Niki Zohdi

Illuminans Obscurum

2024-25

for solo soprano sax

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for
solo soprano sax

Duration: c. 10'

Illuminans Obscurum (tr. 'illuminating the dark') explores momentary cracks of illumination within a background of obscurity. I am fascinated with how the different dimensions of composition can be used to create fluctuating senses of obscurity, especially where pre-existent materials are used. In this piece, all of the pitch and rhythmic material is based, in one way or another, to Pérotin's *Beata Viscera* - a piece which is all about mystery. To heighten this idea of mystery, each section in *Illuminans Obscurum* takes Pérotin's material and obscures it in different ways: through texture, through pitch/ rhythm alterations and through timbre as well as combinations of these parameters. There are very, very short moments in each section where Pérotin's material is quoted in its original form, but these moments are sporadic and may not always be obvious.

Performance notes

- 1/2 breath tone; 1/2 normal tone

- full breath tone

- slap tongue

Multiphonics are all numbered after Daniel Kientzy, *Les sons multiples aux saxophones* (Paris: Editions Salabert, 2003)

T - teeth notes

- random pitch contours

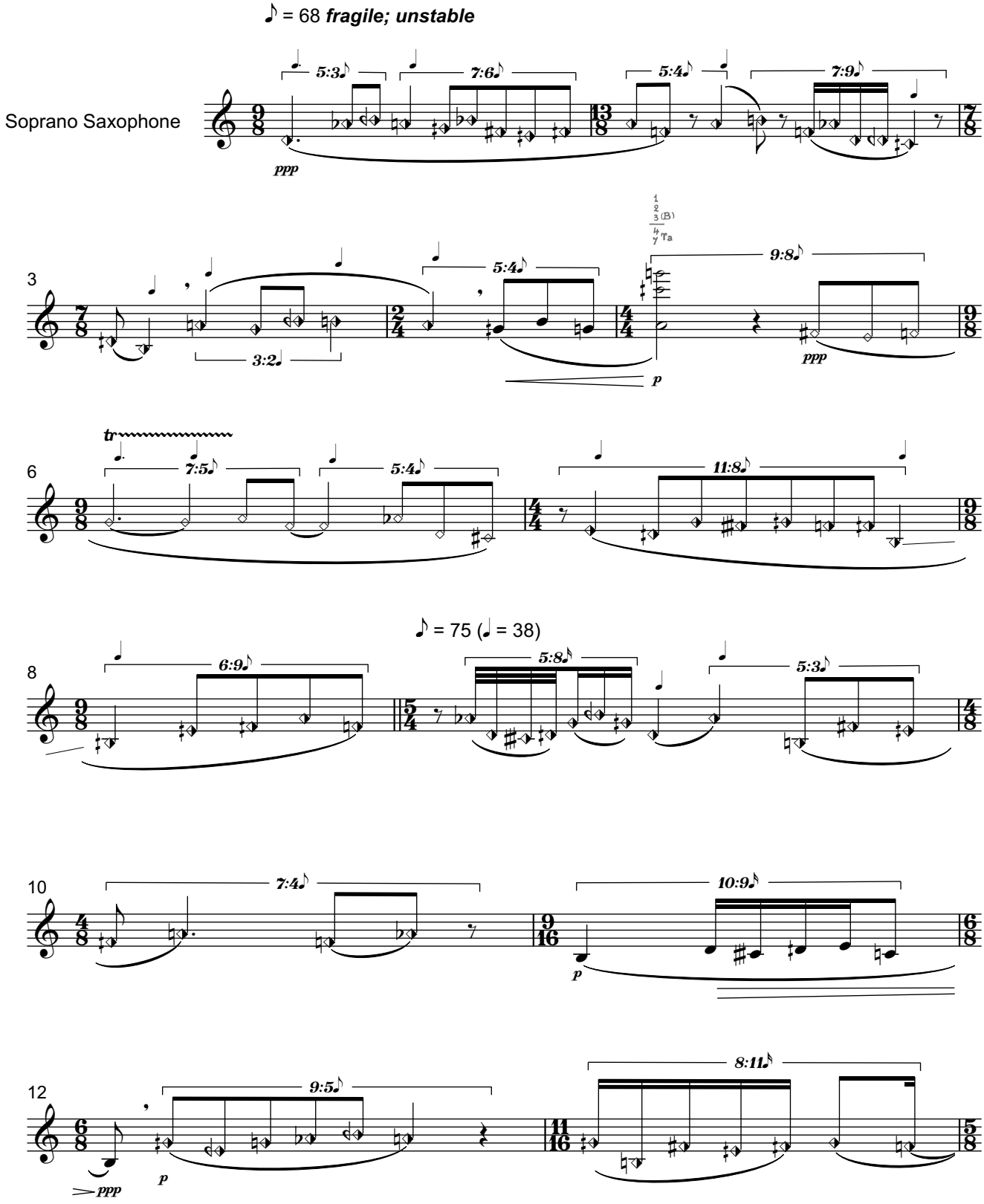
- shout into instrument (with no pitch) to create a 'growl' sound

