Solo Trombone

THREE SCENES

FOR

AMERICAN TROMBONE

AND

BRASS ORCHESTRA

Written for **JOSEPH ALESSI** and the **USAF BRASS IN BLUE**,
SSgt Matthew Erickson, director.

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I. Stravousa!	4:00
II. Hymn	3:20
III. Una canción de tres Américas	4:30

INSTRUMENTATION

SOLO Trombone

Bb Trumpet I
(Bb Piccolo Trumpet)
Bb Trumpet II
Bb Trumpet III
Bb Trumpet IV

Horn I in F
Horn 2 in F

Tenor Trombone
Bass Trombone

Percussion I
(Snare Drum, Suspended Cymbal, Drum Set)

Percussion II
(Bass Drum with Mounted Crash Cymbal, Vibraphone, Tympani)

THREE SCENES for AMERICAN TROMBONE and BRASS ORCHESTRA was composed in September 2008. The work was commissioned by the **USAF Brass In Blue** for a series of concerts featuring trombone virtuoso **Joseph Alessi**. As a trombonist, I consider it a privilege to be asked to write for this artist and group of extremely gifted musicians.

In my view, Mr. Alessi is one of the leading practitioners of the "American School" of trombone performance. I have borrowed this term from the pedagogical writings of Sam Burtis, an accomplished and well-respected freelance trombonist/composer based in New York City. I understand this approach to trombone performance as being one in which the artist is able to move effortlessly between the genres of Western art music, jazz, vernacular styles, and world music. As a composer who defines himself as a *contemporary American eclectic* with a strong interest in "Third Stream" language, this approach to performance resonates strongly with my compositional worldview.

In this work, I have attempted to craft a piece that moves through various musical styles and sets up a backdrop for the soloist to express a wide range of musical thought and sensibilities. While the artist for whom this work was commissioned is a virtuoso of the highest order (and this piece certainly does have its virtuosic moments!), I offer that my intent first and foremost was to compose a work that is melodic and expressive.

STRAVOUSA, (as the name suggests) is a boisterous march influenced by two important American musical figures of the 20th century, Igor Stravinsky and John Philip Sousa. It seems to be a compositional hybrid of ideas developed from *L'Histoire du Soldat* (another work in which the trombone plays a prominent role), *The Thunderer,* and Pat Metheny's *The First Circle*.

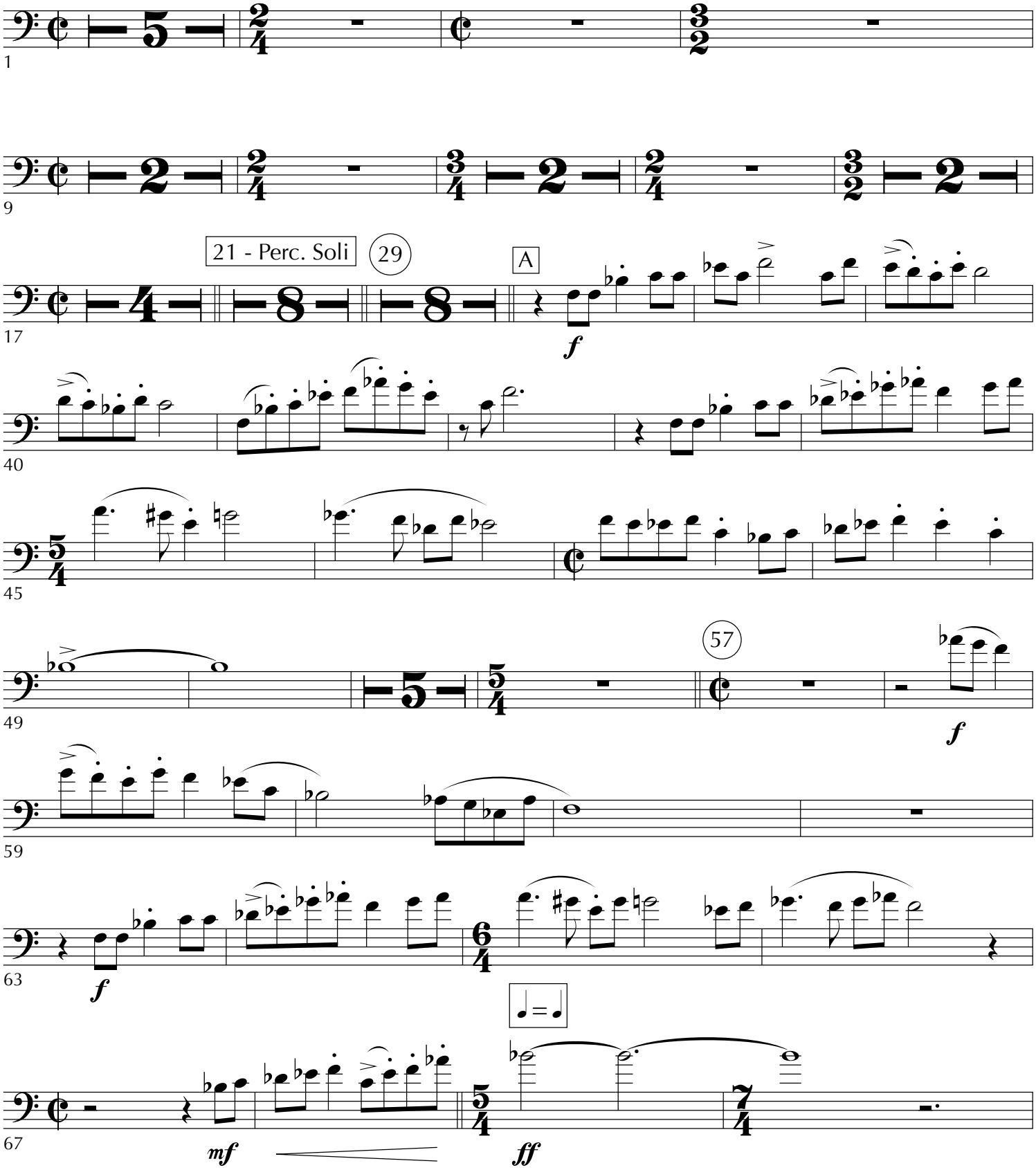
HYMN is a contemplative movement that seemed to compose itself. The soloist "sings" a Dorian chant-like opening which leads into a chorale. This is followed by a "transformative" section influenced by the language of Aaron Copland. The final section of the movement restates the opening chant melody in a bright Lydian modality. Although Hymn is only three minutes in length, my hope for this movement was to depict the spiritual concept of *Metanoia,* the profound change of internal perspective and a desire for repentance made possible only through the grace of a loving and providential Creator.

