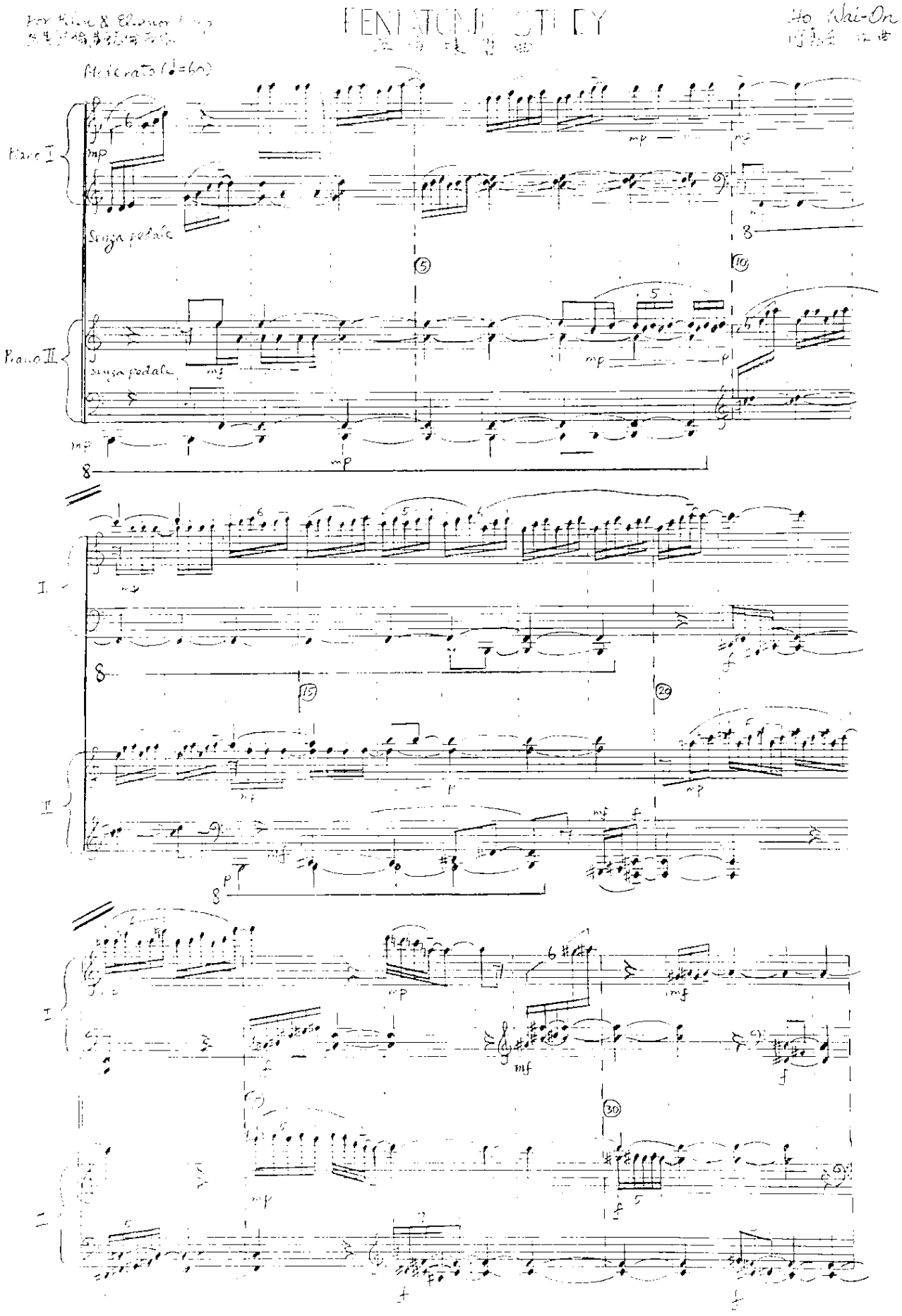
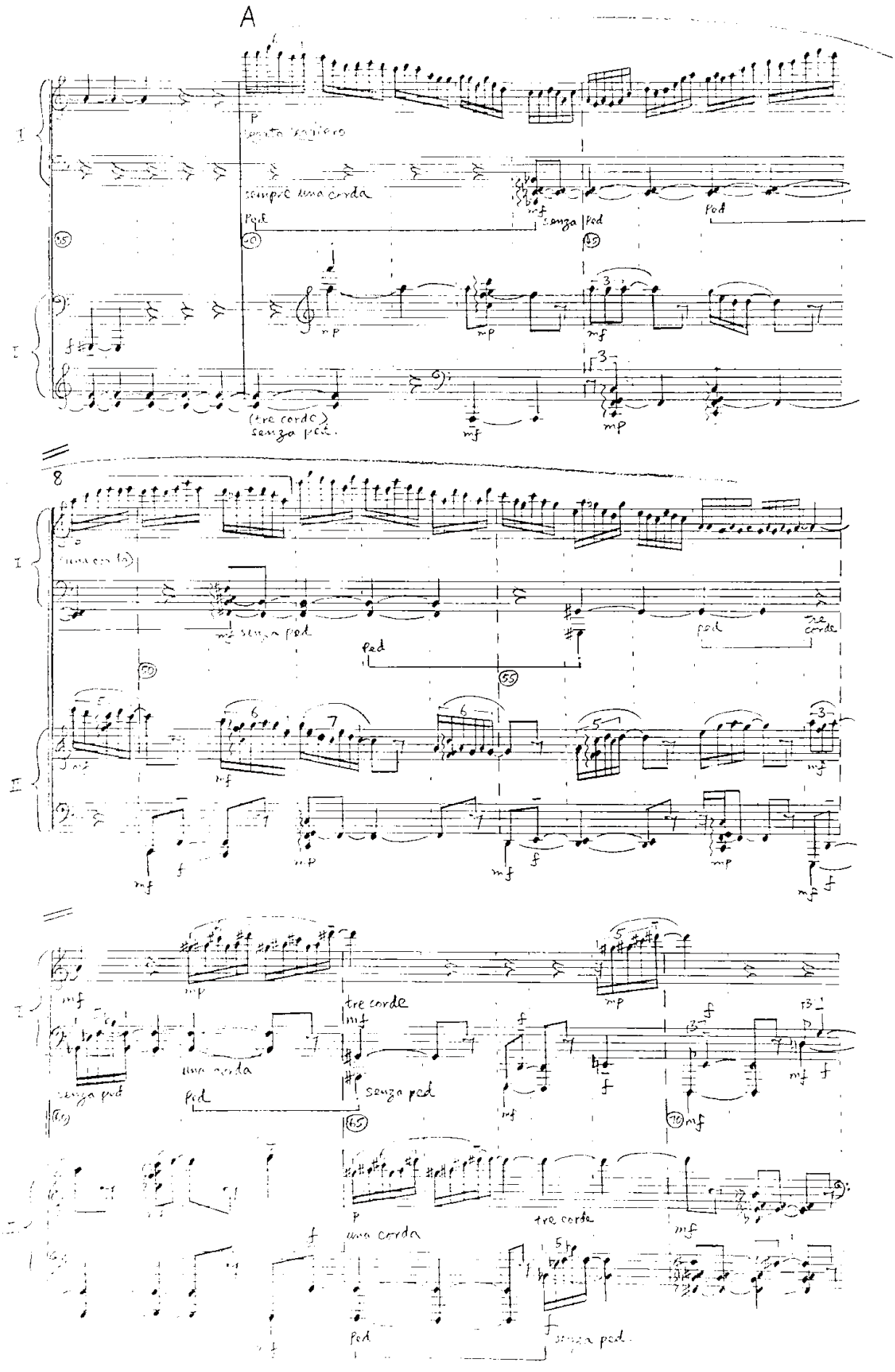
