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Thórdís the Prophetess

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Þórdís the Prophetess

String Quartet No. 2

Full Score

By: Jason Richmond

Duration: 14 minutes

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Performance Notes:

The indication *ord.* (short for ordinary) means to return to normal bow position and playing. This cancels any and all combination of techniques for that particular performer only.

Feather beams are to be played slowly at first and gradually speed up to play as fast as possible within the time value indicated. This is for textural/timbral purposes and does not need to be played in sync with any other performer.

Violins I and II at the beginning until measure 21: Pattern 1 is left hand pizzicato only. Finger notes aggressively on the fingerboard and then pull off, similar to the guitar hammer-on/pull off technique. If the string snaps back against the fingerboard providing a percussive sound this is OK! Ad-lib the tempo/rhythm. Play out of sync with the other violinist. At any point within the first 21 measures, strum behind the bridge (Pattern 2) with the right hand while still playing Pattern 1. If the player would like to use a guitar plectrum to perform the Pattern 2 technique in order to get a louder and more brittle sound, then please do so! But both violinists must use a plectrum if this is the desired way to perform this pattern.

Violins I and II from measure 15 until measure 21: Gradually start adding col legno battuto jeté at random within Pattern 1 only. Concerning the jeté, the rhythmic accuracy or number of successive bow bounces is up to the player.

The entire String Quartet from measures 15 to 33: Play left hand pizzicato only (indicated with a + sign). Finger notes aggressively against the fingerboard. Perform a hammer-on/pull off technique similar to guitar playing. If the string snaps back against the fingerboard providing a percussive sound, this is OK!

Snap pizz. = Bartok pizz.: Pluck the string aggressively so it snaps against the fingerboard creating a percussive effect.

Jeté with glissandi: The use of jeté technique at any point in the string quartet and in tandem with a glissando is utilized as a percussive effect. While the rhythmic accuracy at the beginning of this gesture is of the most importance, the rhythmic accuracy or number of successive bow bounces does not have to adhere strictly within the rhythm that is notated.

Scratch tones and bowing behind the bridge: Scratch tones are used as a textural effect in this piece and are notated with “x” shaped note heads. They should contain little to no discernible pitch and are used primarily as texture. To play this technique, the left hand should lightly mute all strings over the fingerboard. “X” shaped note heads indicate which strings should be bowed. For bowing behind the bridge, only bow the strings indicated with an “X” shaped note head.

Col legno battuto: Use the wood of the bow to bounce against the string. Do not actually bow with the wood (do not play col legno tratto).

The entire String Quartet from measures 242 to 265: Pattern 1 is left hand pizzicato only. Finger notes aggressively on the fingerboard and then pull off, similar to the guitar hammer on

and pull off technique. Ad-lib the tempo/rhythm. Try to play out of sync with the rest of the quartet. After the entire quartet is playing Pattern 1 for 15 to 20 seconds, start incorporating Patterns 2 through 5 at random and in any order, while always returning back to Pattern 1. For example, a player can start with playing Pattern 3 (back to Pattern 1), then Pattern 4 (back to Pattern 1), then Pattern 2 (back to Pattern 1), then Pattern 3 again (back to Pattern 1), and then Pattern 5 (back to Pattern 1). Patterns 2 through 5 are to be played arco, except for Pattern 4, which is to be played col legno battuto. Try to play Patterns 2 through 5 independently from the rest of the ensemble, but if it happens, then it happens. This part is to last 30 to 45 seconds. This section is aleatoric and is supposed to have an improvised feeling to it, but if the quartet would like to devise a plan for this section then go ahead! Make it your own. The first violinist starts playing a particular pattern in tempo and rhythm at measure 258 and will cue the rest of the ensemble when to stop all together at measure 265. This will cause the second violinist, violist, and cellist to stop playing all the patterns (1 through 5) at any point, possibly within the middle of any pattern. This is OK.

Program Notes:

In the 10th century there lived a Prophetess named Þórdís by the roots of the mountain Spákonufell in Skagaströnd, Iceland. Þórdís regarded the mountain as her own and on that mountain she wanted to die later on in life. She hiked up the mountain every day and there she combed her hair with a golden comb. From the top of the mountain there is a beautiful view of the valley and the surrounding bay.

A stubborn sheep, called Grákolla, owned by the minister at Hof, roamed around free. Every day the sheep went to a special place in the valley called Leyningsdalir and ate the grass there. The sheep would return back home to Hof every night. This irritated Þórdís and she repeatedly chased the sheep away from the mountain.

She warned the minister to not let his sheep roam free near Leyningsdalir. This dispute ended in Þórdís killing Grákolla the sheep by breaking its back when she threw a big rock at him.

The minister was devastated when he found out that his sheep was dead and told his shepherd to hike up the mountain to a place above Spákonufellsborg, where Þórdís would go to comb her hair, and throw a glove on her back while she was combing her hair and let her know that this was payback from the minister for the killing of his sheep, Grákolla.

When the shepherd wanted to throw the glove at Þórdís, a rock fell from the edge where the shepherd stood. Þórdís, who was combing her hair, looked up and into the eyes of the shepherd. He lost consciousness on the cliff top and laid unconscious for most of the day. When he woke up he saw that Þórdís was dead on the ground below him. The glove had turned into a big boulder, which broke Þórdís's back.

The minister, who had been bedridden since his sheep was killed, was so happy that Þórdís was dead that he immediately recovered and got out of bed. The people of Skagaströnd were happy as well, as Þórdís was seen as a very demanding woman.

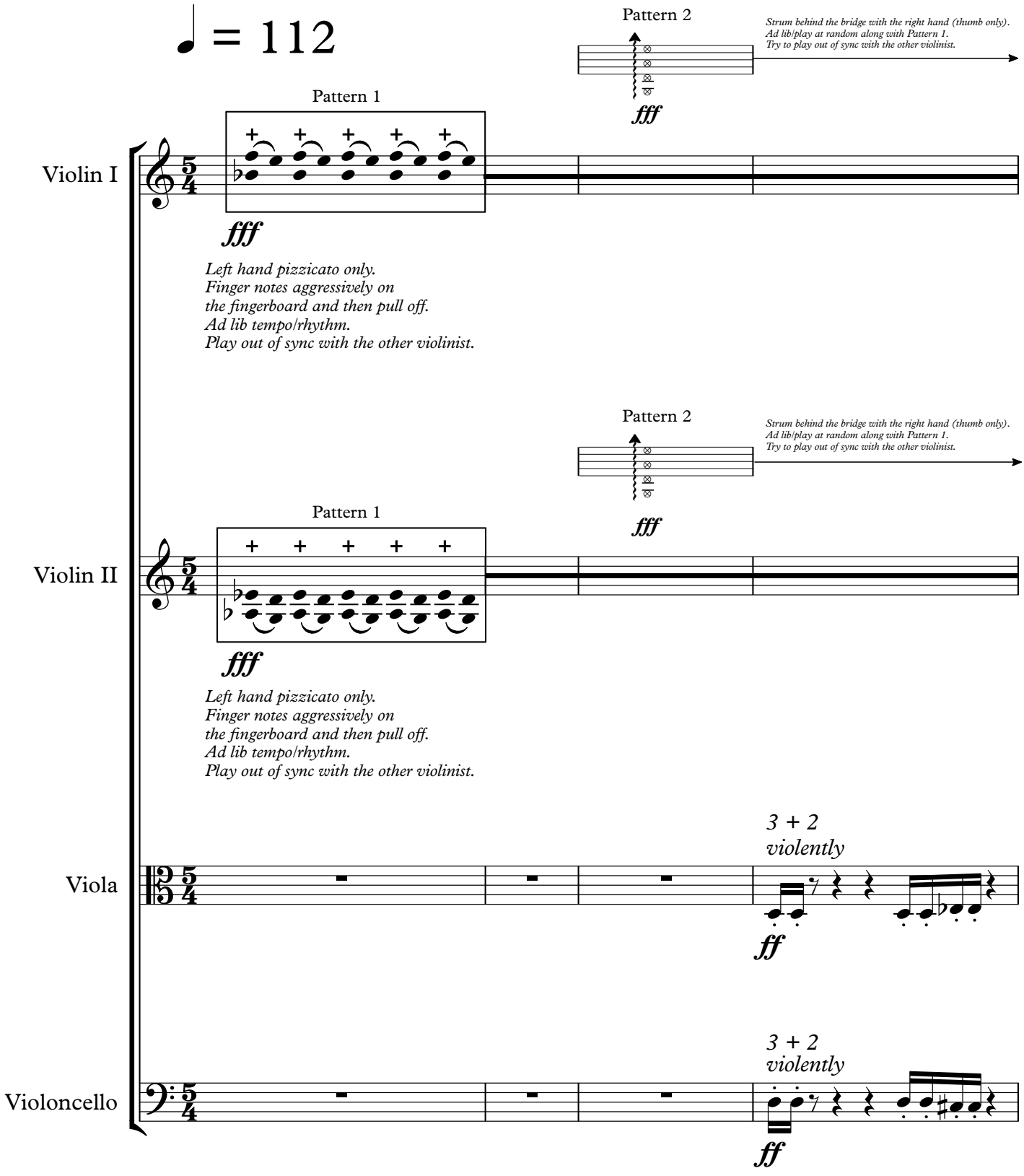
It is as if Þórdís had suspected that she was close to death after killing the sheep Grákolla. She had taken a treasure chest, containing her whole fortune, and hid it on top of Spákonufellsborg, with the key in the lock. She said that this treasure chest would be revealed to a woman, who was neither baptized nor knew of the word of God. If such a woman were to find the treasure chest, then only she would be able to open it and the whole fortune would belong to her. But to everybody else this chest would seem like a rock on top of the mountain. To this day, no woman has claimed this treasure.

This String Quartet tells of story of Þórdís the Prophetess and her death. Each particular section, technique, and theme represents a certain aspect of the story. I leave it up to the performers and the listeners to determine how this story unfolds to them as they experience this musical journey, and if this treasure has actually revealed itself to a specific woman.

Thórdís the Prophetess

for String Quartet

Jason Richmond



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5

ffp

ffp

10

pp *p* *ff*

pp *p* *ff*

13

15

A

Start adding col legno battuto jeté at random along with Pattern 1 only.
The rhythmic accuracy/number of successive bow bounces is up to the player.

Start adding col legno battuto jeté at random along with Pattern 1 only.
The rhythmic accuracy/number of successive bow bounces is up to the player.

ffp ***ff*** ***p*** ***ff***

ffp ***ff*** ***p*** ***ff***

18

The Violist will cue both Violins I and II to stop at Rehearsal B. Stop anywhere within Patterns 1 and 2 when given the cue to stop at Rehearsal B.

The Violist will cue both Violins I and II to stop at Rehearsal B. Stop anywhere within Patterns 1 and 2 when given the cue to stop at Rehearsal B.

jeté (Give cue for Violins I and II to stop at Rehearsal B)

p *ff* *p*

jeté

p *ff* *p*

B

21

ord. senza vibrato *wide and fast vibrato*

ffpp

ord. senza vibrato *wide and fast vibrato*

ffpp

senza vibrato *wide and fast vibrato*

ffpp

senza vibrato *wide and fast vibrato*

ffpp

24

Left hand pizz. only.
Finger notes aggressively.
Hammer on/pull off technique.

ord.

fff ***p*** ***ff***

Left hand pizz. only.
Finger notes aggressively.
Hammer on/pull off technique.

ord.

fff ***p*** ***ff***

Left hand pizz. only.
Finger notes aggressively.
Hammer on/pull off technique.

ord.

fff ***p*** ***ff***

Left hand pizz. only.
Finger notes aggressively.
Hammer on/pull off technique.

ord.

