Six Etudes

for bass clarinet and electronics

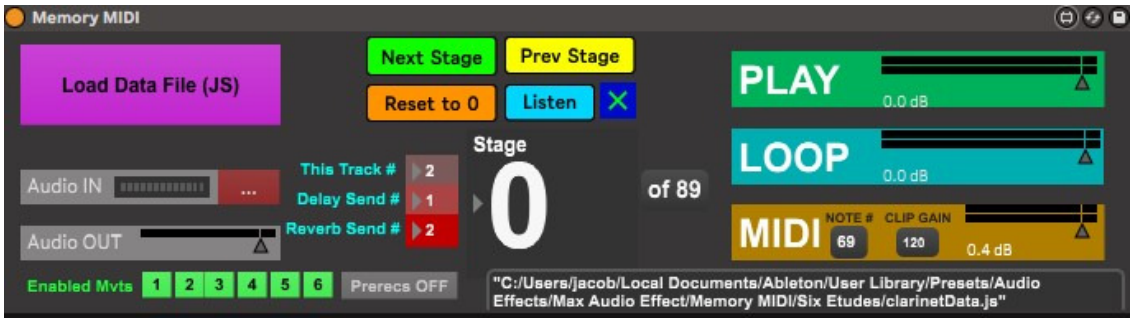
Jake Berran

(2022)

Program Notes

Six Etudes for Bass Clarinet and Electronics is my first foray into live electronics and an important step in my quest to merge my passion for music and my coding skills in meaningful ways. It uses an original Max for Live device I call "Memory MIDI," which allows one to record any segments of the piece and play or loop them back later with pitch, speed, and amplitude transformations, or trigger a MIDI file using the recorded segments (with the same possible transformations) as the base sample. Thus, anything the soloist plays has the potential to be both musical material and raw audio material.

The "Prelude" is a clarinet solo which is recorded in its entirety. "Frenzy" utilizes a captured multiphonic as a fast, staccato MIDI sample to produce a sound which is impossible on the bass clarinet. Next, "Bubbly" uses recorded rapid arpeggios to craft a harmonic accompaniment, and "Spacious" slows sounds down to an extreme level and plays with the resulting textures. "Snappy" stacks and staggers three short motives into fun chords and rhythms. Finally, "Impromptu over edulerP" is a dialogue with the reversed "Prelude" audio with some wacky interjections. Some of the original musical material was developed with the help of Angelo Ciriello, a clarinetist and friend at Oberlin Conservatory.



Performance Notes

This piece requires Ableton with Max for Live. (I hope to improve the accessibility in the future!) Get the patch here: https://github.com/jakeberran/Memory-MIDI

How to Use

- Put the entire "Memory MIDI" folder in your Max Audio Effect folder, move SixEtudes.als where you want, and put Memory MIDI in the "Electronics" effect chain if it hasn't loaded correctly.
- Set the input on tracks 1 and 2 to the microphone recording the clarinet, and output the sound however you wish.
- Load *clarinet.js* as the data file. Set up a foot pedal and connect it to the "Next/Prev Stage" buttons. Contact me at jacob.berran@gmail.com if you have questions!

Notation

- Press the foot pedal on large square notes (usually quarter notes) with stage numbers inside.
- Dotted vertical lines mean "at the same time," whereas diagonal ones mean "one immediately after the other."
- Tied grace notes are often used to ensure that the sound is there before pressing the pedal.
- The main Electronics staff shows the raw MIDI notes fed into Memory MIDI, and ossia staves are approximations of the resultant sound.

Duration: 11 minutes

- Six Etudes -

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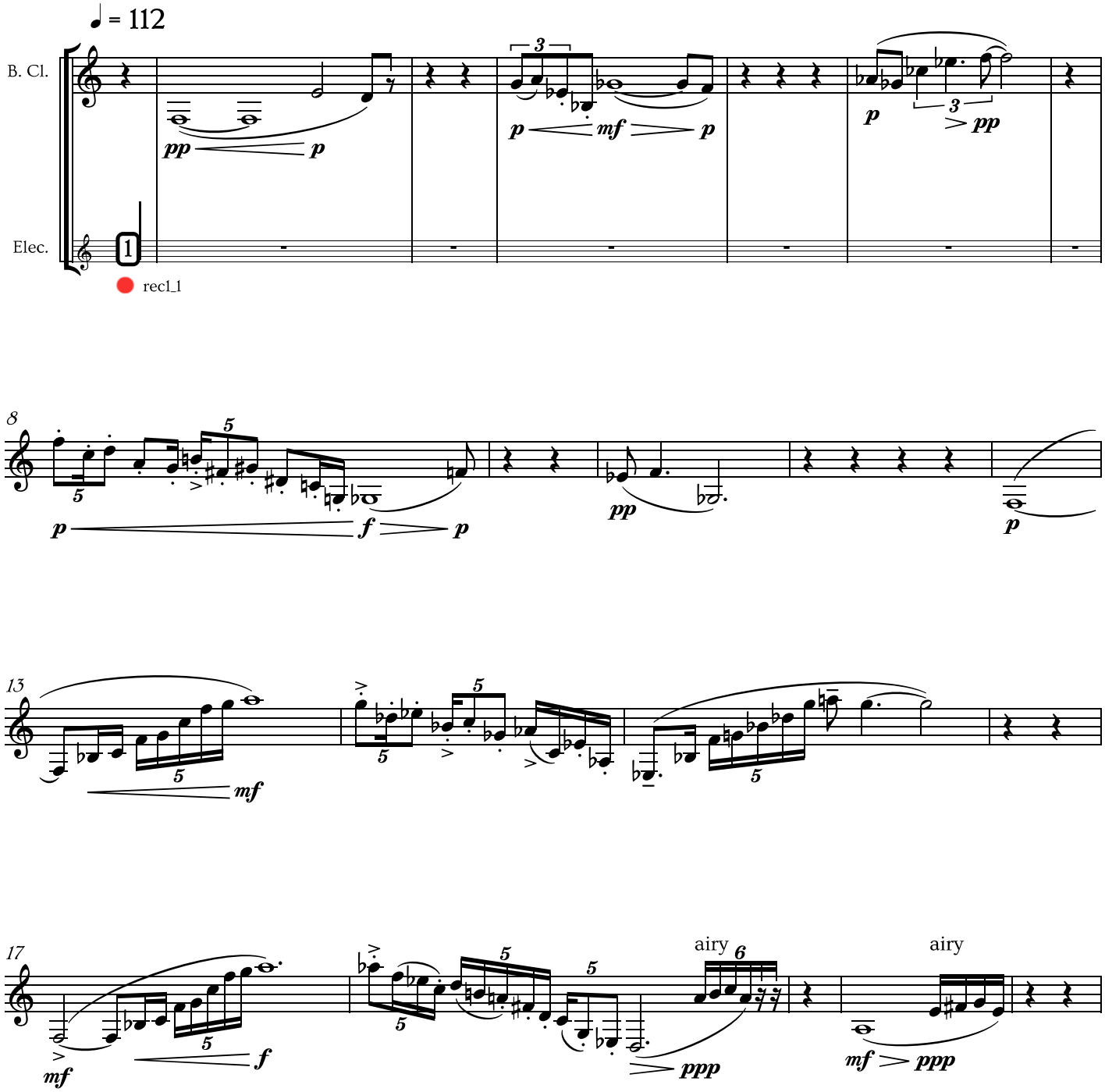
1. Prelude



