JAMES SELLARS

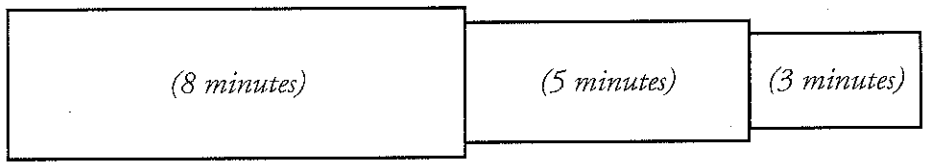
Trio

for Violin, Clarinet, and Violoncello

HOG RIVER MUSIC
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

Program Notes

Formally, my *Trio* for violin, clarinet, and cello can be represented by a telescope of three sections:



These three sections are an analogue of the three movements in the *Trio*, performed here without pause. In the first movement (the large section of the telescope), the tempo is slow, and melodic leaps are large. The second movement (middle section of the telescope) is twice as fast as the first, and the melodic intervals are smaller. The third movement is half again as fast, and the melodic intervals are yet smaller. The first movement runs some eight minutes, at a tempo of ♩=50; the second, approximately five minutes, at ♩=100; the third, around three minutes, at a tempo of 150 beats per minute.

The content within this telescopic form consists of sustained melodic lines and short, gestural comments, each instrument singing and commenting in its own idiomatic way. There is, to my mind, a certain, ongoing, dramatic confrontation between the melodic and the gestural. Indeed, the instruments and their individual capabilities directly influenced most of the musical material. This highly individualized material is but an extension of the supreme tenet of counterpoint: that each line remain distinct in the musical texture and independently audible.

Thus, one approach the listener may take to this music is to focus on a single instrumental line; yet, although the separate lines may be independently audible, each of the three instruments is interwoven into an intricate textural whole. Each is heard in the context of the other. As composition, the resulting harmonic and rhythmic complexity demands from the performers a precision in ensemble playing, which, I hope, provides for the listener a high degree of musical immediacy.

The Trio was commissioned by the Society for Commissioning New Music and is dedicated to John W. Petersen. The first performance took place at University of North Texas on April 26, 1975, with the following performers:

Kenneth Schanewerk, violin
John Petersen, clarinet
Monte Knutson, cello

James Sellars

Performance Notes

This is a C score.

The following pizzicato signs are used:

- ⏀ slapped against fingerboard (Bartók pizzicato)
- ◡ pizzicato with fingernail
- + pizzicato with left hand

Parts are available from the publisher.

