Untogether, Not Apart

A Chamber Concerto in 4 movements

By Chris Pratorius

Commissioned by New Music Works

Instrumentation

Flute
Clarinet in B flat
Vibraphone
Piano
Viola
Double Bass

SCORE

Untogether, Not Apart is a 4-movement chamber concerto commissioned by New Music Works for the 2013-2014 season. It plays off two competing theories as to the etymology of the word concerto: the first is to harmonize or sing together, the other to join in competition or strive against. As a musical genre the concerto typically pits a large ensemble versus a soloist or small group. I tried to explore new ways of thinking about playing together/untogether, while also thinking about the current state of our environment.

Untogether is a slang word that means incompetent or unstable. It is a reference to our inability to be responsible and harmonious citizens of the planet and our ability to ignore the mounting evidence of probable environmental catastrophe. Nonetheless, though we move through the world with little regard for our collective impact, we do coexist with all other life, and are therefore living with them whether we are cognizant of it or not.

The first movement explores this idea of *Untogether, Not Apart* by giving each instrument a fragment of music that loops in a unique way: each loop is a different length in each instrument. Thus, each line goes about its life with little regard to how it coincides with the other lines. Random intersections occur, beautiful moments happen, and they are never repeated. Each fragment that is played is 'sampled' from a historical concerto for the instrument that loops it. For example, the clarinet plays a fragment from Mozart's Clarinet Concerto and the piano a fragment from the slow movement of Beethoven's 3rd Piano Concerto. Other composers who make cameos are Telemann, Dittersdorf and Vivaldi, in the viola, double bass and flute, respectively. Each instrument represents a person stuck in a circular process. We can imagine many possibilities, whether it is cycles of daily life, taking care of children, the desire to work and make money, depression, addiction, etc. All of these personal cycles distract us from our larger surroundings. At the end of the movement, as the chatter of human cycles dies down, the voices of marine mammals take center stage.

The second movement explores the idea of *Untogether, Not Apart* in a different way. This time, everybody plays the same melody. However, each instrument plays at a different tempo and starting on a different pitch. The more agile instruments run through the melody in the shortest amount of time, the less agile take a little longer. The instruments are paired, so everyone always begins with a partner, but inevitably ends alone. The material is clearly related, as everyone plays the same melodic material, but rhythmically it is never synchronized.

The third and fourth movements are more conventional, and were inspired by historical models. The third movement explores baroque ideas of concerto, using ritornello form and pitting the whole ensemble versus a subset. The fourth movement, which

also incorporates marine mammal calls, is a nod to romantic concertos, where the soloist is like a diva and the ensemble accompanies.

I'd like to thank Phil Collins and New Music Works for once again inspiring me to write a new piece, for being one of the few groups to give living composers a venue to present their works and for supporting new music in such an excellent and committed fashion. We are truly lucky to have NMW!

To maximize the sonic effect of the 2nd movement, the instruments paired (flute & clarinet, piano and vibes, viola and double bass) should NOT be sitting next to each other.

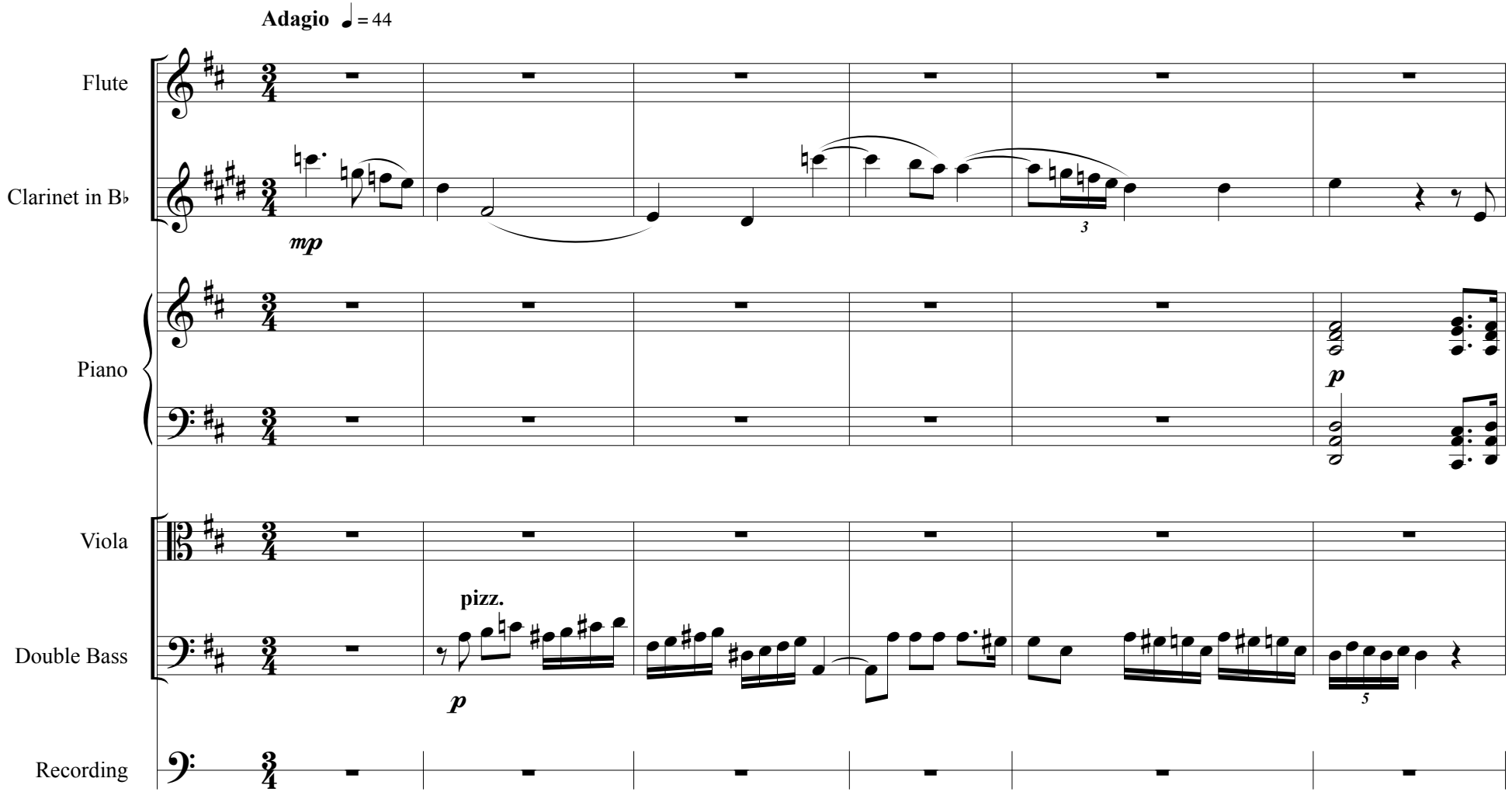
Score

Untogether, Not Apart

Movement 1

Chris Pratorius
2013

In this movement, a recording of humpback whales should be faded in at m. 47.
The track should continue to play 30 seconds after the live musicians end, and than be faded out.



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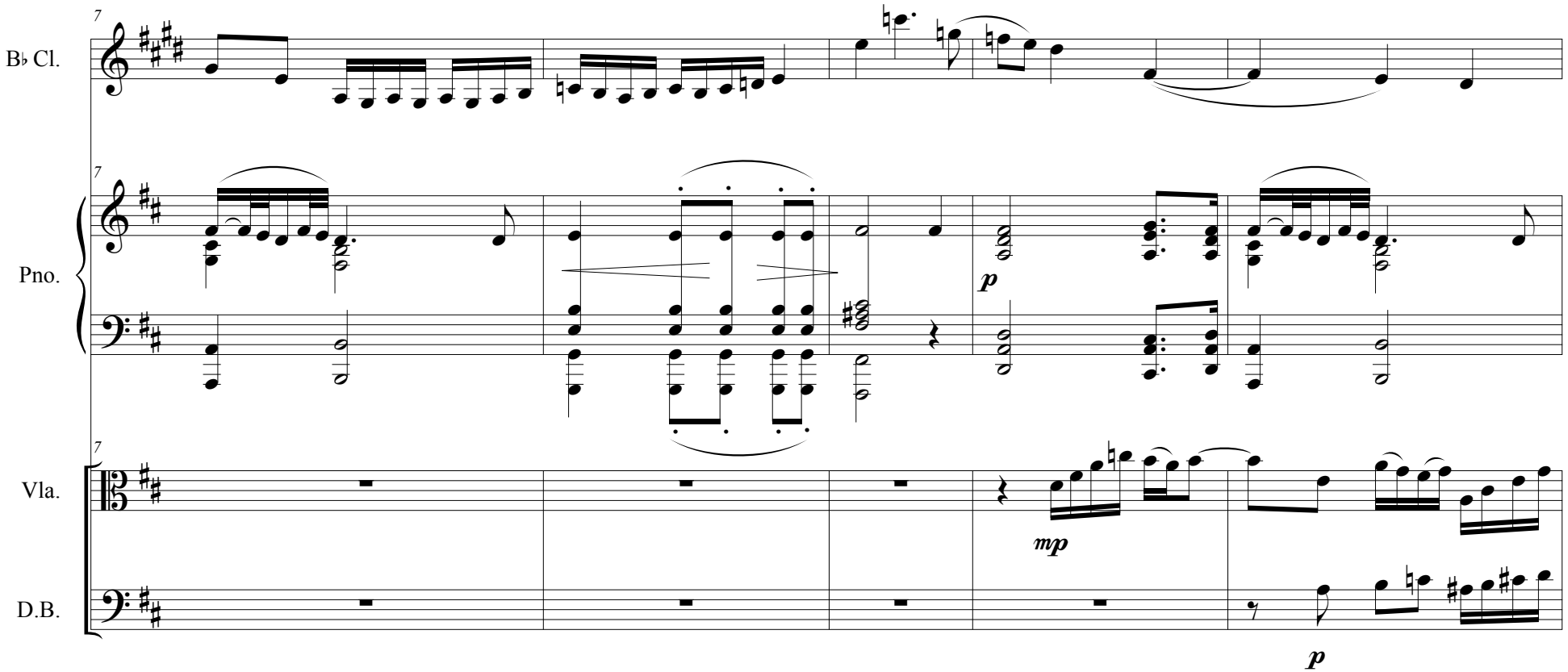
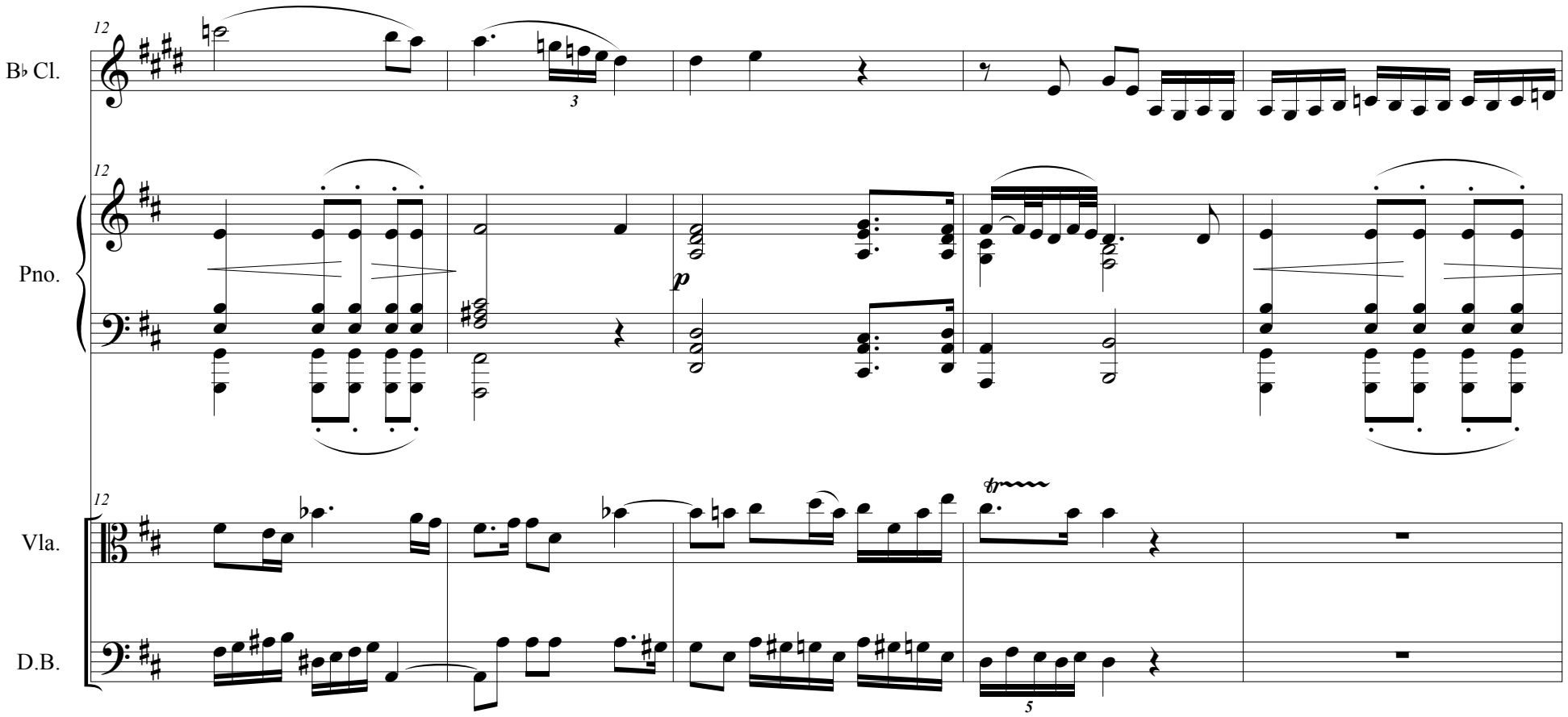
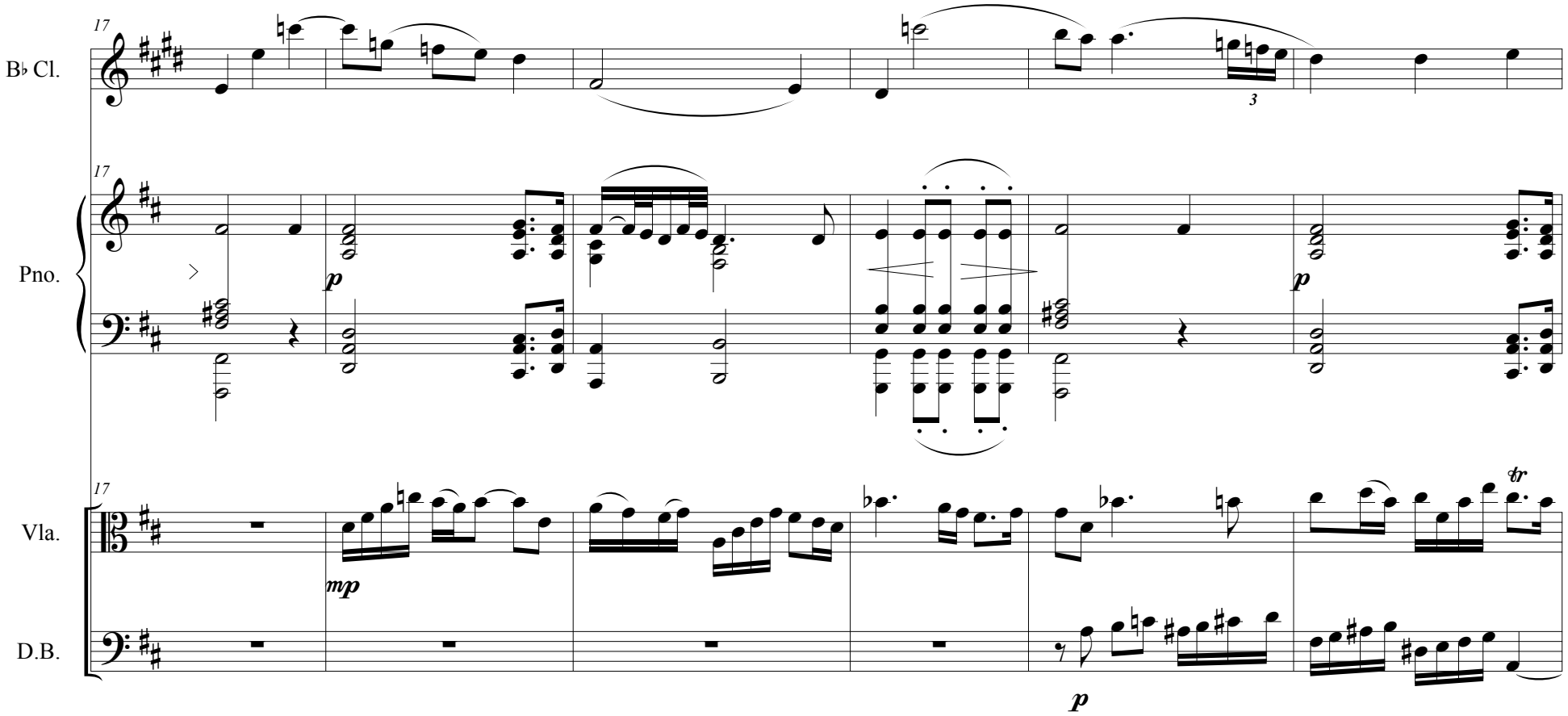
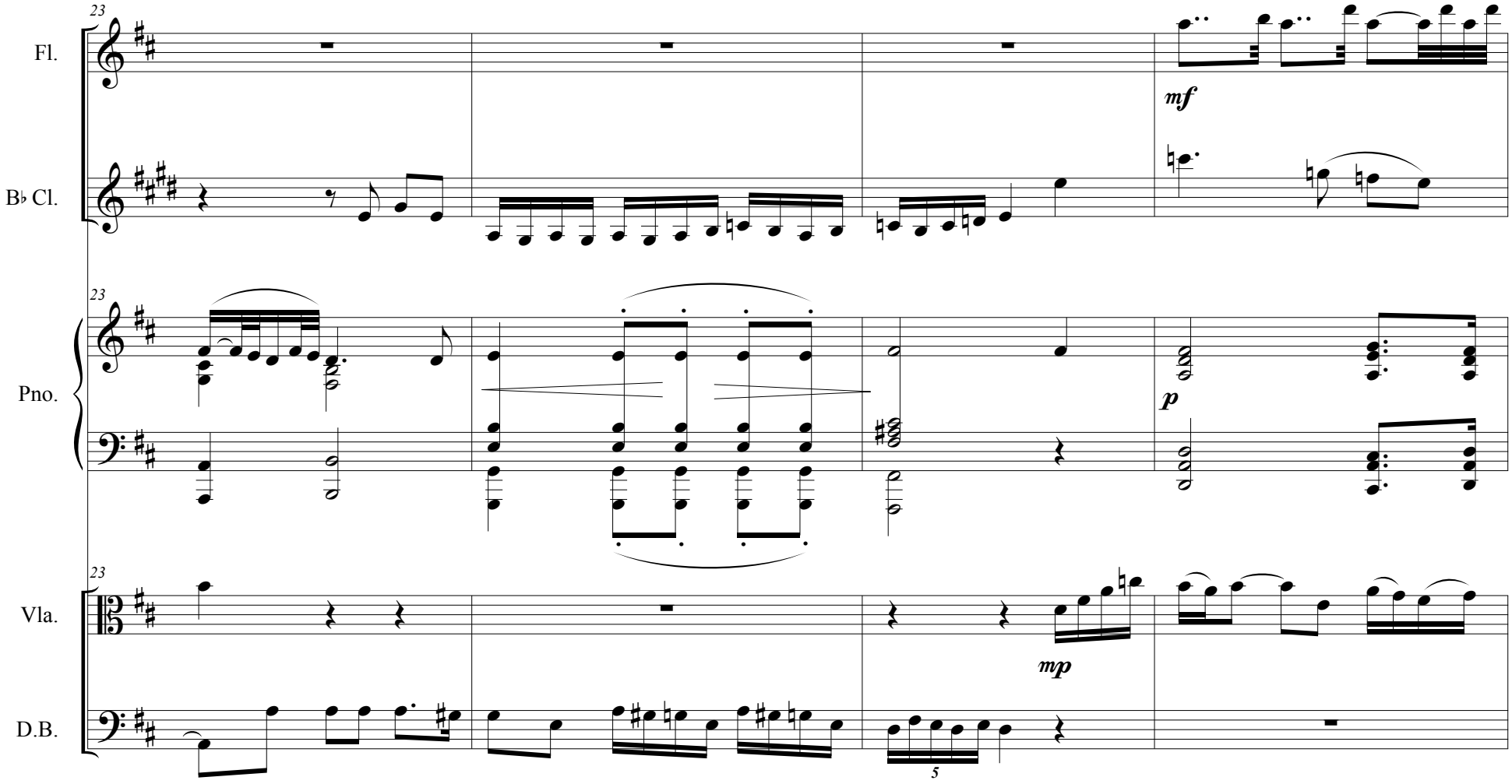
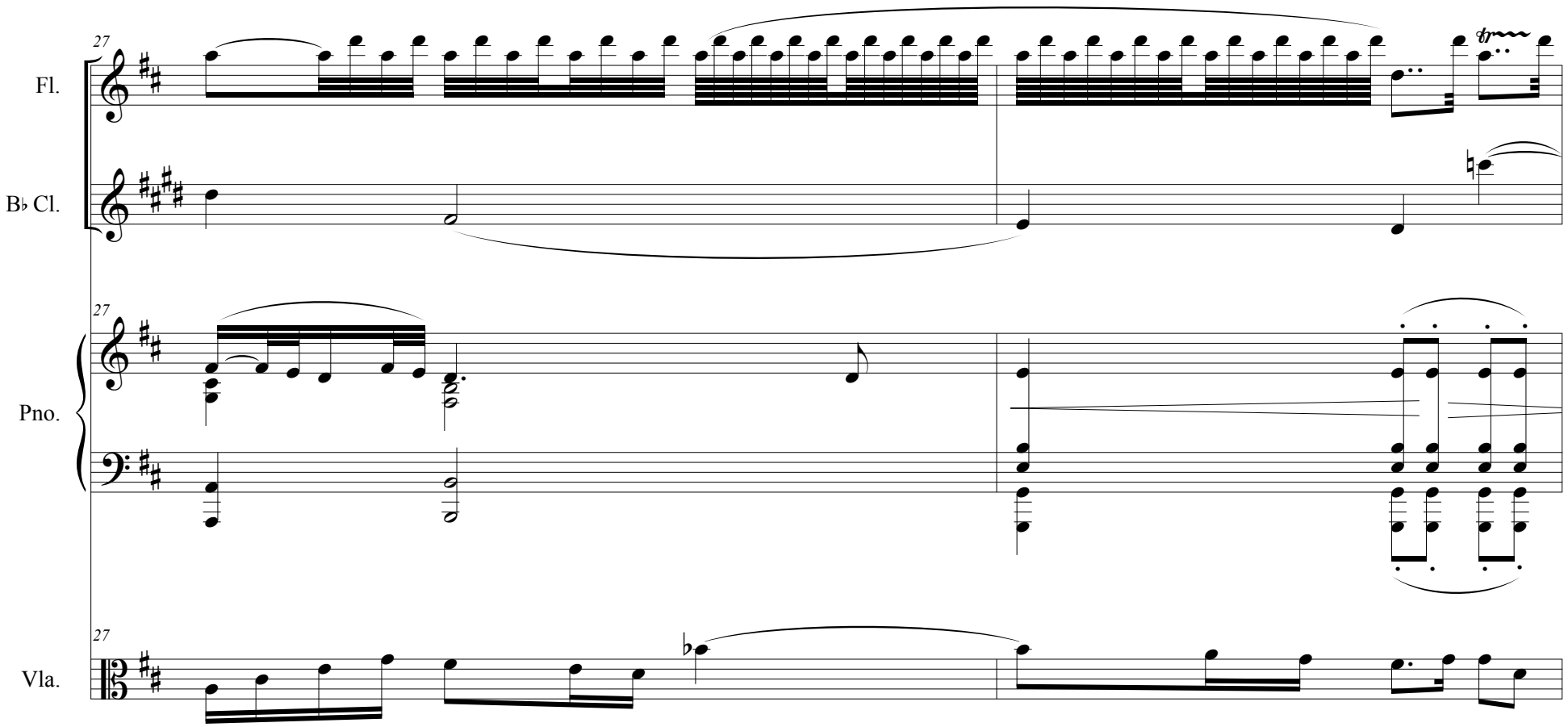
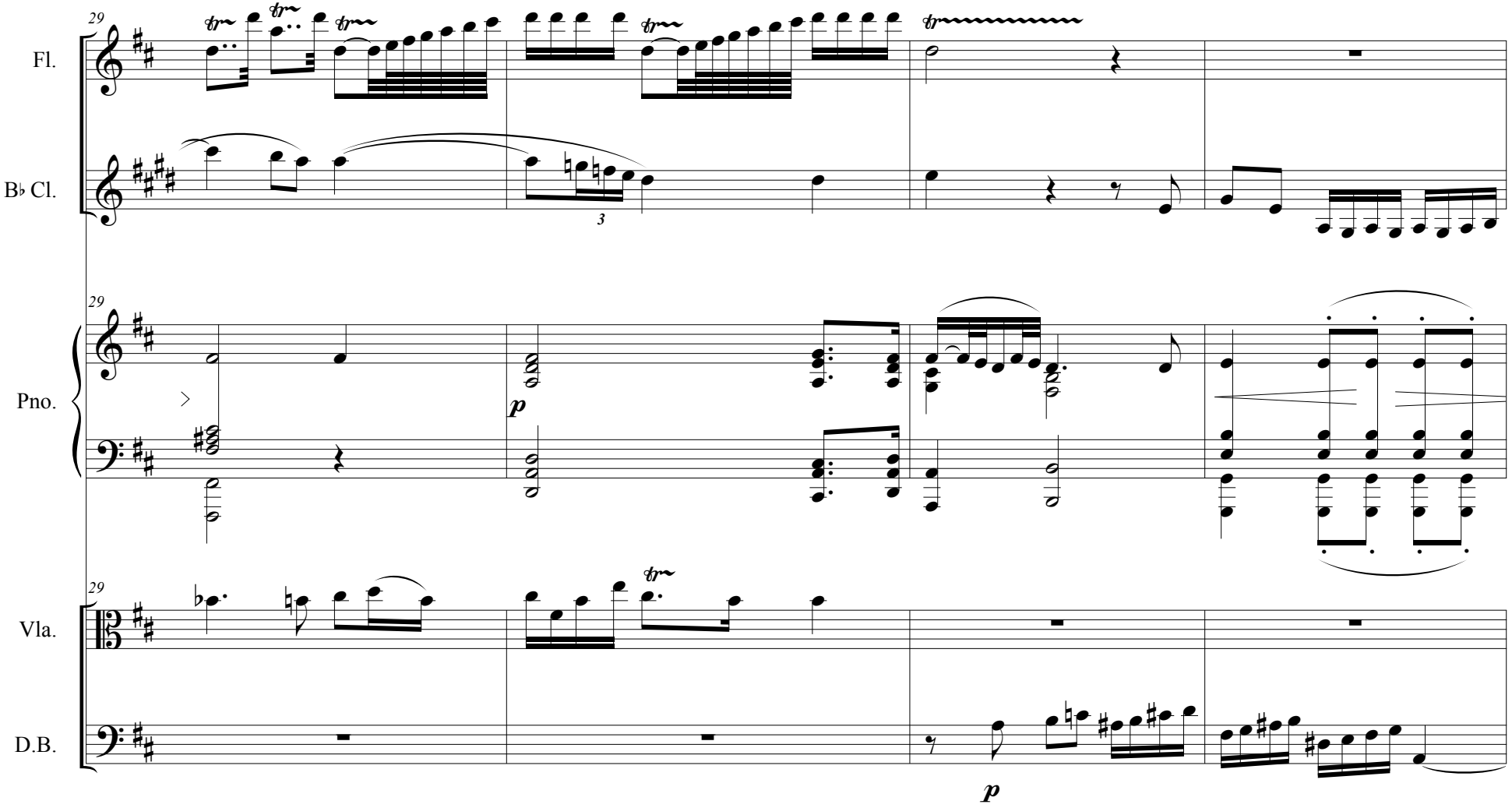