fff ***p*** ***ff***

28

col legno batt. *Previous technique.*

p ***ff***

col legno batt. *Previous technique.*

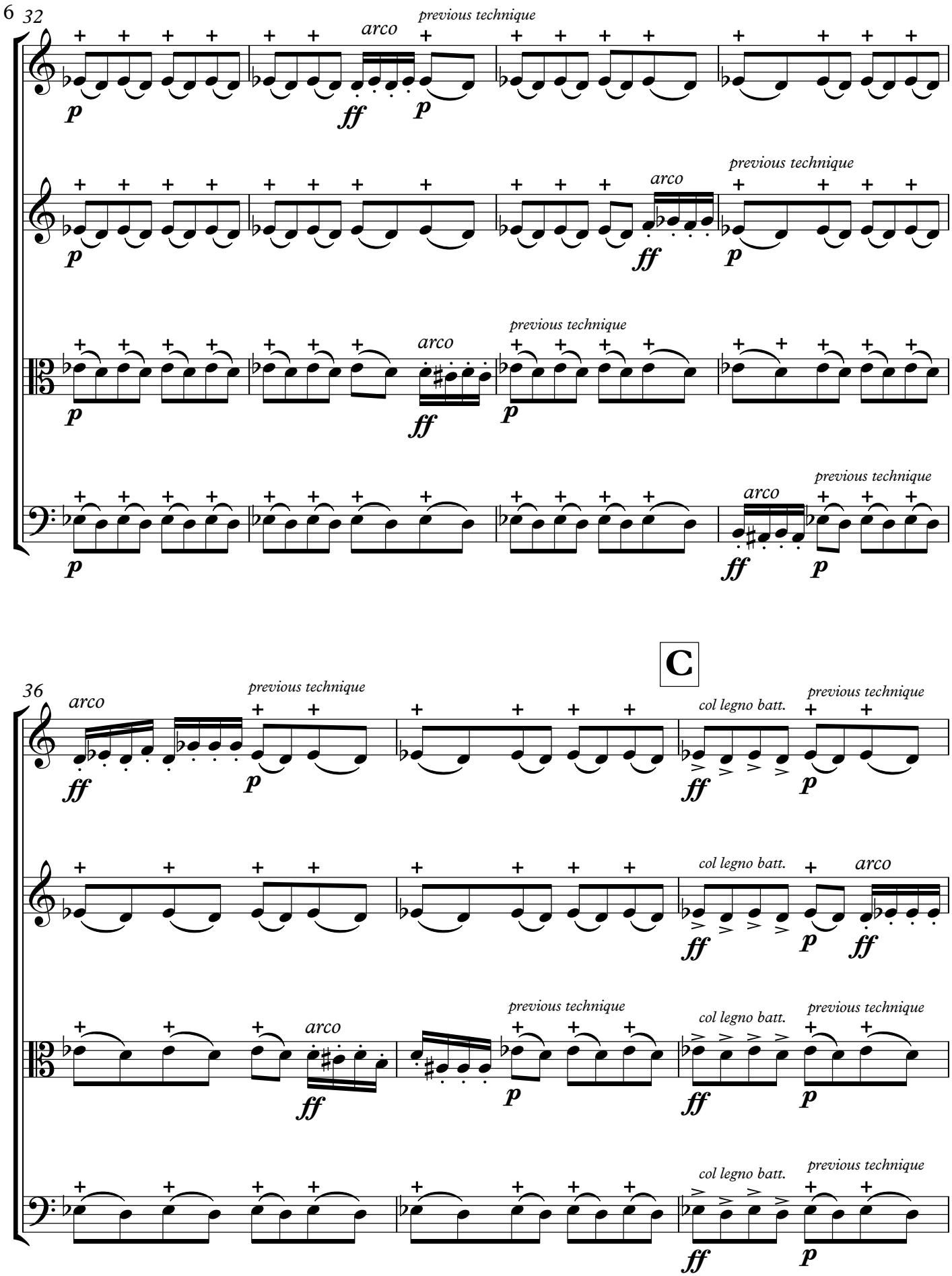
p ***ff***

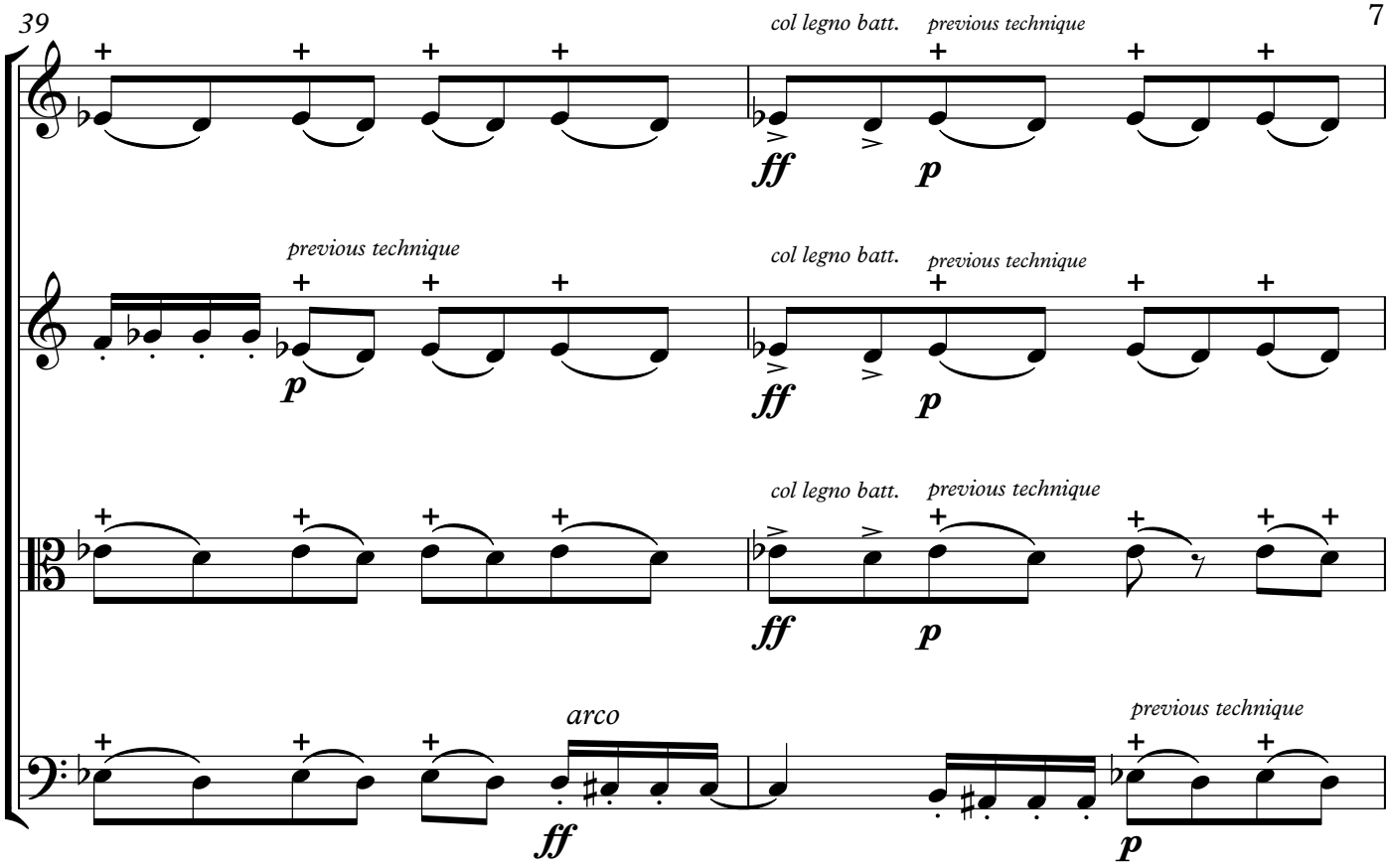
col legno batt. *Previous technique.*

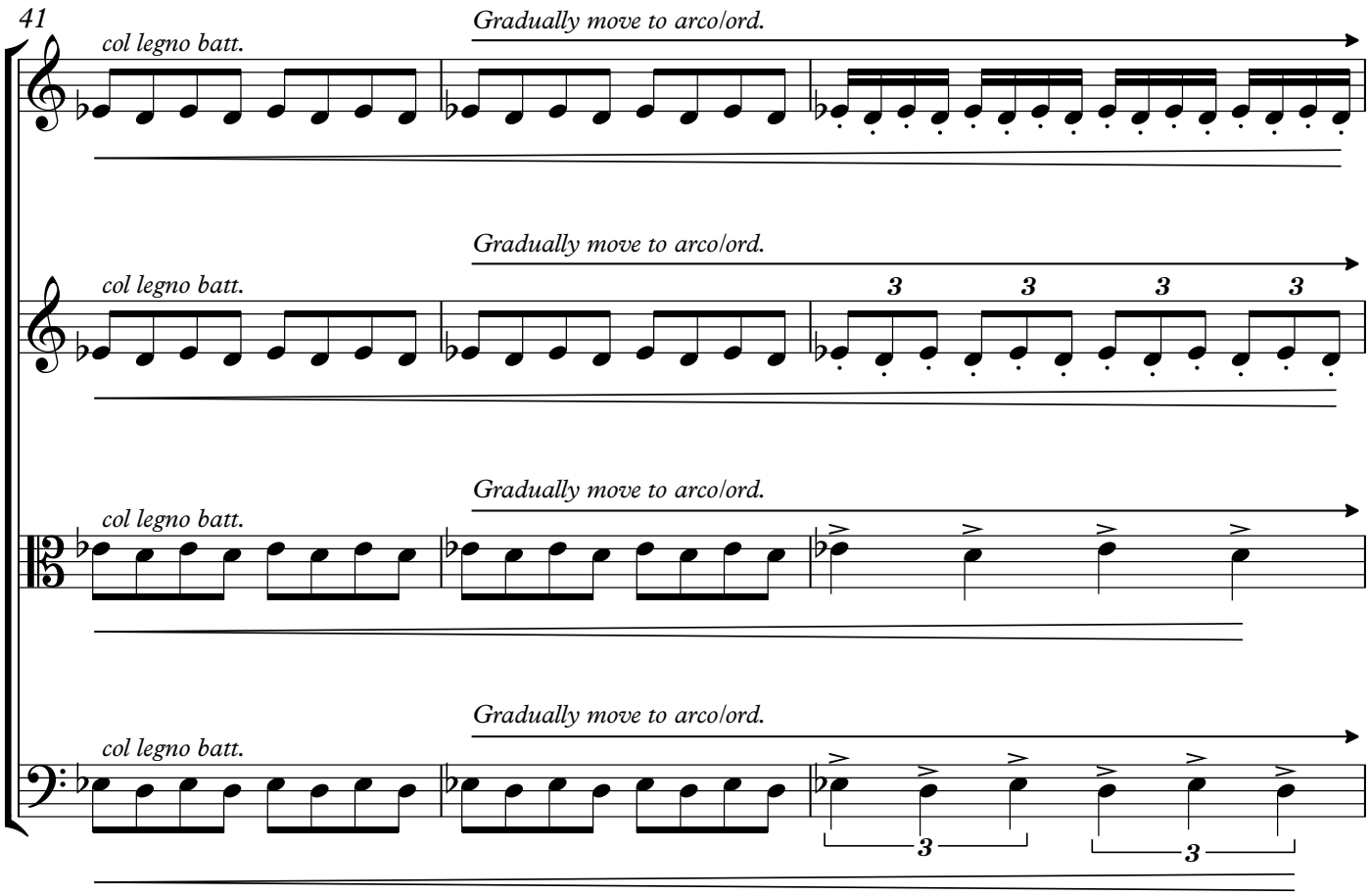
p ***ff***

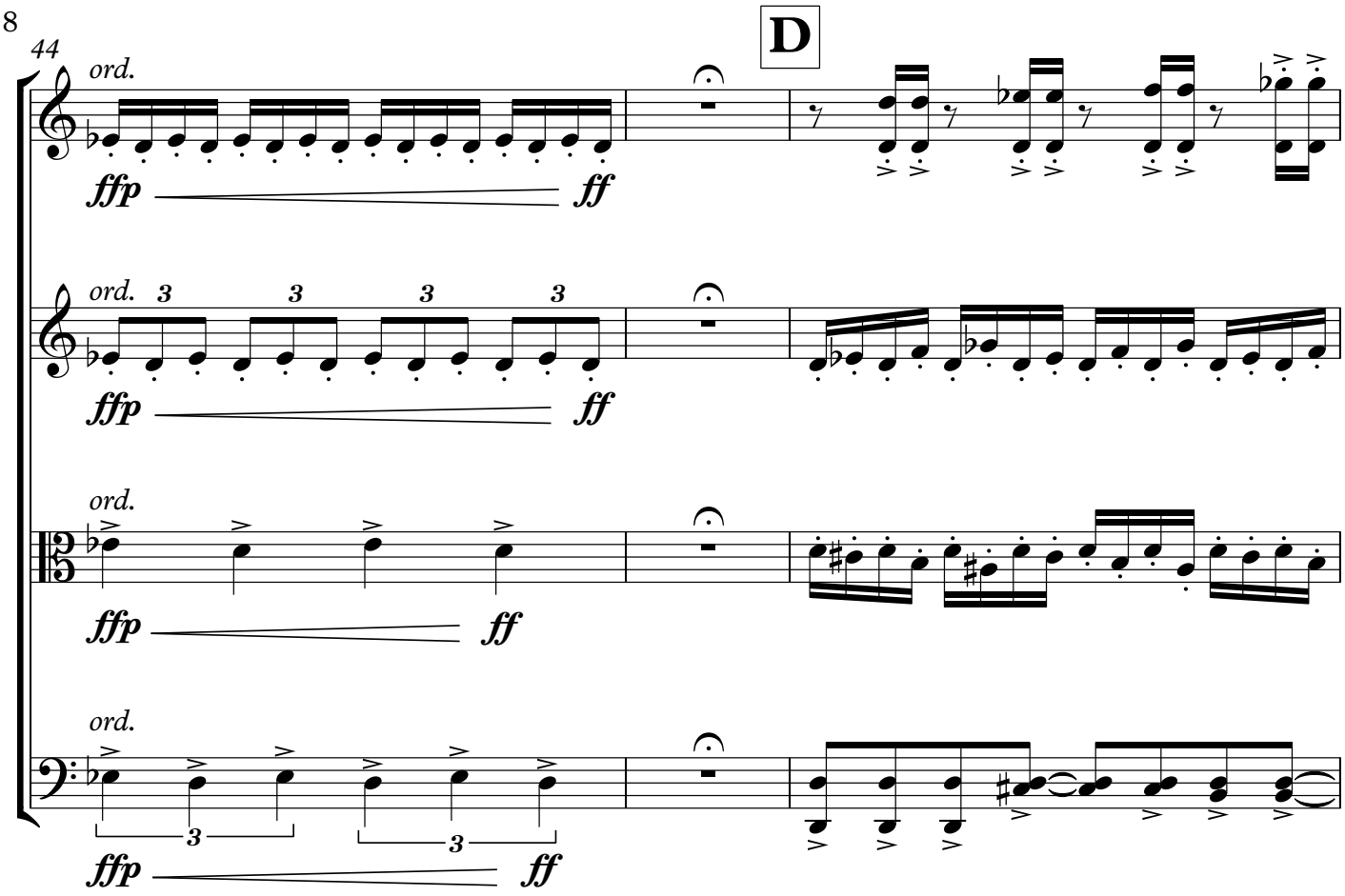
col legno batt. *Previous technique.*

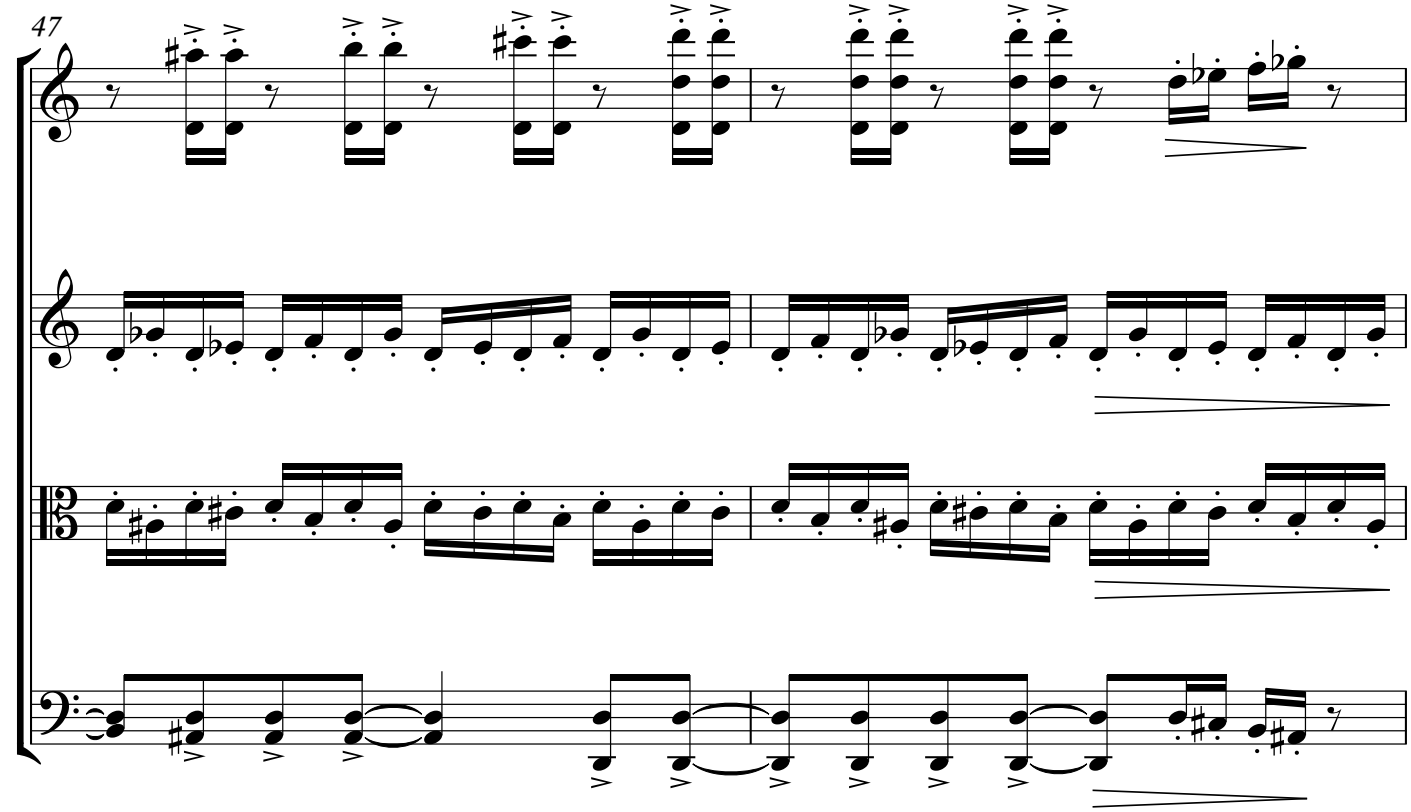
p ***ff***


6
32
arco
previous technique
p
ff
p
arco
previous technique
p
ff
p
arco
previous technique
p
ff
p
arco
previous technique
p
ff
p
C
36
arco
previous technique
ff
p
col legno batt.
previous technique
ff
p
col legno batt.
arco
ff
p
ff
arco
previous technique
ff
p
col legno batt.
previous technique
ff
p
col legno batt.
previous technique
ff
p


39
col legno batt.
previous technique
ff
p
previous technique
p
col legno batt.
previous technique
ff
p
col legno batt.
previous technique
ff
p
arco
ff
previous technique
p


41
col legno batt.
Gradually move to arco/ord.
col legno batt.
Gradually move to arco/ord.
3
3
3
3
col legno batt.
Gradually move to arco/ord.
col legno batt.
Gradually move to arco/ord.
3
3


44
D
ord.
ffp
ff
ord.
ffp
ff
ord.
ffp
ff
ord.
ffp
ff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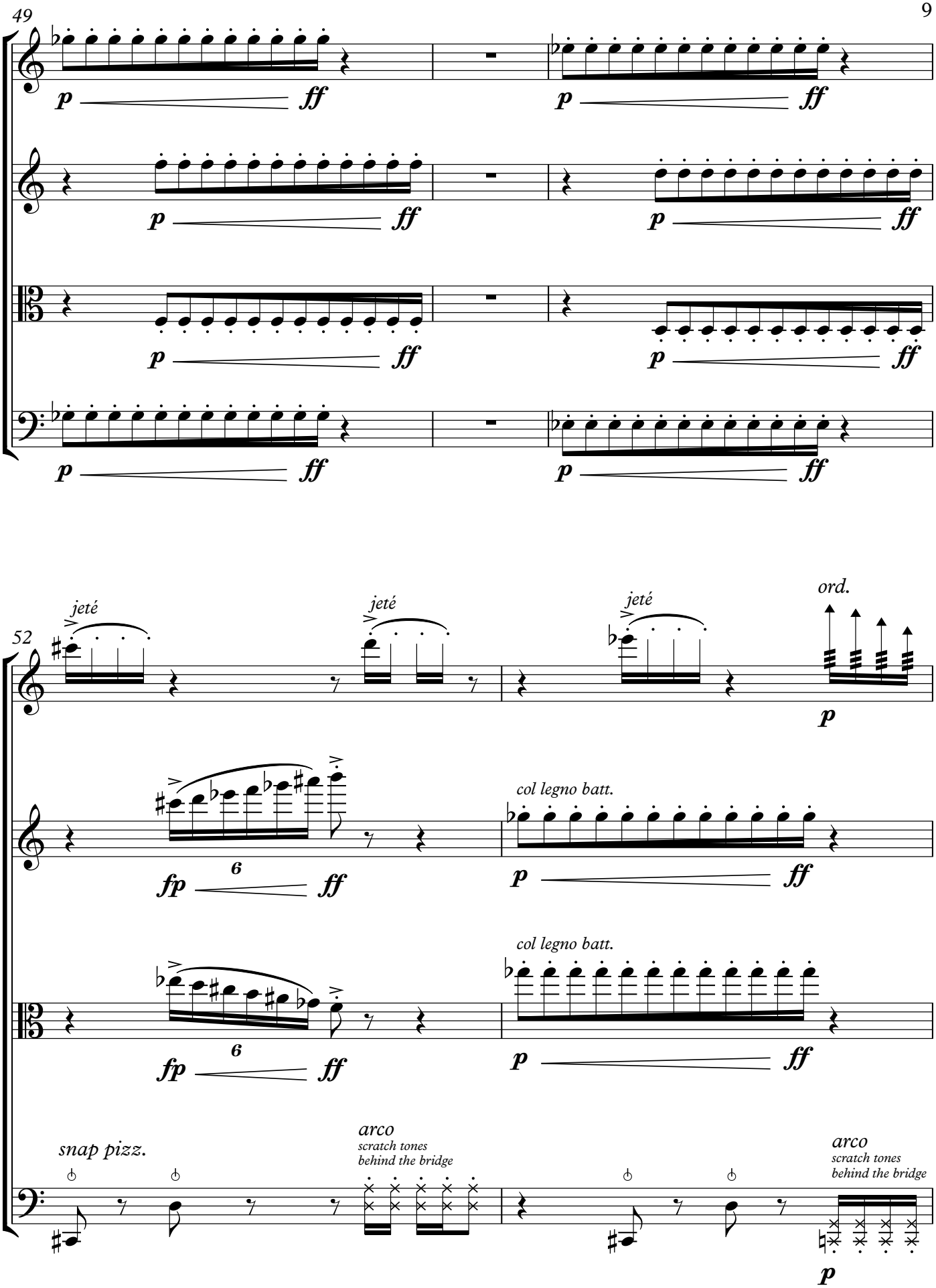

49
p
ff
52
jeté
ord.
fp
6
col legno batt.
snap pizz.
arco
scratch tones
behind the bridge

10

E

54

jeté

ff

ord.

p

ff

6

ord.

p

6

ff

Snap pizz., ord. position

ff

56

jeté

jeté

jeté

6

fp

ff

fp

ff

6

fp

6

fp

6

ff

6

fp

arco, sul I, sul pont. tremolo gliss.

gliss.

p

sul I

58

ppp

col legno batt. *ord.*

p ***ff*** ***p*** ***ff***

col legno batt. *ord.*

p ***ff*** ***p*** ***ff***

ffp

61

F

jeté

ff

scrath tones behind bridge

p ***ff***

scrath tones behind bridge

p ***ff***

jeté, ord. position

ff

63

jeté

pizz.

scrath tones behind bridge

ord.

col legno batt.

scrath tones behind bridge

ord.

col legno batt.

jeté

pizz.

66

3 - 5"

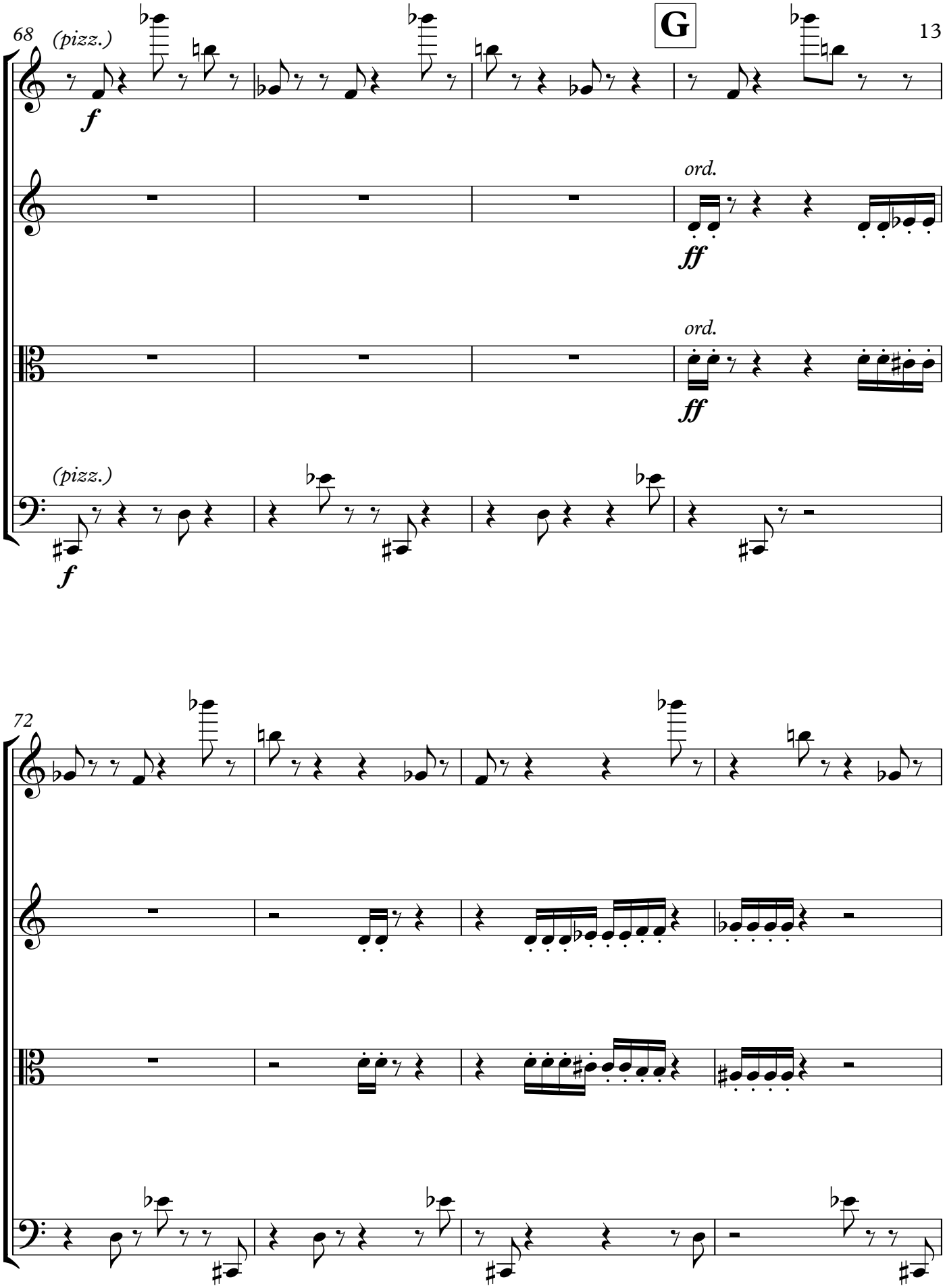
scrath tones behind bridge

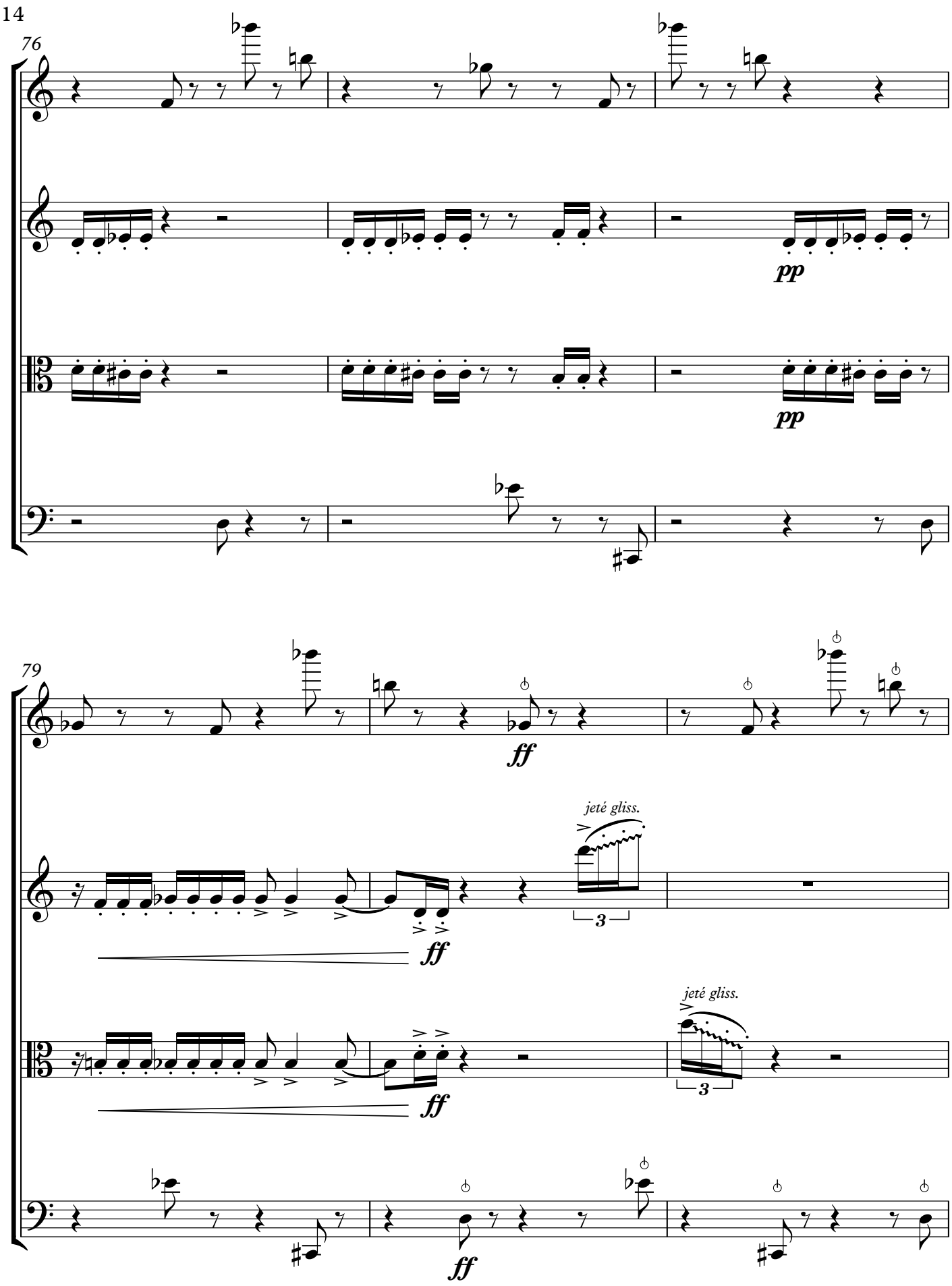
3 - 5"

scrath tones behind bridge

3 - 5"

3 - 5"


68
(pizz.)
f
G
ord.
ff
ord.
ff
(pizz.)
f
72


76
pp
pp
79
ff
jeté gliss.
3
ff
jeté gliss.
3
ff
ff

82

jeté gliss.

jeté gliss.

jeté gliss.

jeté gliss.

