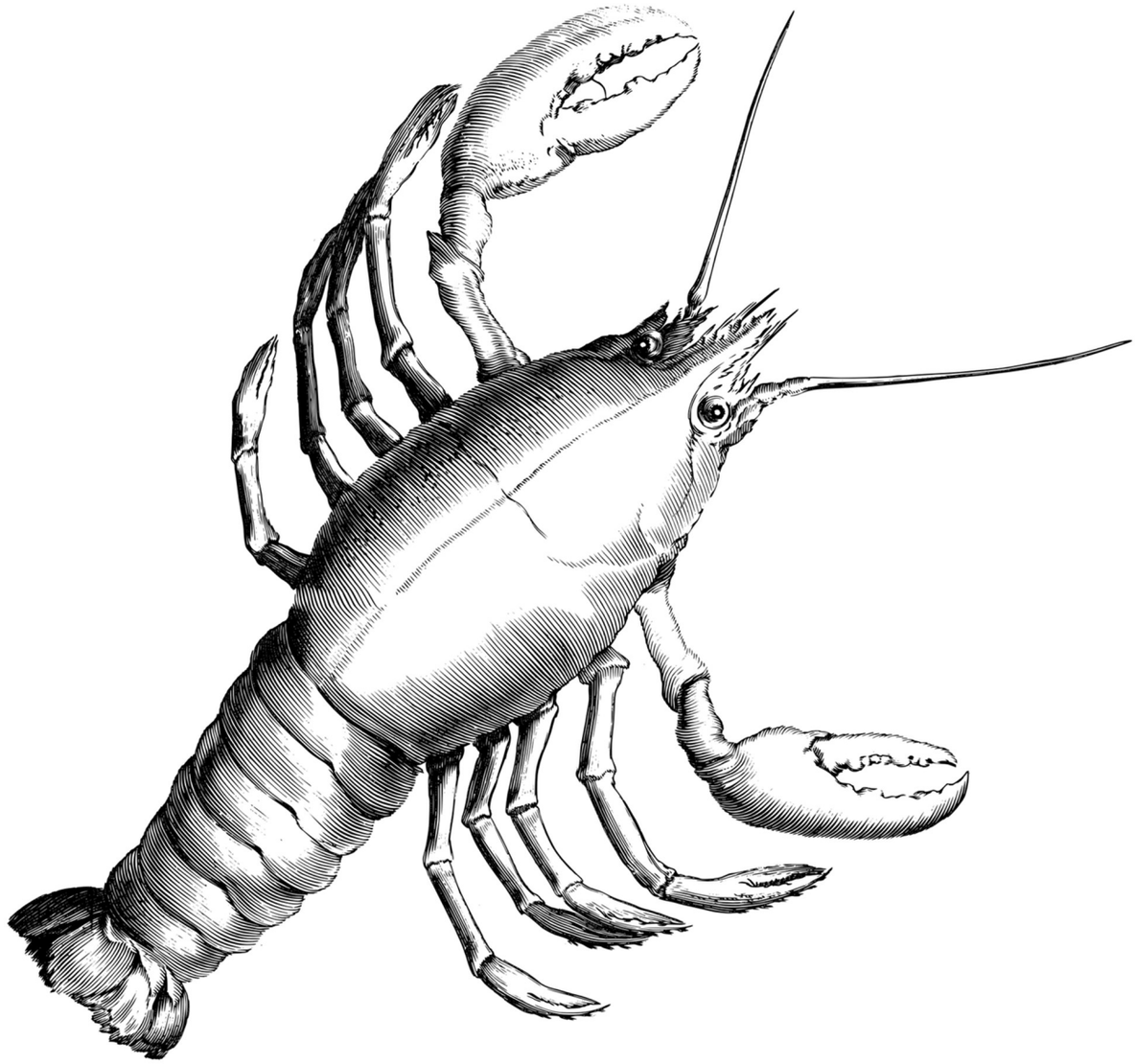
Lukas James Bass



1 Joy Rd.

for oboe, bassoon and piano

Lukas James Bass

1 Joy Rd.

for oboe, bassoon and piano

(2025)

Preface by the composer

I composed this piece in response to the prompts given by Dr. Marilyn Shrude—"What does a library mean to me?" and "What does a library have to offer?"—over the winter break of the 2024/2025 school year; I aimed somewhere between the two. In order to better articulate how my piece fulfills these, I feel it would be fitting, given that this is a piece in honor of the library, to use a quote from a book: Milan Kundera's novel, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being:*

> "The bowler hat was a motif in the musical composition that was Sabina's life. It returned again and again, each time with a different meaning, and all the meanings flowed through the bowler hat like water through a riverbed. I might call it Heraclitus' ('you can't step twice into the same river') riverbed: the bowler hat was a bed through which each time Sabina saw another river flow, another *semantic river:* each time the same object would give rise to a new meaning, though all former meanings would resonate (like an echo, like a parade of echoes) together with the new one. Each new experience would resound, each time enriching the harmony."

