String Quartet No. 1

by

John Burge

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Duration: approximately 25 minutes

About the composer…

John Burge holds degrees in Composition and Theory from the University of Toronto (B.Mus. and M.Mus.) and the University of British Columbia (D.M.A.). Since 1987 he has been teaching at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario where he currently holds the position of Full Professor. He has composed a large body of chamber and orchestral compositions but is particularly well known for his choral music. His composition, ***Angels' Voices***, for choir and orchestra, received the 2006 Outstanding New Choral Composition Award from the Association of Canadian Choral Conductors and was performed in New York City's Carnegie Hall in 2005. The recording of his work, ***Flanders Fields Reflections***, by Sinfonia Toronto on the Marquis Classics label, received the 2009 Juno Award for the Best Canadian Classical Composition. A passionate advocate for Canadian music he was a member of the Executive of the Canadian League of Composers from 1993-2007, serving as President from 1998-2006. He is currently a board member of the SOCAN Foundation.

About the composition…

While John Burge has written a significant amount of music for string instruments over the years, at the age of fifty is perhaps coming a bit late to the string quartet genre. As such, he is very appreciative of the Penderecki String Quartet's offer to commission this composition. Composers have often developed their most intimate and abstract musical thoughts in their string quartets and Burge's first quartet takes a similar initial starting point by following the standard design of four contrasting movements. The first movement, through a process of on-going variation, develops the opening melodic phrase initially presented in unison by all the strings. The second movement is the emotional heart of the work and is built around an expressive solo for the cello. The fast scherzo that follows makes use of a variety of timbres and registers and features a polytonal trio section that juxtaposes a quirky violin solo in F major with a pizzicato accompaniment in D major. The finale displays a rhythmically active foreground that powers the music along to the end with only a few brief respites. This quartet is dedicated to the composer's wife, Nancy, herself a cellist, and was premiered by the Penderecki Quartet on January 15th, 2012, the year of their thirtieth wedding anniversary.

String Quartet No. 1 John Burge (b. 1961)

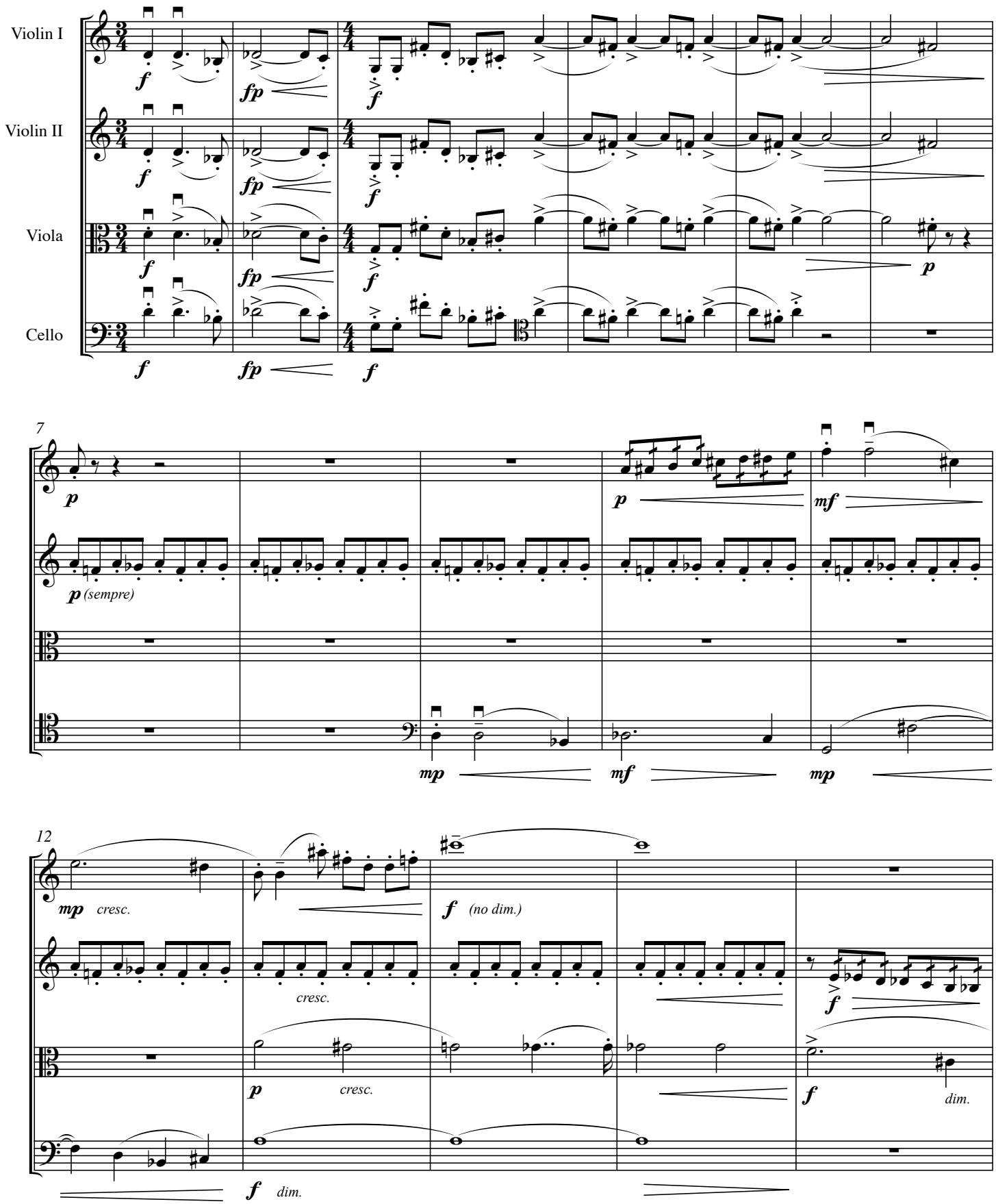
I. Allegro
II. Adagio espressivo
III. Vivace—Poco meno mosso—Vivace
IV. Allegro energico

for Nancy

String Quartet No. 1

Allegro ♩ = 132

John Burge



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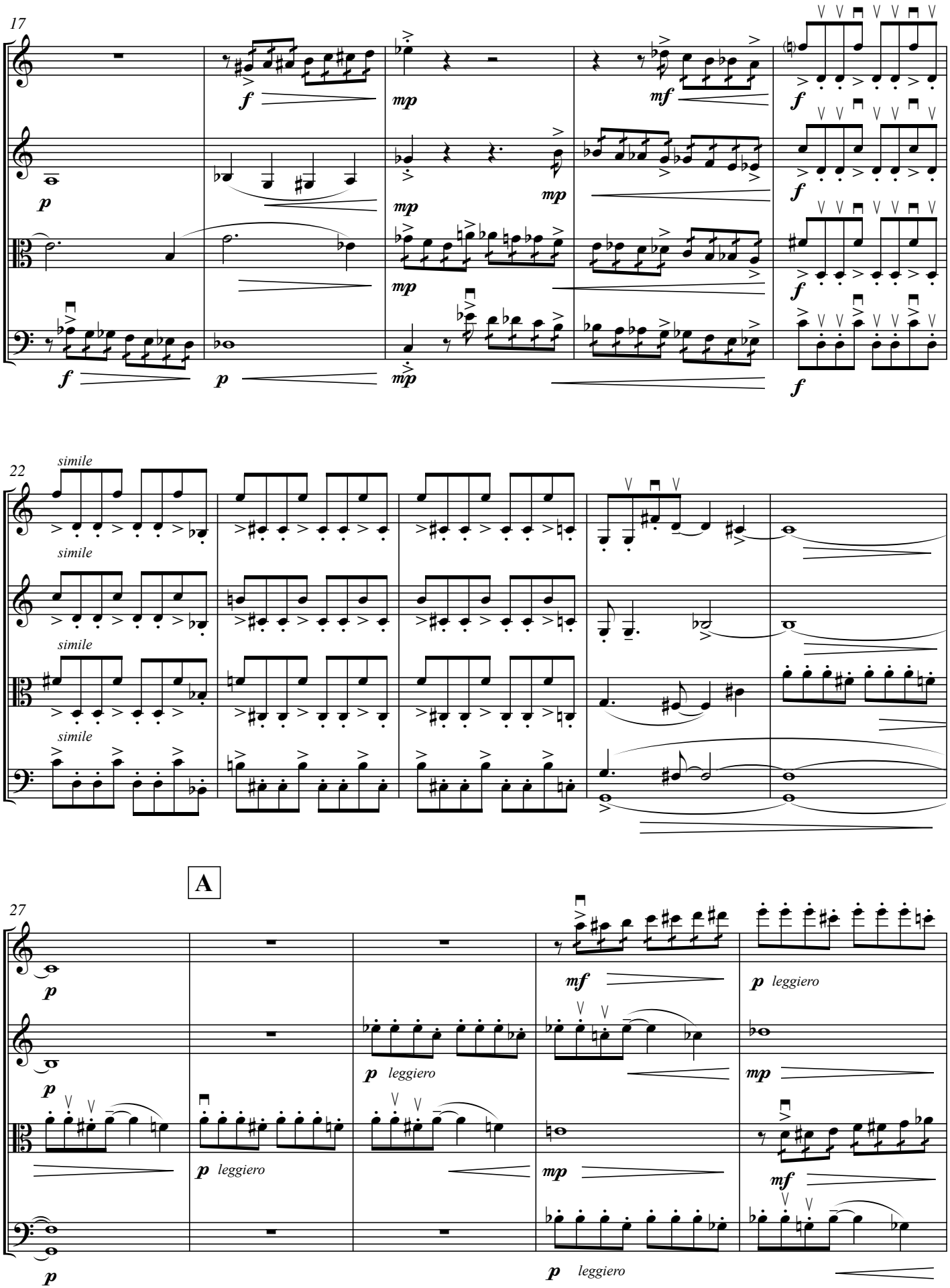
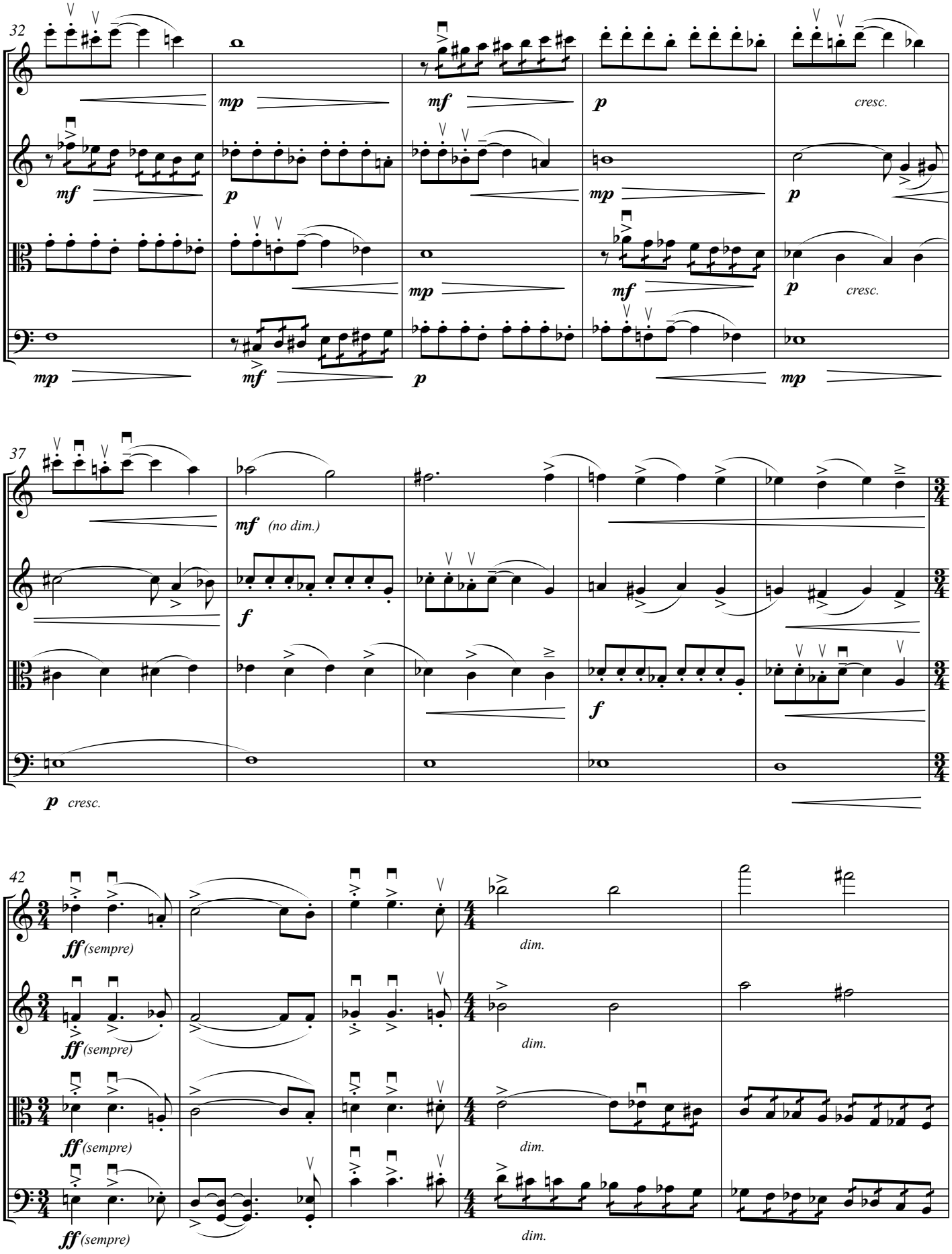
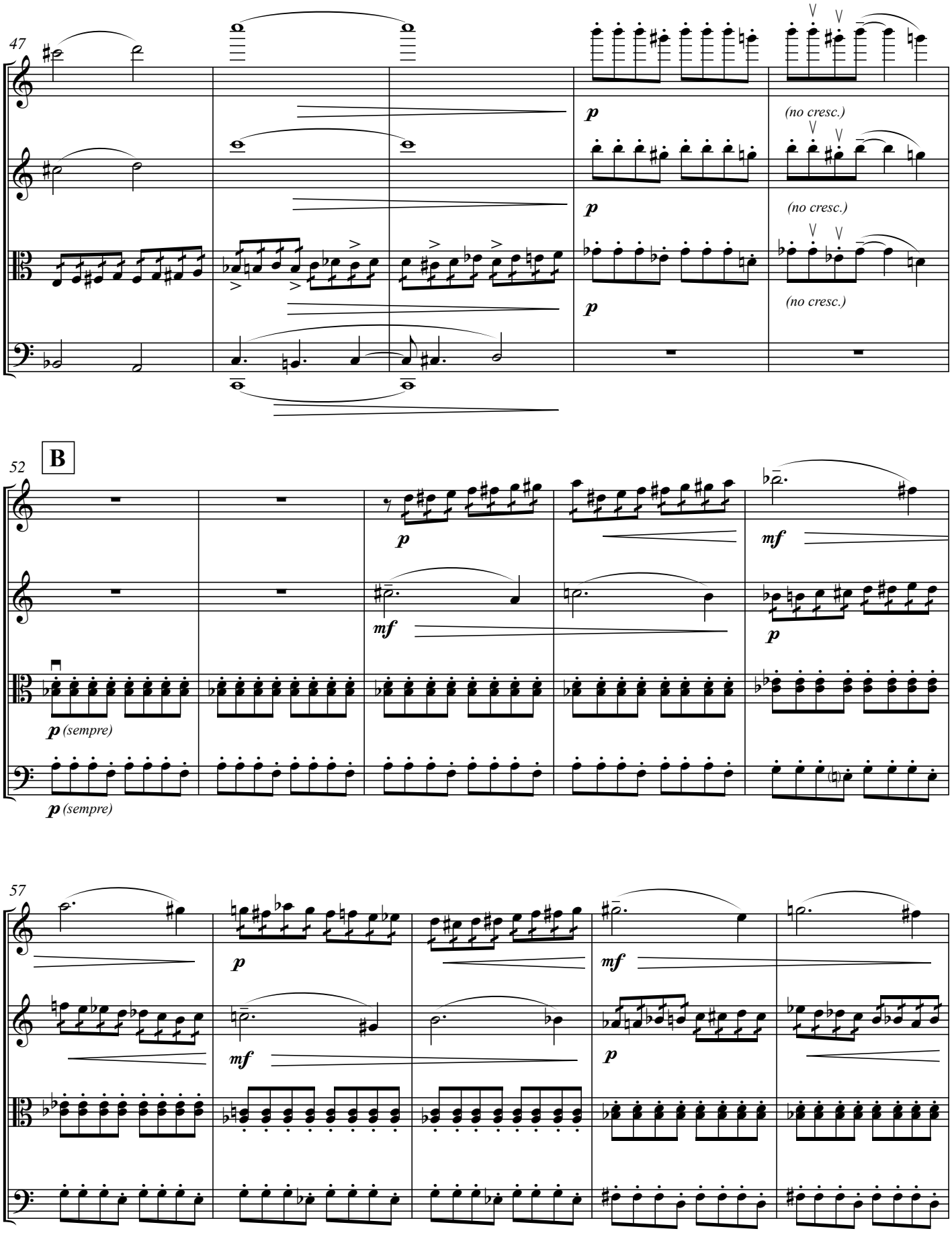
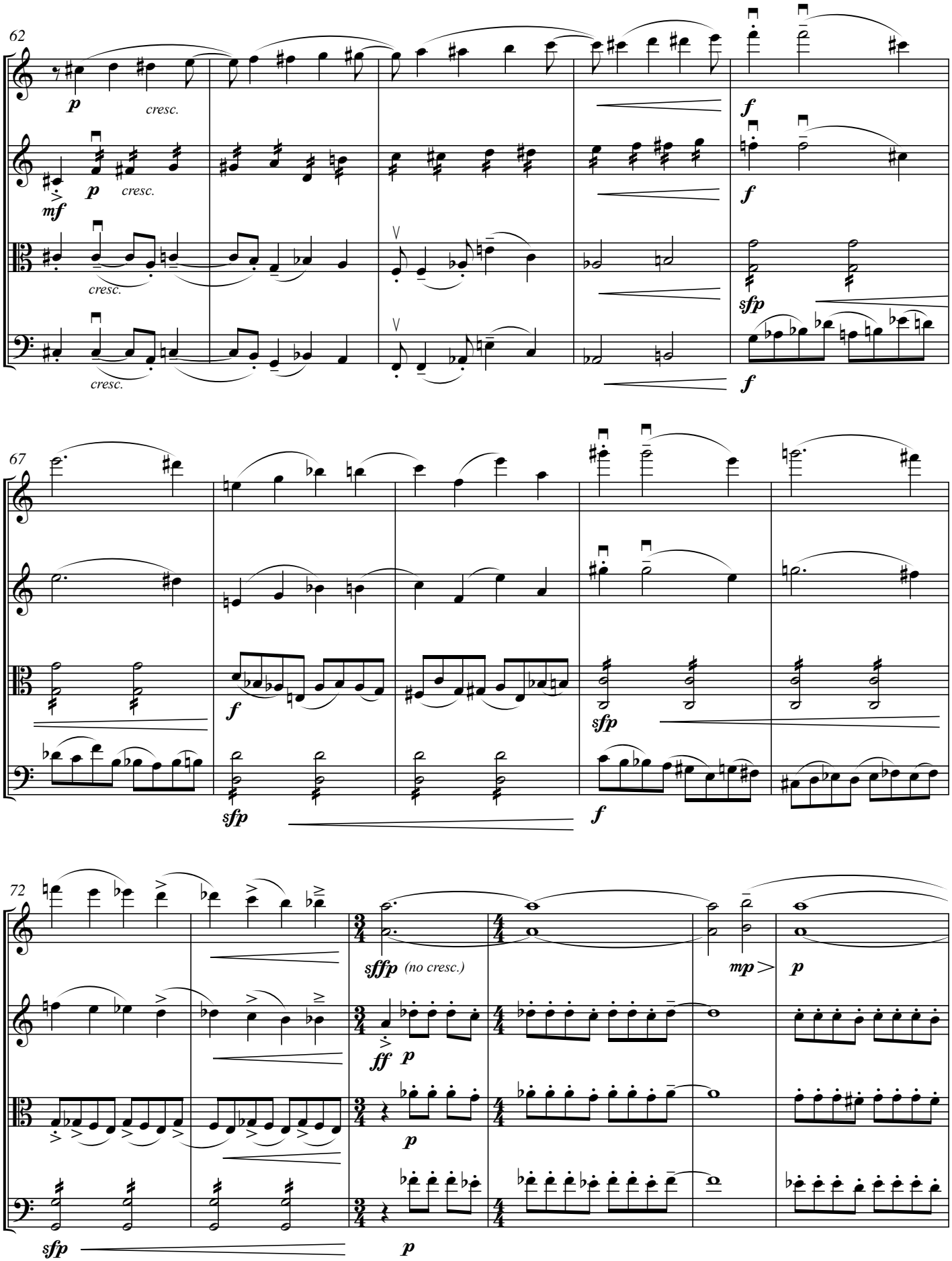
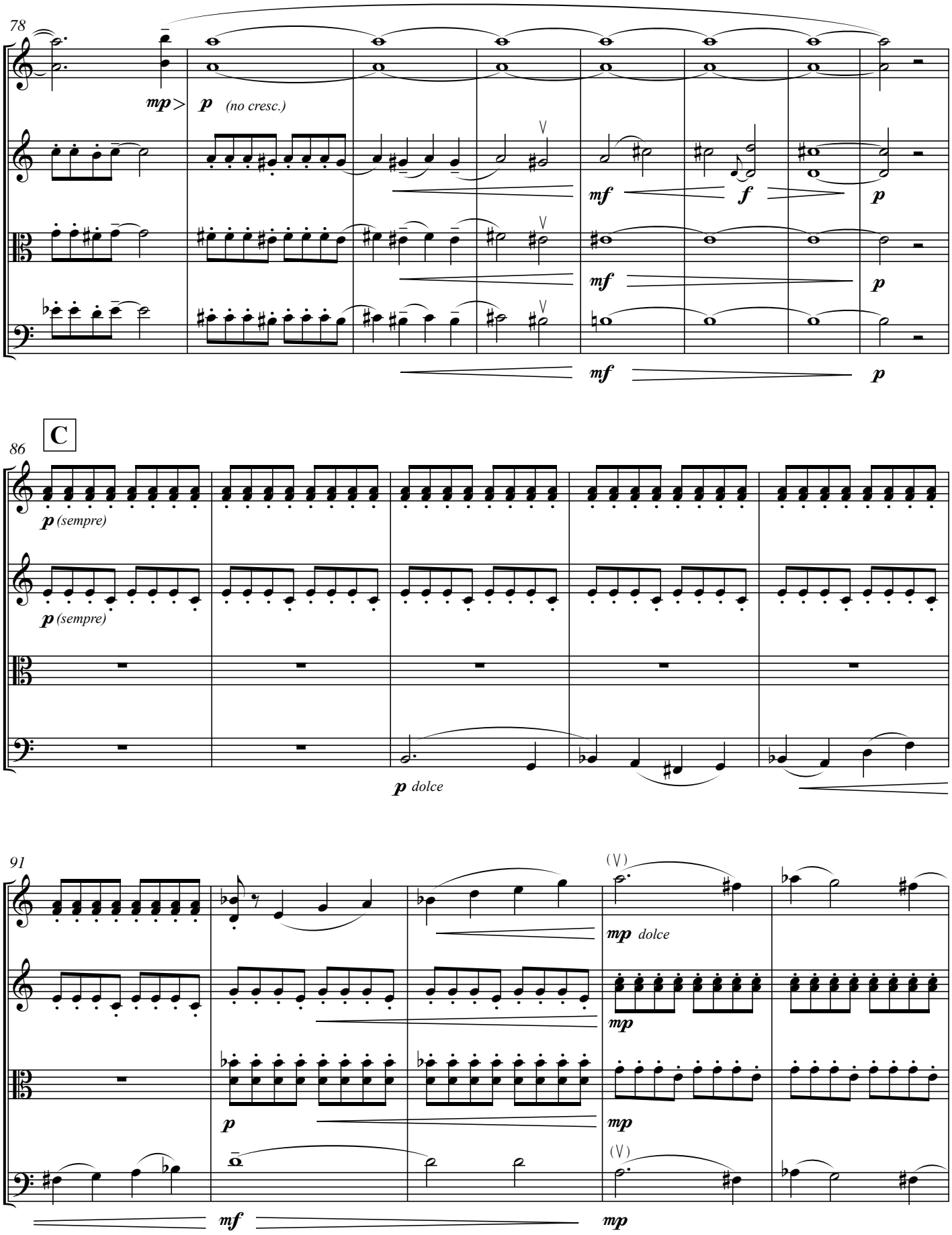
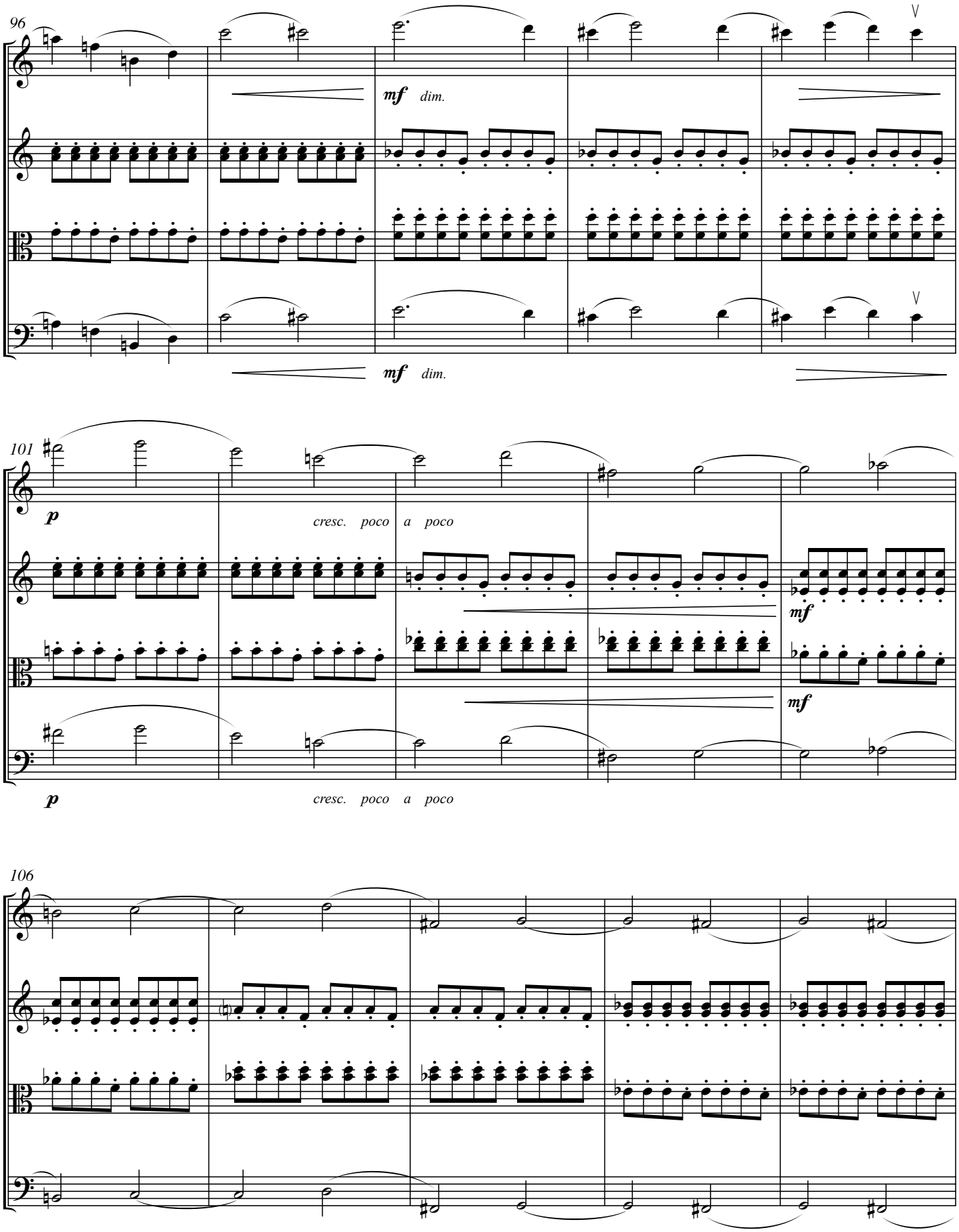

17
f
mp
mf
p
22
simile
A
27
leggiero

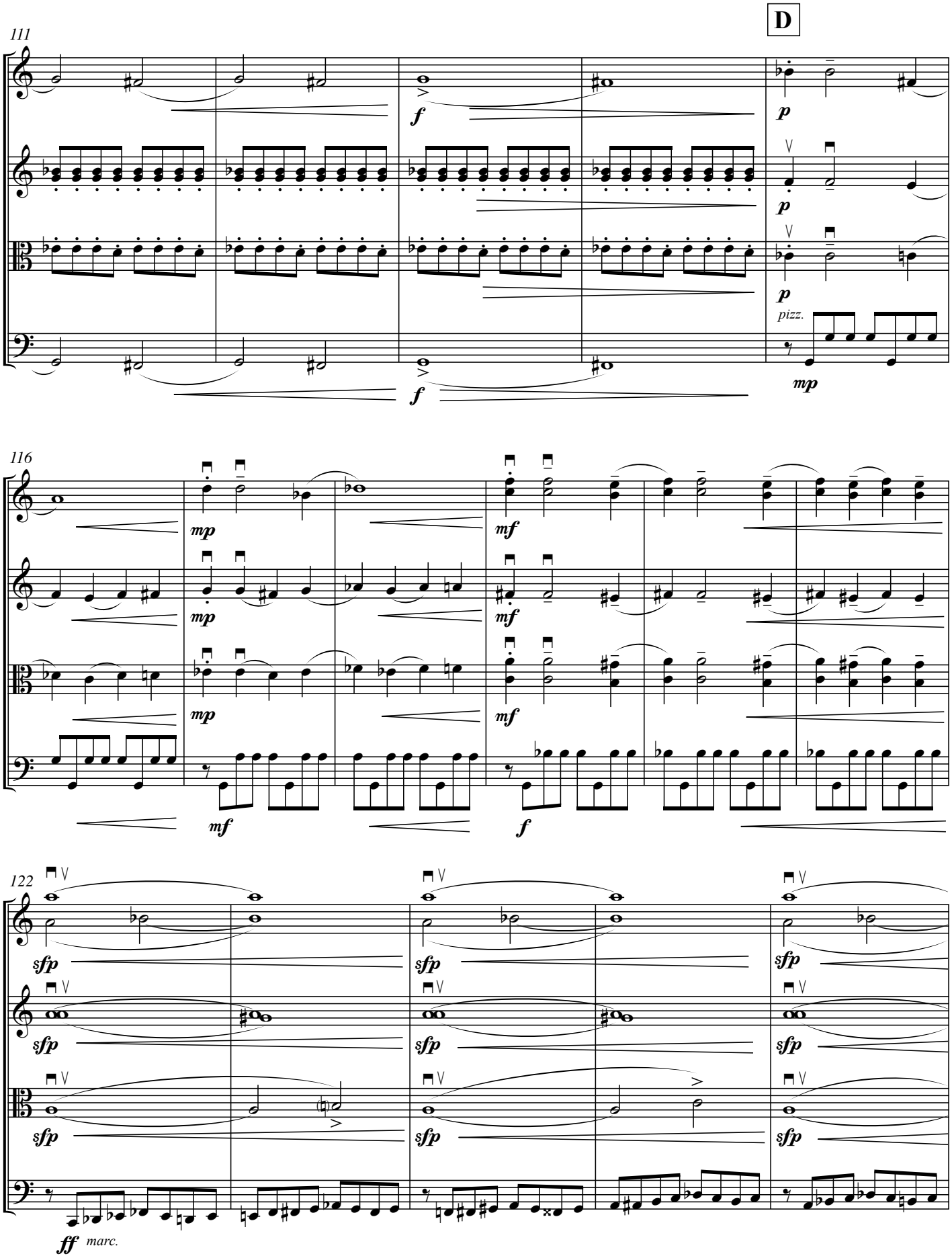

32
mp
mf
p
cresc.
37
mf (no dim.)
f
p cresc.
42
ff (sempre)
dim.

