COMPOSITION PORTFOLIO

BY

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Introduction

In this portfolio I reflect on issues Covid-19 has brought to our communities and the possibilities of creating a brighter future. My music reflects the struggle that most people have faced in the last two years, the emotions and the conspiracies surrounding the experience, and the effect of solitude. In a time such as this it is almost inevitable that the music being composed is connected to the struggle in society at large. For ma composition is a journal of the heart. The pandemic has created a situation where most are out of touch with each other, have lost all previous routine and structure, where relationships are broken due to lack of personal contact, and almost everyone has unwillingly (or unwittingly) been thrust into self-reflection. Every day sees a new struggle to squeeze in all those pre-pandemic ideals so that some normalcy can be obtained, but this is not a time to be looking back. It's a time to understand what we are going through, build new joy and excitement for this different life and learn to live the best we can with the opportunities we are given. There has not been a more important time to foster some form of connection with friends and family, and to be as strong and supportive as possible.

The portfolio begins with a solo violin piece, *Unwelcome Solitude*, which exemplifies the loneliness and sadness during the various lockdowns over the last two years, with hints of the past and the difficulties in trying to resurrect pre-Covid-19 times. There are some unusual expressive markings to add to the descriptive effect within the piece.

This is followed by *The Pandemic*, two serialism works: *Panic* and *Pain* scored for a string quartet. Both of these pieces apply a flexible use of serialism to emphasize out the emotional aspects of the music, and quite simply; the panic and the pain caused by Covid-19 and the country's response to the pandemic as a whole.

Finally there is a three movement chamber piece titled *A Storm Series* which quite literally represents the series of events that occur from the upcoming to the closure of a typical Highveld storm. Further than this, these pieces represent the series of events that occurred in South Africa from the first rumour of the Covid-19 virus starting to circle around the world, through the various lockdowns and progression of events in our country and abroad. The final movement of this series, *Re-awakening,* ends on a positive note representing the rainbow at the end of the storm, and the positive outlook for South Africa to keep persevering through the pandemic.

Unwelcome Solitude A piece for solo violin.

In this piece I have taken to exploring mainly lyrical characteristics of the violin, and the various modes of sound production that are possible. This piece is as much an expression of loneliness fuelled by hard lockdowns during the Covid-19 pandemic, as it is an exploration of the many sonic variations made possible by the violin. Harmonic areas are considered through multiple-stoppings and these range from dissonant features to arpeggiation in broken chord-like writing. In all of this the emotional tautness experienced during hard lockdowns is balanced against and urge to break free from the confines of these difficult times.

Structurally, the music alternates between sections without time signature which showcase the will to explore freedom within the confinement and isolation of lockdown, and the other sections written with bar lines and time signatures being more reminiscent of the pre-Covid-19 era where the predictable rhythm of life was experienced. The unpredictable and unusual way of life experienced during hard lockdowns is expressed in the sections which do not have bar lines or time signatures. The timelessness of level 5 lockdown, for example where the commonplace way of life was replaced with insular, lack of contact with other people (apart from virtual meetings) and a sense of anxiety for the unknown.

With a somewhat improvisatory feel, the character is very free flowing, as instructed by 'Libermente' suggesting a free approach to tempo and rhythm. There is space for freedom of interpretation, especially with the numerous silences throughout the score. The character itself represents emotional self reflection, such as one's journey through inner loneliness to ultimately return and start over, in a manner completely different from the norm in pre-pandemic times. These 'returns' are the stricter forms of lockdown which were imposed at intervals throughout the last eighteen months, reflected in the stop-start nature of the thematic material and the lack of complete follow-though and development of much of the material. The dramatic dynamics throughout befit that of a lonely mind without company to stimulate thoughts, over-thinking and being panicked from the Covid-19 situation.

The piece begins with the main theme in a lyrical fashion. It is a strong statement, which returns multiple times. This theme is the controlling force behind this piece; it is both a representation of a person thrust into solitude from isolation due to hard lockdowns, and the effect of the accompanying deafening silence. The long drawn notes and tied notes with tenuto articulations express the familiar which is no longer so familiar. The intention here is to pulse the longer notes on the beat; the drawn out notes suggest static silence while the pulse imitates the rush of blood in the ears. Although this effect is not very audible in the playback, the intent is to represent the stillness and silence that overcomes one when alone. For this the violin's 'sound' possesses a timbre that allows for this effect of being overwhelmed by solitude and silence to be expressed.

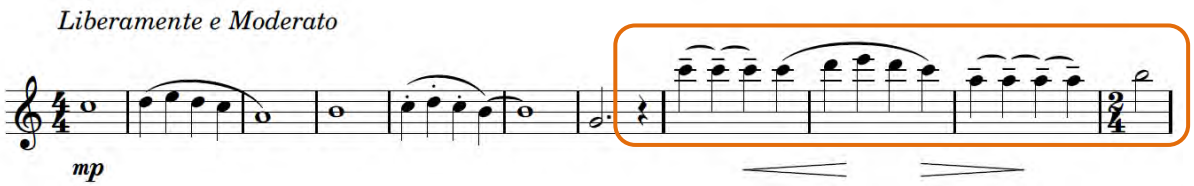


Figure 1 Lemmer, *Unwelcome Solitude* Page 1 - line 1.

Following this a shorter, more rhythmically energetic theme emerges. It sputters into life without developing its full potential, and fails to flower fully (though later incantations are longer lived) such is the emotional difficulty of living under hard lockdown. The attempts to uplift one's own spirit unsuccessfully.

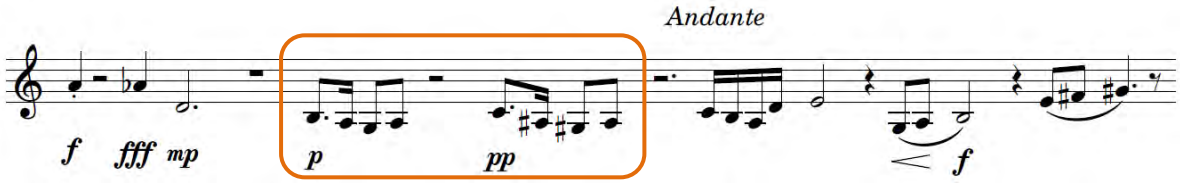


Figure 2 Lemmer, *Unwelcome Solitude* Page 1 - line 3.

A 'falling' motif is introduced in line five on page one, with sonic imagery of an escalation of the sense of loneliness.

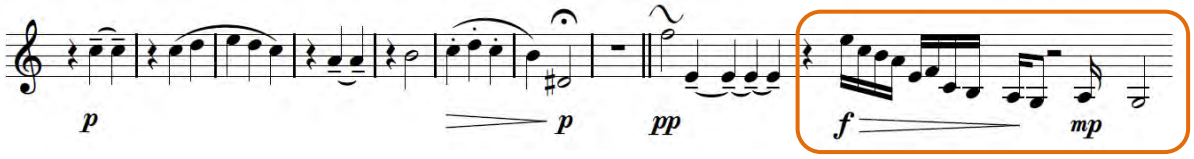


Figure 3 Lemmer, *Unwelcome Solitude* Page 1 - line 5.

This sense is exacerbated at the 'Portamento e adagio' indicated by specific down bows, where the performer slides between pitches on single strings to create a sighing effect.

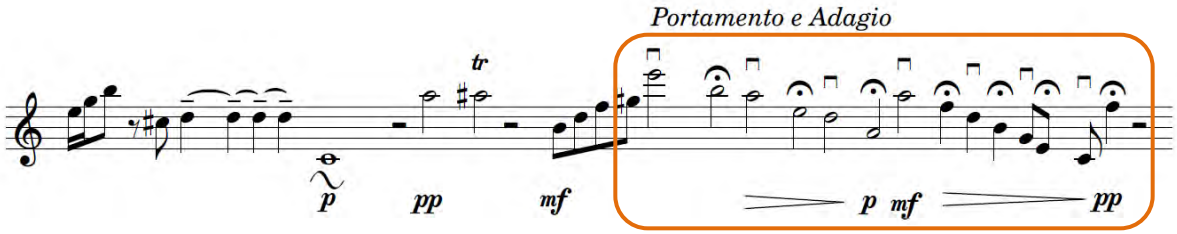


Figure 4 Lemmer, *Unwelcome Solitude* Page 1 - line 7.

From the depths of despair the rhythmically energetic theme returns, reaffirming the necessity of perseverance to work through the difficult times. The music becomes more energized and has a definite sense of purpose as the hard lockdown gives way to something more resembling normality. As the dark lonely cloud lifts, assisted by the decreasing lockdown levels, the energy levels of society begin to rise as people start exercising again and more people are moving around. There are memories of what life was like before Covid-19 struck, though there is still the sense that these less onerous lockdown levels could give way to harder lockdown once again.

Left hand pizzicato appears notated with a '+' above the note. This is a really interesting technique, although not easy to execute, it allows for much quicker movements between bowed and pizzicato notes.

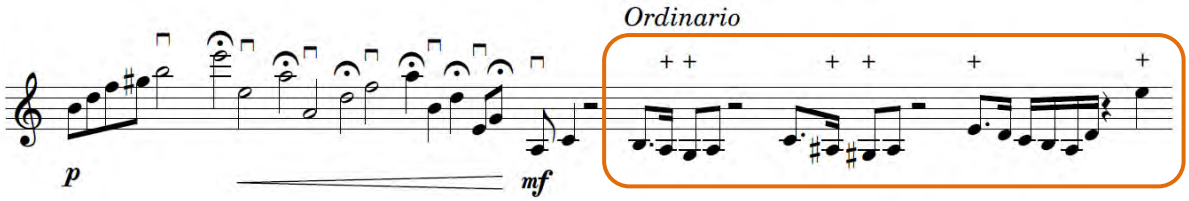


Figure 5 Lemmer, *Unwelcome Solitude* Page 2 - line 1.

The sense of a lightening mood coupled with the greater movement of people serves as inspiration for the section ushered in by D-flat pentatonic at the end of the third line on page two. This section conjures a sense of energy as it alternates between quick bowed and right hand pizzicato notes. Here the musical thoughts are longer and more developed than the brevity of previous sections. As the music moves to a rhythmic section on the seventh line of page two, the emerging hustle and bustle is apparent: the city regains some of its rhythmic momentum with movement on the streets, more energy in its buildings, and a sense of connectivity between people starting to emerge again.

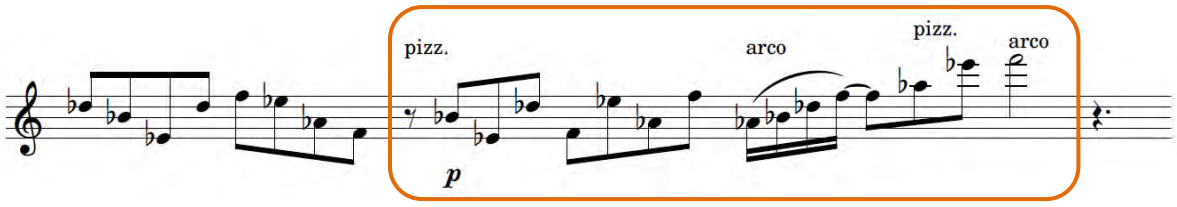


Figure 6 Lemmer, *Unwelcome Solitude* Page 2 - line 3.

With the introduction of 'Flautando e Adagio' (the performer creates a flute-like sound with the bow by lightly moving it over the strings closer to the fingerboard) a new soundscape becomes apparent. This breaks the piece into a new section, it is both a slow reflective moment in between the excitement of this section, and a reminder of what another lockdown could mean.

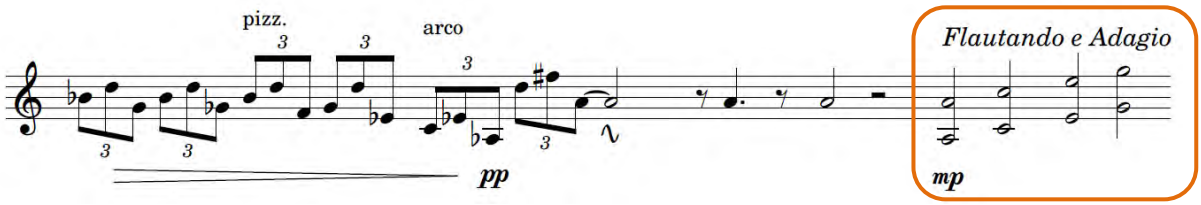


Figure 7 Lemmer, *Unwelcome Solitude* Page 3 - line 3

The piece moves into A pentatonic. On the fourth line of page three, a rising optimistic theme enters. This adds a spirit of liveliness to the music.

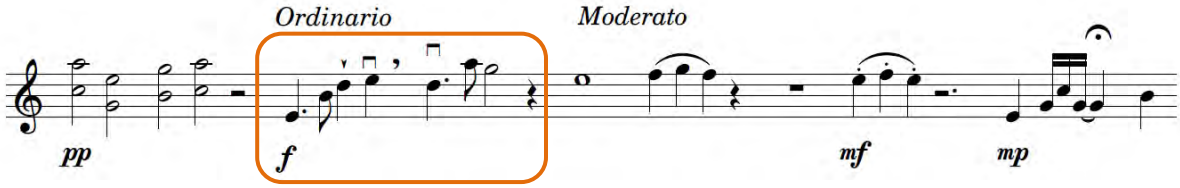


Figure 8 Lemmer, *Unwelcome Solitude* Page 3 - line 4.

Following this, fragments of the initial theme are intertwined with the improvisatory parts. This allows space for the performer to explore the sounds within the theme where before they were more restricted by a structured time signature.

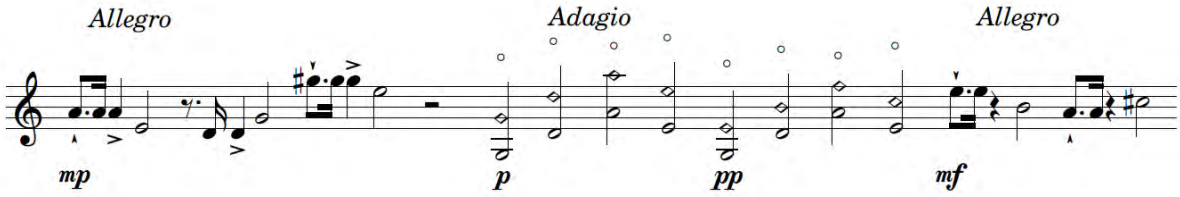


Figure 9 Lemmer, *Unwelcome Solitude* Page 3 - line 7.

As the piece moves to B pentatonic, new material is introduced. This section speaks to the disastrous movement of Covid-19 toward the end of 2020 as the second wave of infections, suffering and death took hold across the world and locally. The liberties that were taken on lighter lockdown now started to cripple the country's readiness as people became too relaxed and dropped their guard; a perfect breeding ground for spreading the virus. 'Col legno' is instructed - notes created by striking the string with the back wooden part of the bow whilst stopping the string on the correct pitch - the percussive sound typifying the frustration of having to move away from a more free way of living to lockdown under stricter conditions.

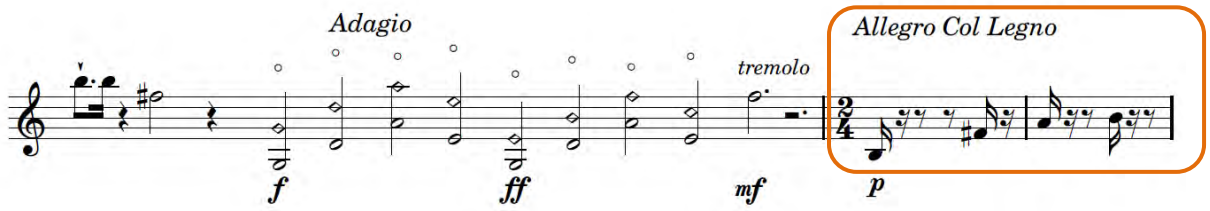


Figure 10 Lemmer, *Unwelcome Solitude* Page 4 - line 1.

This somewhat jarring sound begins the rise of the drama, the panic of harder lockdown returning, and the fear of that lonely depressive state recurring. This all builds up and is brought to a climax with arpeggiated chords, evoking distorted and confused cries.

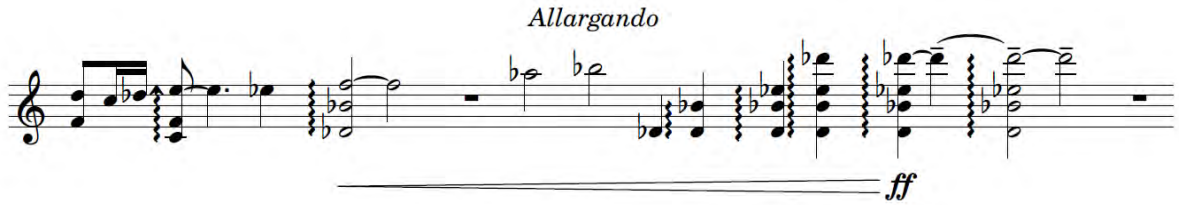


Figure 11 Lemmer, *Unwelcome Solitude* Page 6 - line 5.

The falling motif brings back the silence and unwelcome solitude giving a sense of acceptance of one's fate, and returning to the original theme, to that first agonising pulse in the silence of one's own exhausted thoughts. The pace and the space at the end, seeming like it is lonelier than ever.

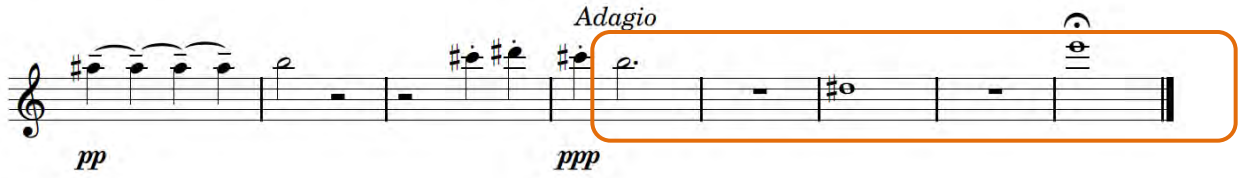


Figure 12 Lemmer, *Unwelcome Solitude* Page 7 - line 3.

The Pandemic Two movements for string quartet

These two movements *Panic* and *Pain* for string quartet use the modernist language of the twentieth-century with its moments of uncompromising dissonance and angular melodic shapes. Both pieces are based on a twelve-tone row and employ serial compositional techniques, though using Alban Berg's Violin Concerto (1934) as a model, the approach to serialism is more pragmatic than rigid. The row appears in varied formats (principal, retrograde, inversion and retrograde inversion) and each format appears in a number of transposed forms, e.g. a perfect fifth higher than the original. Frequently, more than one format of the row appears simultaneously, though there are places where the row is dispensed with or only a portion of the row is used. Expressivity is taken as the most important element in these movements with serialism merely an aid towards a means. Each row contains remnants of harmonic entities with the row for *Panic* closing with intervals that hone in on C as the row culminates. The final five notes move inexorably towards C with hints of dominant-tonic cadencing suggested in the final three notes: D-B-C. This shows some correlation with Berg's row for his Violin Concerto where notes are grouped in triads or outline a tritone; displaying remnants of tonality in the row's contraction. Despite, the tonal implications of the closing parts of the row for *Panic*, the music where the row is applied demonstrates a more atonal bias than tonal, and this adds to the sense of dissent denoted by the title, *Panic*.

Each movement focuses on the role of Covid-19 in uprooting logic and letting panic and false information rip through vast swathes of society, splitting it apart, and leaving it desperate to pick up the pieces. A fluid approach, especially in terms of dynamics, meter and articulation, is followed which allows for an element of artistic surprise within the complexity of the interlocking rows. The changeability of different time signatures create varying metrical stresses and metrical fluidity ideal for depicting the unpredictability of the Covid-19 Pandemic and society's reaction to it. The first movement (*Panic*) is anxious with an element of confusion, reminiscent of the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, when the virus made its way across the world causing panic and death. Then the questions began, questions that could not be answered. As these questions grew so did the anxiety across the globe: What was truly happening, what does it all mean, and, why is it happening to us?

The second movement (*Pain*) provides a much more sombre and introspective overview of the Covid-19 pandemic. Although there are periods that present a more positive outlook, where the strength of society begins to rebuild, the emotional toll that the death and destruction that the pandemic has taken on each individual is evident throughout.

As Covid-19 began circling the world and South Africa did its best to combat the virus and decrease the death rate, people became more disconnected through isolation and the need to protect oneself and loved ones. Although we were all experiencing the same thing, it was affecting us in different ways. Many people felt alone and scared and it reflected in their lives whether they lost their jobs, their houses, their connection with others, or whether they had to bury loved ones due to death caused by the pandemic; situations that no one could have sensed on the horizon.

These are the underlying issues that lie at the core of *Panic* and *Pain* and influenced the artistic expression in each movement.

1. *Panic*

This first movement takes you through the motions of the first two lockdowns due to Covid-19. The interlocking themes and repetitive nature represents the questions and theories about the virus; where it came from and what it could potentially do. The clashing opinions of science and conspiracy theories can be heard as each instrument progresses on its own path, yet also constantly draws from each other. The need to have support and comfort from each other is difficult in a world where everyone is affected so differently. Even so, this need for communication and dialogue brought about a sense of hope for humanity, working as a whole to come up with answers and solutions to the effect of the virus, eventually a vaccine. The possibilities are endless when opinions and societal divisions can be set aside and humankind can work as a whole to create hope for the future.

The movement is set in a variation of Rondo form: A (bar 1 – 34); B (bar 39 – 83); A (bar 93 – 121); C (bar 122 – 177); D (bar 186 – 228) A (bar 233 – 264), with the A section becoming more fragmented as it continues through the piece. Predominantly the form is based on rhythmic and register changes within the chosen rows. The last bar of every A section is what I refer to as "summative Phrase", stretching the principal row across the ensemble in varying modes of motion and pausing before the new section starts.

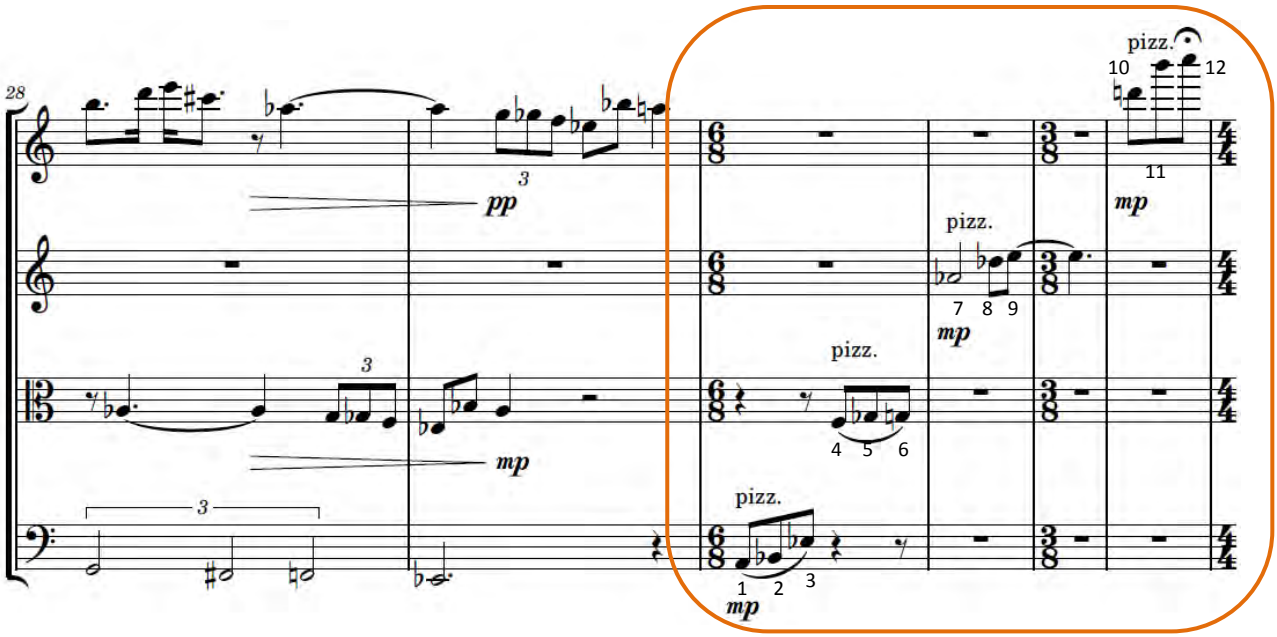
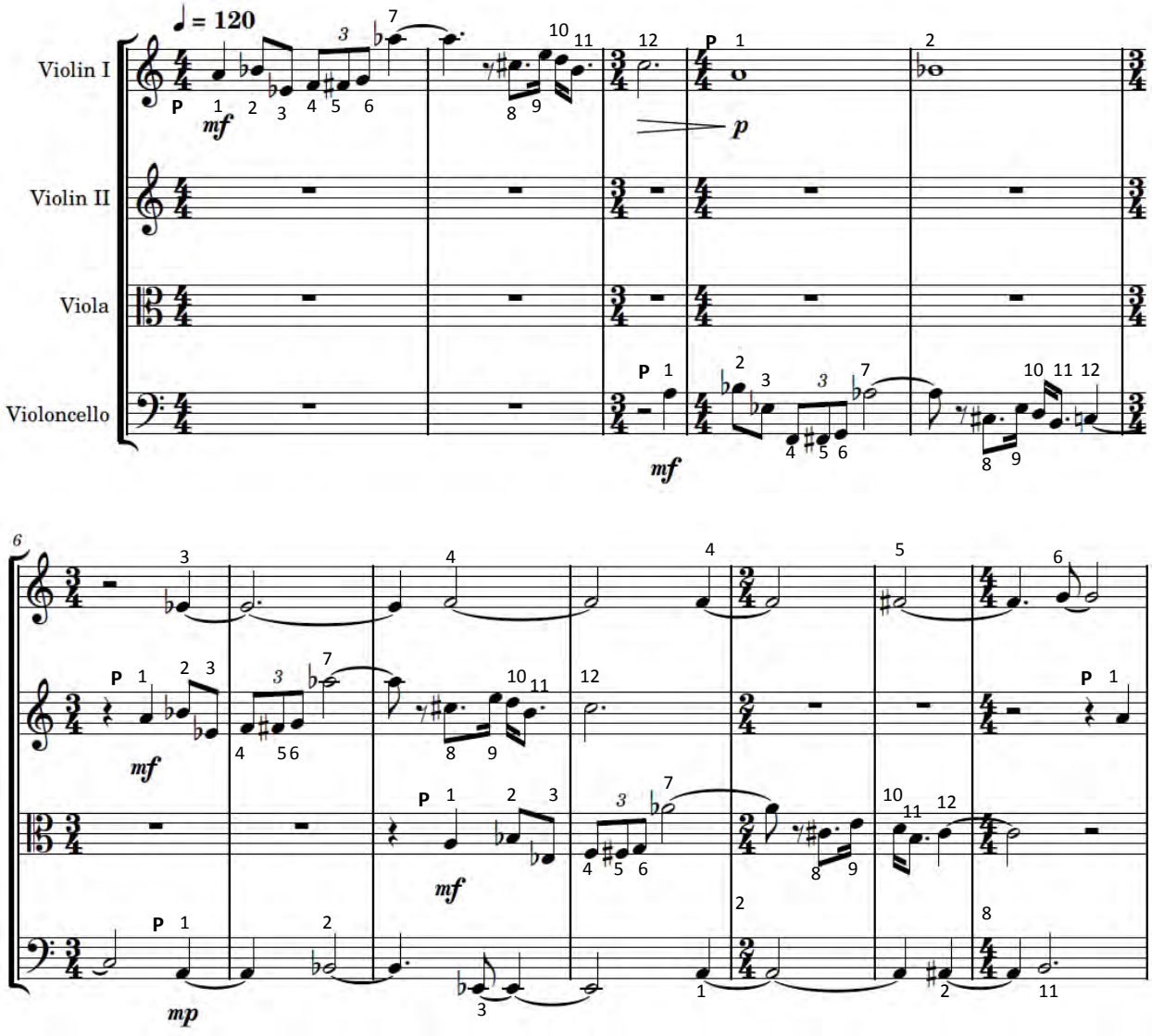


Figure 13 Lemmer, *Panic* bars 28 – 33.

The piece begins with a statement of the principal row in the first violin and then in the cello, in a fugato style that is followed for the initial 29 bars. Simultaneously, the row is presented in parts where the instruments are playing a version of the “principal theme” (either in its original or retrograde formations) in an unusual format where sections of the row are repeated, sections are omitted, and different sections of the row are presented at the same time. For example, after the theme has been announced by the first violin it is portrayed again by the first violin in sustained notes: from bar 4 through bar 12 these notes are derived from the first six notes of the row. From bar 6 the second violin and viola take over the replications of the theme (still in fugato style) while the first violin and cello are adding harmonic substance through the incorporation of longer note values. The first violins addition (bar 4 – 12) has been outlined, but while this is occurring the cello adds another row inspired strand where the traditional treatment of the row is dispensed with. From bar 6 – 12 the notes are derived from the row showing repetition. While the row is the primary source for the musical material, it is used in various formats and not always completely traditionally, with changes to the traditional usage applied to create expressivity and not rigid adherence to the Schoenbergian outline.



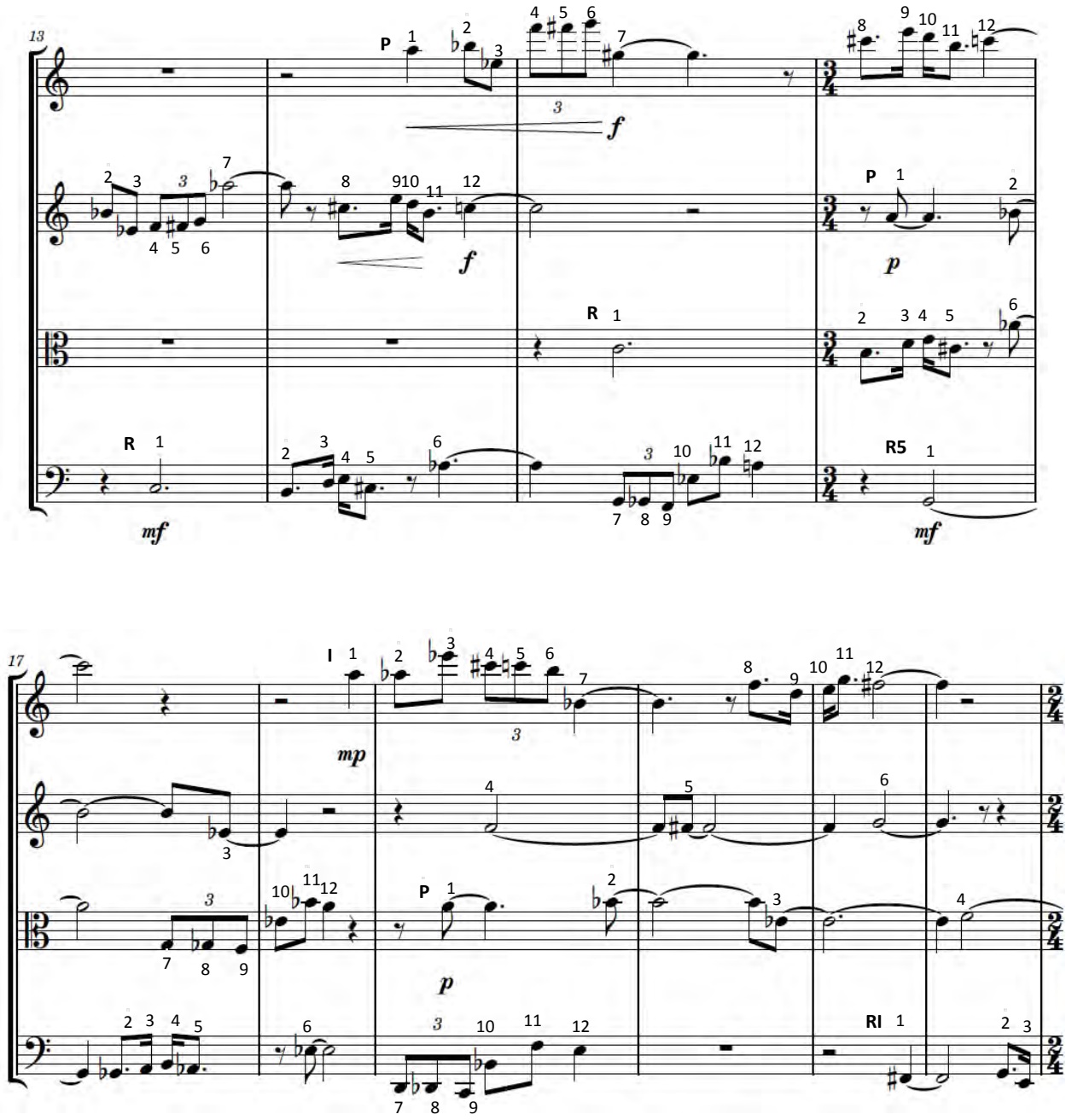


Figure 1 Lemmer, *Panic* bars 1 – 22.

In bars 26 and 27 there is a “falling” motif played by the cello which returns throughout the movement increasing the mood of despondency as the debate between science and conspiracies moves ‘back and forth’.

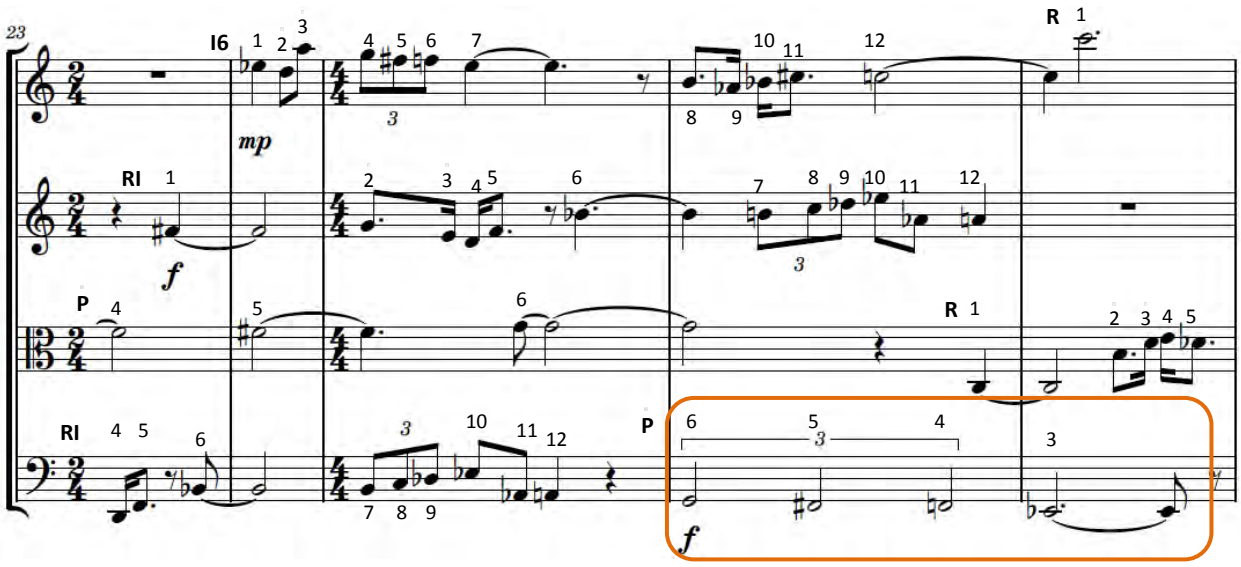


Figure 2 Lemmer, *Panic* bars 23 – 27.

The A section comes to a conclusion with a sweet sounding interlude which returns in various forms through the movement. These interludes start at bars 35, 85, 178, 229 and 265 respectively. These brief moments are tonal where all the instruments work together towards a harmonic goal, within a homophonic chorale-like texture. This exemplifies society and its underlying force of strength when working together for the future and thinking positively. It also shows an internal sense of unity between the atonal and tonal sections as elements of the row are visible in the construction of the main melodic material. Given the neo-classical twist of the modernist style, these repeated though varied "refrains" are a reminder of the ritornelli moments in much Baroque music.

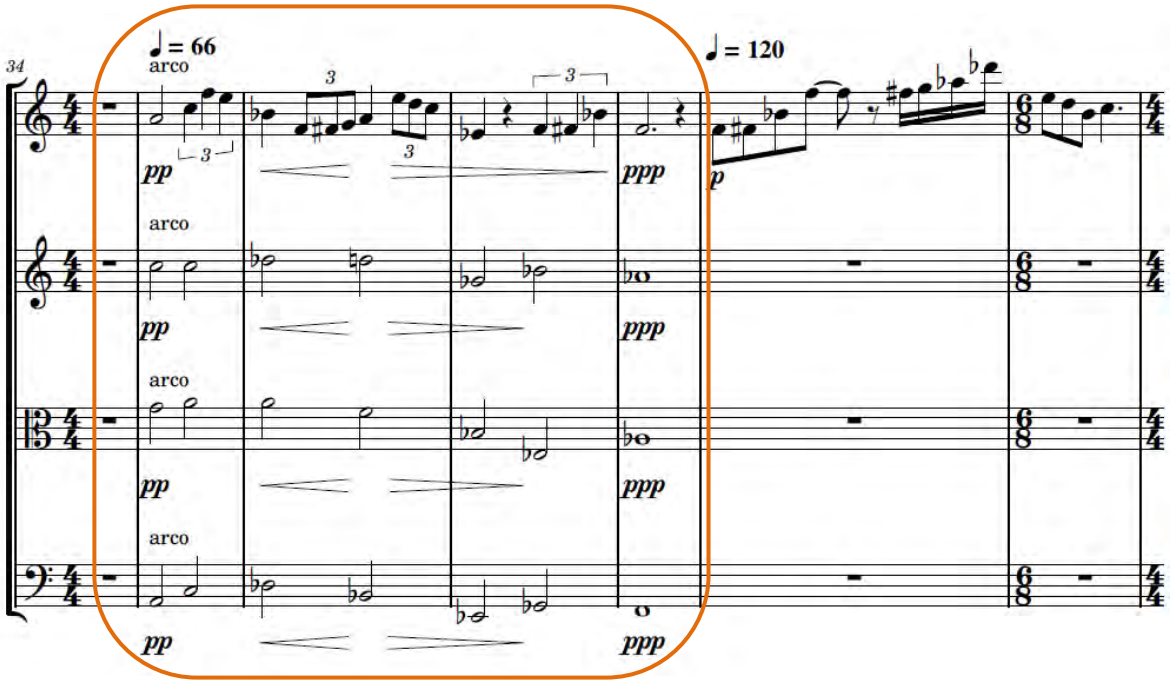


Figure 14 Lemmer, *Panic* bars 34 – 40.

As this movement evolves, the row appears in a myriad of guises, with the overarching emotional aspect of the music being the sense of panic which gripped the nation, and the world, as nation after nation was placed into lockdown to cope with the global pandemic.

Section B shows the varied use of the original row as the motifs twist and interact with each other.

A motif in triplet rhythm, using each of the four basic formats of the row, is scattered across the texture. The repetition of this motif binds the work together and provides a focal point.

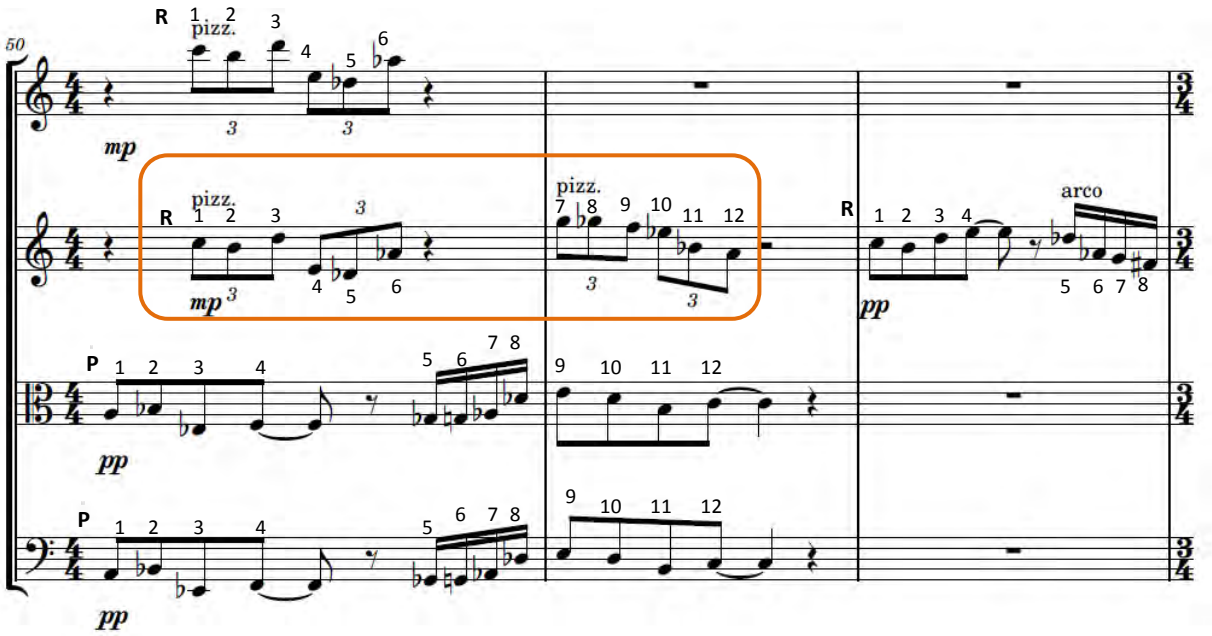


Figure 3 Lemmer, *Panic* bars 50 – 52.

Section A returns in bar 93 with a very fragmented statement of its theme. It is not a repeat of the first section but rather a development of the thematic material. The motif fragmentation is emblematic of the breakdown in society with so many losing their livelihoods and a general lack of true human-to-human contact between people.

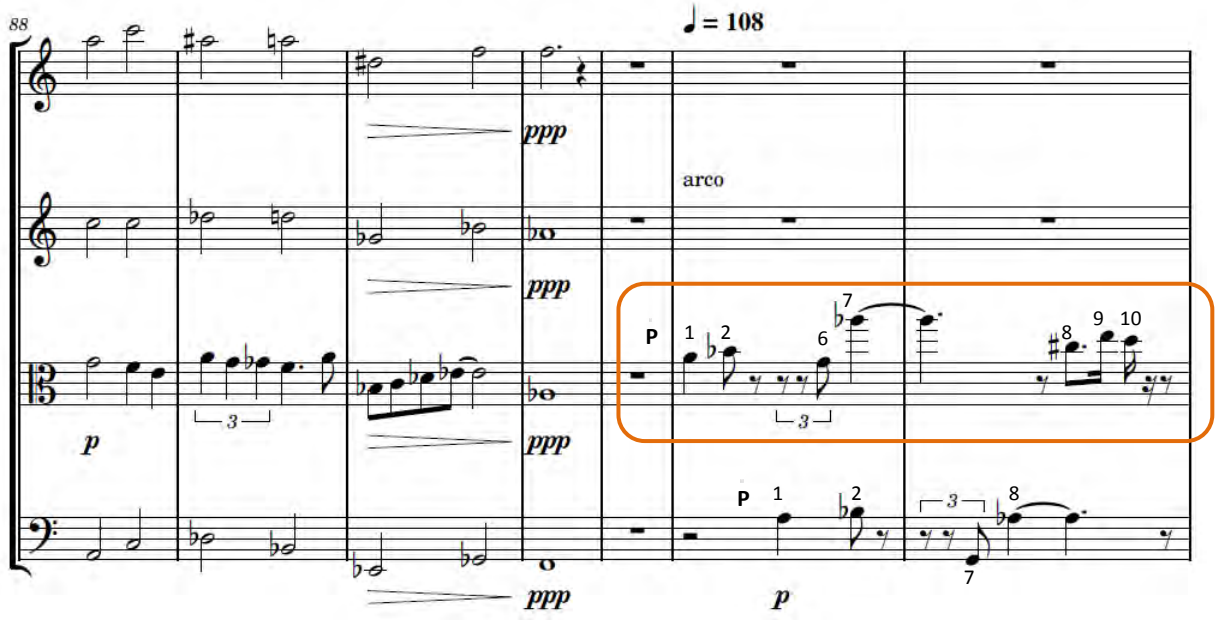


Figure 4 Lemmer, *Panic* bars 88 – 94.

Section C reveals the fastest tempo in this movement and relentless sense of motif propulsion, with the interaction between the instruments necessitating precision in ensemble performance: close working together.

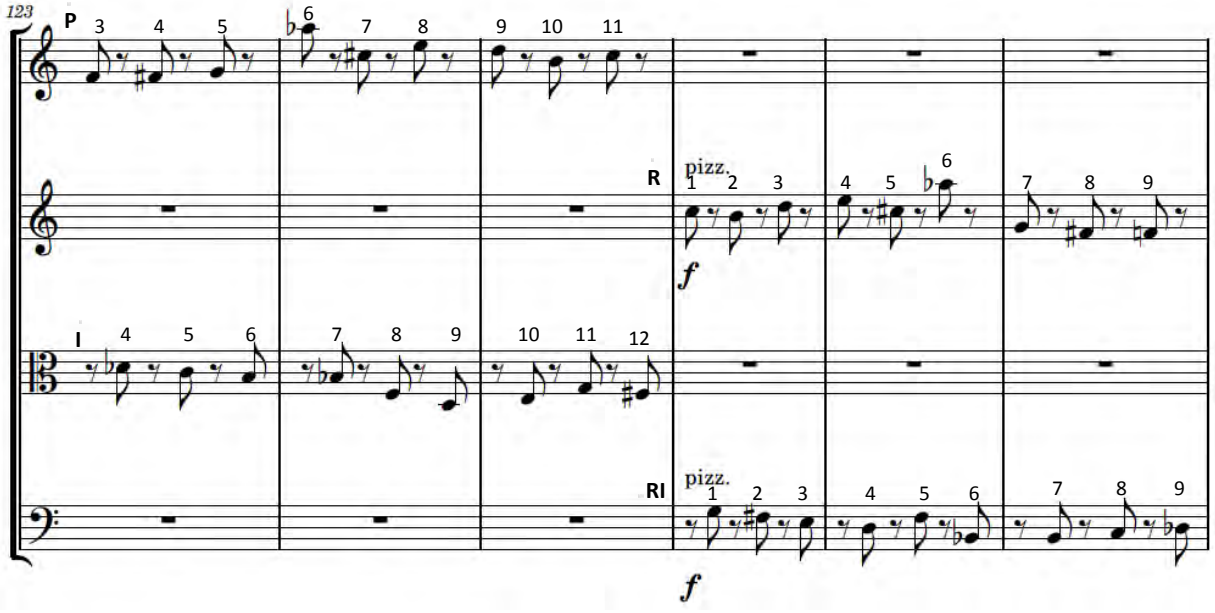


Figure 5 Lemmer, *Panic* bars 123 – 128.

A particular characteristic of section C is the Bartók styled Pizzicato represented by a small circle with a line through it above the note. Here the intention is to allow the string to slap back against the neck of the instrument adding to the percussive resonance. This raw and sharp sound resembles the difficulty to return to normal life practices with all the constraints and changes to general lifestyle. Here again, reference to twentieth-century's modernism is obvious.

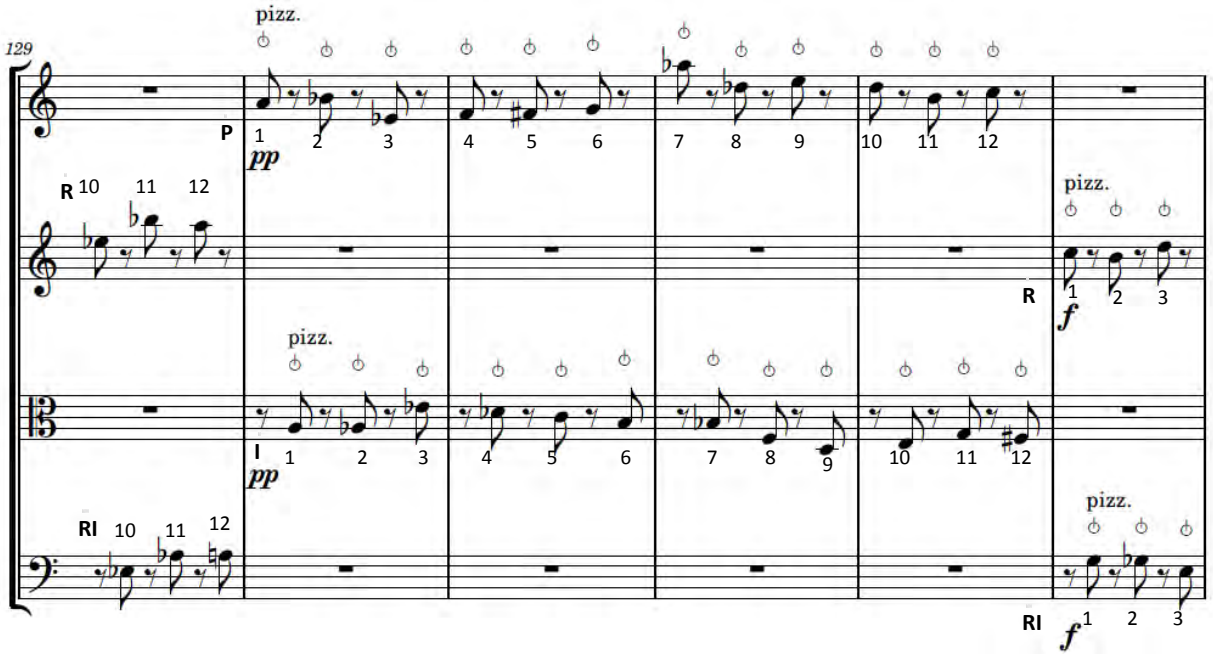


Figure 6 Lemmer, *Panic* bars 129 – 134.

Section D starts with a veiled reference to the original theme (section A) though it appears in an attenuated fashion before a new thematic section is introduced. The polyphonic texture with motifs scattered across the instrumentation produce an unsettling, though driven, feeling. It is possible that this represents the rampant drive of Covid-19 across communities, but that is only a suggestion reached after the music was written. While the Covid-19 pandemic served as the foundational idea for this music it was not composed with specific programmatic intent.

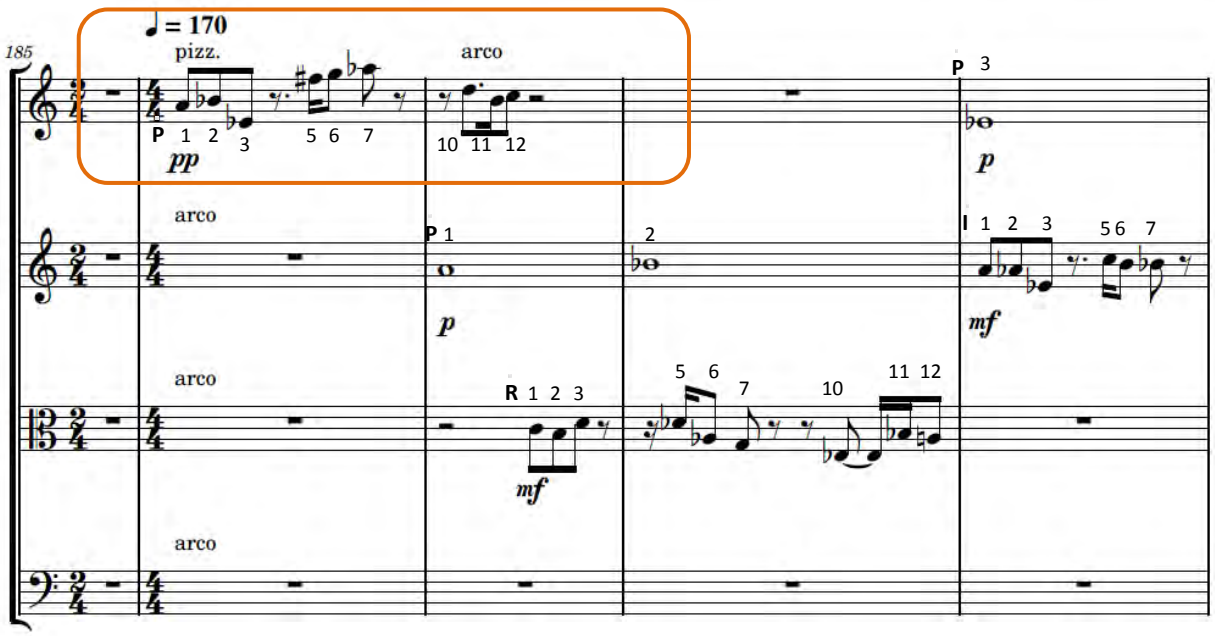


Figure 7 Lemmer, *Panic* bars 185 – 189.

In bar 205 a sequential pattern is established beginning with the retrograde inversion row in the cello. The syncopated rhythmic aspects along with the cross rhythms produced by the triplet structure of the viola part, add to the sense of irregularity in this section. The sustained note values in the first violin part bring as sense of uniformity to this complex rhythmic structure.

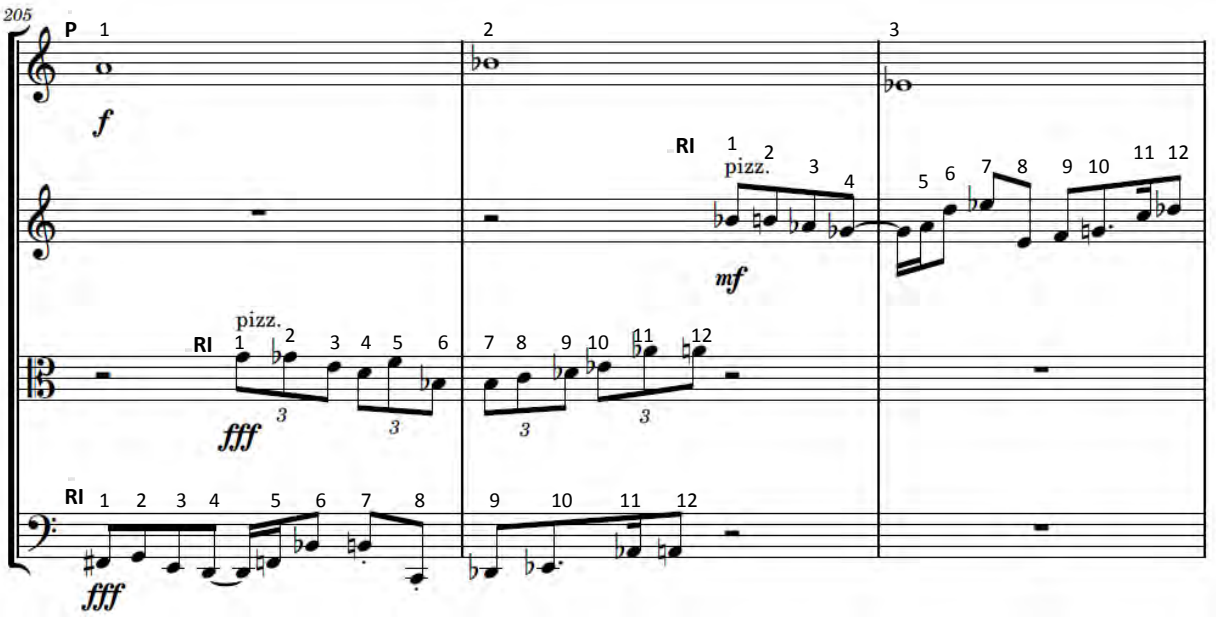


Figure 8 Lemmer, *Panic* bars 205 – 207.

In bar 217 another sequential pattern is established by the cello and viola running simultaneously. This seemingly stable sequencing builds into a short but alarming climax.

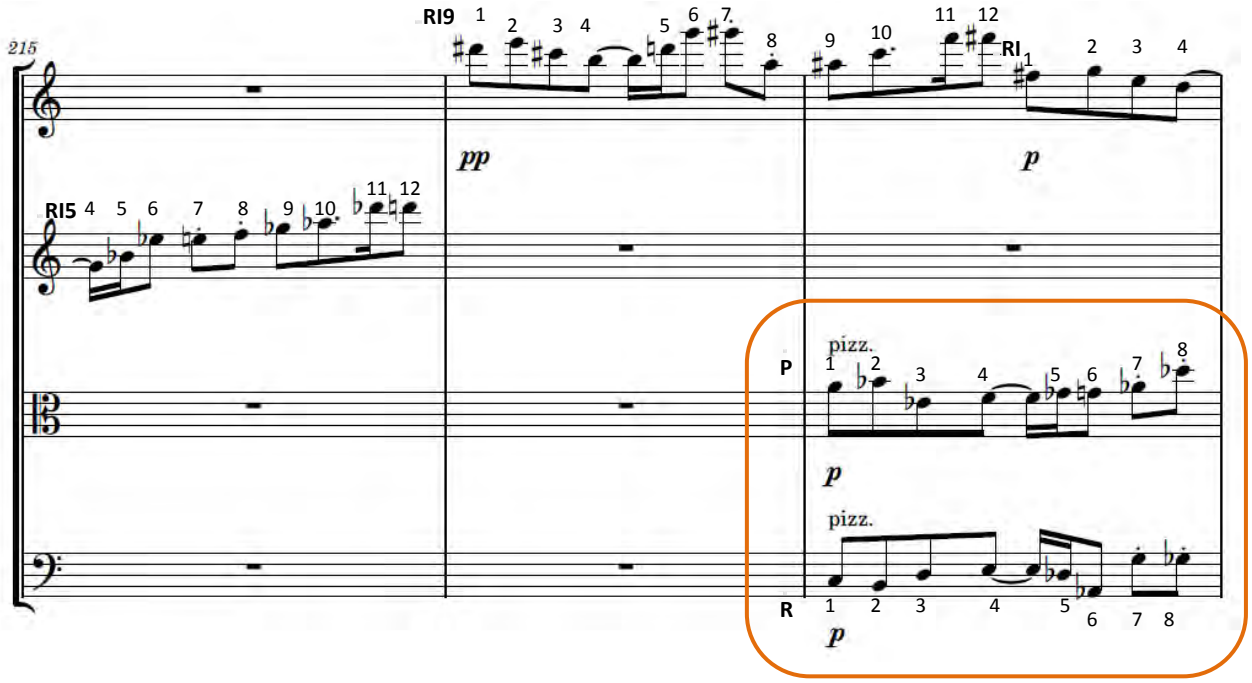


Figure 9 Lemmer, *Panic* bars 215 – 217.

To close, the A section returns rounding off the movement.

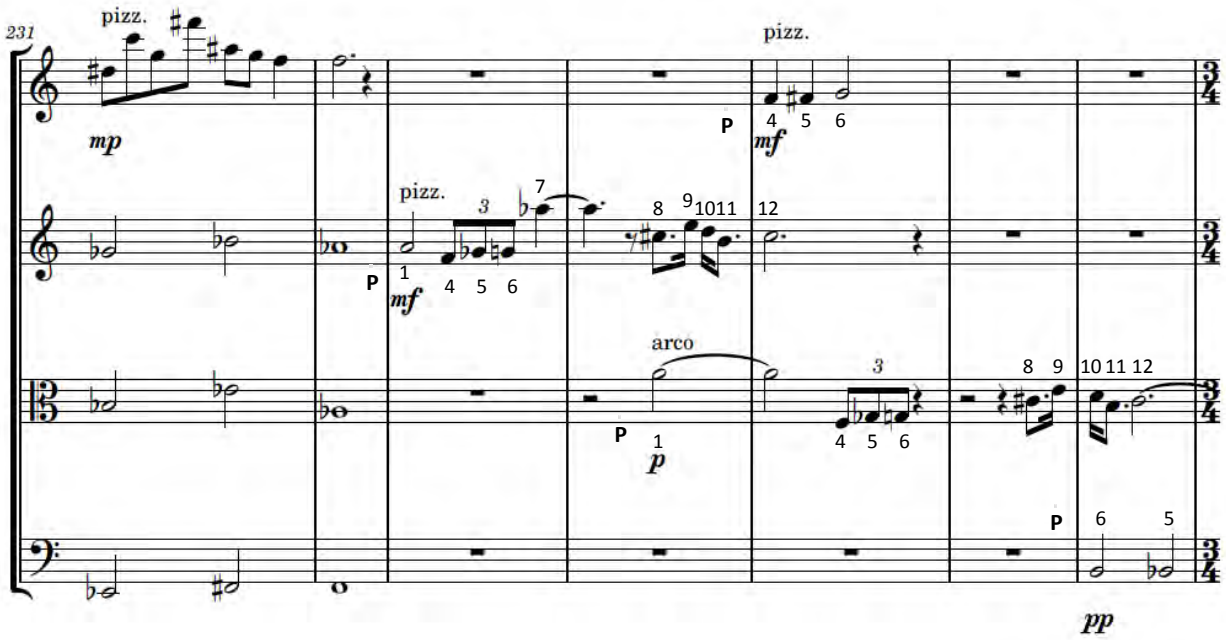


Figure 10 Lemmer, *Panic* bars 230 – 236.

2. *Pain*

In the second movement the anxiety and the hurt that everyone has experienced from Covid-19 serves as the underlying motivation for the manner of expression. This movement reflects emotional moments where all seems lost: the death of loved ones, families torn apart through suffering, the sense of being alone without true contact with other people for stretches of time, and anxiety as the future seems so insecure. It reflects the devastated public and their outcries for the government to help but not receiving any real aid. There were no jobs, so there was no food and when the number of deaths hit over three-hundred a day the country was sent into its third major lockdown. With this, the cracks in the system broke open and many in the population set to looting and burning to get their point across. Although some were egged on by protests against former President Jacob Zuma's arrest many of the others were just looking for help to feed their families after Covid-19 left them jobless, in major debt, with some sent to basically live on the street. This was a heart wrenching tragedy for those who felt the need to loot and those whose shops and factories were destroyed after working for a year and a half to keep them open through all the lockdowns and complications. South Africa's sense of togetherness was destroyed and everyone from then on could only stand for their own, on their own. Nevertheless, there was still hope as people from across social divides grouped together to help clean the mess that followed the looting spree.

Although the movement has a ternary form the climax of the music can be considered as a section in itself, therefore adjusting the form to A (bar 1 – 69) B (bar 70 – 168) C (bar 169 – 260) A (bar 261 – 291). The first theme represents the sadness from the destruction that Covid-19 has wrought. The sustained note values, slow tempo, rhythmic instability with movement away from the main beats, and soft dynamic level, add to expressing the sense of loss.

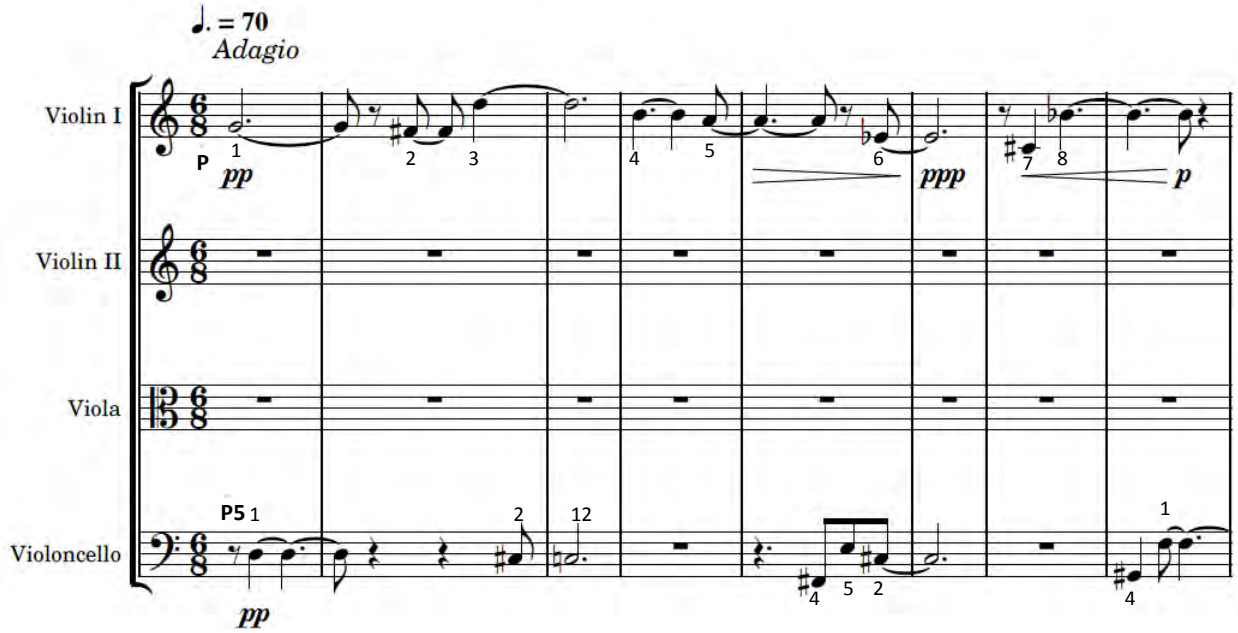


Figure 1 Lemmer, *Pain* Bars 1 – 8.

As section A continues, a faster moving motif is added which allows some reprieve from the general gloom of this section (figure 2). This theme is developed and later appears across the ensemble (figure 3).

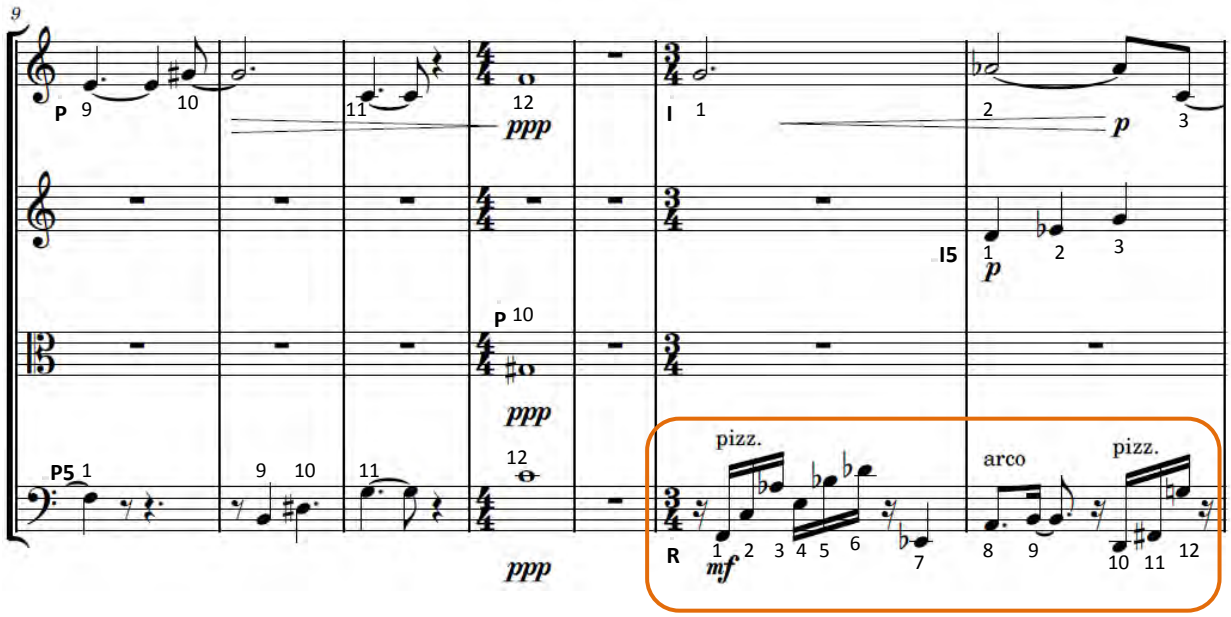
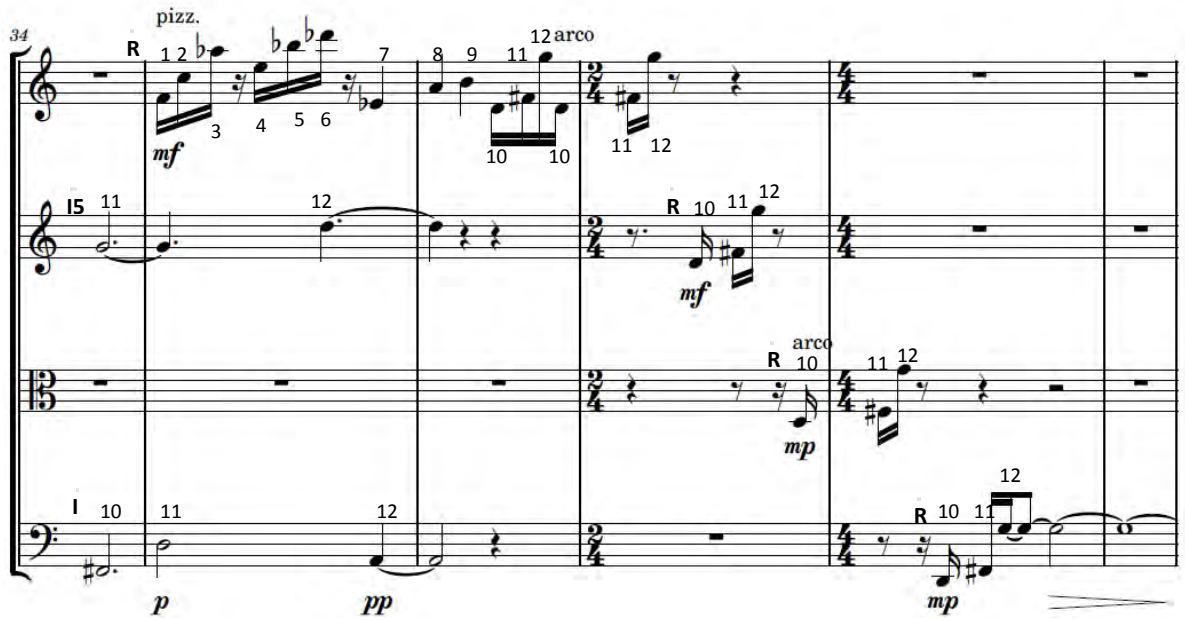


Figure 2 Lemmer, *Pain* bars 9 – 15.

The moving motif ends with a sustained note that is then stretched across all the instruments creating a mournful and heartbroken soundscape, possibly representing the loss of loved ones, jobs, businesses and a past life no longer possible.



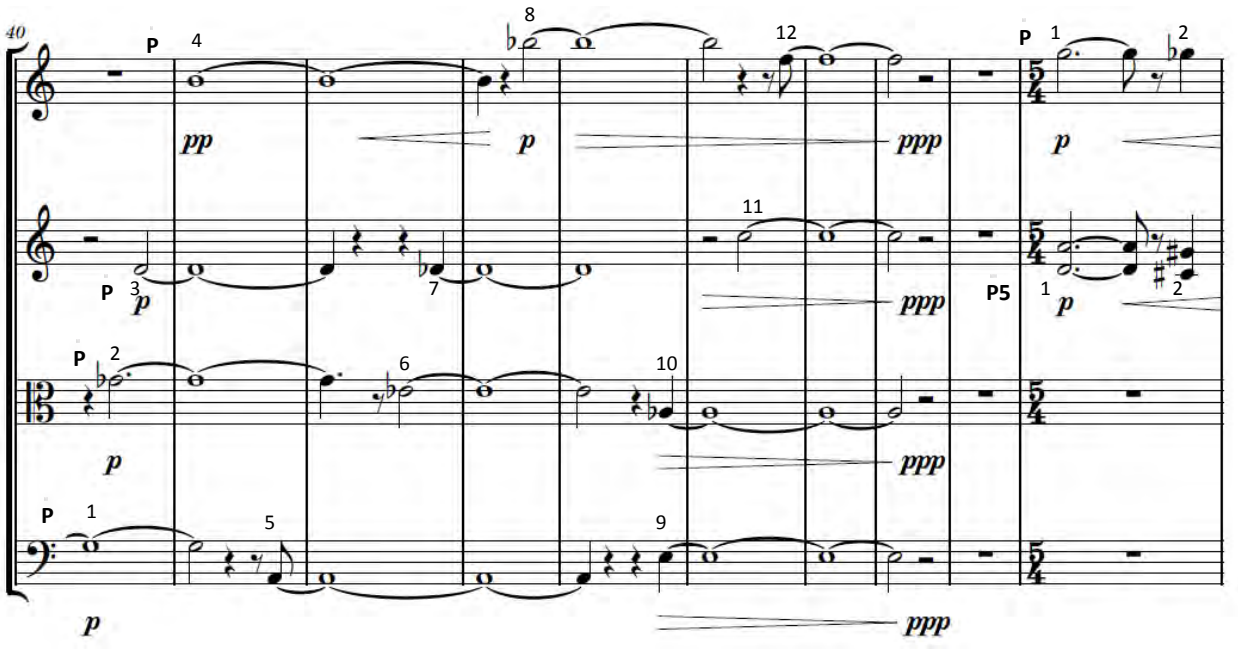


Figure 3 Lemmer, *Pain* bars 34 – 49.

A sense of polyphony is introduced with two vastly different themes operating simultaneously within an irregular time signature. This possibly references the unusual nature of the pandemic on our daily lives and the impact that it has on society.

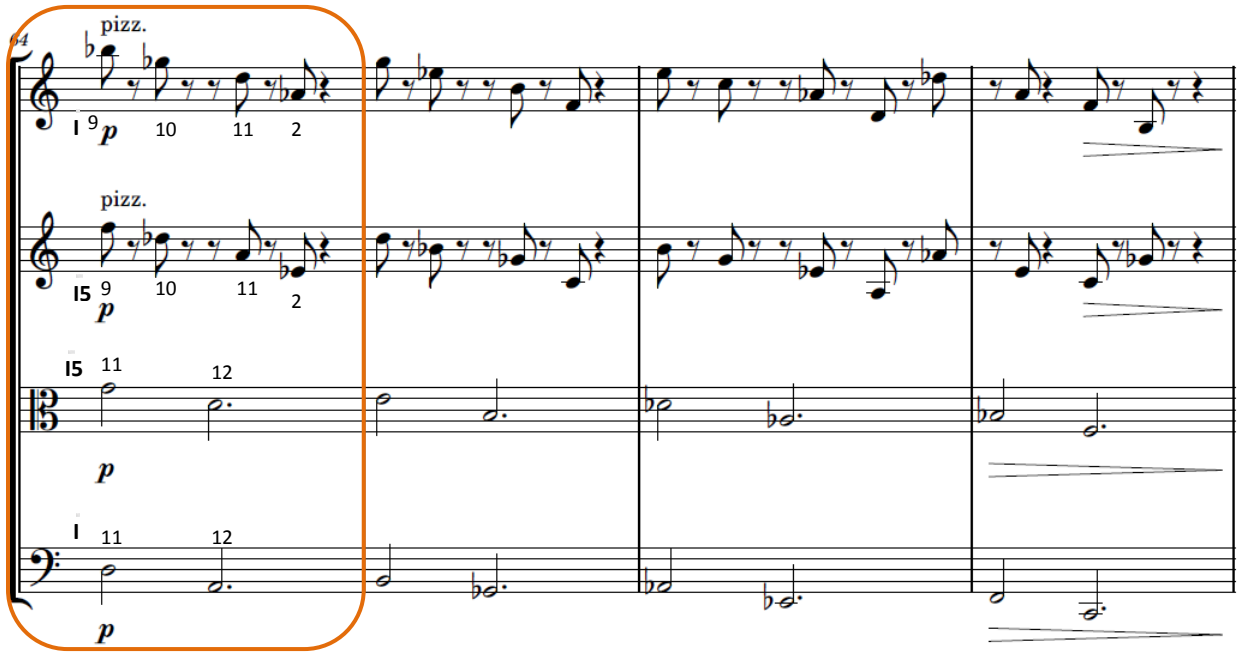


Figure 4 Lemmer, *Pain* bars 64 – 67.

Between bars 106 and 107 a new set of motifs emerge: one is an angularly moving motif grouped in equally spaced quavers (first violin and viola), another one is a melodic motif with a syncopated aspect (second violin) and a third (cello) evenly spaced notes representing the basic compound triple pulse. The combined effect is one of dissonance and pain which resonates with the general sense of forlornness and loss that permeates this movement.

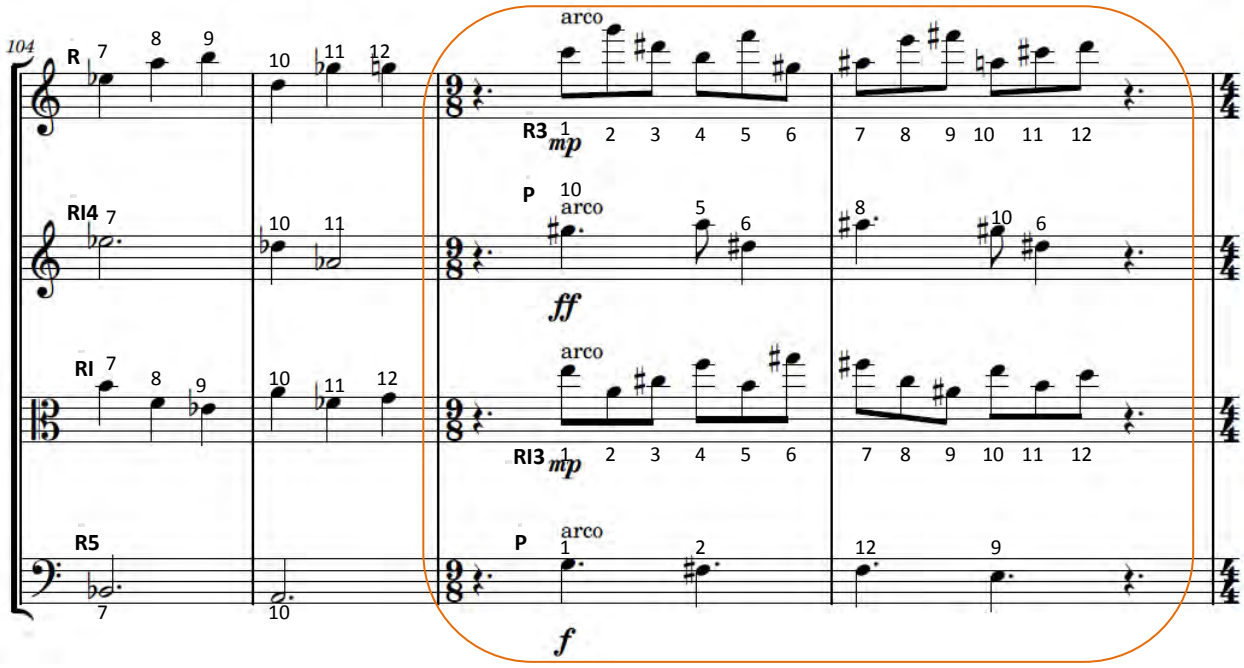


Figure 5 Lemmer, *Pain* bars 104 – 107.

The melodic angularity of the previous motif leads to a motif that generates a perpetual rhythmic movement with sequentially arranged patterns. These are offset against a slightly slower moving pattern with syncopated features set in parallel fourths. The unsettling harmonic imagery suggests the harshness of Covd-19 upon ordinary citizens.

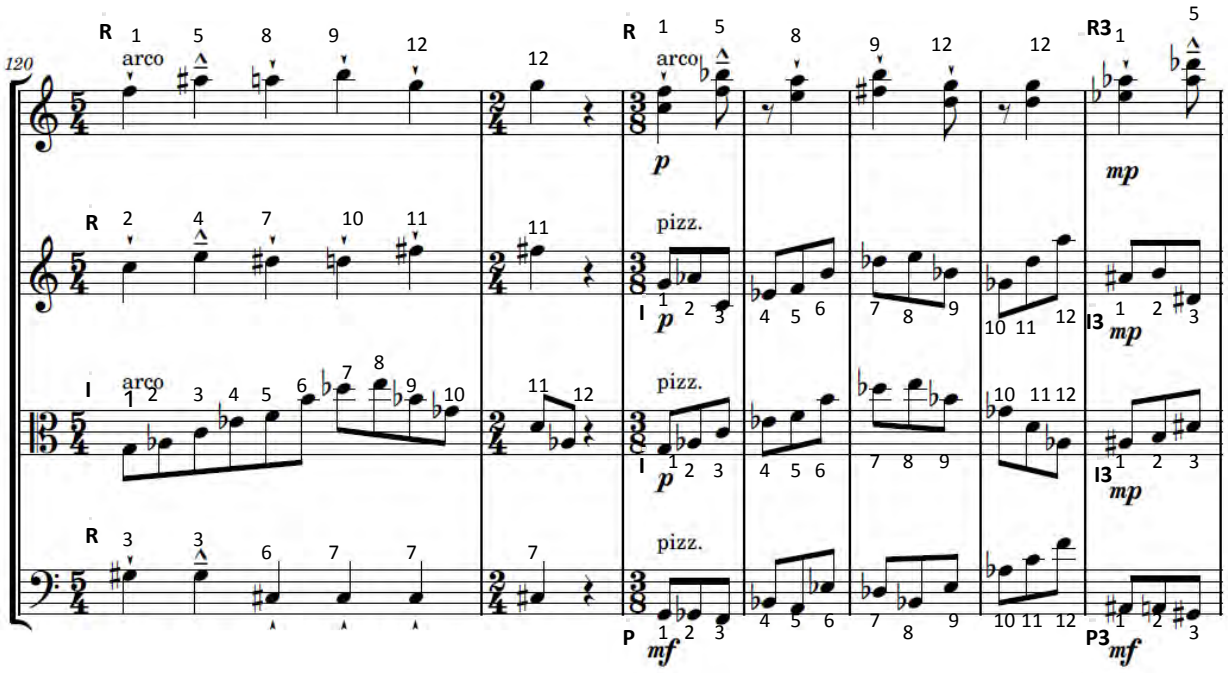


Figure 6 Lemmer, *Pain* bars 120 – 127.

A slower section between bars 138 and 147 suggests a reflective look (in chorale style writing) at the pain and suffering that Covid-19 has inflicted on society.

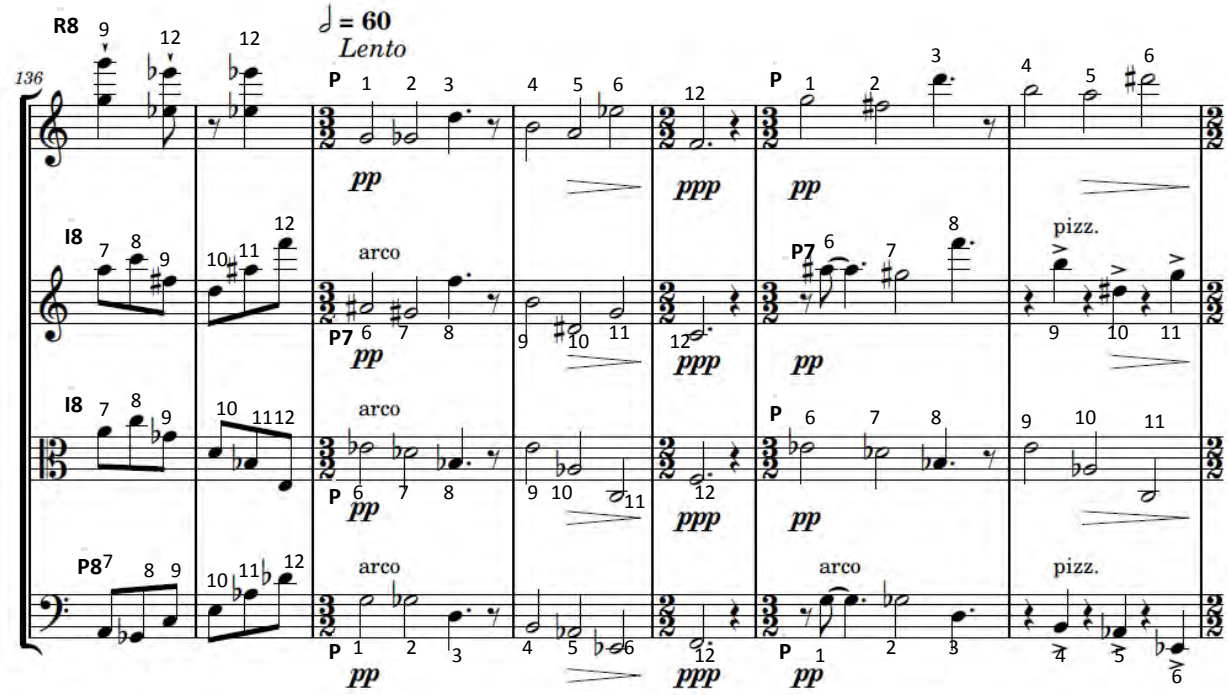


Figure 715 Lemmer, *Pain* bars 136 – 142.

Section C starts mournfully at bar 169 but builds to a frenzy with the irregular time signatures and irregular note groupings (as seen in the example that starts at bar 205) leading the music to a sustained climax founded on a quartal construction.

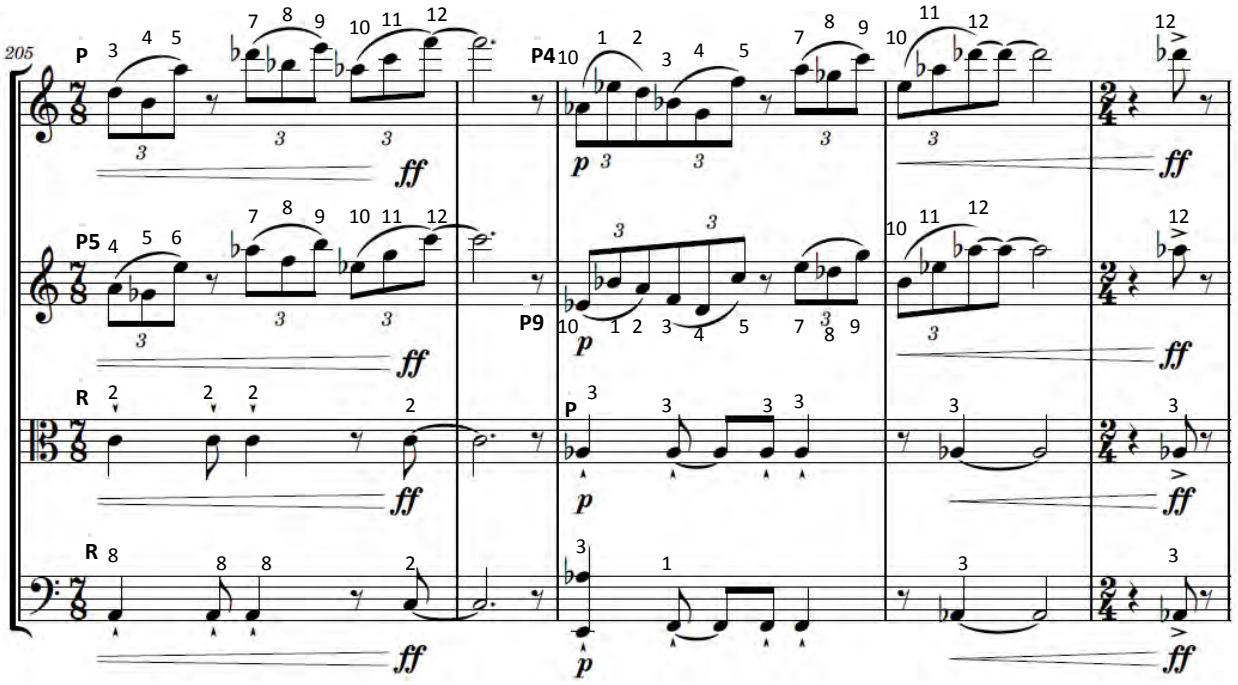


Figure 8 Lemmer, *Pain* bars 205 – 209.

The main part of first climax through bars 211 – 217 is loud and intrusive just like the third wave of Covid-19 was. This passage is overwhelming and scary, sounding the alarm for everyone to return to their homes and for the country to be locked down.

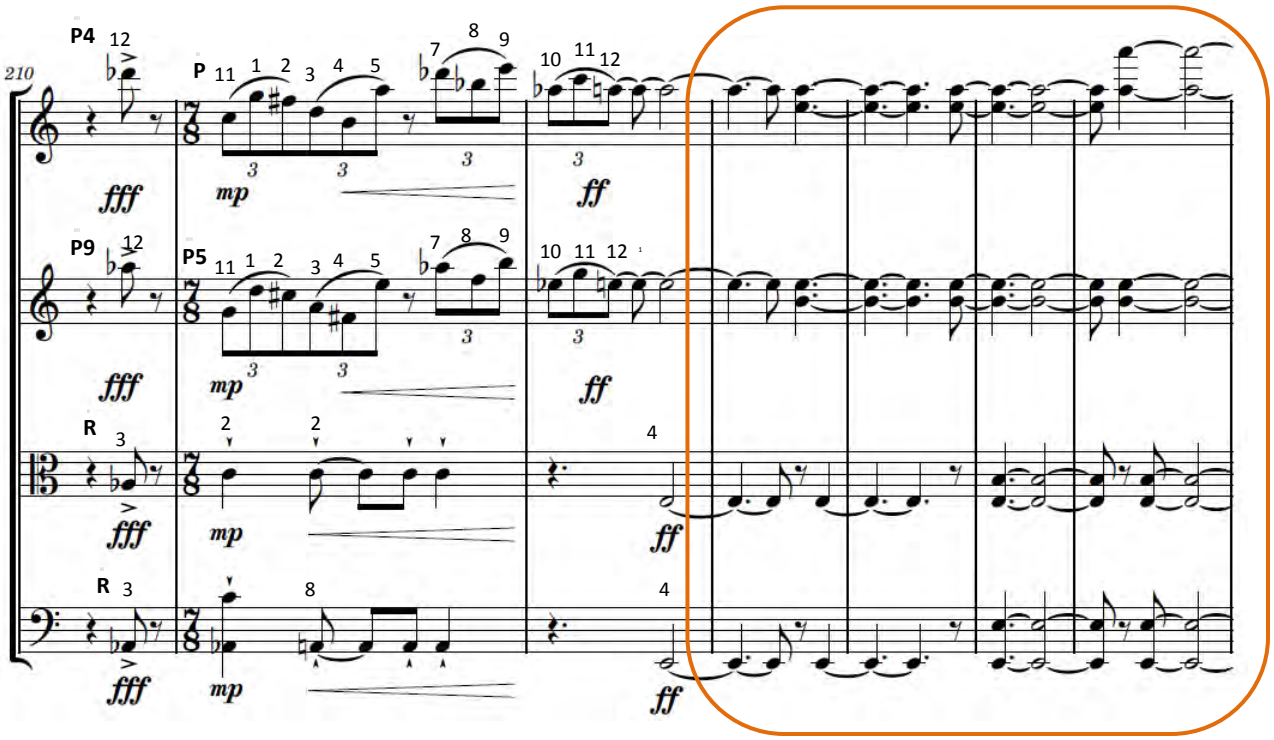


Figure 9 Lemmer, *Pain* bars 210 – 216.

A rising but mysteriously lonely statement interrupts the progress of section C harmonized in rhythmic unison with the principal melody.

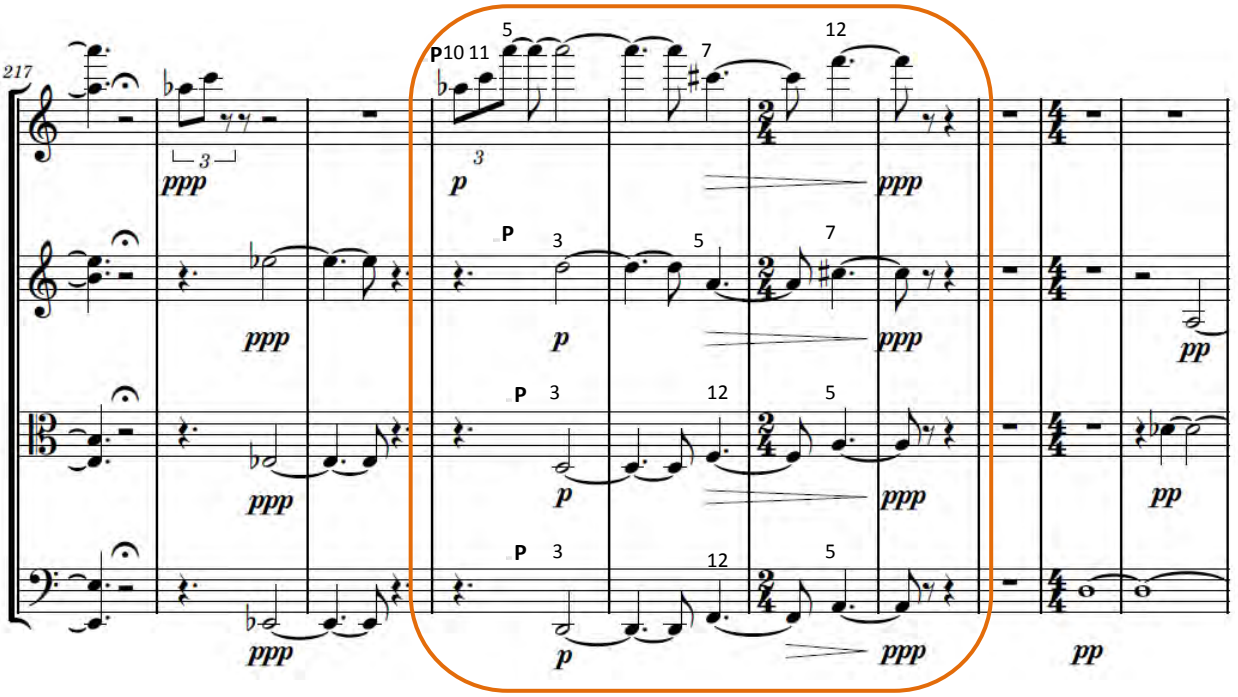


Figure 10 Lemmer, *Pain* bars 217 – 226.

Immediately after this mournful moment a panicked and disjointed Section C erupts in bar 234. This whole section predominantly makes use of the original row in a gradually lengthening rhythmic pattern that includes another note of the row at each sounding (first and second violins).Underneath the viola and cello exert a dominant threatening sound using the retrograde inversion of the row in sustained melodic line format.

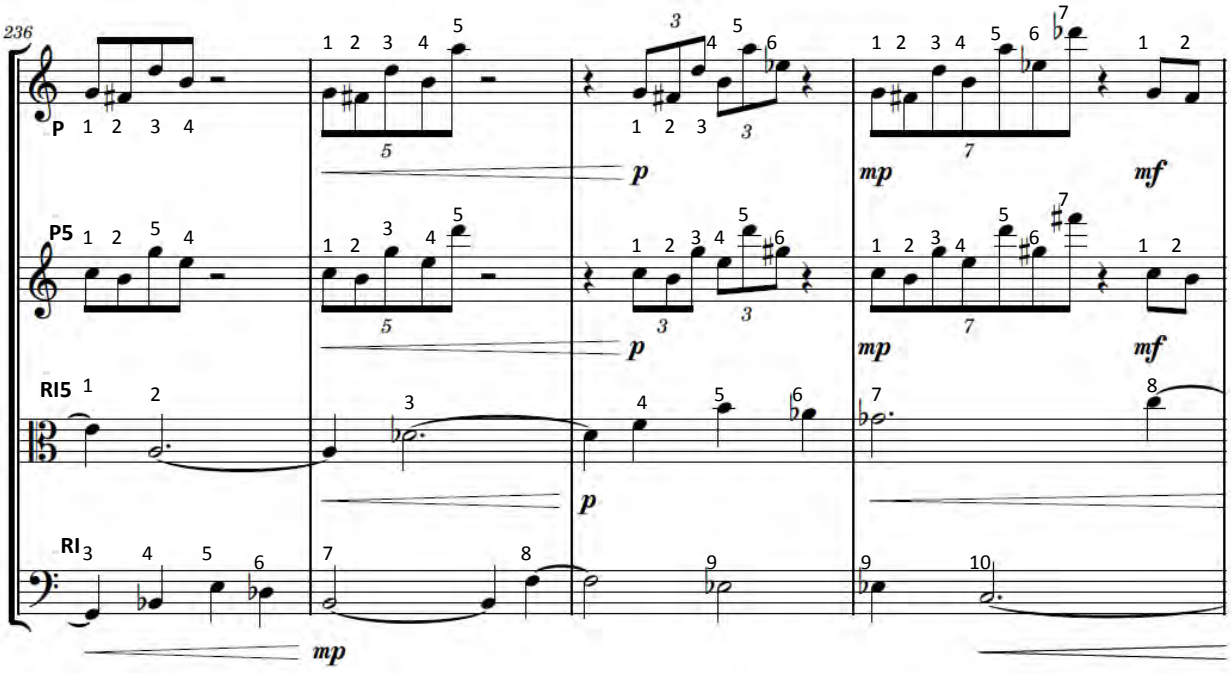


Figure 1116 Lemmer, *Pain* bars 236 – 239.

