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Publication Date
2020

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Chris Rogerson

STRING QUARTET NO. 2

(2013)

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String Quartet No. 2

I. Canzonetta: Sweetness
II. Intermezzo: Dance
III. Chorale: Stillness

Duration: 20 minutes

This work was commissioned by the Buffalo Chamber Music Society in celebration of the Society's 90th anniversary season.

The work was premiered by the Attacca Quartet at Kleinhan's Music Hall in Buffalo, New York on October 8th, 2013.

Performance Note

All "quasi non vib." passages are to be played with fast bows, as in Renaissance-style playing.

Program Note

I composed my second string quartet from the beginning of 2013 until mid-summer. The first movement is song-like in character, with melody and accompaniment, and is based on Stephen Dunn's moving poem "Sweetness"; the second is a light, fleeting dance; and finally, the last movement explores a spacious chorale. Each section of the work explores the topic of overcoming pain and loss, and is a reflection on the hope that emerges in the wake of tragedy.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Attacca Quartet, the Buffalo Chamber Music Society, Donnacha Dennehy, Stephen Dunn, Carol Friedman, Jennifer Higdon, Paul Lansky, Loren Loiacono, Steven Mackey, Ian Murray, Dan Shapiro, Dan Trueman, Alex Weiser, Christopher Weiss, the Ucross Foundation, Katie Vida, and Young Concert Artists, Inc. All helped in the creation of this piece.

Sweetness

BY STEPHEN DUNN

Just when it has seemed I couldn't bear
  one more friend
waking with a tumor, one more maniac

with a perfect reason, often a sweetness
  has come
and changed nothing in the world

except the way I stumbled through it,
  for a while lost
in the ignorance of loving

someone or something, the world shrunk
  to mouth-size,
hand-size, and never seeming small.

I acknowledge there is no sweetness
  that doesn't leave a stain,
no sweetness that's ever sufficiently sweet ....

Tonight a friend called to say his lover
  was killed in a car
he was driving. His voice was low

and guttural, he repeated what he needed
  to repeat, and I repeated
the one or two words we have for such grief

until we were speaking only in tones.
  Often a sweetness comes
as if on loan, stays just long enough

to make sense of what it means to be alive,
  then returns to its dark
source. As for me, I don't care

where it's been, or what bitter road
  it's traveled
to come so far, to taste so good.

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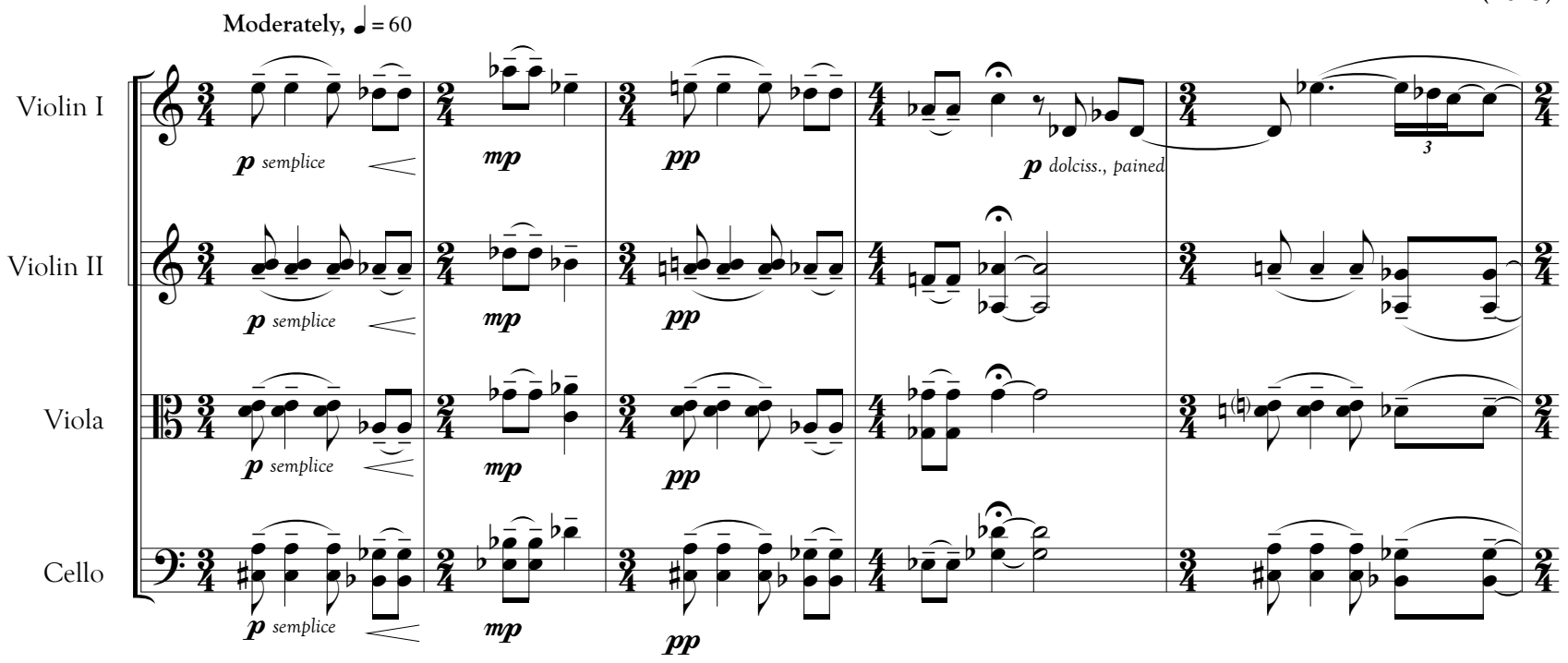
for Carol Friedman

