Mosaics

String Quartet no. 7

2015

Lawrence Kramer

lkramer@fordham.edu

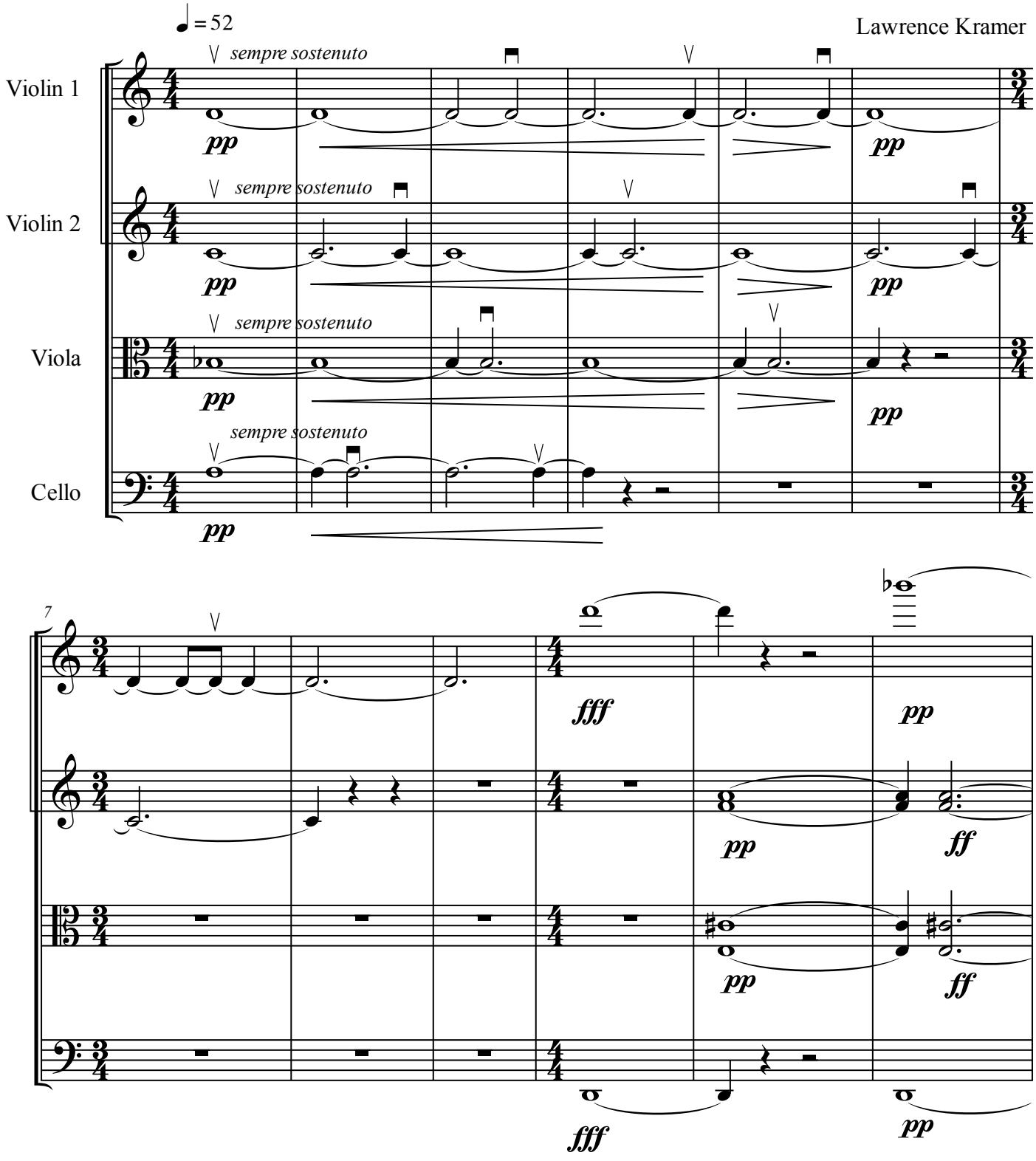
This composition originated during work on an *a capella* setting of a short lyric by Walt Whitman, "Twilight." It occurred to me in mid-stream that the piece would also have a nice sound on string quartet, so I began making the new version. It then occurred to me that the fragmentary nature of the poem invited further treatment as well. The result is this quartet, a series of seven short pieces that constitute a series of variations without a theme. Each piece is conceived as a kind of mosaic in itself. At the same time, by rearranging (reinterpreting, recasting, reframing) elements shared with the others, each piece also adds itself as a tile to the larger mosaic. The "Twilight"movement, no. 5, forms both a long-awaited point of arrival and a necessary point of departure. The poem (in its entirety) reads:

> The soft voluptuous opiate shades,
> The sun just gone, the eager light dispell'd—(I too will soon be gone, dispell'd,)
> A haze—nirwana—rest and night—oblivion.

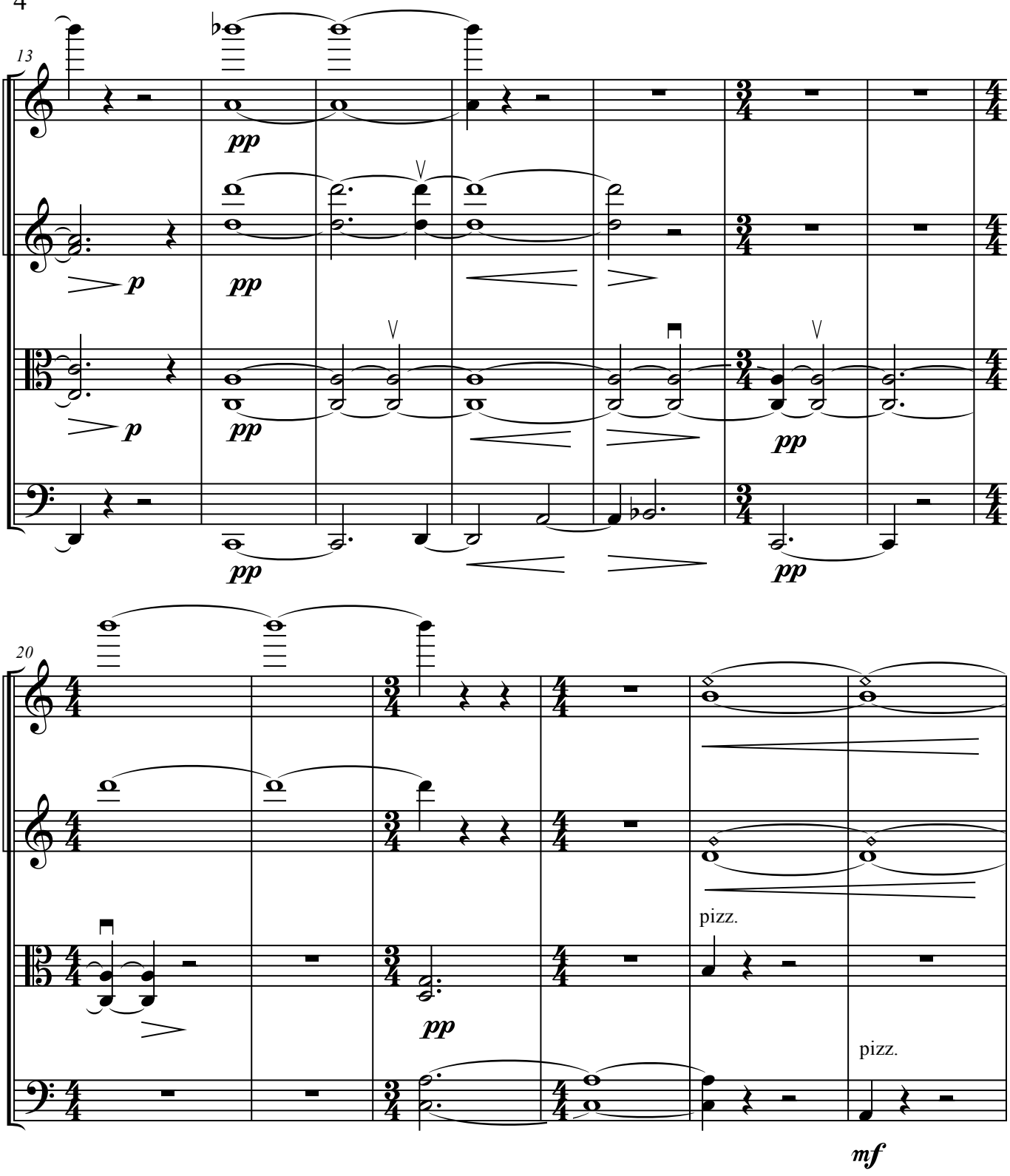
The music both yields to this evocation and resists it. The poem is one of Whitman's frequent portrayals of oblivion as a quasi-erotic bliss. The beauty of its language is captivating, but I don't want to believe what it's telling me. Mosaics" is a musical expression of this contradiction.

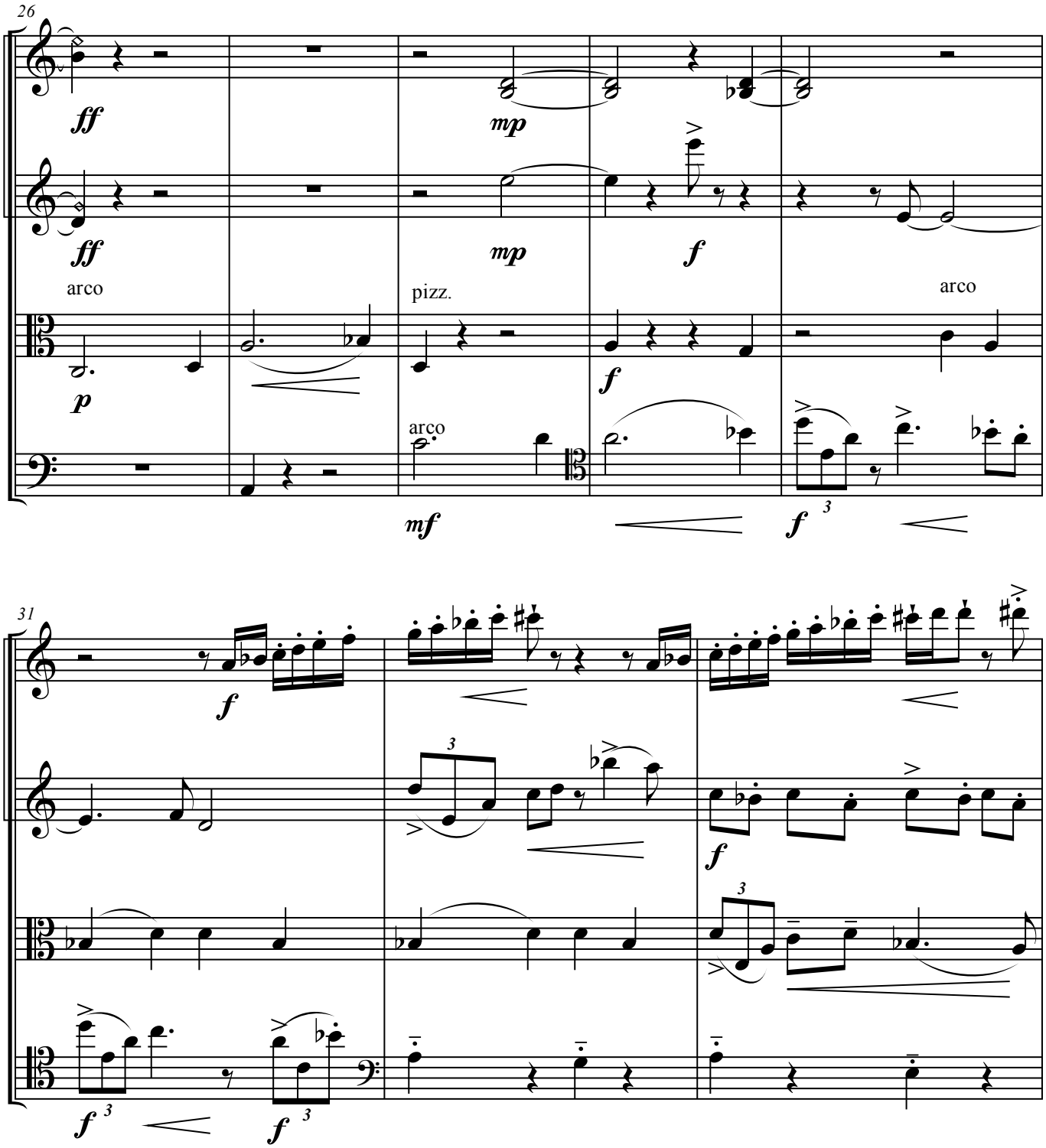
Composed 2015. Duration: 19 minutes.

