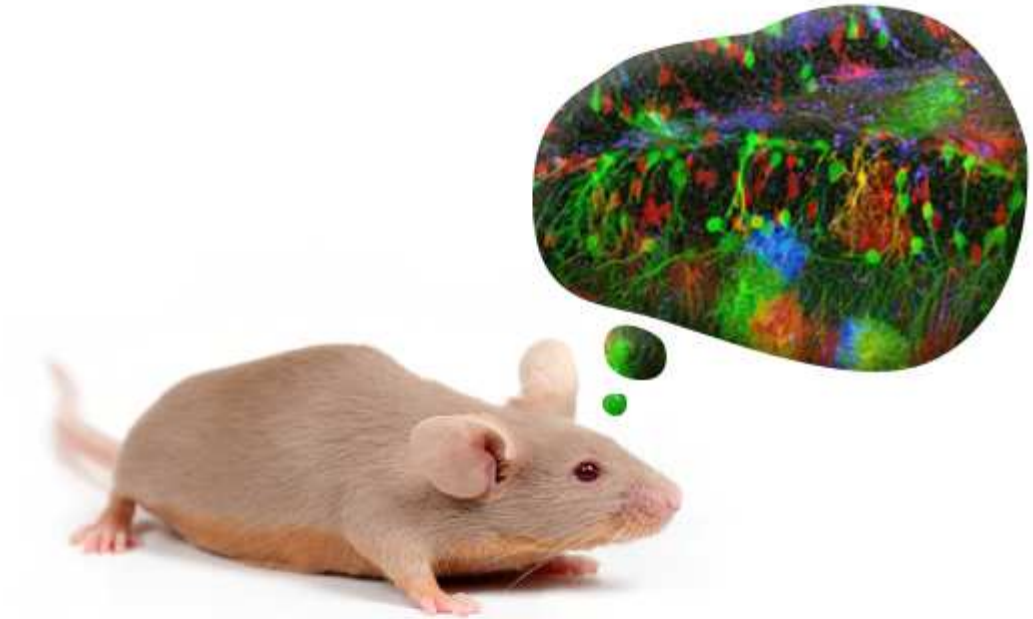
James Whittle



Brainbow mouse

for fl(picc).cl(bcl).pno.vln.vla.vc

Programme Note

"In the 1960s, scientists found that a particular jellyfish makes a protein that glows, known as green fluorescent protein. In the 1990s, using genetic engineering, researchers found that they could take the gene that makes GFP and insert it into the DNA of other cells. This makes different parts of the cell glow – and thus easier to see in a microscope – depending on where the gene is placed.

"To go short, Jean Livet, Jeff Lichtman and their collaborators at Harvard University were able to genetically alter mice so their neurons produce fluorescent proteins, and each cell produces a random combination of the colors yellow, red, and cyan. These colors mix, the way the basic colors of a television screen mix to produce a range of hues. Images can be taken in living mice, and the genetic engineering does not harm them. To celebrate this, the scientists decided to appropriately name the species: *Brainbow Mice*."

While I neither set out with nor assumed any programmatic intent, the brightly coloured images showing the workings of a mouse's brain - with scattered and distracted, reoccurring thoughts? - seemed to correspond to the musical gestures I was composing and treating with such flexibility, unravelling from the opening gesture into a drama for ensemble.

JWW, 30th March 2012 [Source: http://www.nextnature.net/2007/11/brainbow-mice]

Duration: 7 minutes

Performance Notes

When rehearsing and performing this piece, players should at all times have in mind the drama of the music, and the relationships each has to the other. A visual, theatrical experience is desired, as much as aural. The ensemble is at times divided differently, by timbre, by register, by spatial arrangement and mixed combinations. It is within these changing relationships and the sharing or not of material that the drama can be found, which should be conveyed to an audience.

Bars 12-17, strings, and bar 49, viola: a smaller notehead denotes that the string should be half-pressed to the fingerboard to achieve a muffled sound. Pitches here may be treated as approximate: they show the contour and general register of the phrase, though need not be entirely exact so long as the shape is clear.

Bars 11-12, flute: press the D key without covering the hole then slide your finger to cover the hole, bending the pitch from E flat to D whilst also singing them.

The players should sit in an arc:

