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Publication Date
2020

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John Plant

Quintet

for two violins, viola, cello, and piano

duration: 16 minutes

SKETCH FOR A PROGRAM NOTE

I. Where are you?

The opening three-note motif evokes the words Where are you? This leads to a canonic dialogue for the two violins in their highest range, suggesting overlapping memories. A stark recurring funeral waltz fragment for the piano is now heard, which will recur throughout the piece as a haunting refrain, between the more sustained, longing, lyrical, desolate sections voiced by the quintet. The long coda, embedding both the opening gesture and the waltz in its texture, suggests a kind of groping towards a luminous realm, which seems more and more evanescent.
This movement was composed as an elegy for my parents.

II. Scherzo.

Spiky, nervous, clashing pizzicati yield to a brief, impetuous burst of melody, enveloped in swirling glissandi. The movement continues to unfold in a flowing but inexorable playful, spirited and mirthful rhythmic momentum.
This movement is dedicated with great affection and admiration to Blue Engine String Quartet.

III. Twilight with birds.

The twilight is permeated with fragments of birdsong accompanying the birds' soaring, swooping flight, woven into an increasingly blissful and peaceful nocturnal atmosphere. The woodpecker has the last word.
This movement is dedicated to my late aunt Helen Quilliam, founding member of Kingston Field Naturalists. A bird sanctuary in Sydenham, Ontario bears her name.

IV. Passacaglia

The Passacaglia is based on a mode from which the notes of the C sharp minor triad (C#, E, G#) are rigorously excluded until the very end. There are 18 variations on a theme, initially stated by the cello. The listener may recognize a shy nod (or wink) in the direction of Bach (in the theme), Rachmaninoff (variation 7) and Bizet (variation 15). The forbidden notes emerge surreptitiously from the frenetic final variation.

This movement is dedicated to my muse, my beloved wife Jocelyne, who spurs me on to new explorations. The entire work can be taken as an expression of gratitude toward the dedicatees, and toward the world we live in.

- John Plant
www.johnplantmusic.com.

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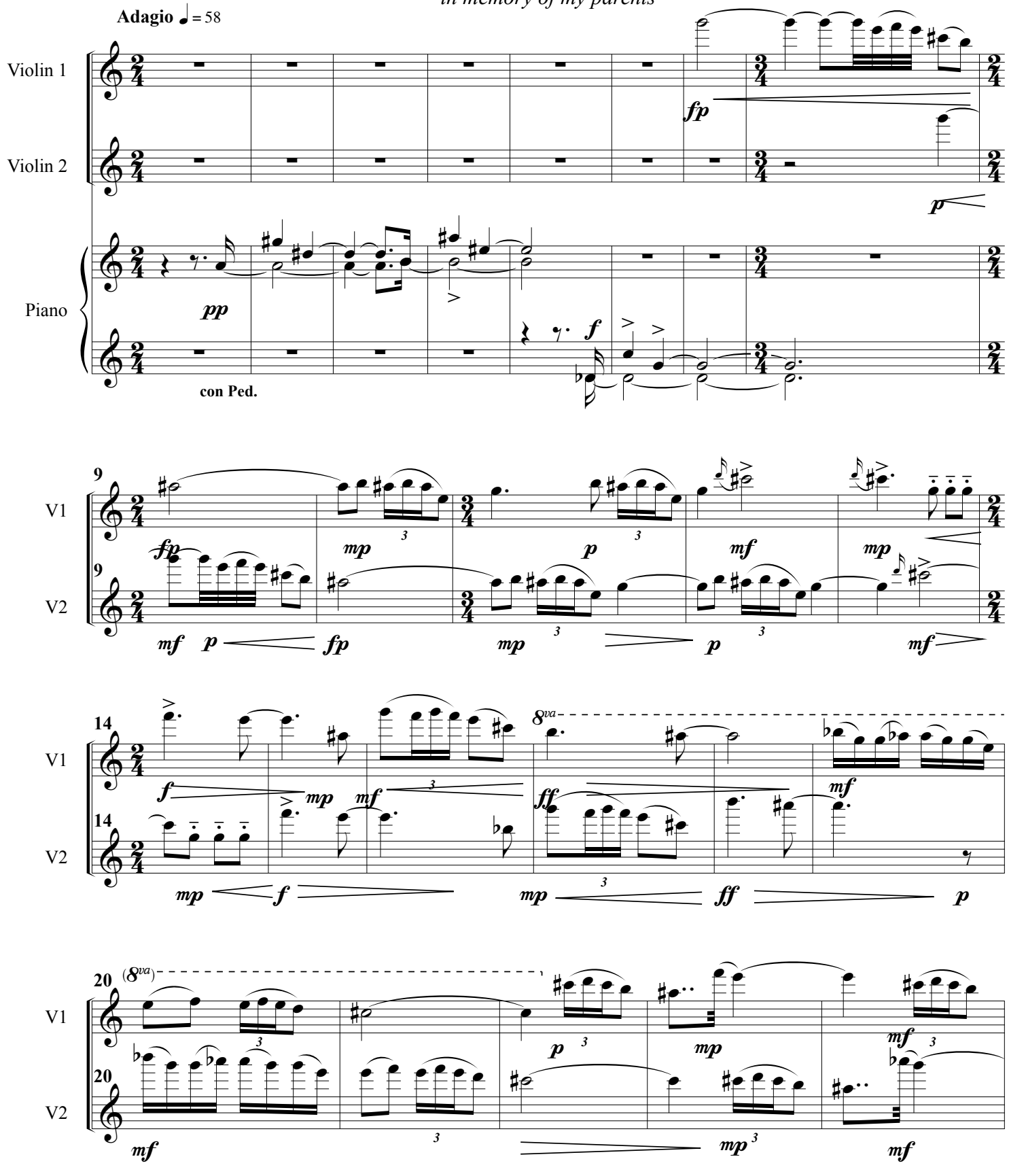
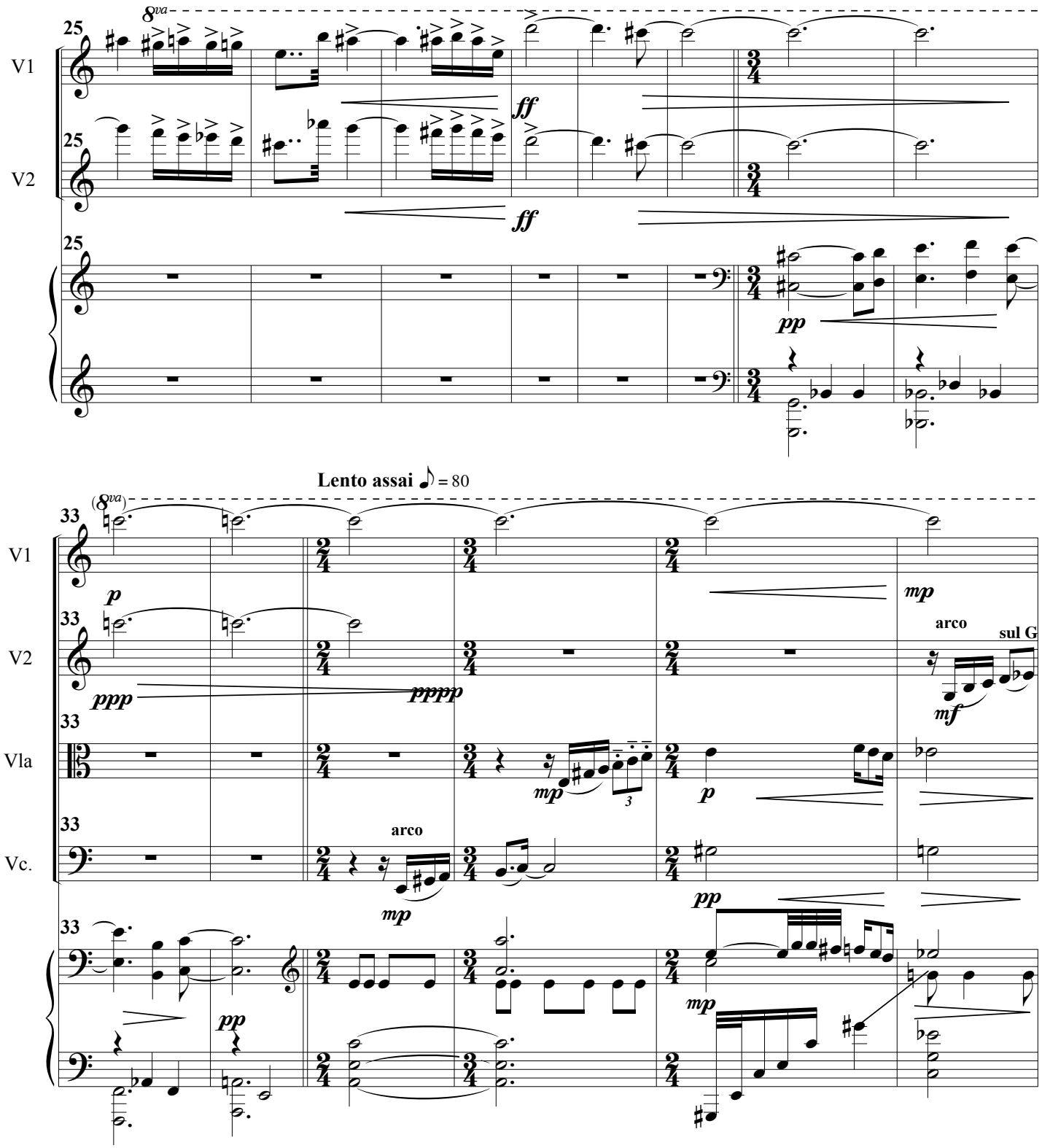
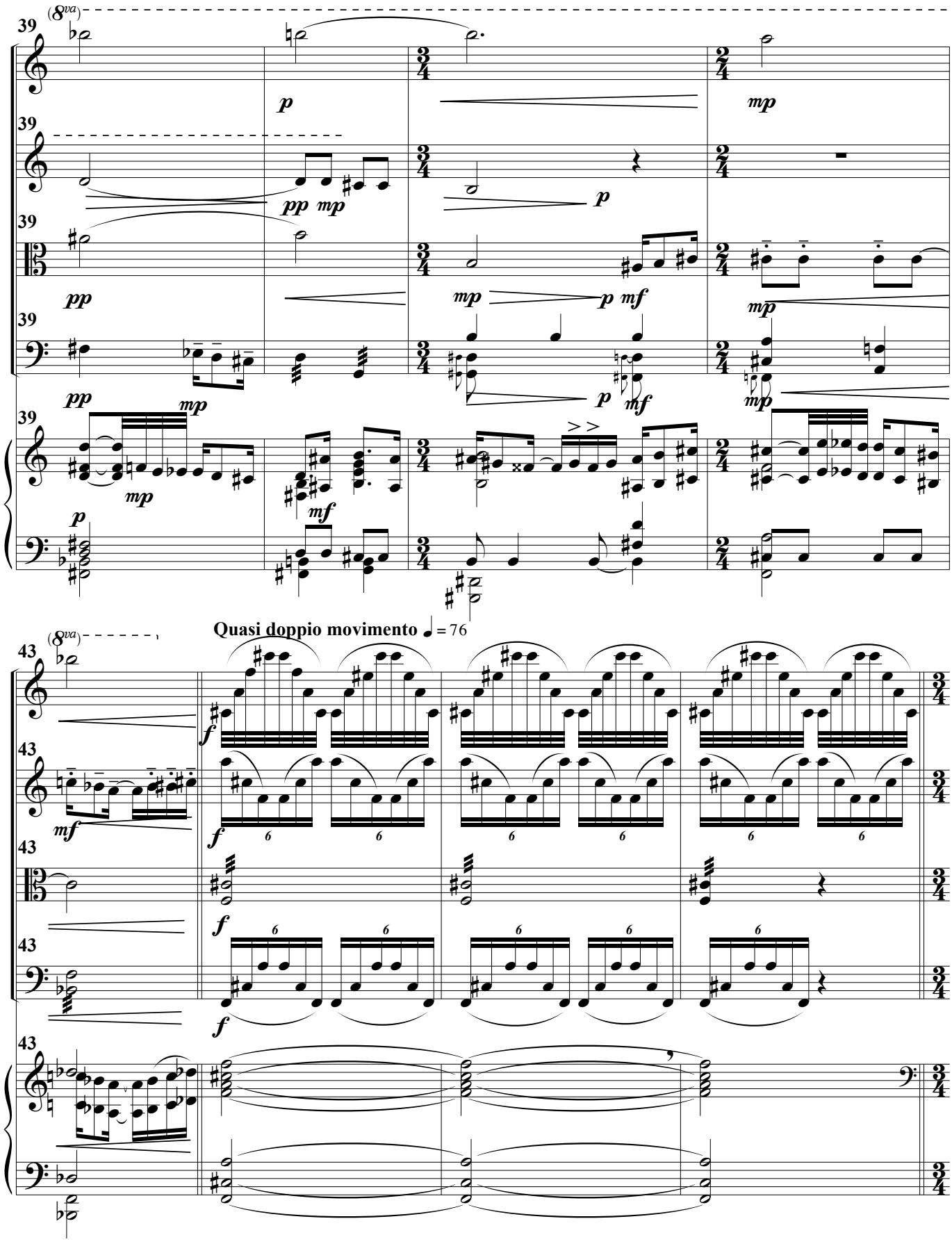
The composer gratefully acknowledges the support of Arts Nova Scotia in the composition of this work.

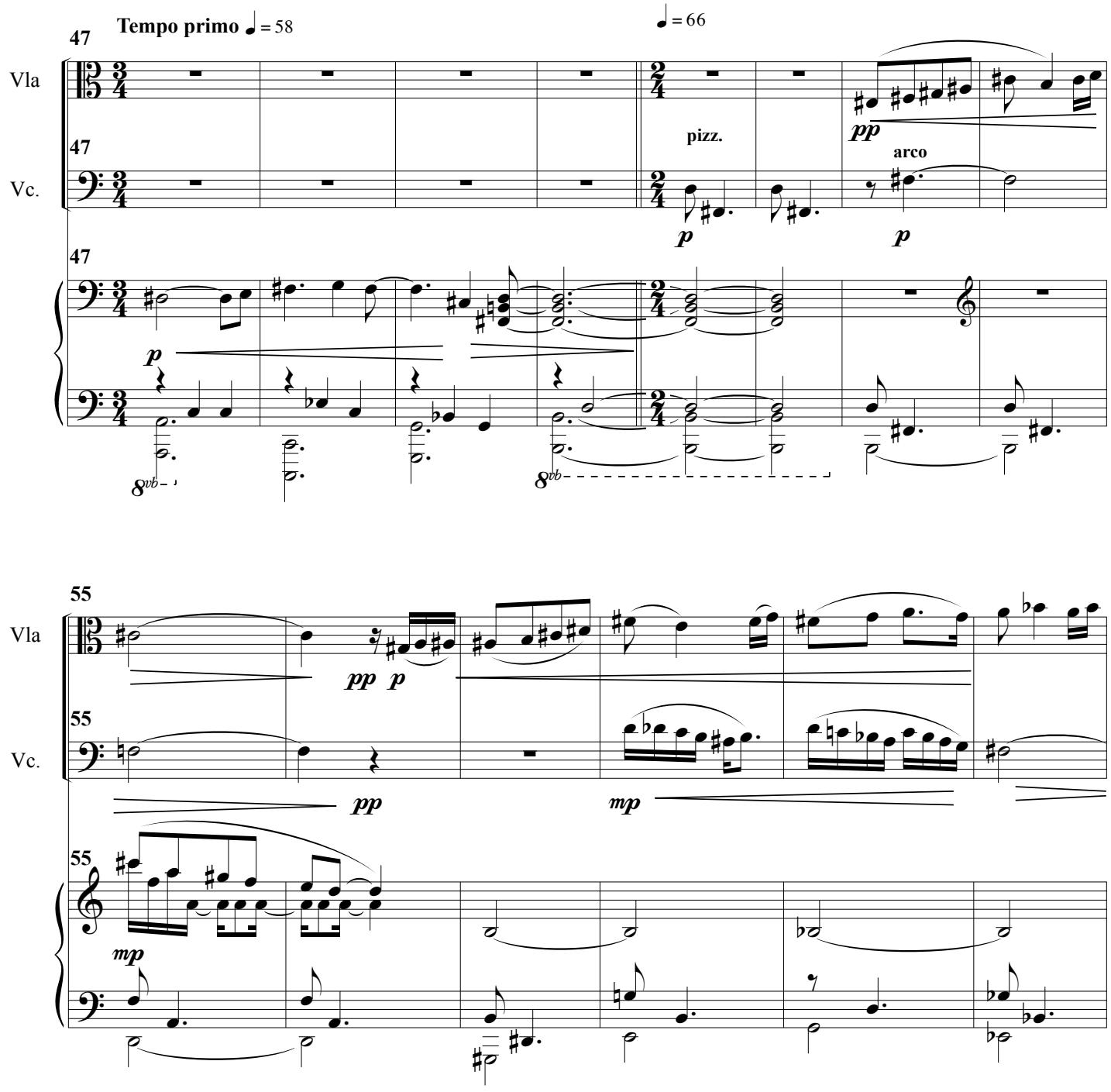
I. Where are you?

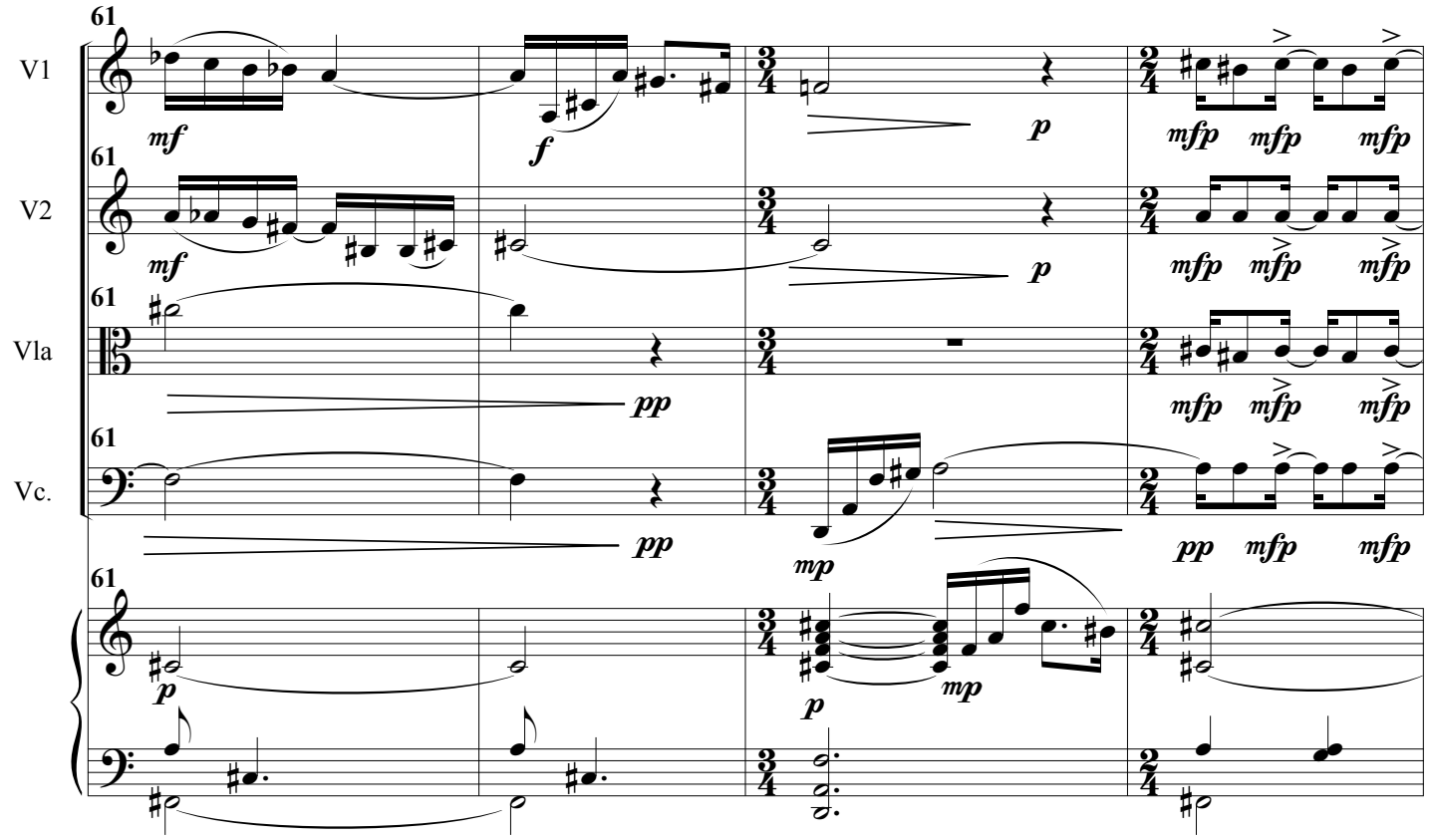
in memory of my parents

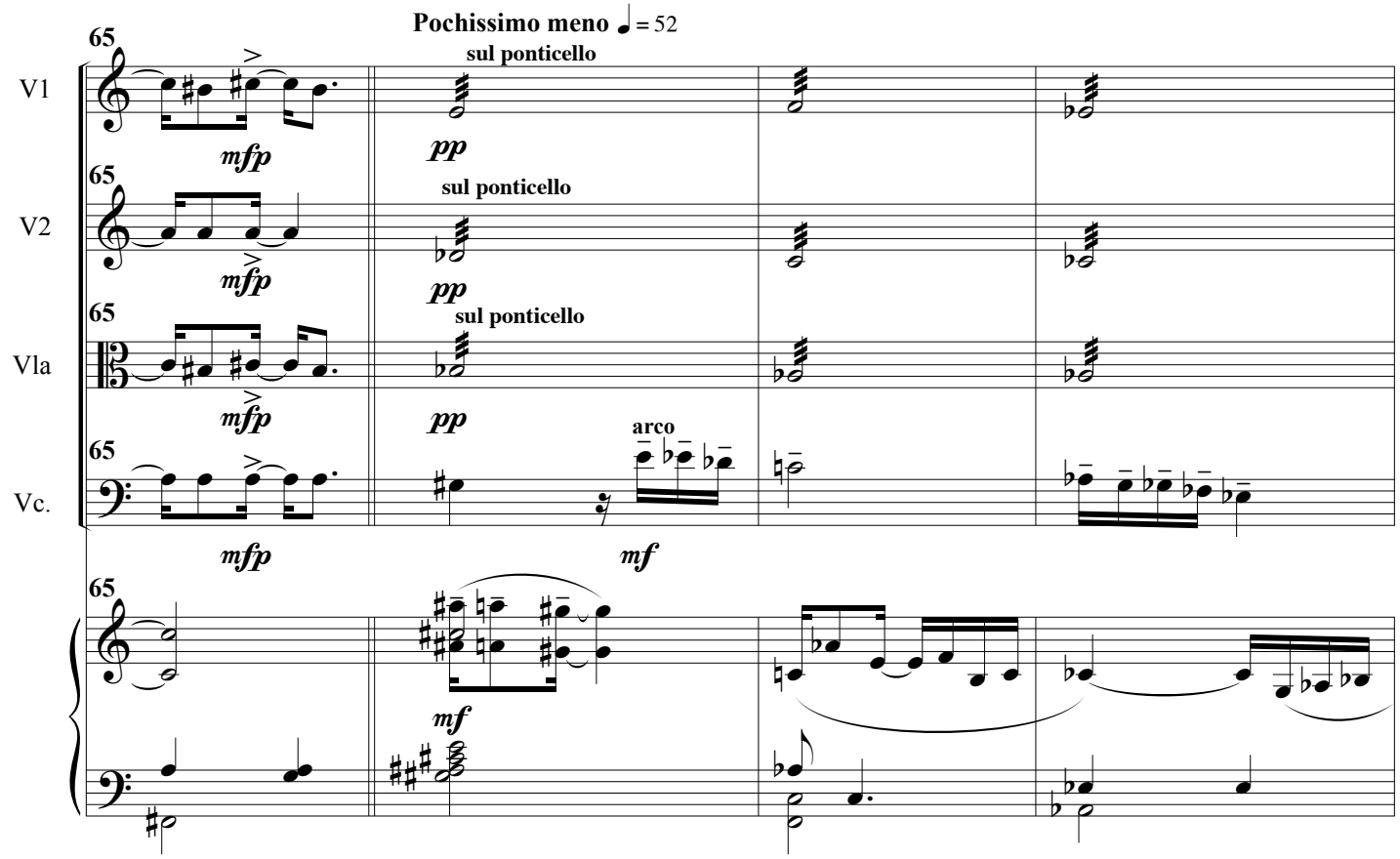


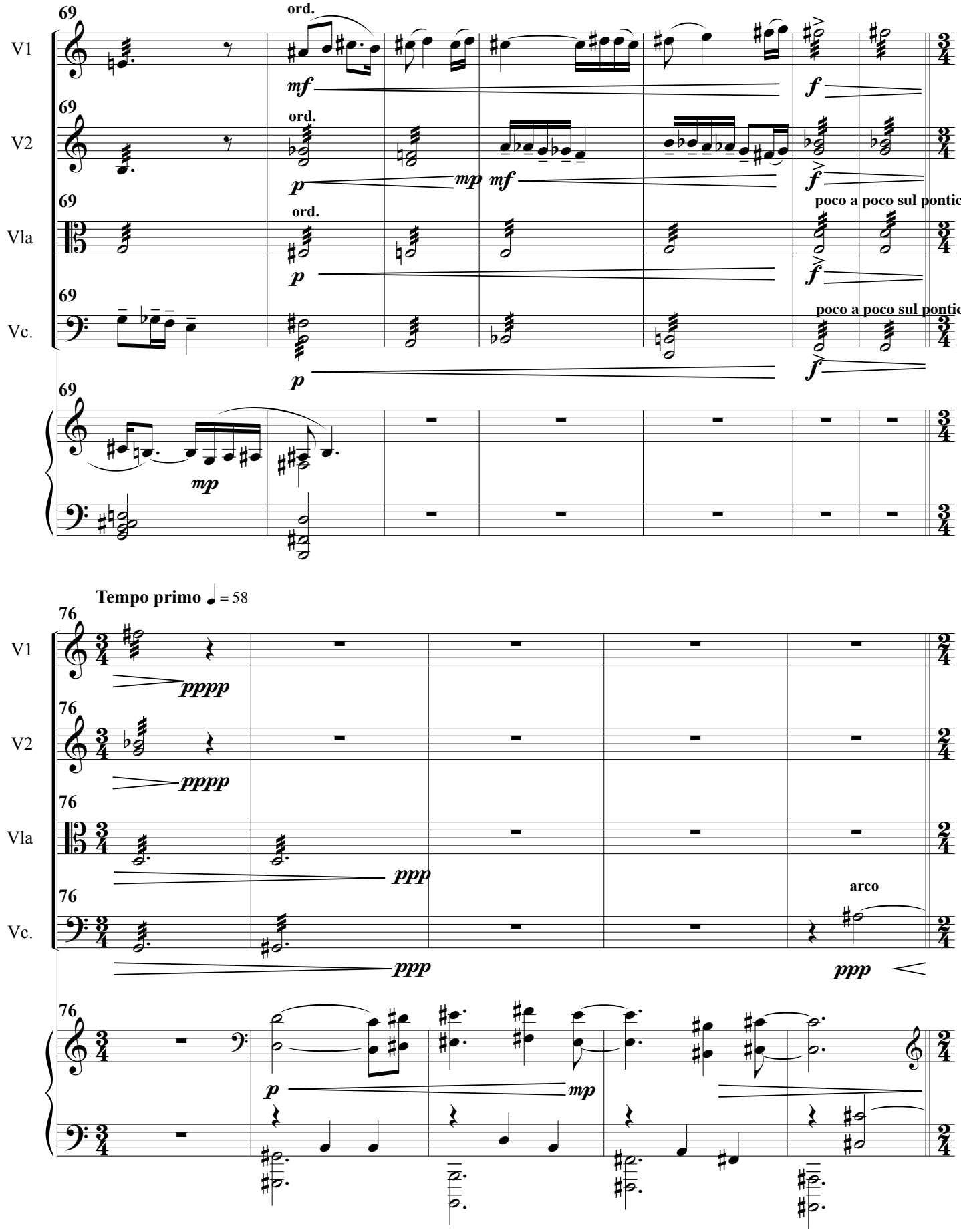

25
8va
V1
V2
ff
pp
Lento assai ♪ = 80
33
(8va)
p
mp
ppp
pppp
arco
sul G
mf
Vla
Vc.
3

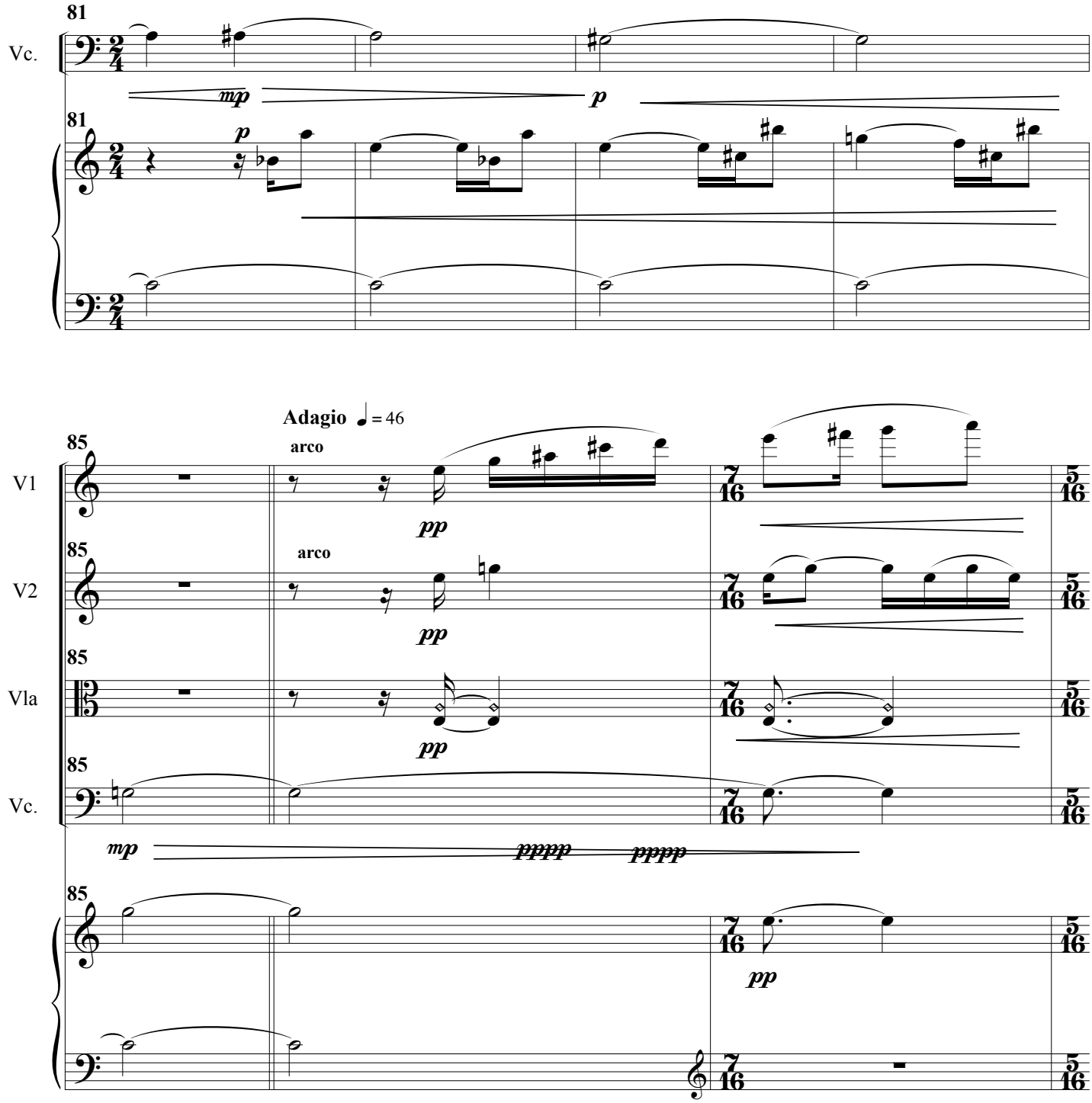

(8va)
39
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
p
pp
mp
mf
Quasi doppio movimento ♩ = 76
43
f
6

