Die Meistersinger
Overture
(abridged)

Richard Wagner

Scored for 12 trombones

arranged by

Bob Reifsnyder

Music from the

REVOLUTIONARY BONE COLLECTION

VOLUME SIX

About the Composer

"Die Meistersinger" of Richard Wagner (1813-83) received its premiere in 1868 in Munich, under the patronage of King Ludwig of Bavaria. It was completed at approximately the same time as Meyerbeer's "L'Africaine (completed posthumously in 1865)), Verdi's "Don Carlo" (1867) and Gounod"s "Romeo and Juliet" (1867). It is often spuriously referred to as a comic opera, most likely because it has a happy ending and a character (Beckmesser) worth of derision. The length of the opera, however, as well as the often grandiose character of the music, suggests that it is indeed a very serious work.

The Overture (Wagner referred to it as a Prelude) is most famous for its liberal and ingenious use of counterpoint. There is one section toward the conclusion where he combines all three principal themes and a running line in the middle strings into an incredibly rich four-part texture reminiscent of a Bach Cantata. Historians have surmised that this was a direct response to the influential Viennese critic Edward Hanslick, who despised Wagner's music and often accused him of having only rudimentary musical skills. In fact, the original score had the character Beckmesser, an amateur musician with no inspiration or discernible musical qualities, labeled as Hanslick. Obviously, Wagner proved the critic incorrect in the composition of this musical masterpiece.

About the arranger

Bob Reifsnyder, a graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy, has two degrees from Juilliard and a Doctorate from Indiana University. As a trombone teacher, he has served on the faculties of the Juilliard Pre-College Division, Indiana University, Indiana State University, and Ithaca College. As a professional trombonist, he has been a member of the West Point band, the National Orchestra of New York, the Spoleto Festival orchestra, Goldman Band, Ringling Brothers, the German orchestras of Bielefeld, Kaiserslautern and Solingen, Terre Haute Symphony, Tri-Cities Opera, Cayuga Chamber Orchestra, Manitowoc Symphony and the Wisconsin Philharmonic. As a gig musician, he has appeared with the Metropolitan Opera, the orchestras of Wuppertal and Dusseldorf in Germany, L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Chamber Orchestra of Lausanne, Fort Wayne Philharmonic, Syracuse Symphony, Binghamton Pops, Ithaca Opera, the Wisconsin orchestras of Sheboygan, Oshkosh, Green Bay and the Fox Valley Symphony.

Notes for this arrangement

1. Performance- These works are designed to add to the performance repertoire of the low brass choir.

2. Clef reading- These arrangements will hopefully also serve as advanced clef practice for trombonists playing the top parts. It is unfortunate that clef reading skills don't seem to be a priority for many contemporary trombone teachers, but the ability to transpose at sight remains a prerequisite for becoming an excellent professional musician. Please keep in mind that the first time one has to ask a conductor for a transposed part is likely the last time one will perform with that ensemble!

3. Scoring- There is some octave displacement to keep the individual parts within the comfortable range of the performing instruments and to establish the alto trombone as the highest voice.

4. Range- The basic range of these transcriptions is from high D to low B. For each of the three quartets, the ideal mix would be alto, .525 bore tenor, .547 bore tenor and bass trombone.

