Circular Variations

on "M. C. J. A. F. P."

for flute & mandolin

Peter McKenzie Armstrong

Opus 37

Edition Ottaviano Petrucci

NOTES

SUBJECT

This work has six themes, each derived from its corresponding portion of the six–element name below. Each theme's pitch classes were specified by mapping its name–part's characters to the musical alphabet loop,

leaving accidentals to be introduced via the music–generative process. Their octave registrations and initial durations were then intuitively set.

M I C H A E L C H R I S T I A N J O H N A R N O F R A N C I S P E S T E L
f b c a a e e c a d b e f b a g c a a g a d g a f d a g c b e b e e f e e

COMPOSITION

As in my *Variations on a Name,* the themes are varied by incremental axial rotation of their (X–time/Y=pitch) coordinates. The earlier work treated its multipart name as a single unit, with ensuing complications as its subnames intermingled. The present work instead rotates name parts separately, throwing into greater relief the underlying generation.

The axial rotation is anticlockwise in 15–deg increments (see opposite). There are 24 of these per movement, yielding as many bars of music.

0	15	30
45	60	75
90	105	120
135	150	165
180	195	210
225	240	255
270	285	300
315	330	345

Albeit incrementally realized, the rotation is essentially continuous, evolving input toward and from its retro–inversion at 180 degrees. Throughout, the functions R and I act only together as RI, never independently.

Time signatures report the total of underlying rhythmic units (invisible) per measure.

INSTRUMENTATION

The score is single–staffed with notehead colors flagging pattern details according to pitch relationships within the bar:

Black: unique
Green: repeating
Red: simultaneous

As rhythm is unmetered – indicating durations only via proportional horizontal space – coordinating three instruments will be prohibitive. I suggest optimally a Flute/Mandolin duo, with flute taking Black and mandolin taking Green and Red; alternatively the whole as a solo for either organ or piano.

PERFORMANCE

Accidentals: Each applies exactly once (a style Lilypond terms "forget").

Articulation: Default for unslurred notes is *detache* – not overly short but ending each note, including a slur's last, before the next begins. Repeated notes (green) are to be held until the next in their group.

Final bars: Each movement is to end with a repeat of its first measure.

Programming: As texture throughout the work is virtually consistent, I suggest that its movements be performed, not all together, but in a selection of one to three at players' choice and ordering.

– PMA

Duration: ~5 min.

to Michael Pestel

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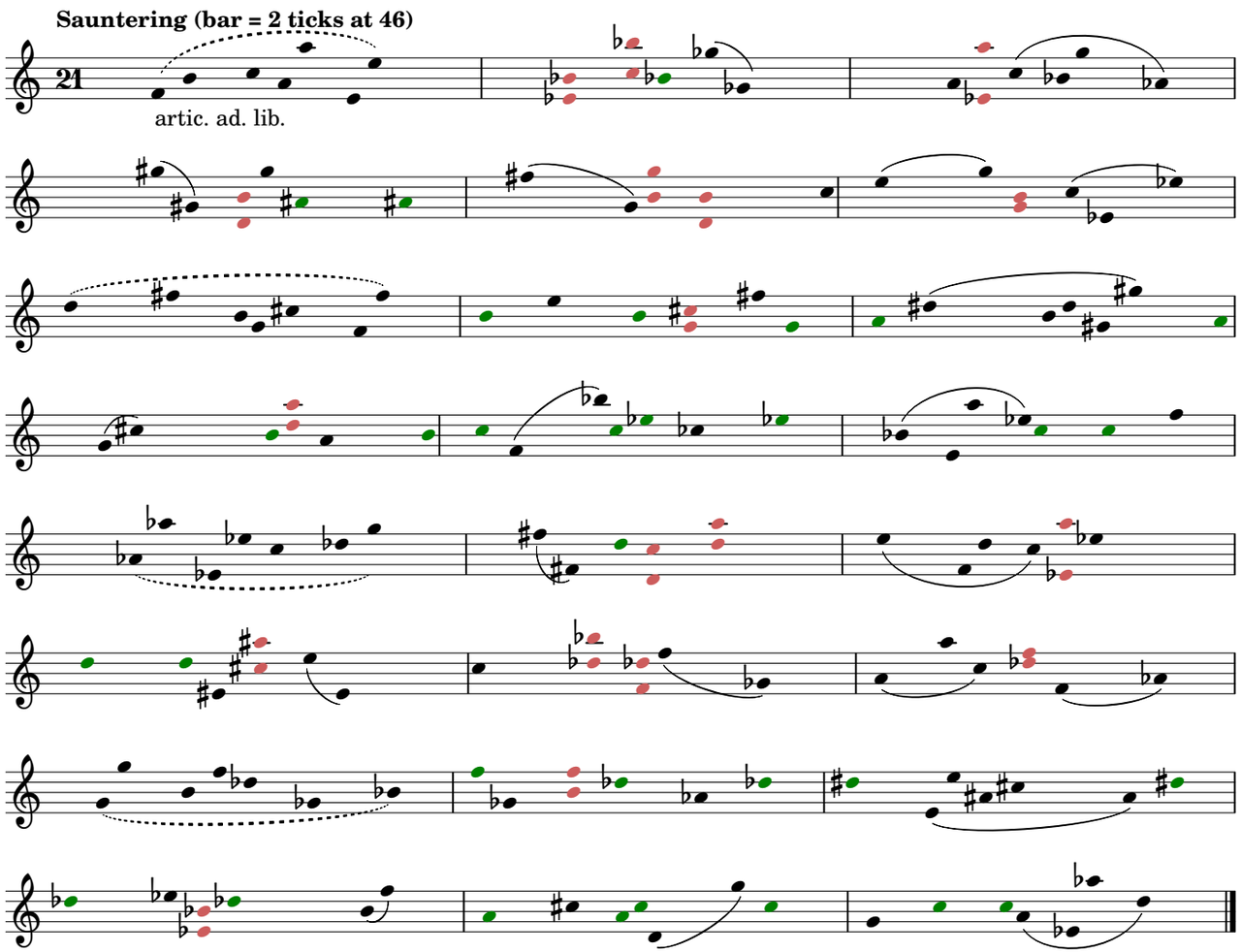
Michael



