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Confluences

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Confluences

Ethan Wickman

Alto Saxophone + Bassoon

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NOTE

Confluences, for alto saxophone and bassoon, attempts to find the various ways in which the two instruments can converge in performance. Throughout the course of the work, these confluences are expressed in tessitura (as instruments match color in shared registers), motive (as they intermittently share melodic and rhythmic material), and space (as they explore diverse places on the stage or performing space). Of course, these convergences are given even greater meaning through various dramatic moments of divergence.

Each movement takes inspiration from some aspect of astronomy or observed interstellar space for its respective title. The first movement, “Rogue,” is named after the phenomenon of rogue planets, or heavenly bodies that do not conform to traditional, predictable orbits. In this movement, saxophone and bassoon are always slightly out of sync, as one is constantly in the process of breaking free of the influence, or ‘gravity,’ of the other.

The second movement, “Receding Orbits,” begins with a plaintive melody derived from permutations of a seven-note row (F#-A-F-C#-D-D#-A#--a conflation of the names “Javier” and “Sean,” respectively, the bassoonist and saxophonist of the Post-Haste Duo to whom the work is dedicated) in the saxophone. This melody repeats in fixed fashion as the bassoon enters articulating its own, independent melody. Each line evolves and develops, seemingly indifferent to the other, the rhythmic relationship between each becoming increasingly strained. At a key moment the instruments erupt into dramatic unity. The movement ends as its principle material descends gently in scale form, as the fragments of a cosmic explosion.

The final movement, “beneath a canopy of angels… a river of stars,’ aims to explore the more poetic notions of the night sky. True convergence ensues from the beginning of the movement. After a lyrical interlude, opening motives return under increased rhythmic and harmonic strain, only to find their way to ultimate confluence.

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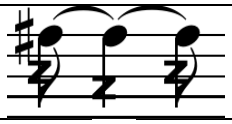
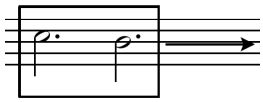
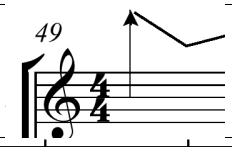
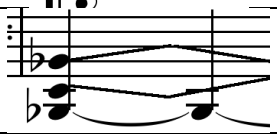
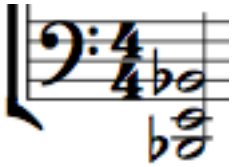
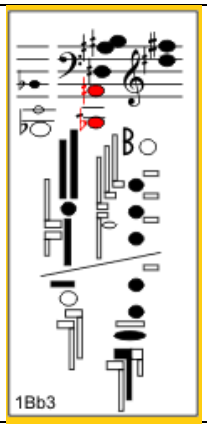
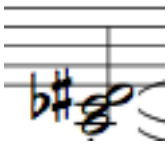
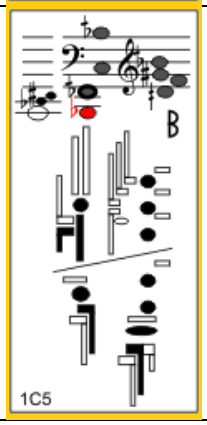
III.	beneath a canopy of angels… a river of stars	p. 11

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Saxophone growl	
Bassoon multiphonic	
Accelerate to as fast as possible, then decelerate, irrespective of tempo	
Play figure once, without respect to given tempo. Listed note values are relative.	
Saxophone plays in altissimo register, sliding between relatively indicated pitches	
Variable bassoon multiphonics over a note. Player should alter multiphonic while maintaining low B-flat in fingering.	

BASSOON MULTIPHONICS

(from www.leslieross.net)

