Hiraeth

for Trombone Octet

Winner of the 2026 International
Trombone Association Composition Contest

Chris Evan Hass

Program Notes

Hiraeth (pronounced HEER-eyeth) is a Welsh term, loosely translated to a longing and nostalgia for home. More than mere homesickness, it is an expression of a bond for a home to which you cannot return; a home that never was. This piece portrays this feeling of eternal longing through unresolved dissonances and a melody riddled with anticipations and suspensions, feeling as though it is constantly chasing and unfulfilling the harmony. The piece was originally written for choir and transcribed for trombone choir shortly after, with the text by Tim Davis reading:

Hiraeth beckons with wordless call,
Hear, my soul, with heart enthrall'd.
Hiraeth whispers while earth I roam;
Here I wait the call "come home."

Like seagull cry, like sea borne wind,
That speak with words beyond my ken,
A heartfelt cry with words unsaid,
Calls a wanderer home instead.

I heed your call, Hiraeth, I come
On westward path to hearth and home.
My path leads on to western shore,
My heart tells me there is yet more.

Within my ears the sea air sighs;
The sunset glow, it fills my eyes.
I stand at edge of sea and earth,
My bare feet washed in gentle surf.

Hiraeth's longing to call me on,
Here, on shore, in setting sun.
Hiraeth calls past sunset fire,
"Look beyond, come far higher!"

About the Composer

Chris Evan Hass (b. 1993) is a composer, arranger, conductor, and friend hailing from Ann Arbor, MI. Praised as "beautifully expressive" (the WholeNote) and "thrillingly off-kilter" (Double Reed Journal), Chris' music aims to delight and inspire, often taking direct influence from his favorite artists and genres.

Known for rhythmic complexity and luscious harmonies, Chris' compositions have attracted performances worldwide from some of today's leading musicians, including members of the New York Philharmonic, Dallas Winds, Sinta Saxophone Quartet, Boston Symphony Orchestra, U.S. Army Band, Eastman Saxophone Project, and U.S. Naval Academy Band. His music has been featured at prestigious conferences including the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic, Texas Music Educator's Association Conference, and the Indonesia Orchestra and Ensemble Festival. As a prominent voice in the saxophone and brass community, Chris' chamber works are regularly performed at the Fischoff Chamber Music Competition and have become staples at instrumental showcases like the International Trombone Festival, World Saxophone Congress, and the International Trumpet Guild.

As an educator, Chris has worked internationally to rehearse ensembles ranging from beginning bands to collegiate and professional ensembles. Chris teaches private composition and low brass lessons, offers instruction in music theory, and frequently presents on topics including composition, networking, and freelancing at universities across the U.S.

Chris holds degrees in Composition from Central Michigan University (M.M.) and Western Michigan University (B.M.) where he studied with David Gillingham, Evan Ware, and Christopher Biggs. Chris currently resides in Jackson, MI with his wife, two sons, and three dogs - Pesto, Basil, and Olive.

Note from the Composer

Hello! Chris Evan Hass here. I wanted to extend my deepest gratitude to you for choosing to pick up this piece. As a composer, the greatest joy of my work is hearing others bring these notes to life. As much as I love the writing process, it's the humanity, excitement, and passion that musicians like yourselves bring to these dots on the page that continues to inspire me.

As a hooligan trombonist who loves taking notes down the octave, I grant you *some* permission to enhance or adapt the written music. If you discover ways to improve playability or add musical interest, feel free to explore them as long as the overall character of the piece is preserved. You're welcome to get creative and have some artistic license over the piece - Don't feel 100% bound to the page.

Please let me know if you have questions or suggestions on this piece or any future works! I love hearing recordings of your interpretations of this music and would be happy to provide some helpful insight through a Zoom or in-person clinic. If nothing else, sending me programs of your performances always goes a long way - if you let me know the performance date in advance, I'd be happy to promote your concert to my nearly *dozens* of followers on social media.

Thank you sincerely for your support, and I hope you enjoy working on this piece!

Email - chrisevanhass@gmail.com Website - YouTube -

Chris Evan Hass

All Works for Trombone (c. 2025)

Solo

Flash in the Pan - Unaccompanied Bass Trombone

A funky and kaleidoscopic journey.

Frigid Envy - Trombone and Fixed Media

A poignant and visceral depiction on social media's effect on mental health.

Imposter - Contrabass (or Bass) Trombone and Piano

An introspective and disorientating exploration of anxiety.

Nebulous - Trombone and Piano

A vast and lyrical ballad depicting the expansiveness of space.

Resurgence - Solo Trombone and Trombone Sextet

A three act story of resilience in the face of adversity.

Violent Shadows - Solo Bass Trombone with different accompaniment options (Trombone Quintet, Piano, Brass Quintet, Wind Ensemble (Grade 5))

A virtuosic display of both fierce aggression and pure lyricism.

When Great Trees Fall - Bass Trombone and Piano

An emotional journey through different stages of grief.

Chamber

Adagio in Ab Major - Brass Quintet

A bittersweet and lyrical ballad.

Black Diamond - Brass Trio

An invigorating and vigorous journey down a brutal skiing slope.

Boiling Point - Trombone Octet

A frenetic and cacophonous fanfare.

Dancing Light - Trombone Quartet

An rhythmic and illuminating dance.

Hiraeth - Trombone Octet

A chorale depicting feelings of longing and nostalgia.

Olympian Suite - Brass Quintet

A 3-movement suite portraying the three Olympian brothers of Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades.

Through the Vaulting Skies - 12-part Trombone Choir

A high-fantasy adventure based on the "hero's journey" story structure.

Vanquish - Trombone Octet

A triumphant and exhilarating battle scene.

You Do You - Brass Quintet

A jazzy and lighthearted romp with open improv solos for trumpet and trombone.

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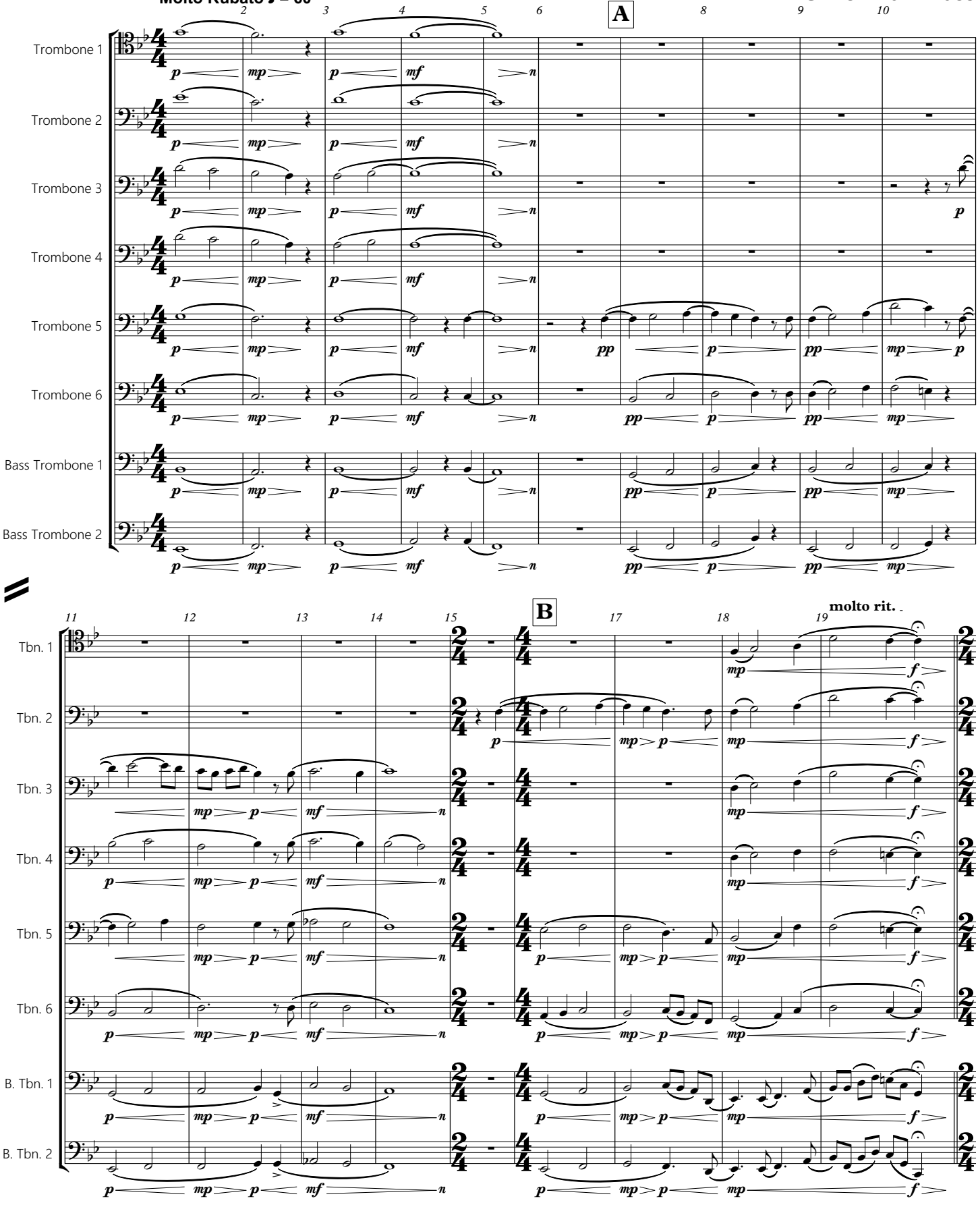

