Feona Lee Jones

Adrenaline

[2019]

For String Quartet

14 Min.

Title: String Quartet No. 2 *Adrenaline*
Composer Name: Feona Lee Jones
Expected Duration: 14:00

Instrumentation:

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello

Program Notes

Adrenaline is a 4-movement string quartet piece titled for the dissonant driving chromatic motives that clash and glissando towards a mass of aggressive, rhythmic, and cluster-heavy patterns that unfold into an adrenaline-driven force that continues until the end.

Performance Notes

Movement 1

The first movement is episodic in nature and loosely based on an emotional arc of a horror film. I wanted to create an experience of suspense and terror using harsh, abrasive dissonances to create a climate of anxiety by immersing the listener in an adrenaline-filled experience. In the final section of the first movement, the two violins bring back the beginning motive while playing rhythmic gestures back and forth. The interplay between the two violins creates a web of intricate rhythms while the viola and cello play a counterpoint that drives the pieces to a climactic moment where all voices reach a minor sonority played at fortississimo.

Movement 2

The second movement is the shimmery, dreamy, palate-cleanser movement designed to give the listener (and players) a break from the previous fast-paced movement. It is slower in tempo and features a lyrical quarter-note triplet motive that reappears throughout the movement. The piece is sparser and plays with space and harmonies that are gradually shifting and fading in and out. Portamento is used to slide from one note to another in order to create smooth transitions

and seamlessly connect the slowly fluctuating harmonies. There is a climactic point where all players are playing a harmony that builds in intensity before petering out to silence. This movement introduces a melodic and harmonic component that prepares the listener for the following movement.

Note: All lines in this movement refer to glissando lines, unless they are labeled as portamento lines.

Movement 3

The third movement is a high energy, fast-paced, frenzied dance movement in 5/4 time, but notated as a 3/4 bar plus a 2/4 bar. I was inspired by Asian instruments—specifically the dan bau and pipa when composing this movement. In order to create the same type of pitch-bending that occurs in these Asian instruments, I used a lot of pizzicato with a glissando to create a short pitch bend effect.

Another influential element that inspired me when writing this movement were David Lynch films. Lynch has the extraordinary ability to take something normal and make it otherworldly. Since I was using a more traditional approach with harmony and melody in this movement, I wanted to somehow give it an otherworldly feel. I experimented by adding quarter tones and portamento, which gave the piece a change of color and dirtied-up the melody. The addition of quarter tones and portamento gave the instruments a more exotic sound. I applied non-western techniques to break out of the western European tuning system of equal temperament, to smudge the melody, and create a different timbral color.

Note: The pizzicato notes with glissando lines should all be short. The “goal” note they slide to is just a guide note, but it does not necessarily mean one has to land on that particular note. Also “spic.” stands for spiccato.

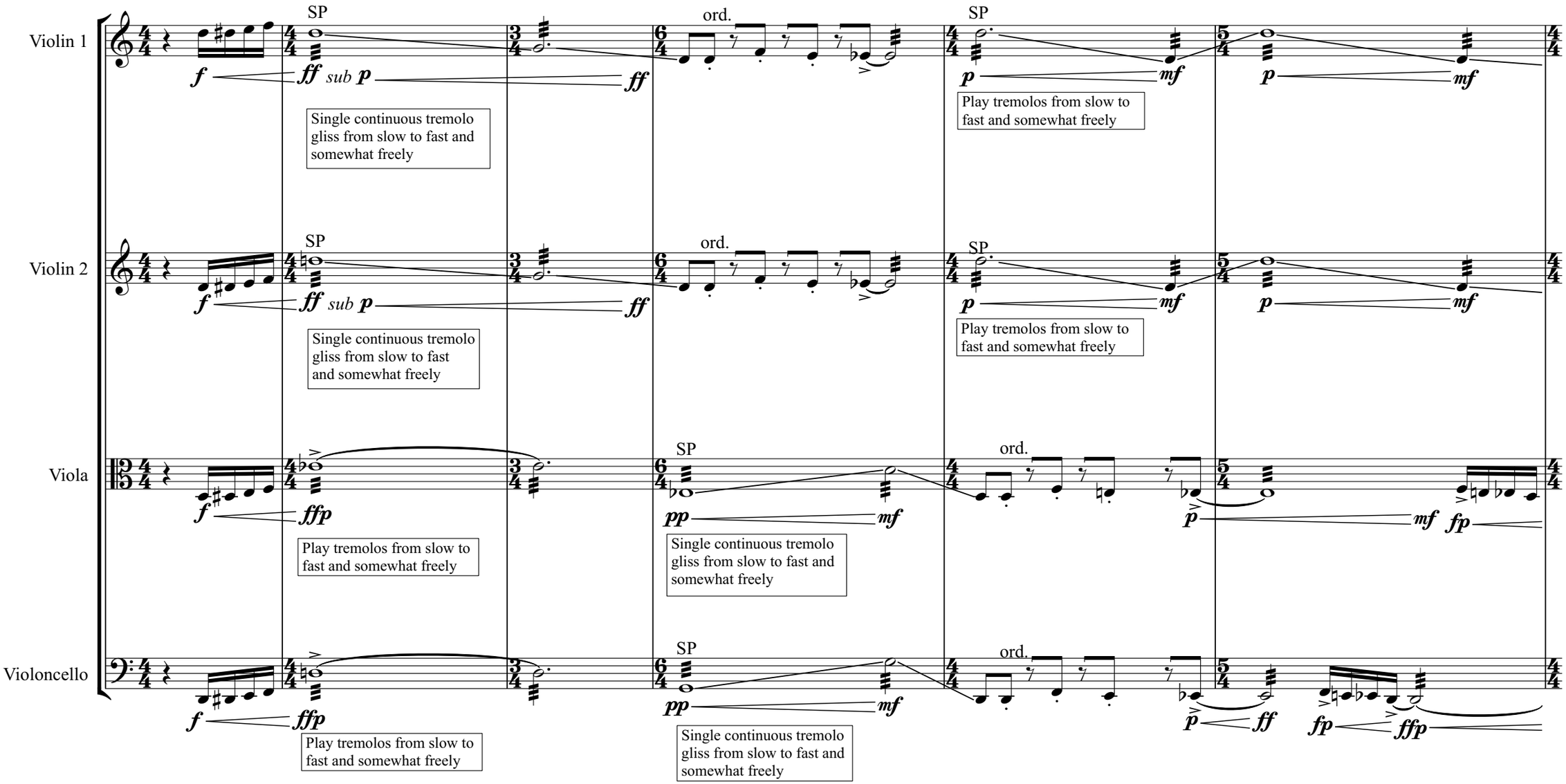
Movement 4

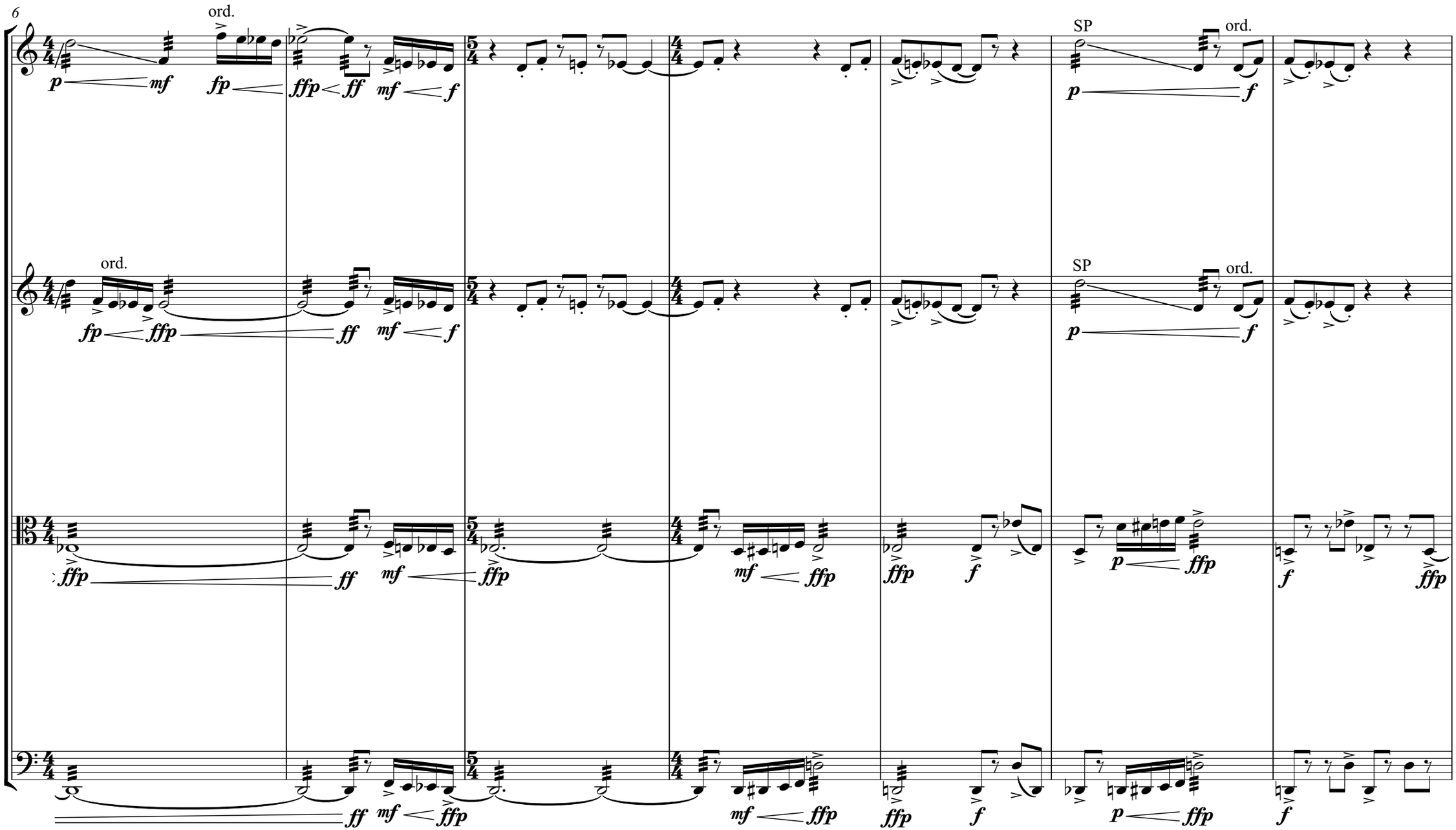
The fourth and final movement contains motives and material from the earlier movements. I wanted to end the string quartet with a fast-paced movement that left the listener wanting more. My challenge was to effectively and efficiently say what I want to say in two minutes or less and not overstay my welcome. The final movement contains motives and fragments of ideas from earlier movements. I chose to stick with only a couple ideas to give the listener something to remember. It is the final movement where the title of the piece, *Adrenaline* is most appropriate. Towards the middle and end of the piece there are places where the music speeds up giving it a more frantic feeling. At the end, the piece builds in intensity and strength and ends by running off a cliff into silence.

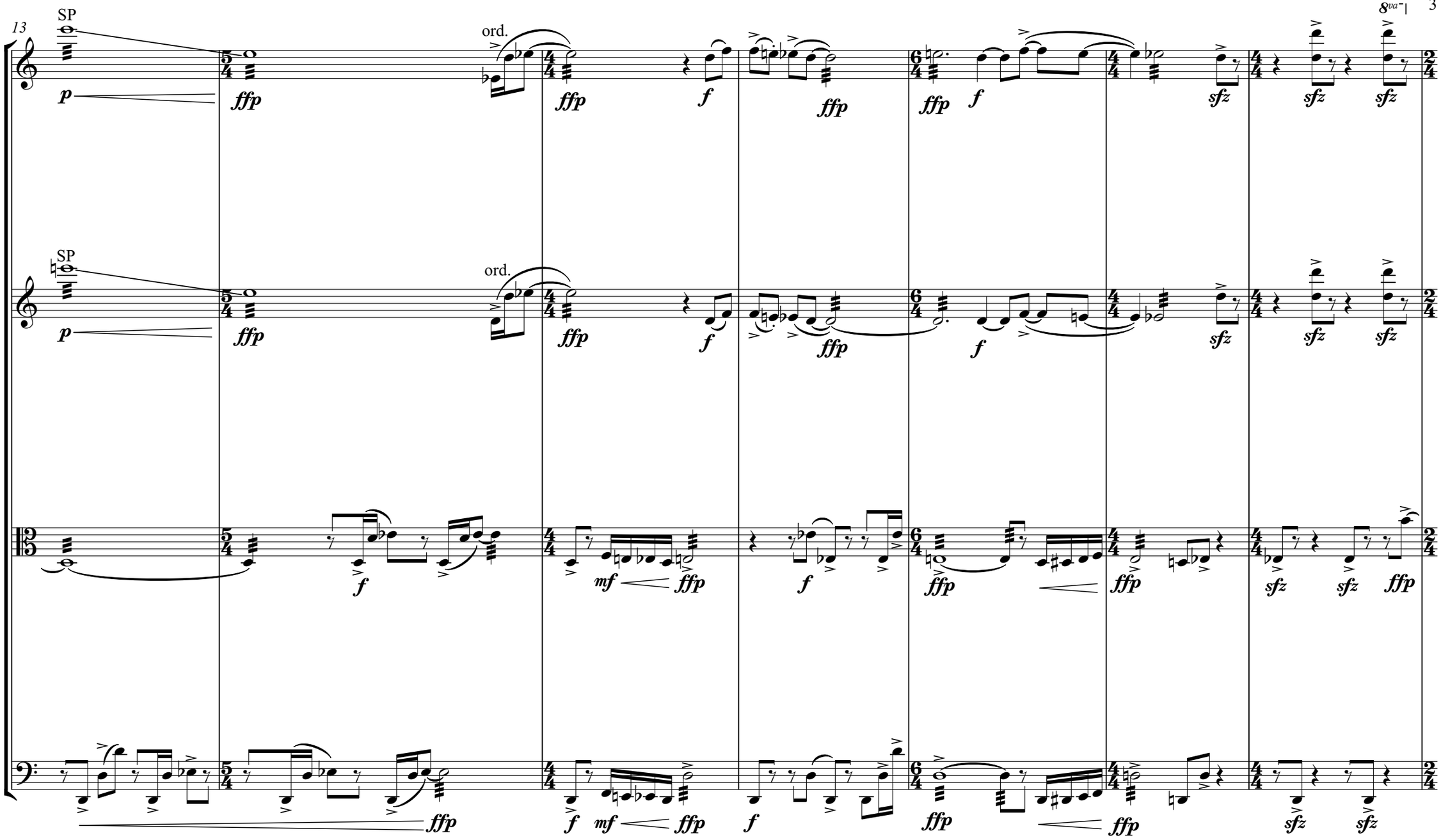
String Quartet No. 2

Feona Lee Jones (2019)

♩=105-110
Allegro (Molto Agitato)




6
ord.
SP
ord.
p
mf
fp
ffp
ff
mf
f
p
f
ord.
SP
ord.
fp
ffp
ff
mf
f
p
f
ffp
ff
mf
ffp
mf
ffp
ffp
f
p
ffp
f
ffp
ff
mf
ffp
mf
ffp
ffp
f
p
ffp
f