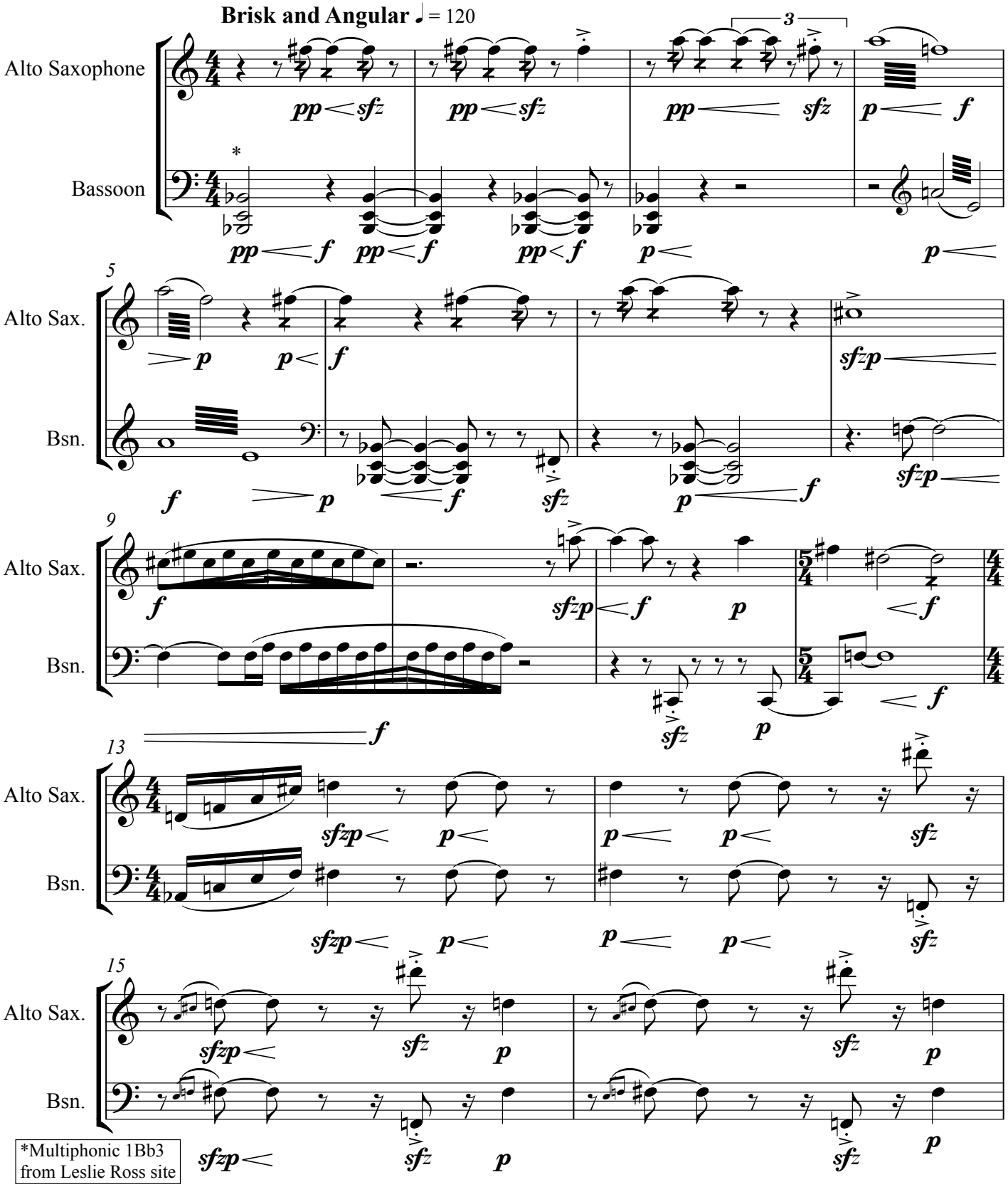
Duration: 10 minutes

For the Post-Haste Reed Duo

Confluences

I. Rogue

Ethan Wickman



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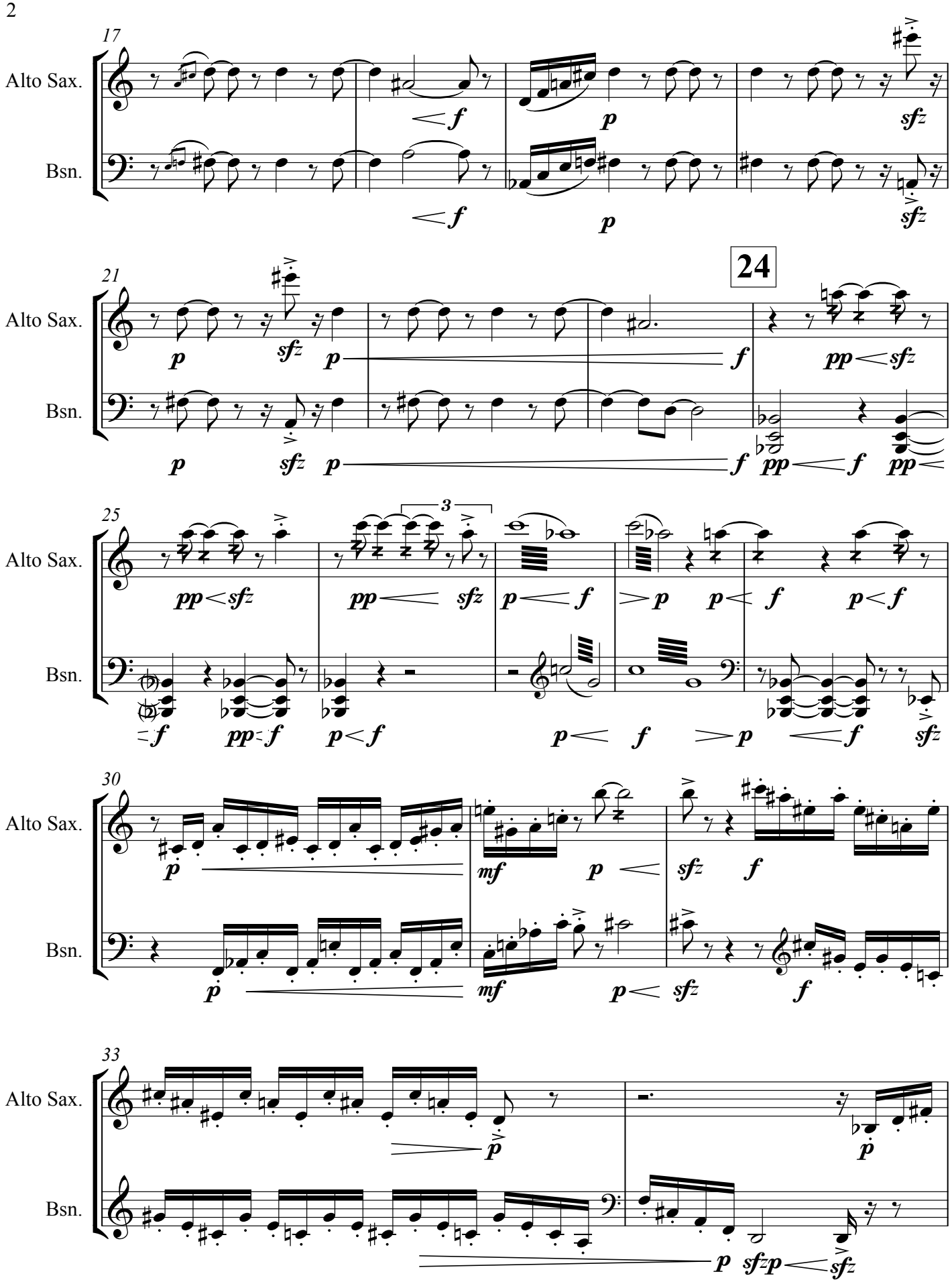
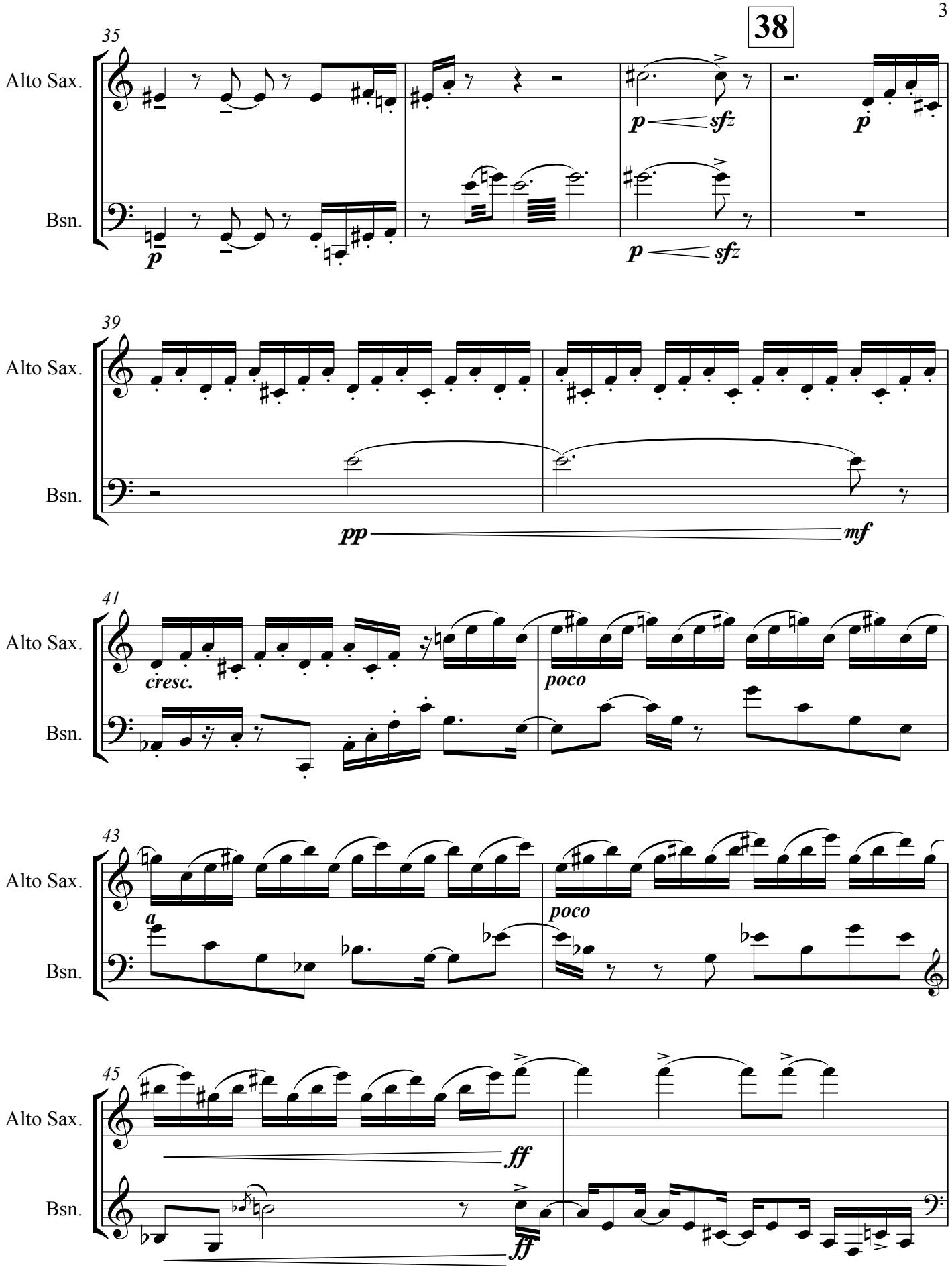
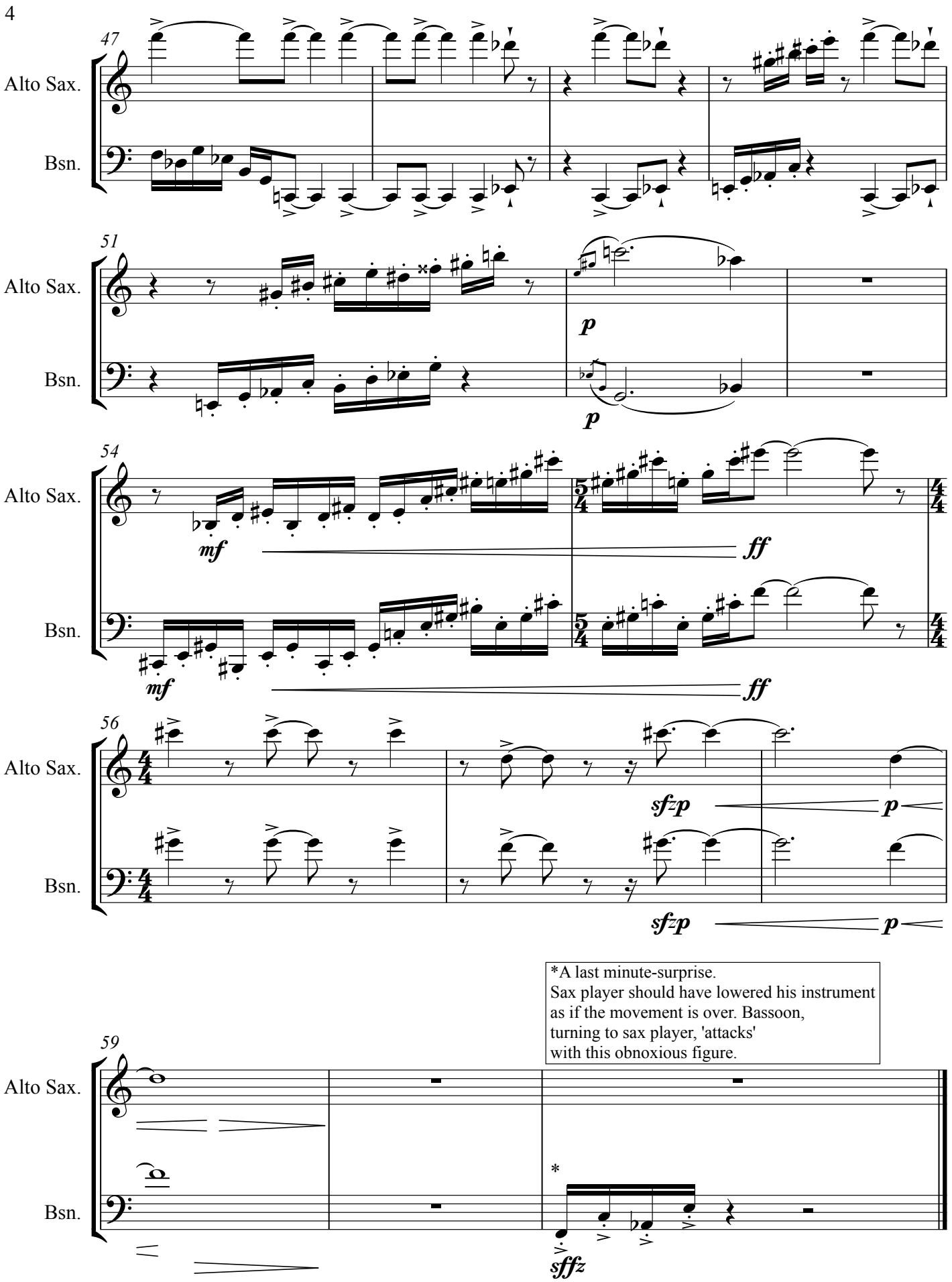

