Forrest Wentzel

Readings

(2022)

for string quartet

As a child, my grandparents hosted a “Welcome to the World” party for a small group of friends and family. Each person who attended chose a short reading to share with the group and family that could not make it to Maine sent their own texts to be read by proxy. When watching the home video of the get-together, I was struck by the musicality of several of the readings and decided to map out the melodies of four and apply harmony.

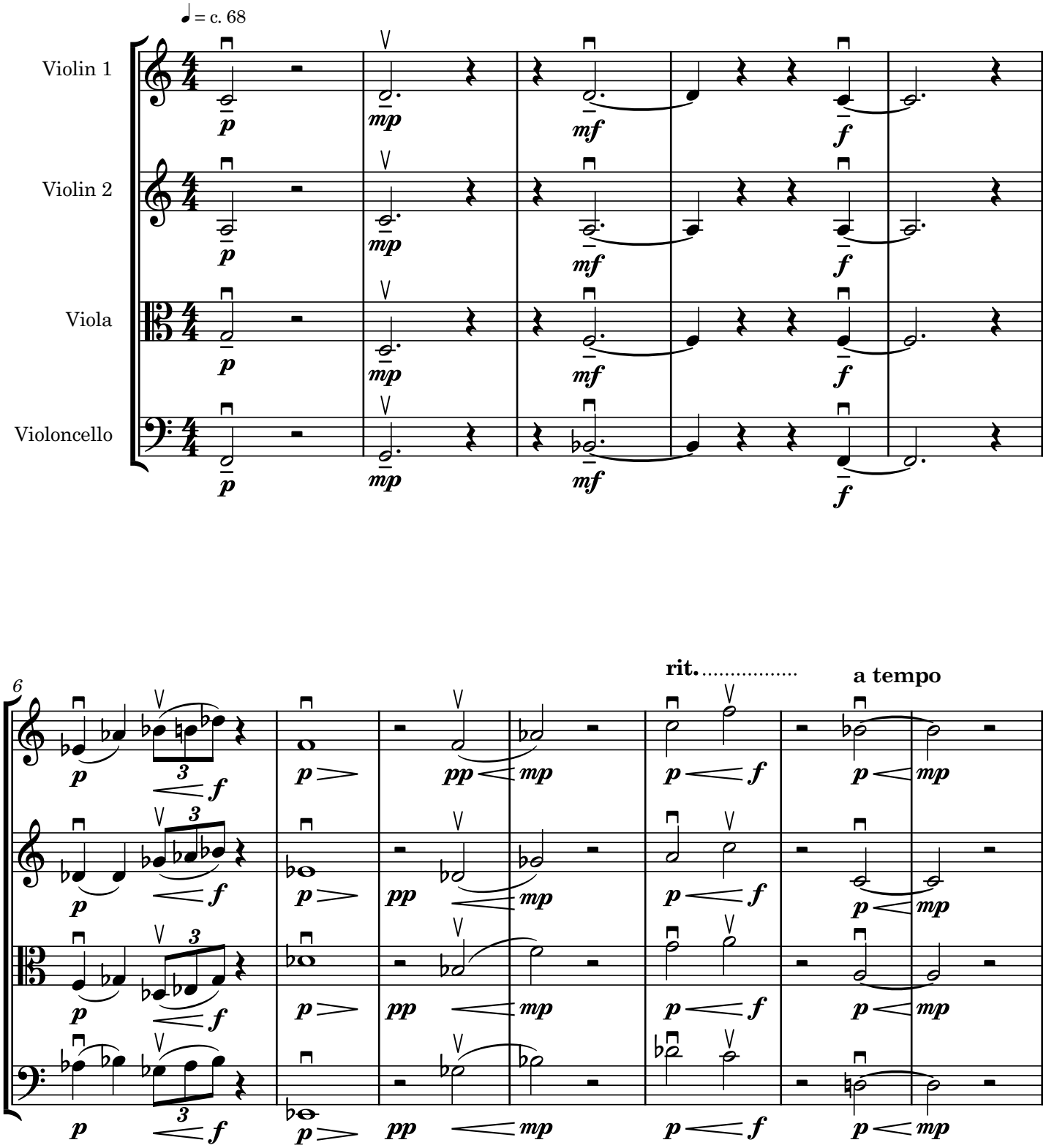
The four texts which inspire each movement are:

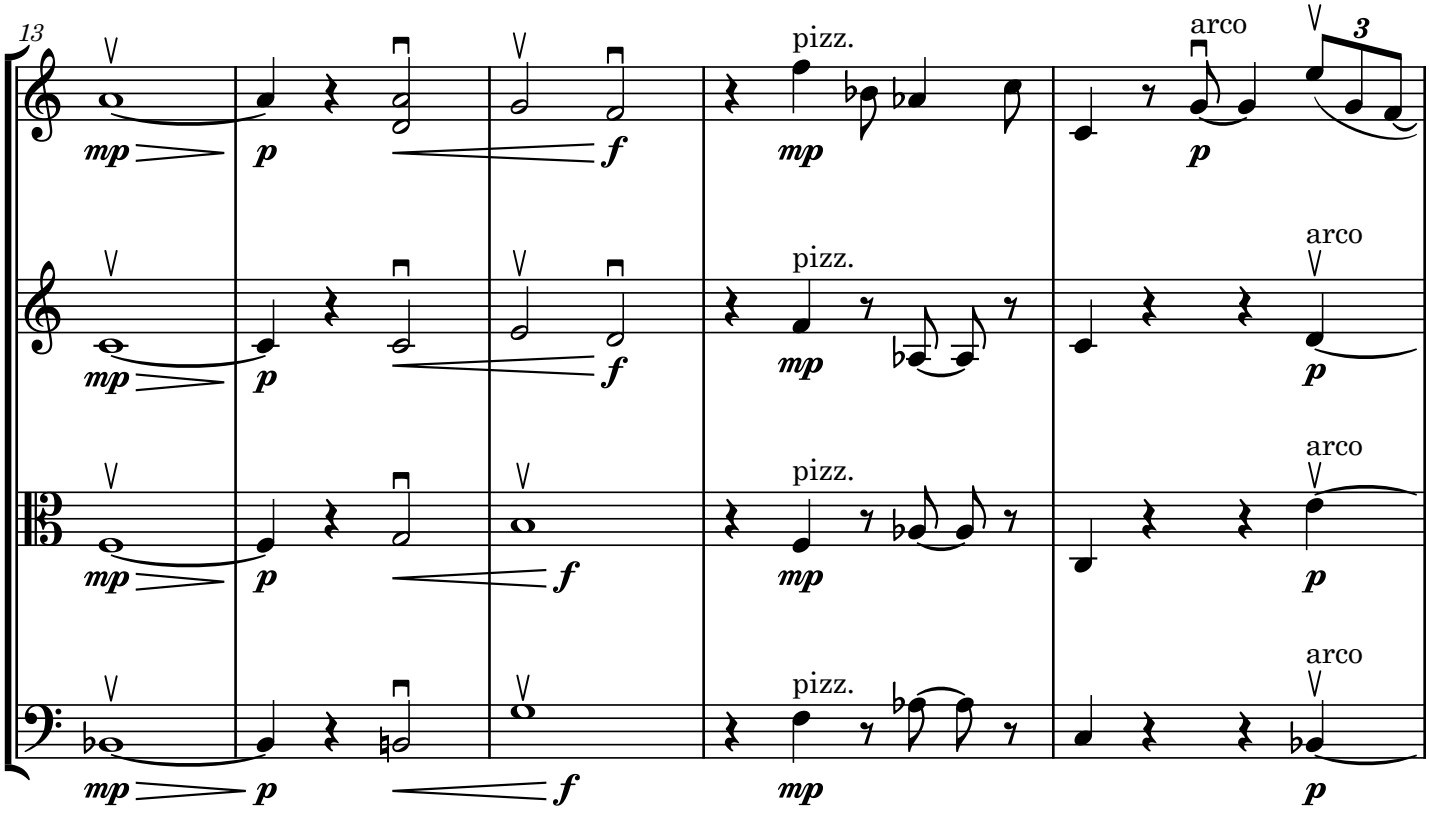
1. The end of Plato's Phaedrus as read by my great uncle Jim who was a renowned scholar of the classics
2. A poem written by my cousin Solomon (11 years old at the time) called "Ocean" as read by my father
3. A selection from Alan Paton's novel *Cry, the Beloved Country,* as read by my grandfather who was a pastor
4. A poem written by my great Aunt Carol called "Gifts and Bequests," again, as read by my great uncle Jim

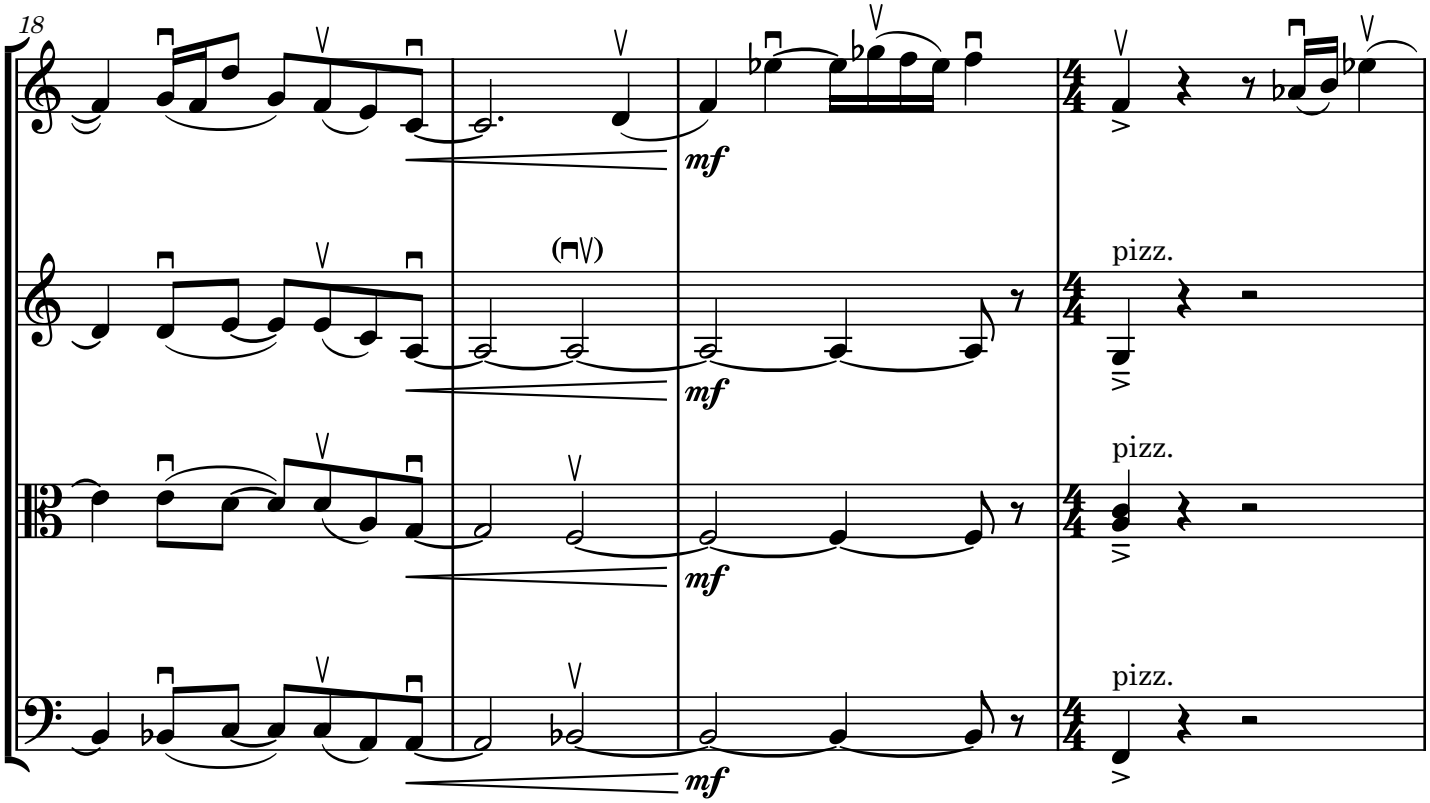
Readings (for String Quartet) attempts to hone in on the lilting beauty of my family members’ voices while removing the words entirely.

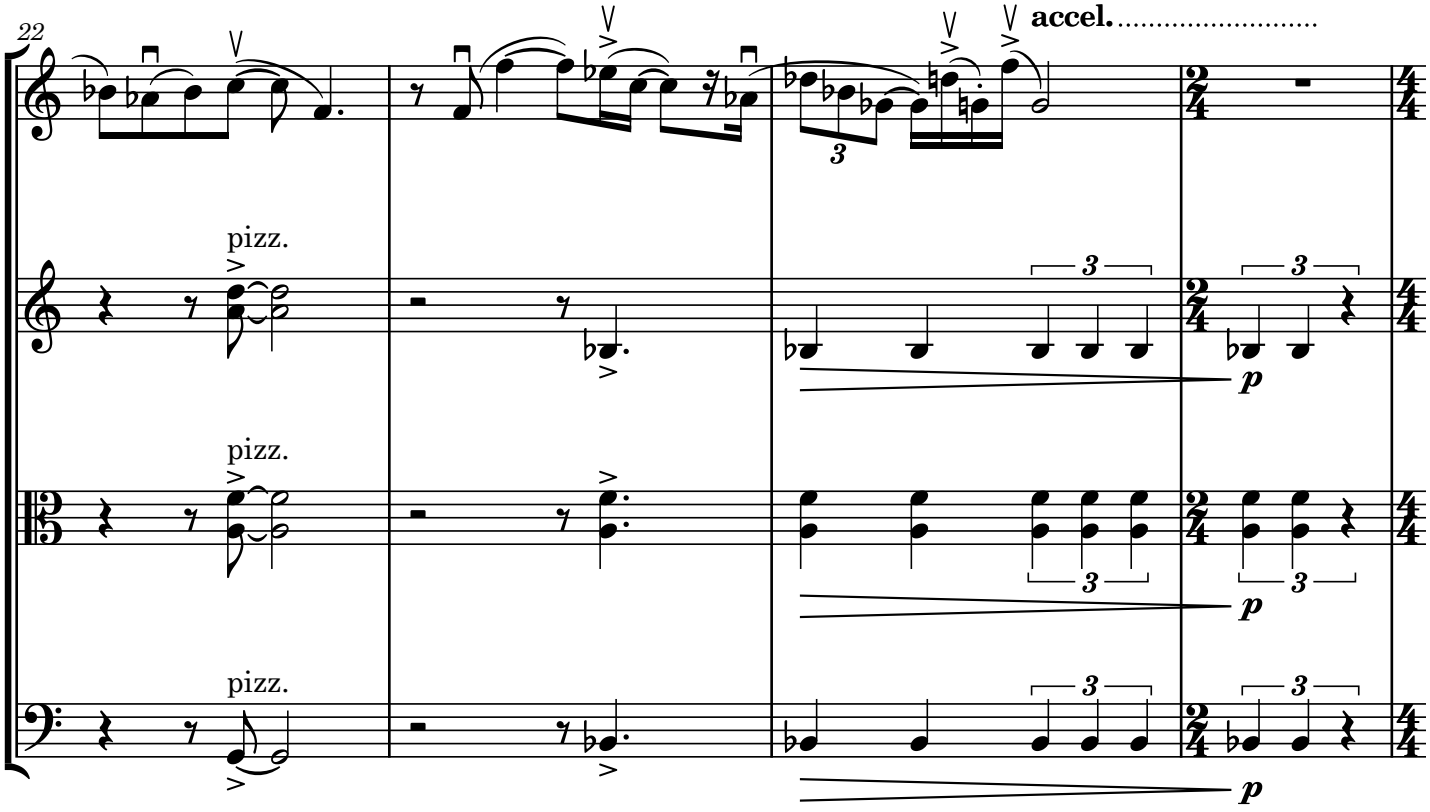
READINGS (for String Quartet)