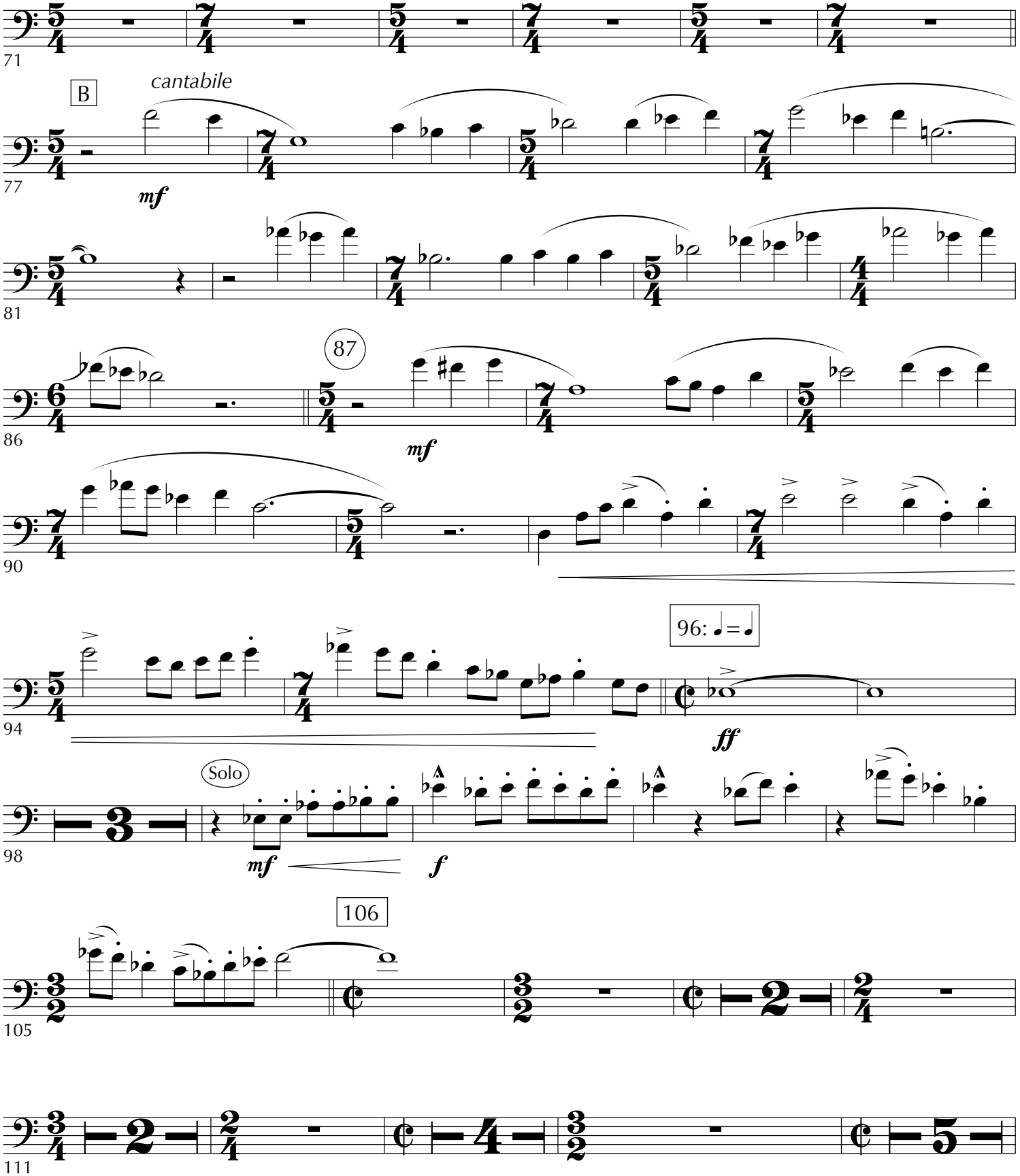
The third "scene", UN CANCÍON DE TRES AMERÍCAS (A Song of Three Americas), is a exciting, rhythmic, dance-like piece in triple meter. The influence of North, Central, and South American musical styles and vocabulary as well as echoes of Leonard Bernstein can be heard clearly in this movement. Much is asked of the soloist in terms of range, rhythmic precision, and energy.
It is hoped the soloist, brass orchestra, and listener will have fun with this movement!