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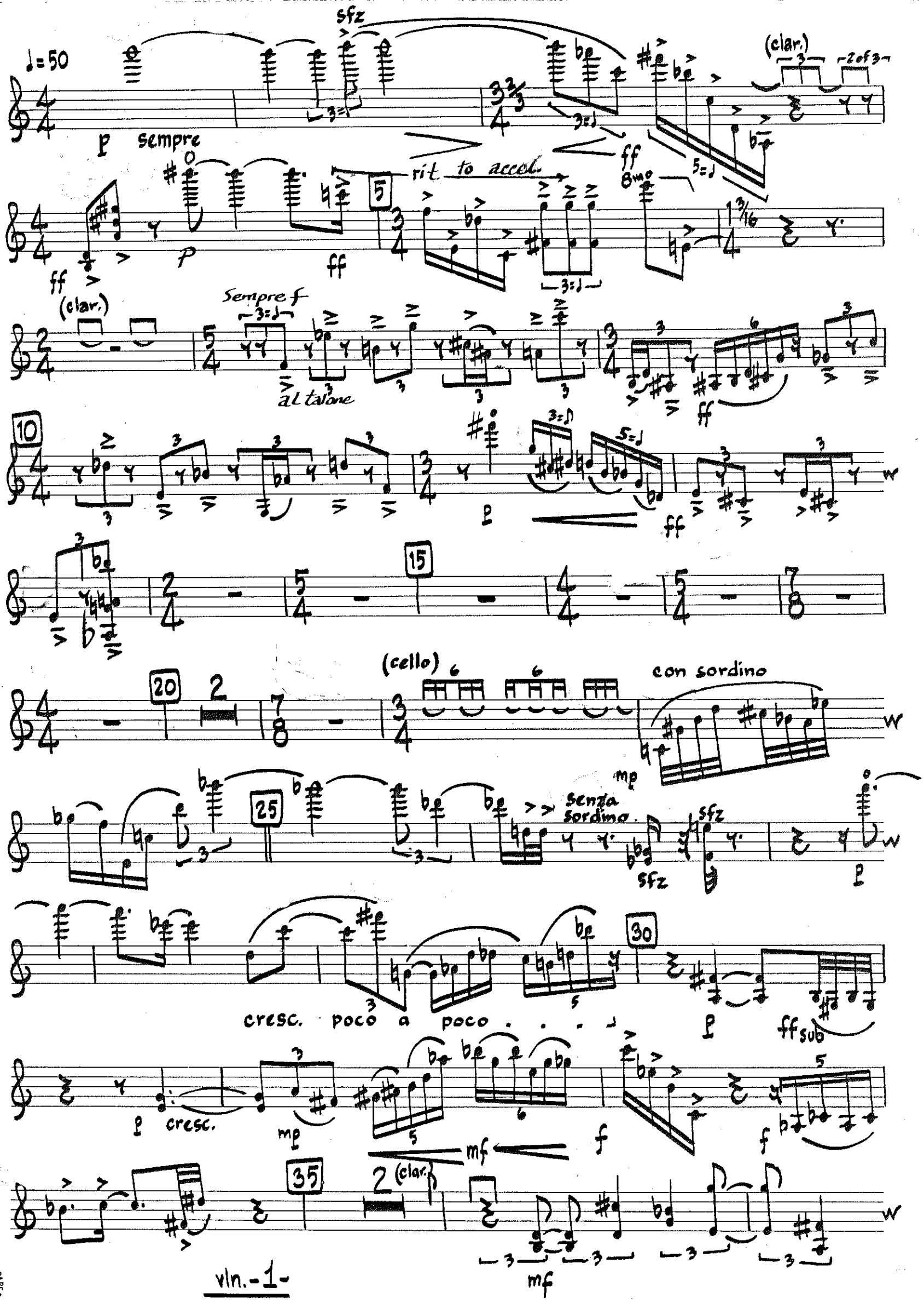
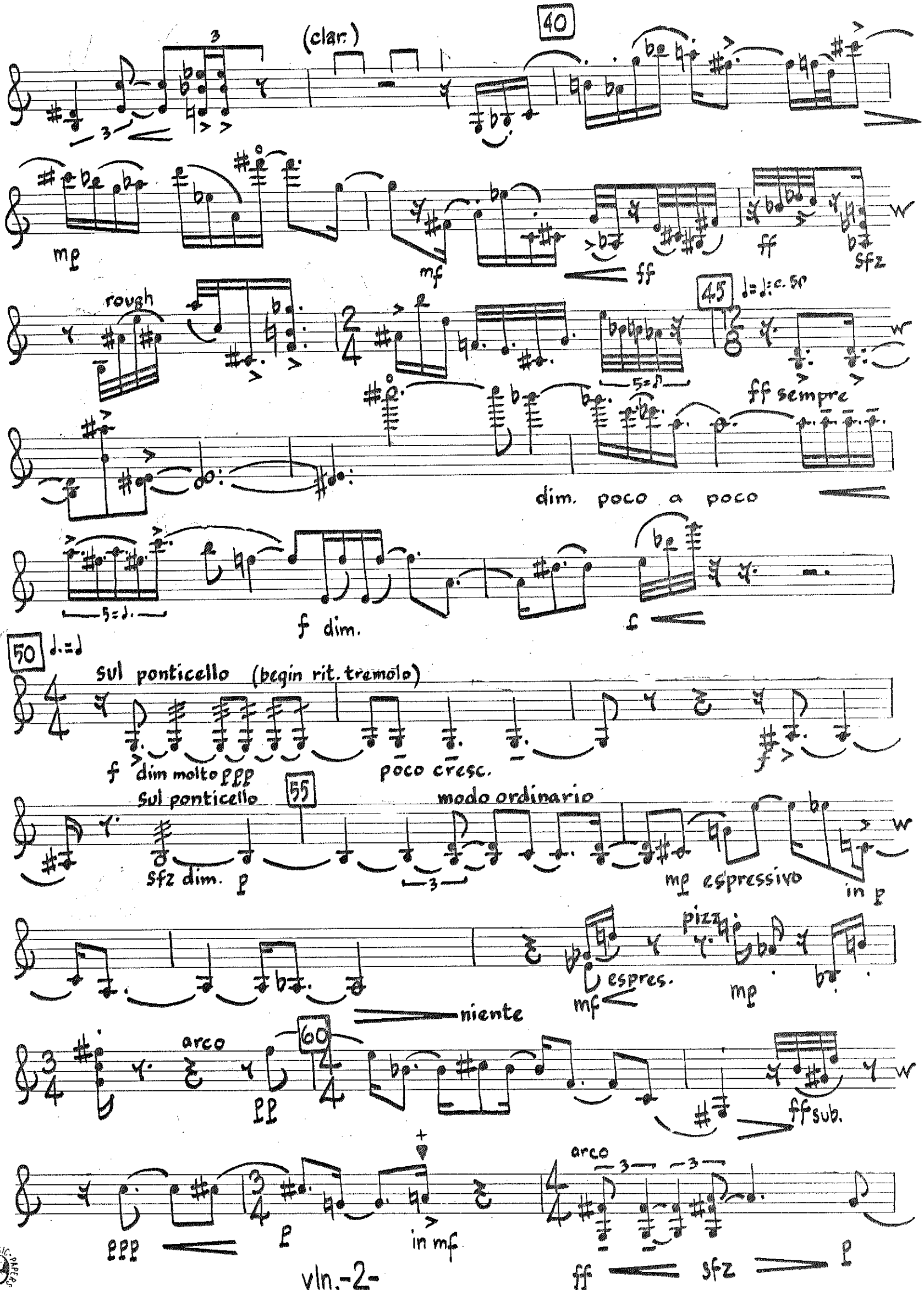

