THE SEDUCTION OF SAPIENTIA

David Rosenboom

1973/74

realized for
Viola da Gamba with
voltage controlled resonators

Composed for and comissioned by Dr. Peggie Sampson
with assistance from the Canada Council and the York
University Faculty of Fine Arts.

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Michael Byron (ed.). (1976).
(Aesthetic Research Centre
of Canada: Vancouver).

NOTES ON A REALIZATION FOR A STRINGED INSTRUMENT WITH ELECTRONICS

The performer may wish to make any number of different realizations. One example requires the use of one or more highly resonant, voltage controlled, band-pass filter-resonators. The output of each filter must be connected to an envelope follower, capable of delivering a control voltage to the resonator that will set the resonator's center frequency. The range of response of the filter and the envelope follower must be experimentally adjusted to allow for subtle control of harmonics by variations in bow pressure and intonation of the viola da gamba player or other stringed instrument. The sound of the instrument is to be amplified and fed to all resonators used. Movement I is ideally performed with a set of five resonators which must be set for a fixed frequency, without control from the envelope followers. Several resonators may be used in parallel for movement II to increase the effect of isolating the harmonics. Movements I and III may also be modified for performance without resonators. Sample circuits that have been used are shown on the following page.

David Rosenboom
August, 1974
Maple, Ontario

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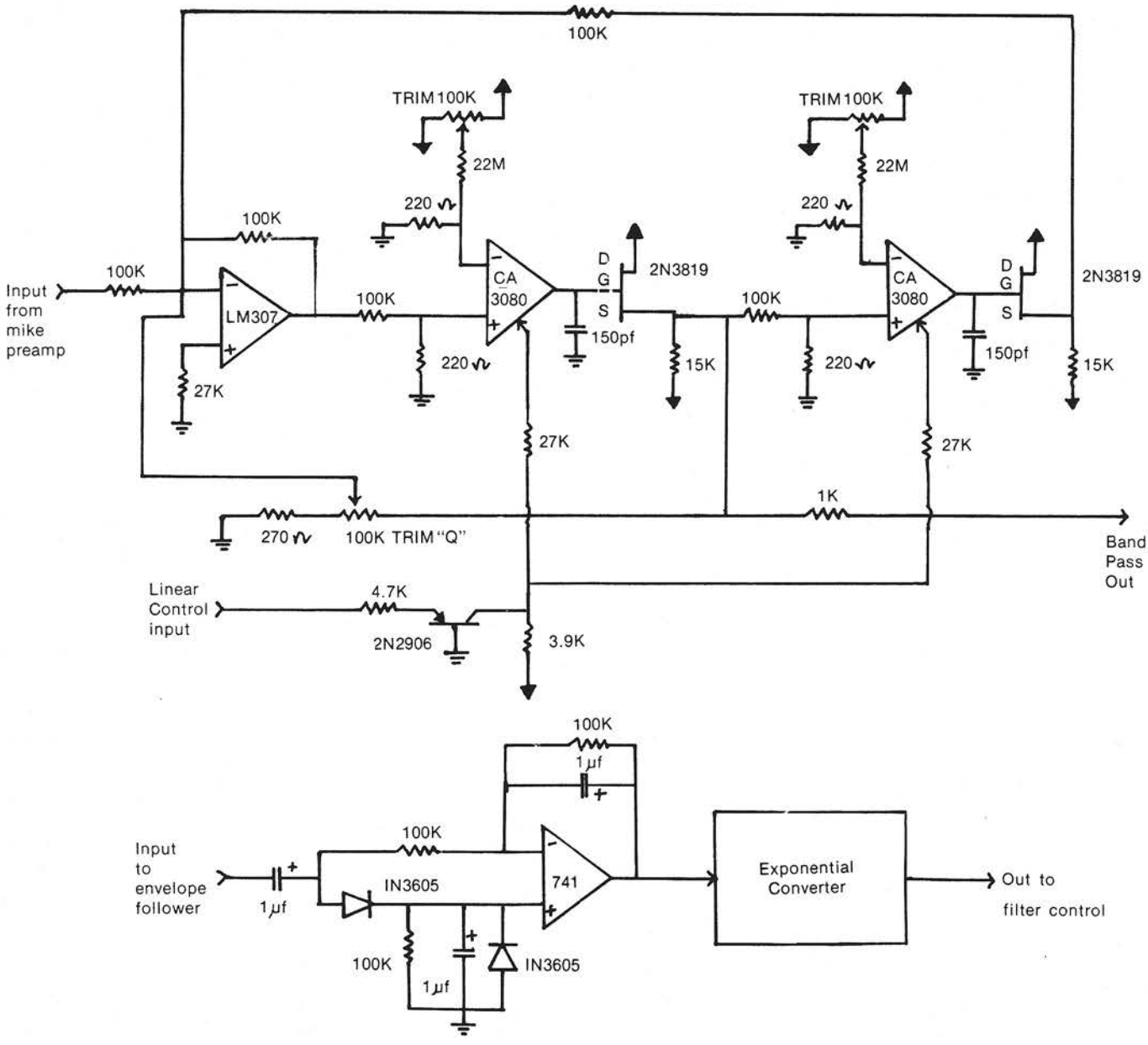
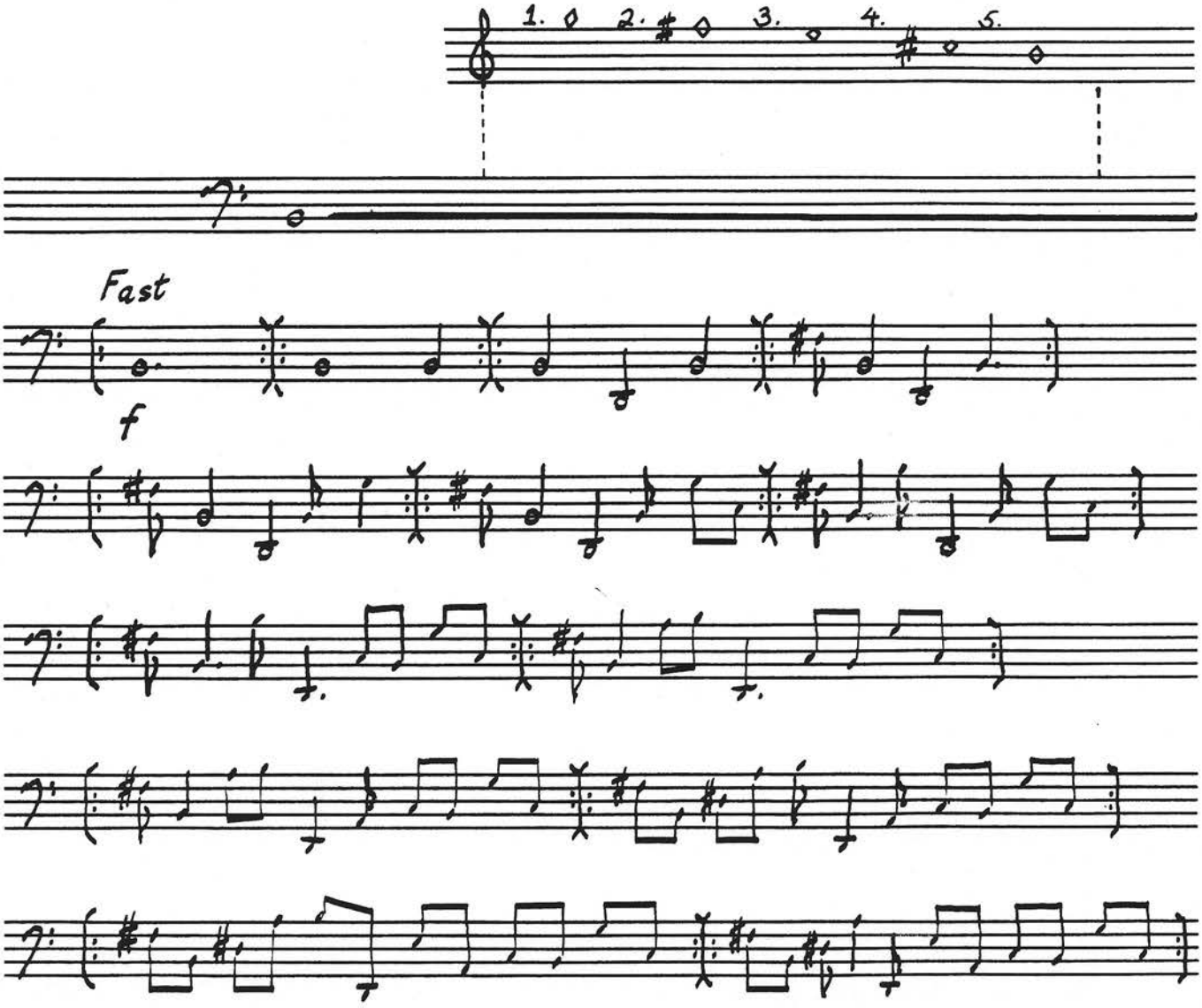
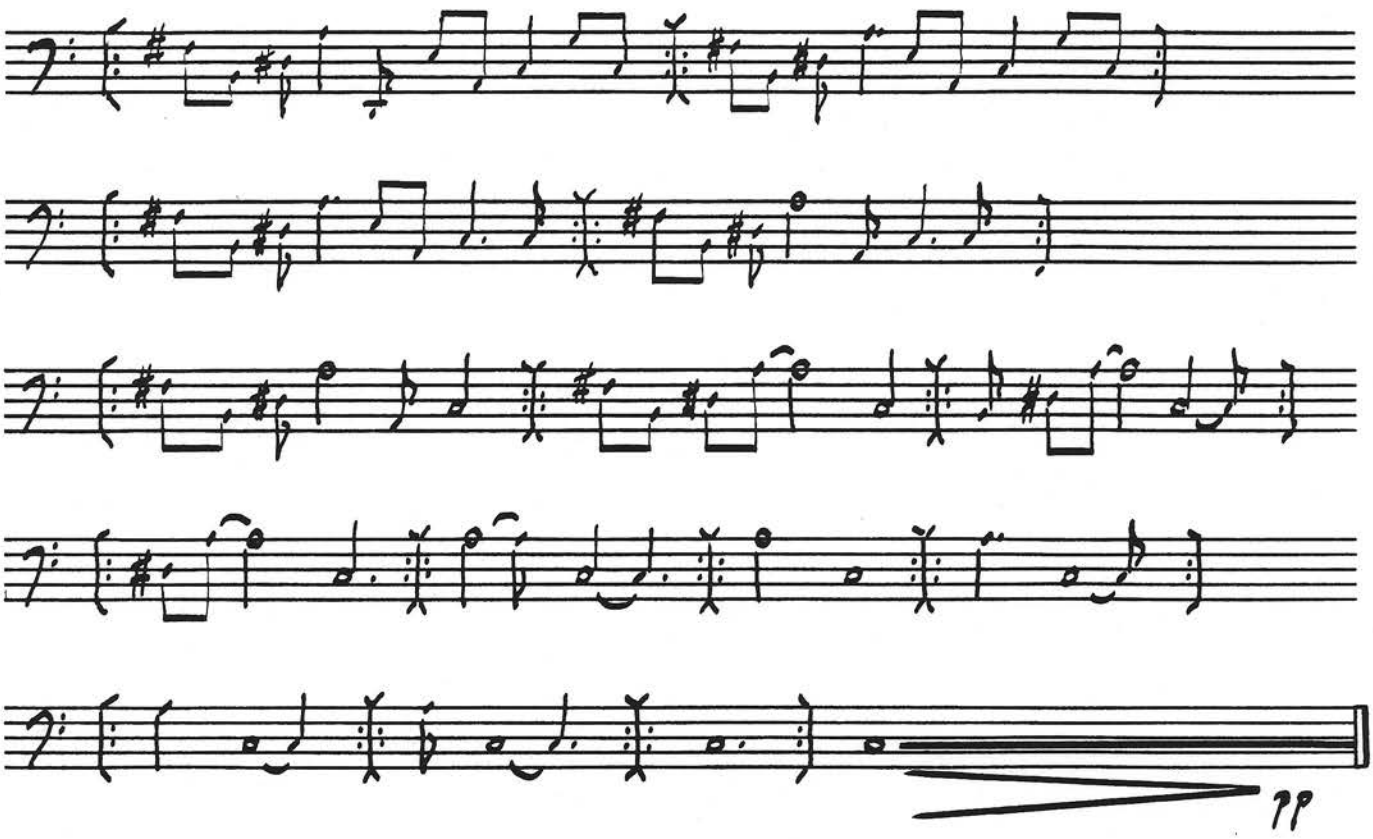
VOLTAGE CONTROLLED RESONATOR/ENVELOPE FOLLOWER



