SELECTIONS

From

Handel's Overtures

to his Operas and Oratorios

For

Alto, Tenor, Bass Trombone and Tuba

Arranged by

Bob Reifsnyder

MUSIC for the

BAROQUE BONE SQUAD

VOLUME 14

About the Composer

The three great innovators of the 17th century, Monteverdi(1567-1643), Giovanni Gabrieli (1556?-1612) and Corelli (1653-1713) can easily be paired with the three masters of the 18th, Handel (1685-1759), Bach (1685-1750) and Vivaldi (1678-1741). The circumstances of the connections, however, differ greatly. From the operas of Monteverdi to the operas of Handel, there are two complete generations of composers, highlighted by the careers of Francesco Cavalli (1602-1676) and Allessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725), both of whom were quite famous during their lifetimes. From the sacred concertos of Gabrieli to the cantatas of Bach, there are also two generations of composers, represented most vividly by the careers of Heinrich Schutz (1585-1672), a celebrated student of Gabrieli and Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707), a much lesser known composer. In contrast, Corelli was not only alive, but in the prime of his career when Vivaldi started his own creative output. Handel's Overtures, however, show virtually no influence of the Monteverdi, Cavalli, Scarlatti continuum; they come straight from the "French Overture" style of Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687). Dotted rhythms are quite prominent in the slow introductions, while the allegro sections that follow consistently use contrapuntal (fugal) texture. What is most fascinating is the "total" lack of operatic style in these preludes; one could never guess that an "Opera Seria" would soon follow. In the Oratorios, there is more stylistic unity, since he frequently used contrapuntal texture in the movements for Chorus. Handel is certainly one of the great minds in music history, but he was hardly influential on future generations of composers. His chosen media were the Opera Seria, Dance Suite, French Orchestra and Old Testament Oratorio. The first three essentially disappeared after his death and the Oratorio underwent a major overhaul, while ceasing to have a major impact on future audiences. Fortunately, however, we still have the masterpieces of Handel.

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- Handel's overtures were sometimes written in five parts, but the ones in this collection are all basically four-part texture (Doubling in woodwinds sometimes appear). Handel did indeed write continuo parts for all of these works, but their inclusion is hardly necessary to give a sense of completeness. As a result, public performance is highly encouraged; to make that easier, many of the works have been transcribed to make it less taxing for the alto and tenor trombonists.

2. Clef reading- These arrangements will hopefully serve as advanced clef practice for trombonists playing the first and second 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- These works are all originally scored for strings, with some doubling by woodwinds. Unlike the Bach arrangements (vols. 11 and 12), notes from one voice are frequently exchanged with another, a technique that also occurs regularly in earlier trio volumes. One will also notice frequent key changes from the original, to keep the range appropriate for low brass.

4. Range- The basic range of these transcriptions is from high D to low G, to accommodate a C tuba. These arrangements are also quite suitable for performance by a viola, trombone, cello and string bass, which offers a wonderful chamber music experience for a trombonist.

5. Tempi- All tempi are suggestions, not requirements. They are based on three tenets of Baroque performance:
    A, triple tempi are faster than duple tempi
    B. music with quarter and half notes as the fastest value have faster tempi
    C. music with eighth and sixteenth notes as the fastest value have slower tempi

6. Dynamics- Only three dynamic levels are used in these arrangements (mf,mp,p) and they are also suggestions as well. If one wants to expand the dynamic range a bit, there is certainly no issue with using "f,mp,pp" instead. The use of dynamics here is almost always an indication of the relative importance of the four independent lines.

7. Breathing- 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.

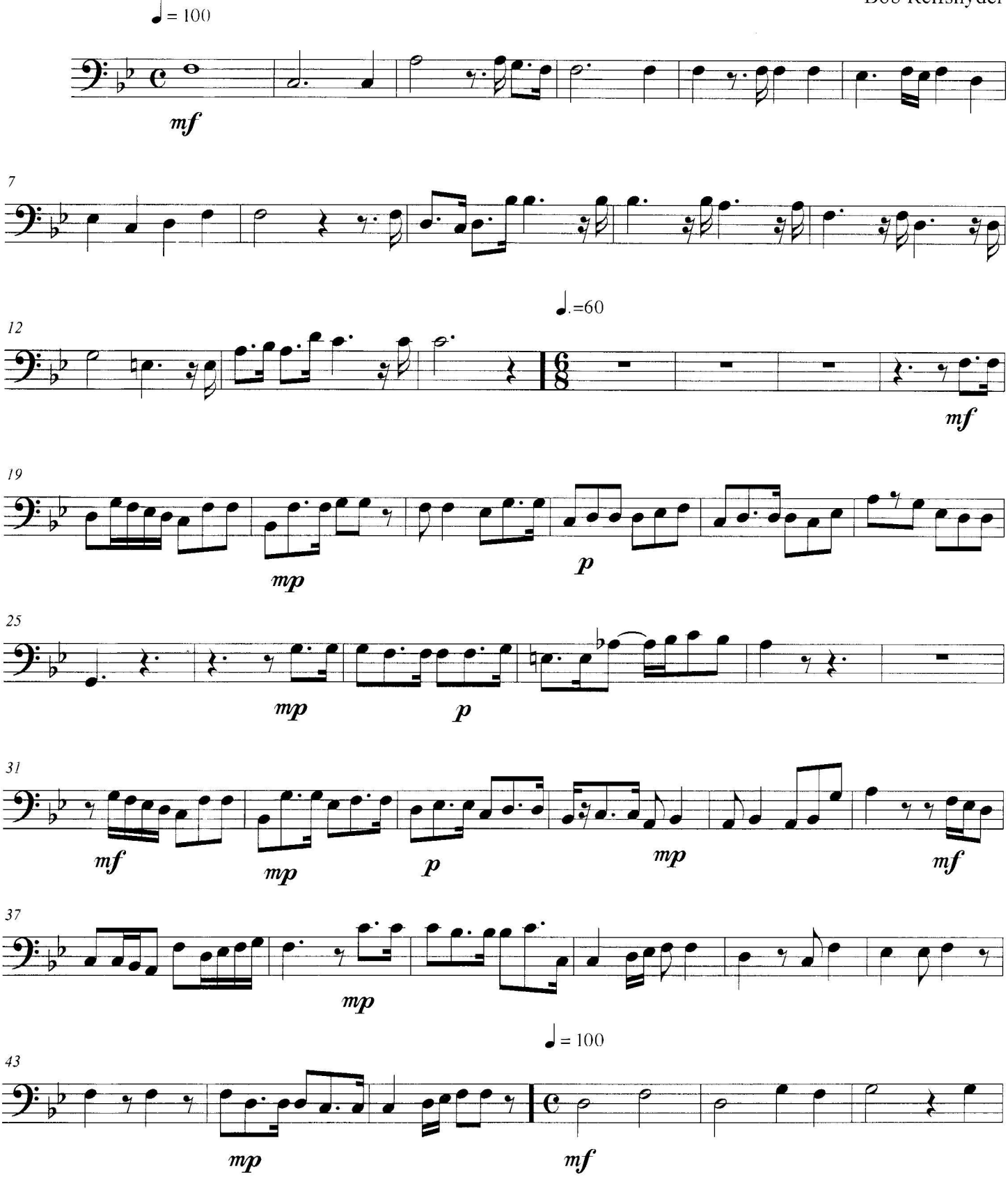
Bass Trombone

Overture from Rodrigo

HWV5

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder



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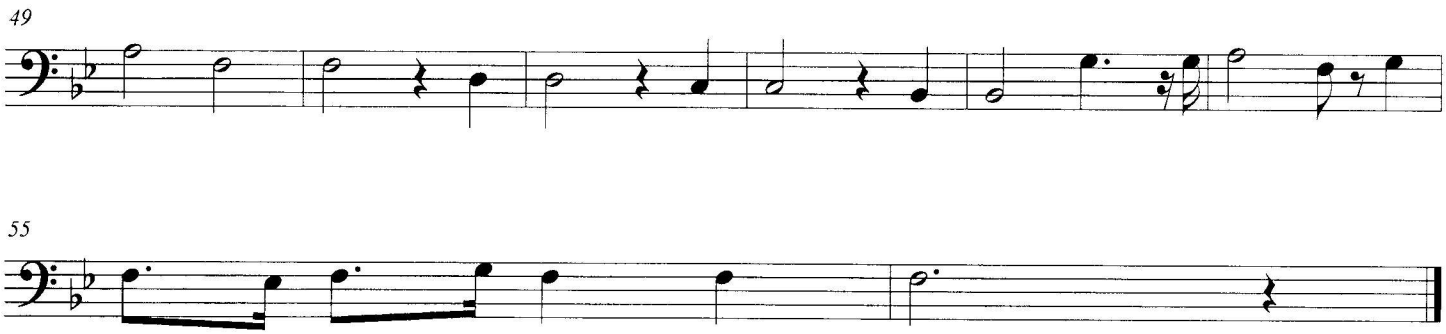

49

55

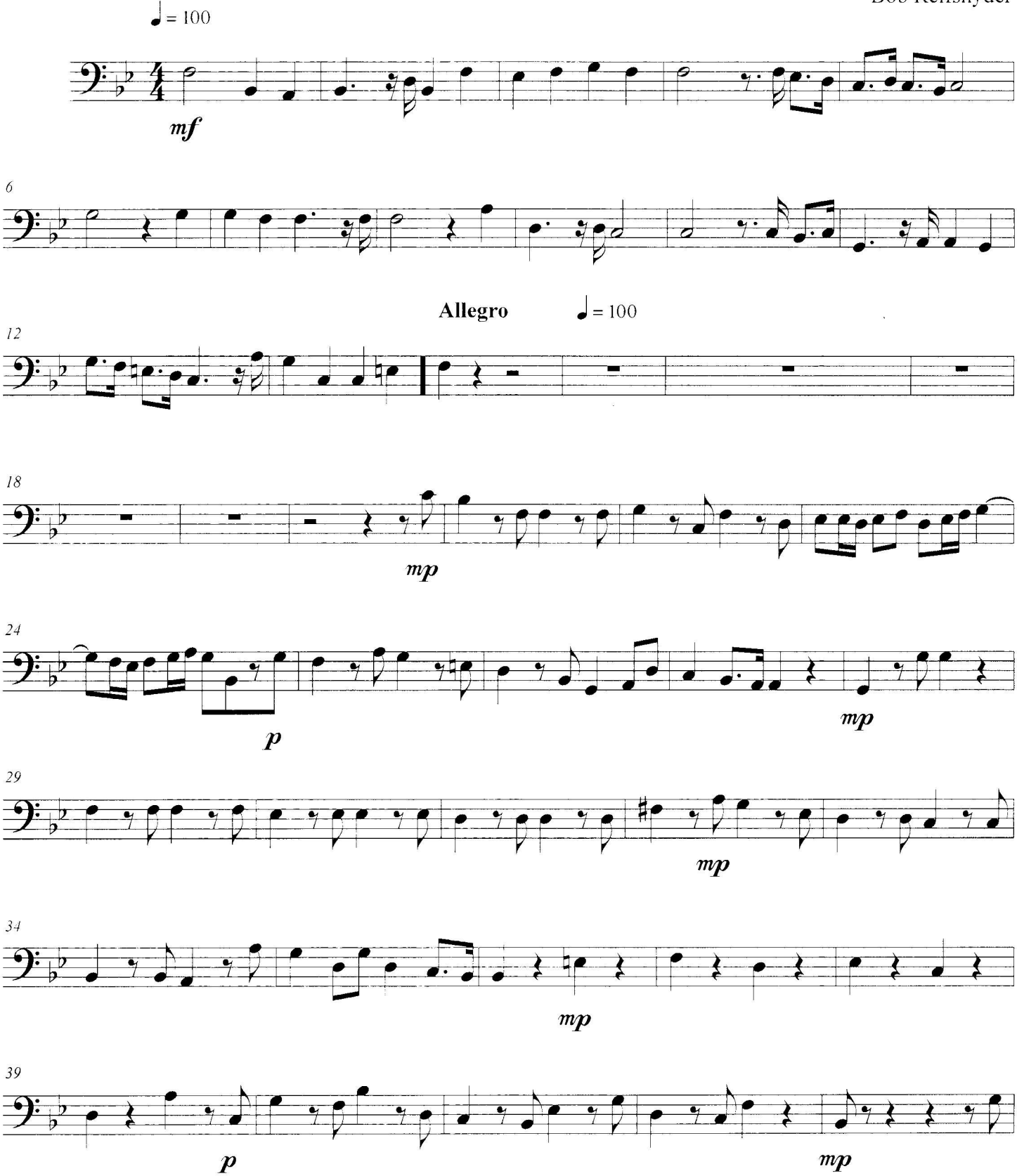
Bass Trombone

Overture to Rinaldo

HWV7

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder



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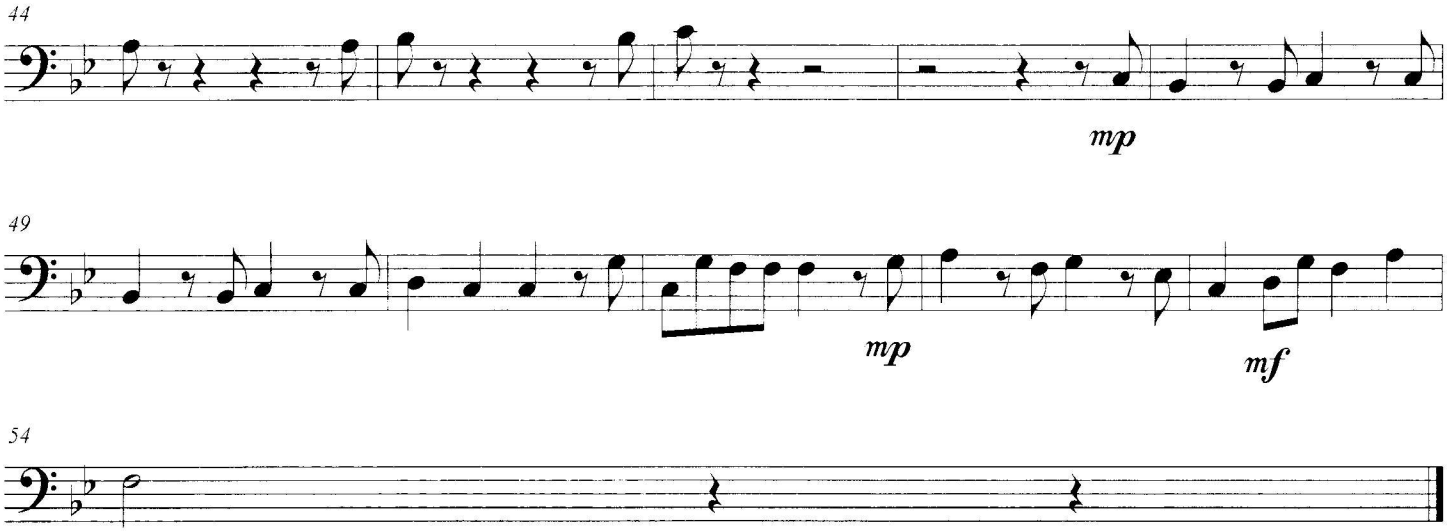