Piano

Viola

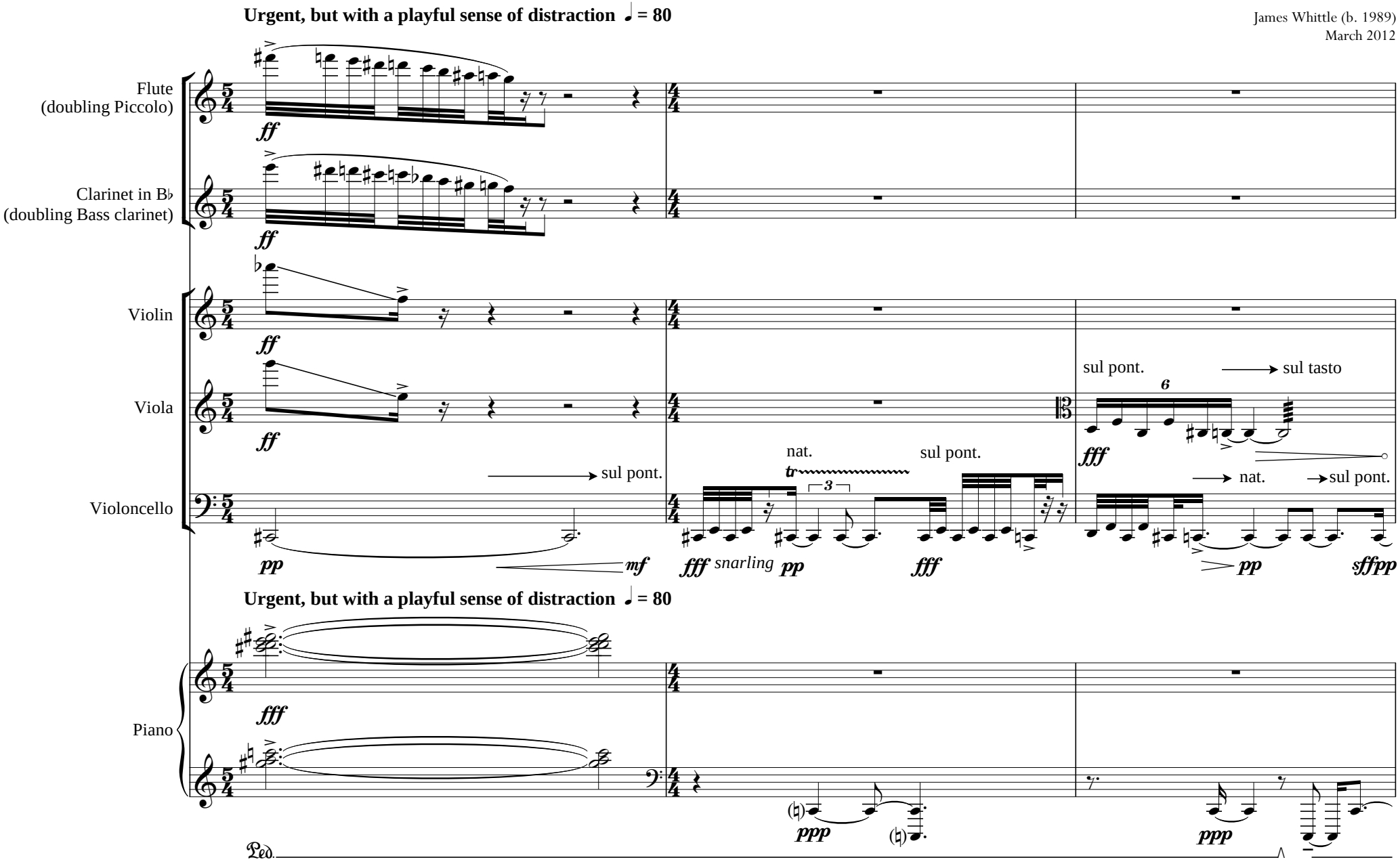
Flute Clarinet

Violin Cello

Full Score in C

Brainbow mouse

James Whittle (b. 1989)
March 2012



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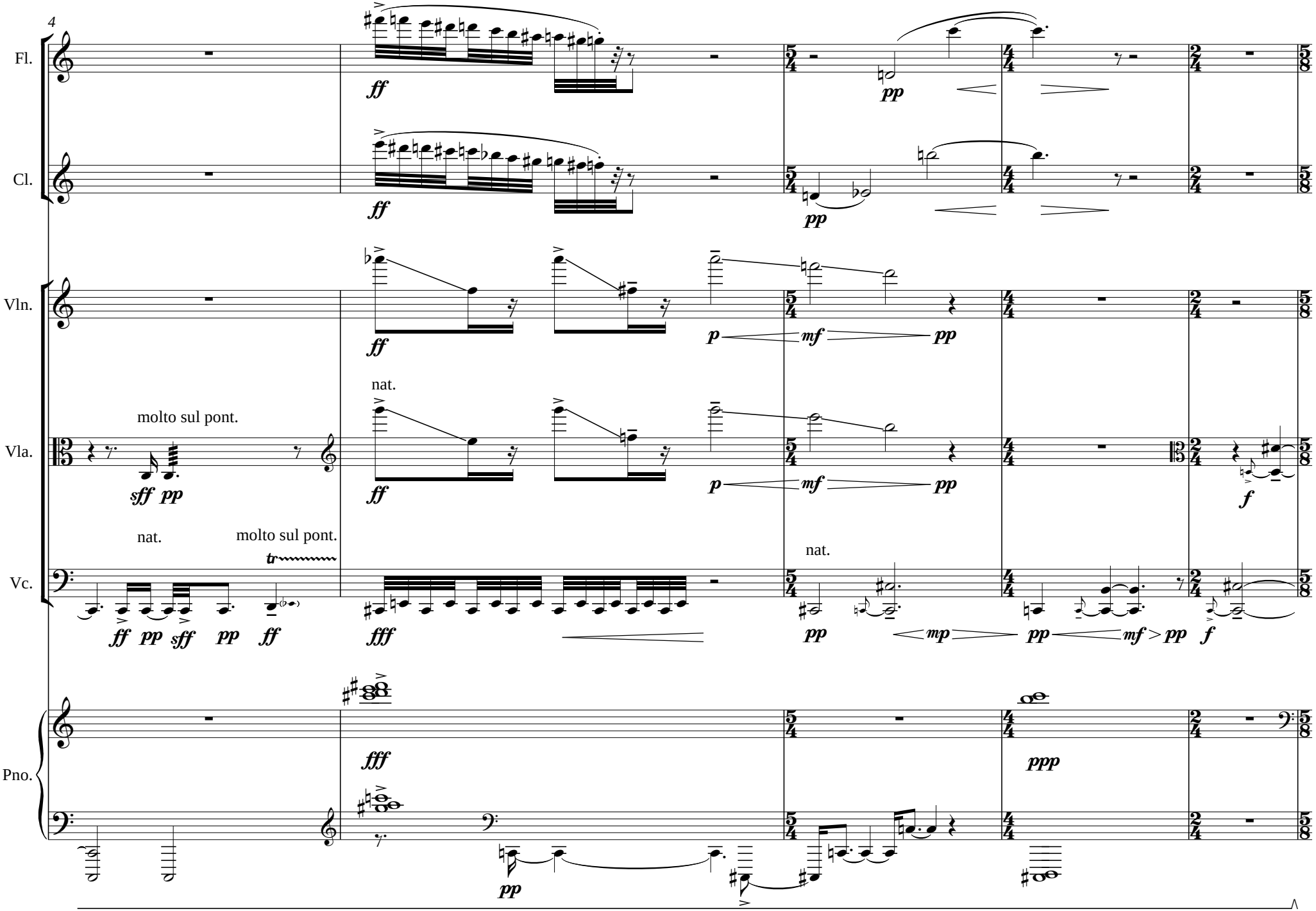
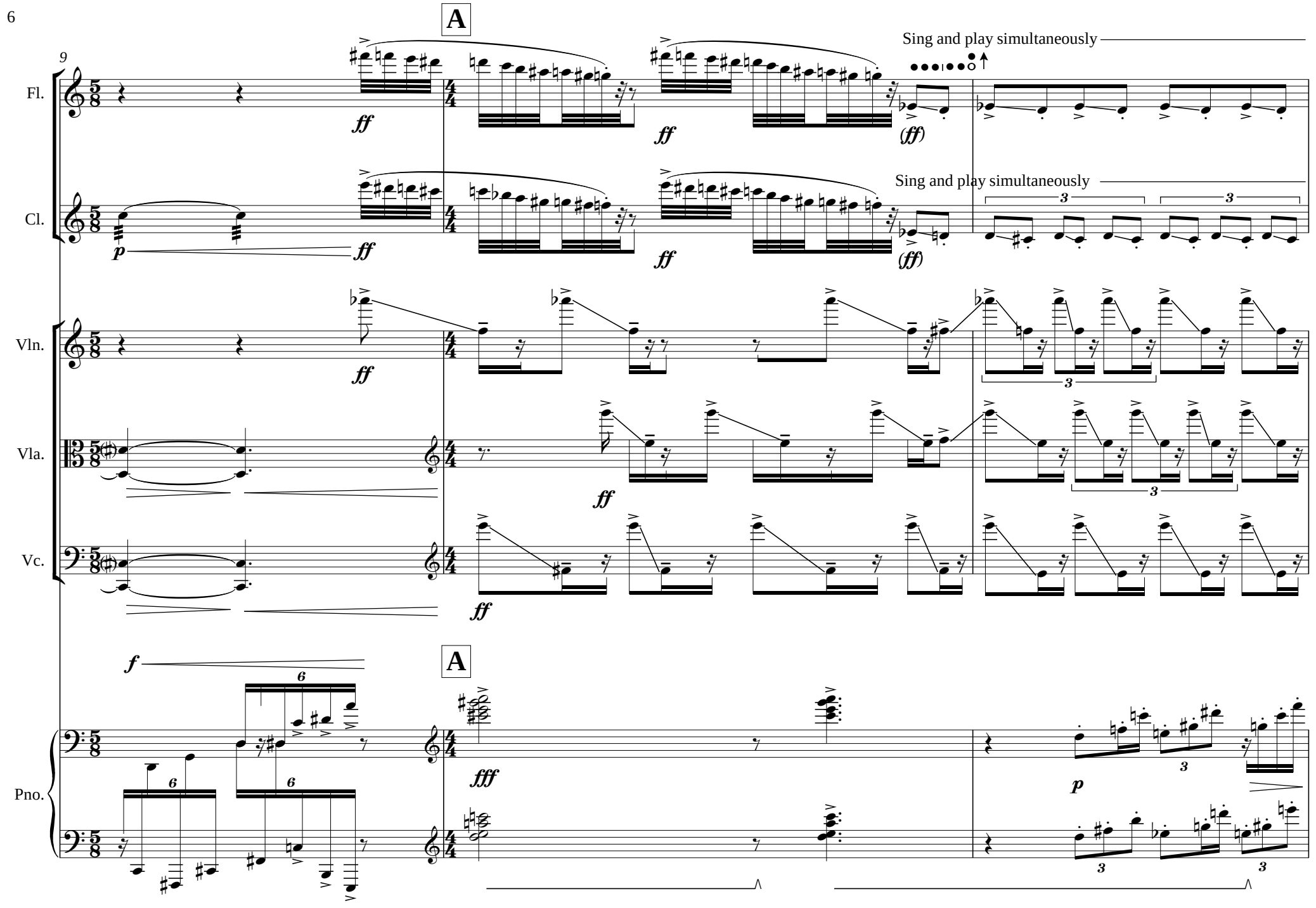
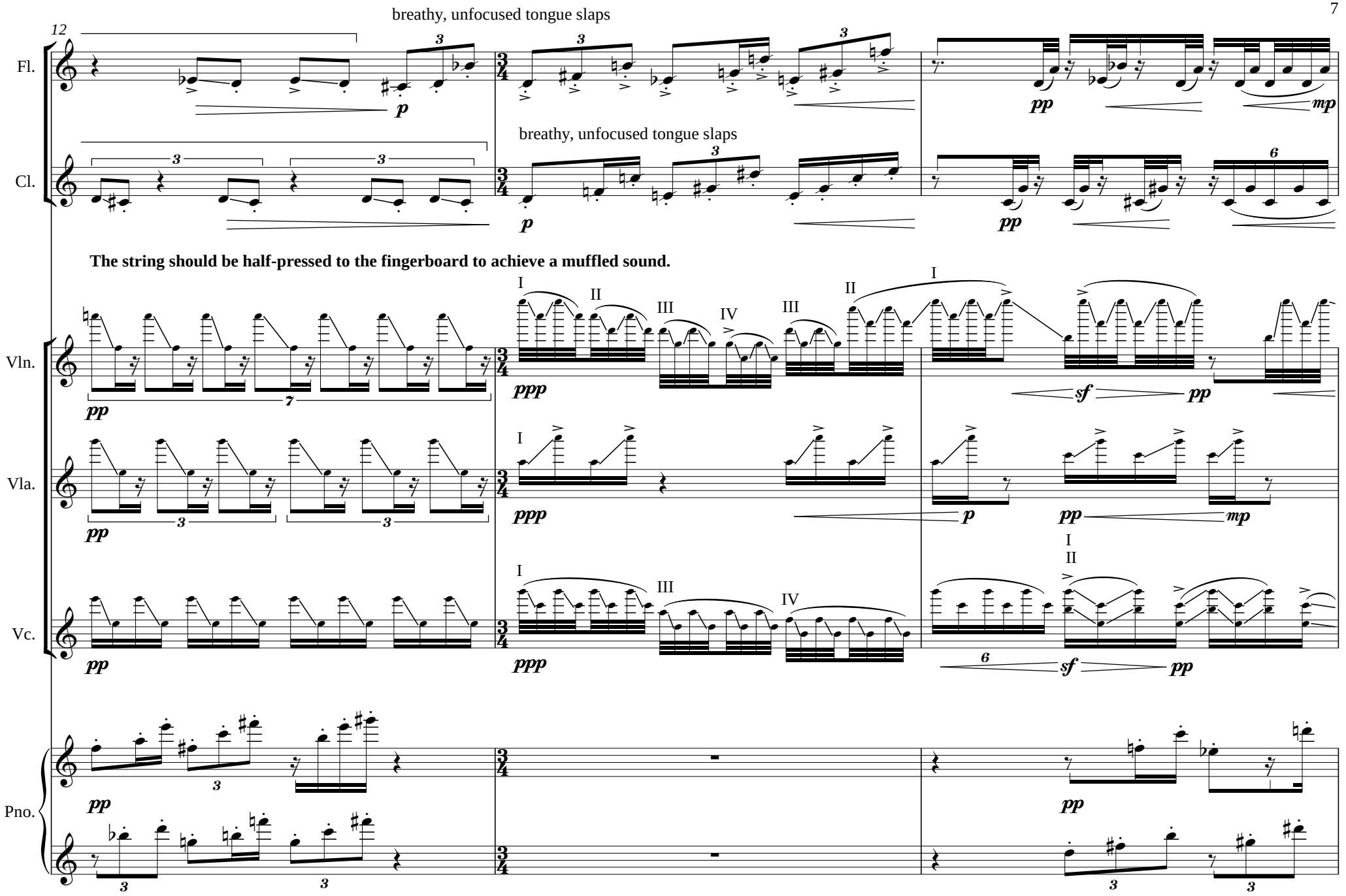
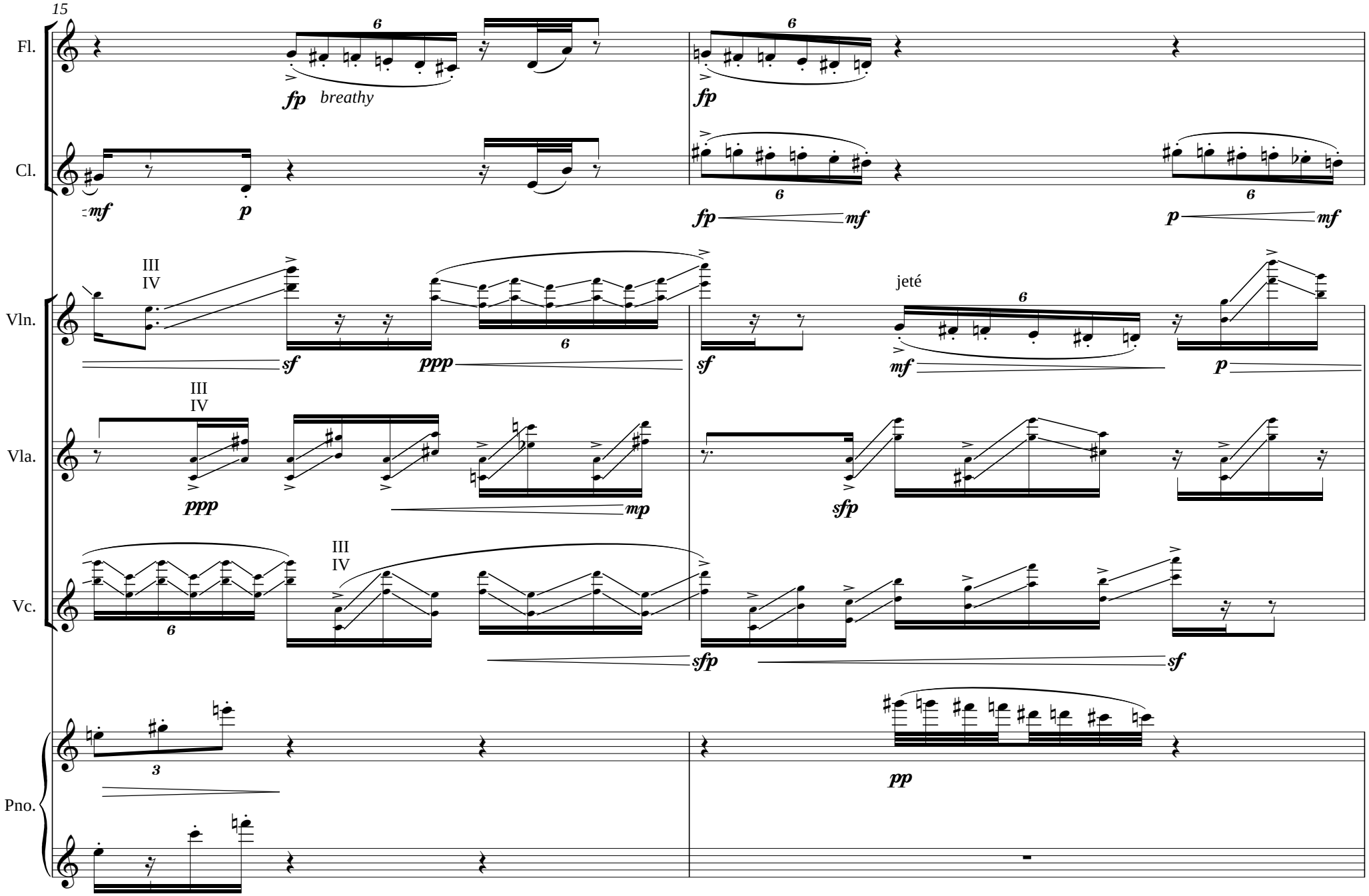

4
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
molto sul pont.
nat.
molto sul pont.
nat.
nat.


A
9
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
Sing and play simultaneously
Sing and play simultaneously
ff
fff
p
f
(ff)
3
6
A


12
Fl.
Cl.
breathy, unfocused tongue slaps
breathy, unfocused tongue slaps
The string should be half-pressed to the fingerboard to achieve a muffled sound.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.


15
Fl.
fp
breathy
fp
Cl.
mf
p
fp
mf
p
mf
Vln.
III
IV
sf
ppp
sf
jeté
mf
p
Vla.
III
IV
ppp
mp
sfp
Vc.
III
IV
sfp
sf
Pno.
pp

17

B **Mischievous**

Fl.

Cl.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

Pno.

jeté

jeté

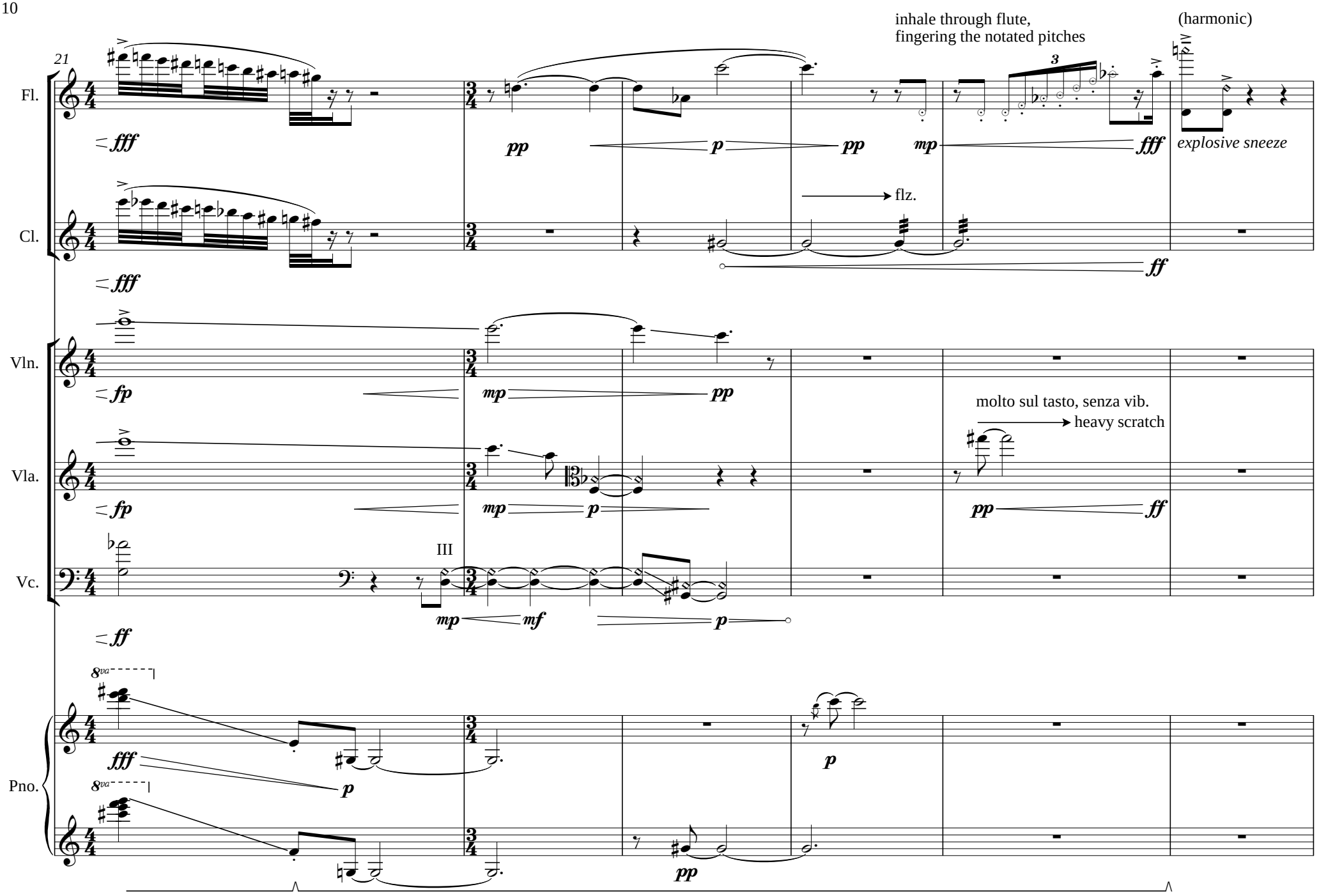
pizz.