13
SP
ord.
8va
p
ffp
f
mf
sfz

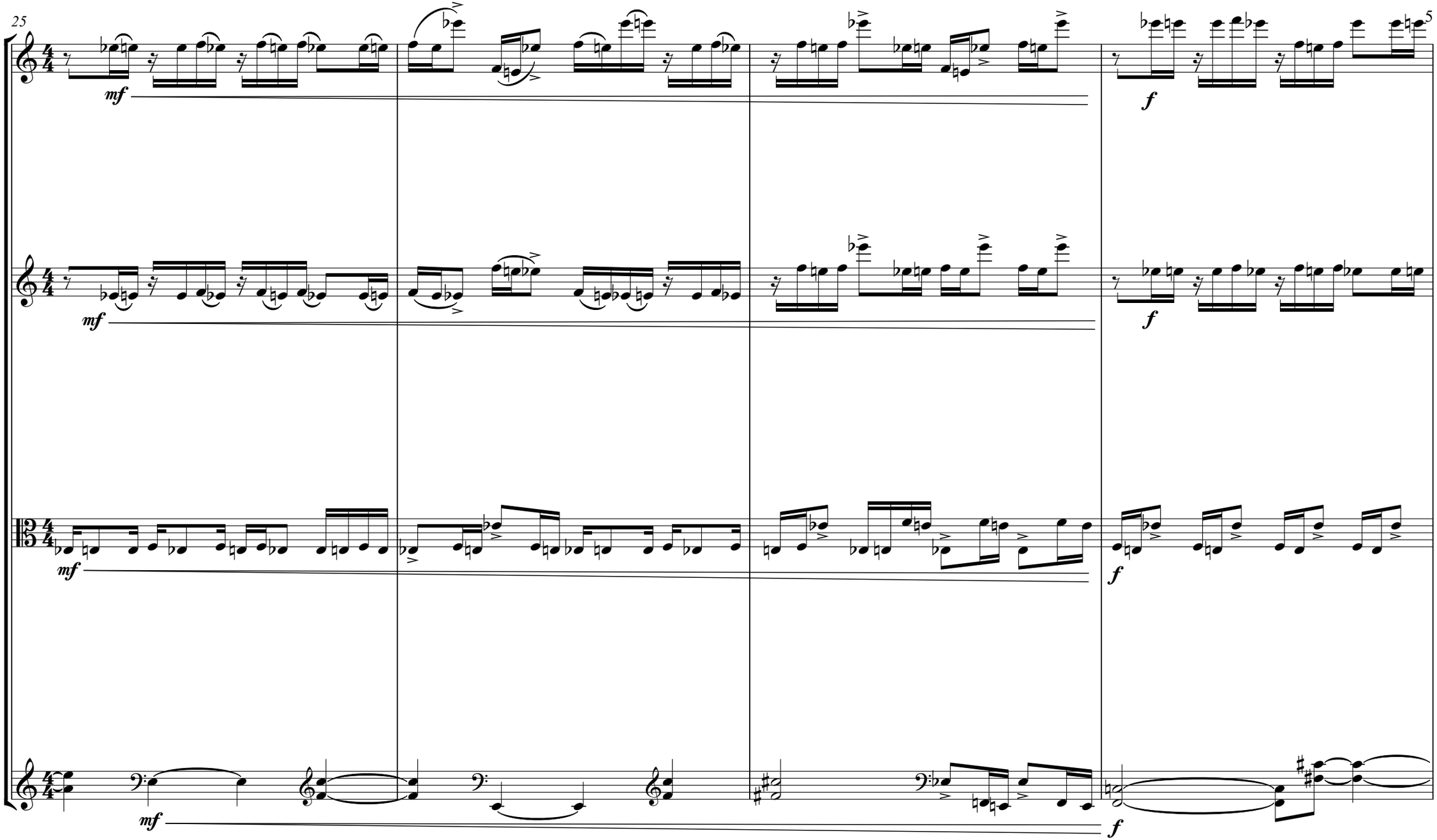
Playful, jabby

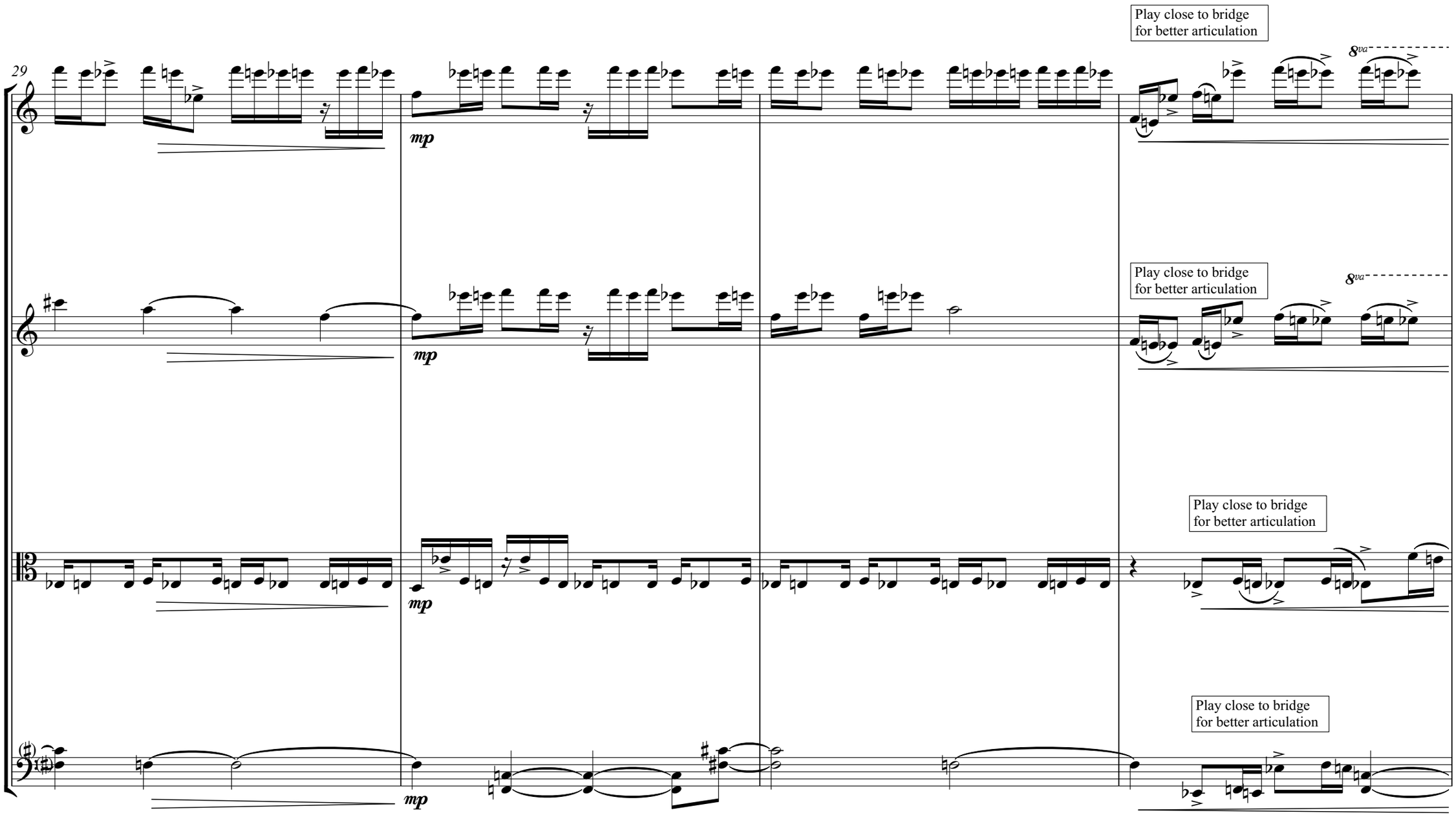
20

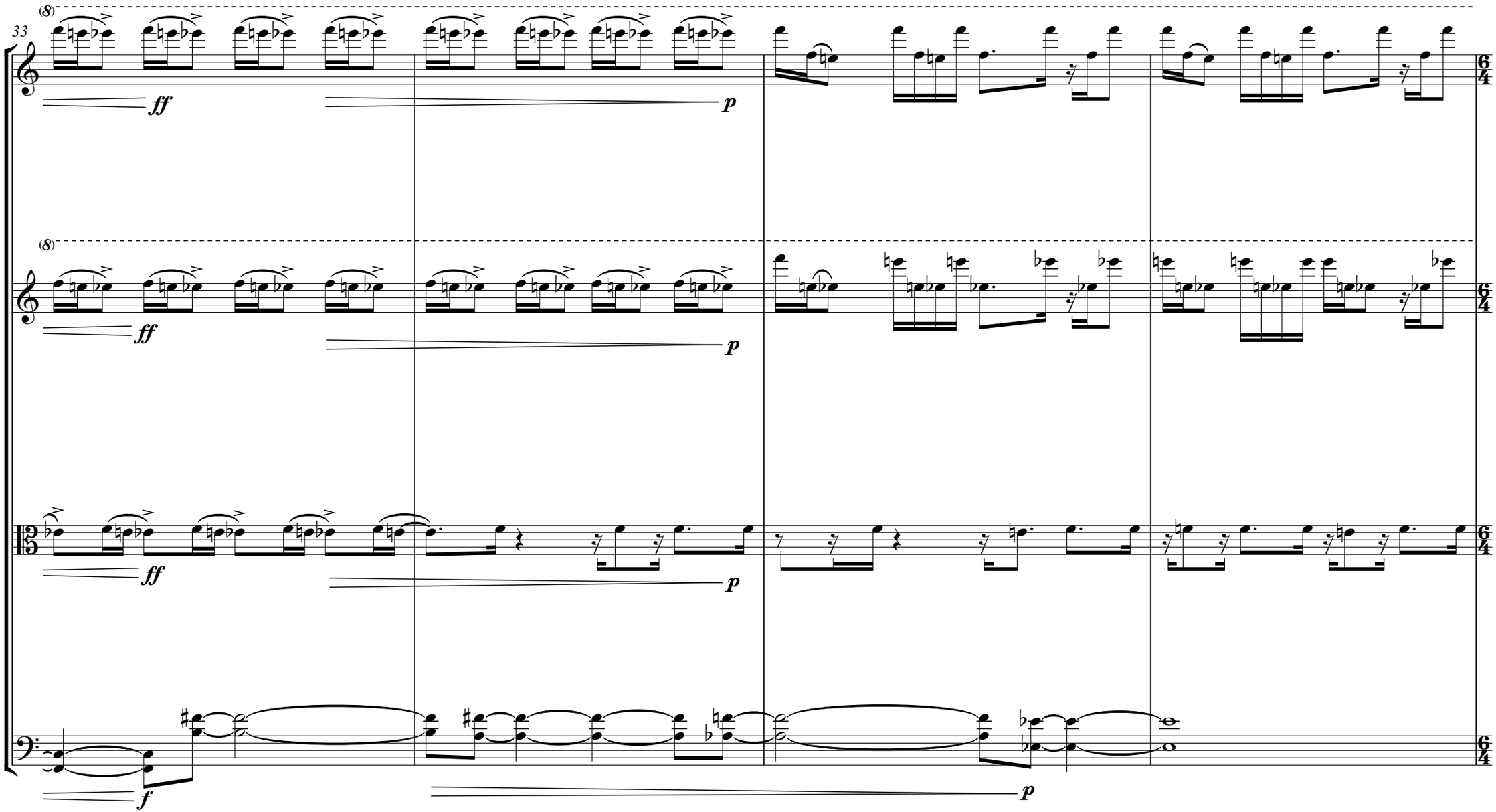
ffp

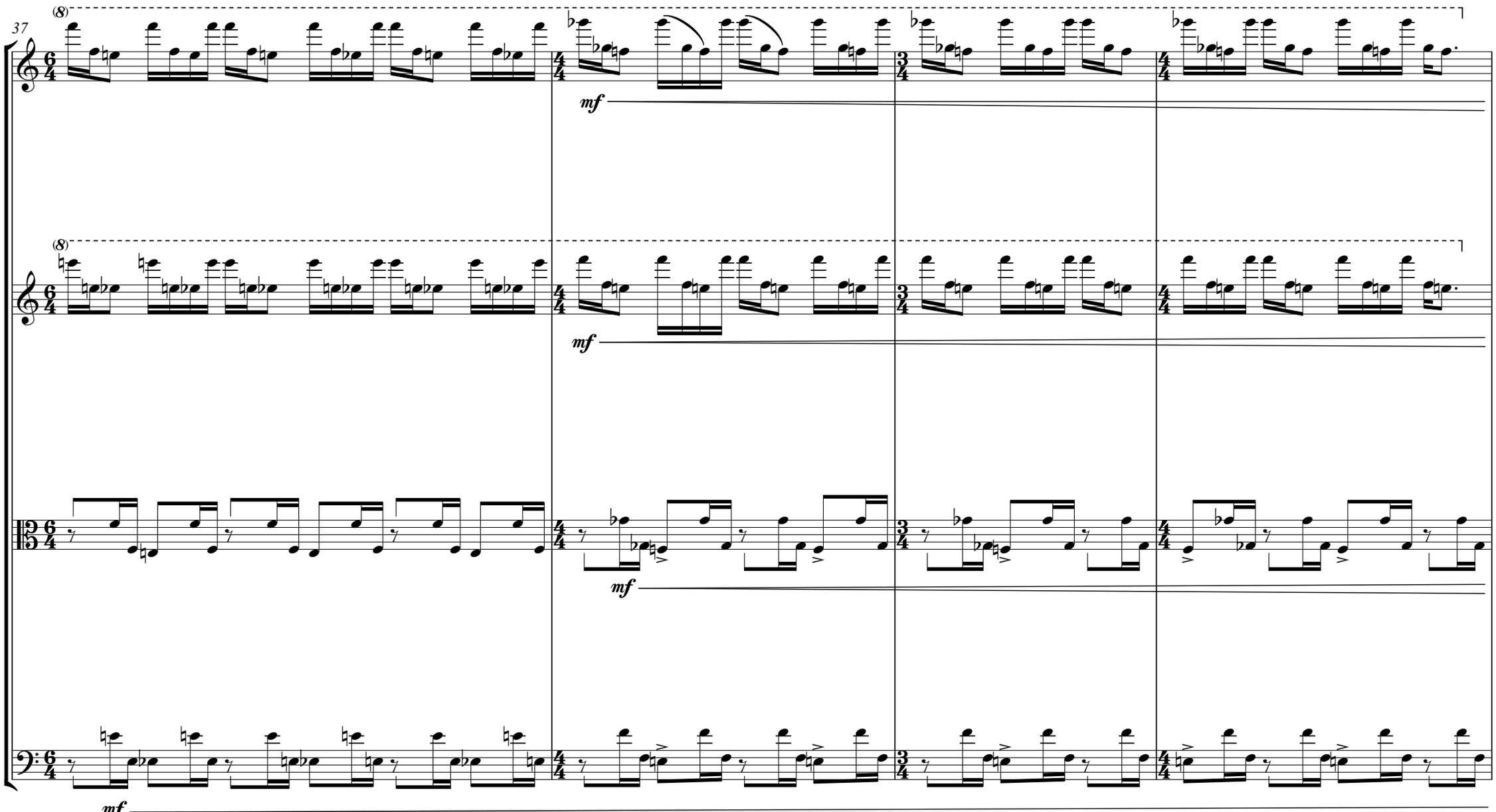
ffp

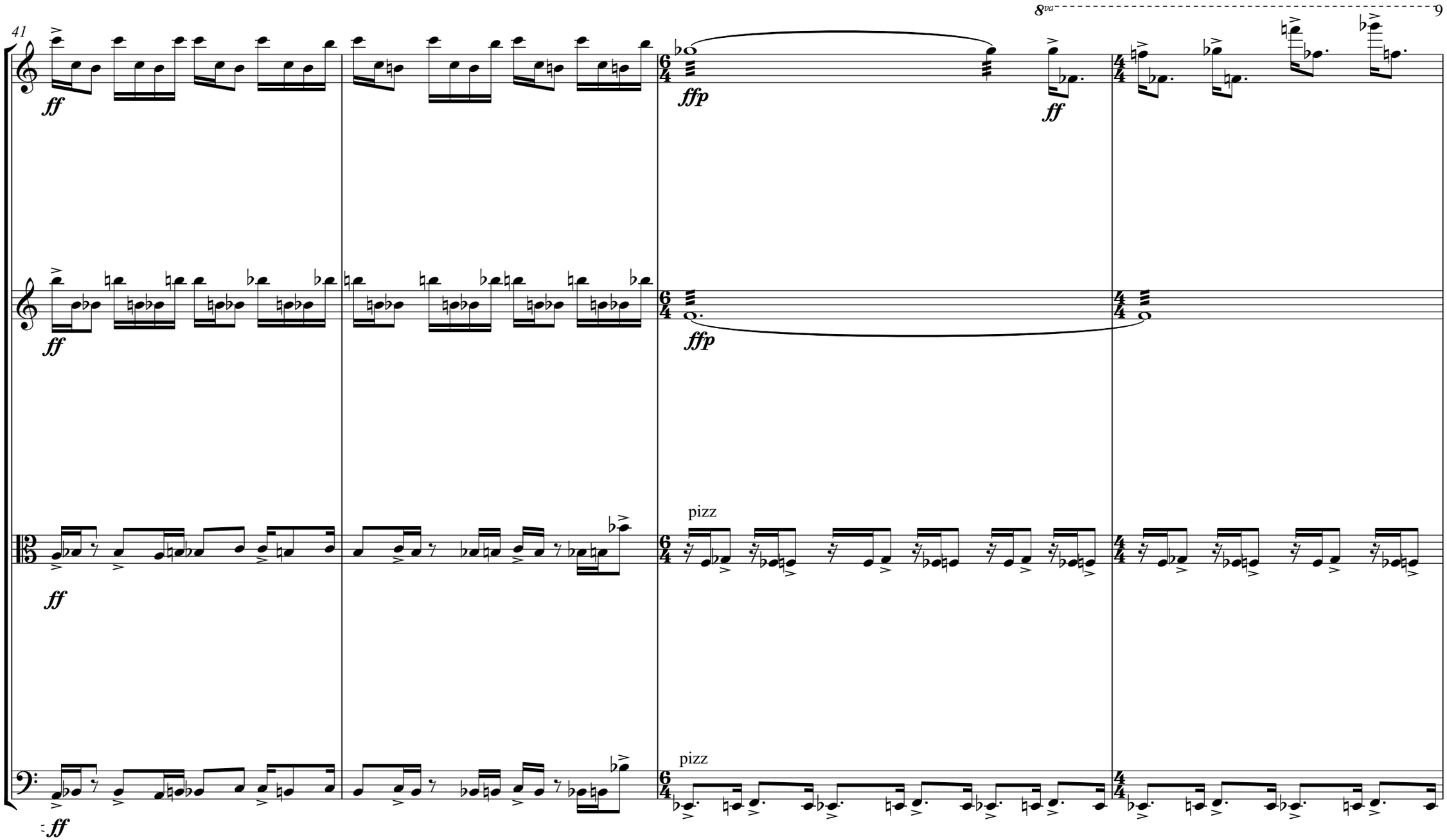
ffp

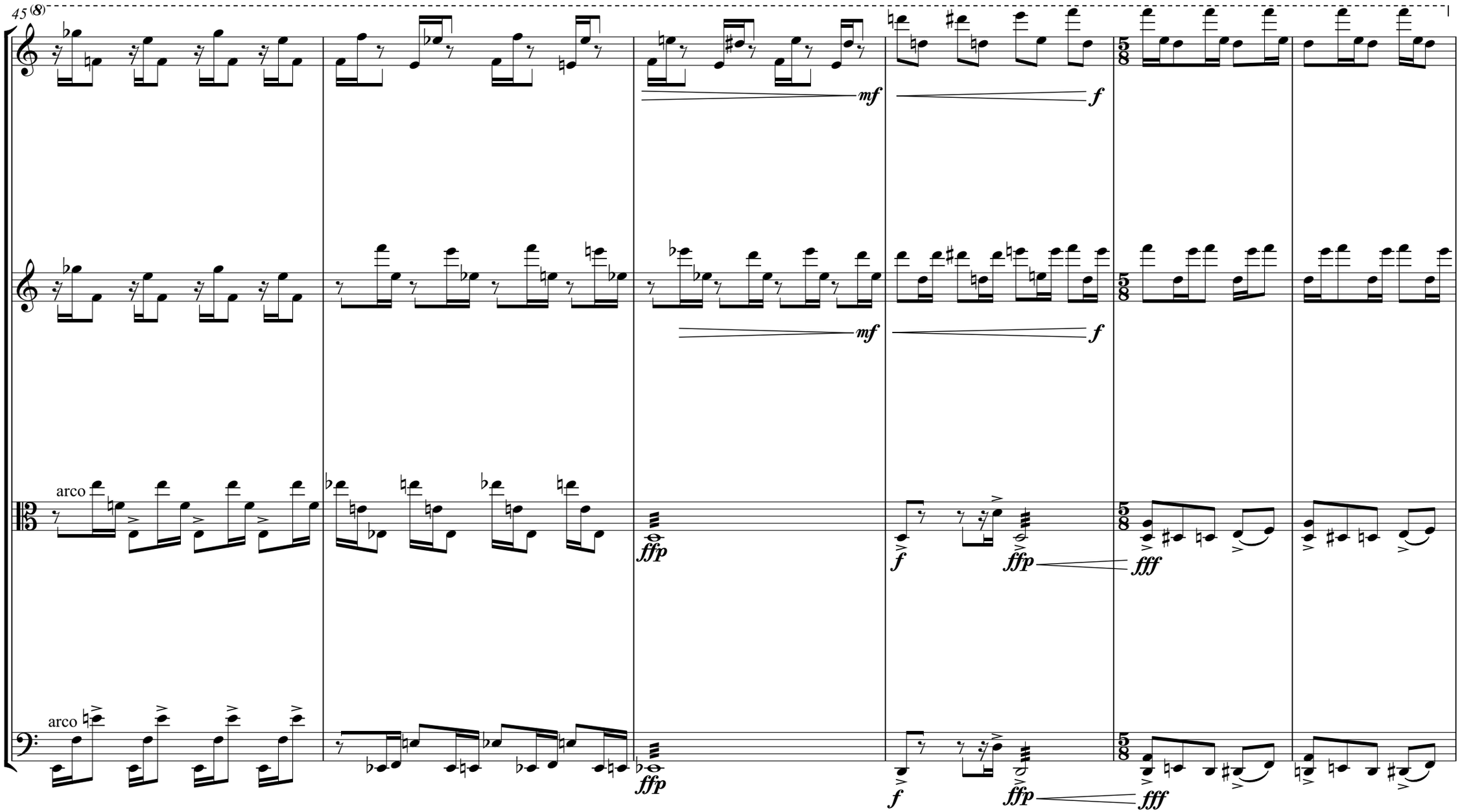

25
mf
f
5


29
mp
mp
mp
mp
Play close to bridge for better articulation
Play close to bridge for better articulation
Play close to bridge for better articulation
Play close to bridge for better articulation
8va
8va