44
mp
49
mp
mf
54

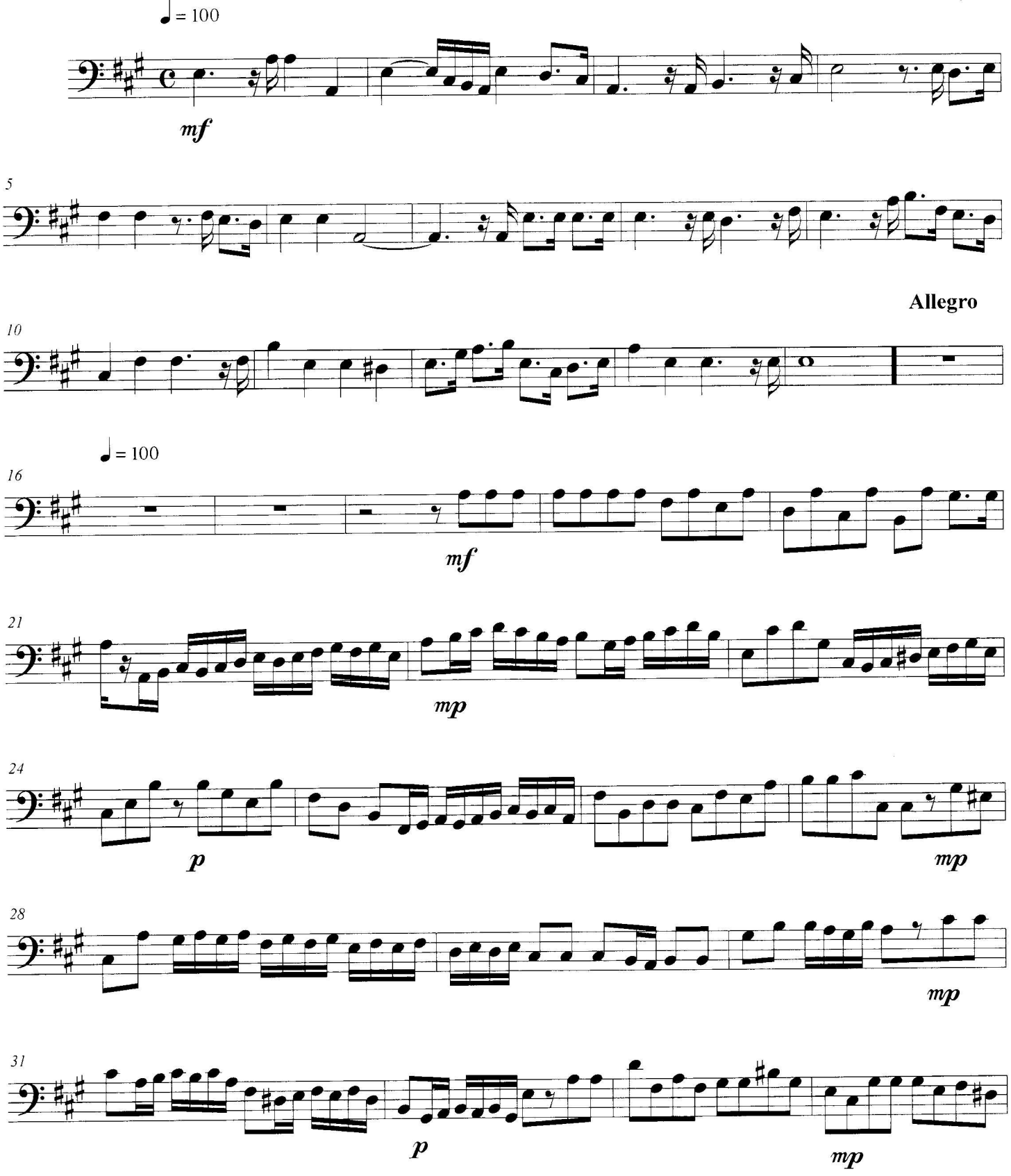
Bass Trombone

Overture to Julius Caesar

HWV17

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder



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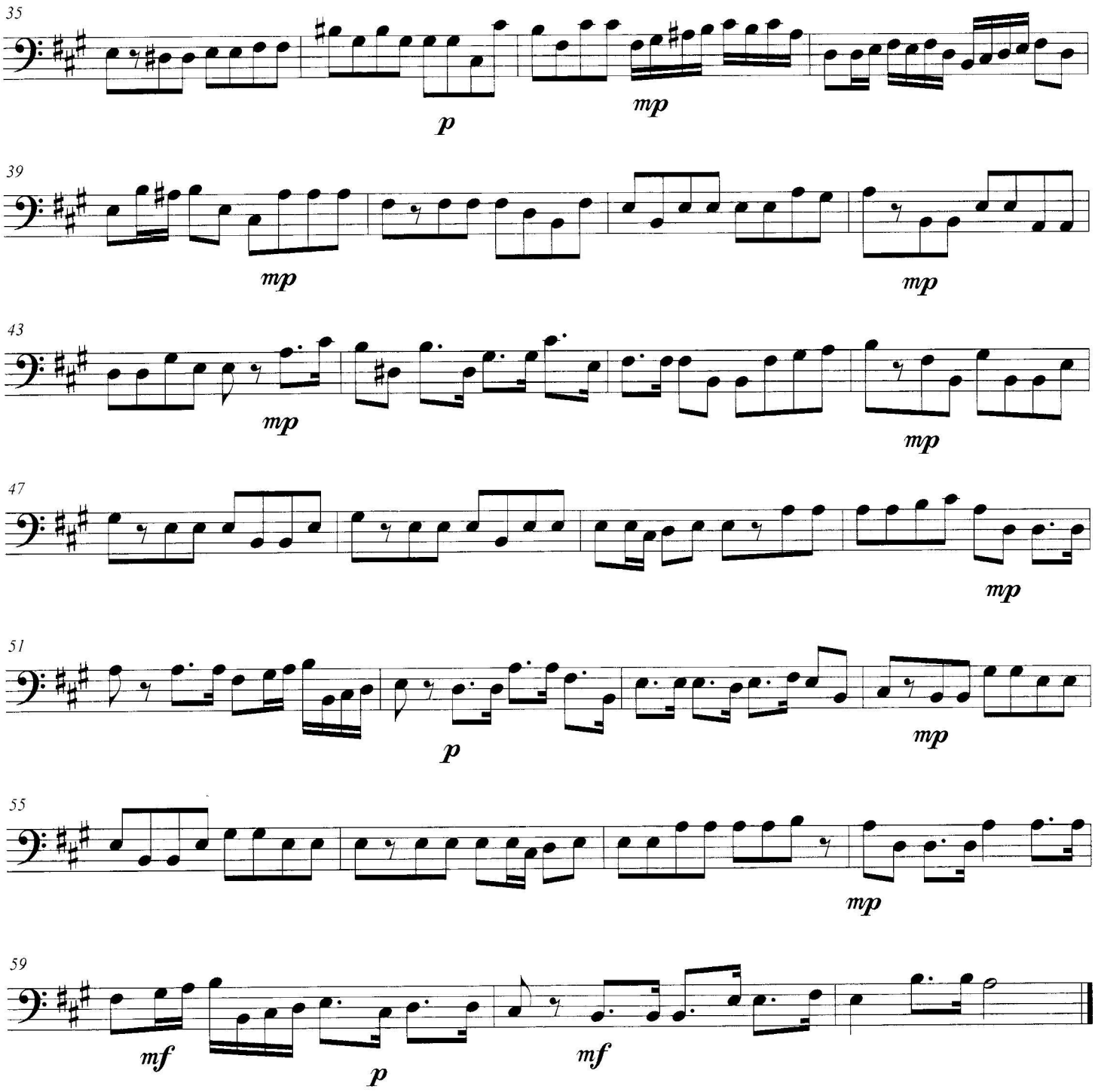

35
p
mp
39
mp
mp
43
mp
mp
47
mp
51
p
mp
55
mp
59
mf
p
mf

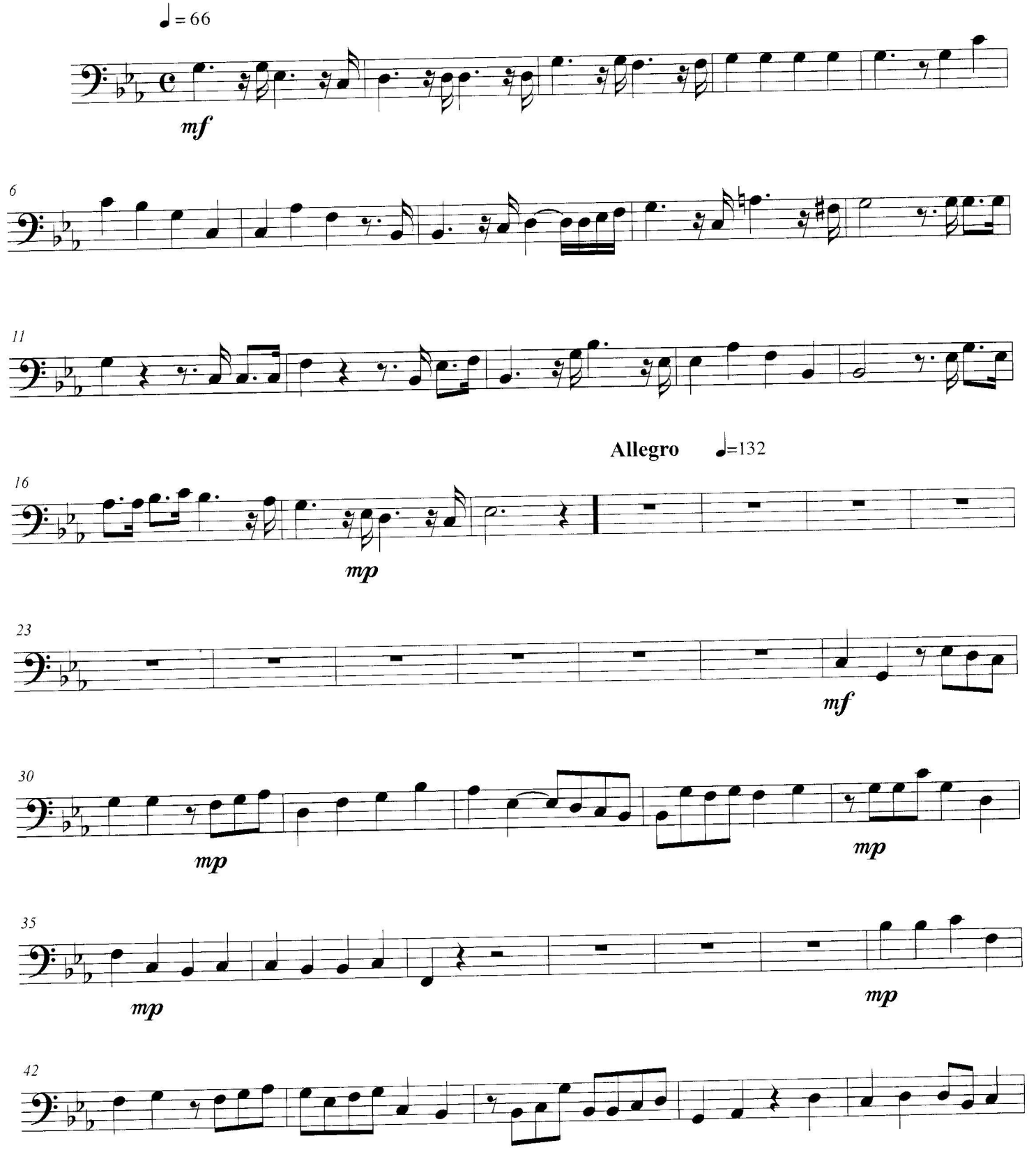
Bass Trombone

Overture from "Tamerlano"

HWV18

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder



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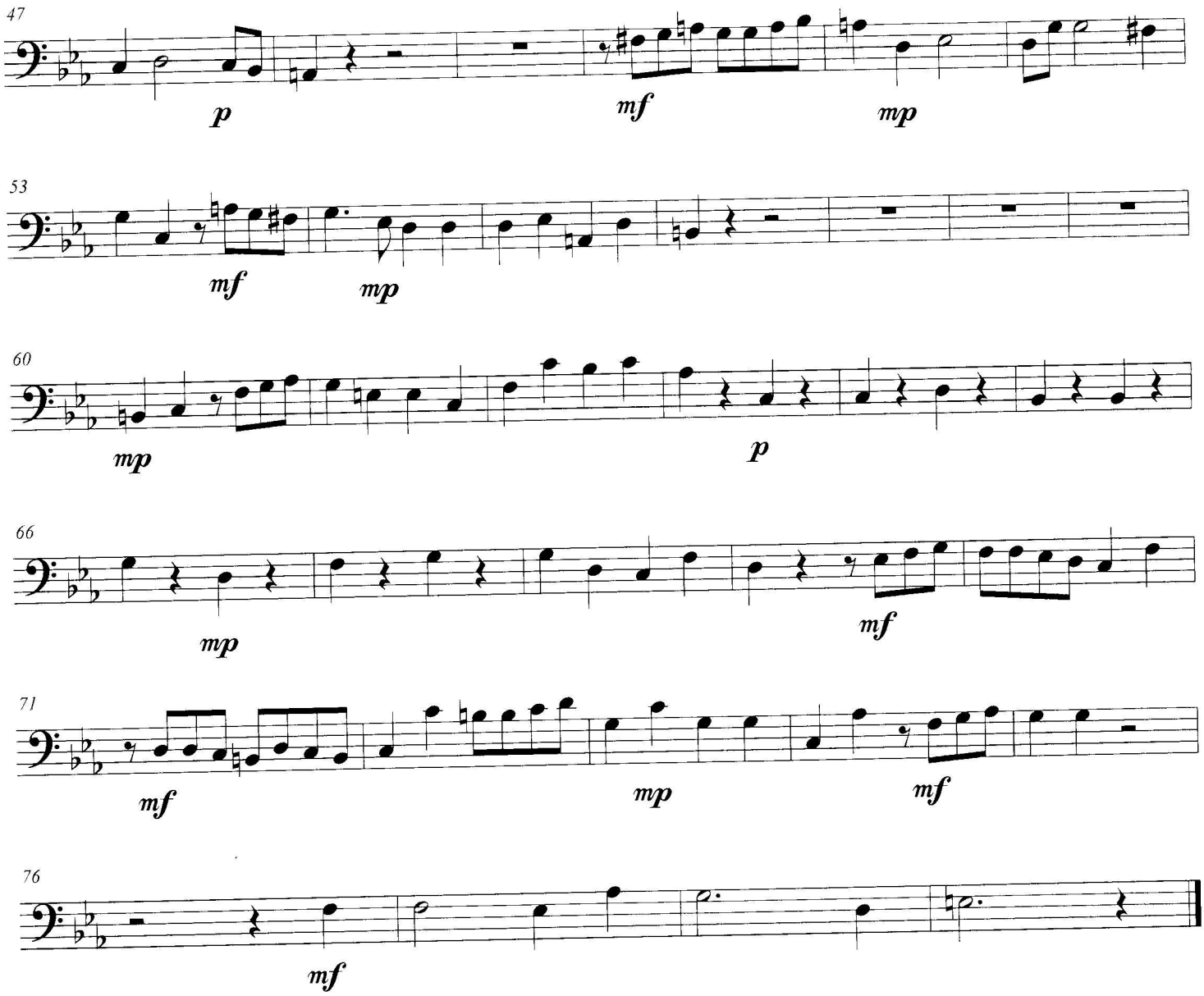