This climax runs from 242 to 257 with quickly moving agitated notes. A rhythmic sequence of the original row is stated in bar 249 and repeated in bars 250 and 251 bringing the height of the climax to an overwhelming point.

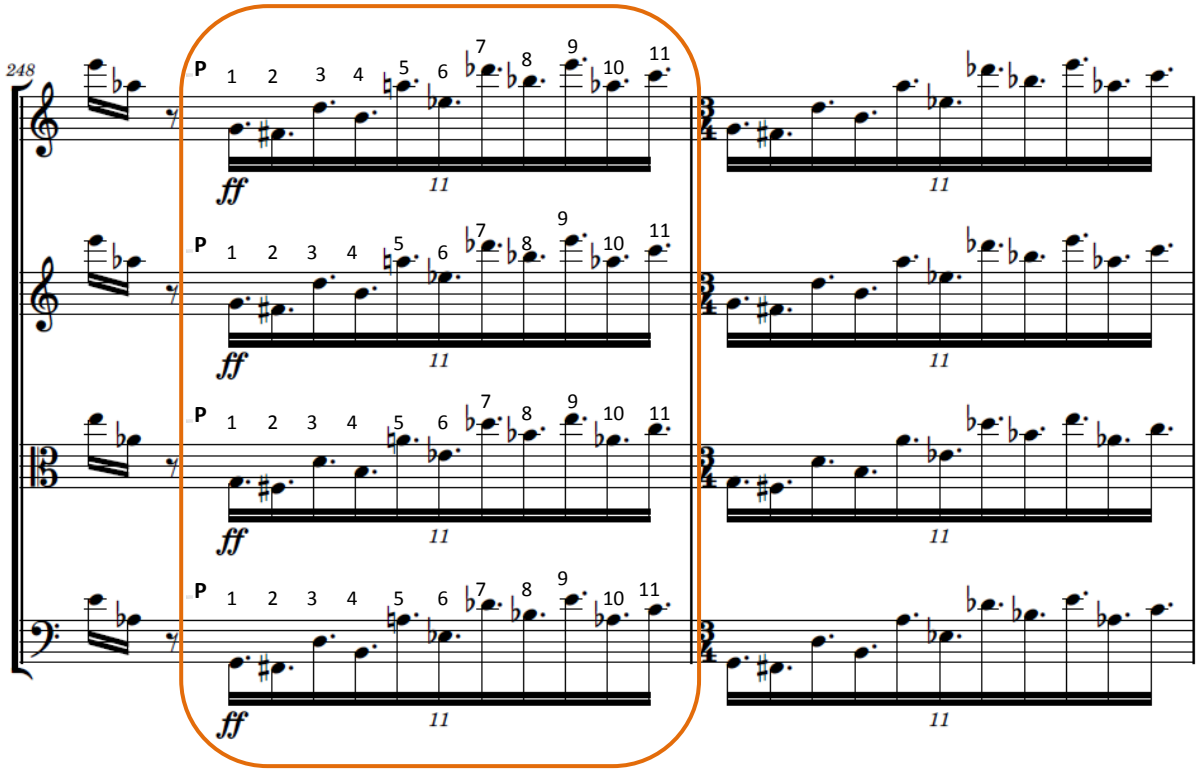


Figure 12 Lemmer, *Pain* bars 248 – 249.

This comes to an abrupt end, as a short homophonic passage with harmonically recognisable chords gives way to a final reprise of A that once again expresses the sadness and pain of the destruction and tragedy that Covid-19 has brought.

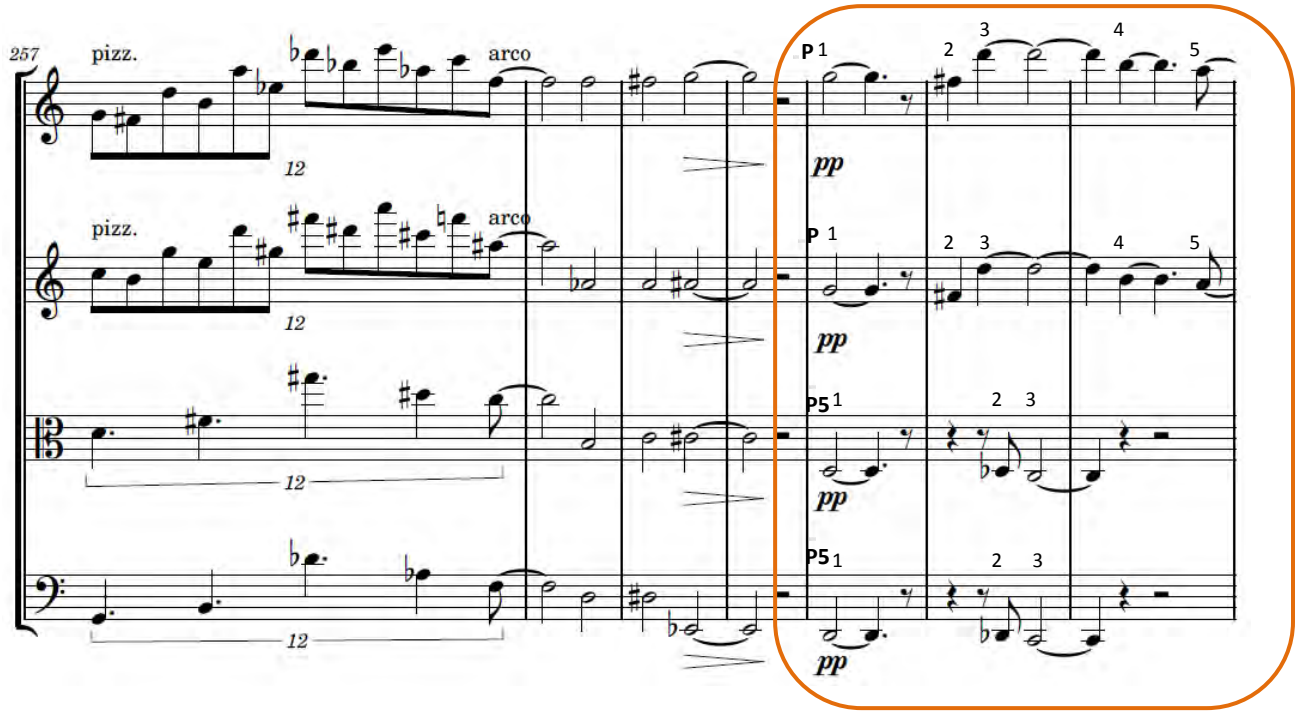


Figure 1317 Lemmer, *Pain* bars 257 – 263.

The piece concludes with a final statement of the section A theme with a lonely and sad timbre.

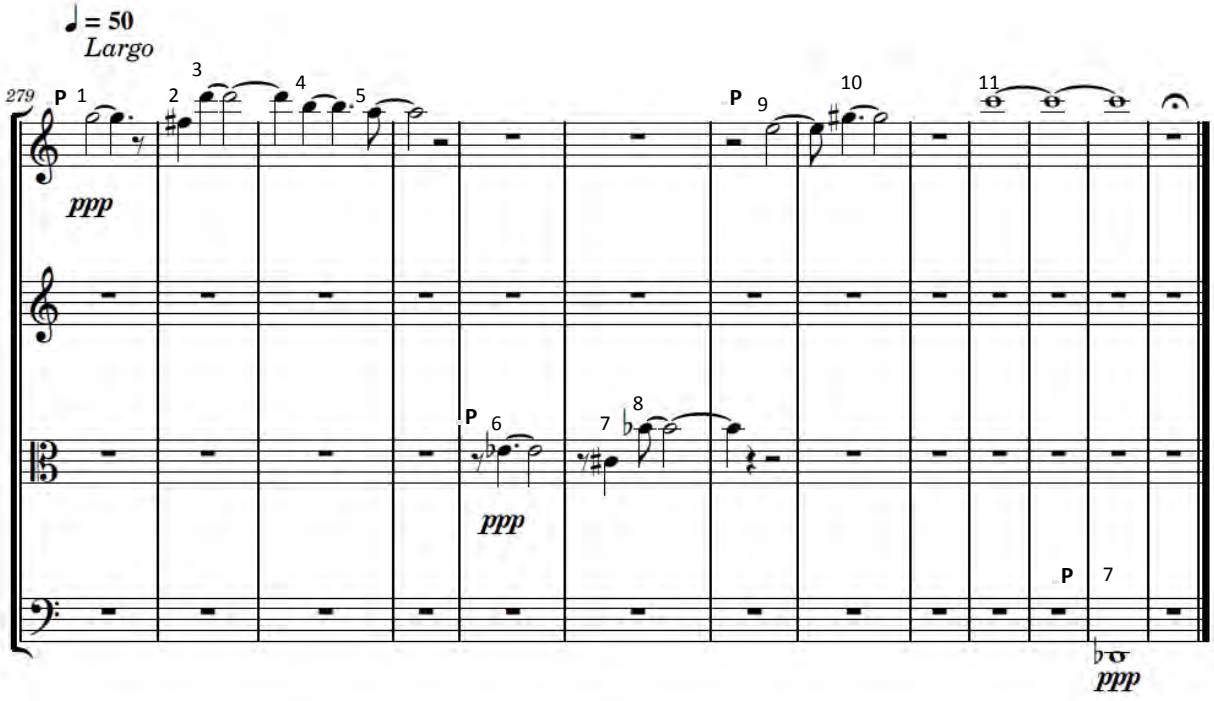


Figure 14 Lemmer, *Pain* bars 279 - 291

A Storm Series: Three movement chamber piece.

My intention behind this set of pieces is to represent the natural movement of a summer Highveld storm in South Africa. Since I moved to the Highveld a few years ago the impact of a good thunder shower is one of my most favourite natural events. It is such a powerful experience when you notice the reaction of nature, the leaves swirling, the animals running for shelter and the cooling of the earth. However, a storm can be more than physical; it can be an emotional journey which is often my experience, and both are represented in this music. My focus begins with the approach of the storm, the rise of pressure and the smell of those first few drops on the hot earth. I named this movement *Petrichor*, which describes this particular smell. The slow drops of rain and the whirls of wind blowing a beautiful smell all around as it pumps exhilaration and energy into the air, a subtle reminder that the weather is about to change, and the storms of life are about to buffet the world.

The second movement, *Thoughts in a Storm*, is a reminder of the oncoming and release of the storm itself. While the storm is breaking open I have allowed for a moment of self-reflection when the sheer volume of the storm, leaves one with only thoughts to ponder on. The crash and rumble of lightning and thunder, and the swirling of leaves as the storm rages on, perhaps with battering hailstones, and incessant rain, so typical of what can happen during a summer Highveld storm. Outside, a tree may be uprooted or a street flooded; that which was may be irrevocably changed. Naturally, these storm moments can be reflected in personal experiences.

The final movement, *Re-awakening*, is a hopeful, joyful sigh of relief. The earth has been replenished and a new positive outlook acquired, with a simple sentiment that there is always an end to the chaos. The moment the sun comes out, after a seemingly endless event reminding us that nature is beautiful and there is always a reprieve after a storm.

This metaphor itself can be related to the recent (and ongoing) pandemic and the journey we all took to survive. At the start of the pandemic, when the news came from other countries of a dangerous virus spreading rapidly and killing many, it all felt so surreal. That initial panic of what will the country do when the virus gets to us and the rush and panic before we were sent into our first hard lockdown, sitting and hearing about the devastation this virus was causing just outside our front door. This sentiment is spread across the first movement; nature warning us of an impending storm. It reflects on the change slowly spreading across the world and society being sent into a craze not knowing what to expect from Covid-19 or the reaction that our country would have to protect its people. It was only the beginning and so many questions were left unanswered. With those questions still hanging we plunged into the first big wave of infections and the country was placed into hard lockdown. This increase in energy through the movement reflects the increase in South Africa's infection rate leading to the climax from bars 171 to 182 which is the peak of the infections and lockdown, the feeling so foreign yet utterly conceivable.

The second movement reflects the storm: the crash of economies, loss of livelihoods, and the sense of so much death all around. Beginning with the build to the second wave through bars 35 to 48, slowly but surely the Covid-19 cases began to surge until they became uncontrollable, the wave was

upon us this time even worse than before , the new variant running rampant. This sensation is then mirrored, where it trickles out as the country is moved into another stricter locked down state in an effort to curb the death rate. The hospitals became over-run and it was no longer possible to give all non-Covid-19 patients the treatment they required with. Only emergency surgeries were scheduled and elective surgeries were placed on hold. During the second hard lockdown over the festive season there was so much alone time to reflect on what was happening to our country and the devastation all around. Between bars 78 and 129 there is a moment of reflection and realisation of the true long term impact of job loss and economic uncertainty. A reflection on the horrifying reality that if this same surge happened again there might not be enough strength left to recover. This reflection also brings in an uplifting tone towards the climax, to reaffirm that there was still time to build spirits and rely on the perseverance of humanity to stay strong and fight through it. The climax builds unnoticeably just as the third wave begins to develop. In bar 116 we begin the true climb to the height on the third wave but this time with a sense of strength and preparedness especially suggested in the final chords sounding in bars 126, 127, and 129. The height of the third wave brings us back to the theme for the storm in bar 131, devastating the country, filling hospital beds with at its peak nearly three hundred people dying a day from Covid-19 related issues. Even more broken hearts left to witness the country being looted and crying for help, but help does not seem to be coming anytime soon.

The third movement shows a refreshing aftermath. A reminder that after all this torture, of not knowing what to do or what is going to happen tomorrow, there will be a day when we establish a new form of normalcy and can enjoy life once again. After the storm the sun comes out and reminds us that no matter what happens, when you think there couldn't possibly be an end to this overwhelming destruction and just then, it begins to end and a beautiful rainbow appears, reminding us of the beauty our world still has to offer and inspiring us to make the most of the good moments. This movement is inspired by the positive reaction to the Covid-19 vaccine, the benefits and the positivity it sent through everyone and the new motivation to not only return to some semblance of normalcy but also to make our society even better.

The comparison of this storm and the last 2 years of the Covid-19 pandemic are apt in showing the true destruction of our communities and in personal lives. But most importantly, in this comparison we can find reprieve, as we all know that the rainbow must come at the end of a summer storm. This pandemic itself can be seen as Mother Nature taking control of its home, it is an ever powerful force that can change and create at any time, then can scream and burn and destroy overnight. We can't stand out in a storm and expect not to become affected, we can only hope that we have some shelter to wait out the motion of the natural world, and survive to enjoy another day. Nature is a truly scary, but beautiful system, and after all our pollution and destruction for societal gains causing global warming, the response from this self-preserving climate could only be devastating.

Each of these movements tells a story, on a dawning of a new world, the horrors that occurred and the call for strength to fight for a better future. The power of positive thought is astronomical and we as a society can band together and inspire strength in our communities. We can inspire people to get back on their feet and fight through the struggle because we can make it better, and we can return to some of the things we loved doing pre-pandemic, because we made our home safe again.

1. *Petrichor*

This first movement begins atmospherically. The use of whole tone scales with their interlocking sets of unresolved dissonant augmented triads, and suggestions of different tonal centres operating simultaneously within a wide canvas of whole tone movement creates a mysterious and curious sound, adding to the sense of eeriness and anxiety. The piece begins with a dovetailing of whole tone scales: B whole tone in the flute and B-flat whole tone in the clarinet, G whole tone in the bassoon and vibraphone and E-flat whole tone in the marimba and timpani. The B-flat clarinet is notated in concert pitch throughout these movements.

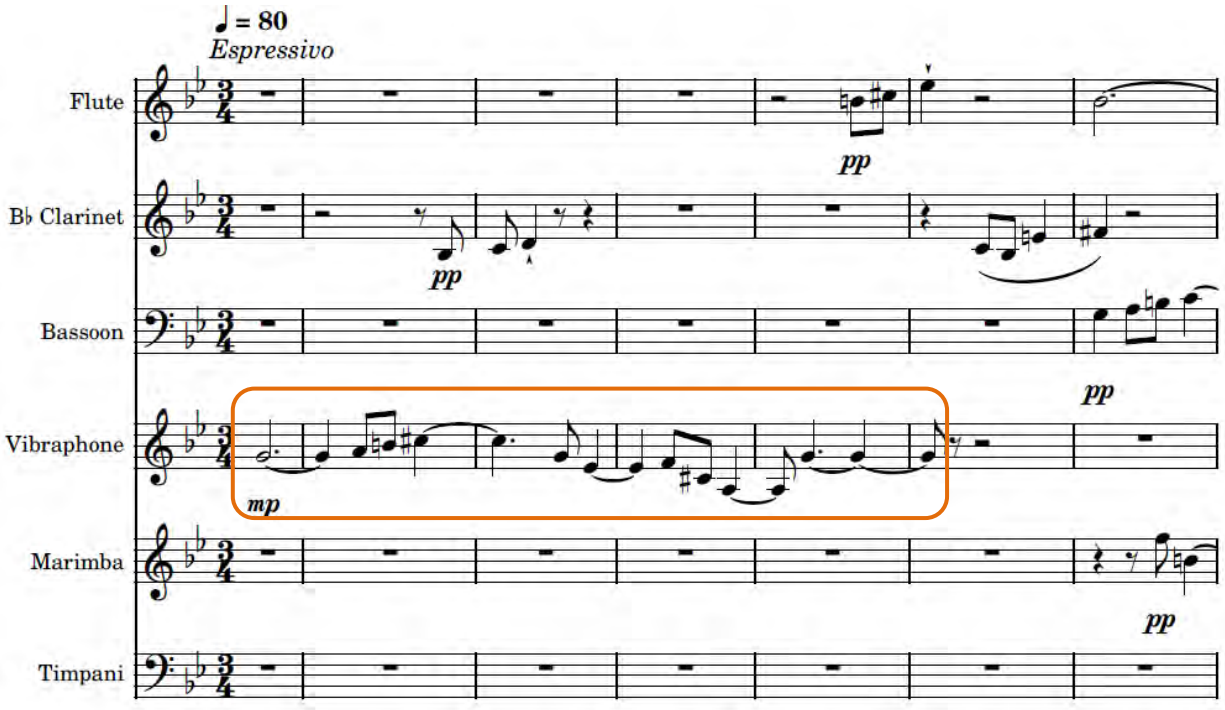


Figure 18 Lemmer, *Petrichor* bars 1 – 7.

The opening theme represents the smell of Petrichor, that inimitable smell of rain, or the hint of rain, after a prolonged period of dryness. This smell is usually the first hint of the weather changing. The combination of the small rising motifs and the sense of questioning put the energy in the music. The dissonance within the texture as numerous whole tone scales move together and the rhythmic movement embodied in each strand adds to the sense of uncertainty.

Without wishing to be overtly programmatic specific it is possible to consider the marimba part from bar 15 to represent rain droplets, though this could be another strand in the build up toward the storm.

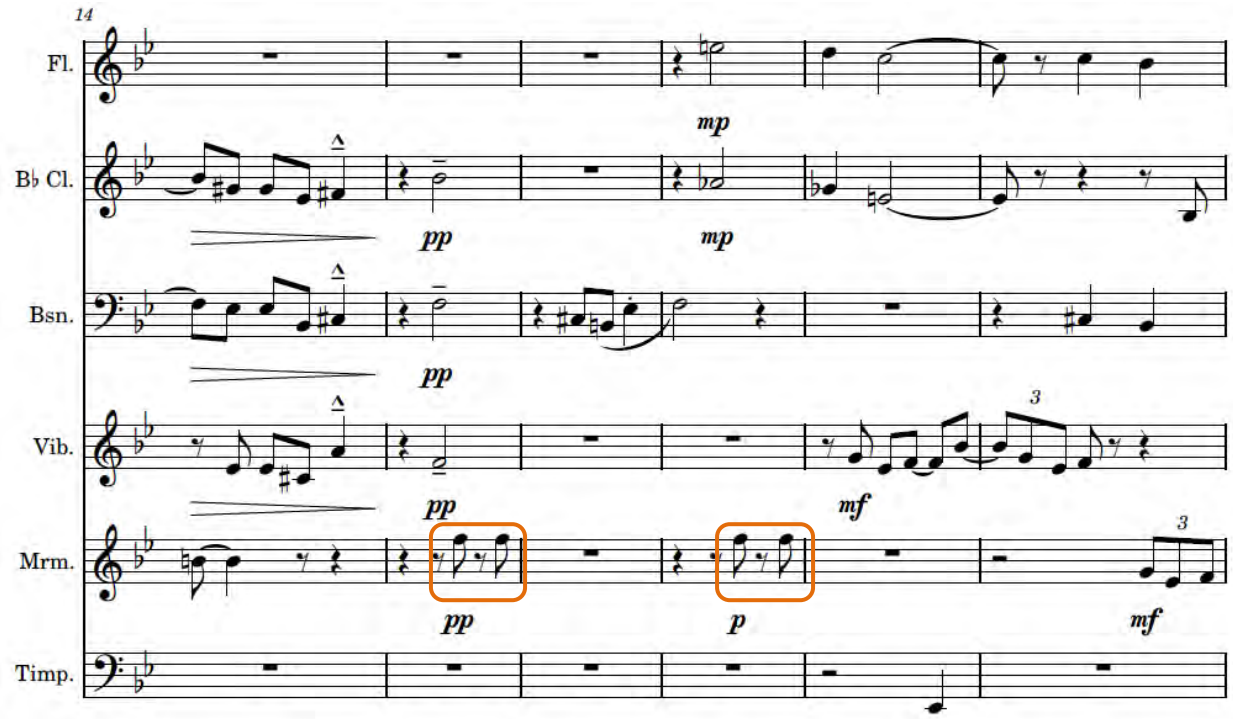


Figure 19 Lemmer, *Petrichor* bars 14 – 19.

The scampering of creatures trying to find cover or the scurrying of humankind as an unusual storm of pandemic proportions approaches did influence my creation of this rising triplet figure first played by the vibraphone at bar 28.

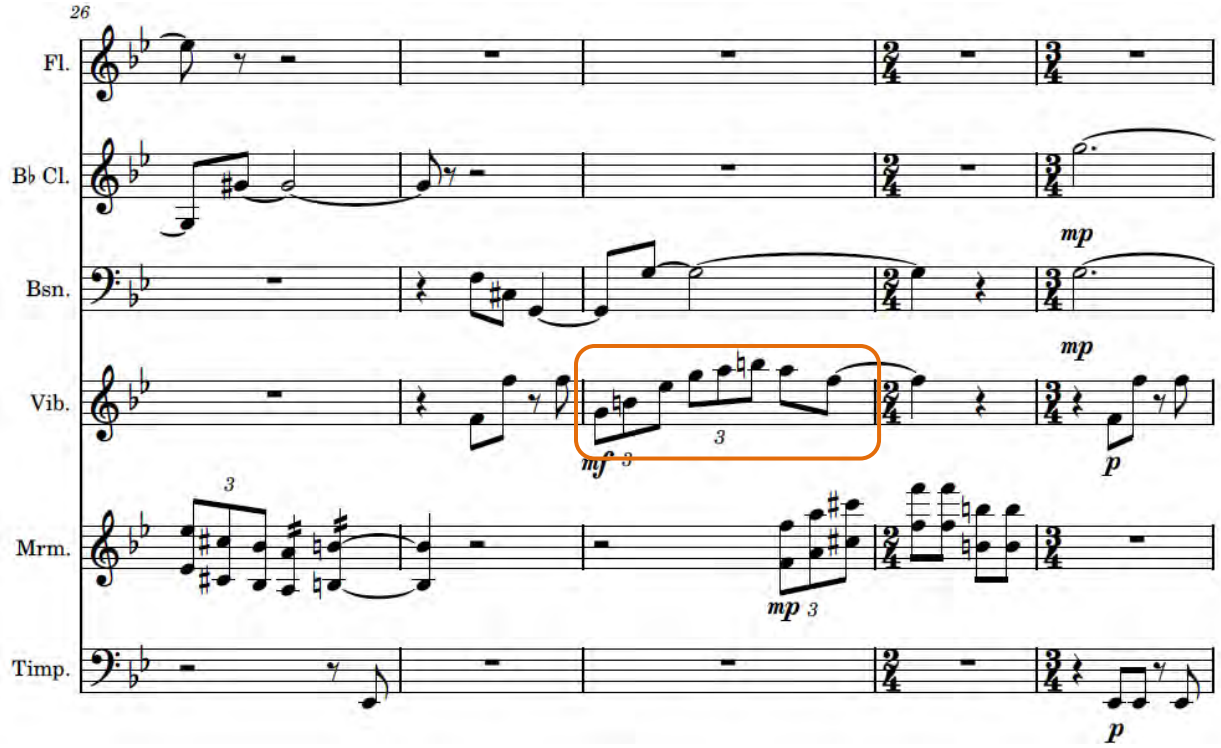


Figure 20 Lemmer, *Petrichor* bars 26 – 30.

From bar 42 the character becomes more intense as the brooding intensity of the storm becomes ever ominous. The descending figure and its varied formations add to the sense of foreboding.

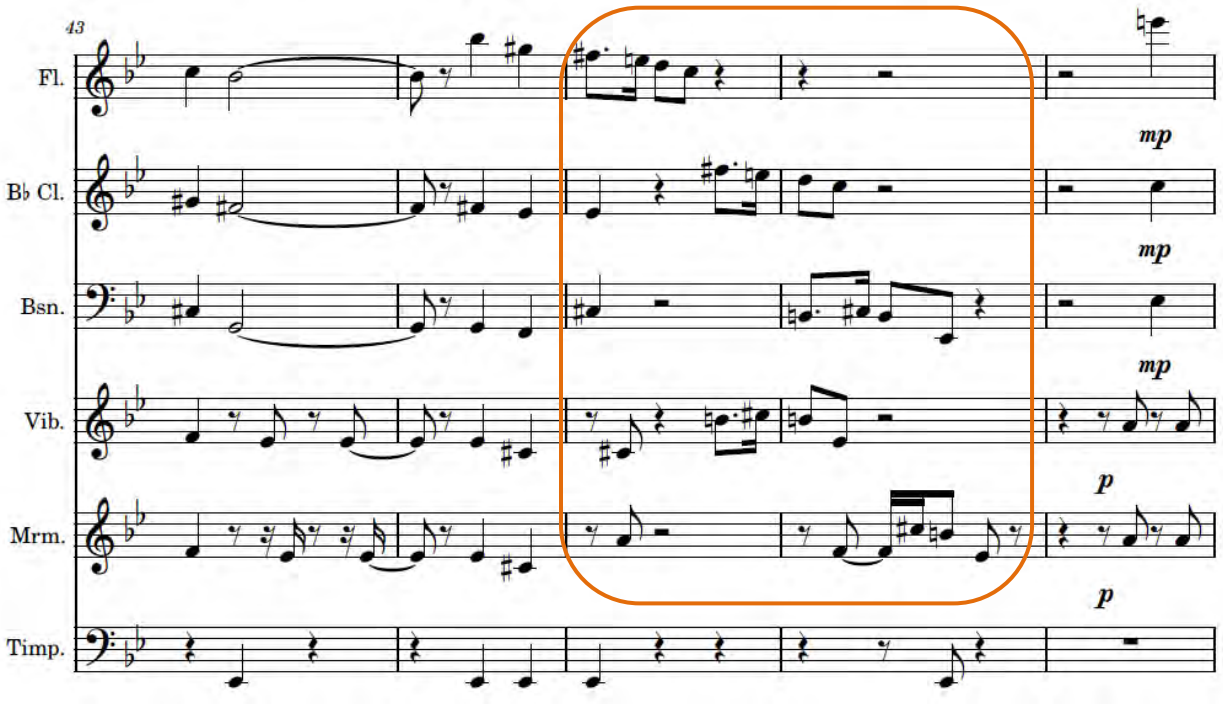


Figure 21 Lemmer, *Petrichor* bars 43 – 47.

Bar 68 is the final statement of the theme, closing off this section – spread across four octaves with intervallic doubling and stretto imitation – with the harmonised and contrapuntal appearance adding darkness to the timbre.

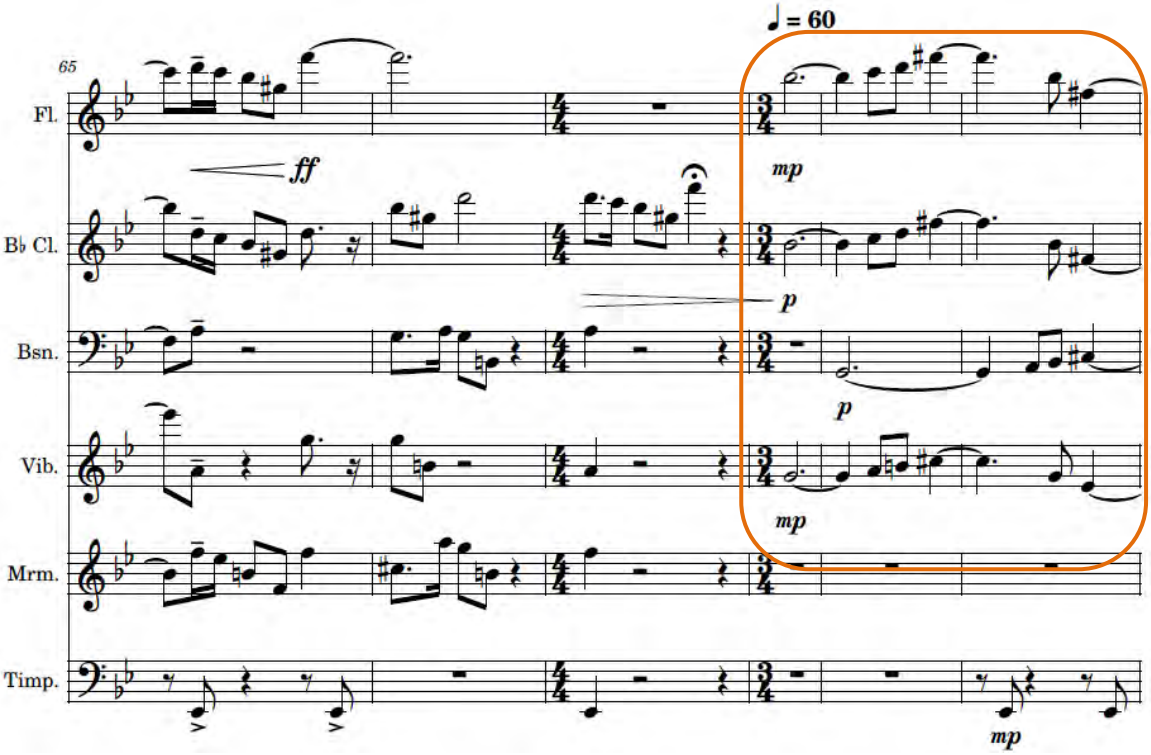


Figure 22 Lemmer, *Petrichor* bars 65 – 70.

A new section starts in bar 75 which is based around the Aeolian mode starting on G, though there is a hint of the harmonic minor in the bassoon part. It is less brooding than the previous whole tone section though it develops in intensity as the section progresses. The percussion (marimba, vibraphone and timpani) hints at thunder and lightning in the distance, the devastation making its way closer.

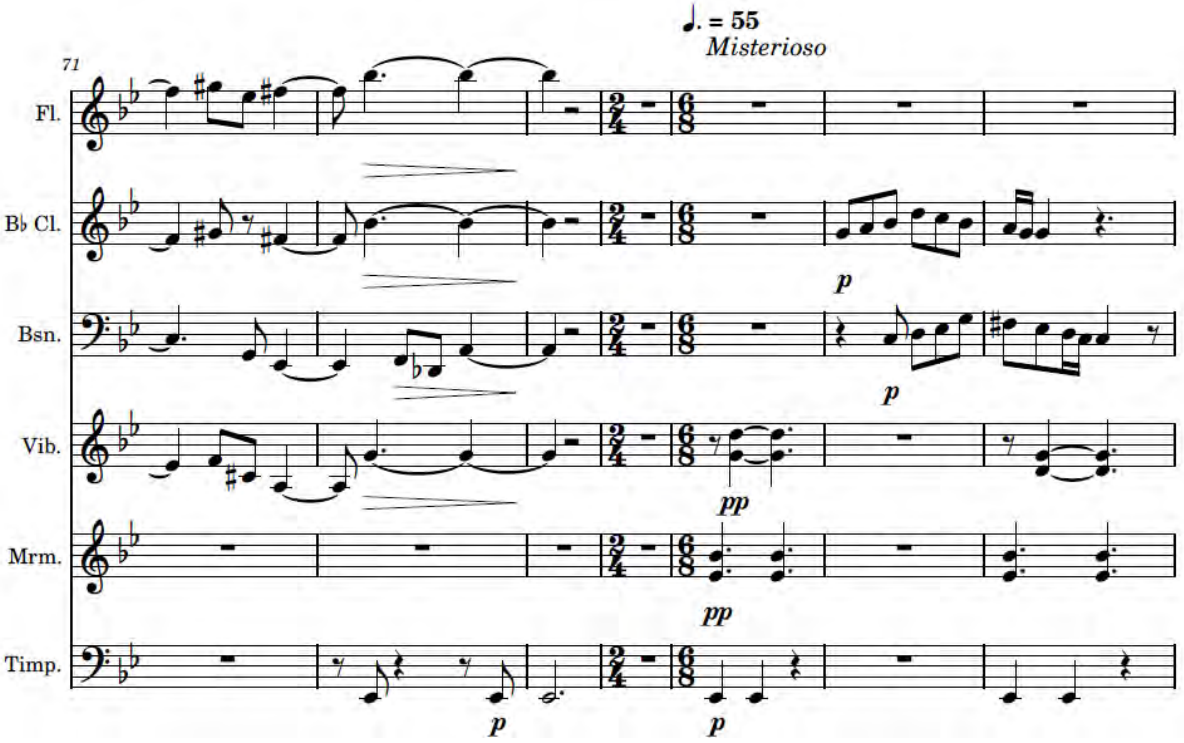


Figure 23 Lemmer, *Petrichor* bars 71 – 77.

As in the first section, a triplet dominated theme, first presented in ascending form then reappearing in intervallic truncated format. It is cast in simple triple (3/4) within a compound duple (6/8) setting creating a suggestion of hemiola, and rhythmic interest.

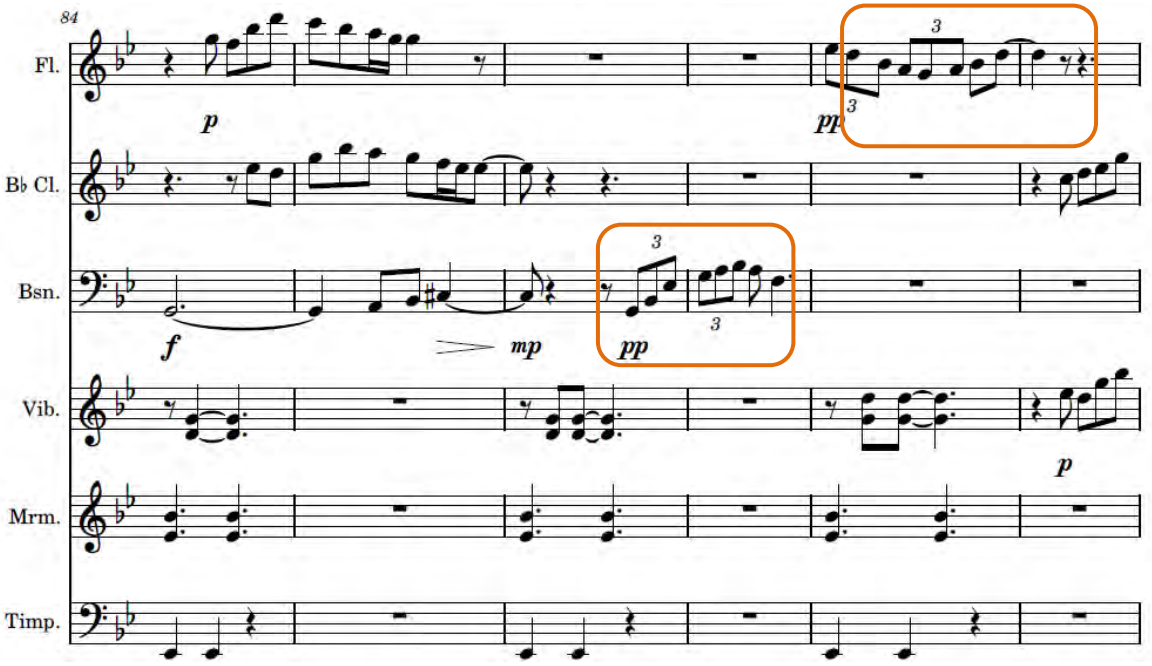


Figure 24 Lemmer, *Petrichor* bars 84 – 89.

As the clarinet and bassoon play swirling semiquaver passages with the marimba added into the mix, the sense of the fast approaching storm becomes ever-present. The hemiola figure presented in the timpani (in effect as 3/4 time signature within a 6/8 framework) the unease of the impending storm is made more apparent, especially as the “knocking” from the timpani becomes more incessant.

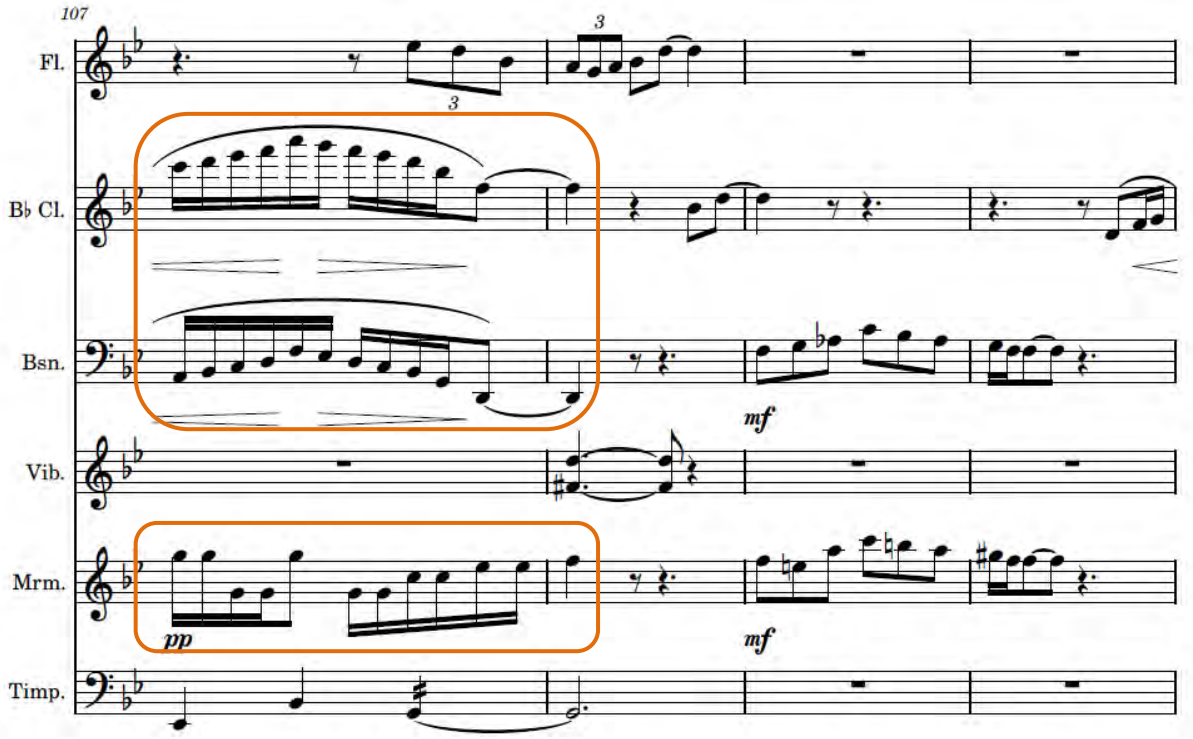


Figure 25 Lemmer, *Petrichor* bars 107 – 110.

The music moves to an irregular time signature (7/8) in bar 124 and the flute begins with a new theme echoed by the bassoon.

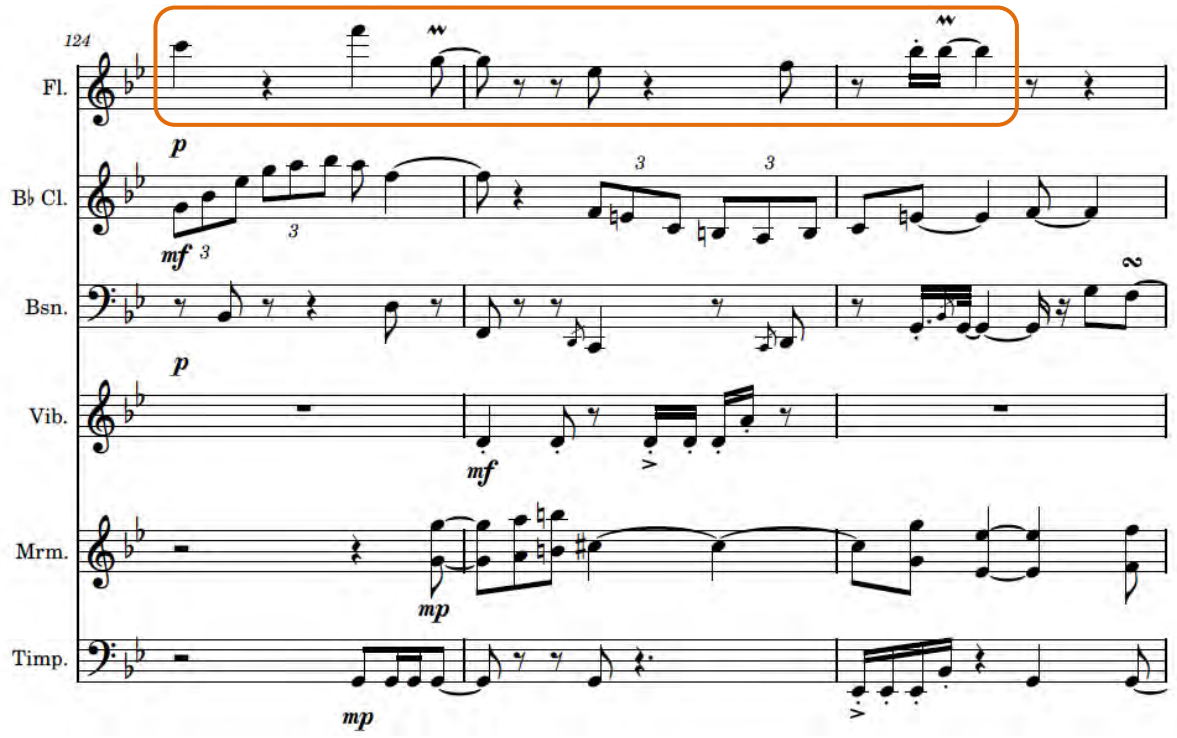


Figure 26 Lemmer, *Petrichor* bars 124 – 126.

The nature theme sings even stronger from bar 141. The natural progressing of the storm in on the way and cannot be halted. In bar 144 to145 the timpani is accented and gives a shock, suddenly this storm is right above. This begins the rush to the climax as the wind swirls and the rain falls harder. The Nature theme singing away above all the chaos erupting.

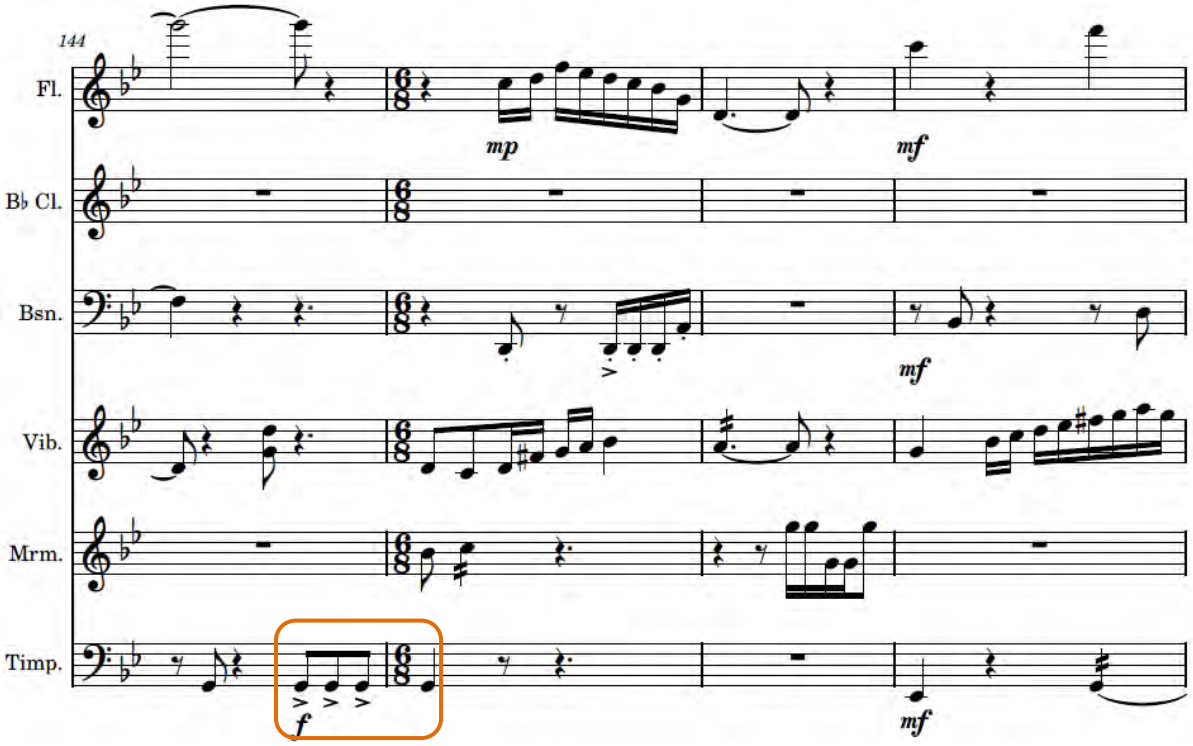


Figure 27 Lemmer, *Petrichor* bars 144 – 147.

From bar 163 the climax builds even further. Running triplets in bar 171 through all instruments, makes the final announcement that the storm is about to erupt and Nature is ready to work its magic. It culminates in bars 177 to 180 the tone expressing the sheer power and grandeur of the oncoming storm.

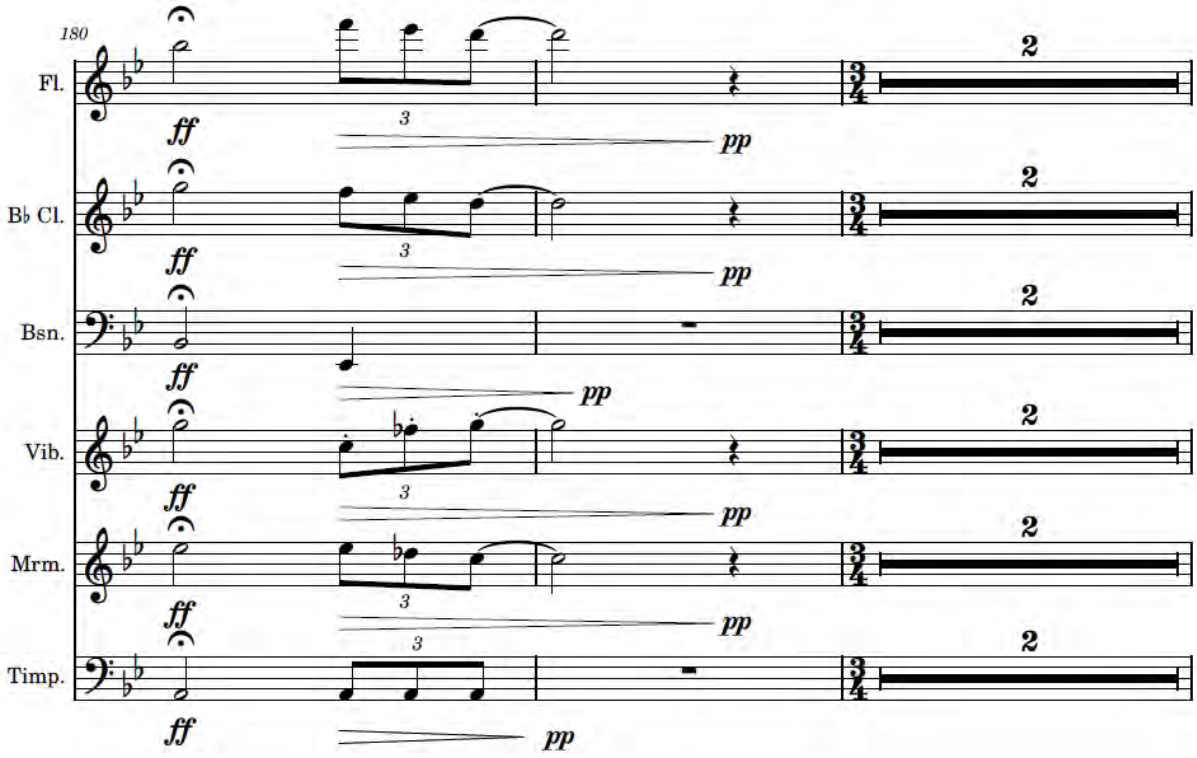


Figure 28 Lemmer, *Petrichor* bars 180 – 184.

The final section is a recapitulation of the first Petrichor theme, giving the listener a reminder of where this started, that this beautiful overwhelming smell, was the sign that brought on the dark destruction of the storm.

2. *Thoughts in a Storm*

This movement is the storm, also reminiscent of the Covid-19 escalation forcing lockdowns and taking so many loved ones to their death, while everyone struggled to keep the rest alive without adequate facilities and protection, it was inevitable. Once the storm is fully in motion there is a moment of reflection. The mind begins to wander and consider the impact of the storm on the earth. All the devastation from this virus and the emotional toll it pays on everyone is a difficult matter to think through or even understand, how can this glorious nature, hand us such horrific consequences? What could have been done to avoid this and how will it ever end without a vaccine or a cure. This reflective journey comes to an end with a re affirmation of the storm itself and how it slowly comes to an end. The timpani and the cymbal work together to perform the thunder and lightning, as if they are two separate elements.

The piece begins with atmospheric notes from the timpani and the vibraphone, with quick droplets littered all over. It is the breaking of the calm before the true storm leading off the sentiment of the final passage of the first movement.

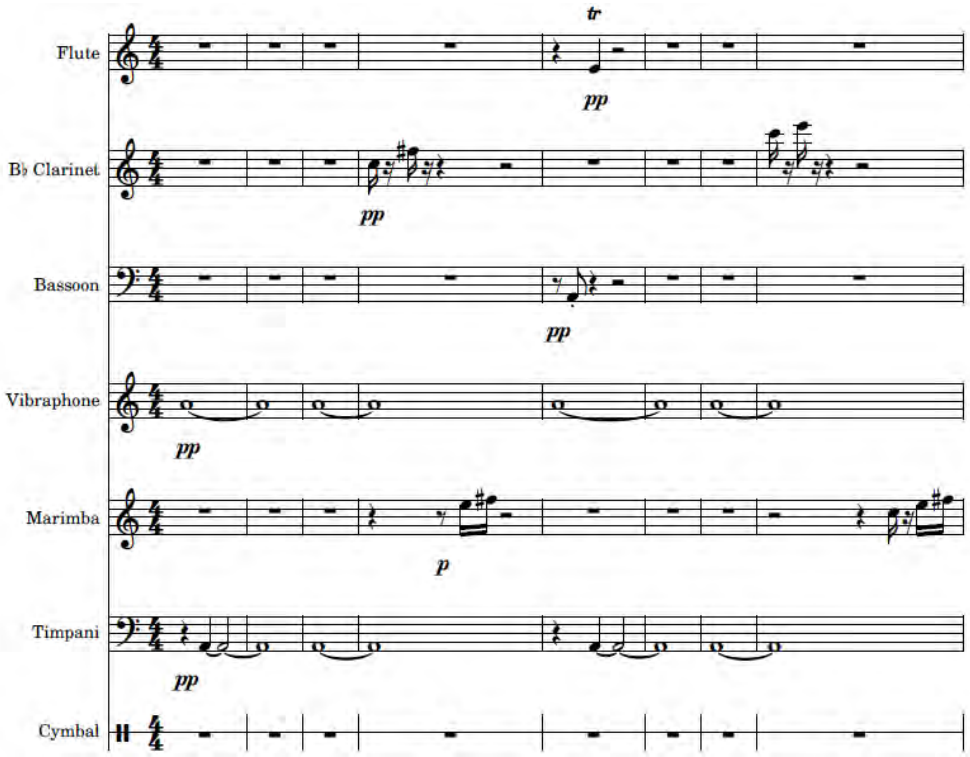


Figure 29 Lemmer, *Thoughts in a Storm* bars 1 – 8.

The notes gradually increase in speed until they run alongside each other building up that first big shock of the storm. The feeling of the first section depicting the build of the storm assists in the description of the different physical elements of the setting. During this build in bar 42, an ascending motif forms which is instrumental in announcing the danger and warning of the upcoming storm, specifically as it is carried through the climax by the bassoon.

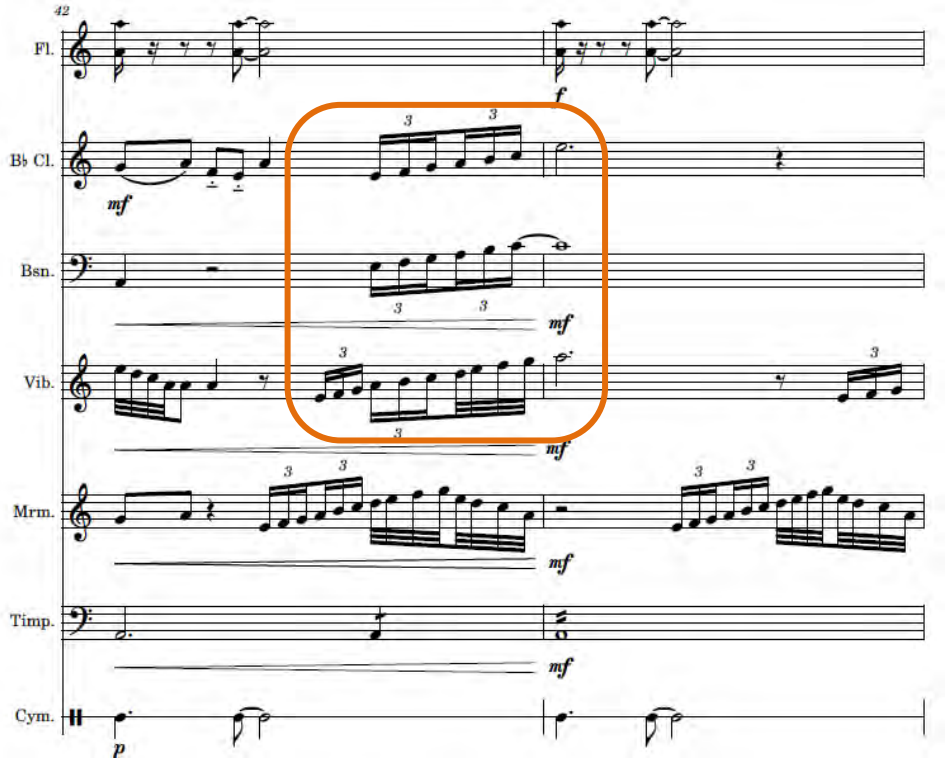


Figure 30 Lemmer, *Thoughts in a Storm* bars 42 – 43.

In bar 50 the theme of the storm itself is introduced. Each instrument works to create the power and ferocity of this storm all around. The marimba and the vibraphone bring in a repetitive motif representing the rainfall. This section allows the listener to be immersed in the storm, with the gusts of wind and the lightning and thunder. This section is more tonal and rhythmical, showing the structured predetermined event, an event that has been around since the beginning of time and always returns.

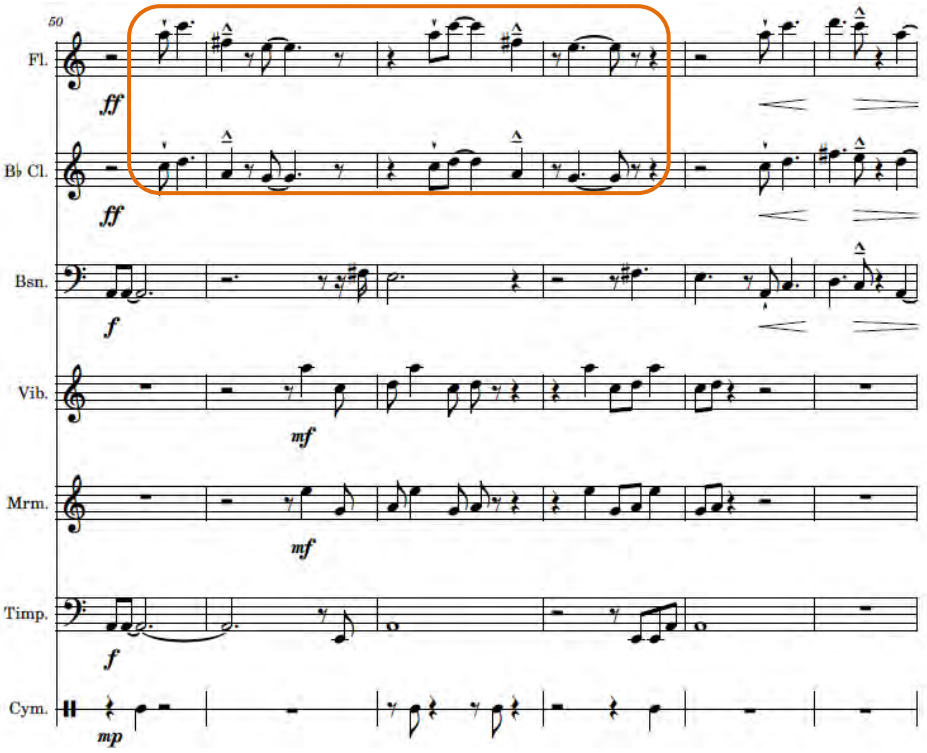


Figure 31 Lemmer, *Thoughts in a Storm* bars 50 – 55.

The short motif appearing in bar 70 draws us into the mind space, as if a fade-in of a memory, but in this case it is a reflection of the situation at hand.

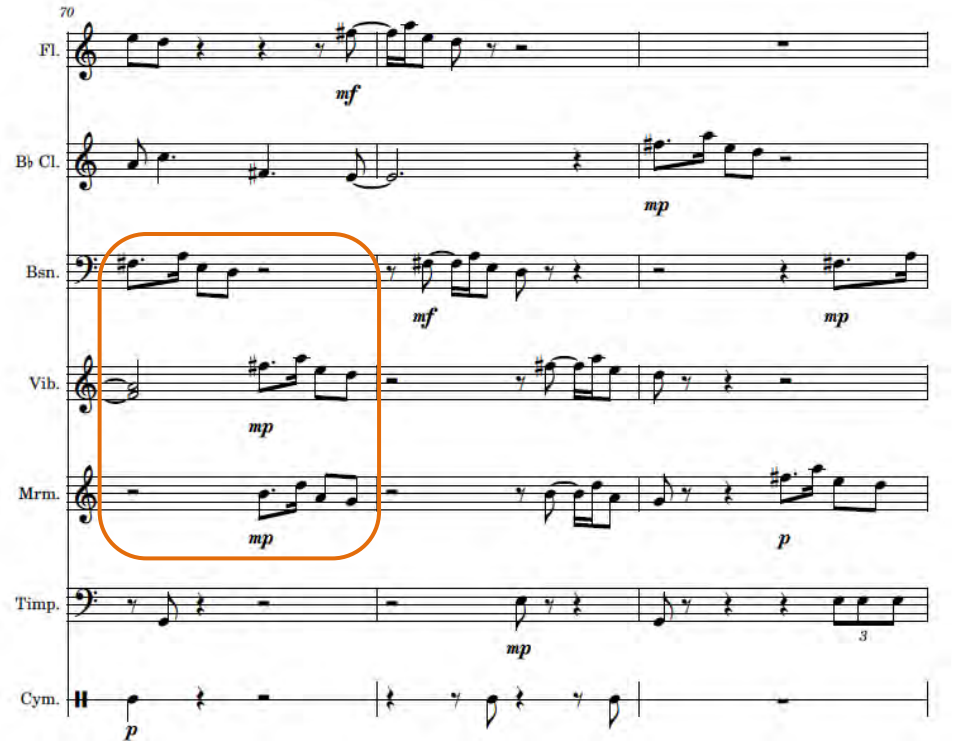


Figure 32 Lemmer, *Thoughts in a Storm* bars 70 – 73.

The next section is kept afloat by the vibraphone with a regular rhythm. The staccato articulation adds to the continuous, somewhat monotonous rainfall throughout this section. In bar 80 the theme enters with a hint of hemiola patterning. All normal day routine is put on hold, waiting for the storm to activate and pass. The mood is quizzical and ethereal with fast running motifs creating a mystical space.

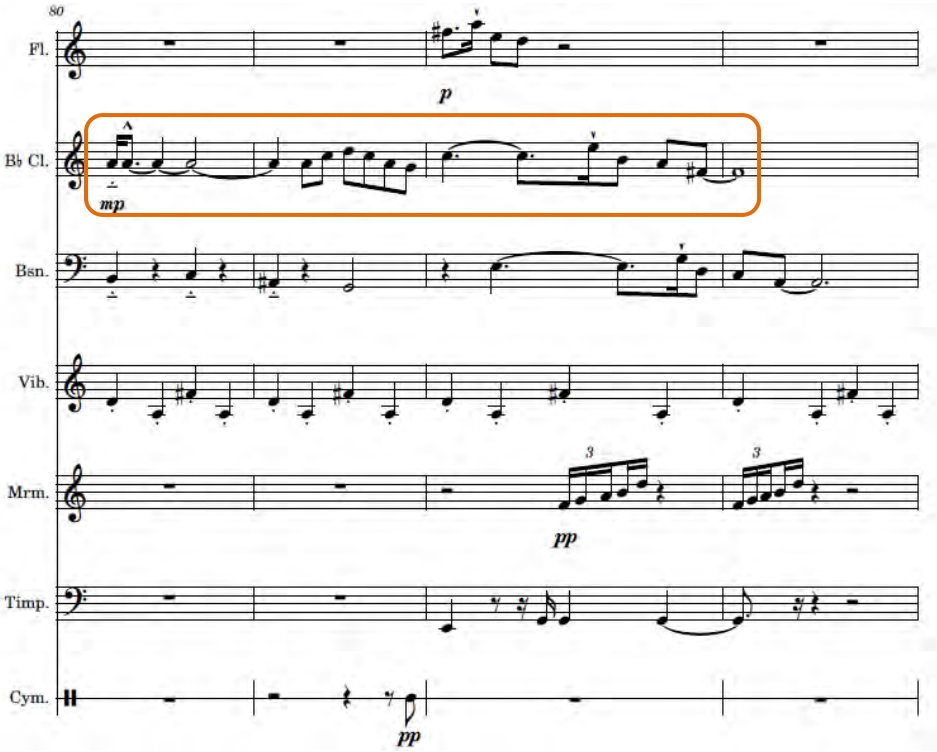


Figure 33 Lemmer, *Thoughts in a Storm* bars 80 – 83.

This section remain very structured and rhythmical reflecting on living through a storm in the safety and comfort of secure dwelling, sheltered away from the storm, to allow the space to think about the events.

The determination of humanity to keep going is clear as this section moves to its own climax. The modulations through bars 122 and 125 lead to a strong point of harmonic arrival. The positivity and motivation to survive is strong and vibrant. There is a note of resounding support and respect for nature and the sheer power of the storm.

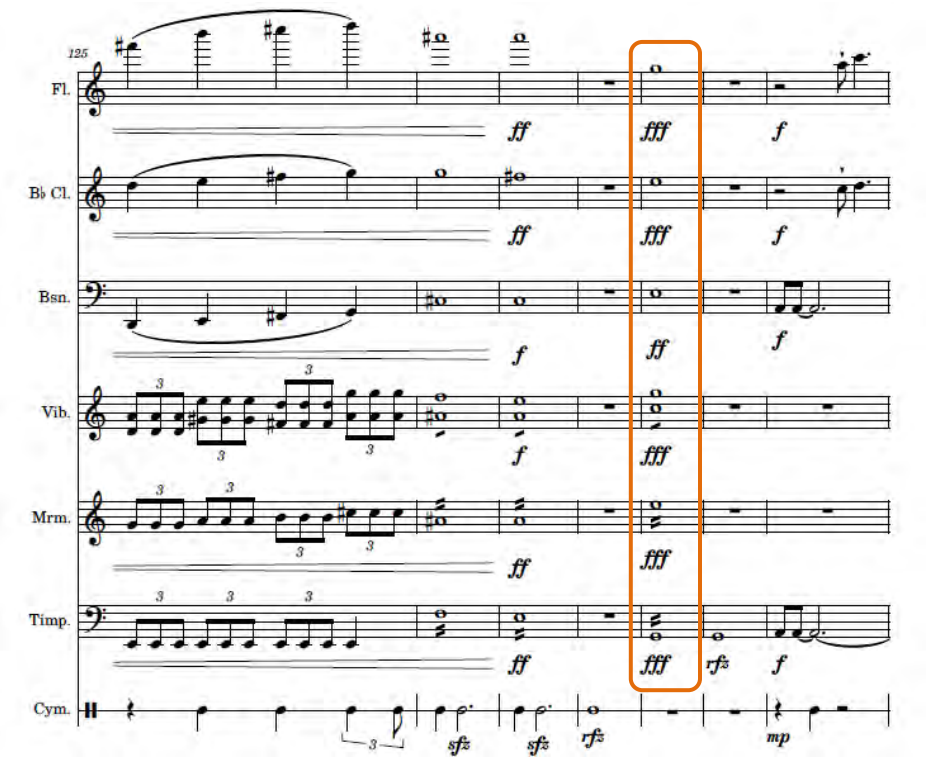


Figure 34 Lemmer, *Thoughts in a Storm* bars 125 – 131.

In bar 131 there is a return to the original storm theme, leaving the mind space and returning to the thundering storm. Reality is re-established and the storm is still raging on.

Around bar 150 the storm begins to fade and we are reminded of what we learnt in the storm and the respect we gained. This ethereal motif brings the end of the storm, after the volume and the journey the storm brought the end is questioning.

3. *Re-awakening*

The final movement is after the storm has completed its work and the earth has been refreshed. It runs through the slow re-awakening of birds and the animals hiding away, the clearing of the sky and trickles of sun beams coming through. Finally the sun comes out and the rainbow appears. Everything is fresh and bright. This is perfectly positive way to conclude the series, the power of positive thought. If we believe in ourselves we can out last any storm.

The piece begins with a strong statement by the flute and bassoon of the main theme; "re-awakening". This theme represents the end of the storm, the confirmation that it's over and the gratefulness that it was survived. This theme has the energy of everything waking up from the haze of the storm coming to see what the earth looks like now. It is scored using the D Dorian mode.

Figure 35 Lemmer, *Re-awakening* bars 1 – 7.

From bar 10 the marimba (and later the vibraphone joins) depicts the last of the droplets as the clouds separate and the timpani fades the thunder as the storm moves on. Later, the theme is doubled at the interval of a perfect fifth with the bassoon using G Dorian mode.

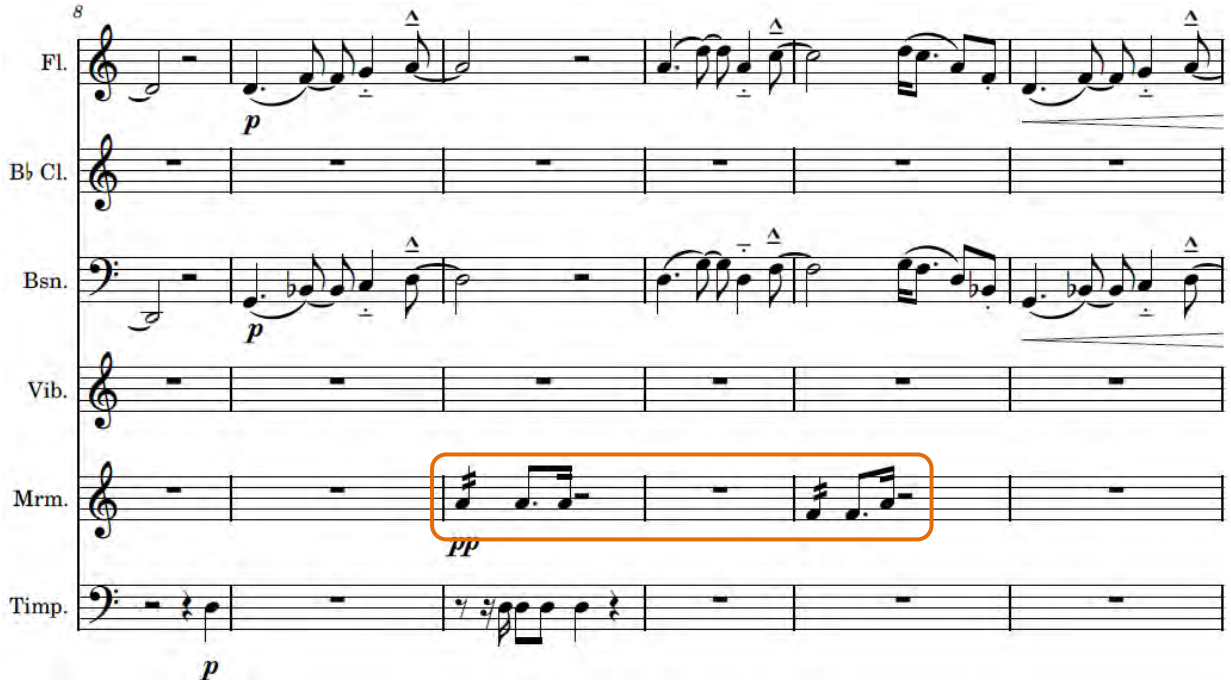


Figure 36 Lemmer, *Re-awakening* bars 8 – 12.

The motif in the vibraphone and marimba changes in bar 26 to represent the sun rays trickling through.

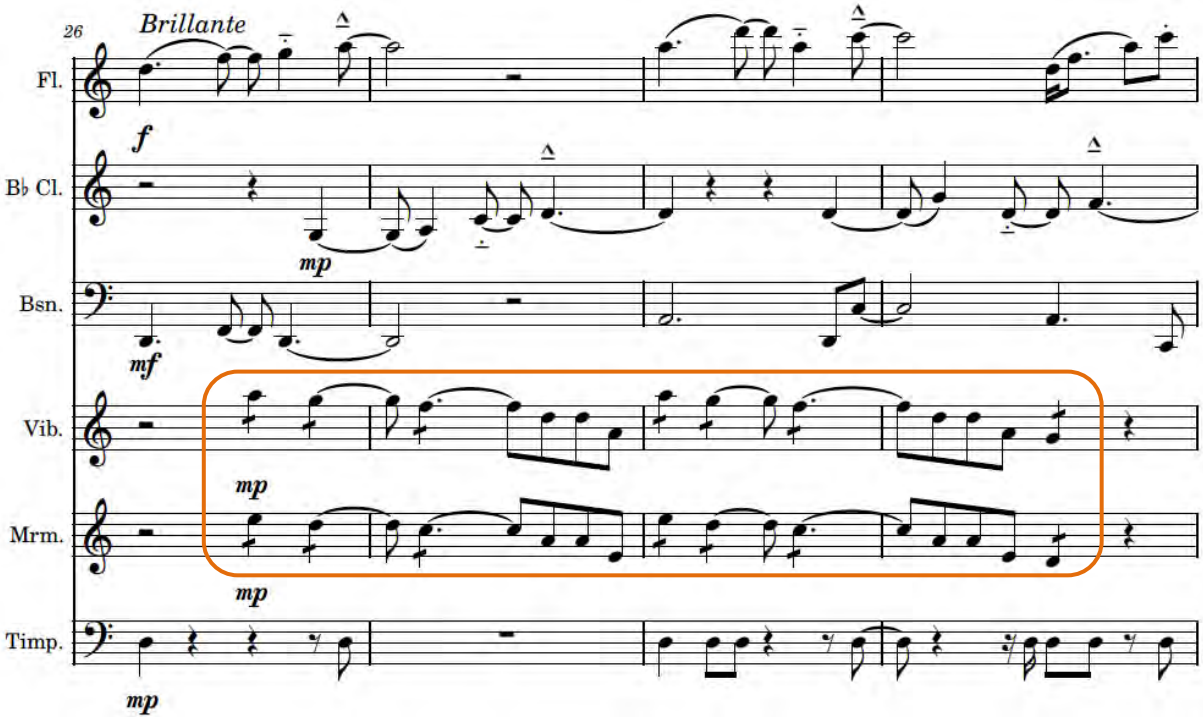


Figure 37 Lemmer, *Re-awakening* bars 26 – 29.

Bar 57 brings the build to the climax. The music starts to move a lot faster, everything awakens and the world begins to spin back to normal. All this energy builds to the climax point where the clouds break open and the sun appears in full, shining bright ,as the last of the clouds begin to dissipate and a rainbow appears. This appearance of the rainbow is represented by the sustained notes played by the flute, clarinet and bassoon.

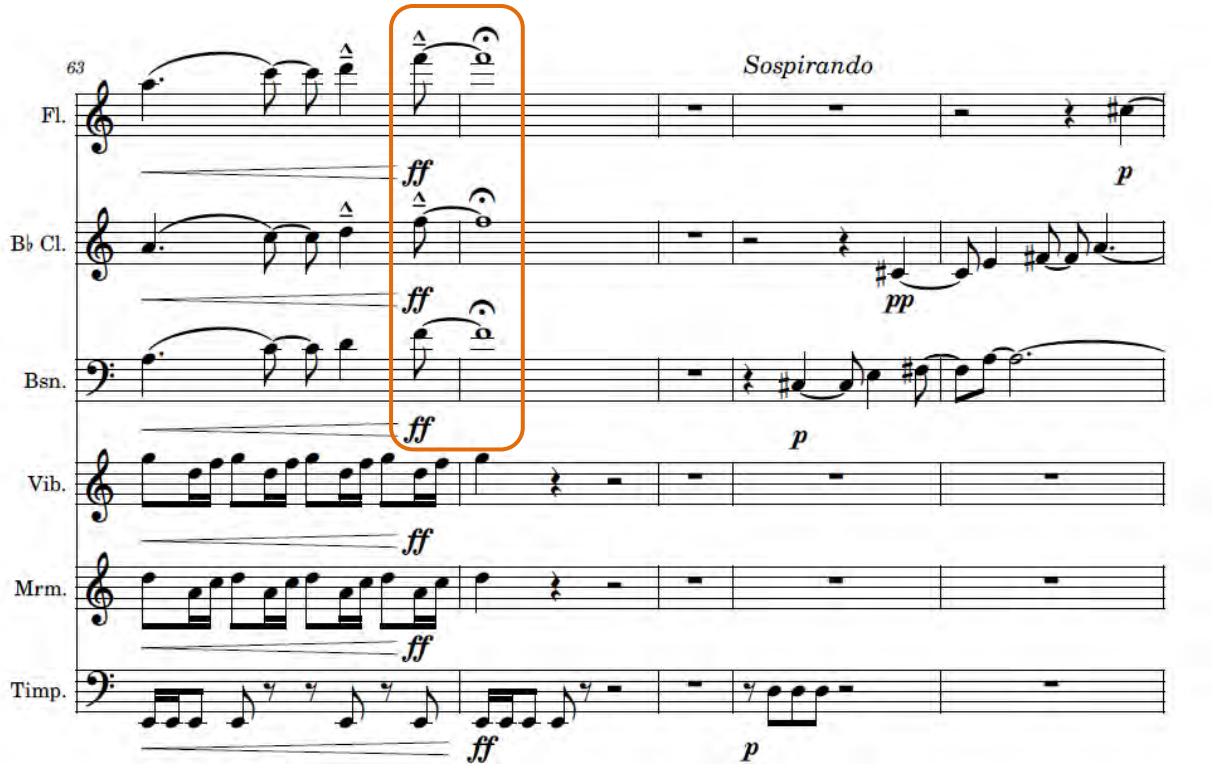


Figure 38 Lemmer, *Re-awakening* bars 63 – 67.

In bar 69 a theme emerges that represents the soft touch of the sun now spreading out all over the ground and touching all of nature. This theme is played in full by the flute with echoes through the instruments. This section is like a sigh of relief, the rainbow is out and the sun is coming down, all the drama of the storm appears to be subsiding.

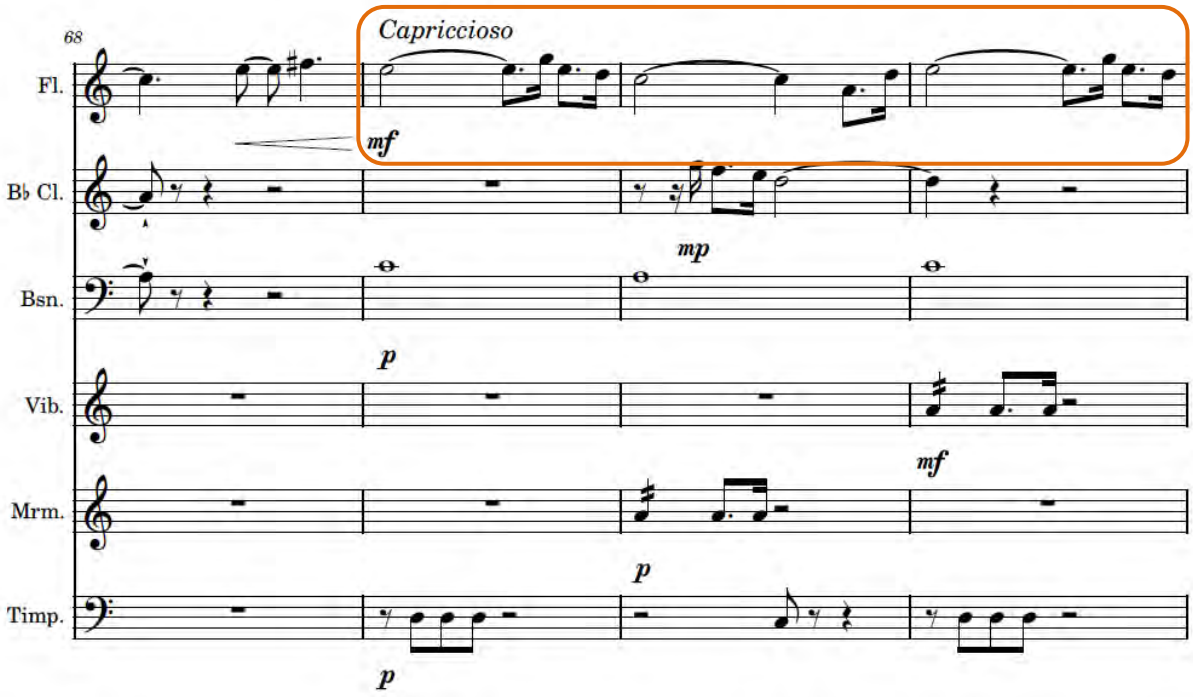


Figure 39 Lemmer, *Re-awakening* bars 68 – 71.

Throughout this section there is so much fresh energy and movement, reaffirming the *Re-awakening* and the happiness that has come with it.

The piece modulates and the texture thins out before the return of the original theme in bar 105 for one last refreshing and joyful moment, made more poignant through the contrapuntal, complex texture.

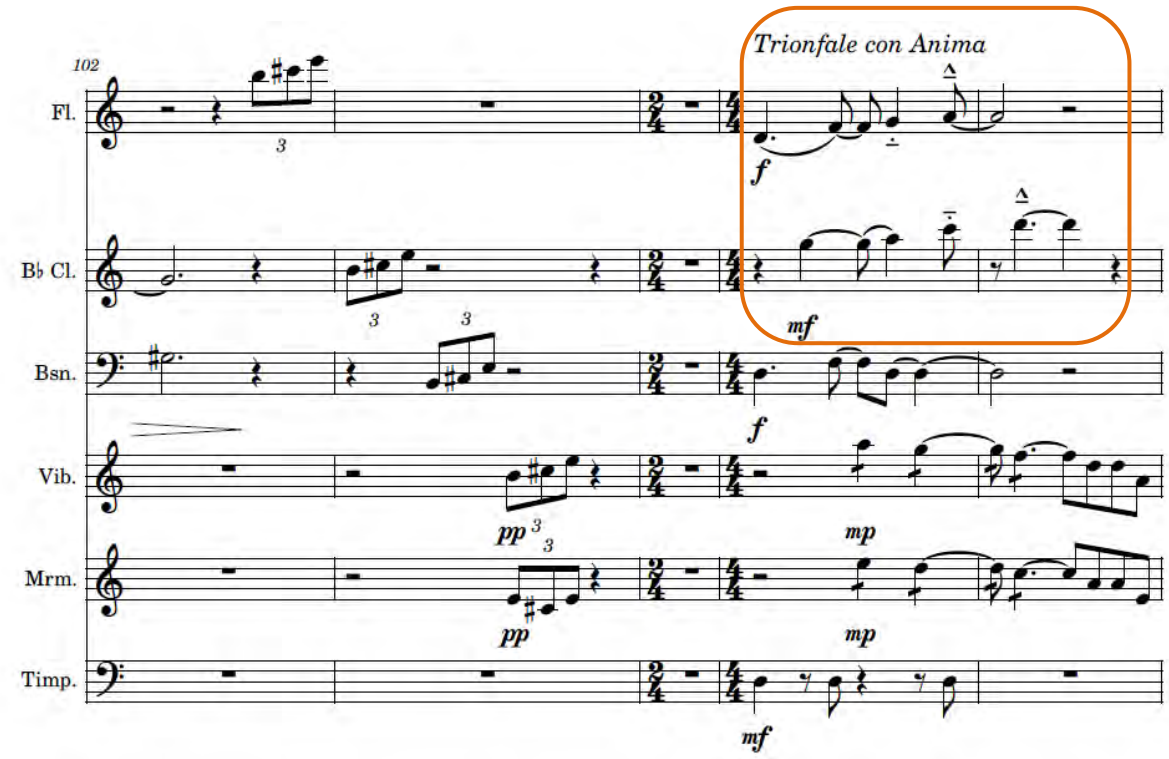


Figure 40 Lemmer, *Re-awakening* bars 102 – 106.

In Bar 128 most of the instruments sound the original theme as a reaffirmation of this positive energy achieved through the re-awakening, showing the strength and support though society working together in a more free and supportive environment without fear.

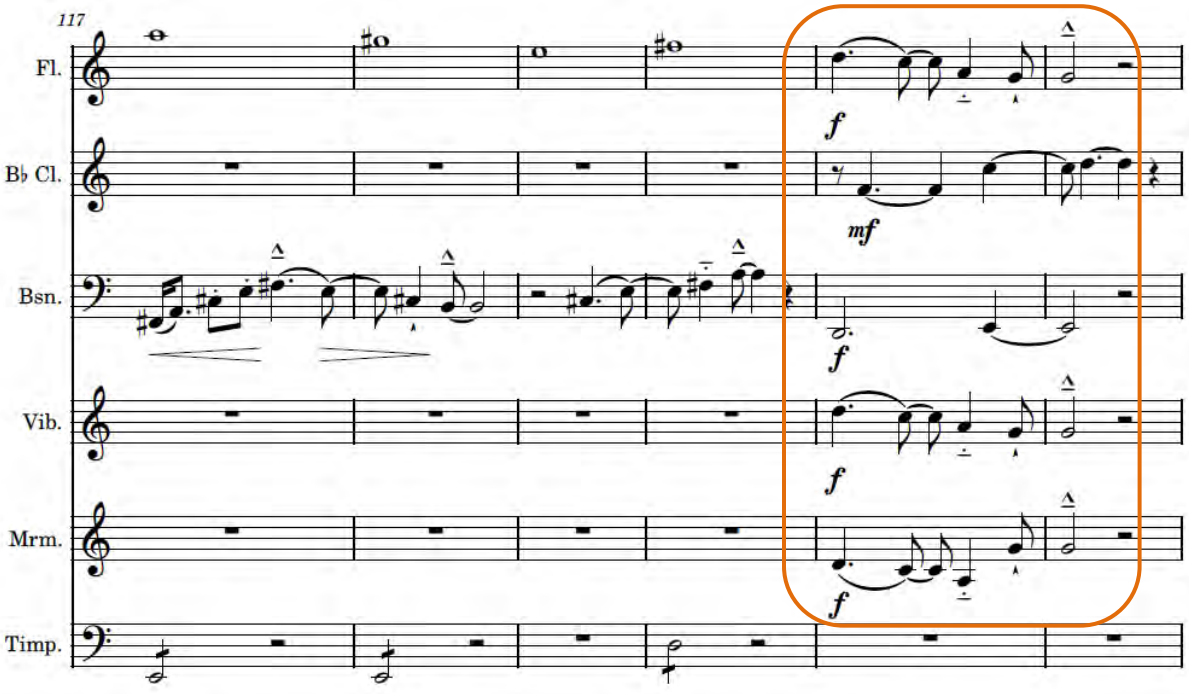


Figure 41 Lemmer, *Re-awakening* bars 117 - 122.

The piece closes very gently with a thin texture as the original theme continues, alternating through the flute, clarinet and finally the bassoon creating a euphoric and relaxed closing atmosphere.

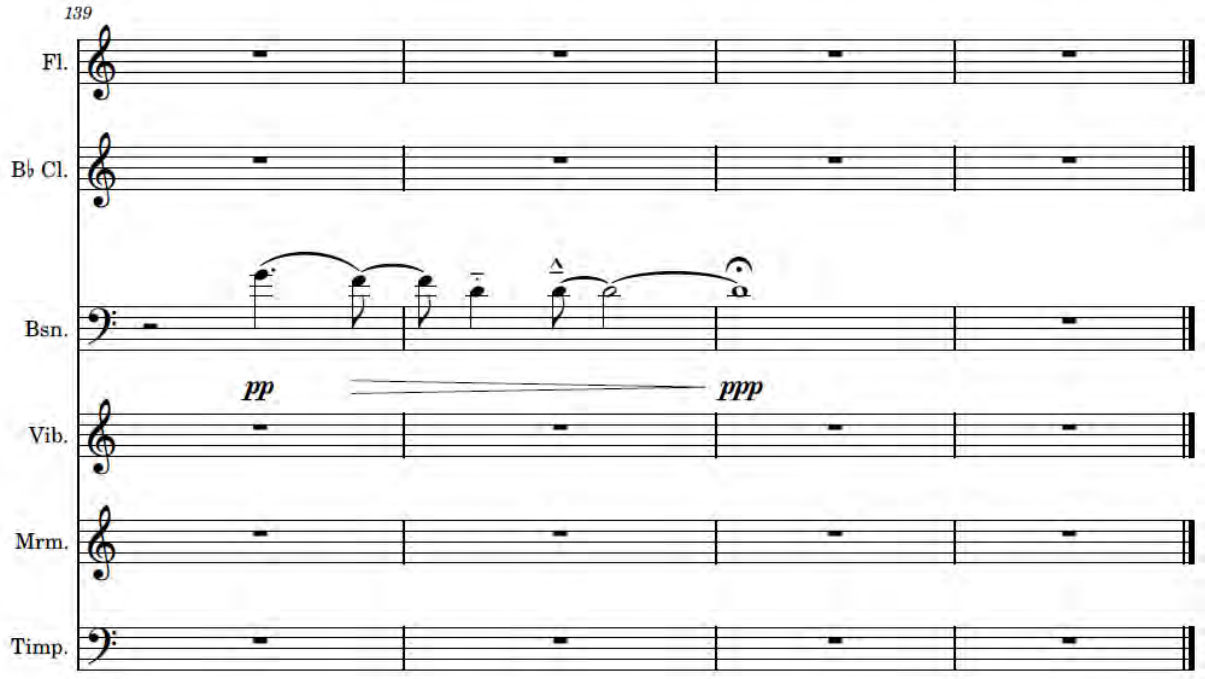


Figure 42 Lemmer, *Re-awakening* bars 139 – 142.