33
(8)
ff
p
(8)
ff
p
ff
p
f
p
6/4
6/4
6/4
6/4


37
(8)
mf
(8)
mf
mf
mf


41
8va
ff
ffp
ff
ffp
pizz
ff
pizz
ff


45
(8)
mf
f
mf
f
arco
ffp
f
ffp
fff
arco
ffp
f
ffp
fff

♪=190
heavy and not too fast

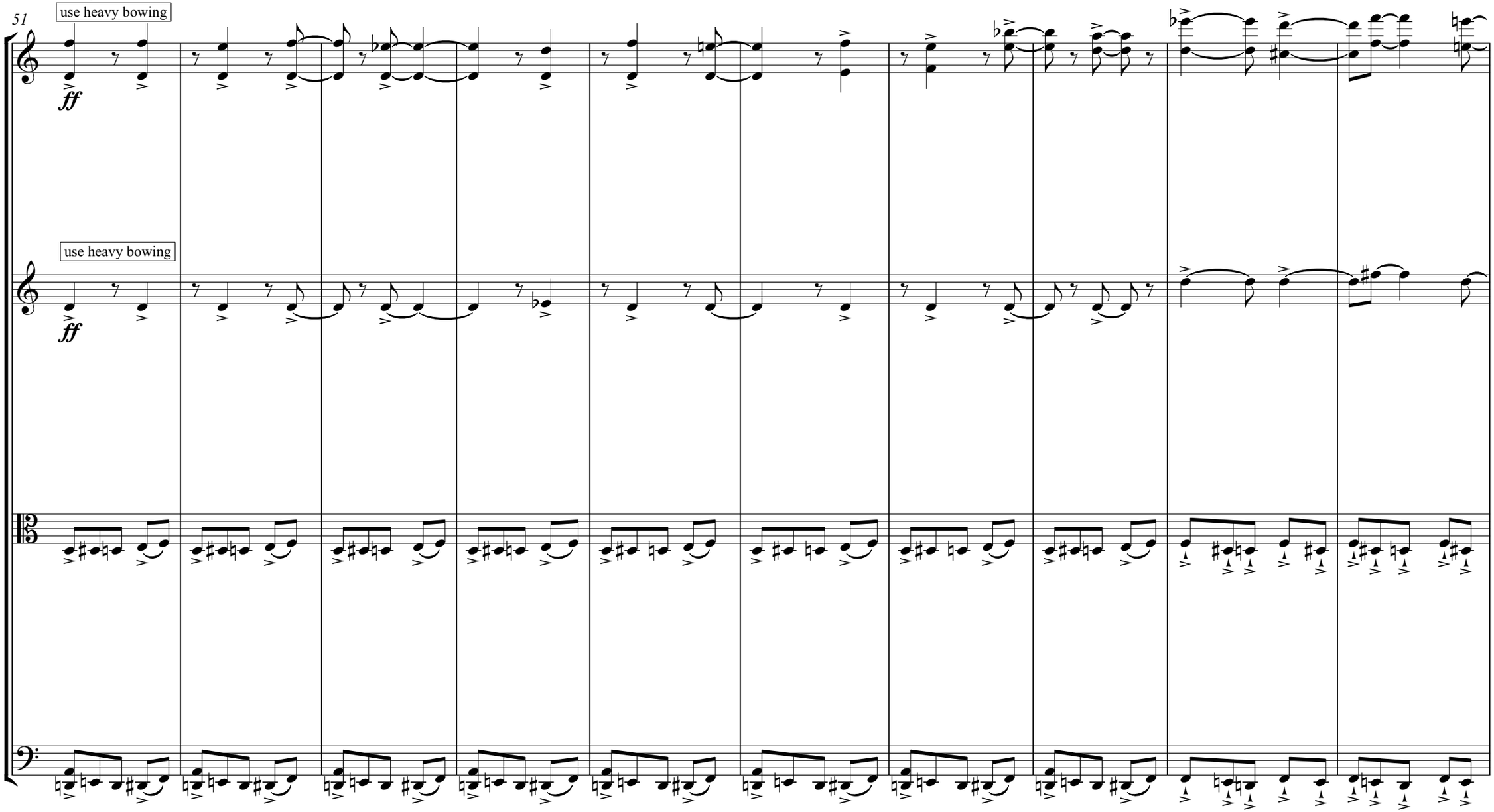
51

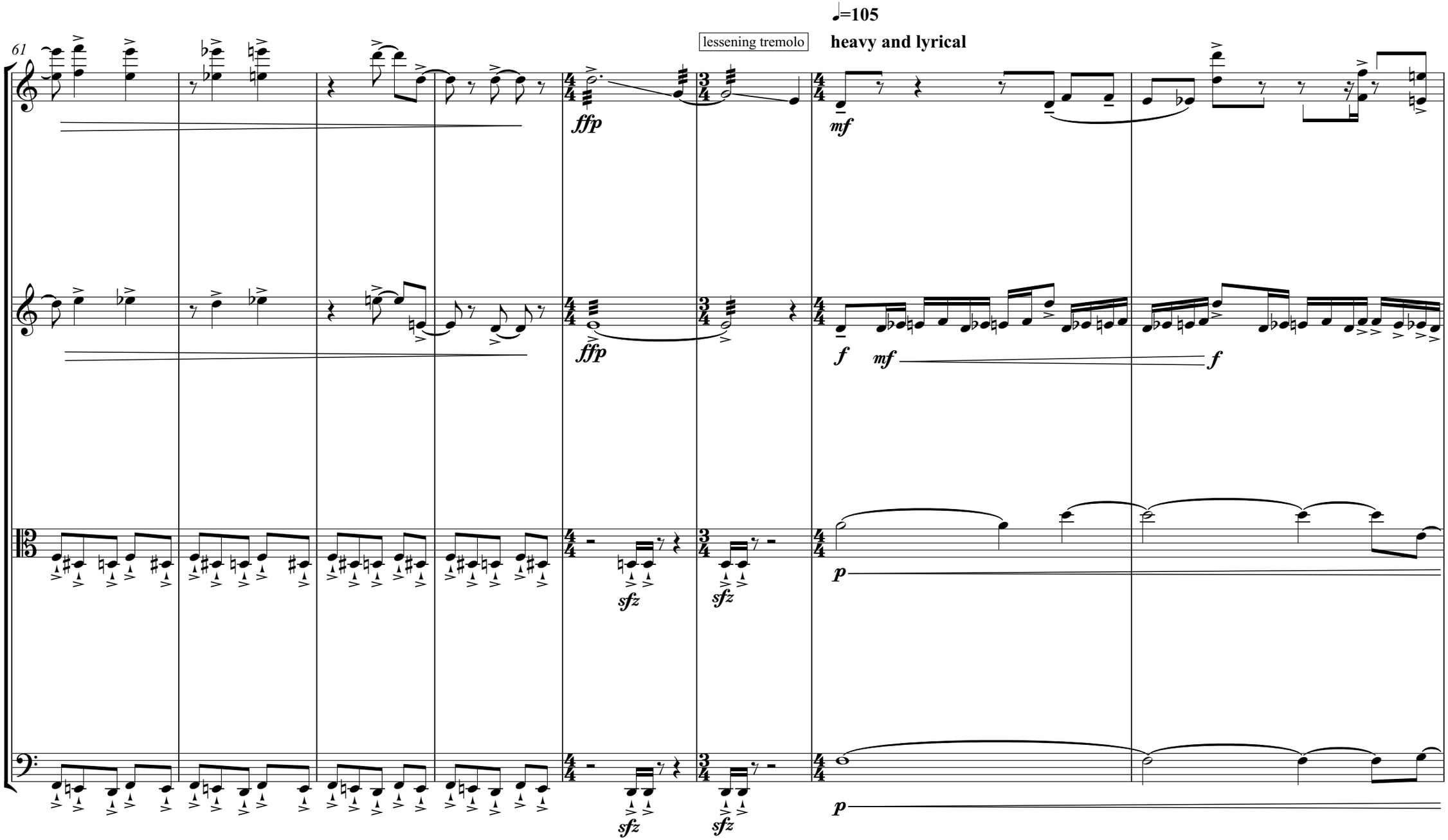
use heavy bowing

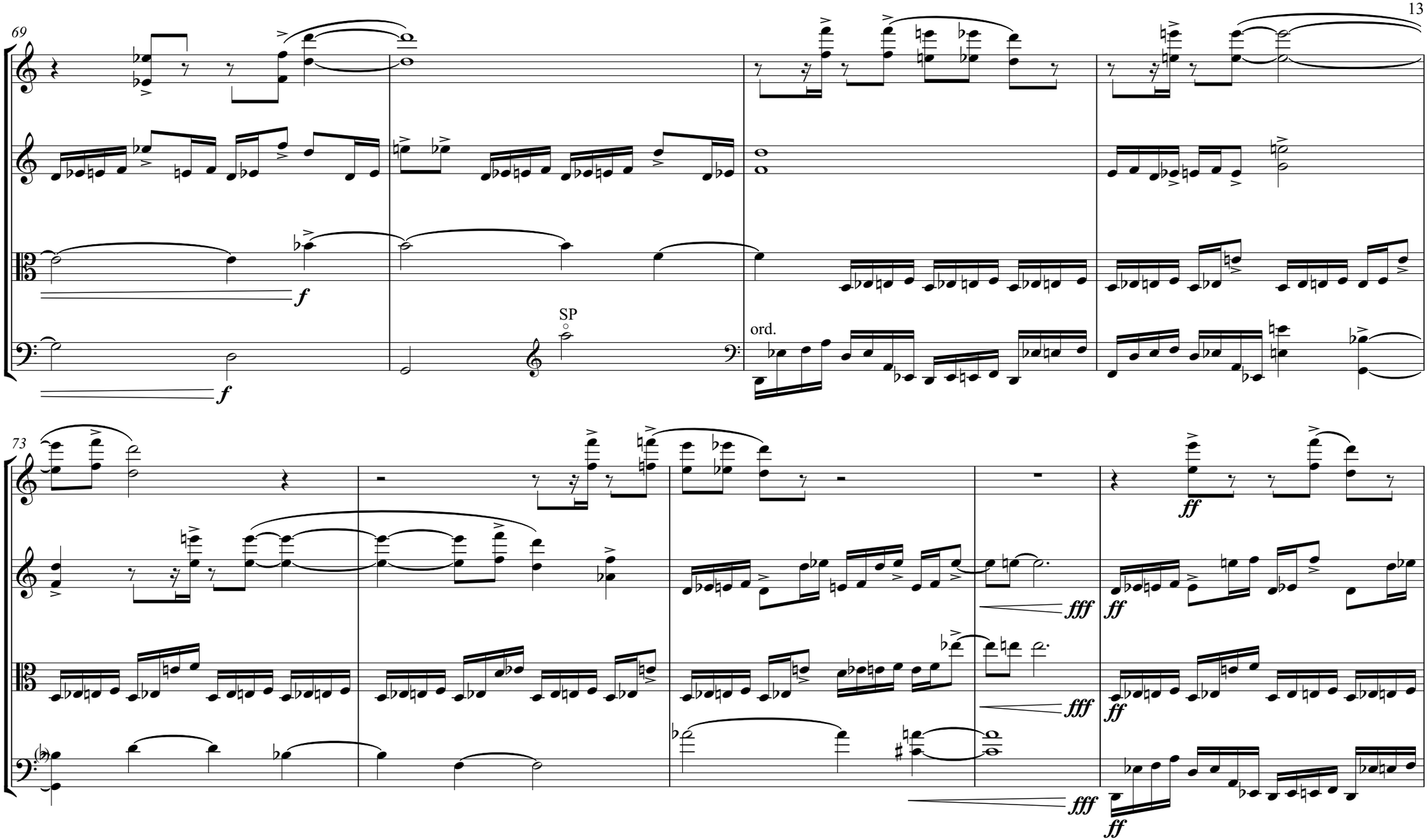