47
p
mf
mp
53
mf
mp
60
mp
p
66
mp
mf
71
mf
mp
mf
76
mf

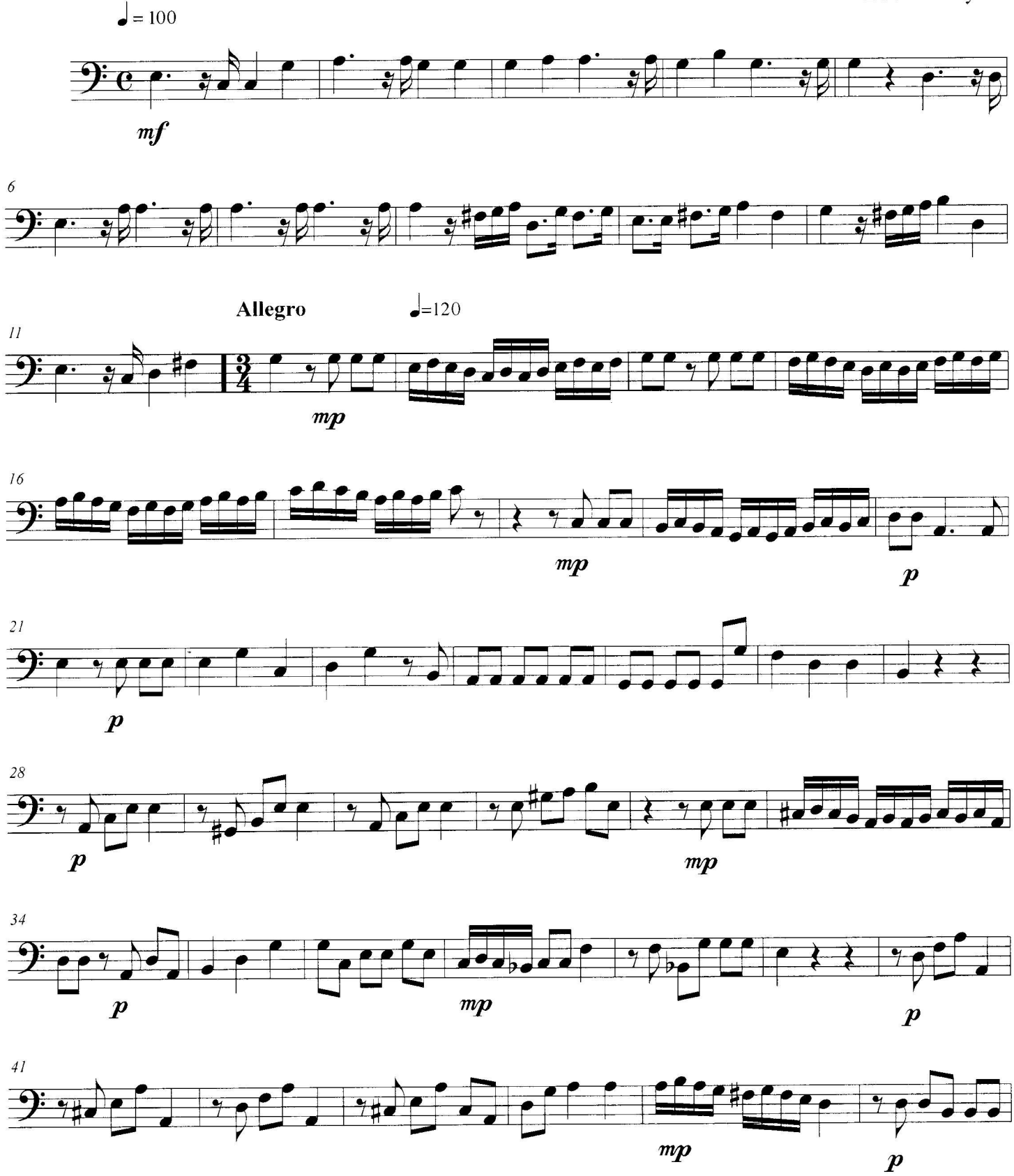
Bass Trombone

Overture from Rodelinda

HWV19

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder



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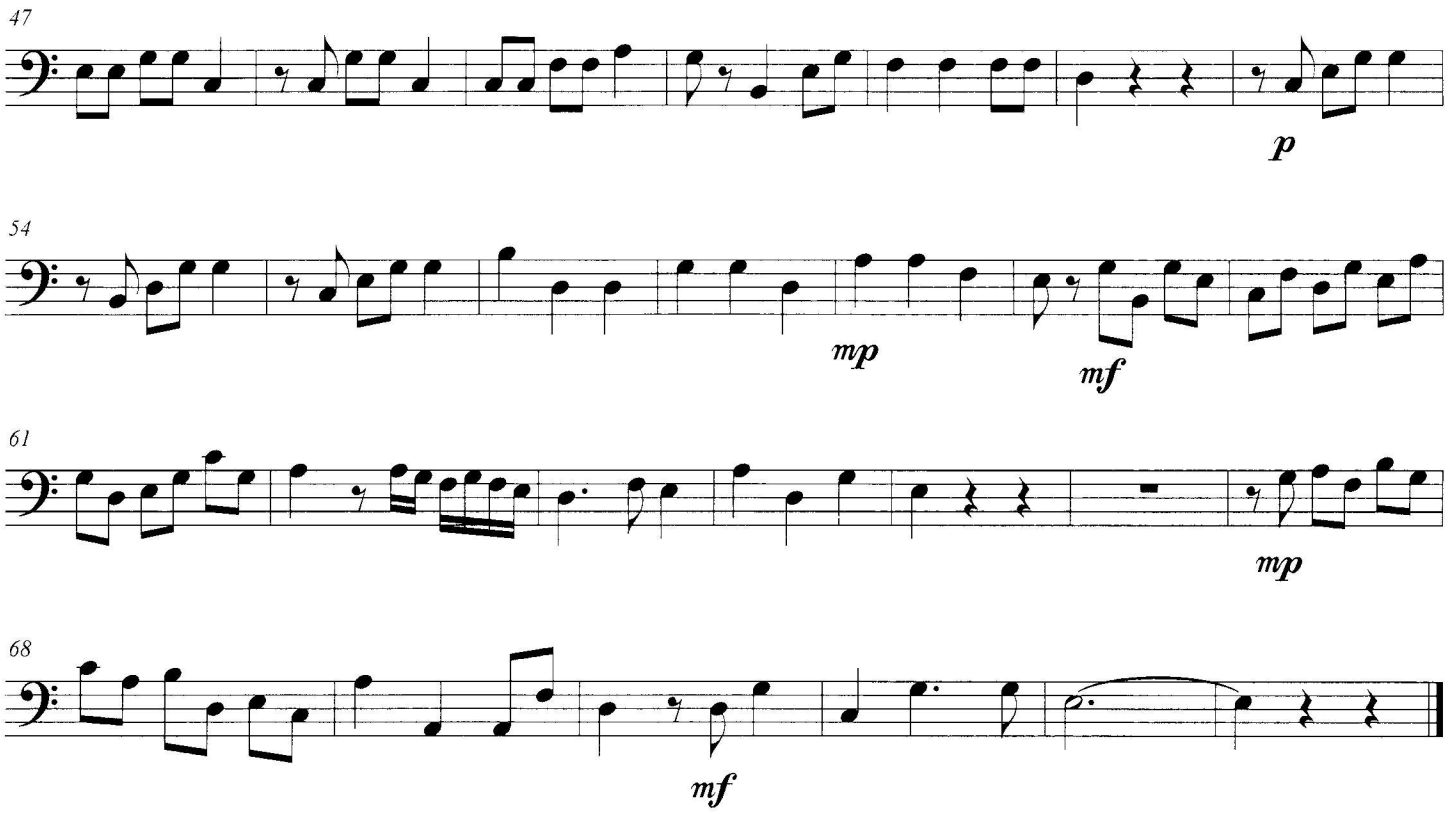

47
p
54
mp
mf
61
mp
68
mf

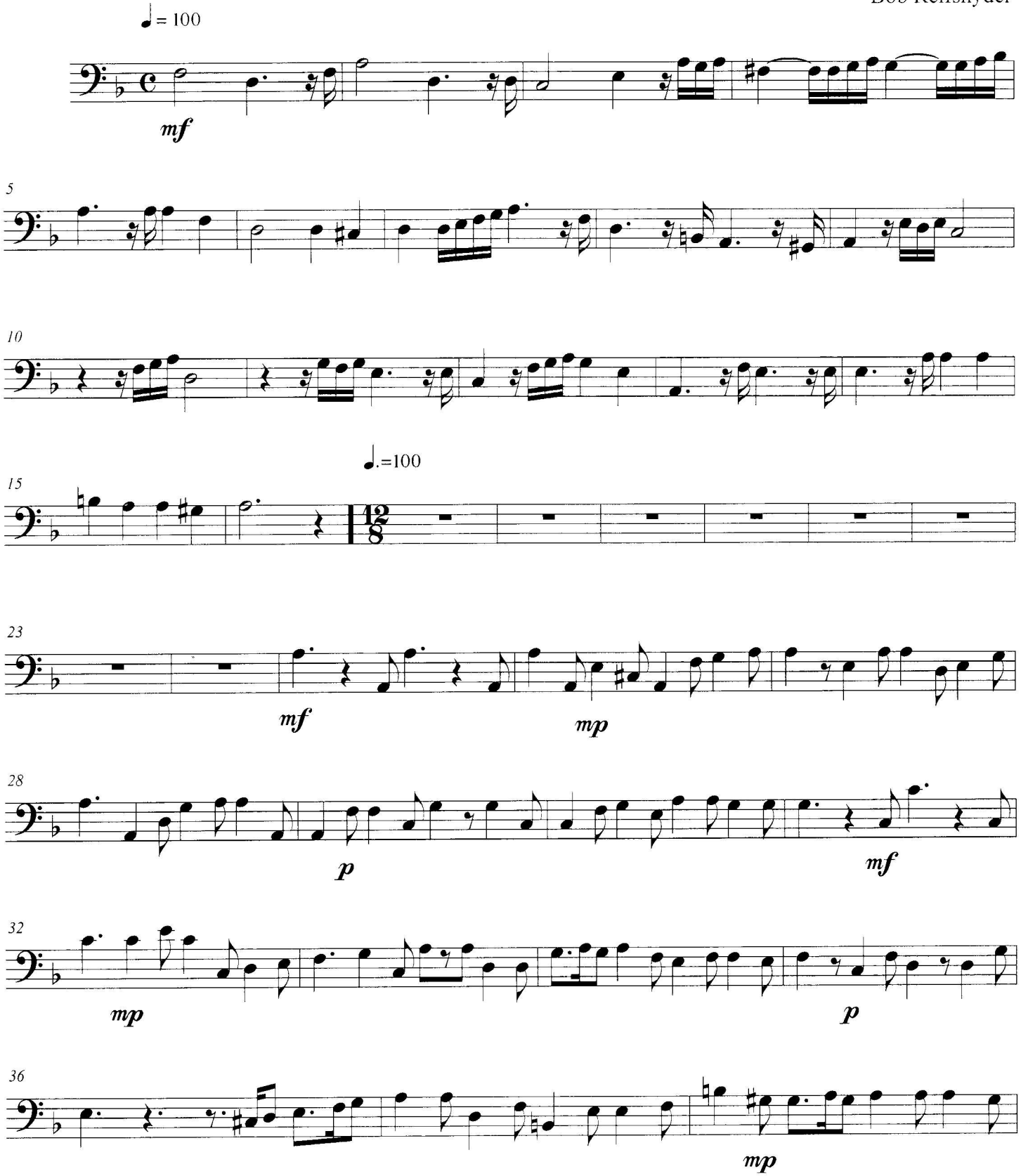
Bass Trombone

Overture from Por, King of India

HWV28

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder



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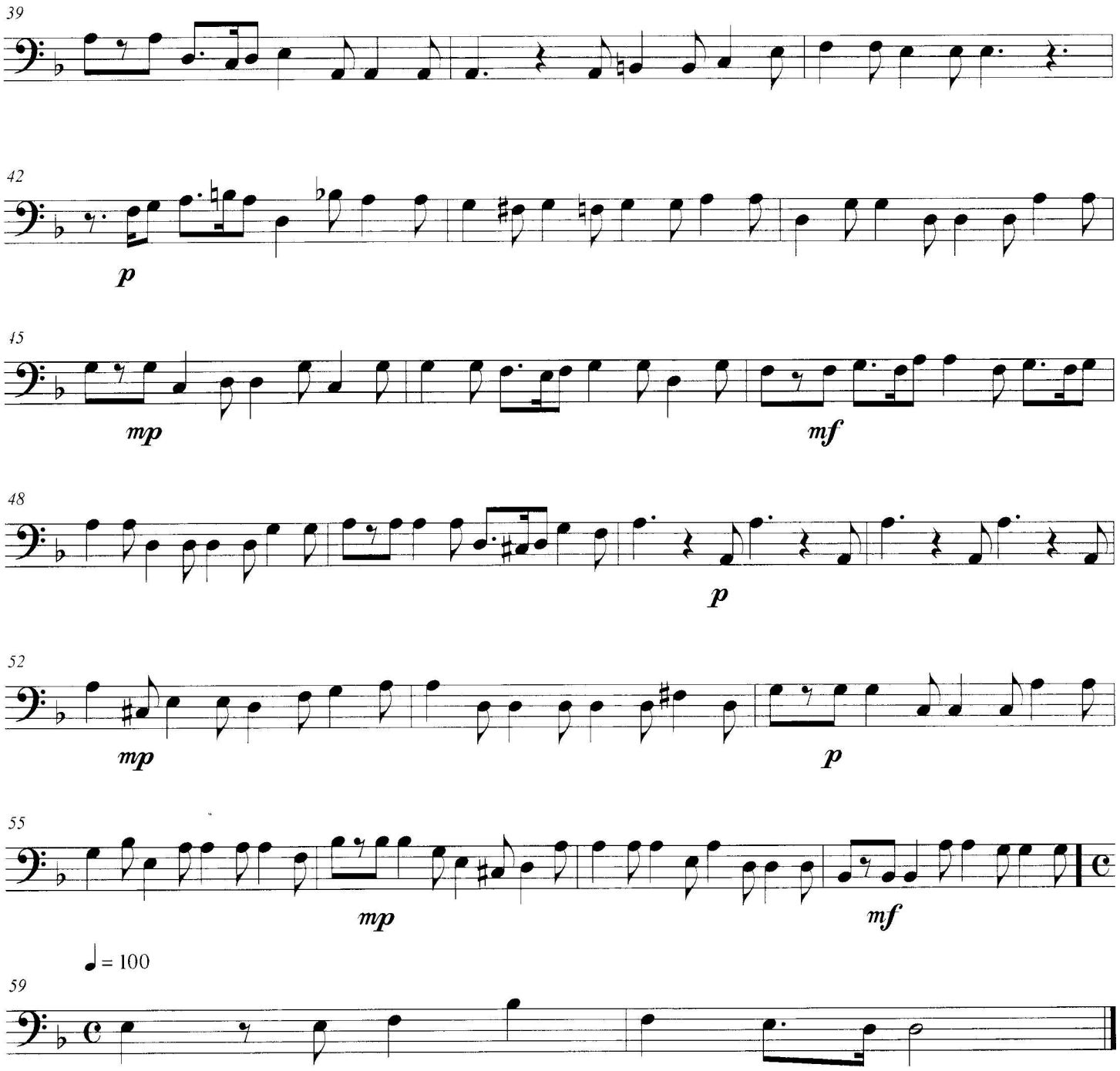

