Jeffrey Ryan

BELLATRIX

for violoncello solo

Commissioned by CBC Radio Music
in partnership with the Canada Council for the Arts

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Performance notes:

Total performance time ca. 8'

s.t. = sul tasto
s.p. = sul ponticello
n.v. = non vibrato

Tenuto markings indicate a slight dynamic and rhythmic stress on the note.

All glissandi should start immediately upon sounding the initial pitch. Glissandi longer than a quarter note are notated with an opening eighth note and the required total duration. It is important to note that some glissandi end with a bow change (*e.g.* from m. 2 into m. 3) while others have no bow change at the end (*e.g.* m. 26).

BELLATRIX is a highly dramatic work that requires the soloist's awareness of the theatrical aspect of concert performance. It is essential that the singing, humming, breathing and vocalisations be integrated into the character of the music, be it aggressive or lyrical.

Programme note:

I have been interested in astronomy for many years. As a child growing up in rural Ontario, Canada, I had many opportunities for star-gazing, and I voraciously studied both the constellations and the mythologies behind them. I was always excited when Orion, the Hunter, would first appear in the evening sky, because it heralded the advent of winter, bringing with it the many bright stars and favourite constellations of those long clear nights.

Bellatrix is the Latin name given to the star that marks Orion's left shoulder. Traditionally, Orion is depicted as a man holding up a shield and brandishing a club. *Bellatrix* translates as “female warrior” and I find it cosmologically comforting that many years ago someone recognised the importance of acknowledging Orion's feminine side. It is this Female Warrior that has provided the inspiration for this extroverted and dramatic work.

BELLATRIX (the music) is a virtuosic tour de force for the soloist. Within an overall tone of aggression and emphatic outward energy there are moments of reflection and lyricism, and the integration of vocalisations and breath sounds into the soundworld of the piece draws on the full resources of the player's performance skills, resulting in a work that demands a dramatic stage presence and a recognition of the concert experience as an act of theatre.

BELLATRIX was commissioned by CBC Radio Music in partnership with the Canada Council for the Arts, as the imposed piece for the 31st CBC Radio National Competition for Young Performers.

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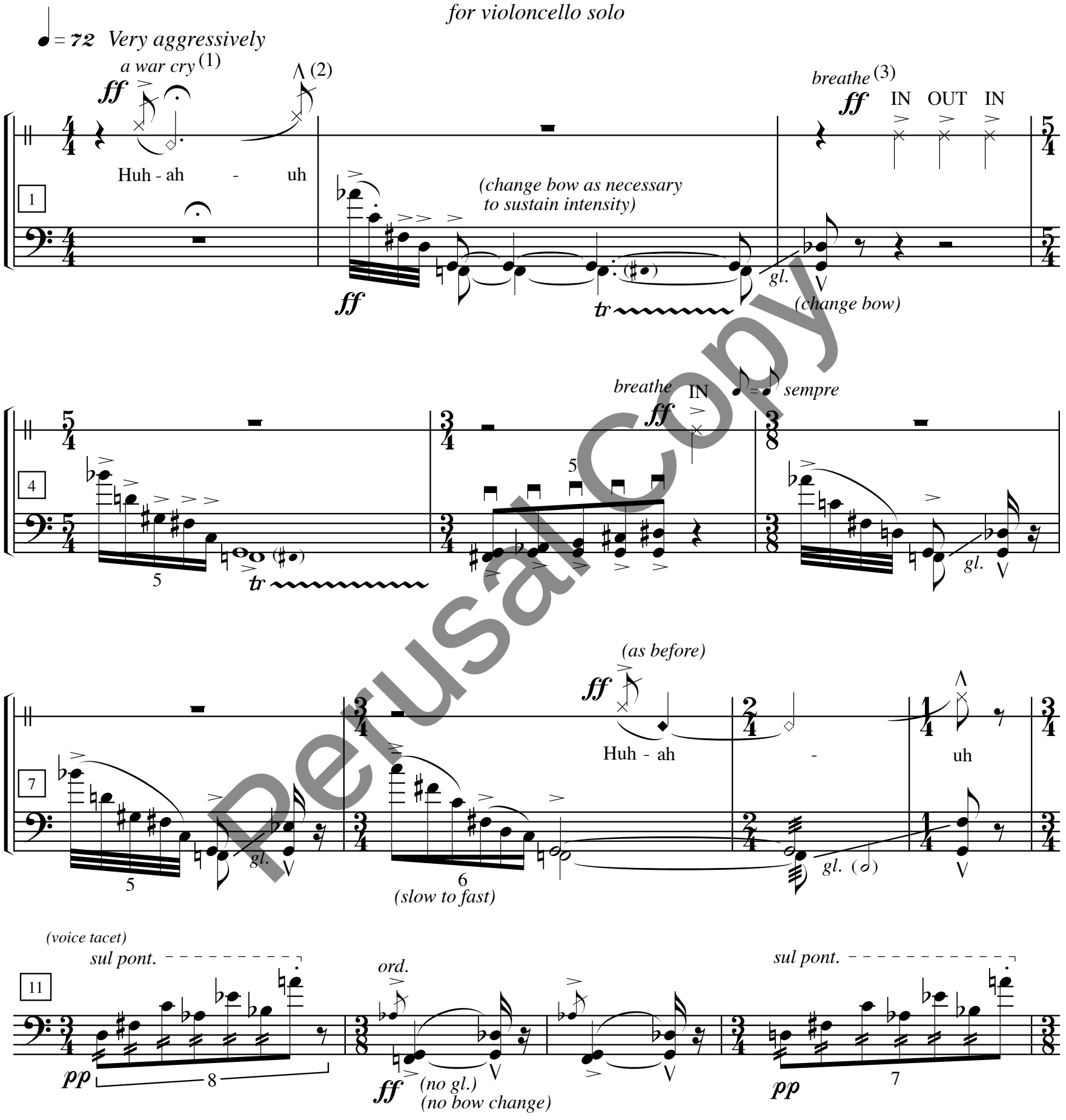