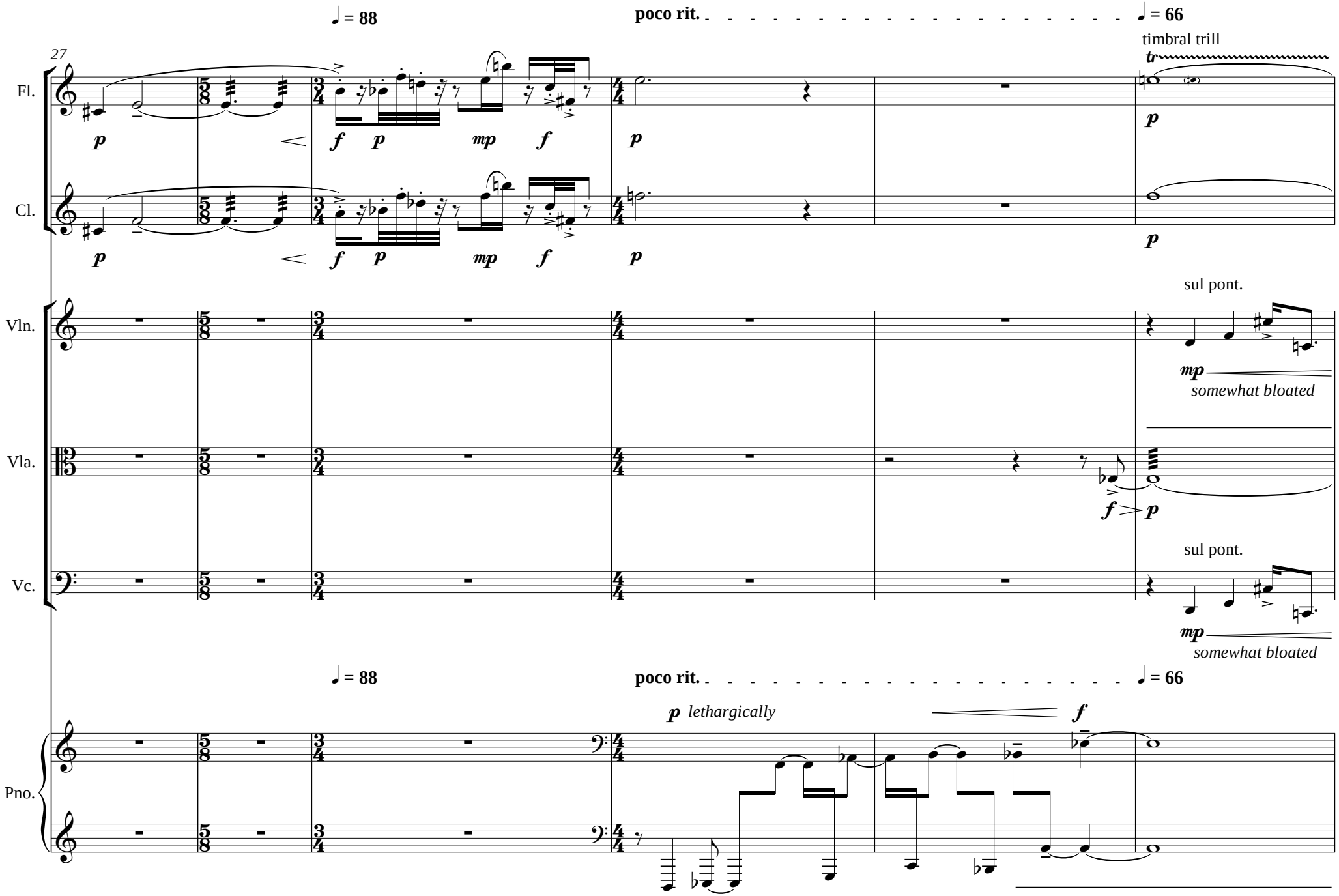
arco

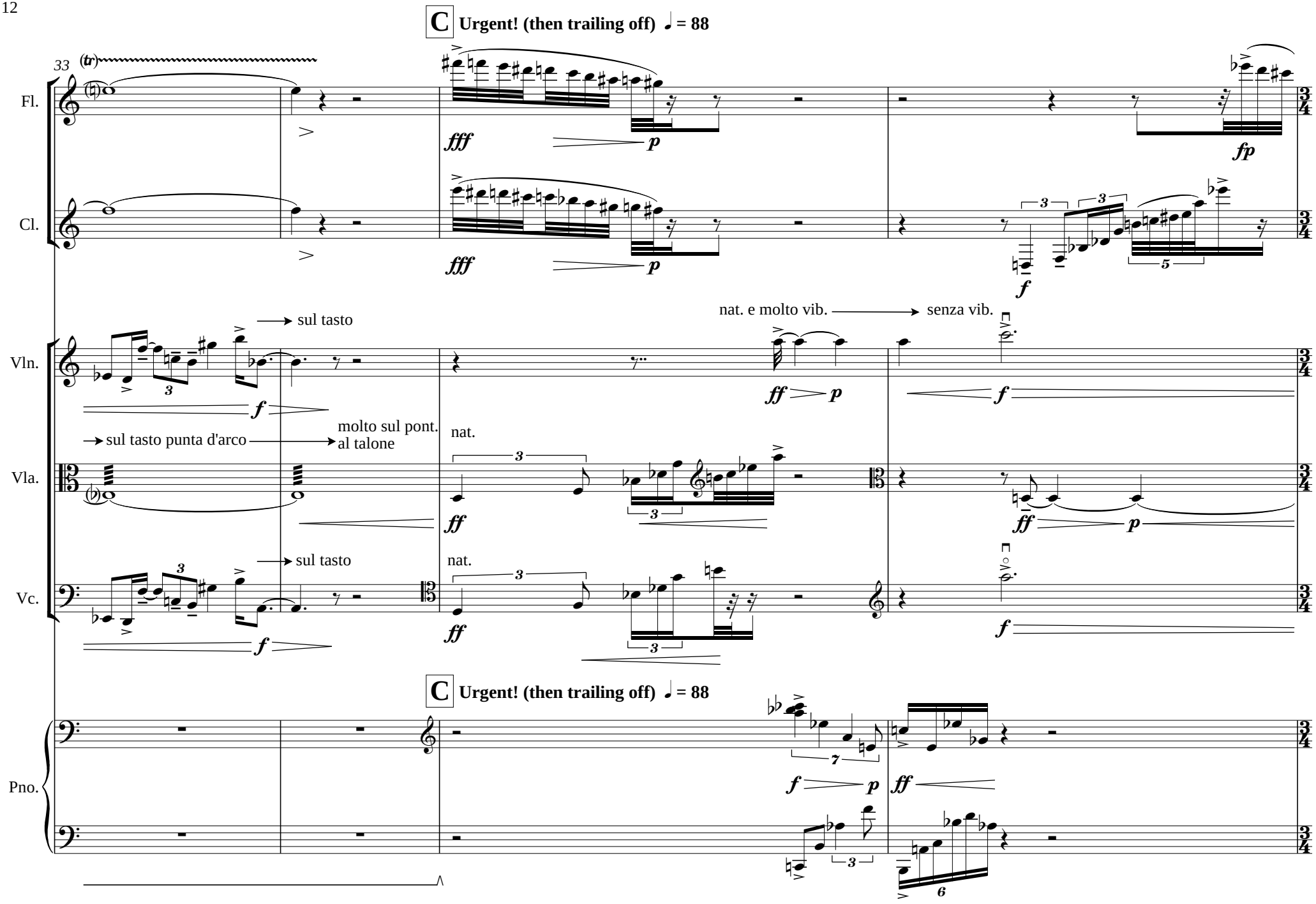
8va

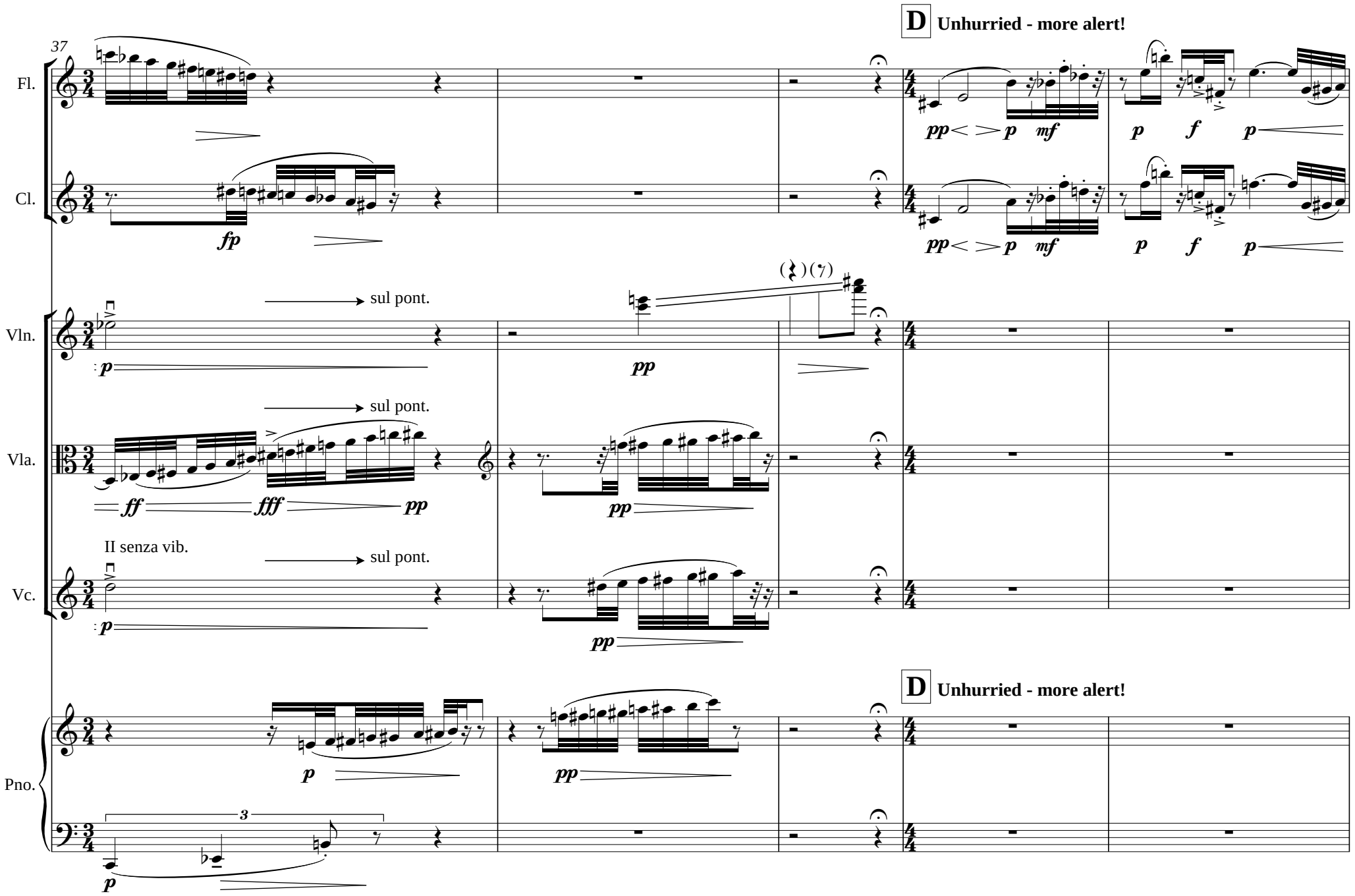
8va

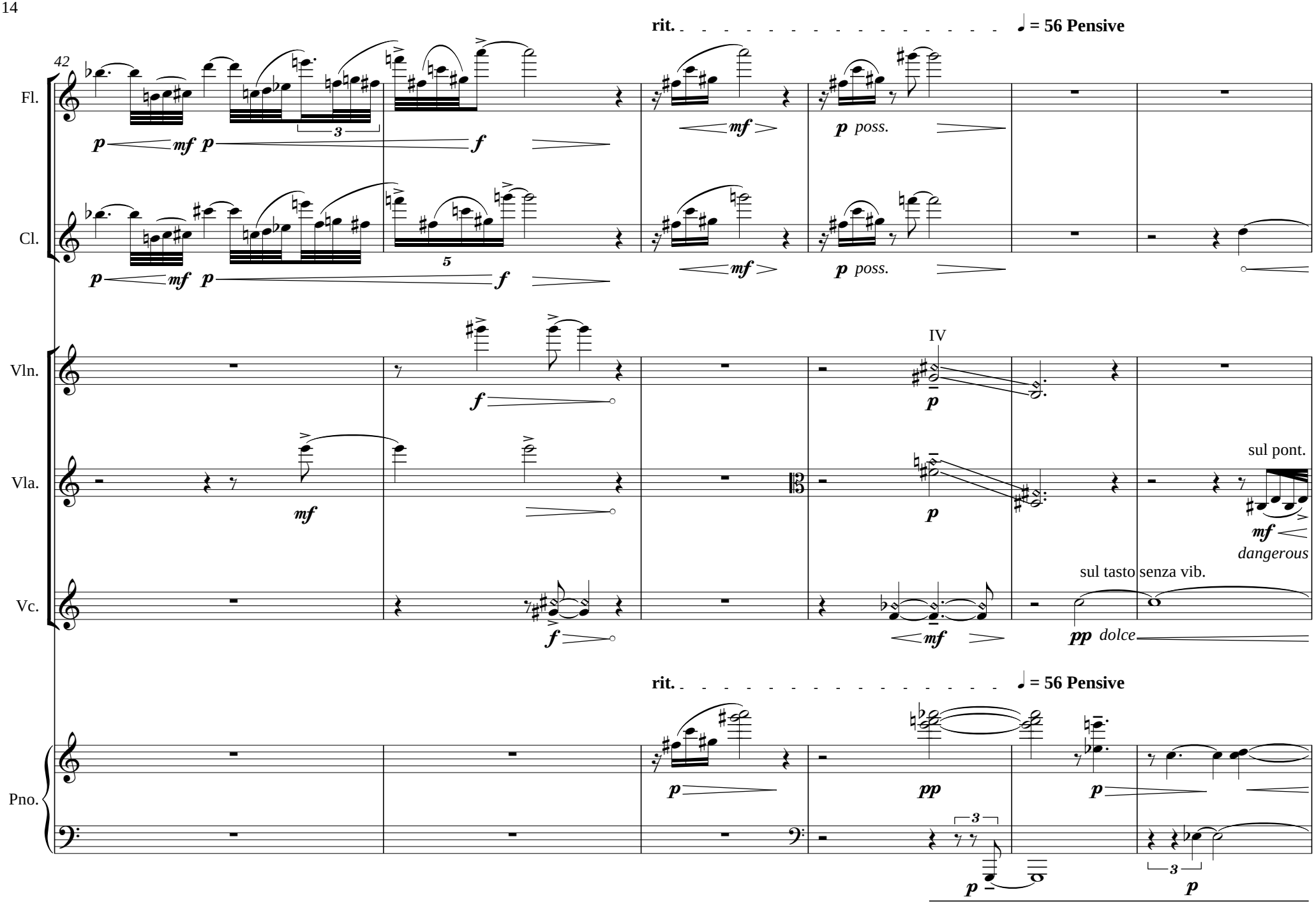
B **Mischievous**

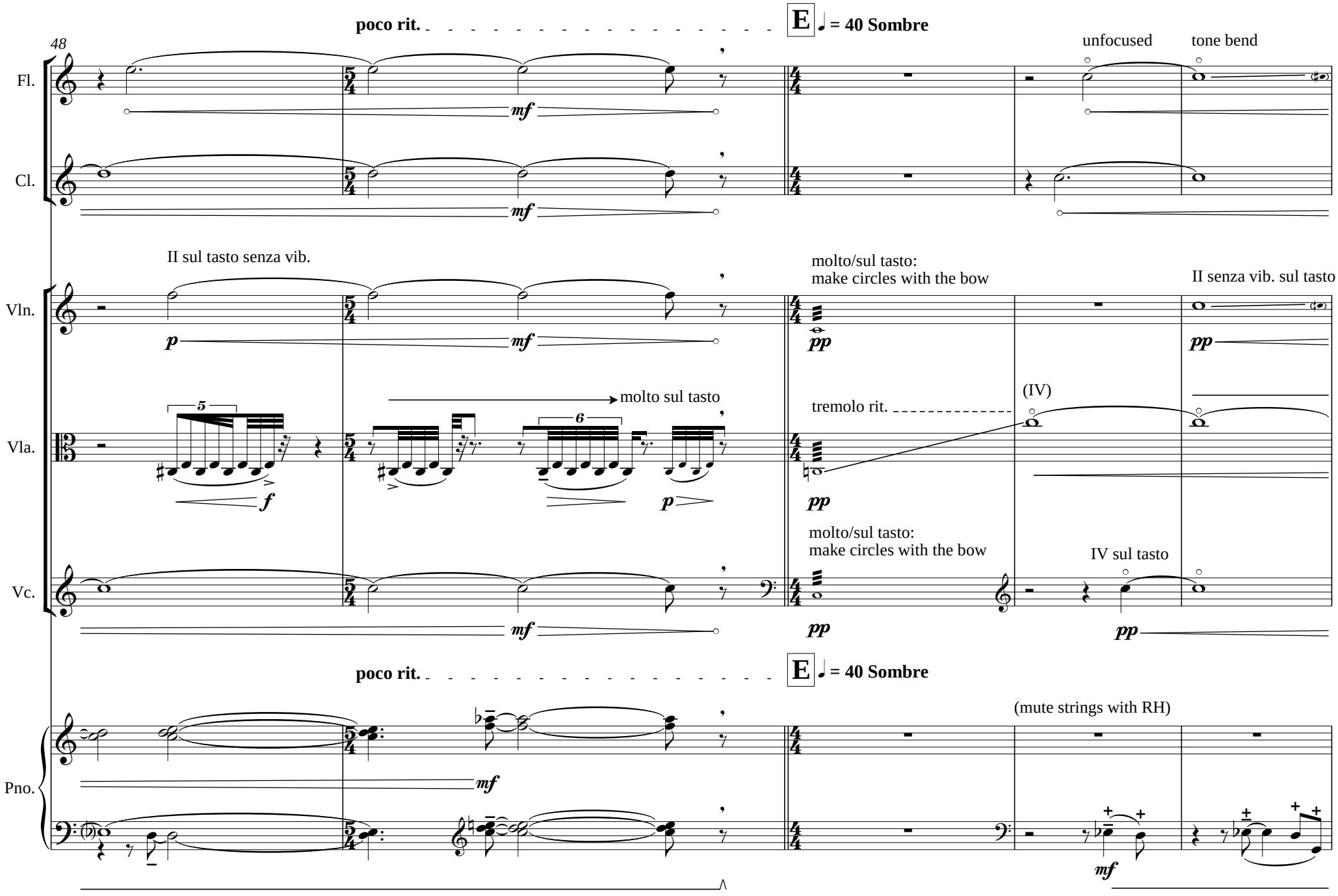

21
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
fff
pp
p
mp
ff
fp
mf
III
8va
inhale through flute,
fingering the notated pitches
(harmonic)
explosive sneeze
flz.
molto sul tasto, senza vib.
heavy scratch