39
42
p
45
mp
mf
48
p
52
mp
p
55
mp
mf
♩ = 100
59

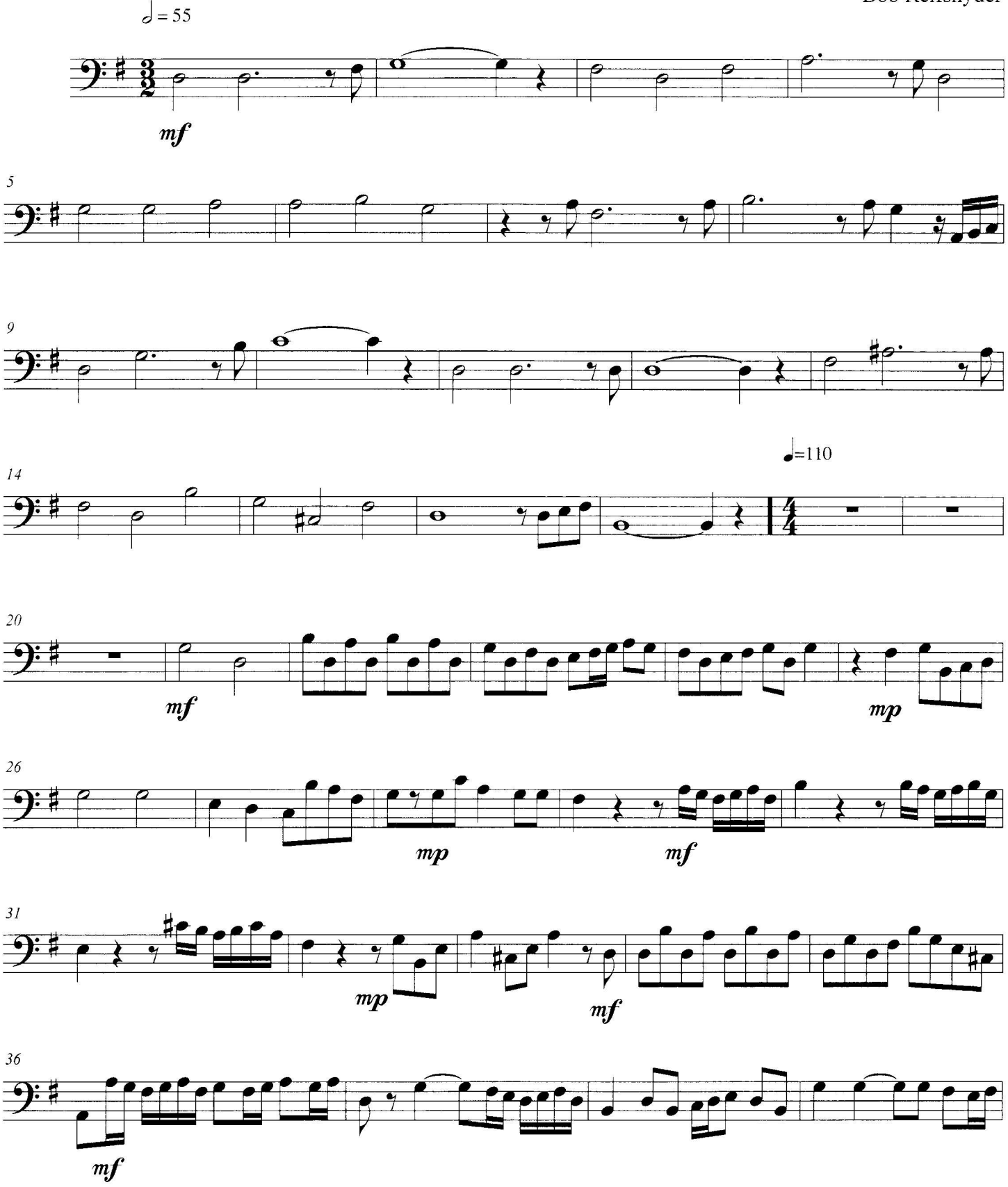
Bass Trombone

Overture to Sosarme

HWV30

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder



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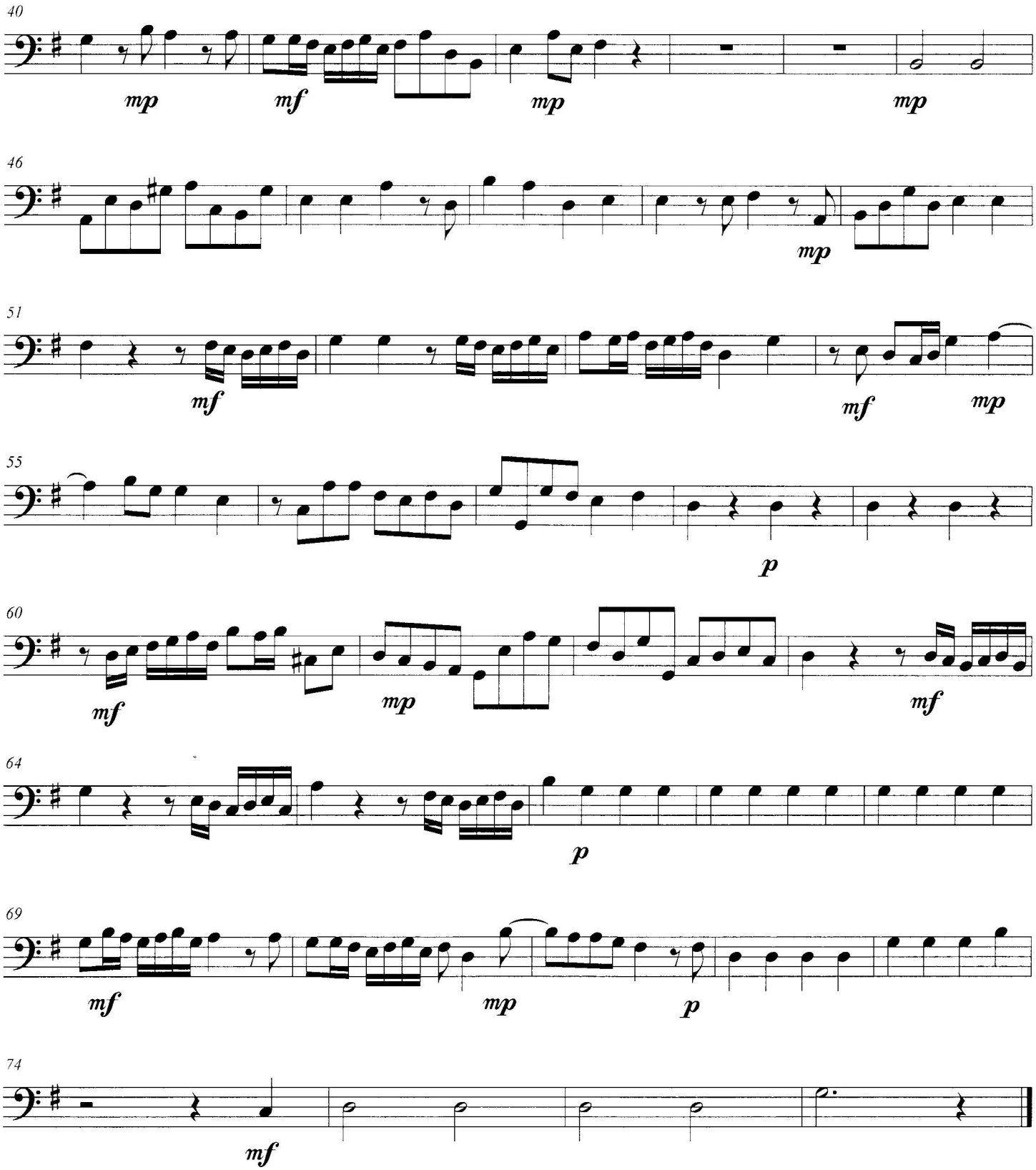

40
mp
mf
mp
mp
46
mp
51
mf
mf
mp
55
p
60
mf
mp
mf
64
p
69
mf
mp
p
74
mf

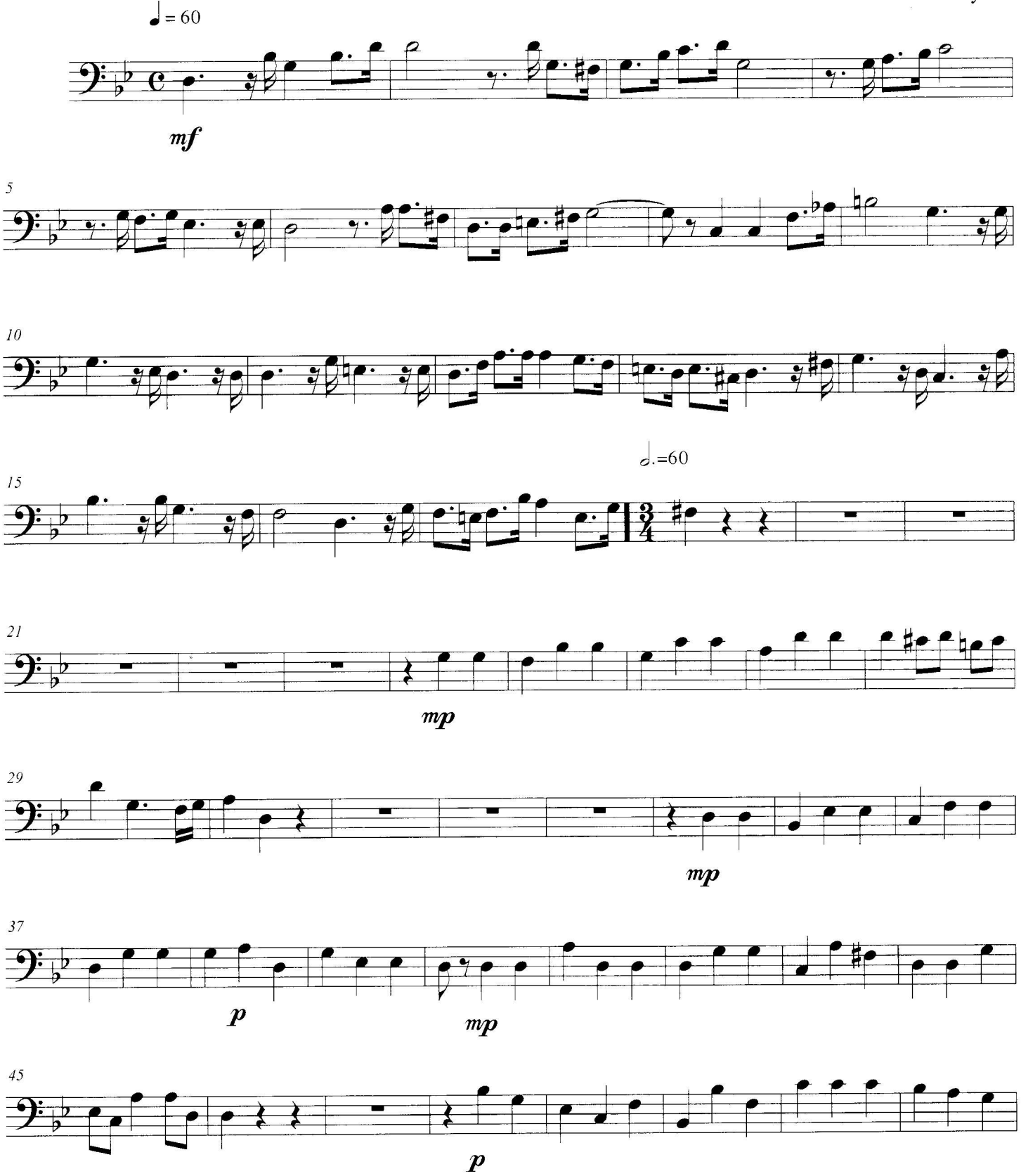
Bass Trombone

Overture to Ariodante

HWV33

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder



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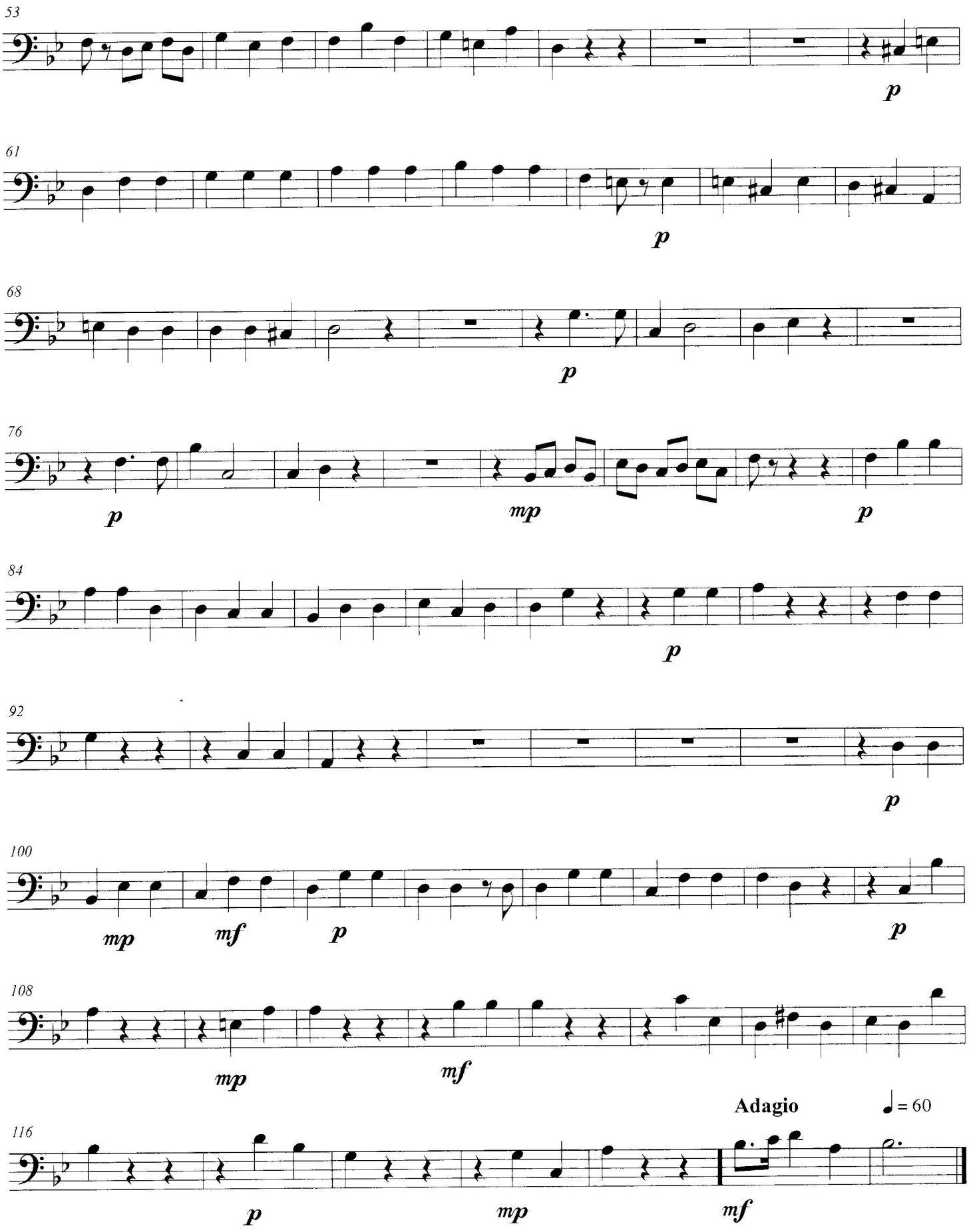