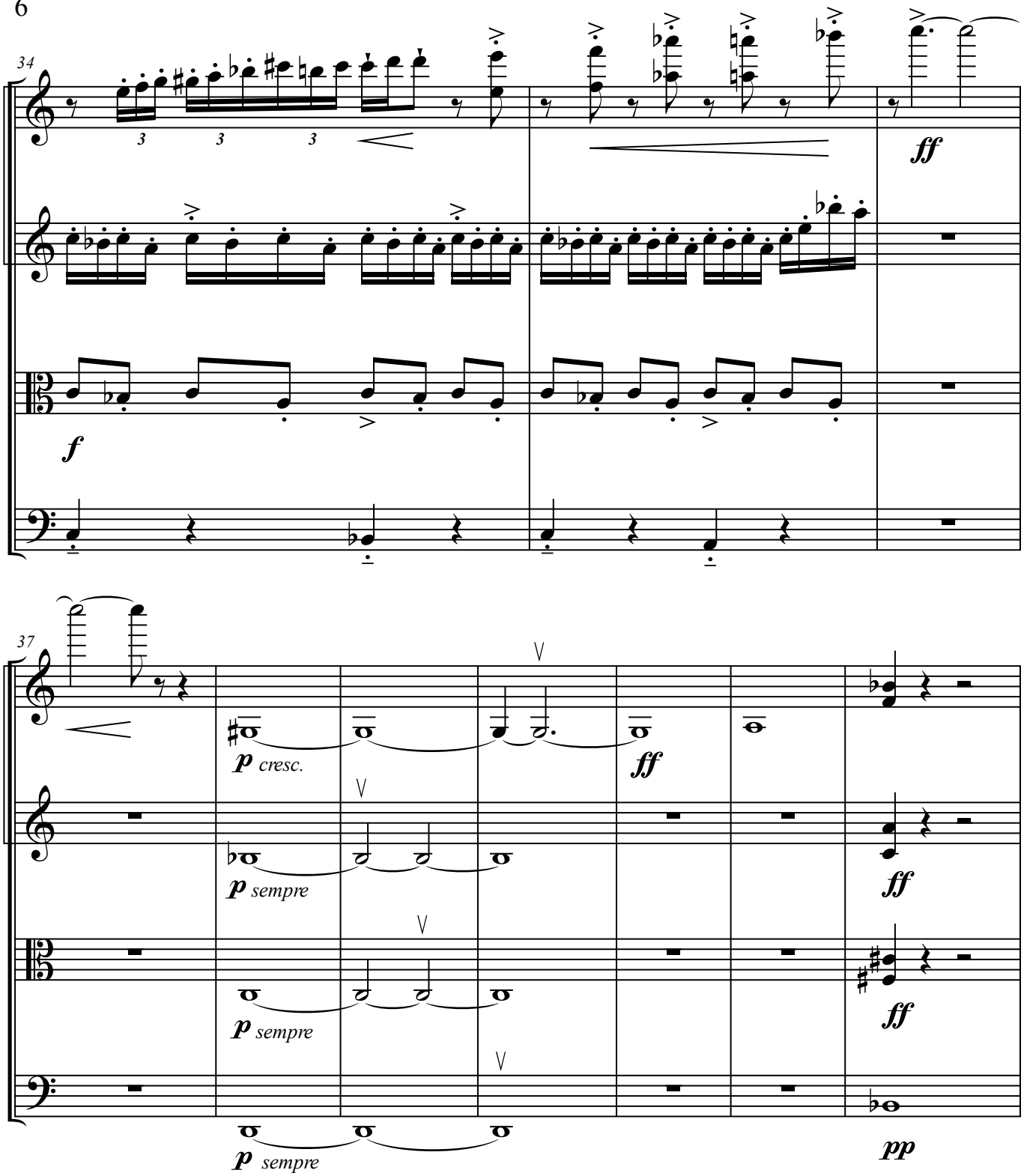
Mosaics

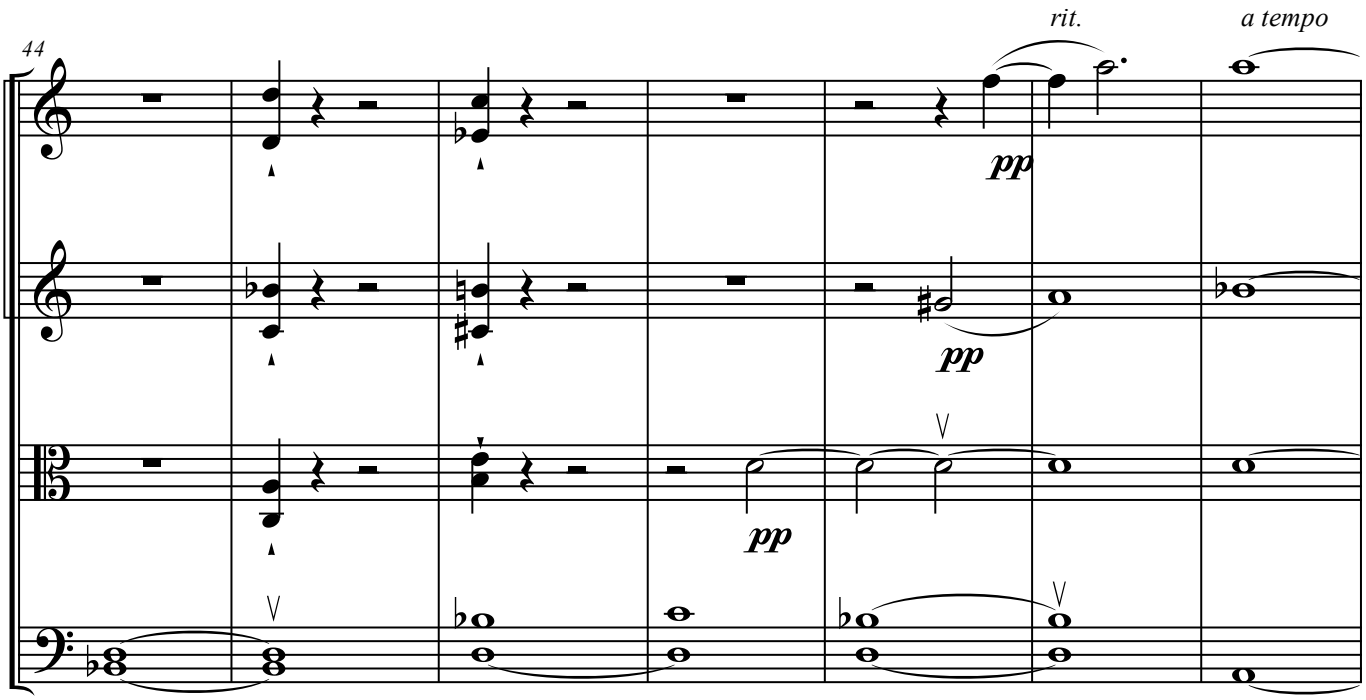


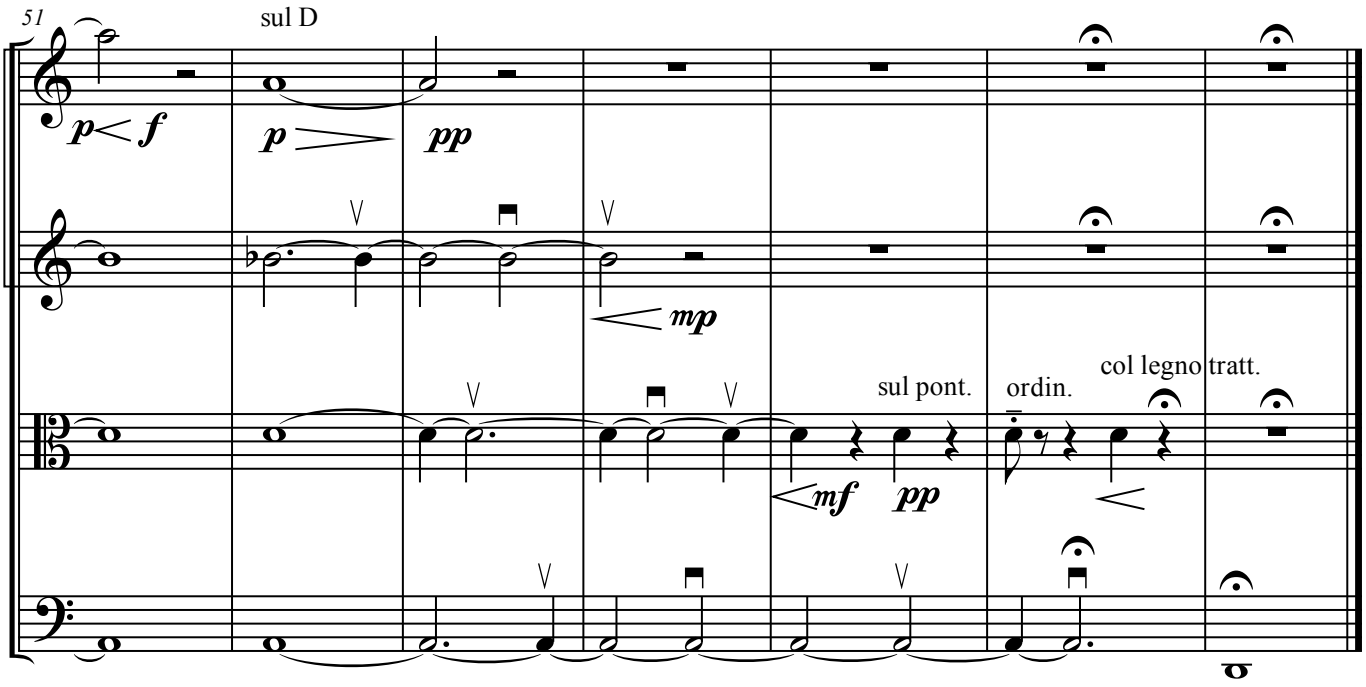
©2015

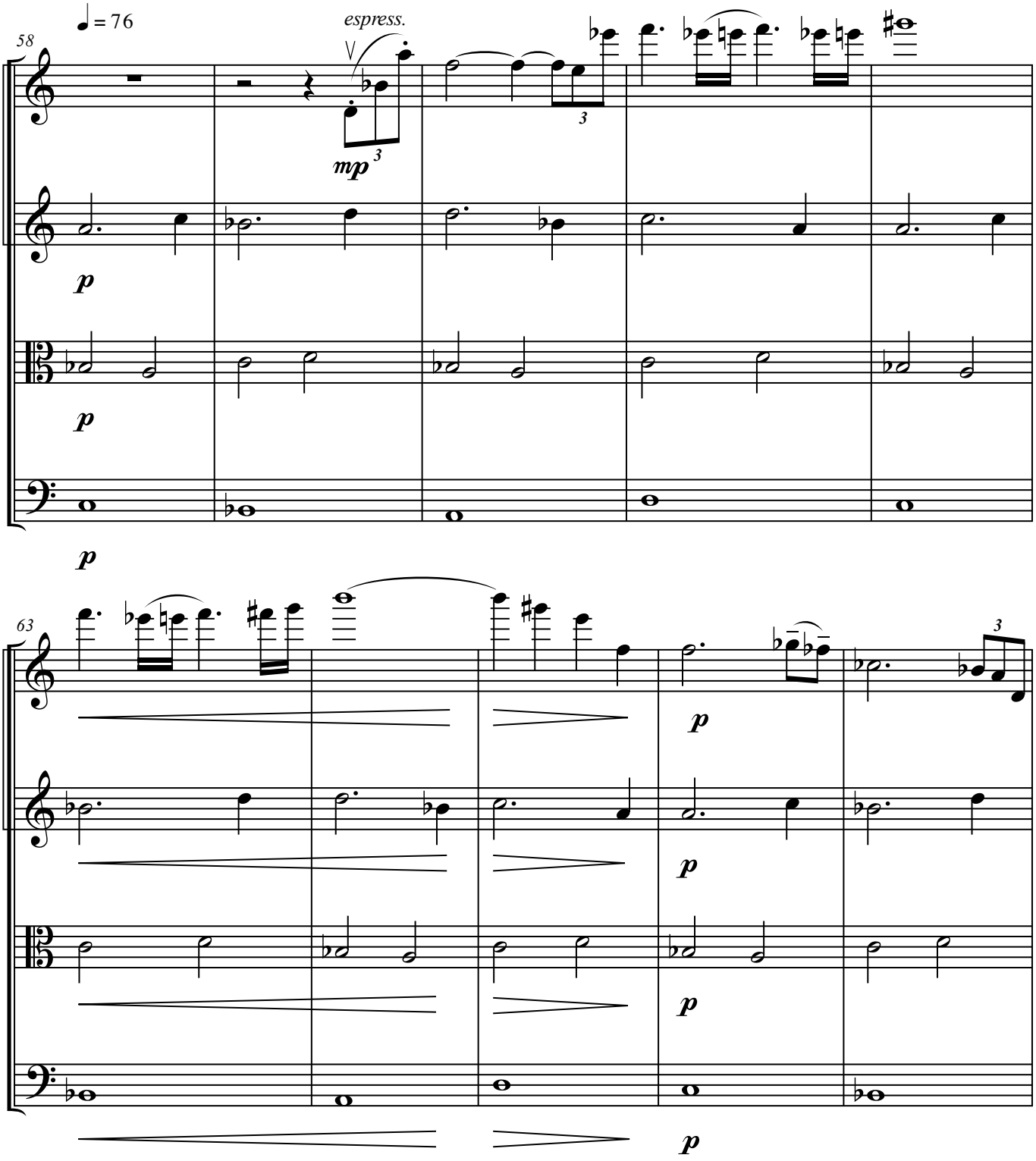

13
pp
p
pp
p
pp
pp
pp
20
pizz.
pp
pizz.
mf

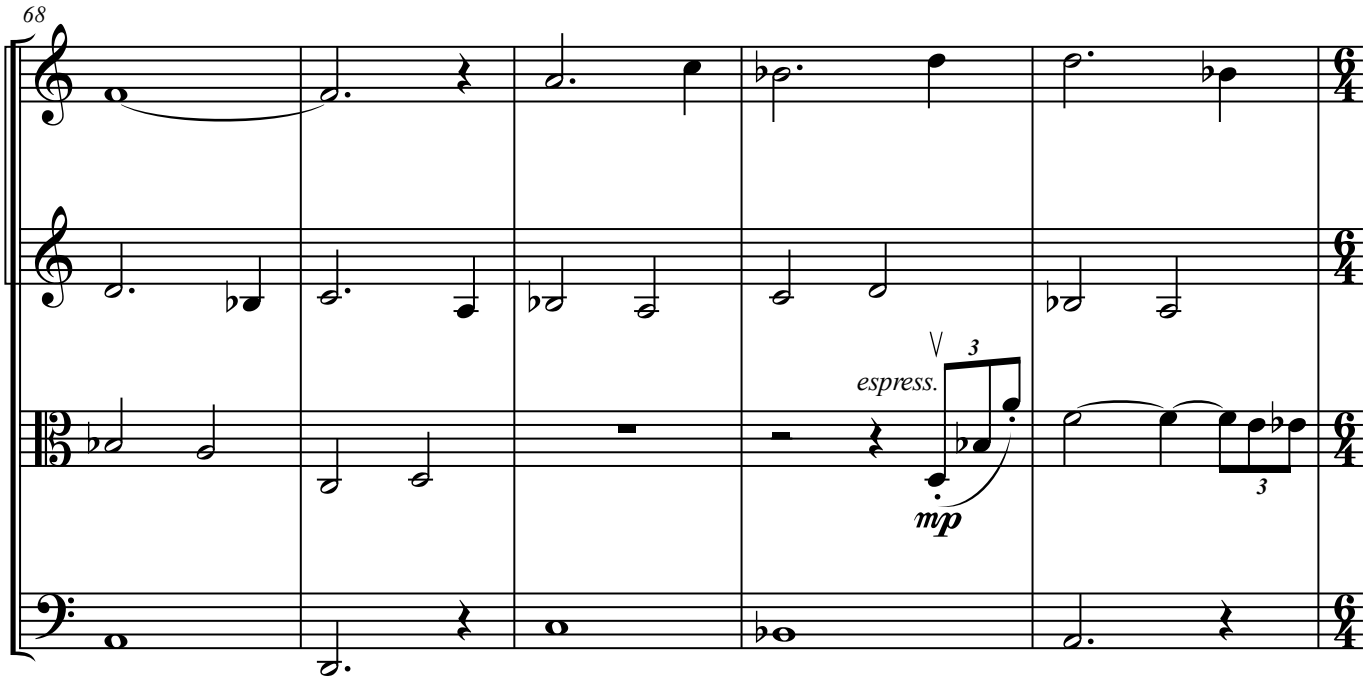

26
ff
mp
ff
mp
f
arco
pizz.
arco
p
f
arco
mf
f
3
31
f
3
3
f
f
3
f
3

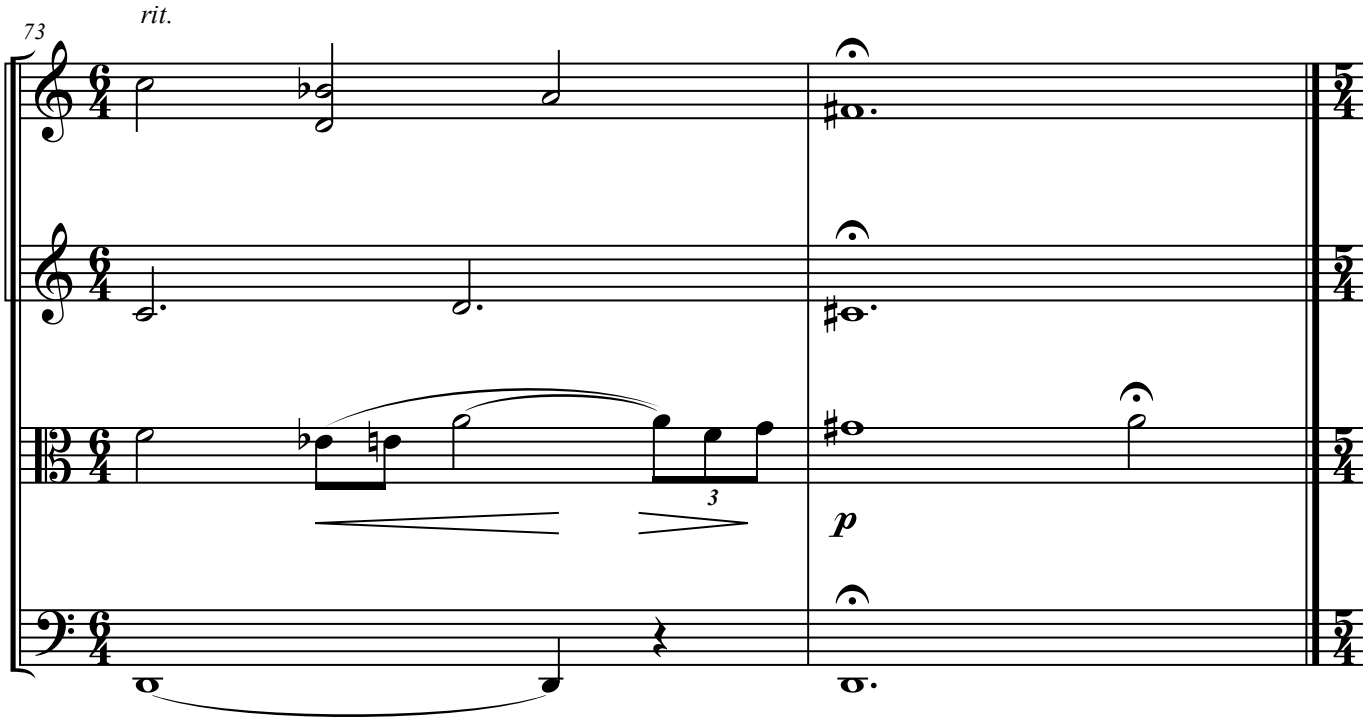

34
ff
f
37
p cresc.
ff
p sempre
ff
p sempre
ff
p sempre
pp

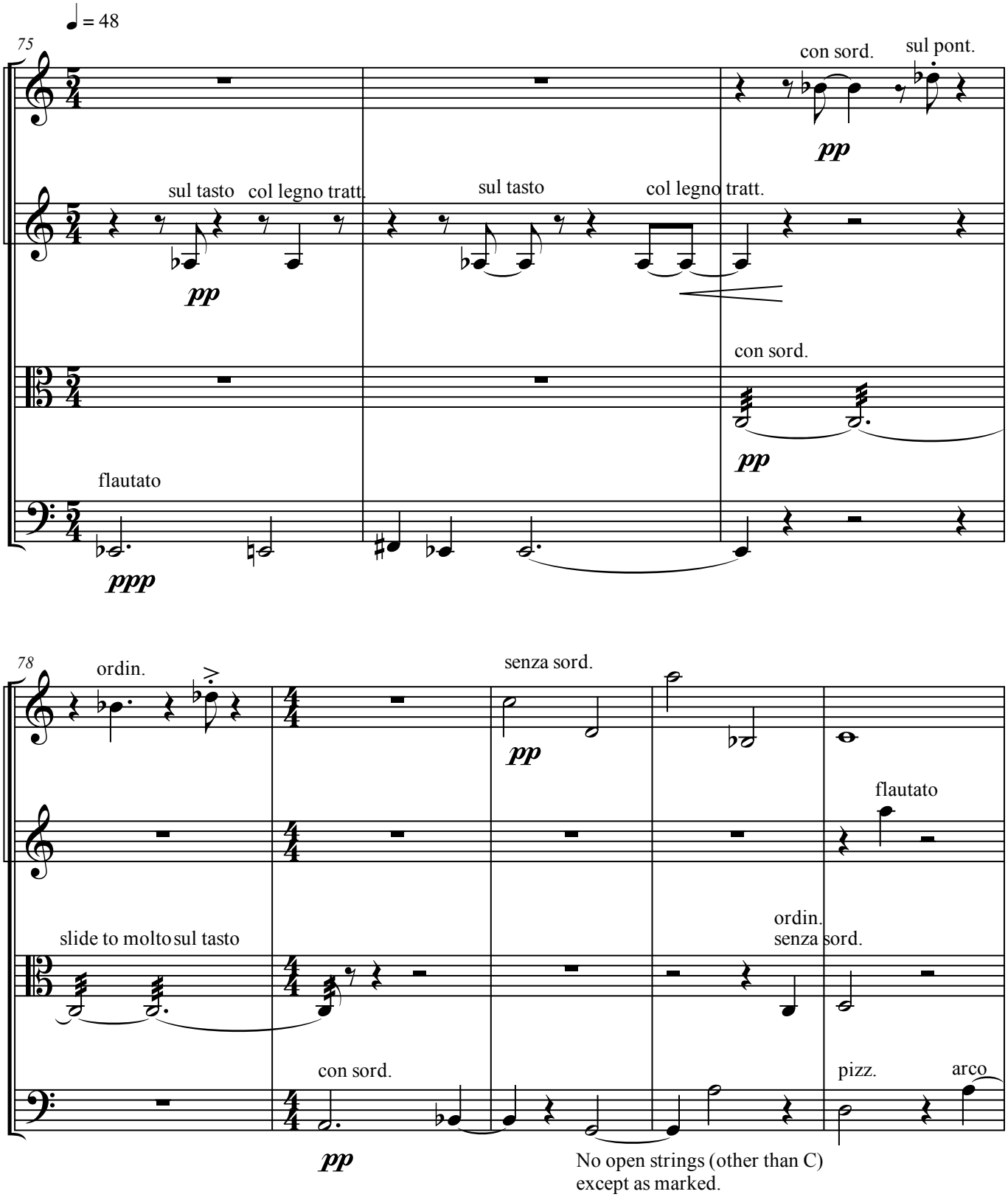

44
