Reflections on a Glacier

solo guitar

Tom Baker
February 2023

Commissioned by and dedicated to Mark Hilliard Wilson.

Frog Peak Music

Composed in 2023 by Tom Baker
tombakermusic.com

Reflections on a Glacier is a work that draws its material from a larger song-cycle entitled ***Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Glacier,*** also composed in 2023 and also commissioned by Mark Wislon. Both pieces are based on a poem by Craig Santos Perez (which is based on a poem by Wallace Stevens - *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a* Blackbird). Copyright © 2016 by Craig Santos Perez. From Habitat Threshold, Omnidawn Publishing (2020). Originally appeared in Newsletter of the Comparative Literature Association of the Republic of China. Adapted and Reprinted with permission of the author.
craigsantosperez.com

THIRTEEN WAYS OF LOOKING AT A GLACIER

I. Among starving polar bears,
the only moving thing
was the edge of a glacier.

II. We are of one ecology
like a planet
in which there are 200,000 glaciers.

III. The glacier absorbs greenhouse gas.
We are a large part of the biosphere.

IV. Humans and animals
are kin.
Humans and animals and glaciers
are kin.

V. We do not know which to fear more,
the terror of change
or the terror of uncertainty,
the glacier calving
or just after.

VI. Icebergs fill the vast ocean
with titanic wrecks.
The mass of the glacier
disappears, to and fro.
The threat
hidden in the crevasse
an irreversible clause.

VII. O vulnerable humans,
why do you engineer sea walls?
Do you not see how the glacier
already floods the streets
of the cities around you?

VIII. I know king tides,
and lurid, unprecedented storms;
but I know, too,
that the glacier is involved
in what I know.

IX. When the glacial terminus broke,
it marked the beginning
of one of many waves.

X. At the rumble of a glacier
losing its equilibrium,
every tourist in the new Arctic
chased ice quickly.

XI. They explored the poles
for offshore drilling.
Once, we blocked them,
in that we understood
the risk of an oil spill to a glacier.

XII. The sea is rising.
The glacier must be retreating.

XIII. It was summer all winter.
It was melting
and it was going to melt.
The last glacier fits
in our warm hands.

Reflections on a Glacier

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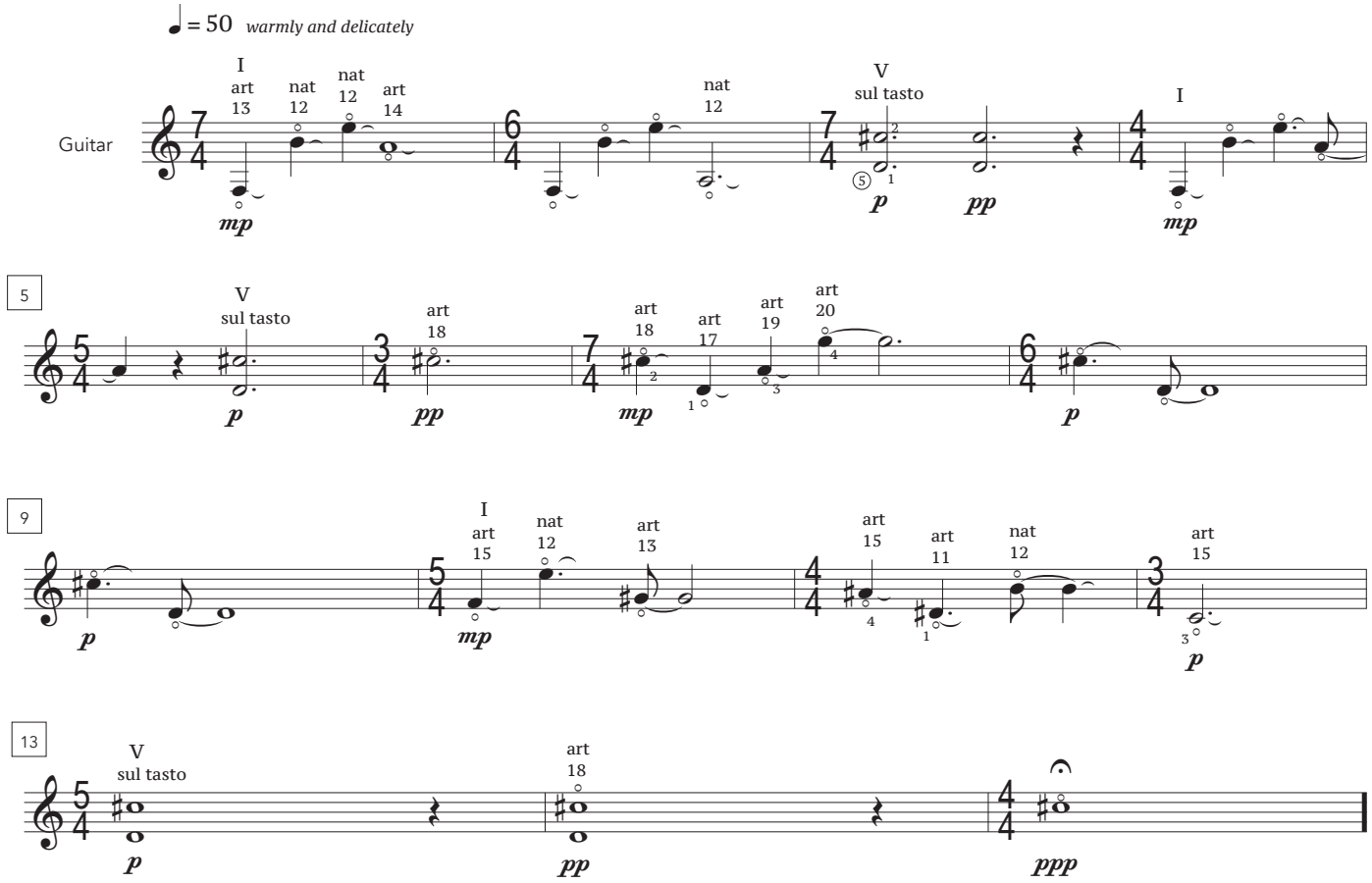
Tom Baker (2023)