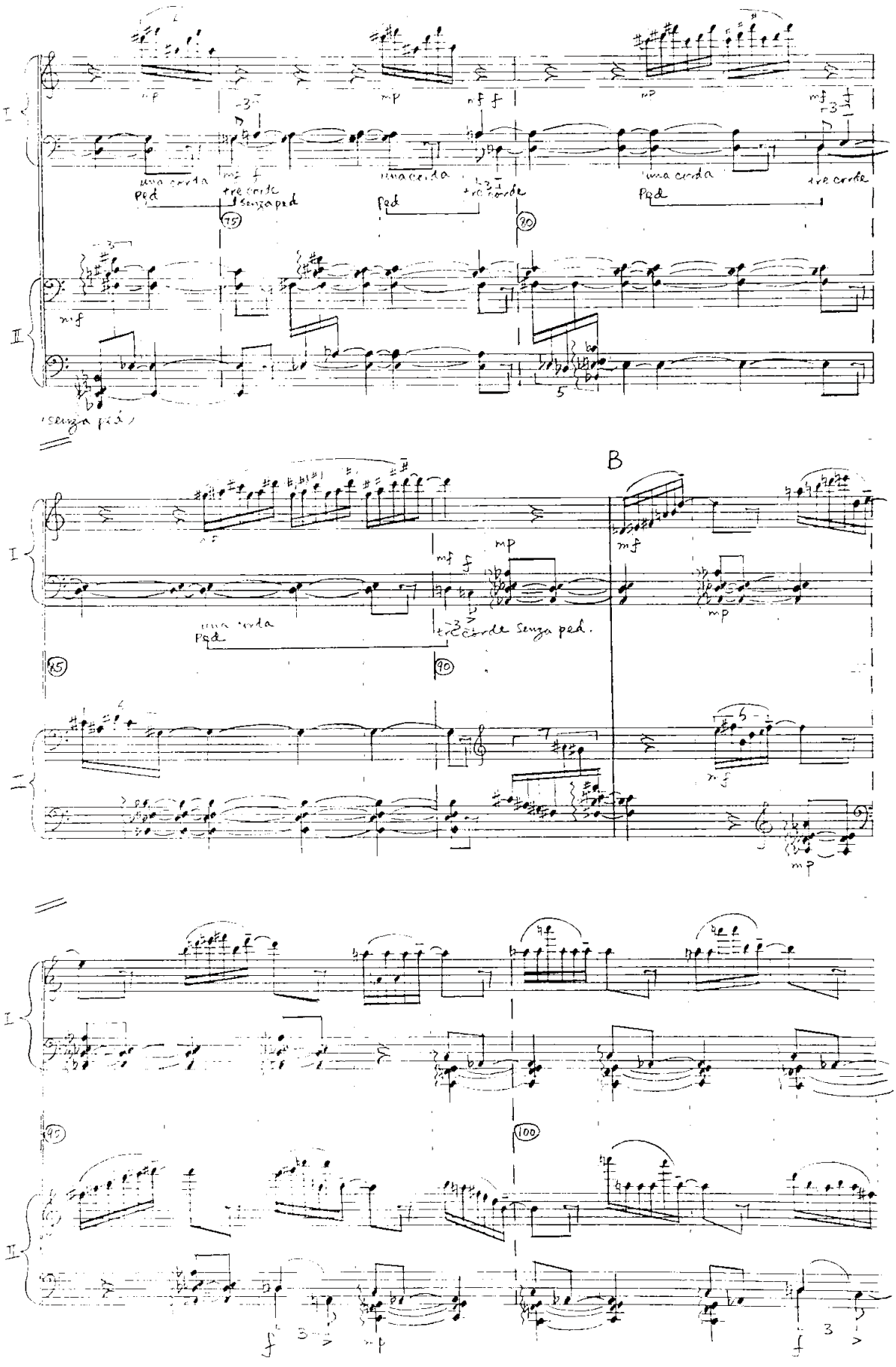
