Ji Heng Lee

'After Shosty'

String Quartet in B♭ major

(in the style of Dmitri Shostakovich)

Explanatory note

Here, I imagine Shostakovich writing in Autumn 1950 to Dmitri Tsyganov (first violinist of the Beethoven Quartet), following the withdrawal from public performance of his Fourth String Quartet earlier in that same year.

Dear Mr. Tsyganov,

I first want to thank you for rehearsing my Fourth Quartet, of which I have been advised is better off kept in my drawer for now. My dear friend Isaak has since made no effort to suppress his enquires on my new string quartet. Thanks to him I have made rapid progress, finishing it just last week, four movements in all. For what has happened to the Fourth, I would like to dedicate this Fifth Quartet to your group, so I am now sending you the score.

I have no intention of describing the piece measure-by-measure. That kind of analysis should be left to musicologists. But if it is of any assurance for you, do not expect to find any 'Jewish' quotes in this (as in my Fourth). I have made each of the four movements straightforwardly clear in its form—my kind of composer's studies. The first movement uses sonata form, the second is in three sections ('slow-fast-slow'), the third is a scherzo, and the fourth is again in three sections ('fast-slow-fast').

And I do not have to say it for you to notice a familiar tune I have written for Sergey (on the cello) in the second movement, which has found its way back to me from the first movement of my Eighth Symphony. They say composers are self-obsessed beings. I don't know. Maybe it is the piano Preludes and Fugues I am currently working on which have taken me into the past. But I have also discovered ideas I shall revisit in my future quartets :

I have joined (*attacca*) the second movement with the third. The second movement's cello theme captivated me so much, I thought I could write an entire third movement with its motif (mm. 104–6)! When I had finished the third, I realised it was possessed by the 'spirit' of the second but with a new lease of life. You know, the quartet is one of the most difficult genres as one has to tell a coherent and powerful story with only four voices. By joining movements, one can craft a grand story with connected themes and motifs.

Also, the forceful outburst which begins the fourth movement came out of a moment of anguish, when I again recalled that ingratiating smirk of Zhdanov's two years ago. Images like this haunt me time and again, and my music is the place I shut them in, like prison cells. Music that doesn't stir up agony could be soothing, but is more likely to be banal. What does the listener get from my music? I think one can hear the sound of lunatics whom I refuse to speak to. And you can expect to hear more of them in future, as long as they live to torment. But for now, I hope you are entertained by this piece.

I

Ji Heng Lee
(2017)

Allegro non troppo ♩ = 120

Violino I

Violino II

Viola

Violoncello

p

7

1

p

13

gliss.

gliss.

