An American Recorder Society Composers/Arrangers Special Music Edition for

ARS Play-the-Recorder Month 2021

and Play-the-Recorder Day, March 20, 2021

Transparent Letters Across the Sky

for SATB recorders

By Melika M. Fitzhugh

This special music for Play-the-Recorder Month is published as a Supplement to* American Recorder *for the members of the American Recorder Society. ***Winter 2020***
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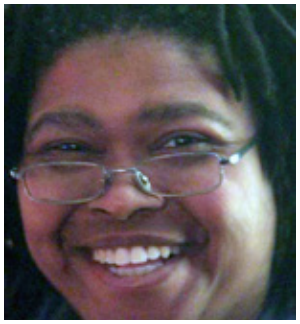
A SPECIAL MUSIC EDITION FOR PLAY-THE-RECORDER MONTH 2021!



By Melika M. Fitzhugh

A native of Stafford, Virginia, **Melika M. Fitzhugh** (A.B. Harvard-Radcliffe, Music Theory and Composition; M.M. Longy School of Bard College, Composition) has studied conducting and composition with Thomas G. Everett, Beverly Taylor, James Yannatos, Julian Pellicano, Roger Marsh, Jeff Stadelman, and, most recently, Osnat Netzer and John Howell Morrison. Performed internationally, Mel's compositions have been commissioned by John Tyson, Catherine E. Reuben, John and Maria Capello, Laura and Geoffrey Schamu, and the Quilisma Consort, and have been performed by those artists as well as B3: Brouwer Trio (Valencia, Spain), the PHACE Ensemble (Vienna, Austria), Quarteto L'Arianna (São Paulo, Brazil), the Radcliffe Choral Society, Patricia Reuben Abreu, Berit Strong, Miyuki Tsurutani, Libor Dudas, and Aldo Abreu.

Mel has been composing from an early age, and was the 2014 winner of both the Longy orchestral and commencement processional / recessional composition competitions, and has performed with the Radcliffe Choral Society, Coro Allegro, the Harvard Wind Ensemble, the Village Circle Band, and WACSAC. Mel was a member of Just In Time Composers and Players and is currently a member of world / early music ensemble Urban Myth and the early music ensemble Quilisma Consort, in addition to playing bass guitar with acoustic rock singer / songwriter Emmy Cerra, the ambient rock band Rose Cabal and the Balkan folk dance band Balkan Fields. Mel enjoys playing a variety of instruments for folk dance ensembles, including: violin / viola; acoustic guitar / bass; recorders; flute; hand percussion including dumbek / djembe / kahoun. Mel teaches these instruments, in addition to piano, violoncello, trumpet, clarinet and saxophone, privately.

MARCH 2021 IS PLAY-THE-RECORDER MONTH

Recorder players from across North America celebrate March as **Play-the-Recorder Month (PtRM)**. Many ARS chapters, consorts, and recorder orchestras plan special concerts and presentations to illustrate the versatility and beauty of this wonderful instrument. Plan your 2021 PtRM celebration now!

Here are some of the activities happening next March and other ways you can participate:

- ARS chapters, consorts and recorder orchestras plan special concerts and events to illustrate the versatility and beauty of this wonderful instrument.
- **March 20, 2021**, is designated "**Play-the-Recorder Day!**" Recorder players around the world are encouraged to play this year's composition entitled *Transparent Letters Across the Sky* by Melika M. Fitzhugh. This four-part piece was composed especially for this occasion, and is published and mailed as a standalone piece, similar to the way we present our *Members' Library Editions* music. Parts are available to ARS members on our web site.
- As in many years, in 2021 ARS is offering a half-price special for new or lapsed members. For anyone who has never joined, or who hasn't renewed for the past five years, the many membership benefits are at a discount for the new member's first year.
- Also in March, celebrate "Early Music Month." This outreach program was begun in March 2016 by Early Music America. Visit their web site for more info: ***https://www.earlymusicamerica.org/endeavors/early-music-month***.
- March is also "Music in Our Schools Month" (MIOSM), started in 1985 by MENC, the National Association for Music Education: ***www.nafme.org/programs/miosm***.

To see our resources for planning your events — a timeline, press release, and public service announcement — and for more information about **Play-the-Recorder Month**, see the American Recorder Society web site or use this link: ***https://americanrecorder.org/play_the_recorder_month.php***.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Small notes are higher and / or faster alternatives for adventuresome players. A mixture of the two is quite acceptable, so feel free to start easy and work your way up.

D's and A's trill up to E-flat and B-flat; however, flutter tongue (playing a note while producing a rolled "r" – either front-of-the-tongue Spanish-style "r" or back of the tongue German-style "r") can be substituted for any troublesome trills.

For the falls (such as in measure 2): reduce the air pressure and volume of the note but do not correct the pitch; let it sag naturally. Falls are a sort of sigh.

The title is from a translation of poem VII of *Libro de Las Preguntas* by Pablo Neruda (*Book of Questions*, 1973):

"What happens to swallows who are late for school?
Is it true that they scatter transparent letters across the sky?"