53
p
61
p
68
p
76
p
mp
p
84
p
92
p
100
mp
mf
p
p
108
mp
mf
Adagio
♩ = 60
116
p
mp
mf

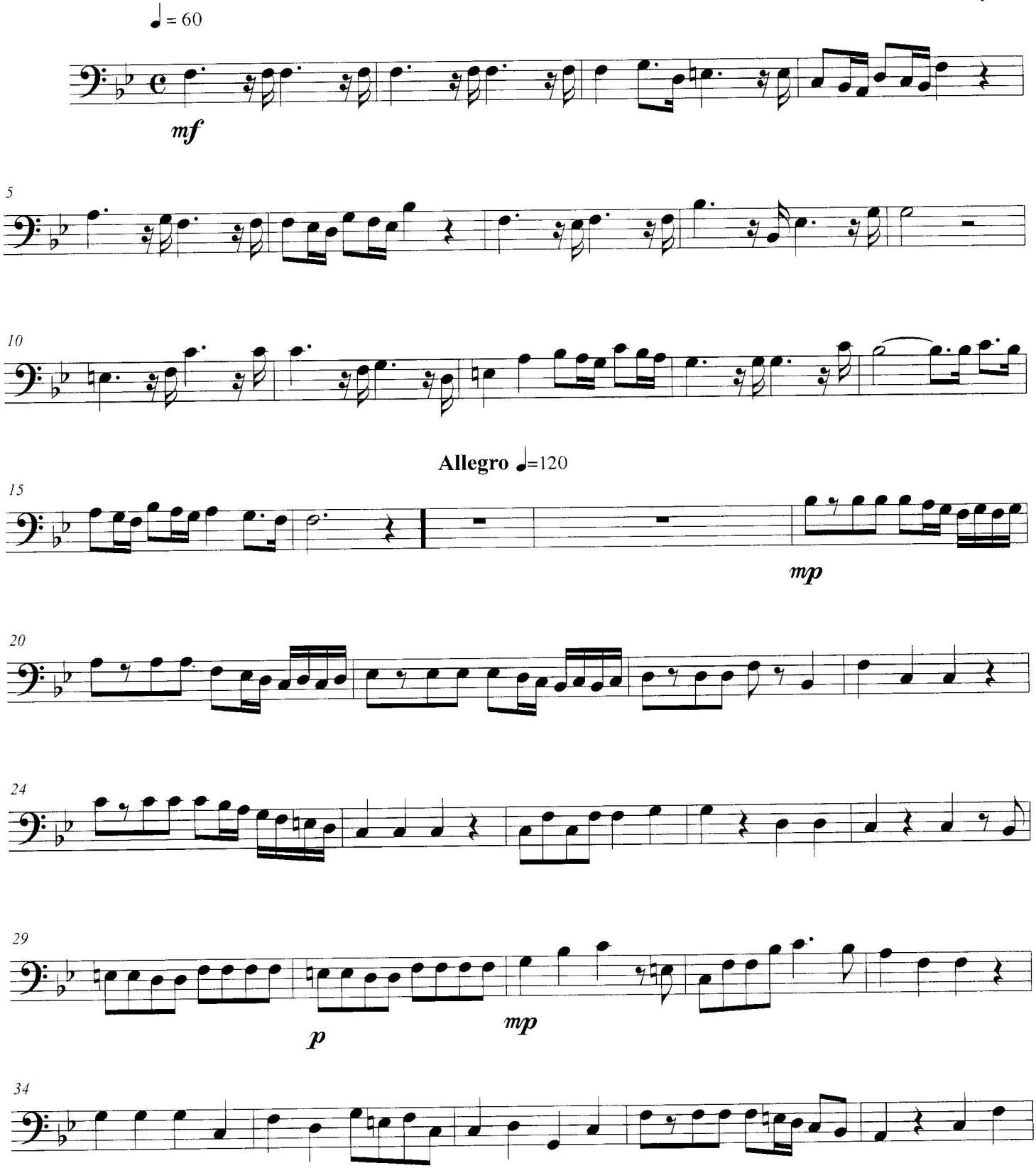
Bass Trombone

Overture from Alcina

HWV34

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder



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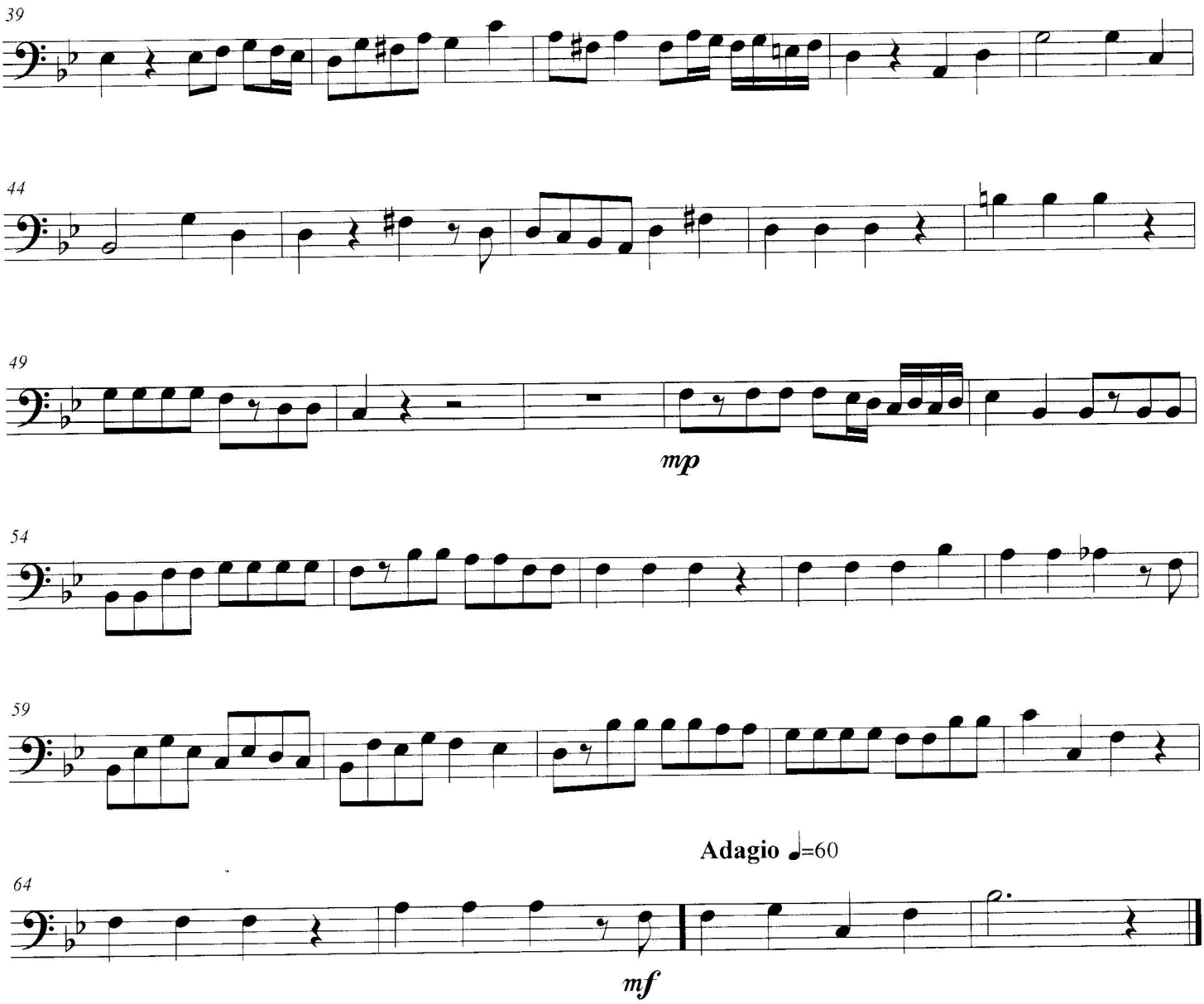

