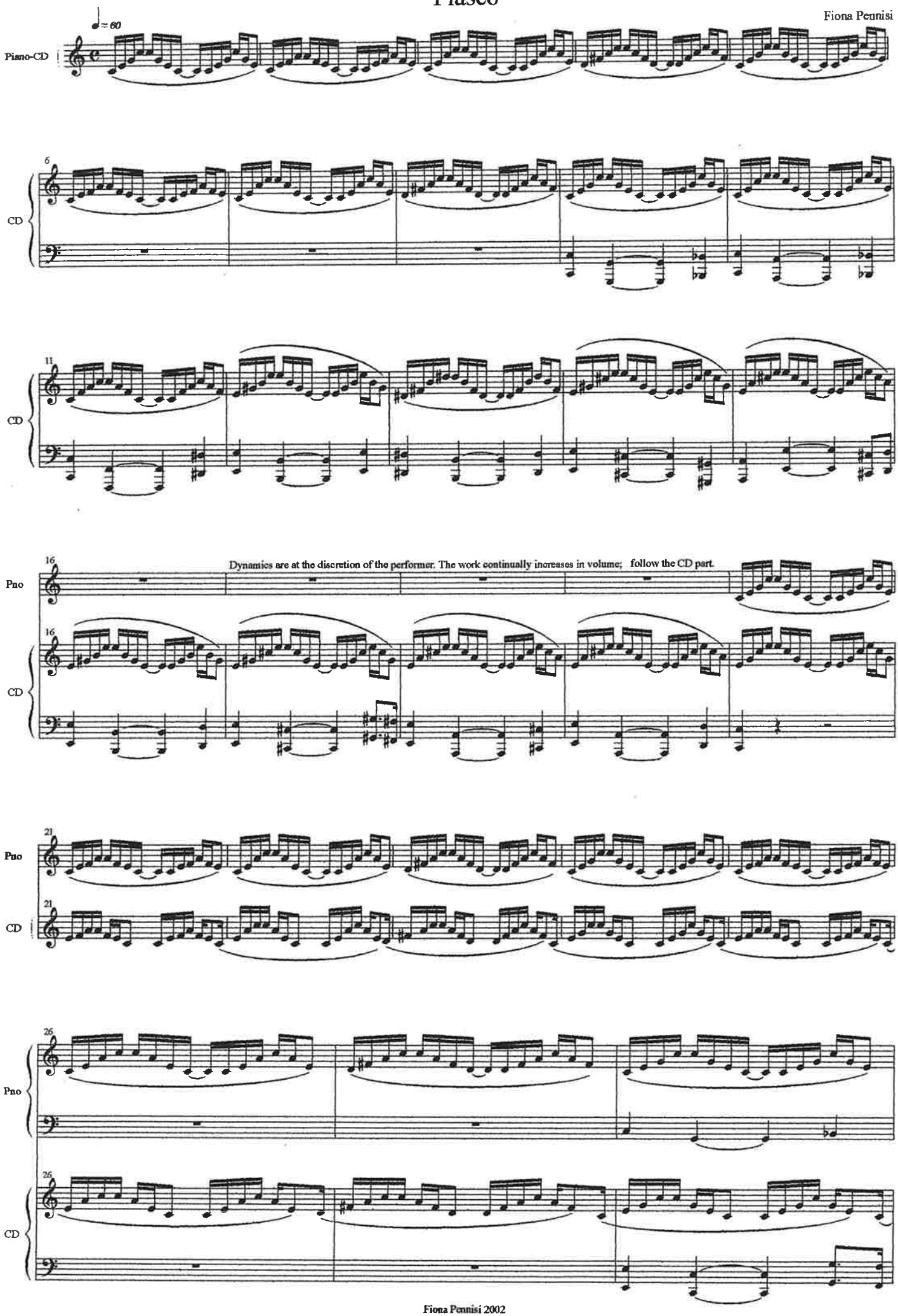
