THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

Effective Conducting Techniques

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Keith W. Hodgson, University of the Arts

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Pittsburgh, PA

Alondra de la Parra

The Maestro's Magic!

Keith W. Hodgson

Educator, Conductor, Clinician

- University of the Arts, Philadelphia
- NAfME Eastern Division President-Elect
- Conn-Selmer Educational Clinician
- South Jersey Area Wind Ensemble
- American Music Abroad Gold Tour

Mark Lortz

Educator, Composer, Conductor

- Stevenson University, Maryland
- Award Winning Composer
- Guest Conductor/ Clinician
- Vic Firth Marching Perc. Specialist
- Temple Doctoral Candidate

THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

OVERVIEW:

- *8 POINT CHECKLIST*
- *THE PREPARATORY BEAT*
- *INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS*
- *GROUP DEMO*
- *CONDUCTING* ***TASK #1***
- *GROUP DEMO*
- *CONDUCTING* ***TASK #2***
- *GROUP DEMO*
- *CONDUCTING* ***TASK #3***
- *GROUP DEMO*
- *CONDUCTING* ***TASK #4***
- *"TOP 10"*
- *FINAL THOUGHTS*

THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

BASICS REVIEW

THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

THE "EIGHT POINT" CHECKLIST

EIGHT POINT CHECKLIST:

Review

-Anthony Maiello

1. Proper Stance *(both feet securely on the podium)*
2. Correct Posture *(arch the back, no crouching)*
3. Correct Baton Grip *(fingers tucked, palm to the floor)*
4. Survey the Performers (head sweep) to insure readiness
5. Ready position on the horizontal and vertical plane is set
6. Internalization of the tempo before executing the preparatory beat *(touch tip of tongue to roof of mouth in tempo)*
7. Preparatory beat will effectively convey tempo, style, dynamic marking, who plays, starting beat
8. Inhalation of air during the entire preparatory beat

FIVE PREPARATORY BEAT CONSIDERATIONS:

-Anthony Maiello

1. TEMPO
2. STYLE
3. DYNAMICS
4. ON WHICH BEAT MUSIC BEGINS
5. WHO IS PLAYING

THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS ON CONDUCTING

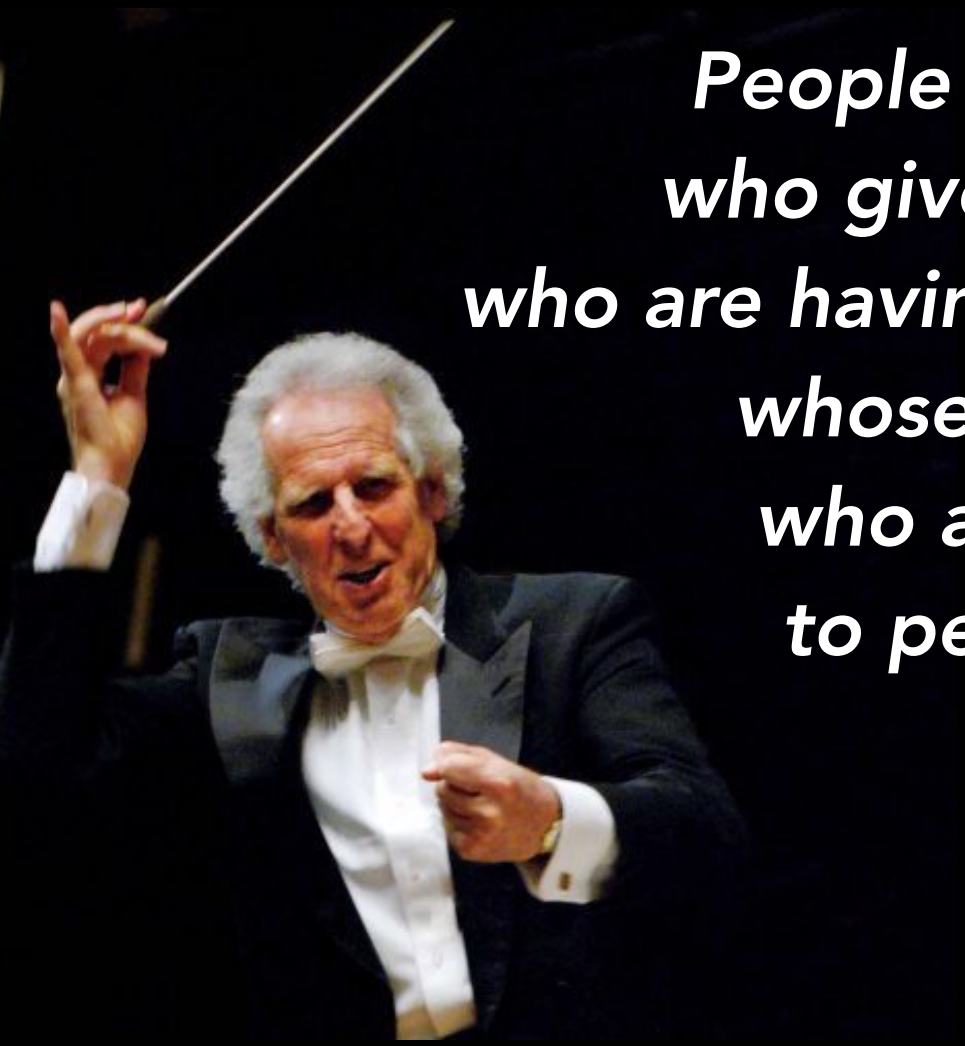
Proper Preparation Promotes Perfection

- **Preparation**
  - Be sure to have knowledge of the musical scores and players in the ensemble (i.e., strengths, weaknesses, any special concerns), etc.
  - Prepare your scores with all cues, musical lines, meter changes, etc.
- **Plan**
  - Have an effective rehearsal plan that includes
  - Plan A, B and C
- **Practice**
  - Practice your conducting as if you were practicing your instrument for a performance

What Makes an Effective Conductor?

Conducting Characteristics

- Dedication - a love for music
- Musicianship - musical competence
- Manual Technique
- Organization
- Psychology
- Physical presence / persona / personality / sense of humor
- Ability to display emotion, sensitivity
- Ability to impose one's will upon others and having them enjoy it (upholding personal ideals without violating others)
- Interpersonal skills - The ability to work with people



"What makes an effective businessman
is the same thing that
makes an effective orchestra:

People who want to be there,
who give everything they have,
who are having a wonderful time doing it,
whose eyes are shining and
who are giving out energy
to people around them."

–BEN ZANDER

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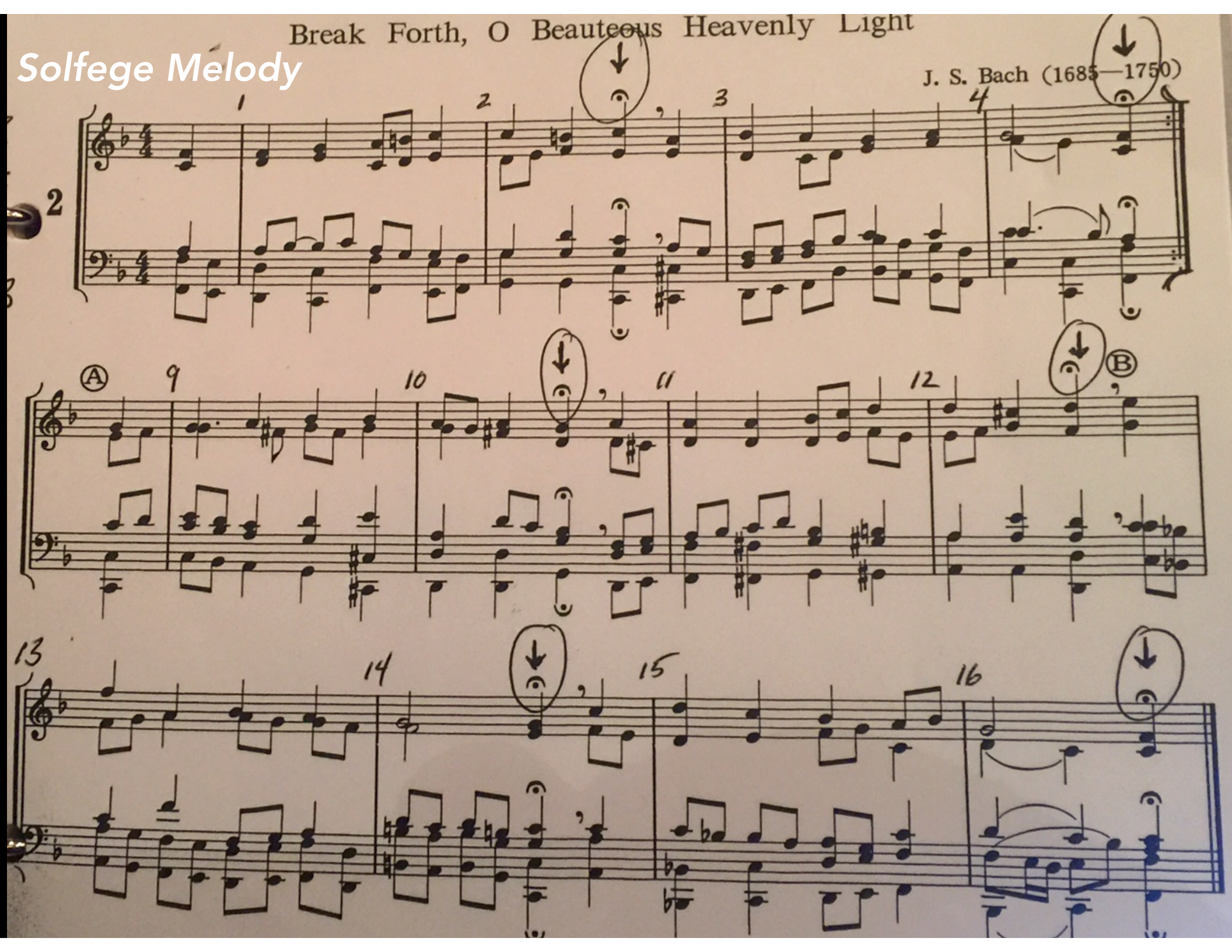
GROUP DEMO 1

THE FERMATA!

MUSICAL DECISIONS:

- Treatment of each Fermata… Decisions
- Release of each Fermata and Prep for Next Phrase
- Making Musical Decisions about…
  - *Tempo*
  - *Dynamics*
  - *Phrasing*

Solfege Melody



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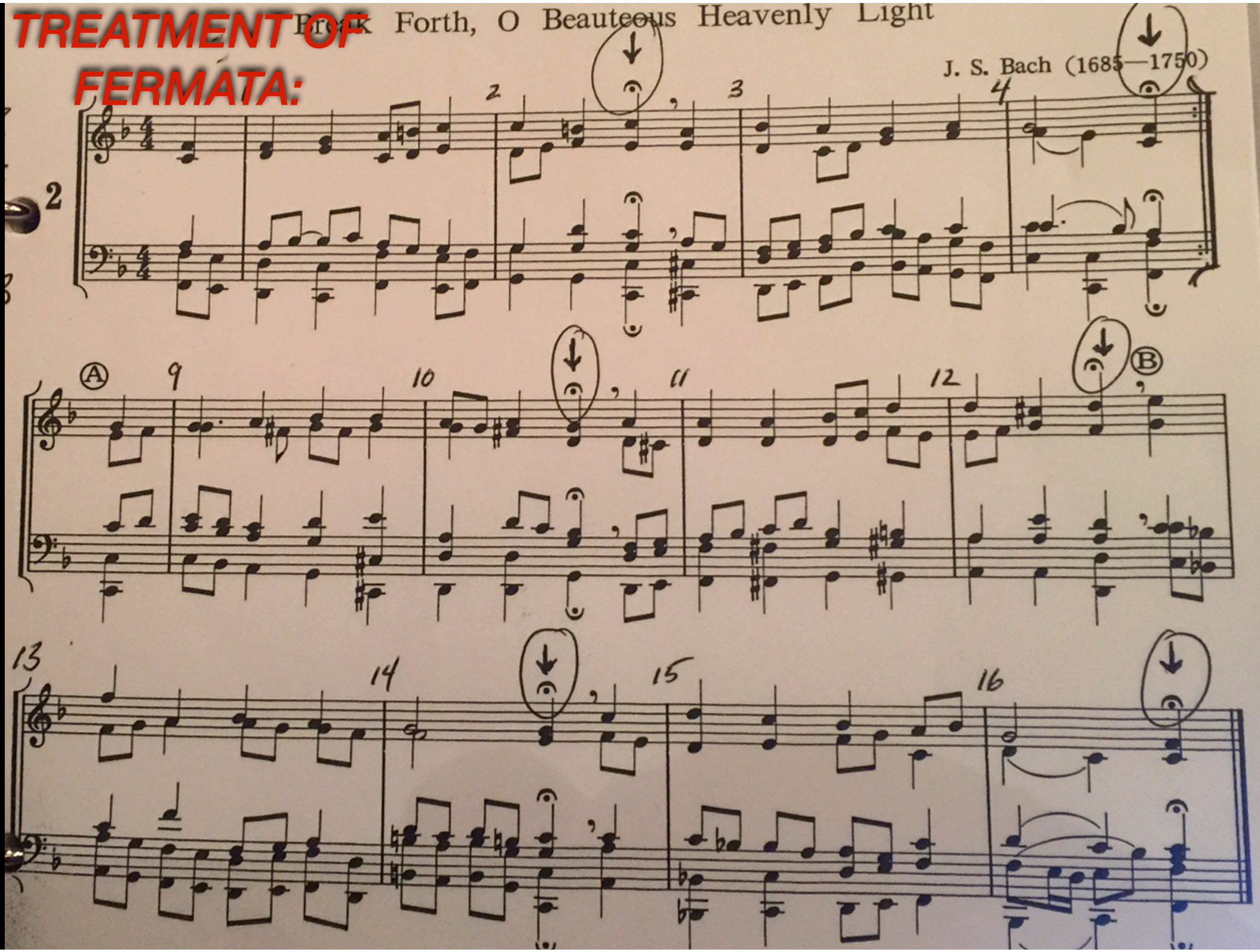
CONDUCTING TASK #1

TREATMENT OF THE FERMATA & MAKING MUSICAL DECISIONS

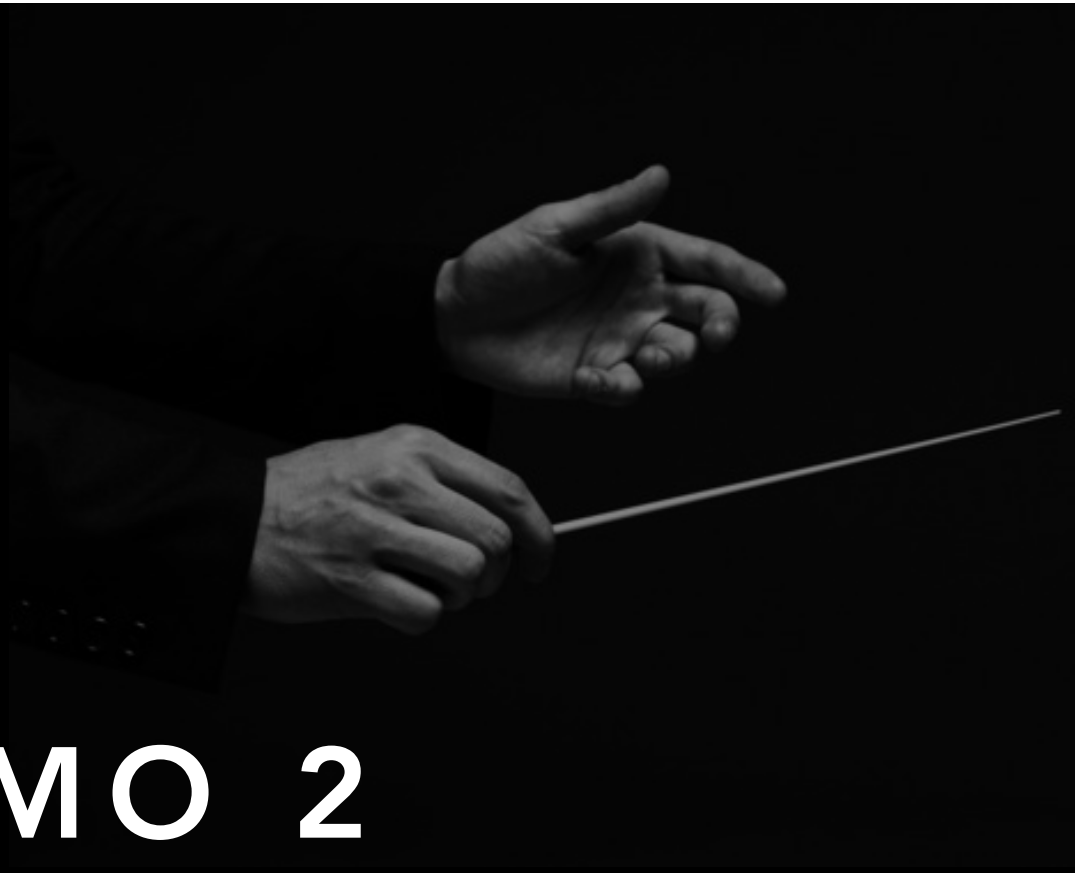
TREATMENT OF FERMATA:



Music Joke #85
Wanna hear a joke about a staccato? Never mind, it's too short. How about a fermata joke? Never mind, it's too long.

"I'm not interested in having an orchestra
sound like itself.
I want it to sound like the composer."

