natural to do.

8va node — Bow placement exactly on the octave node of the note being played / held by left hand. E.g. if the performer holds an F on the D string, one must place the bow (always at 90° with this technique) spot on the octave above. The result is a very soft sound, lacking of overtones, almost panpipe-like. This is a difficult technique, as it demands absolute precision to achieve this effect.
If this technique is called upon on a double stop, aim for the octave of the lower string.

Please listen to snippets of these last two techniques at http://smordal.no/fivefingers.

sul pont. 1/2/3 — 1 – normal/slightly off ord. (towards bridge)
3 – almost on bridge
2 – between 1 and 3. Higher number means higher pitches.



Open string played with angled bow to control the amount of desired pitch to gradually emerge. In this example try to emphasize the fifth partial, with as little fundamental pitch as possible.

\+ — Left hand pizzicato, performed as usual. If left hand pizzicato is a harmonic, strike the string preferably on the upper/nut side of the string – as this gives more energy to the attack.

Piano

+ — Fully mute string(s), percussive effect.

⊕ — Half-muted string(s), clear pitch, but quite dampened.

○ — Open string(s), normal.

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to the Cikada Trio

fivefingers

Jan Martin Smørdal
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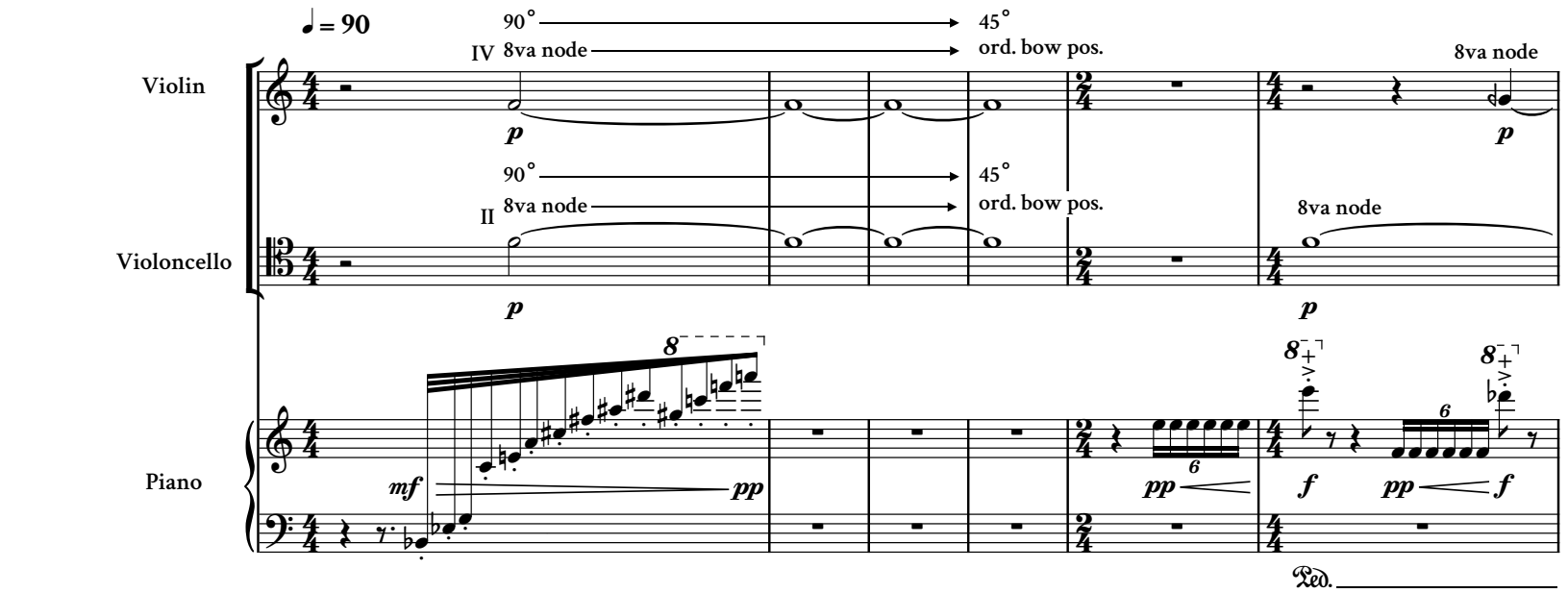
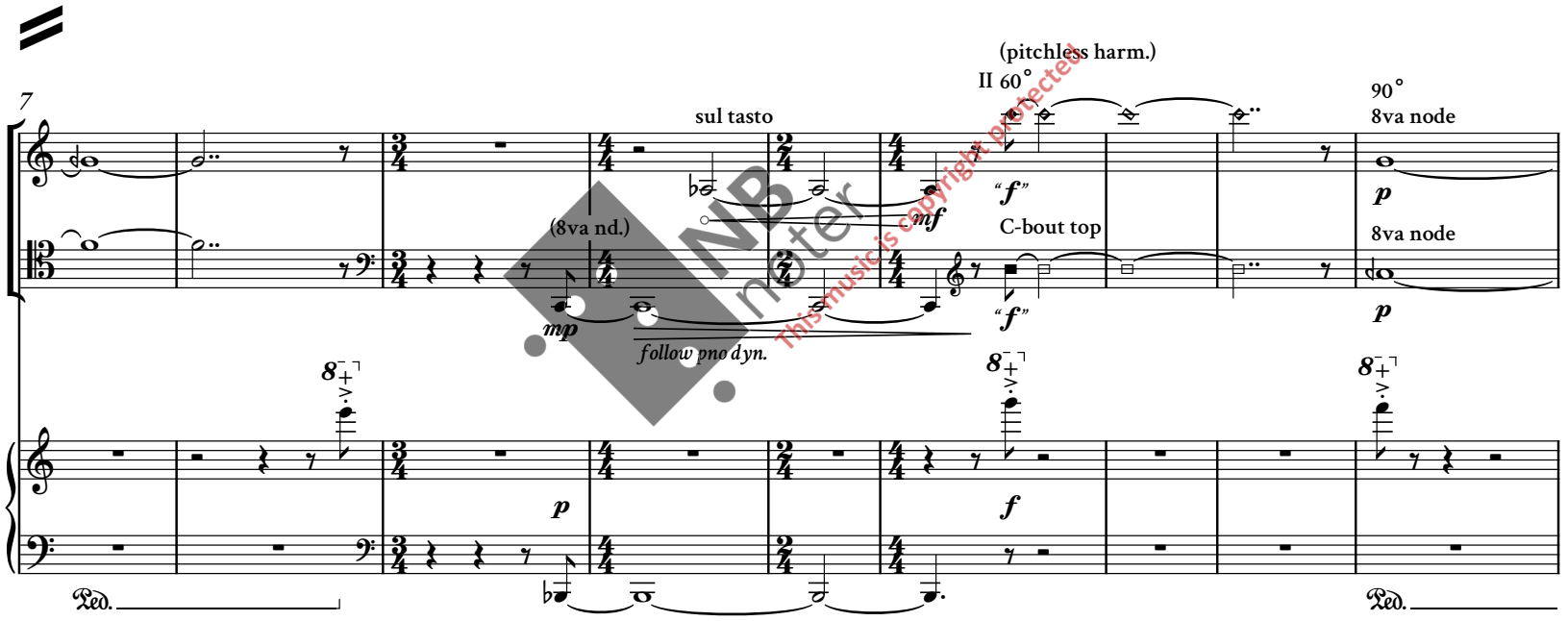
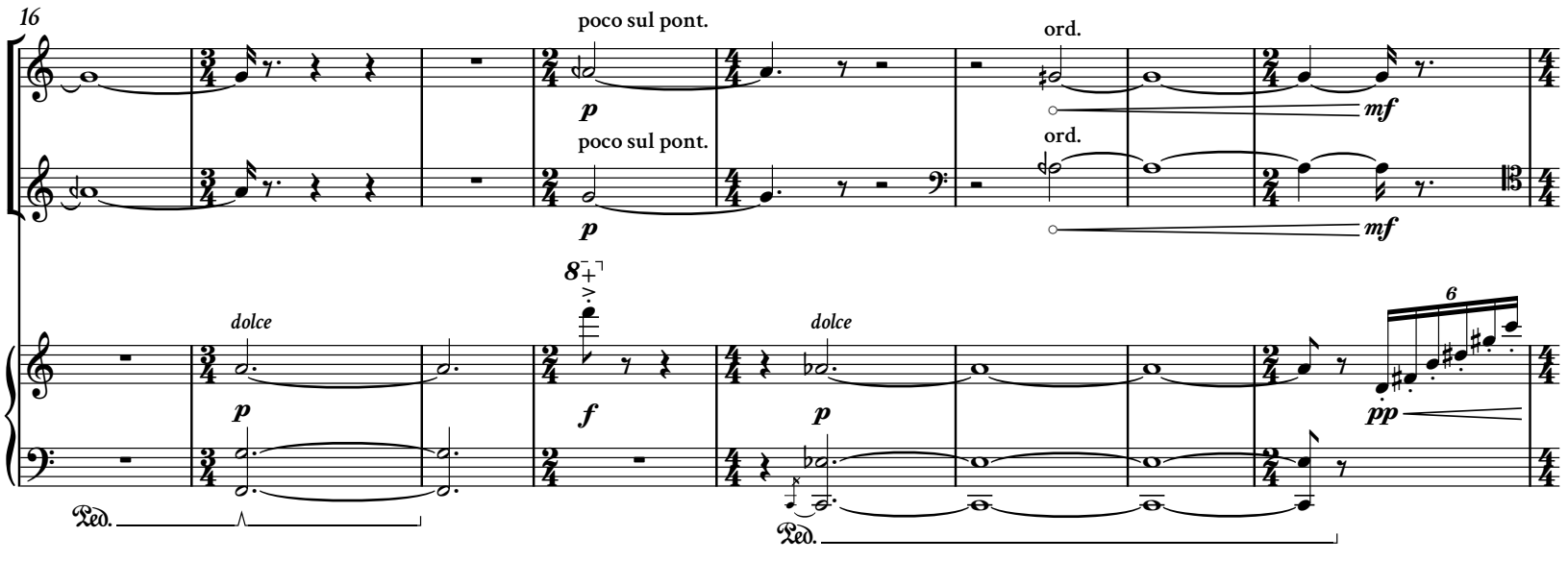
pick