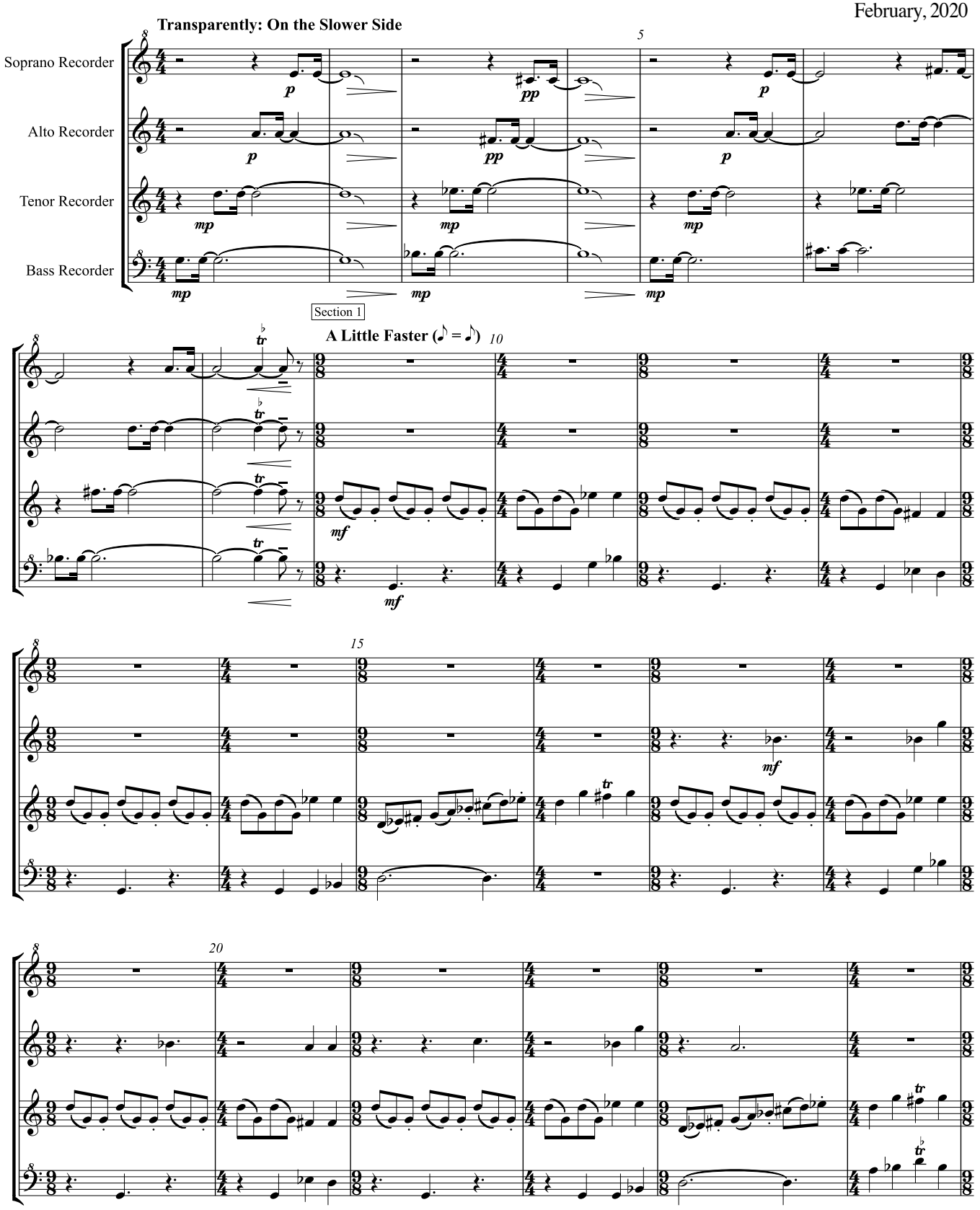
Melika M. Fitzhugh
February 2020

Credit:
Pablo Neruda, VII, translated by Willliam O'Daly, from *The Book of Questions*. Copyright © 1974 by Pablo Neruda and the Heirs of Pablo Neruda. Translation copyright © 1991, 2001 by William O'Daly. Reprinted with the permission of The Permissions Company, LLC on behalf of Copper Canyon Press, ***www.coppercanyonpress.org***.

Transparent Letters Across the Sky

2021 ARS Play-the-Recorder Month Composition

Melika M. Fitzhugh
February, 2020



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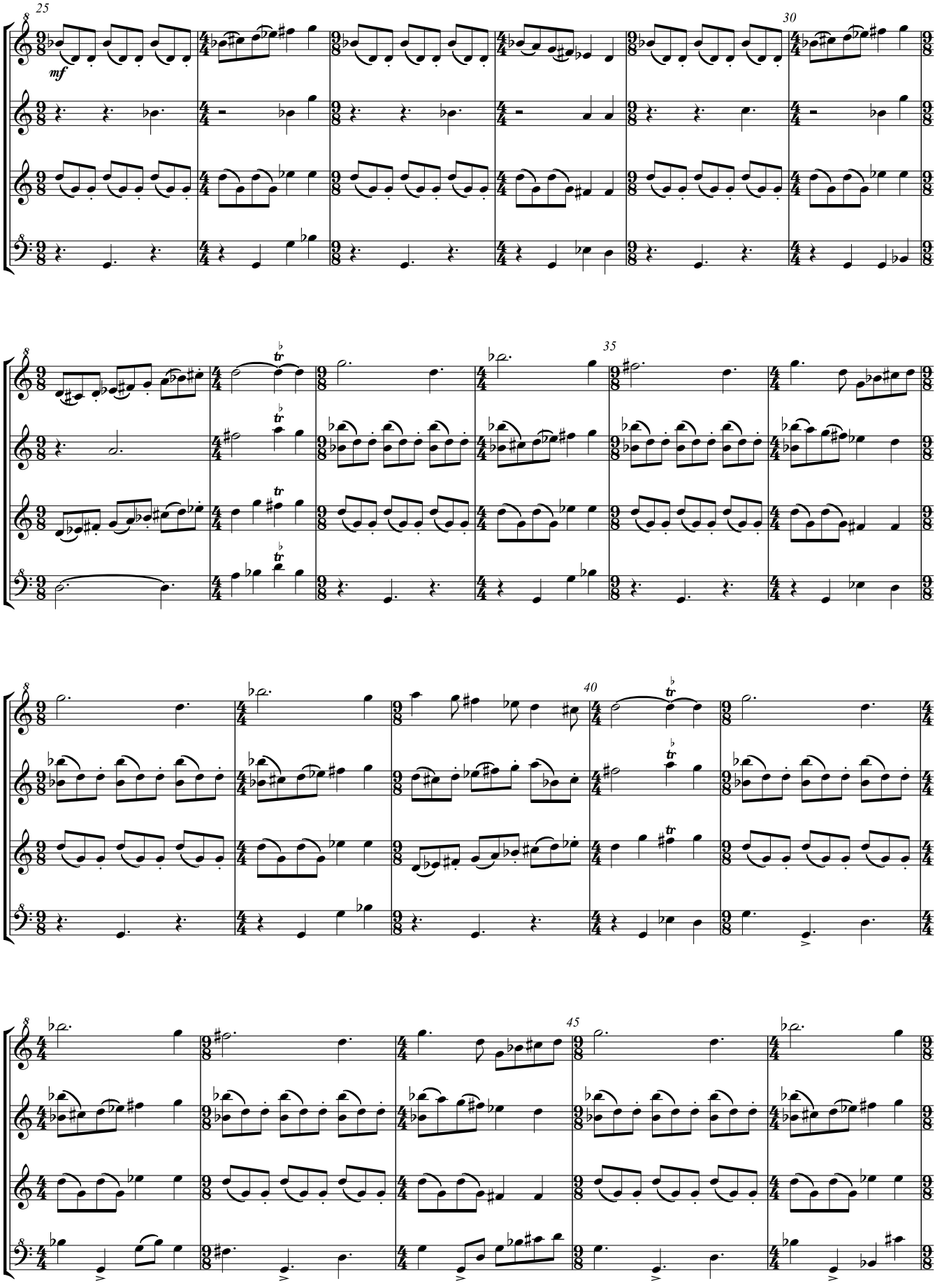