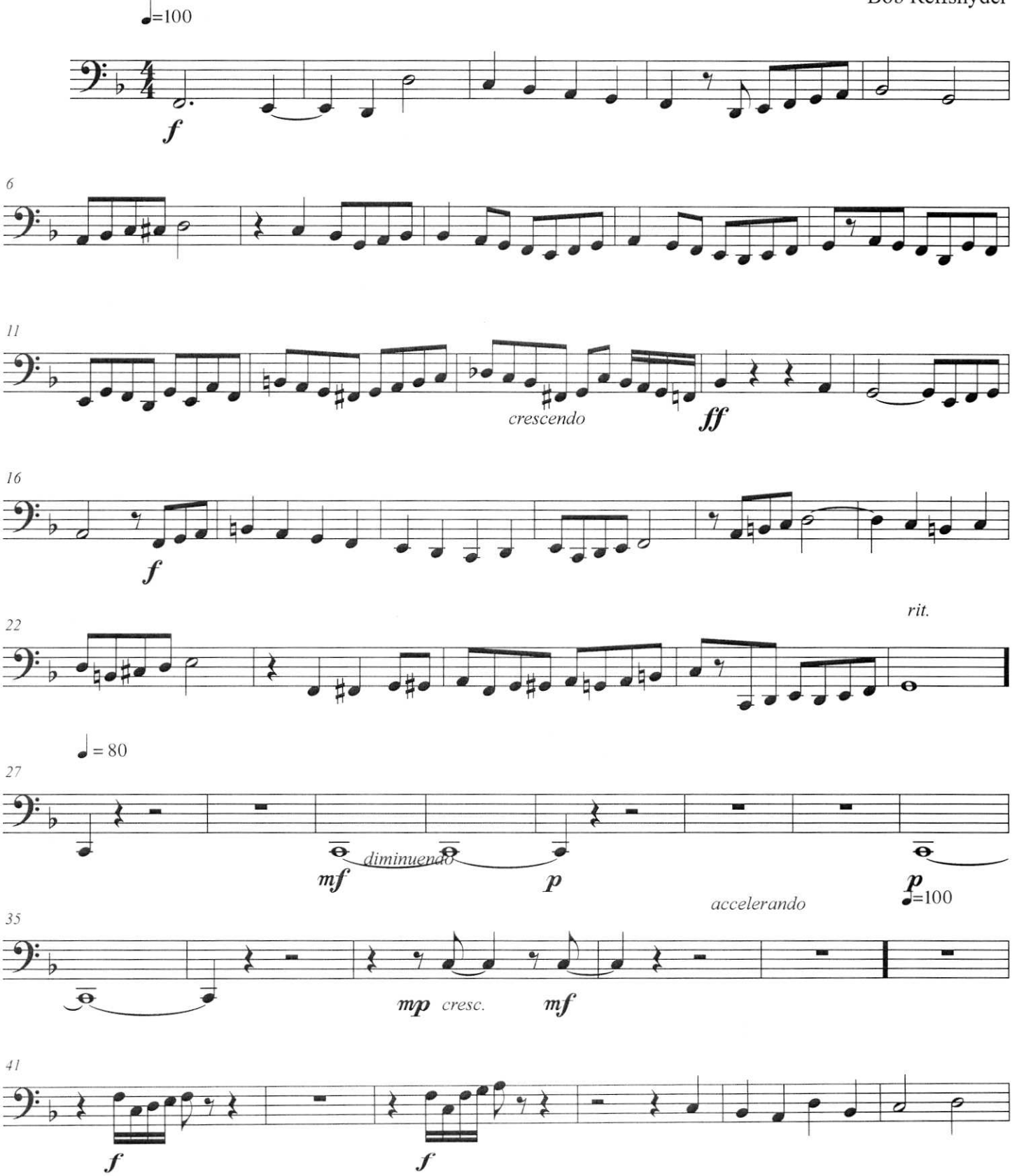
5. Breathing and Articulation- There are no breath marks in these transcriptions; that is perhaps the most personal decision a brass player ever makes. There are, however, notes left out in extended passages that would be otherwise impossible to perform well, hopefully in the most appropriate locations. Performers are also encouraged to add slurs whenever it is deemed appropriate.