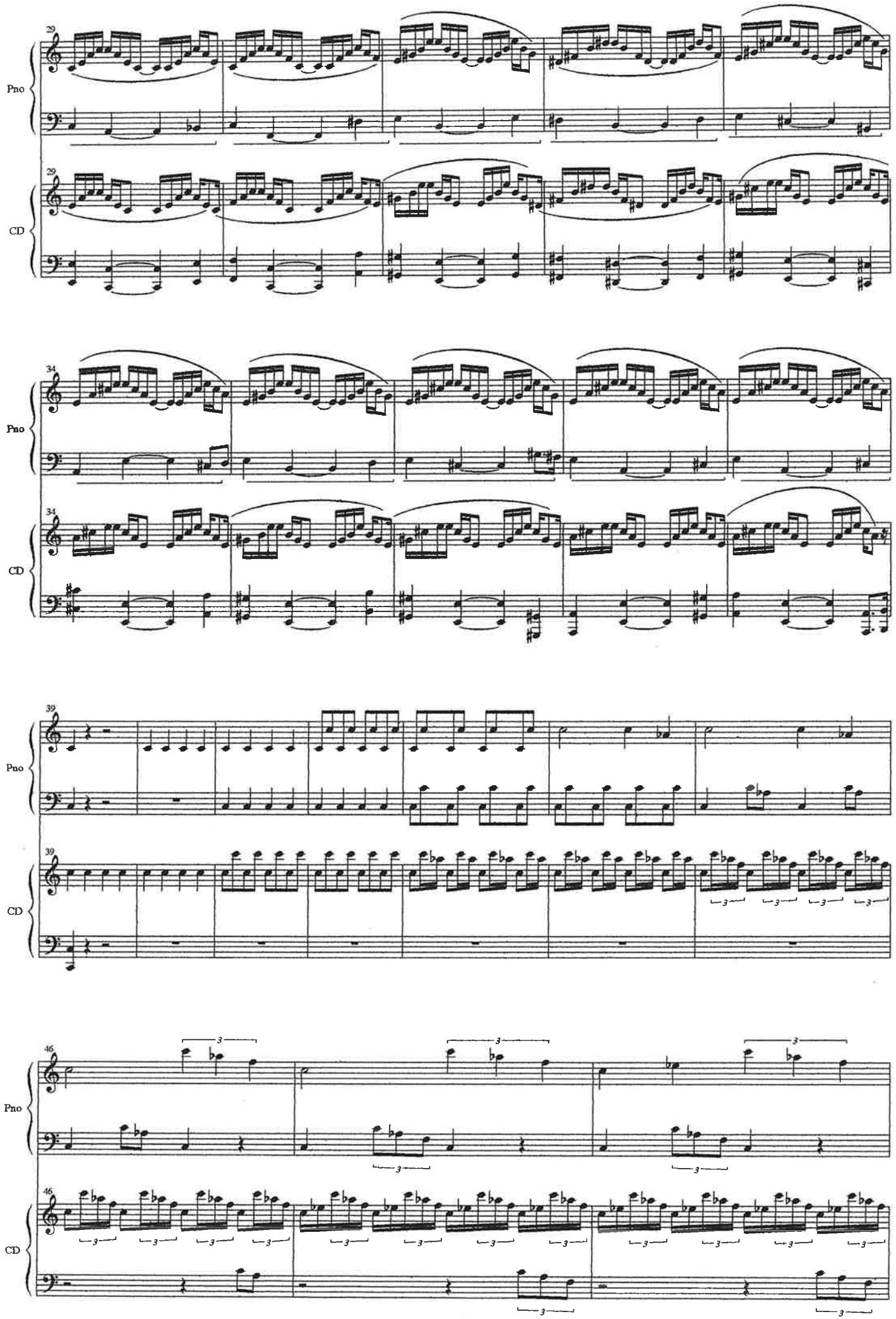
Fiasco