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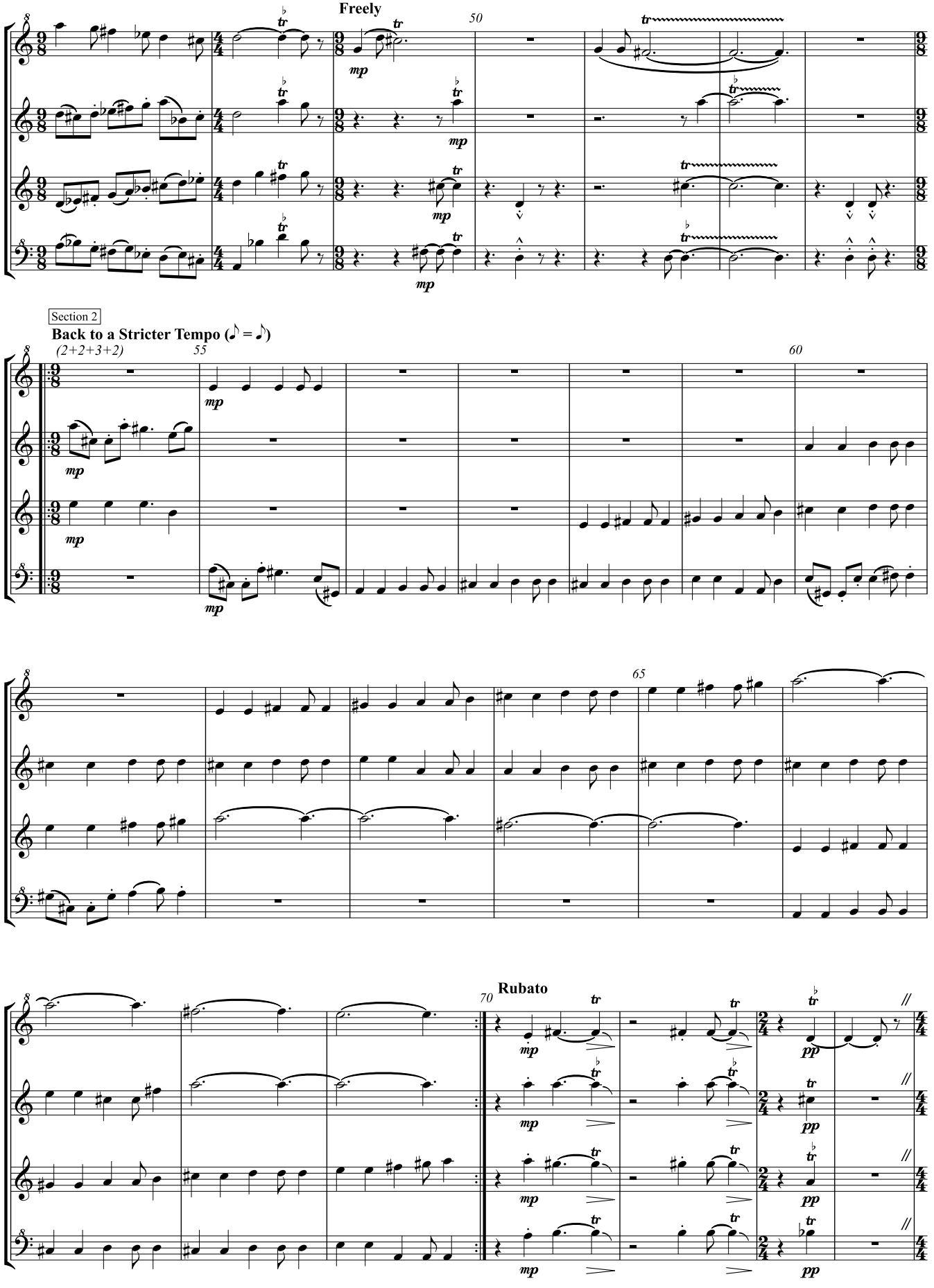

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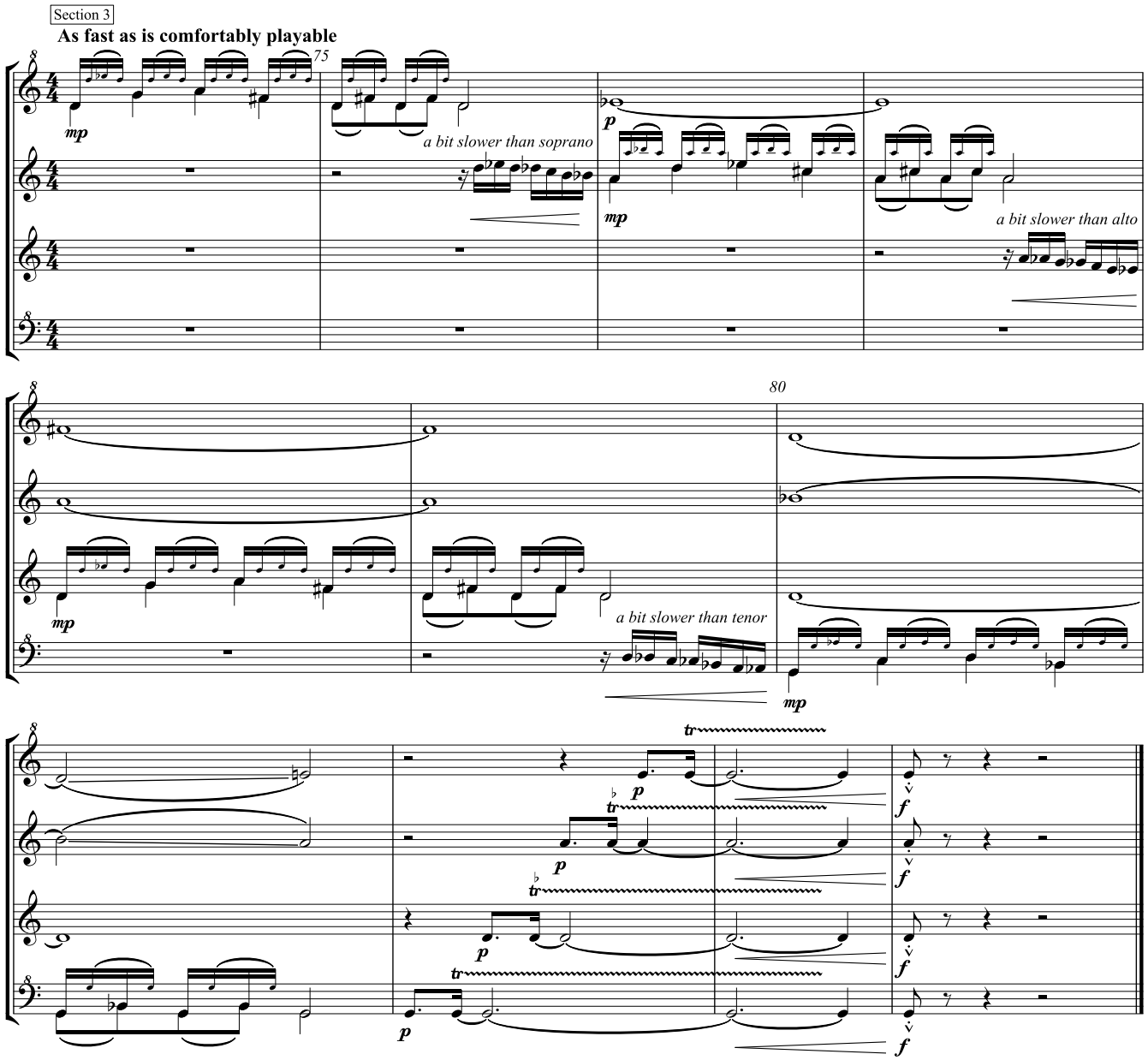