Bass Trombone 3

Overture to "Die Meistersinger"

Wagner

Bob Reifsnyder



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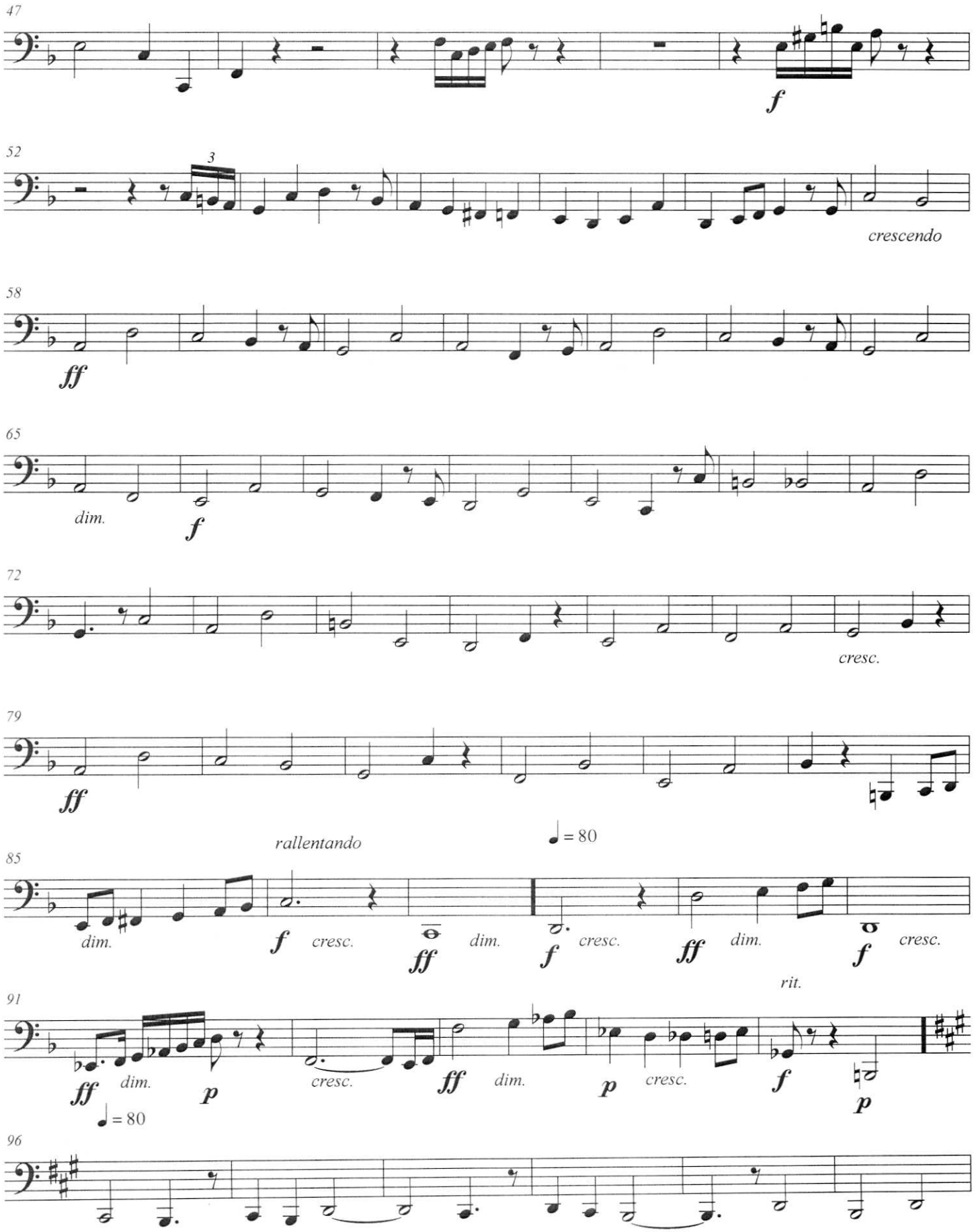
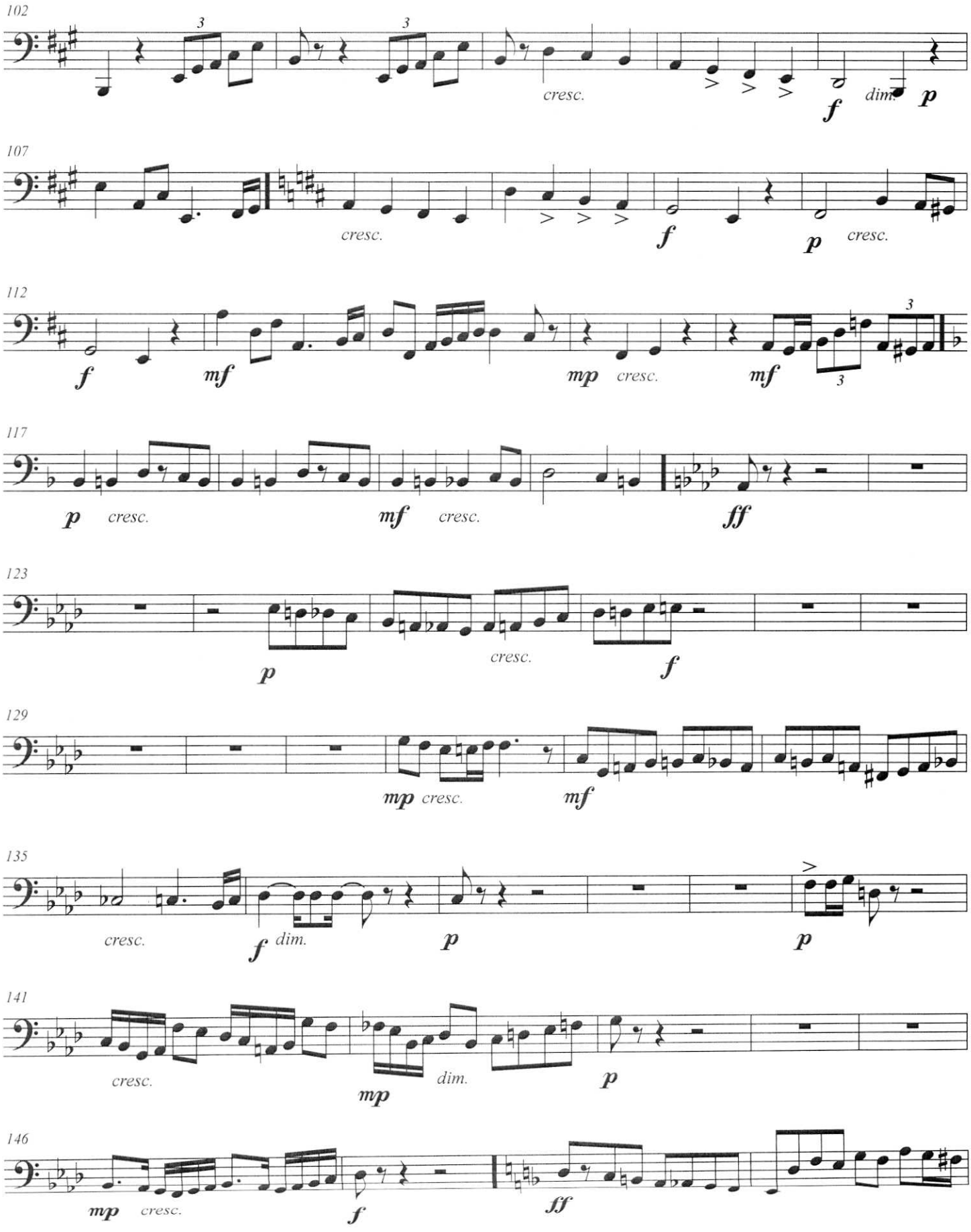