rit.
a tempo
pp
pp
pp

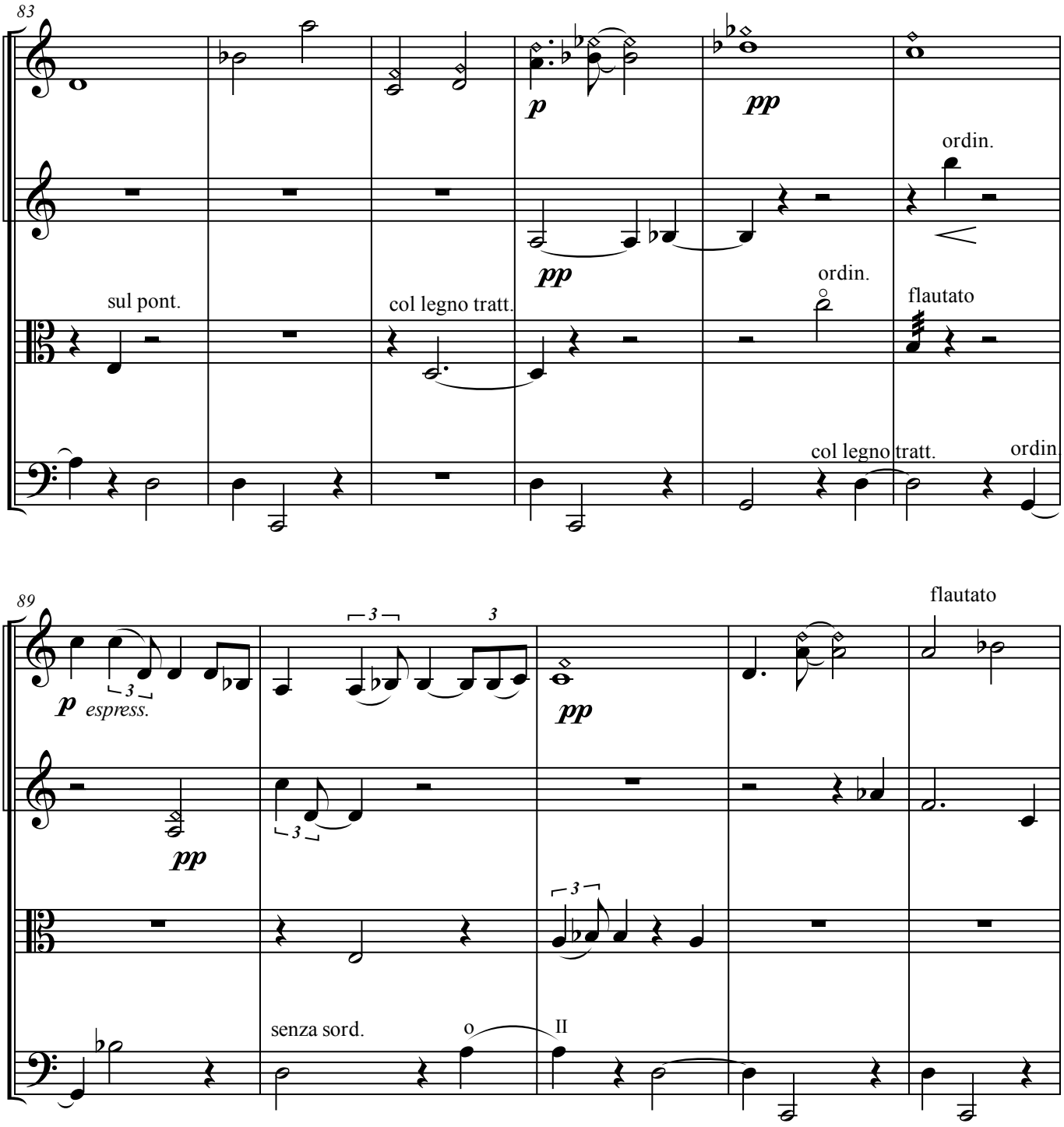

51
sul D
p < f
p
pp
mp
sul pont.
ordin.
col legno tratt.
mf
pp

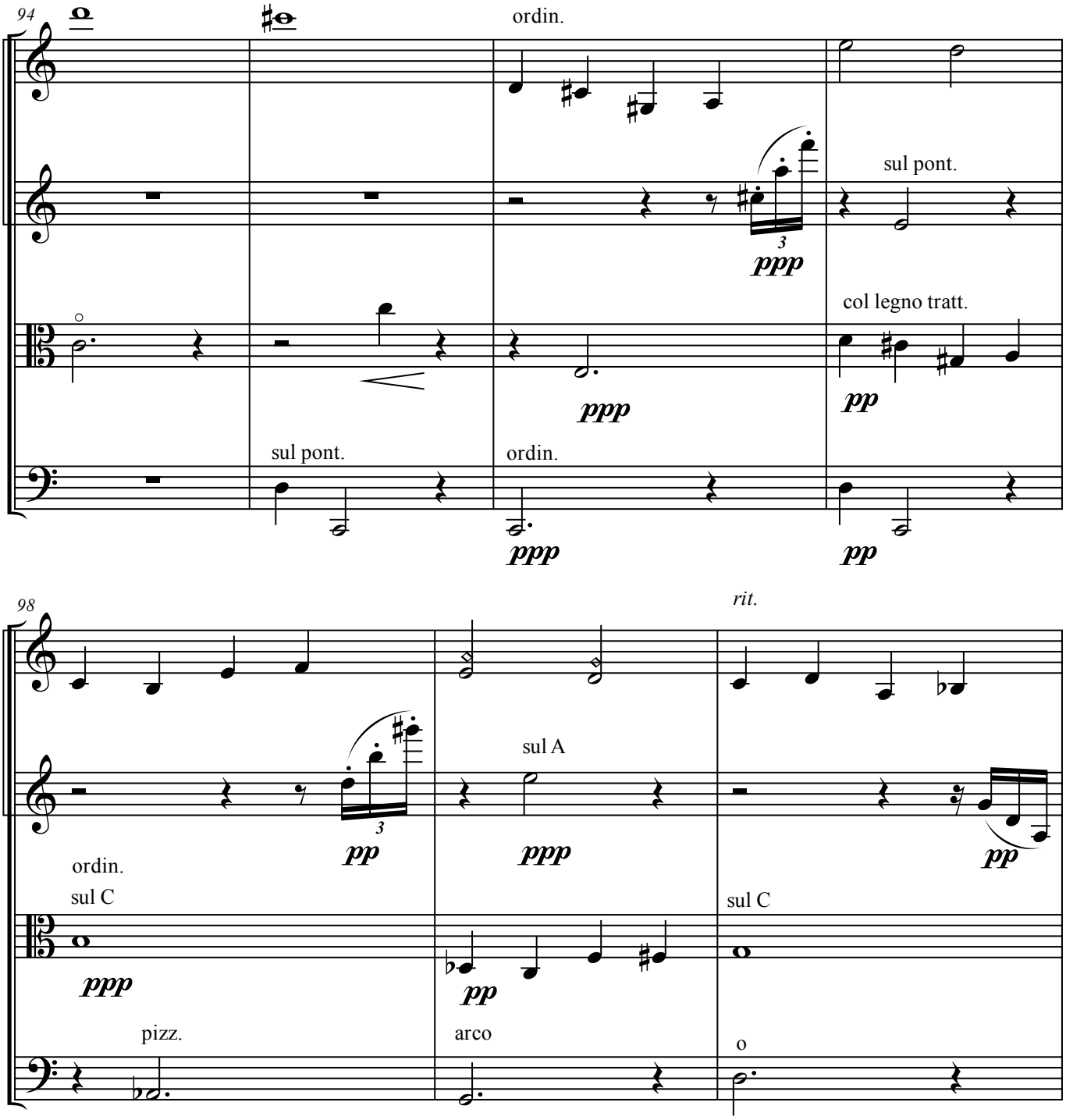

58
♩ = 76
espress.
mp
3
p
63
3

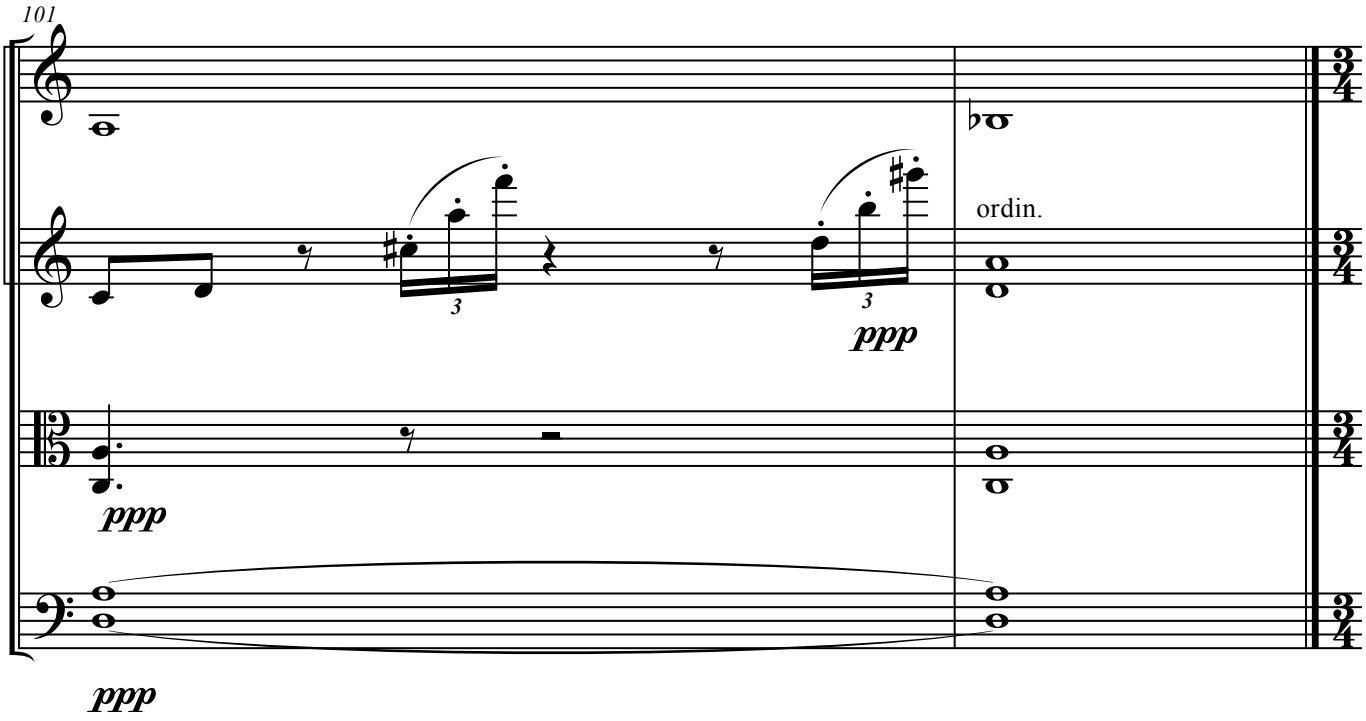

68
espress.
3
mp
3

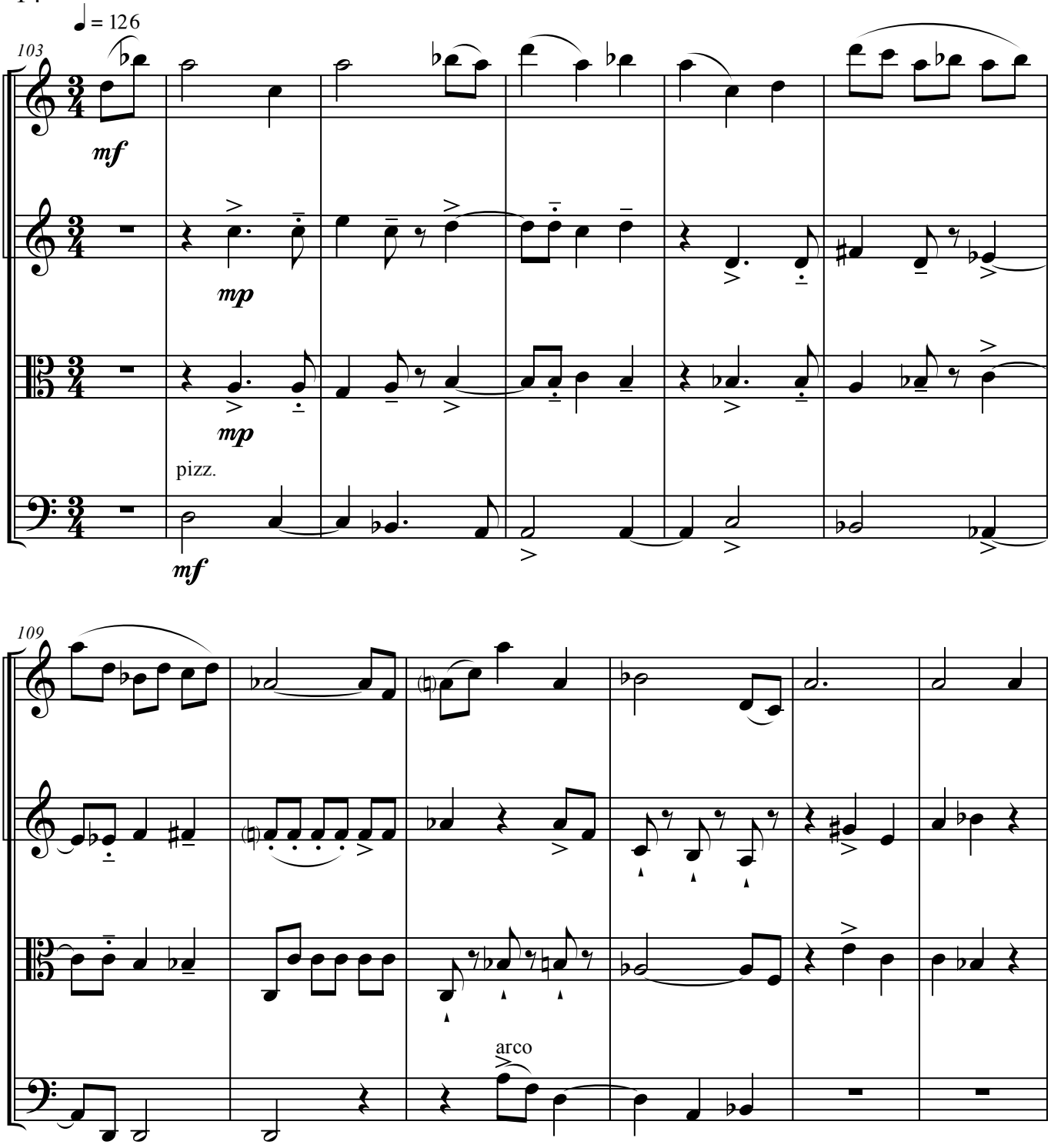

73
rit.
3
p

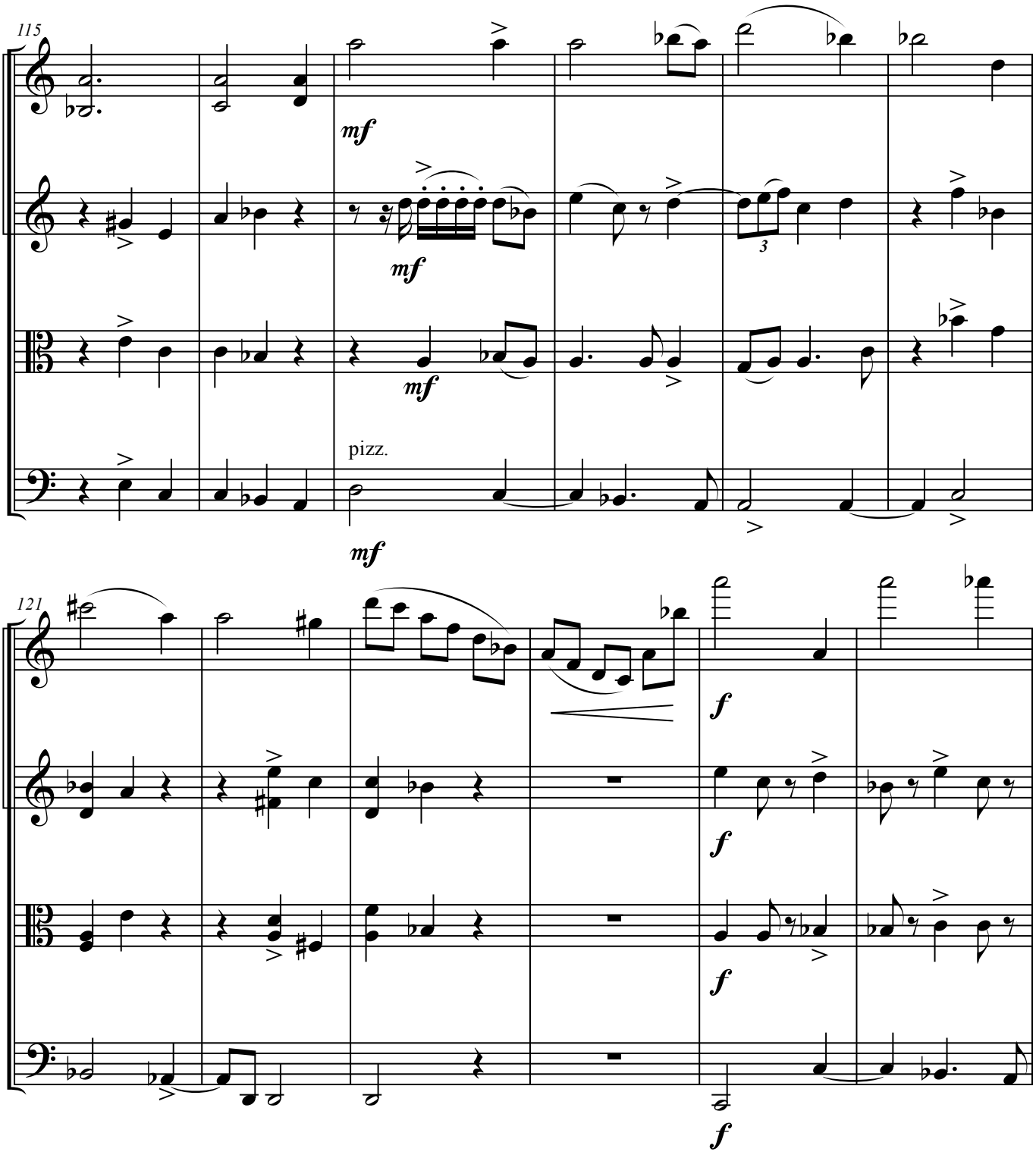

♩ = 48
75
con sord.
sul pont.
pp
sul tasto
col legno tratt.
sul tasto
col legno tratt.
pp
con sord.
pp
flautato
ppp
78
ordin.