Unwelcome Solitude

Elizabeth Lemmer

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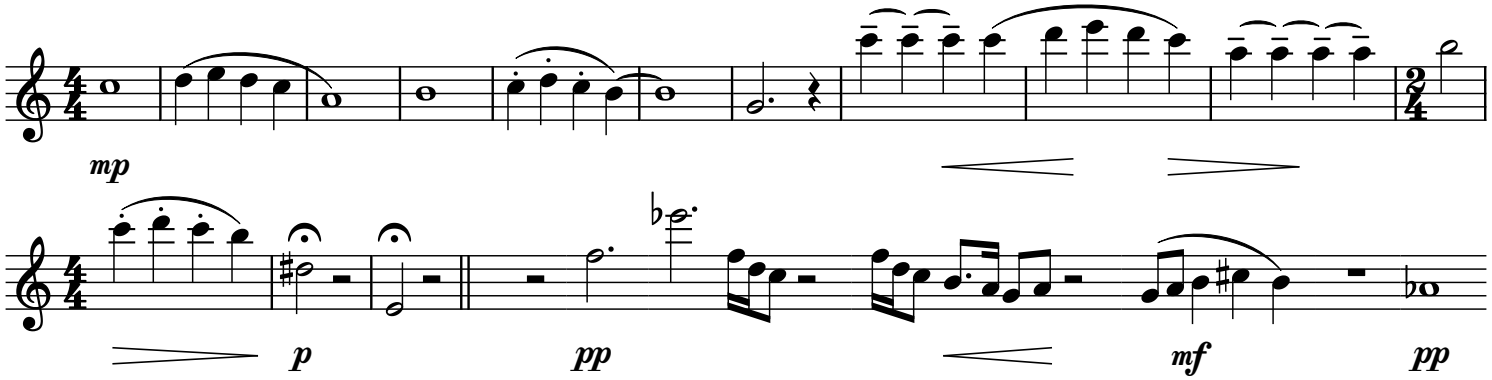
Liberamente e Moderato



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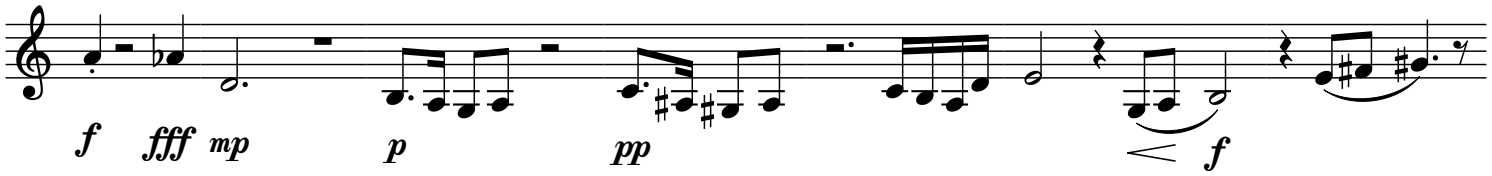

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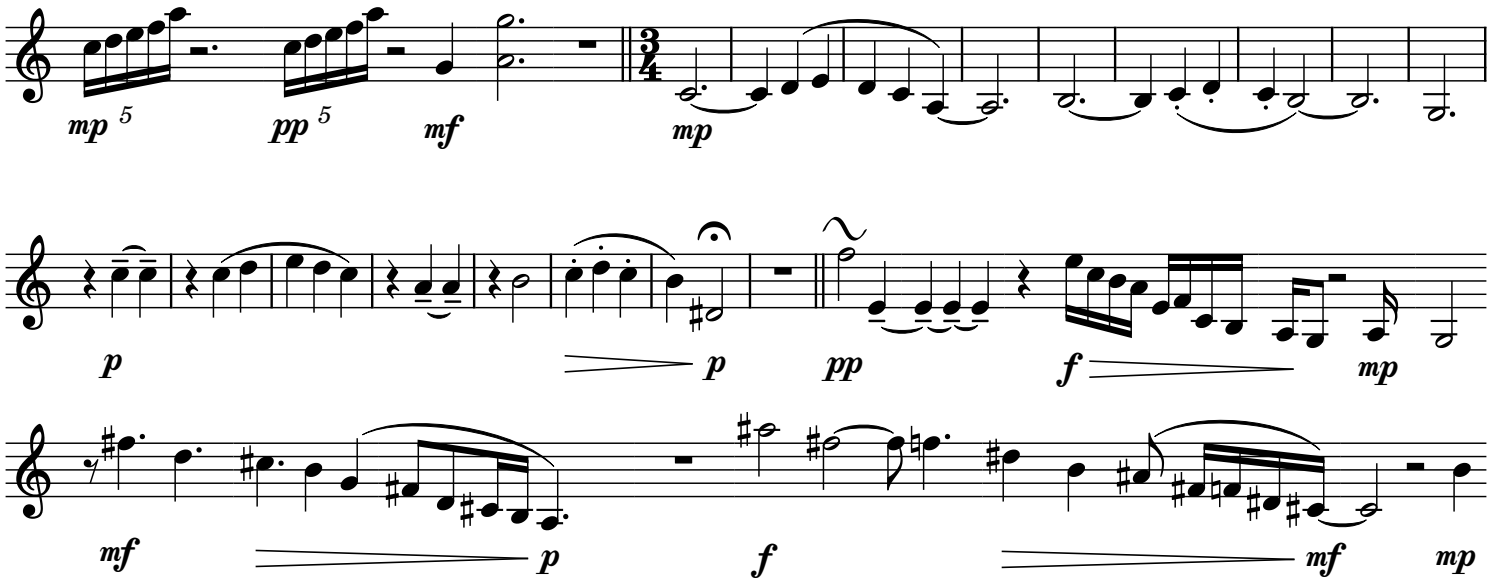

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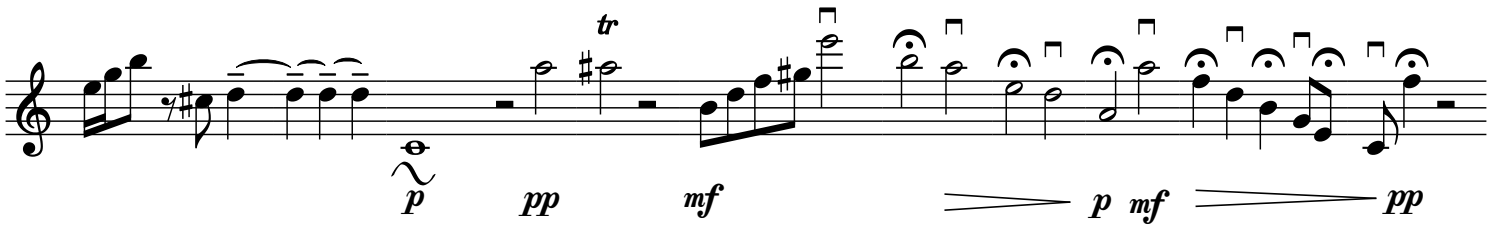

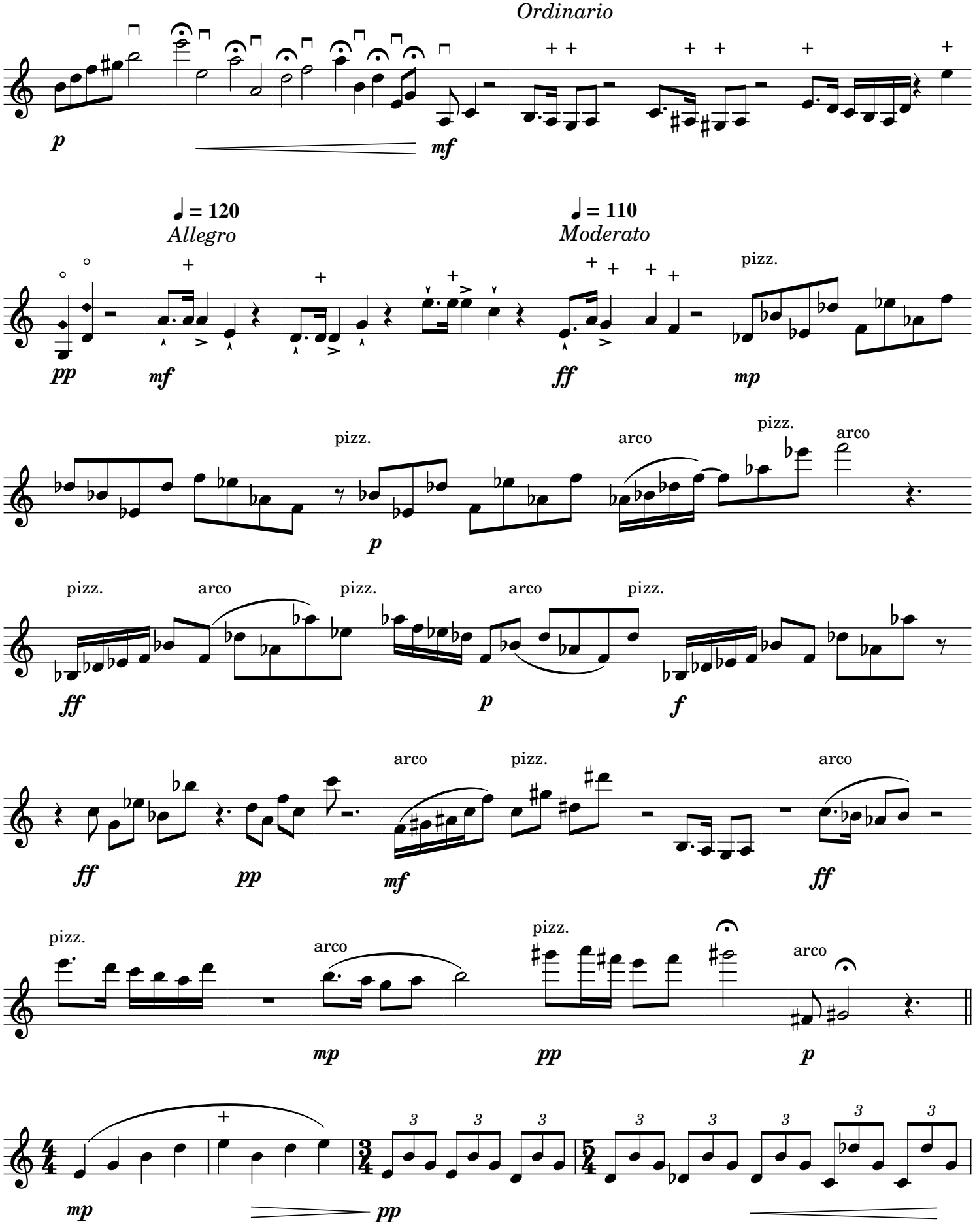
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Allegro
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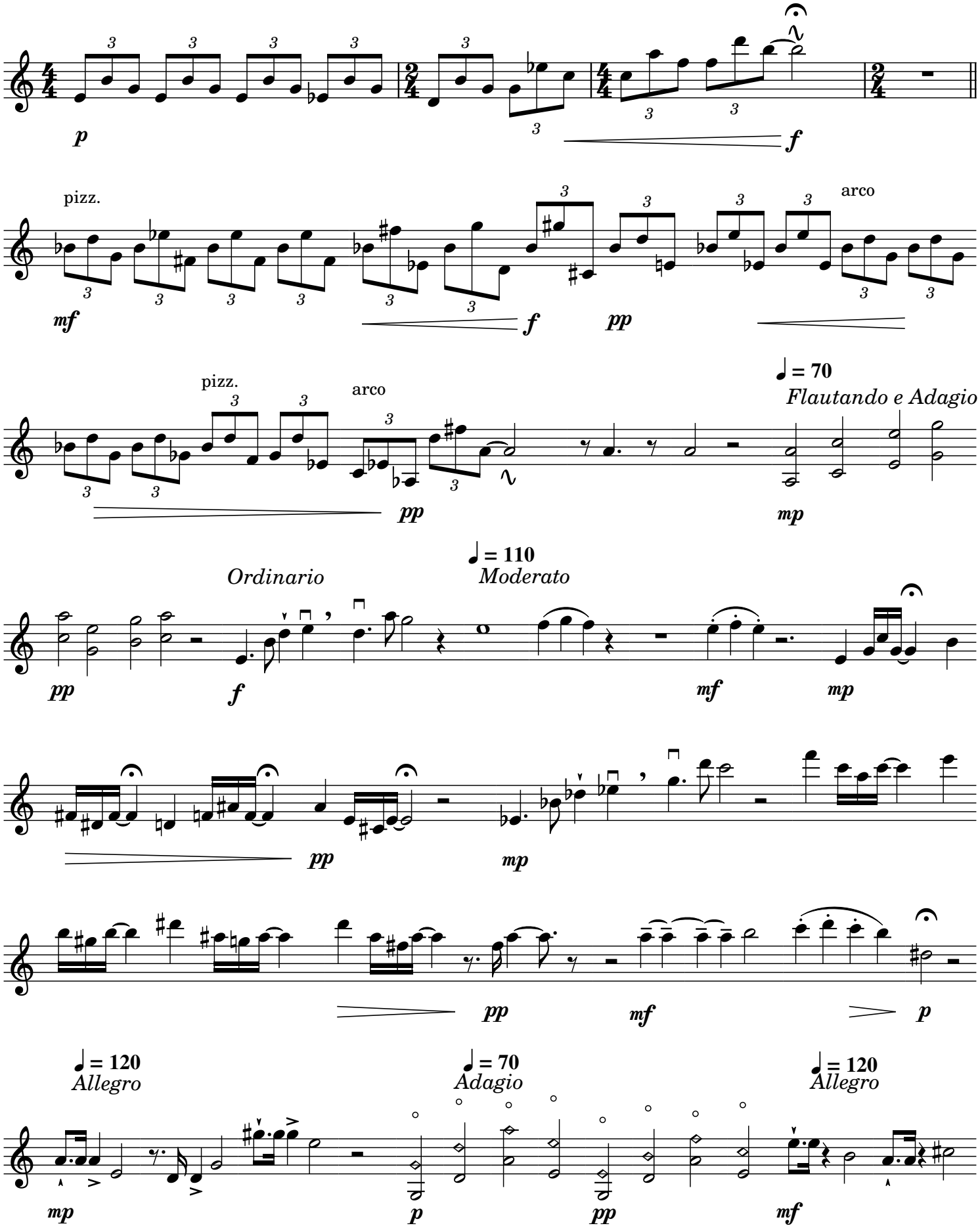
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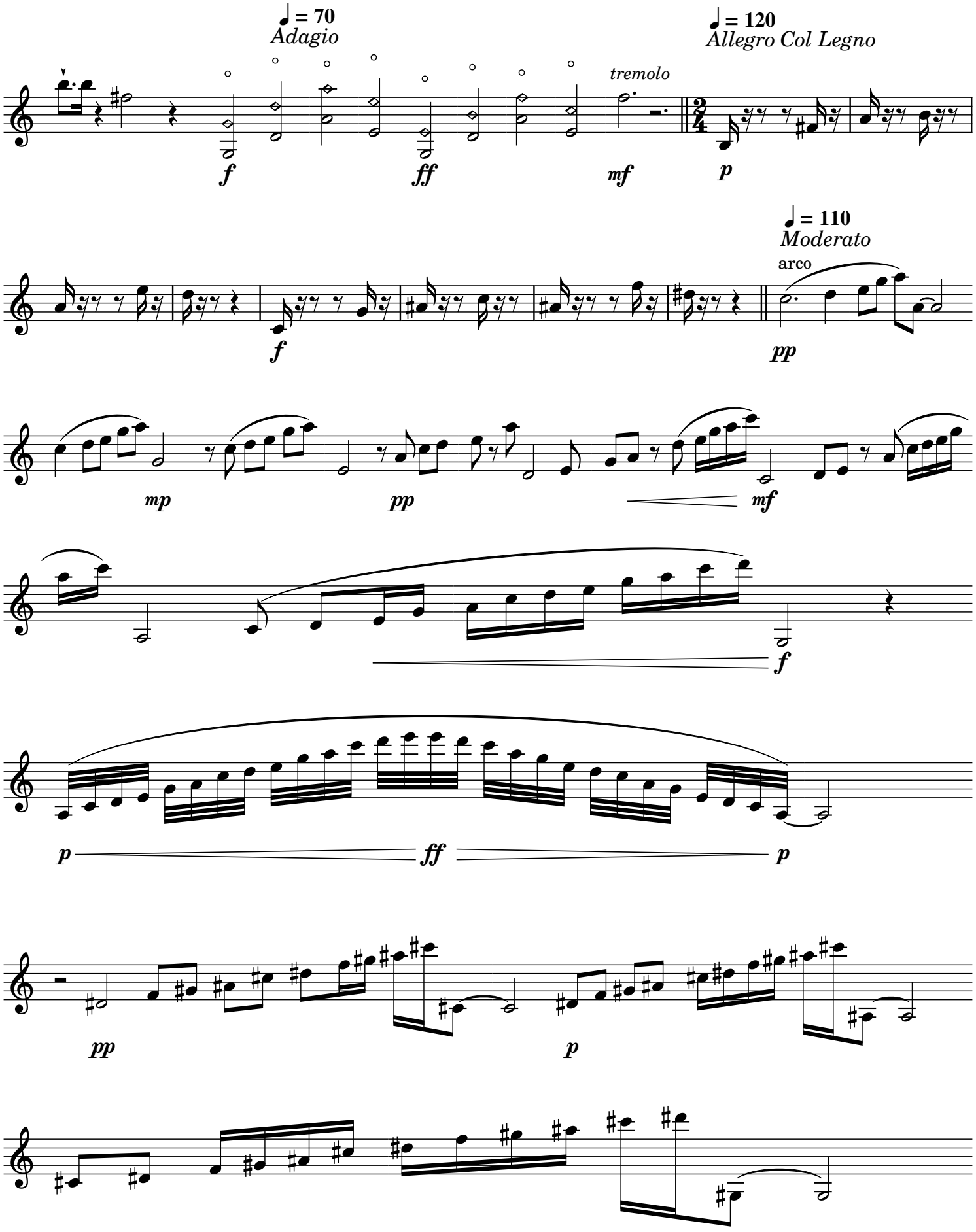
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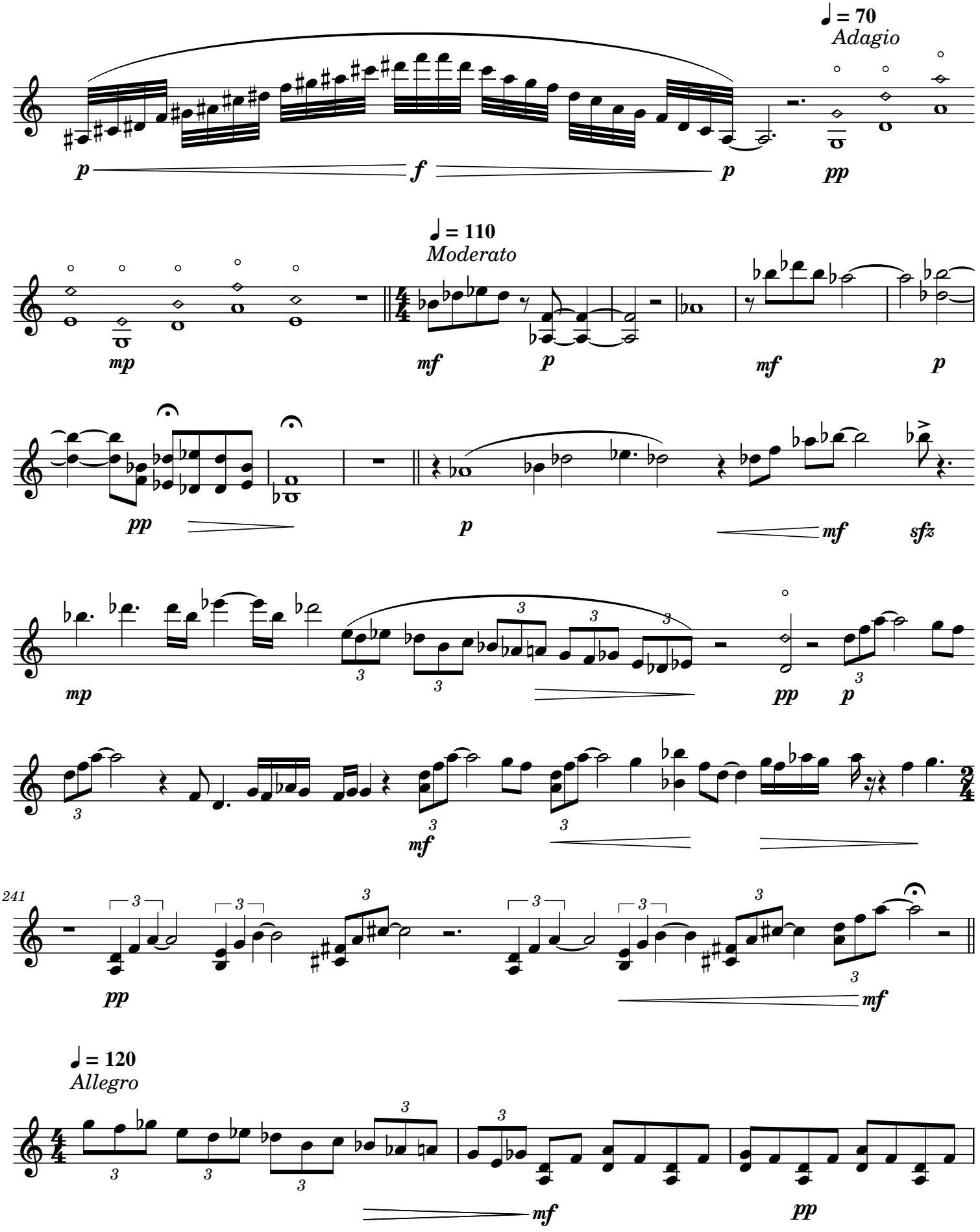
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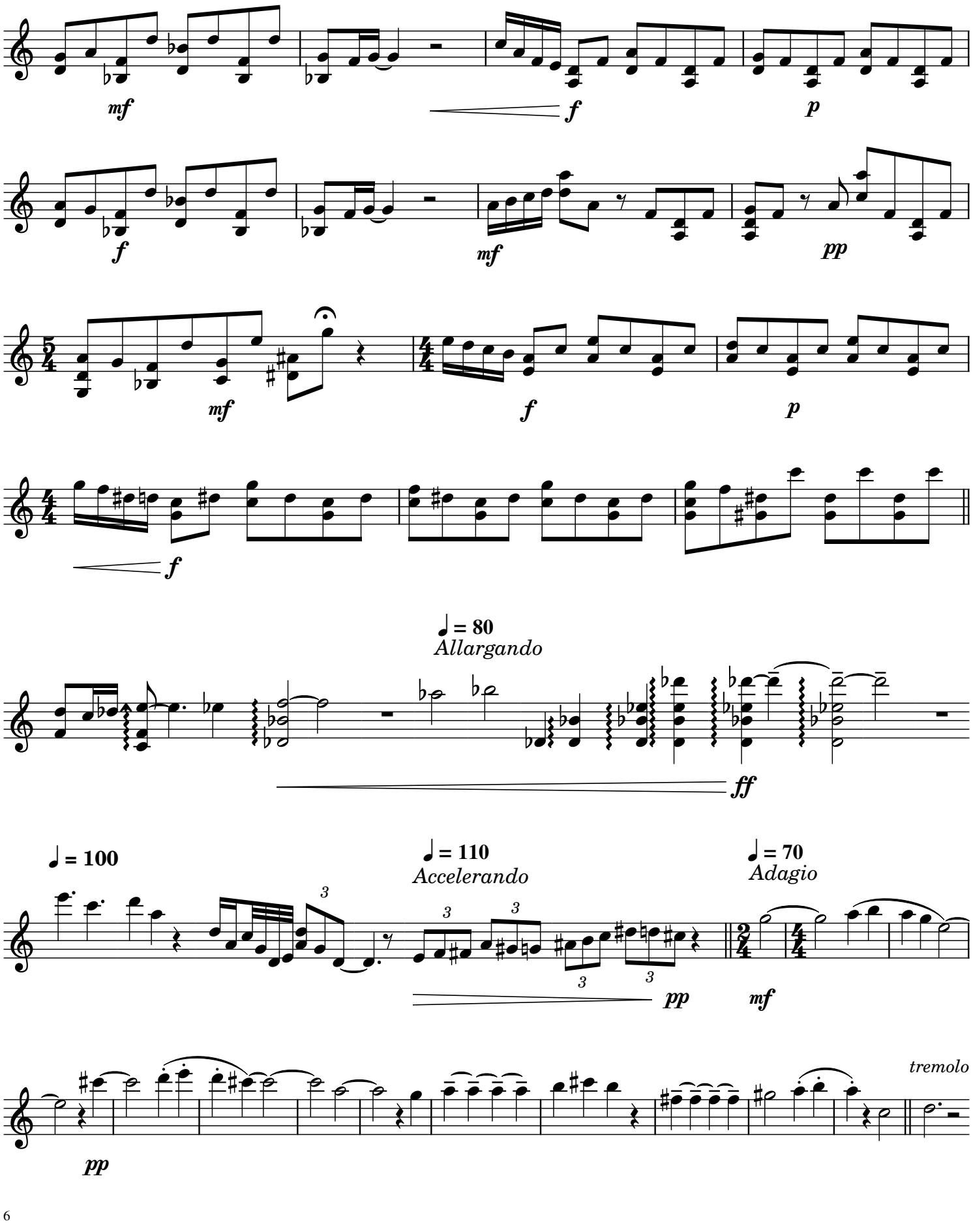
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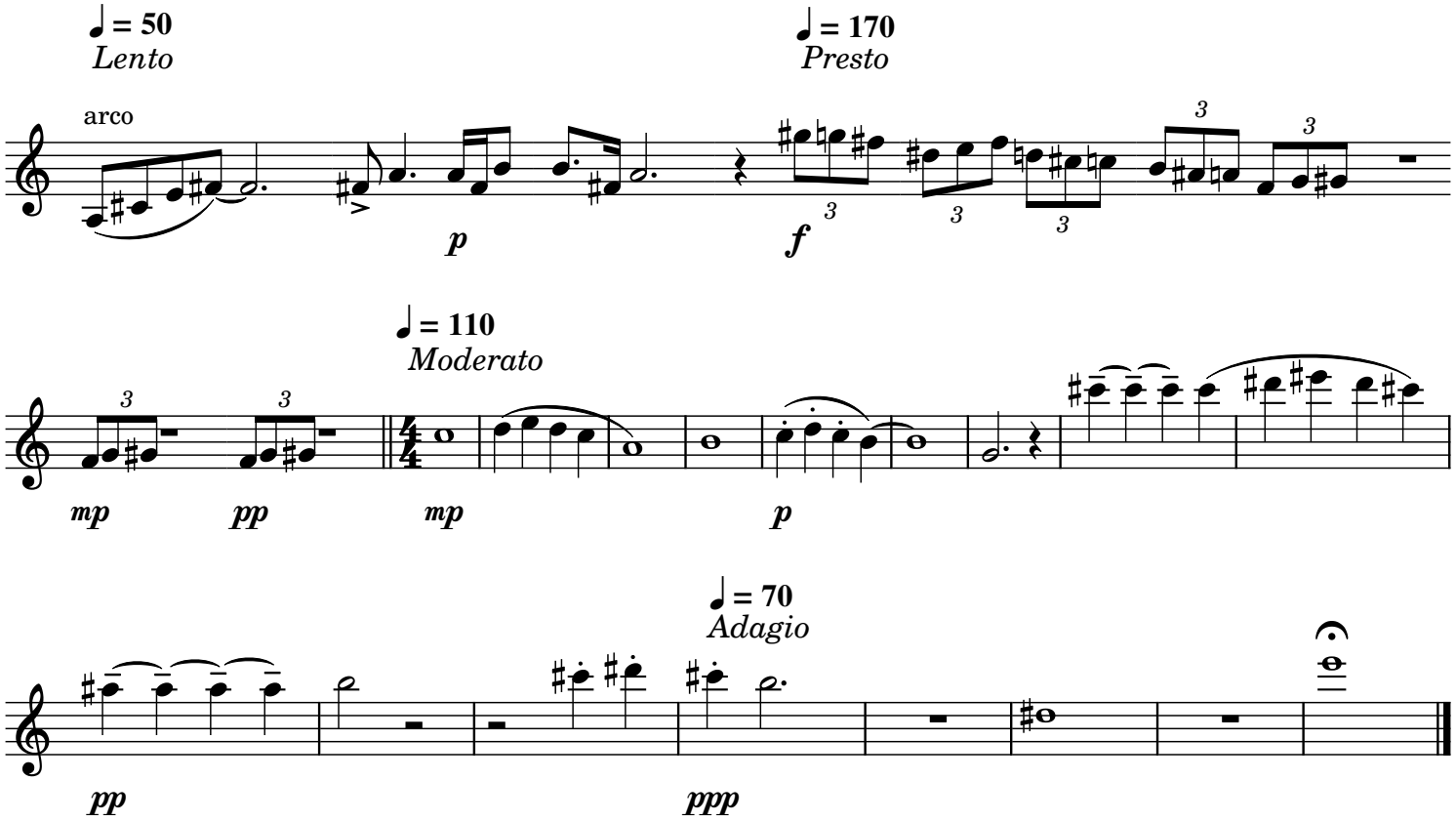


Expressive marking; Example in piece; Directions of use:

Portato; Page 1 Line 1; Rhythmic pulsing of the sustained note.

Portamento; Page 1 line 7; Sliding between pitches.

Left hand Pizzicato; Page 2 line 1; Plucking the note with any left hand finger whilst stopping at the correct pitch.

Flautando; Page 3 Line 3; Creates flute like sounds by moving the bow closer to or on top of the finger board.

Spiccato; Page 3 Line 5; Bounce the bow lightly on the string.

Harmonics; Page 3 line 7; Gently touch the string with your fourth left hand finger whilst drawing a normal bow stroke.

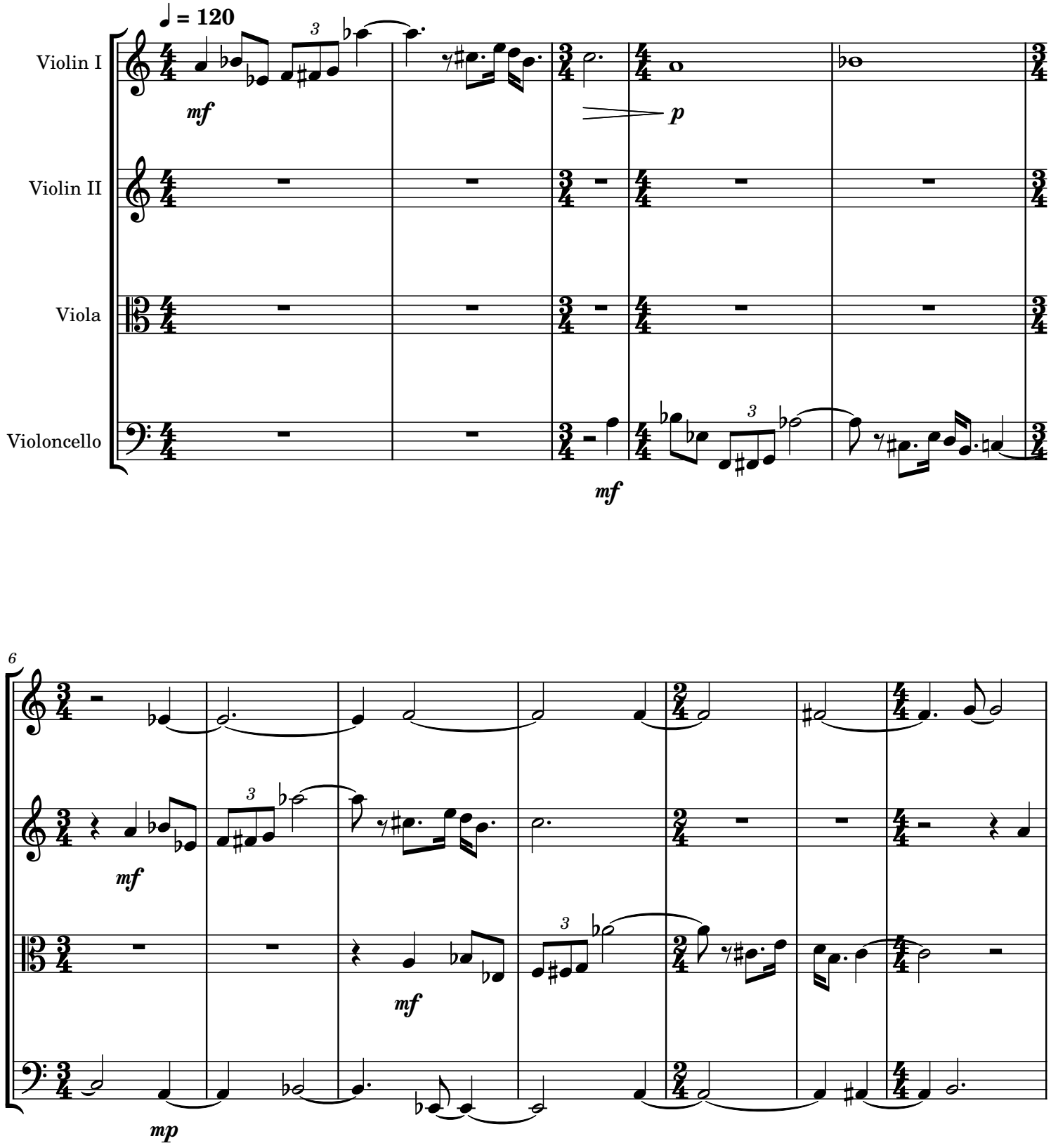
Col Legno; Page 4 Line 1; Strike the string with the back of the bow.