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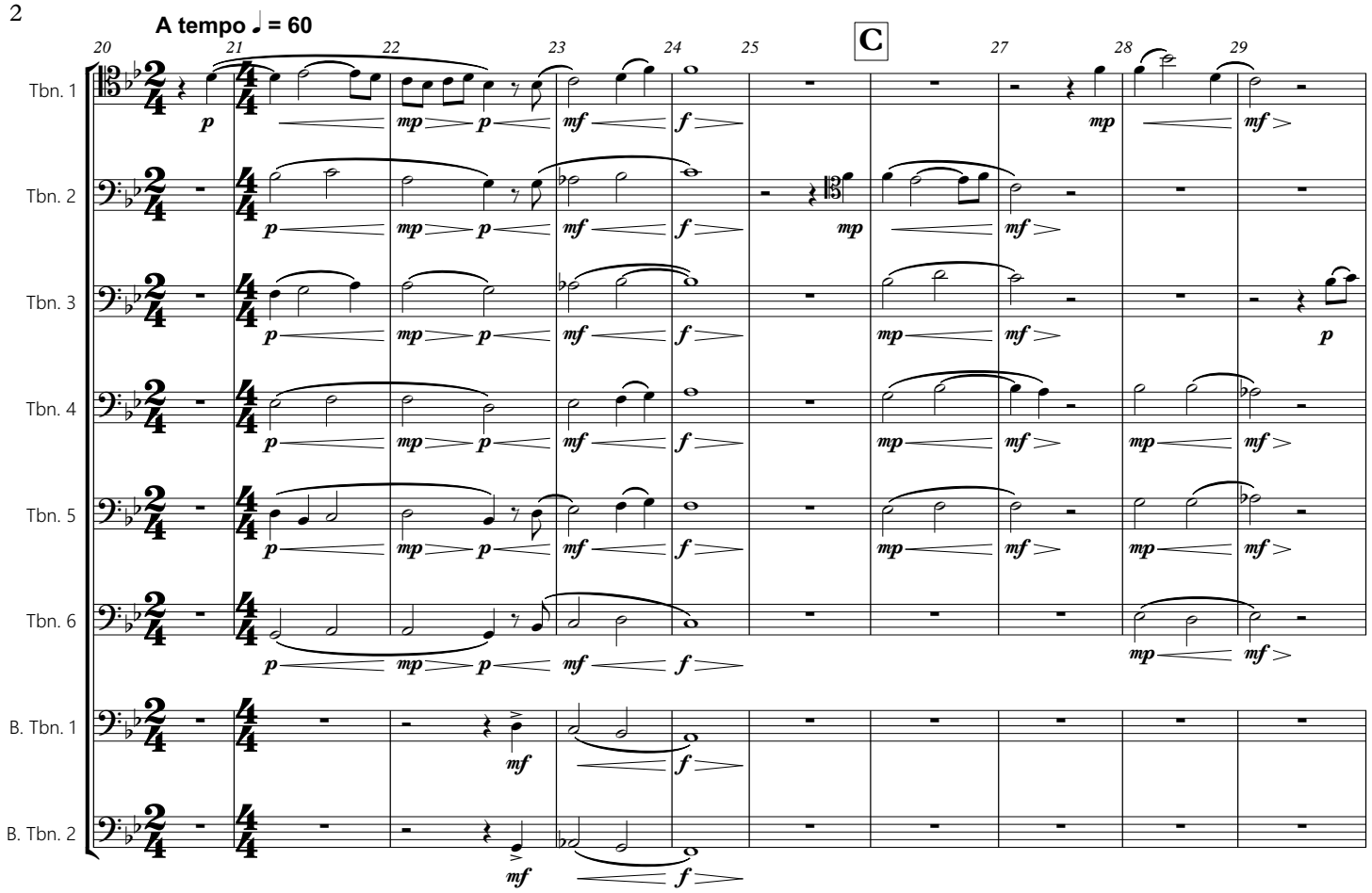
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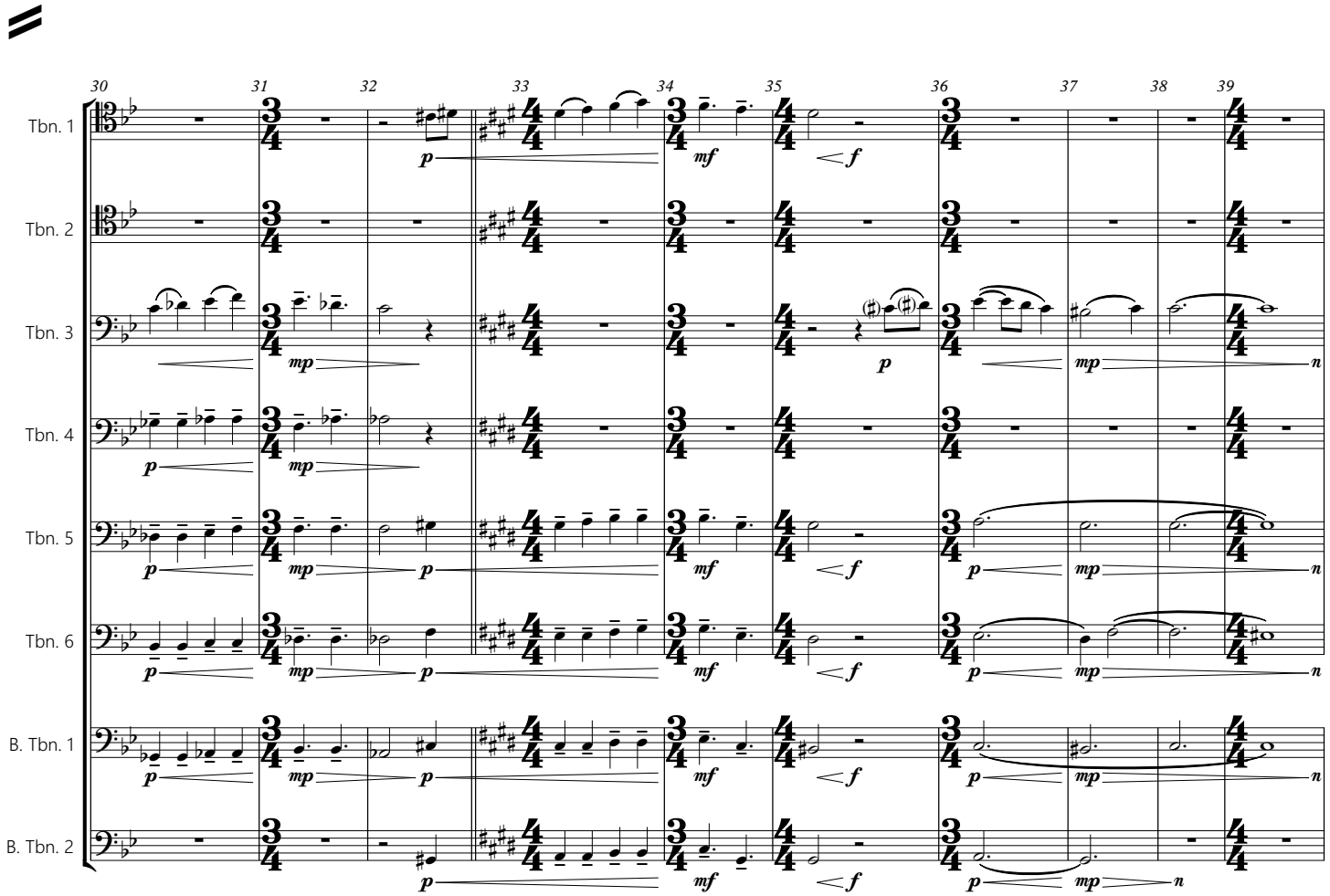
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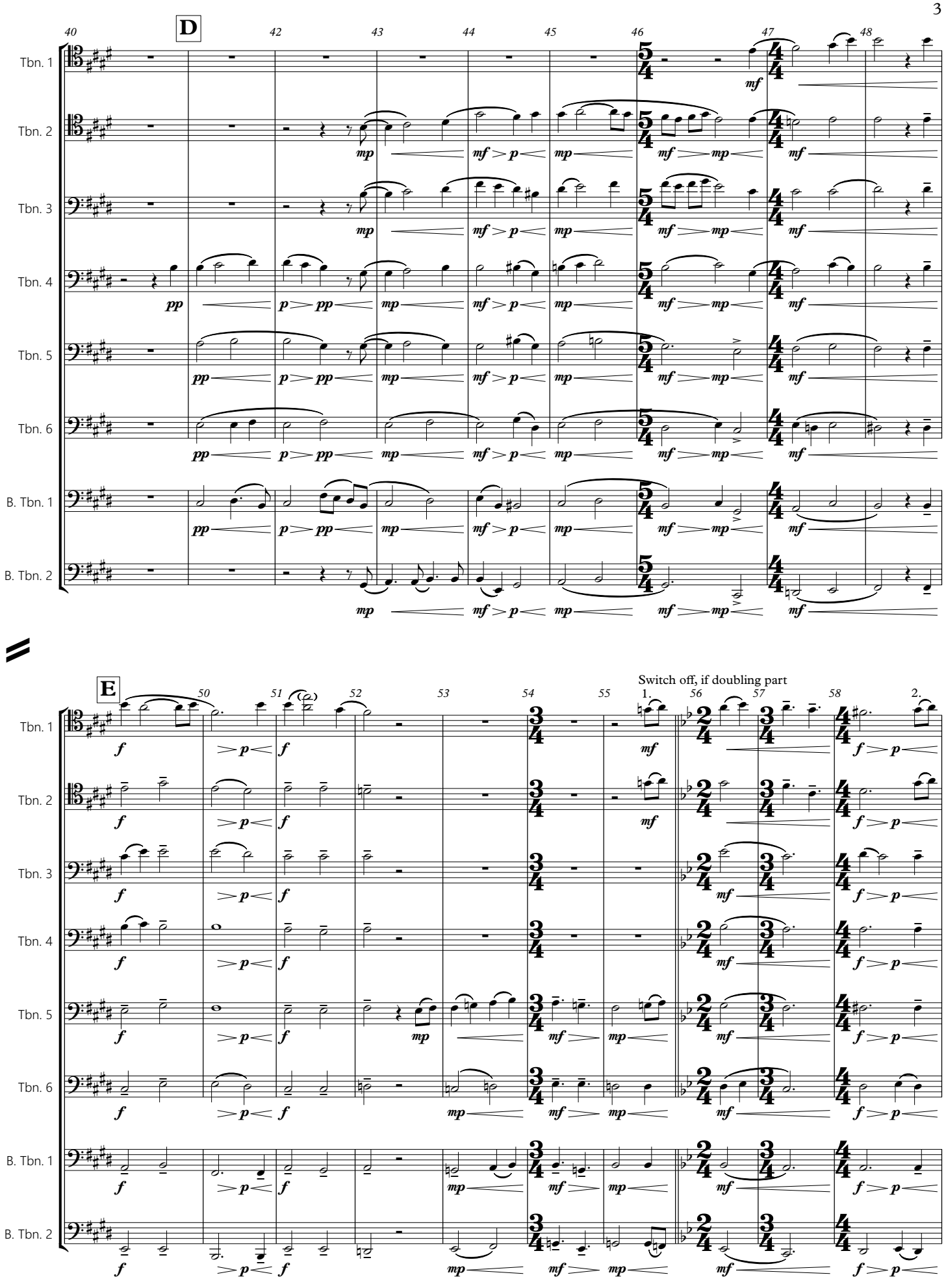
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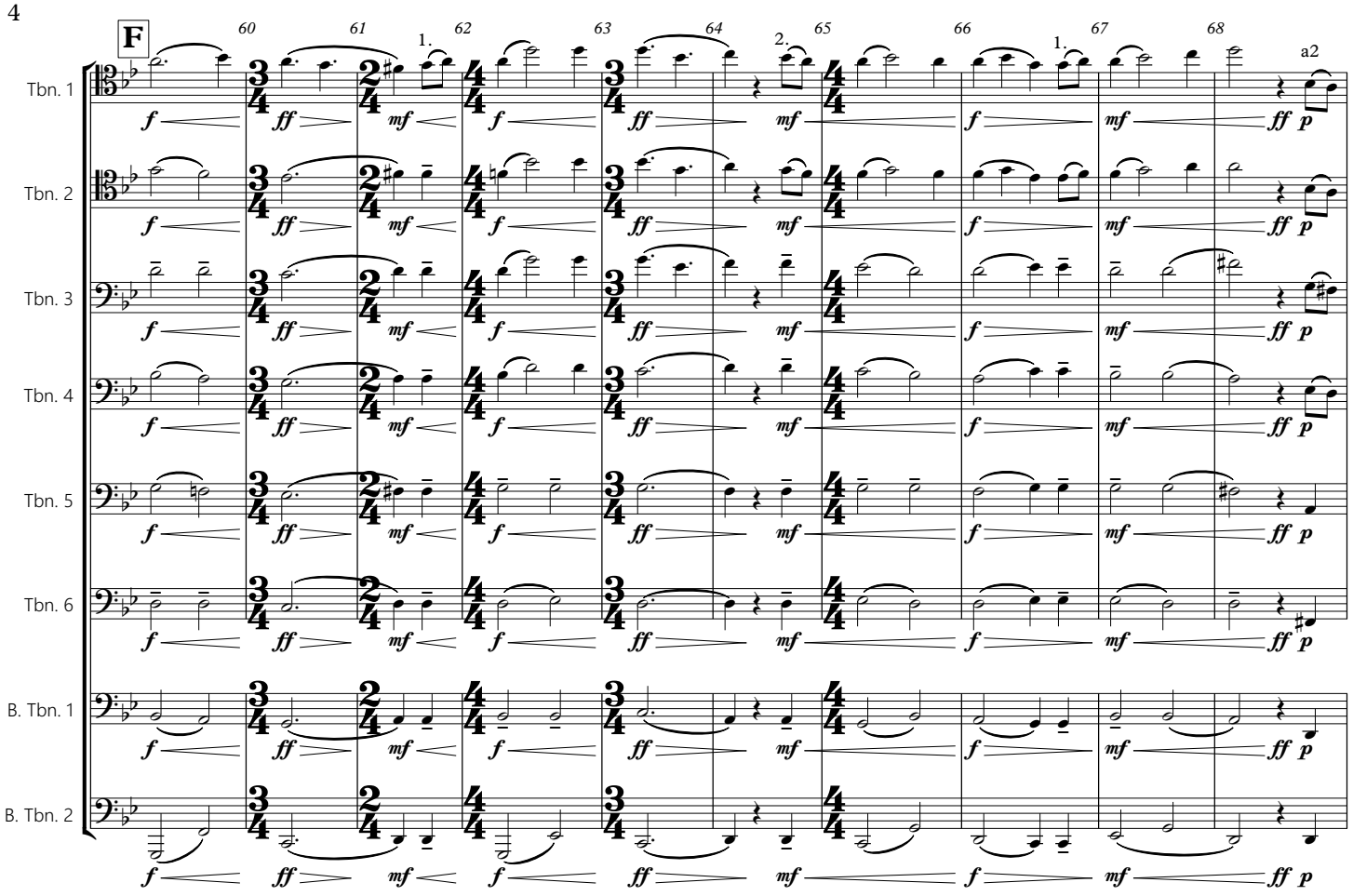
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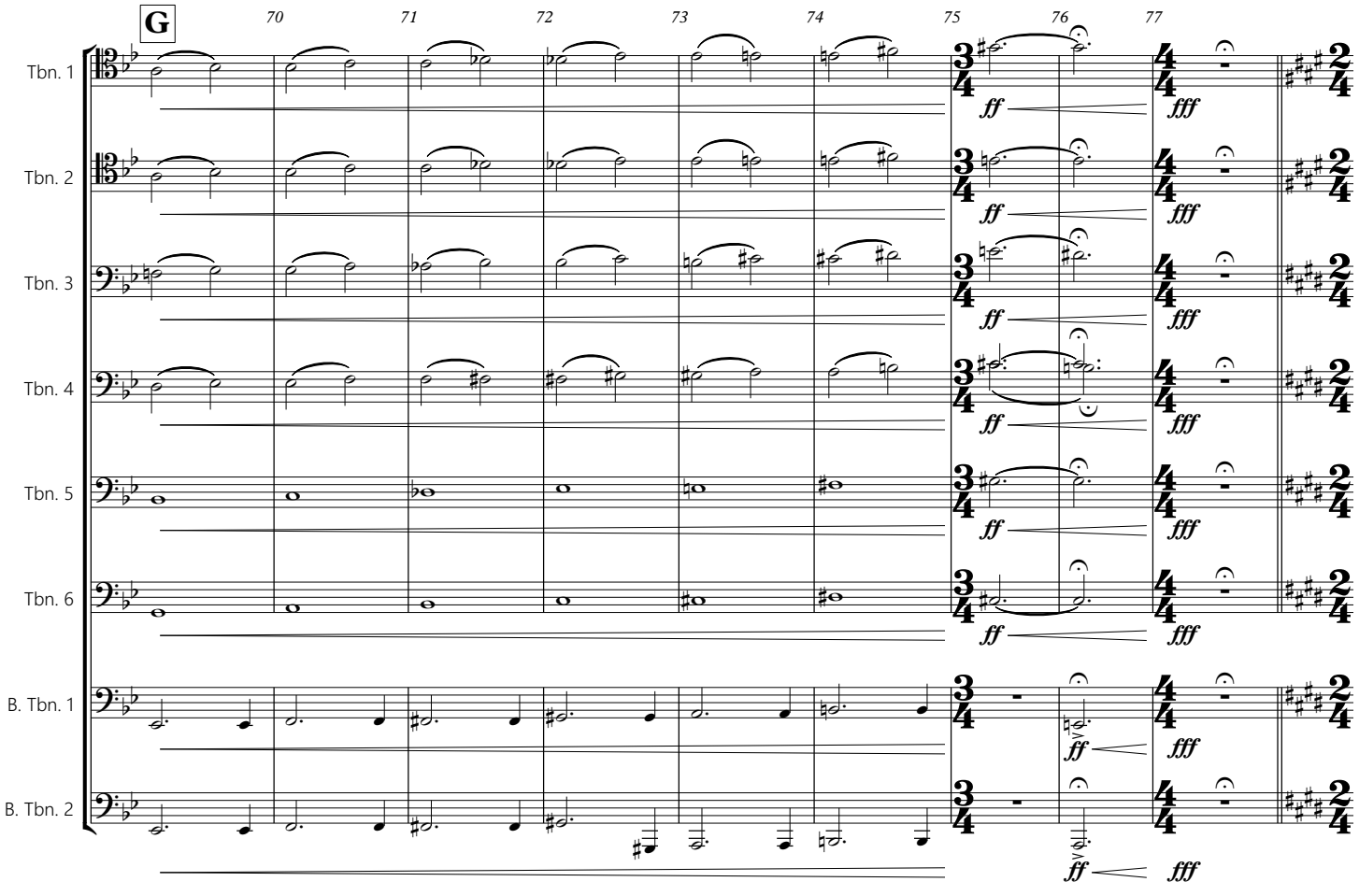
