Notes from the Composer

Tremors was commissioned in 2005 for Bellissimo of Redlands Adventist Academy. The school's proximity to the San Andreas fault line was the inspiration for this original composition, which features a "rumbling" chromatic ostinato and intense, energized polyphony.

Care should be taken at all times to ensure a consistent pulse. The ostinato which begins in the bass line should always be noticeable, but not overpower the melody. This is particularly crucial in highly polyphonic sections, such as mm. 20-26, where the ostinato is in the high treble bells, augmented in the bass, and the main and secondary melodies are overlaid in between. In this section, the D2 and D3 mallet rolls must have more articulations than the triplets, and should be loud enough so as to be somewhat uncomfortably distracting. This holds true in the recapitulation as well.

The middle section alternates between f minor and A♭ Major, and is reflective of the aftermath and rebuilding following a major earthquake. It involves a sense of wandering, a mix of hope and hopelessness, before the next earthquake comes – more intense than the first. The recapitulation of the B section must not wane in tempo; the only relief is the sudden, unexpected end. The final three measures offer a shimmering glimmer of peace, with an unresolved final chord representing the uncertainty of what's to come...and when.

Churches with advanced ensembles may program this piece as a Lenten or Advent postlude under its subtitle, *With Fear and Trembling Stand.* The tumult of an earthquake is much like that of our wandering world (at any time in its history), and the glimmer of hope in the final three measures is not unlike that of the world awaiting the coming of Christ (whether His birth or His return): peaceful but mysterious anticipation.

While three percussion instruments are used, the parts may be played by two experienced percussionists if well choreographed. In the event that only one percussionist is available, the composer suggests the following concessions be made: in measures 14-15, omit the orchestral chimes; in measure 18, omit the tam tam; in measures 32-33, omit the orchestral chimes; and in measures 58-60 and 75-83, omit the bass drum.

In addition, if equipment and/or personnel circumstances require it, handbells of different tunings (such as Petit and Fritsen™) or timbres (such as Whitechapel™) may be used instead of the orchestral chimes.

Finally, in the event that only an 18-note set of orchestral chimes is available (as opposed to a 20-note set), measures 14, 46 and 76 indicate the necessary octave displacements with cue-sized notes. If a 20-note set is available, only play the higher-octave notes in these measures.