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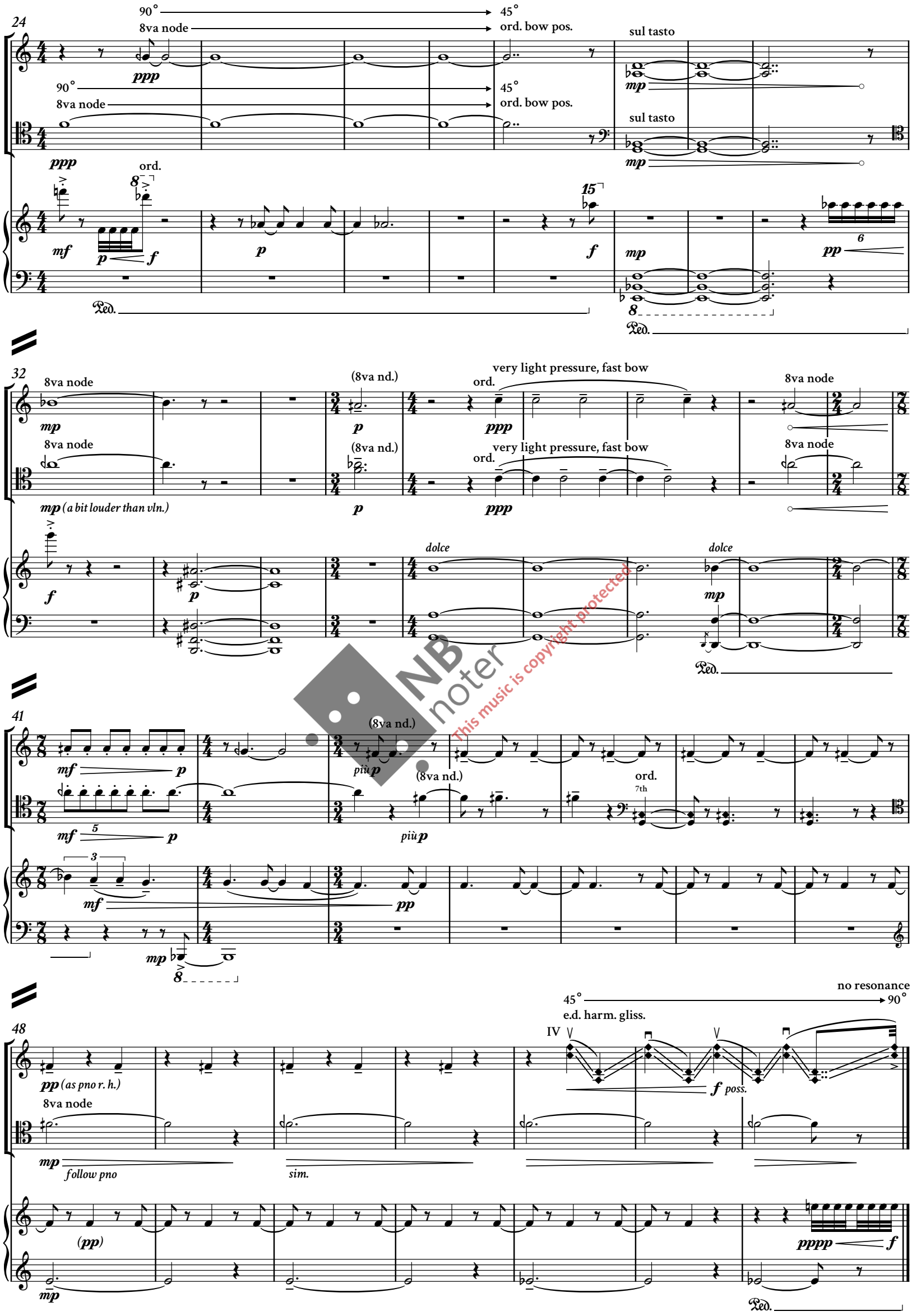