This Play-the-Recorder Month Composition is made possible by a generous donation from Nancy Frederick, self-described as "an aging amateur recorder player." Nancy sponsored the composition because she is fond of the ARS for many reasons. She wishes the ARS to grow yearly and to find and encourage many amateur players. Playing with other people is a joy.

Play-the-Recorder Month and Play-the-Recorder Day grew out of a one-day worldwide event on April 1, 1989, during the 50th anniversary year of the American Recorder Society. Its success caused the ARS to declare an annual celebration starting with Play-the-Recorder Day on March 28, 1992. The single day was later expanded to monthlong activities plus a focus on one day, which have been observed each March since then.

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Soprano Recorder

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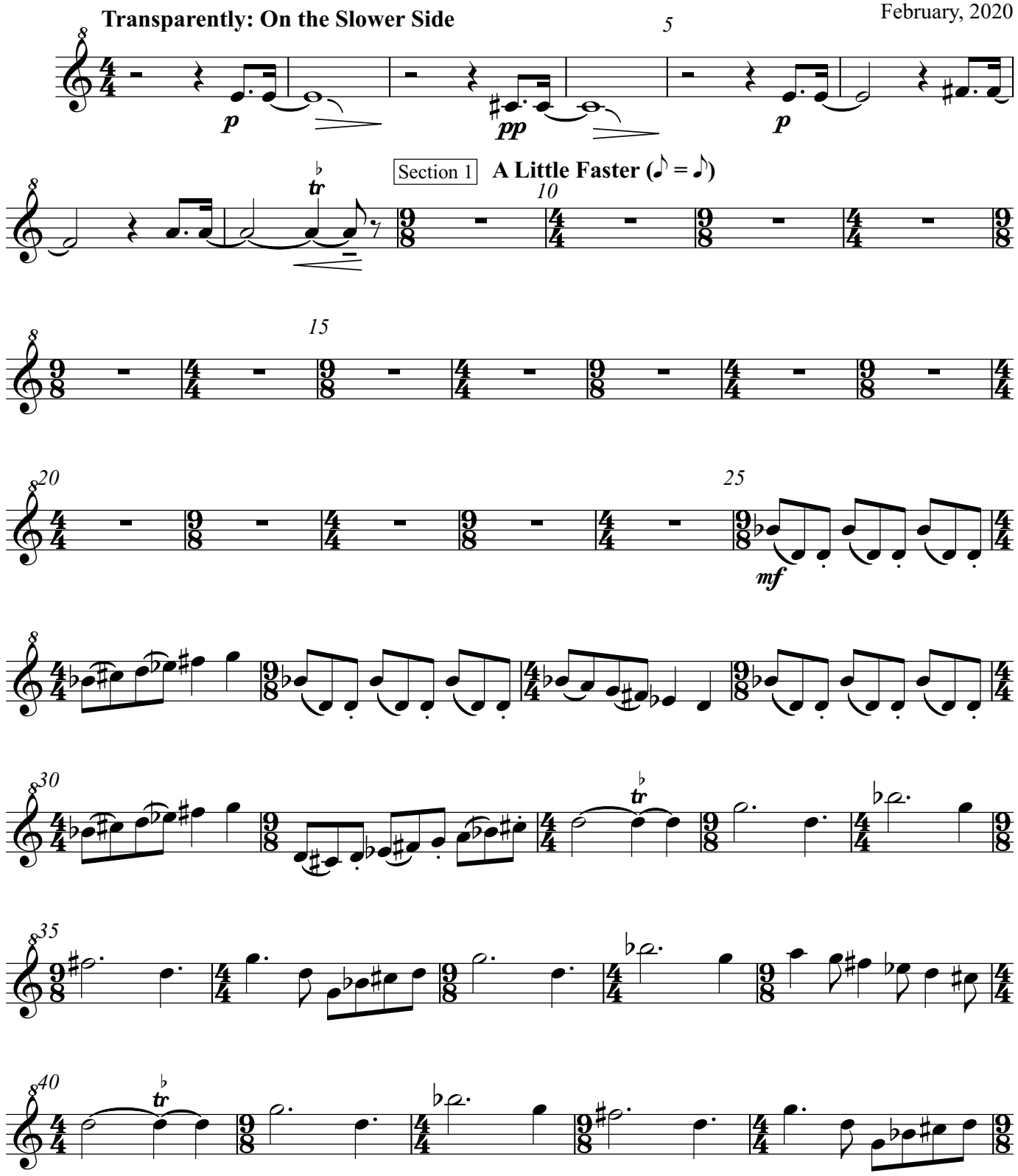
February, 2020

Transparently: On the Slower Side



V.S.