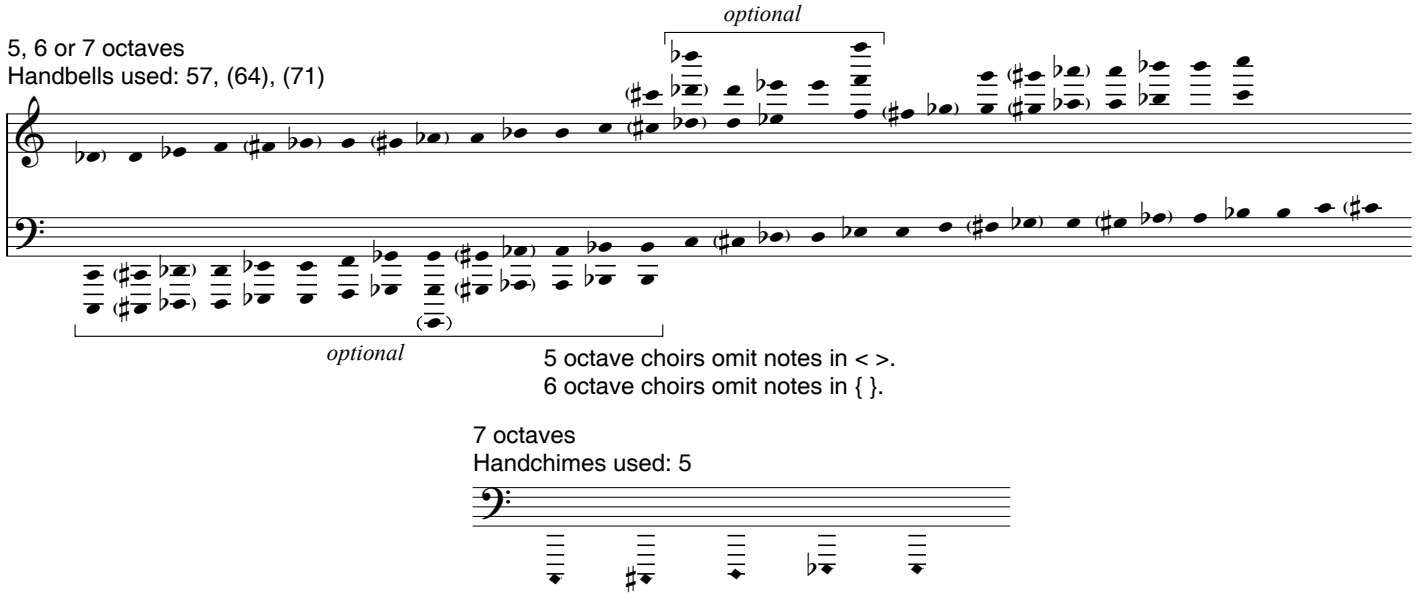
Musically yours,
Michael Glasgow

Commissioned by Bellissimo of Redlands Adventist Academy, Redlands, California
James R. Walters, director