STRING QUARTET NO. 2

I. Canzonetta: Sweetness

Chris Rogerson
(2013)



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10

poco rit.

a tempo

p

pp

pp

pp

pp

mp cant.

p

mf warmly

pizz.

arco

mf

14

rit.

mf warmly

mf warmly

f

f

f

f

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

(arco)

19

a tempo

p

mp cant.

p

mf warmly

f

f

f

mf

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

f

24

rit.

a tempo

rit.

a tempo

p dolciss., soaring

p

mp cant.

pizz.

p

3

3

29

rit.

Pushing forward, ♩ = 72

ppp distant

ppp distant

ppp

ppp distant

arco

pizz. arco

pizz.

ppp distant

35

mf

mf

mf

mf

f espress.

f espress.

f espress.

f espress.

41

p sub. f mf

46

p pp ppp p cant.

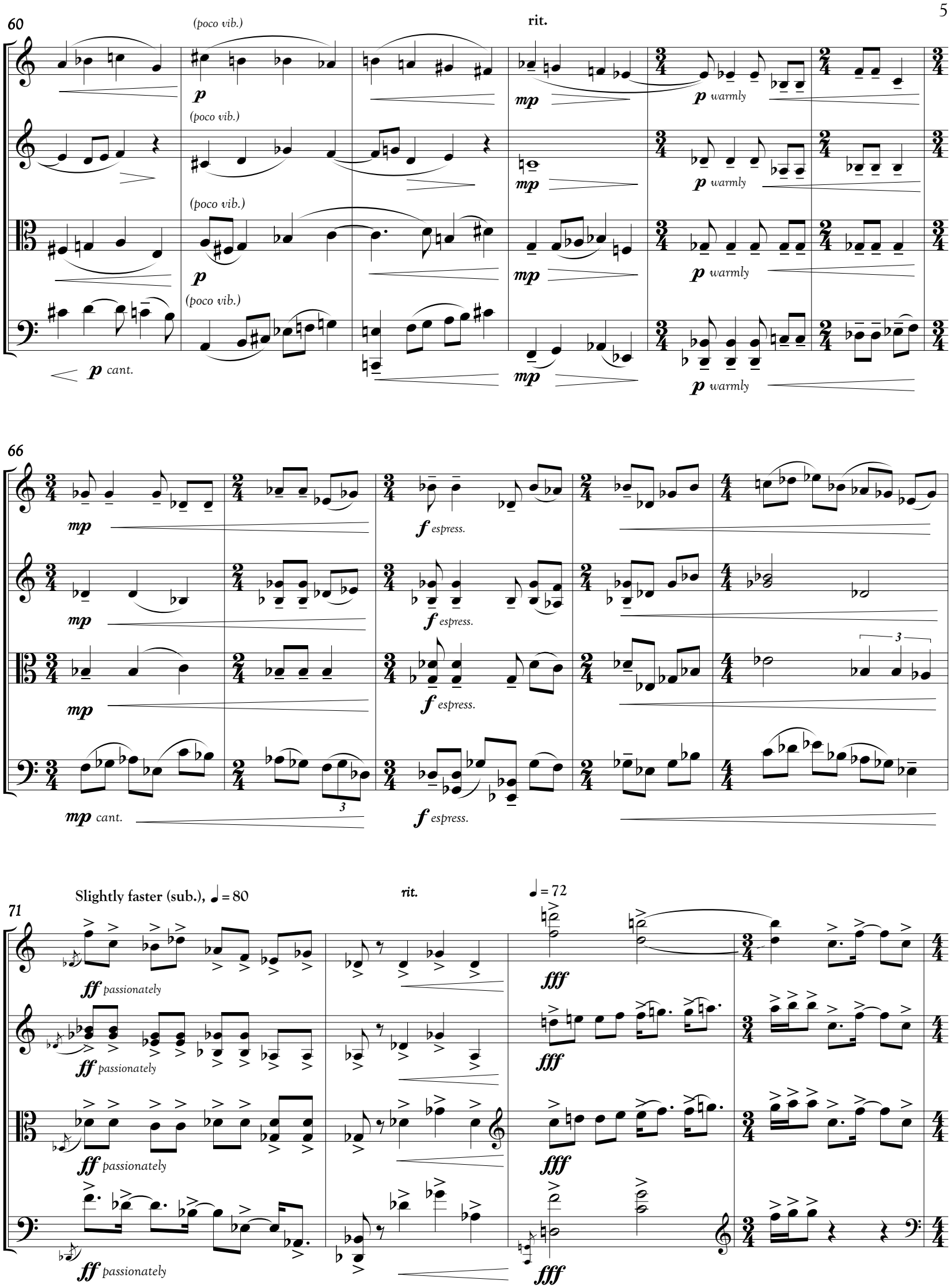
54

Very slow, ♩ = 40 poco rit. a tempo Pushing forward, ♩ = 72

pp dolciss. quasi non vib. pp semplice

mf pp

p dolciss., soaring mp


60
(poco vib.)
rit.
p
mp
p warmly
p cant.
66
f espress.
mp cant.
71
Slightly faster (sub.), ♩ = 80
rit.
♩ = 72
ff passionately
fff

75

79

rubato

82

rit.

Slow and pained, ♩ = 52

pizz.

arco

87

rit.

a tempo

pp dolciss.

pp dolciss.

pp dolciss.

pizz.

arco

p

pp

91

ppp

ppp

ppp

p

pp

pp

pp

ppp

ppp

ppp

95

rit.

ppp

pp dolciss.

pp

pp

Very slow, ♩ = 40

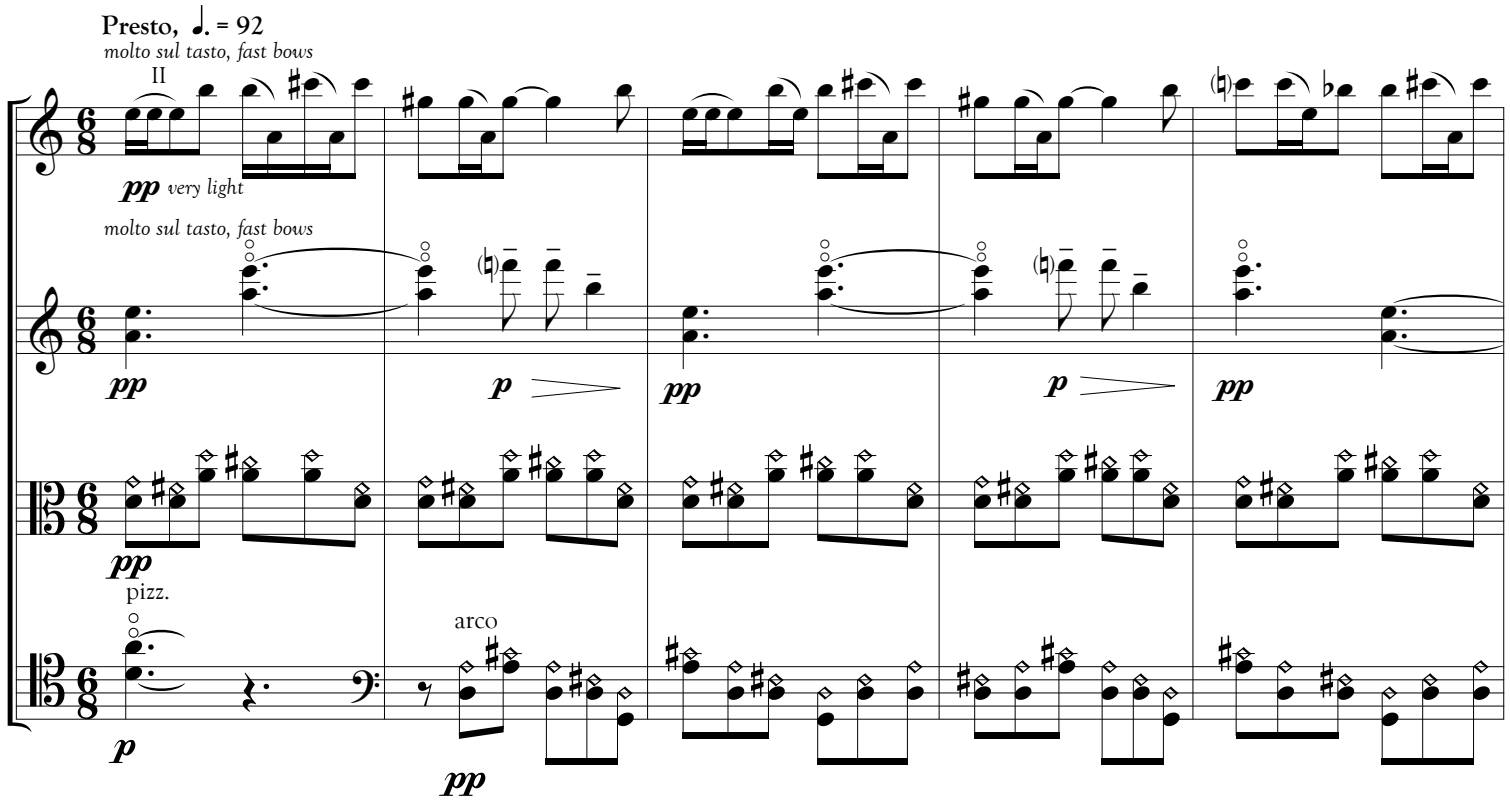
ppp

ppp

ppp

attacca

II. Intermezzo: Dance



11

G.P.