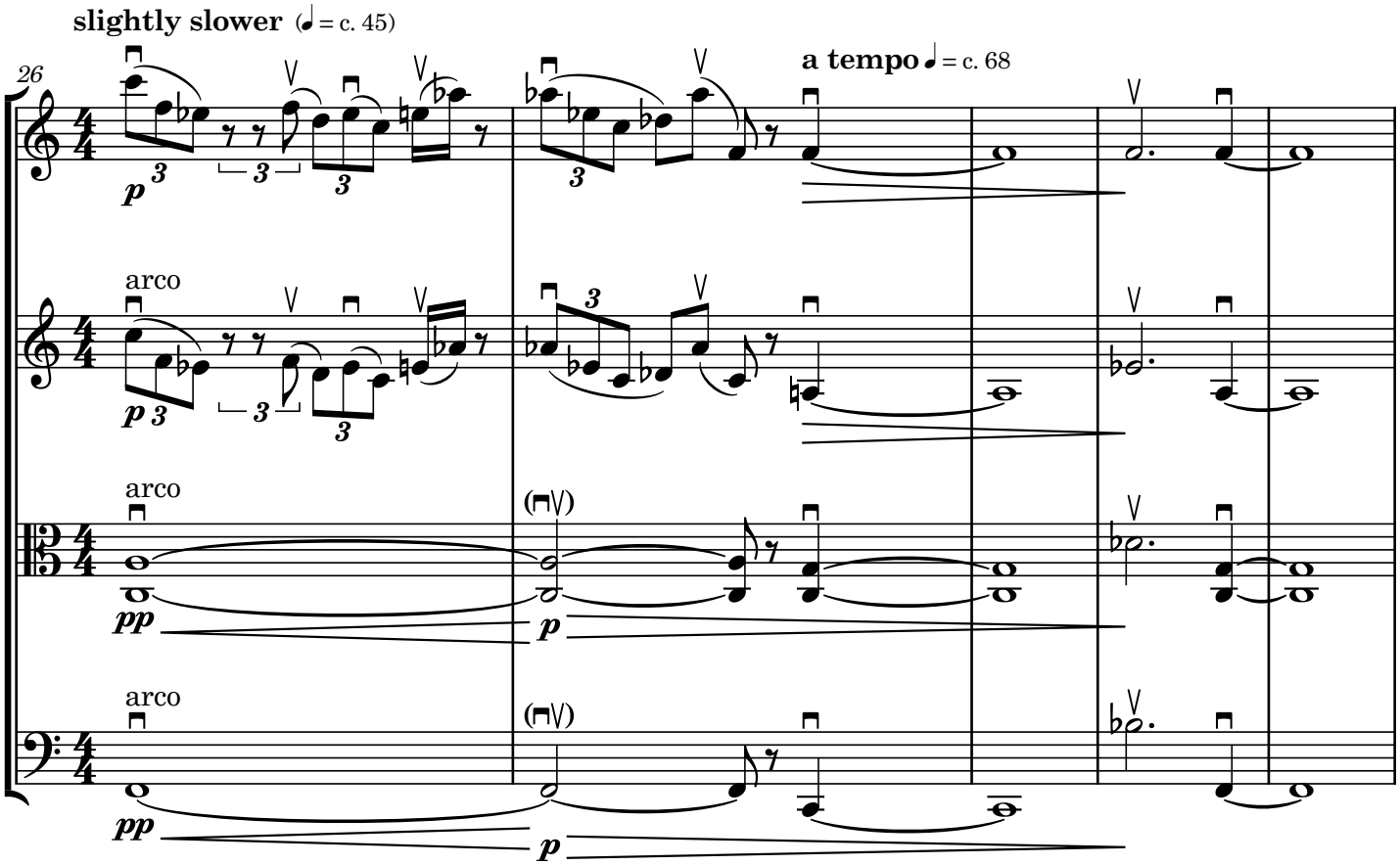
1. PHAEDRUS

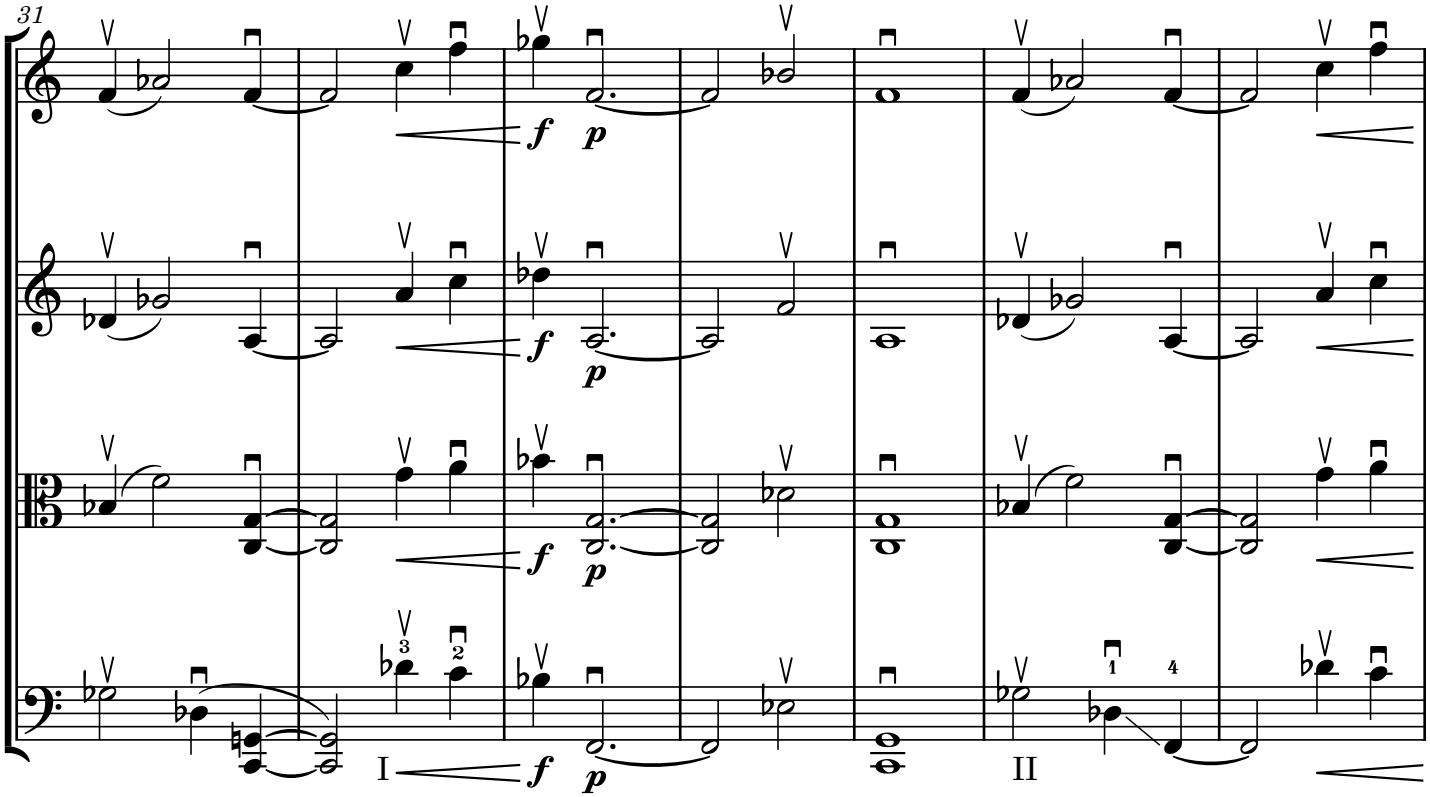


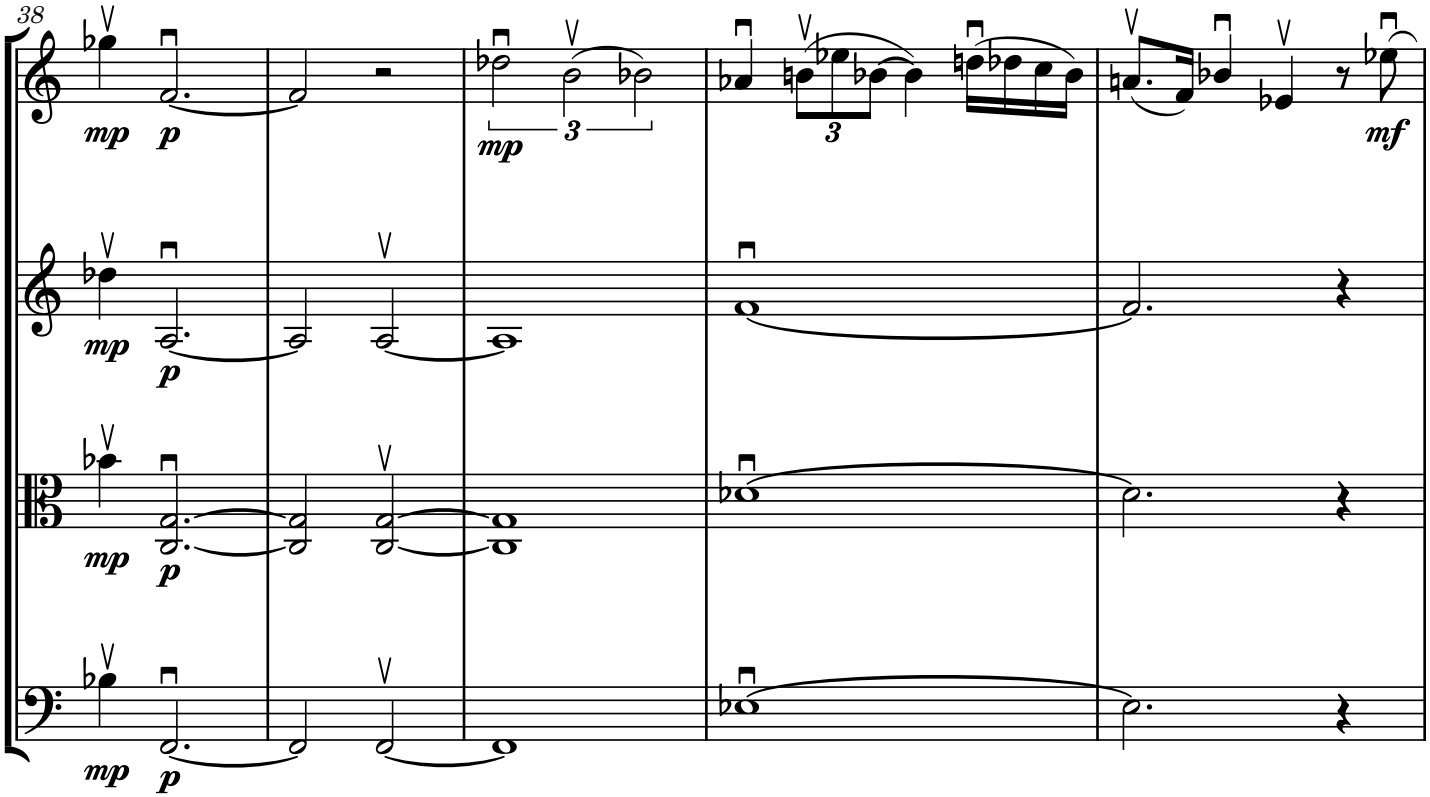

13
mp
p
f
pizz.
arco
3

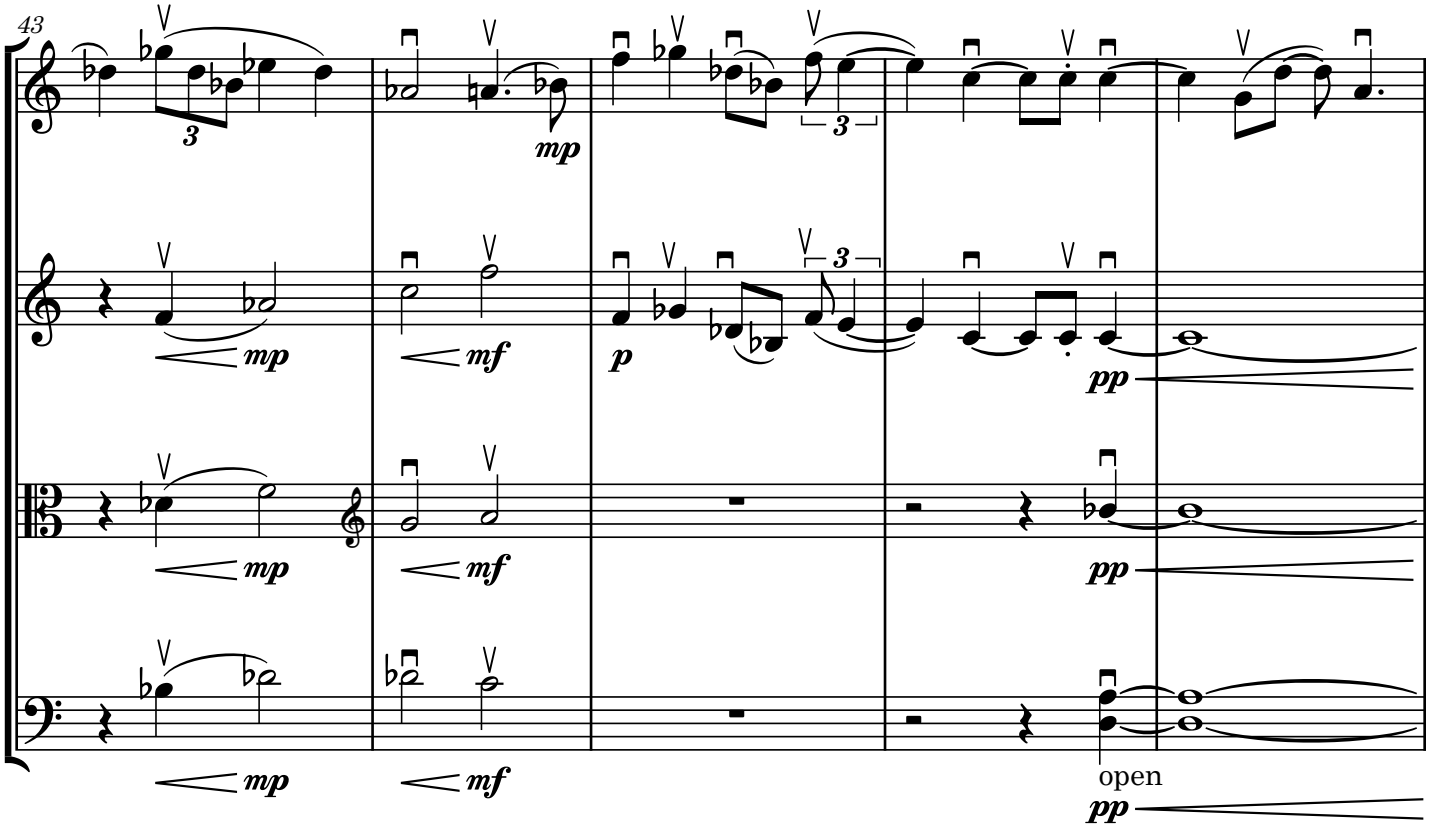

18
mf
(⊓V)
pizz.

