Porch Music

(2007)

1) Before Dawn (parts 1 & 2)

2) Morning in Appalachia

3) Playing Outdoors

4) Dark Clouds over the Coalfields

5) Saturday Night

6) Porch Swing Lullaby

for violin/viola, cello, and percussion

(duration ca. 25 min.)

Mark Phillips

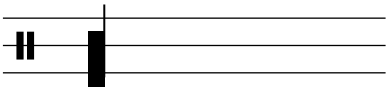
published and distributed by Coolville Music (www.coolvillemusic.com)

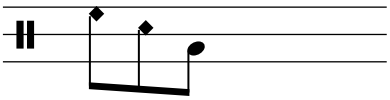
Porch Music

by Mark Phillips

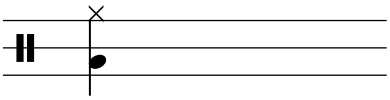
The inspiration for *Porch Music* came to me during a stretch of time in the summer of 2006 when storms damaged the electric service equipment at our house and we endured weeks of nearly constant power outages. As I sat around the house reading, unable to get much work done on the project I needed to finish on my computer, I began to think about a time before life became so dependent on electricity for comfort, productivity, and entertainment. Being old enough to remember life before computers and air conditioning were ubiquitous, I found myself daydreaming and time-traveling back to those days. But then the brakes on my time machine failed and my daydreams careened even further back to a time I know only from reading and listening to the stories of folks much older then myself — a time when electricity and plumbing were scarce; when most Appalachian workers' days were filled with strenuous physical labor in fields, forests, factories, and coal mines; when Saturday was just another day for hard work and weekends didn't begin until Saturday night; when porches provided a necessary escape from the heat on a summer evening and a place for informal social gatherings; a time when almost everything was homemade, including the music and most other entertainment.

Percussion Instruments for
Dark Clouds over the Coalfields



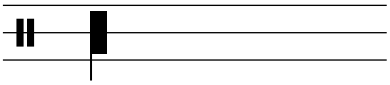
Highly complex percussion sound:
Heavy "junk" metal bars resting on foam struck with heavy metal pipe. Other possible instruments to be added to the mix include crasher bar, high-pitched (or piccolo) woodblock, log drum, and/or tambourine. One of these could be mounted on a foot pedal. If available, a large caxixi could be worn around wrist (or the ankle) to contribute to the sound.

2 log drums med/low

low deep sounding floor tom or muffled bass drum

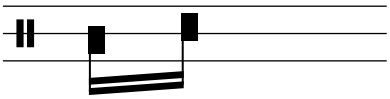


tambourine (struck)

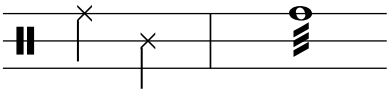
low deep sounding floor tom or muffled bass drum



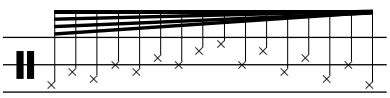
complex percussion sound:
Similar to the beginning complex sound, but omit the junk metal struck with a pipe.



Divide the previous collection of instruments into high & low subsets.



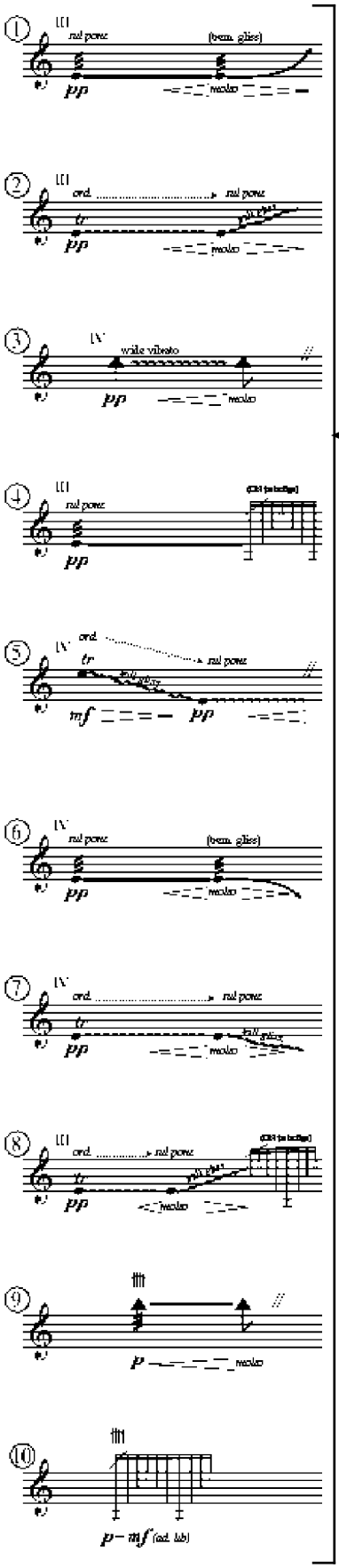
2 suspended cymbals



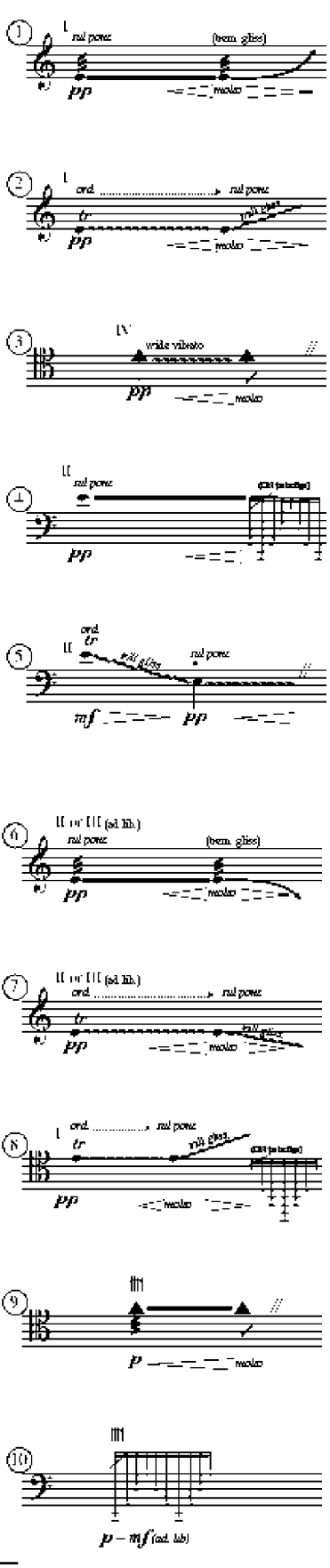
Delicate improvisation using various available struck "noisemakers" including, but not limited to, those already used in the piece (e.g. log drums, floor tom, bongos, tambourine, caxixi).

Before Dawn - part 1

violin

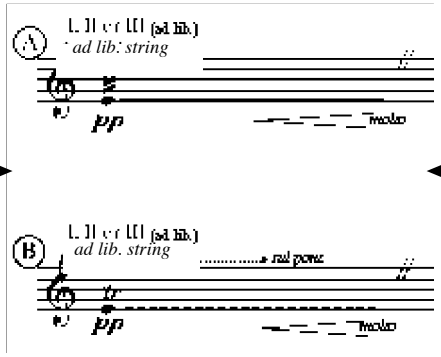


cello



the road map:

Begin with motive A or B and then alternate between numbered motives and lettered motives. After both A & B have been played twice, you may skip between the numbered motives without returning to A or B. Avoid repeating numbered motives more than twice and lettered motives more than three times.



performance notes:

- typical duration for each motive should be ca. 3–5 sec.
- outer limits of motive durations should be 2–6 sec.
- trills and tremolos should be very fast
- crescendos and diminuendos should be dramatic
- sul ponticello should be extreme
- motive 9 is played *behind* the bridge

The sound of this movement should be characterized by lots of busy, nervous energy should be constant, with no silences of any consequence — like a swarm of insects. Overall volume should be fairly soft except for short burst of sound caused by crescendos motives.

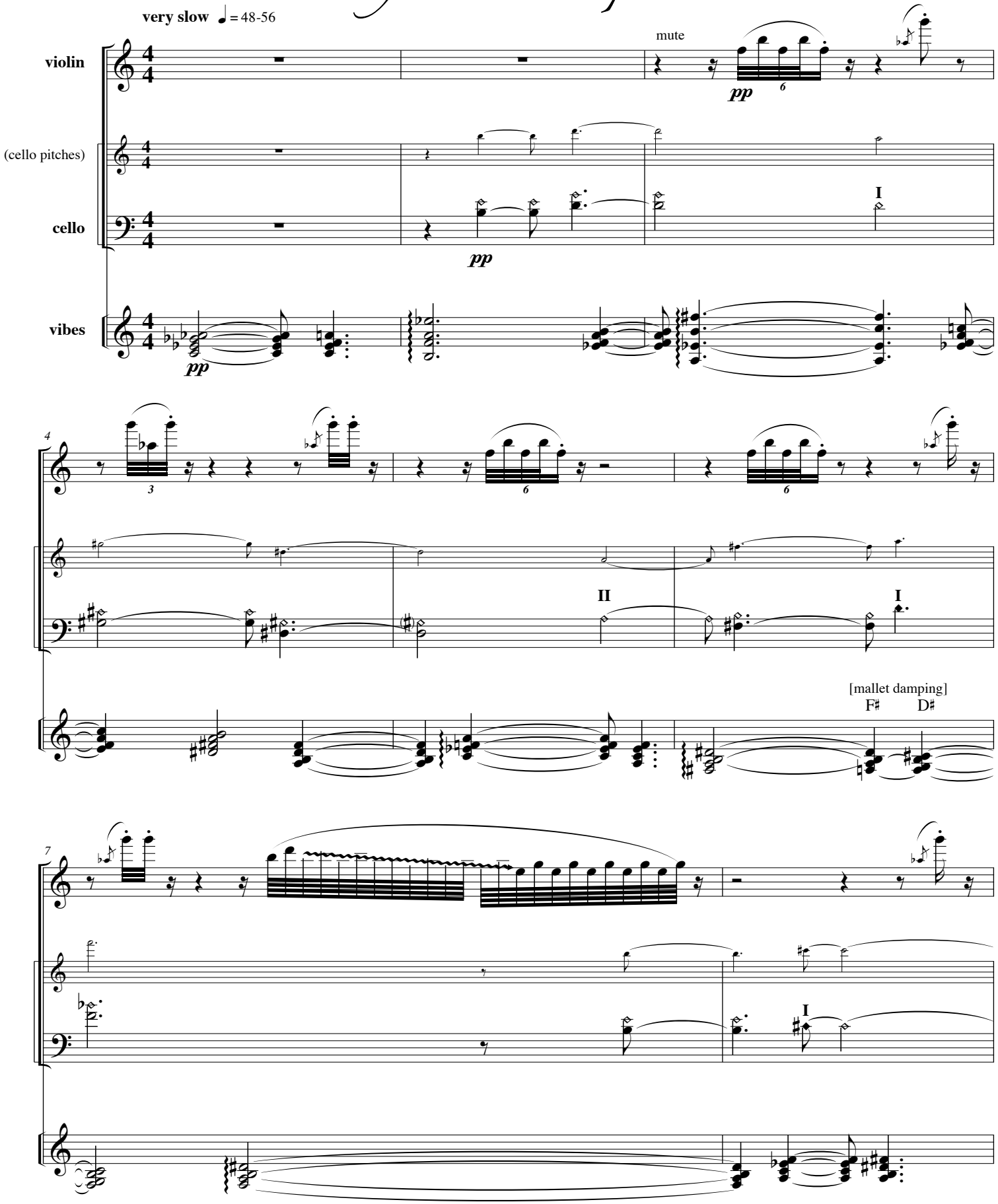
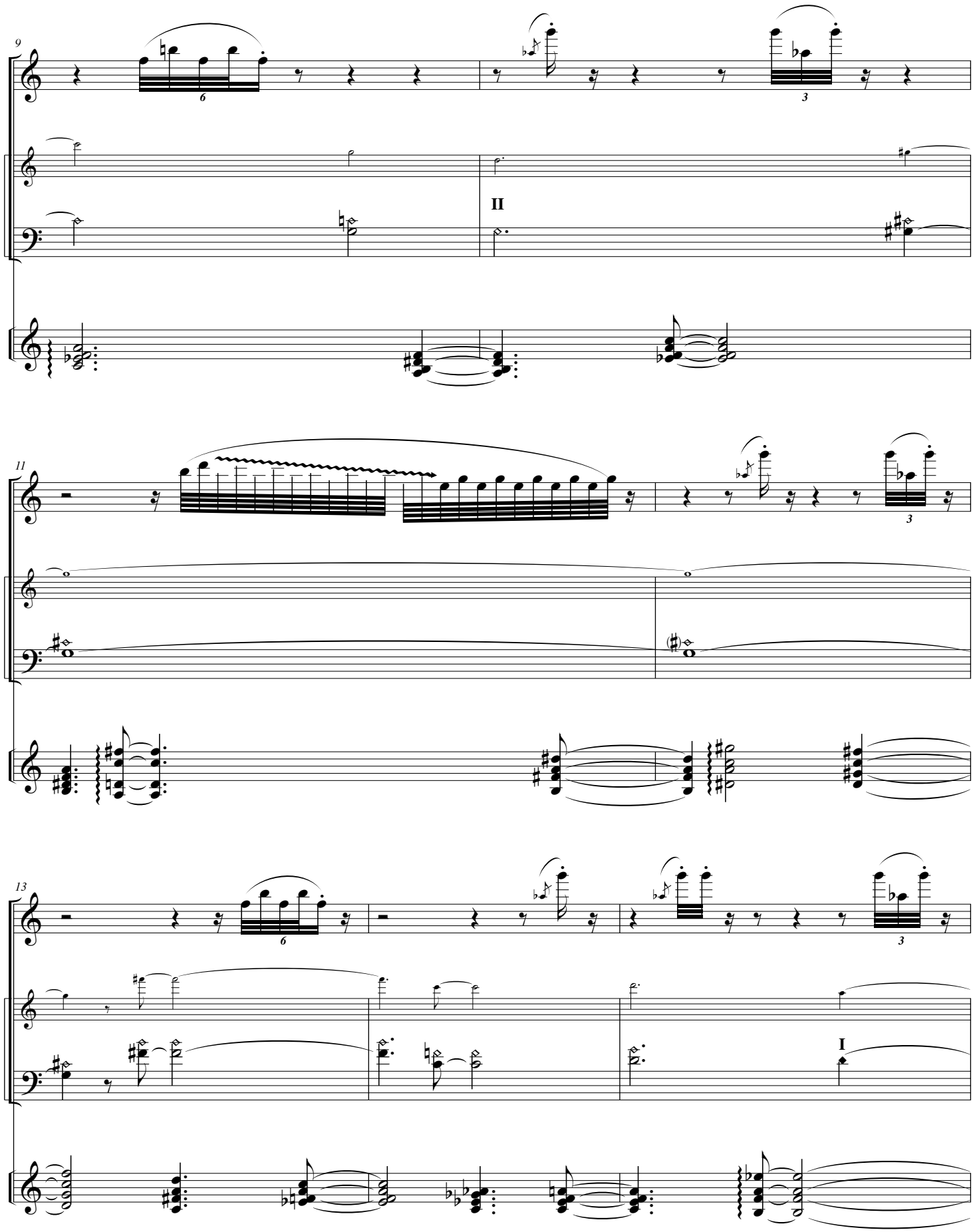
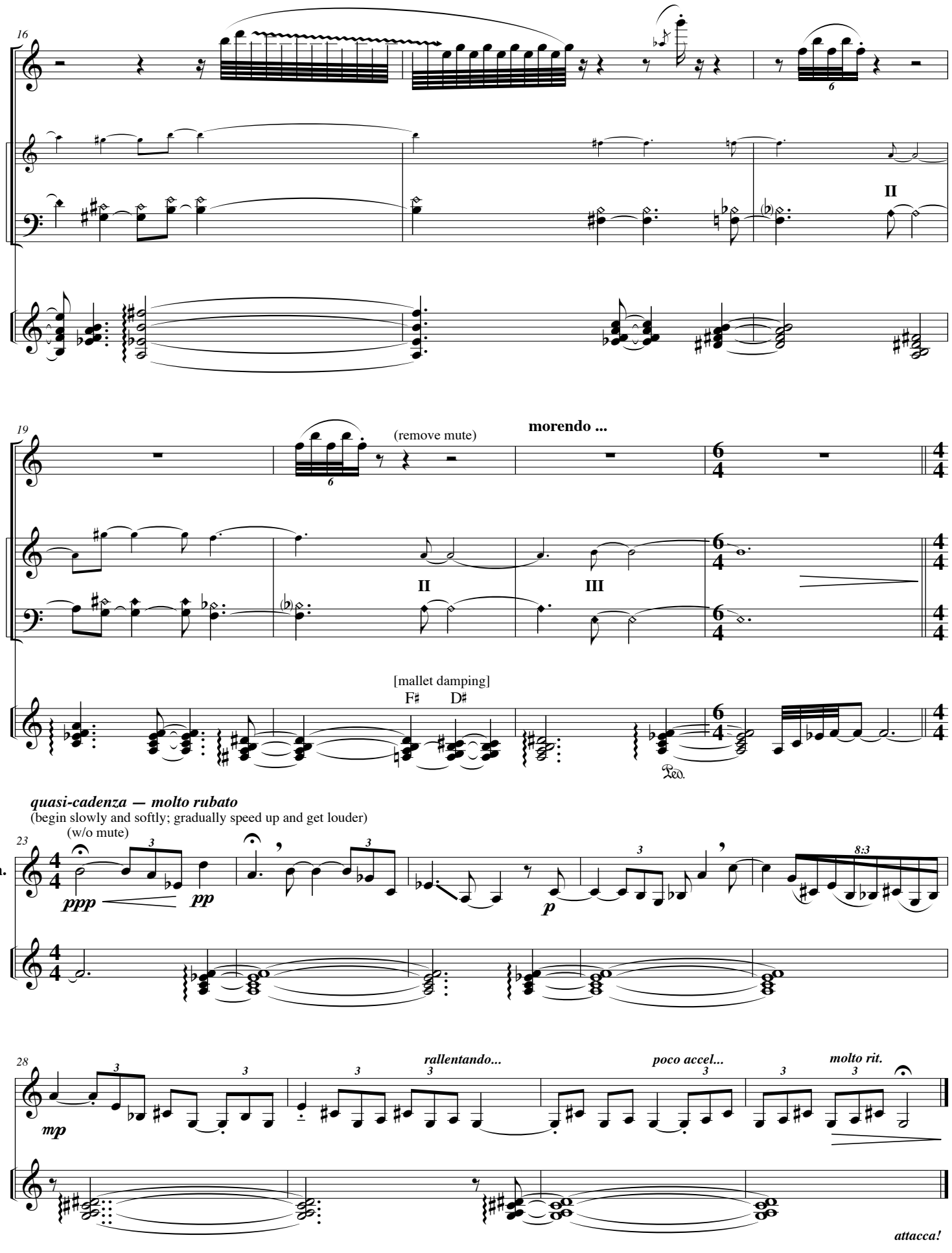
Percussionist:
Percussionist will improvise with various "nature" sounds utilizing leaf shaking sounds (a branch with leaves attached, for example). Other possibilities include rain tree, shakers of various kinds, guiro, etc.