7
B♭ Cl.
7
Pno.
p
7
Vla.
mp
D.B.
p

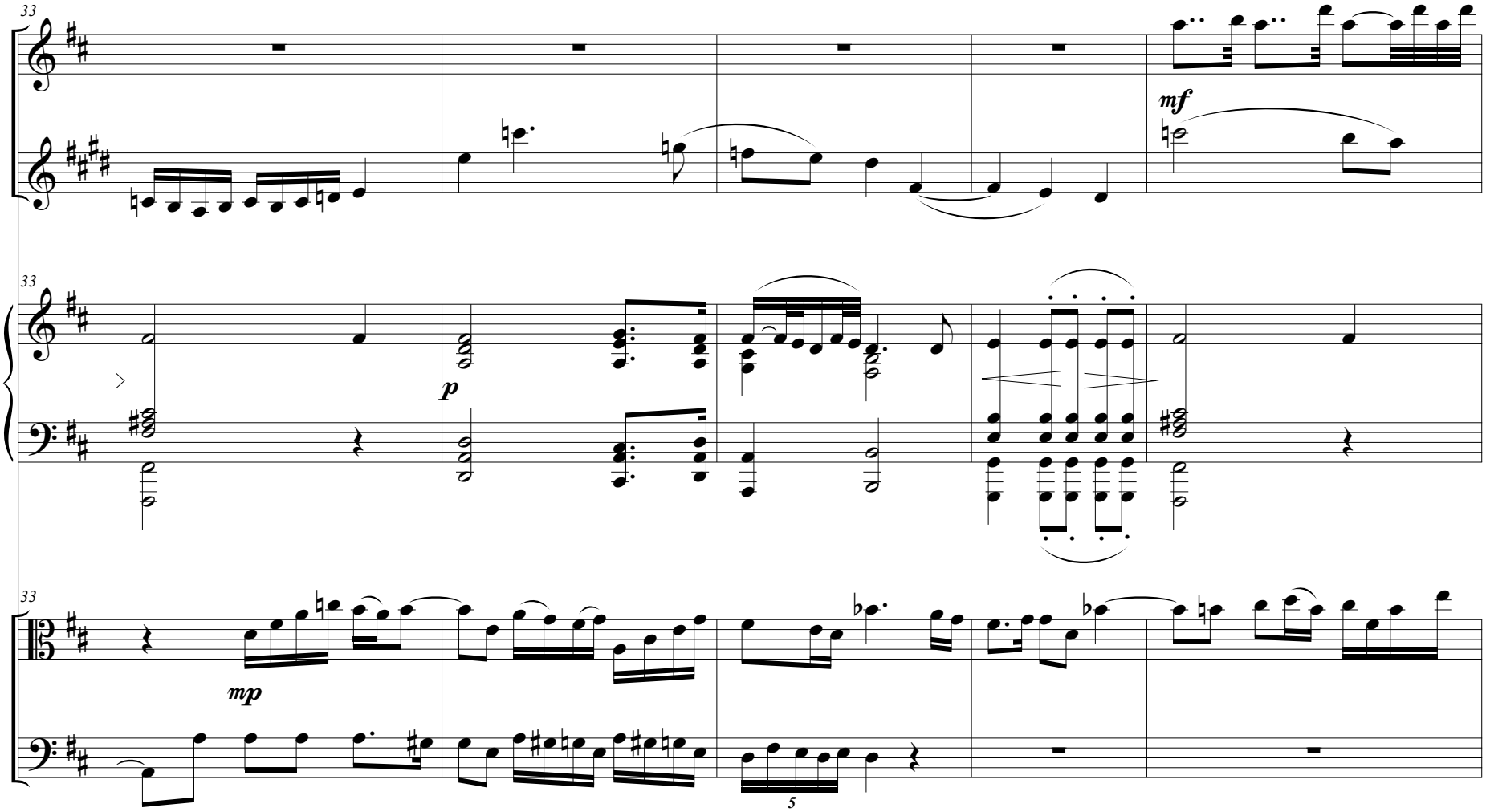

12
B♭ Cl.
3
12
Pno.
p
12
Vla.
tr
D.B.
5

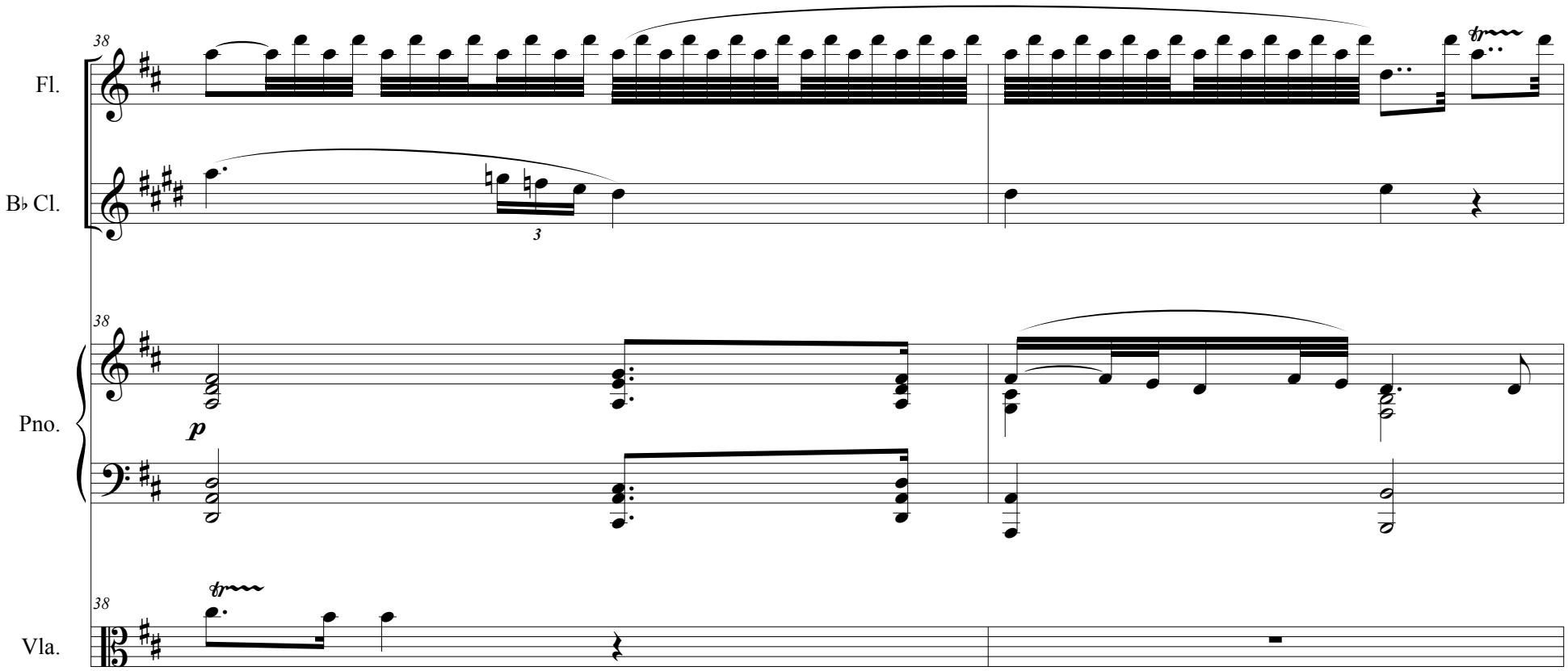

17
B♭ Cl.
17
Pno.
p
p
17
Vla.
mp
tr
D.B.
p

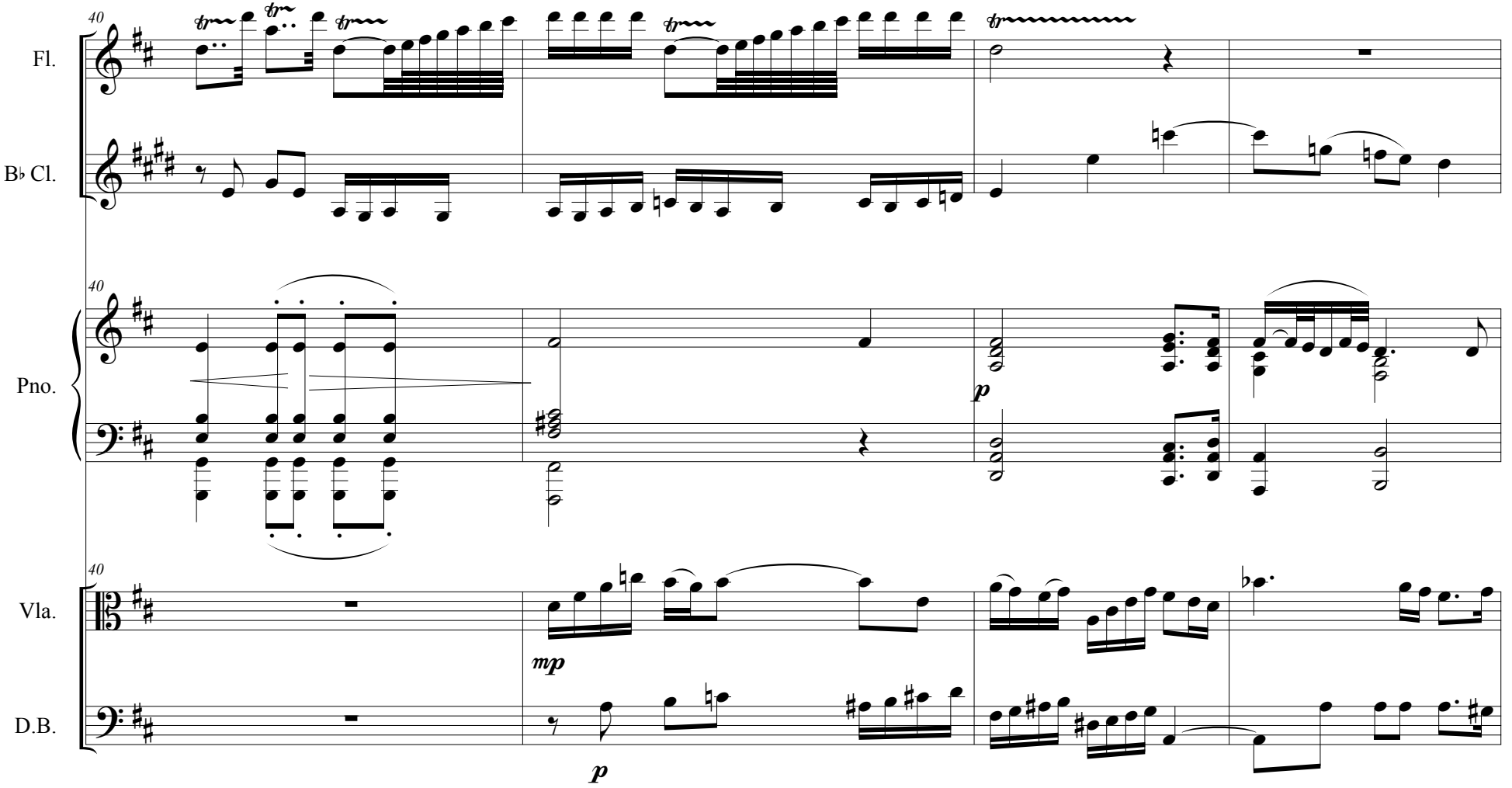

23
Fl.
mf
B♭ Cl.
23
Pno.
p
23
Vla.
mp
D.B.
5

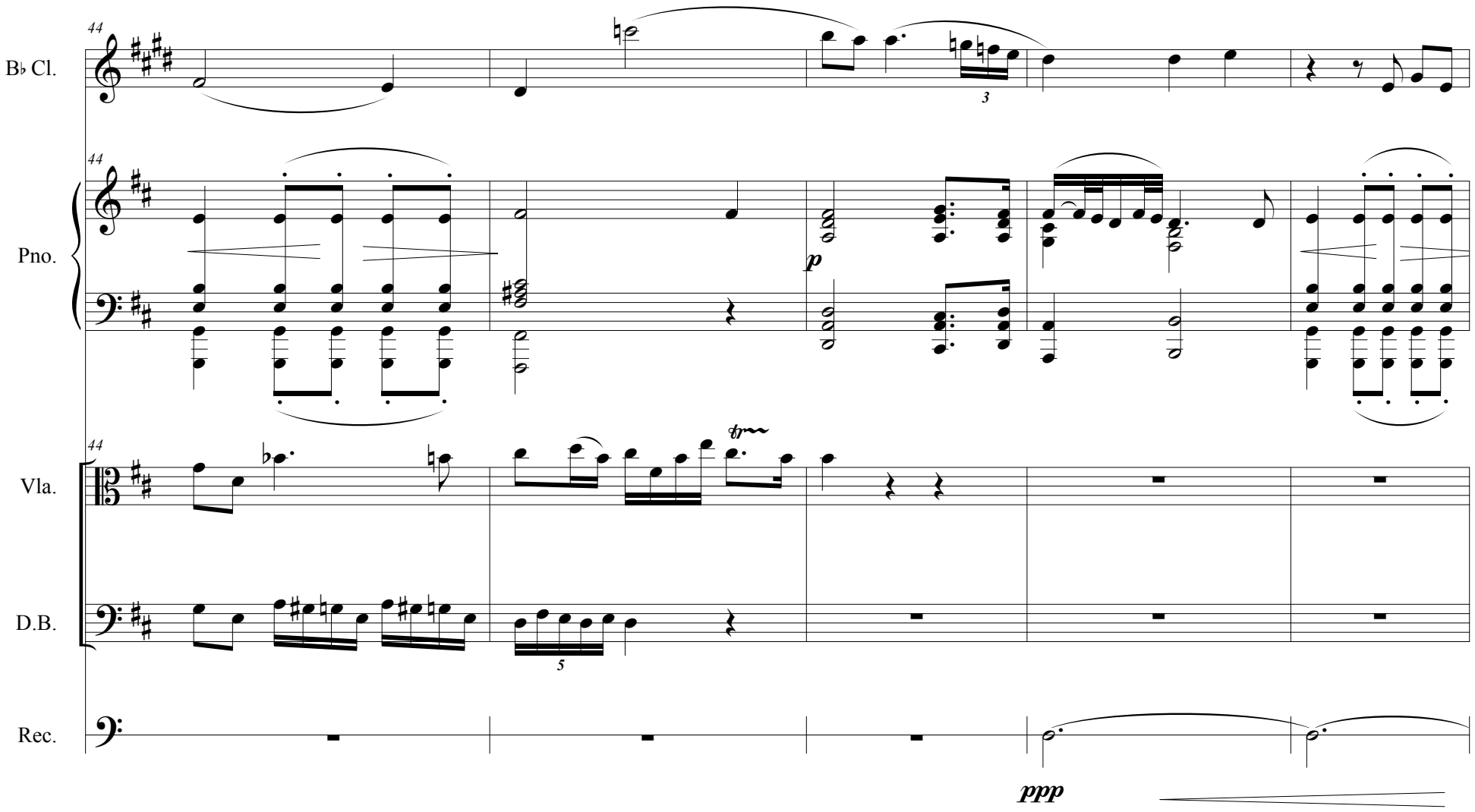

27
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
27
Pno.
27
Vla.