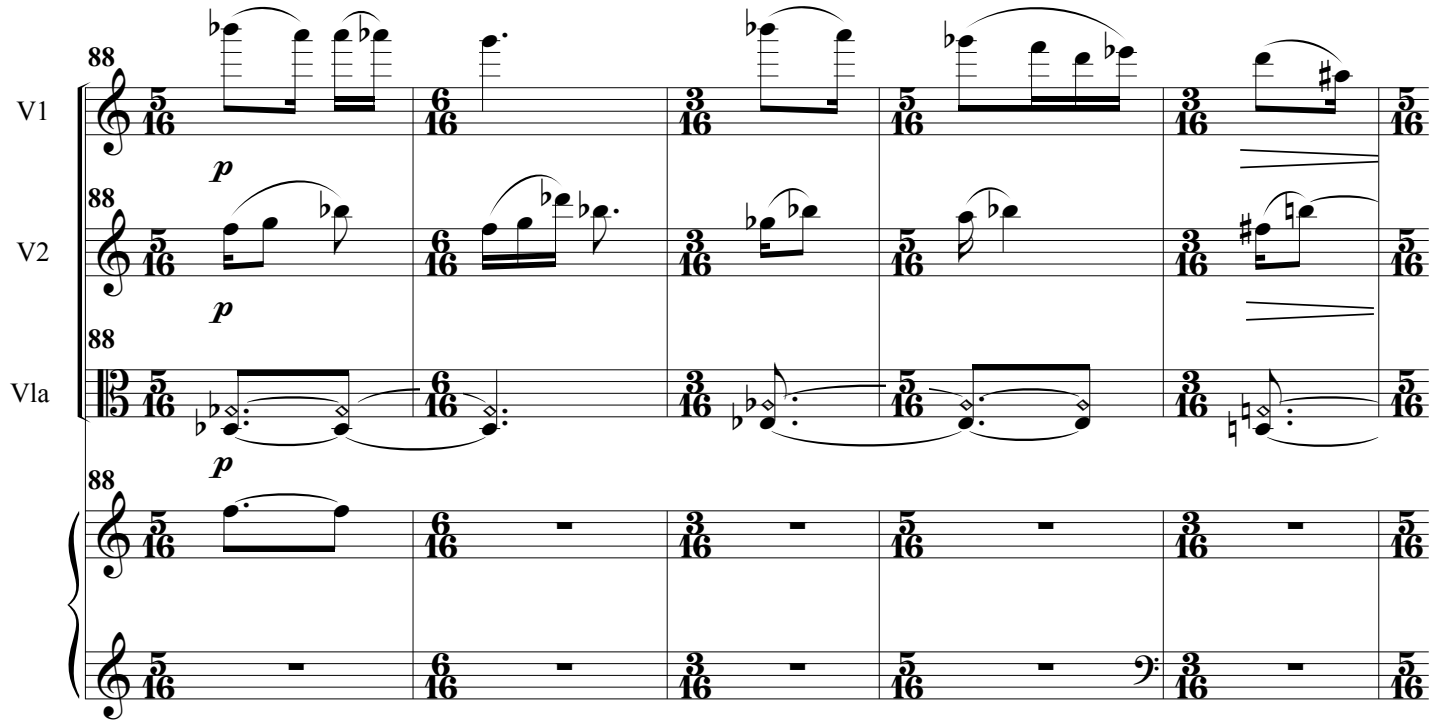

Tempo primo ♩ = 58
♩ = 66
47
Vla
Vc.
pizz.
arco
pp
p
8vb
55
mp

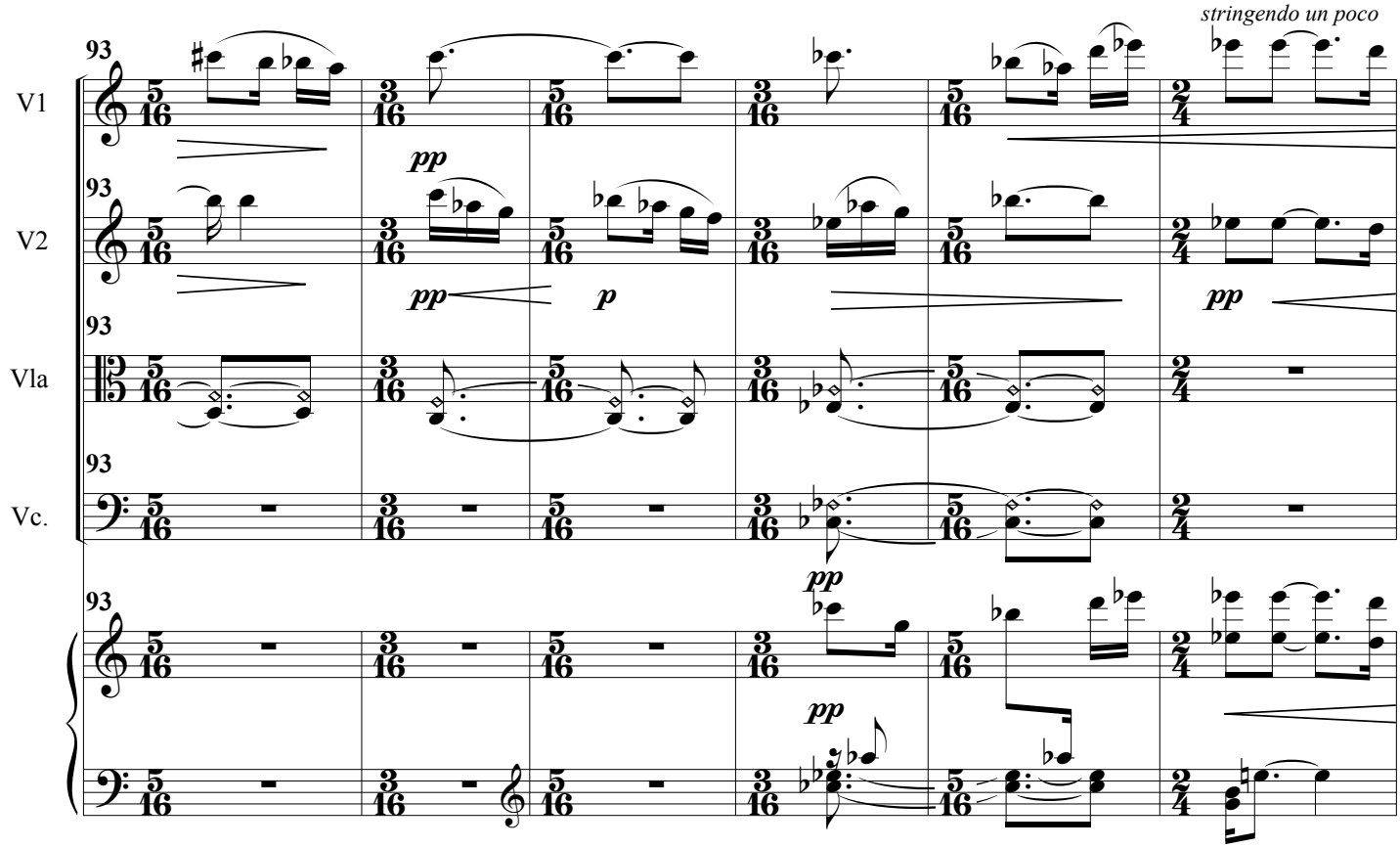

61
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
mf
f
p
mfp
pp
mp

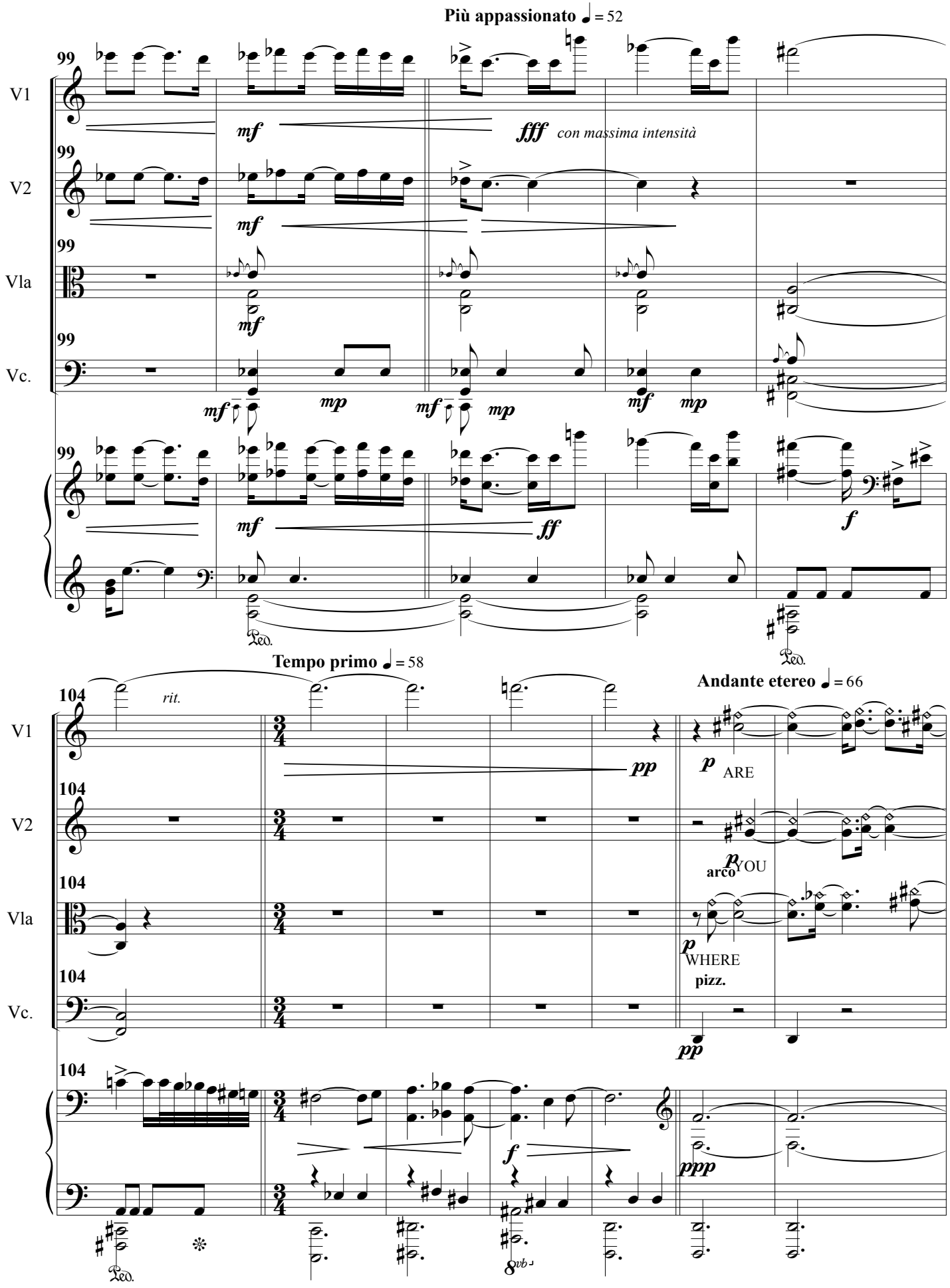

Pochissimo meno ♩ = 52
65
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
sul ponticello
arco
pp
mfp
mf

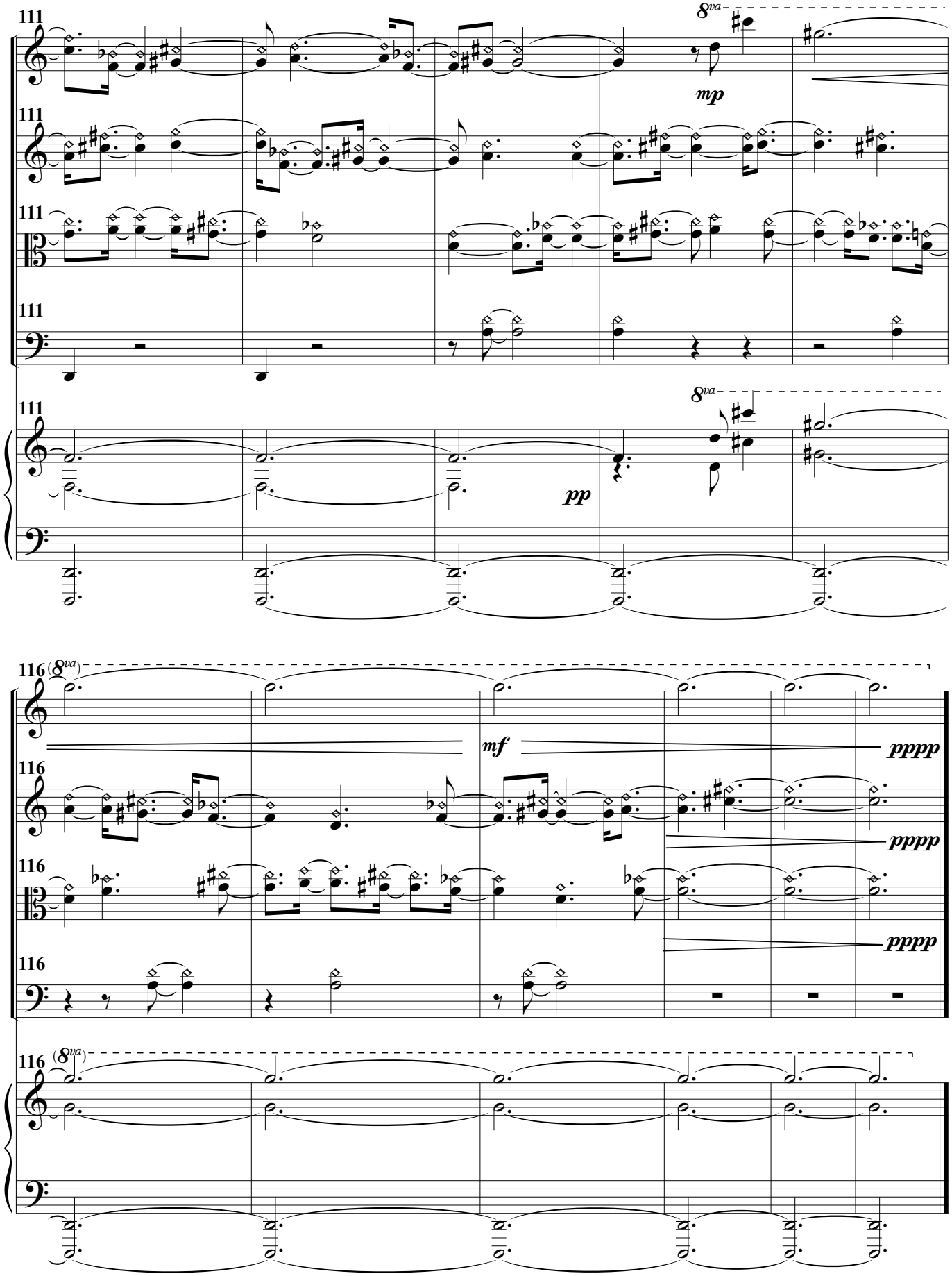

69
V1
ord.
mf
f
69
V2
ord.
p
mp
mf
f
69
Vla
ord.
p
poco a poco sul ponticello
f
69
Vc.
p
poco a poco sul ponticello
f
69
mp
Tempo primo ♩ = 58
76
V1
pppp
76
V2
pppp
76
Vla
ppp
76
Vc.
ppp
arco
ppp
76
p
mp


81
Vc.
mp
p
81
p
Adagio ♩ = 46
85
V1
arco
pp
85
V2
arco
pp
85
Vla
pp
85
Vc.
mp
ppppp
ppppp
85
pp


88
V1
V2
Vla
p
p
p

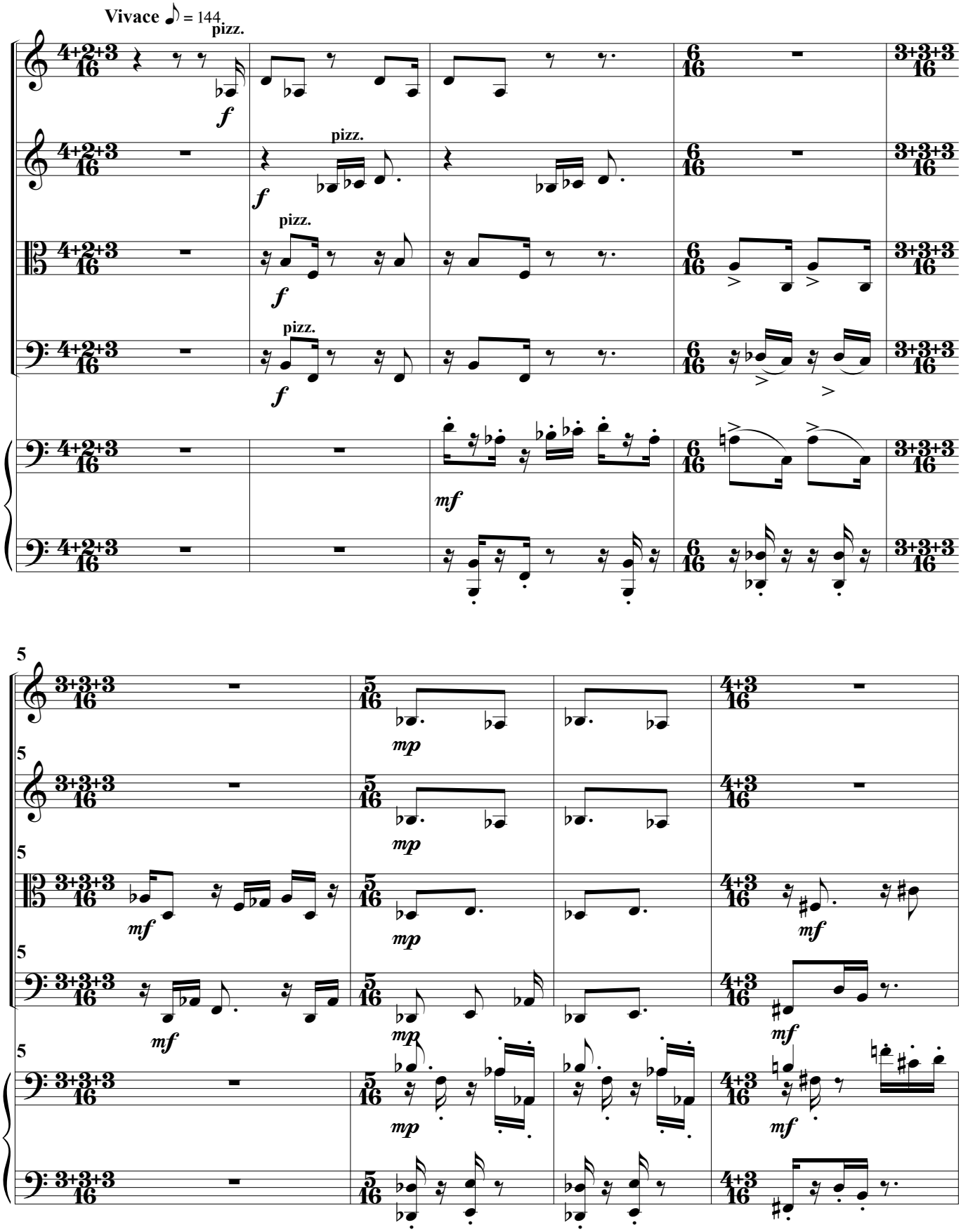

stringendo un poco
93
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
pp
pp
p
pp
pp
pp

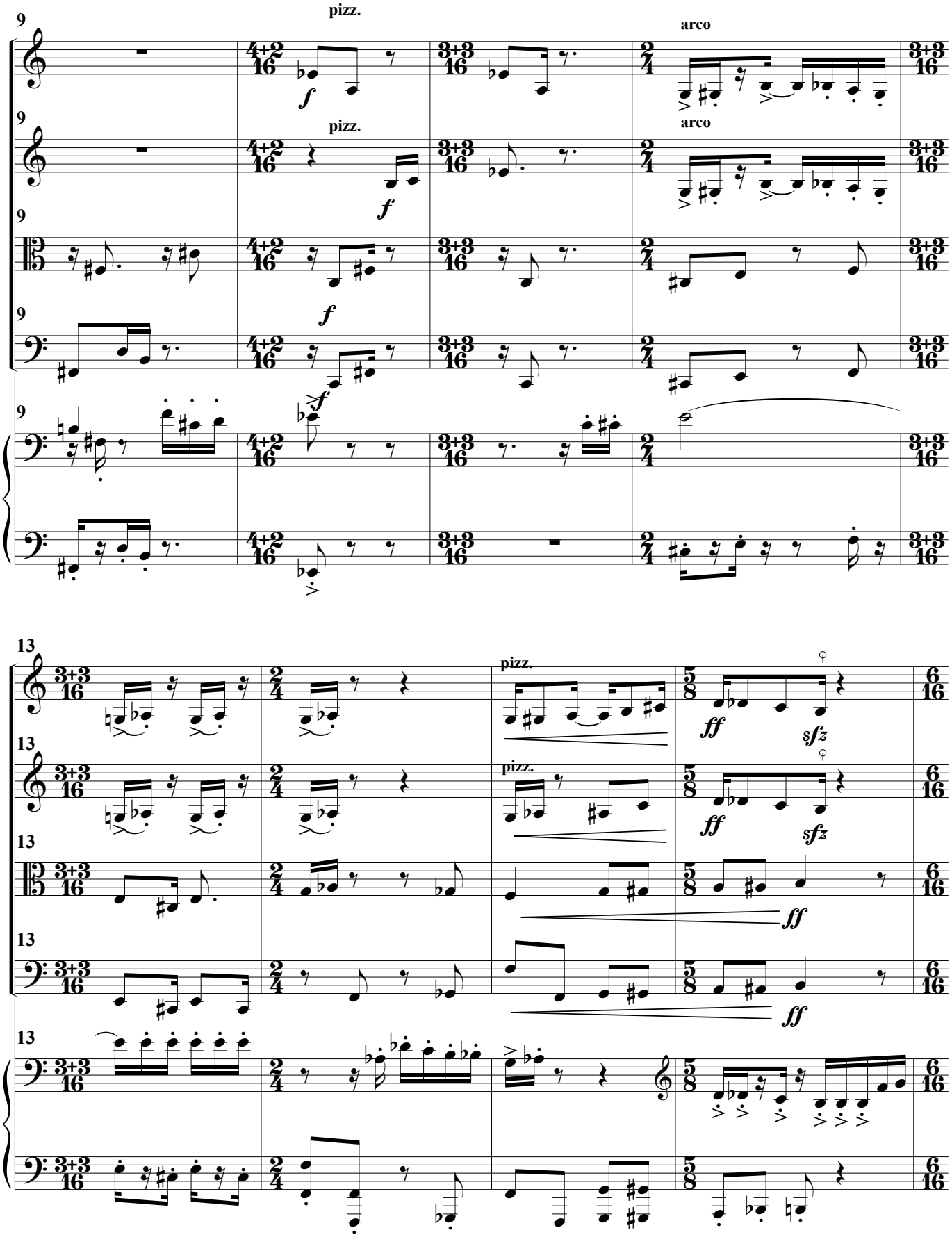

Più appassionato ♩ = 52
99
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
mf
fff
con massima intensità
mp
ff
f
Tempo primo ♩ = 58
104
rit.
pp
Andante etereo ♩ = 66
ARE
YOU
WHERE
arco
pizz.
ppp
8vb

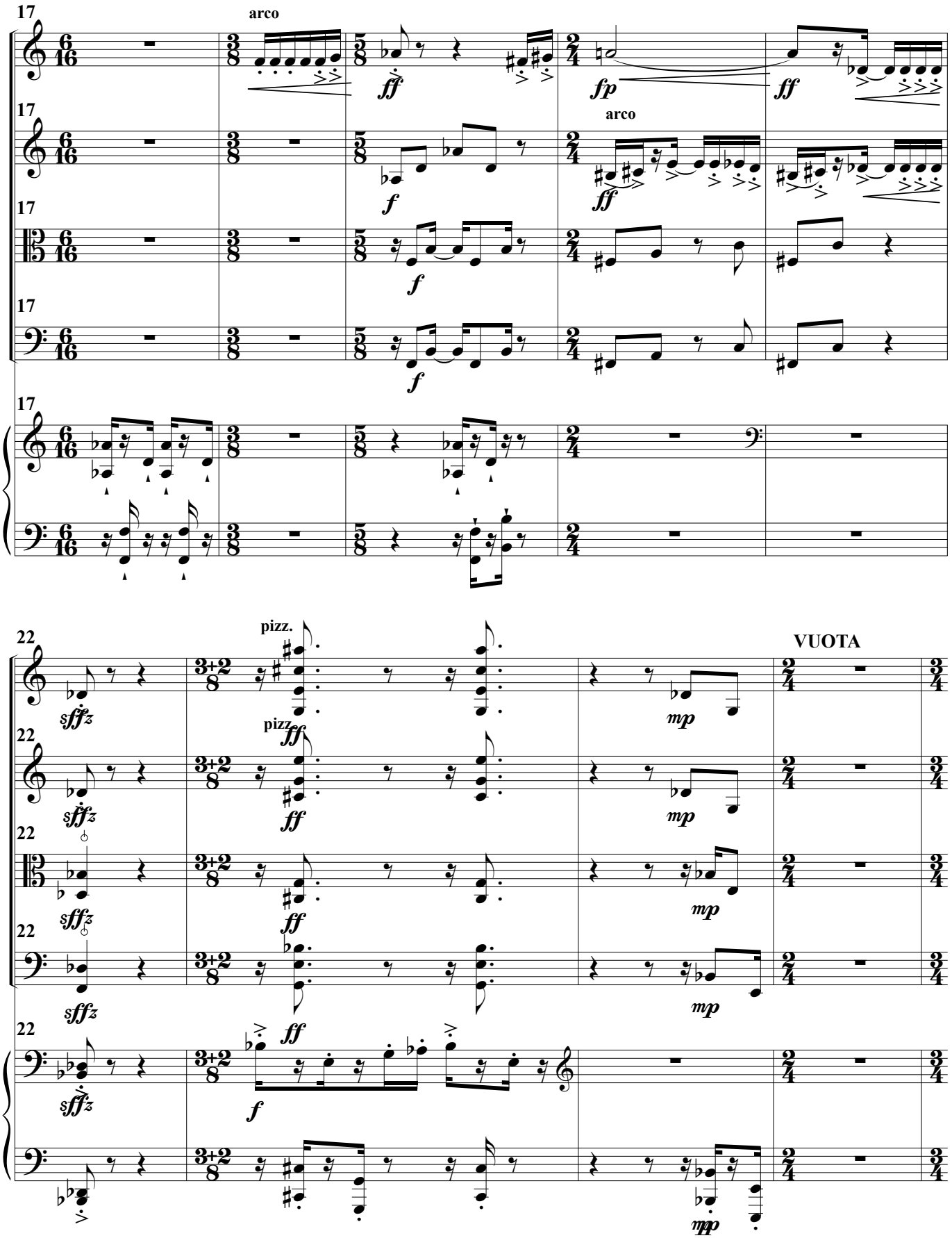

111
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
8va
mp
pp
116
(8va)
mf
pppp