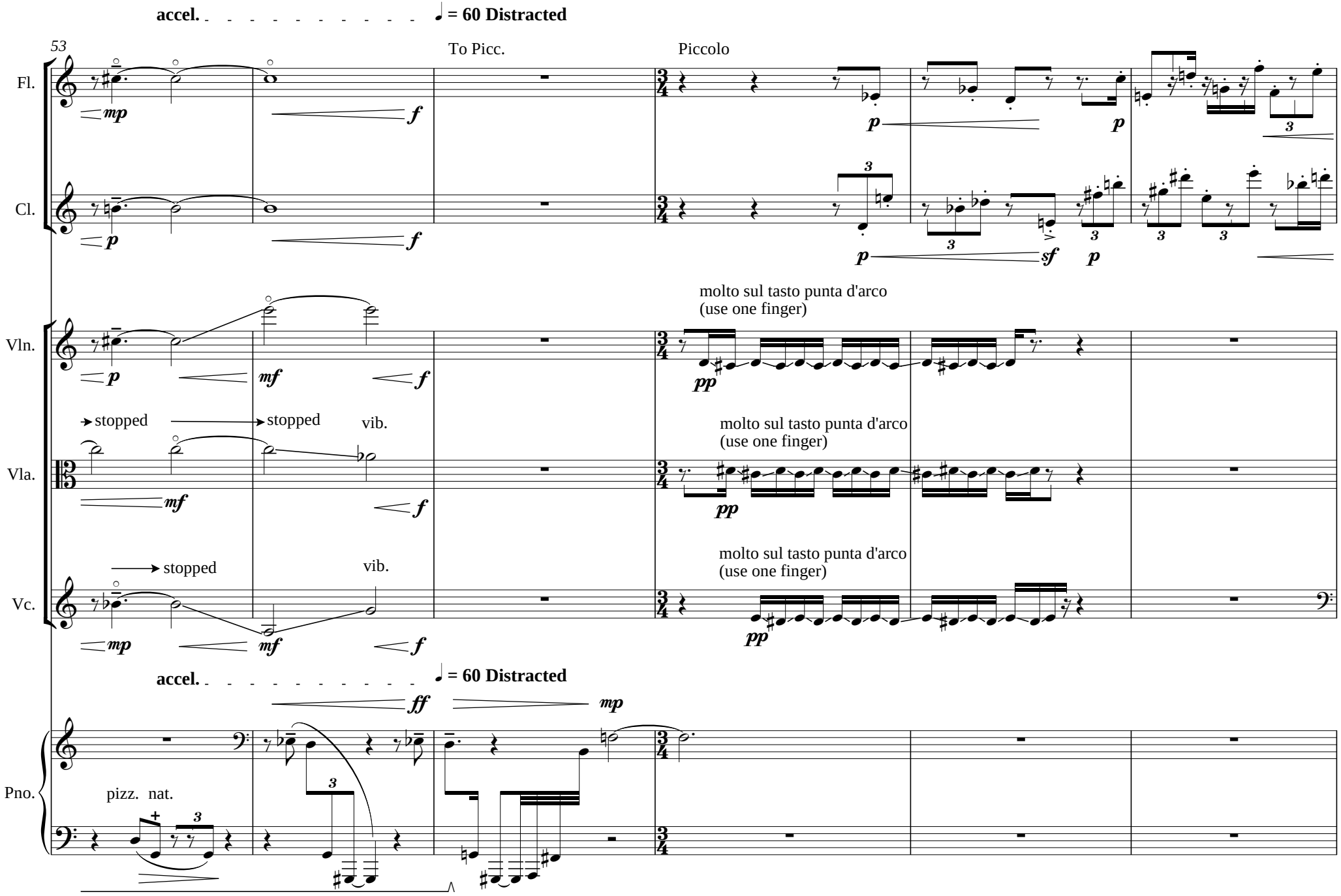

♩ = 88
poco rit.
♩ = 66
27
Fl.
Cl.
timbral trill
tr
p
f
mp
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
sul pont.
somewhat bloated
Pno.
lethargically

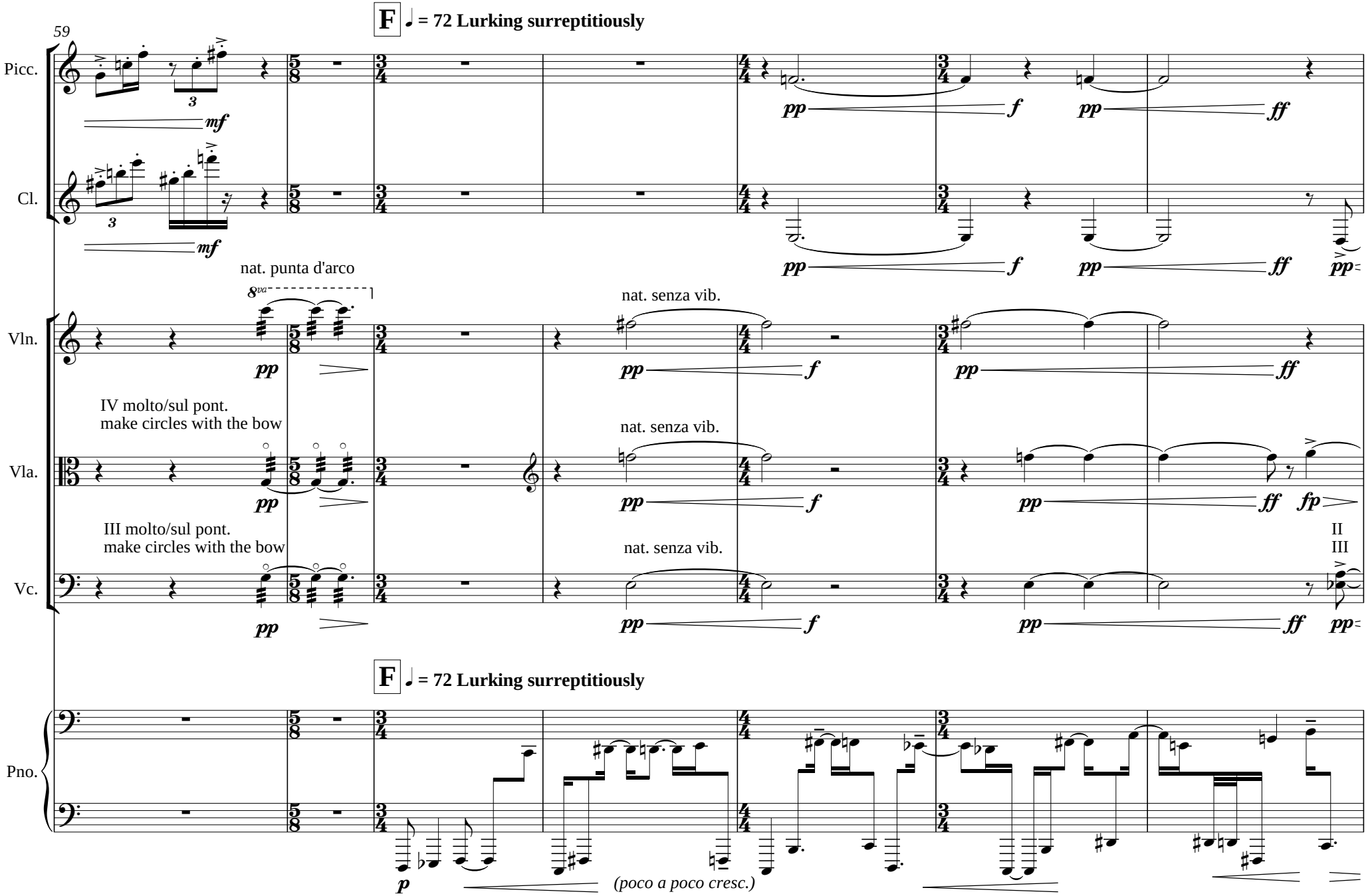

C Urgent! (then trailing off) ♩ = 88
33
(tr)
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
fff
p
fp
f
ff
sul tasto
nat. e molto vib.
senza vib.
sul tasto punta d'arco
molto sul pont.
al talone
nat.