Fiona Pennisi



Fiona Pennisi 2002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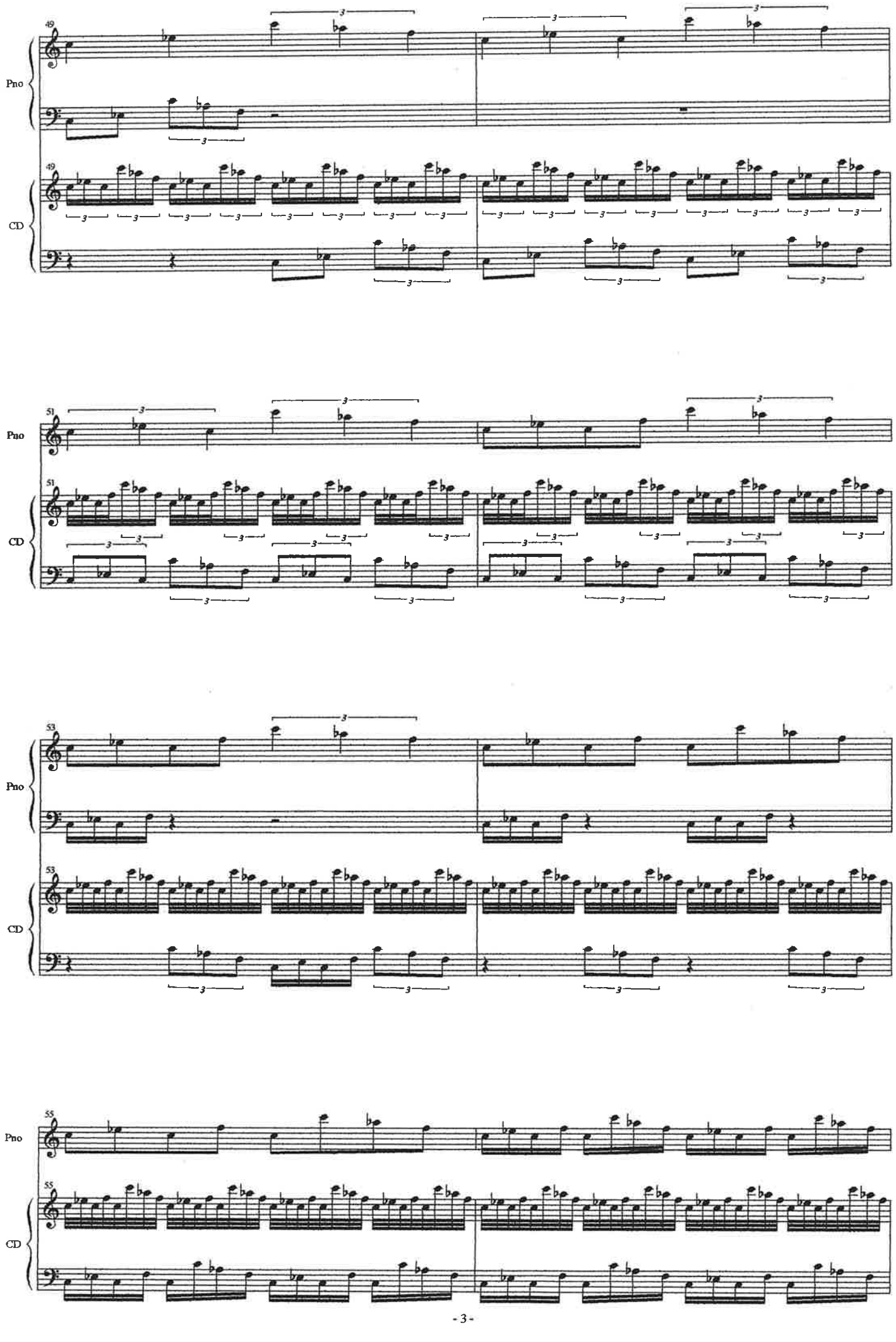
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