An optional pre-recorded audio file of nature sounds may preceed and/or accompany this page of improvisation.

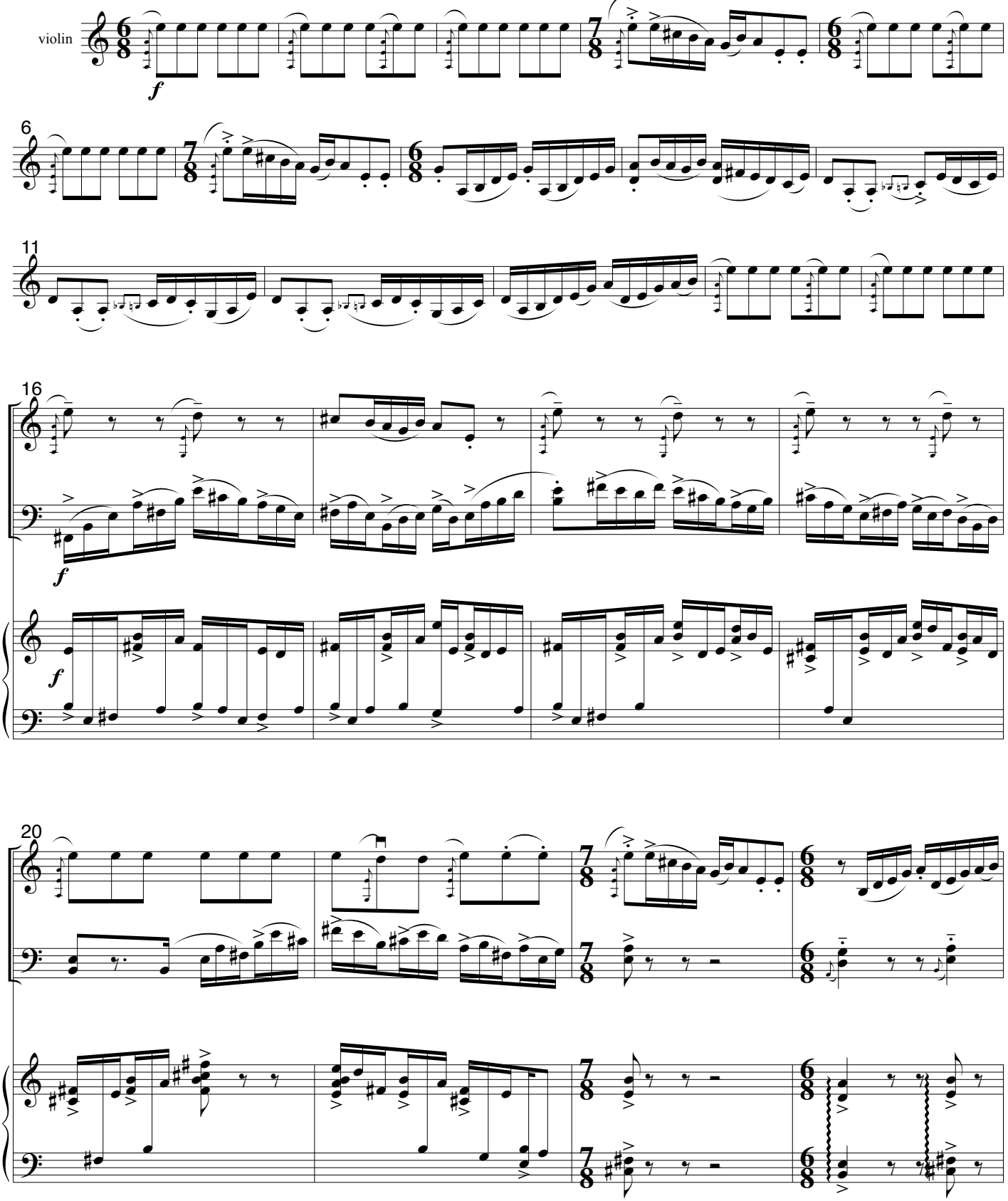
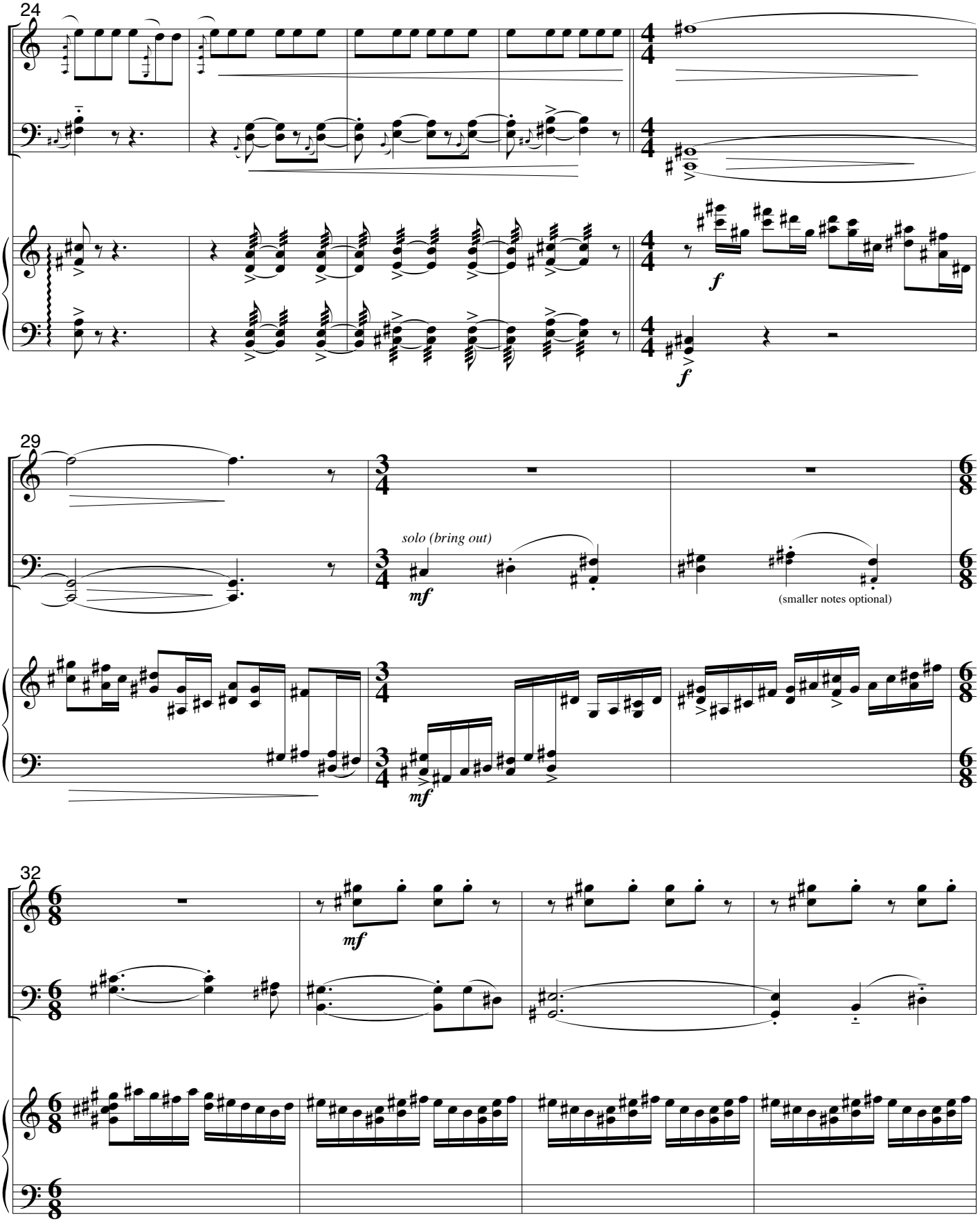
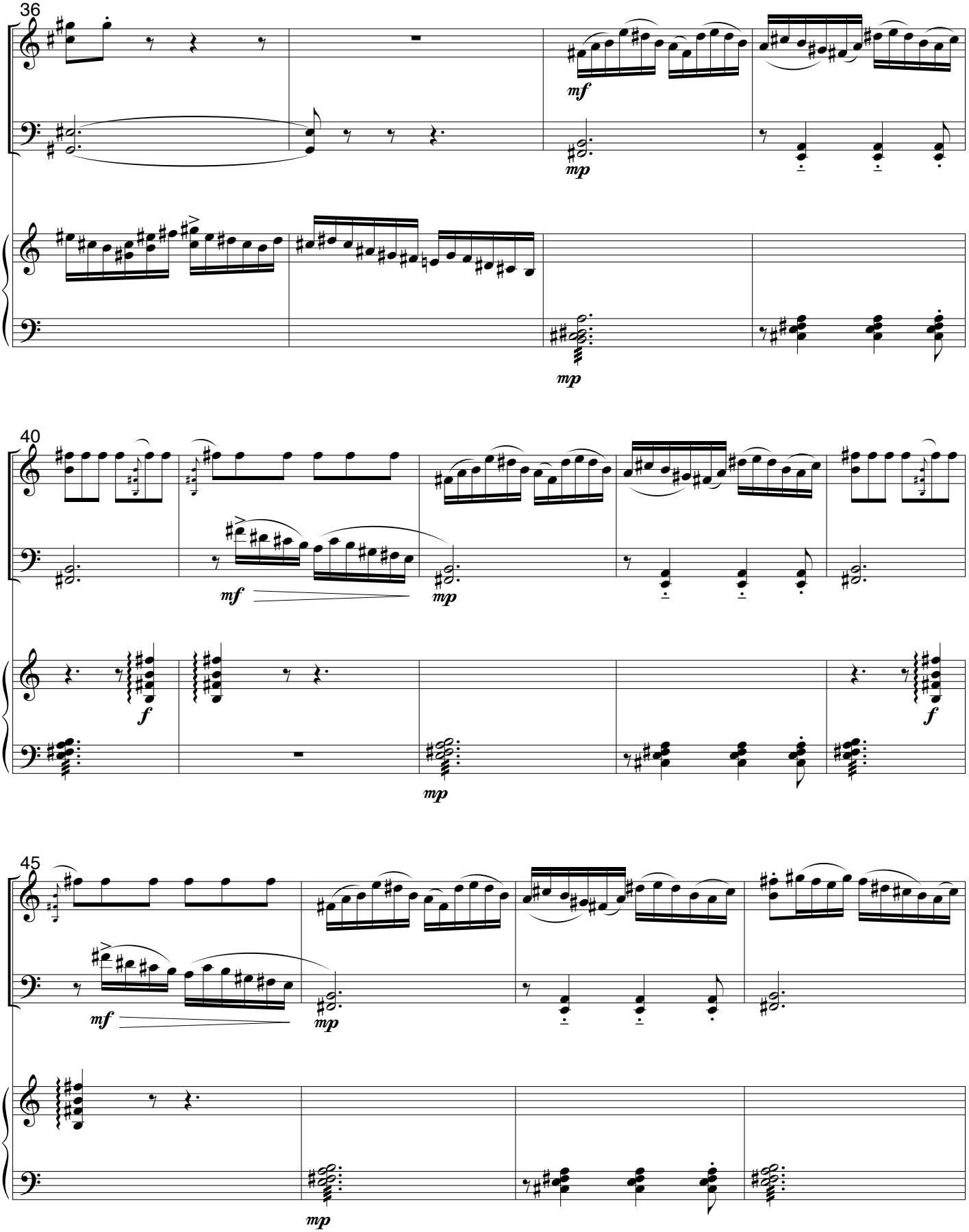
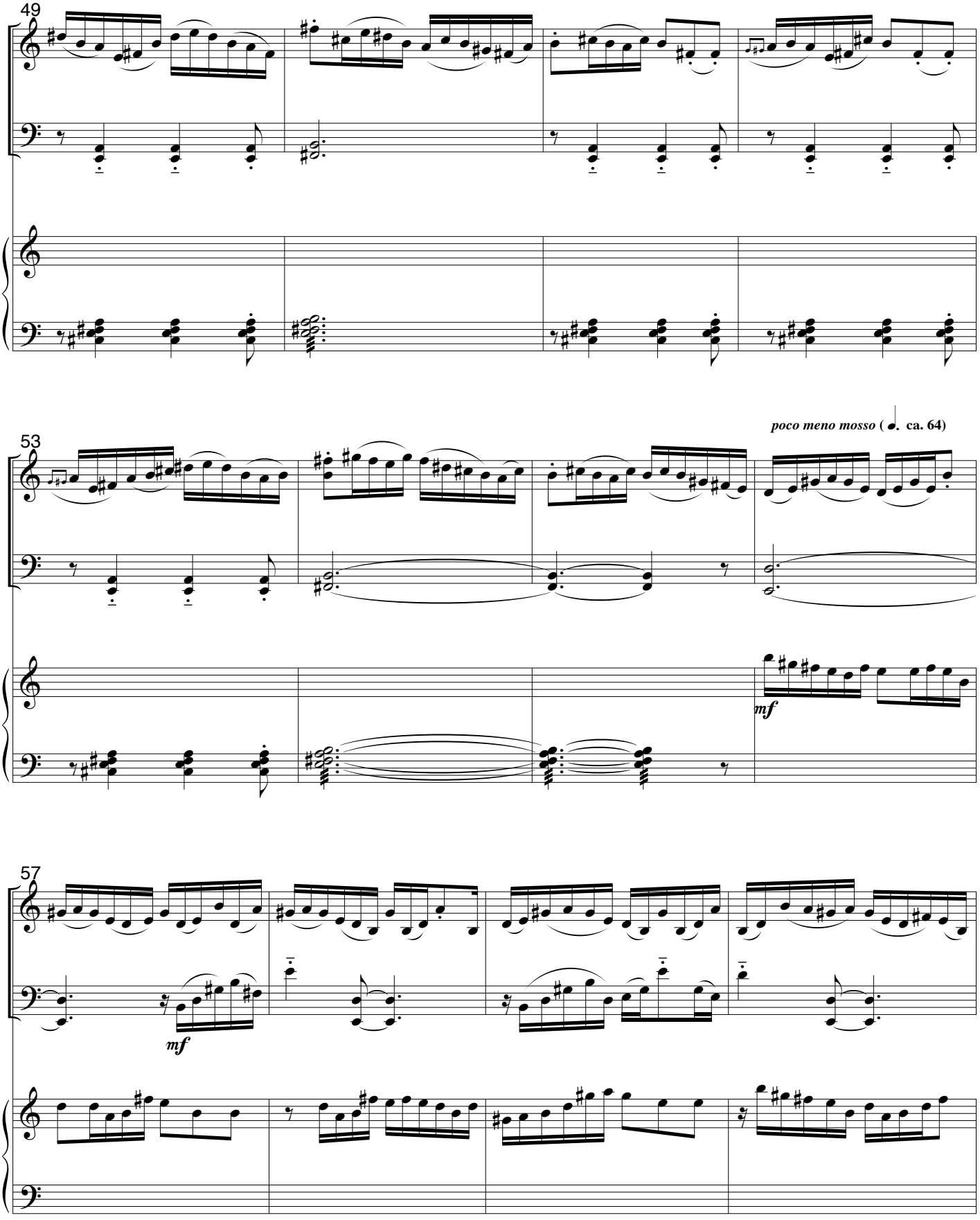
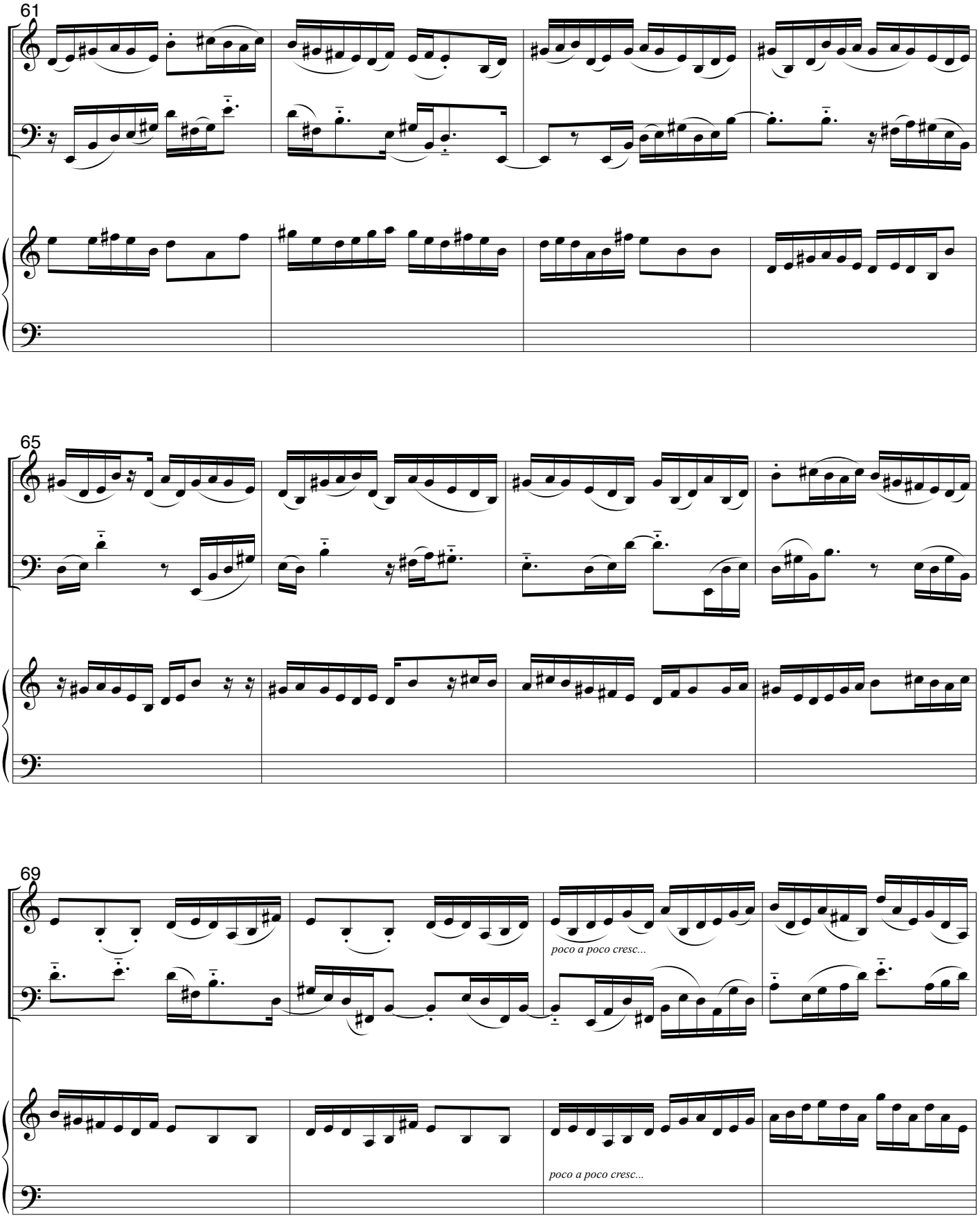
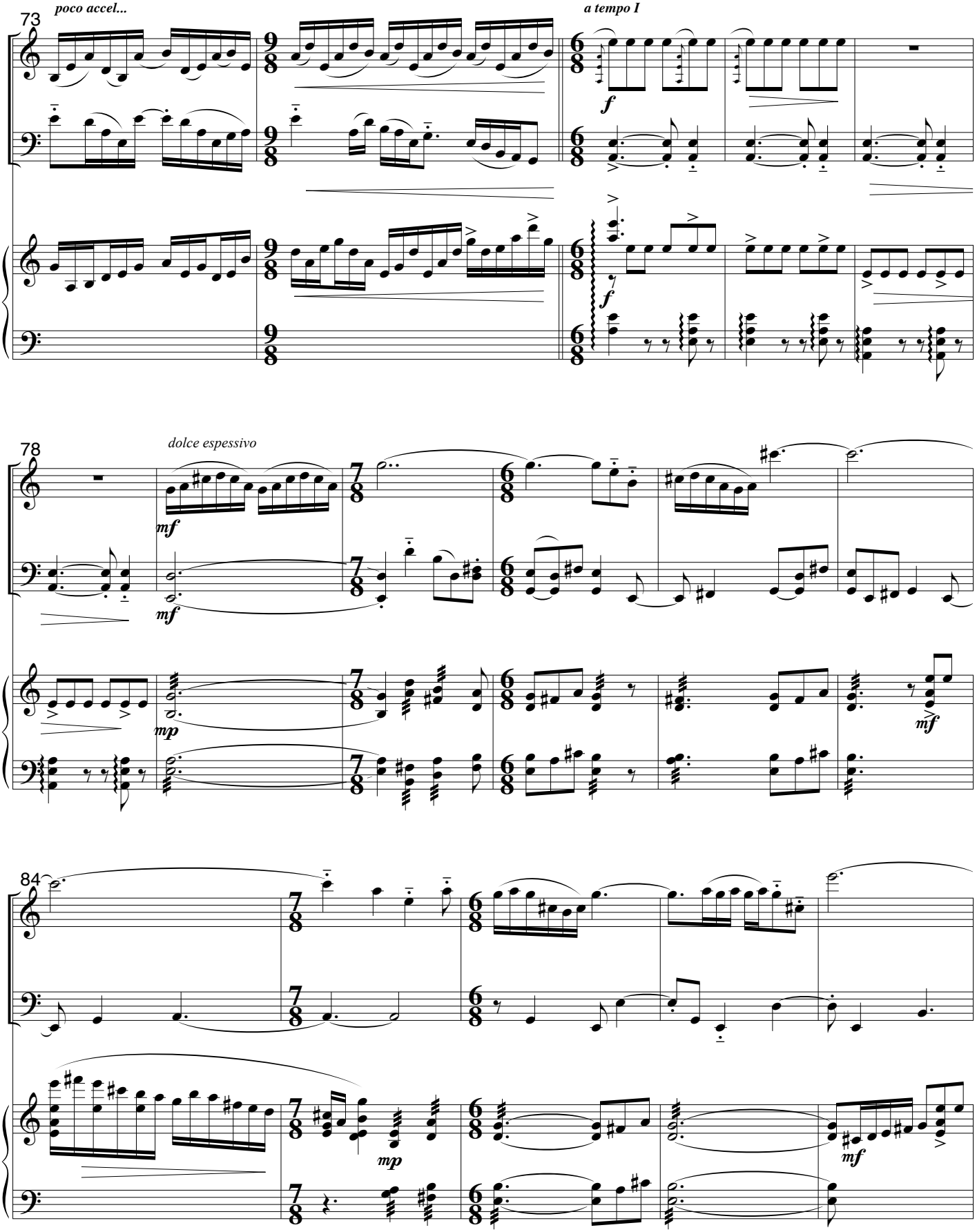
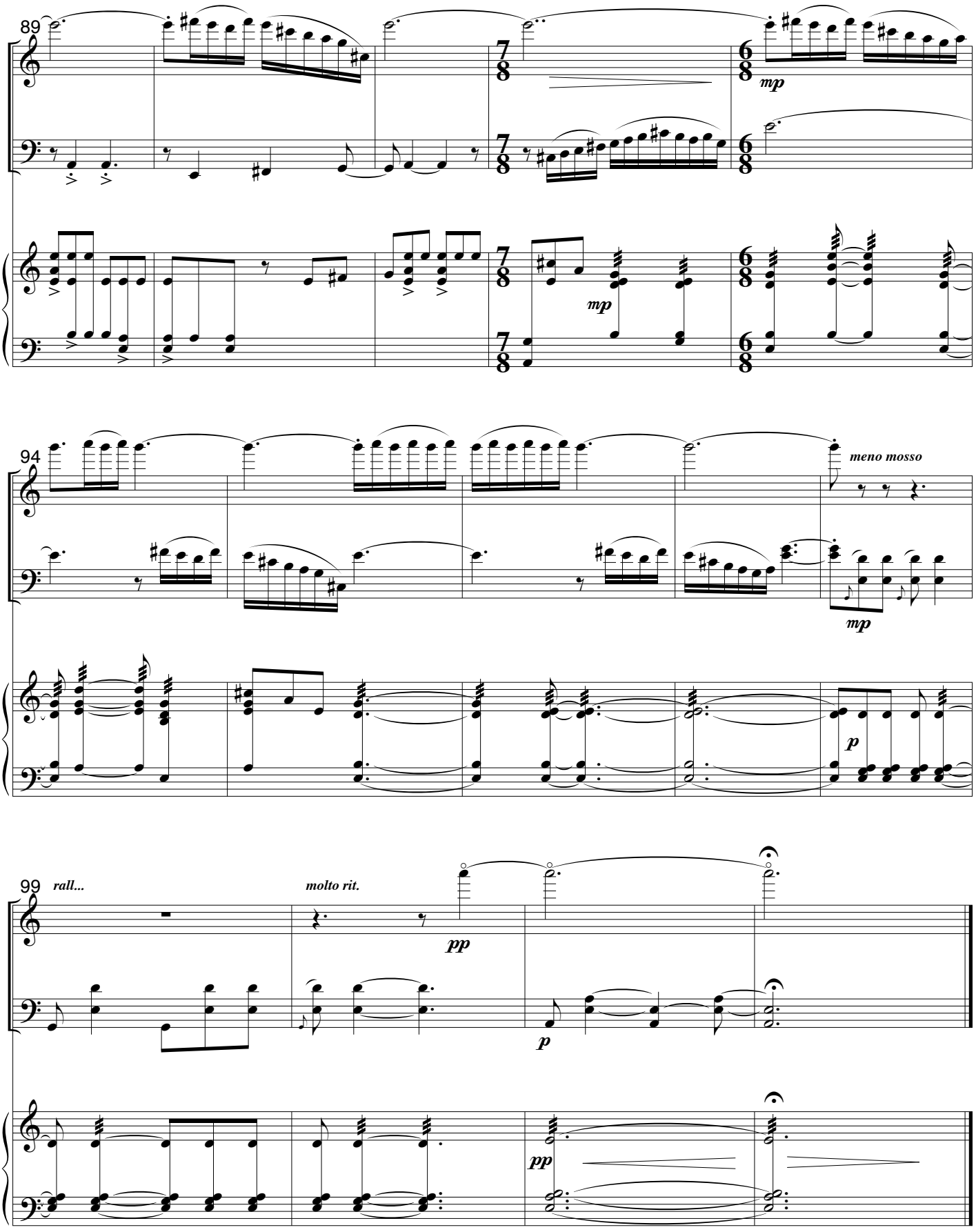
duration: ca. 1:00-1:30