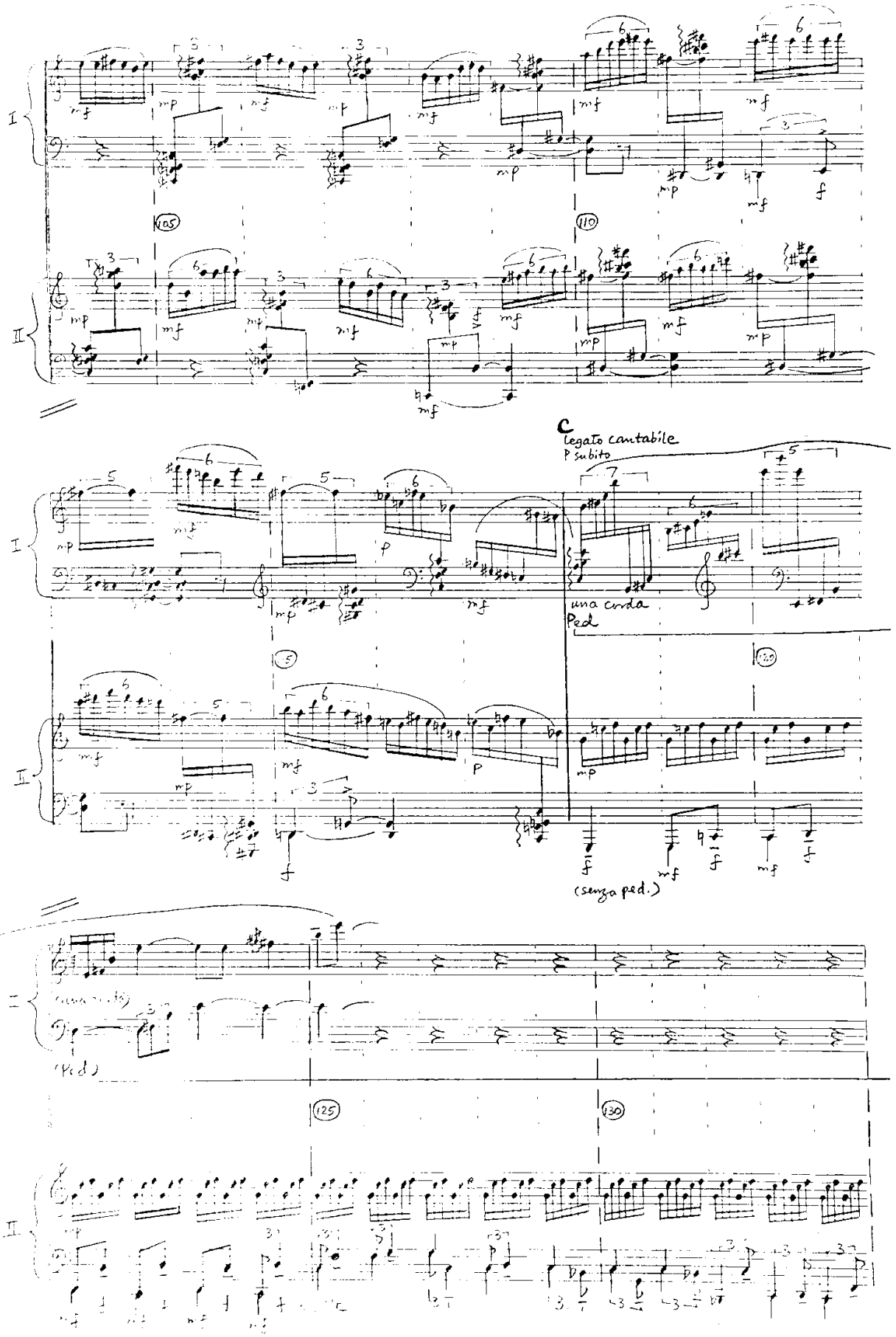
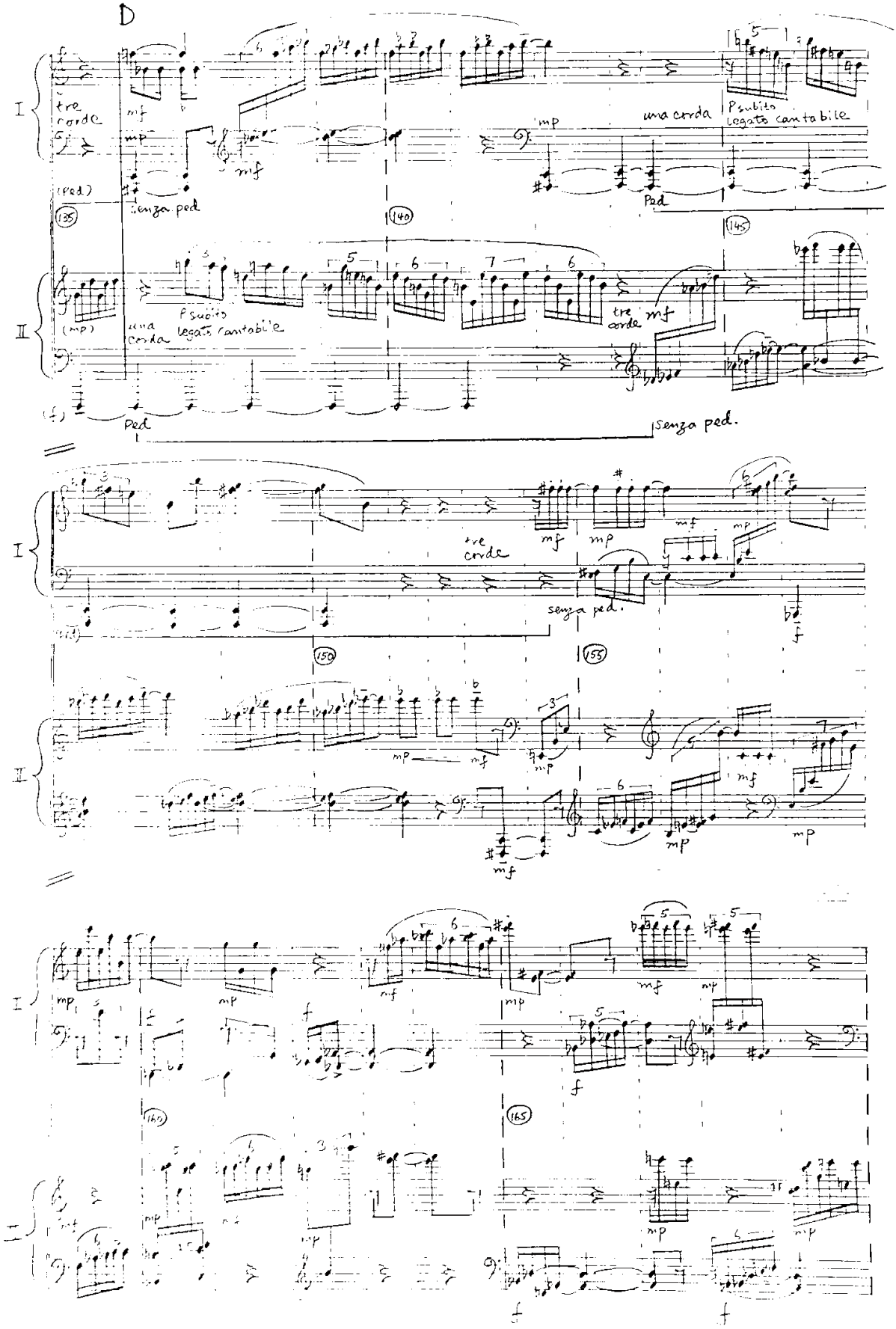