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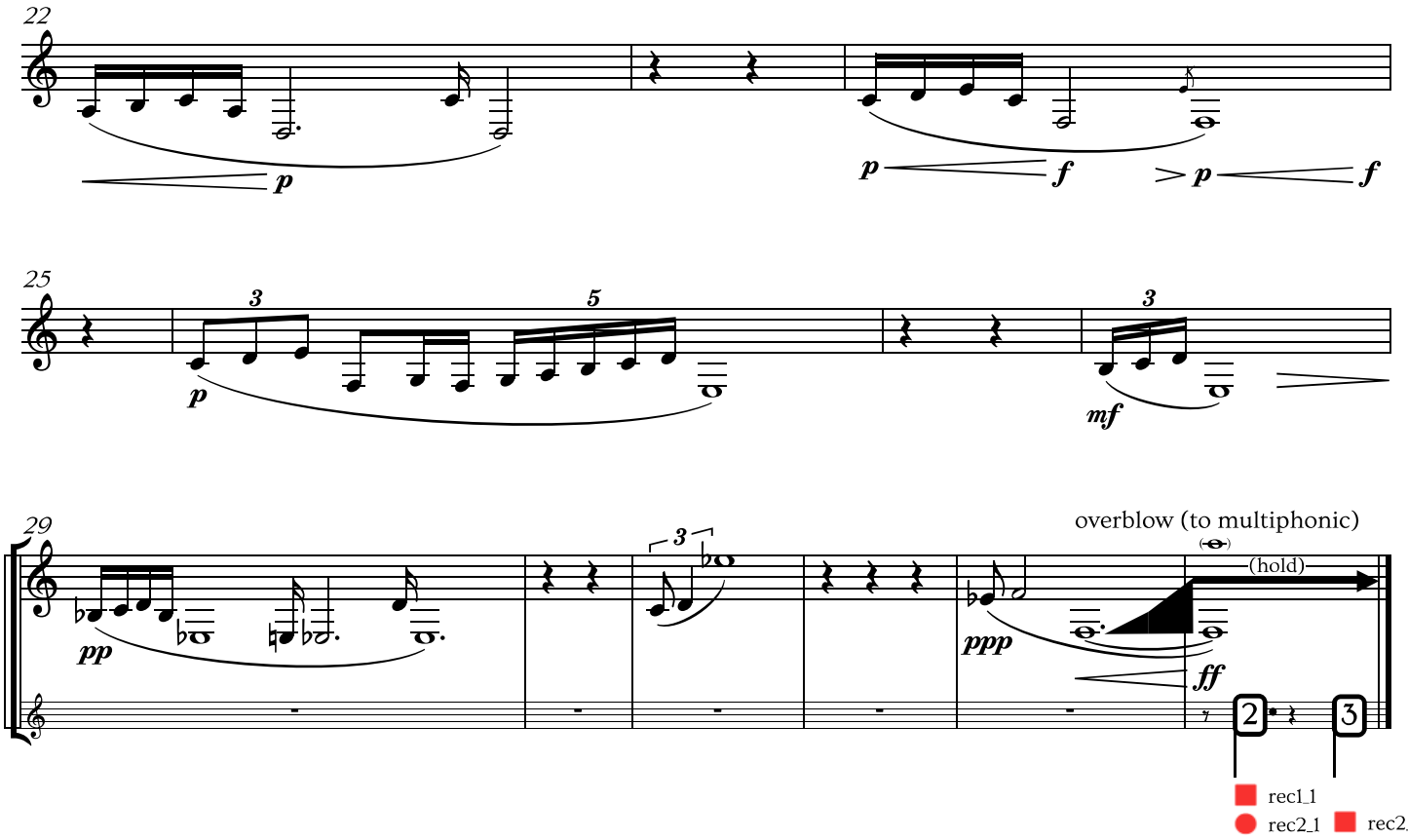
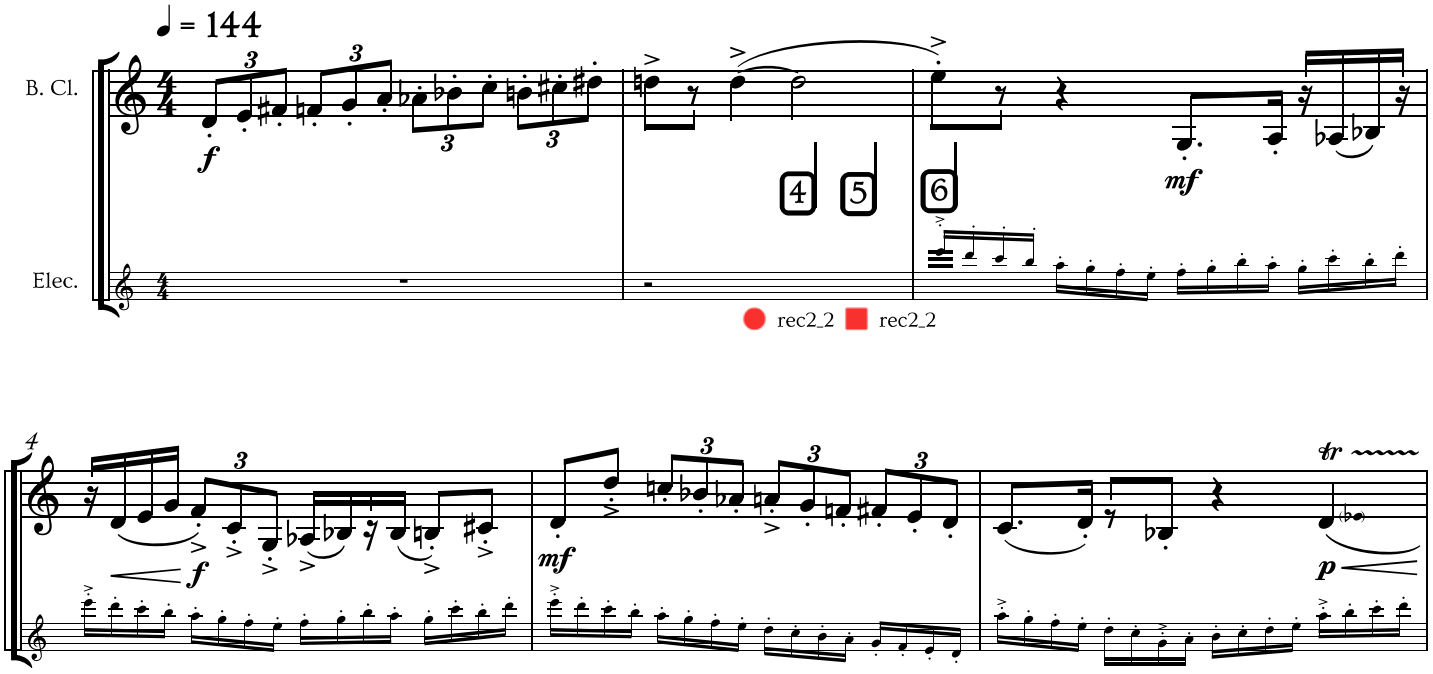