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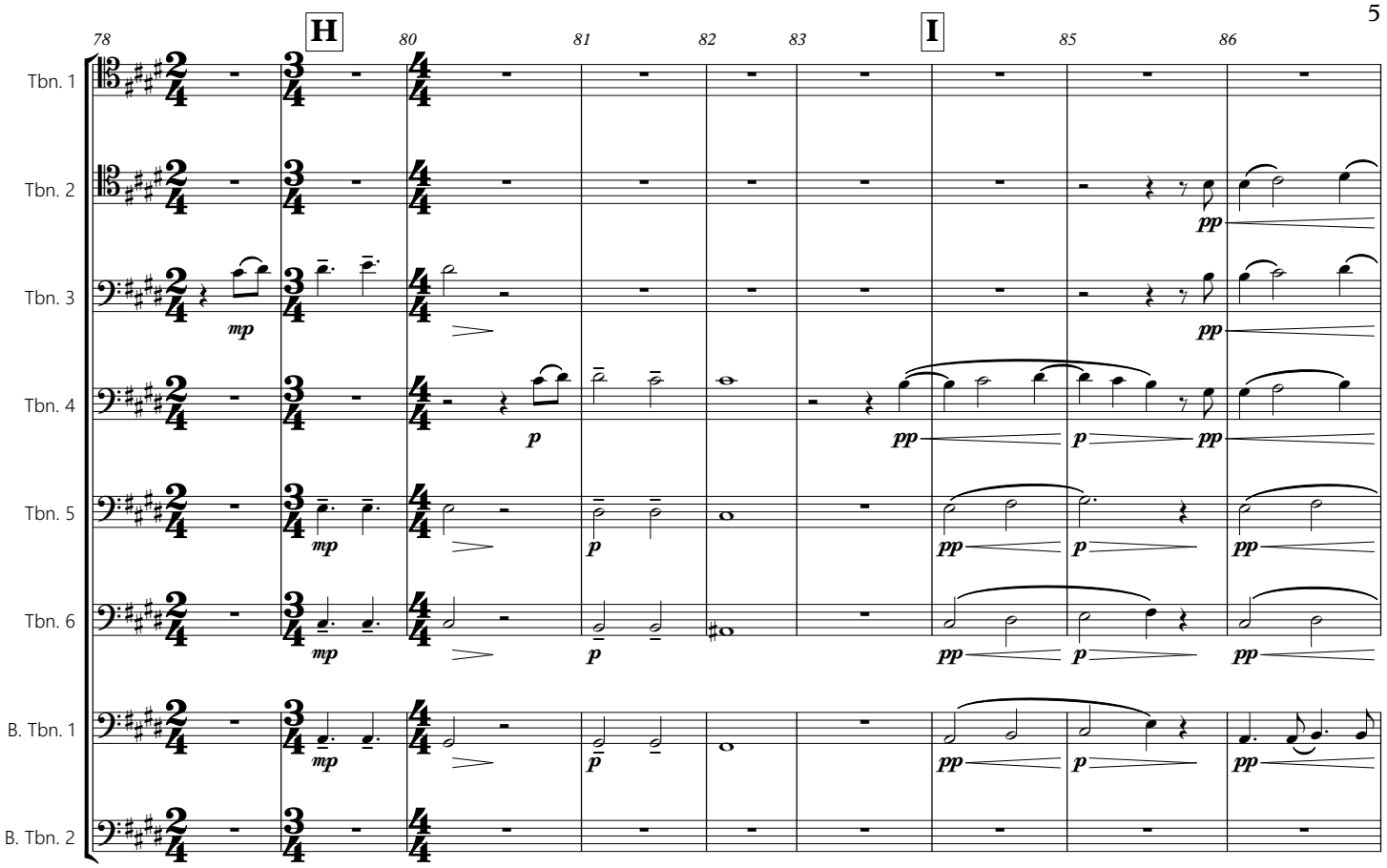
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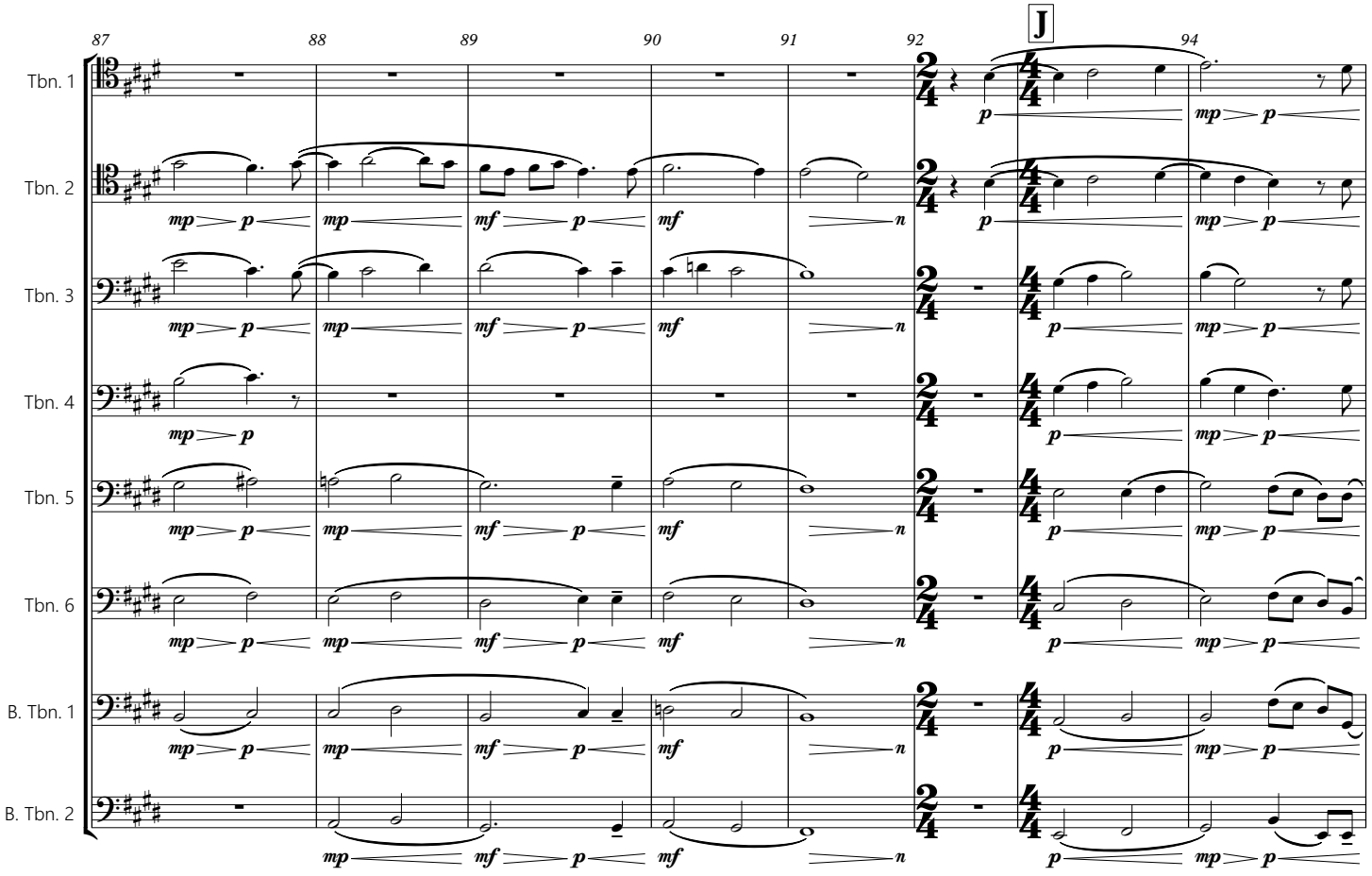
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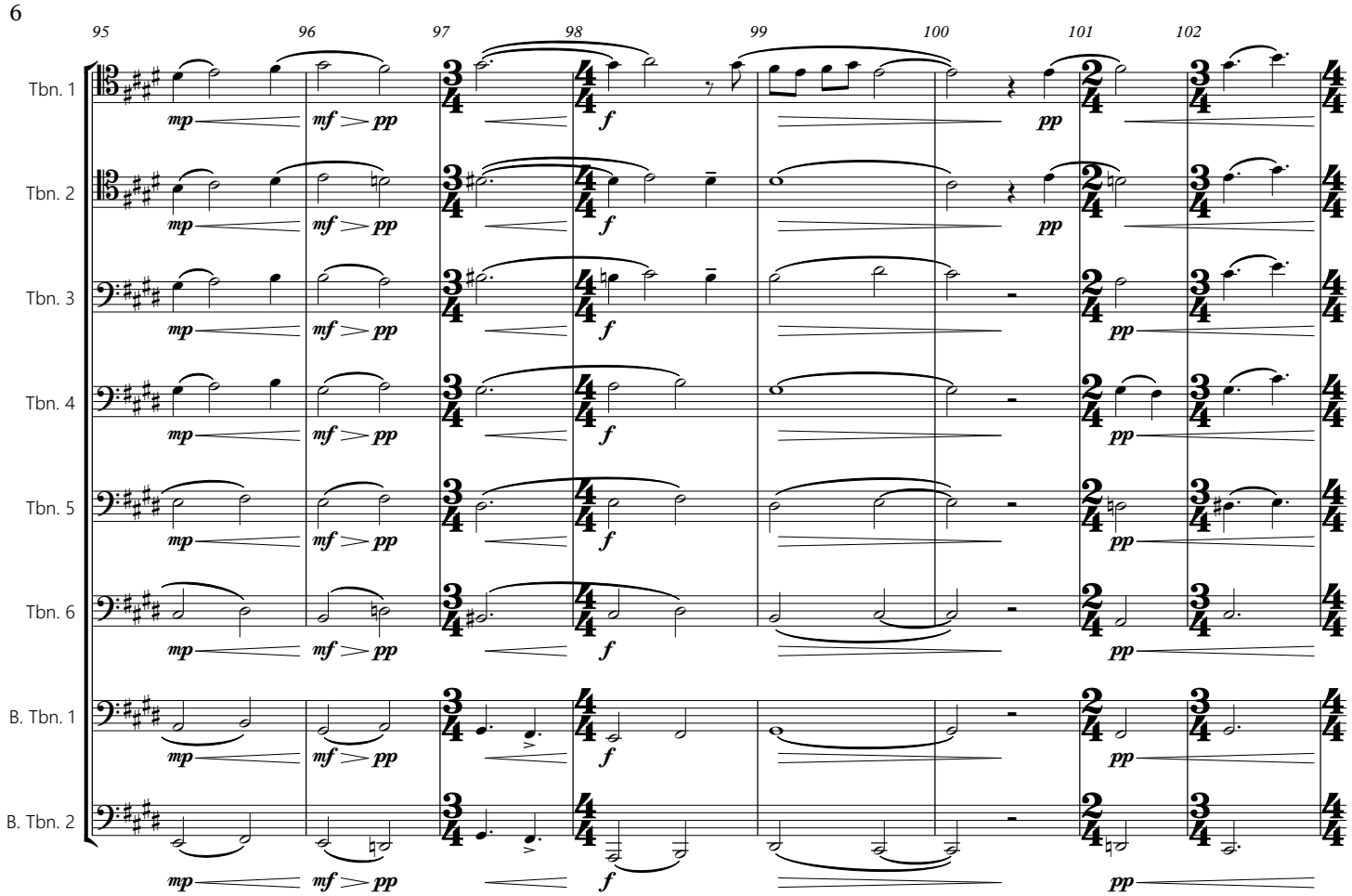
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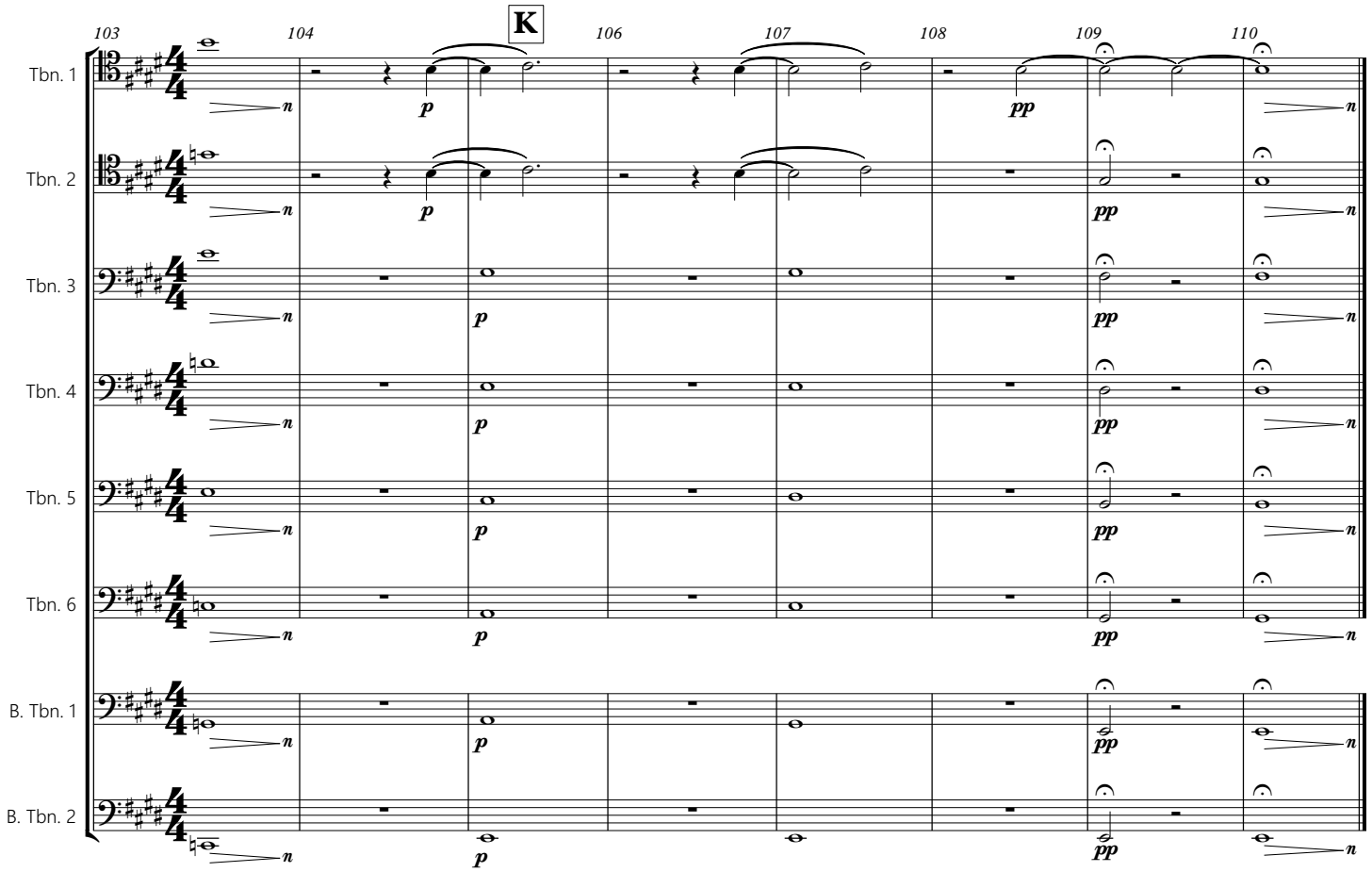
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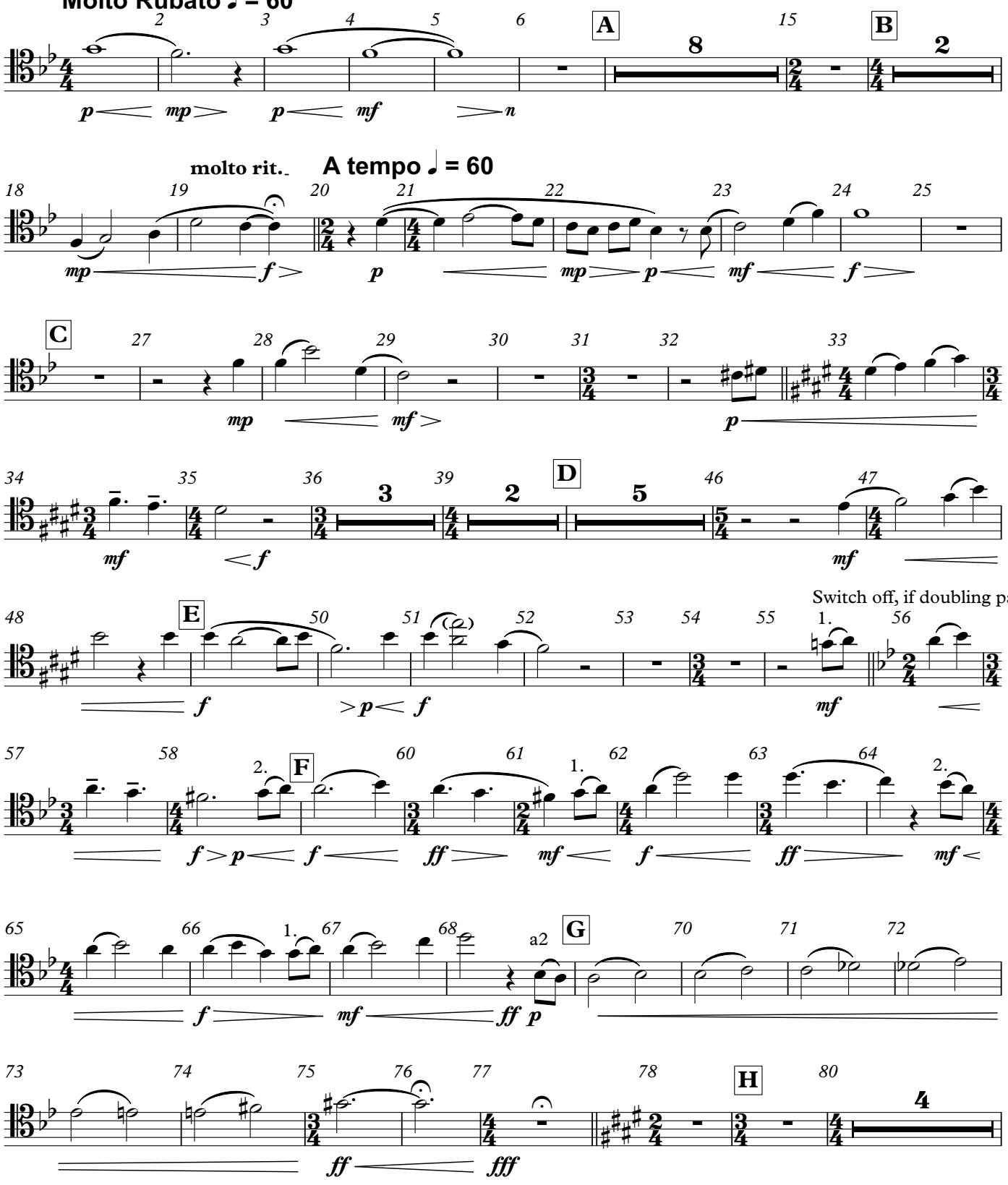
Trombone 1