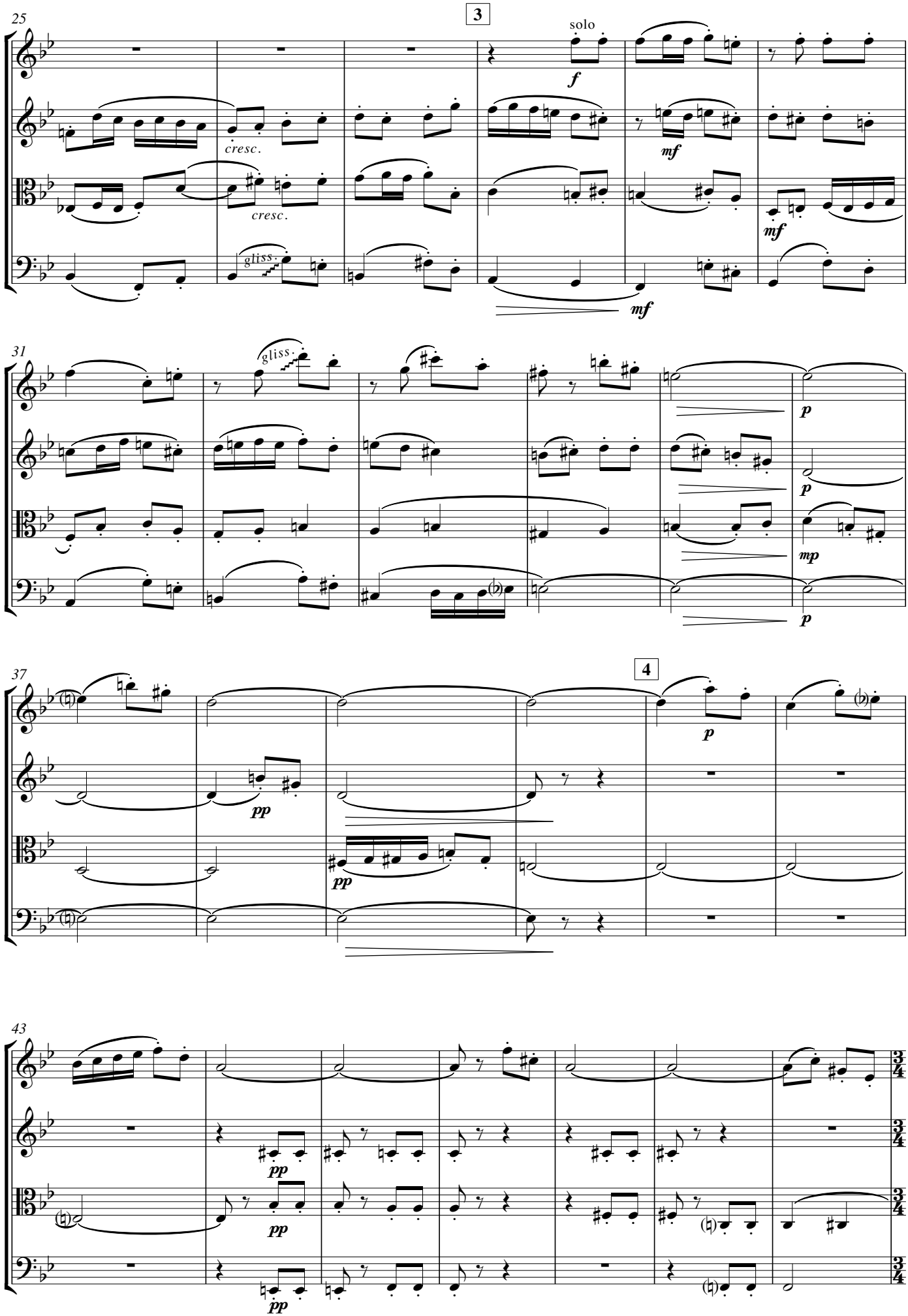
19

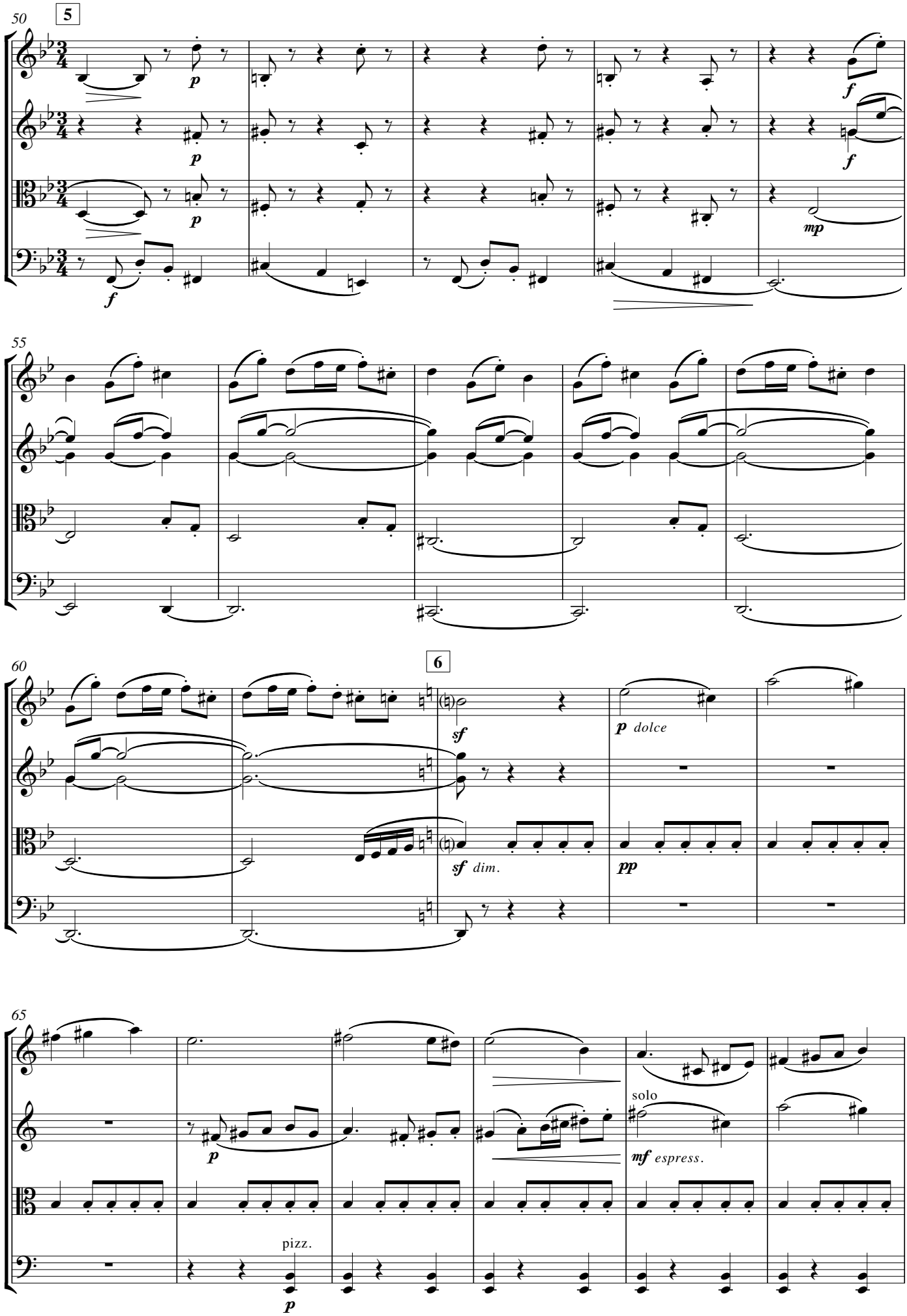
2

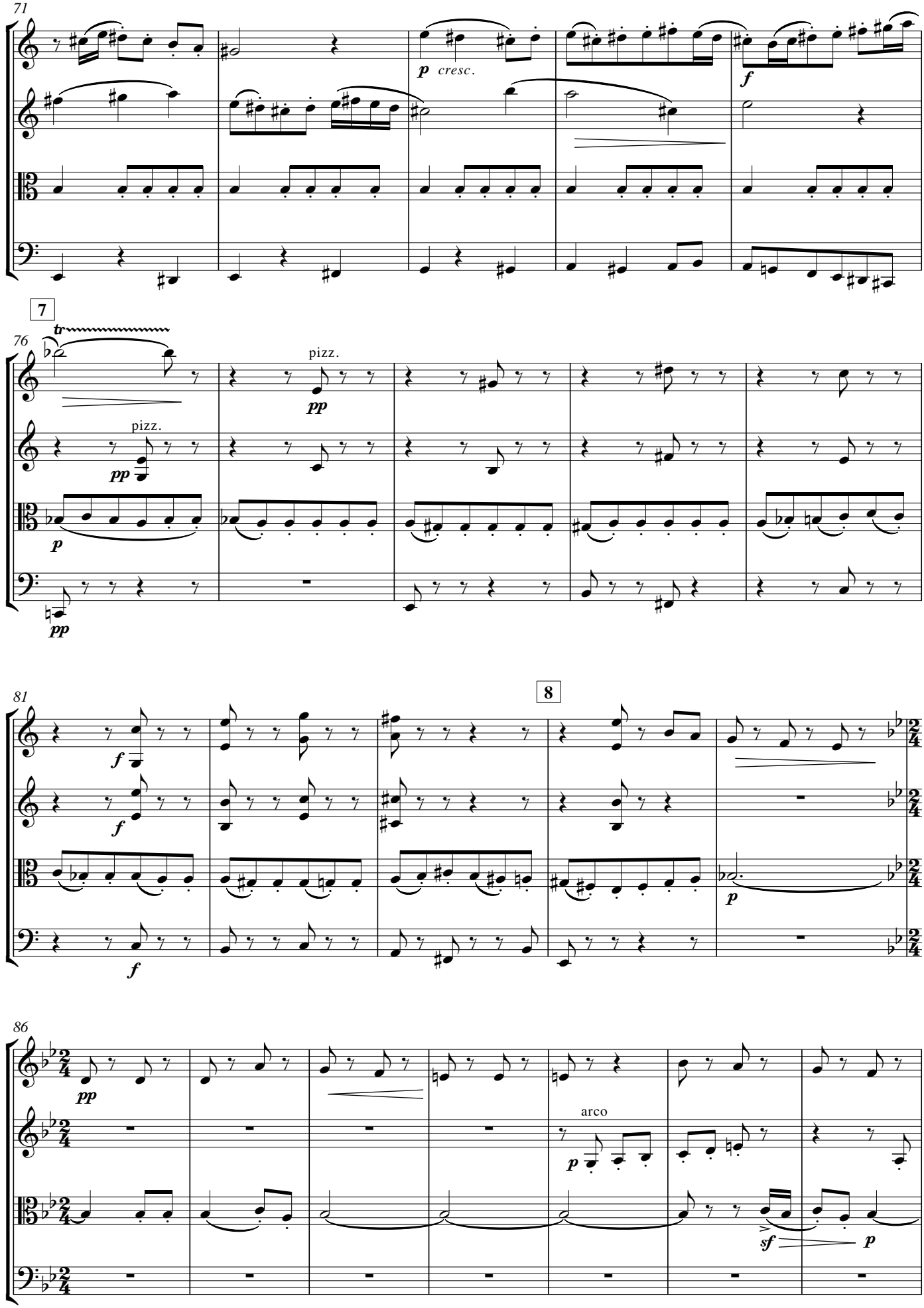
p

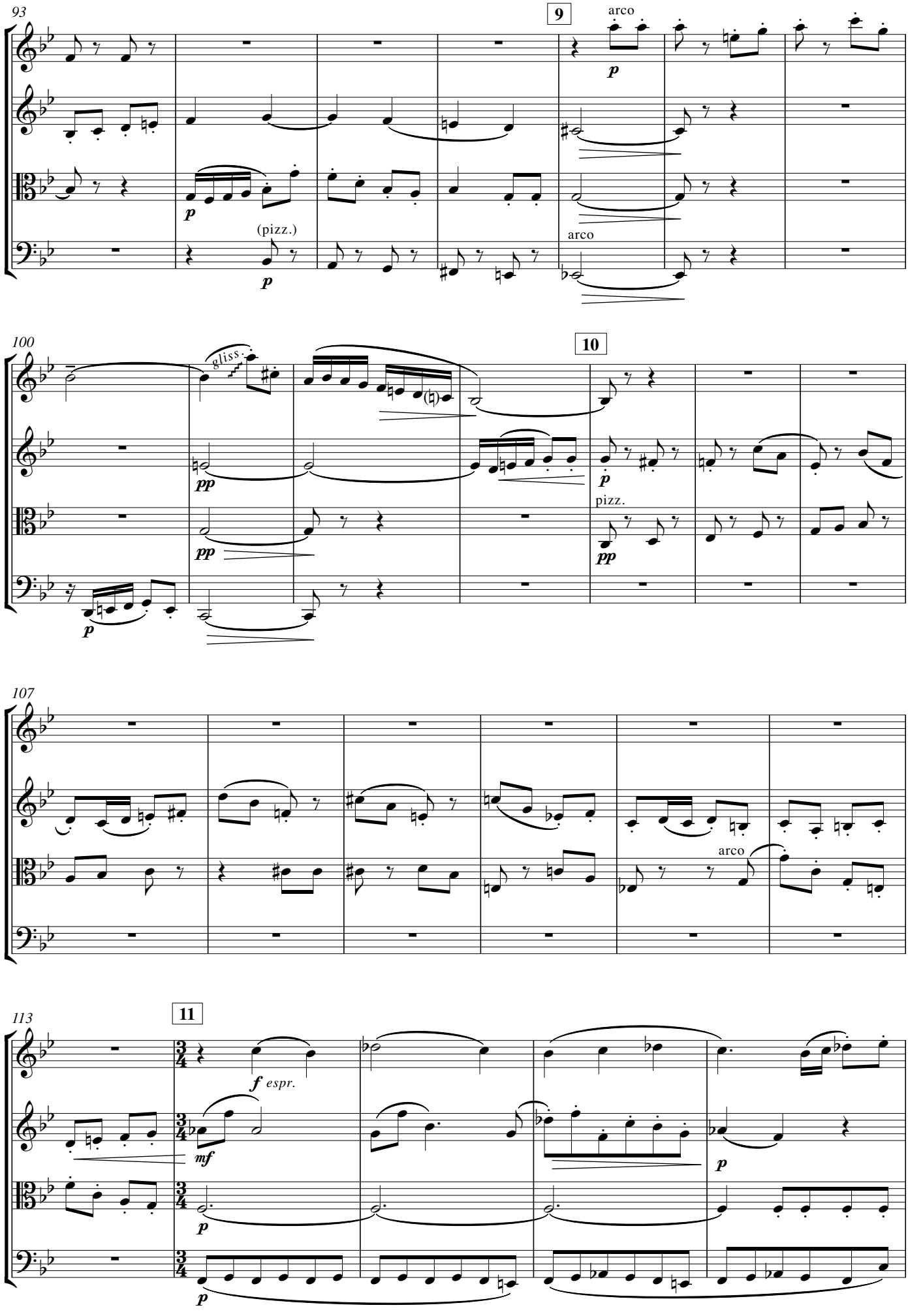
solo

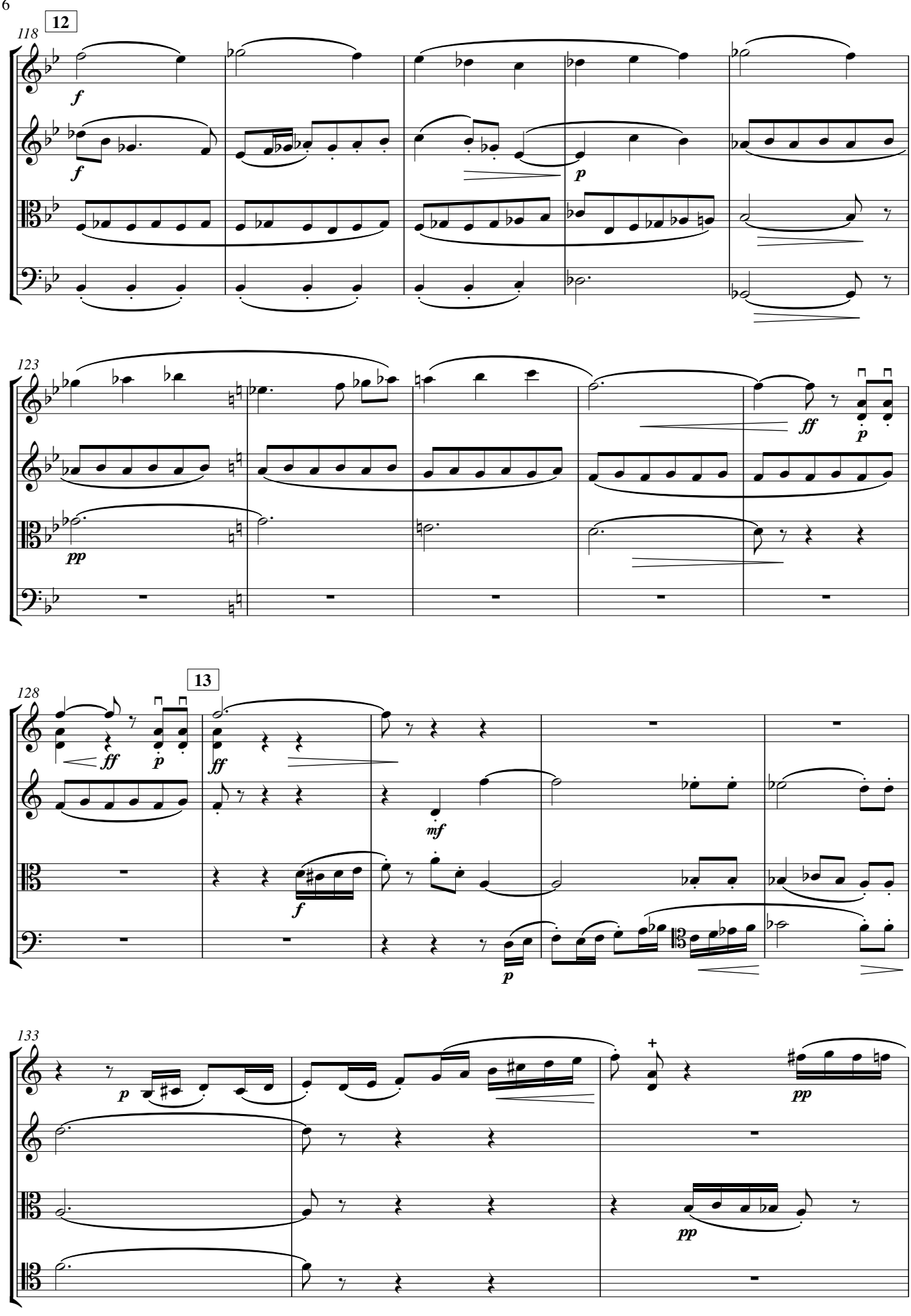
f

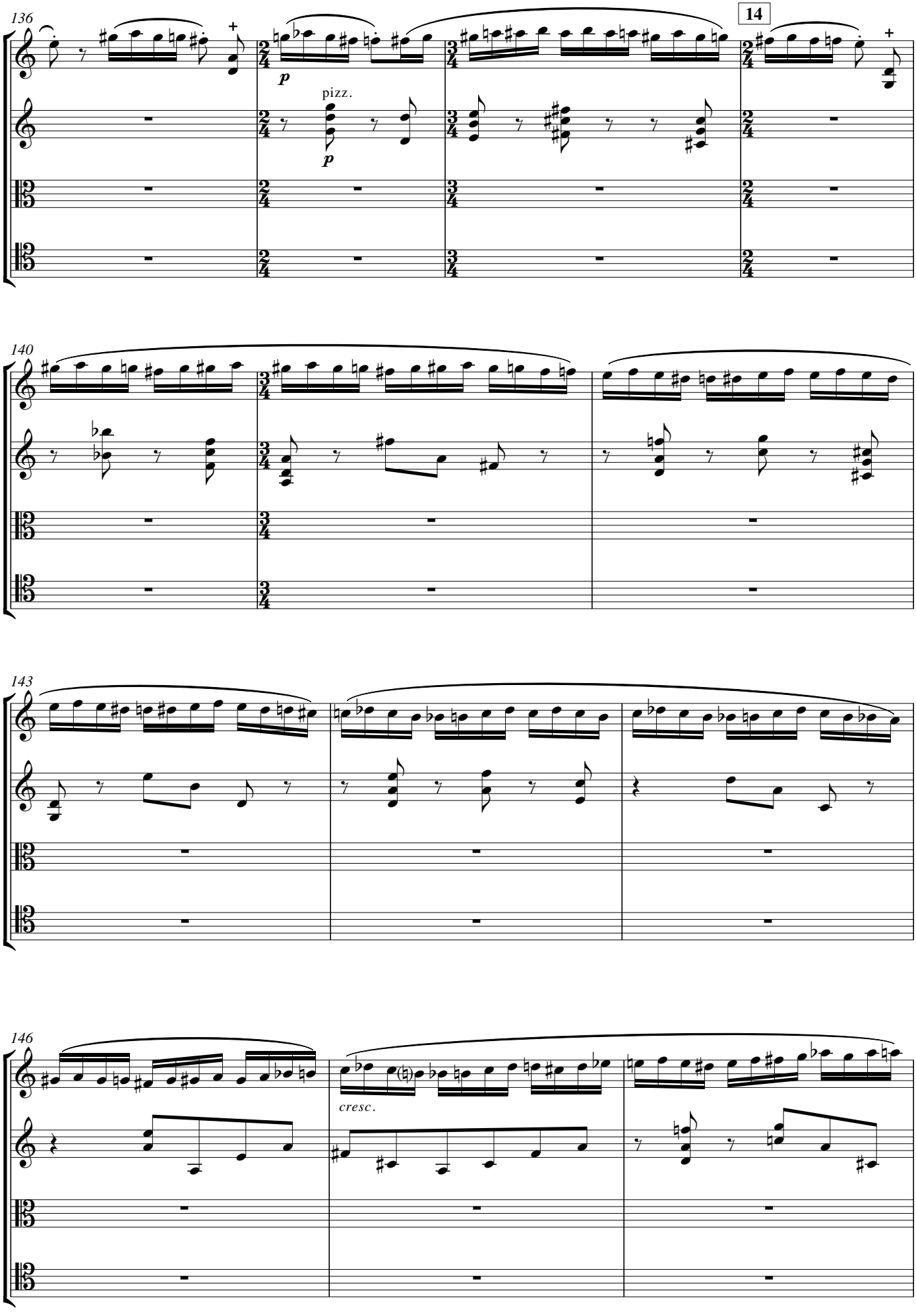

25
3
solo
f
cresc.
cresc.
mf
mf
mf
gliss.
31
gliss.
p
p
mp
p
37
4
p
pp
pp
43
pp
pp
pp
3/4
3/4
3/4
3/4

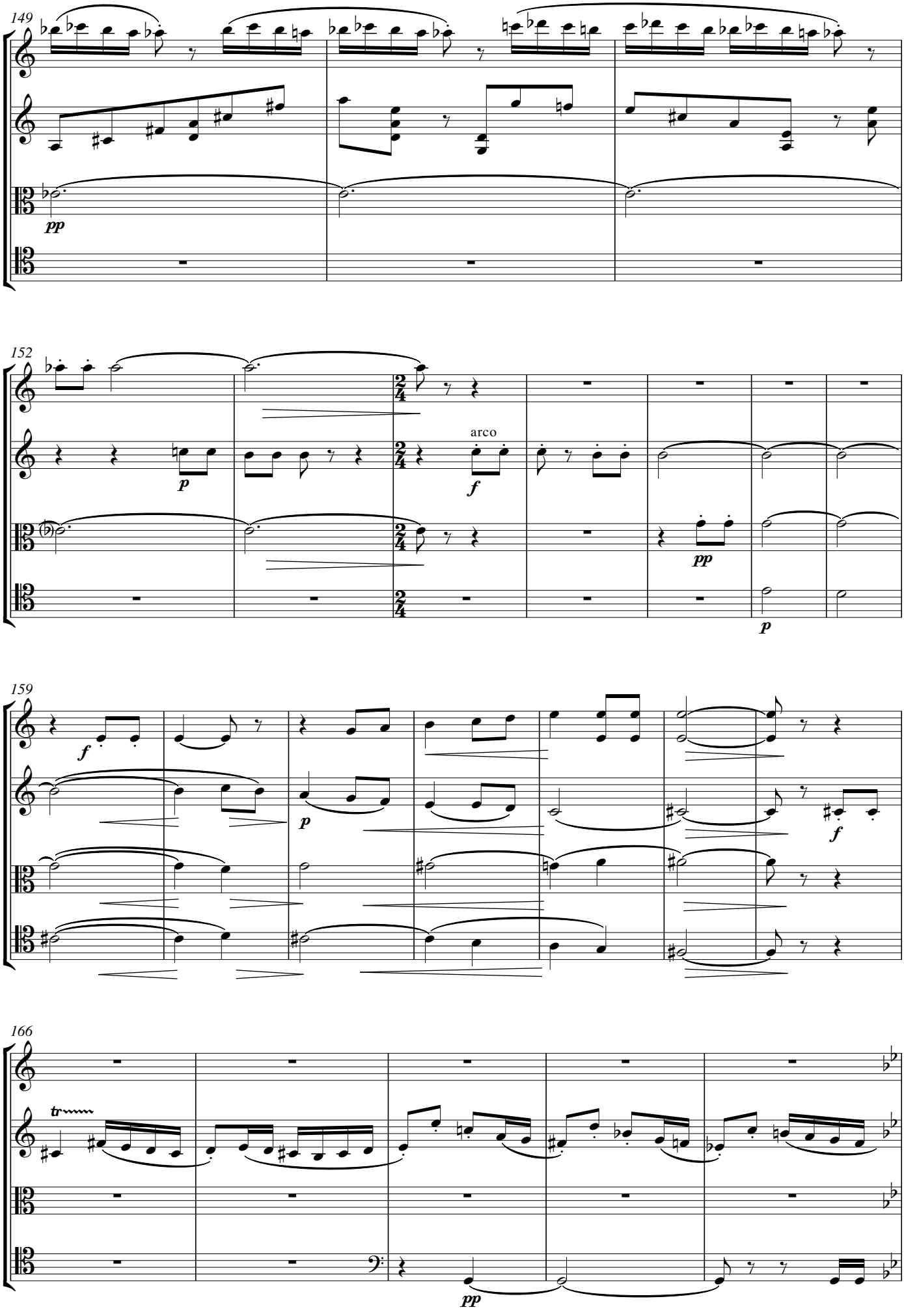

50
5
p
p
p
f
f
f
mp
55
60
6
sf
p dolce
sf dim.
pp
65
p
pizz.
p
solo
mf espress.

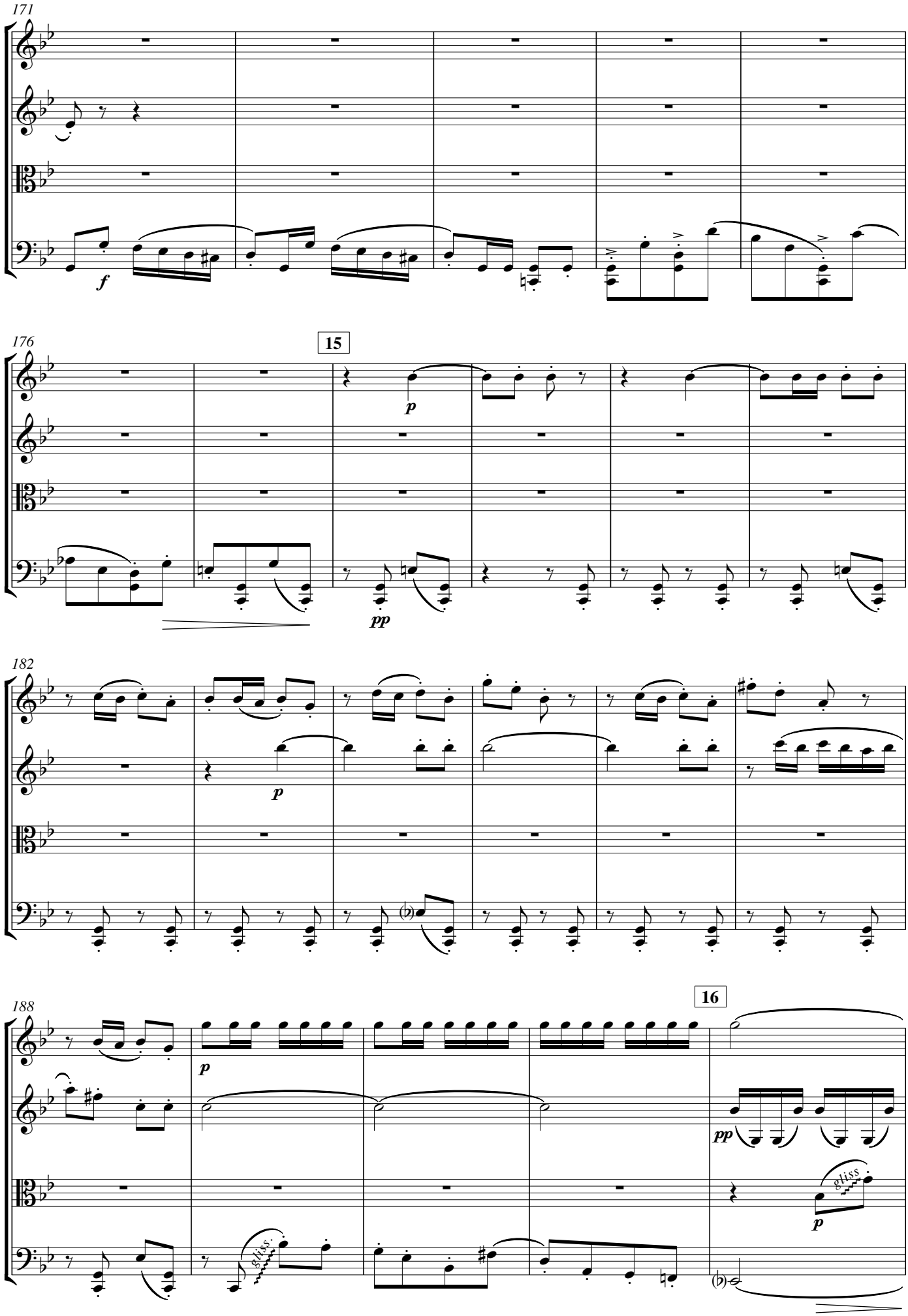

71
p cresc.
f
7
76
tr
pizz.
pp
pizz.
pp
p
pp
81
f
f
f
8
p
86
pp
arco
p
sf
p

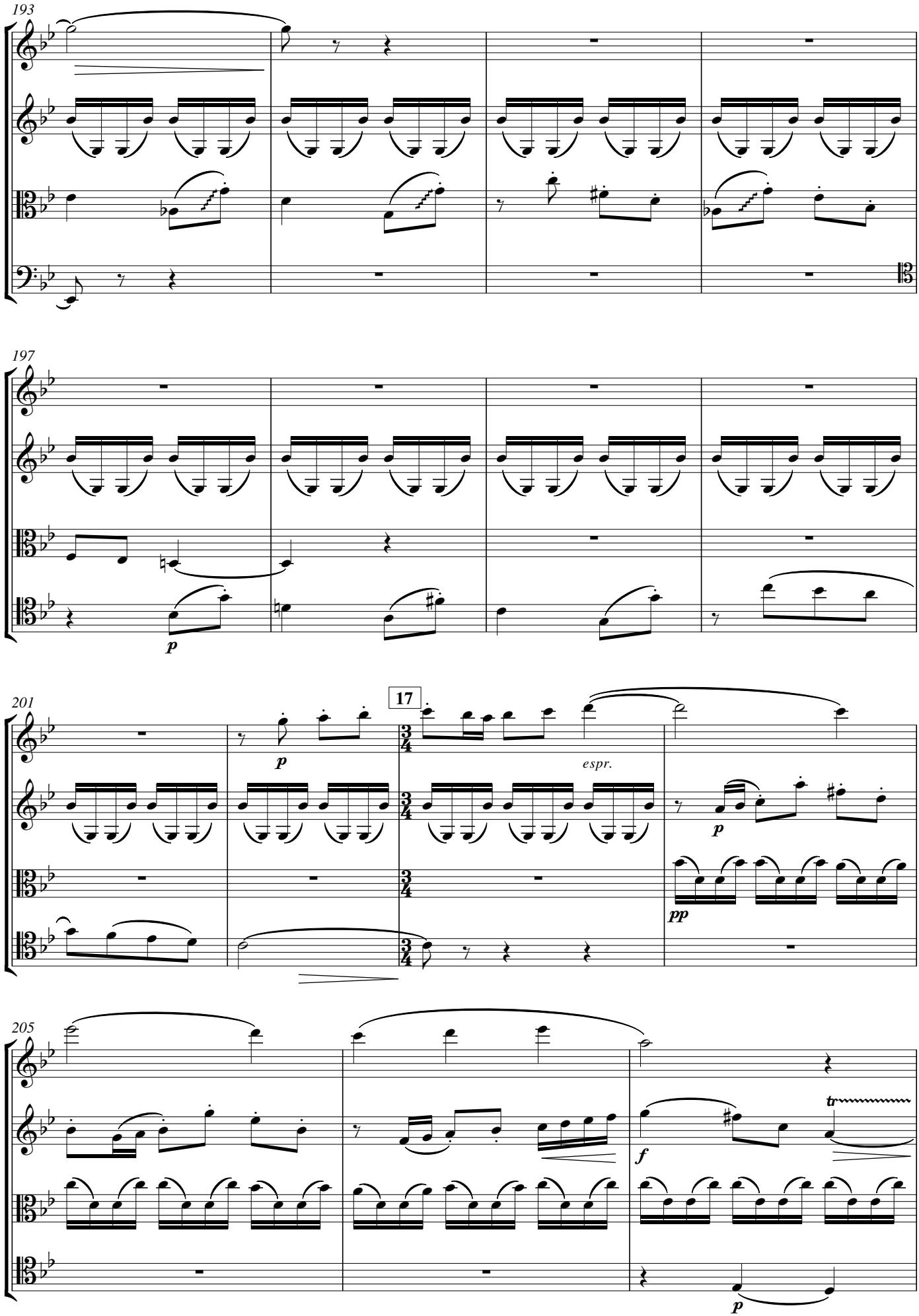

93
9
arco
p
(pizz.)
p
arco
100
10
gliss.
pp
pp
p
pizz.
pp
107
arco
113
11
f espr.
mf
p
p