I

Movement I is a piece of cyclic pattern music. Each of the repeated patterns is to be played a large number of times, the performer moving from one pattern to the next at his own will, never interrupting the flow of sound. If electronic resonators are to be used in a particular realization begin by holding the low B as a drone and tune the resonator(s) to one or more of the harmonics of B, as indicated on the upper stave. These settings are to remain fixed throughout the duration of the first movement. Bowing is to be in a marccato, detached style for realization by a stringed instrument.

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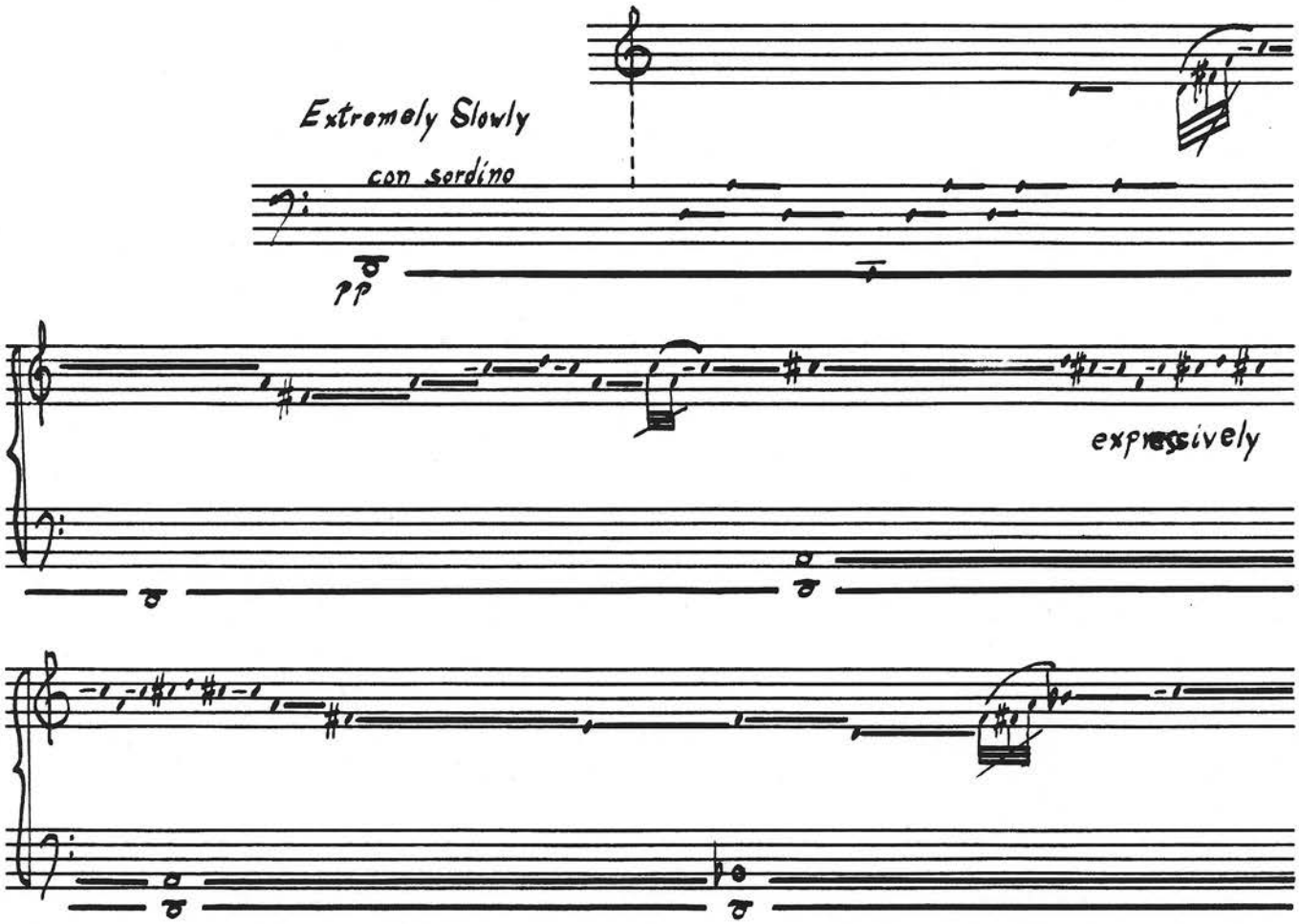
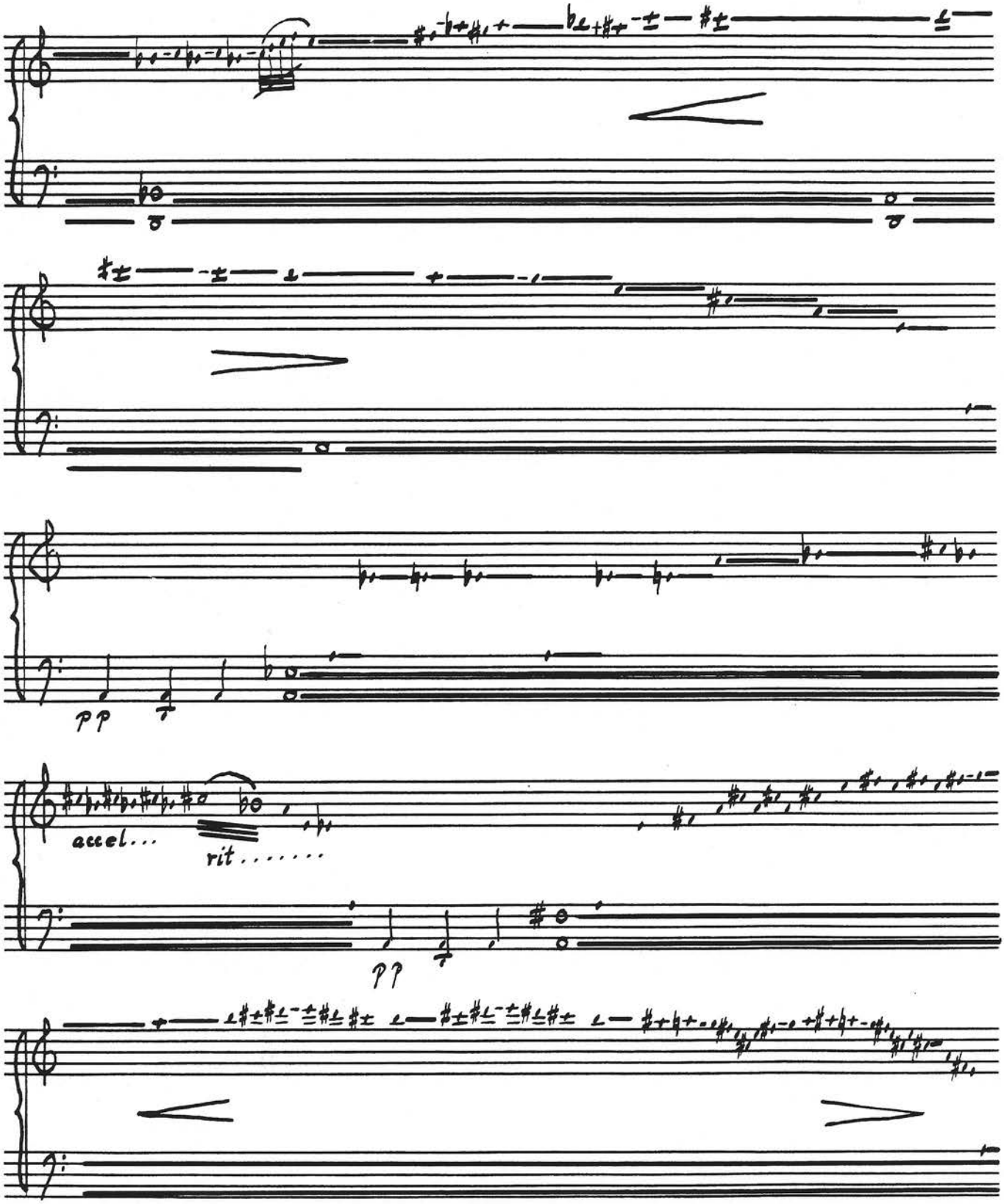
II