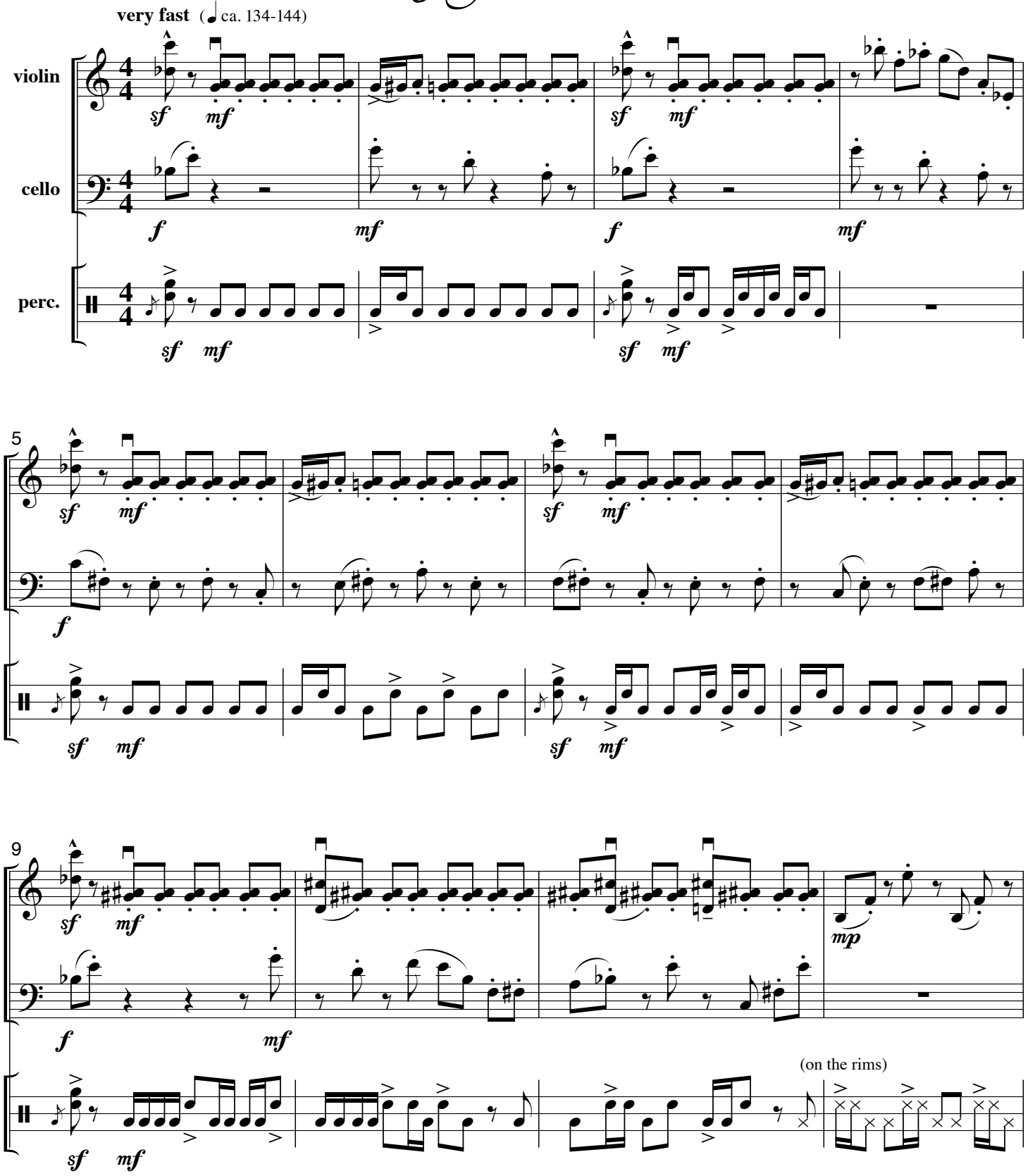
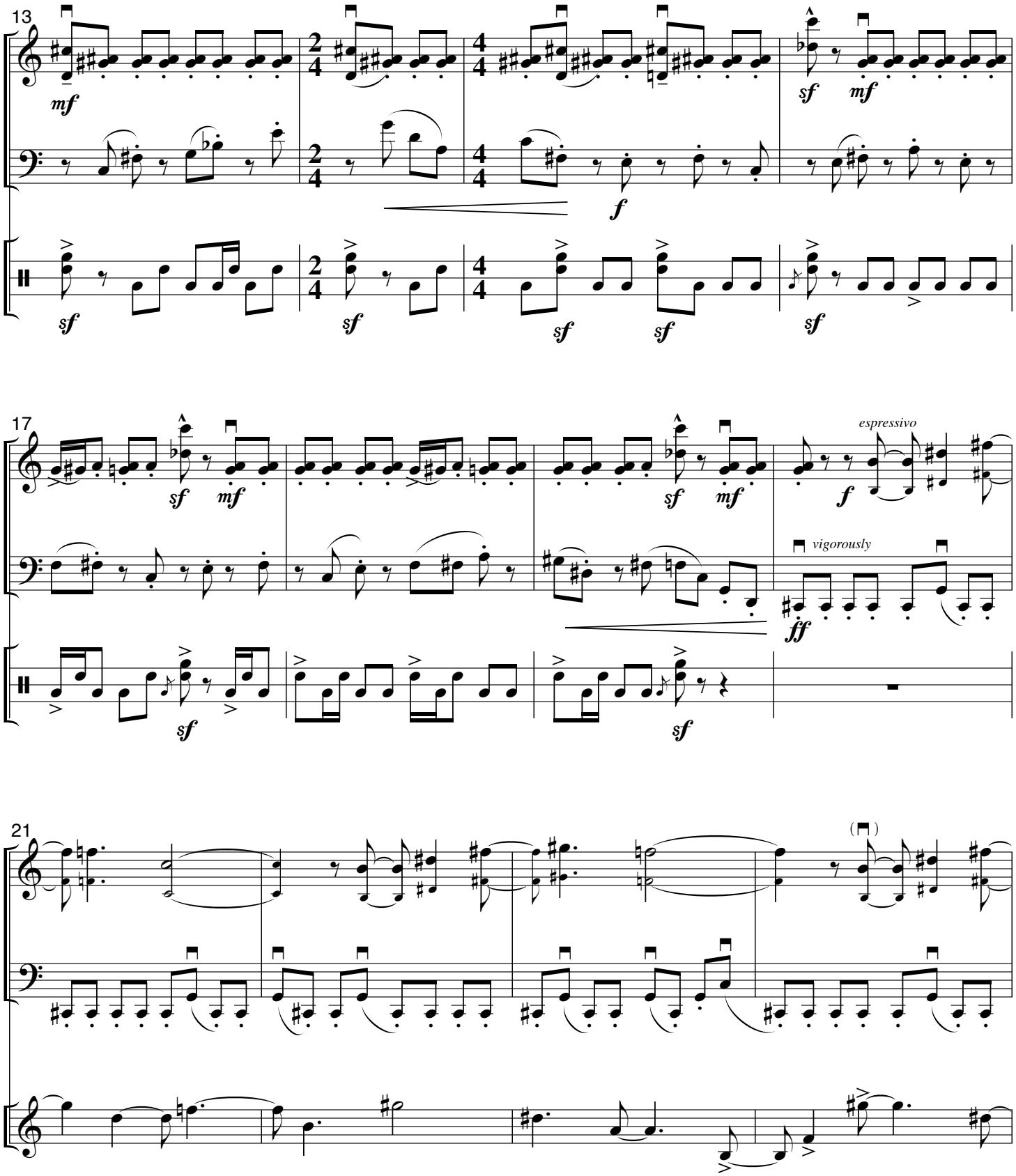
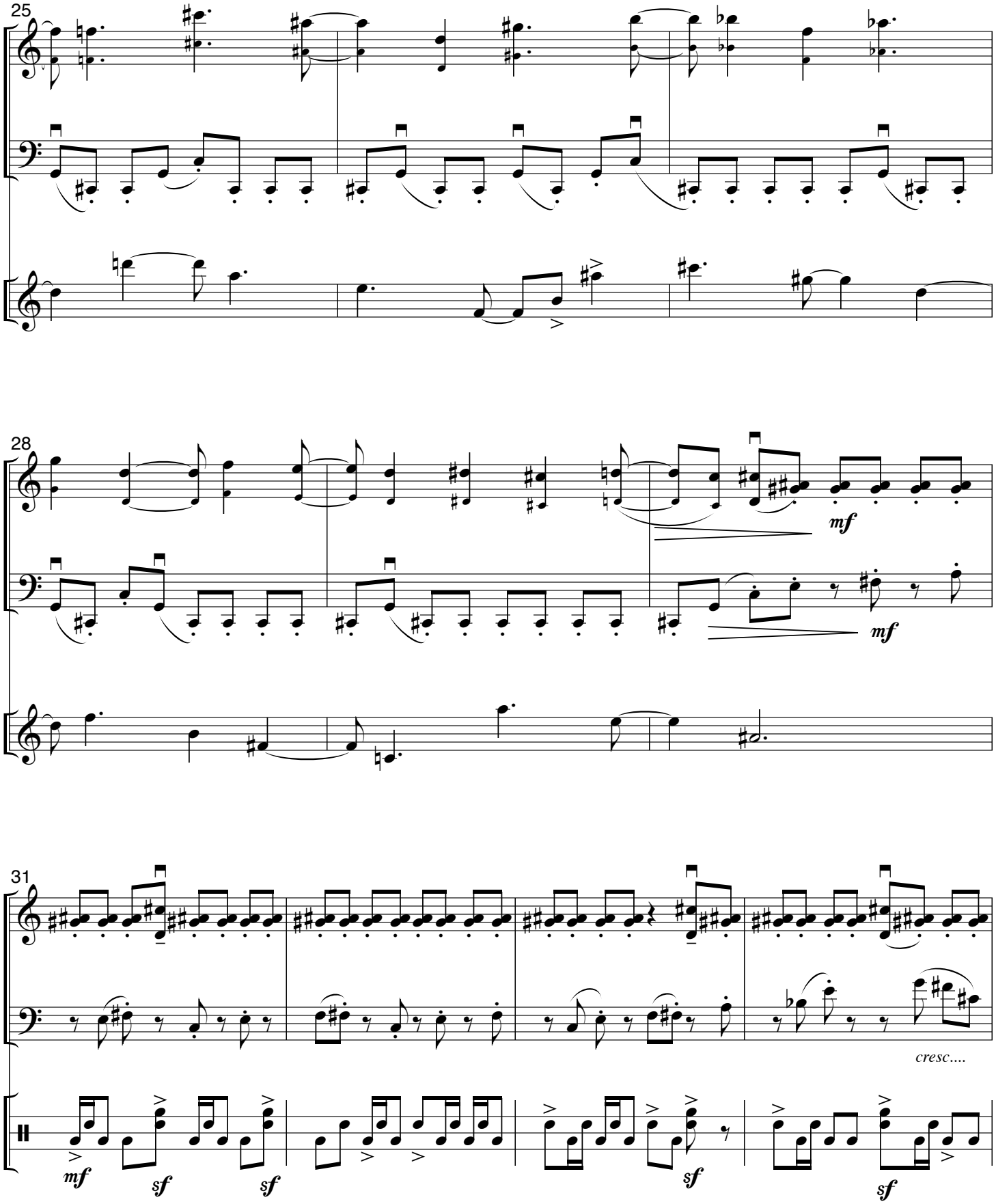
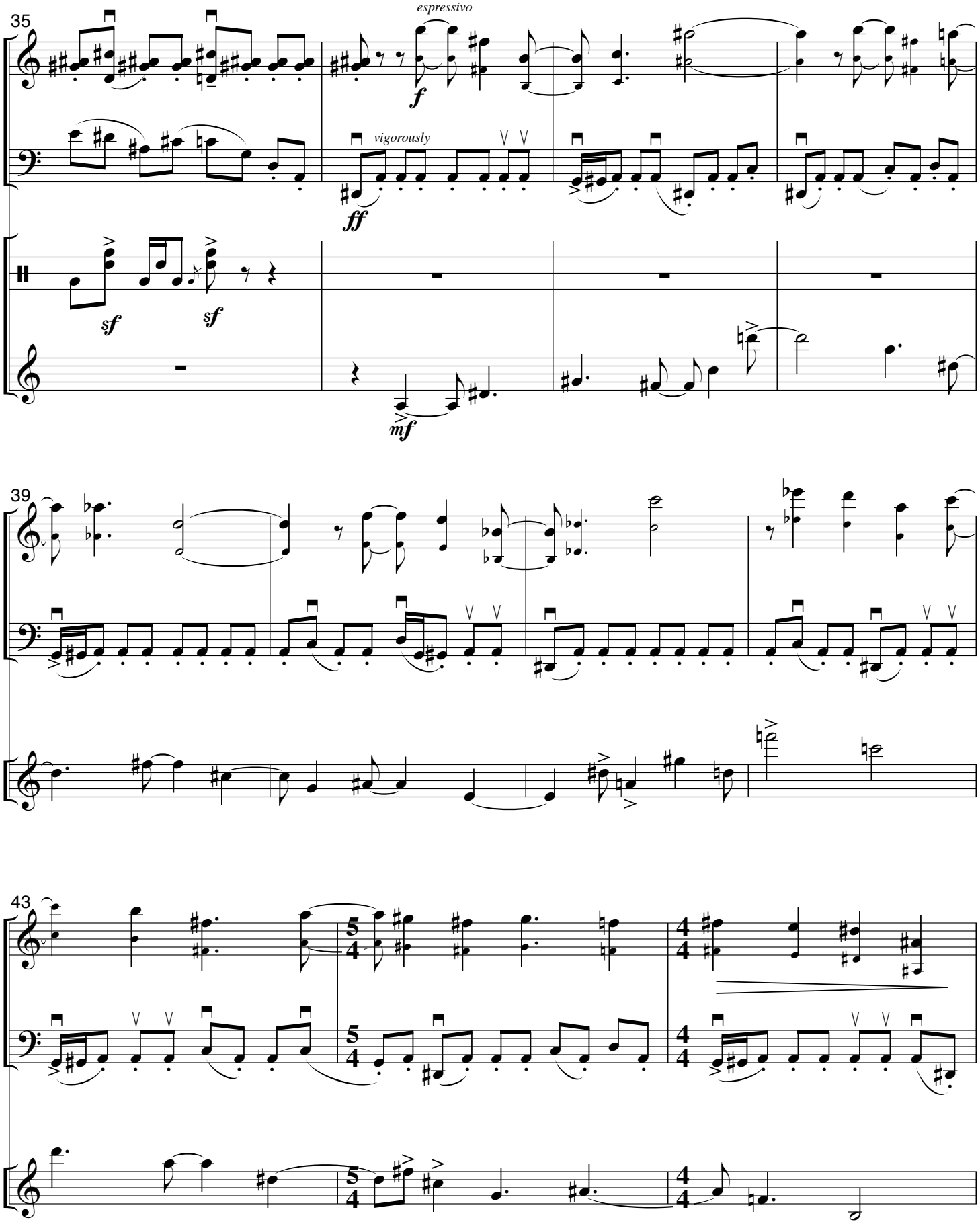
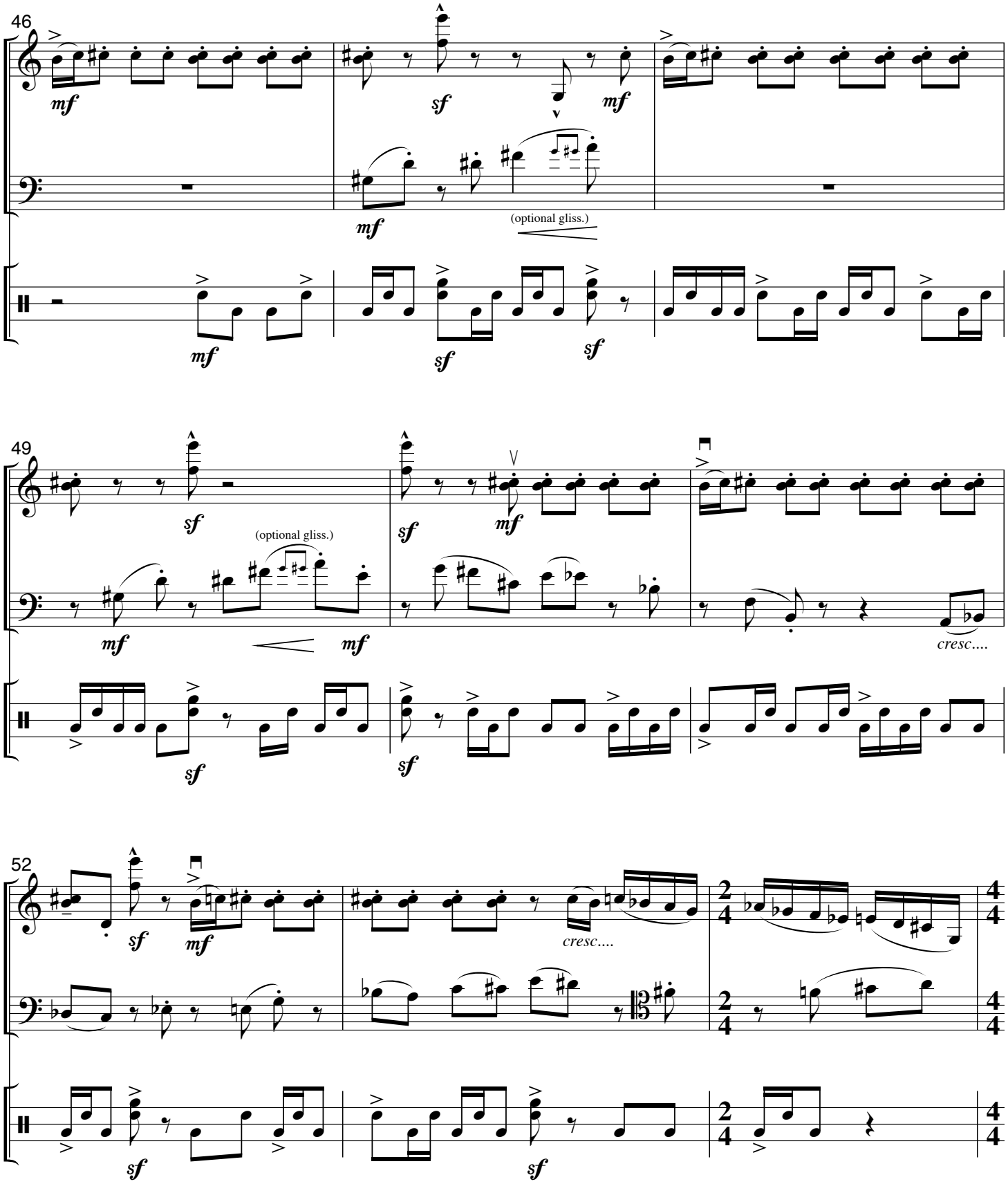
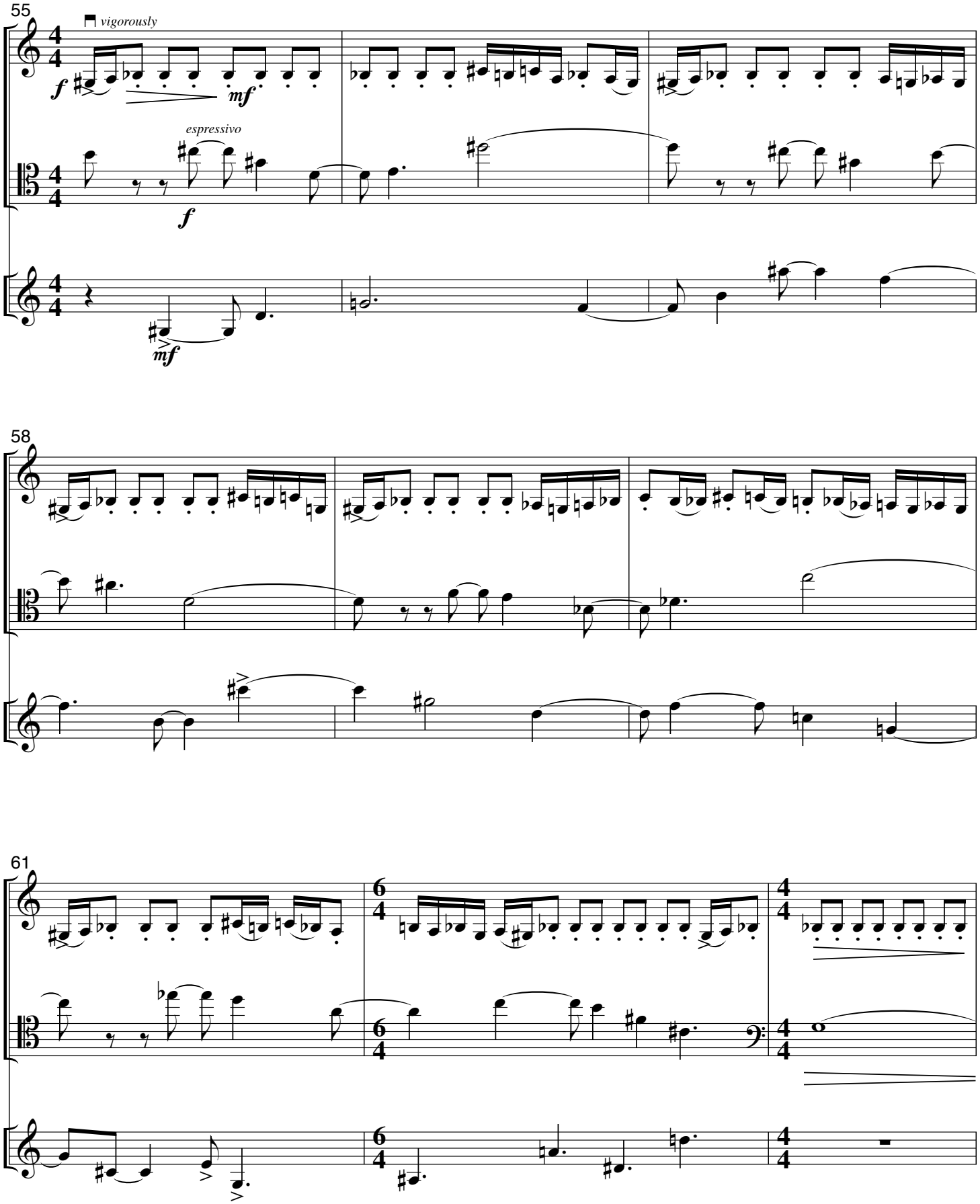
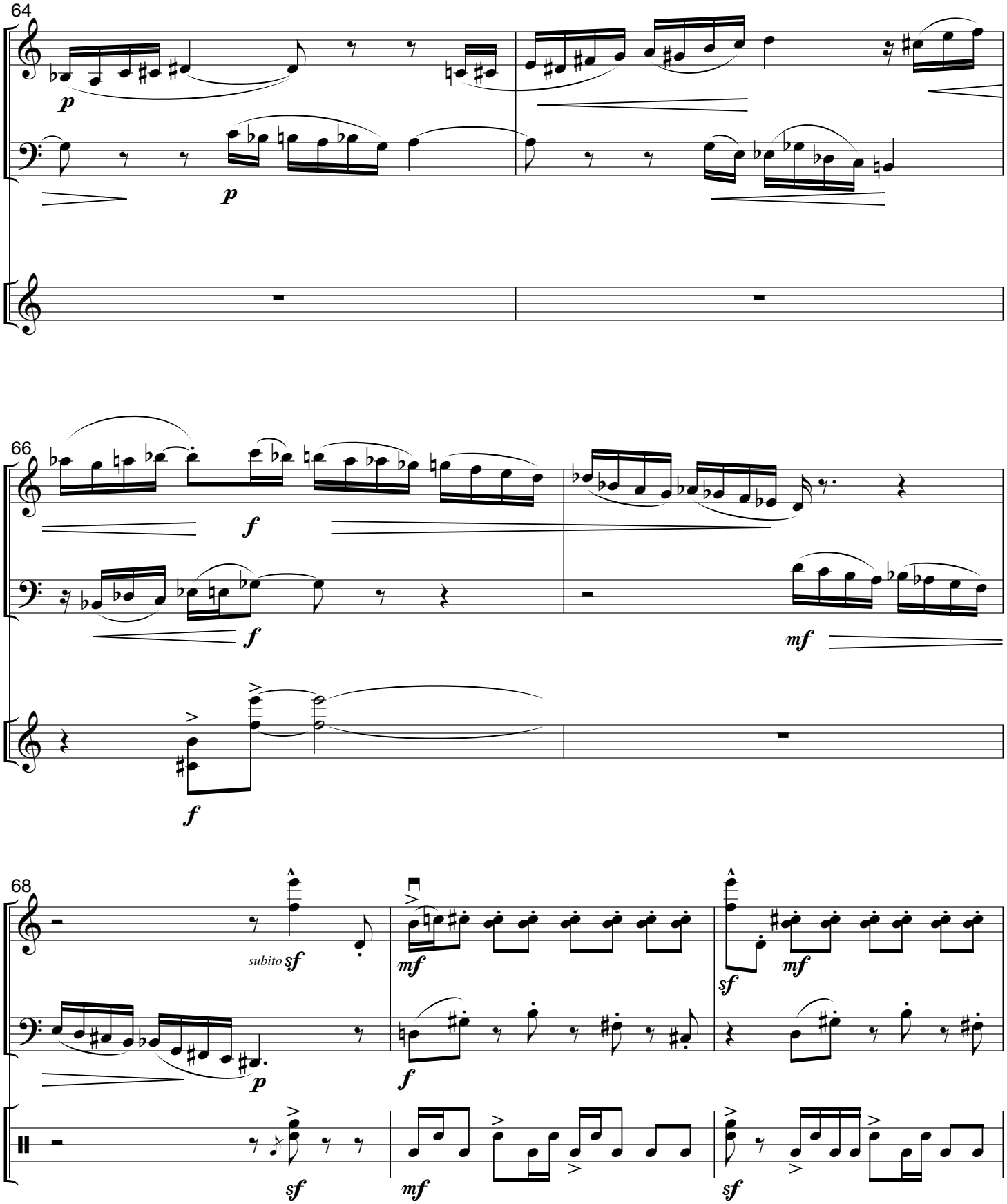
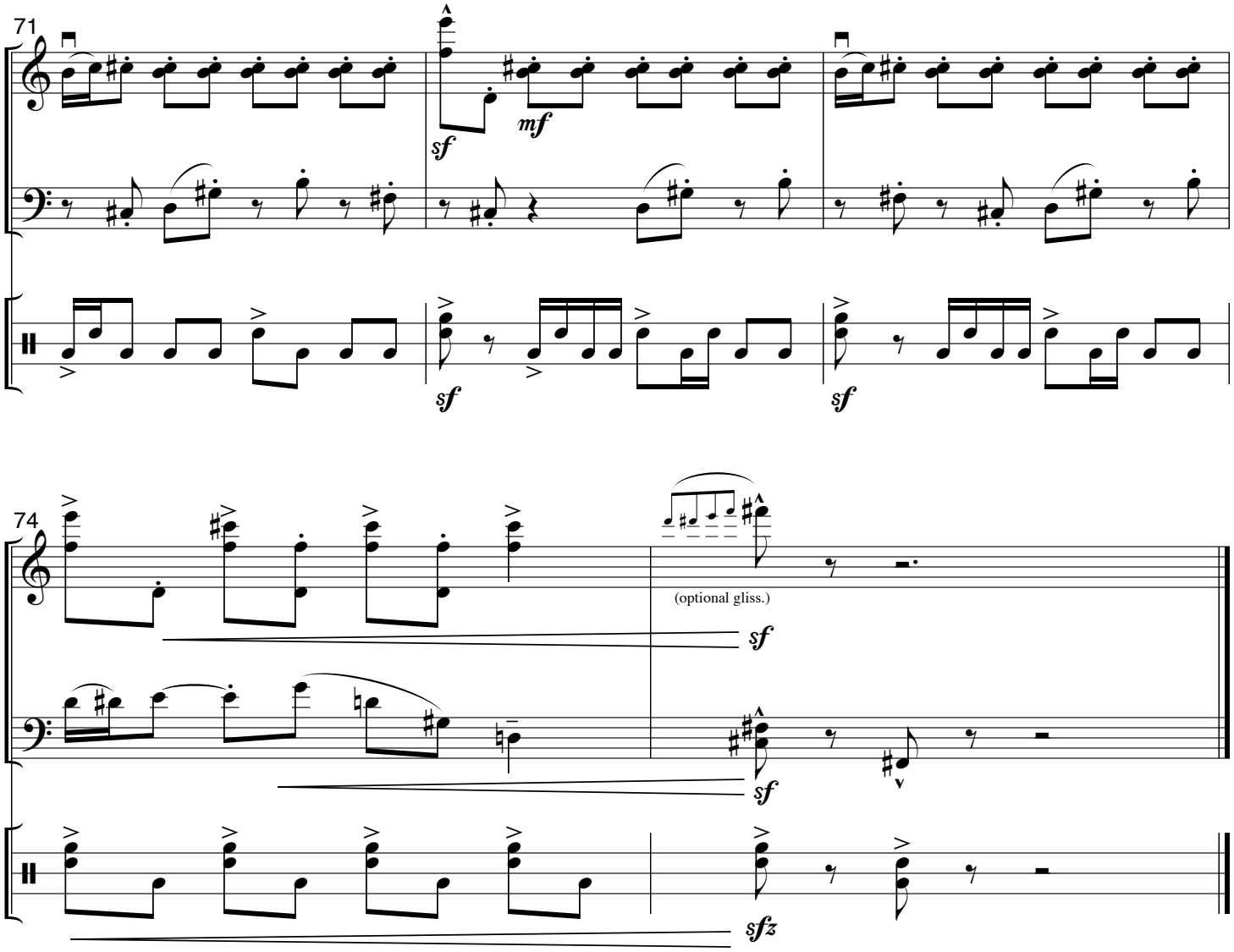
Attacca to *Before Dawn—part II*