The piece I wrote was in part inspired by an experience I had in a library when I was working at a restaurant up in Maine during the summer of 2023. In sharing this, I wanted to reflect on how, more broadly, the library as an institution and a community space acts as a motif that—whether frequently or infrequently—recurs to accompany or punctuate individual life experiences of a breadth that isn't matched by any other public space. Its reach is virtually universal to all walks of life and is present throughout the entirety of one's life, which is something that cannot be said about most other public spaces or institutions (schools, bars, etc.). That its impact on each of our personal lives is universal—yet at the same time, how is so unique to each person—is what makes the public library a living and breathing institution that has been in constant evolution for the past two millennia.

Program Note:

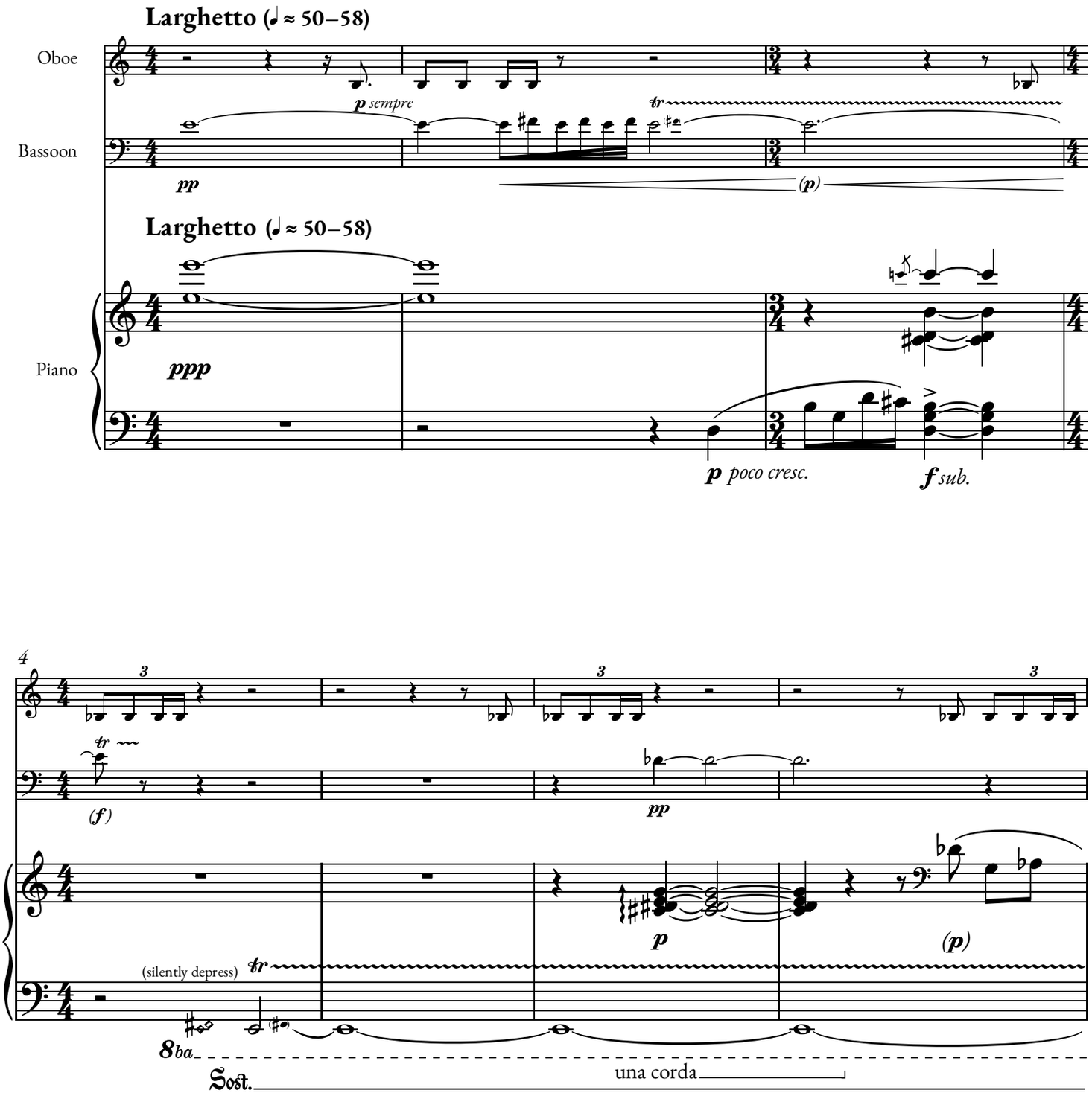
After parking my car in a small gravel lot on the edge of town and before dragging my life half a mile downhill to the marina where I would be taken to a remote island to work for the summer, I stopped into a large grey building to pick up a card whose whimsical front—a local schoolchild's depiction of a lighthouse peaking over a small wall of 5 hardbound books—contrasted with a clinical back that, above my card's temporary number and barcode, plainly said: "Northeast Harbor Library, 1 Joy Road."