(1) Pitch is not important, but the general shape of the line should be followed. While the performer should feel free to experiment to find an effectively aggressive interpretation, it is suggested that the tone should be very straight and pushed, with a nasal quality if possible. Women should feel free to use the chest register or a "belt" tone.

(2) A complete and forceful exhalation of remaining air, from the diaphragm. There should be a sense that this action then triggers the instrument's entry.

(3) The breathing must be very angry here, strongly diaphragmatic, and should connect with both the energy of the preceding release and the following instrumental entry.

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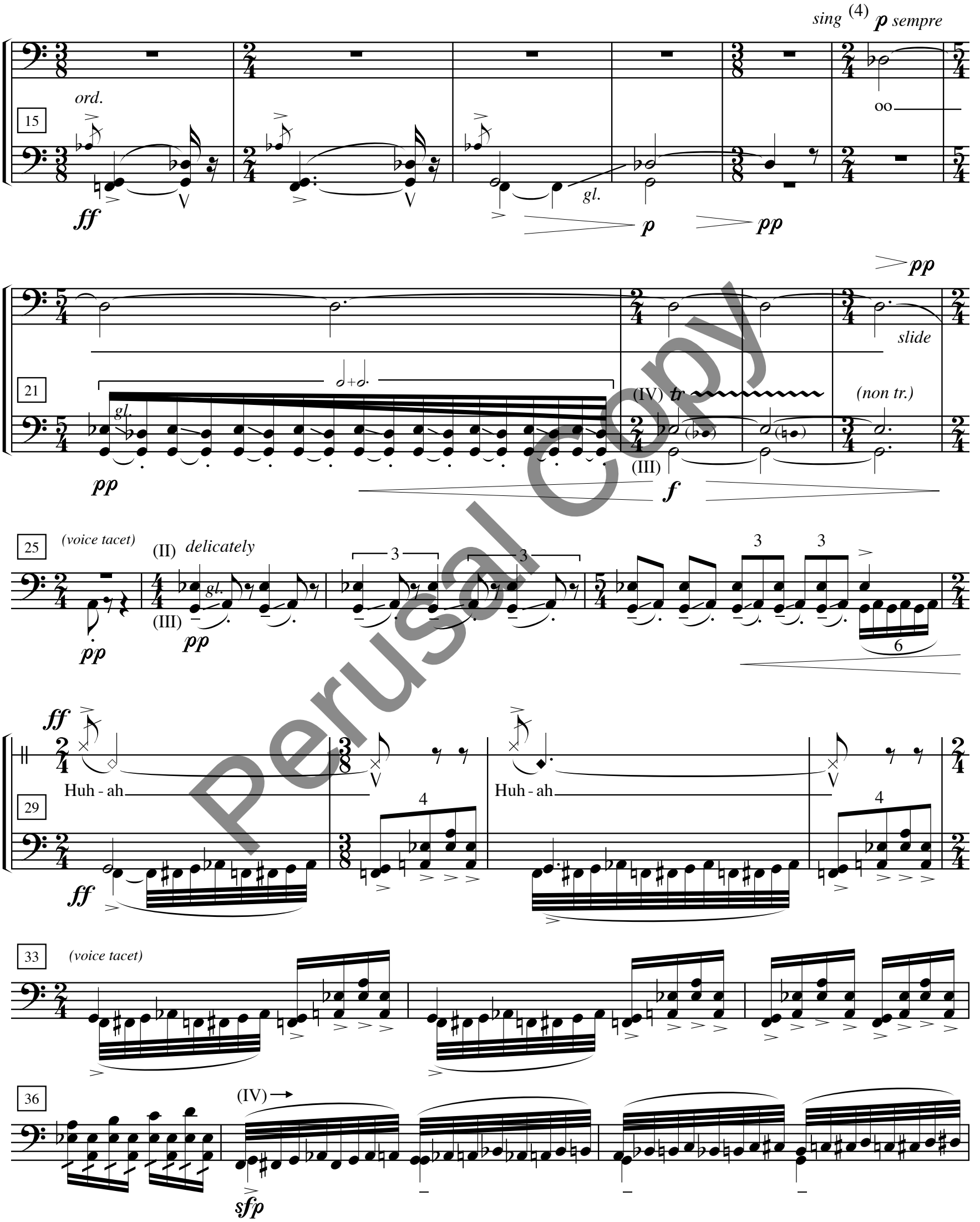

