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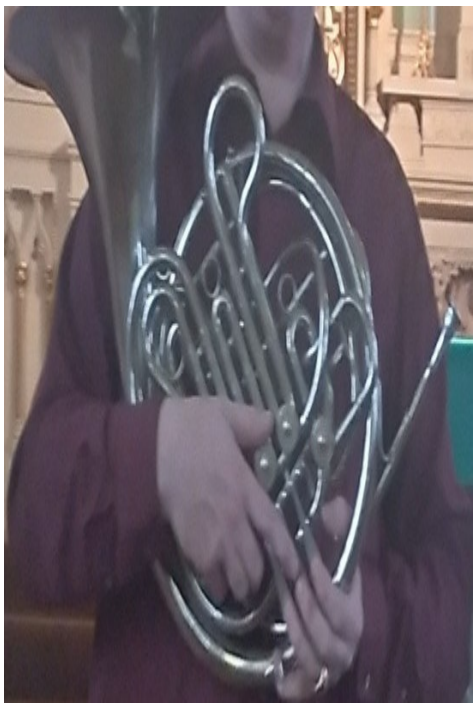
Milwaukee, WI



Down Low for Solo Horn and Optional Narrator

by Mike Keegan

ABOUT DOWN LOW FOR SOLO HORN AND OPTIONAL NARRATOR

Down Low for Solo Horn and Optional Narrator, not only features the low register of the horn, but also how the human brain works with autism. After all, humans have different brain functions. The first movement, Fantasia, is based on the fantasia of the Baroque period. The work opens with fast passages in F Major, a slower section in D Minor with different modulations to return to the Recapitulation of the opening theme. Communication Is A Two-Way Street describes how communication works. The narrator and hornist have a dialogue of how the movement is set up. The slow opening is how a person speaks fluently with a faster rhythmic section to follow, where communication gets lost as someone who speaks too fast. The opening returns where the communication is set up so people do understand. There Are Two Sides To A Story is based on how people communicate their viewpoints. Again, narrator and hornist speak about the importance of hearing both sides of the story. I premiered this work with Donna Bizub, who was the narrator, for Music on the Hill at St. John 23rd-St. Mary's Church, Port Washington. It’s my hope that this work gives the audience and performers alike an idea of how autism is a different brain function rather than the neurological disorder it is, and how neurodiversity is appreciated in society.

Mike Keegan

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Down Low for Solo Horn with Optional Narrator

I. Fantasia

Mike Keegan

Allegro ♩ = 120

decres.

rit.

accel.

decres.

rit.

Adagio

Allegro ♩ = 120

accel.

rit.