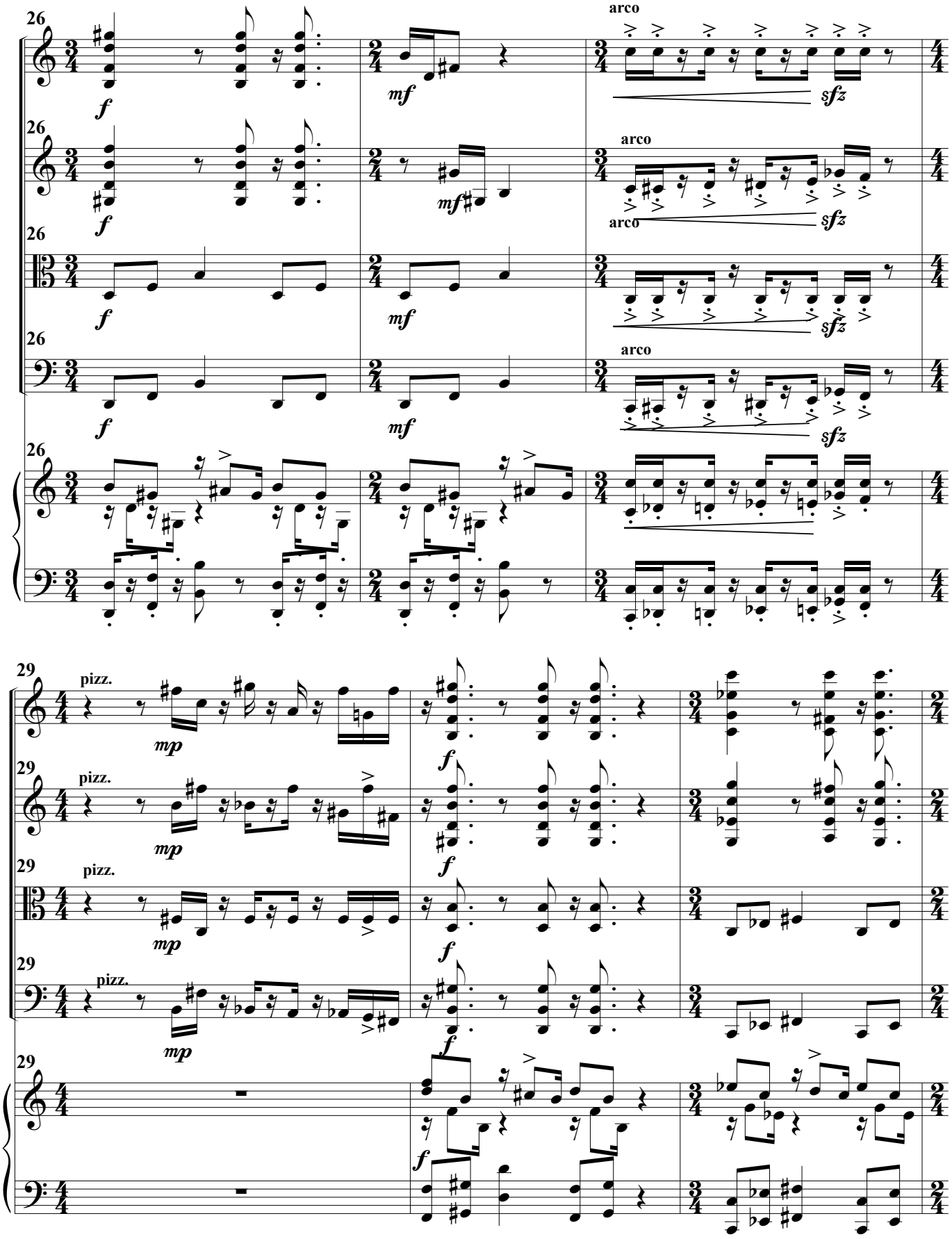
II. Scherzo

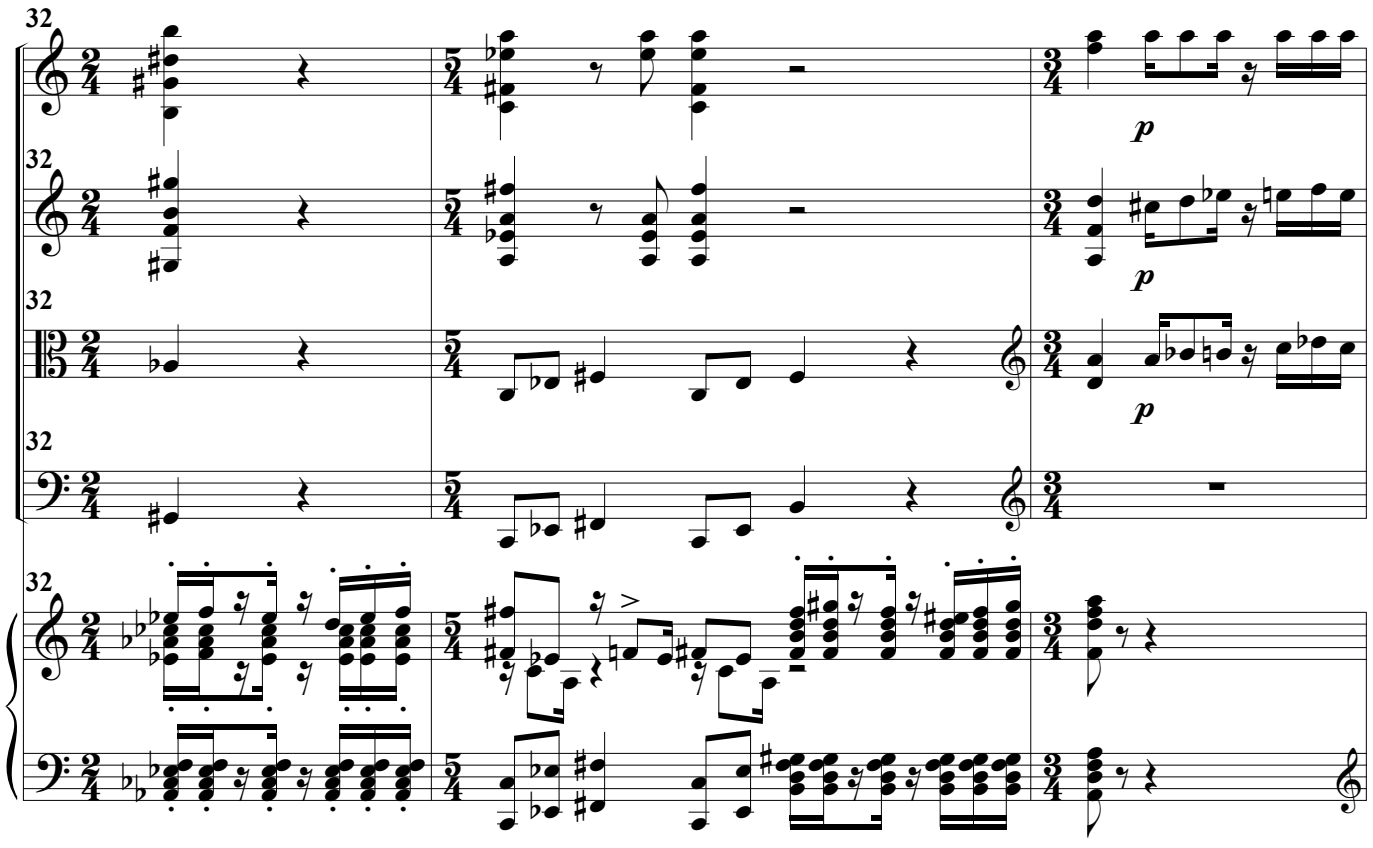
for Blue Engine String Quartet



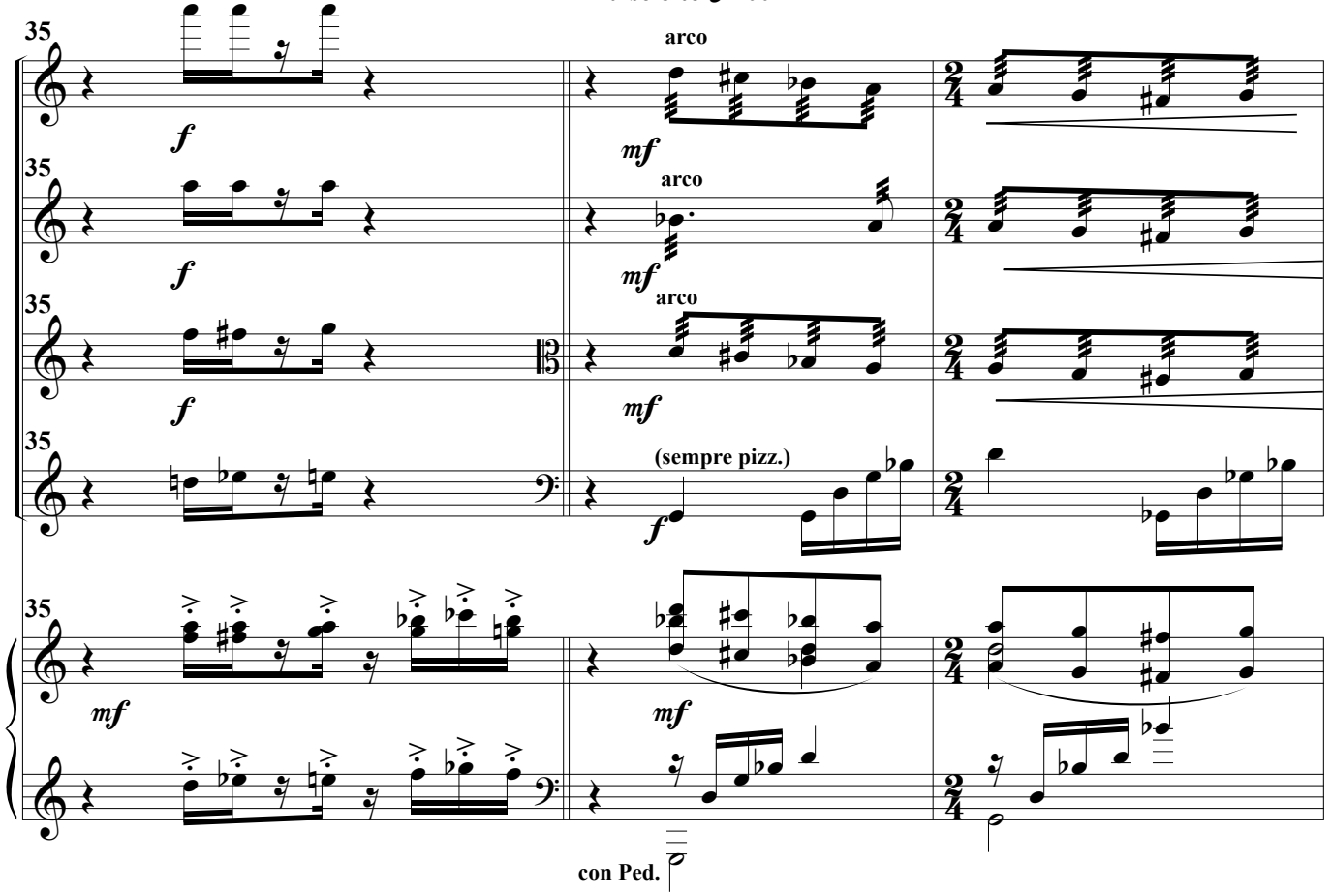

9
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
pizz.
arco
f
13
ff
sfz

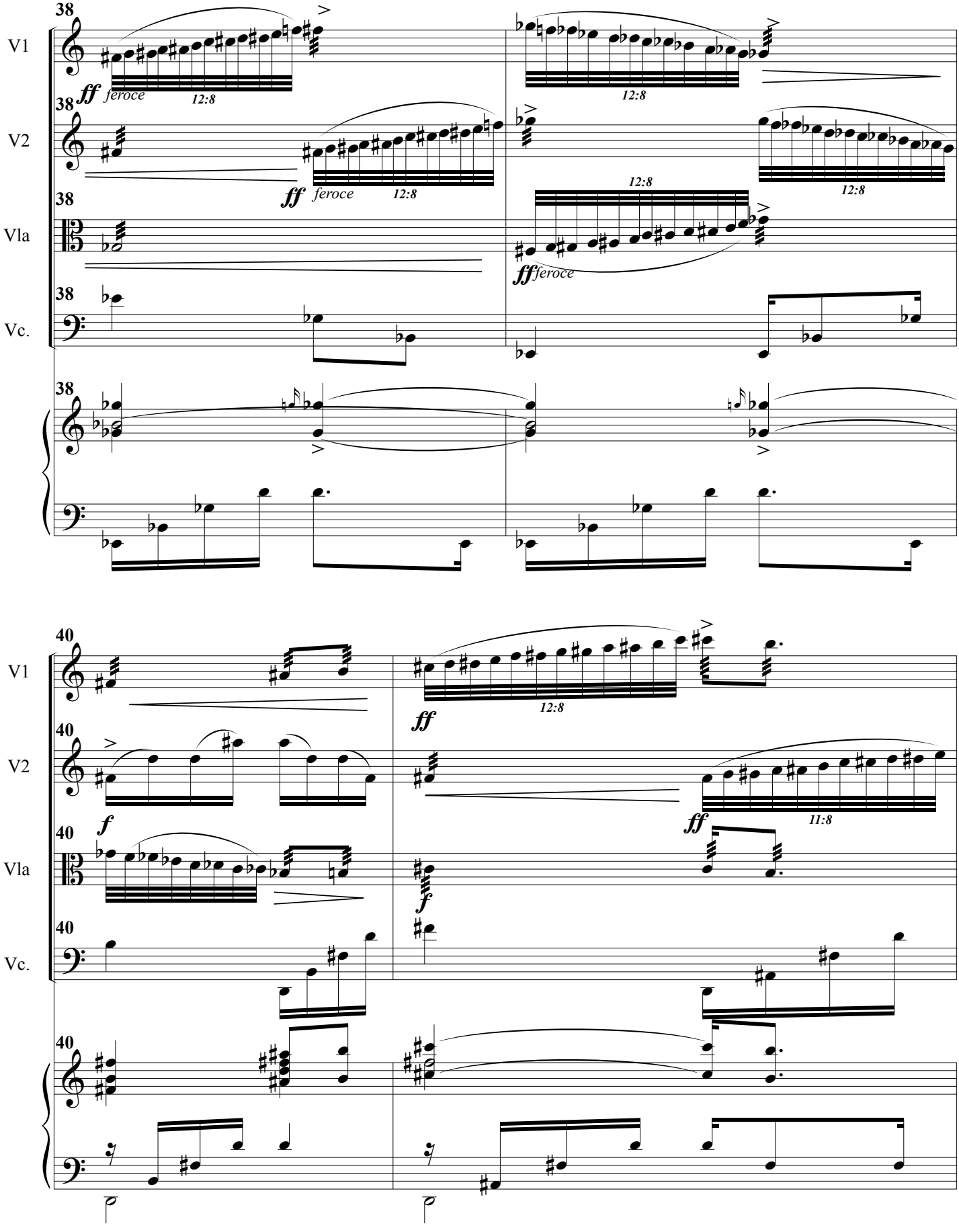

17
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
arco
ff
fp
ff
arco
ff
f
f
f
22
pizz.
sffz
ff
VUOTA
mp
mpp

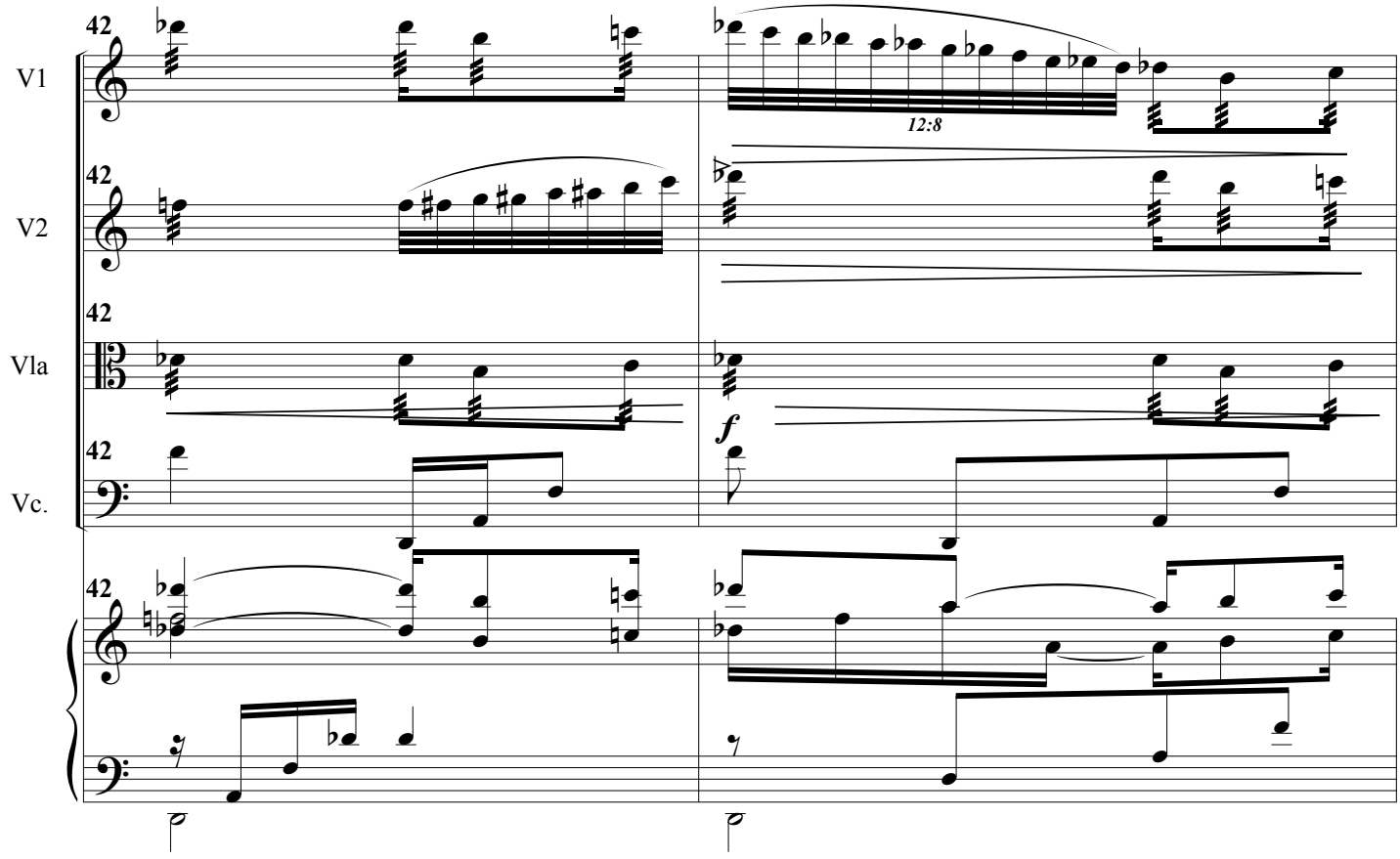

26
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
arco
f
mf
sfz
29
pizz.
mp

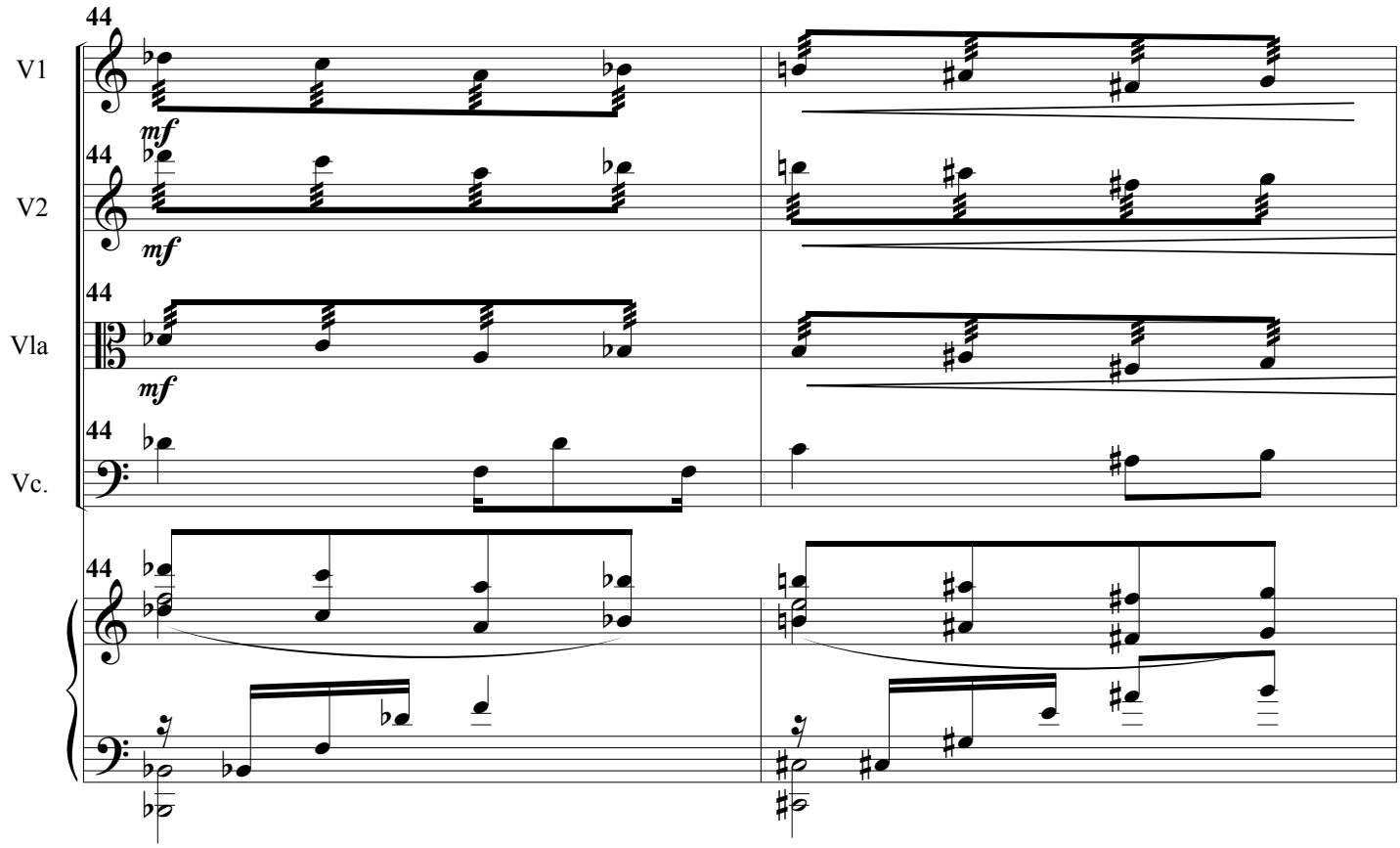


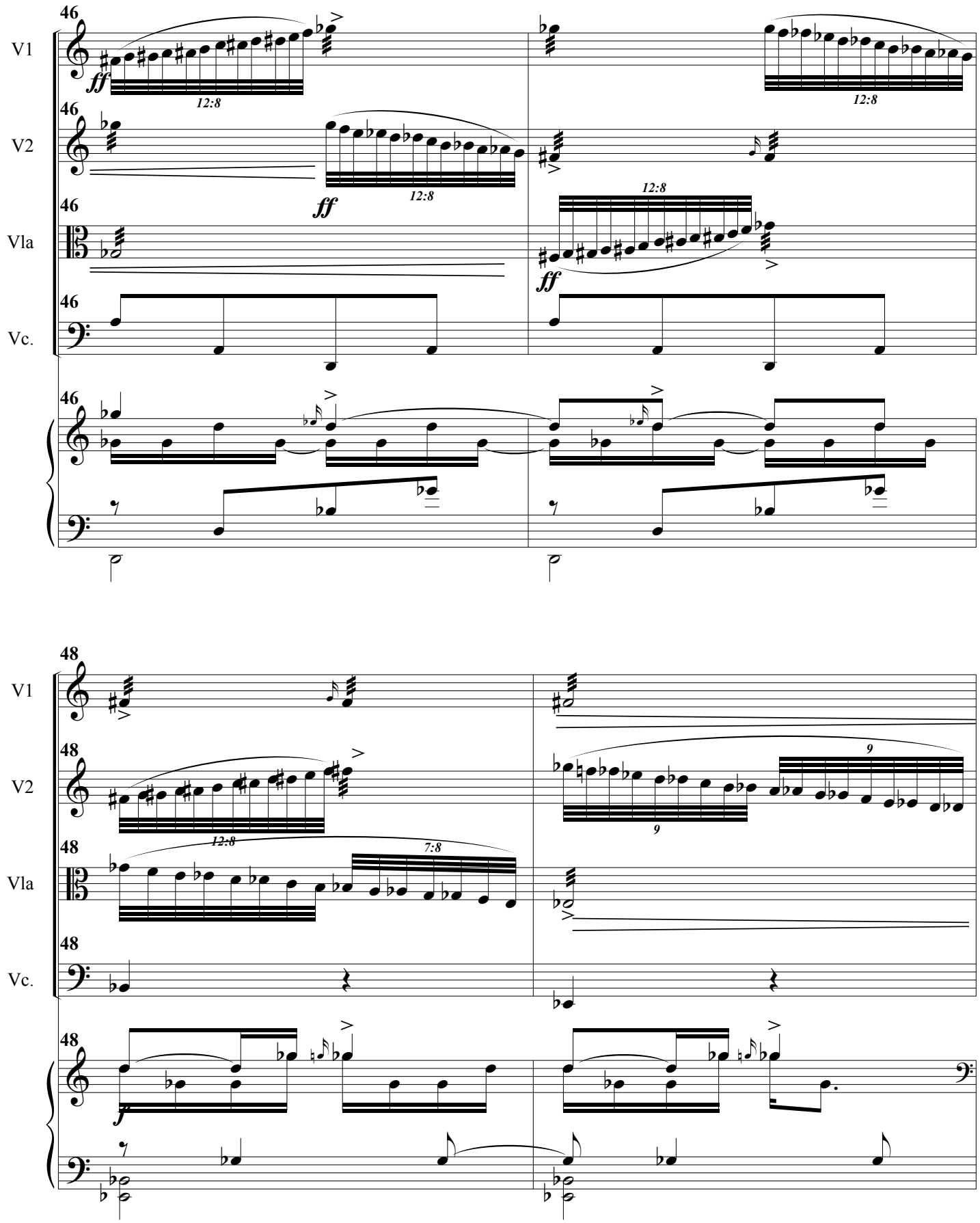
Più sciolto ♩ = 66

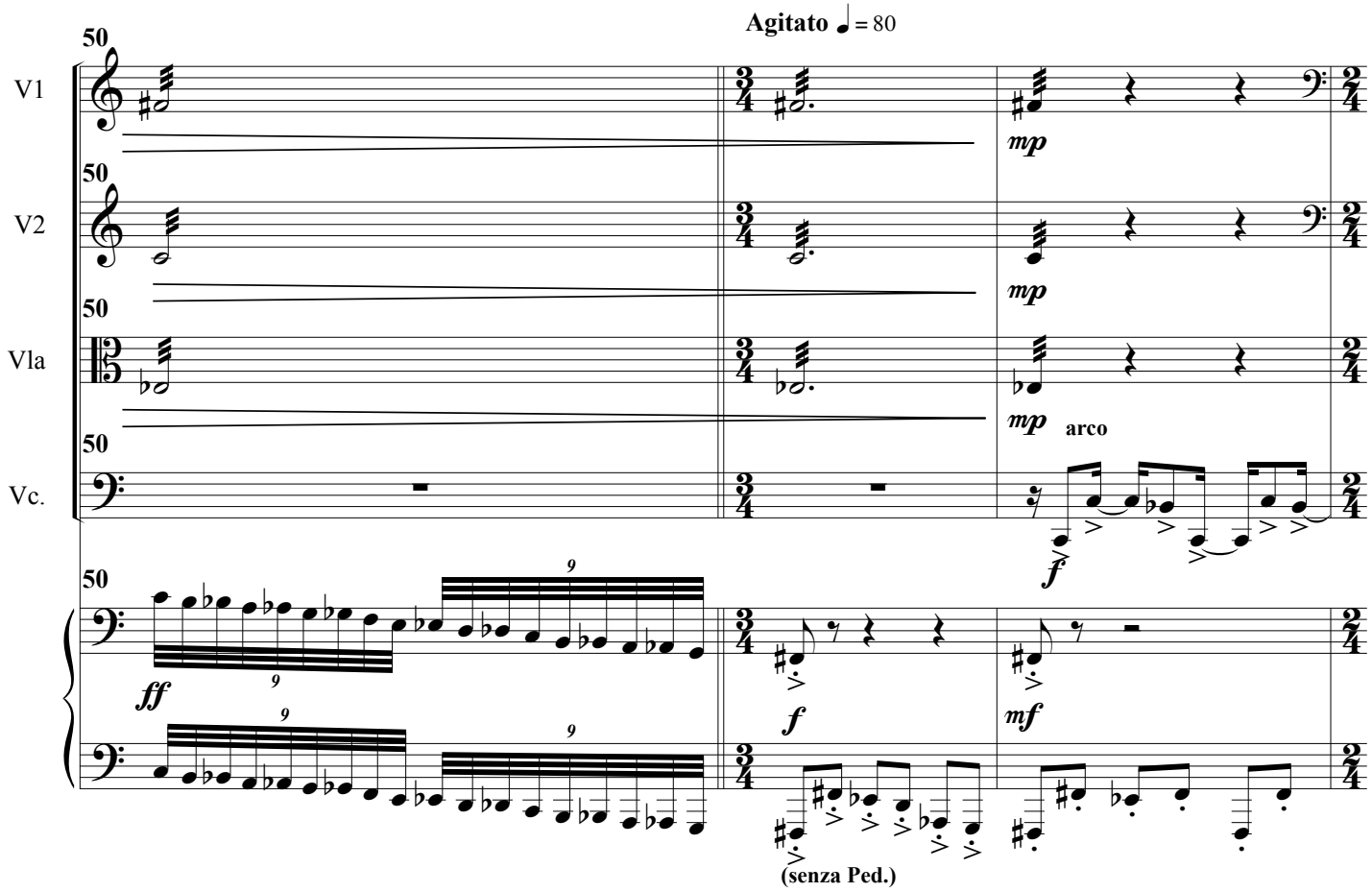


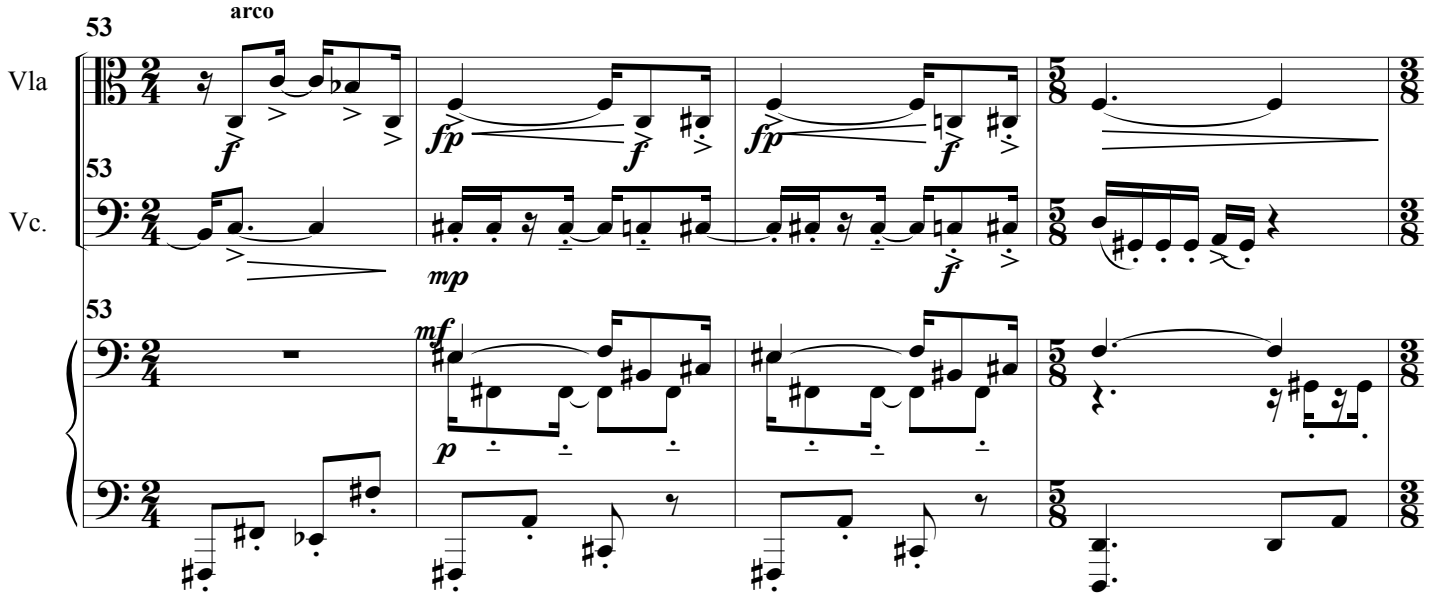

38
V1
ff feroce
12:8
38
V2
ff feroce
12:8
12:8
12:8
38
Vla
ff feroce
38
Vc.
38
40
V1
ff
12:8
40
V2
f
ff
11:8
40
Vla
f
40
Vc.
40