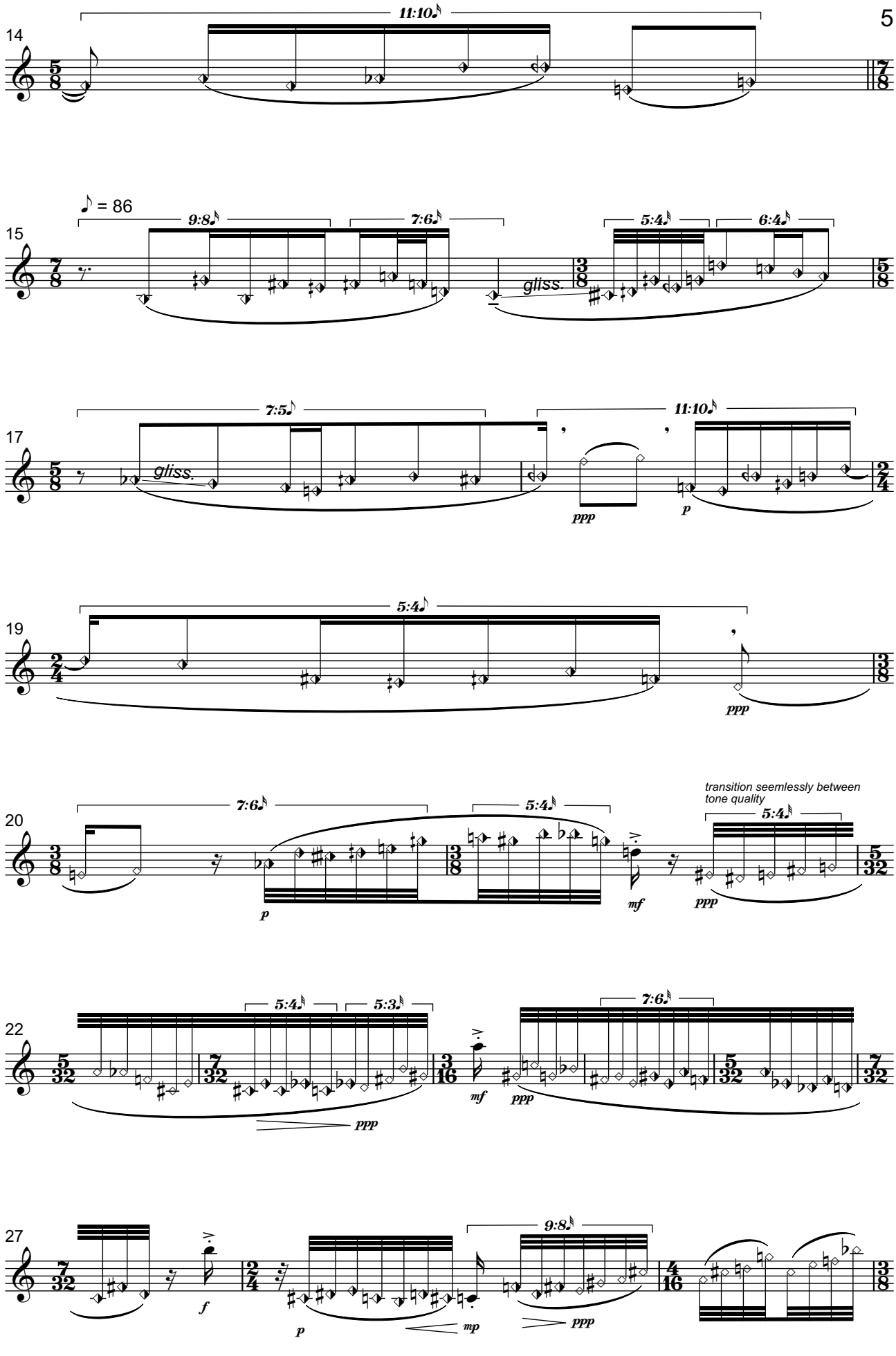
Score is **TRANSPOSED**
Accidentals only apply to the note they are next to unless that note is immediately repeated
All other directions are noted on the score