Movement II is for any method of producing drones and well tuned harmonics derived from those drones. One method utilizes a stringed instrument and voltage controlled resonator(s) that responds to subtle changes of bow pressure as follows. The center frequency setting of the resonator(s) is under control of an envelope follower connected to the resonator's output(s). The resonator(s) will then be able to be tuned to ring with the harmonics indicated in the upper staves of the score as a function of bow pressure and intonation. The notes of the upper staves are taken from the harmonic series of the drones indicated on the lower staves. These drones are to be played as continuously as possible. Movement in the harmonic series will, of course, be associated with expression and crescendi and diminuendi. Proceed through the score very slowly, holding each drone for a long time, and use fine degrees of bow control to produce the harmonic melodies. An example of a second realization might take the form of a performance by two pianists who sing or hum the drones and play the harmonic melodies on well tuned instruments, following each other as closely as possible.

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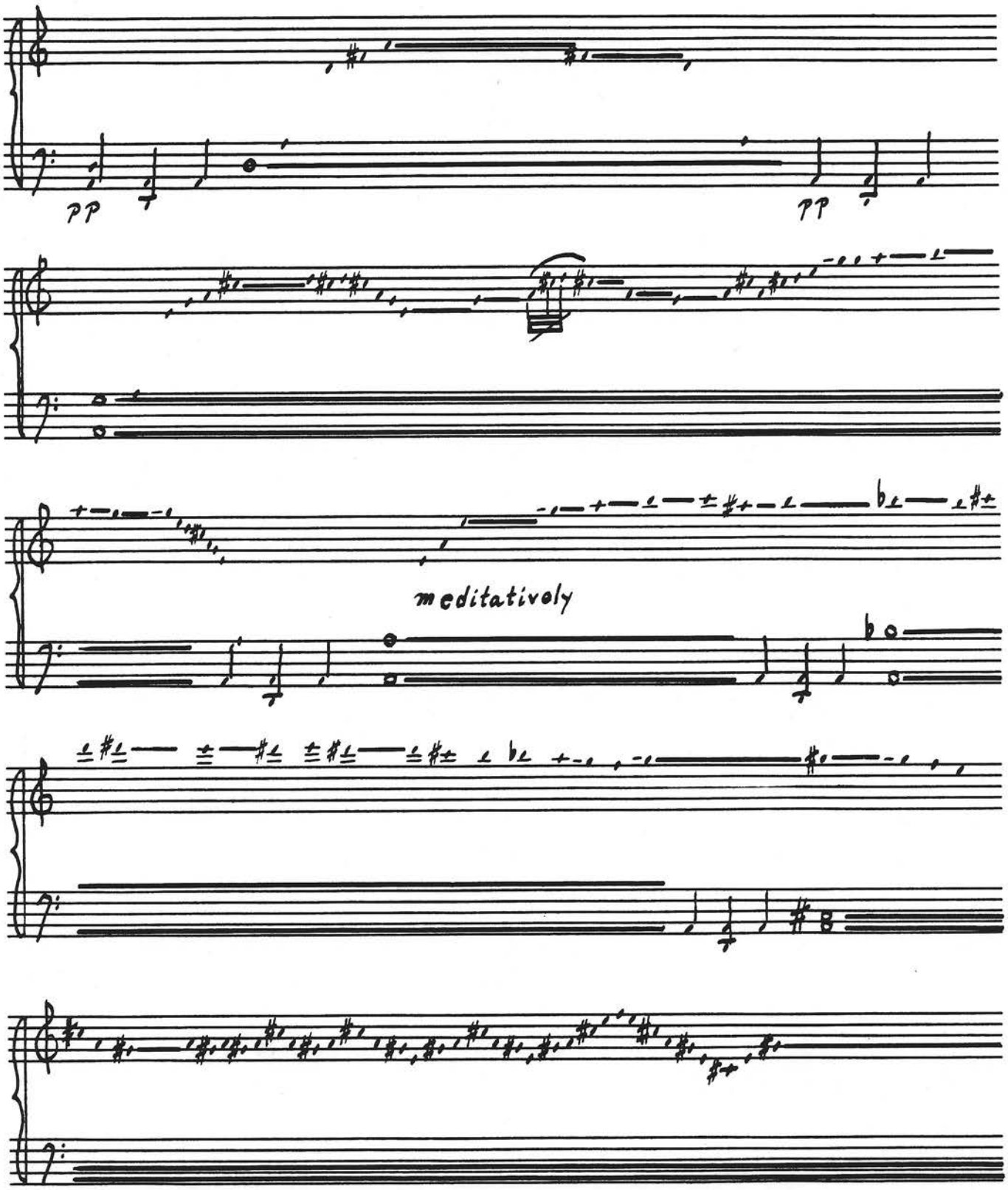
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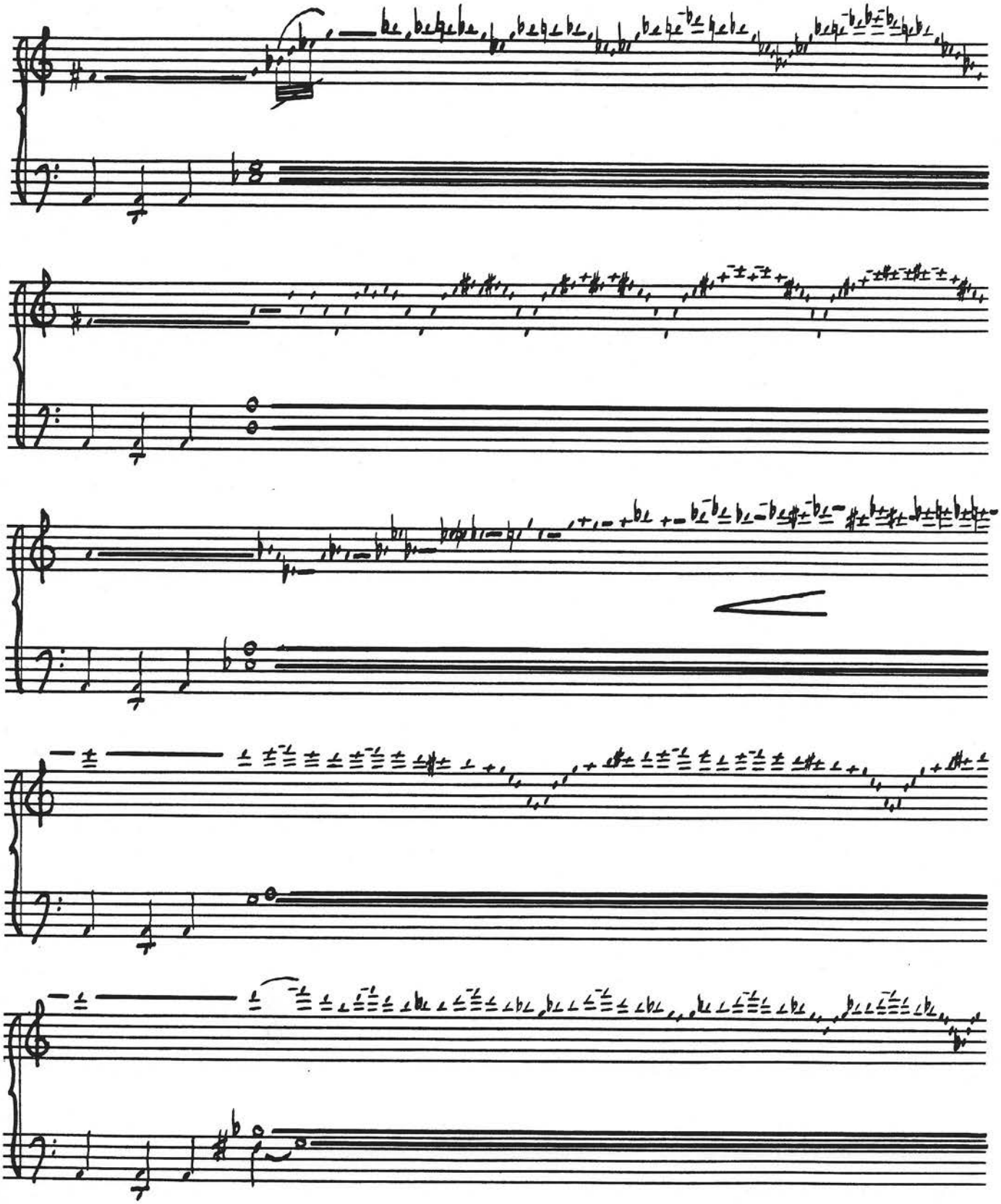

