James Williamson

The Fifth Element

(2012)

for solo oboe

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Composers note:

I like the idea of 'less is more'. I like to create simple structural foundations and then build layers of colour and texture on top. This piece was written like an Etudé for oboe and is built on simple foundations – a repetition of a short six bar phrase, which is transposed around a cycle of fifths, keeping the same rhythm each time and ends with a multiphonic at each cadence based on the next fifth of the cycle. I then add grace notes, timbral-flutters and breathy key rattles to add another layer of texture and colour. There is also an optional piano part (subject to availability) to act as a further resonance to the oboe and space, rather than an accompaniment. The piano draws out and resonates the accented grace notes (cycling the fifths) throughout the duration of the piece to create another underlying layer of colour. The piece ends how it started with the opening few bars suggesting an infinite amount of times the cycle can be repeated.

This piece was written for the oboeist David Benfield from *Souza Winds and world premiered as part of the York Late Music* concert series 01/09/2012.

Performance notes

All grace notes to be played on the beat and always *ff* unless otherwise stated.

All trills should be timbral where possible.

Multiphonic fingerings are only a suggestion. Where these fingerings are not compatible with your instrument, please find alternative ways to emulate a similar sonority.

N.B. There is also an optional piano part, whereby the piano is to act as a resonance. Particluar pitches and the sustain pedal are to be depressed (not played), therefore another performer is required for this option. In order for piano resonace to be more effective, stand close to the piano & direct the oboe toward the piano soundboard (if possible, perform looking out to the audience).