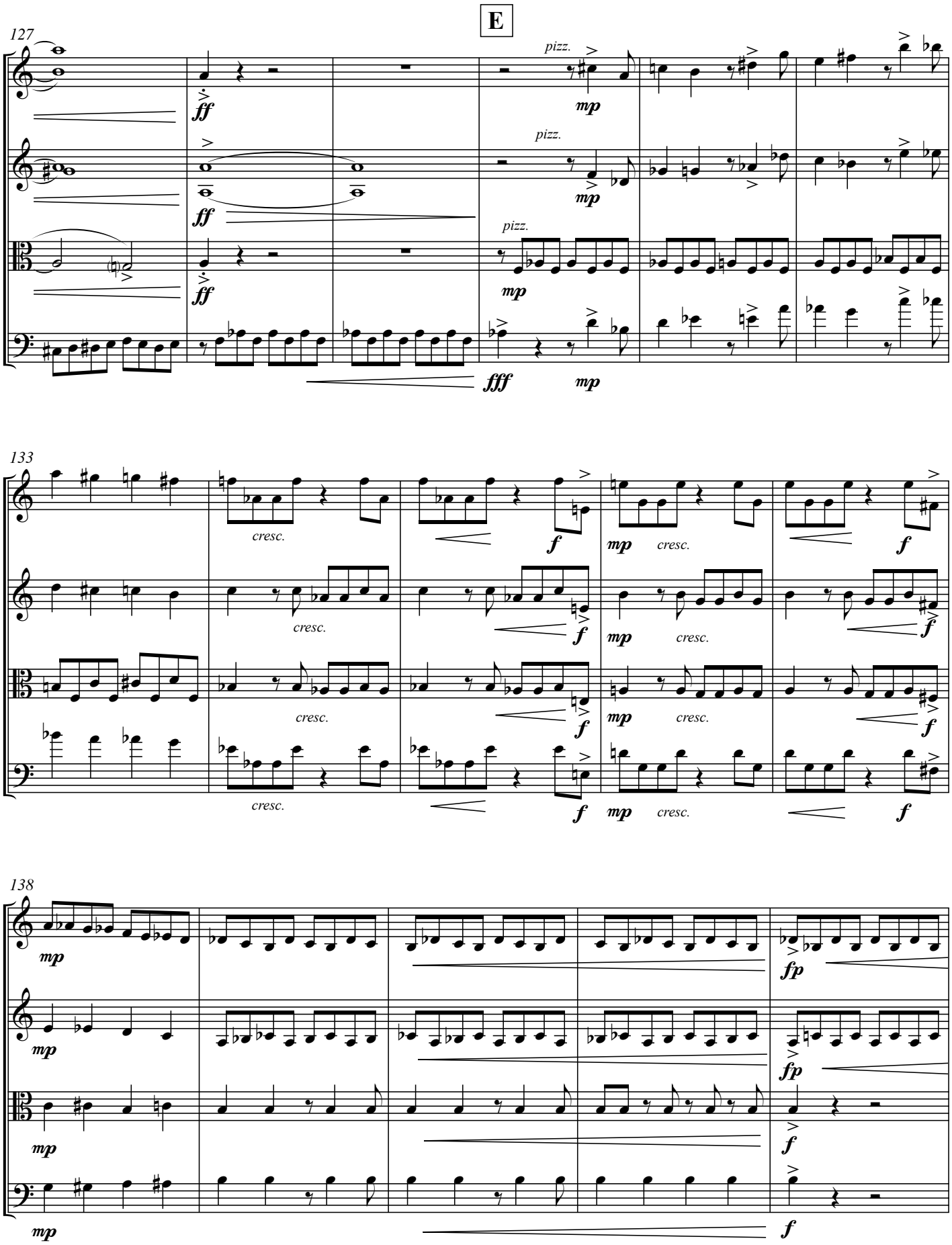

47
p
(no cresc.)
p
(no cresc.)
p
(no cresc.)
52
B
p
mf
mf
p
p (sempre)
p (sempre)
57
p
mf
mf
p

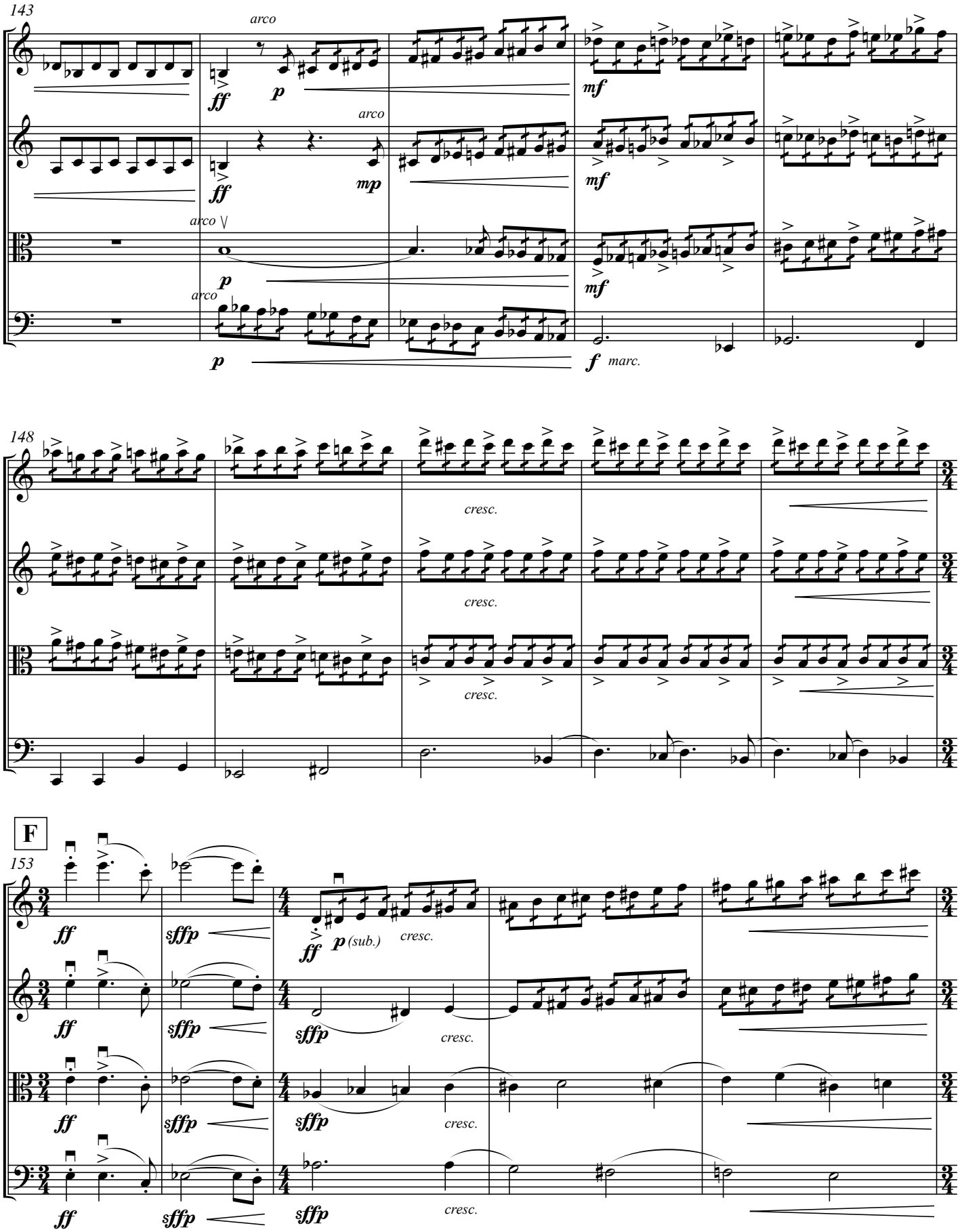

62
p
cresc.
f
mf
p
cresc.
f
cresc.
sfp
cresc.
f
67
f
sfp
sfp
f
72
sffp
(no cresc.)
mp
p
ff
p
p
sfp
p

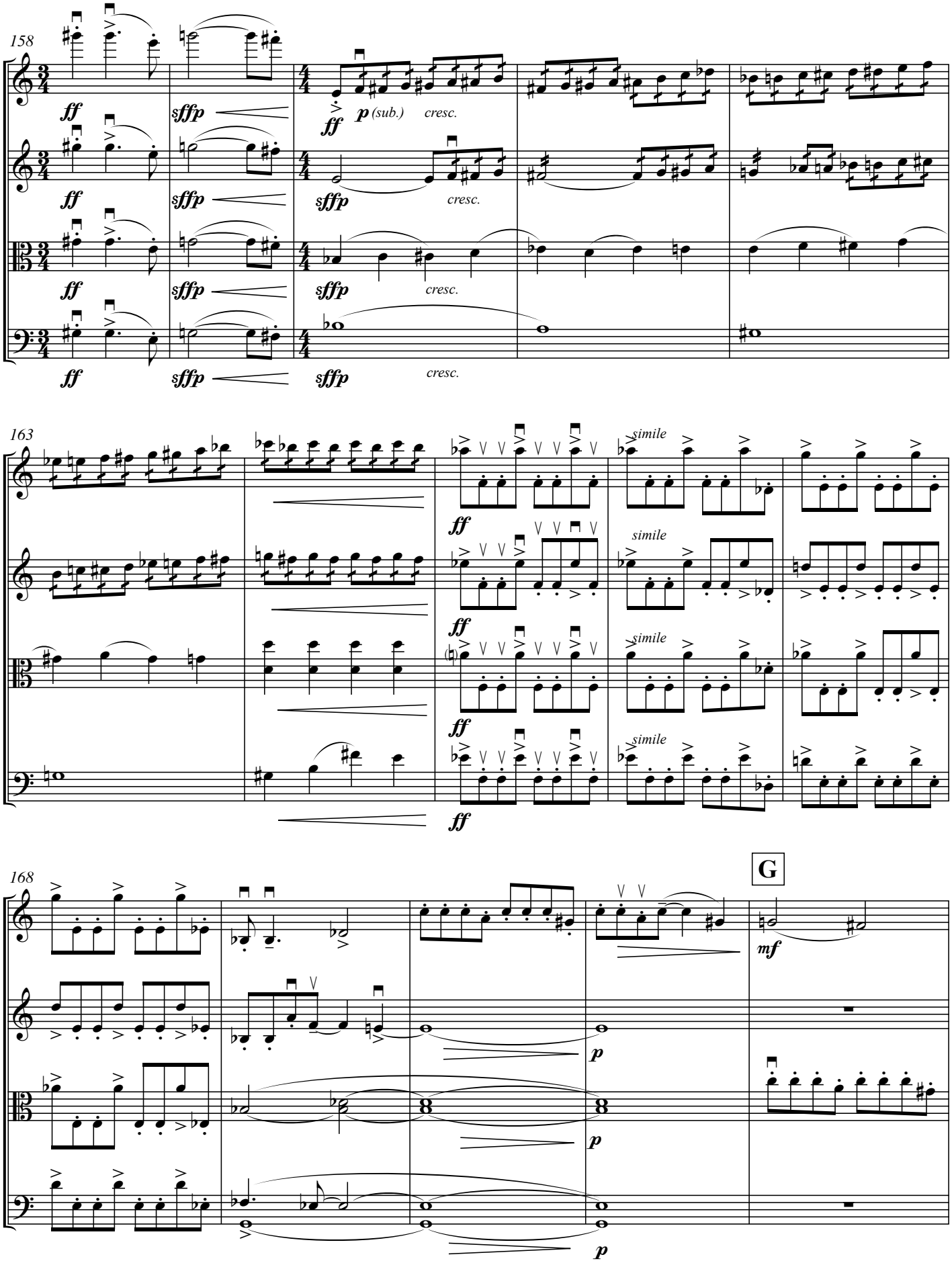

78
mp
p (no cresc.)
mf
f
p
mf
p
mf
p
C
86
p (sempre)
p (sempre)
p dolce
91
mp dolce
mp
p
mp
mf
mp

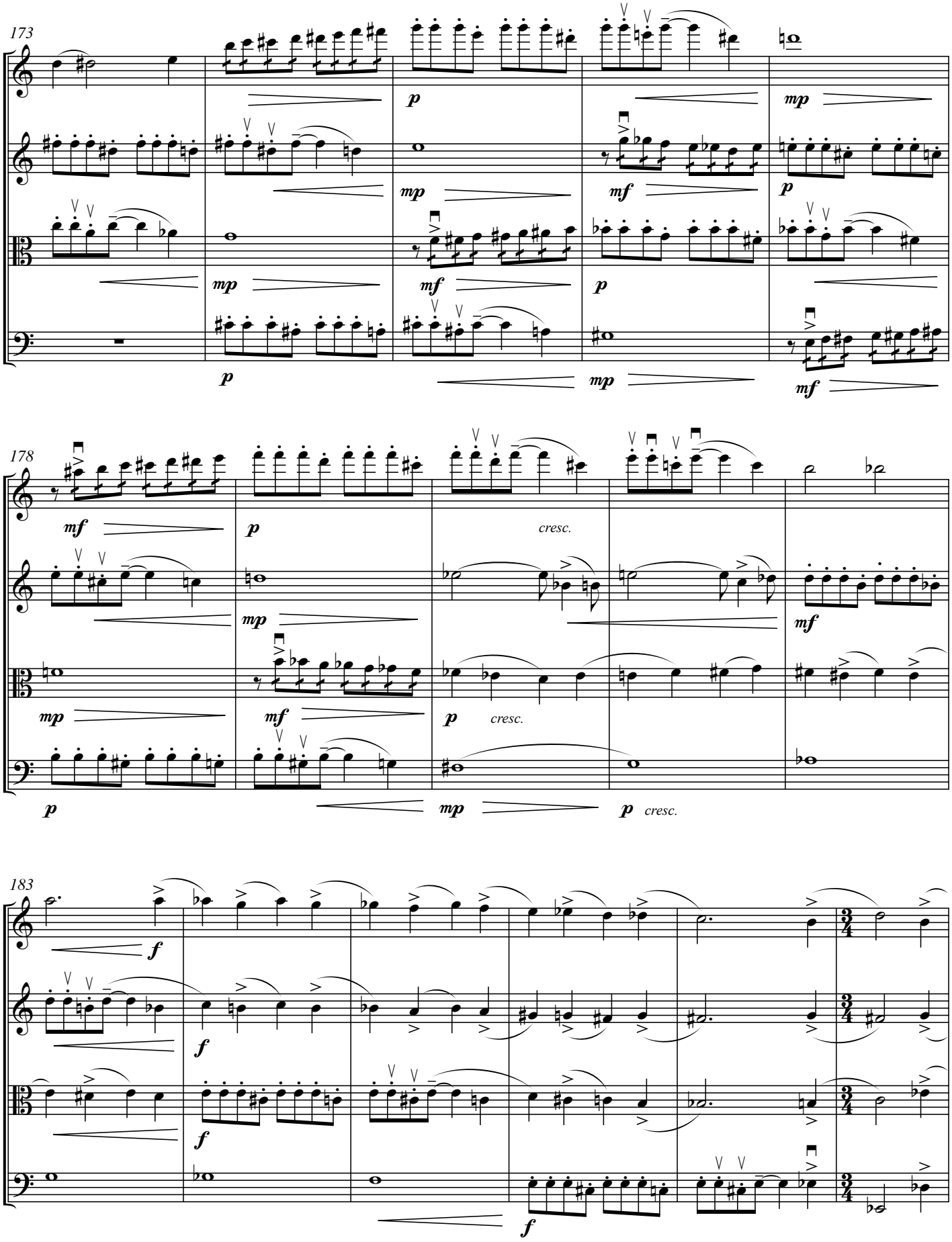

96
mf dim.
mf dim.
101
p
cresc. poco a poco
mf
mf
p
cresc. poco a poco
106

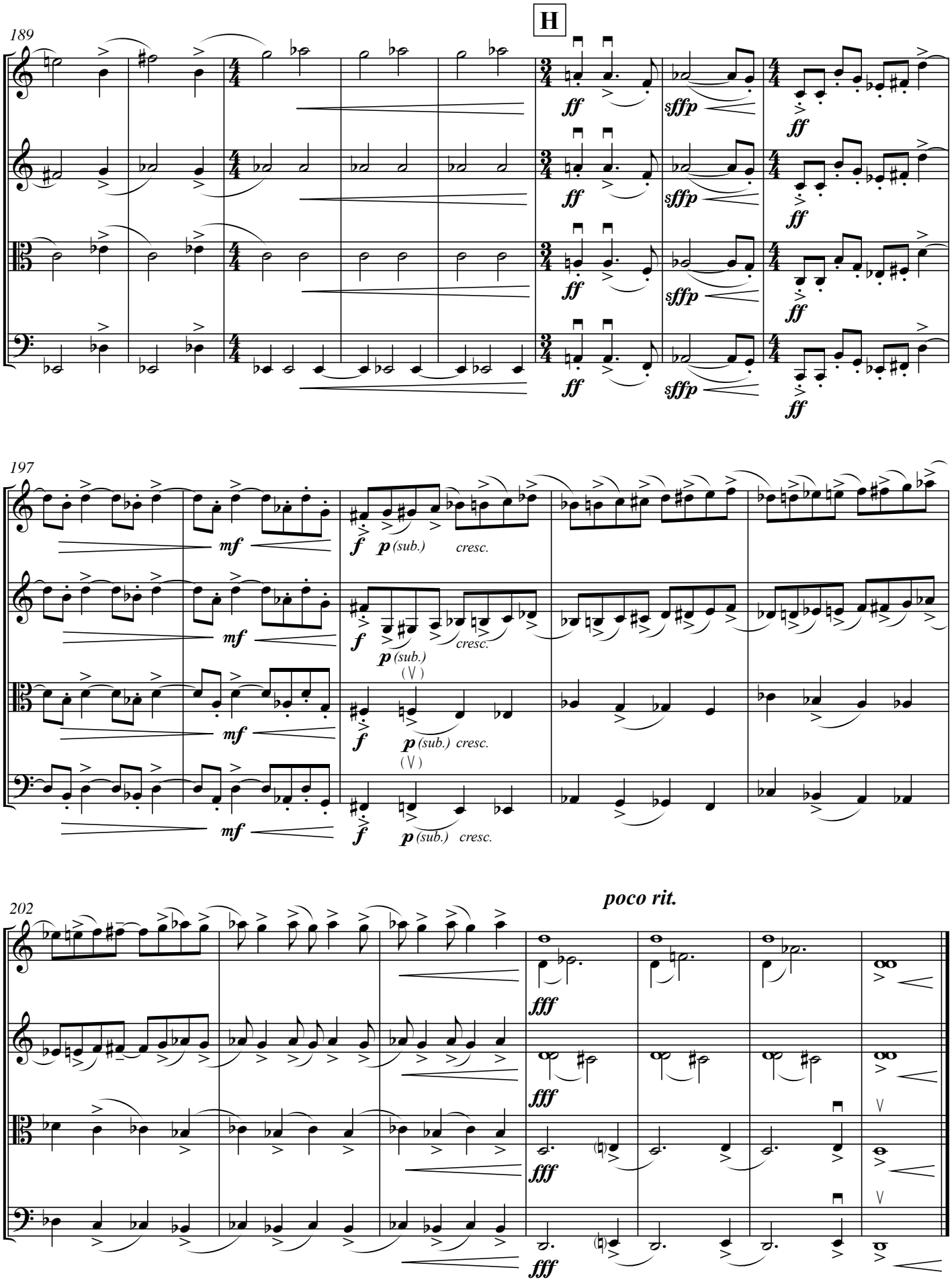

D
111
f
p
p
p
pizz.
mp
f
116
mp
mf
mp
mf
mp
mf
mf
f
122
sfp
sfp
sfp
sfp
sfp
sfp
sfp
sfp
sfp
ff
marc.


E
127
pizz.
ff
mp
ffff
133
cresc.
f
138
fp


143
arco
ff
p
mf
arco
ff
mp
mf
arco
p
mf
arco
p
f
marc.
148
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
F
153
ff
sffp
ff
p (sub.)
cresc.
ff
sffp
sffp
cresc.
ff
sffp
sffp
cresc.
ff
sffp
sffp
cresc.