ppp

G.P.

ppp

G.P.

ppp

arco

G.P.

pp

ppp

17

f p sub.

arco

pizz.

f

p

pizz.

f

arco

p

f p sub.

arco

pizz.

f

p

pizz.

f

arco

p

22

pp

f p sub.

arco

pizz.

pp

f

p

pizz.

f

arco

pp

f p sub.

pizz.

arco

mp

pp

f

p

mp cant.

arco

27

pp

pp

pp

mf

ppp distant

ppp distant

ppp distant

ppp distant

32

(♪=♪) *sempre* pizz.

p

mp

pp

pp flautando

mf

pp

p

pp

36

mf

mp

mf

p

pp flautando

mf

39

arco

flautando

pizz.

42

arco

pizz.

46

arco

50

53

57

61

f

f

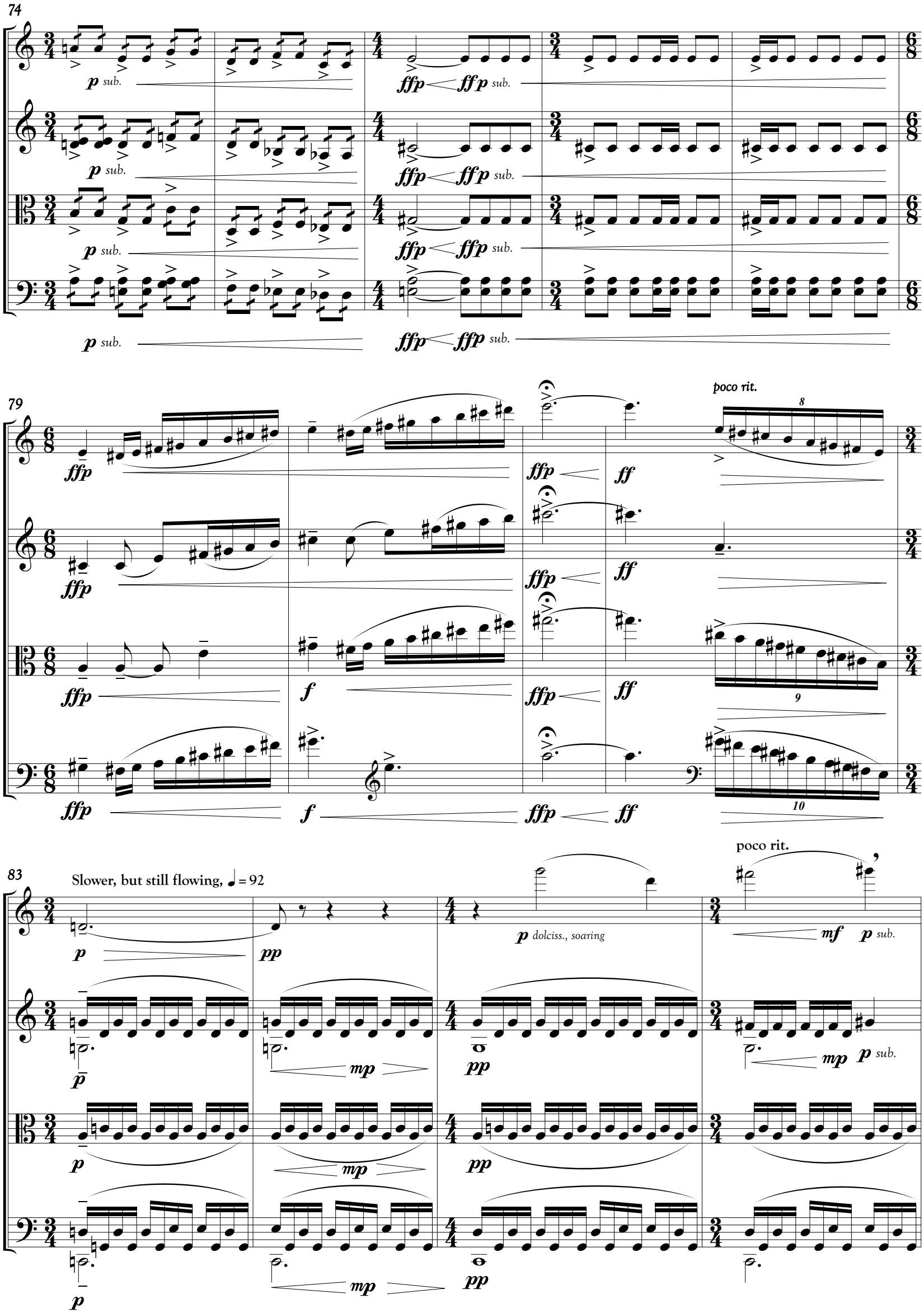
65

ff *passionately*

ff

ff

70


74
p sub.
ffp
ffp sub.
79
ffp
f
ff
poco rit.
8
9
10
83
Slower, but still flowing, ♩ = 92
p
pp
p dolciss., soaring
mf
mp
poco rit.