ff

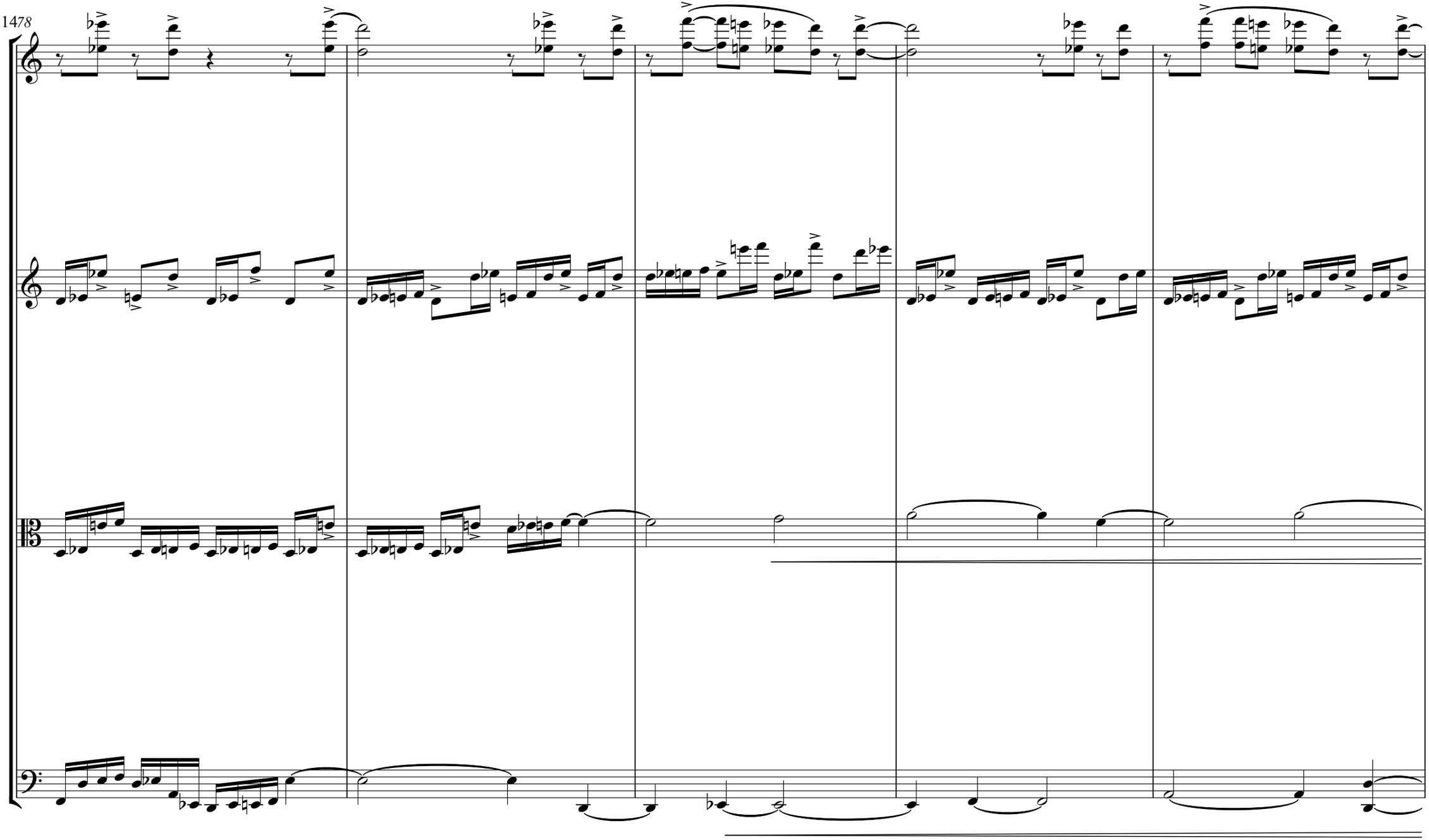
use heavy bowing

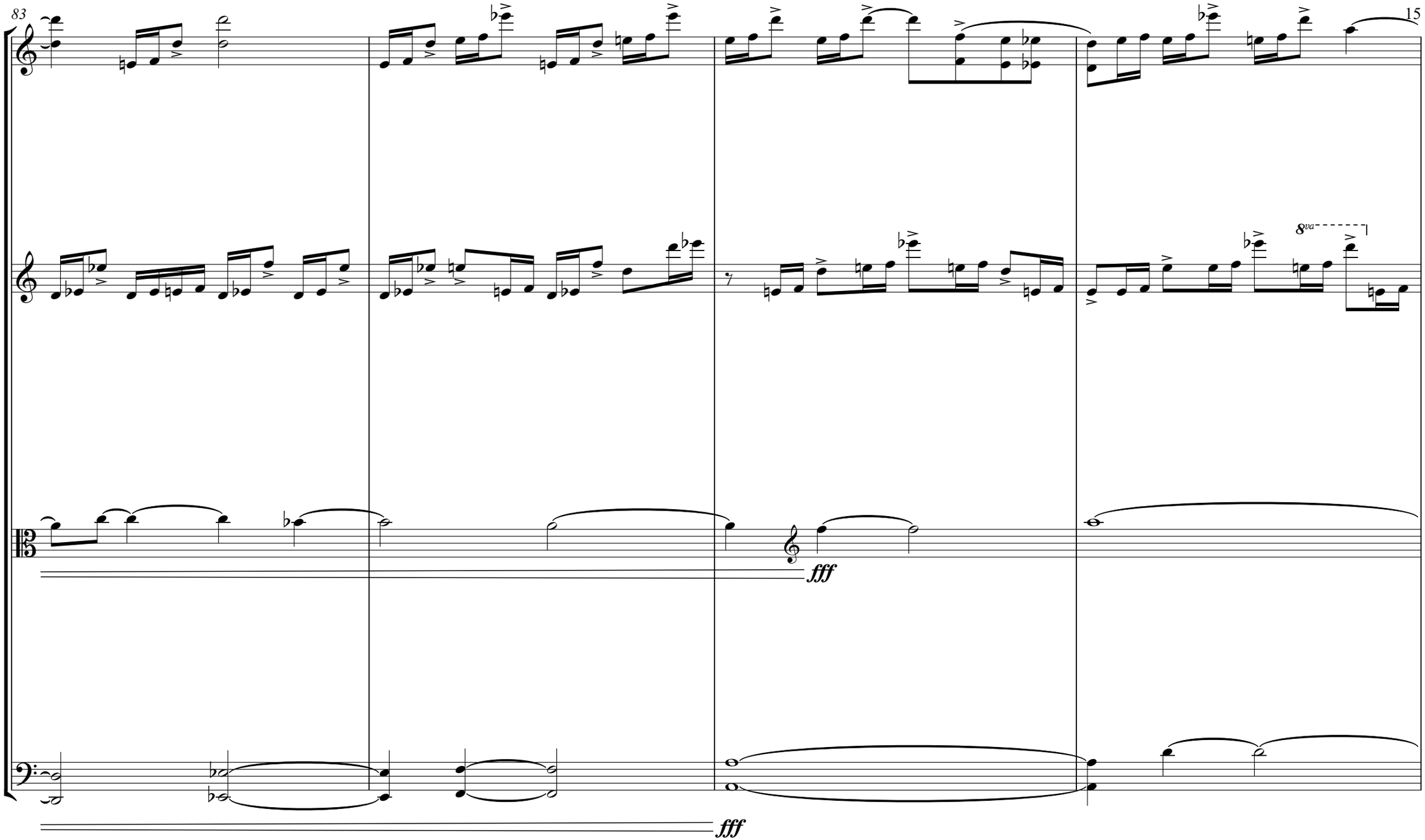
ff

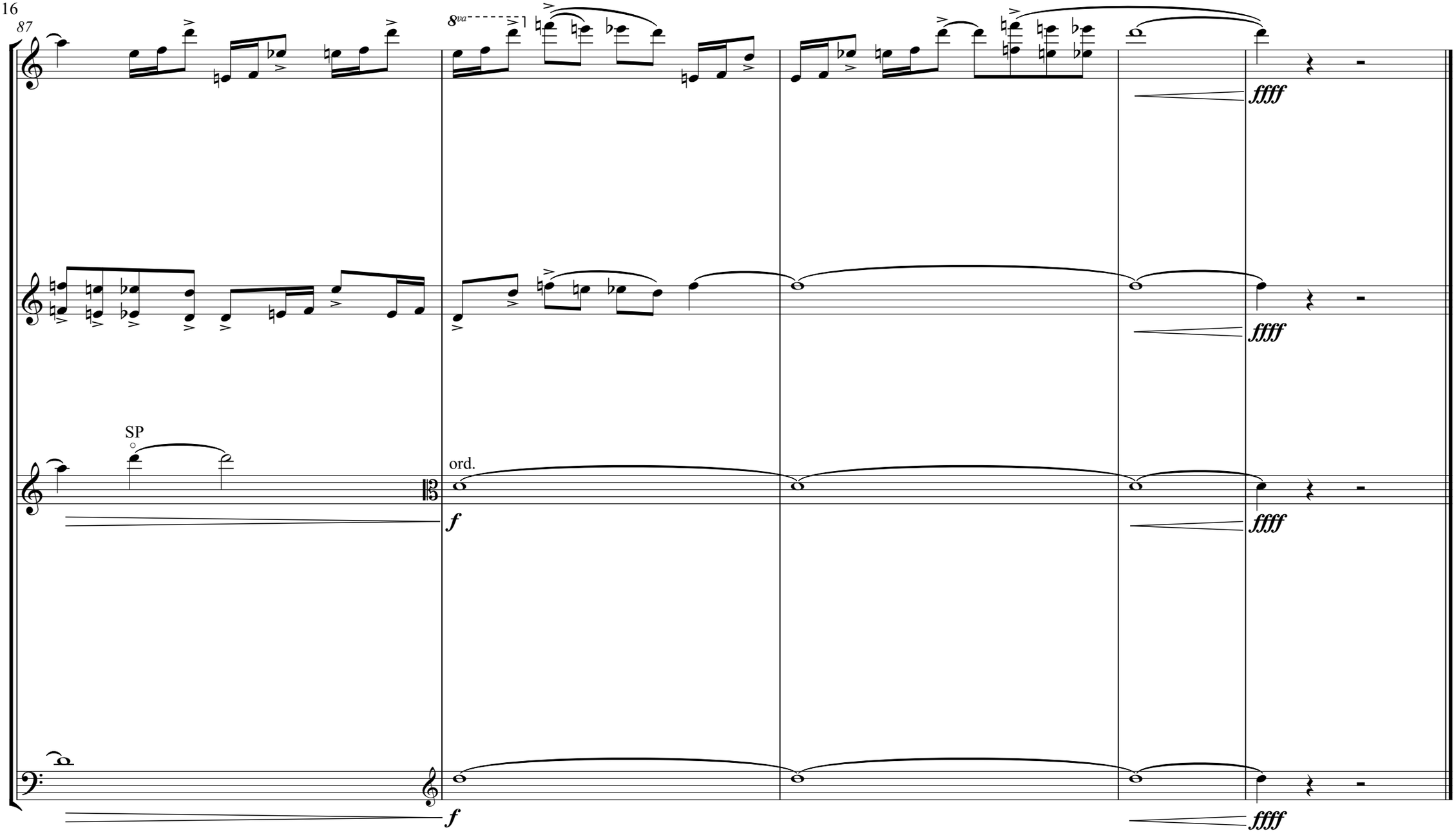


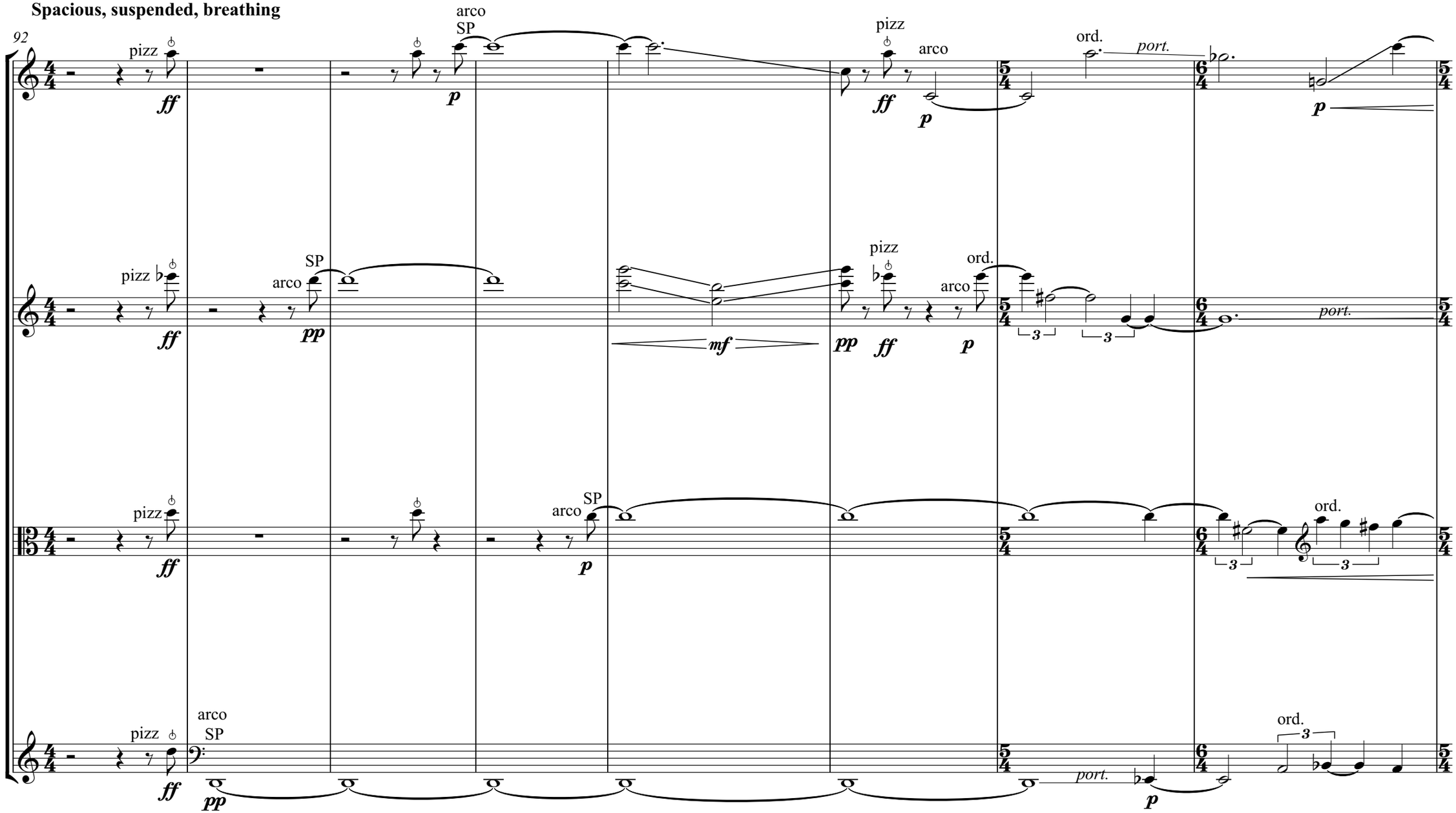

61
lessening tremolo
♩=105
heavy and lyrical
ffp
mf
f
mf
f
p
sfz
p

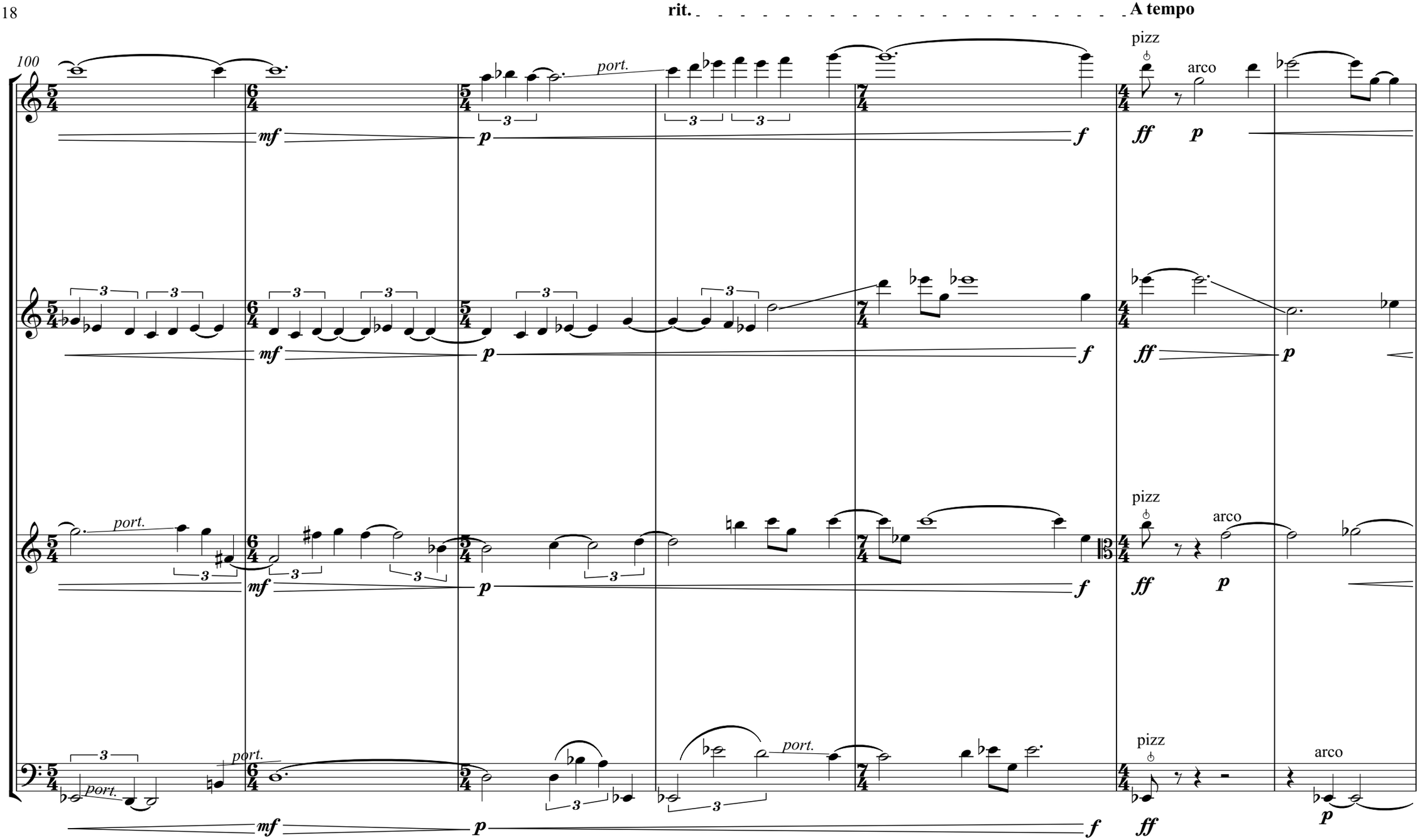

69
f