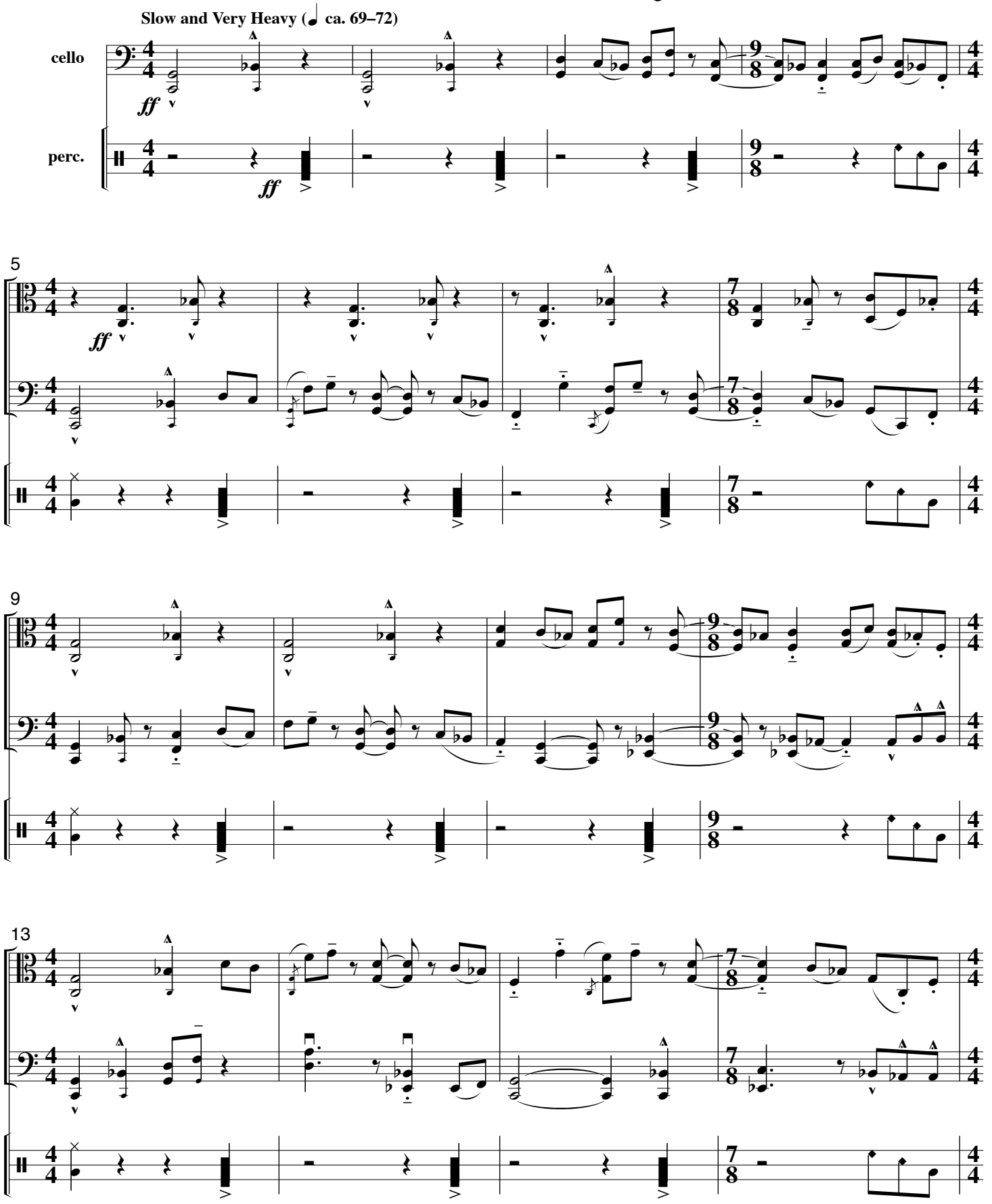
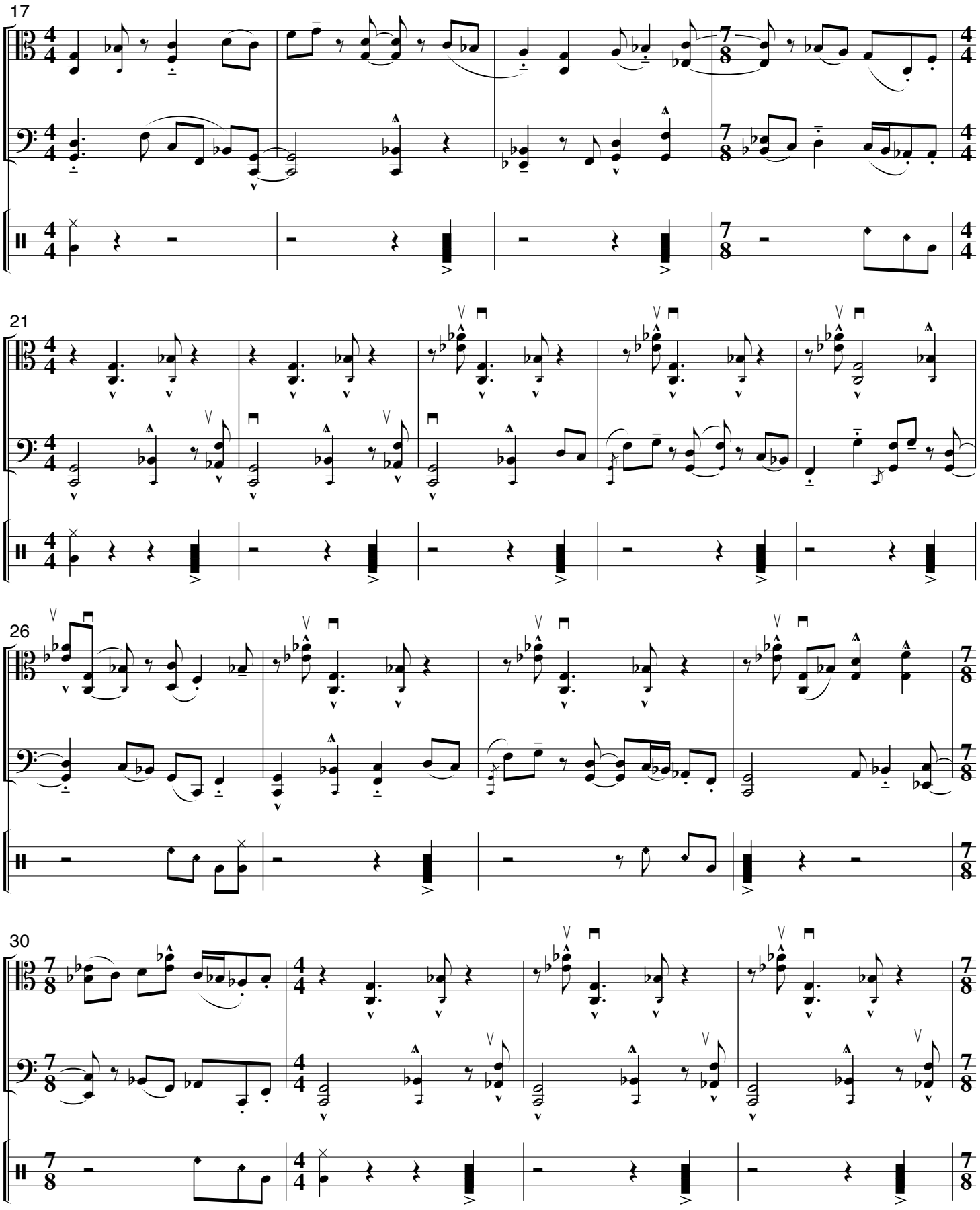
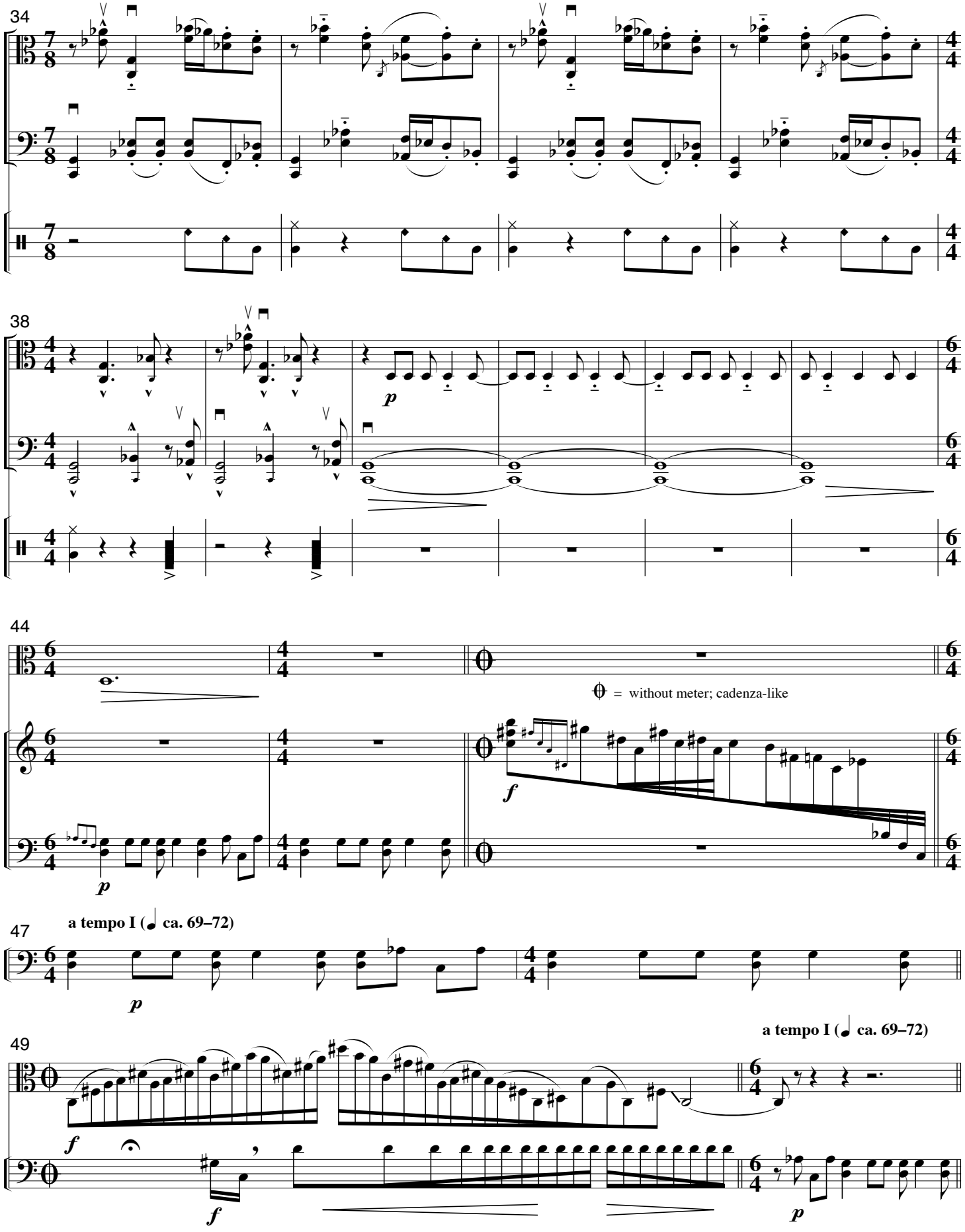
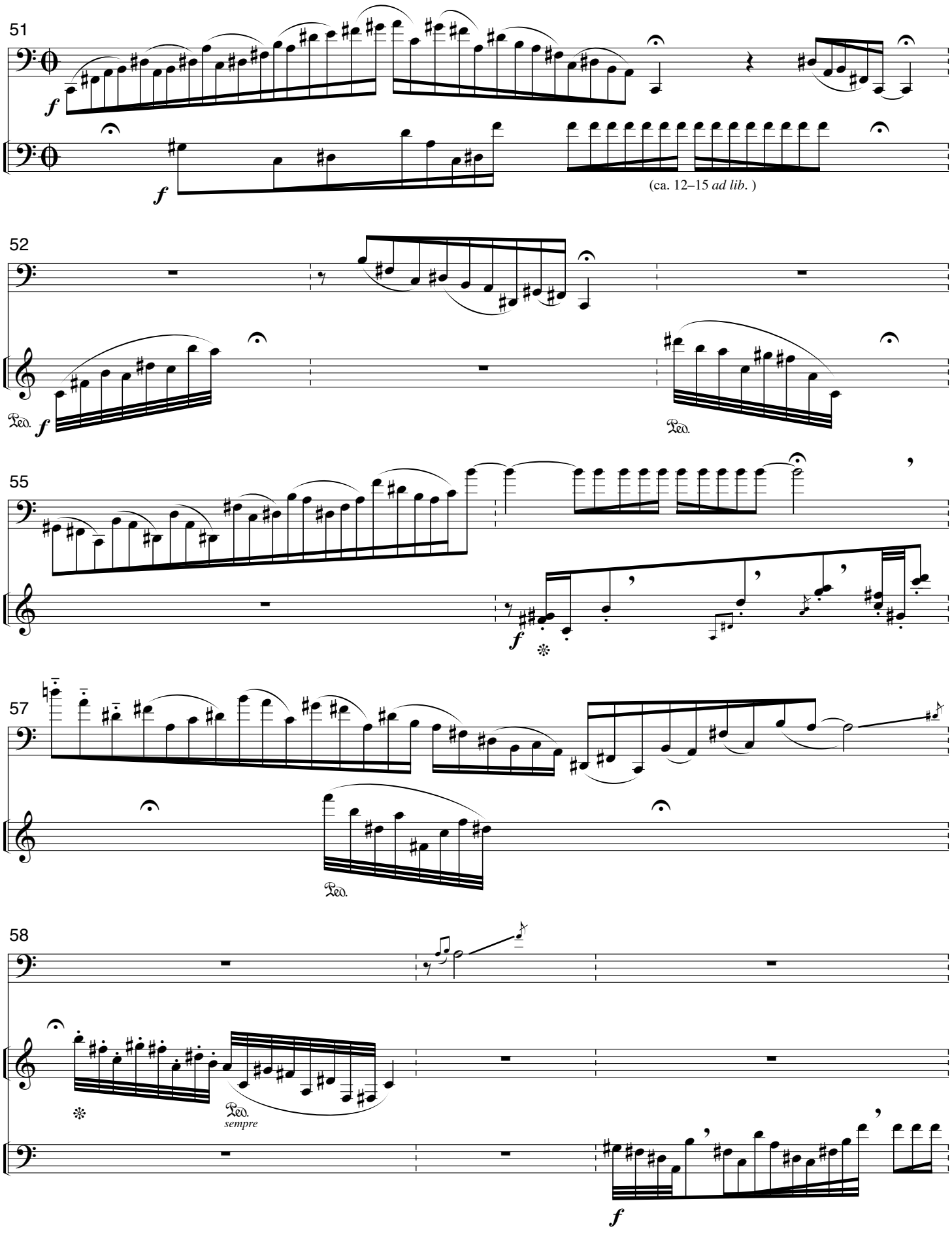