–LENNY



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GROUP DEMO 2

CUEING / USING THE LEFT HAND

Cueing Gestures: **How do you deliver a cue?**

- 1. A Left Hand gesture *(consider style, dynamic etc)*
- 2. A Right Hand gesture within the pattern
- 3. Eye contact
- 4. Facial expression
- 5. Combination of several or all

* Prep / Entrance

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CONDUCTING TASK #2

CUEING / USING THE LEFT HAND

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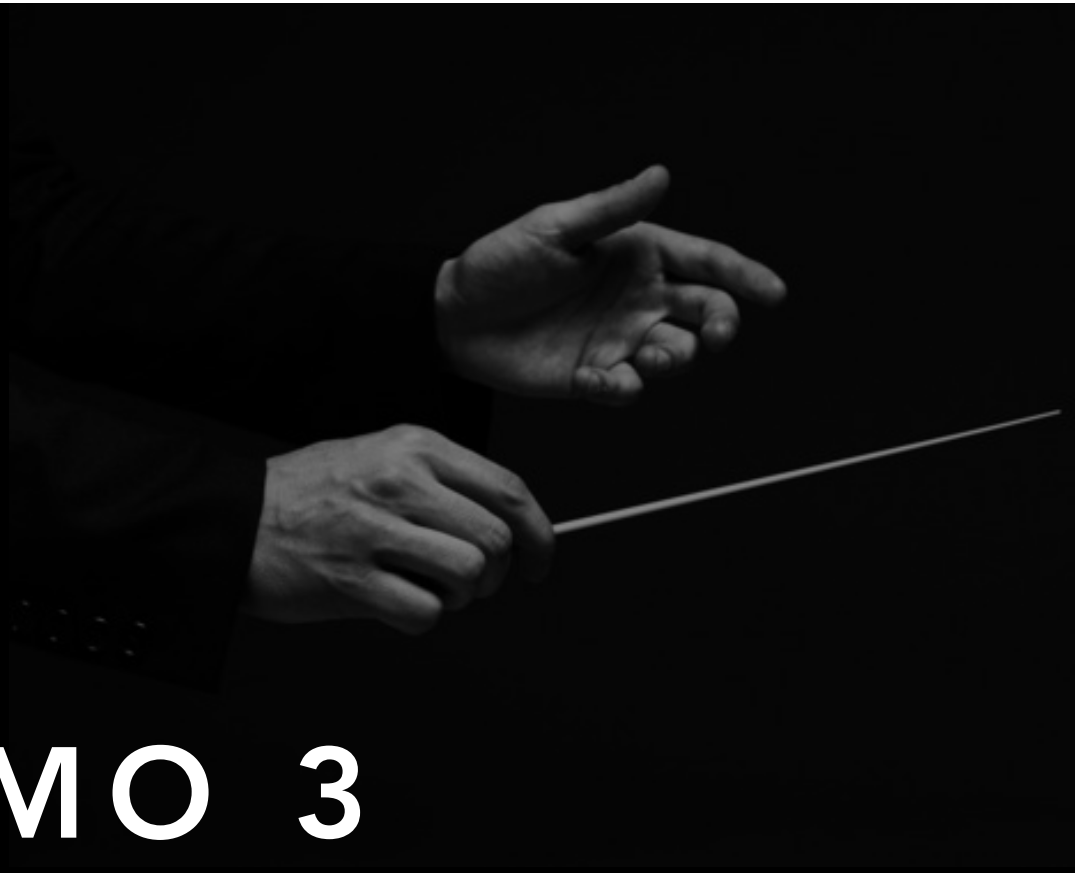
Come on...
Come on...
Throw the
stick...
search ID: drei1840
Reynolds



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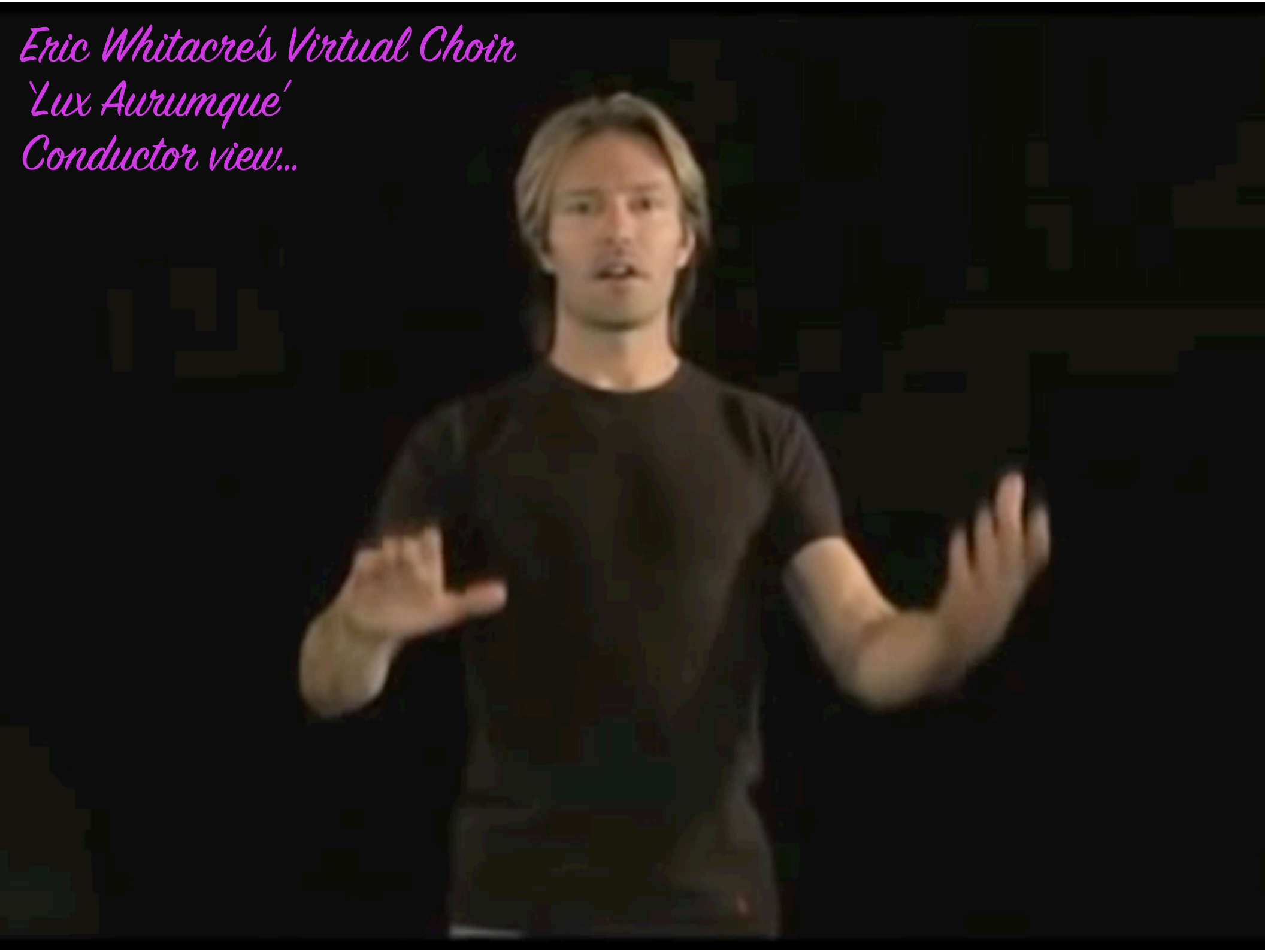
GROUP DEMO 3


Eric Whitacre's Virtual Choir
'Lux Aurumque'
Conductor view...

“I can’t write music unless I’m deeply connected to it and that connection almost always comes from some experience that I have had or am having.”

–ERIC WHITACRE

LYRICAL CONDUCTING

"What is best in music is not found in the notes…"

-Gustav Mahler

"We can never exhaust the multiplicity of nuances and subtleties which make the charm of music…"

-Pablo Casals

"The written note is like a straight jacket, whereas music, like life itself, is constant movement, continuous spontaneity, free from any restrictions…"

-Pablo Casals

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CONDUCTING TASK #3

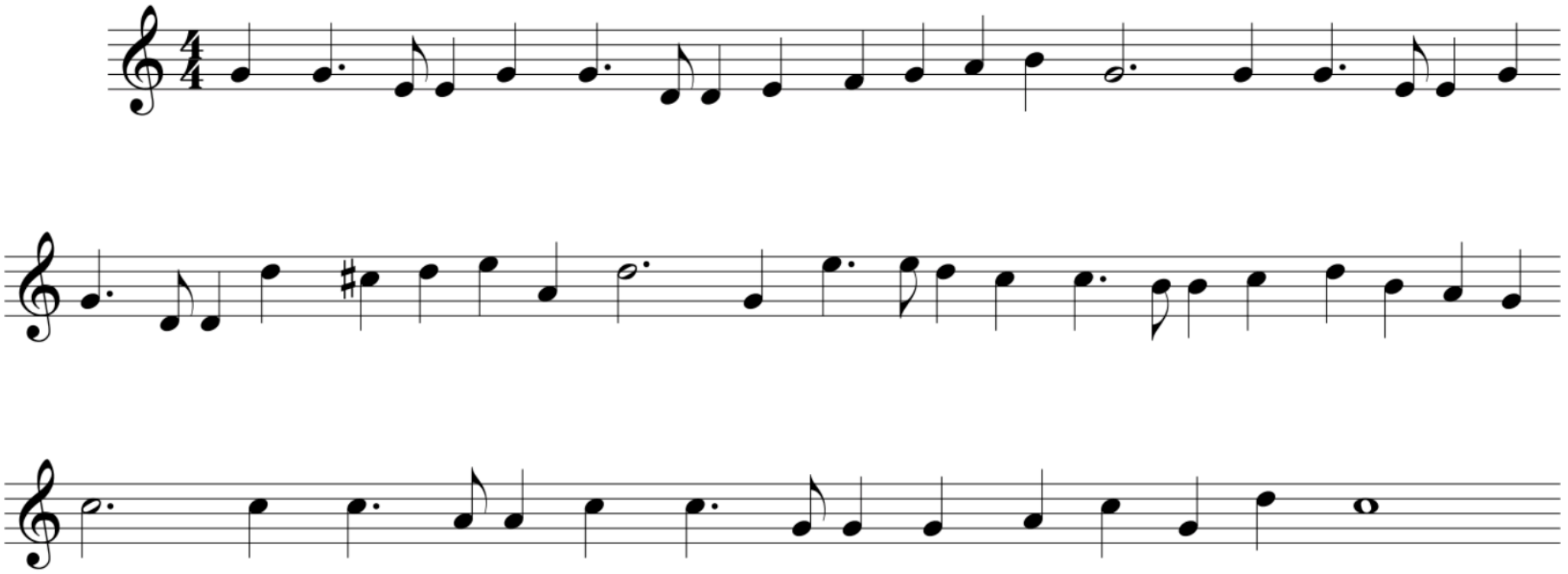
LYRICAL CONDUCTING

Developing a uniqueness for musical expression:

"Music making begins in the mind, not in the stick." -Leonard Bernstein

Oh beautiful for spacious skies,
for amber waves of grain,
For purple mountains majesties
Above the fruit-ed plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on three,
And crown thy good with brotherhood,
From sea to shining sea!

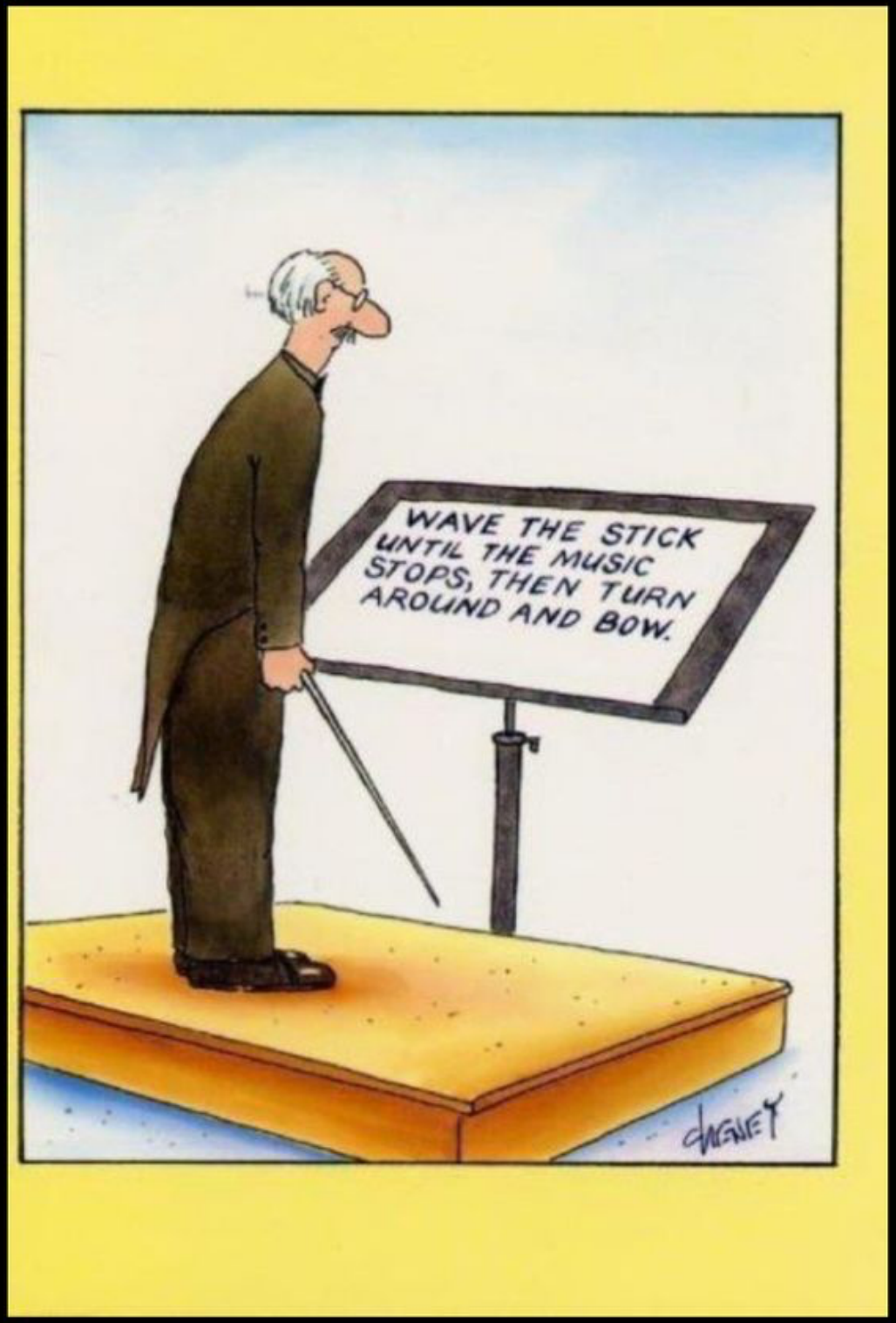
Developing a uniqueness for musical expression:

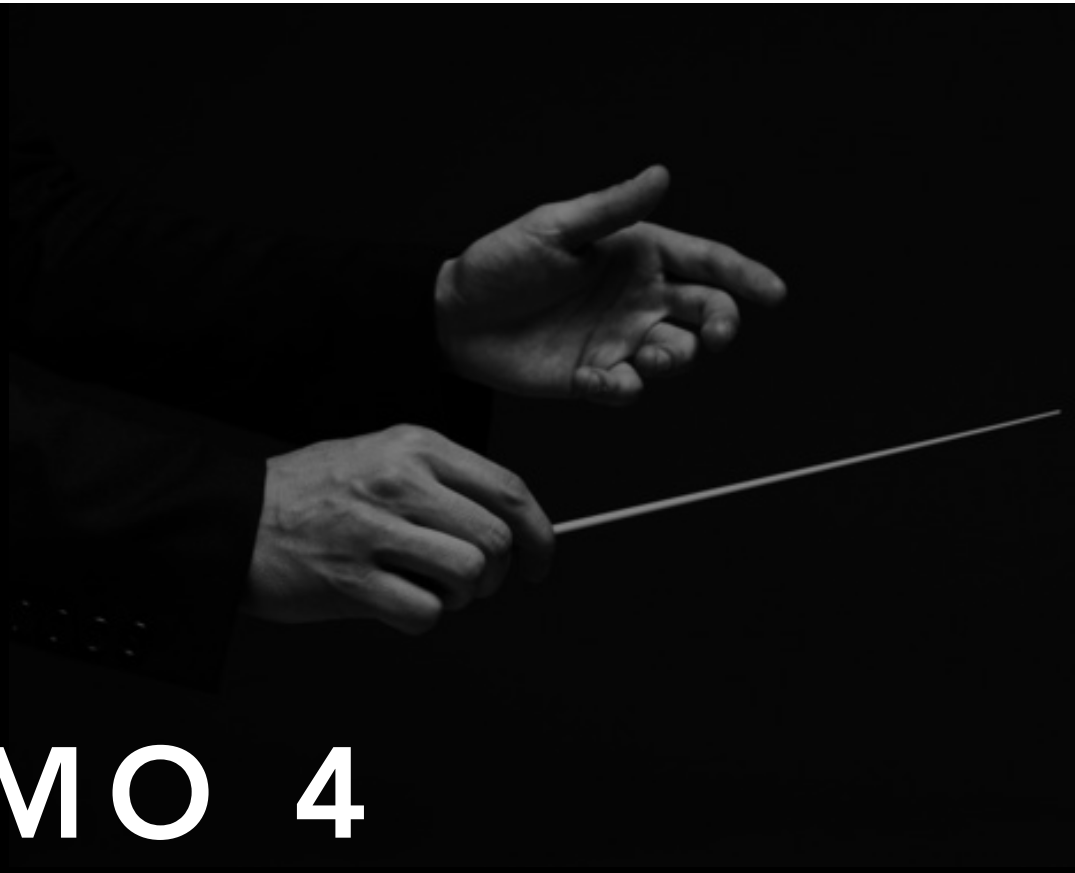


- *Sing the text as you conduct.*
- *Let the text inflection drive your musical decisions.*
- *Don't feel bound by the conducting "pattern."*
- *Use hands for now instead of a baton.*

“Artistic expression has no limitations. It is spontaneous and cannot be programmed or imitated. Artistic expression is freedom... Freedom from preconceived patterns or boundaries. Once expression is ‘programmed,’ it no longer exists as artistic expression.”