H

85

jeté gliss.

col legno batt.

p

jeté gliss.

col legno batt.

p

88

arco

p

ord.

ff

(ff)

7

ord.

ff

(ff)

7

arco

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

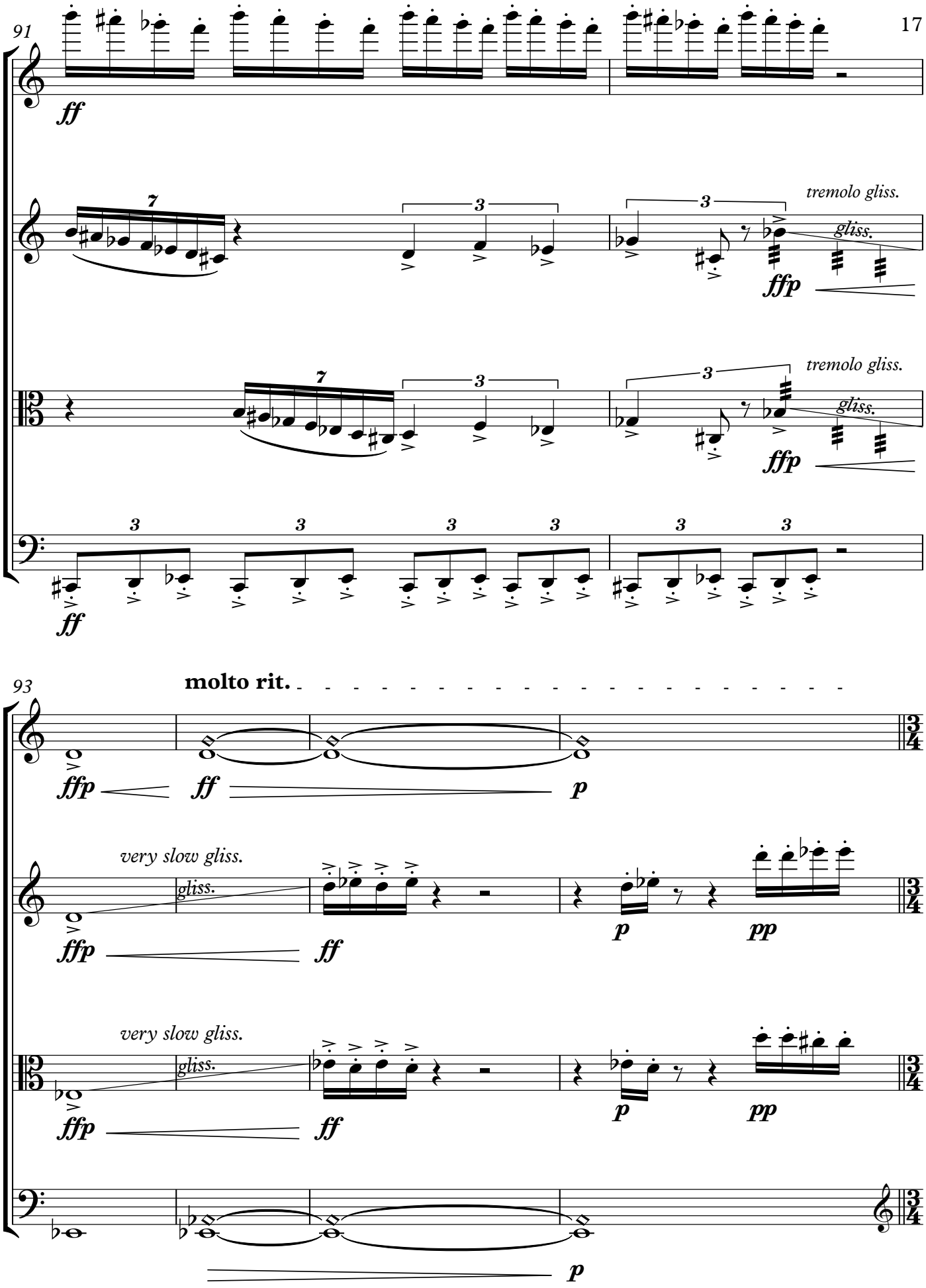
p

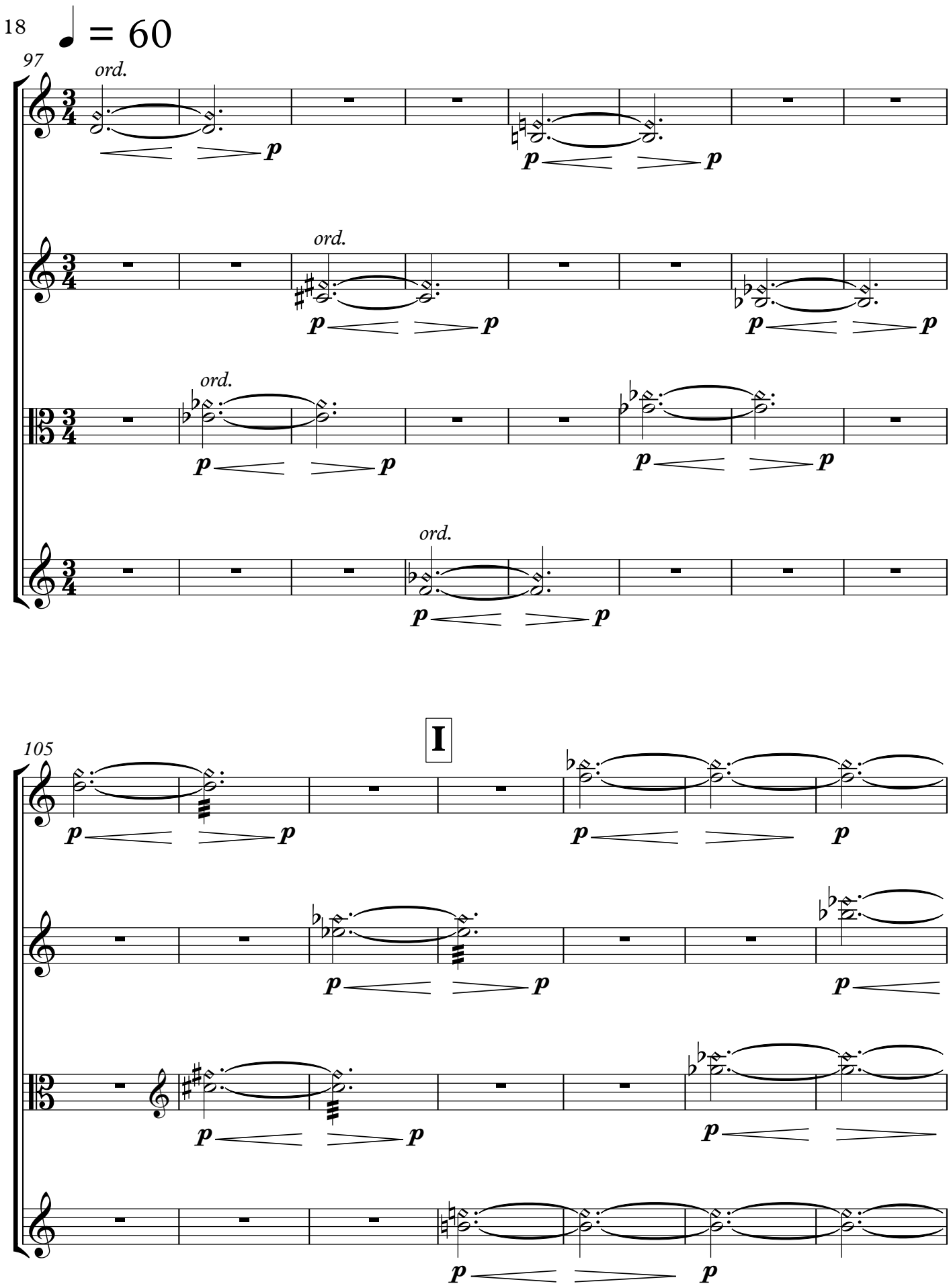
90

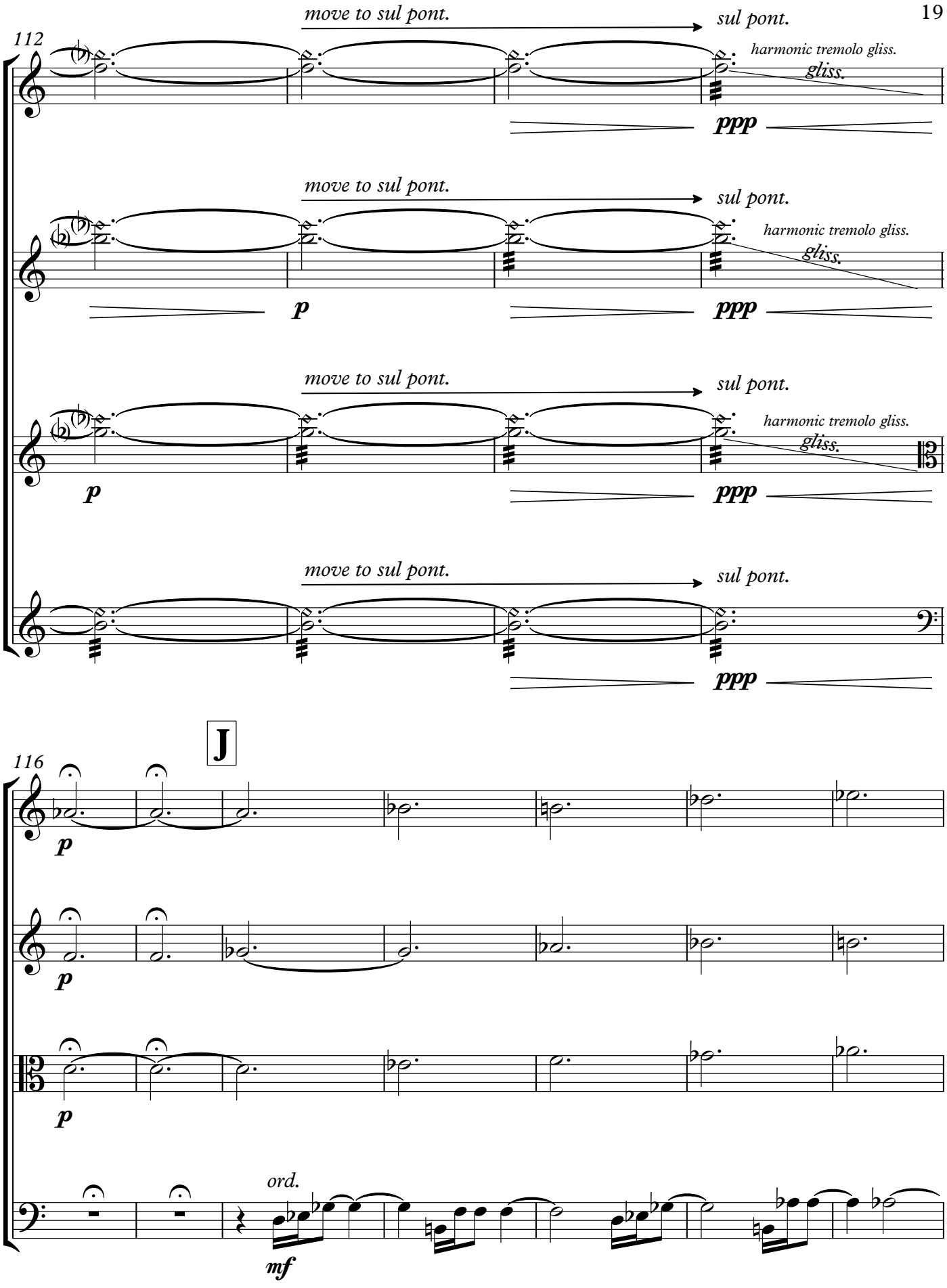
7 7

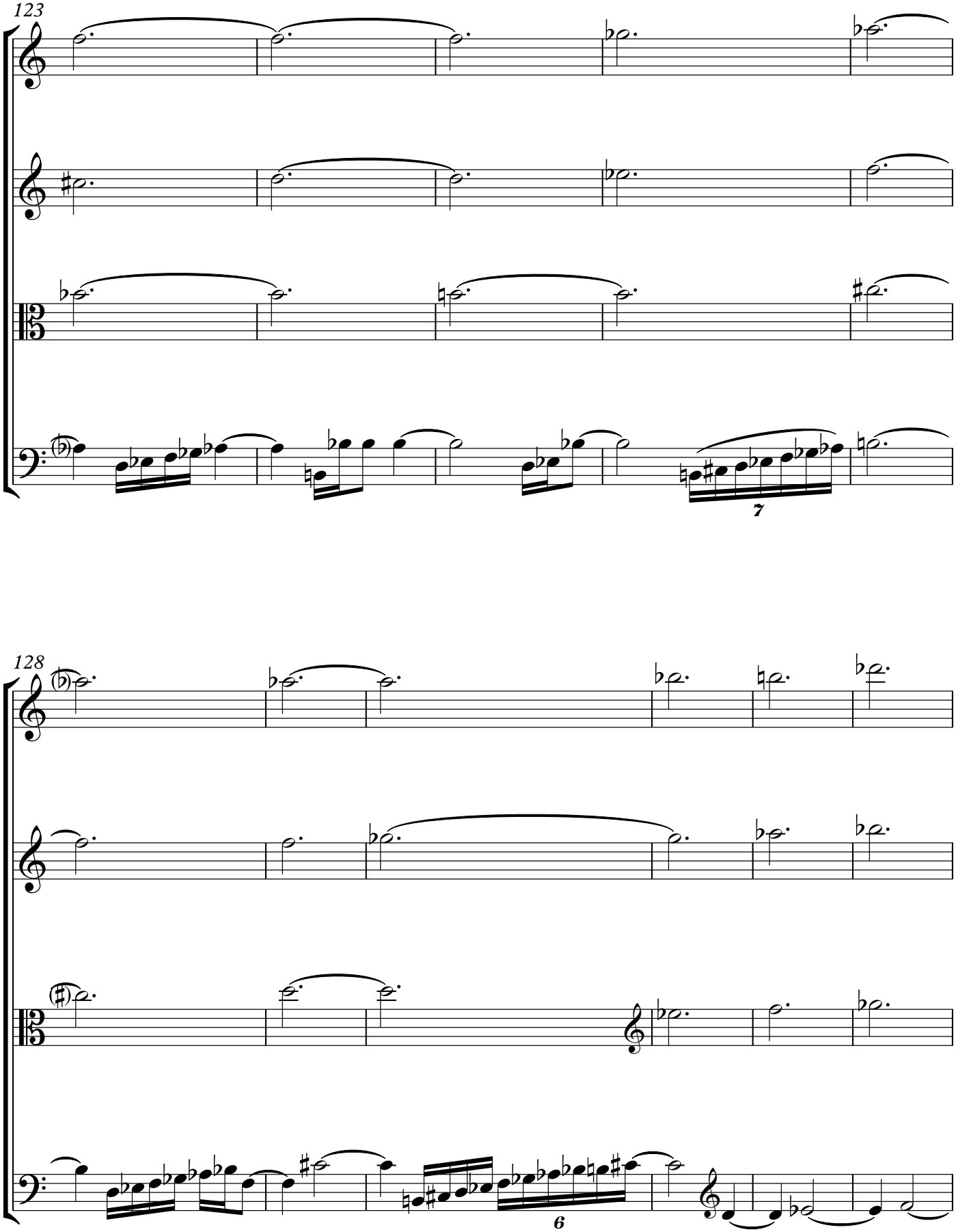
7 7

3 3 3 3


91
ff
tremolo gliss.
gliss.
ffp
tremolo gliss.
gliss.
ffp
ff
93
molto rit.
ffp
ff
p
very slow gliss.
gliss.
ffp
ff
p
pp
very slow gliss.
gliss.
ffp
ff
p
pp
p


18
♩ = 60
97
ord.
ord.
ord.
ord.
105
I


112
move to sul pont.
sul pont.
harmonic tremolo gliss.
gliss.
ppp
move to sul pont.
sul pont.
harmonic tremolo gliss.
gliss.
p
ppp
move to sul pont.
sul pont.
harmonic tremolo gliss.
gliss.
p
ppp
move to sul pont.
sul pont.
ppp
J
116
p
p
p
ord.
mf


123
7
128
6

K

134

fff

fff

fff

fff

accel.