Hiraeth

for Trombone Octet

Chris Evan Hass



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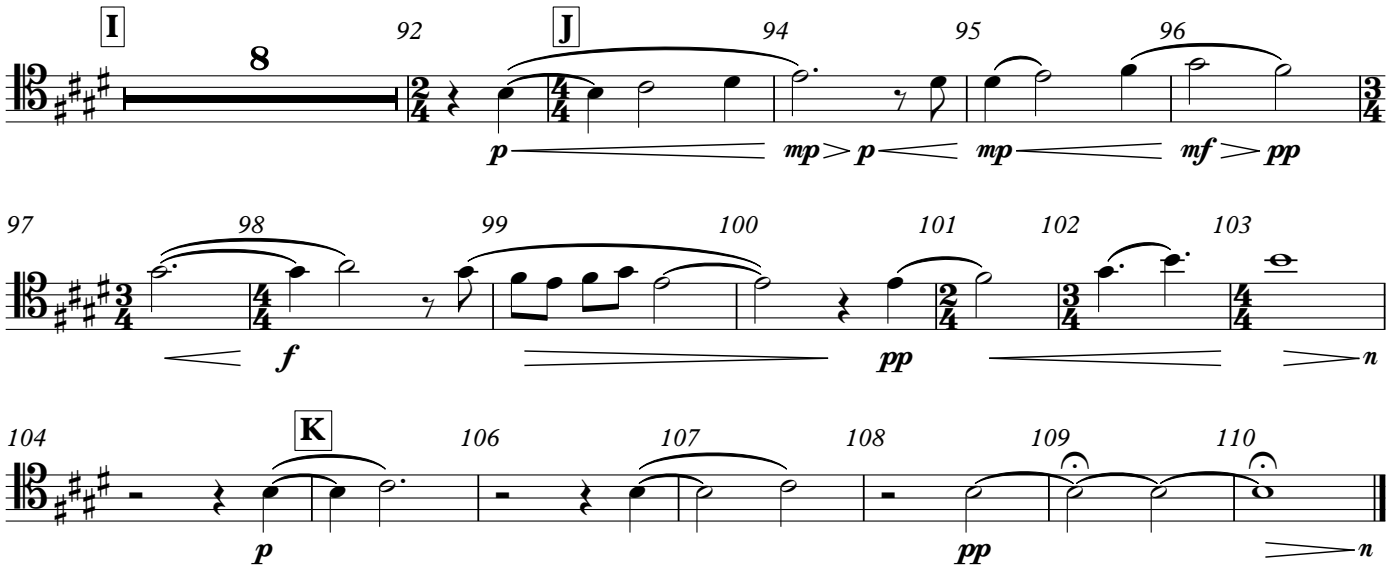
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Trombone 2

