ON THE WINGS OF THE SPRING BREEZE

for flute solo

Lo Ting-cheung

2013

First Performance:

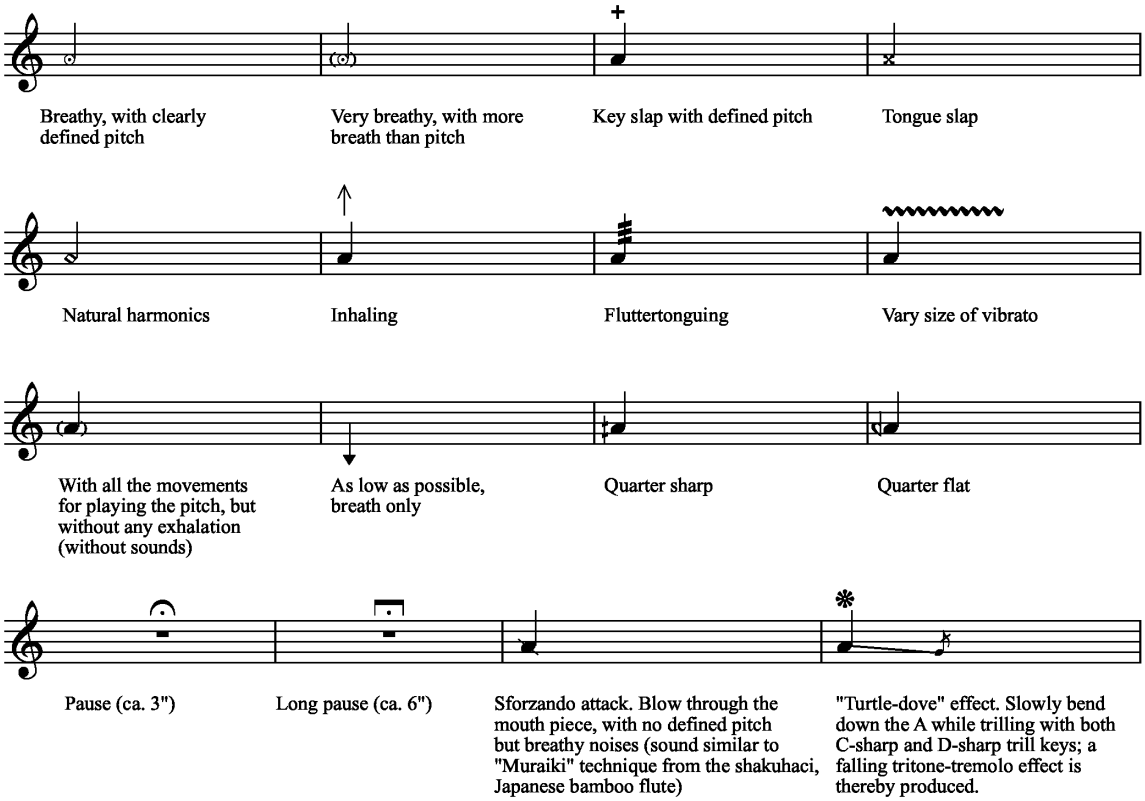
Diondre McKinney

July 19th, 2013

Atlantic Music Festival 2013

Lorimer Chapel, Colby College, Maine, US

Performance Notes



- Accidentals apply to all the notes within the same bar. Natural signs are used when there is a need to avoid confusion.

- All metronomic indications are approximate and may vary slightly, depending on the acoustical properties of the hall.

- “Speak-flute”: Whisper the indicated words over the mouthpiece of the instrument so that both the words and the flute pitches project distinctly.

- The notation of harmonics shows both the fingered notes and the desired actual pitches.

Programme Note

The piece was inspired by a centuries-old poem, *Hearing a Flute in Luoyang on a Spring Night*, by *LI Bai* (ca. 701-762) who is one of the best-known Chinese poets of all centuries. *LI*'s poem, freely translated, reads like this,

> The sound of a solitary flute comes soaring in the evening gloom.
> Borne on the wings of the spring breeze, it soon fills the night air everywhere with its drifting tune.
> It's a sad song to the sojourner's ear, bringing back memories of parting scenes.
> I can't but begin to think of home, but I'm not the only one missing home in this city tonight.