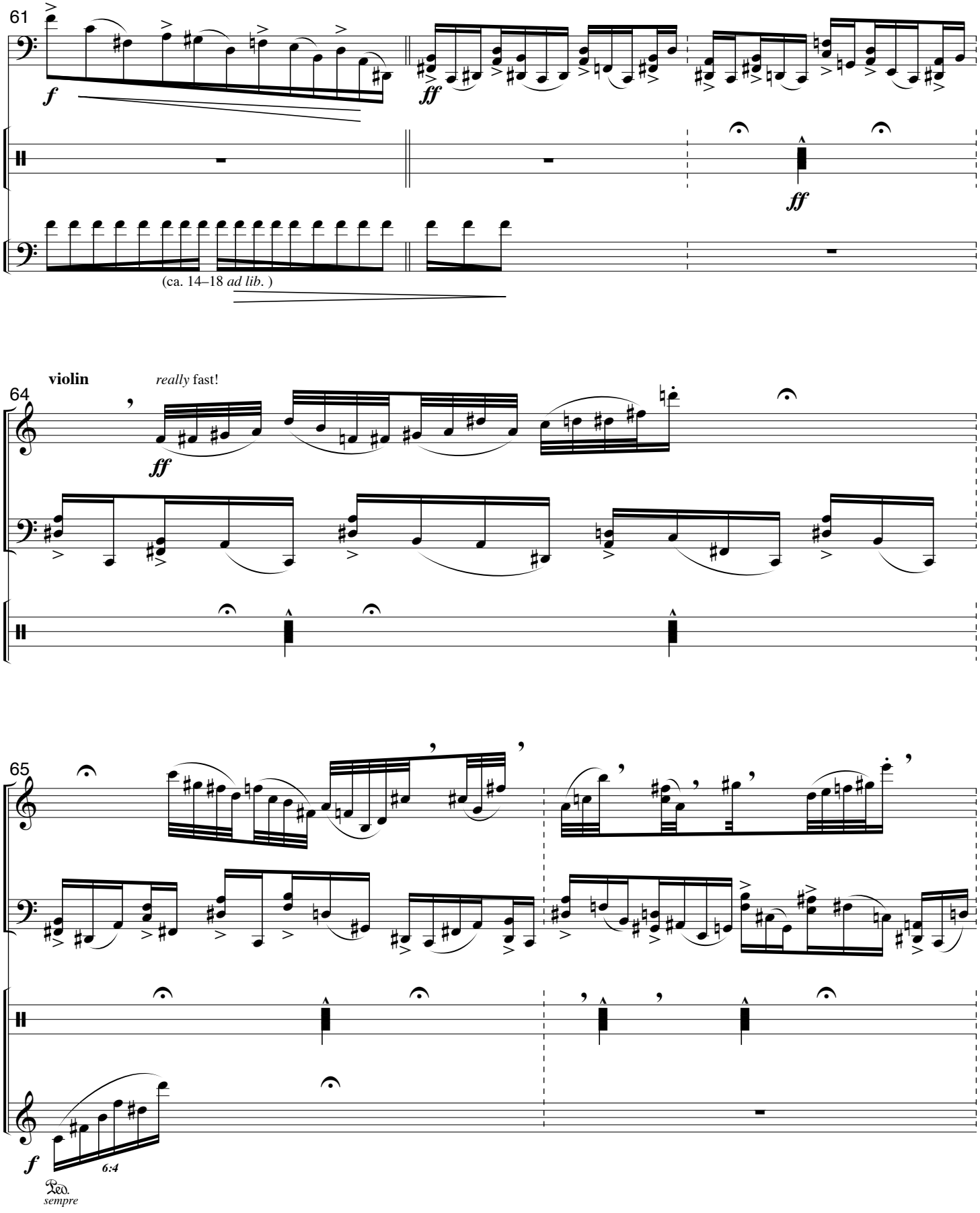
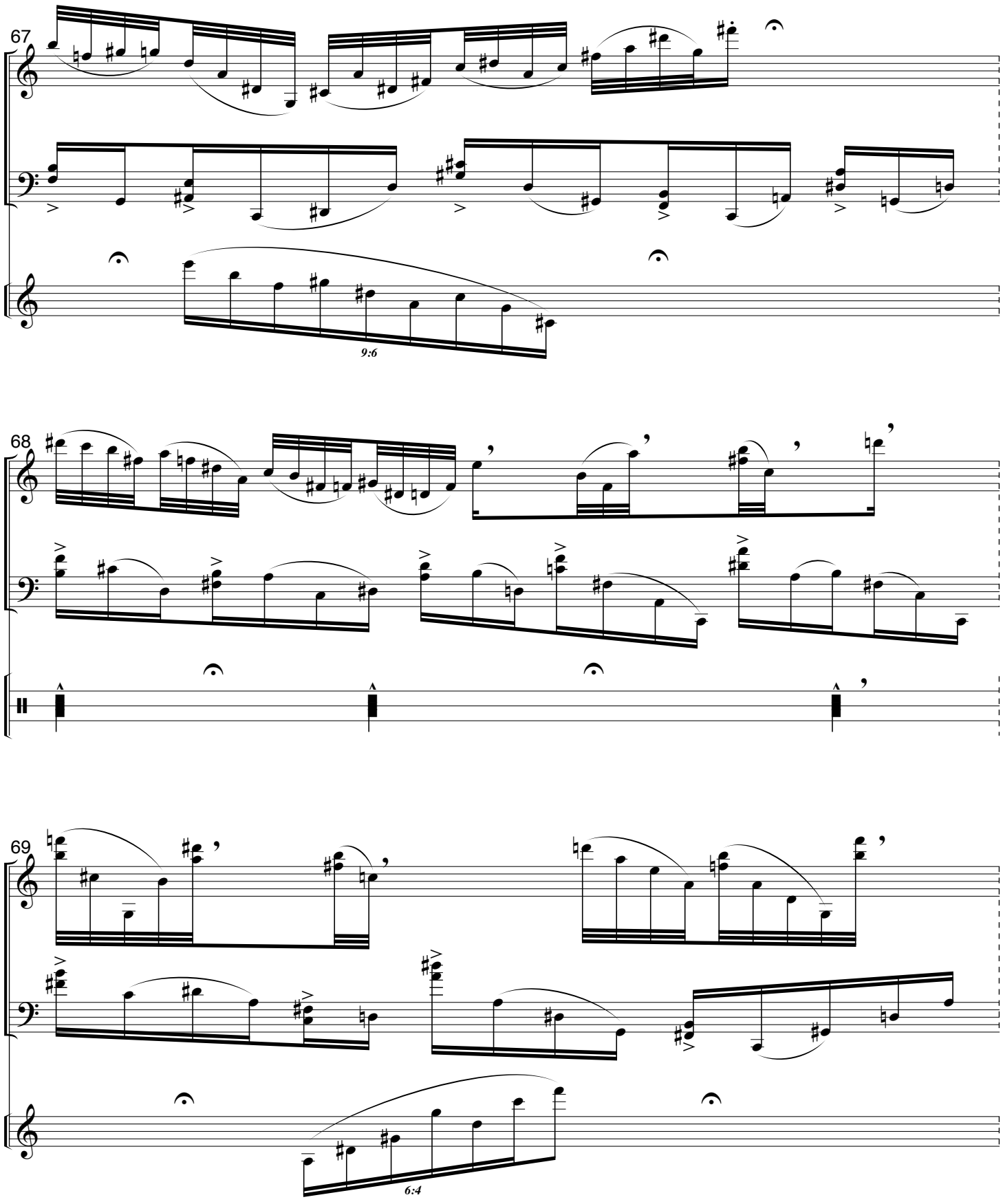
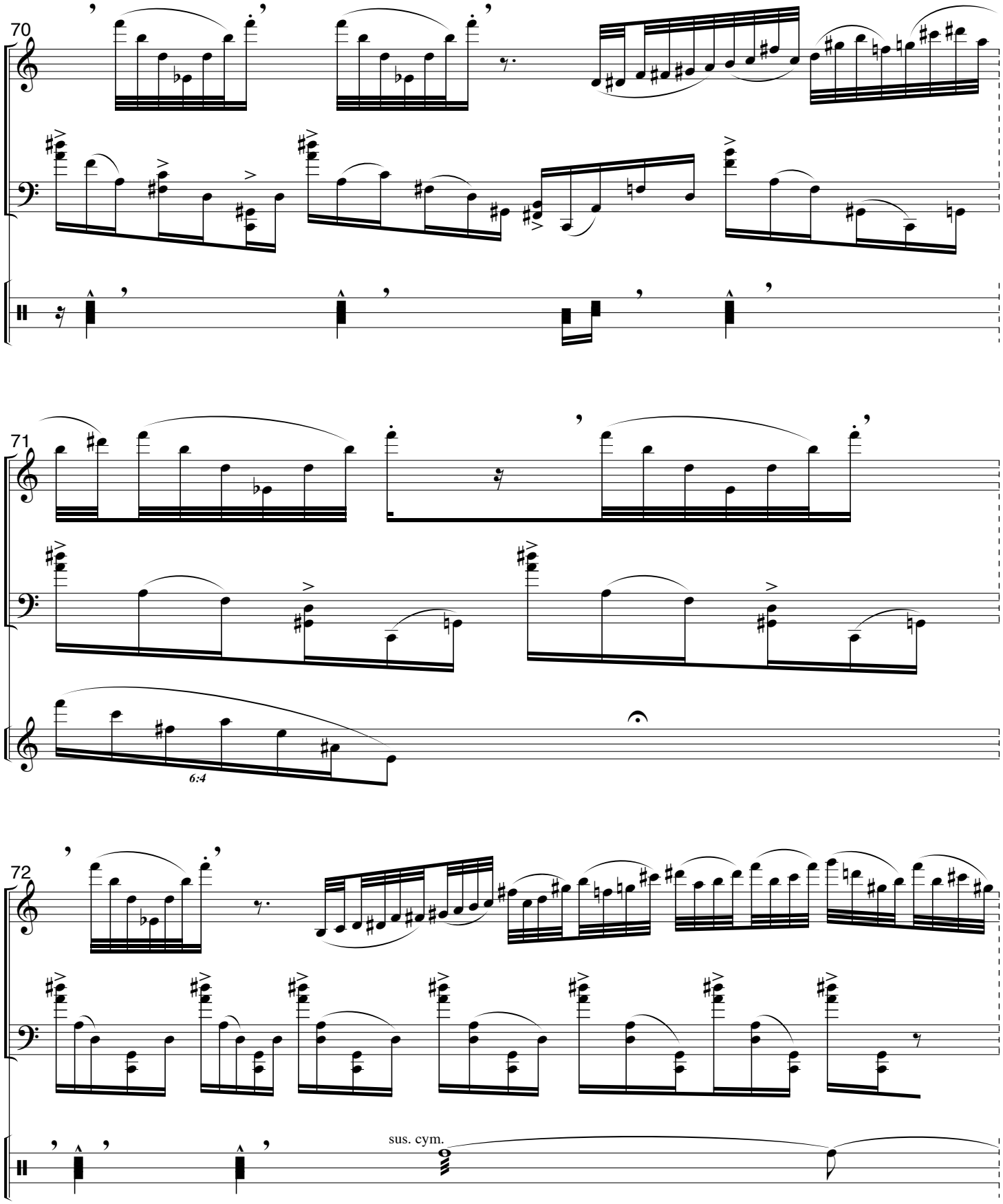
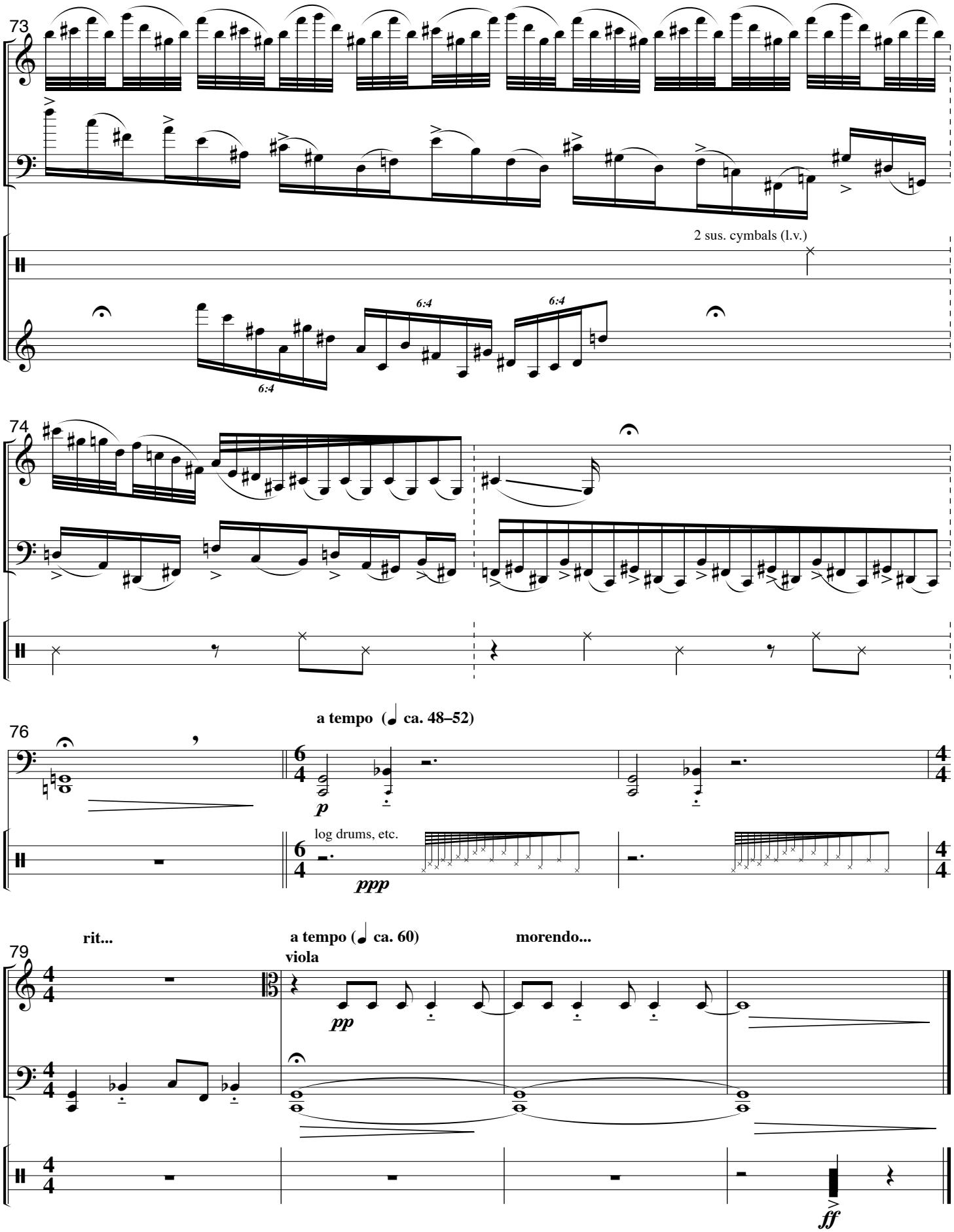
© 2007 by Mark Phillips