♩=50
sfz
(clar.)
2 of 3
p sempre
ff
rit to accel.
8mo
5
1 3/16
(clar.)
Sempre f
al talone
10
15
20
(cello)
con sordino
mp
25
senza sordino
sfz
30
cresc. poco a poco . . .
ff sub
p cresc.
mp
mf
f
35
2 (clar.)
vln.-1-



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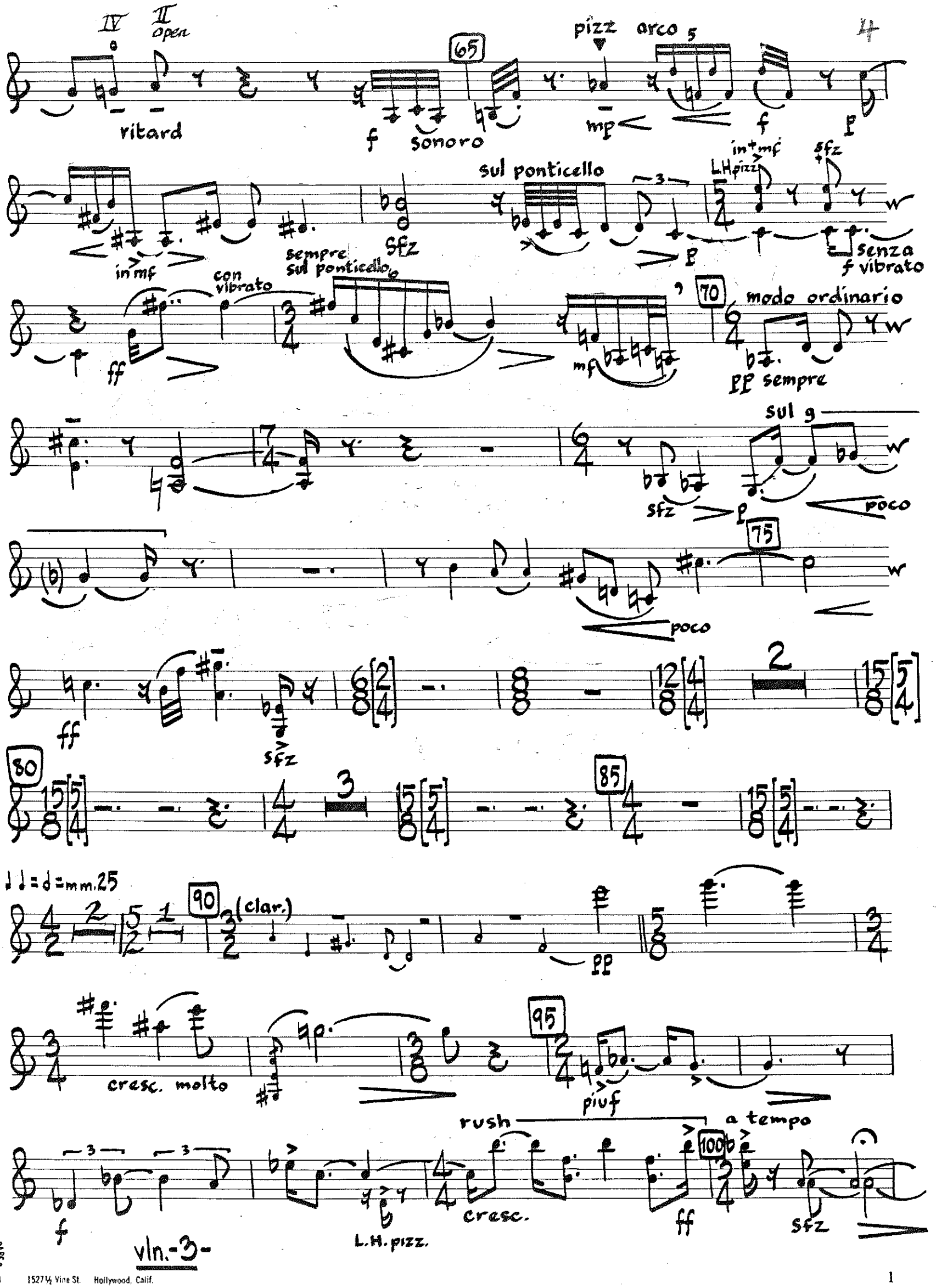

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105

pp

8va

poco piu mosso

p pizz.

110

arco

mf

molto rit. → accel.

molto rit.

a tempo

lunga

ff

pizz. (+)

arco

spring

3=♪

con molto

f

sfz

spring

L.H. pizz.

rit.... accel...

a tempo

5

L.H. pizz

sfz

115

poco

a poco

6=♩

stringendo

poco rit.

molto accel...