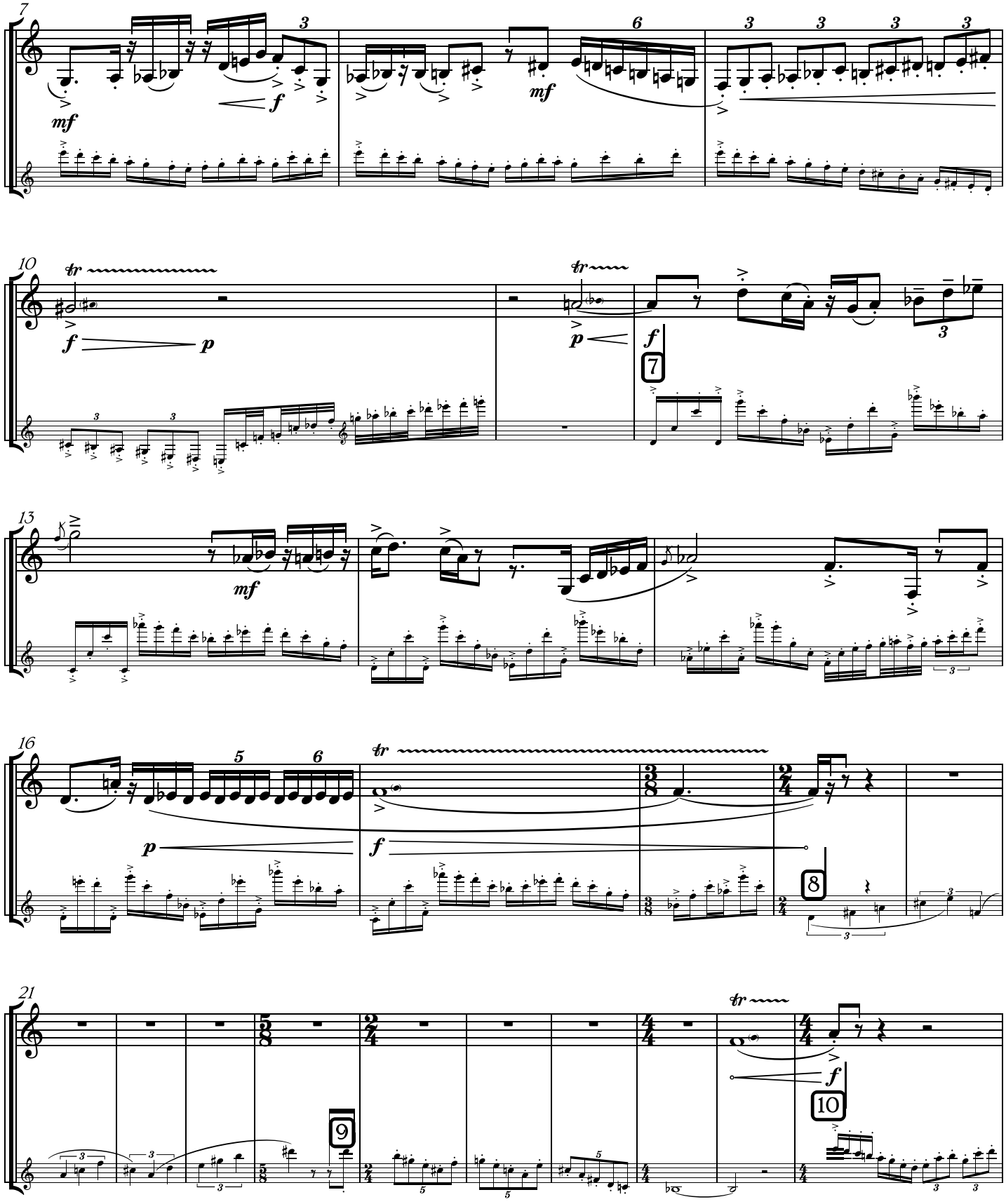
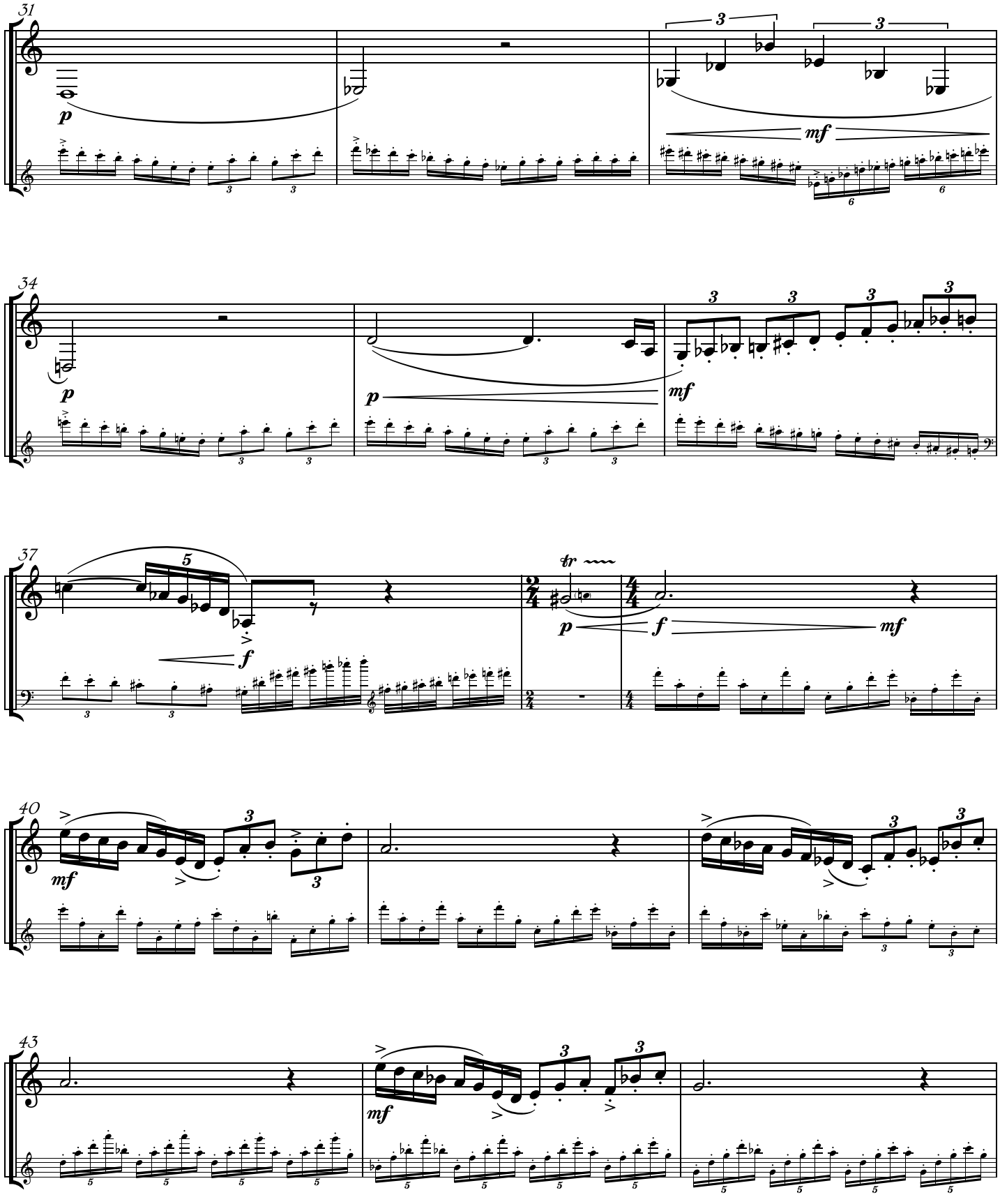
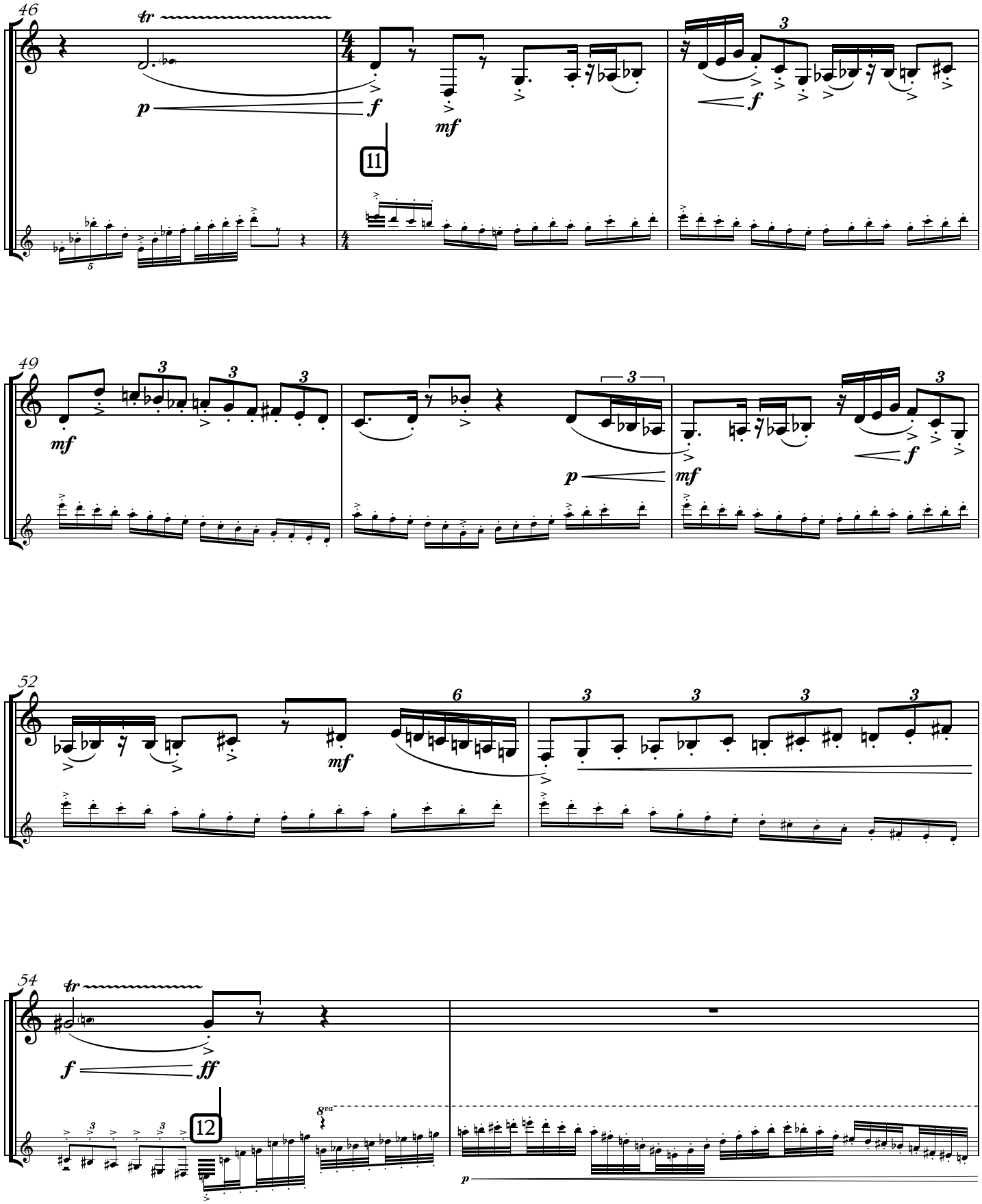