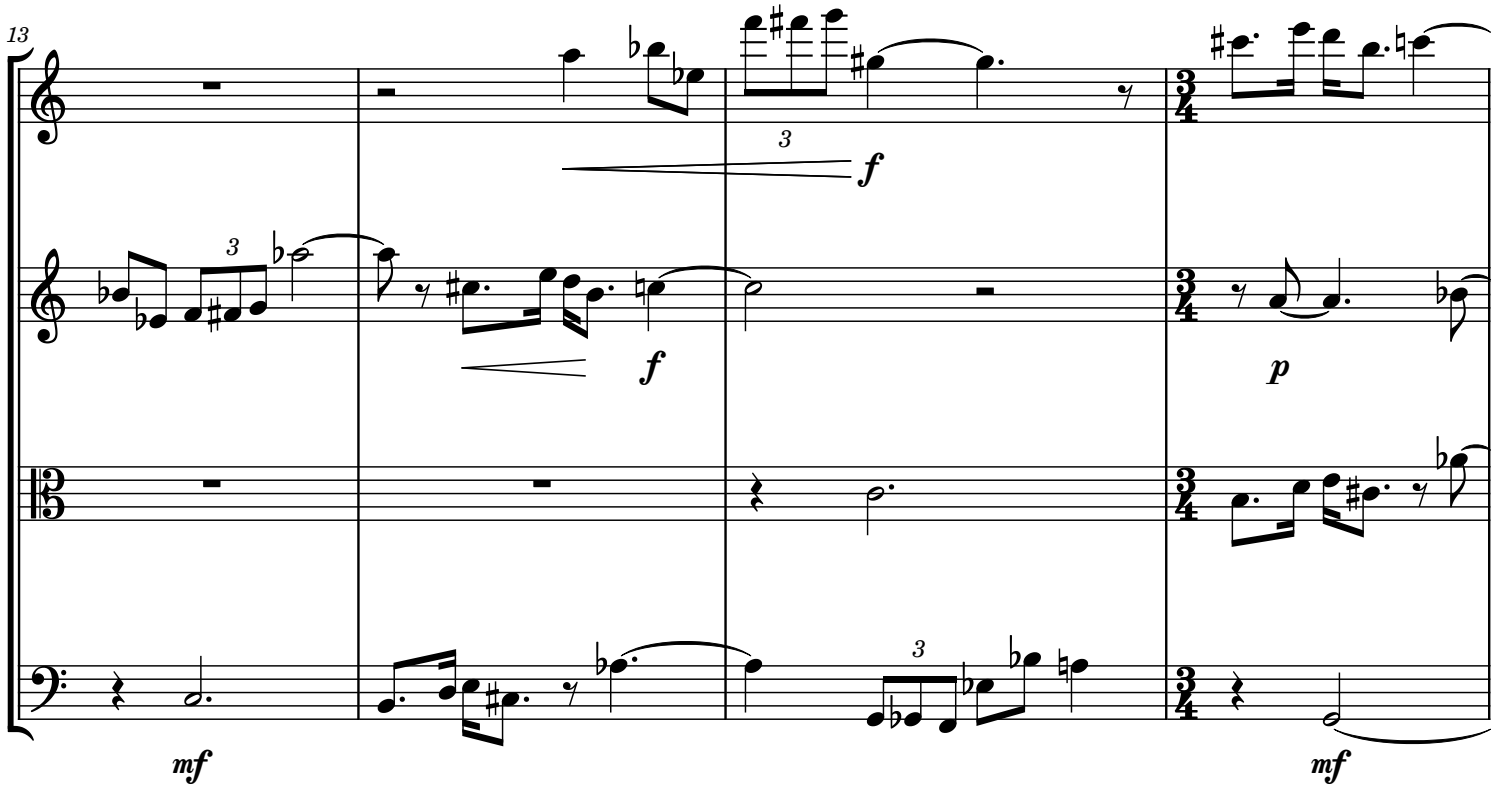
The Pandemic

Elizabeth Lemmer

1. Panic

Elizabeth Lemmer

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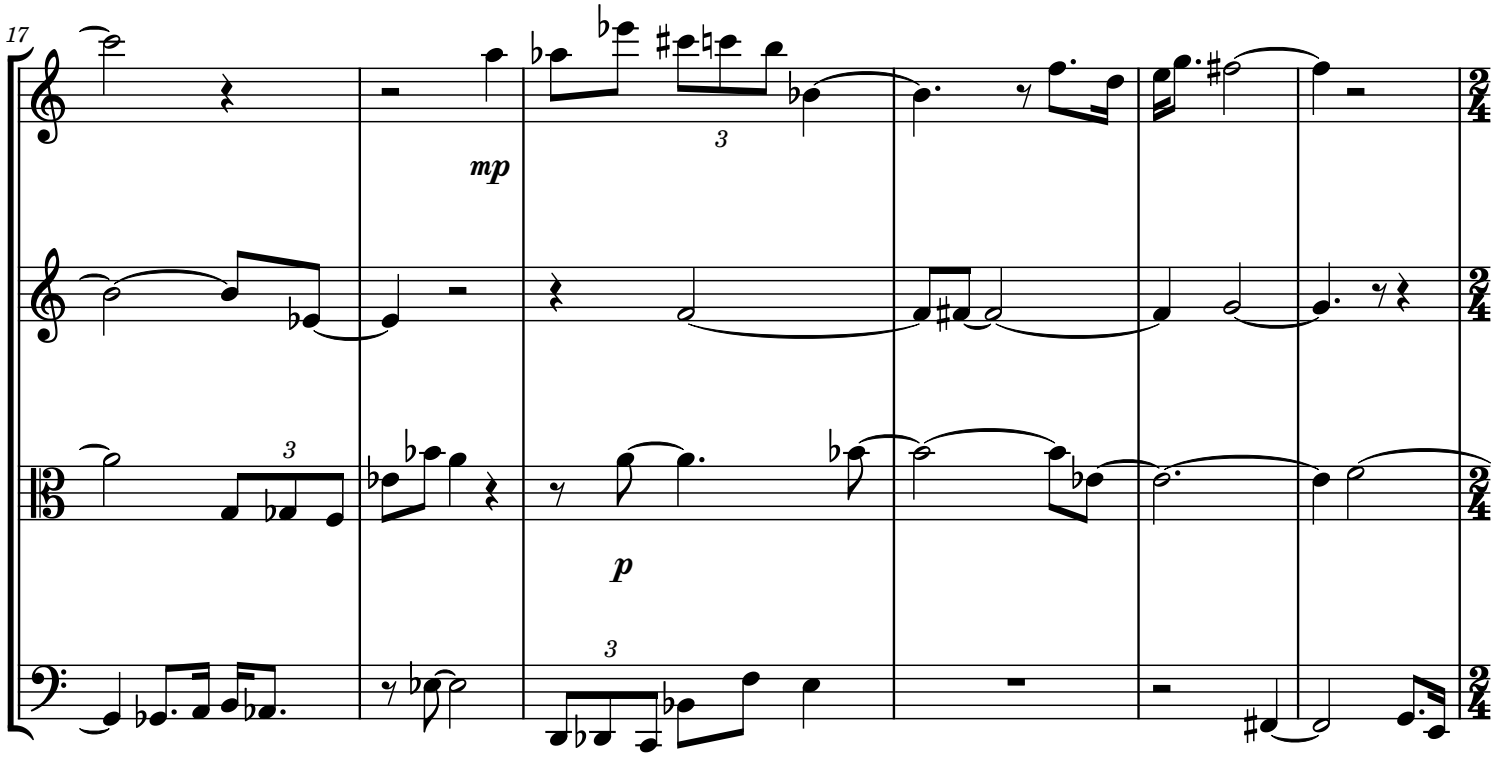
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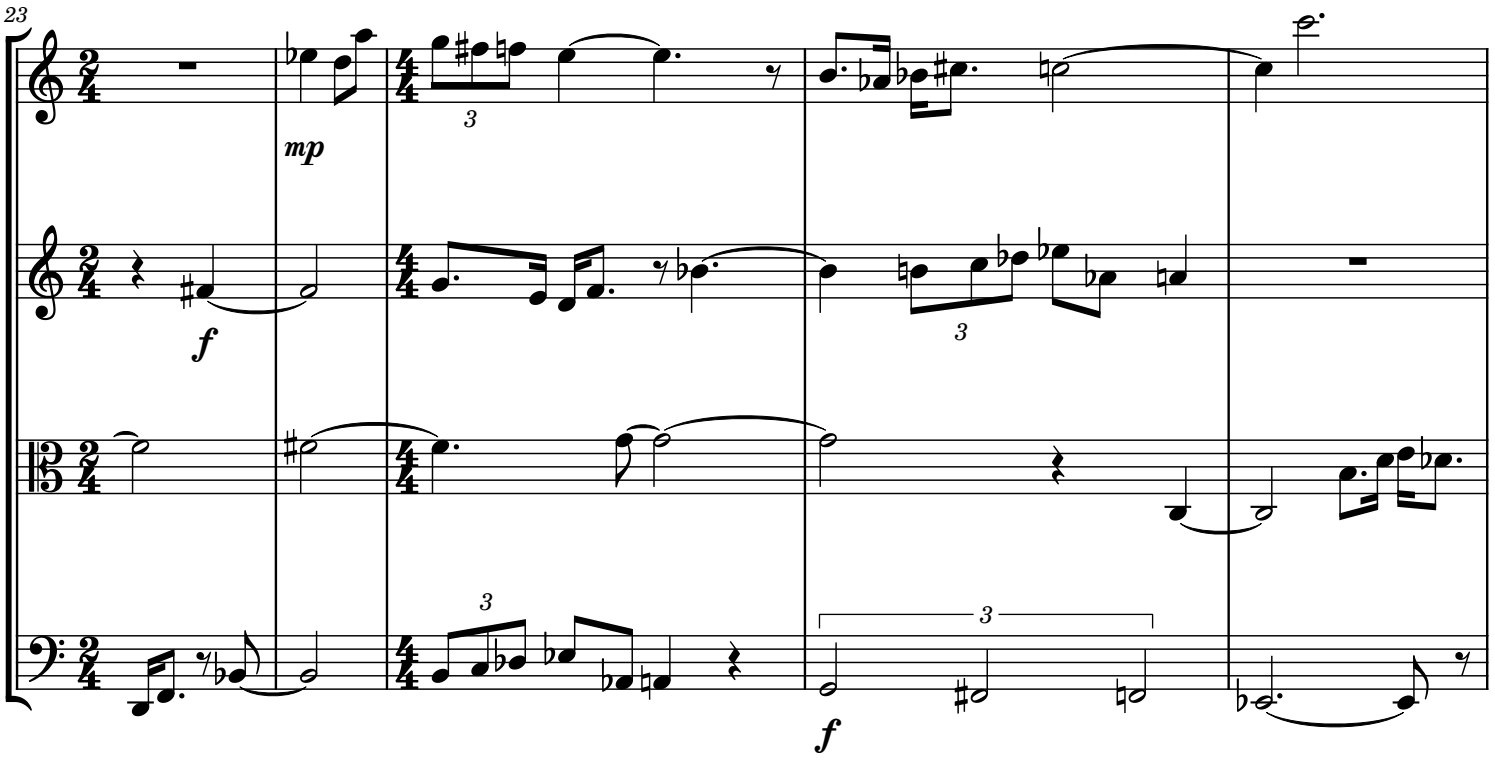
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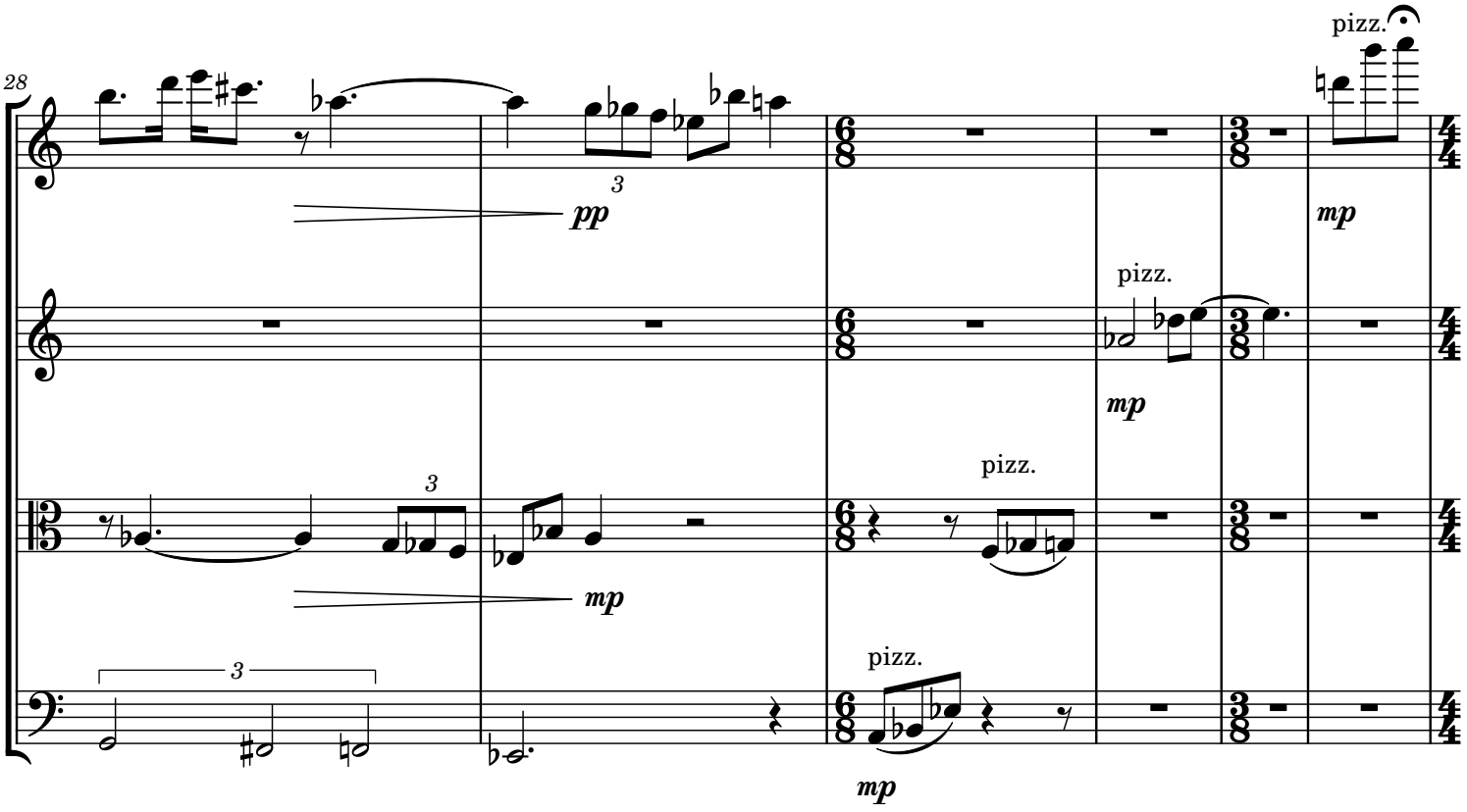
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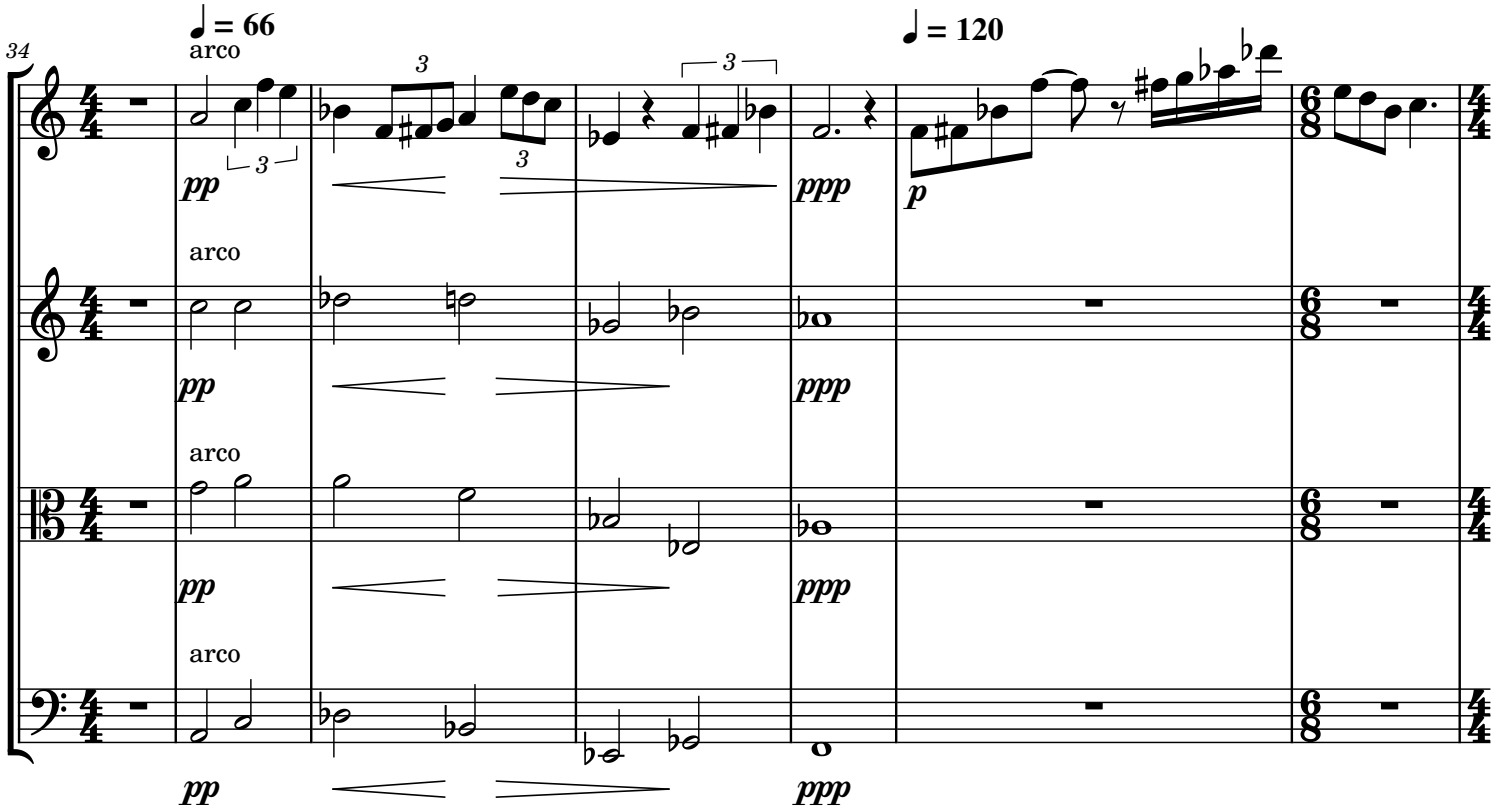
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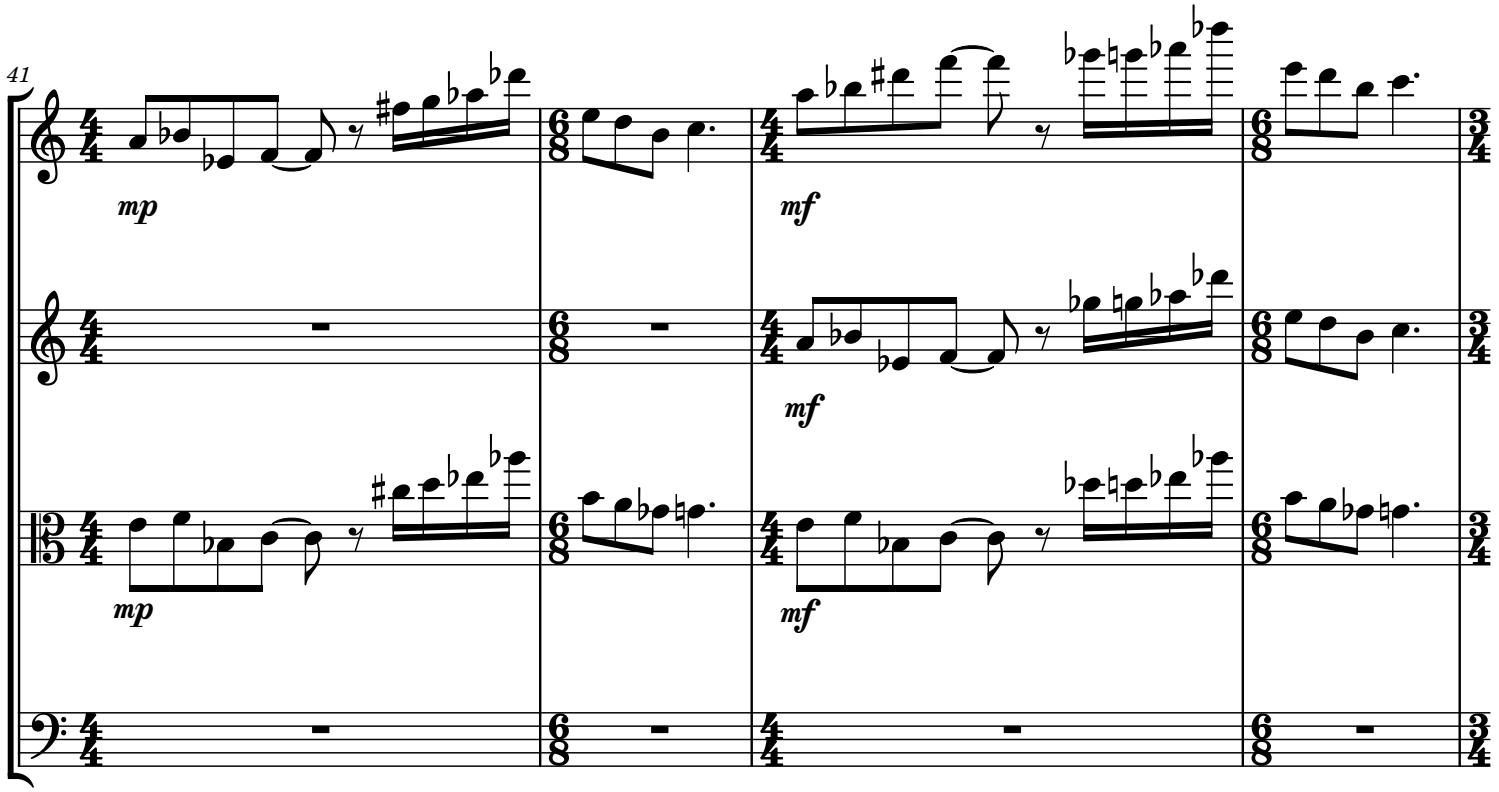
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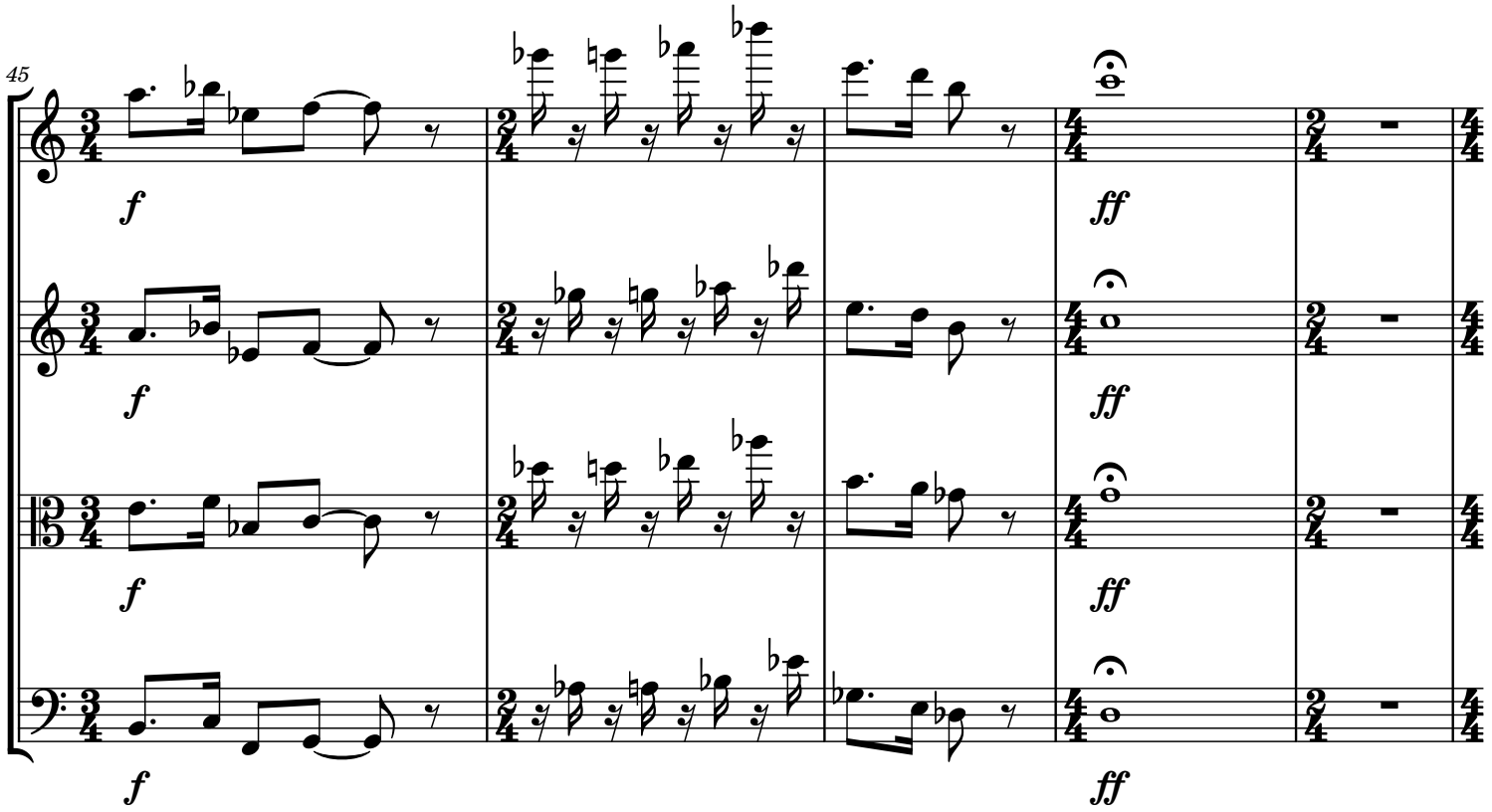
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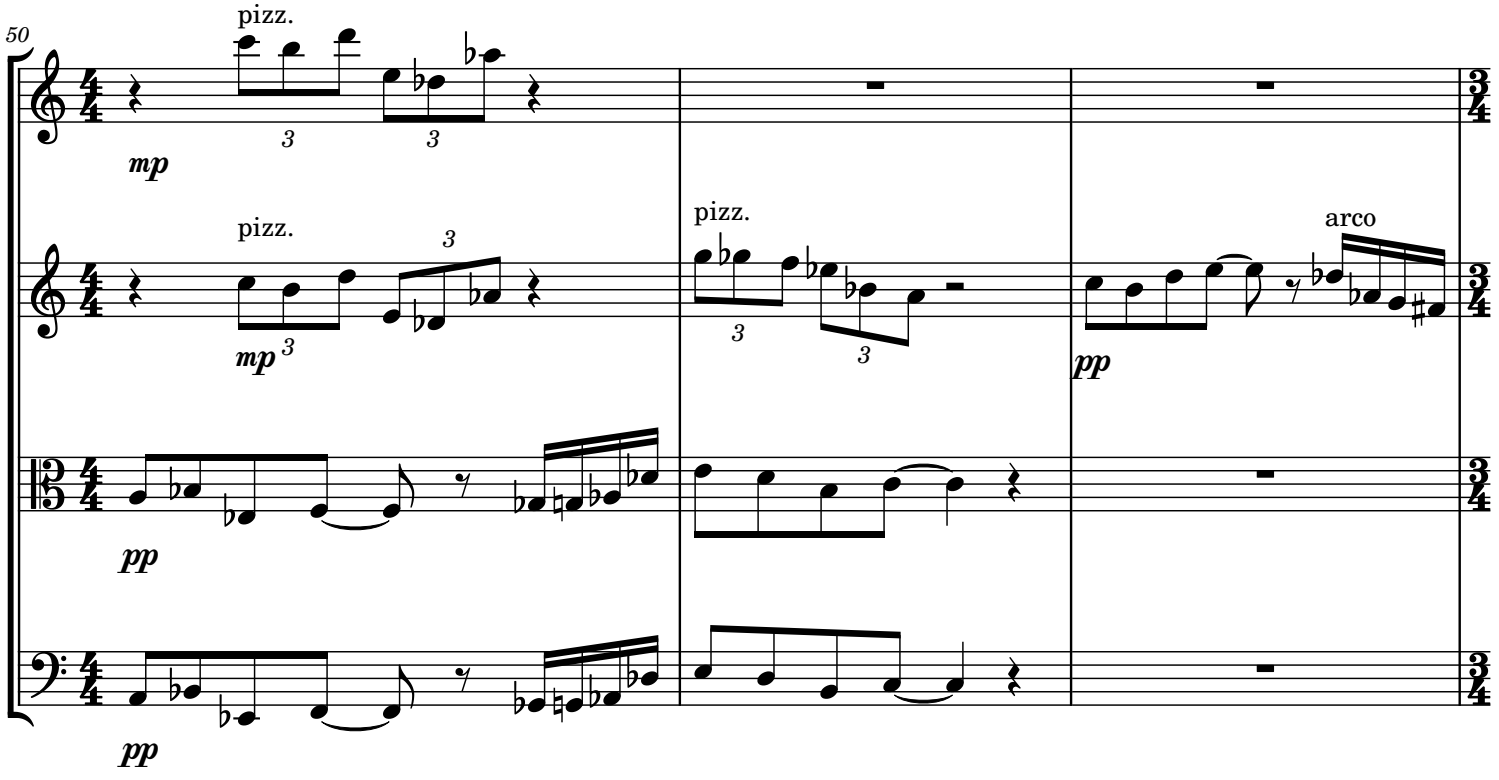
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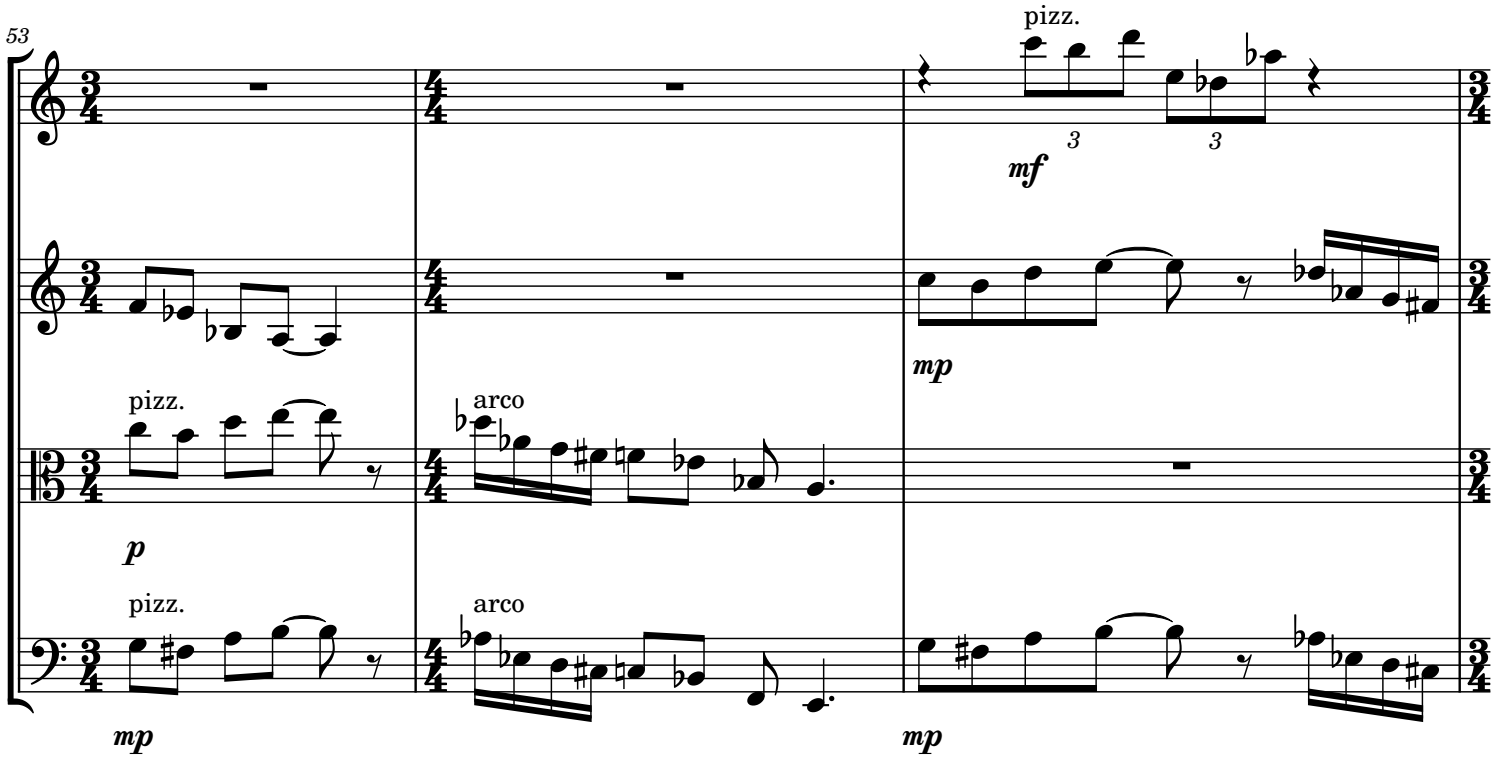
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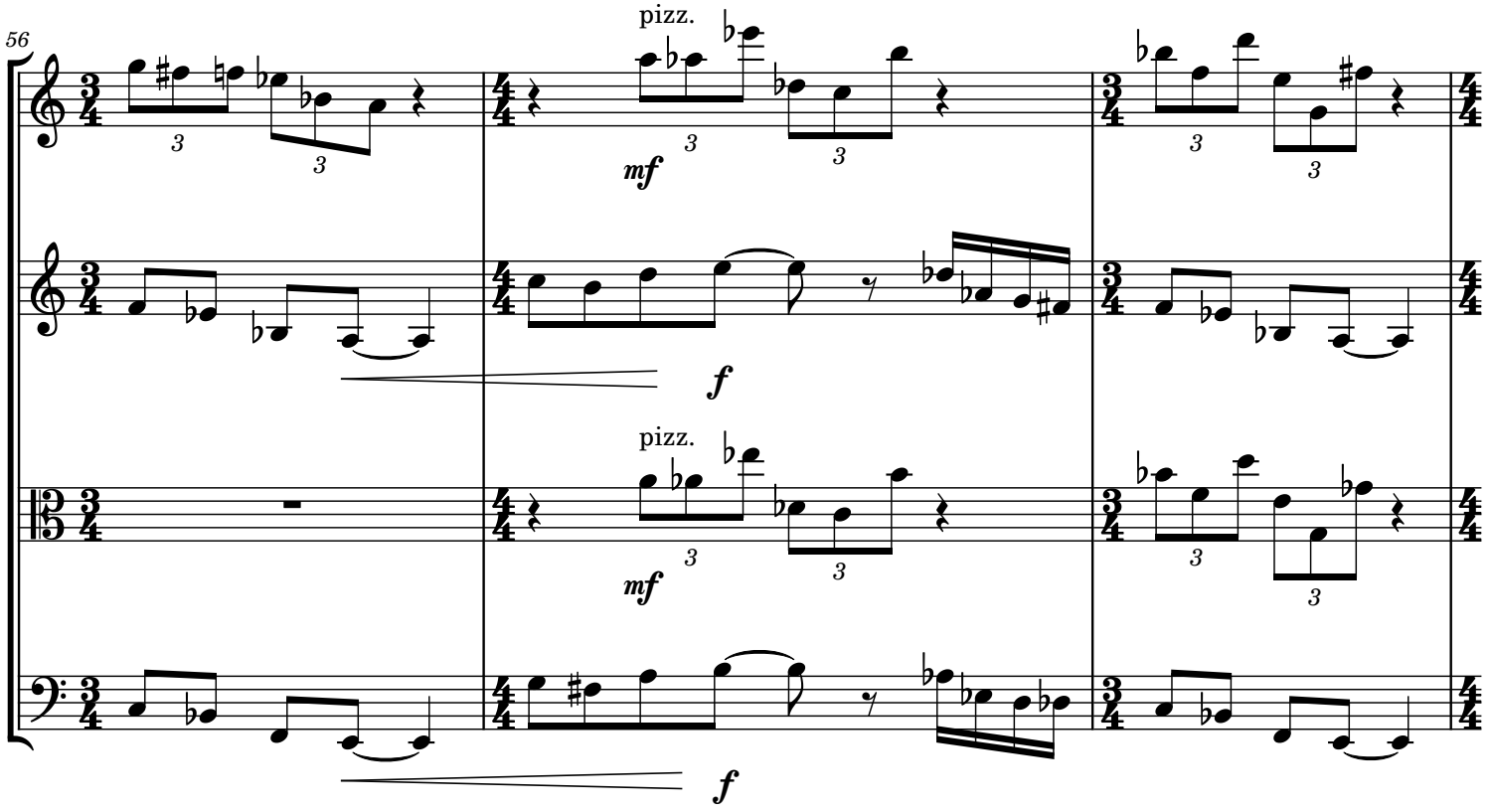
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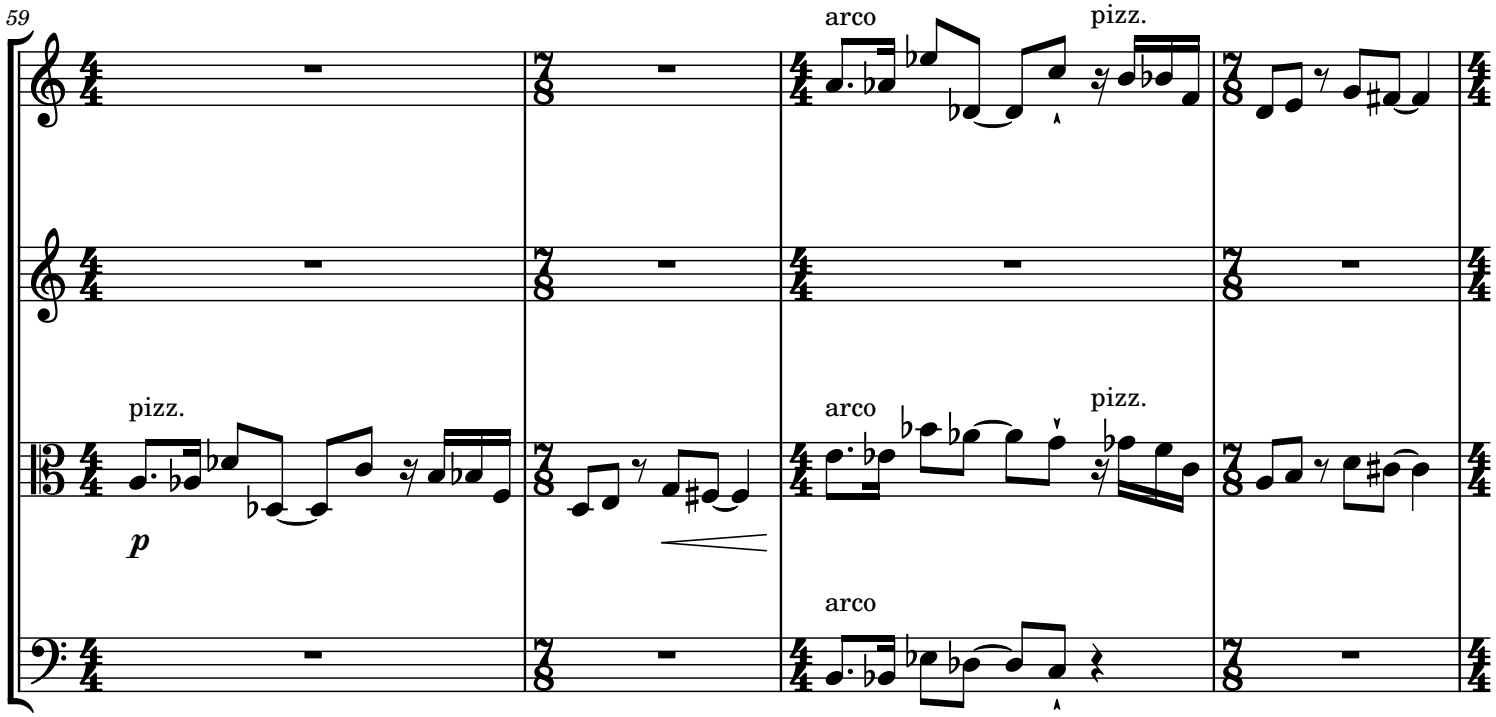
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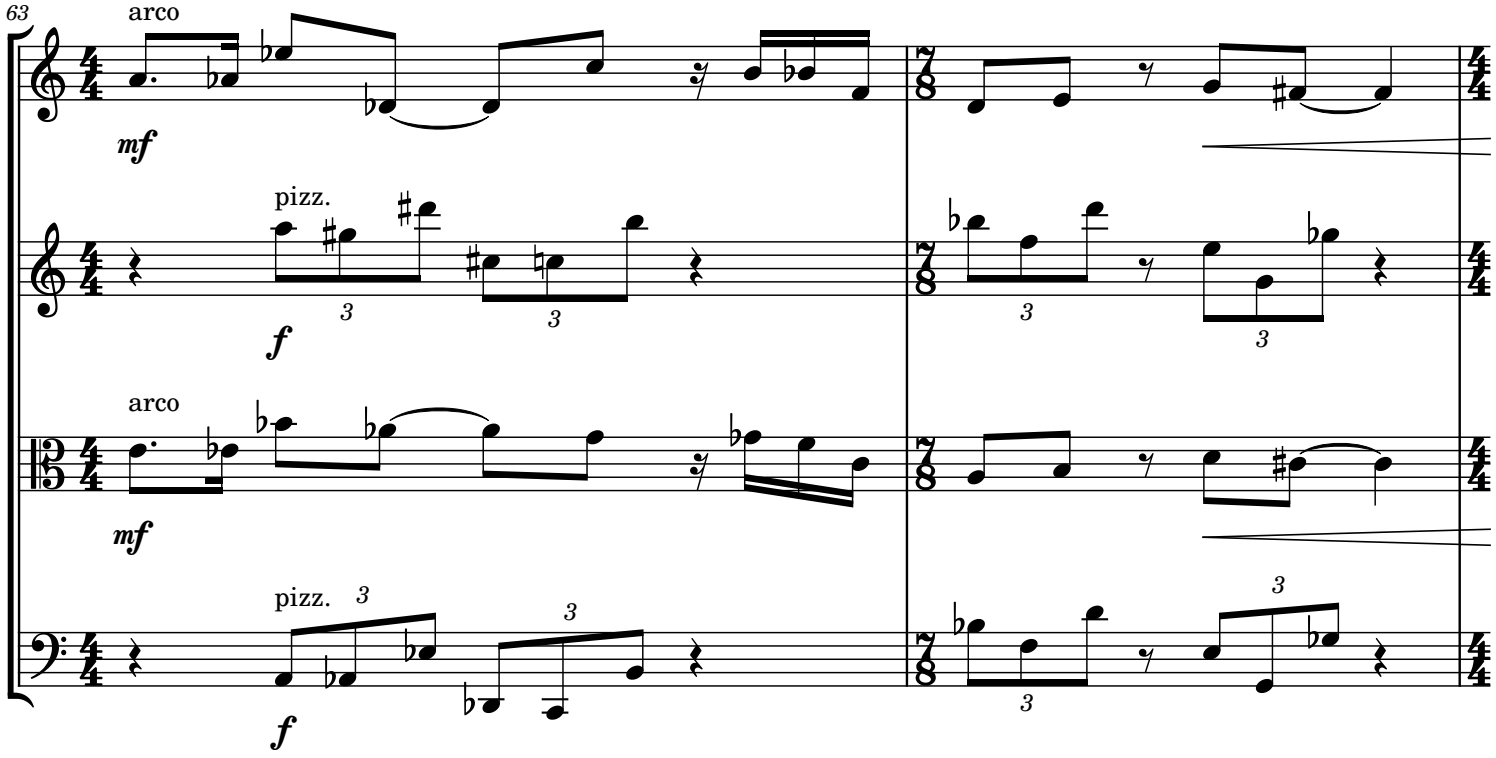
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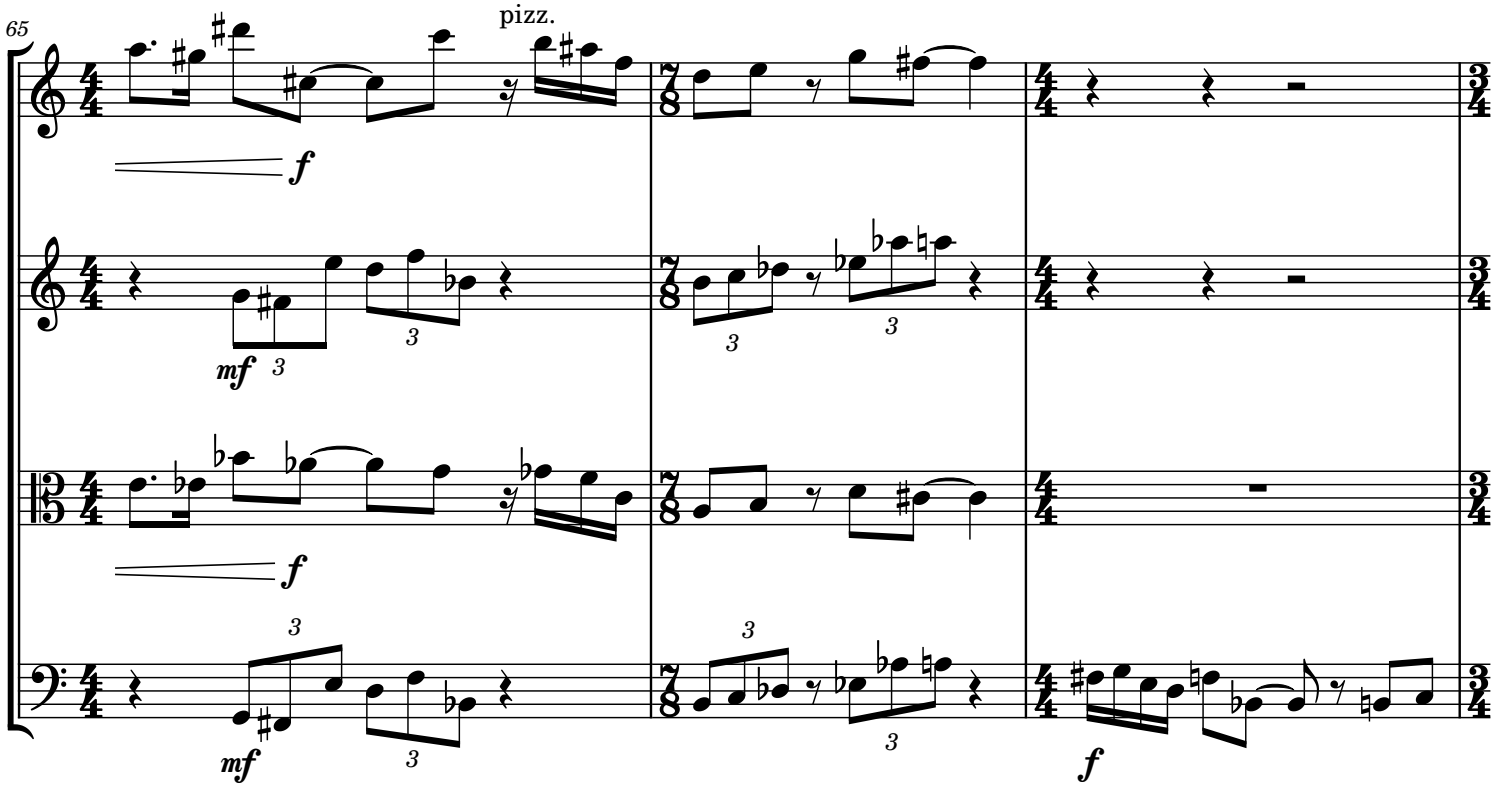
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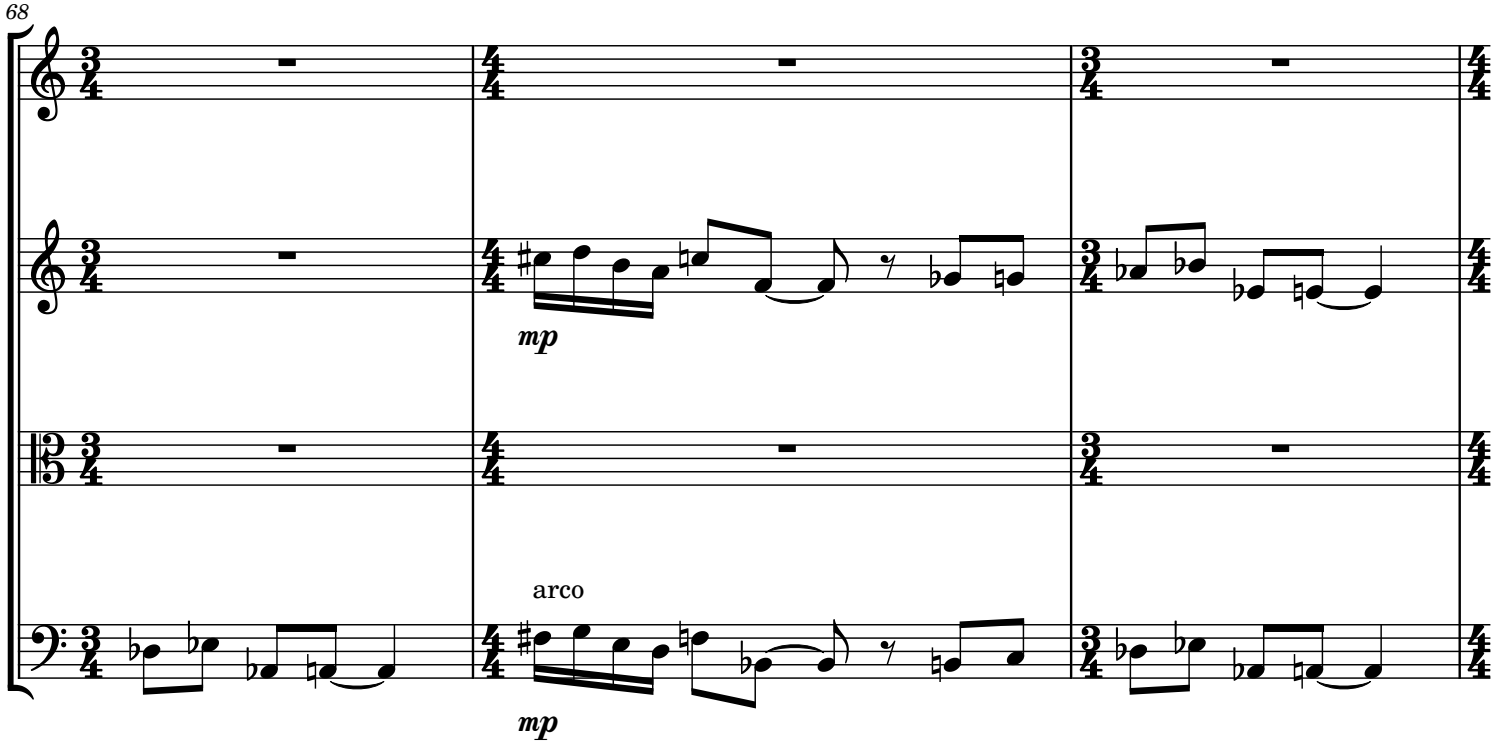
68
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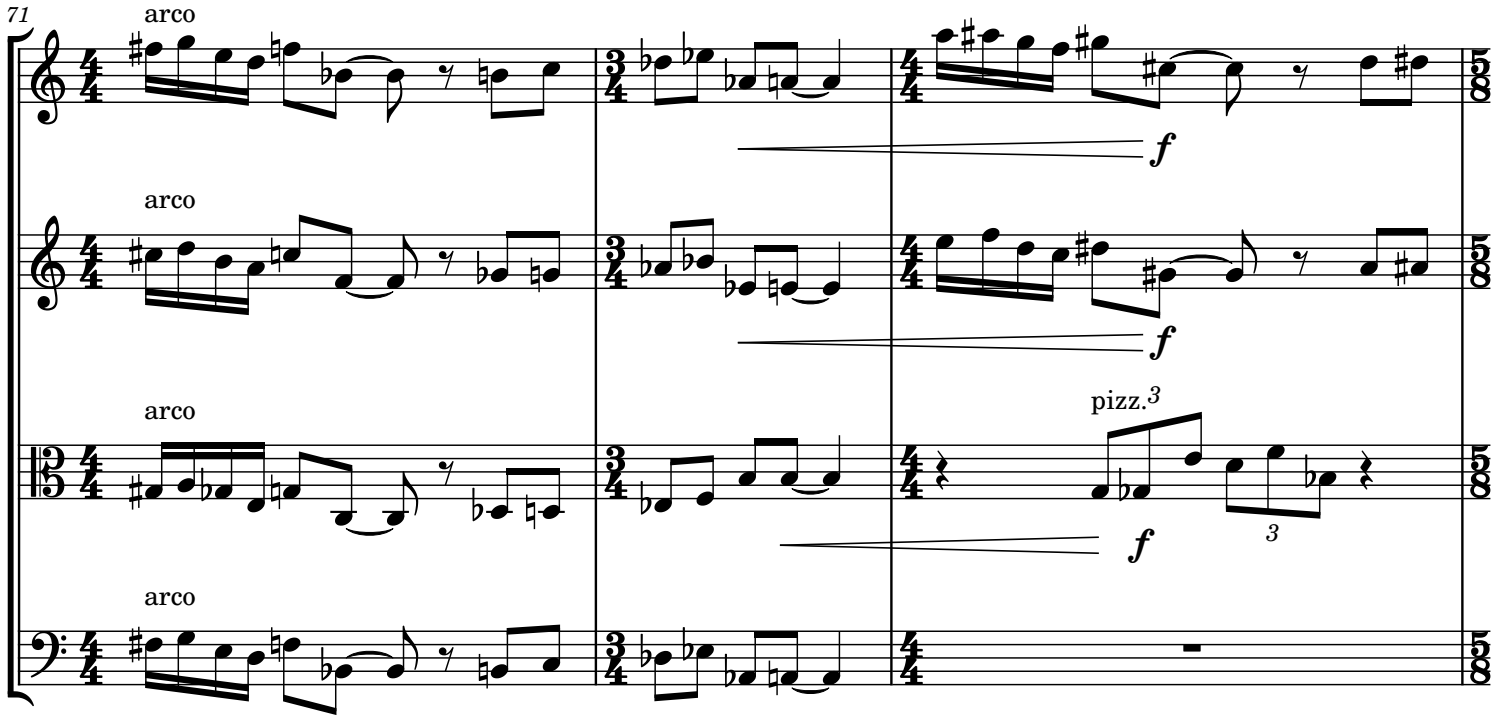
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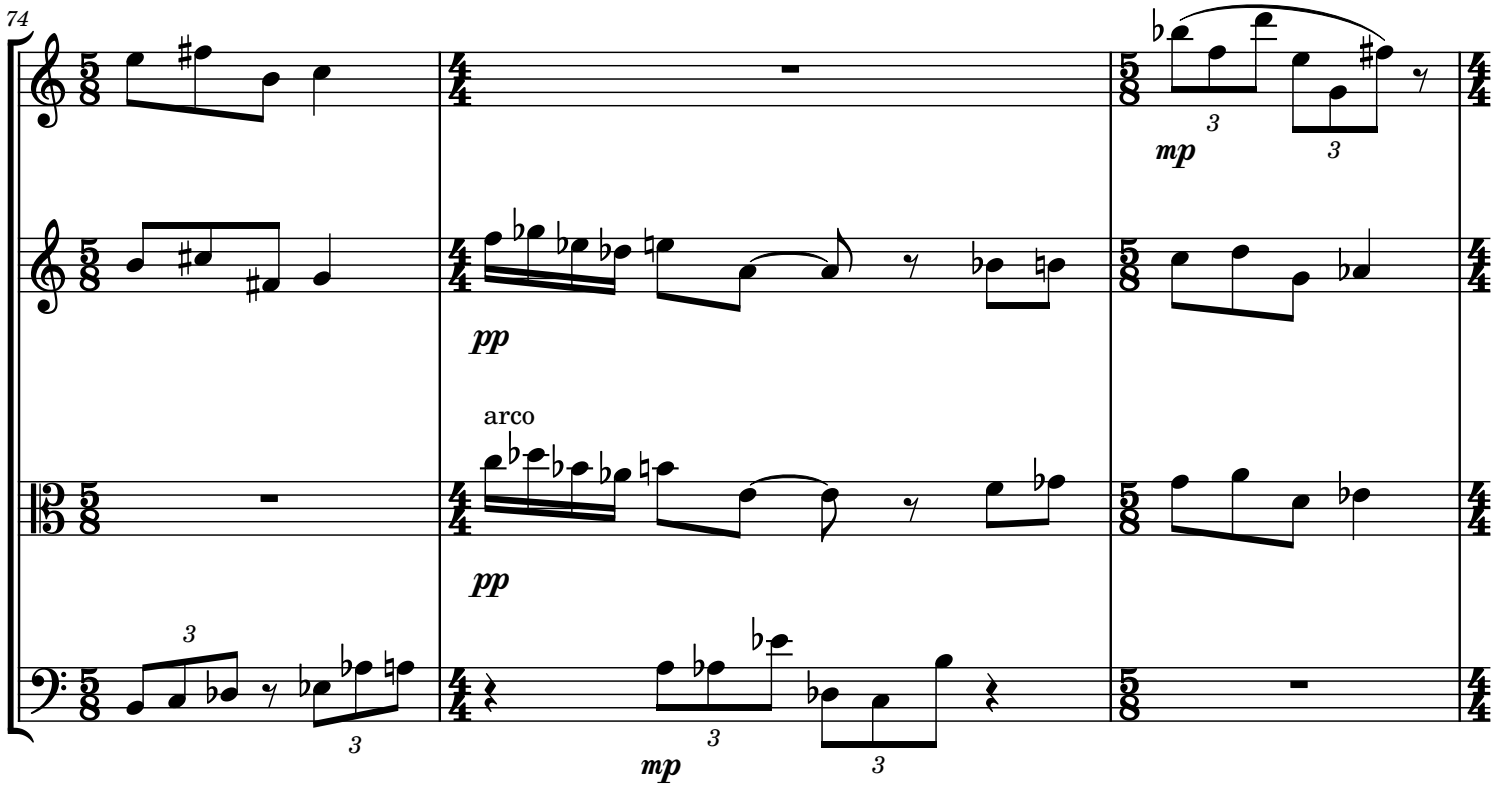
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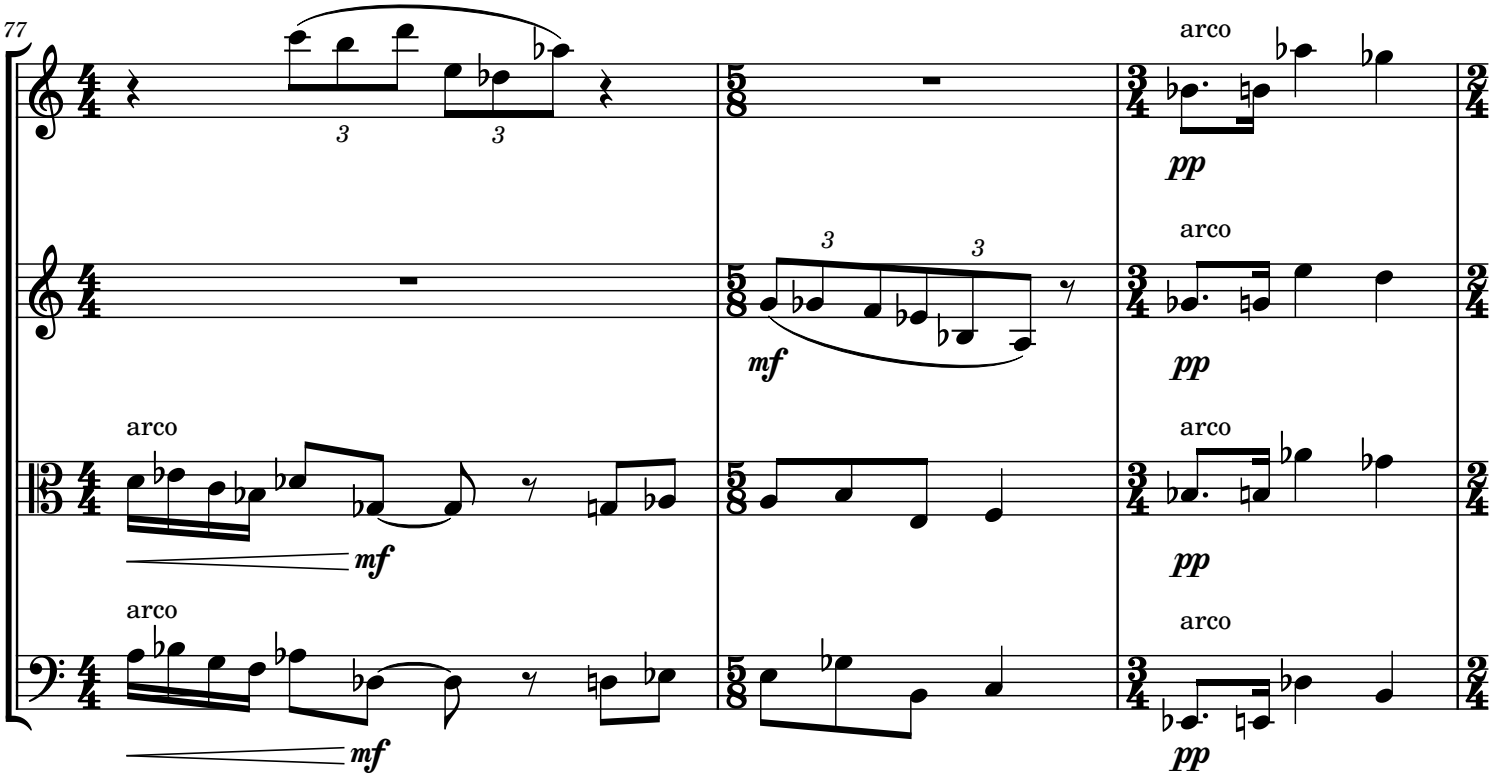
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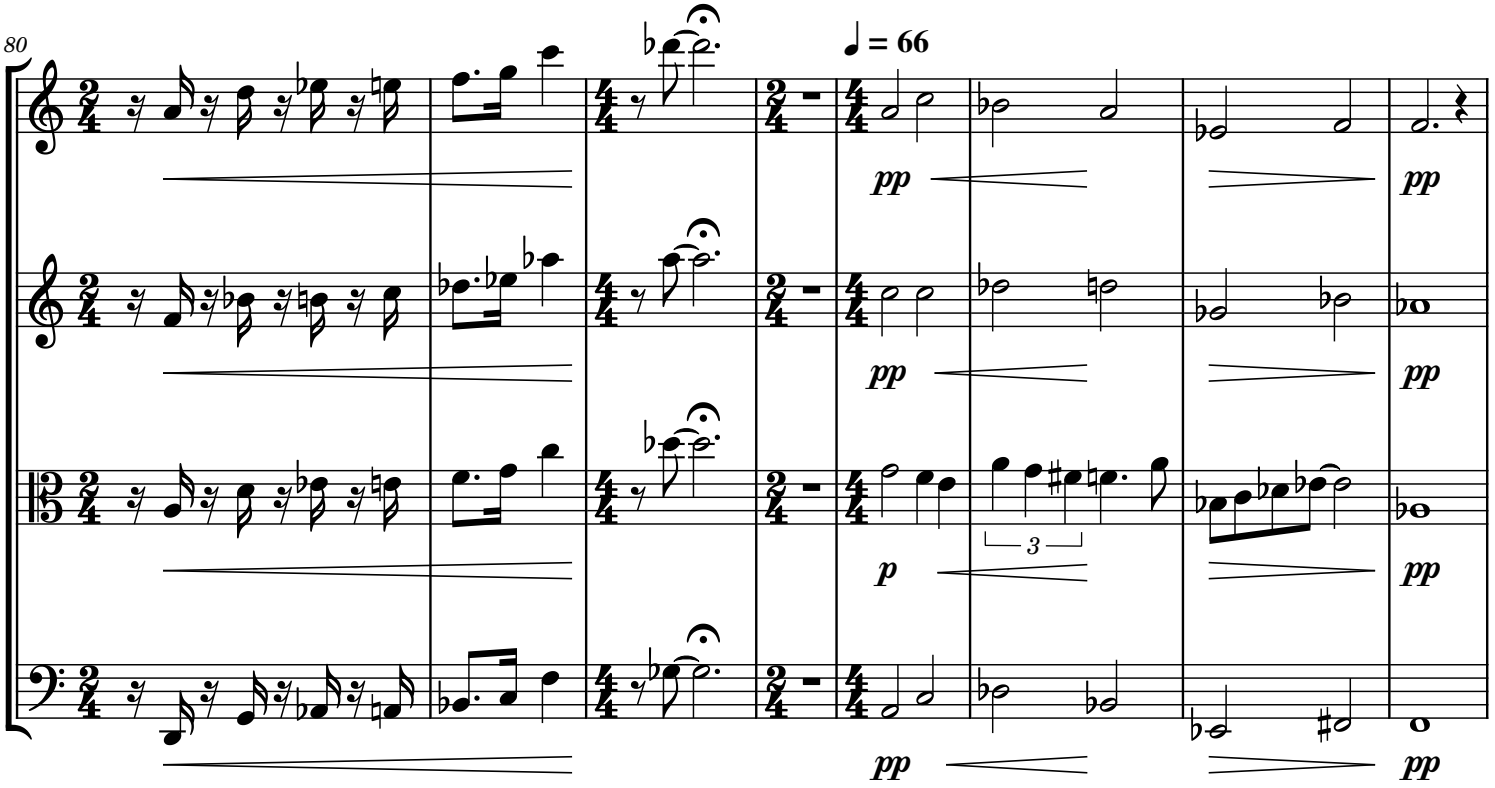
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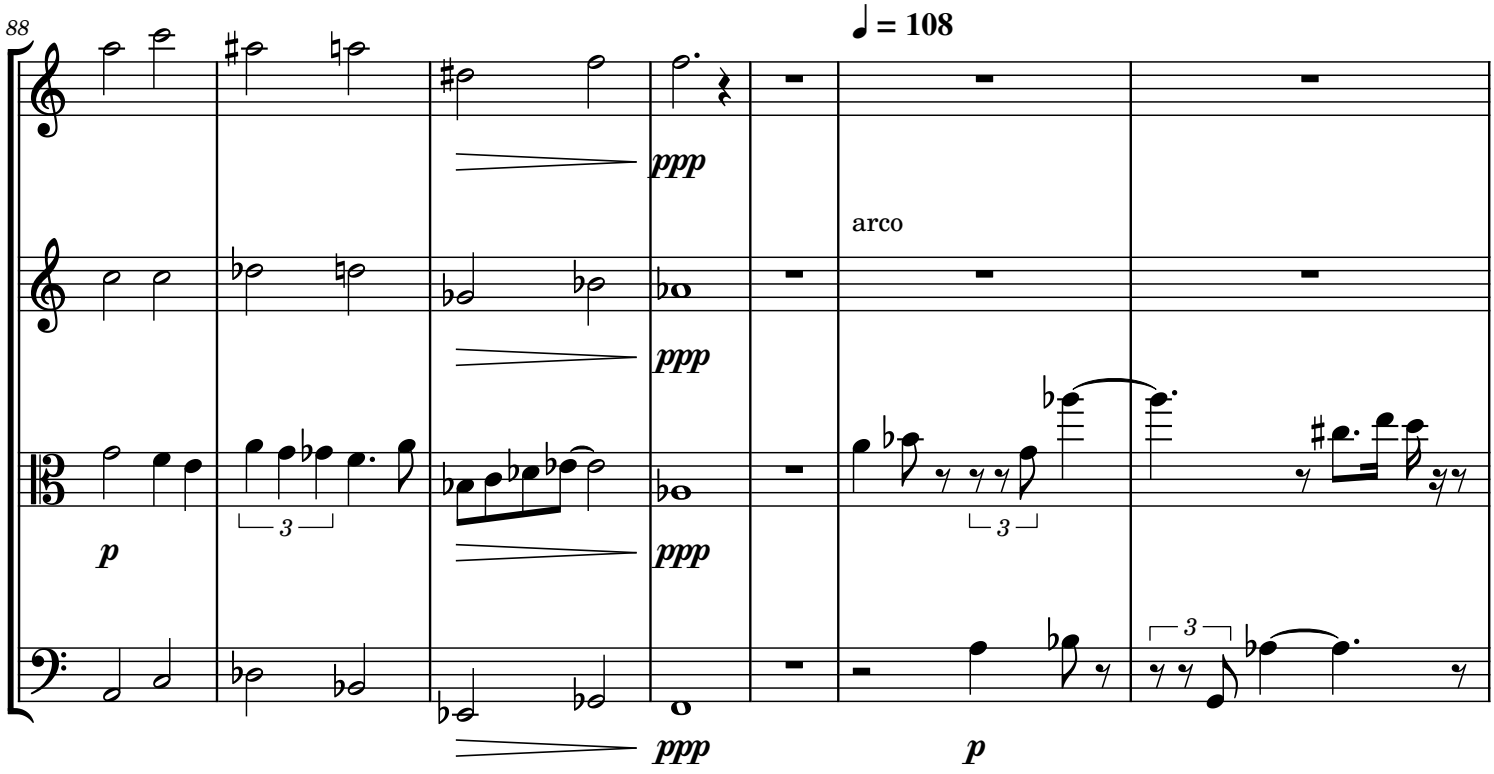
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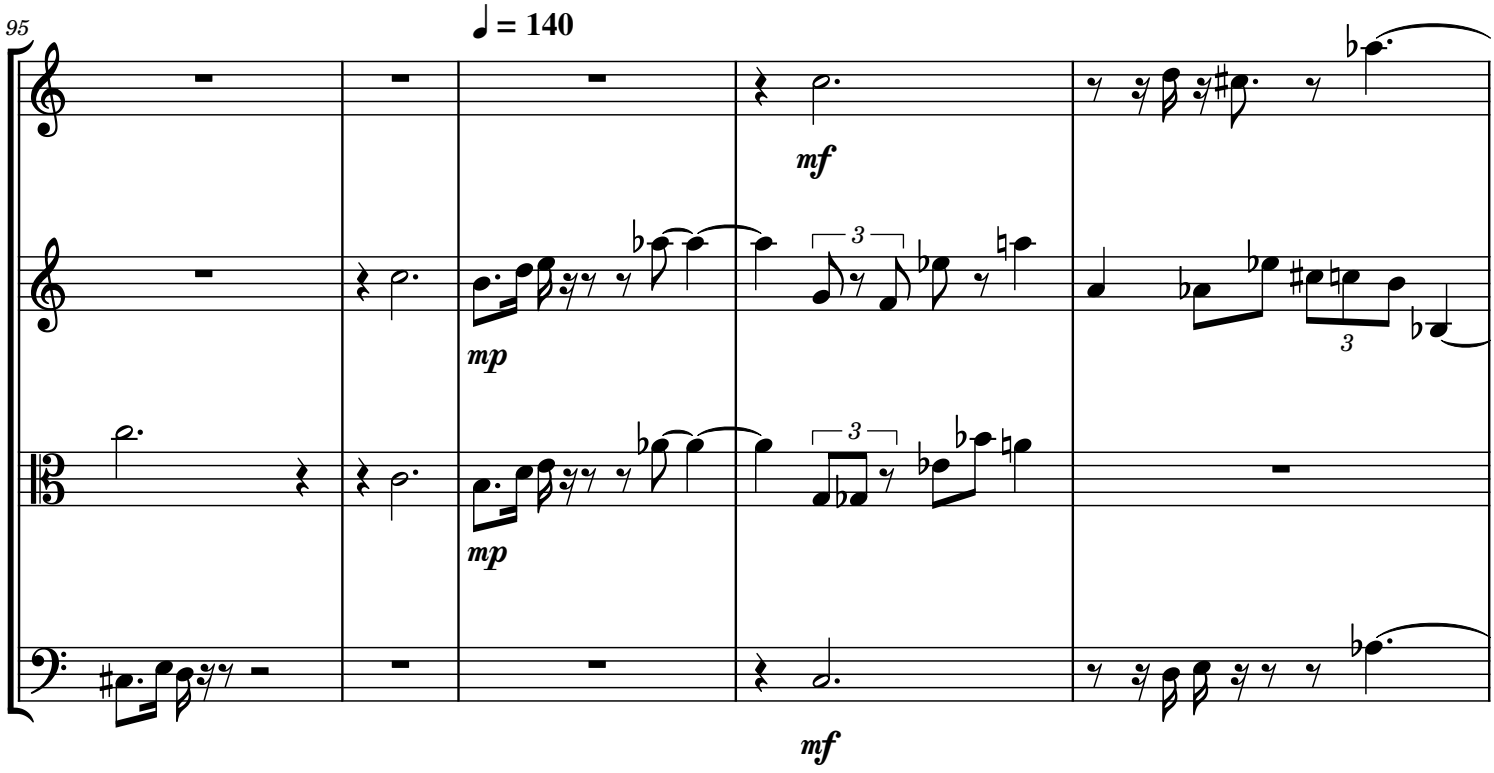
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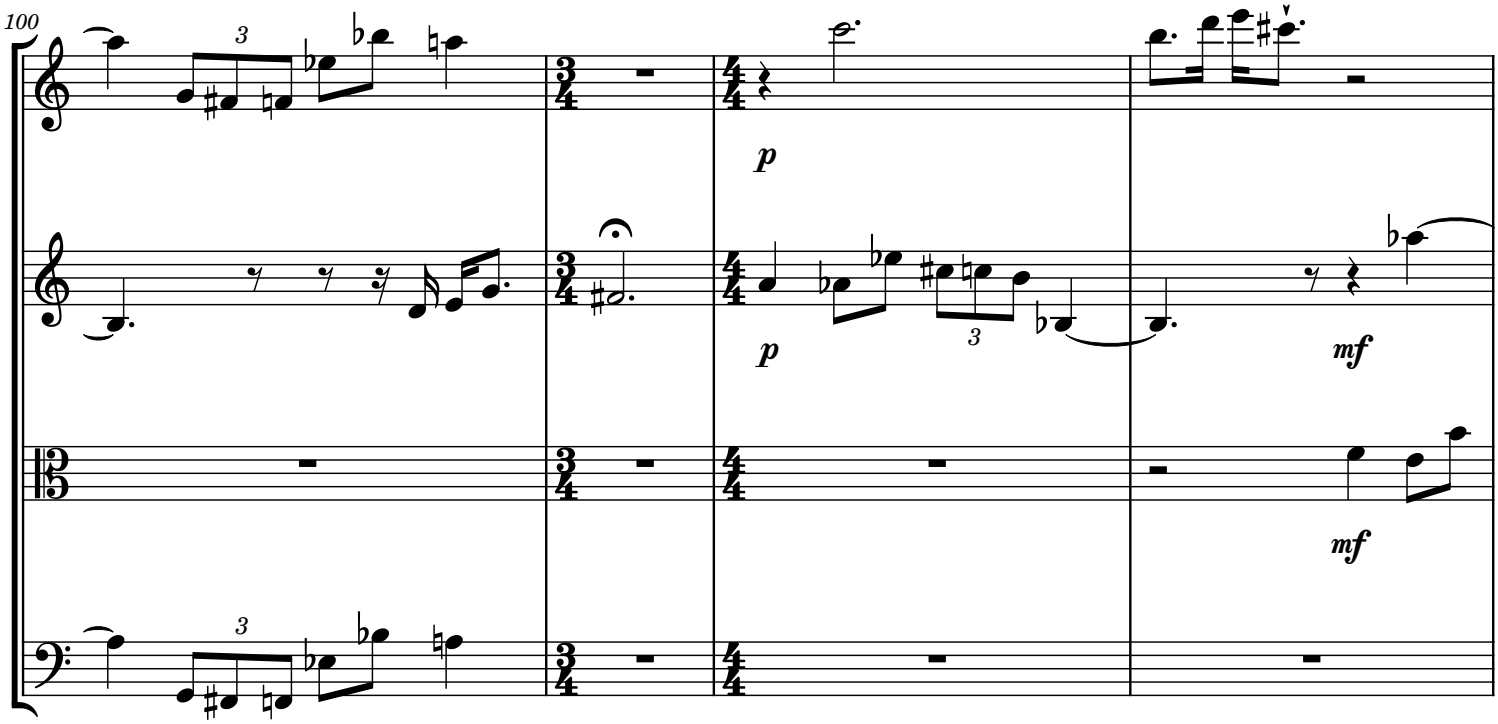
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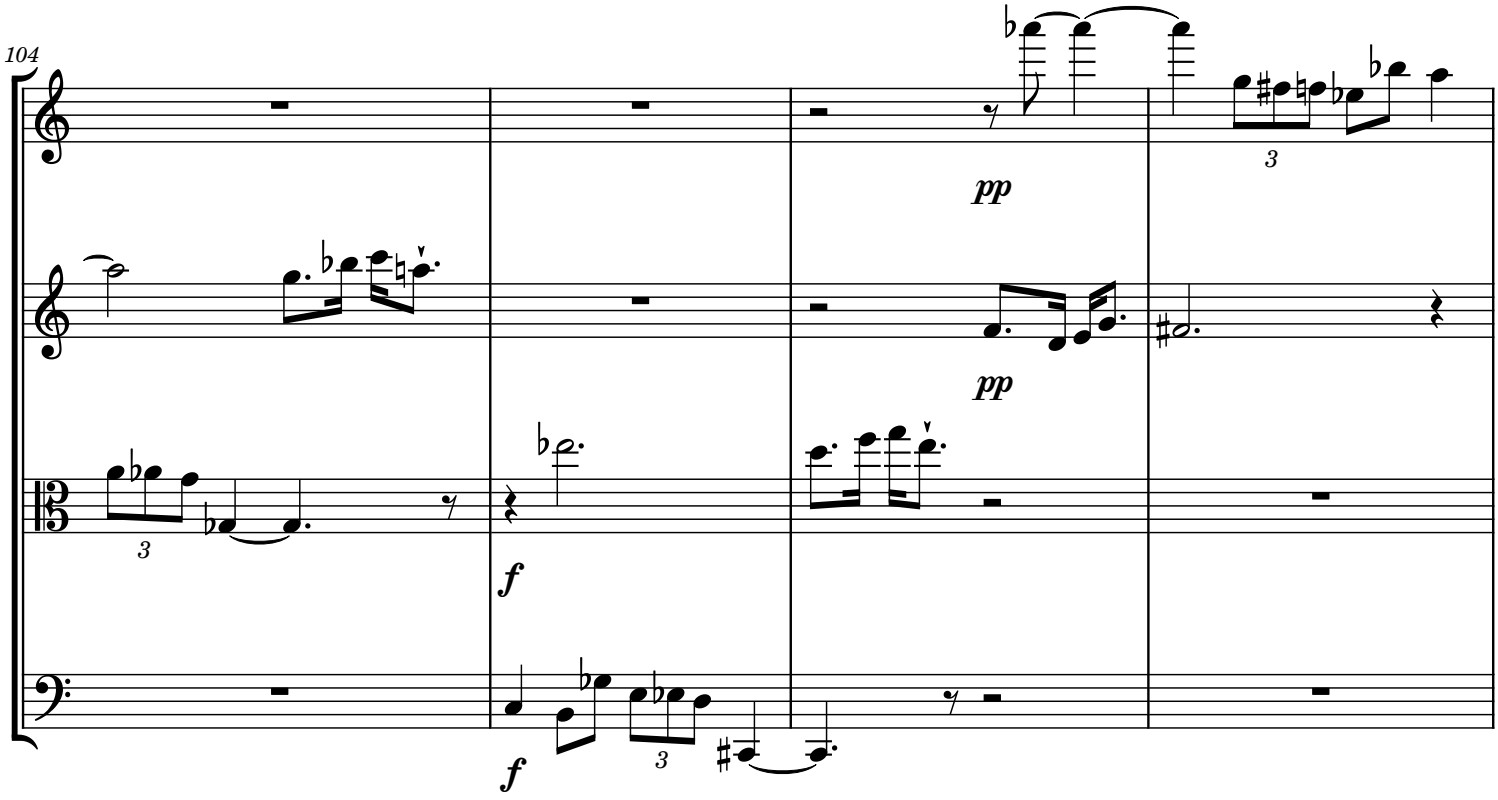
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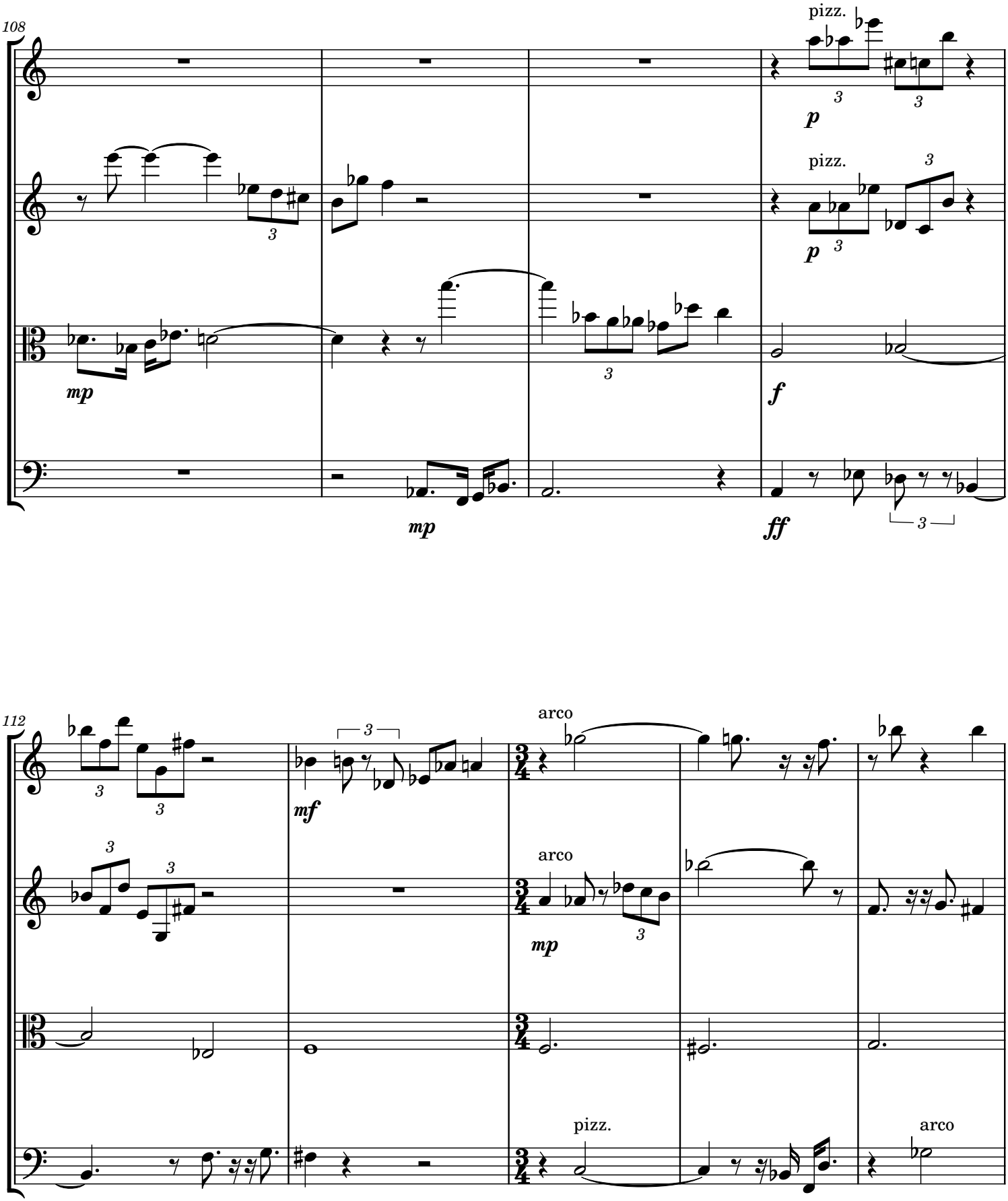
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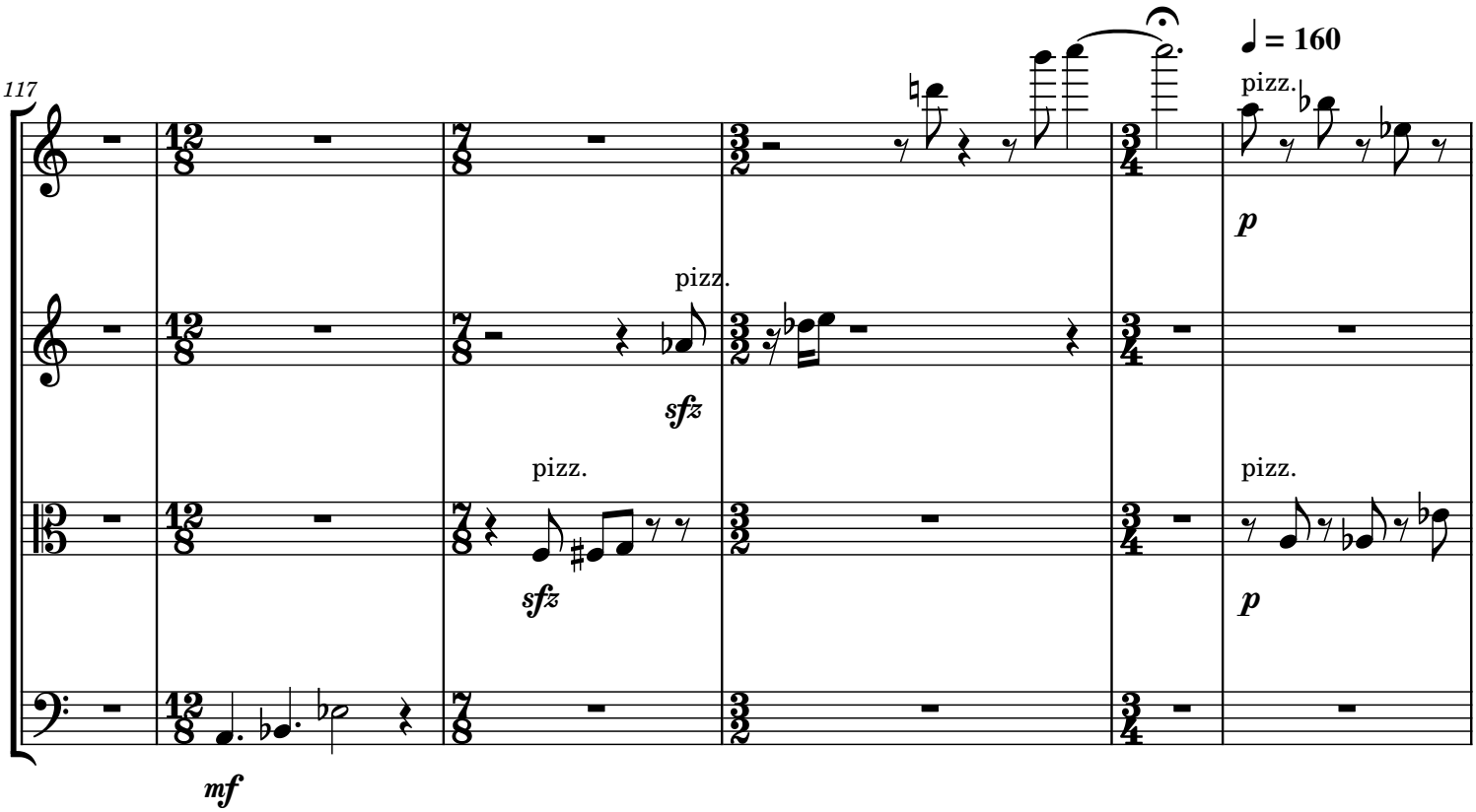
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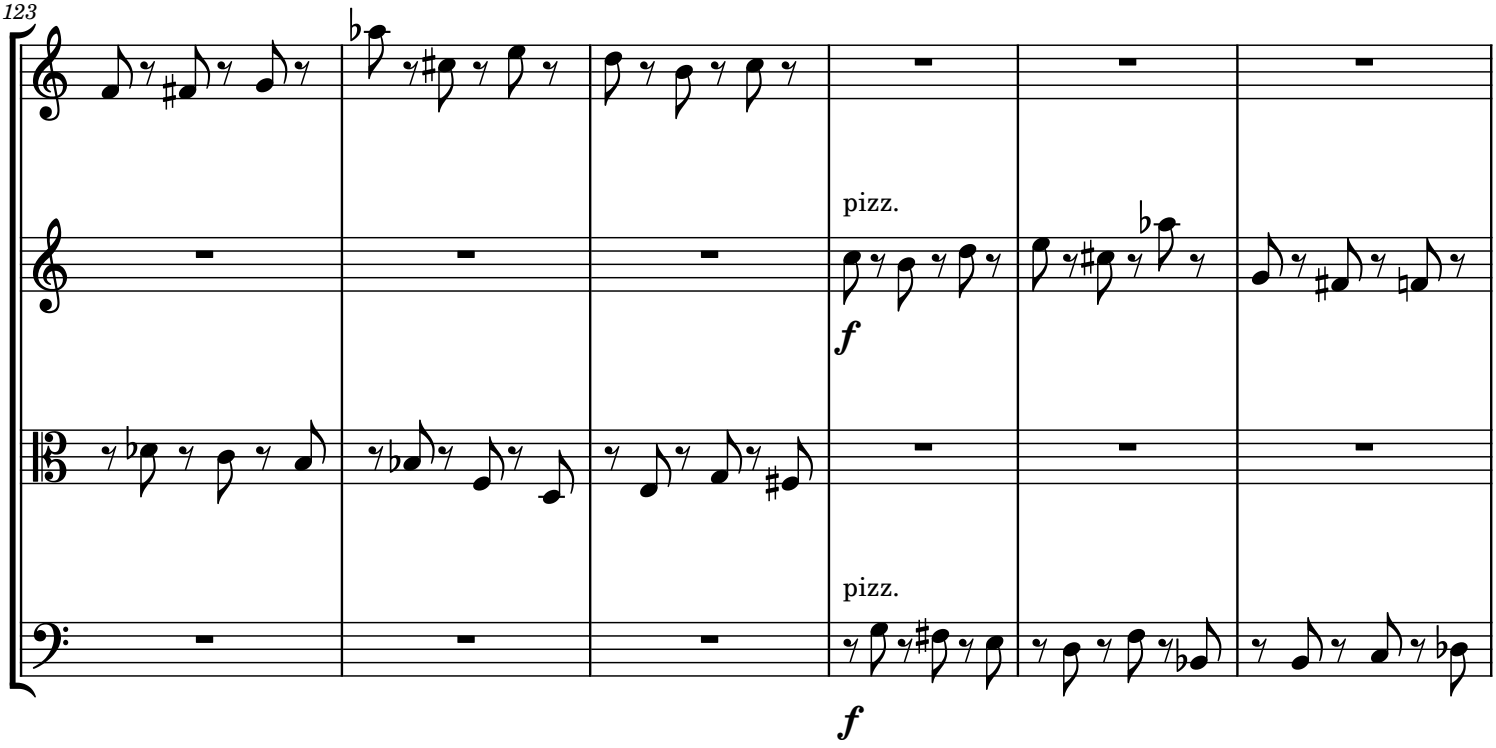
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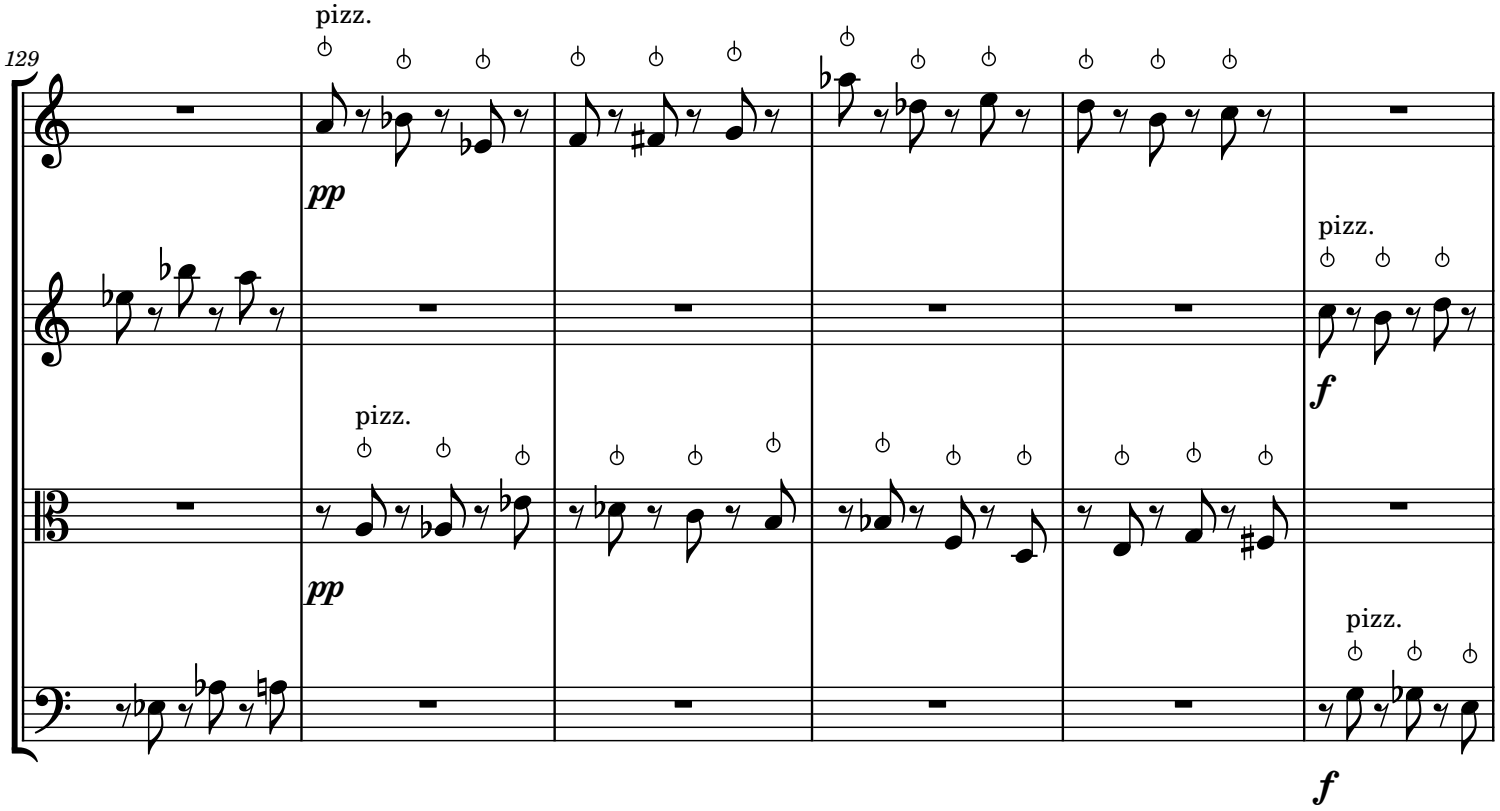
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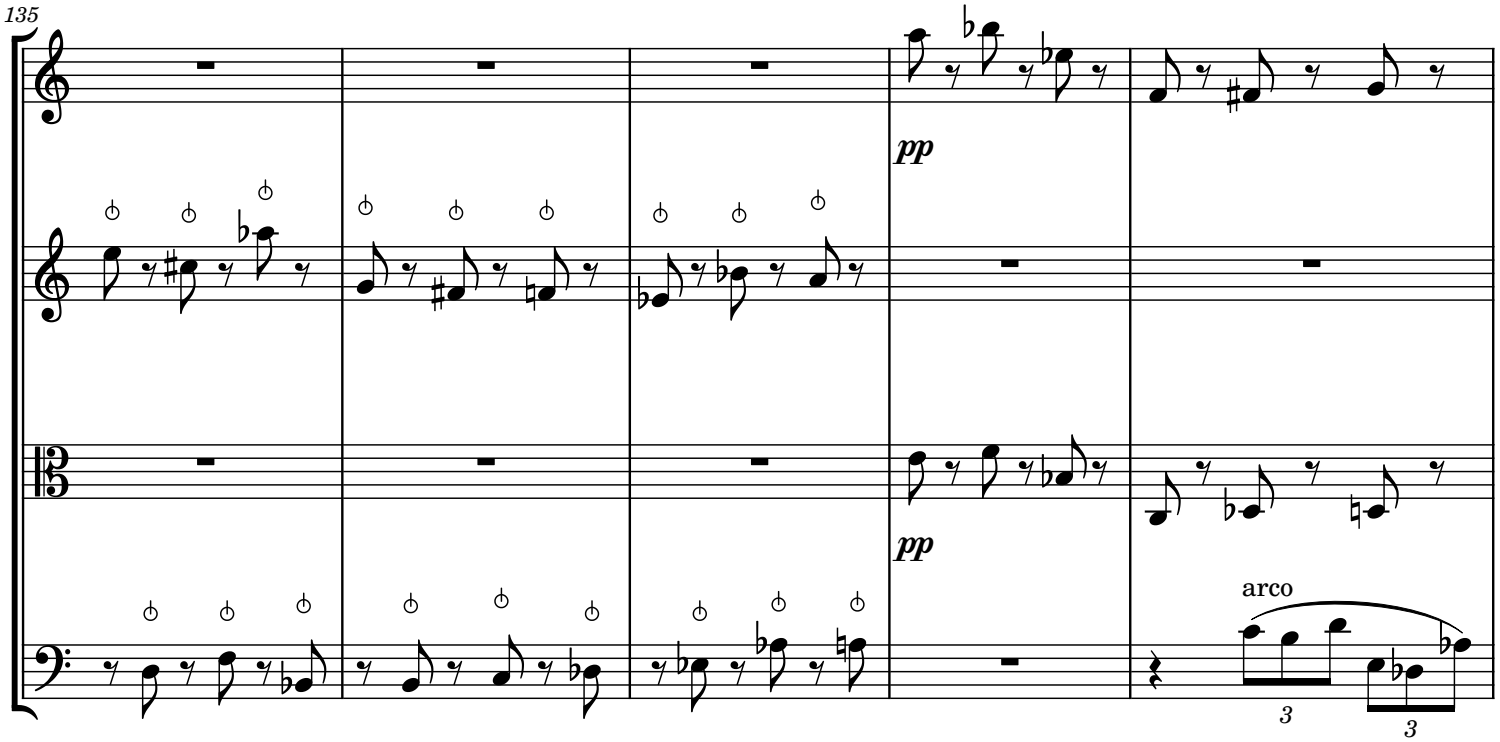
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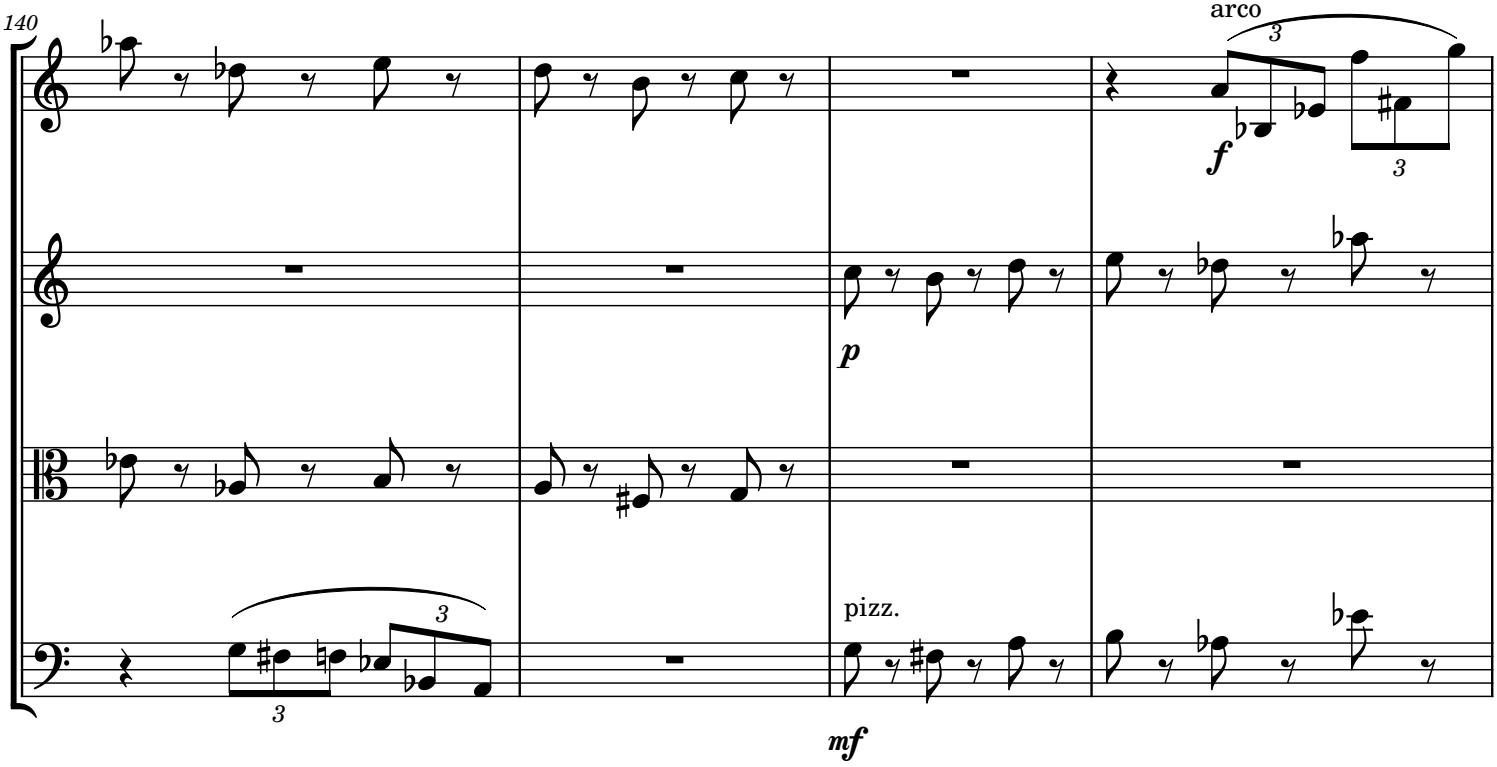
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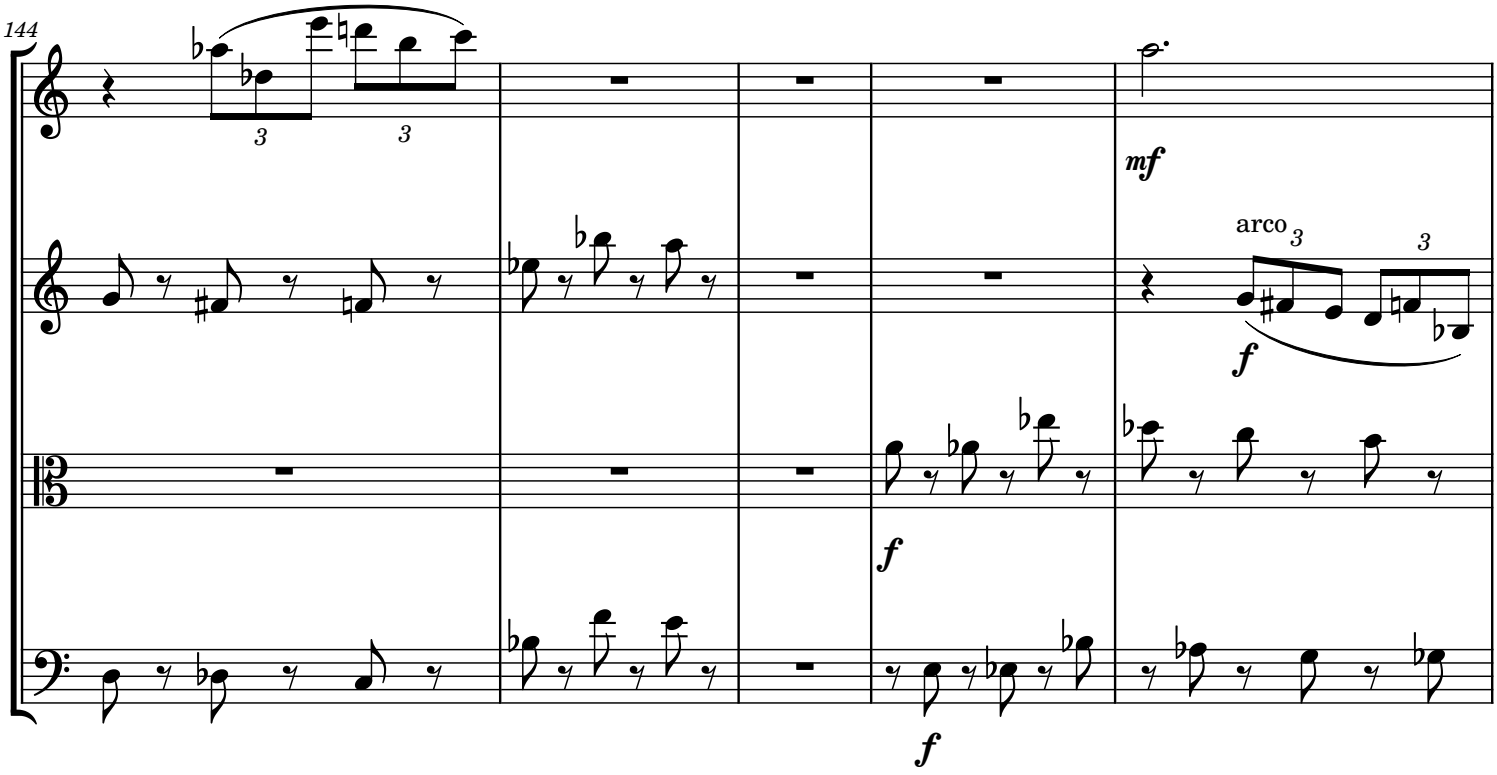
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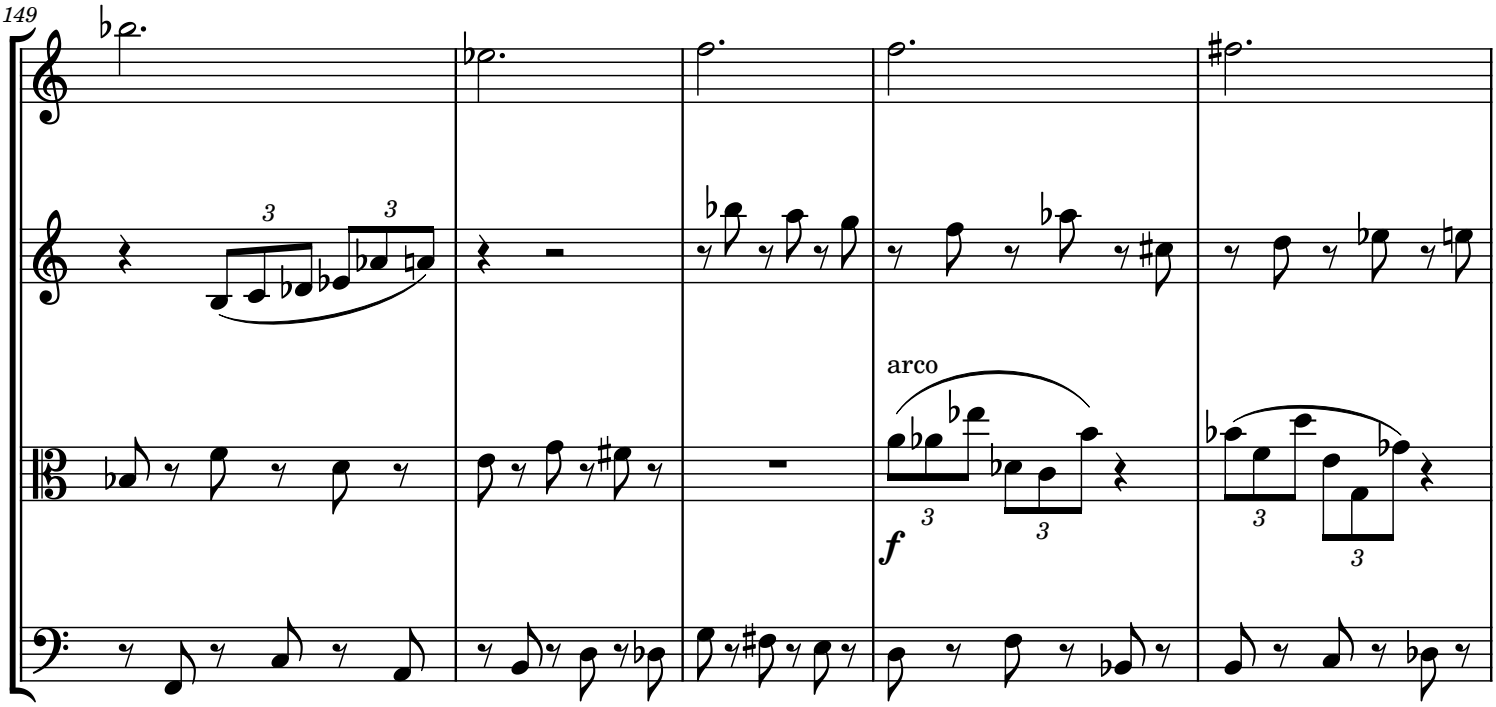
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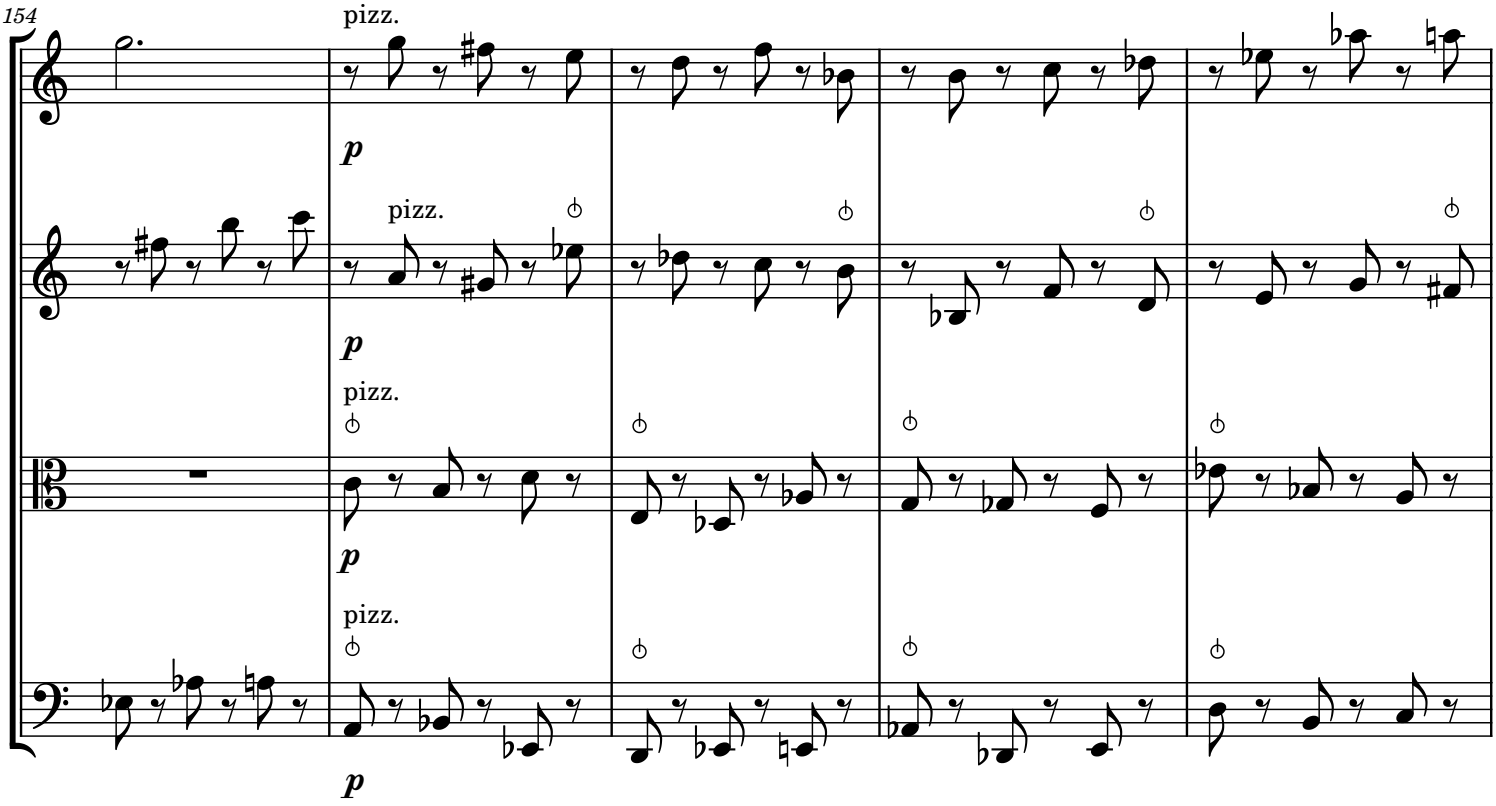
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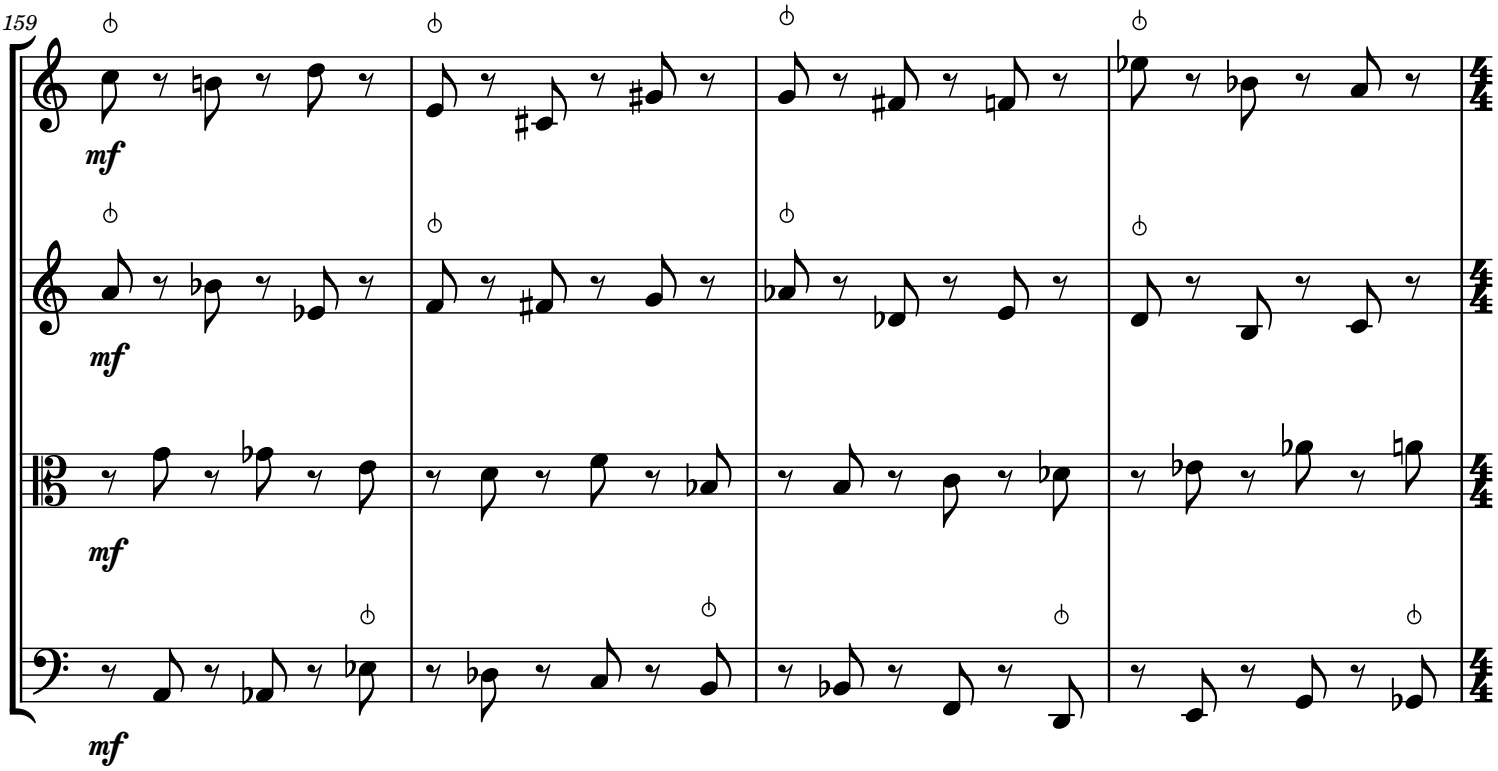
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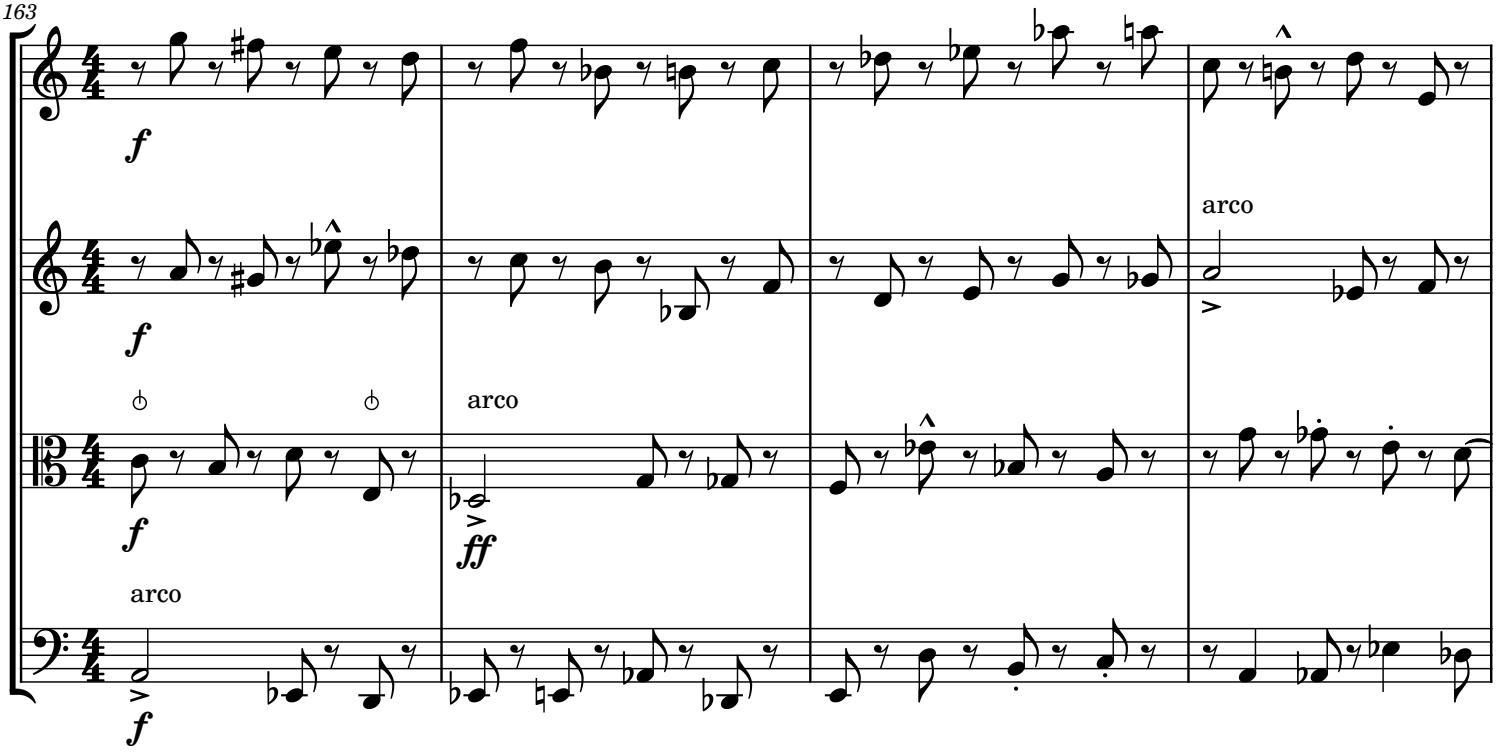
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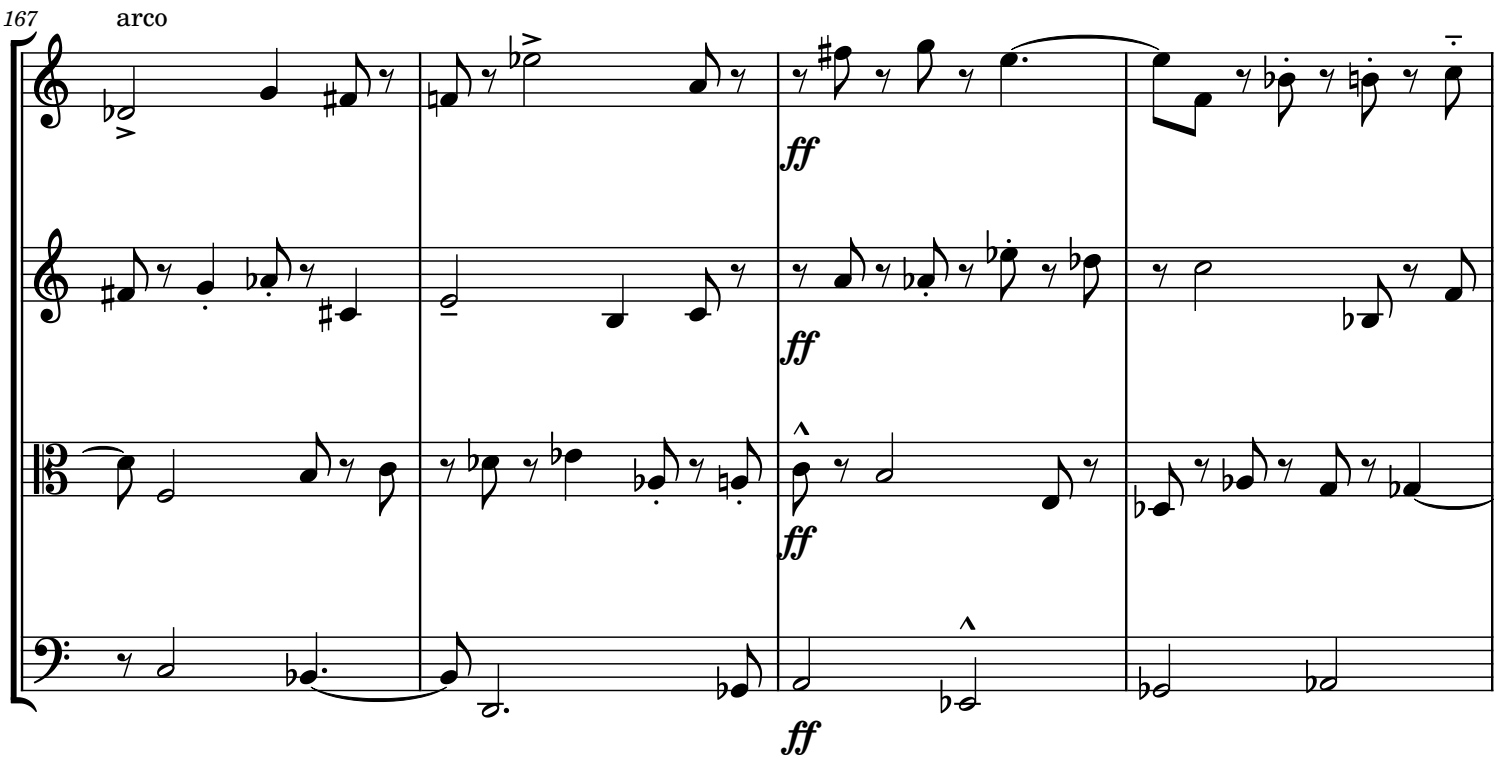
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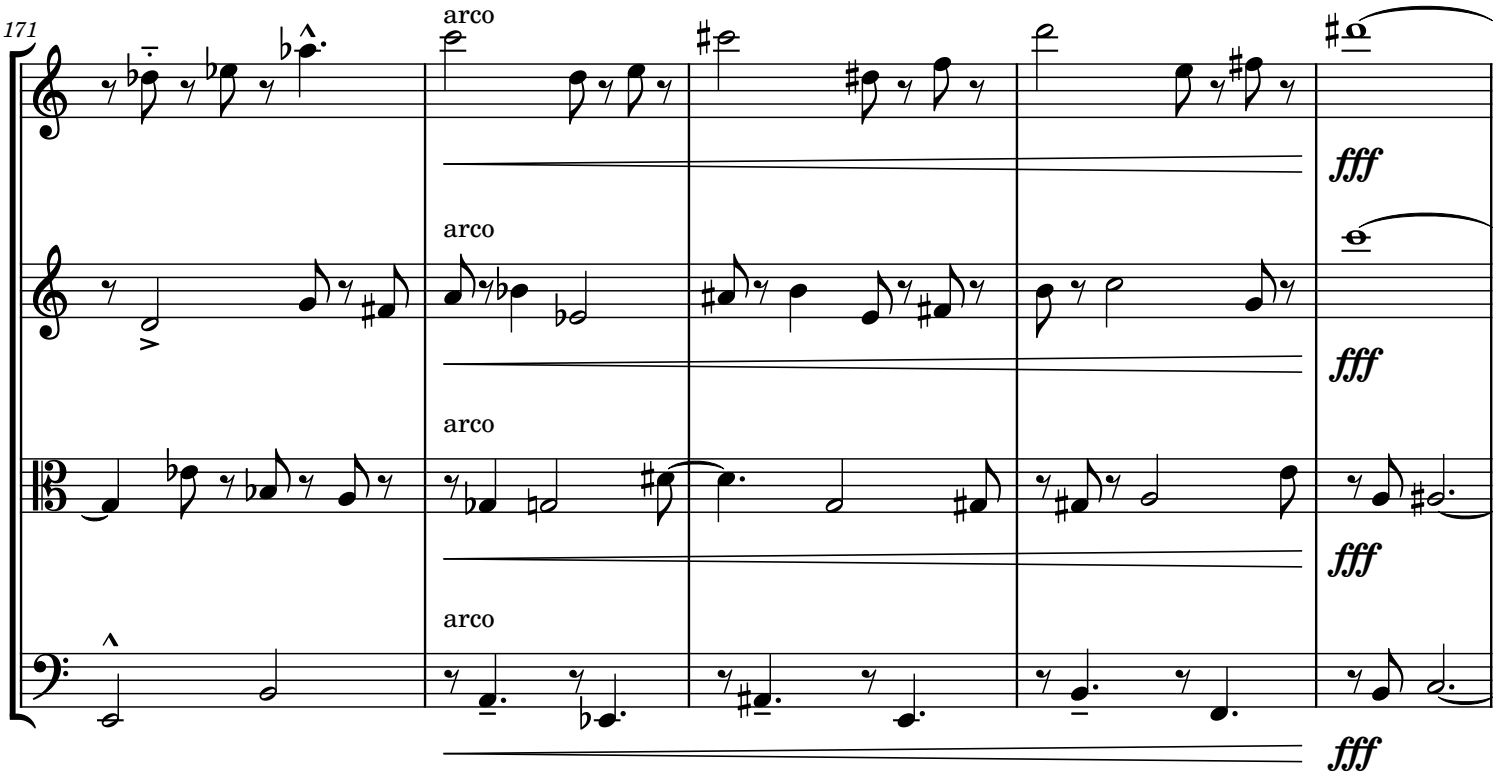
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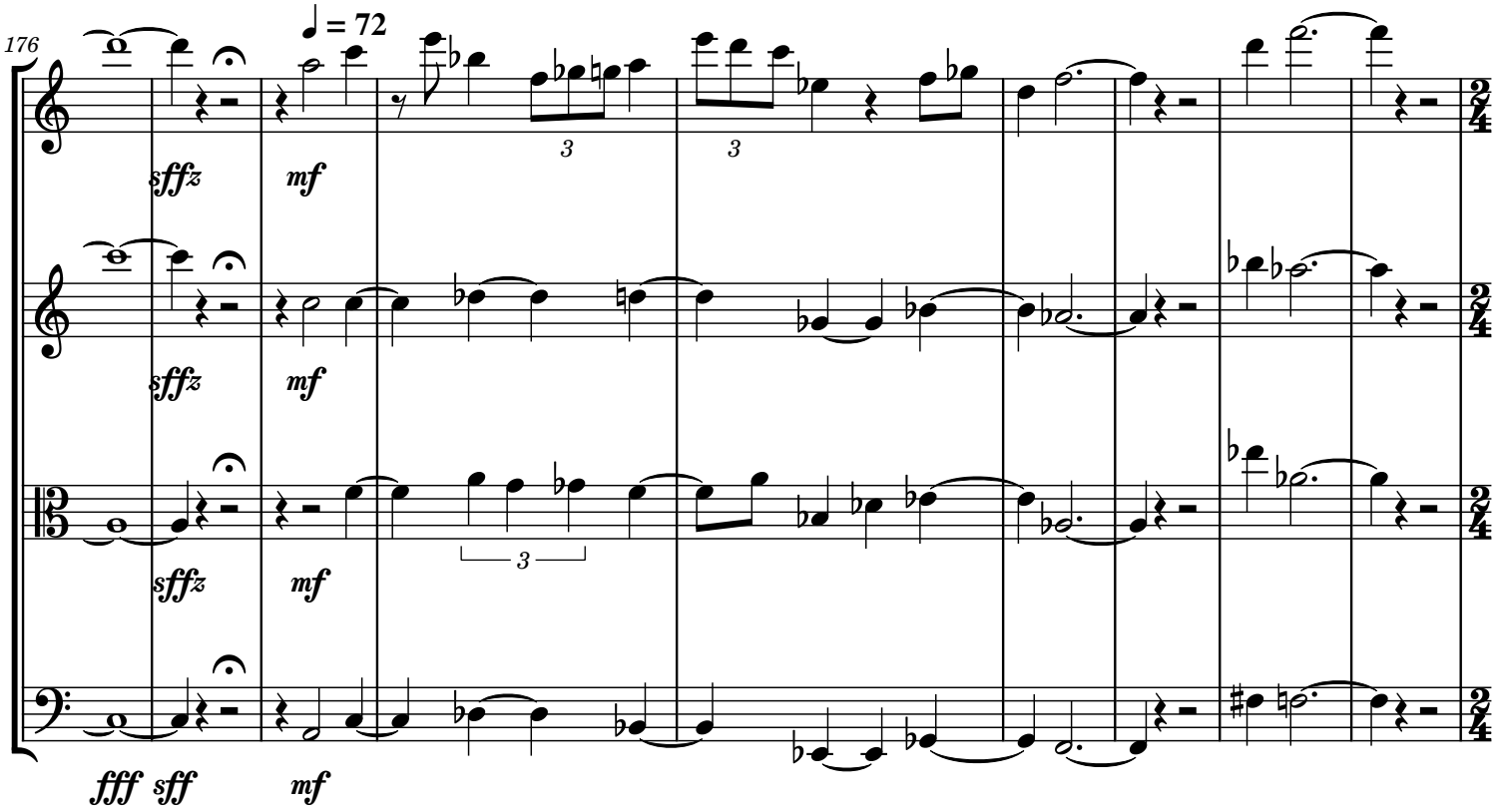
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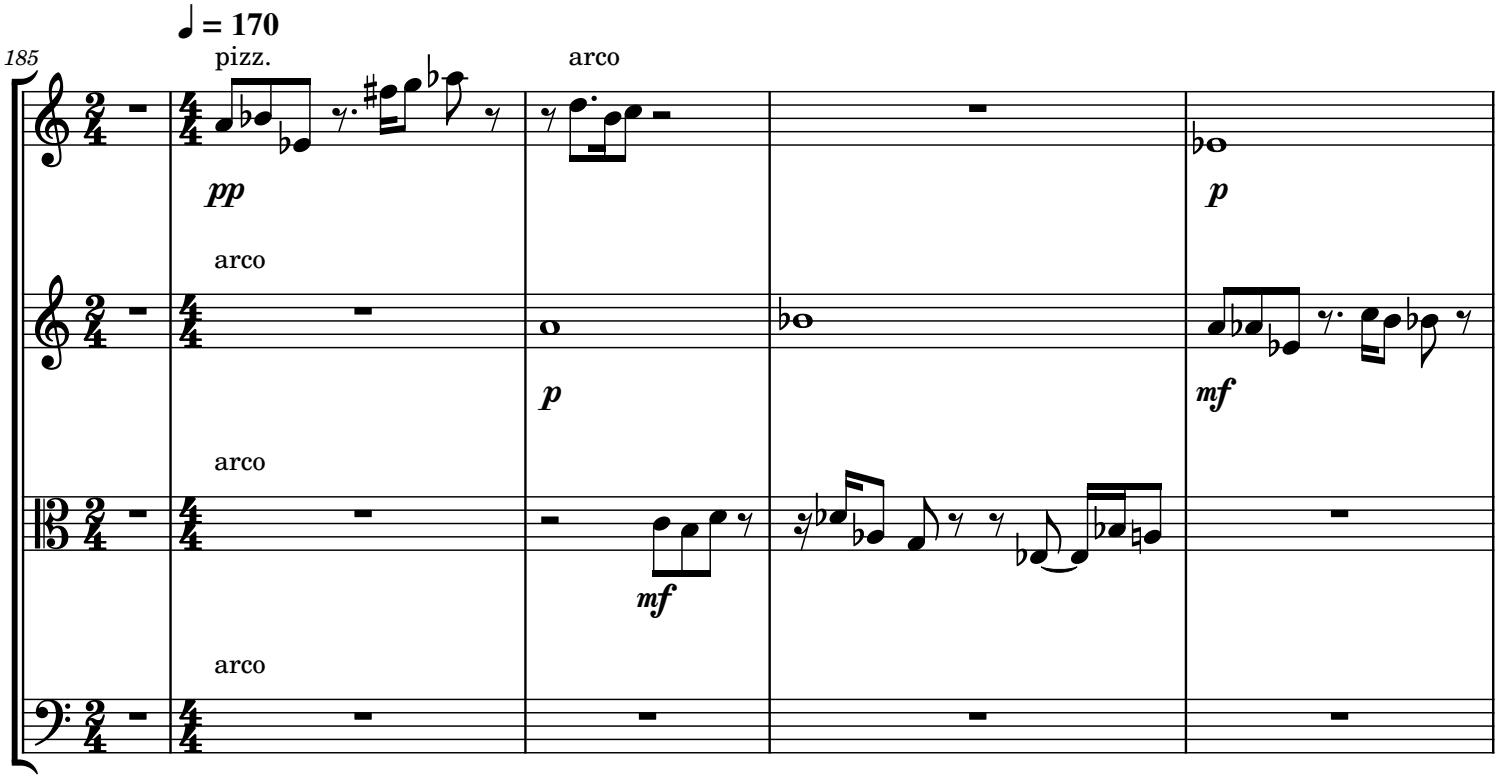
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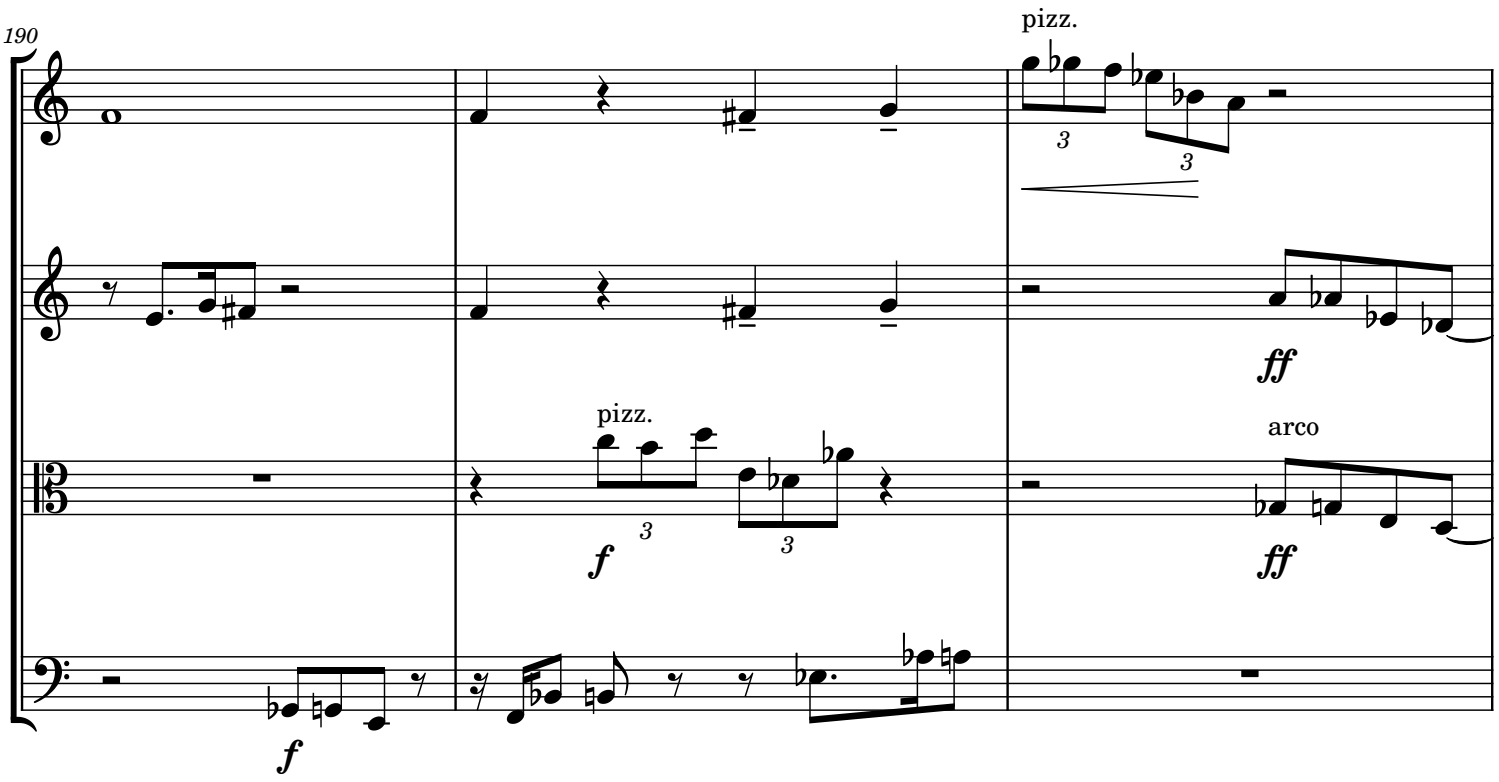
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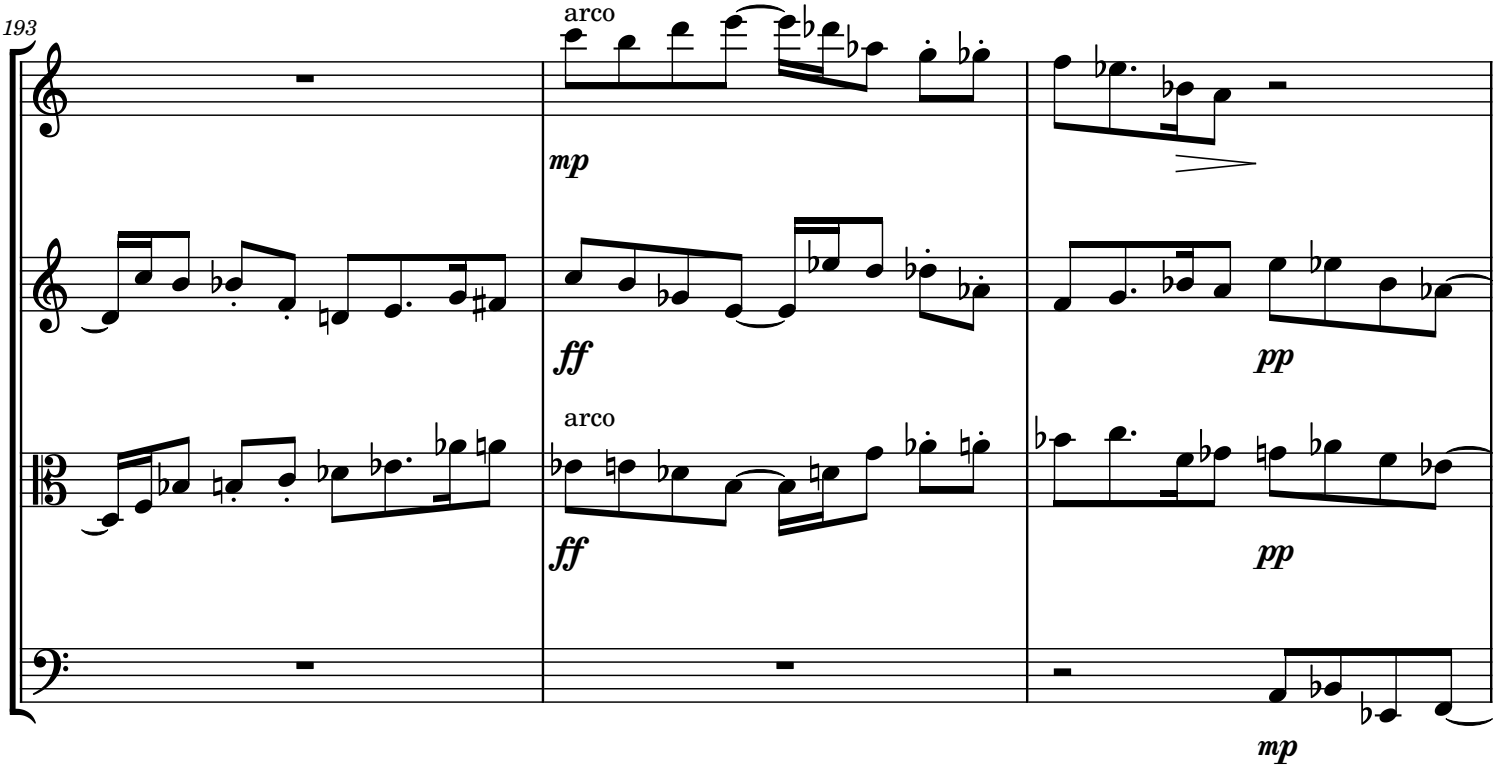
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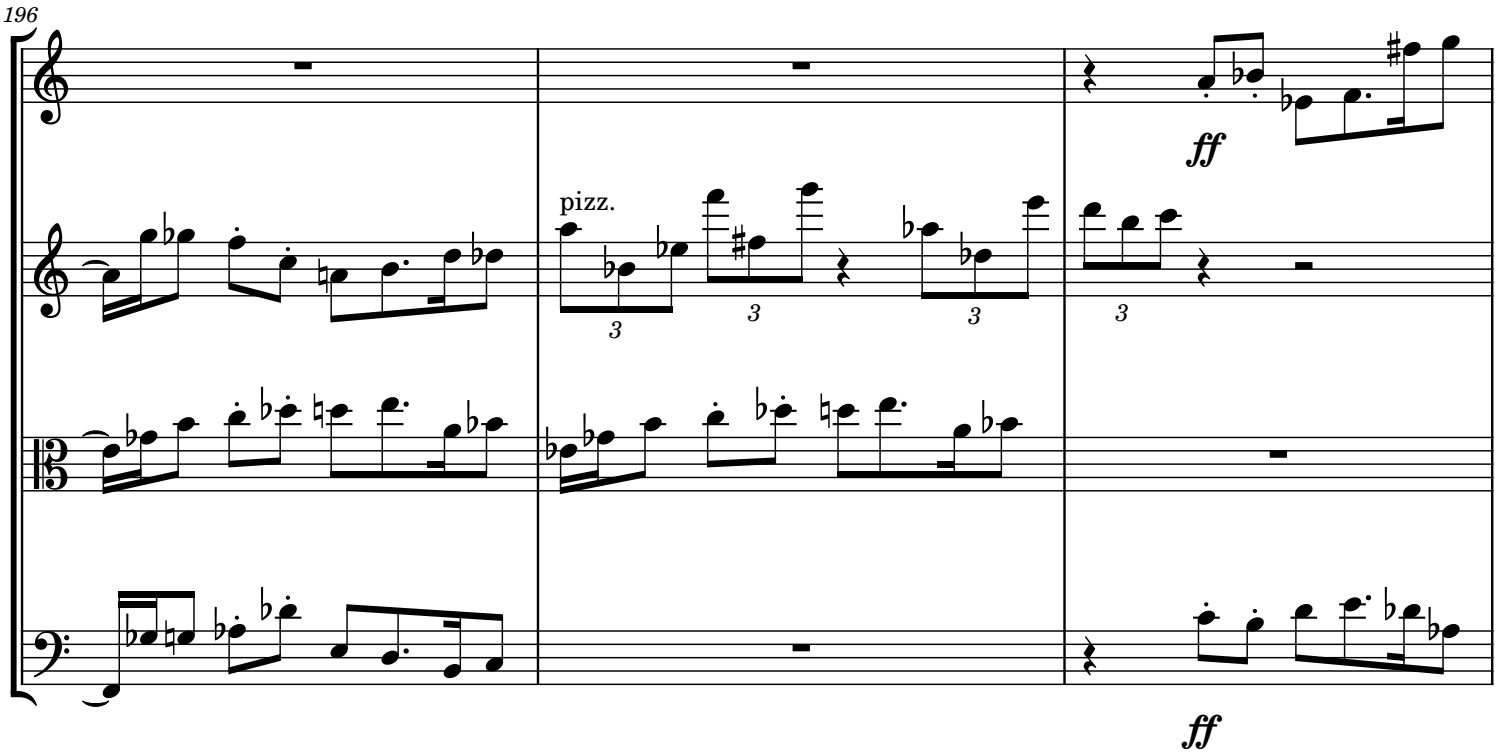
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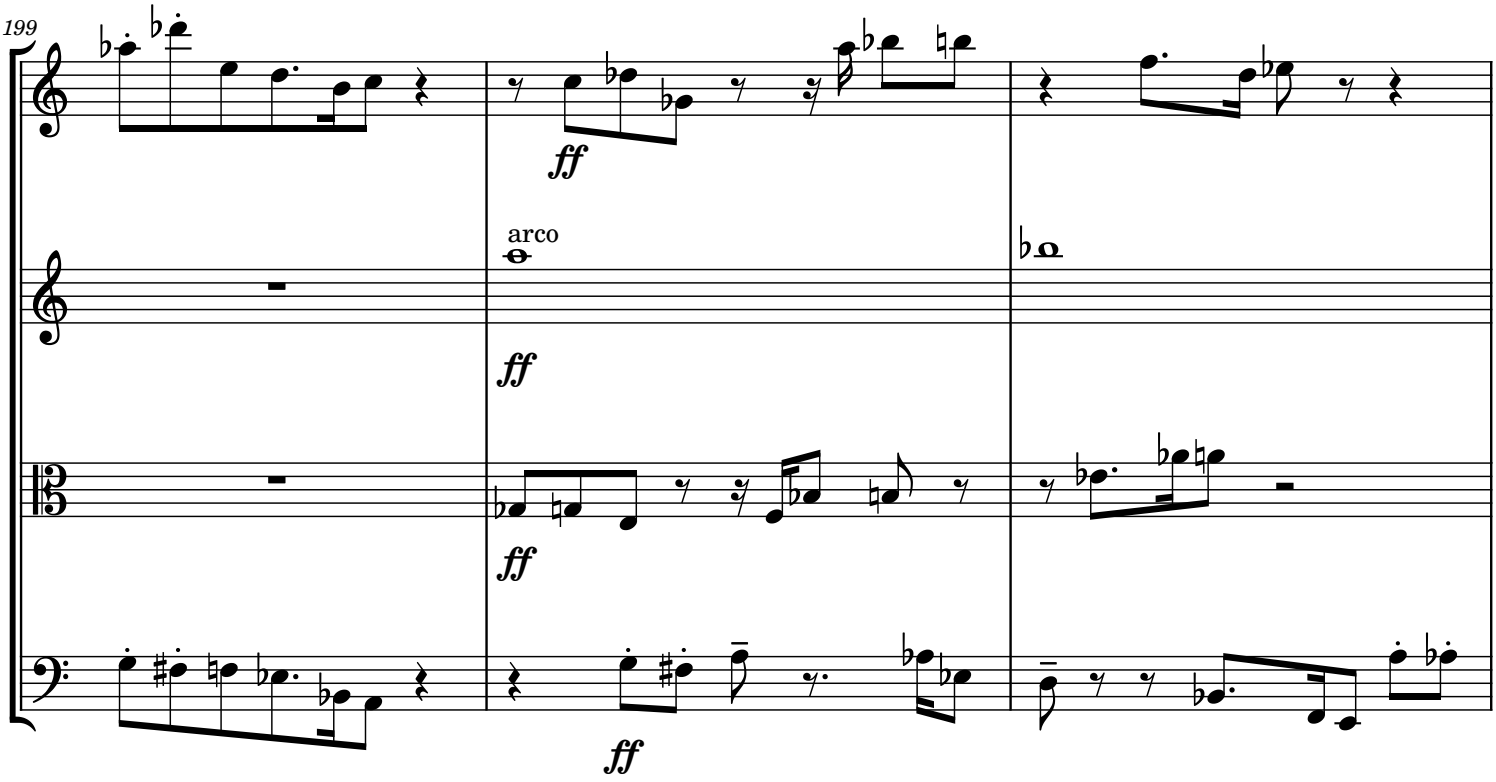
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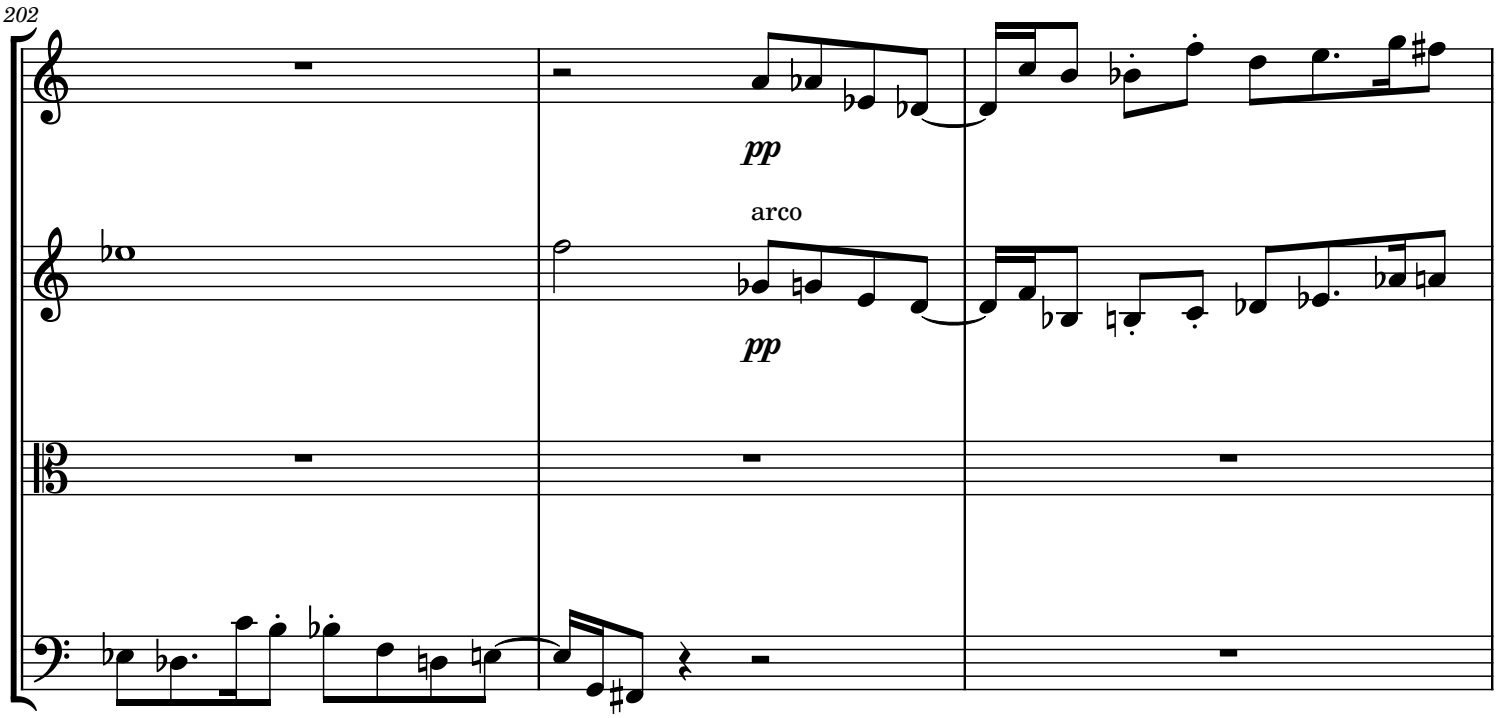
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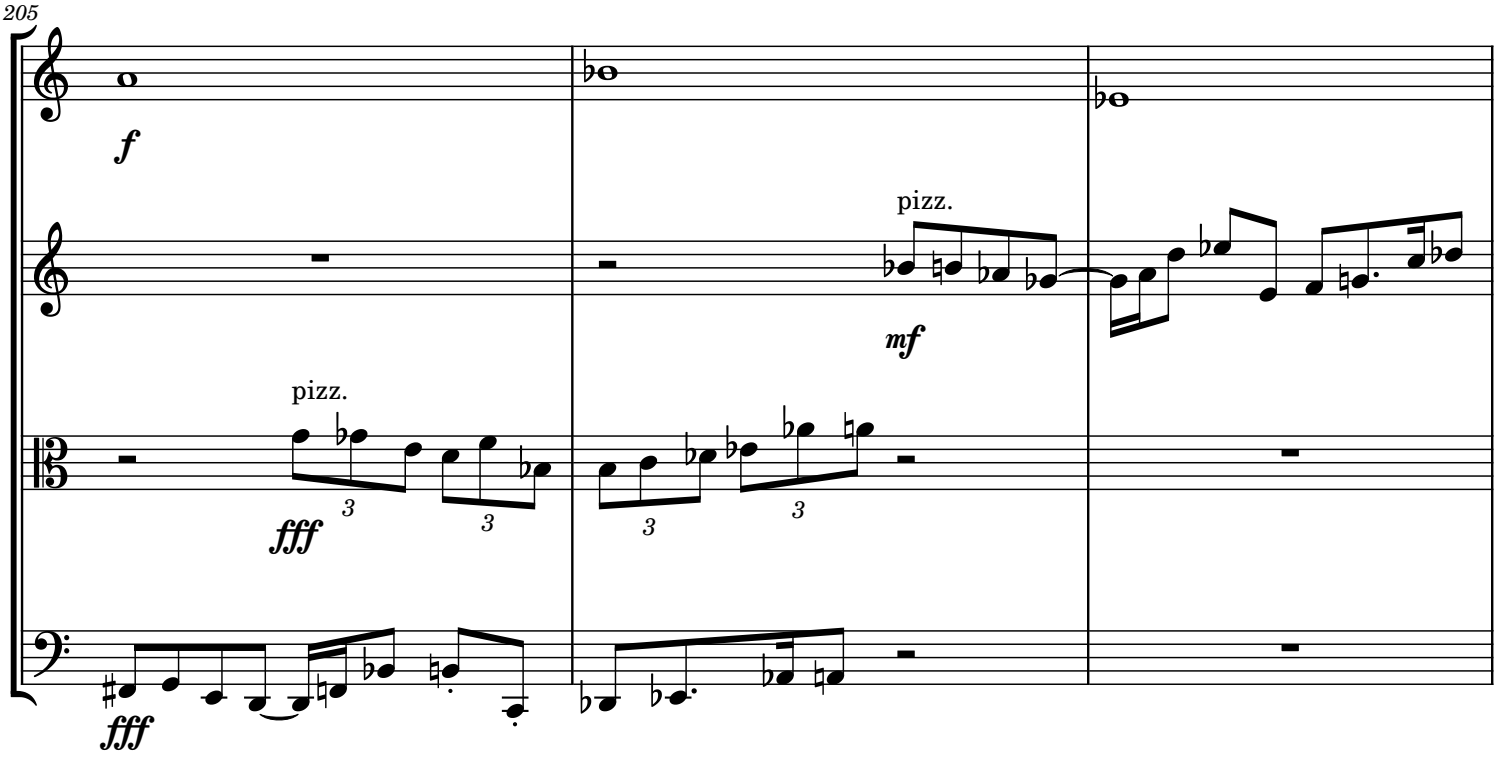
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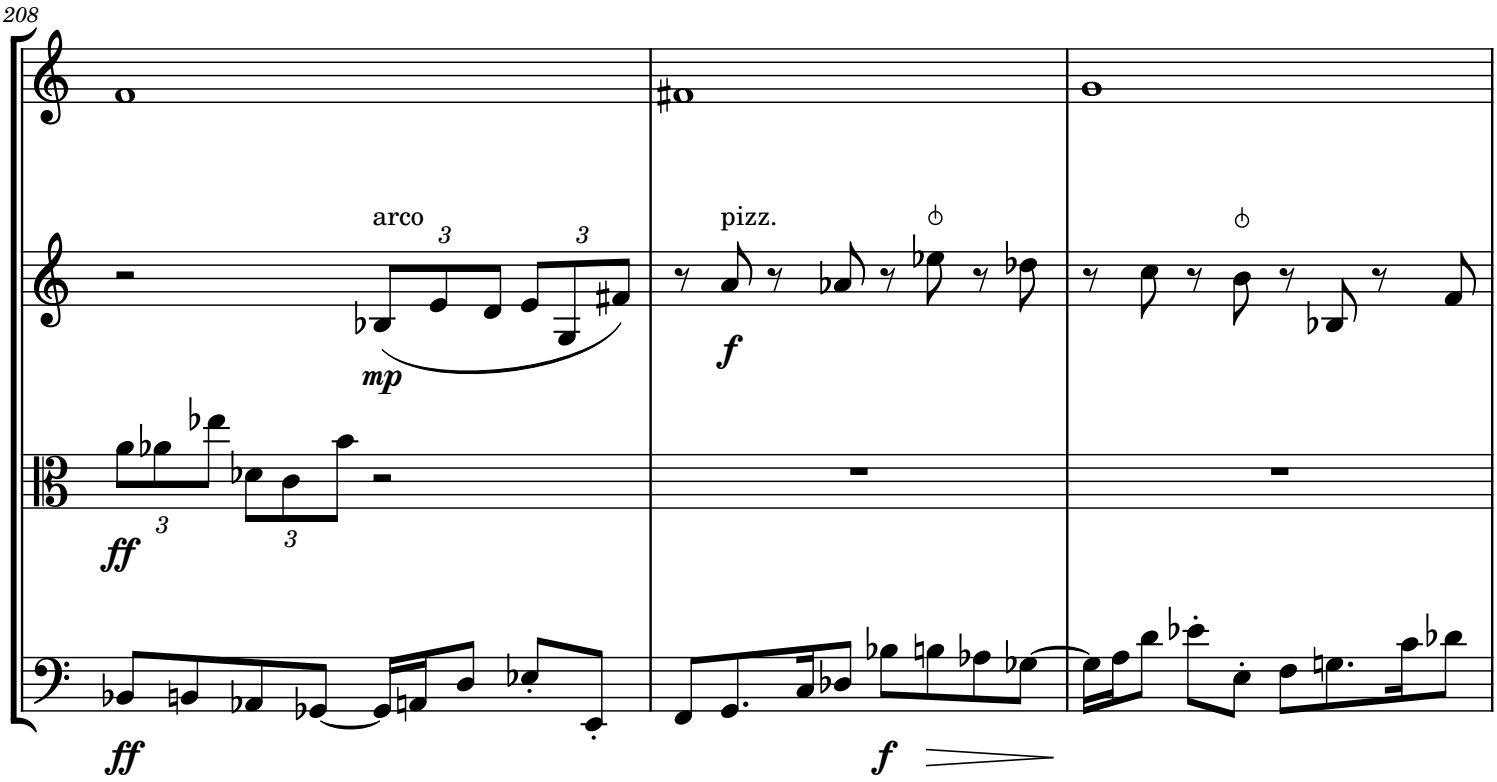
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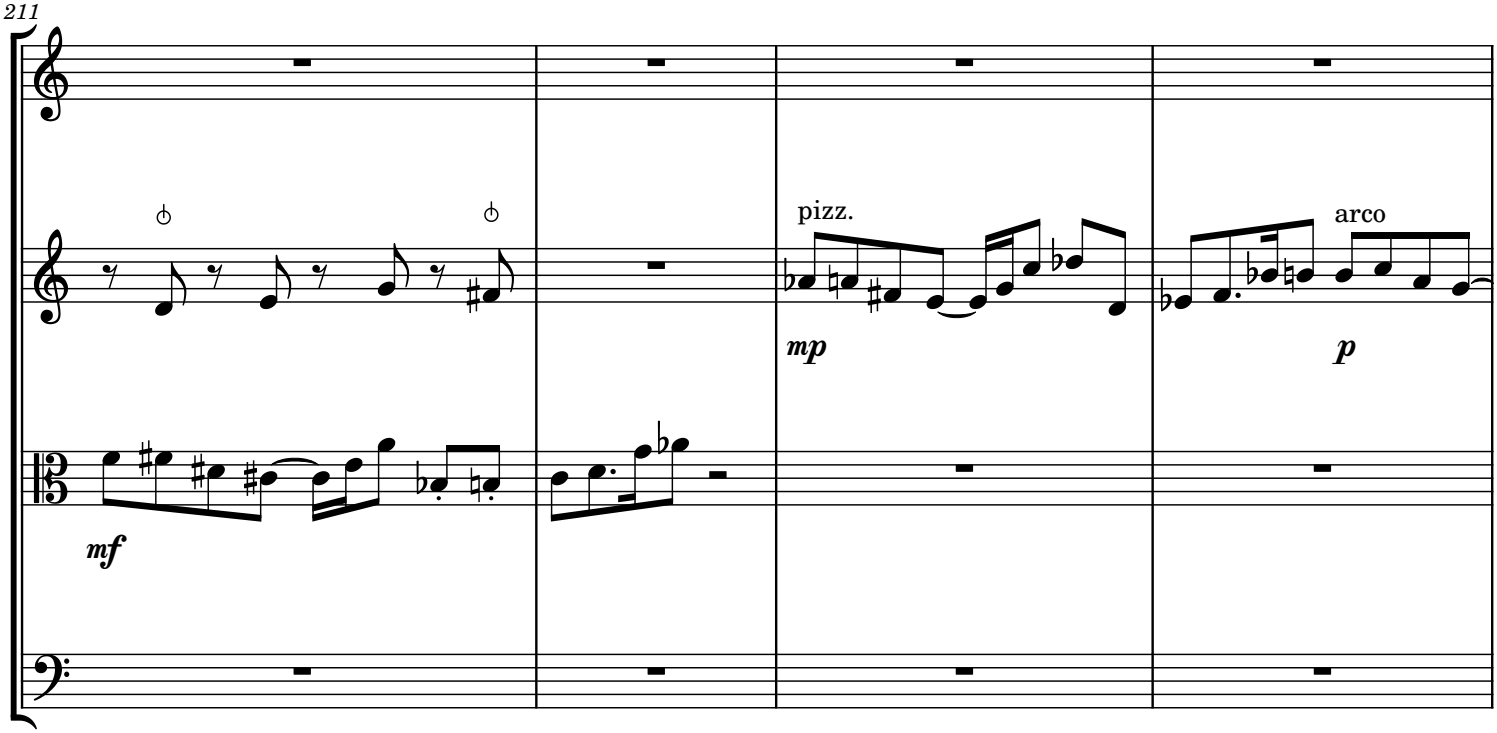
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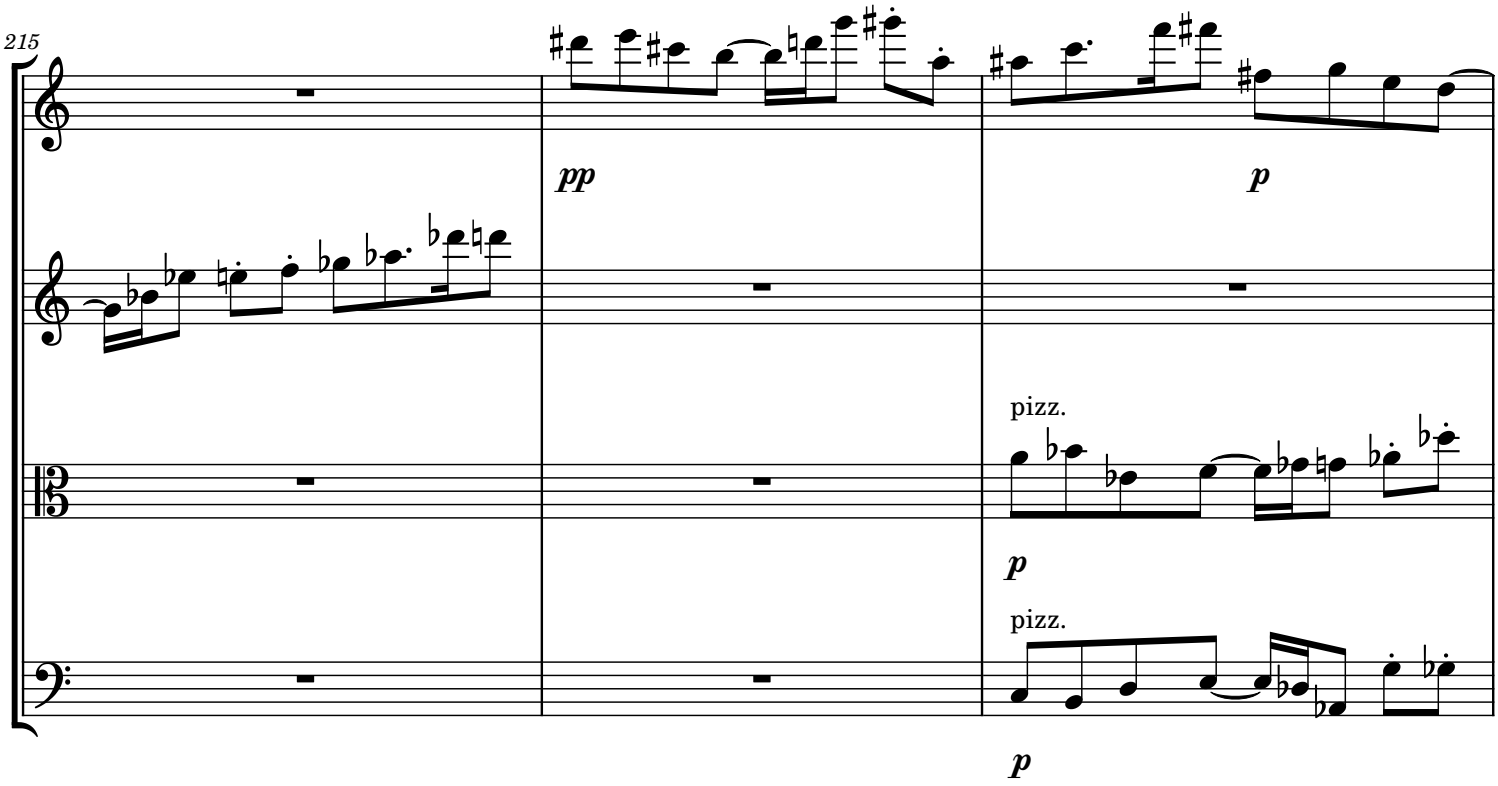
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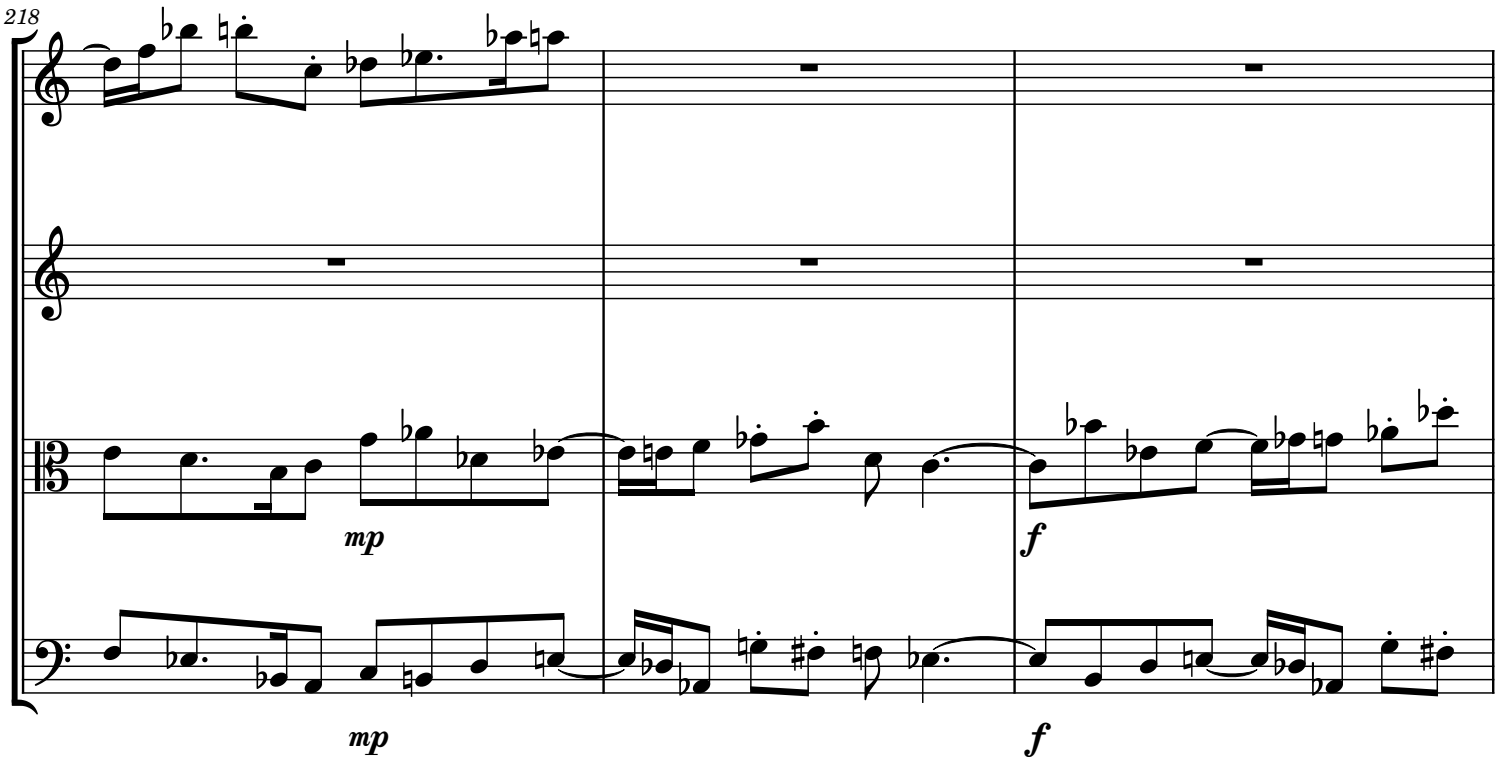
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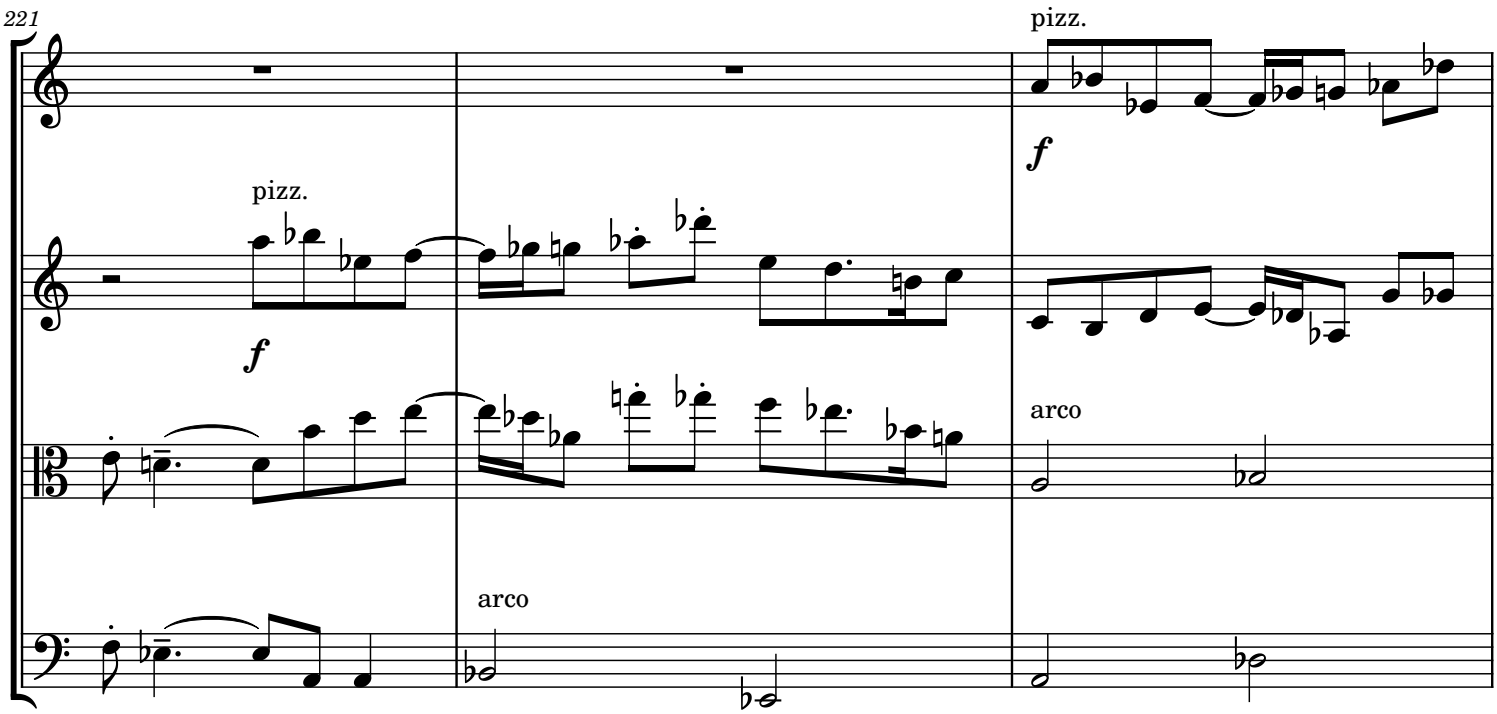
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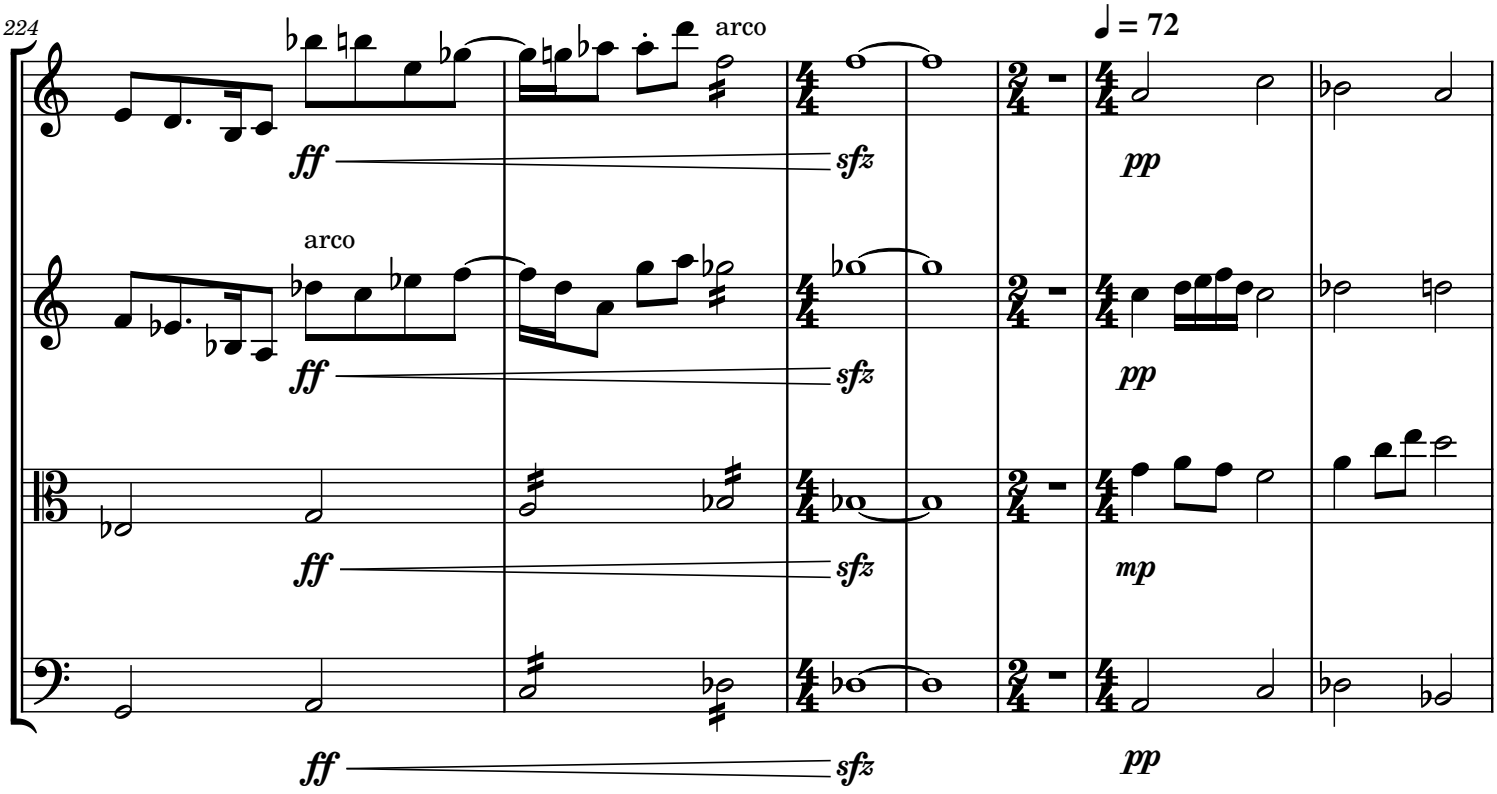
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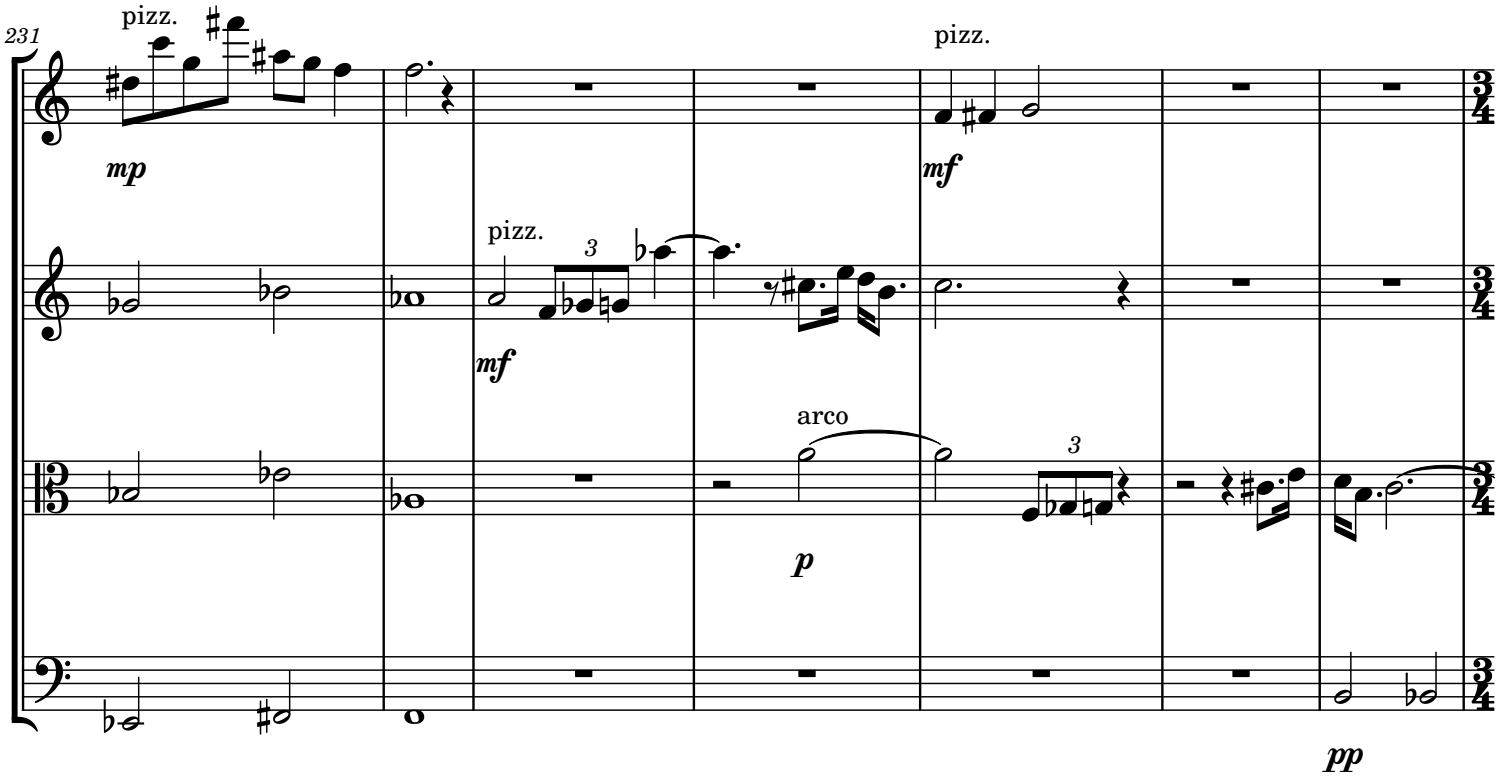
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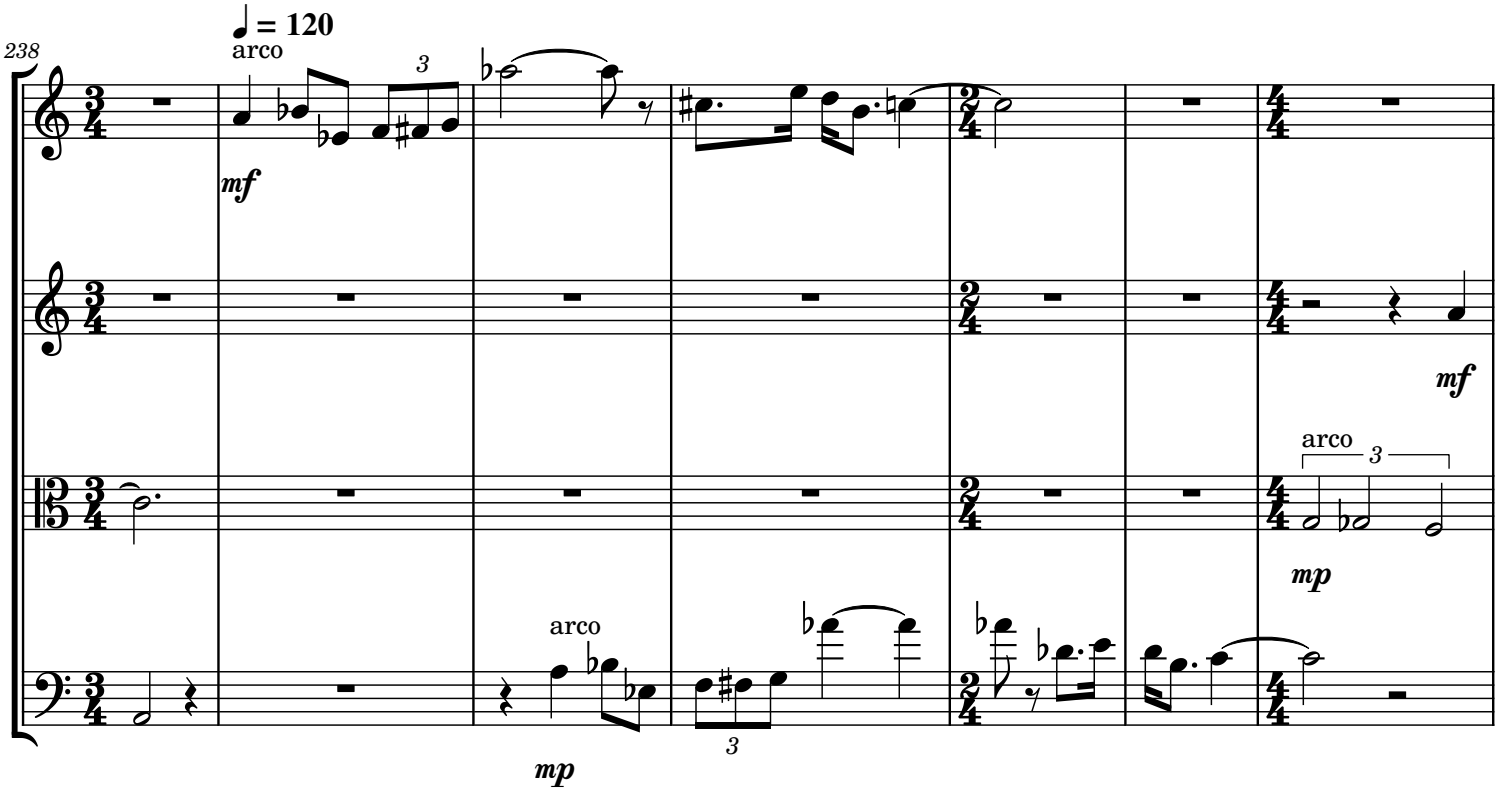
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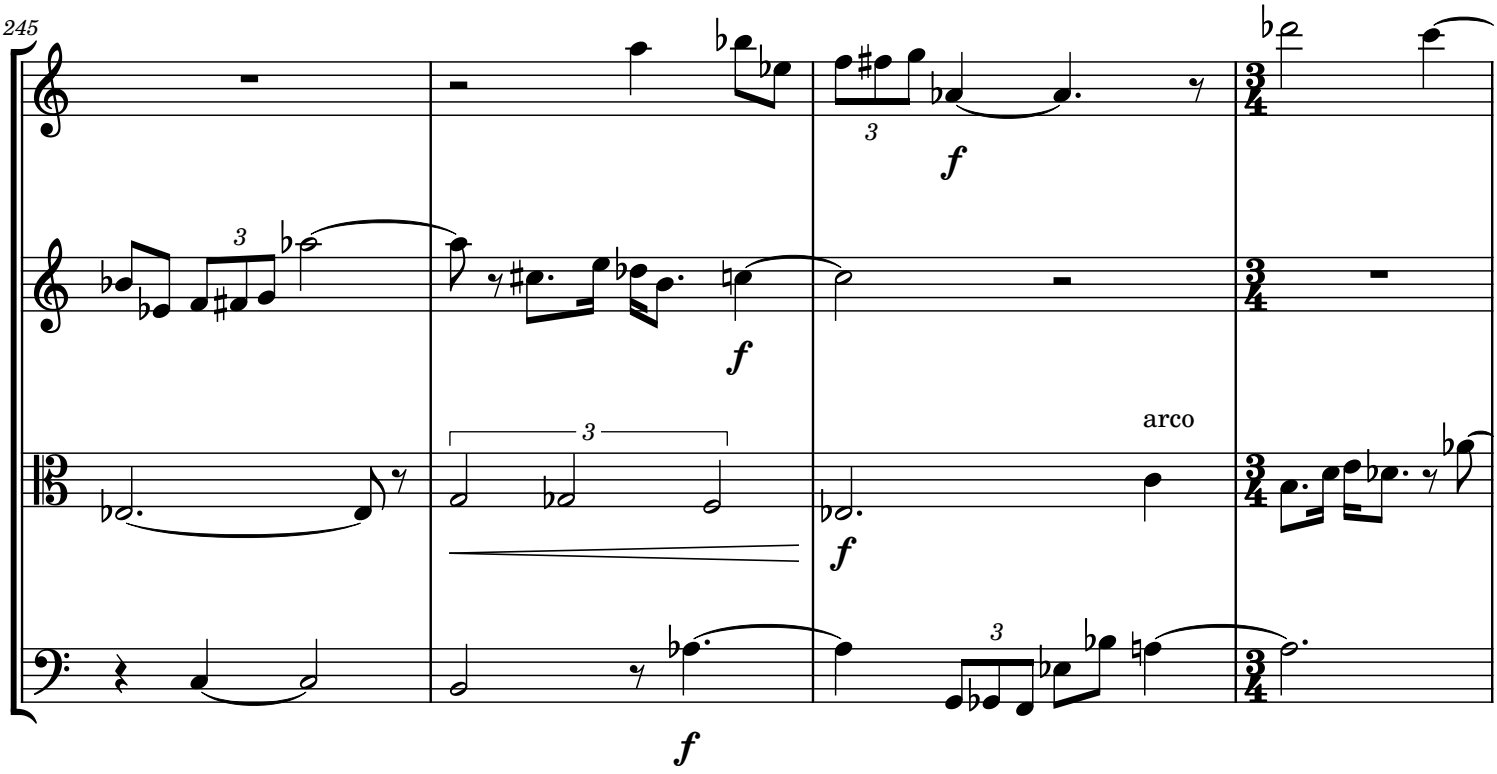
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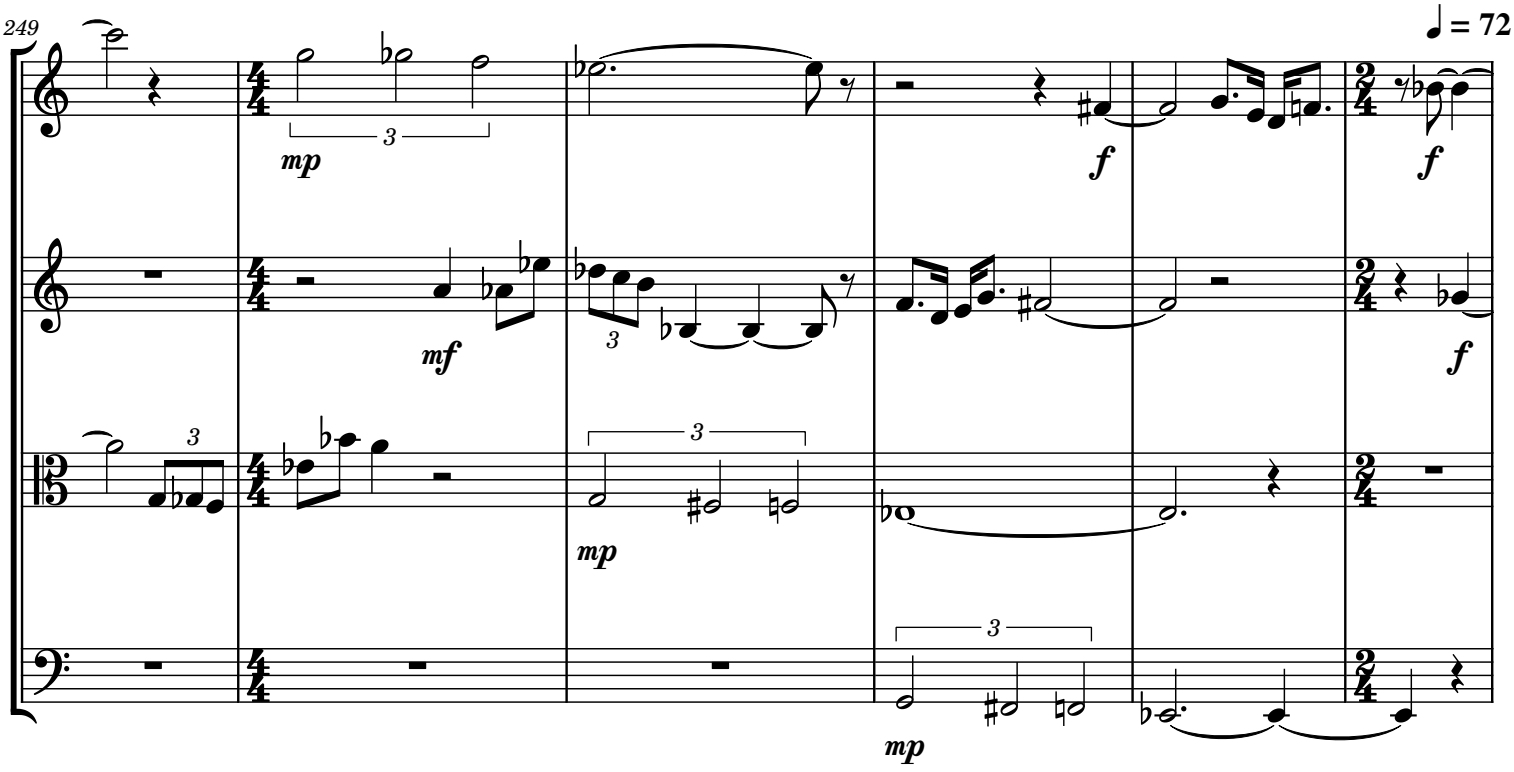
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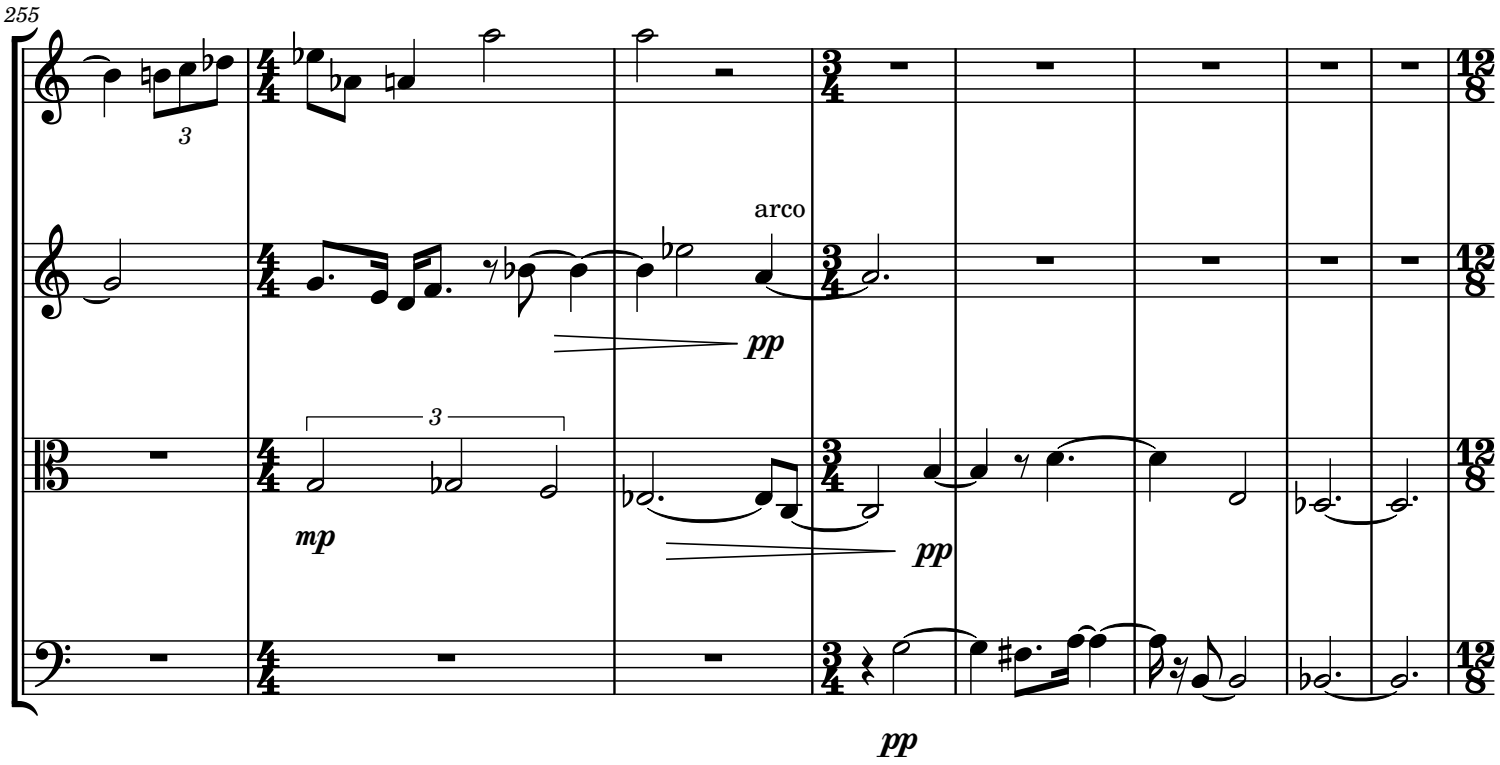
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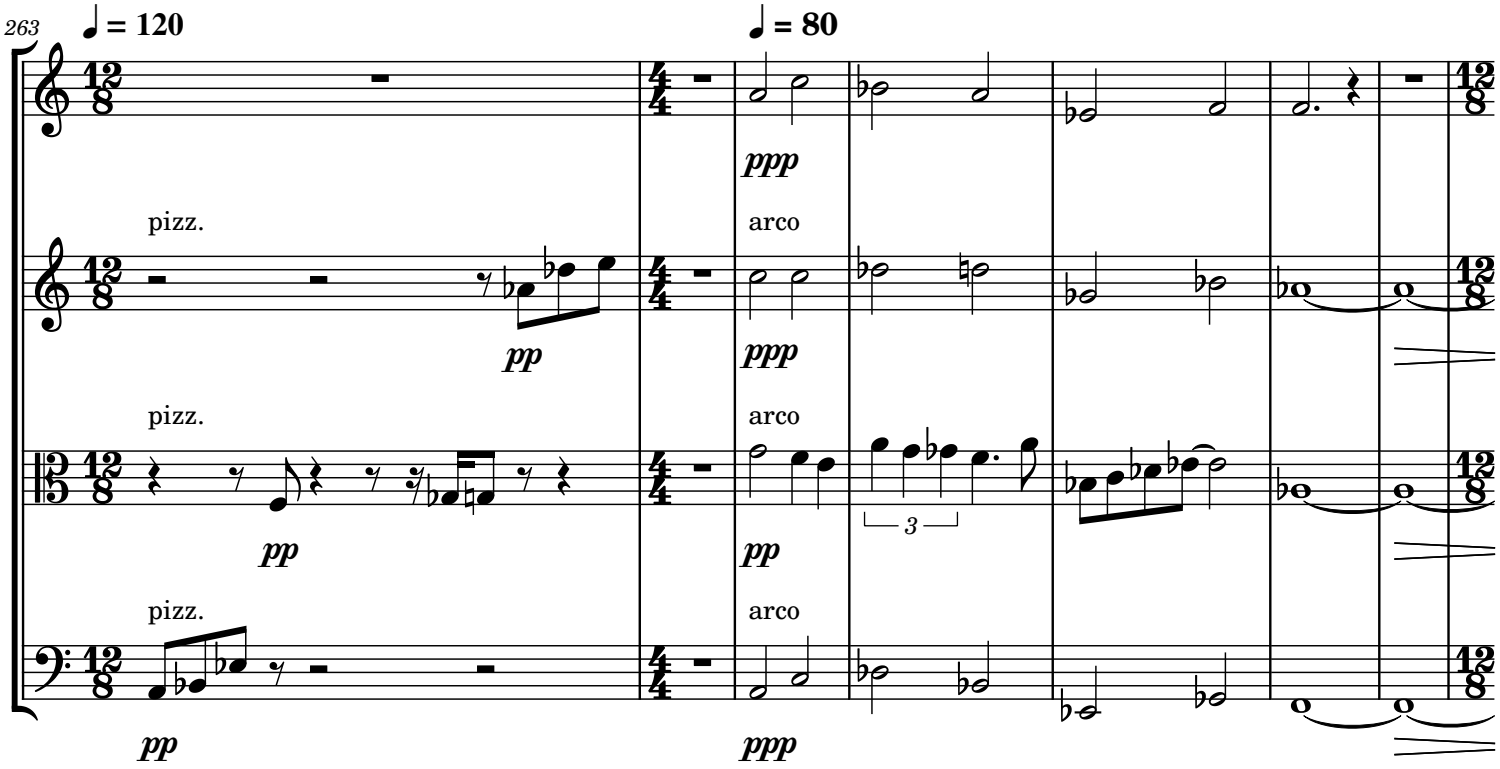
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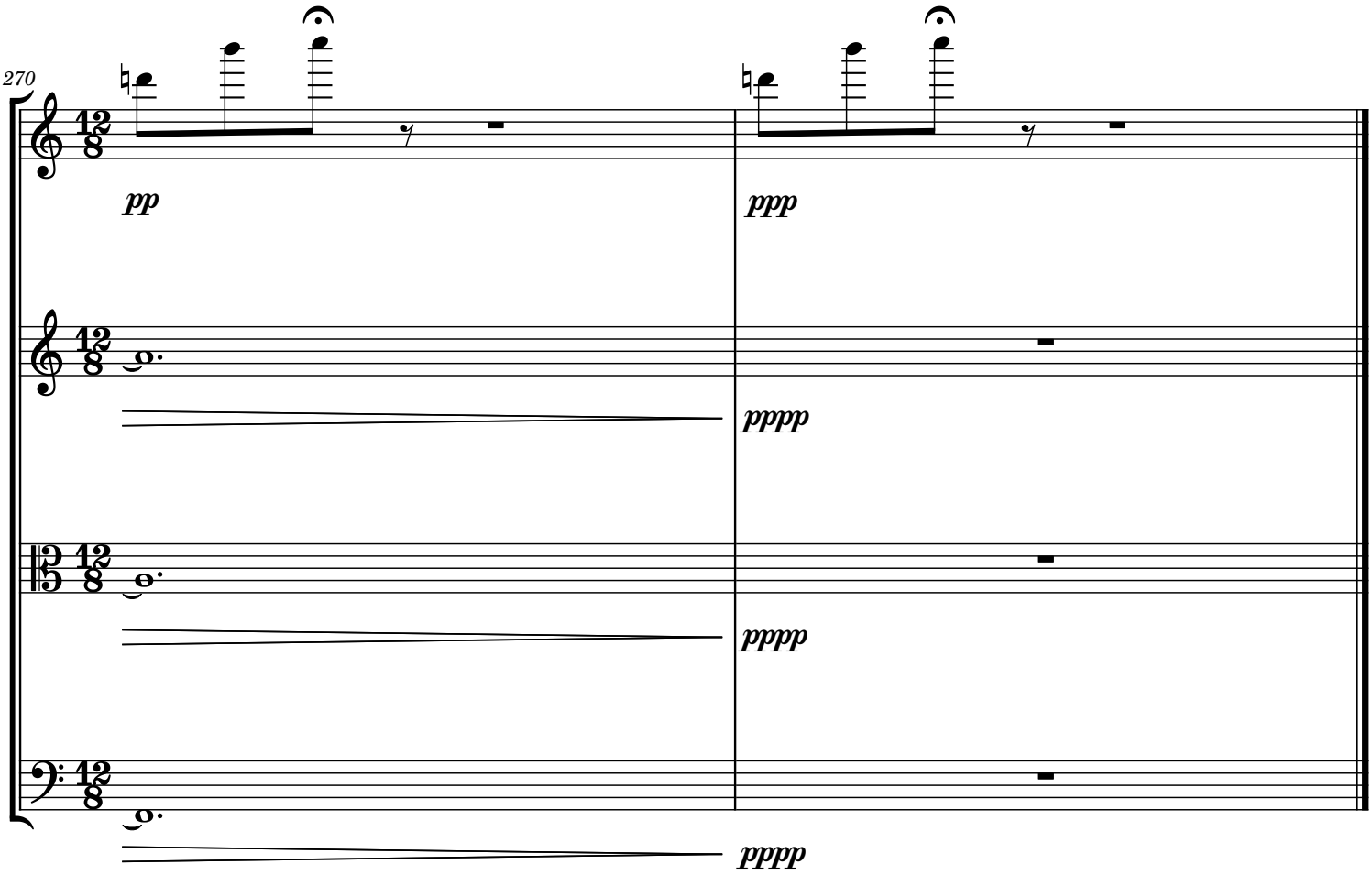
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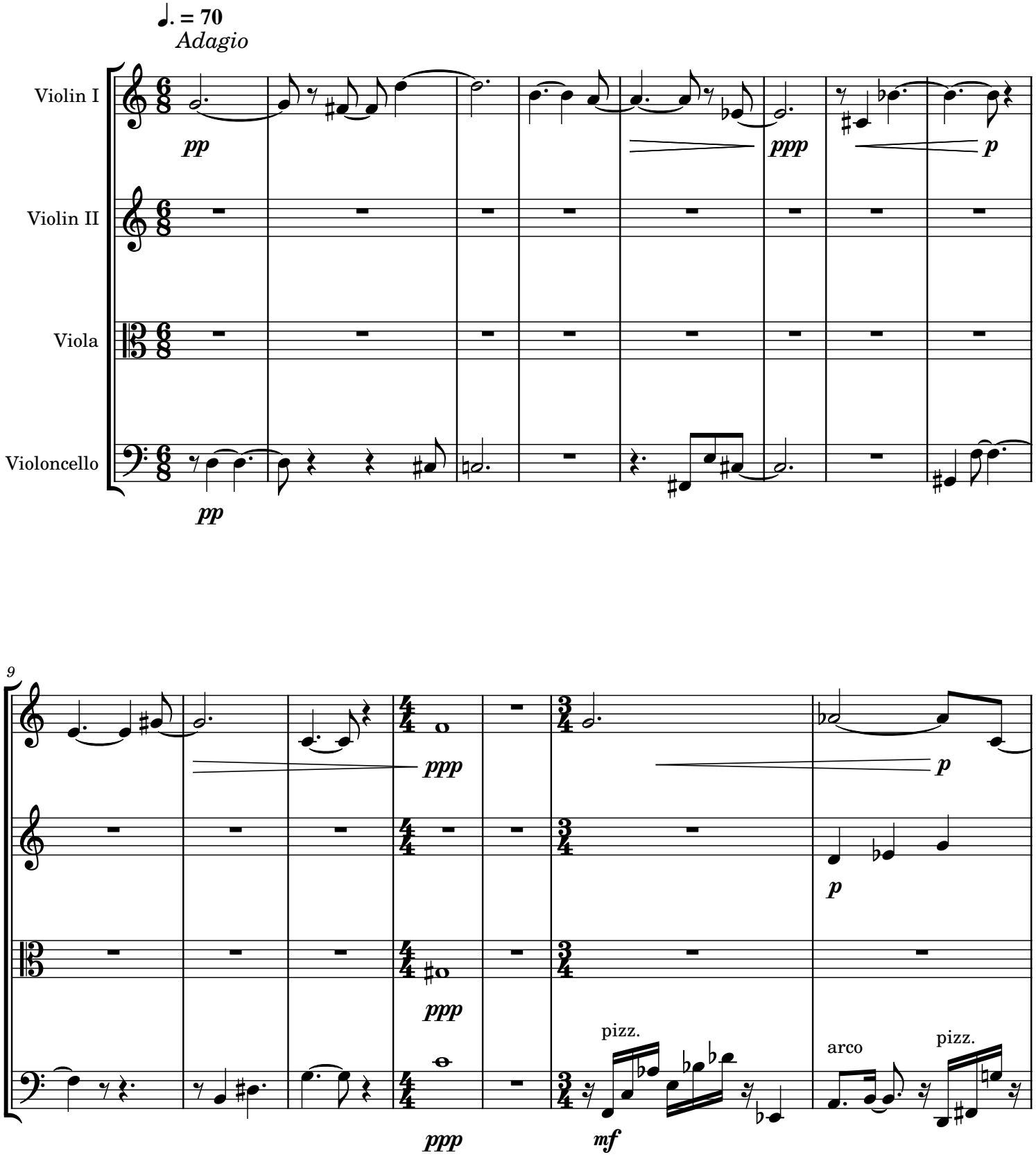
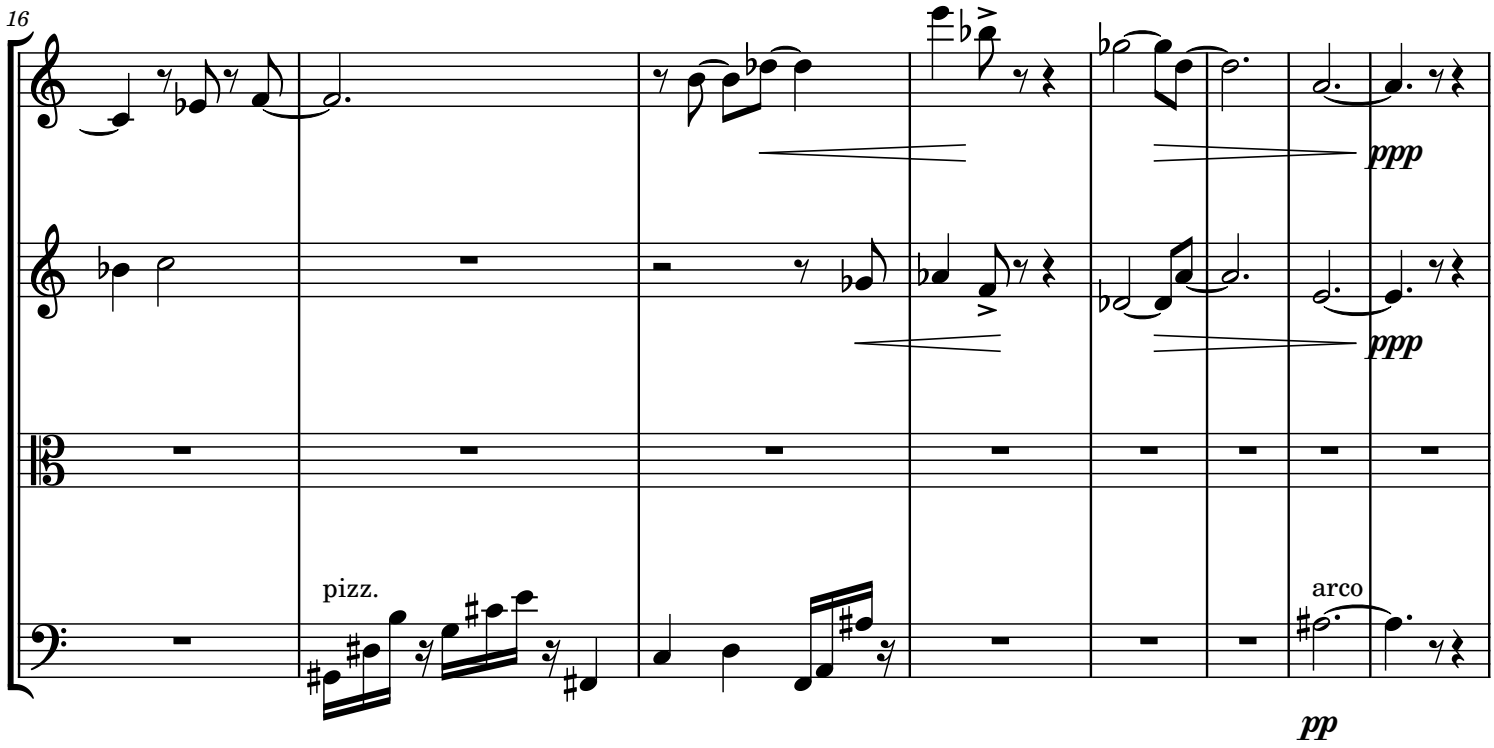
2. Pain