Hiraeth

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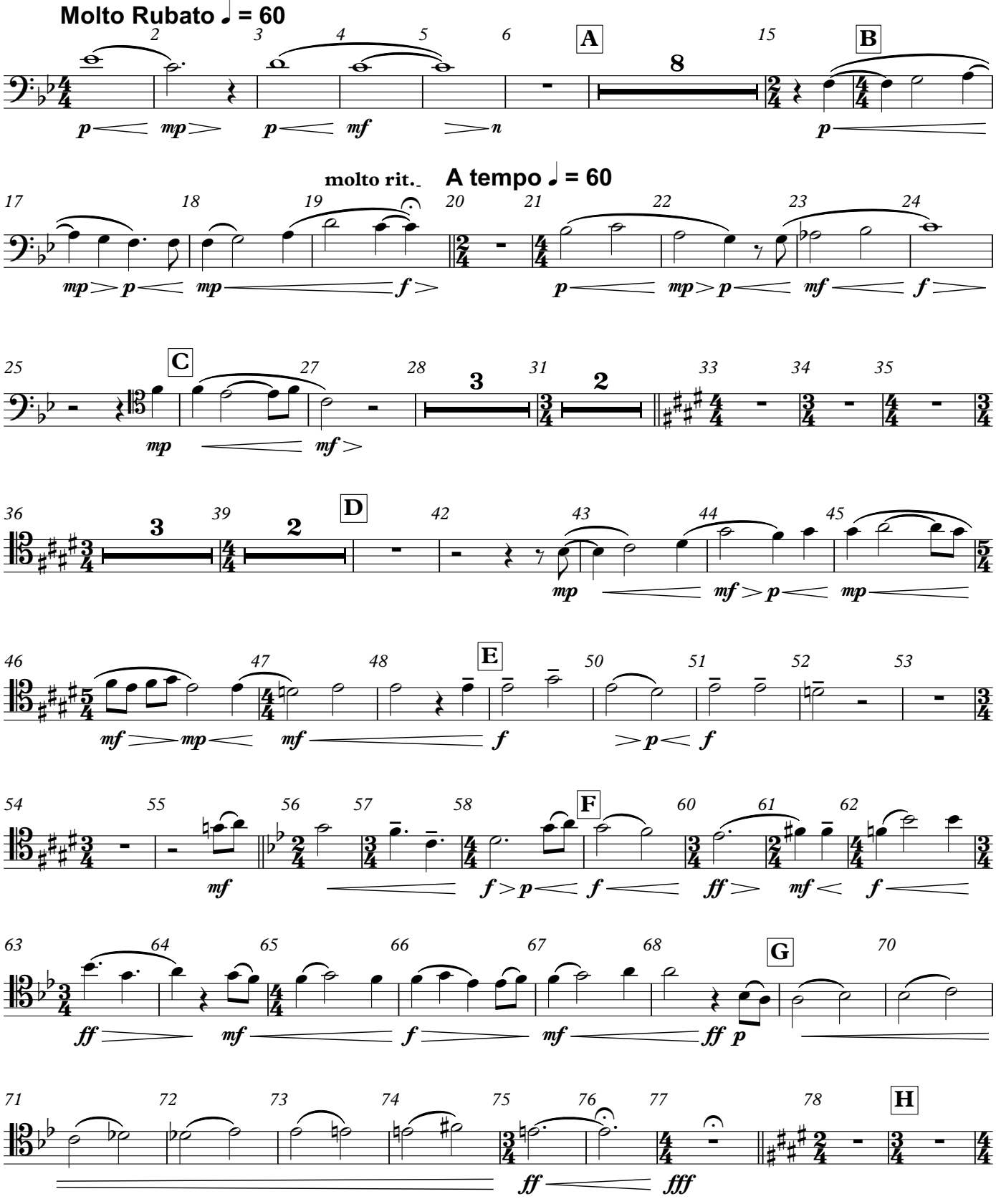

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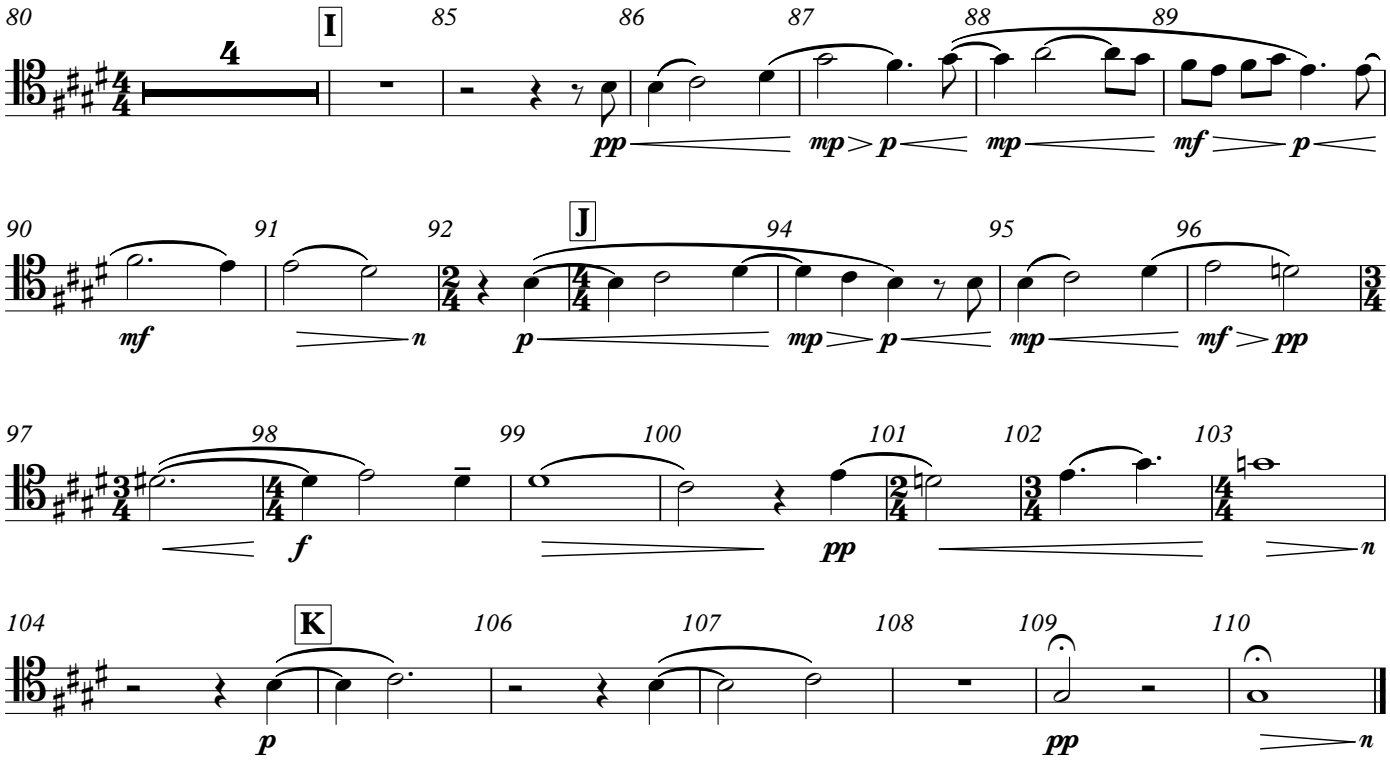
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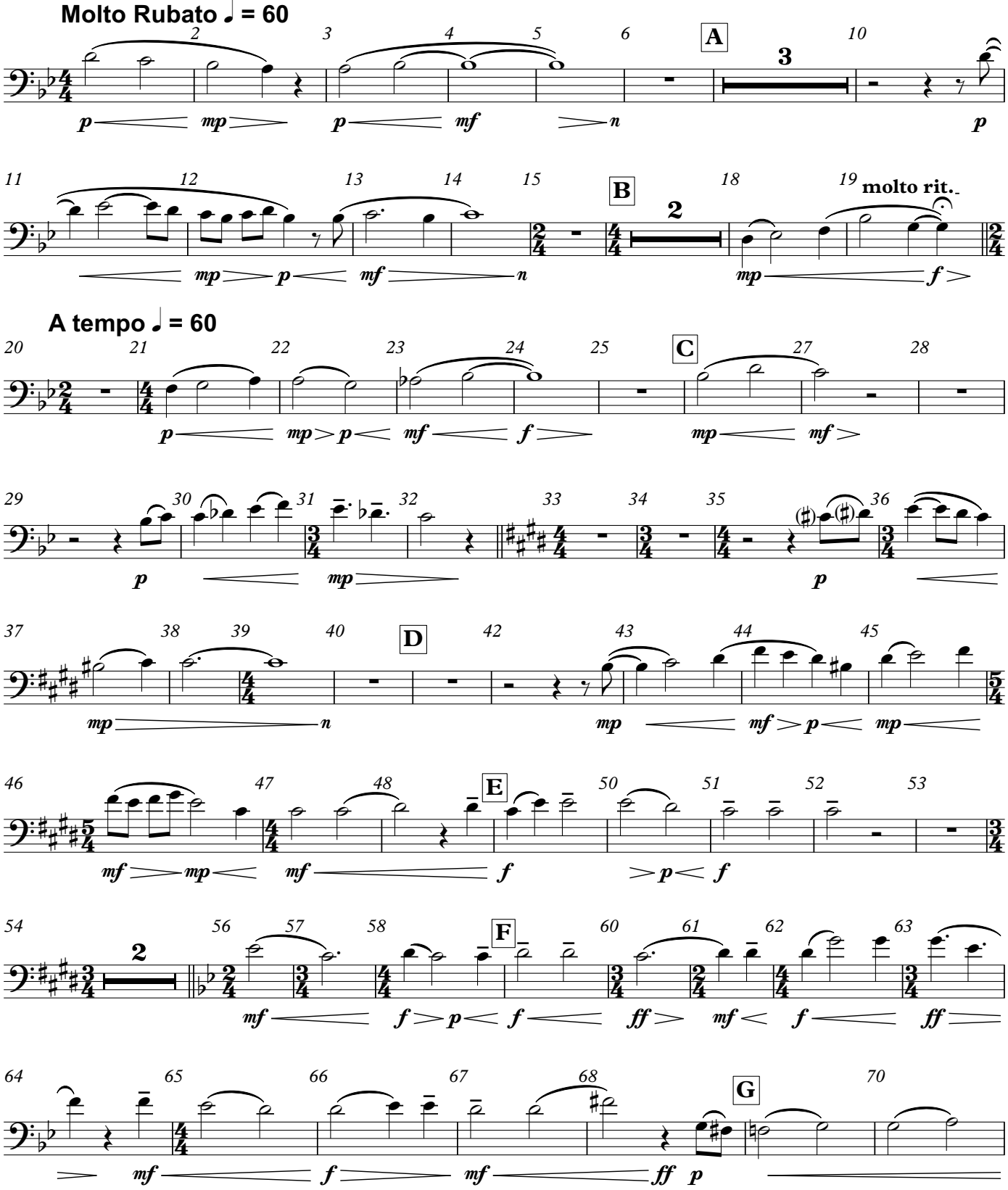
Trombone 3

Hiraeth

for Trombone Octet

Chris Evan Hass



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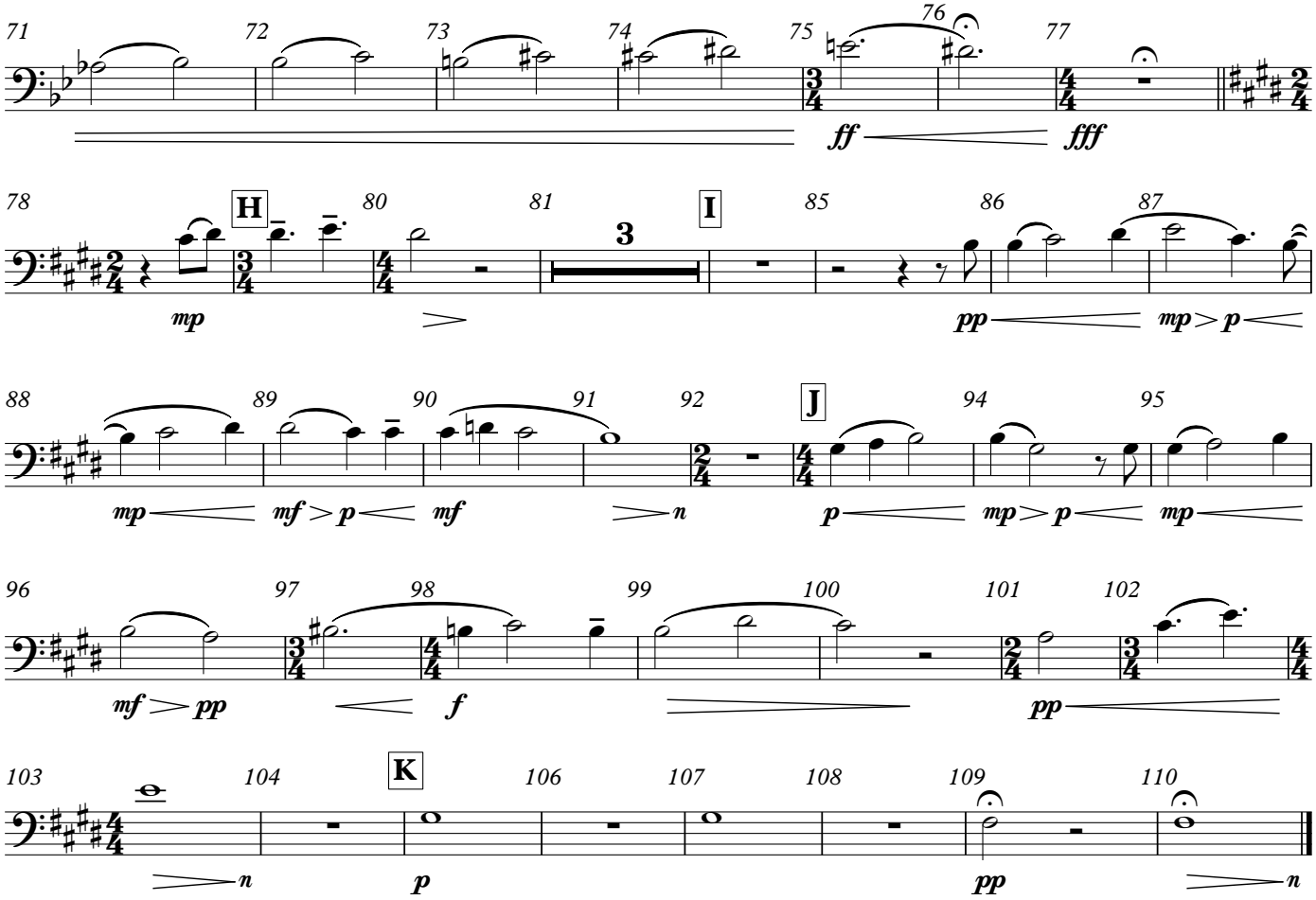
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Trombone 4