22
p
p
f
p
f
25
3
5
p
3
mf
29
pp
3
ppp
overblow (to multiphonic)
(hold)
ff
2
3
rec1_1
rec2_1
rec2_1

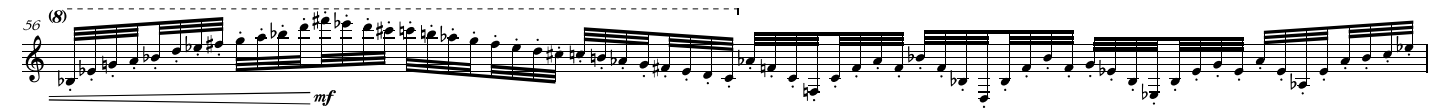
2. Frenzy

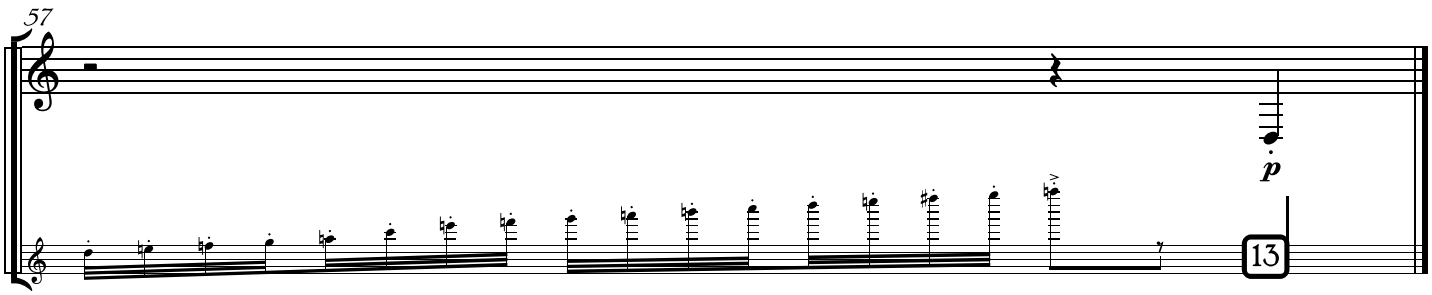

♩ = 144
B. Cl.
Elec.
f
3
3
3
3
4
5
6
mf
rec2_2
rec2_2
4
f
3
mf
3
3
3
tr
p


7
mf
f
mf
10
tr
f
p
tr
p
f
7
13
mf
16
5
6
tr
p
f
8
21
9
tr
f
10

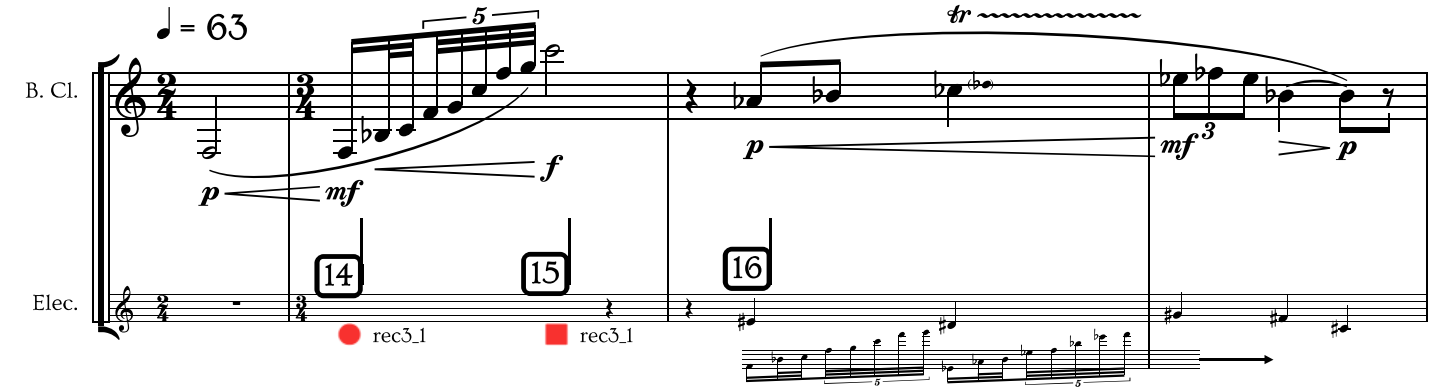

31
p
mf
34
p
p
mf
37
f
tr
p
f
mf
40
mf
43
mf

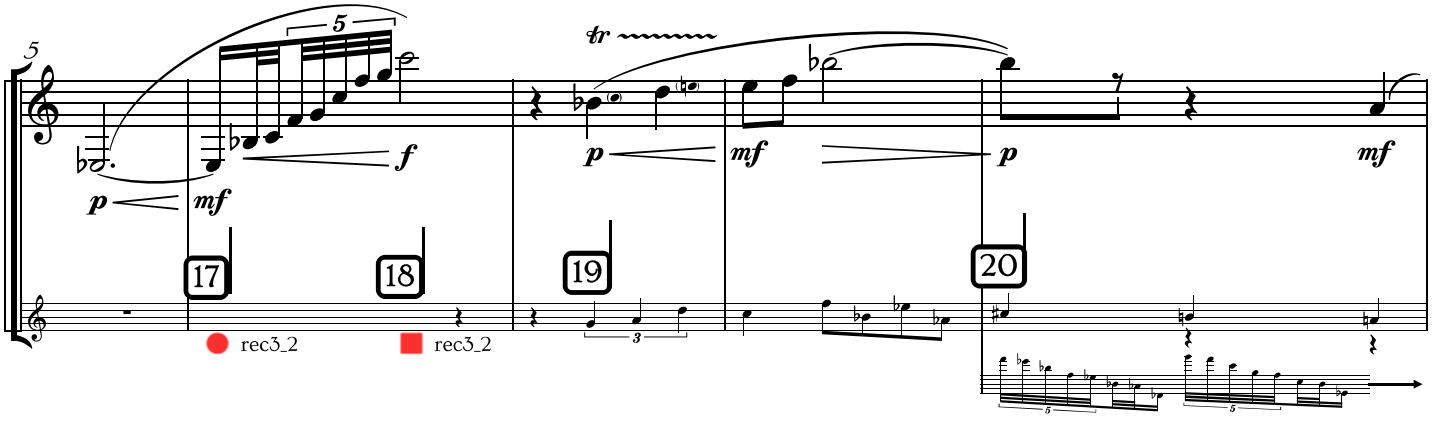

46
tr
p
f
mf
11
f
49
mf
3
p
mf