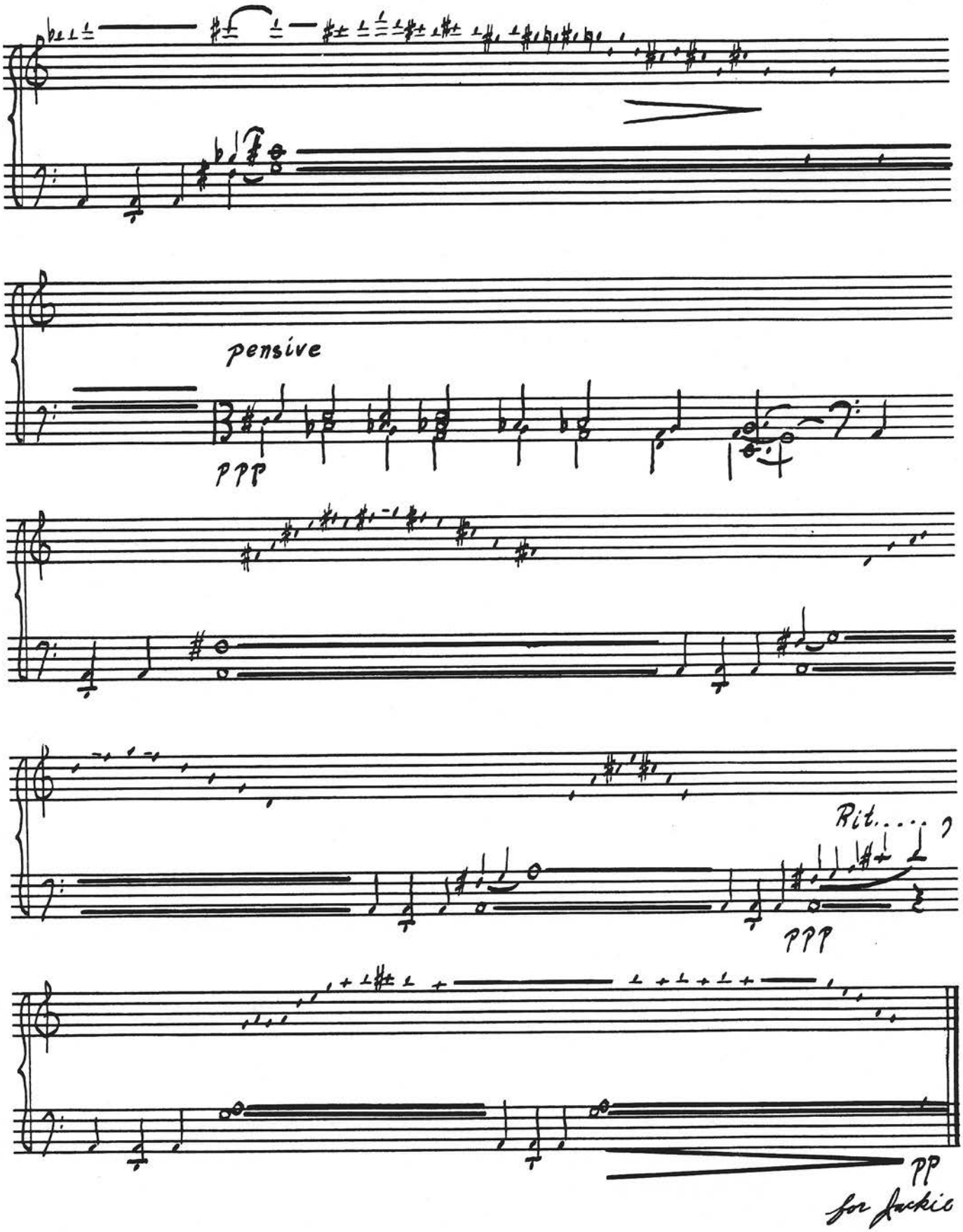
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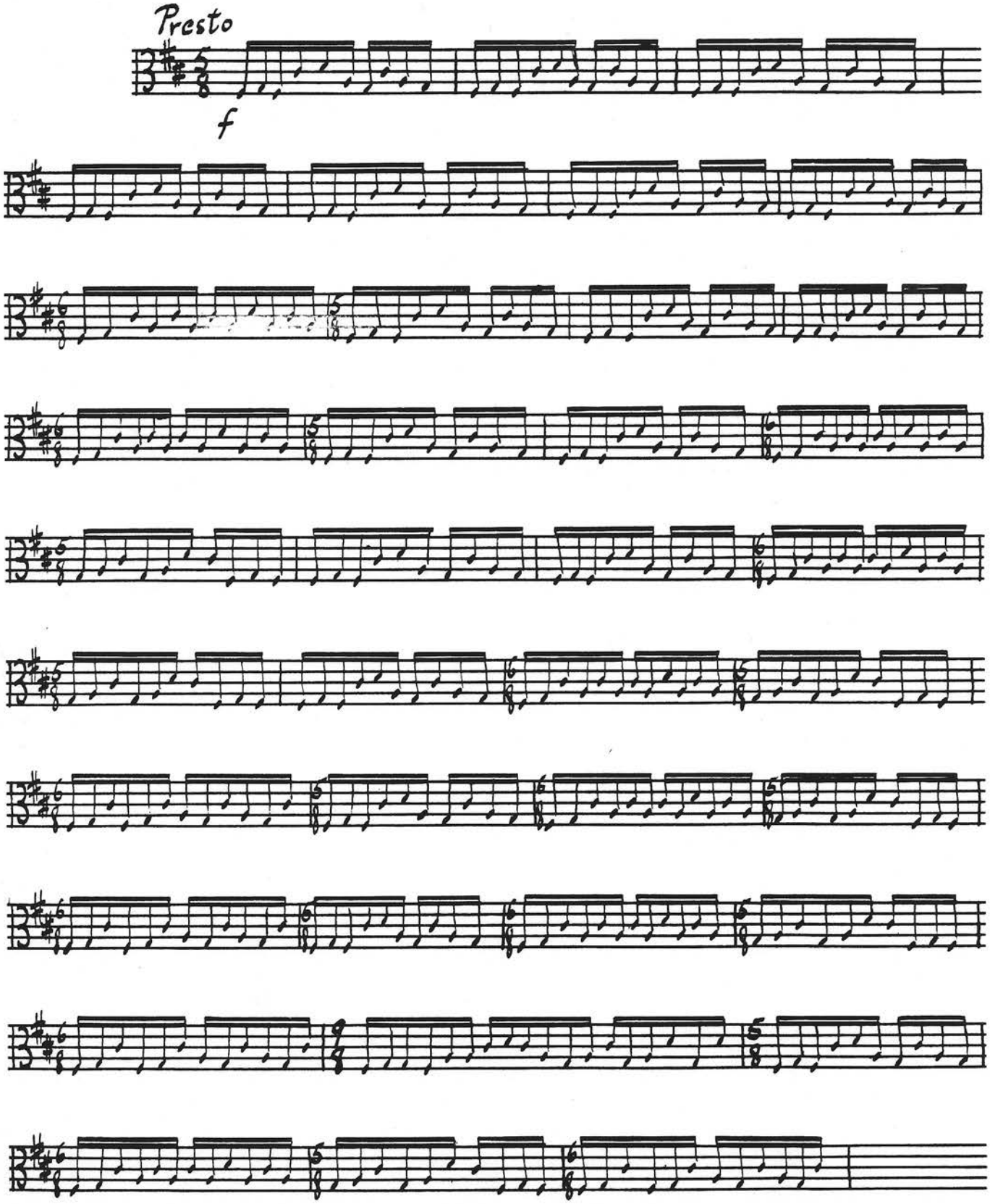
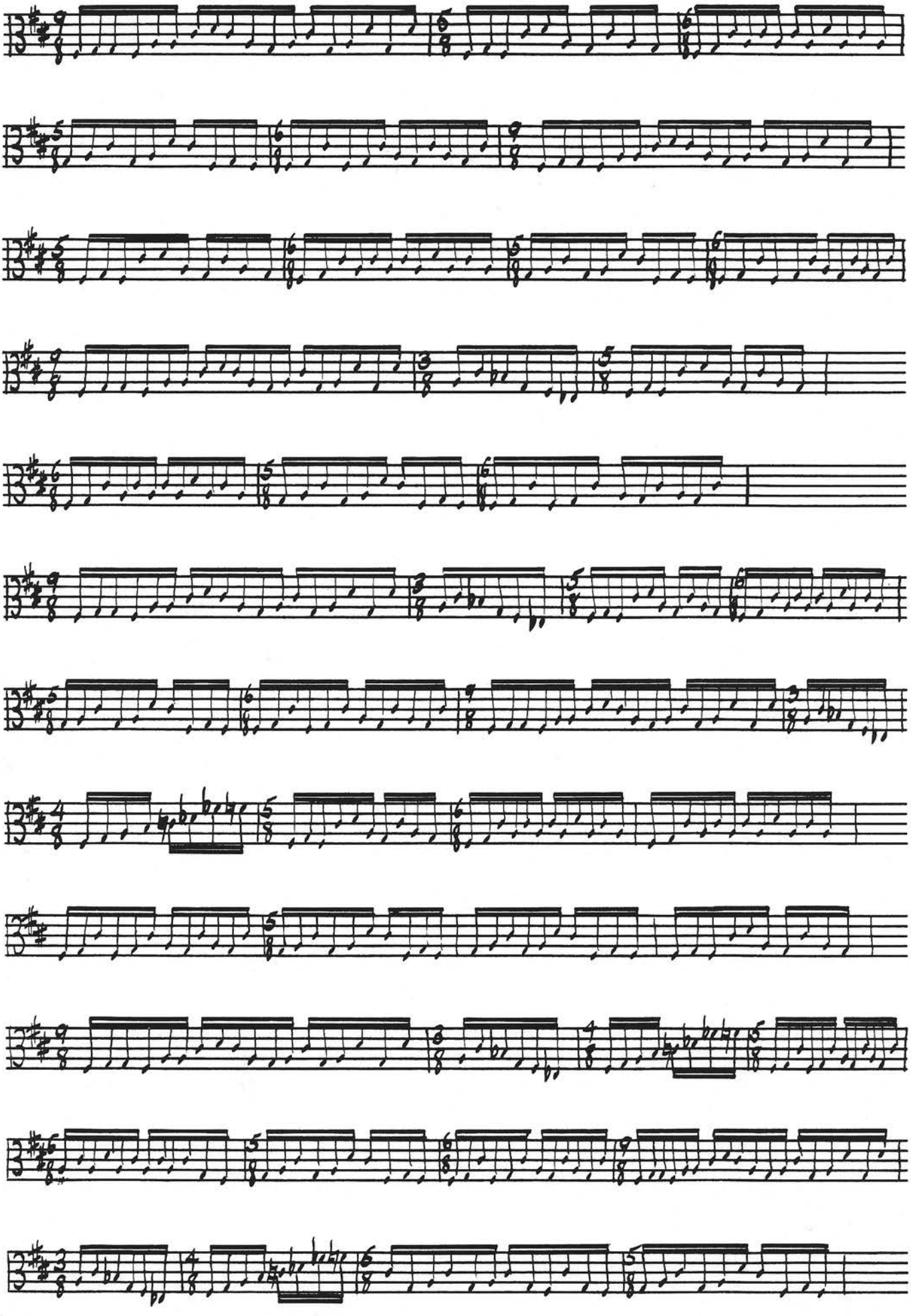
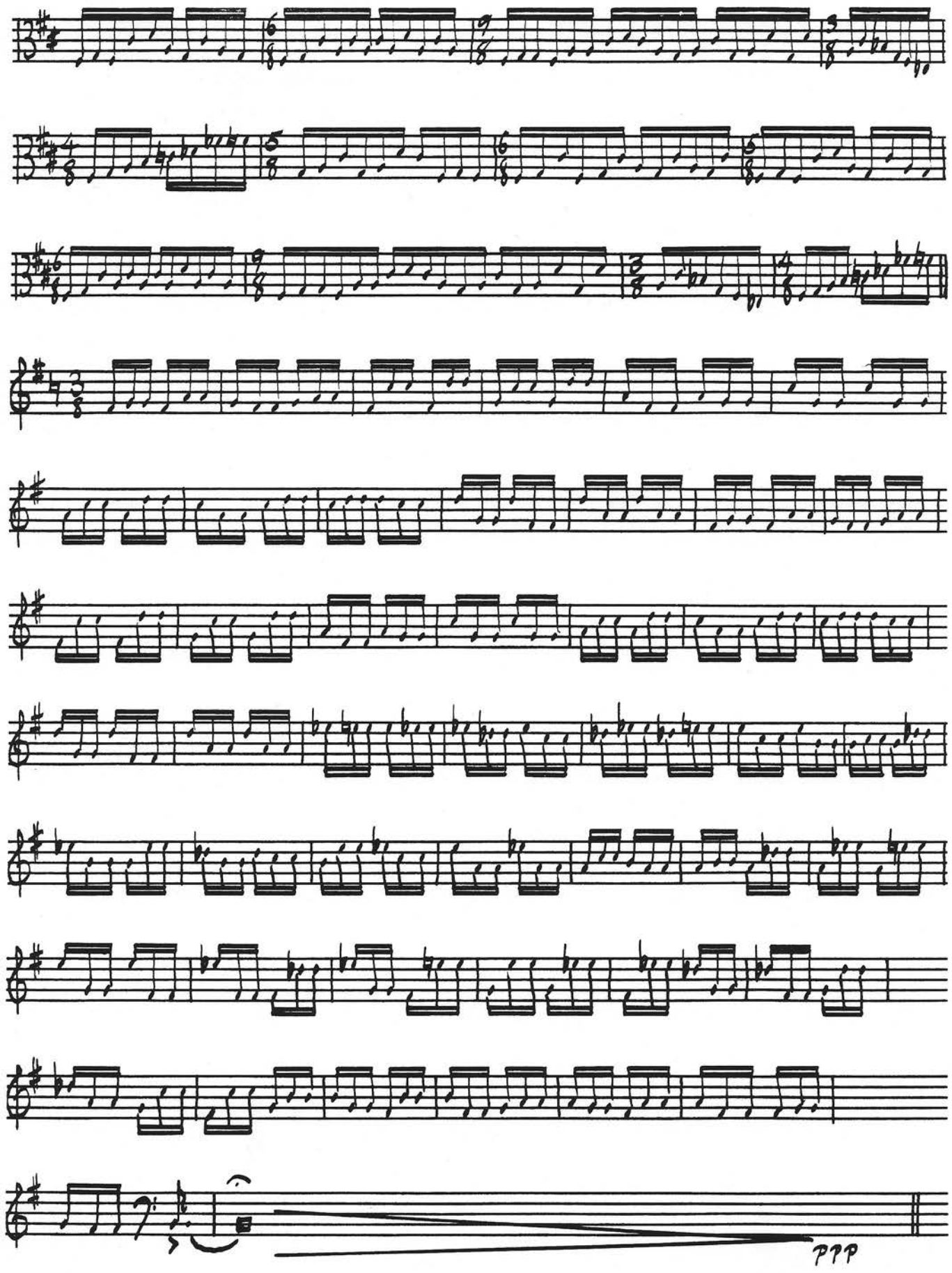
Movement III is to be performed very fast, as indicated. There is a short center section that makes use of the production of harmonic melodies as in Movement II.