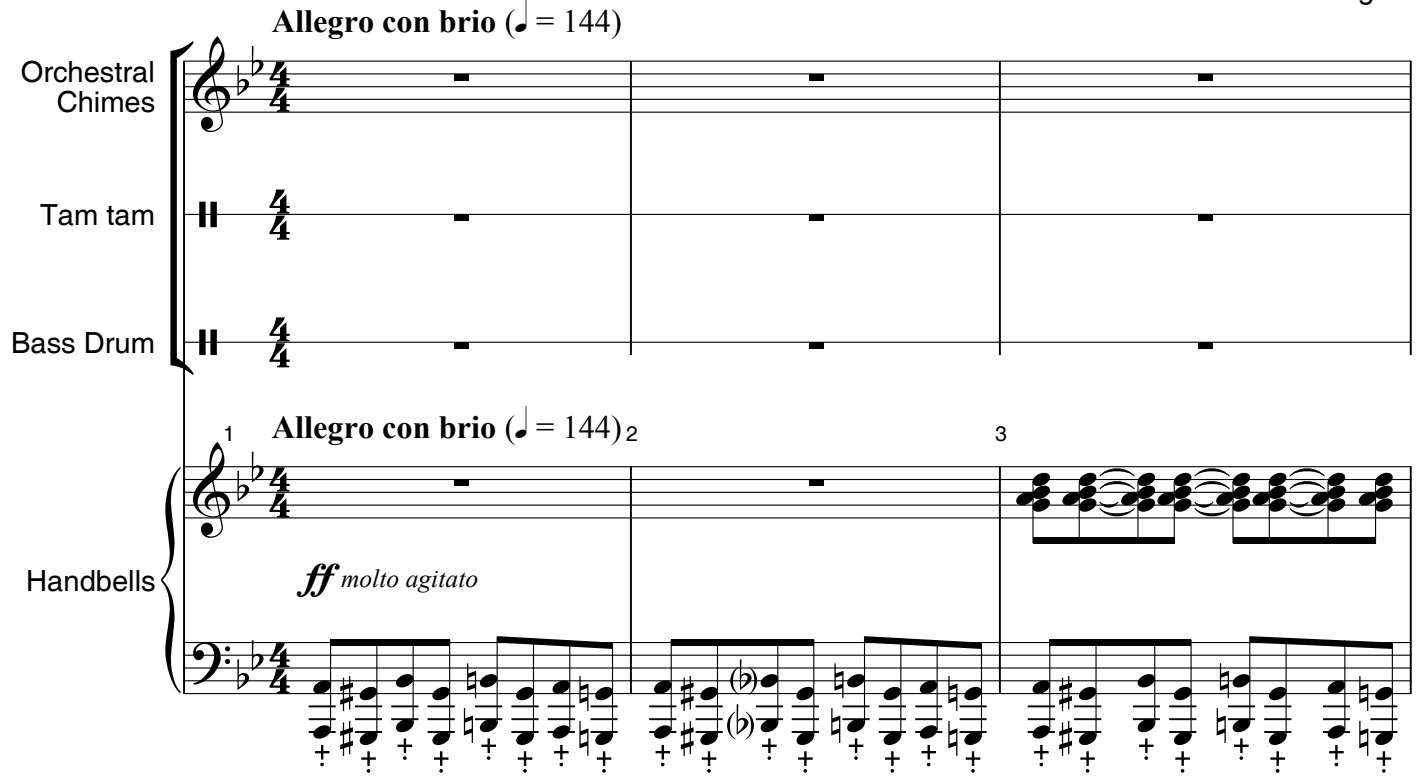
Full Score

Tremors

With Fear and Trembling Stand



Michael J. Glasgow



Reproducible parts for orchestral chimes, tam tam and bass drum are printed on pages 22-26.
A handbell score including is available, code CGB618.