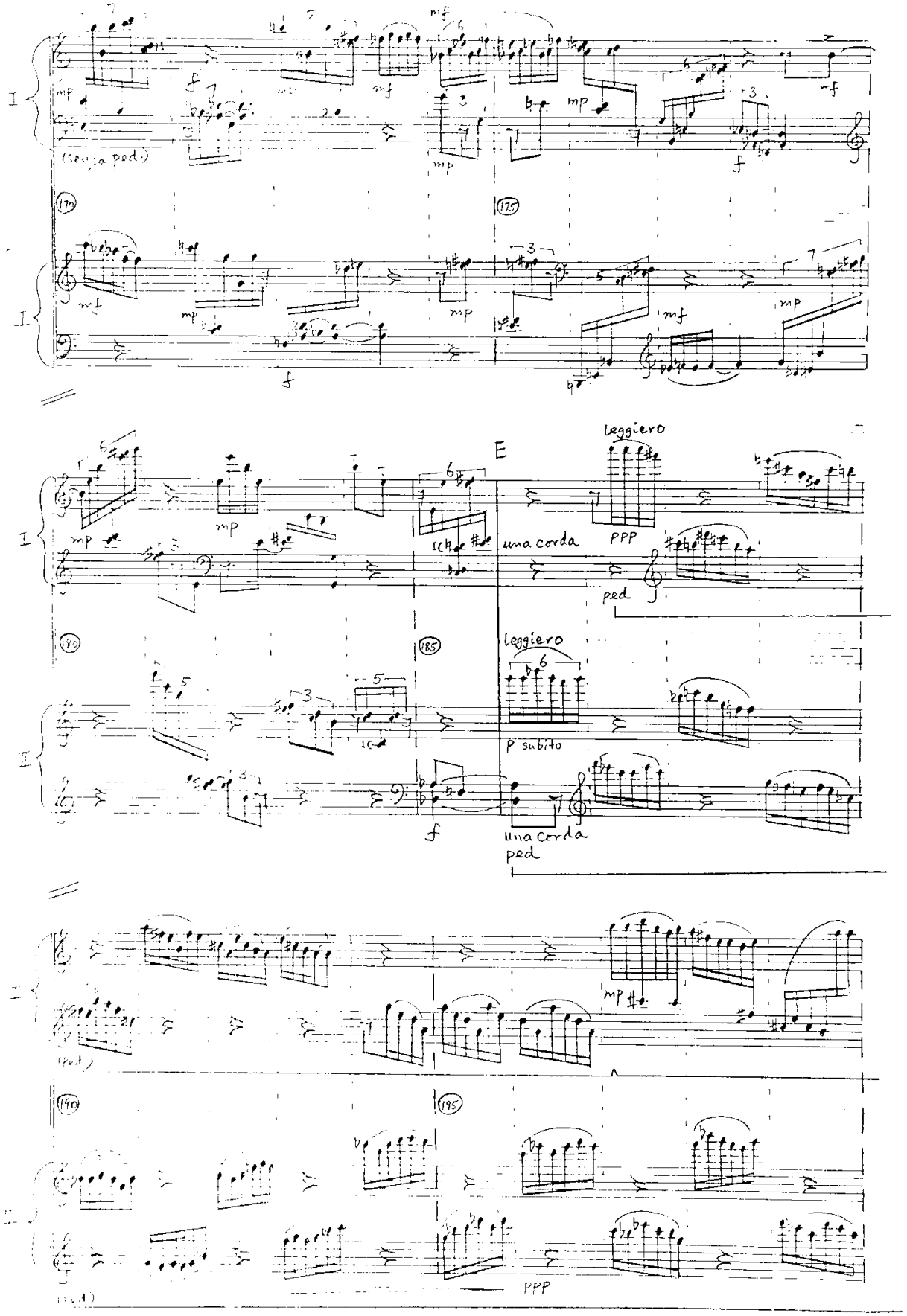

PENTATONIC STUDY
Ho Wai-On
Moderato (♩=60)
Piano I
Piano II
senza pedale
senza pedale


A
legato leggiero
sempre una corda
Ped
senza Ped
(tre corde)
senza ped.