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point

Piano cadenza ♩ = 50

IV 8va node

5"

8va node

p

p

mp *pp*

pp

poco

Ped.

11

III

p

p

pp (softer)

pp (softer)

pp

poco

3 3 5

p

3 3

20

p

p

8 5 5 5

ppp < *mp* *ppp*

5 5

mp

pp *mp* *ppp*

3

5

mf

Ped.

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27

90° → 45°
8va node → ord. bow pos.
mf "f" (not forced)
90° → 45°
8va node → ord. b.p.
mf "f"
ord.
mf
8va node
p
poco
pp
Ped.

38

mp
p
3
5
pp
Ped.

48

mp
ord.
p
8va node
(pp)
Ped.

57

(8va nd.) → ord. bow pos.
90° → 45°
mf
8va node
mp
5
3
7
poco
Ped.

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peel

♩ = 70

8va node

mf

8va node

mf

8

p (softer than strings)

poco

Ped.

5

ppp

col pno
flautando

f

pp

col pno ord. (but mellow)

pp

(8va nd.)

ppp

mf

8

p

mp p sub.

Ped. sim.

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10

sul pont. 3

ppp

(8)

14

8va node

mp

8va node

(mp)

mp

(8)

7

16

(8)

15

18

f poss.

f poss.

(15)

8

3

8

f

Sost.

20

p

mp

aim for 11th (poco s.p.)

degree of audible pitch

60°

90°

mp

8

p

(8)

(Sost.)

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23

ord.

ppp

(90°)

mp

60°

ord.

ppp

(8)

(8)

(Sost.)

26

mf

(ord.)

pp

8va node

mf

pp

mf pp sub.

mf pp sub.

mf pp sub.

II

29

8va node

(8va nd.)

mf

pp sub.

8

6

7

33

long

ppp

ppp

15

6

5

5

6

5

f

p

ppp

8

f

pp

3

3

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(palm)

♩ = 110

dashed hairpins = degree of audible pitch

45°

bow: aim for 5th partial

IV arco

pizz.

III

I

"f" poss. (unpitched sounds)

45°

e.d. harm. gliss.

III sim.

"f" (bowing and l.h. gliss. sounds)

15

mp

mp

8

Ped.

5

(f)

(45°) 60°

60°

f poss. (occasional chirping sounds)

(60°) 45°

f

easy, as if no resistance

8

3 3 3 3

p

3 3 3 3

Ped.

45° 60°

e.d. harm. gliss.

10 IV sim.

"f" (bowing and l.h. gliss. sounds)

f poss. (occasional chirping sounds)

dashed hairpins = degree of audible pitch

45°

bow: aim for 5th partial

IV arco

pizz.

III *f*

II

"f" poss. (unpitched sounds)

ord. 15

15

mf

8

Ped.

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14

(f)
60°
mp
poco
8
5
p
Ped.

18

arco : aim for 5th p.
(f)
90°
45°
60°
III pizz. (5th on G)
IV
f
"f" poss.
90°
45°
60°
45°
III
f
"f" poss. (no pitch)
8
mf

23

90°
45°
8
3
p

27

sul pont. 1
60°
sul pont. 3
(60°)
90°
sul pont. 1
(90°)
60°
90°
IV
(f poss.)
pizz. 60°
90°
pp
f poss.
bow: aim for 7th p.
arco
"f"
mf
15
5th p. preferably
p

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32

(90°) → 45°

ord.

7th p.

"f" (balance col pno)

60° → 90°

II

"p"

8

7

mp

8

37

(90°)

f poss

poco

rdm. harm. near bridge

"f" poss. (but not forced)

rdm. harm. near bridge

sim.

"f" poss

poco

"f" poss. (but not forced)

(8)

mp

8

5

mf

42

(8)

pp

8

5

mf

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47

sul pont. 1 → sul pont. 2 → sul pont. 3

(90°)

III sim.

mp (but audible)

III

sul pont. 3

fast string transition

II

f

fast string transition

fast string transition

Ossia:

(8)

ppp mp

8

mp

pp

pp mf ppp

50

I

f

(90°)

I

(90°)

(Tacet)

mp

or as fast as poss. (unmeasured)

mf ppp

mp ppp mp

52

45°

90°

rdm. harm. near bridge

p

45°

90°

rdm. harm. near bridge

p

8

ppp

p

Ped.