Prelude



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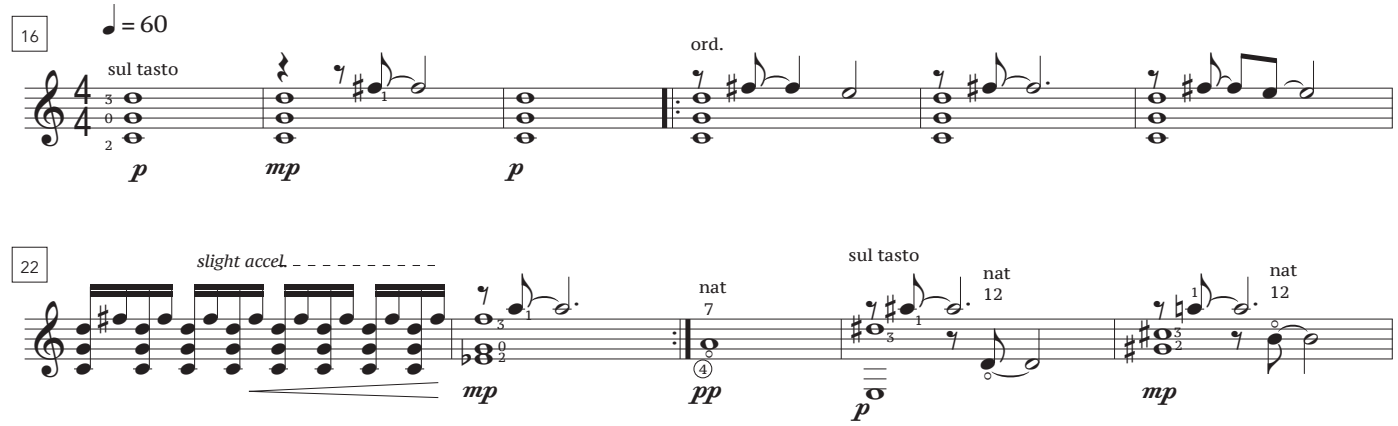

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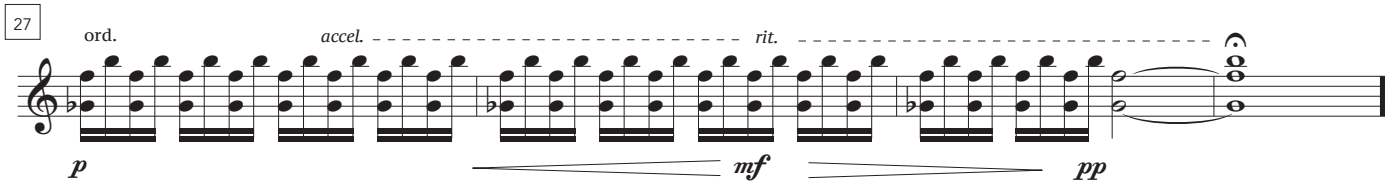

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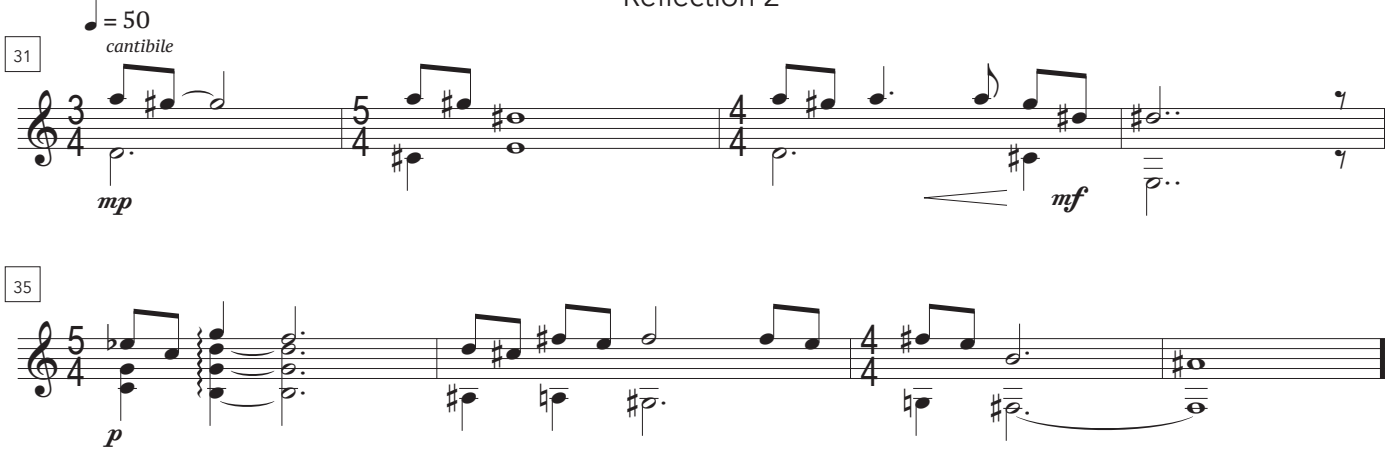

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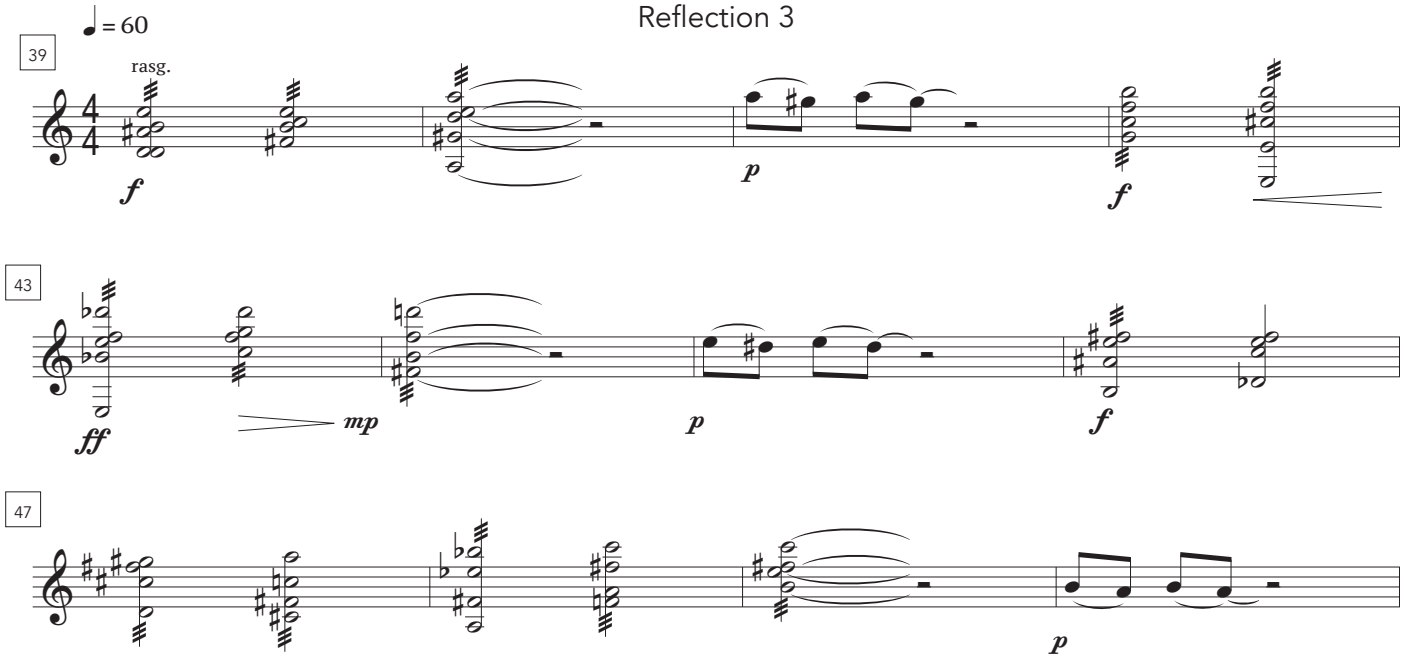