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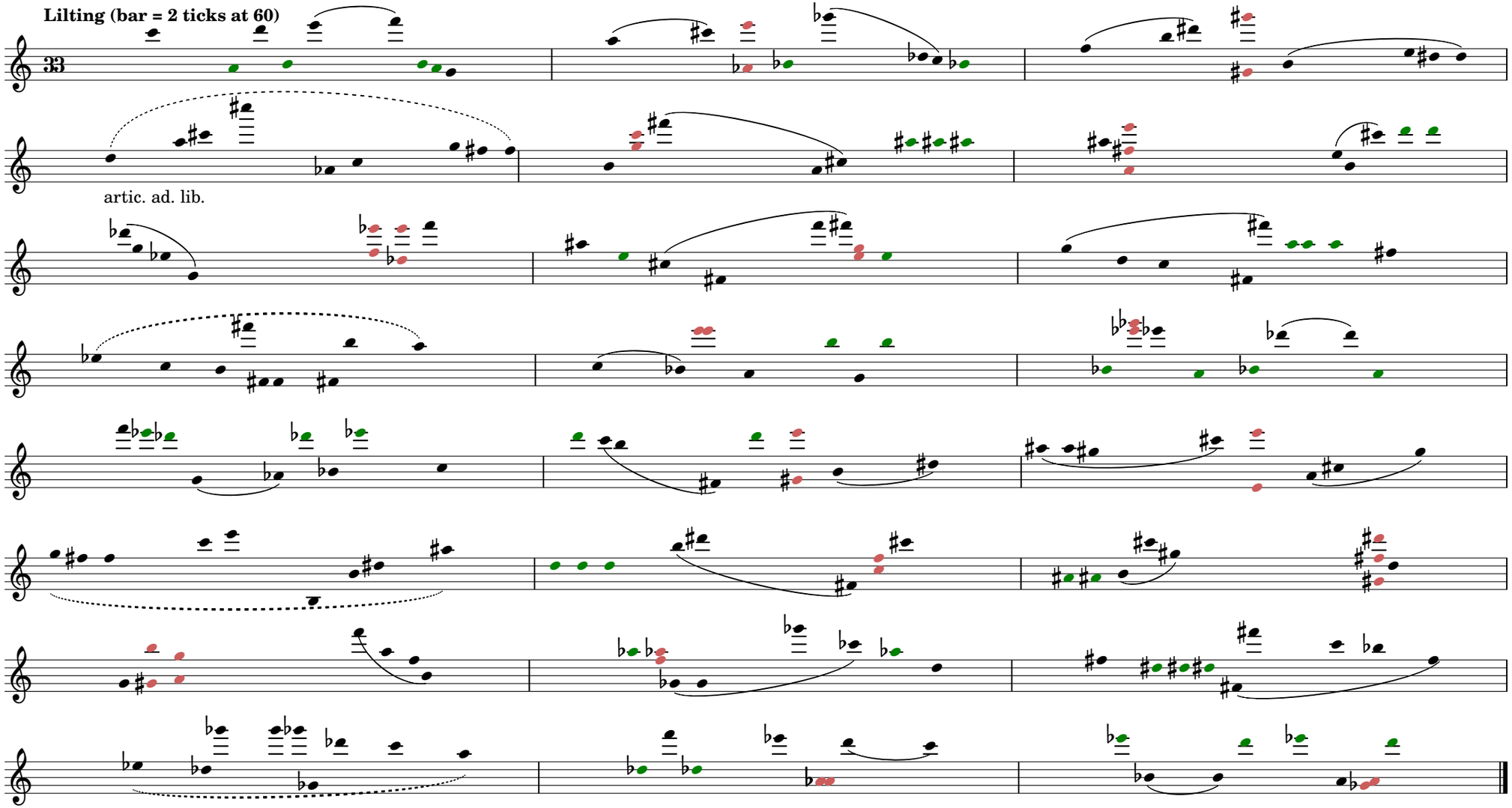
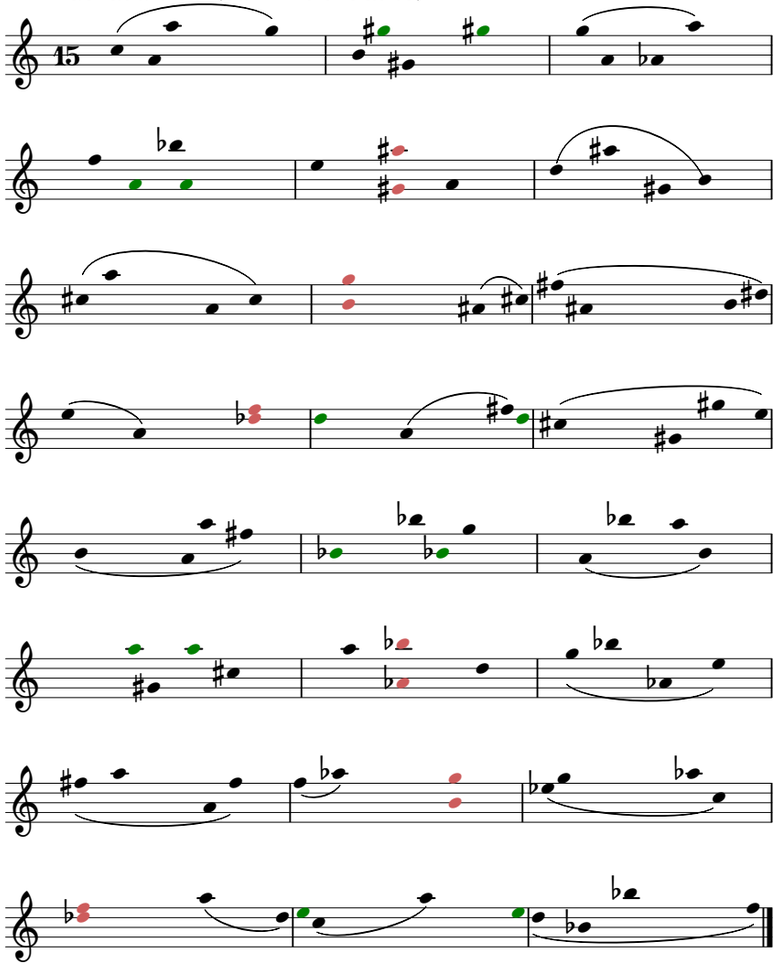
Christian