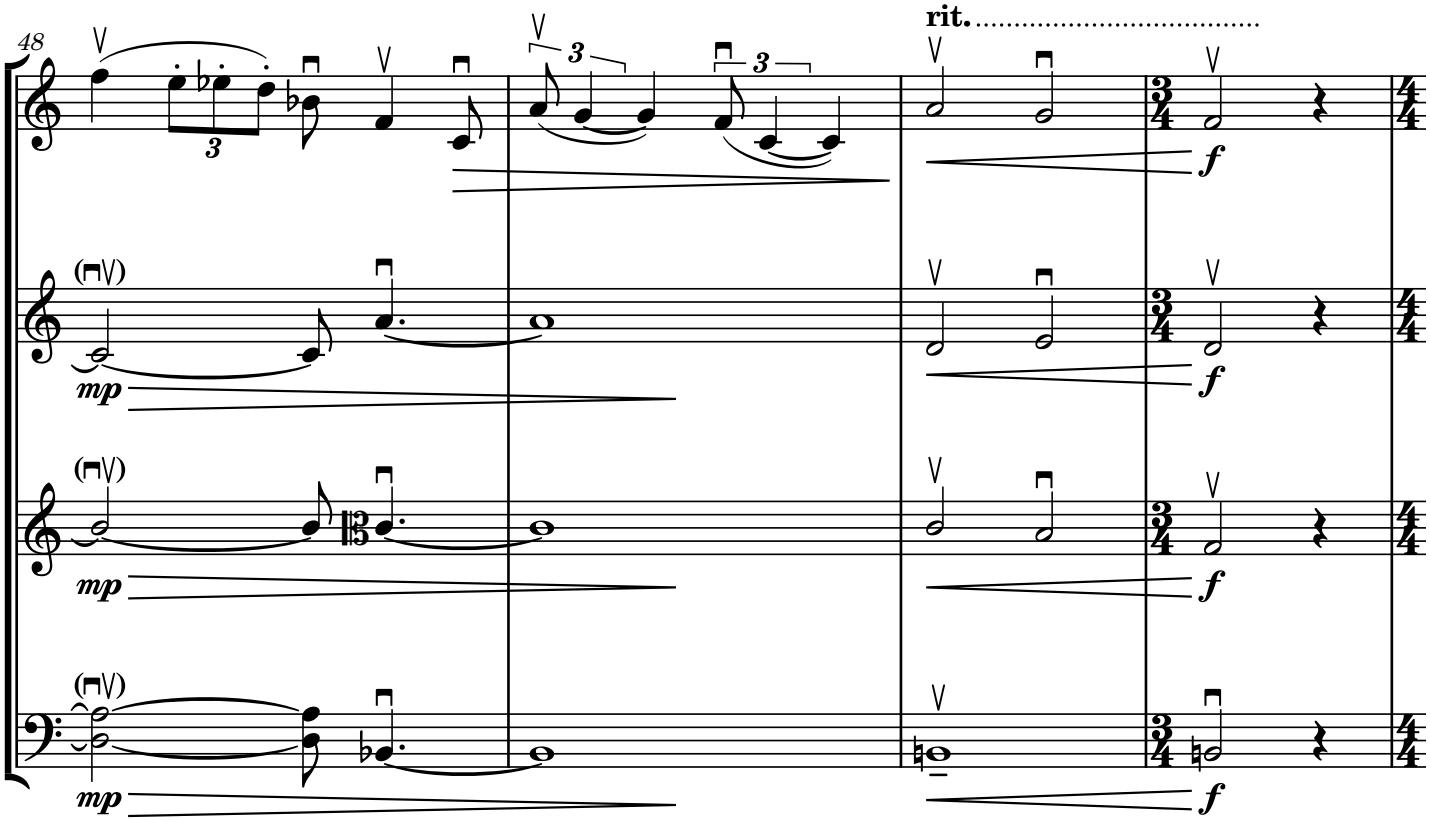

22
accel.
pizz.
pizz.
pizz.
p

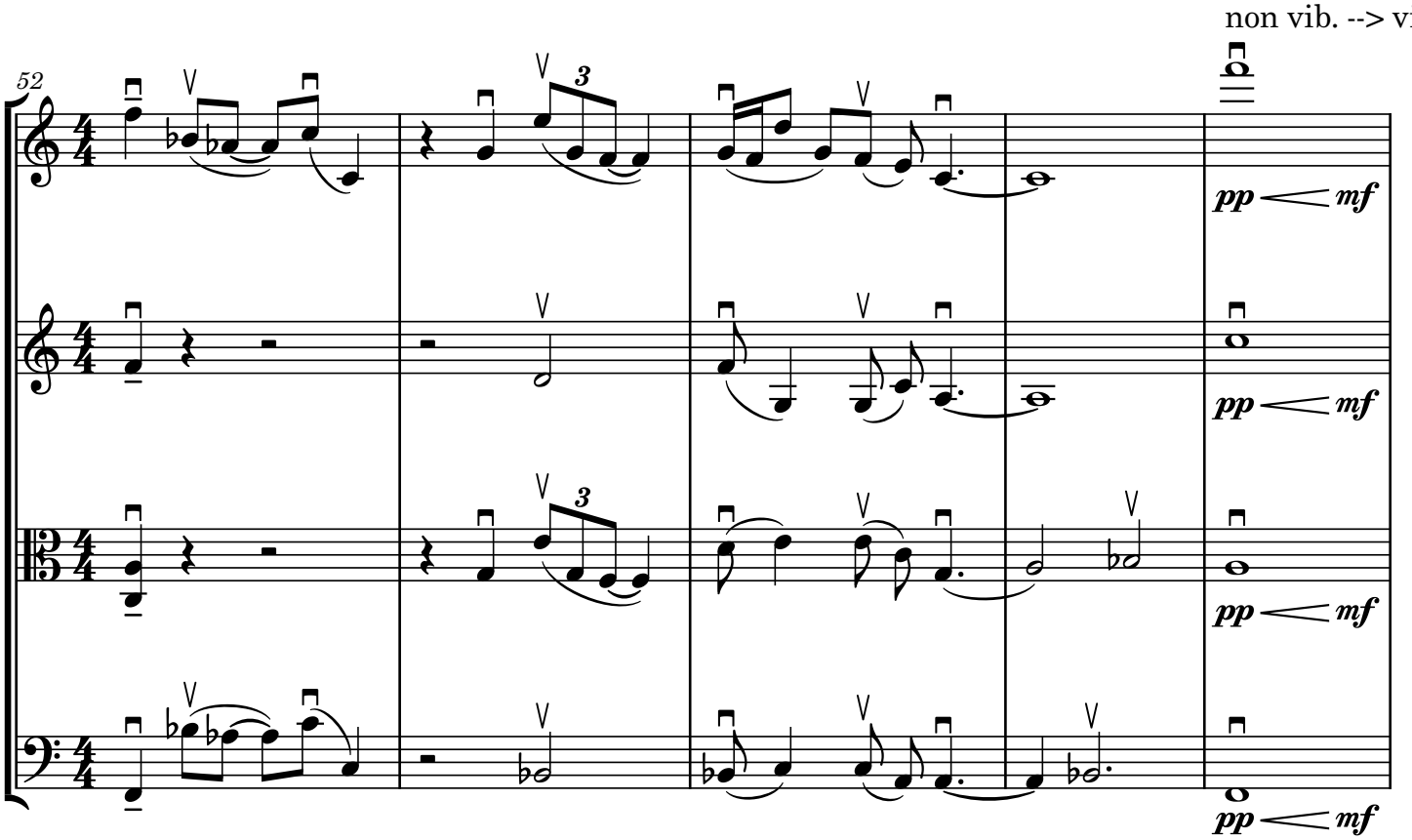

slightly slower (♩ = c. 45)
a tempo ♩ = c. 68
26
arco
arco
arco
pp
p

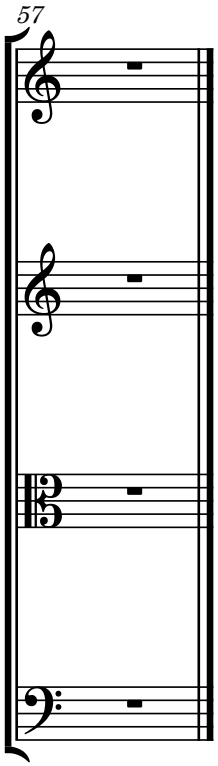

31
I
II


38

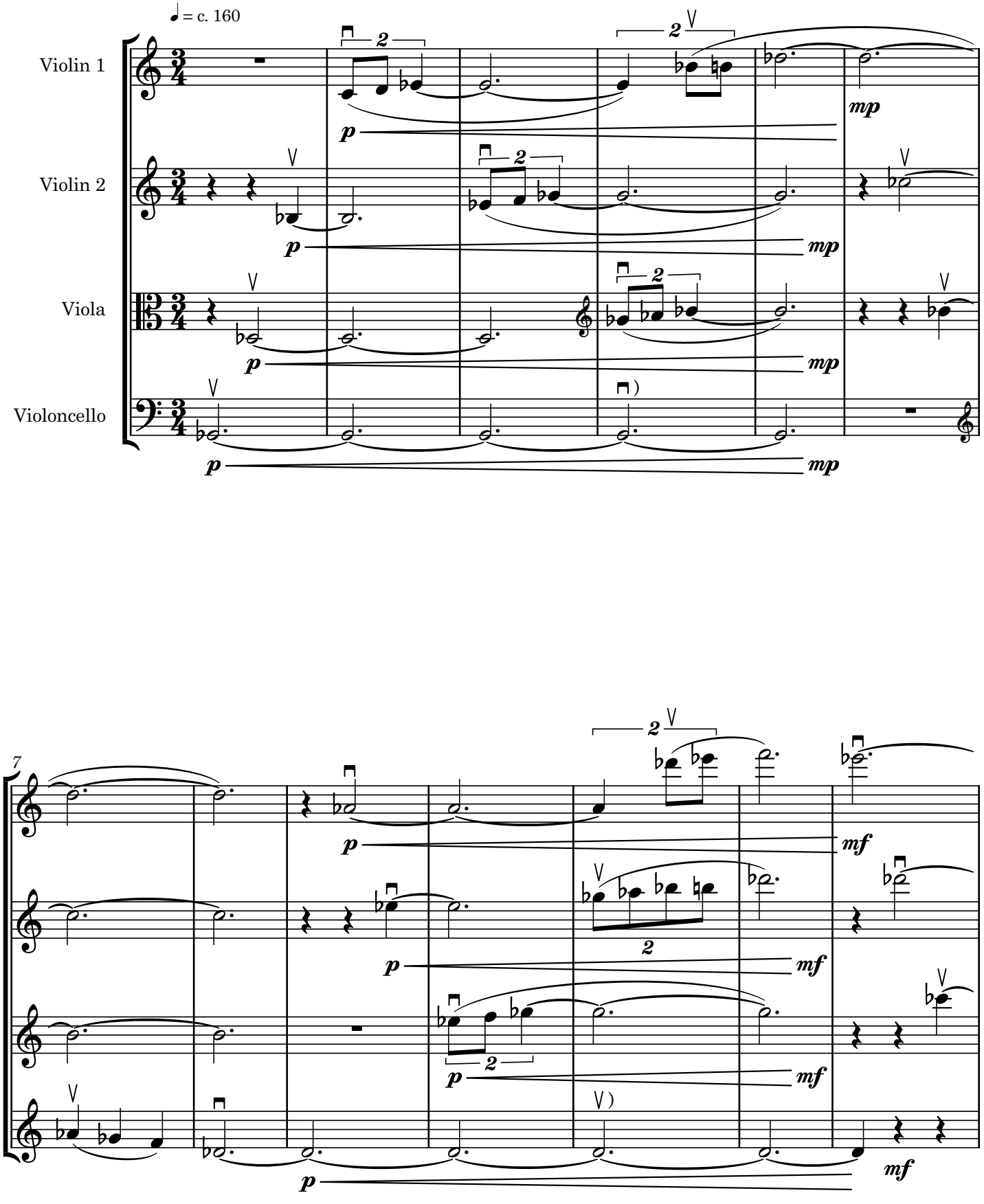

43
mp
mf
p
pp
open

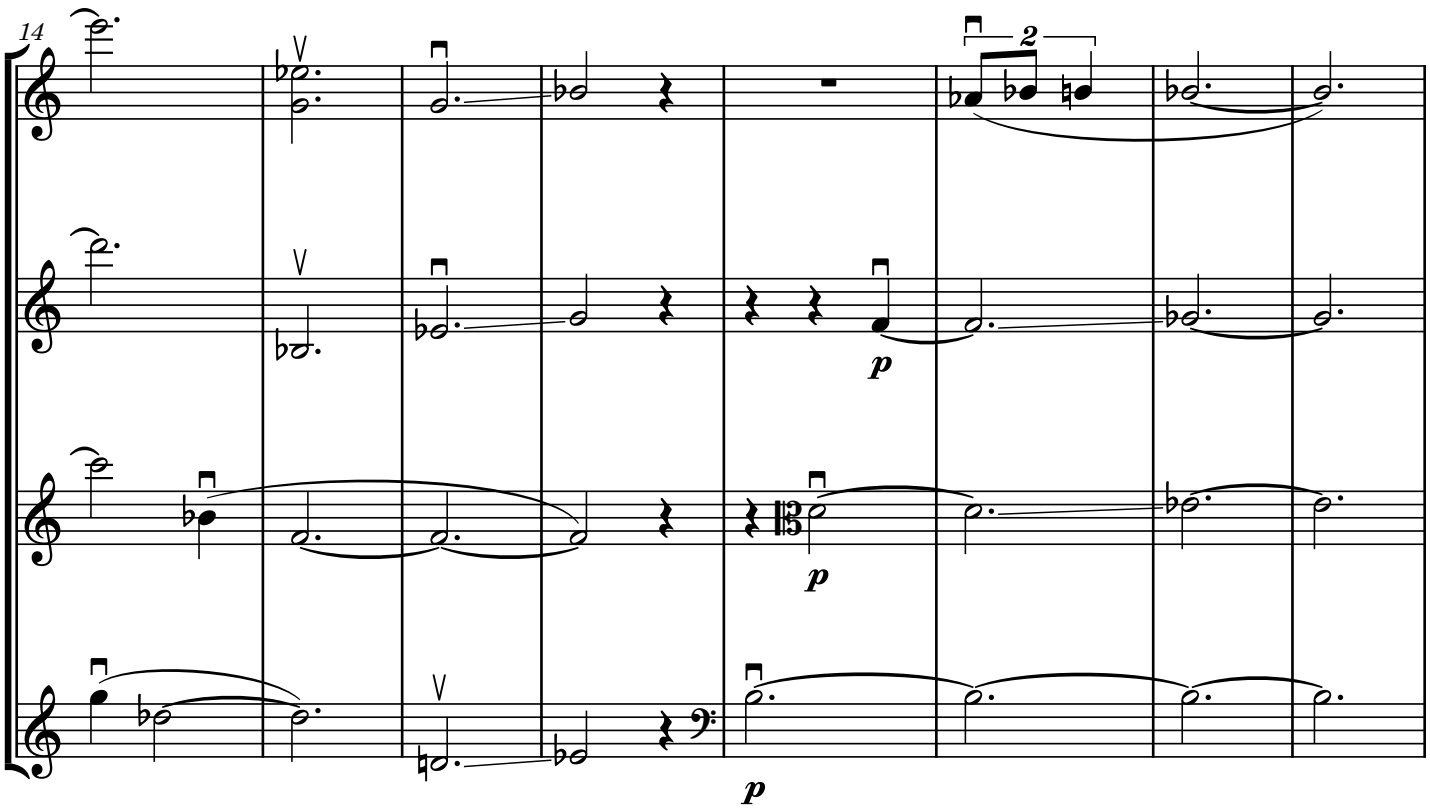

48
rit.
mp
f

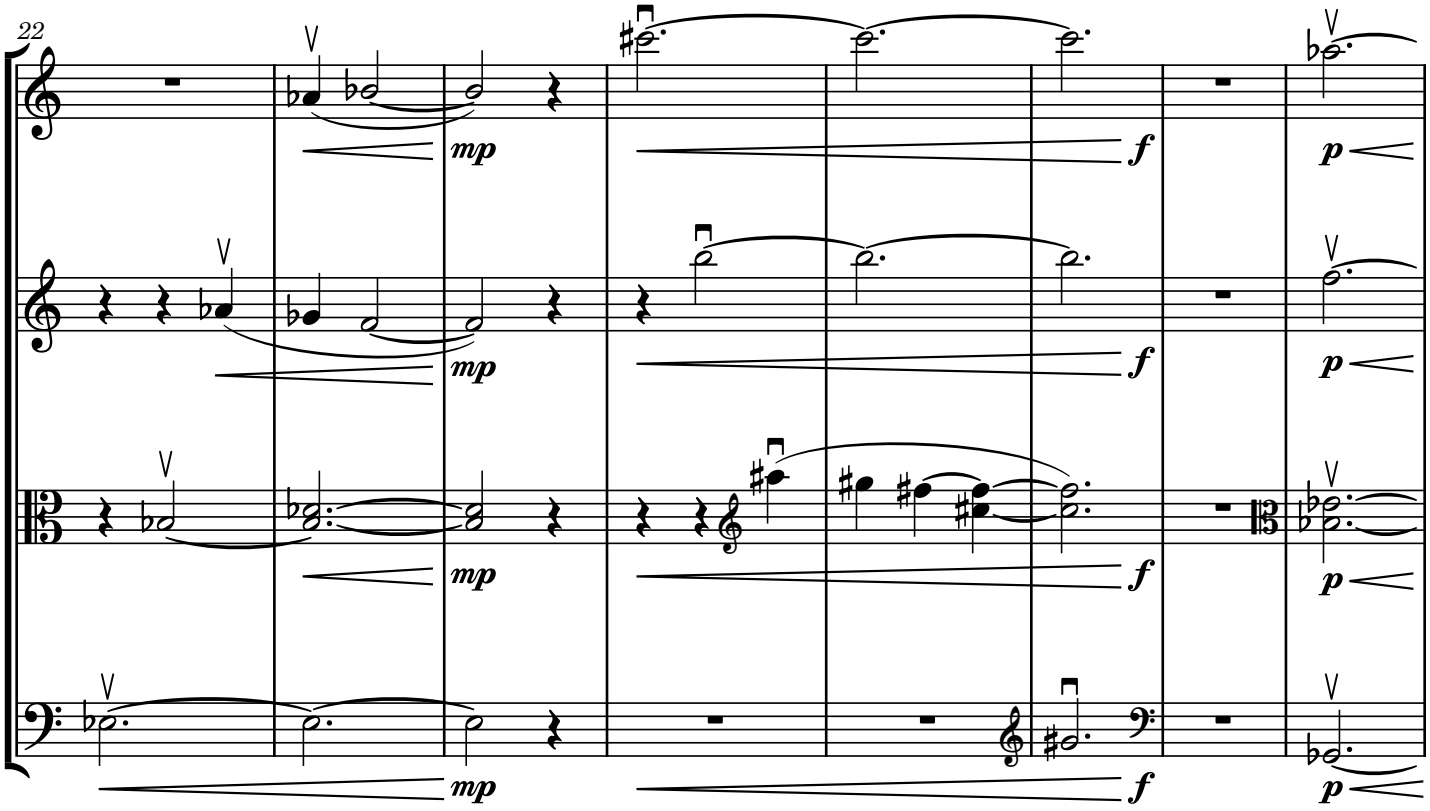

non vib. --> vib.