Before Dawn — part 2

9
6
3
II
11
3
13
6
3
I

16
II
19
(remove mute)
morendo ...
II
III
[mallet damping]
F♯ D♯
Ped.
quasi-cadenza — molto rubato
(begin slowly and softly; gradually speed up and get louder)
(w/o mute)
23
vln.
ppp
pp
p
8:3
28
mp
rallentando...
poco accel...
molto rit.
attacca!

Morning in Appalachia

♩. ca. 66
lively and spirited
(but never harsh)

24
f
f
29
solo (bring out)
mf
(smaller notes optional)
mf
32
mf

36
mf
mp
mp
40
mf
mp
f
mp
f
45
mf
mp
mp

49
53
poco meno mosso (♩. ca. 64)
mf
57
mf

61
65
69
poco a poco cresc...
poco a poco cresc...

73
poco accel...
a tempo I
f
78
dolce espessivo
mf
mp
84

89
mp
mp
94
meno mosso
mp
p
99
rall...
molto rit.
pp
p
pp

Playing Outdoors

13
mf
sf
mf
f
sf
sf
sf
sf
17
sf
mf
sf
mf
f
espressivo
vigorously
ff
sf
sf
21

25
28
mf
mf
31
cresc....
mf
sf
sf
sf
sf

35
espressivo
f
vigorously
ff
sf
sf
mf
39
43
5
4
5
4
4
4
4
4

46
mf
sf
mf
mf
(optional gliss.)
mf
sf
sf
49
sf
(optional gliss.)
sf
mf
mf
cresc....
sf
sf
52
sf
mf
cresc....
2/4
4/4
sf
sf

55
vigorously
f
mf
espressivo
f
mf
58
61

64
p
p
66
f
f
mf
f
68
subito sf
p
mf
f
sf
mf
sf
mf
sf

71
sf
mf
sf
sf
74
(optional gliss.)
sf
sf
sfz

Dark Clouds over the Coalfields

17
21
26
30

34
38
44
= without meter; cadenza-like
m.
47
a tempo I (♩ ca. 69–72)
49
a tempo I (♩ ca. 69–72)

51
f
m.
f
(ca. 12–15 ad lib.)
52
v.
Ped.
f
Ped.
55
v.
f
57
v.
Ped.
58
v.
Ped.
sempre
m.
f

61
f
ff
ff
m.
(ca. 14–18 ad lib.)
violin
64
really fast!
ff
65
v.
f
6:4
Ped.
sempre

67
v.
9:6
68
69
v.
6:4

70
71
v.
6:4
72
sus. cym.

73
2 sus. cymbals (l.v.)
v.
6:4
6:4
6:4
74
76
a tempo (♩ ca. 48–52)
p
log drums, etc.
ppp
79
rit...
a tempo (♩ ca. 60)
viola
morendo...
pp
ff

Saturday Night

Mark Phillips

Lively (♩ = c. 100)

Marimba

mf *to* ***f*** *throughout (but never harsh)*

5

m.

9

m.

(less, but bring out bottom line)

13

m.

17

v.

mf *to* ***f*** *throughout (but never harsh)*

c.