Hiraeth

for Trombone Octet

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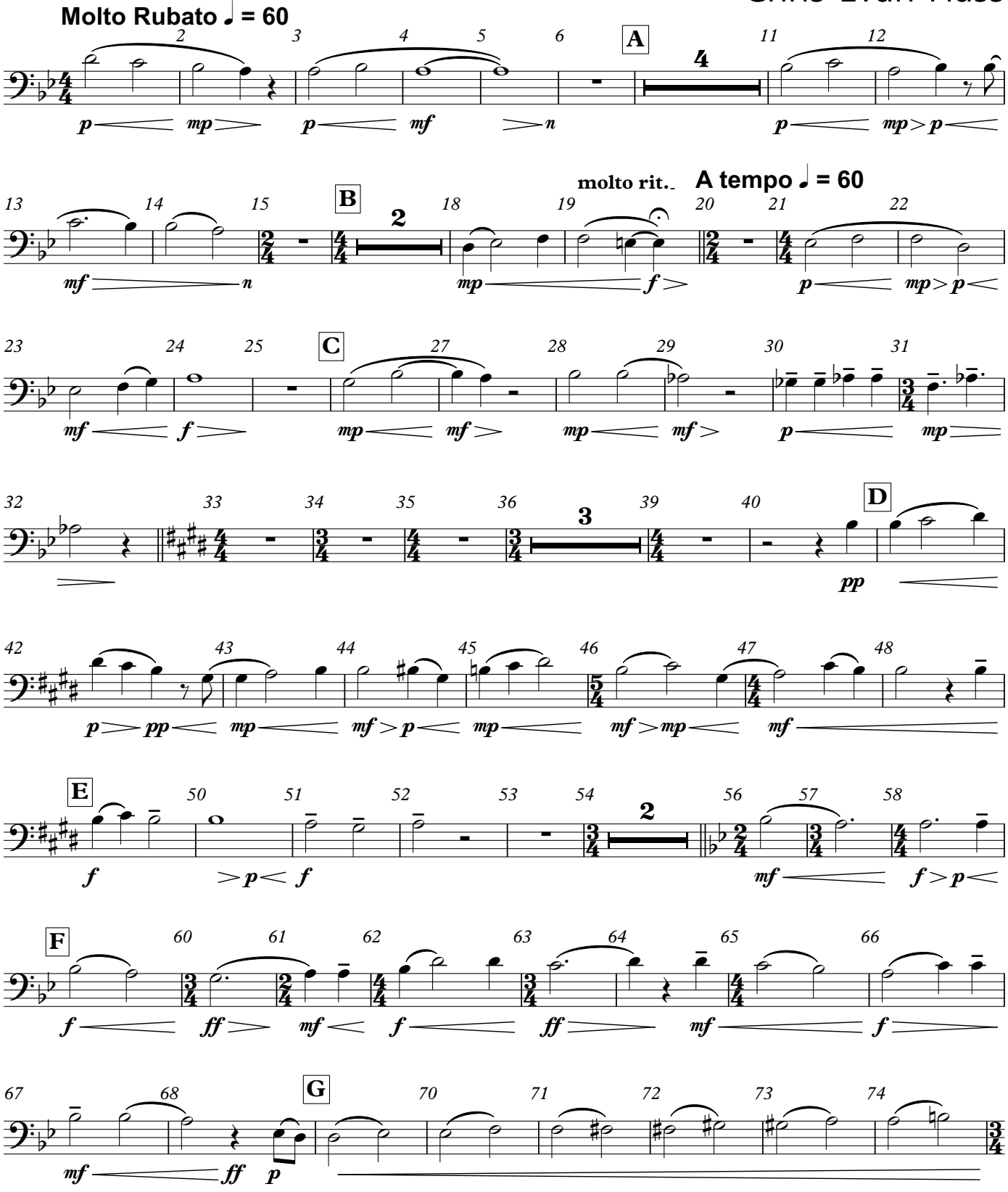

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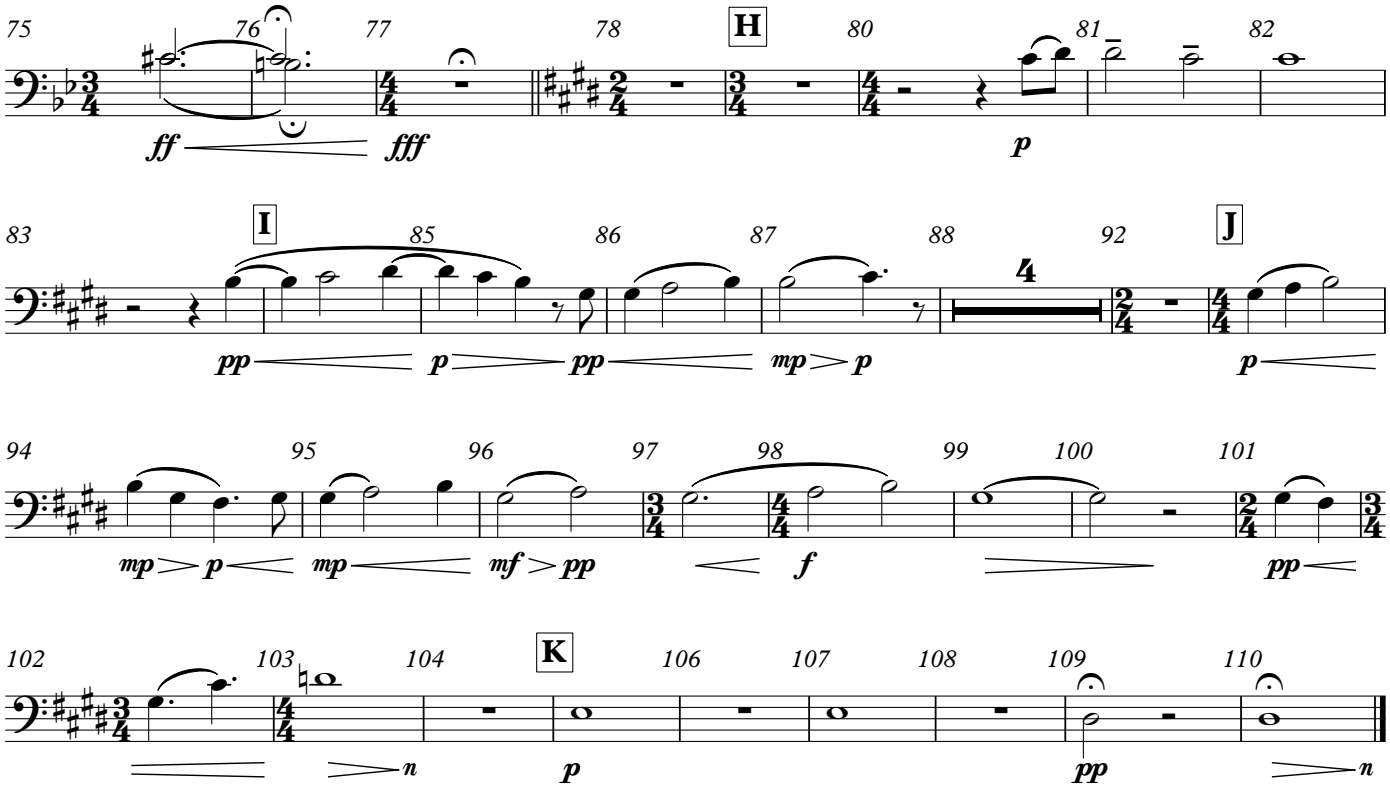
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Trombone 5

Hiraeth

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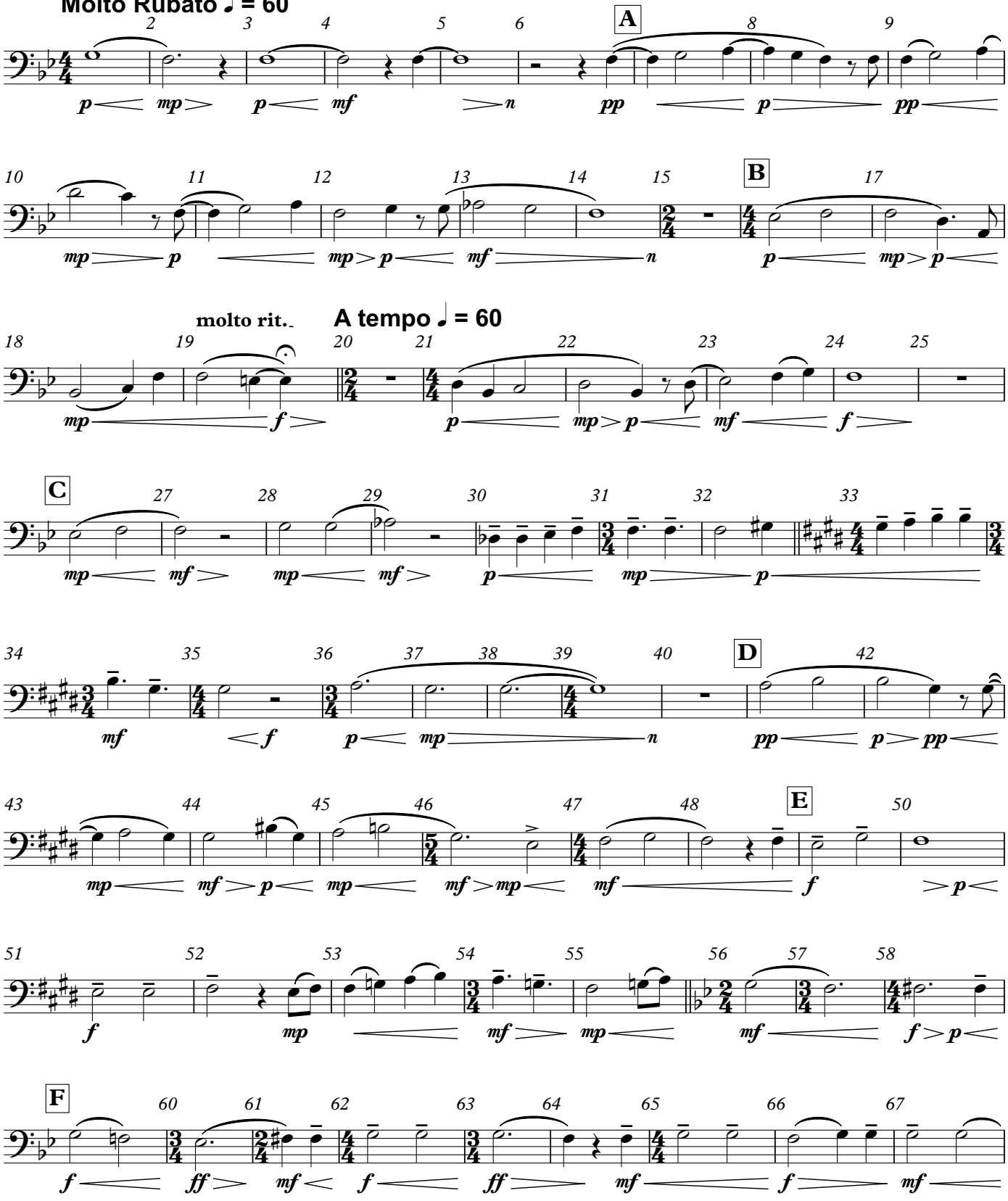