f
52
mf
6
3
54
tr
f
ff
12
8va
p

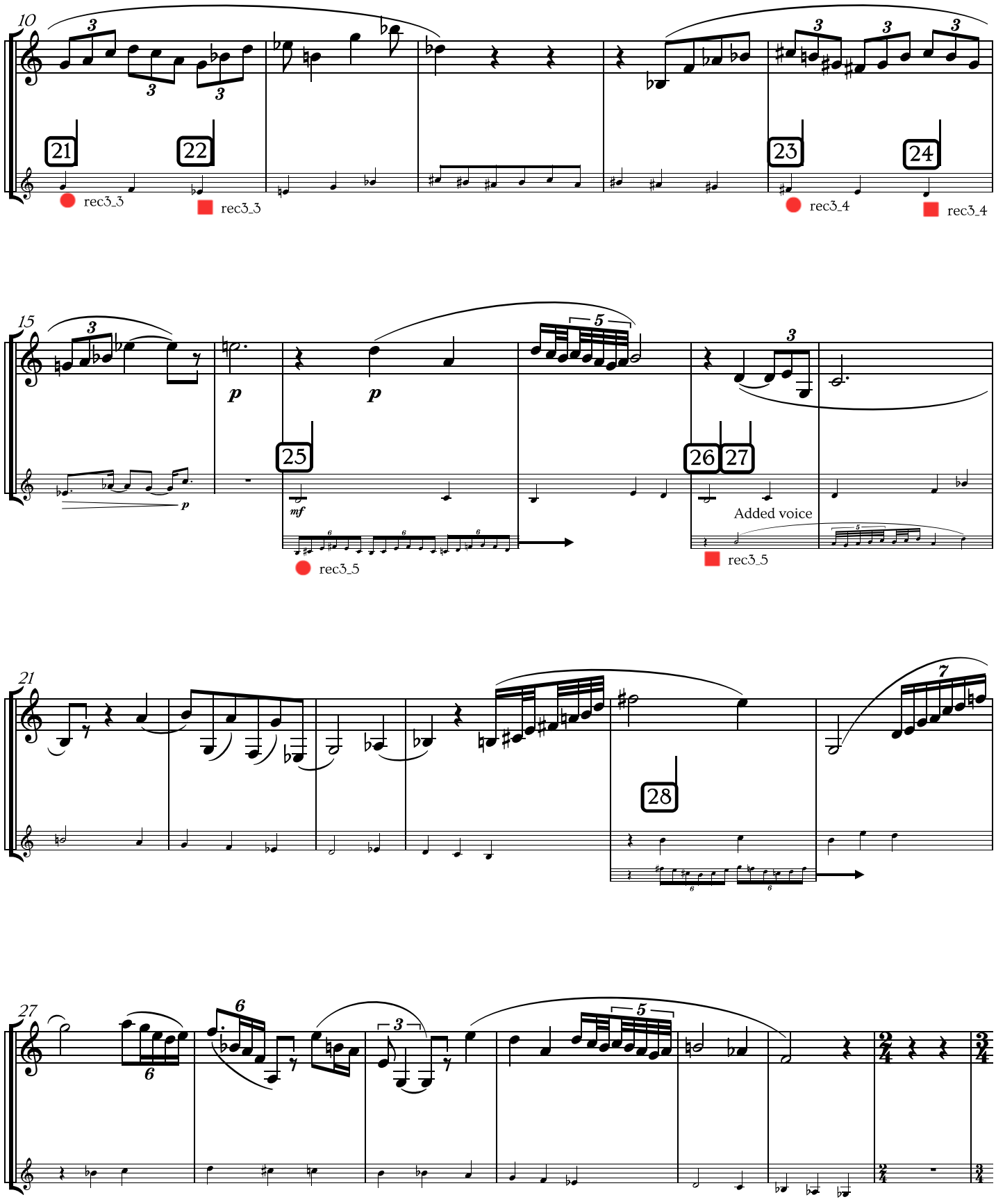

56
(8)
mf

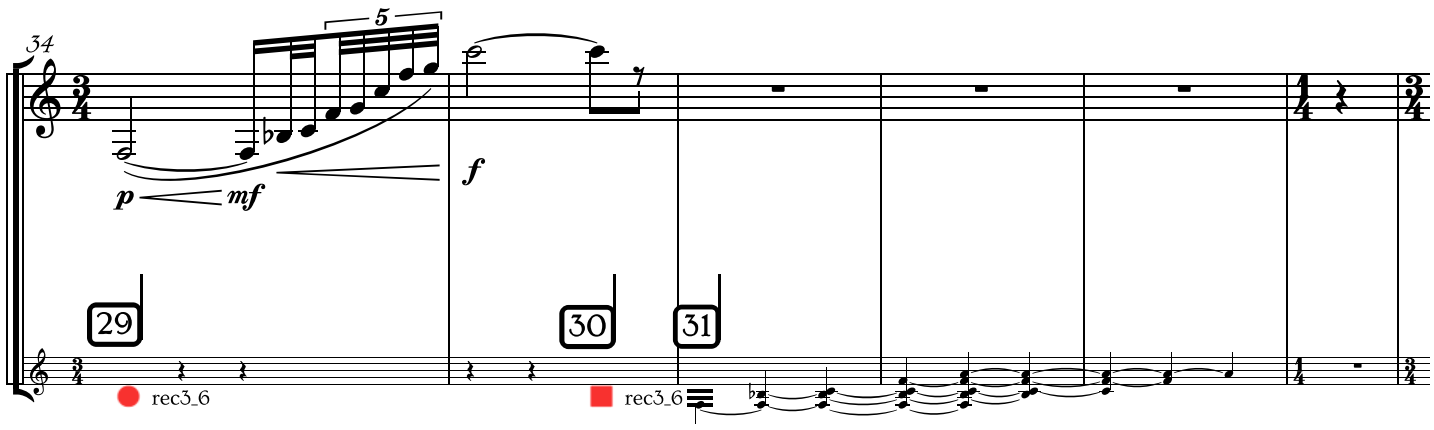

57
p
13

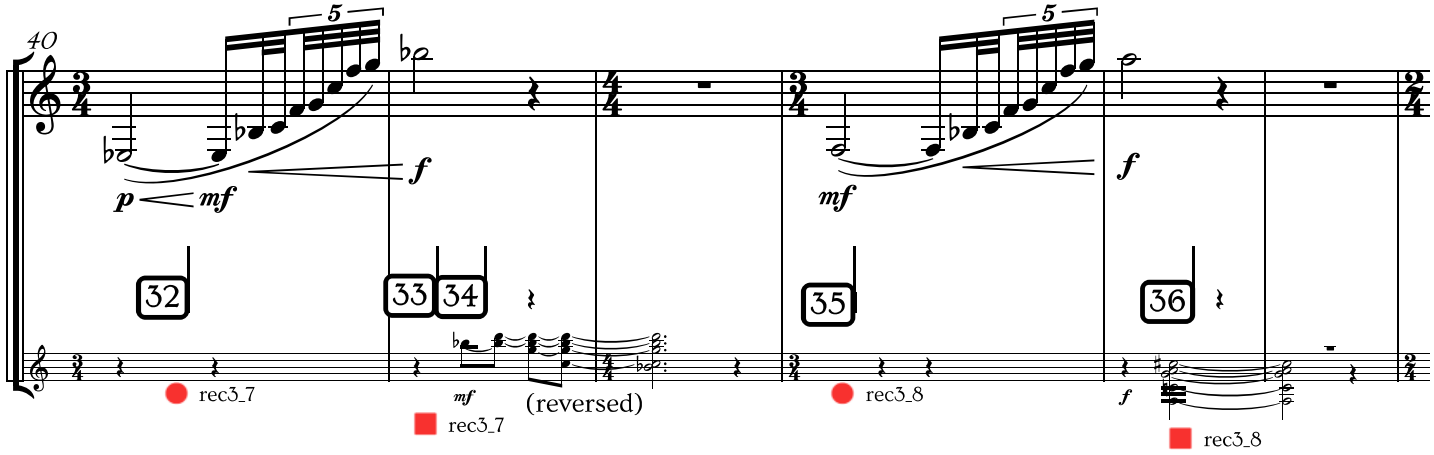
3. Bubbly

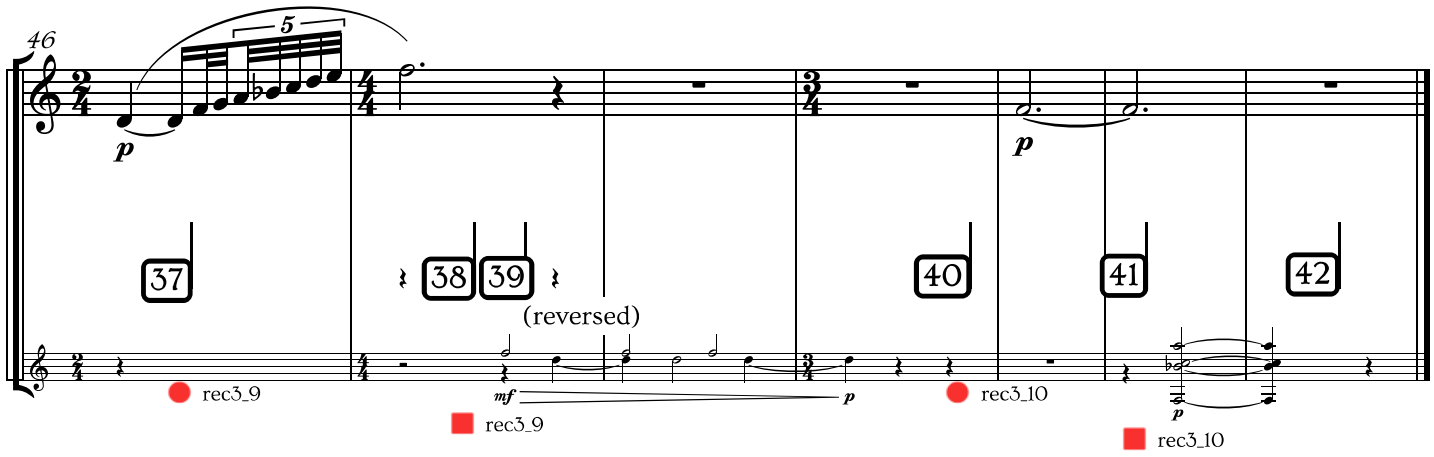

♩ = 63
B. Cl.
Elec.
5
p
mf
f
14
15
16
tr
p
mf
3
p
rec3_1
rec3_1


5
5
p
mf
f
17
18
rec3_2
rec3_2
tr
p
mf
19
3
p
20
mf

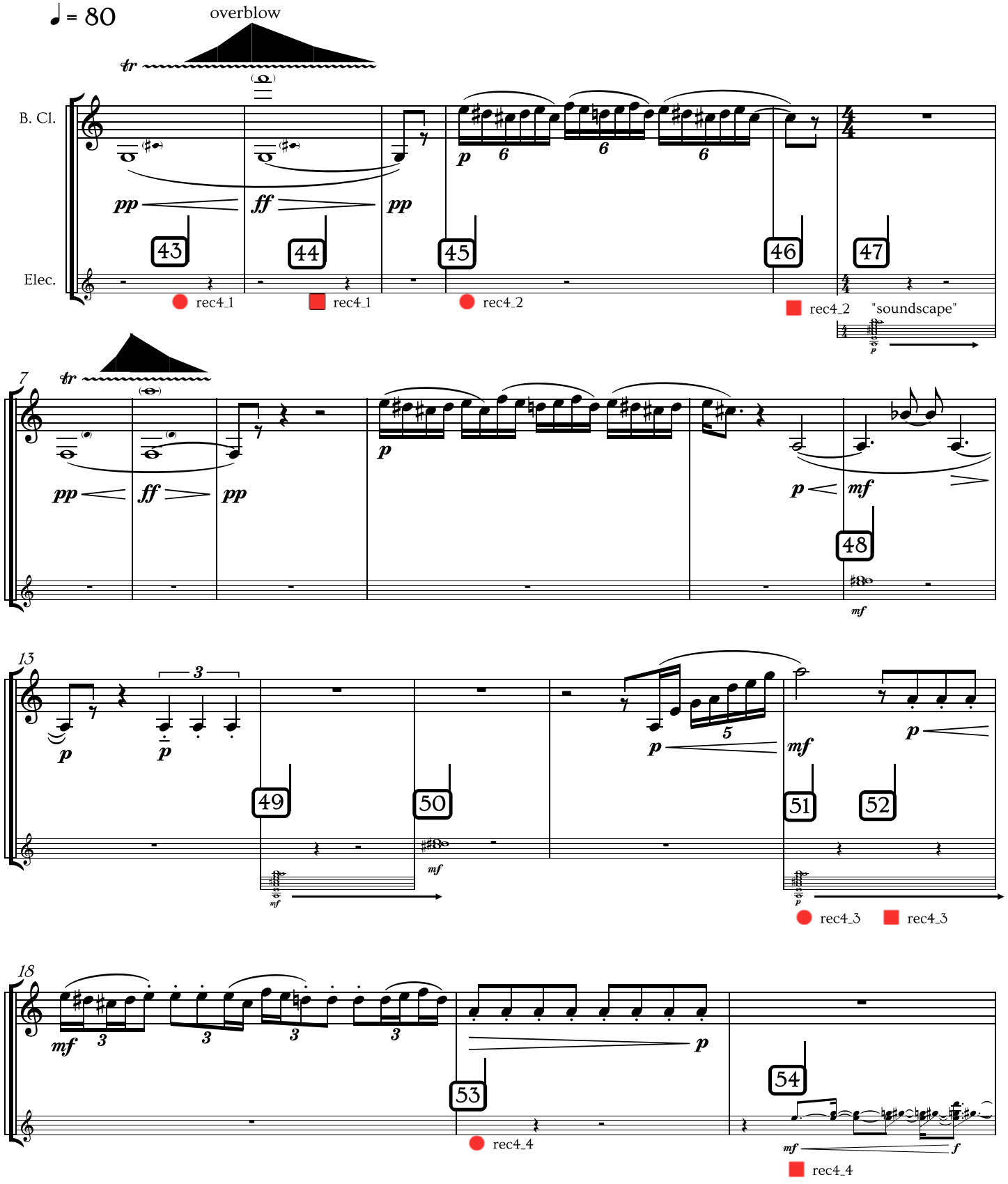

10
21
22
23
24
rec3_3
rec3_3
rec3_4
rec3_4
15
25
26
27
p
p
mf
Added voice
rec3_5
rec3_5
21
28
27
6
5
7