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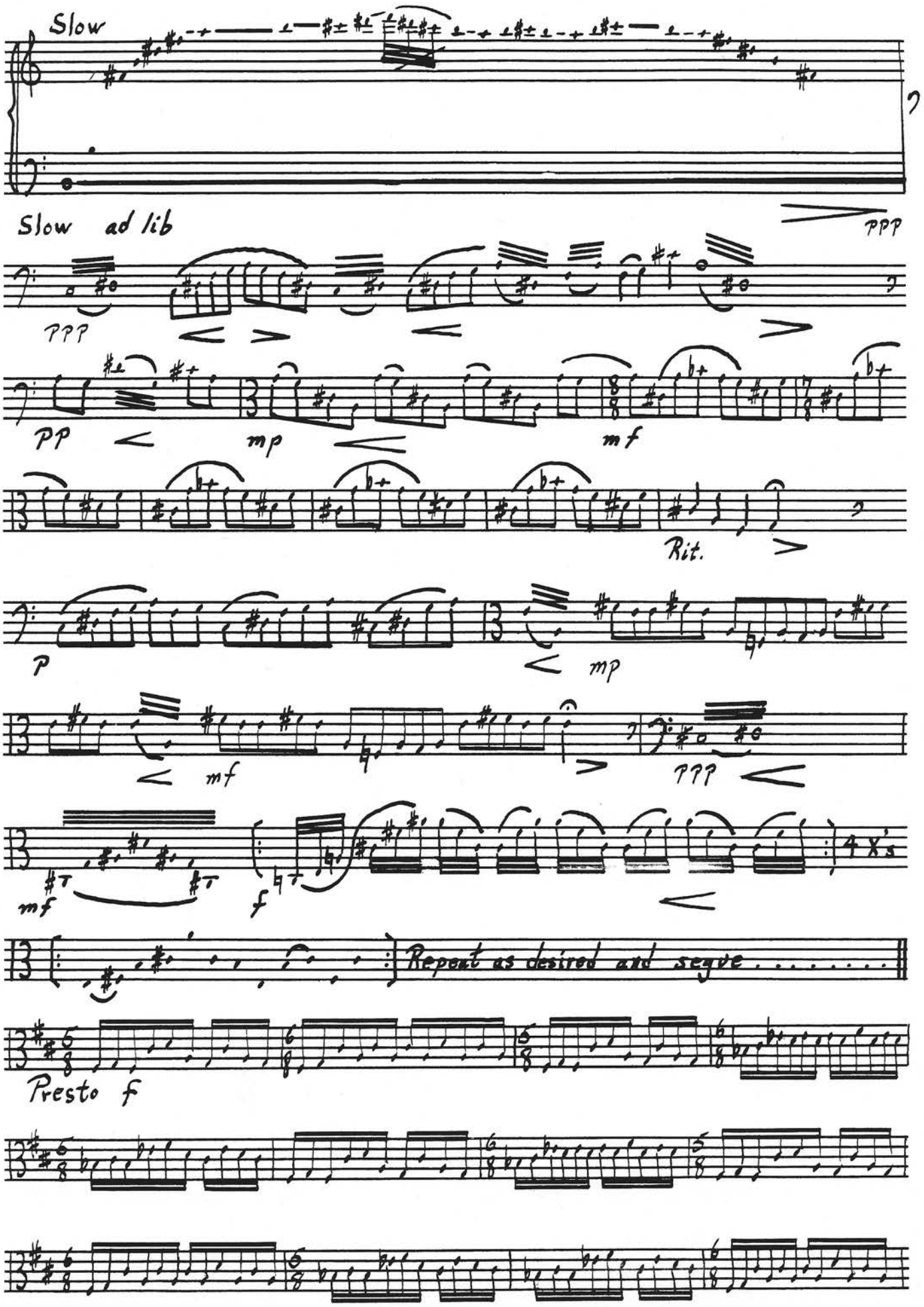
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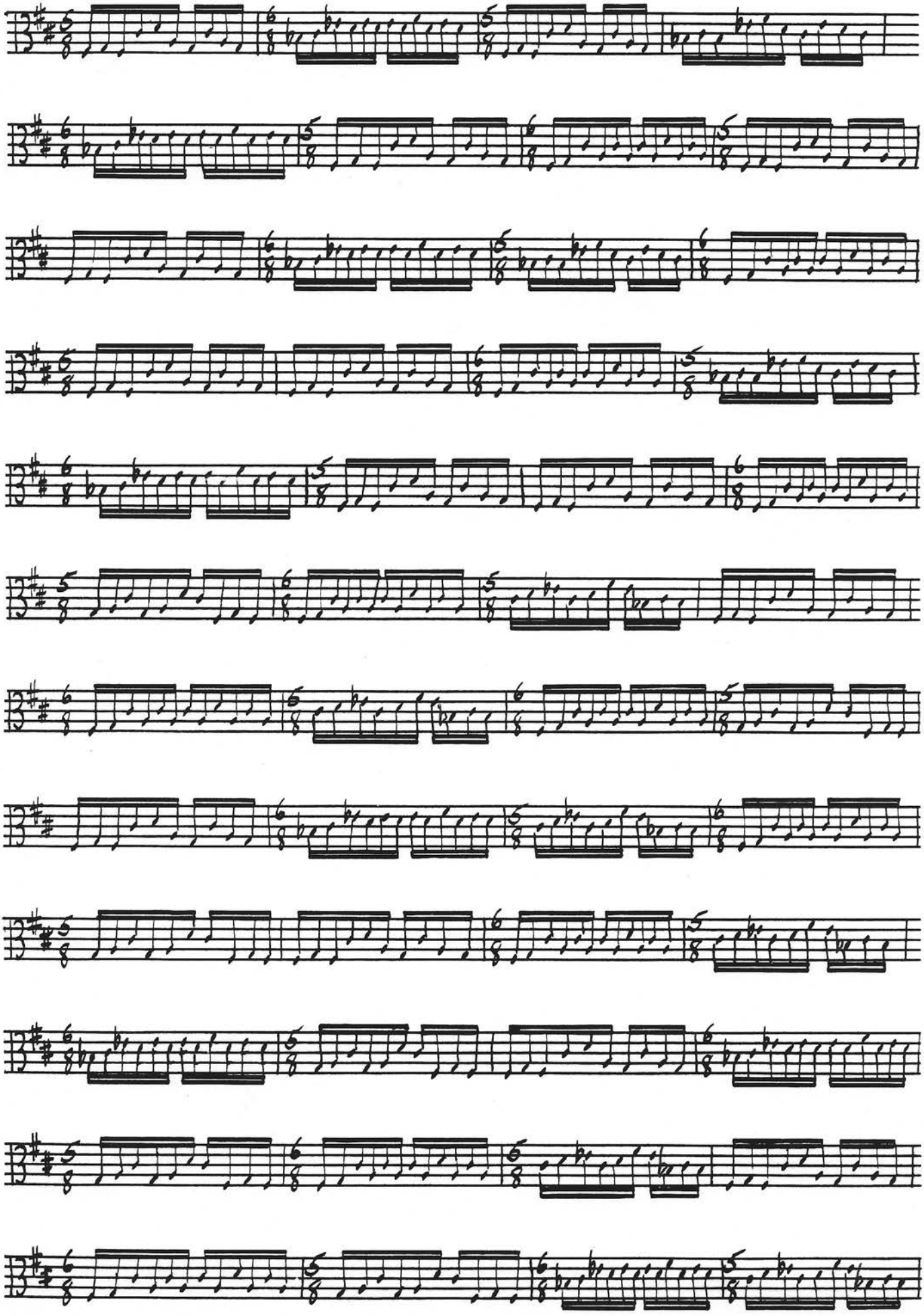