Duration: approx 5 mins 15 secs

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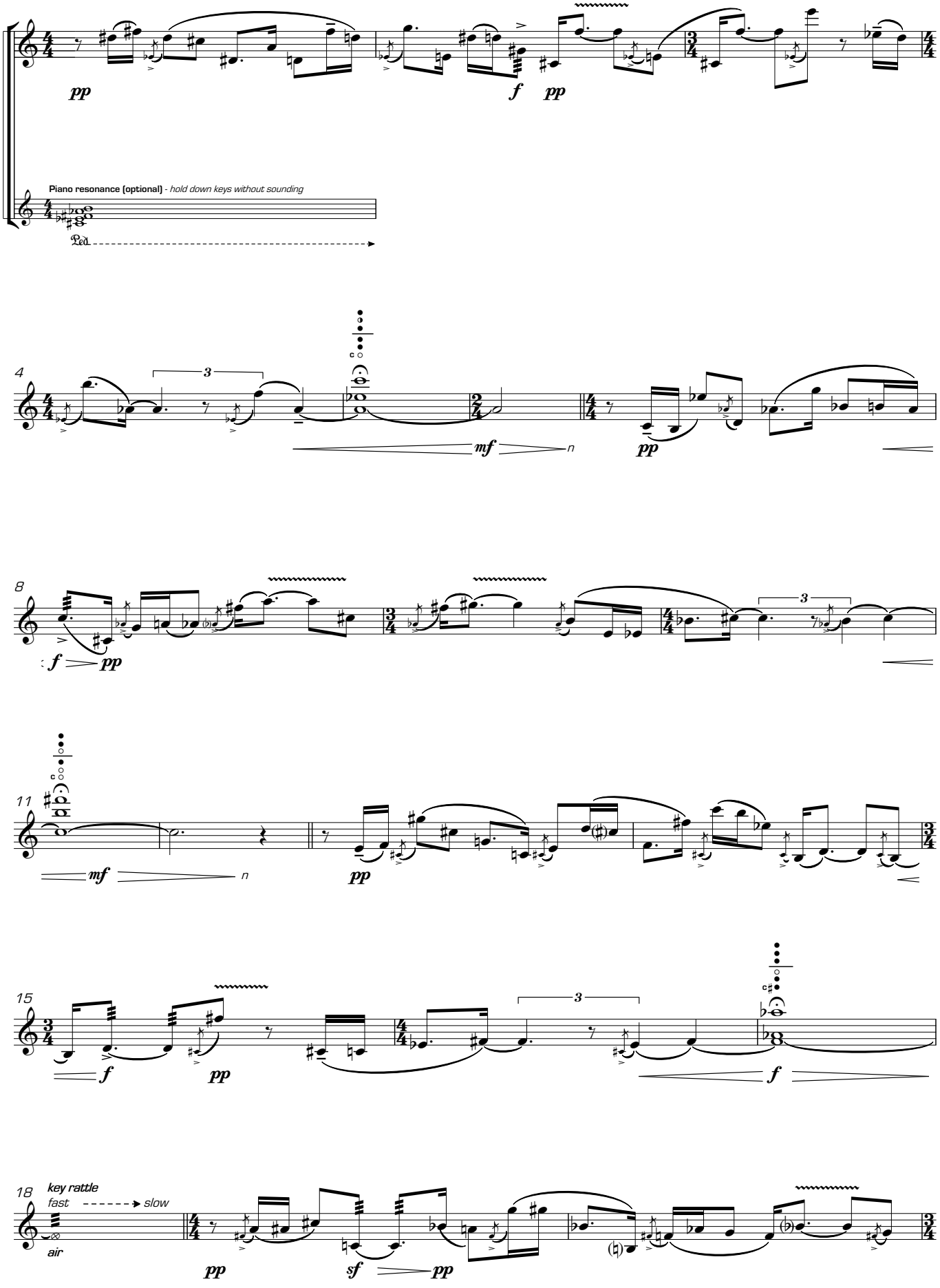
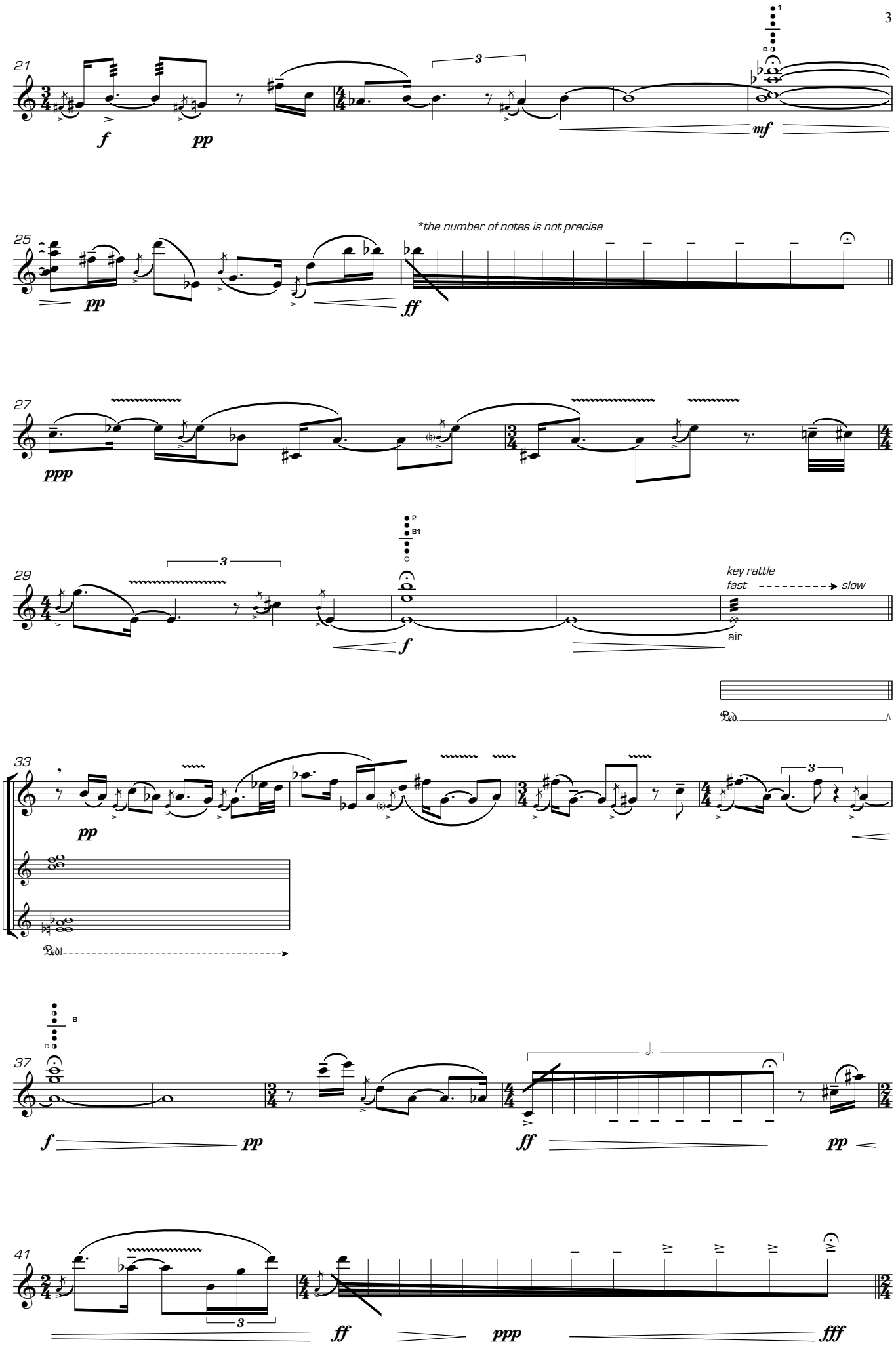