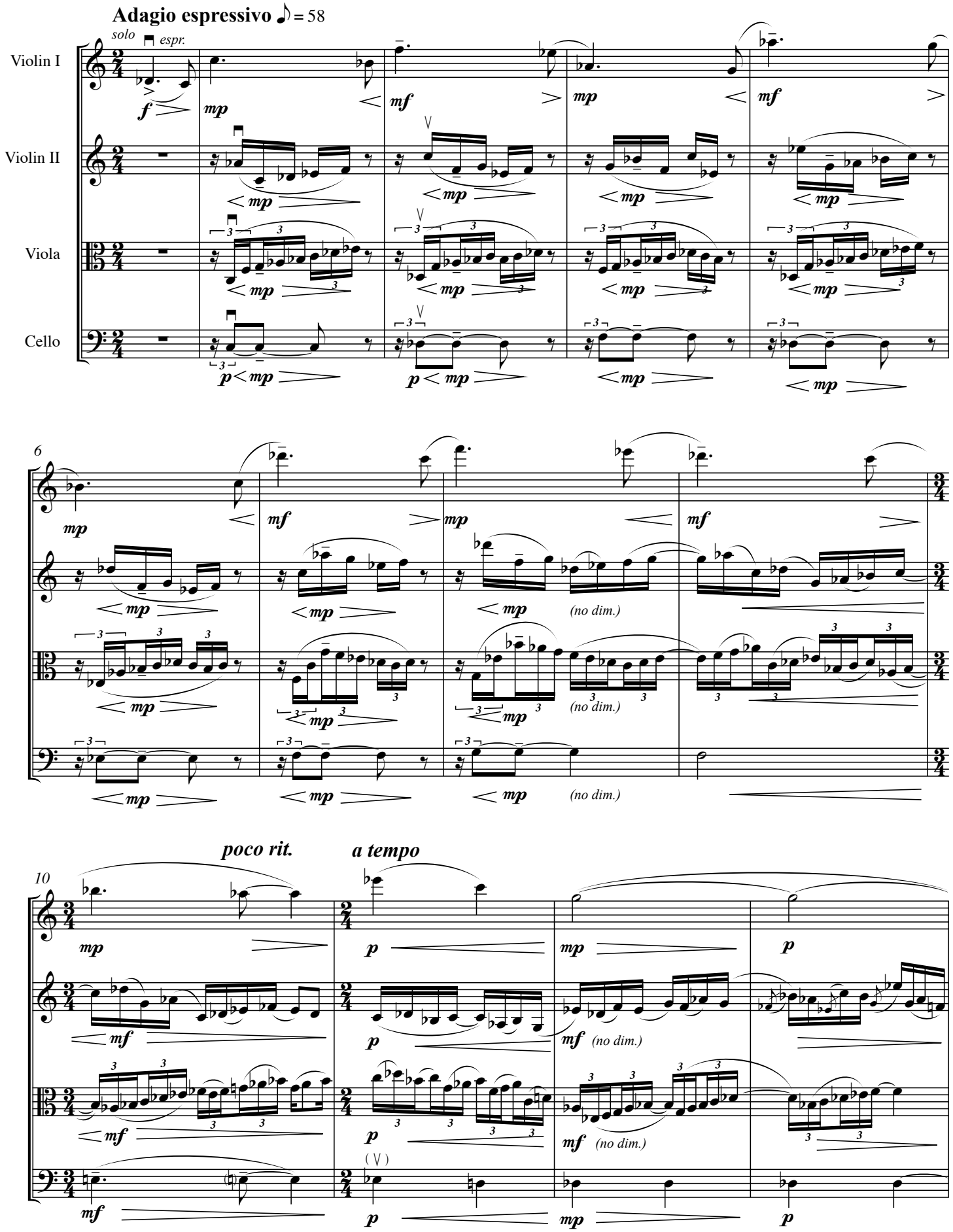

158
ff
sffp
ff
p (sub.)
cresc.
sffp
163
simile
mf
168
G
p

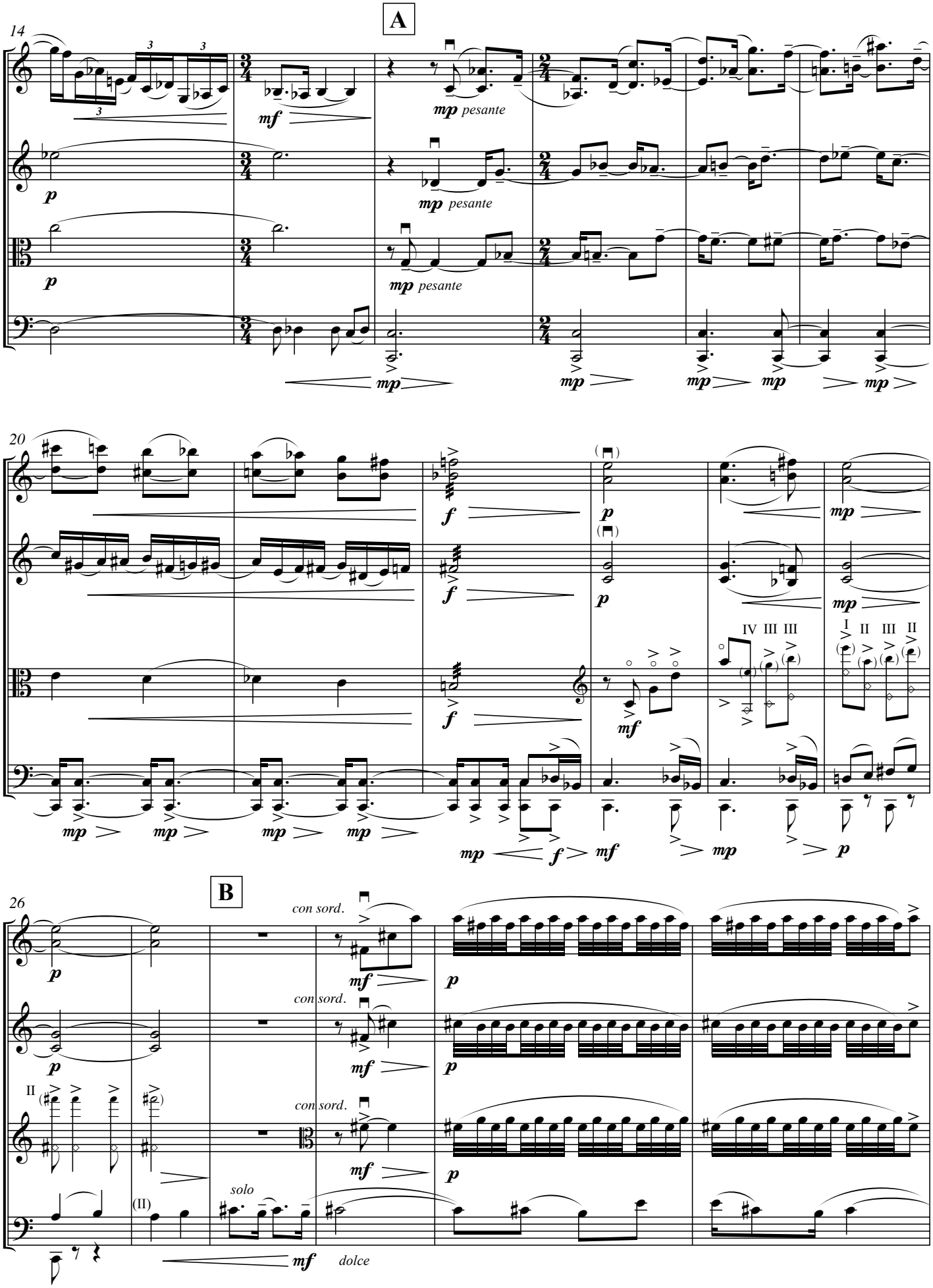

173
p
mp
mf
178
cresc.
183
f

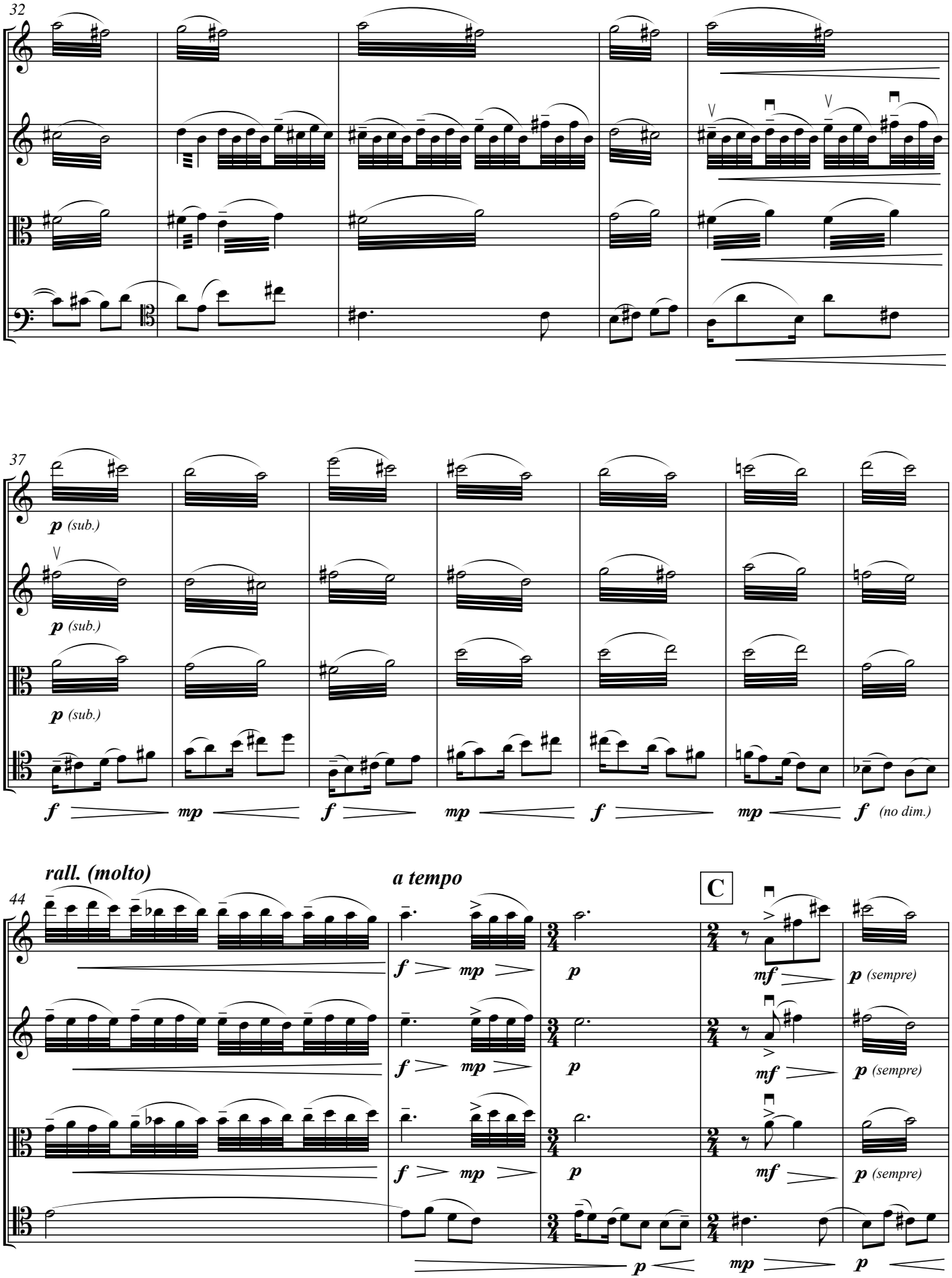


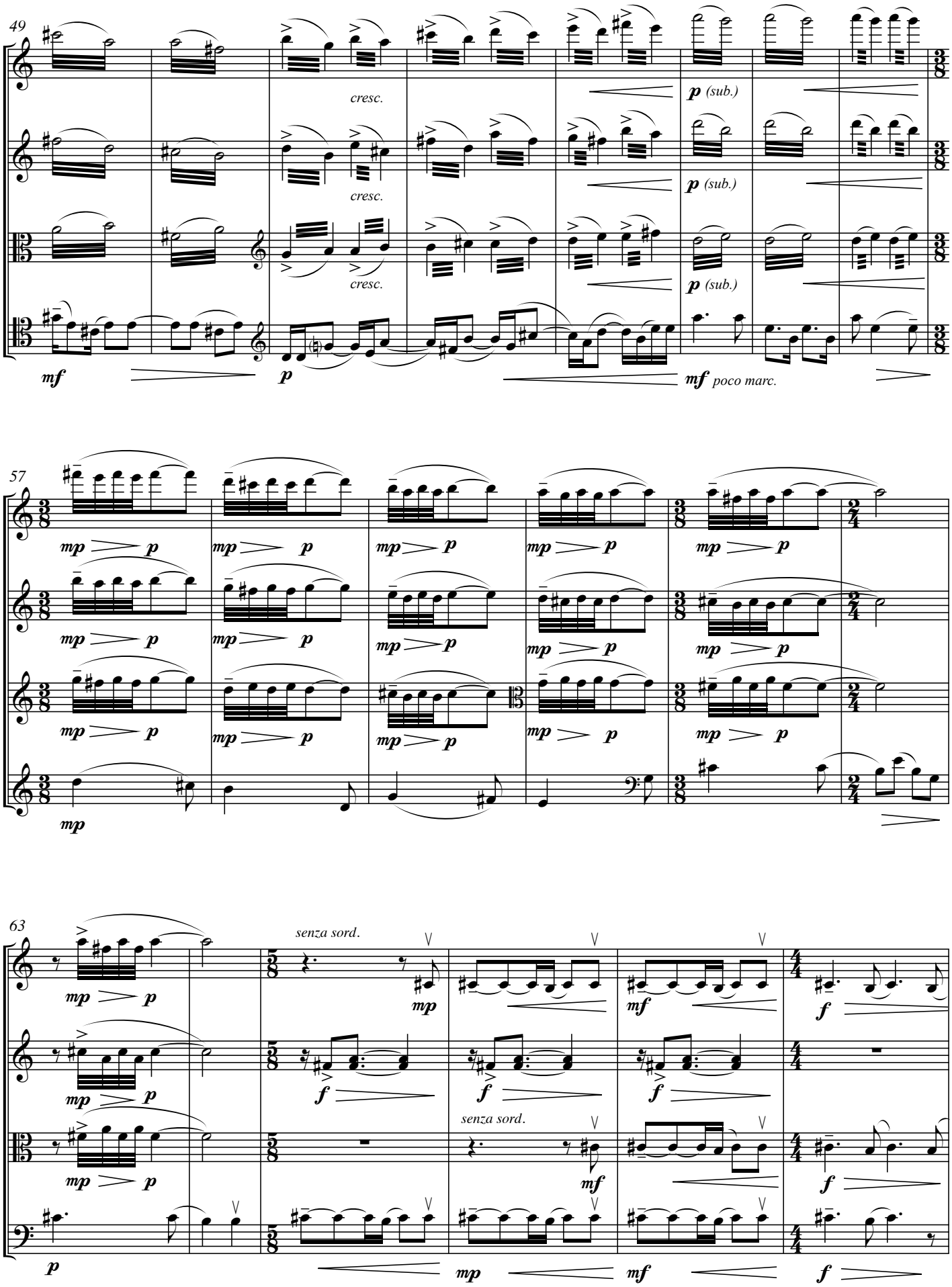
[ca. 6' 00']

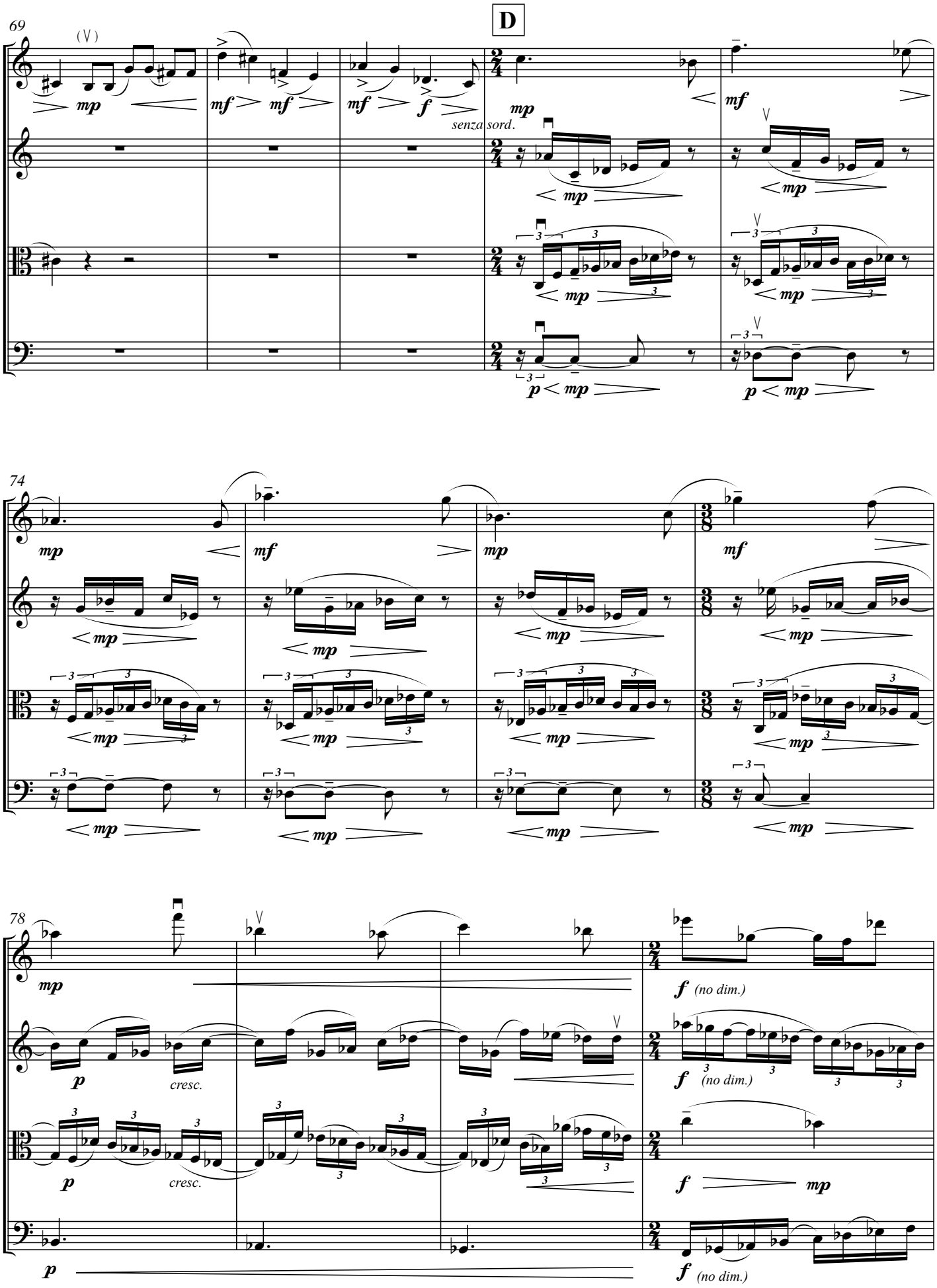
II.

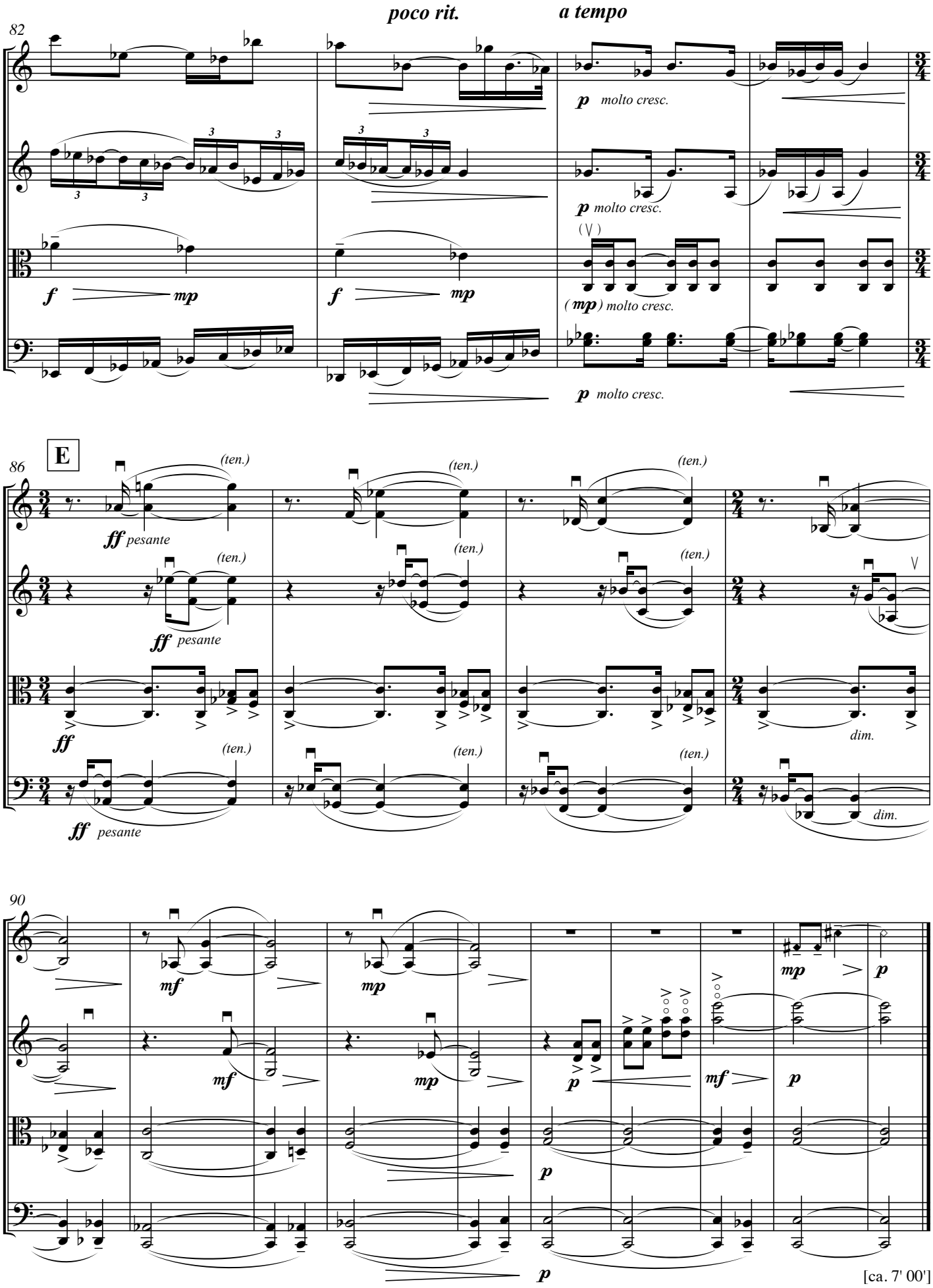

Adagio espressivo ♪ = 58
solo
espr.
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello
6
(no dim.)
poco rit.
a tempo
10


A
14
mf
mp pesante
p
mp
20
f
mf
IV III III
I II III II
B
26
con sord.
solo
(II)
dolce


32
37
p (sub.)
p (sub.)
p (sub.)
f
mp
f
mp
f
mp
f (no dim.)
rall. (molto)
a tempo
C
44
f
mp
p
mf
p (sempre)
f
mp
p
mf
p (sempre)
f
mp
p
mf
p (sempre)
p
mp
p

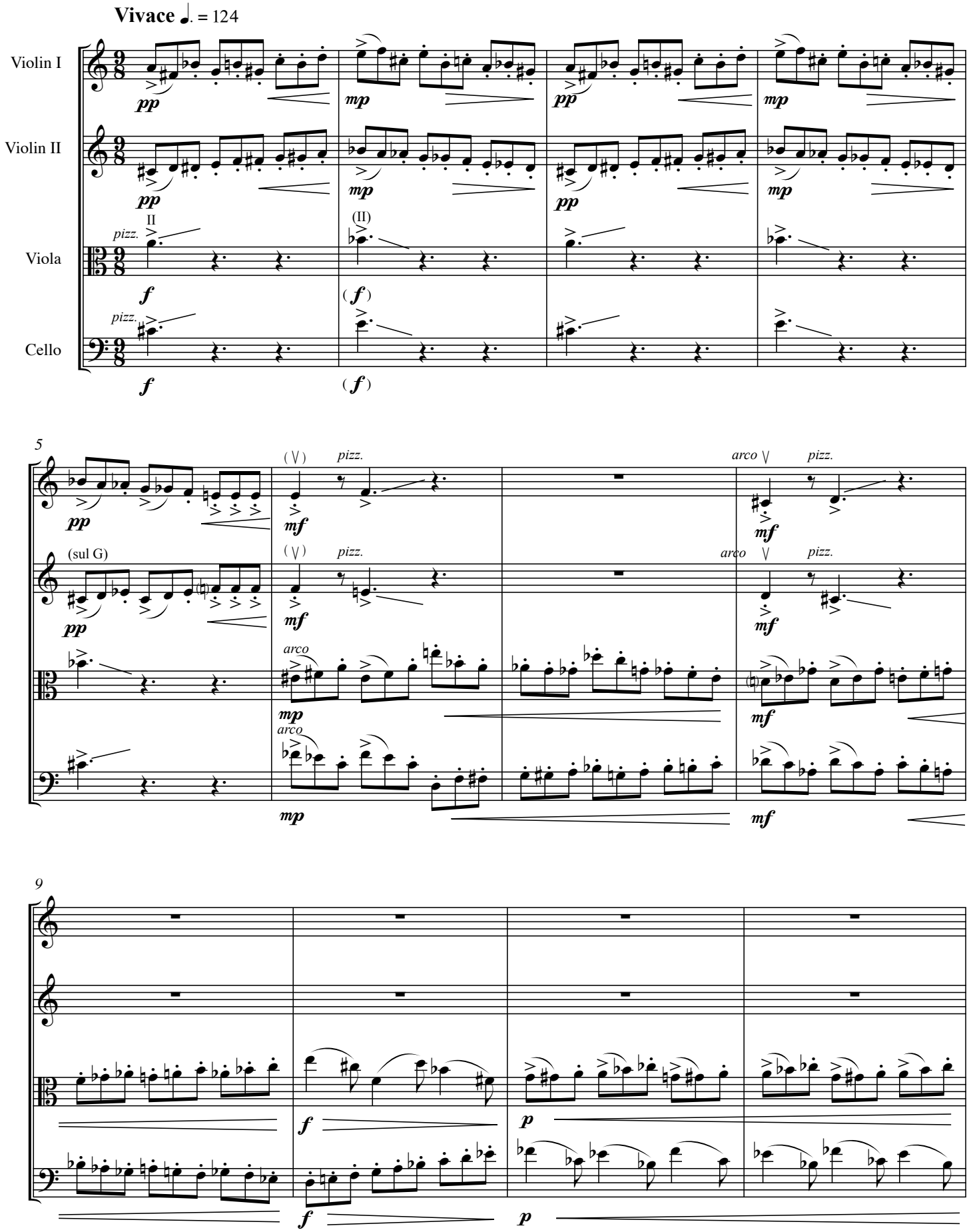

49
cresc.
p (sub.)
mf
p
mf poco marc.
57
mp
p
63
senza sord.
mp
mf
f

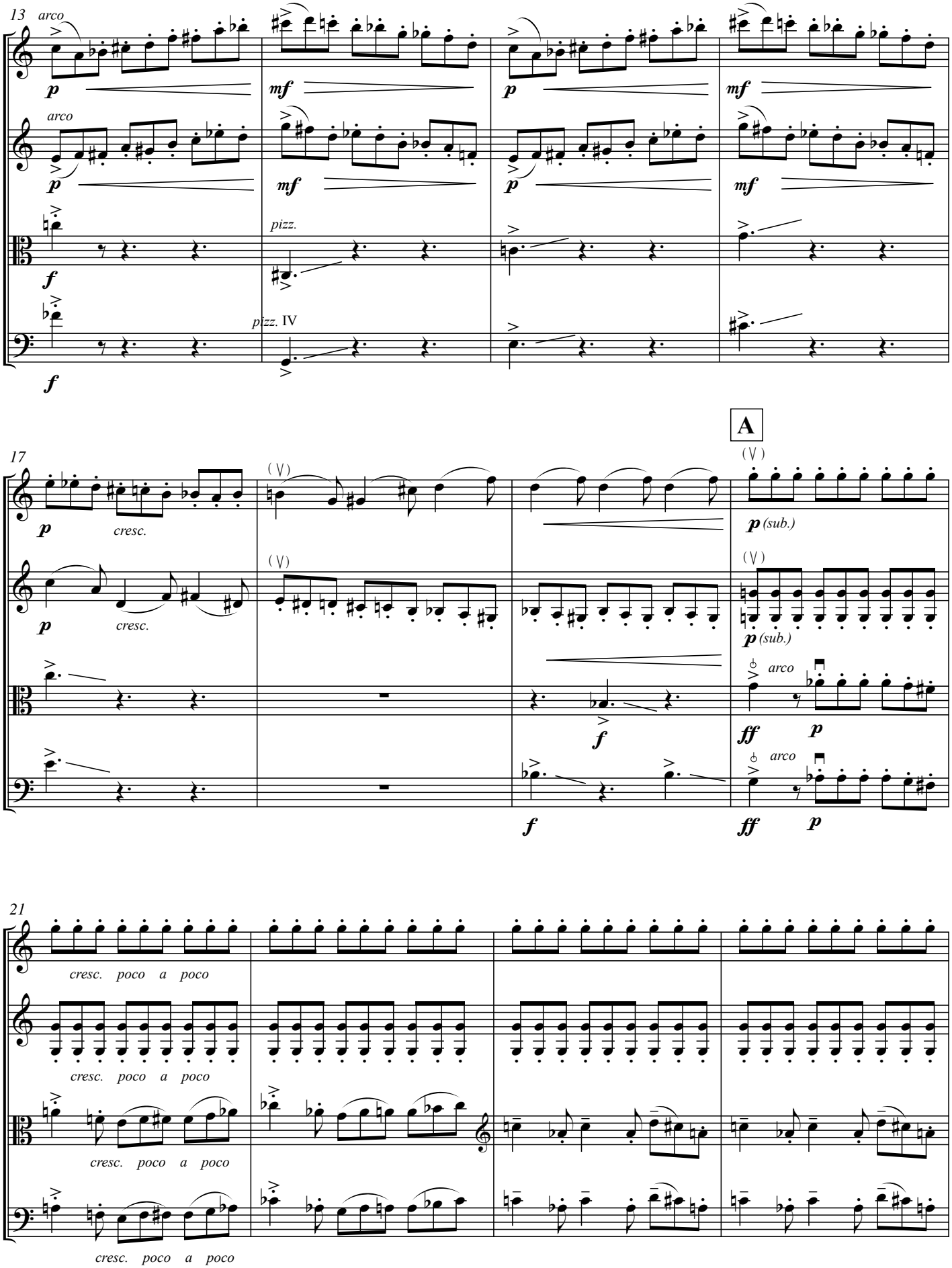

D
69
(V)
mp
mf
mf
mf
f
mp
senza sord.
mf
mp
mp
mp
p
mp
p
mp
74
mp
mf
mp
mf
mp
mp
mp
mp
mp
mp
mp
mp
78
mp
p
cresc.
p
cresc.
p
f (no dim.)
f (no dim.)
f
mp
f (no dim.)

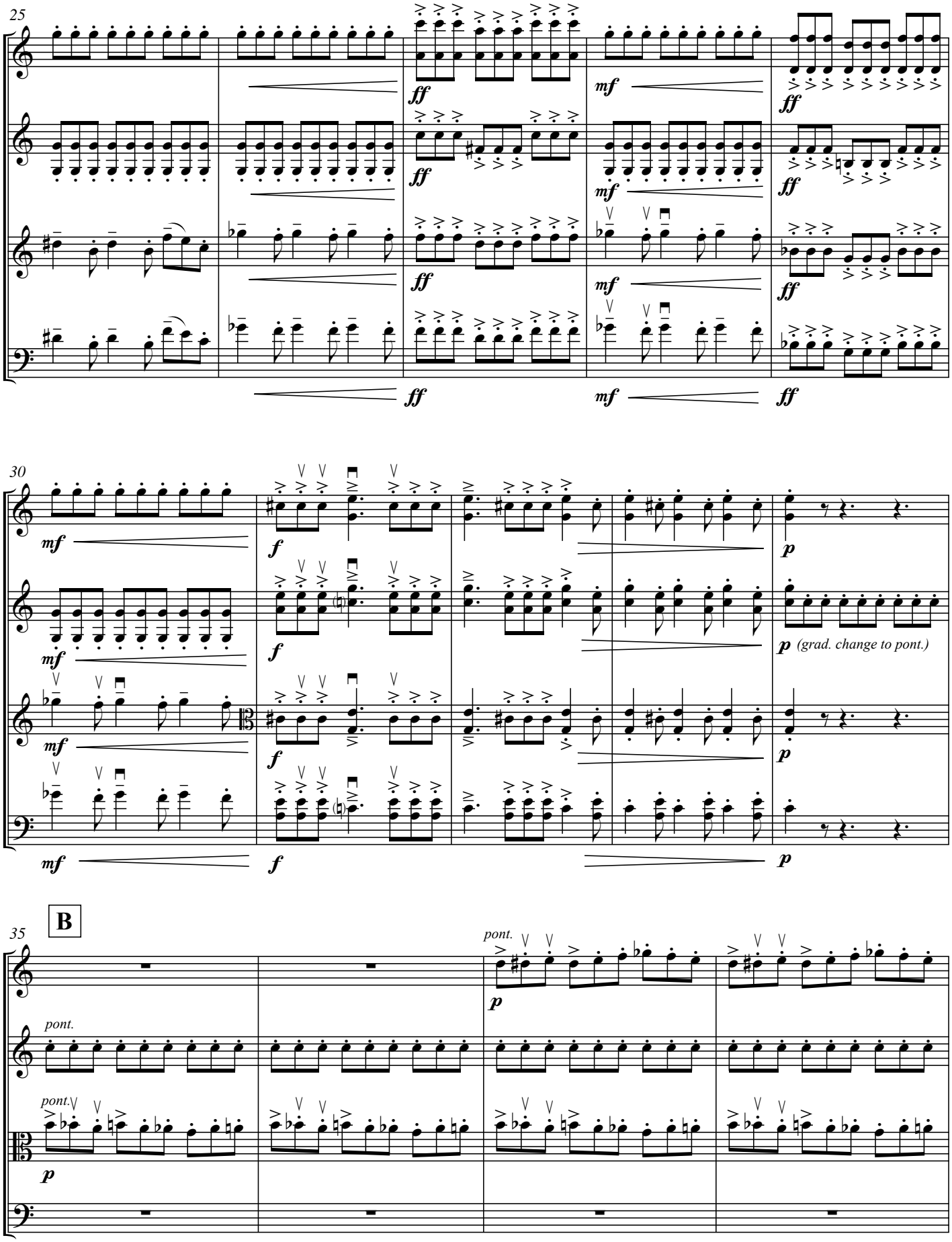

poco rit.
a tempo
82
p molto cresc.
f
mp
(mp) molto cresc.
E
86
(ten.)
ff pesante
ff
dim.
90
mf
mp
p

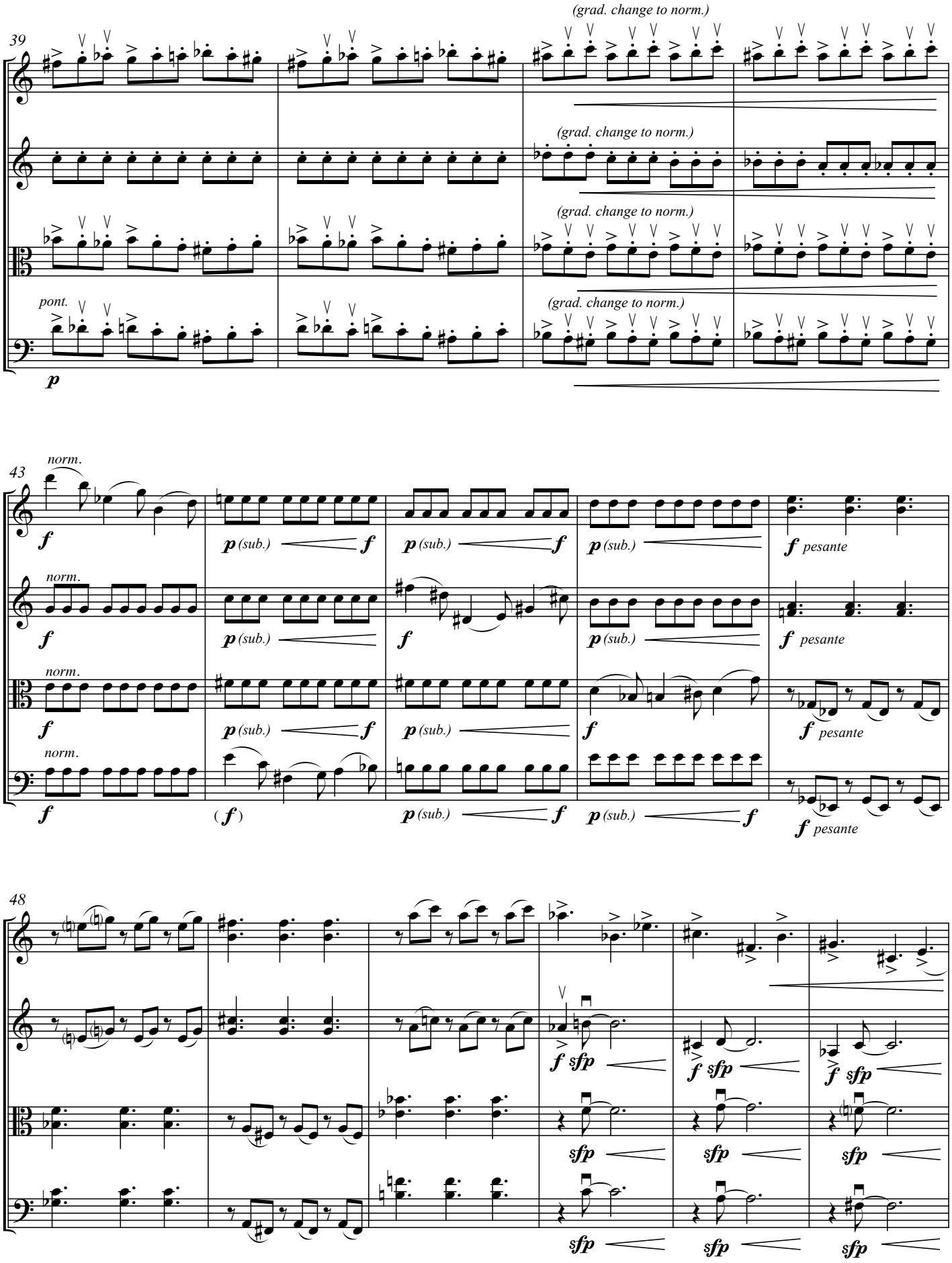
[ca. 7' 00']

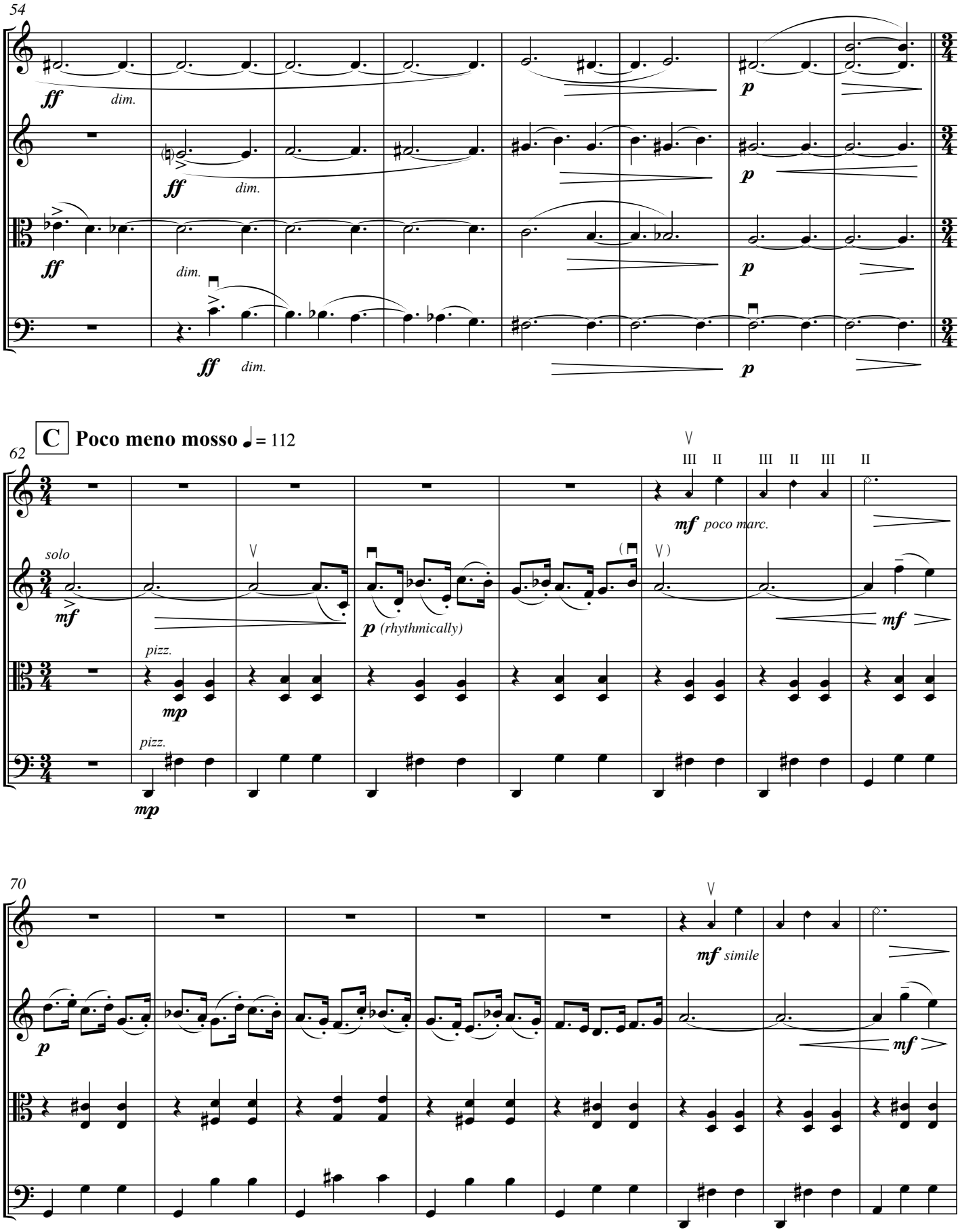
III.