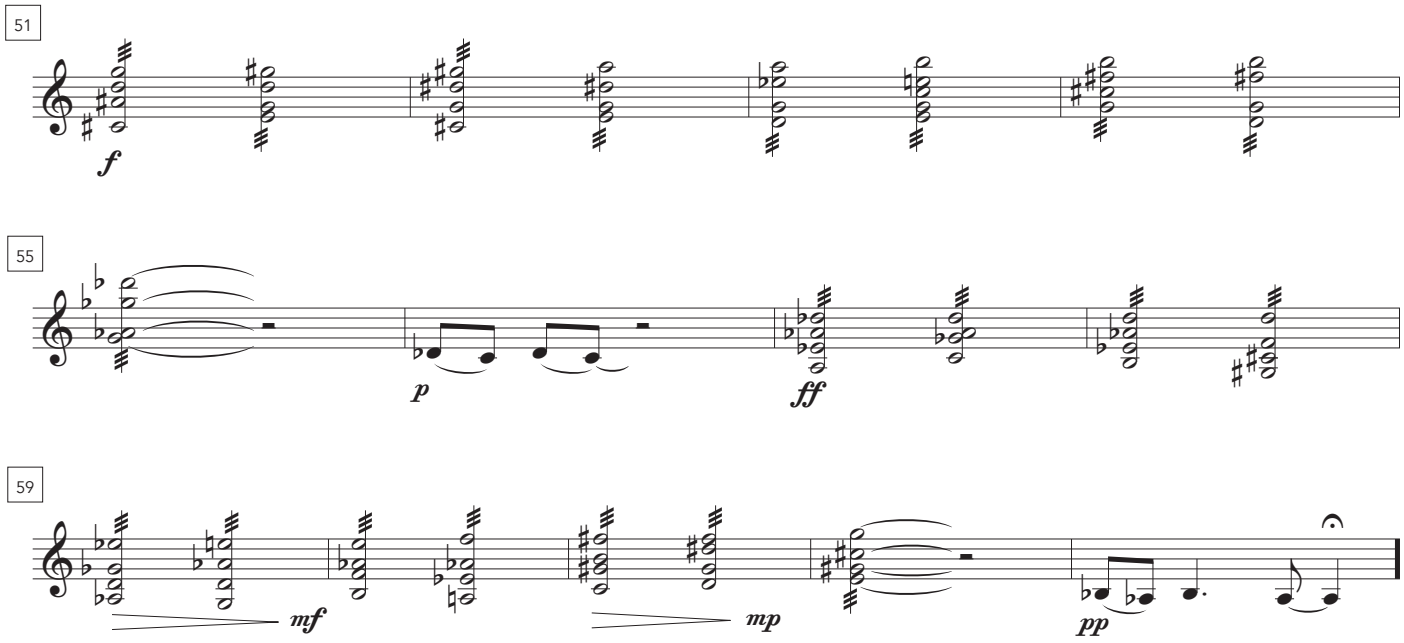

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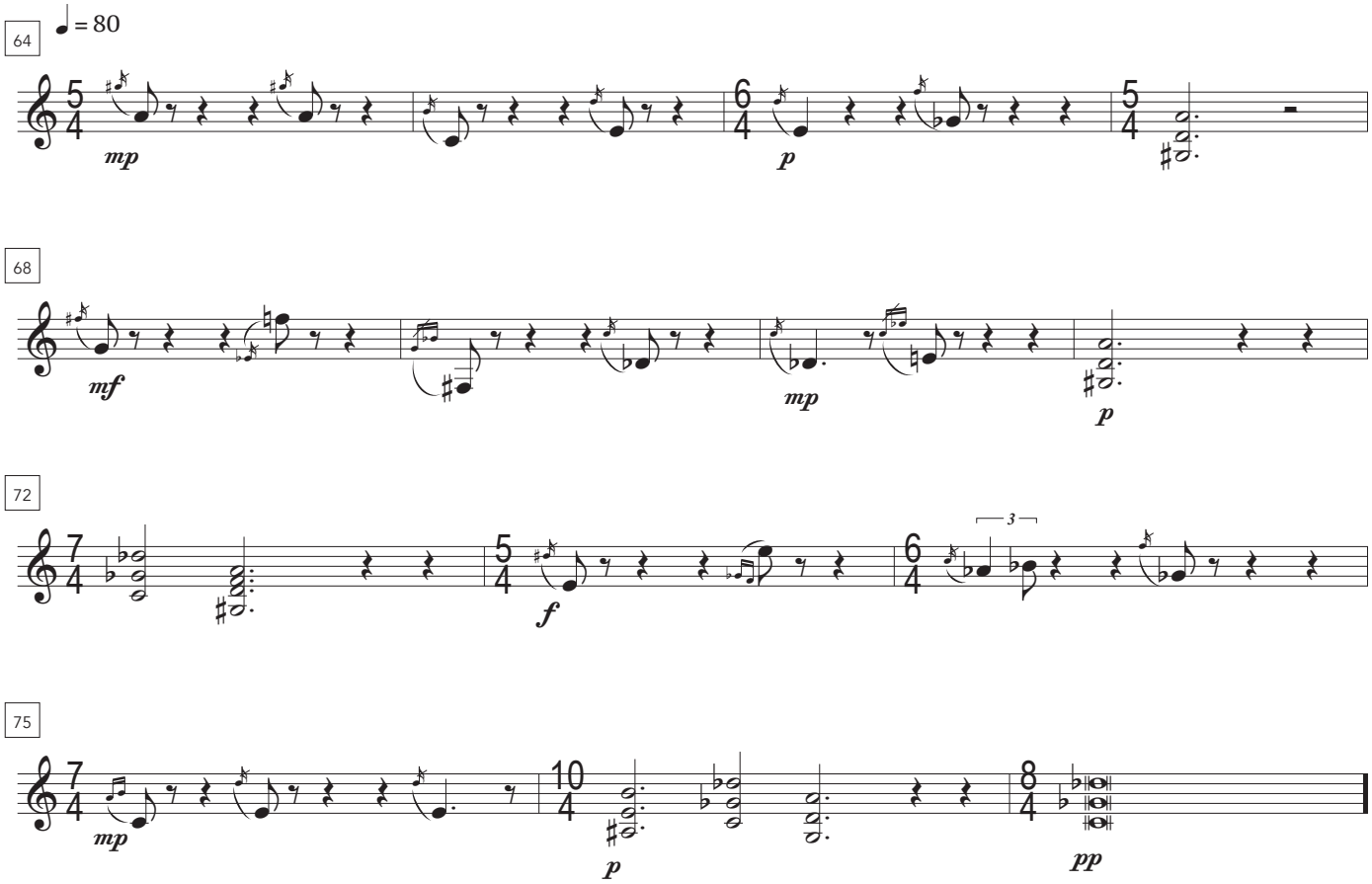