87 a tempo

poco rit.

p pp p pp

91 a tempo

poco rit.

pp p mf p sub.

ppp mp pp sub.

ppp mp pp sub.

ppp

95 a tempo

p mp p pp p

p pp p

p pp p

99

poco rit.

a tempo

ppp

pp sub.

mp

mf

103

poco rit.

a tempo

pp dolciss.

107

Tempo I (Presto), ♩. = 92

molto sul tasto, fast bows

p

pp very light

114

p

pp

p

ppp *distant*

pp *flautando*

119

pp

p

pp

pp *flautando*

p

pp

mp

ppp

pizz.

p

pp

pp

p

123 *poco rit.*

a tempo

ppp

pp *very light*

pp *very light*

arco

mp *gliss. ad lib.* (I)

flautando

mp

p

pp

127

pizz.

arco

pizz.

G.P.

G.P.

G.P.

G.P.

ppp

p *pp*

p

pp

p *pp*

mp *gliss. ad lib.* (I)

132

f *off the string*

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

f

mf

f

mf

137

mp

pp

mp

pp

mp

pp

mp

pp

142

poco rit.

Slightly slower, ♩ = 92

mp *gliss. ad lib.* (I)

p ***pp***

ppp

mp *gliss. ad lib.* (II)

pizz.

pizz.

p

p

146

pizz.

Tempo I (Presto), ♩. = 92

arco

attacca

p

pp

pizz.

arco

pp

p

pp

arco

mp *gliss. ad lib.* (I)

pizz.

arco

port.