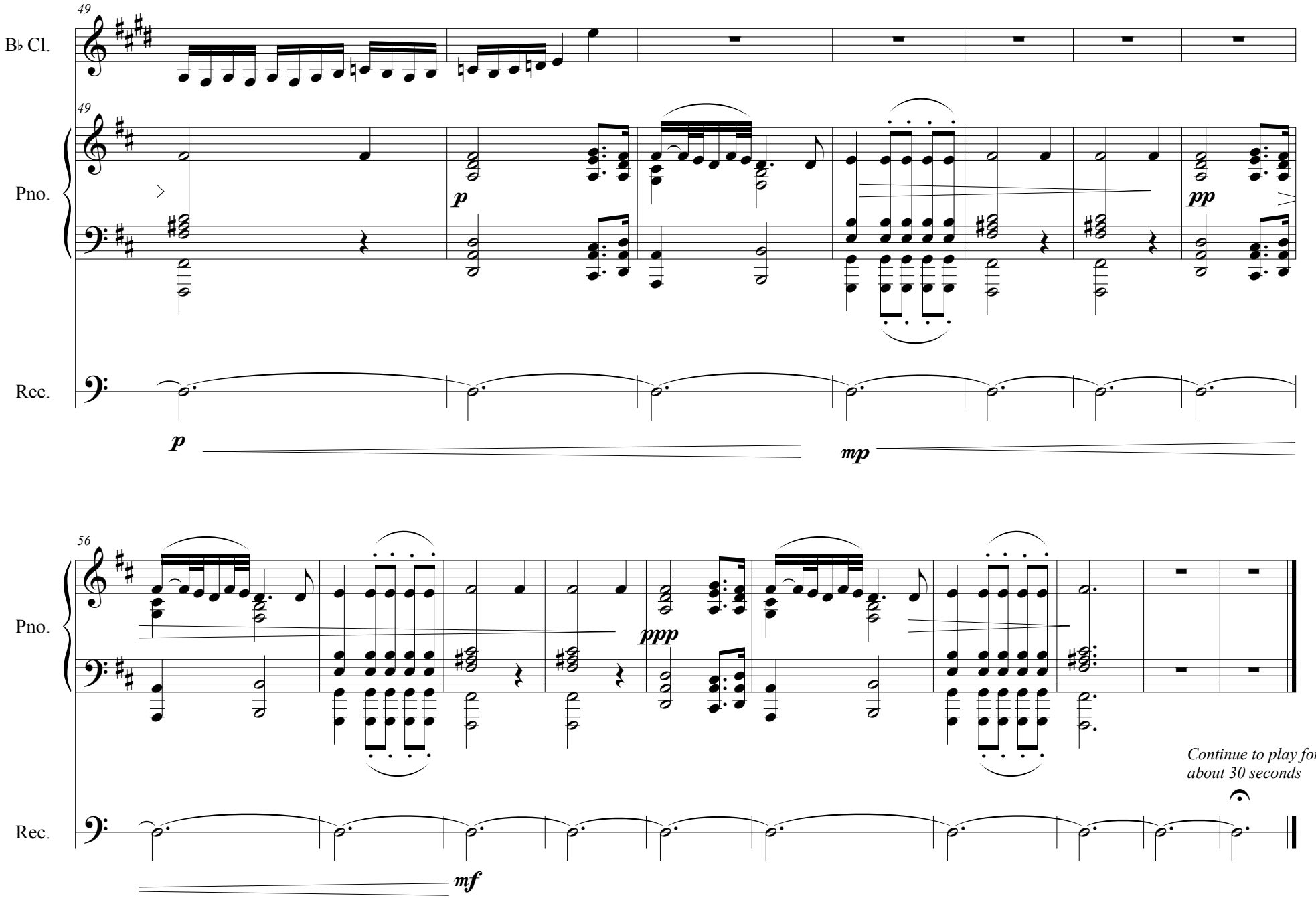

29
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
3
29
Pno.
p
29
Vla.
D.B.
p


33
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
mf
33
Pno.
p
33
Vla.
mp
D.B.
5


38
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
3
38
Pno.
p
38
Vla.


40
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
40
Pno.
p
40
Vla.
mp
D.B.
p


B♭ Cl.
Pno.
Vla.
D.B.
Rec.
44
3
5
p
tr
ppp


49
B♭ Cl.
49
Pno.
p
pp
Rec.
p
mp
56
Pno.
ppp
Continue to play for
about 30 seconds
Rec.
mf

Untogether, Not Apart
Movement II

In this movement, each instrument plays the same melody, but each starting on a different pitch and at different tempos.

Flute plays at ♩ = 180, Clarinet at ♩ = 160, Piano at ♩ = 140, Vibraphone at ♩ = 120, Viola at ♩ = 100 and Contrabass at ♩ = 80.

These tempos mirror ratios that correspond to the starting pitches of the instruments as they relate to the overtone series of the note D.

Instructions

Flute and clarinet begin together.

At ca. 0:22 viola and contrabass enter, starting together.

At ca. 1:15 piano and vibraphone enter, starting together.

The piece ends at approximately 2:20, with vibraphone finishing his/her melody alone.

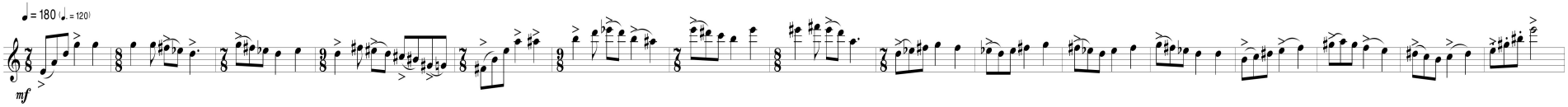
The parts are never meant to line up in any way, but it is important that the shape of the piece develops properly, so that at any time the desired instrumental balance is present. The following score shows approximately the relation of the parts to each other, so that if the instrumentalists do speed up or slow down, the conductor can adjust the subsequent entrance appropriately.

The proportions of the parts in the following score are approximations, they are not exact.

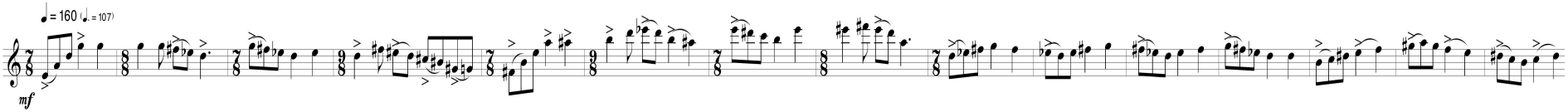
Each page represents 20 seconds.

0’00”

Fl



Cl



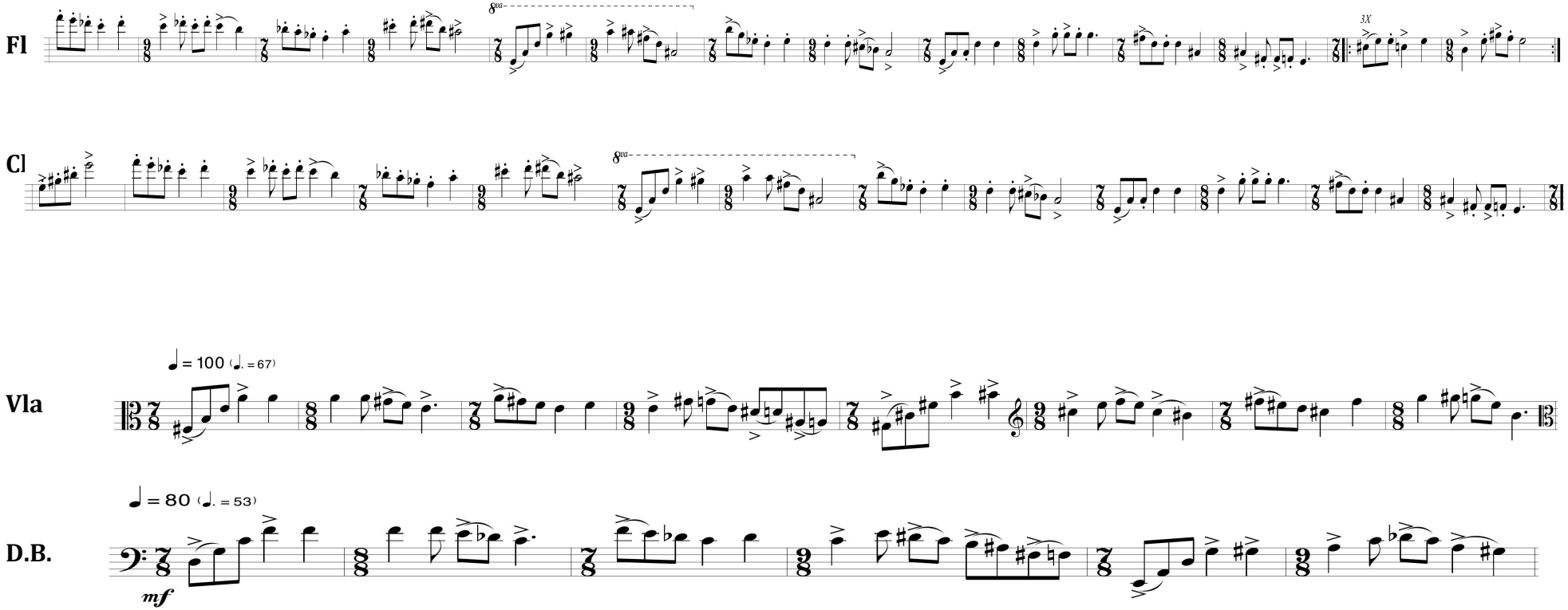
Vb

Pno

Vla

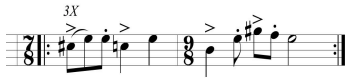
D.B.

0’20”

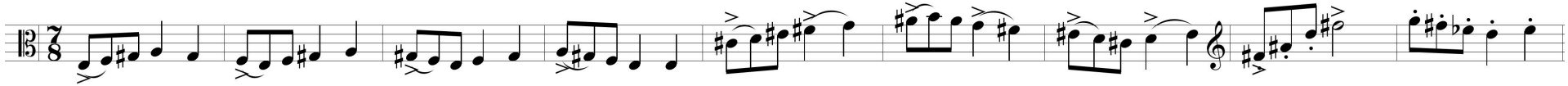


0’40”

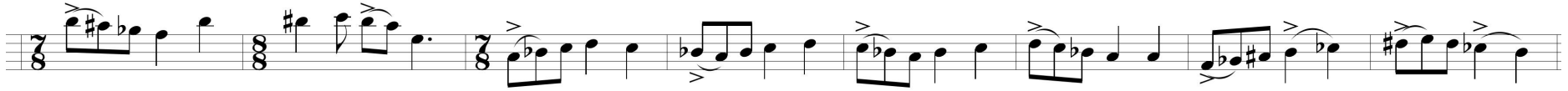
Cl



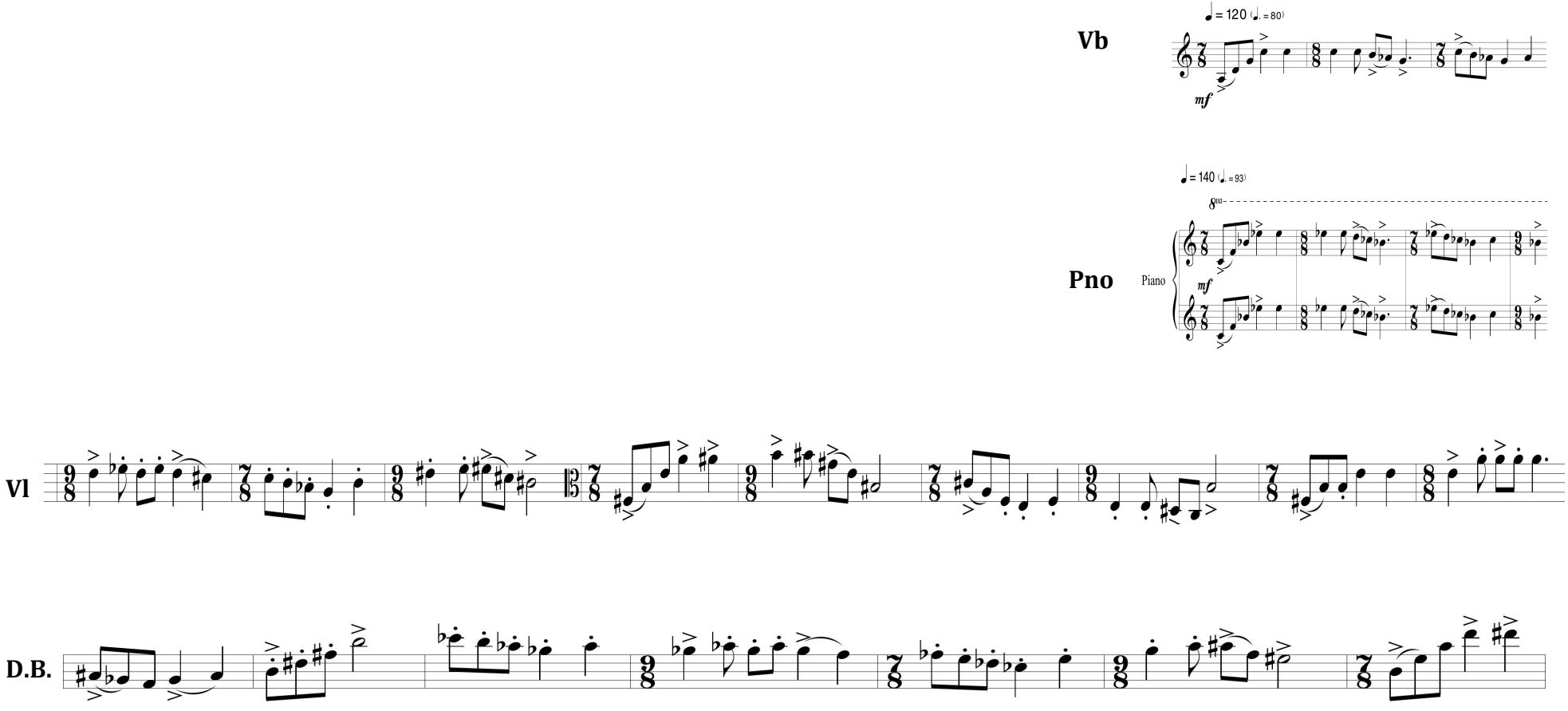
Vl



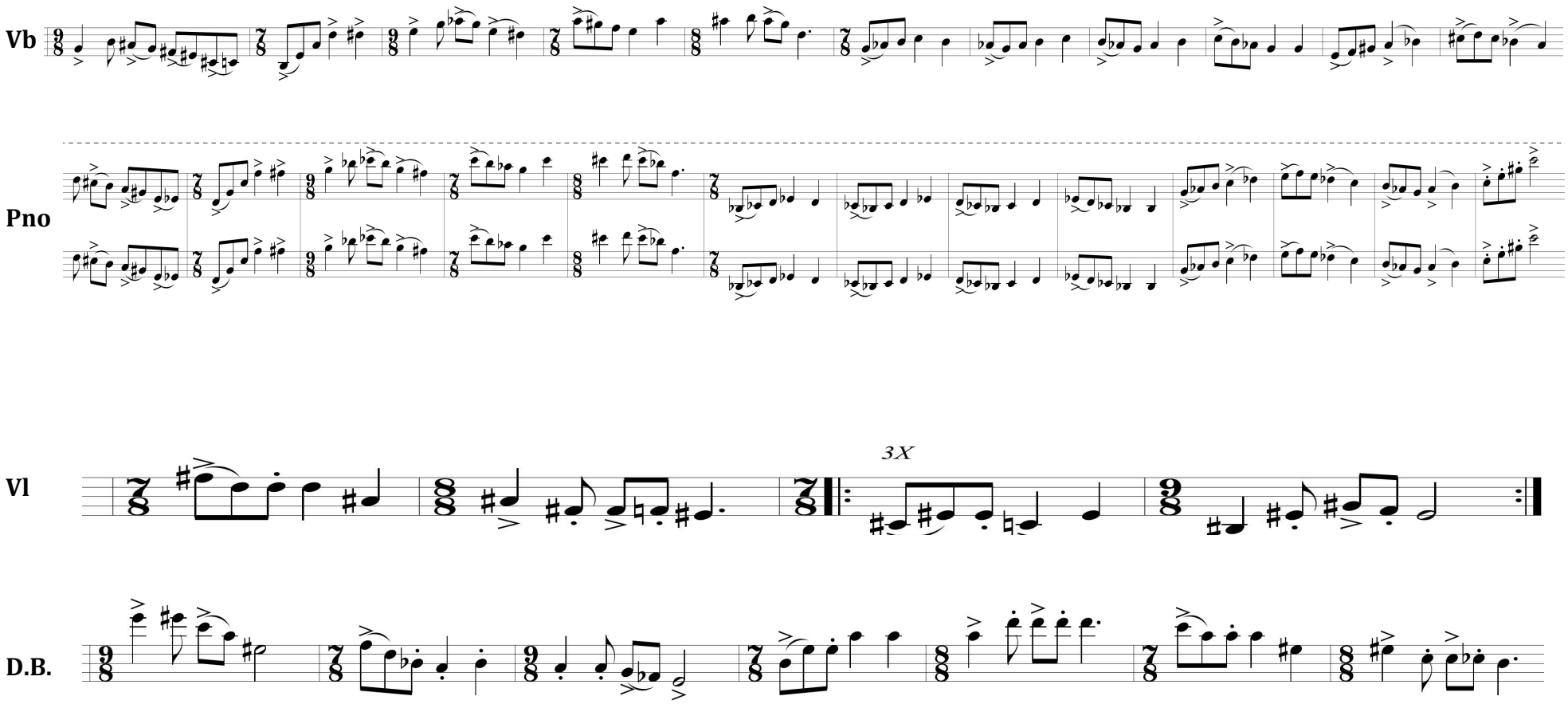
D.B.