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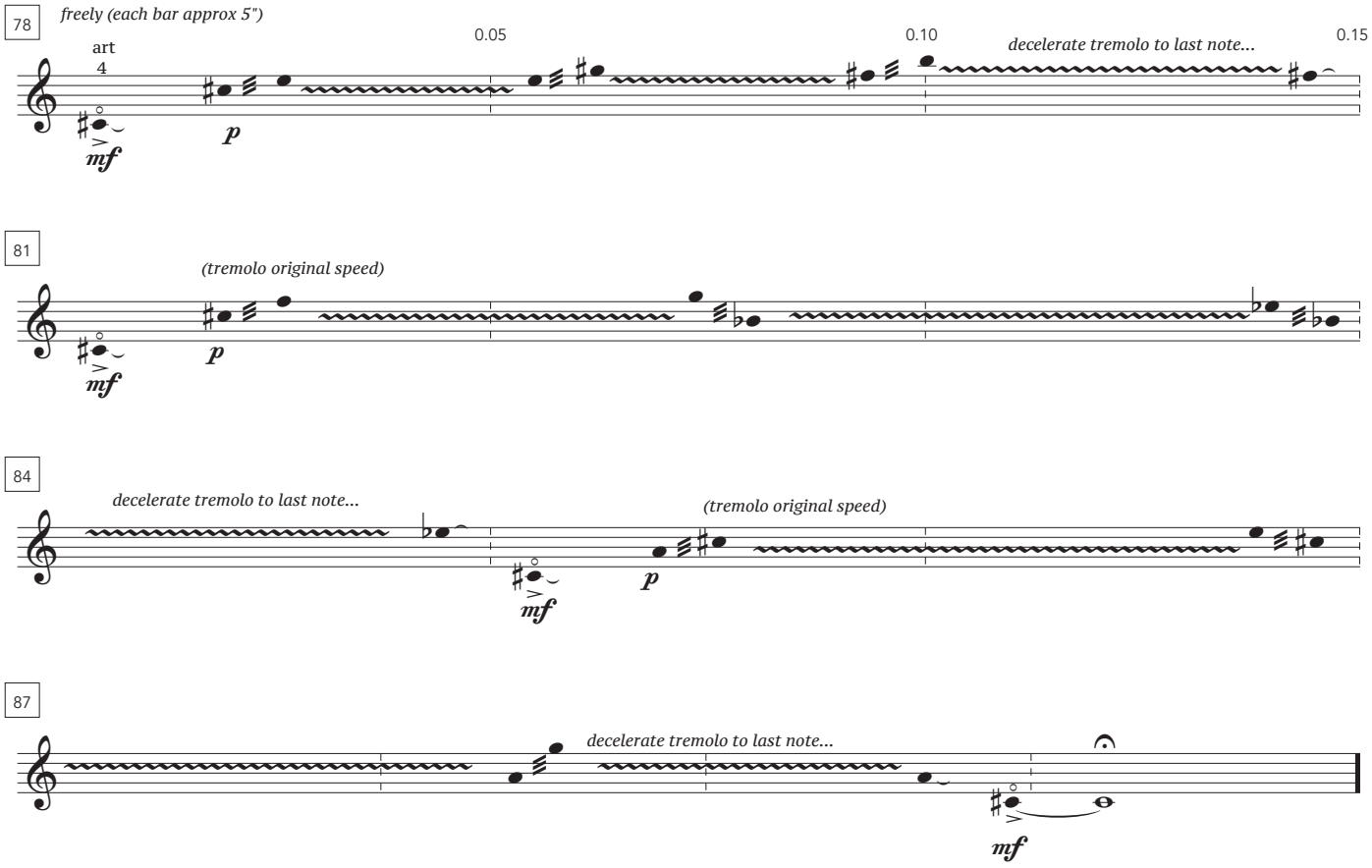

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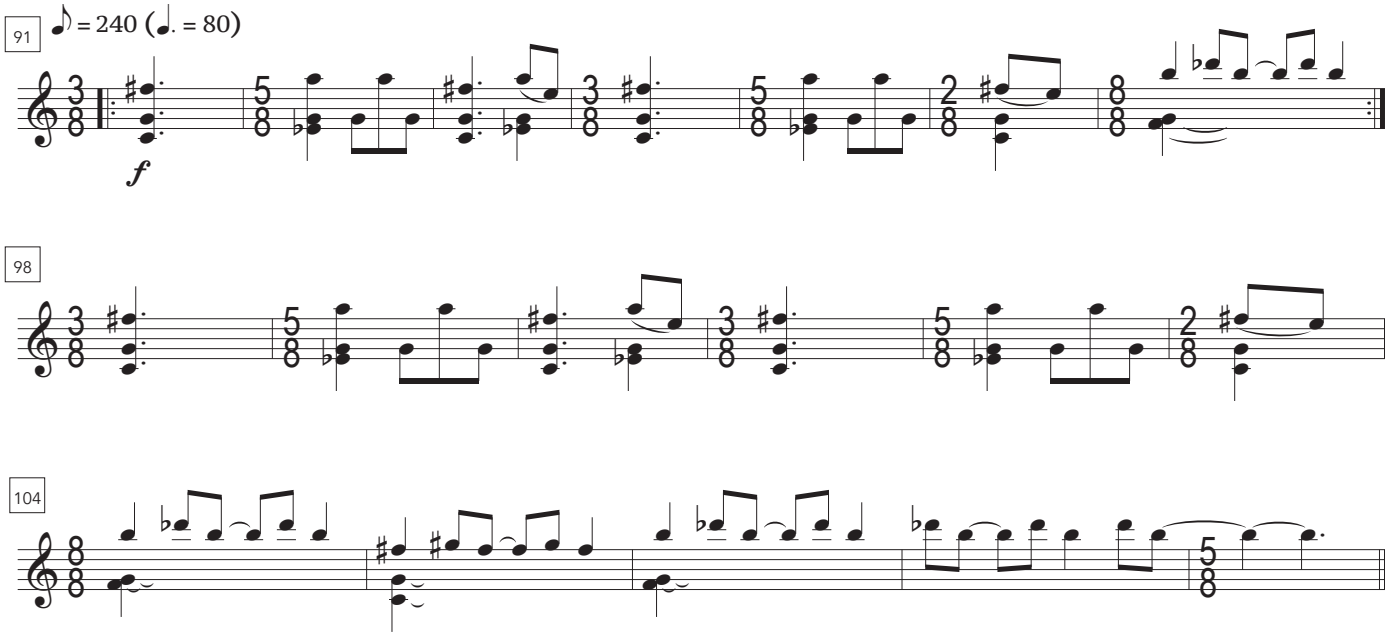