p

pp

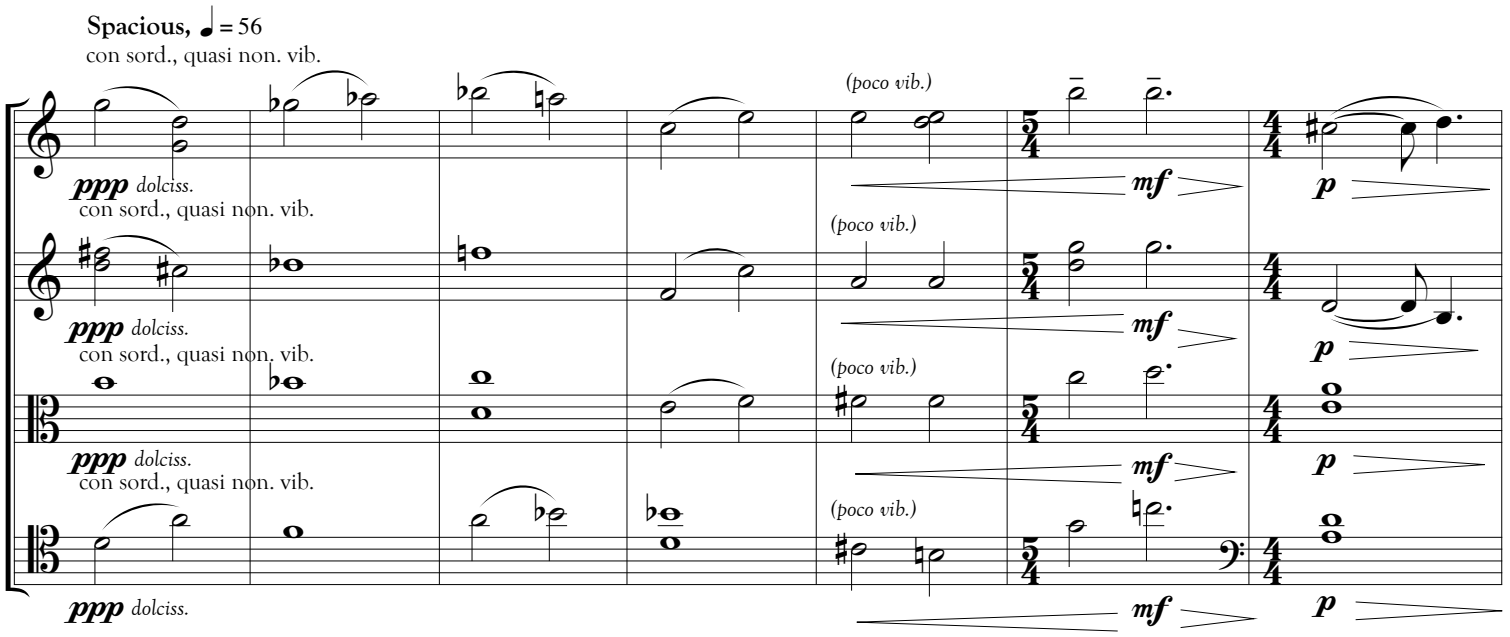
arco

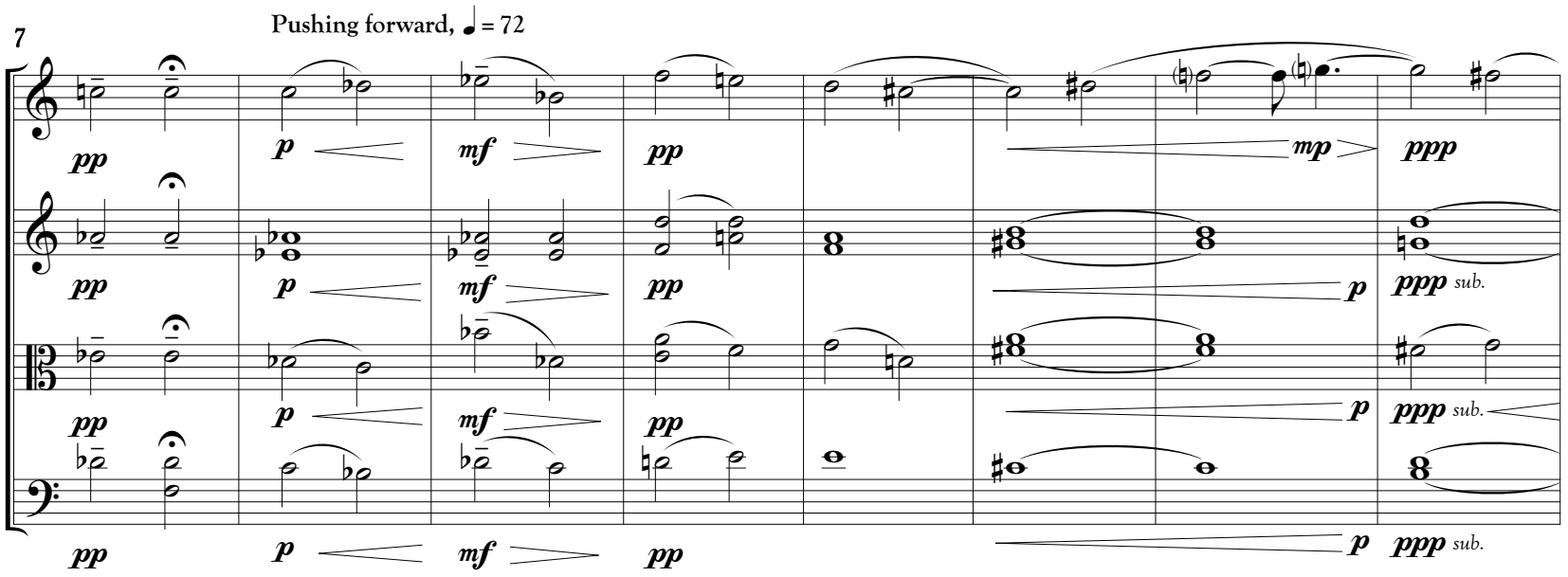
pizz.