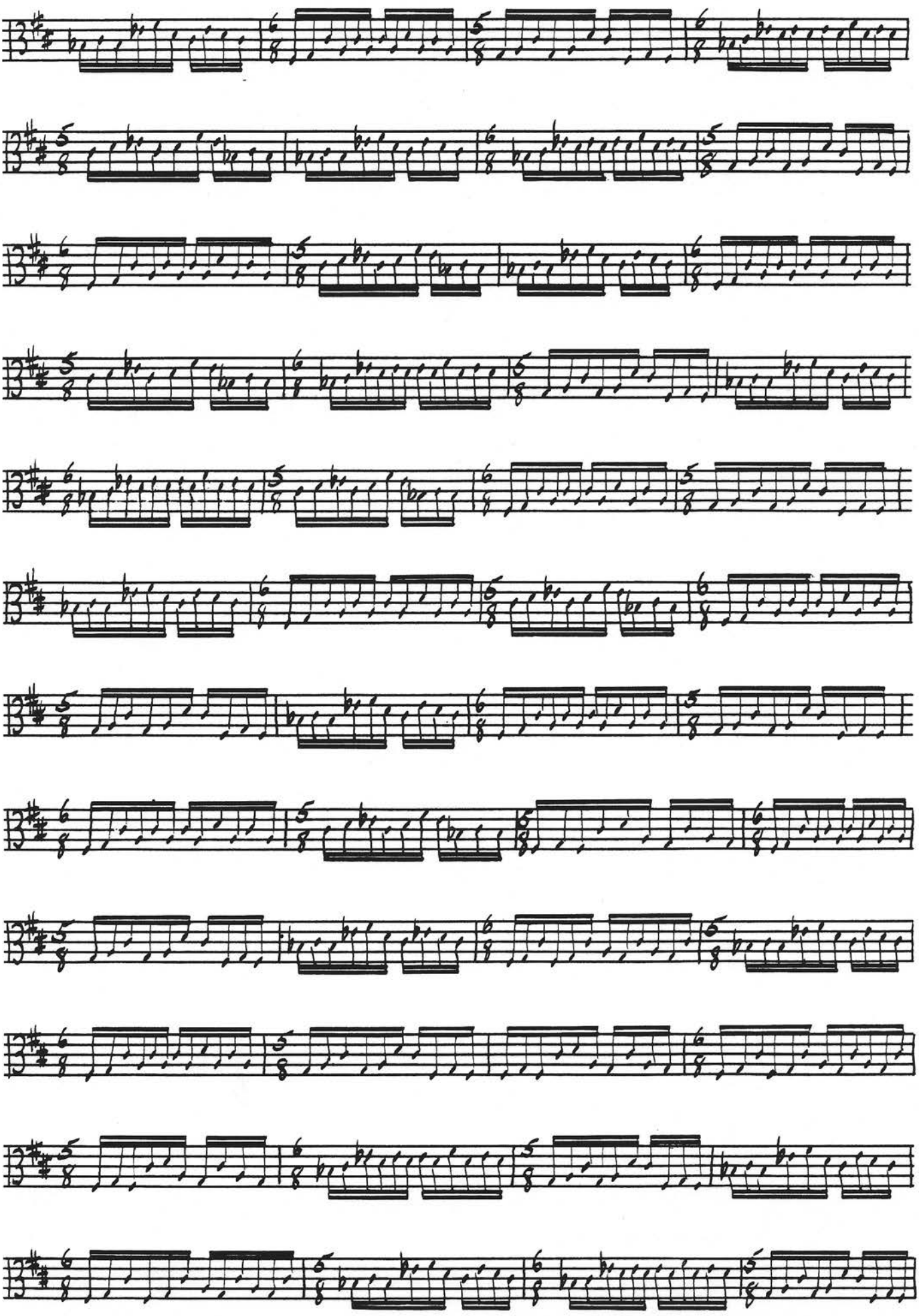

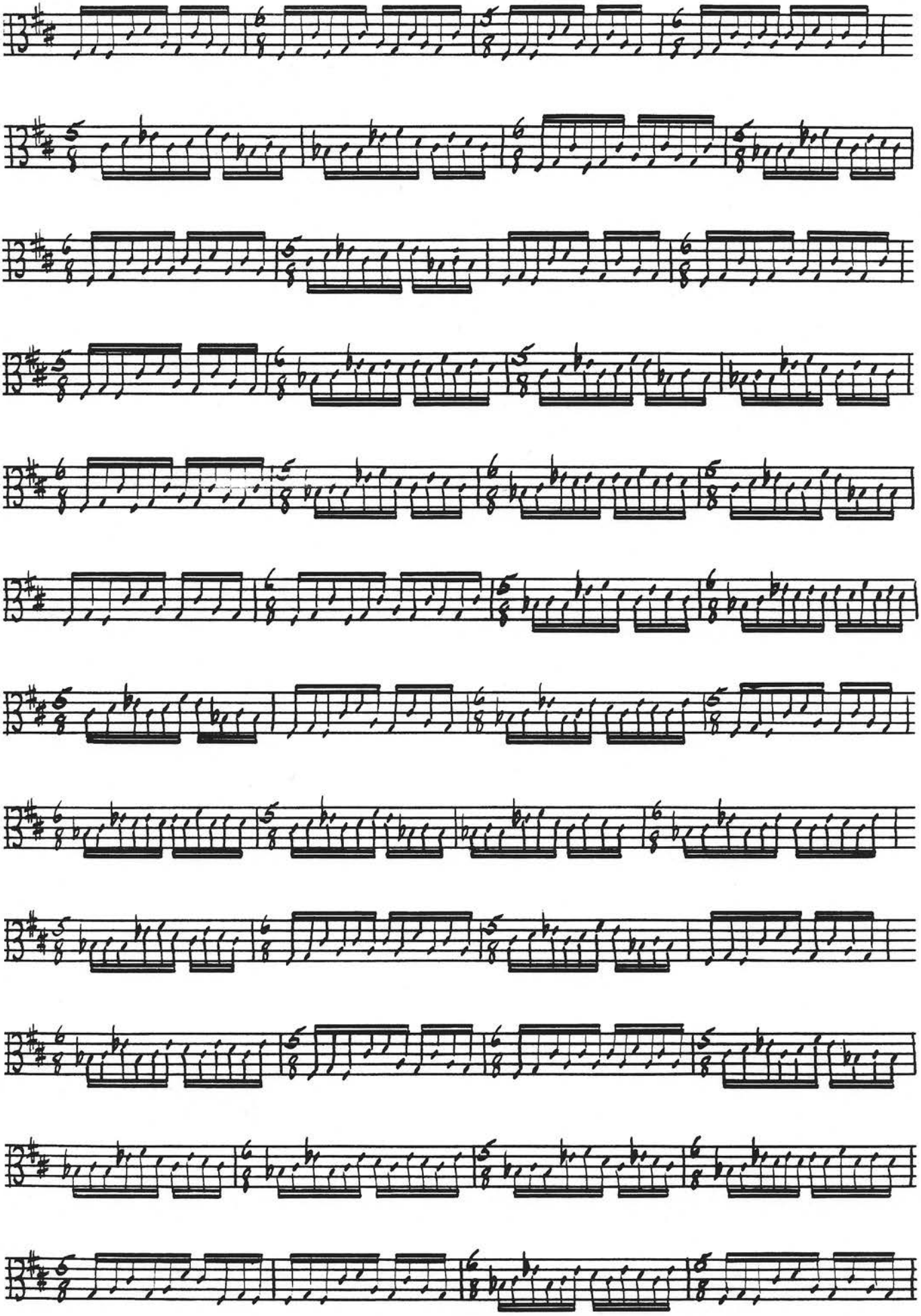

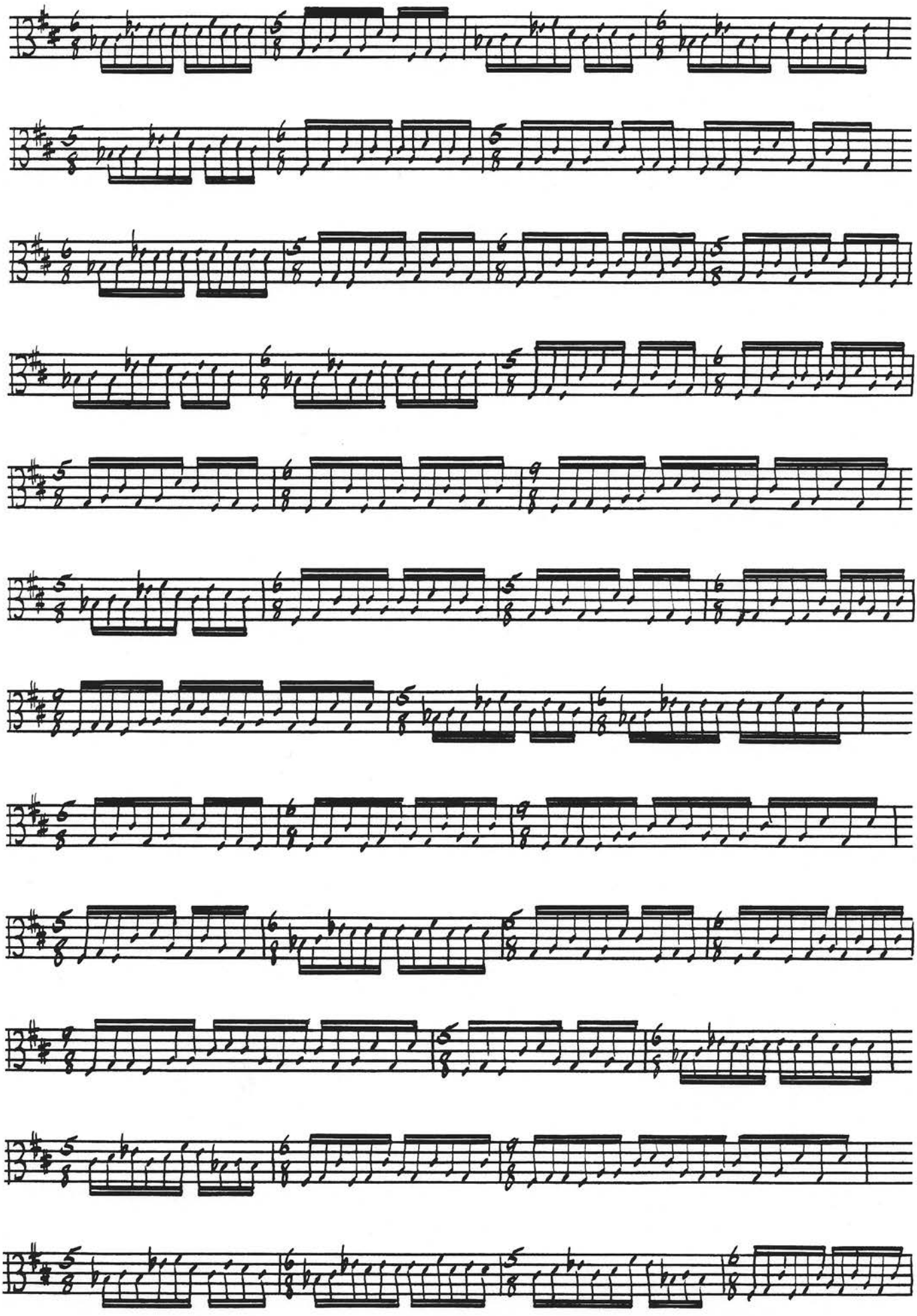