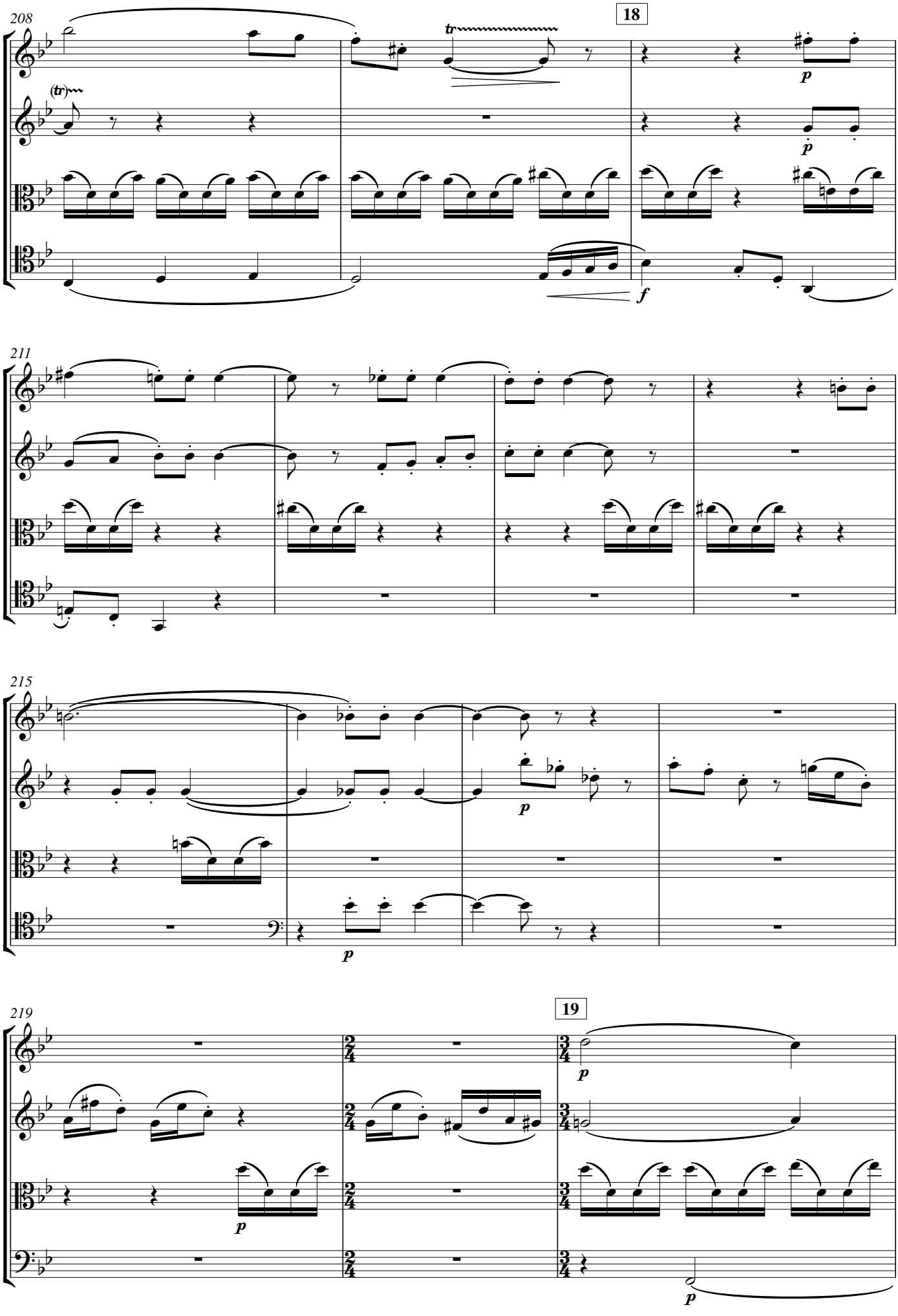

12
118
f
f
p
123
pp
ff
p
13
128
ff
p
ff
mf
f
p
133
p
pp
pp

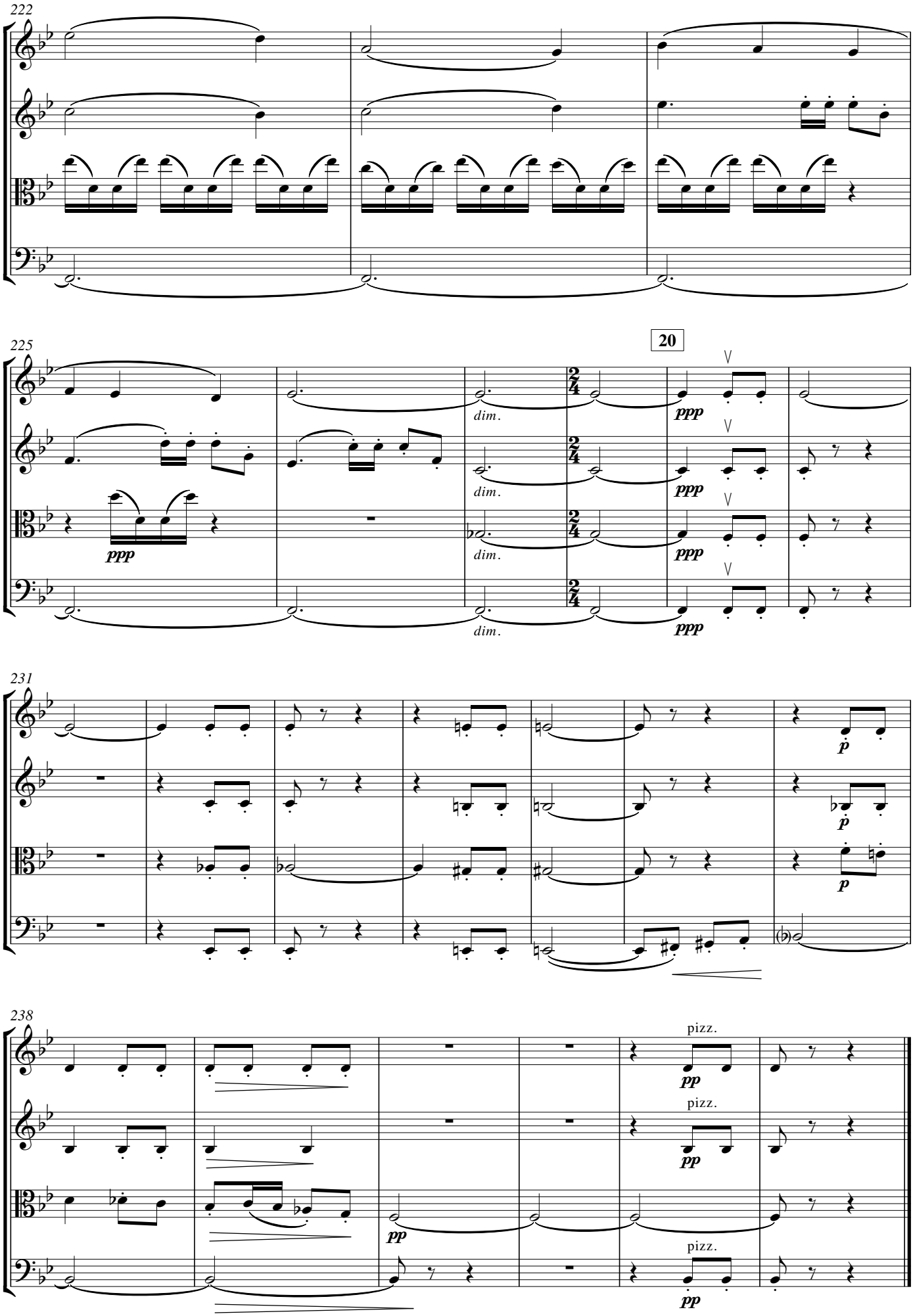

136
14
p
pizz.
p
140
143
146
cresc.