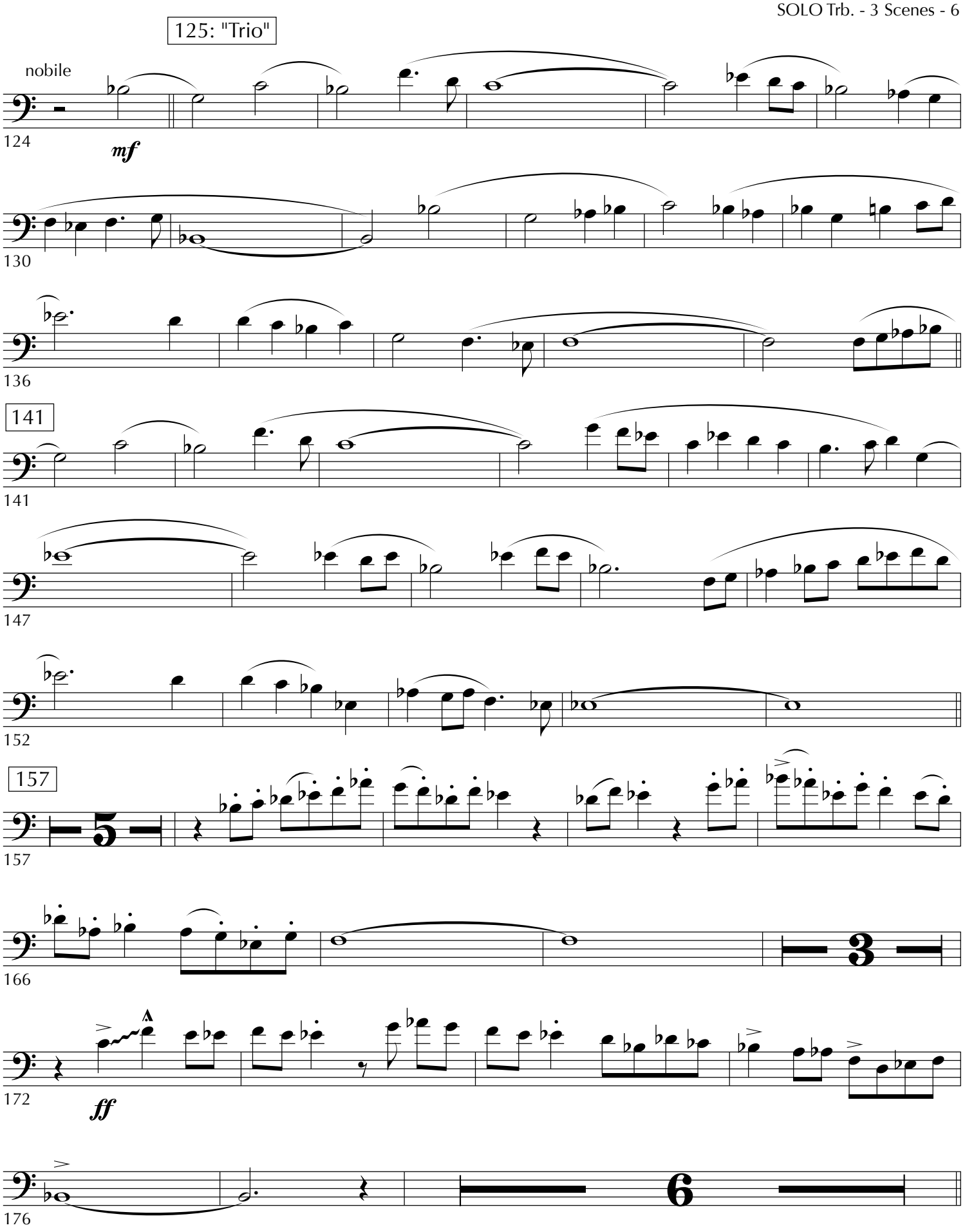
Eric Richards

September 16, 2008

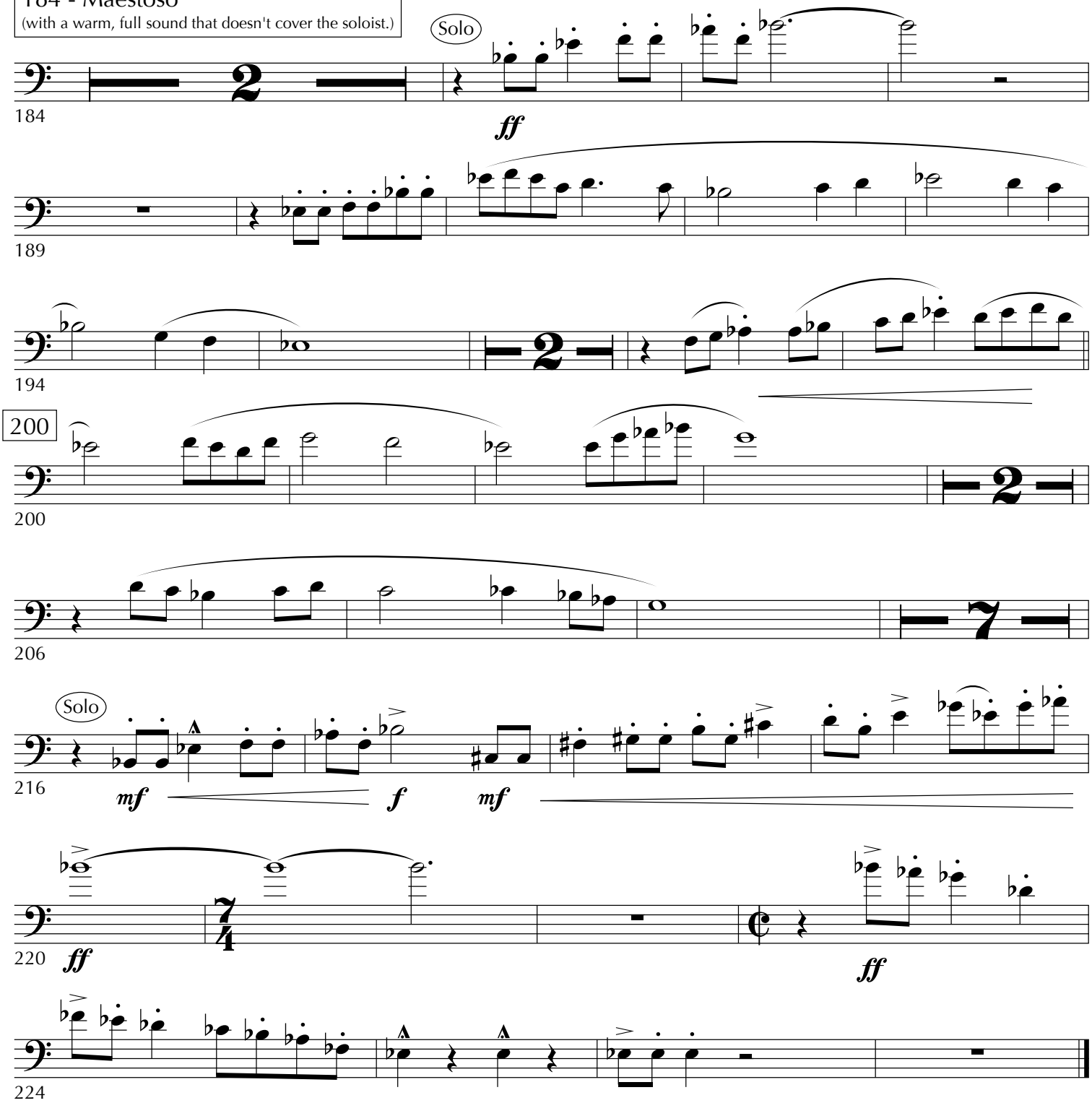
I. Stravousa! Energetic March; M.M. 𝅗𝅥 = 120