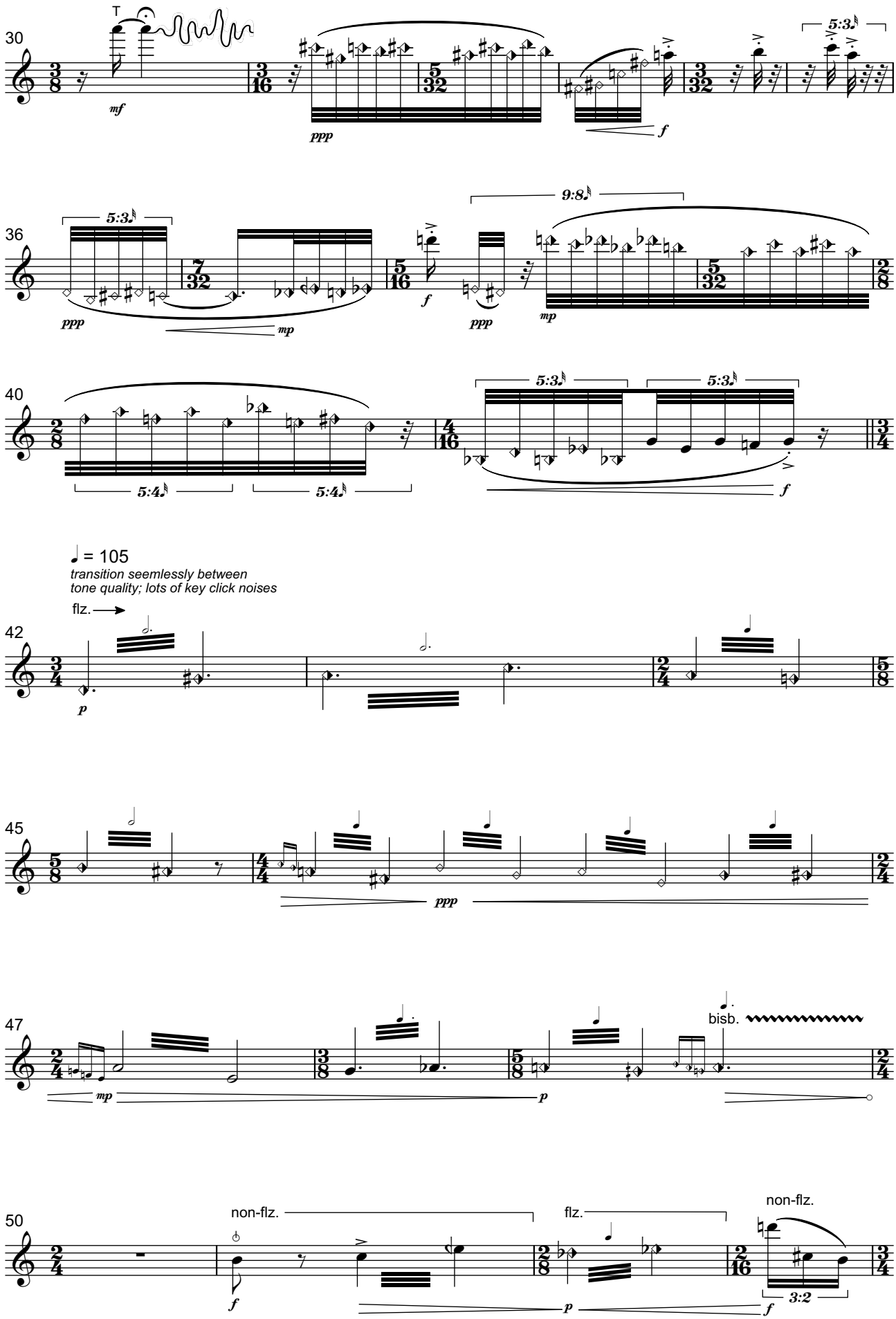
To Rob Burton

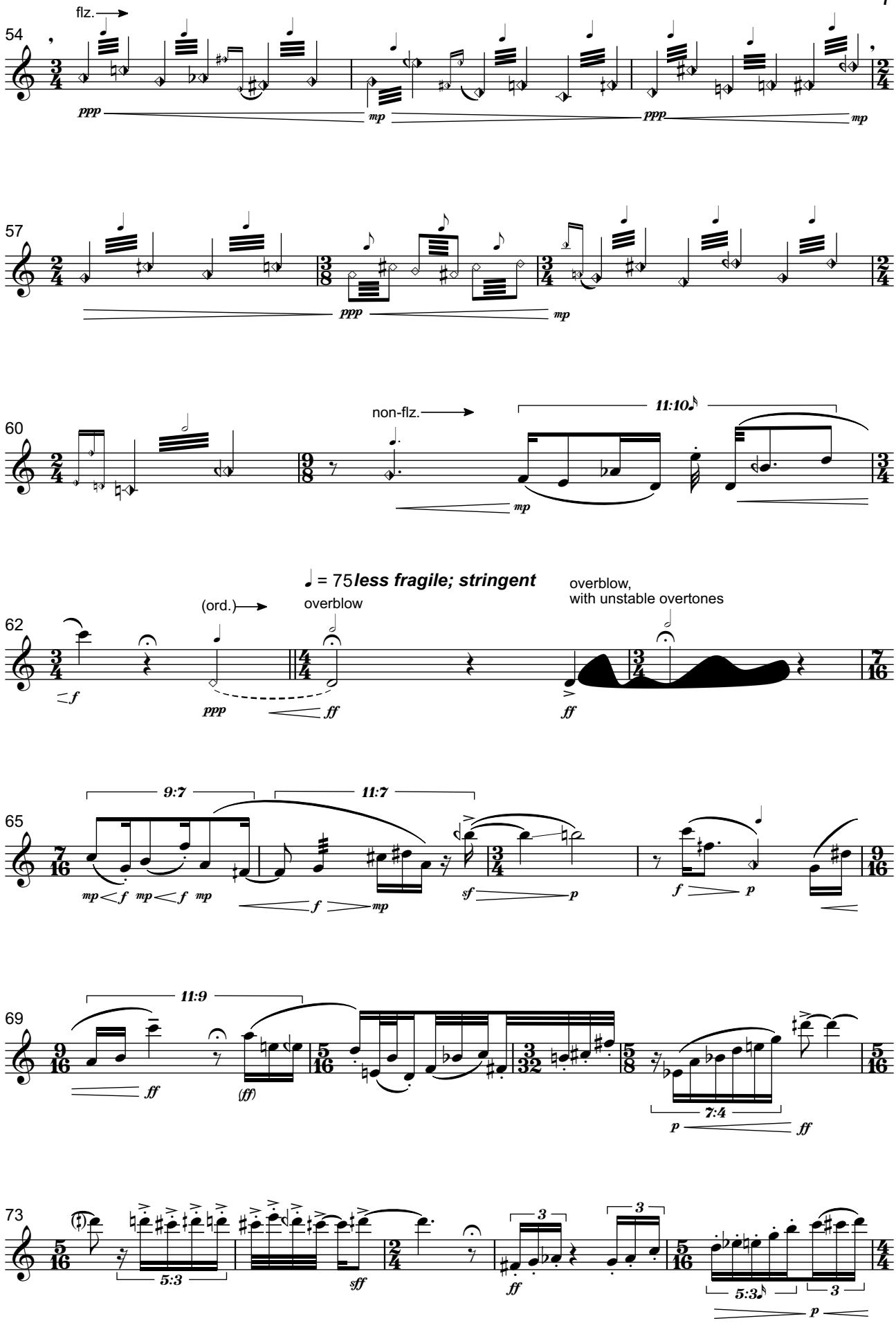
Illuminans Obscurum

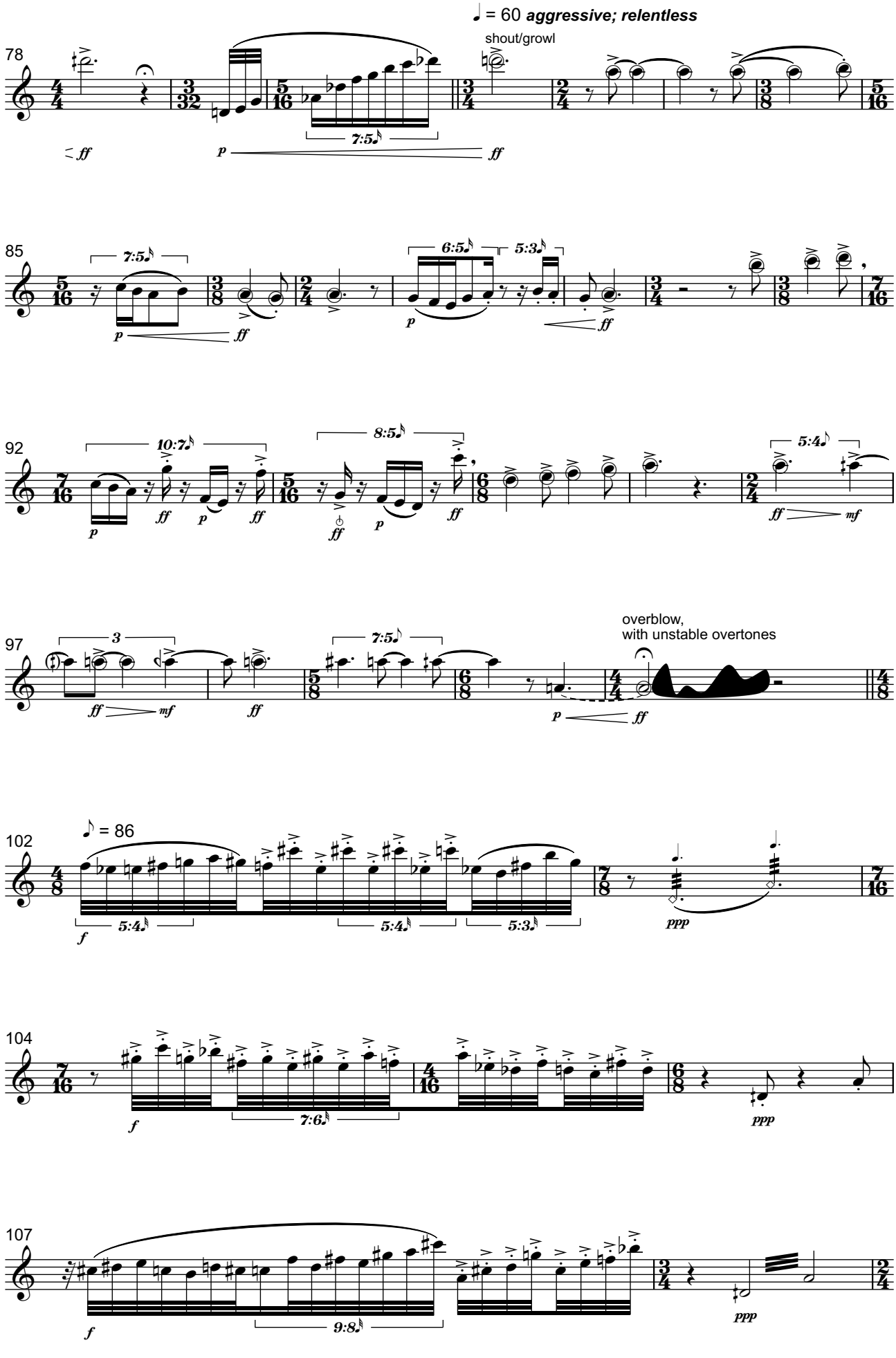