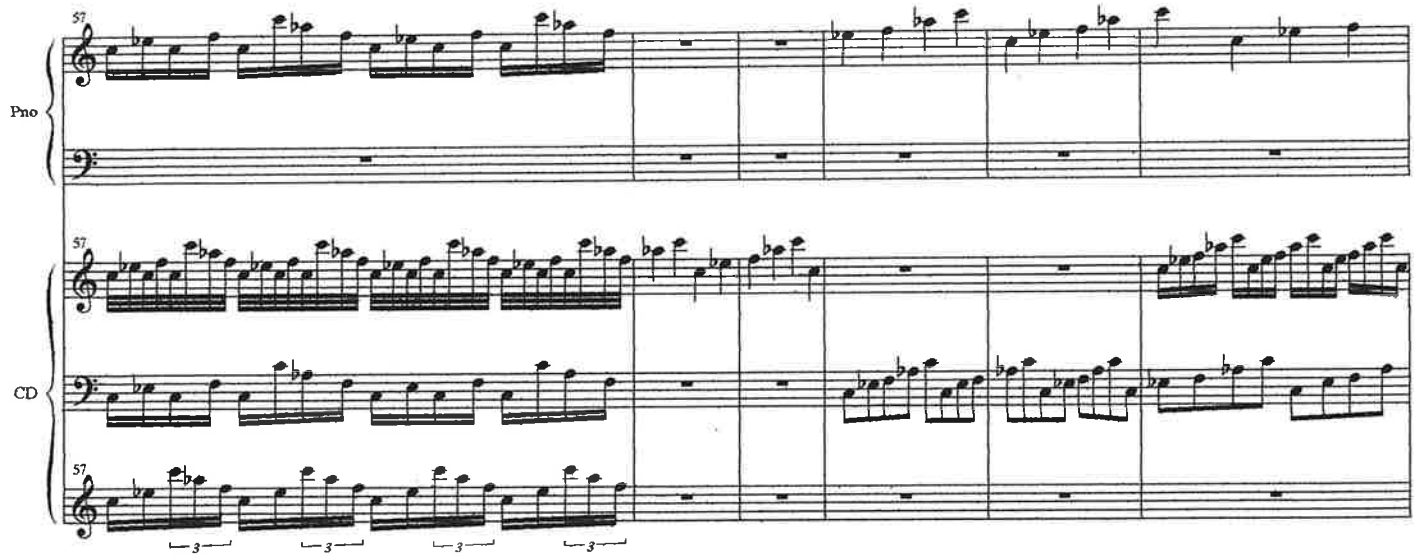
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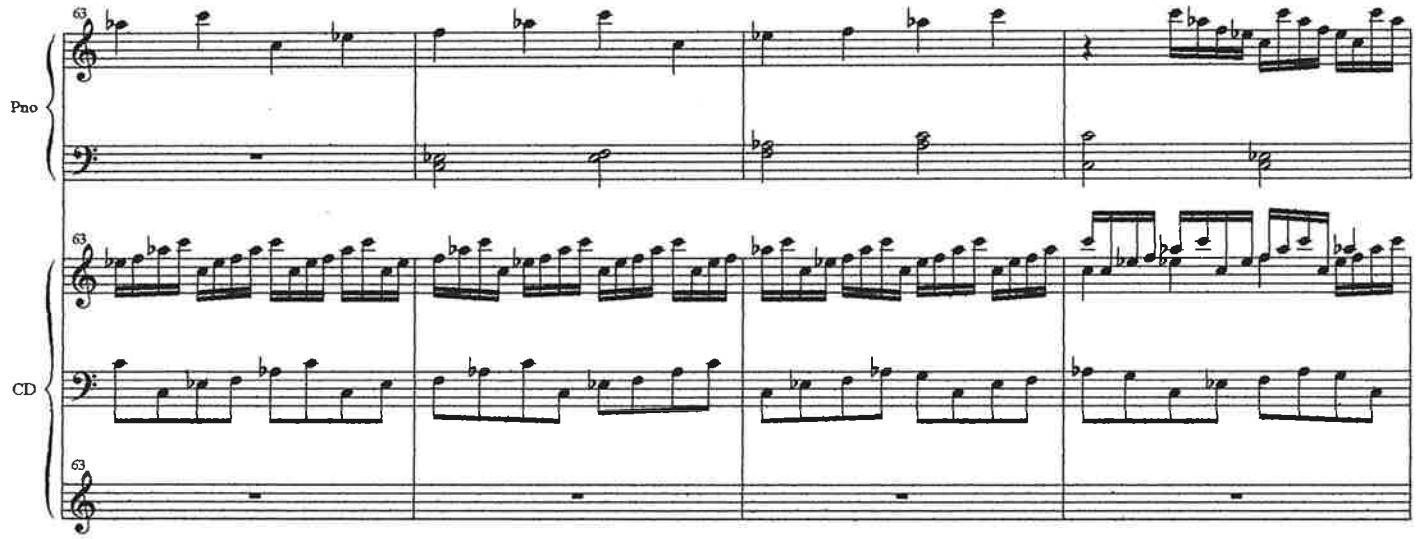
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