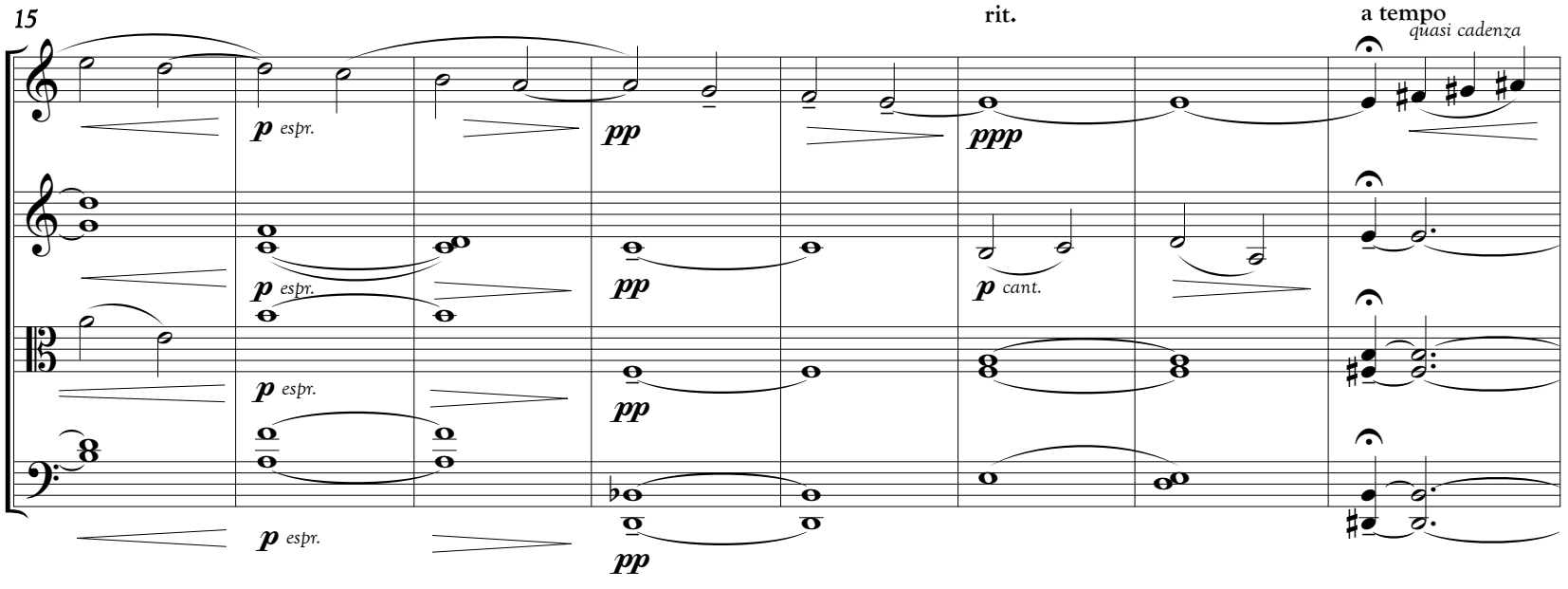
pp

mp *gliss. ad lib.* (I)

III. Chorale: Stillness







23

p cant.

senza sord.

senza sord.

senza sord.

ppp

full and warm

pp *mp*

full and warm

pp *mp*

full and warm

pp *mp*

29

p espr.

rit.

port.

pp *mp* *p*

pp *mp* *p*

pp *mp* *p*

34

poco rit.

p espr.

mp *p* *mf* *pp* *ppp*

mp *p* *mf* *pp*

mp *p* *mf* *pp*

40

a tempo

senza sord.

rit.

Tempo I

Pushing forward, ♩ = 72

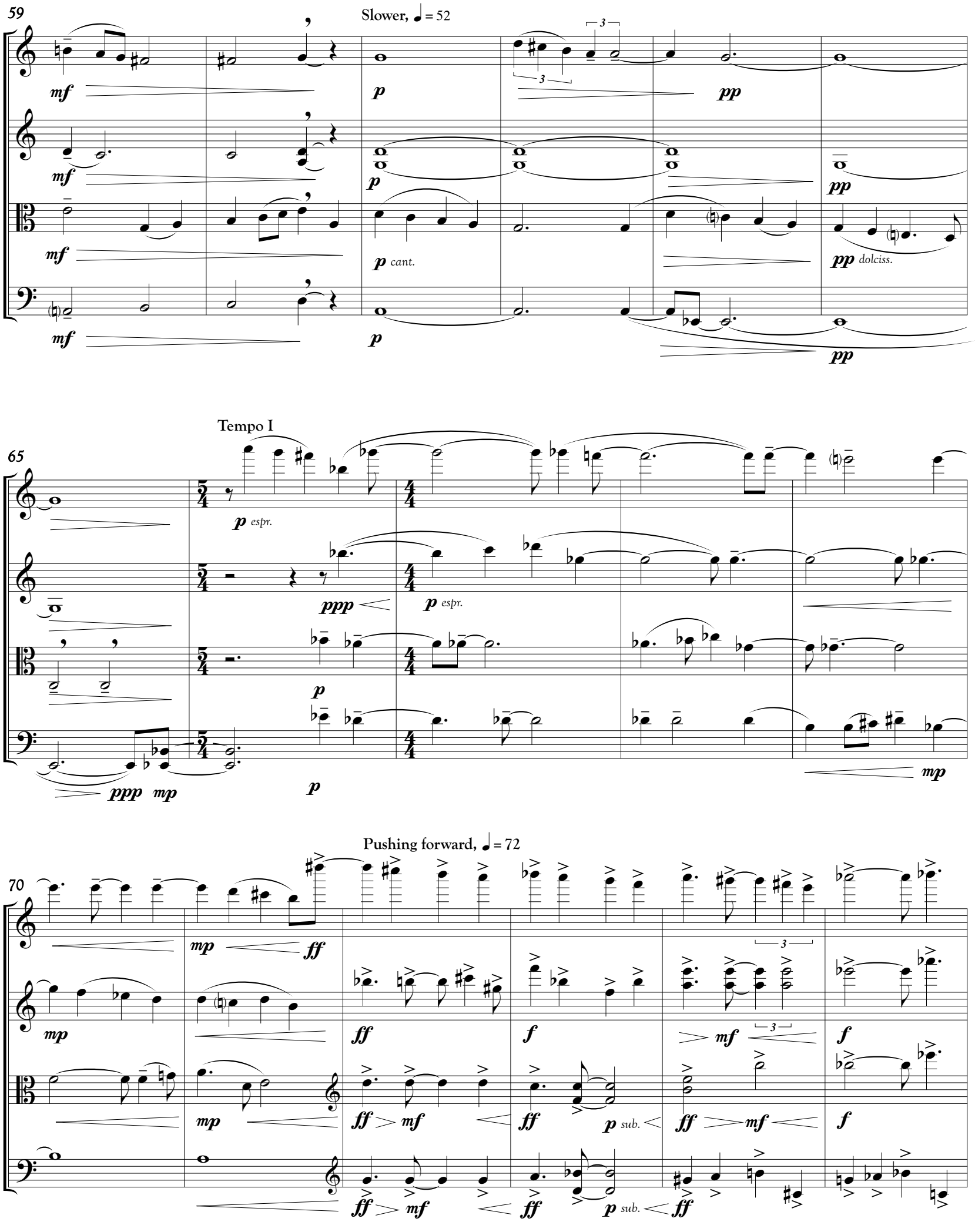
47

(poco vib.)

rit.