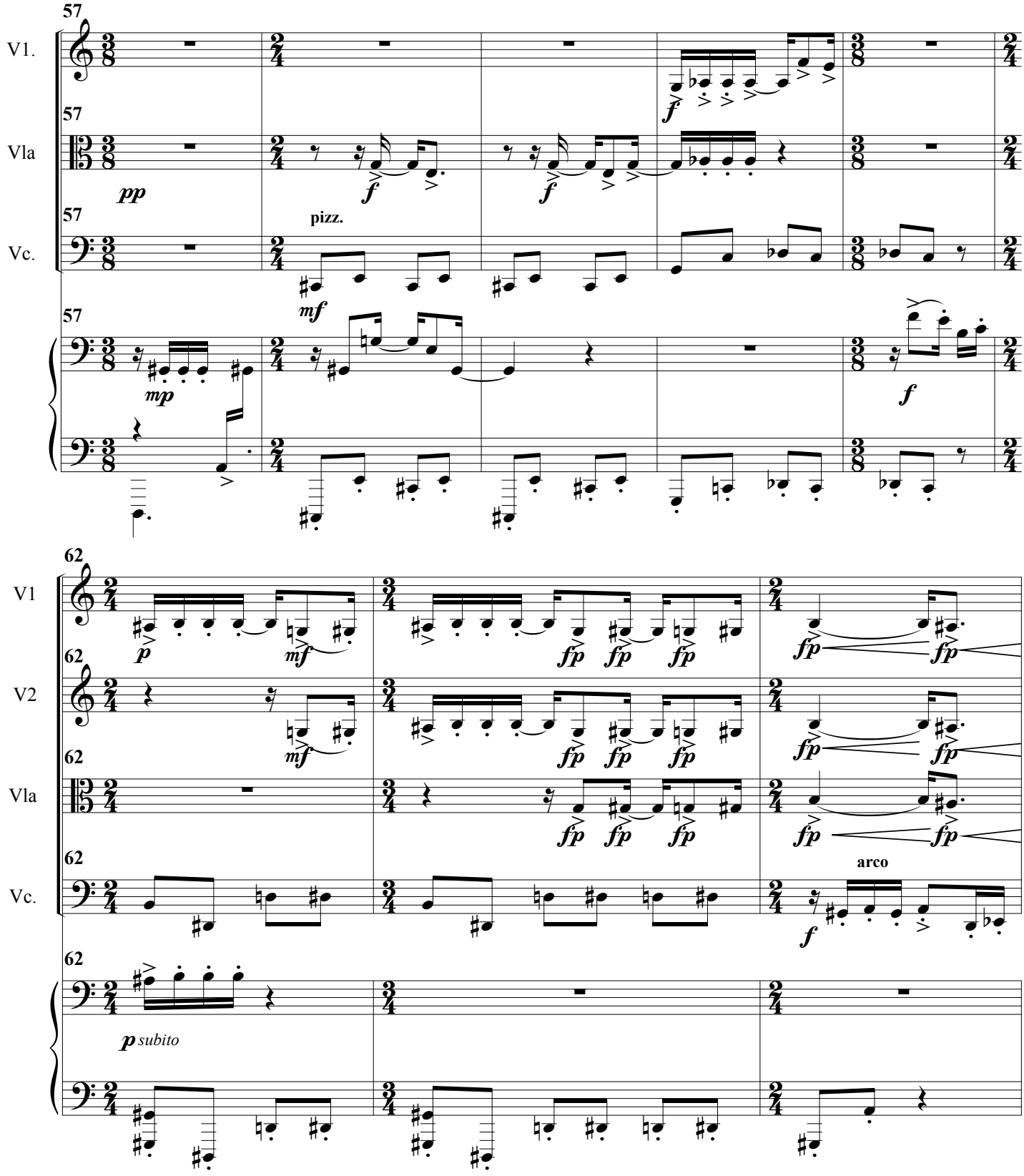

42
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
12:8
f

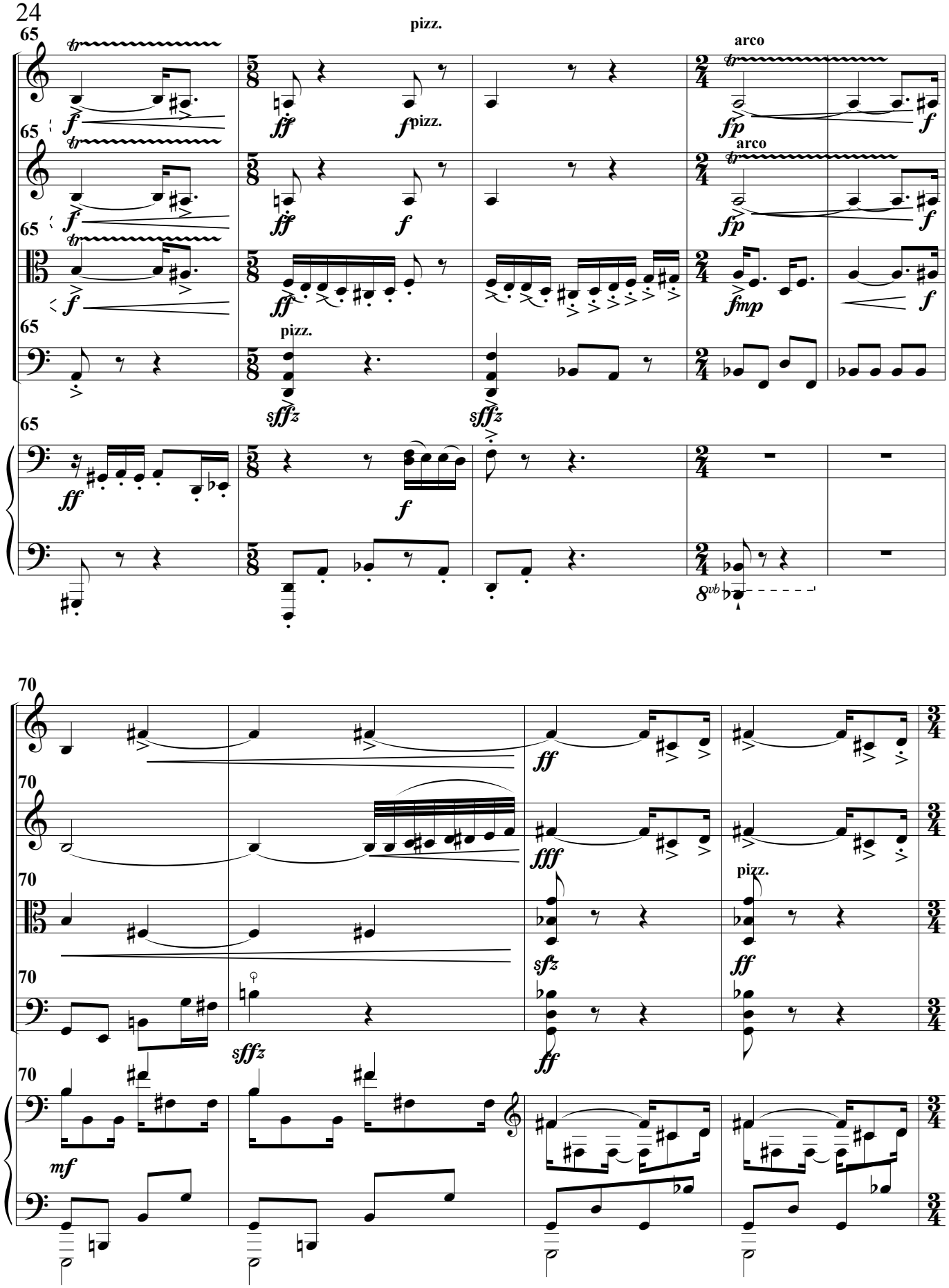

44
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
mf

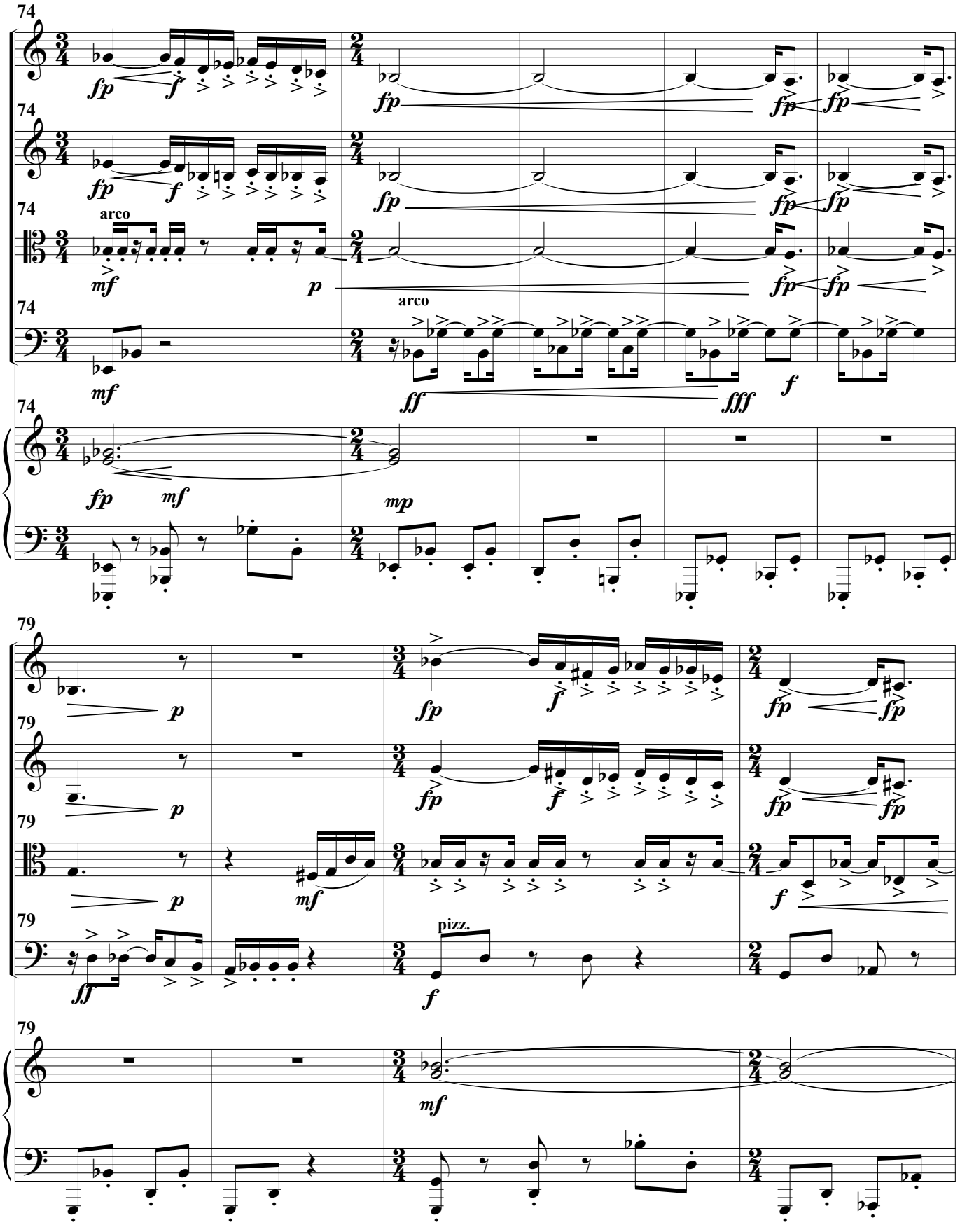

46
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
ff
12:8
48
7:8
9

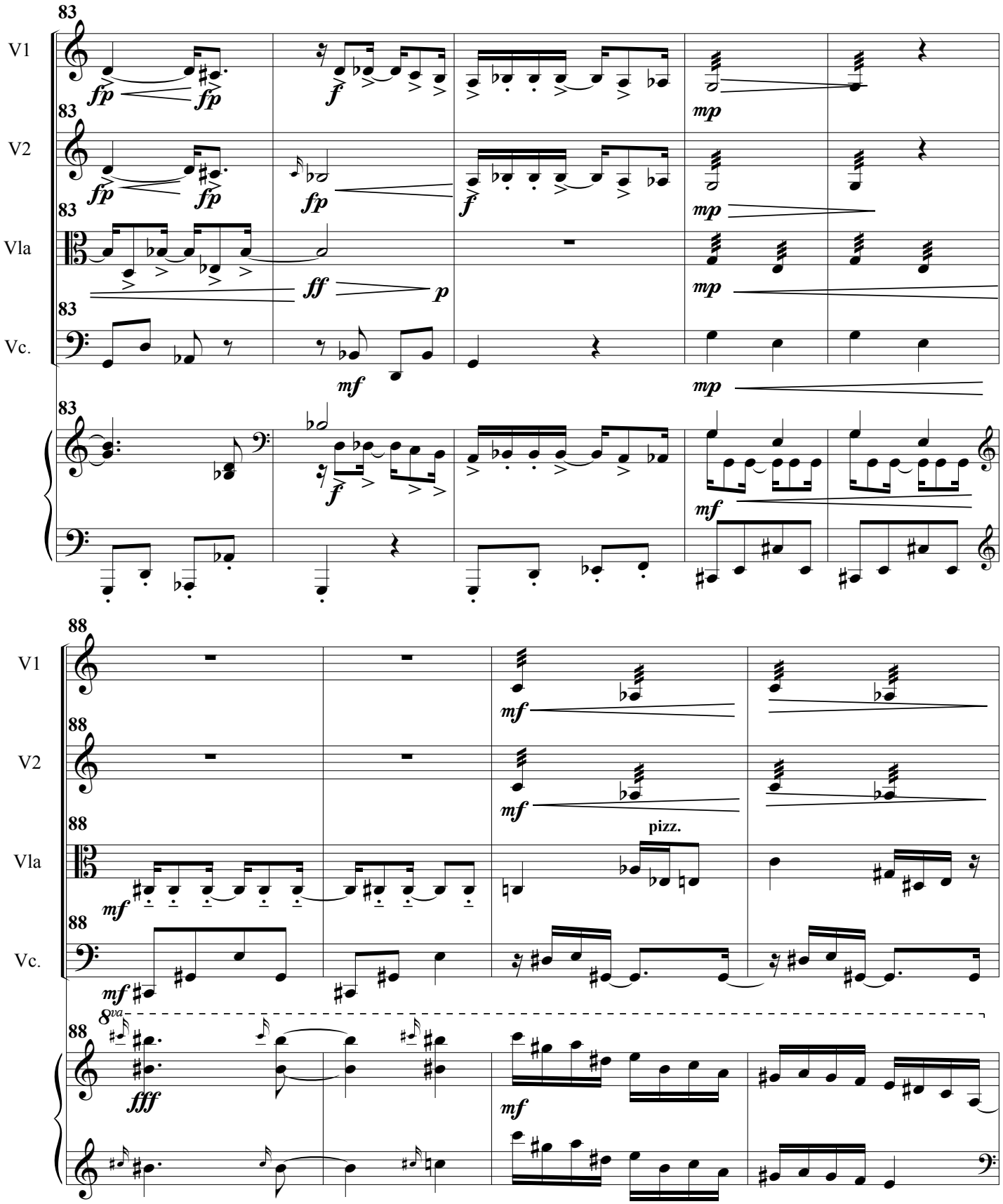

Agitato ♩= 80
50
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
mp
arco
f
ff
mf
(senza Ped.)

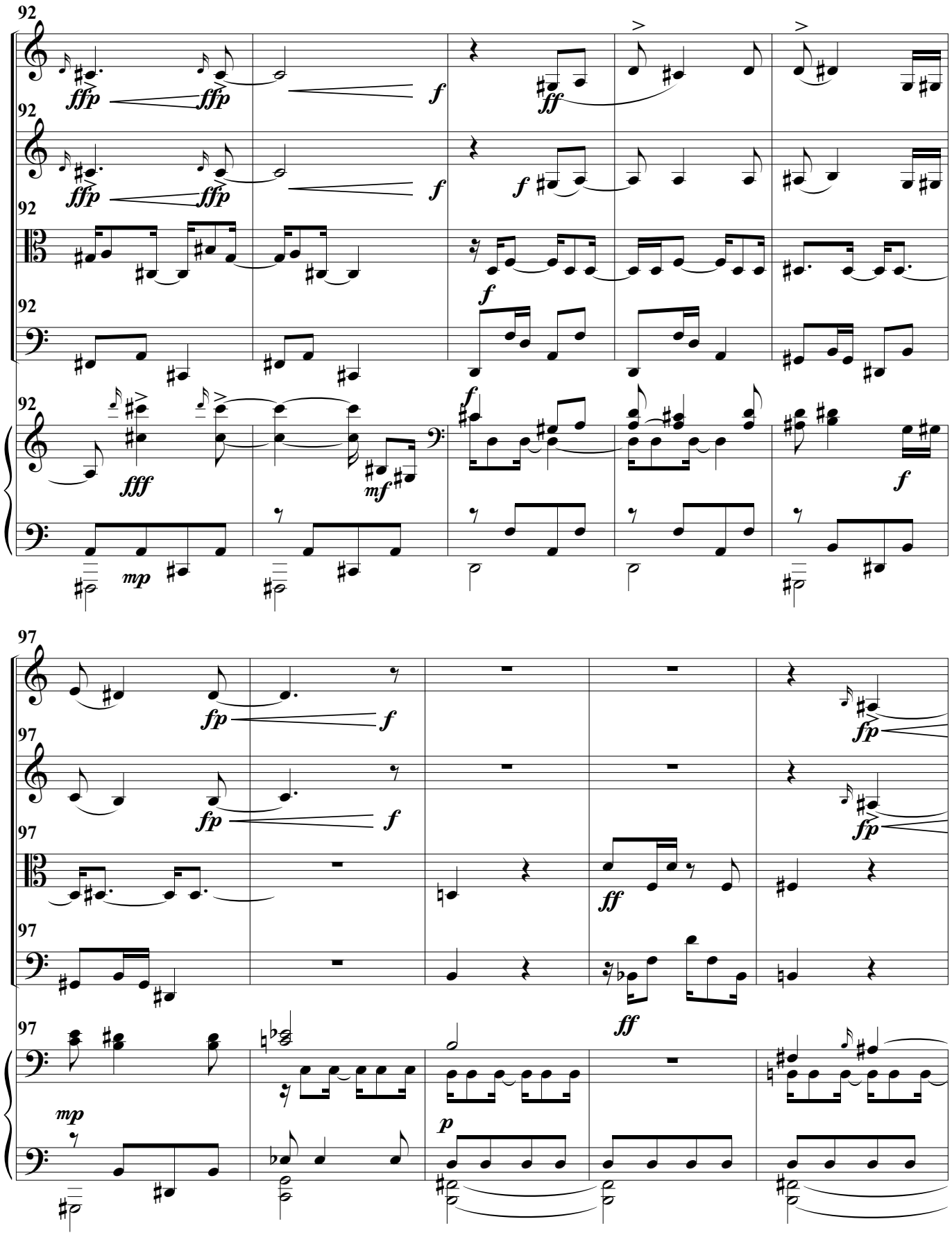

53
arco
Vla
Vc.
f
fp
mp
mf
p

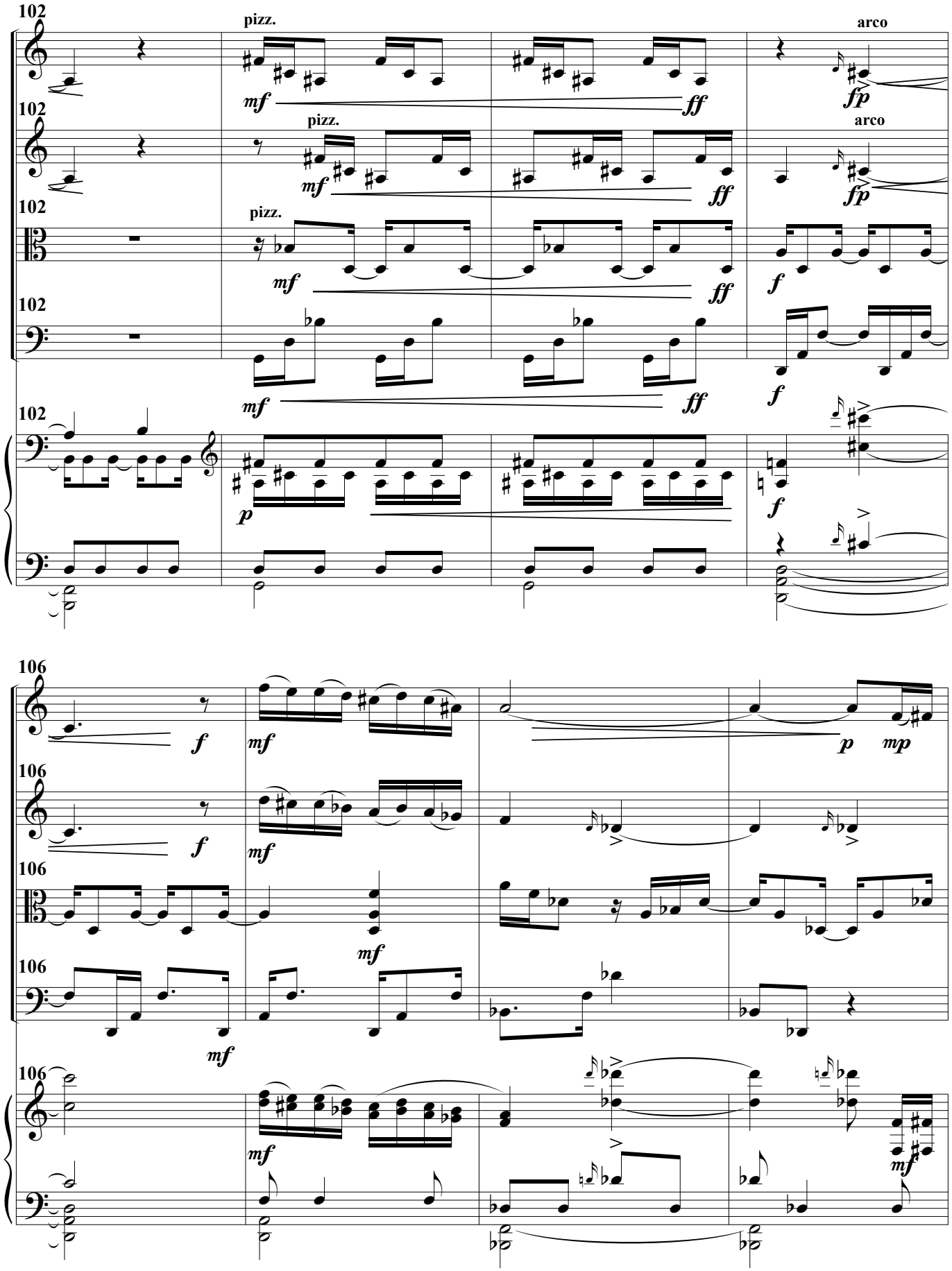

57
V1.
Vla
Vc.
pp
f
pizz.
mf
mp
62
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
p
mf
fp
arco
p subito

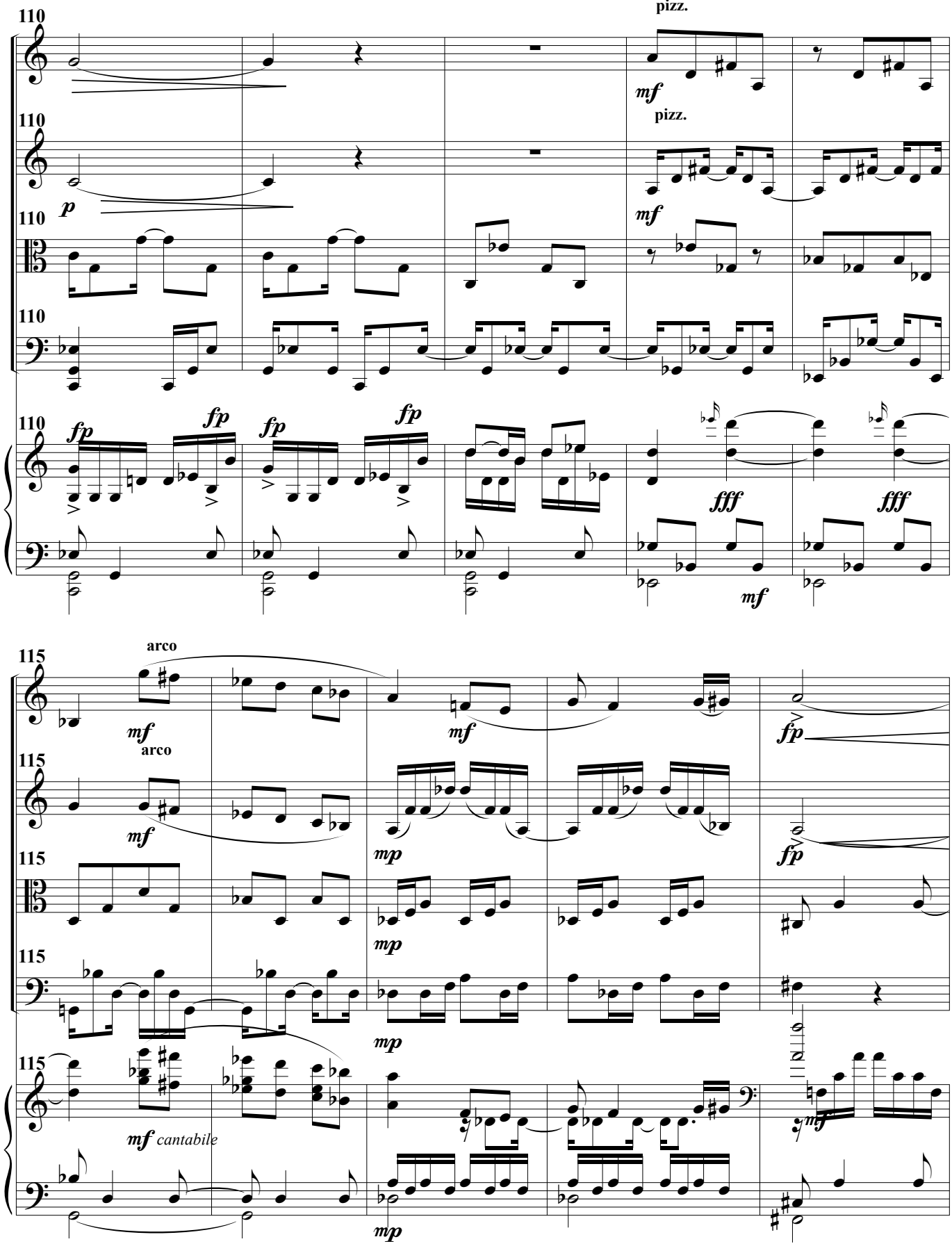

65
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
pizz.
arco
70
mf
sfz
fff
ff
fp
fmp
sffz
8vb

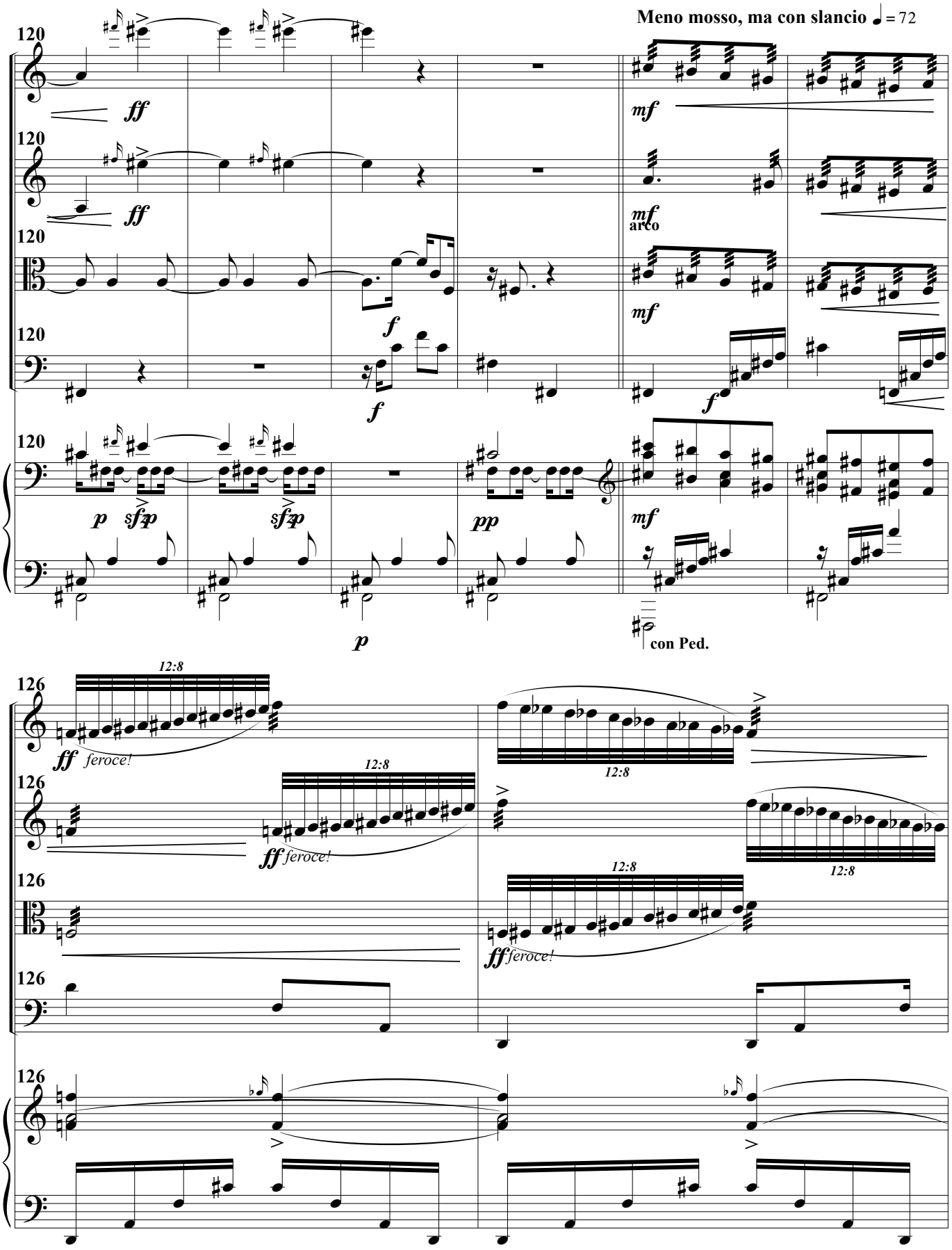

74
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
arco
79
pizz.