–EDWARD LISK


WAVE THE STICK UNTIL THE MUSIC STOPS, THEN TURN AROUND AND BOW.



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GROUP DEMO 4

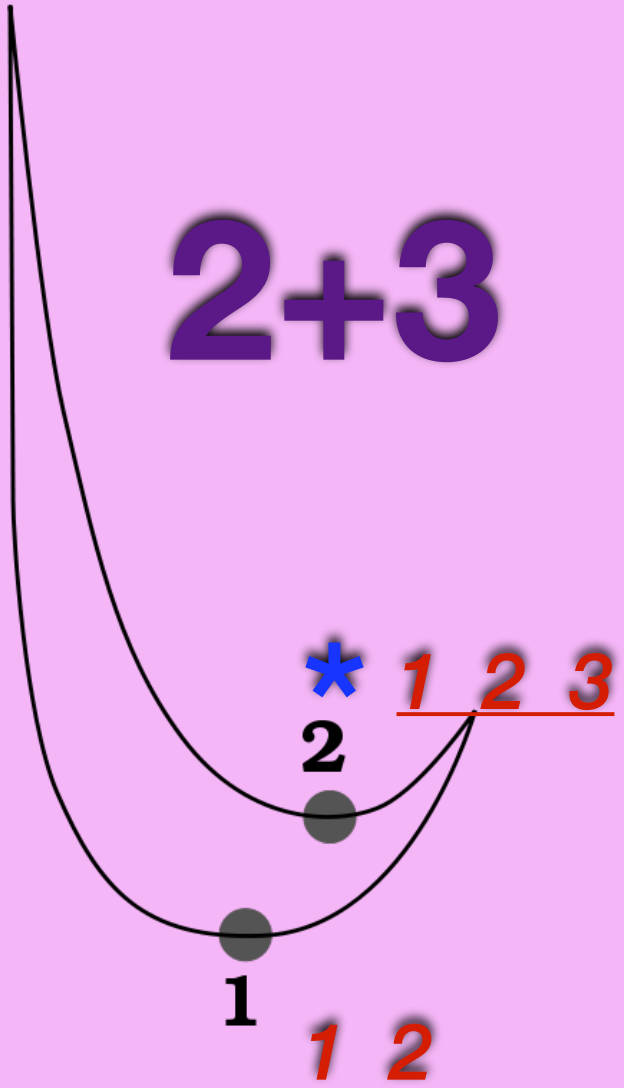
METER MADNESS

- Compound Time Signatures
- Changing/ Mixed Meters
- Clarity of Sub-Division
- Clarity of Conducting Pattern
- Phrasing, Articulations, Rhythmic Groupings

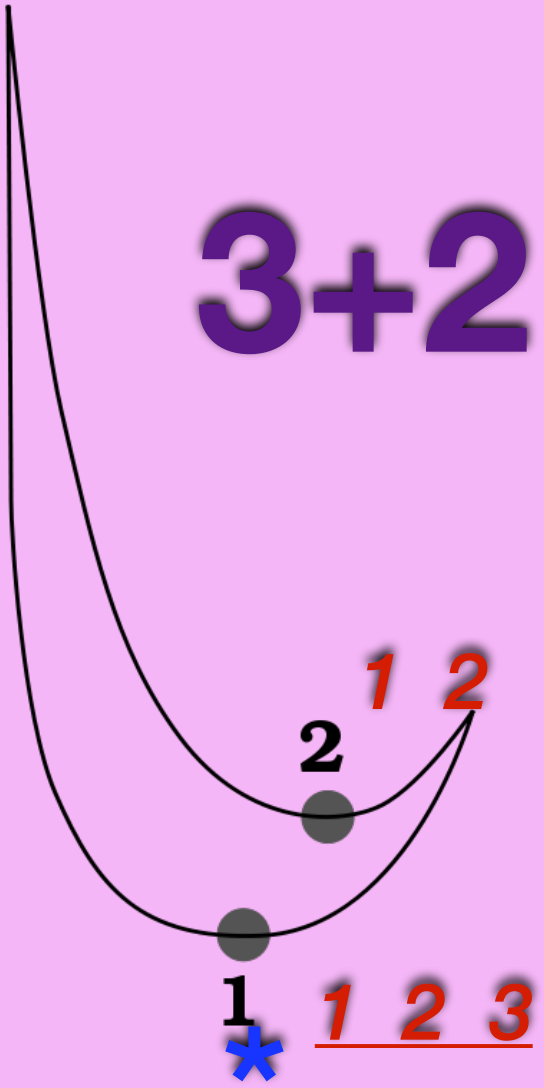
5/8

* = Delayed

2+3



3+2



Irregular Compound Meter

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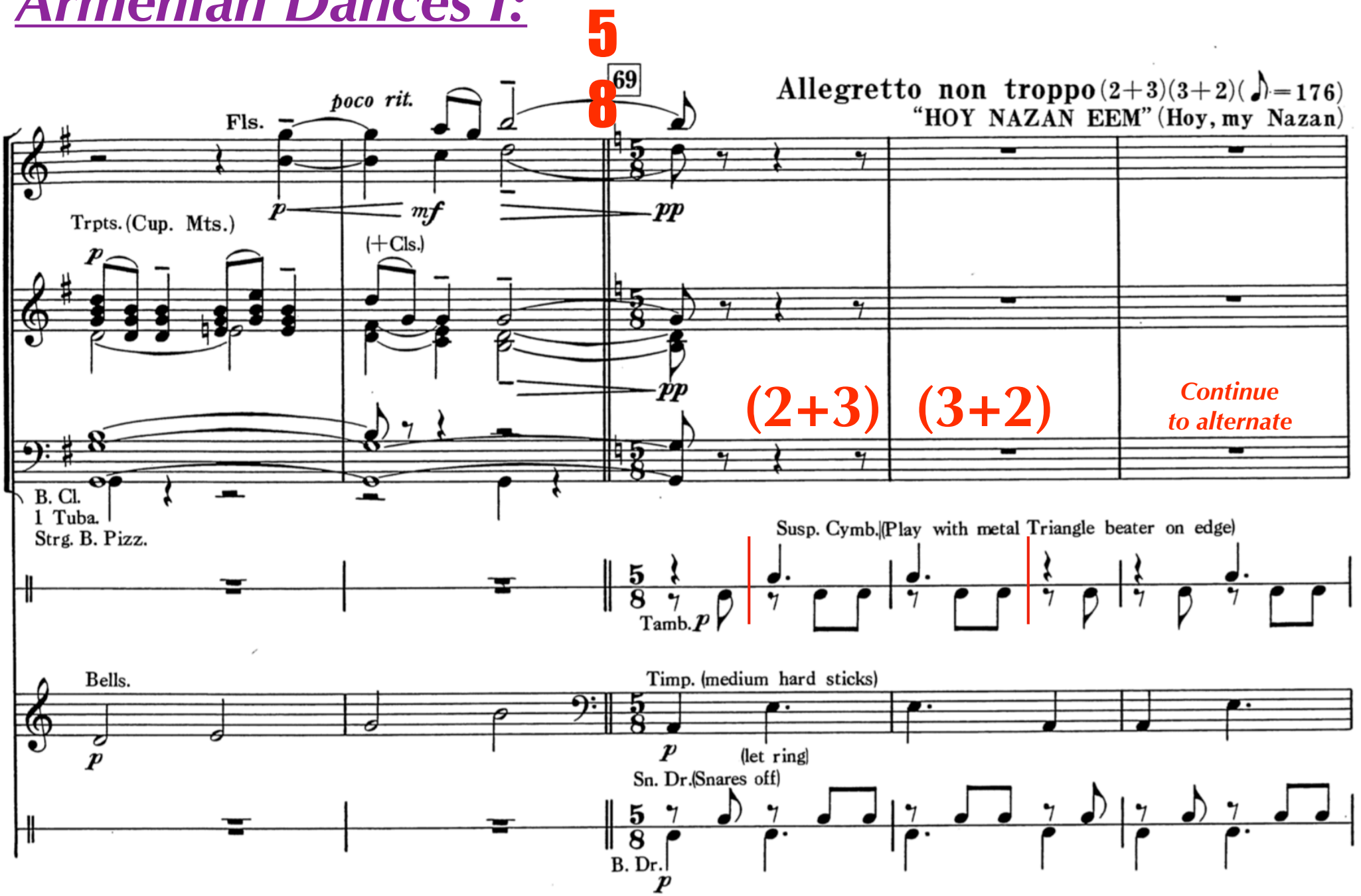
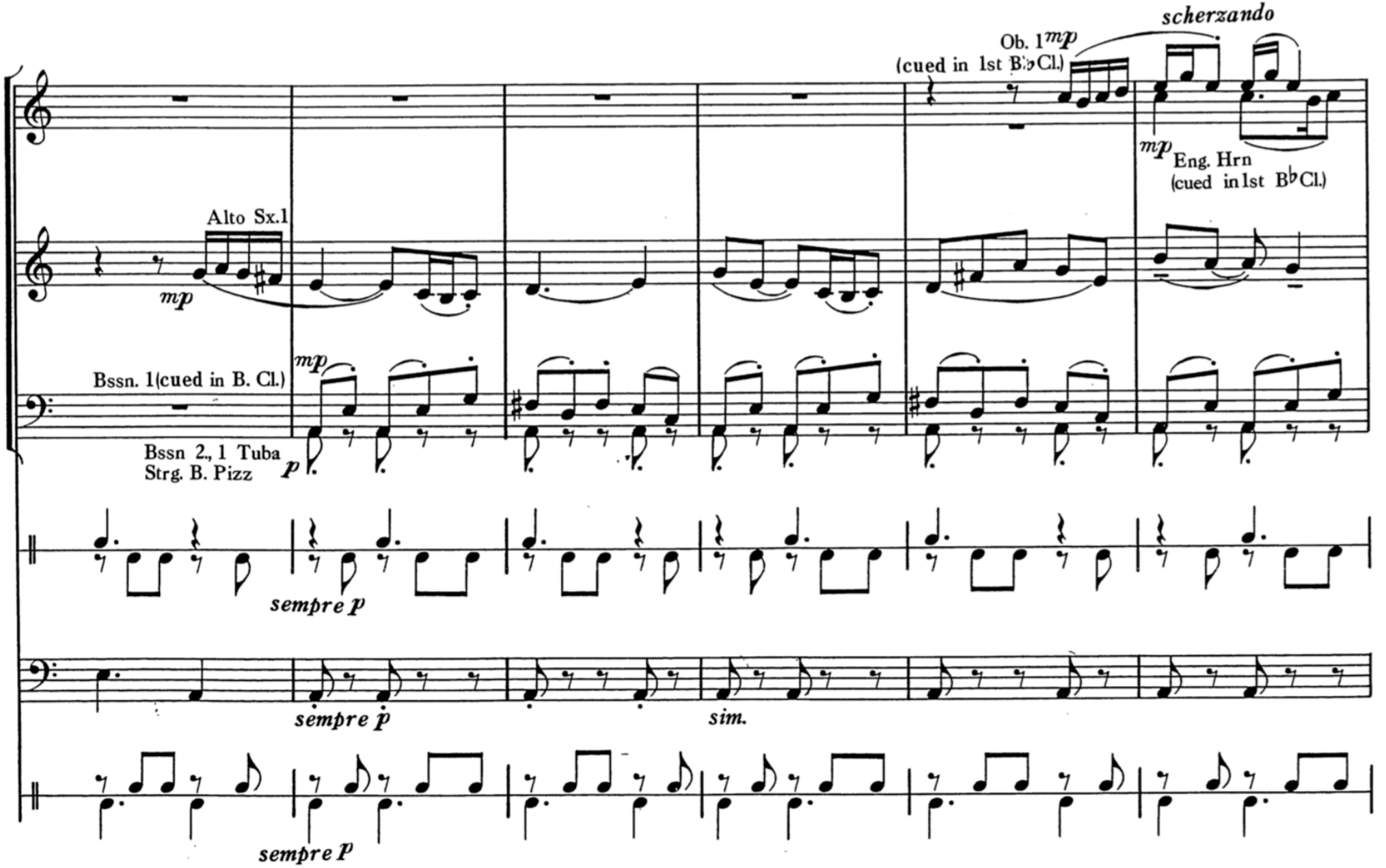
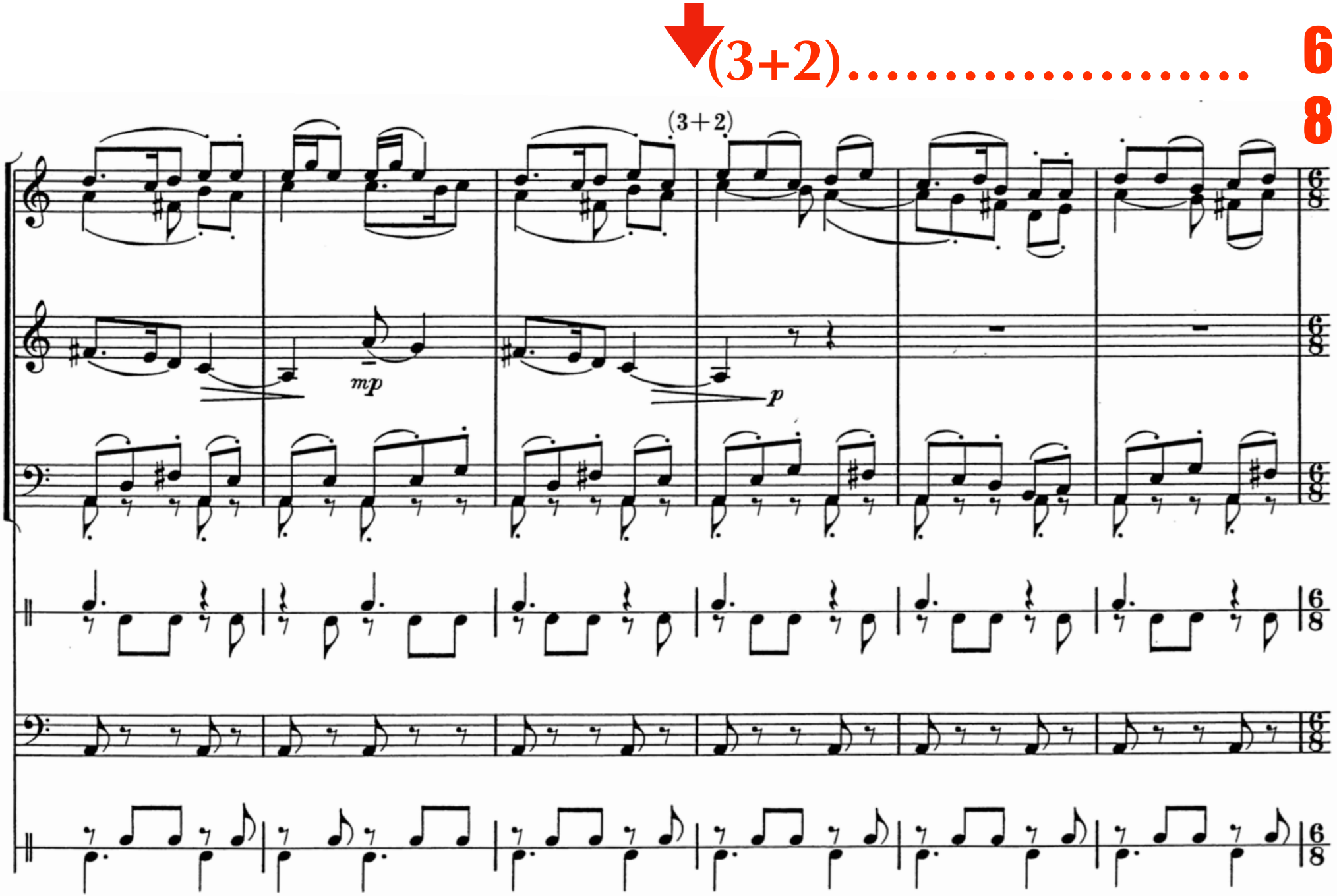
CONDUCTING TASK #4