senza sord.
pp
flautato
slide to molto sul tasto
ordin.
senza sord.
con sord.
pizz.
arco
pp
No open strings (other than C)
except as marked.

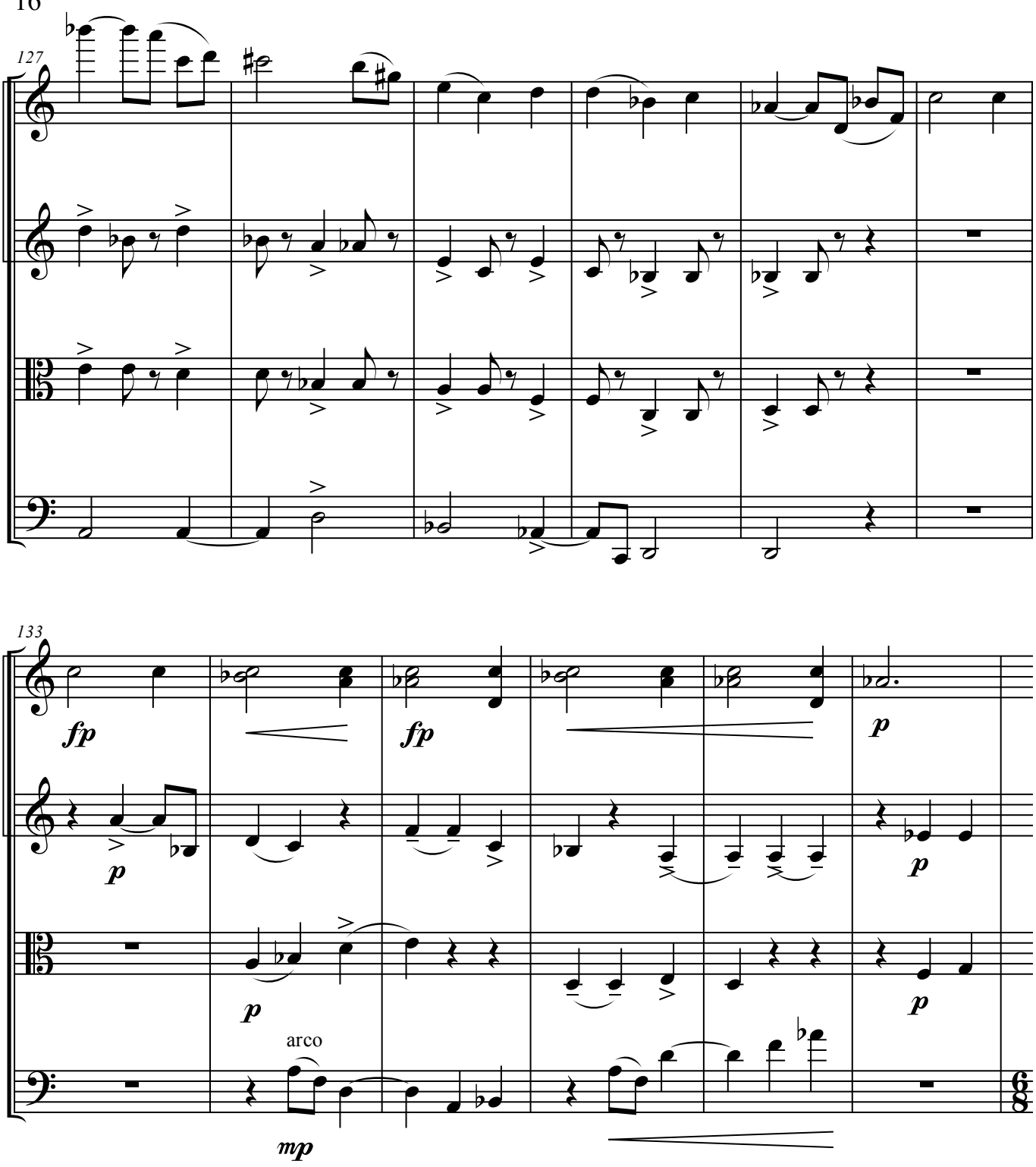

83
p
pp
ordin.
sul pont.
col legno tratt.
pp
ordin.
flautato
col legno tratt.
ordin
89
flautato
p espress.
pp
pp
senza sord.
o
II

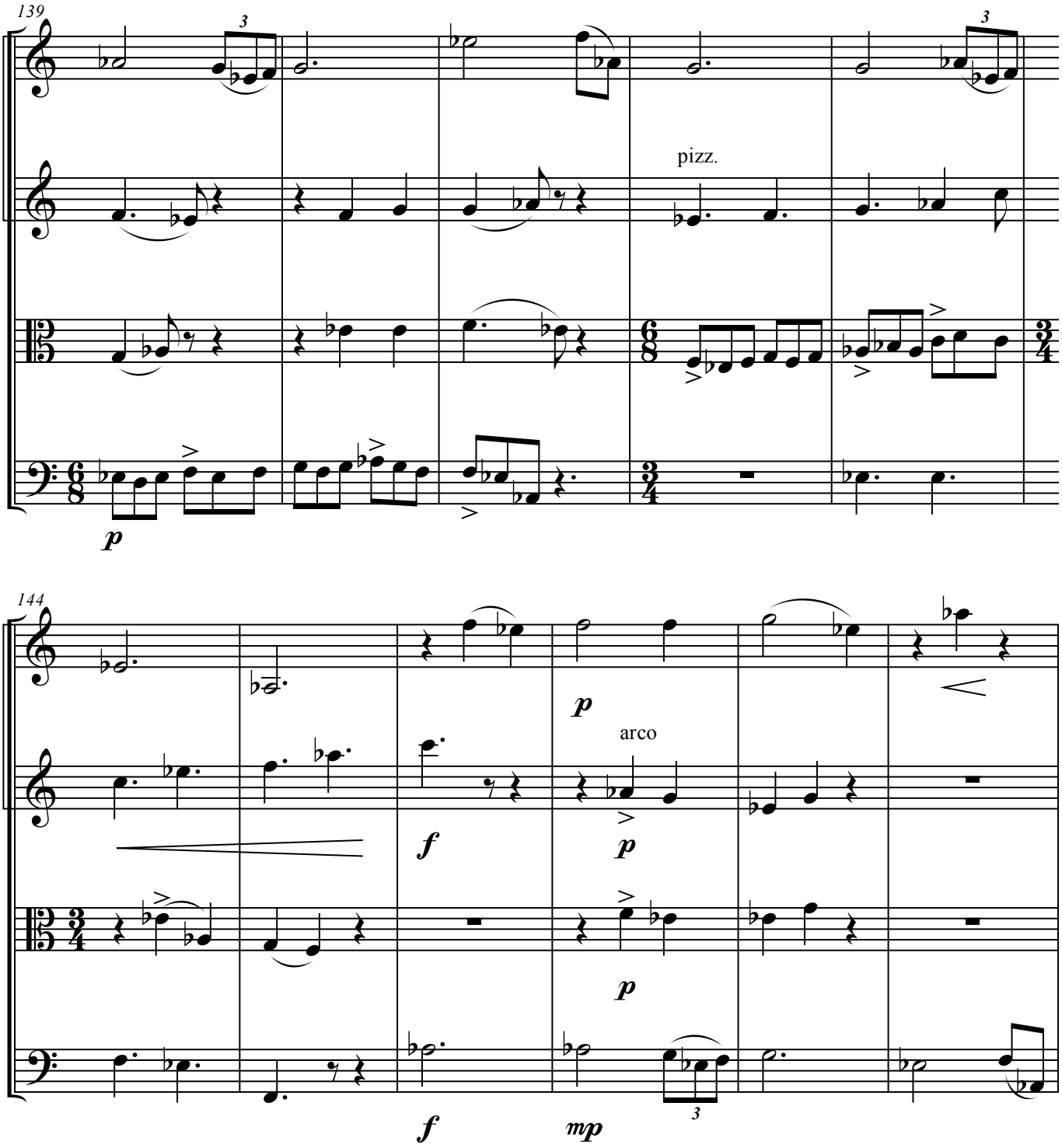

94
ordin.
sul pont.
ppp
col legno tratt.
pp
sul pont.
ordin.
ppp
pp
98
rit.
sul A
pp
ppp
pp
ordin.
sul C
ppp
sul C
pizz.
arco
o
pp