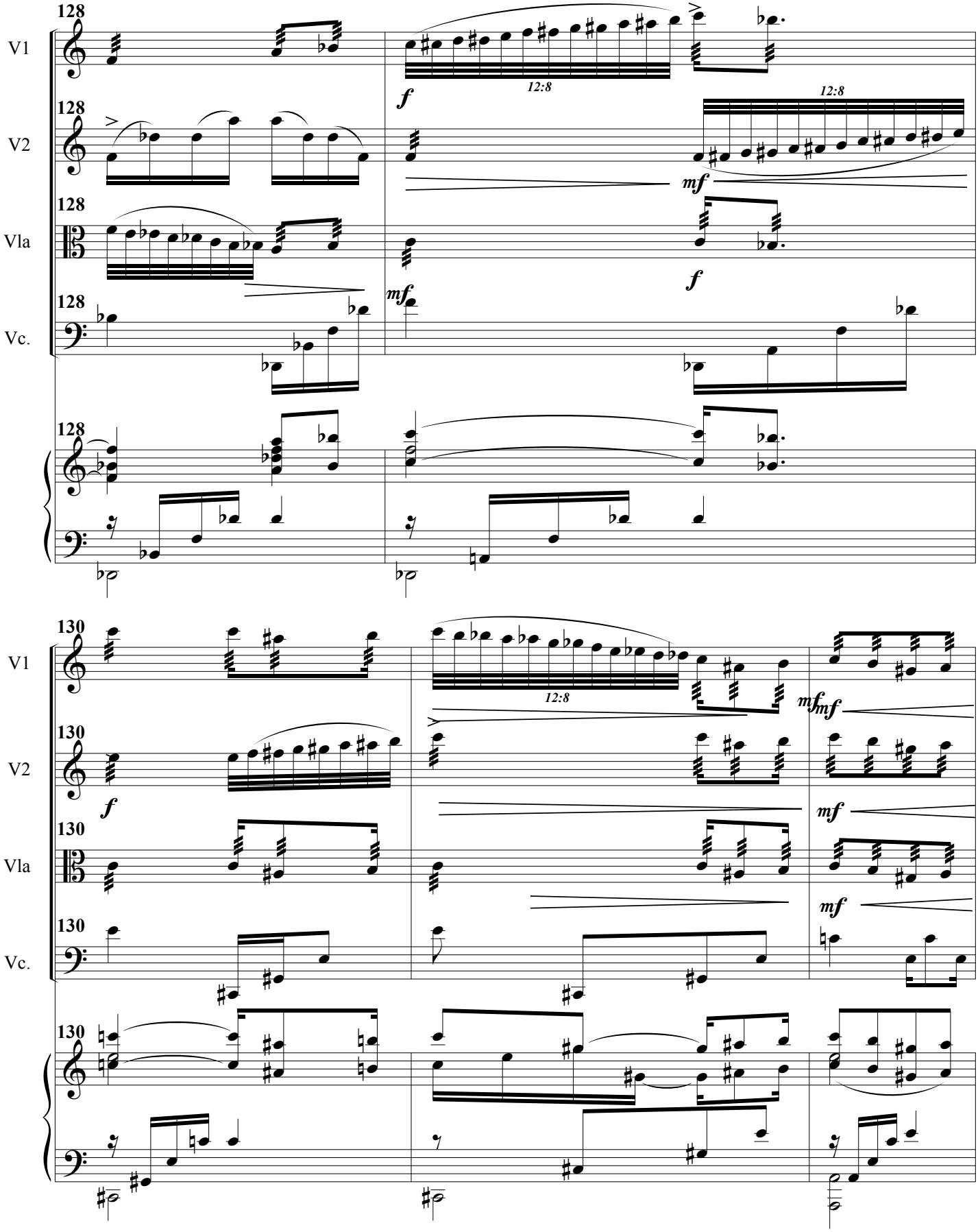

83
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
fp
fp
f
mp
ff
p
mf
88
pizz.
8va
fff

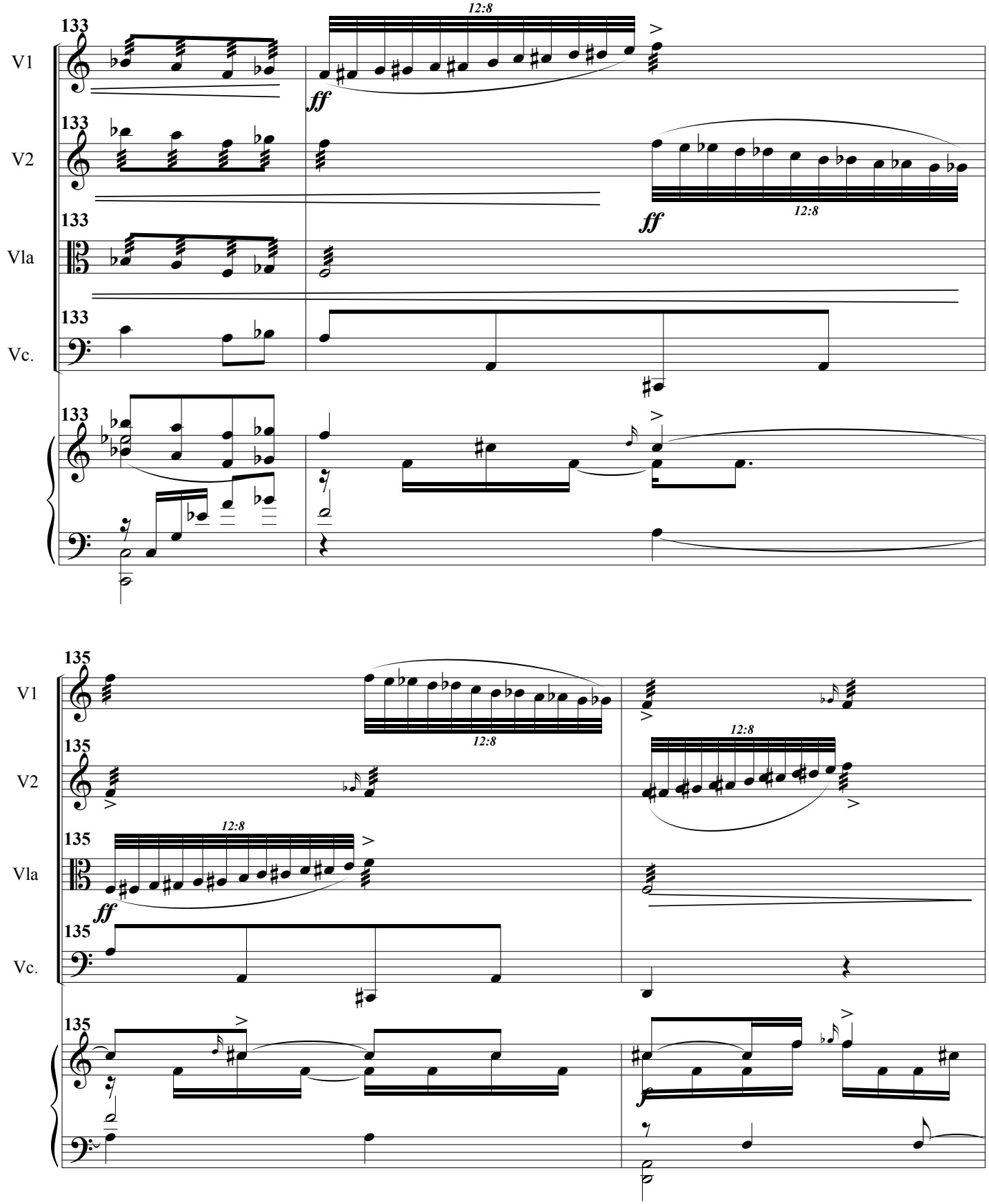

92
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
ffp
ffp
f
ff
fff
mf
mp
97
fp
p

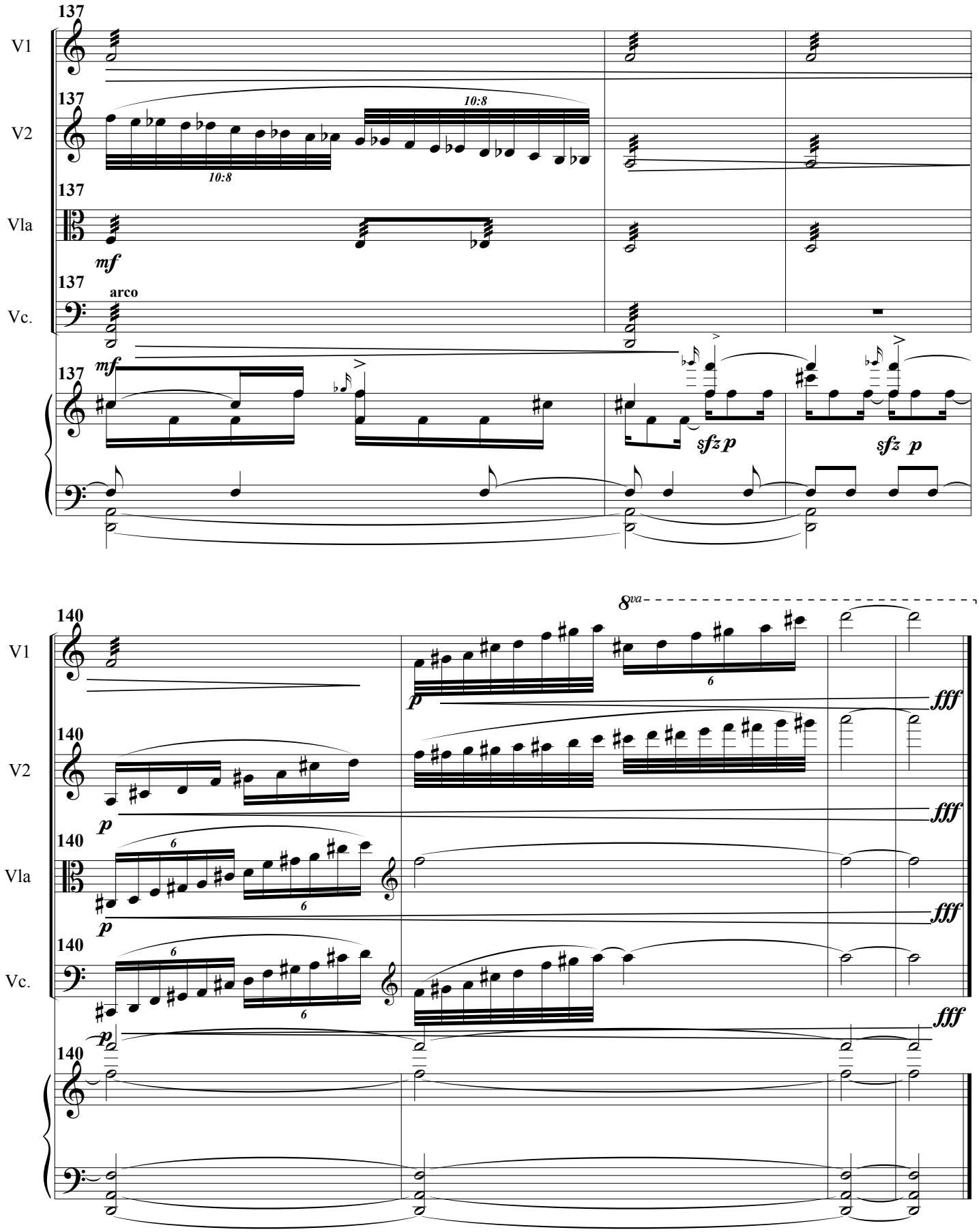

102
V1
pizz.
arco
mf
ff
fp
102
V2
pizz.
arco
mf
ff
fp
102
Vla
pizz.
mf
ff
f
102
Vc.
mf
ff
f
102
p
f
106
V1
f
mf
p
mp
106
V2
f
mf
106
Vla
mf
106
Vc.
mf
106
mf
mf


110
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
pizz.
mf
p
fp
fff
115
arco
cantabile
mp


Meno mosso, ma con slancio ♩ = 72
120
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
ff
mf
arco
f
p
sfz
pp
con Ped.
126
12:8
feroce!

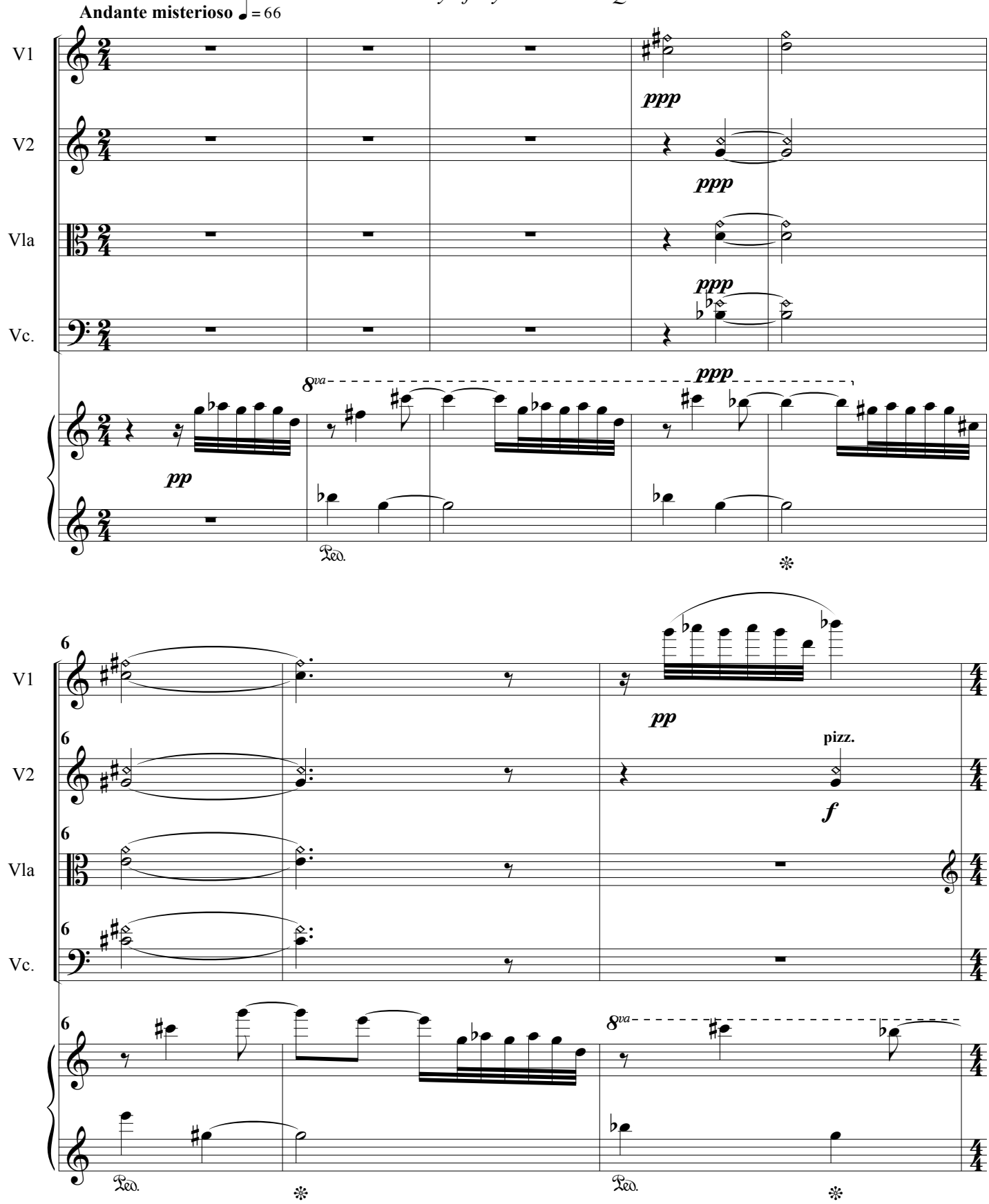

128
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
f
12:8
mf
130
mf

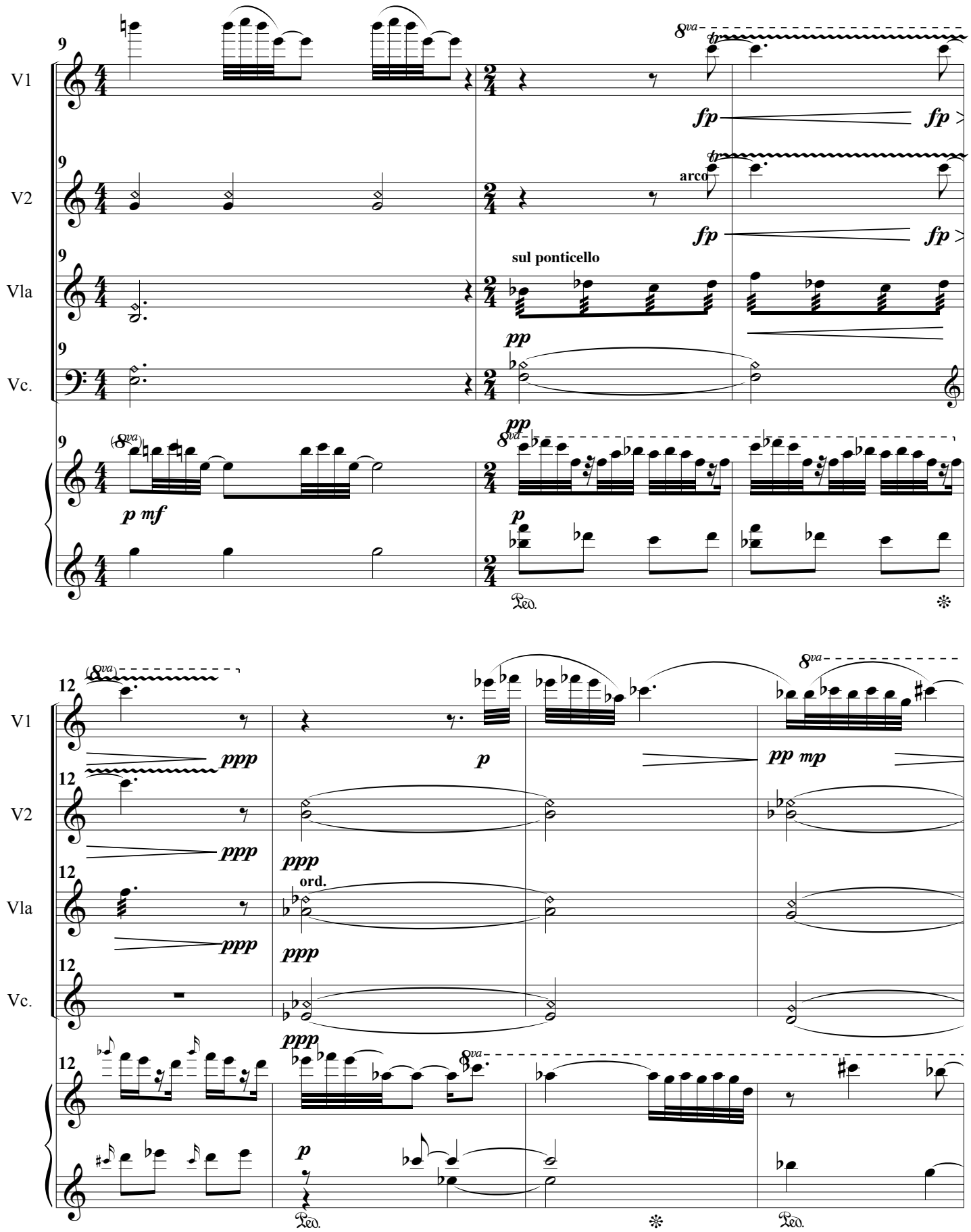

133
V1
12:8
ff
133
V2
ff
12:8
133
Vla
133
Vc.
133
135
V1
12:8
135
V2
12:8
12:8
135
Vla
ff
135
Vc.
135

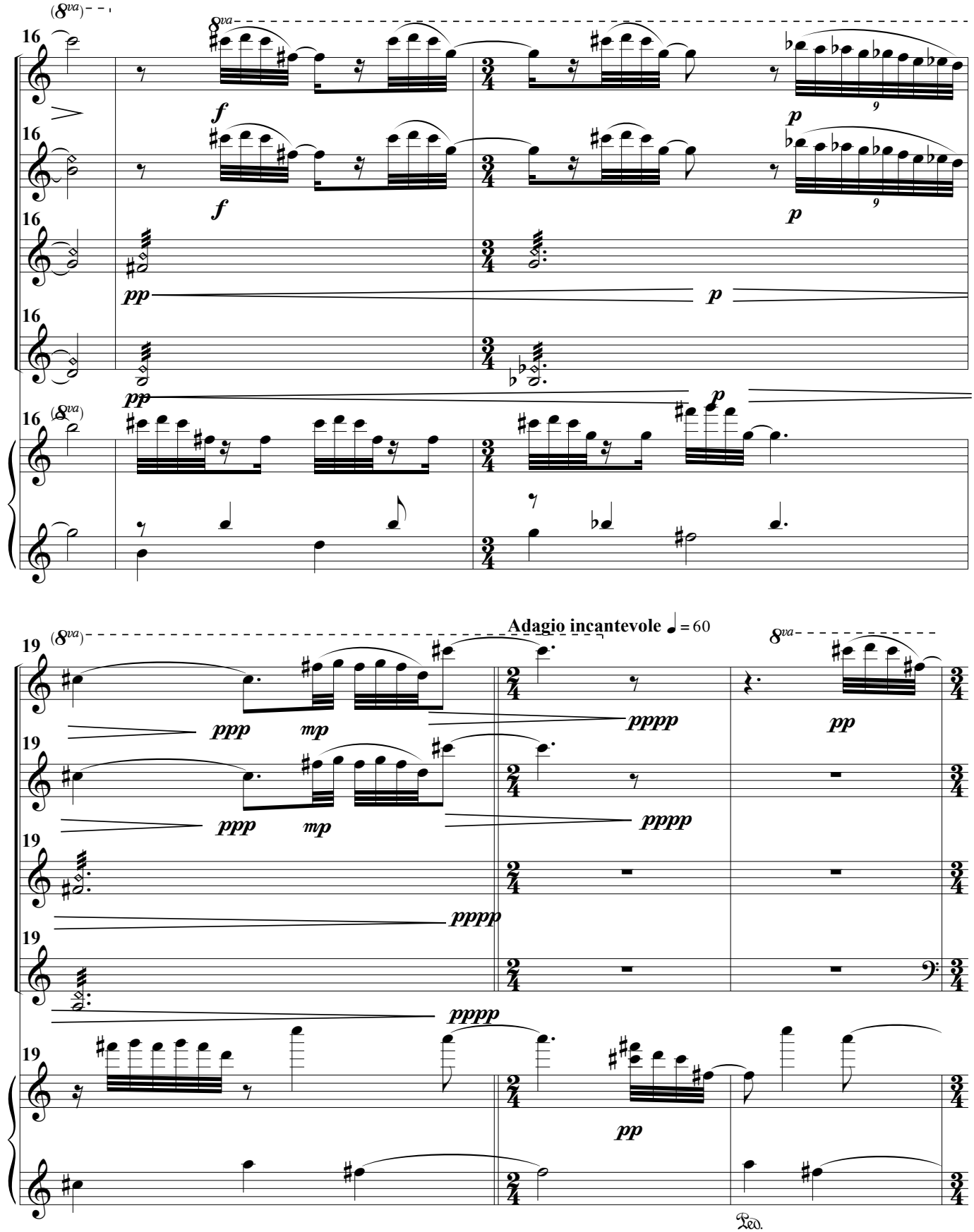

137
V1
137
V2
10:8
10:8
137
Vla
mf
137
arco
Vc.
137
mf
sfz p
sfz p
140
8va
V1
p
fff
140
V2
p
fff
140
Vla
6
6
p
fff
140
Vc.
6
6
p
fff
140

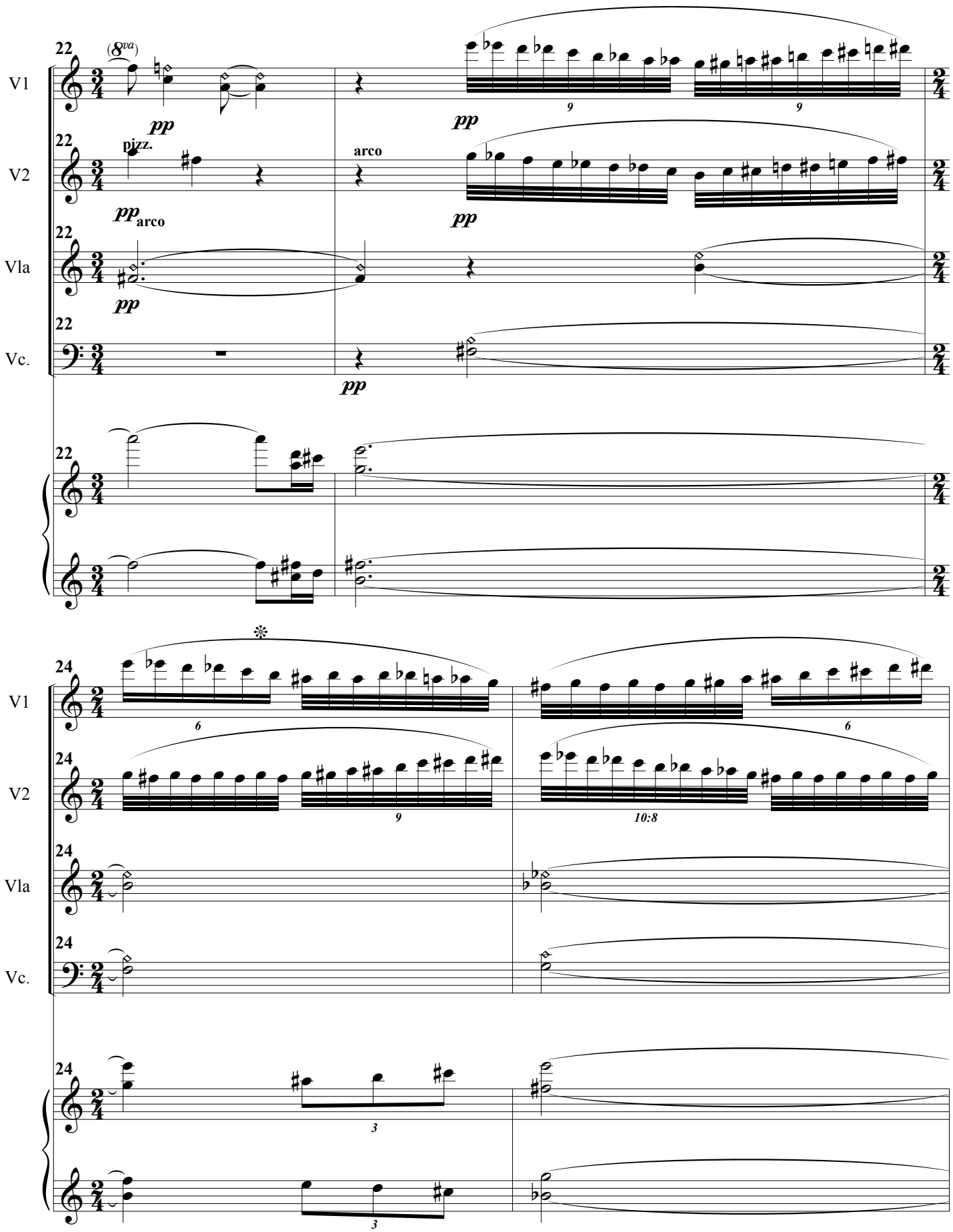
III. Birds at twilight

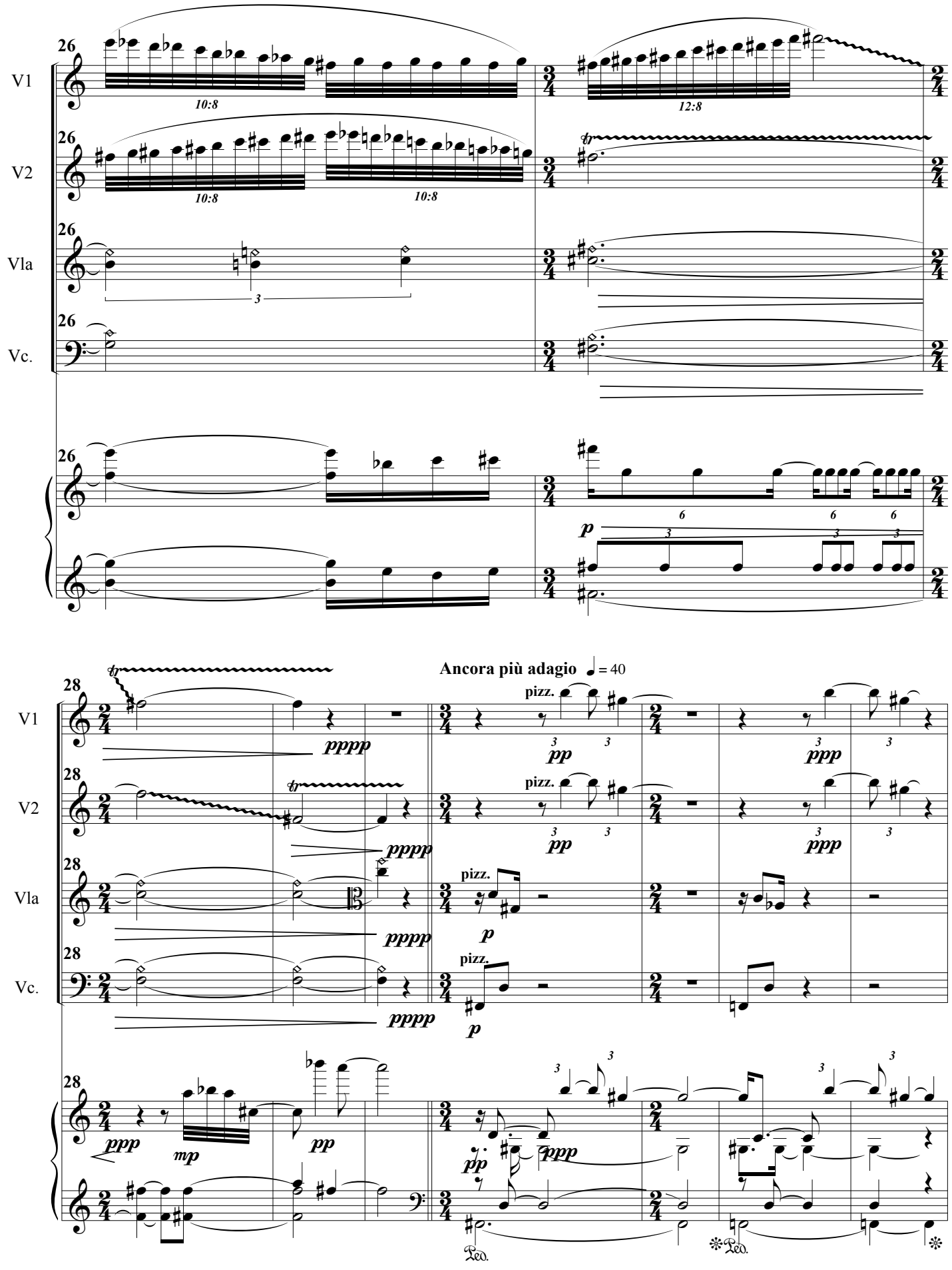
in memory of my aunt Helen Quilliam

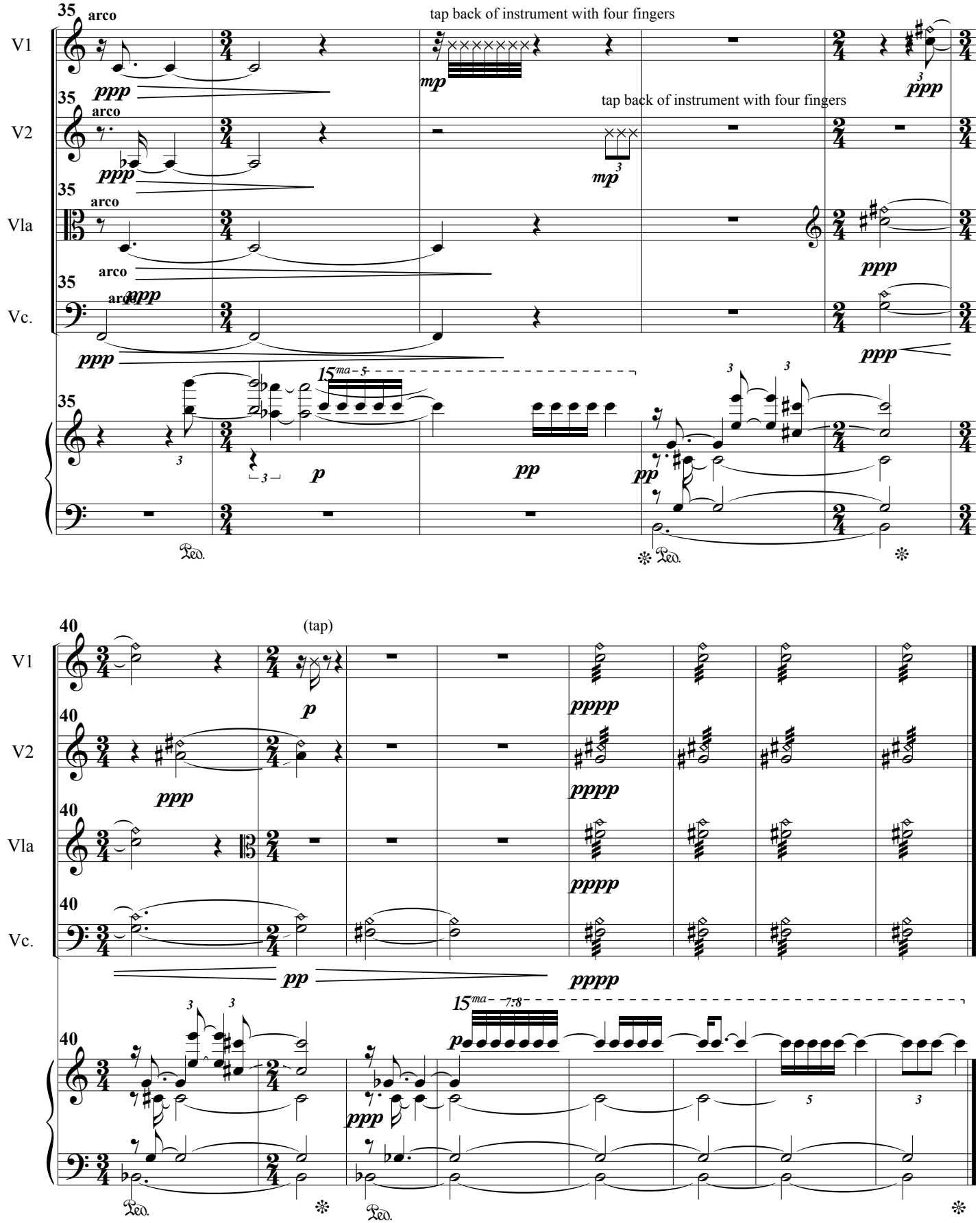



9
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
8va
tr
fp
arco
sul ponticello
pp
p mf
p
Ped.
12
ppp
ord.
pp mp


V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
16
8va
f
p
pp
19
Adagio incantevole ♩ = 60
ppp
mp
pppp
Ped.