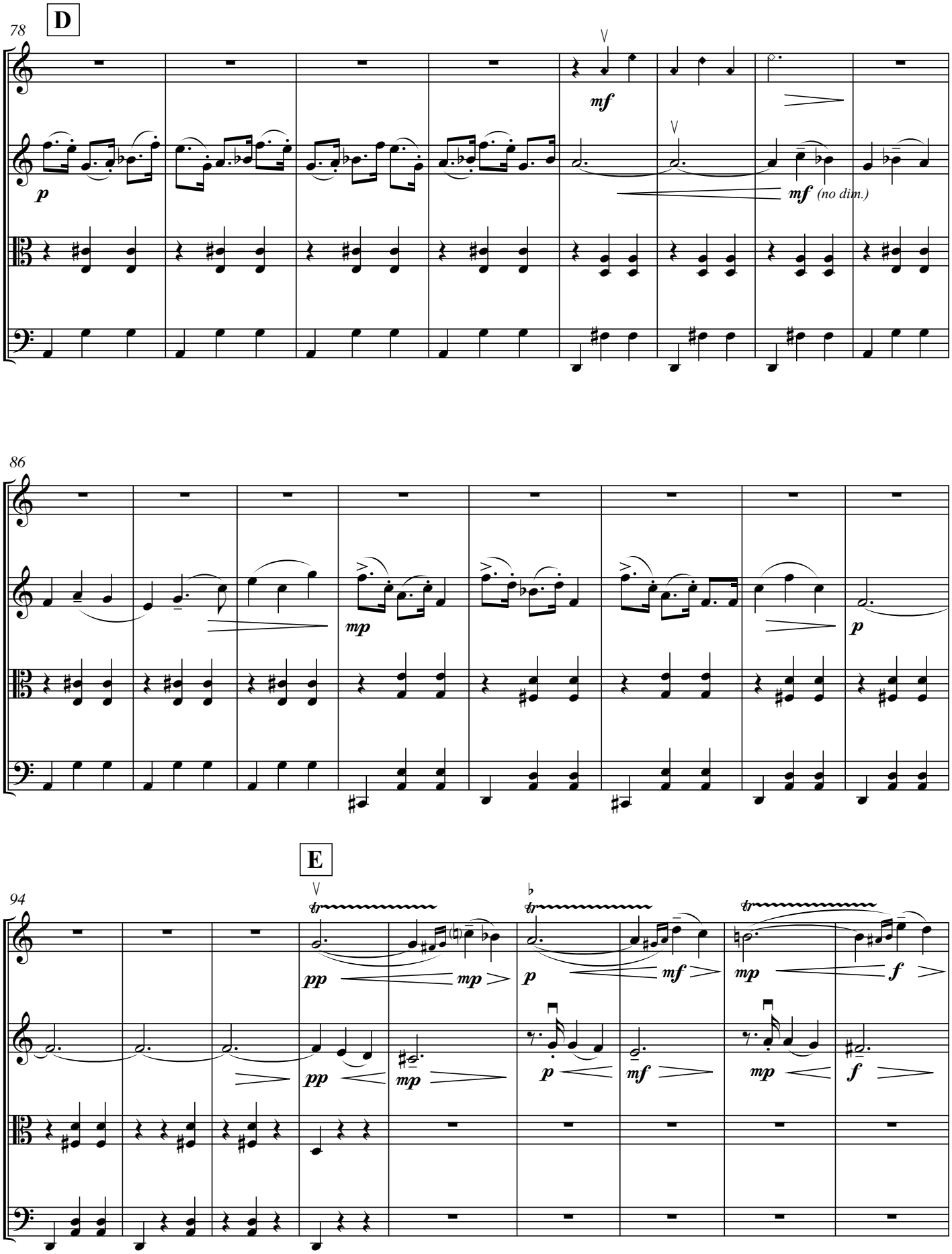

Vivace ♩. = 124
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello
pp
mp
pp
mp
pp
mp
pp
mp
pizz.
II
(II)
f
(f)
pizz.
f
(f)
5
pp
(sul G)
pp
(∨)
pizz.
mf
(∨)
pizz.
mf
arco
∨
pizz.
mf
arco
∨
pizz.
mf
arco
mp
arco
mp
mf
mf
9
f
p
f
p

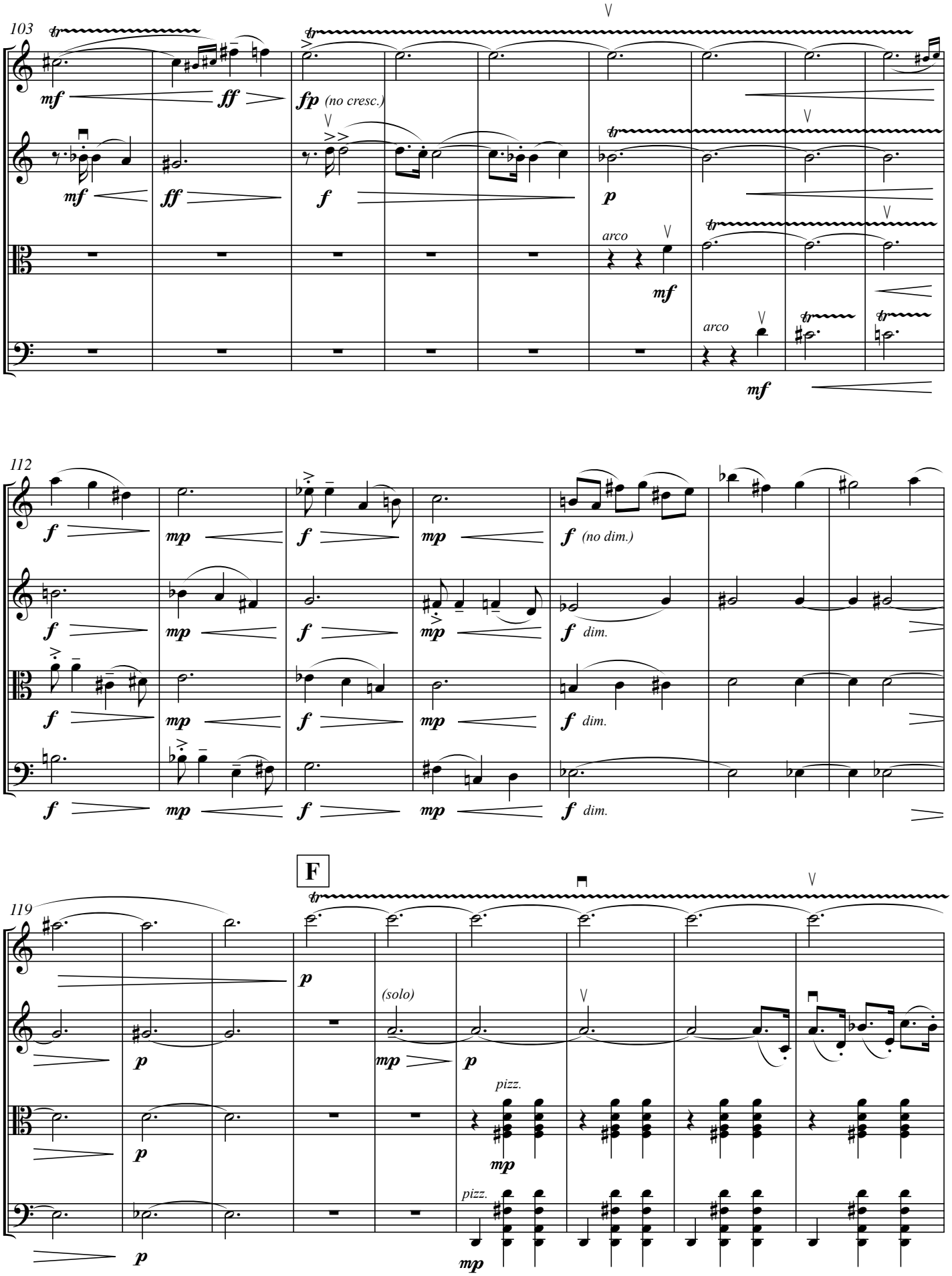

13
arco
p
mf
p
mf
arco
p
mf
p
mf
pizz.
f
pizz. IV
f
17
p
cresc.
p
cresc.
A
p (sub.)
p (sub.)
arco
ff
p
f
arco
ff
p
f
21
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco

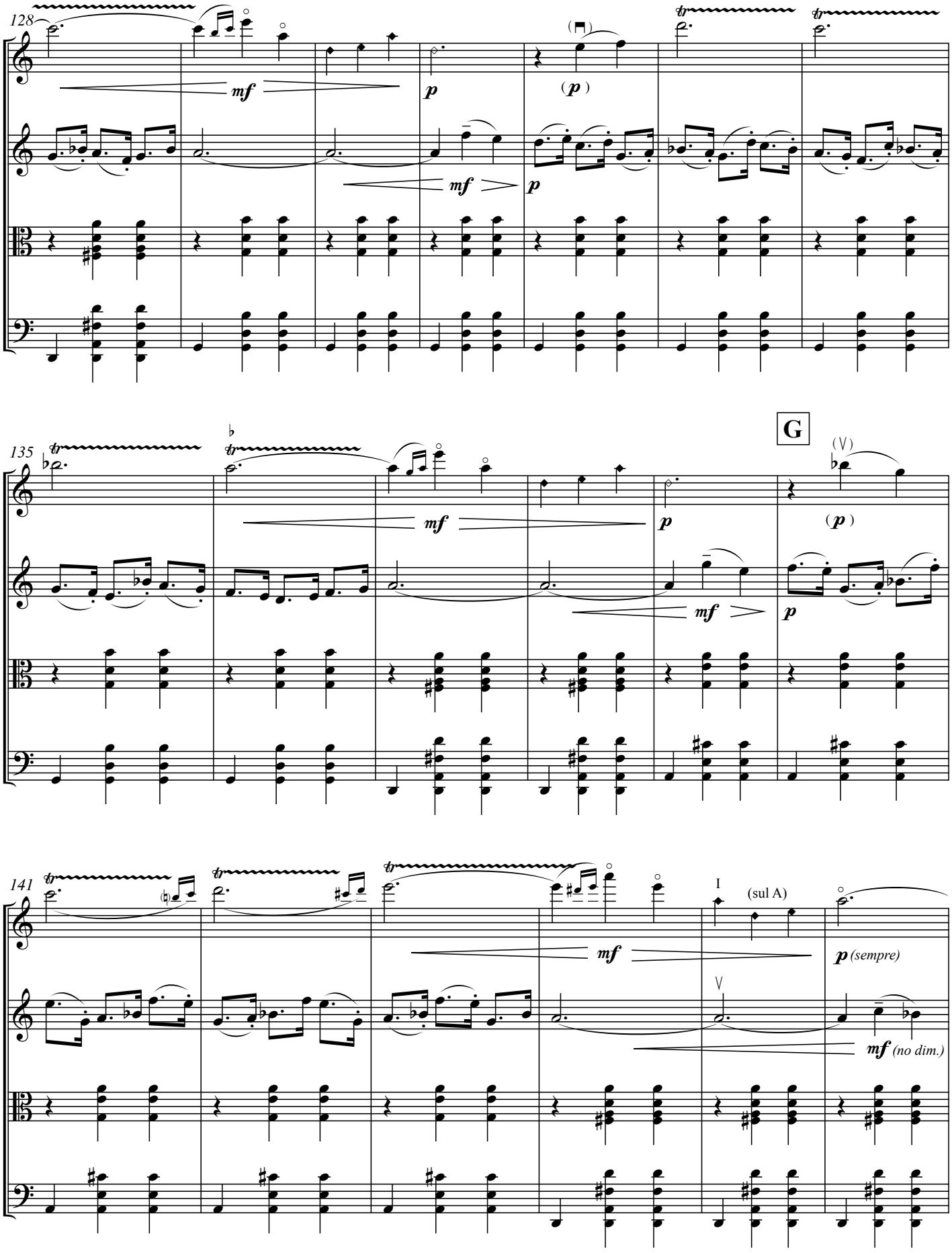

25
ff
mf
ff
30
mf
f
p
(grad. change to pont.)
B
35
pont.
p

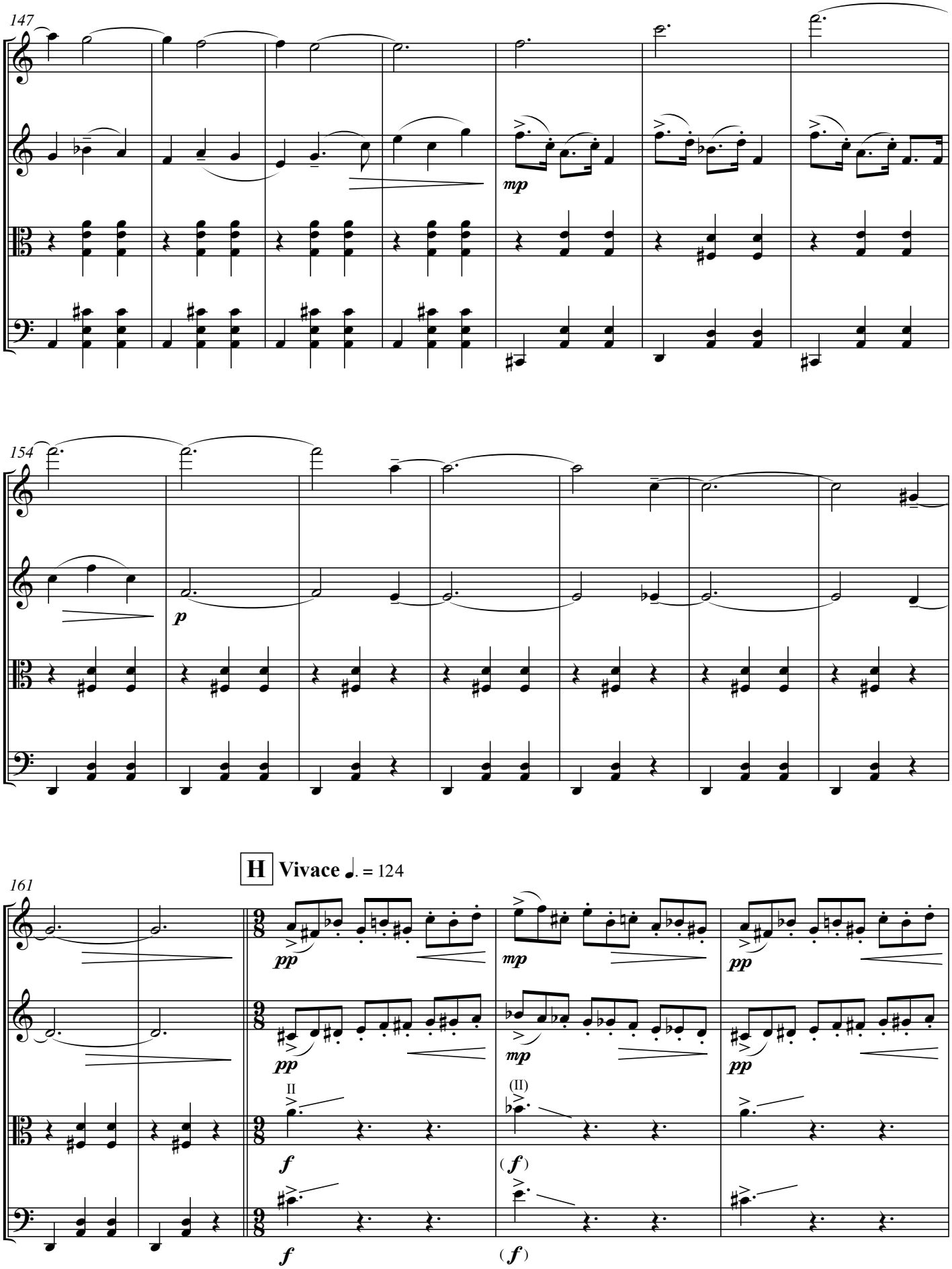

39
(grad. change to norm.)
(grad. change to norm.)
(grad. change to norm.)
pont.
(grad. change to norm.)
p
43
norm.
f
p (sub.)
f
p (sub.)
f
p (sub.)
f pesante
norm.
f
p (sub.)
f
p (sub.)
f pesante
norm.
f
p (sub.)
f
p (sub.)
f
f pesante
norm.
f
(f)
p (sub.)
f
p (sub.)
f
f pesante
48
f sfp
f sfp
f sfp
sfp
sfp
sfp
sfp
sfp
sfp

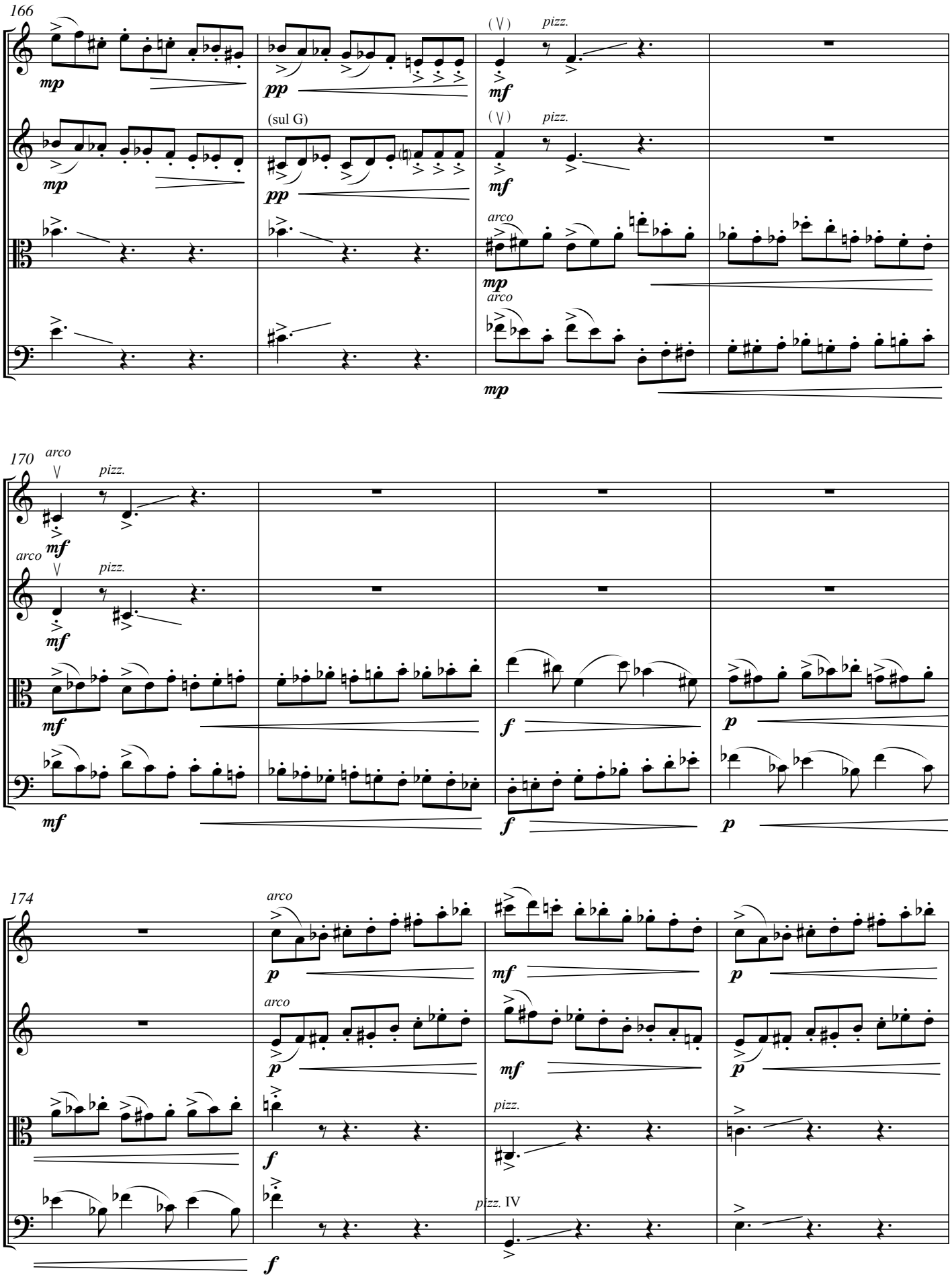

54
ff
dim.
p
62
C
Poco meno mosso ♩ = 112
solo
mf
p (rhythmically)
pizz.
mp
III II III II III II
mf poco marc.
70
mf simile

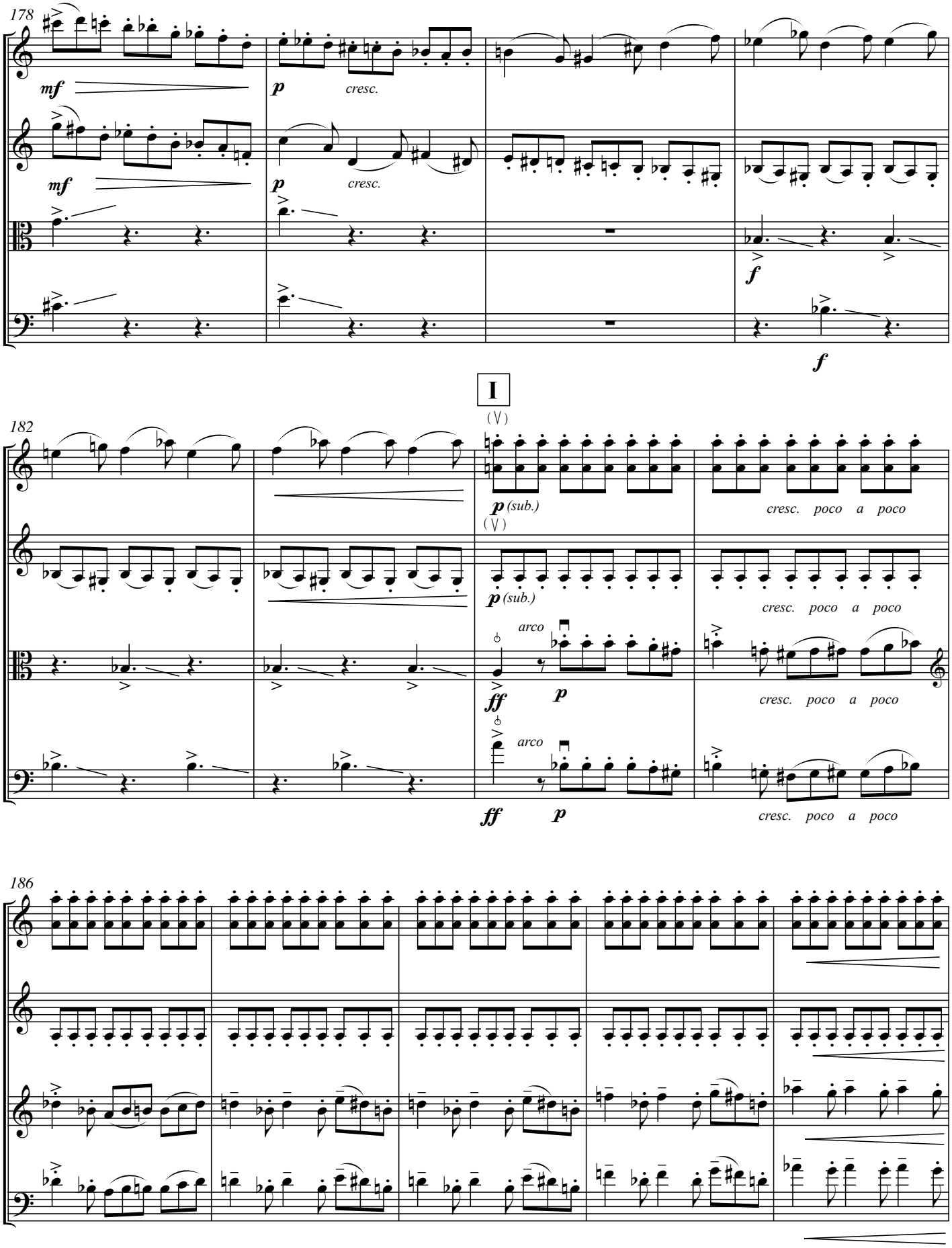

D
78
mf
p
mf (no dim.)
86
mp
p
E
94
pp
mp
p
mf
mp
f
pp
mp
p
mf
mp
f

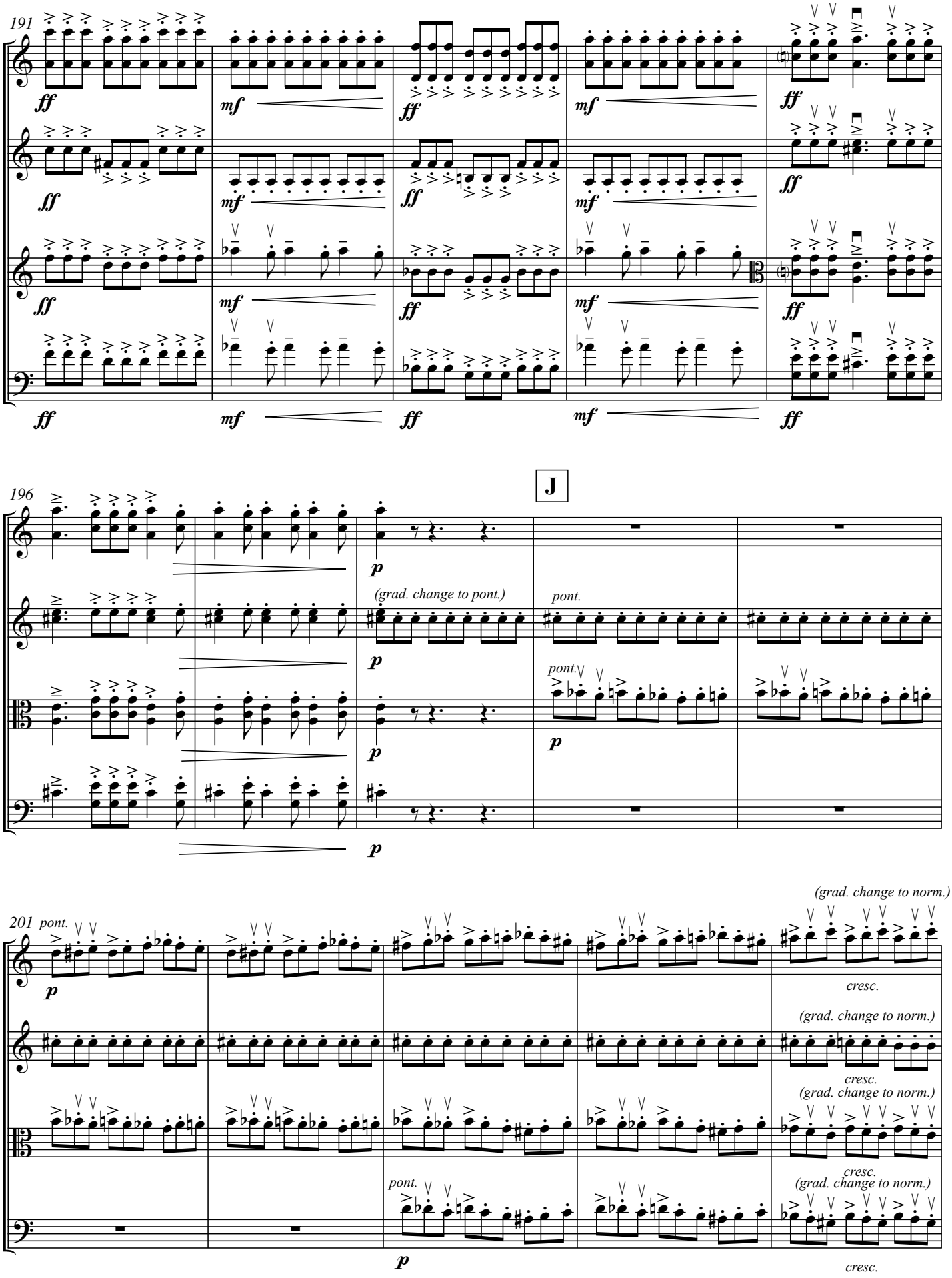

103
mf
ff
fp (no cresc.)
mf
ff
f
p
arco
mf
arco
mf
112
f
mp
f
mp
f (no dim.)
f
mp
f
mp
f dim.
f
mp
f
mp
f dim.
f
mp
f
mp
f dim.
F
119
p
p
(solo)
mp
p
p
pizz.
mp
pizz.
p
mp

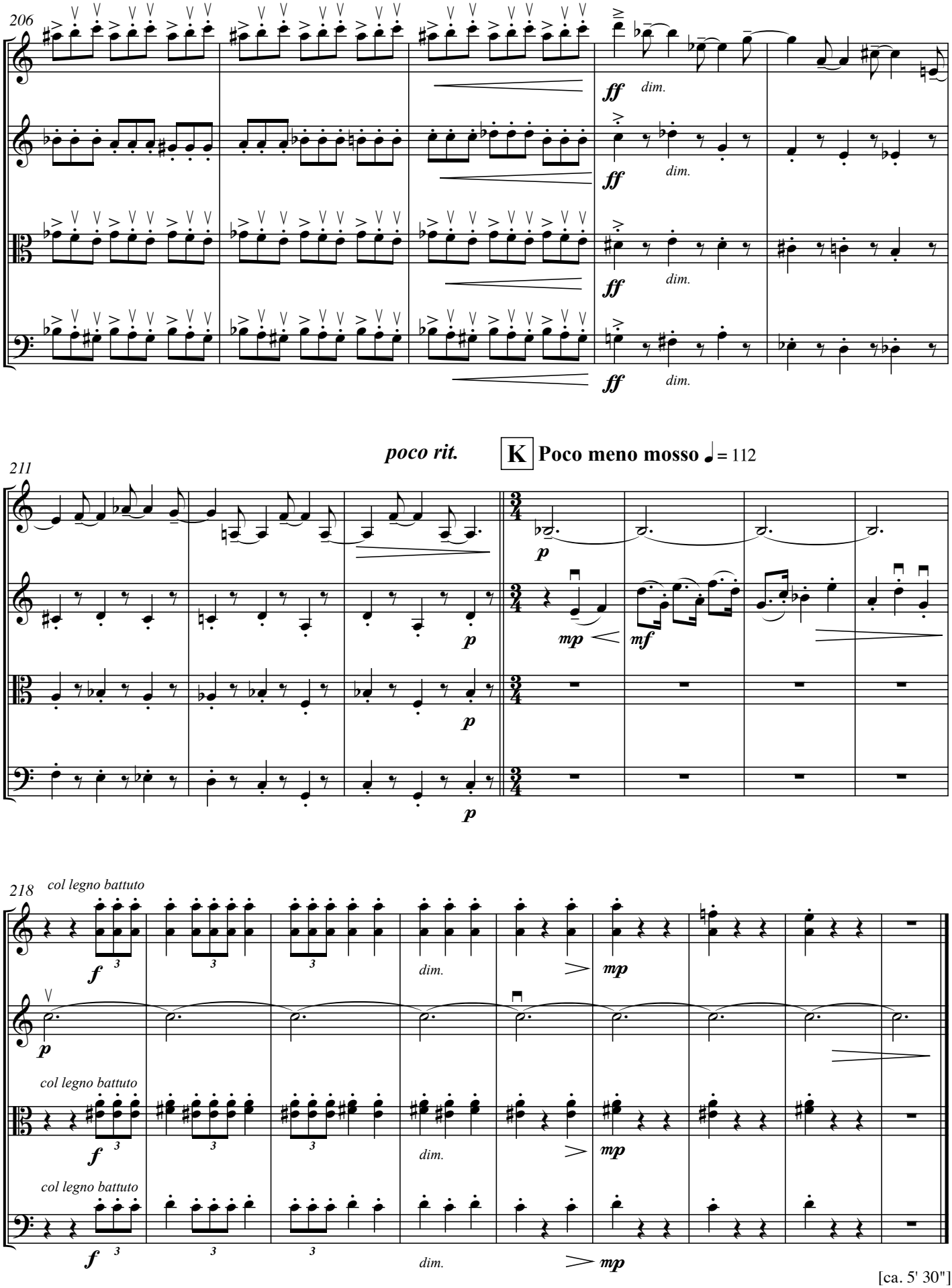

128
mf
p
(p)
mf
p
135
G
(V)
mf
p
(p)
mf
p
141
I
(sul A)
mf
p (sempre)
V
mf (no dim.)