ca. 2' 30"

This piece was written in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Wood County Public Library

1 Joy Rd.

Lukas James Bass
(2025)



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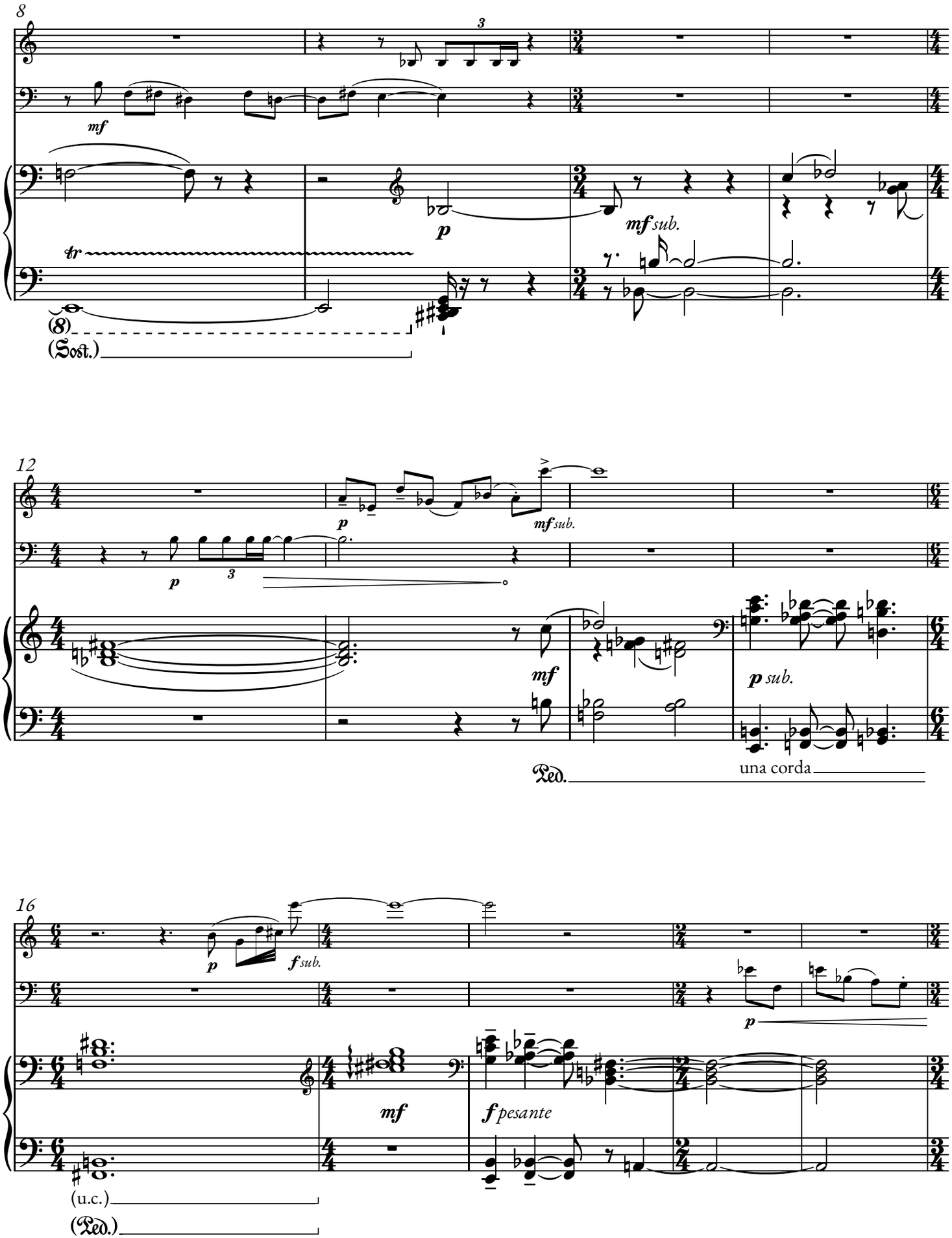
8
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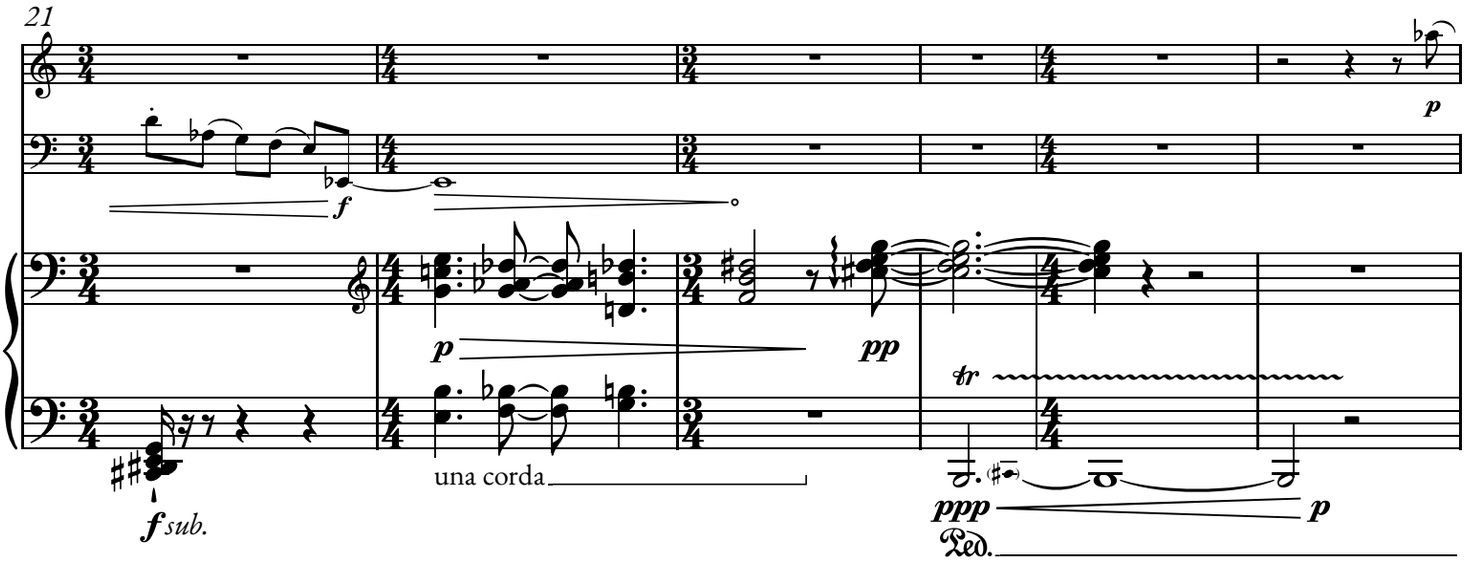
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