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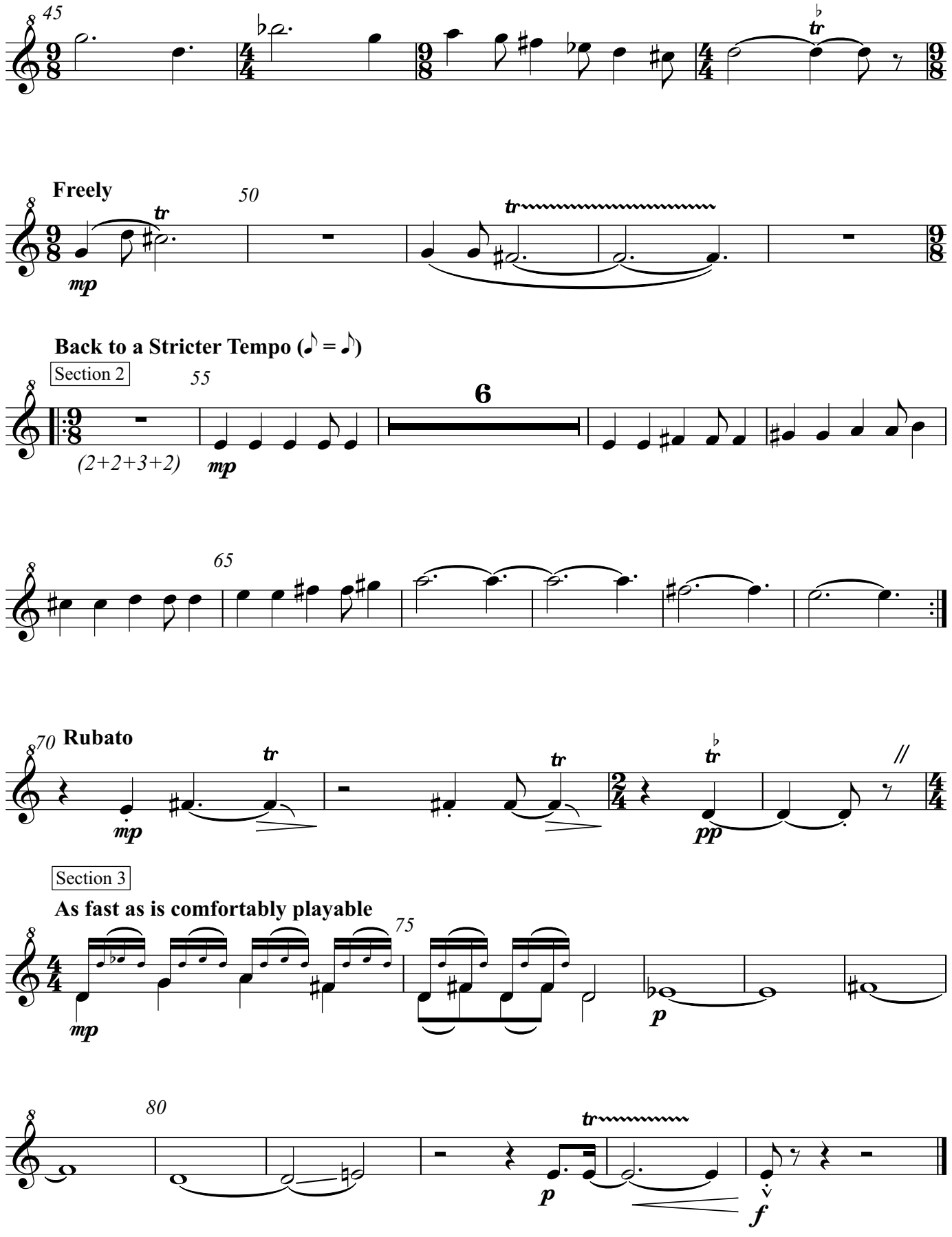
45
Freely
50
mp
Back to a Stricter Tempo (♪ = ♪)
Section 2
55
6
(2+2+3+2)
mp
65
70
Rubato
mp
pp
Section 3
As fast as is comfortably playable
75
mp
p
80
p
f

Alto Recorder

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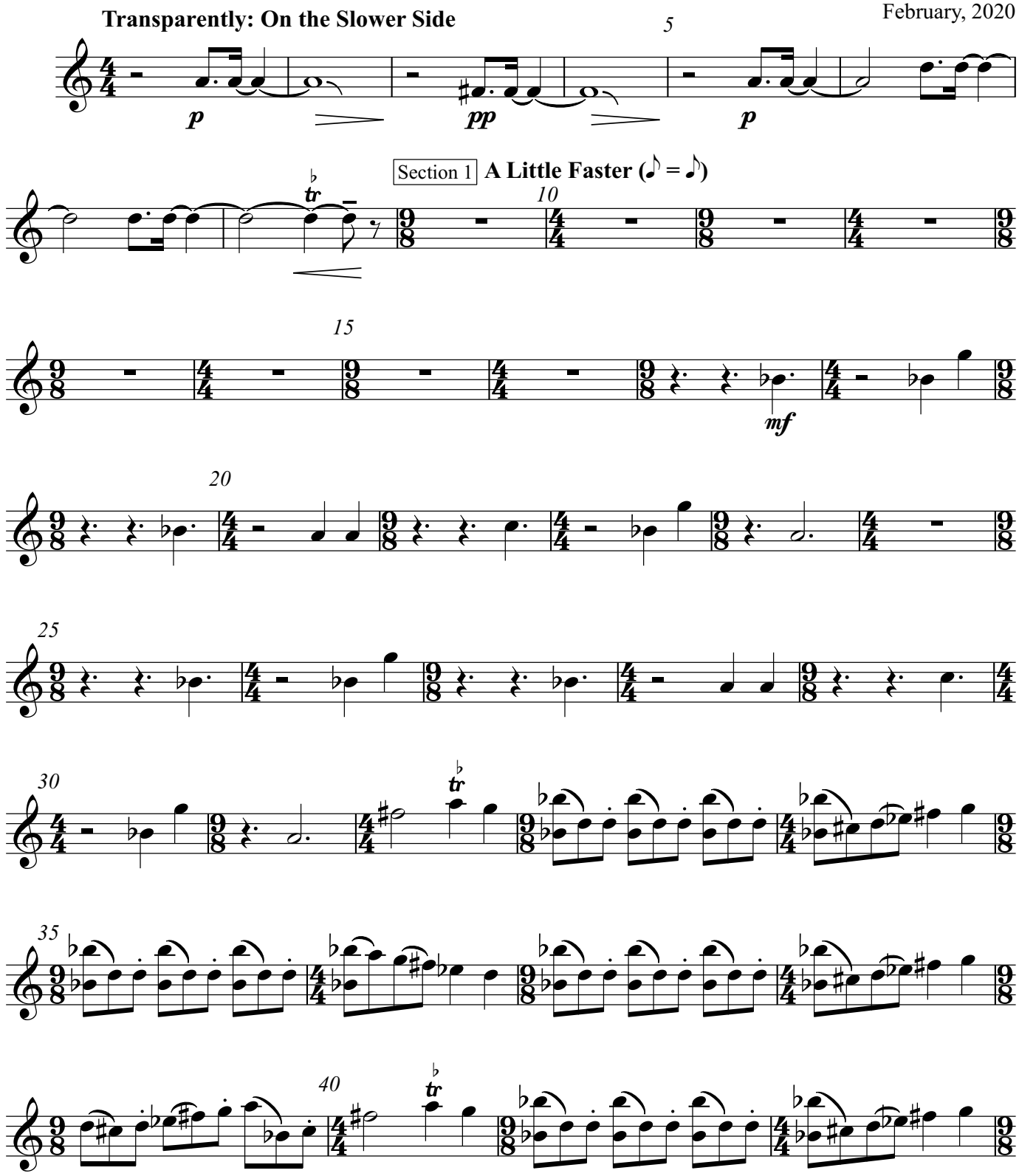
February, 2020