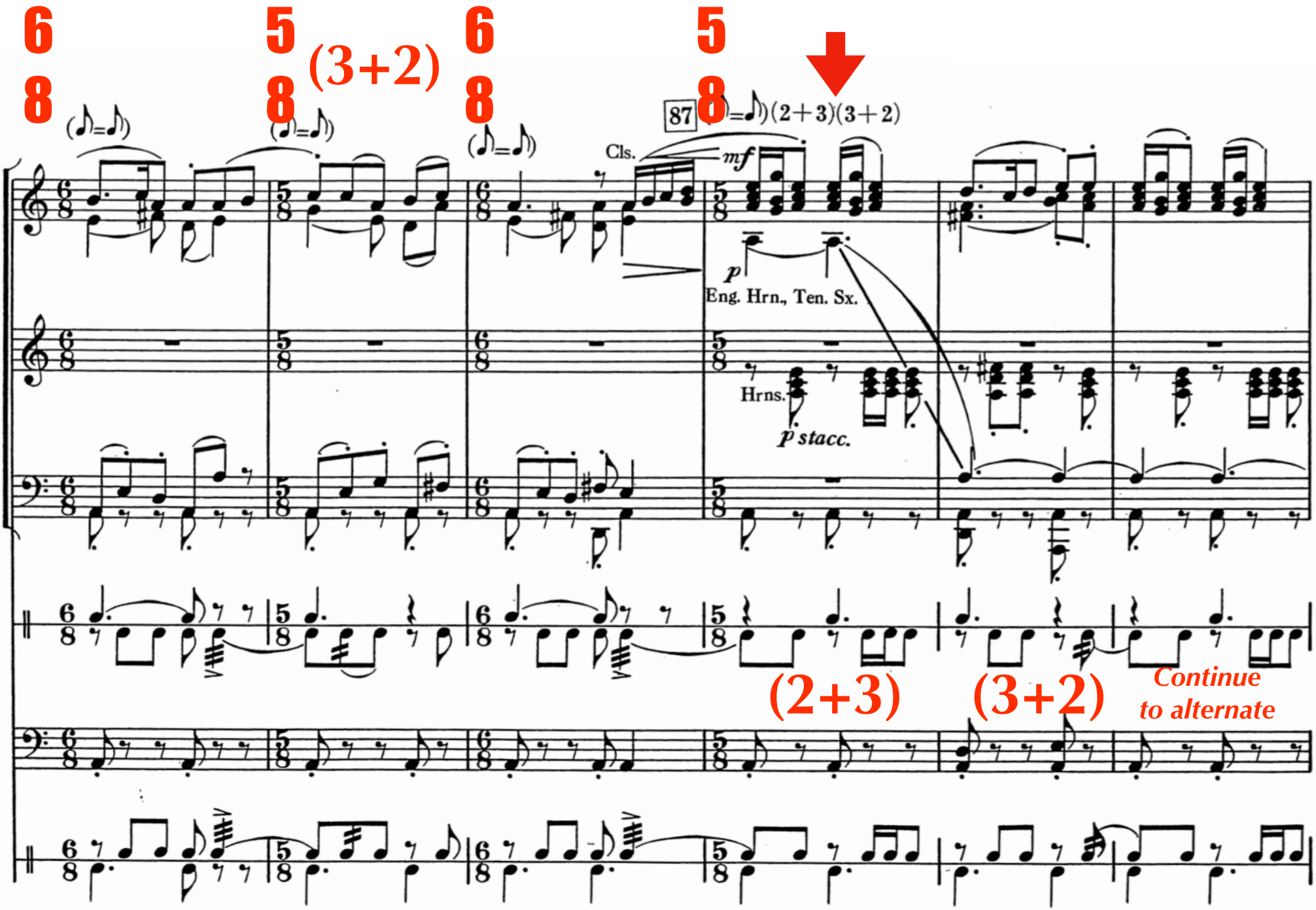
METER MADNESS

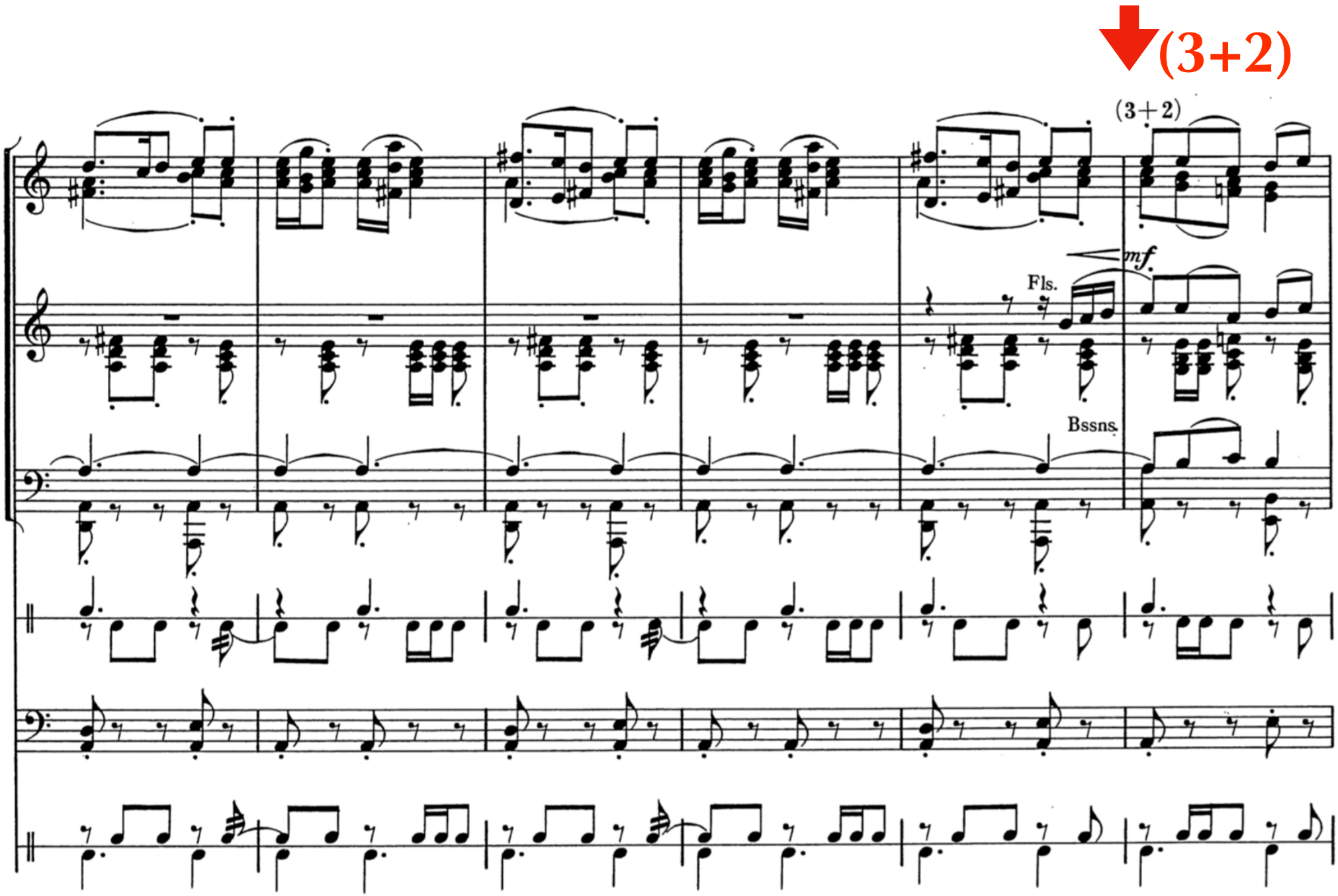
Armenian Dances I:

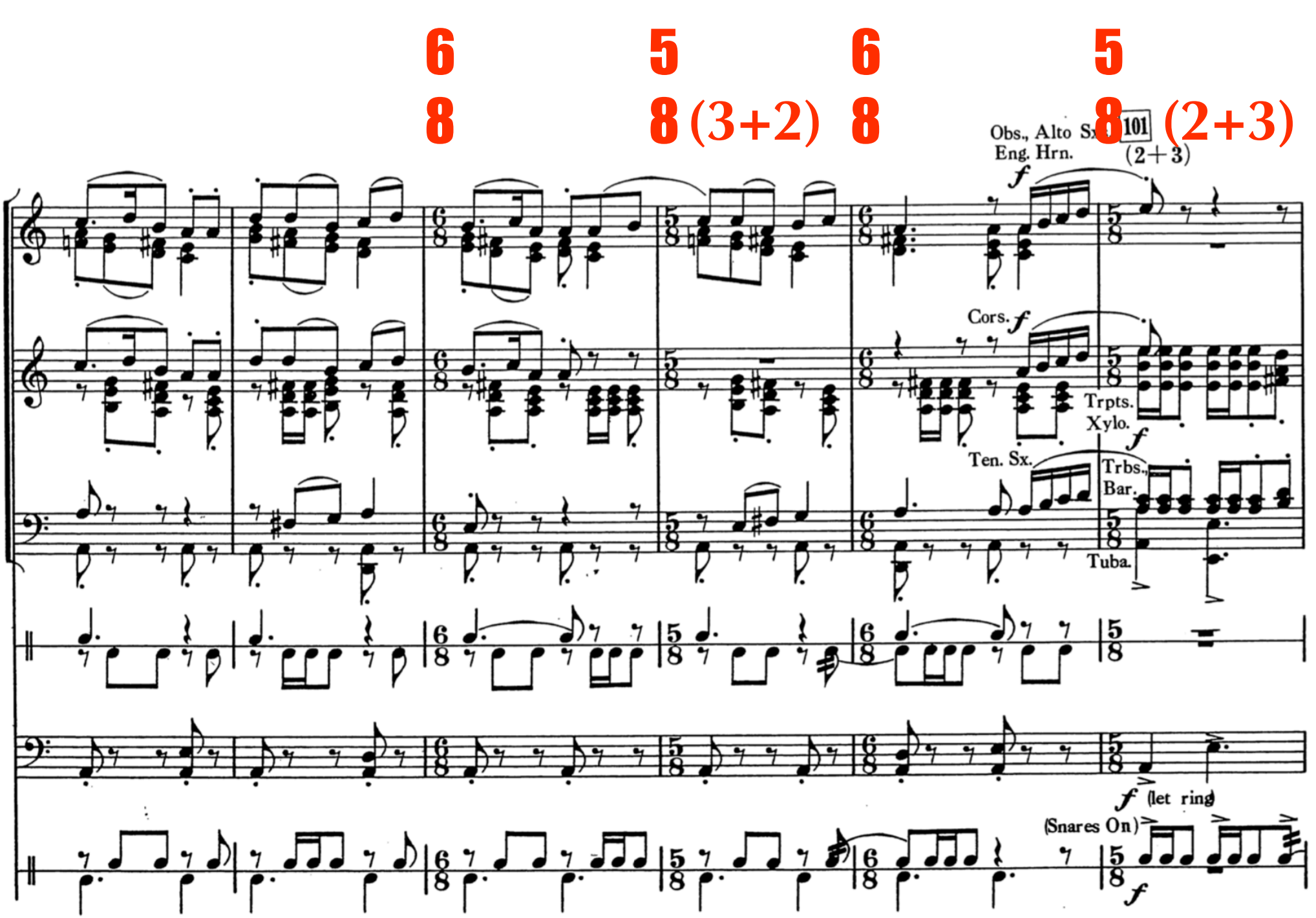



scherzando
Ob. 1 mp
(cued in 1st B♭Cl.)
mp Eng. Hrn
(cued in 1st B♭Cl.)
Alto Sx.1
mp
Bssn. 1(cued in B. Cl.)
mp
Bssn 2., 1 Tuba
Strg. B. Pizz
p
sempre p
sempre p
sim.
sempre p

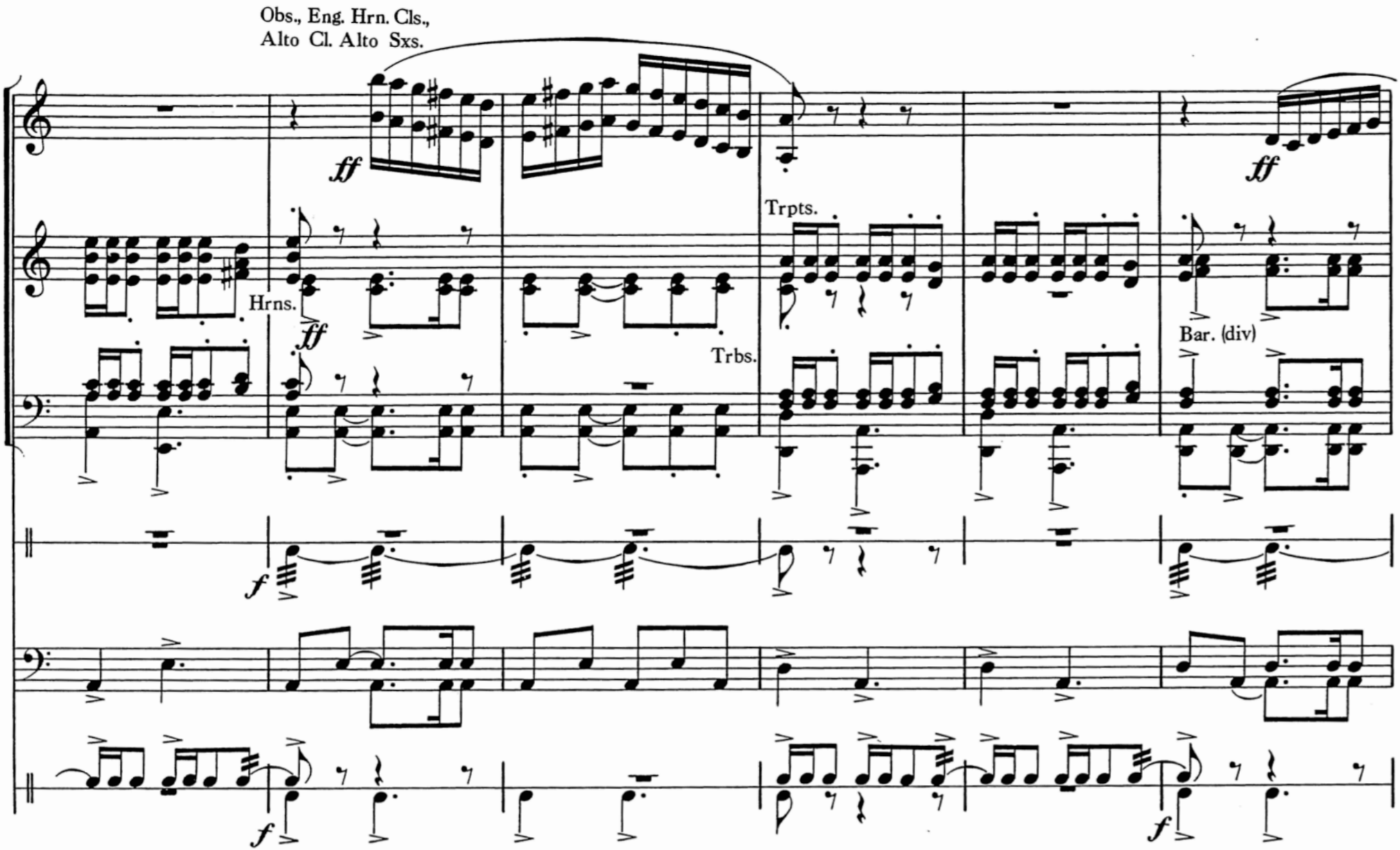

(3+2)..... 6/8
(3+2)
mp
p

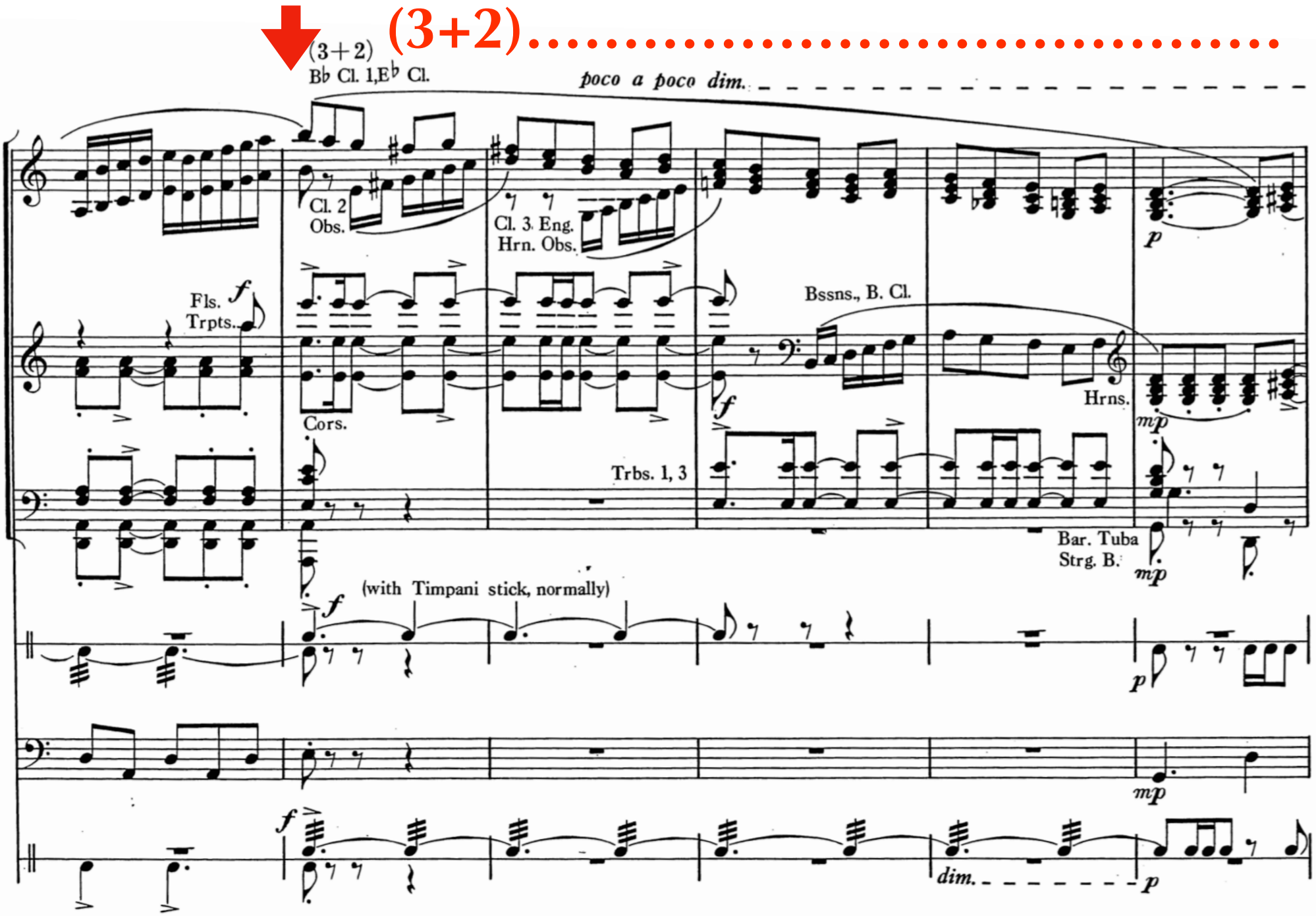

6/8
5/8 (3+2)
6/8
5/8
87
(♪=♪)(2+3)(3+2)
Cls.
mf
p
Eng. Hrn., Ten. Sx.
Hrns.
p stacc.
(2+3)
(3+2)
Continue to alternate


(3+2)
(3+2)
mf.
Fls.
Bssns.