Elizabeth Lemmer

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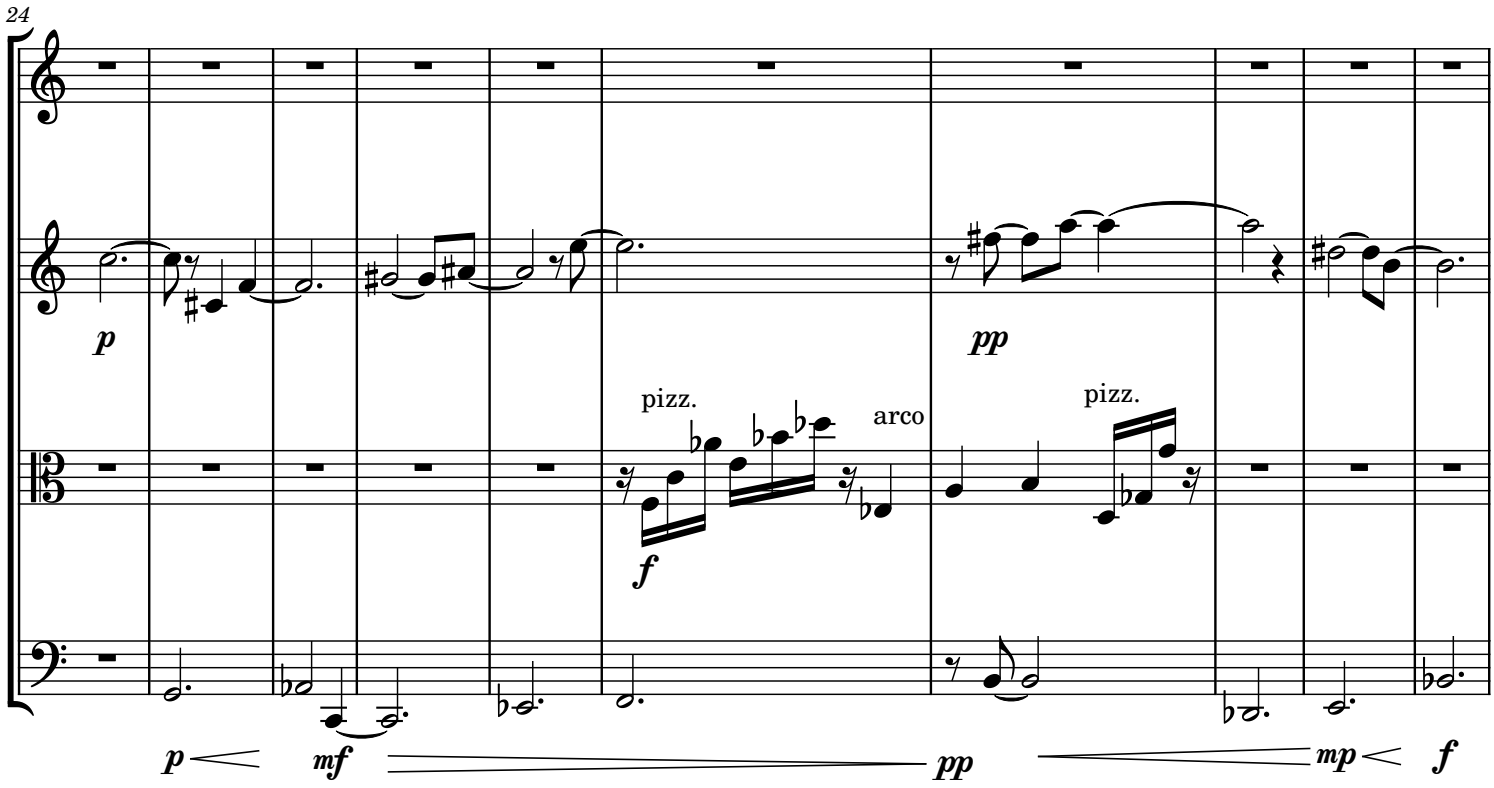
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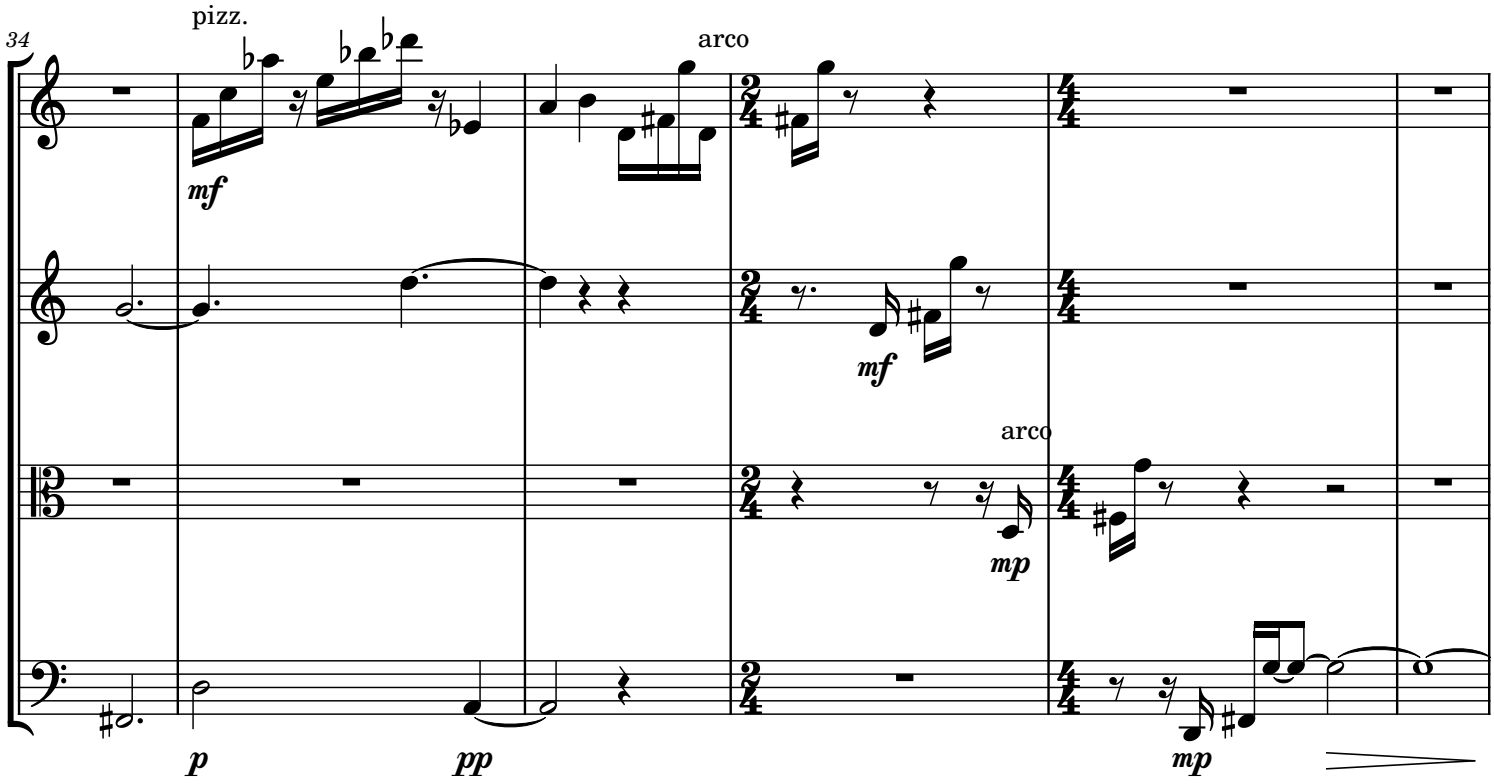
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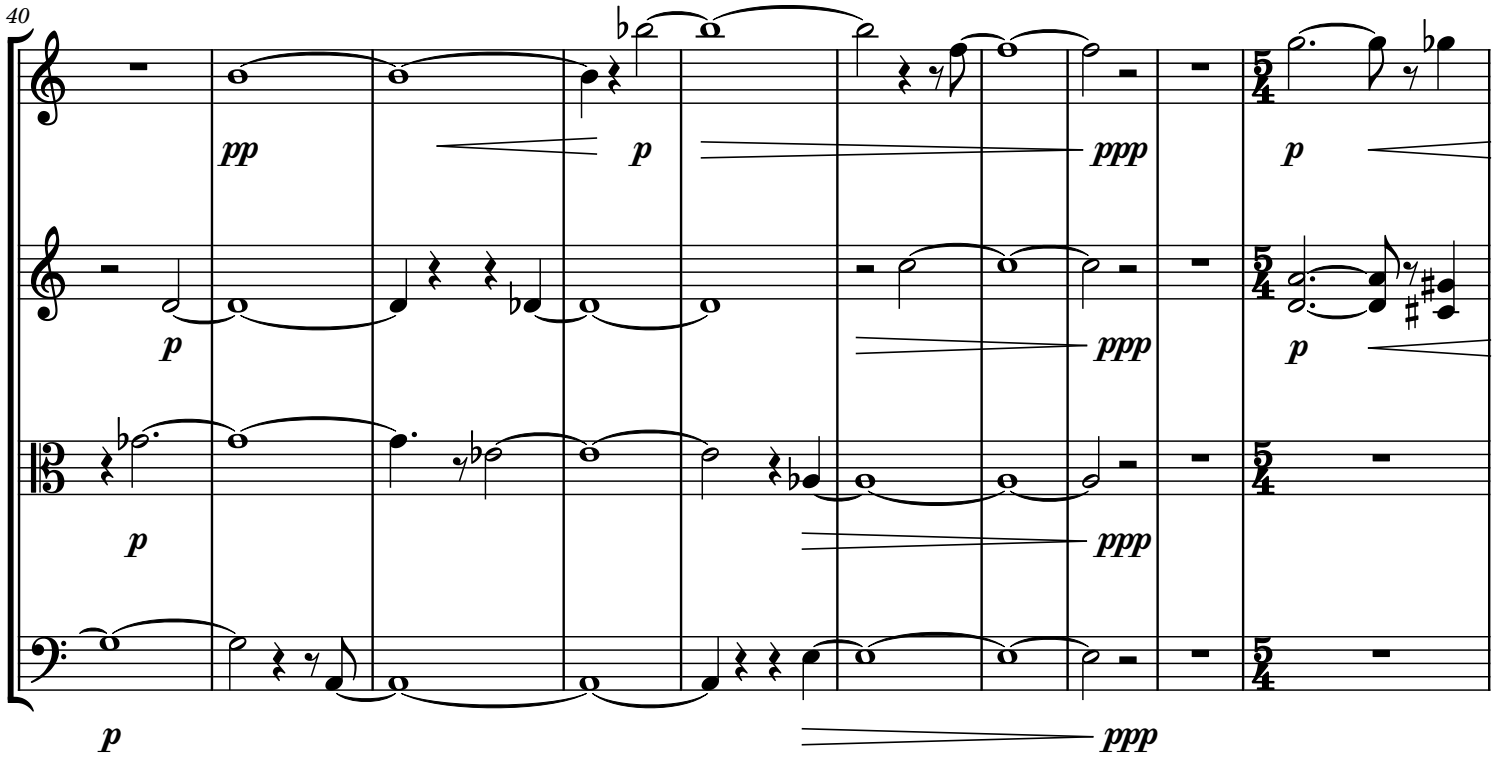
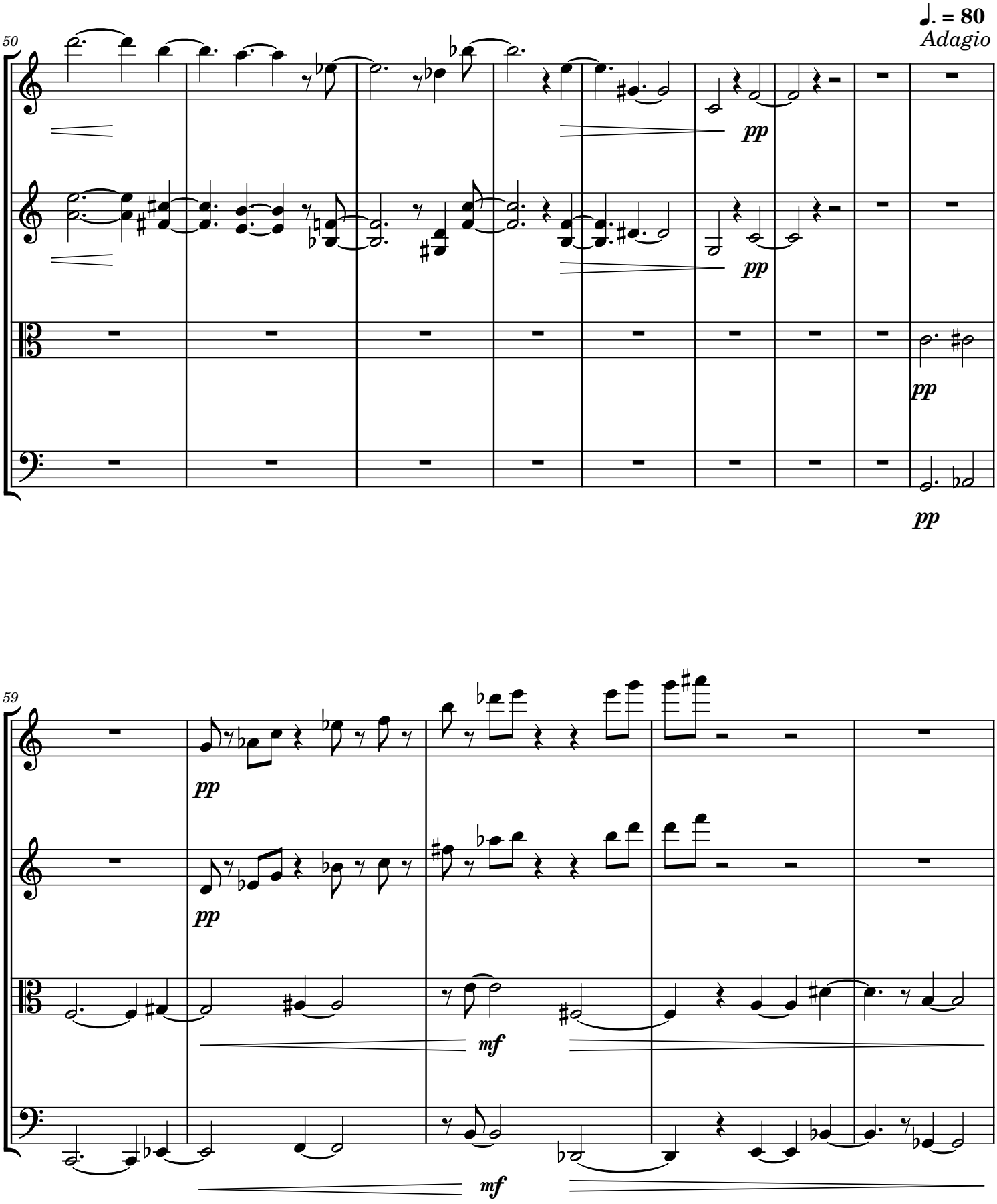
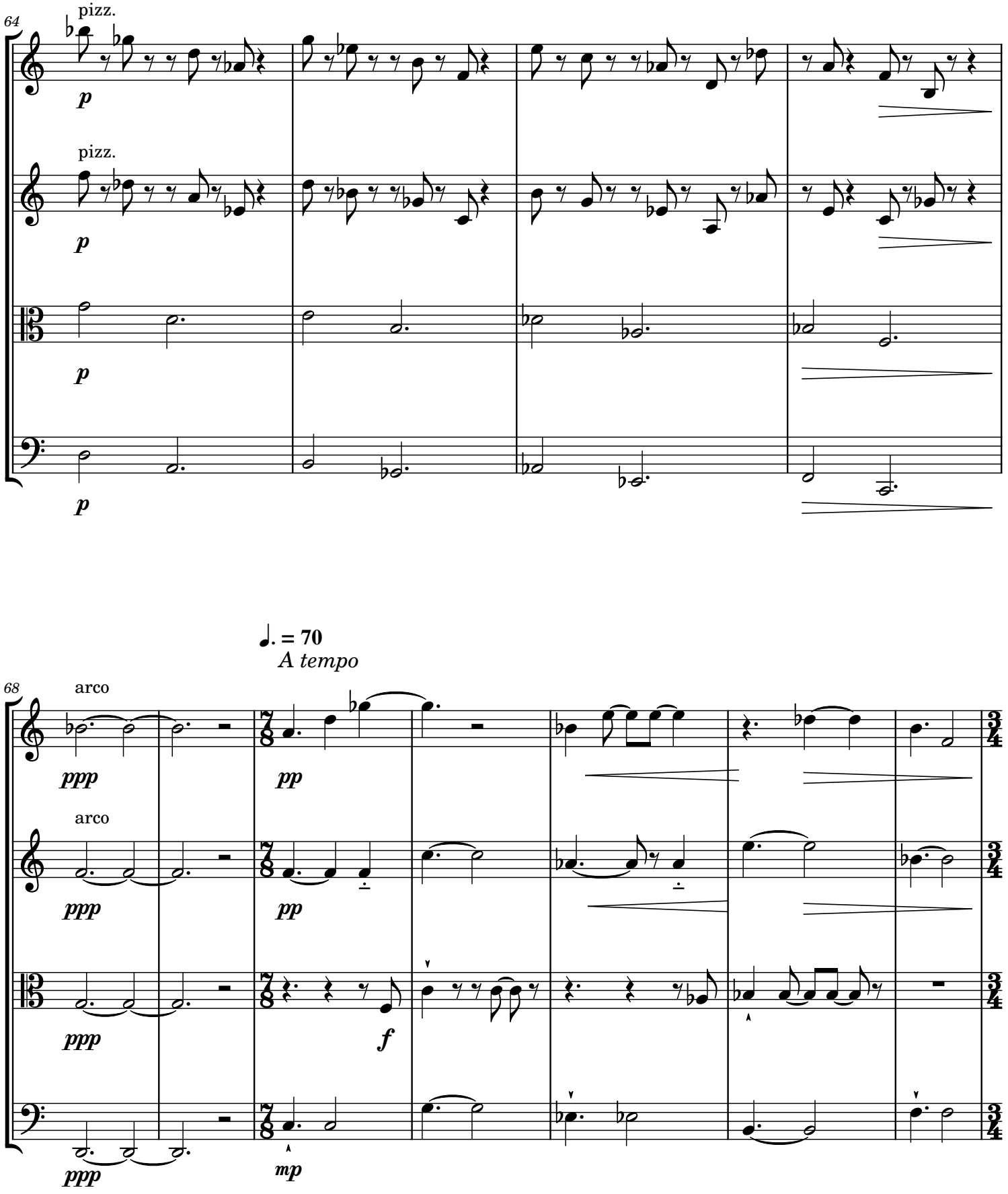
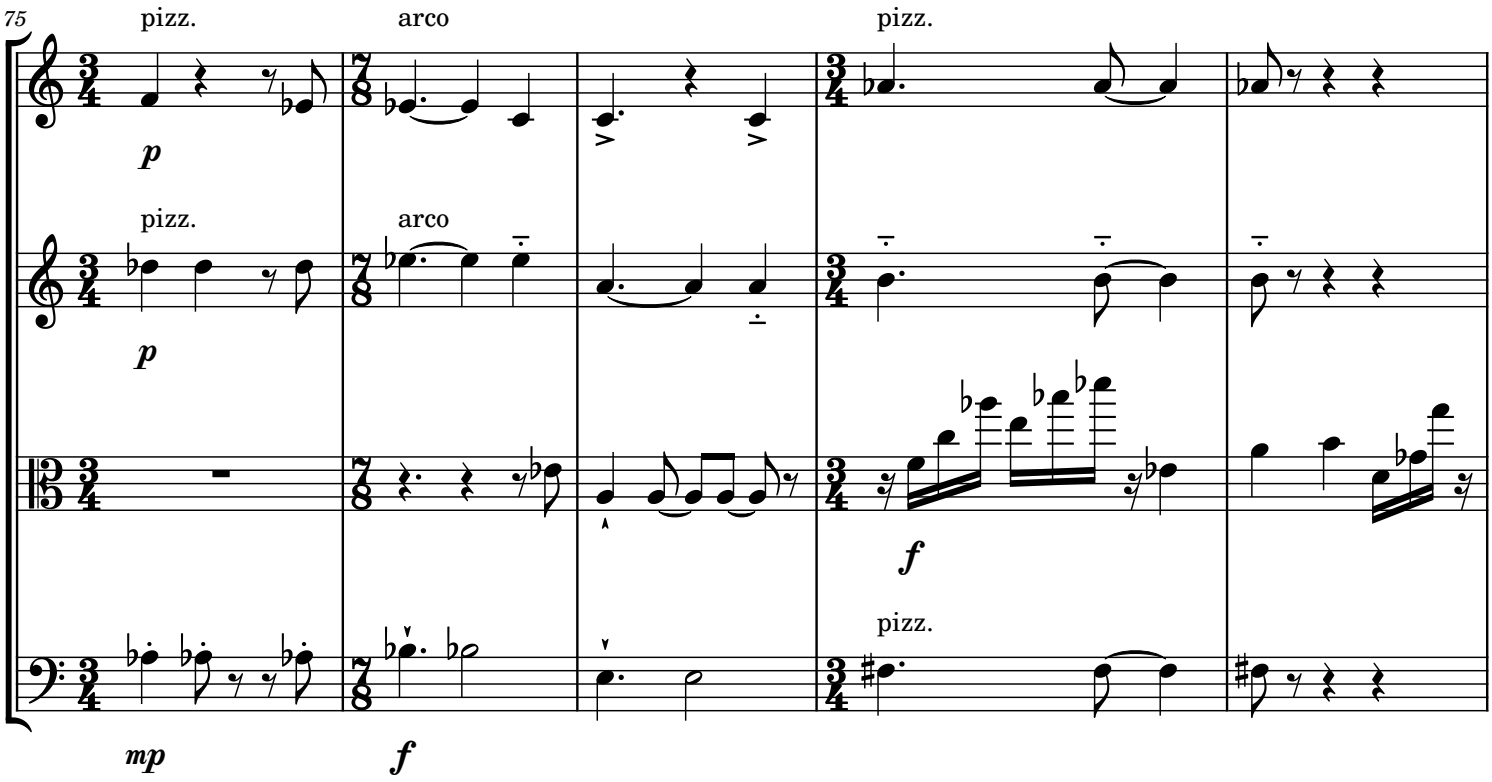
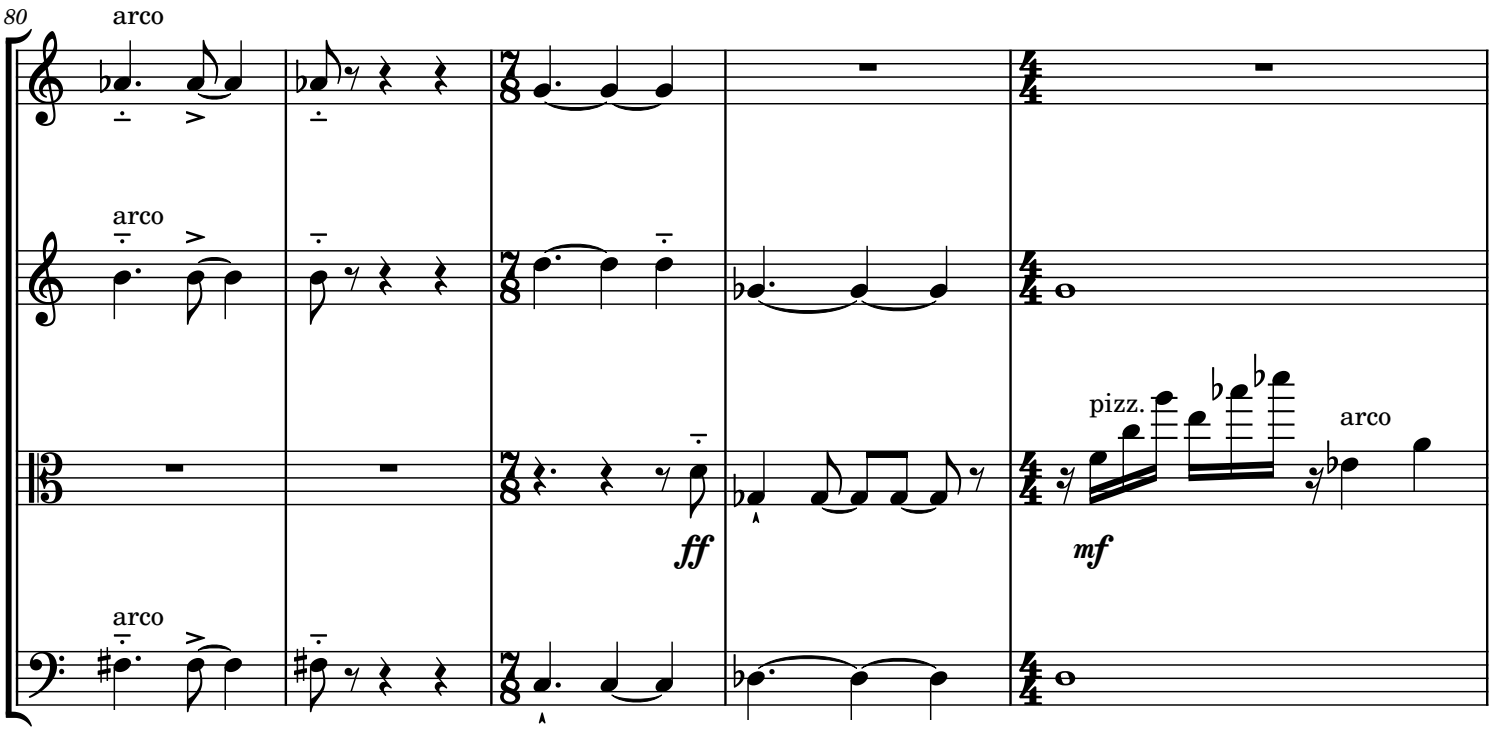
arco
arco

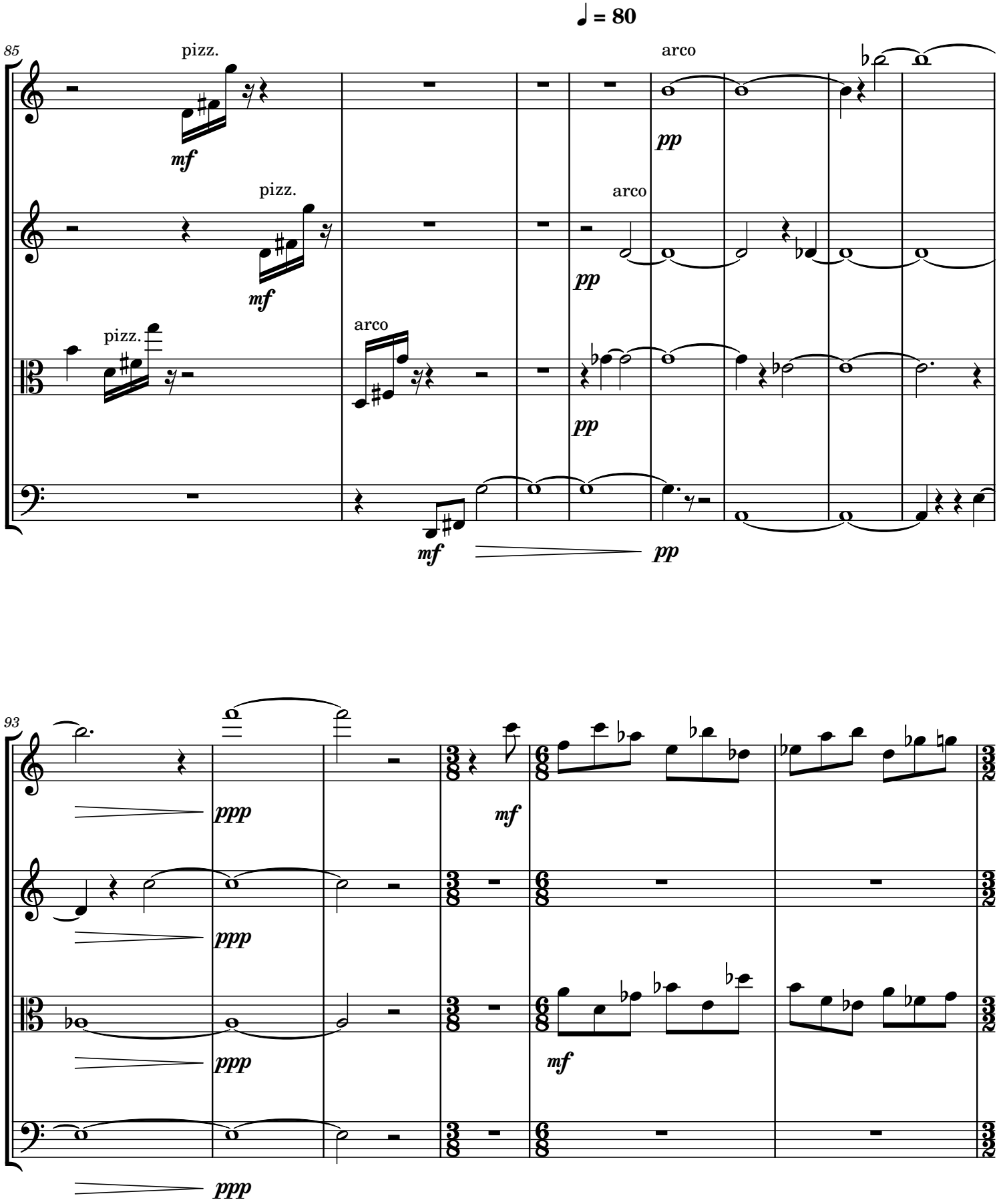

40

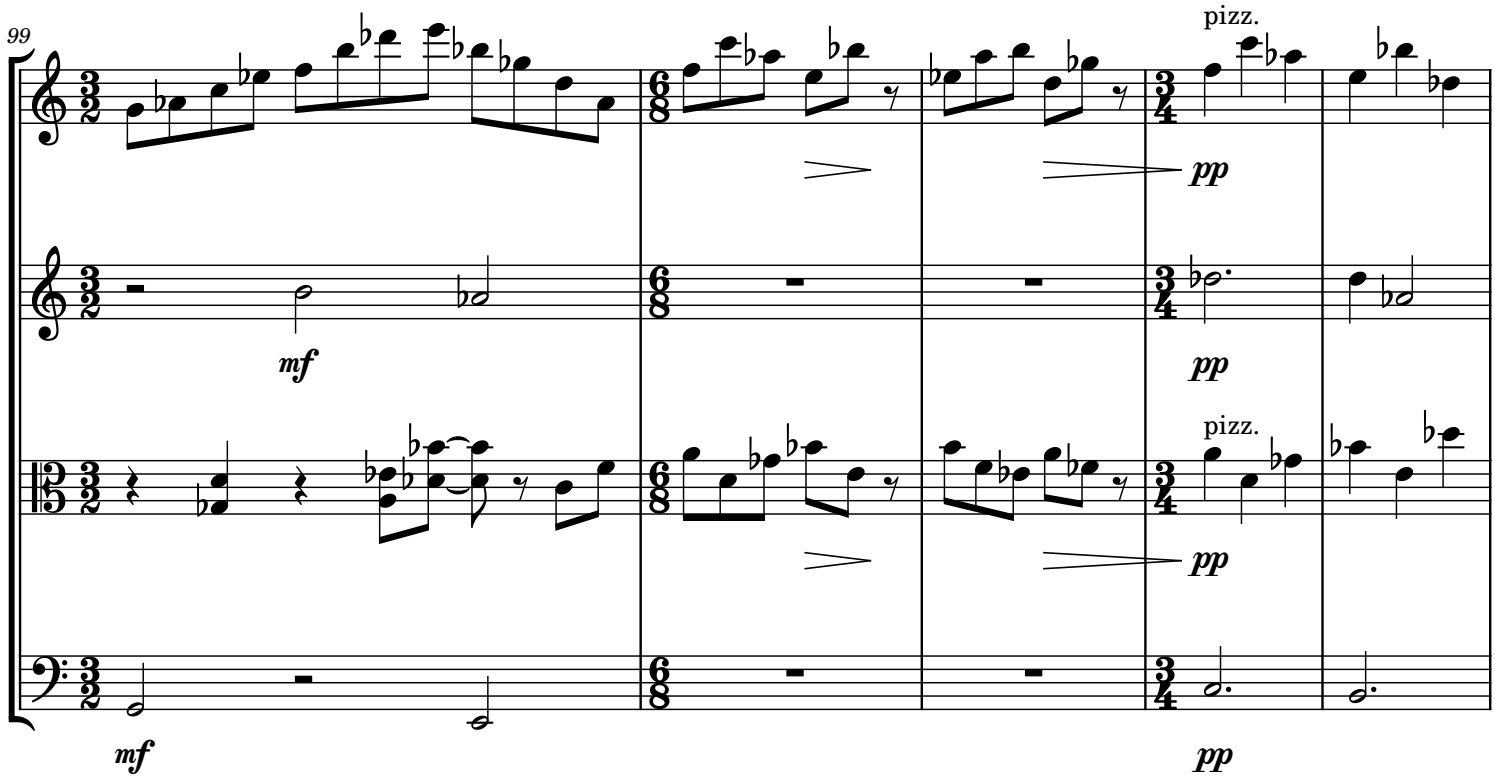

♩. = 80
Adagio
50
pp
pp
pp
pp
59
pp
pp
mf
mf

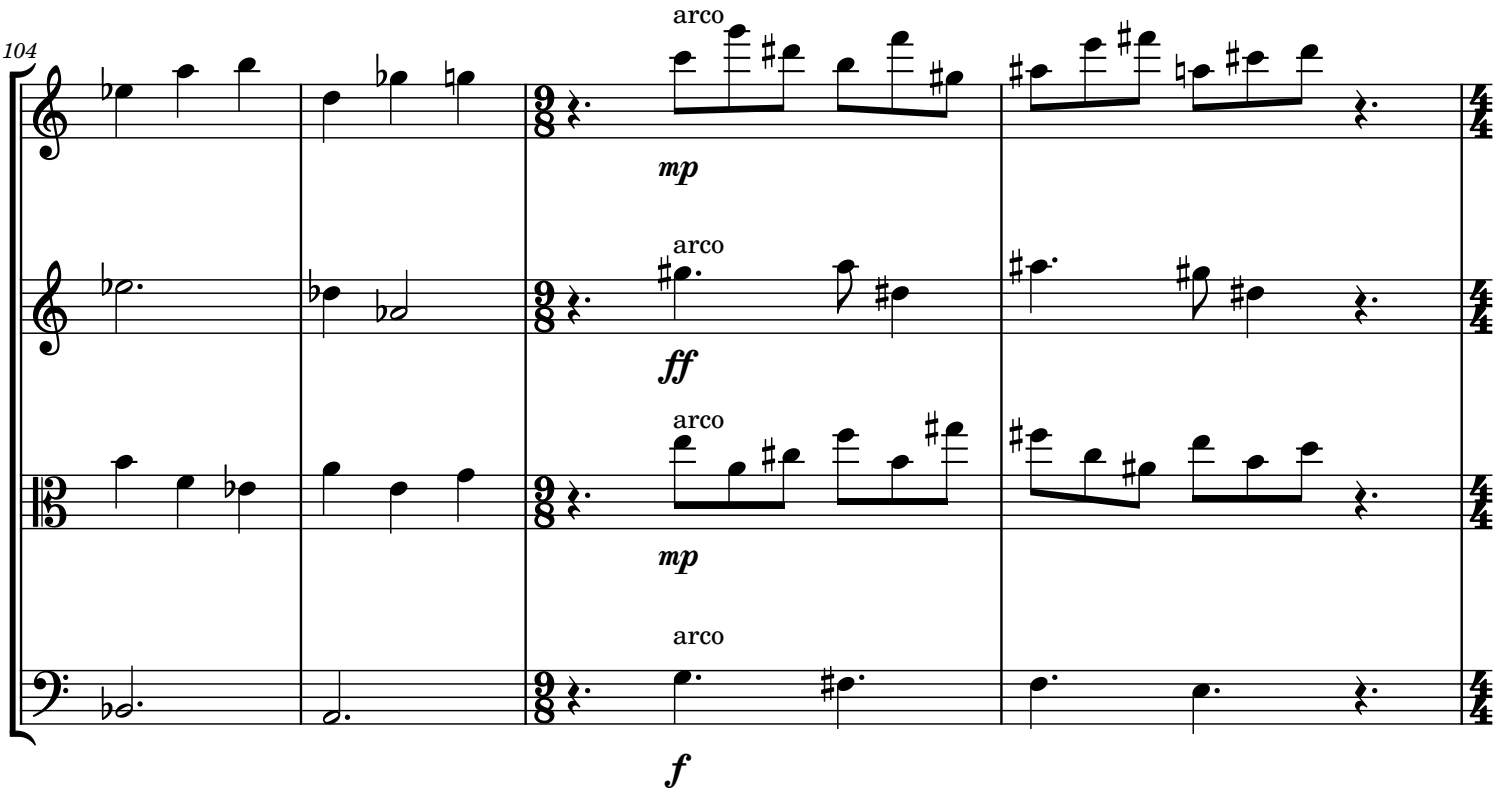

64
pizz.
p
pizz.
p
p
p
♩. = 70
A tempo
68
arco
ppp
pp
arco
ppp
pp
ppp
f
ppp
mp

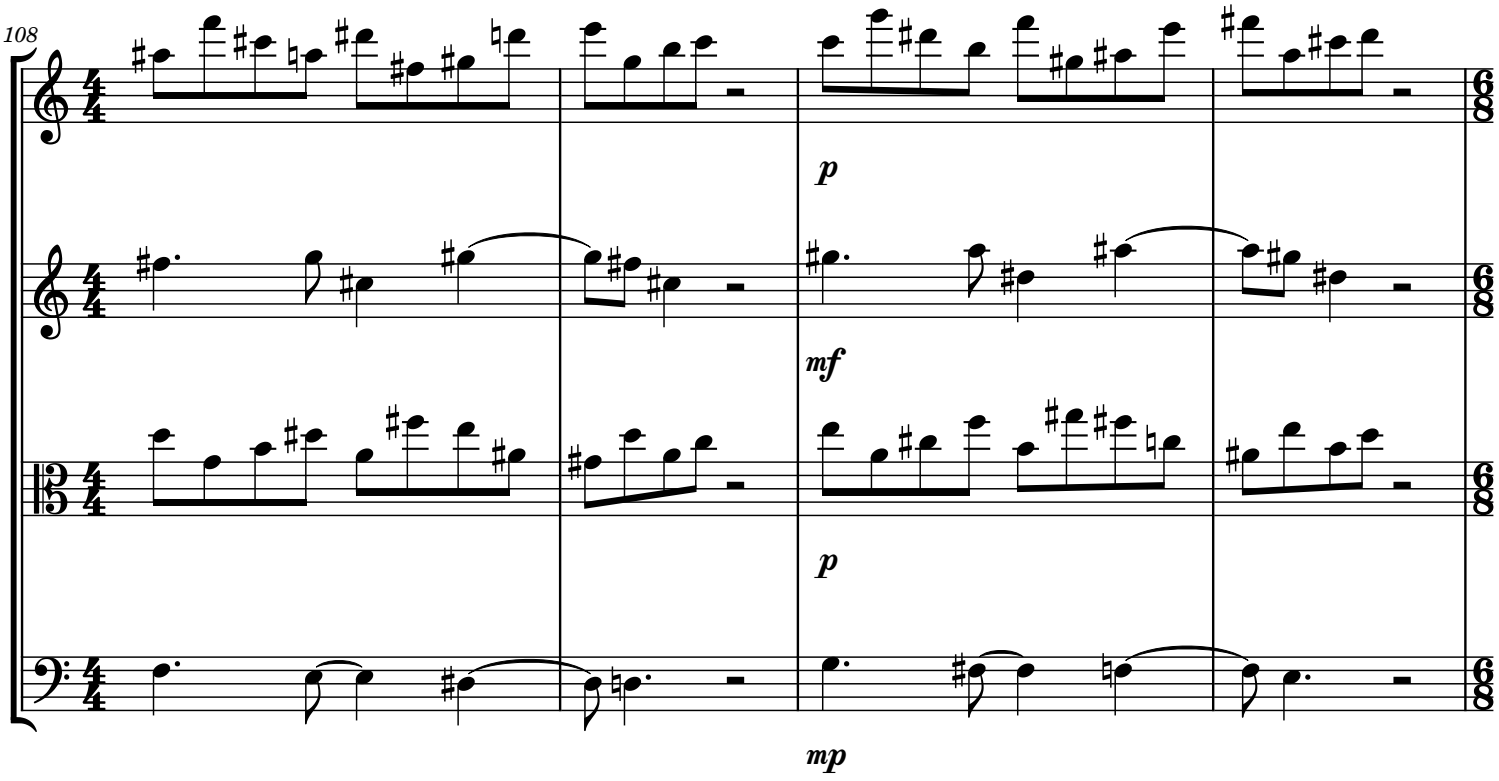

75
pizz.
arco
pizz.
p
pizz.
arco
p
f
pizz.
mp
f

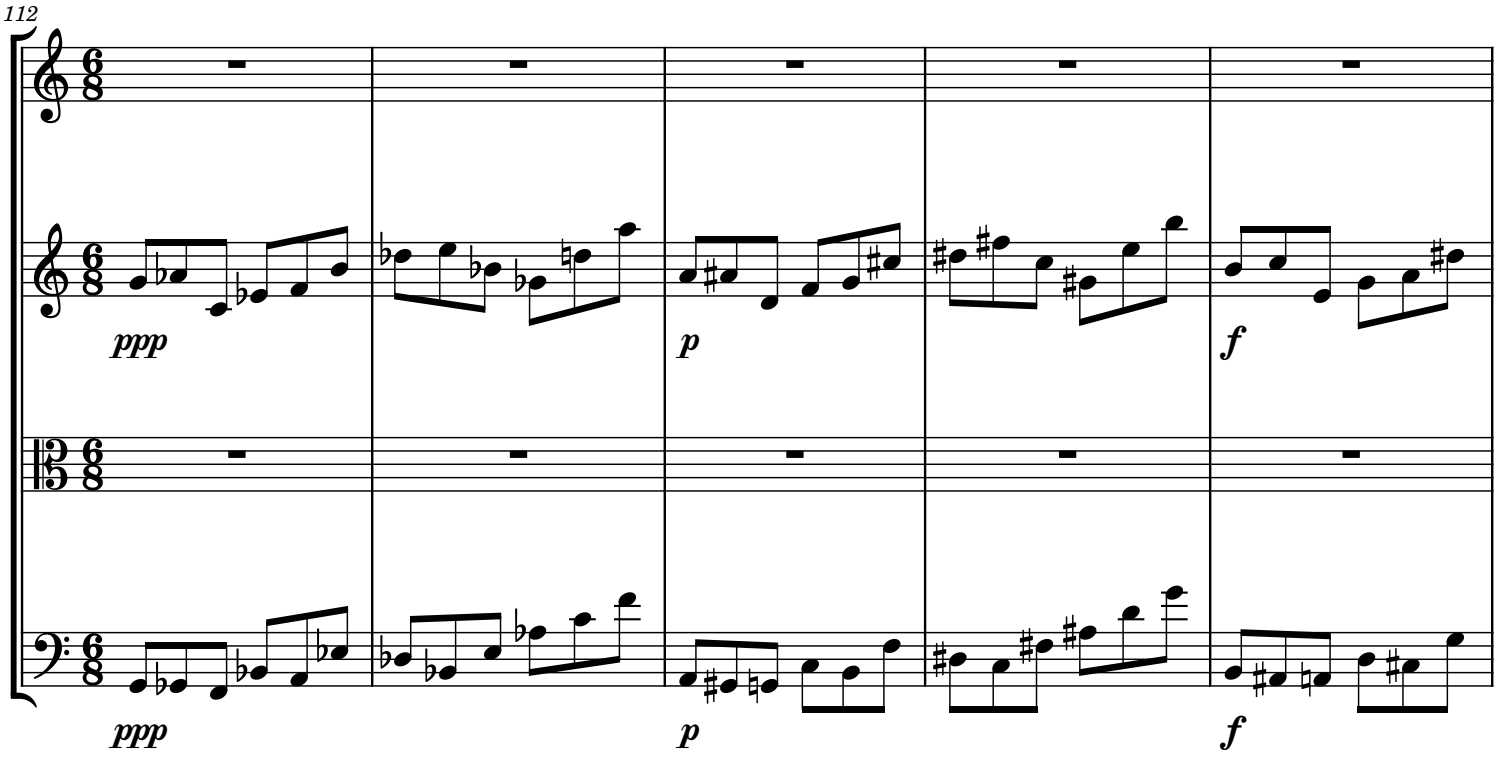

80
arco
arco
arco
ff
pizz.
arco
mf

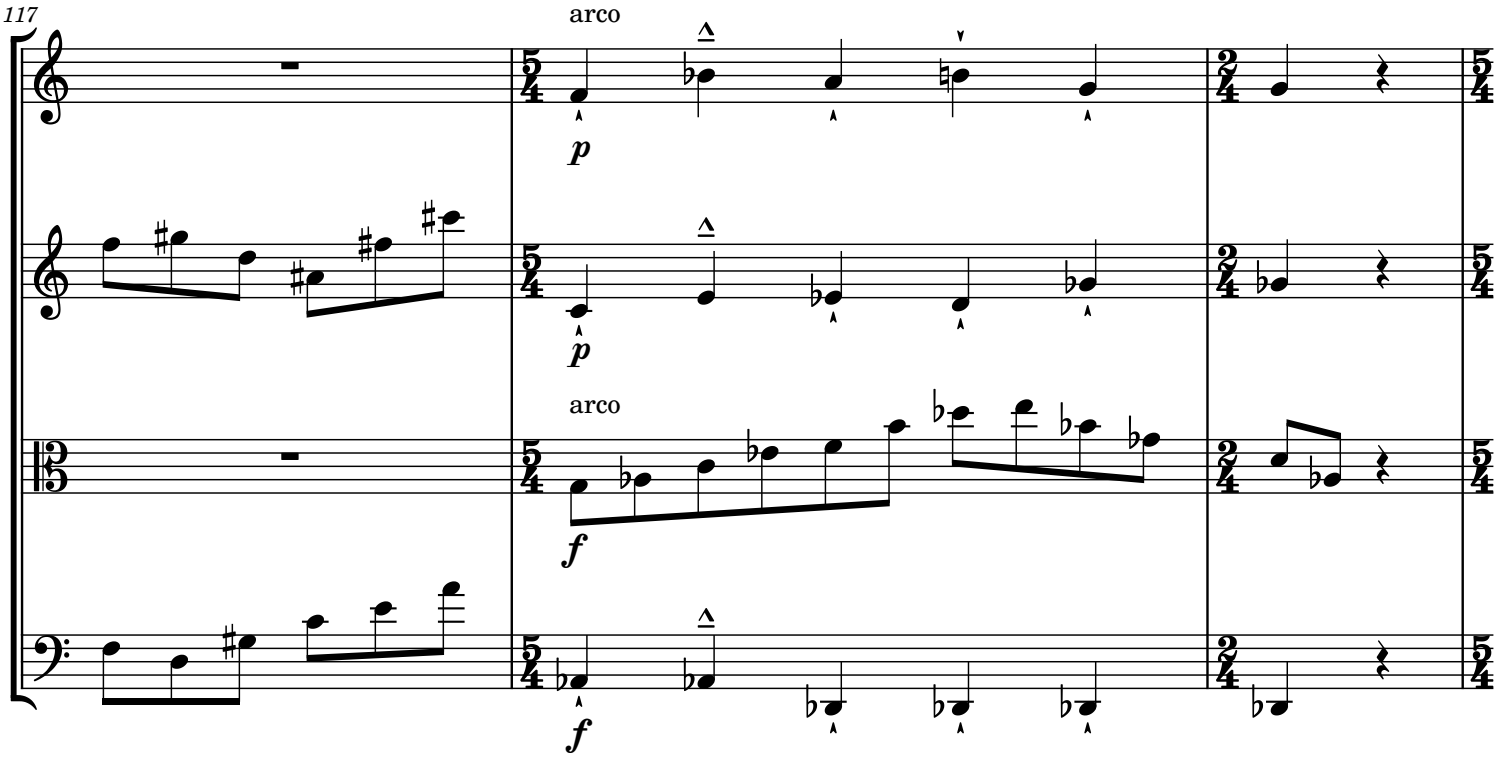

♩ = 80
85
pizz.
arco
mf
pp
pizz.
arco
mf
pp
pizz.
arco
pp
mf
pp
93
ppp
mf
ppp
ppp
mf
ppp