52
3
3
pp mf
pp mf
pp mf
pp mf

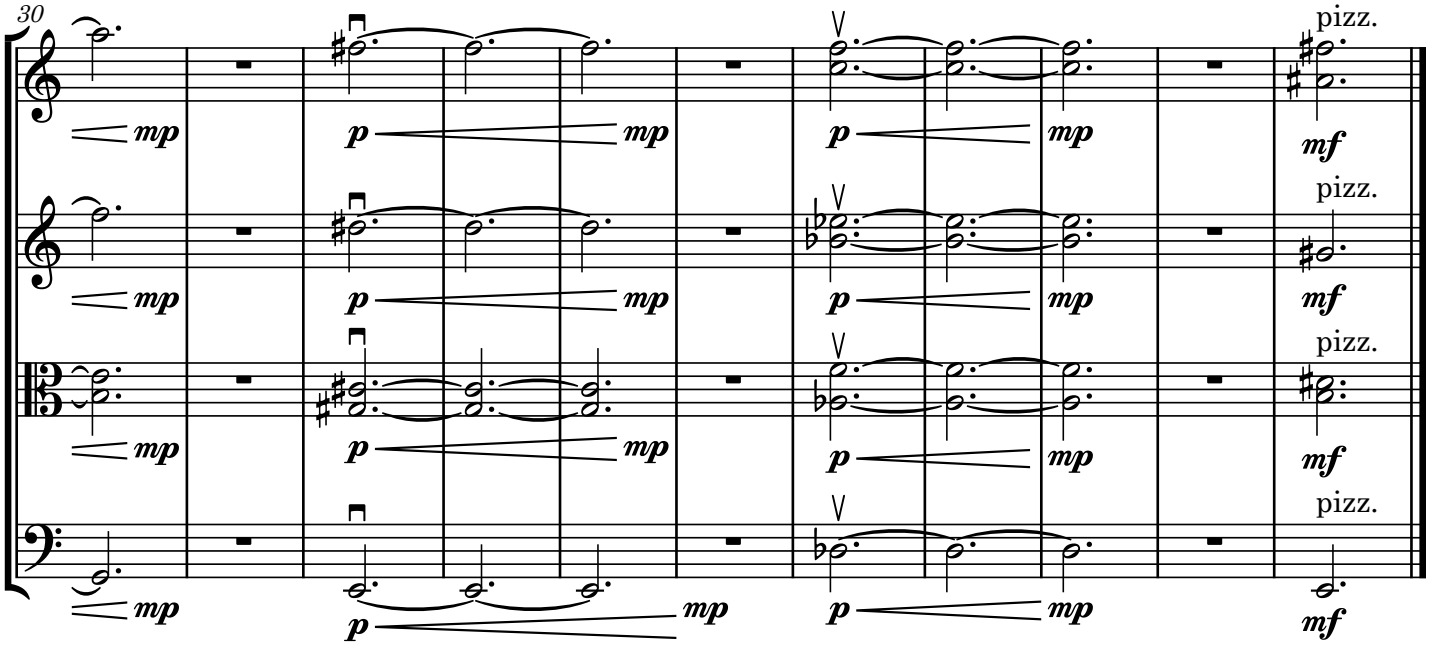

57

2. SOLOMON'S POEM

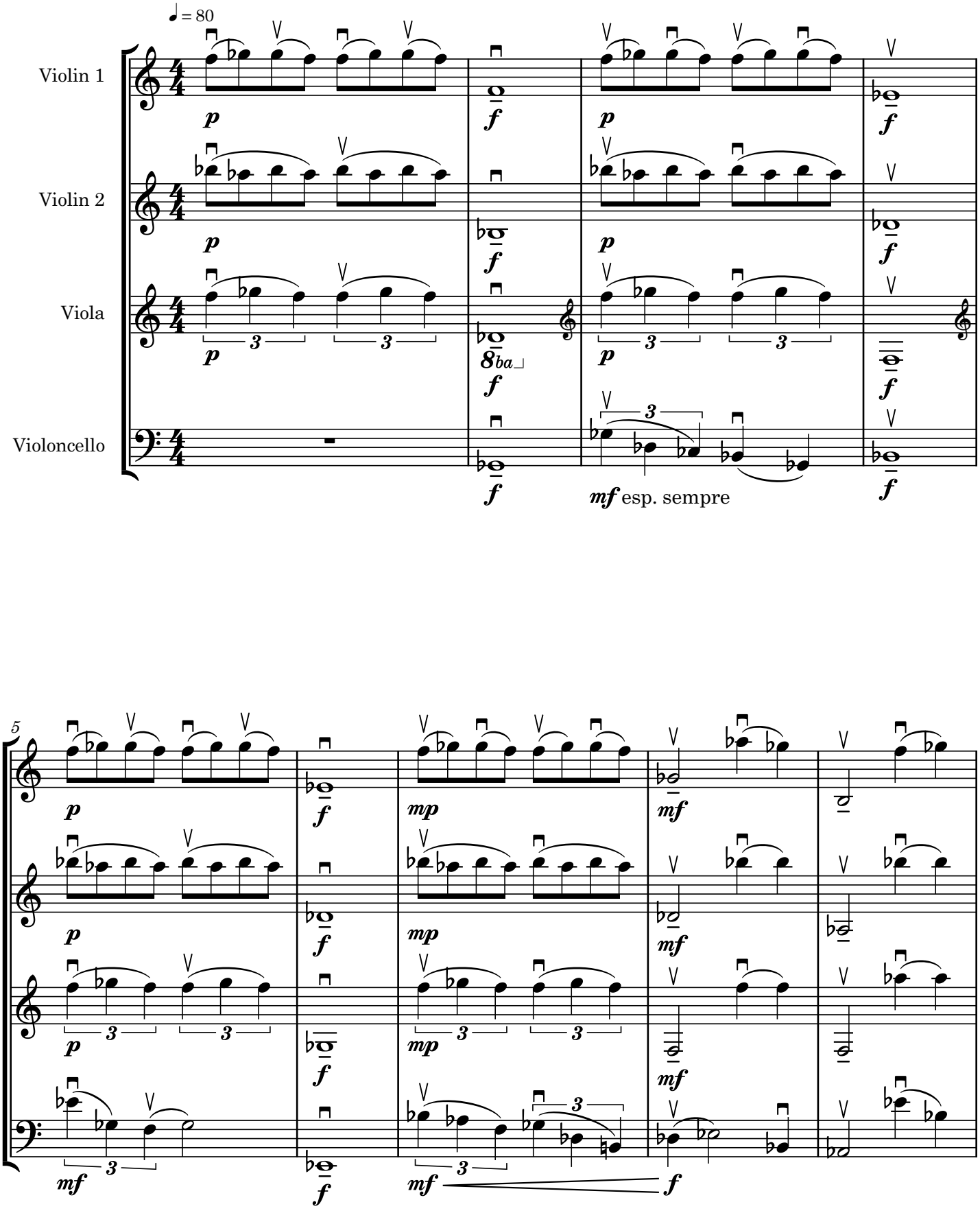


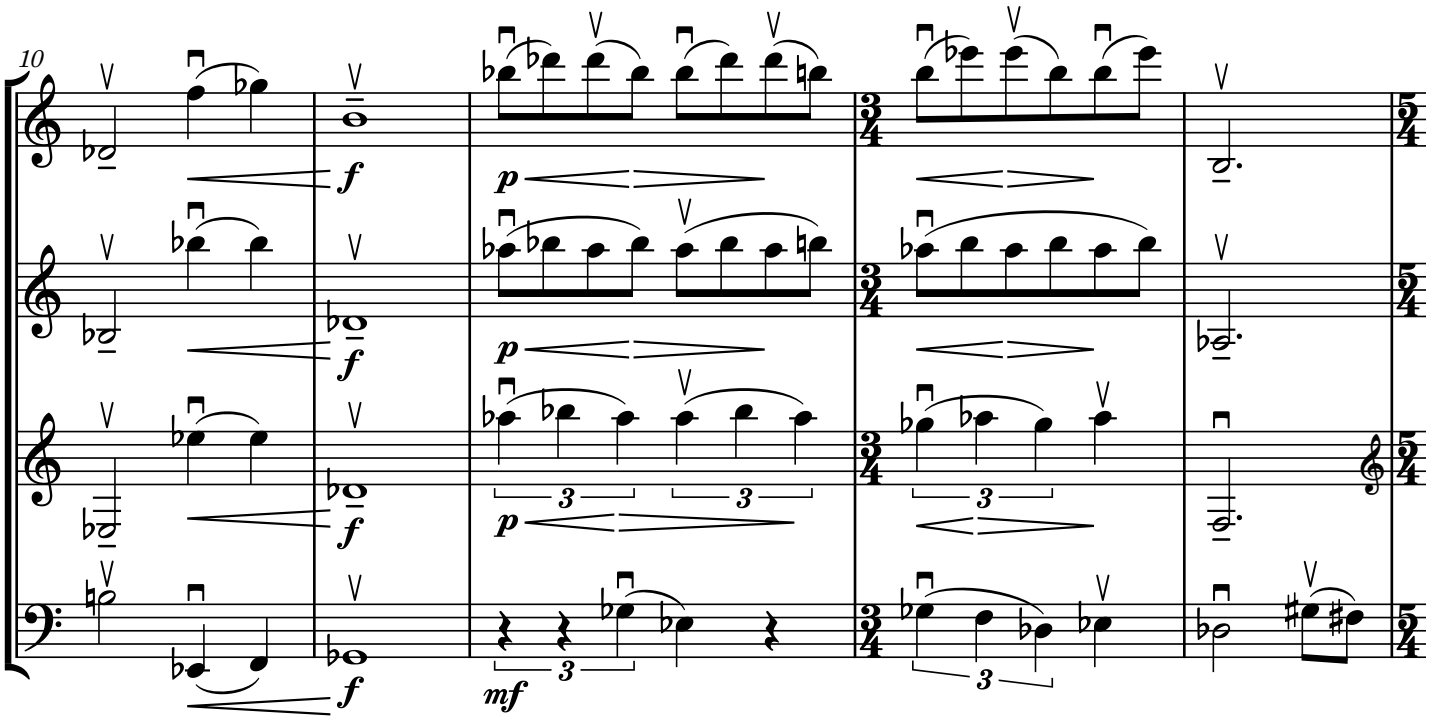

14
2
p
p
p

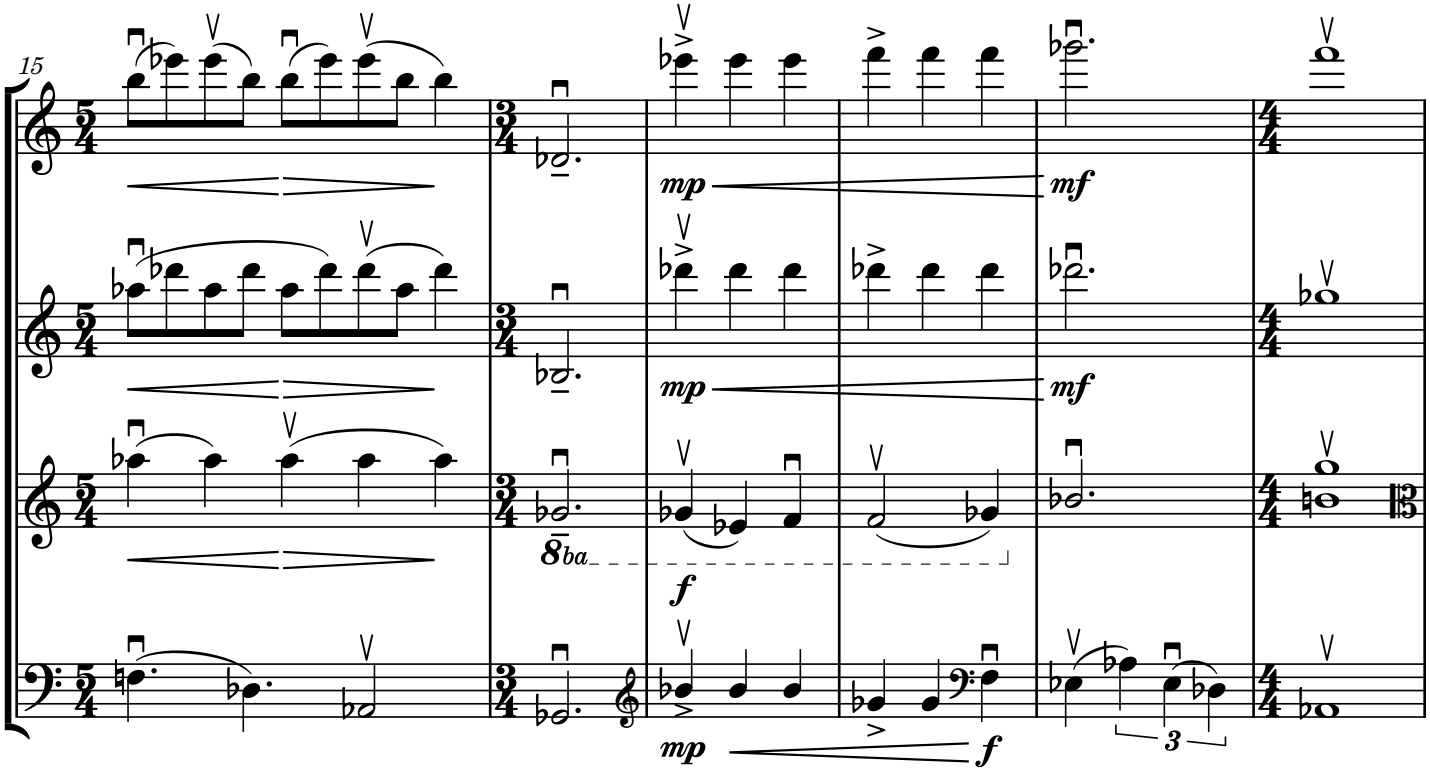

22
mp
mp
mp
mp
f
f
f
f
p
p
p
p

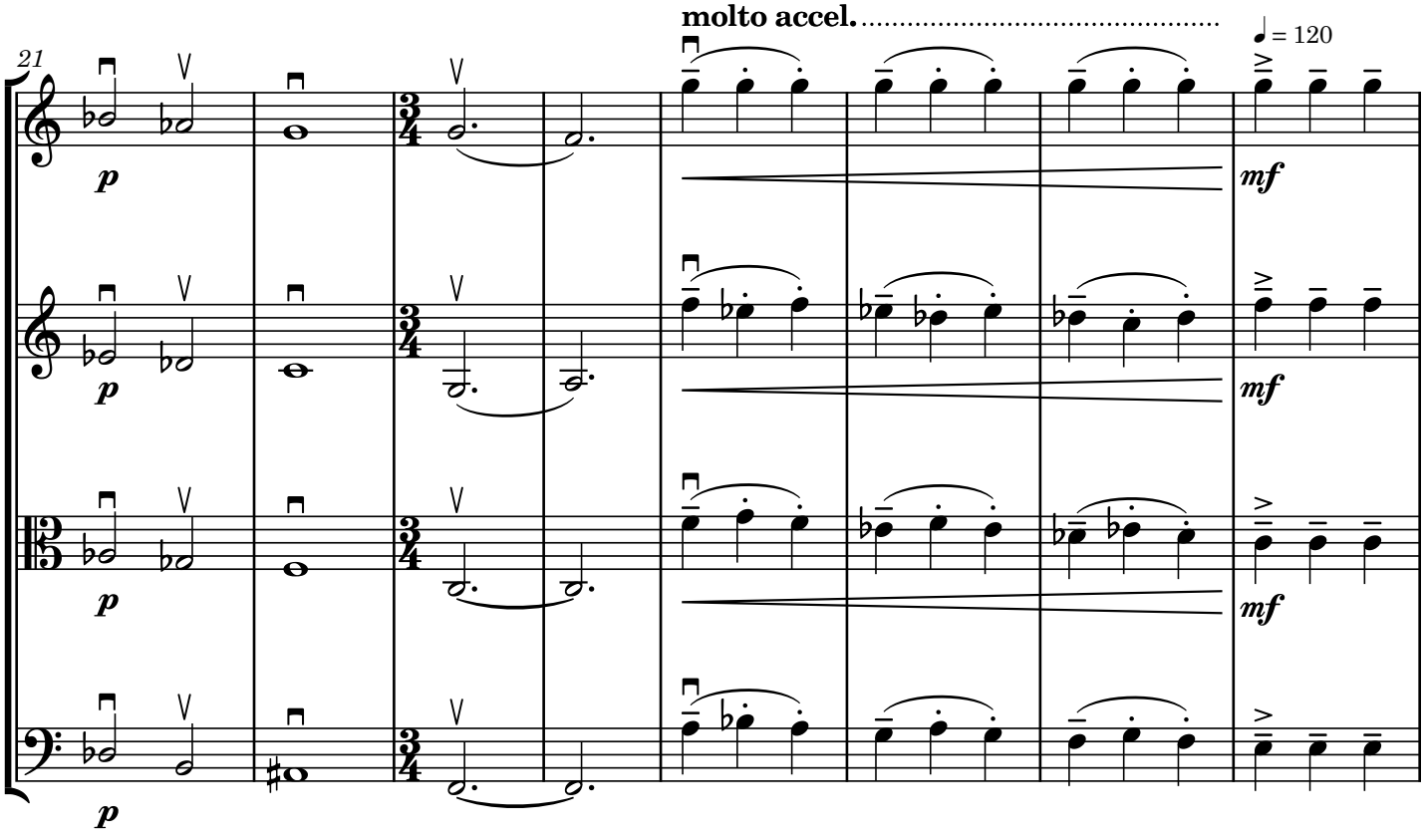

30
pizz.
pizz.
pizz.
pizz.
mp
p
mf

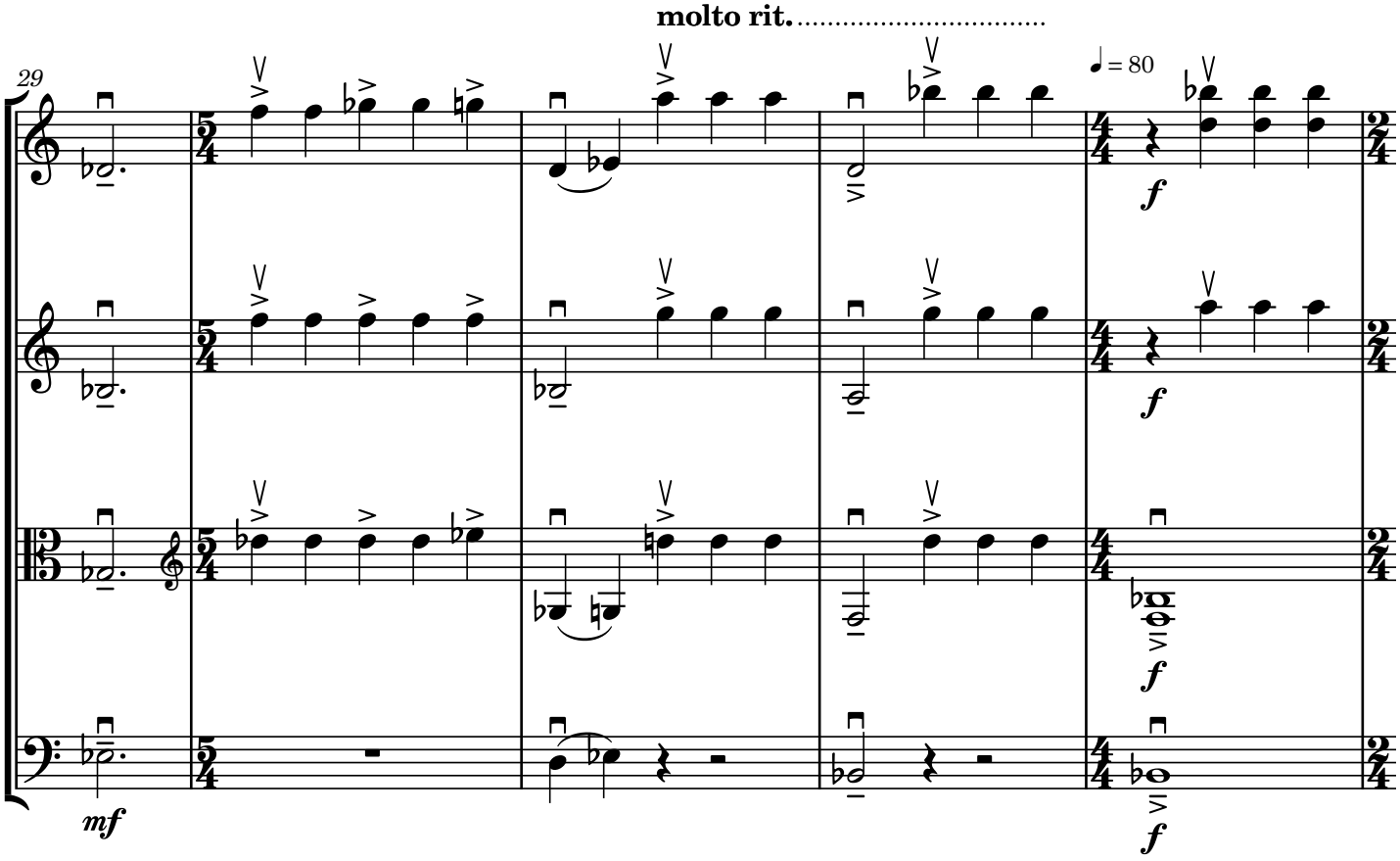
3. I HOLD THE BANDAGES