rushing

8va

♩=100

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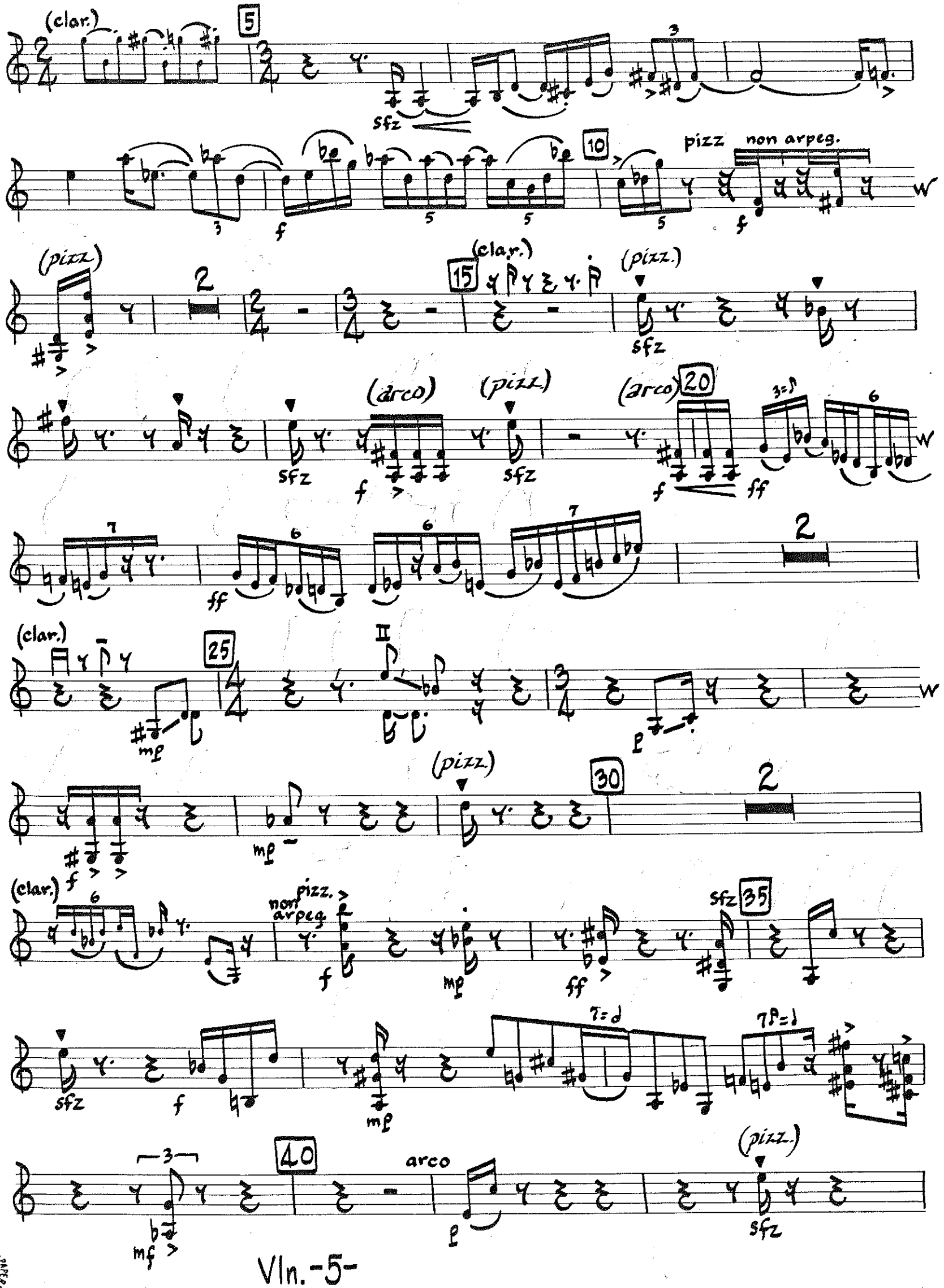

Vln.-5-

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arco

pp

45

p sempre

50

(Vc.)

p

55

sfz

ppp

60

p

(pizz.)

(arco)

ff

sfz

ff

p

65

ff

ff

legato

sfz

70

pp

75

ppp

80

pizz

mp

85

(pizz)

mp

(Vc.) 3

mf

non arpeg.

sfz

90

(pizz)

mp

non arpeg.

mf

Vln.-6-

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(pizz.) non arpeg. 95 mf

non arpeg. sfz non arpeg. 100 sfz

non arp. sfz mf ff mf mp sfz

105 p arco ff intenso legato

110 espress. mf

115 fff

120

125 (♩=c.100) clar. cad.

poco rit.

con tutta forza pizz.-non arpeg.