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(4) All sung and hummed tones may be transposed by octave into a comfortable register for the player.

39

poco rit. - - -

a tempo

gl.

poco rit. - - -

f

43

= 60

slow gl.

p mf

breathe mf IN

(more relaxed, but audible)

= 54

meno mosso

poco rit. - -

pp n.

49

OUT n.

espr.

p

= 48

meno mosso

(voice tacet)

pp

53

= 60 poco più mosso

rit. to - - - - - - - - -

5

p pp

pp

56

= 48

gl.

mf pp

(fast, not wide)

n.v. → molto vib.

gl.

n. mf

60

sul tasto

p n.

pp

63

pizz.

pp

(pizz. gliss. — pluck first note only)

4

(pizz. low to high)

arco

s.t. → s.p. → s.t.

pp < p > pp

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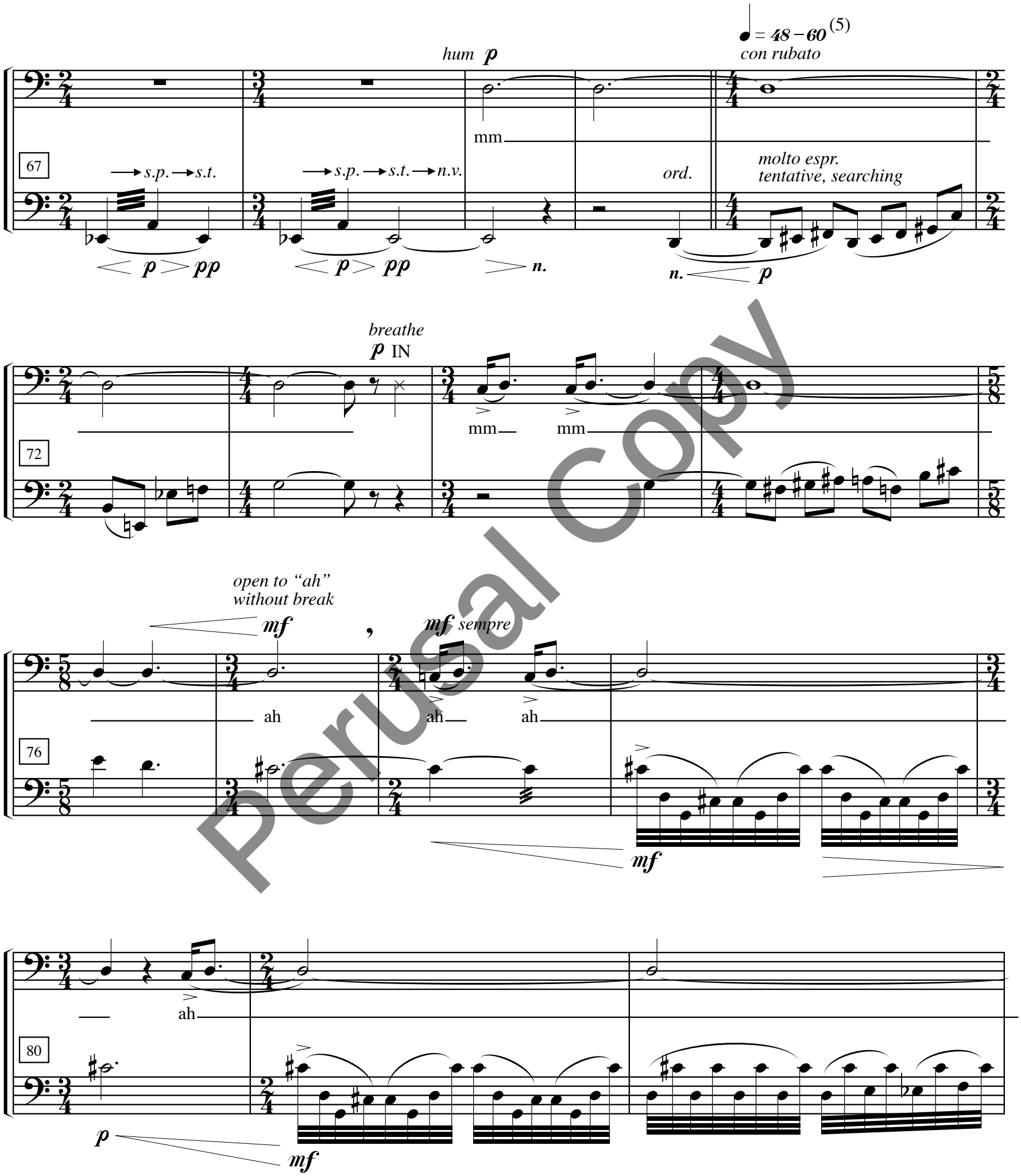

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(5) From mm. 71-88, the tempo should be *very* flexible and expressive with the given range.

accel. to

mf

gl.

ah

83

ff

♩ = 72 f

ah

85

(IV)

f

12

12

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87

(voice tacet)

accel.

furioso!

rit. to

♩ = 60

gl.

ff

ff < f poss.

♩ = 84 (♪ = 168)

leggiero, tempo giusto

(ricochet)

(I)

arco

gl.

arco

gl.

arco

89

p

92

arco

very rough - at the heel

sempre

(III)

III moves by quartertone

(IV)

ff sub.

(unison)