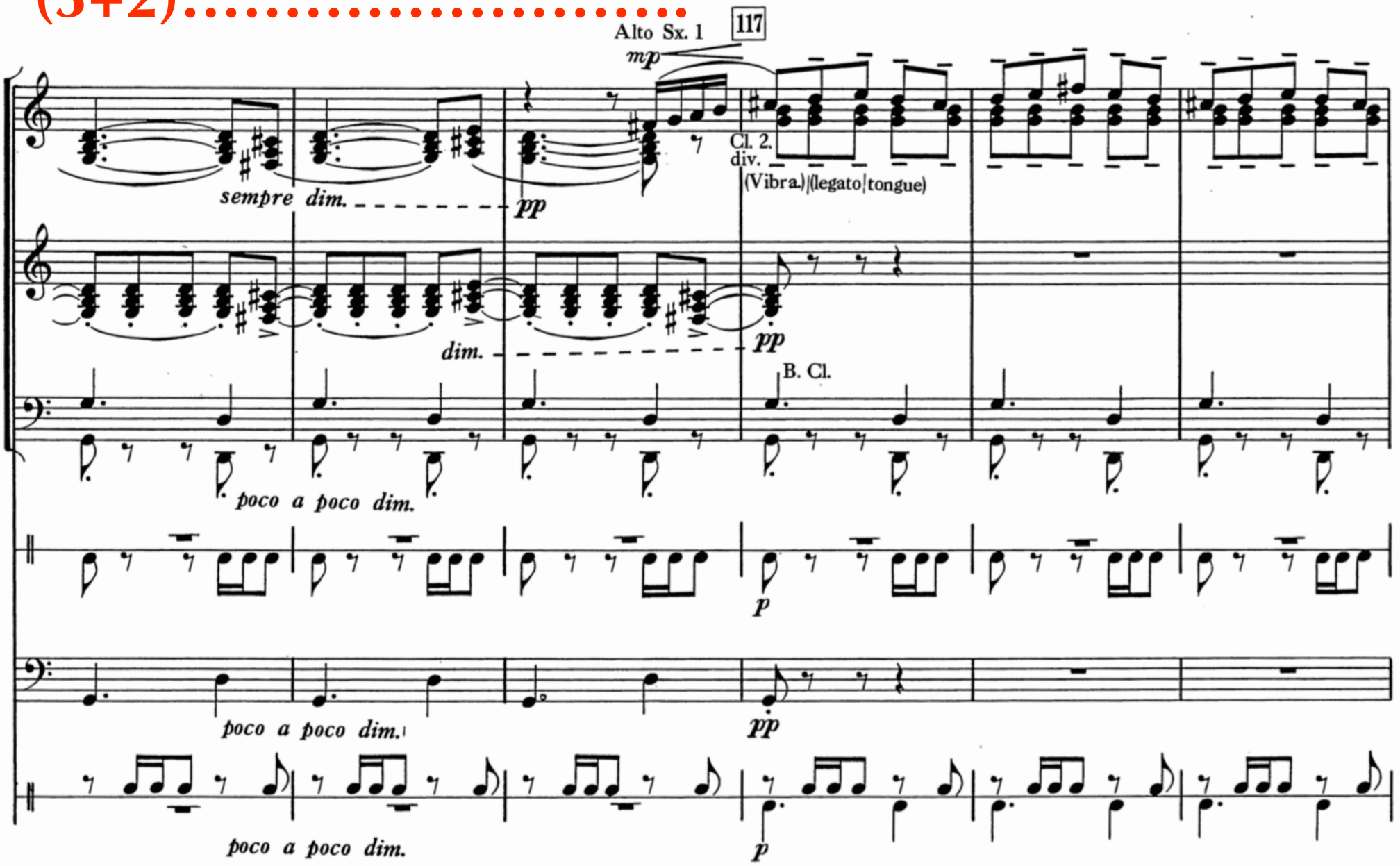

6/8
5/8 (3+2)
6/8
5/8 (2+3)
Obs., Alto Sx.
Eng. Hrn.
101
(2+3)
f
Cors.
Trpts.
Xylo.
Ten. Sx.
Trbs.
Bar.
Tuba.
(let ring)
(Snares On)

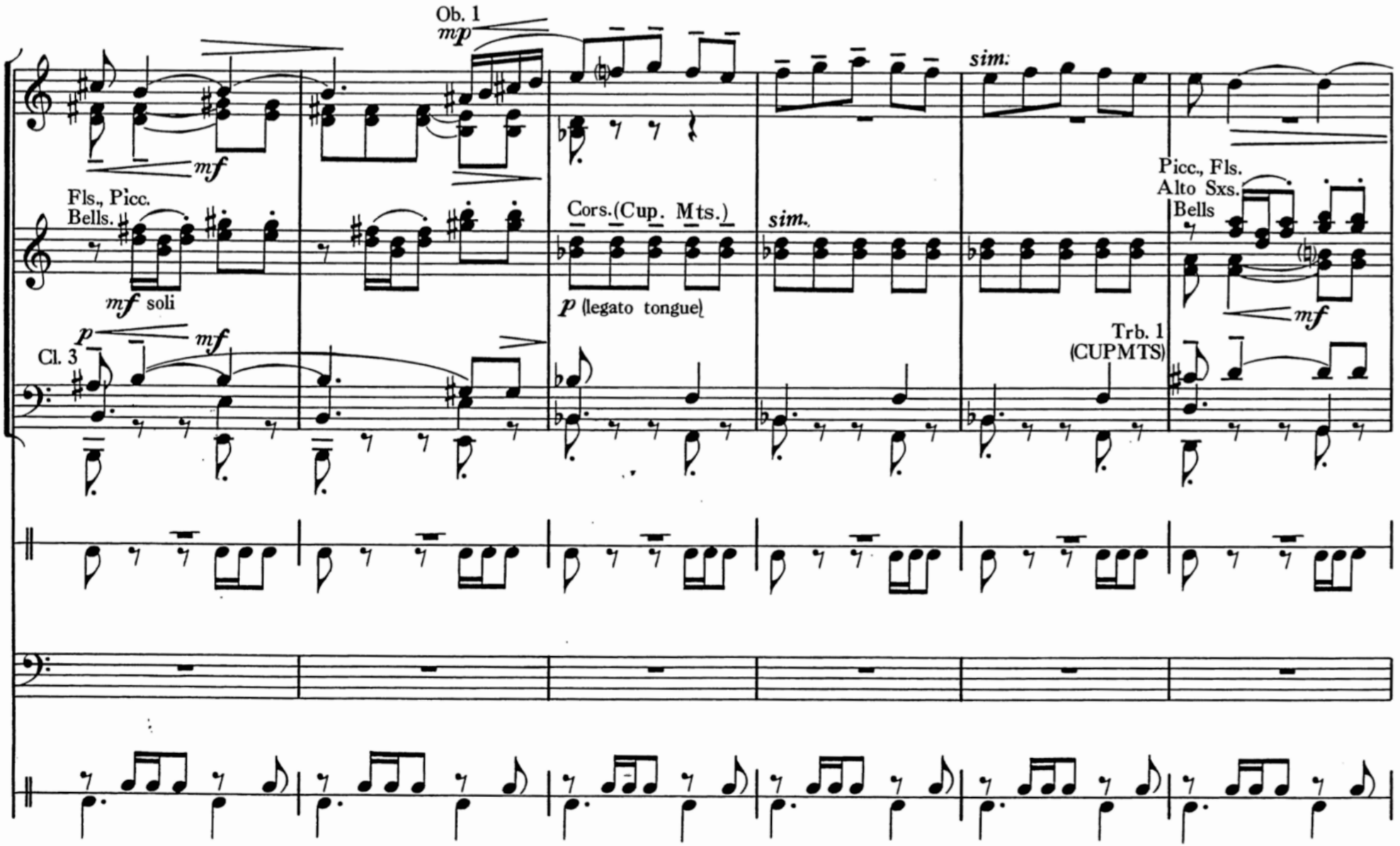
(2+3).....


Obs., Eng. Hrn. Cls.,
Alto Cl. Alto Sxs.
ff
Hrns.
ff
Trpts.
Trbs.
ff
Bar. (div)
f
f
f

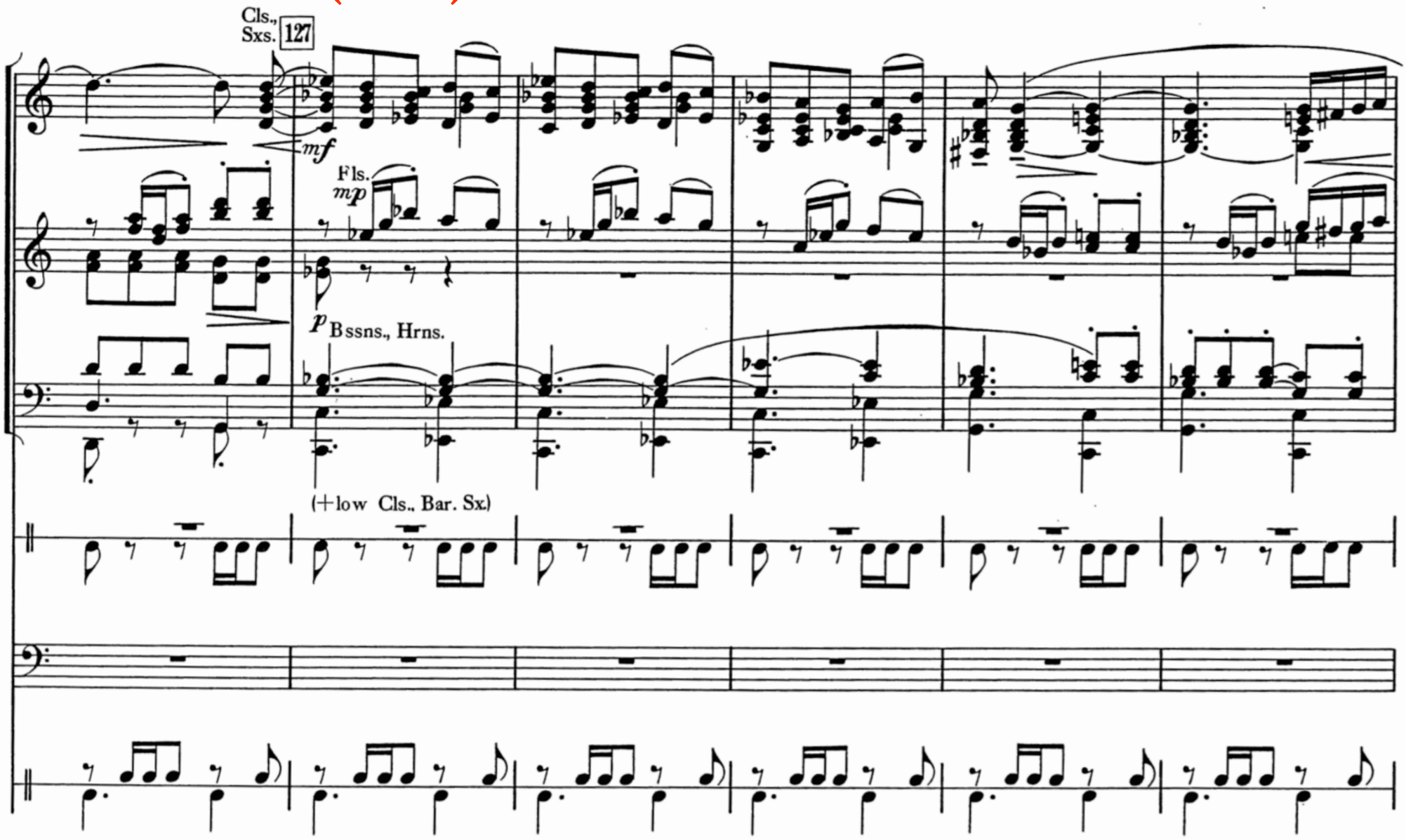

(3+2)
(3+2)
Bb Cl. 1,Eb Cl.
poco a poco dim.
Cl. 2
Obs.
Cl. 3 Eng.
Hrn. Obs.
Fls.
Trpts.
Cors.
Bssns., B. Cl.
Hrns.
Trbs. 1, 3
Bar. Tuba
Strg. B.
(with Timpani stick, normally)
dim.

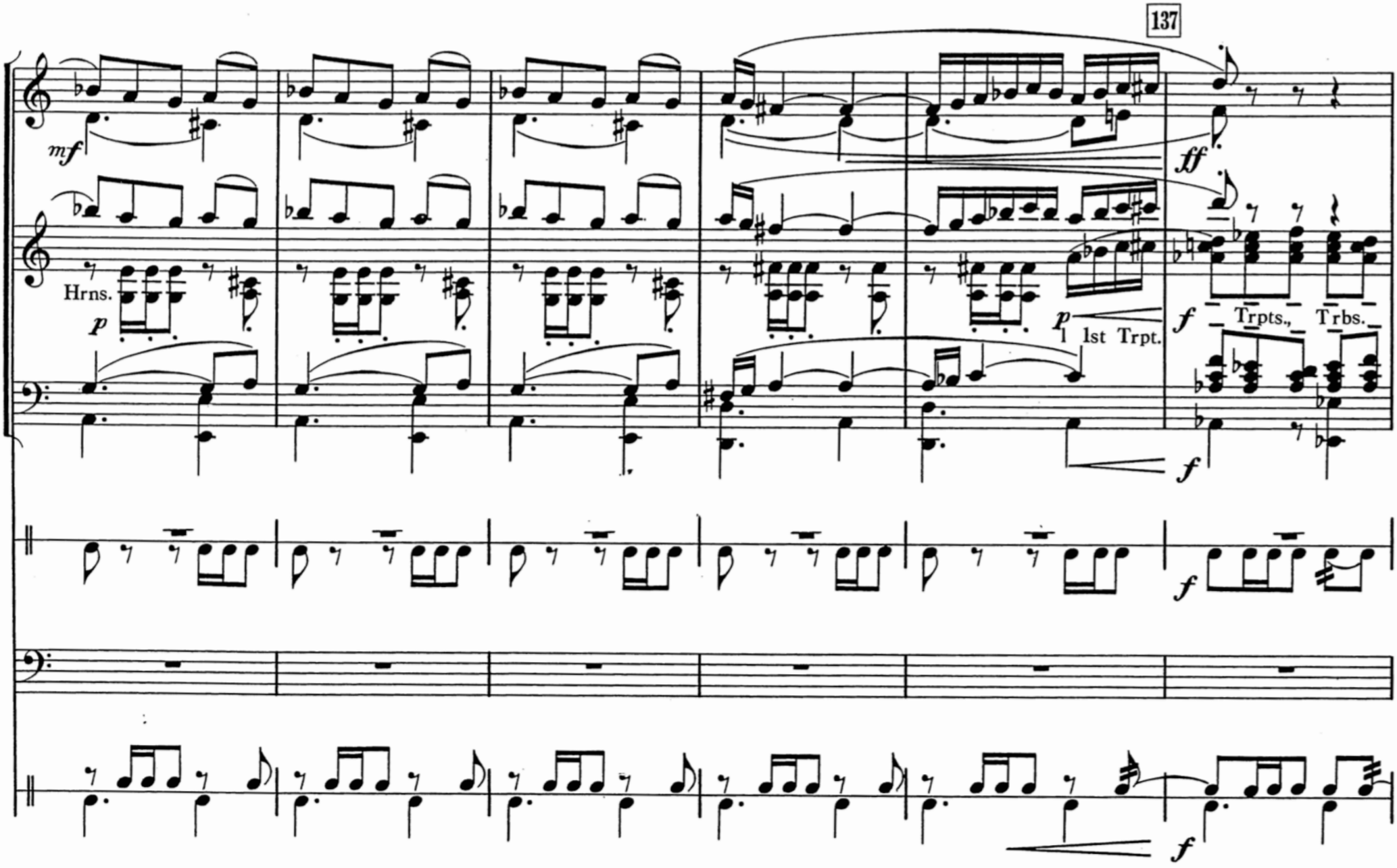
(3+2).....