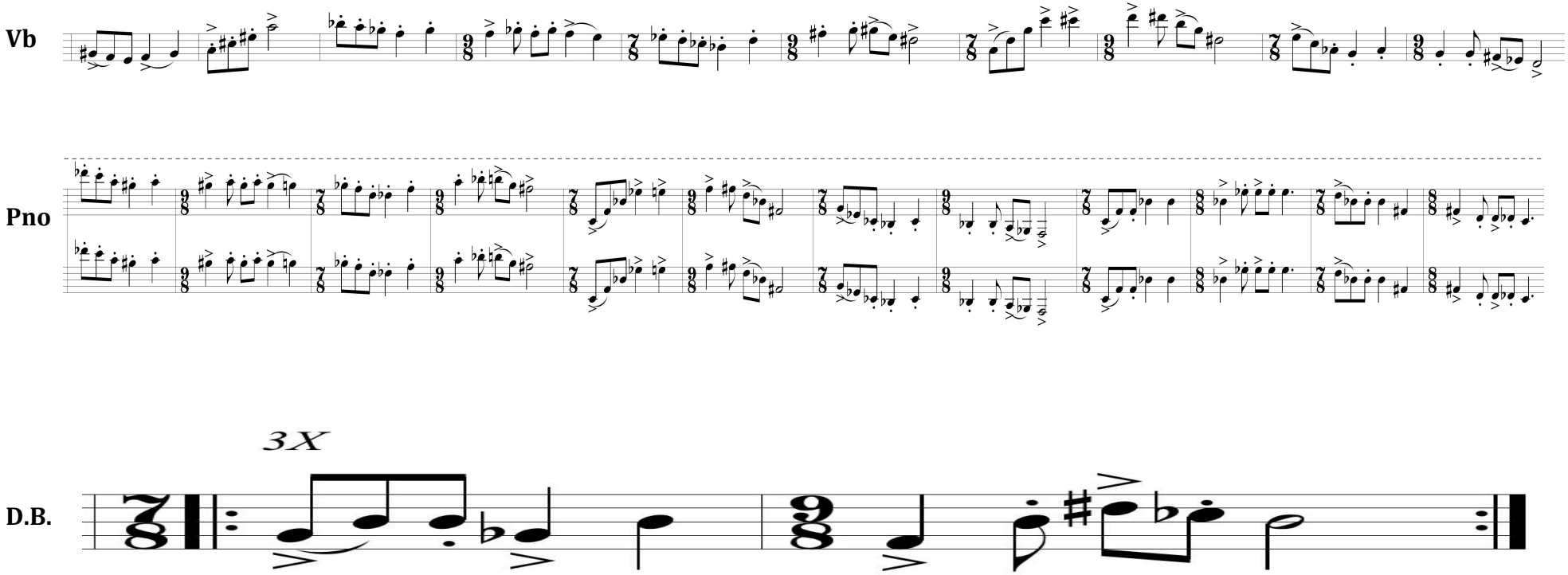
1’00”



1’20”

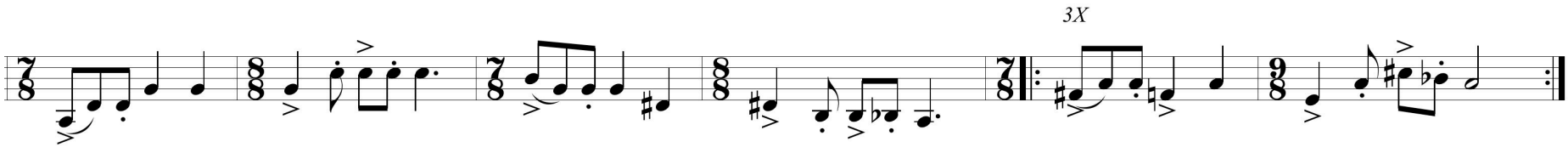


1’40”

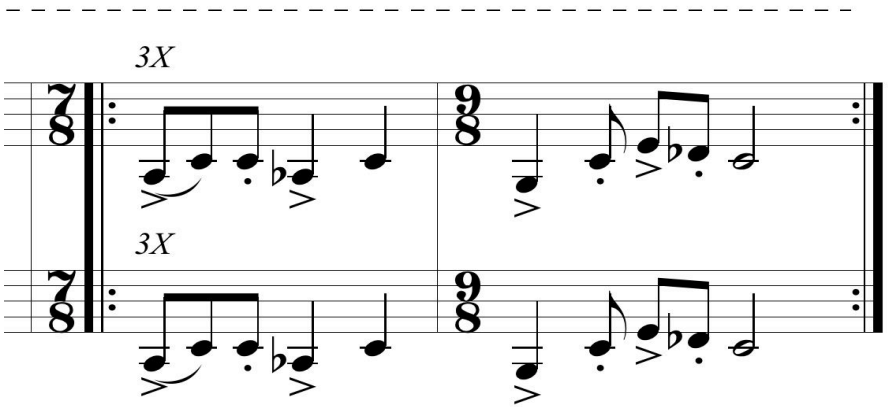


2’00”

Vb



Pno



Score

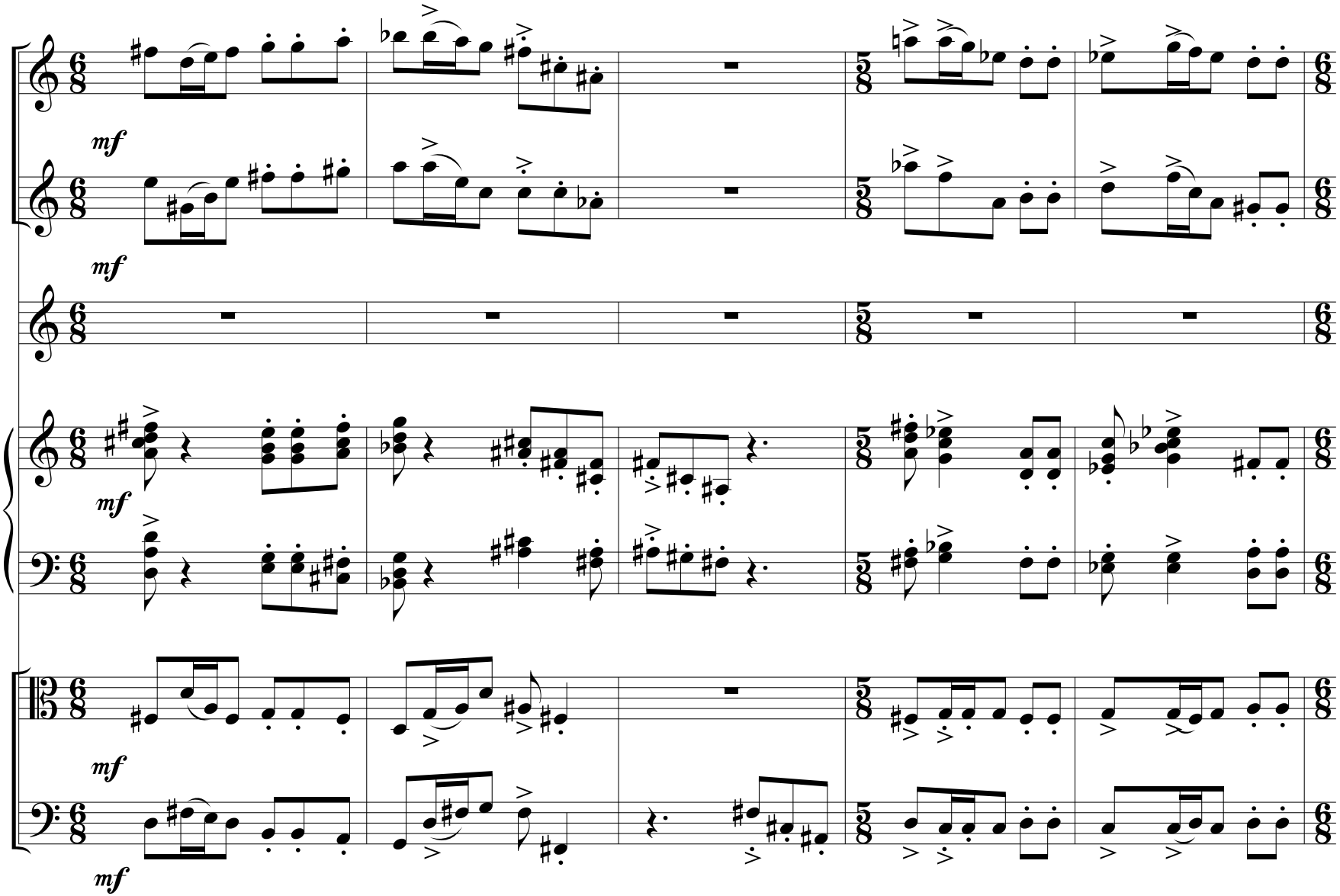
Untogether, Not Apart

Movement III

Chris Pratorius

2013

Moderate but rhythmic ♪ = 144



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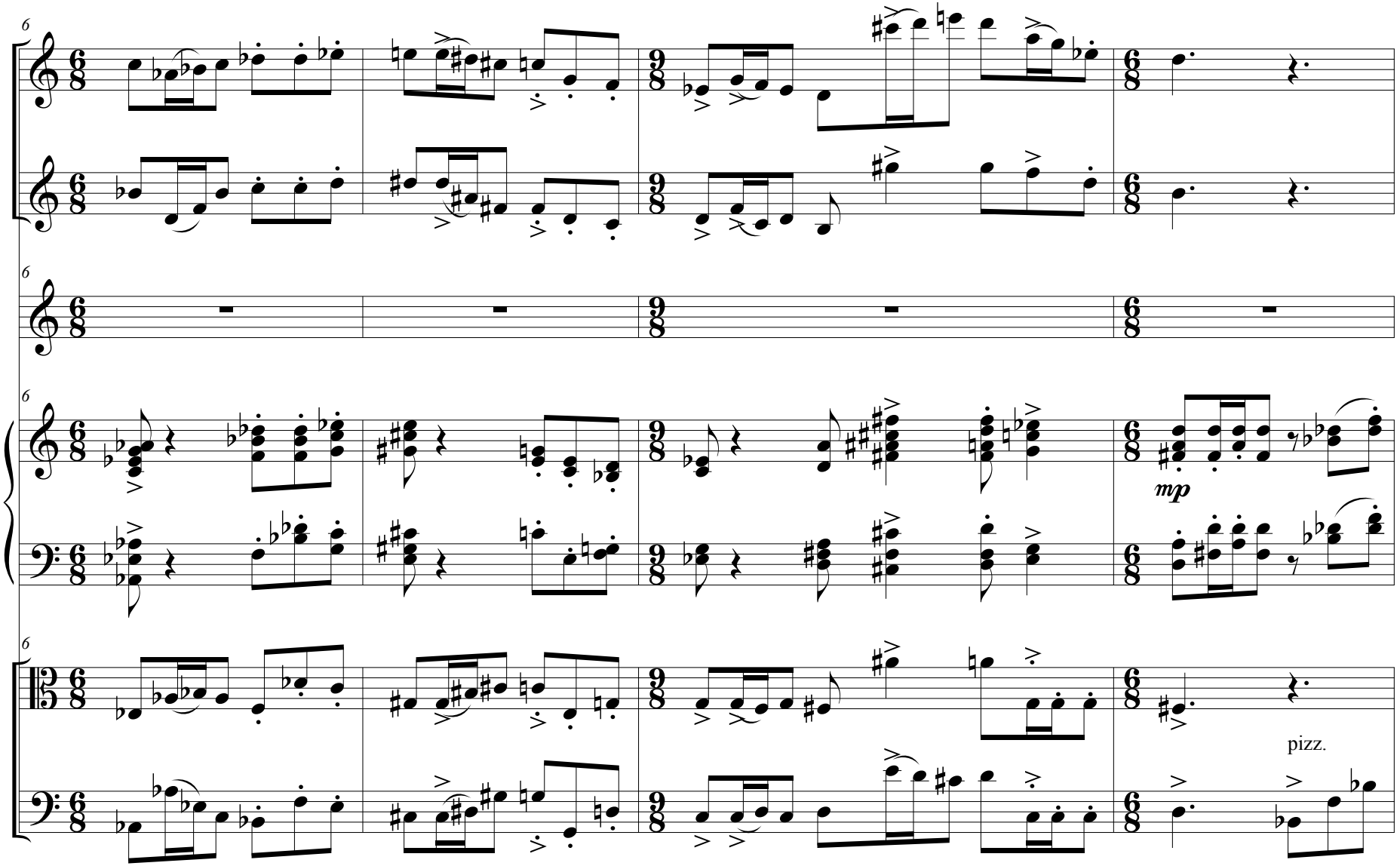
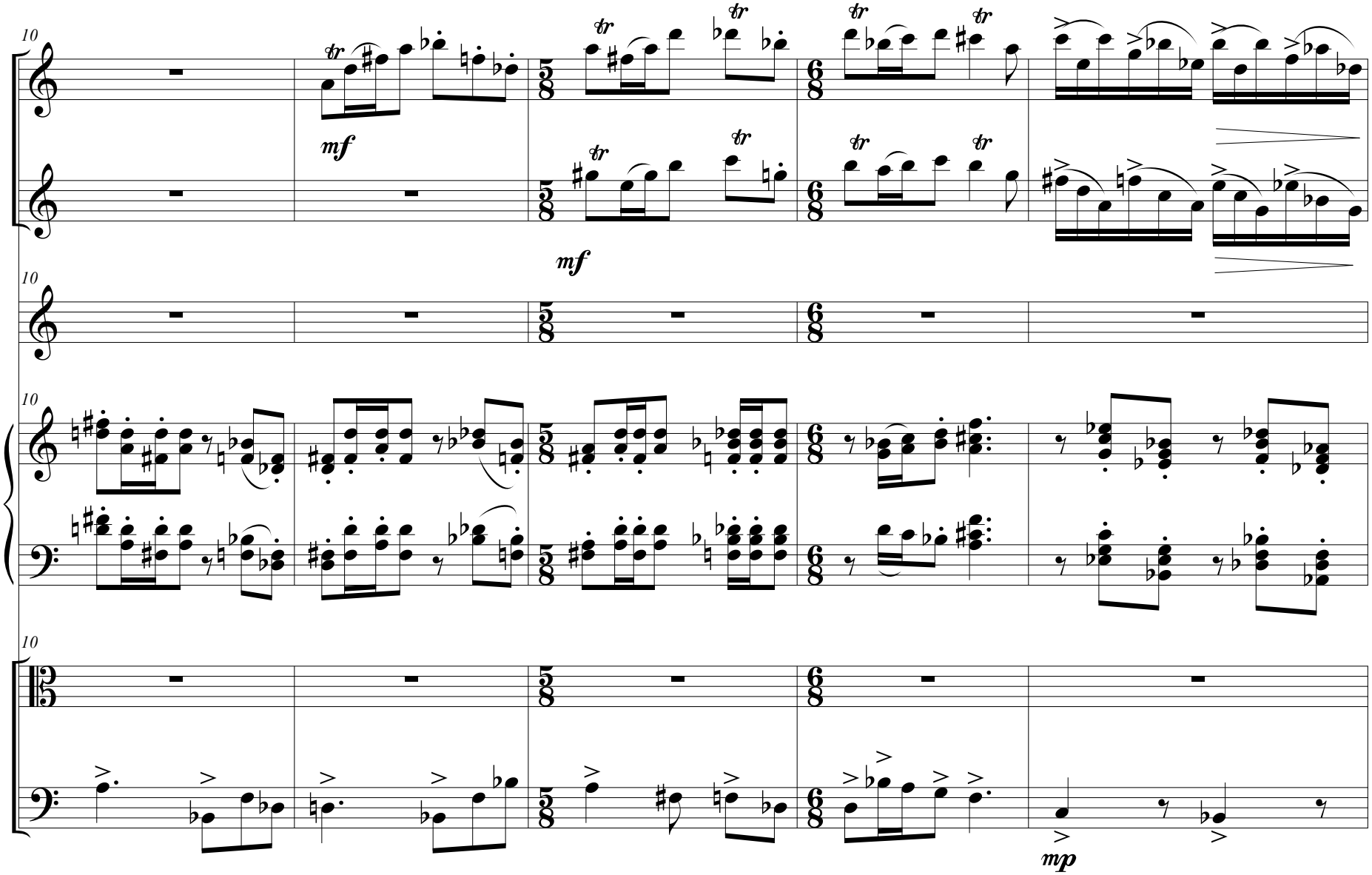
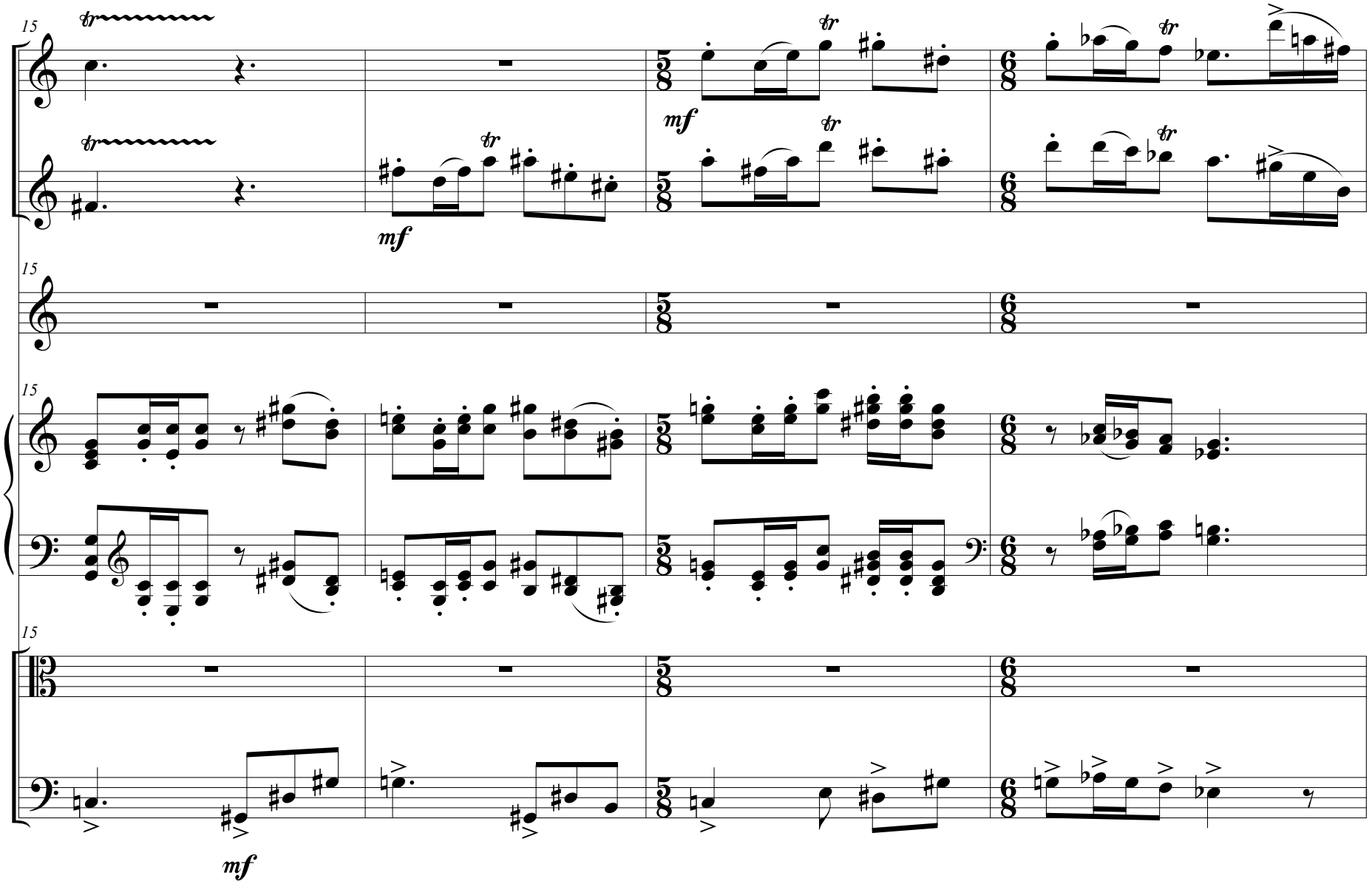
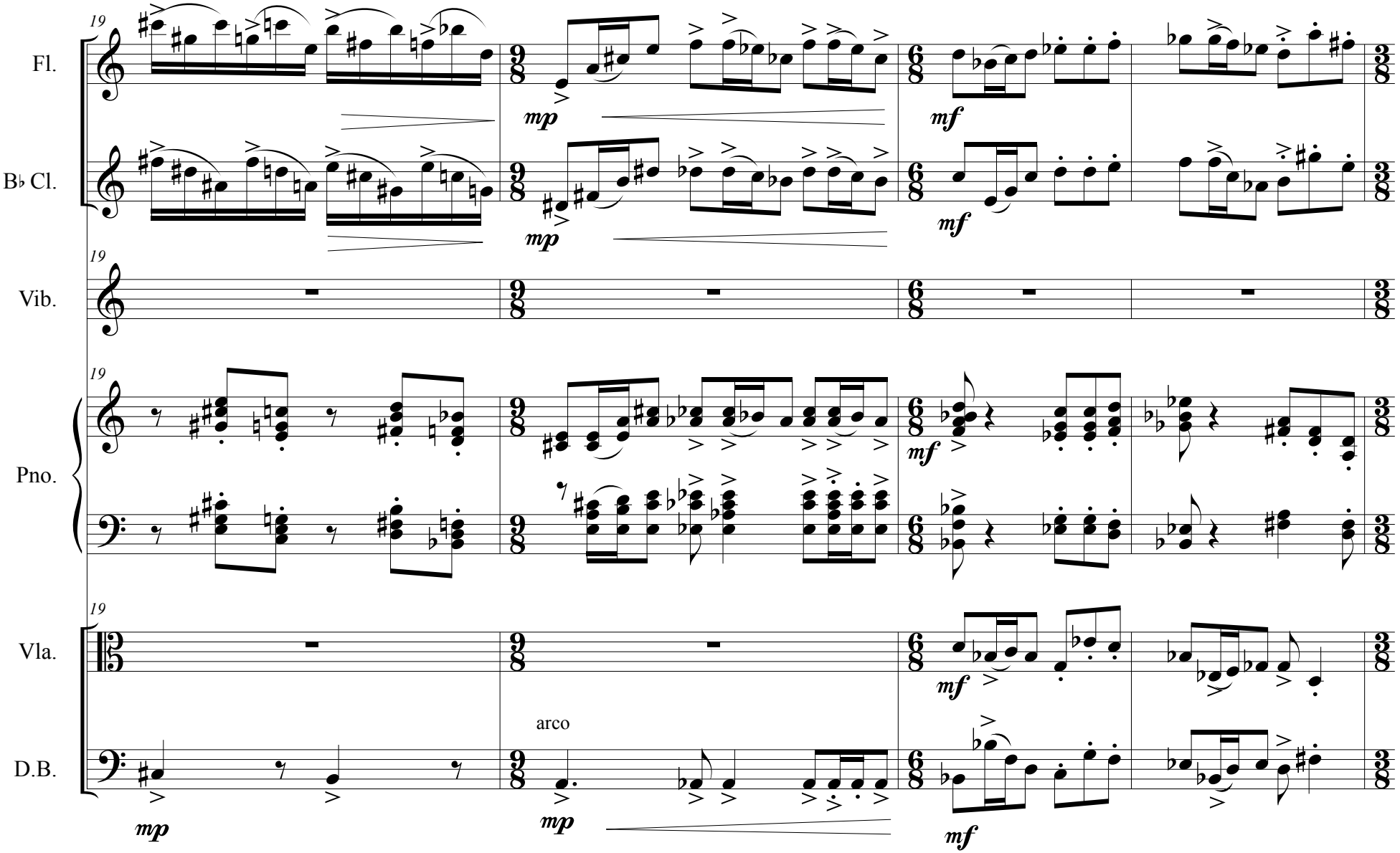
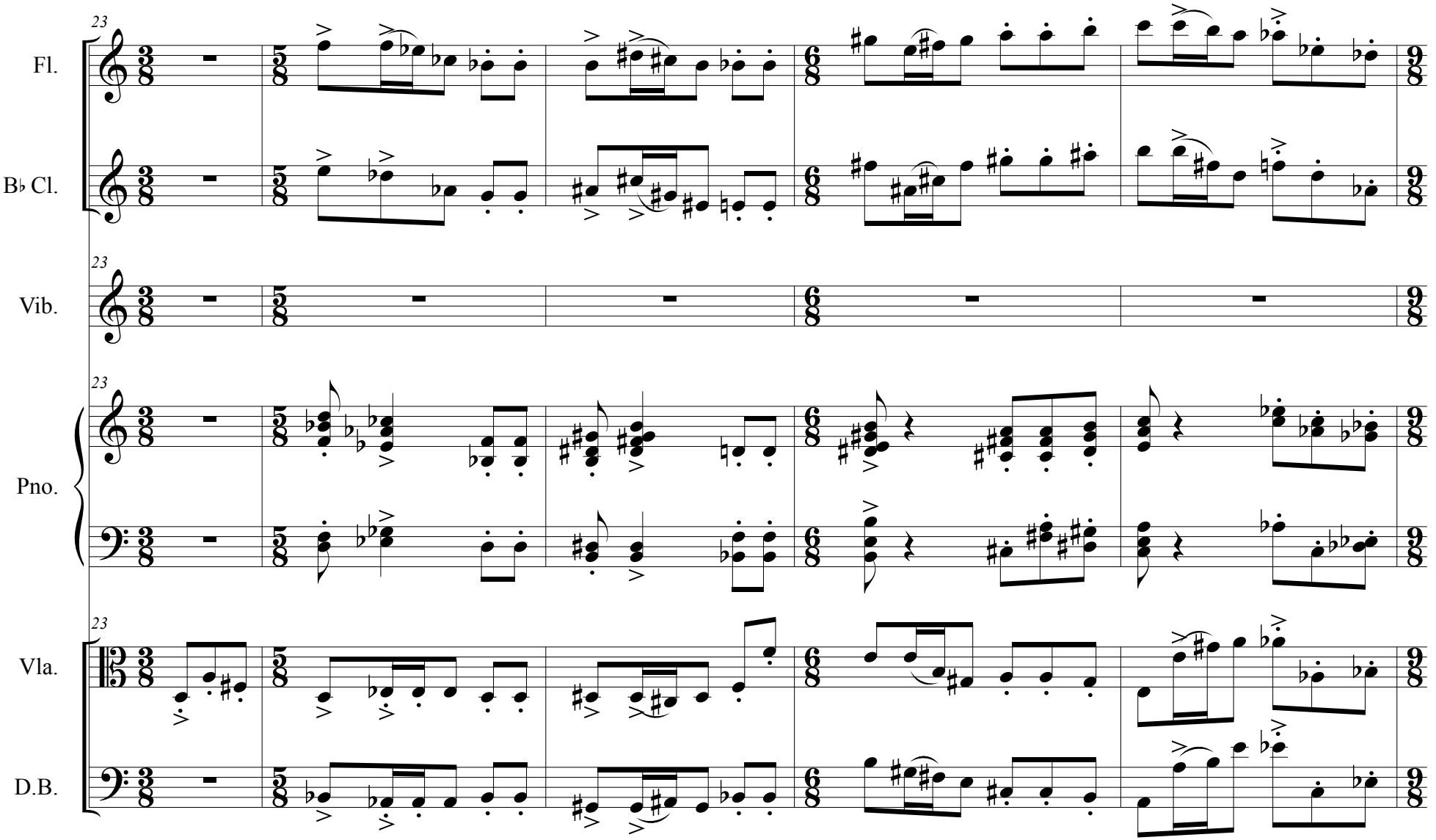
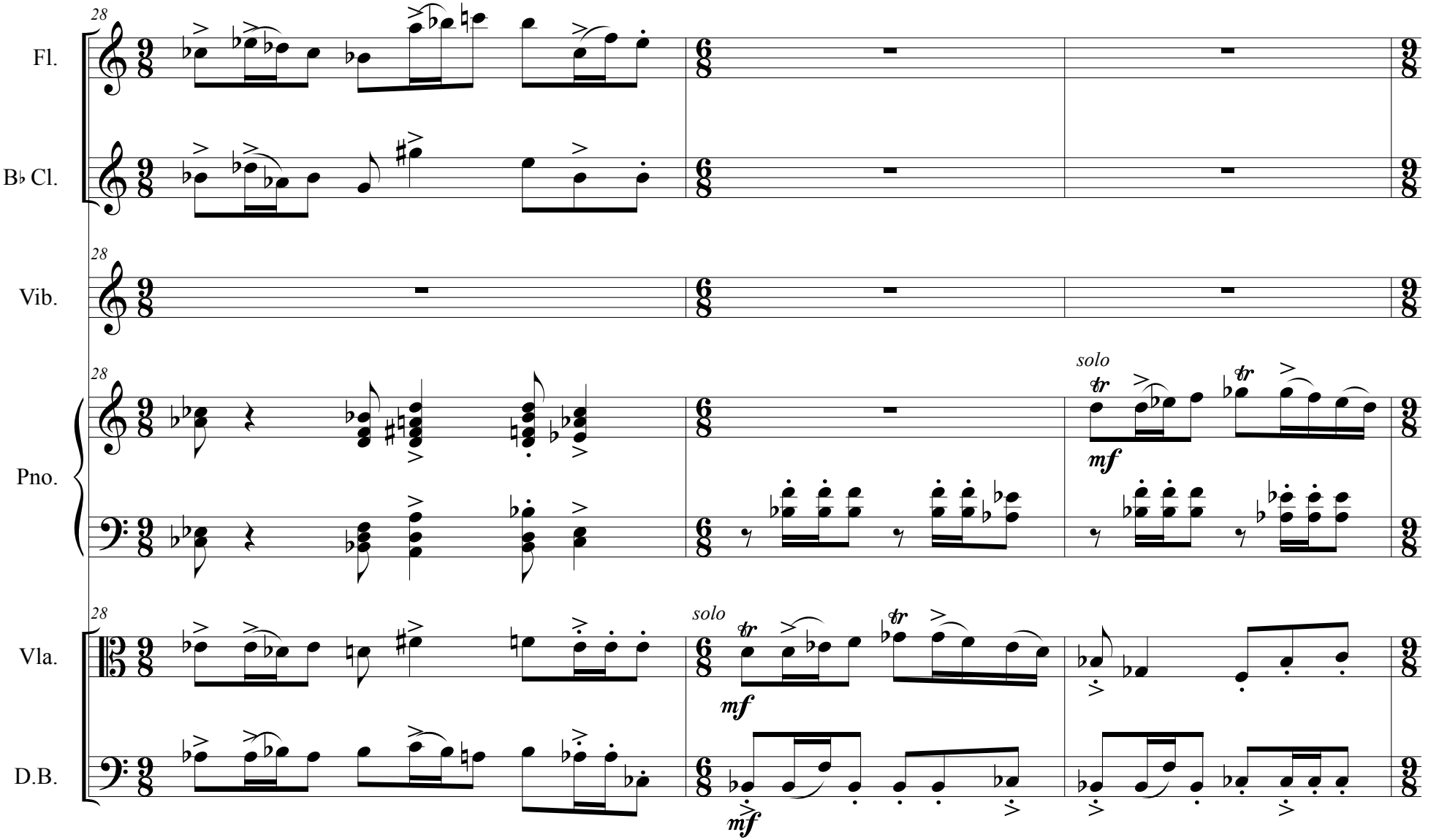