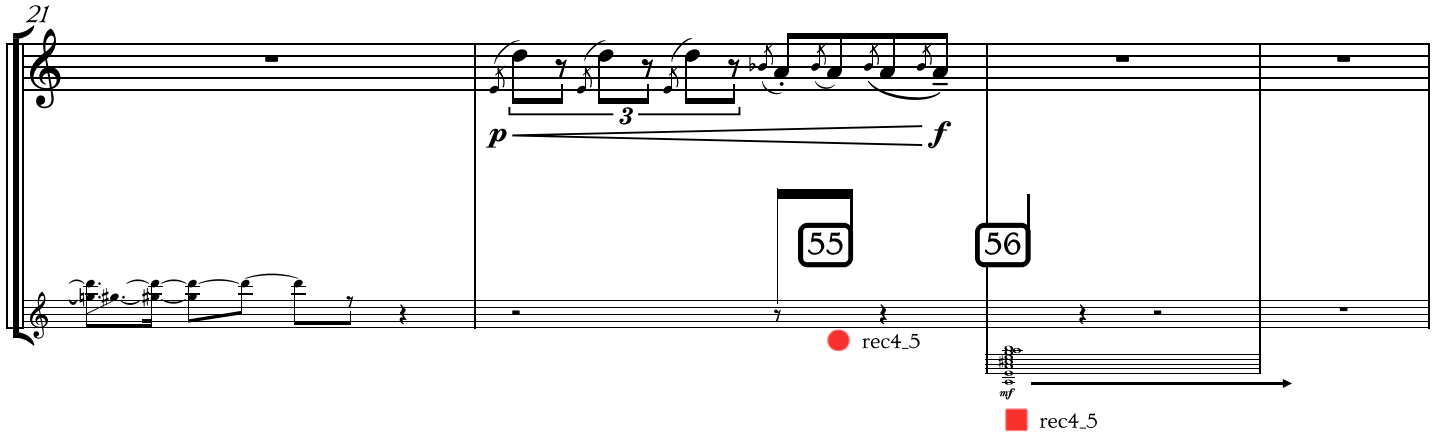

34
5
p
mf
f
29
30
31
rec3_6
rec3_6

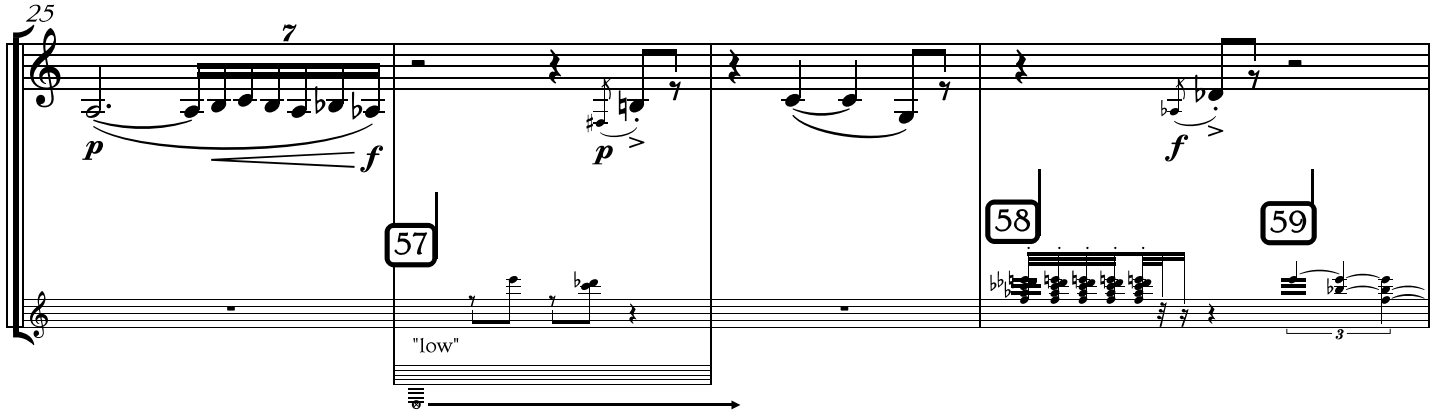

40
5
p
mf
f
32
33
34
35
36
rec3_7
mf
(reversed)
rec3_7
rec3_8
f
rec3_8

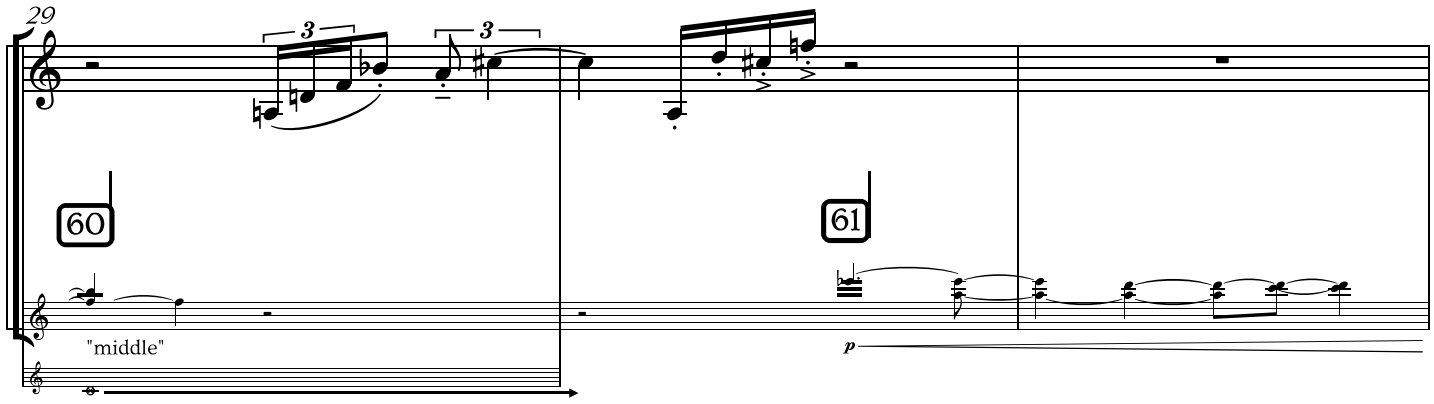

46
5
p
37
38
39
40
41
42
(reversed)
rec3_9
mf
p
rec3_9
rec3_10
p
rec3_10

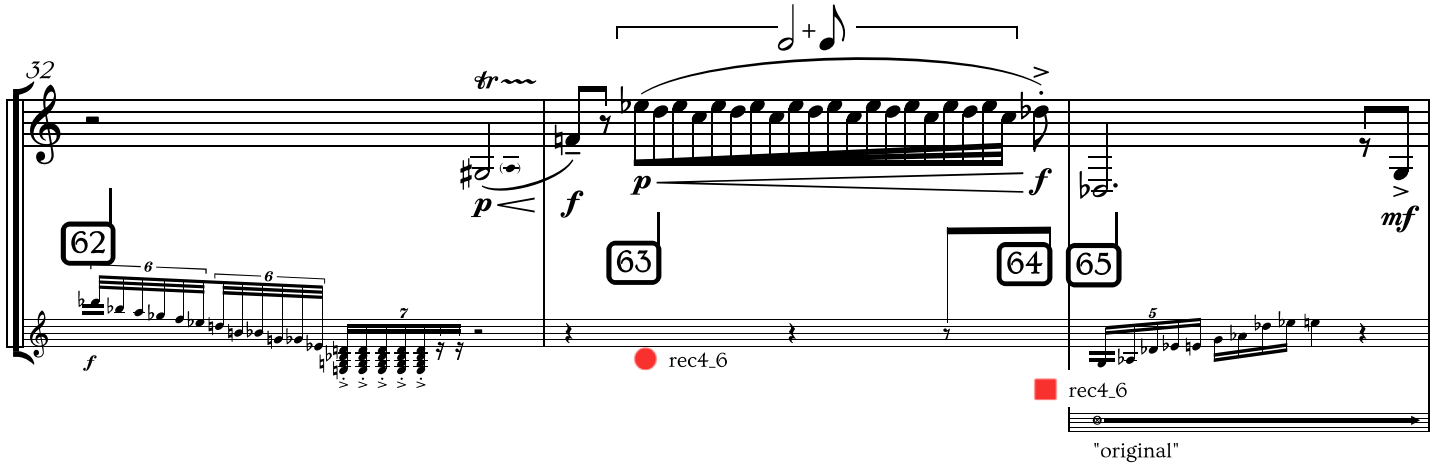
4. Spacious

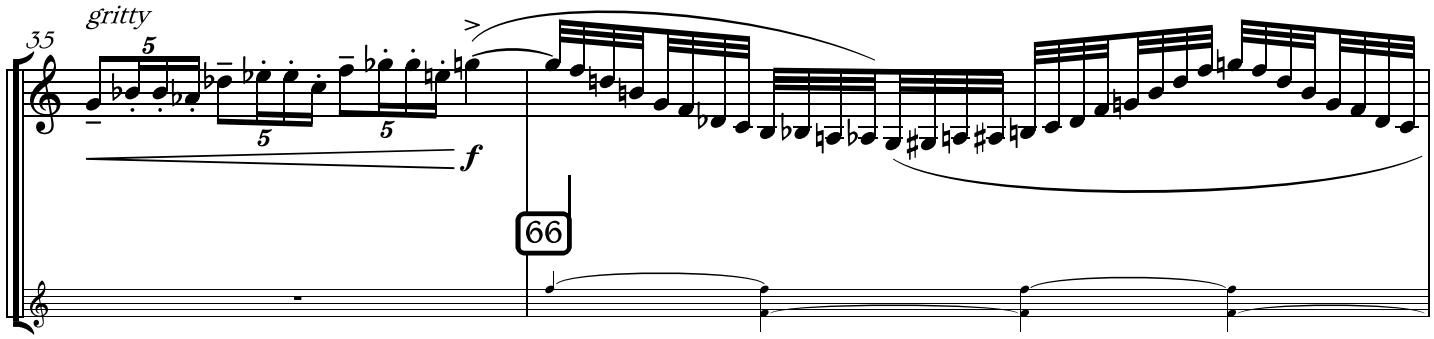

♩ = 80
overblow
B. Cl.
Elec.
pp
ff
pp
p
43
44
45
46
47
rec4_1
rec4_1
rec4_2
rec4_2
"soundscape"
7
48
mf
13
49
50
51
52
rec4_3
rec4_3
18
53
54
rec4_4
rec4_4