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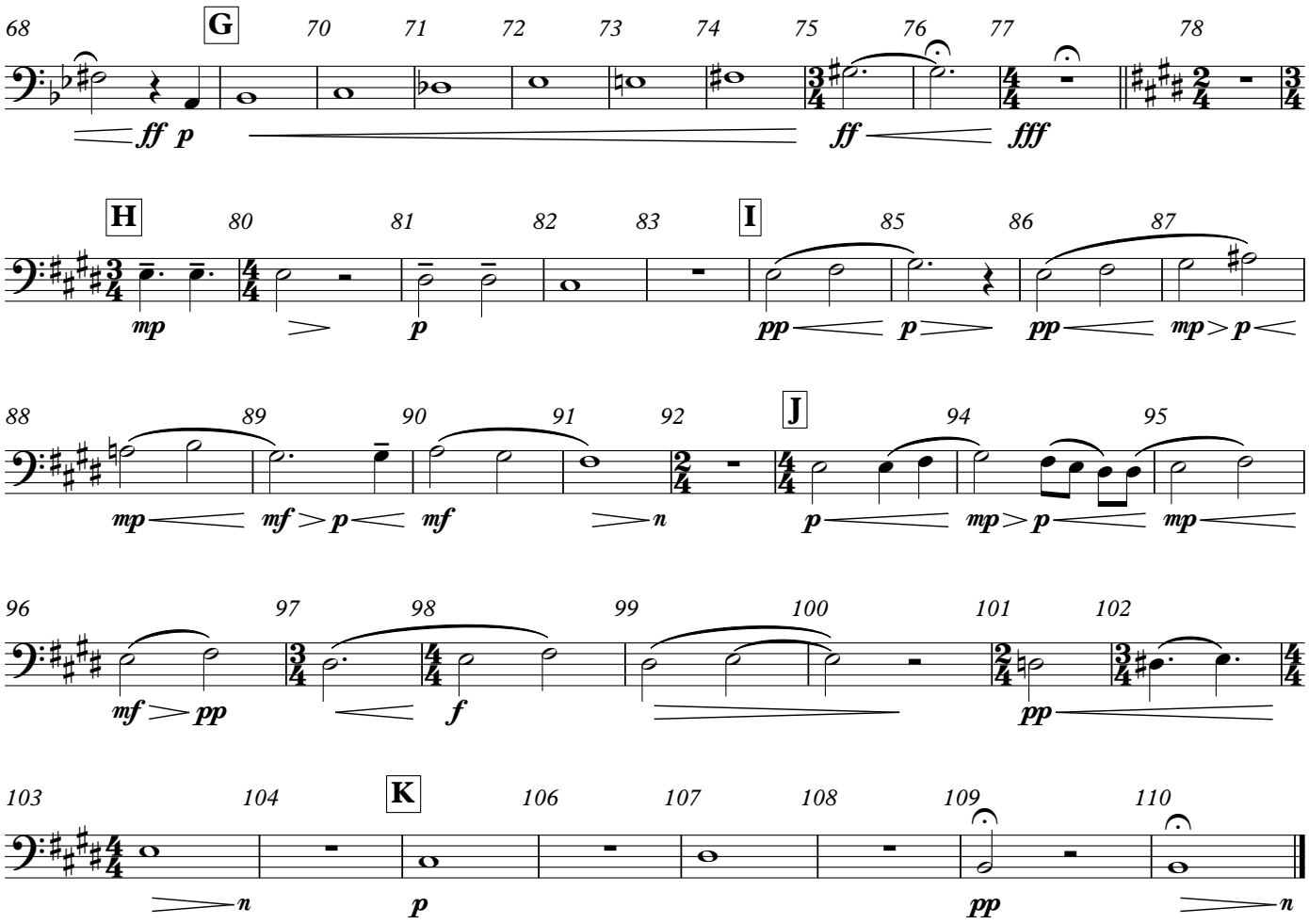
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Trombone 6

Hiraeth

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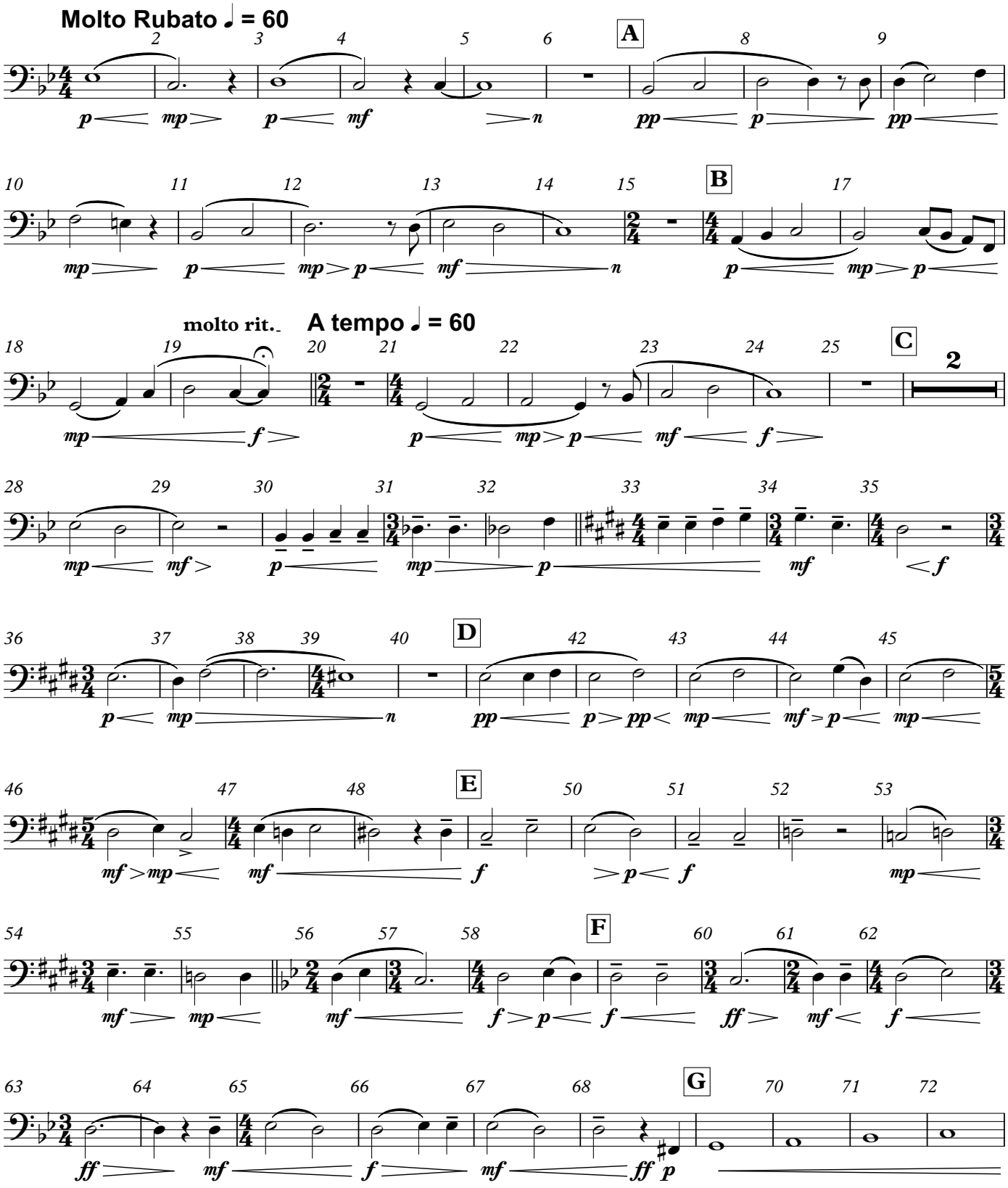

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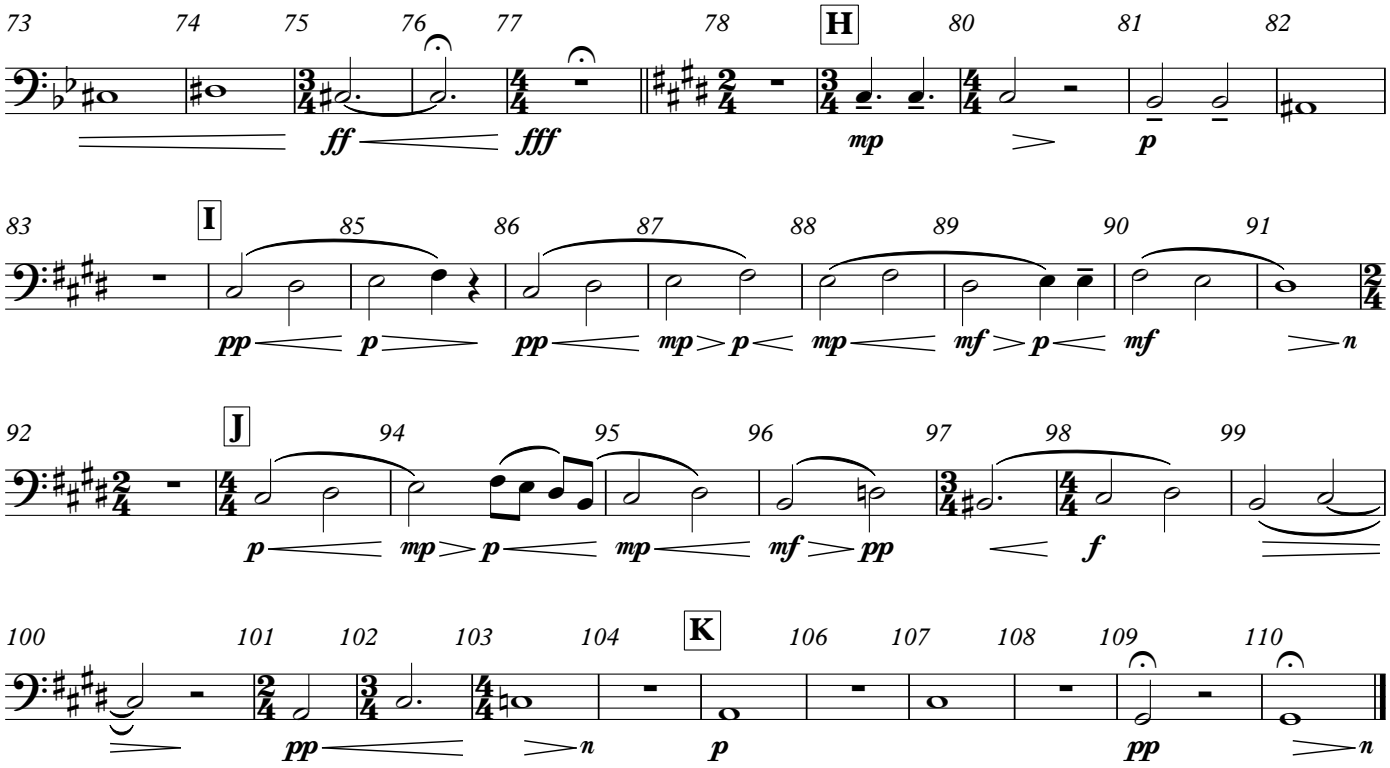
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Bass Trombone 1

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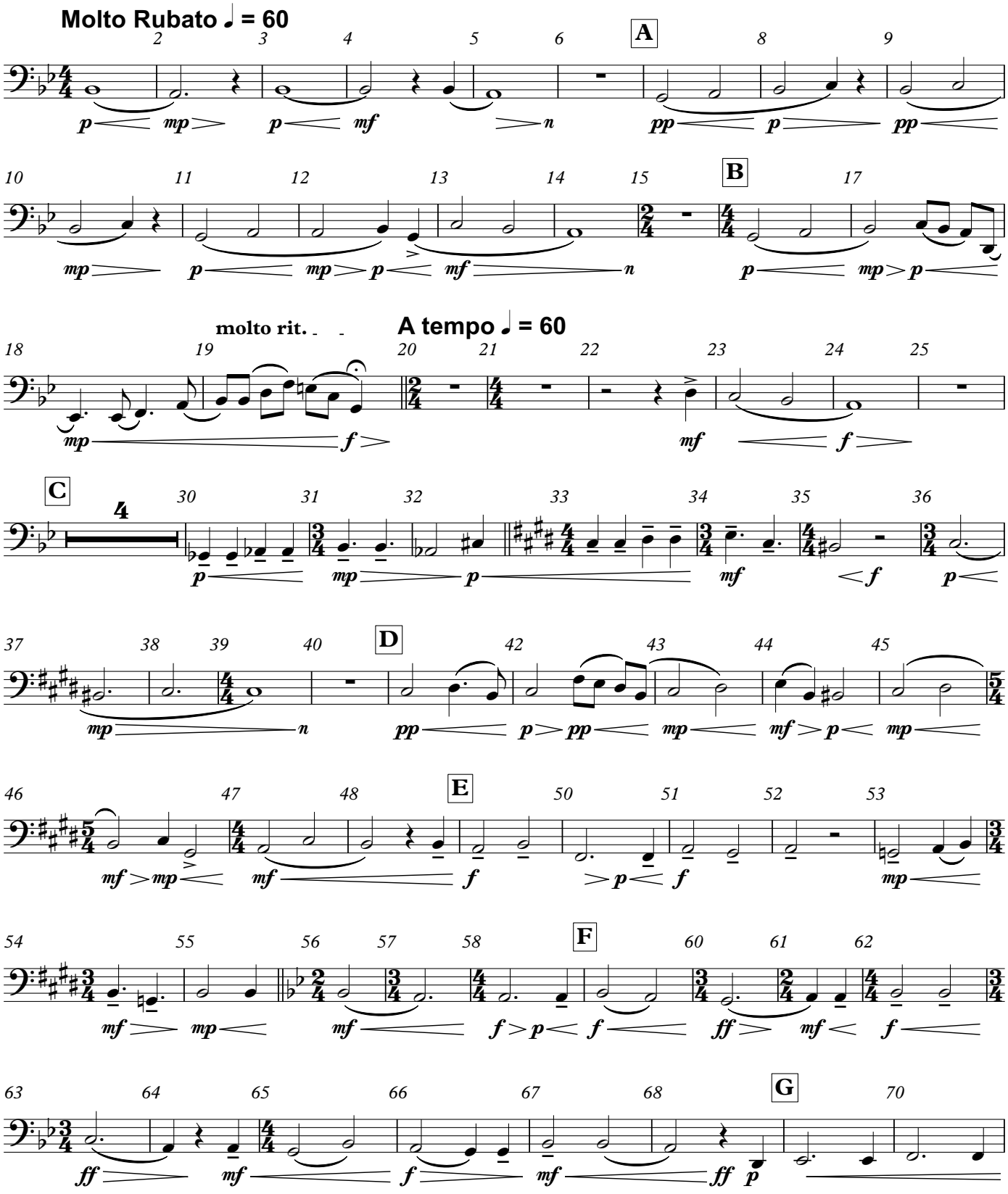

