Karlheinz Essl

Sequitur VII

for alto saxophone and live-electronics

2008

Dedicated to Lars Mlekusch

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www.essl.at

Karlheinz Essl

Sequitur (2008)
for various solo instruments and live-electronics

Sequitur is a series of compositions for solo instruments and live-electronics which are written for outstanding soloists. The aim is to create various pieces which use the same computer program – the so-called *Sequitur-Generator* – written in Max/MSP. It generates a complex 8-part canon from the instrument's live input as an accompaniment. Unlike traditional canons, the individual canonic layers do not enter at regular intervals but in a sort of acceleration which results in an increasing structural density. Moreover, the single canonic layers are getting gradually distorted – as if the were decaying. And at last, the 8 parts do not always play together, but are constantly cross-faded by using random operations which results in every-changing and unforeseeable structural interactions where the canon can vary between 1 and 8 voices.

In other words: A strict and mechanical construction principle of the canon (hence the title *Sequitur* from the latin word which translates into "it follows") is subversively excavated. This finally results in an unpredictable system that in fact uses the input of the soloist as its basic material but also shows an autonomous and surprising behaviour.

This dichotomy challenges the soloist who is performing a score which consists of accurately notated musical actions that are seperated by fermatas. As the lengths of those fermatas is not indicated, the performer decides how long they should last - according to the output which the computer creates in real time.

Finally, the computer-generated canon structures run through a series of sound transformers (like ringmodulator, detuner, flanger and comb filter) where the sonic shape of the sound is being altered. These are controlled by a sequence of pre-composed preset which can be called by the player by pressing the space on his computer keyboard according to the indications of the score. At each key stroke, the next preset will be loaded which gradually changes the positions of the FX sliders.

The title *Sequitur* advertently relates to the famous *Sequenze* of Luciano Berio. It is an attempt to write a series of pieces which take advantage of the idiosyncratic instrumental possibilities - and confront them with a realtime sound processing environment that has its own secret life.

More information at:

http://www.essl.at/works/sequitur.html

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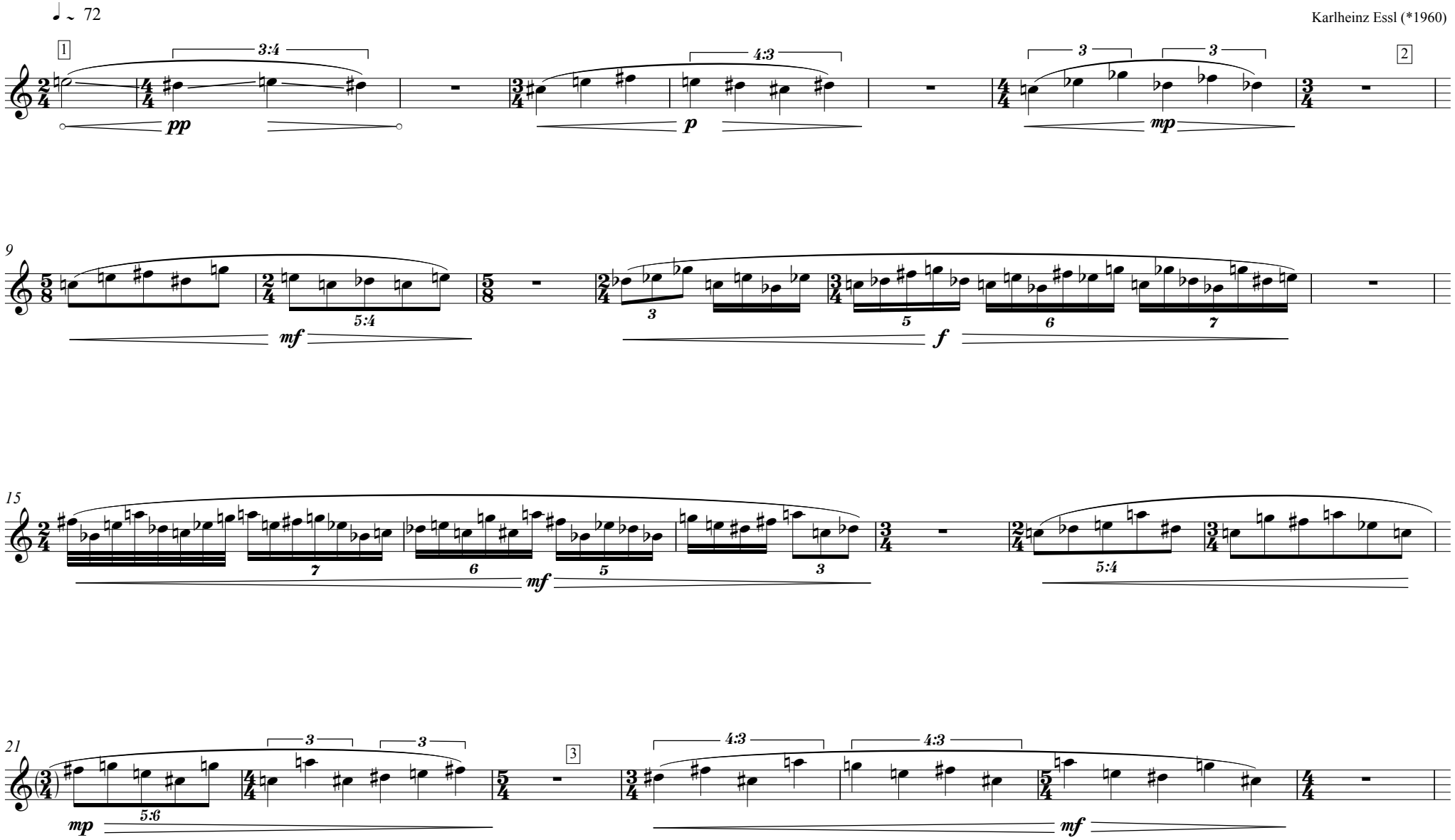