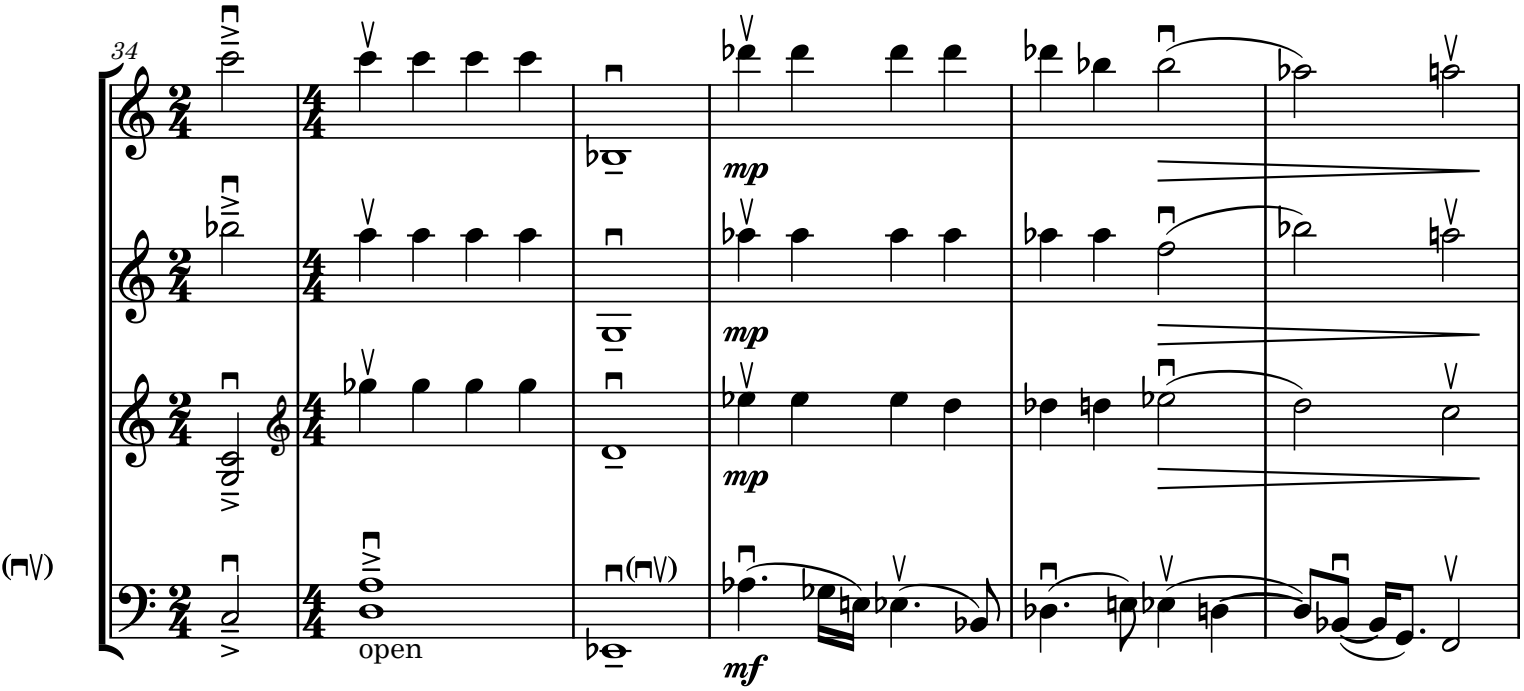


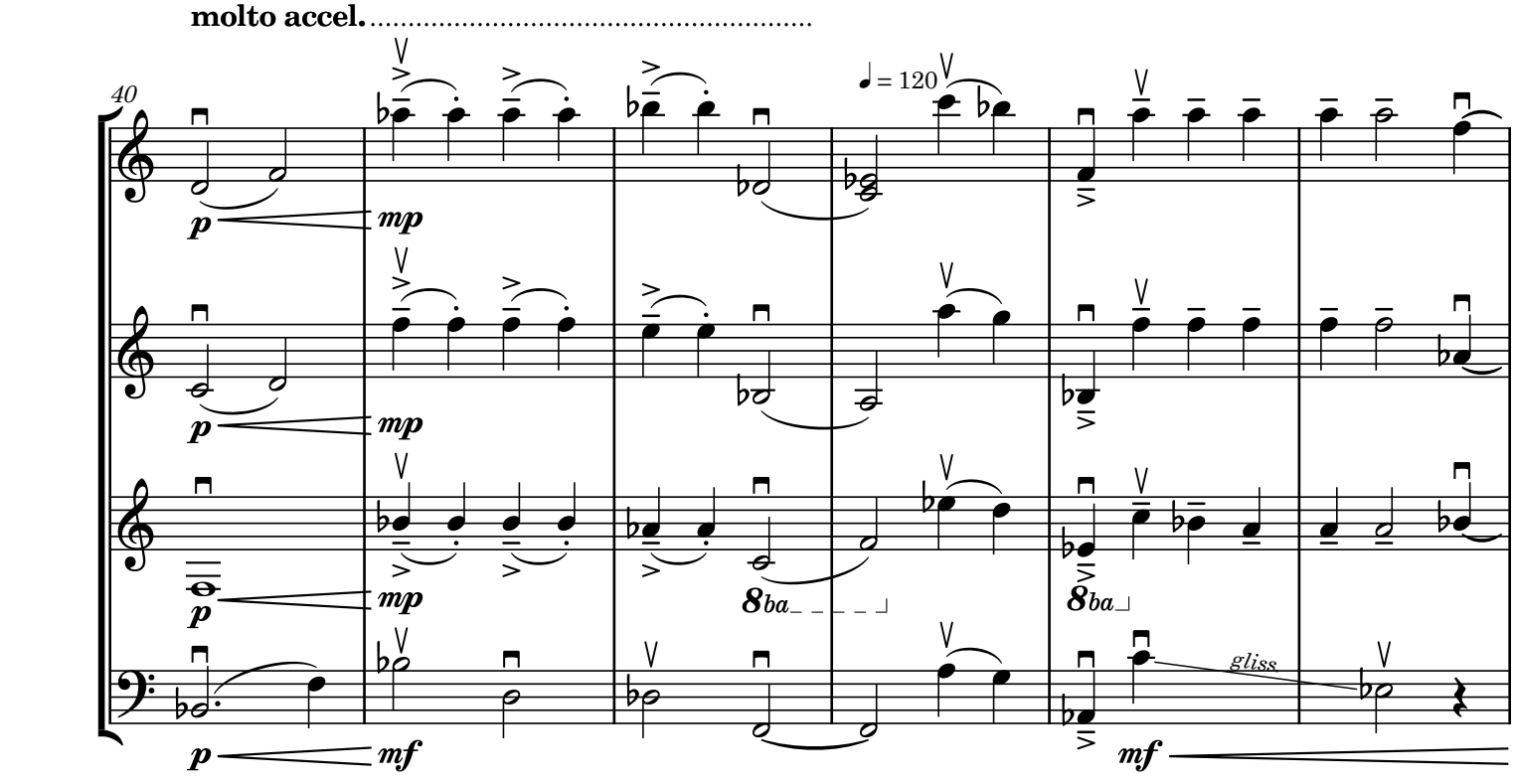

10
f
p
mf
3

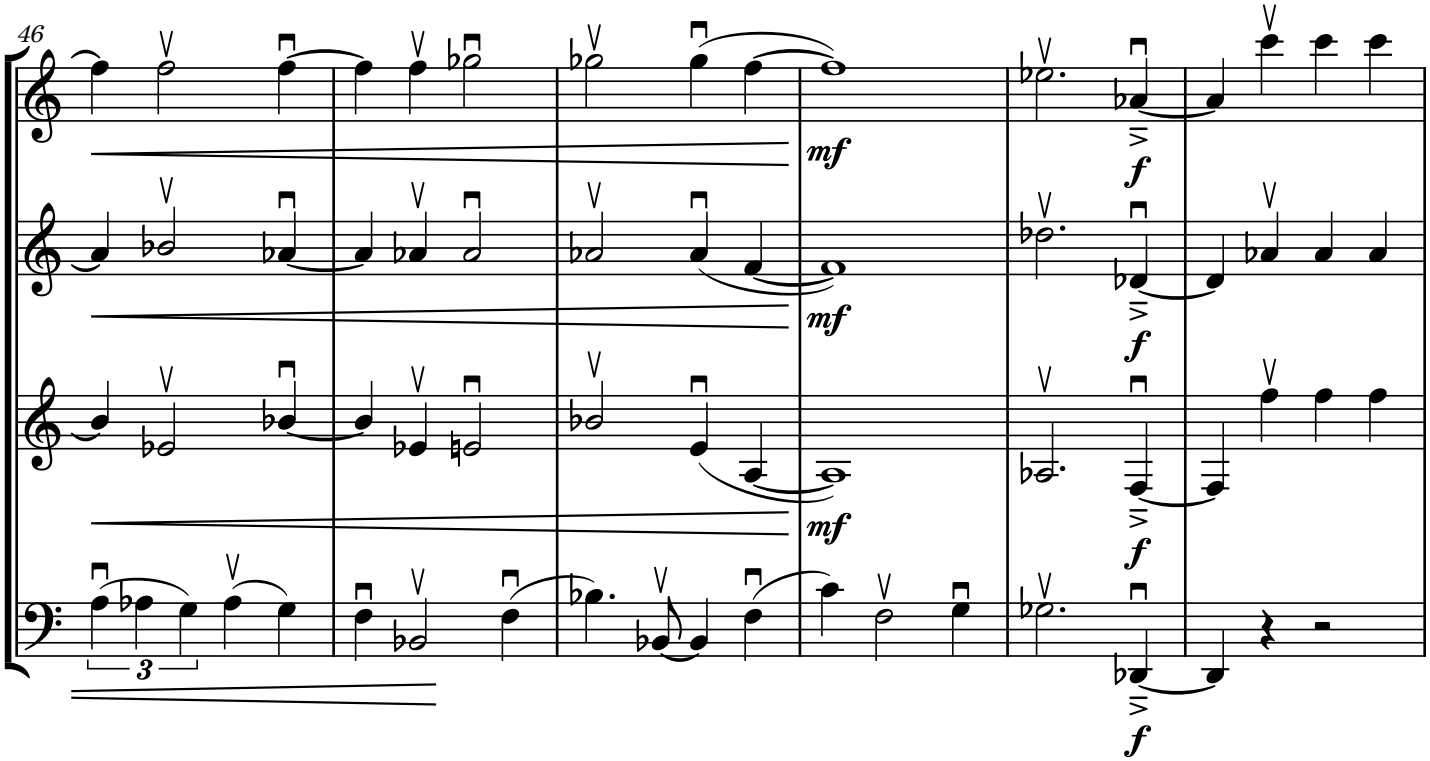

15
mp
mf
8ba
f

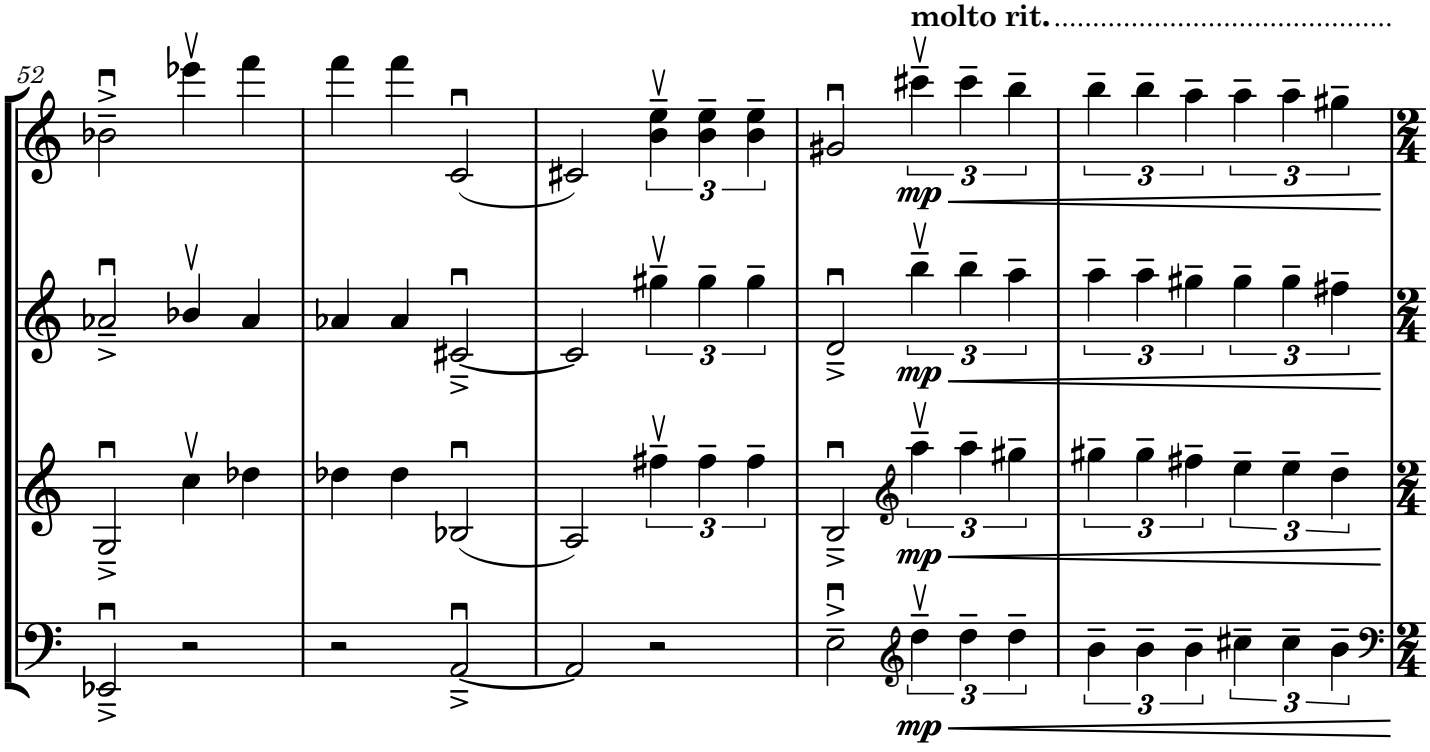

molto accel.
♩ = 120
21
p
mf

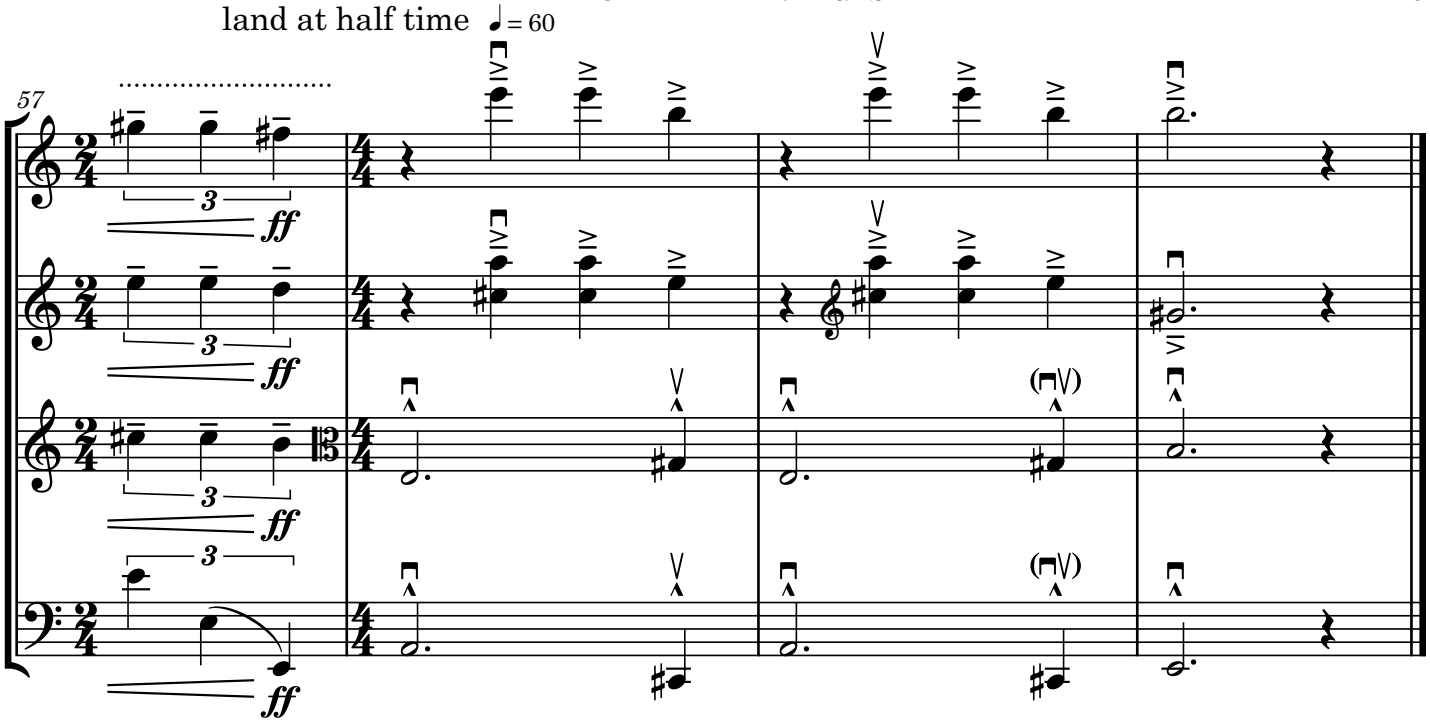

molto rit.
♩ = 80
29
mf
f


34
mp
mp
mp
open
mf


molto accel.
40
♩ = 120
p
mp
p
mp
p
mp
8ba
8ba
p
mf
gliss
mf


46
mf
mf
mf
f
f
f
f

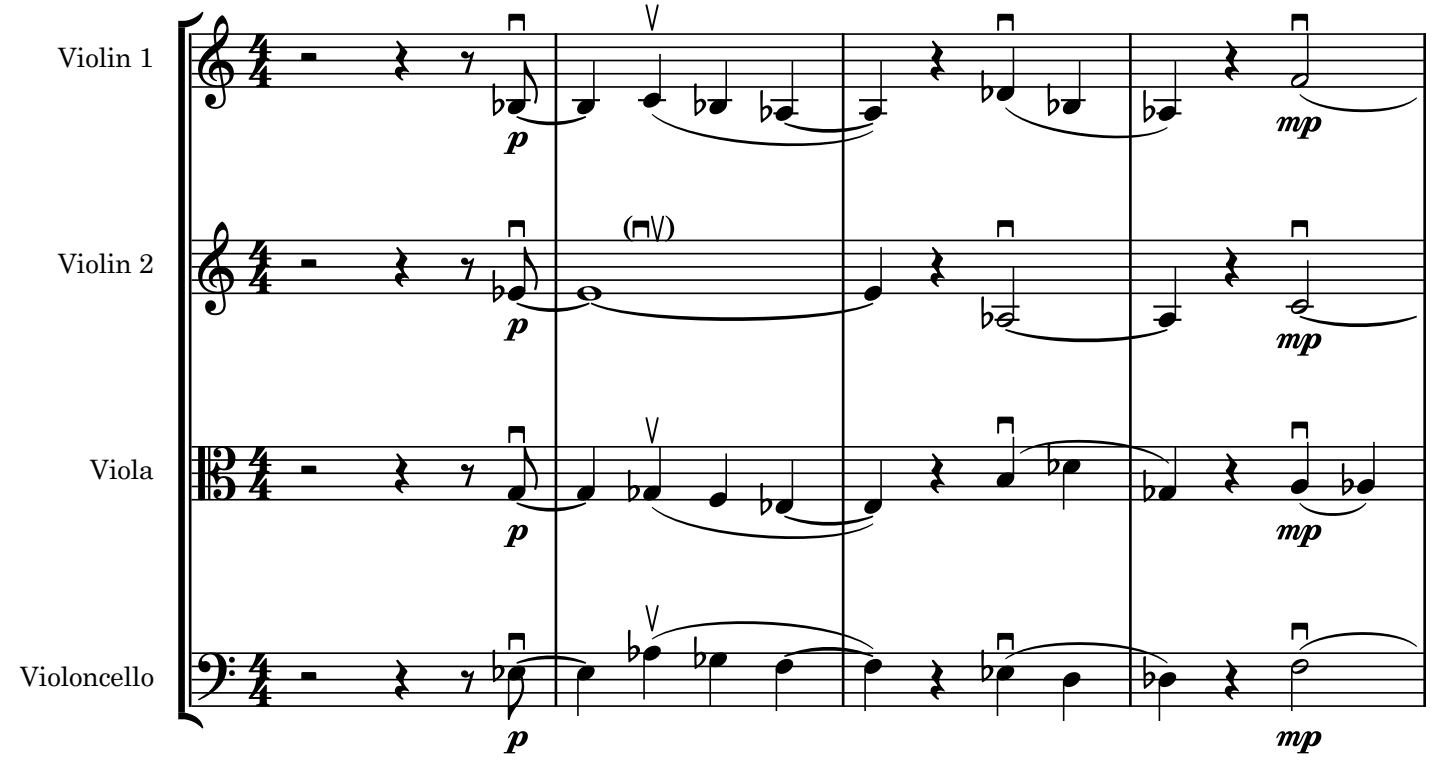