147
mp
154
p
161
H
Vivace ♩. = 124
pp
mp
pp
II
(II)
f
(f)
f
(f)


166
mp
pp
(sul G)
pizz.
mf
arco
170
pizz.
mf
f
p
174
arco
p
mf
pizz.
pizz. IV


178
mf
p
cresc.
mf
p
cresc.
f
f
I
182
p (sub.)
cresc. poco a poco
p (sub.)
cresc. poco a poco
arco
ff
p
cresc. poco a poco
arco
ff
p
cresc. poco a poco
186


191
ff
mf
ff
mf
ff
196
J
p
(grad. change to pont.)
pont.
201
(grad. change to norm.)
cresc.


206
ff
dim.
poco rit.
K
Poco meno mosso ♩ = 112
211
p
mp
mf
218
col legno battuto
f
3
dim.
mp

[ca. 5' 30"]

IV.

Allegro energico ♩ = 92

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

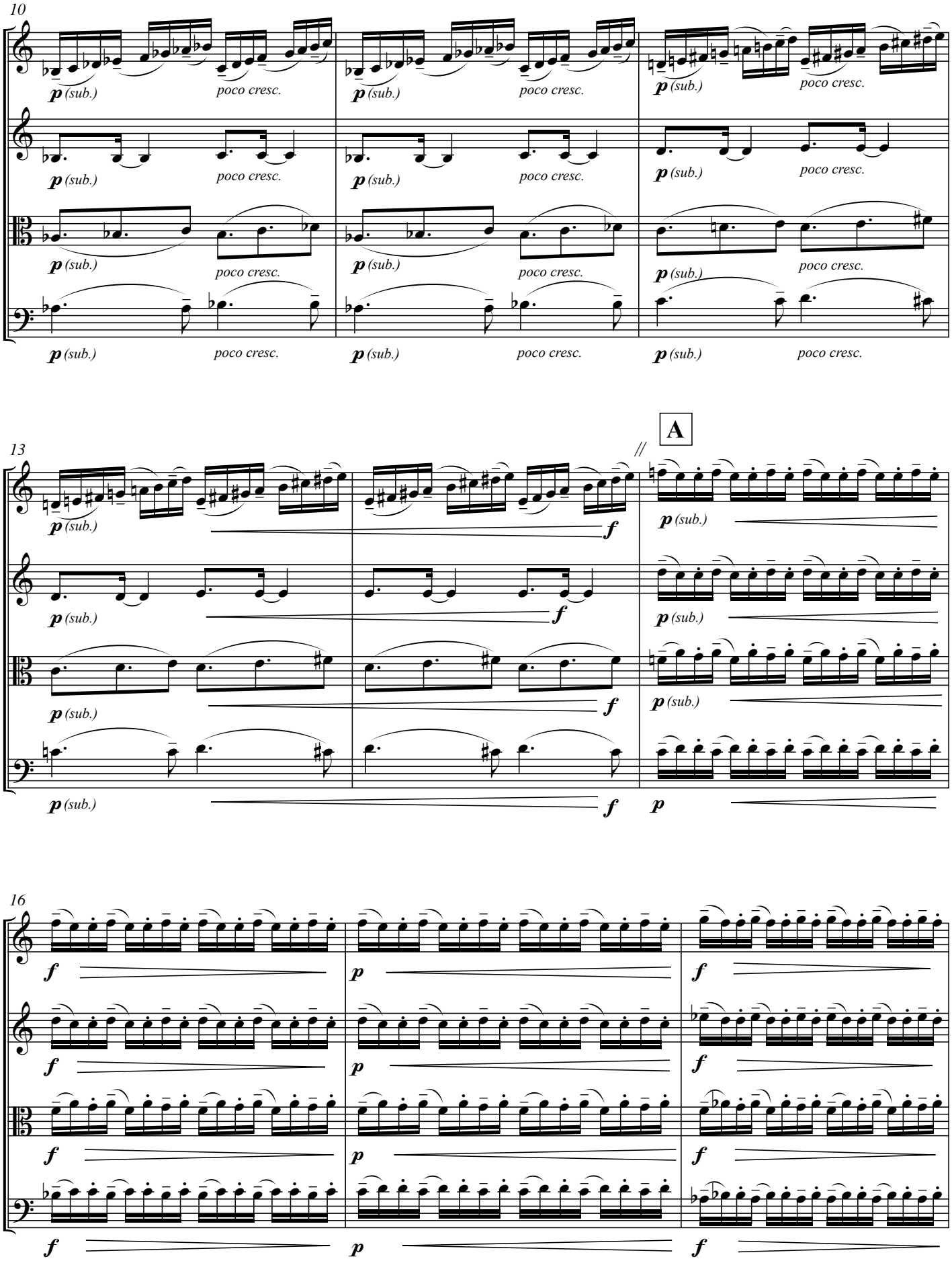
p *(no cresc.)* *f (sub.)* *p (sub.)*

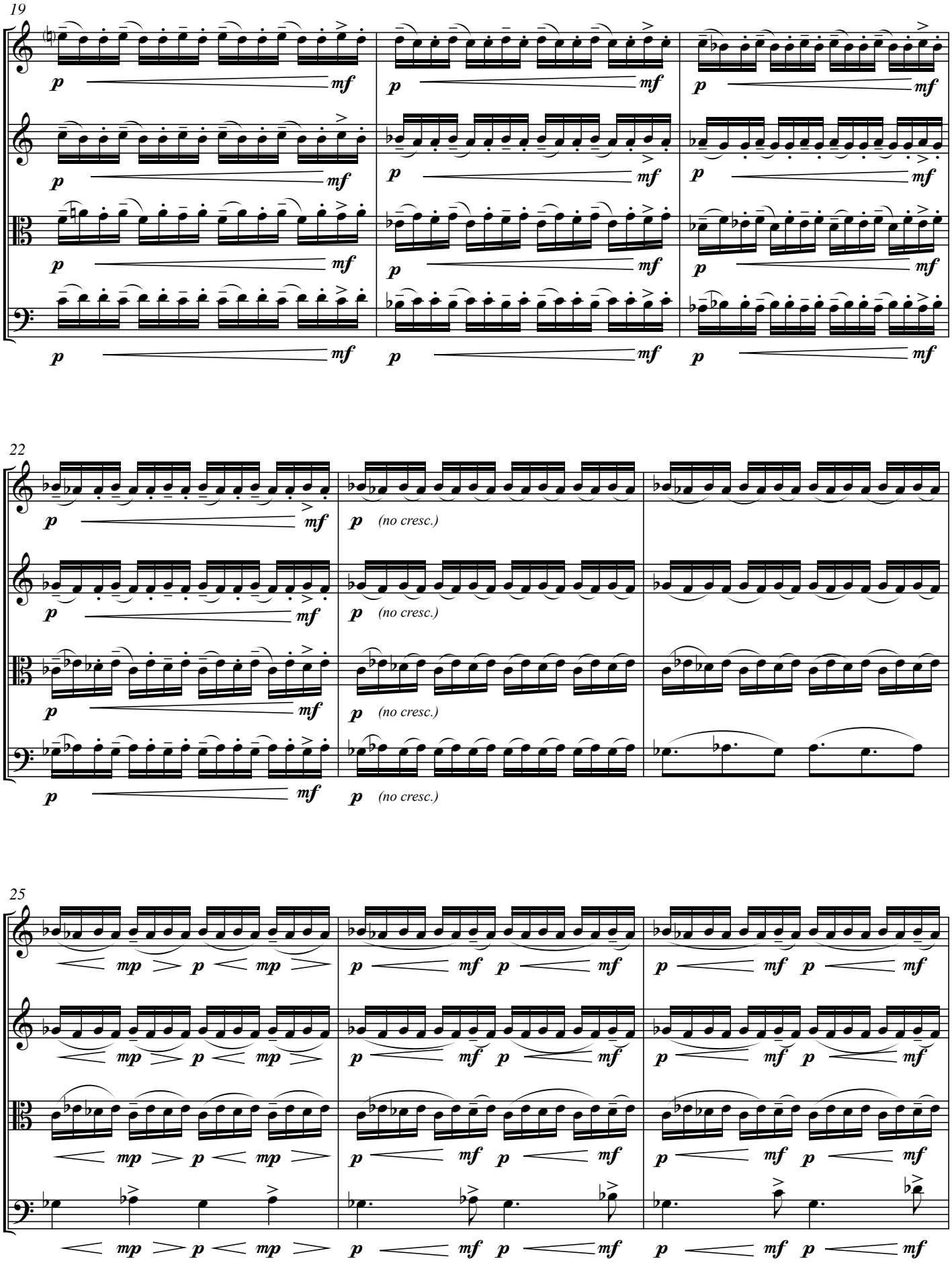
4

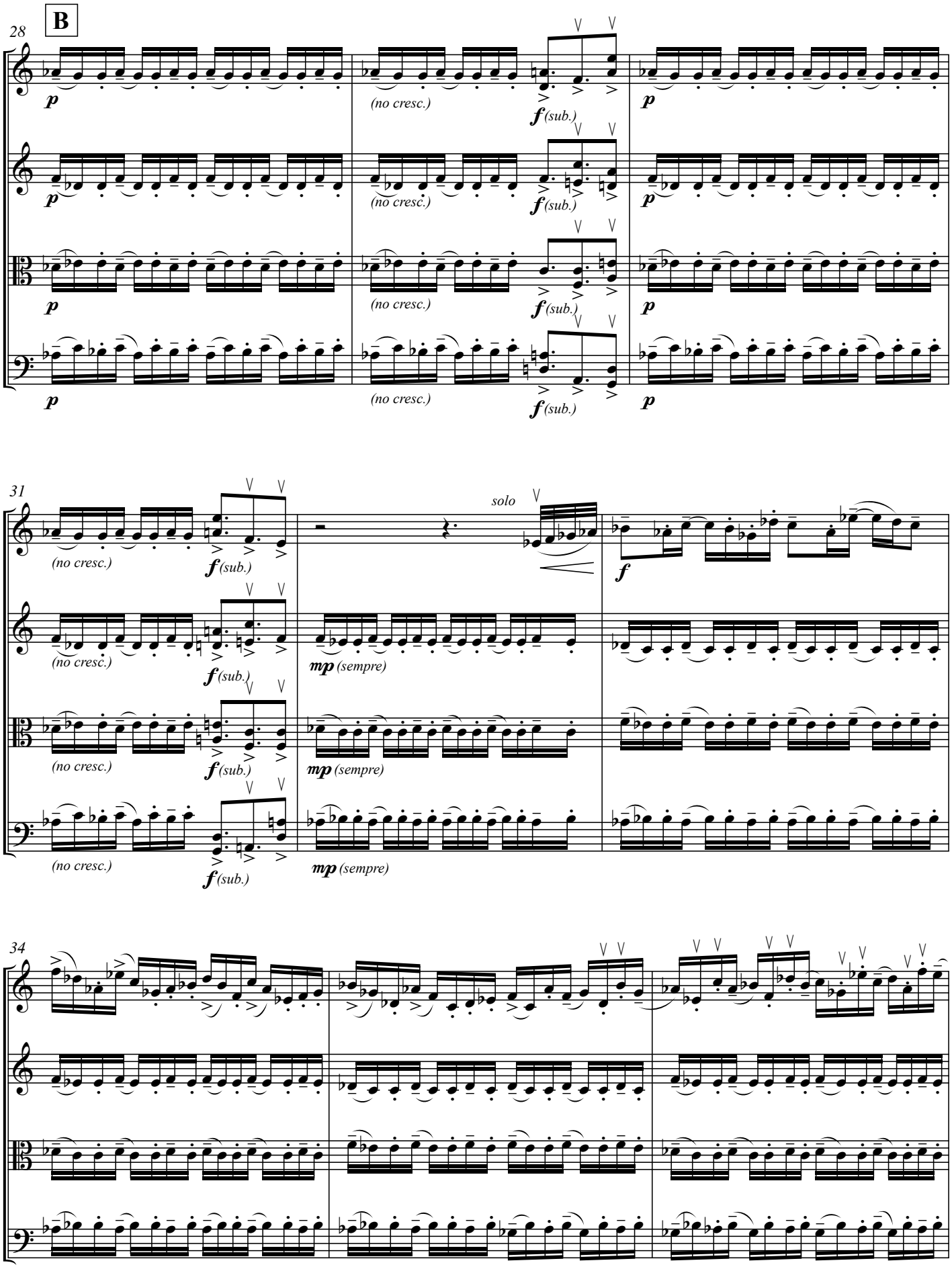
f (sub.) *p (sub.)* *f (sub.)*

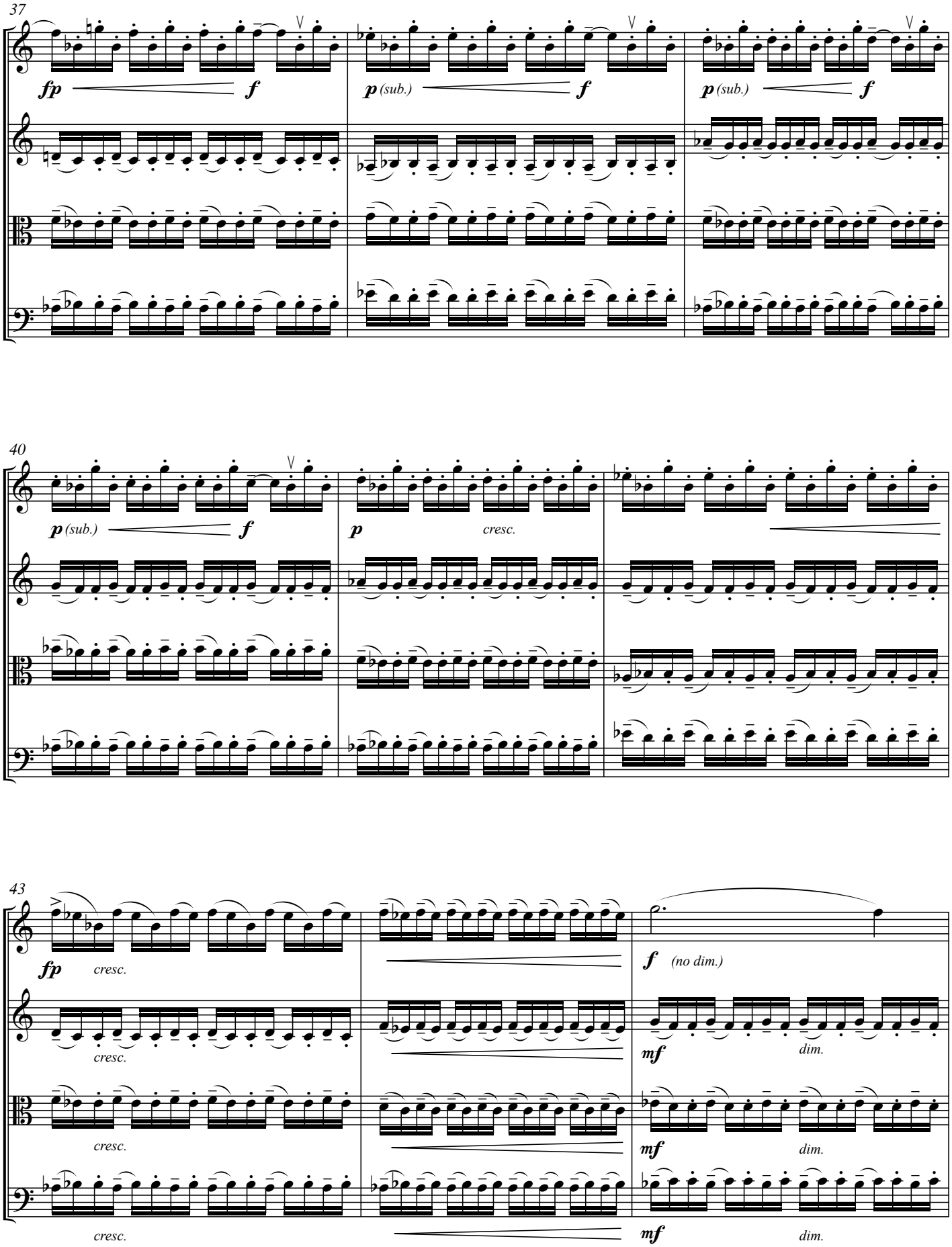
7

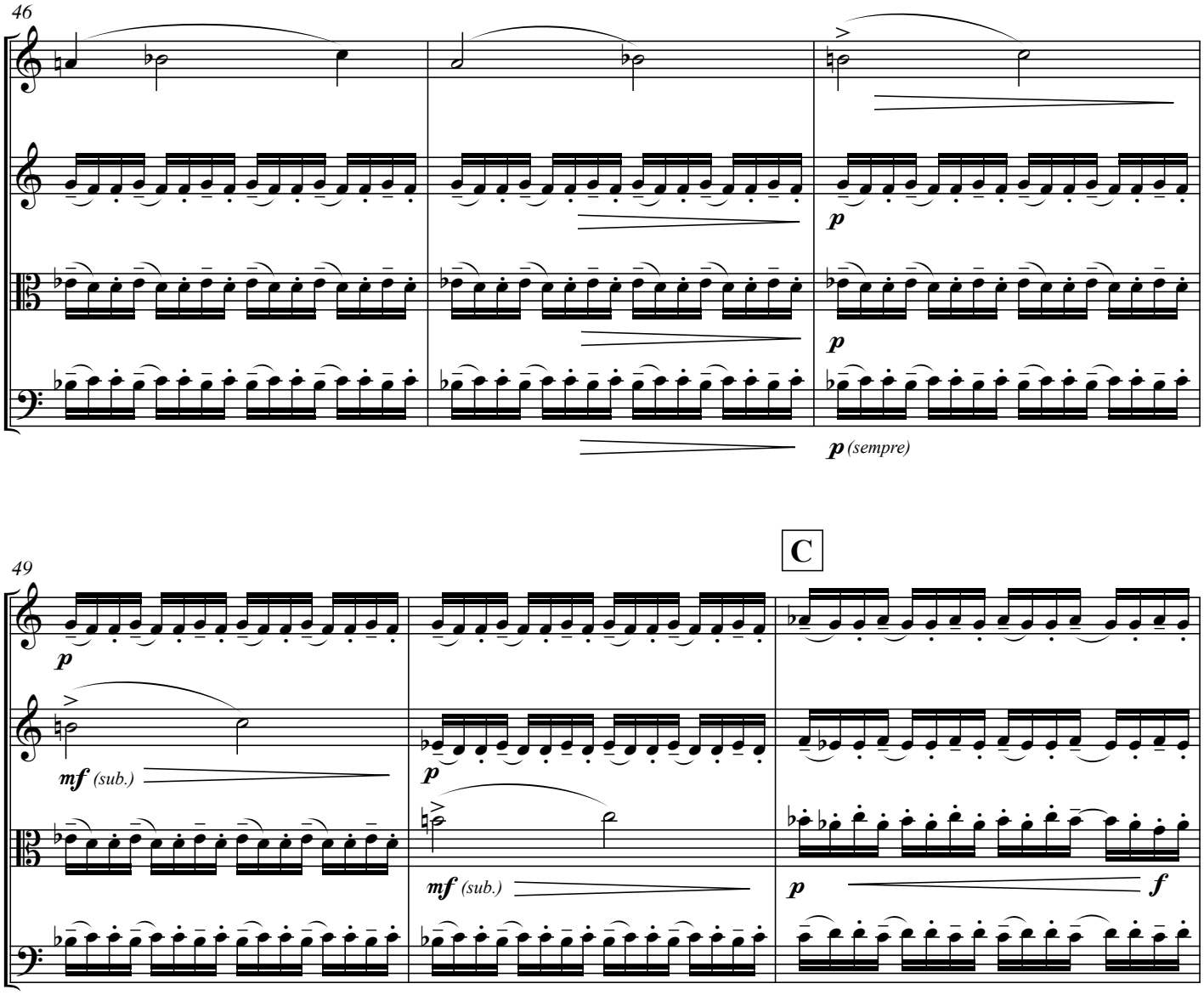
p (sub.) *f*

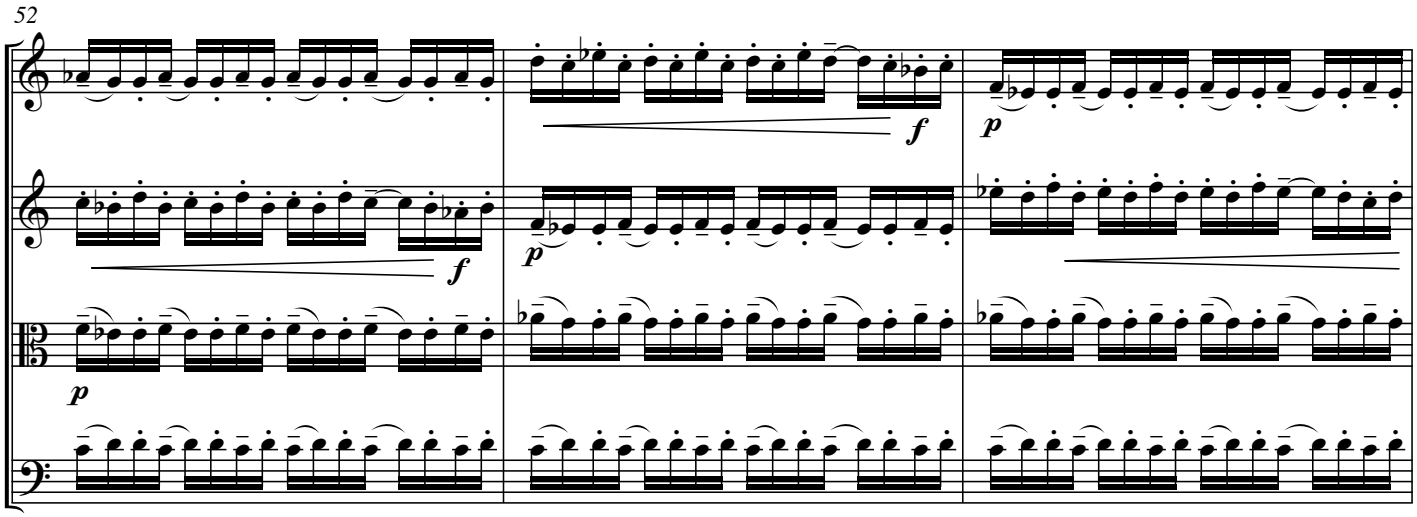

10
p (sub.)
poco cresc.
13
A
//
f
p
16

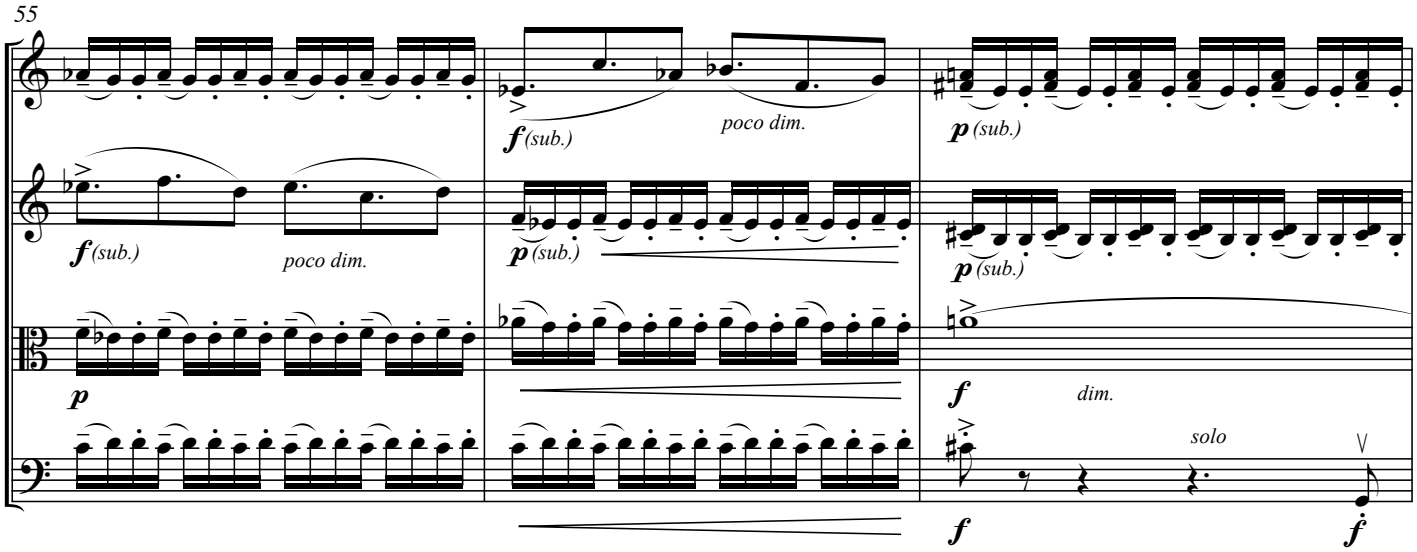

19
p
mf
22
(no cresc.)
25
mp
p
mf

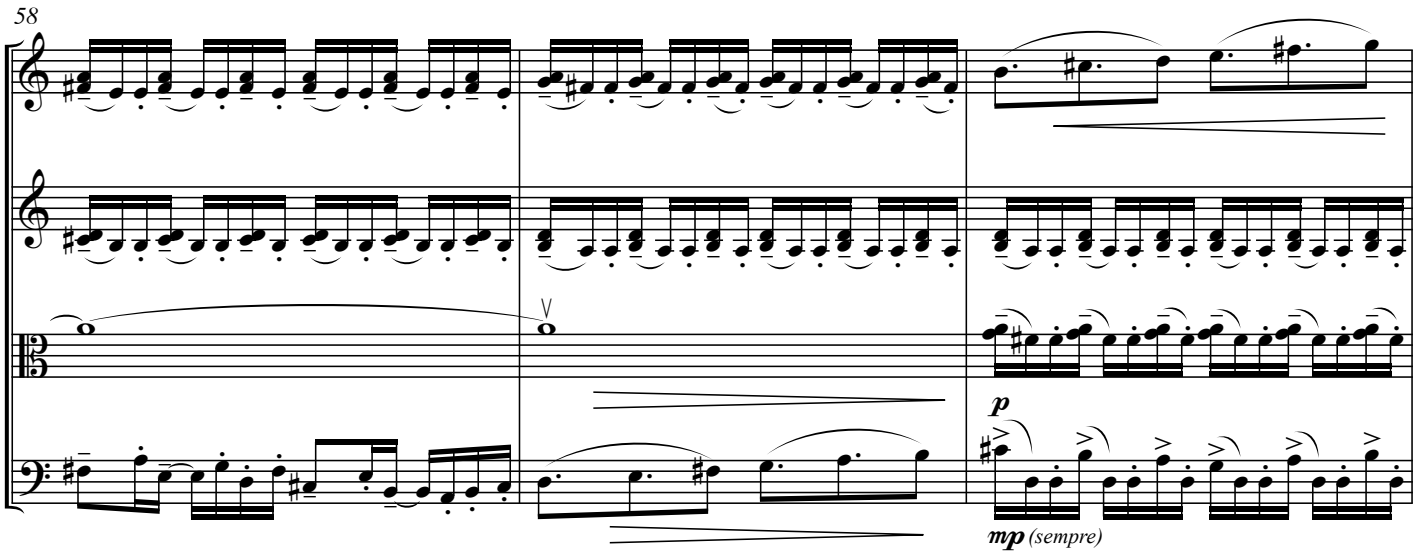

B
28
p
(no cresc.)
f (sub.)
31
solo
f
mp (sempre)
34

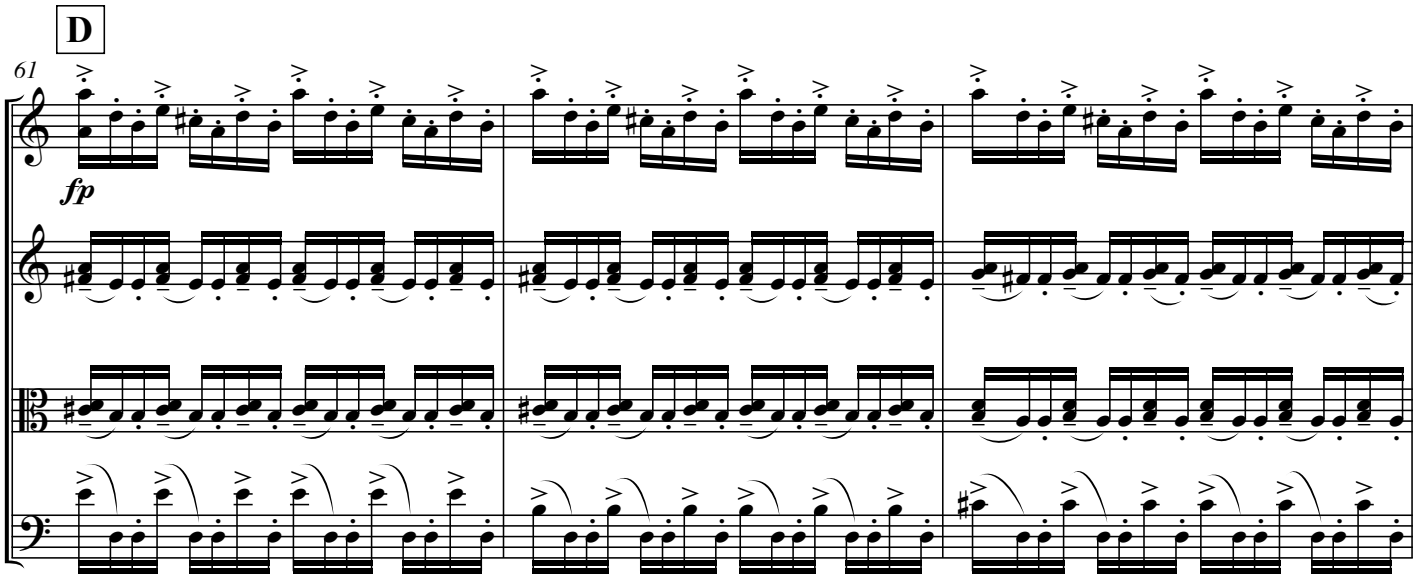

37
fp
f
p (sub.)
f
p (sub.)
f
40
p (sub.)
f
p
cresc.
43
fp
cresc.
f
(no dim.)
cresc.
mf
dim.
cresc.
mf
dim.
cresc.
mf
dim.