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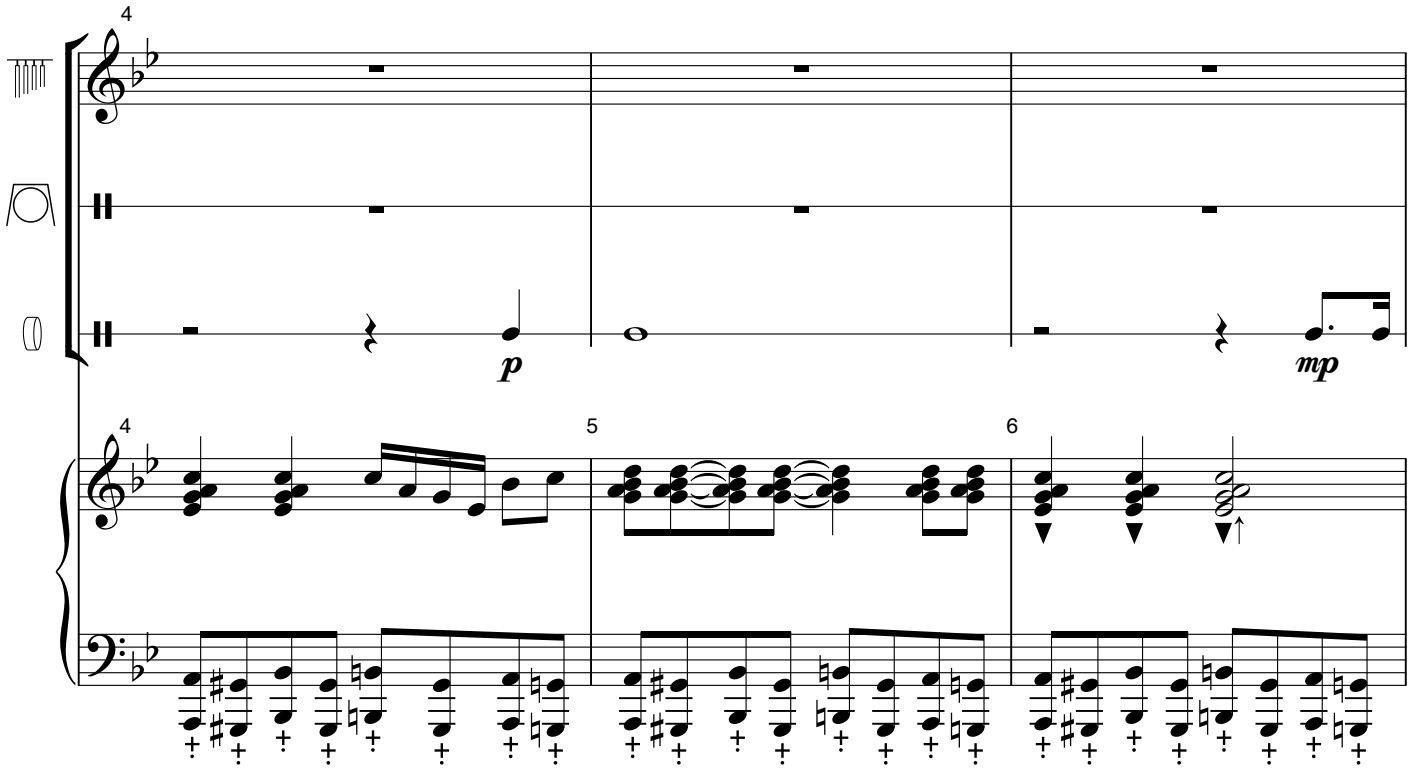
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