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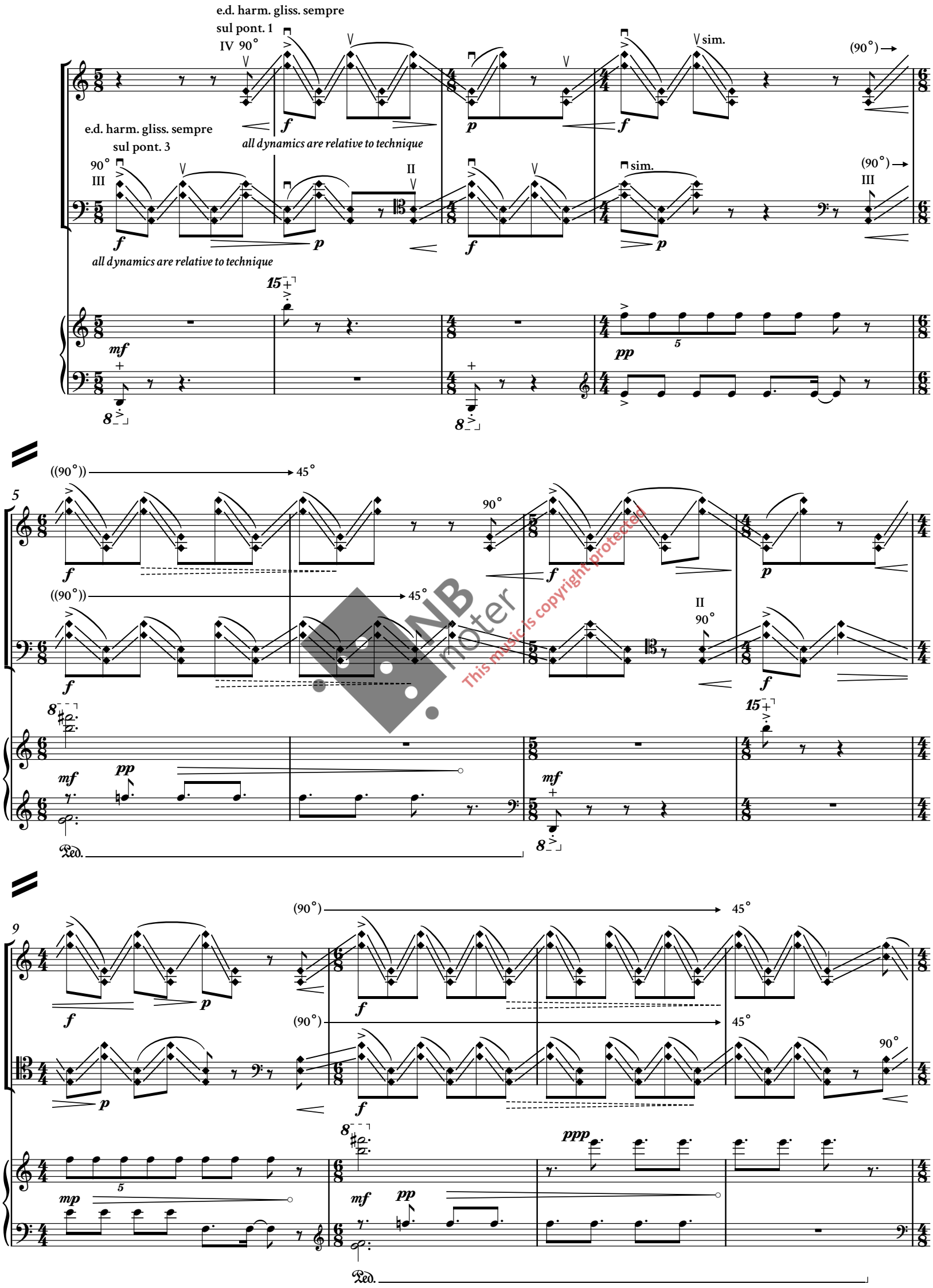
toss