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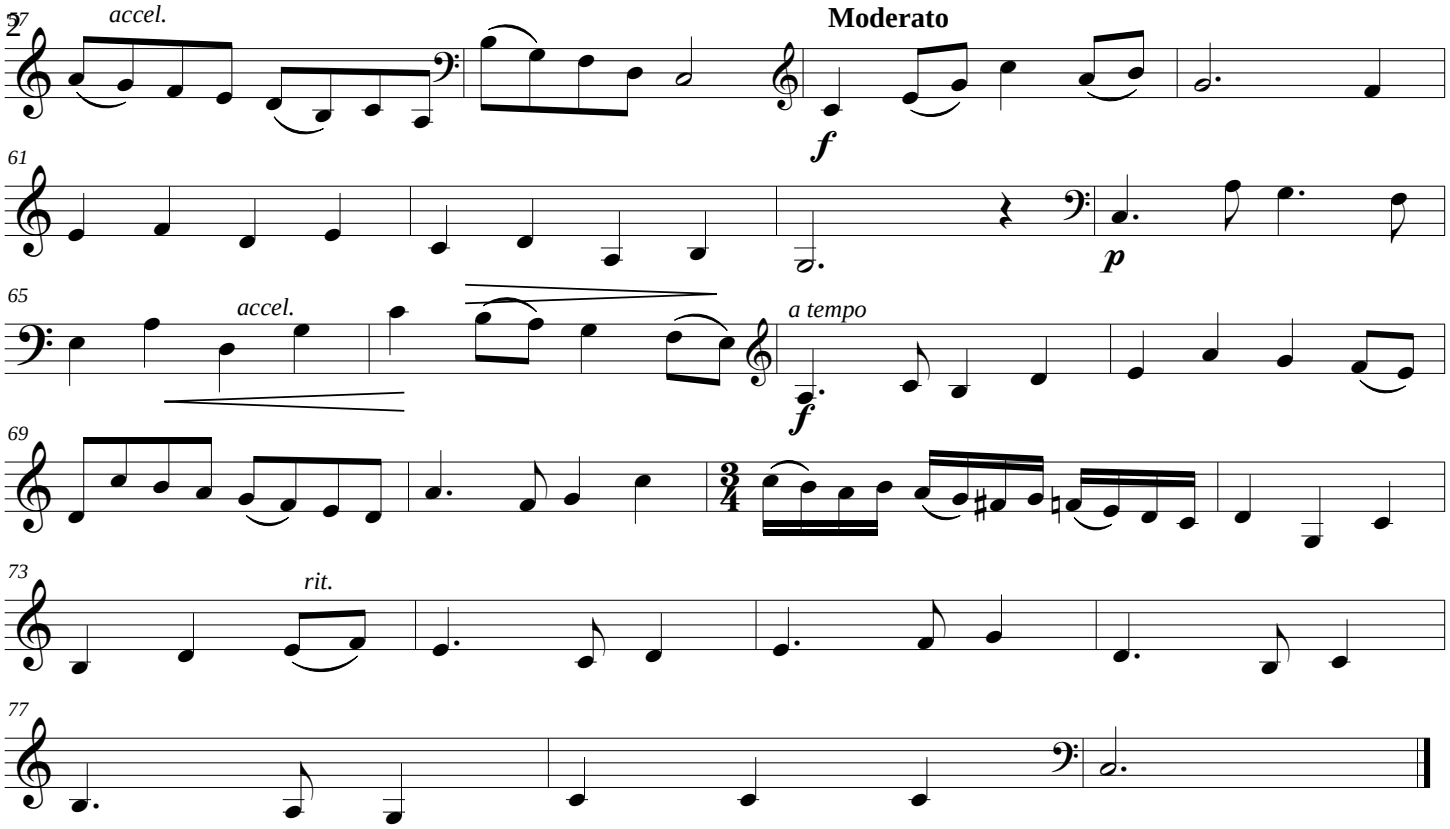