149
pp
152
arco
p
f
pp
p
159
f
p
f
166
tr
pp

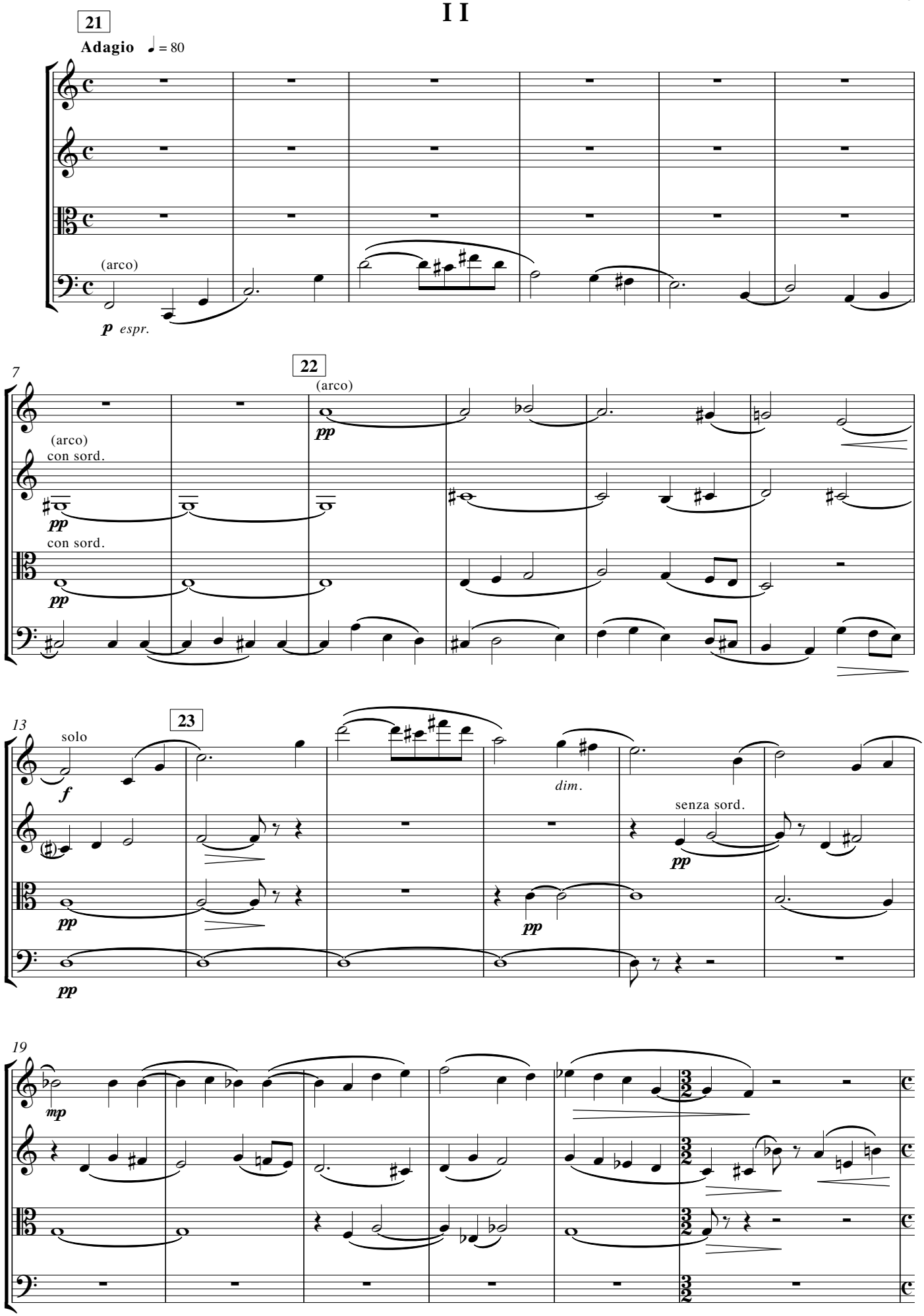

171
f
176
15
p
pp
182
p
188
16
p
gliss.
pp
gliss.
p

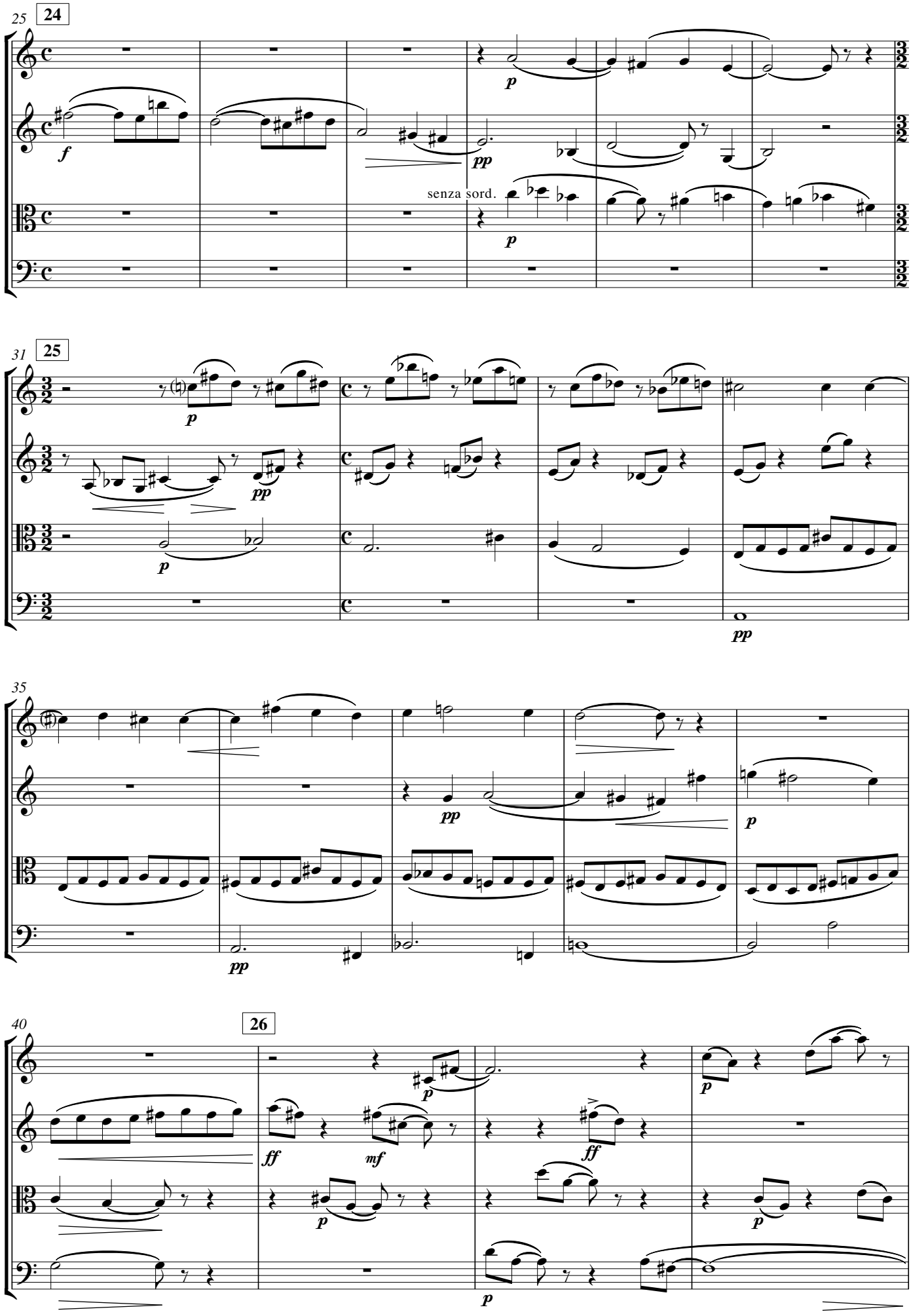

193
197
p
201
17
p
espr.
p
pp
205
f
tr
p

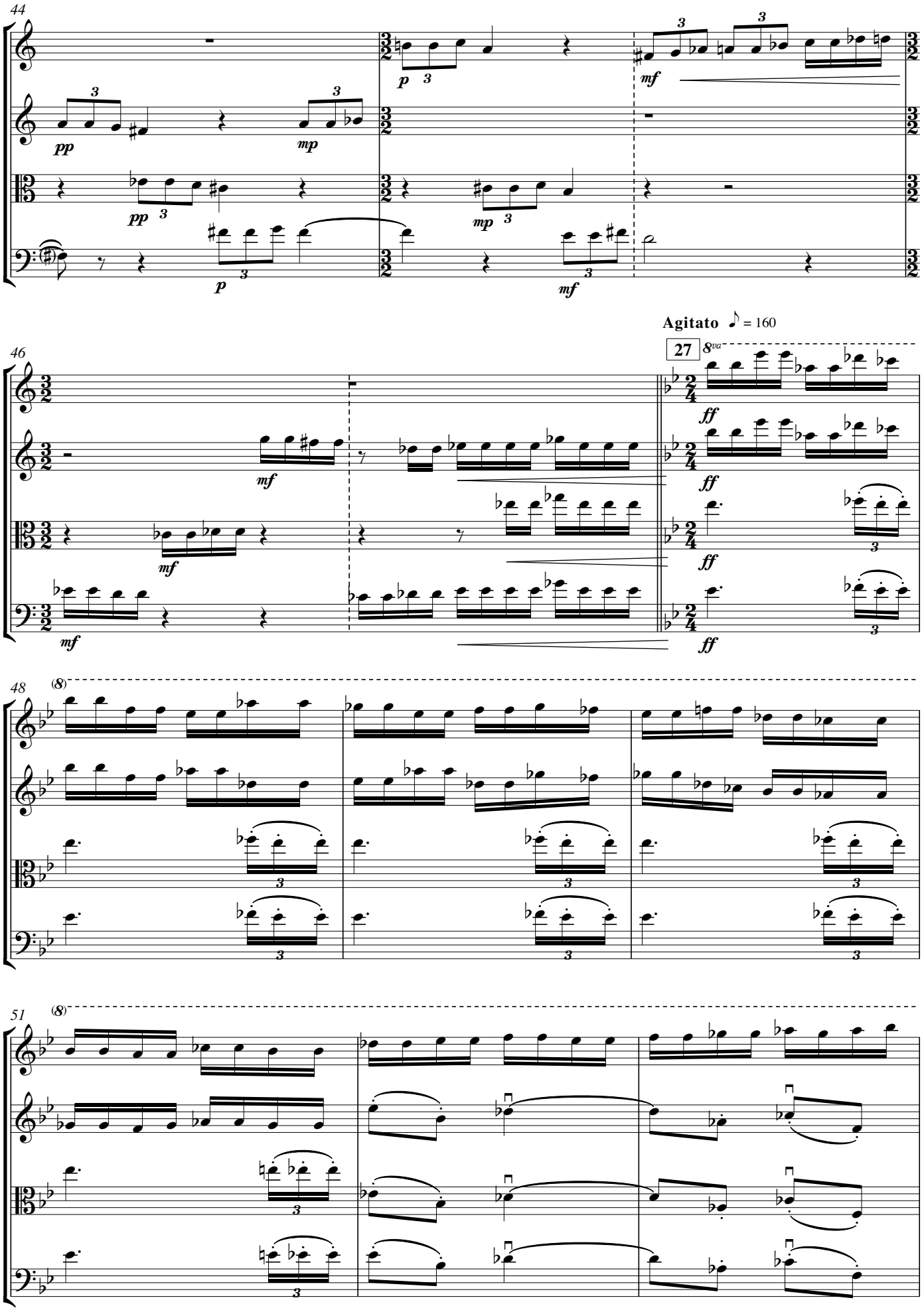

208
18
tr
(tr)
p
p
f
211
215
p
p
219
19
p
p

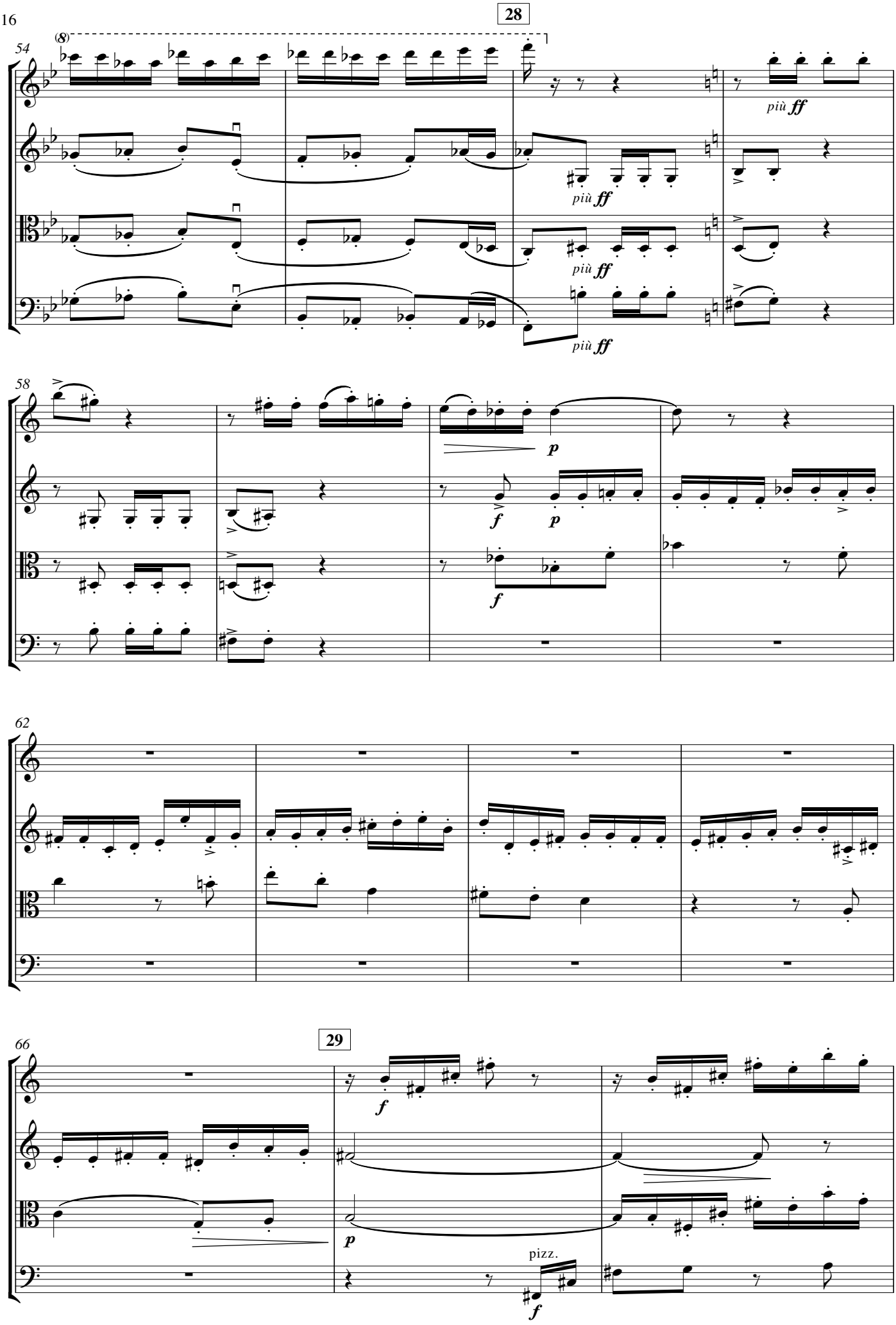

222
225
20
ppp
dim.
231
p
238
pizz.
pp

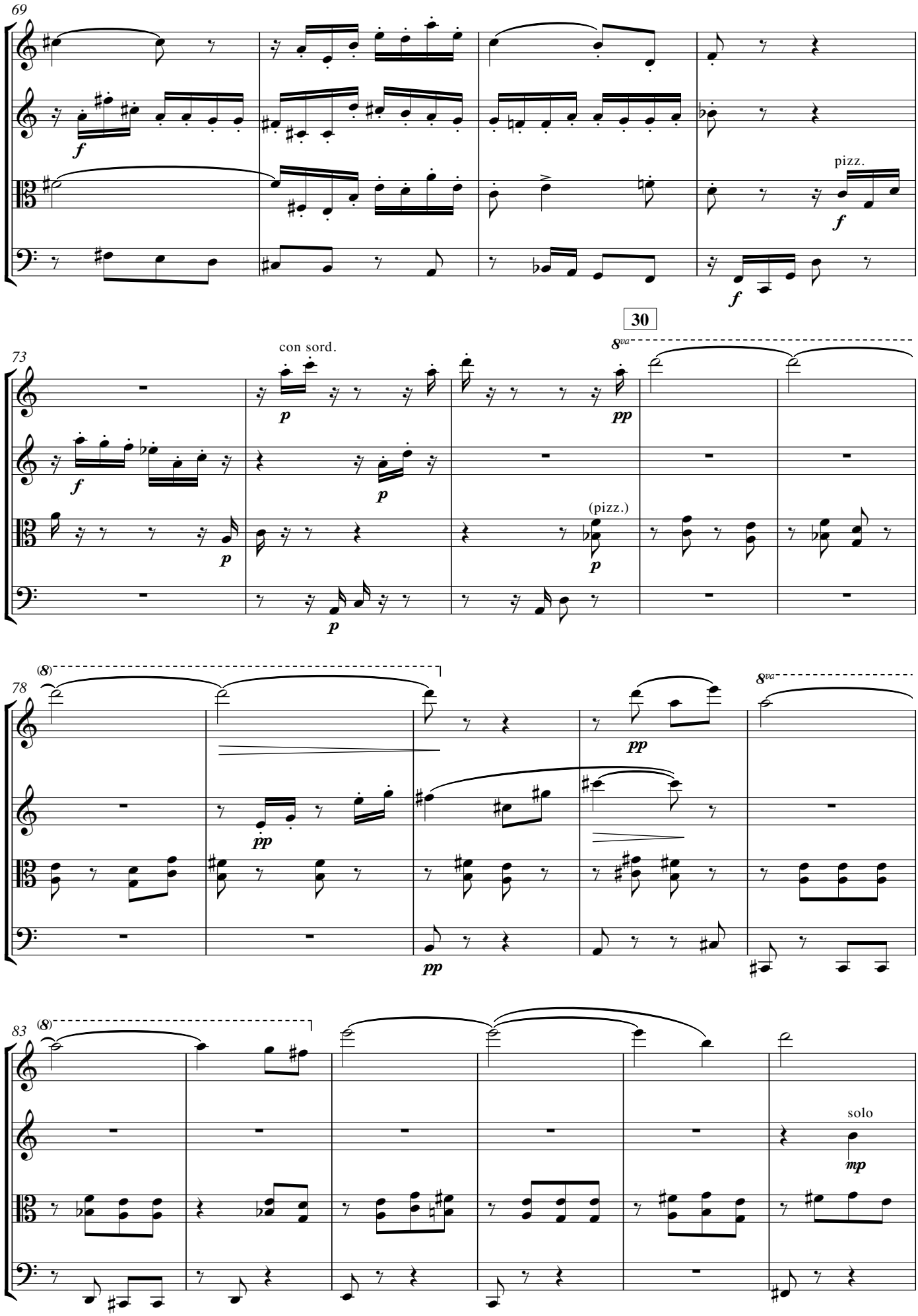
I I

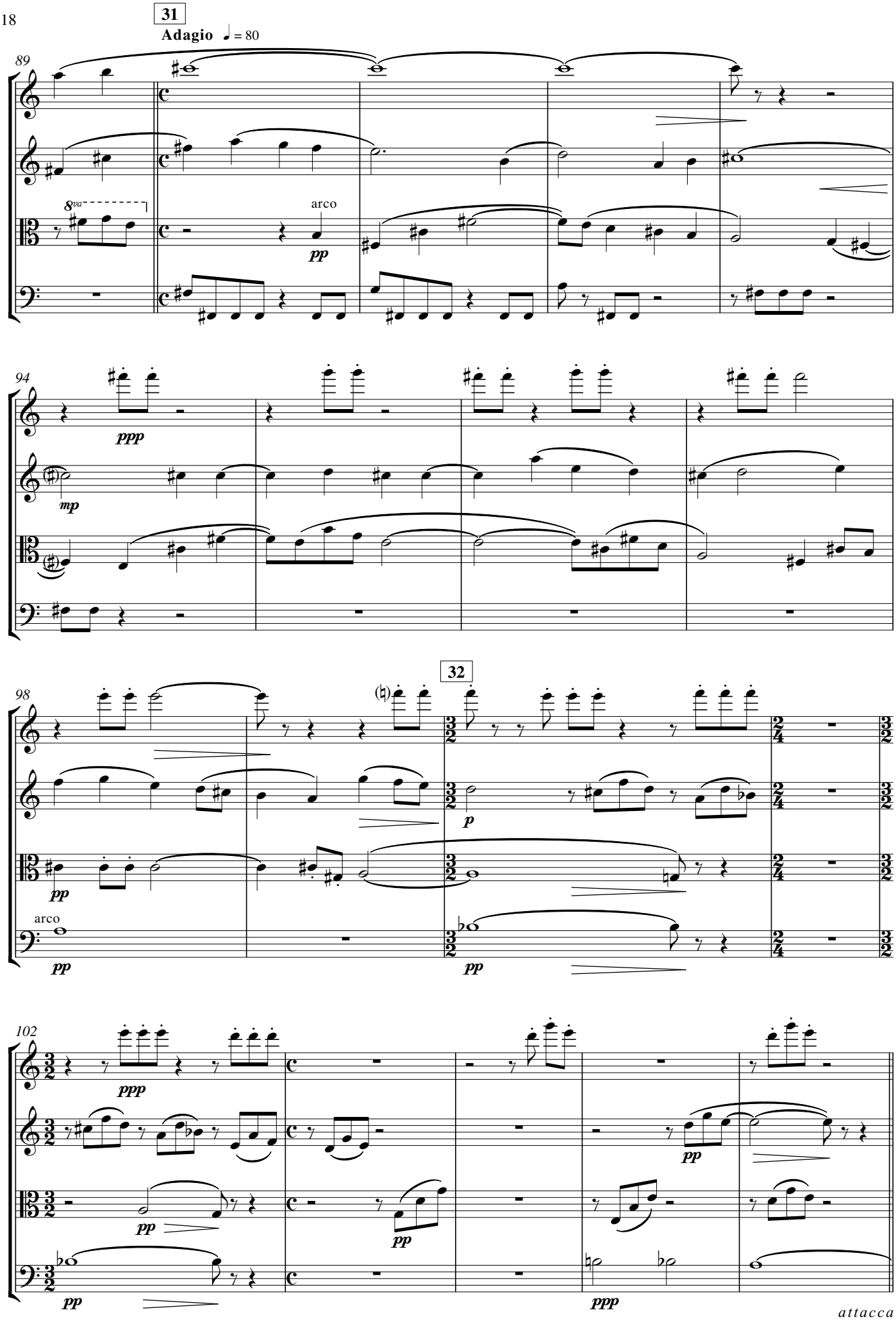

21
Adagio ♩ = 80
(arco)
p espr.
7
22
(arco)
pp
(arco)
con sord.
pp
con sord.
pp
13
23
solo
f
dim.
senza sord.
pp
pp
pp
19
mp


25
24
f
p
pp
senza sord.
p
31
25
p
pp
p
pp
35
pp
pp
p
40
26
p
ff
mf
p
ff
p
p
p

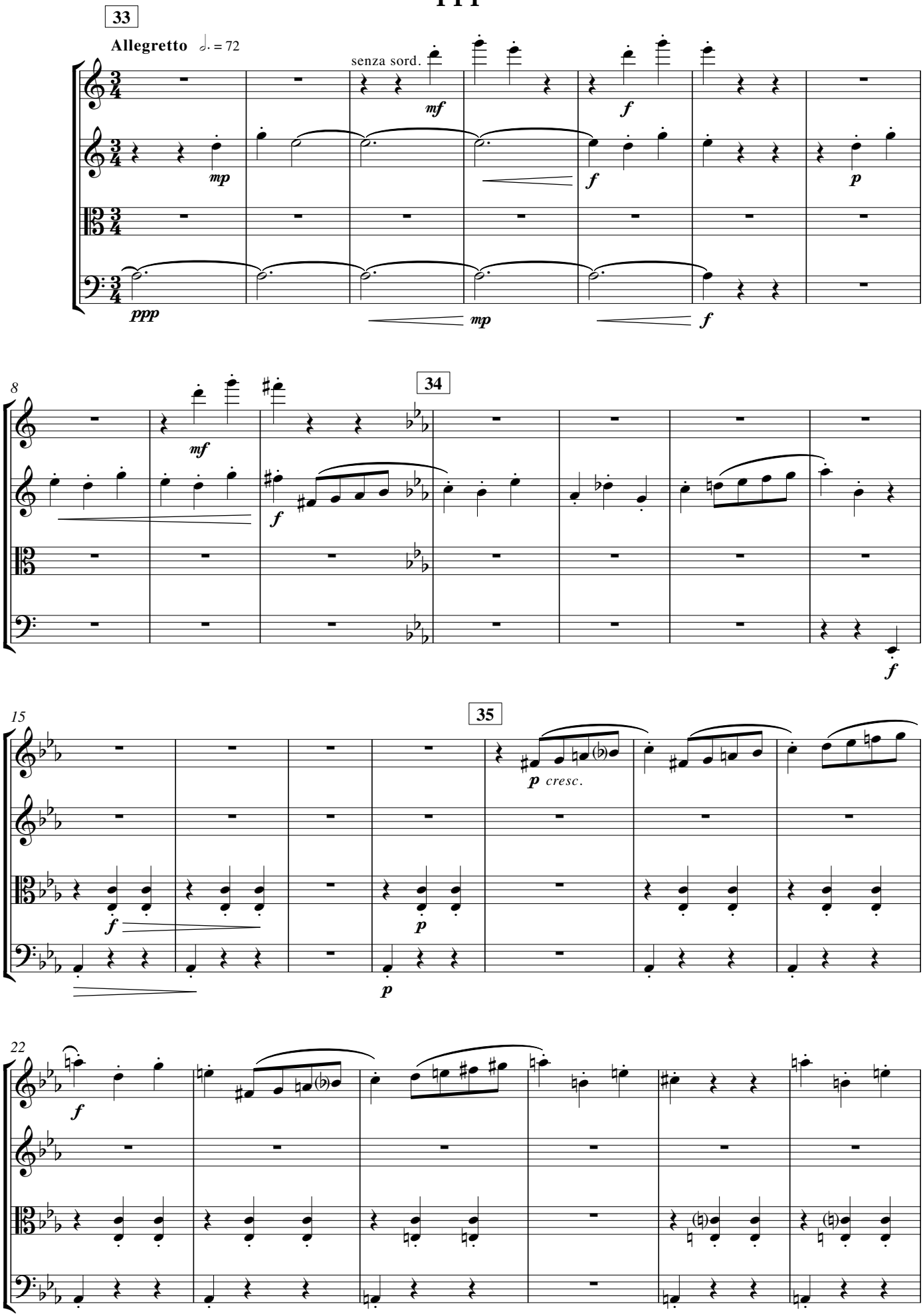

44
pp
mp
pp
mp
p
mf
p
mf
46
mf
mf
mf
Agitato ♪ = 160
27
8va
ff
ff
ff
ff
48
(8)
51
(8)