f
SP
ord.
73
ff
fff
ff
fff
ff
fff
ff

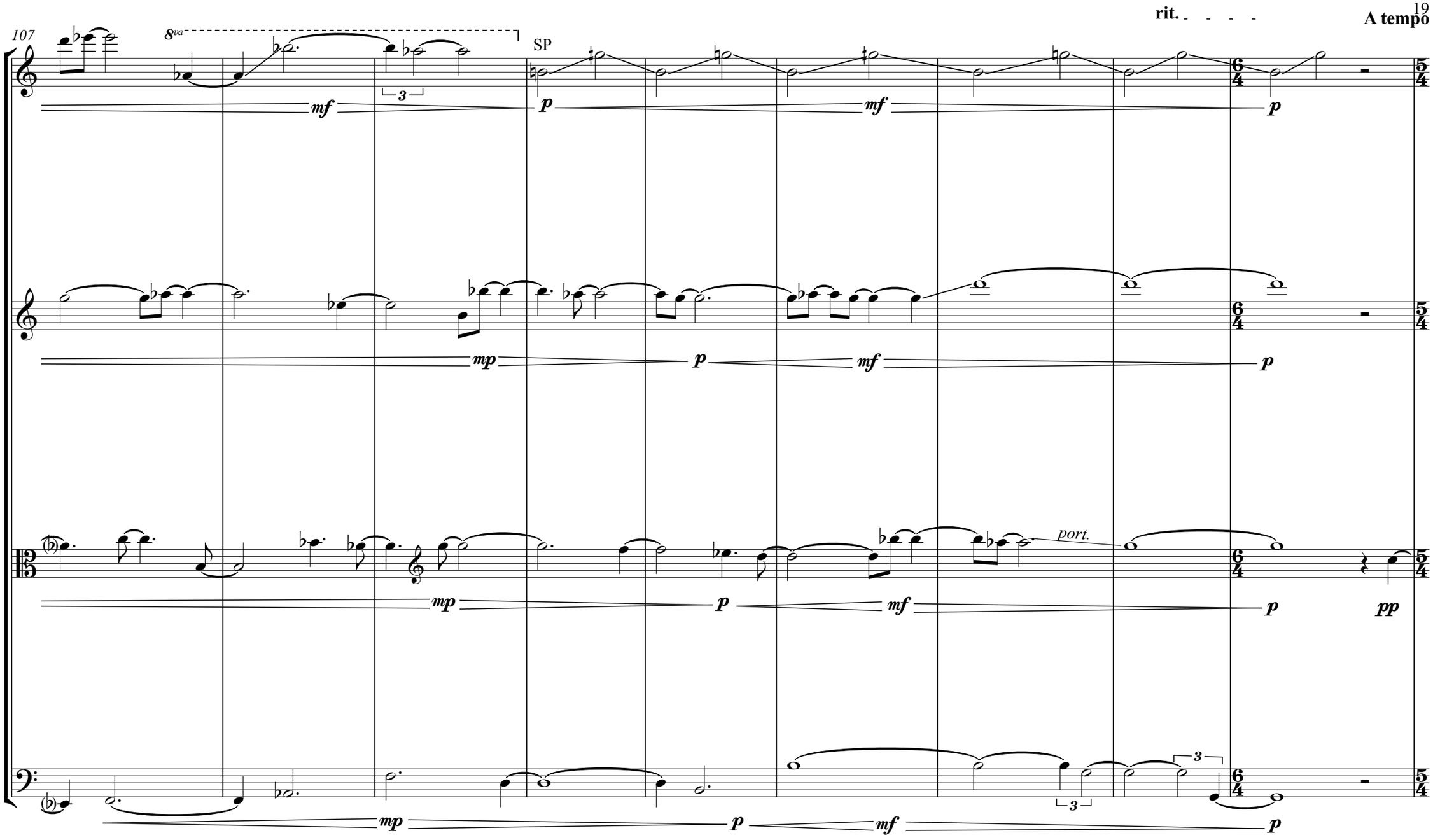


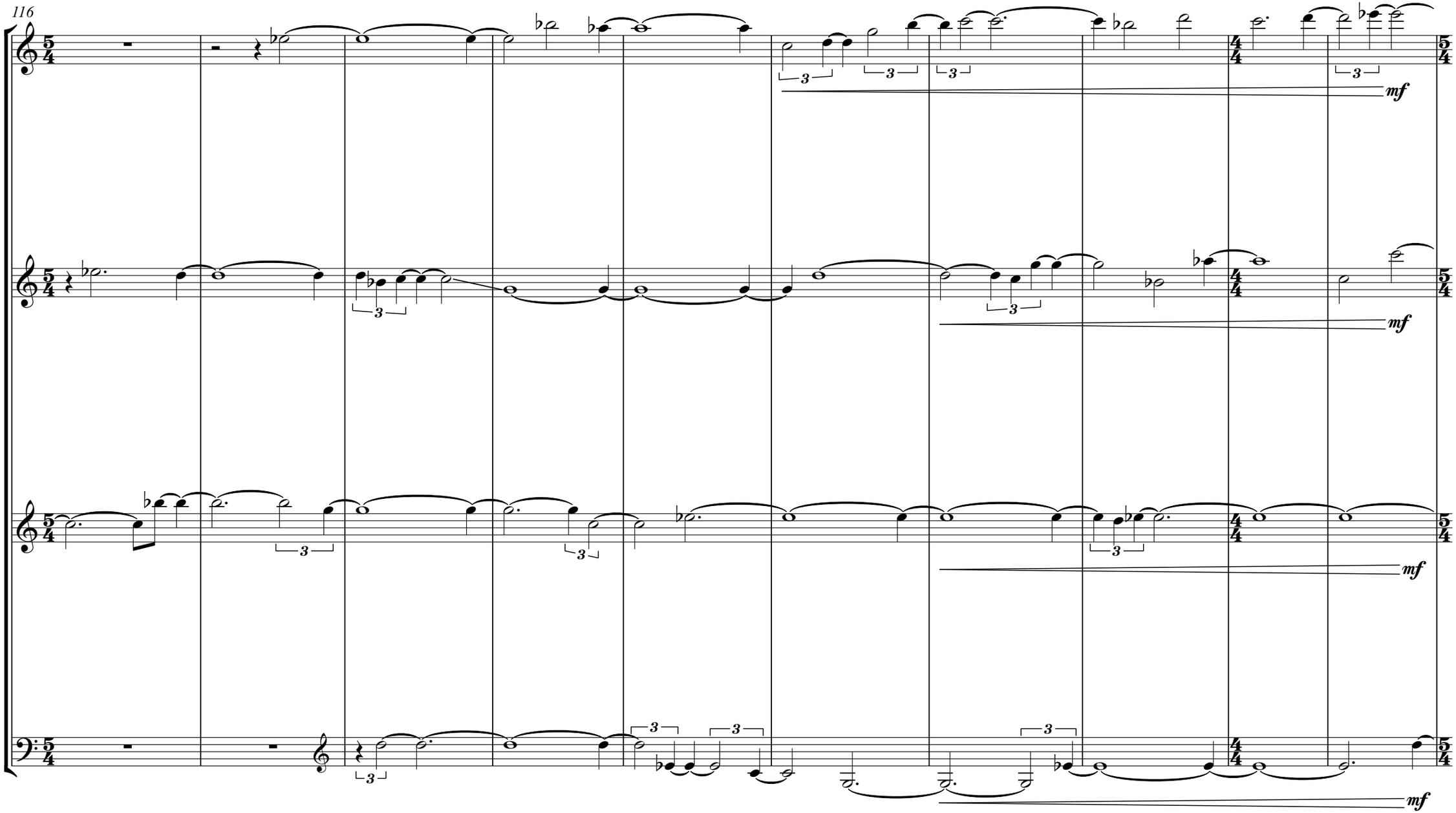

8va
fff
fff

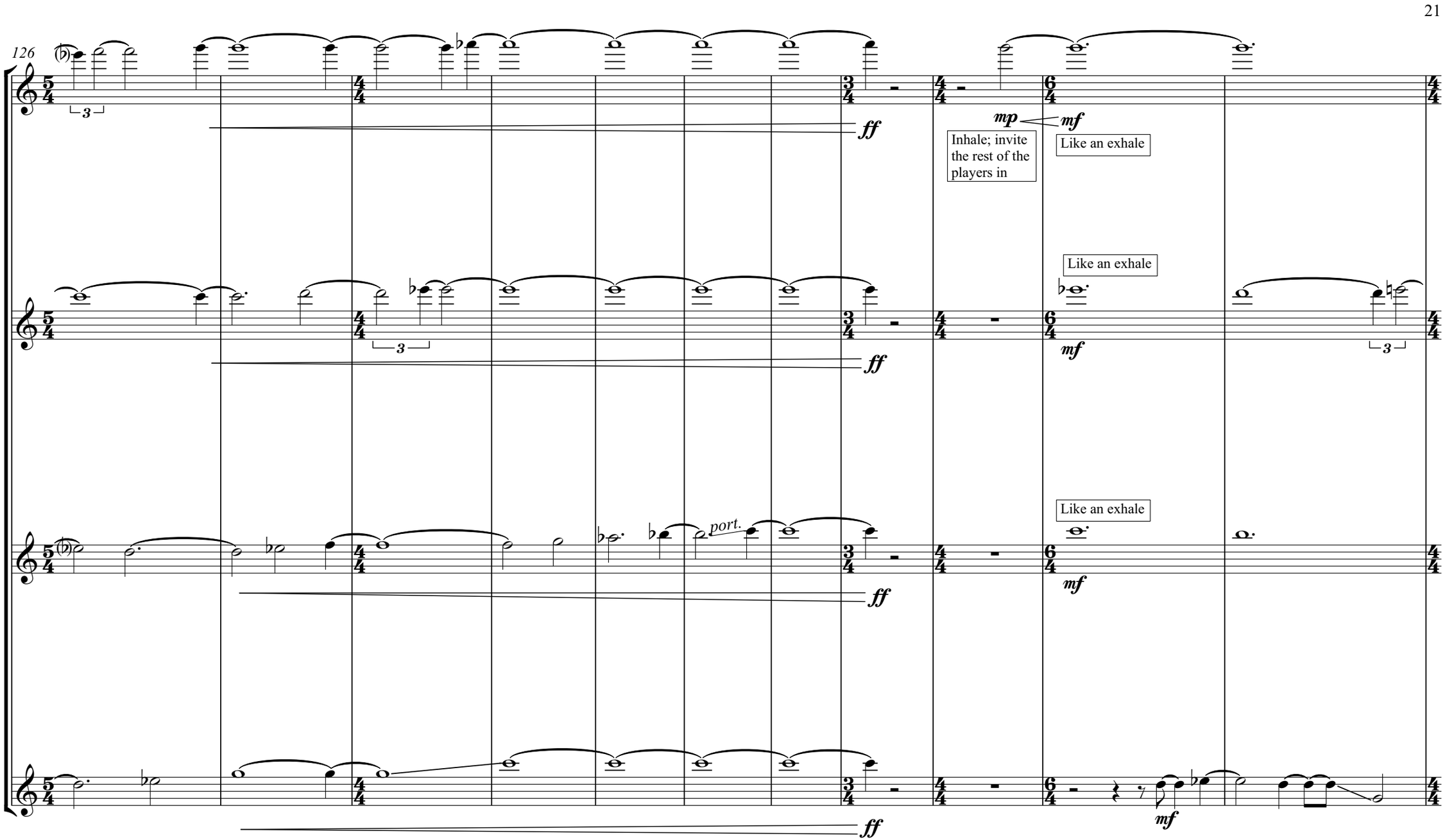

87
8va
SP
ord.
f
f
ffff
ffff
ffff
ffff

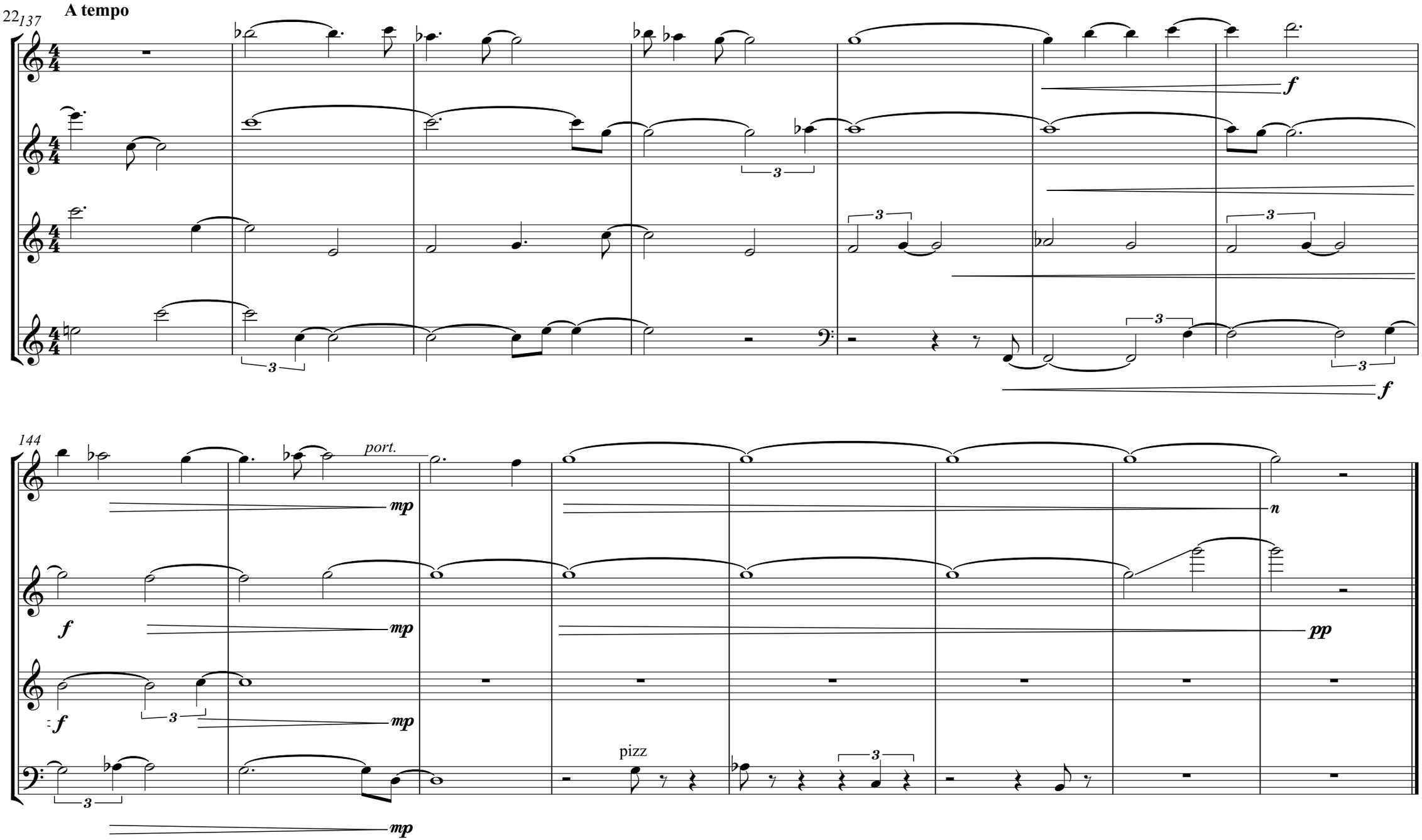

♩=85
Spacious, suspended, breathing
92
pizz
arco
SP
ord.
port.