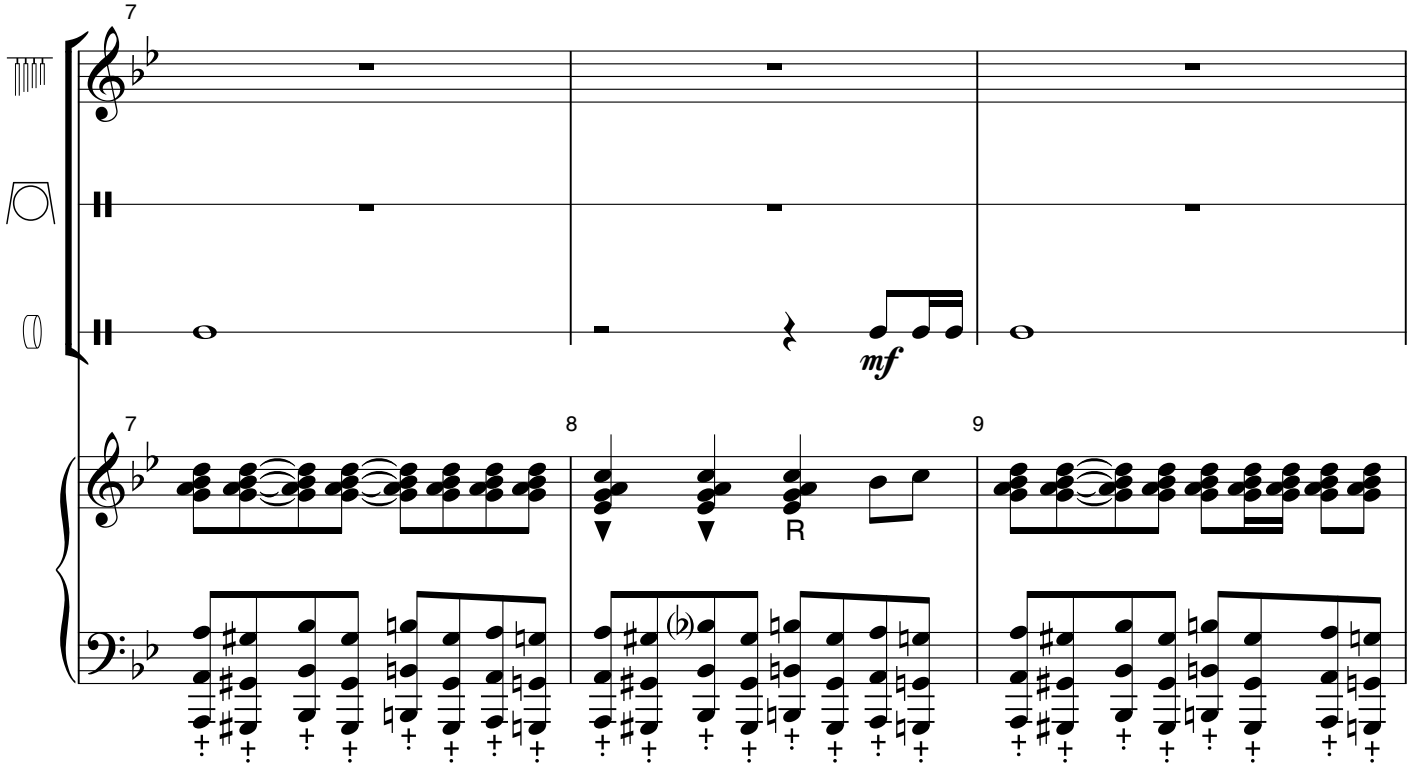
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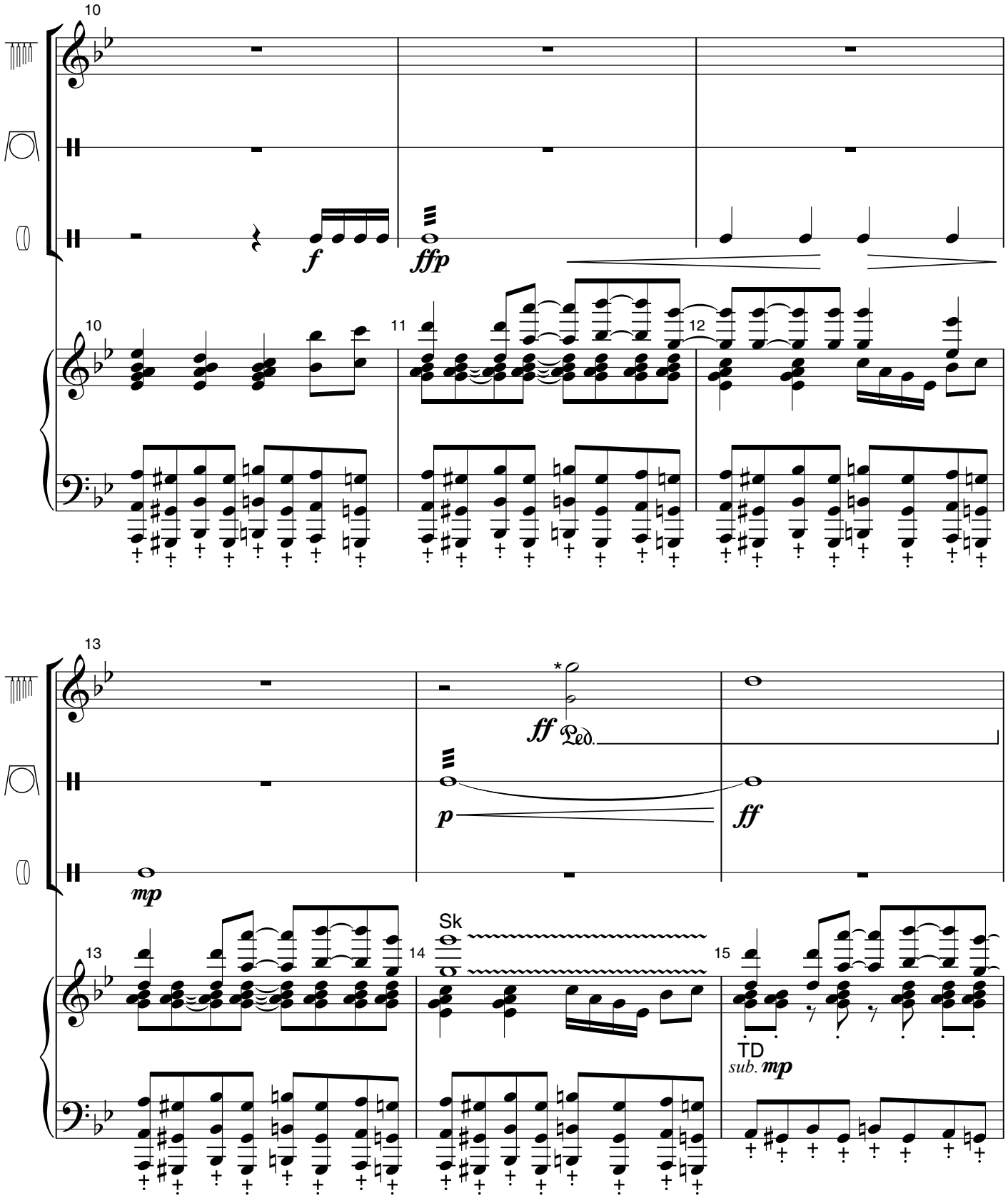