IV holds C#

95

(II)

0

98

gl.

gl.

(III)

102

107

V

V

V

111

5

V

V

V

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114

117

= = 168

(IV) *biting, growling*

(III)

V

pp

ff

121

rit. poco a poco to

gl.

V

V

decresc. poco a poco

125

(molto)

= 60 =

128 ♩ = 60 *a bit laboured*

p *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *gl.*

133 ♩ = 48 *espr.* 3

p *gl.* *gl.*

137 (II)

n. *mf*

141 *delicately* *pizz.* *arco*

pp *pp* *pp* *gl.* *gl.*

146 *pizz.* ♩ = 72 *arco* *pizz.* *arco* *pizz.*

pp *pp* (alternate between fundamental and artificial harmonic) *ff sub.* *pp* *ff sub.*

150 *arco* *accel. to* ♩ = 88 *sing* *f* *gl.* (o) *f poss.*

ah *(gl. while trilling)* *(highest note on III)*

pp *f* *f poss.*

(voice tacet) ♩ = 168 *sub.*

155 *f*

158

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161

163

166

169

gl.

hum ***p***

172

mm

mm

pizz.

arco *pizz.*

p

ff ***p***

176

mm mm ah

arco *pizz.* *arco* *pizz.*

ff ***p*** ***ff*** ***p***

(voice tacet)

179

arco

p ***f***

182

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185

188

191

sfp f sfp

195

f

sfp f sfp

198

f

4 4

ff

202

gl. gl.

206

gl. gl.

pp

211

fff

215

4 4

gl. (o)

gl.

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