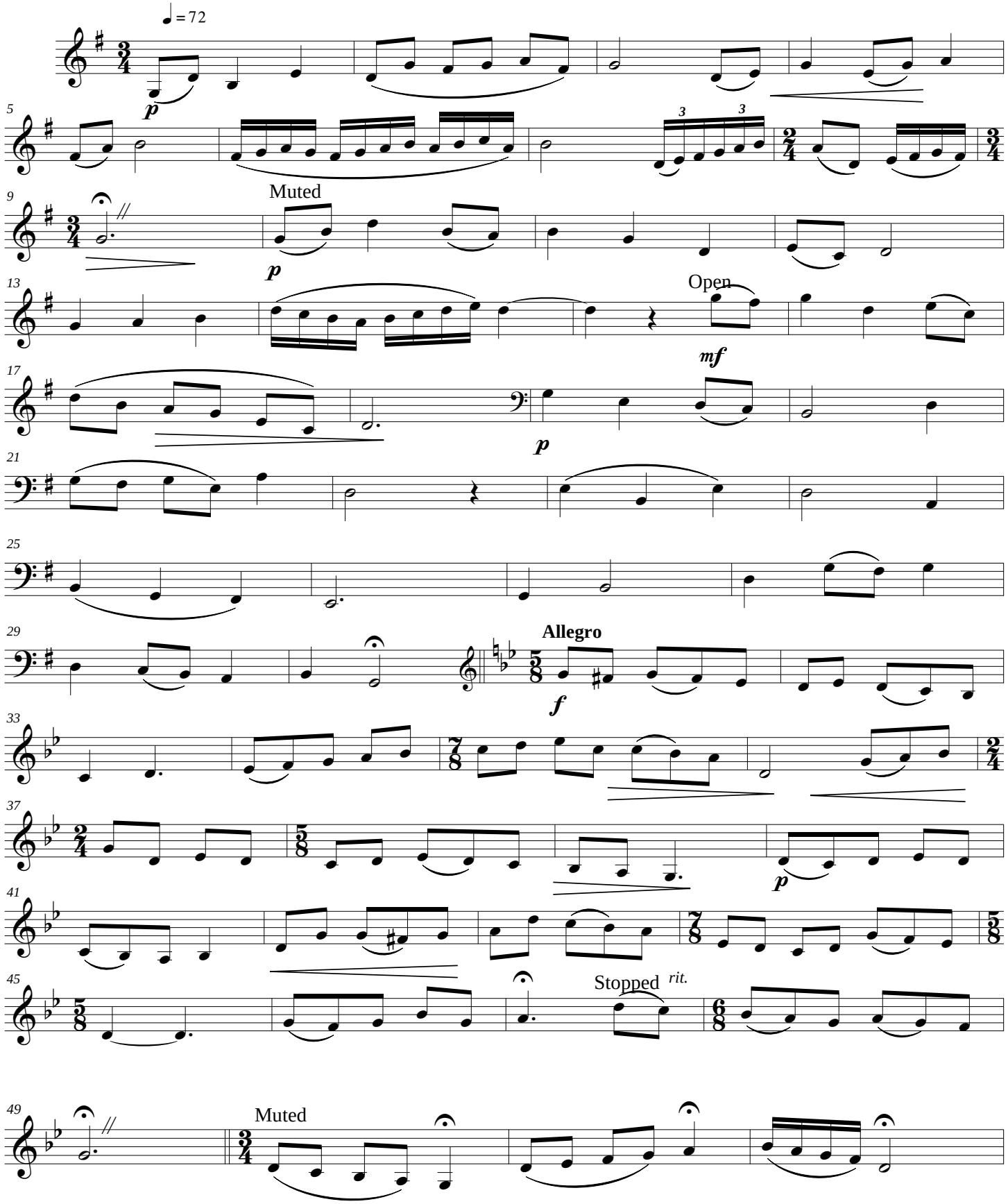
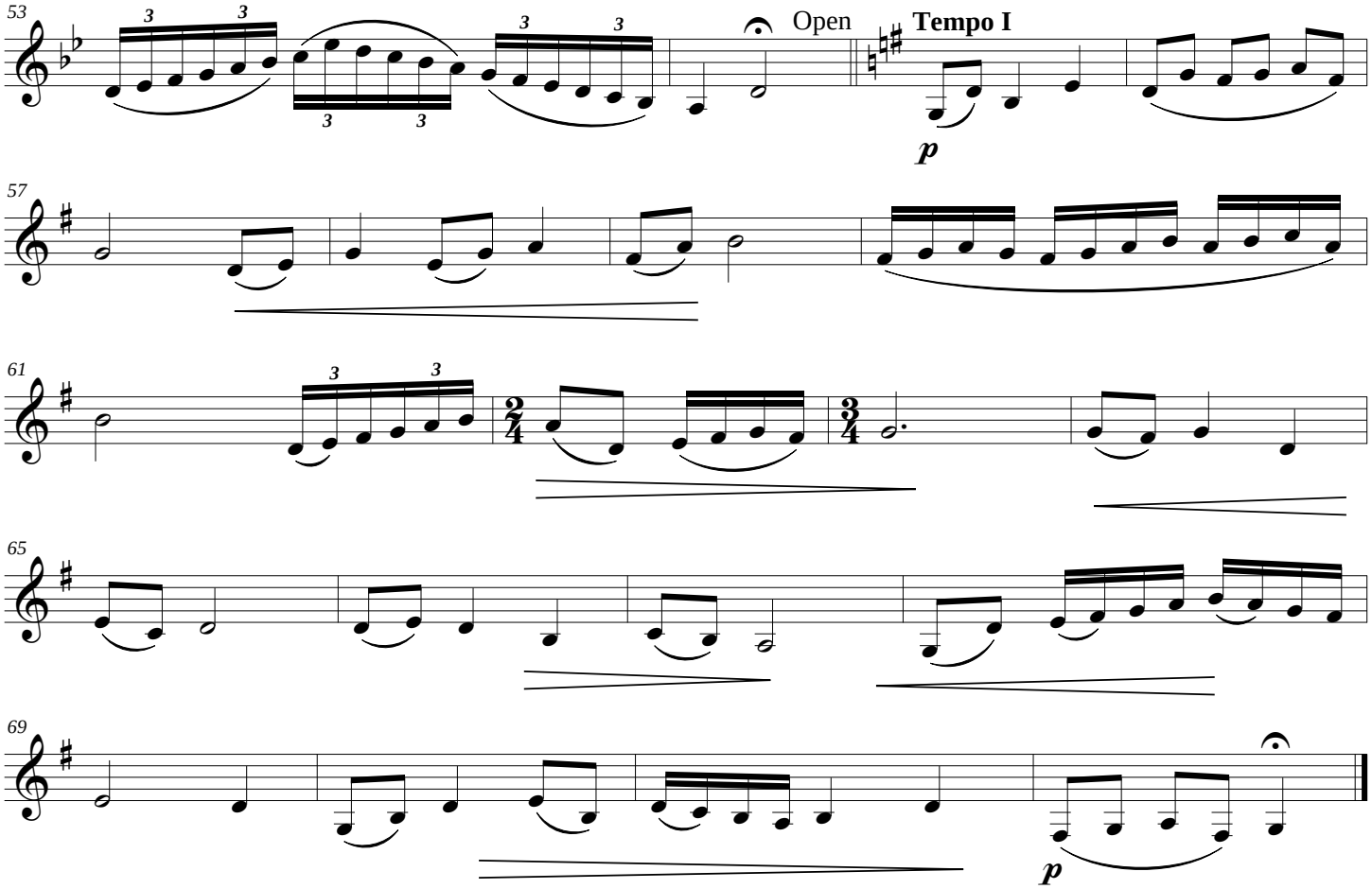