17
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
21
24
25
30
33


38
35
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
p
sfz
p
p
sfz
39
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
pp
mf
41
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
cresc.
poco
43
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
a
poco
45
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
ff
ff

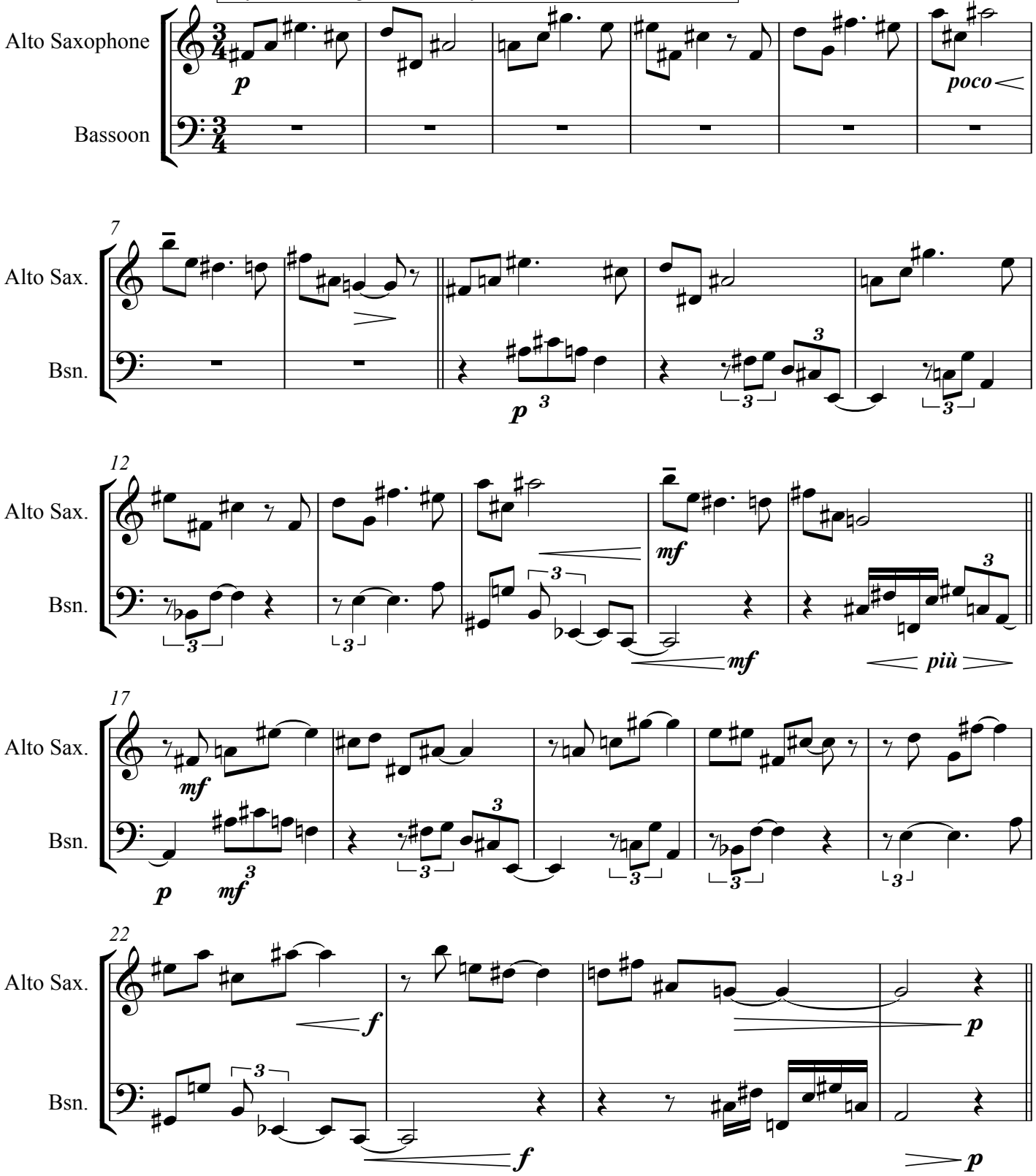

47
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
51
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
p
p
54
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
mf
ff
mf
ff
56
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
sfzp
p
sfzp
p
*A last minute-surprise.
Sax player should have lowered his instrument
as if the movement is over. Bassoon,
turning to sax player, 'attacks'
with this obnoxious figure.
59
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
*
sffz