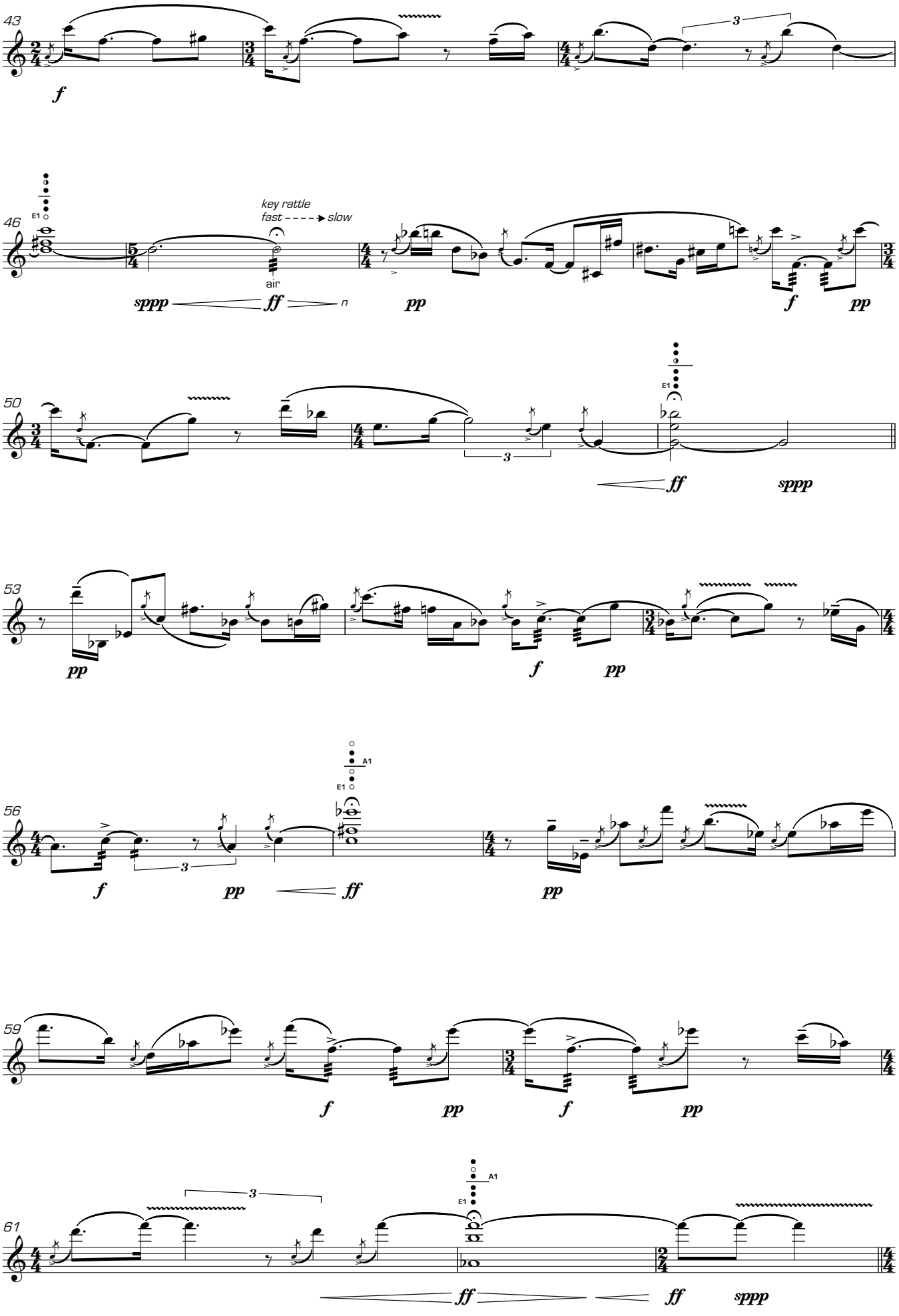
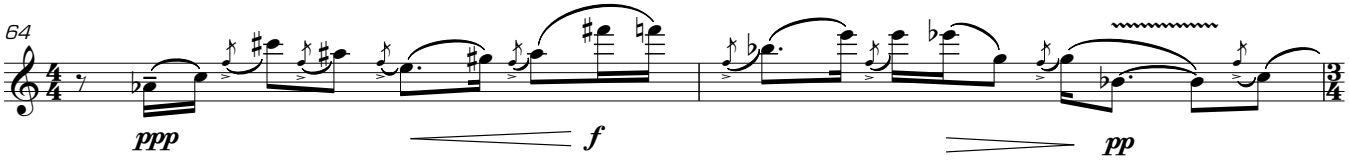
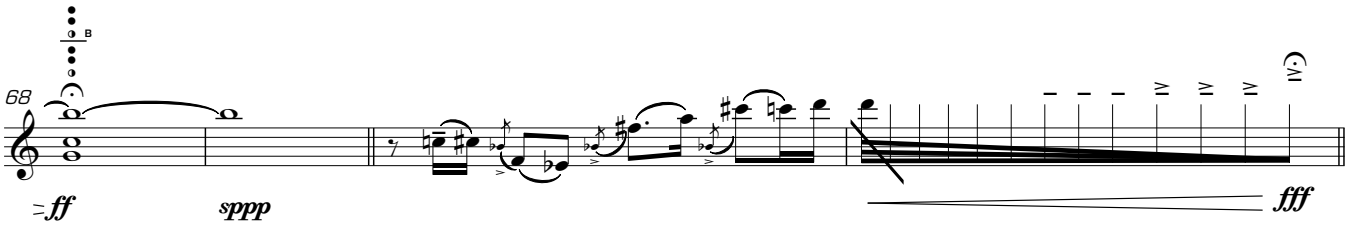
♩=96 **Smooth & Flowing**