Tempo I

53


59
Slower, ♩ = 52
mf
p
pp
p cant.
pp dolciss.
65
Tempo I
p espr.
ppp
mp
70
Pushing forward, ♩ = 72
ff
f
mf
p sub.

76

ff

mf sub.

81

poco rit.

G.P.

Faster, ♩ = 72 senza sord.

p *pp* *p espr.* *p cant.*

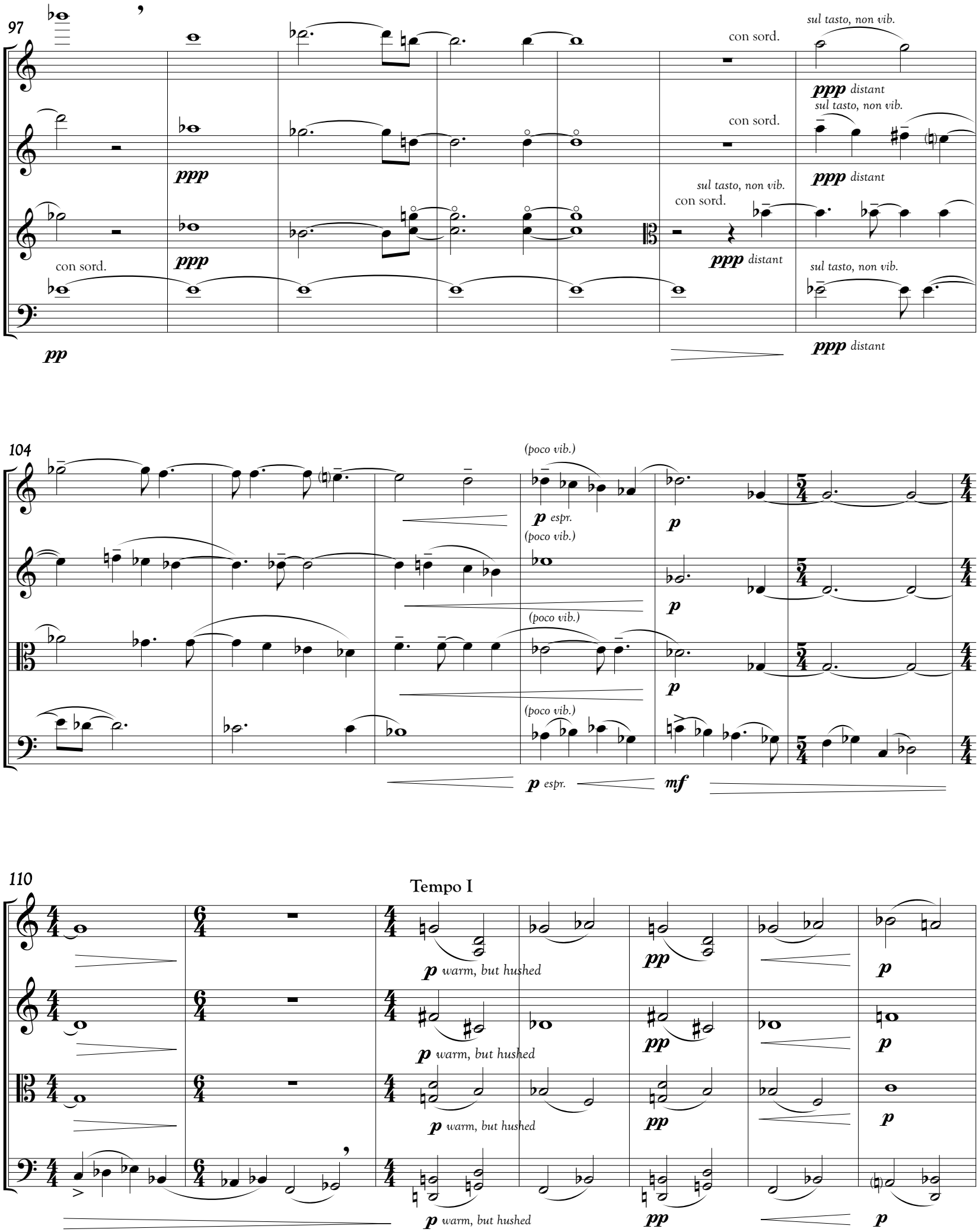
sul tasto

senza sord.

89

sul tasto

ppp


97
con sord.
sul tasto, non vib.
ppp distant
ppp
pp
104
(poco vib.)
p espr.
p
mf
110
Tempo I
p warm, but hushed
pp

117

124 Slower, ♩ = 52

131

molto rit.