Confluences

II. Receding Orbits

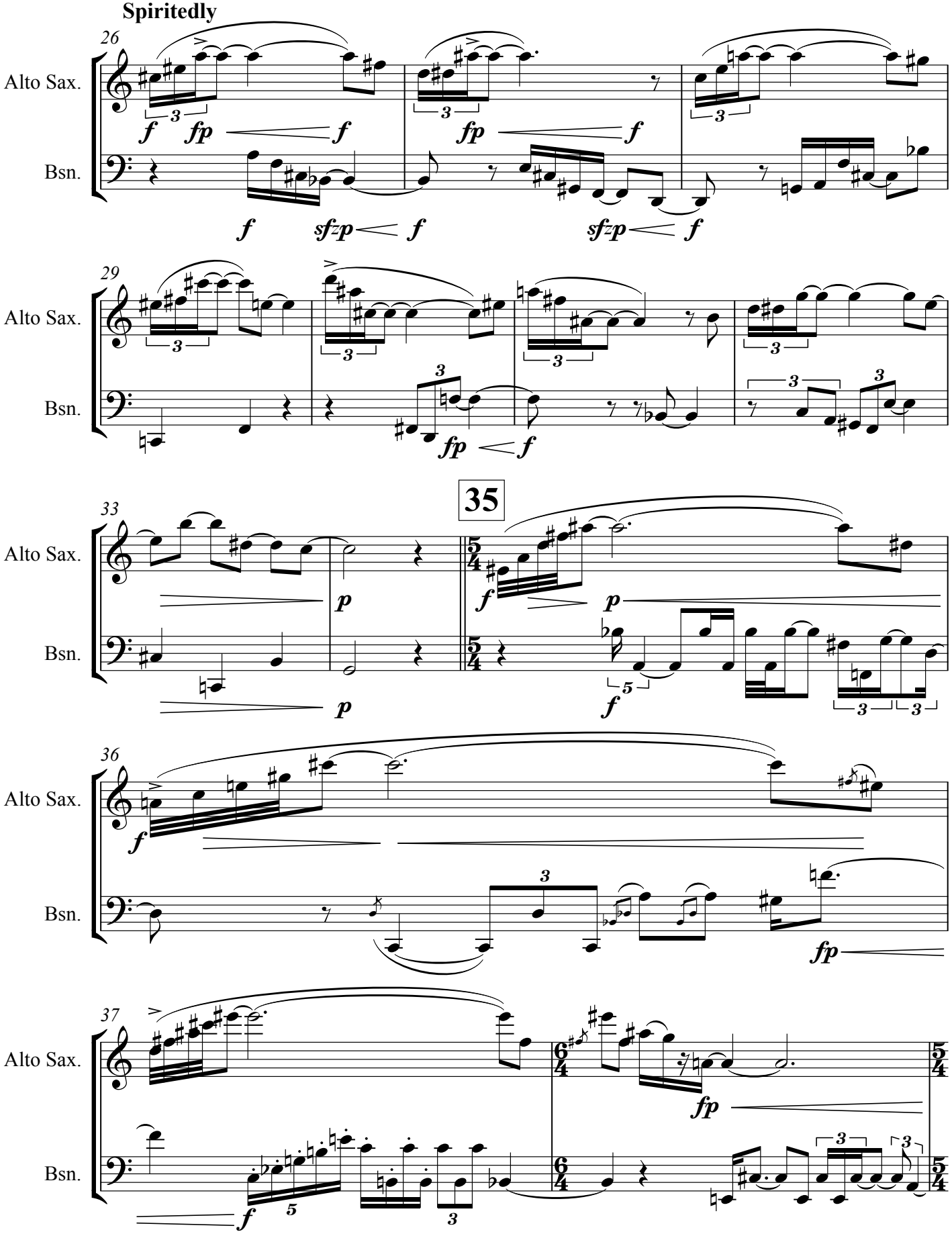
With detached independence ♩ = 72

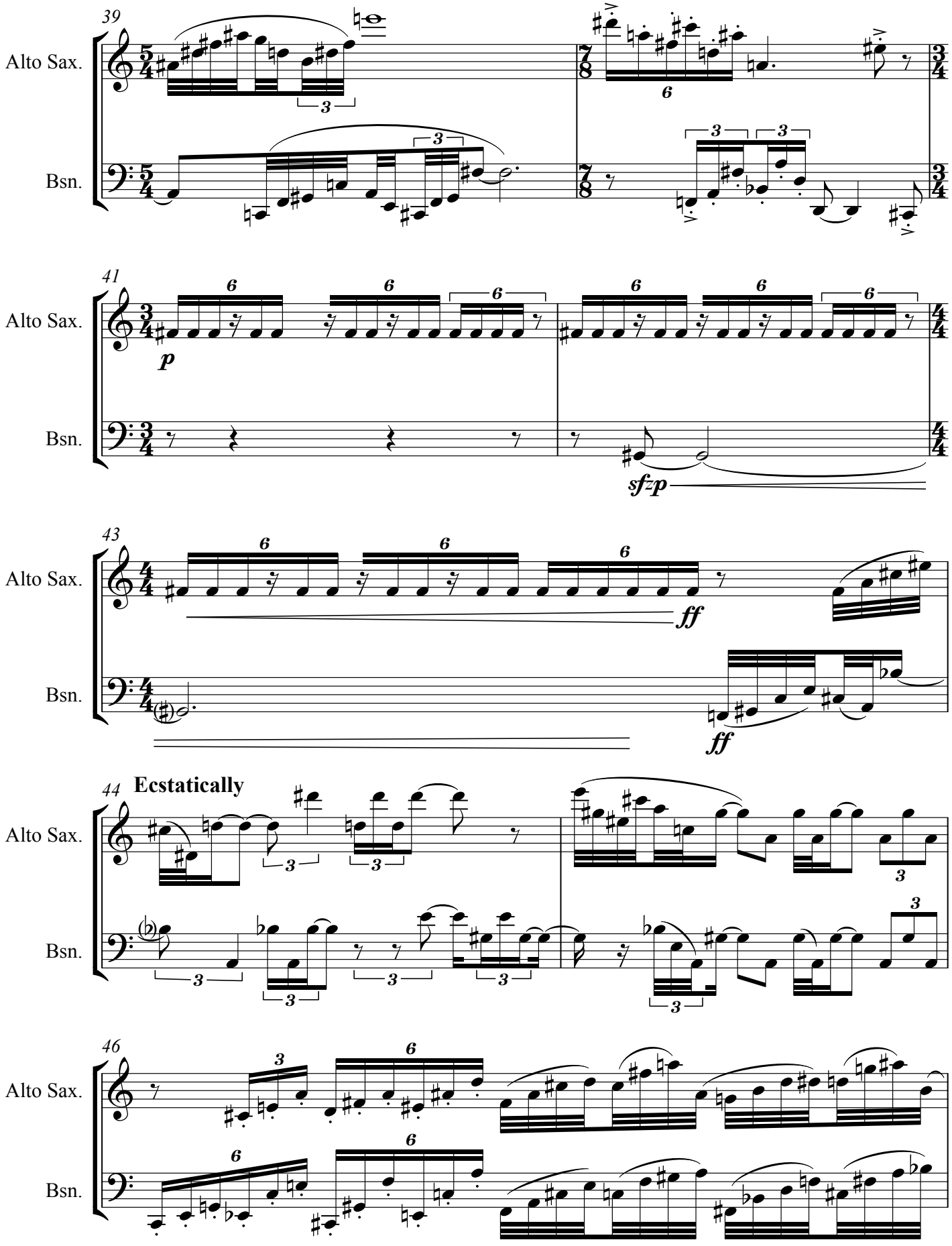
Players should begin to face away from one another from mm. 1-25

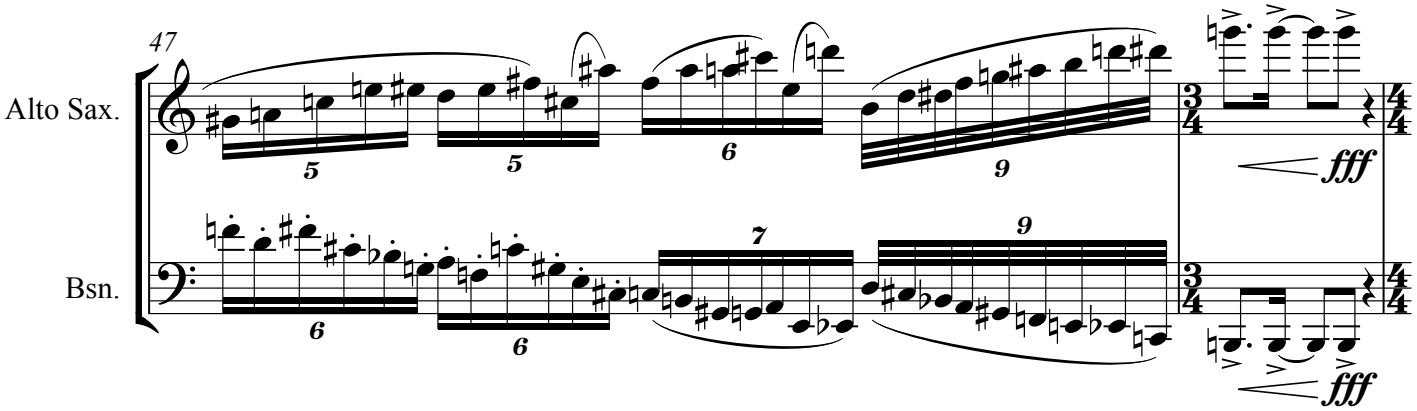


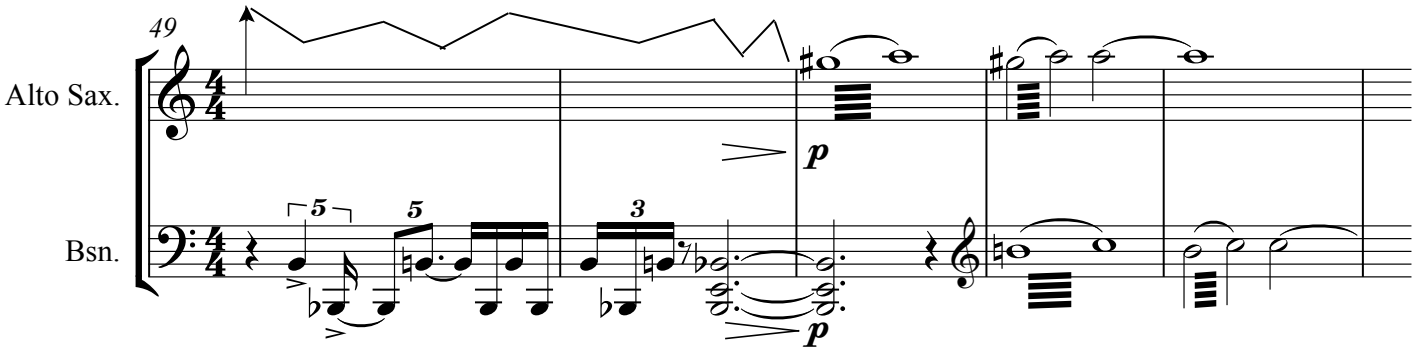
26

Spiritedly




39
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
41
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
p
sfzp
43
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
ff
ff
44
Ecstatically
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
46
Alto Sax.
Bsn.