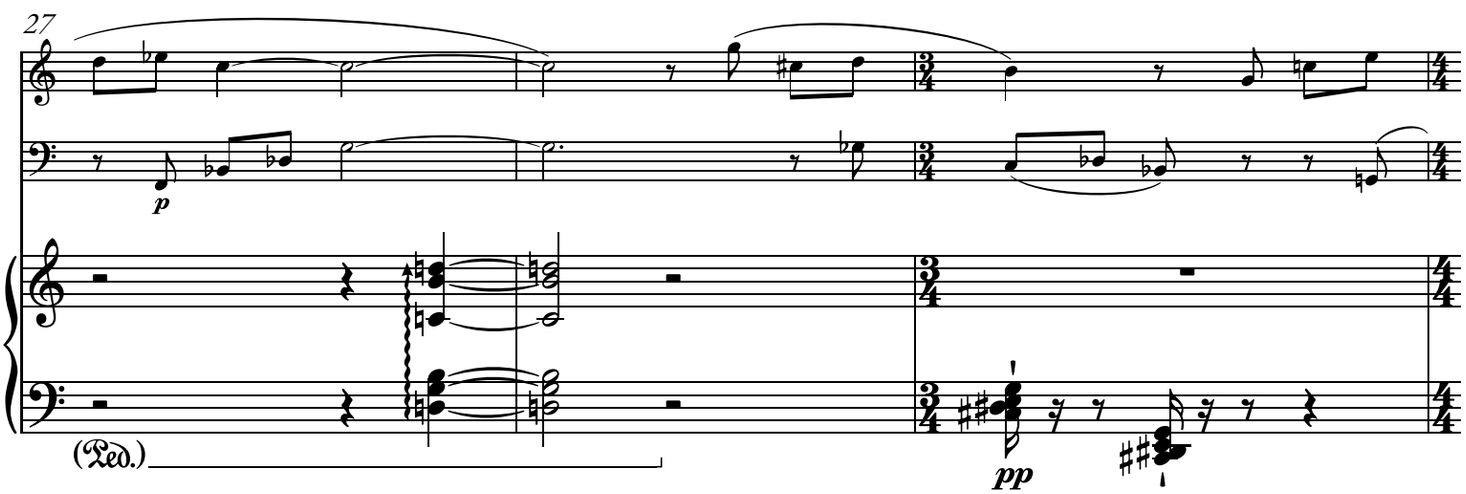
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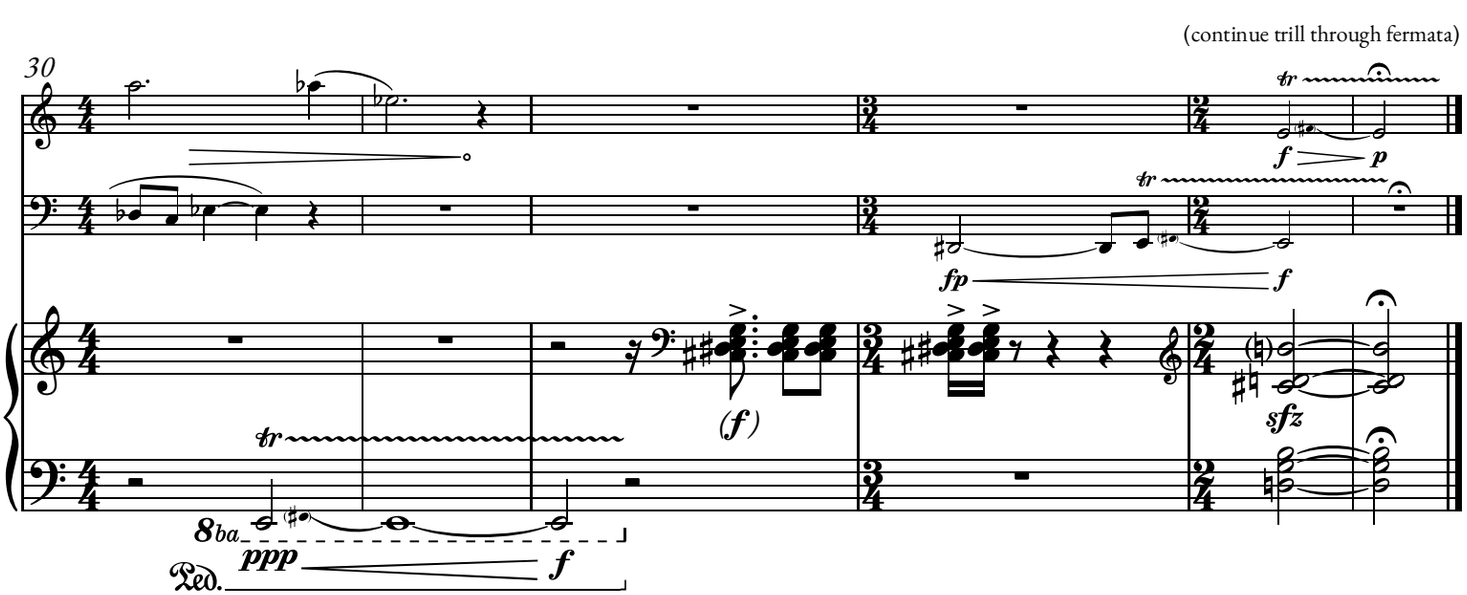
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