The theme of the poem is one of homesickness. Although it was set in an ancient Chinese city, the emotion contained therein transcends time and place. As a foreign student in an unfamiliar land, I have experienced inevitable bouts of homesickness. Amazingly, I find in this poem echoes of my nostalgic feelings. It also gives me the poetic impulse to seek musical analogues.

The flute solo is not intended to echo the narrative flow of the original poem. What it tries to do is to capture the mood and emotion contained in the Chinese poem and to express them musically in a contemporary context. The flute, the western counterpart of *dizi* (Chinese flute), has the same extraordinary ability of sounding intimate and distant. But at the same time, it can be bold and powerful. So the flute in this piece is both intimately lyrical and vigorously virtuosic, with the developing dramaturgy ranging from the quietest contemplative moment to the most extreme outburst of emotion. The musical shape is relatively free, mapping the contours of our emotions which are often much more strongly and overtly displayed today than in the times of the Chinese poet.

The work also represents my attempt to explore the expressive potential of the flute as an instrument with an enormous range of dynamics and timbres. In order to enhance its expressivity, I have introduced in this piece some special ways of playing the instrument (e.g. the elements of breath and noise), manifold harmonics /multiphonics, and changes in articulations and registers, creating a kind of polyphonic and multi-layered effect.

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for flute solo

Daniel LO Ting-cheung
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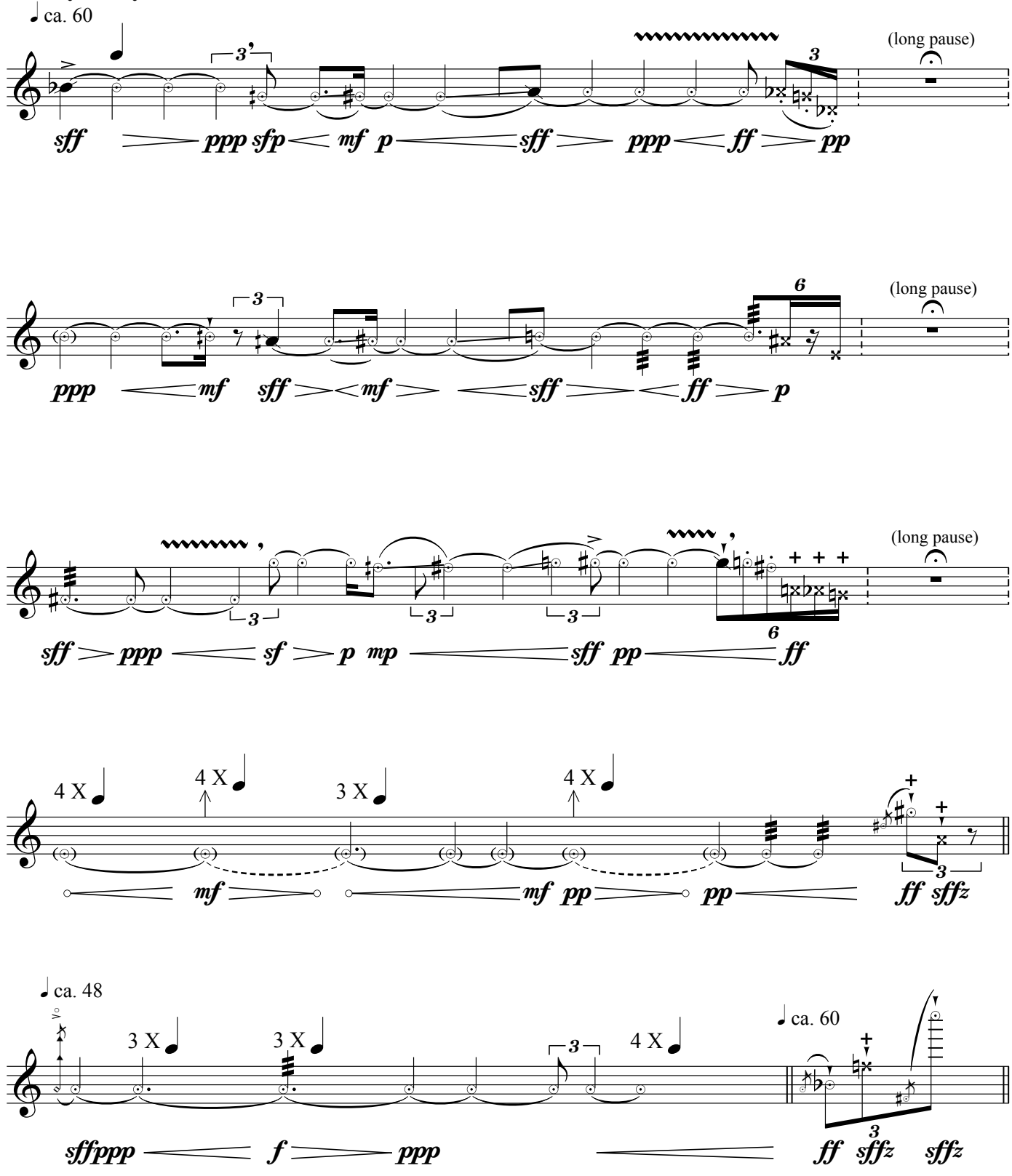
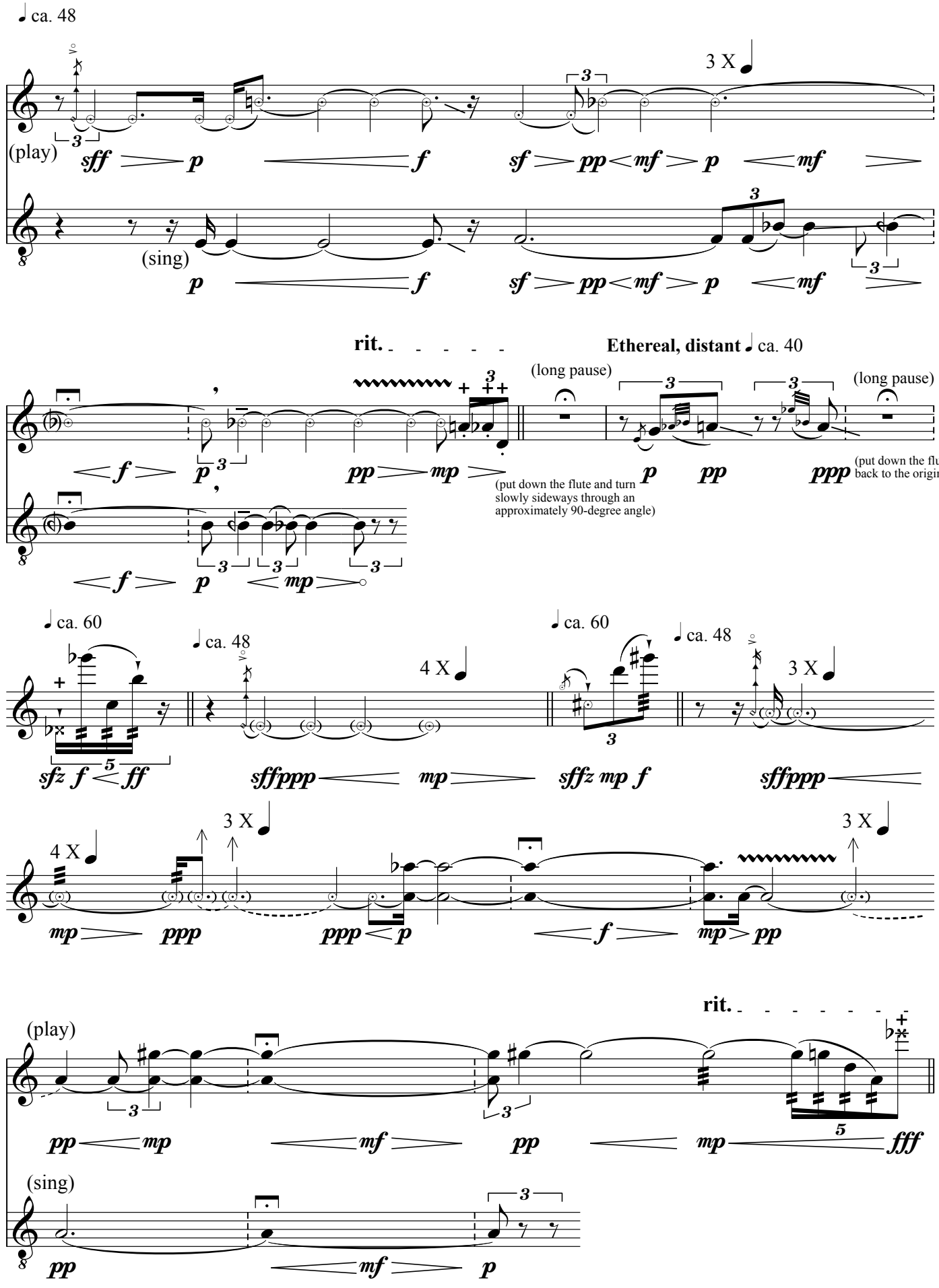
Very freely, as from afar