Transparently: On the Slower Side



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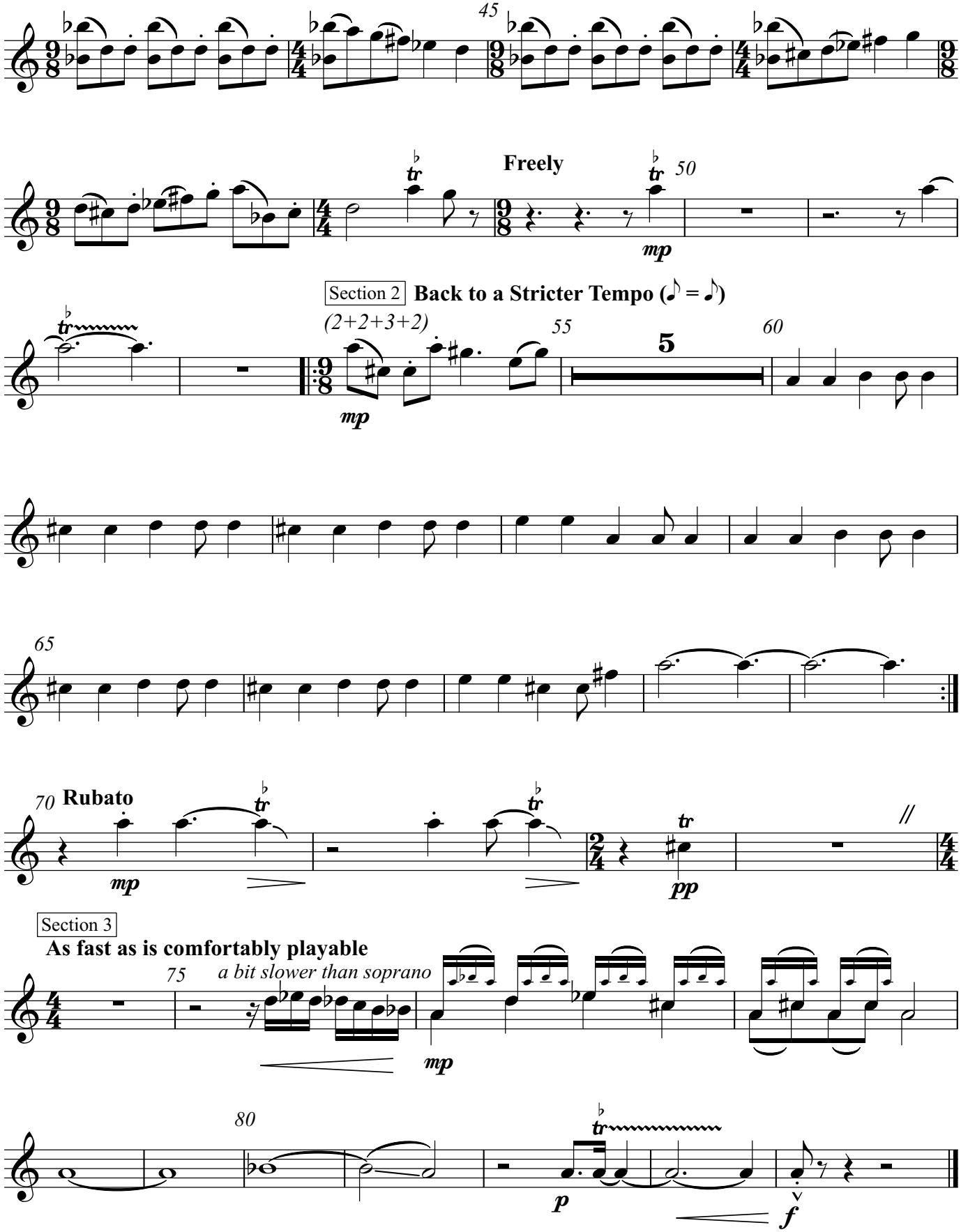
45
Freely
50
mp
Section 2
Back to a Stricter Tempo (♪ = ♪)
(2+2+3+2)
55
5
60
mp
65
70
Rubato
mp
pp
Section 3
As fast as is comfortably playable
75
a bit slower than soprano
mp
80
p
f

Tenor Recorder

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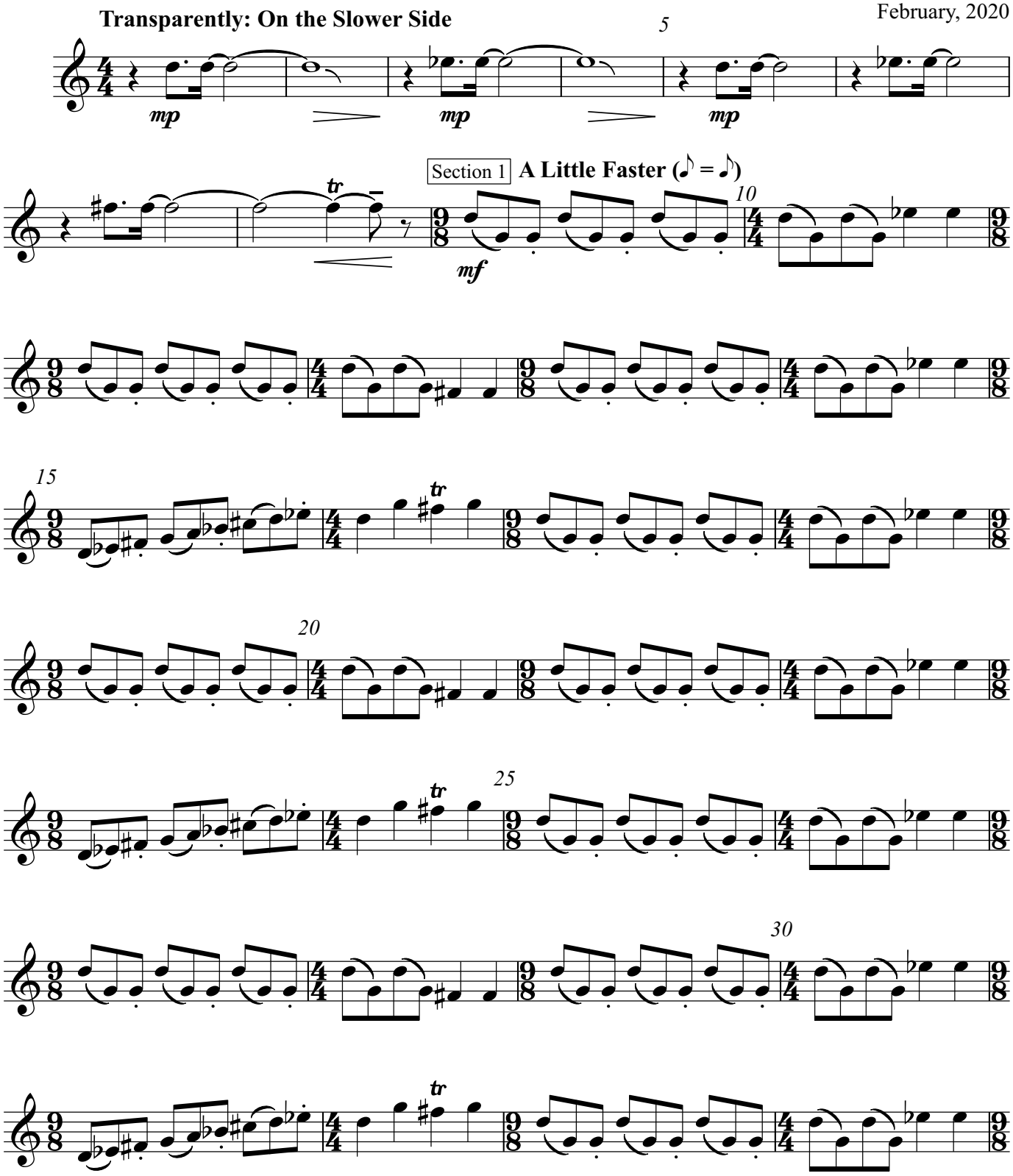
February, 2020