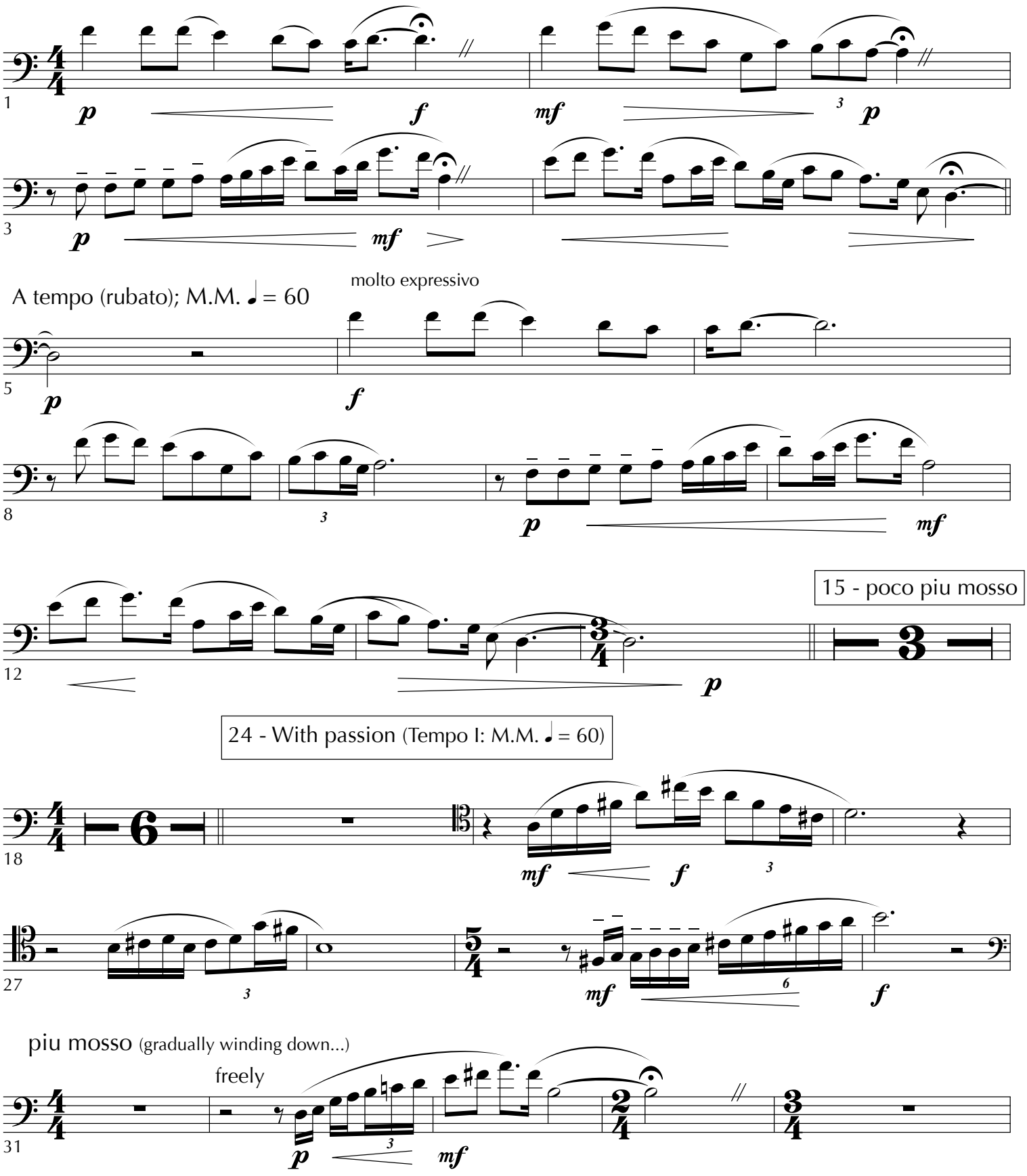

71
B
cantabile
mf
77
81
87
mf
86
90
96: ♩ = ♩
94
ff
Solo
mf
f
98
106
105
111

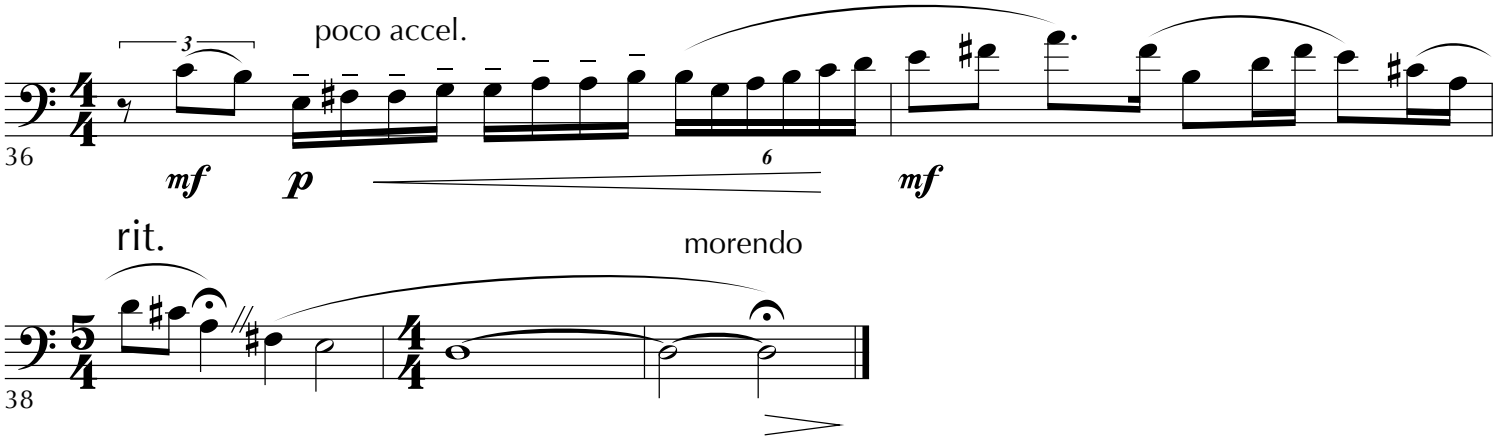

125: "Trio"
nobile
124
mf
130
136
141
141
147
152
157
157
166
172
ff
176

184 - Maestoso
(with a warm, full sound that doesn't cover the soloist.)