39
44
49
mp
54
59
Adagio ♩=60
64
mf

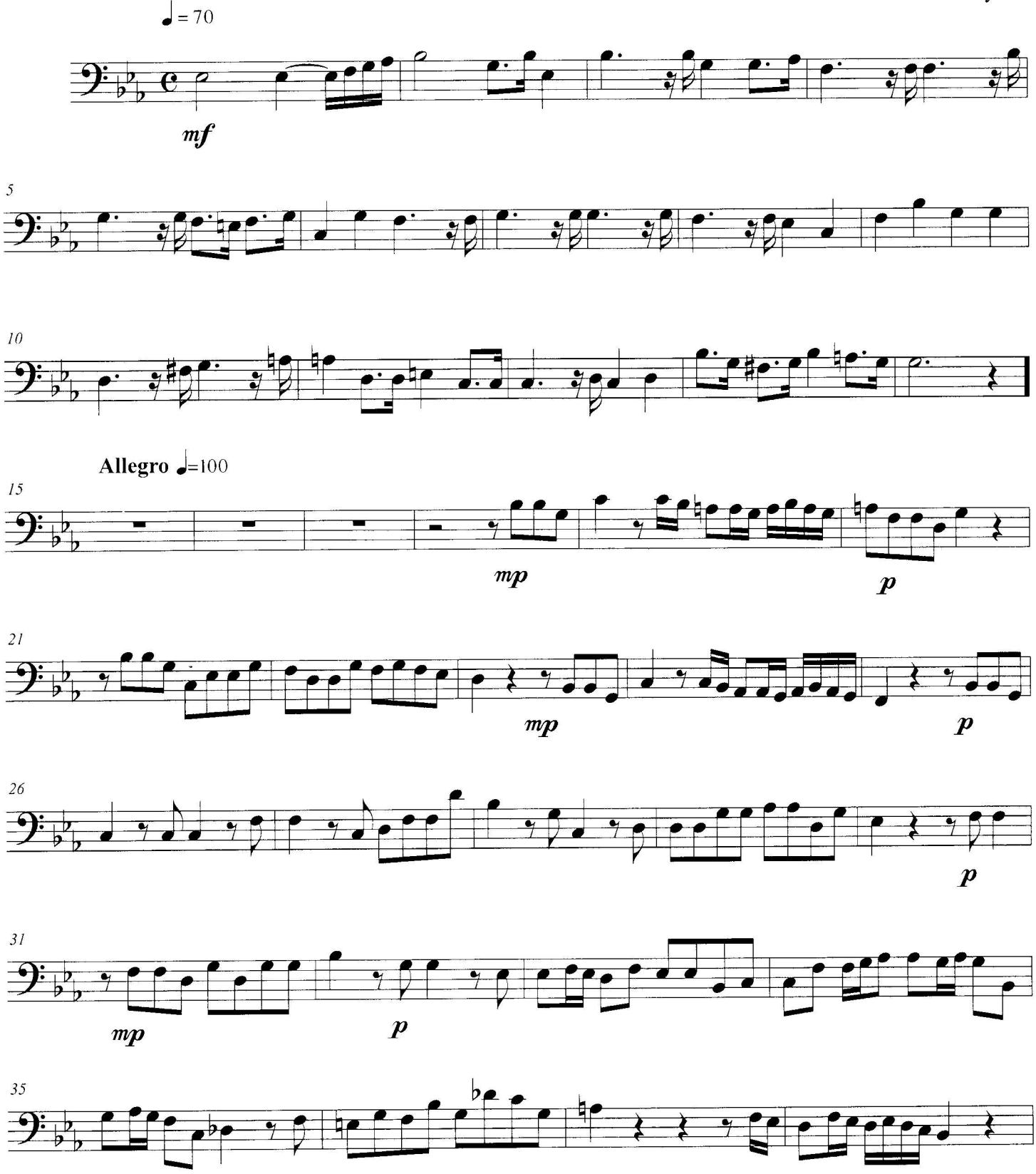
Bass Trombone

Overture to Berenice

HWV38

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder



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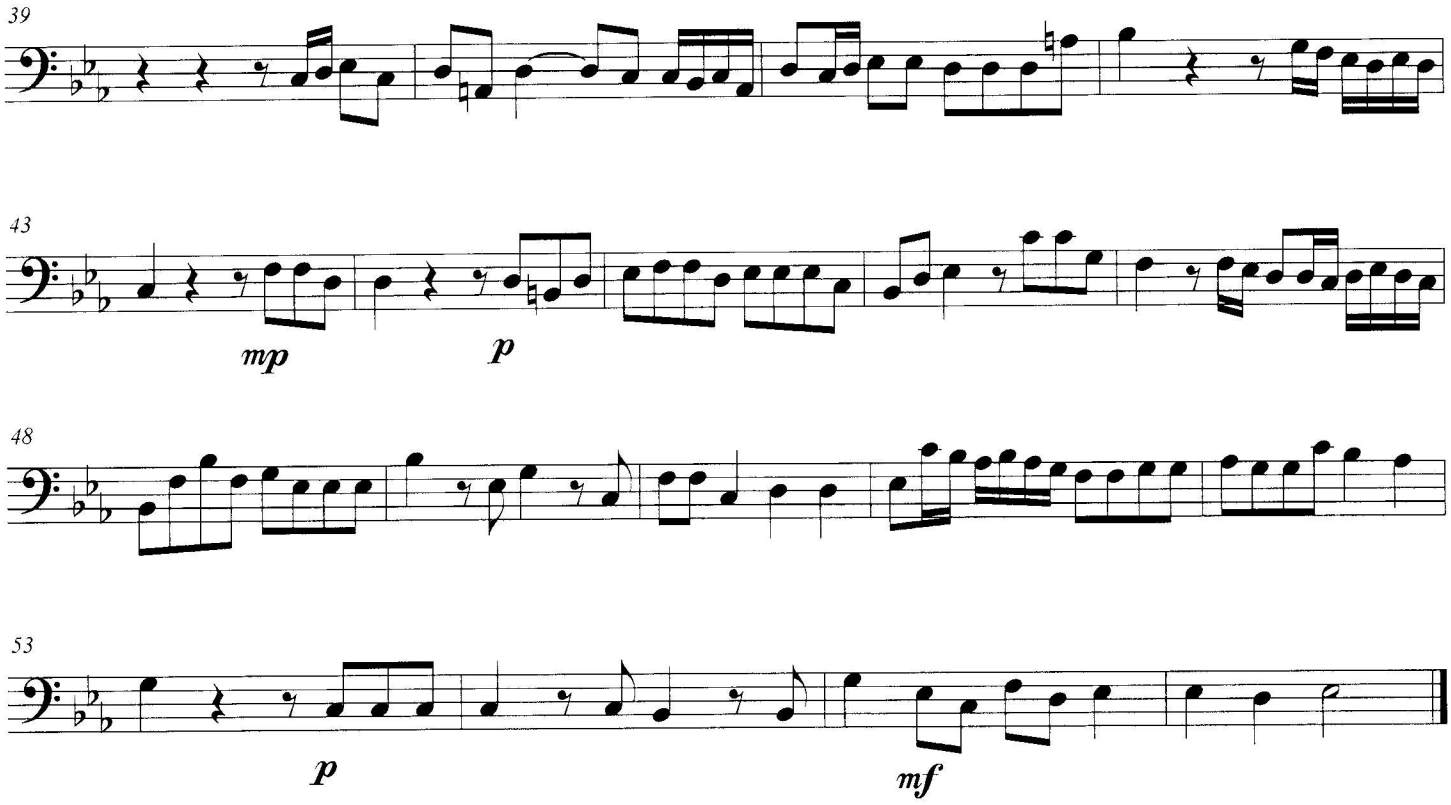

39
43
mp
p
48
53
p
mf

Bass Trombone

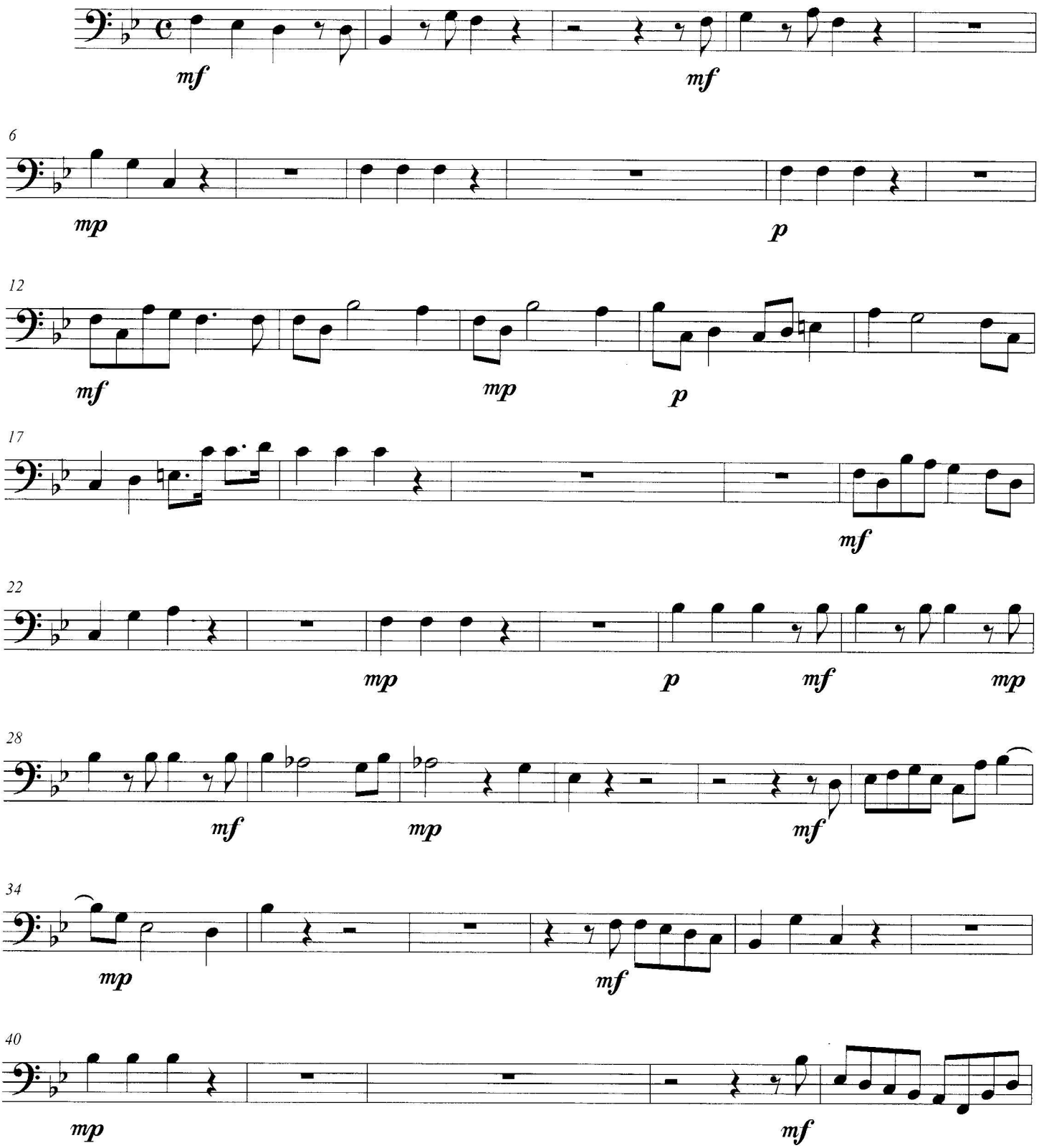
Overture to Saul

HWV53

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder

♩ = 132



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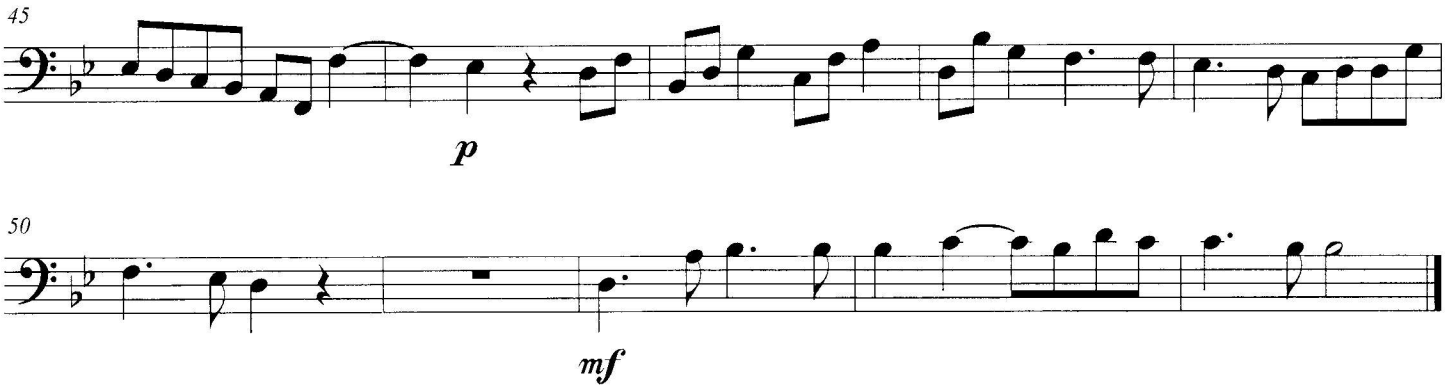

45
p
50
mf

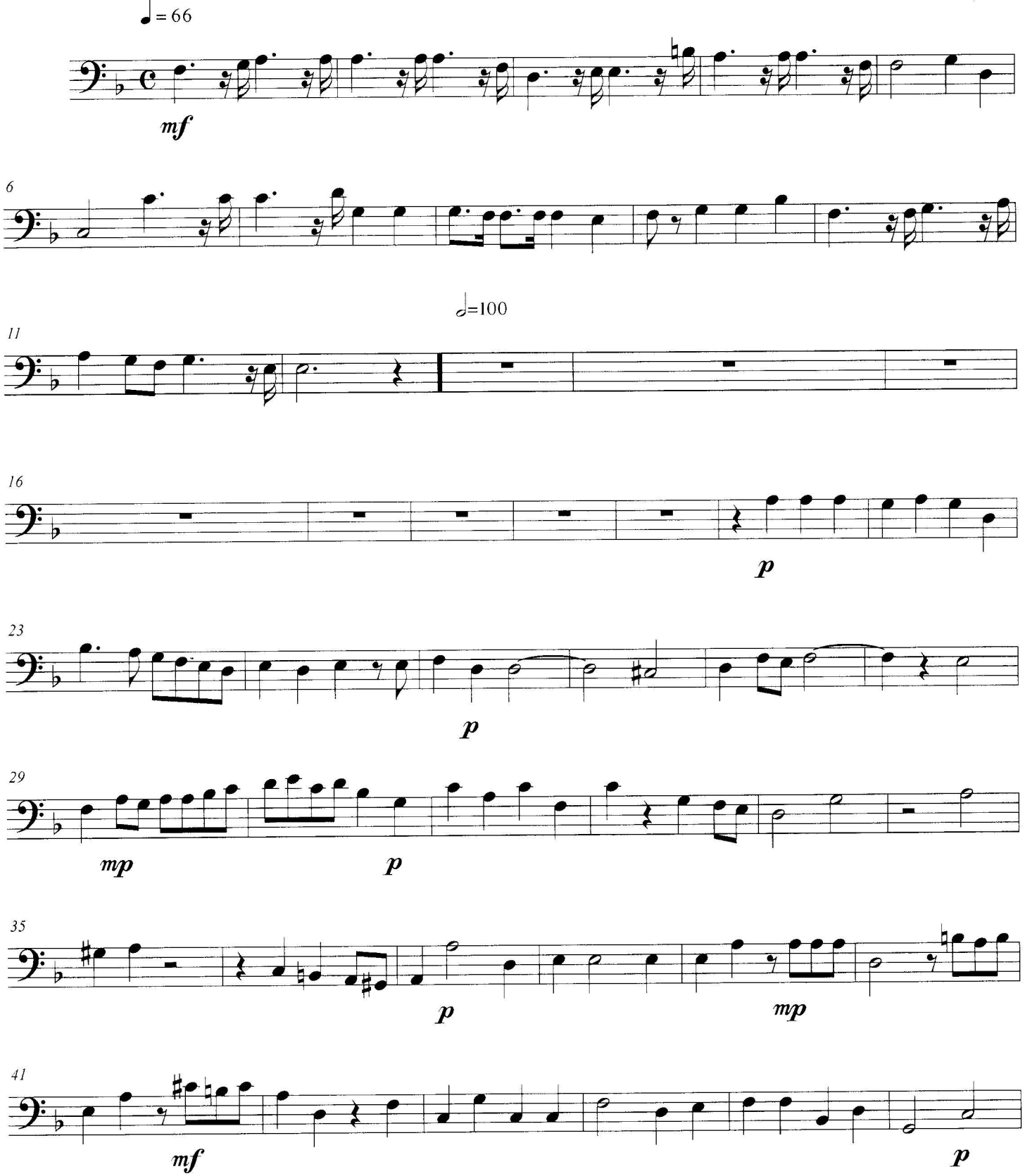
Bass Trombone

Overture to the Messiah

HWV56

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder



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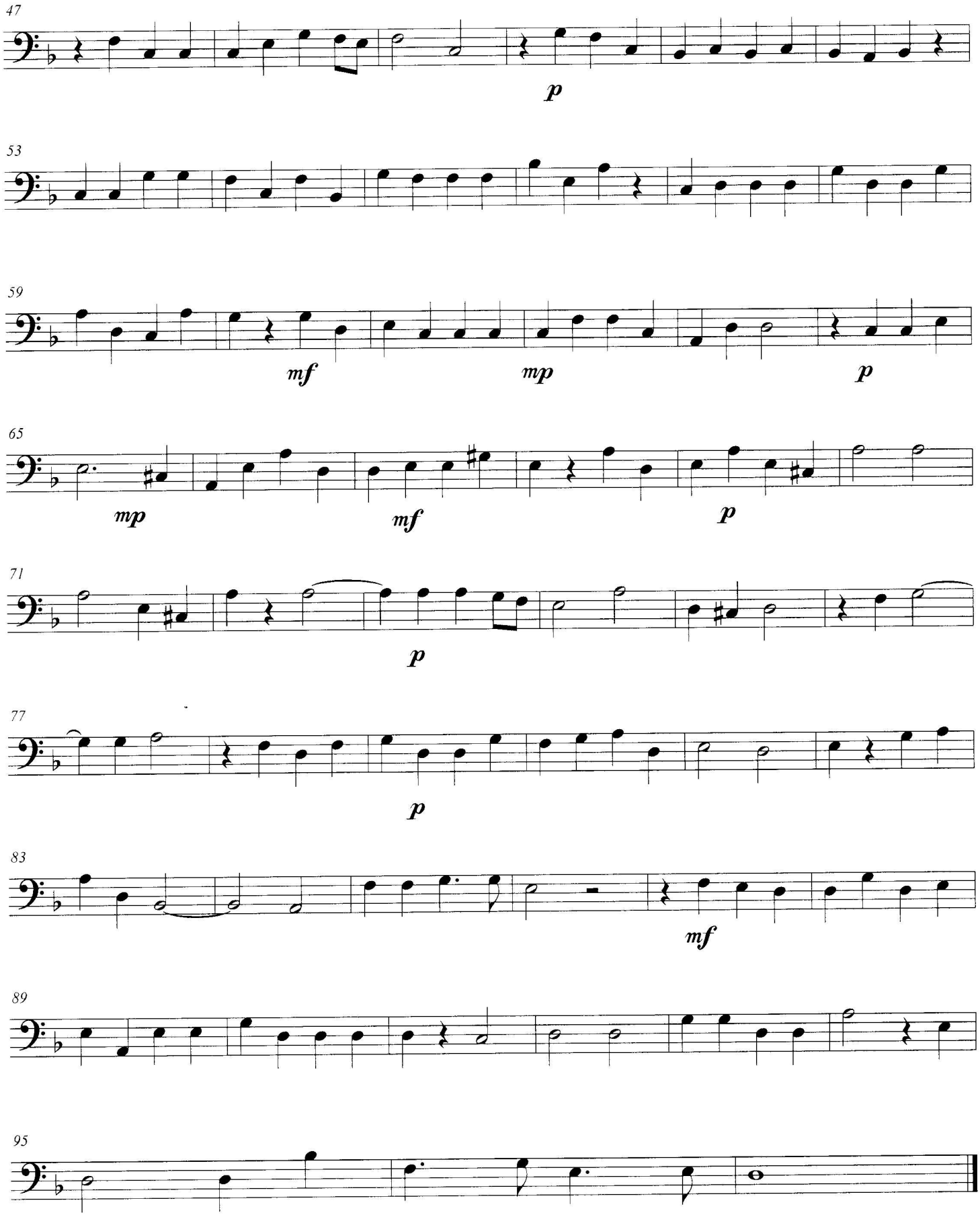