Transparently: On the Slower Side



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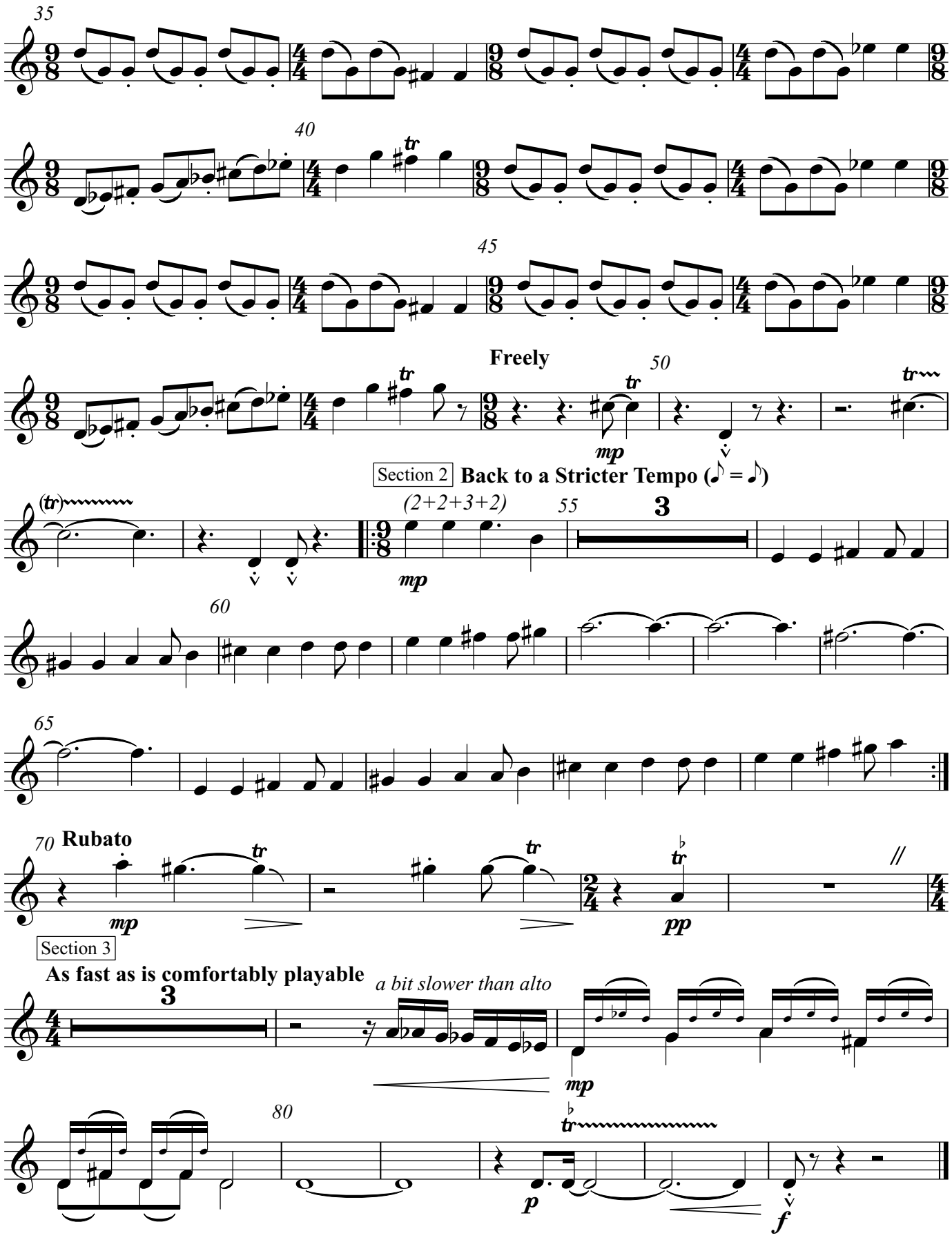
35
40
45
Freely
50
mp
Section 2
Back to a Stricter Tempo (♪ = ♪)
(2+2+3+2)
55
3
mp
60
65
70
Rubato
mp
pp
Section 3
As fast as is comfortably playable
3
a bit slower than alto
mp
80
p
f