molto rit.
52
mp
mp
mp
mp

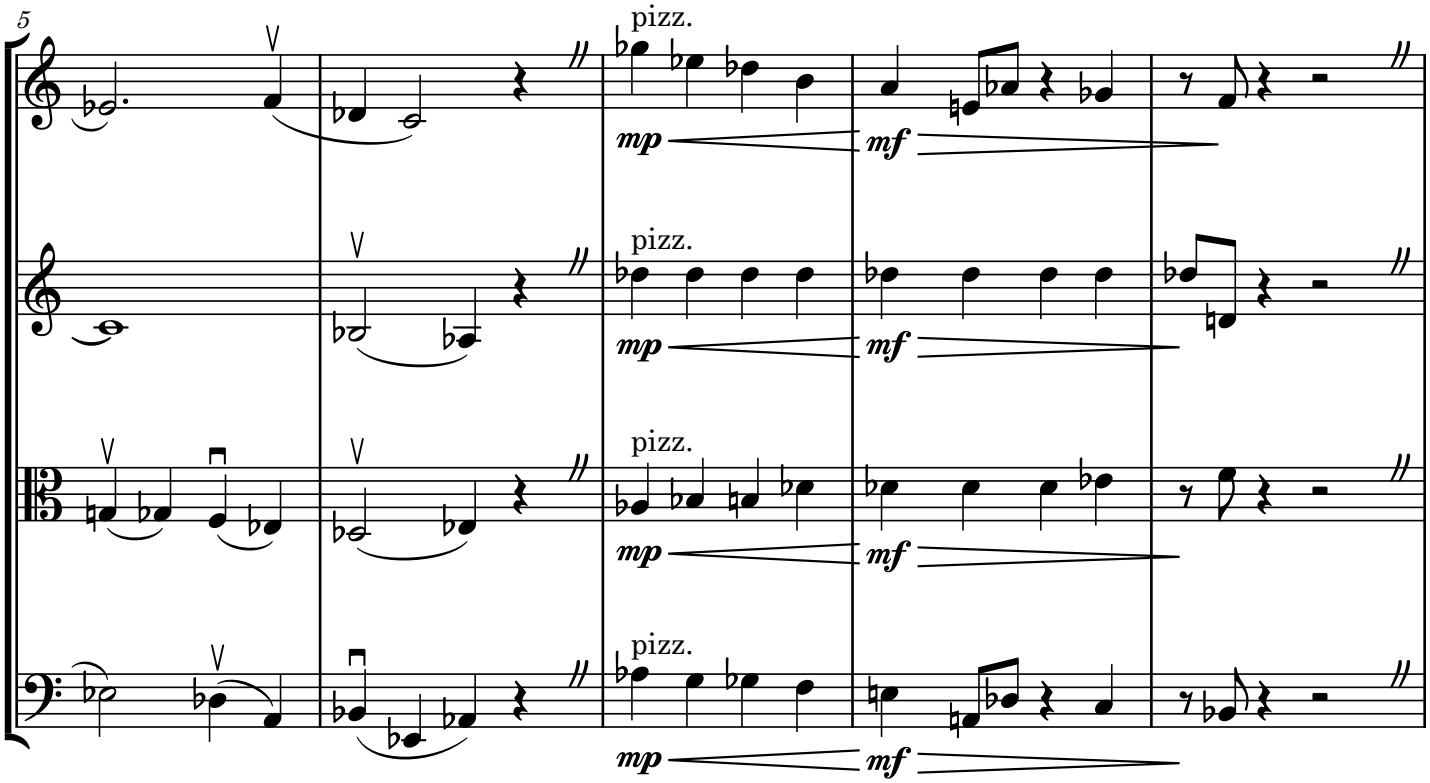

land at half time
♩ = 60
57
3
ff

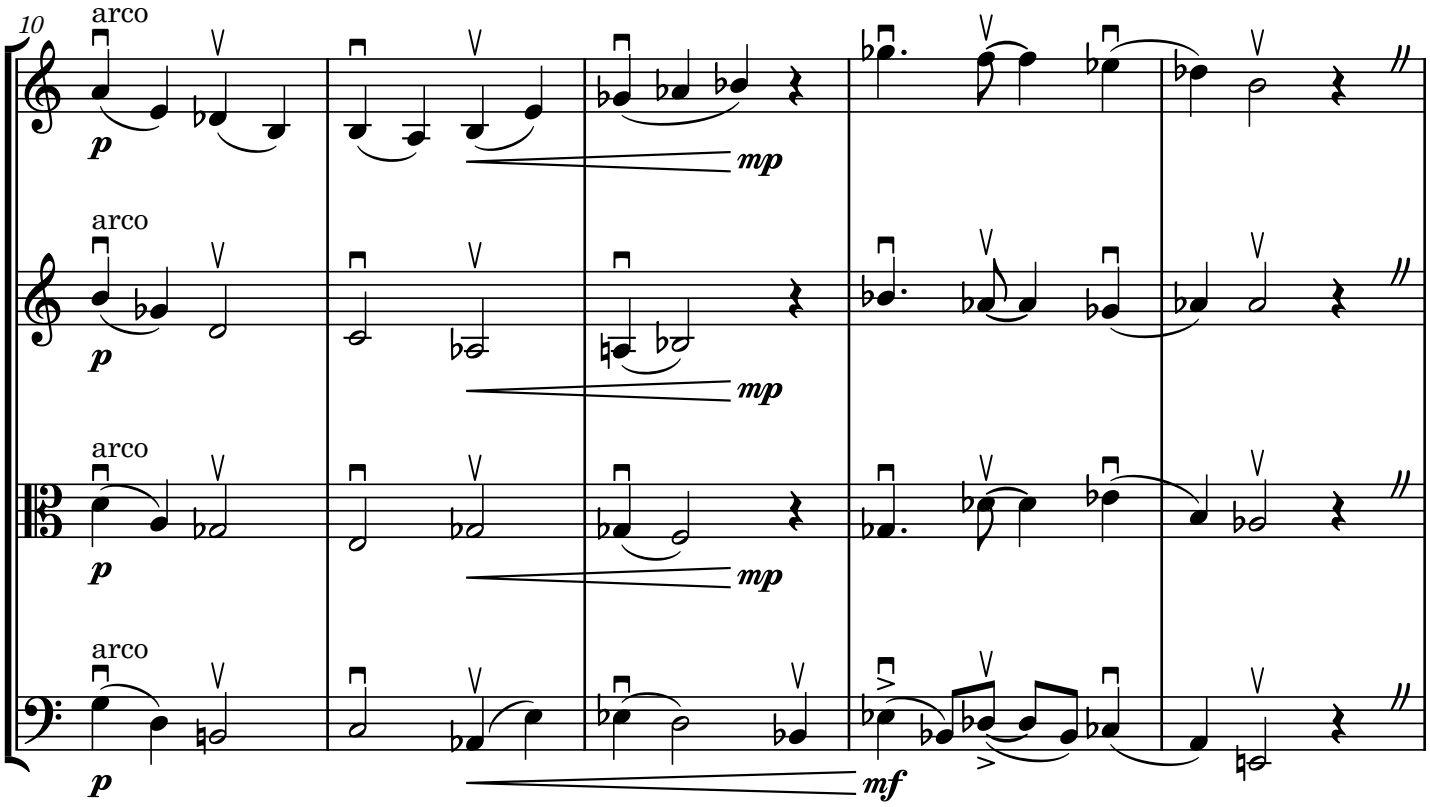
4. GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

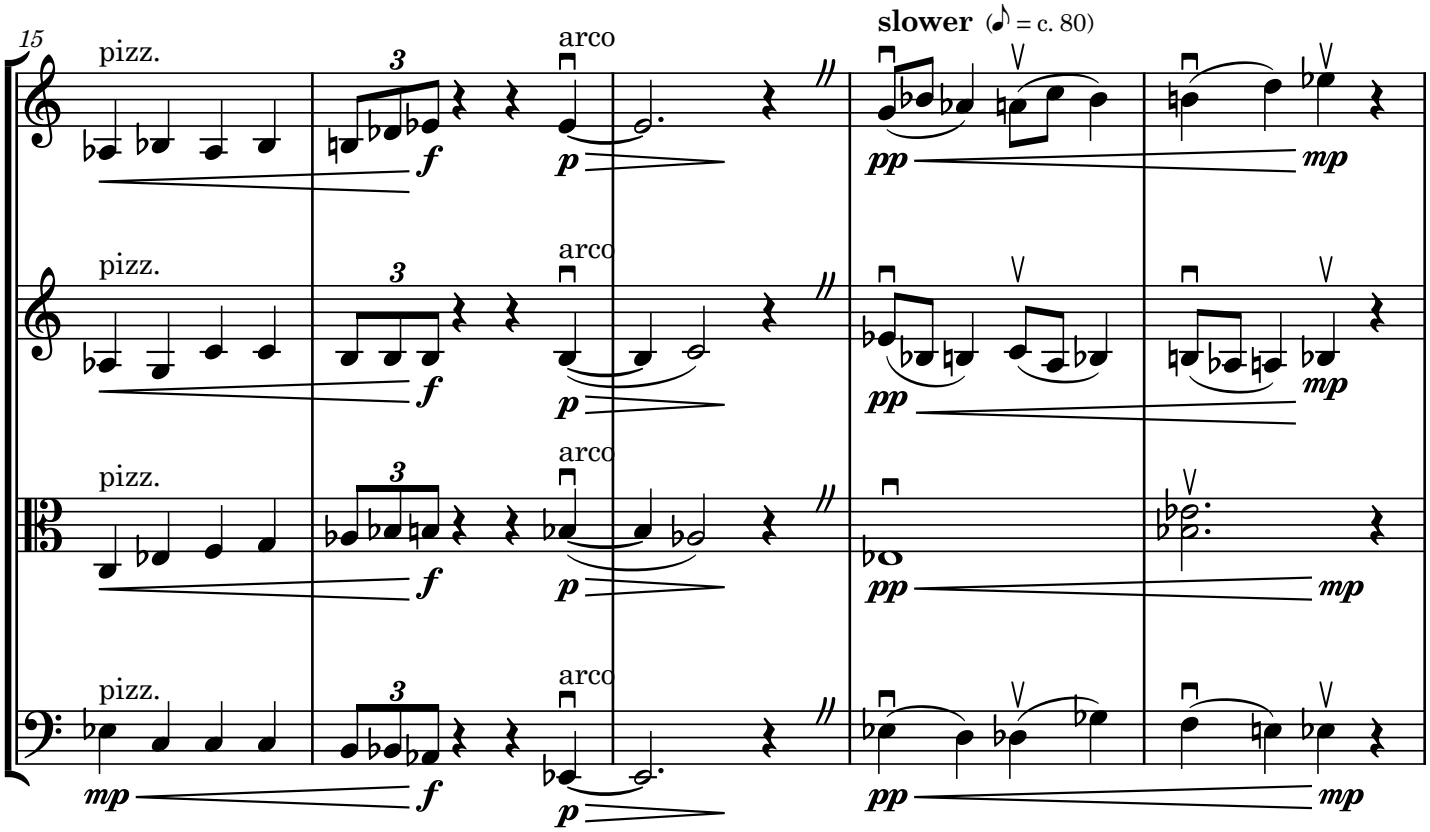
plenty of give and take — at each caesura tempo should be slightly quicker
until the "slower" marking at m.18, which should be even slower than the first phrase