II. Hymn Freely and reverently (chant-like); M.M. ♩ = 60 +/-

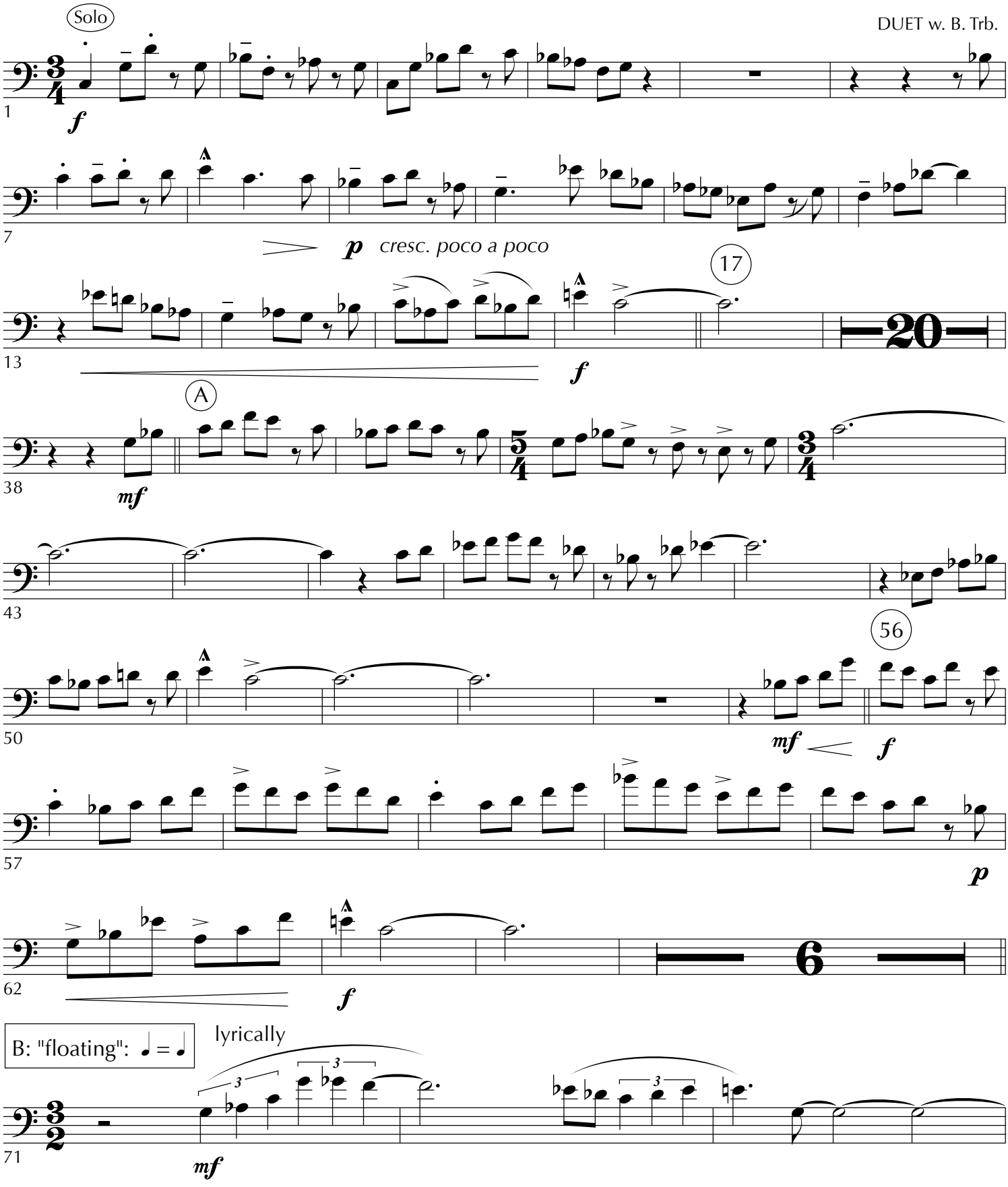


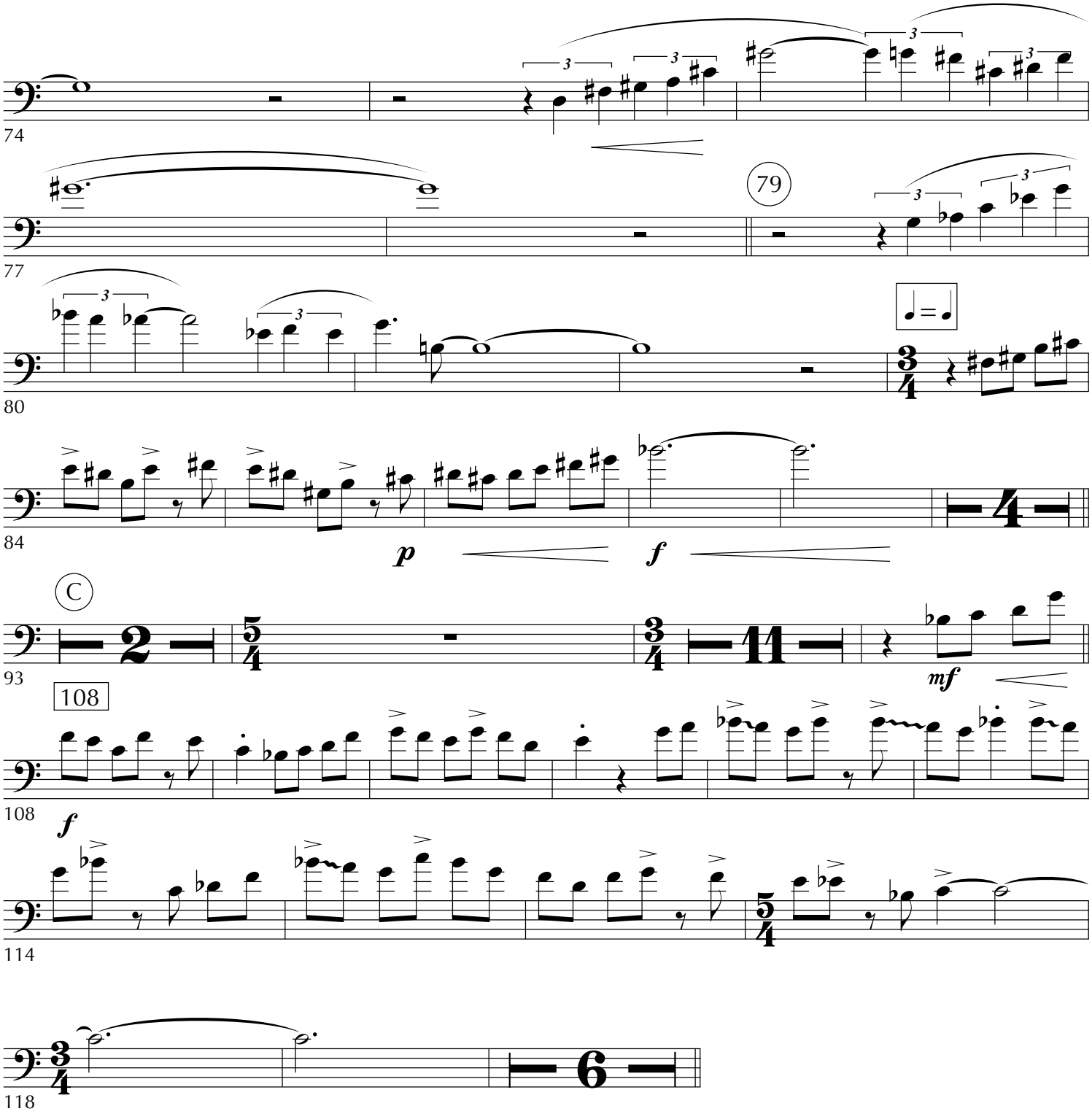

poco accel.
36
mf
p
6
mf

rit.
morendo
38

III. Una canción de tres Américas

With great energy and crisp rhythm (In one: M.M. 𝅗𝅥. = 60 - 72)