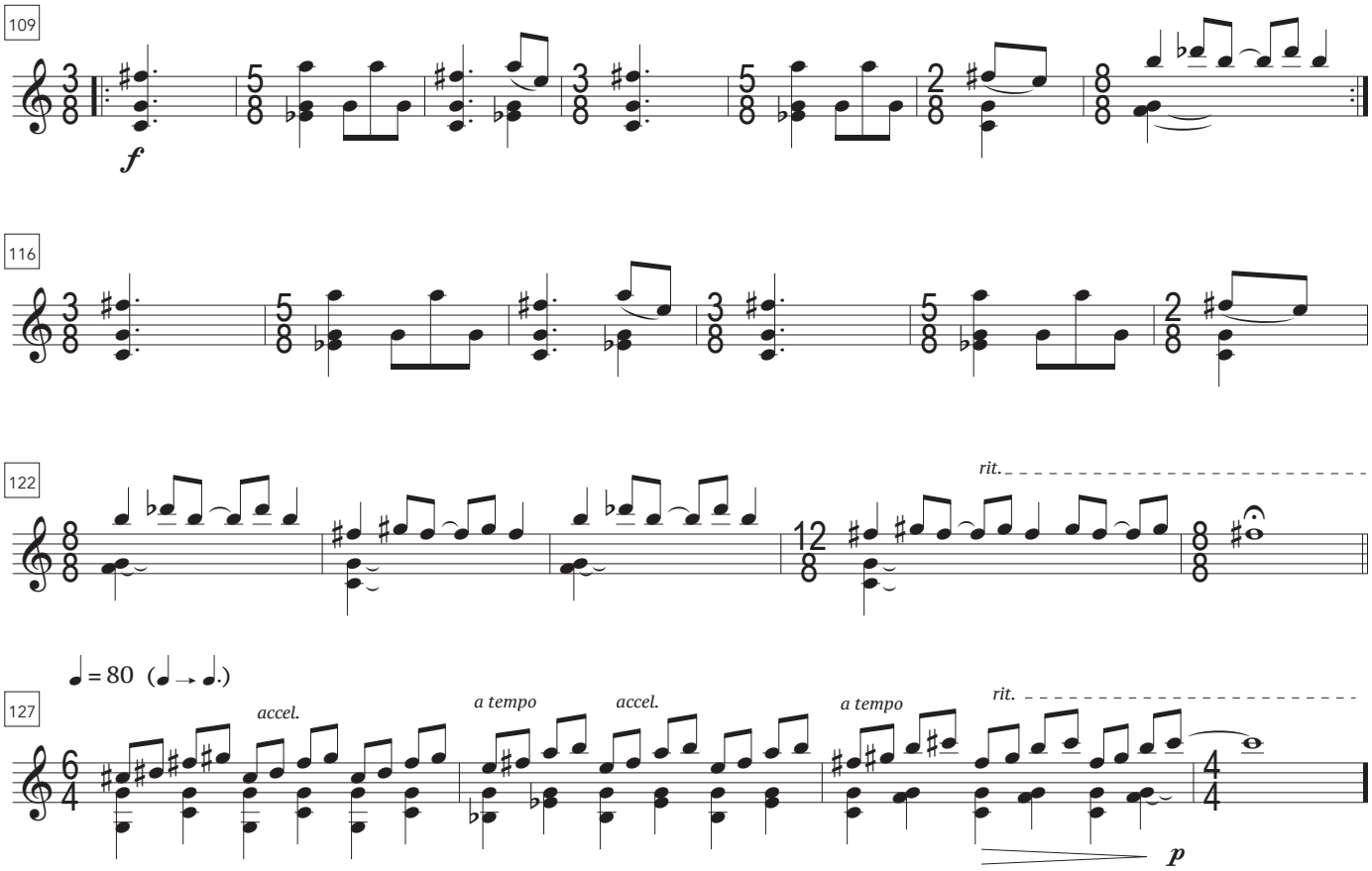

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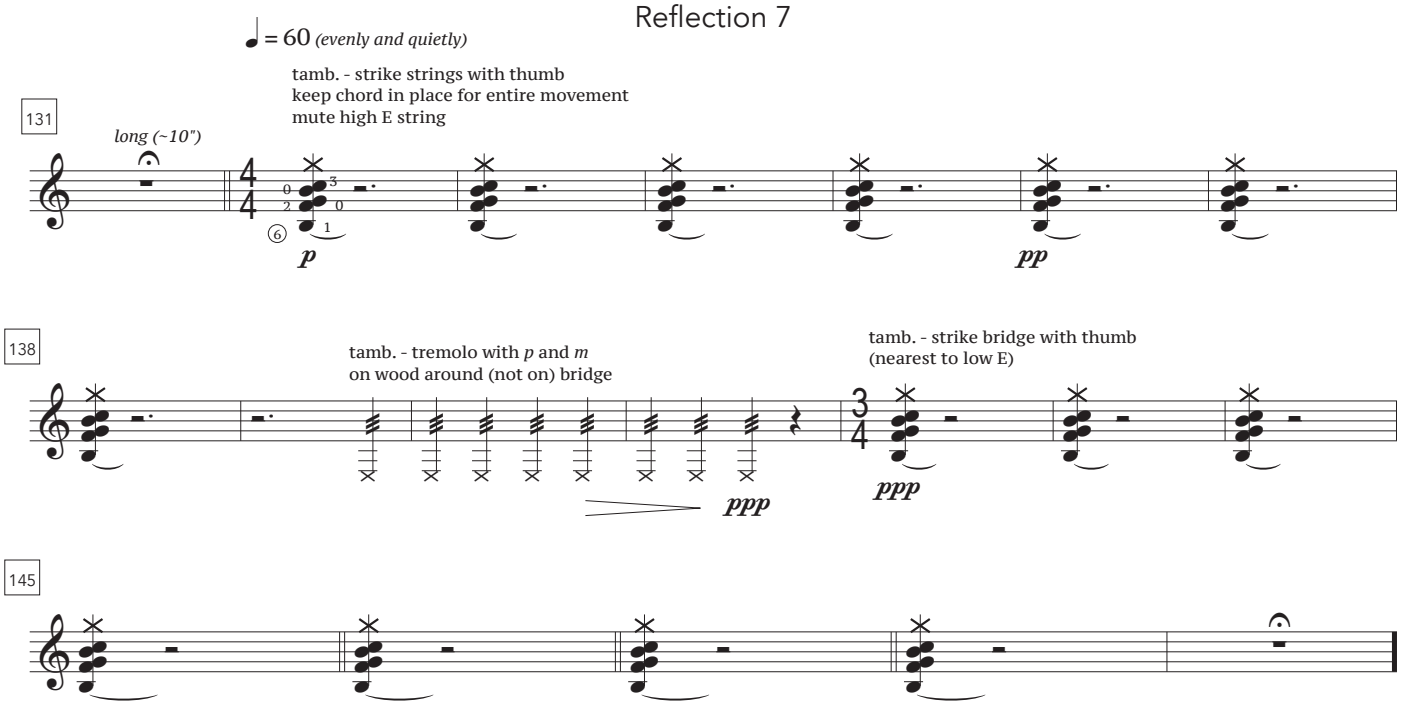