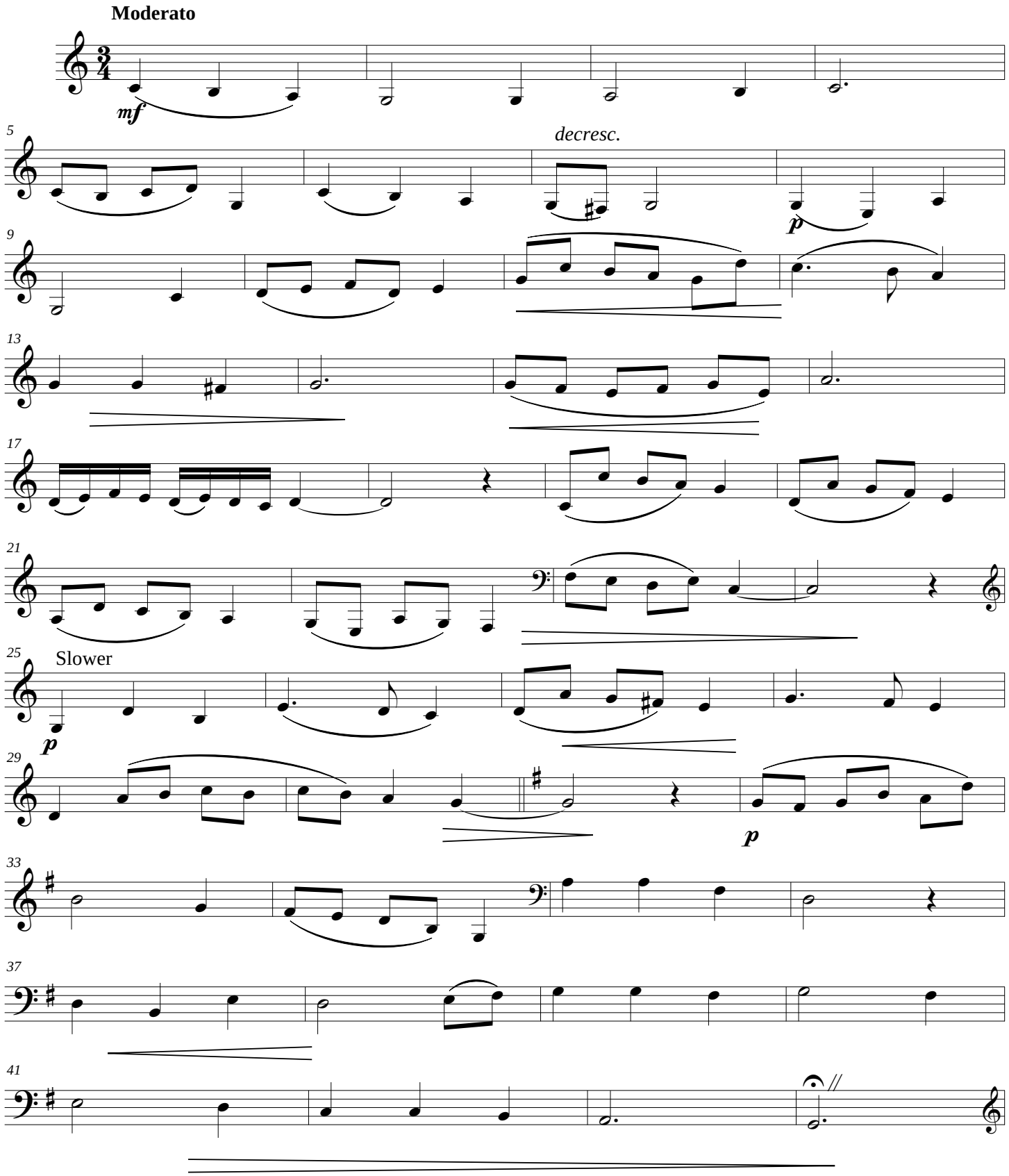