*Throughout the piece, lower-octave alternate notes are provided (in cue size) for smaller sets of orchestral chimes. The upper notes are preferred, if available. Play only one (not both) of the octave notes.

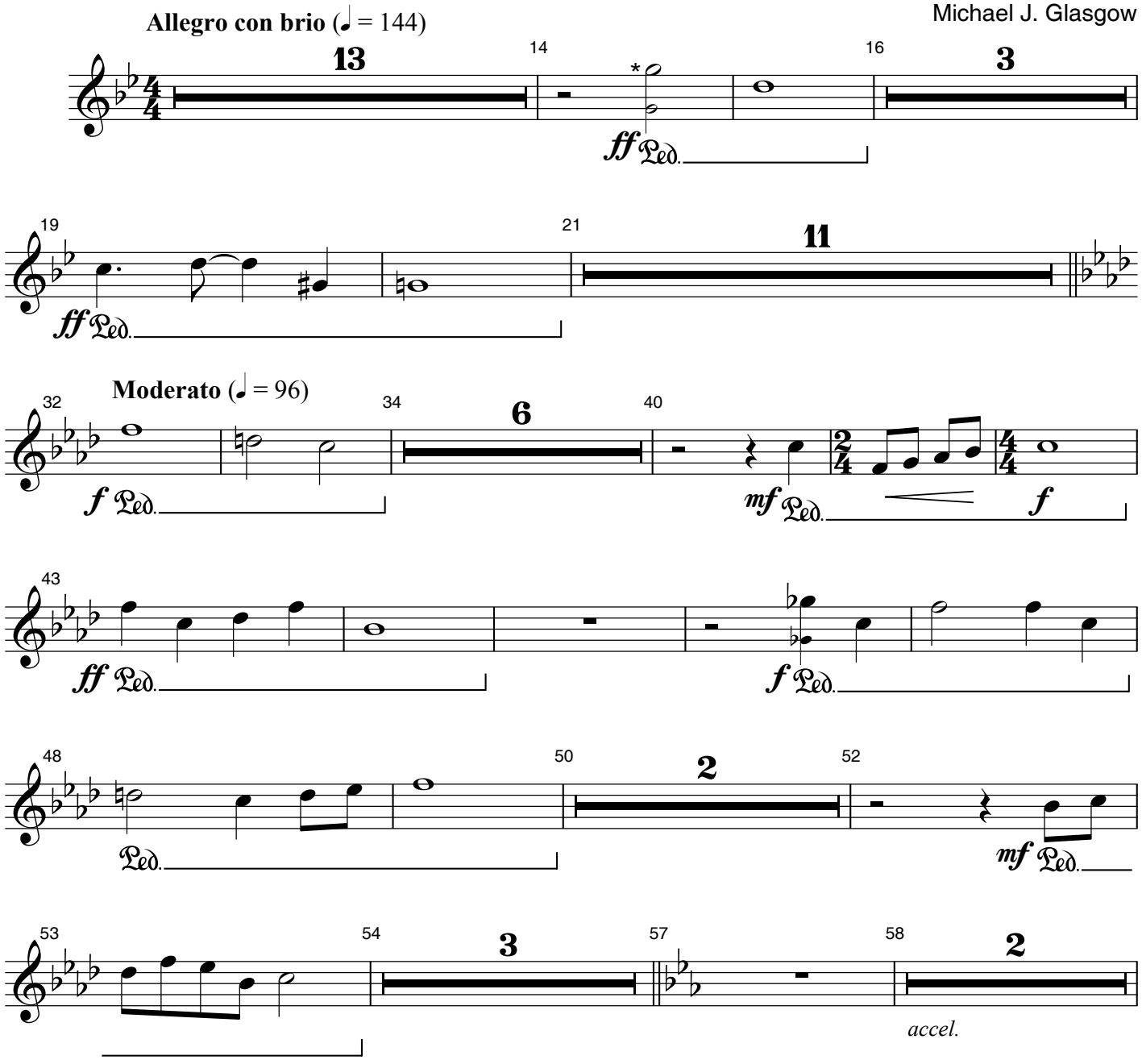
Commissioned by Bellissimo of Redlands Adventist Academy, Redlands, California
James R. Walters, director