143

ord.

pp

ord.

pp

ord.

p

p

149

fff

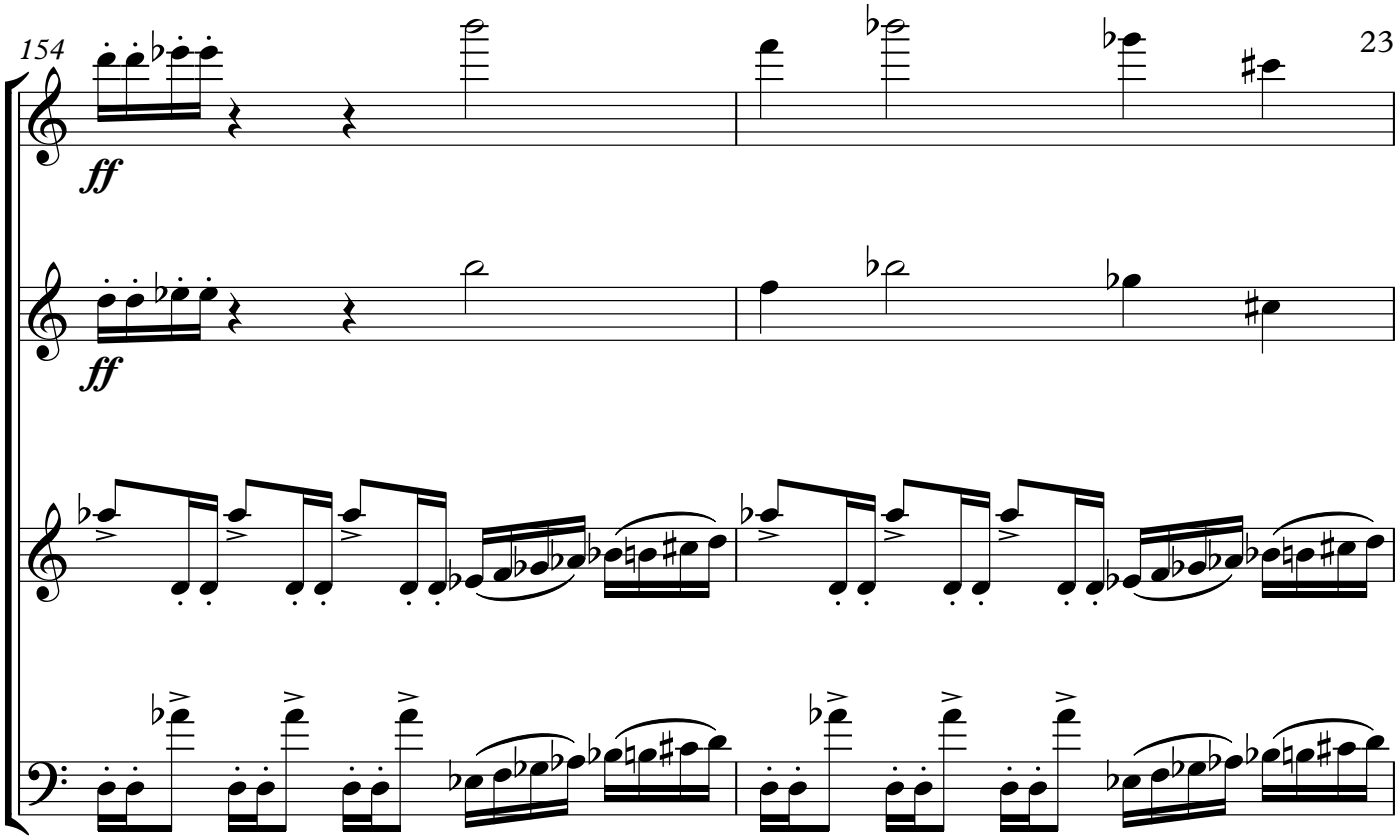
fff

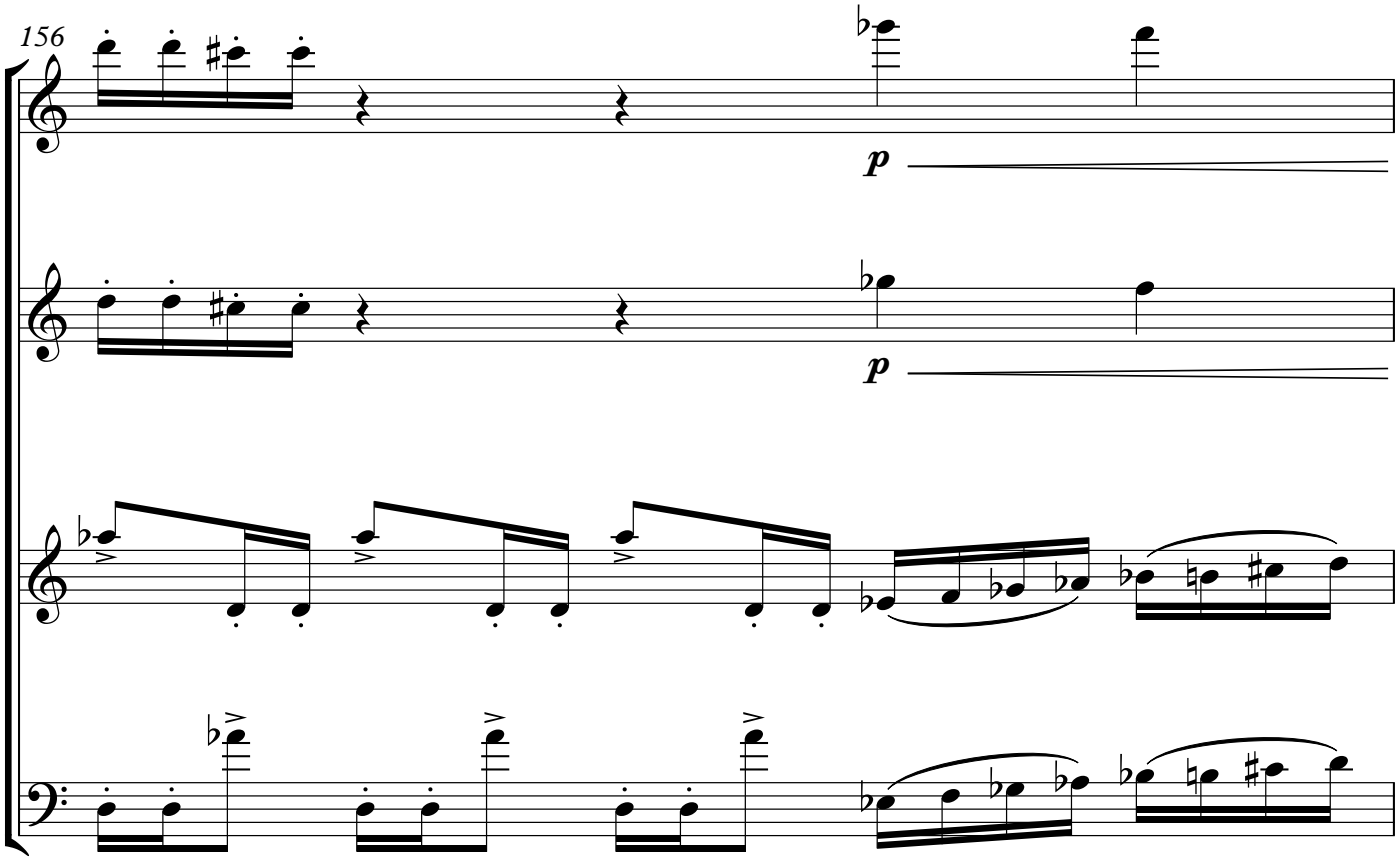
153

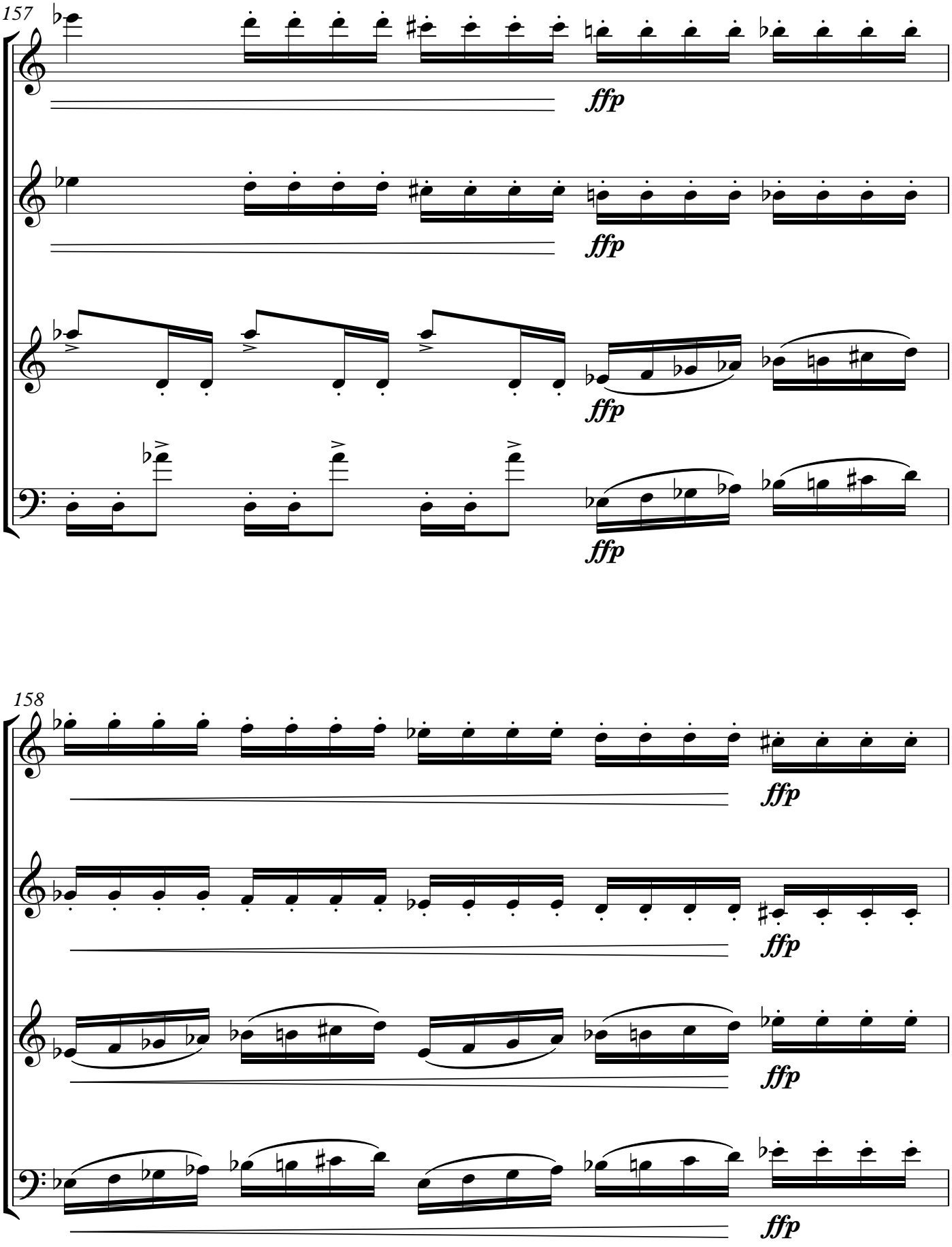
♩ = 126

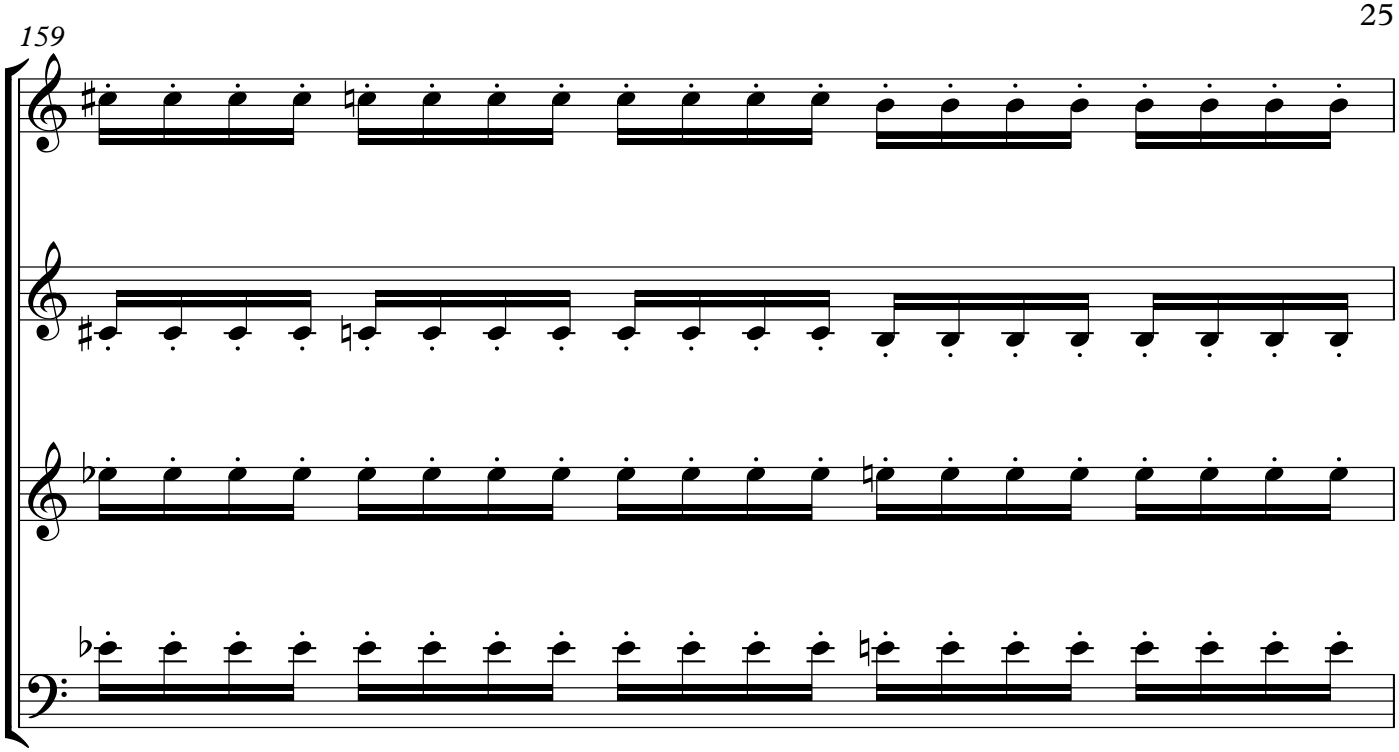
ff

ff


154
ff
ff


156
p
p


157
ffp
ffp
ffp
ffp
158
ffp
ffp
ffp
ffp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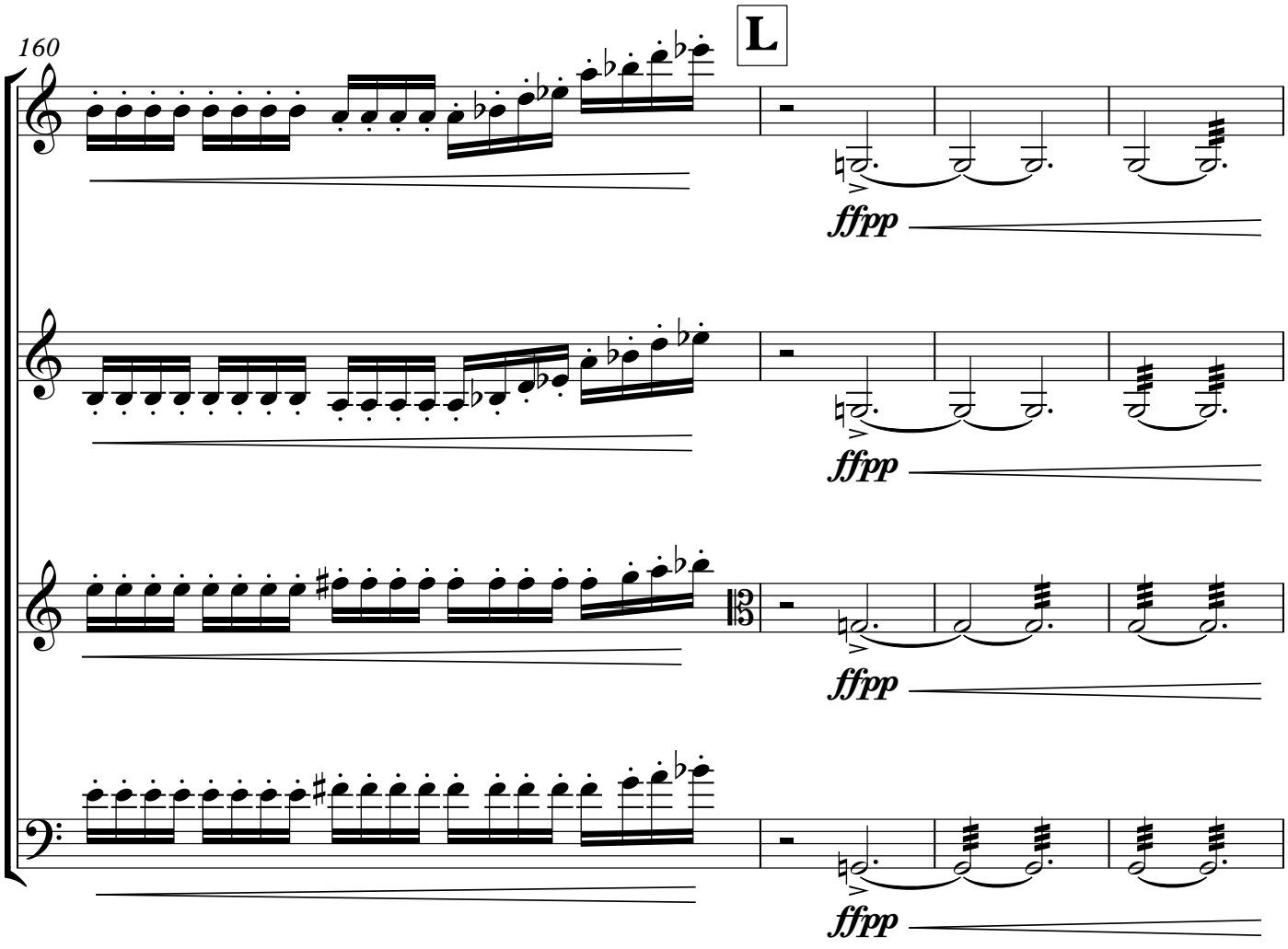
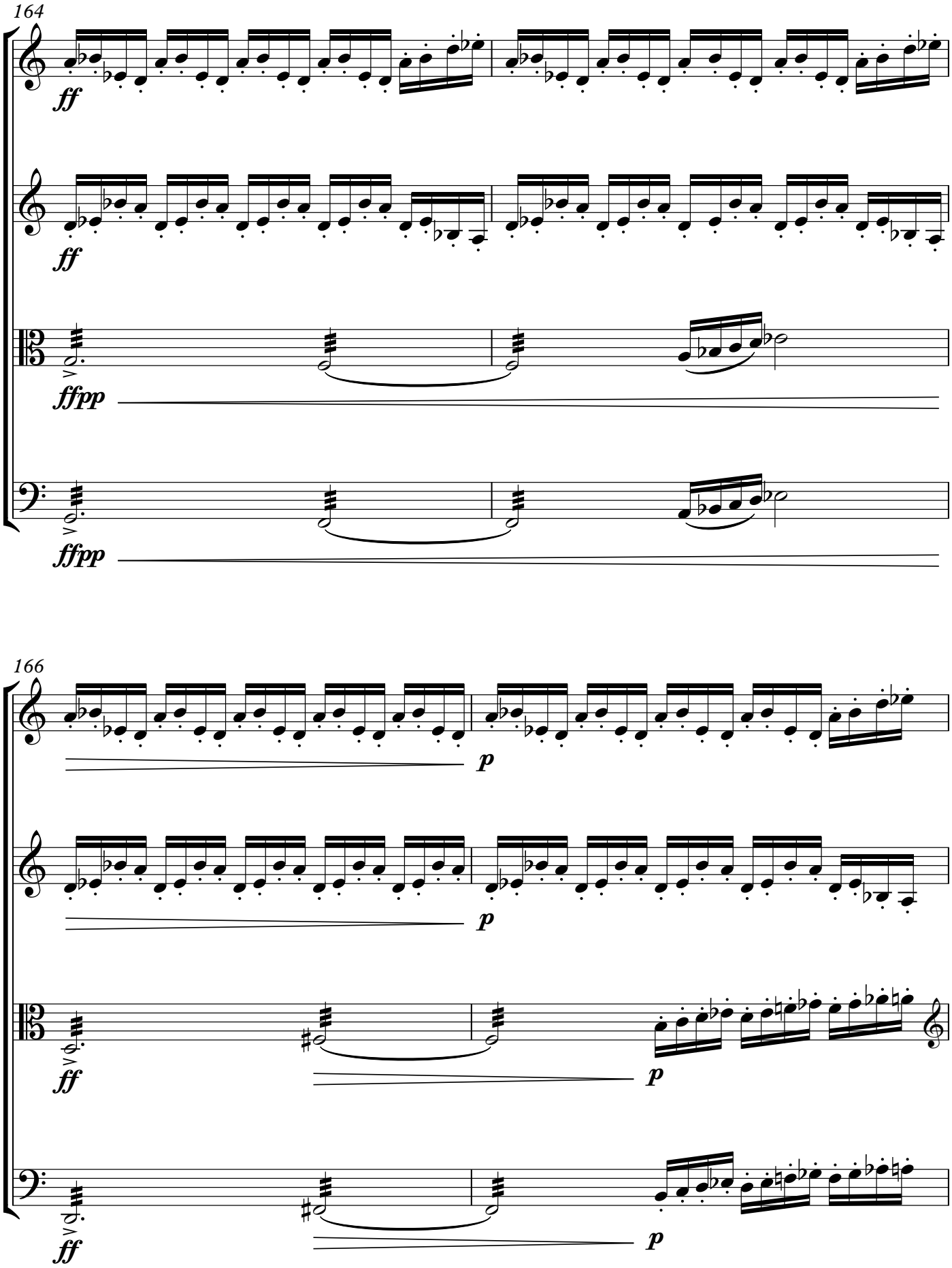
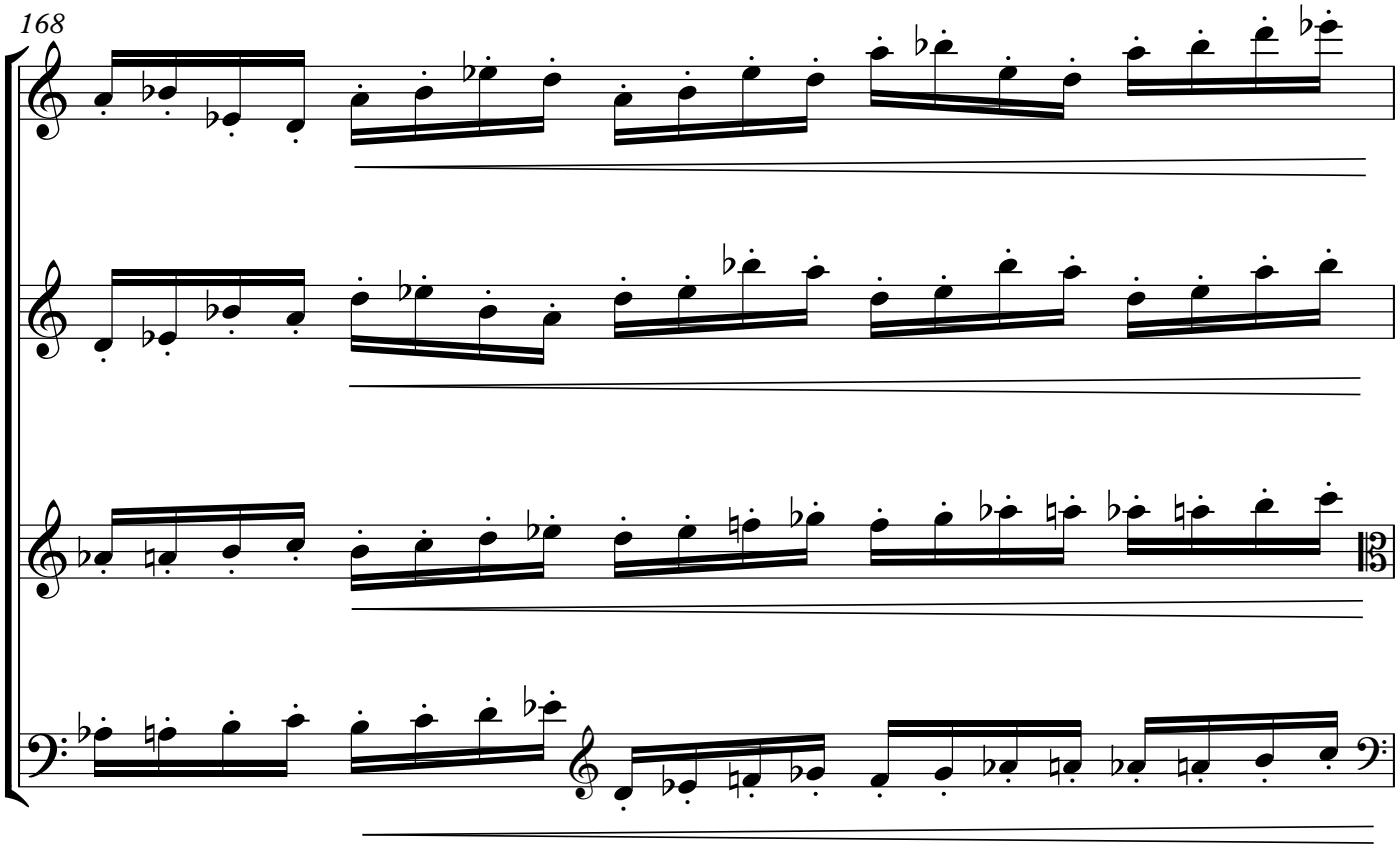