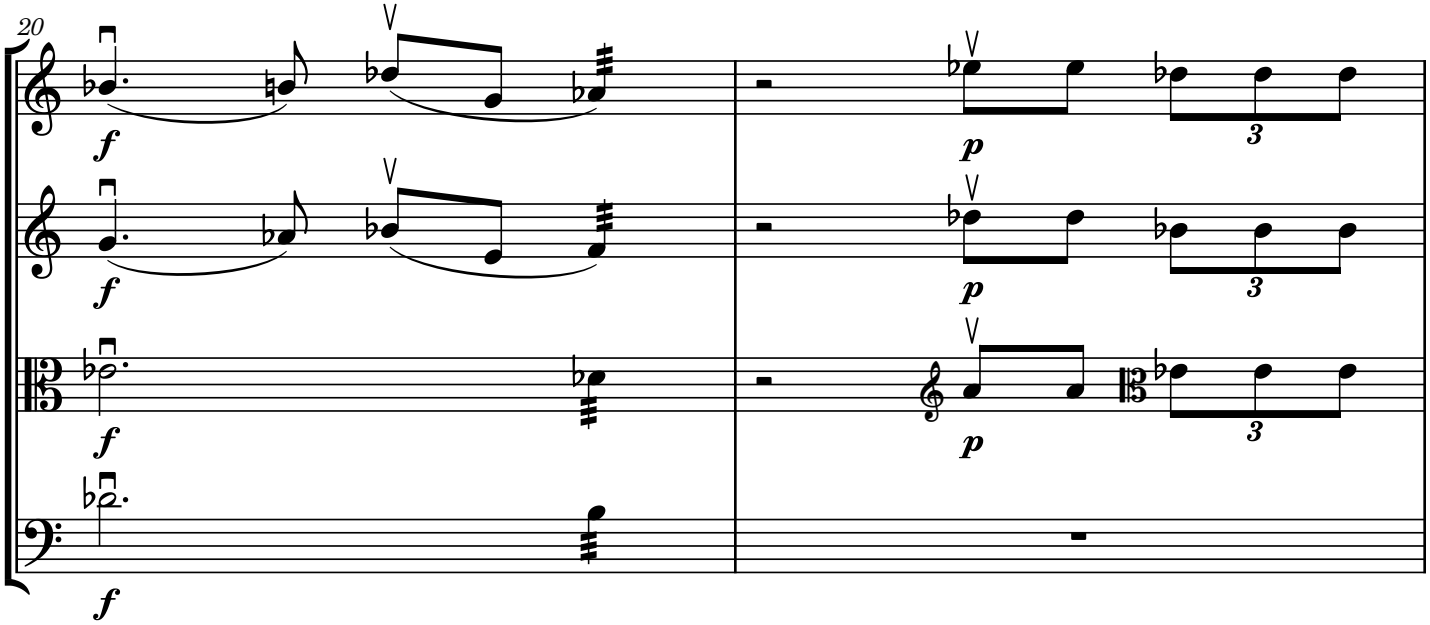
♪ = c. 100

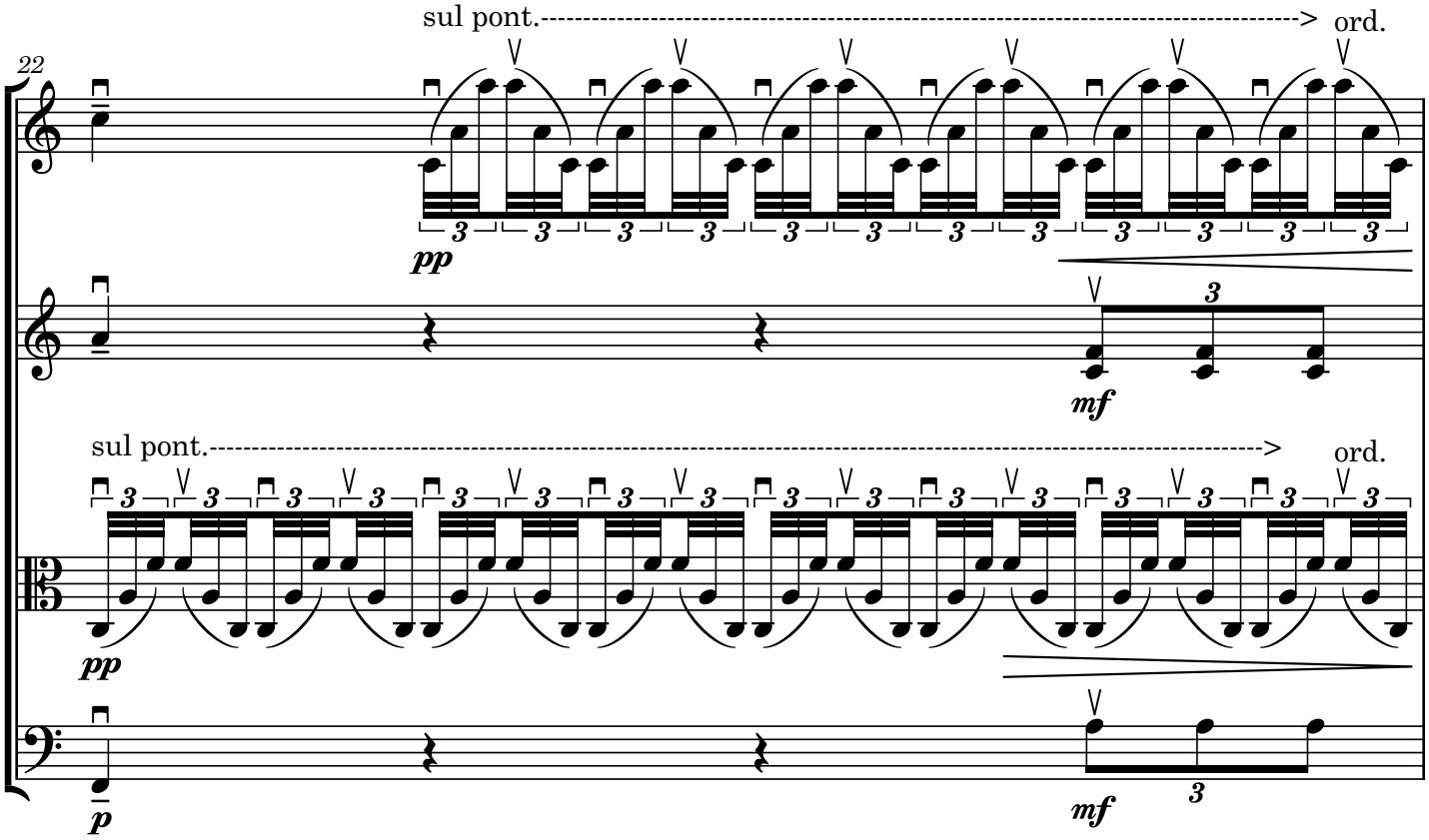


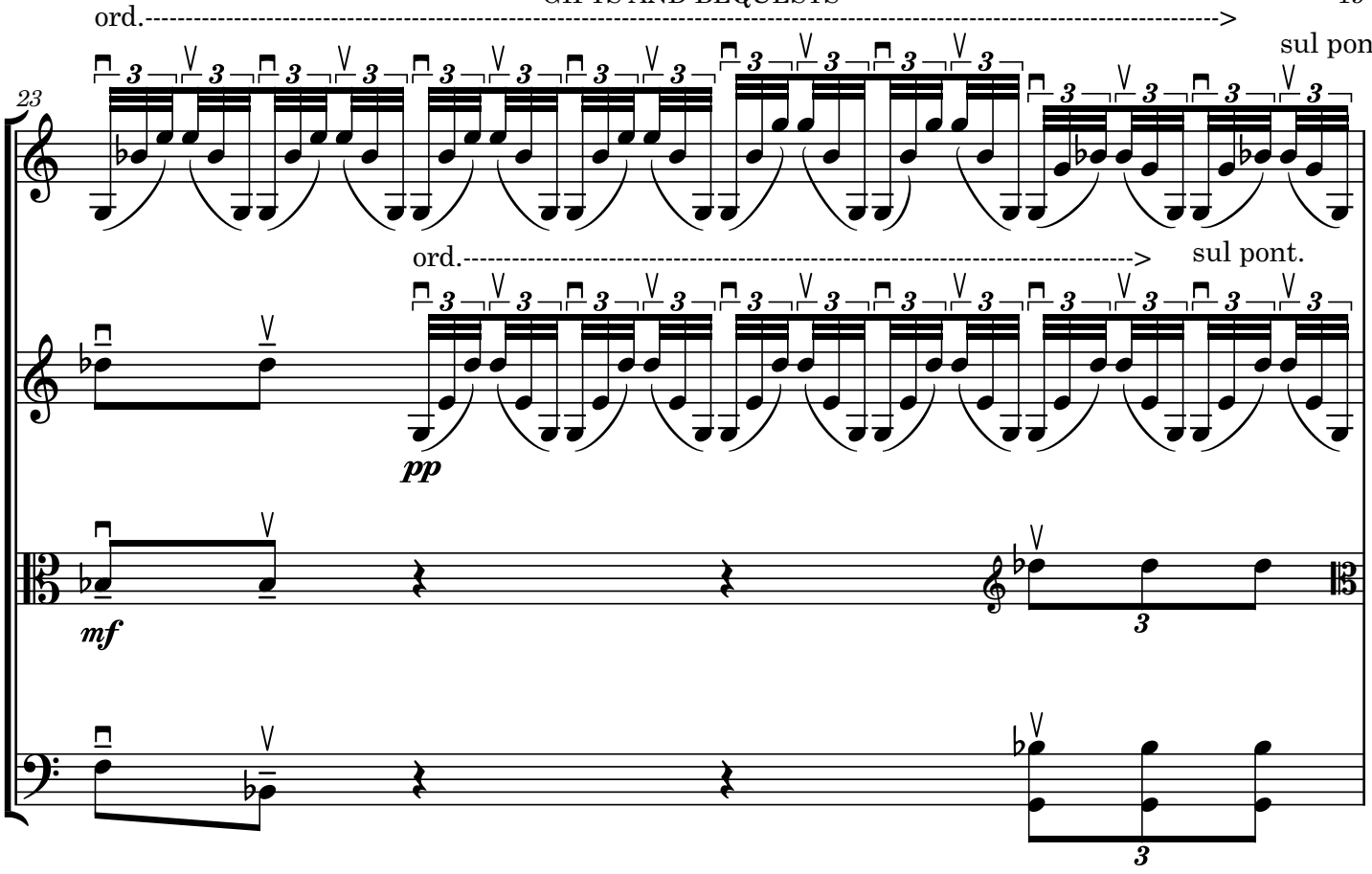


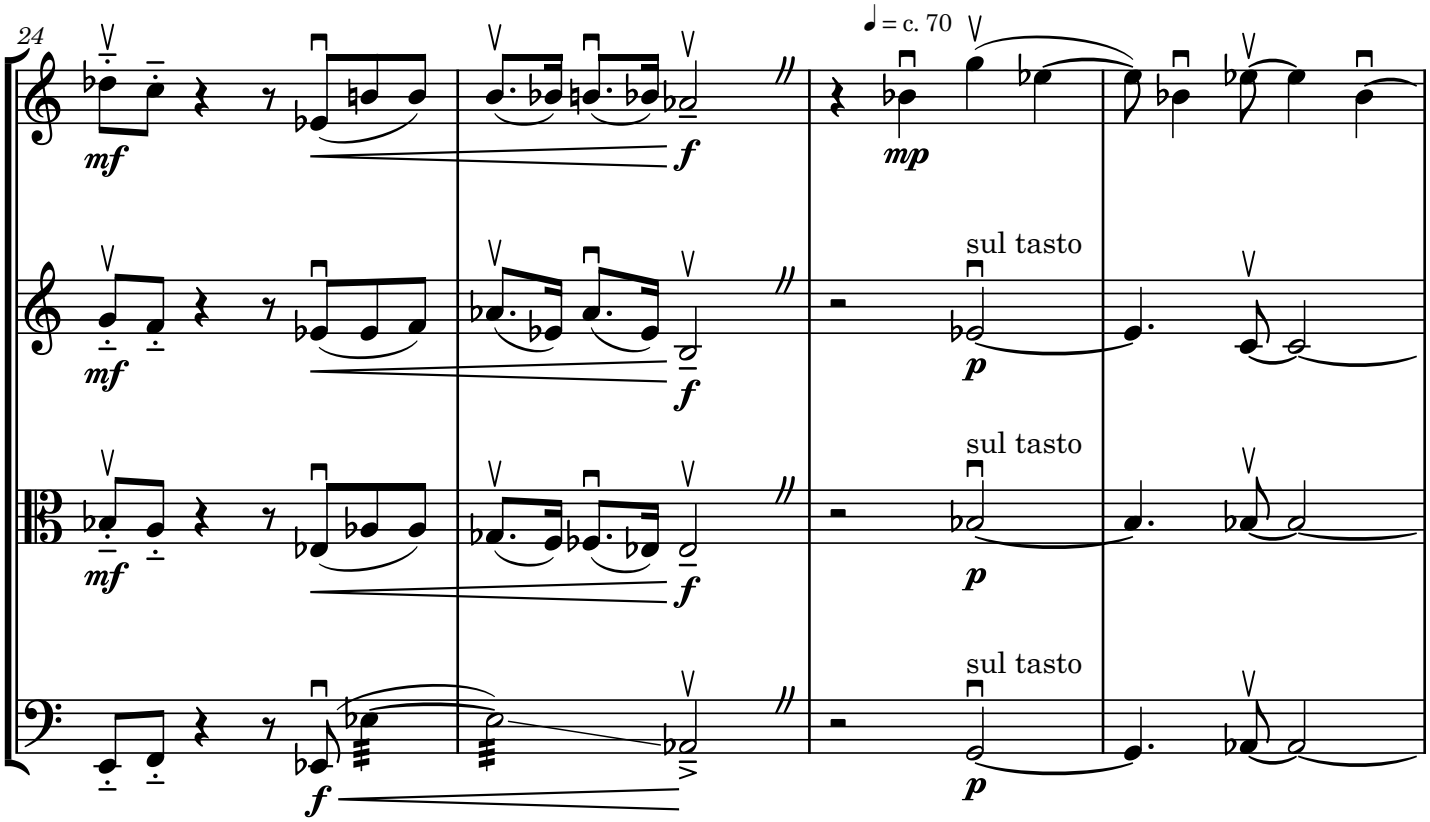

10
arco
p
mp
mf

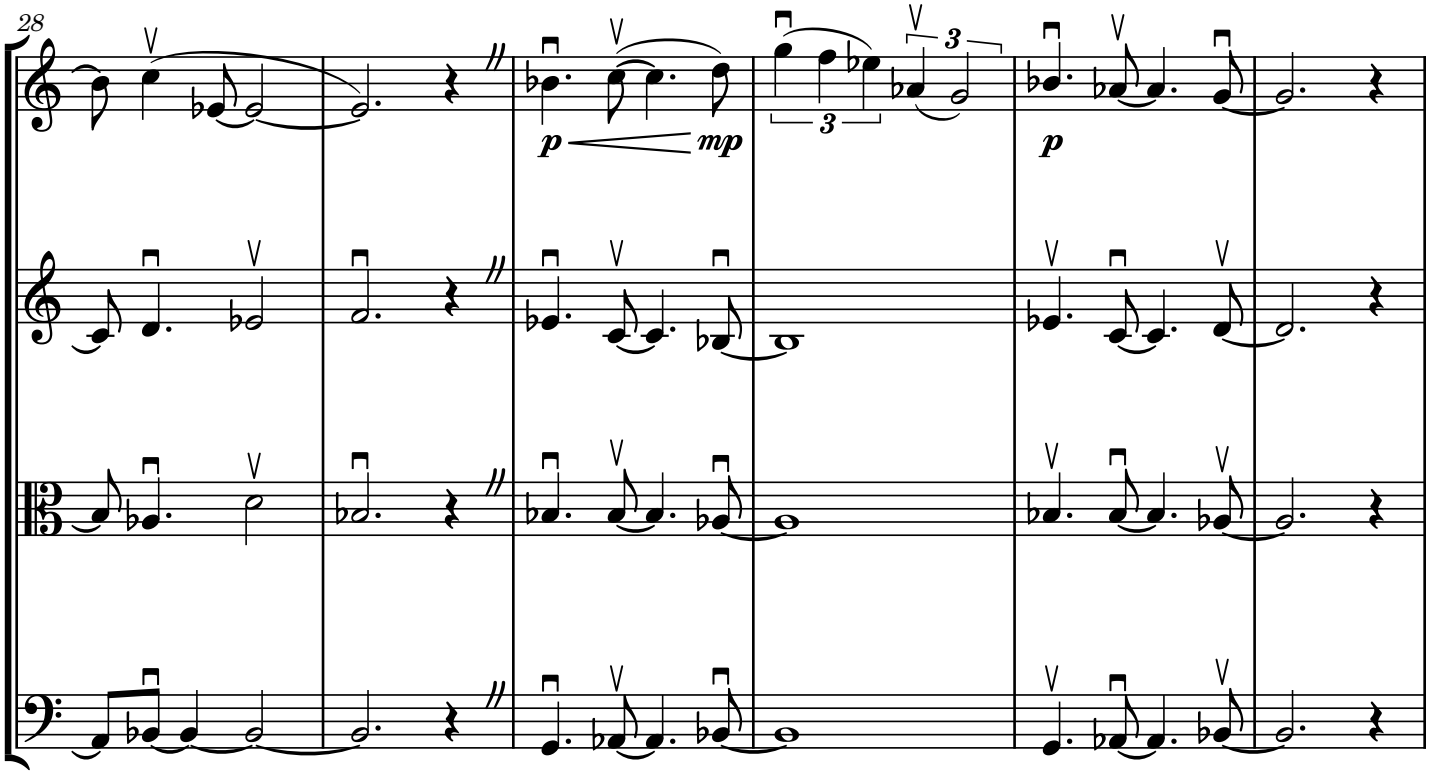

15
pizz.
arco
3
f
p
slower (♪ = c. 80)
pp
mp

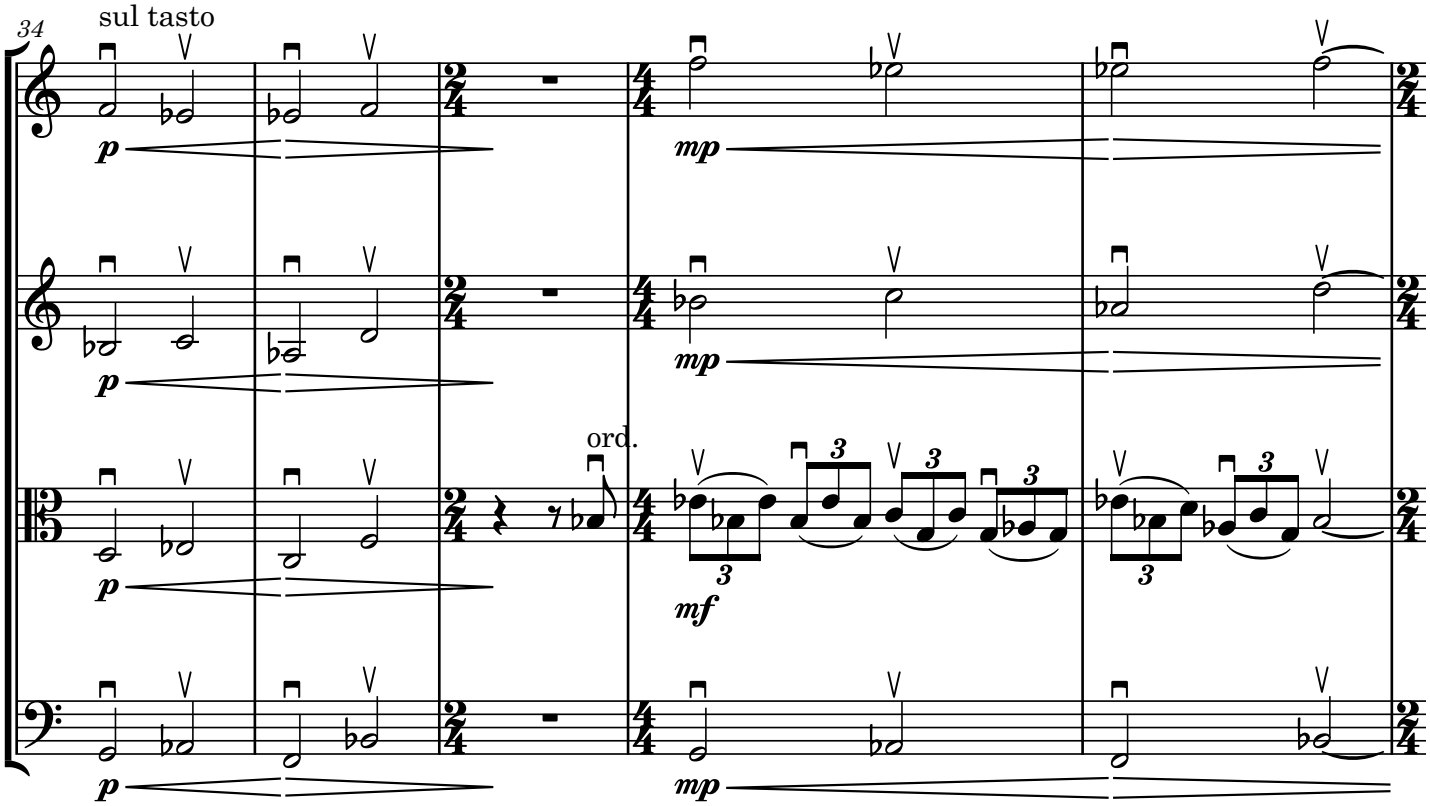

20
f
p
3

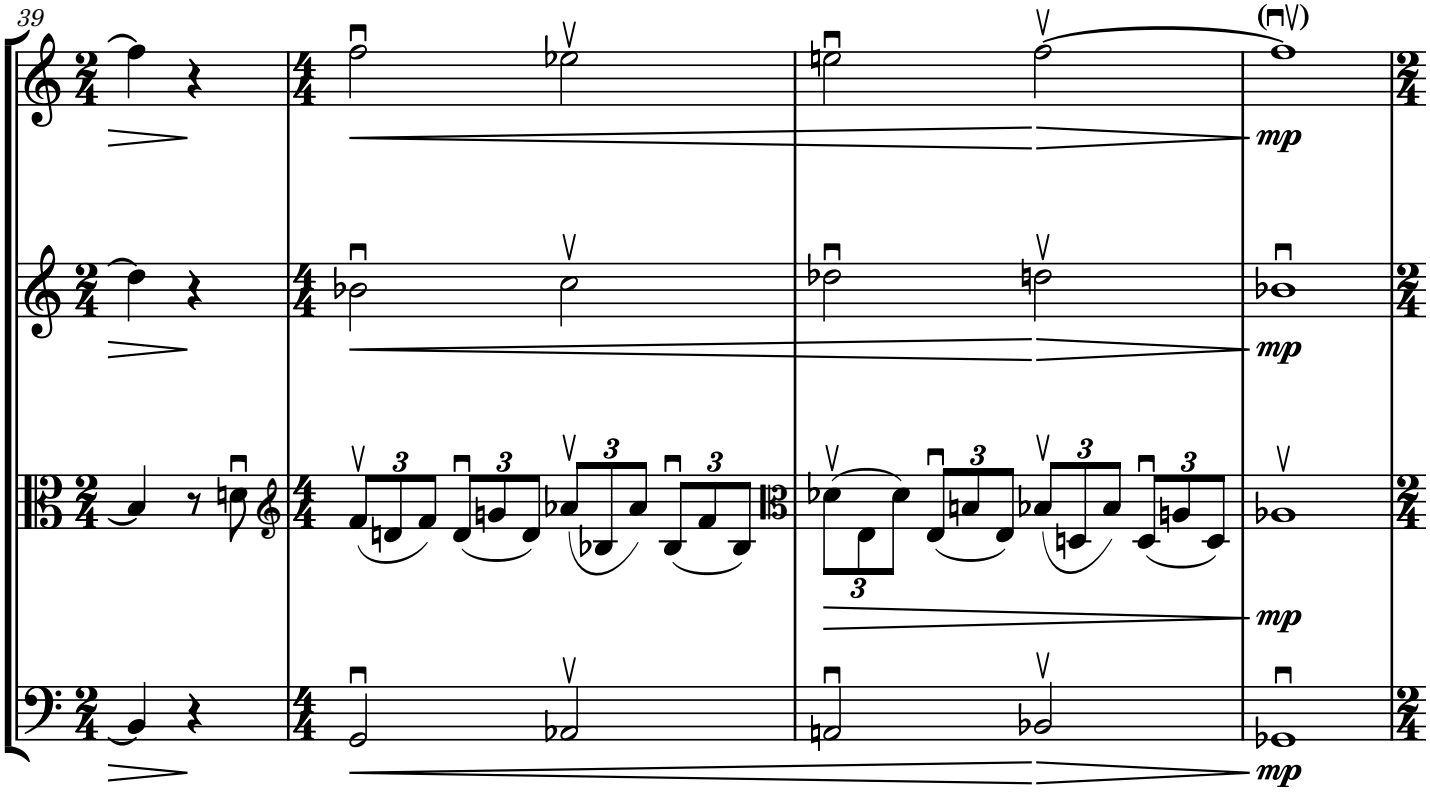

sul pont.
ord.
22
pp
mf
p
3

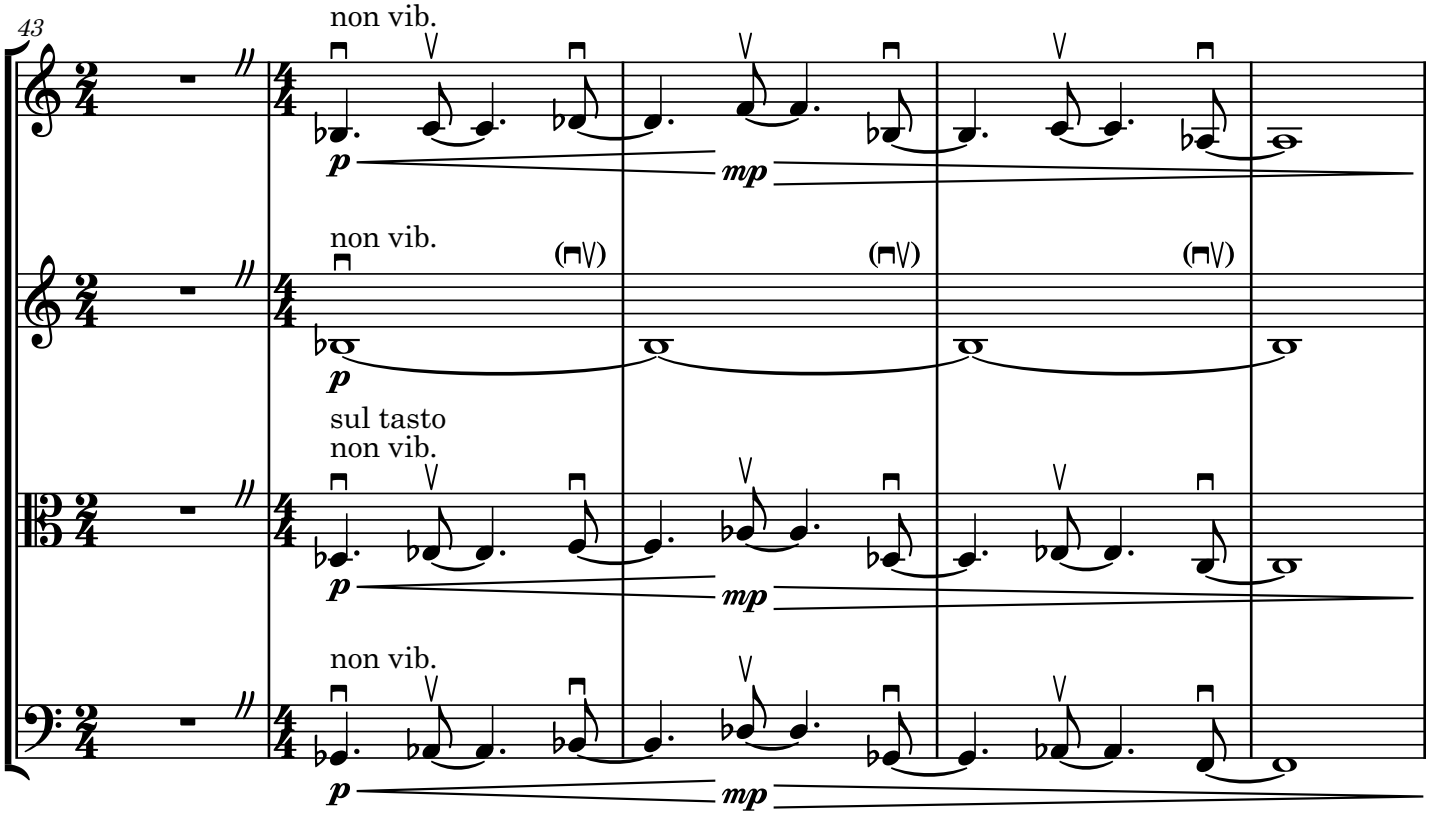

ord.
sul pont.