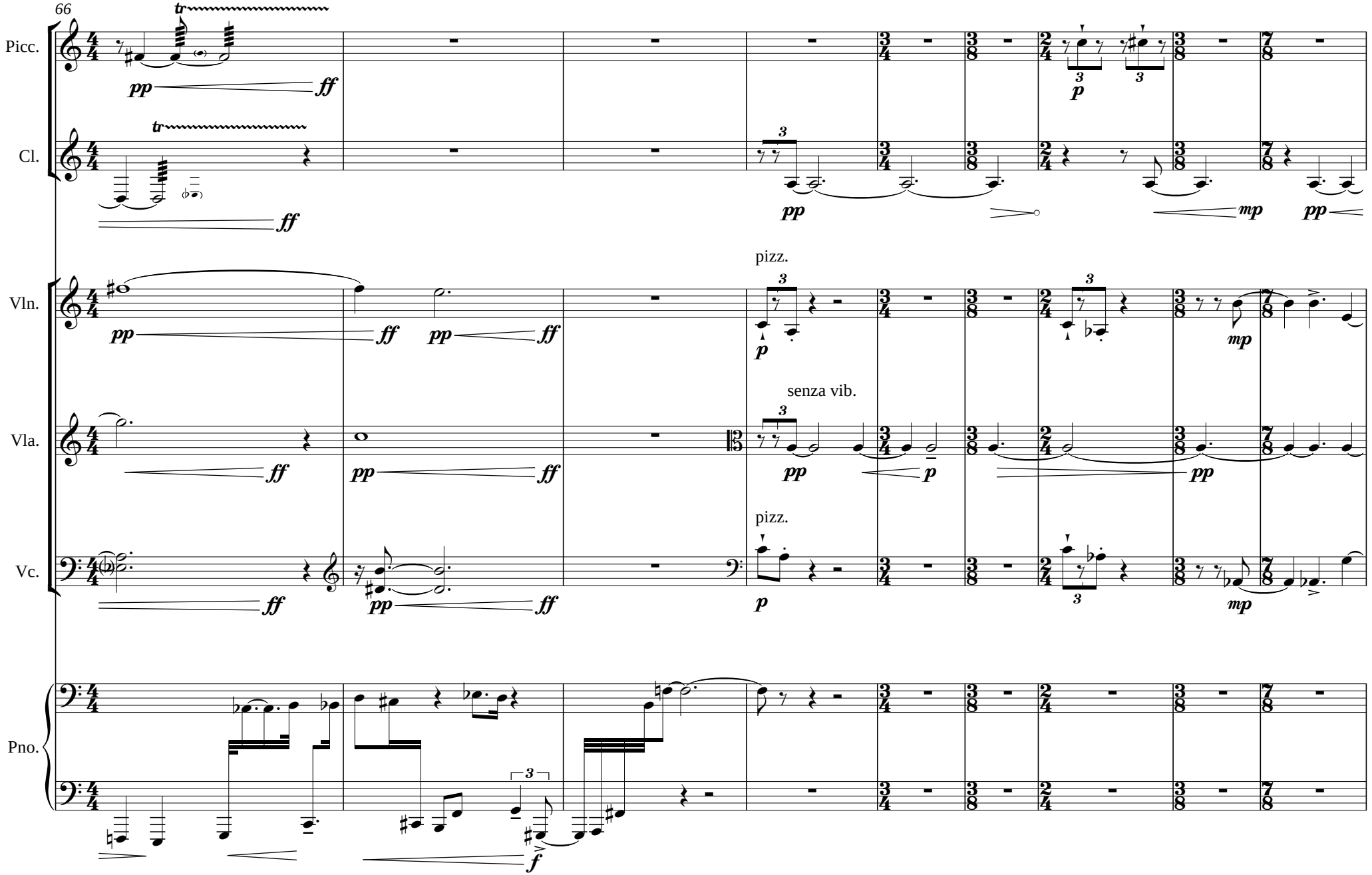

D Unhurried - more alert!
37
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
fp
pp < > p mf
p f p
sul pont.
ff fff pp
II senza vib.
p
3
D Unhurried - more alert!

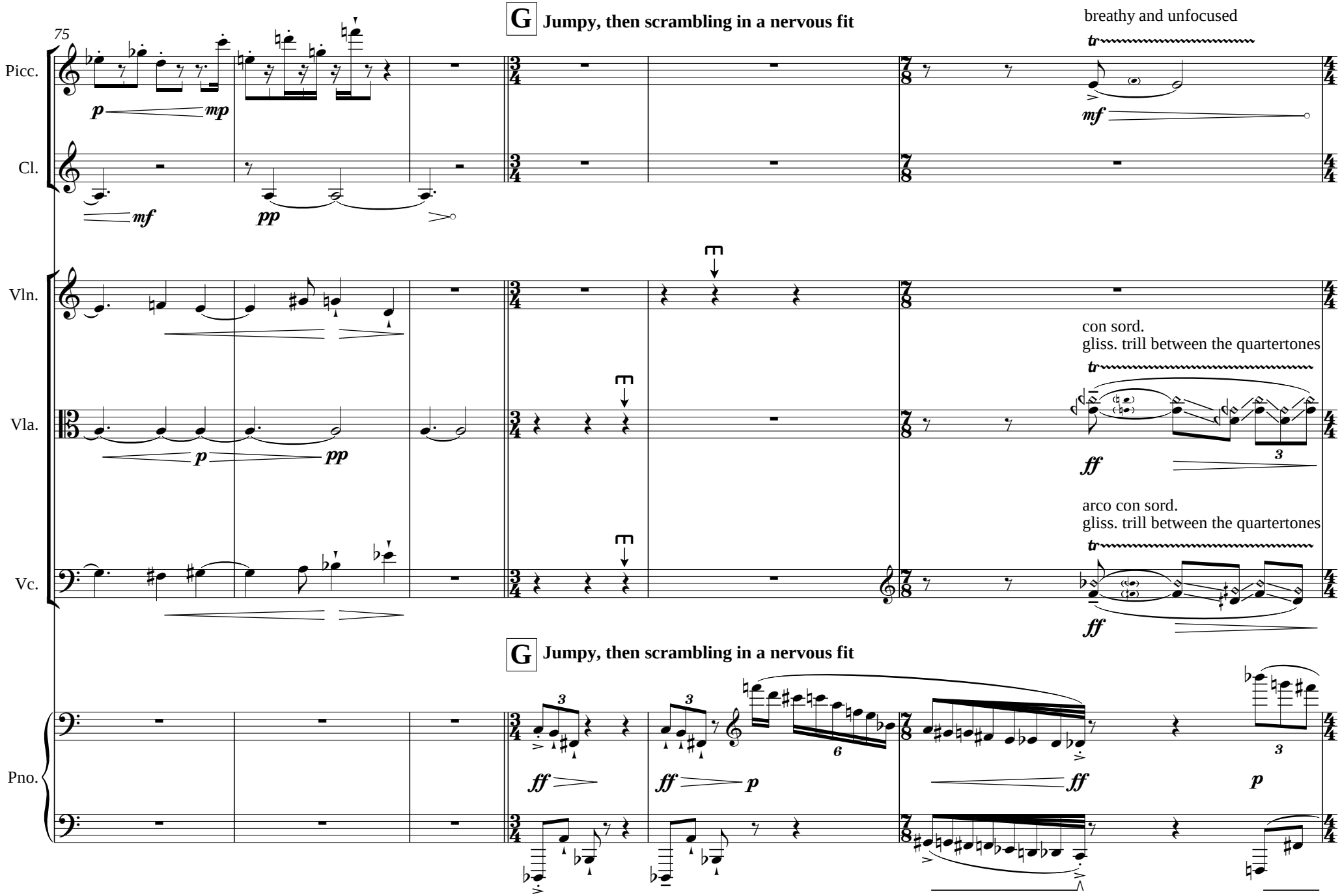

42
rit.
♩ = 56 Pensive
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
p mf p f
mf
p poss.
IV
sul pont.
mf dangerous
sul tasto senza vib.
pp dolce
pp

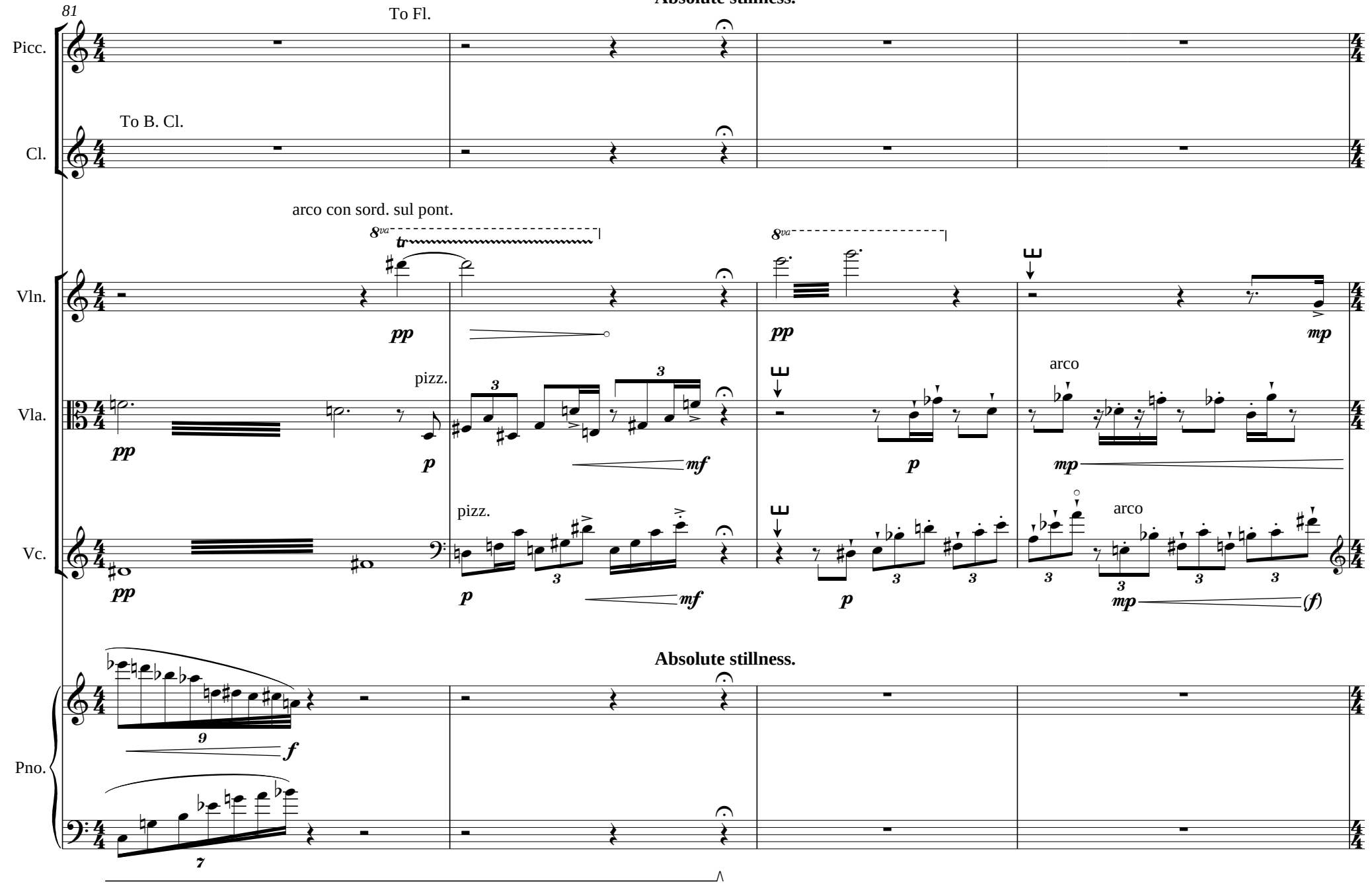

poco rit.
E
= 40 Sombre
48
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
mf
unfocused
tone bend
II sul tasto senza vib.
p
molto sul tasto
f
molto/sul tasto:
make circles with the bow
pp
II senza vib. sul tasto
tremolo rit.
(IV)
IV sul tasto
(mute strings with RH)

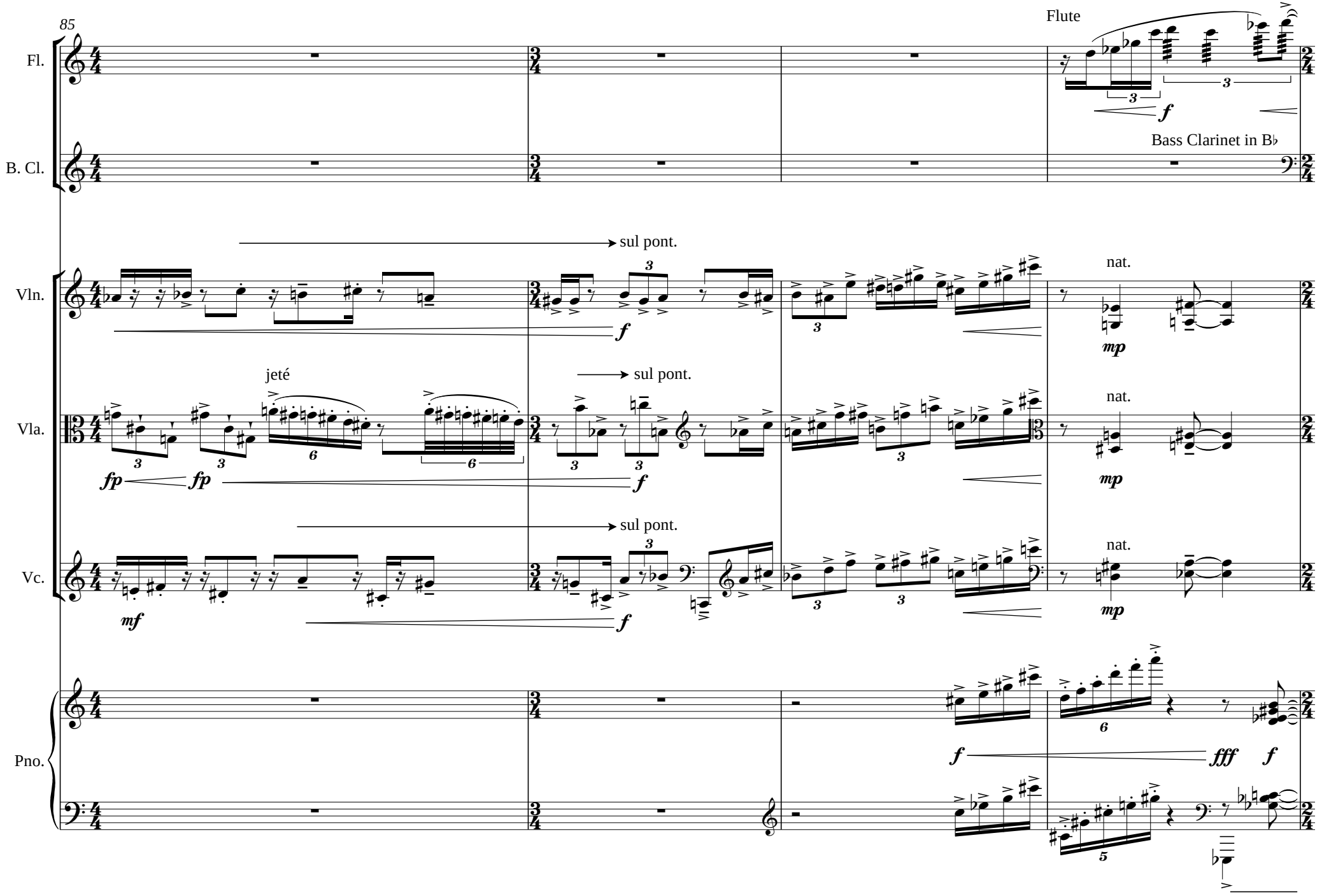

accel.
♩ = 60 Distracted
53
To Picc.
Piccolo
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
molto sul tasto punta d'arco
(use one finger)
Vla.
stopped
stopped
vib.
molto sul tasto punta d'arco
(use one finger)
Vc.
stopped
vib.
molto sul tasto punta d'arco
(use one finger)
accel.
♩ = 60 Distracted
Pno.
pizz. nat.