6
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Pno.
Vla.
D.B.
mp
pizz.

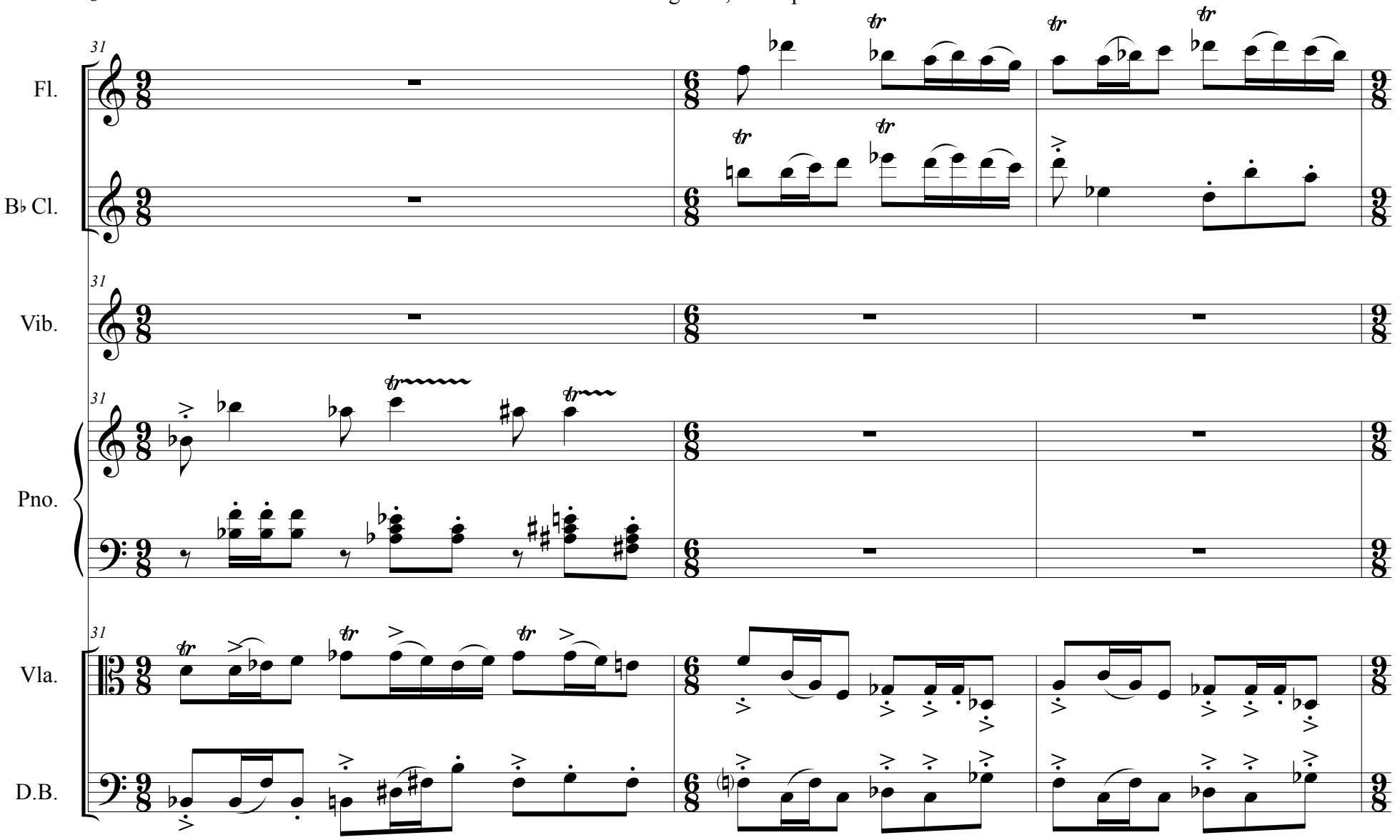

10
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Pno.
Vla.
D.B.
mf
mf
mp

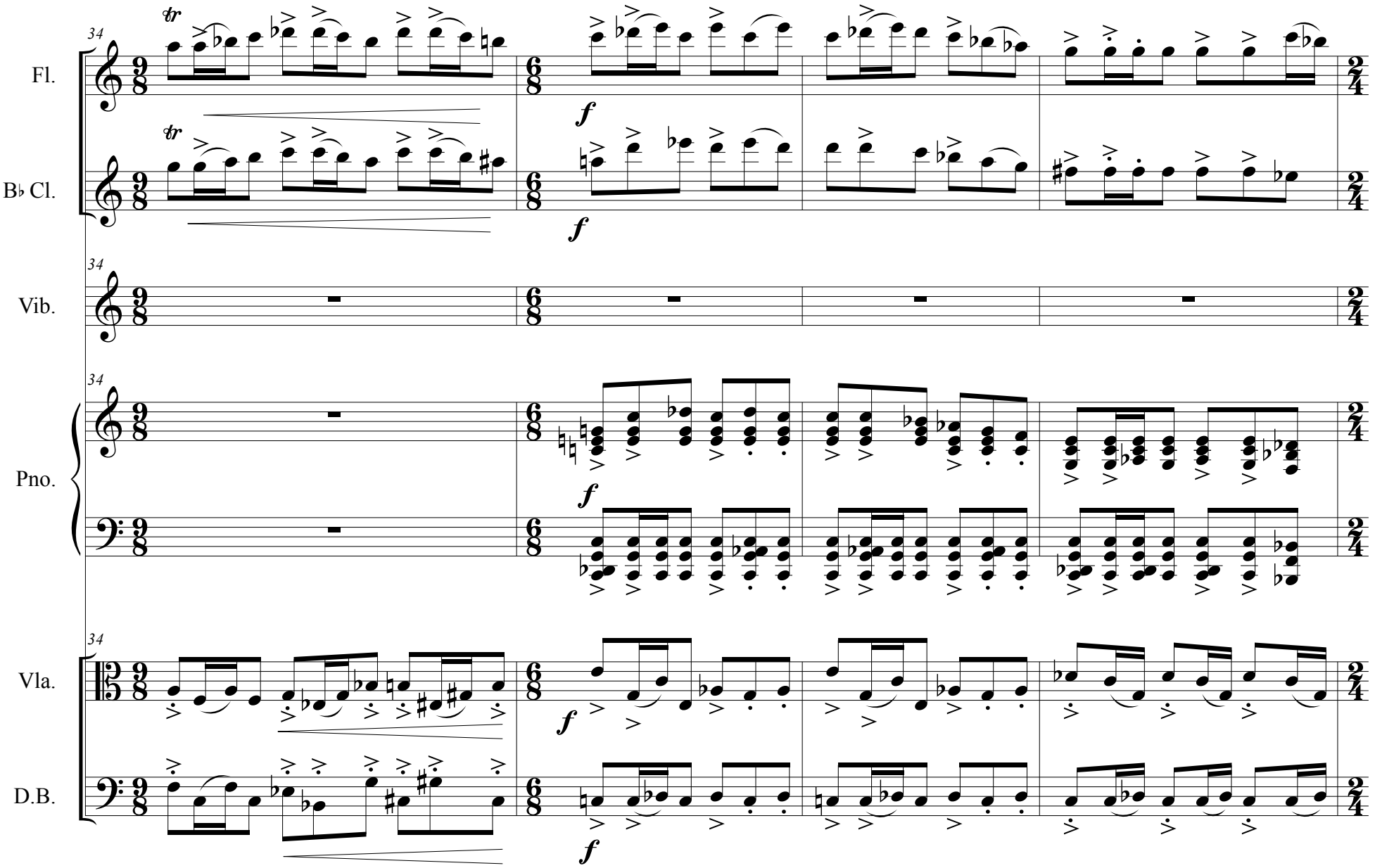

15
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Pno.
Vla.
D.B.
mf
tr

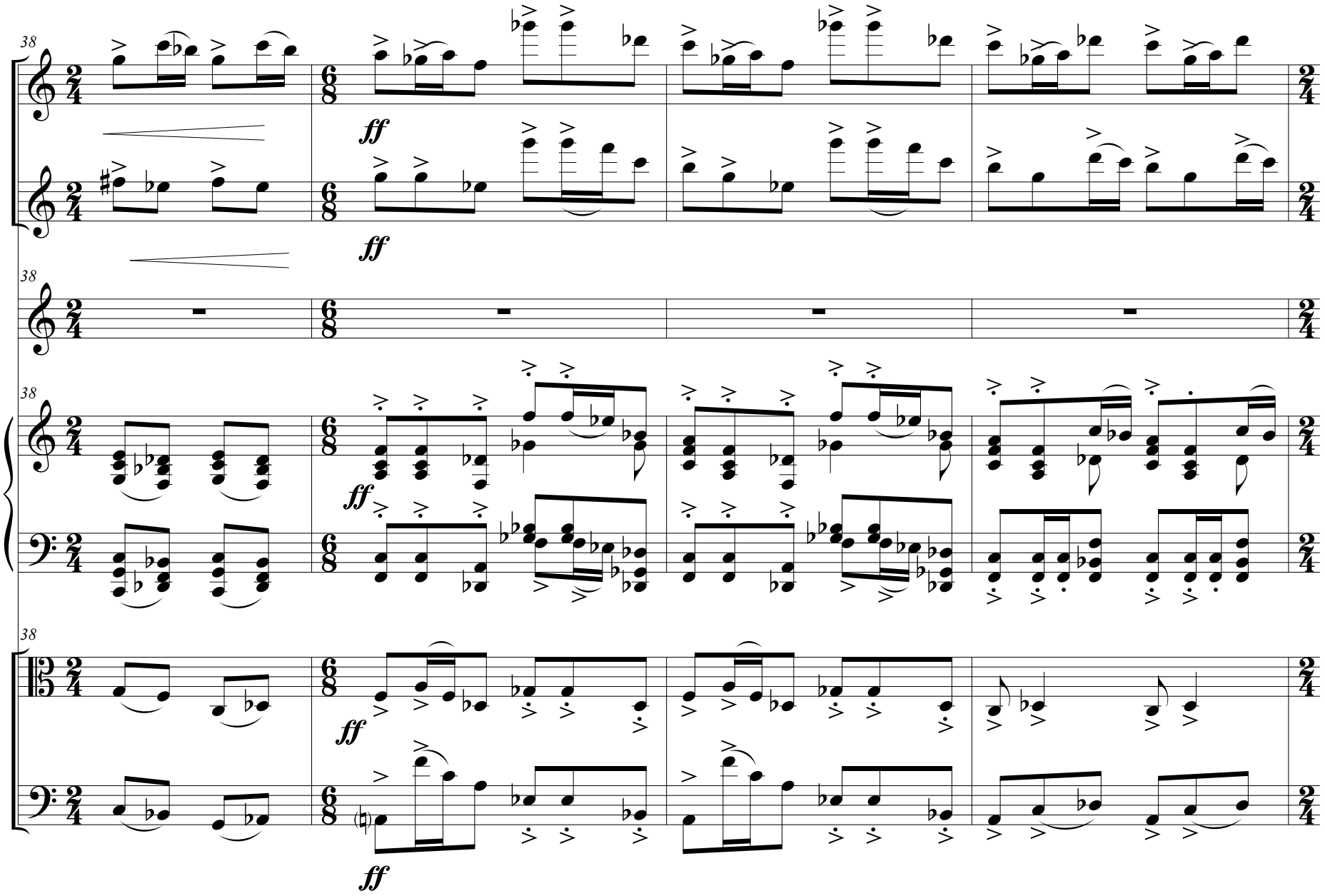

19
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Pno.
Vla.
D.B.
mp
mf
arco

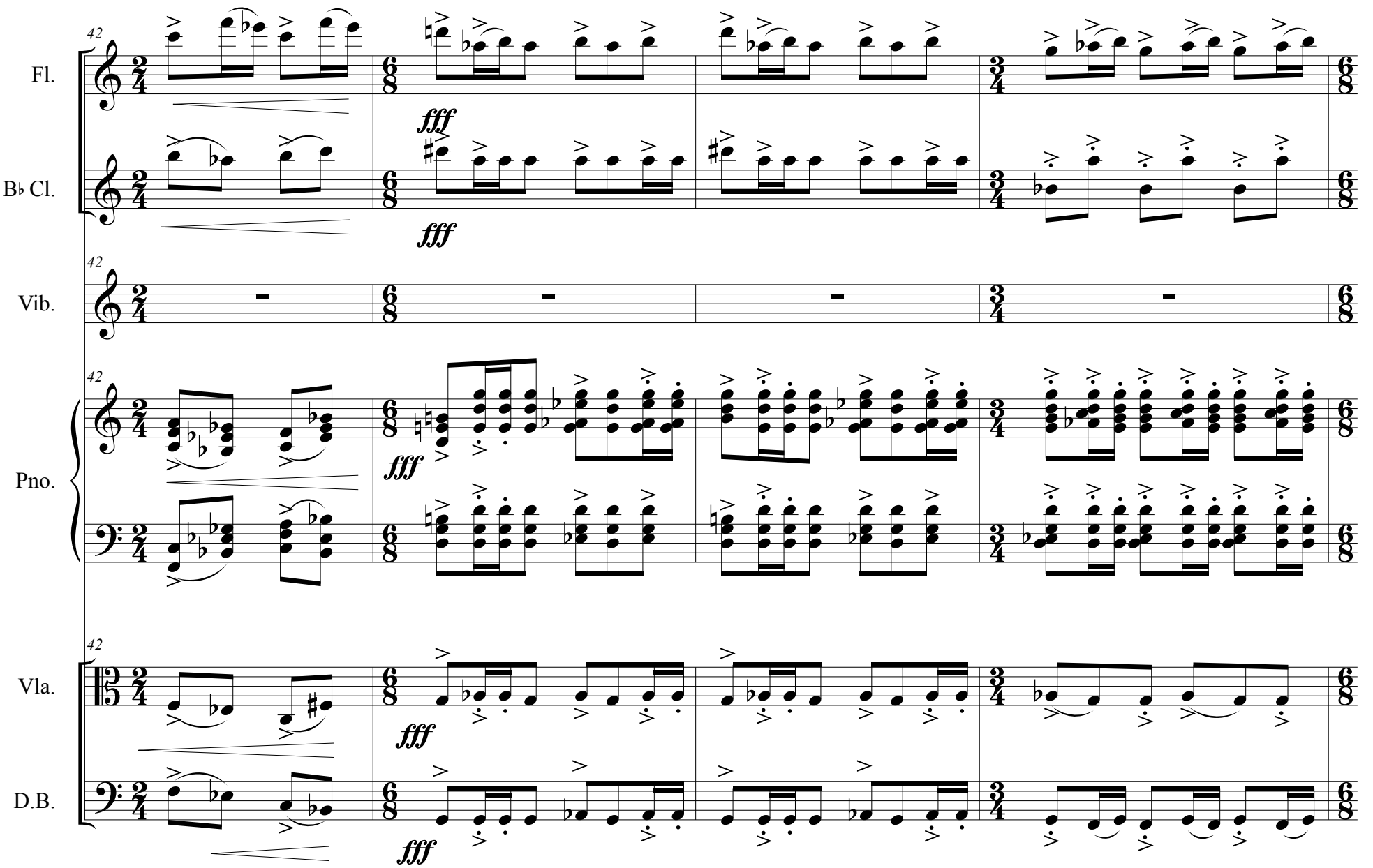

23
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Pno.
Vla.
D.B.