rit.
A tempo
100
port.
pizz
arco
mf
p
f
ff


107
8va
SP
rit.
A tempo
port.
mf
p
mf
p
mp
p
mf
p
mp
p
mf
p
mp
p
mf
p
pp

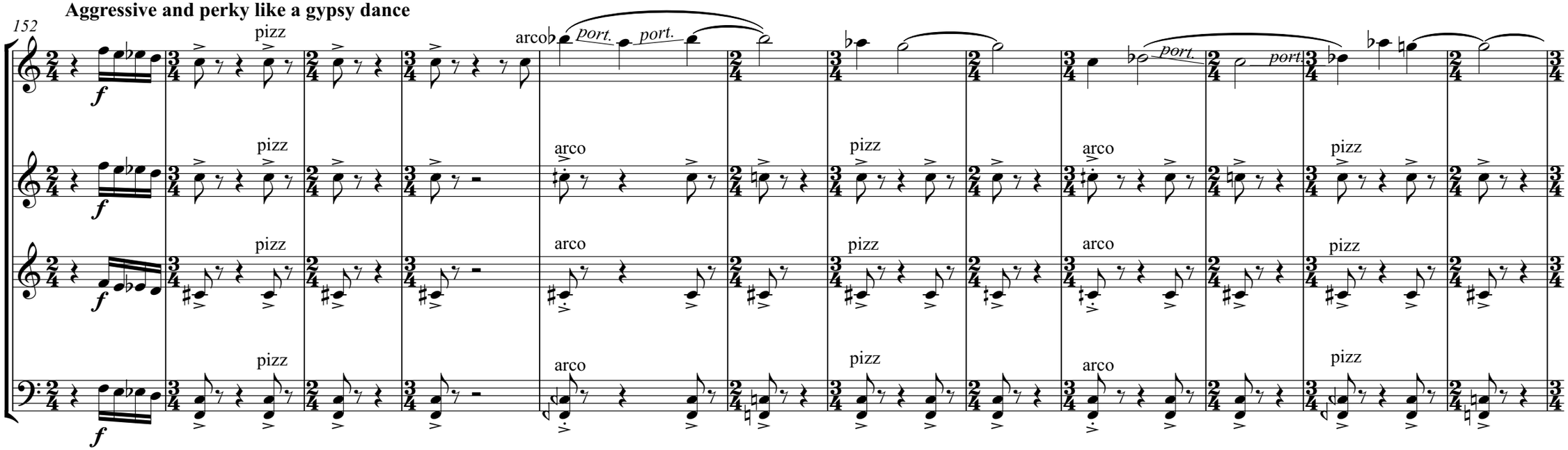

116
mf
mf
mf
mf


rit.
126
ff
mp
mf
Inhale; invite the rest of the players in
Like an exhale
Like an exhale
Like an exhale
port.


22
137
A tempo
f
3
144
port.
mp
n
pp
pizz

♩=140
Aggressive and perky like a gypsy dance

152



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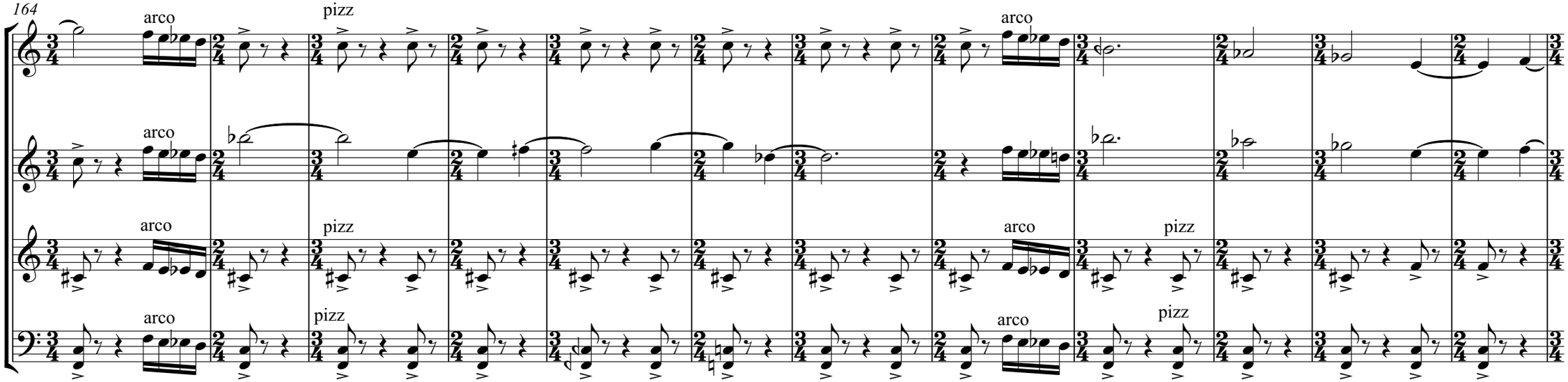
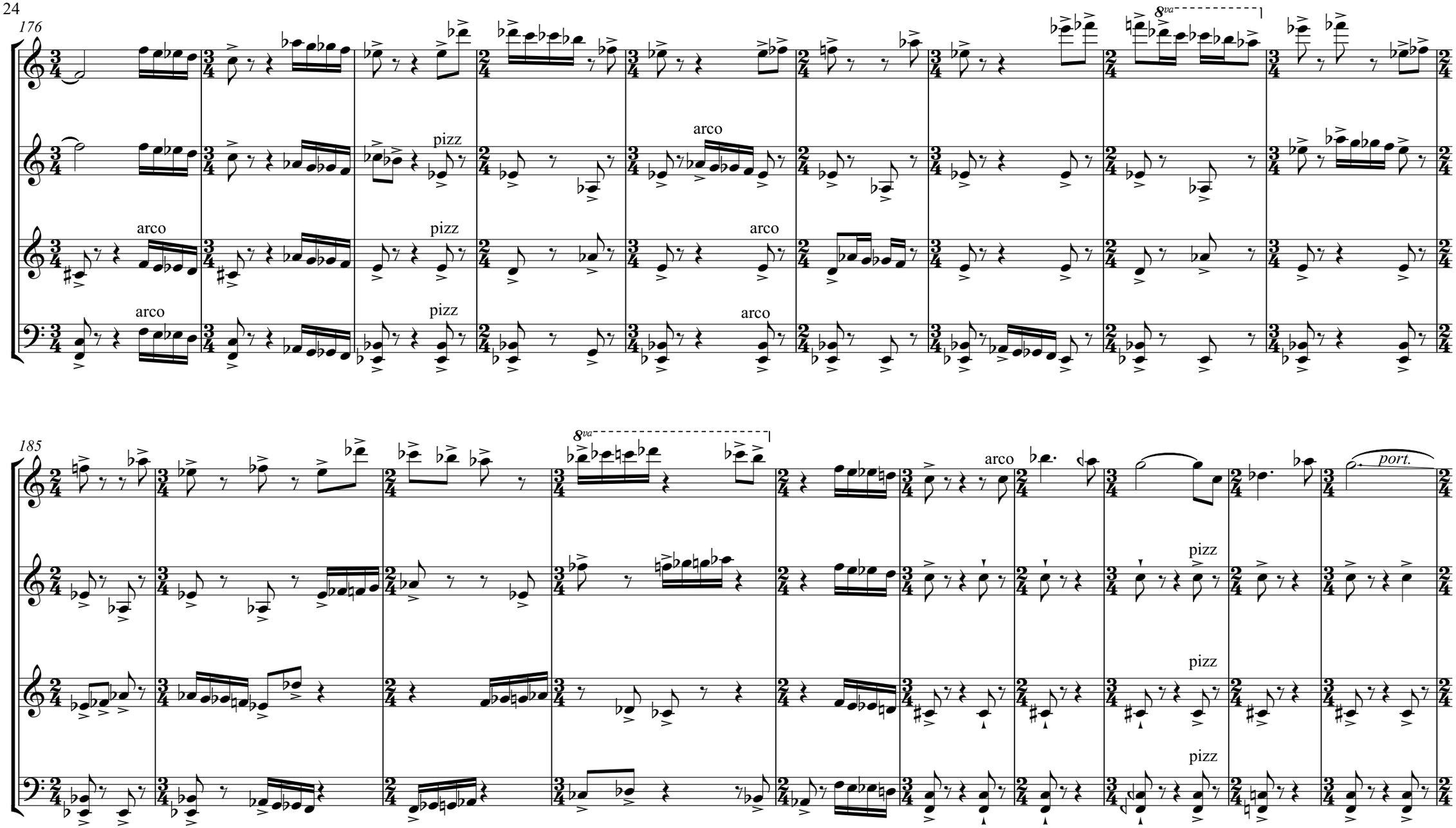
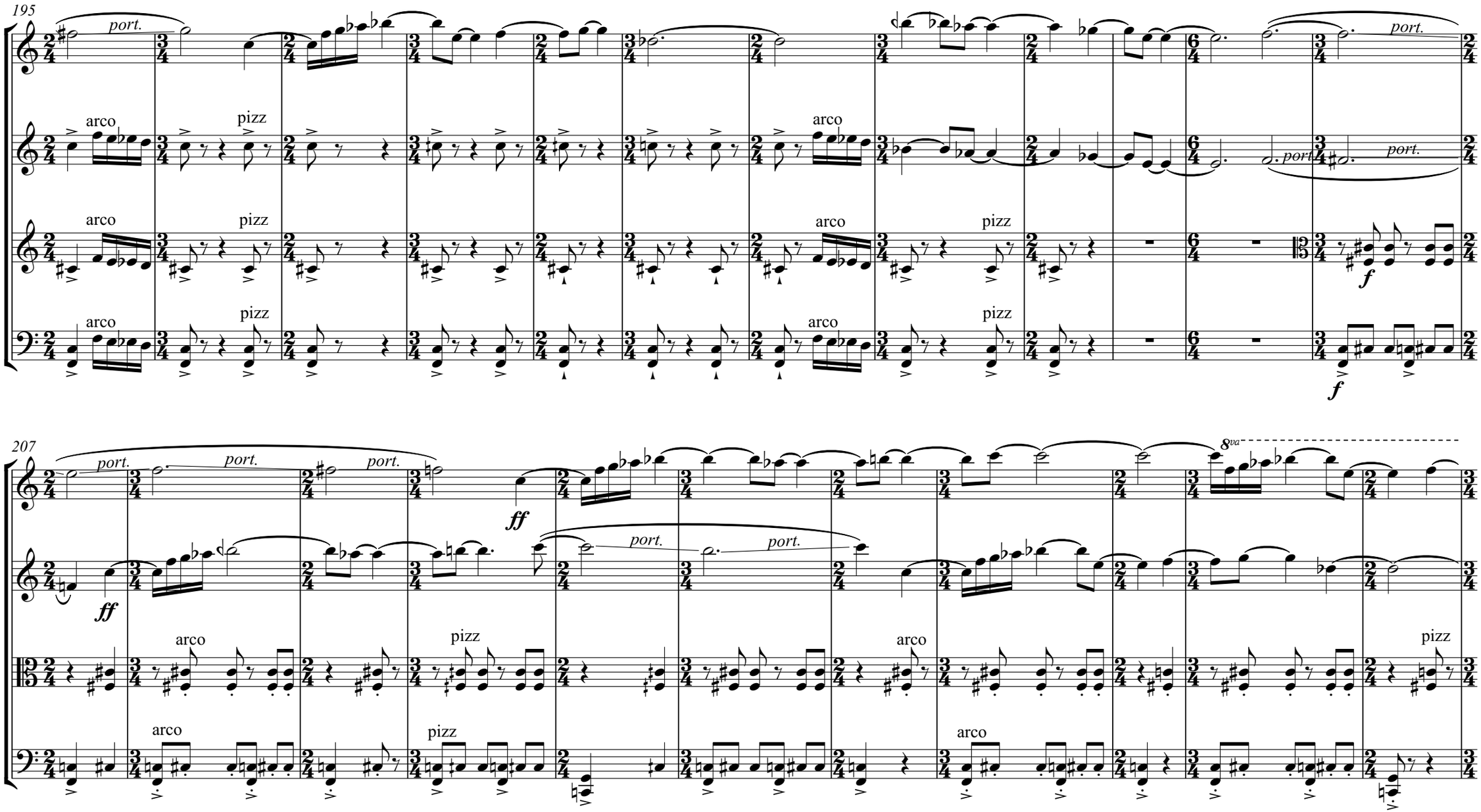
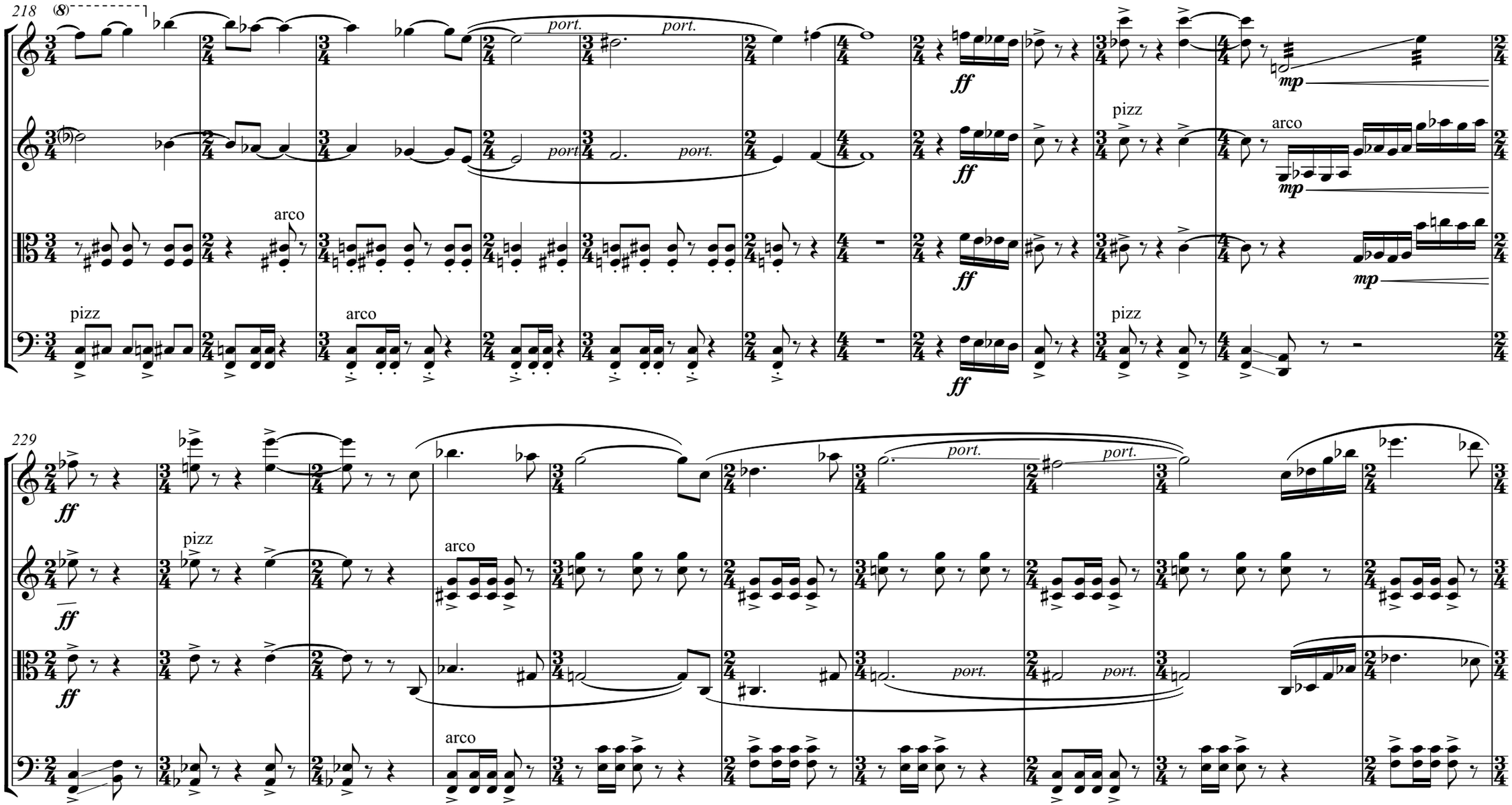
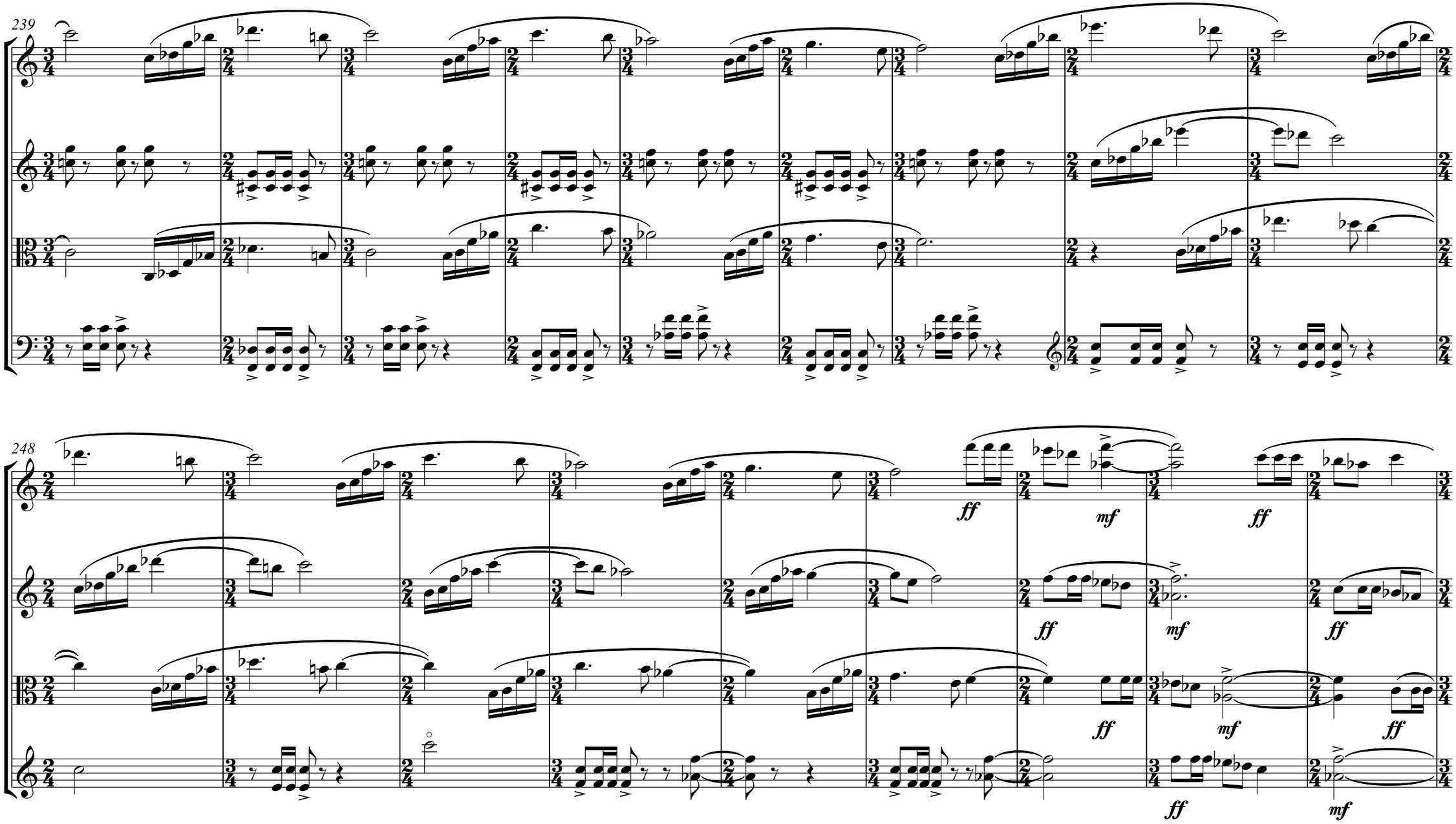