Niki Zohdi

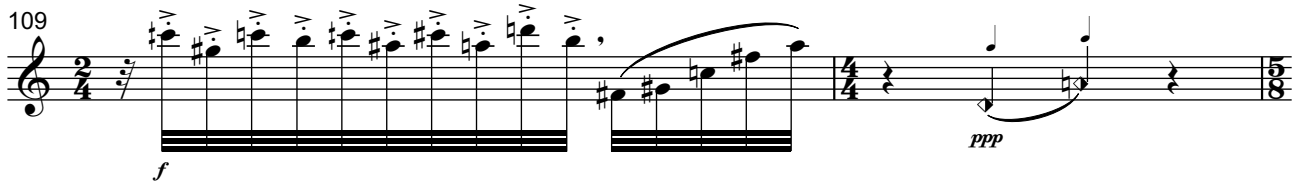


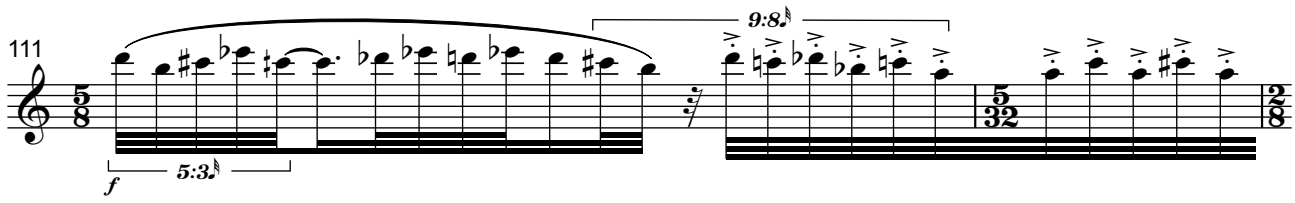

14
11:10
15
♪ = 86
9:8
7:6
5:4
6:4
gliss.
17
7:5
11:10
gliss.
ppp
p
19
5:4
ppp
20
7:6
5:4
transition seemlessly between tone quality
5:4
p
mf
ppp
22
5:4
5:3
7:6
ppp
mf
ppp
27
f
9:8
p
mp
ppp