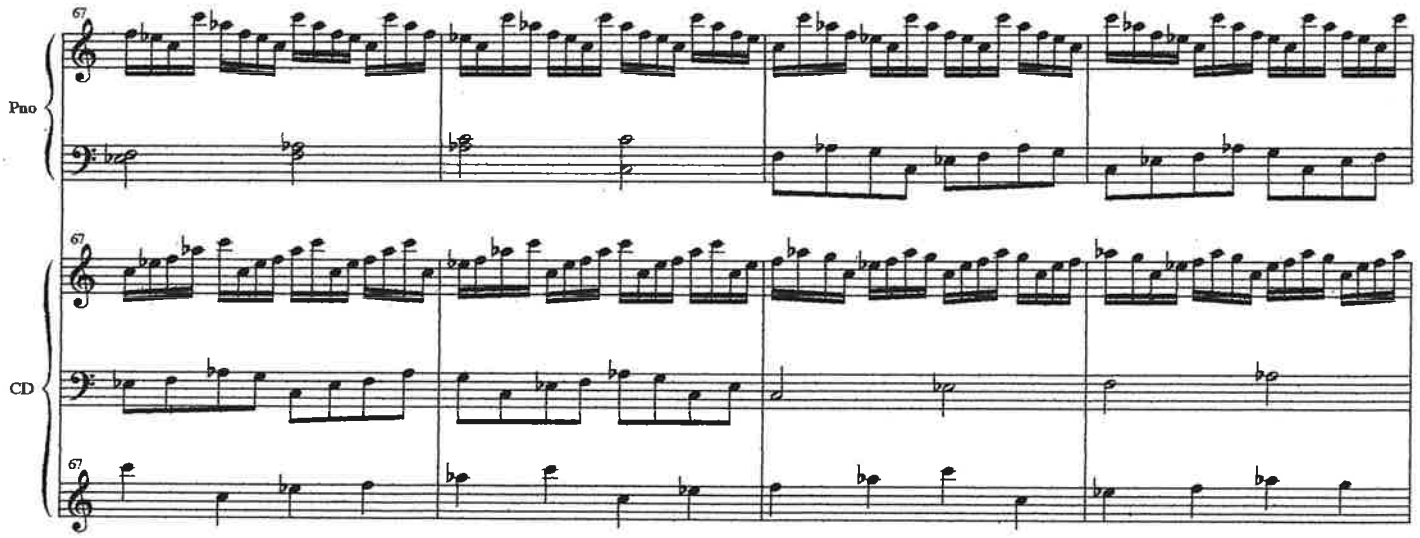
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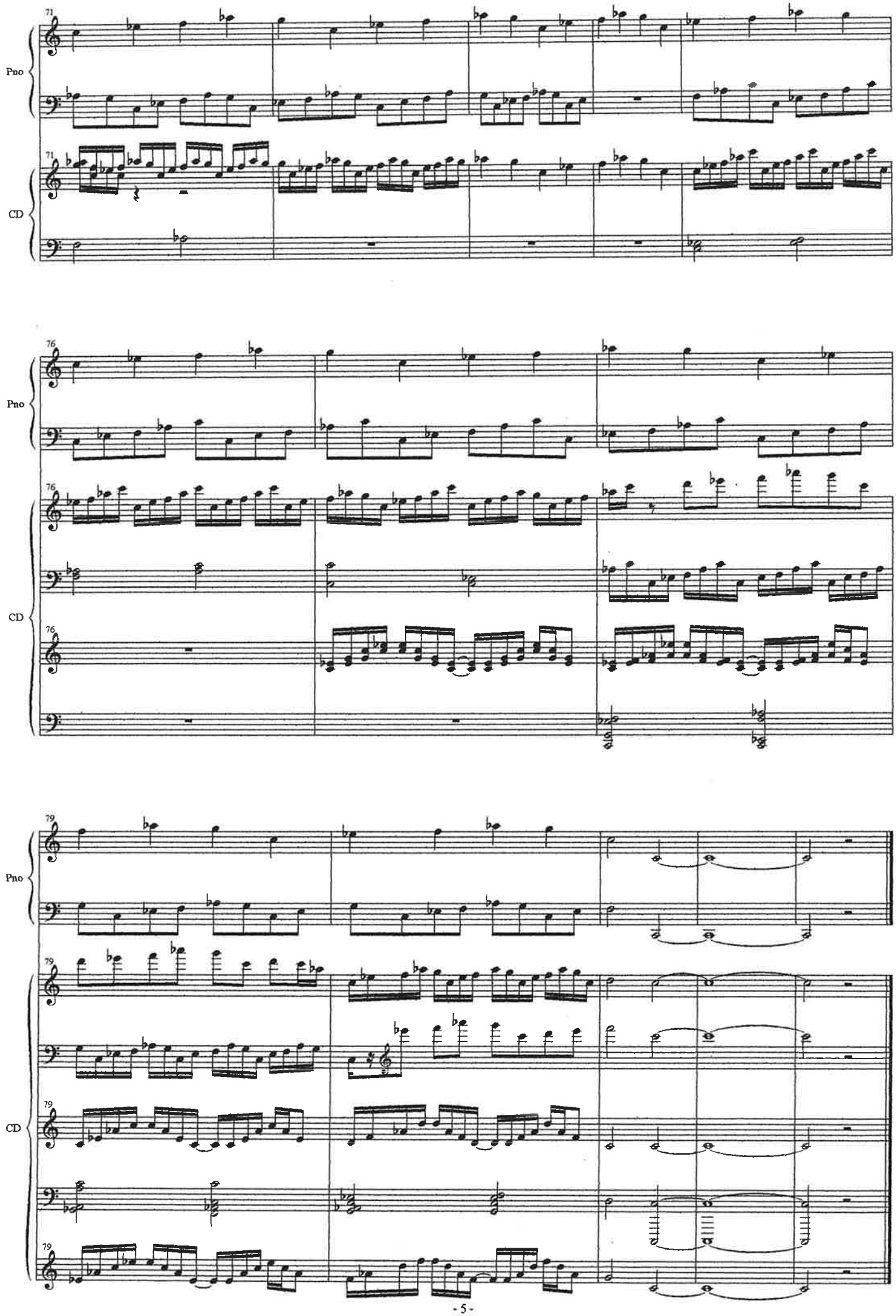
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FIASCO