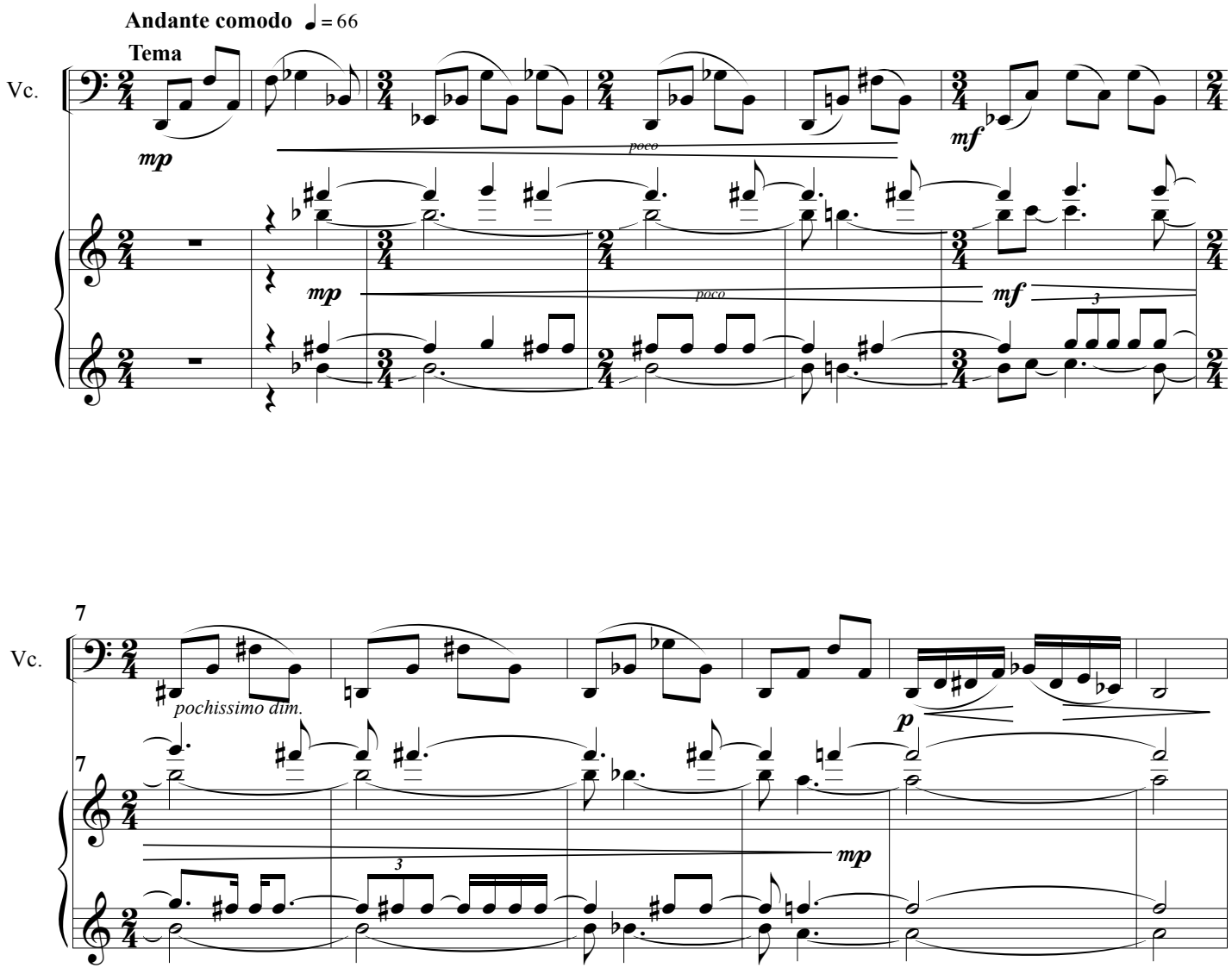

22
(8va)
V1
pp
pp
9
9
22
pizz.
arco
V2
pp arco
pp
22
Vla
pp
22
Vc.
pp
22
24
V1
6
6
24
V2
9
10:8
24
Vla
24
Vc.
24
3
3

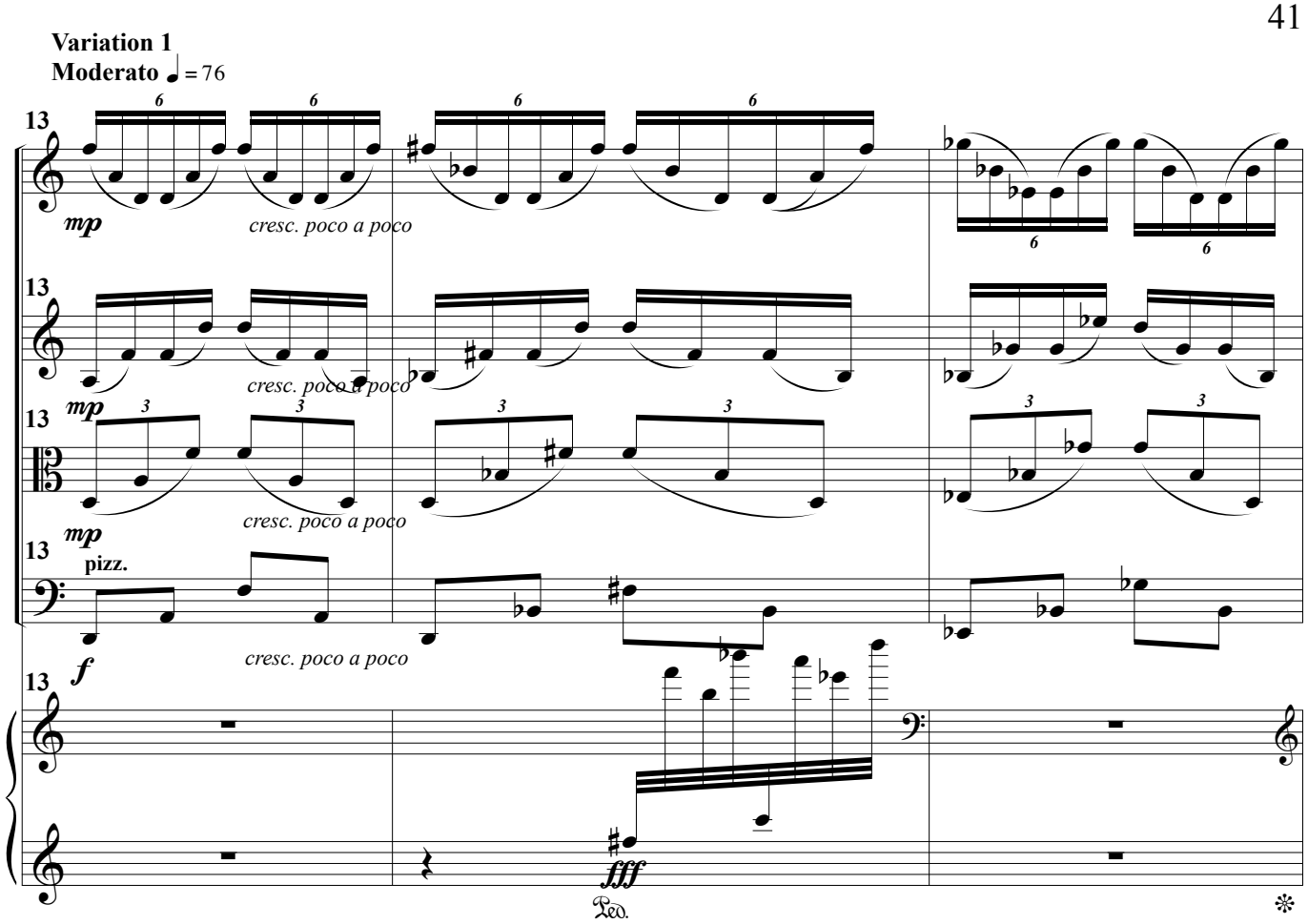

26
V1
10:8
12:8
V2
10:8
10:8
Vla
3
Vc.
6
6
6
p
3
3
3
Ancora più adagio ♩ = 40
28
pizz.
pppp
pp
ppp
p
ppp
mp
Ped.
Ped.

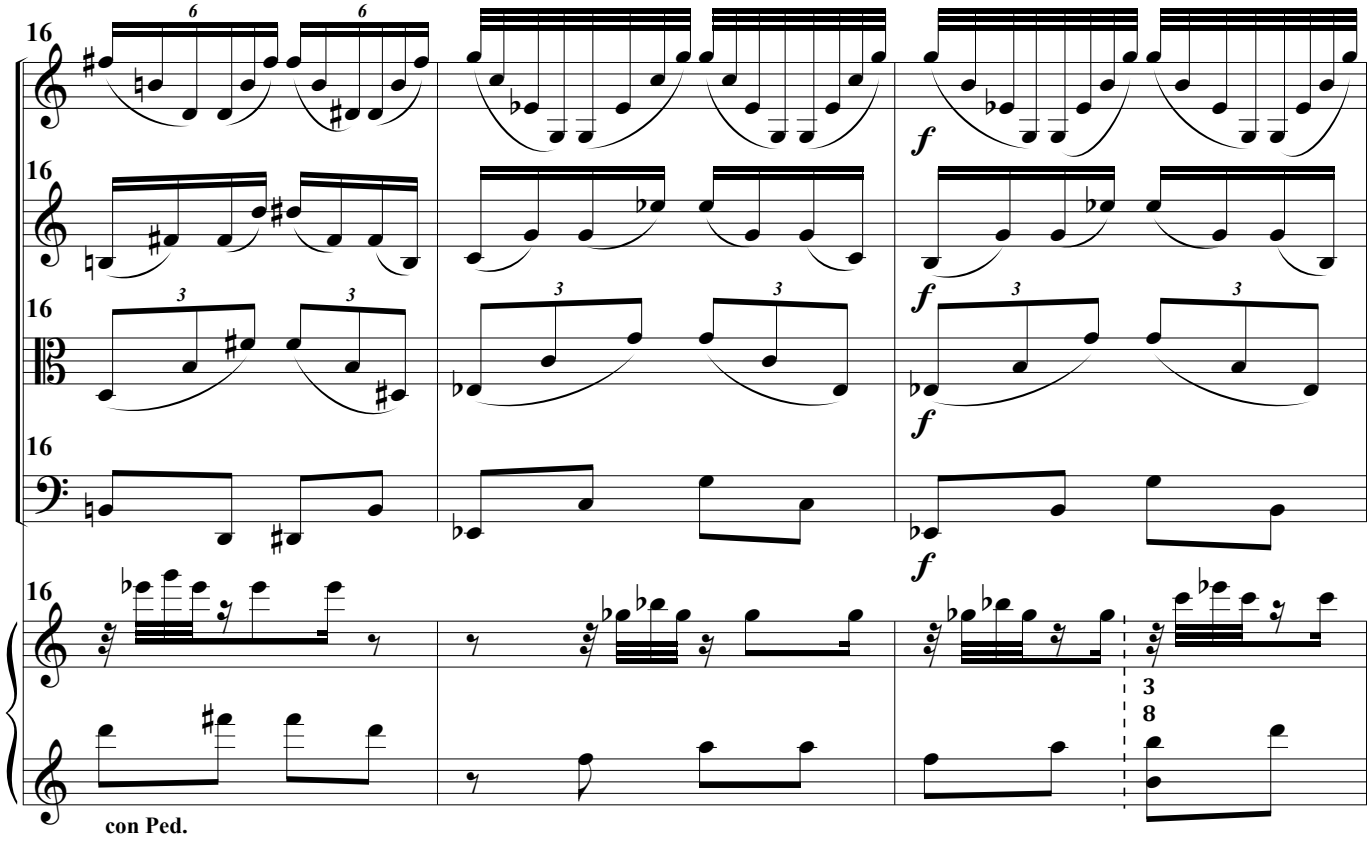

35
arco
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
tap back of instrument with four fingers
tap back of instrument with four fingers
ppp
mp
mp
ppp
ppp
ppp
ppp
ppp
15ma - 5
p
pp
pp
Ped.
Ped.
40
(tap)
p
pppp
pppp
pppp
pp
pppp
15ma - 7:8
p
ppp
Ped.
Ped.

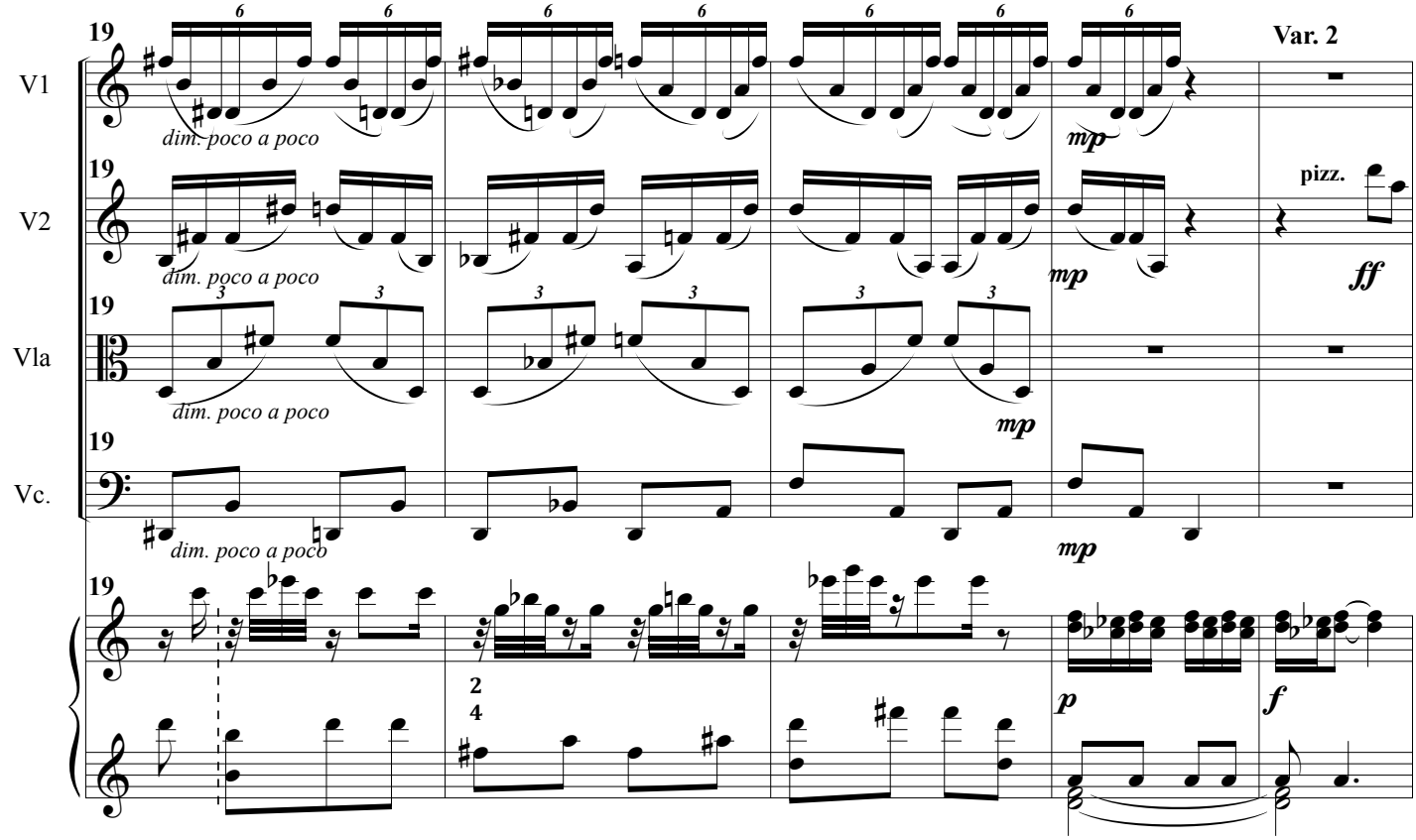
IV. Passacaglia

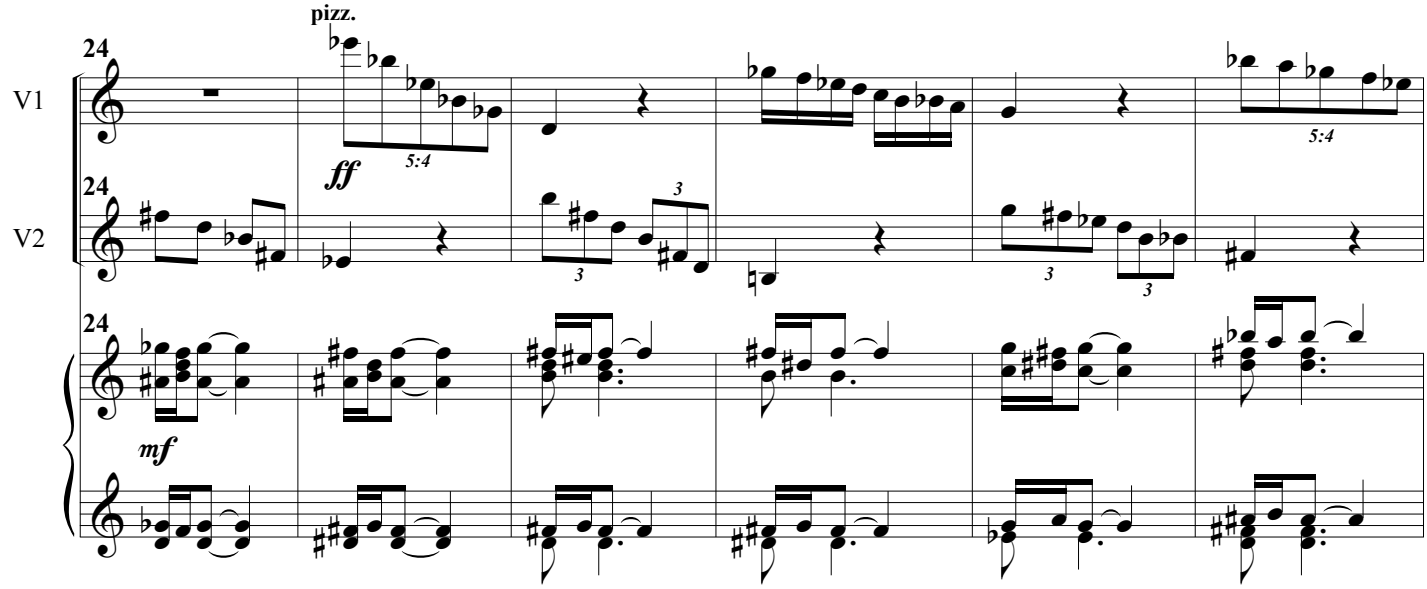
pour Jocelyne

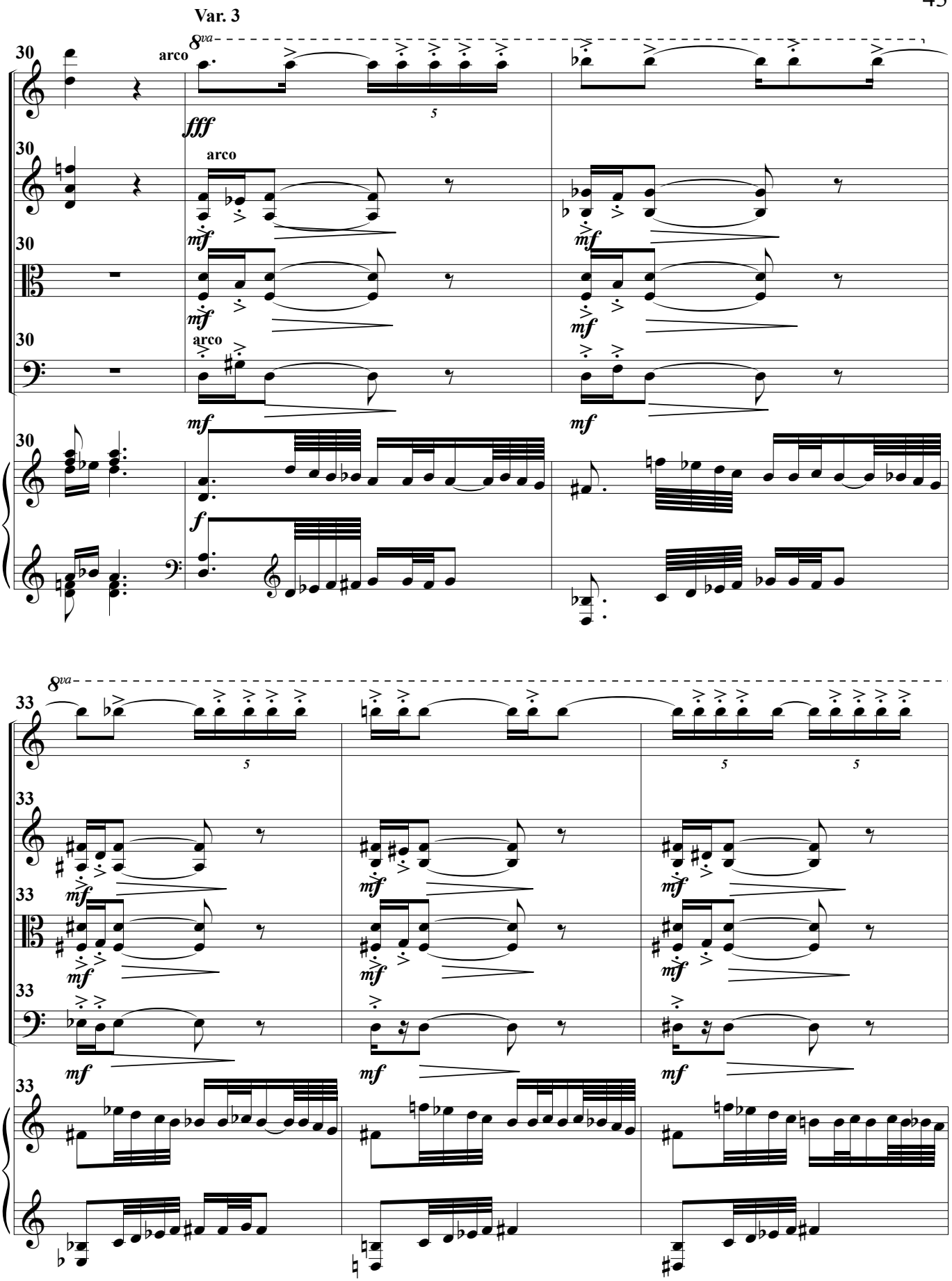


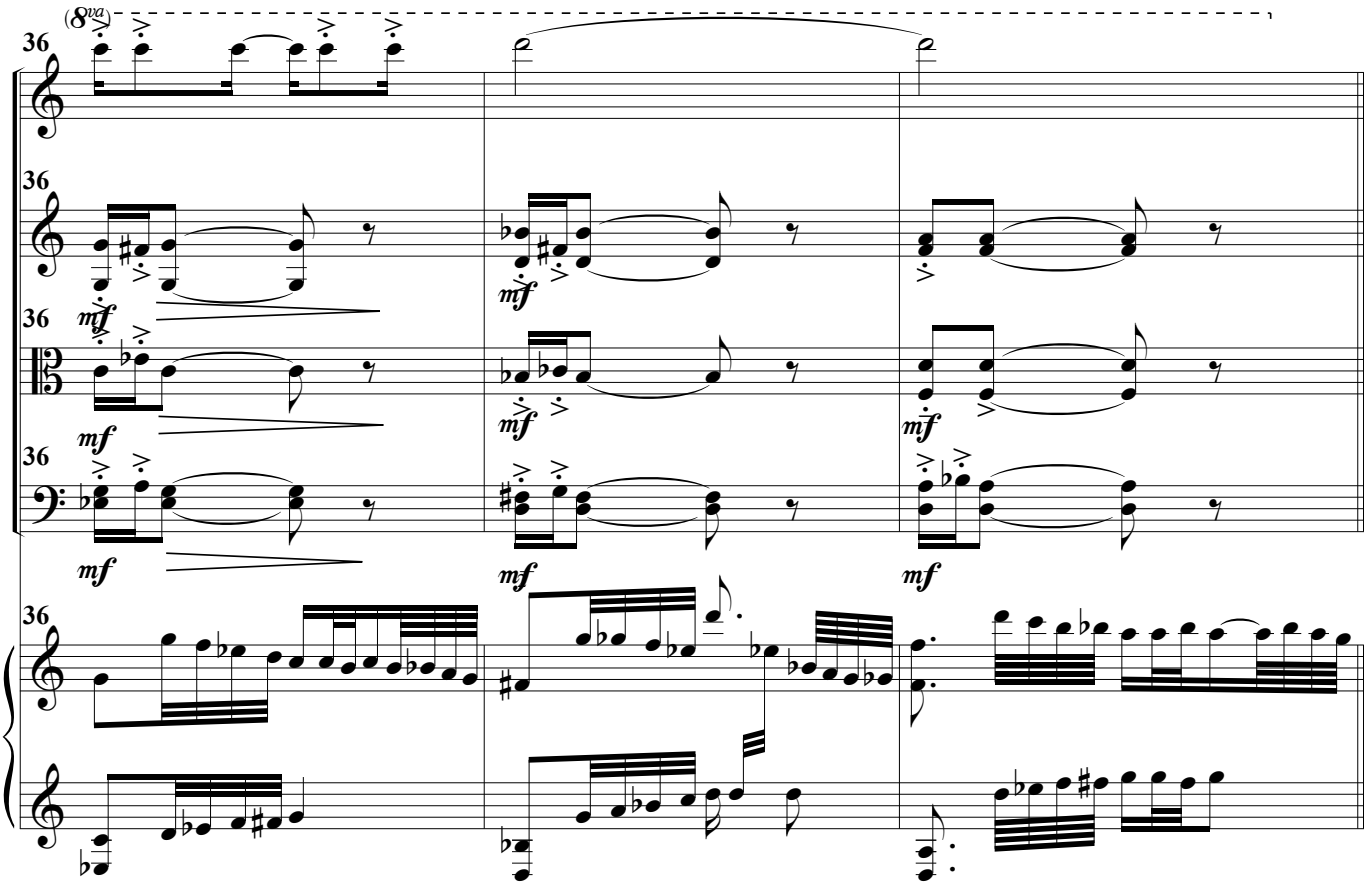

Variation 1
Moderato ♩ = 76
13
V1
mp
cresc. poco a poco
13
V2
cresc. poco a poco
13
Vla
mp
cresc. poco a poco
13
Vc.
mp
pizz.
cresc. poco a poco
13
f
fff
Ped.


16
V1
f
16
V2
16
Vla
f
f
16
Vc.
f
16
3
8
con Ped.


19
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
dim. poco a poco
mp
Var. 2
pizz.
ff
p
f
2
4

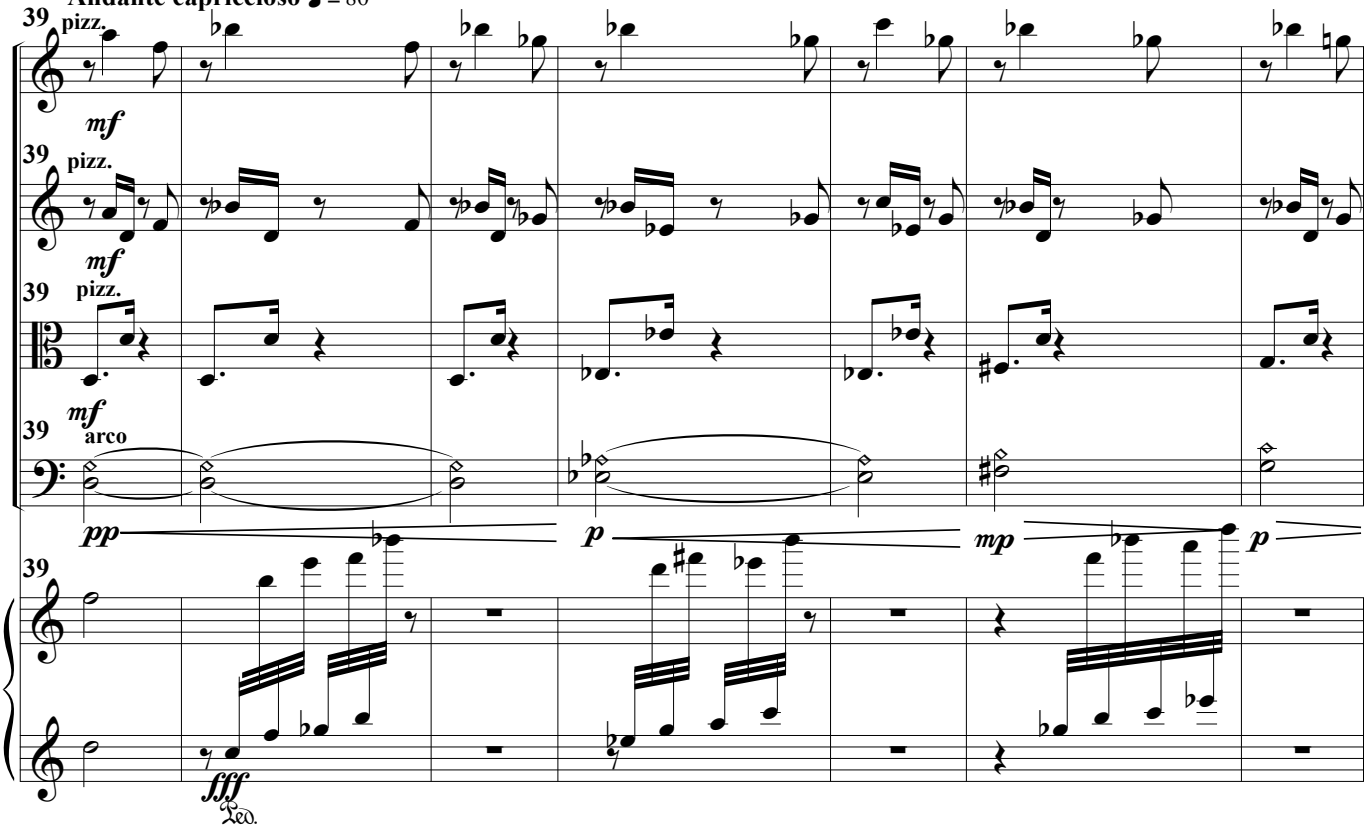

24
V1
V2
pizz.
ff
5:4
mf

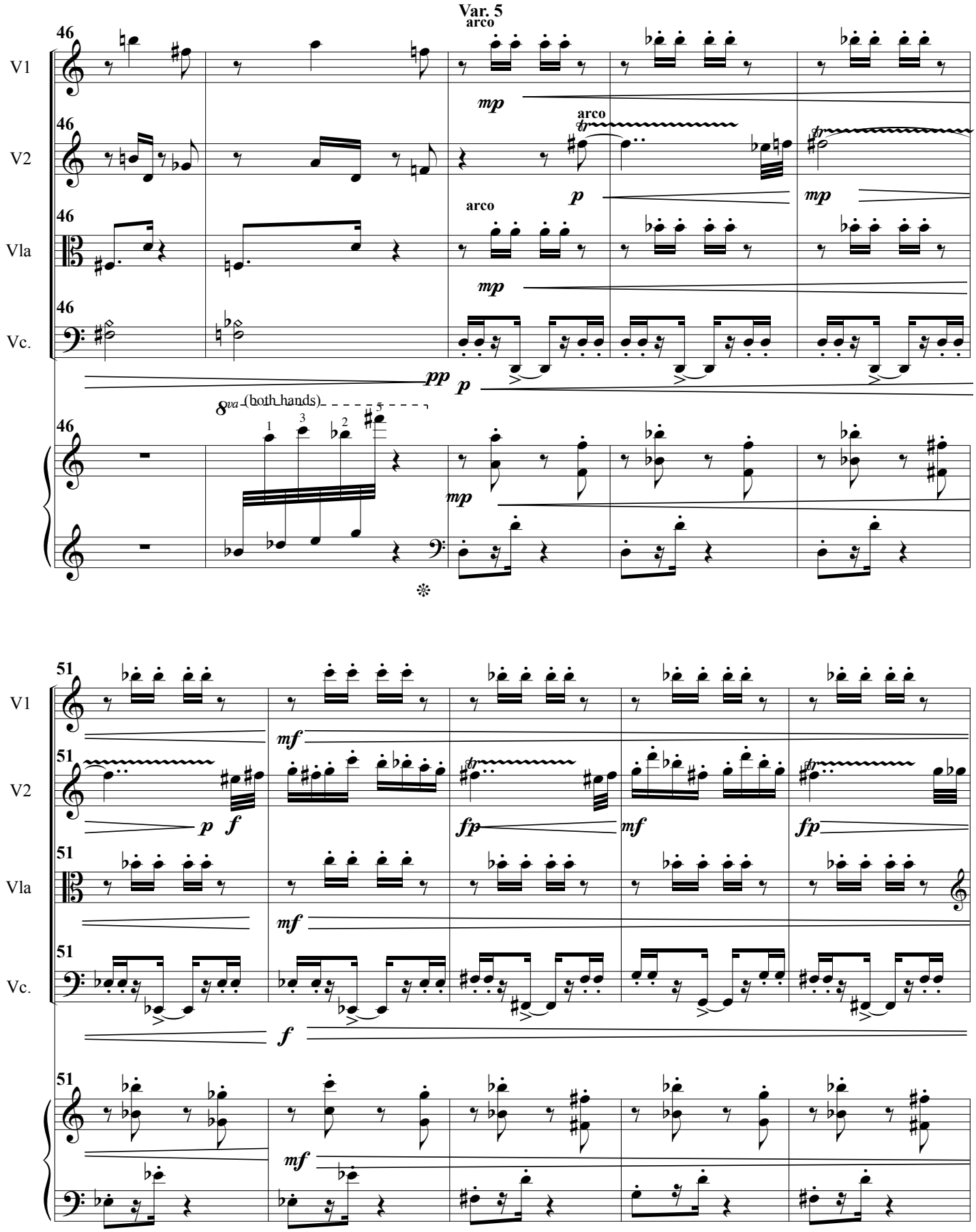

Var. 3
30
arco
8va
fff
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
mf
f
33
5