117
Alto Sx. 1
mp
sempre dim.
pp
Cl. 2.
div.
(Vibra.)|(legato|tongue)
dim.
pp
B. Cl.
poco a poco dim.
p
poco a poco dim.
pp
poco a poco dim.
p

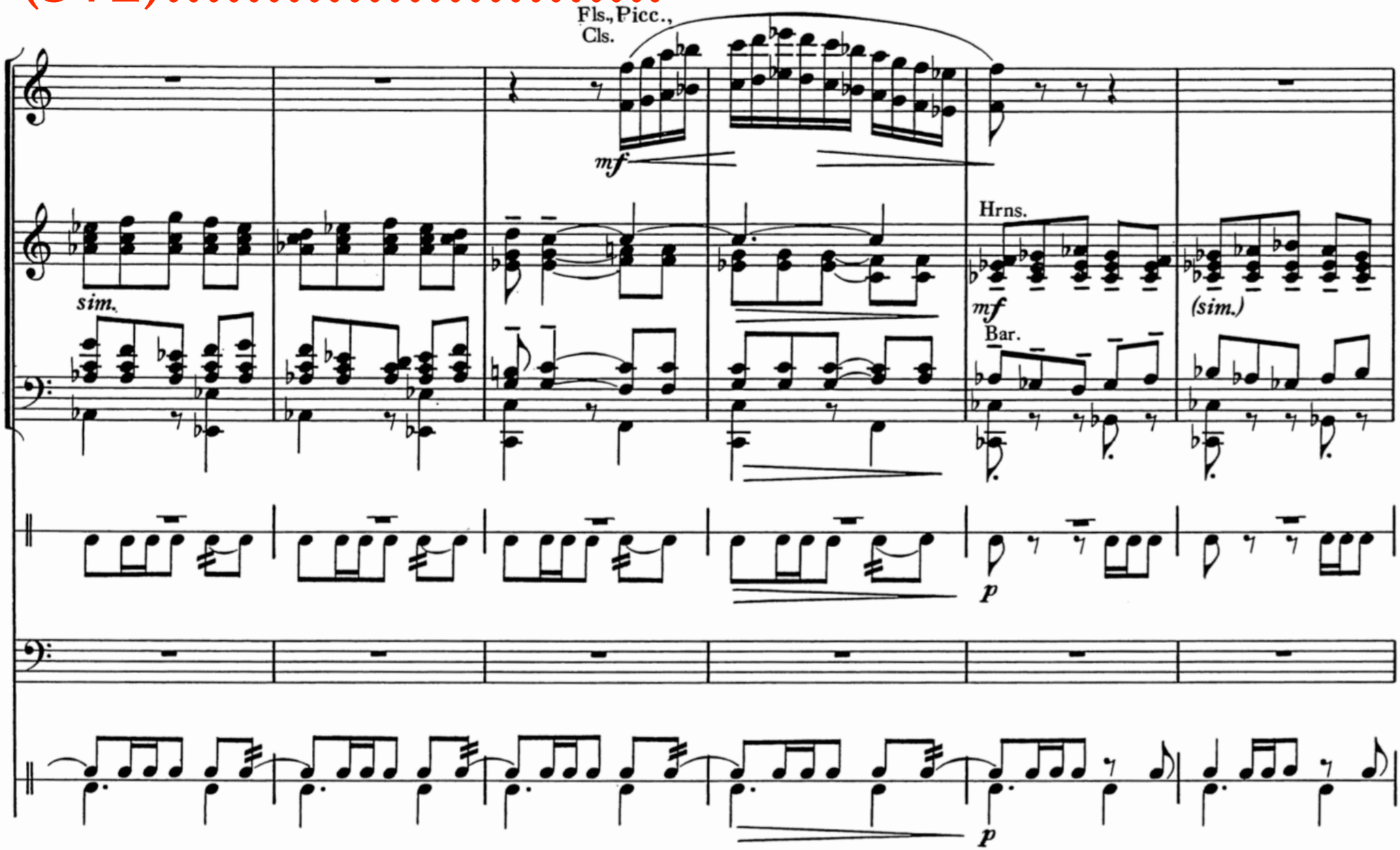

Ob. 1
mp
mf
sim.
Fls., Picc.
Bells.
mf soli
Cors.(Cup. Mts.)
sim.
Picc., Fls.
Alto Sxs.
Bells
mf
p (legato tongue)
p
mf
Cl. 3
Trb. 1
(CUPMTS)

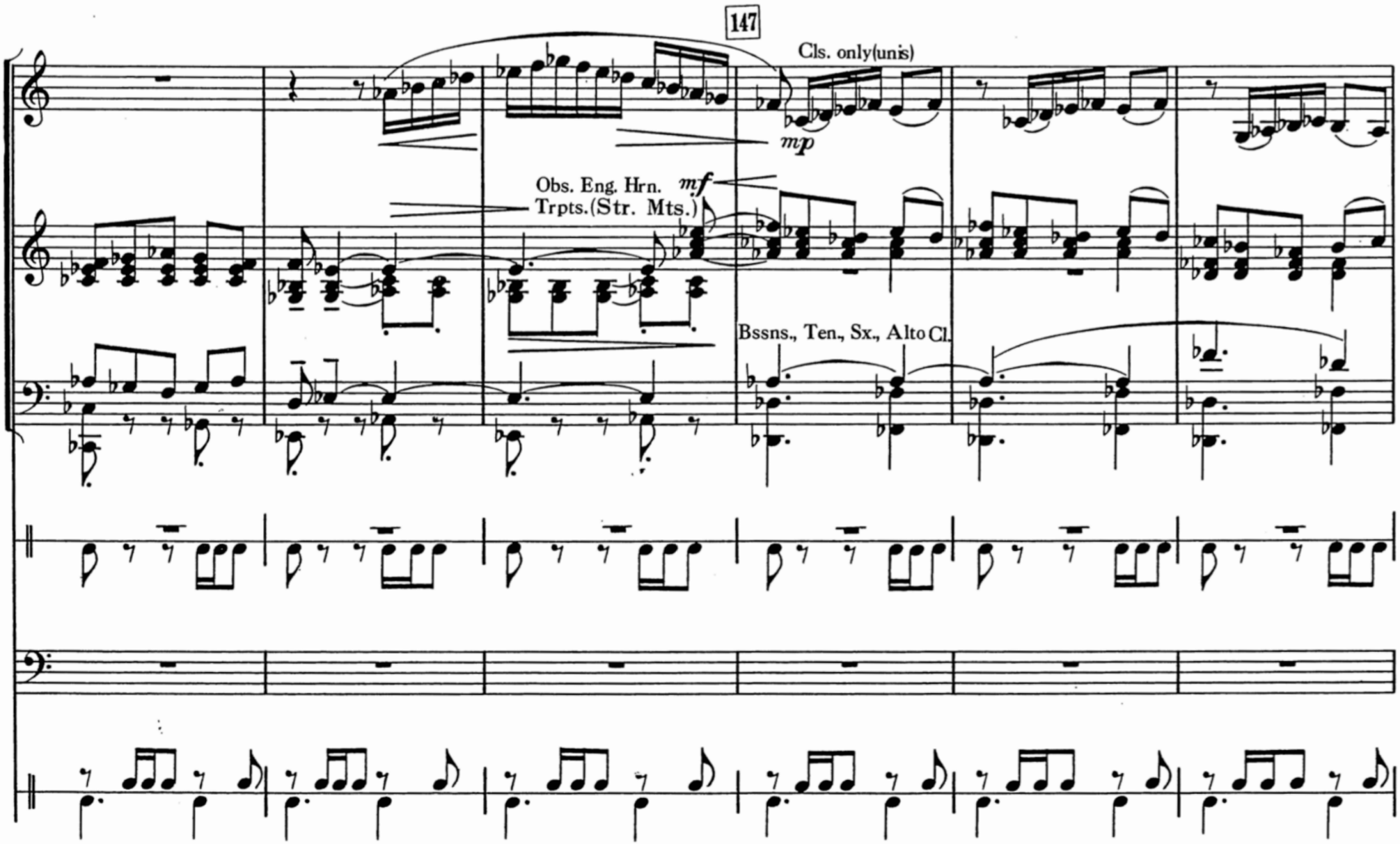
(3+2).....



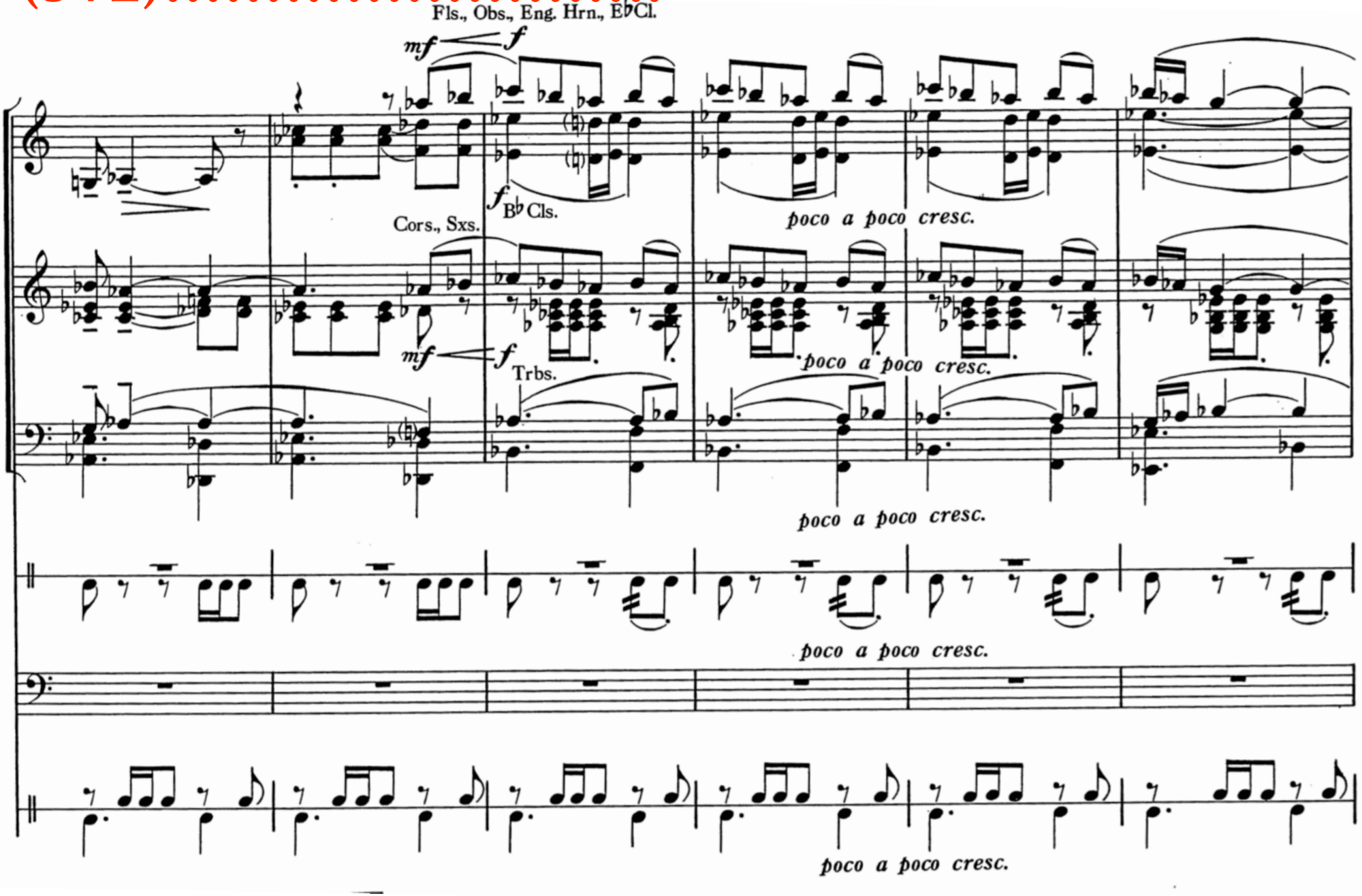

137
mf
Hrns.
p
ff
p
1 1st Trpt.
f
Trpts.
Trbs.
f
f
f

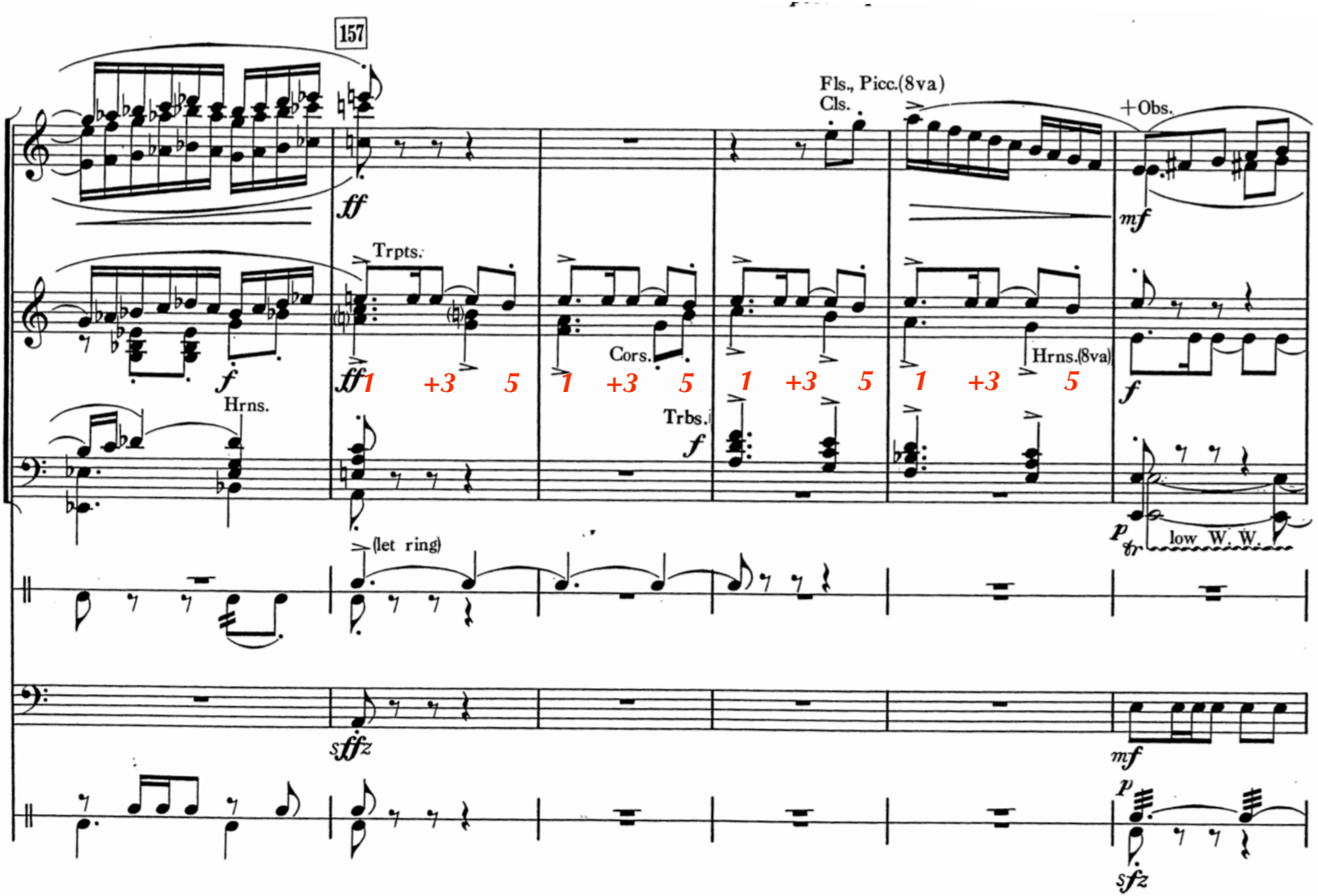
(3+2).....