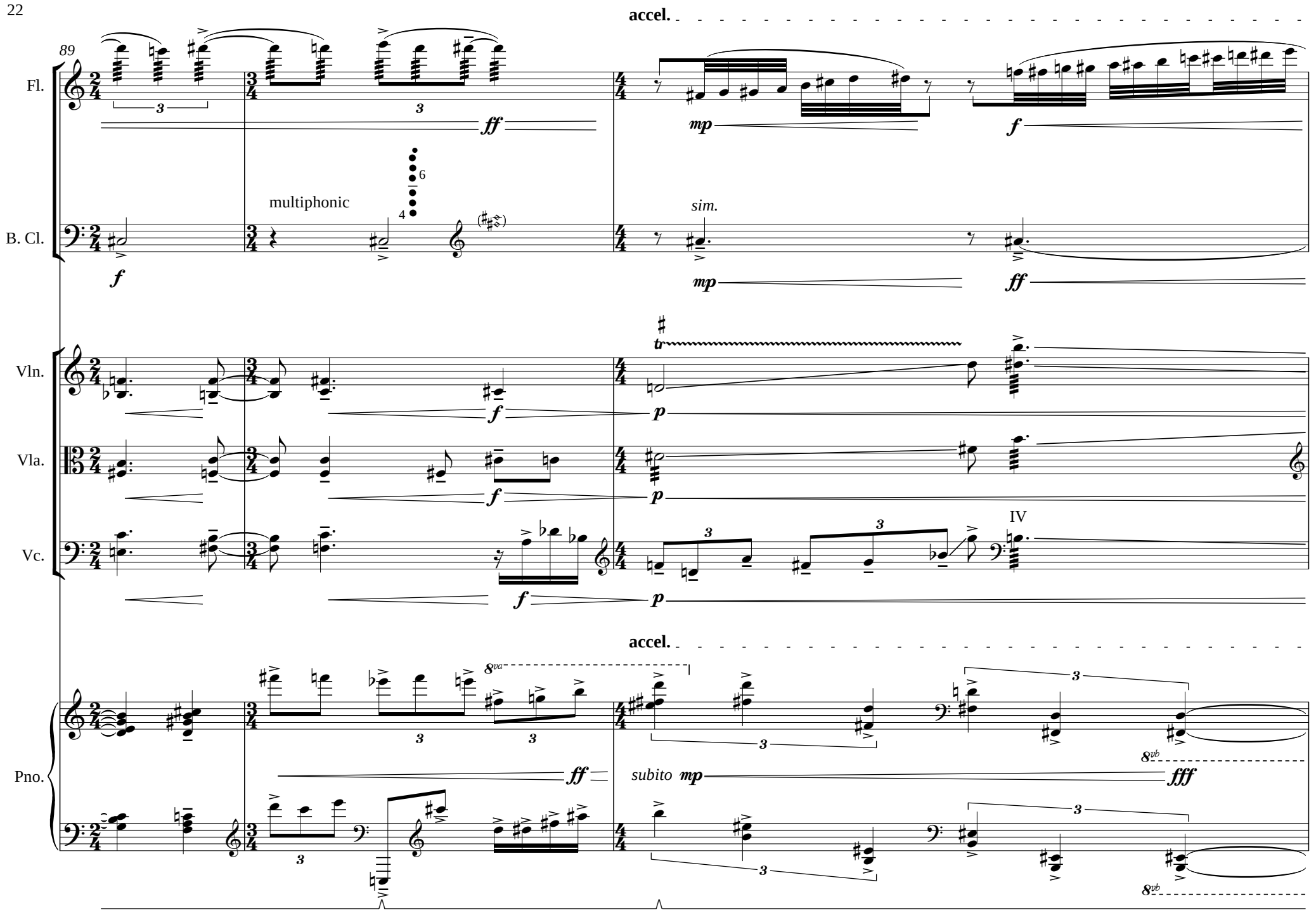

59
F ♩ = 72 Lurking surreptitiously
Picc.
Cl.
nat. punta d'arco
8va
nat. senza vib.
Vln.
IV molto/sul pont.
make circles with the bow
Vla.
III molto/sul pont.
make circles with the bow
Vc.
II
III
F ♩ = 72 Lurking surreptitiously
Pno.
(poco a poco cresc.)

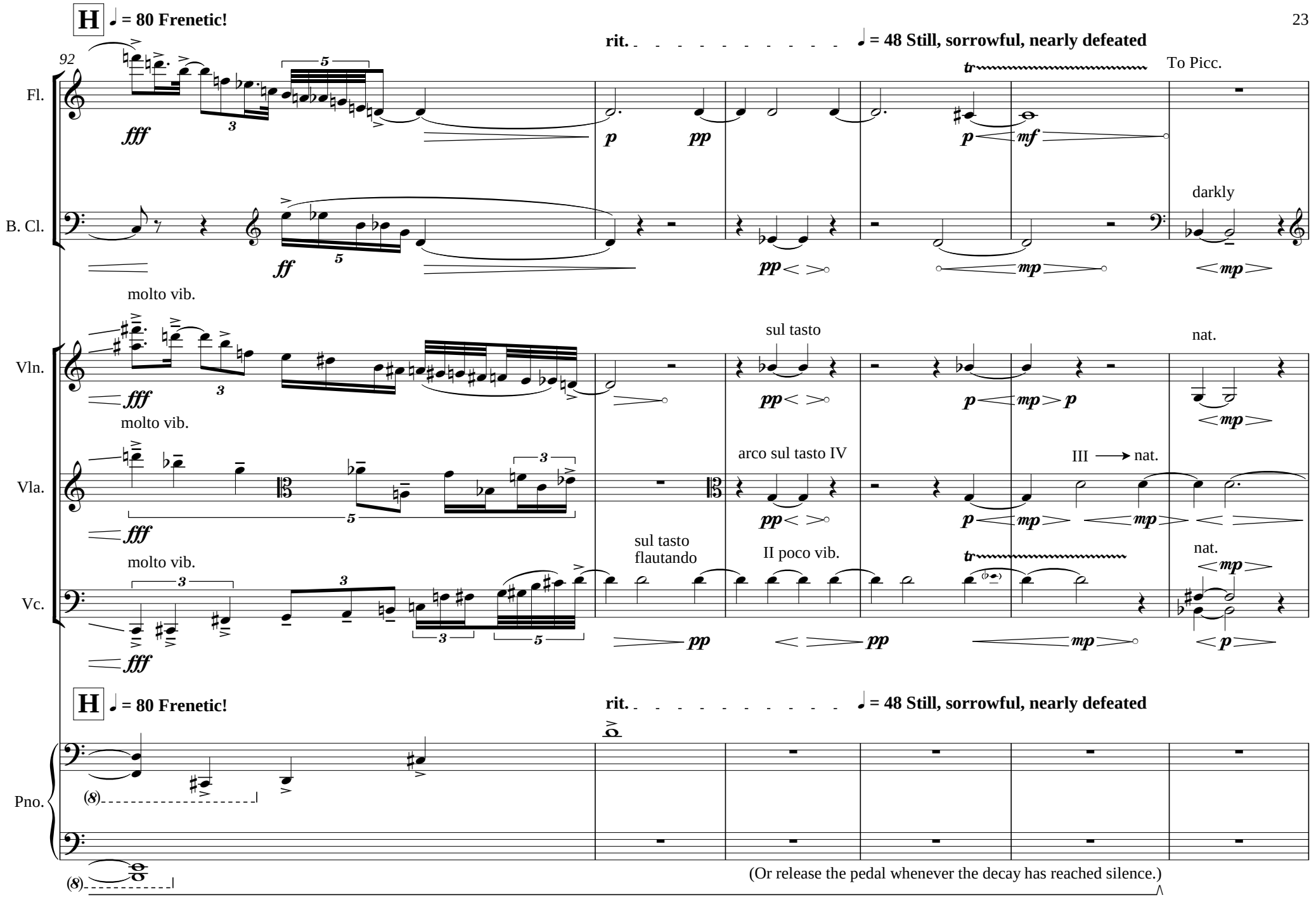

66
Picc.
Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
pizz.
senza vib.
pizz.

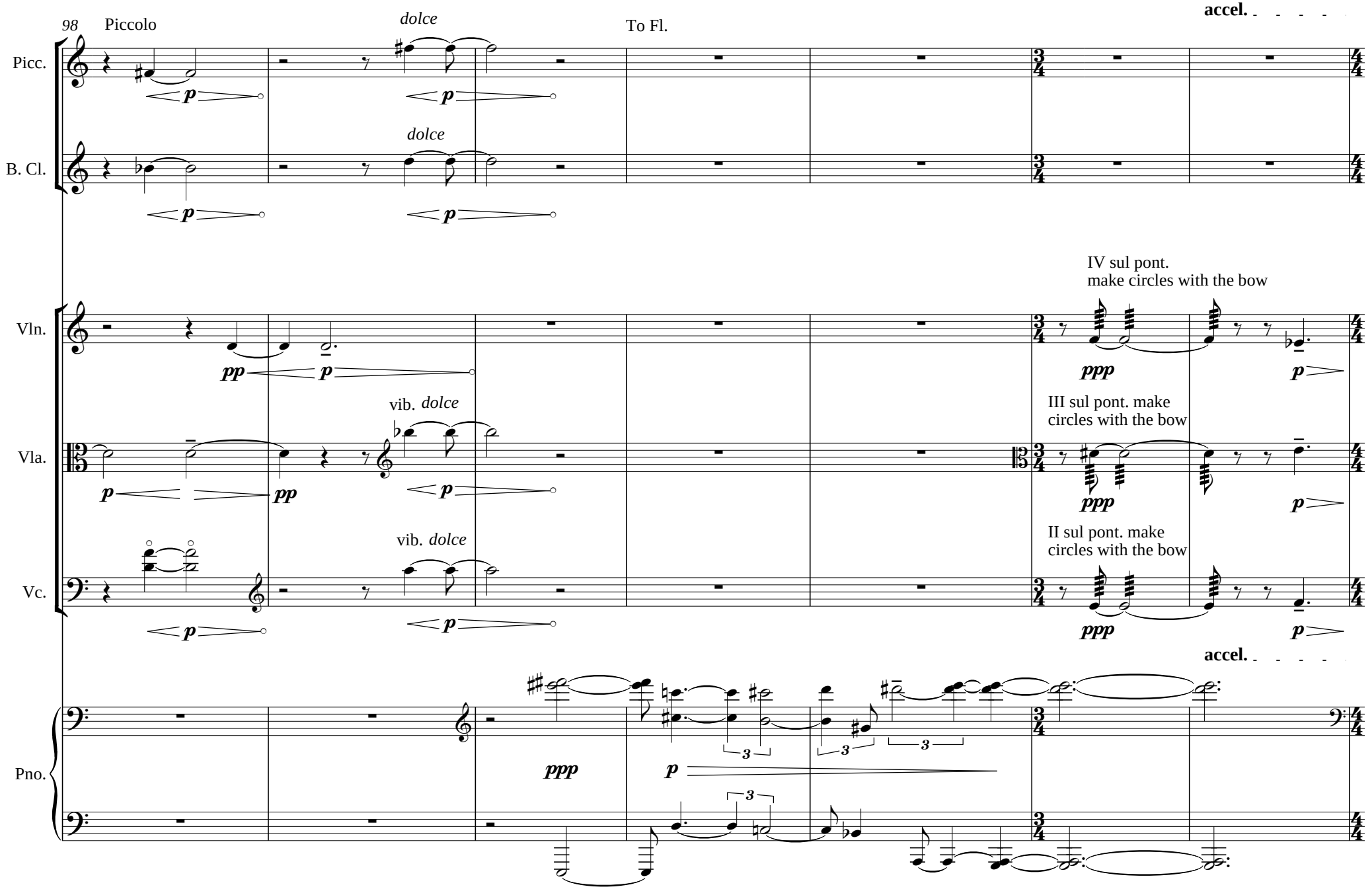

75
G
Jumpy, then scrambling in a nervous fit
breathy and unfocused
Picc.
Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
con sord.
gliss. trill between the quartertones
arco con sord.
gliss. trill between the quartertones
G
Jumpy, then scrambling in a nervous fit