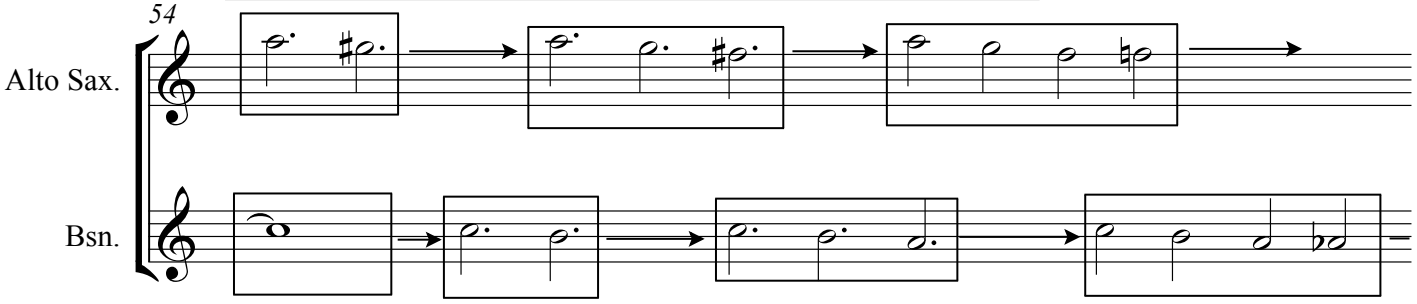


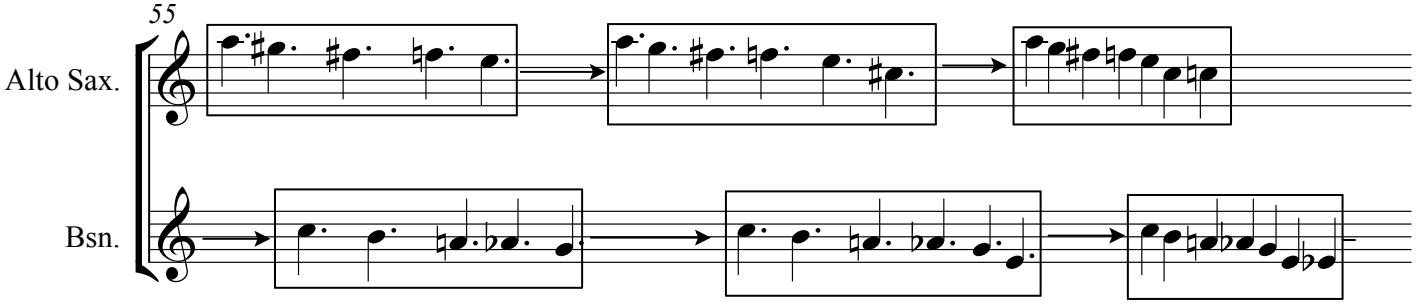


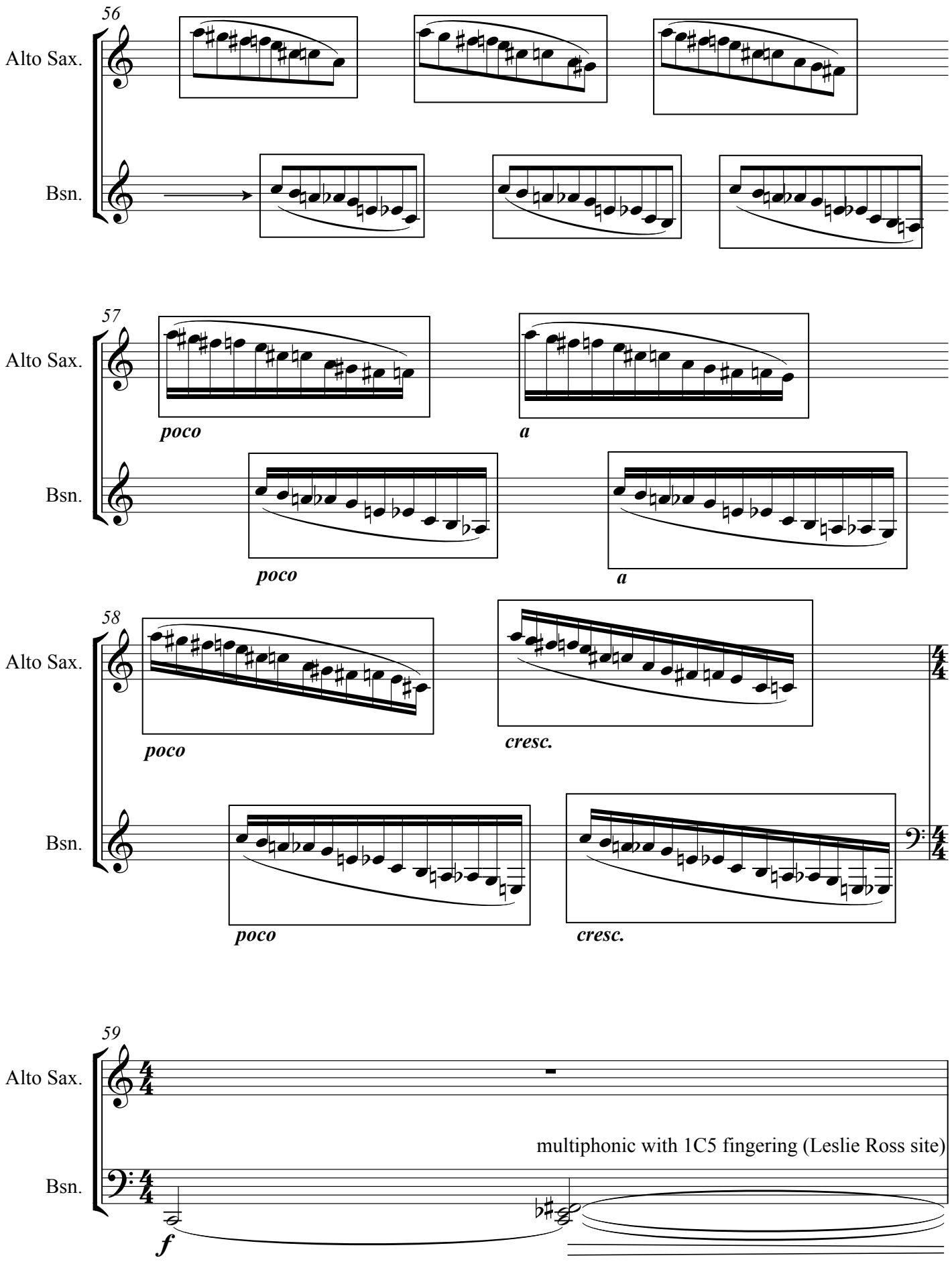
54 **Placidly**

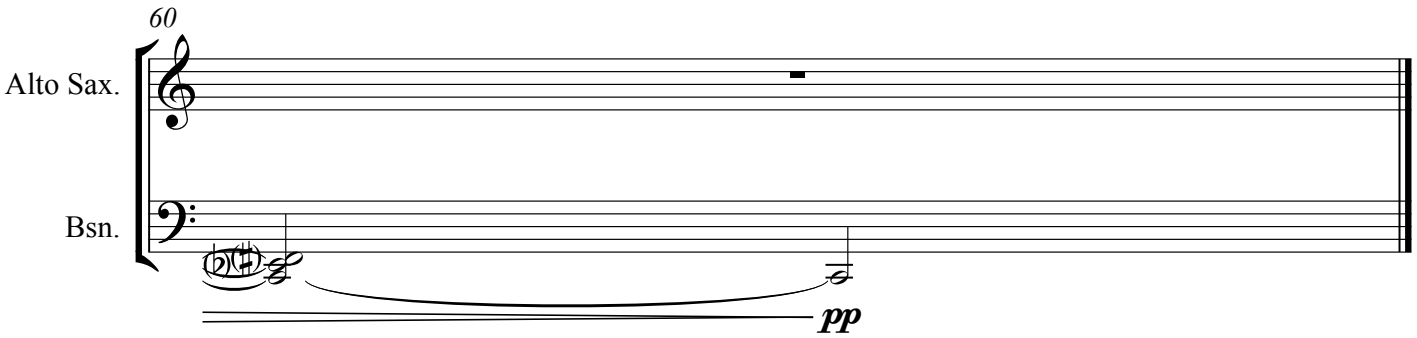
Note values are relative, and not to be interpreted strictly by the given tempo.

Players begin walking slowly to outer stands, arriving before m. 59





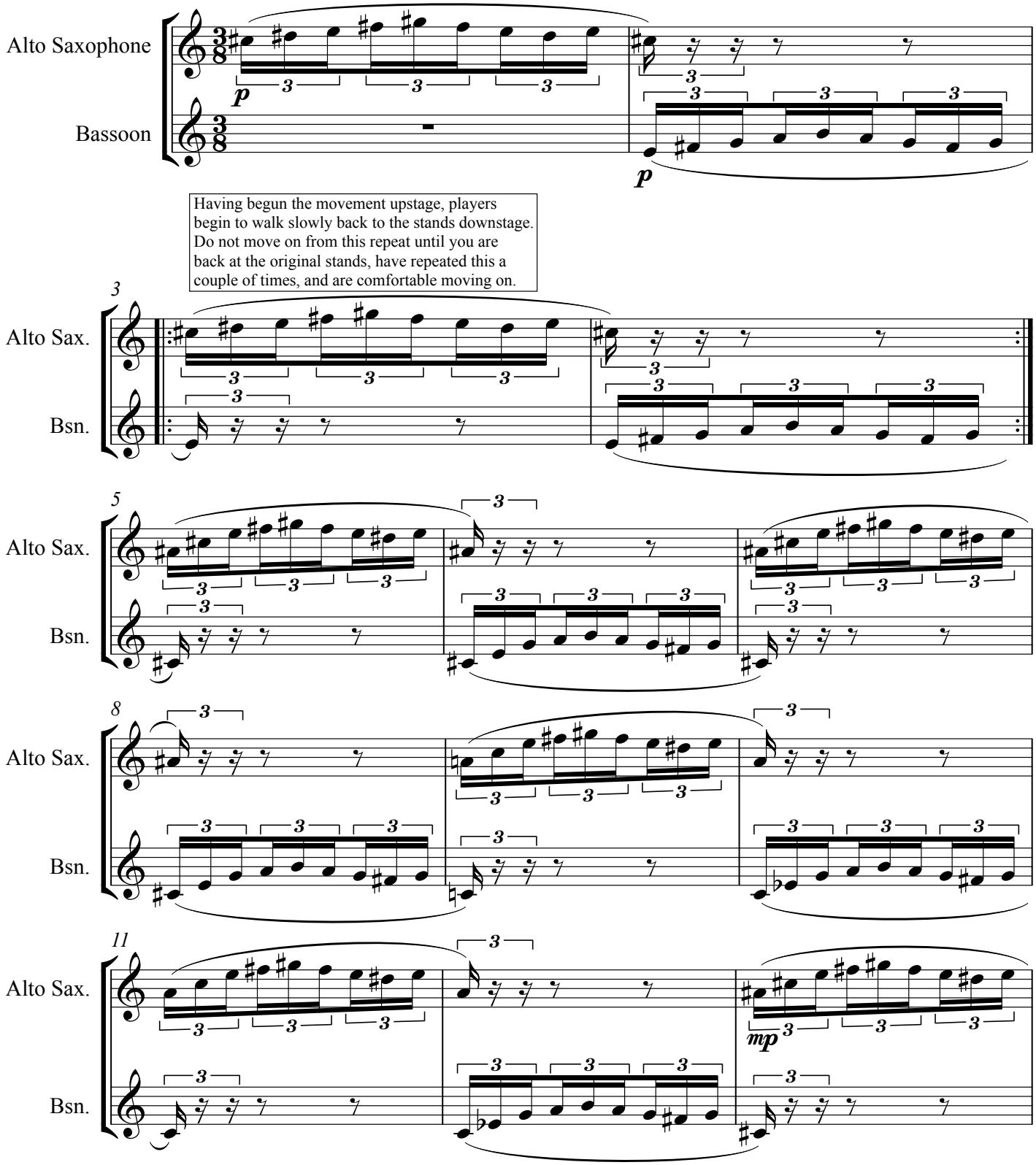

56
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
57
Alto Sax.
poco
a
Bsn.
poco
a
58
Alto Sax.
poco
cresc.
Bsn.
poco
cresc.
59
Alto Sax.
multiphonic with 1C5 fingering (Leslie Ross site)
Bsn.
f