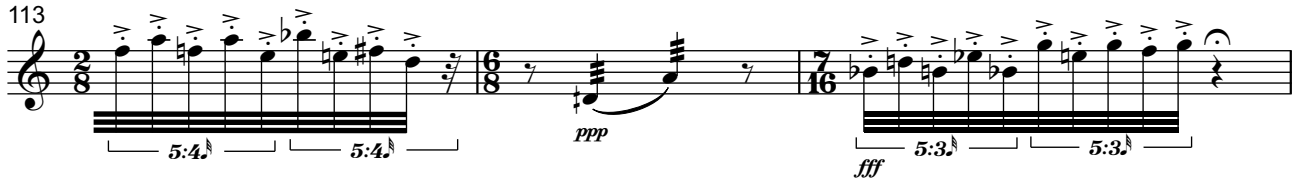

30
T
mf
ppp
f
5:3
36
5:3
ppp
mp
f
ppp
9:8
mp
40
5:4
5:4
5:3
5:3
f
♩ = 105
transition seemlessly between
tone quality; lots of key click noises
flz.
42
p
45
ppp
47
mp
p
bisb.
50
non-flz.
f
flz.
p
non-flz.
3:2
f


54
flz.
ppp
mp
ppp
mp
57
ppp
mp
60
non-flz.
11:10
mp
62
(ord.)
overblow
♩ = 75 less fragile; stringent
overblow,
with unstable overtones
f
ppp
ff
ff
65
9:7
11:7
mp f mp f mp
f mp
sf p
f p
69
11:9
ff
(ff)
7:4
p ff
73
5:3
sff
ff
3
3
5:3
3
p

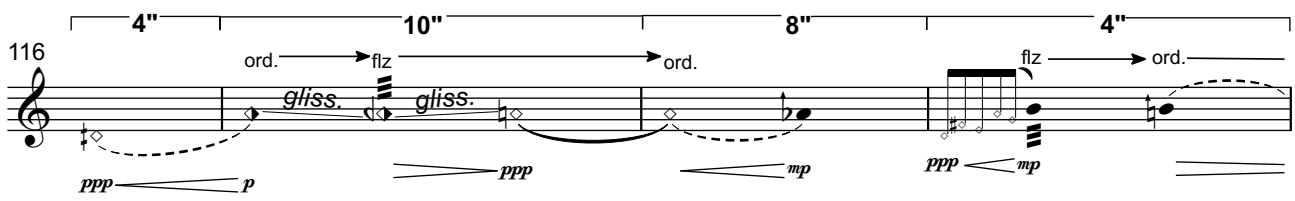

♩ = 60 aggressive; relentless
shout/growl
78
7:5
85
7:5
6:5
5:3
92
10:7
8:5
5:4
97
3
7:5
overblow,
with unstable overtones
102
♪ = 86
5:4
5:4
5:3
104
7:6
107
9:8