160
L
ffpp
ffpp
ffpp
ffpp

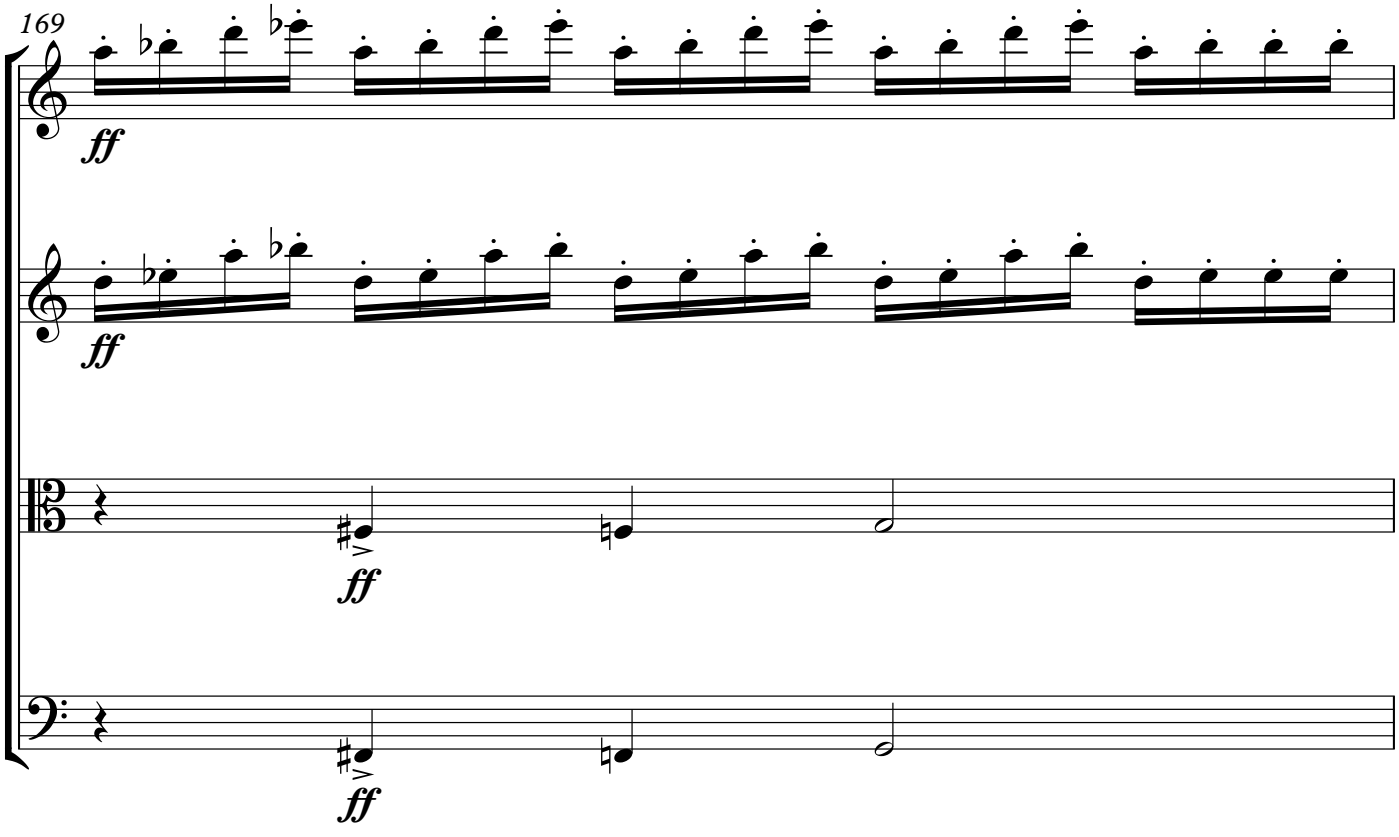

164
ff
ff
ffpp
ffpp
166
p
p
ff
p
ff
p

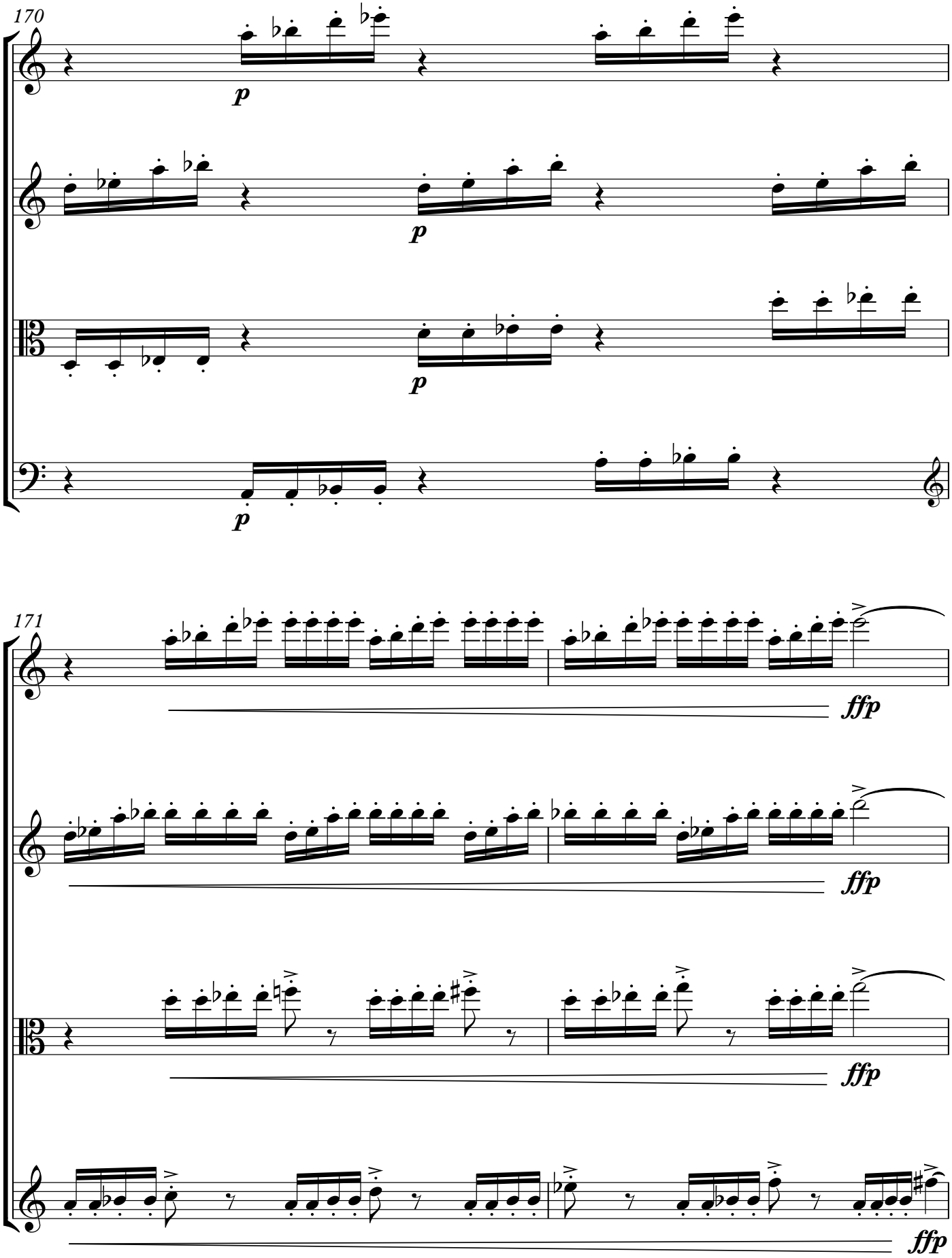
168

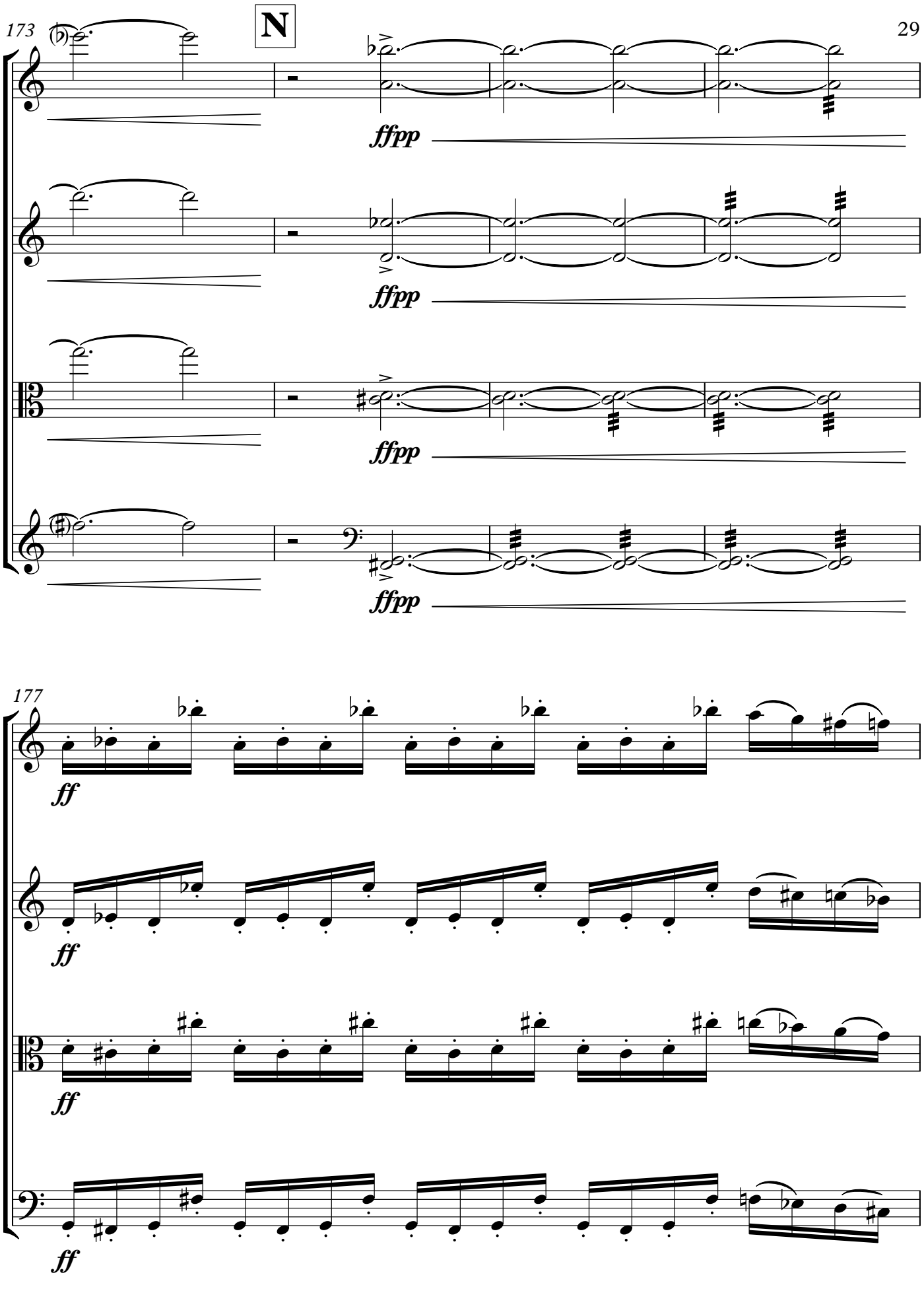


M

169




170
p
p
p
p
171
ffp
ffp
ffp
ffp


173
N
ffpp
ffpp
ffpp
ffpp
177
ff
ff
ff
ff

178

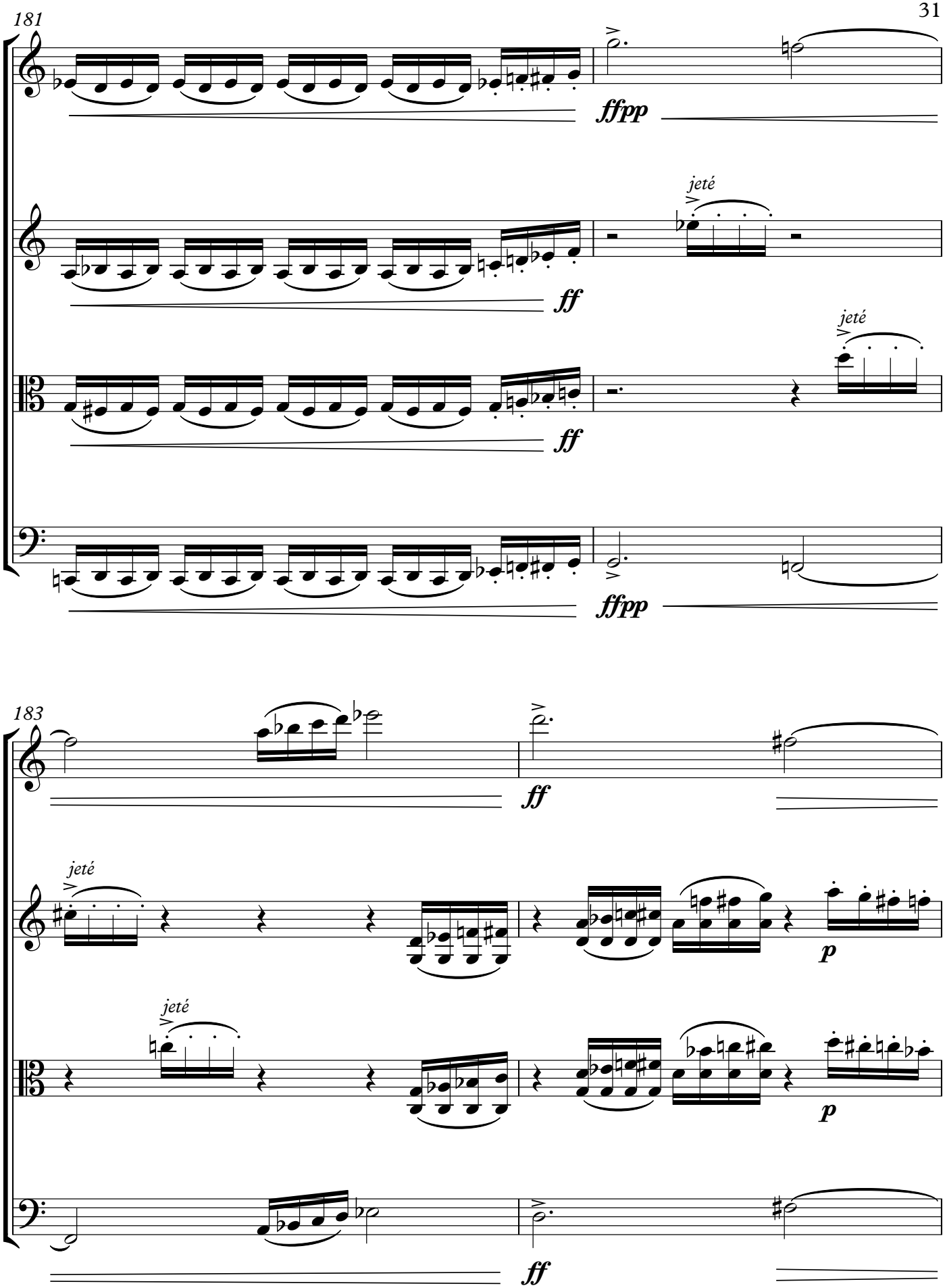
180

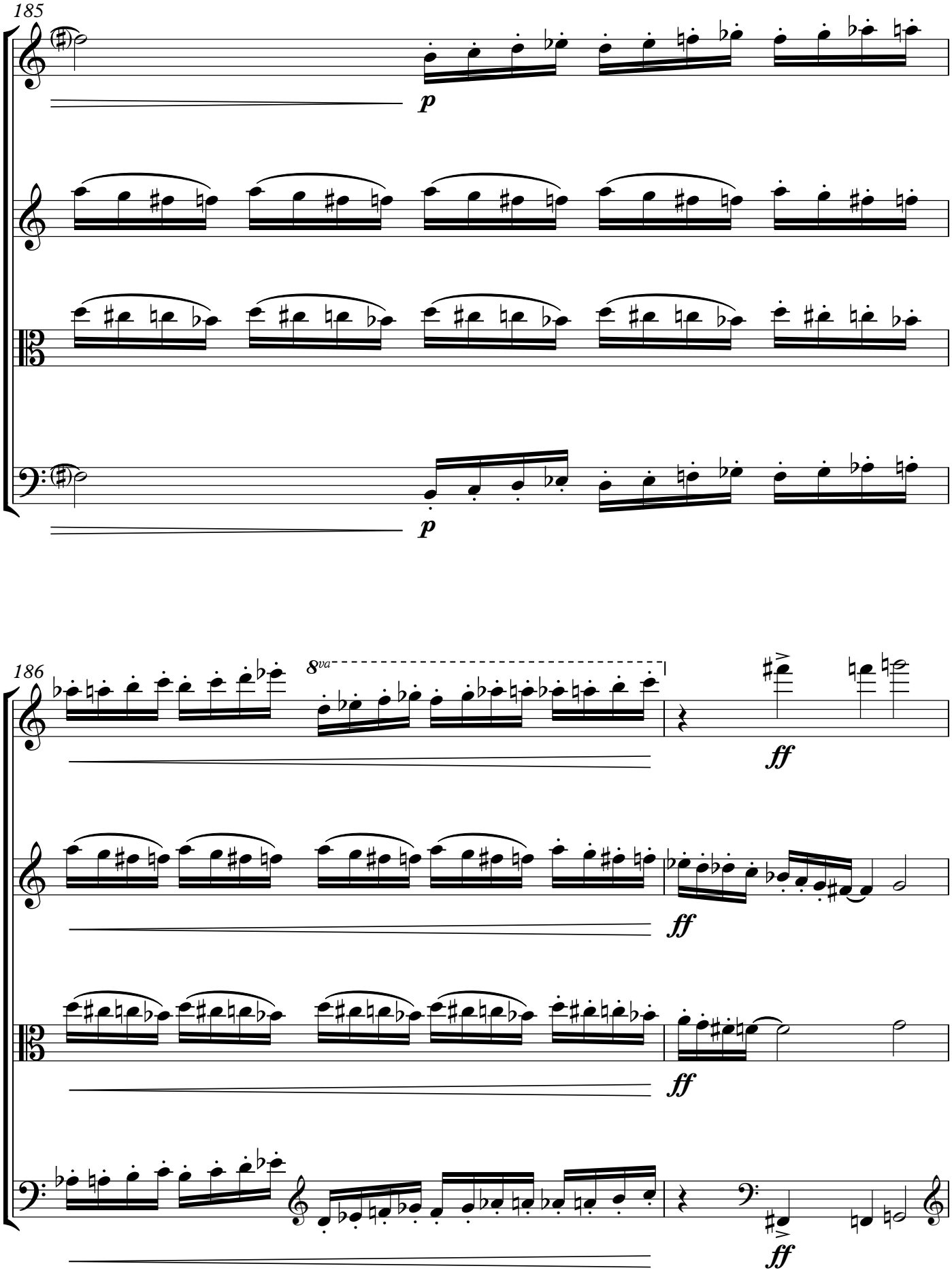
p *sub.*

p *sub.*

p *sub.*

p *sub.*


181
ffpp
jeté
ff
jeté
ff
ffpp
183
ff
jeté
p
jeté
p
ff


185
p
p
186
8va
ff
ff
ff
ff

188

snap pizz.