74
77
79
80
84
p
f
C
93
mf
108
108
f
114
118

126: OPEN Drums/Perc./Claps Soli (opt. cut to 134)

Optional improvisation: **C Mixolydian** or **C Lydian Dominant**

126

(LAST time: decresc. to 134)

134 - On CUE: Solo Trb./Drums

134 *mf* gradually building...

142

140

146

153

152

158

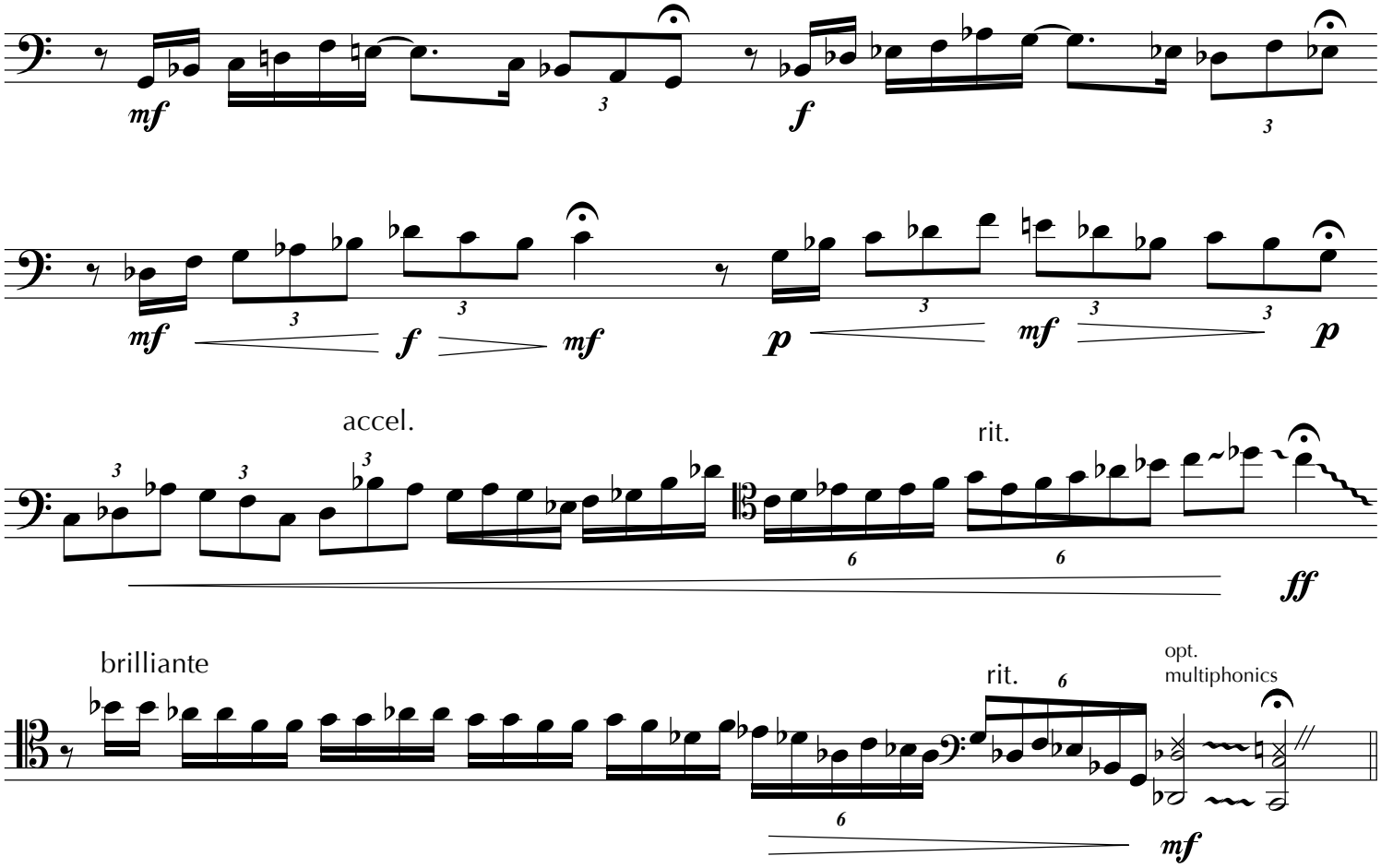
164 *p* *ff*

Cadenza

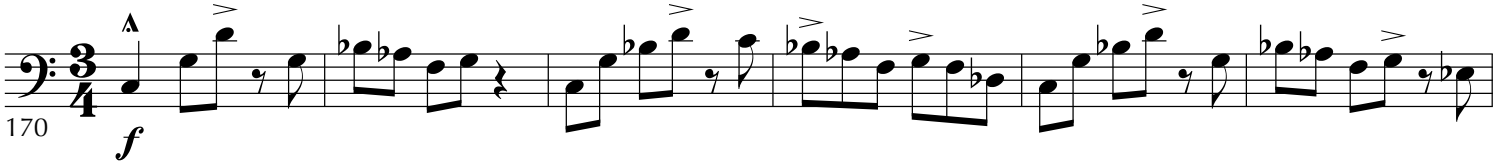
accel.