a sudden waltz ♪ = 120



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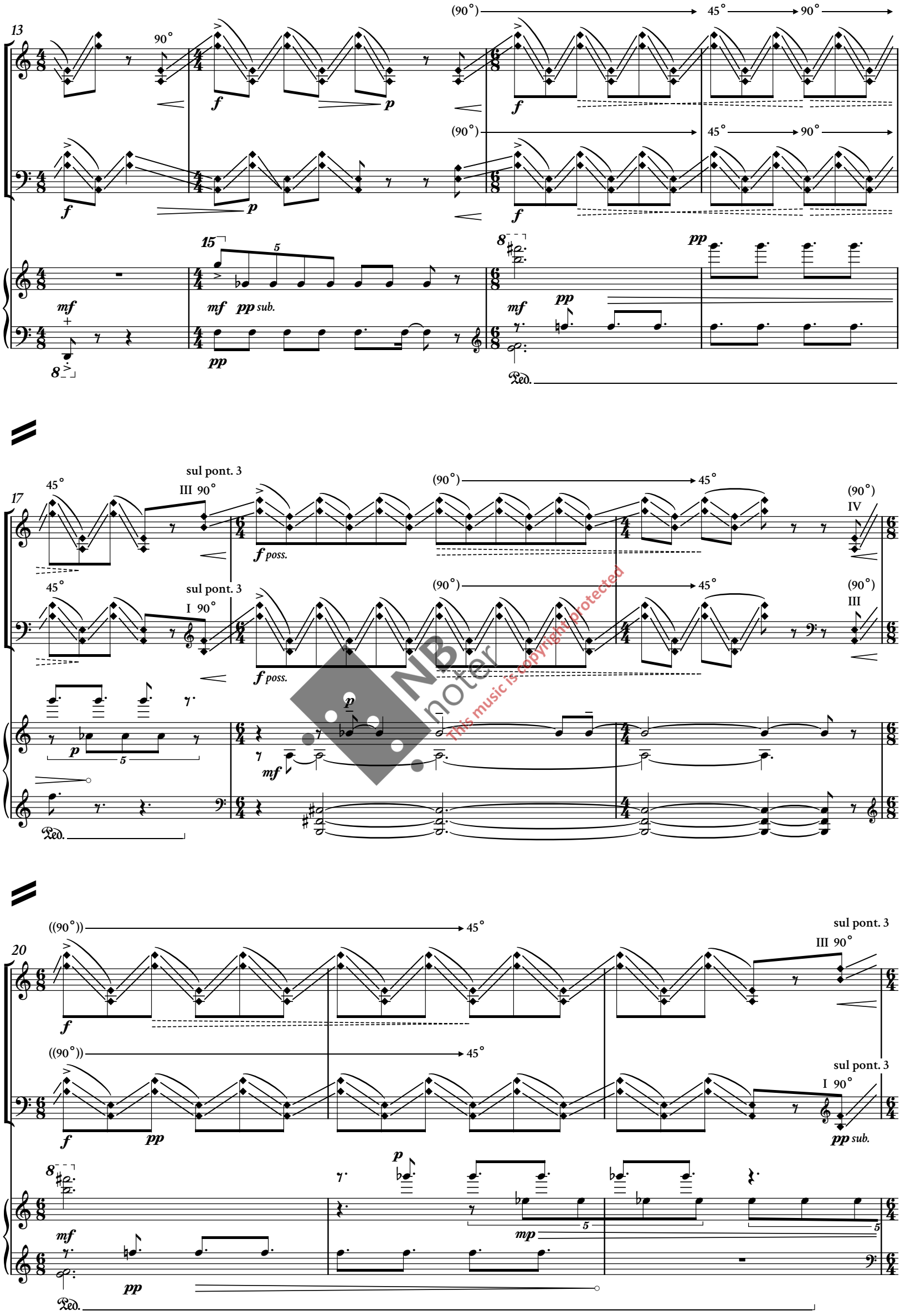