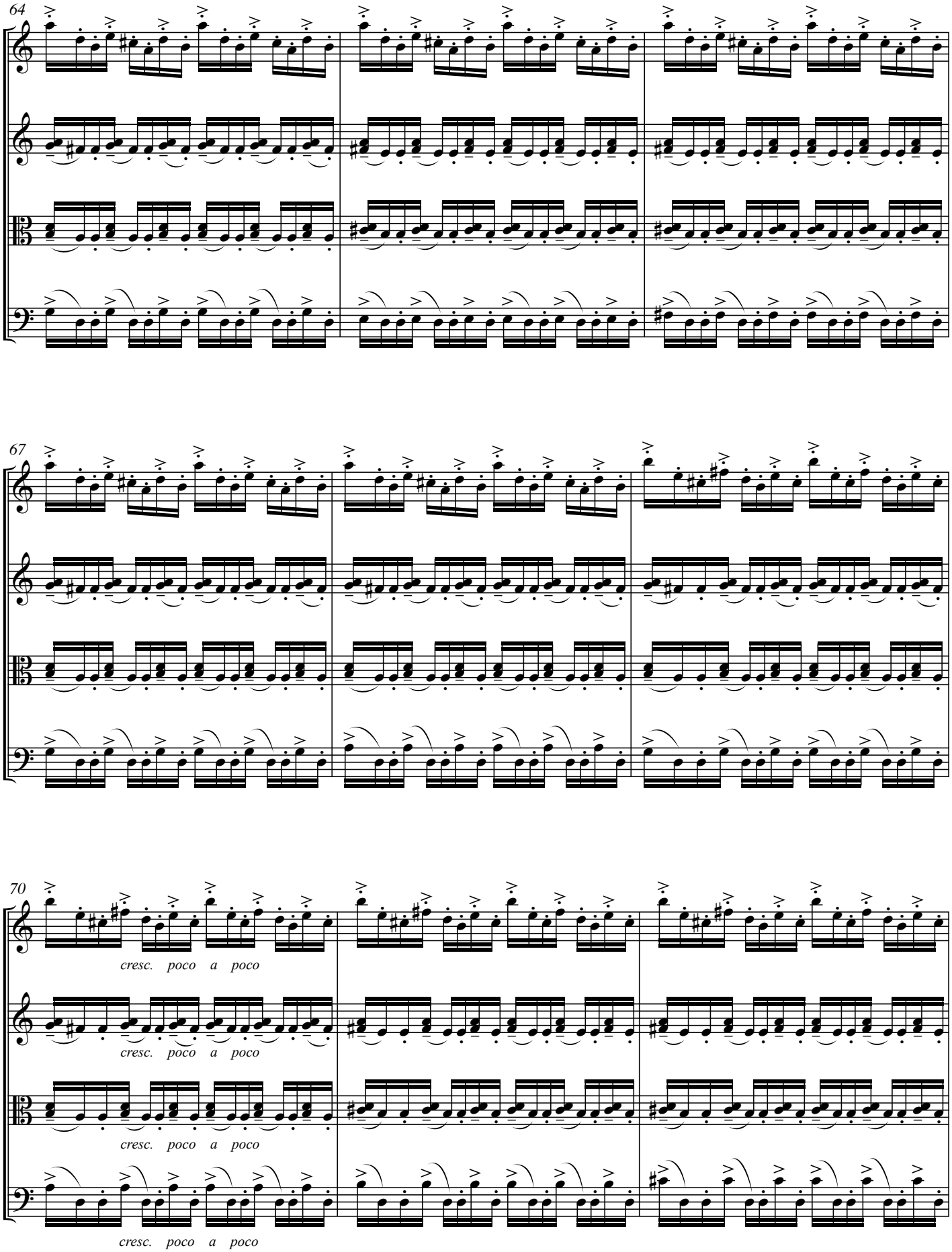

46
p
p
p (sempre)
C
49
p
mf (sub.)
p
mf (sub.)
p
f

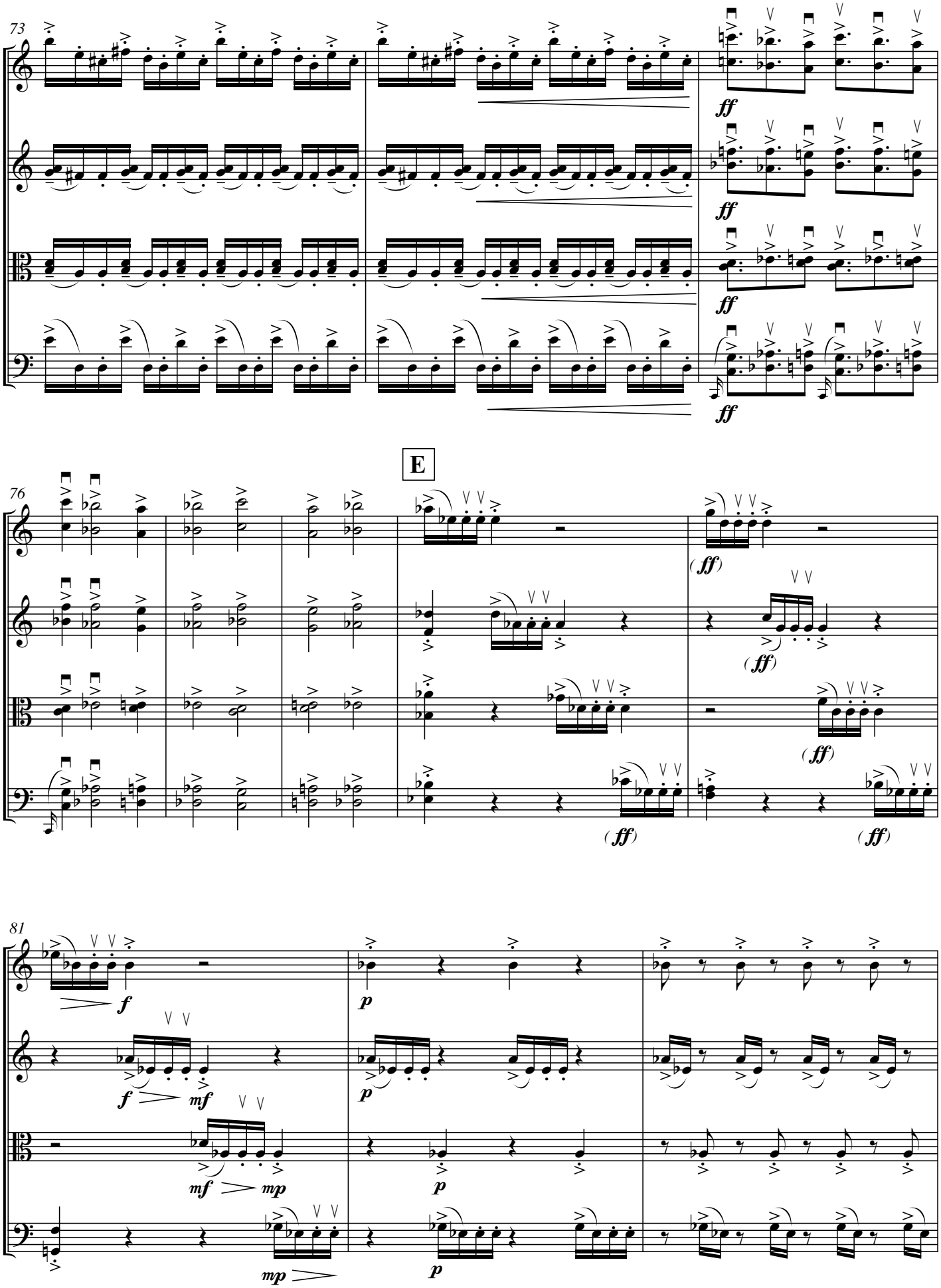

52
f
p
f
p
p

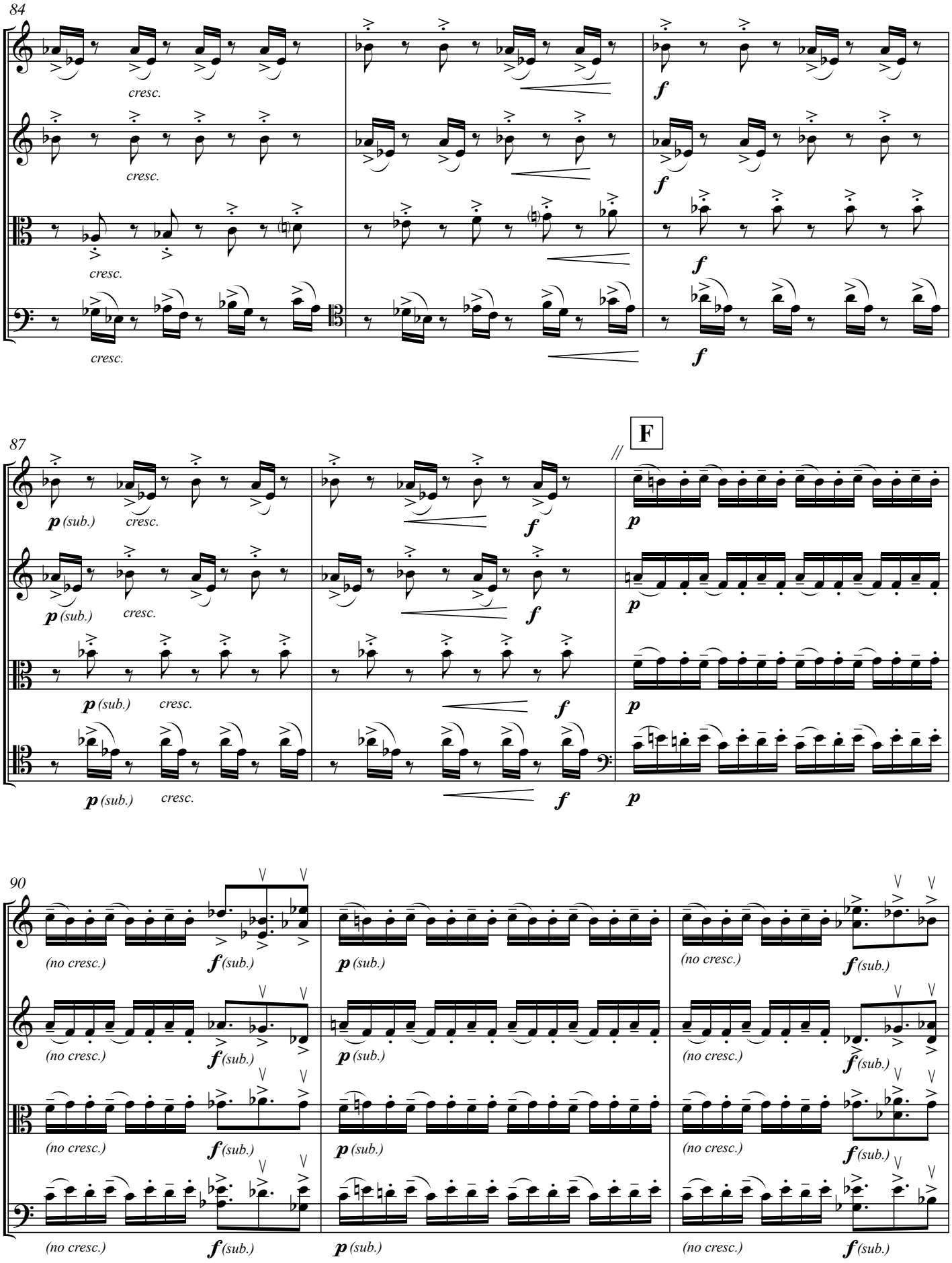

55
f (sub.)
poco dim.
p (sub.)
f (sub.)
poco dim.
p (sub.)
p (sub.)
p
f
dim.
solo
f
f

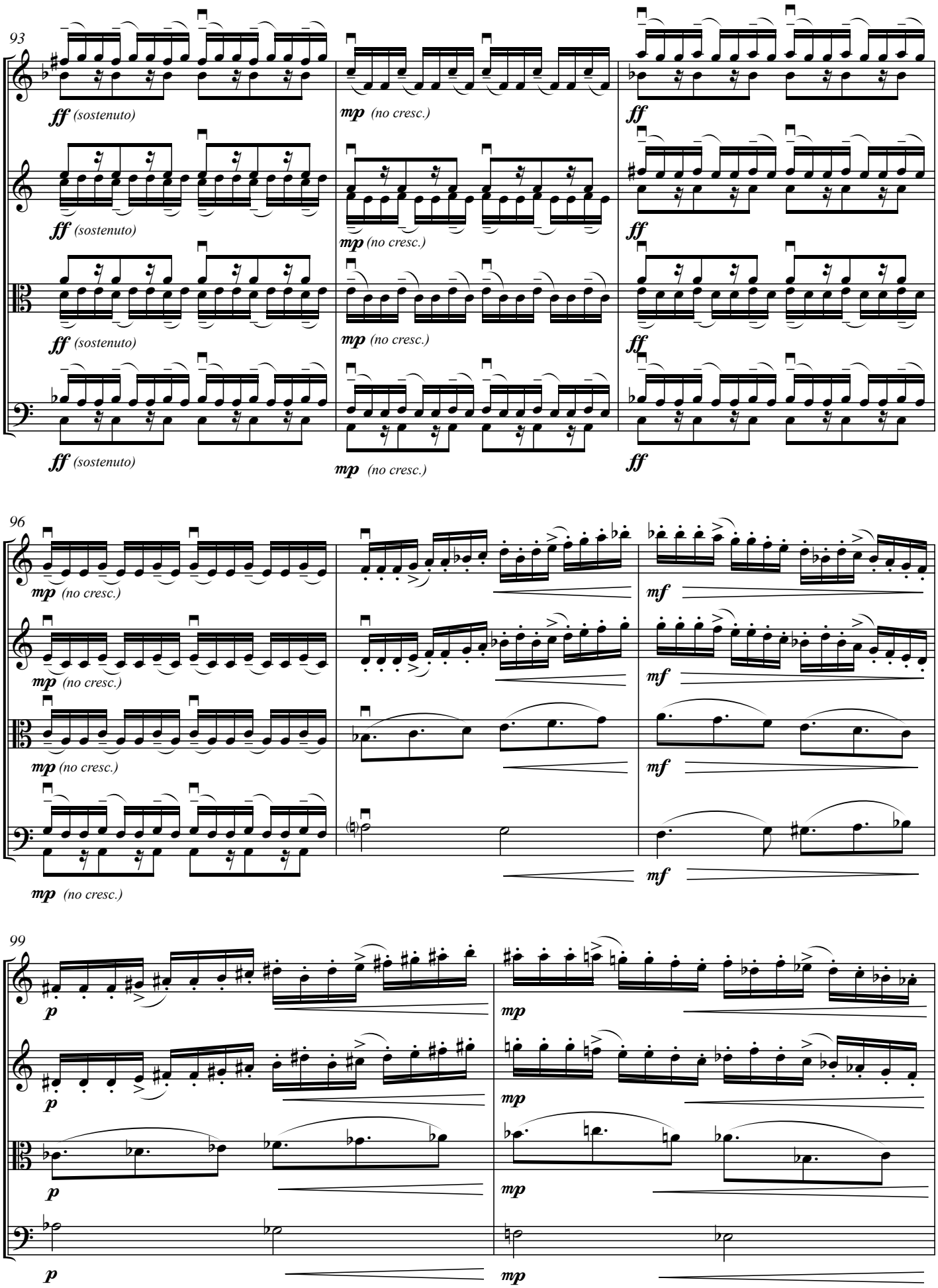

58
p
mp (sempre)

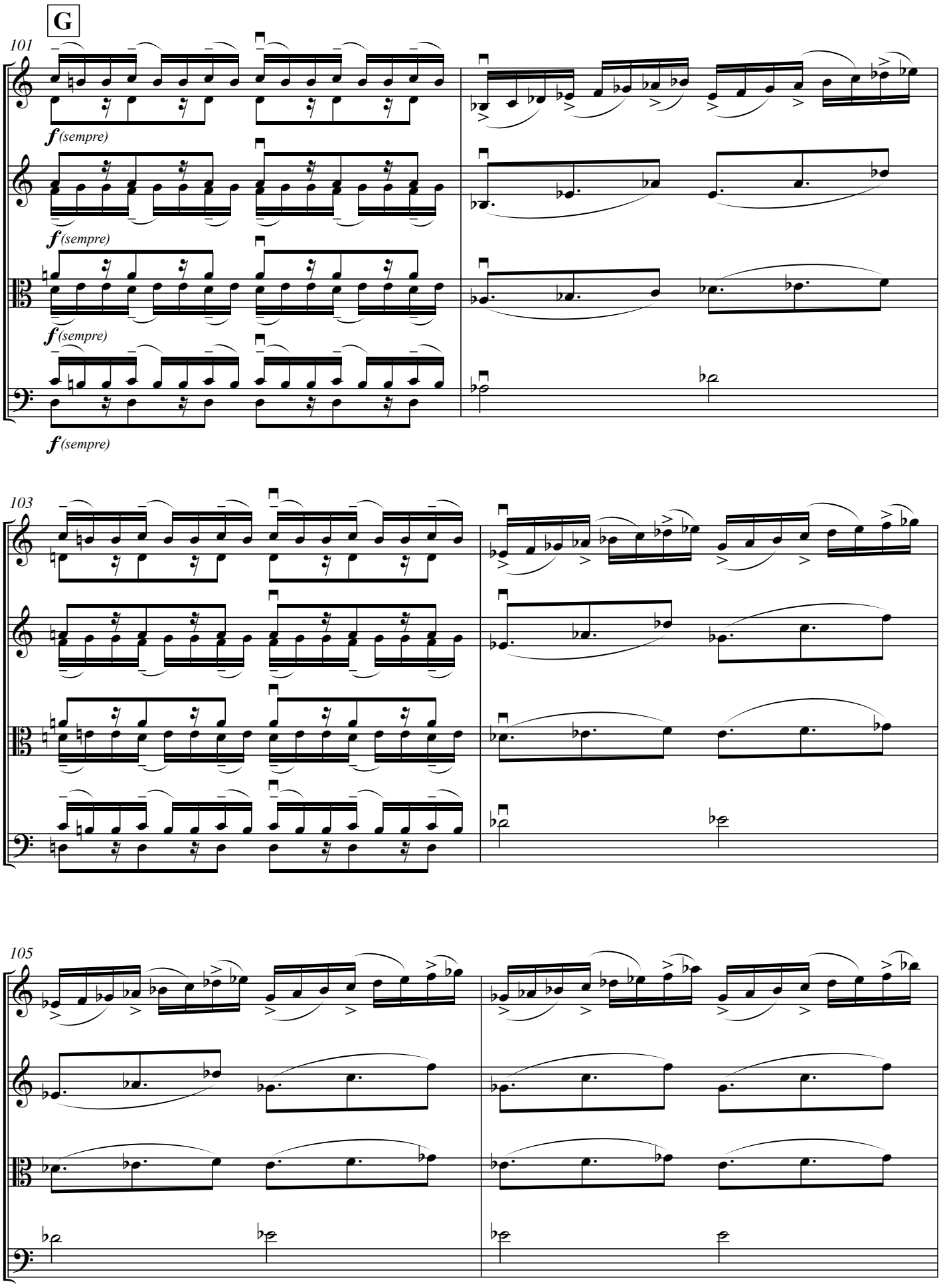

D
61
fp

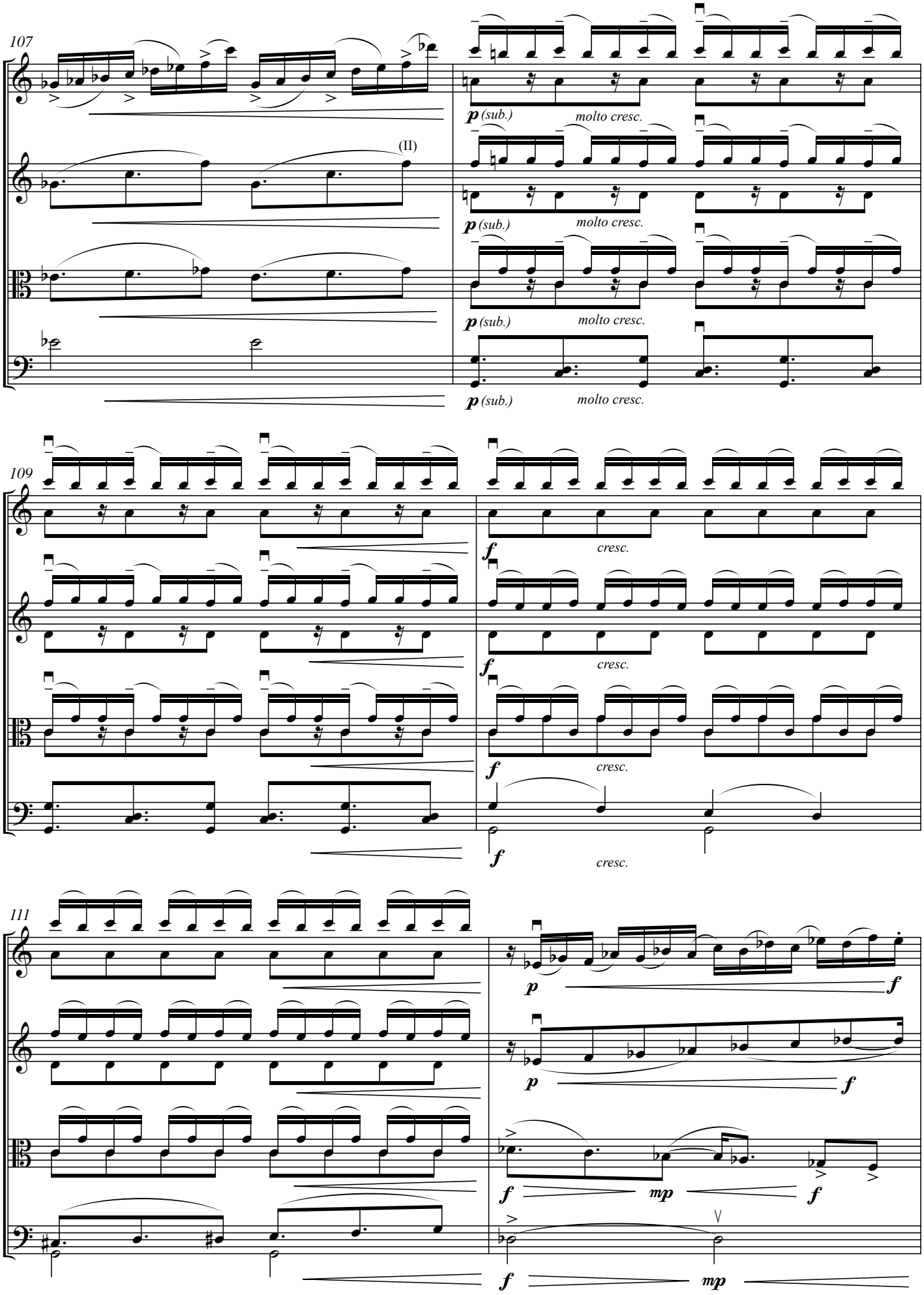

64
67
70
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco

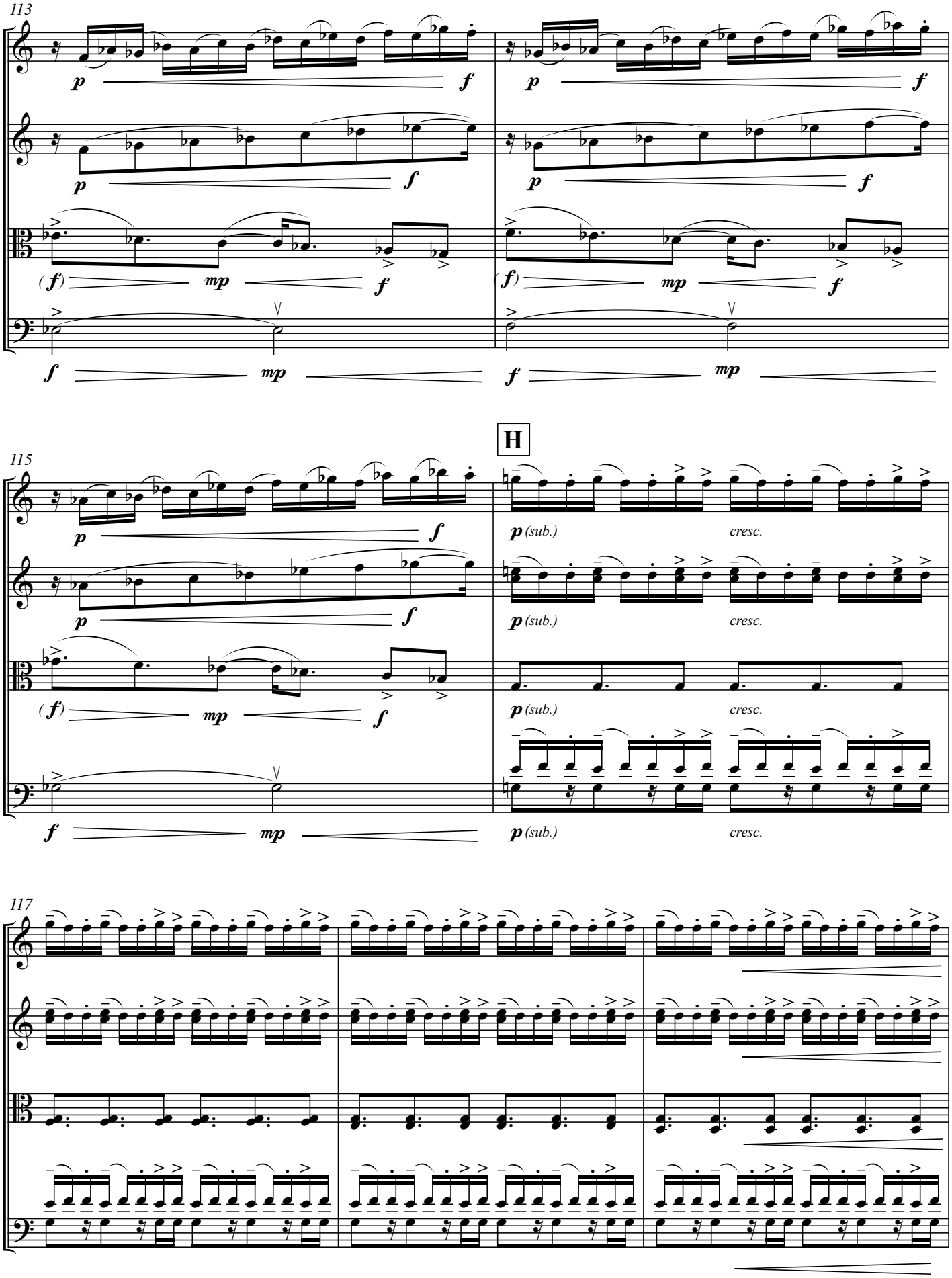

73
ff
ff
ff
ff
E
76
(ff)
(ff)
(ff)
(ff)
(ff)
81
f
p
f
mf
p
mf
mp
p
mp
p

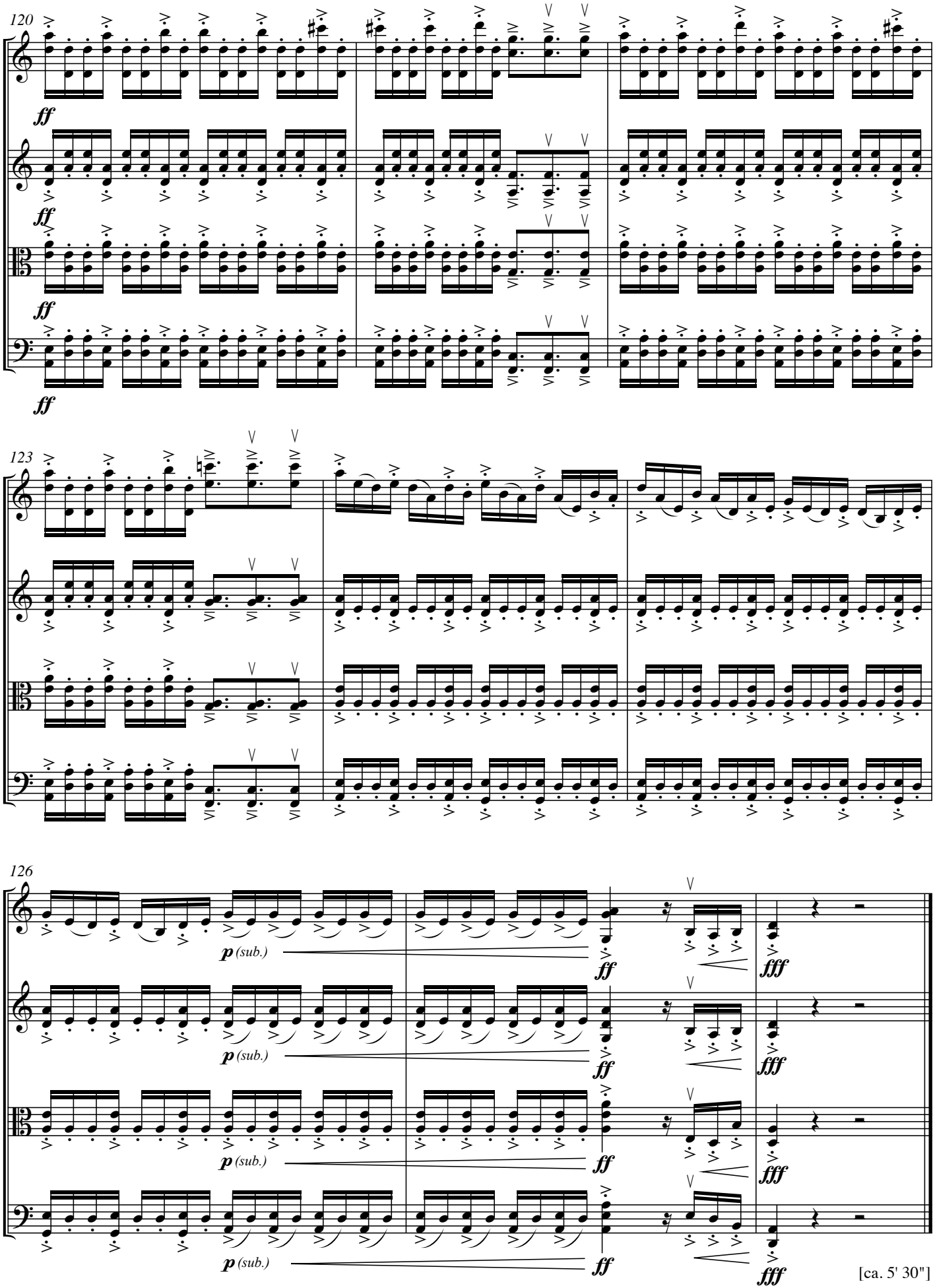

84
cresc.
f
87
p (sub.)
cresc.
f
F
p
90
(no cresc.)
f (sub.)
p (sub.)