47
p
53
59
mf
mp
p
65
mp
mf
p
71
p
77
p
83
mf
89
95

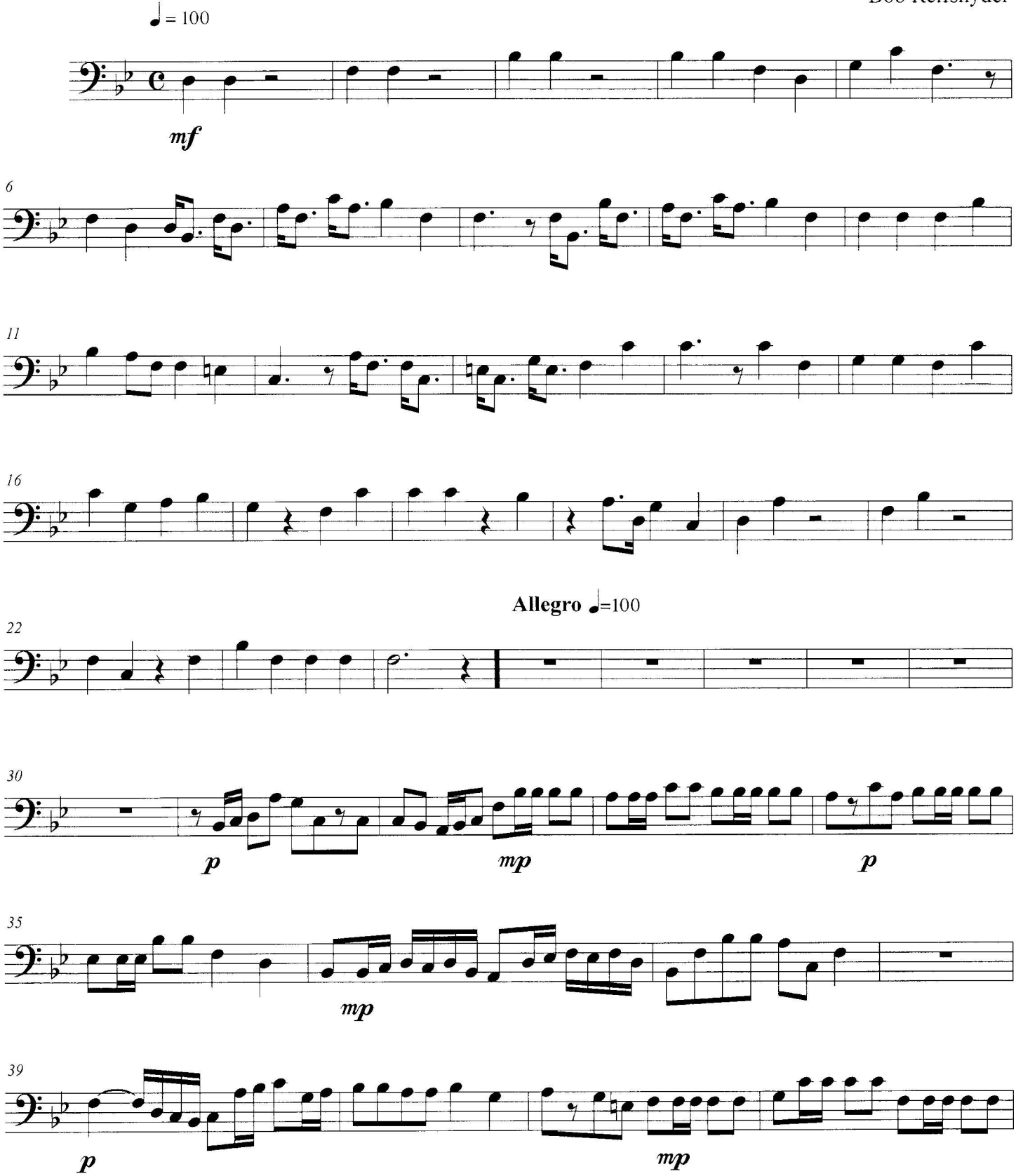
Bass Trombone

Overture from Hercules

HWV60

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder



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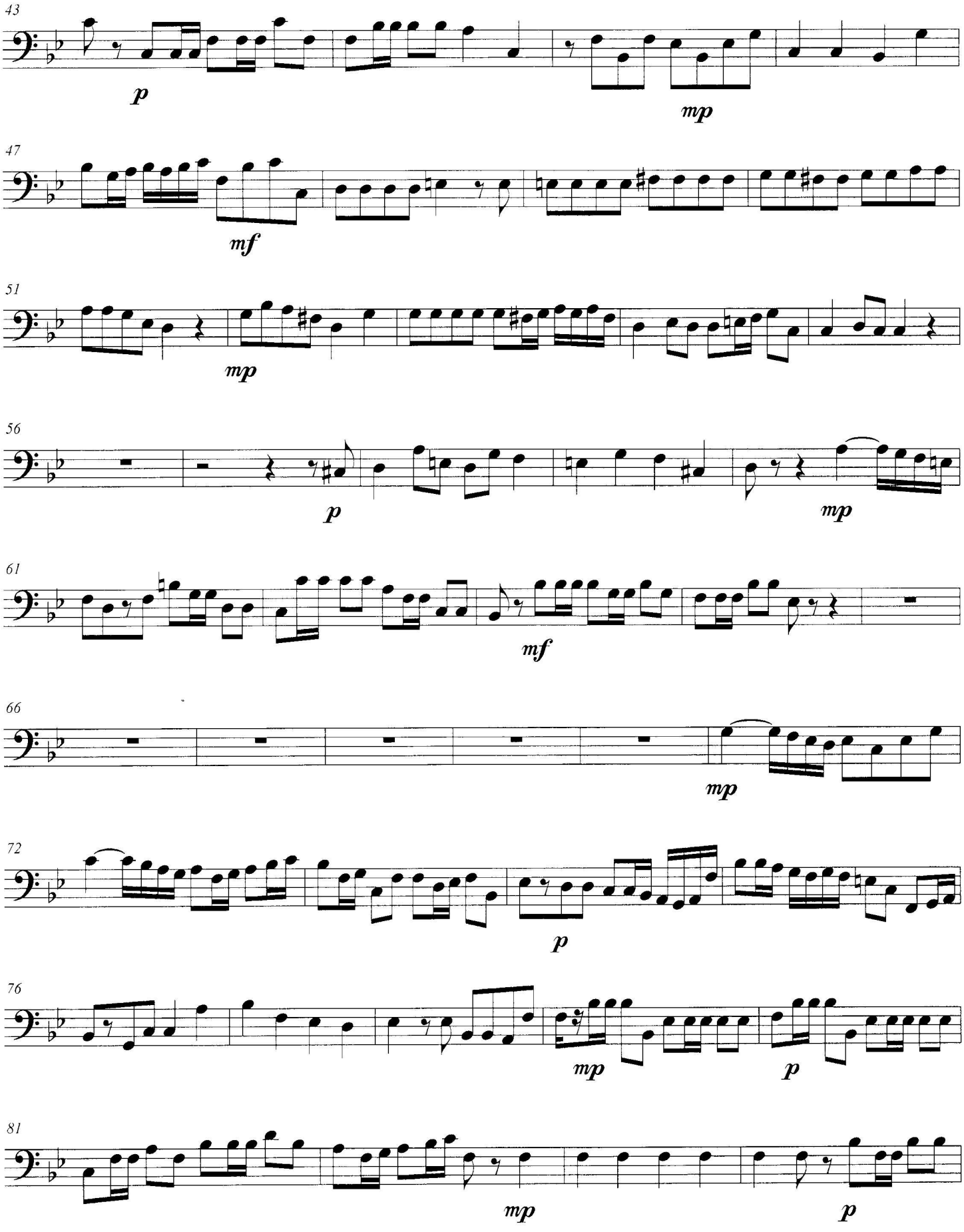
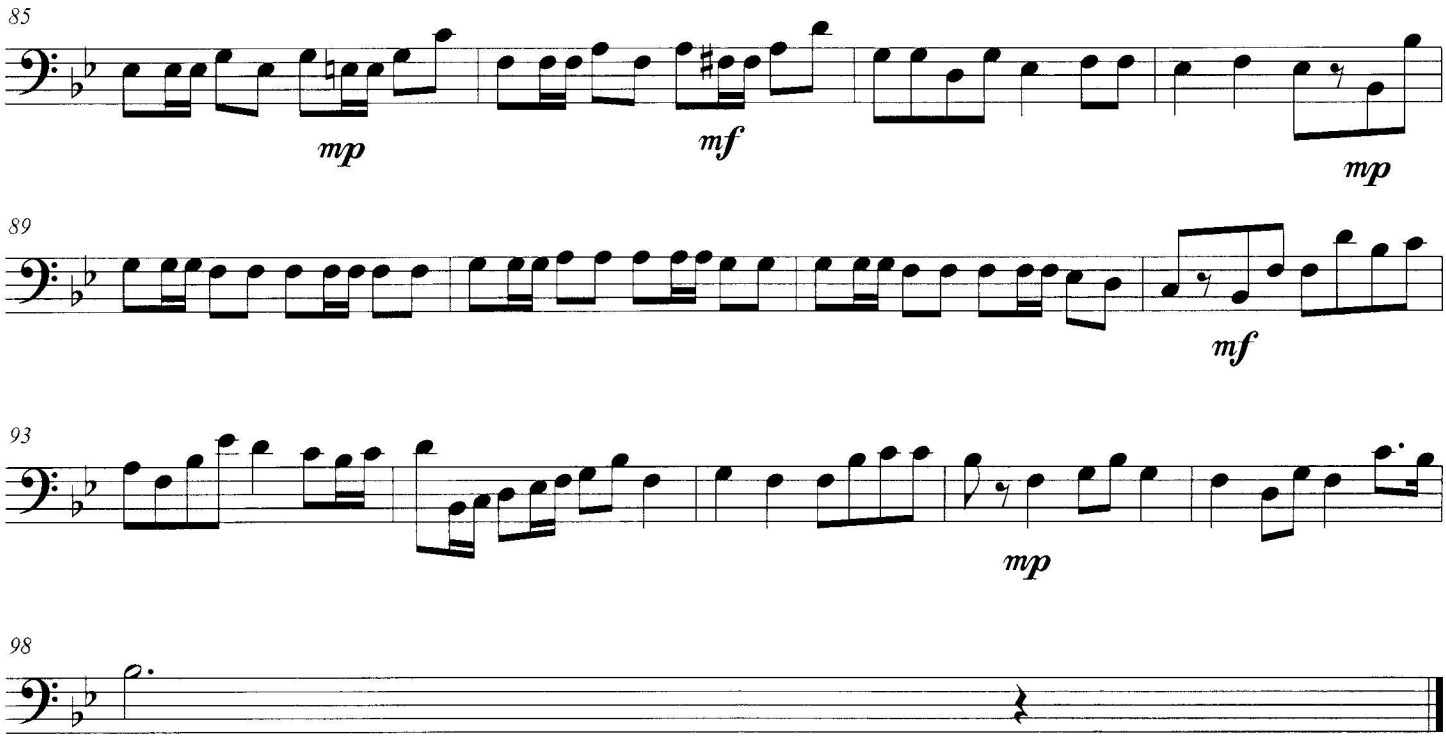