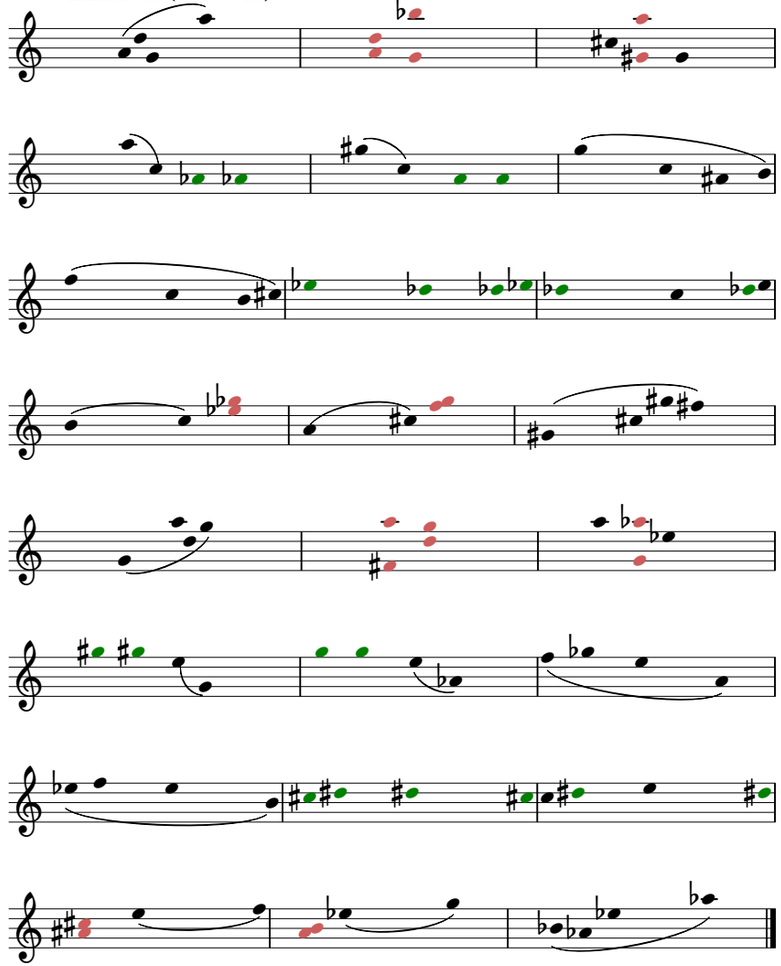
John

Lackadaisical (bar = 2 ticks at 69)