Orchestral Chimes

Tremors

With Fear and Trembling Stand

Michael J. Glasgow



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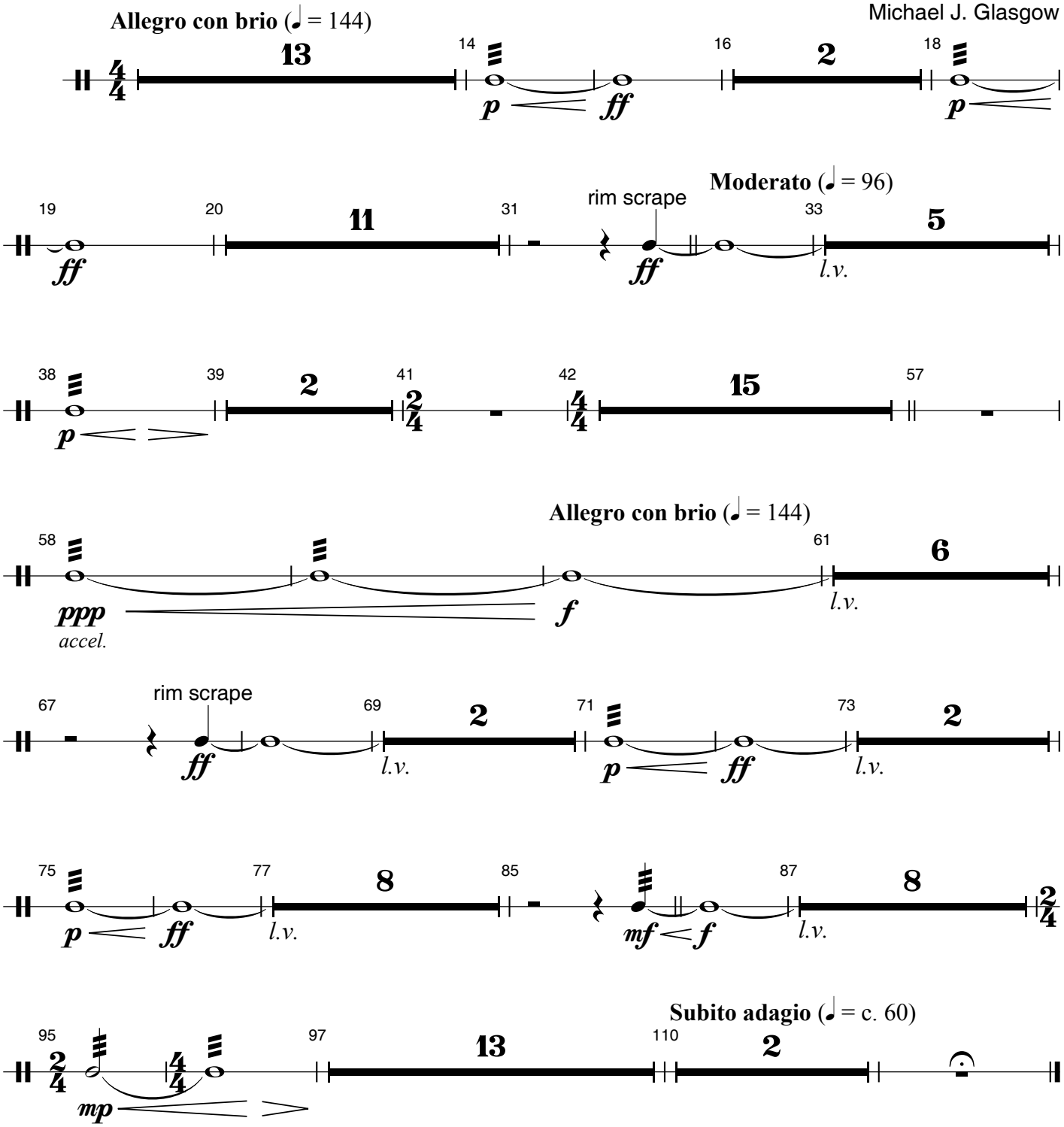
Commissioned by Bellissimo of Redlands Adventist Academy, Redlands, California
James R. Walters, director