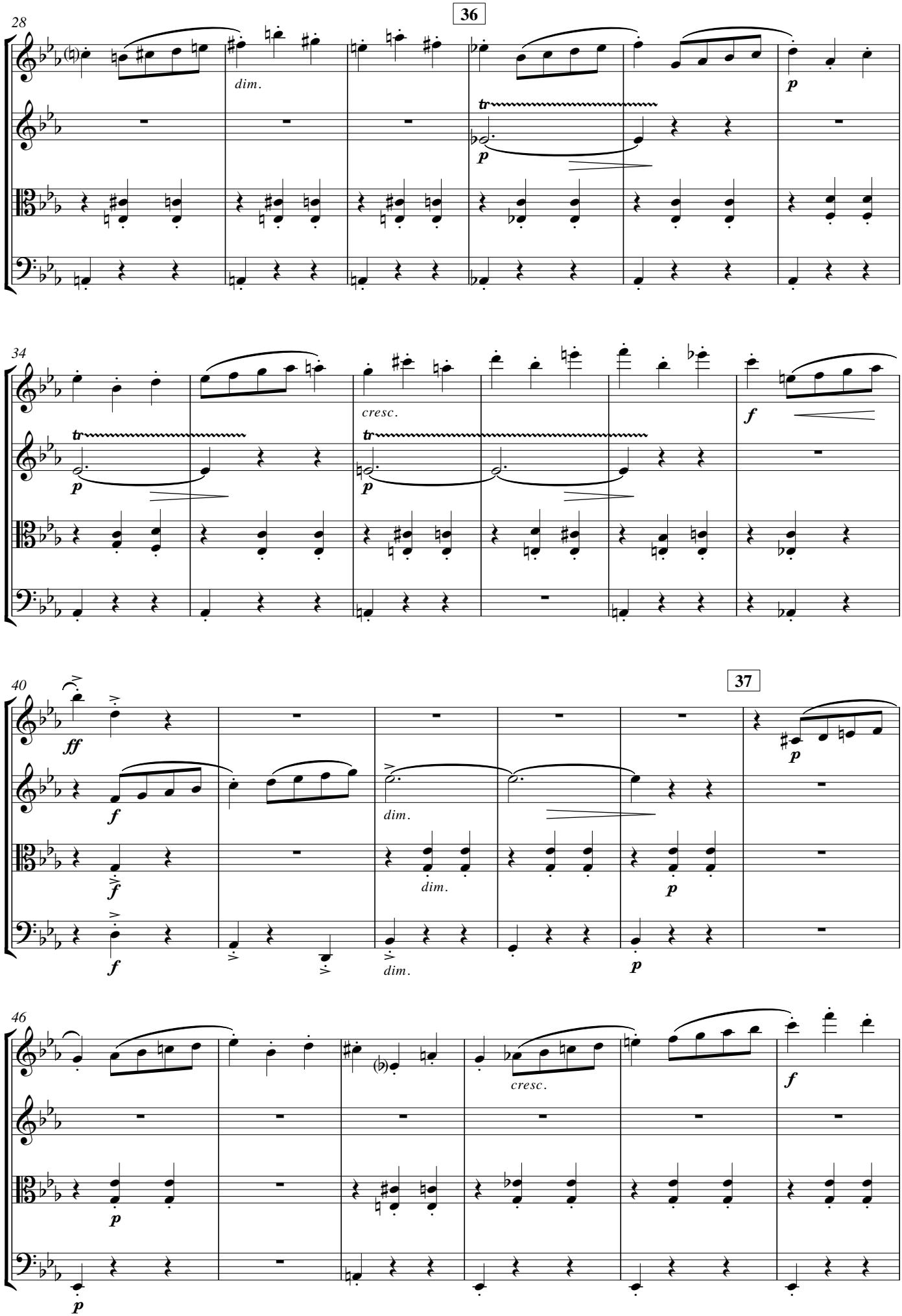

28
(8)
54
più ff
più ff
più ff
più ff
58
p
f
p
f
62
29
66
f
p
pizz.
f

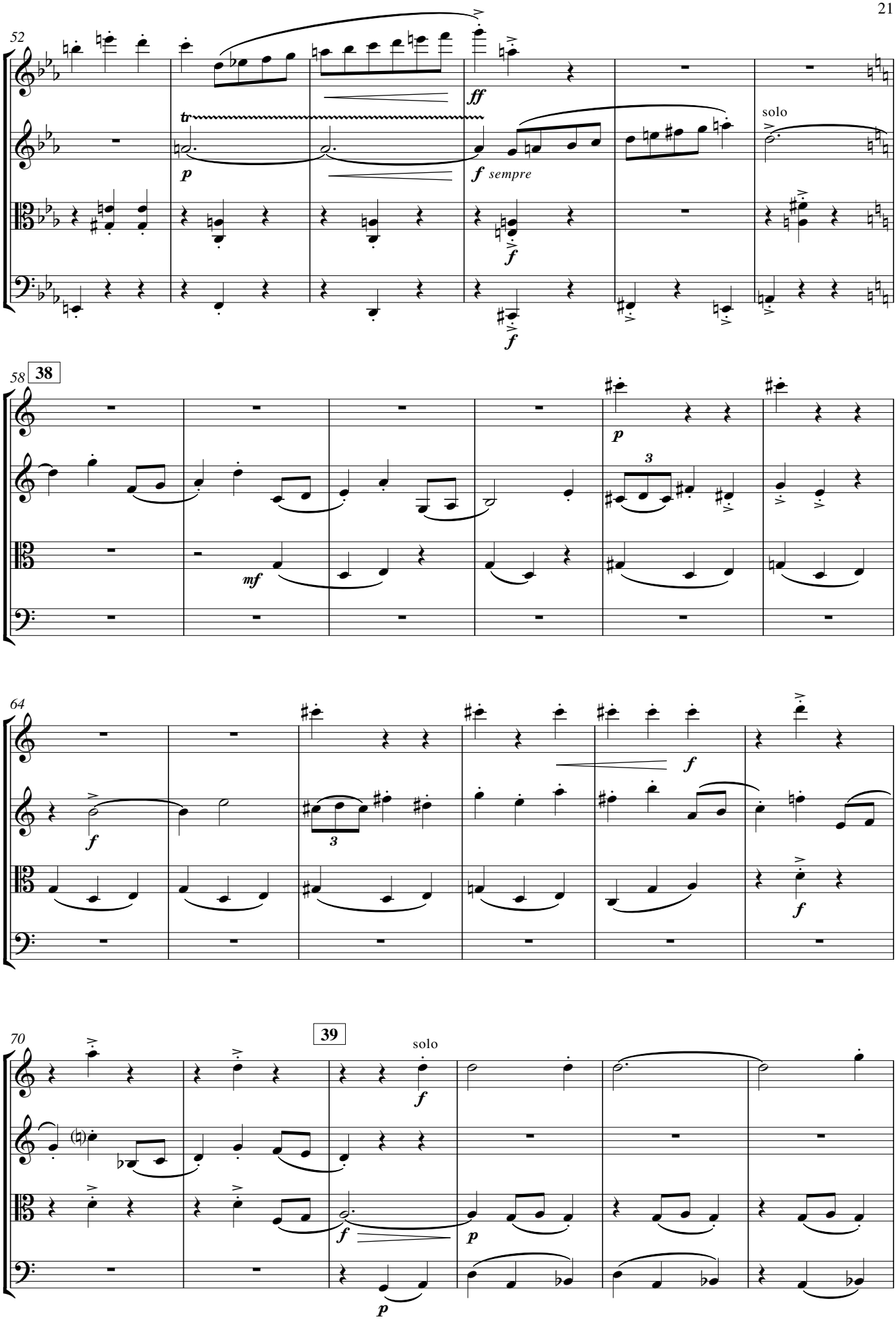

69
f
pizz.
f
f
30
73
con sord.
p
8va
pp
f
p
p
(pizz.)
p
p
78
(8)
8va
pp
pp
pp
83
(8)
solo
mp