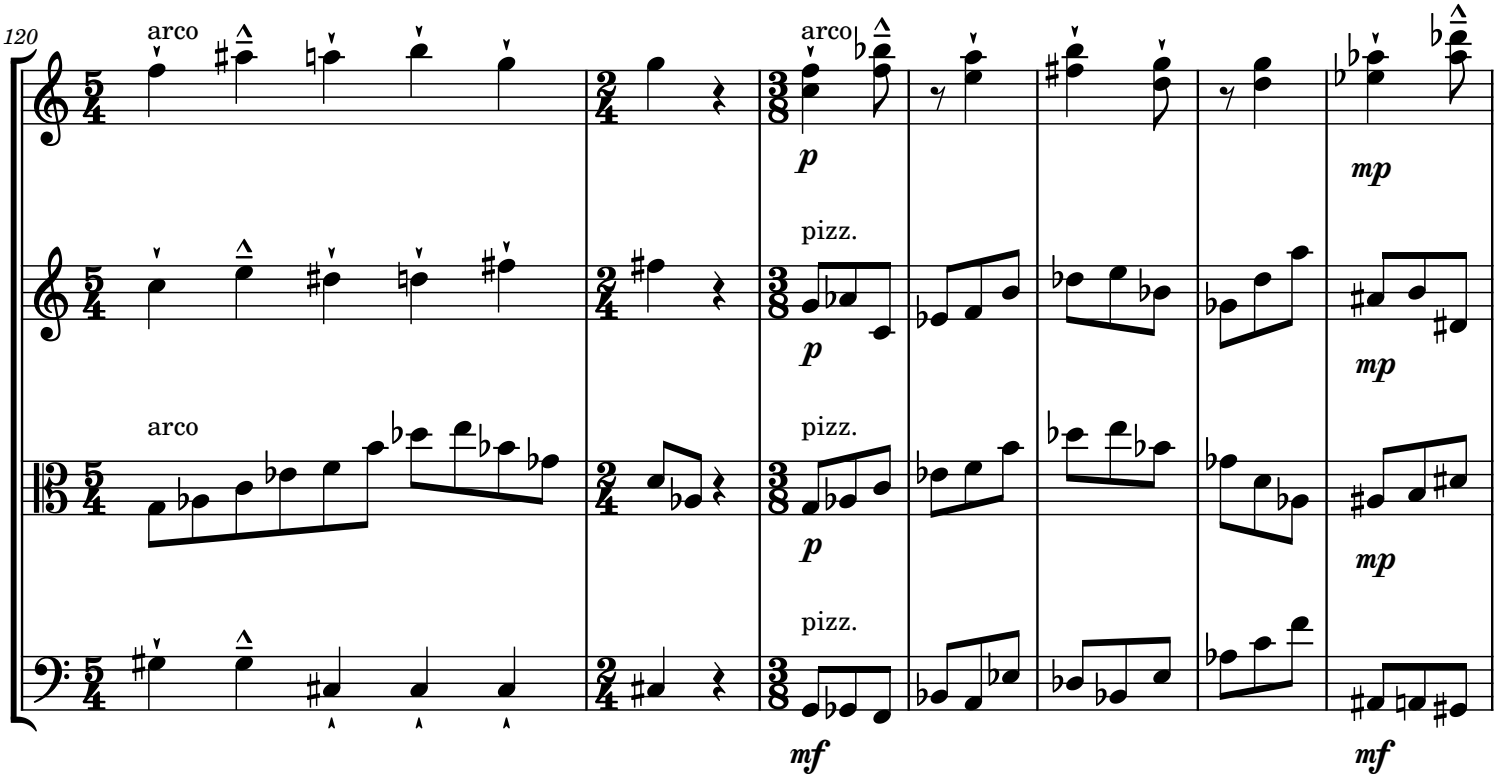

99
pizz.
pp
mf
pp
pizz.
pp
mf
pp

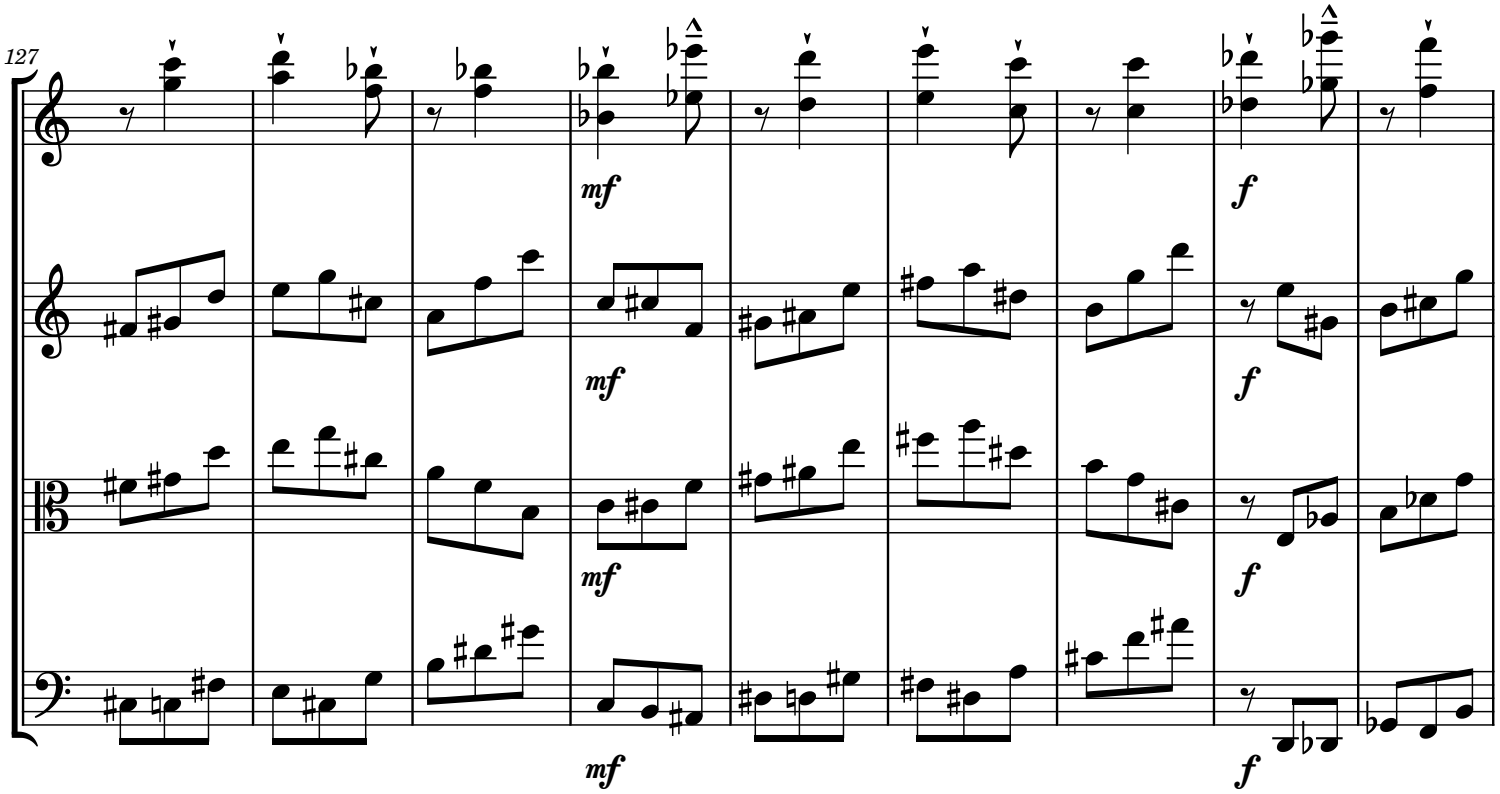

104
arco
mp
arco
ff
arco
mp
arco
f

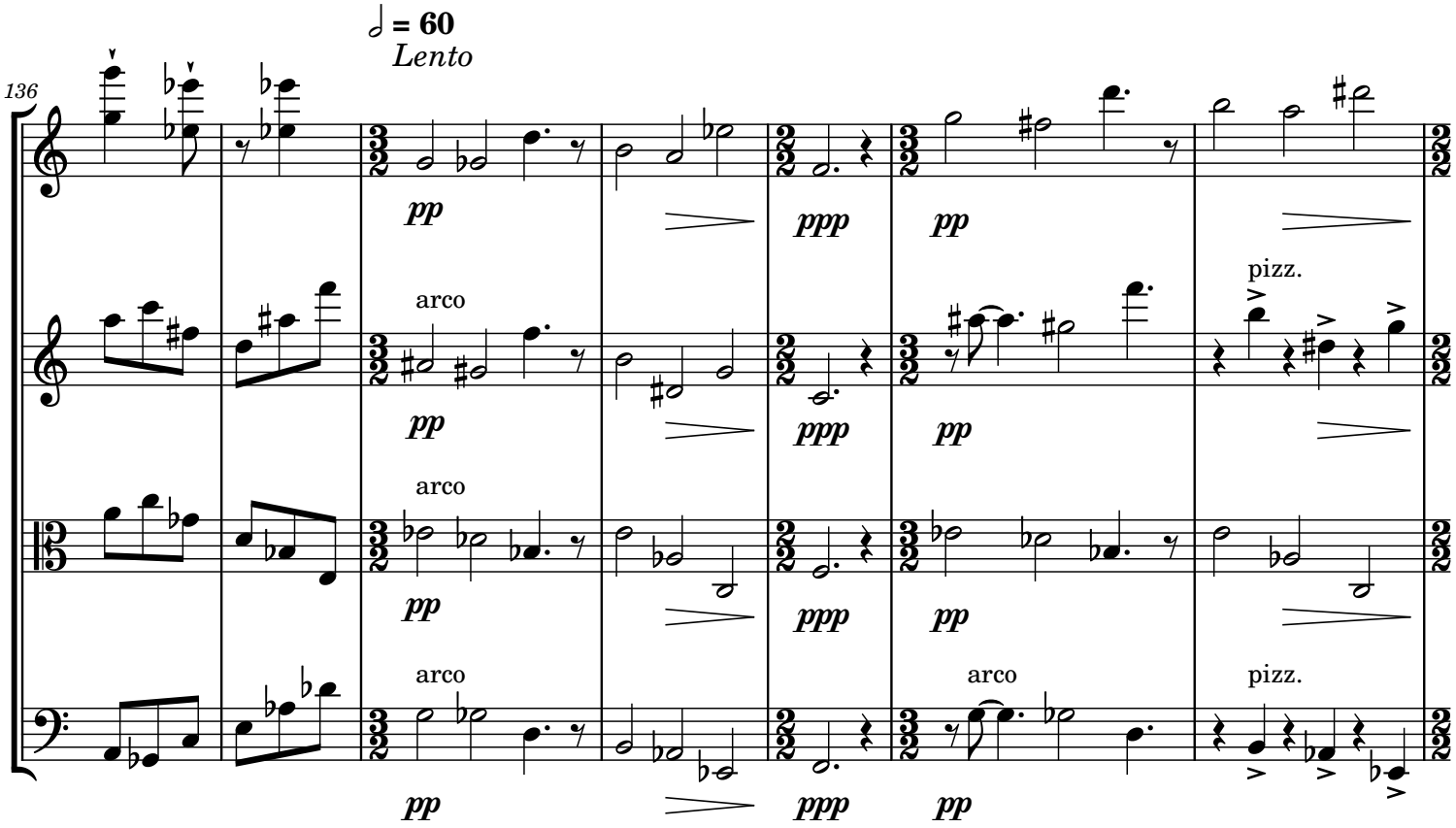

108
p
mf
p
mp

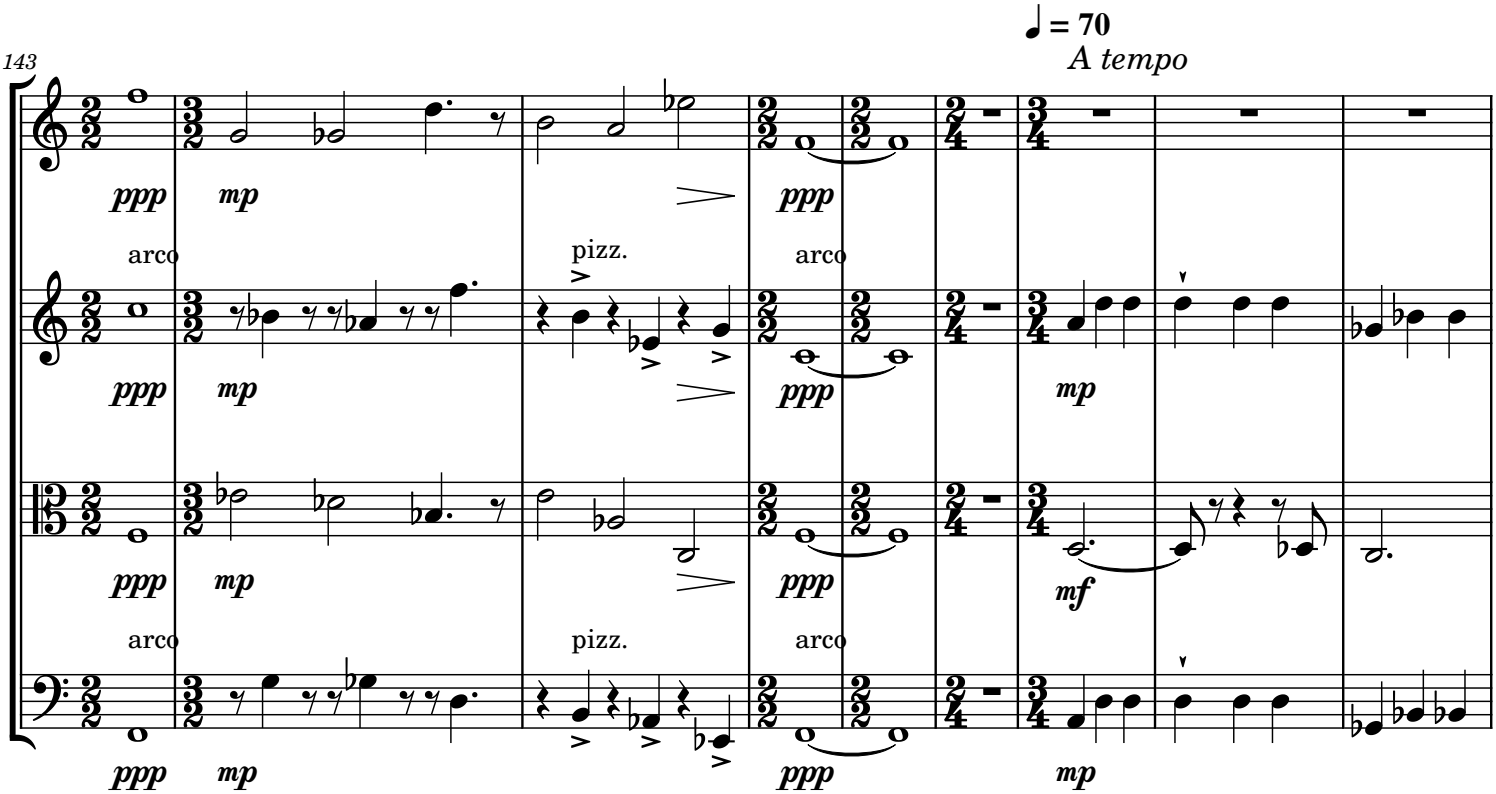

112
ppp
p
f
ppp
p
f

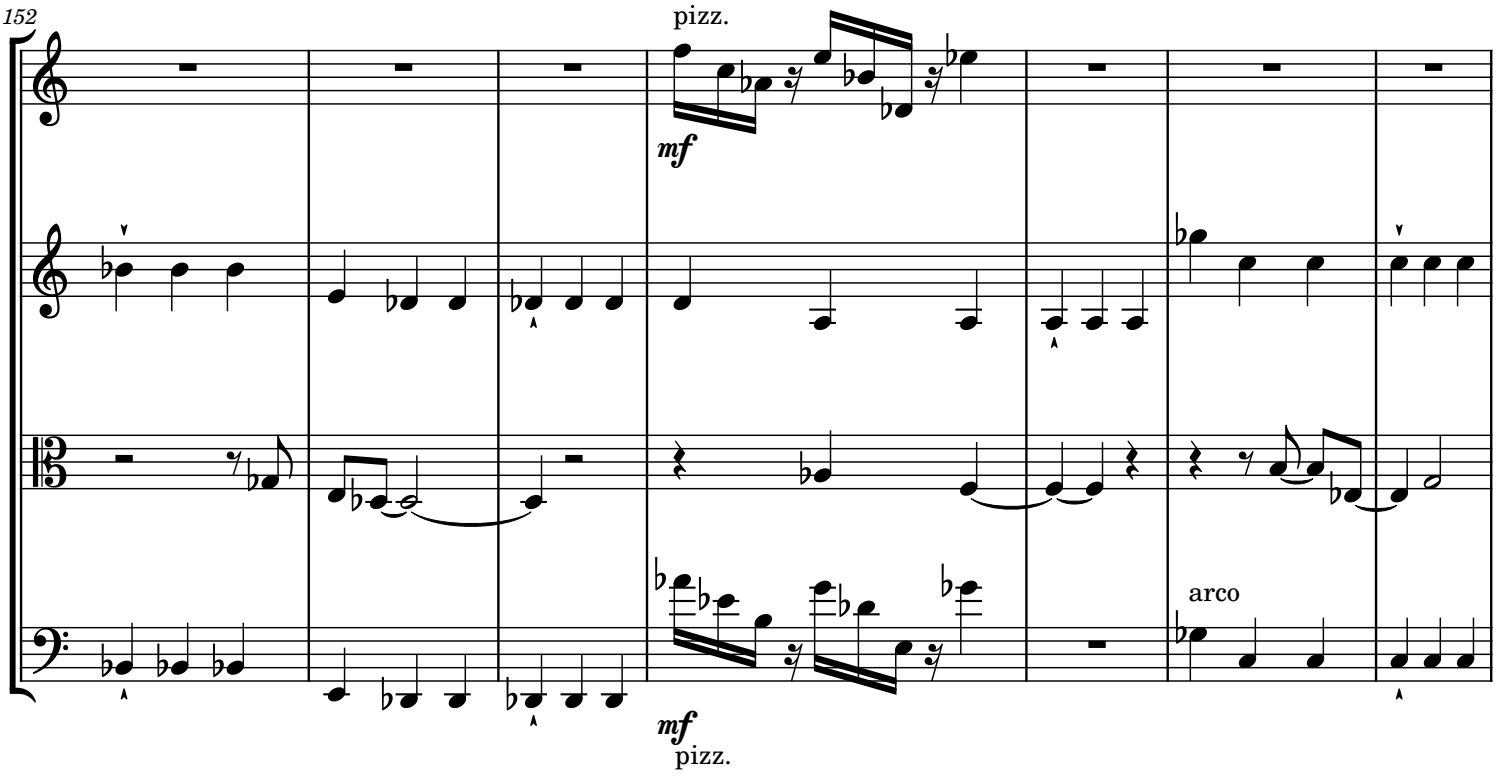

117
arco
p
p
arco
f
f

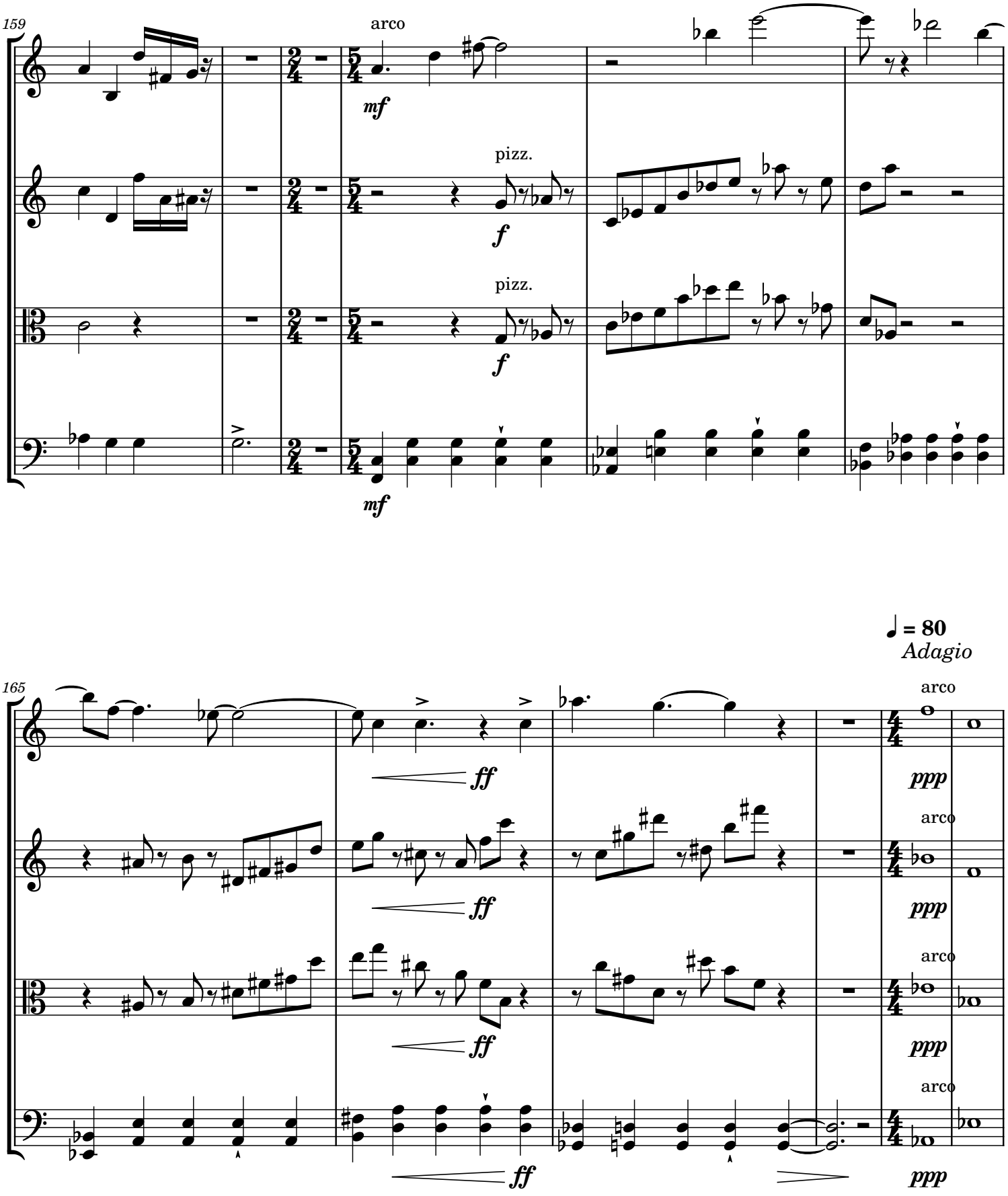

120
arco
arco
p
mp
pizz.
p
mp
arco
pizz.
p
mp
pizz.
mf
mf

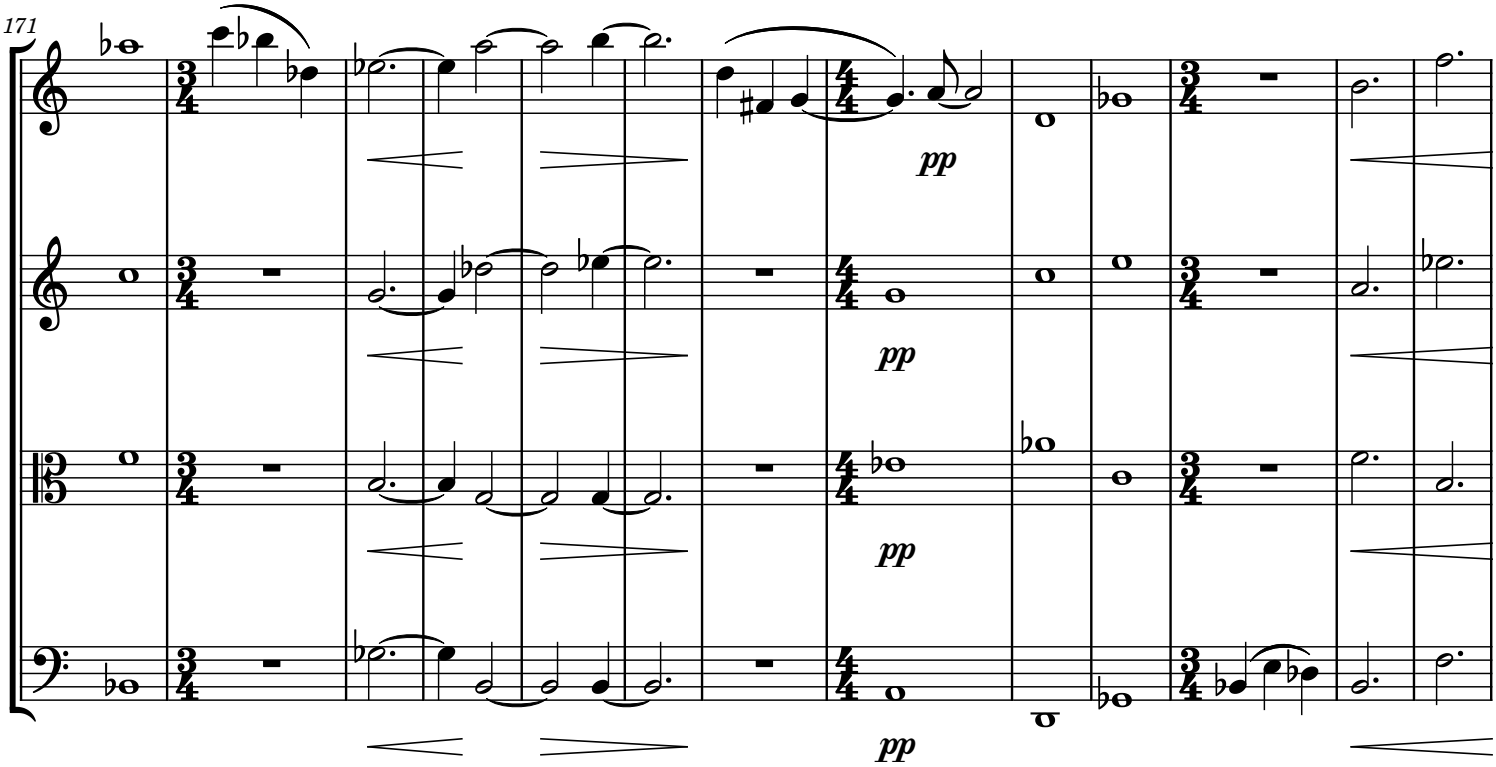

127
mf
mf
mf
mf
f
f
f
f

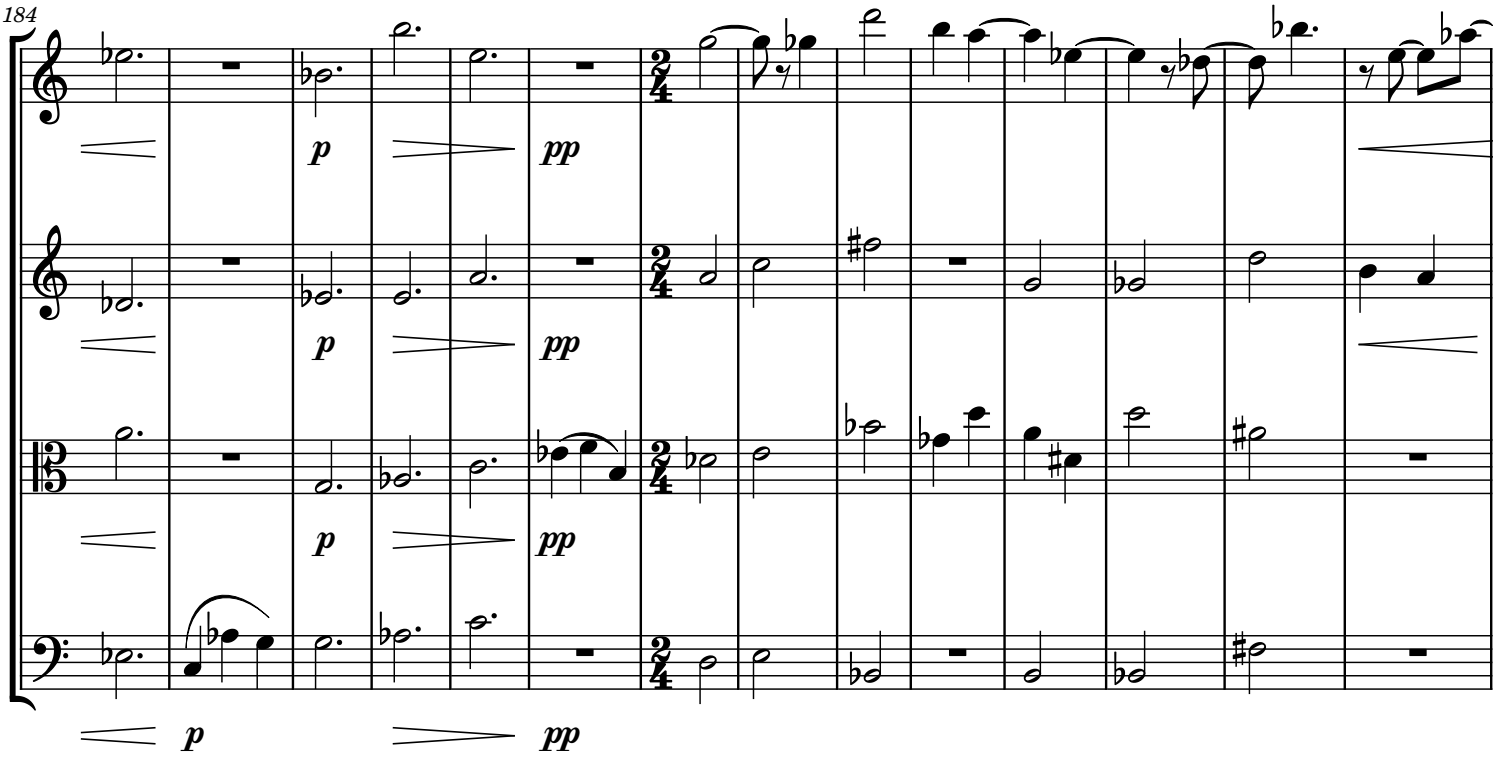

136
♩ = 60
Lento
pp
ppp
pp
arco
pizz.
arco
arco
arco
pizz.

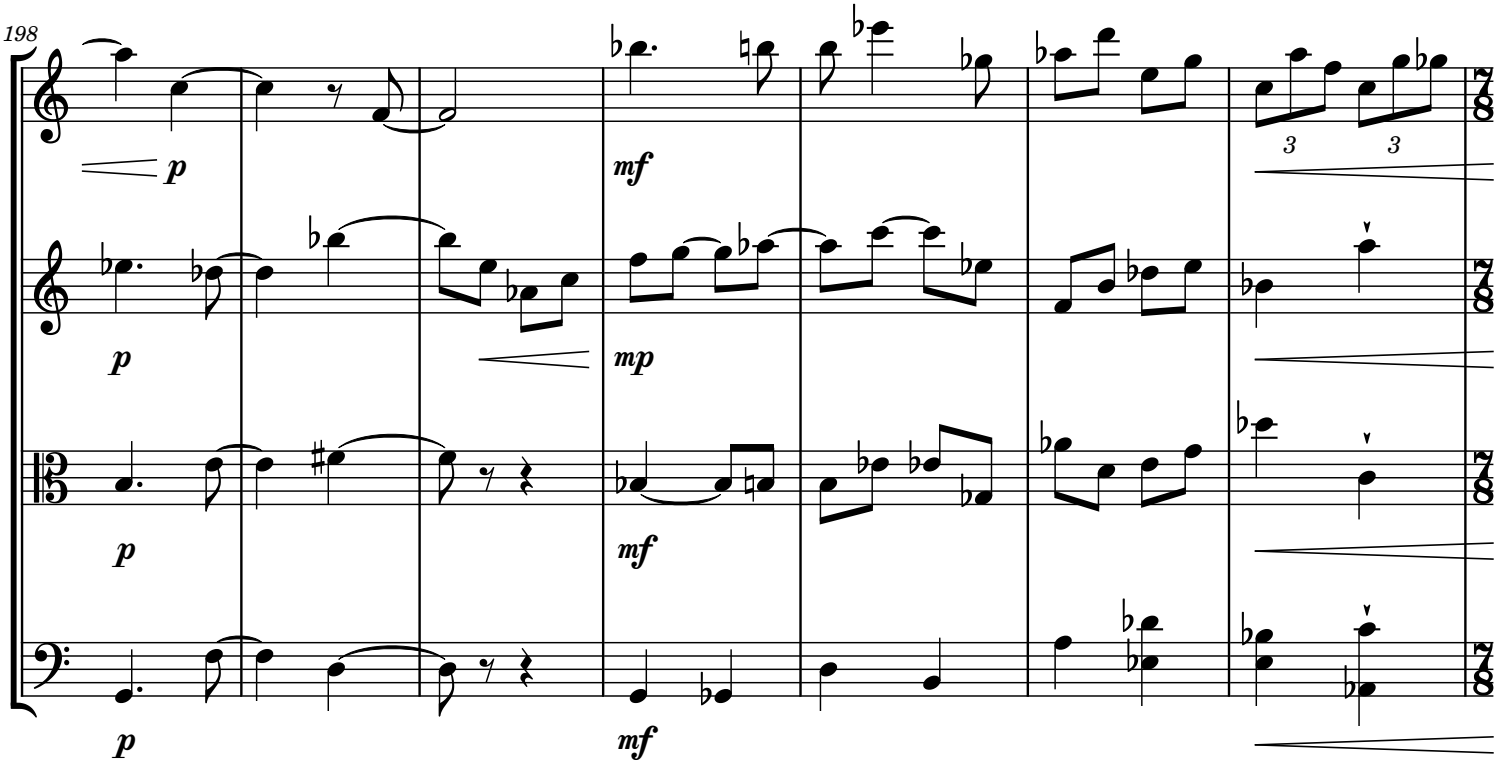

143
♩ = 70
A tempo
ppp
mp
arco
pizz.
mf

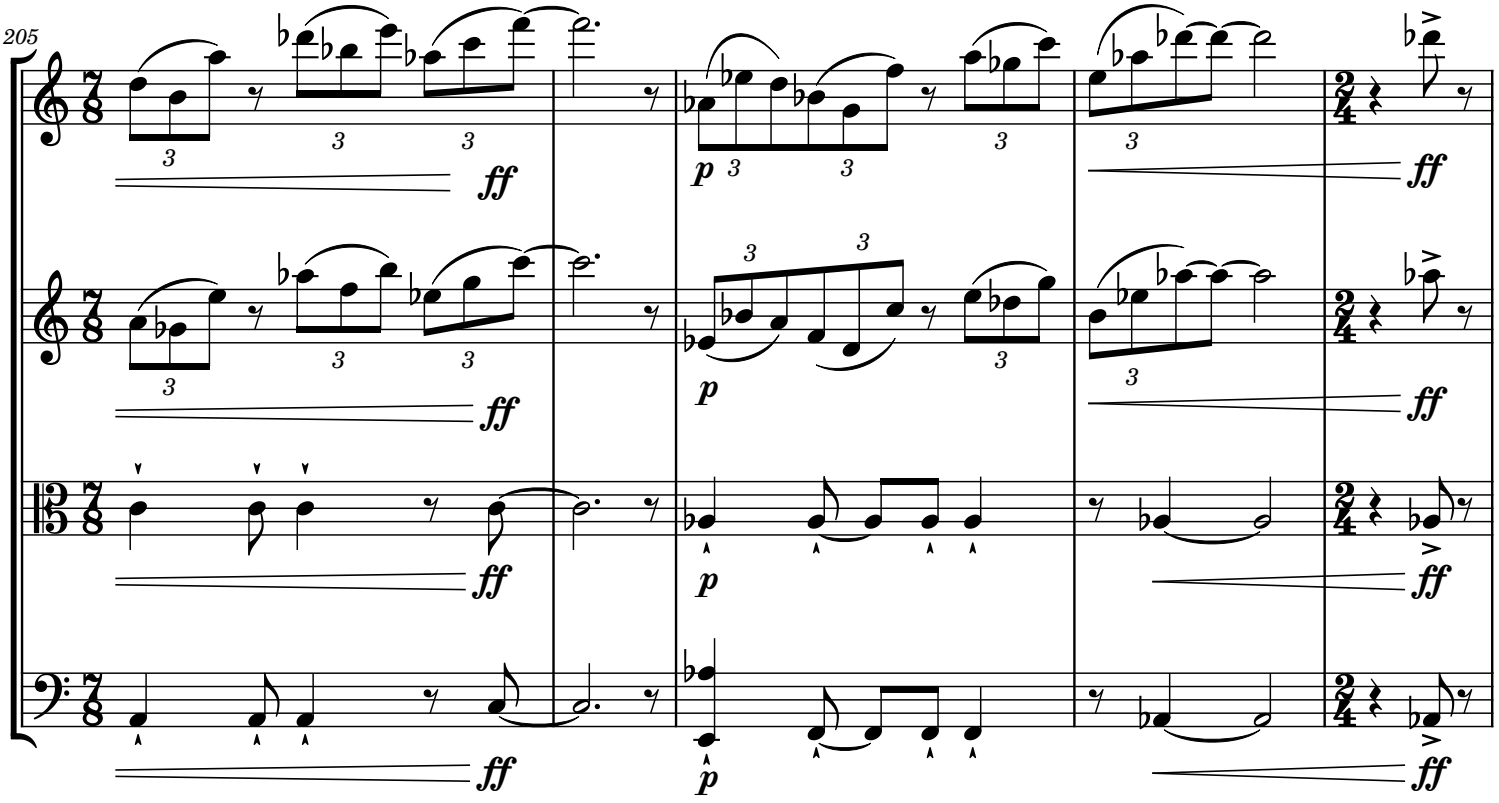

152
pizz.
mf
arco

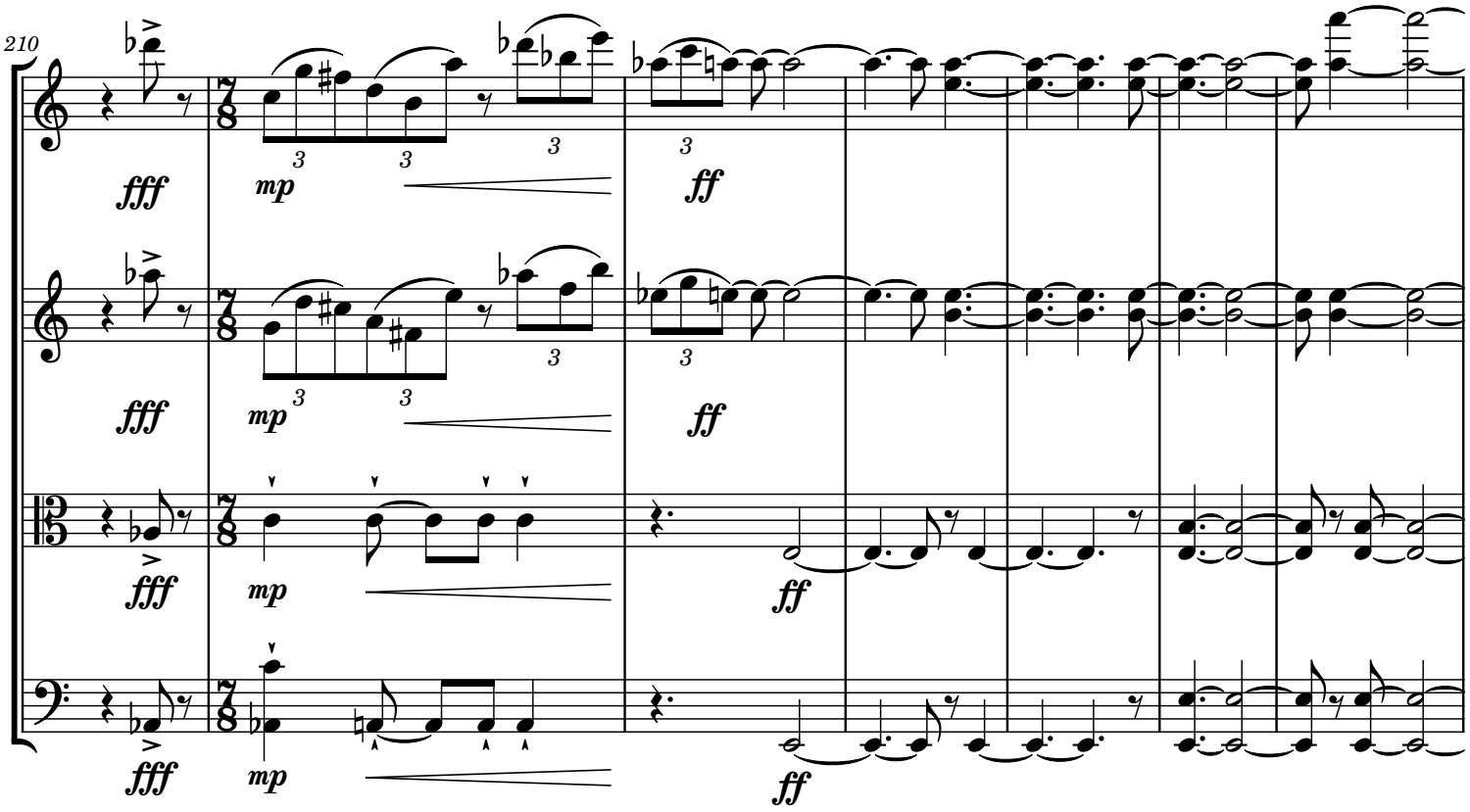

159
arco
mf
pizz.
f
pizz.
f
mf
♩ = 80
Adagio
165
arco
ff
ppp
arco
ff
ppp
arco
ff
ppp
arco
ff
ppp

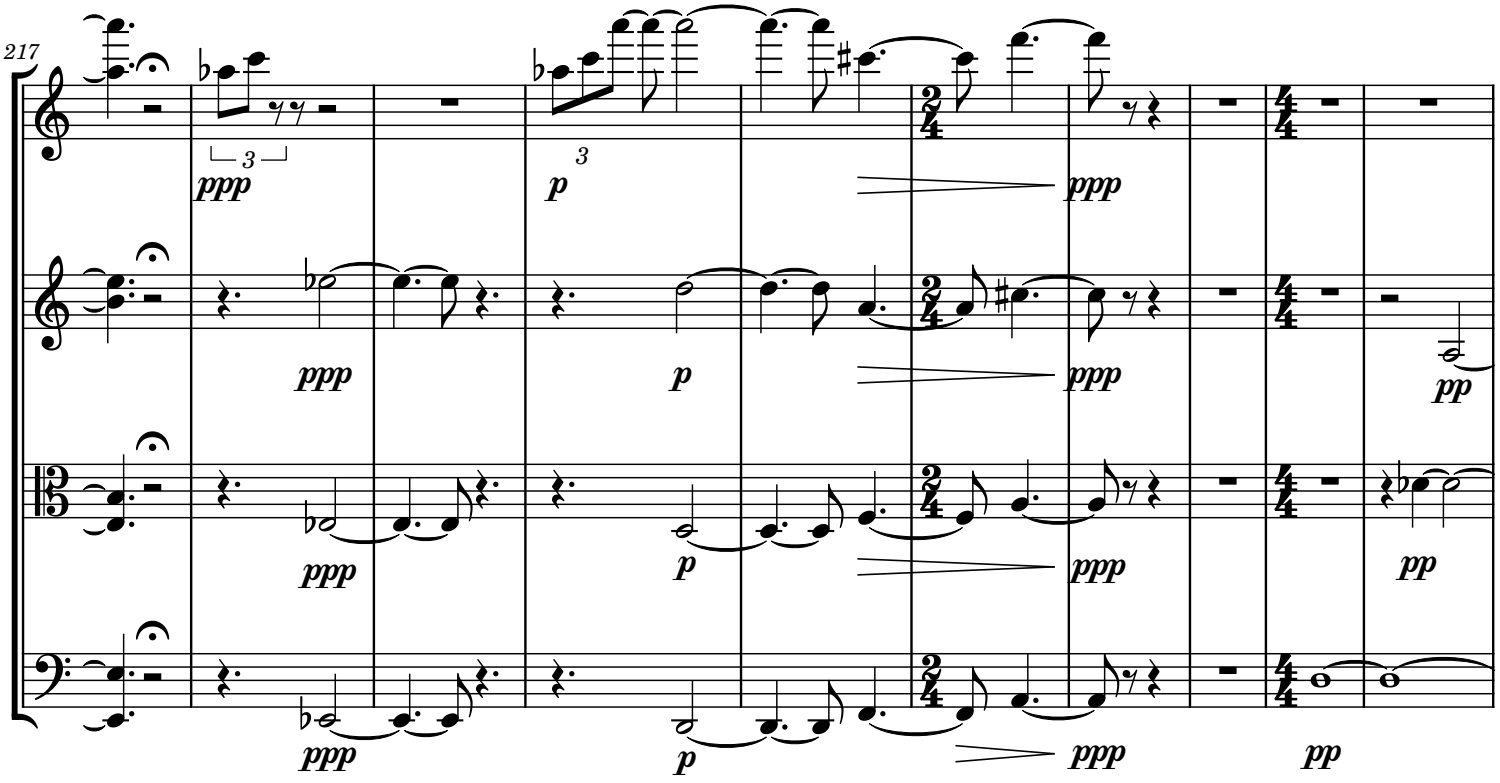

171
pp
pp
pp
pp

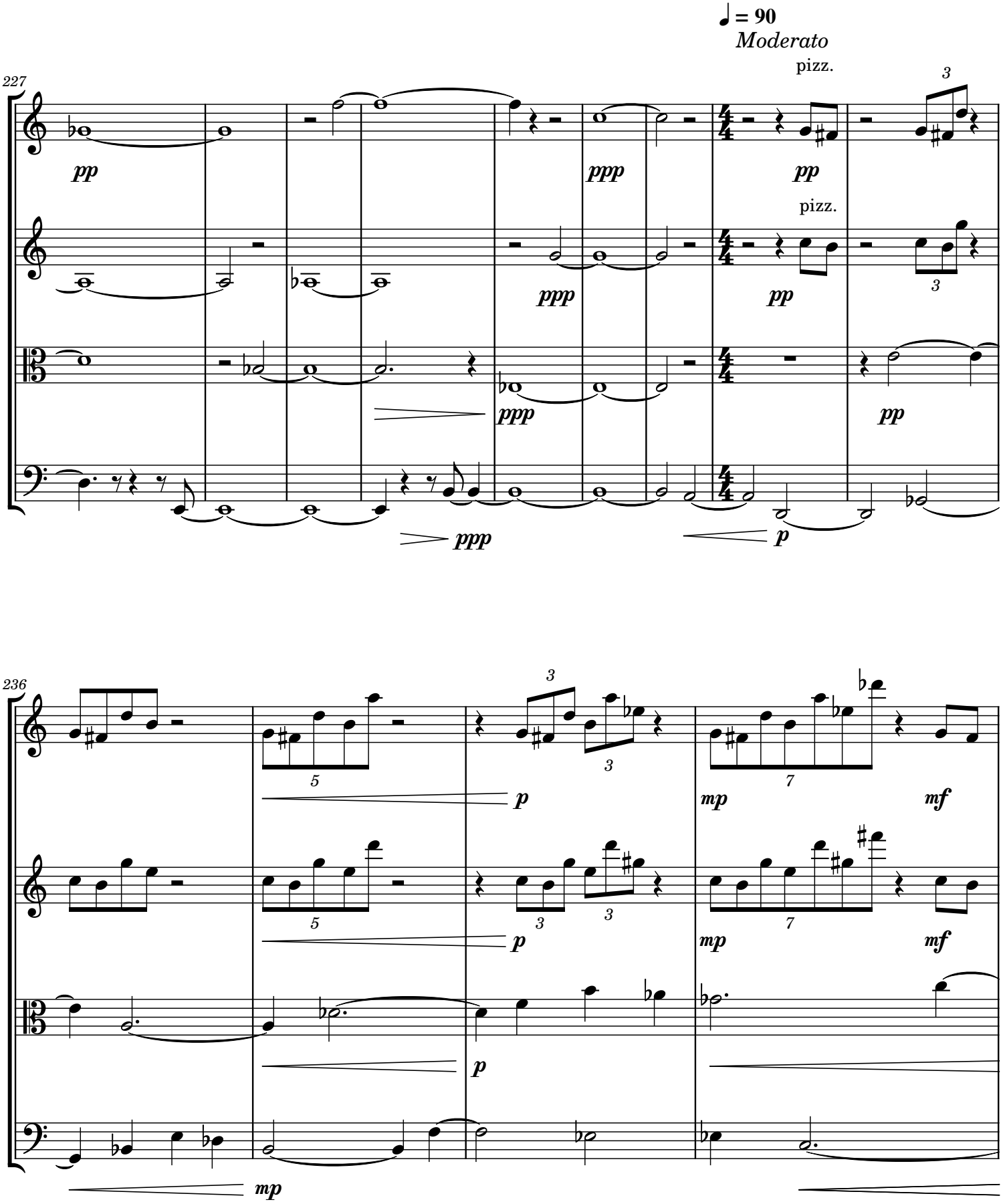

184
p
pp
p
pp
p
pp
p
pp

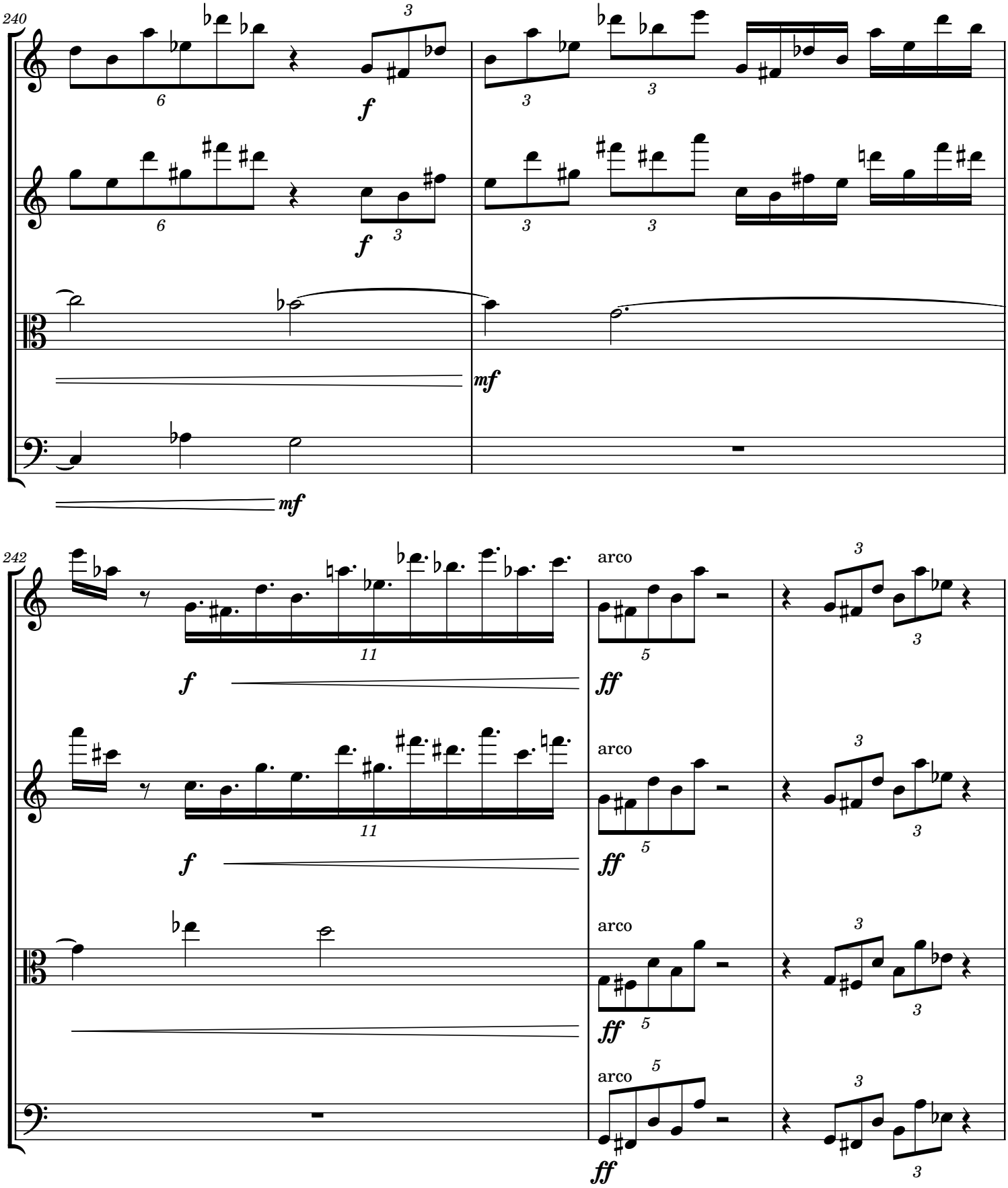

198
p
mf
p
mp
p
mf
p
mf

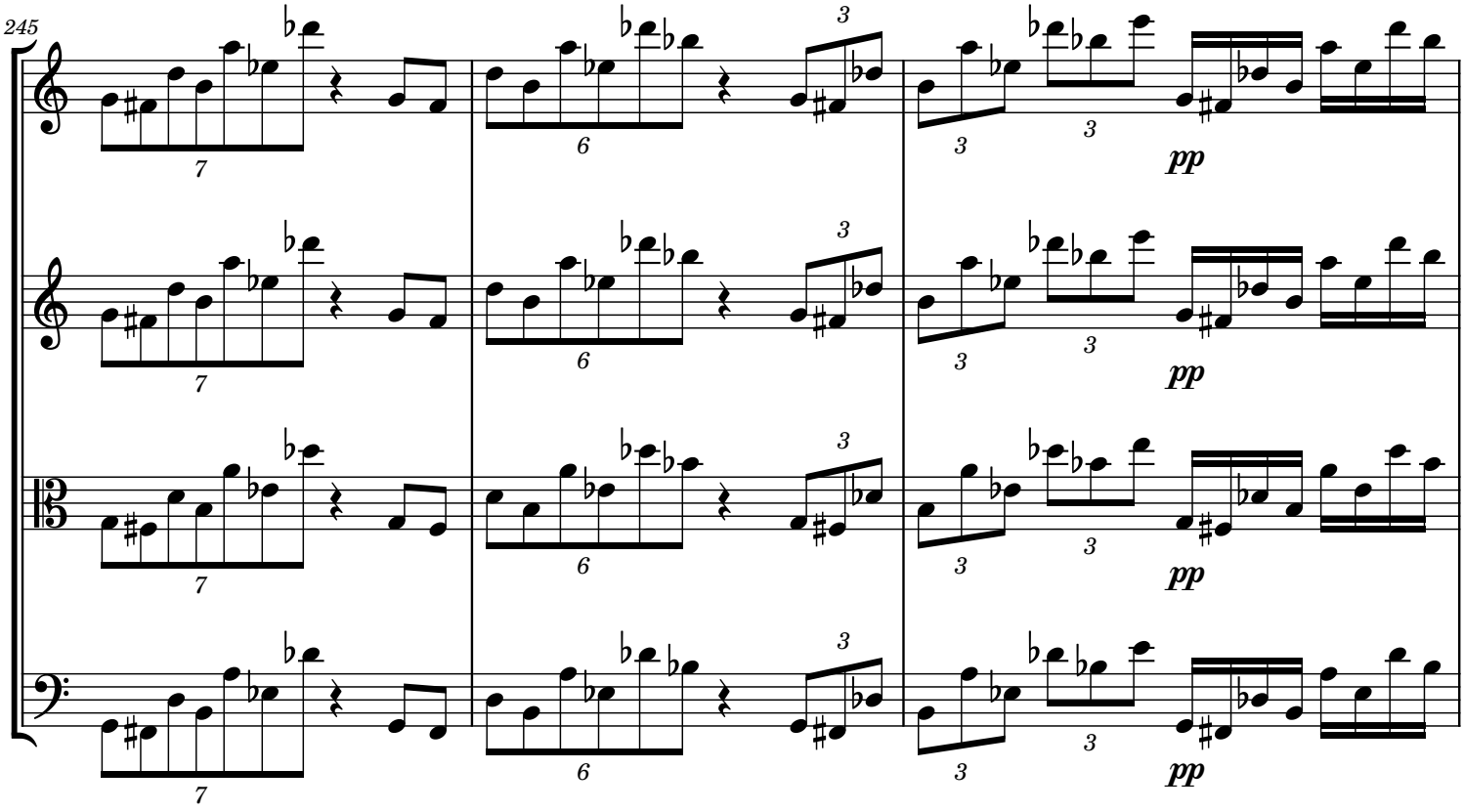

205
ff
p
ff
ff
p
ff
ff
p
ff

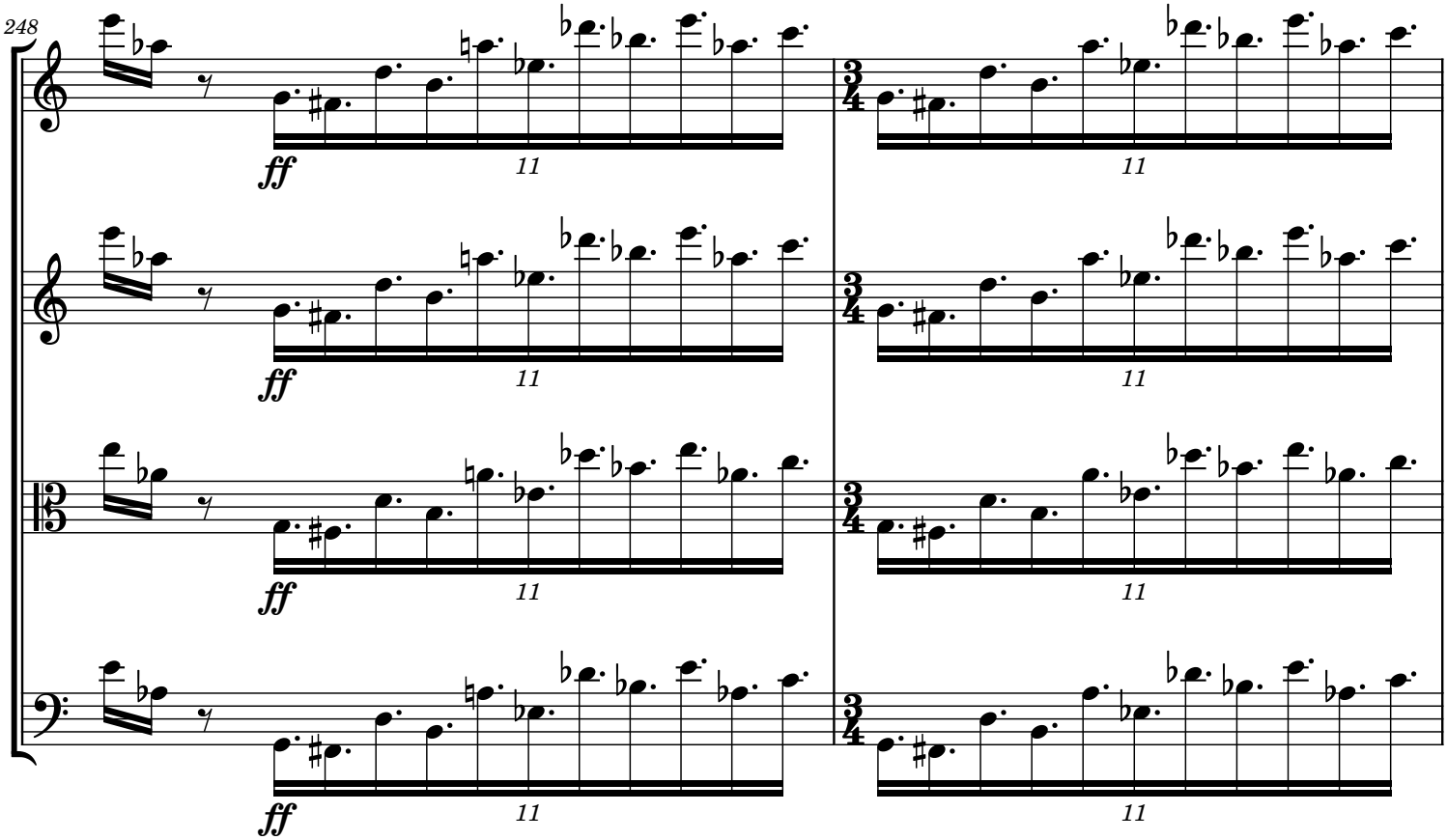

210
fff
mp
ff

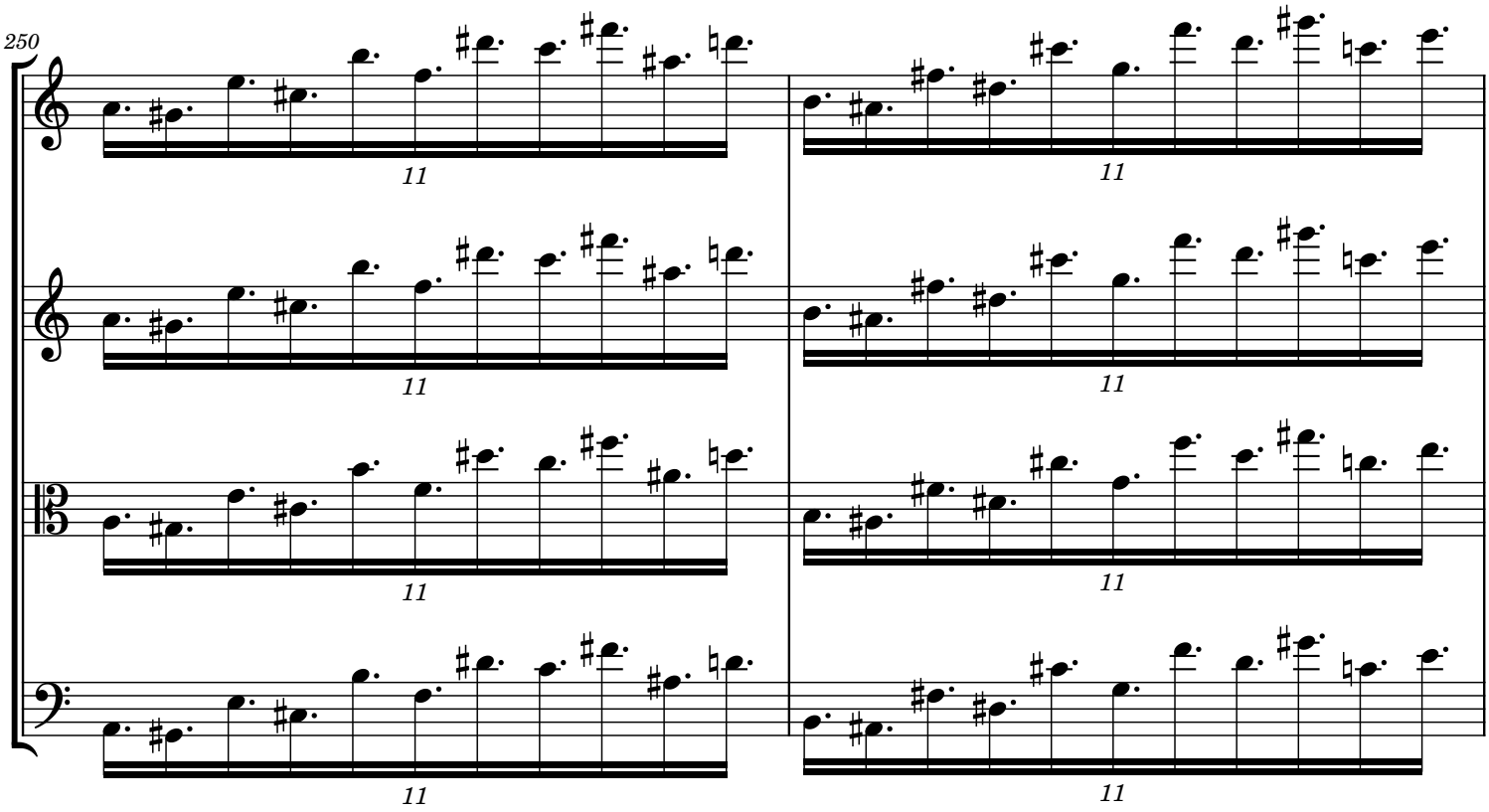

217
ppp
p
pp

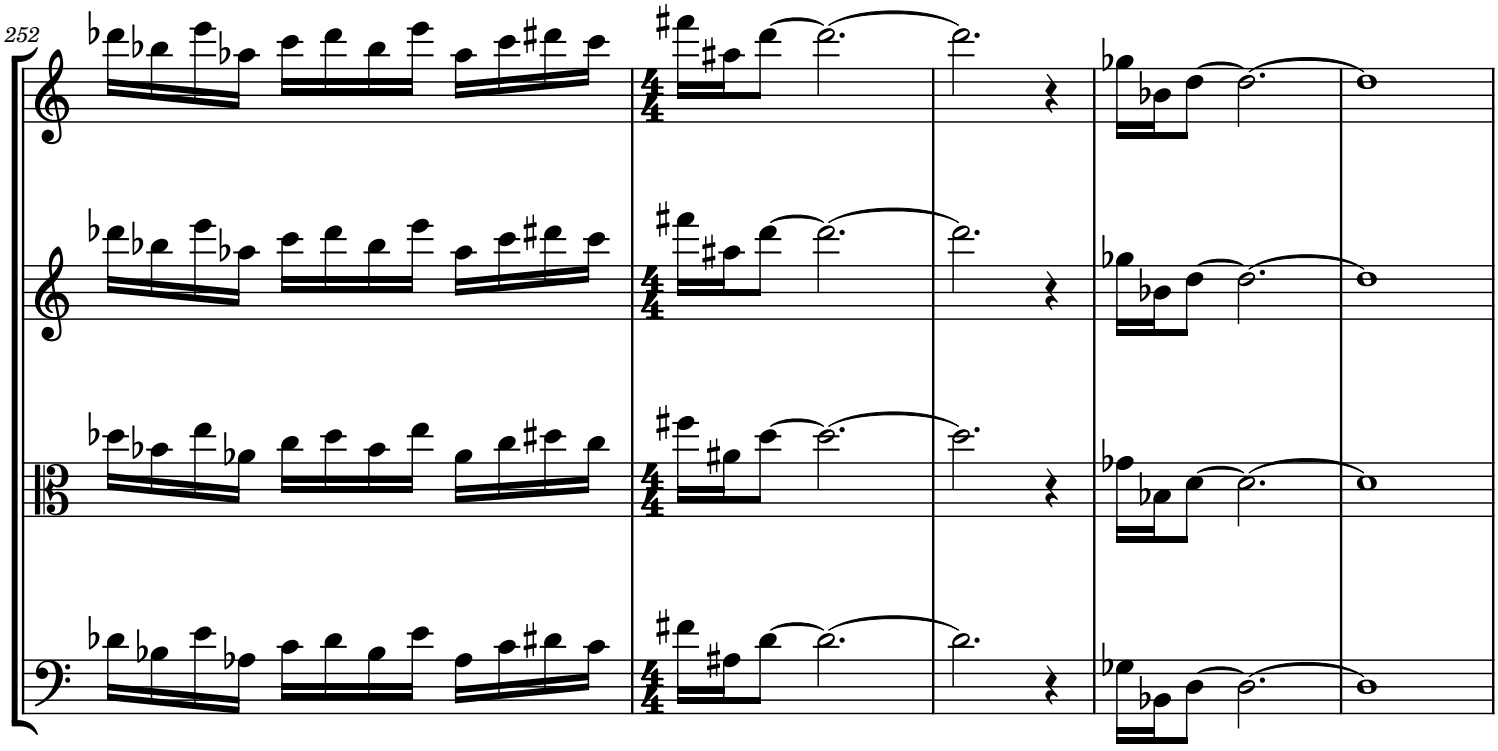

♩ = 90
Moderato
227
pizz.
pizz.
236

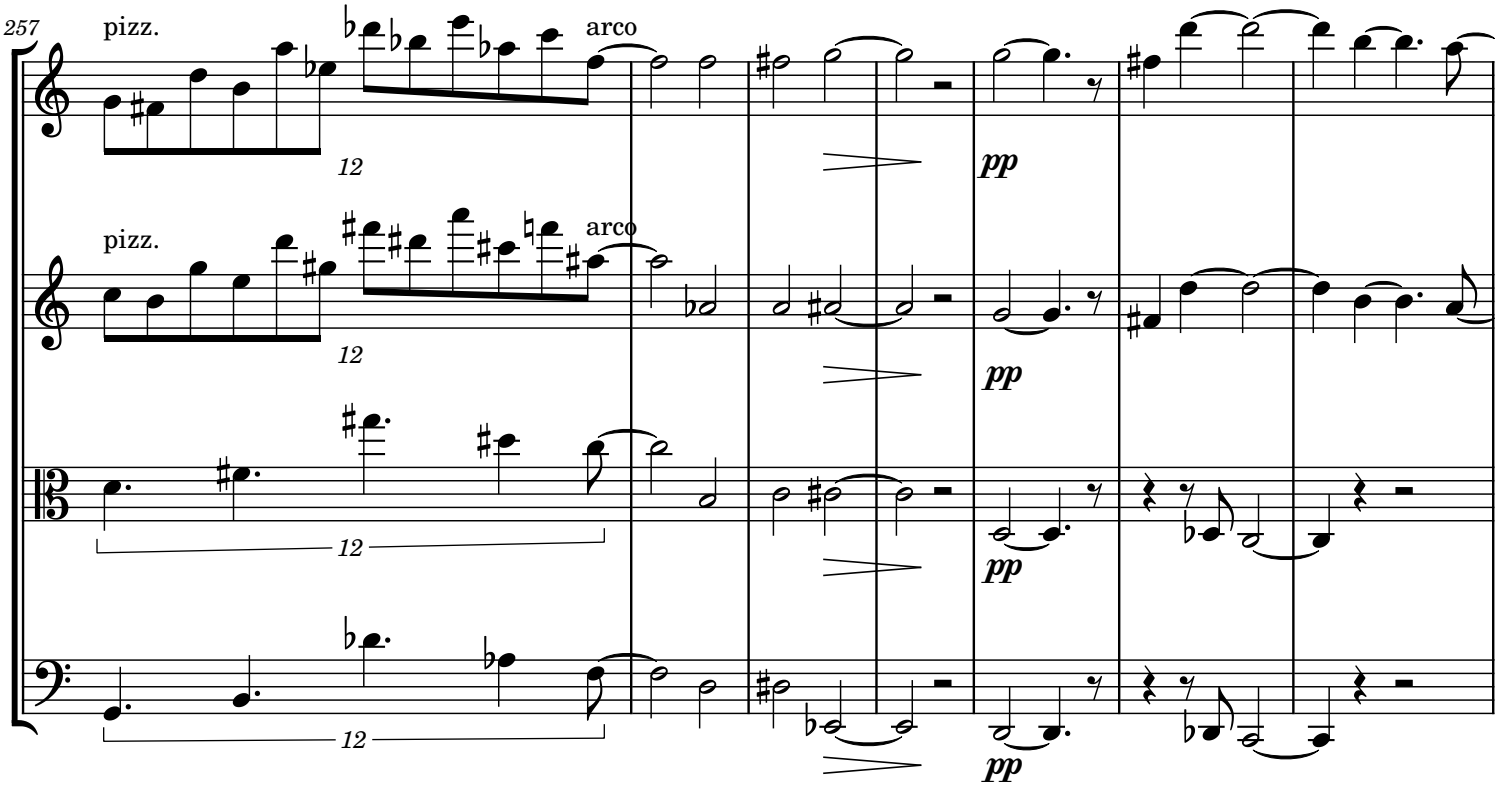

240
f
mf
242
arco
ff

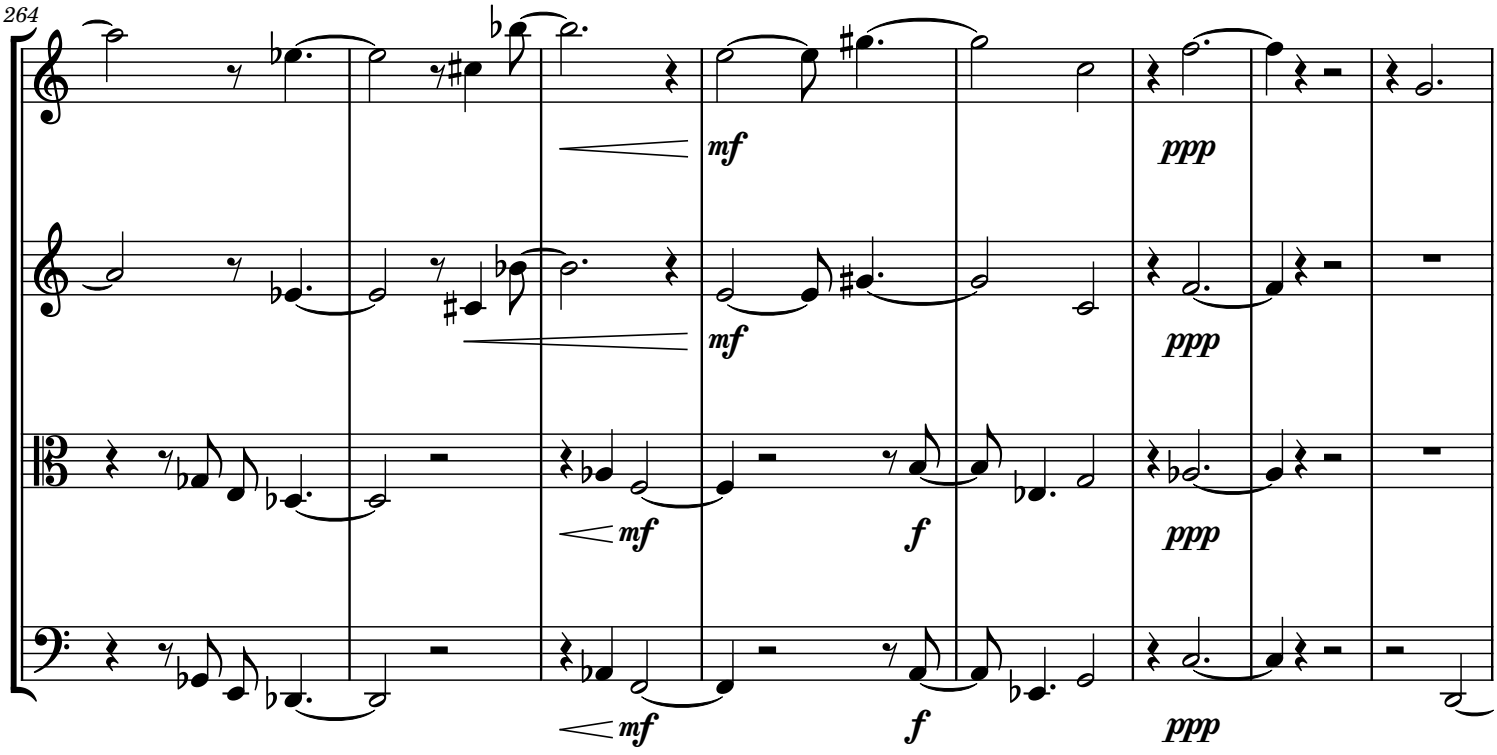

245
7
6
3
pp

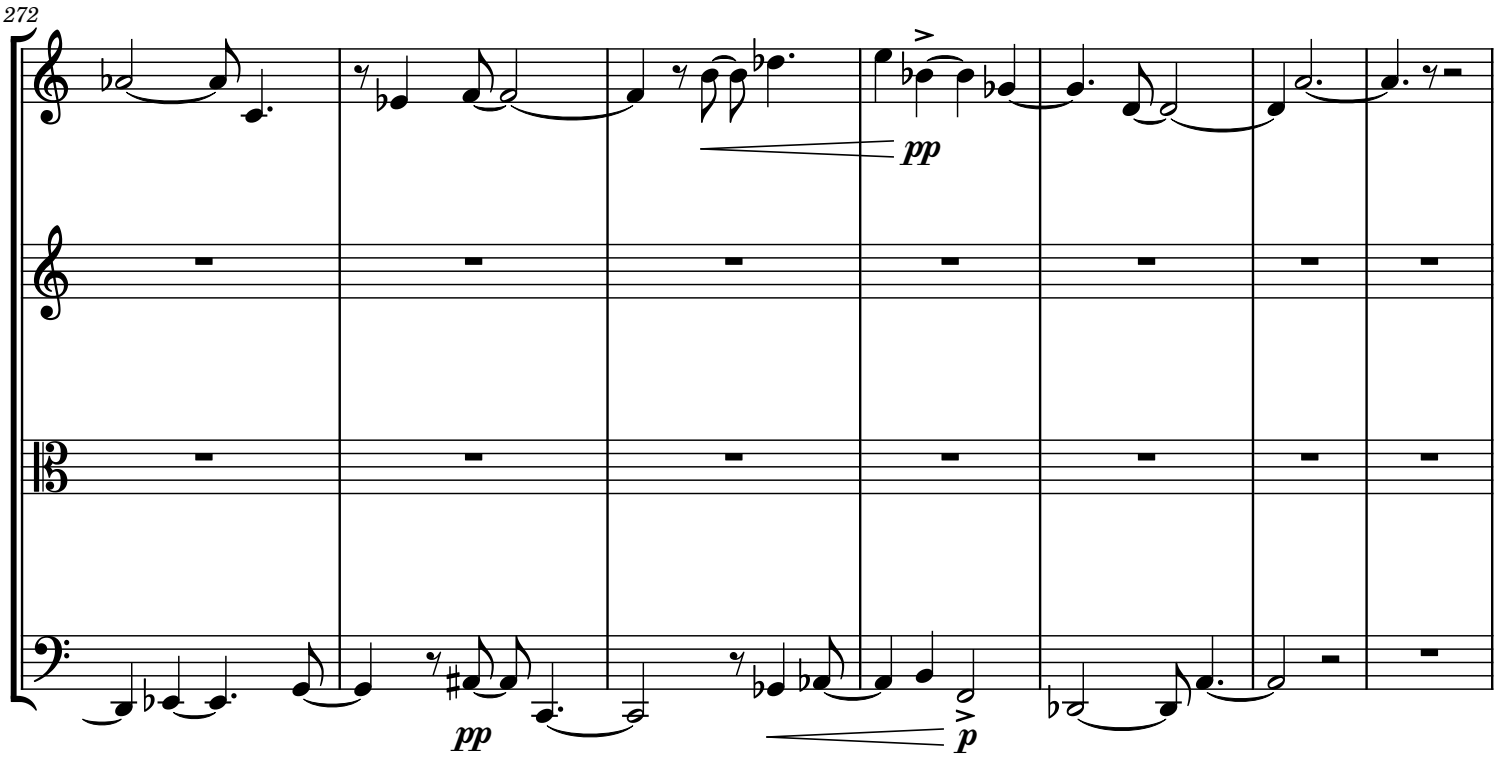

248
ff
11

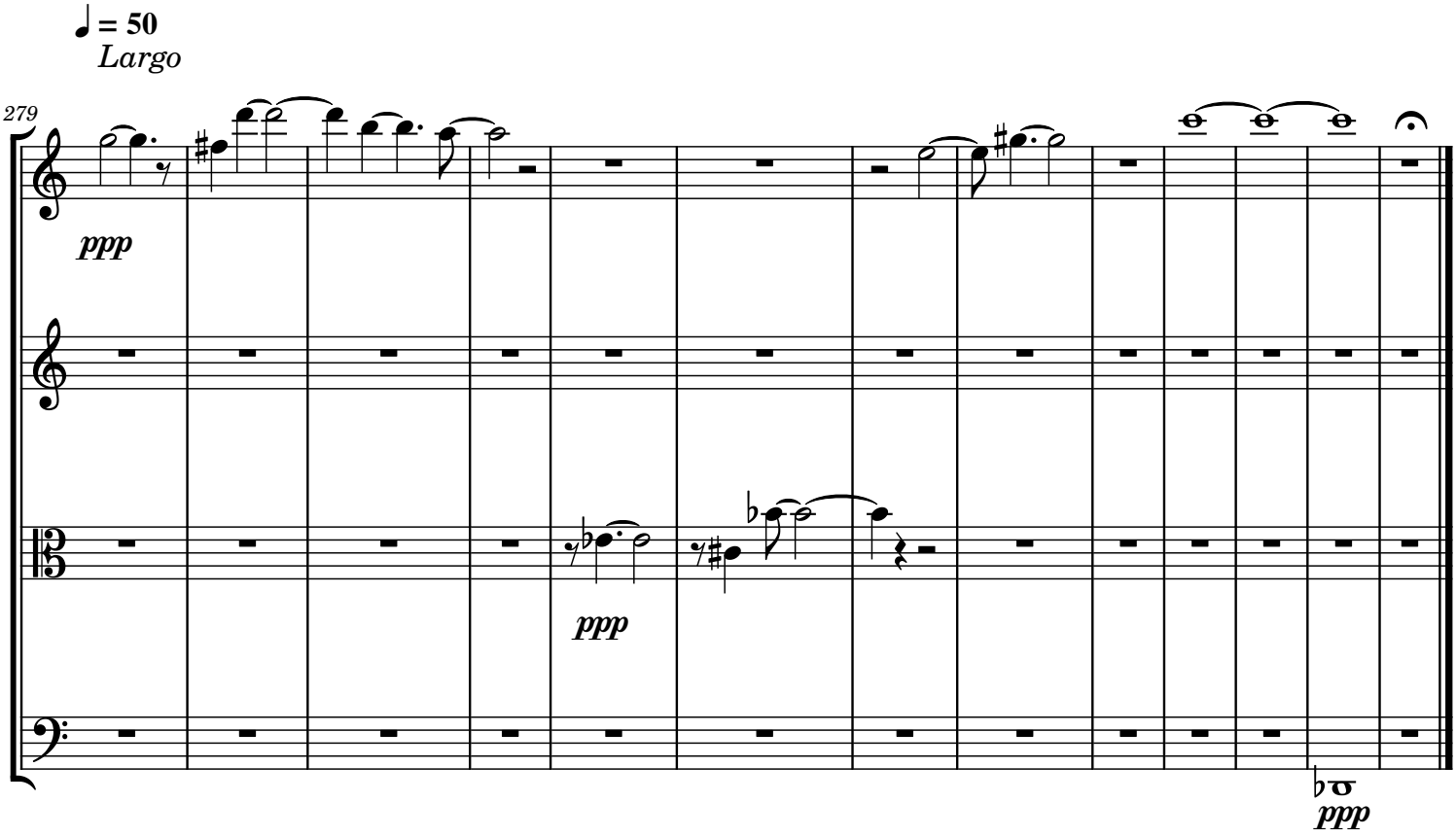

250
11
11
11
11
11
11
11
11


252


257
pizz.
arco
12
pizz.
arco
12
12
12
pp
pp
pp
pp


264
mf
mf
mf
f
ppp
ppp
ppp
ppp


272
pp
pp
p

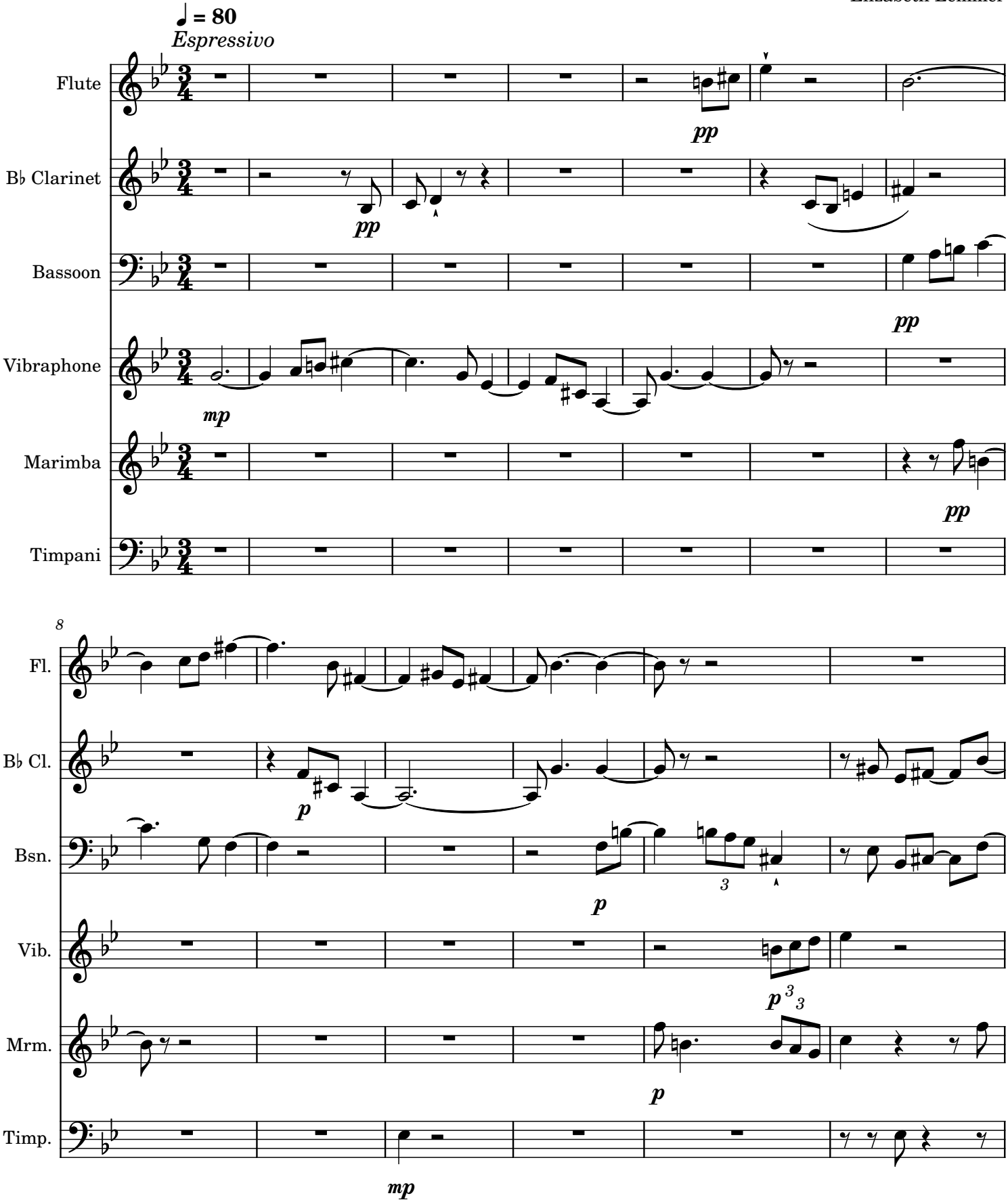

♩ = 50
Largo
279
ppp
ppp
ppp

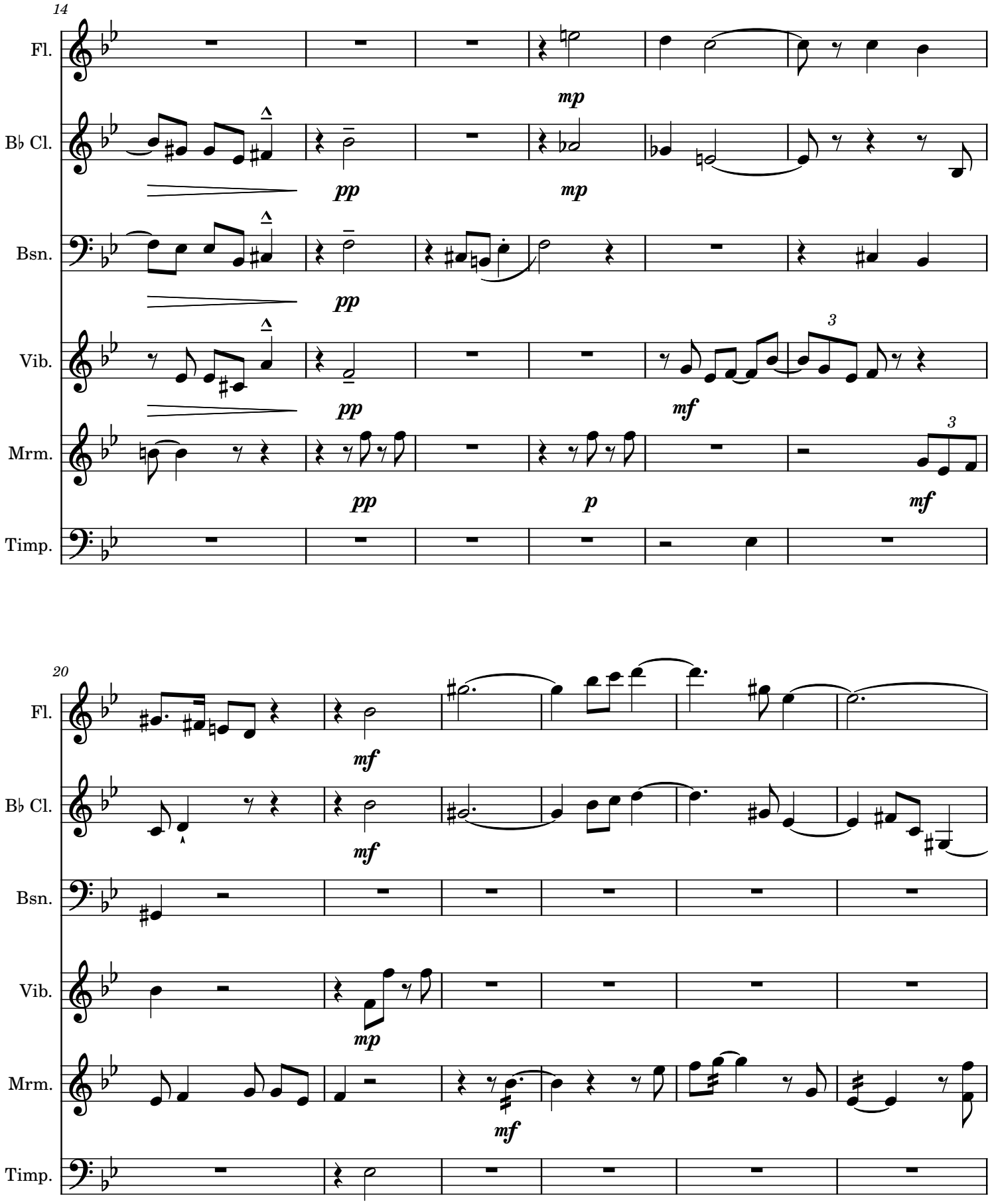
A Storm Series

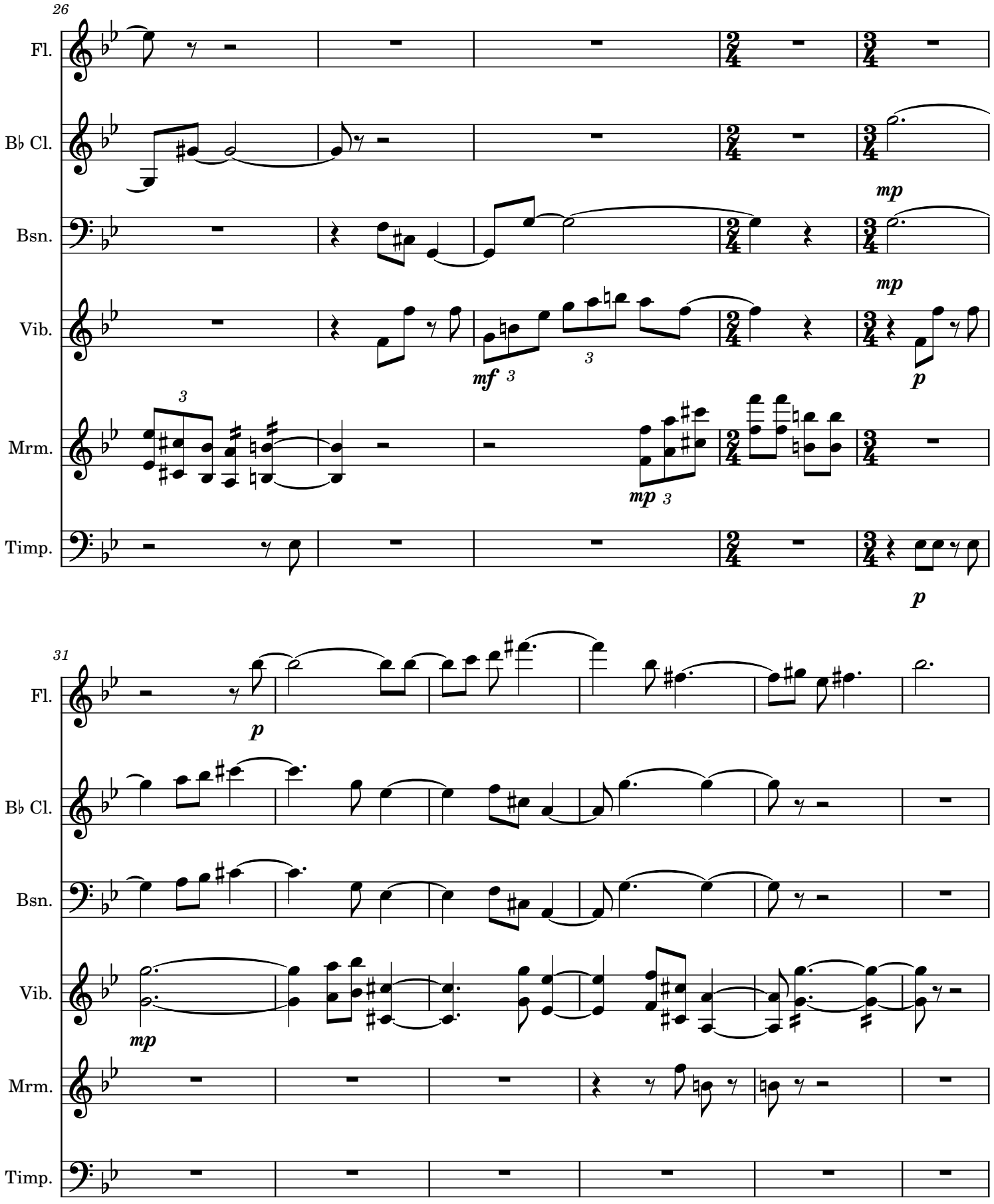
Elizabeth Lemmer

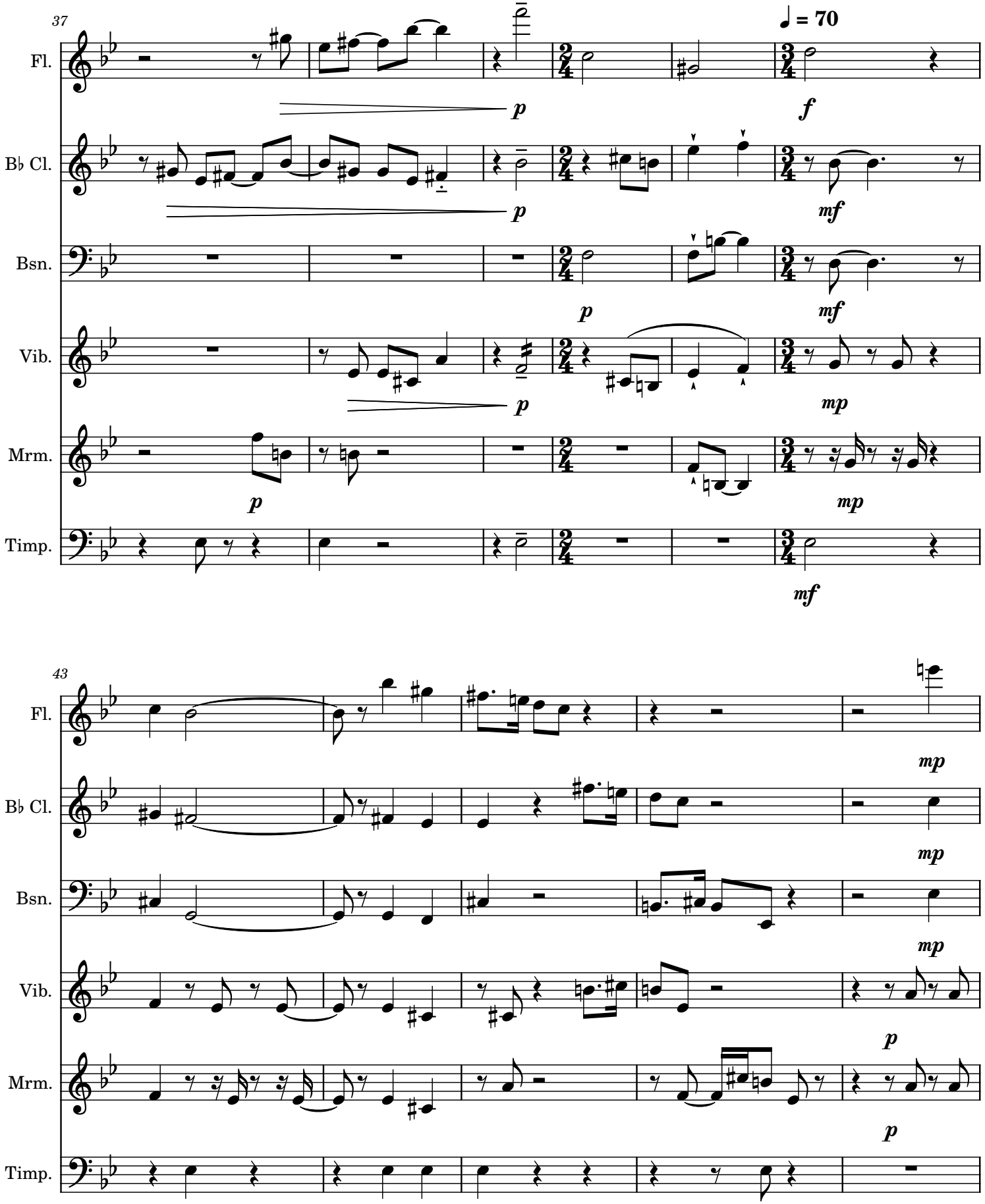
1. Petrichor

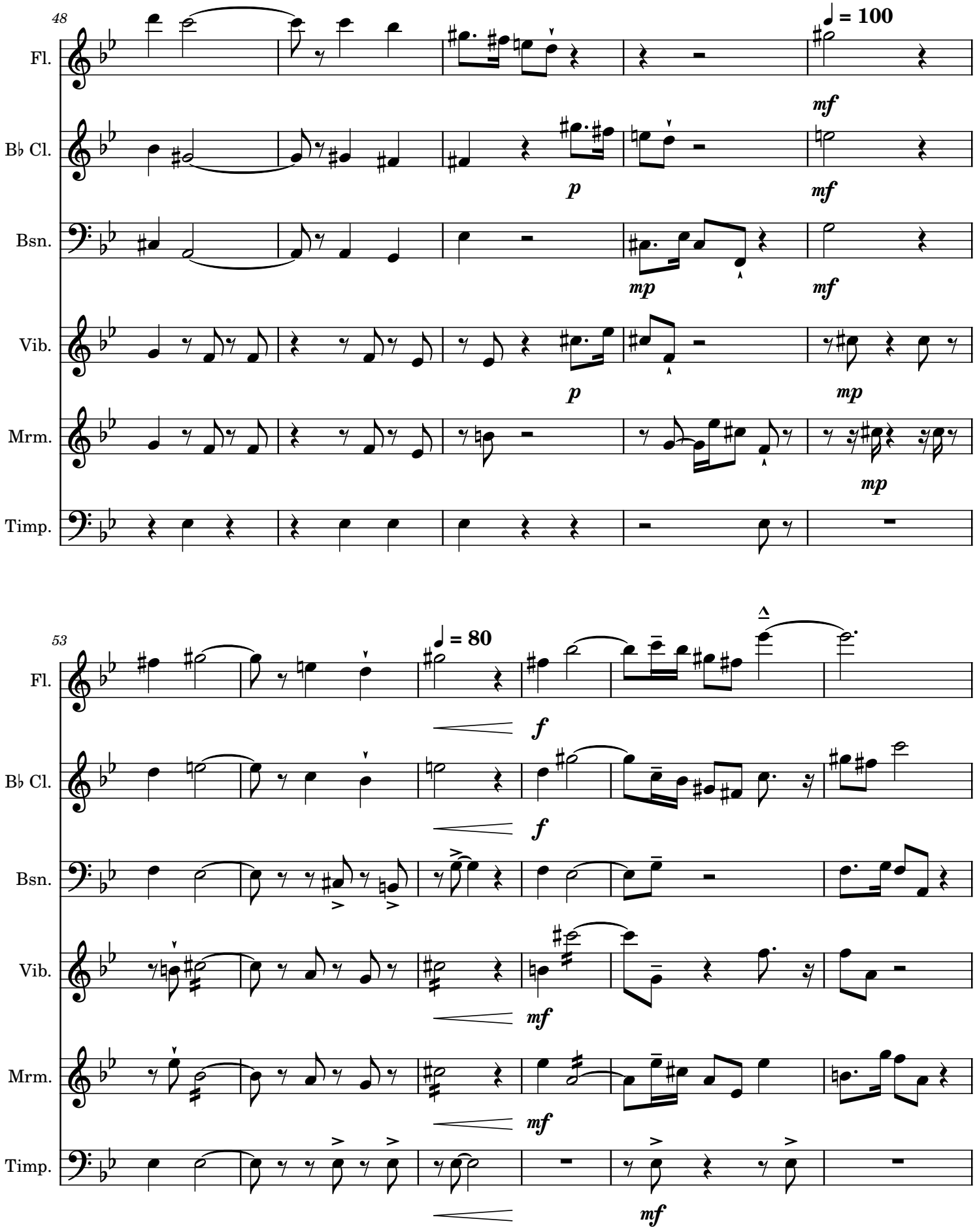
Elizabeth Lemmer

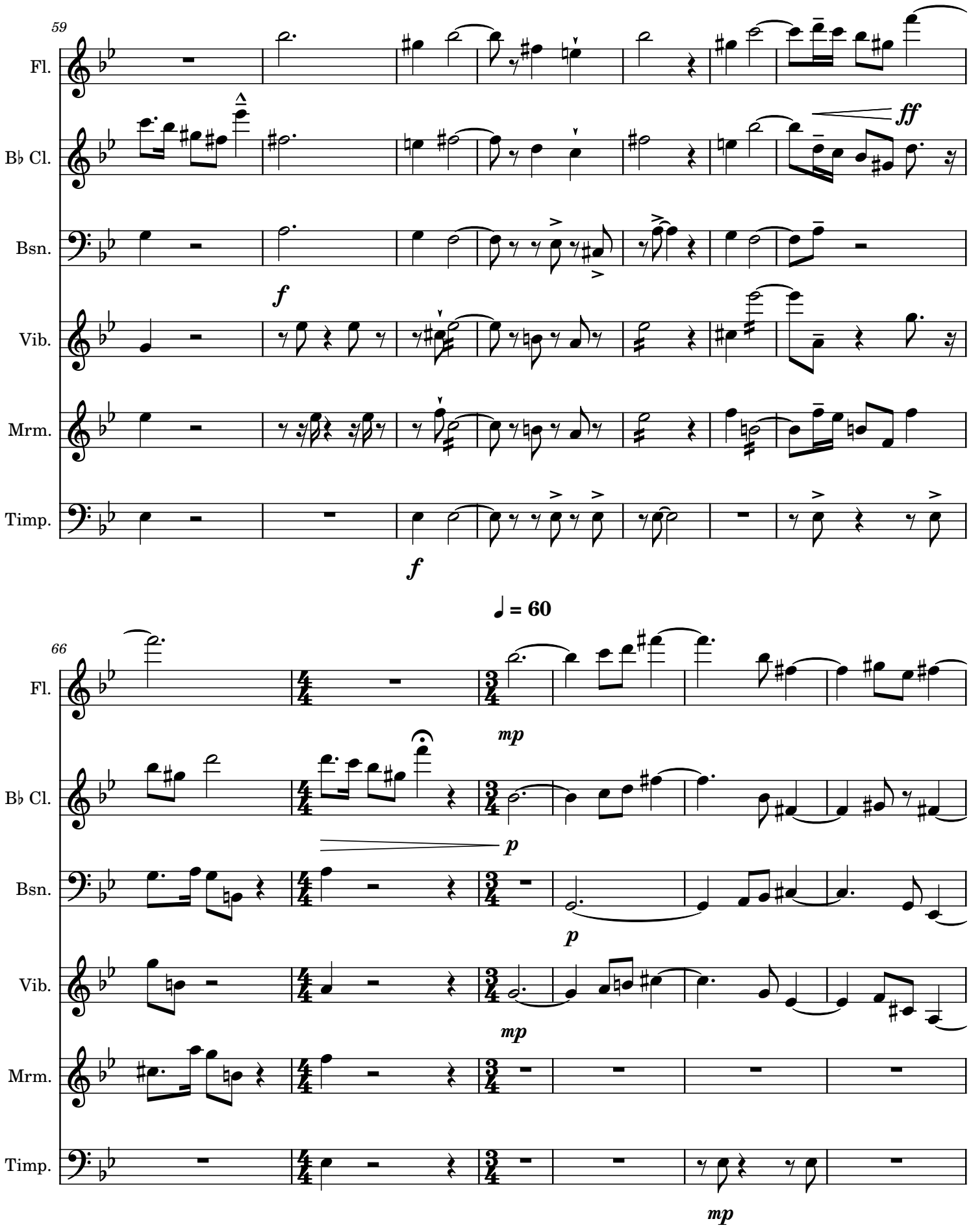


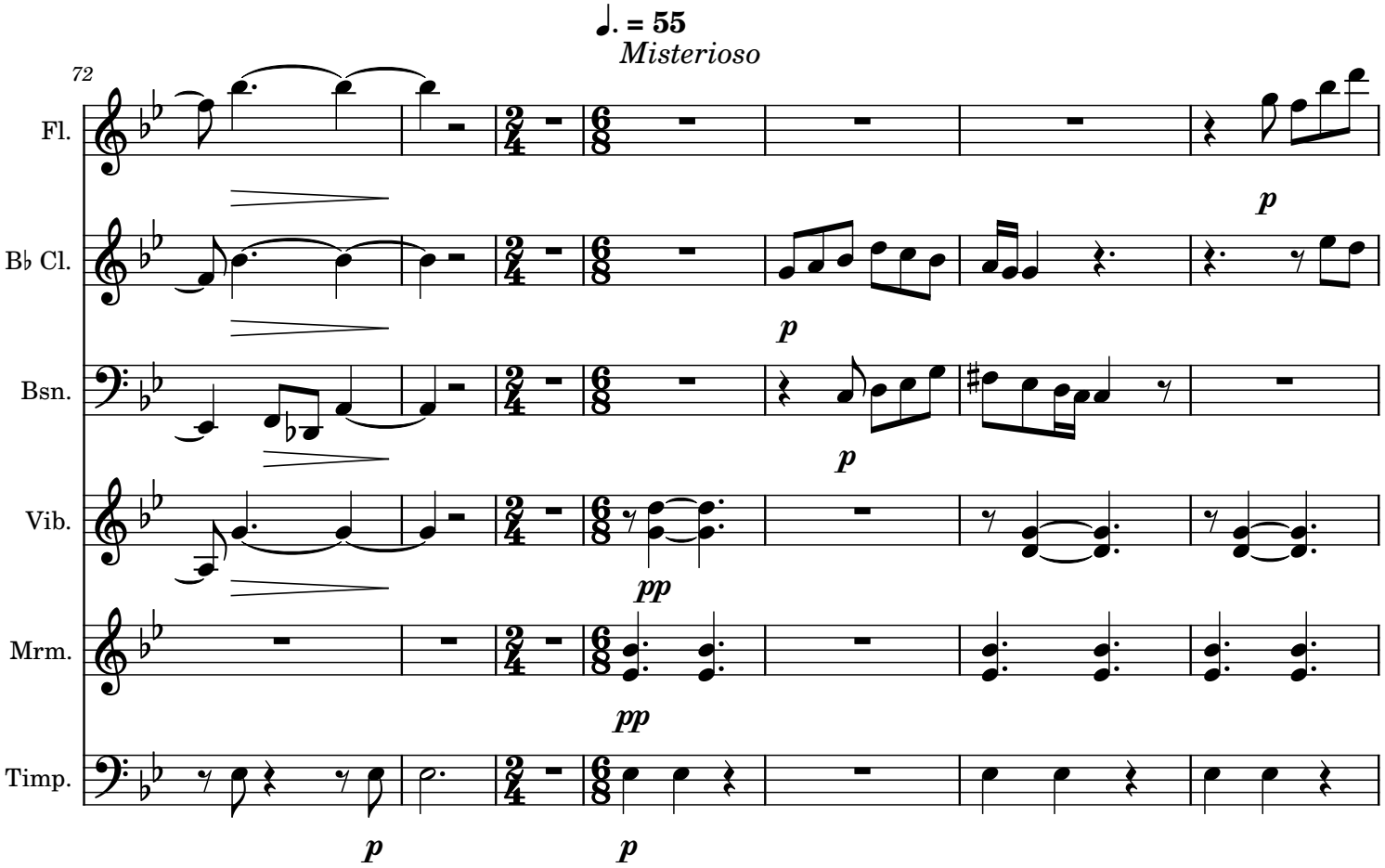

14
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
mp
pp
mp
pp
pp
3
mf
pp
p
3
mf
20
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
mf
mf
mp
mf