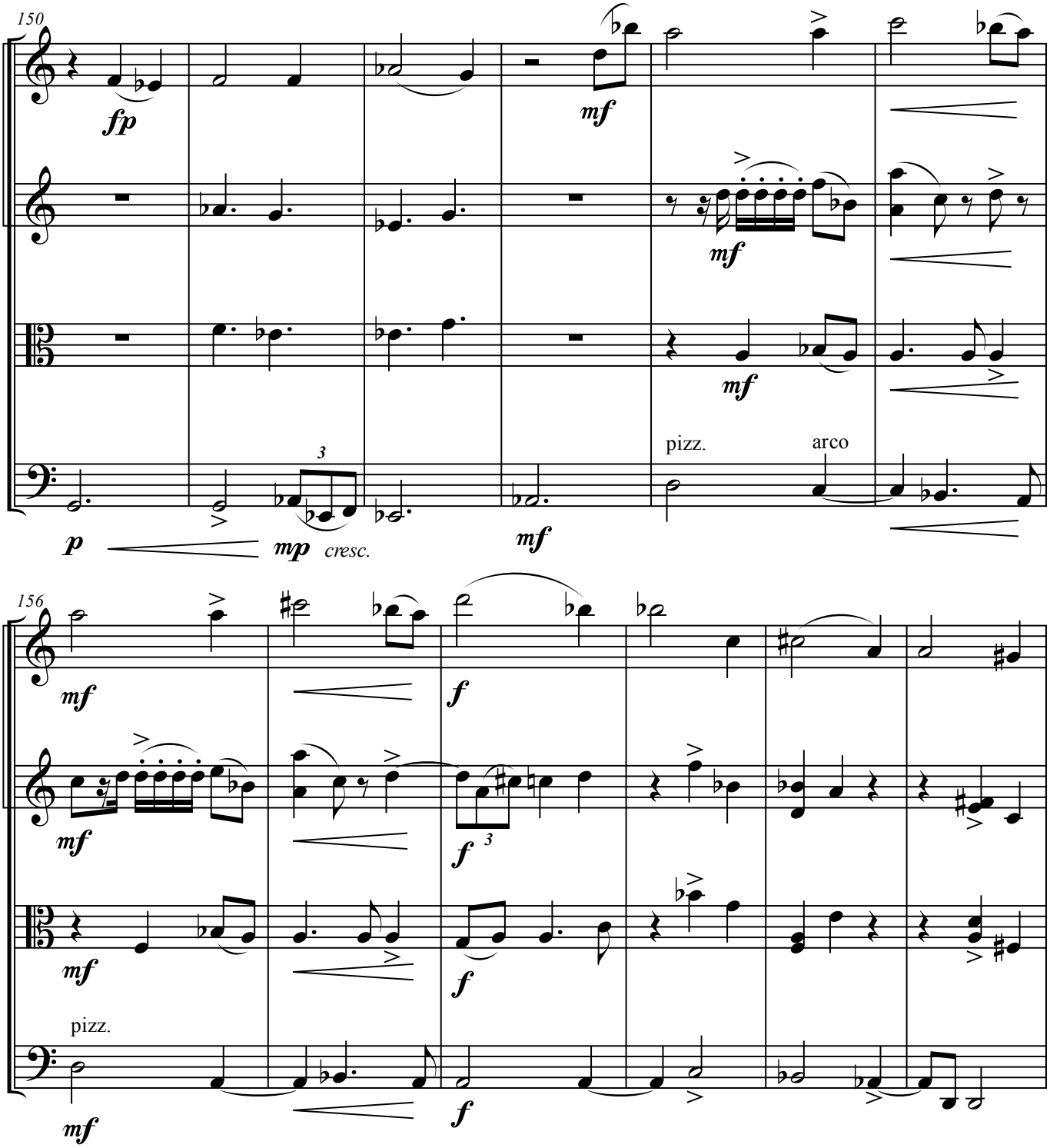

101
ordin.
ppp
ppp
ppp

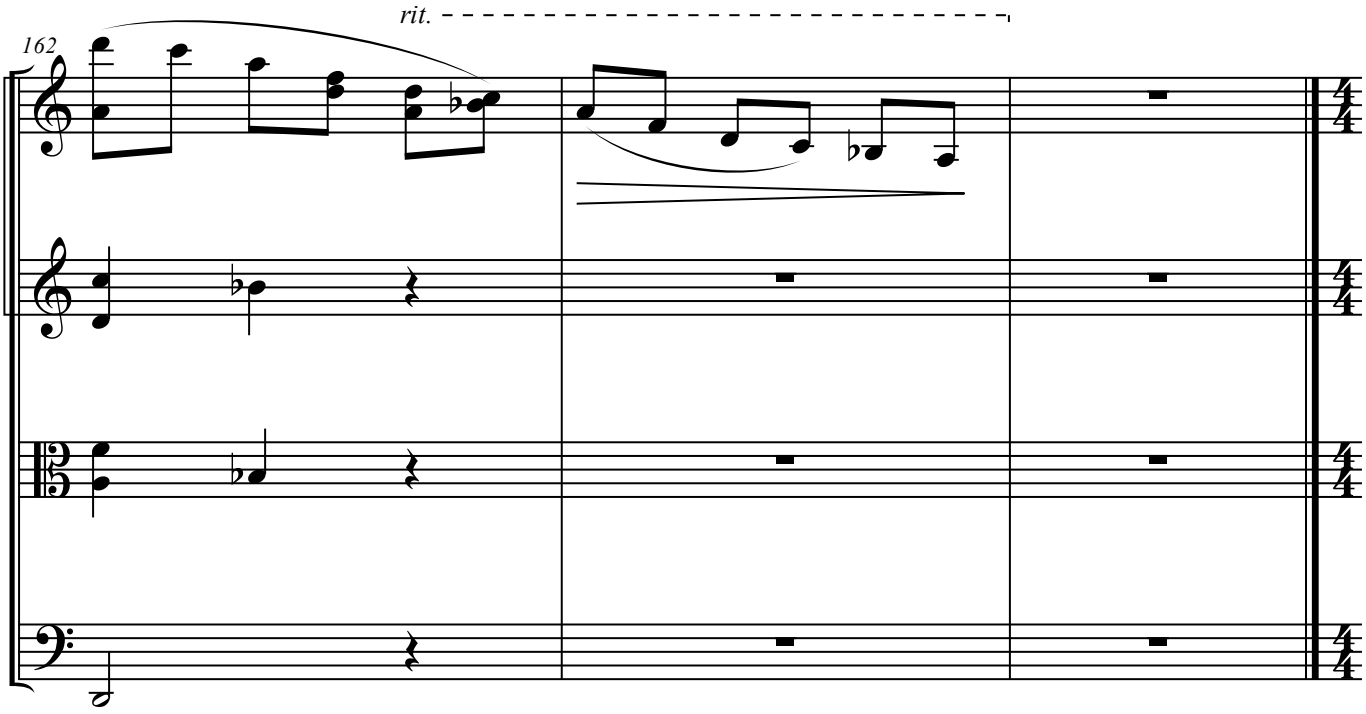

♩ = 126
103
mf
mp
mp
pizz.
mf
109
arco


115
mf
mf
mf
pizz.
mf
121
f
f
f
f


127
133
fp
fp
p
p
p
p
p
arco
mp


139
3
pizz.
p
144
p
arco
f
p
p
f
mp


150
fp
mf
mf
mf
pizz.
arco
p
mp
cresc.
mf
156
mf
f
mf
f
mf
f
pizz.
mf
f



attacca:

Twilight

♩ = 52

165

pp

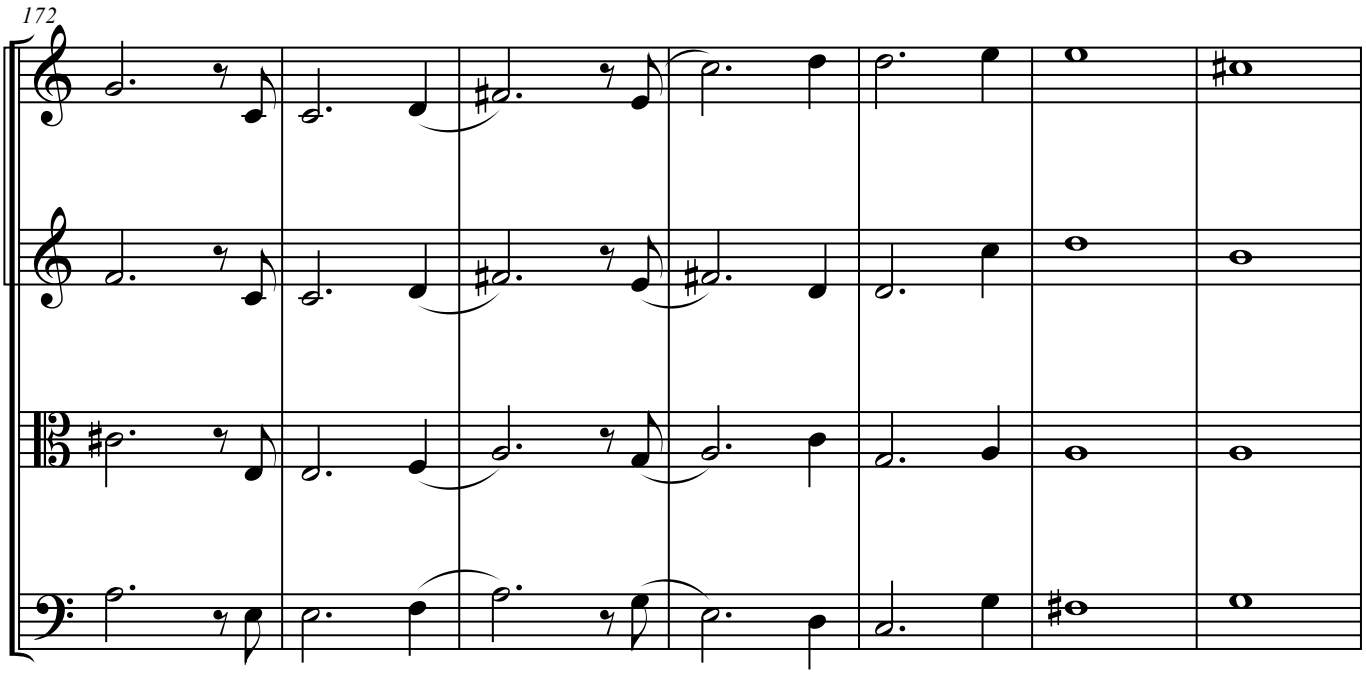
pp

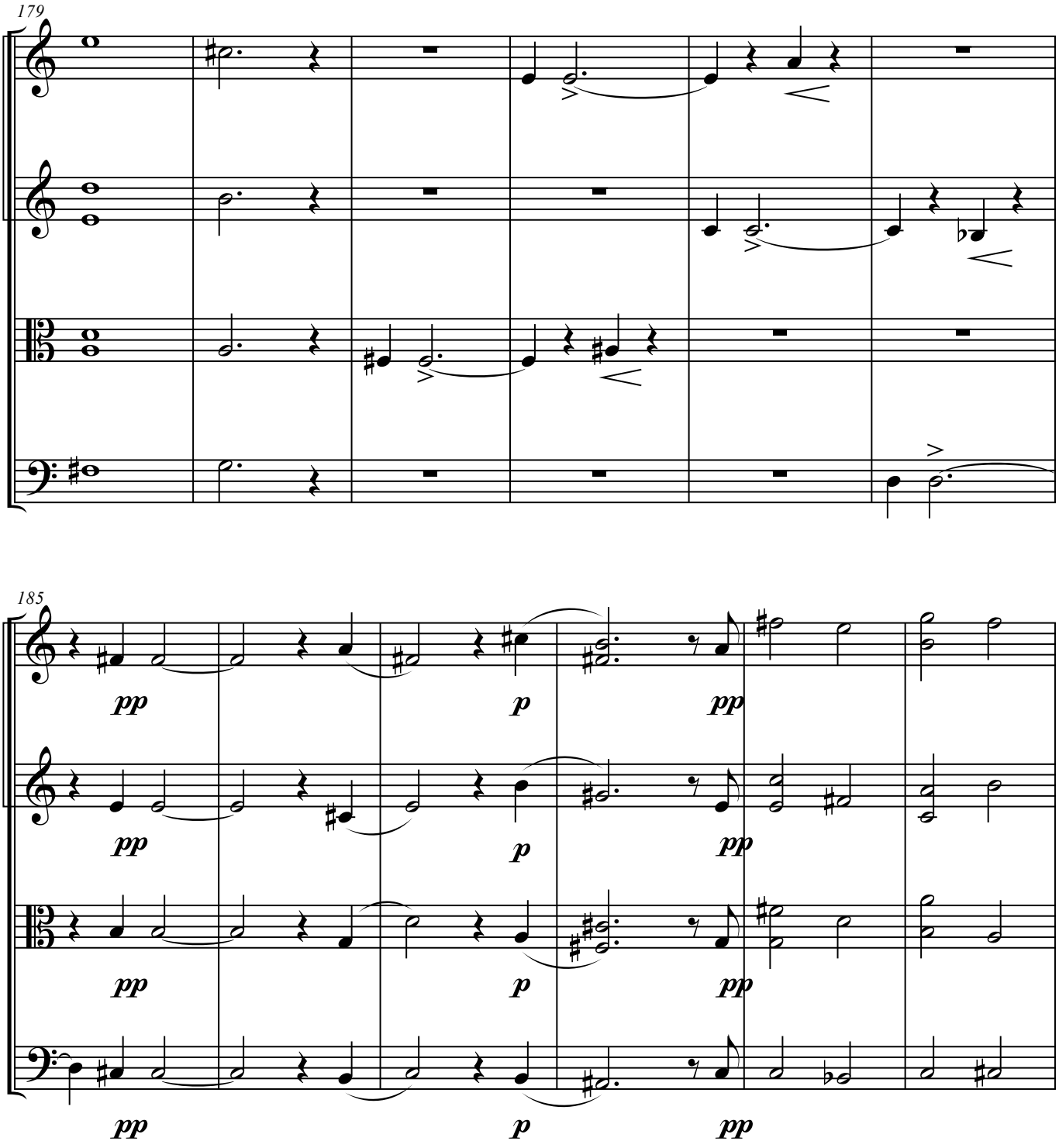
pp

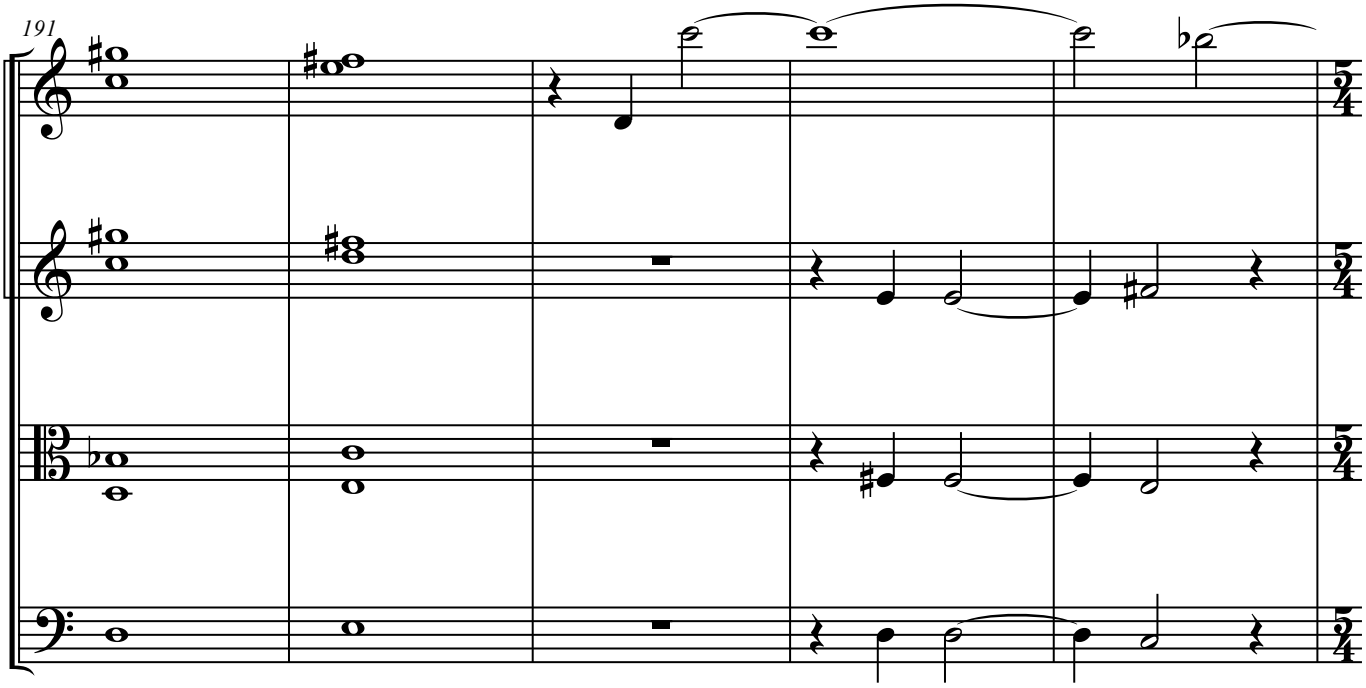
arco

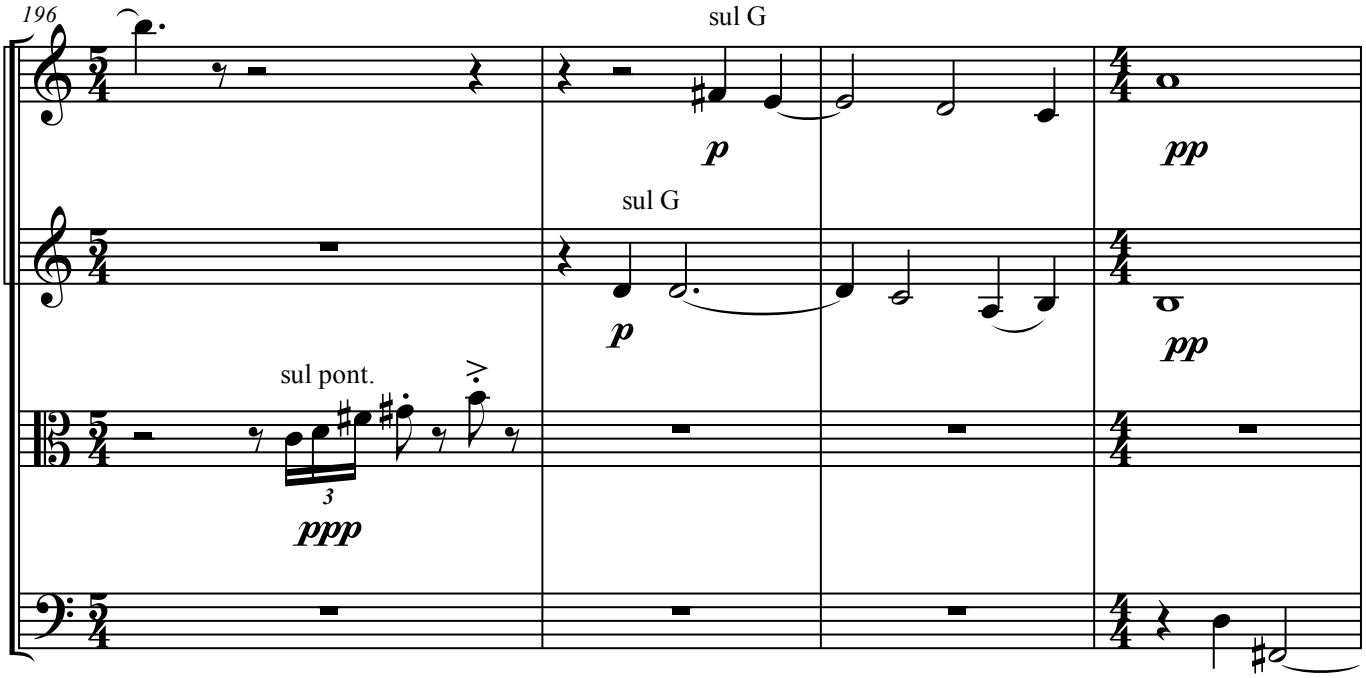
pp

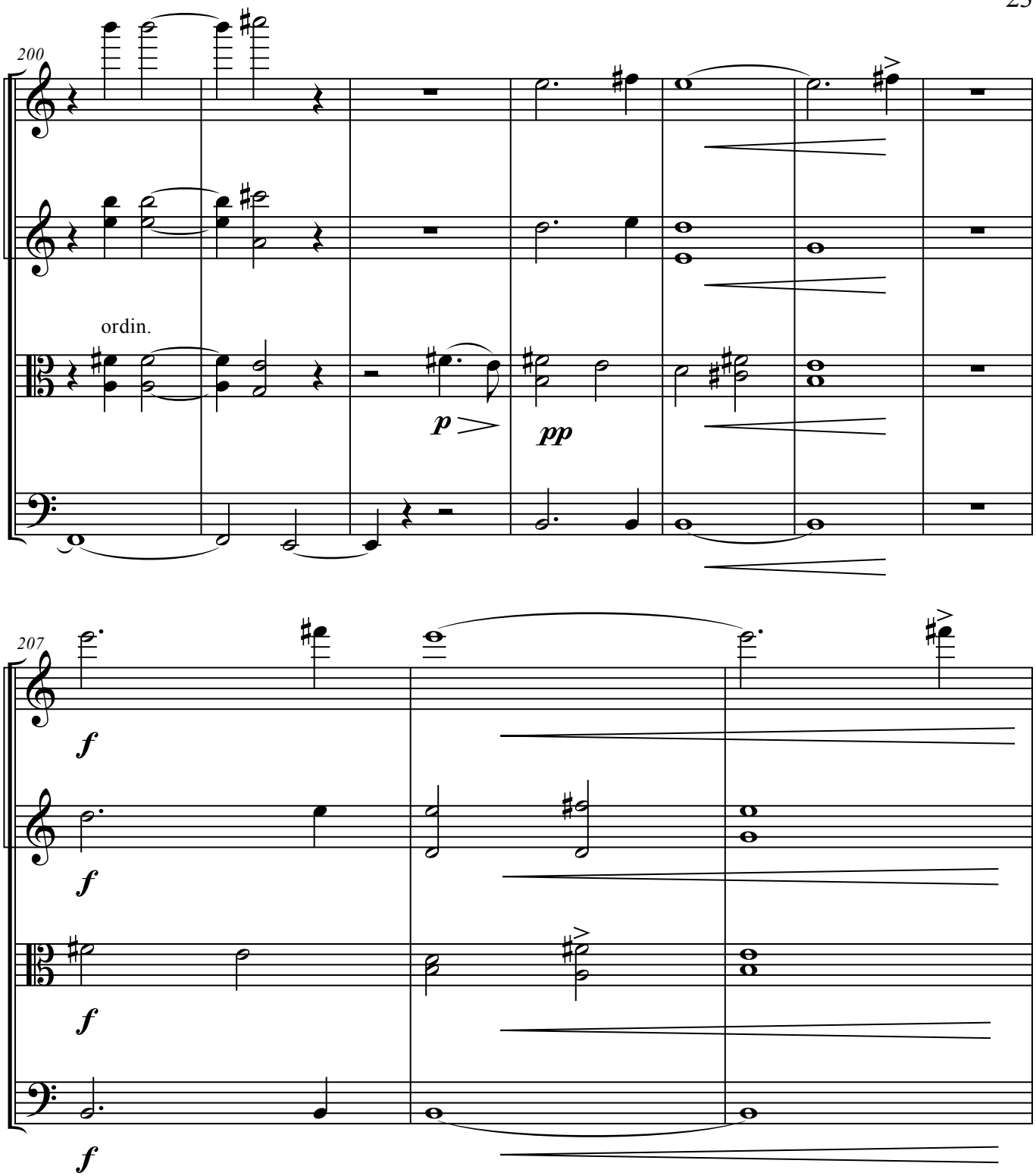
172

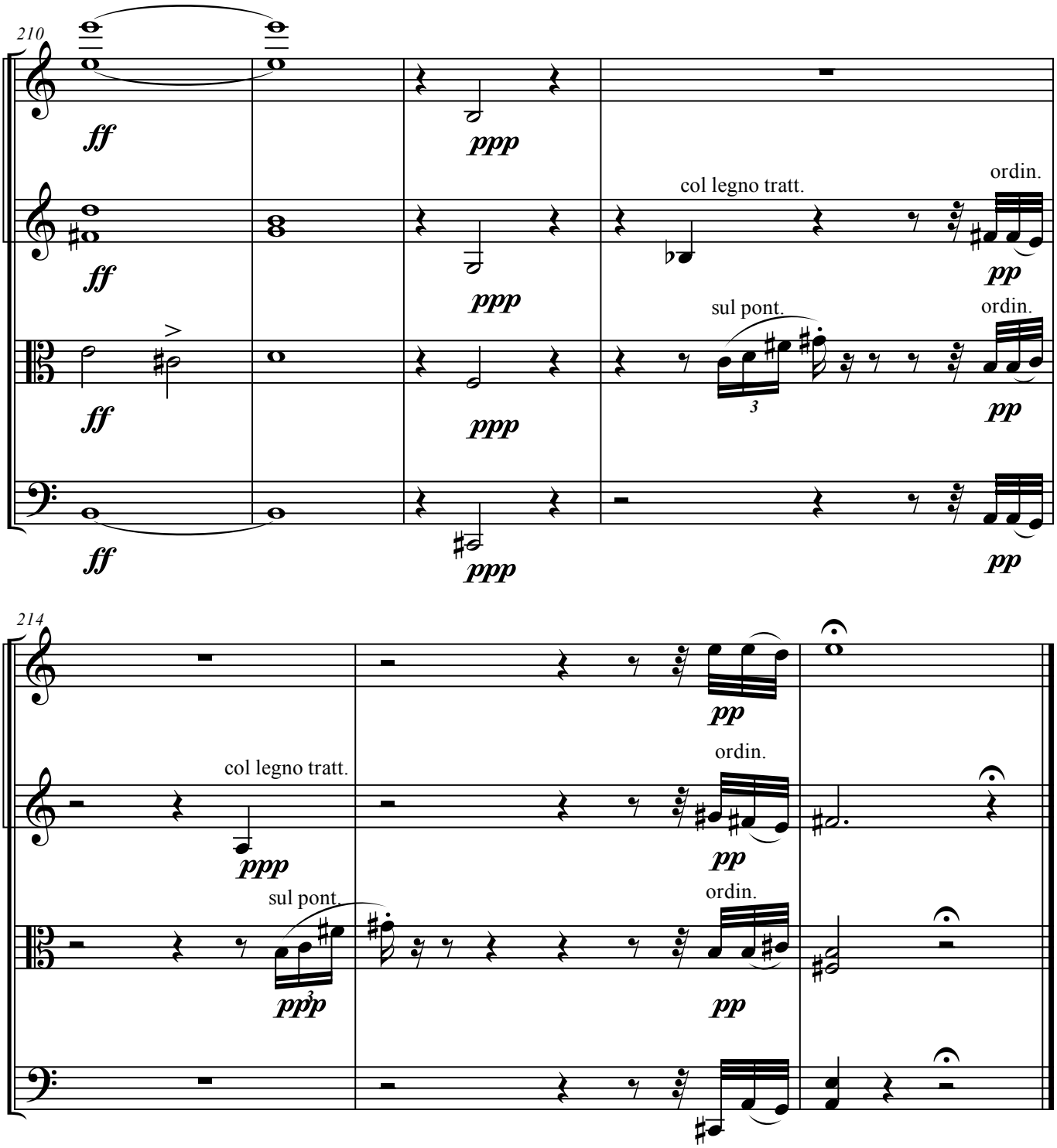


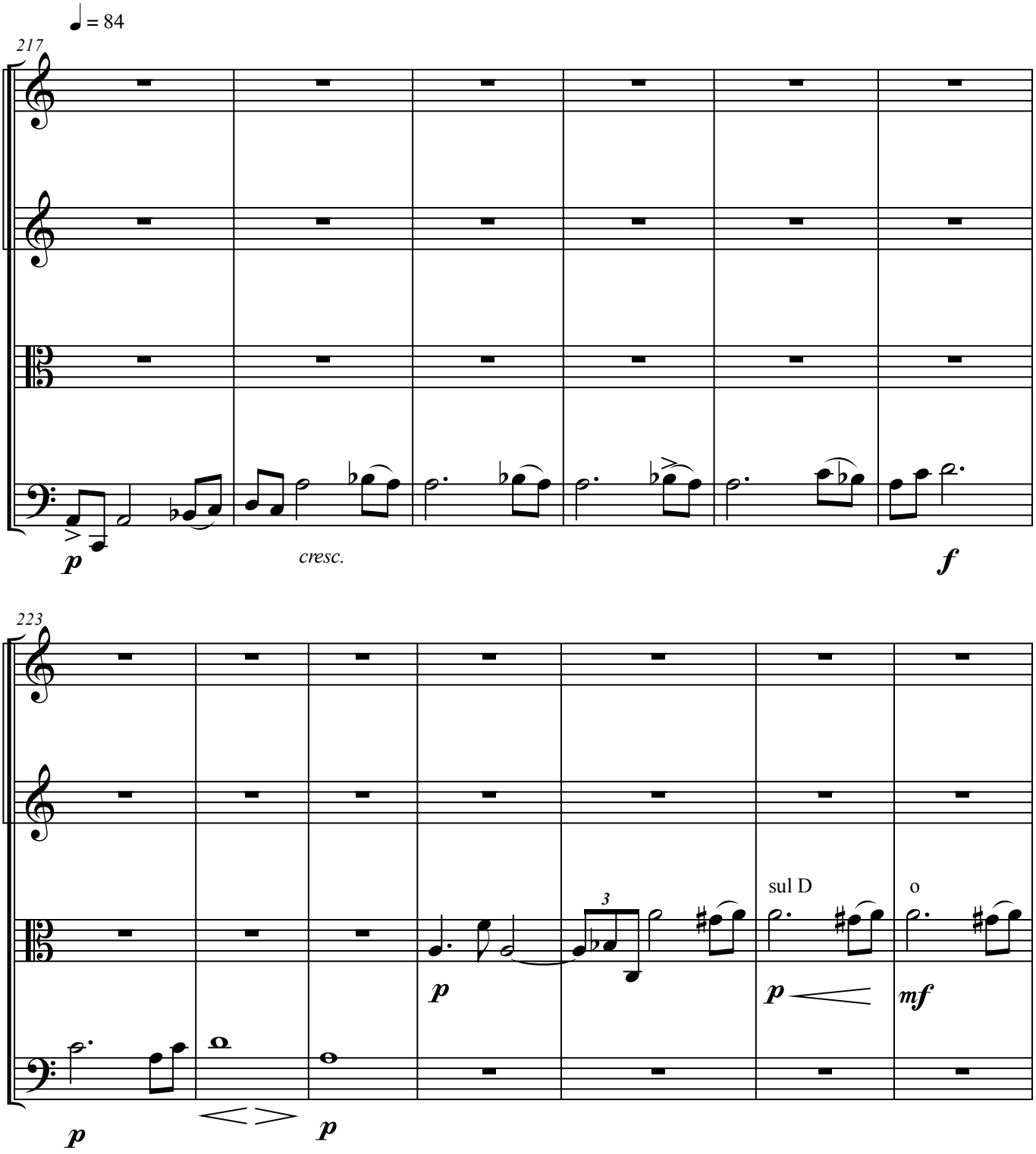

179
185