fff

ffpp

ff

ffpp

ff

snap pizz.

fff

O

191

arco

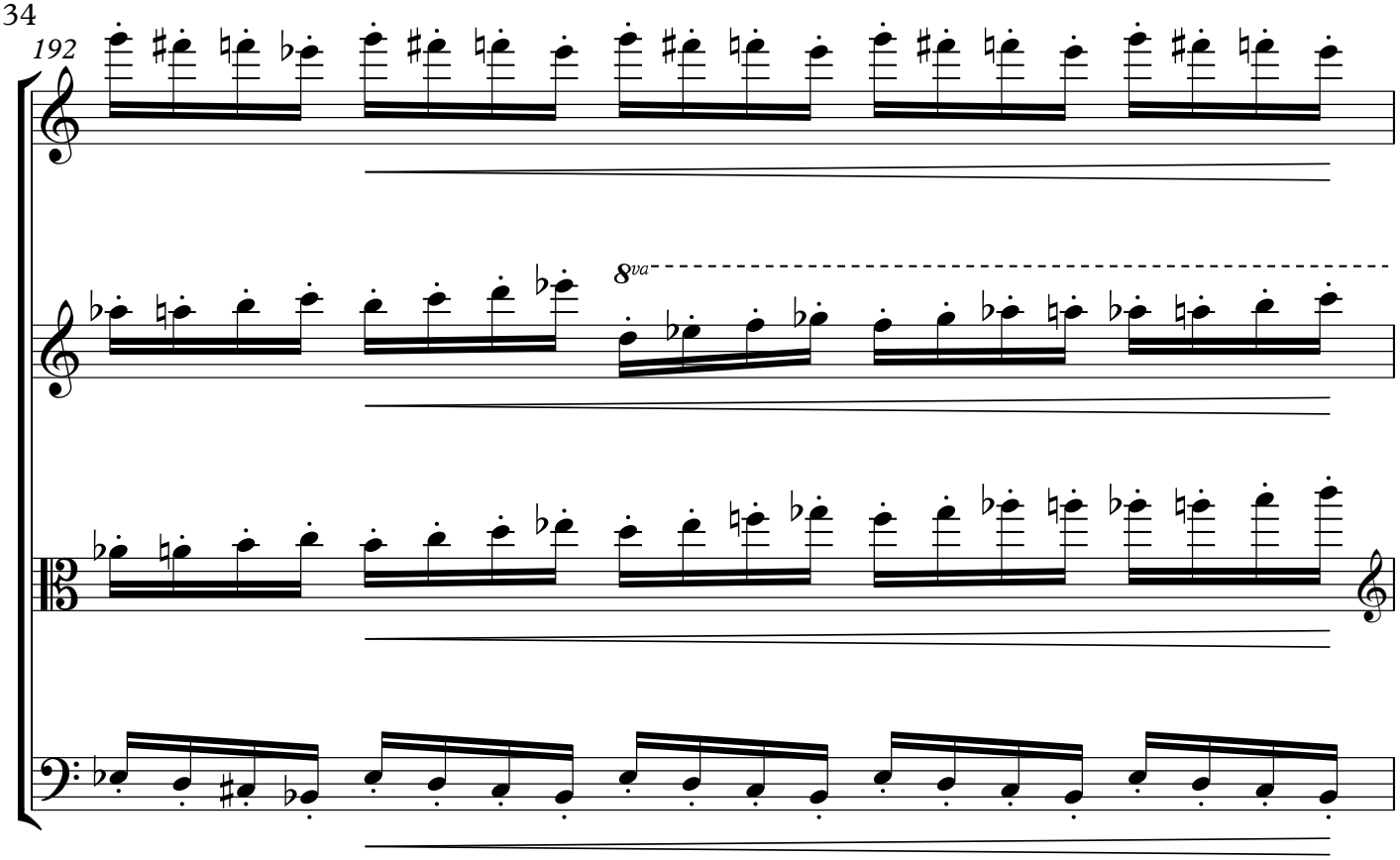
p

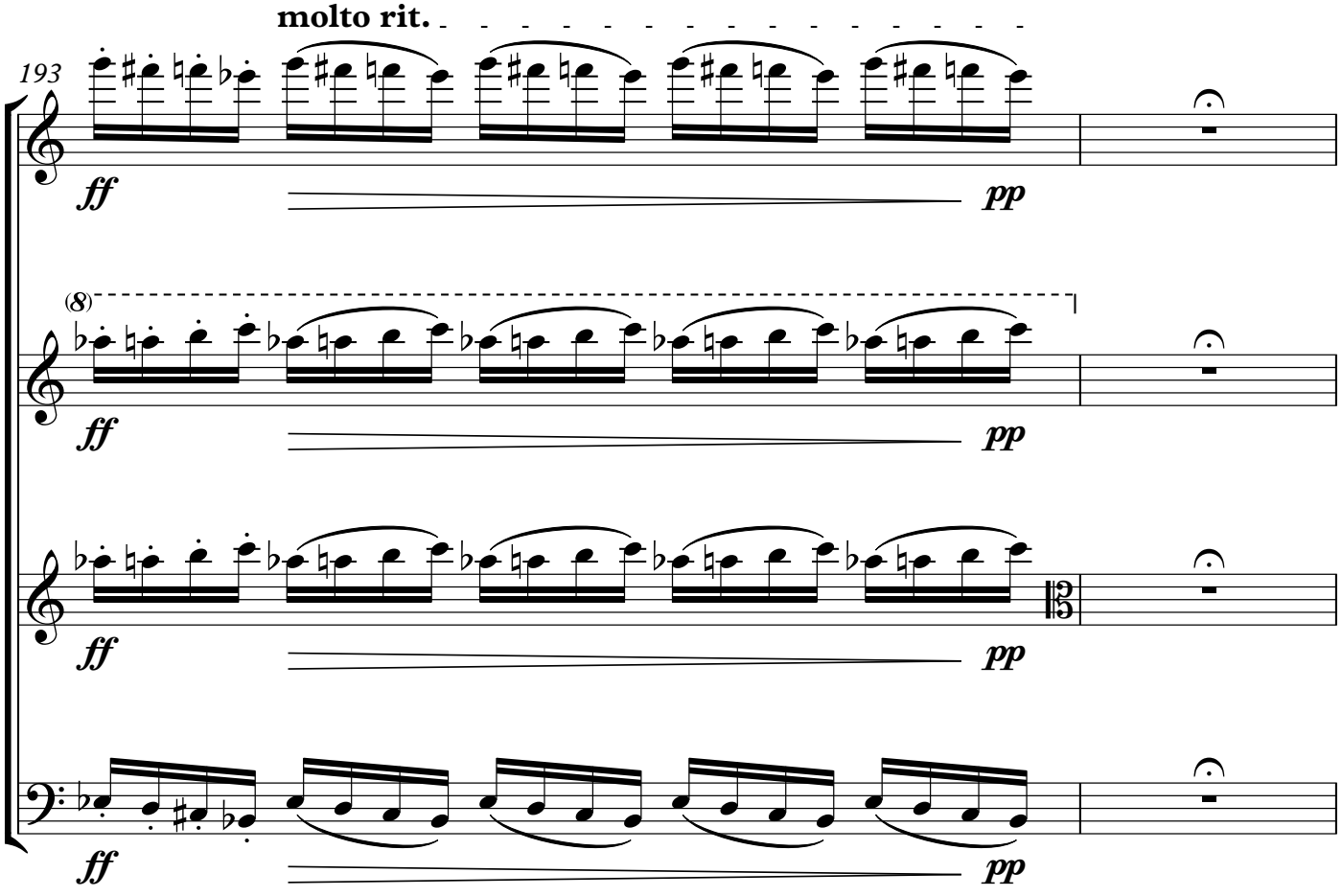
p

p

arco

p


192
8va


molto rit.
193
ff
pp
(8)

♩ = 126 **rit.**

195

p *ppp*

p *ppp*

p *ppp*

p *ppp*

♩ = 60

sul III, sul pont.

200

sul II

p *f* *p*

p *ff*

p *ff*

sul III, sul pont. *sul IV*

p *f* *p*

206

P

sul I

f *p*

p *ff*

p *ff*

sul I

f *p*

Q

210

sul IV

f *p*

p *ff*

p *ff*

sul II

f *p*

214

sul III *sul IV*

f *p*

tr

p *ff* *p*

tr

p *ff* *p*

sul II *sul I*

f *p*

219

sim. *ord.*

f

(tr)

slow gliss trill *gliss.*

ffppp

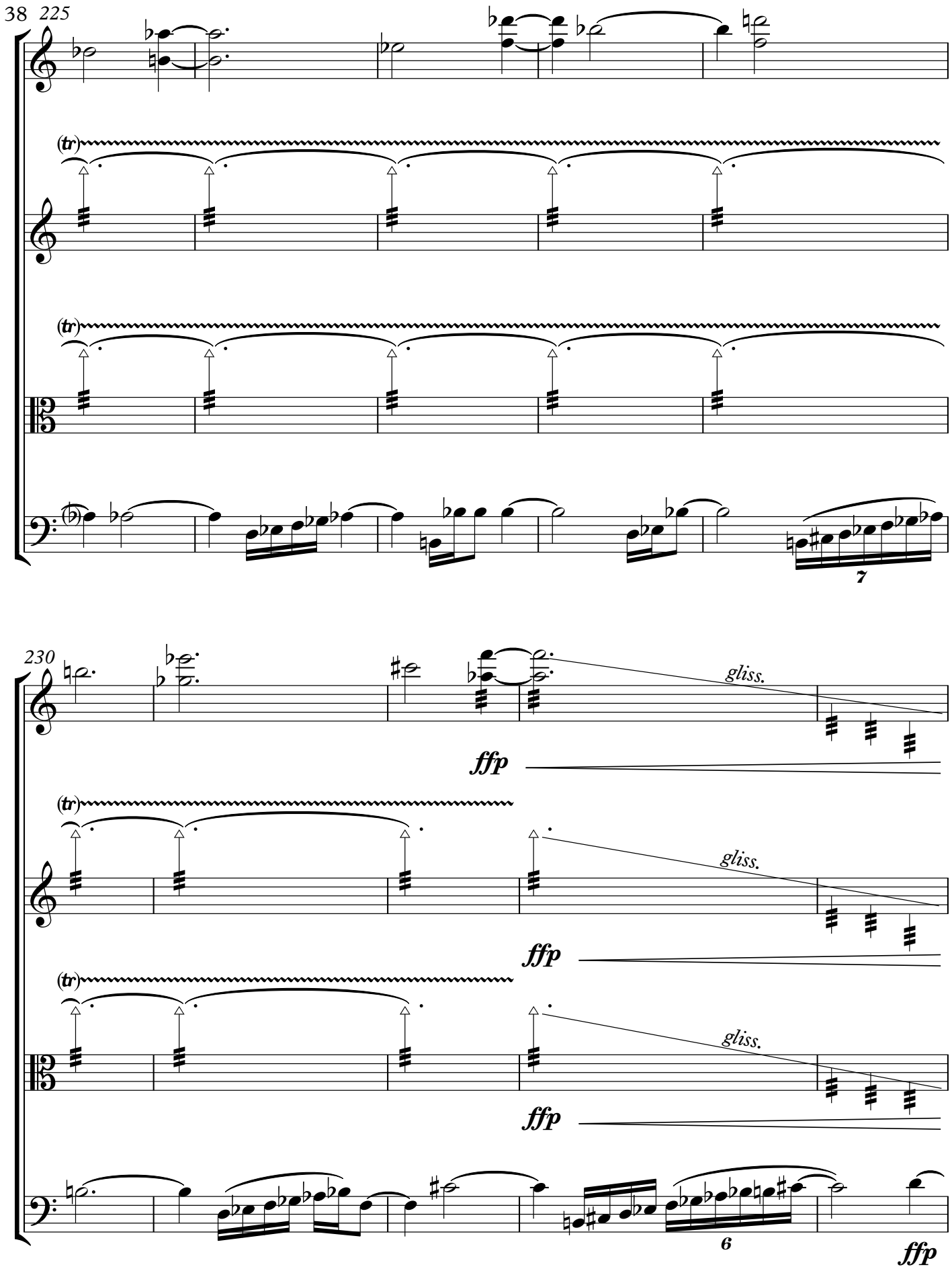
(tr)

slow gliss trill *gliss.*

ffppp

sim. *ord.*

f


38
225
(tr)
(tr)
7
230
gliss.
ffp
(tr)
gliss.
ffp
(tr)
gliss.
ffp
6
ffp

235 **accel.**

ffpp ***fff***

♩ = 112

242

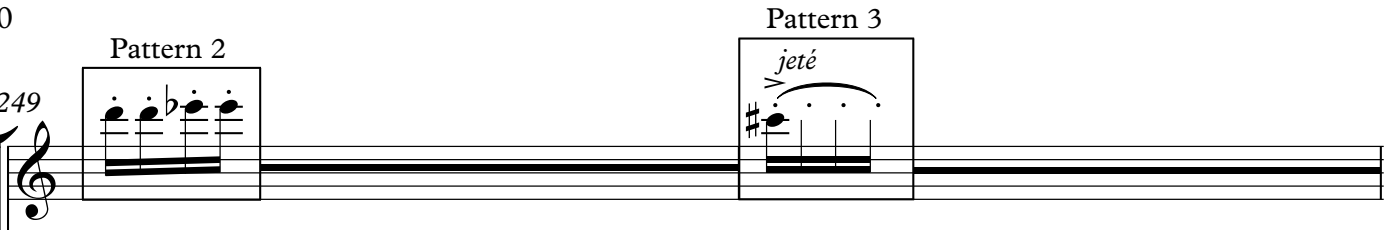
pizz. Pattern 1

15 -- 20"

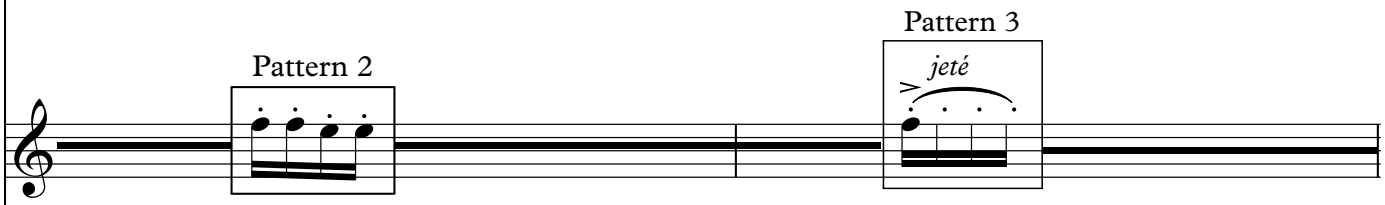
Left hand pizzicato only. Finger notes aggressively on the fingerboard and then pull off. Ad lib tempo/rhythm. Play out of sync with all other players.

fff

249



Keep playing Pattern 1. Ad lib inserting Patterns 2 through 5 at any point within playing Pattern 1.
Patterns 2 through 5 do not need to be played in any specific order and are always played arco
(except for Pattern 4, to be played col legno batt.), while Pattern 1 is always left hand pizzicato.
For example, a player can start with Pattern 3, then play Pattern 5, then Pattern 2, etc.,
while always returning to Pattern 1. The time between playing Patterns 2 through 5 is left up to each player,
and each pattern does not need to be played a set amount of times.
Try not to play Patterns 2 through 5 in sync with any other player, but if that happens, well then it happens!



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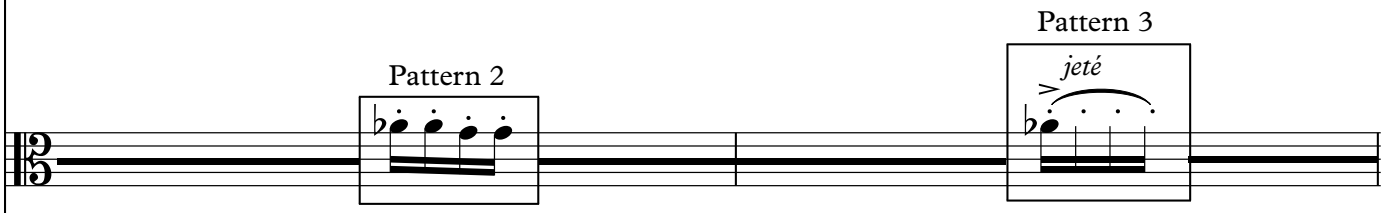

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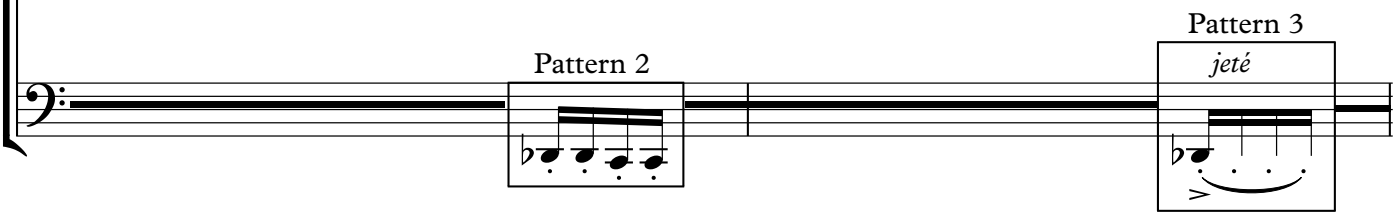


251

Pattern 4

col legno batt.

Pattern 5

jeté gliss.

Pattern 4

col legno batt.

Pattern 5

jeté gliss.

Pattern 4

col legno batt.

Pattern 5

jeté gliss.

Pattern 4

col legno batt.

Pattern 5

jeté gliss.