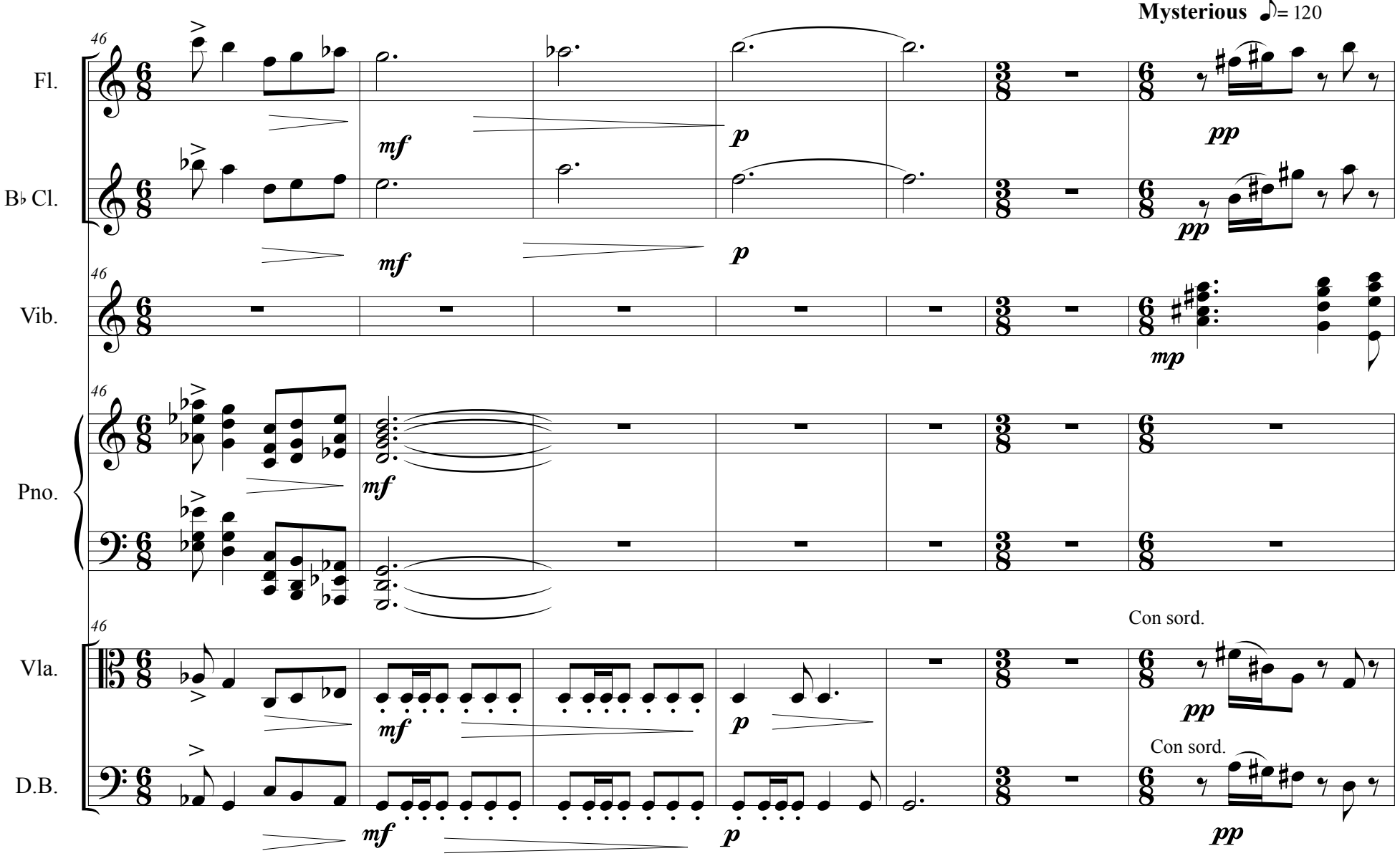

28
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
28
Vib.
28
Pno.
solo
mf
28
Vla.
solo
mf
D.B.
mf

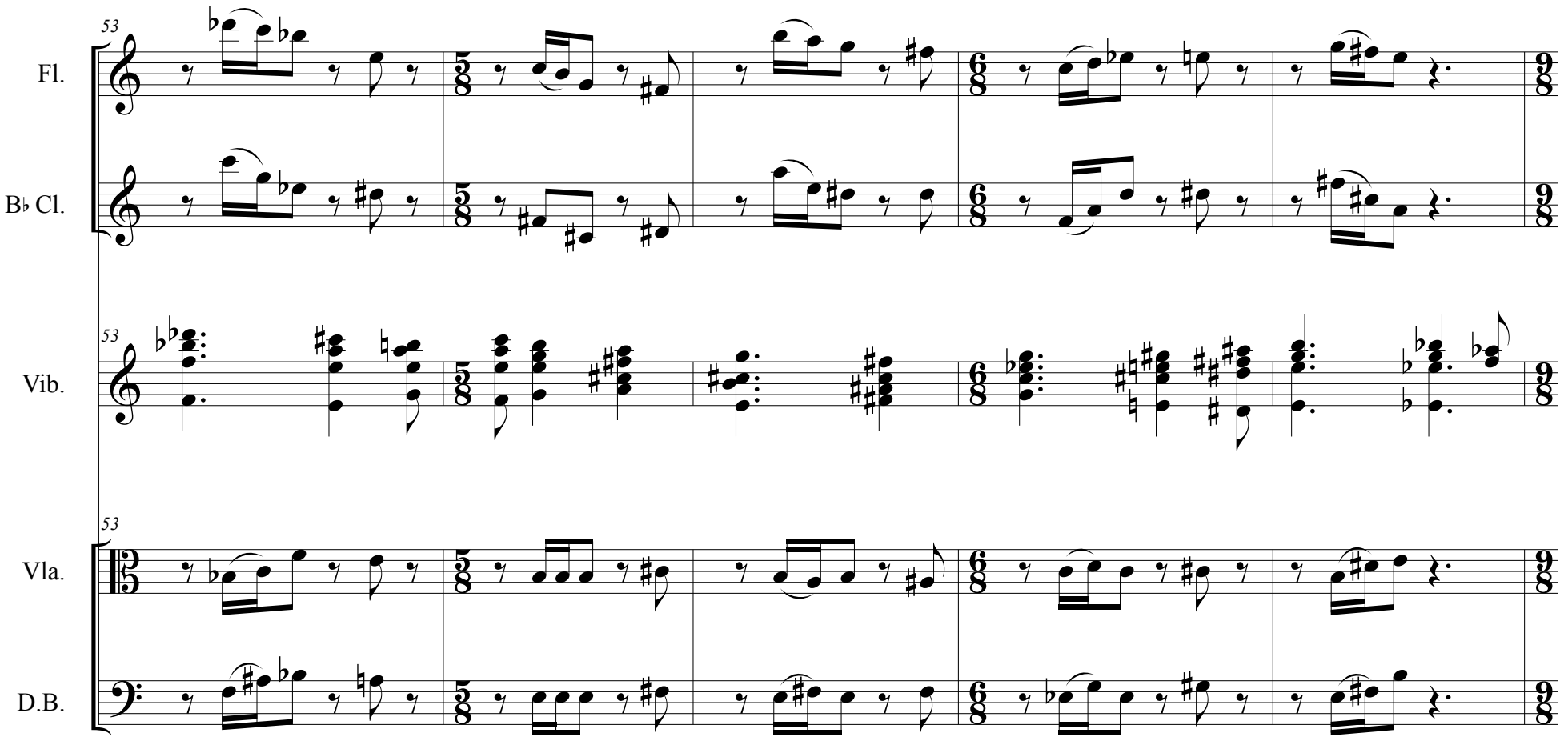

31
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Pno.
Vla.
D.B.

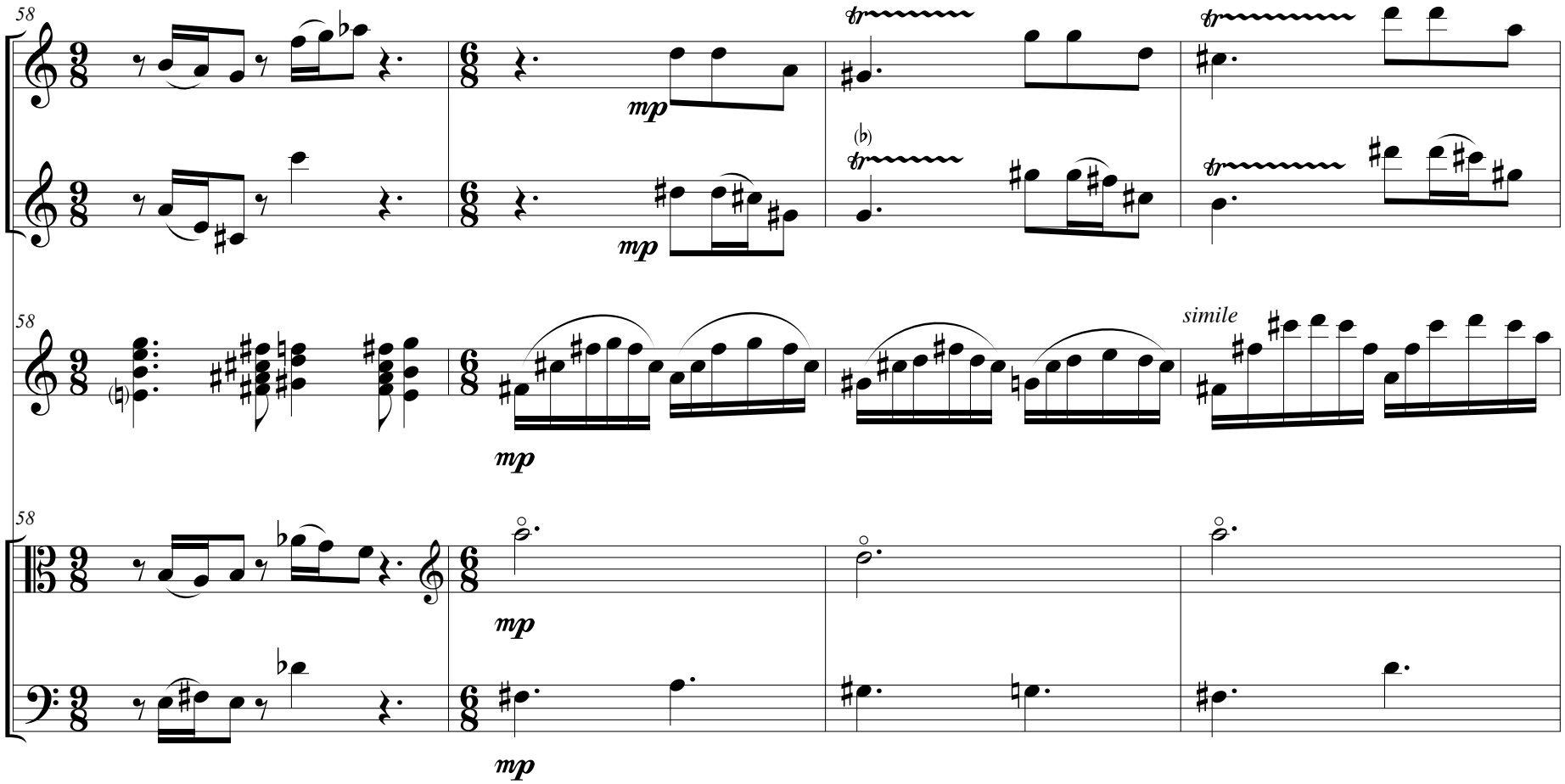

34
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Pno.
Vla.
D.B.
tr
f

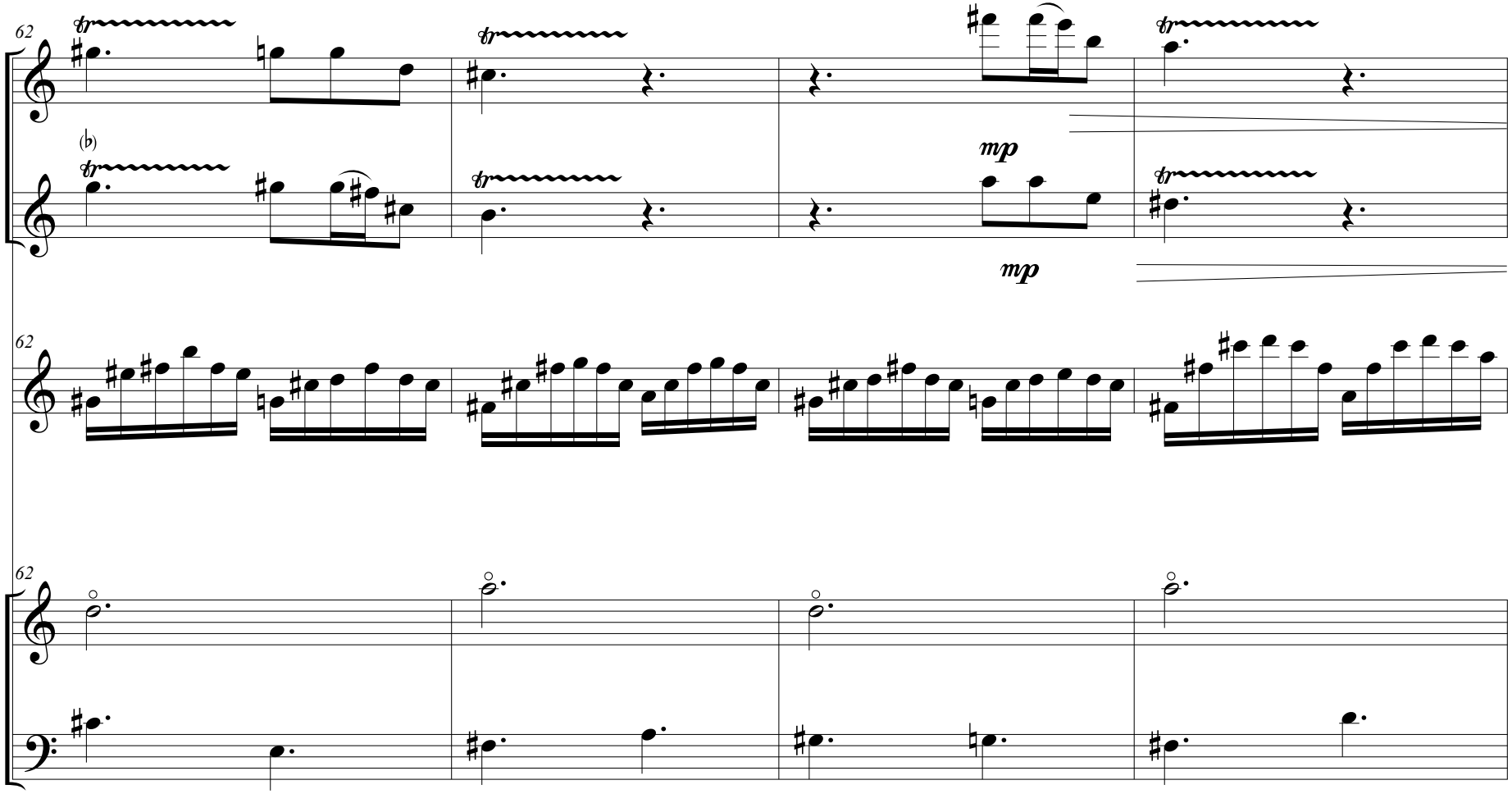

38
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Pno.
Vla.
D.B.
ff

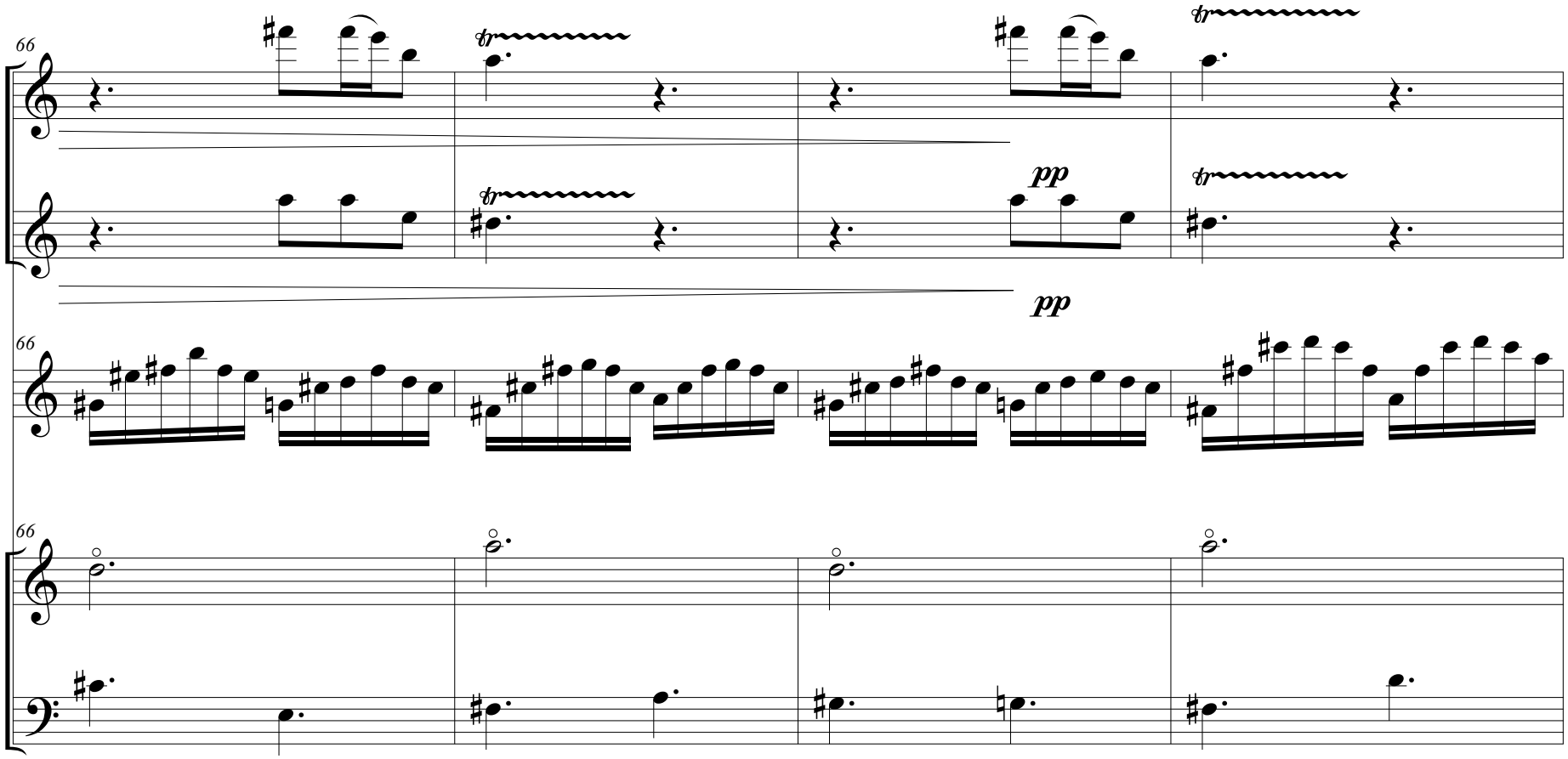

42
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Pno.
Vla.
D.B.
fff

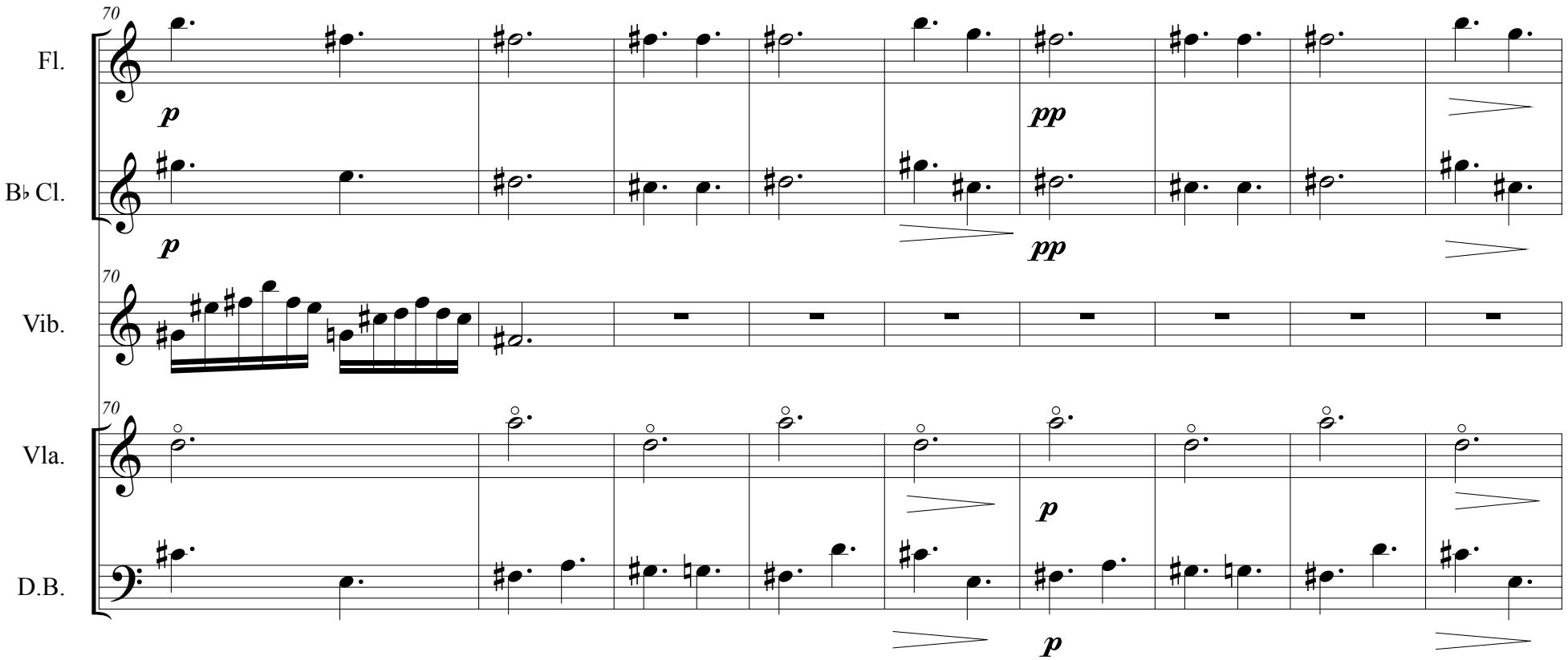

Mysterious ♪= 120
46
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Pno.
Vla.
D.B.
mf
p
pp
mp
Con sord.