ca. 48
3 X
(play)
sff
p
f
sf
pp
mf
p
mf
(sing)
p
f
sf
pp
mf
p
mf
rit.
Ethereal, distant
ca. 40
(long pause)
(long pause)
f
p
pp
mp
(put down the flute and turn slowly sideways through an approximately 90-degree angle)
p
pp
ppp
(put down the flute and turn back to the original position
f
p
mp
ca. 60
ca. 48
4 X
ca. 60
ca. 48
3 X
sfz f ff
sffppp
mp
sffz mp f
sffppp
4 X
3 X
3 X
mp
ppp
ppp
p
f
mp
pp
rit.
(play)
pp
mp
mf
pp
mp
fff
(sing)
pp
mf
p

(long pause) **Ethereal, distant** ♩ ca. 40

(put down the flute and turn slowly sideways through an approximately 90-degree angle)

pp *p* *ppp* *p* *pp* *ppp*

(long pause)

(put down the flute and turn back to the original position)

Lento ♩ ca. 40

(speak-flute)

Hea - ring the flu - (te)

pp *mp*

(long pause)

Molto e calmo ♩ ca. 48

3 X

(no sound)

mp *ppp* *mp*

(long pause)

Lento ♩ ca. 40

On the wings of the spring bree(ze)

mp

(long pause)

Molto e calmo ♩ ca. 52

(no sound)

mp

(long pause)

(sing) *p*

Lento ♩ ca. 40

pp *mp* *Fills the night air e - very - where*

(long pause)

Molto e calmo ♩ ca. 52

(no sound)