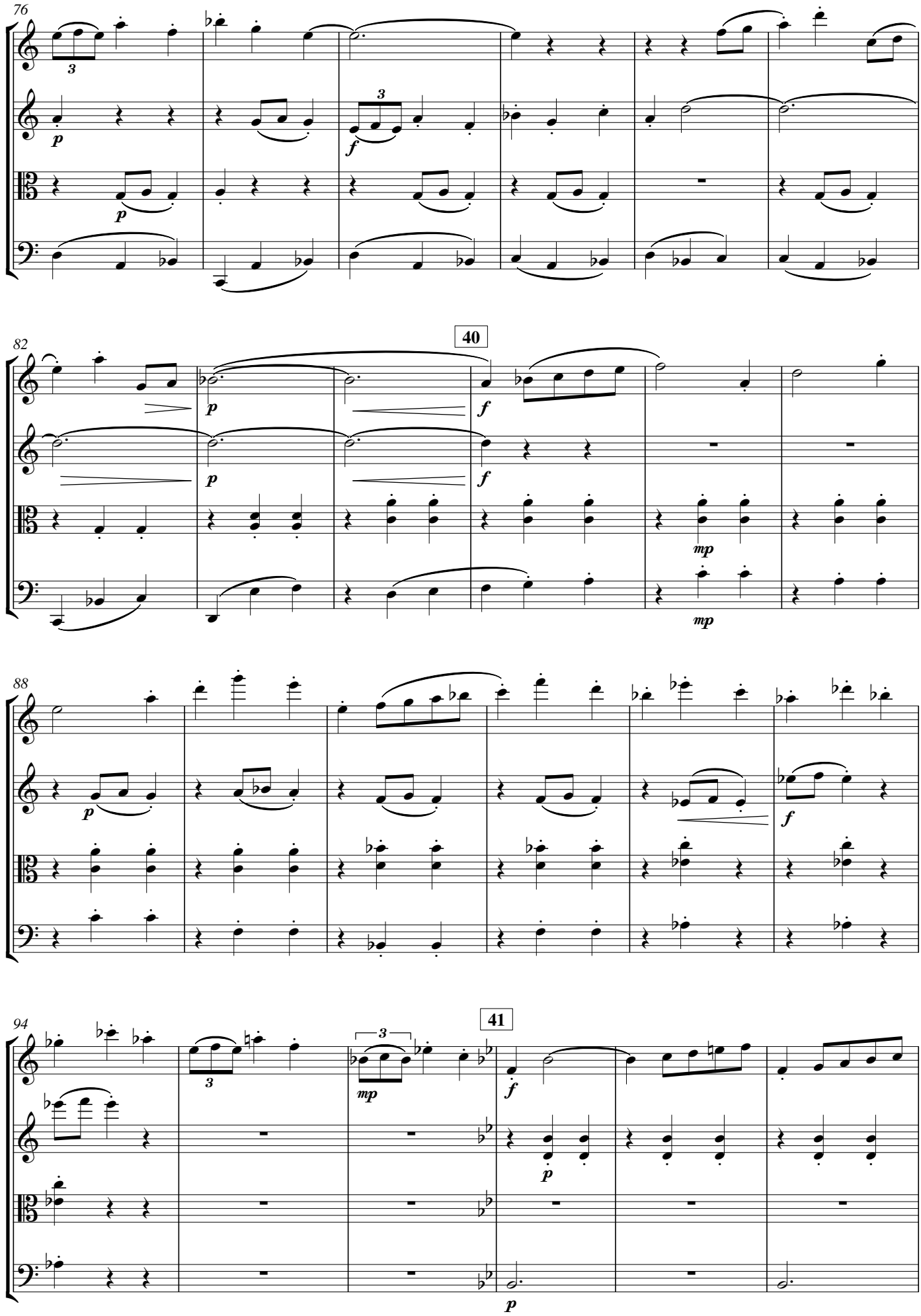

31
Adagio ♩ = 80
89
8va
arco
pp
94
ppp
mp
32
98
p
pp
arco
102
ppp
pp
attacca

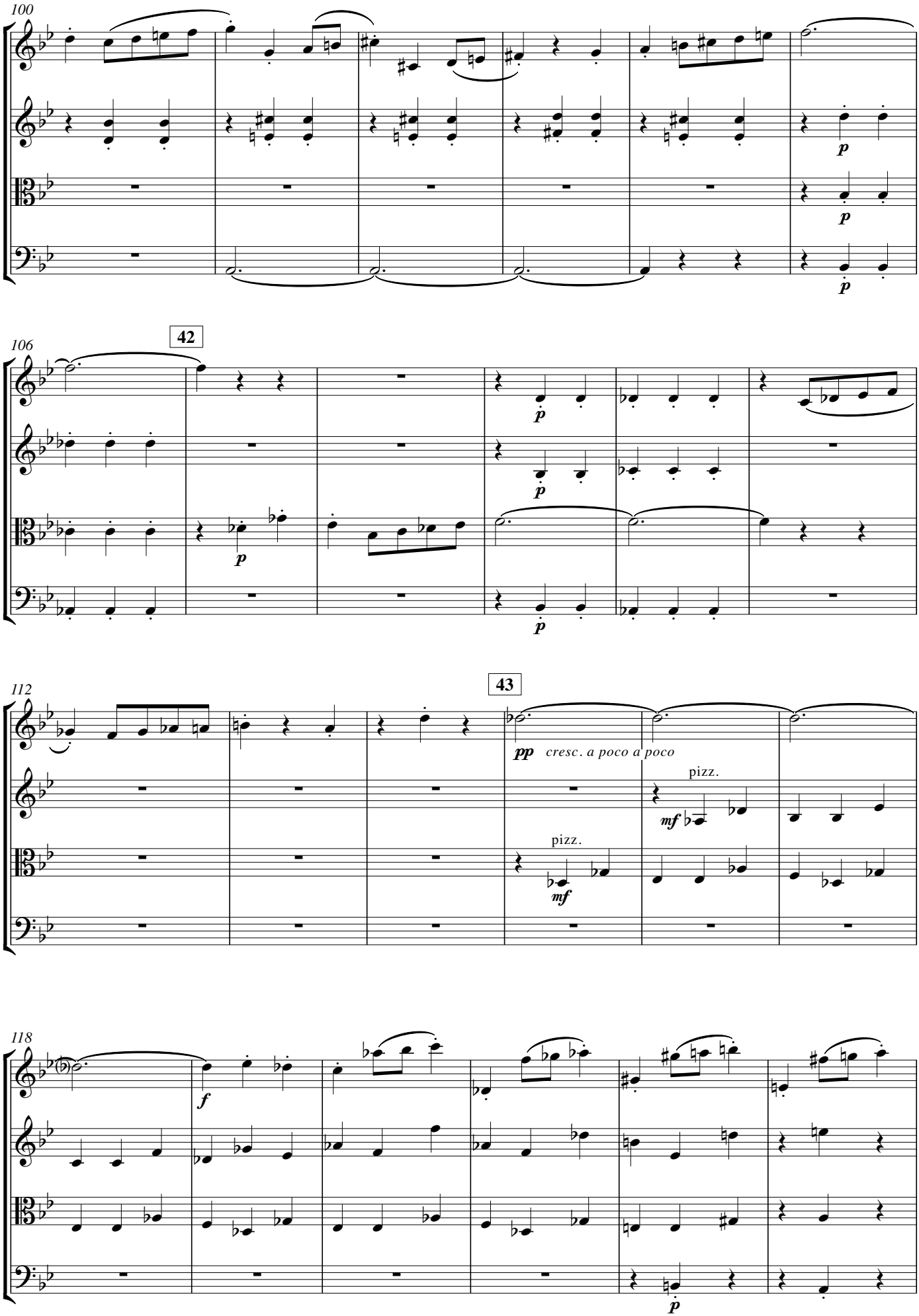
I I I

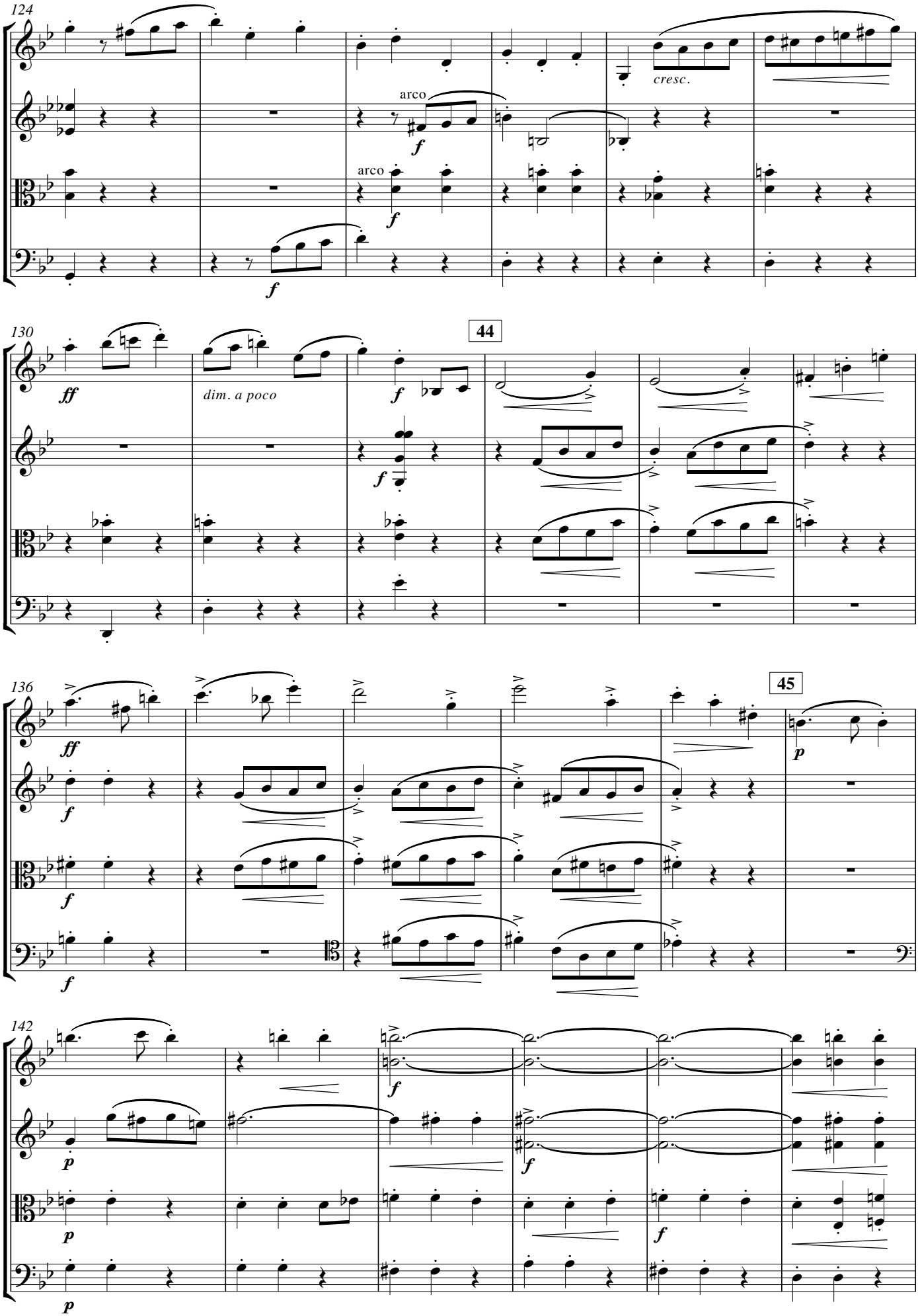

33
Allegretto ♩. = 72
senza sord.
mf
f
mp
f
p
ppp
mp
f
8
34
mf
f
f
15
35
p cresc.
f
p
p
22
f

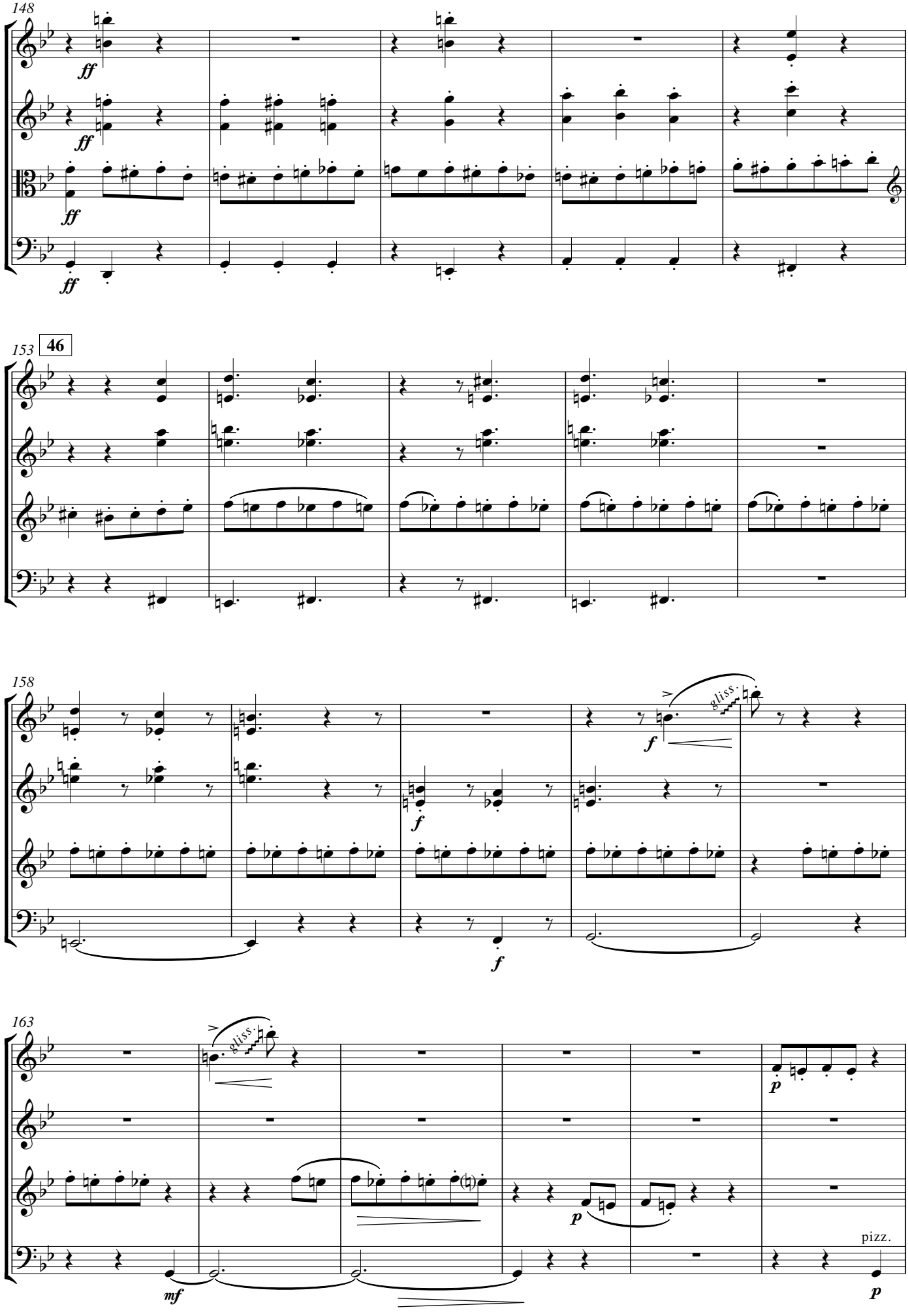

28
36
dim.
tr
p
34
cresc.
f
40
37
ff
dim.
46
cresc.

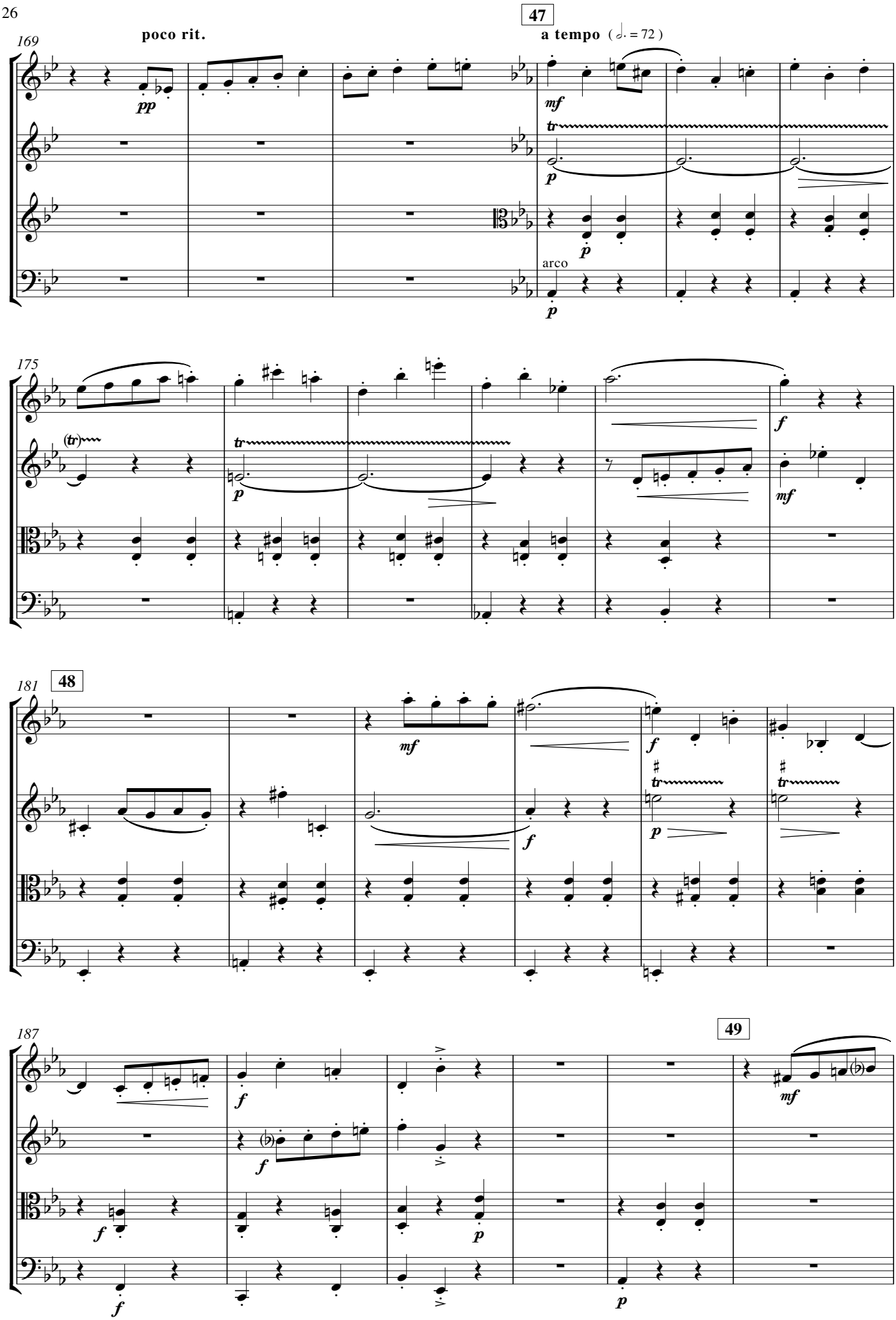

52
tr
p
ff
f sempre
f
f
solo
58
38
mf
p
3
64
f
3
f
f
70
39
solo
f
p
f
p

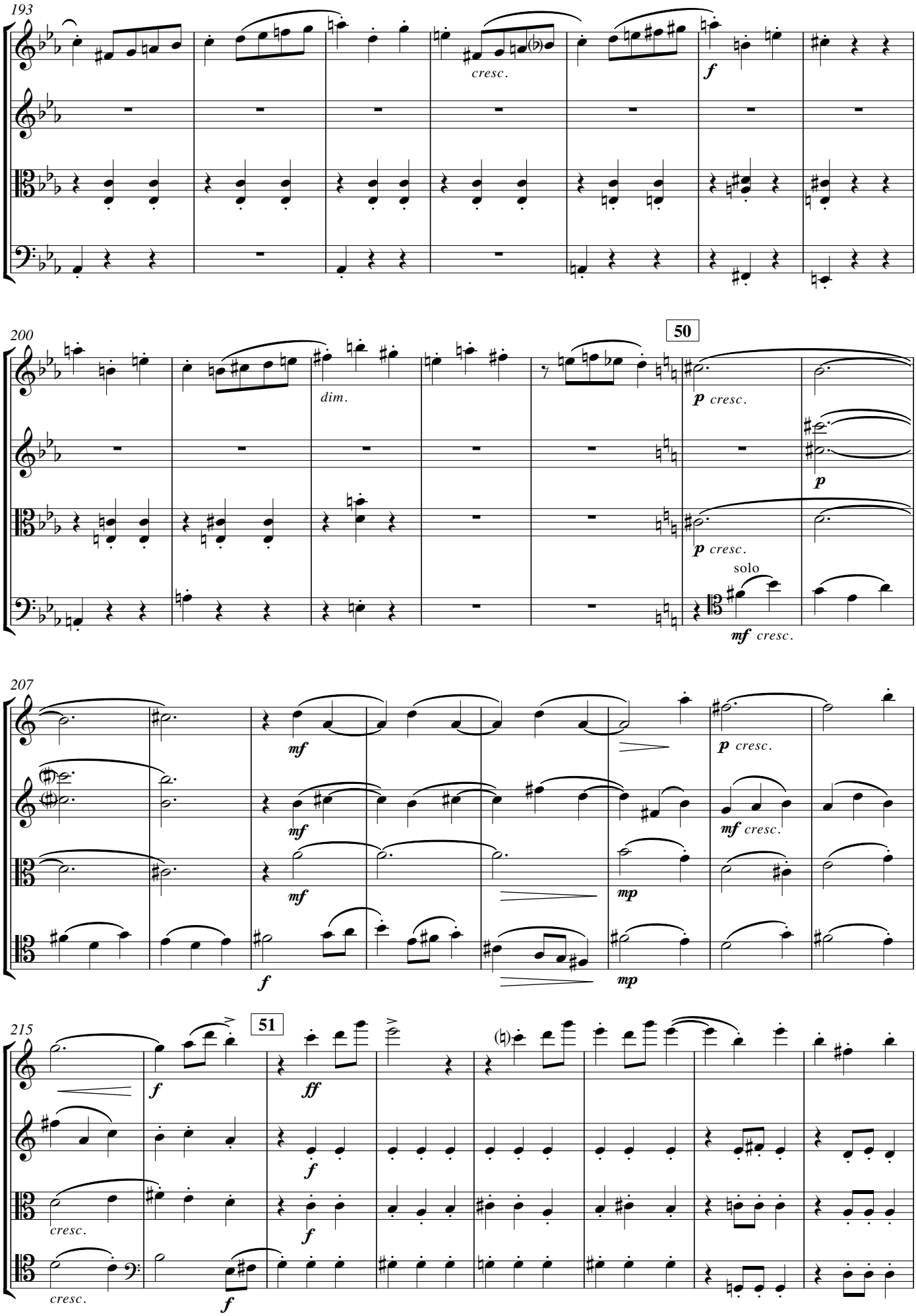

76
82
40
88
94
41

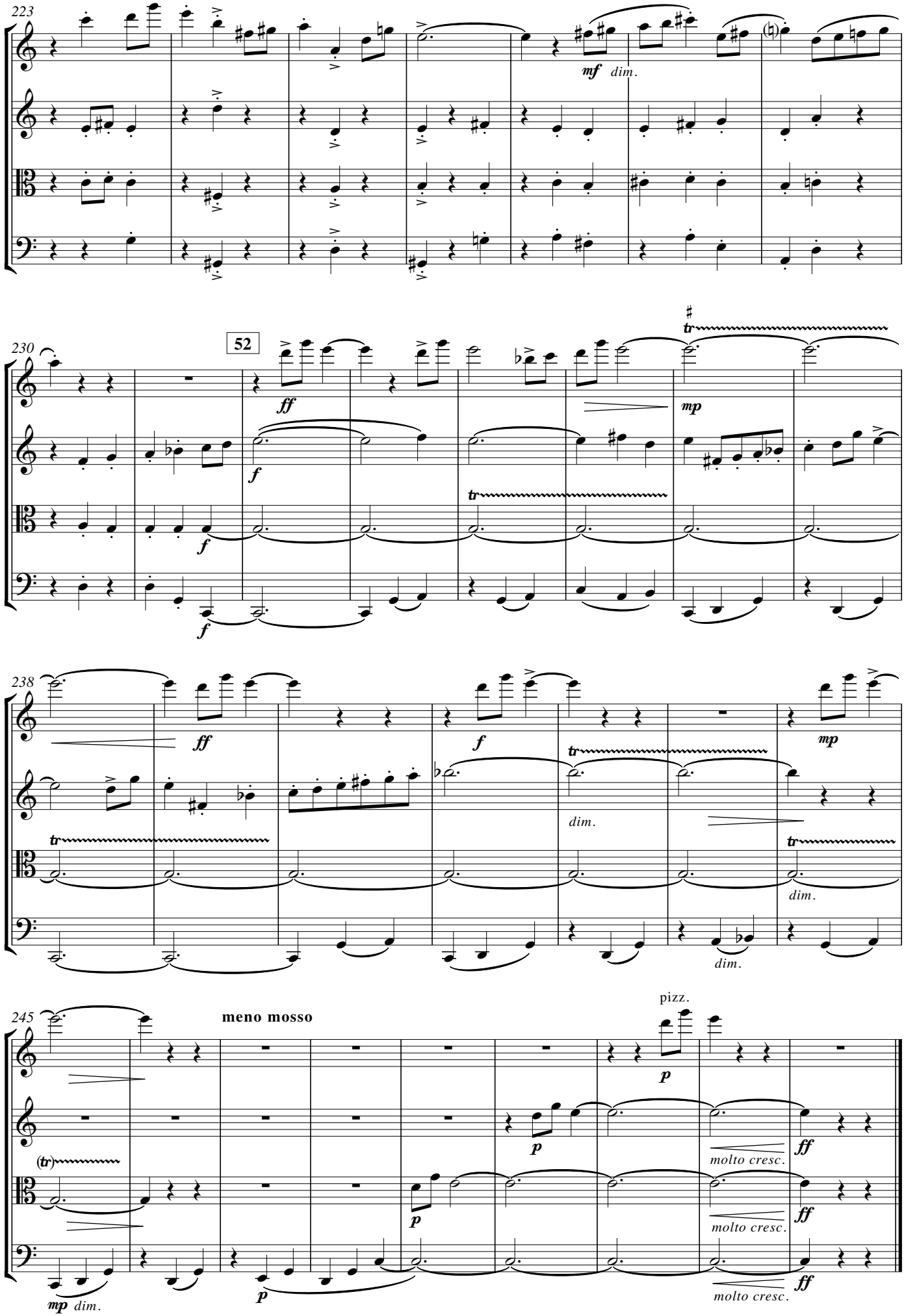

100
106
42
112
43
pp cresc. a poco a poco
pizz.
mf
pizz.
mf
118
f
p


124
arco
cresc.
arco
130
44
dim. a poco
136
45
142


148
ff
ff
ff
ff
153
46
158
f
f
f
gliss.
163
mf
p
p
gliss.
pizz.
p


47
poco rit.
a tempo (♩. = 72)
169
pp
mf
tr
p
arco
175
(tr)
f
48
181
49
187


193
cresc.
f
200
dim.
50
p cresc.
p
p cresc.
solo
mf cresc.
207
mf
mf
mf
p cresc.
mf cresc.
f
mp
mp
215
51
f
ff
f
f
cresc.
cresc.
f


223
mf dim.
230
52
ff
f
f
f
mp
tr
238
ff
f
mp
tr
dim.
dim.
dim.
245
meno mosso
pizz.
p
p
p
molto cresc.
molto cresc.
molto cresc.
ff
ff
ff
mp dim.