Tam tam

Tremors

With Fear and Trembling Stand

Michael J. Glasgow



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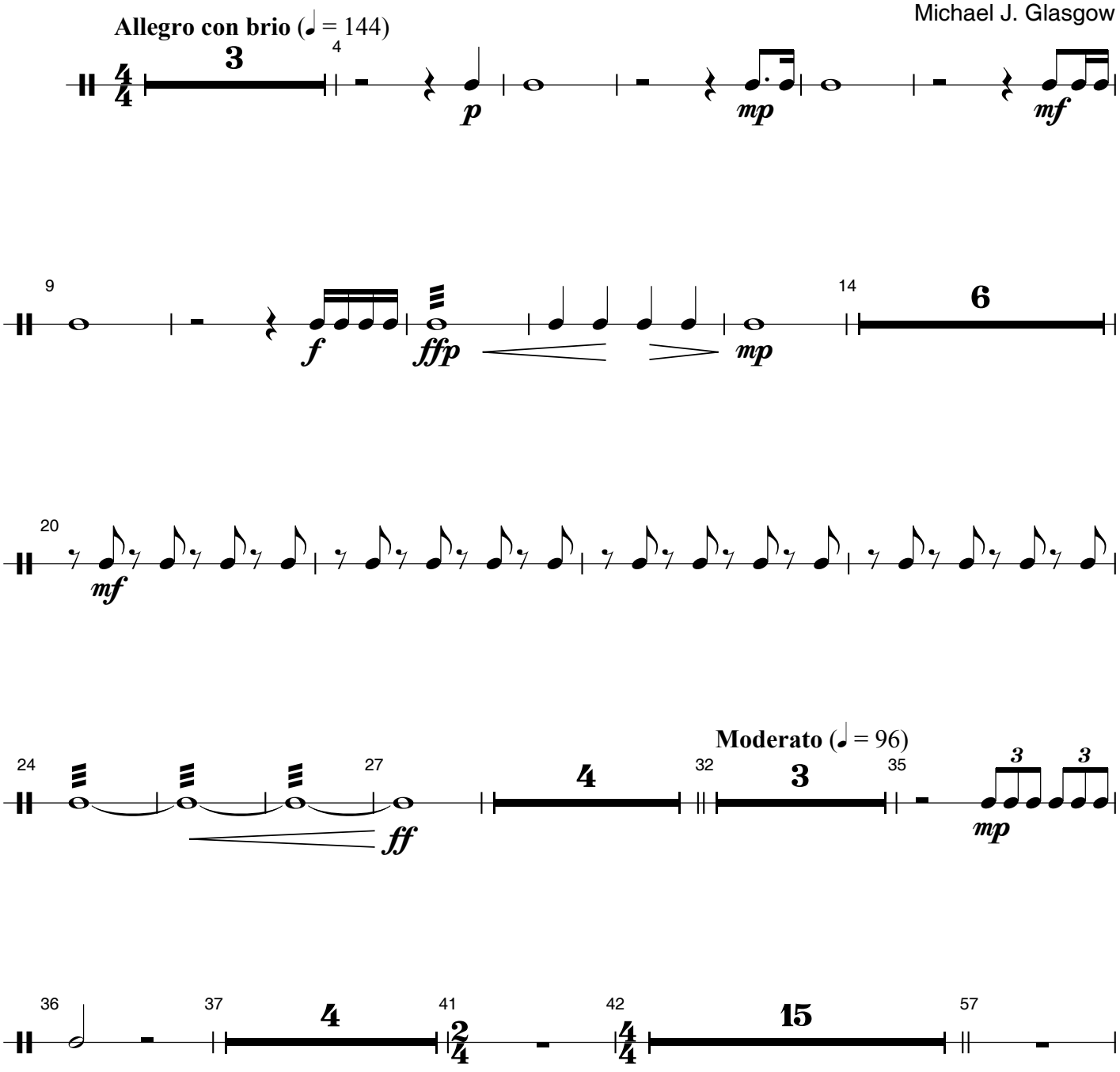
Commissioned by Bellissimo of Redlands Adventist Academy, Redlands, California
James R. Walters, director

Bass Drum

Tremors

With Fear and Trembling Stand

Michael J. Glasgow



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