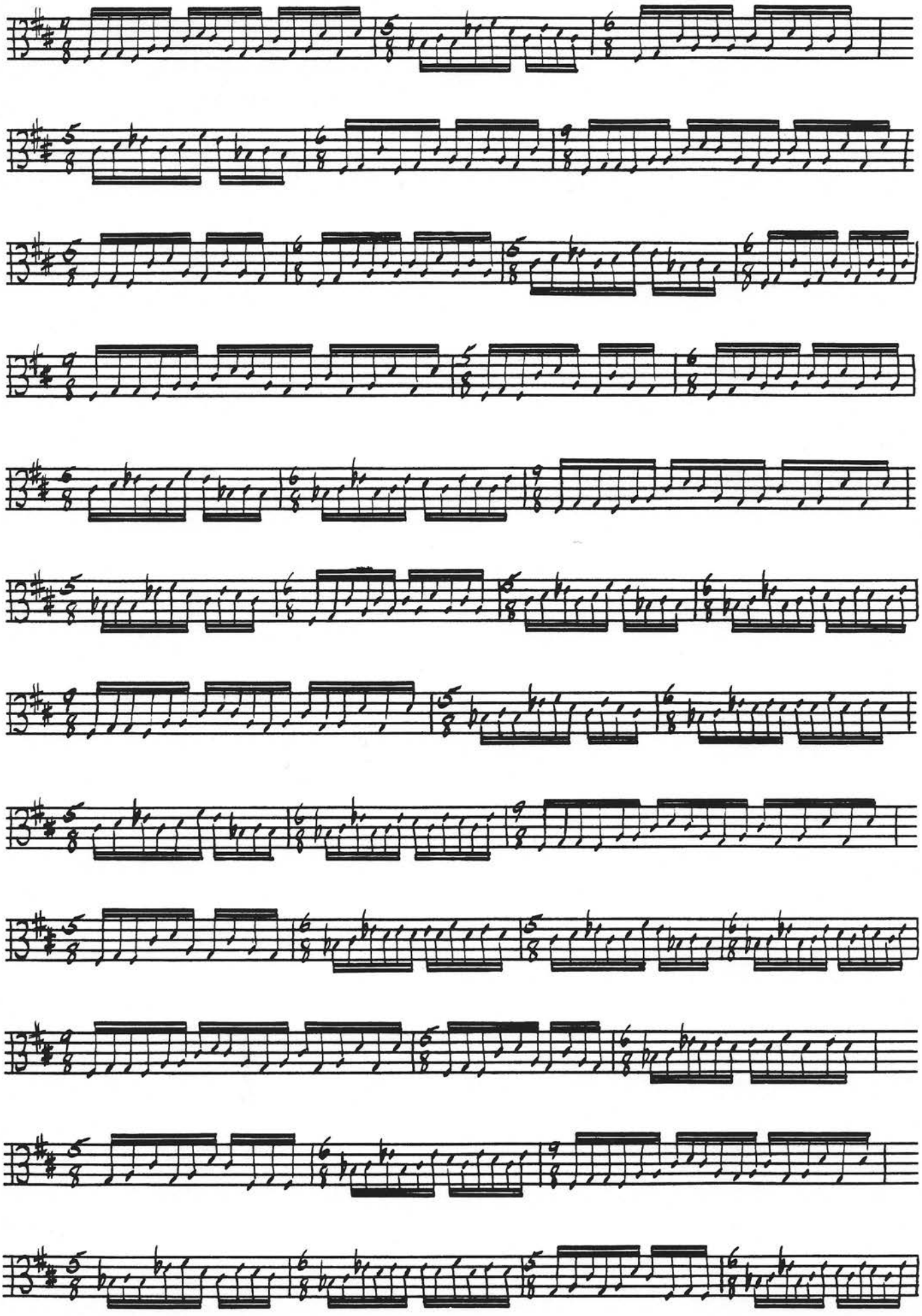

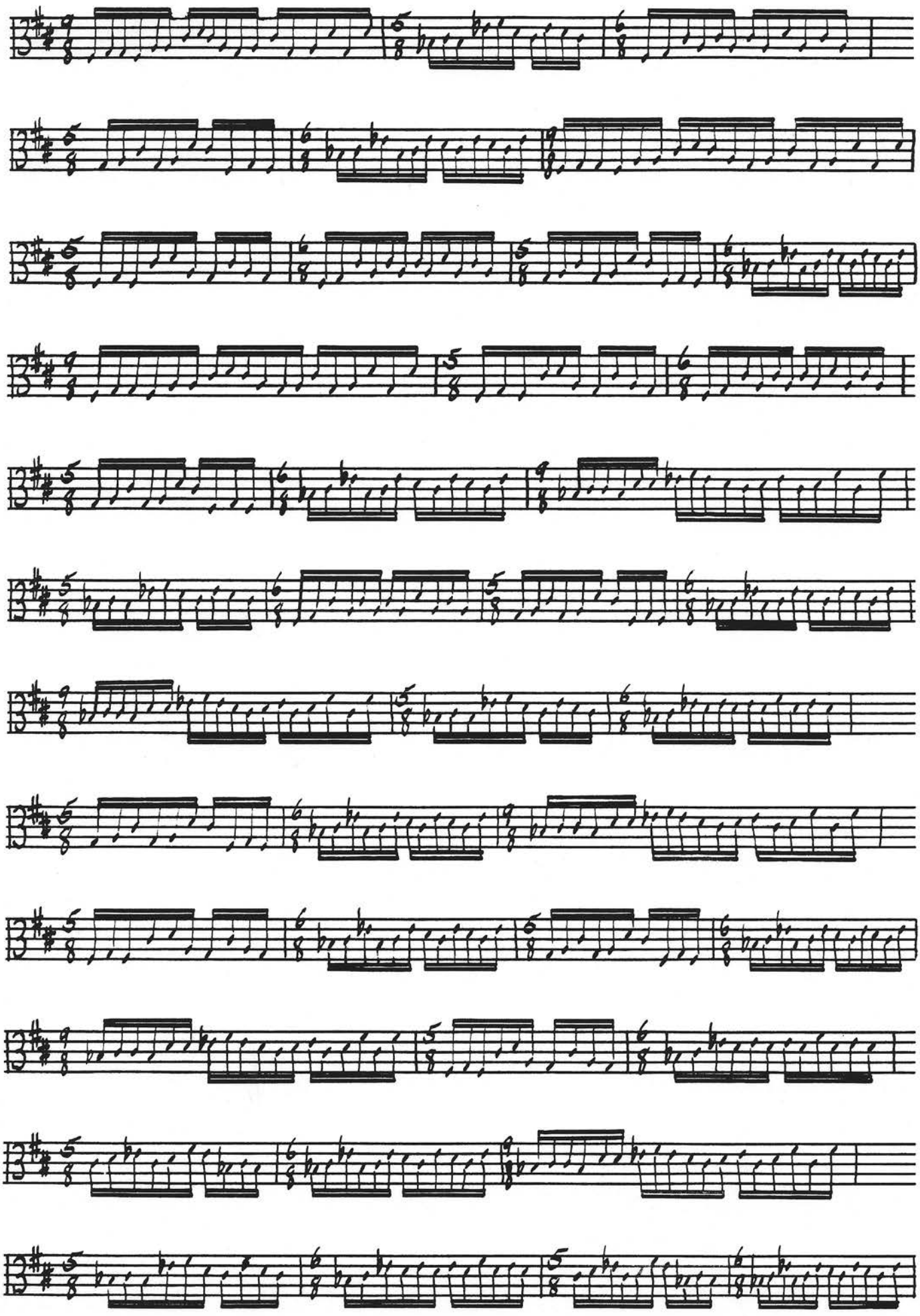

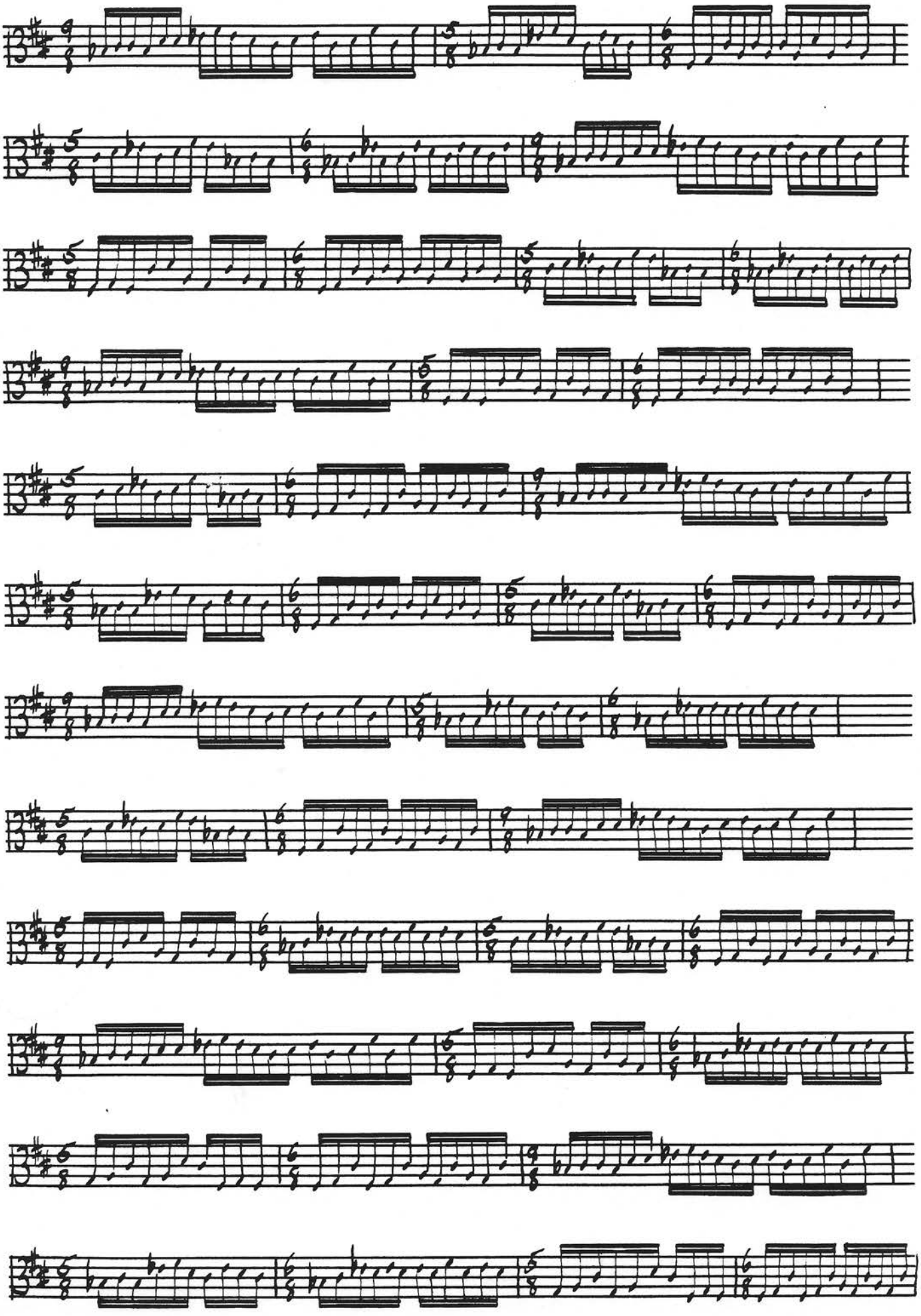