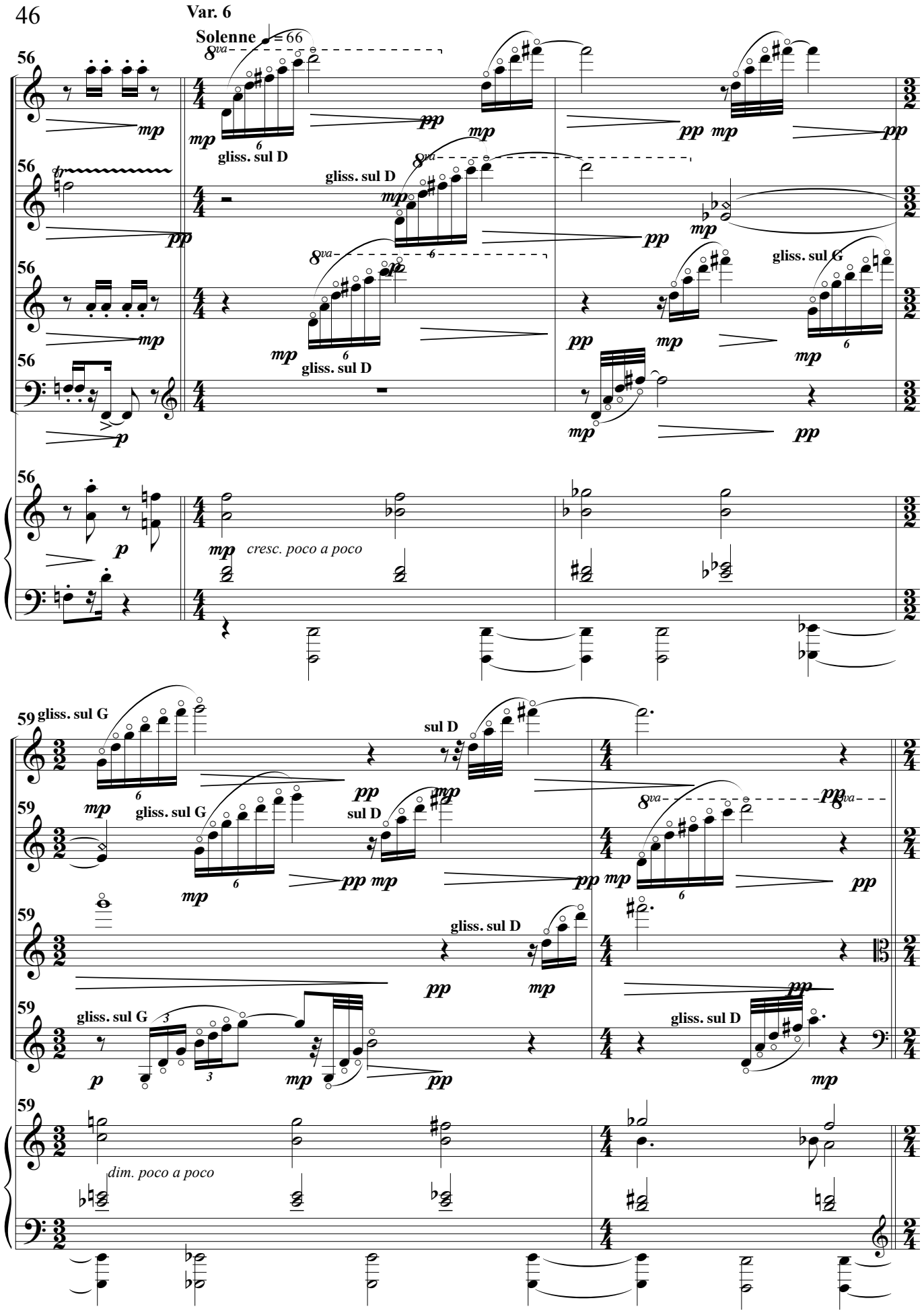


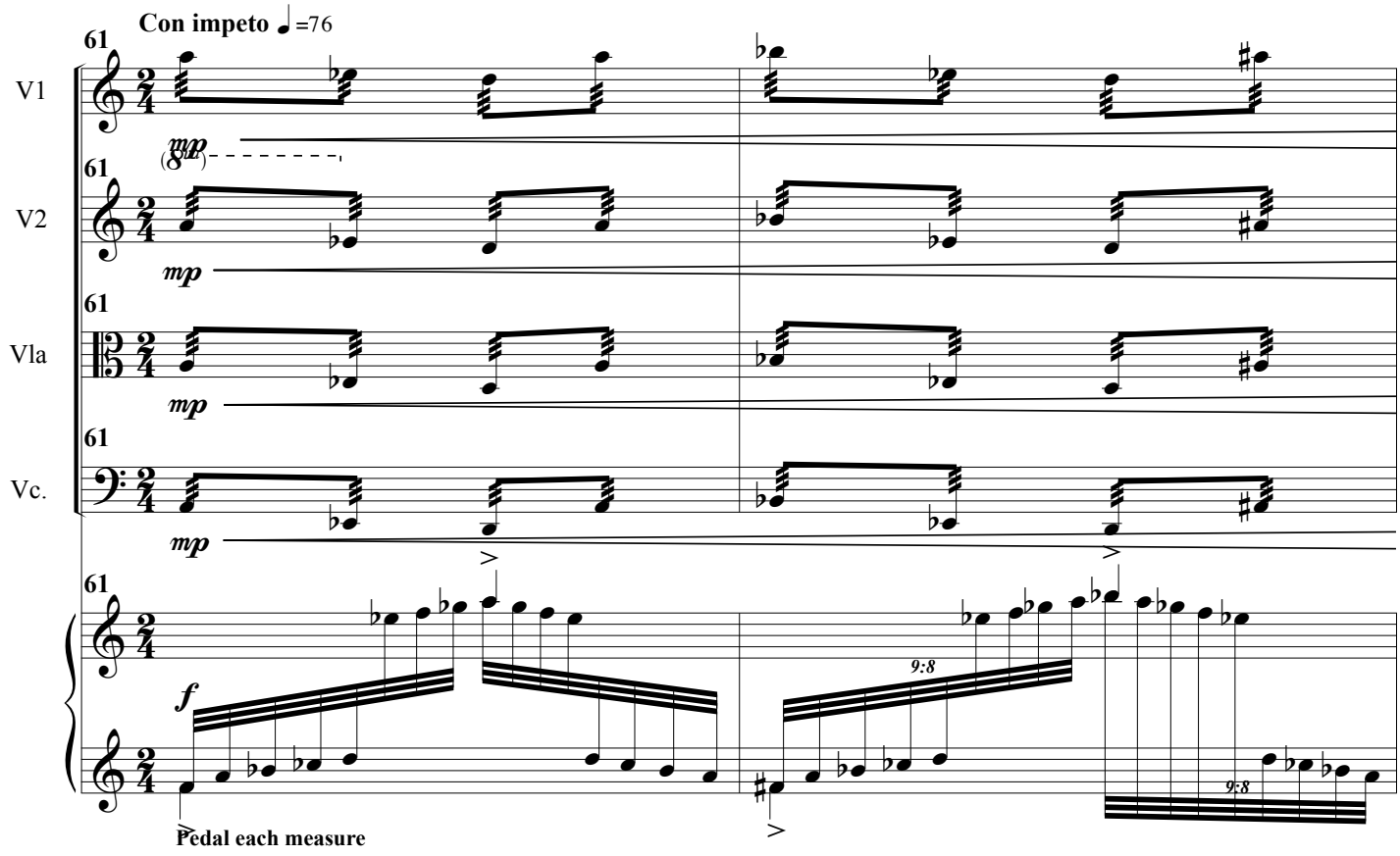
Var. 4

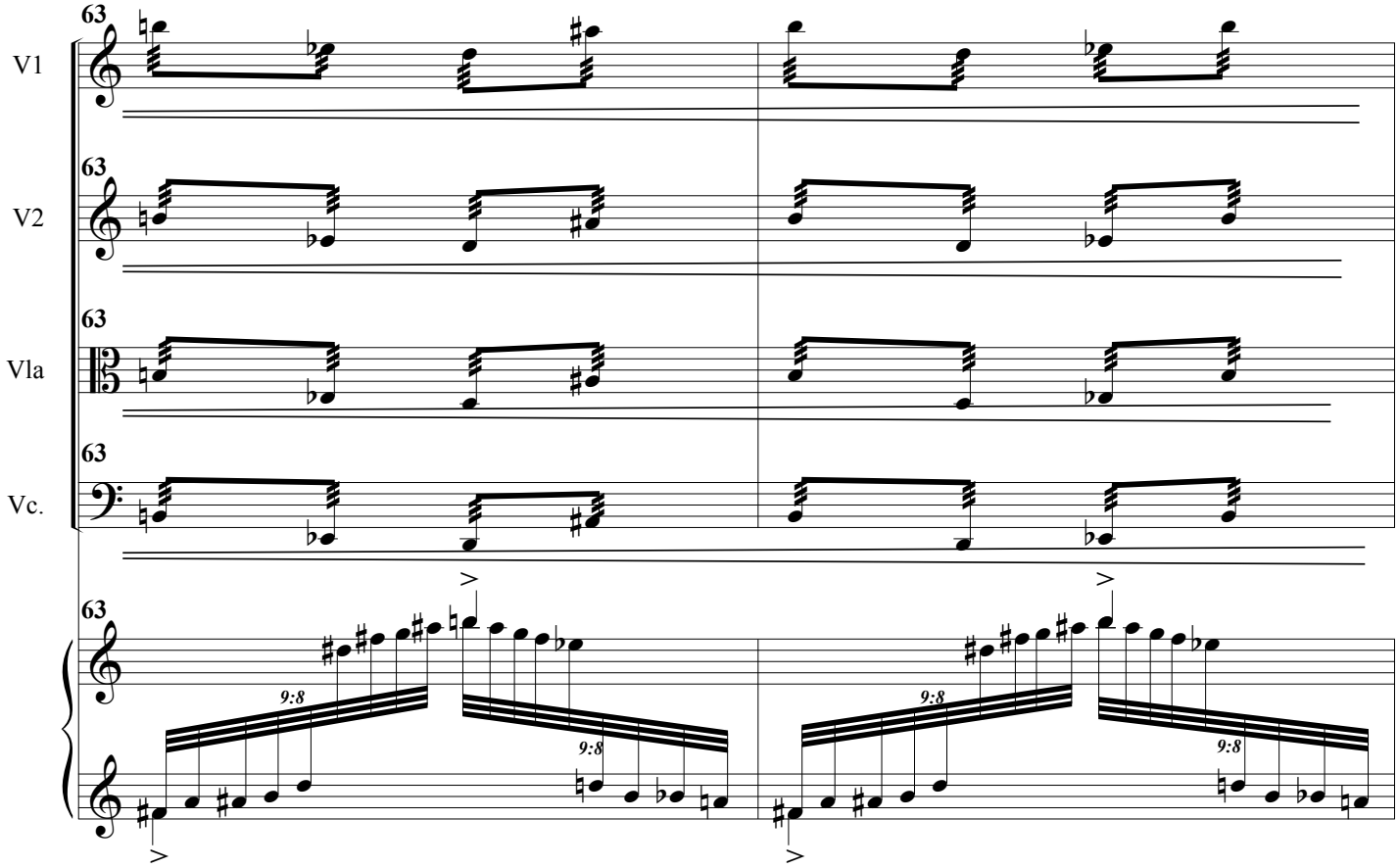
Andante capriccioso ♩ = 80

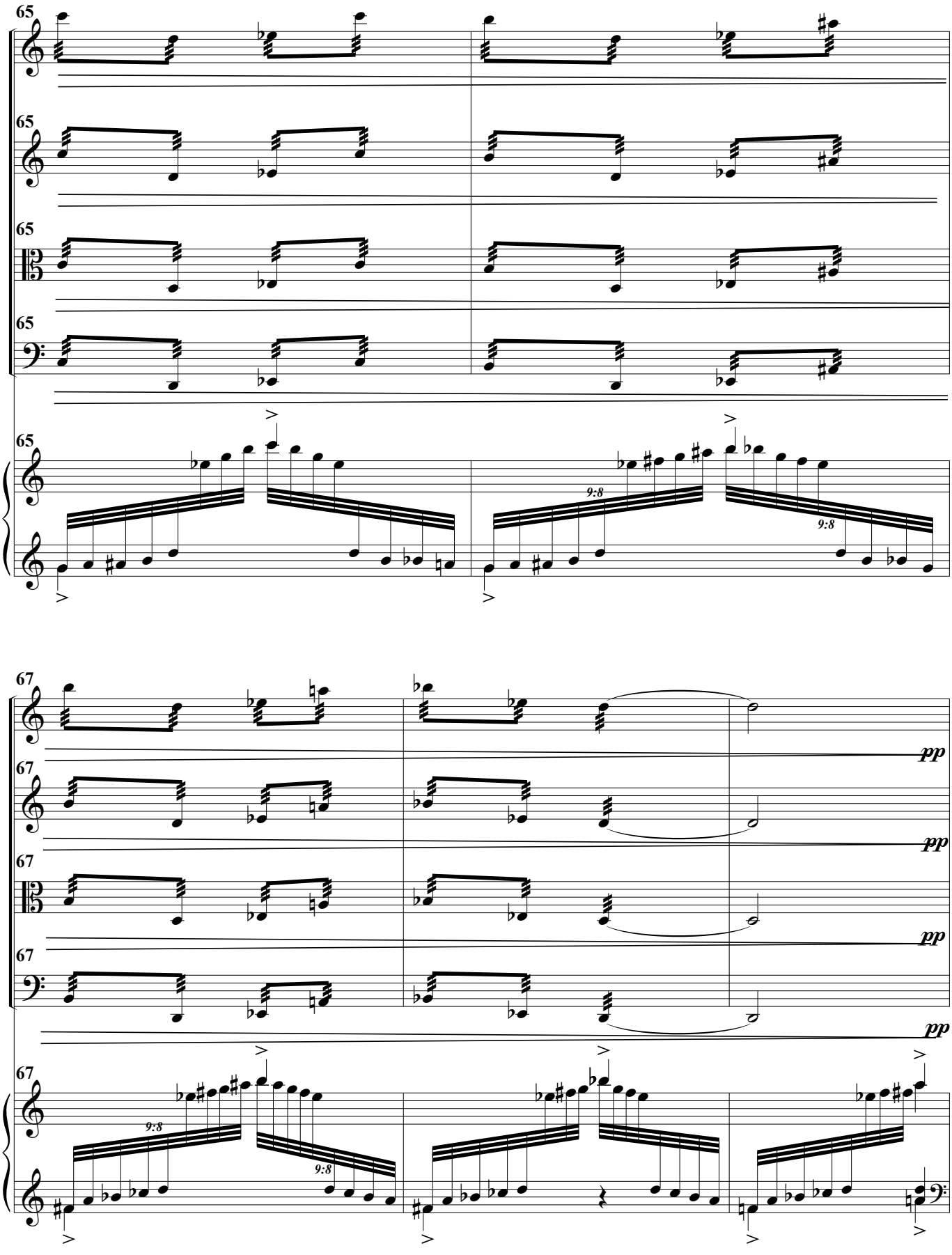


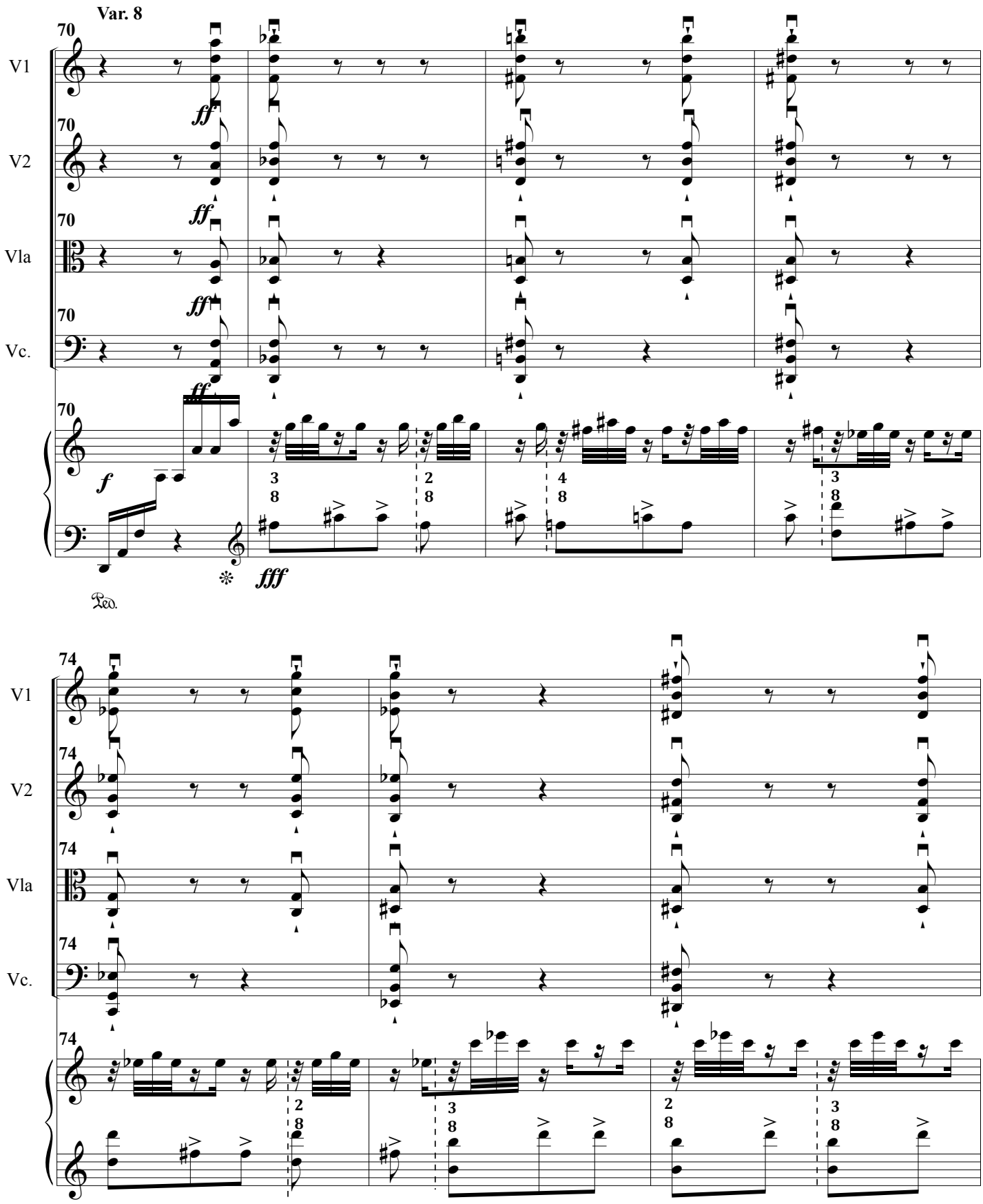

Var. 5
46
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
arco
mp
p
pp
8va (both hands)
51
mf
f
fp

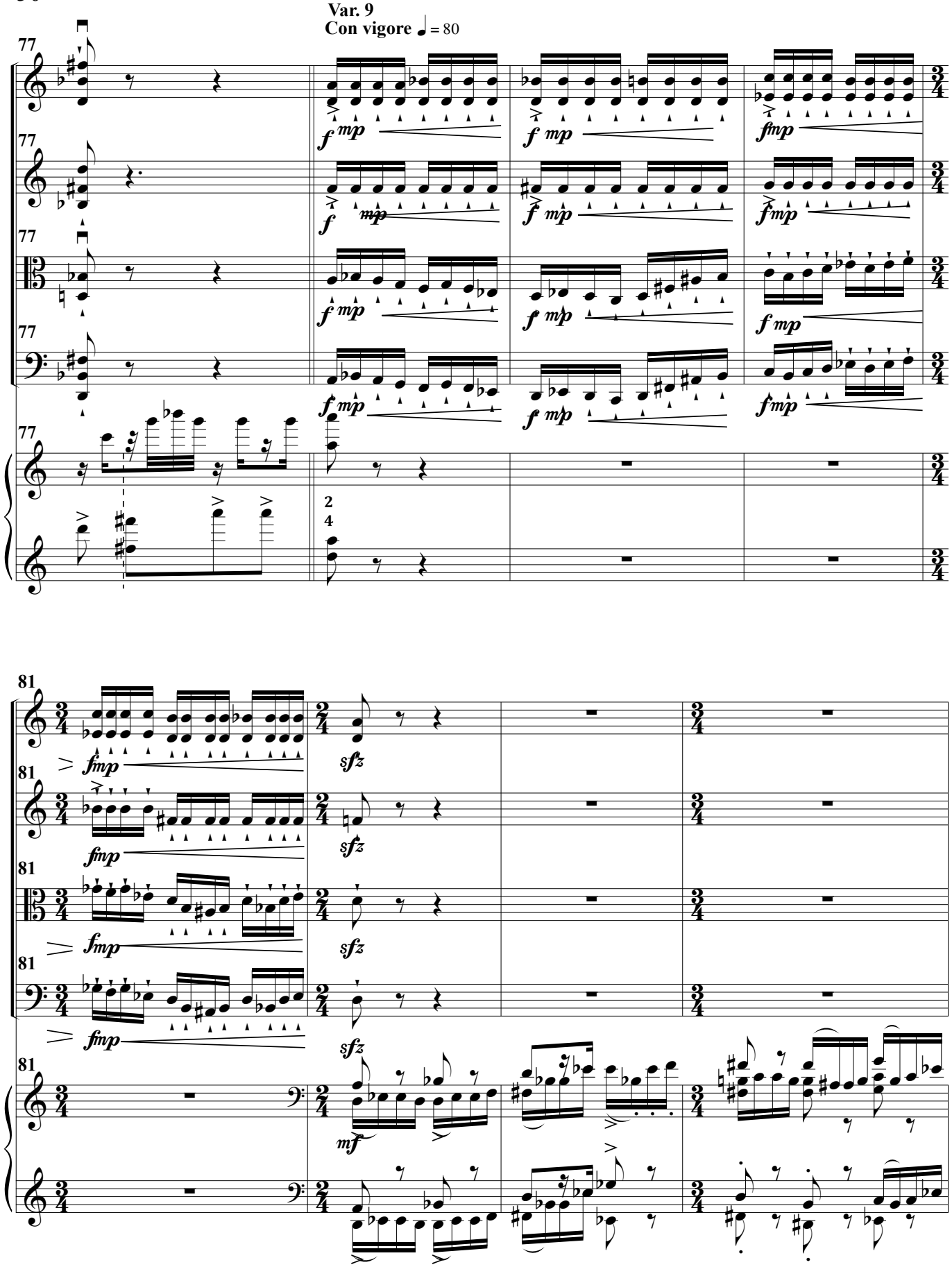

Var. 6
Solenne ♩= 66
56
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
gliss. sul D
gliss. sul G
cresc. poco a poco
59
sul D
dim. poco a poco

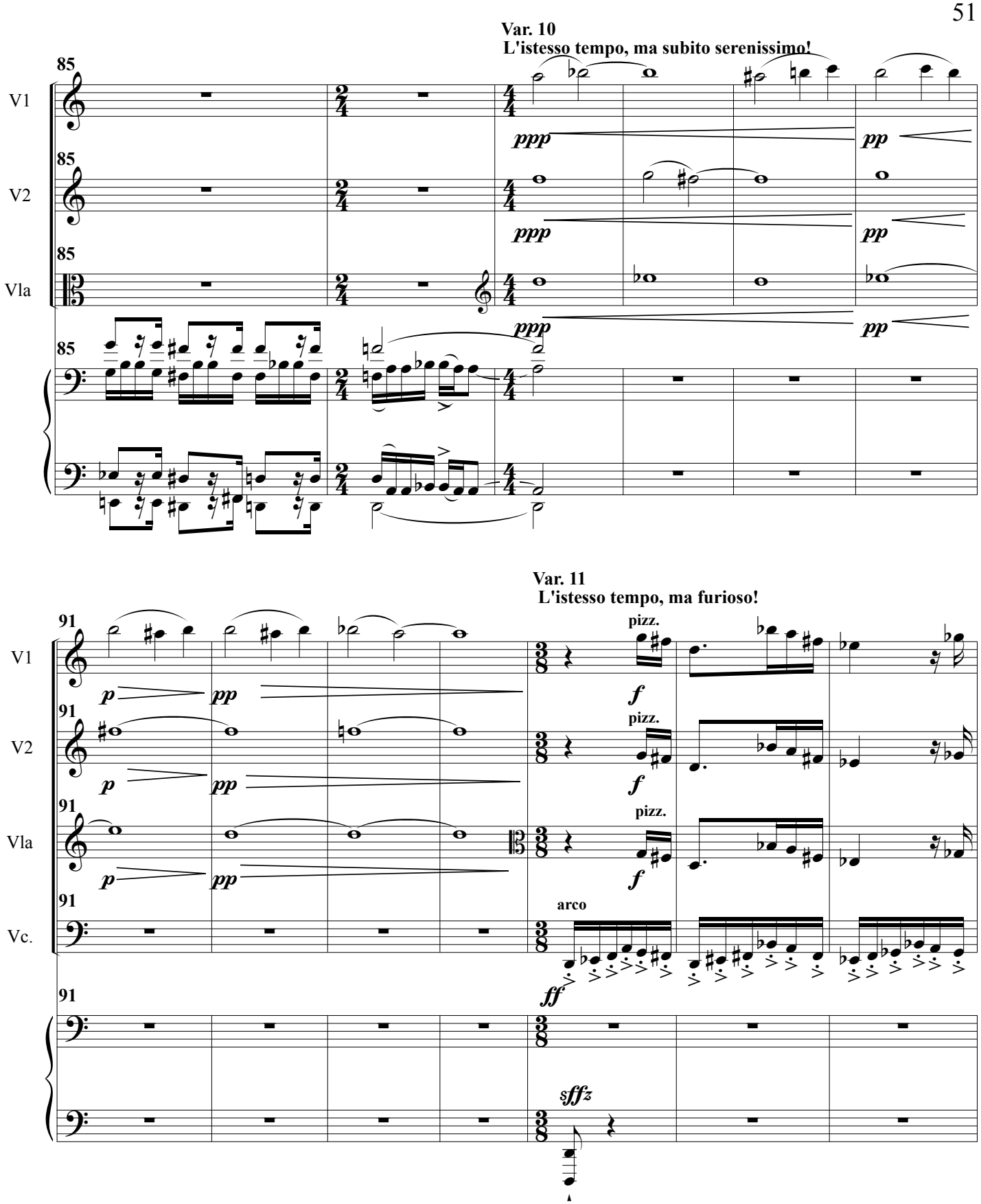

Con impeto ♩=76
61
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
mp
(8va)
f
9:8
Pedal each measure