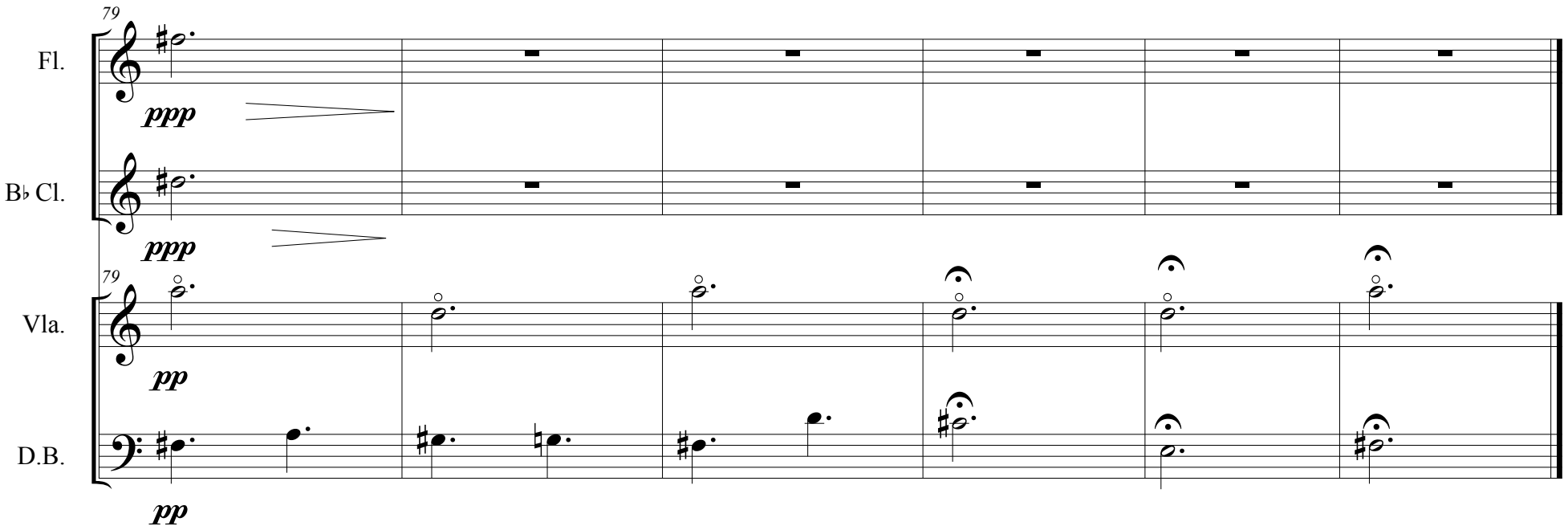

53
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
53
Vib.
53
Vla.
D.B.


58
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Vla.
D.B.
mp
simile


62
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Vla.
D.B.
mp
mp


66
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
pp
pp
66
Vib.
66
Vla.
D.B.


70
Fl.
p
pp
B♭ Cl.
p
pp
70
Vib.
70
Vla.
p
D.B.
p


79
Fl.
ppp
B♭ Cl.
ppp
79
Vla.
pp
D.B.
pp

Score

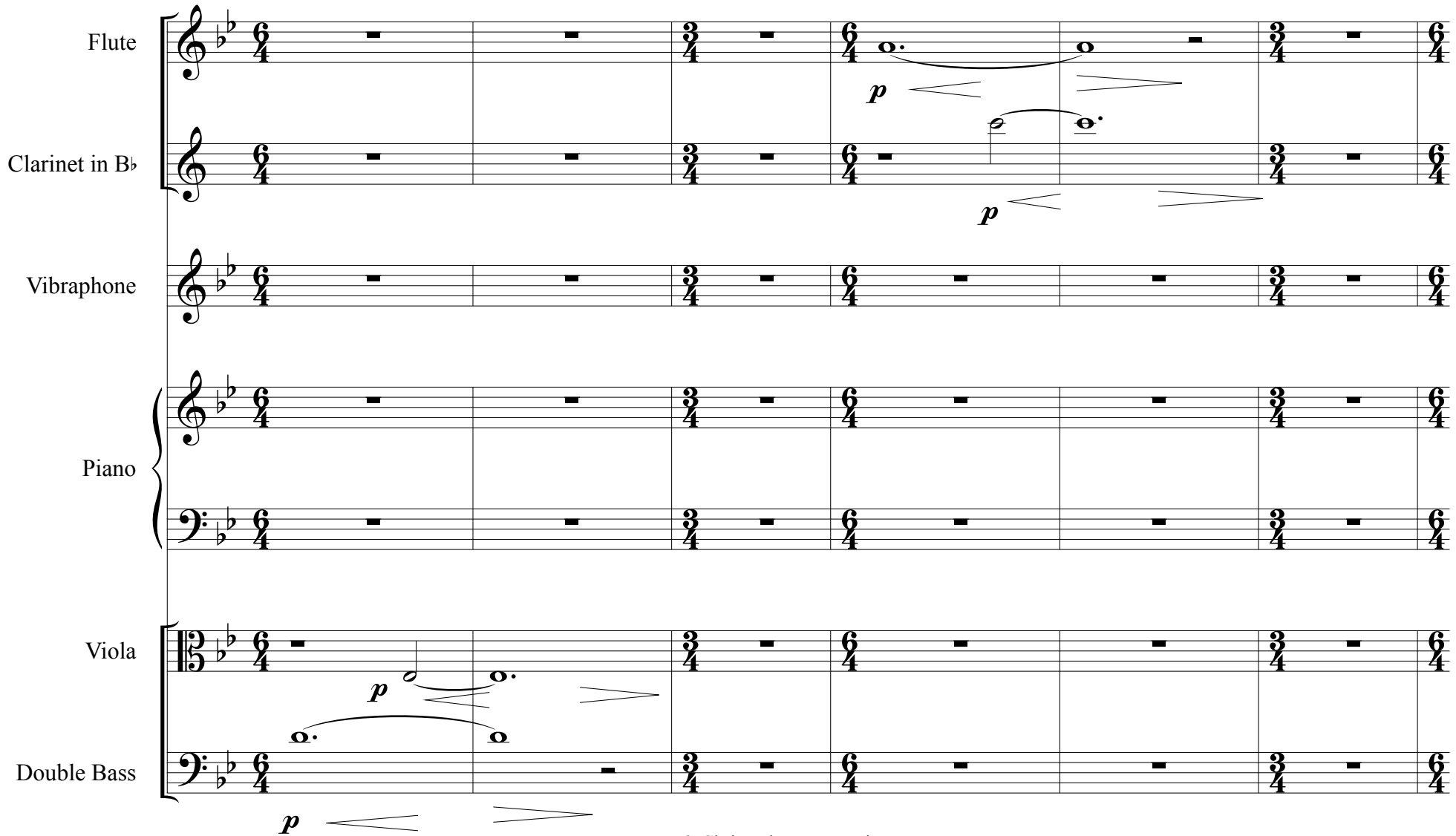
Untogether, Not Apart

Movement IV

Chris Pratorius
2013

This movement to be played with the sounds of orcas in the background.
Fade the recording in slowly as the musicians begin, and fade it out starting at m. 50. By m. 55 the orca track should be gone.

sustained and rubato ♩ = 72



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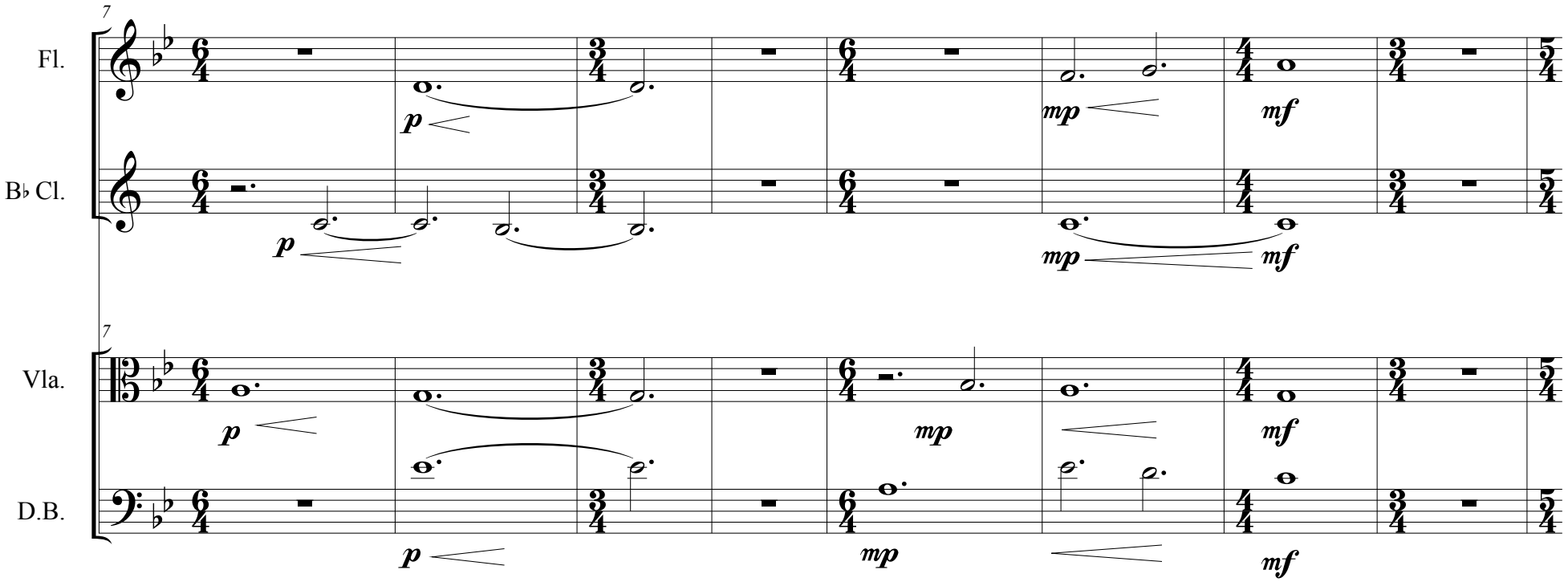
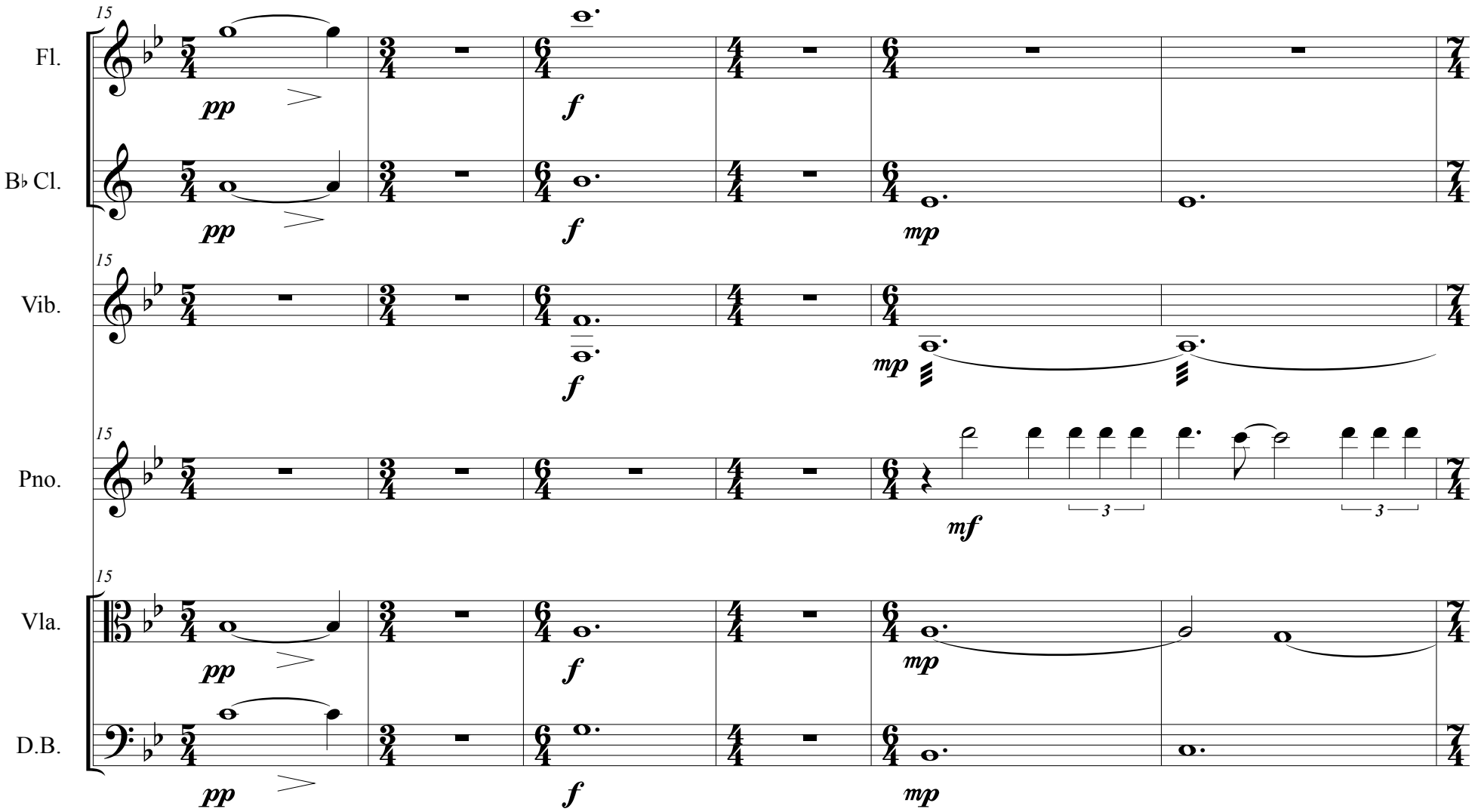
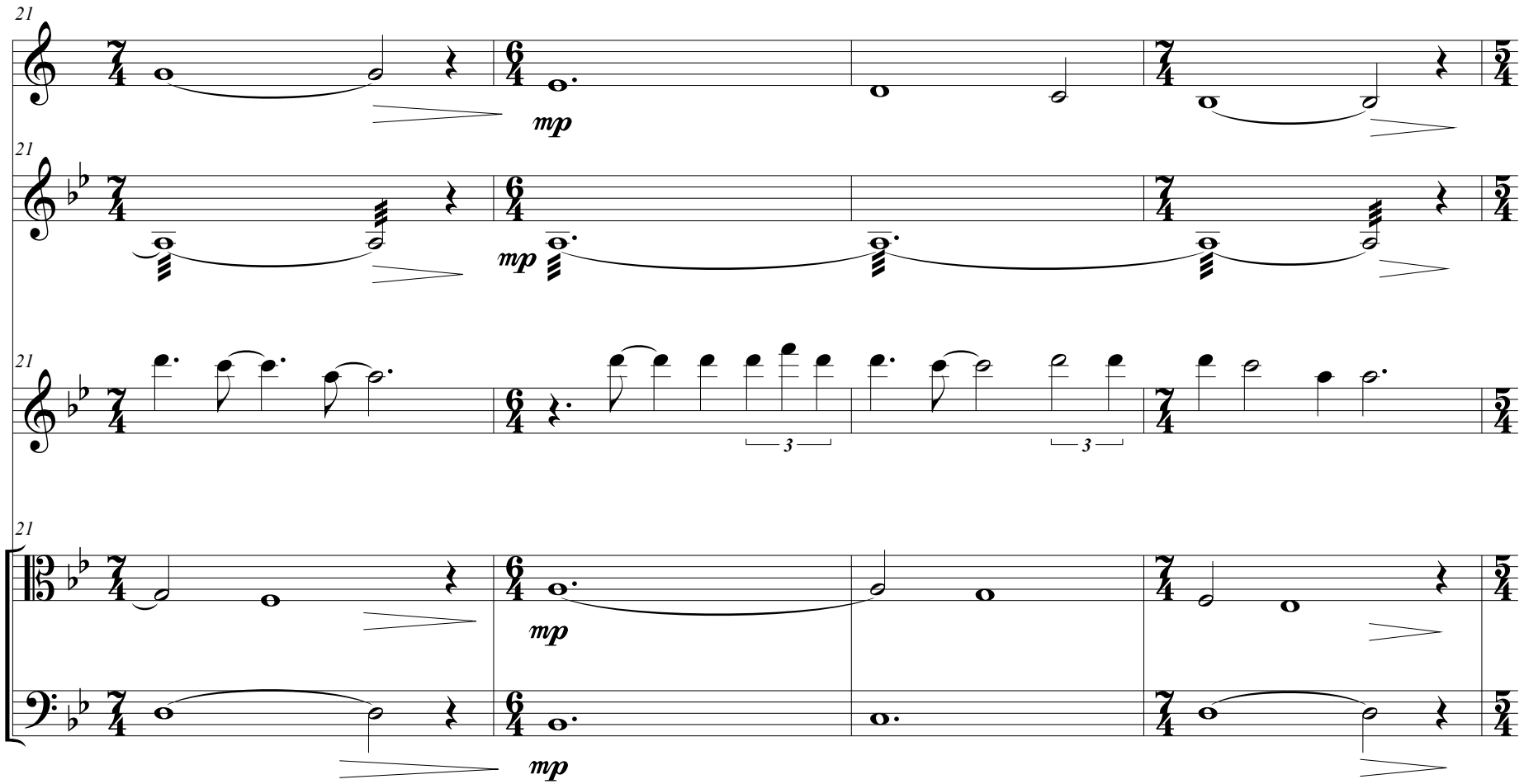
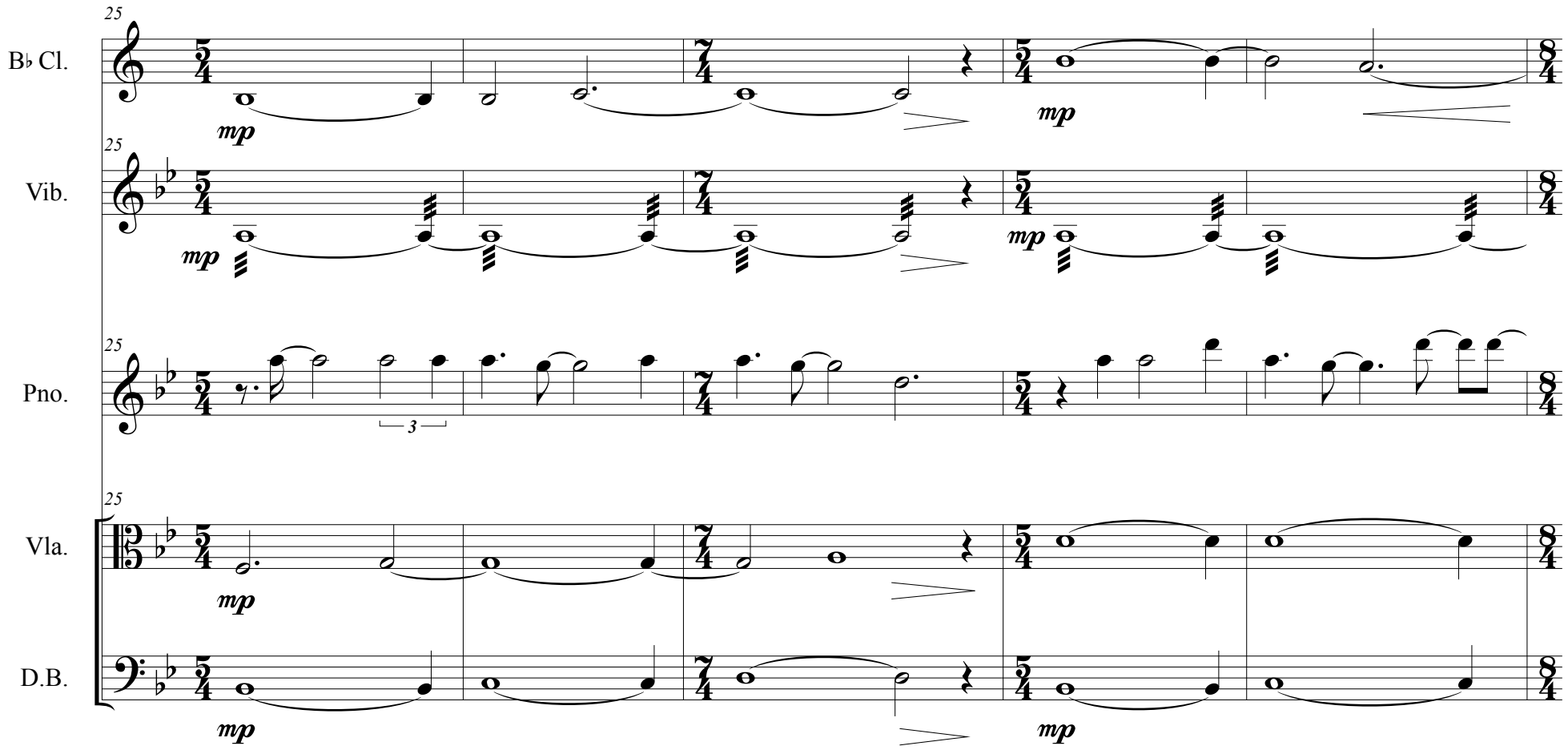
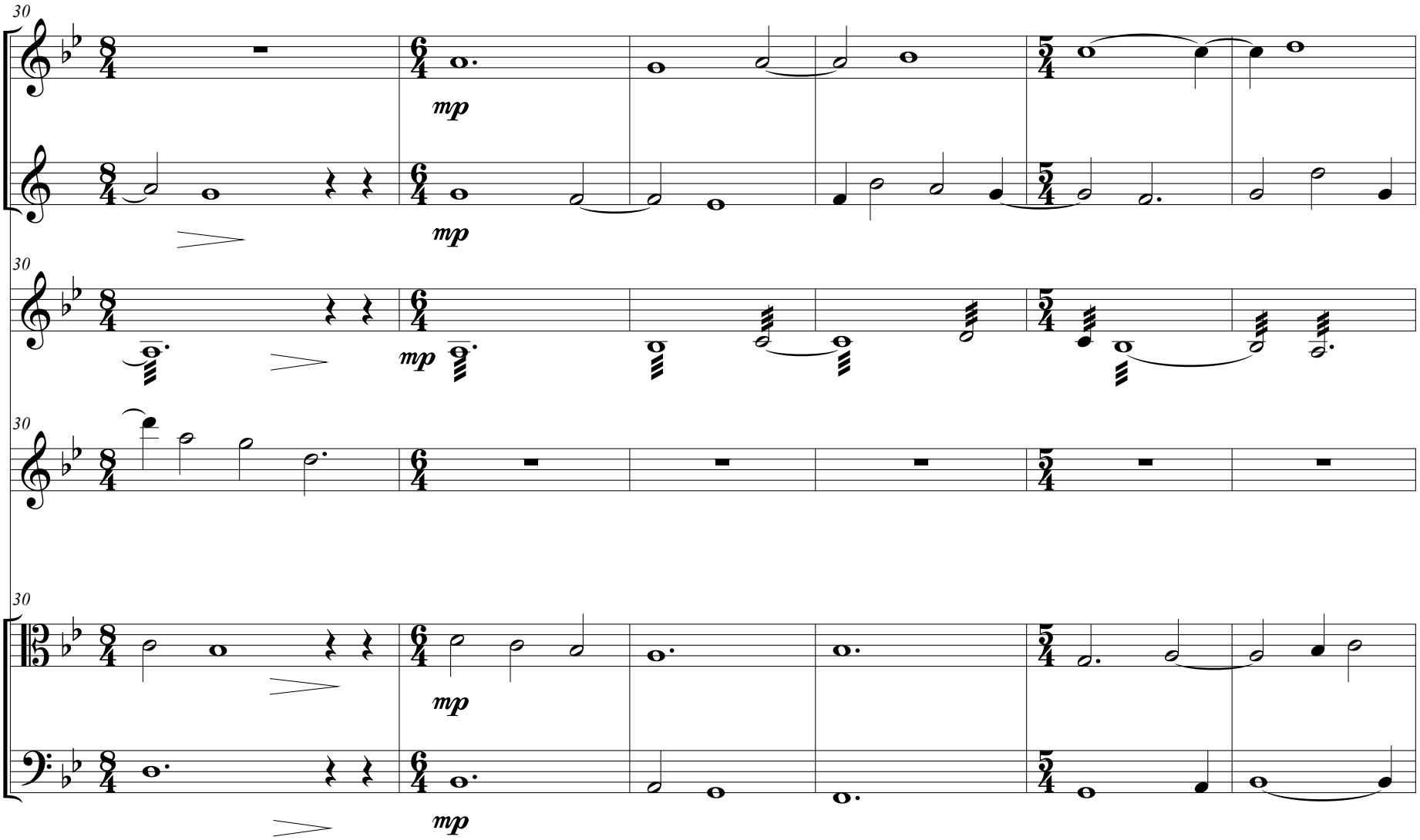
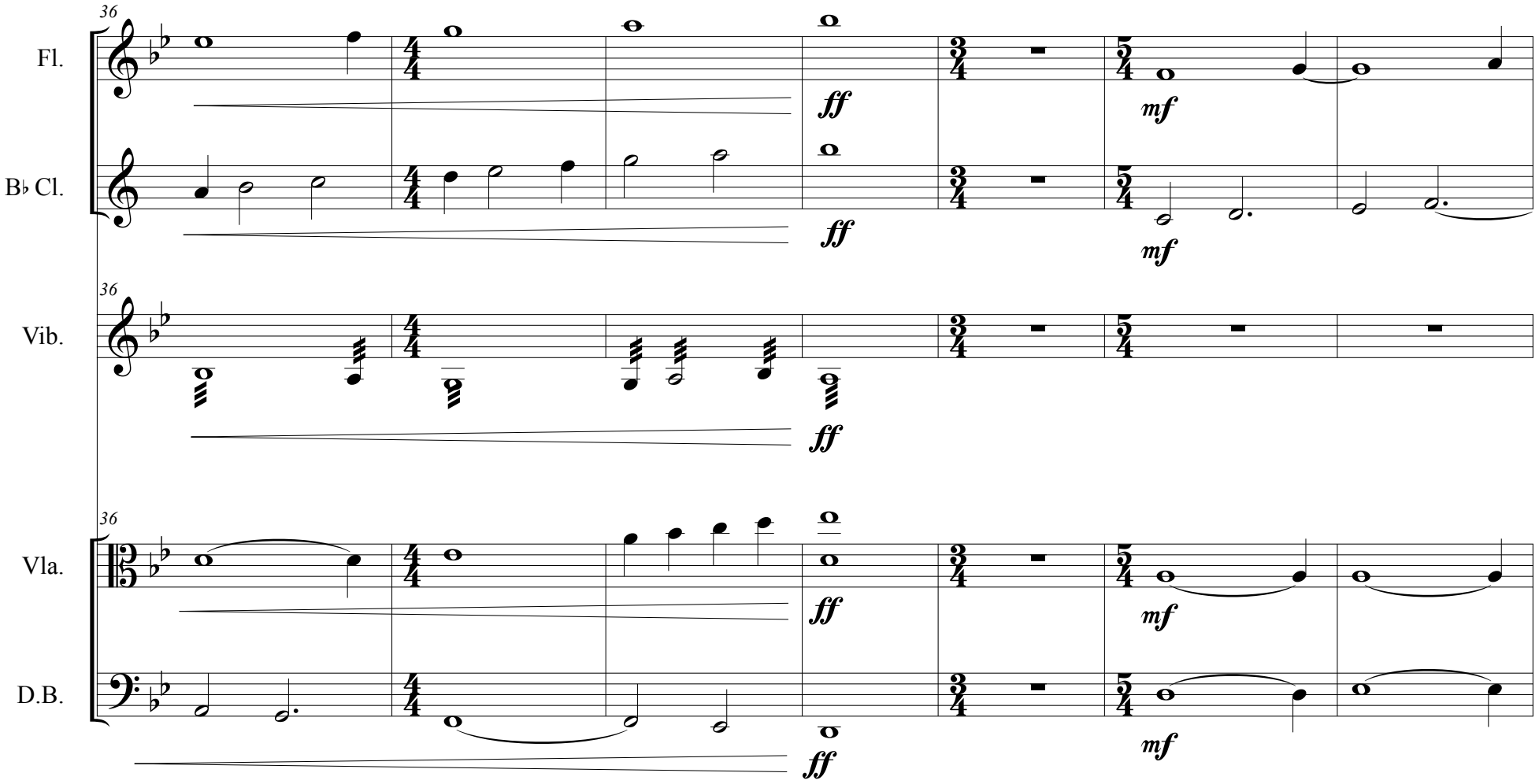