R

253

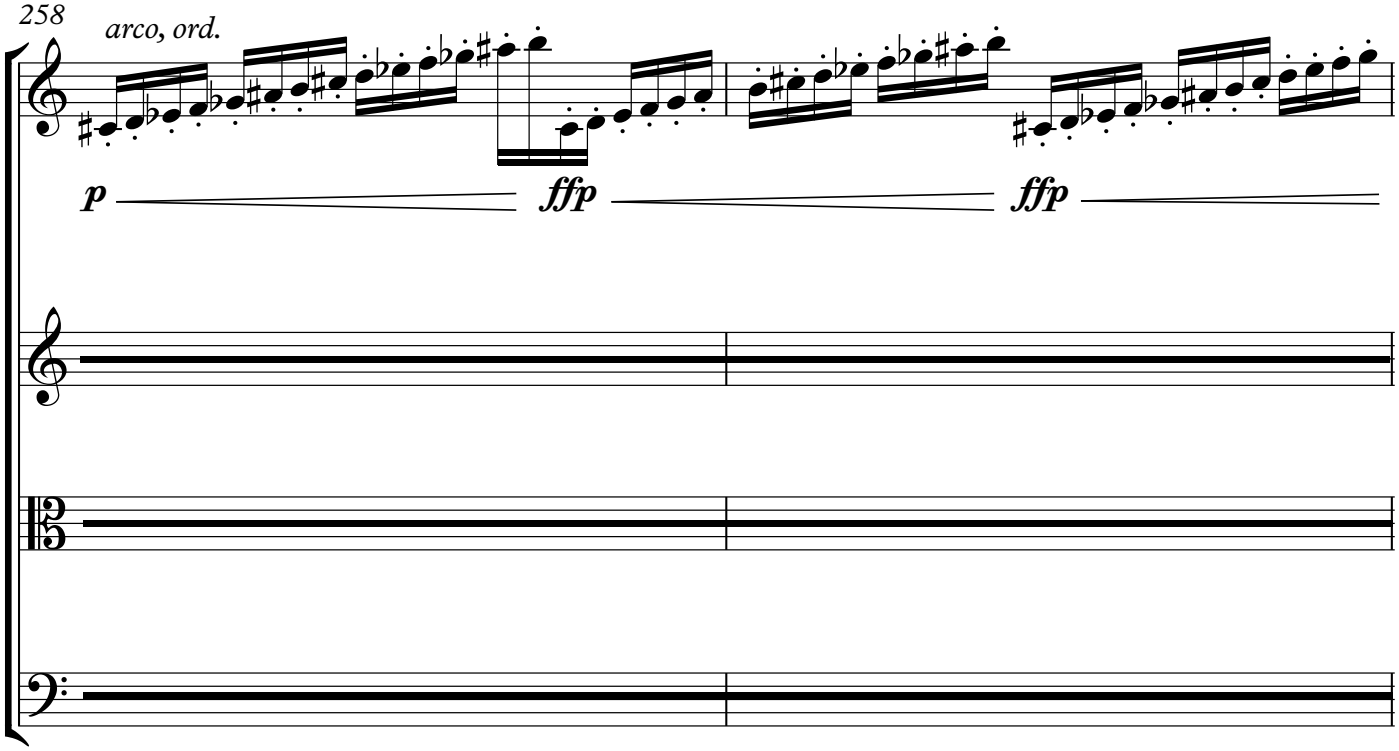
30 -- 45"

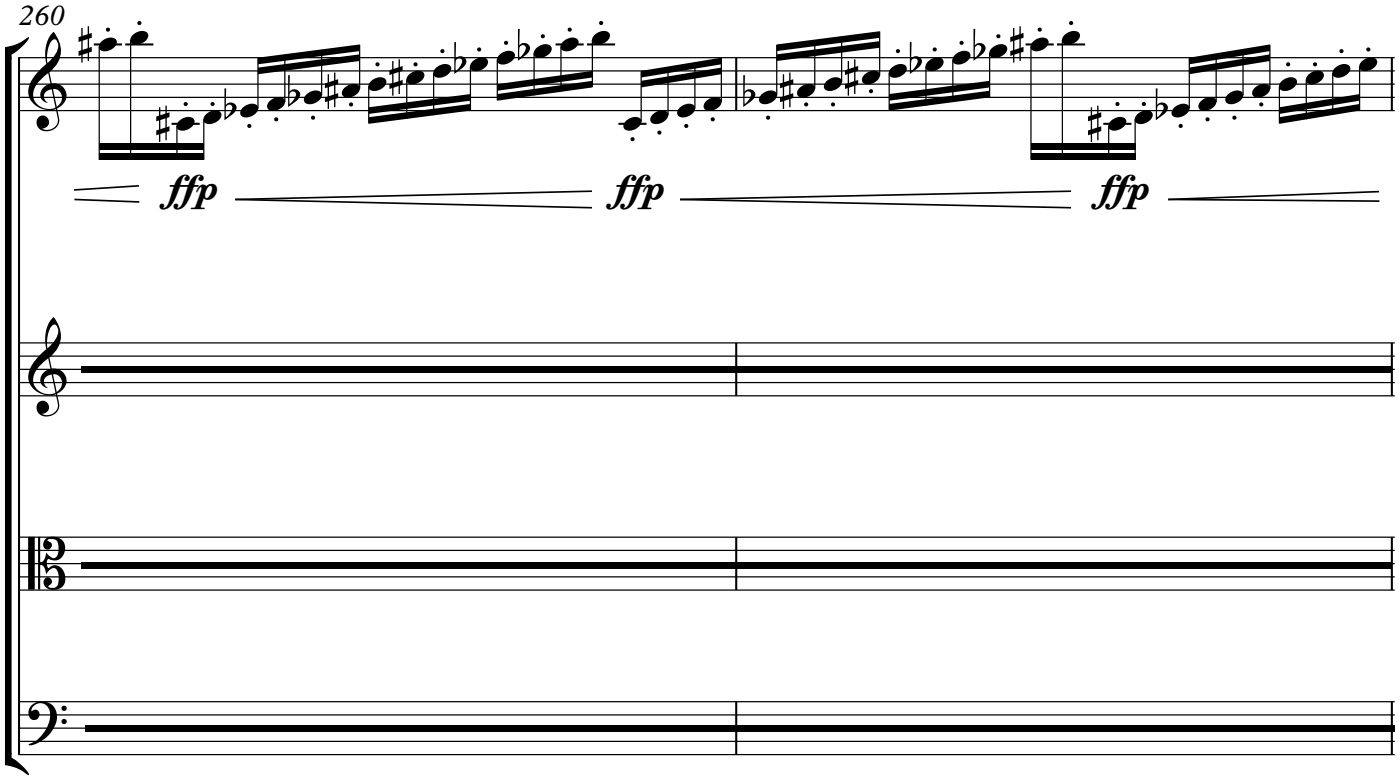
30 -- 45"

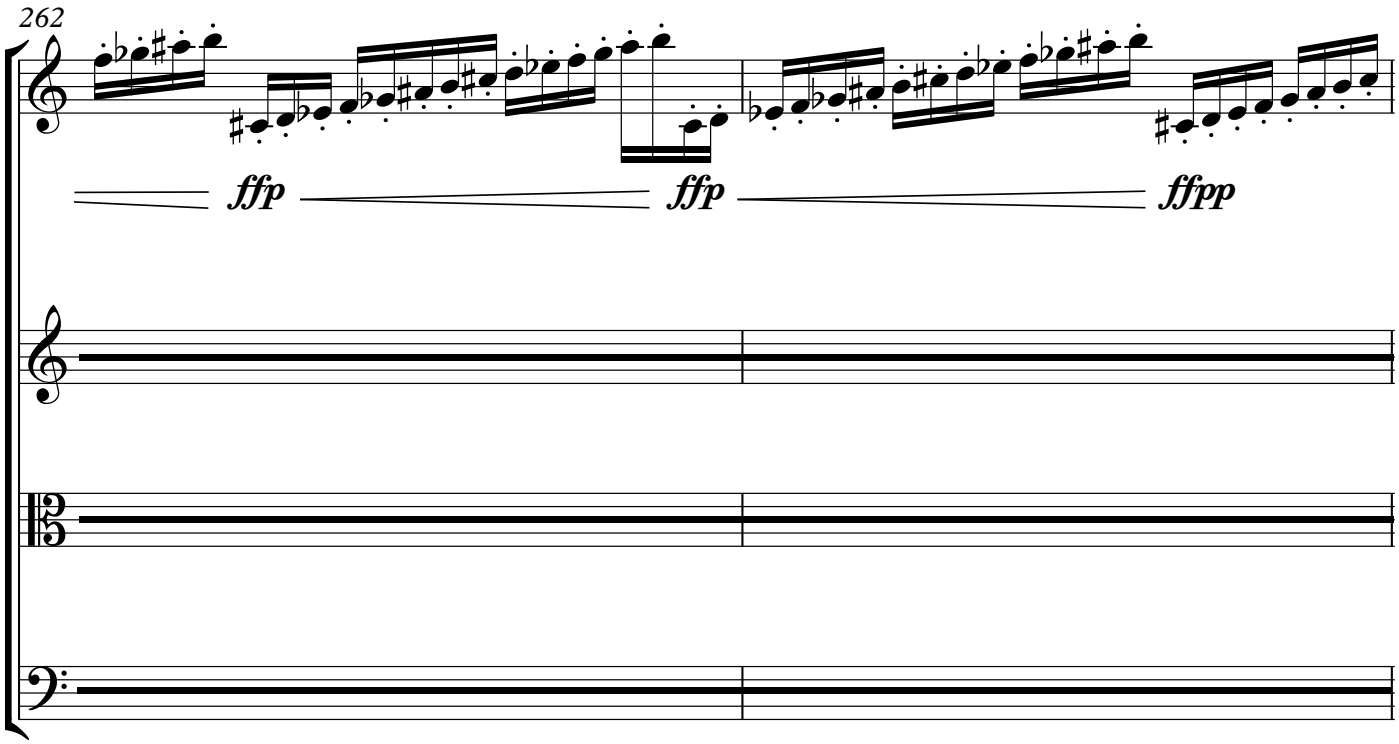
30 -- 45"

30 -- 45"

42 **S**

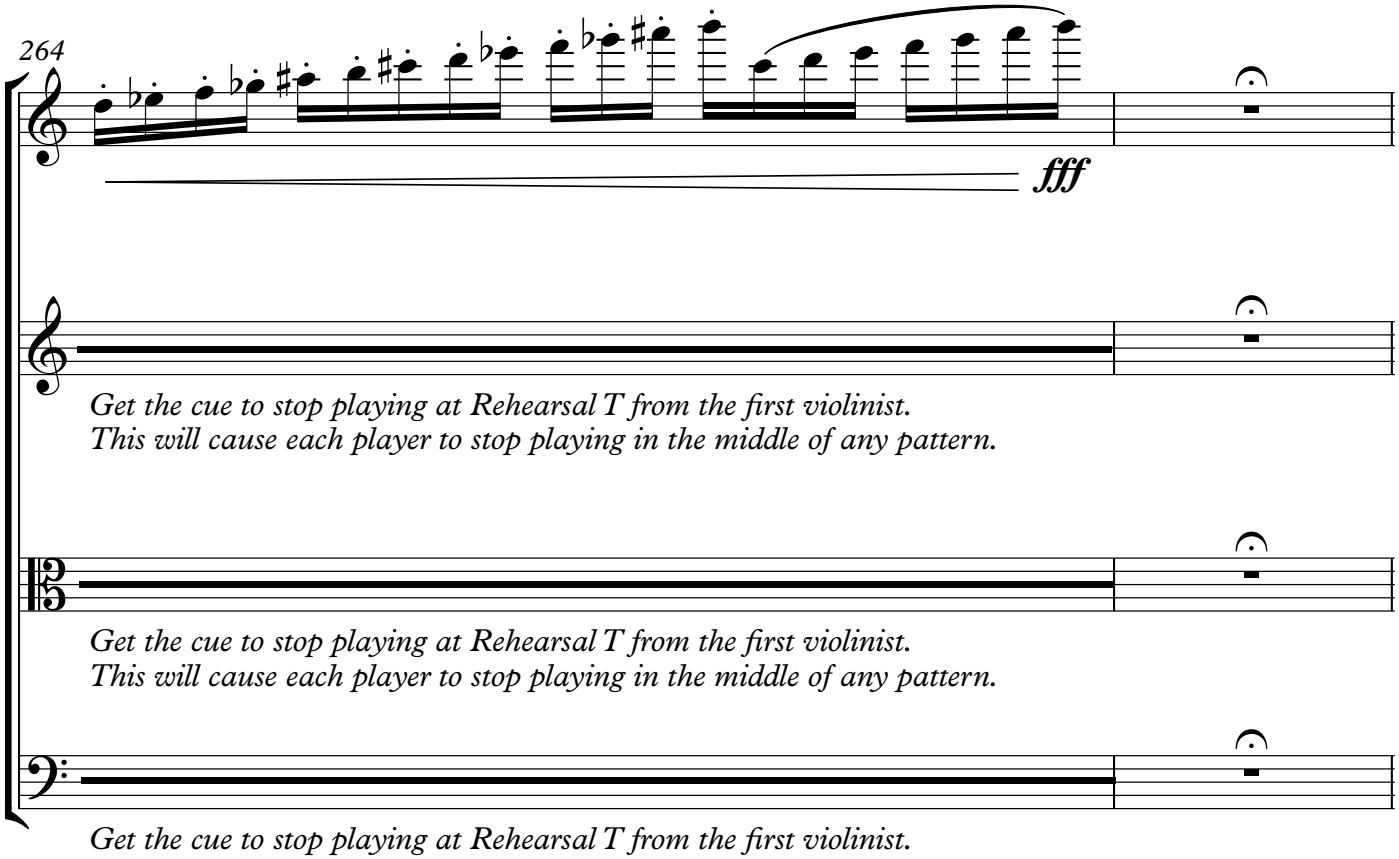






Give cue to the other players to stop all together at Rehearsal T.

T



Get the cue to stop playing at Rehearsal T from the first violinist.
This will cause each player to stop playing in the middle of any pattern.