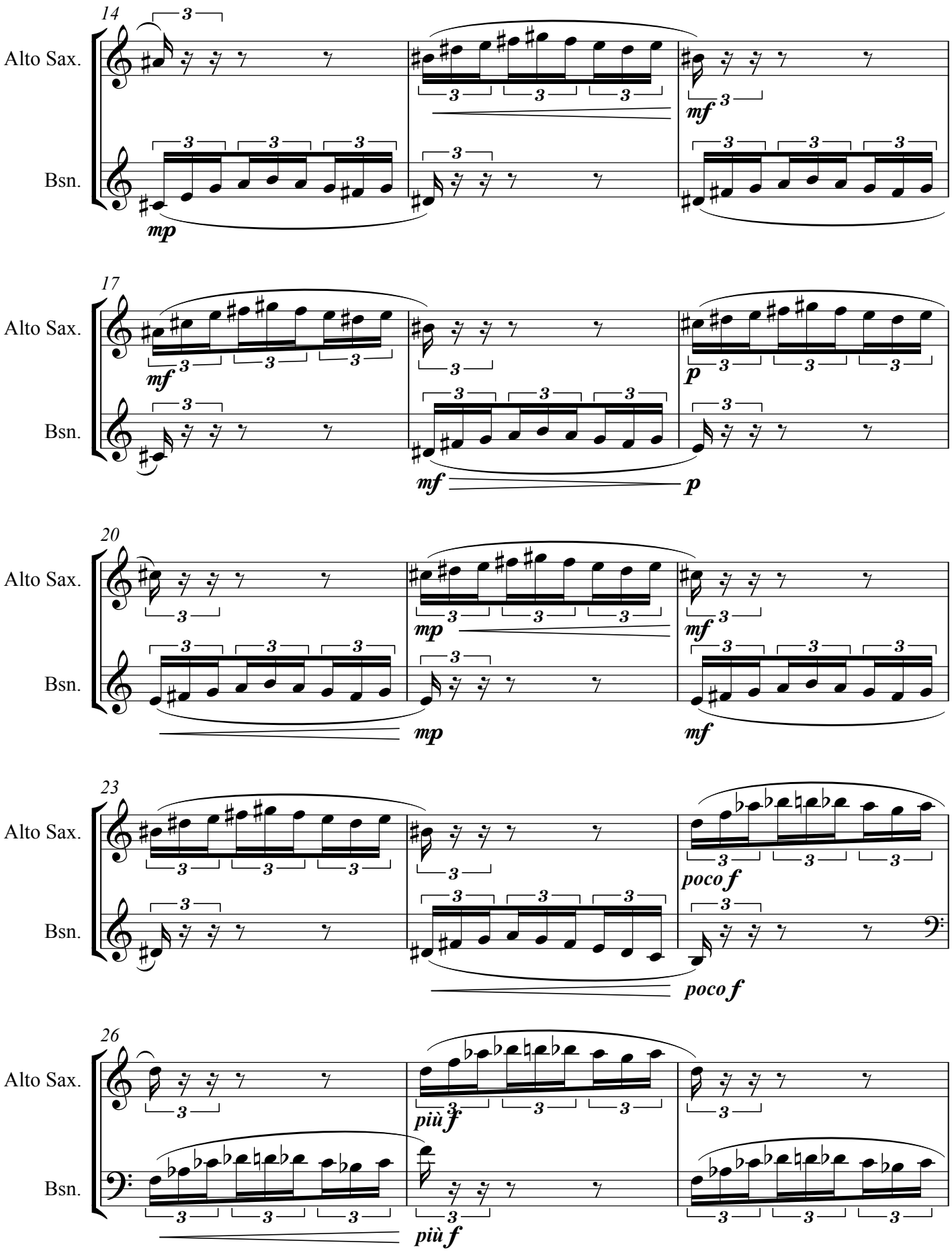

60
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
pp

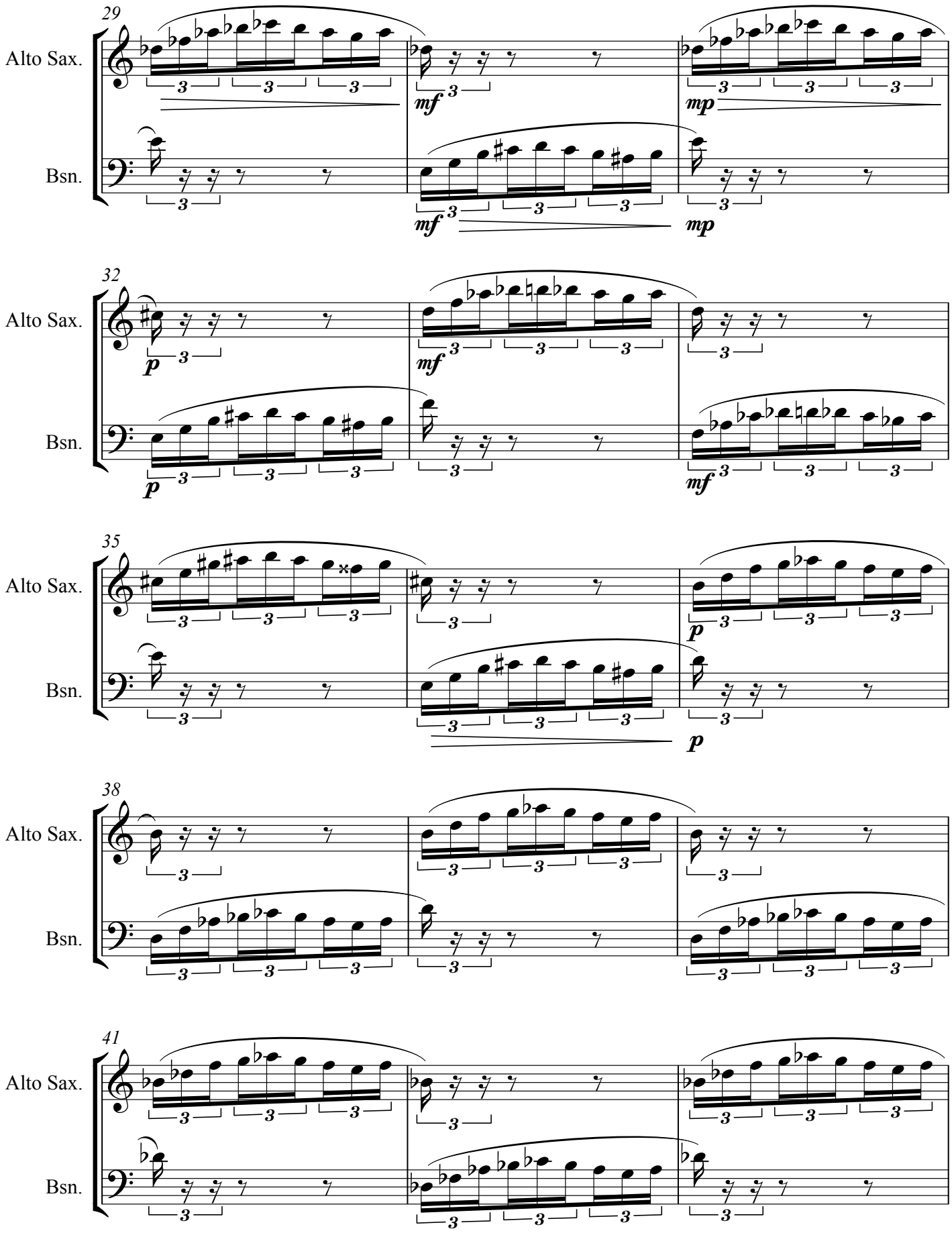
Confluences

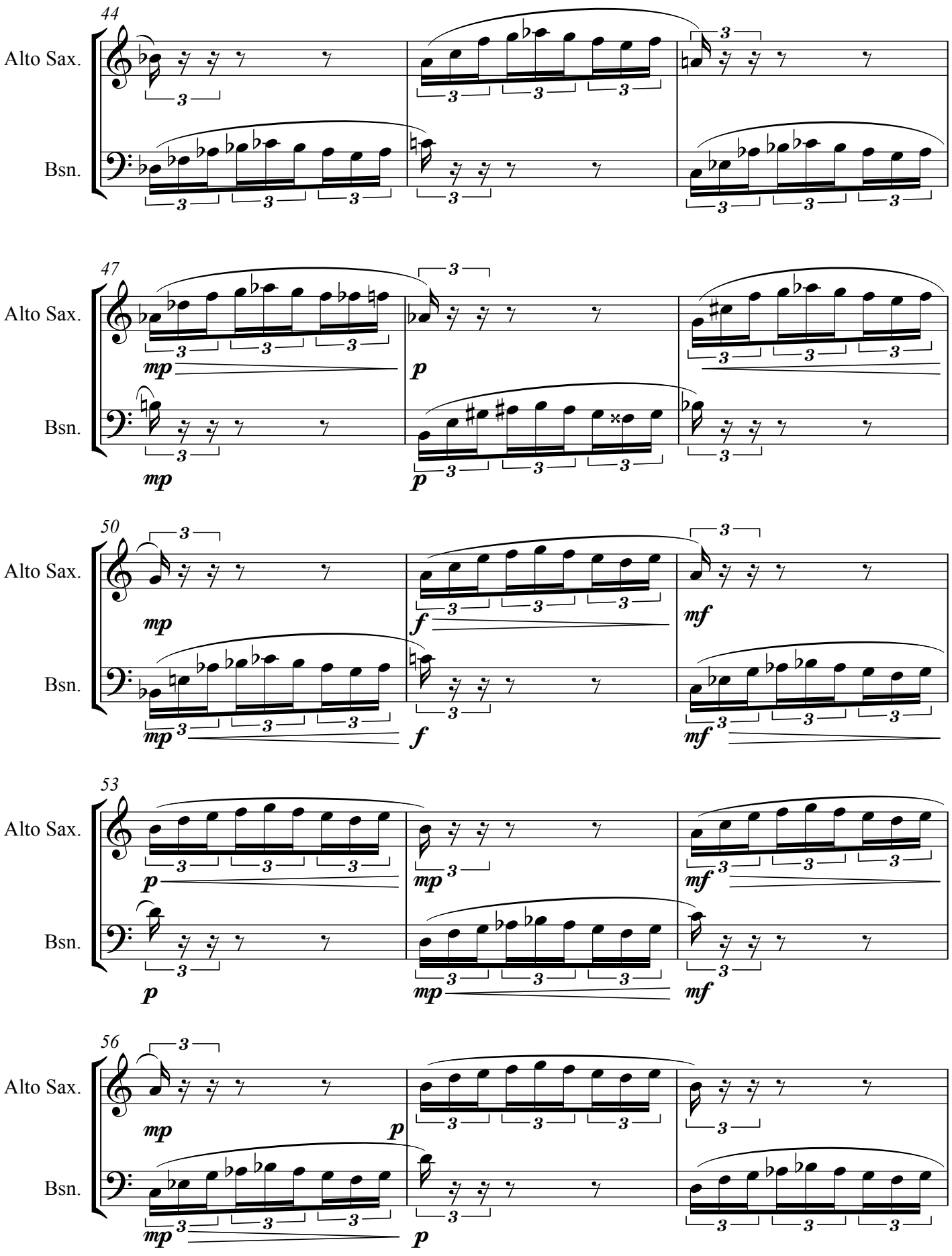
III. beneath a canopy of angels... a river of stars