23
pp
mf
3

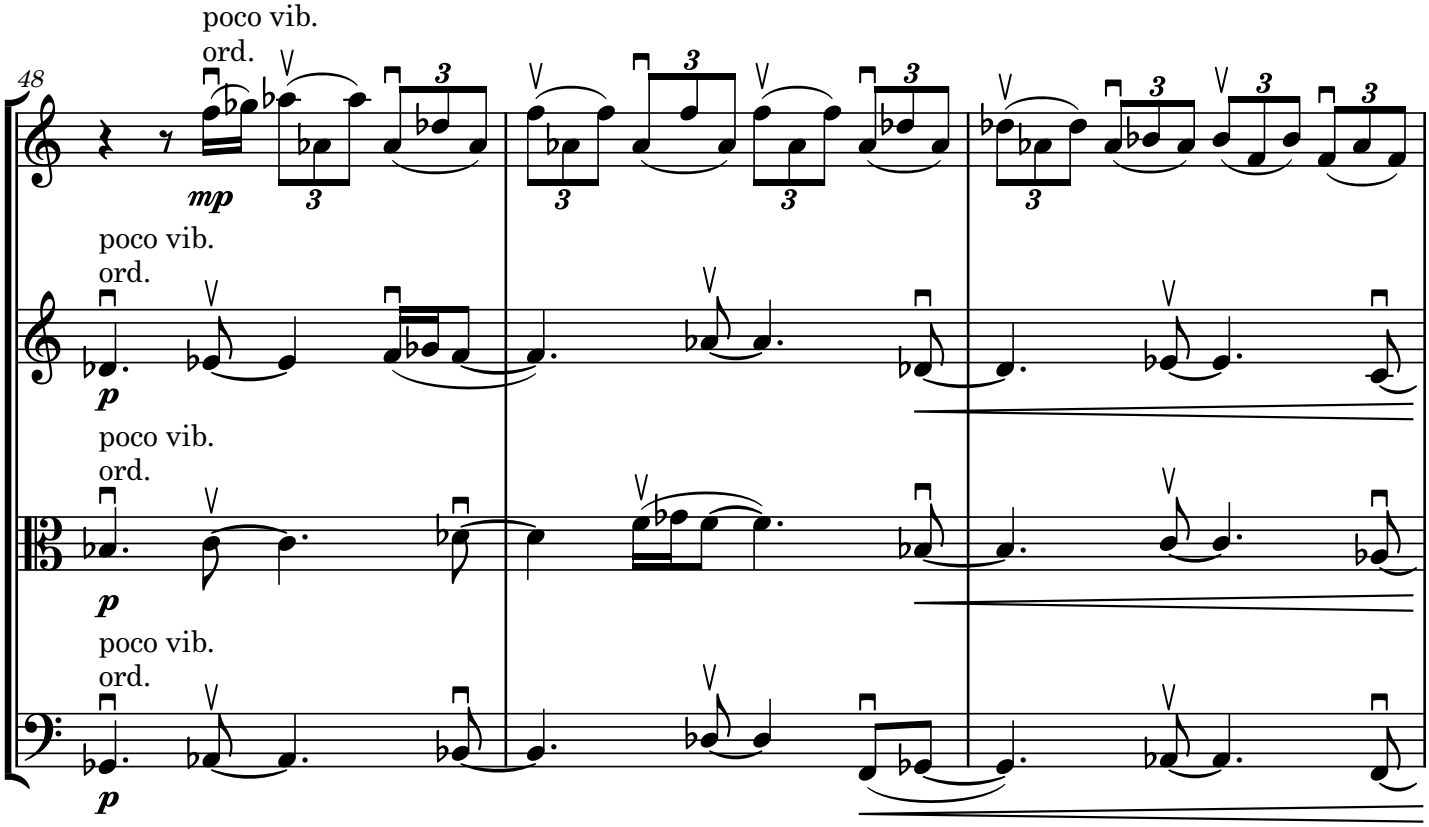

24
mf
f
mp
= c. 70
sul tasto
p

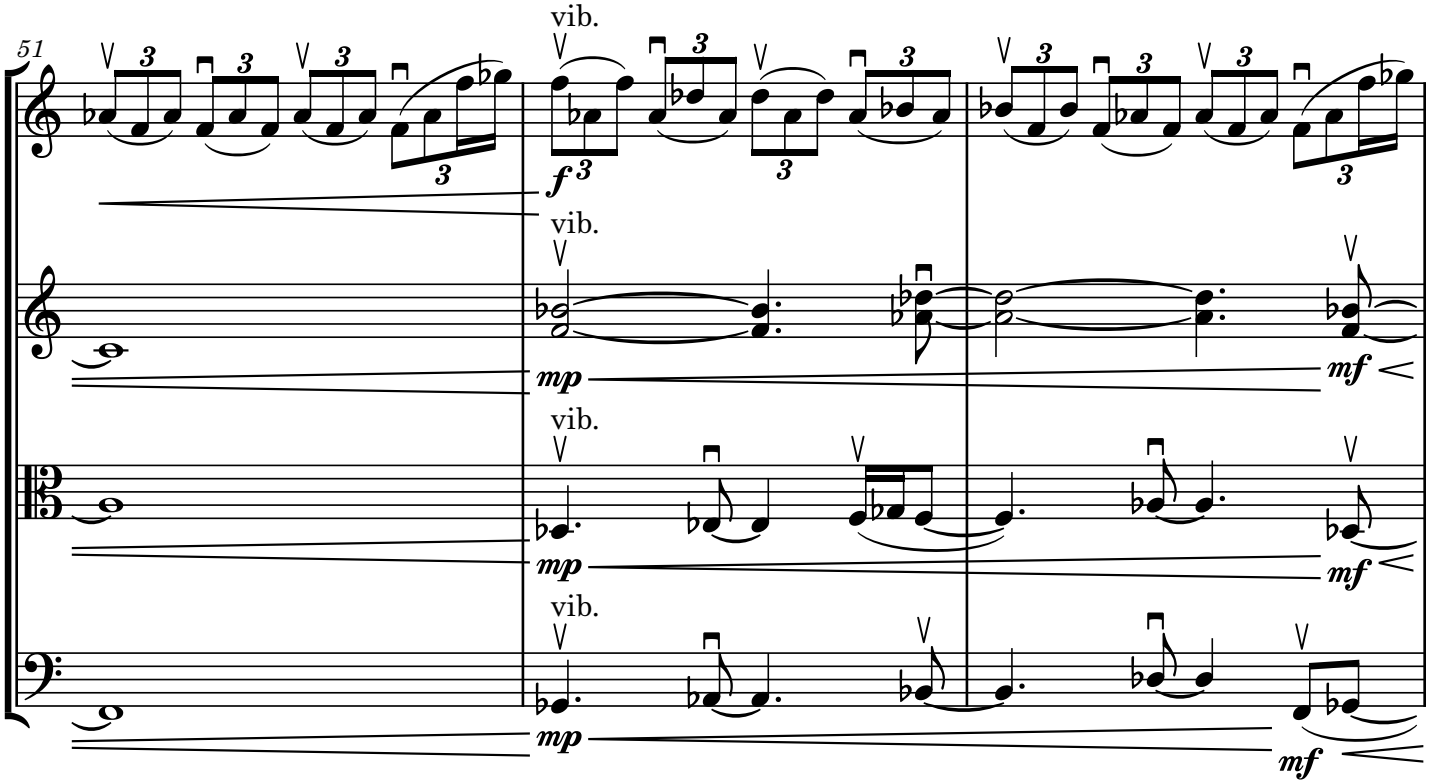

28
p
mp
3
p

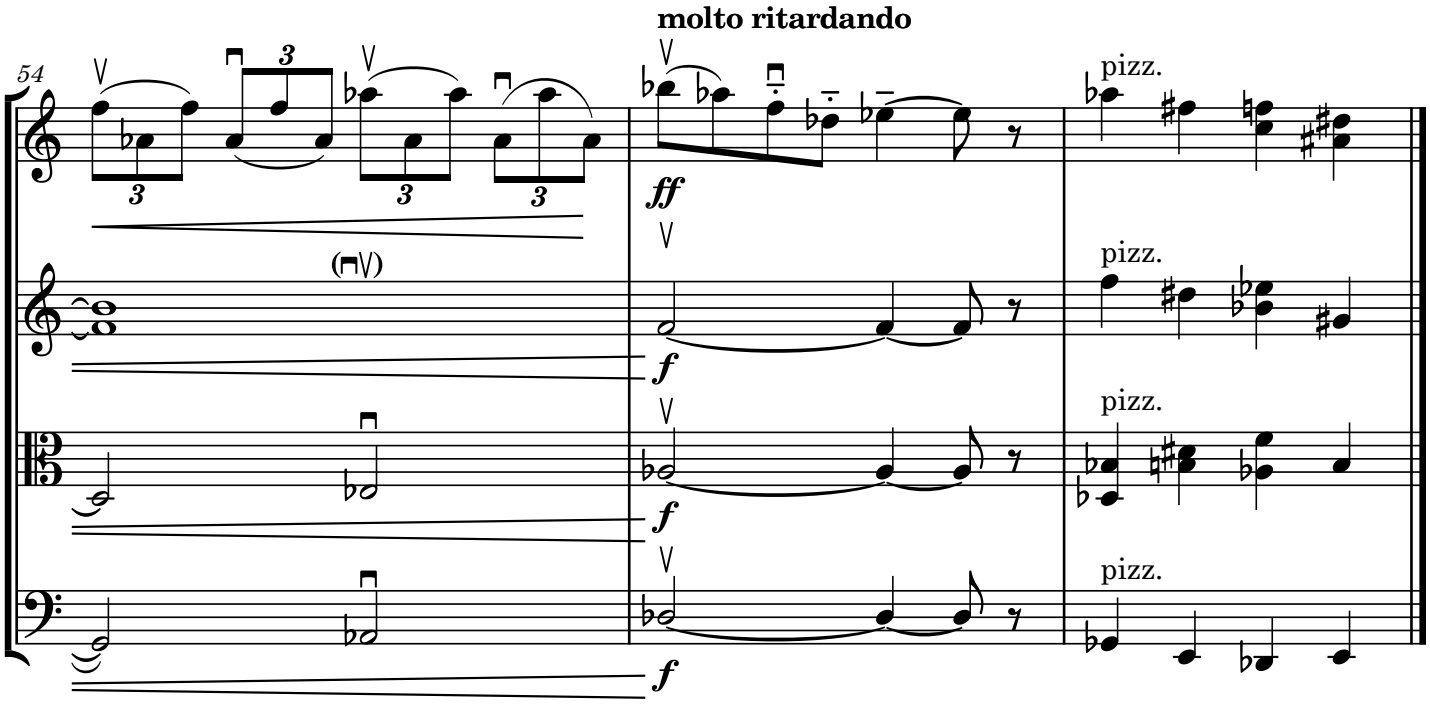

34
sul tasto
p
mp
ord.
mf


39
mp
mp
mp
mp


43
non vib.
p
mp
non vib.
p
sul tasto
non vib.
p
mp
non vib.
p
mp


48
poco vib.
ord.
mp
poco vib.
ord.
p
poco vib.
ord.
p
poco vib.
ord.
p


51
vib.
f
vib.
mp
mf
vib.
mp
mf
vib.
mp
mf


molto ritardando
54
ff
f
f
f
pizz.
pizz.
pizz.
pizz.