176
8va
pizz
arco
arco
pizz
arco
arco
pizz
arco
185
8va
arco
port.
pizz
pizz
pizz


195
port.
arco
pizz
port.
f
207
ff
8va
pizz


218
(8)
port.
port.
ff
mp
pizz
arco
229
ff
pizz
arco


239
248
ff
mf
ff
ff
mf
ff
ff
mf
ff
ff
mf
ff
ff
mf

257

8va

pizz

arco

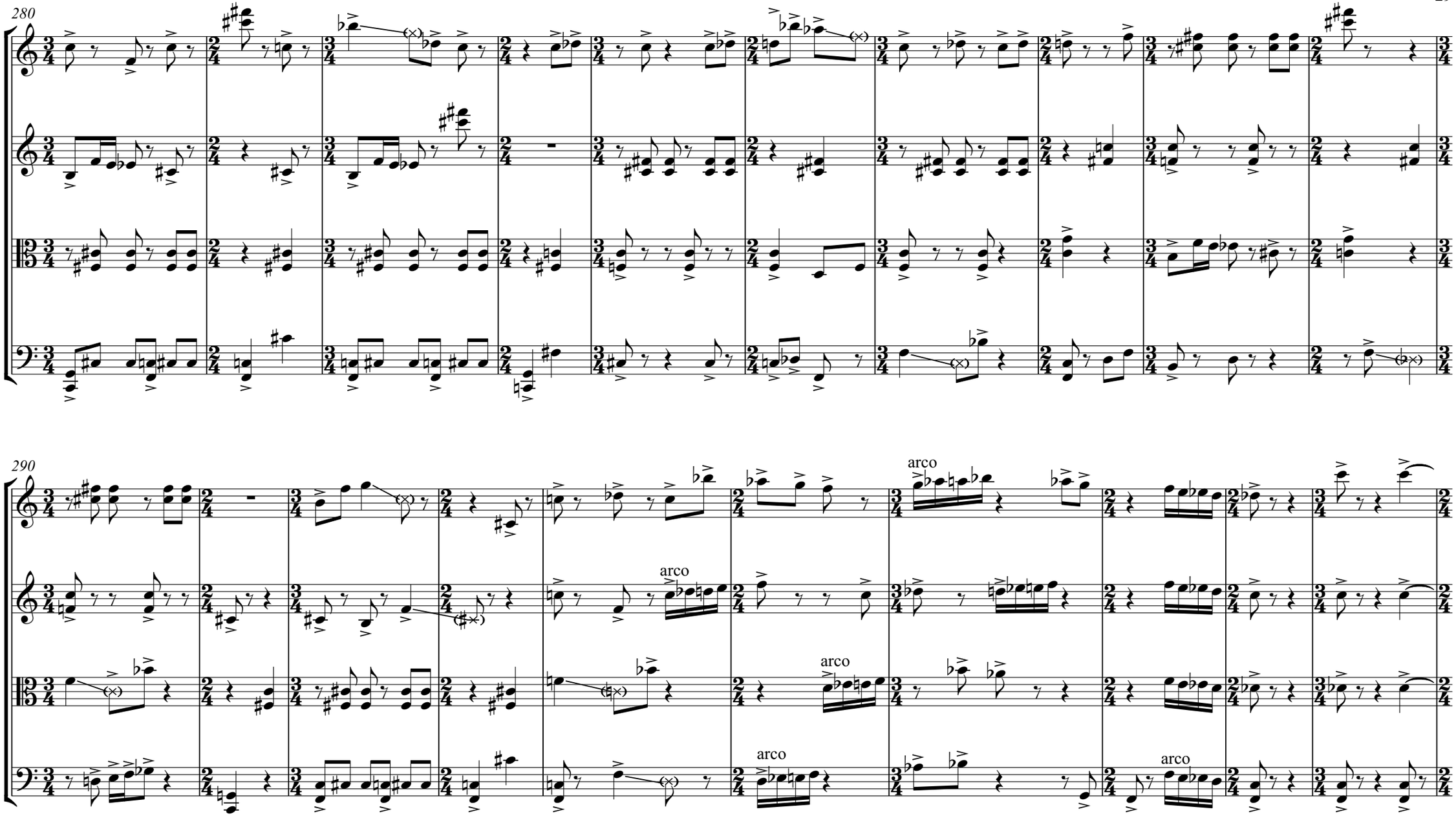
port.

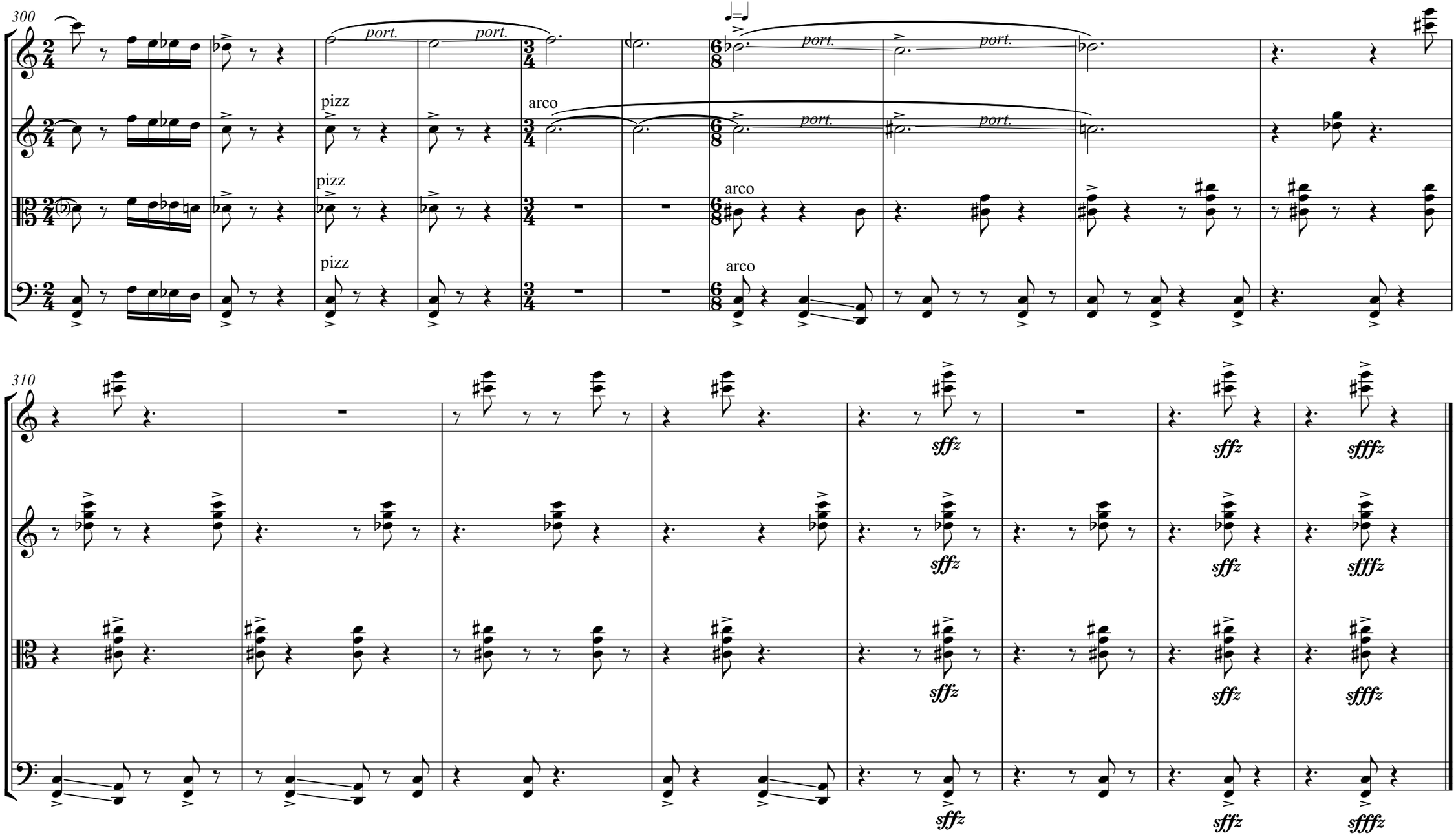
267

pizz

Portamento ad lib.