I V

53

Allegro molto ♩ = 112

arco

ff

sff

9

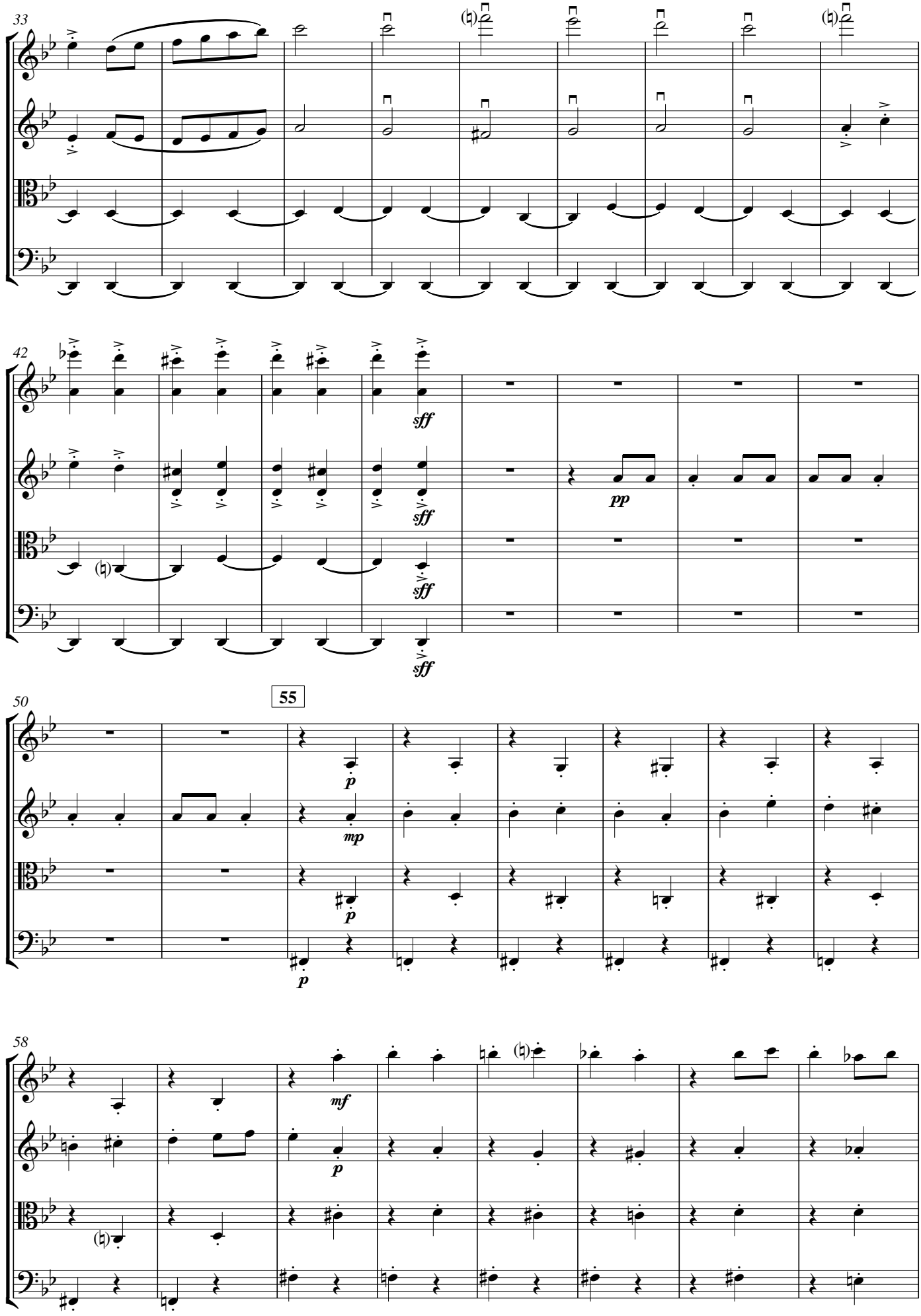
16

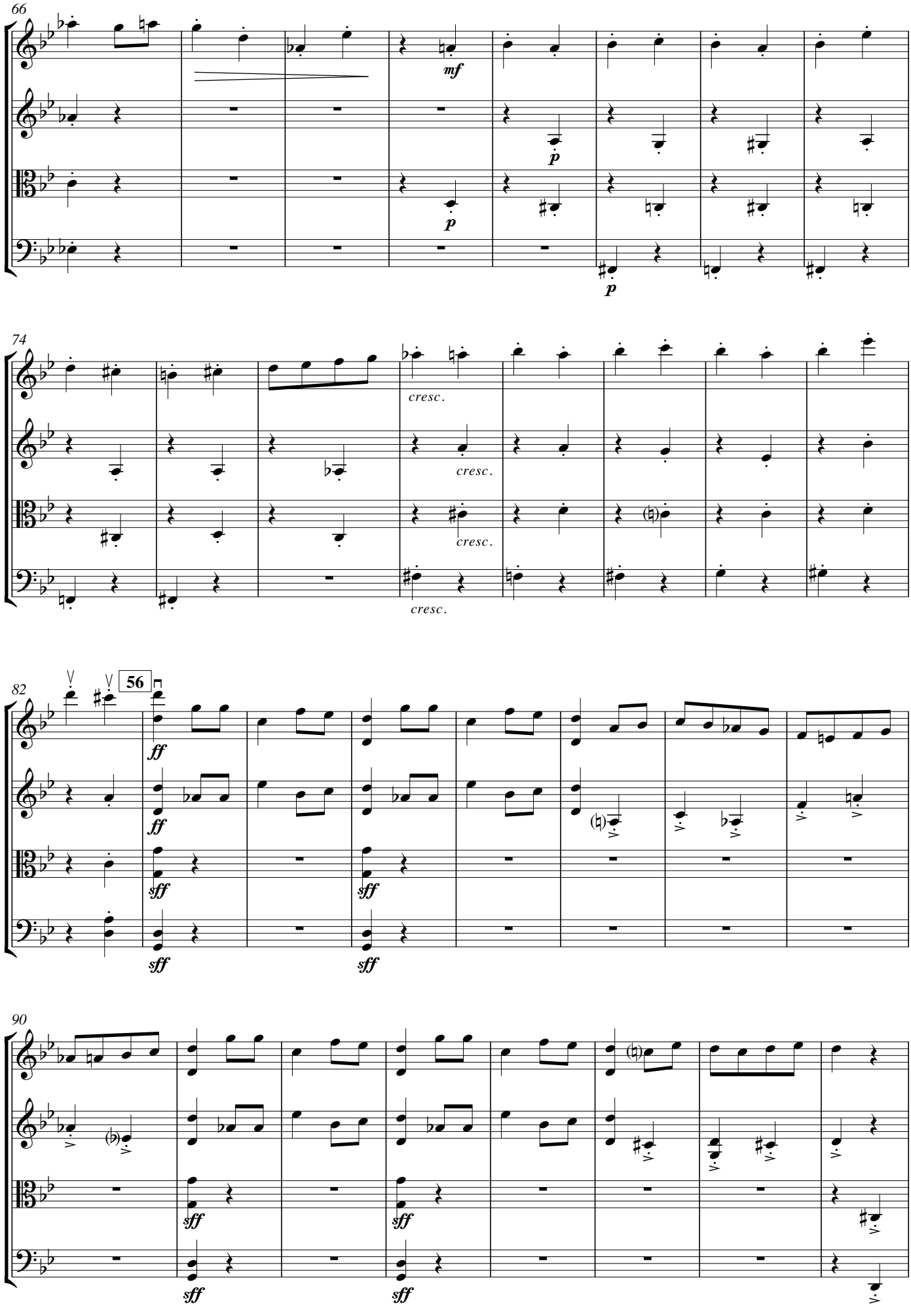
54

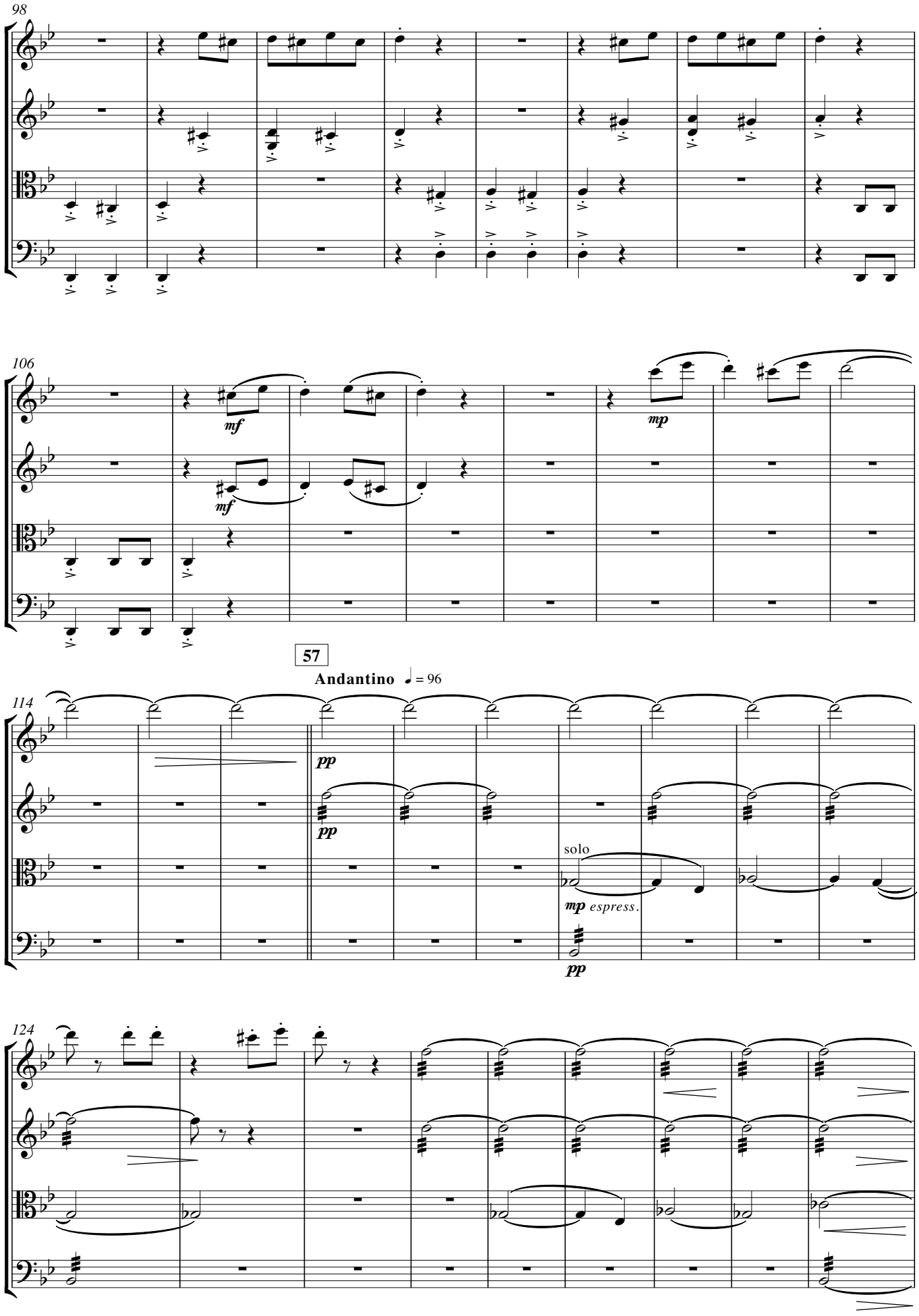
ff

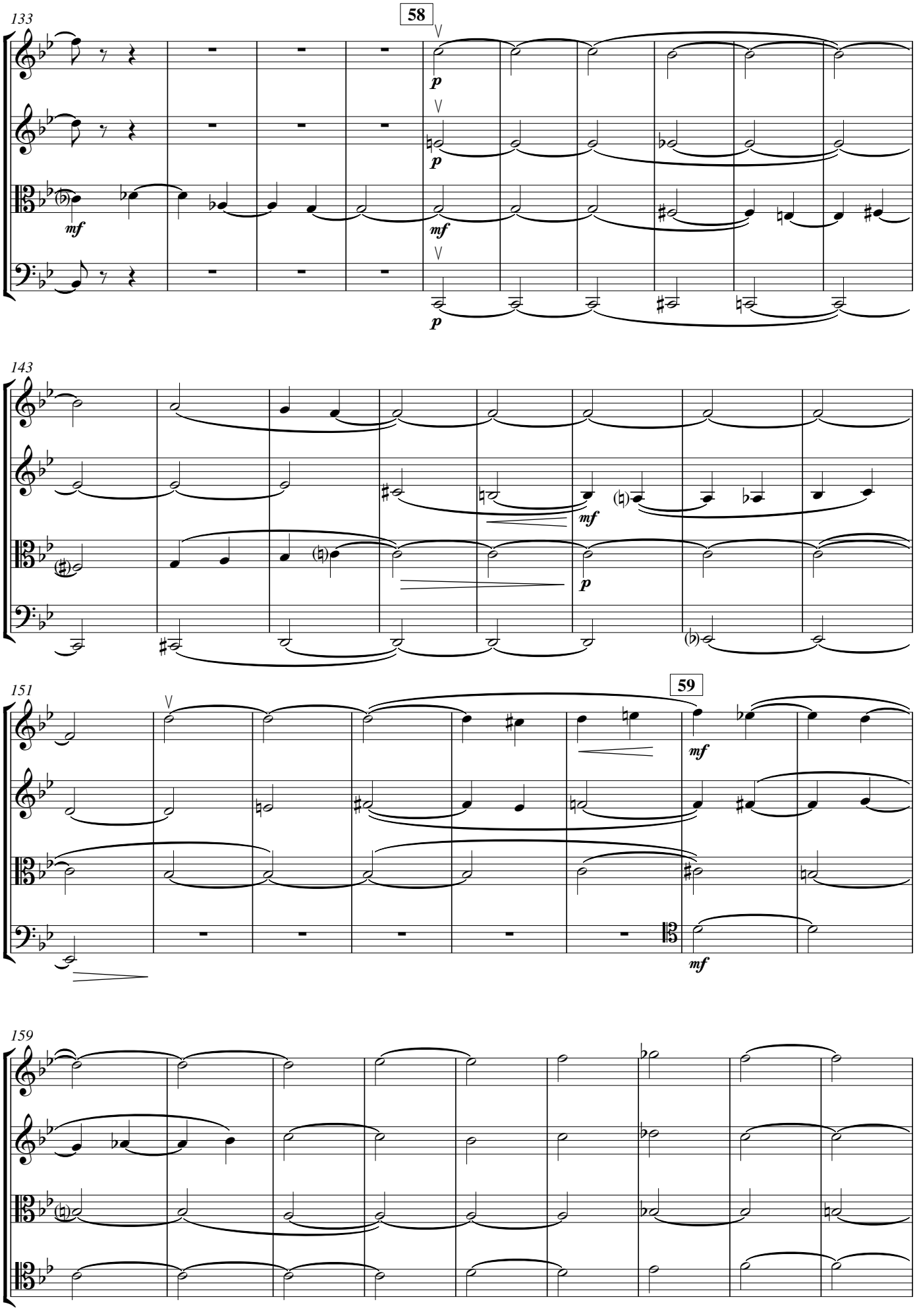
sim.

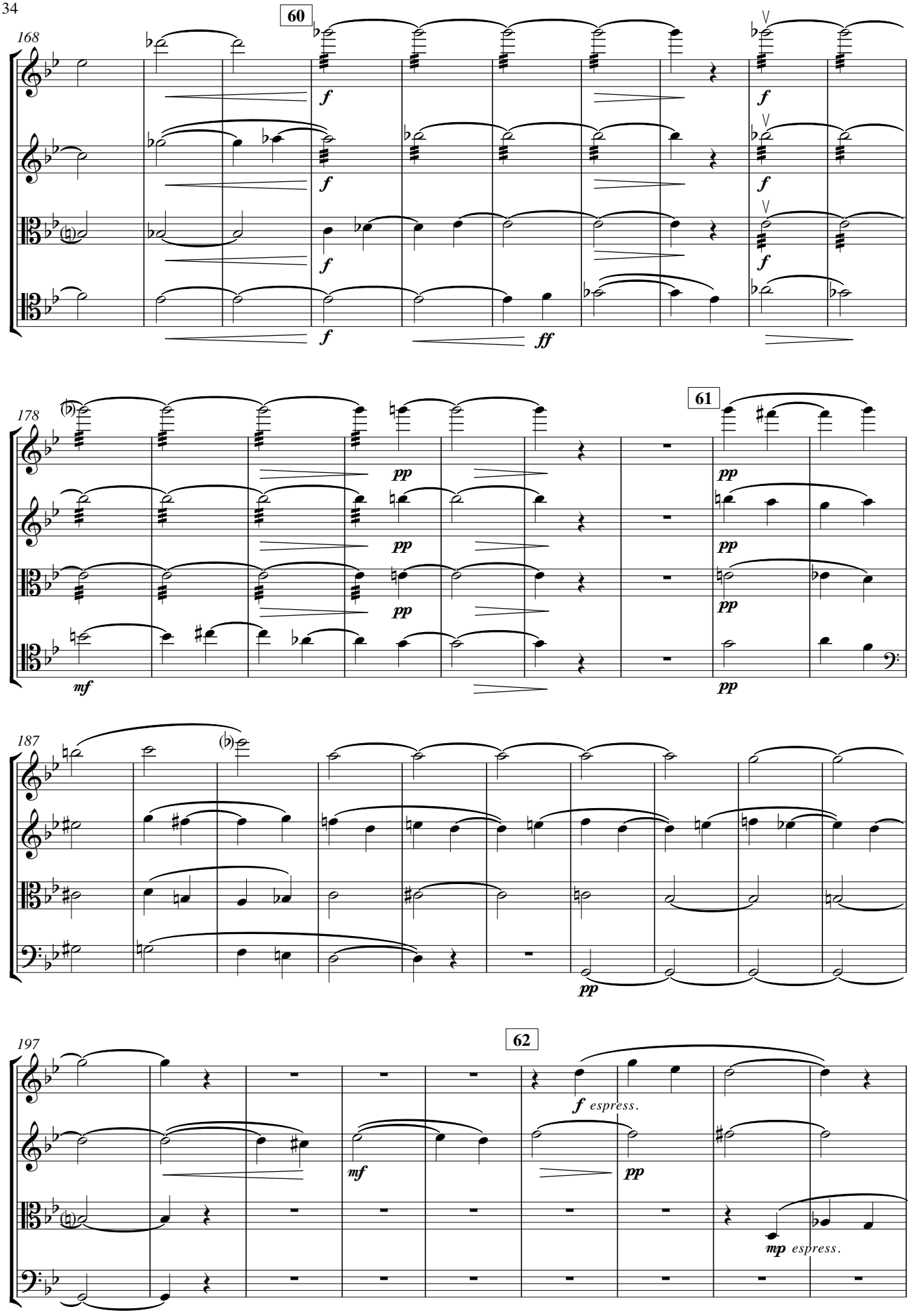
25


33
42
sff
pp
50
55
p
mp
58
mf


66
mf
p
p
p
74
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
82
56
ff
ff
sff
sff
sff
sff
90
sff
sff
sff
sff


98
106
mf
mf
mp
57
Andantino ♩ = 96
114
pp
pp
solo
mp espress.
pp
124


133
58
143
151
59
159


60
61
62
f espress.
mp espress.