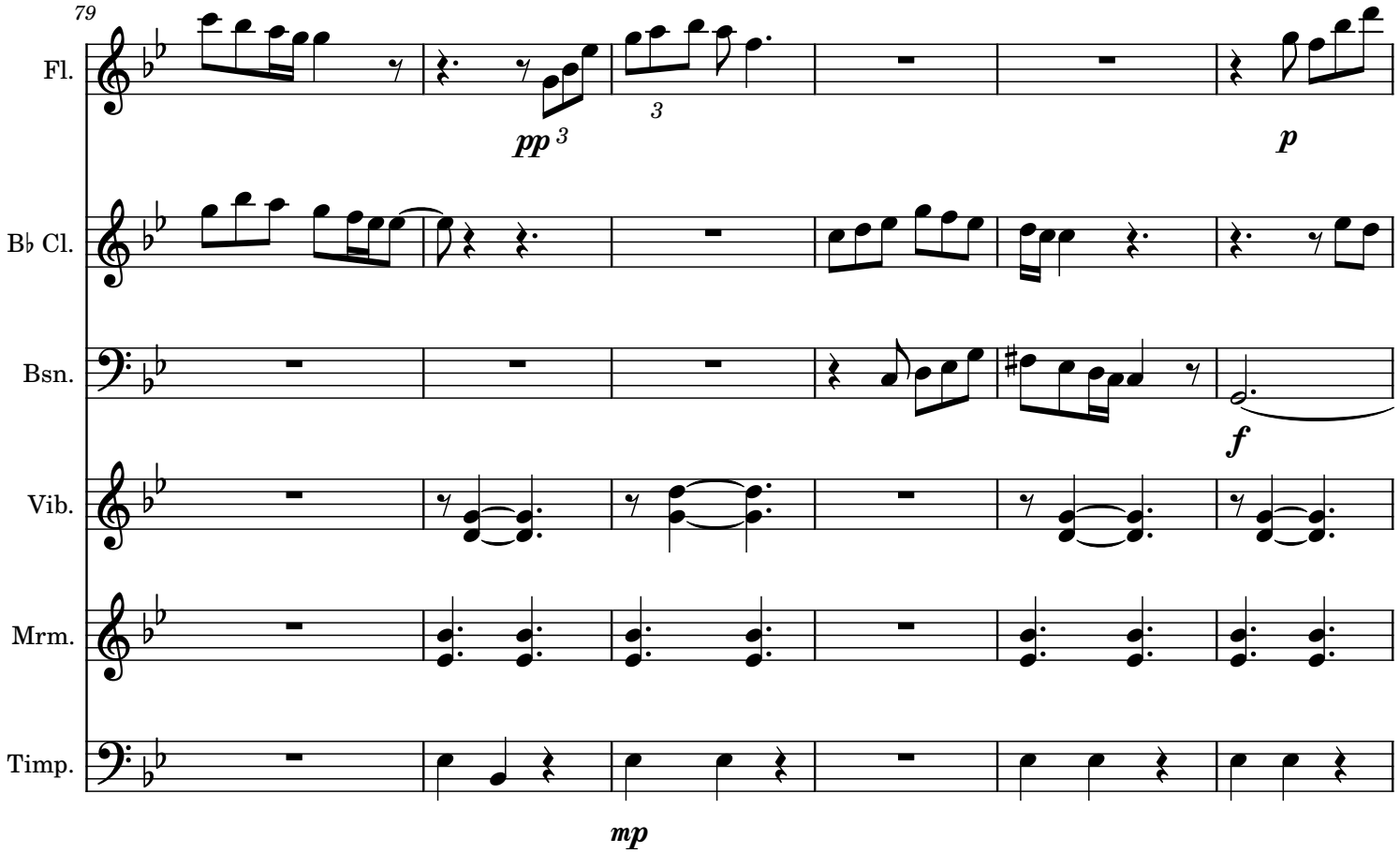

26
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
mp
mf
3
p
31

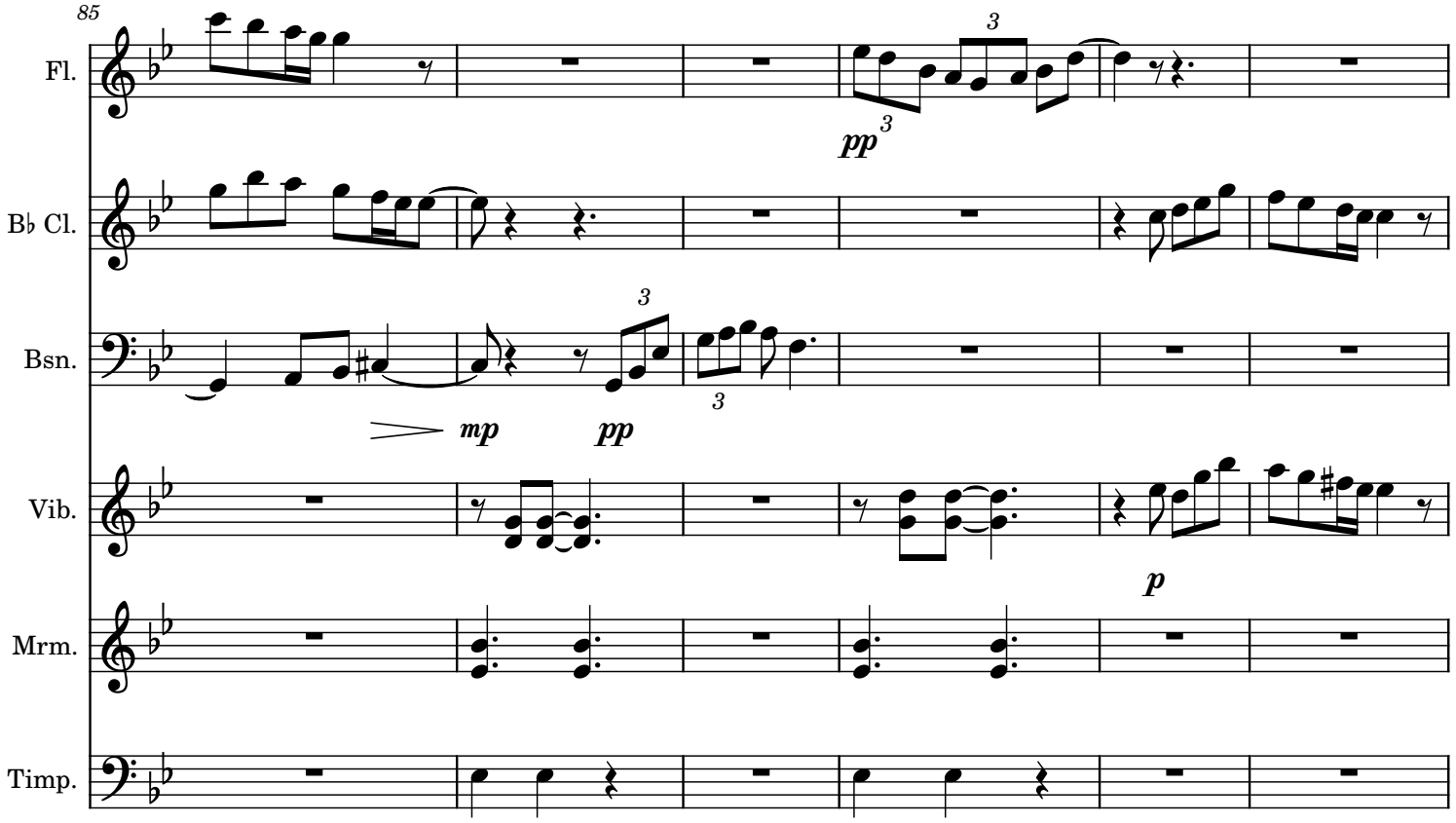

37
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
♩ = 70
p
f
mf
mp
43

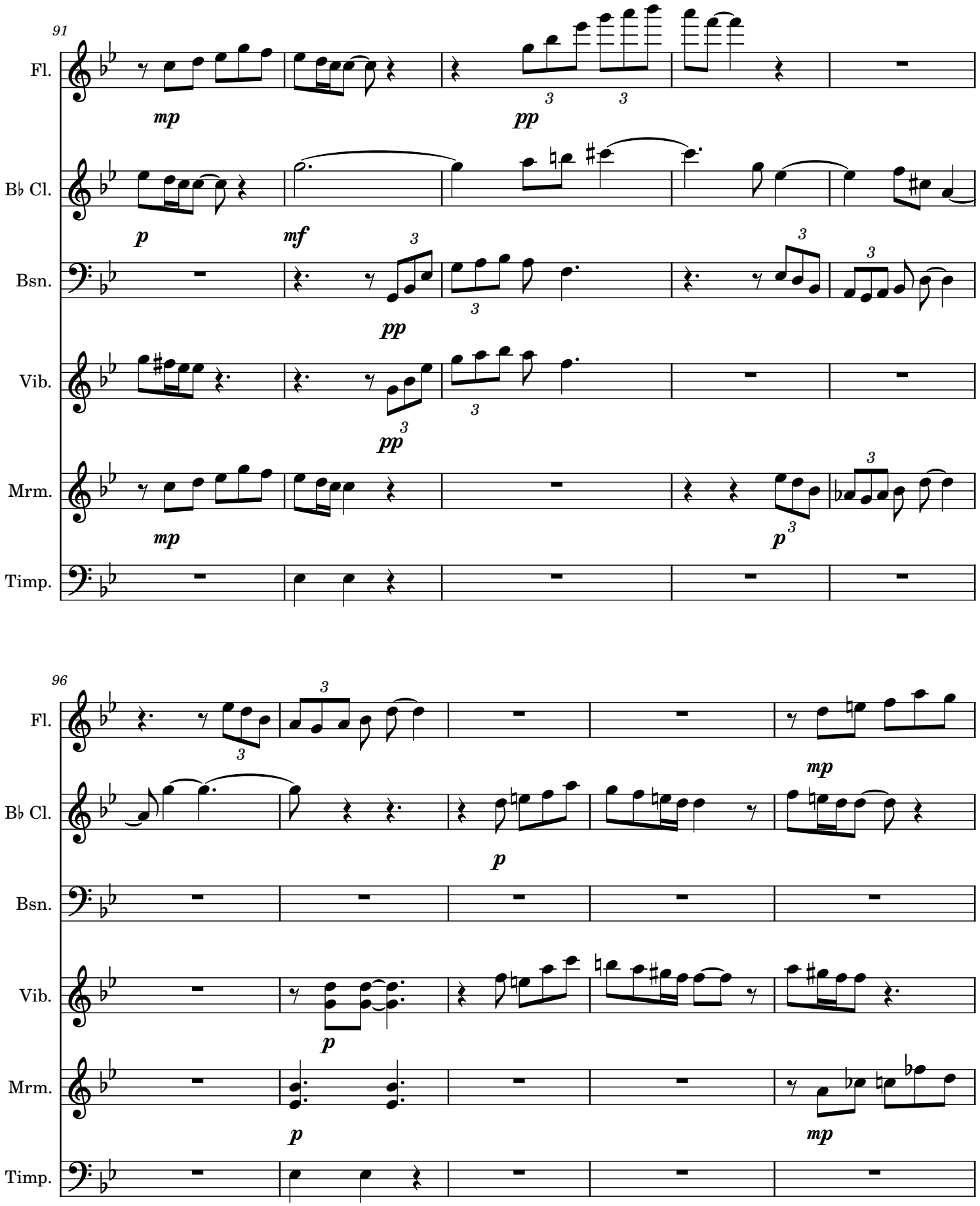

48
♩ = 100
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
mf
p
mf
mp
mf
p
mp
mp
53
♩ = 80
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
f
f
mf
mf
mf

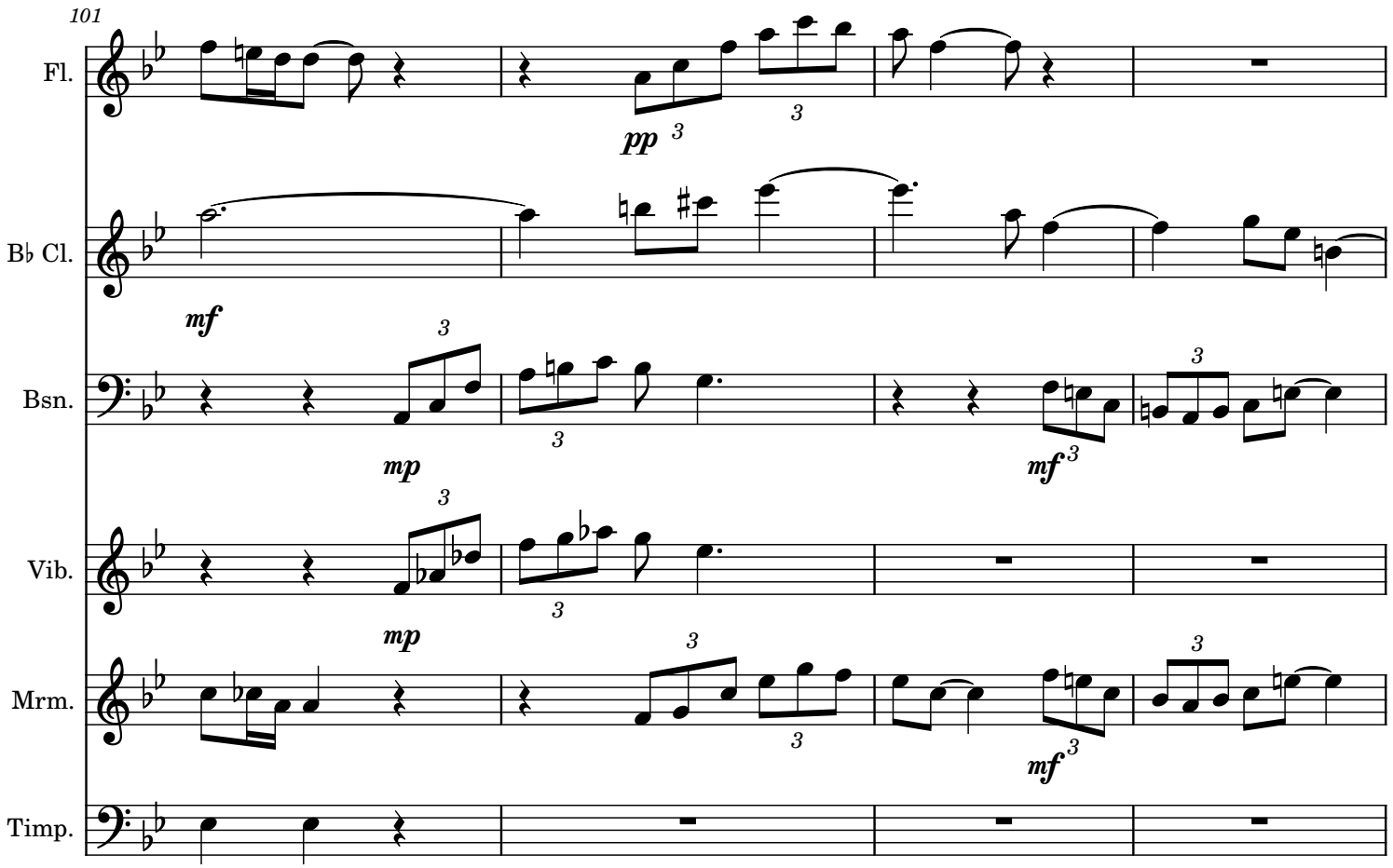

59
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
ff
f
f
♩ = 60
66
mp
p
p
mp
mp

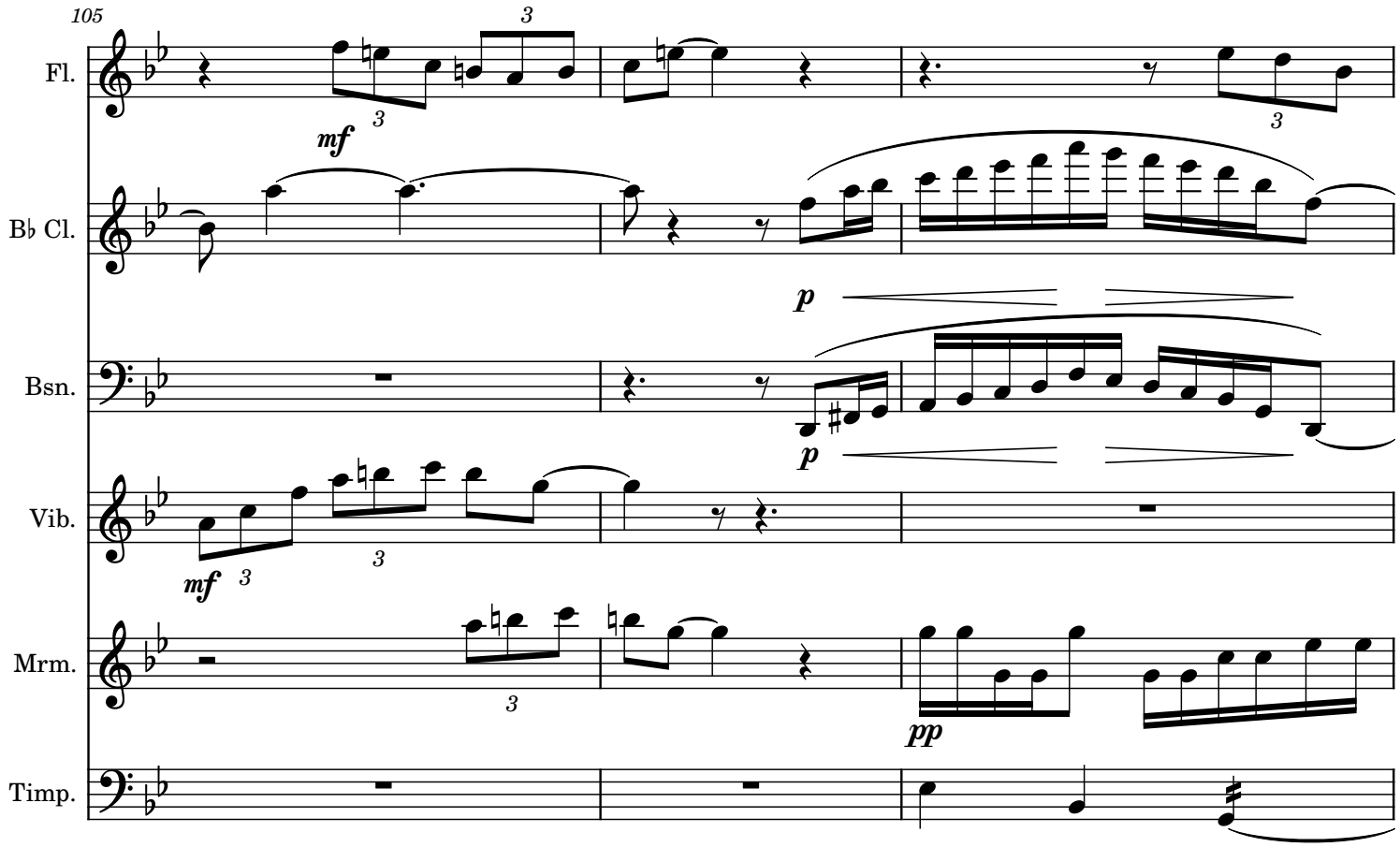

♩. = 55
Misterioso
72
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
p
p
p
pp
pp
p
p


79
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
pp
3
3
p
f
mp


85
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
3
pp
3
mp
pp
3
p


91
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
mp
pp
p
mf
96


101
Fl.
pp
3
3
B♭ Cl.
mf
Bsn.
mp
3
3
mf
3
3
Vib.
mp
3
3
Mrm.
3
3
mf
3
3
Timp.


105
Fl.
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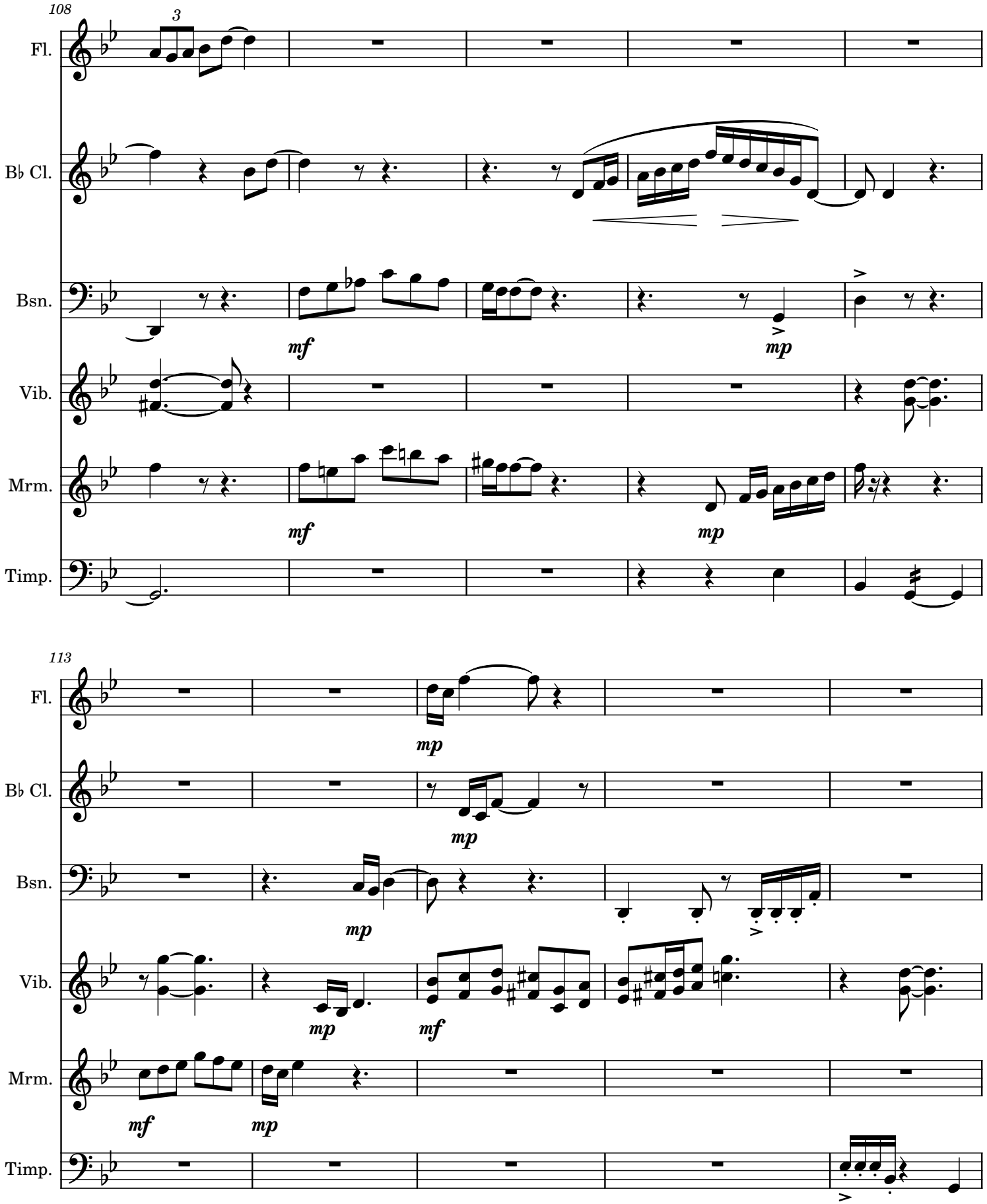
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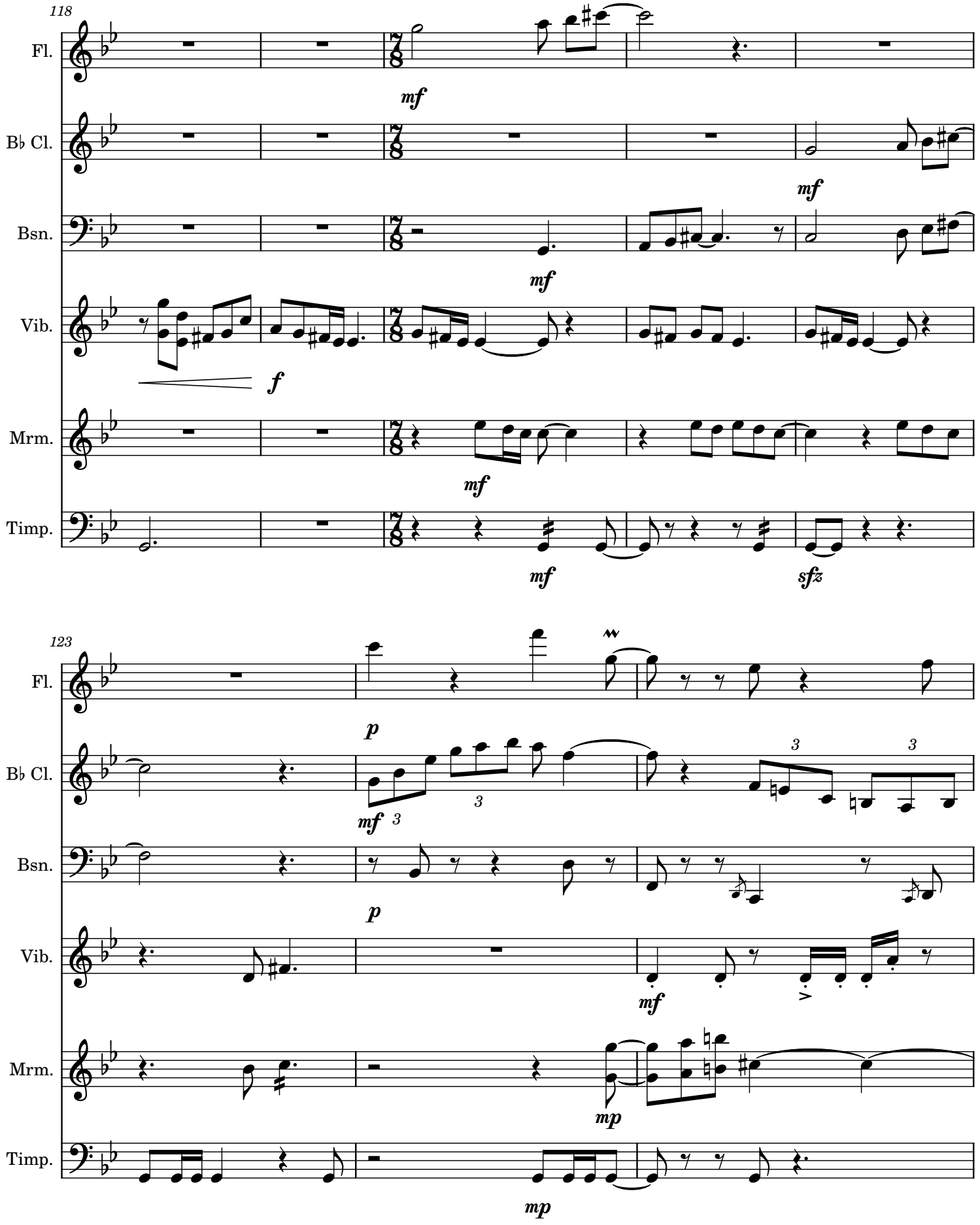
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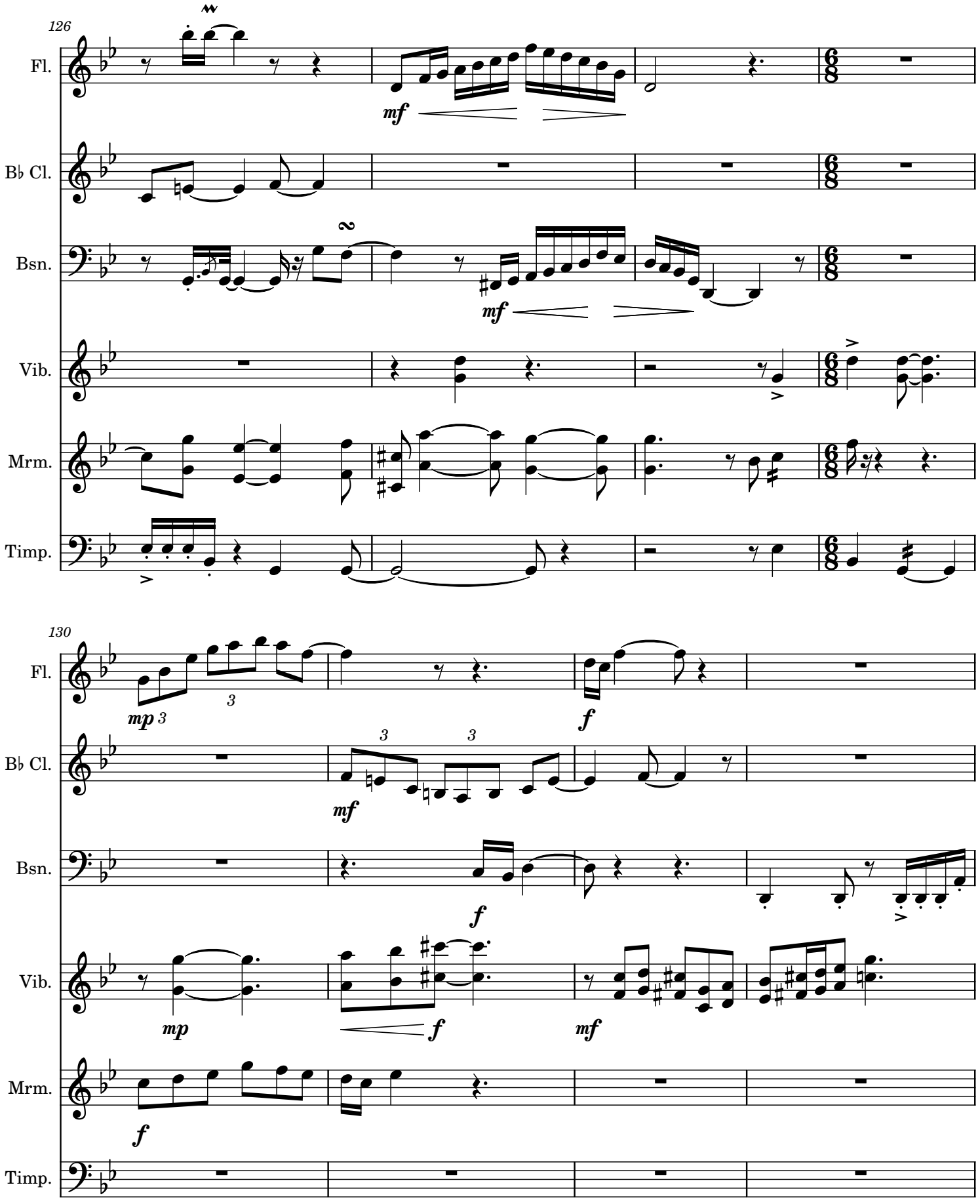
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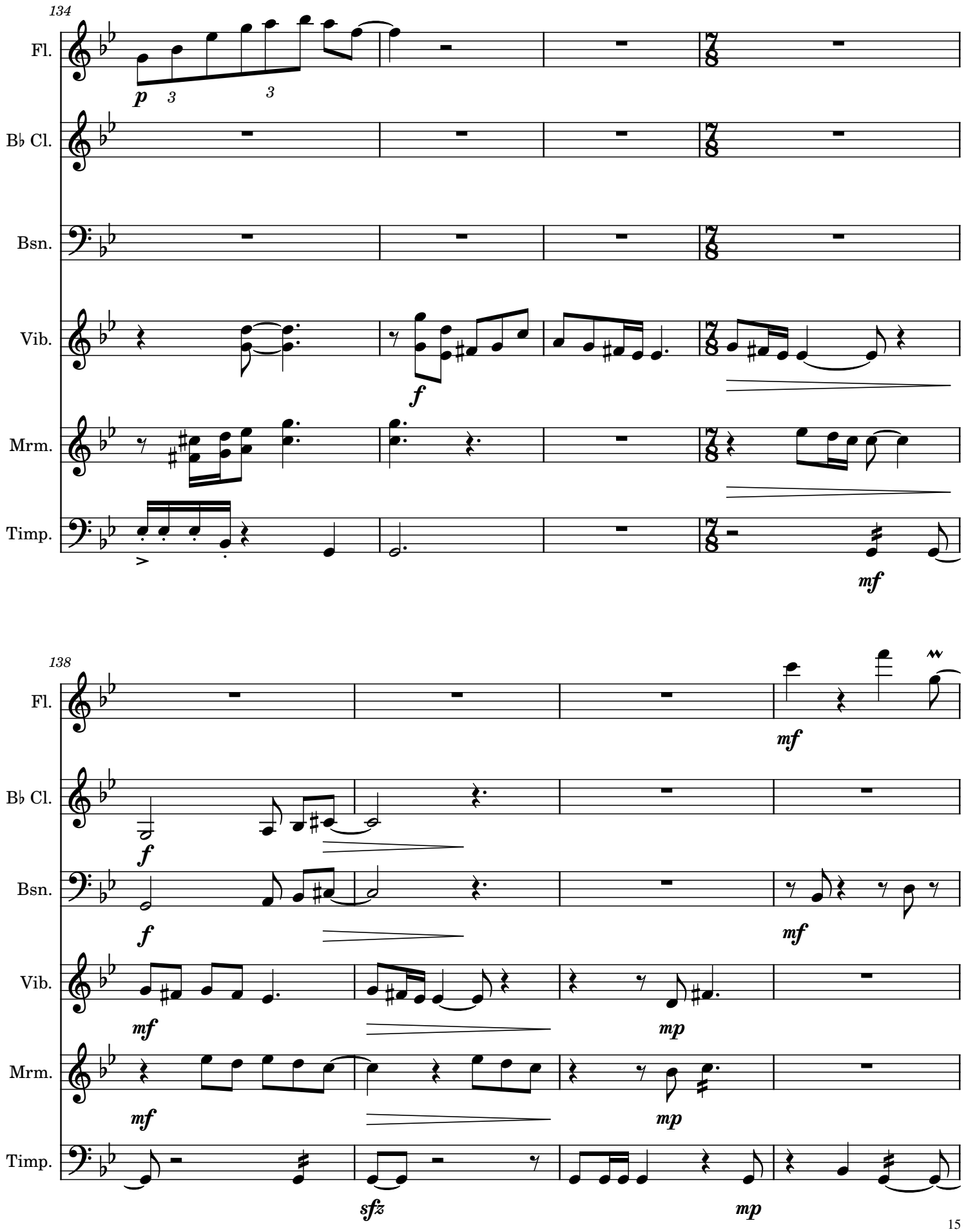
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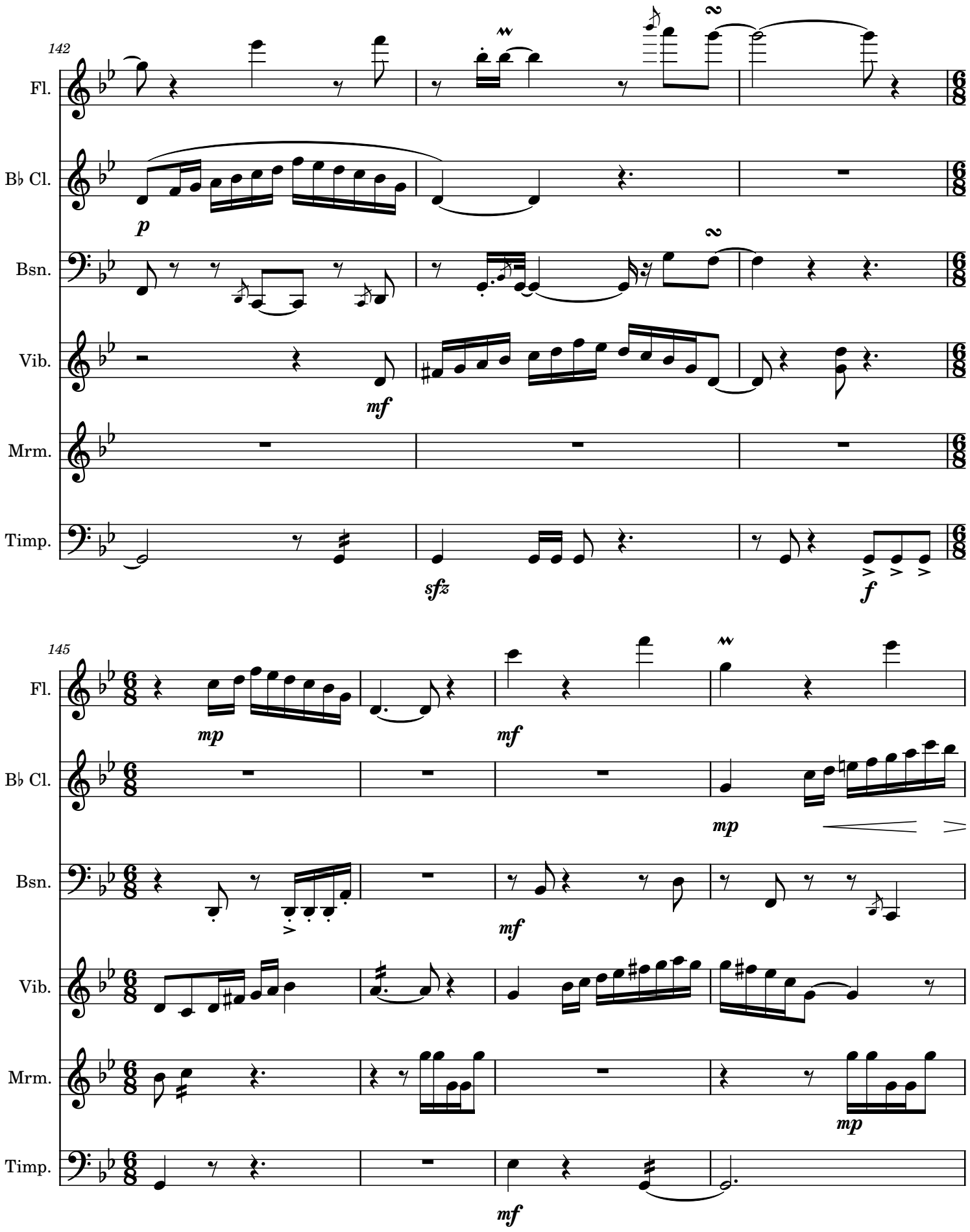
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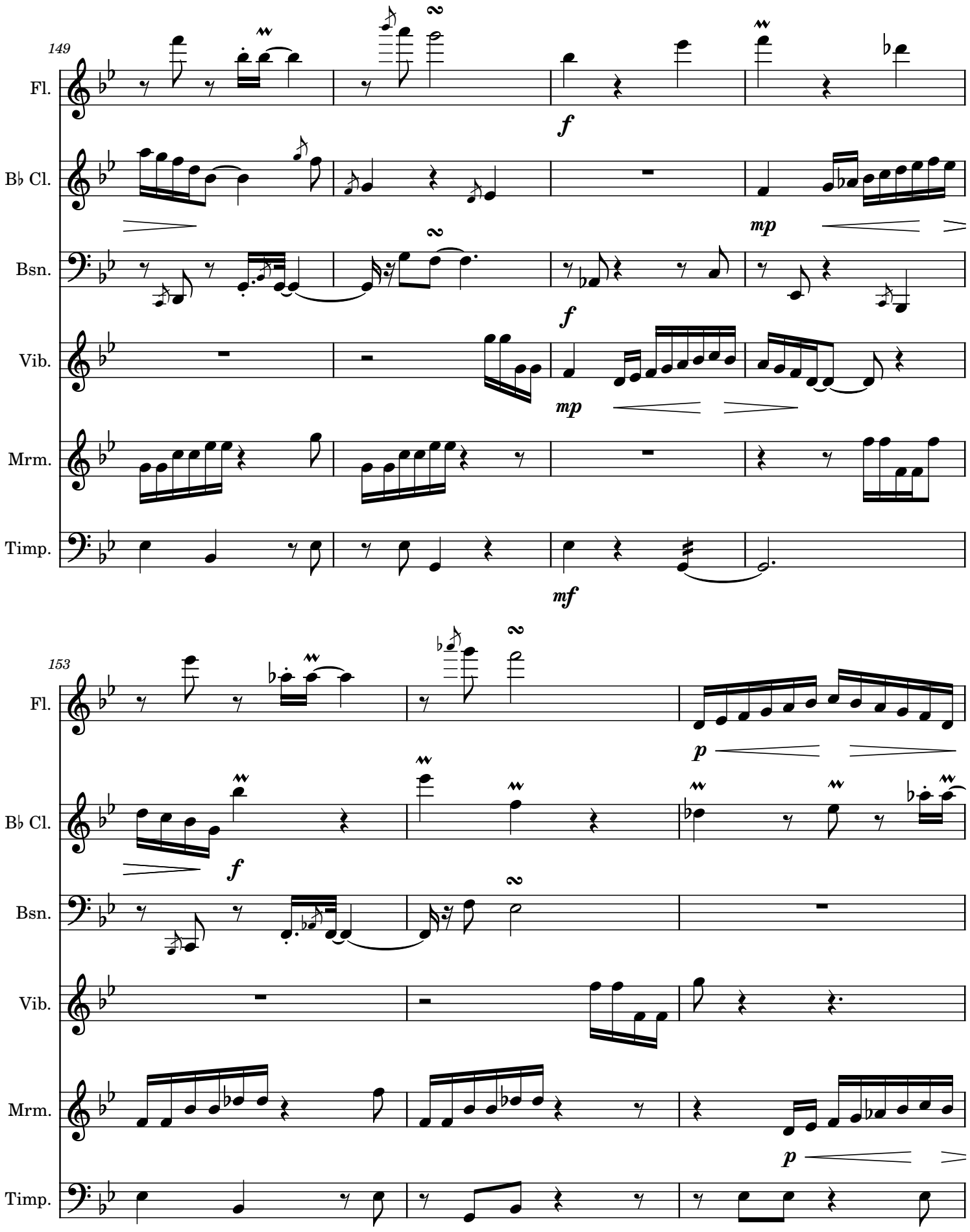
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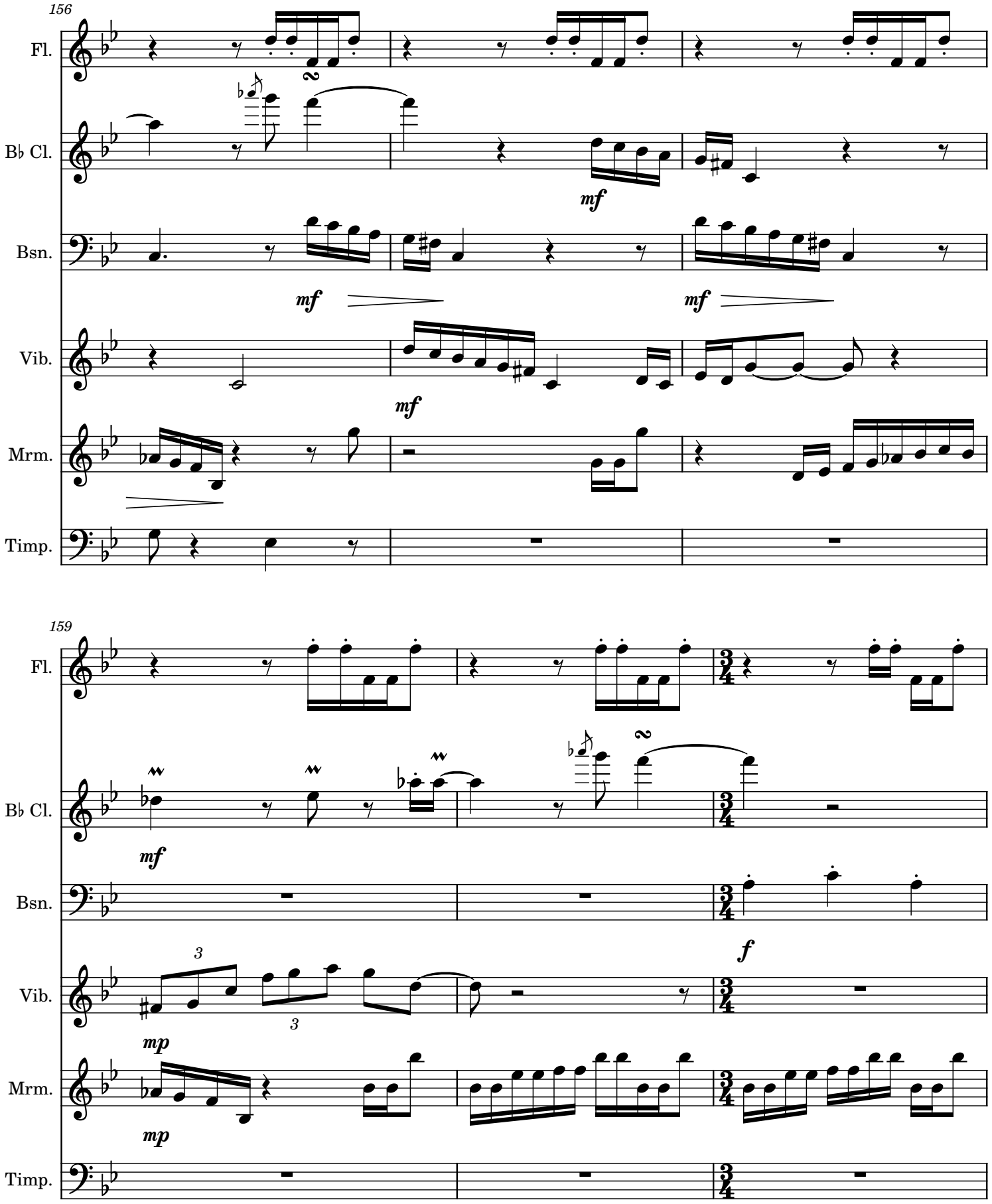
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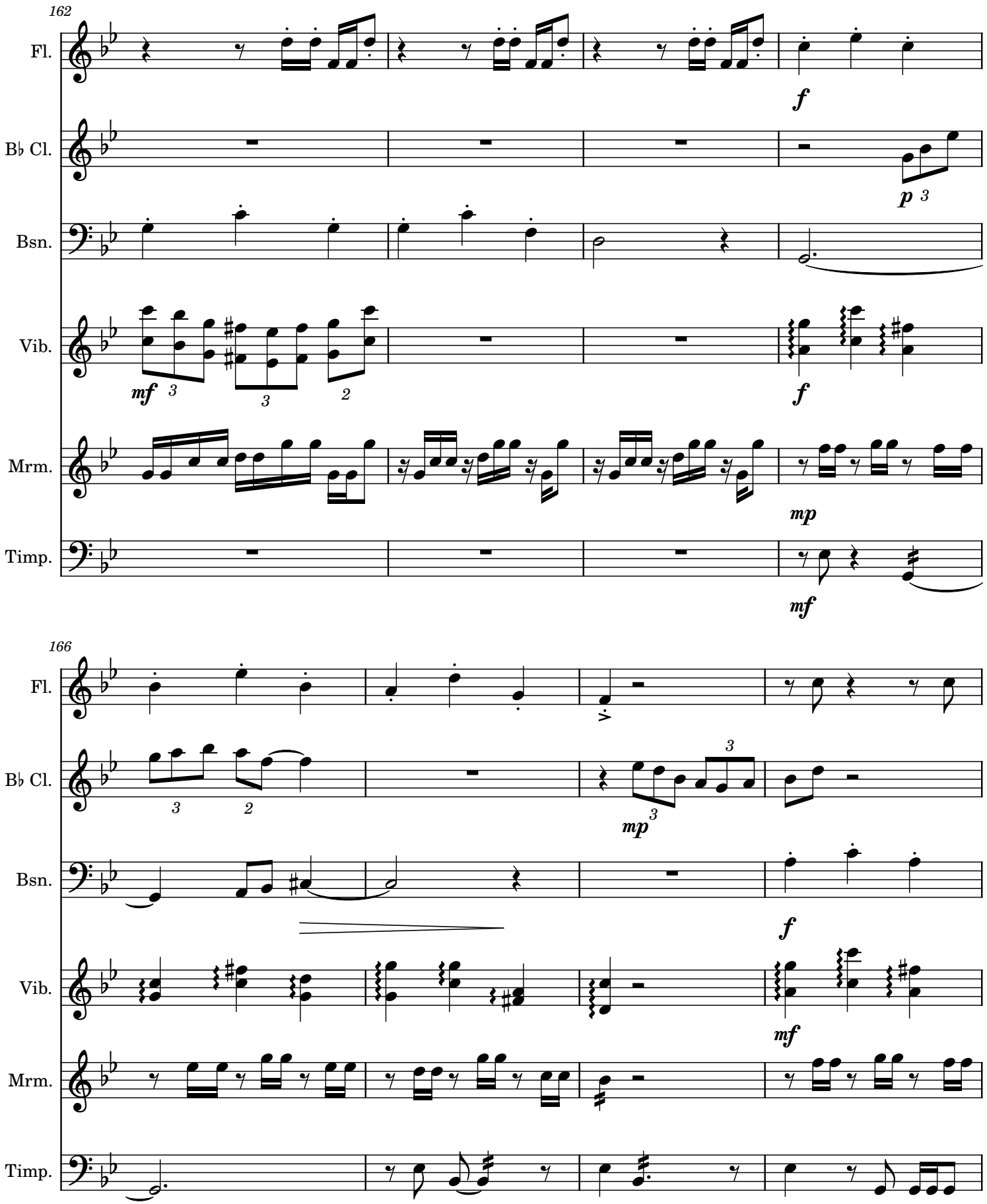
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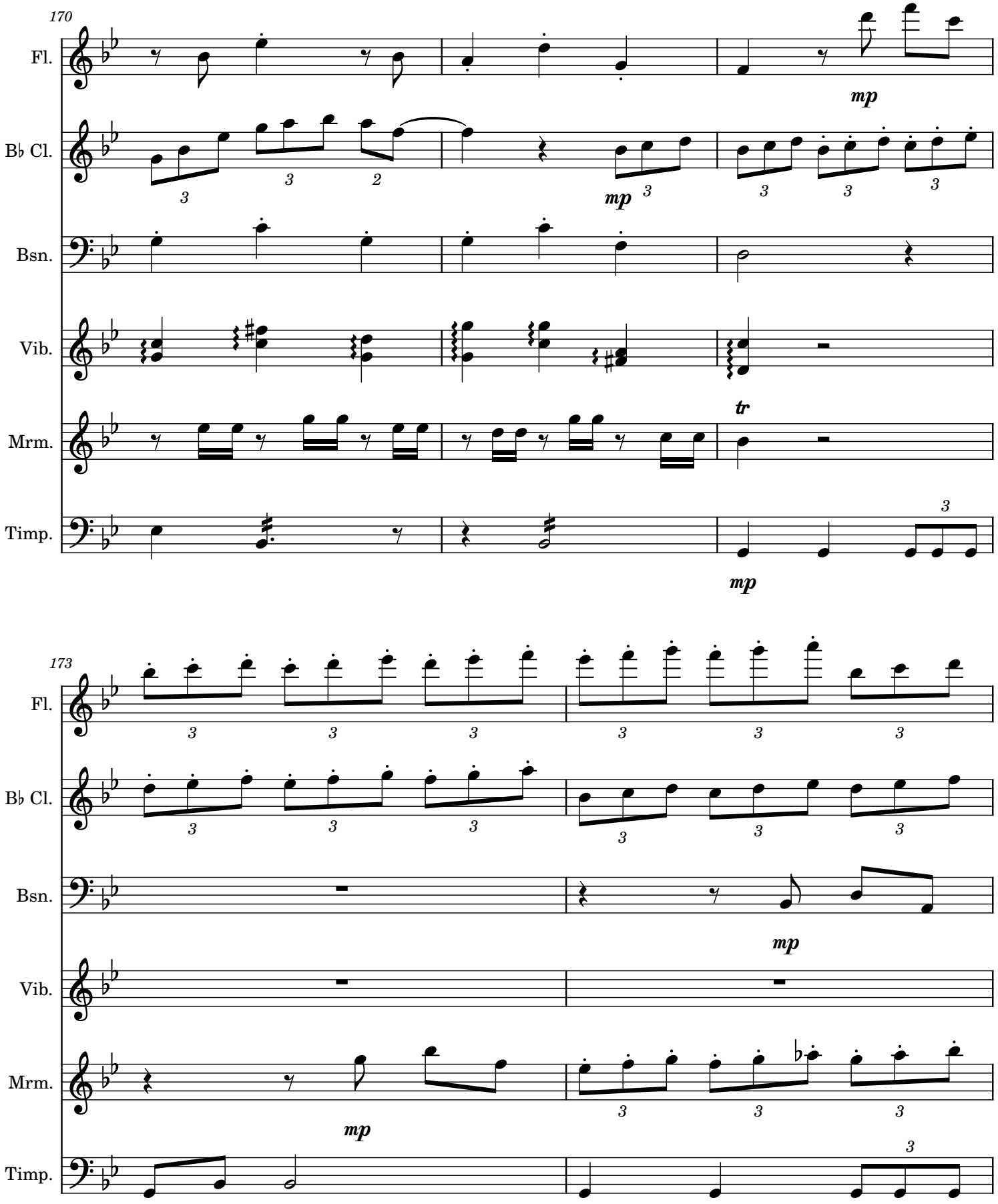
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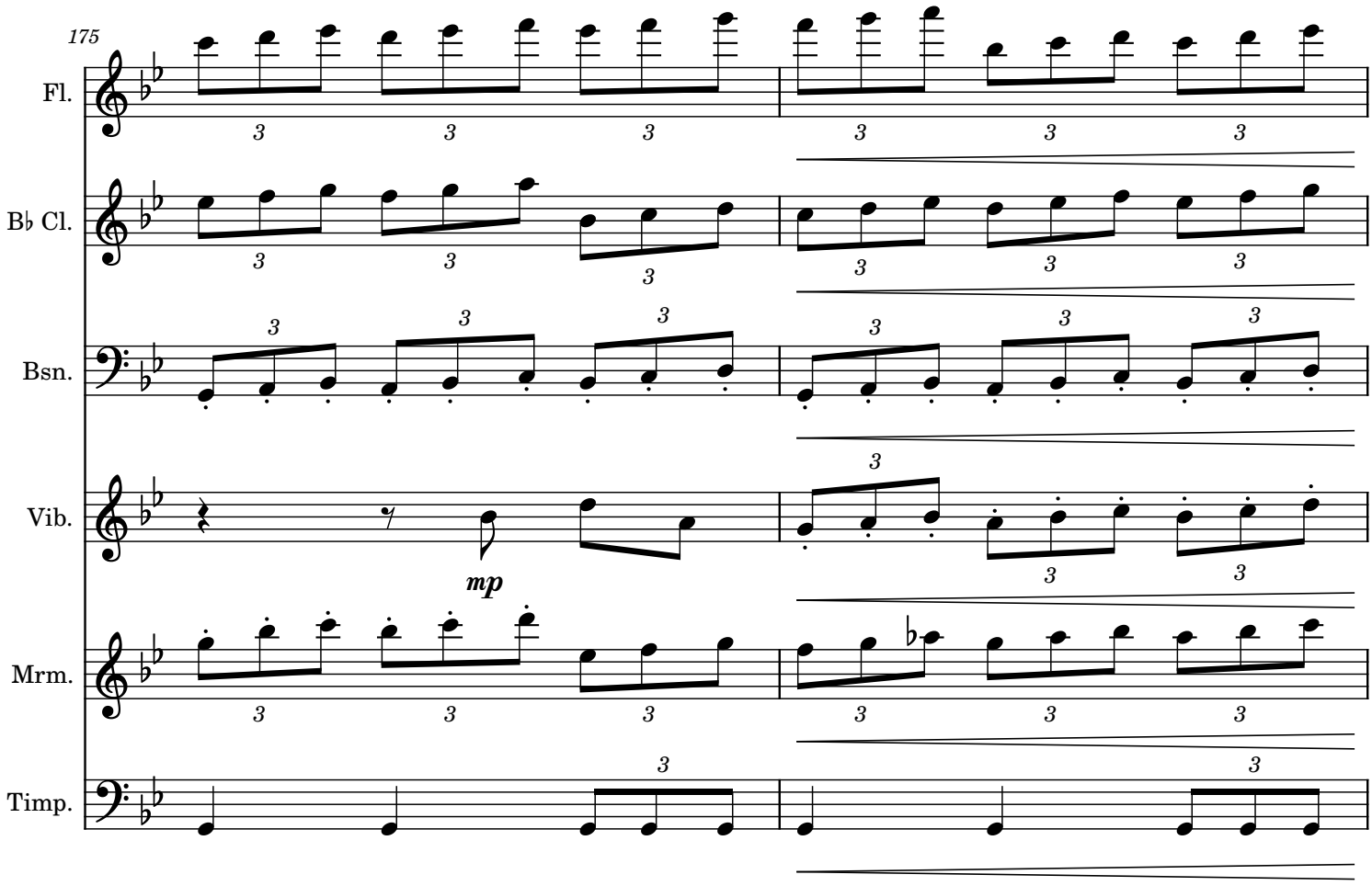
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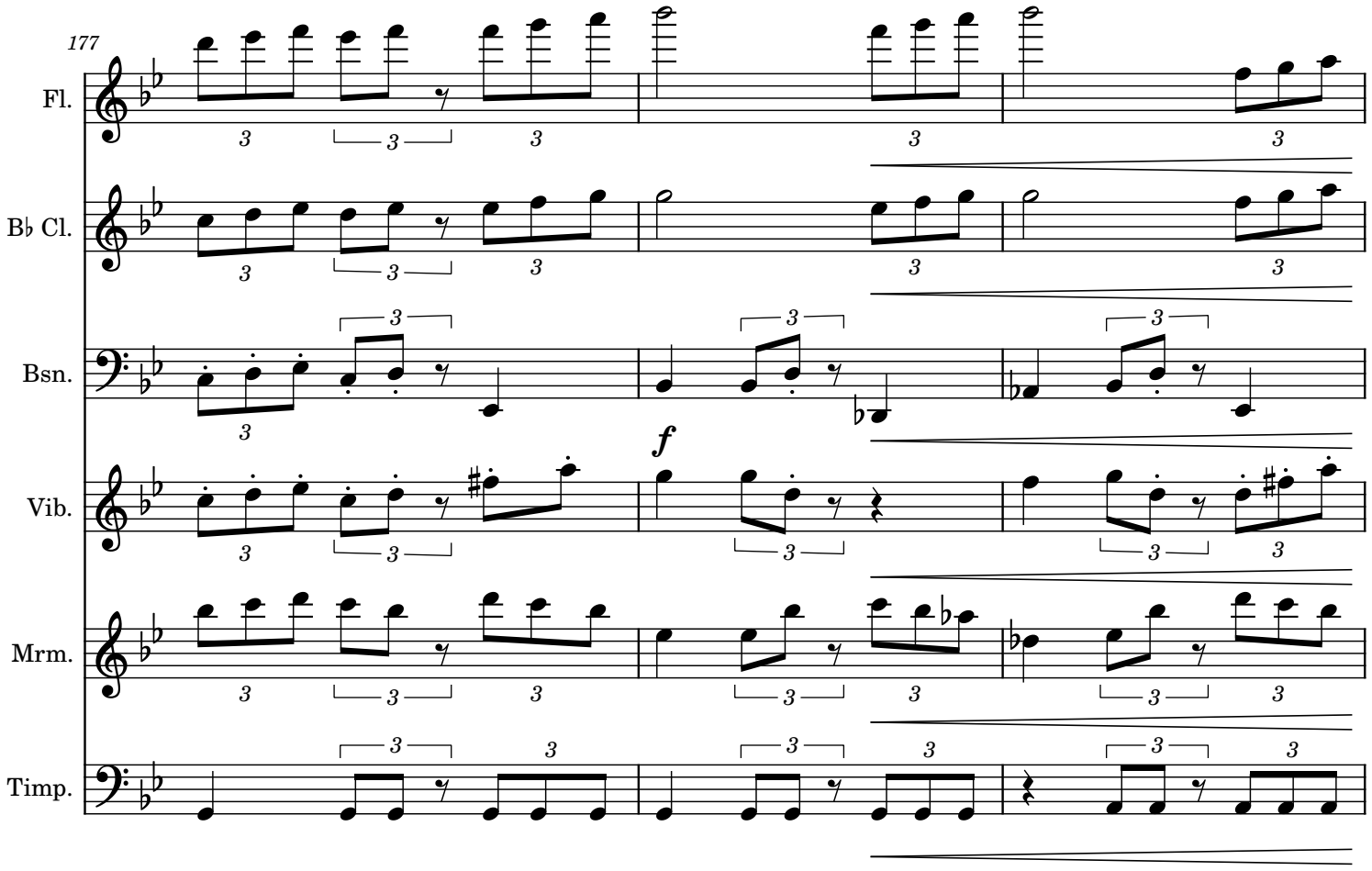
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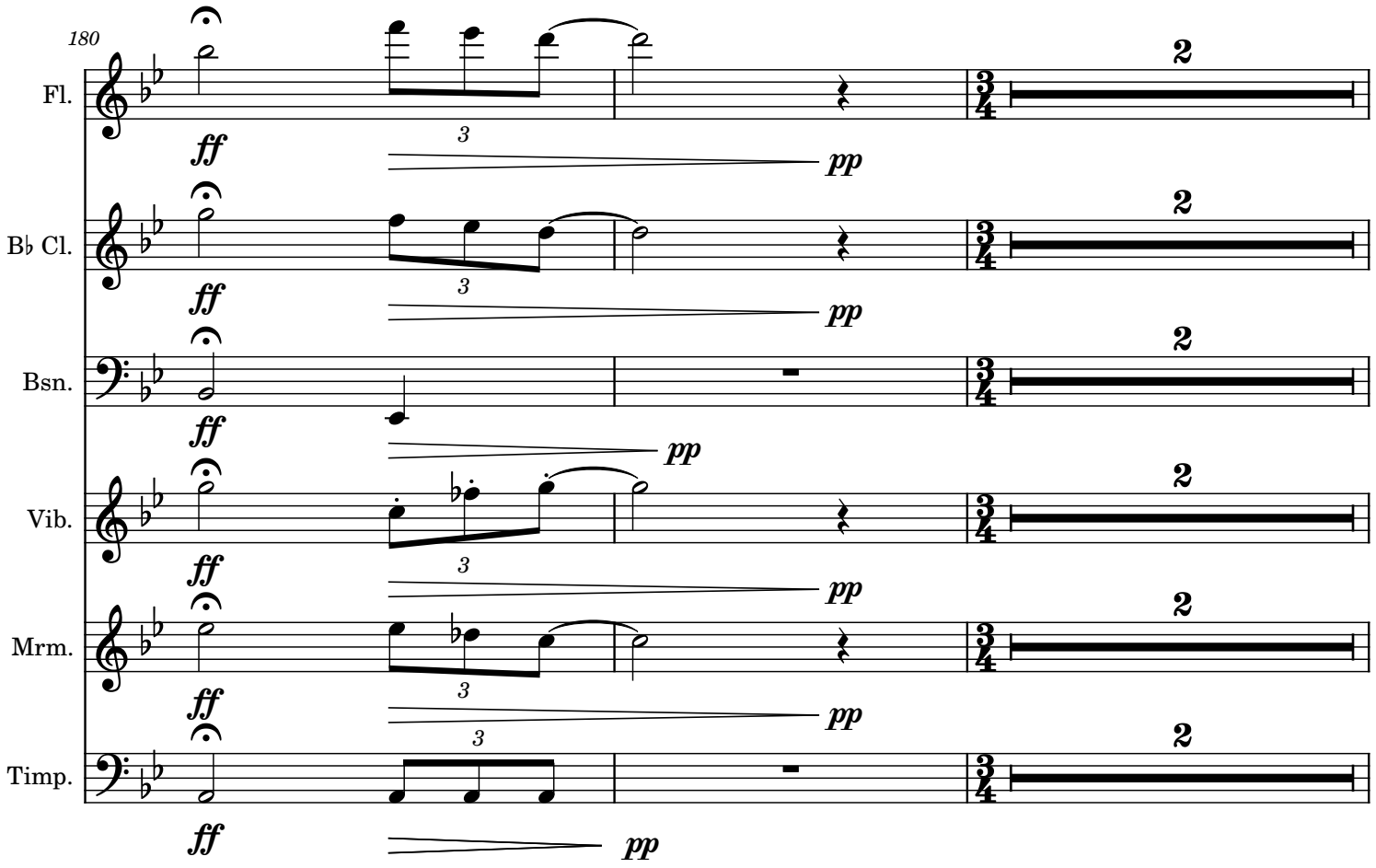
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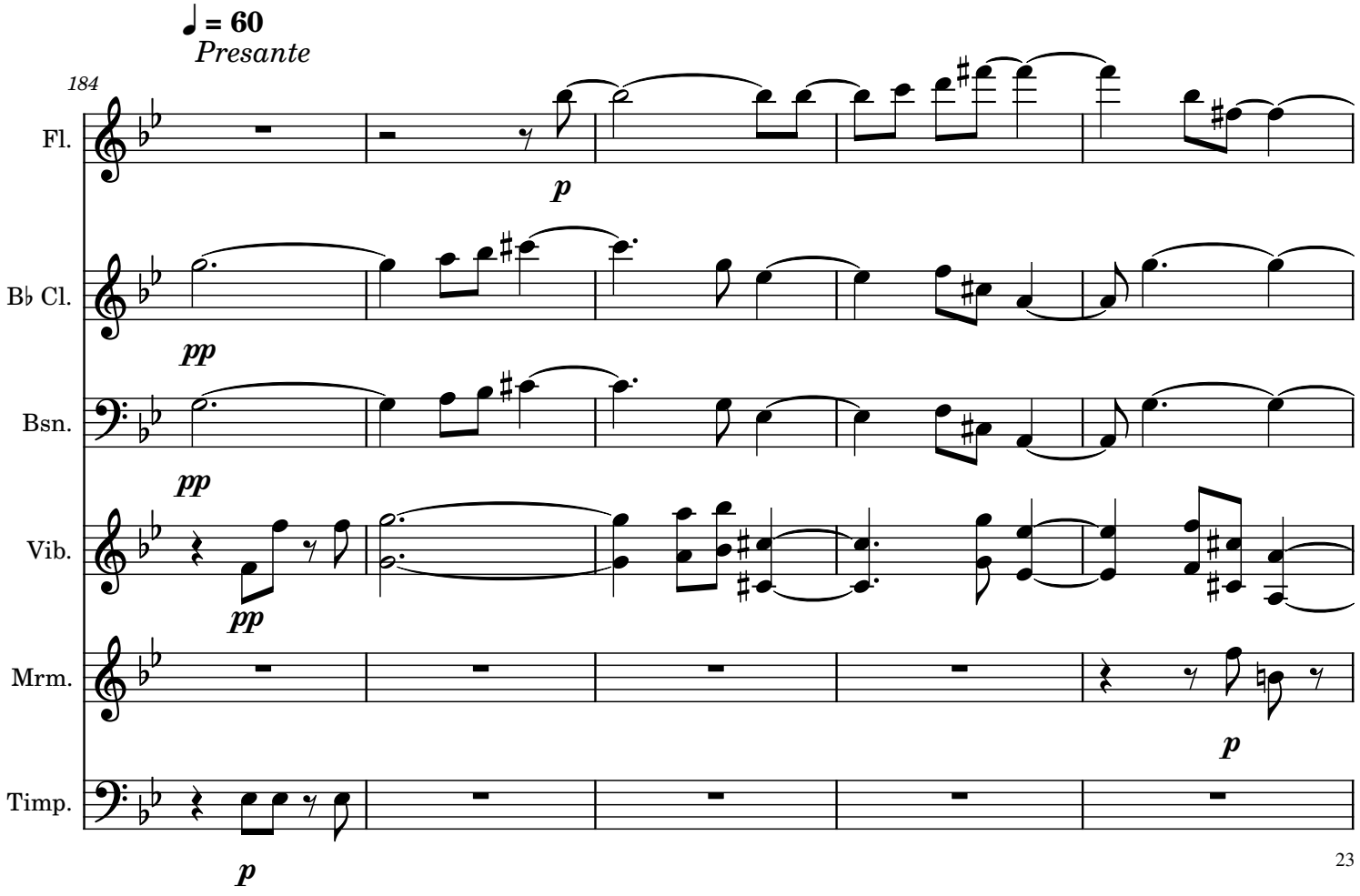
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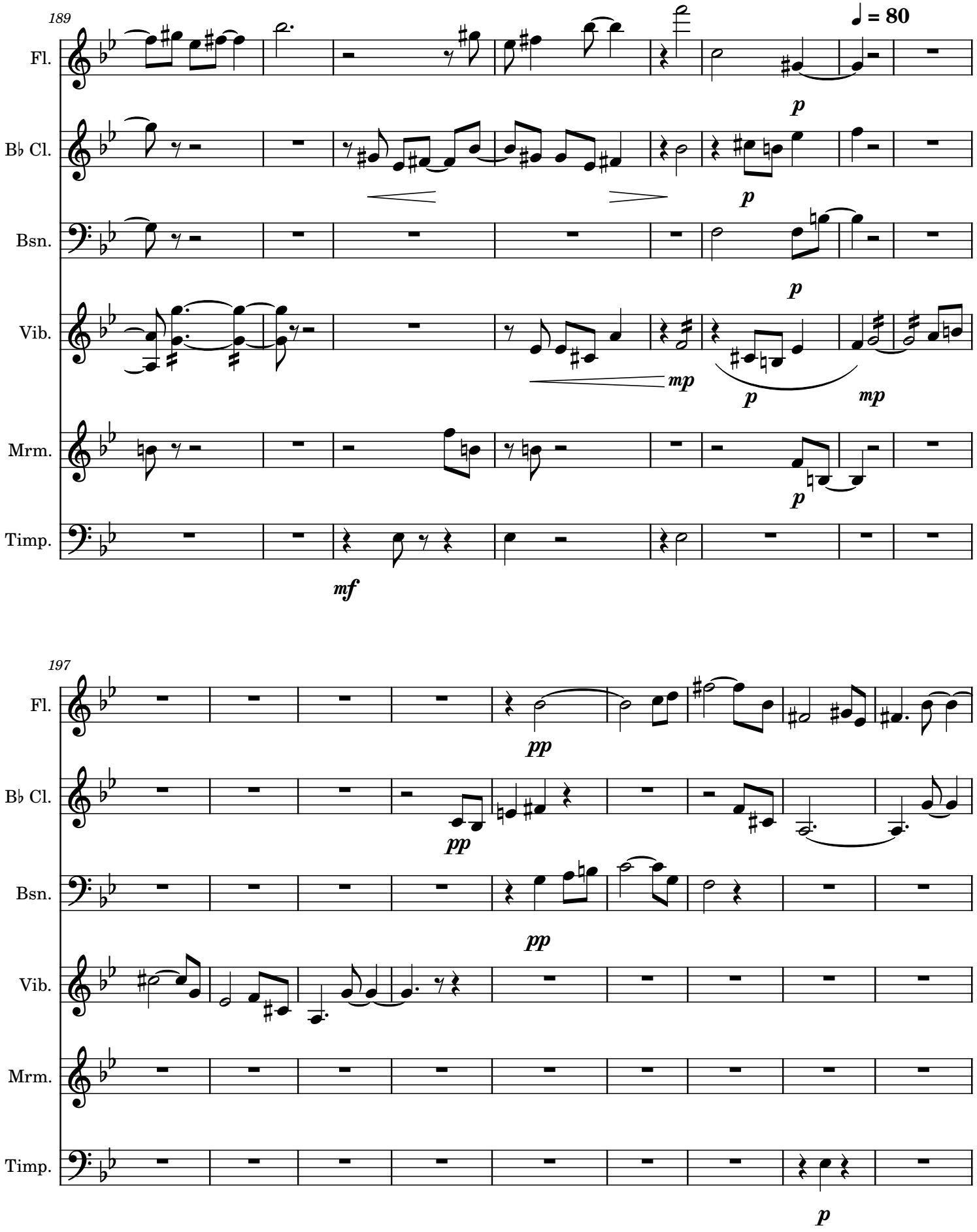
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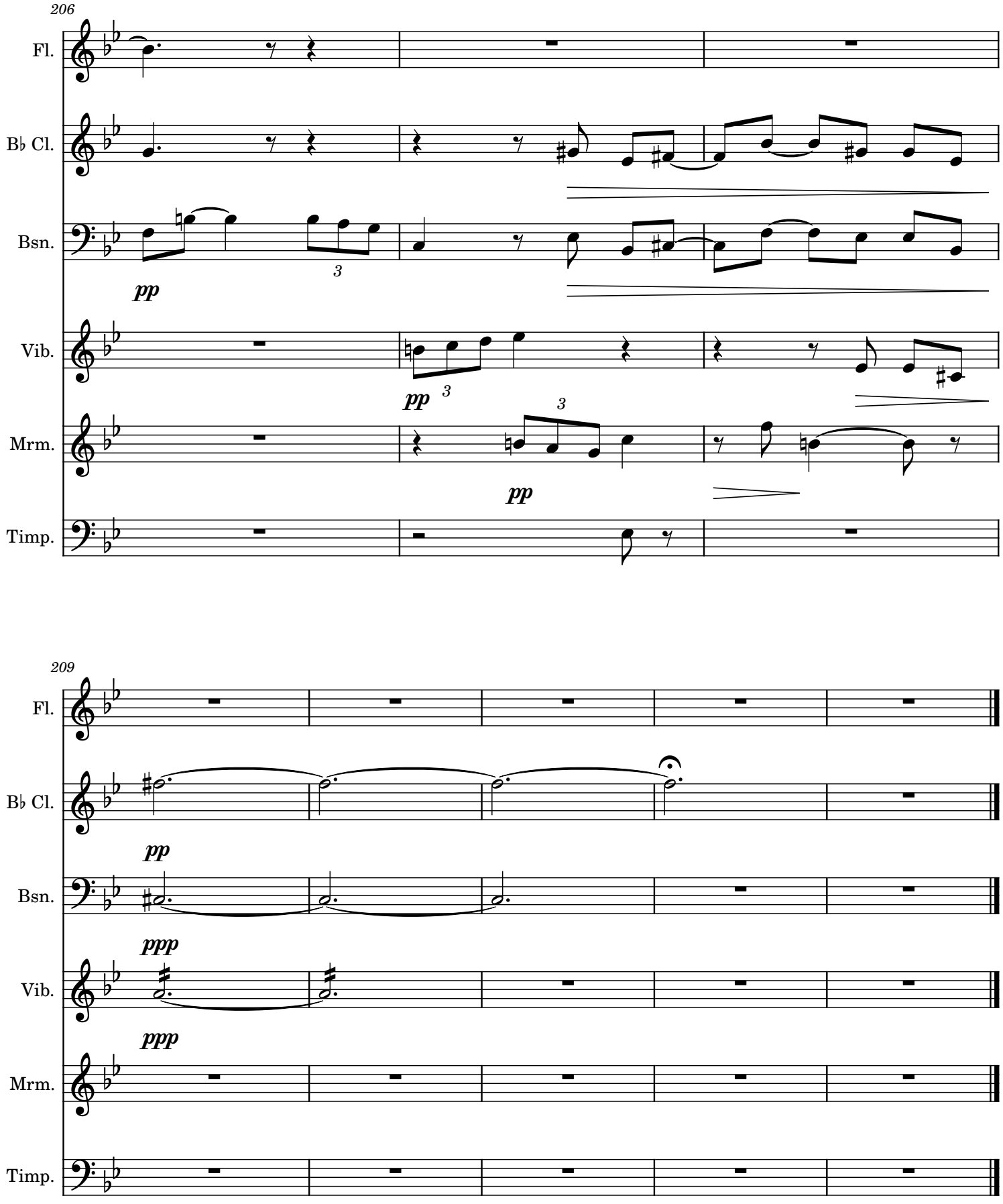
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3
pp
Timp.
209
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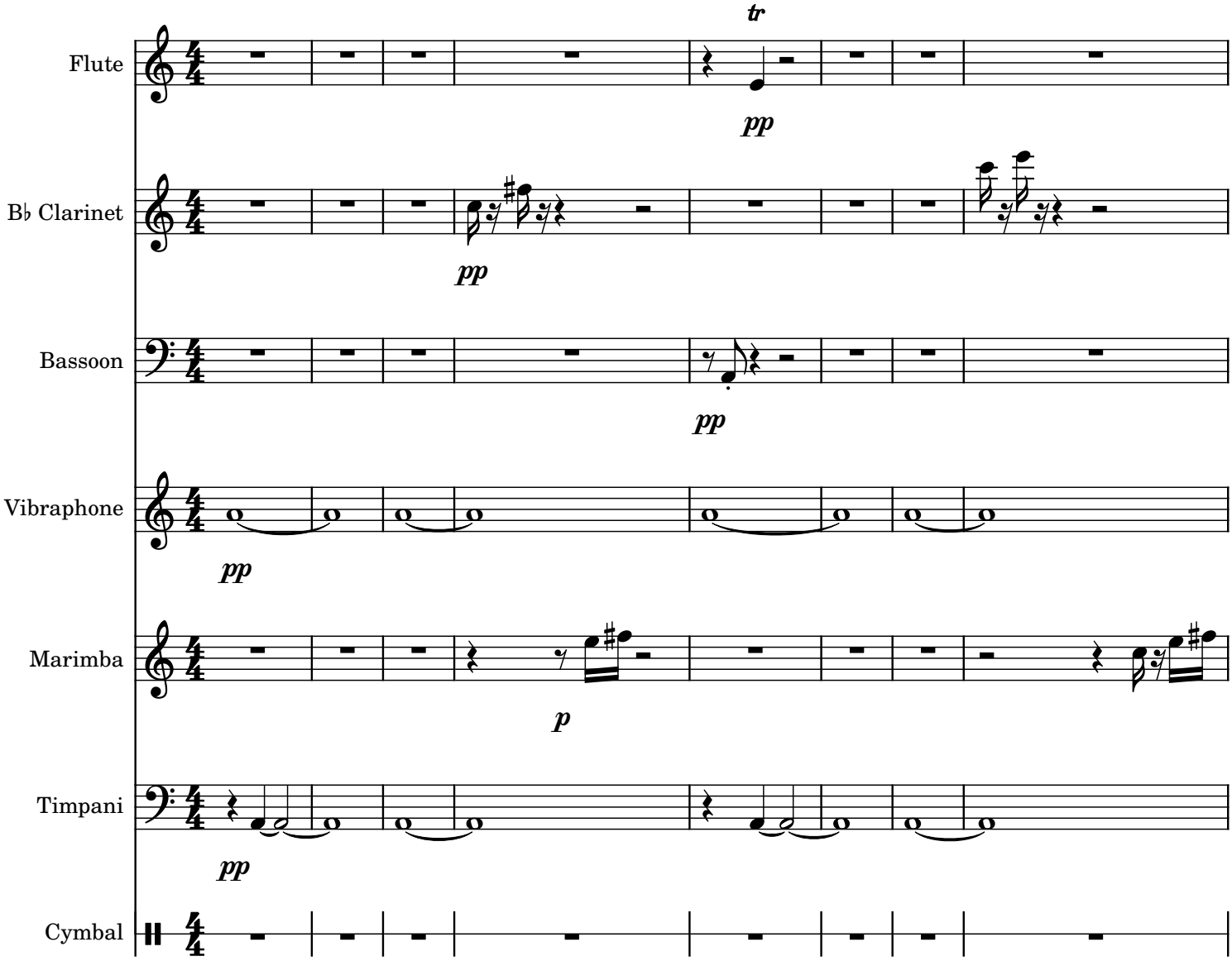
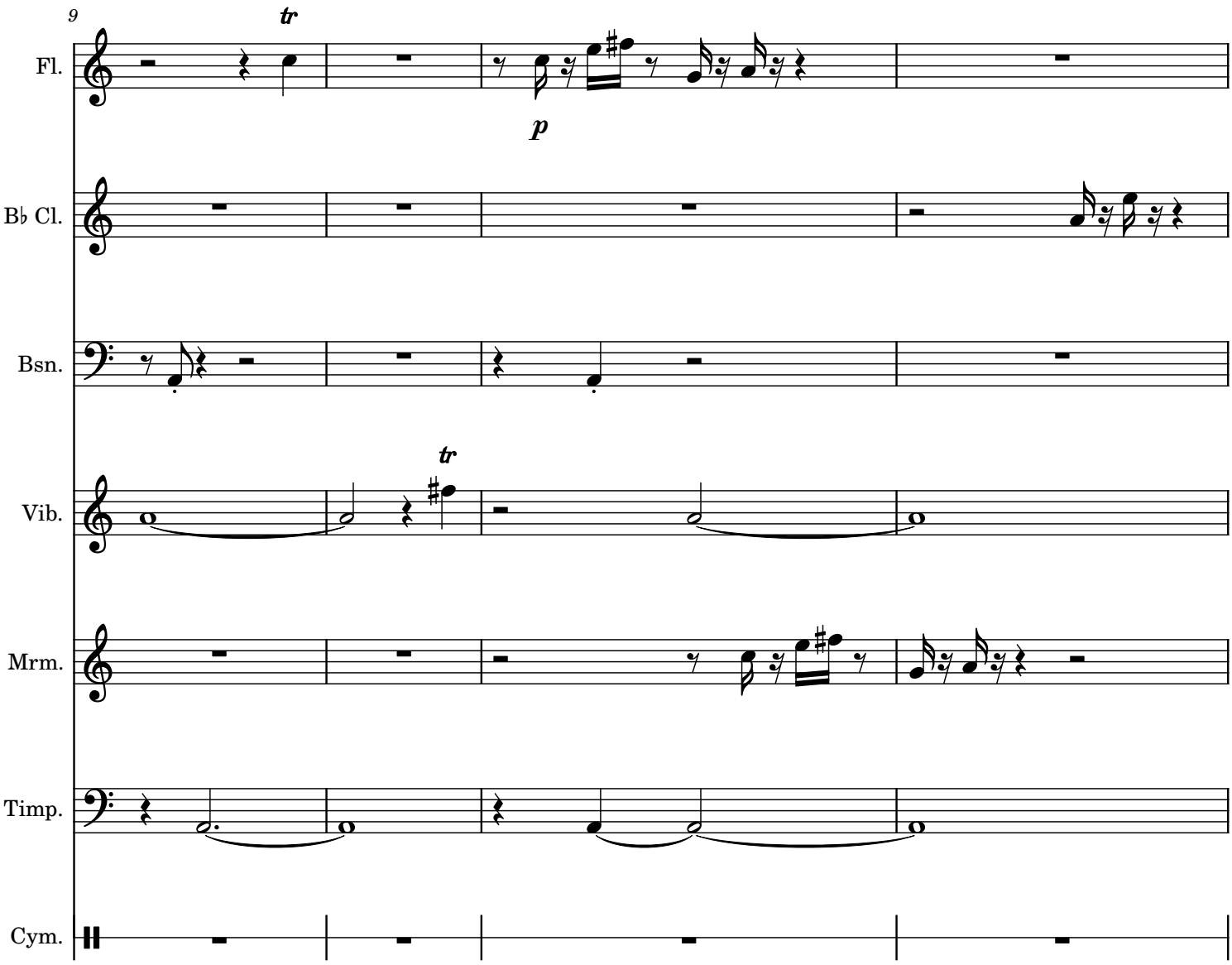
ppp
Vib.
ppp
Mrm.
Timp.