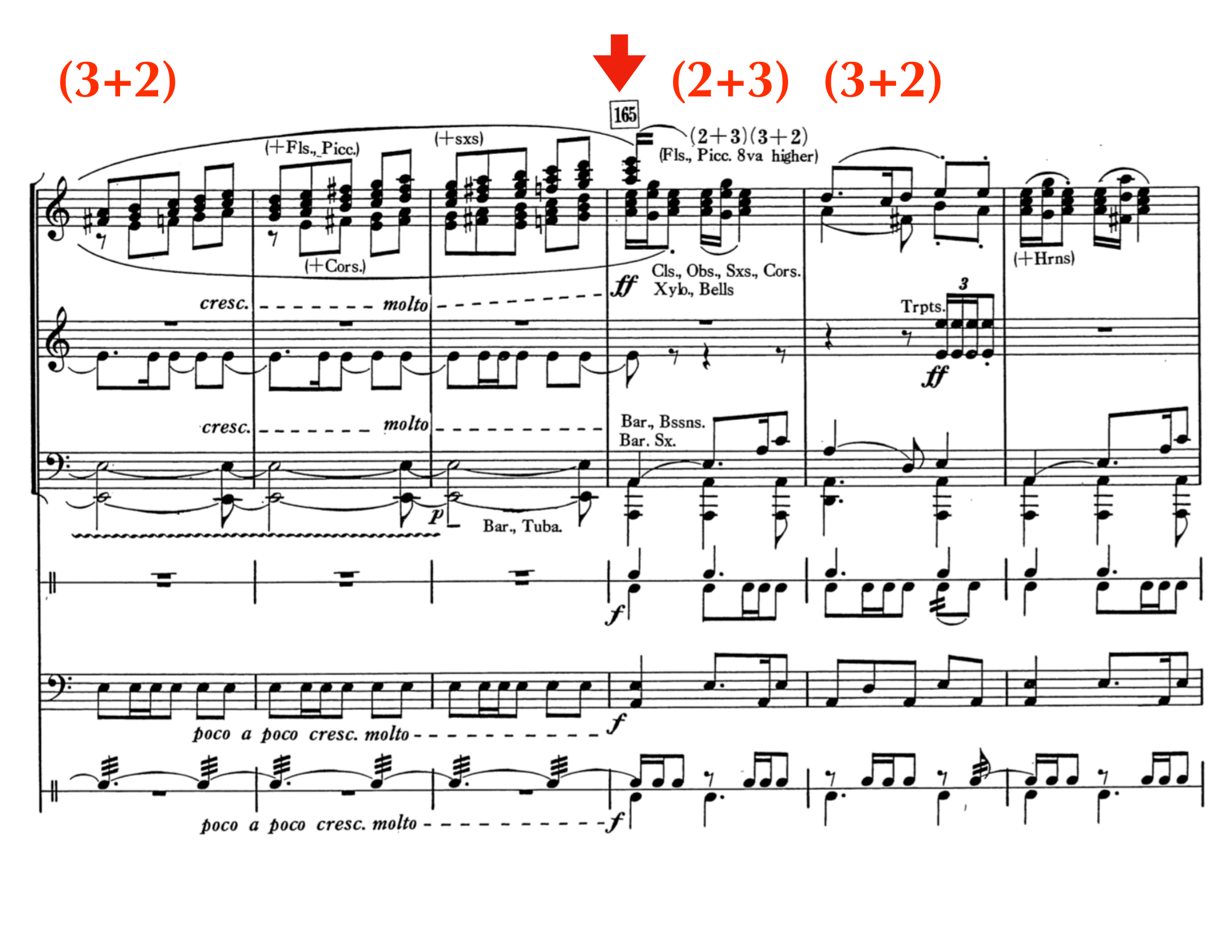


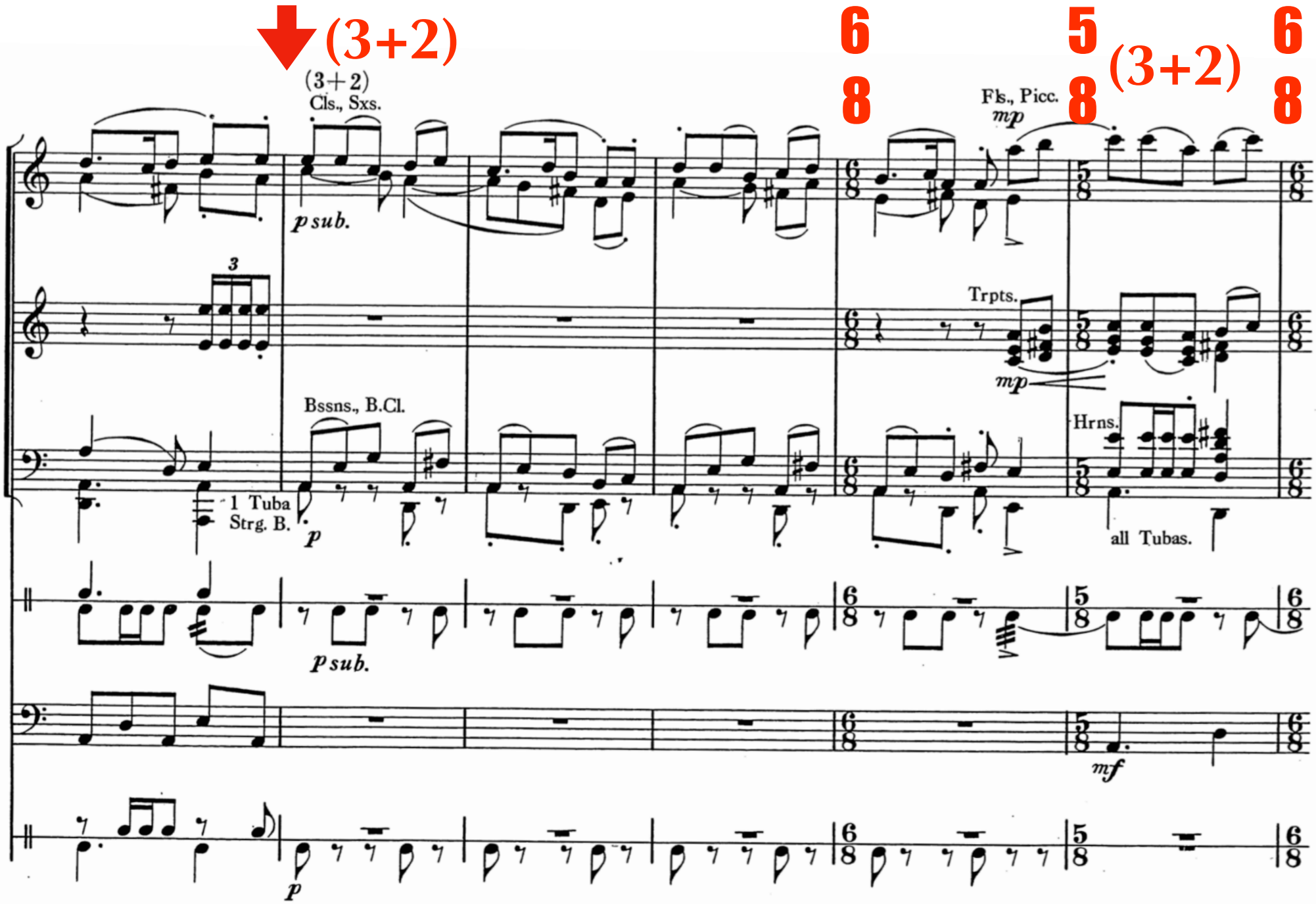

147
Cls. only(unis)
mp
Obs. Eng. Hrn.
Trpts.(Str. Mts.)
mf
Bssns., Ten., Sx., Alto Cl.

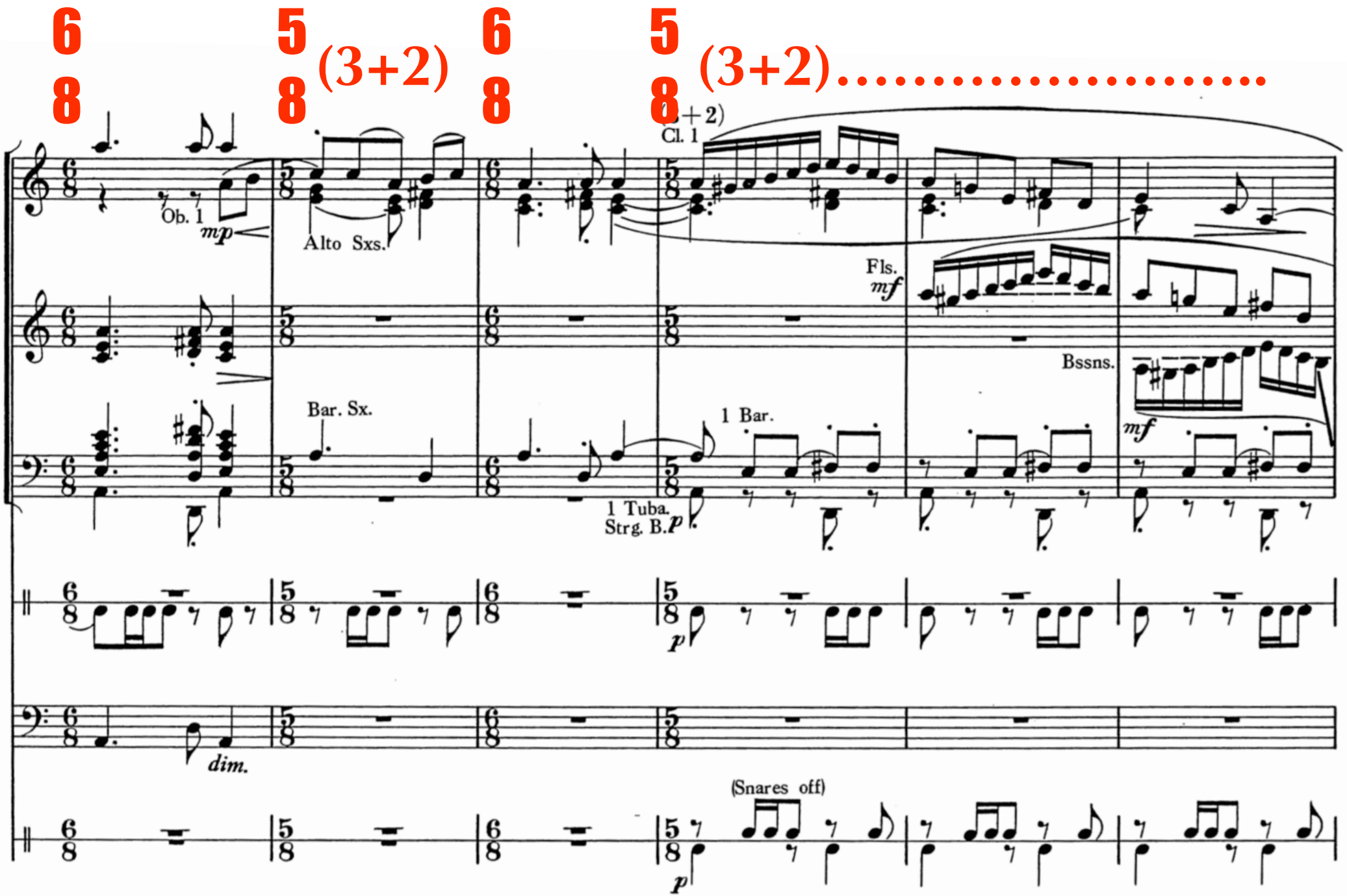
(3+2).....

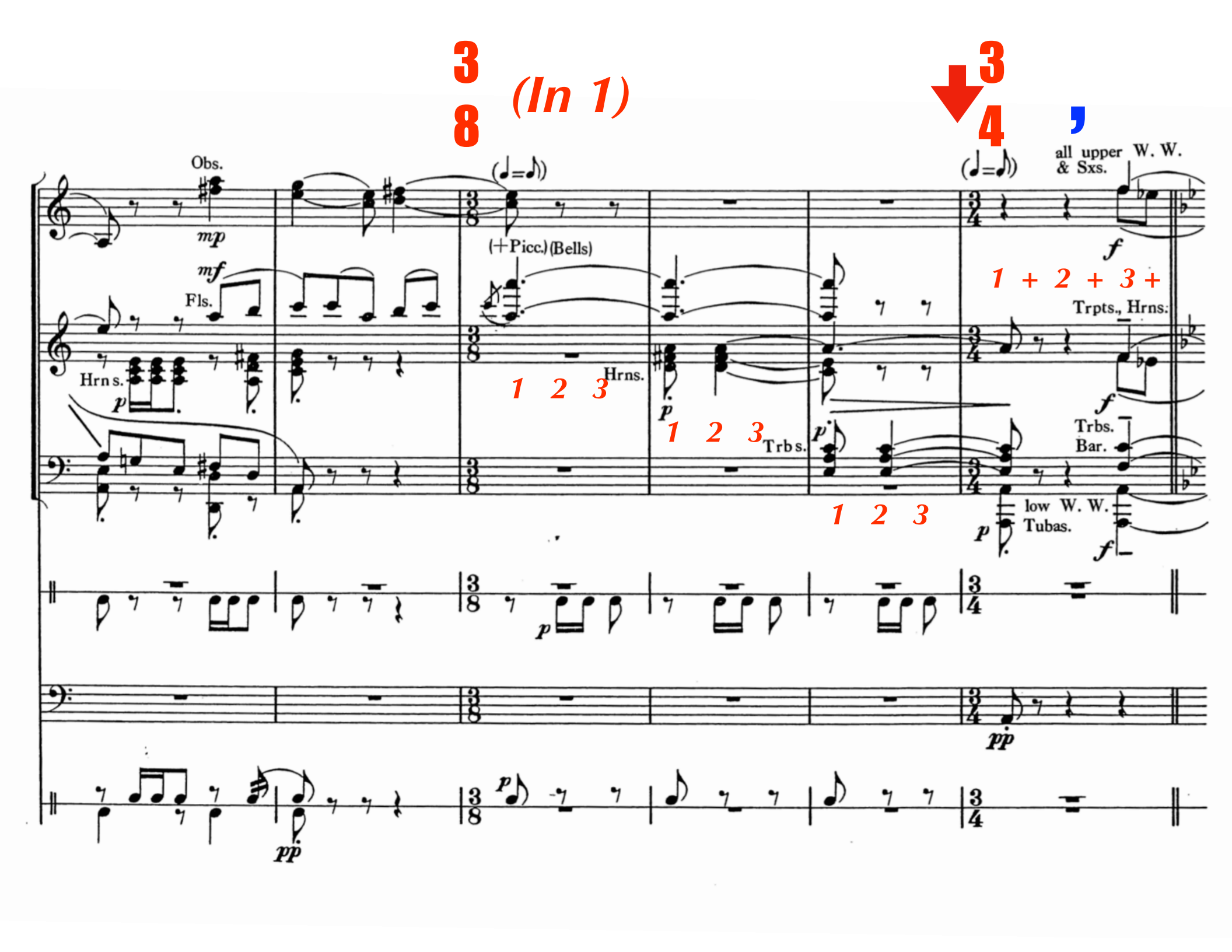

Fls., Obs., Eng. Hrn., E♭Cl.
mf
f
Cors., Sxs.
f
B♭ Cls.
poco a poco cresc.
mf
f
Trbs.
poco a poco cresc.
poco a poco cresc.
poco a poco cresc.
poco a poco cresc.


157
Fls., Picc.(8va)
Cls.
+Obs.
ff
mf
Trpts.
f
ff
Cors.
Hrns.(8va)
1 +3 5 1 +3 5 1 +3 5 1 +3 5
Hrns.
Trbs.
f
f
p
tr
low W. W.
(let ring)
sffz
mf
p
sfz


(3+2)
(2+3) (3+2)
165
(2+3)(3+2)
(Fls., Picc. 8va higher)
(+Fls., Picc.)
(+sxs)
(+Cors.)
(+Hrns)
ff
Cls., Obs., Sxs., Cors.
Xylo., Bells
cresc. molto
Trpts.
3
ff
cresc. molto
Bar., Bssns.
Bar. Sx.
p
Bar., Tuba.
f
f
poco a poco cresc. molto
f
poco a poco cresc. molto
f


(3+2)
(3+2)
Cls., Sxs.
6/8
5/8
(3+2)
6/8
Fls., Picc.
mp
psub.
3
Trpts.
mp
Bssns., B.Cl.
Hrns.
1 Tuba
Strg. B.
p
all Tubas.
psub.
mf
p


6/8
5/8 (3+2)
6/8
5/8 (3+2).....
Ob. 1
mp
Alto Sxs.
Cl. 1
Fls.
mf
Bssns.
mf
Bar. Sx.
1 Bar.
1 Tuba.
Strg. B.
p
p
dim.
(Snares off)
p


3
8
(In 1)
3
4
Obs.
mp
mf
Fls.
Hrn s.
p
(+Picc.) (Bells)
1 2 3
Hrns.
p
1 2 3
Trb s.
p
1 2 3
p
low W. W.
Tubas.
f
all upper W. W.
& Sxs.
f
1 + 2 + 3 +
Trpts., Hrns.
f
Trbs.
Bar.
f
p
pp
p
pp

“Great conductors get the best out of their people at the right time. They ensure their musicians feel significant, accepted and secure.”

–MICHAEL HYATT

Larry Lang

The Maestro's Magic!

TOP 10:

The Maestro's Magic!

#10

Anu Tali

ALWAYS BE GRACIOUS AND KIND

The Maestro's Magic!

#9

KNOW THE SCORE!

The Maestro's Magic!

#8

USE
BOTH
HANDS

BUT HAVE A
REASON FOR
USING THE
LEFT HAND

Tomomi Nishimoto

The Maestro's Magic!

#7

FOCUS ON BREATHING

Joseph Young

The Maestro's Magic!

#6

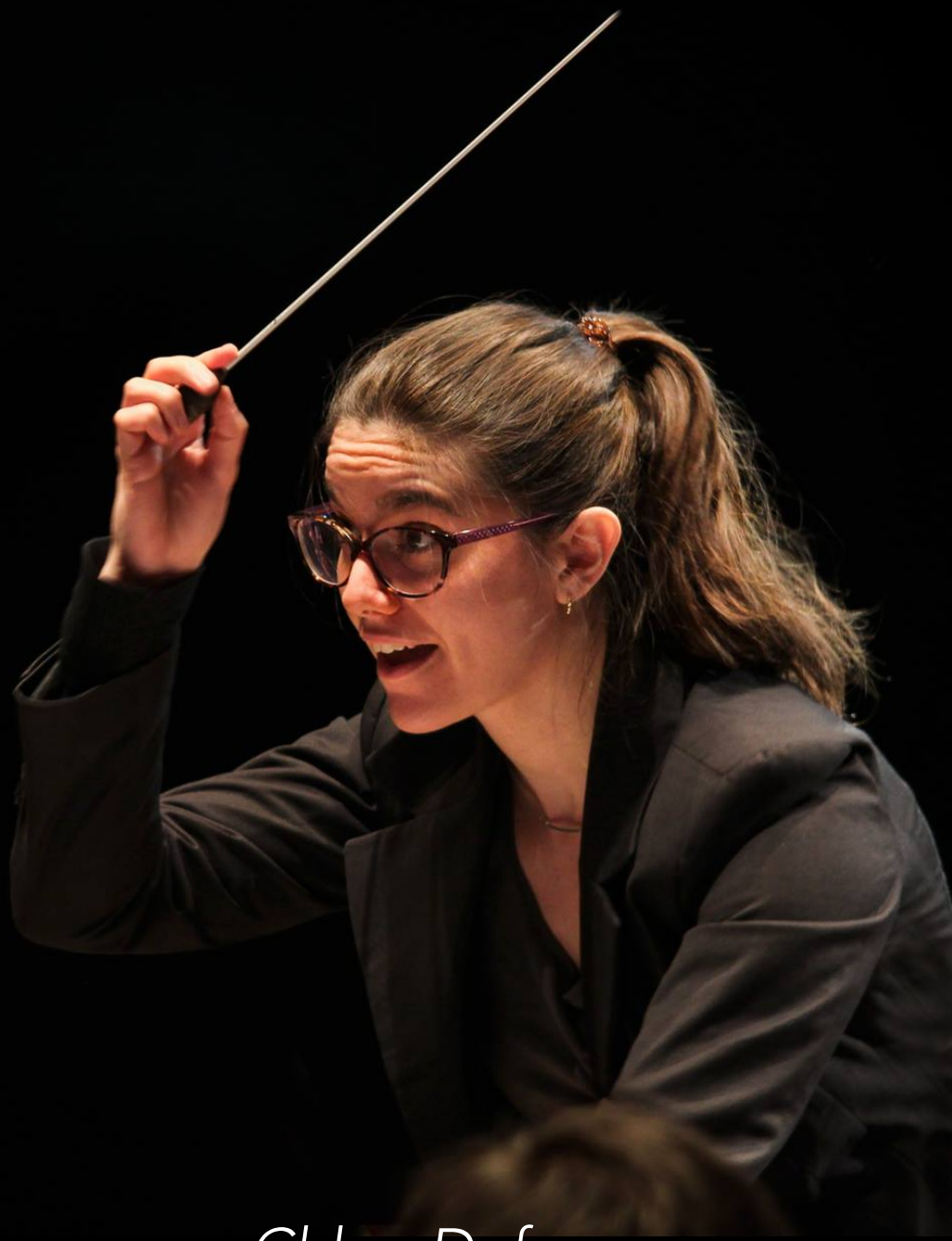
STRIVE TO HAVE YOUR BANDS...

PLAY LIKE ORCHESTRA'S BOW...
AND LIKE CHOIRS SING!

The Maestro's Magic!

#5

WORK FOR CLARITY



Chloe Dufresne

The Maestro's Magic!

#4

BE
ECONOMICAL

(DON'T OVER
CONDUCT)

Arturo Toscanini

The Maestro's Magic!

#3

MAINTAIN METER, PULSE AND TEMPI

Marin Alsop

The Maestro's Magic!

#2

PRACTICE!

THIS IS IMPORTANT.

SO MANY DIRECTORS DON'T!

The Maestro's Magic!

AND NOW... THE #1 SECRET TO BEING AN EFFECTIVE CONDUCTOR...

Lorin Maazel

The Maestro's Magic!

#1

BE YOURSELF!

DRAW ON YOUR OWN INSPIRATIONS AND EXPERIENCES.