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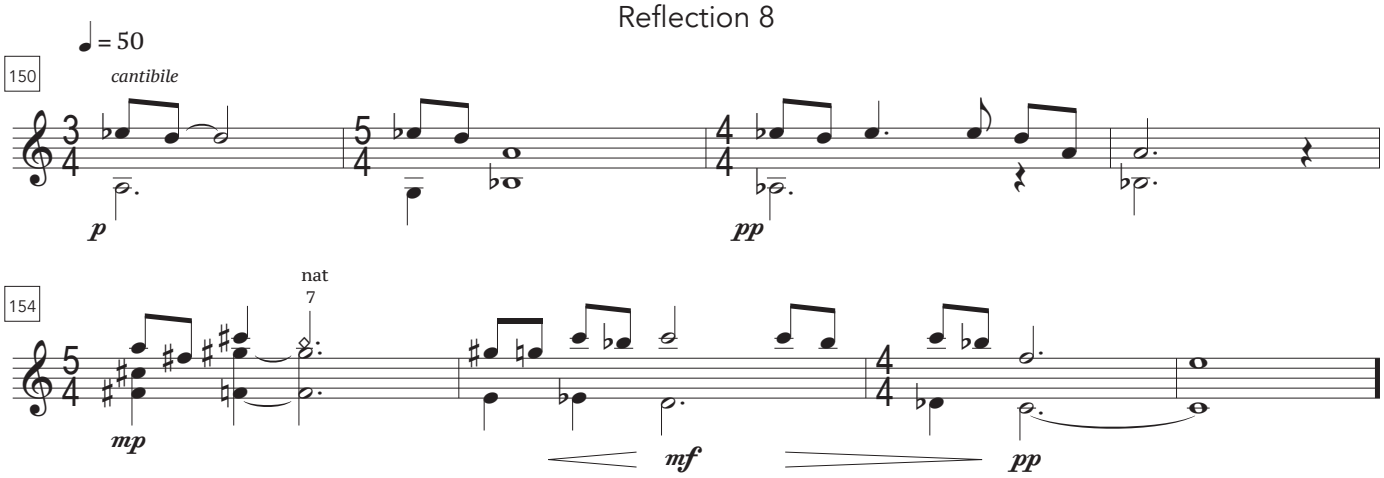

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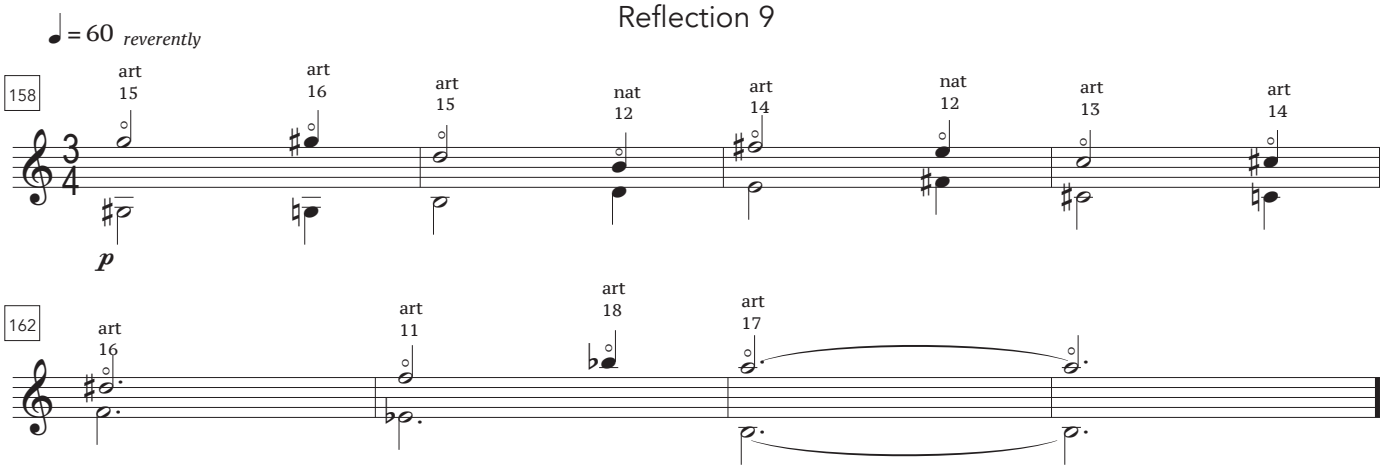