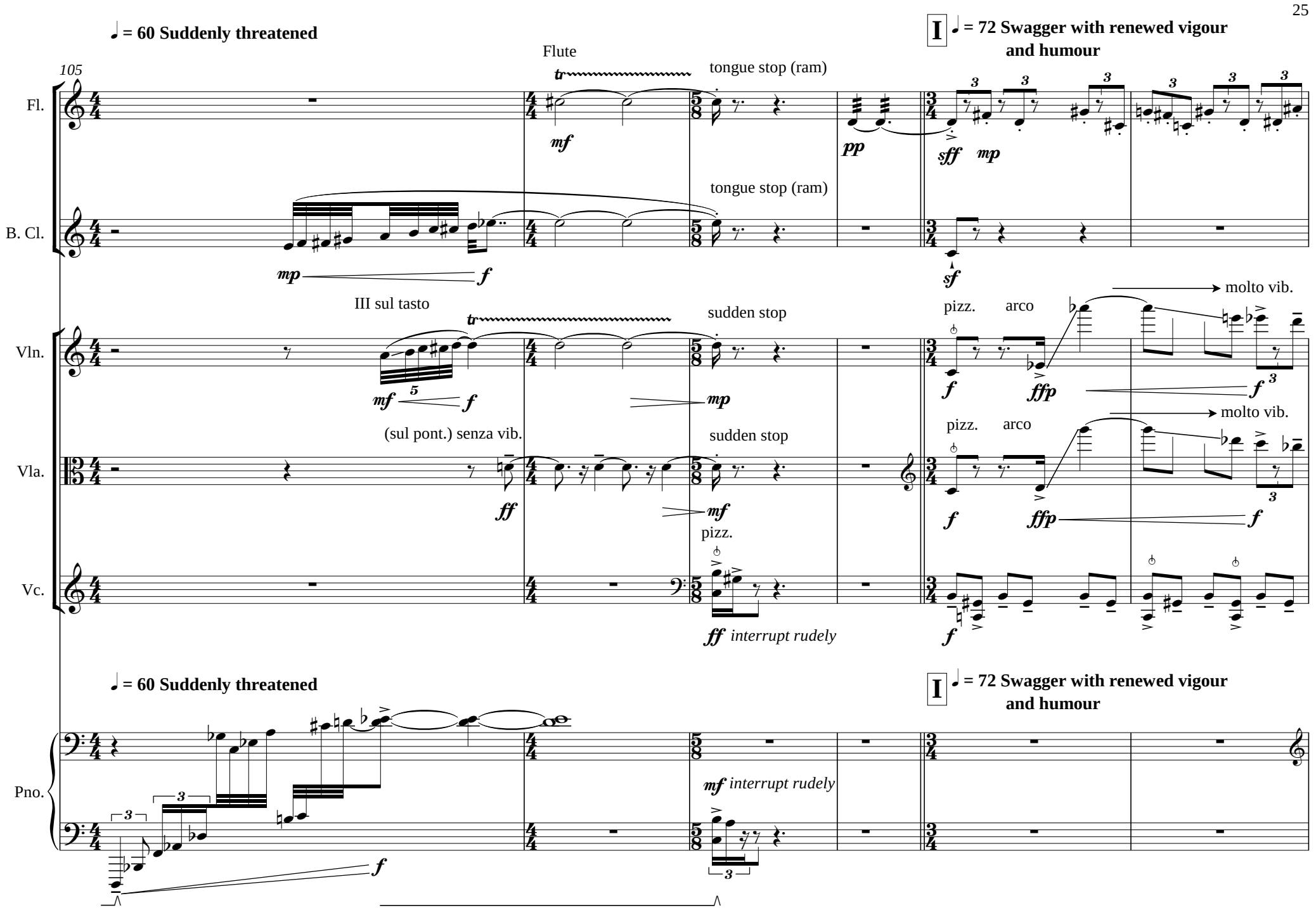

Absolute stillness.
81
To Fl.
Picc.
To B. Cl.
Cl.
arco con sord. sul pont.
8va
tr
Vln.
pp
pp
mp
pizz.
Vla.
pp
p
mf
p
arco
mp
pizz.
Vc.
pp
p
mf
p
arco
mp
(f)
Absolute stillness.
Pno.
f

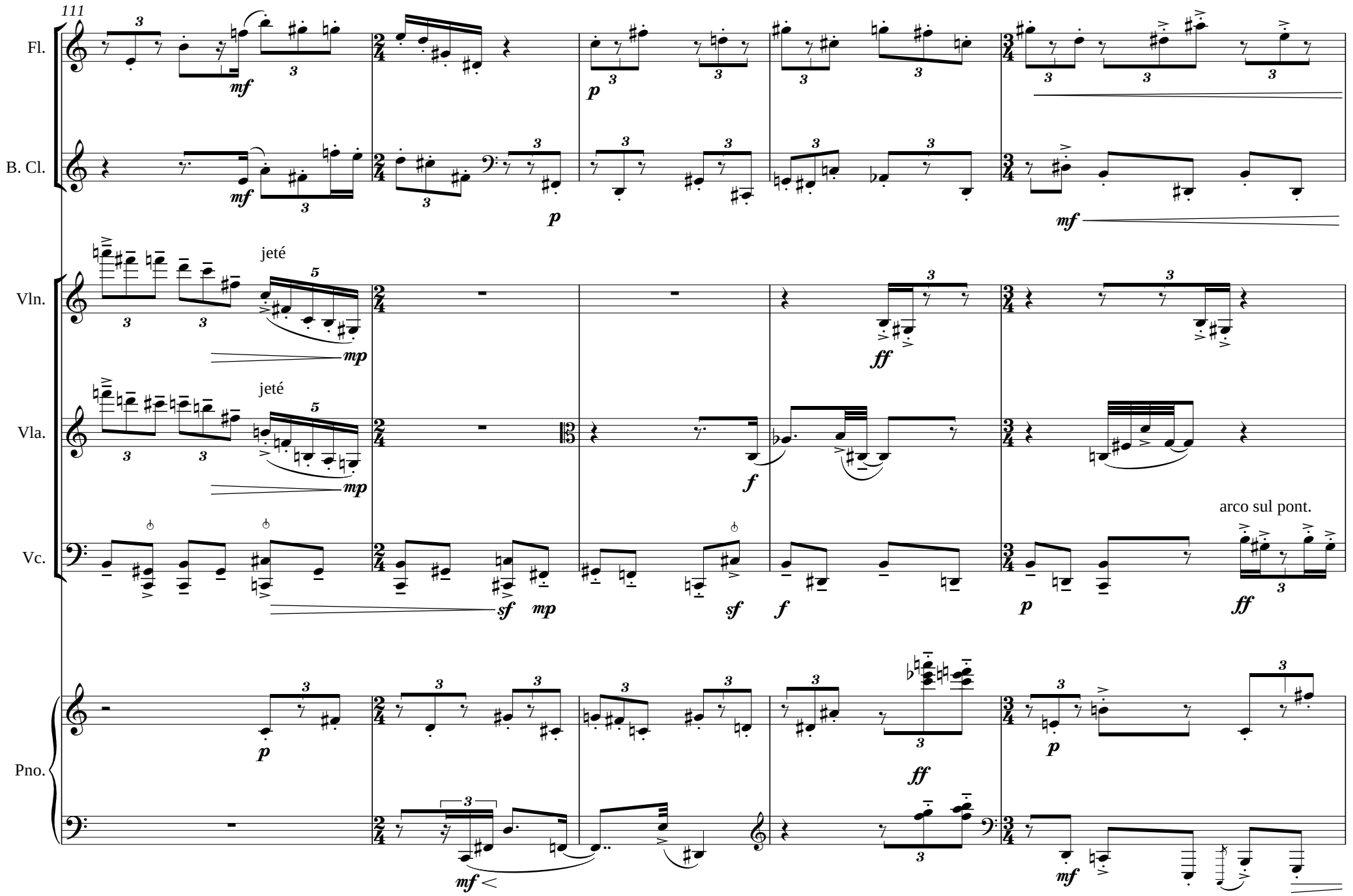

85
Fl.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
Flute
Bass Clinet in B♭
sul pont.
jeté
nat.
fp
mf
mp
f
fff

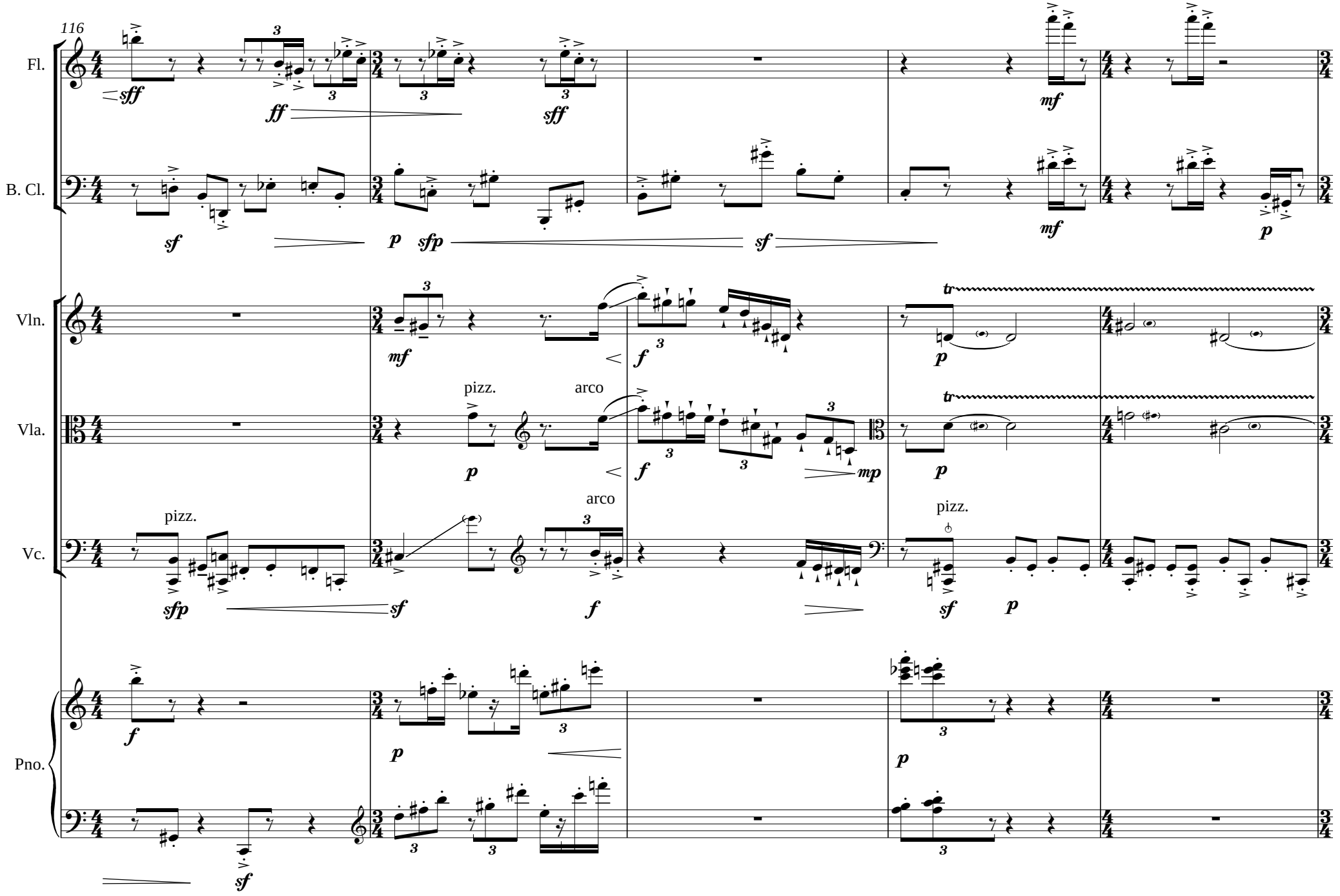

accel.
89
Fl.
ff
mp
f
multiphonic
6
4
B. Cl.
sim.
mp
ff
Vln.
tr
f
p
Vla.
f
p
Vc.
IV
f
p
accel.
8va
Pno.
ff
subito mp
fff
8vb
8vb

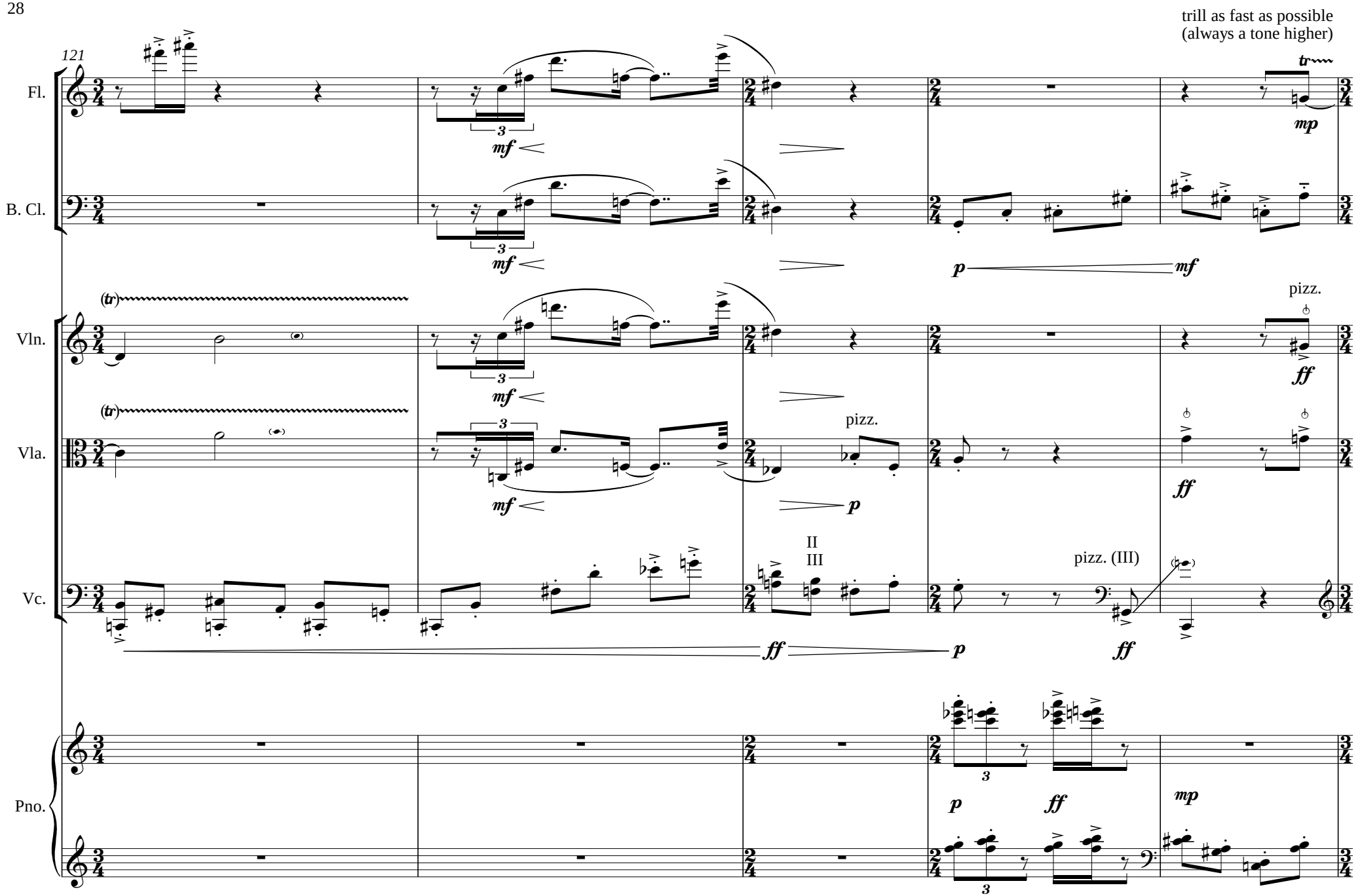

H
♩ = 80 Frenetic!
92
rit.
♩ = 48 Still, sorrowful, nearly defeated
To Picc.
Fl.
B. Cl.
darkly
molto vib.
Vln.
sul tasto
nat.
molto vib.
Vla.
arco sul tasto IV
III → nat.
Vc.
sul tasto
flautando
II poco vib.
nat.
molto vib.
H
♩ = 80 Frenetic!
rit.
♩ = 48 Still, sorrowful, nearly defeated
Pno.
(Or release the pedal whenever the decay has reached silence.)