93
ff (sostenuto)
mp (no cresc.)
ff
96
mp (no cresc.)
mf
99
p
mp

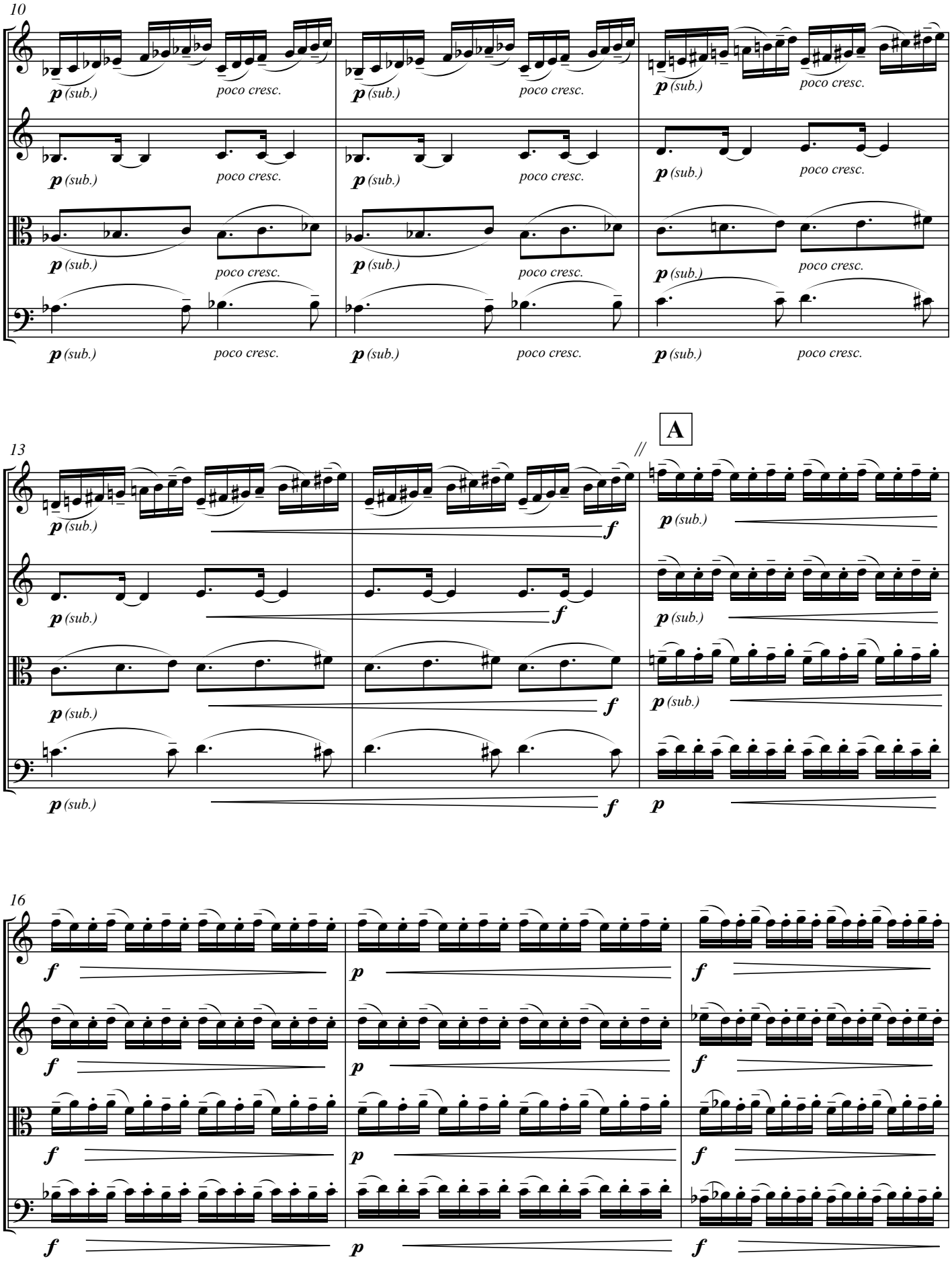

G
101
f (sempre)
f (sempre)
f (sempre)
f (sempre)
103
105

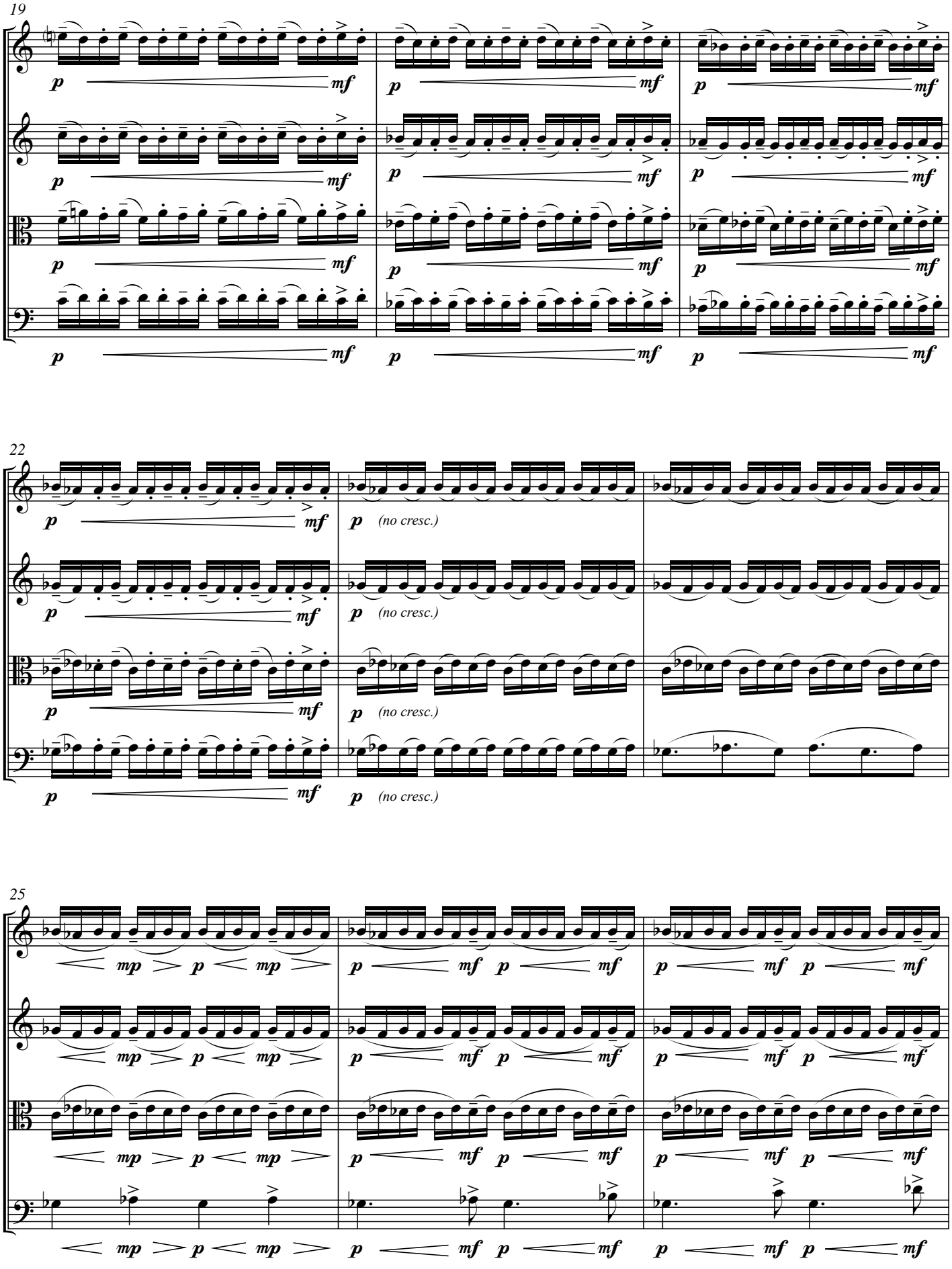

107
(II)
p (sub.)
molto cresc.
109
f
cresc.
111
p
f
mp

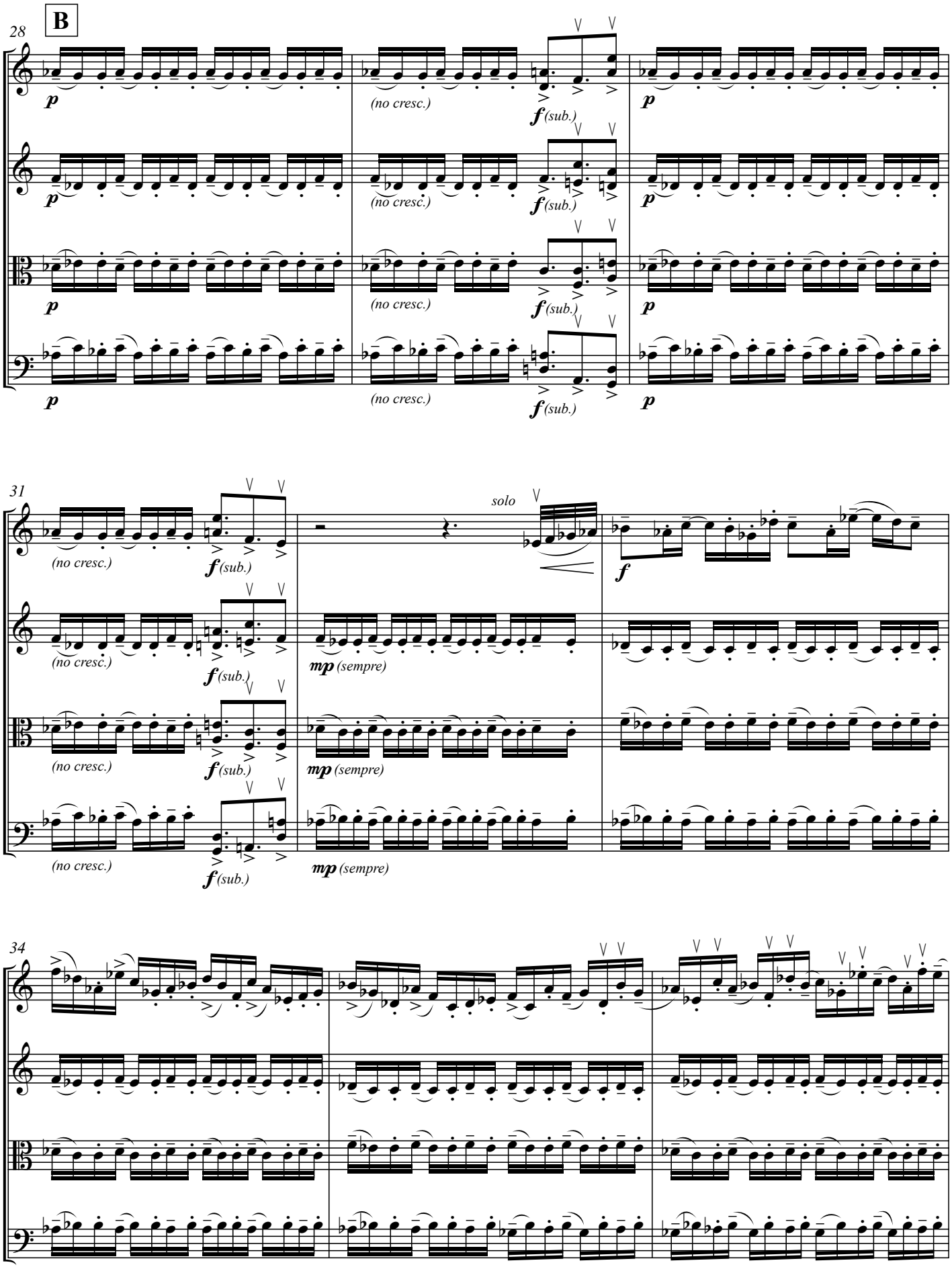

113
p
f
(f)
mp
H
115
(sub.)
cresc.
117

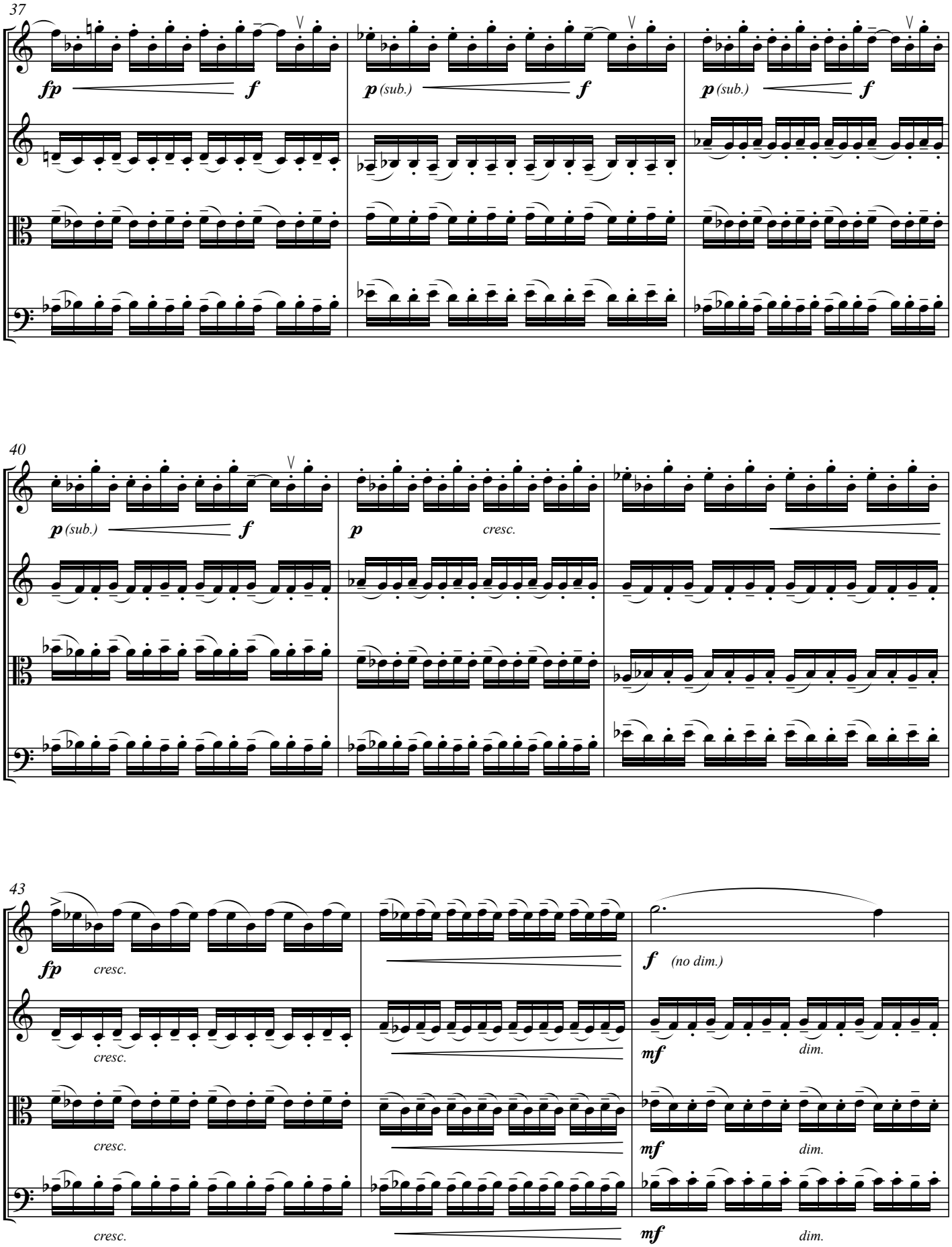

120
ff
ff
ff
ff
123
126
p (sub.)
ff
fff
p (sub.)
ff
fff
p (sub.)
ff
fff
p (sub.)
ff
fff

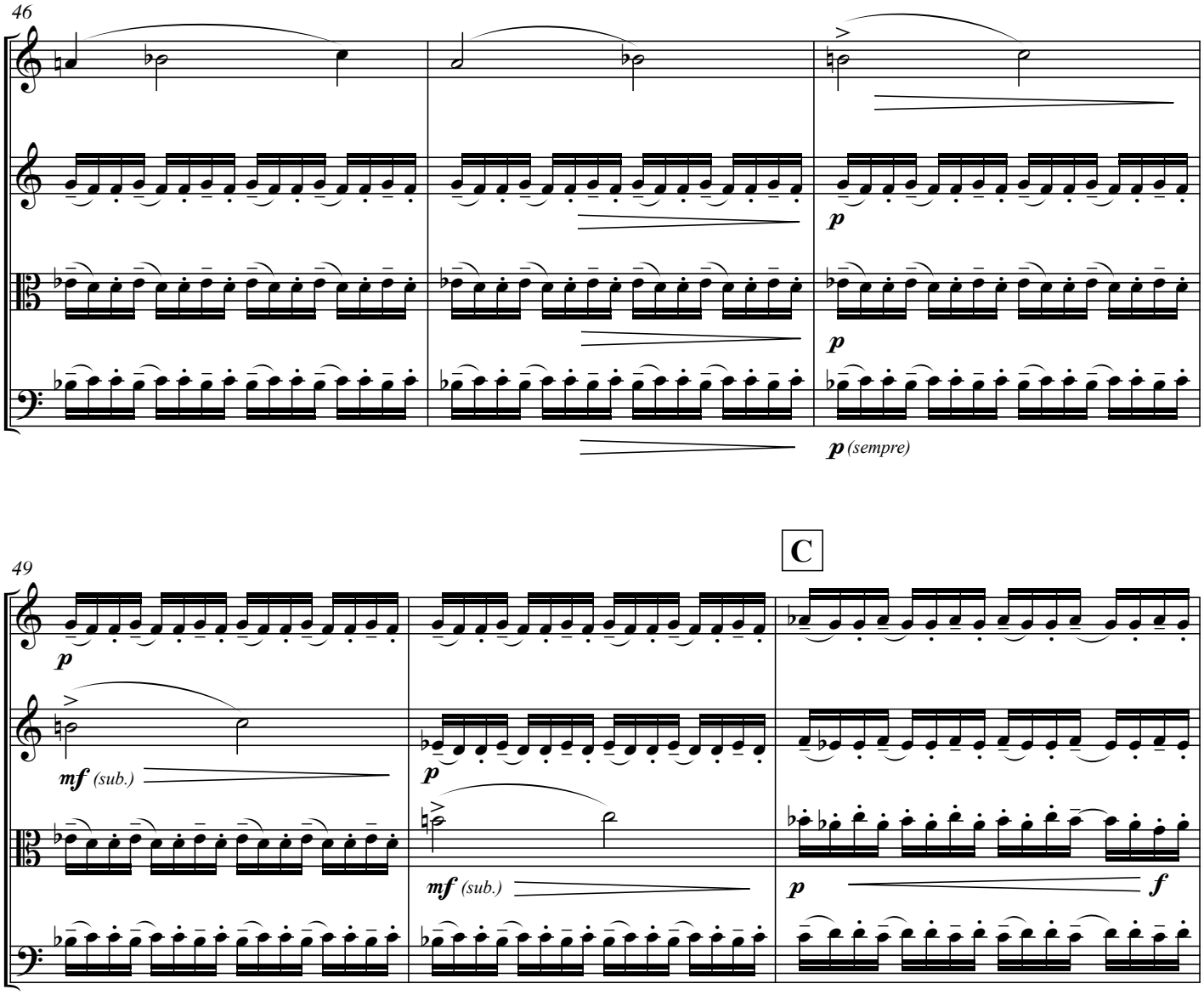
[ca. 5' 30"]

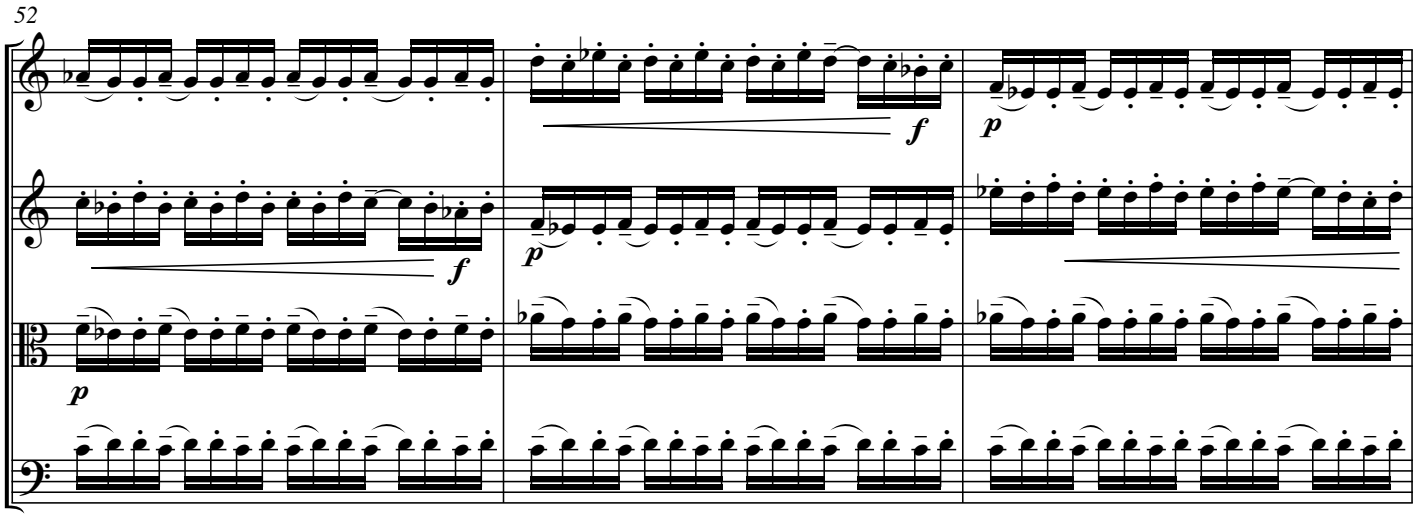

10
p (sub.)
poco cresc.
13
A
//
f
p
16

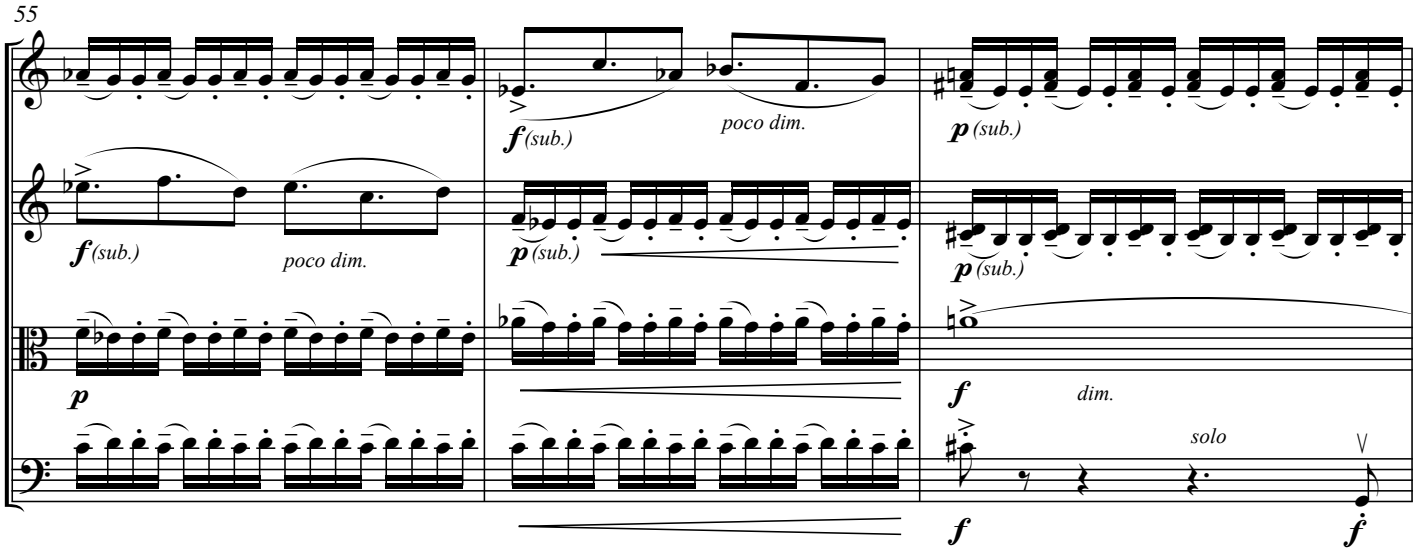

19
p
mf
22
(no cresc.)
25
mp
p
mf

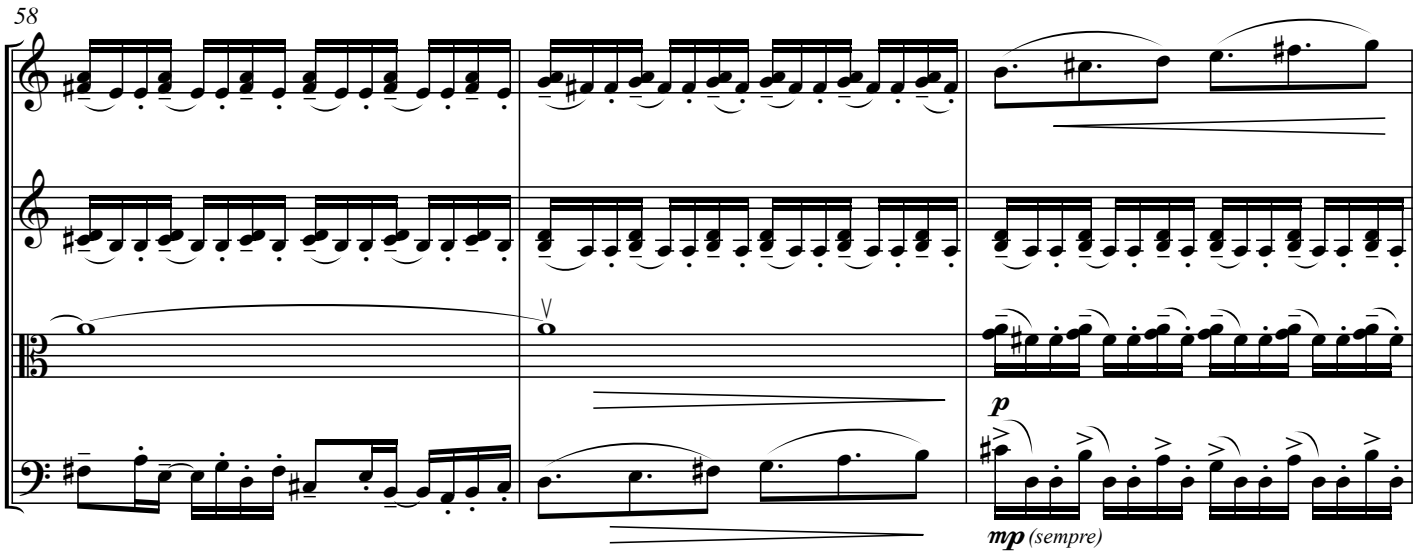

B
28
p
(no cresc.)
f (sub.)
31
solo
f
mp (sempre)
34

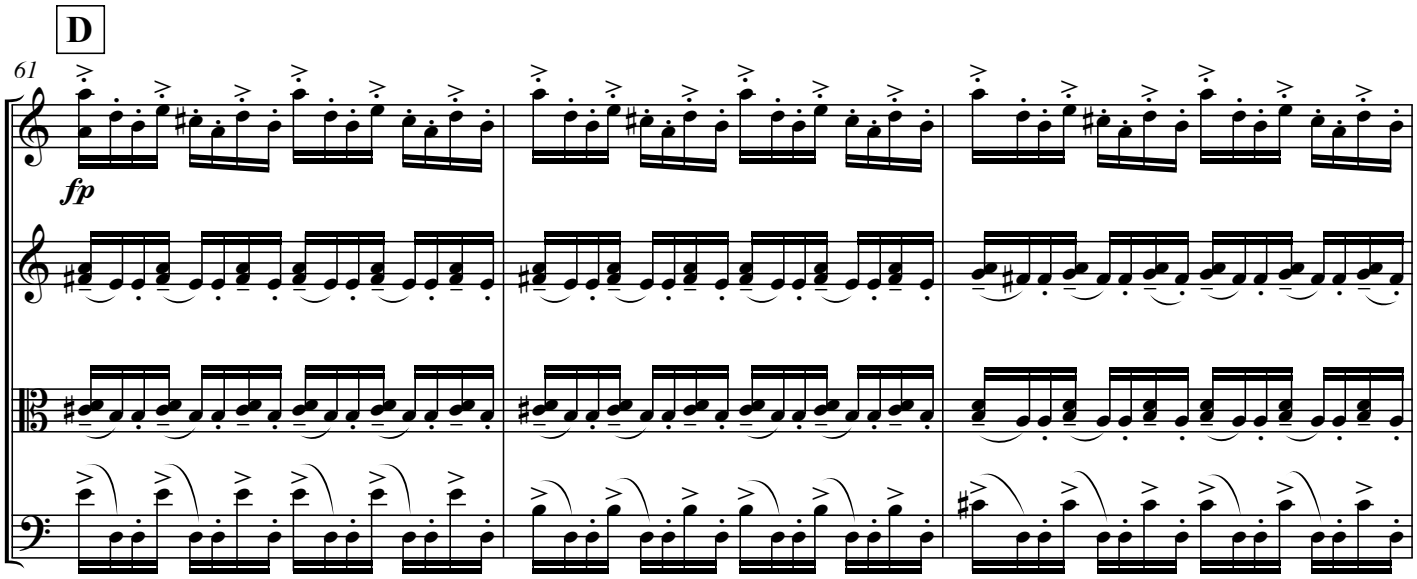

37
fp
f
p (sub.)
f
p (sub.)
f
40
p (sub.)
f
p
cresc.
43
fp
cresc.
f
(no dim.)
cresc.
mf
dim.
cresc.
mf
dim.
cresc.
mf
dim.