clar. ♩=150

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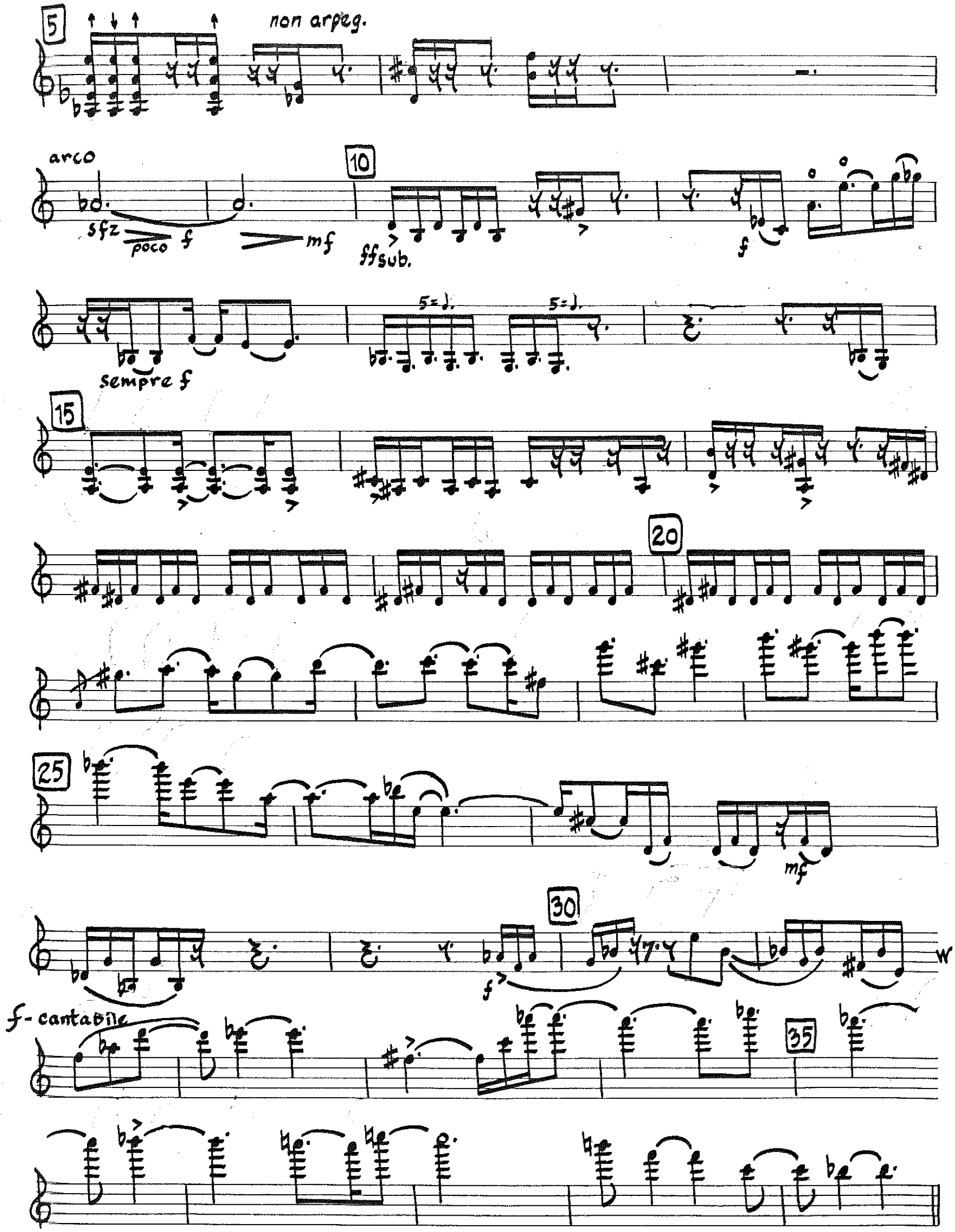

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40 ♪ = ♪

2

sempre ff

45

50

5 = ♩

pizz.

f

arco

55

sfz sfz sfz sfz sfz

f

60

3

pizz.