206

63

p subito

mf

p subito

mf

mp

p subito

215

mp

mf

64

223

poco accel.

p

f

p

f

p

f

65

229

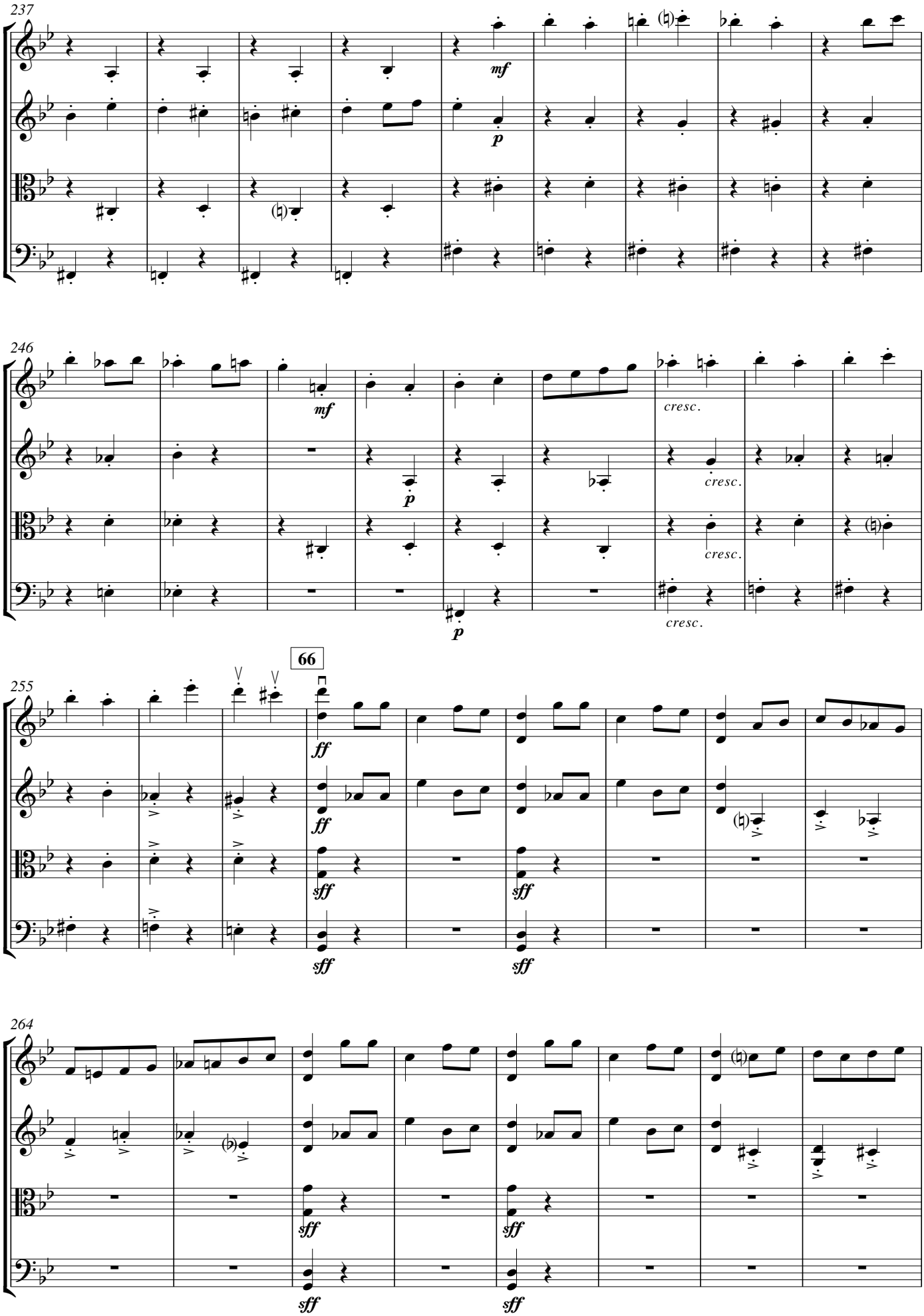
Allegro molto ♩ = 112

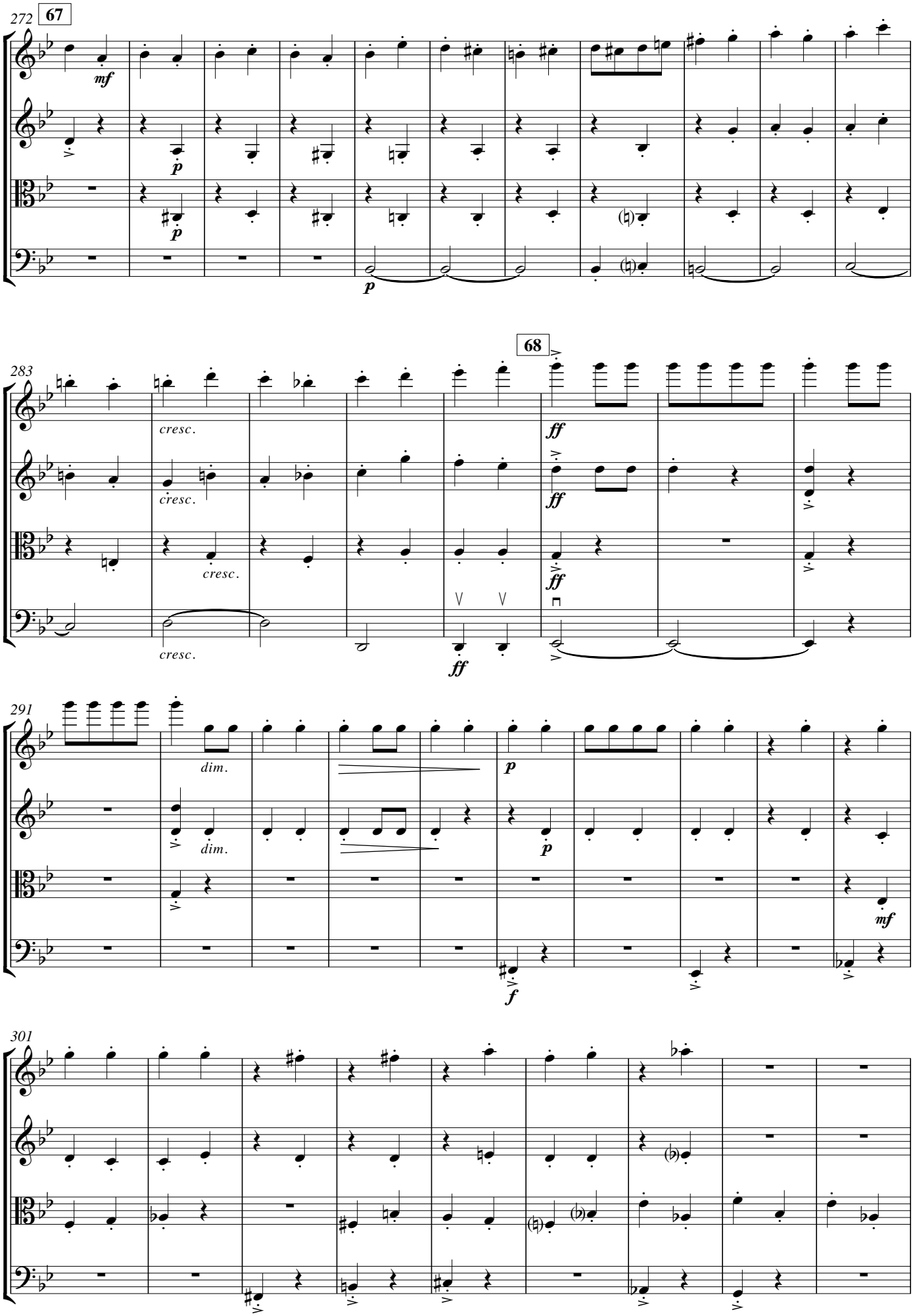
p

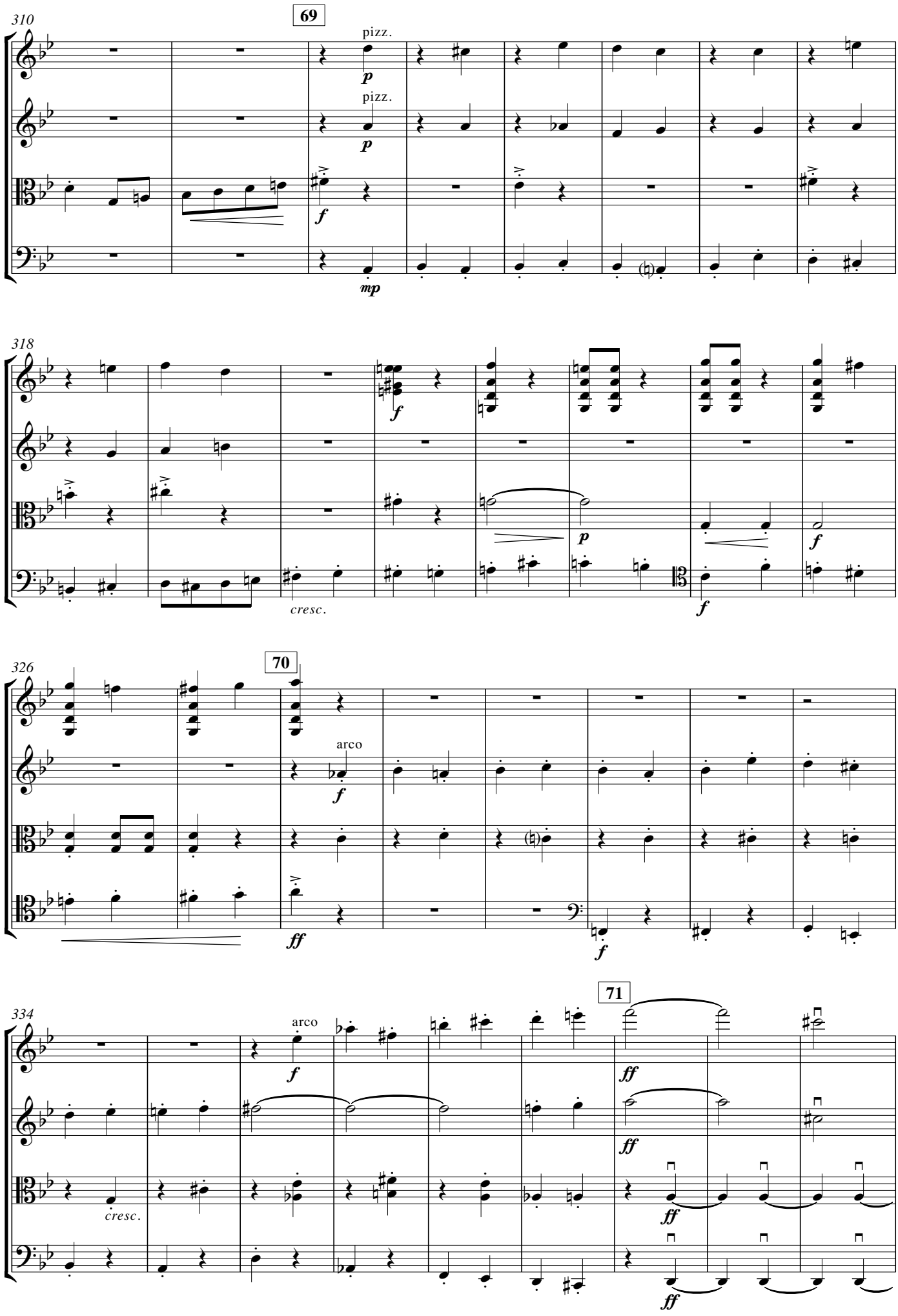
f

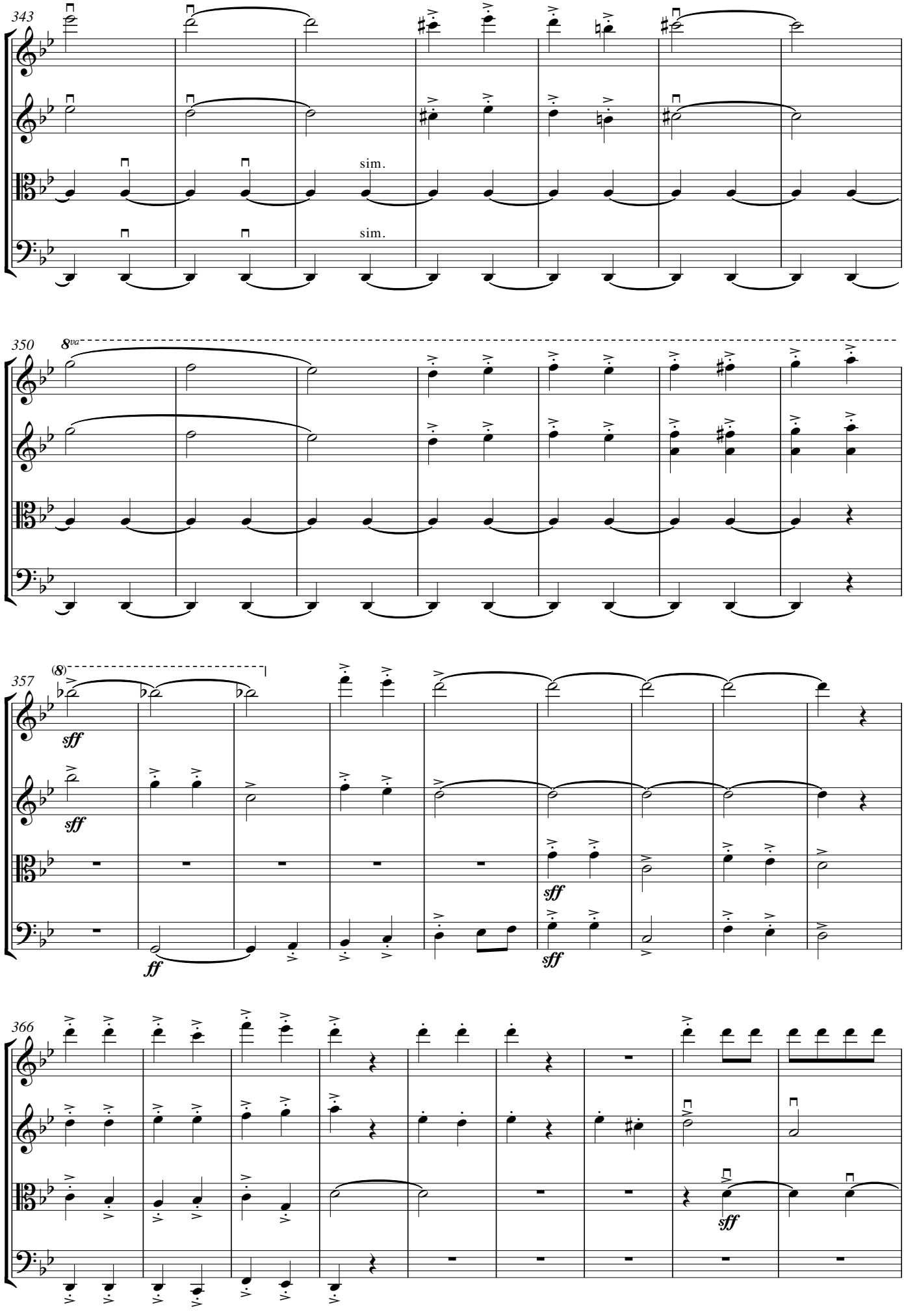
p

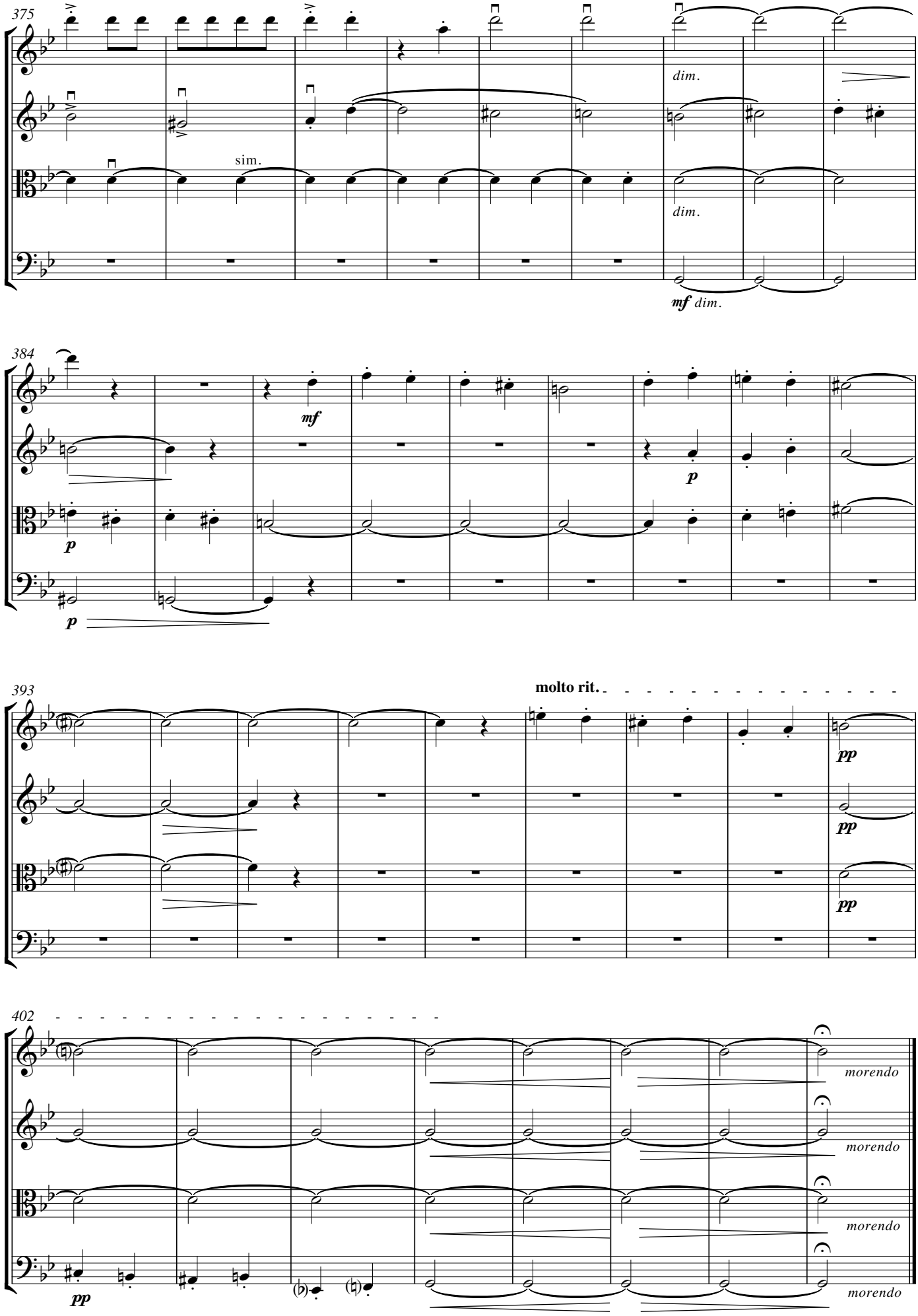
p


237
mf
p
246
mf
cresc.
p
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
p
66
255
ff
ff
sff
sff
sff
sff
264
sff
sff
sff
sff


272
67
mf
p
p
p
283
68
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
ff
ff
ff
ff
291
dim.
dim.
p
p
f
mf
301


310
69
pizz.
p
pizz.
p
f
mp
318
f
p
f
cresc.
f
326
70
arco
f
ff
f
334
arco
f
71
ff
ff
cresc.
ff
ff


343
sim.
sim.
350
8va
357
(8)
sff
sff
ff
sff
sff
366
sff


375
sim.
dim.
dim.
mf dim.
384
mf
p
p
p
393
molto rit.
pp
pp
pp
402
morendo
morendo
morendo
morendo
pp