57
accel.
Moderato
f
61
p
65
accel.
a tempo
f
69
73
rit.
77

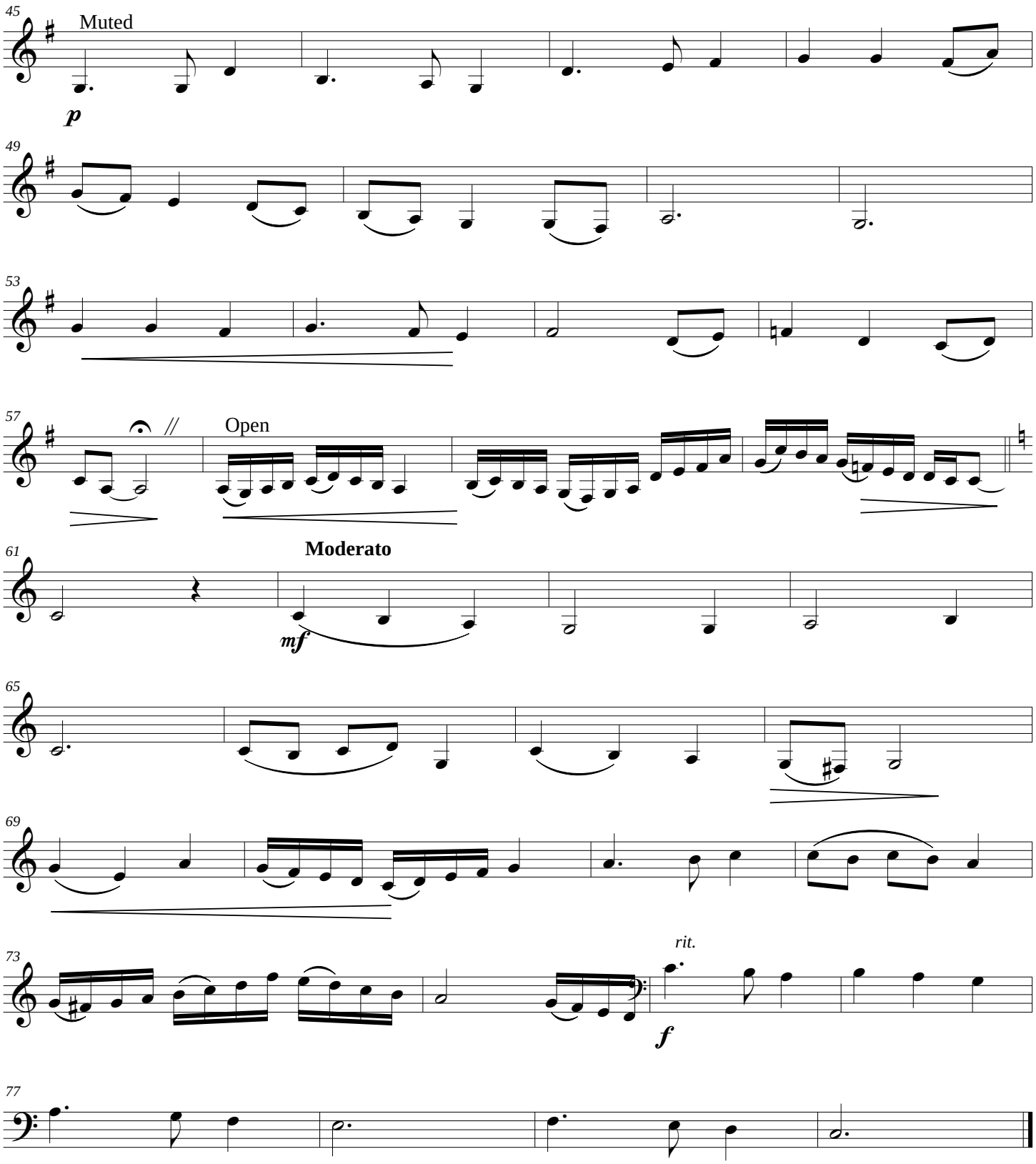
II. Communication Is a Two-Way Street




53
Open
Tempo I
p
57
61
65
69
p

III. There Are Two Sides To A Story




45
Muted
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Open
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Moderato
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rit.
f
77

NARRATION FOR DOWN LOW FOR SOLO HORN

Narrator: Hello everyone. Mike Keegan has composed a work for the low range of the horn, Down Low. This work not only explores the low range of the instrument itself, but how people communicate with others through art, music, and speech. For a long time, Autism has been a neurological disorder, but thanks in part to recent diagnoses and many other technological advances, autism is a just a different brain function, or way of thinking. The Fantasia introduces horn in the low range and what it's like to be on the Autism Spectrum. This represents the different ways of communicating with other people, looking at things, and a different way of thinking.

SECOND MOVEMENT

Narrator: Communication is a two-way street. What does this mean to you?
Hornist: It takes two people to have a conversation. For example, people who stutter and those that don't, talk too quickly. It helps for the stutterer and non-stutterer alike to slow down when speaking.
Narrator: Agreed. If no one communicates, then there's no way of knowing the other side of the story.
Hornist: In this movement, the slow introduction can be thought of the speaker who speaks slowly so people can hear them clearly. The faster section can be described as someone who talks too fast that there's no way of knowing the words being communicated to the audience or people. To look at the Recapitulation of the opening, if people speak slowly, then others understand.

THIRD MOVEMENT

Narrator: So, we just heard communication is a two-way street. There are two sides to a story. What does this mean to you?
Hornist: Well, it means one person has some things to say, and the other person presents the other side.
Narrator: Yes, that is true. The other point of view is important, whether we agree with it or not.
Hornist: I highly agree. The first part is one side and the second part, the other side. Both sides of the story need to be heard. (Insert name) has done a wonderful job in communicating both sides of the story in this entire work. It's our hope that performers and listeners alike can learn a lot from the composer who is autistic to understand how the arts play an important role in society. Thank you for listening.