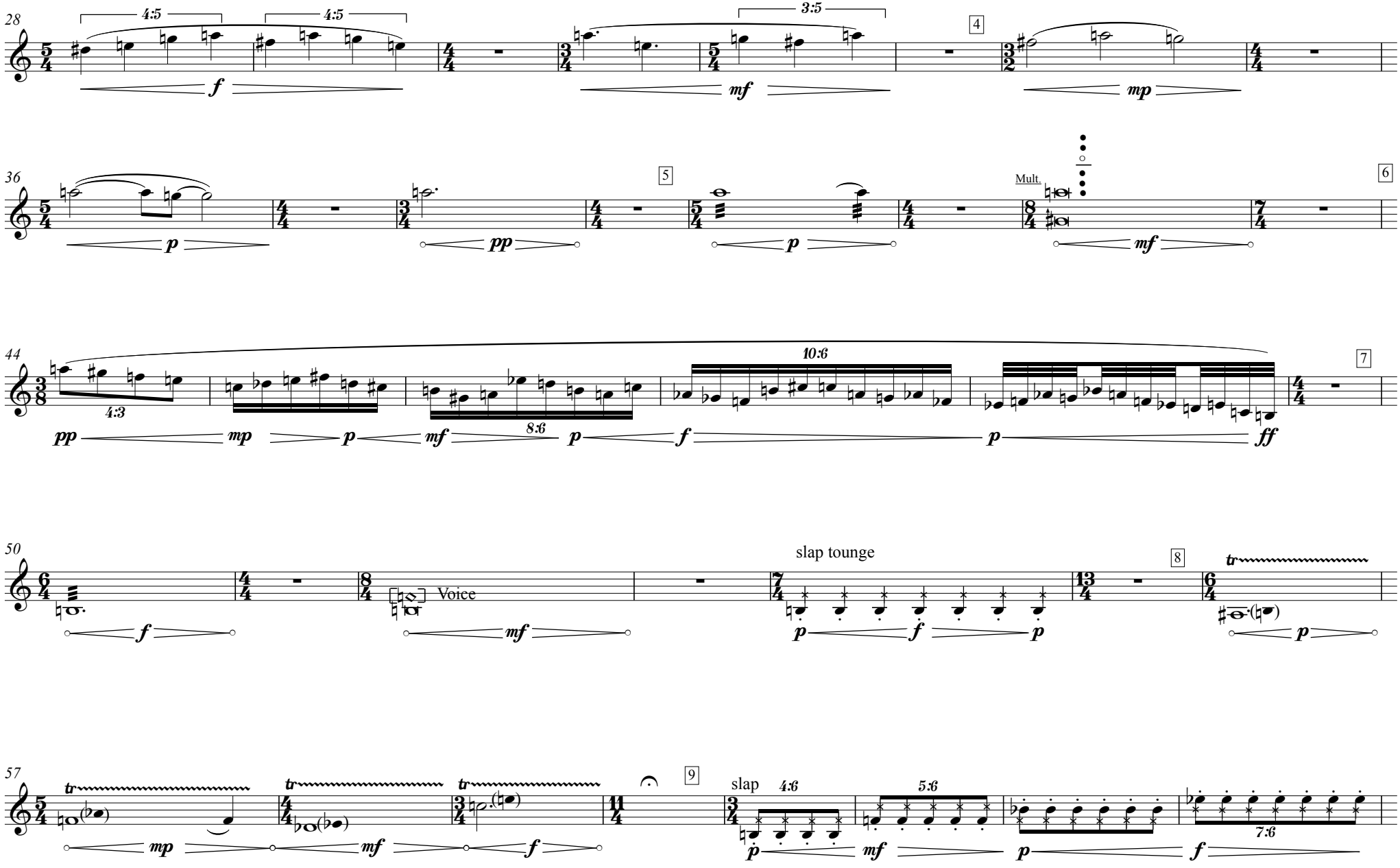
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