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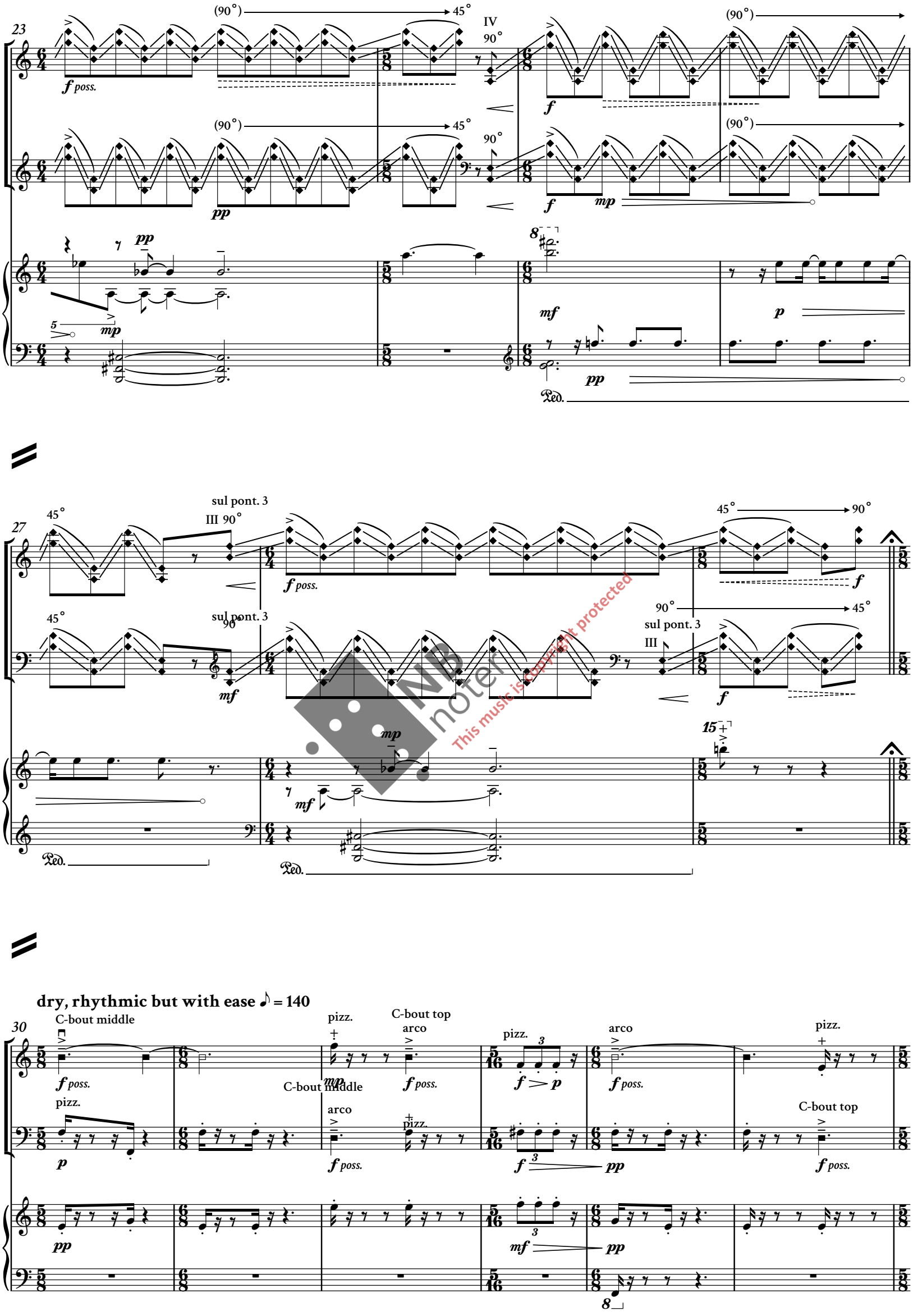

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36

45°
arco
pizz.
arco
pizz.
aim for 11th p.
60°
arco
audible pitch
pizz.

43

pizz.
C-bout middle
arco
pizz.
C-bout top
arco
pizz.
C-bout middle
arco
C-bout top
arco
pizz.
nails on keys,
no notes

50

arco
8va node
pizz.
ord.
aim for 9th p.
60°
audible pitch
arco
8va node
ord.
pizz.
arco
7th
sim.

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58

p

mp

pp

pizz.

mp

p

p

mf

p

Sost.

very soft

64

arco sul tasto
legato poss.

mp

arco sul tasto
legato poss.

III
IV

mp

p

mf

Ped.

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69

8va node

pp

8va node

pp

pizz.

mf

pizz.

mf

[scissored
ending]

5

pp sub.

mf

mp

Ped.