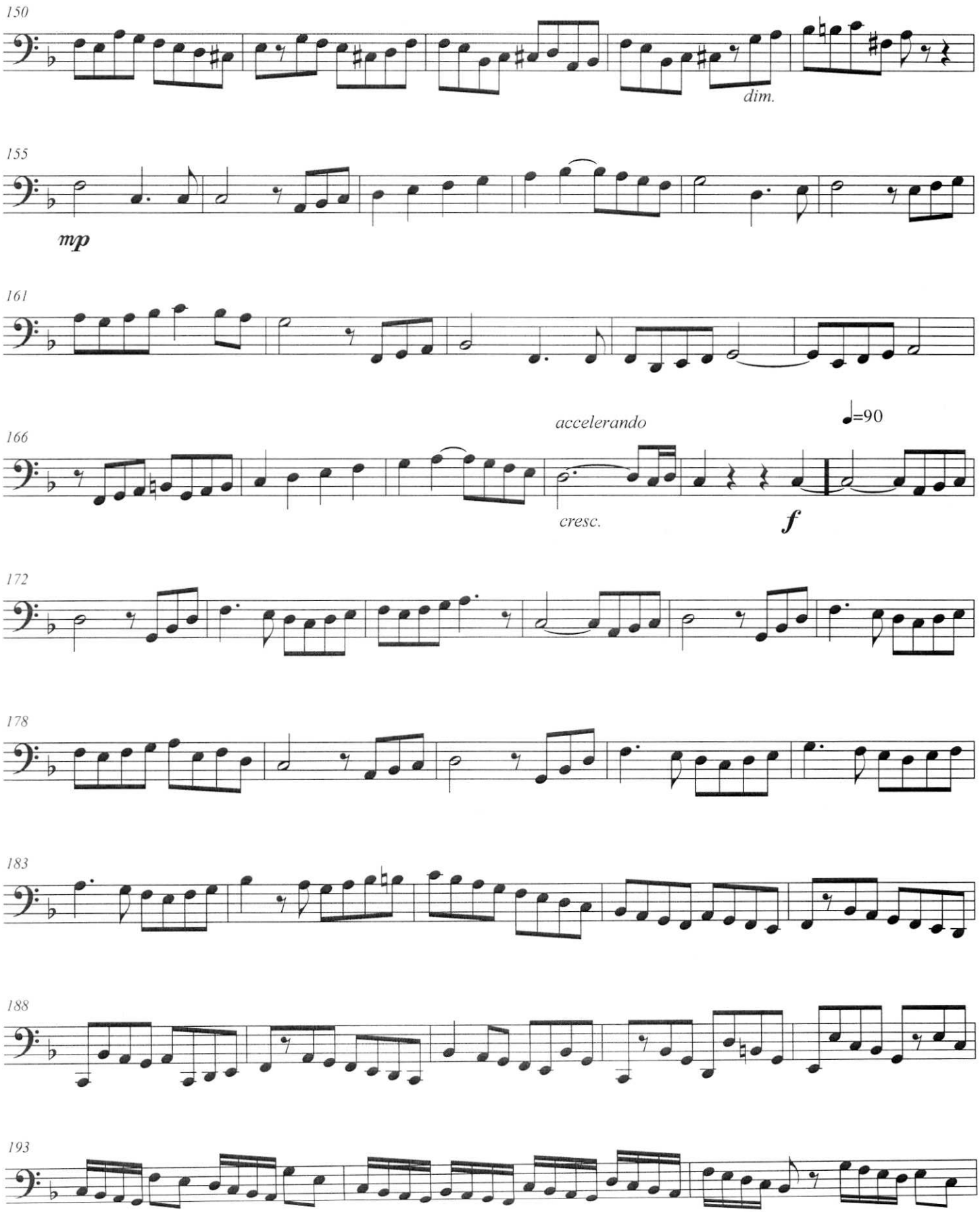
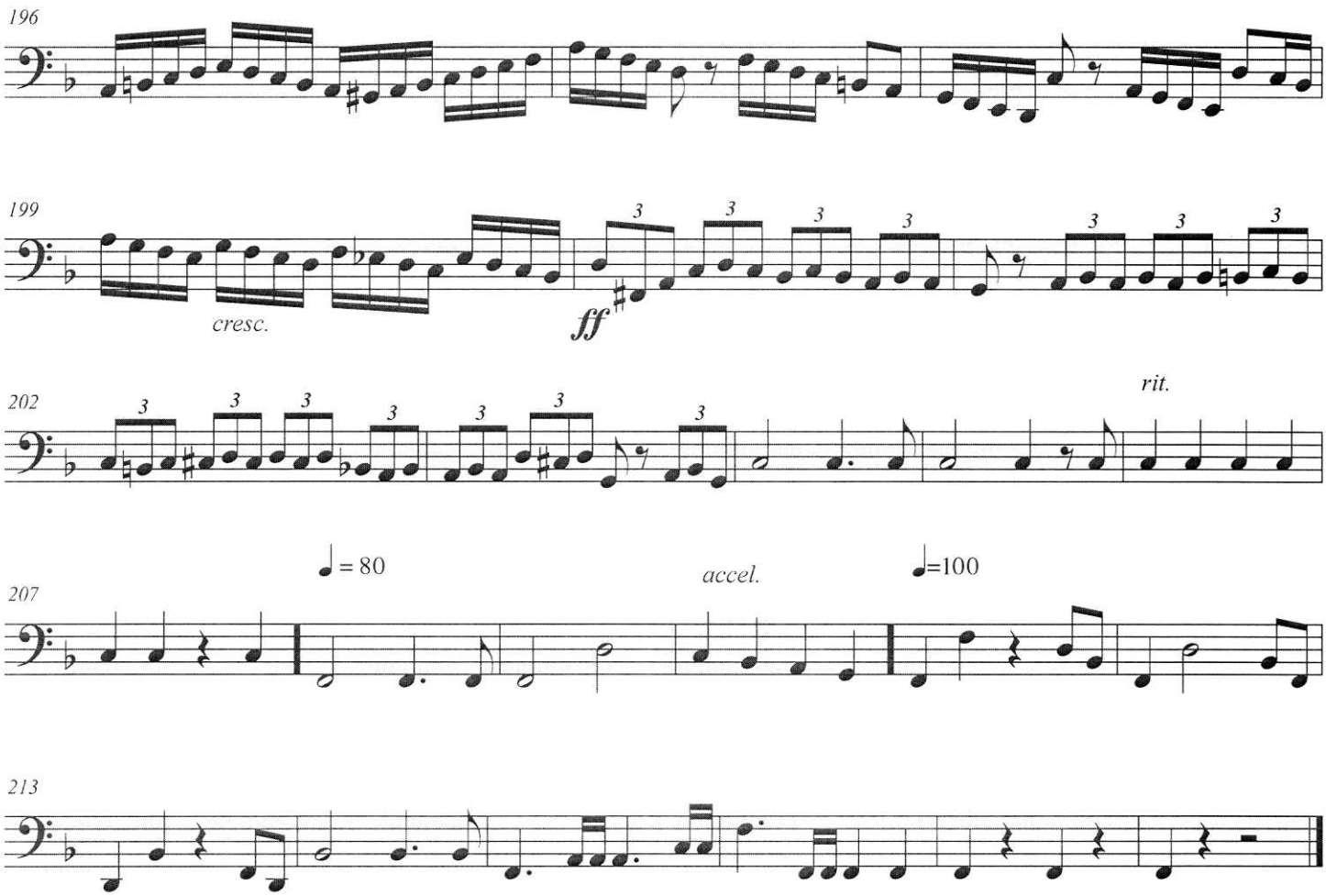

47
f
52
3
crescendo
58
ff
65
dim.
f
72
cresc.
79
ff
rallentando
♩ = 80
85
dim.
f cresc.
ff dim.
f cresc.
ff dim.
f cresc.
rit.
91
ff dim. p
♩ = 80
cresc.
ff dim.
p cresc.
f
p
96


102
3
3
cresc.
f
dim.
p
107
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
112
f
mf
mp
cresc.
mf
3
3
117
p
cresc.
mf
cresc.
ff
123
p
cresc.
f
129
mp
cresc.
mf
135
cresc.
f
dim.
p
p
141
cresc.
mp
dim.
p
146
mp
cresc.
f
ff


150
dim.
155
mp
161
166
accelerando
♩=90
cresc.
f
172
178
183
188
193


196
199
cresc.
ff
202
rit.
207
♩ = 80
accel.
♩=100
213