7
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vla.
D.B.
p
mp
mf

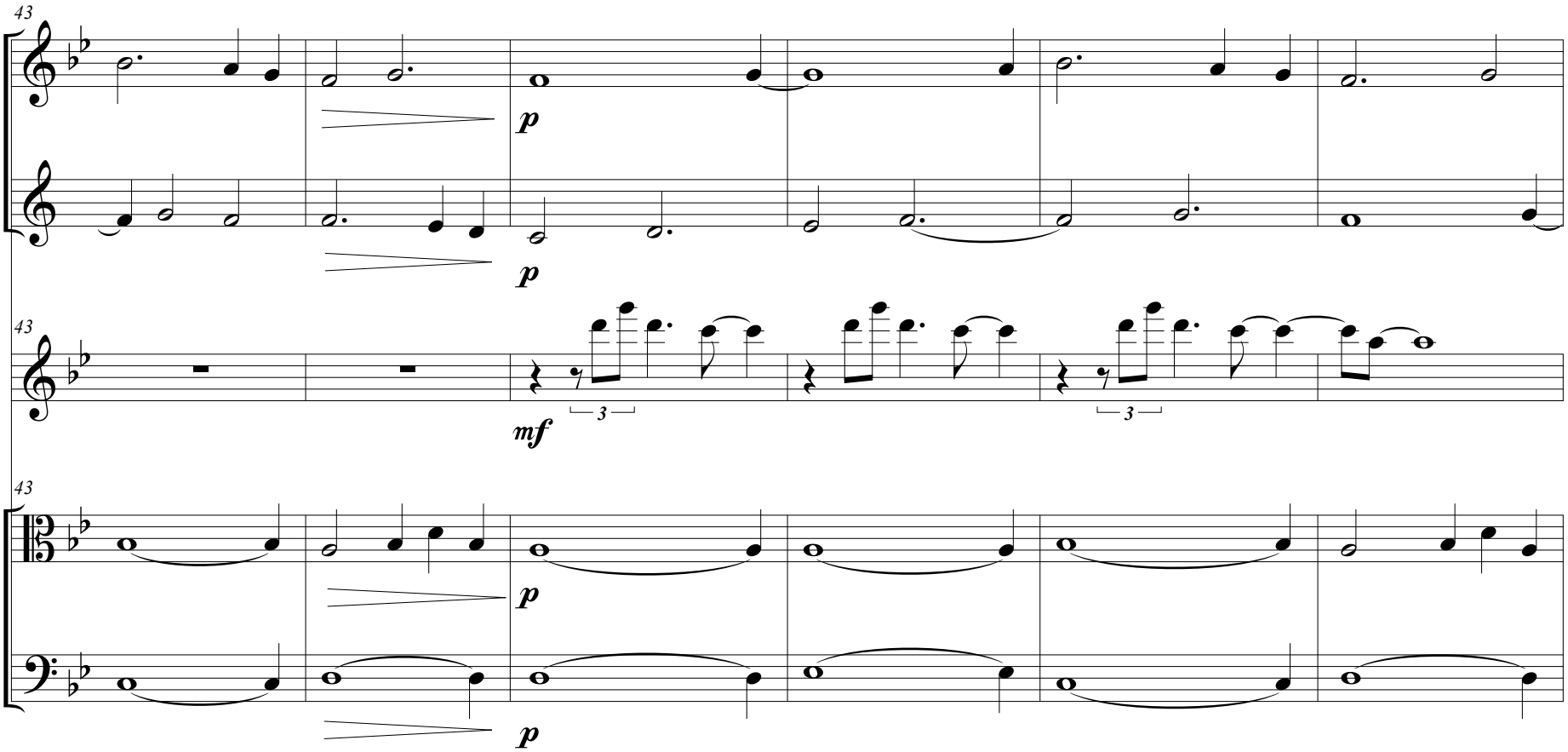

15
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Pno.
Vla.
D.B.
pp
f
mp
mf
3

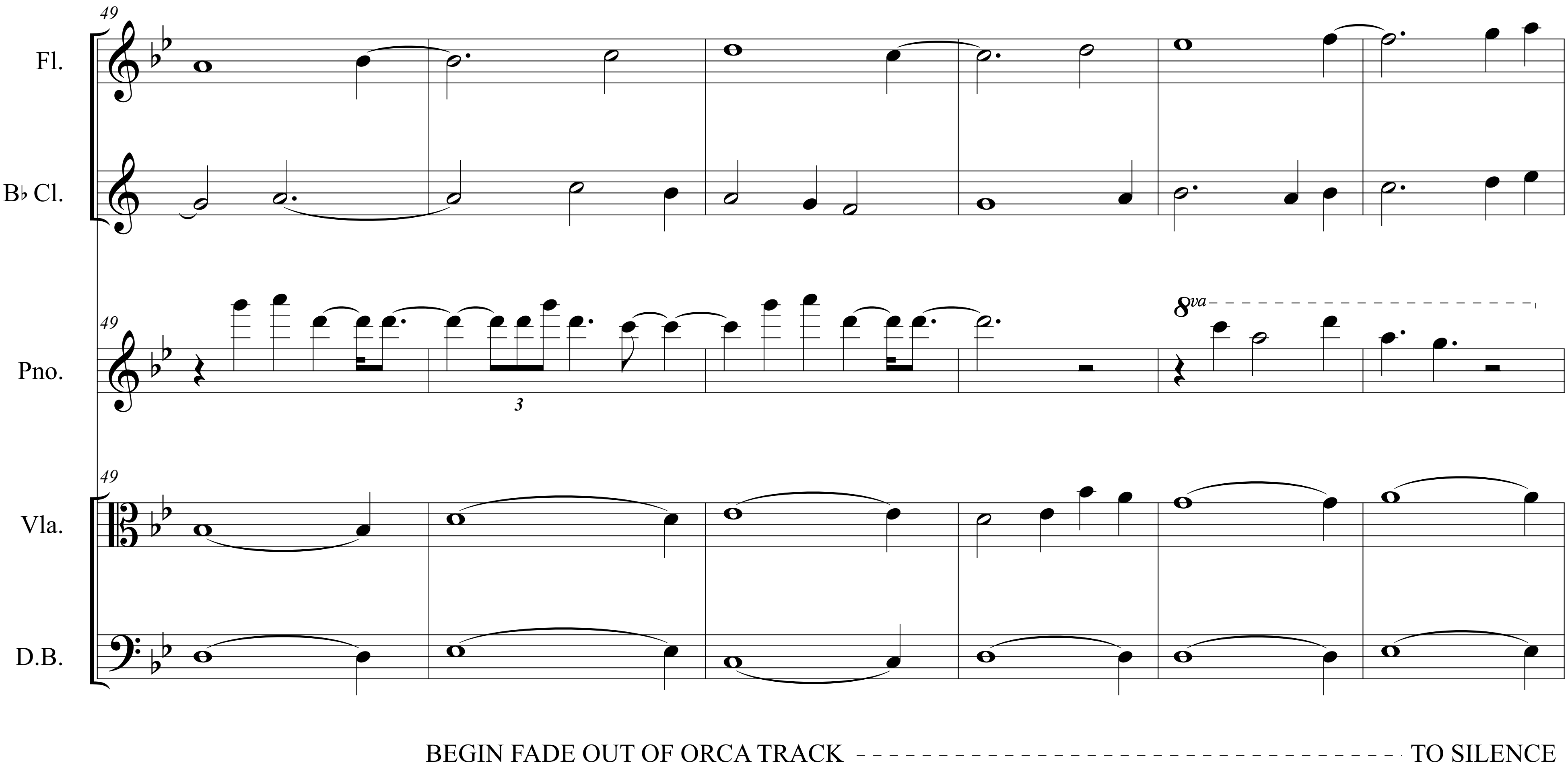

21
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Pno.
Vla.
D.B.
mp
3

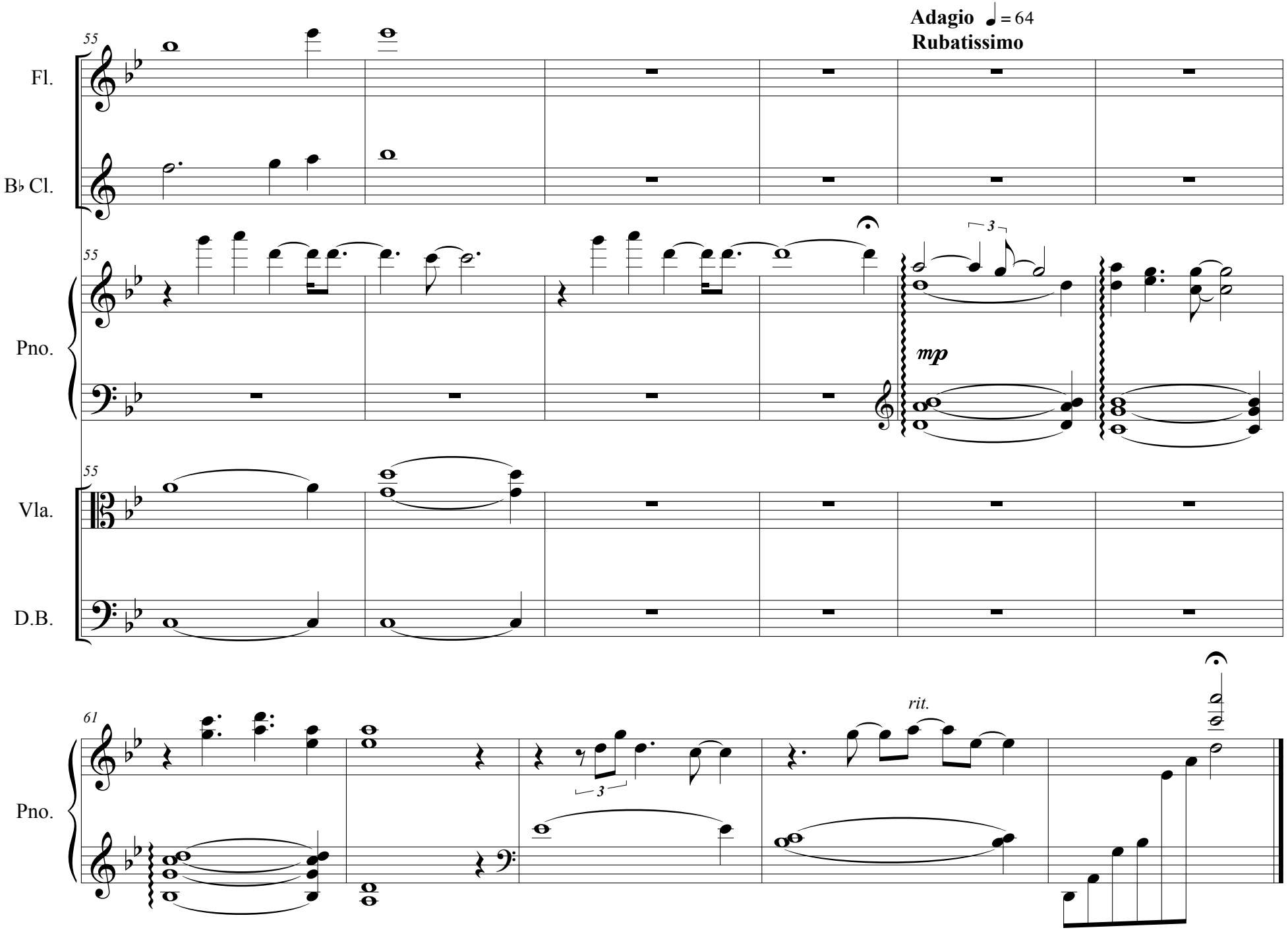

25
B♭ Cl.
mp
mp
25
Vib.
mp
mp
25
Pno.
3
25
Vla.
mp
D.B.
mp
mp


30
Fl.
mp
B♭ Cl.
mp
30
Vib.
mp
30
Pno.
30
Vla.
mp
D.B.
mp


36
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Vib.
Vla.
D.B.
ff
mf


43
Fl.
p
B♭ Cl.
p
43
Pno.
mf
3
3
43
Vla.
p
D.B.
p


49
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
3
8va
Vla.
D.B.
BEGIN FADE OUT OF ORCA TRACK
TO SILENCE


Adagio ♩ = 64
Rubatissimo
55
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
Vla.
D.B.
mp
3
61
rit.