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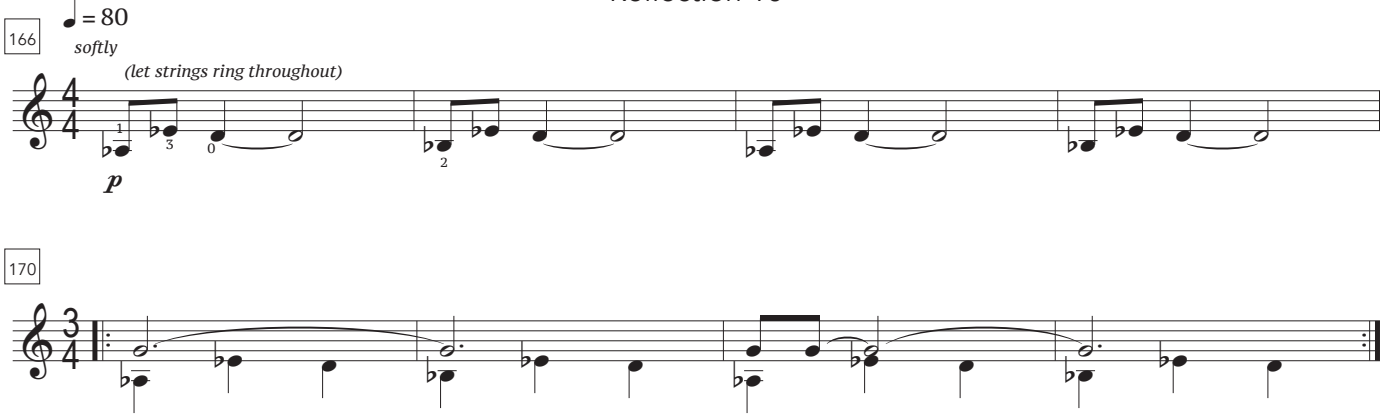
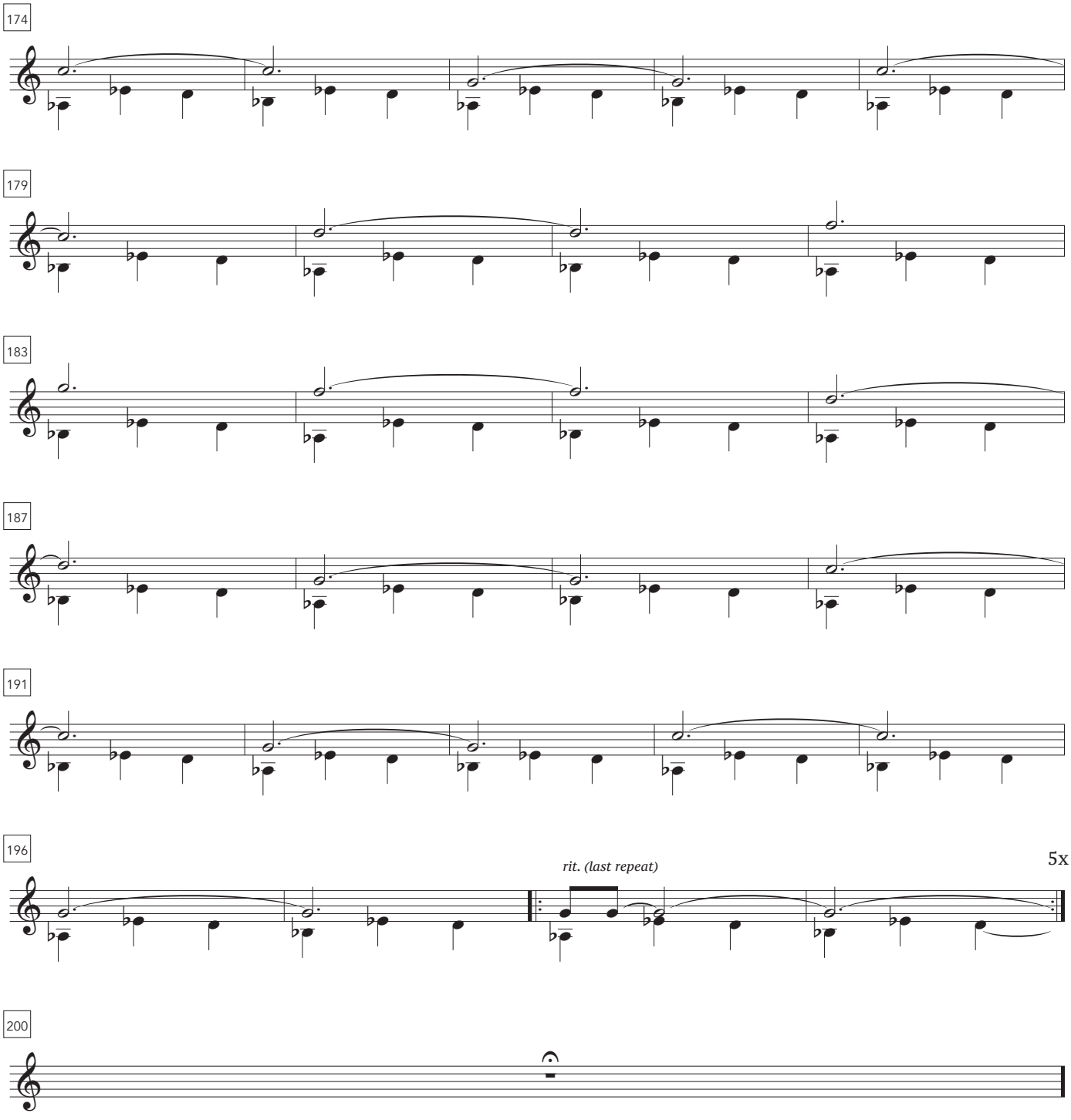
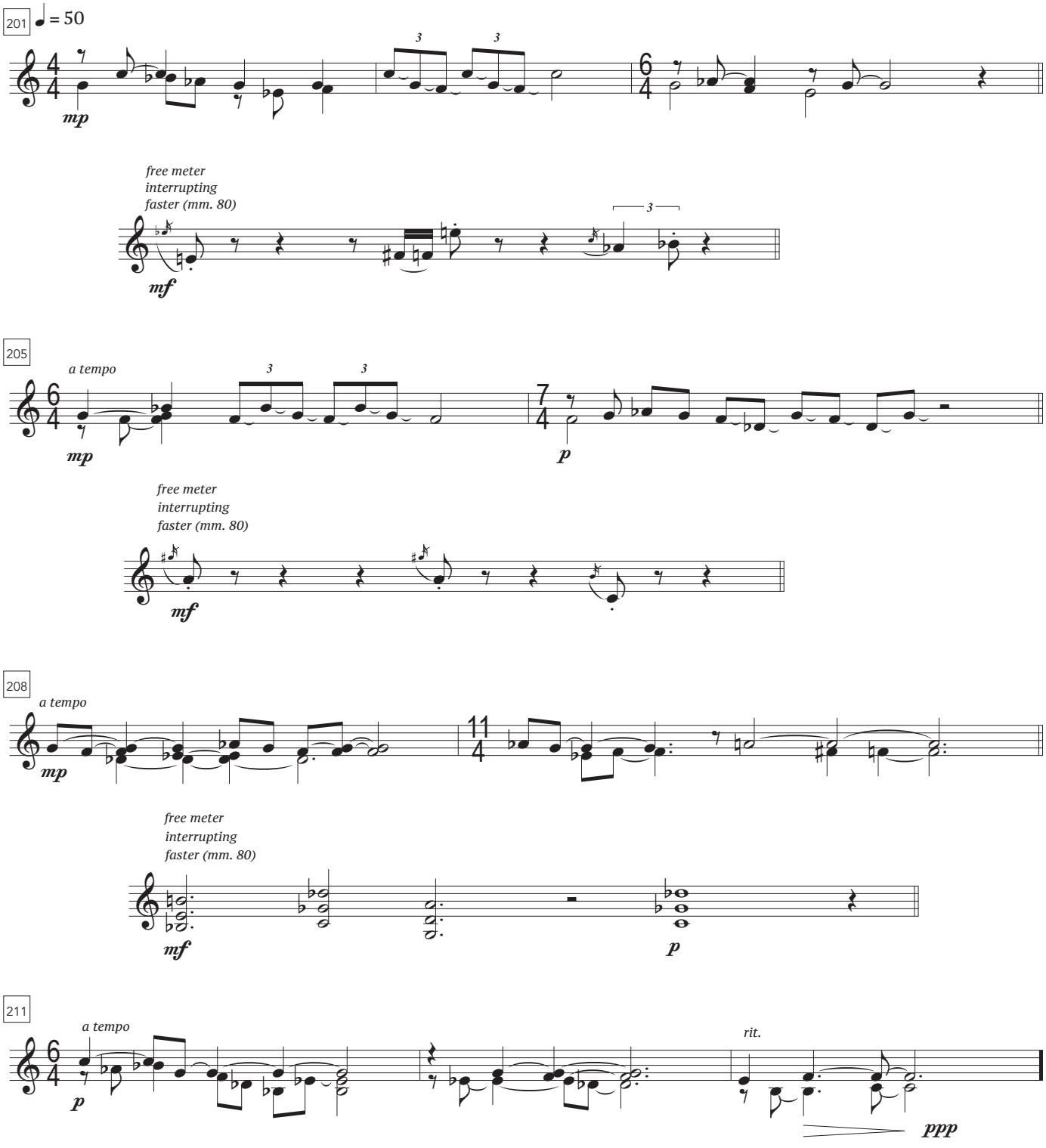
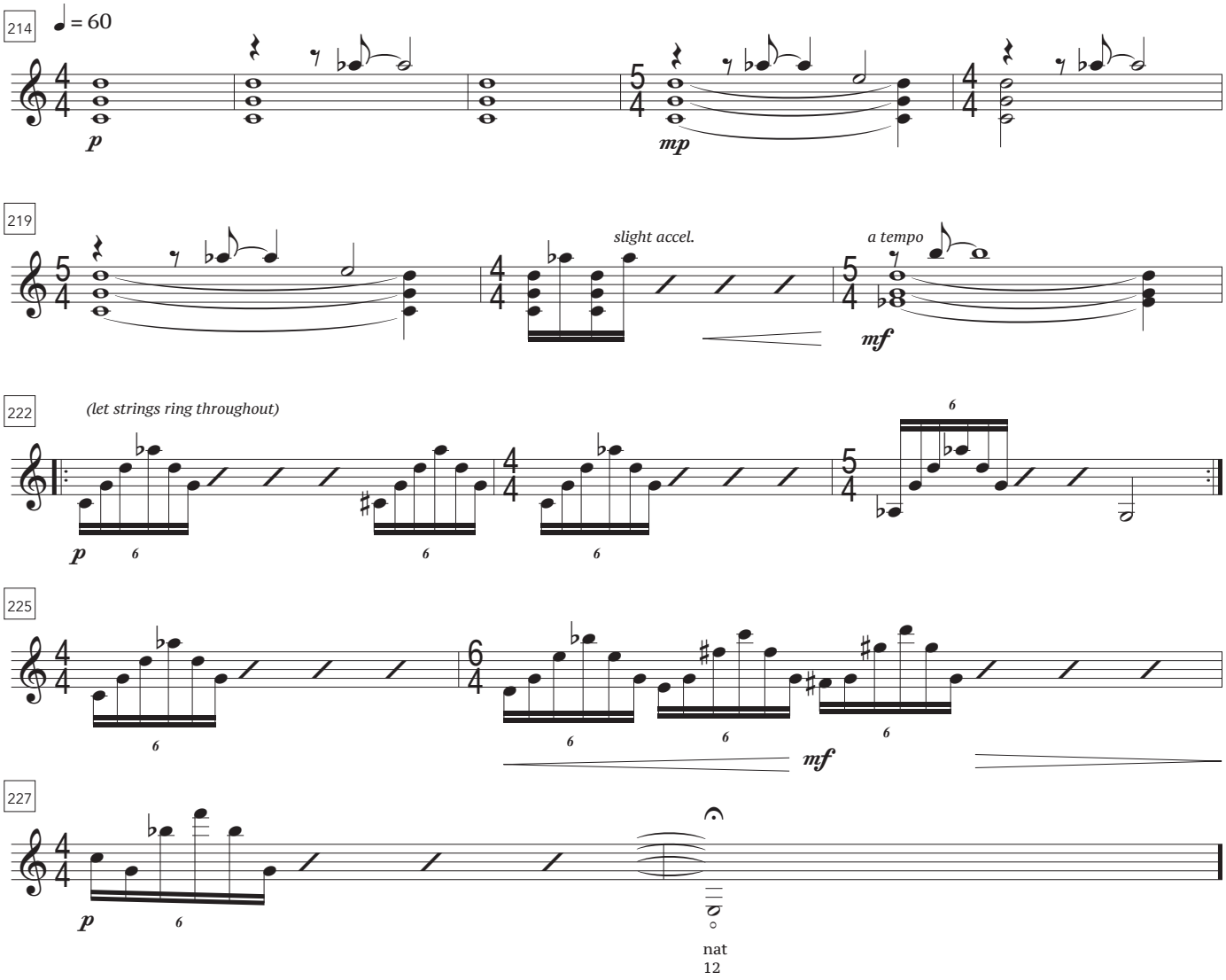
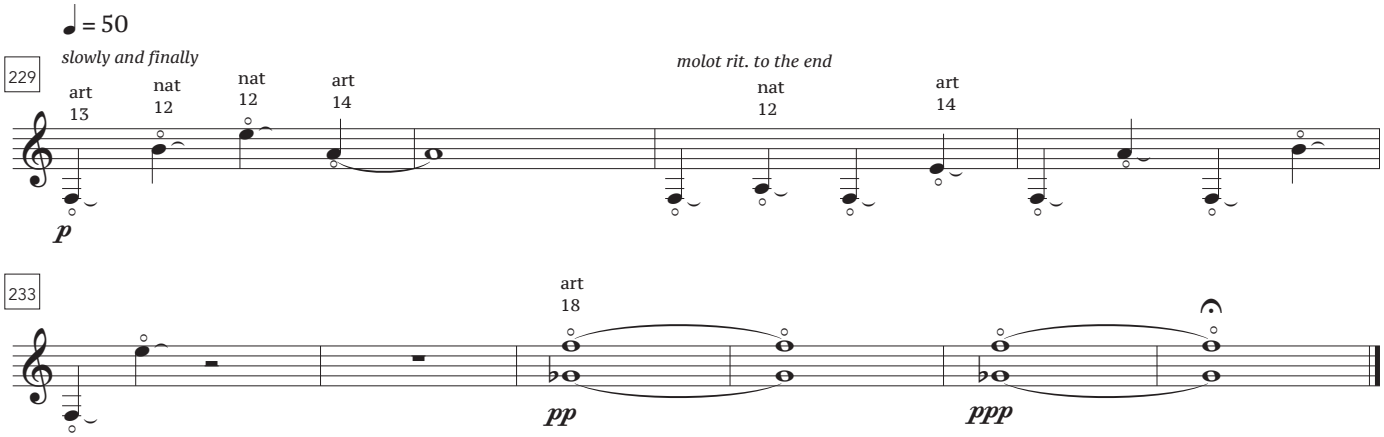



174
179
183
187
191
196
rit. (last repeat)
5x
200


201
♩ = 50
mp
3
3
free meter
interrupting
faster (mm. 80)
mf
205
a tempo
mp
p
free meter
interrupting
faster (mm. 80)
mf
208
a tempo
mp
free meter
interrupting
faster (mm. 80)
mf
p
211
a tempo
p
rit.
ppp

Reflection 12



Reflection 13