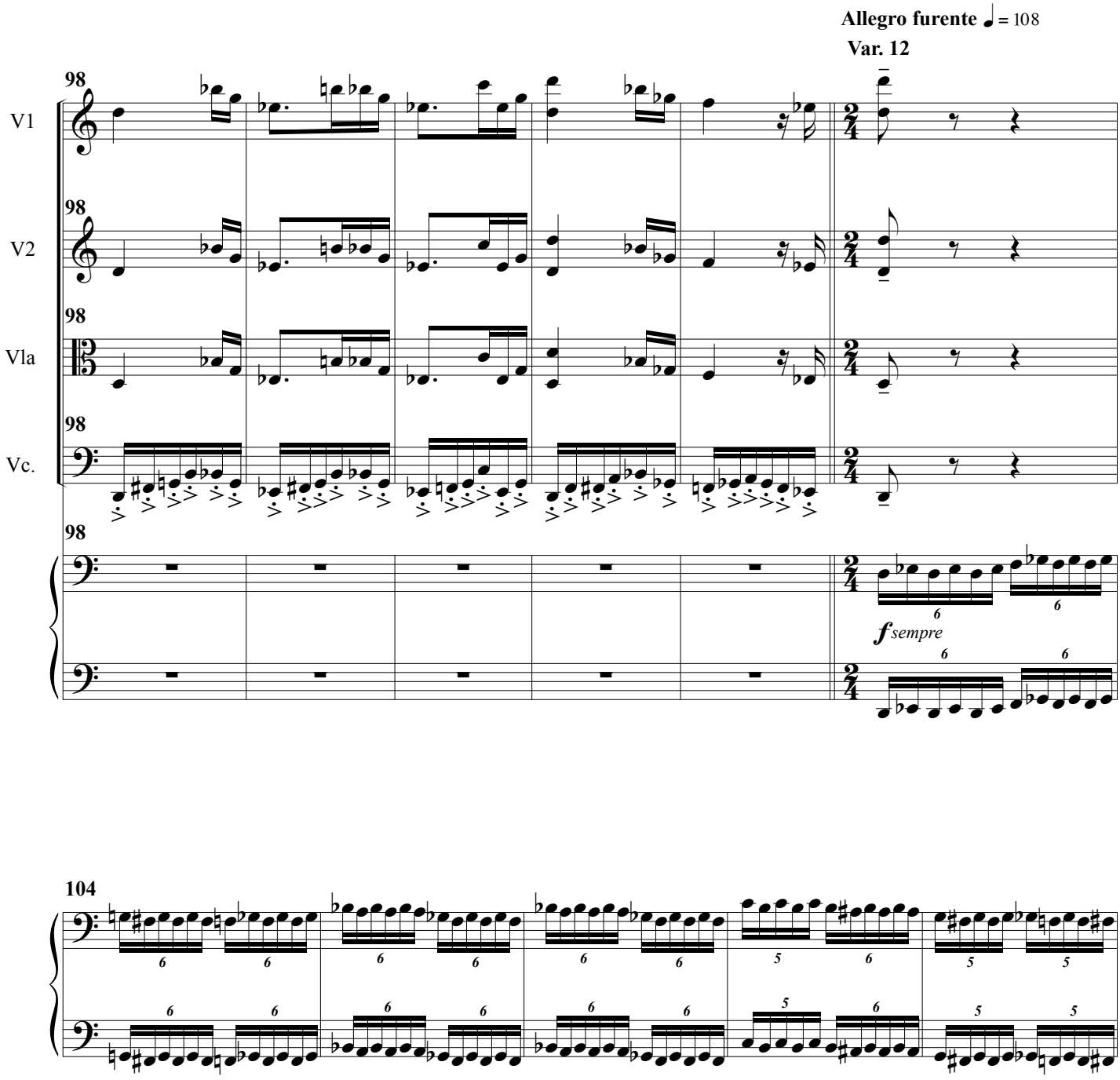

63
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
9:8

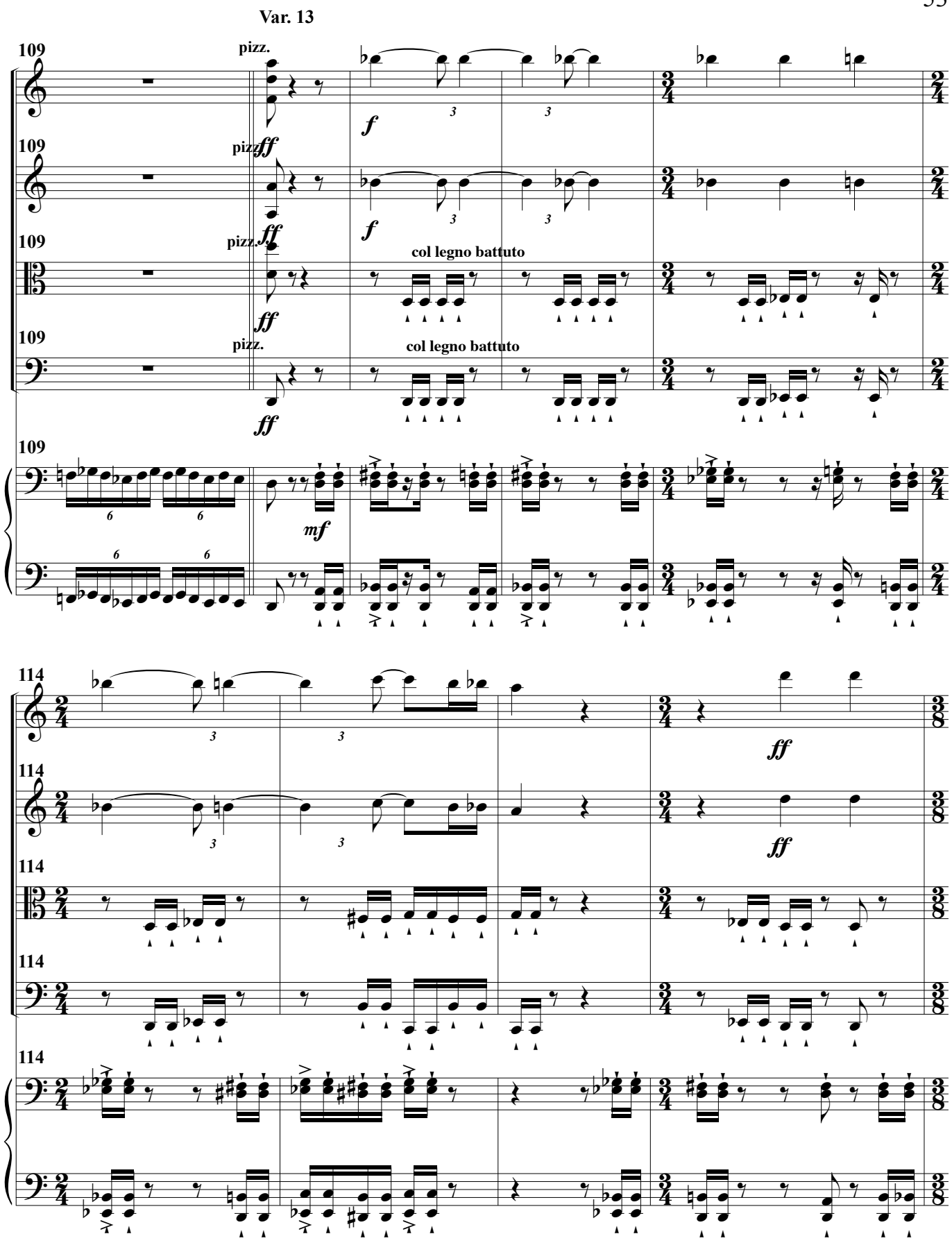

65
V1
65
V2
65
Vla
65
Vc.
65
9:8
9:8
67
V1
pp
67
V2
pp
67
Vla
pp
67
Vc.
pp
67
9:8
9:8

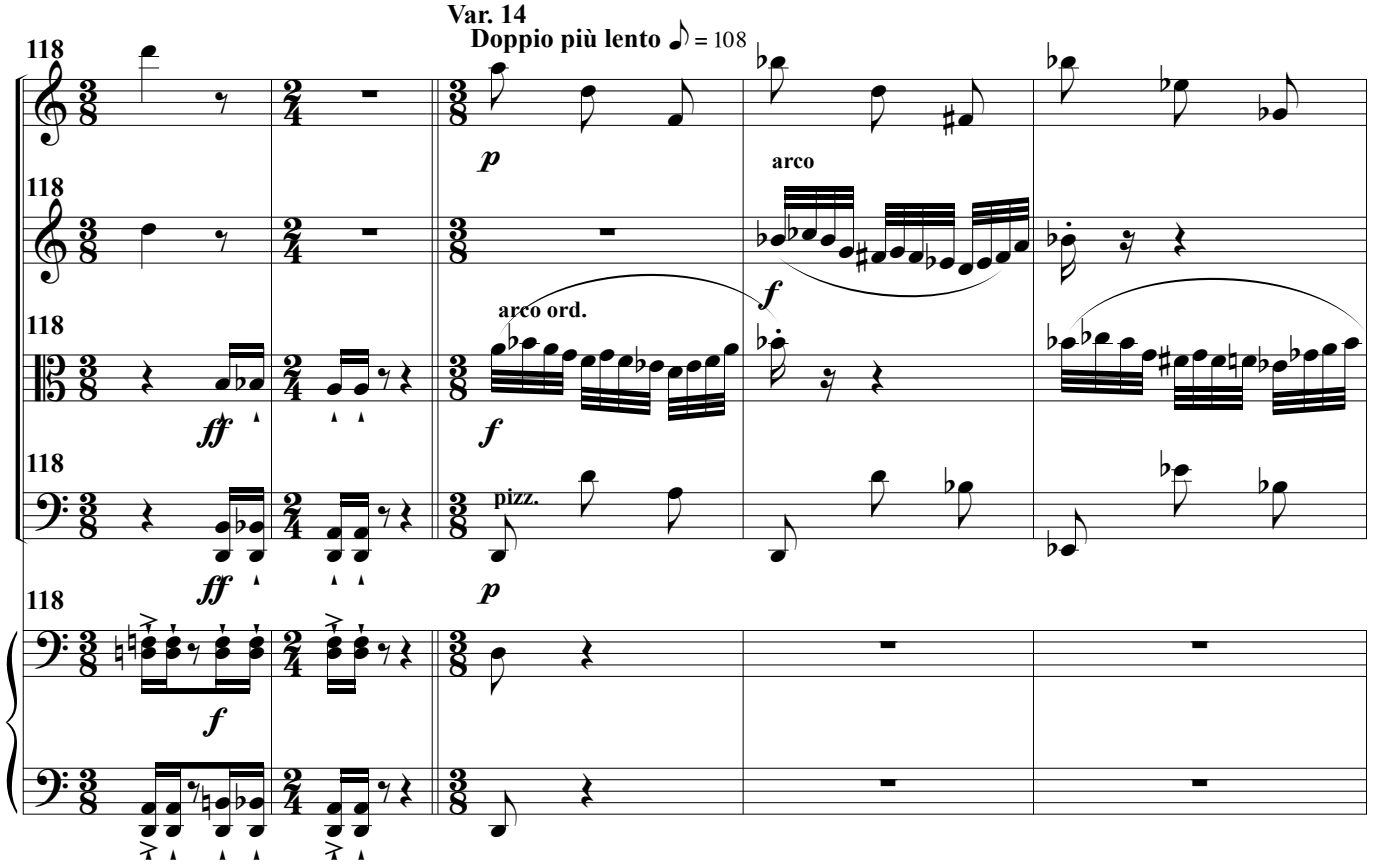

Var. 8
70
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
ff
f
fff
Ped.
74

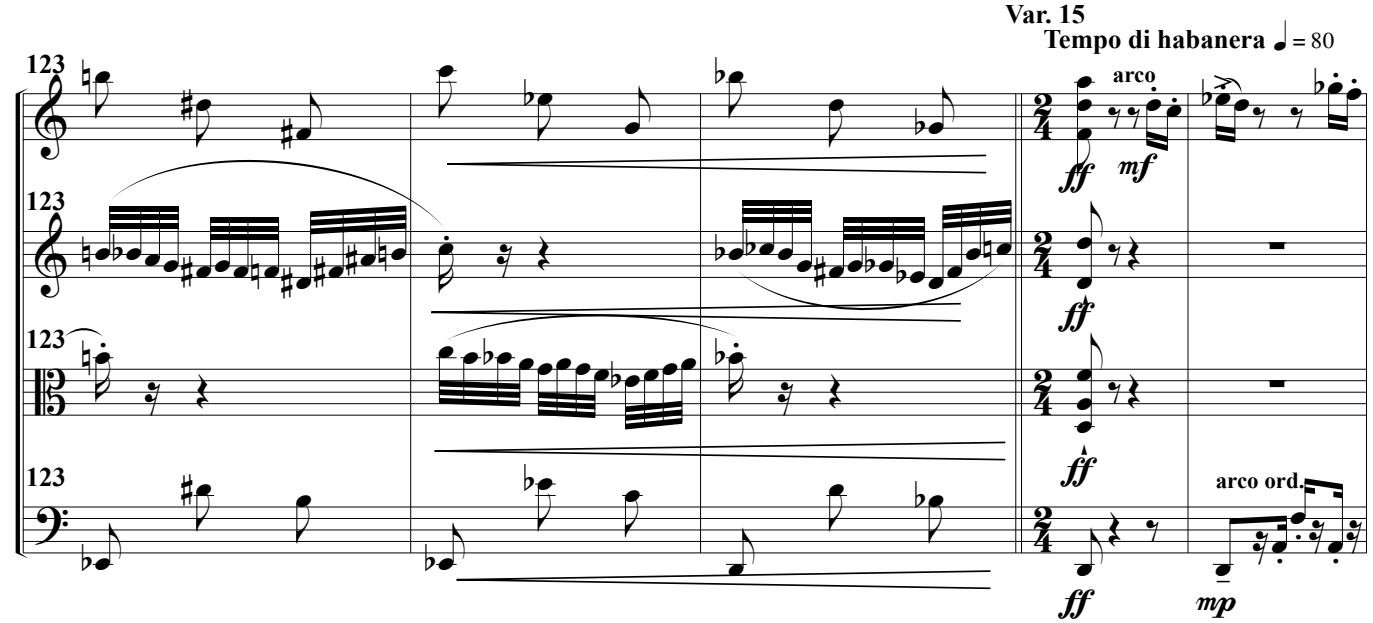

Var. 9
Con vigore ♩ = 80
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
77
81
f mp
fmp
sfz
mf

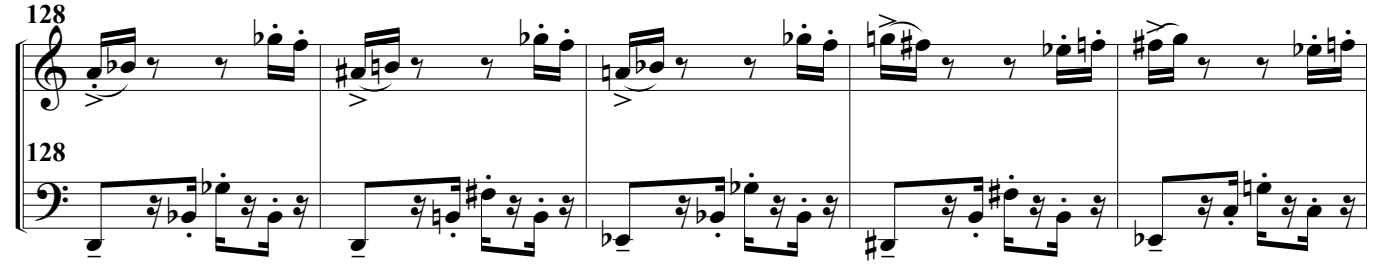

Var. 10
L'istesso tempo, ma subito serenissimo!
85
V1
V2
Vla
ppp
pp
Var. 11
L'istesso tempo, ma furioso!
91
Vc.
p
pp
pizz.
f
arco
ff
sffz

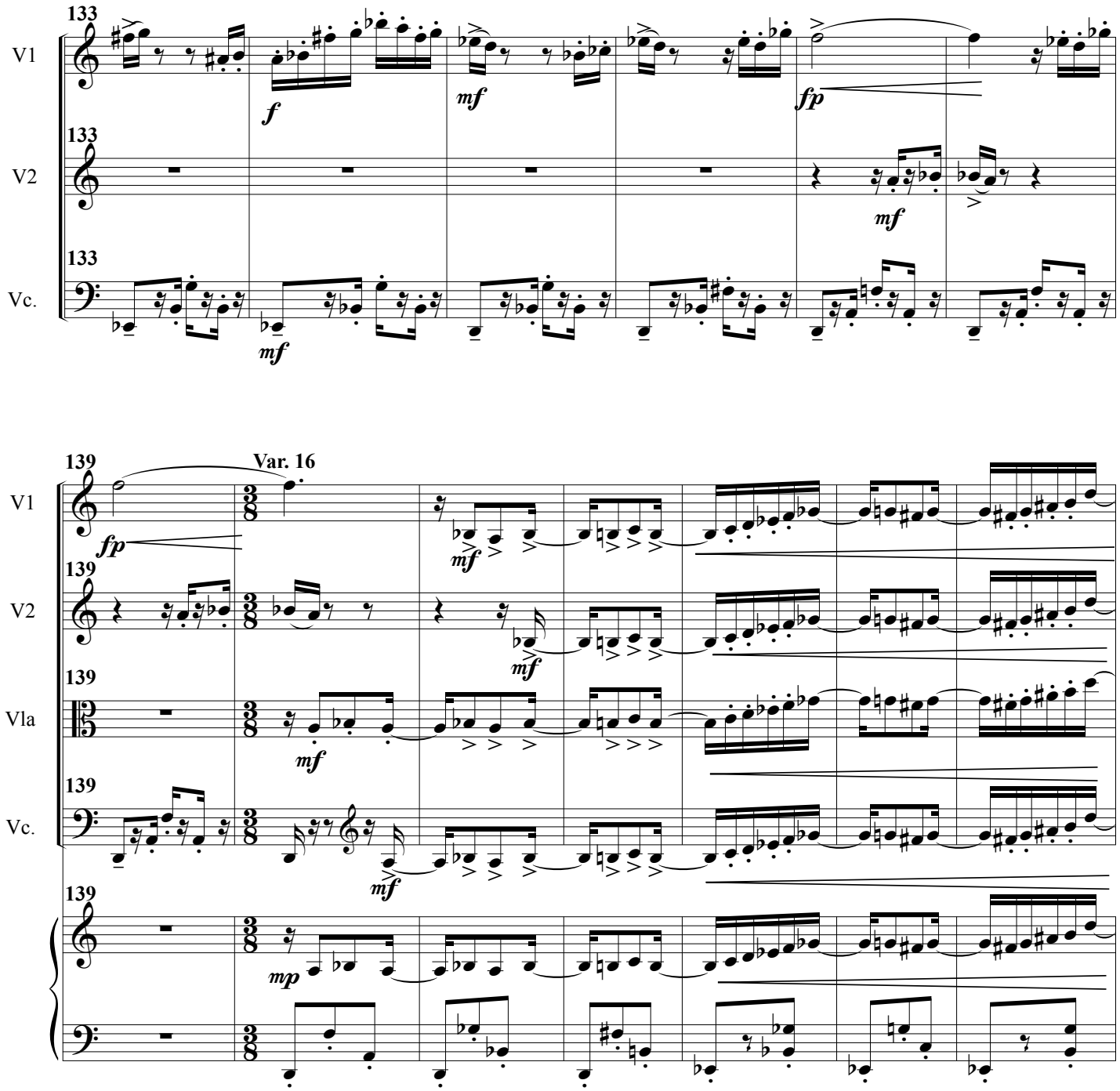

Allegro furente ♩ = 108
Var. 12
98
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
f sempre
104

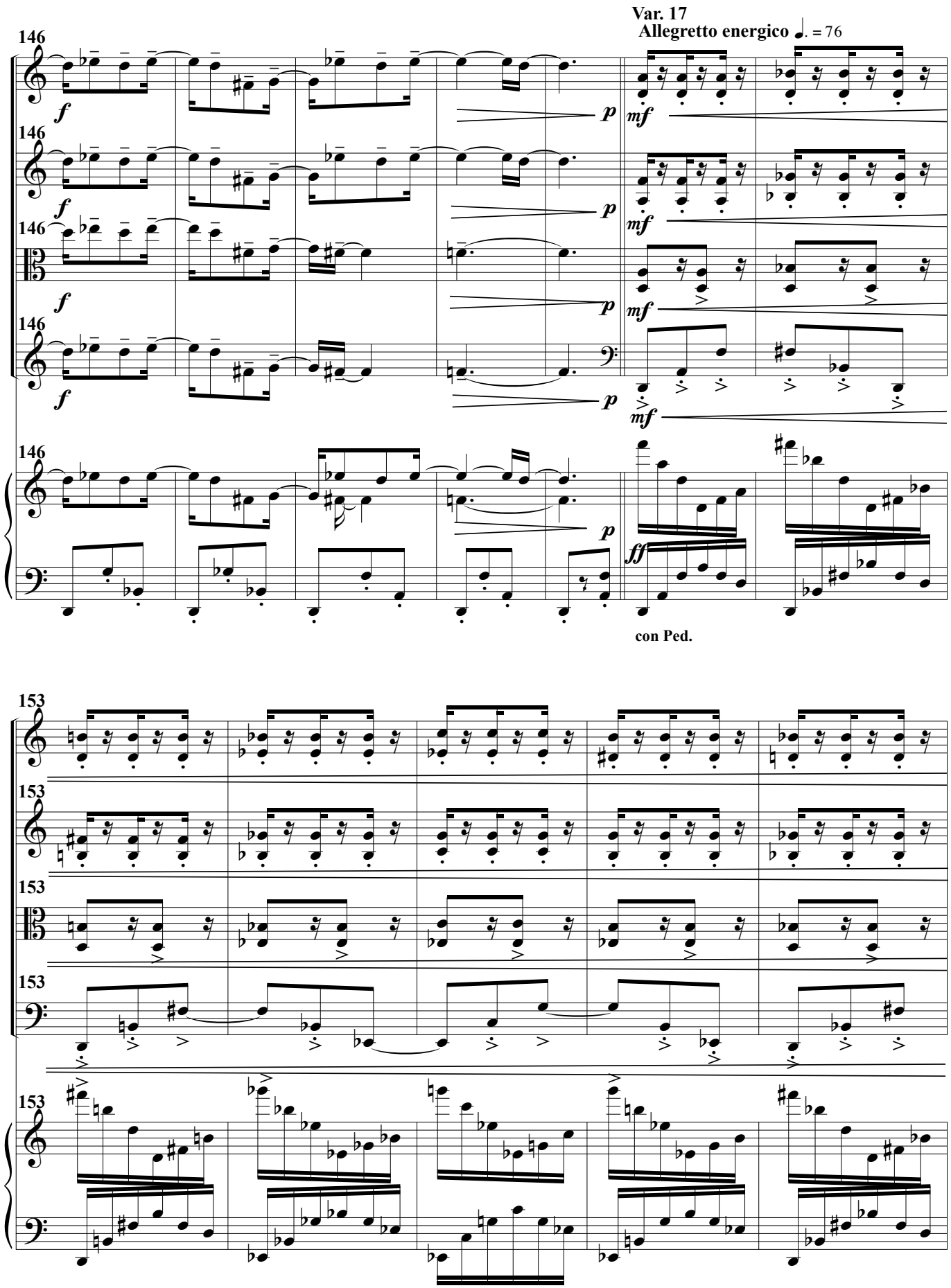

Var. 13
109
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
pizz.
ff
f
col legno battuto
mf
114
ff

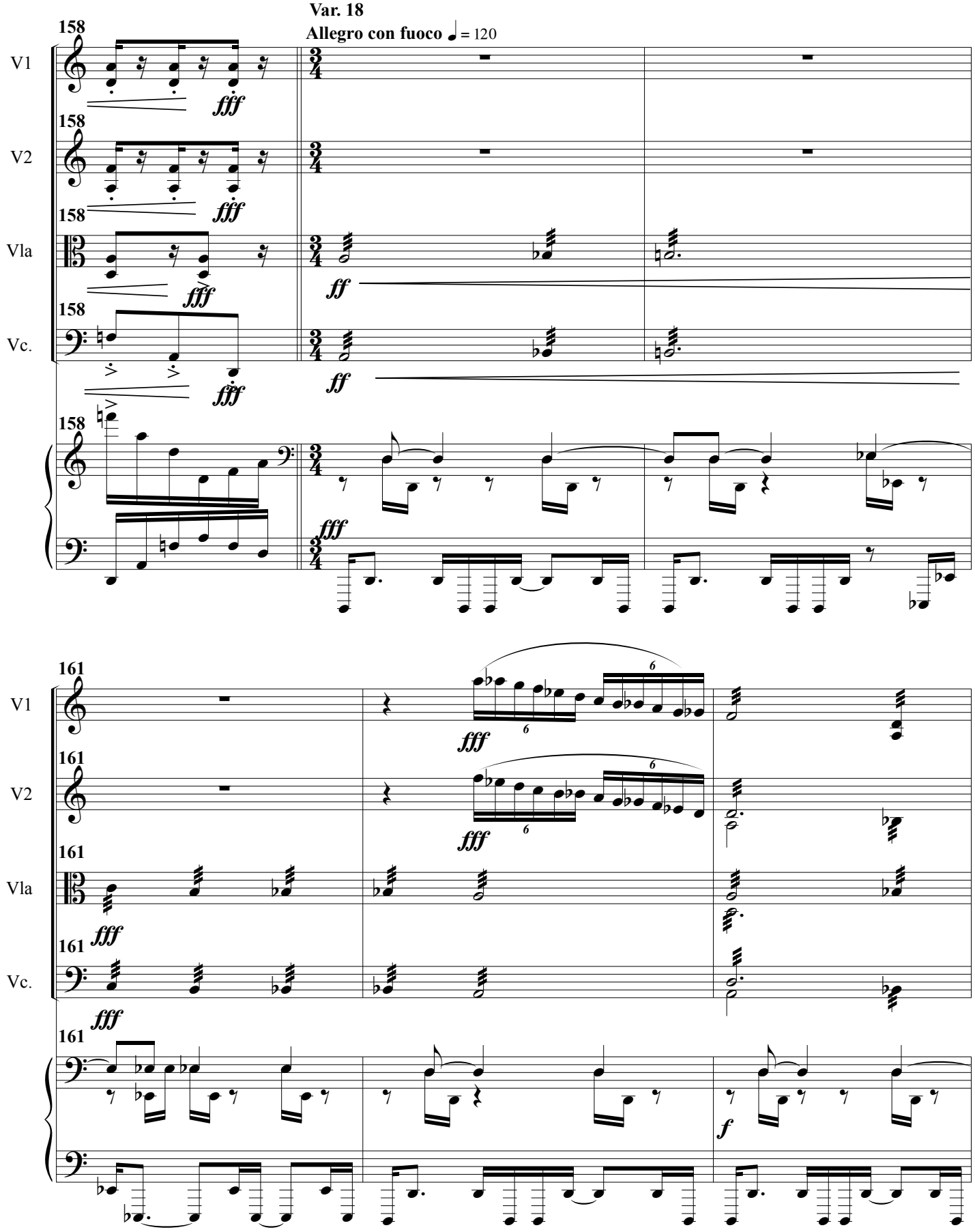

Var. 14
Doppio più lento ♪ = 108
118
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
arco
arco ord.
pizz.

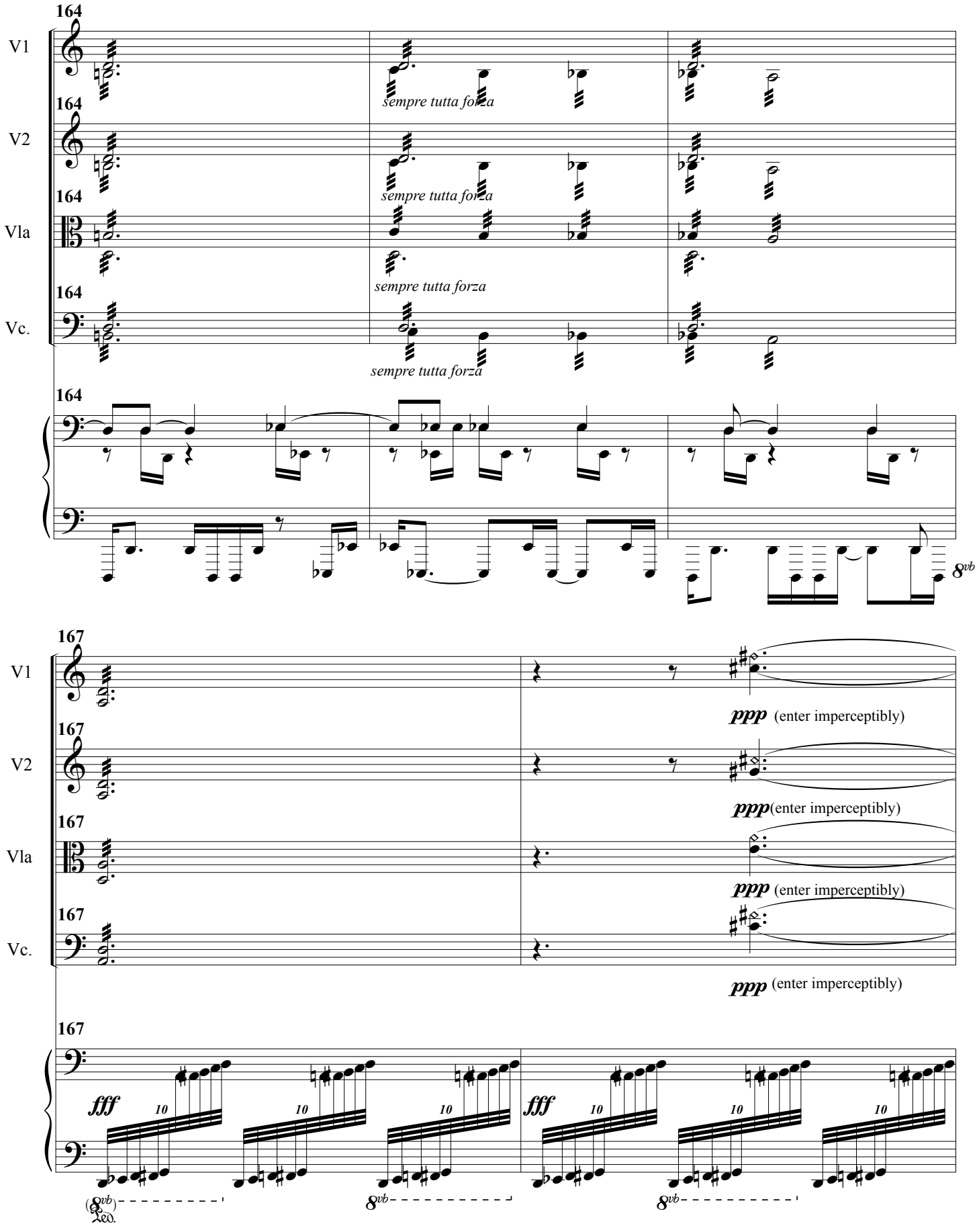

Var. 15
Tempo di habanera ♩ = 80
123
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
arco
arco ord.

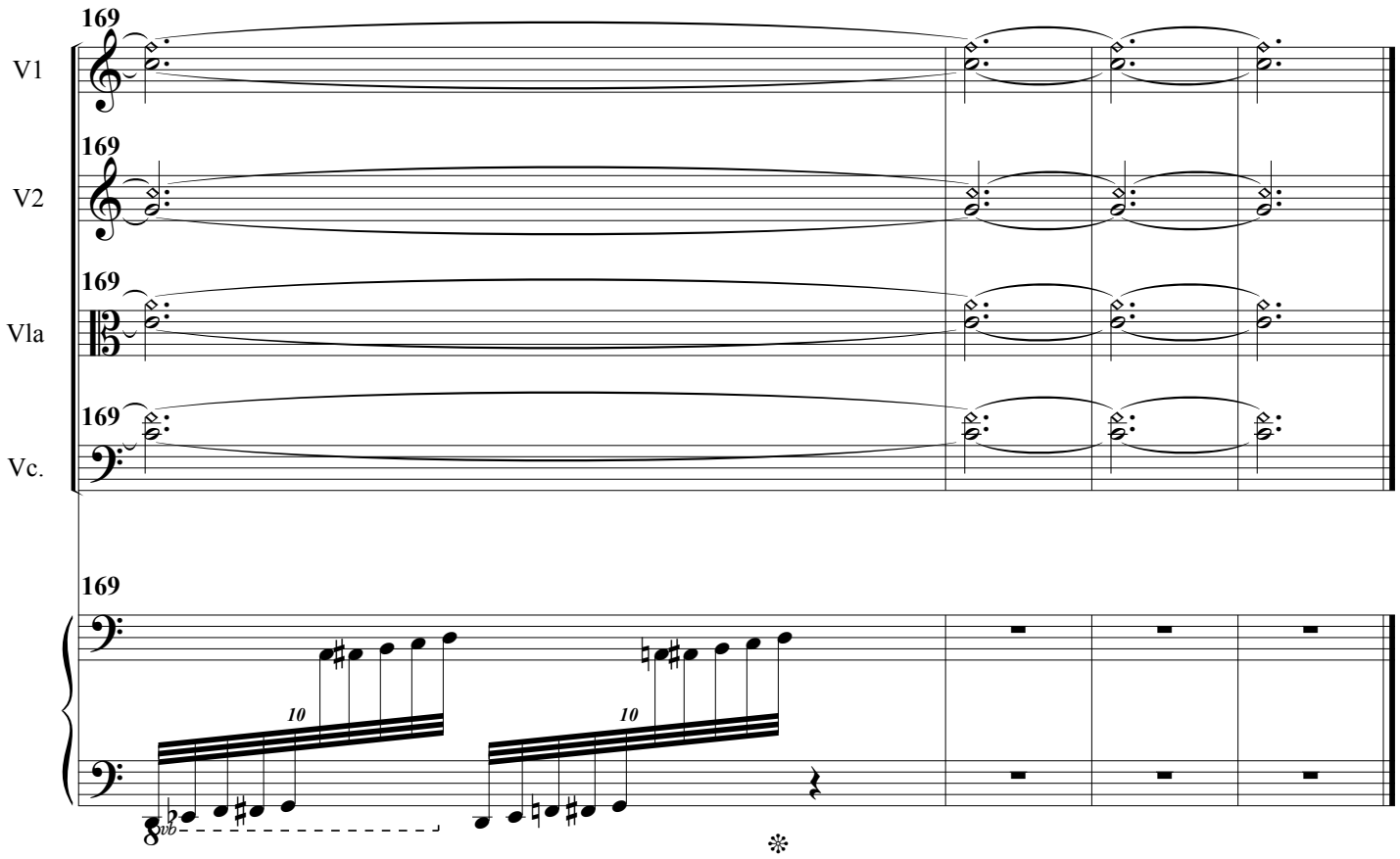

128
V1
Vc.


133
V1
f
mf
fp
133
V2
mf
133
Vc.
mf
139
Var. 16
V1
fp
mf
139
V2
mf
139
Vla
mf
139
Vc.
mf
139
mp


Var. 17
Allegretto energico ♩. = 76
146
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
f
p
mf
ff
con Ped.
153


Var. 18
Allegro con fuoco ♩ = 120
158
V1
V2
Vla
Vc.
fff
ff
161
f


164
V1
sempre tutta forza
164
V2
sempre tutta forza
164
Vla
sempre tutta forza
164
Vc.
sempre tutta forza
164
8vb
167
V1
ppp (enter imperceptibly)
167
V2
ppp(enter imperceptibly)
167
Vla
ppp (enter imperceptibly)
167
Vc.
ppp (enter imperceptibly)
167
fff
10
10
10
fff
10
10
10
(8vb)
Ped.
8vb
8vb


169
V1
169
V2
169
Vla
169
Vc.
169
10
10
8vb