poco accel. ♩ ca. 56

mf *pp* *mp* *sf* *sf* *sfpp* *sf* *pp*

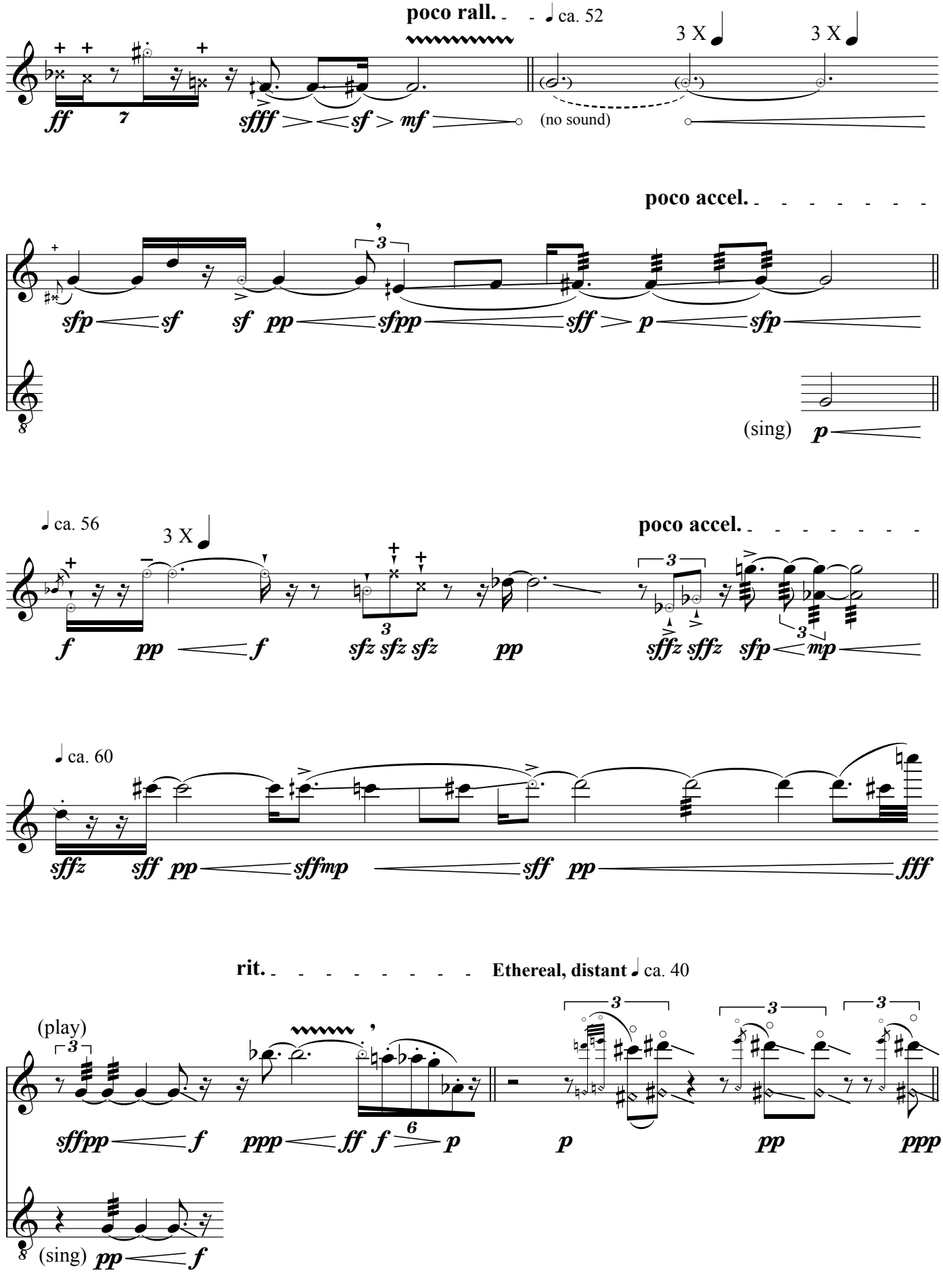
(play)