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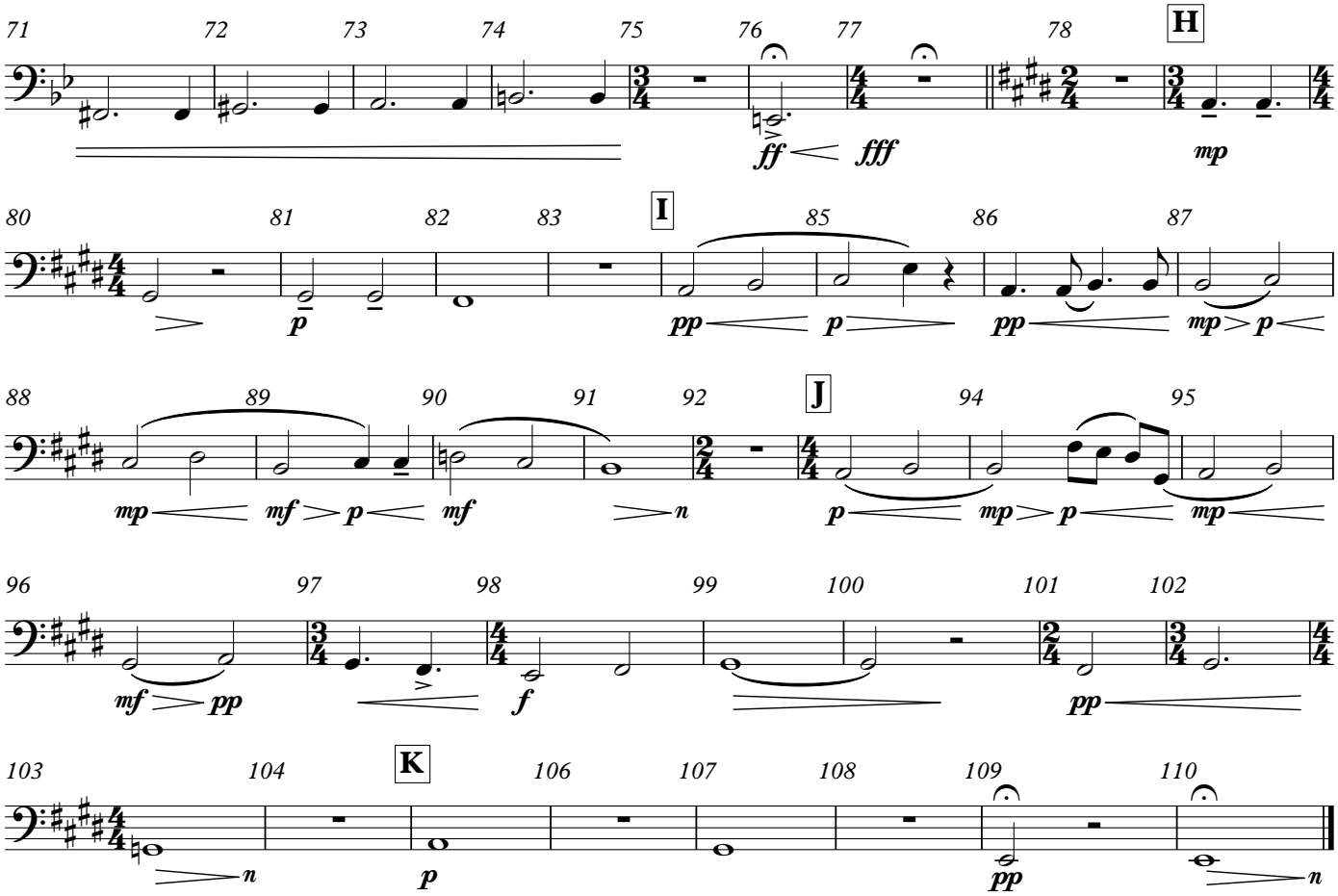
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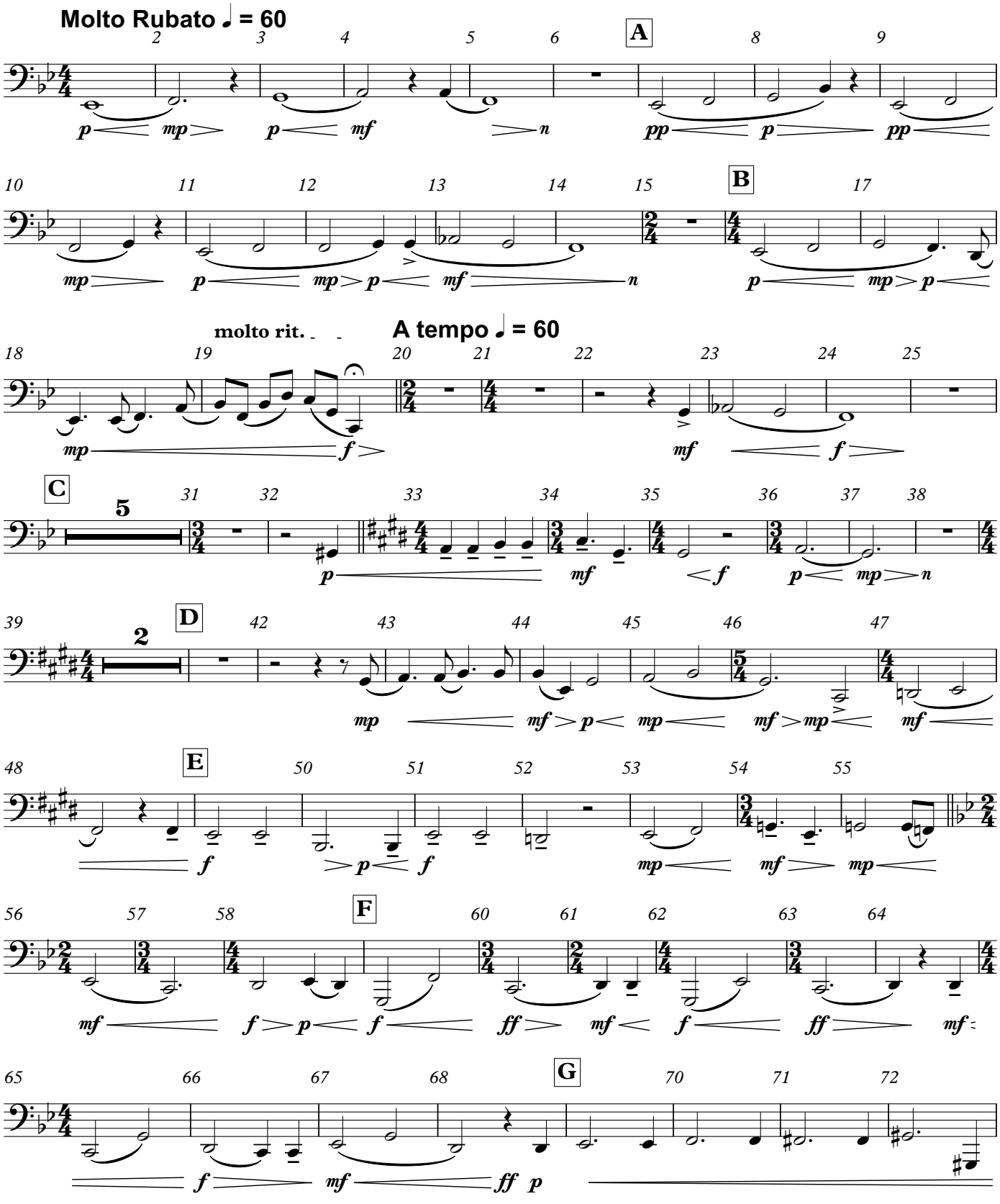
Bass Trombone 2

Hiraeth

for Trombone Octet

Chris Evan Hass



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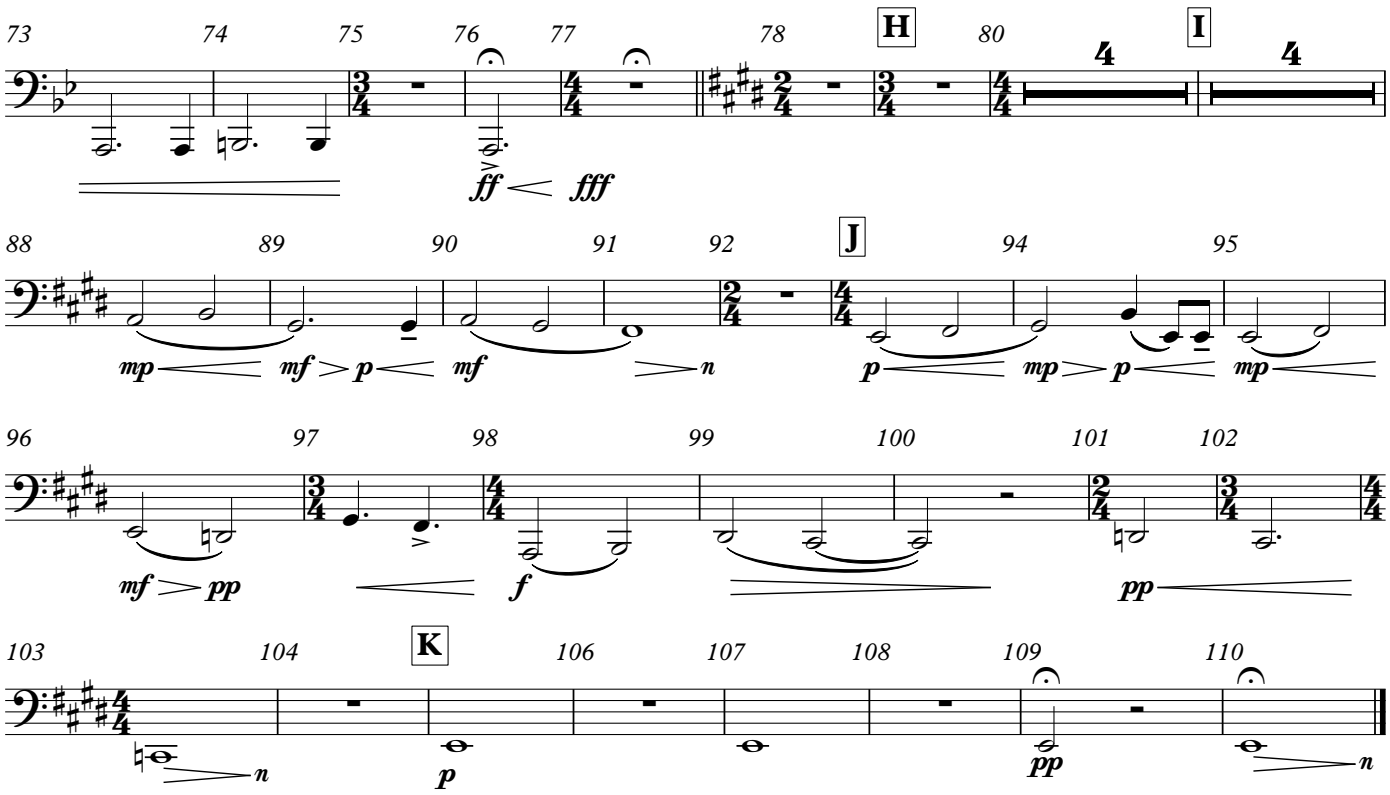
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