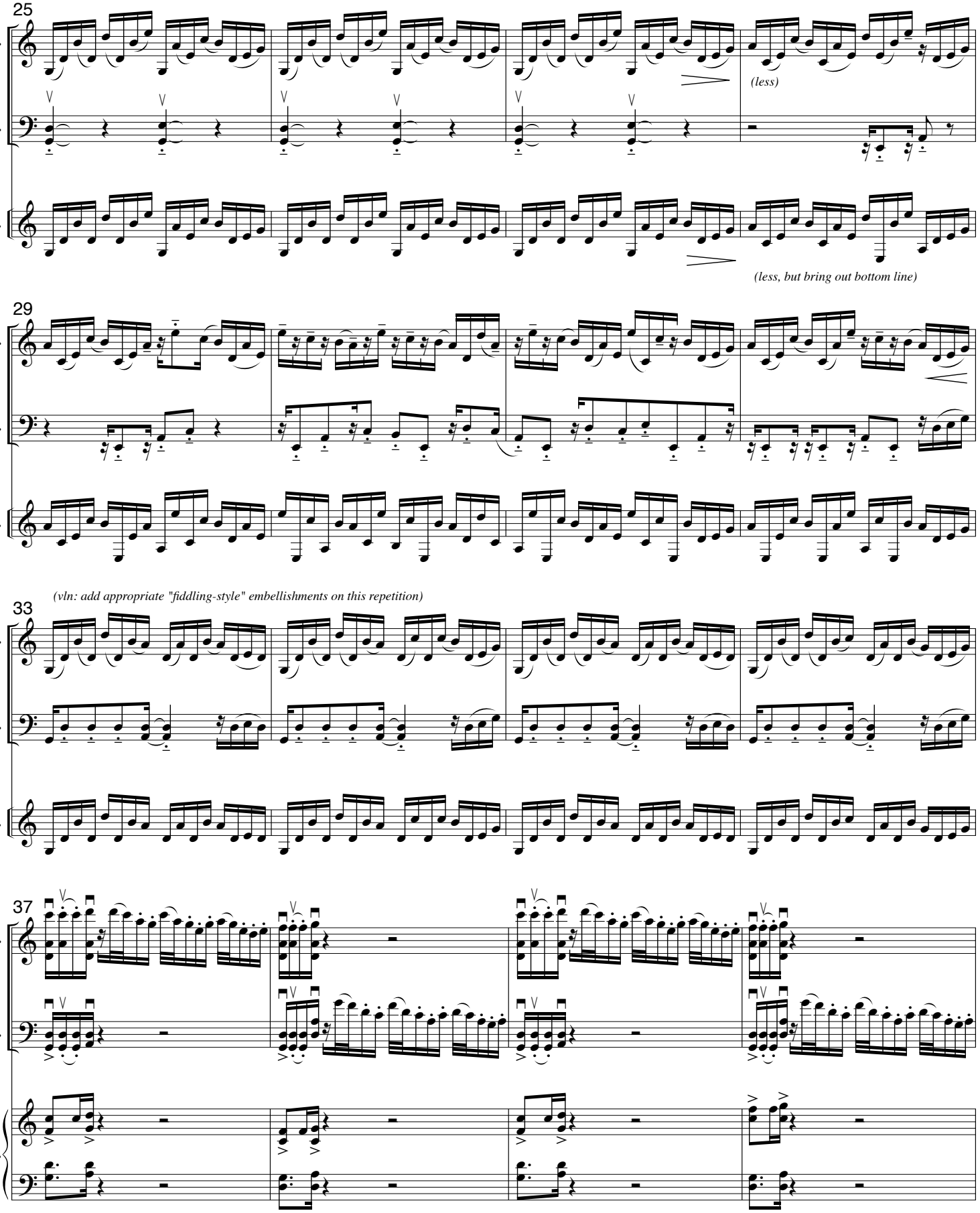
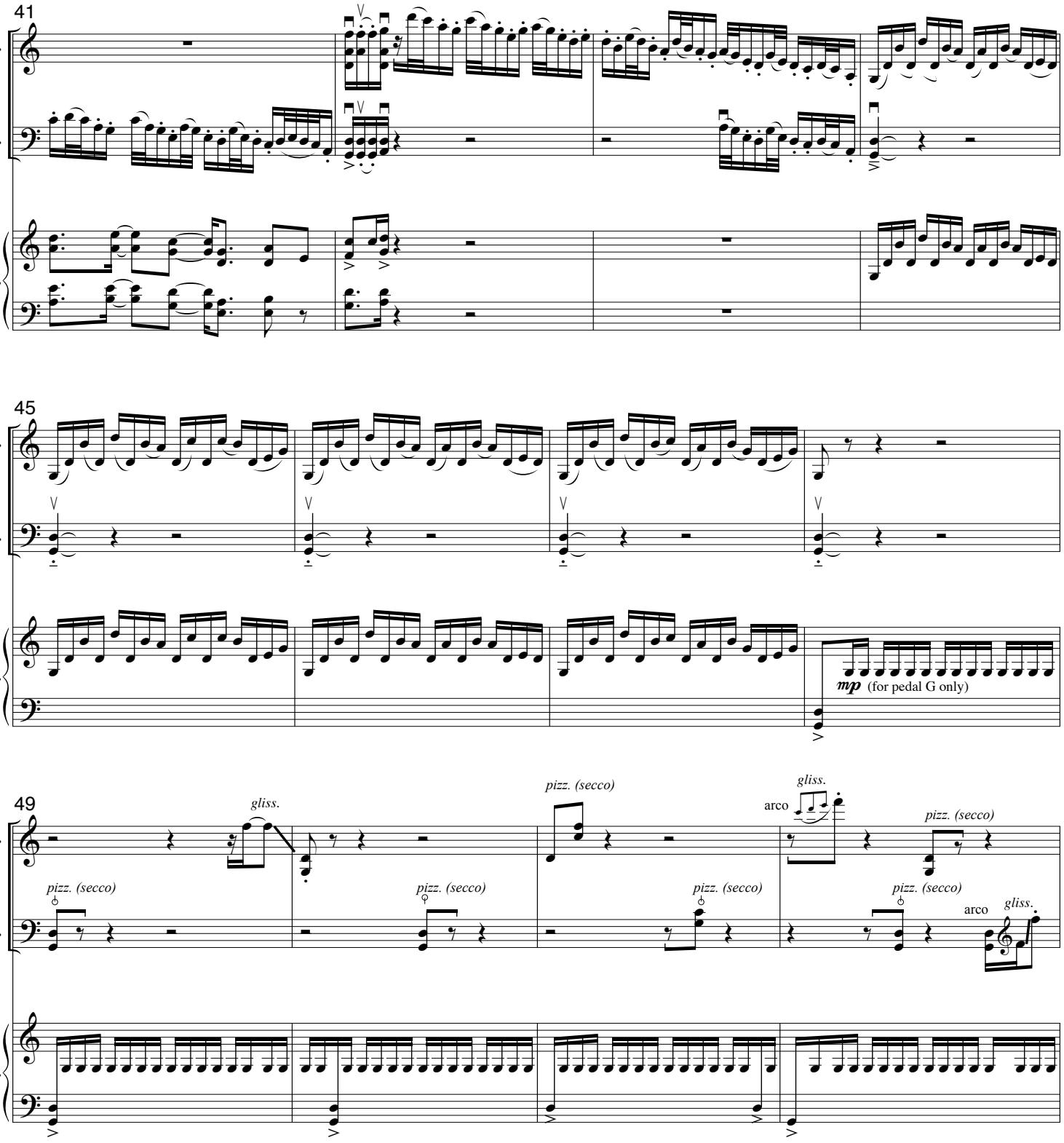
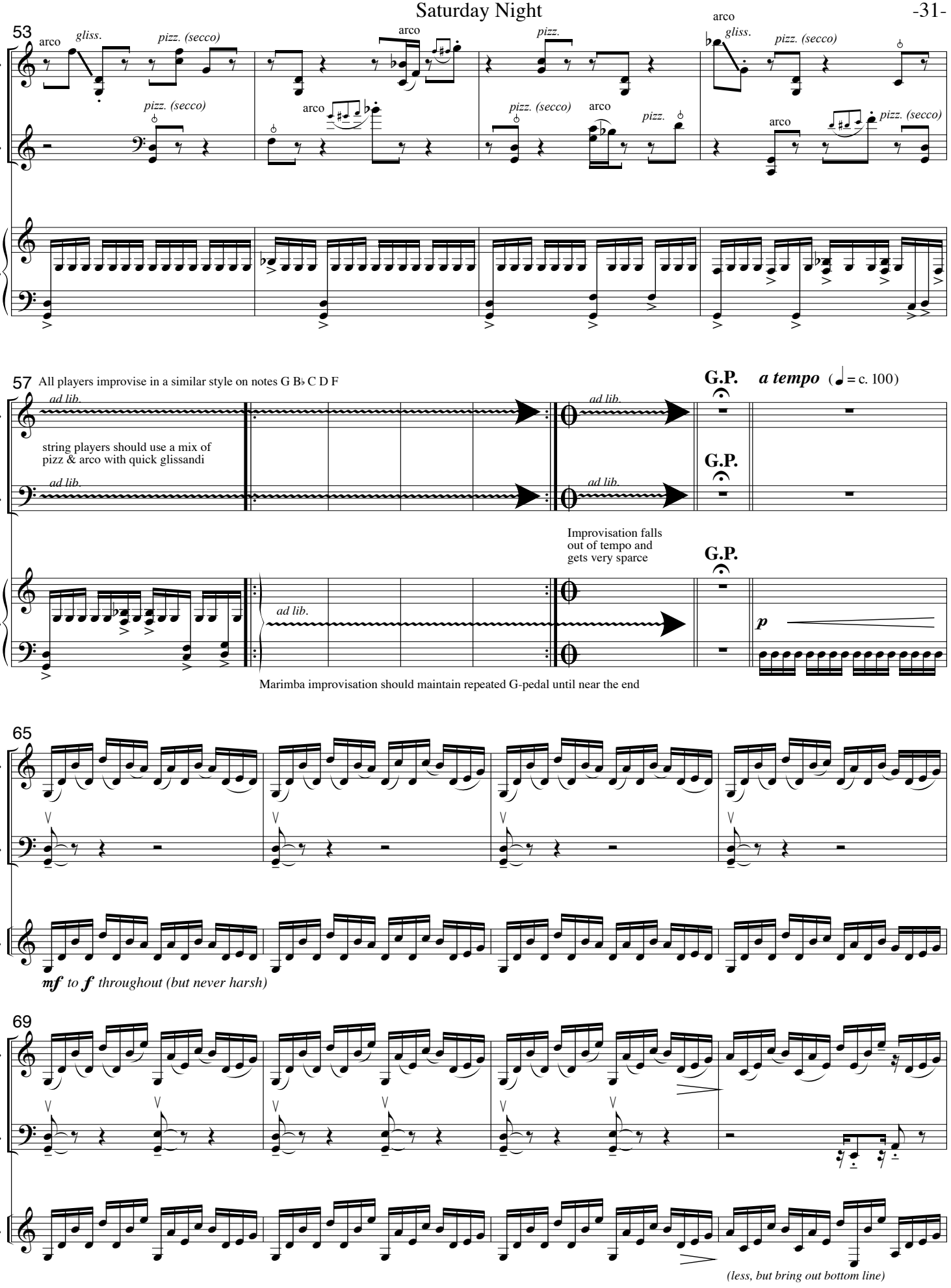
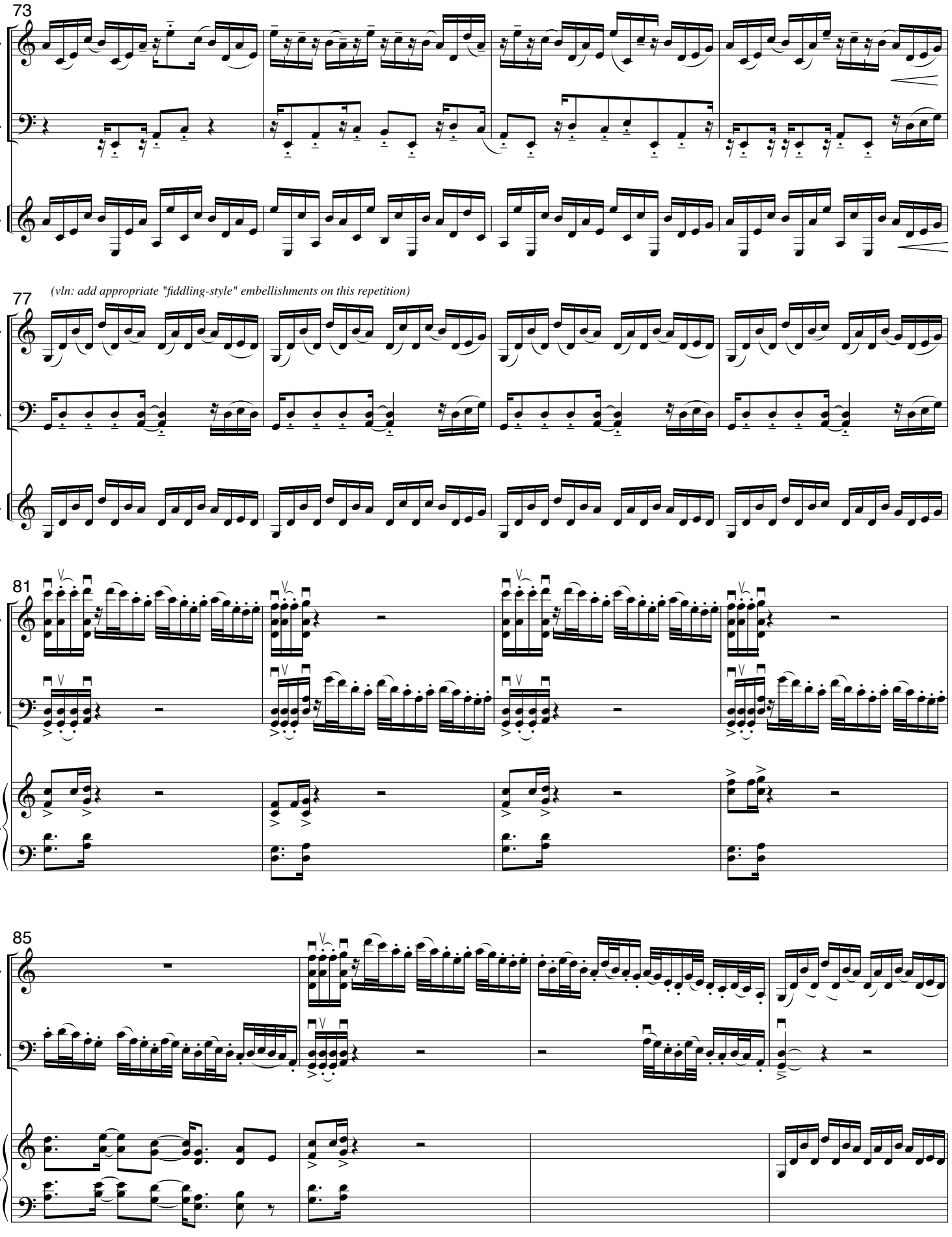
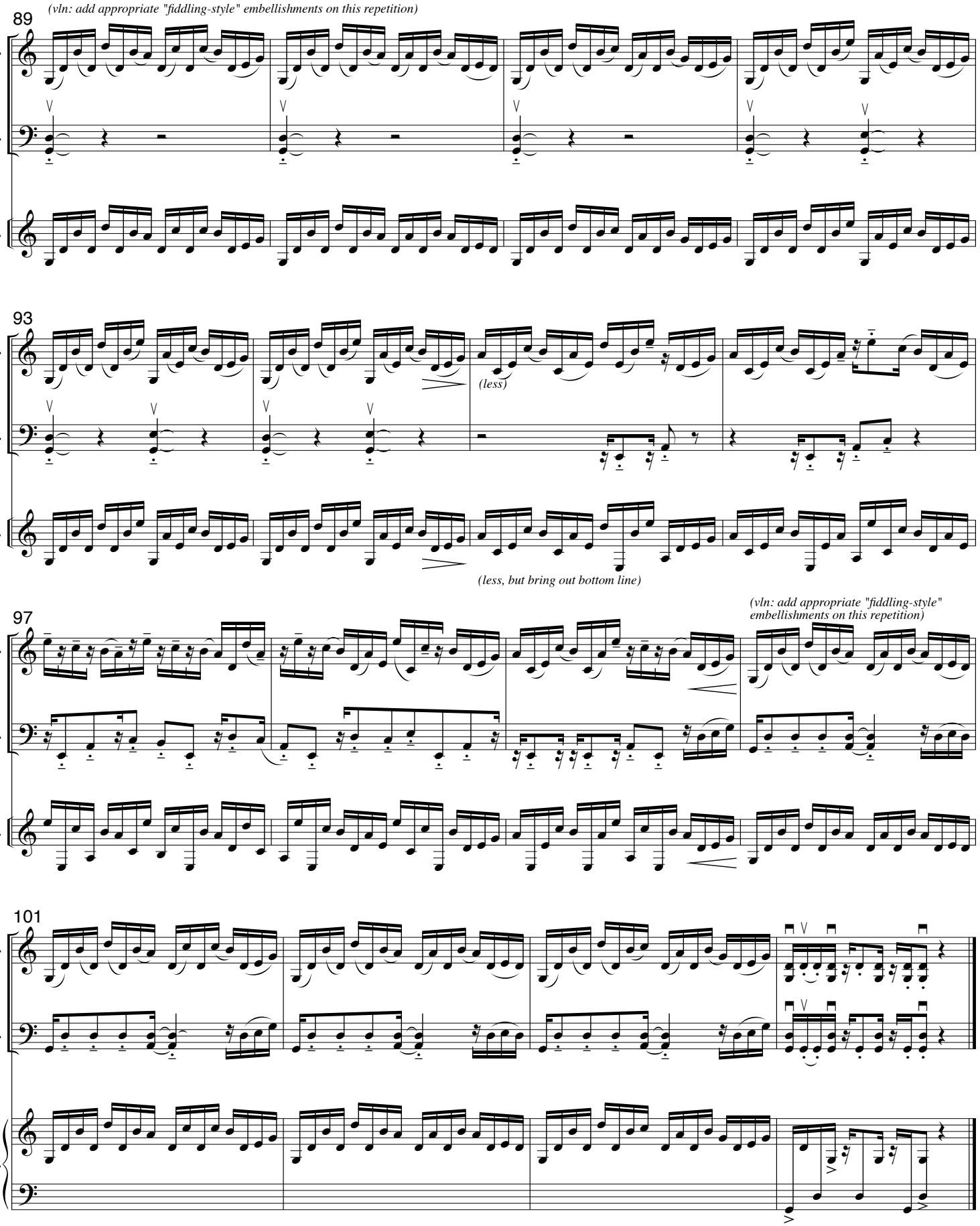
mf *to* ***f*** *throughout (but never harsh)*