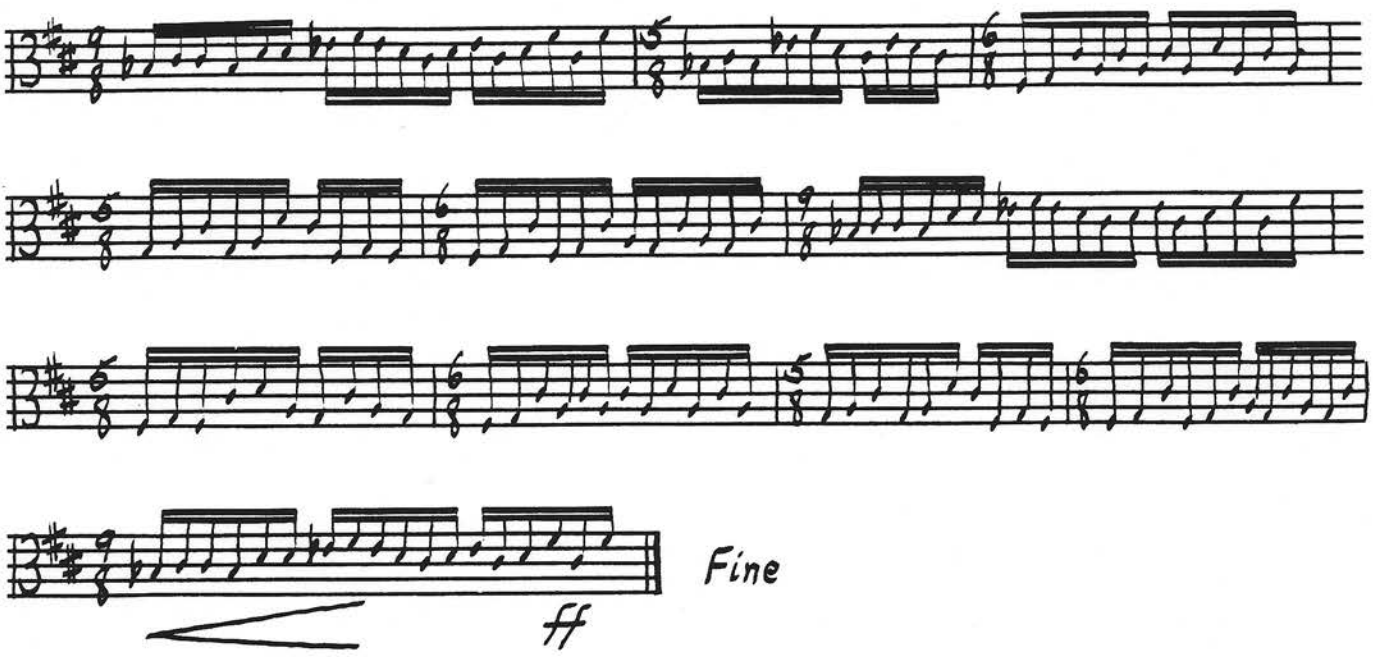

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