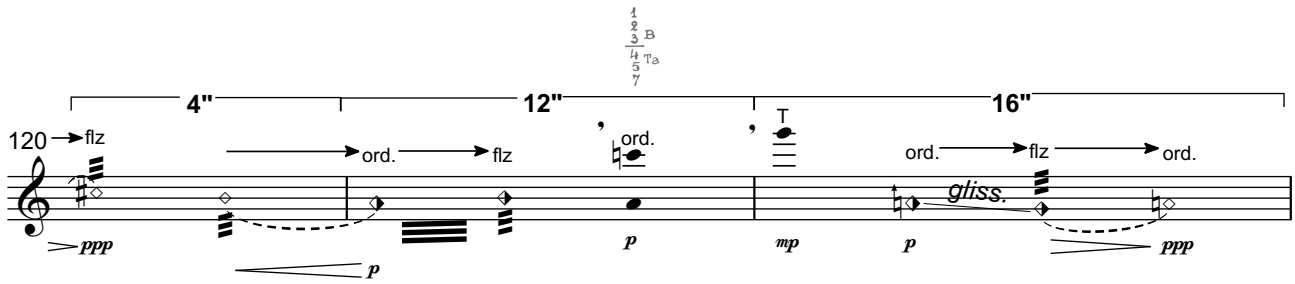


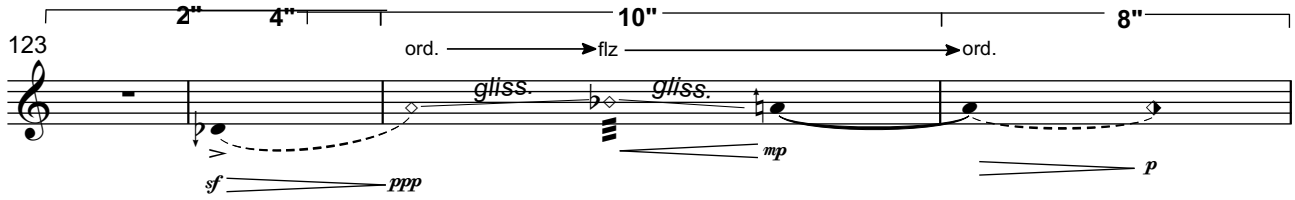


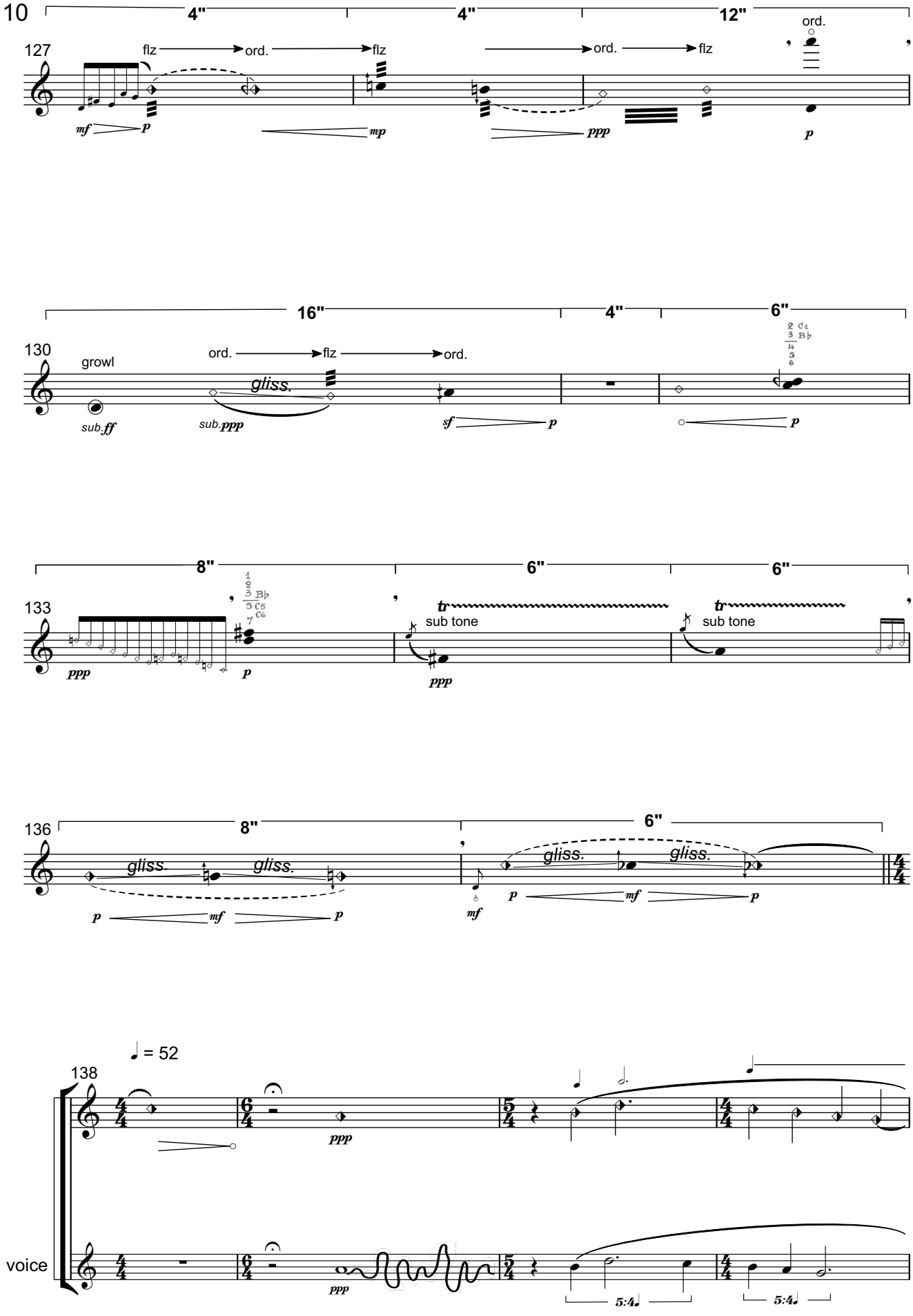


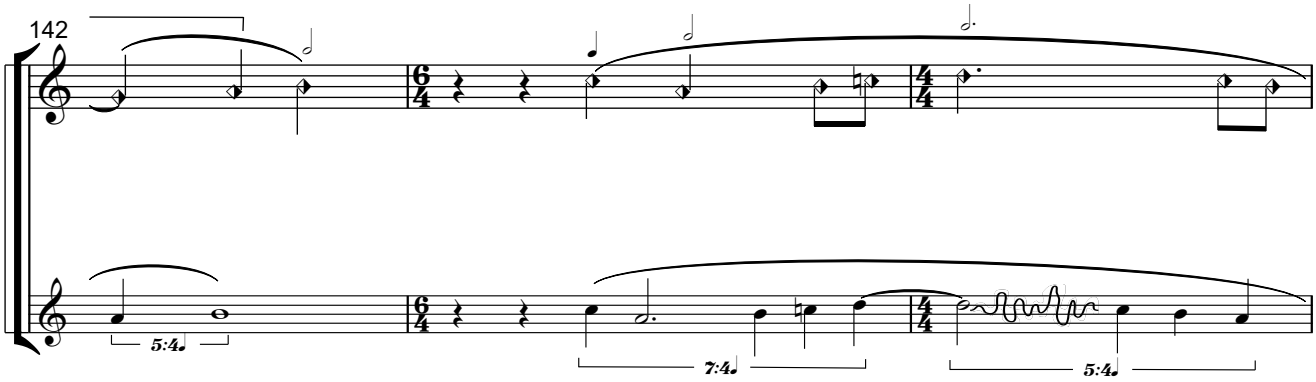
fragile; unstable

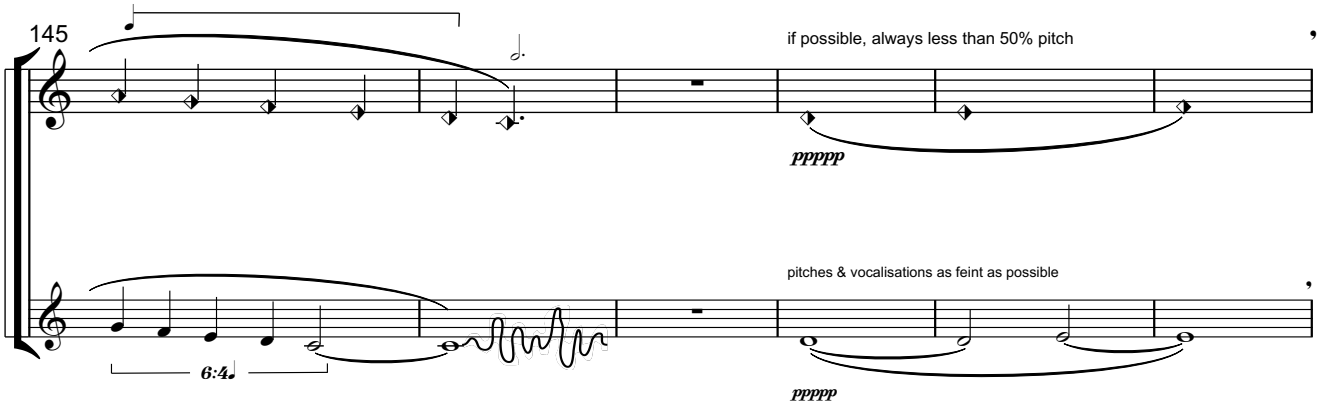


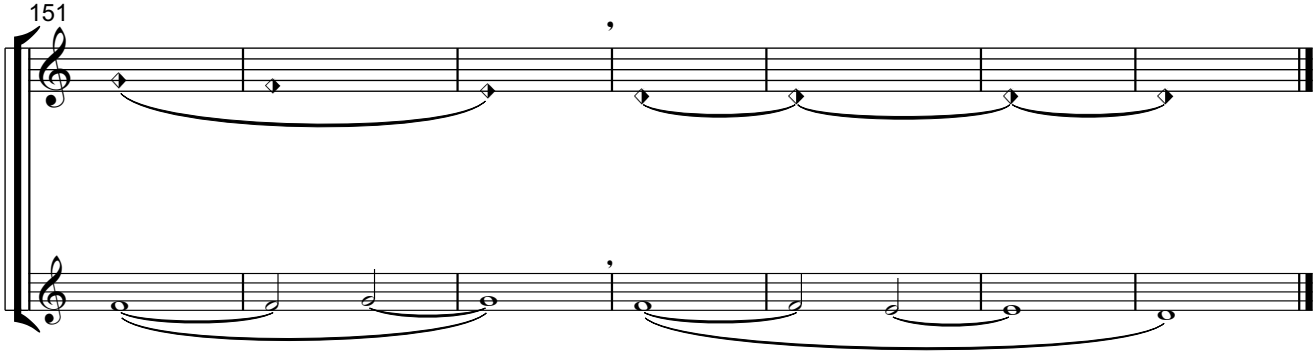





4"
4"
12"
127
flz
ord.
flz
ord.
flz
ord.
mf
p
mp
ppp
p
16"
4"
6"
130
growl
ord.
flz
ord.
gliss.
sub.ff
sub.ppp
sf
p
p
8"
6"
6"
133
tr
sub tone
tr
sub tone
ppp
p
ppp
136
8"
6"
gliss.
gliss.
gliss.
gliss.
p
mf
p
mf
p
mf
p
♩ = 52
138
ppp
ppp
5:4
5:4
voice


142
5:4
7:4
5:4


145
if possible, always less than 50% pitch
ppppp
pitches & vocalisations as feint as possible
6:4
ppppp


151