pp
p
pp

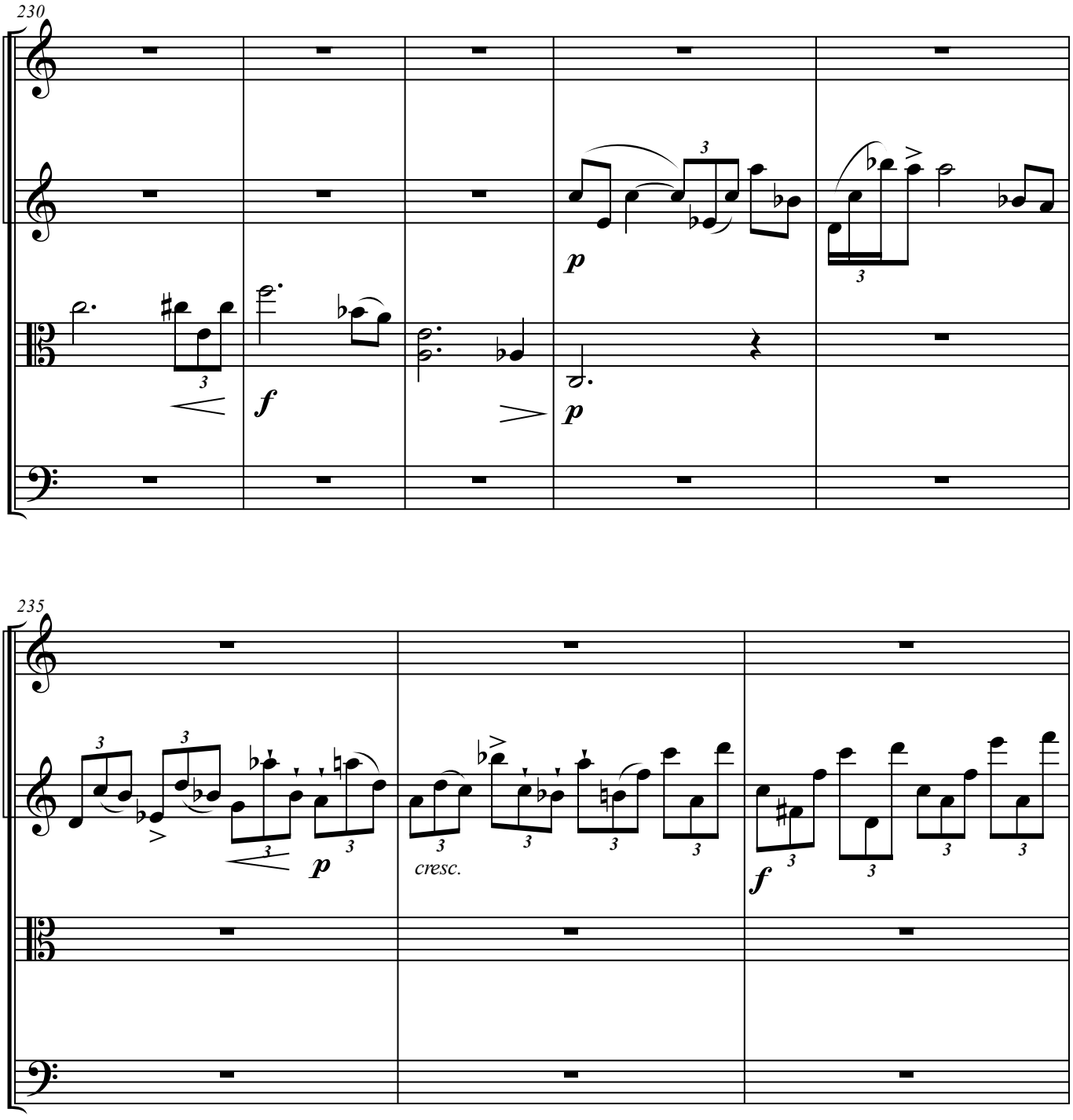

191

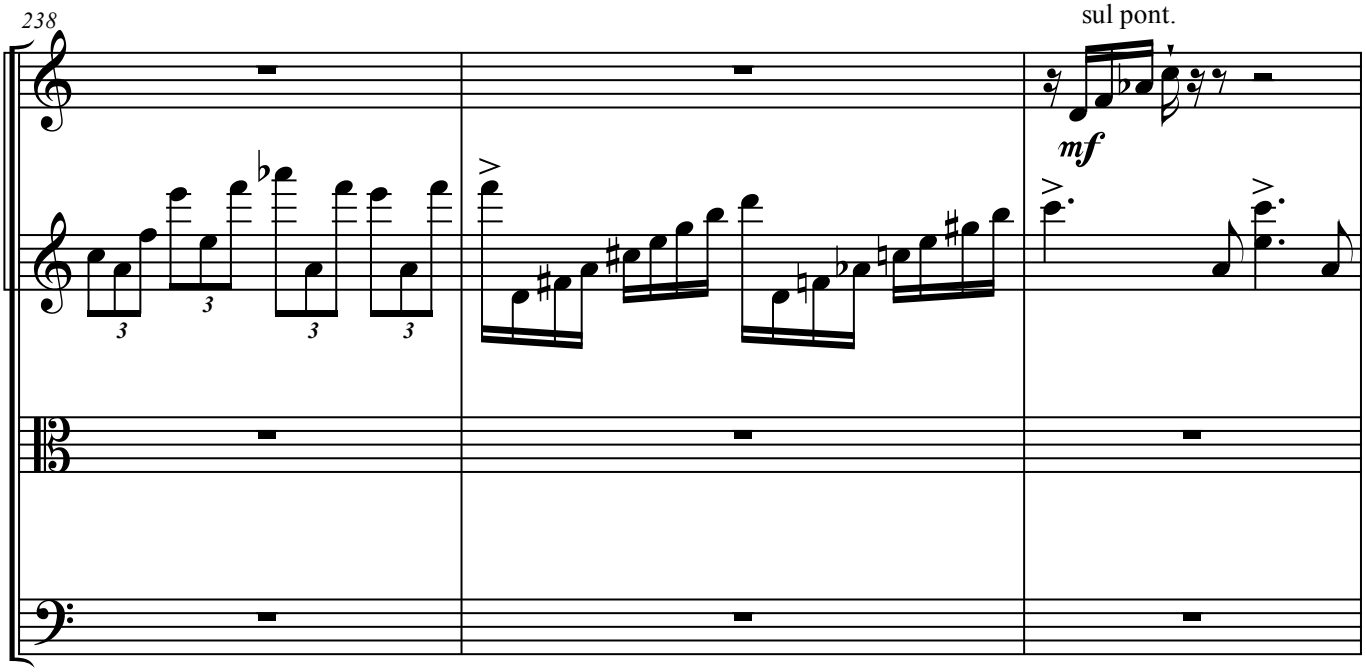

196
sul G
p
pp
sul G
p
pp
sul pont.
3
ppp

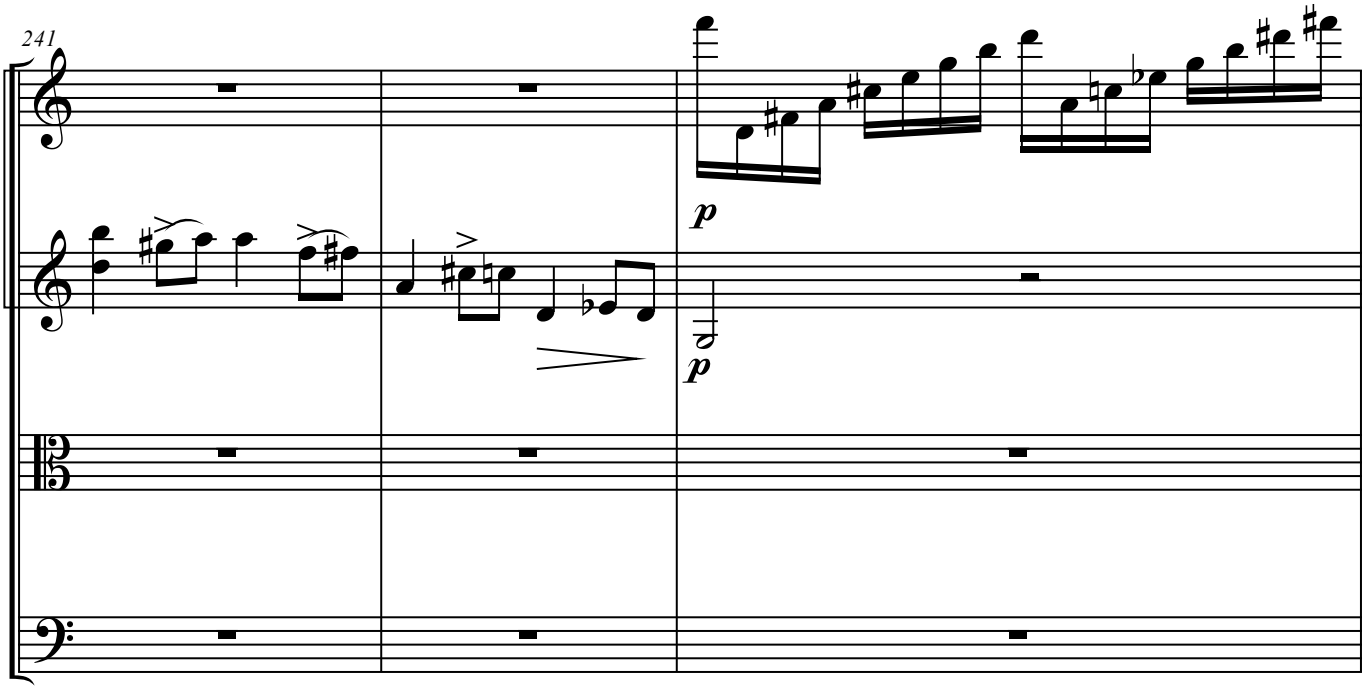

200
ordin.
p
pp
207
f
f
f
f

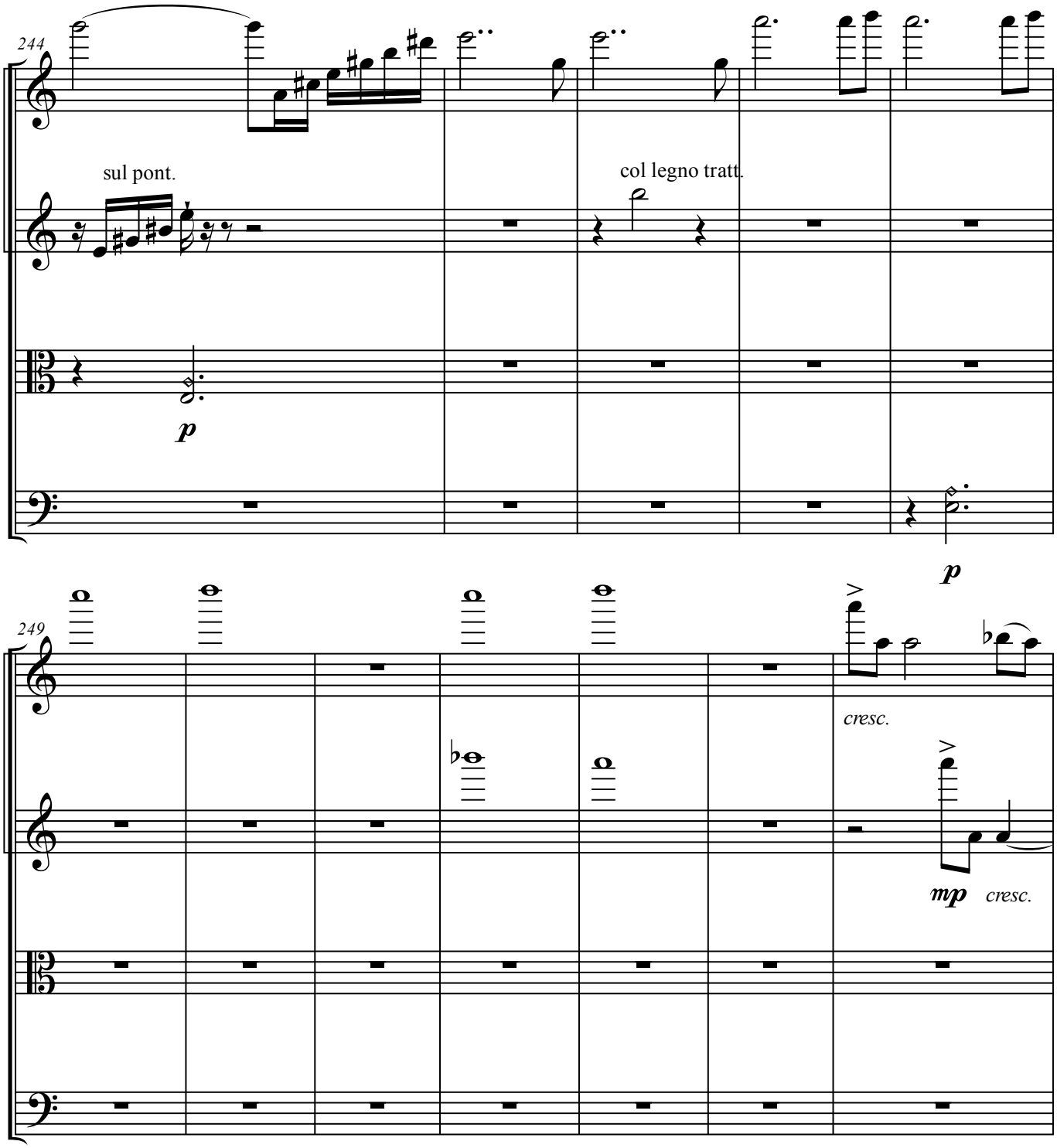

210
ff
ppp
col legno tratt.
ordin.
pp
sul pont.
3
214
col legno tratt.
ppp
pp
sul pont.
ppp