(una corda)
senza ped
tre corde
una corda
senza ped
tre corde
una corda
tre corde
senza ped.


I
II
mp
mf f
una corda
Ped
tre corde
senza ped
75
80
mf
(senza ped)
B
mf
mp
tre corde senza ped.
85
90
95
100
f
3

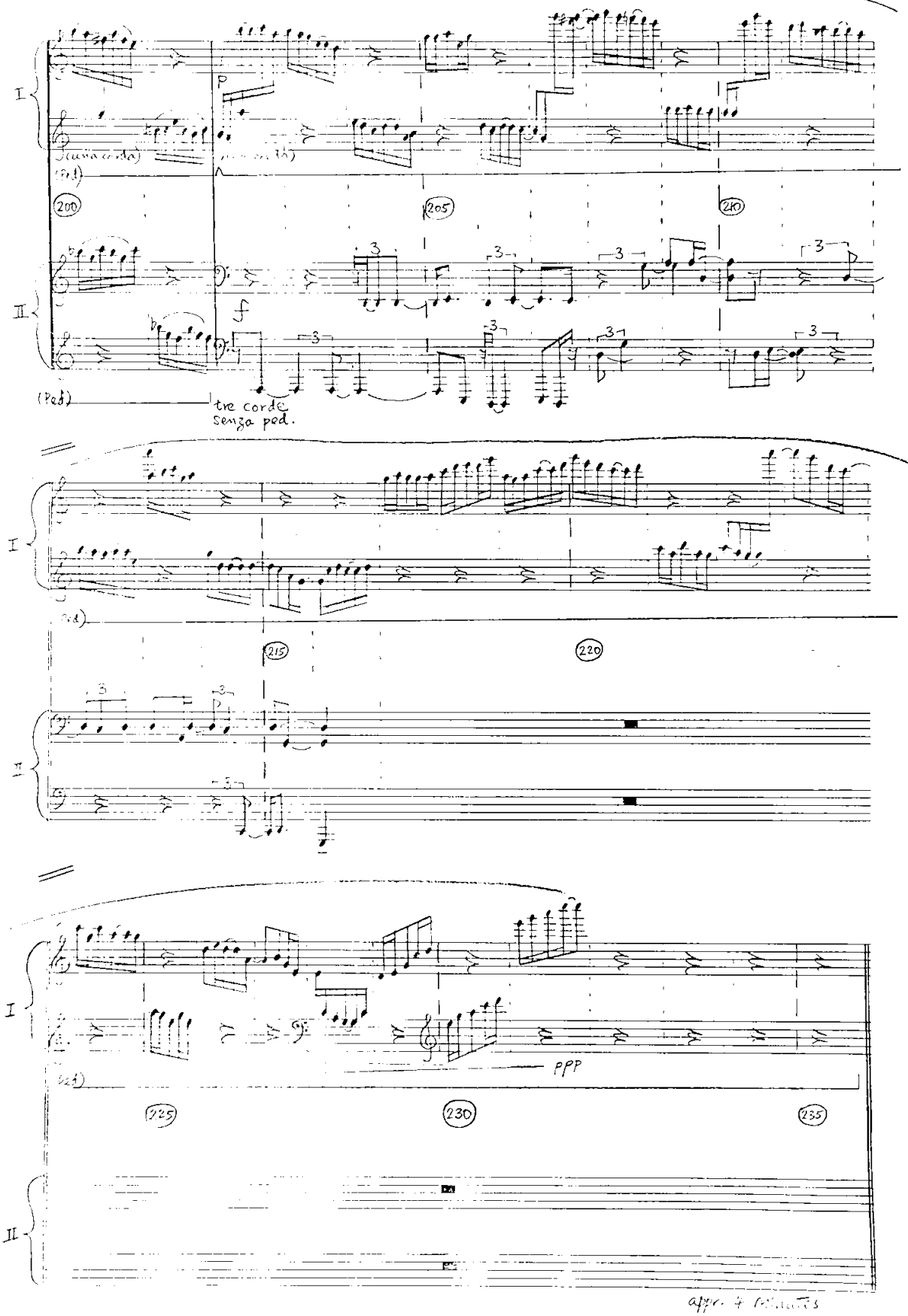

I
II
105
110
C
legato cantabile
P subito
una corda
Ped
(senza ped.)