Bass Recorder

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February, 2020

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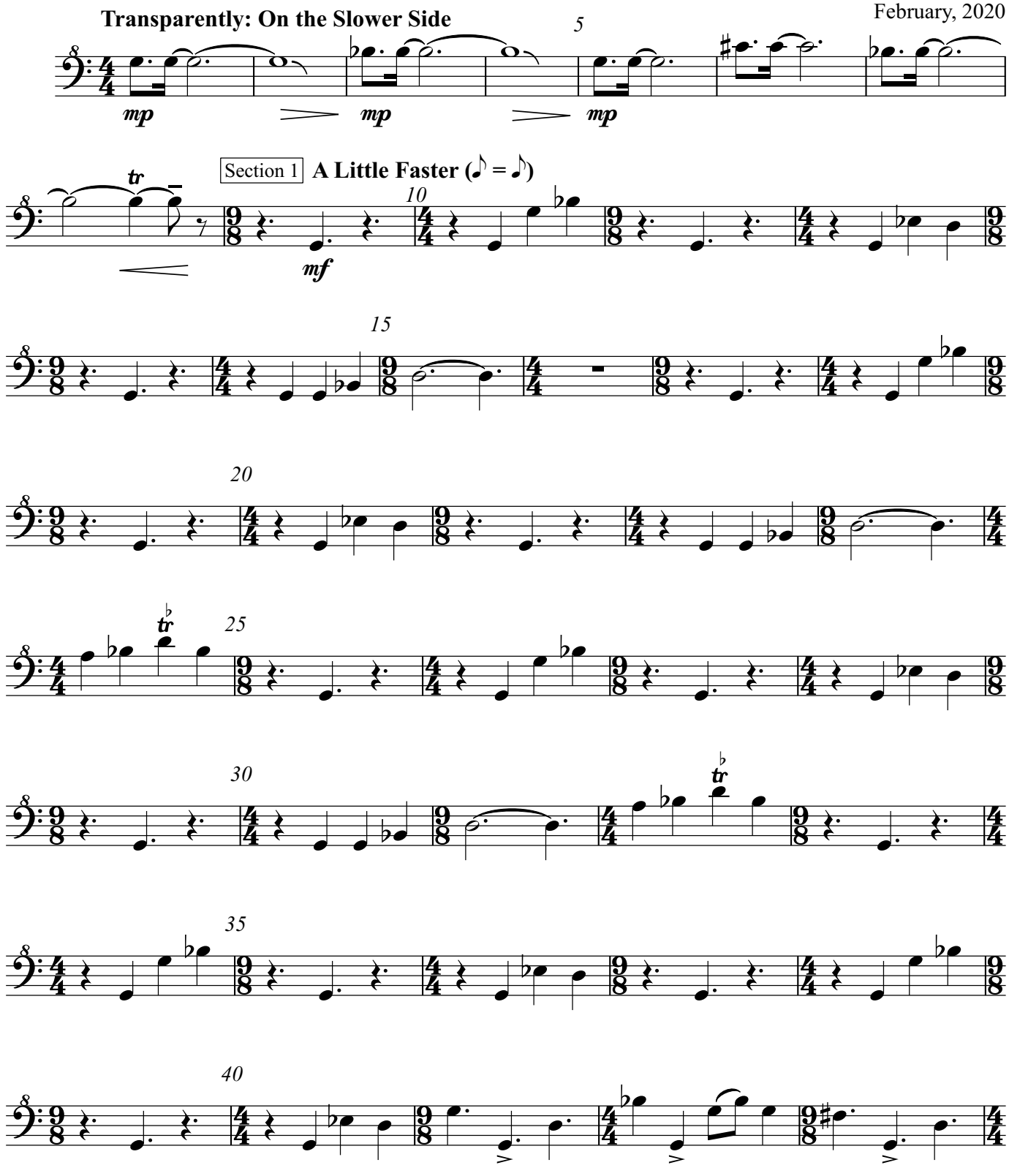

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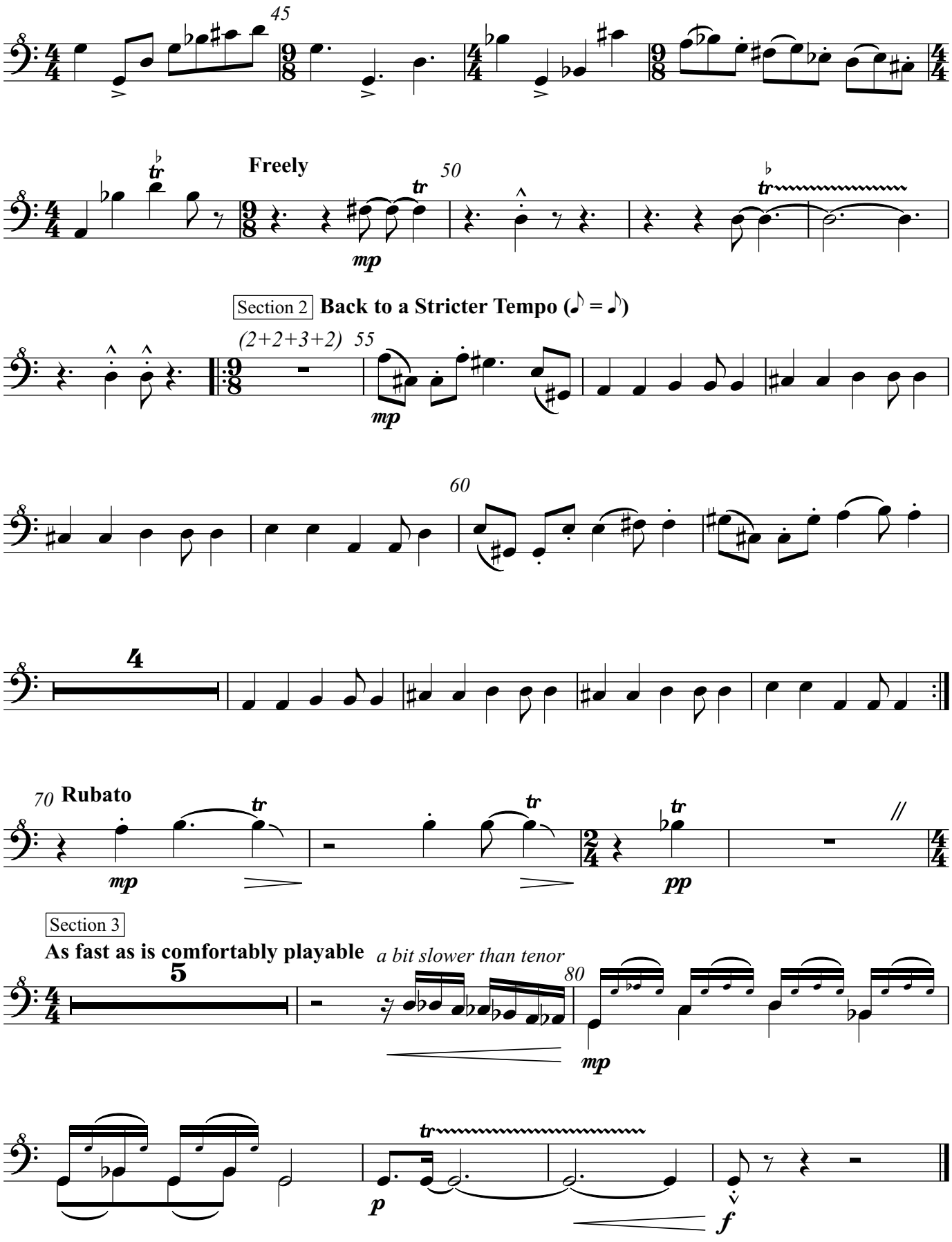
45
Freely
50
mp
Section 2
Back to a Stricter Tempo (♪ = ♪)
(2+2+3+2)
55
mp
60
4
70 Rubato
mp
pp
Section 3
As fast as is comfortably playable
a bit slower than tenor
5
80
mp
p
f