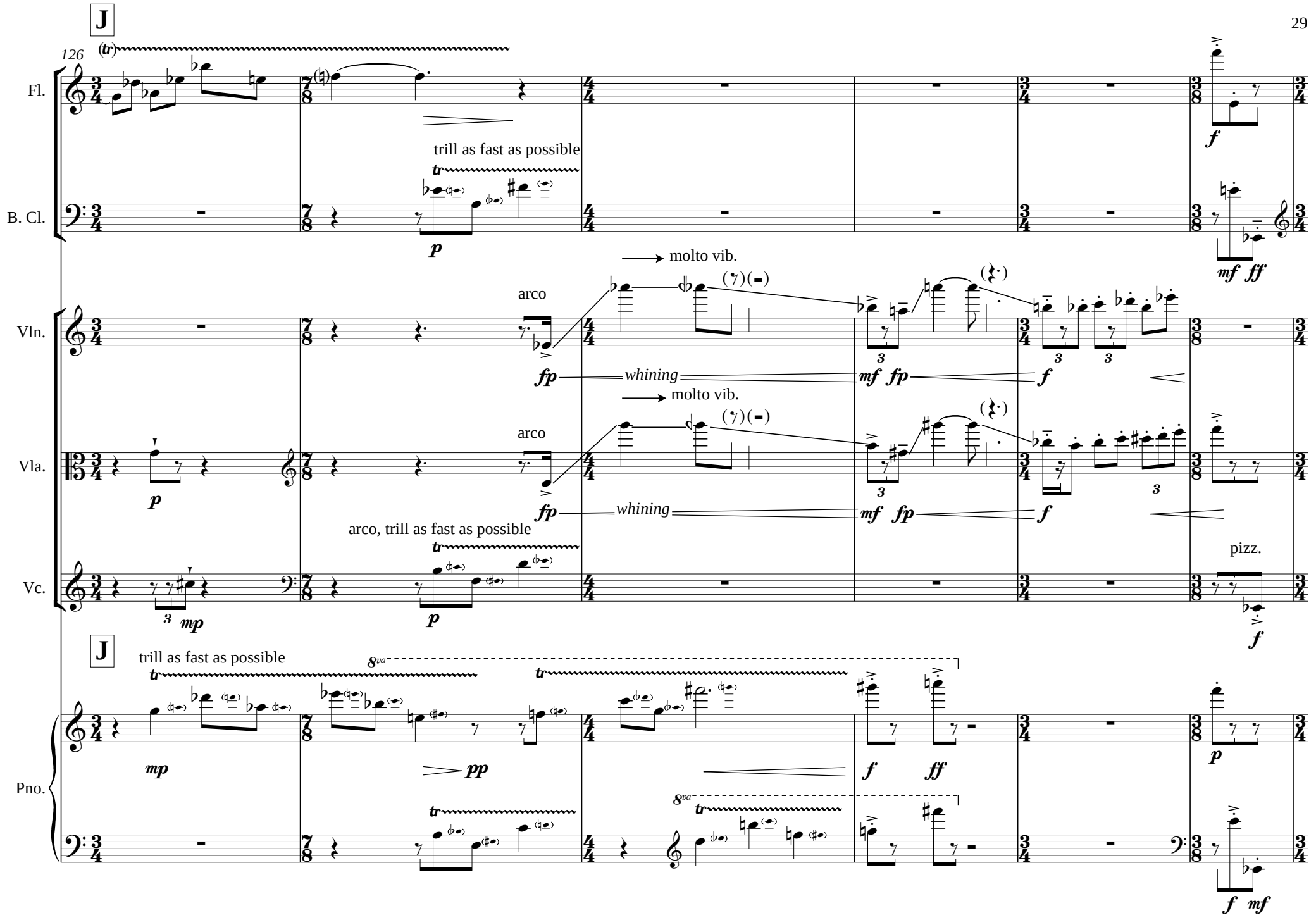

98
Piccolo
dolce
To Fl.
accel.
Picc.
B. Cl.
dolce
IV sul pont.
make circles with the bow
Vln.
vib. dolce
III sul pont. make
circles with the bow
Vla.
vib. dolce
II sul pont. make
circles with the bow
Vc.
accel.
Pno.

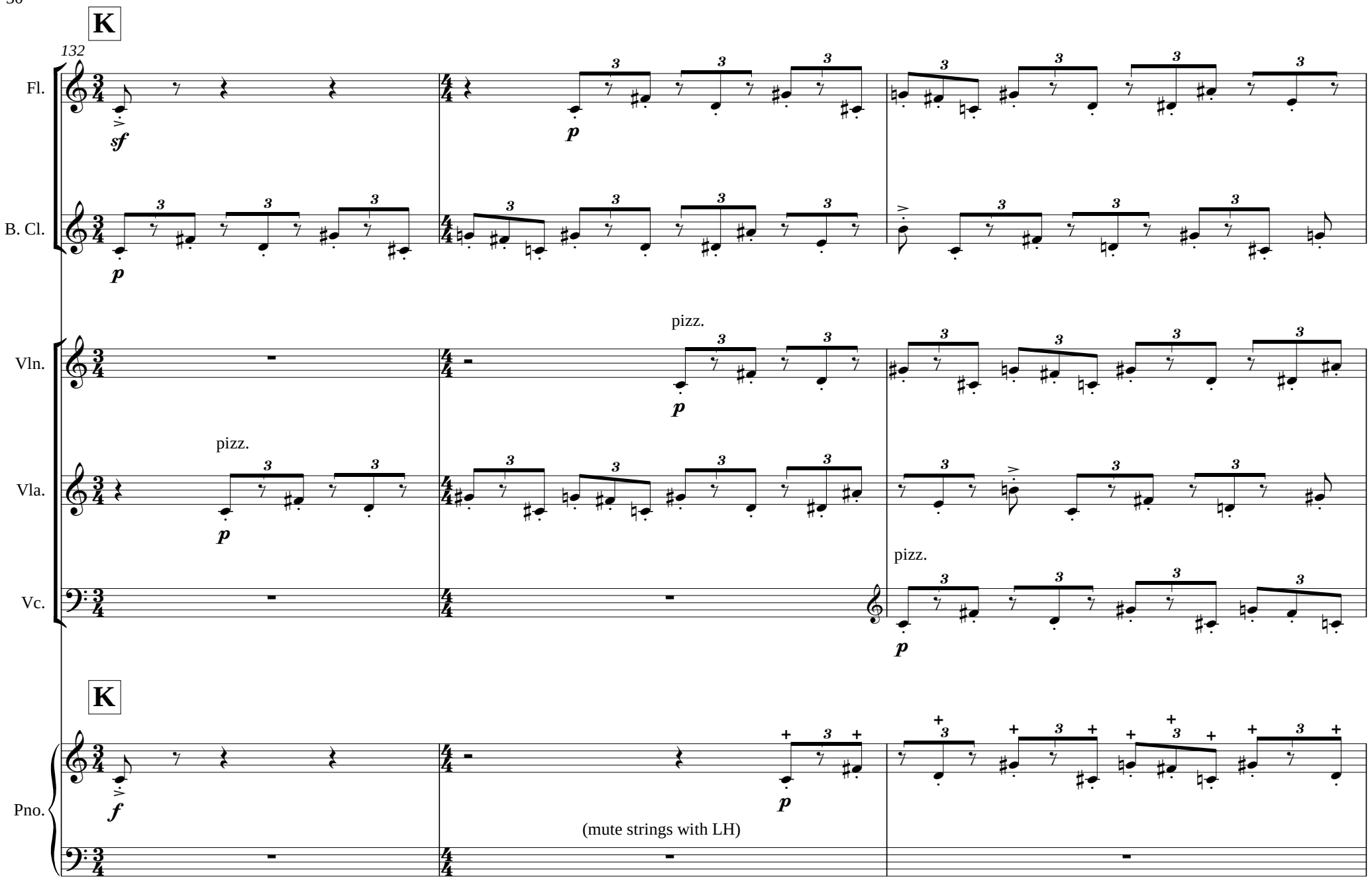

♩ = 60 Suddenly threatened
105
Flute
tongue stop (ram)
Fl.
mf
pp
I
♩ = 72 Swagger with renewed vigour and humour
sff
mp
tongue stop (ram)
B. Cl.
mp
f
sf
III sul tasto
sudden stop
molto vib.
pizz.
arco
Vln.
mf
5
f
mp
ffp
(sul pont.) senza vib.
sudden stop
Vla.
ff
mf
pizz.
Vc.
ff interrupt rudely
♩ = 60 Suddenly threatened
I
♩ = 72 Swagger with renewed vigour and humour
Pno.
mf interrupt rudely
f

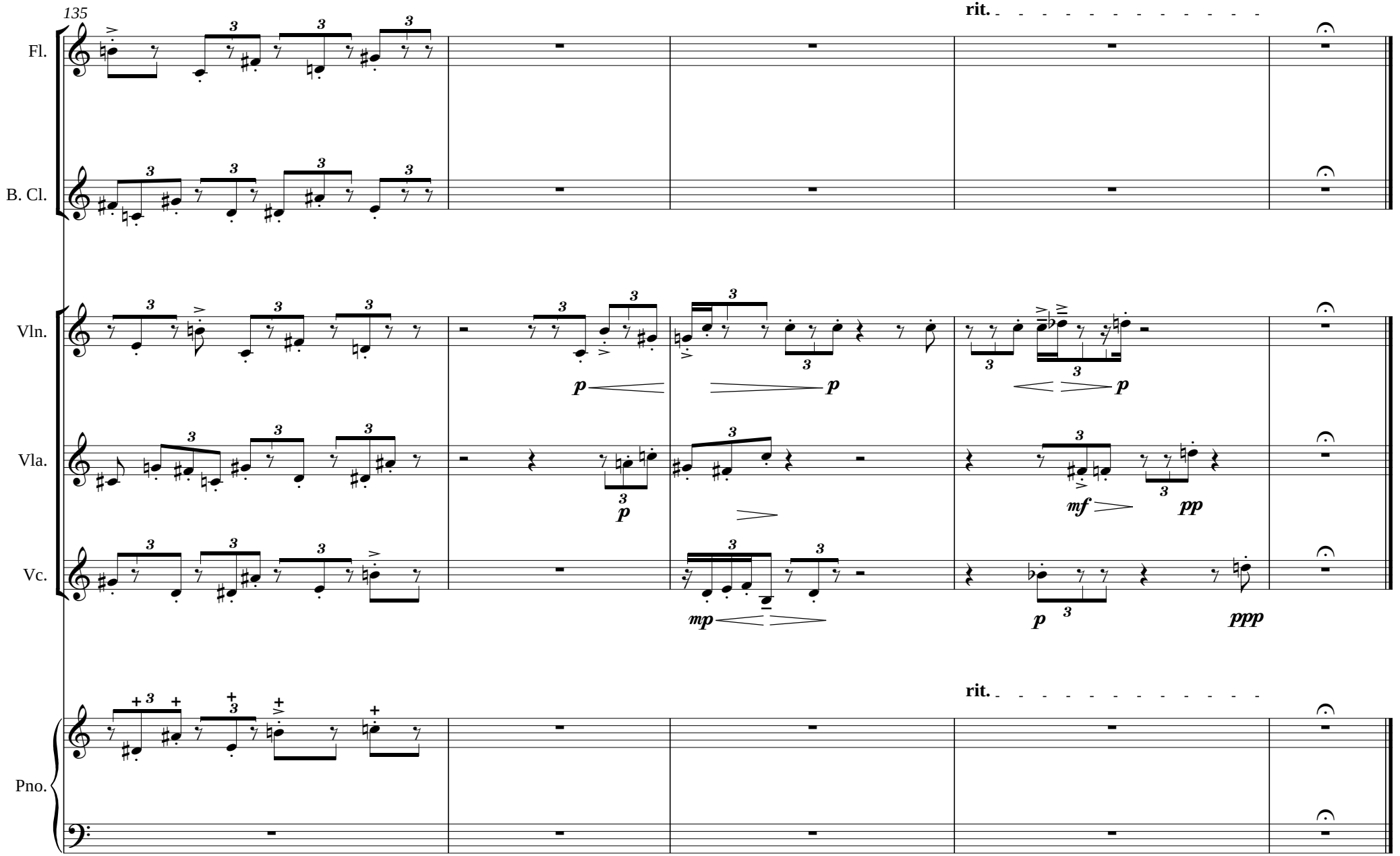

111
Fl.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
jeté
jeté
arco sul pont.


116
Fl.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
pizz.
arco
tr


trill as fast as possible
(always a tone higher)
121
Fl.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
pizz.
II
III
pizz. (III)


J
126
(tr)
Fl.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
trill as fast as possible
molto vib.
arco
whining
arco, trill as fast as possible
pizz.
8va


K
132
Fl.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
sf
p
pizz.
f
(mute strings with LH)


135
rit.
Fl.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
p
mp
mf
pp
ppp