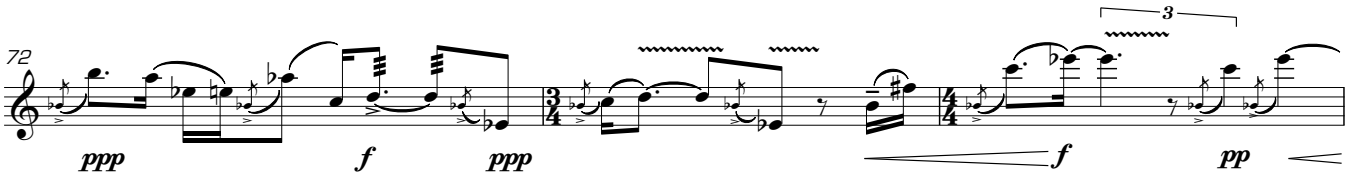


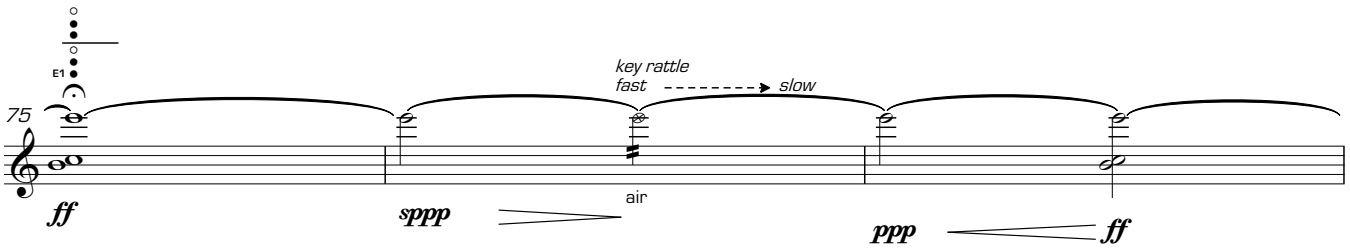

21
f
pp
mf
25
*the number of notes is not precise
pp
ff
27
ppp
29
f
key rattle
fast
slow
air
Ped.
33
pp
Ped.
37
f
pp
ff
pp
41
ff
ppp
fff

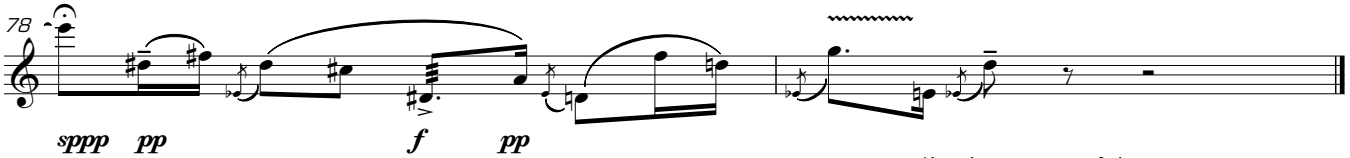

43
f
46
E1
key rattle
fast ----→ slow
air
sppp
ff
n
pp
f
pp
50
E1
ff
sppp
53
pp
f
pp
56
E1
A1
f
pp
ff
pp
59
f
pp
f
pp
61
E1
A1
ff
ff
sppp











*Let piano resonance fade or taper out manually according to the acoustics.