(Ped.)
125
130


D
I
tre corde
mf
mp
(Ped)
senza ped
135
140
145
una corda
P subito legato cantabile
Ped
II
(mp)
una corda
P subito legato cantabile
tre corde
mf
(f)
Ped
senza ped.
150
155
160
165
f



I
II
(senza ped.)
mp
mf
f
170
175
E
leggiero
una corda
PPP
ped
180
185
leggiero
p subito
una corda
ped
190
195
PPP

F



appr. 4 minutes

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A very long time ago, Helen and Eleanor Wong asked me to write a short piece for two pianos for them to be performed at a conservatoire in Canton – I met them when I was a student at the Royal Academy of Music. The piece is called Pentatonic Study.

I prefer the Japanese pentatonic scale (do mi fa la ti) which has the augmented 4th and minor 2nd intervals (watch my ***Sakura Variations*** on YouTube,). Chinese pentatonic (do re mi sol la) appears lacking in dissonance. As a small child in Hong Kong, I encountered Cantonese opera and noticed performers employing non-well tempered tuning, tone fluctuation, glissando ... and freely modifying existing music of any genre to make it their own. All these liberated Cantonese opera from the confines of Chinese pentatonic. When I compose pentatonic music I prefer writing for the voice and/or instruments that can bend pitches (watch my ***Four Songs*** on YouTube).

Important Message... At the time of writing the work, few Western Classical musicians would modify existing music to make it their own. The piano is well-tempered. A way to expand the sound from this restriction is using the sustaining pedal liberally and long pedalling, allowing all strings to vibrate in sympathy creating nuances akin to water colour. Also, I allow freely changing the tempo and rubato for personal expression. Instead of finding two matching pianos I would encourage the use of two pianos of different qualities, even to include a prepared piano to add contrasts. The markings in the music are only suggestions and can be ignored to explore your own. If you would like to use my score as a prototype to re-create, I would be delighted to hear a recording of the result.

寫給黃慰倫黃懿倫姊妹。
五音調(1 — 2 — 3 — 5 — 6)似缺乏不和聲與和聲的對比,聽起來易覺單調。但我小時候聽到的粵劇粵曲,表演者採用的定音並非西方古典音樂現在採用的定音,而演出時有很多修改自由,又常加震音、滑音裝飾音等等,出色的演出者會把音樂再創造使成為自己的腔。我寫這曲時,西方古典音樂演奏家多沒有把音樂再創造的觀念,而鋼琴用五音調尤其受到定音限制,只能用持續踏板和長踏板使所有琴弦同振動,產生似水彩的混音色,增加點變化。通常演出鋼琴二重奏會用兩架儘量相似的鋼琴,使聽起來合而為一似的。但我這首兩重奏卻歡迎用兩架聽起來音色不相似的鋼琴,使雖然同是彈五音調聽起來色彩會豐富一點,和增加對比。亦欢迎將樂譜作為原型來再創作,自由改變節奏、速度、表情...表達你的個人音樂思潮。我會很高興聽到你演繹的錄音。