ff

65

arco

pp

70

75

2

80

niente

sfz

ff

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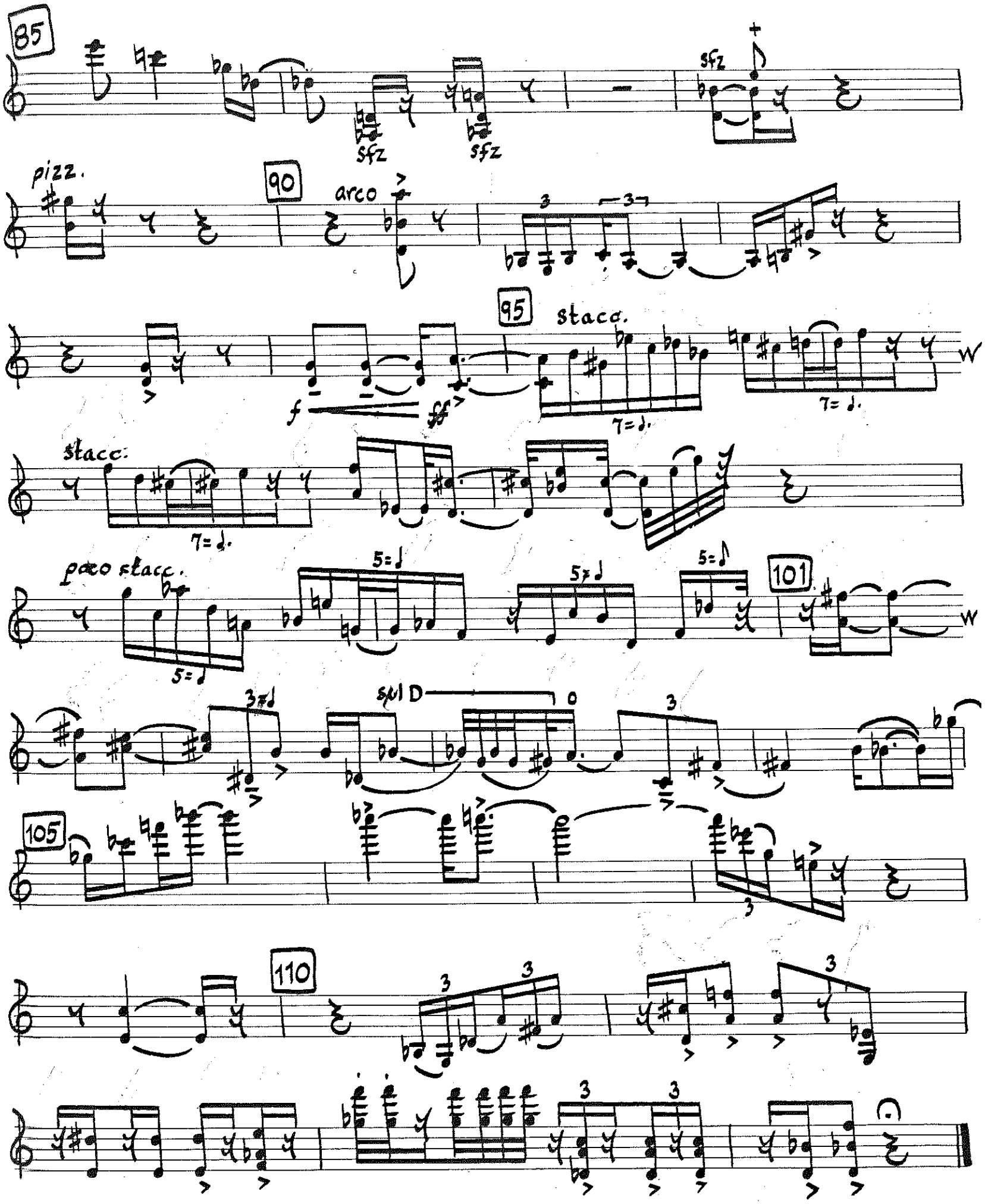

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