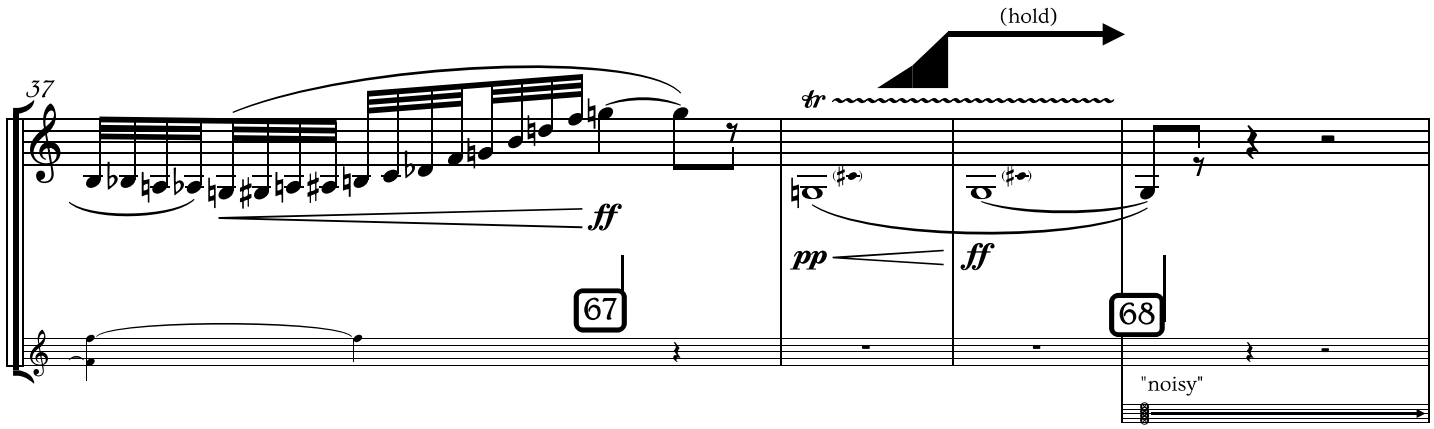

21
3
p
f
55
56
rec4_5
mf
rec4_5


25
7
p
f
p
f
57
58
59
"low"
3


29
3
3
60
61
"middle"
p

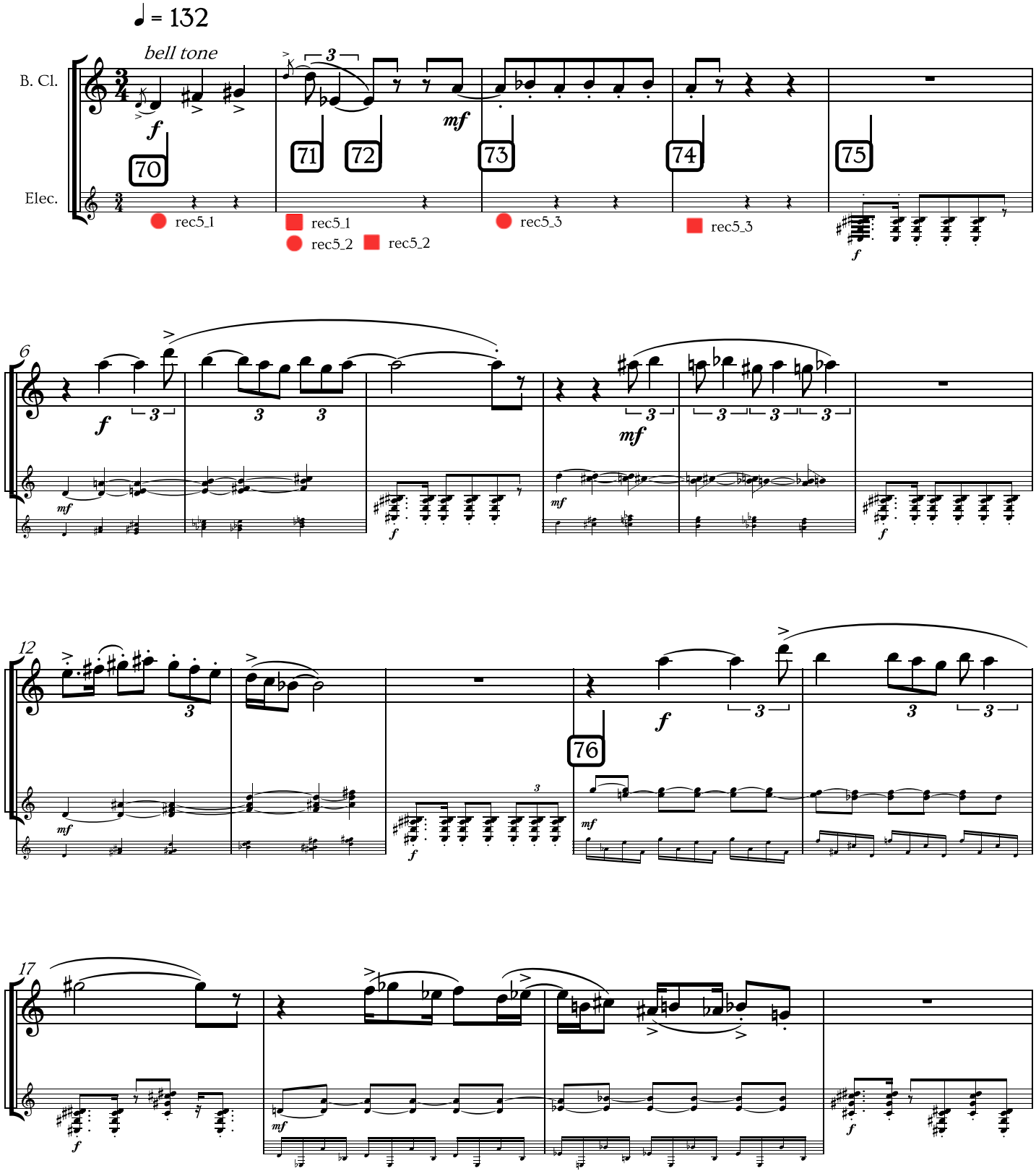

32
62
63
64
65
rec4_6
rec4_6
"original"

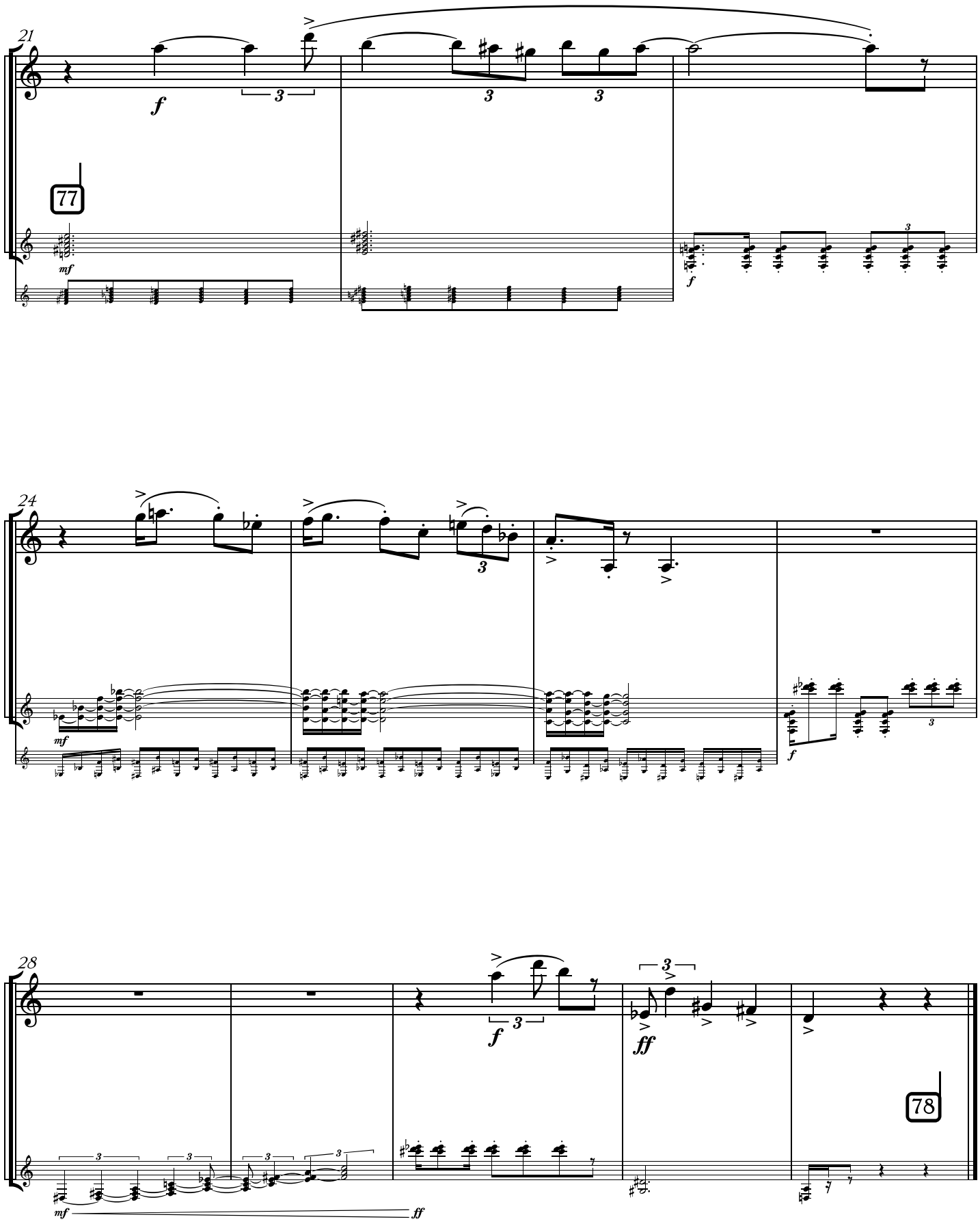

gritty
35
66


(hold)
37
67
68
"noisy"