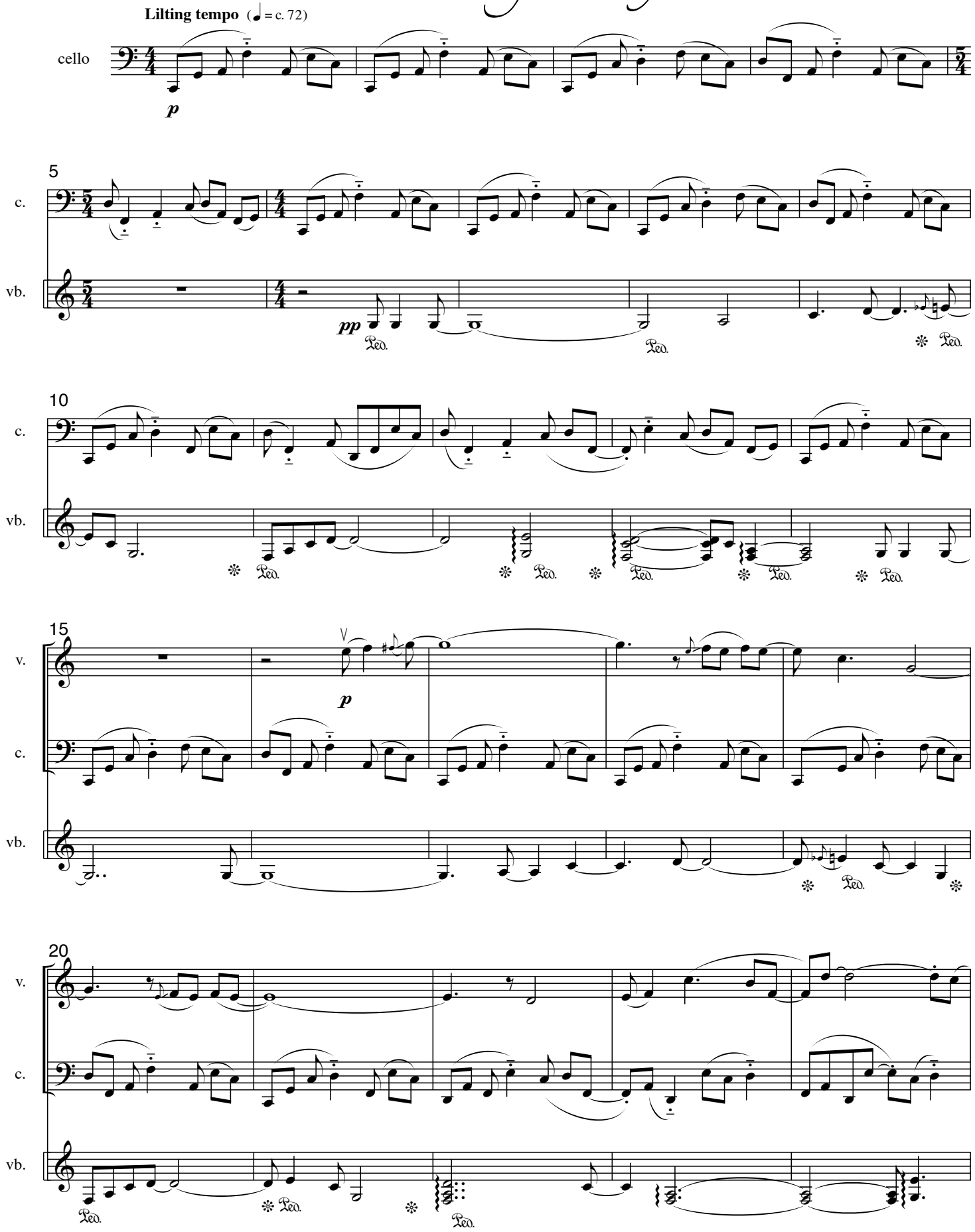
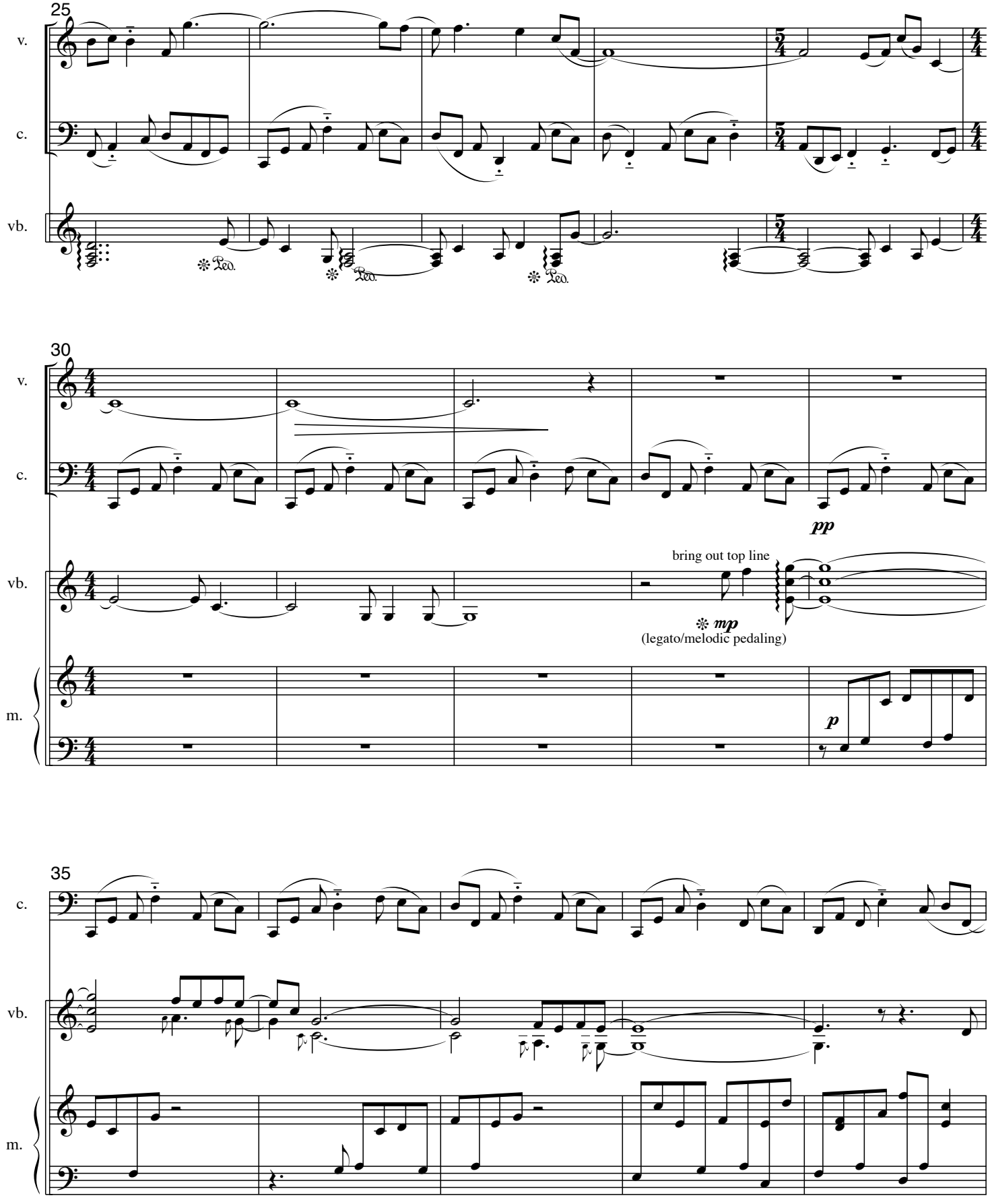
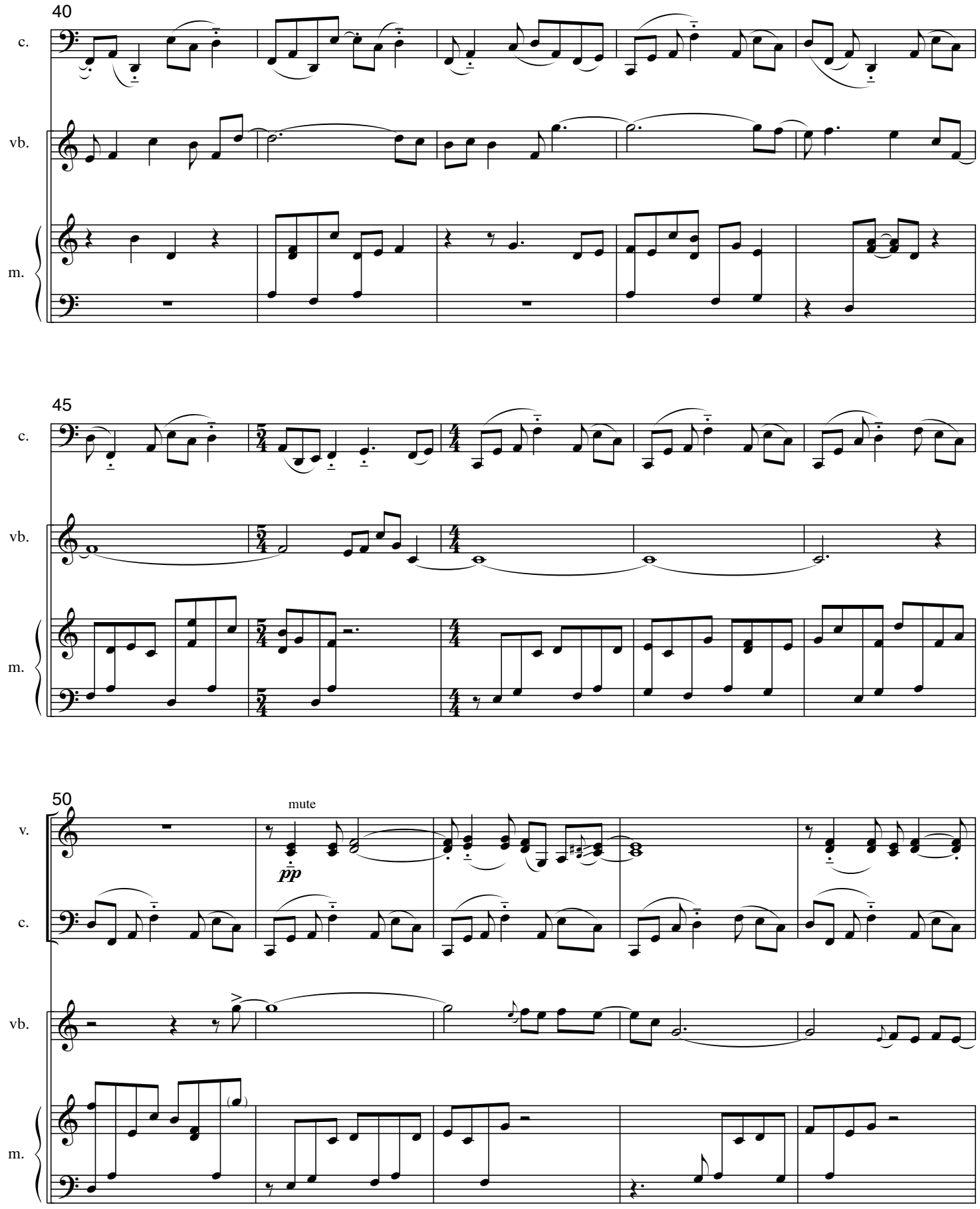
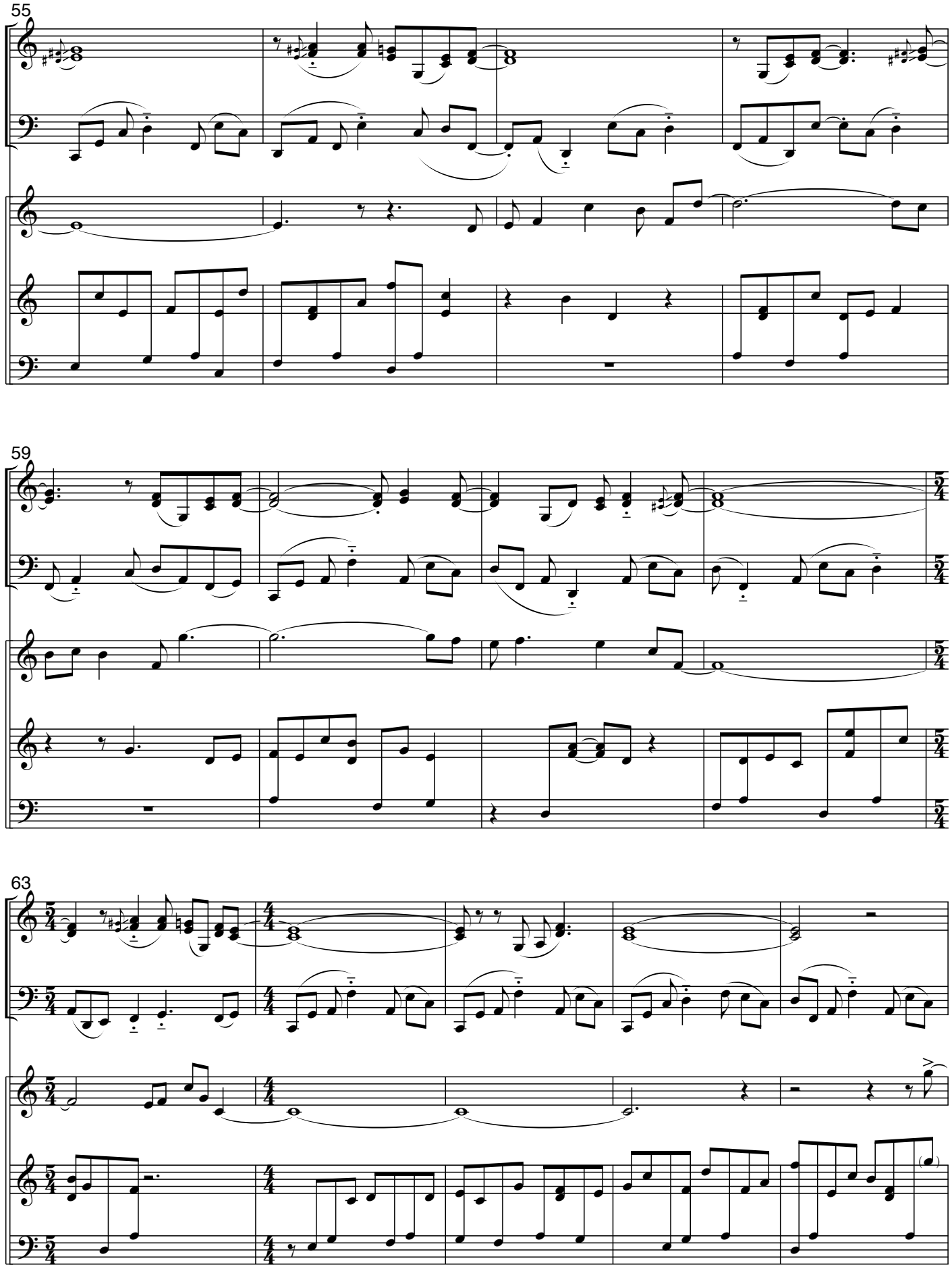
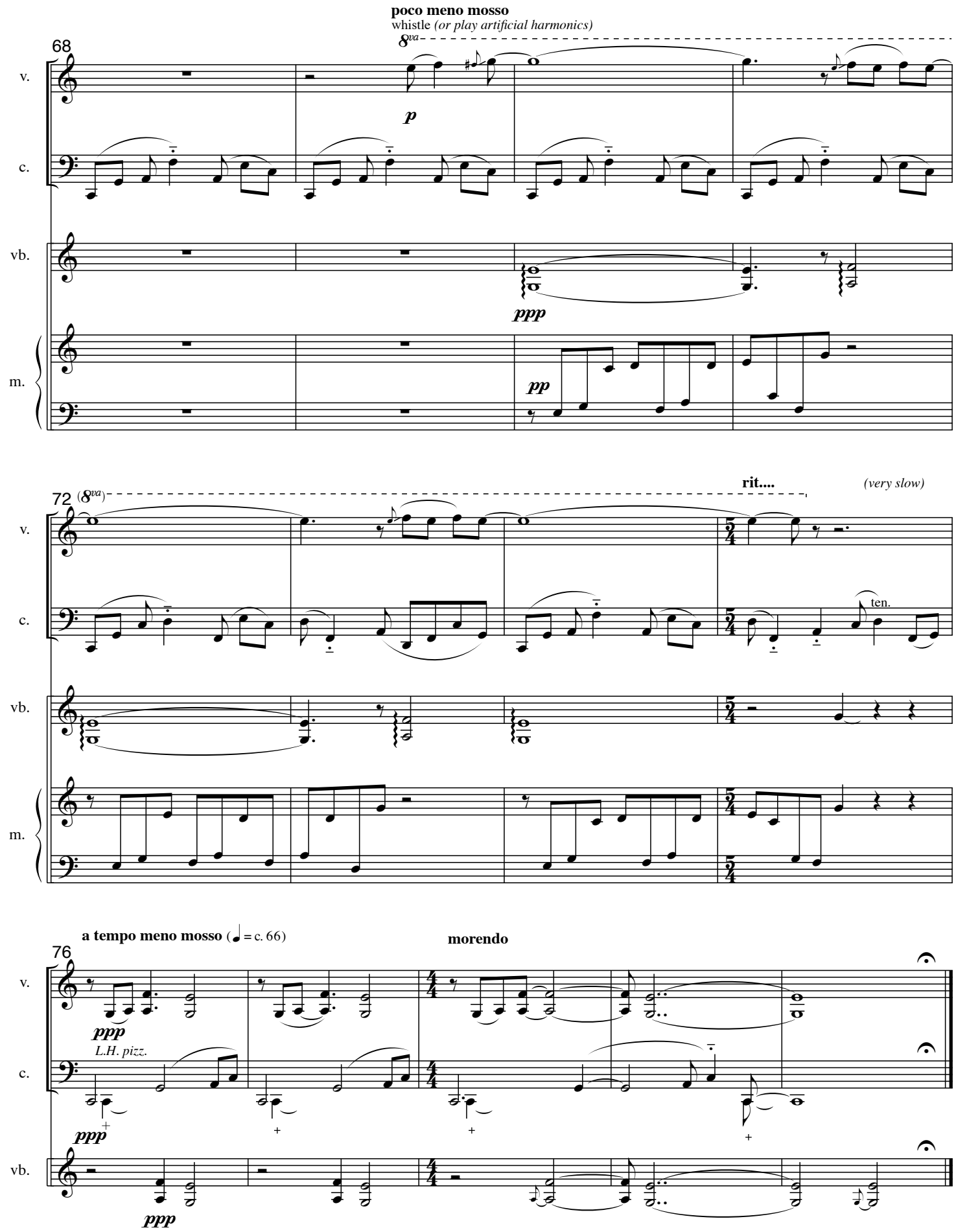
m.

21

v.

c.

m.

25
v.
c.
m.
(less)
(less, but bring out bottom line)
29
(vln: add appropriate "fiddling-style" embellishments on this repetition)
33
37

41
v.
c.
m.
45
v.
c.
m.
mp (for pedal G only)
49
v.
c.
m.
gliss.
pizz. (secco)
pizz. (secco)
pizz. (secco)
gliss.
arco
pizz. (secco)
pizz. (secco)
arco
gliss.

53
v.
c.
m.
arco
gliss.
pizz. (secco)
pizz.
57
All players improvise in a similar style on notes G B♭ C D F
ad lib.
string players should use a mix of pizz & arco with quick glissandi
G.P.
a tempo (♩ = c. 100)
Improvisation falls out of tempo and gets very sparce
p
Marimba improvisation should maintain repeated G-pedal until near the end
65
mf to f throughout (but never harsh)
69
(less, but bring out bottom line)

73
v.
c.
m.
77
(vln: add appropriate "fiddling-style" embellishments on this repetition)
81
85

(vln: add appropriate "fiddling-style" embellishments on this repetition)
89
v.
c.
m.
93
(less)
(less, but bring out bottom line)
97
(vln: add appropriate "fiddling-style" embellishments on this repetition)
101

Porch Swing Lullaby

25
v.
c.
vb.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
30
v.
c.
vb.
m.
pp
bring out top line
mp
(legato/melodic pedaling)
p
35
c.
vb.
m.

40
c.
vb.
m.
45
c.
vb.
m.
50
mute
v.
pp
c.
vb.
m.

55
v.
c.
vb.
m.
59
v.
c.
vb.
m.
63
v.
c.
vb.
m.

poco meno mosso
whistle (or play artificial harmonics)
68
8va
v.
c.
vb.
m.
p
ppp
pp
72
(8va)
rit....
(very slow)
ten.
a tempo meno mosso (♩ = c. 66)
morendo
76
ppp
L.H. pizz.