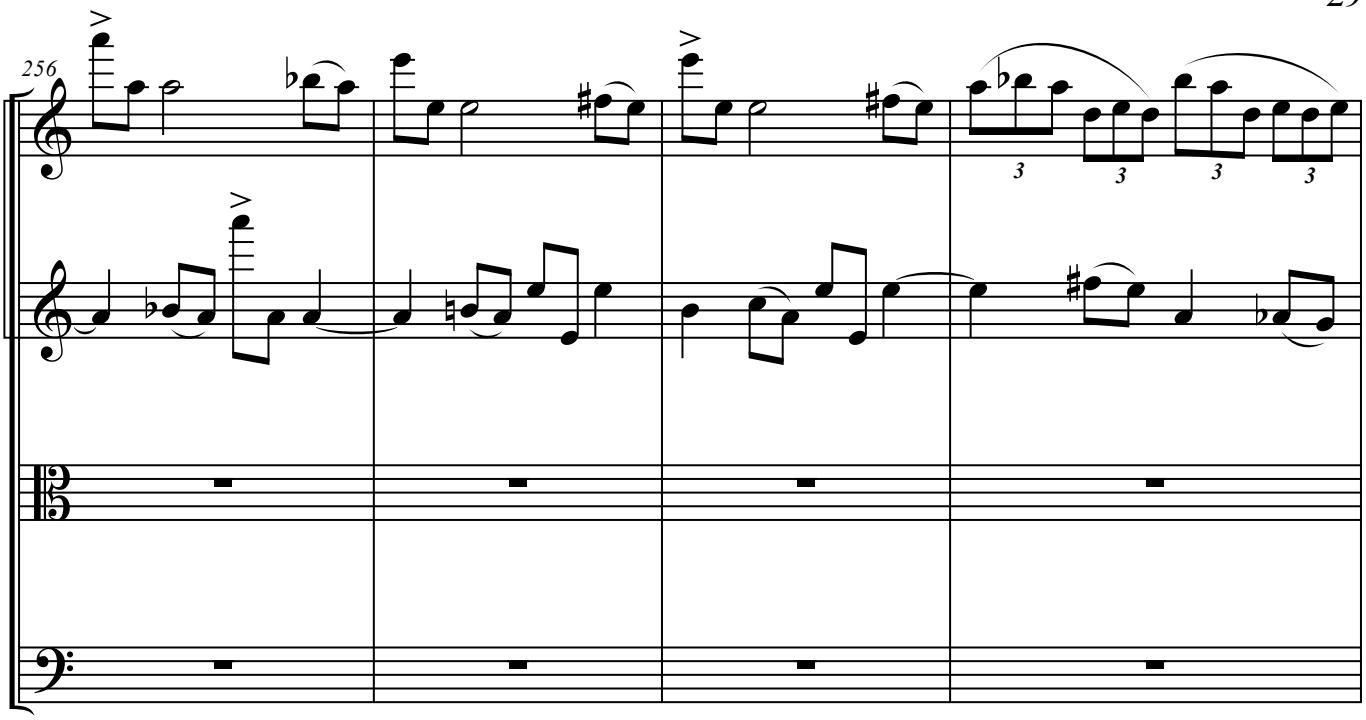

♩ = 84
217
p
cresc.
f
223
sul D
o
p
p
p
mf
p

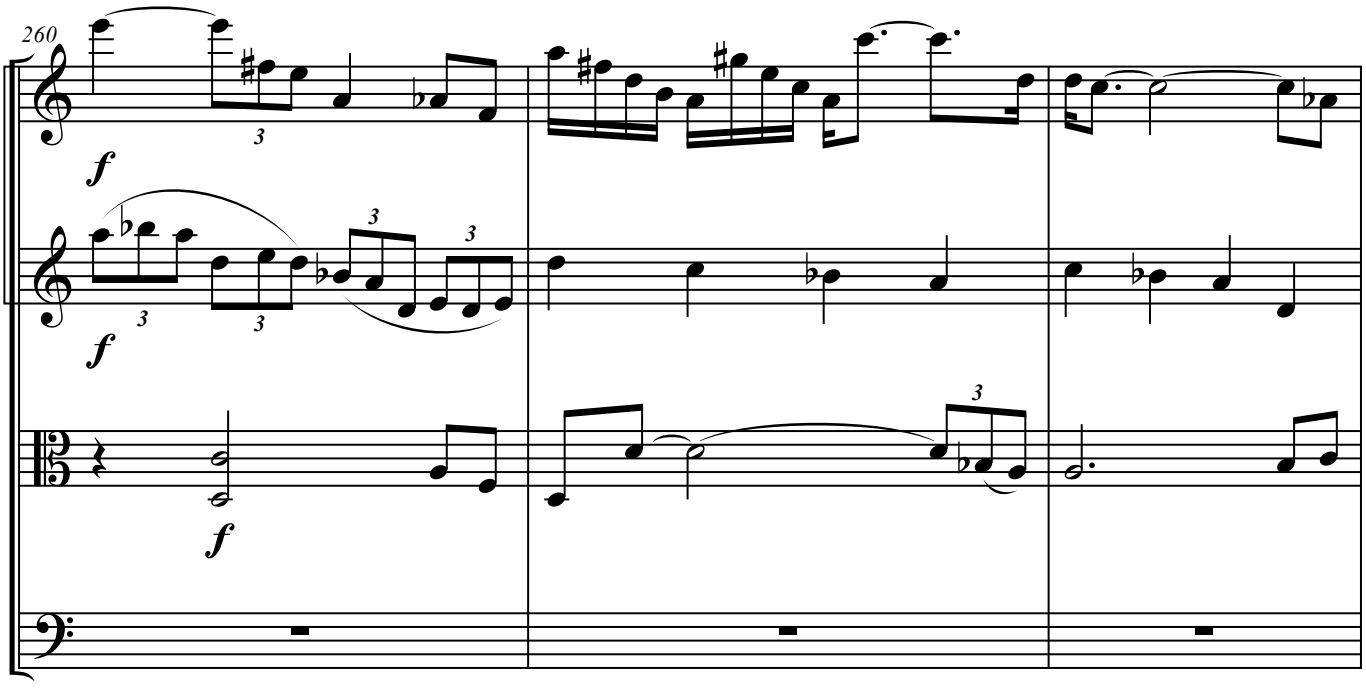

230
f
p
p
235
p
cresc.
f

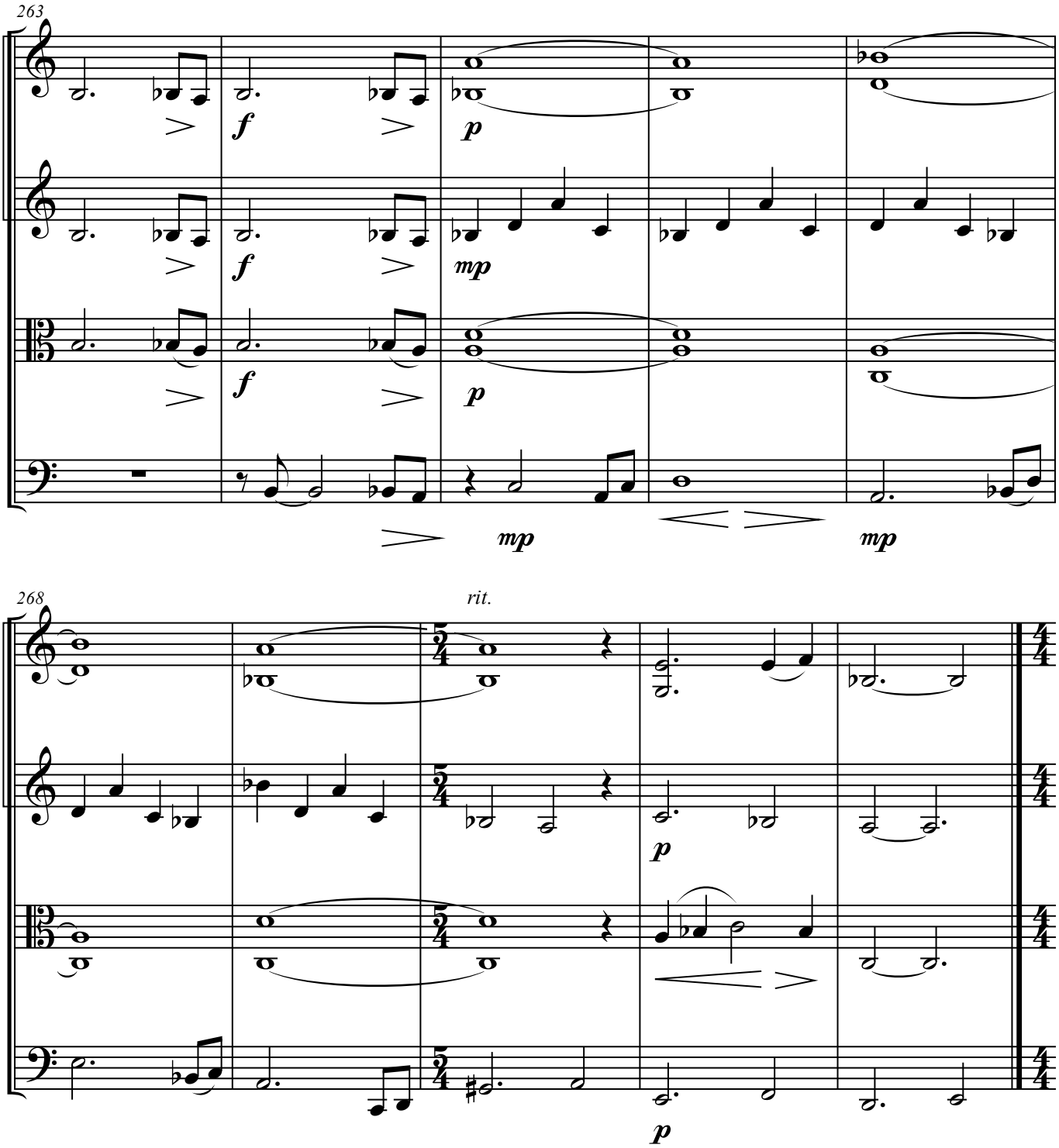

238
sul pont.
mf

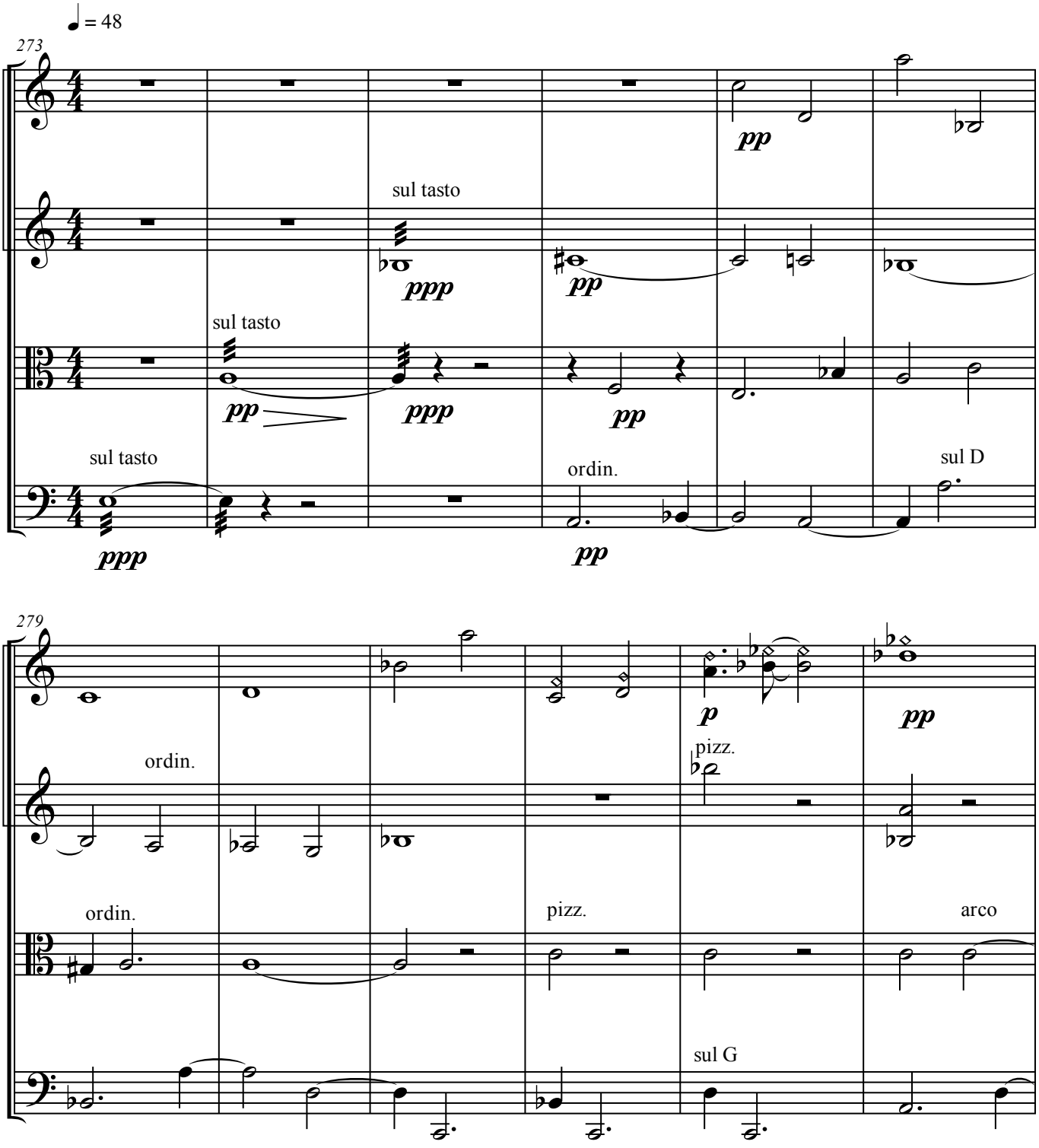

241
p
p

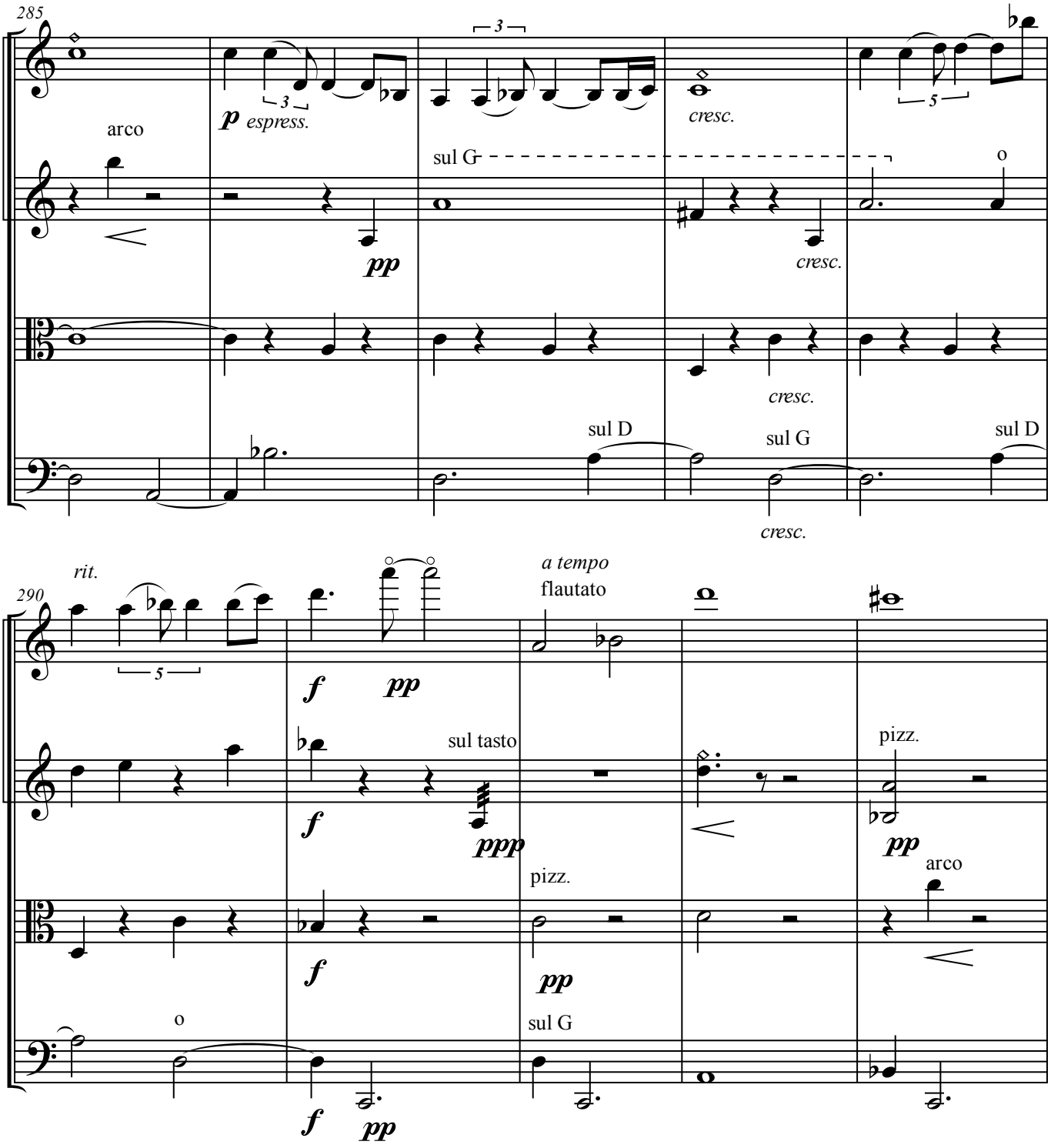

244
sul pont.
col legno tratt.
p
p
249
cresc.
mp
cresc.

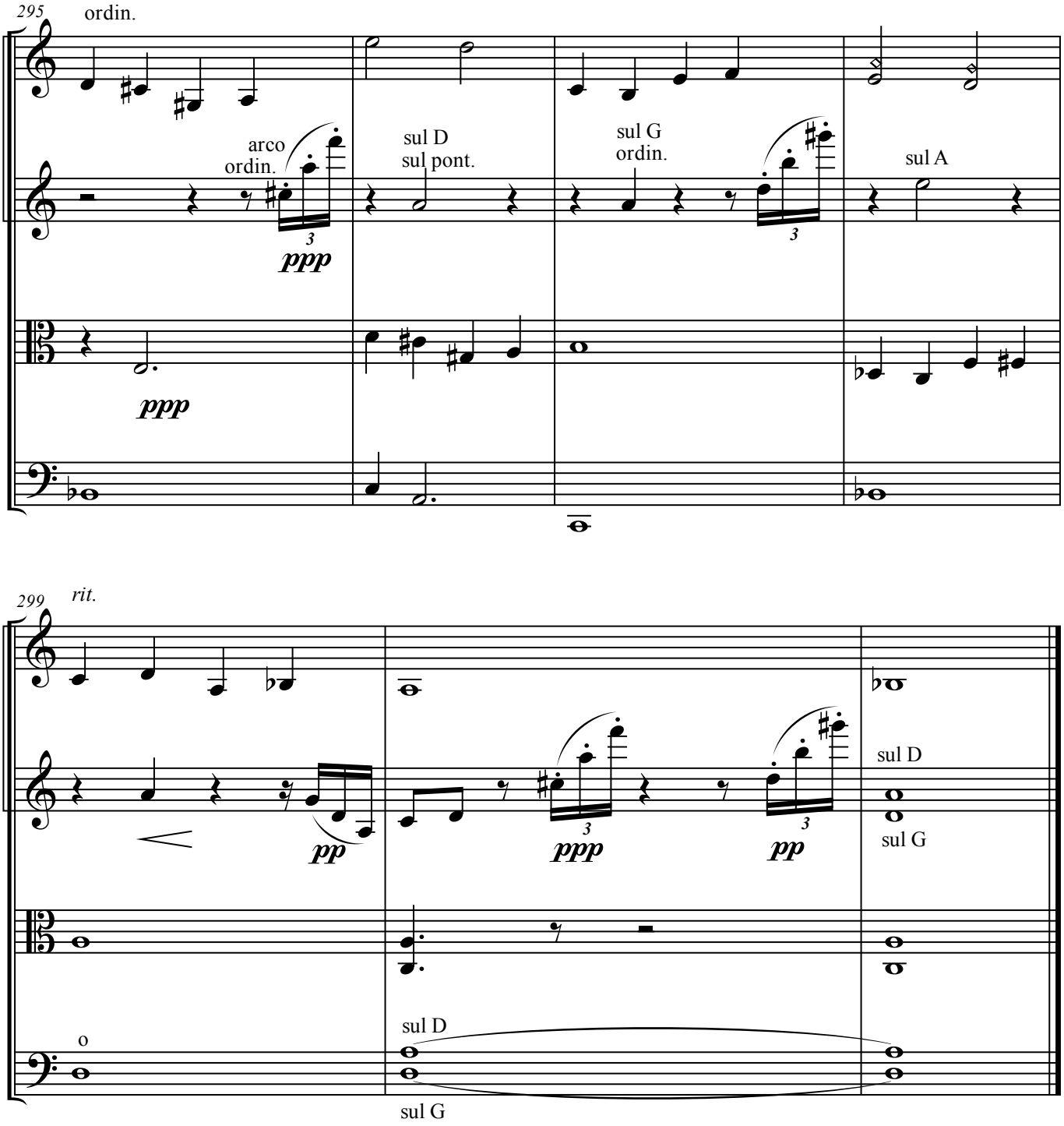

256


260
f
f
f


263
f
p
mp
f
mp
f
p
mp
mp
268
rit.
p
p


♩ = 48
273
sul tasto
sul tasto
sul tasto
ordin.
sul D
279
ordin.
ordin.
pizz.
arco
sul G


285
arco
p espress.
3
3
pp
sul G
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
5
o
sul D
sul G
sul D
cresc.
290
rit.
5
f
pp
a tempo
flautato
sul tasto
f
ppp
pizz.
pp
arco
pizz.
f
pp
o
sul G
f
pp


295
ordin.
arco
ordin.
sul D
sul pont.
sul G
ordin.
sul A
ppp
ppp
299
rit.
pp
ppp
pp
sul D
sul G
o
sul D
sul G