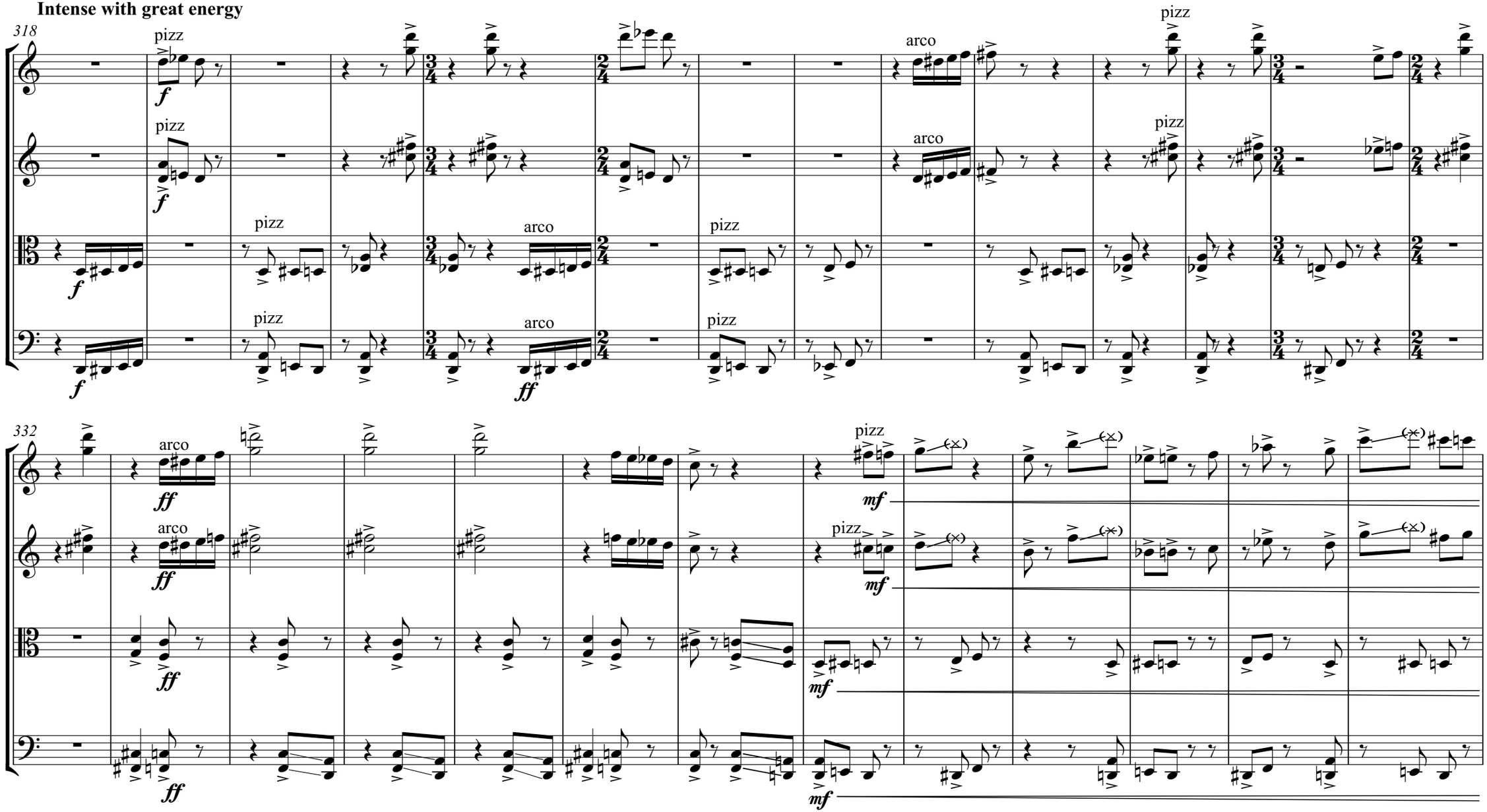
Pesante

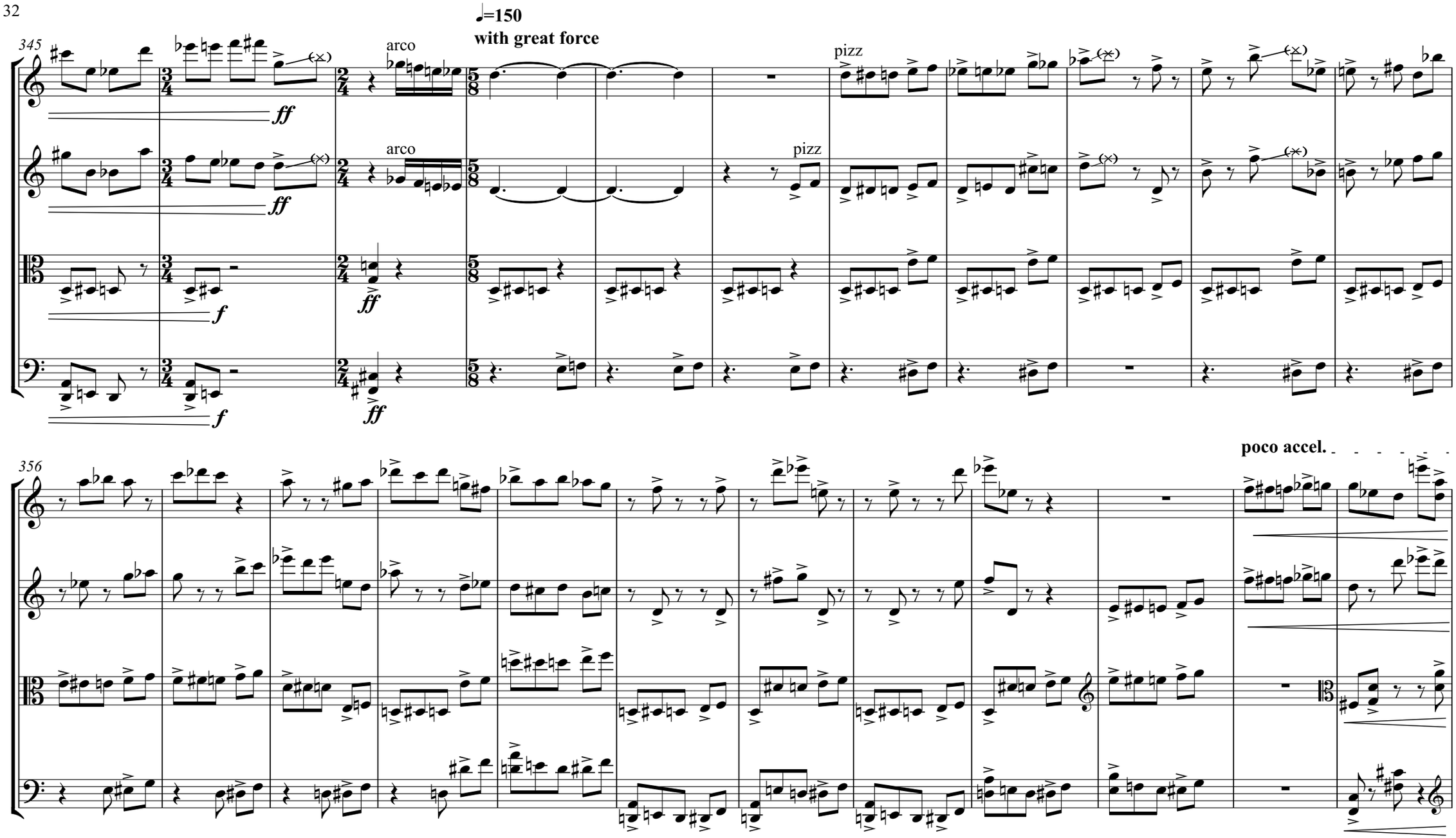

280
290
arco
arco
arco
arco
arco


300
port.
port.
pizz
arco
port.
port.
pizz
arco
port.
port.
pizz
arco
310
sffz
sffz
sffz
sffz
sffz
sffz
sffz
sffz
sffz
sffz
sffz
sffz

Movement 4

♩=150-160
Intense with great energy




♩=150
with great force
345
arco
arco
pizz
pizz
ff
ff
ff
ff
f
f
356
poco accel.

368

♩=150

A tempo

arco

arco

379

pizz

pizz

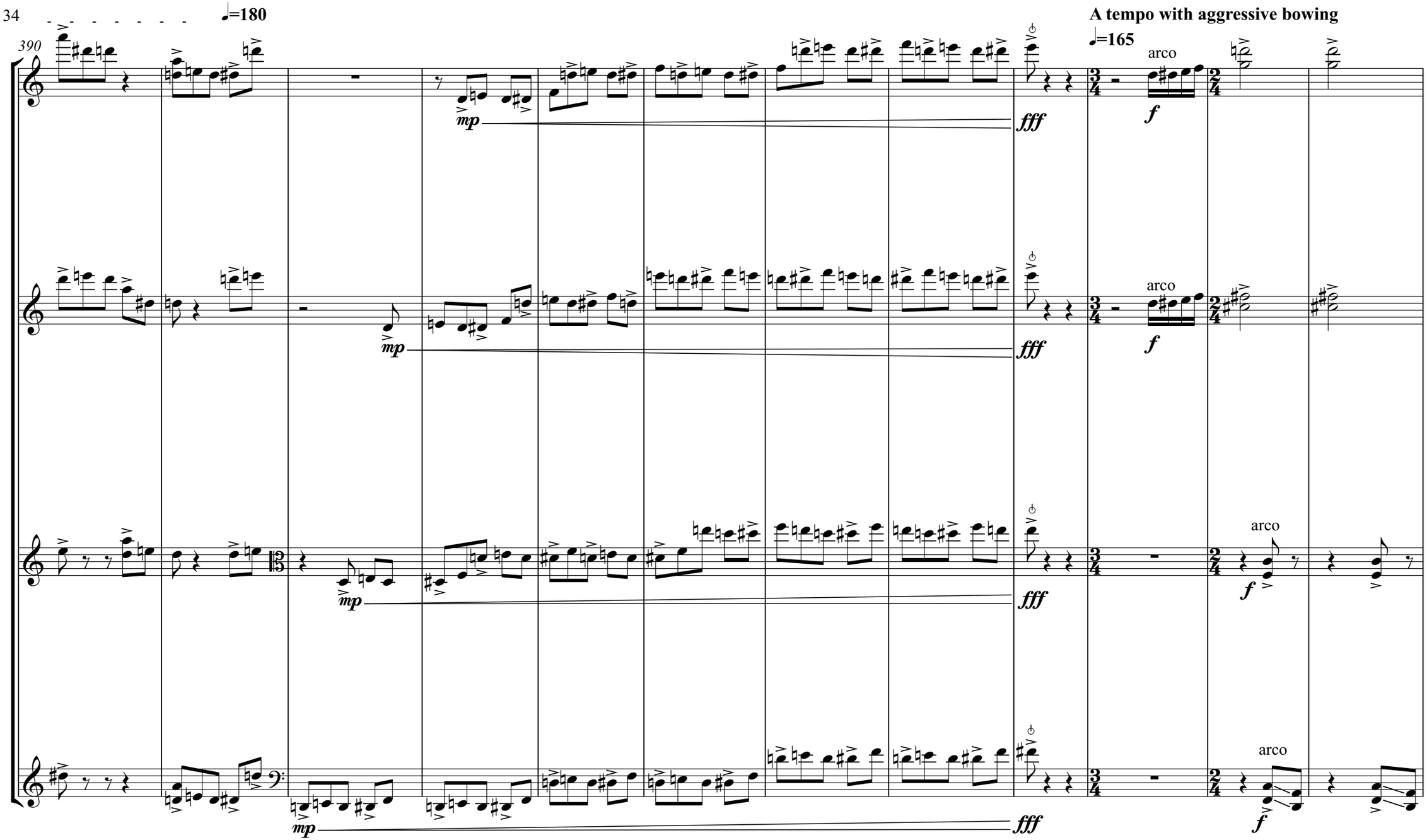
accel.

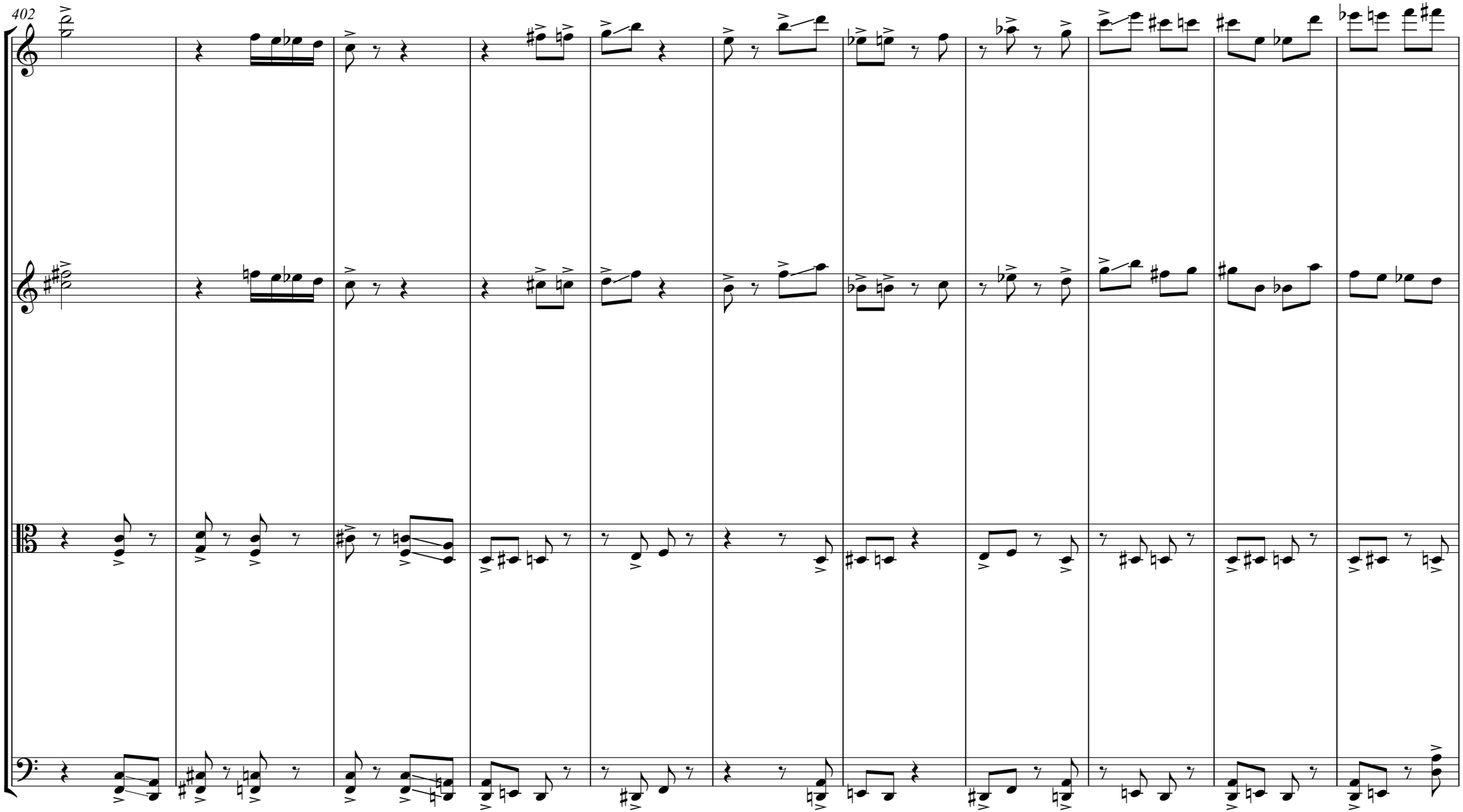
mf

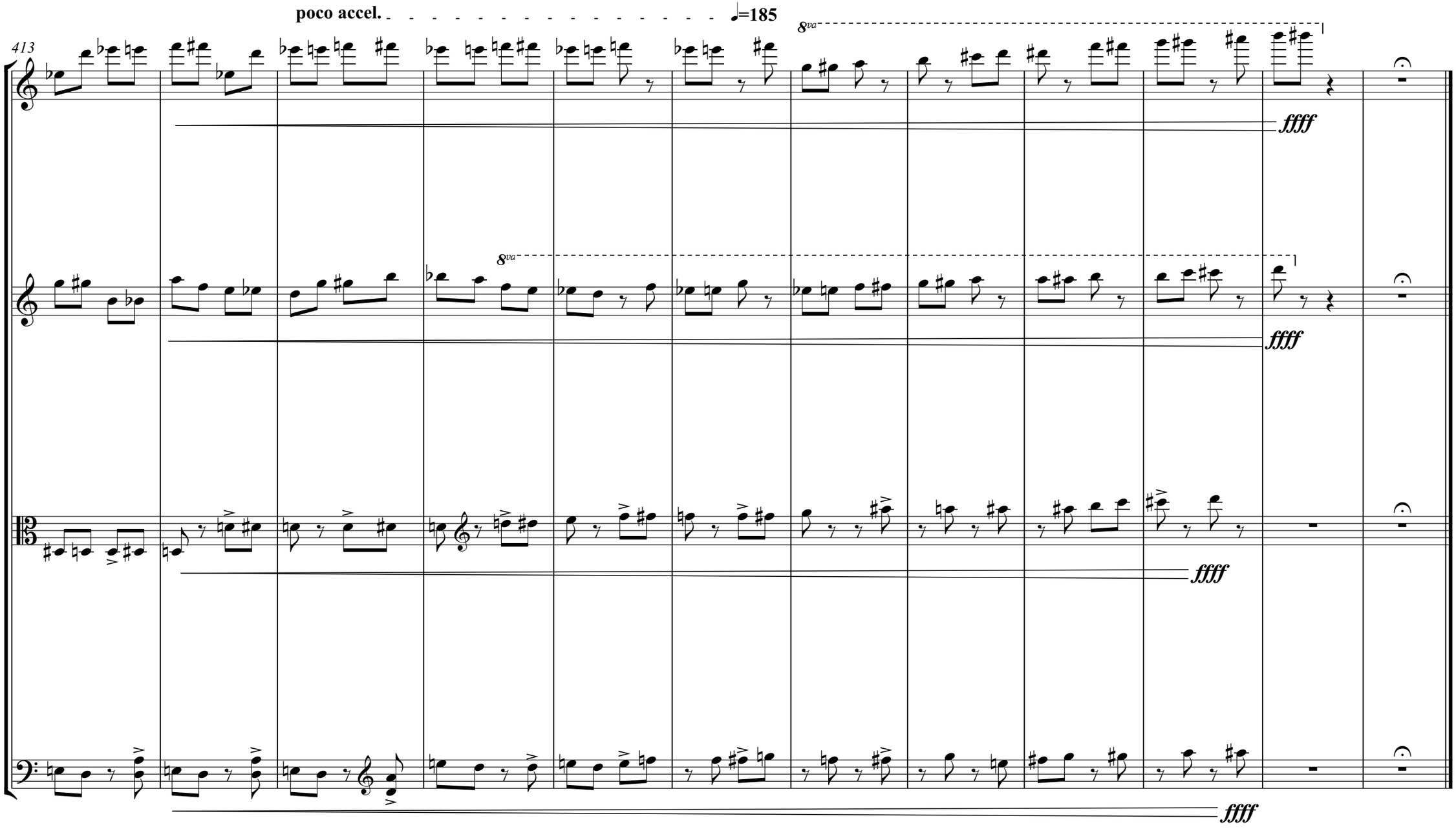
mf

mf

mf


390
♩=180
A tempo with aggressive bowing
♩=165
arco
mp
fff
f


402


poco accel.
♩=185
413
8va
8va
ffff
ffff
ffff
ffff