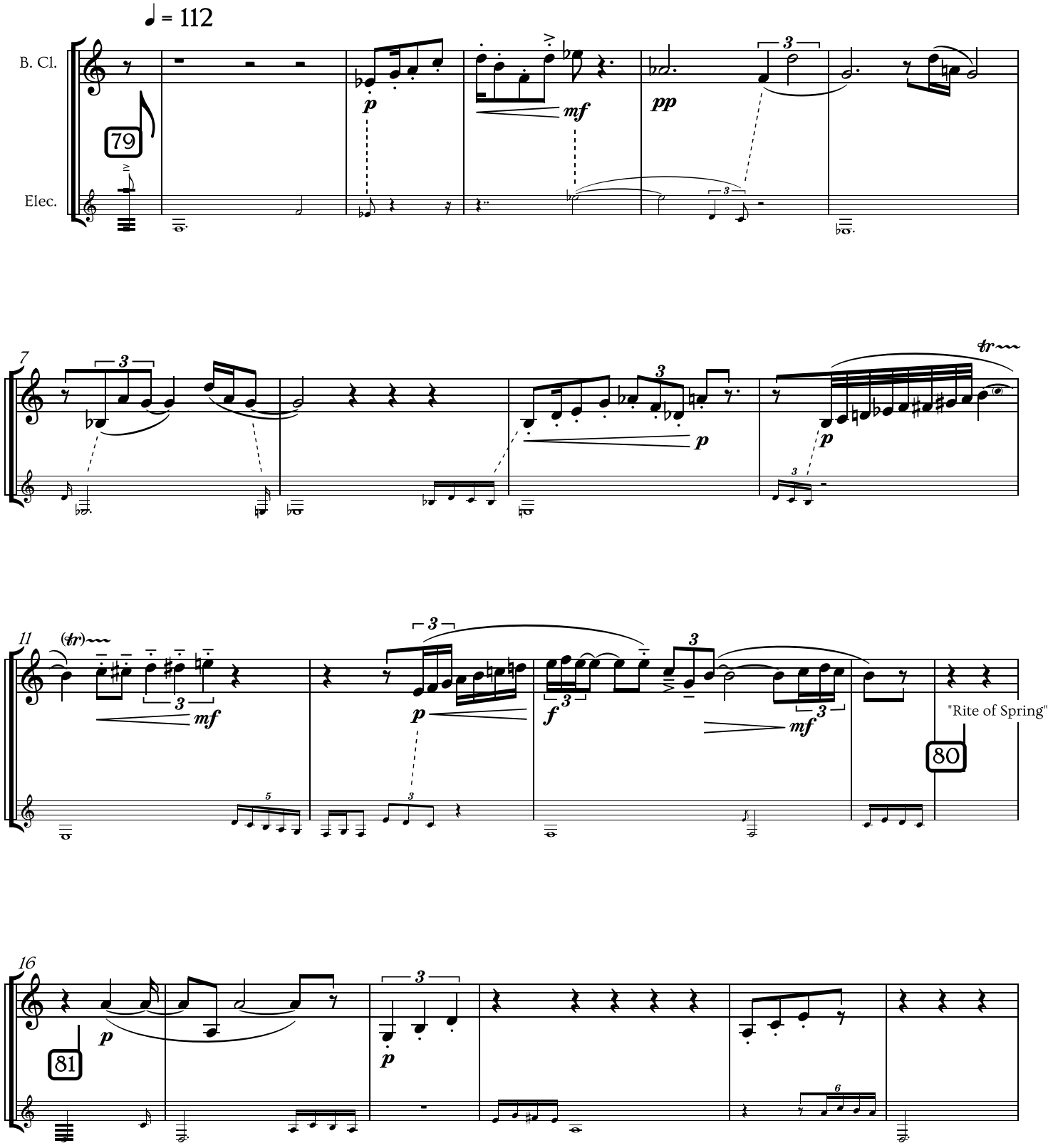
41
69
fade out

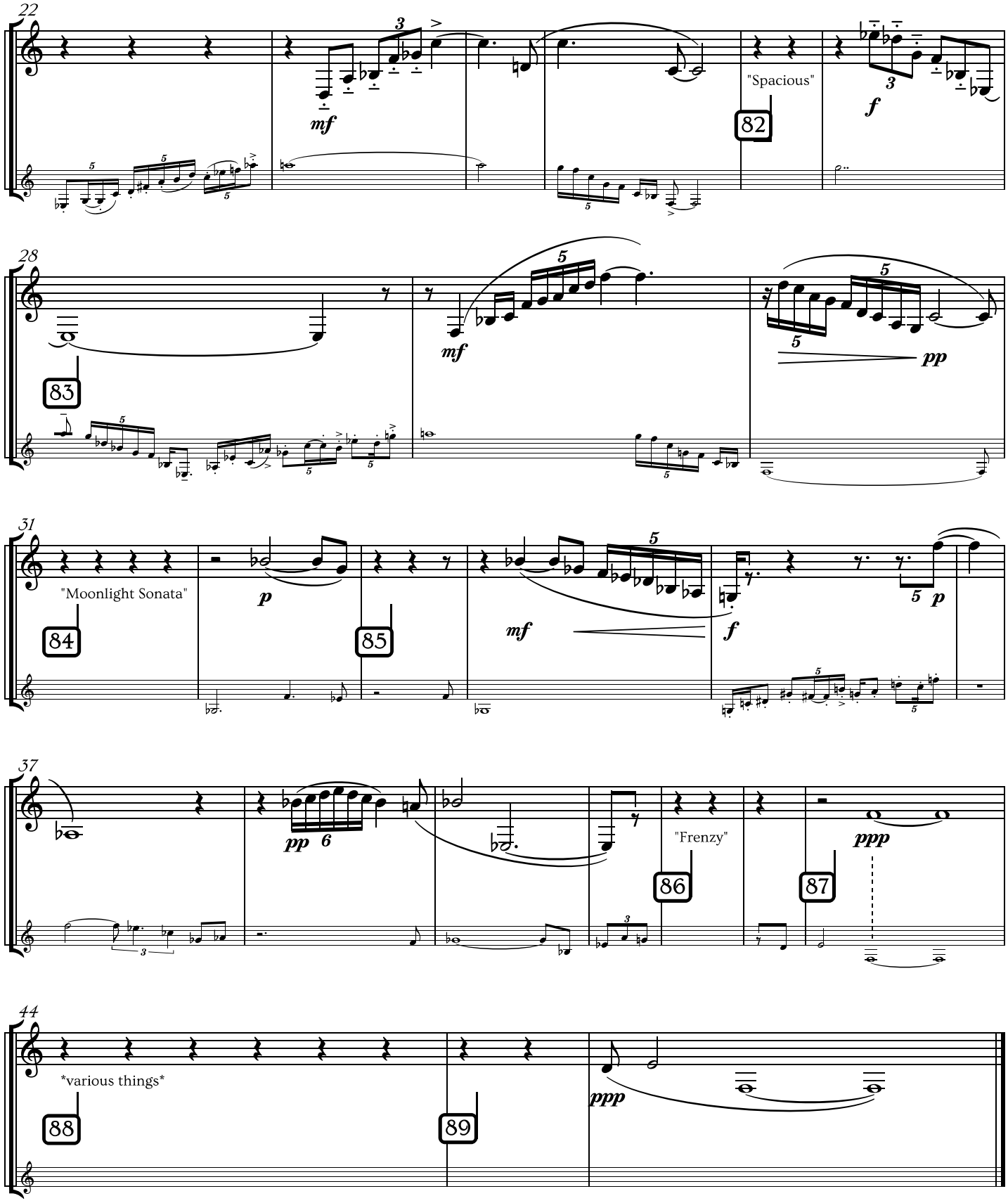
5. Snappy


♩ = 132
bell tone
B. Cl.
Elec.
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
rec5_1
rec5_1
rec5_2
rec5_2
rec5_3
rec5_3
f
mf
6
12
17


21
77
24
28
78

6. Impromptu over edulerP




22
mf
"Spacious"
82
f
28
83
mf
pp
31
"Moonlight Sonata"
84
p
85
mf
f
p
37
pp
"Frenzy"
86
87
ppp
44
various things
88
89
ppp