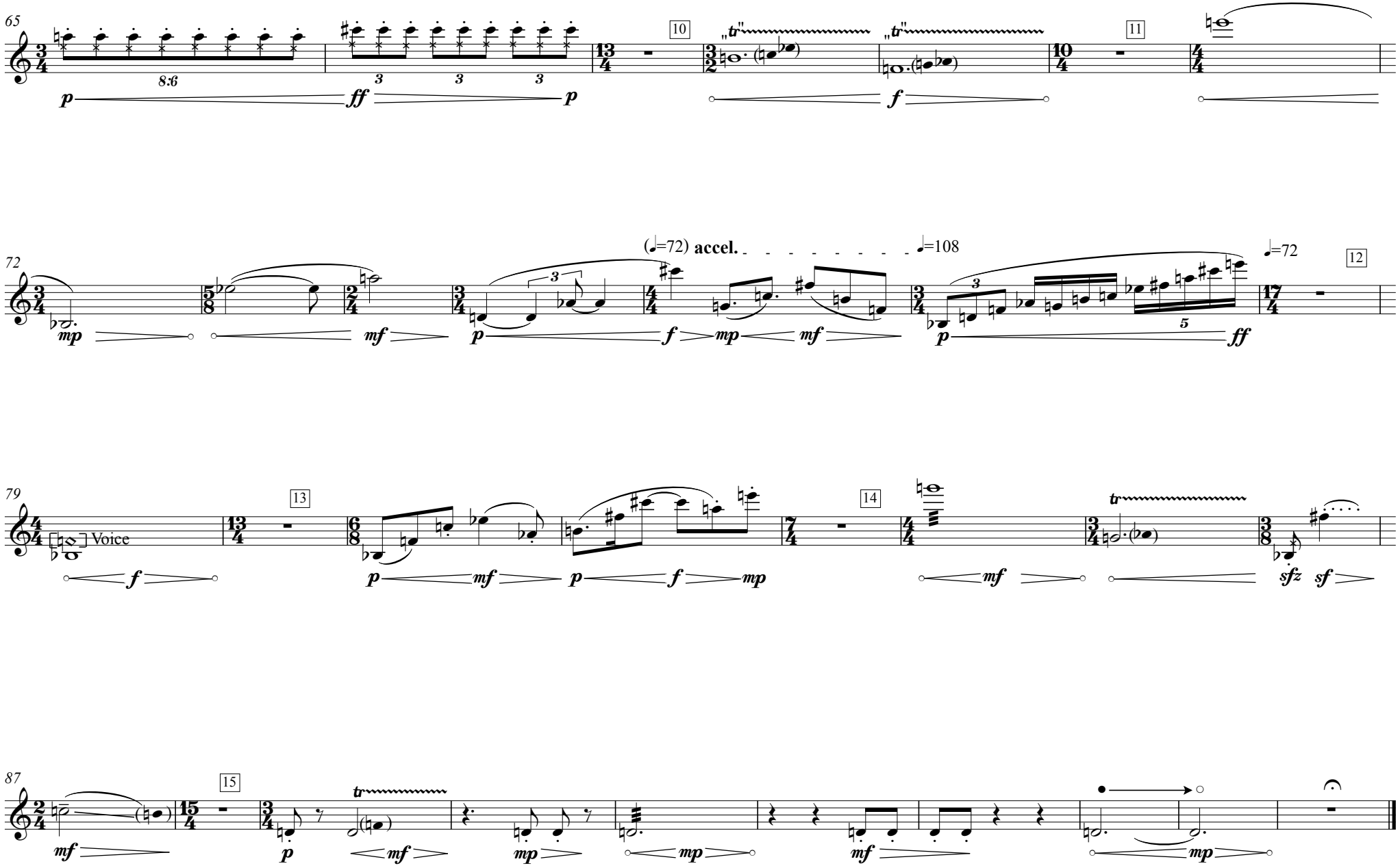
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