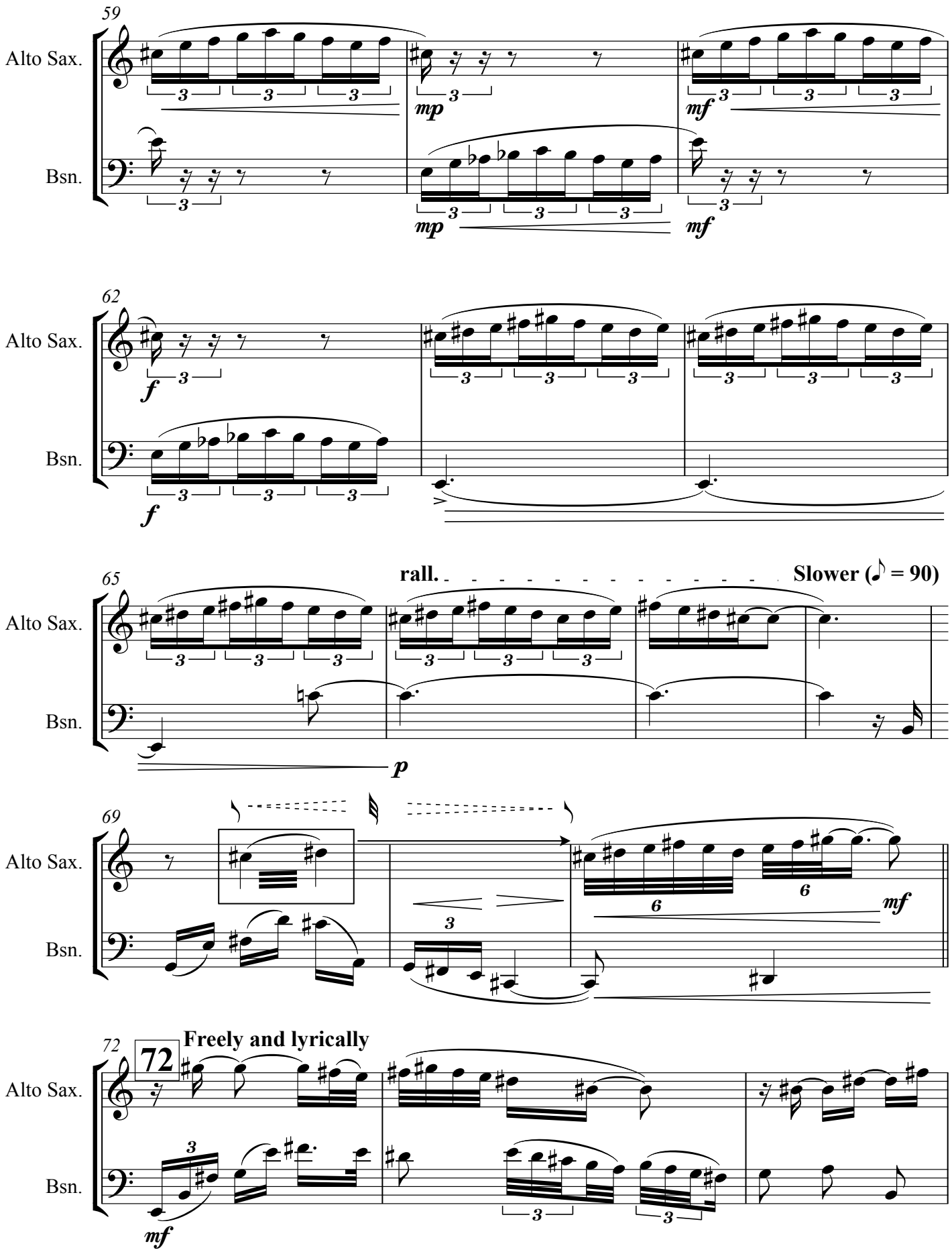
Seamlessly fleeting ♩. = 54

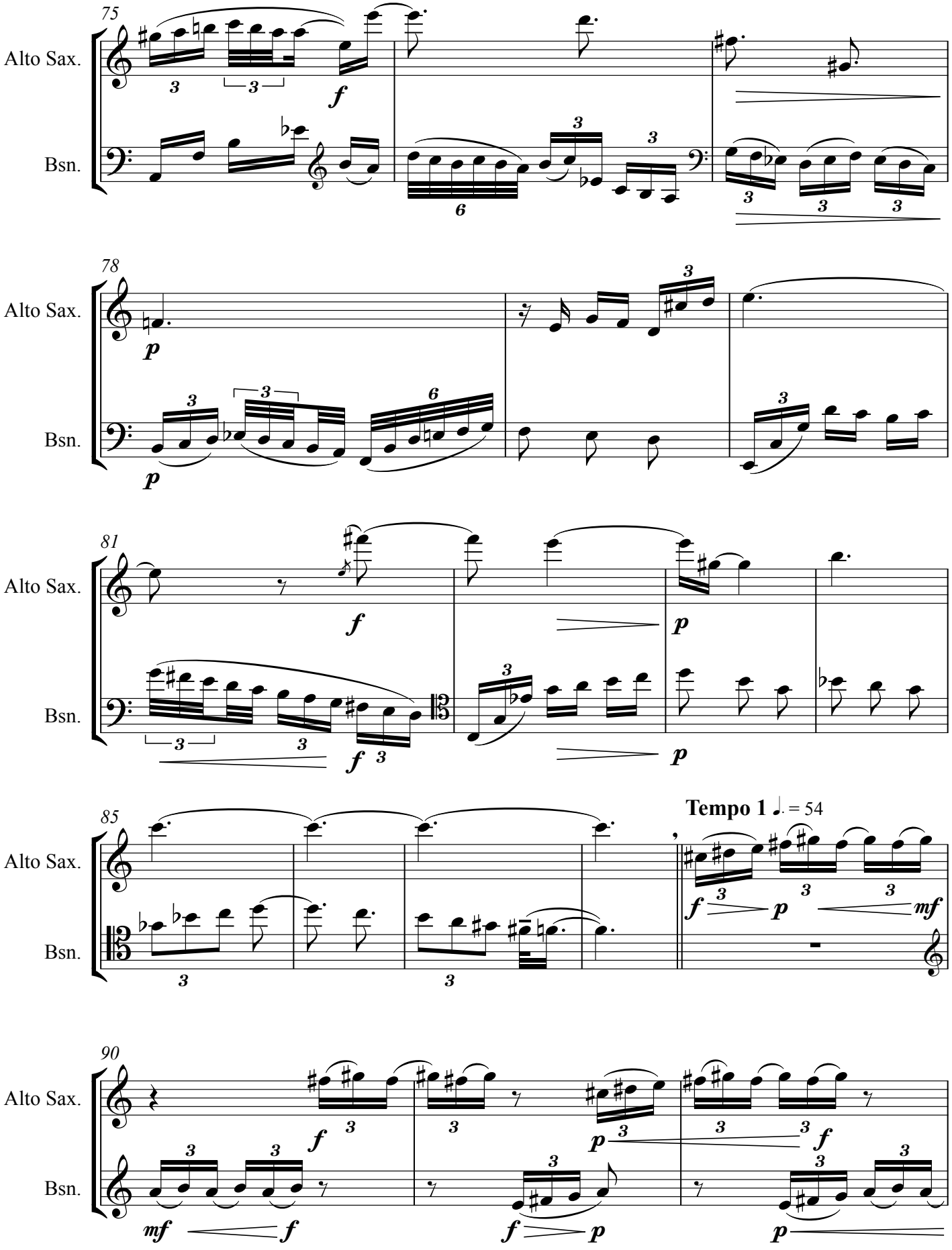


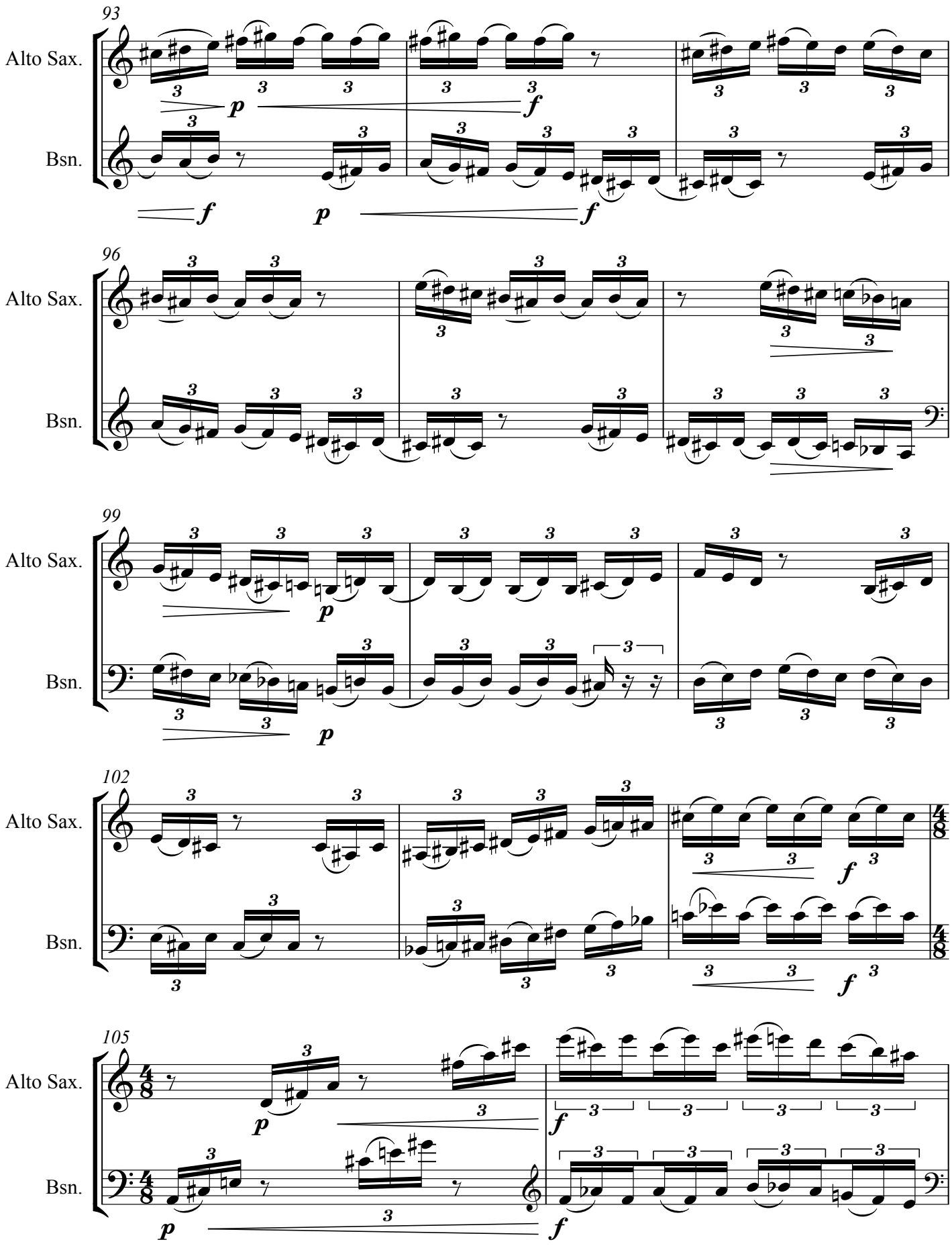

14
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
mp
mf
17
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
mf
p
20
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
mp
mf
23
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
poco f
26
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
più f

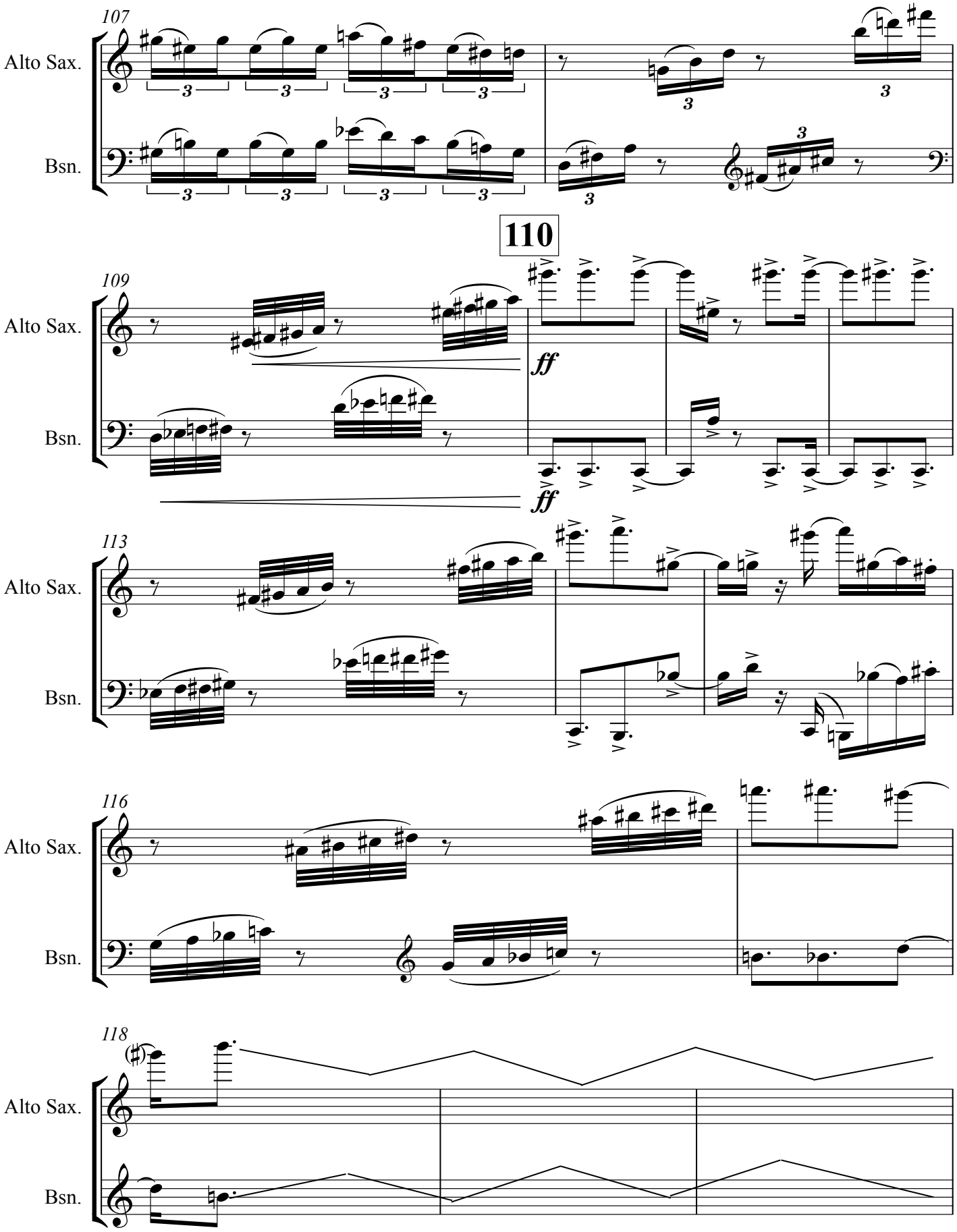

29
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
mf
mp
32
p
mf
35
38
41


44
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
47
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
mp
p
50
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
mp
f
mf
53
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
p
mp
mf
56
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
mp
p


59
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
mp
mf
62
f
65
rall.
Slower (♪ = 90)
p
69
mf
72
72
Freely and lyrically
mf


75
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
f
78
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
p
81
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
f
p
85
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
Tempo 1 ♩. = 54
f
p
mf
90
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
mf
f
p


93
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
96
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
99
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
102
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
105
Alto Sax.
Bsn.


107
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
110
109
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
ff
ff
113
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
116
Alto Sax.
Bsn.
118
Alto Sax.
Bsn.

February 10, 2014
San Antonio, TX