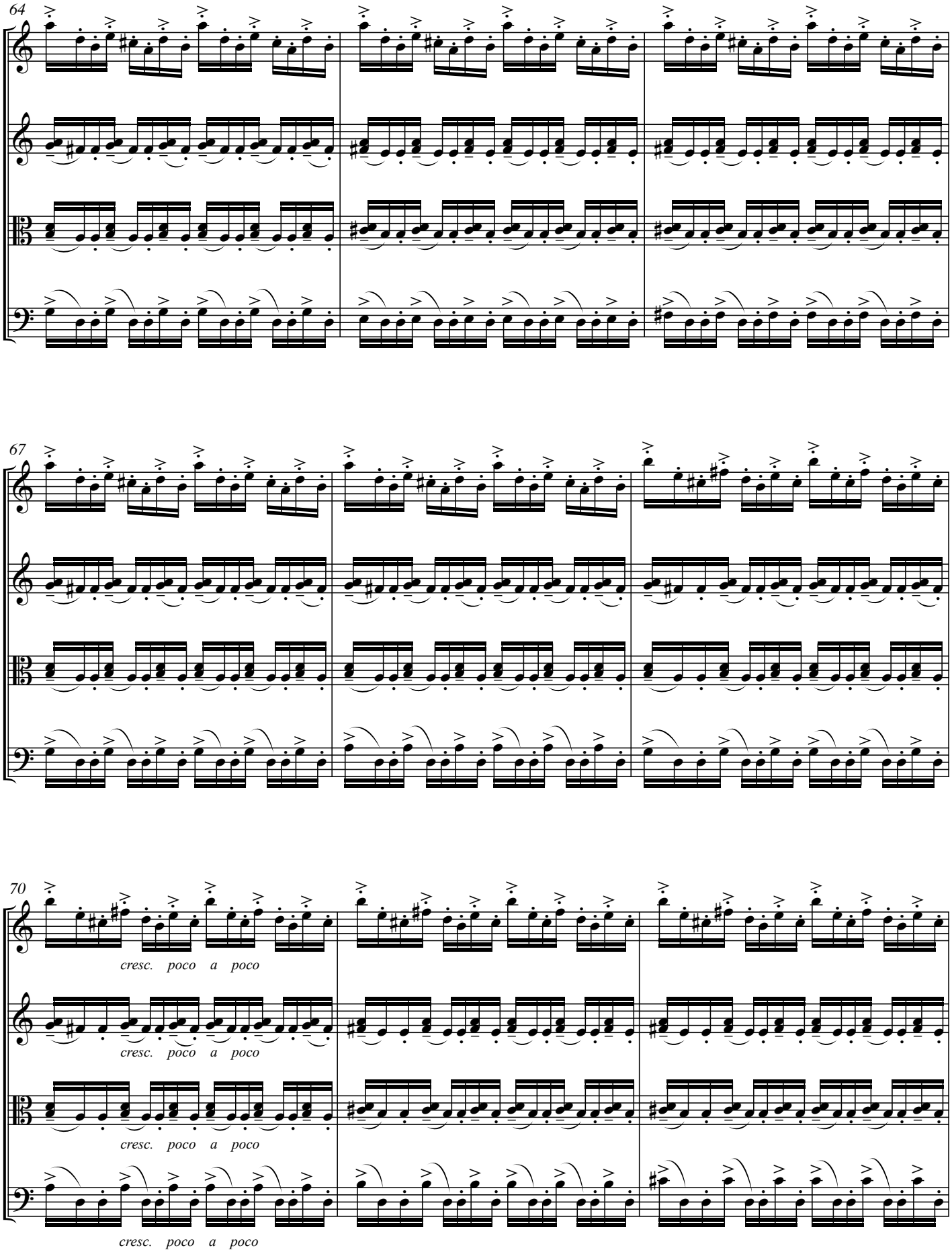

46
p
p
p (sempre)
C
49
p
mf (sub.)
p
mf (sub.)
p
f

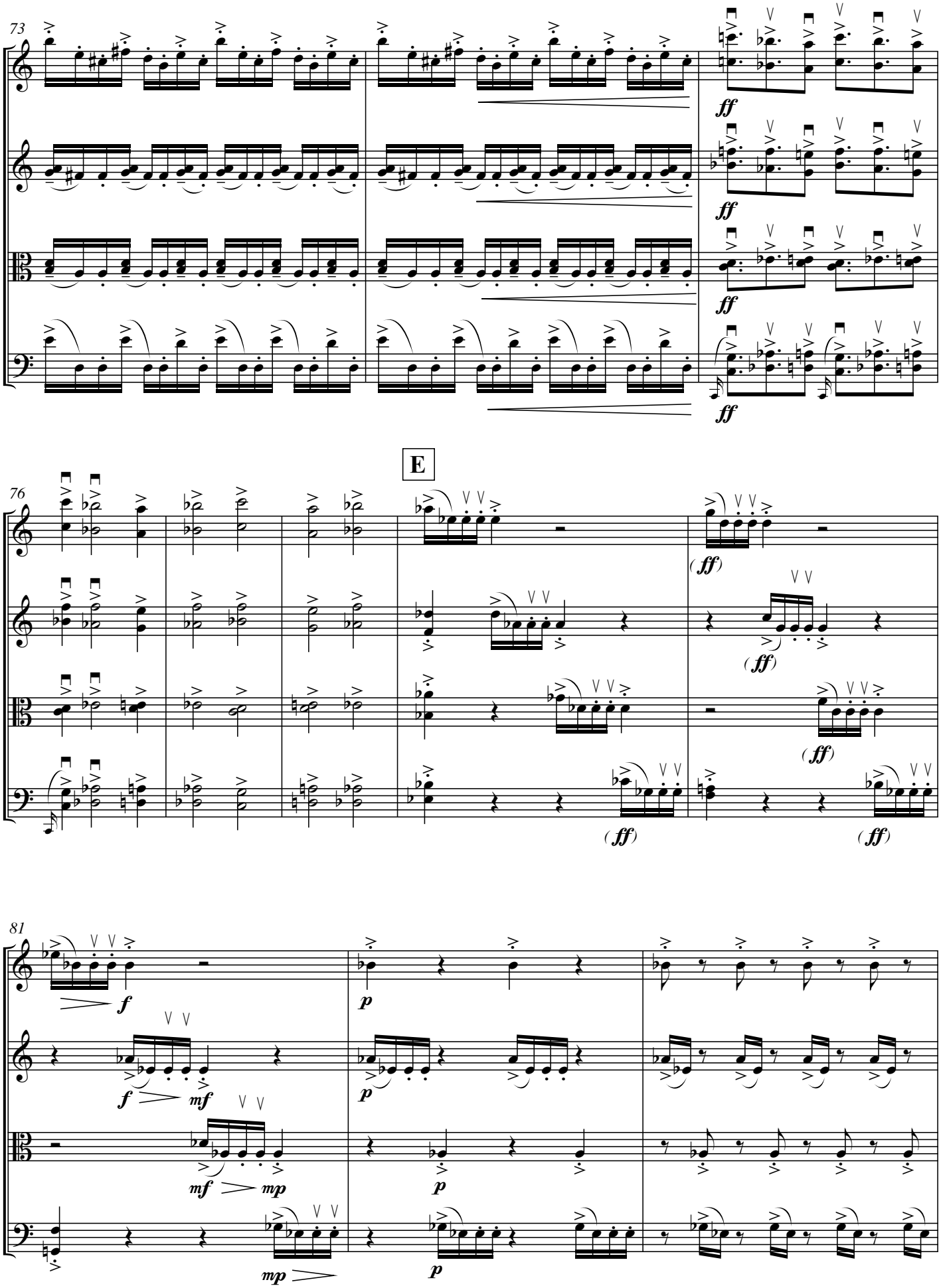

52
f
p
f
p
p

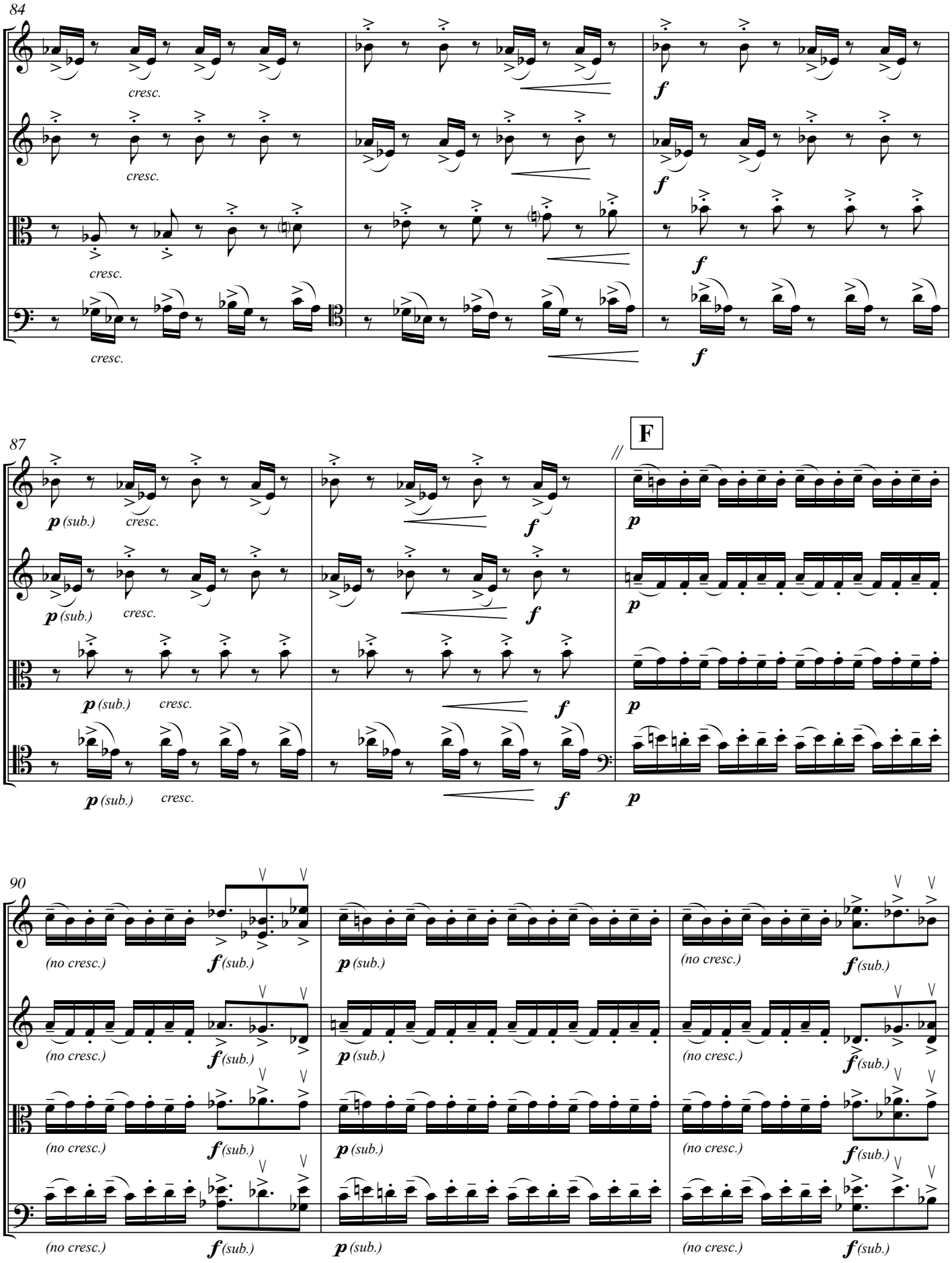

55
f (sub.)
poco dim.
p (sub.)
f (sub.)
poco dim.
p (sub.)
p (sub.)
p
f
dim.
solo
f
f

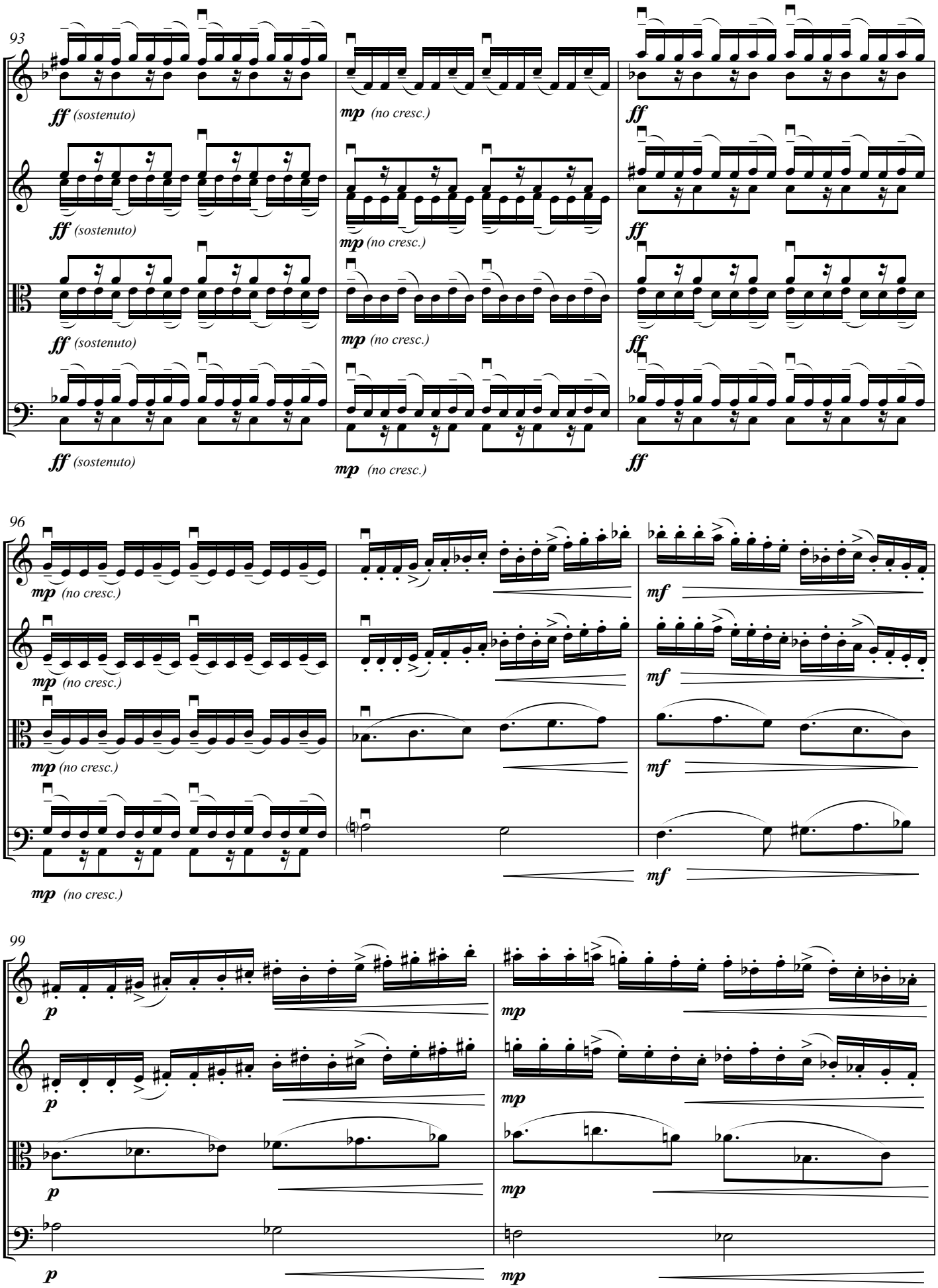

58
p
mp (sempre)

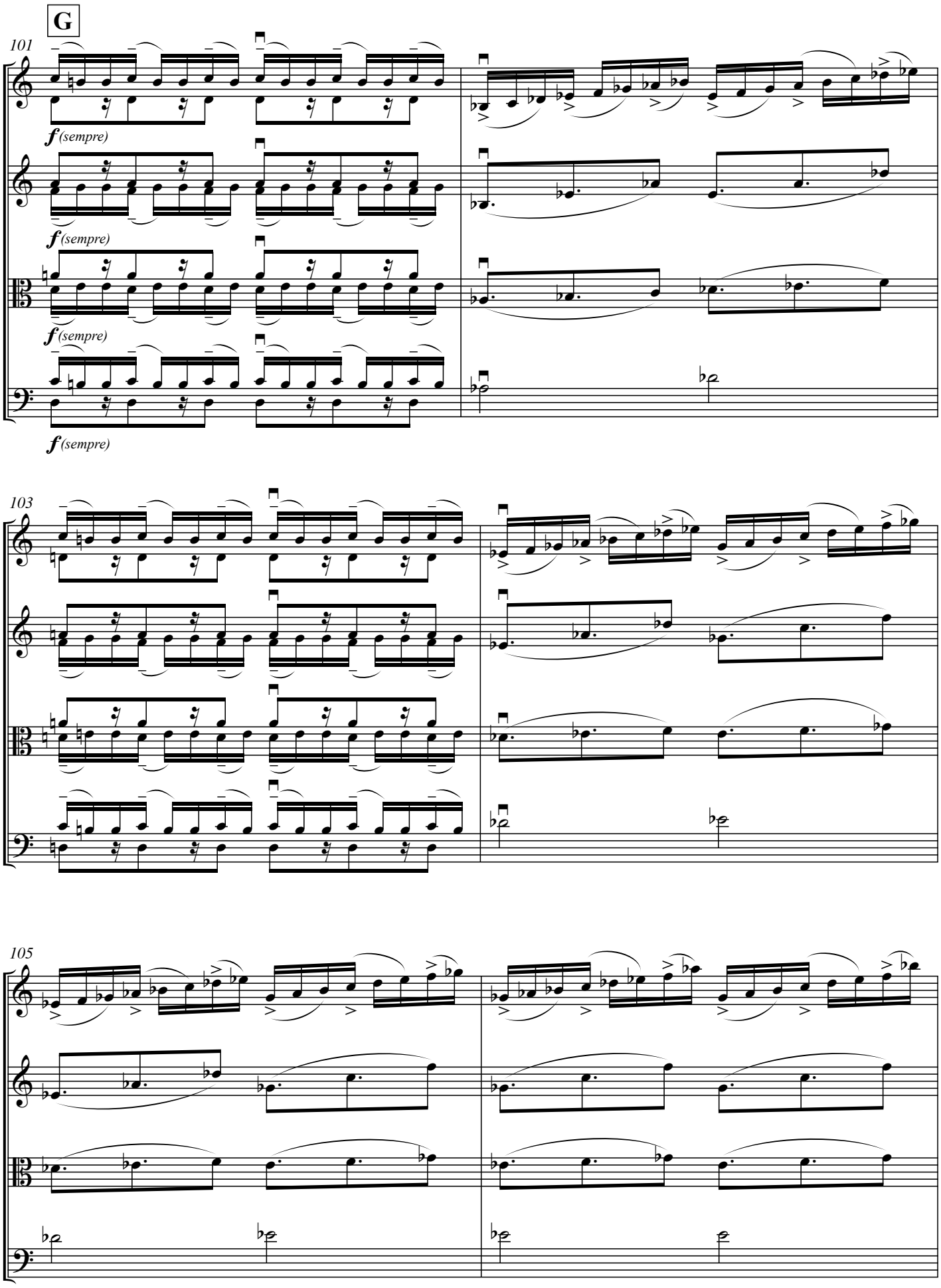

D
61
fp

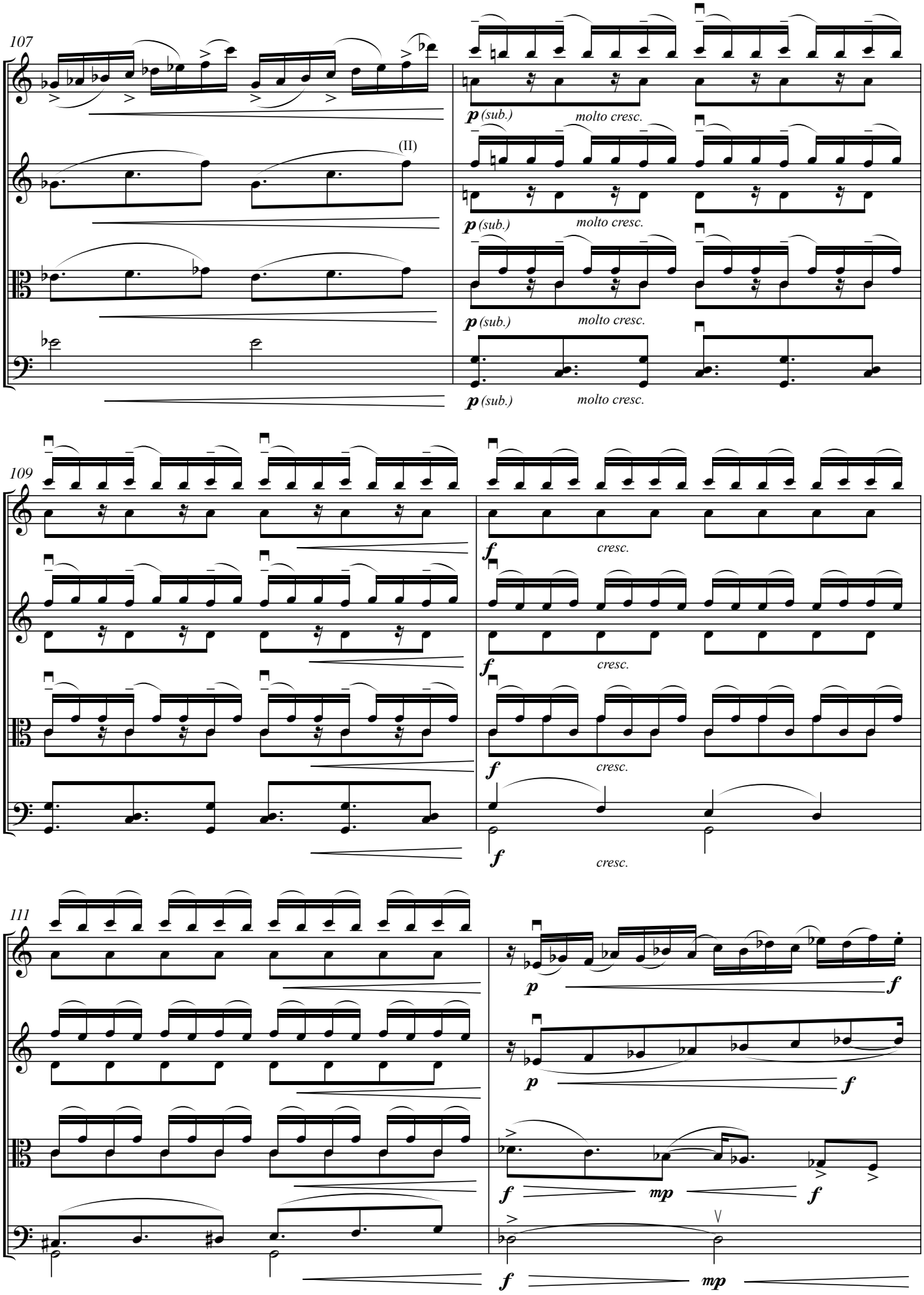

64
67
70
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco

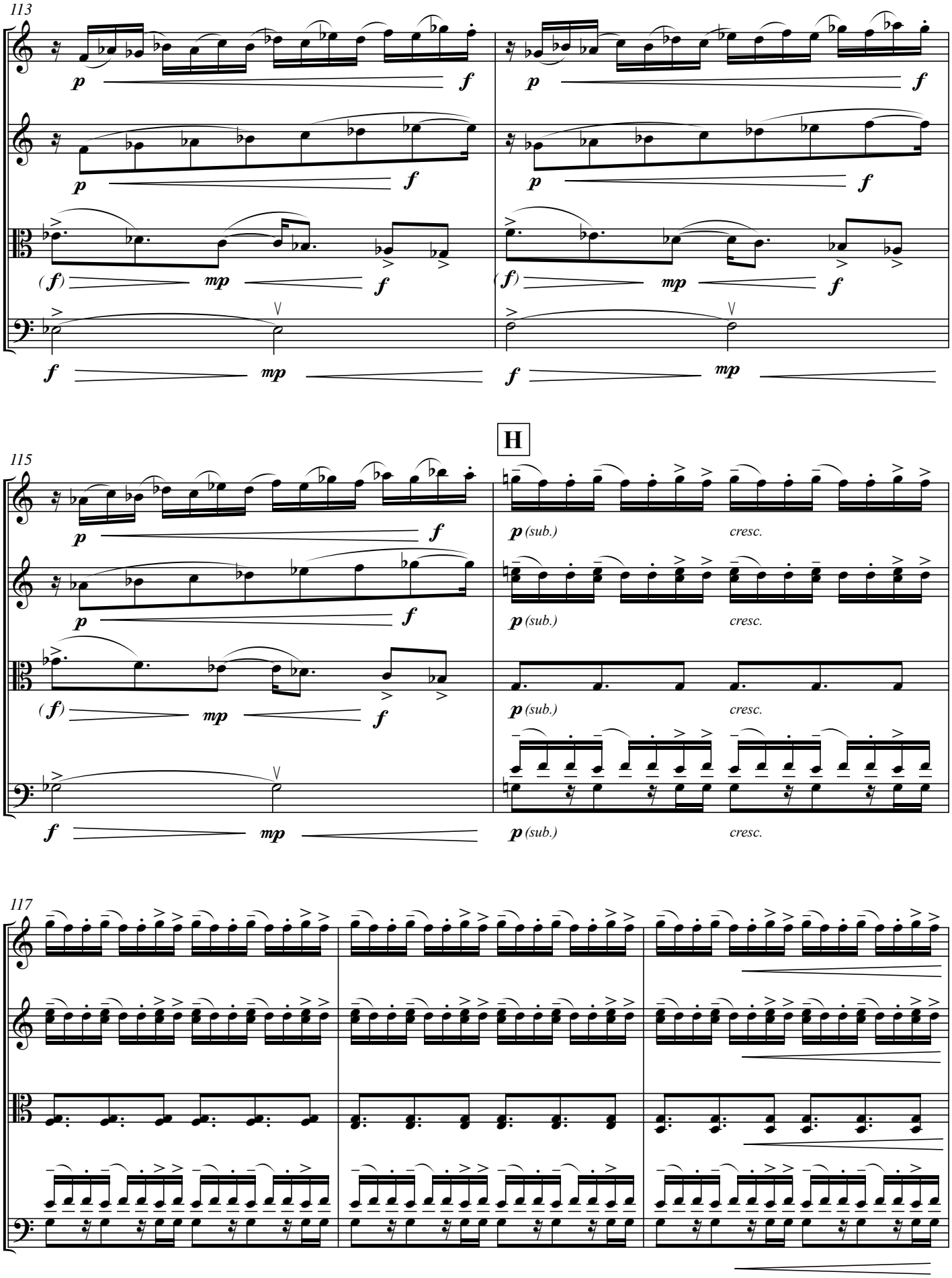

73
ff
ff
ff
ff
E
76
(ff)
(ff)
(ff)
(ff)
(ff)
81
f
p
f
mf
p
mf
mp
p
mp
p

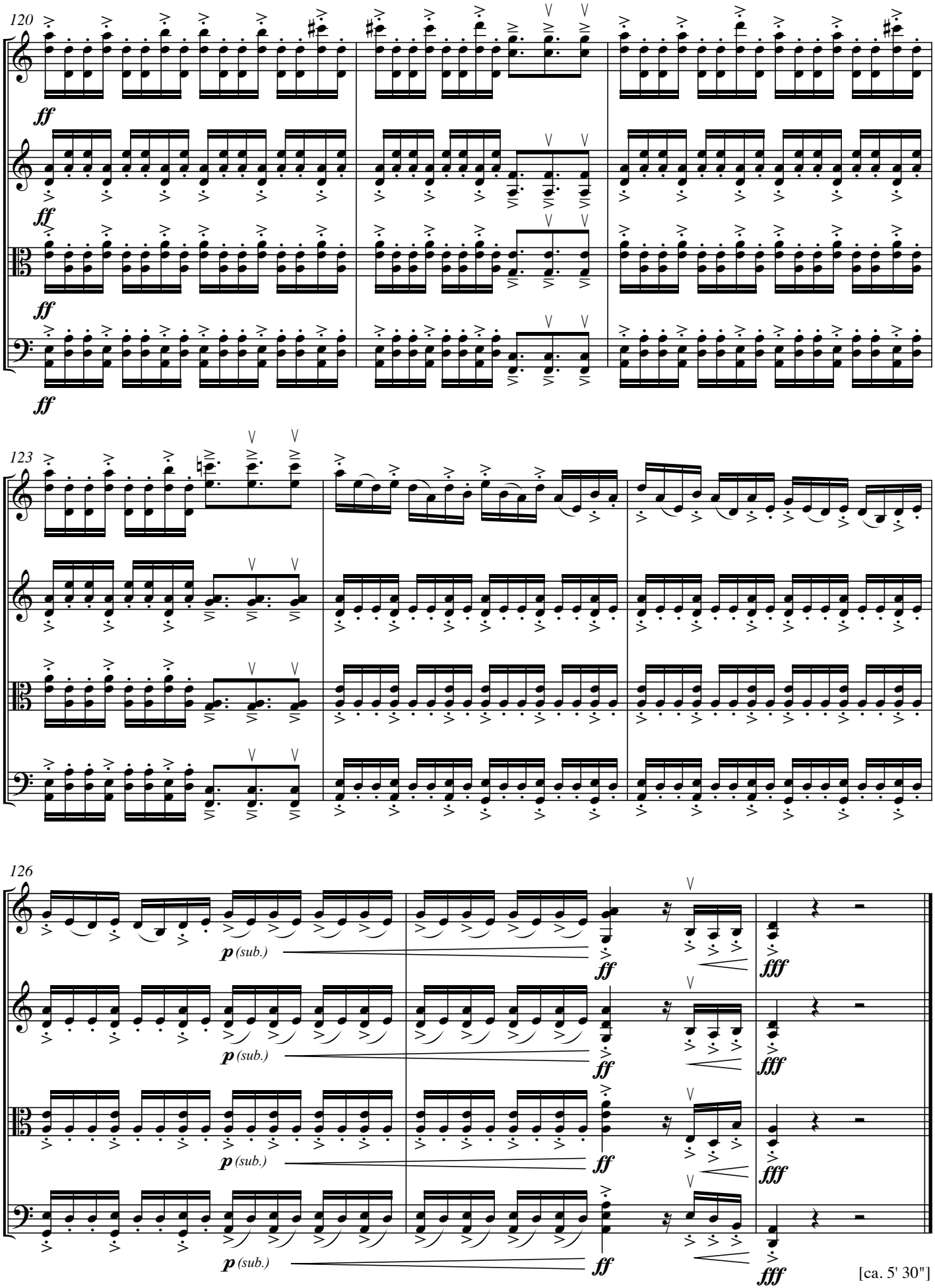

84
cresc.
f
87
p (sub.)
cresc.
f
F
p
90
(no cresc.)
f (sub.)
p (sub.)


93
ff (sostenuto)
mp (no cresc.)
ff
96
mp (no cresc.)
mf
99
p
mp


G
101
f (sempre)
f (sempre)
f (sempre)
f (sempre)
103
105


107
(II)
p (sub.)
molto cresc.
109
f
cresc.
111
p
f
mp


113
p
f
(f)
mp
H
115
(sub.)
cresc.
117


120
ff
ff
ff
ff
123
126
p (sub.)
ff
fff
p (sub.)
ff
fff
p (sub.)
ff
fff
p (sub.)
ff
fff

[ca. 5' 30"]