43
p
mp
47
mf
51
mp
56
p
mp
61
mf
66
mp
72
p
76
mp
p
81
mp
p


85
mp
mf
mp
89
mf
93
mp
98

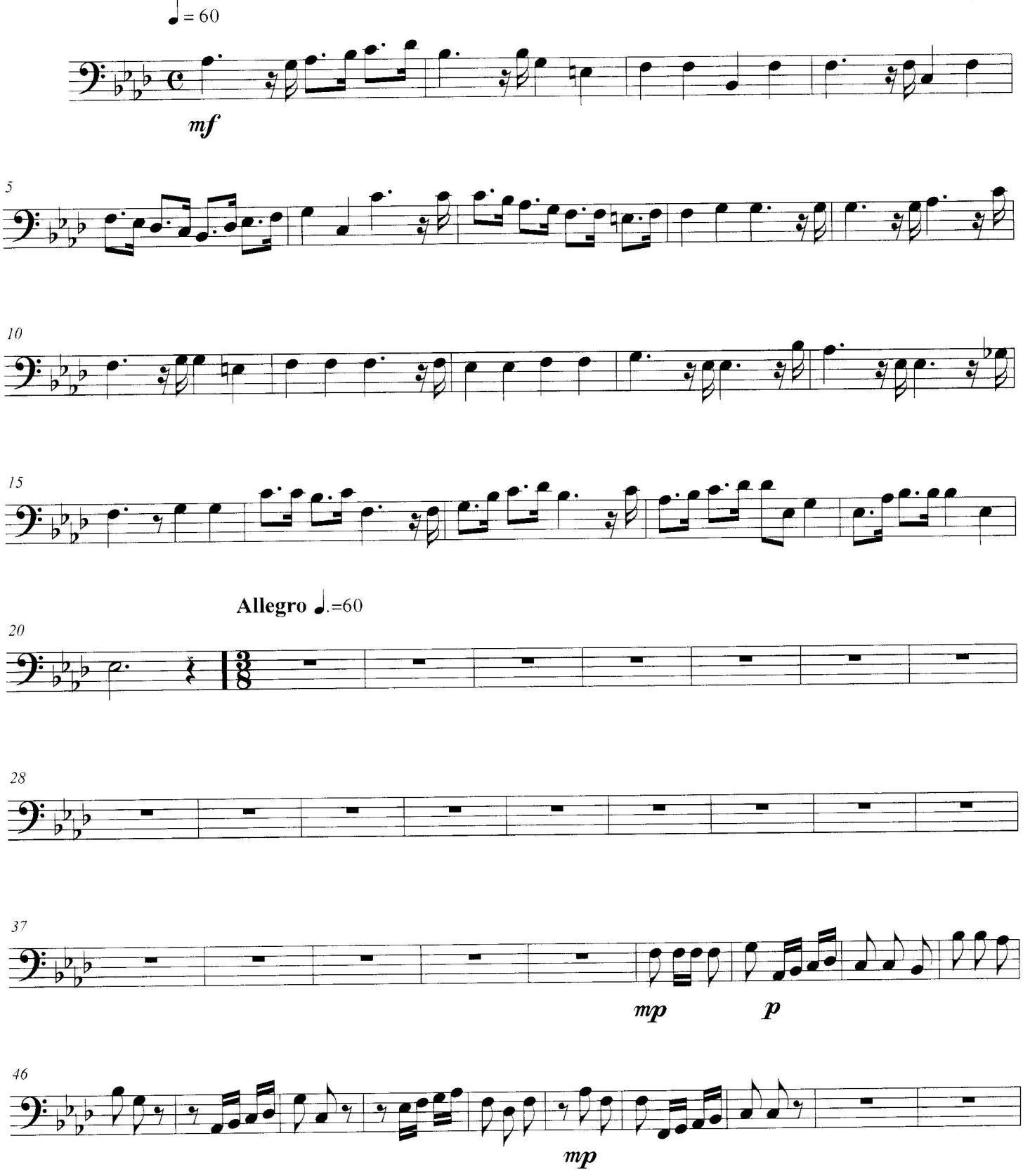
Bass Trombone

Overture to Judas Maccabeus

HWV63

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder



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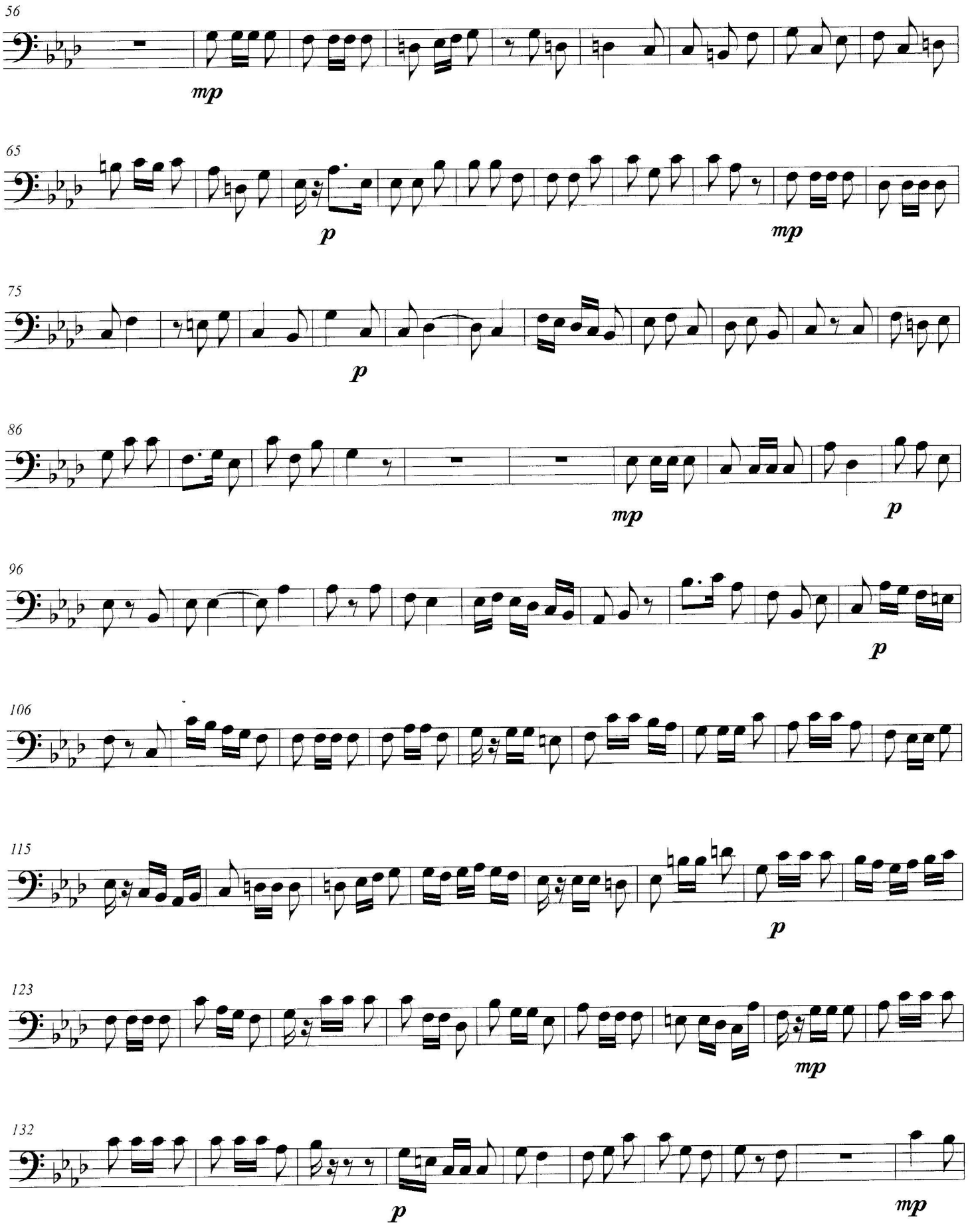
56
mp
65
p
mp
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p
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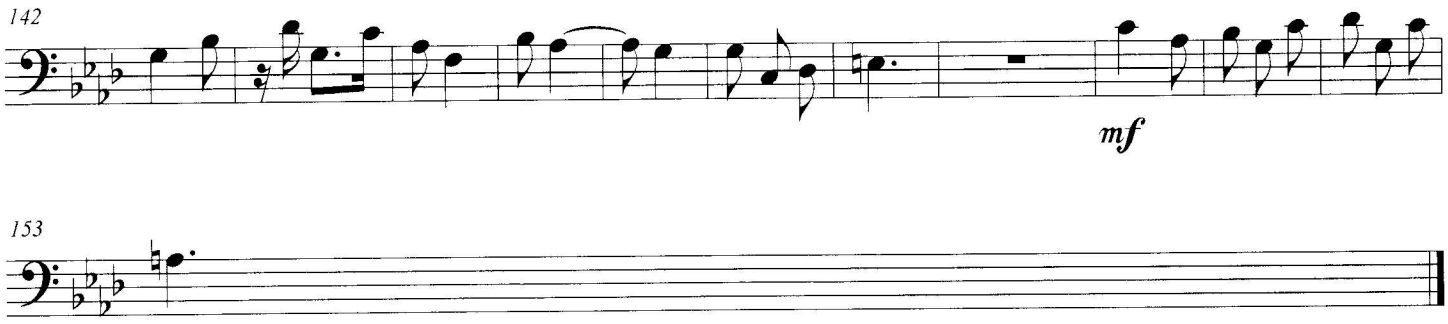
mp


142
mf

153

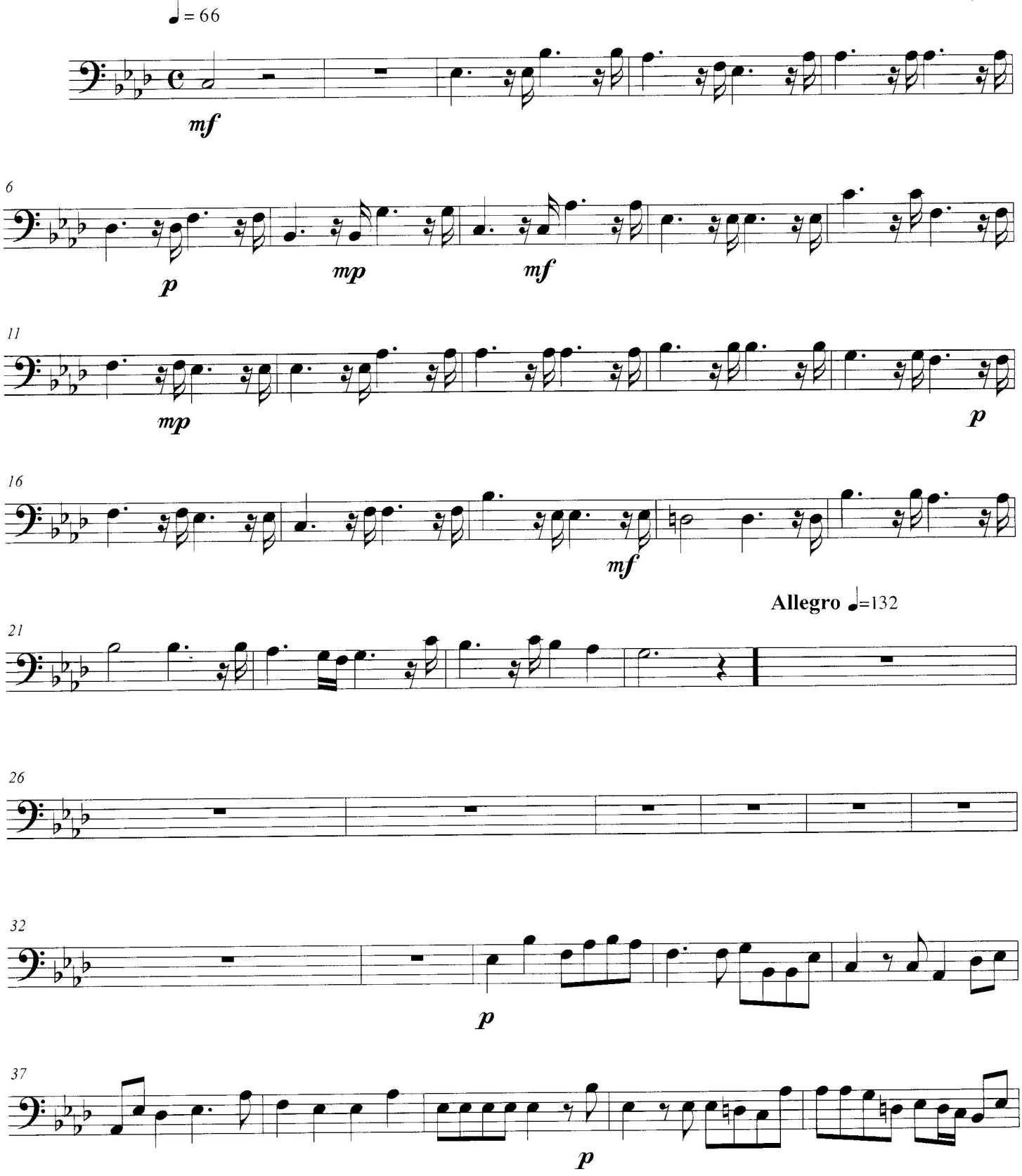
Bass Trombone

Overture to Solomon

HWV67

Handel

Bob Reifsnyder



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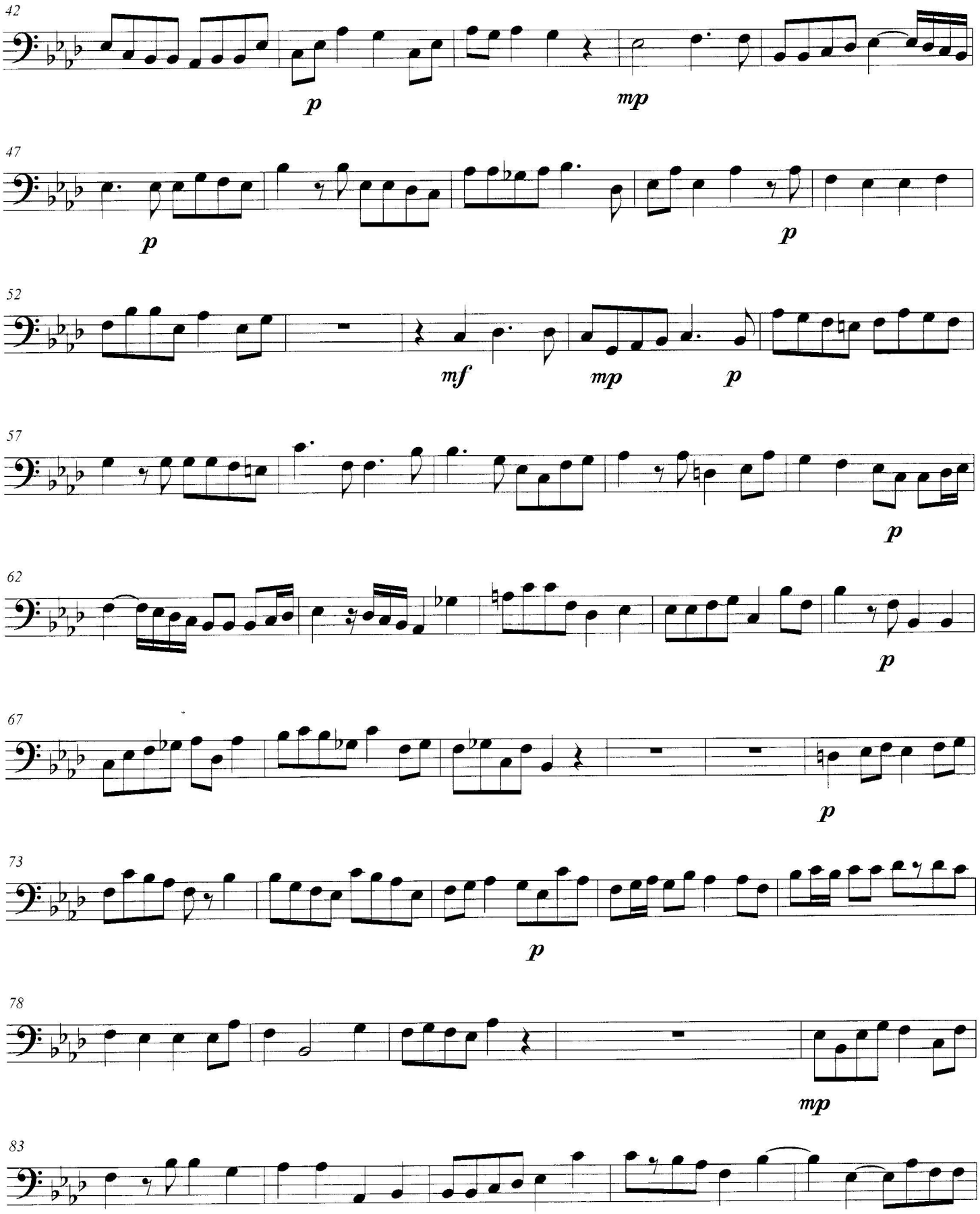
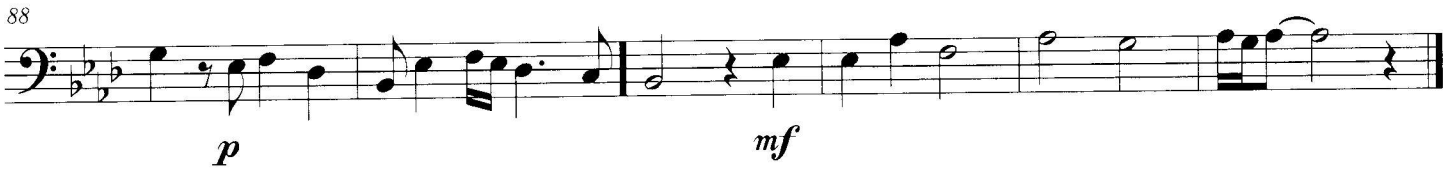

42
p
mp
47
p
p
52
mf
mp
p
57
p
62
p
67
p
73
p
78
mp
83

Andante ♩=66

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