ff

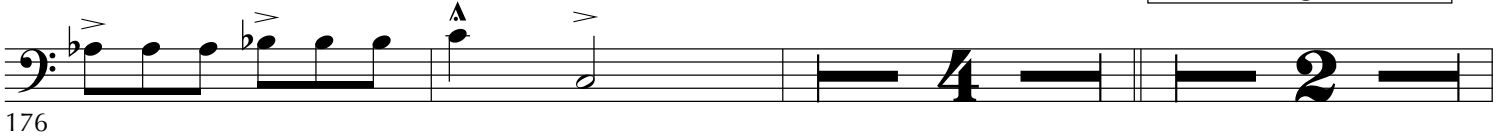
mf

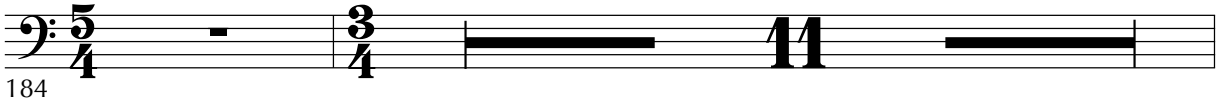


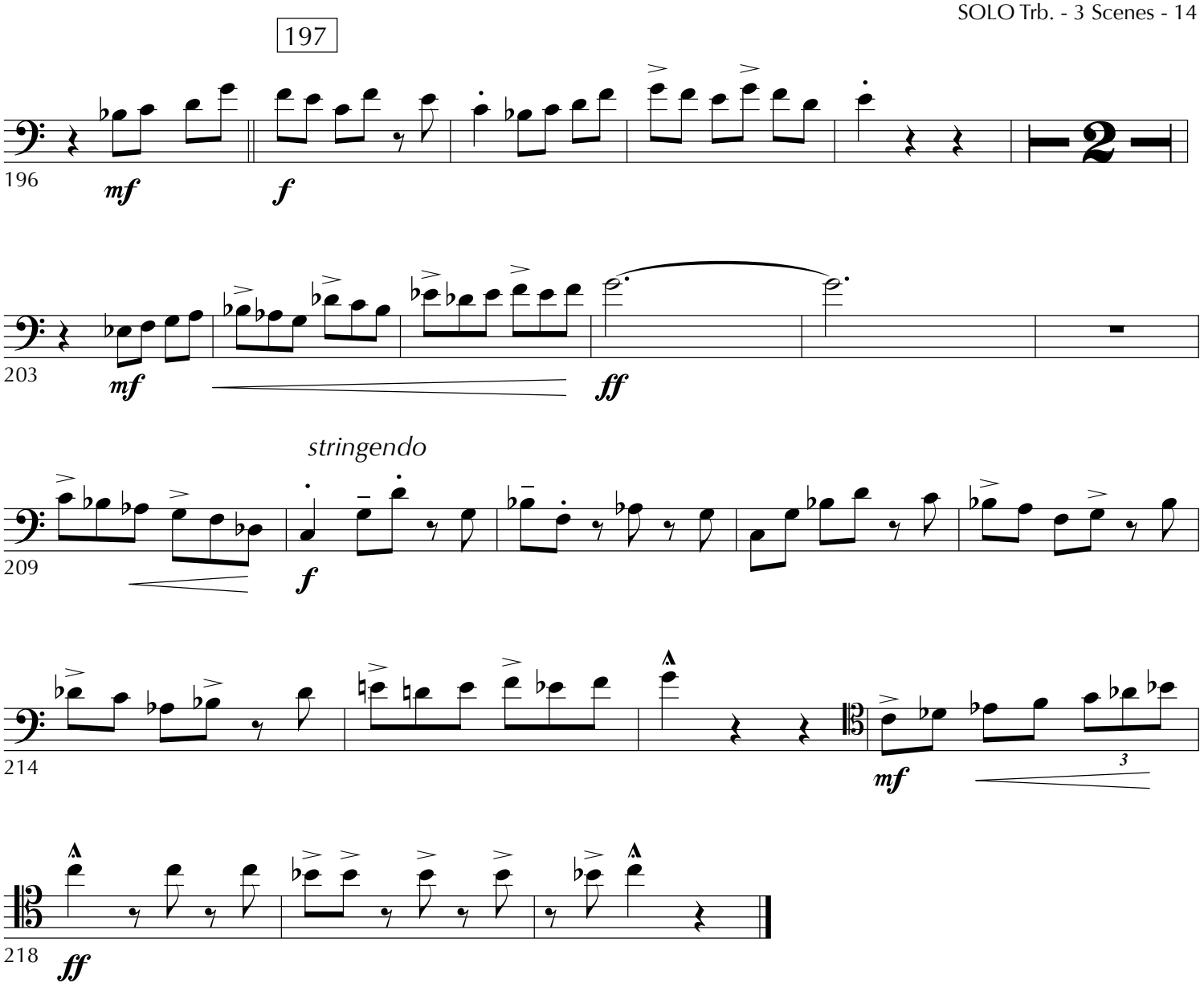
170: A Tempo (+?)



182 - bring it home!






197
196
mf
f
203
mf
ff
stringendo
209
f
214
mf
3
218
ff