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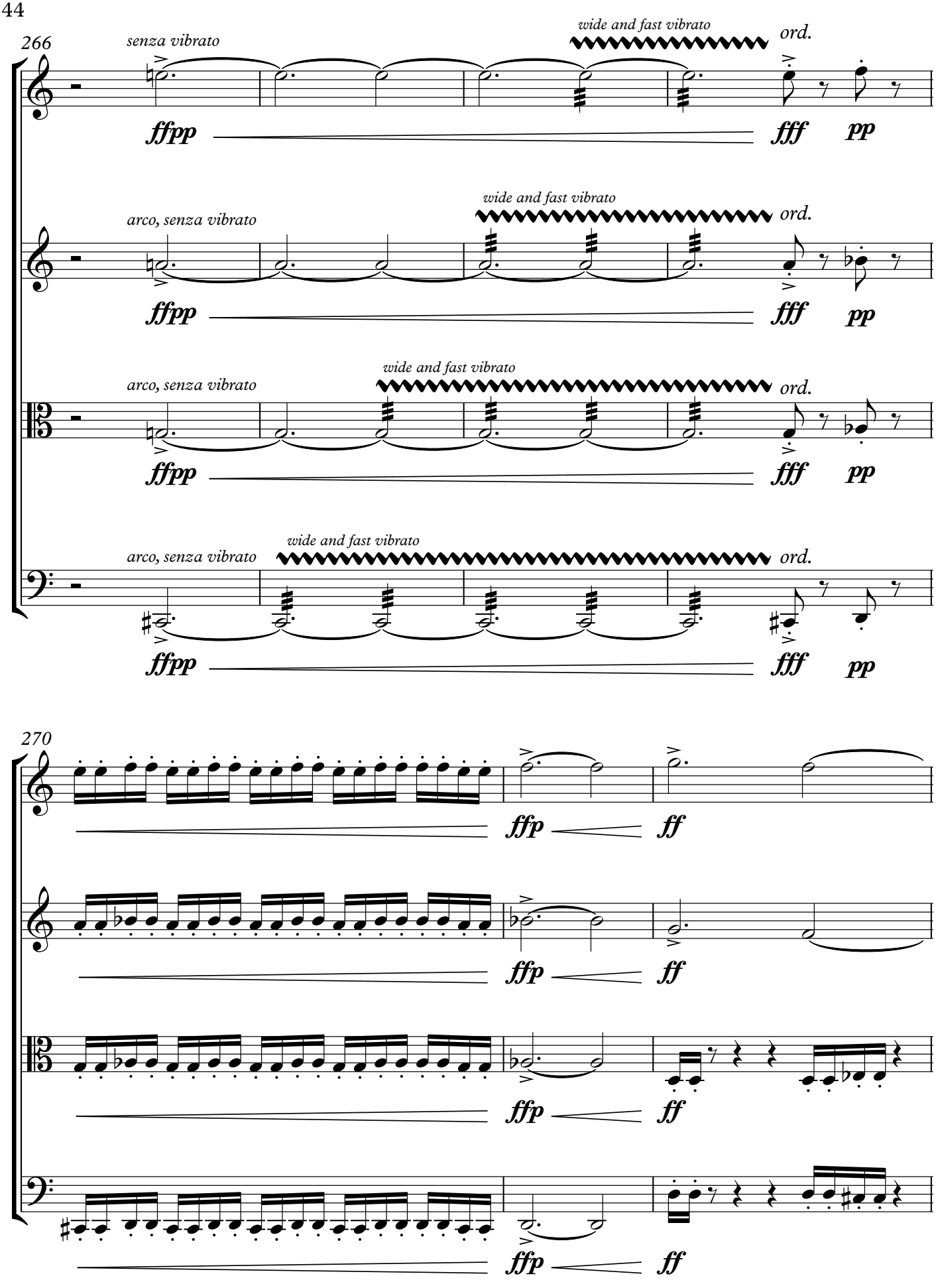
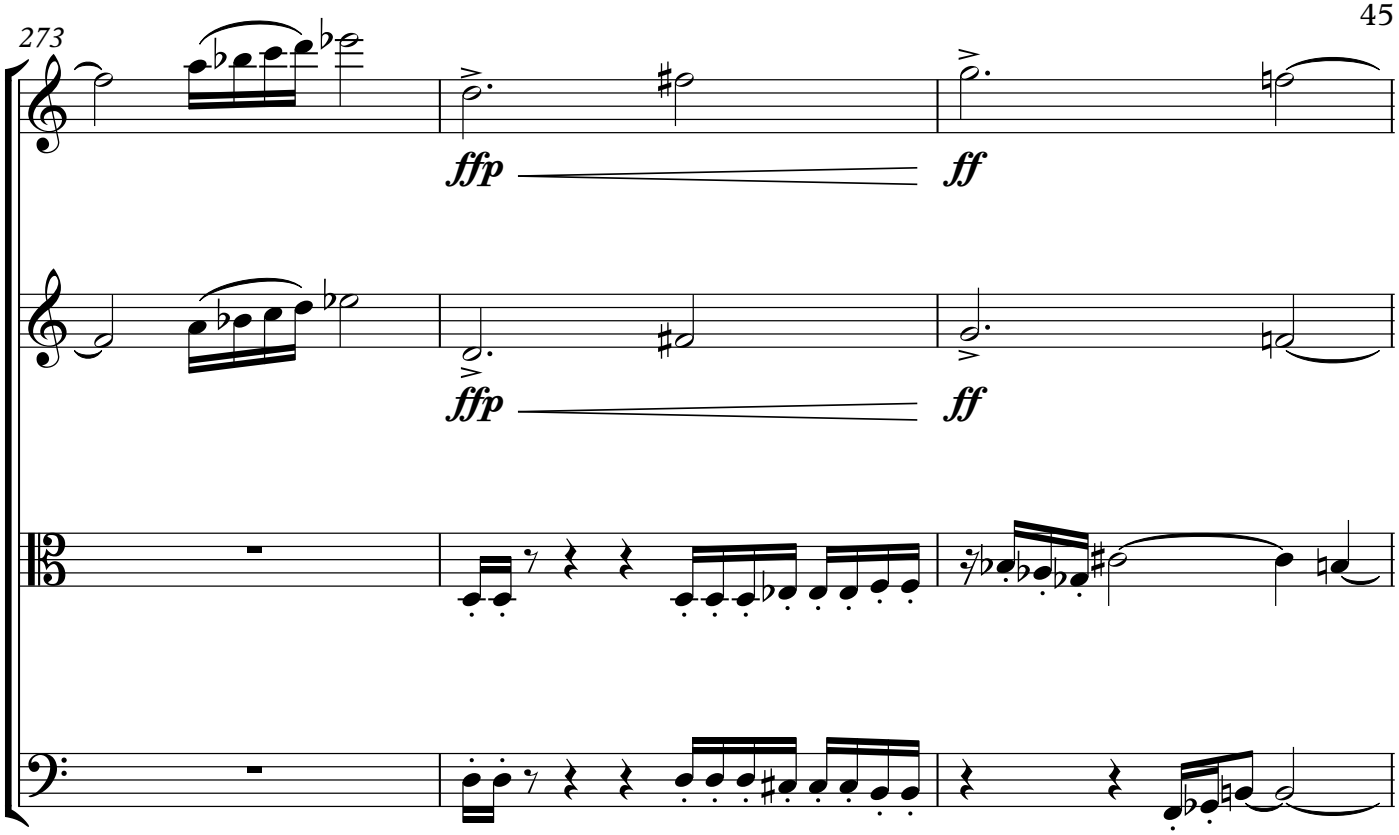
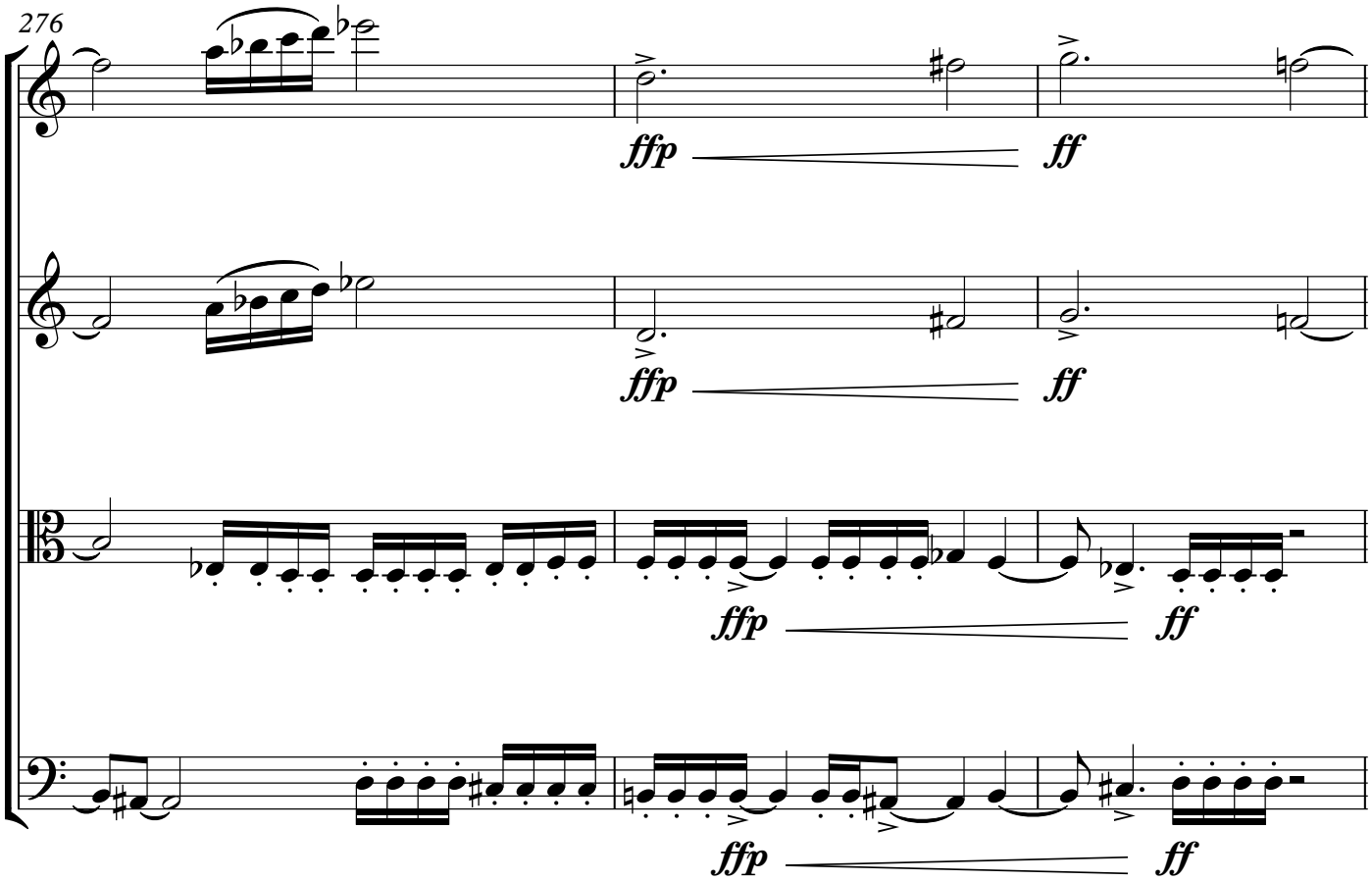
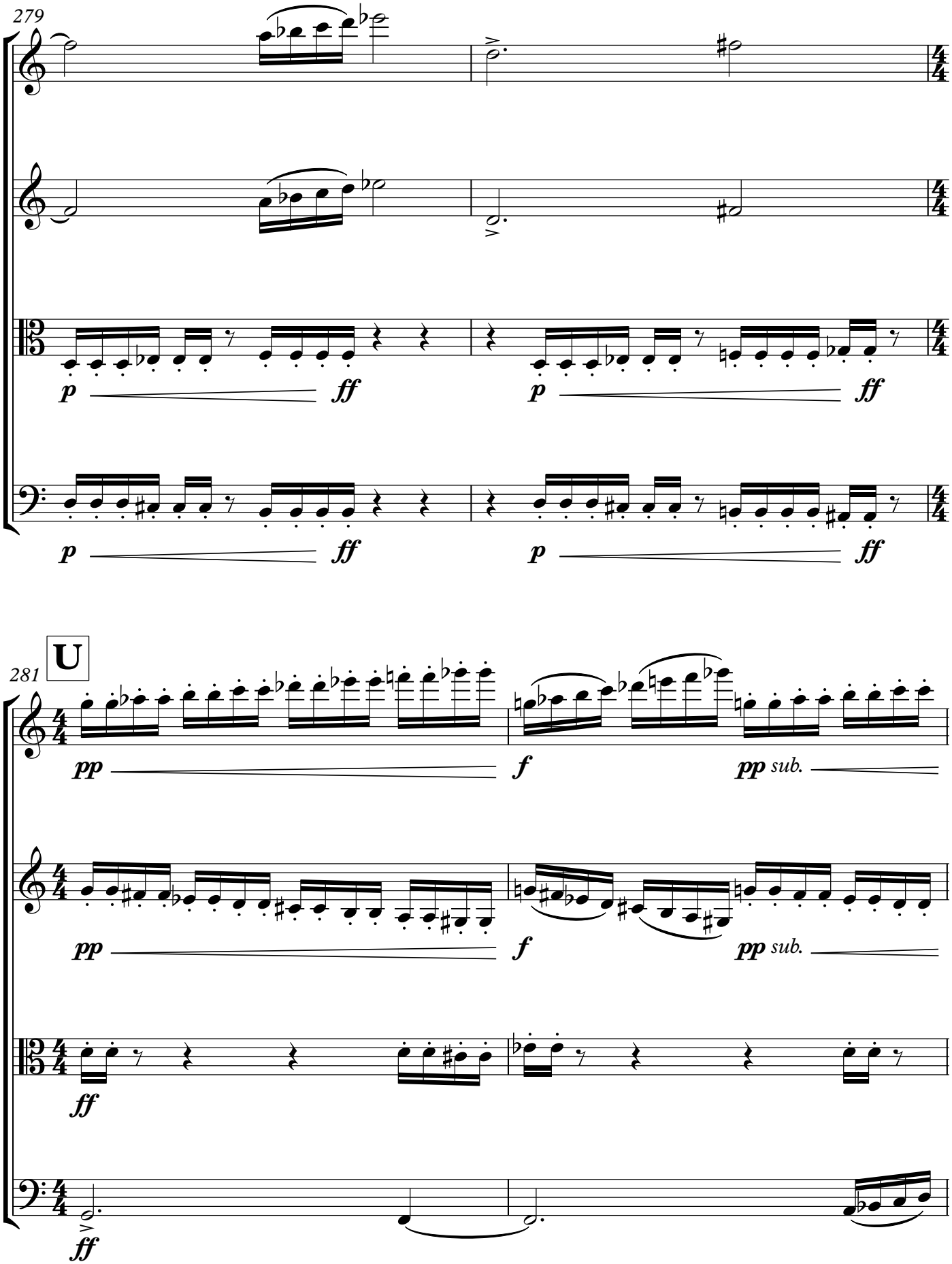
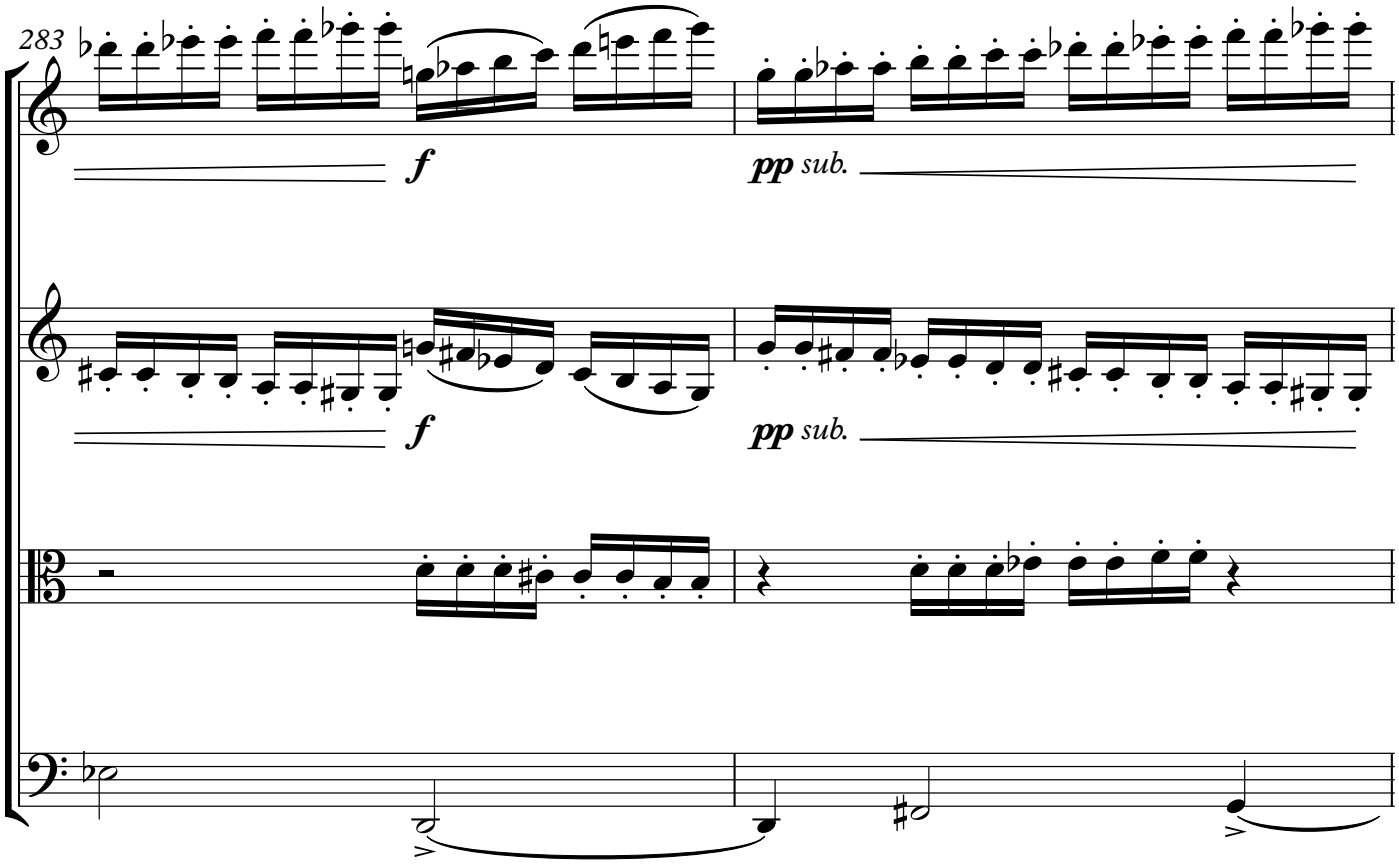
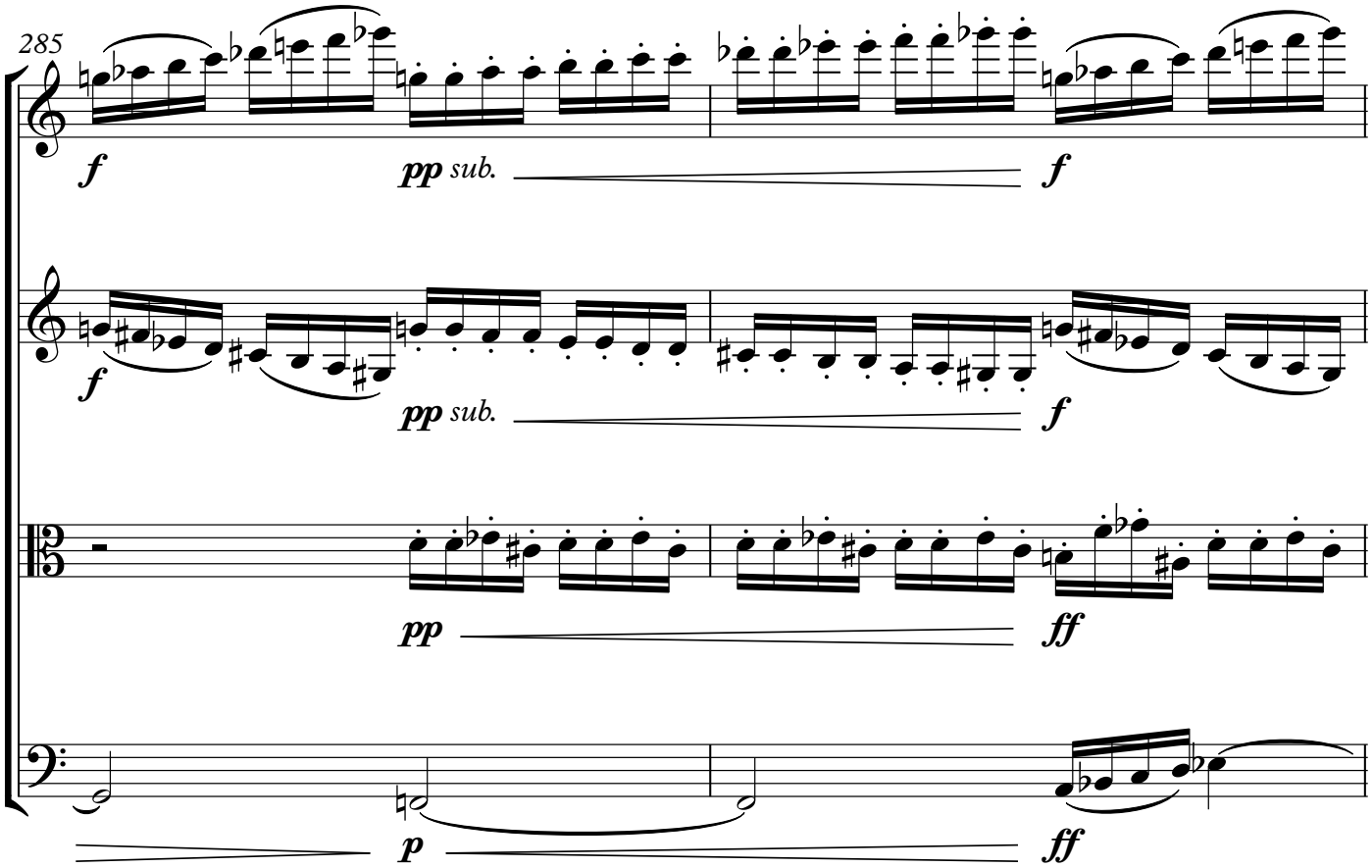

266
senza vibrato
wide and fast vibrato
ord.
ffpp
fff
pp
arco, senza vibrato
wide and fast vibrato
ord.
ffpp
fff
pp
arco, senza vibrato
wide and fast vibrato
ord.
ffpp
fff
pp
arco, senza vibrato
wide and fast vibrato
ord.
ffpp
fff
pp
270
ffp
ff
ffp
ff
ffp
ff
ffp
ff

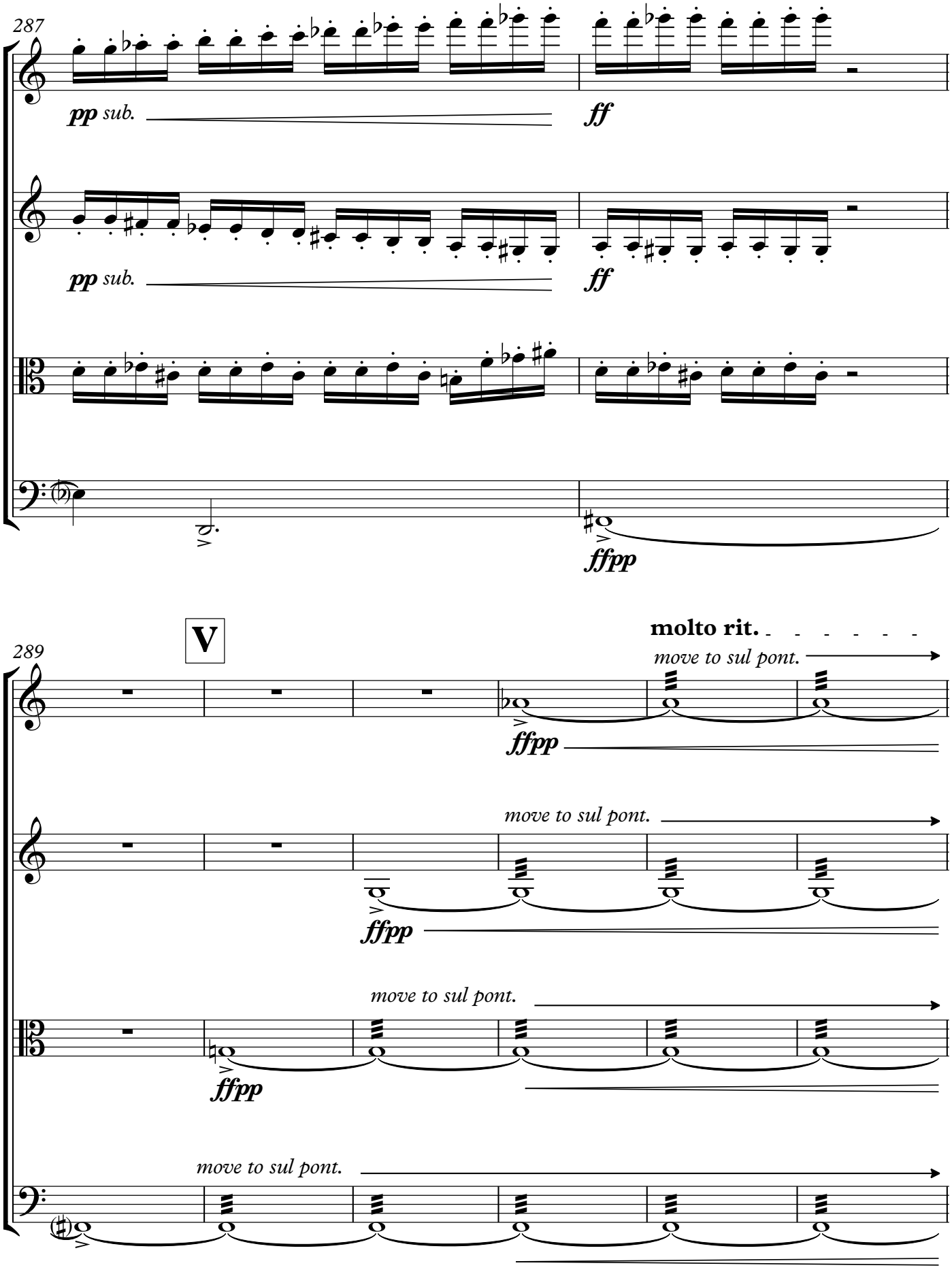

273
ffp
ff
ffp
ff


276
ffp
ff
ffp
ff
ffp
ff
ffp
ff


279
p
ff
p
ff
p
ff
p
ff
U
281
pp
f
pp sub.
pp
f
pp sub.
ff
ff


283
f
pp sub.
f
pp sub.


285
f
pp sub.
f
f
pp sub.
f
pp
ff
p
ff


287
pp sub.
ff
pp sub.
ff
ffpp
289
V
molto rit.
move to sul pont.
ffpp
move to sul pont.
ffpp
move to sul pont.
ffpp
move to sul pont.

295

sul pont.

fff

sul pont.

fff

sul pont.

fff

sul pont.

fff

298

5 -- 8"

ppp

5 -- 8"

ppp

5 -- 8"

ppp

5 -- 8"

ppp