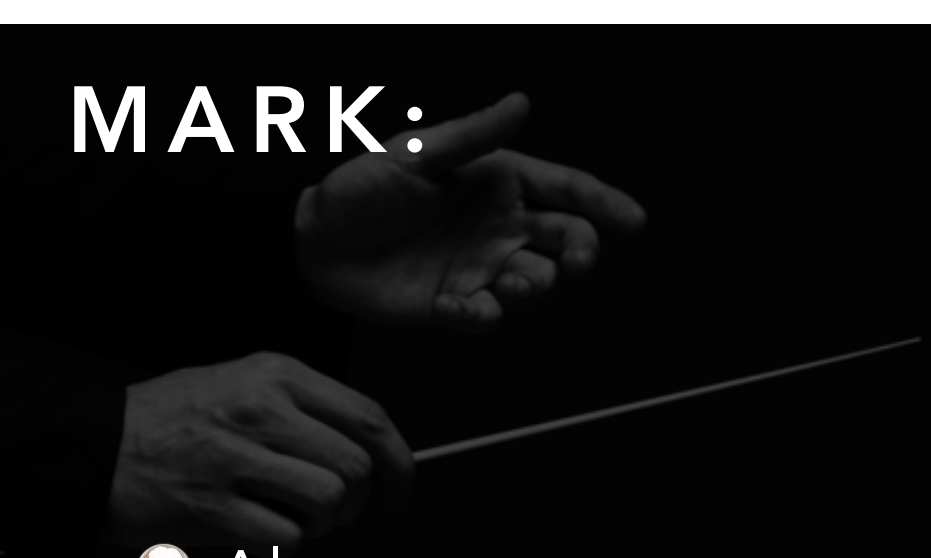
CONDUCT THE MUSIC!

Alondra de la Parra

THE MAESTRO'S MAGIC!

FINAL THOUGHTS

MARK:

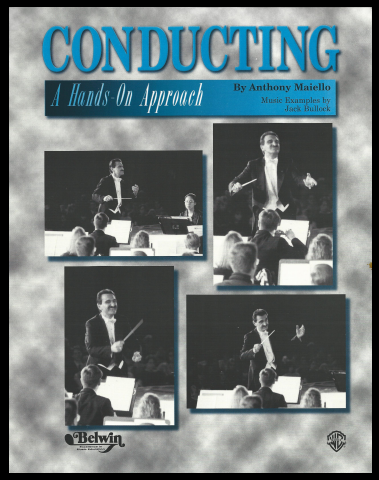


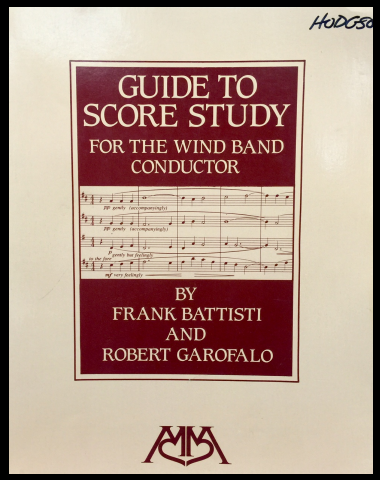
- Always prepare your scores and have an effective rehearsal Plan A, B & C.
- ALWAYS discuss phrasing and musicality.
- Become obsessed with balance, color, and bass motion.
- ALWAYS rehearse transitions - they are the glue that holds the piece together and the place where things can fall apart.
- Continue to assess yourself by video recording yourself.

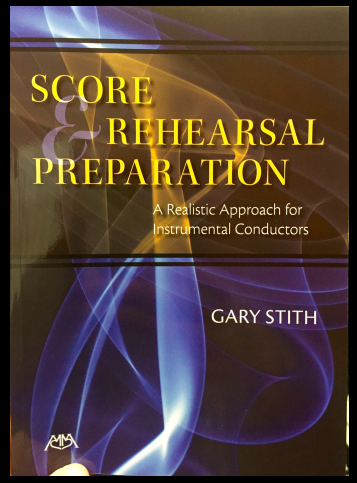
KEITH:

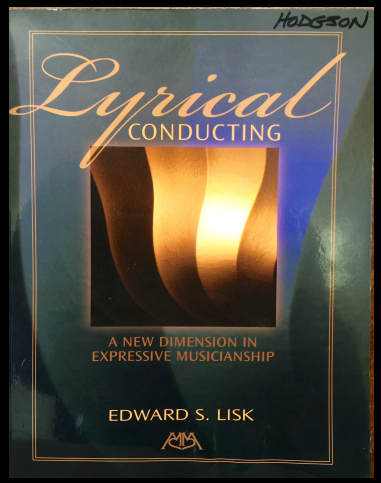
- *LOOK* Like the Music!
- Avoid Sending Mixed Messages.
- Clarity of gestures.
- Find true musical experiences.
- Delivery of the moment!

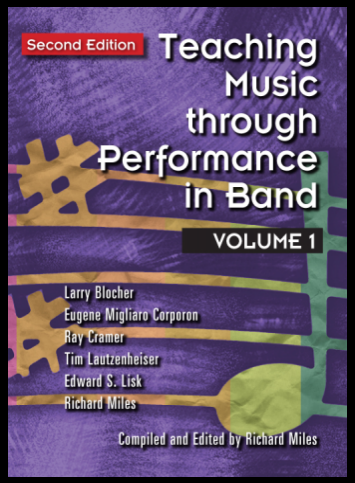
RECOMMENDED BOOKS

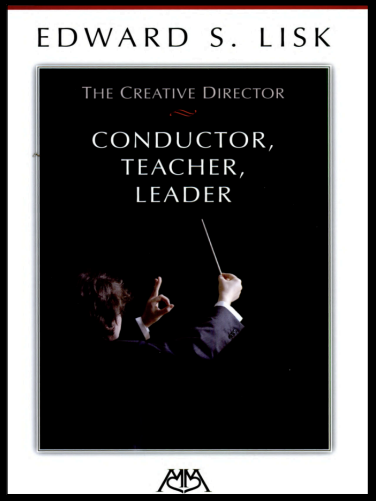


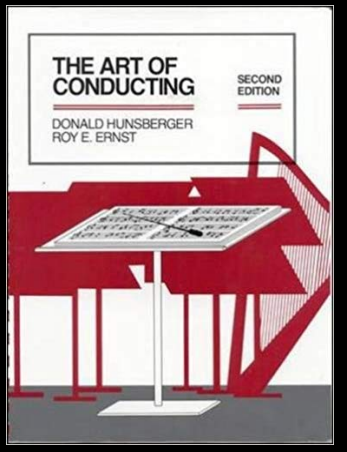


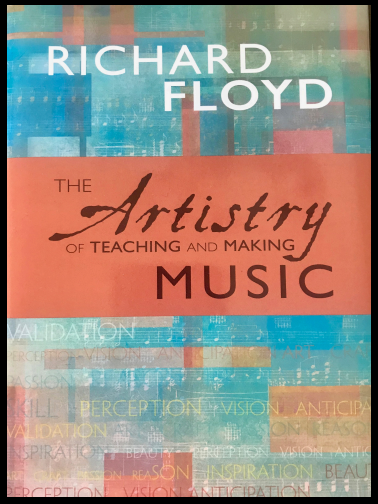


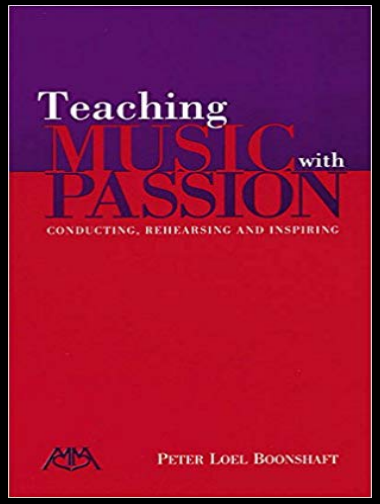


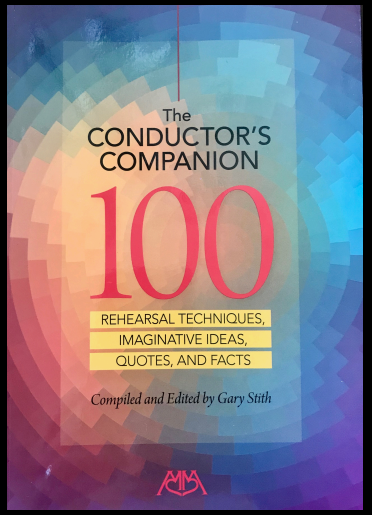


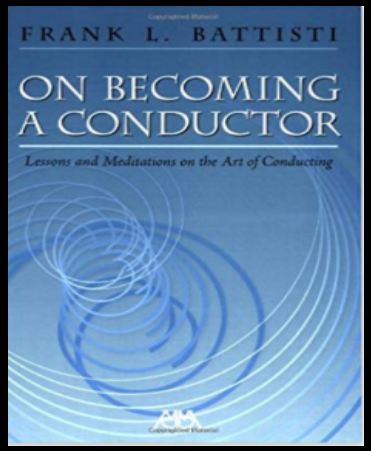


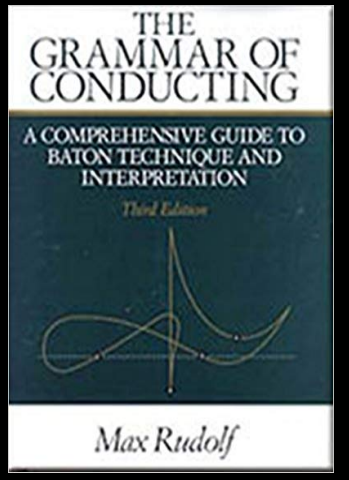








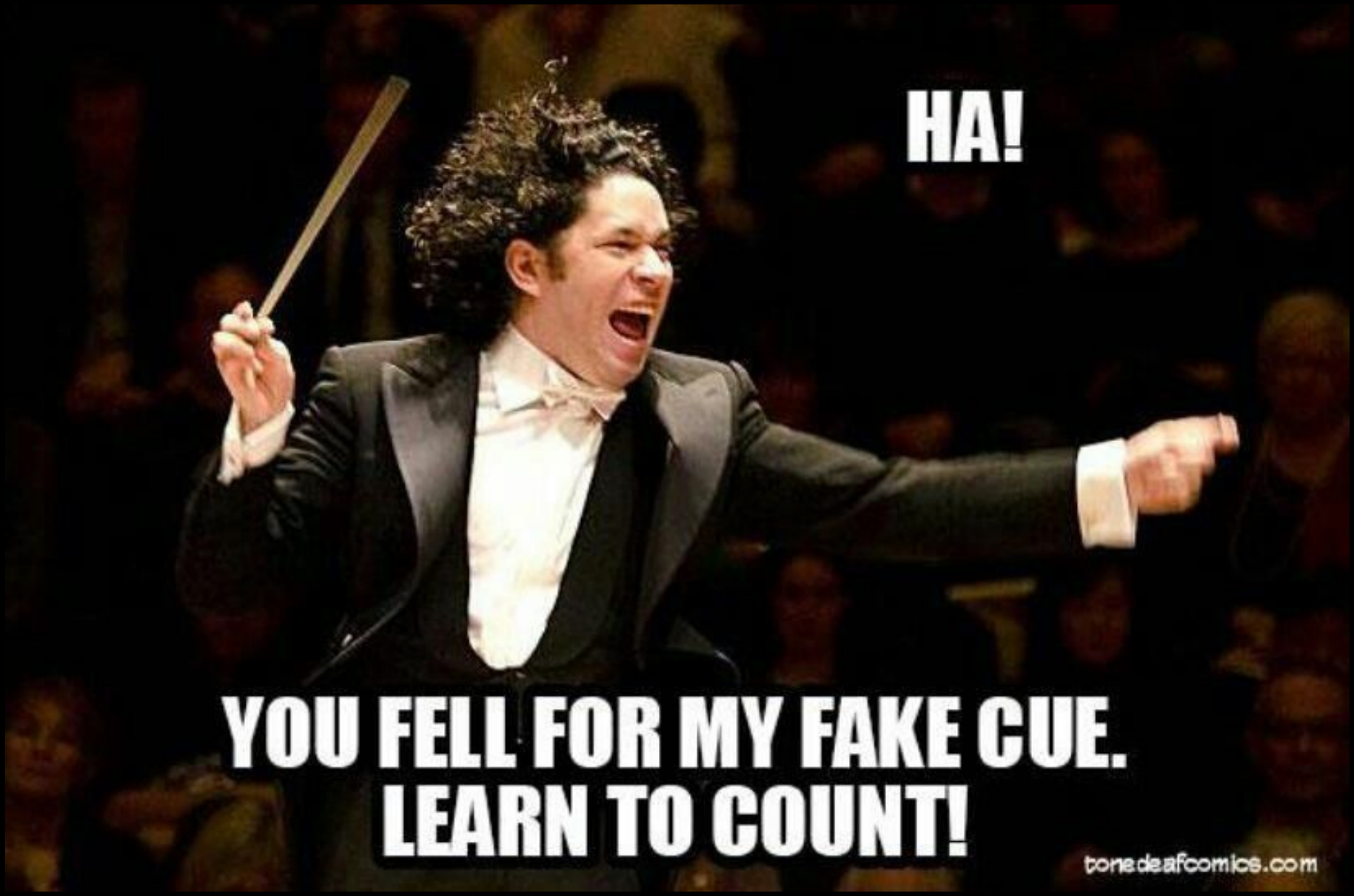




“I set out to create a means whereby music could be a way of vindicating the rights of the masses.”

–GUSTAVO DUDAMEL

OR...


HA!
YOU FELL FOR MY FAKE CUE.
LEARN TO COUNT!
tonedeafcomics.com

The Maestro's Magic!

Session Materials & Keynote

Please Sign-In

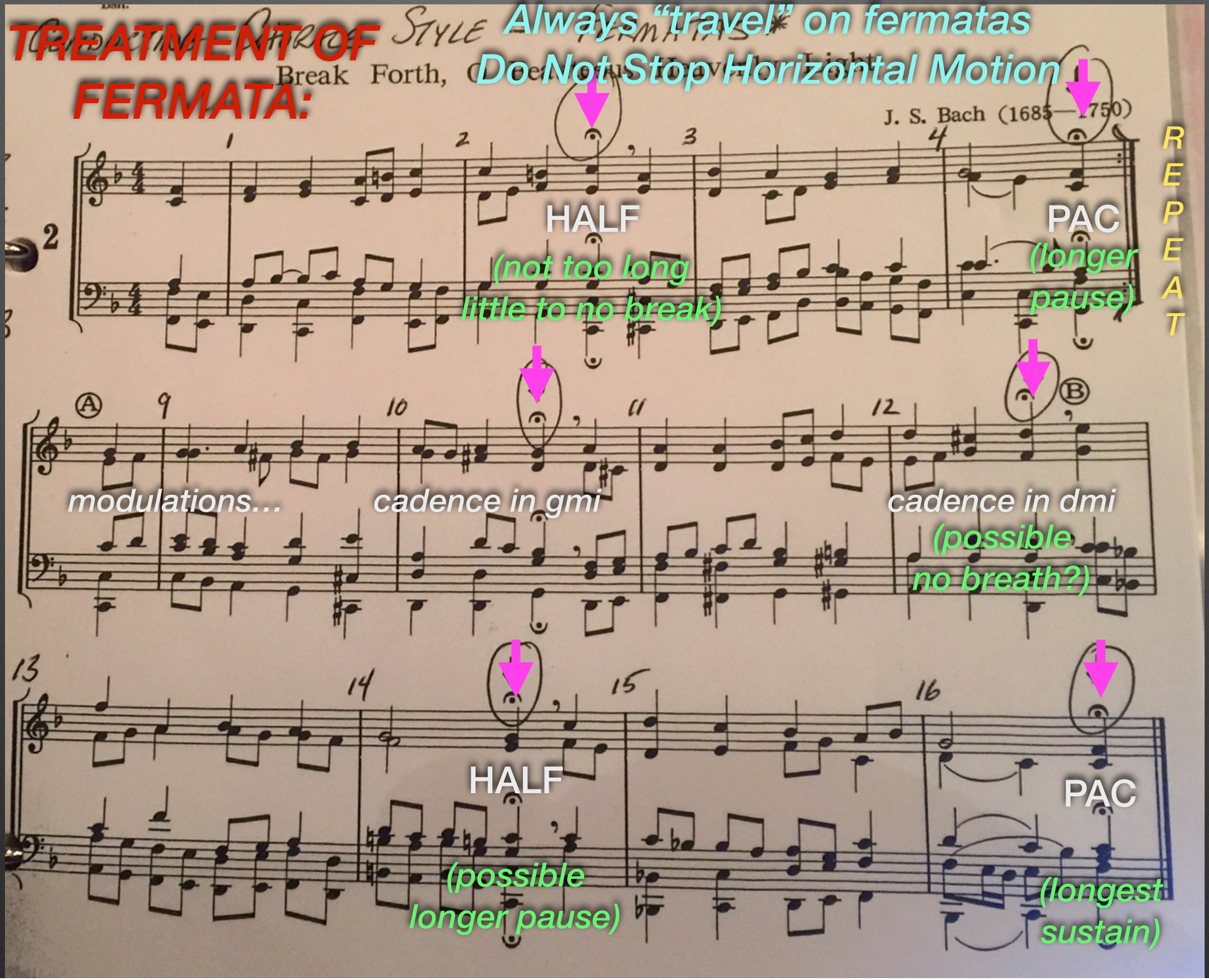
http://bit.ly/hodgson-sign-in

Contact:

khodgson@uarts.edu

mark@marklortz.com

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!


TREATMENT OF FERMATA:
Always "travel" on fermatas
Do Not Stop Horizontal Motion
Break Forth,
J. S. Bach (1685—1750)
HALF
(not too long
little to no break)
PAC
(longer
pause)
REPEAT
modulations…
cadence in gmi
cadence in dmi
(possible
no breath?)
HALF
(possible
longer pause)
PAC
(longest
sustain)