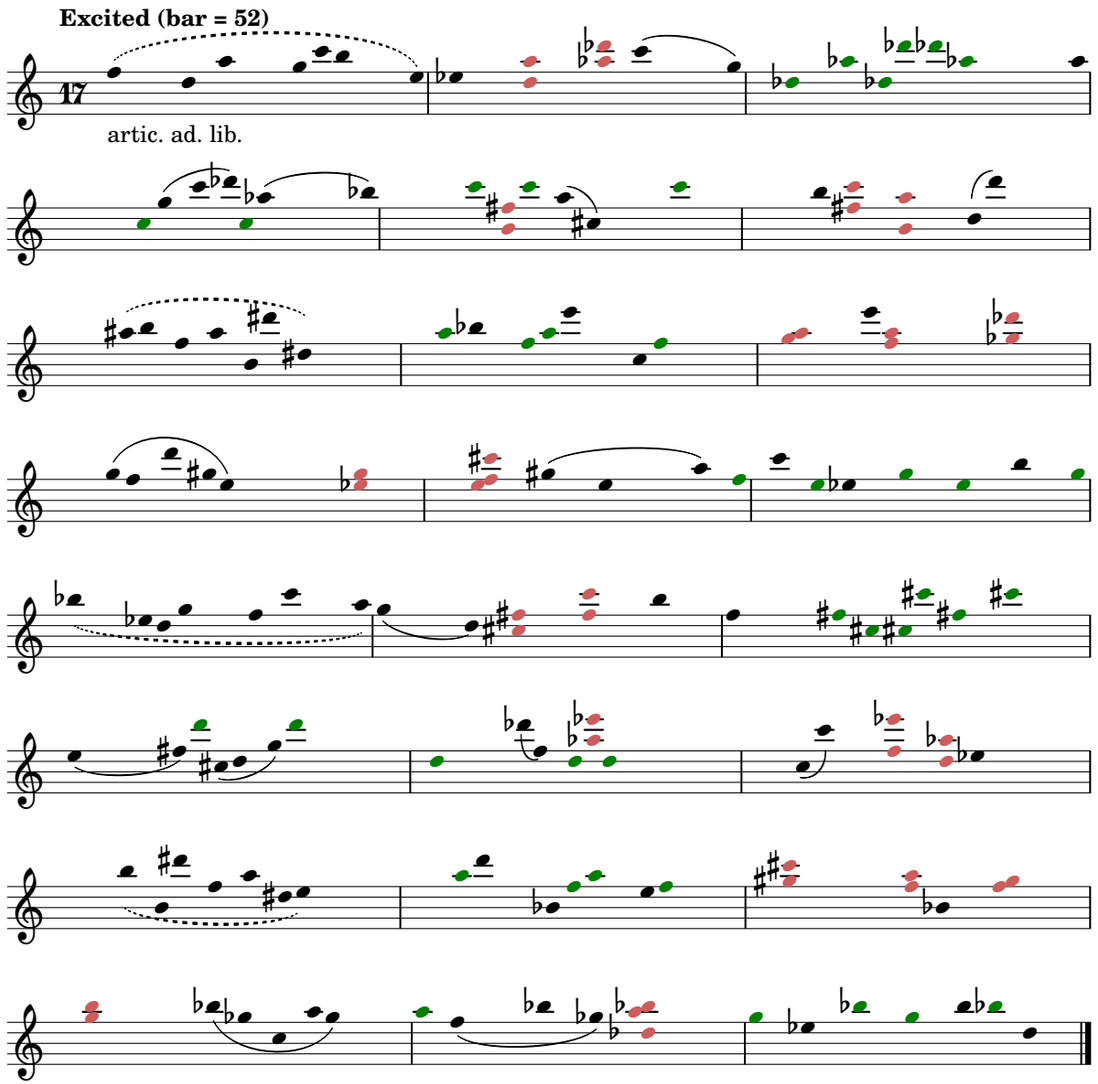


Arno

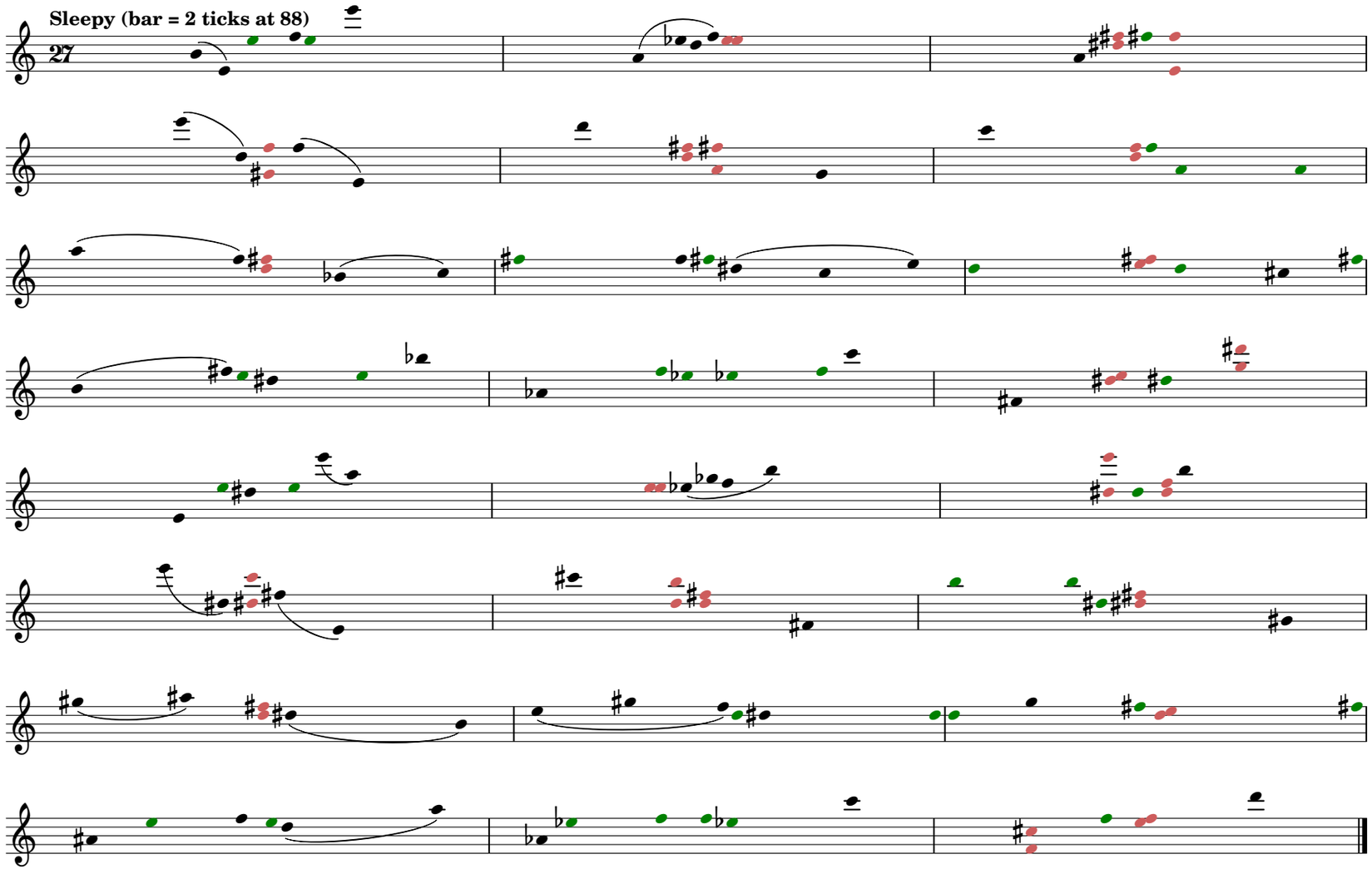
Whimsical (bar = 48)



Francis



Pestel



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