Fiasco is an electro-acoustic piece that employs one live pianoforte player who is accompanied by a pre-recorded CD. The CD part was created by notating the exact musical material in Finale, exporting each staff as independent midi files which were then individually imported into VSC (Virtual Sound Canvas) and converted into audio files (using the first general midi piano sound available in this program). These audio files were then imported into Protools, placed on separate tracks and treated as different instruments (i.e. six different pianofortes). These midi piano sounds, after being treated, were placed in the mix with live piano samples of the same material (present only for the first section of the piece) that had been played at a different speed. The live sample begins in time with the midi sample and gradually moves out of phase (and once it has reached a certain point slowly coming back into time) throughout the first 19 bars of the work.

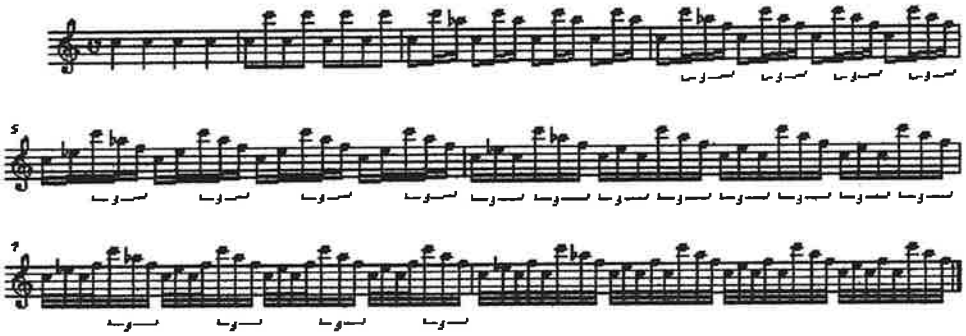
The initial, and coincidentally the primary, gesture in *Fiasco* is a tonal broken chord figuration as such:

Bars 1-4, *Fiasco*

This gesture employs the following chordal structure as functional harmony:

||:C |F^{maj7}/C |Am |D^{7} :||C |Am |F ||:E |B |C#m |A :||

The second gesture is of an additive nature:



There are also two pitch cells used in this work. Cell one uses the pitches C Eb F Ab C (in that order), while cell 2 substitutes the second C with a G – C Eb F Ab G.

The form of *Fiasco* can described as so:

SECTION	**BARS**	**MATERIAL**
A	1 – 38	Gesture 1
B	39 – 57	Gesture 2
C	58 – 74	Cell 1 (ending with premonitions of cell 2)
D	75 – 83	Cell 2 and Gesture 1

Development is achieved throughout this piece principally as a result of textural construction. Each section has an increased number of instruments/lines than the previous one, with the associated polyrhythms. Use of isorhythms, both rhythmic and melodic, is another important element in *Fiasco*. Additive processes are applied to all levels: textural, temporal and harmonic.