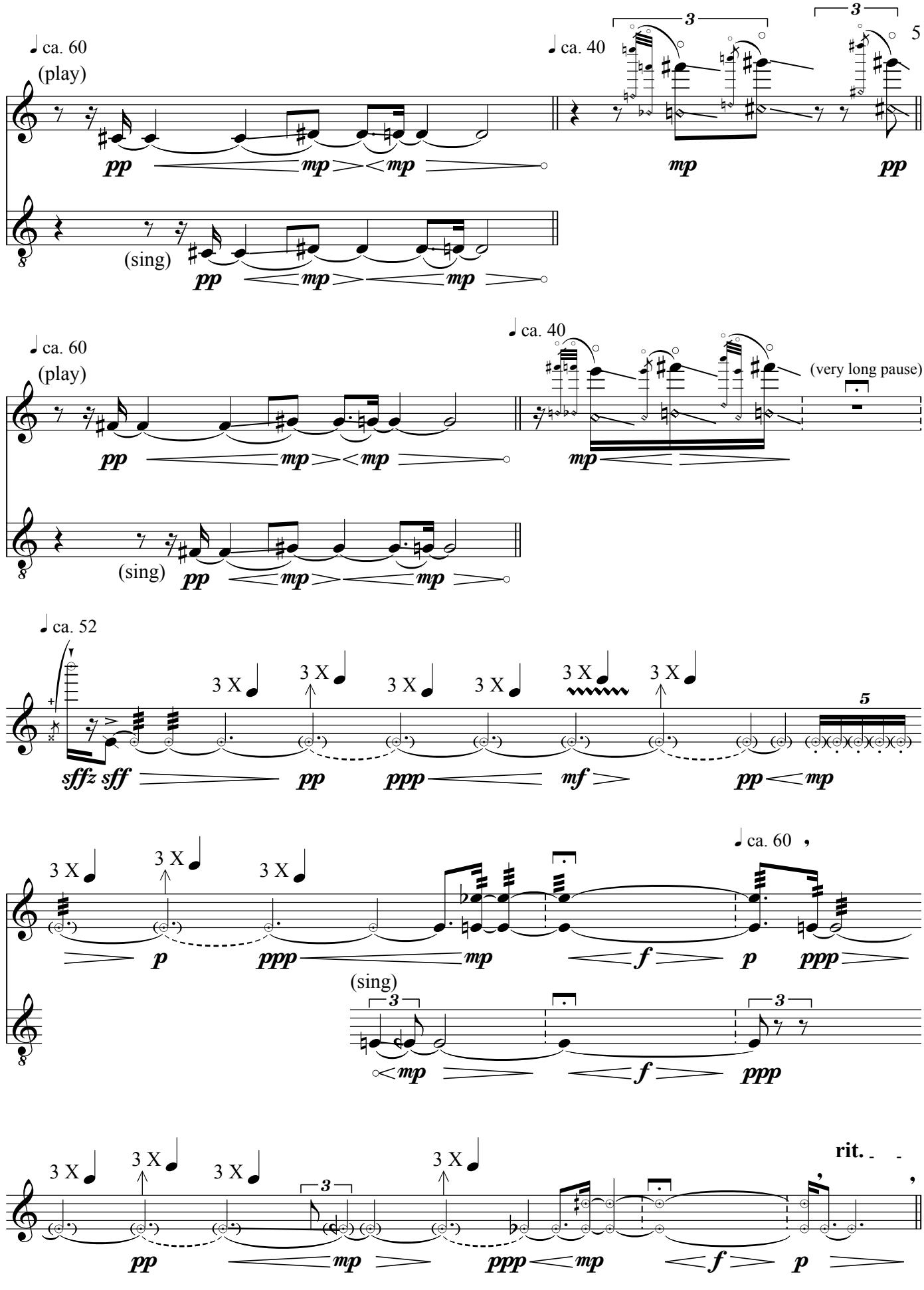
sfp *ff* *p* *p* *mf* *f* *pp*

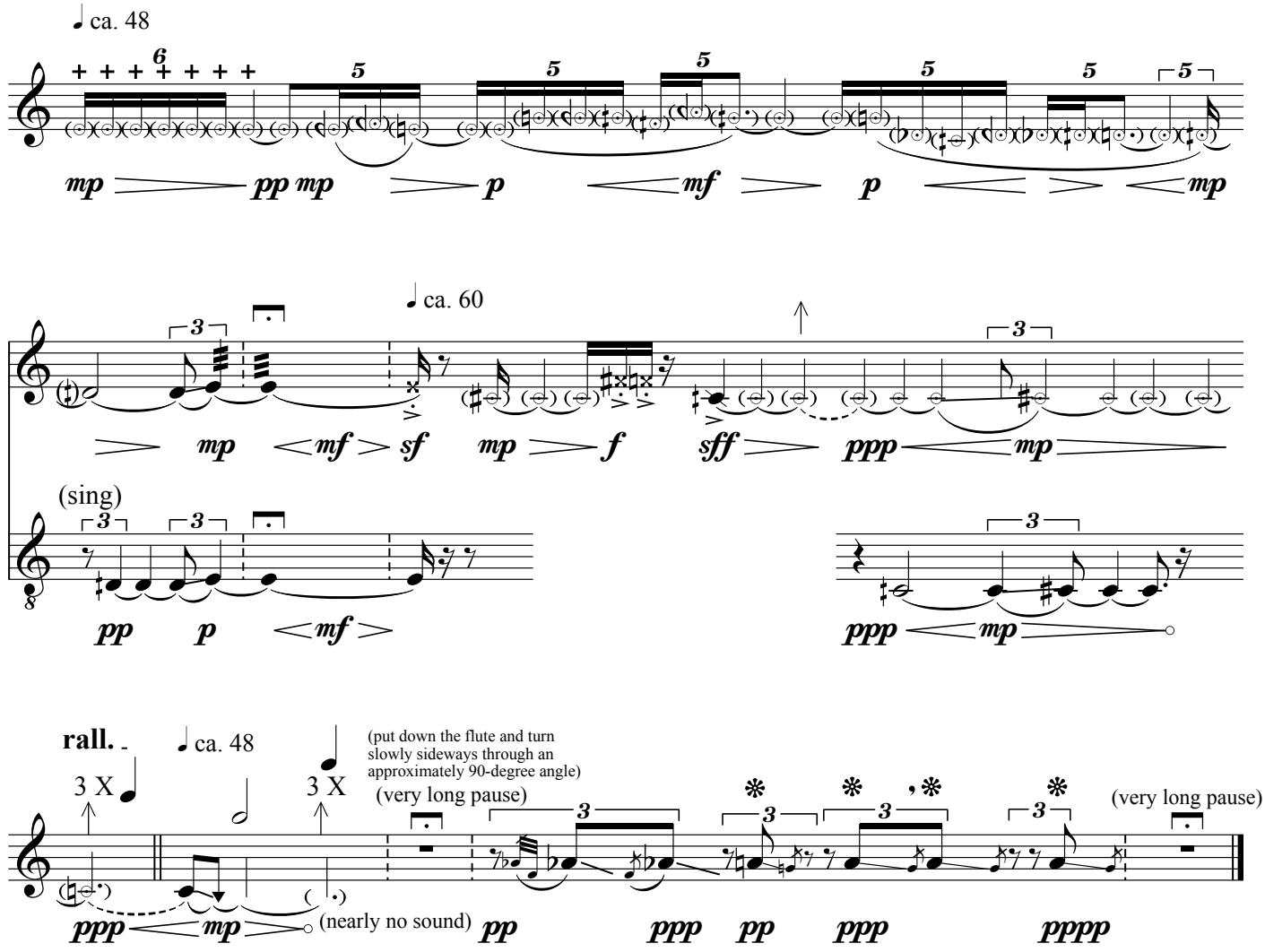
(sing)

sfp *ff*

f *pp*


poco rall.
ca. 52
3 X
3 X
(no sound)
poco accel.
(sing)
ca. 56
3 X
poco accel.
ca. 60
rit.
Ethereal, distant
ca. 40
(play)
(sing)


ca. 60
(play)
ca. 40
5
(sing)
(very long pause)
ca. 52
3 X
ca. 60
rit.


ca. 48
mp
pp mp
p
mf
p
mp
ca. 60
mp
mf
sf
mp
f
sff
ppp
mp
(sing)
pp
p
mf
ppp
mp

rall.
ca. 48
3 X
3 X
(put down the flute and turn slowly sideways through an approximately 90-degree angle)
(very long pause)
(very long pause)
ppp
mp
(nearly no sound)
pp
ppp
pp
ppp
pppp