2. Thoughts in a Storm

Elizabeth Lemmer

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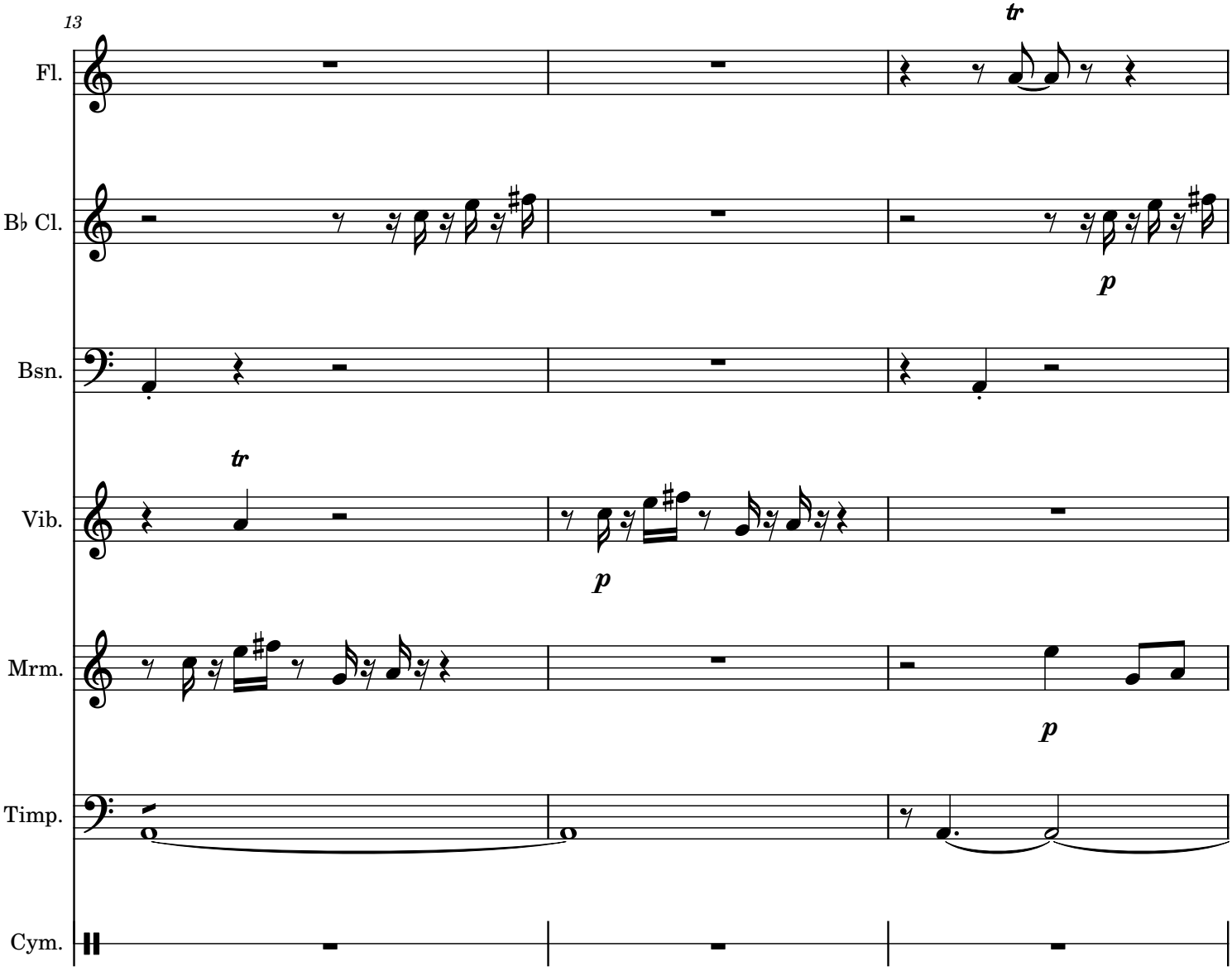
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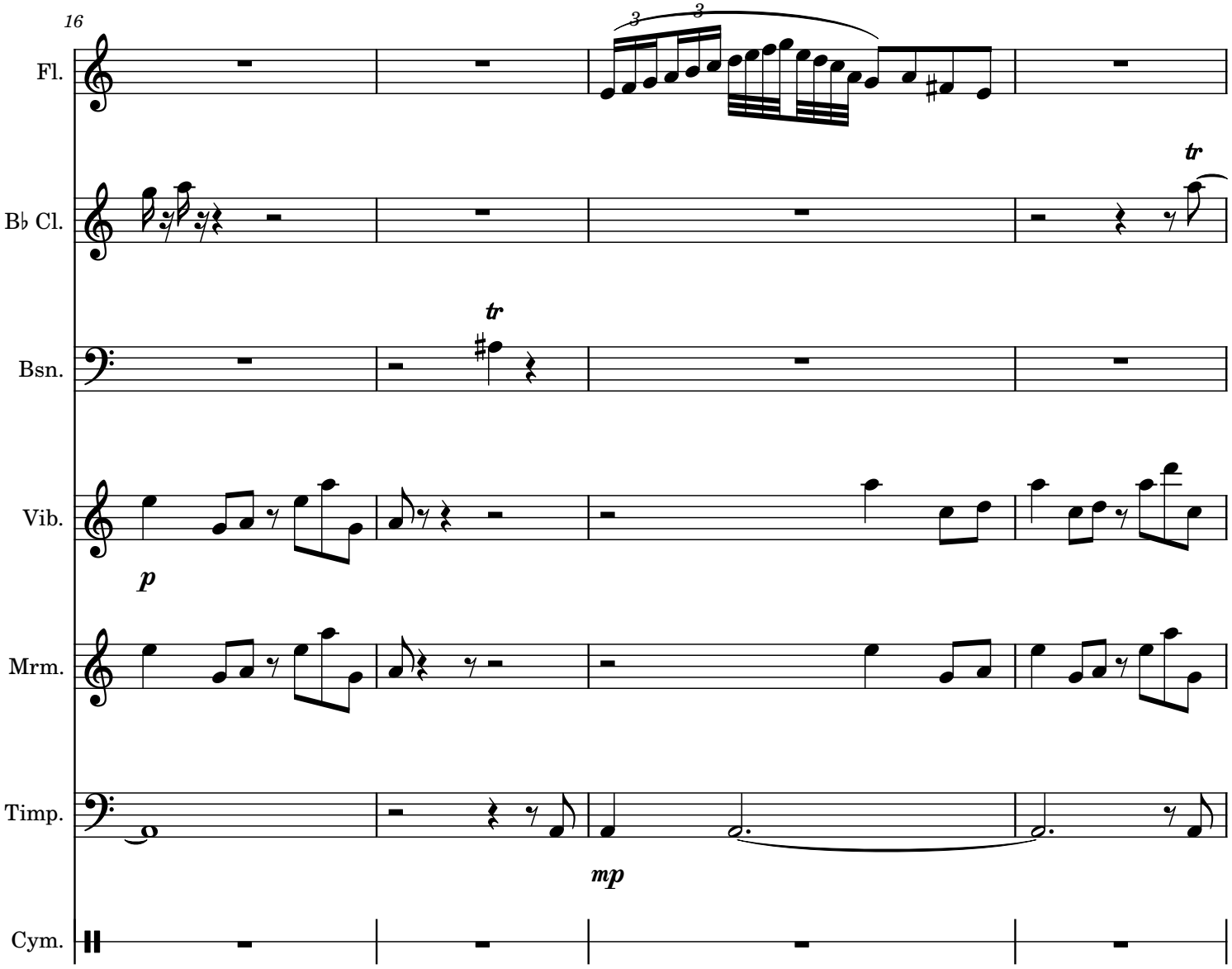
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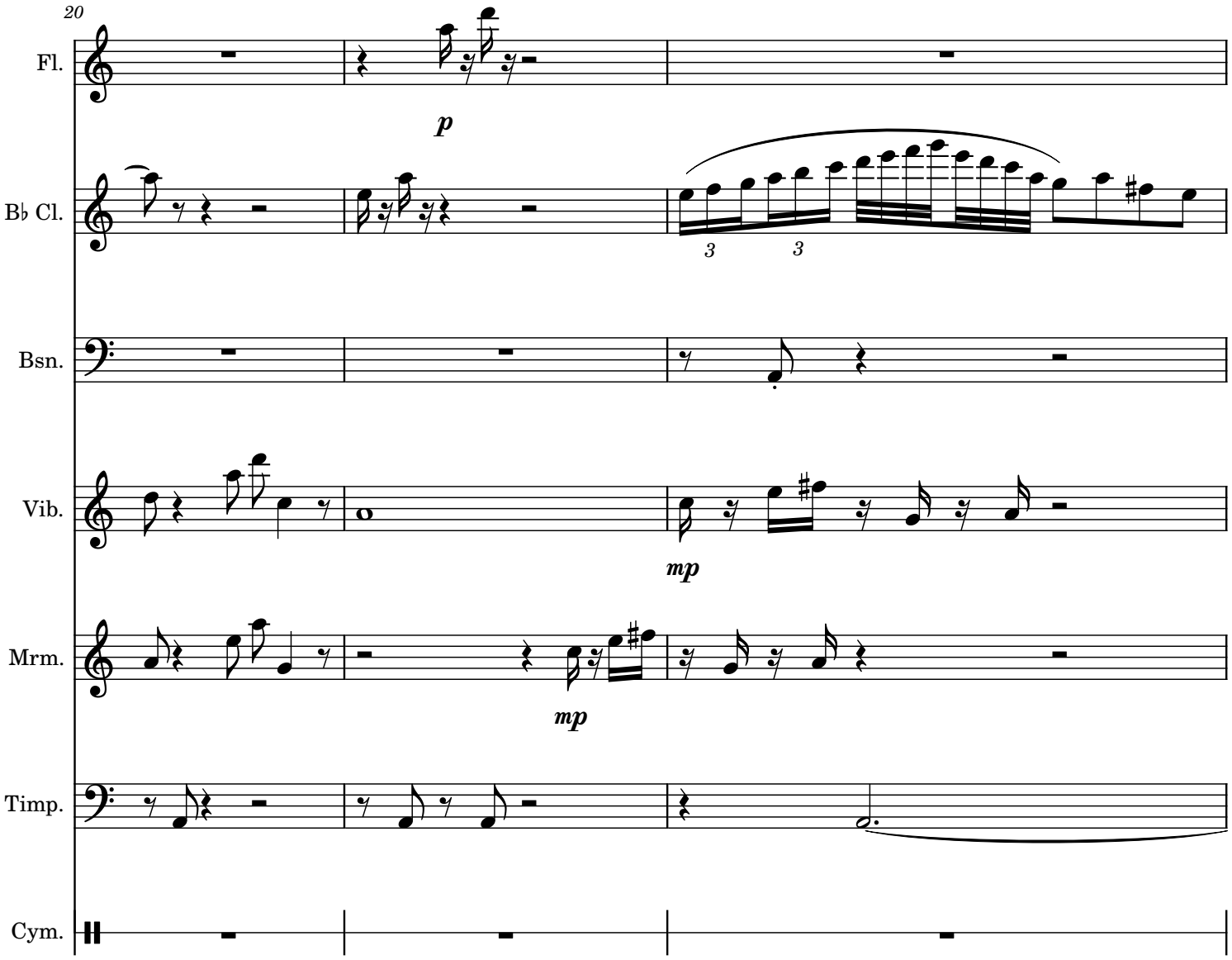
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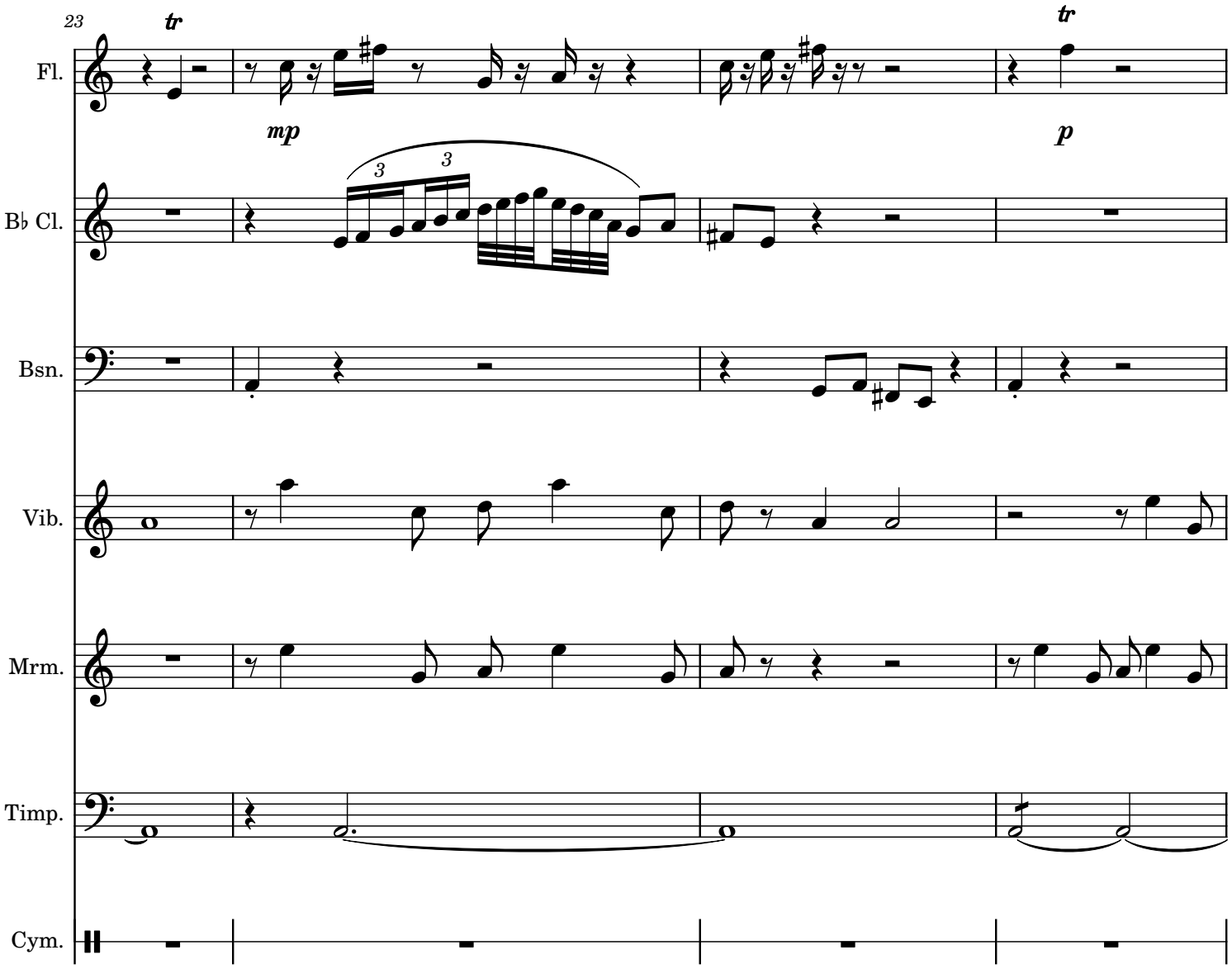
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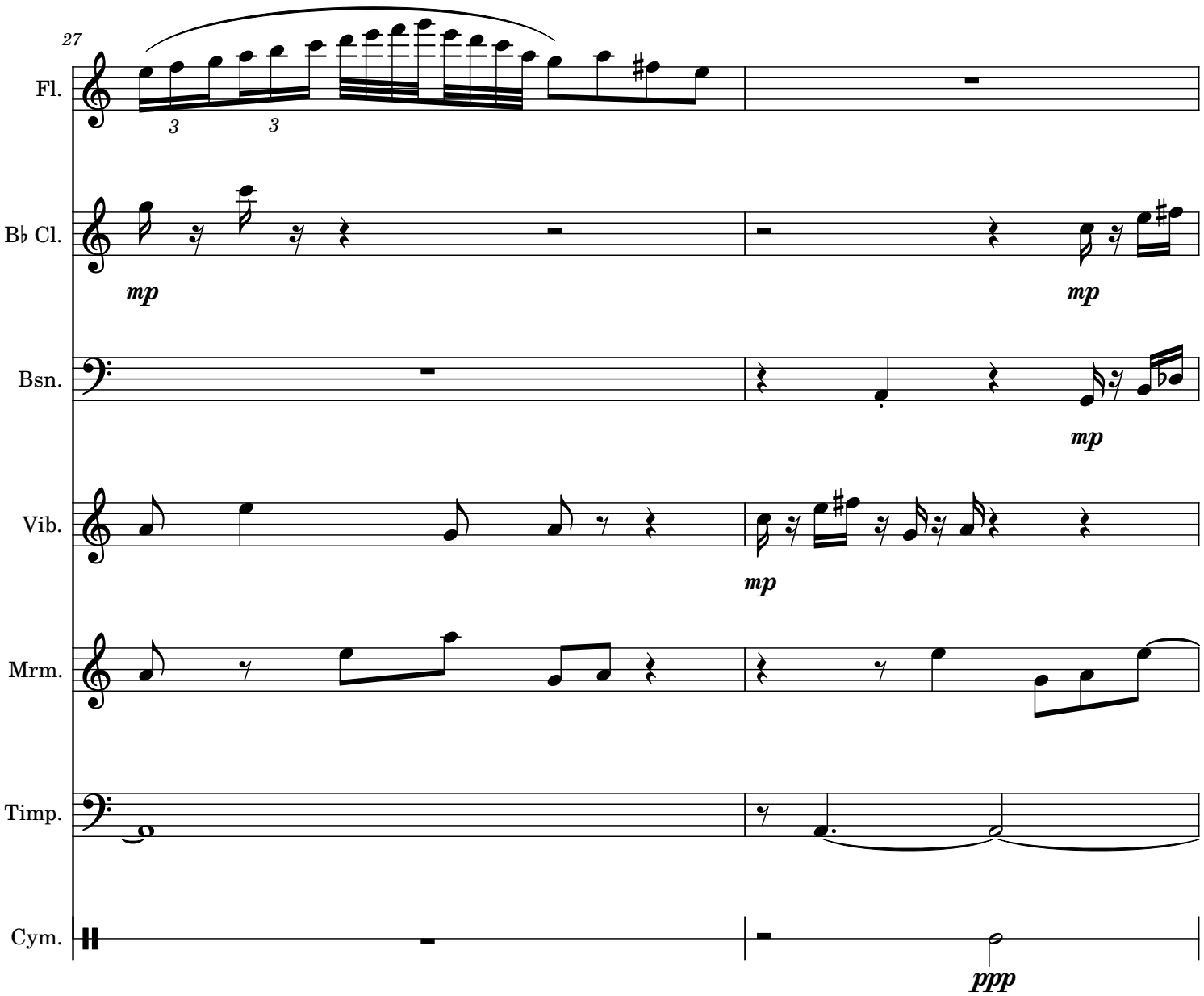
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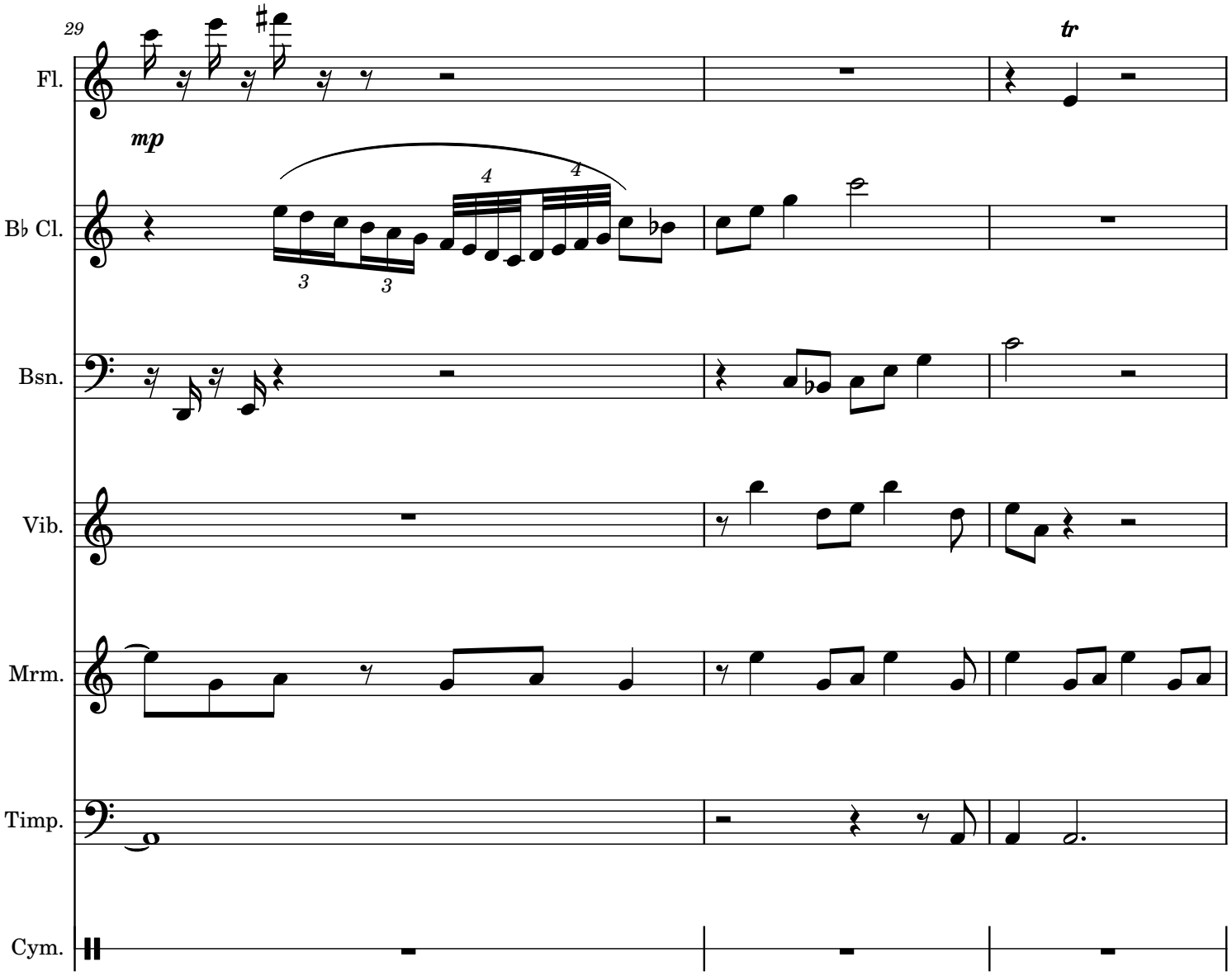
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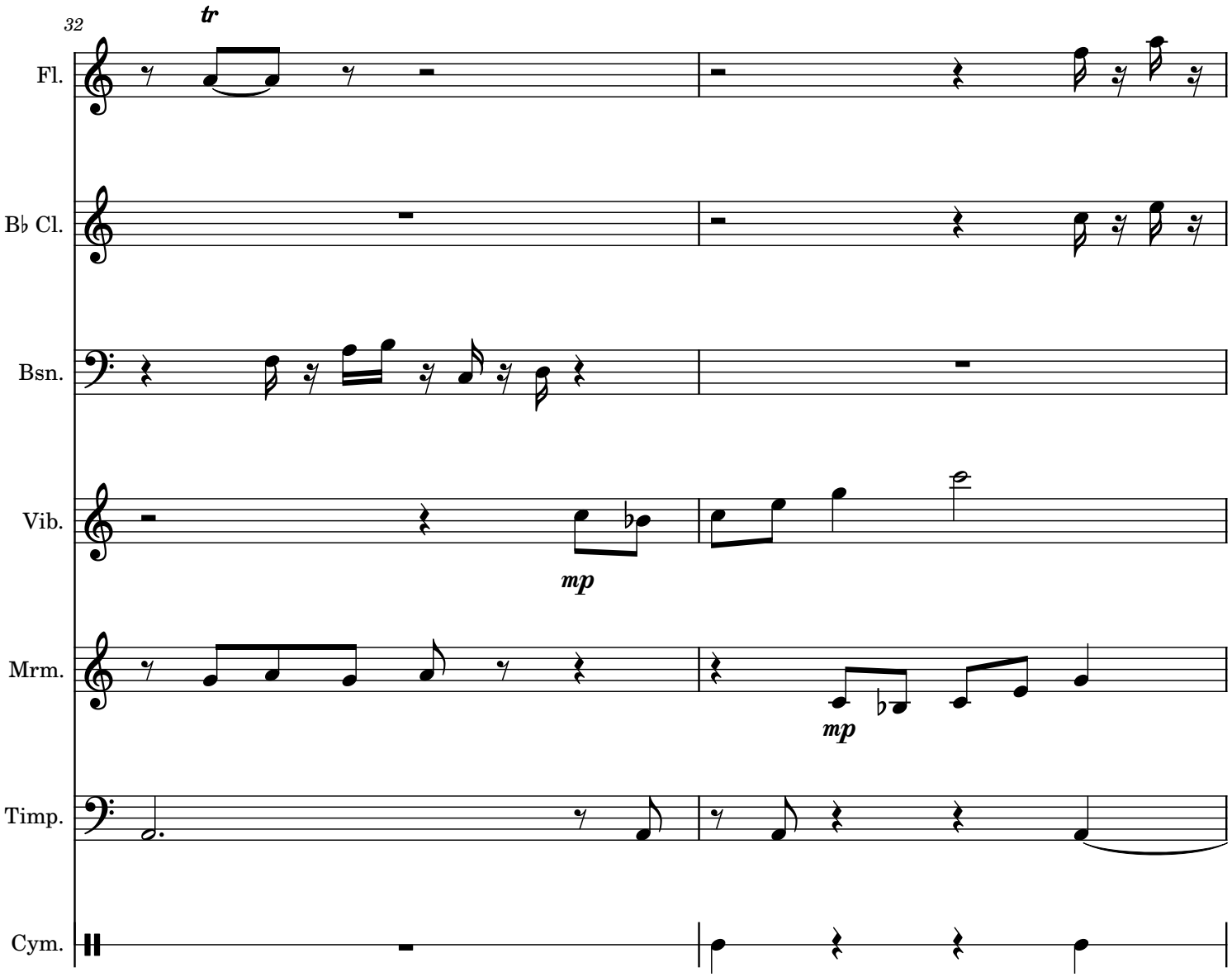
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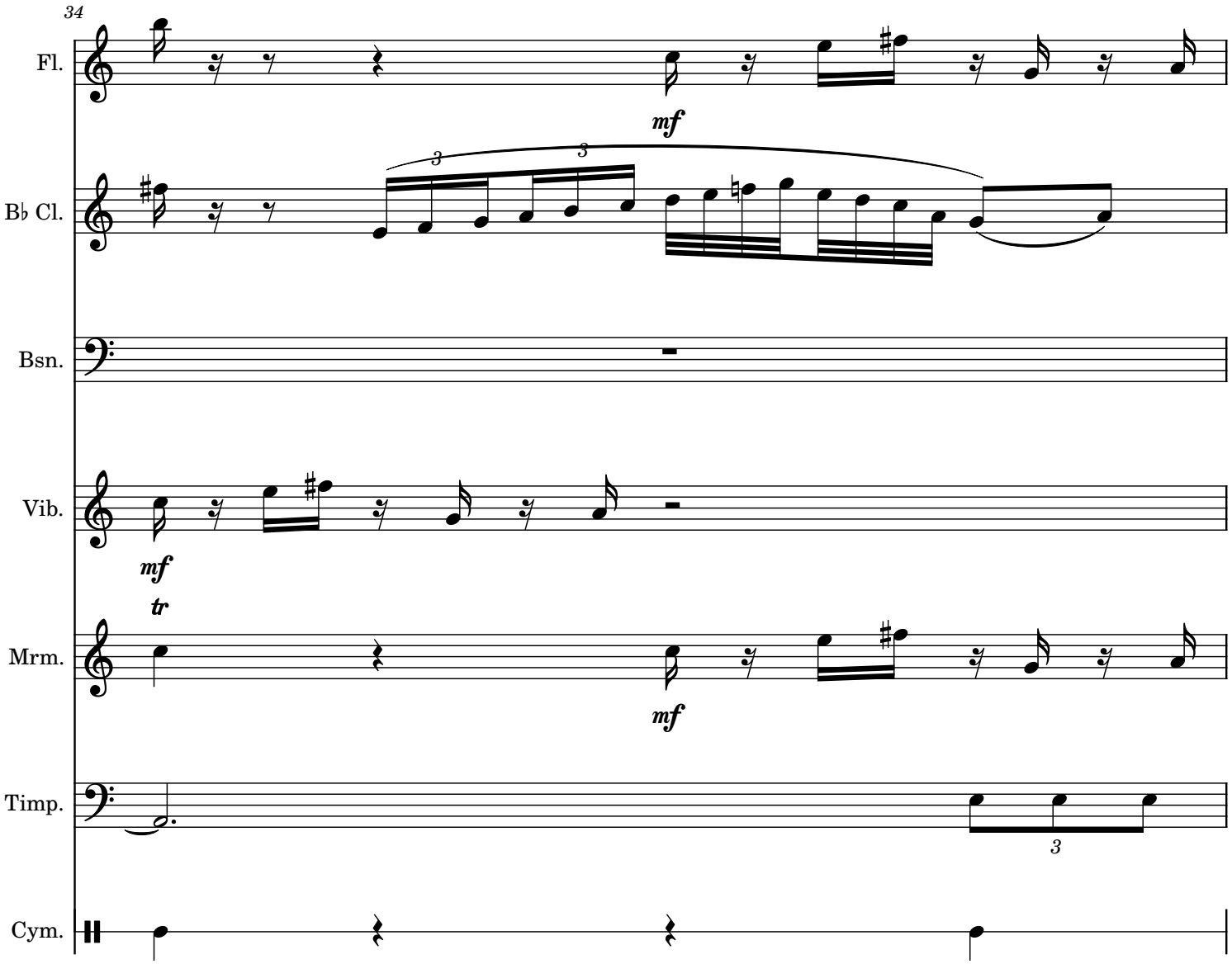
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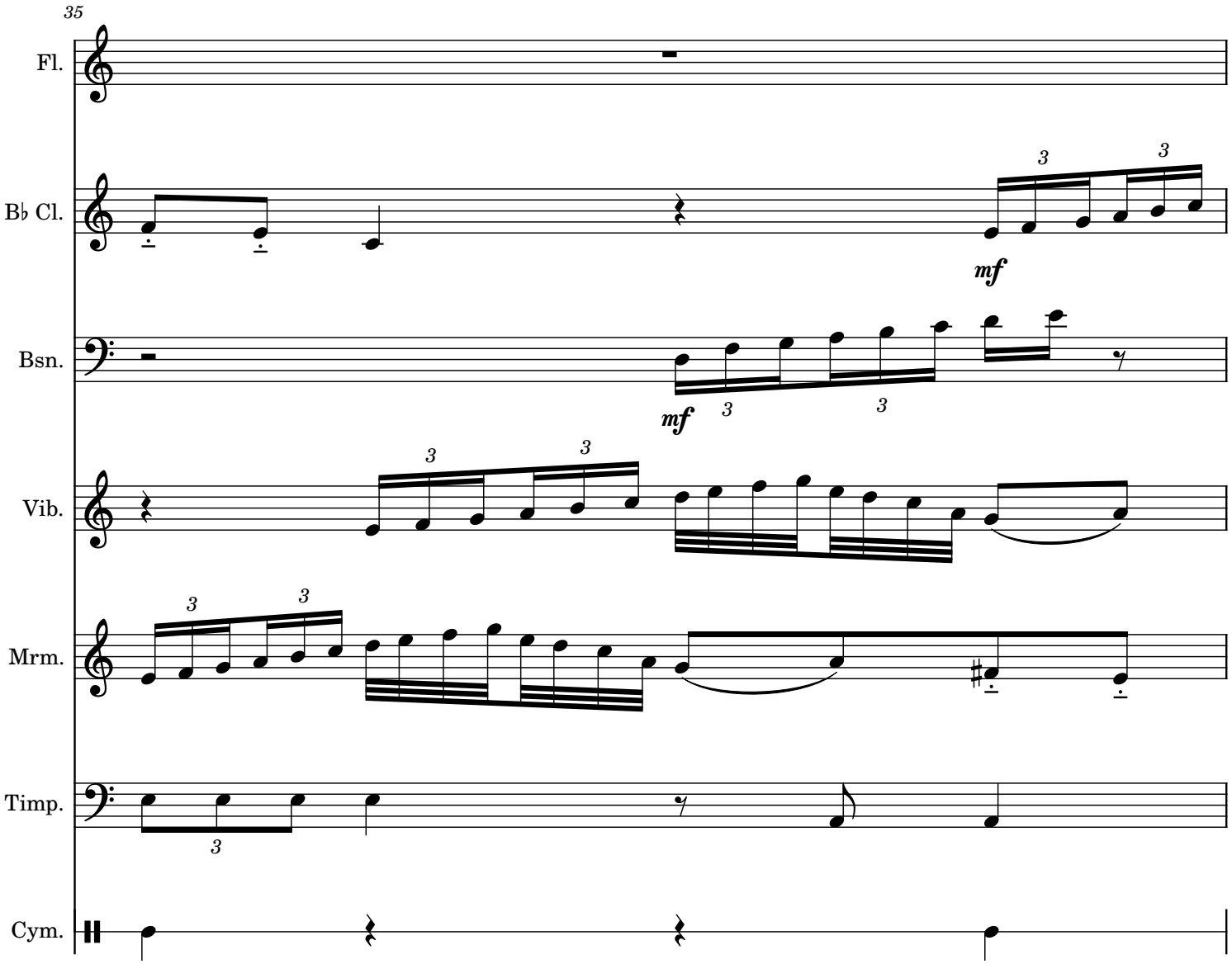
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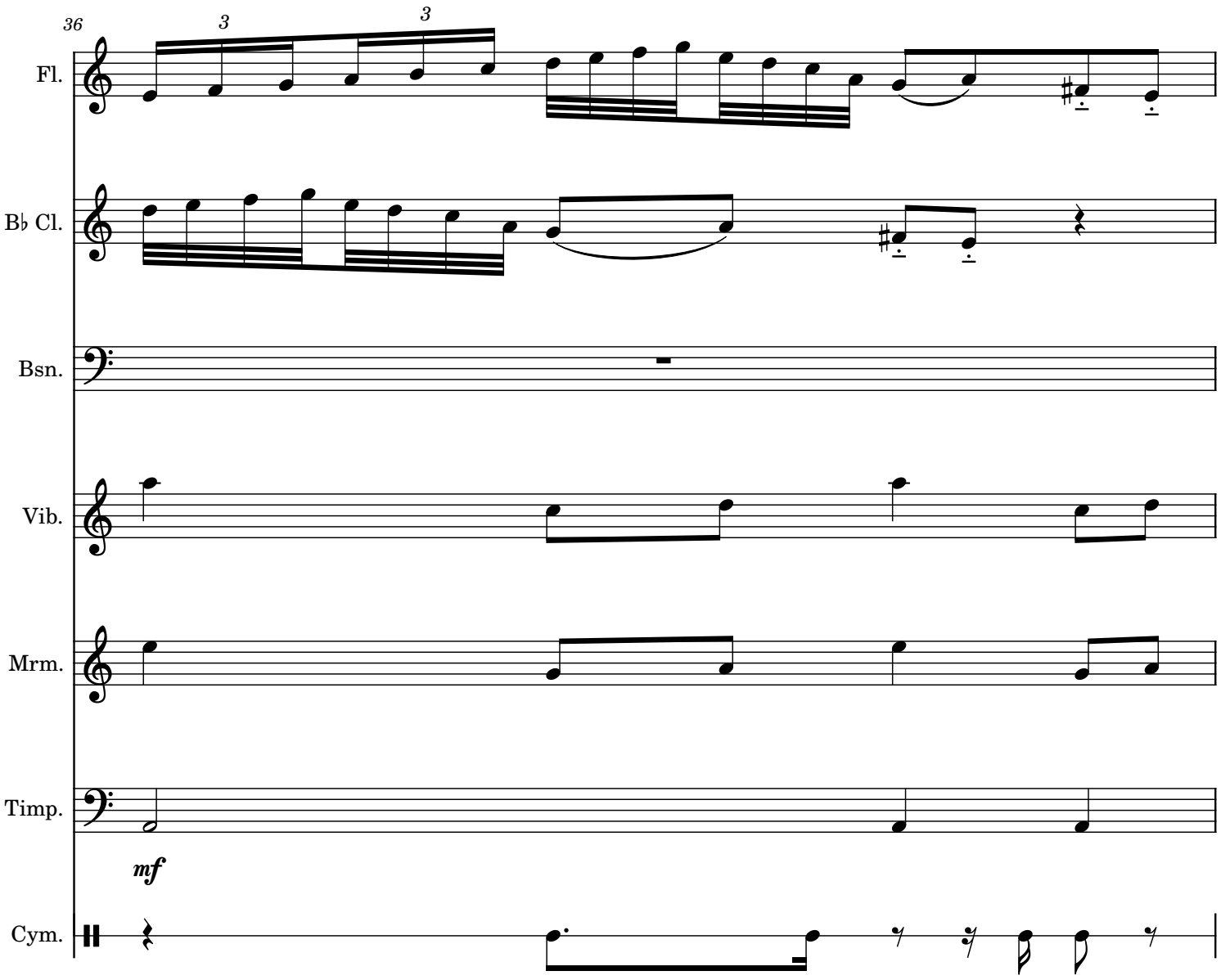
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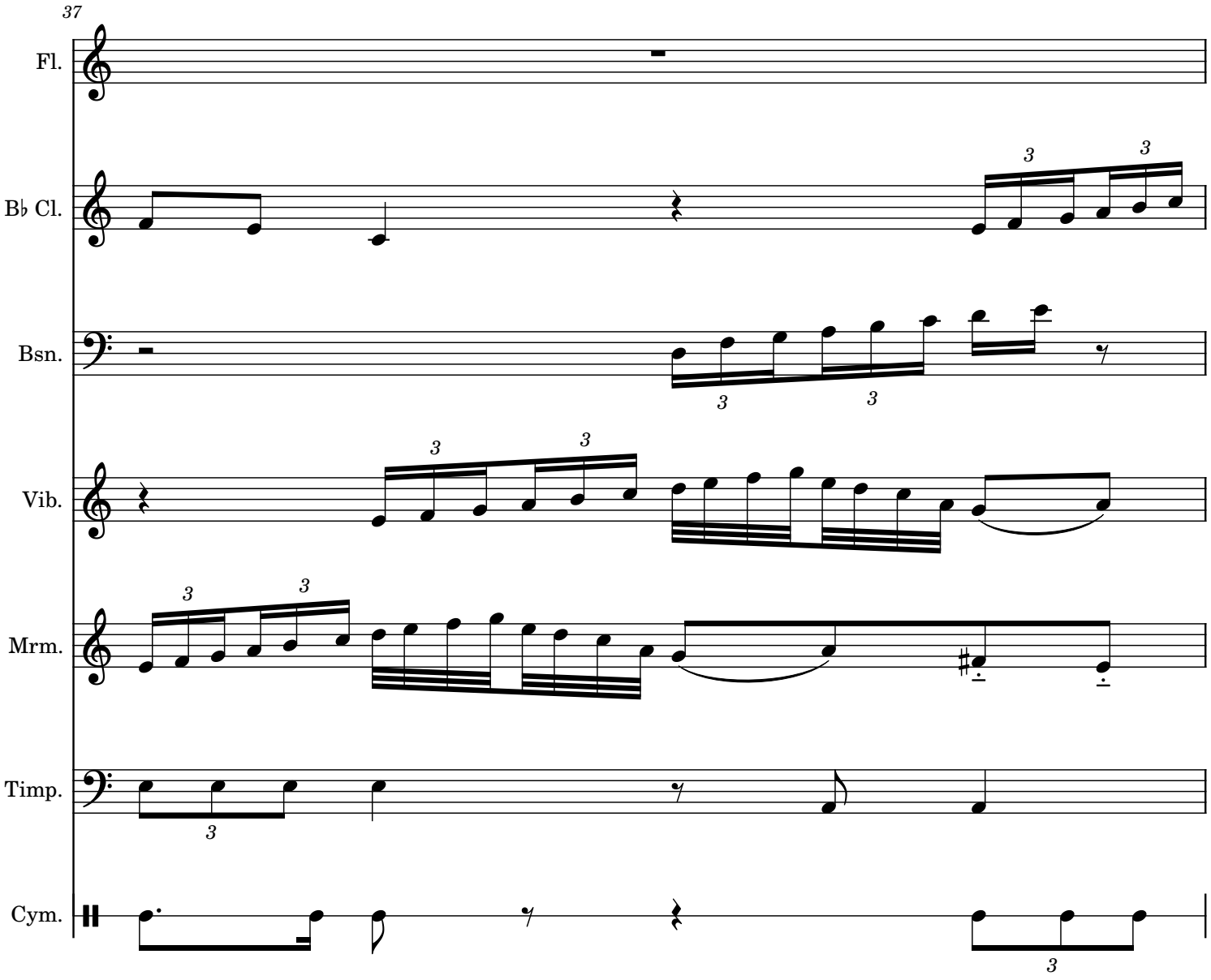
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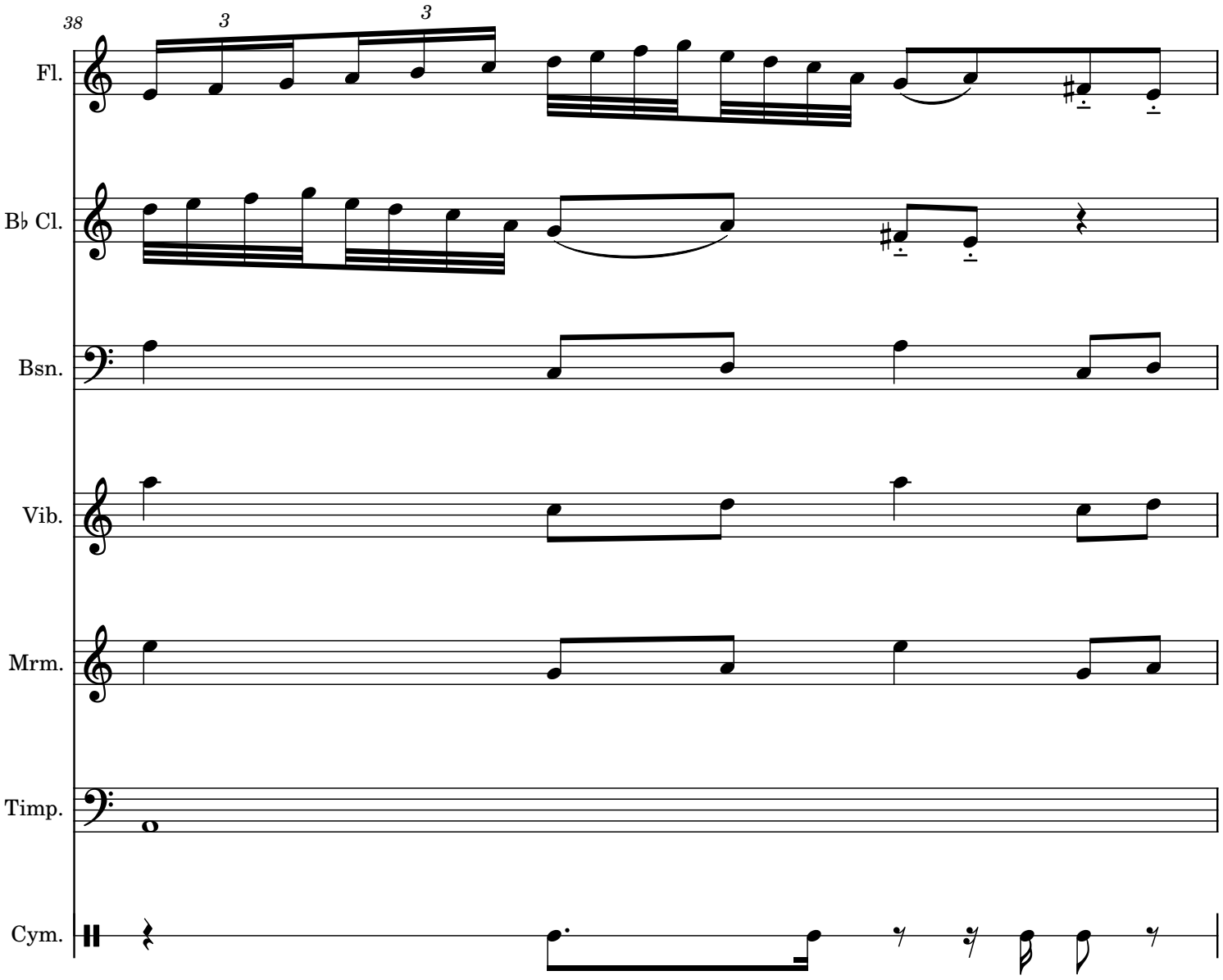
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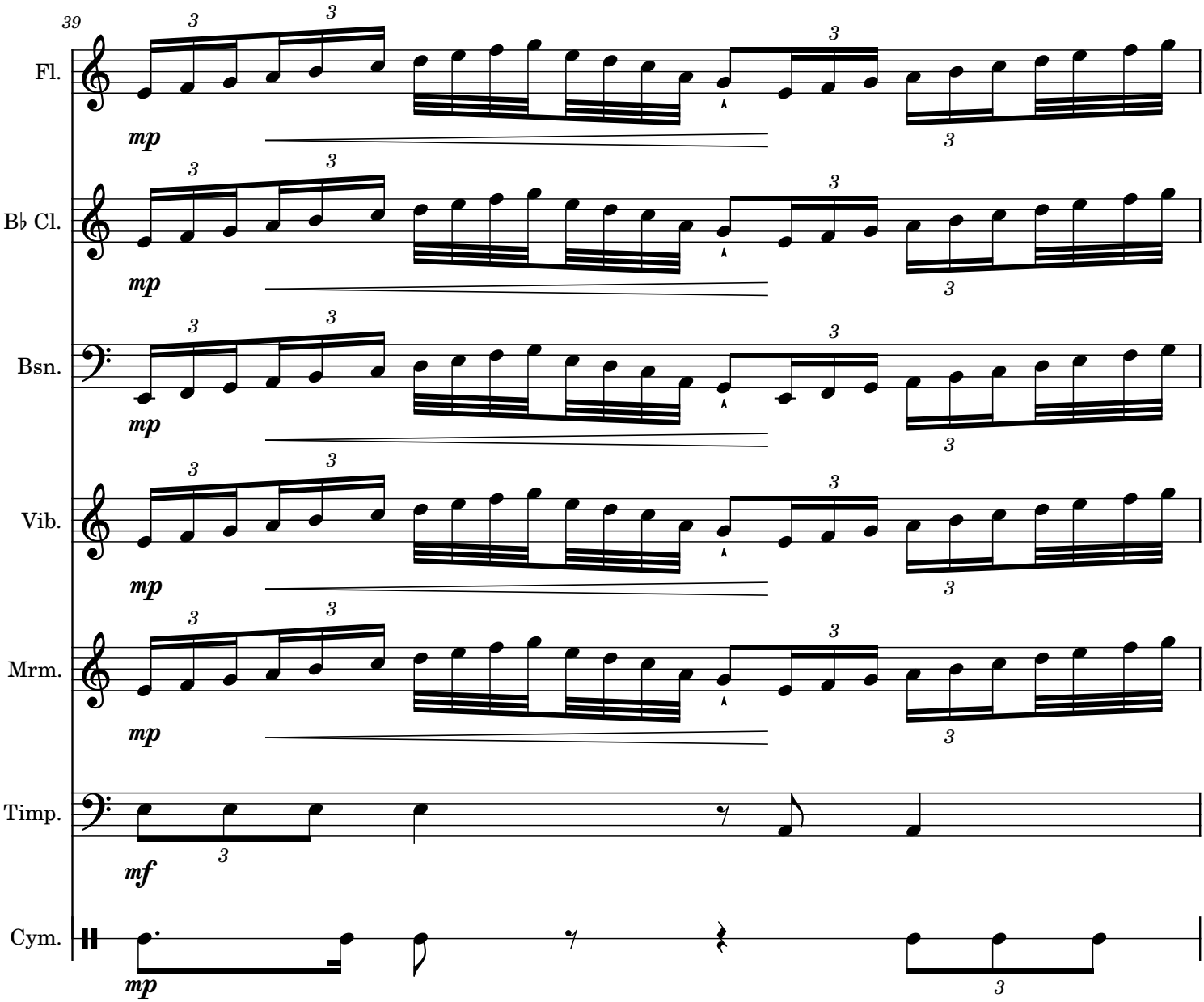
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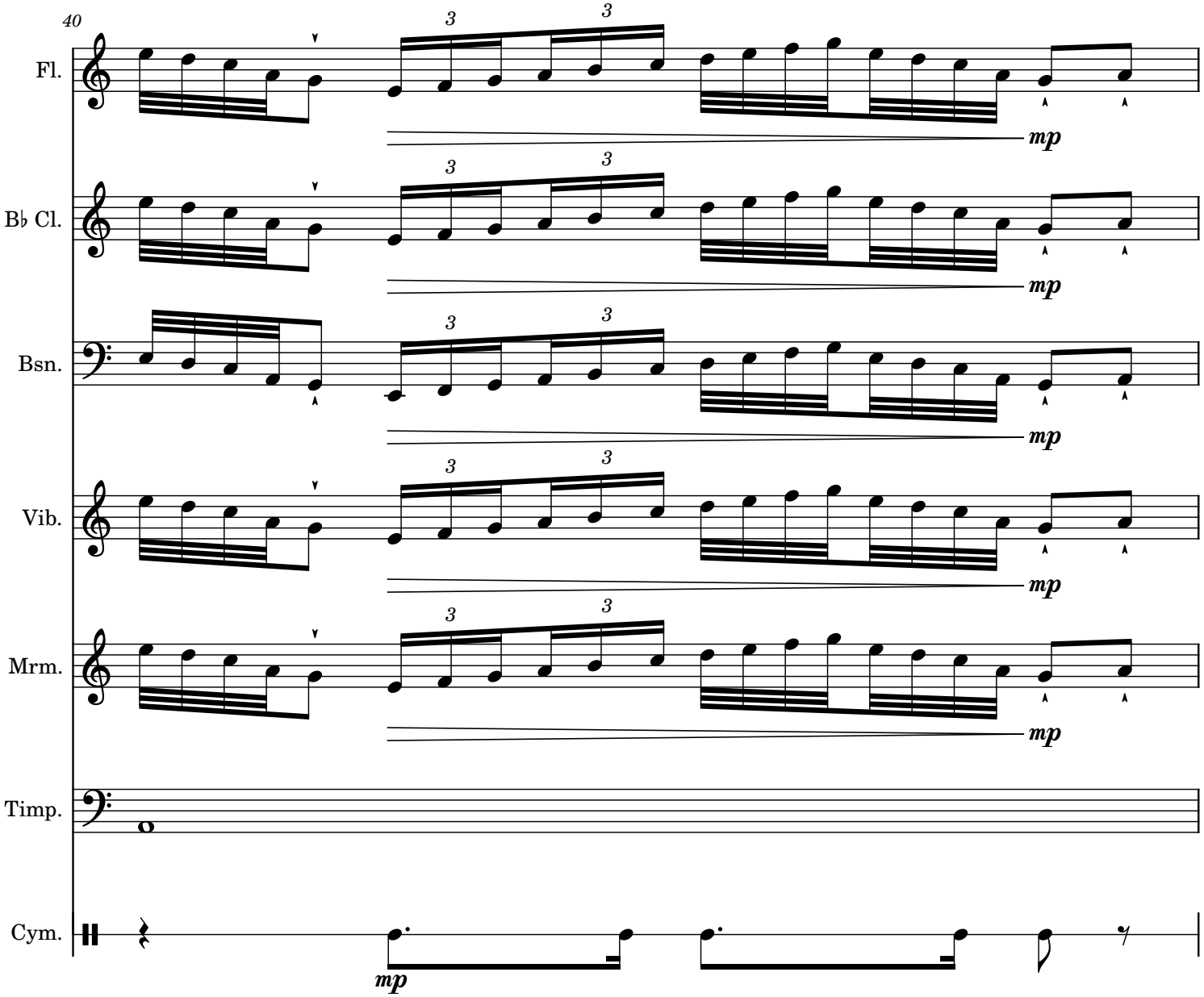
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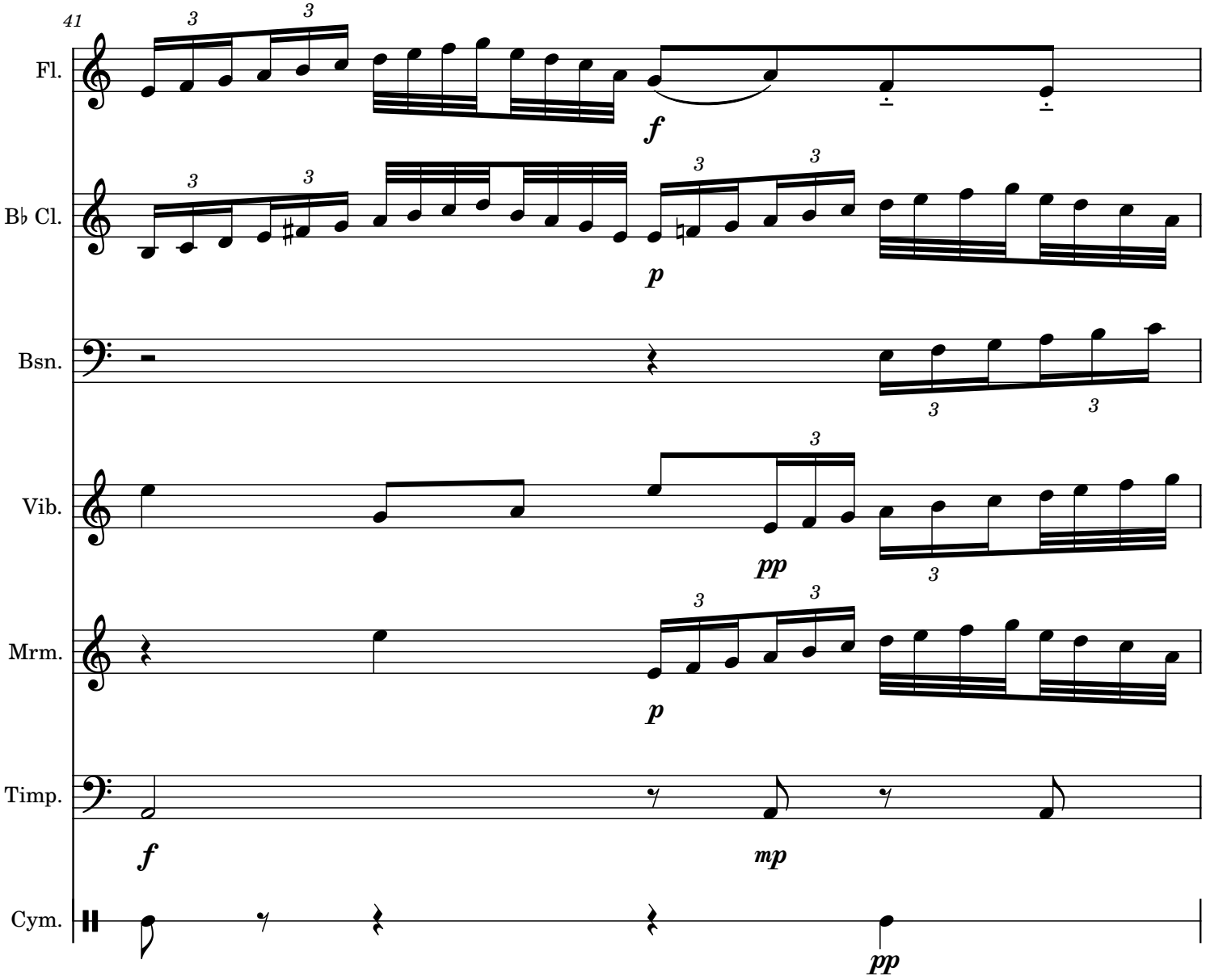
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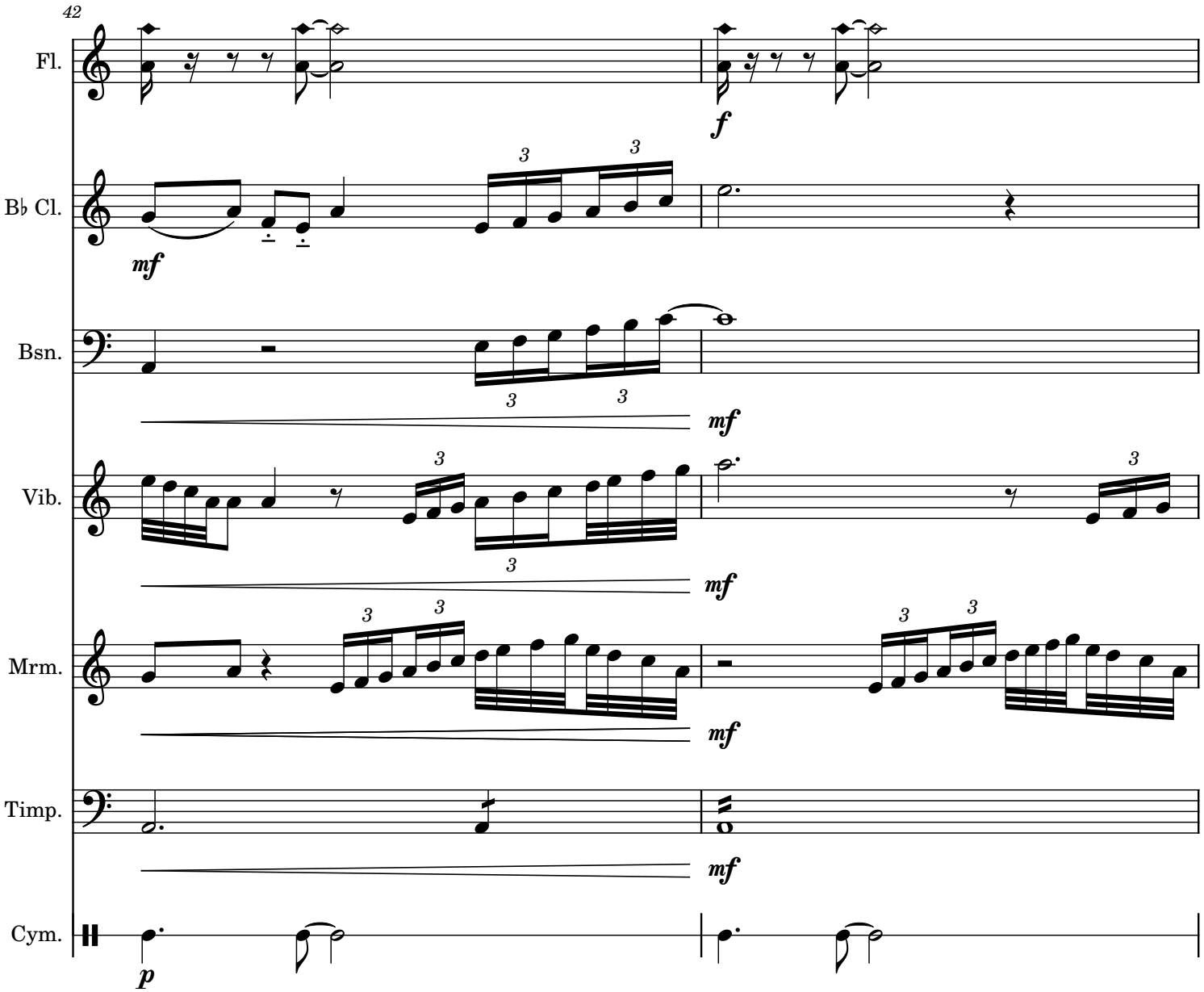
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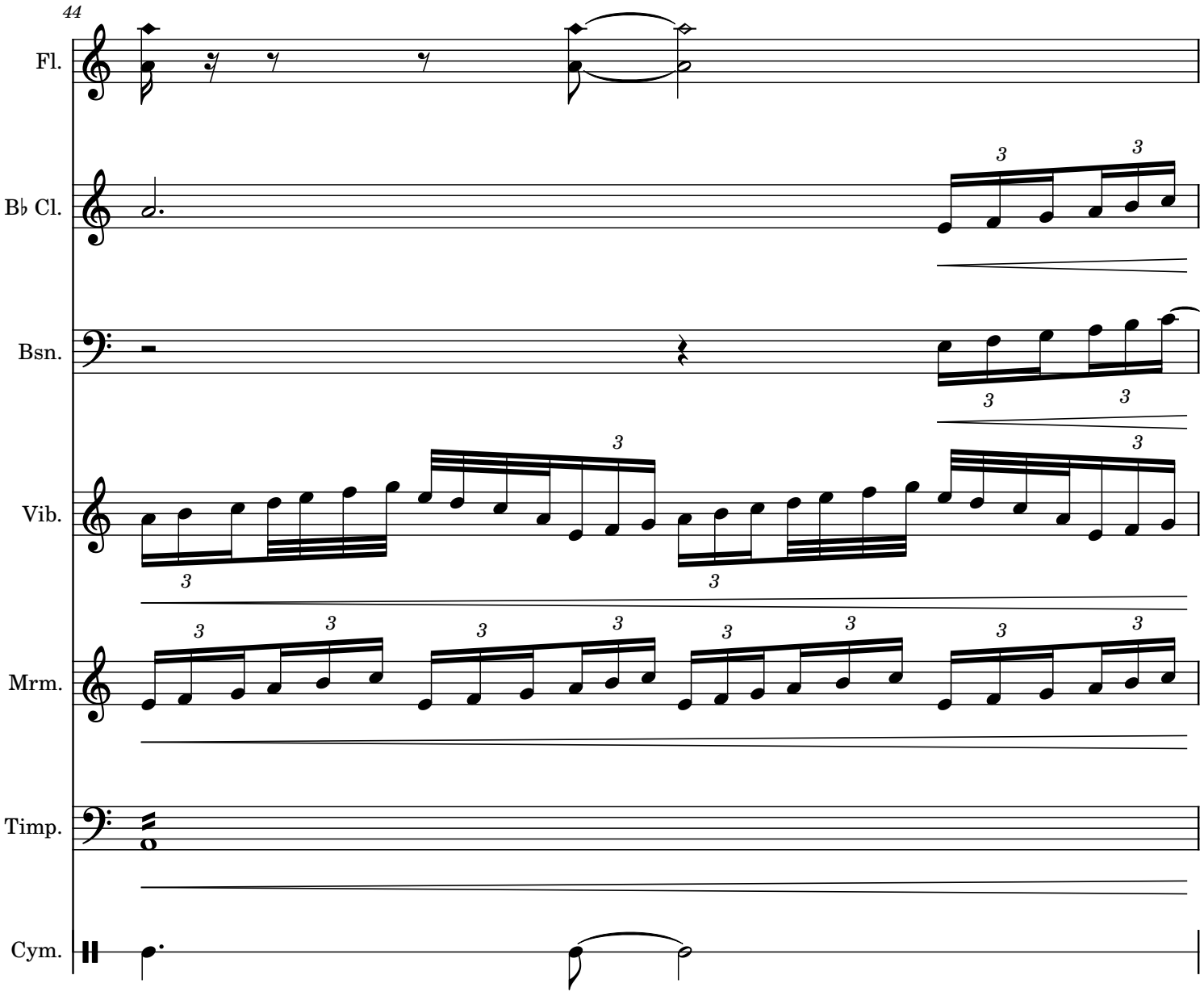
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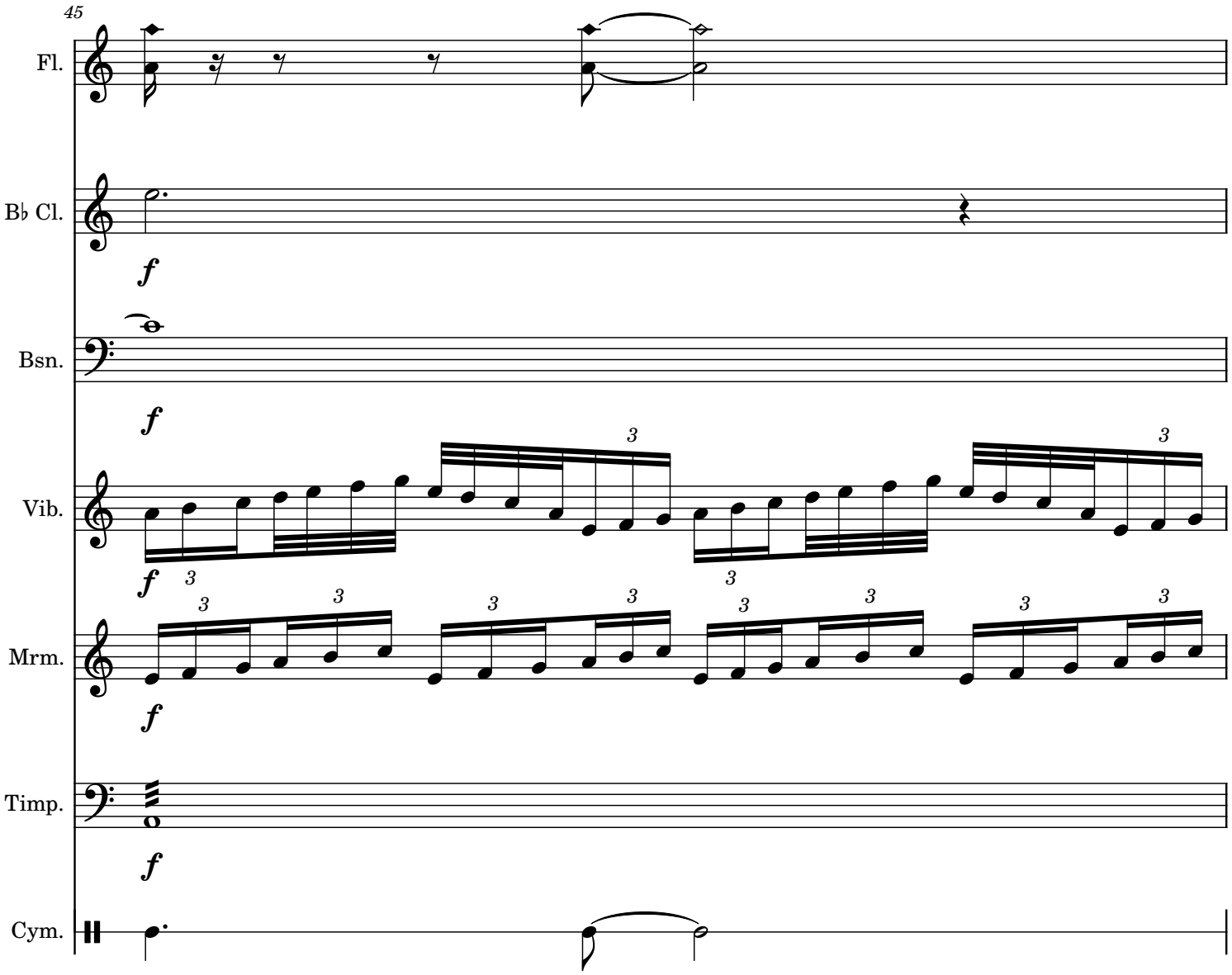
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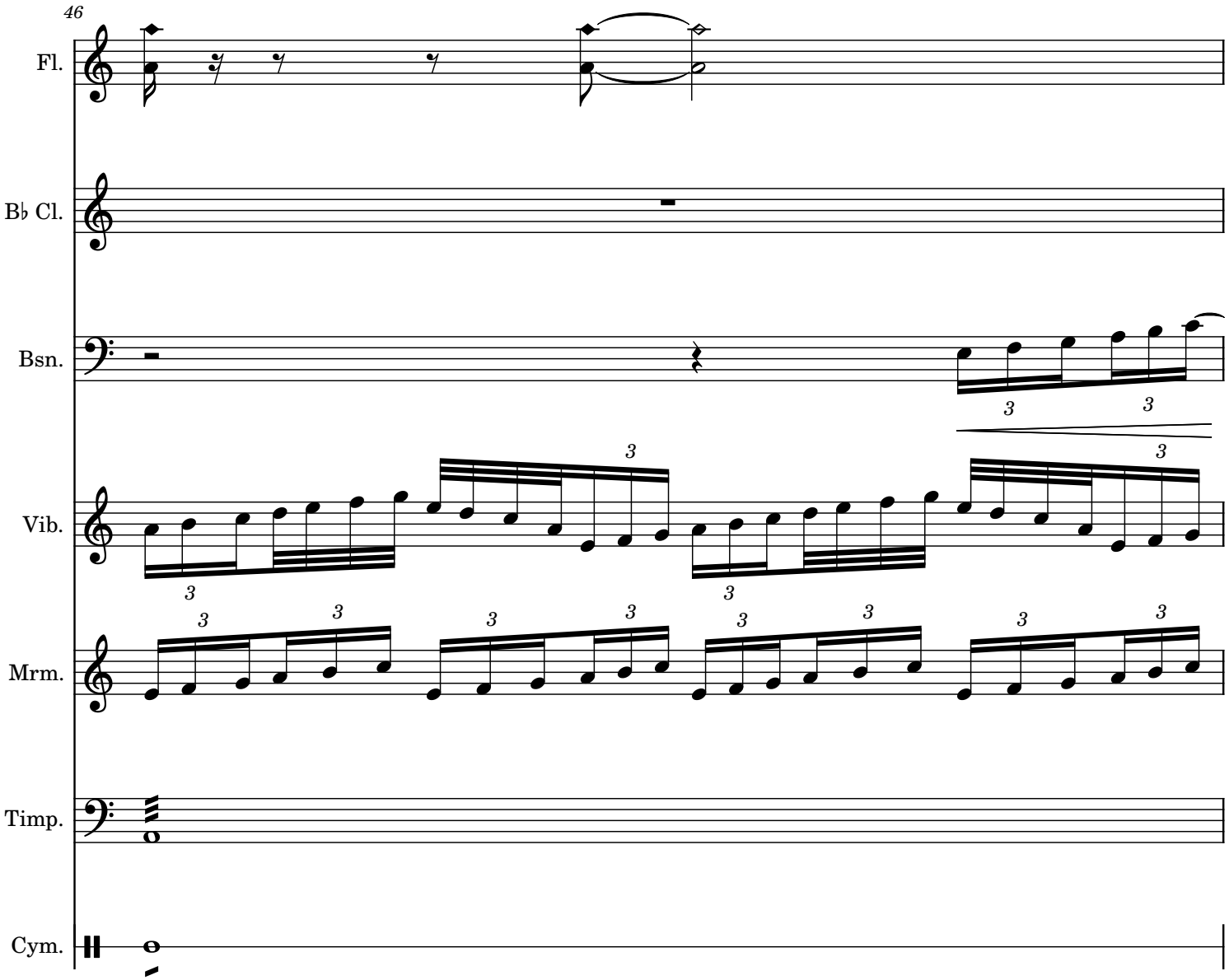
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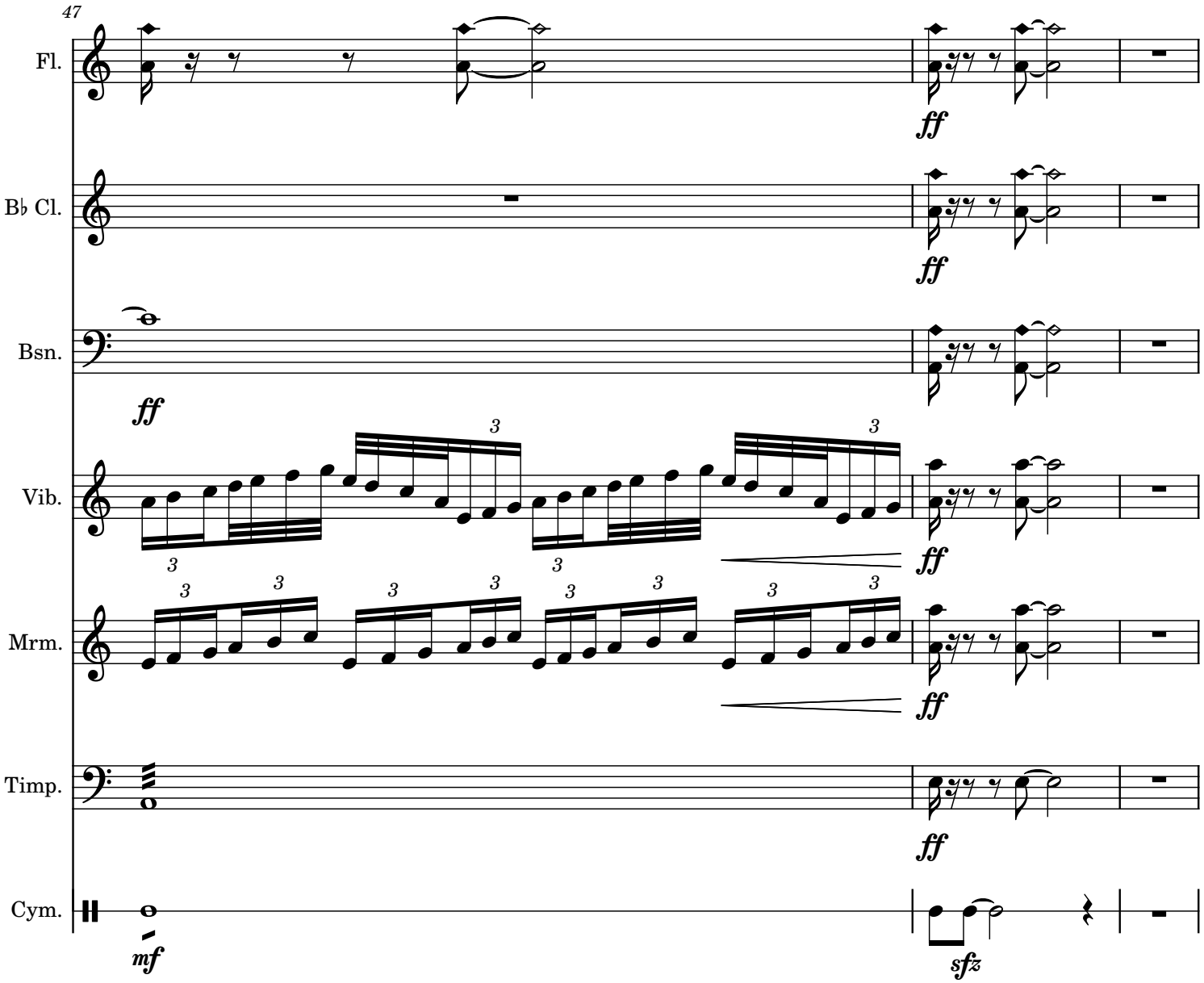
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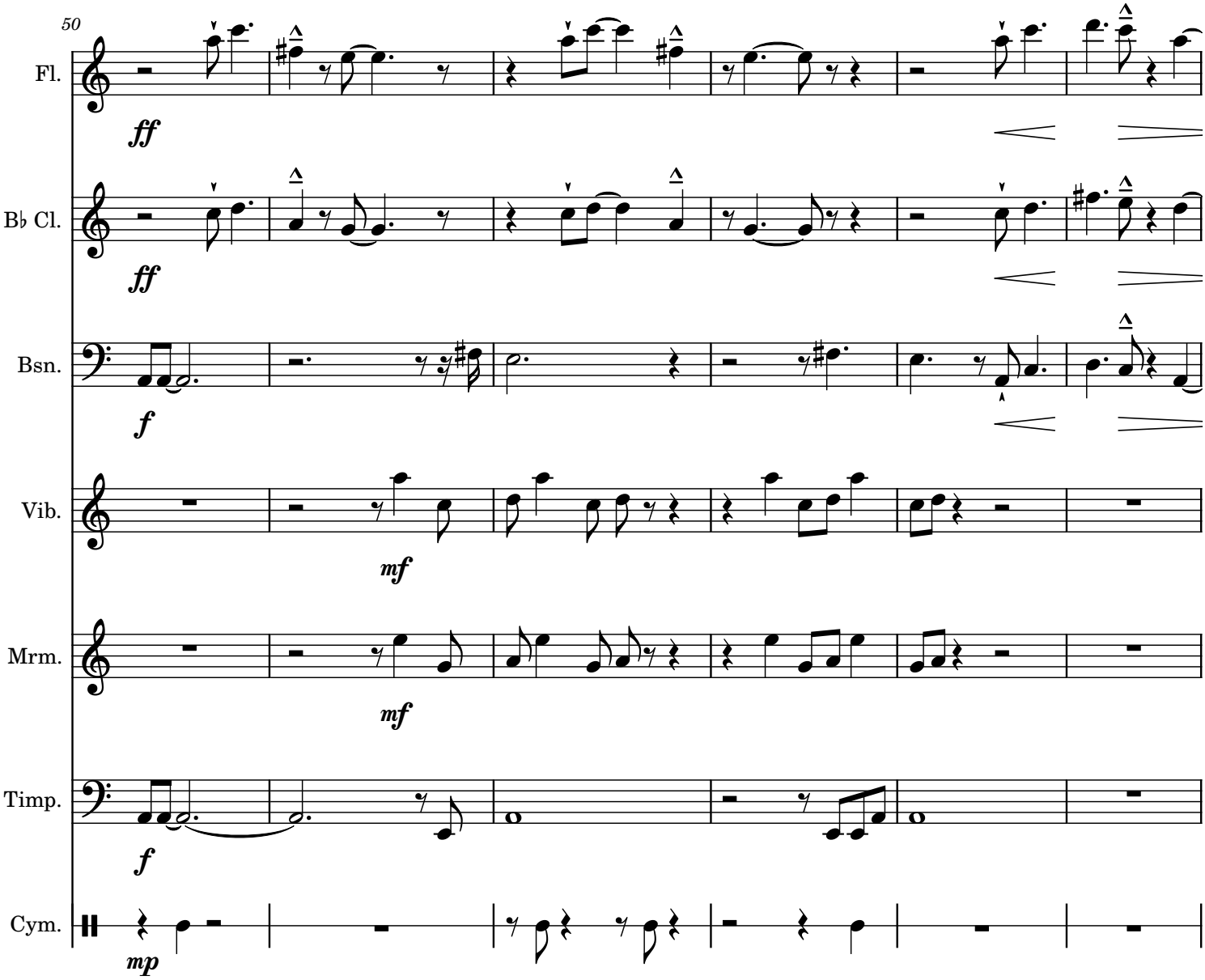
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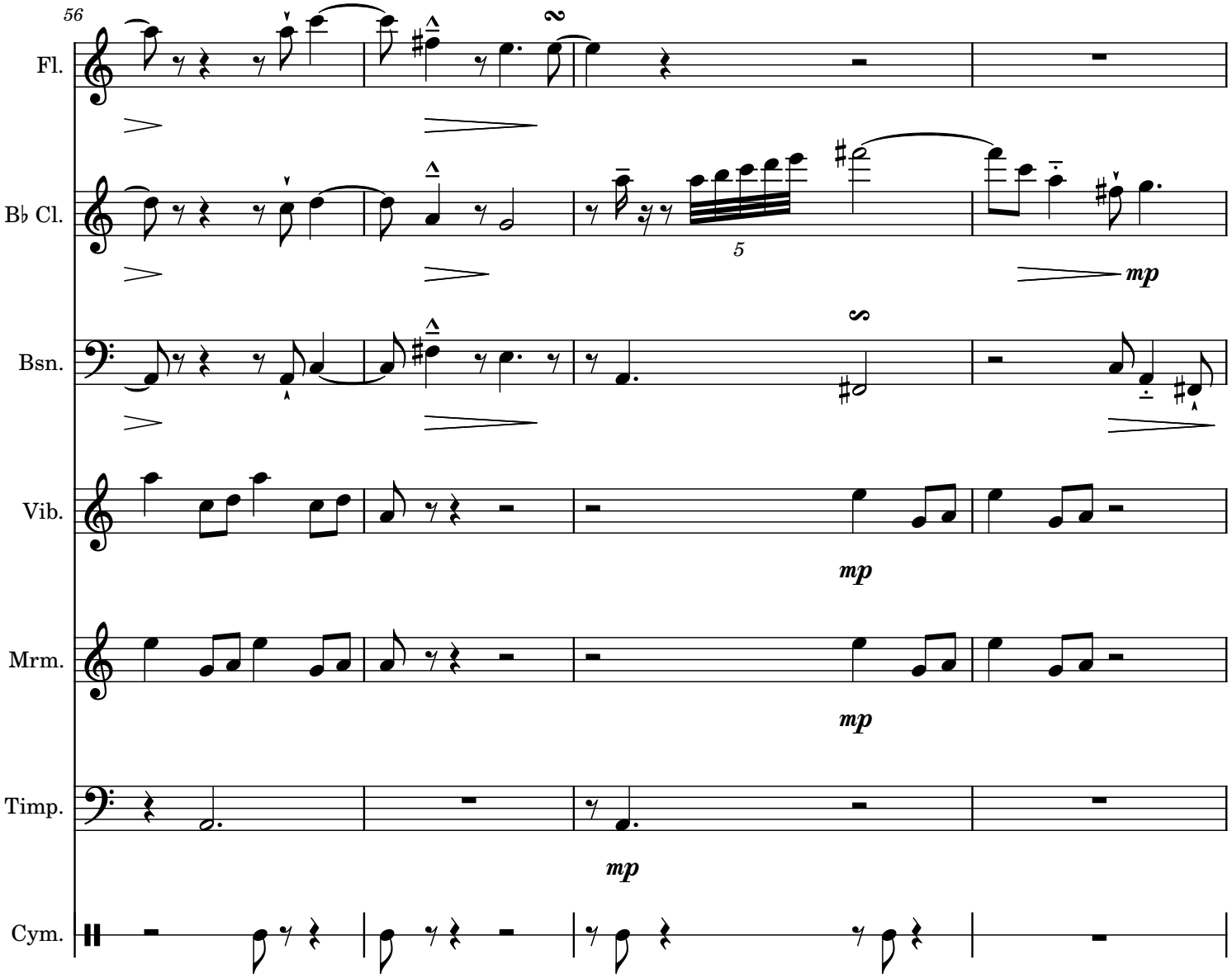
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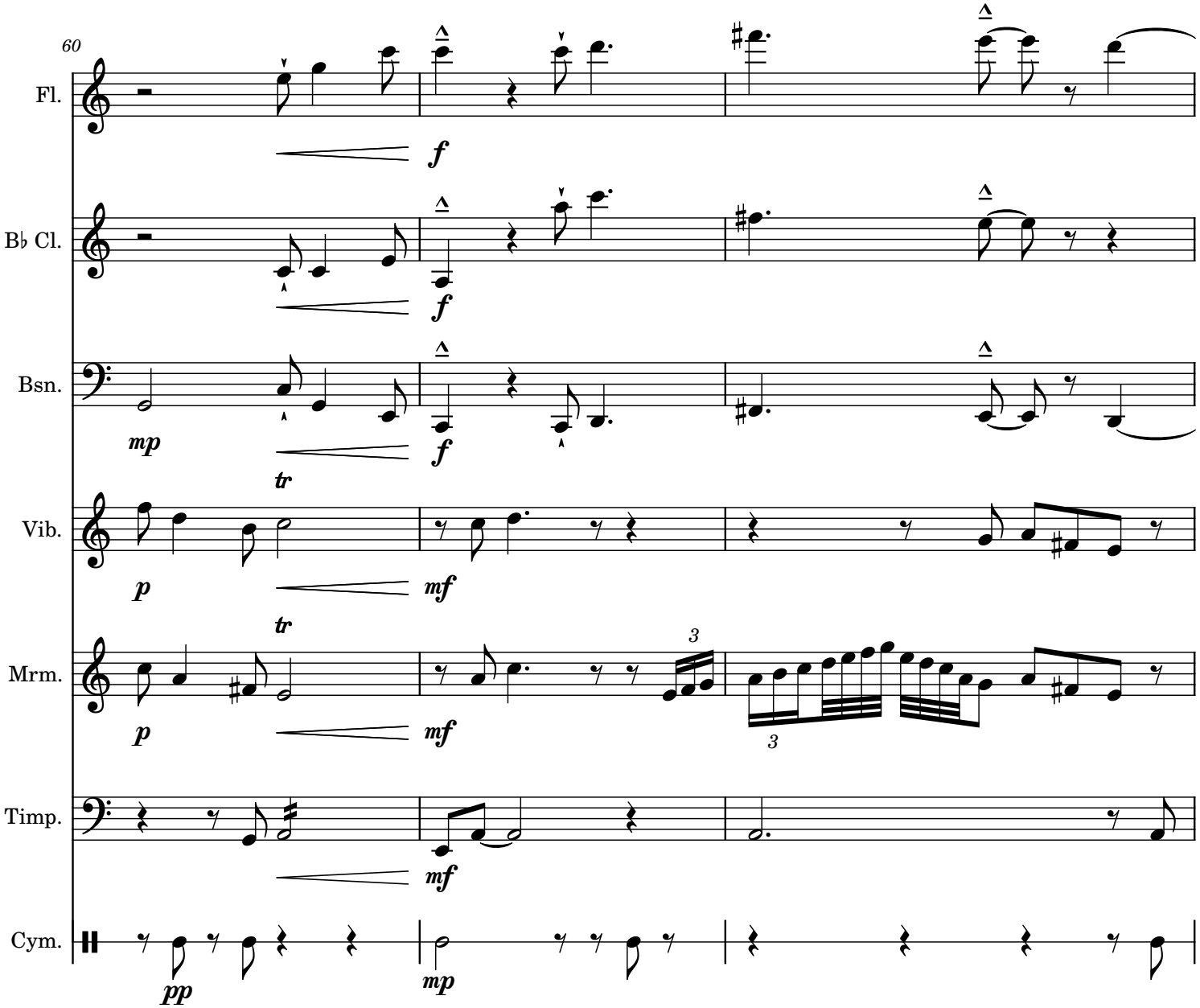
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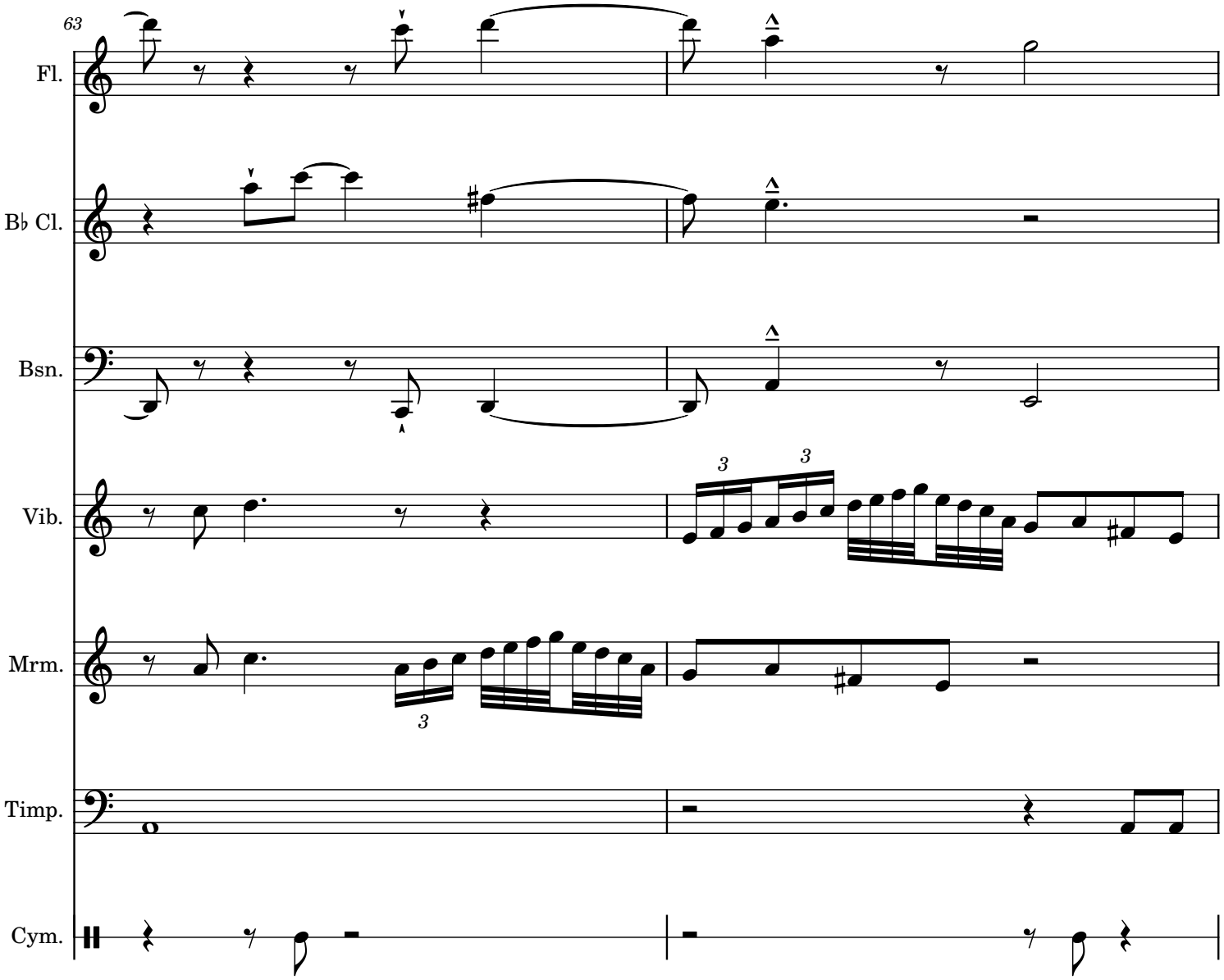
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Timp.
Cym.
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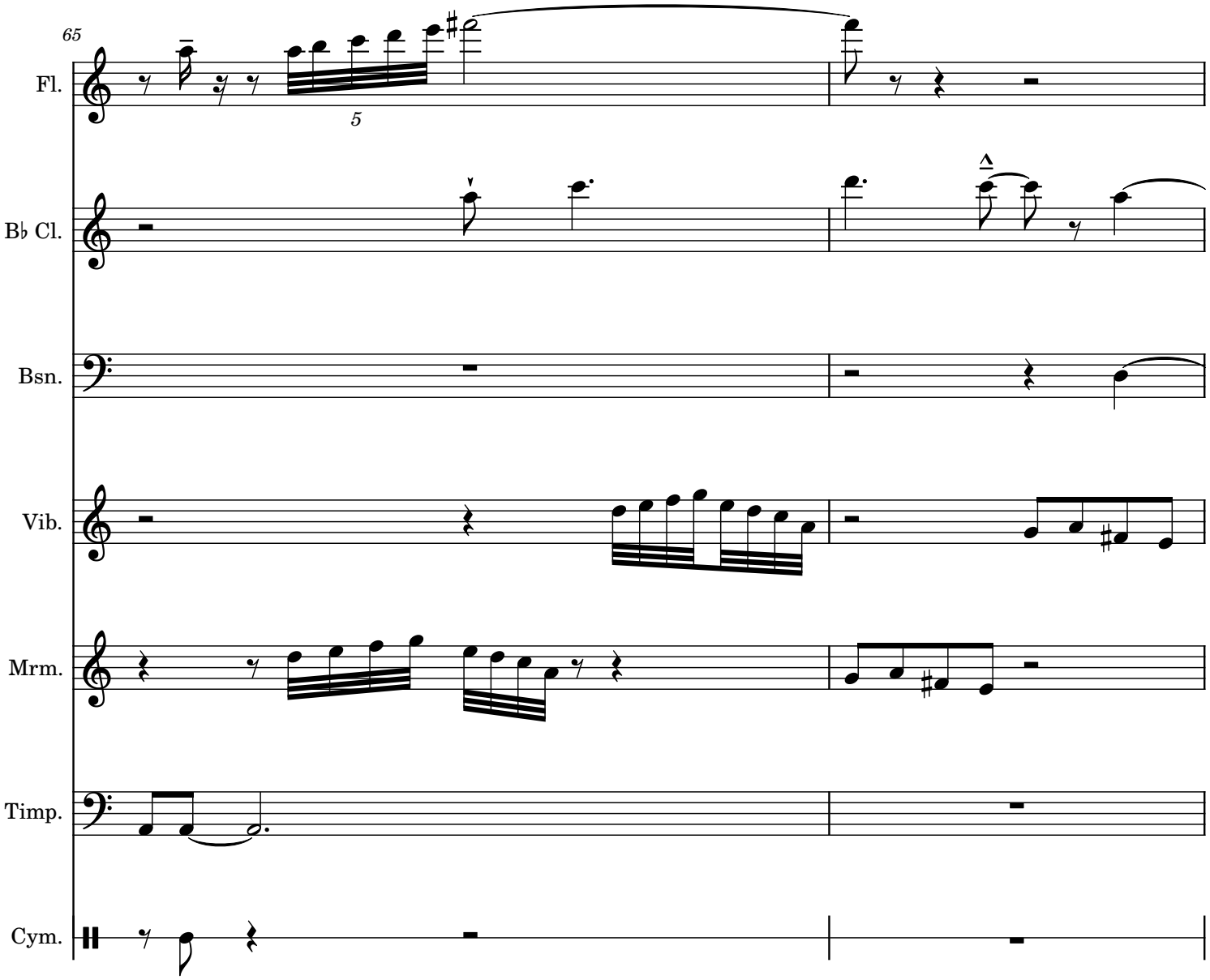
65
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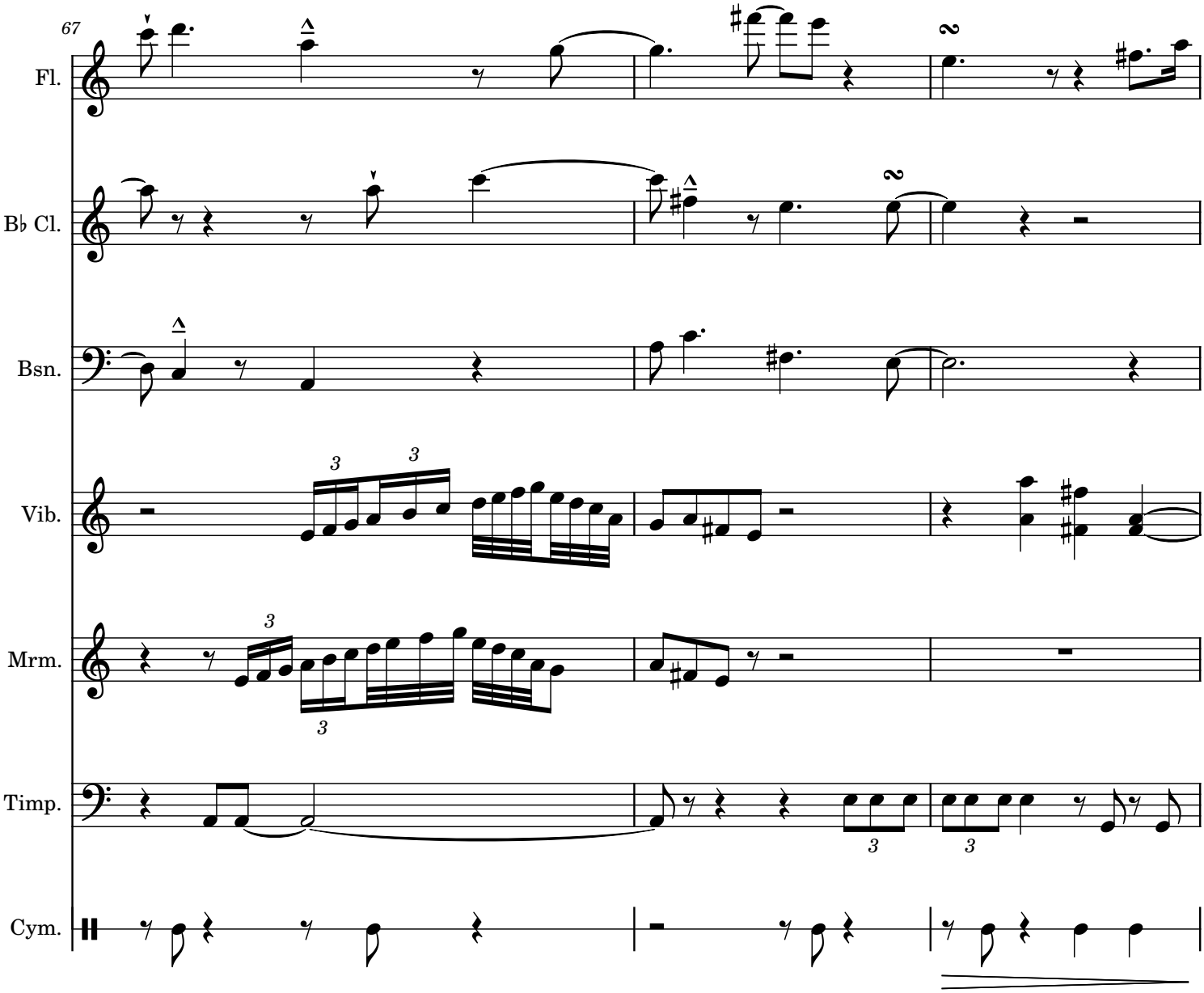
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
Cym.


67
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Vib.
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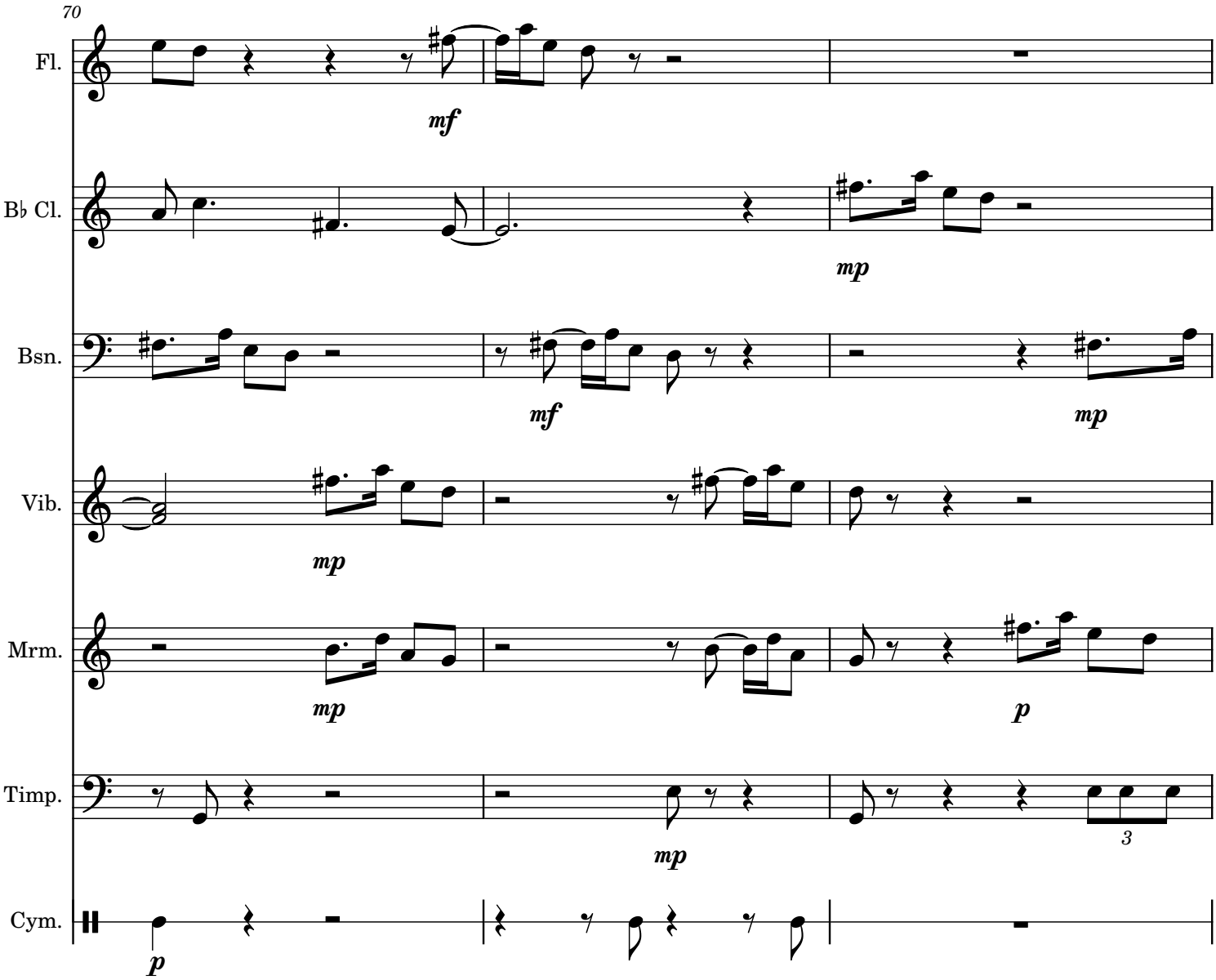
Timp.
Cym.


70
Fl.
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B♭ Cl.
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mf
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Vib.
mp
Mrm.
mp
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Timp.
mp
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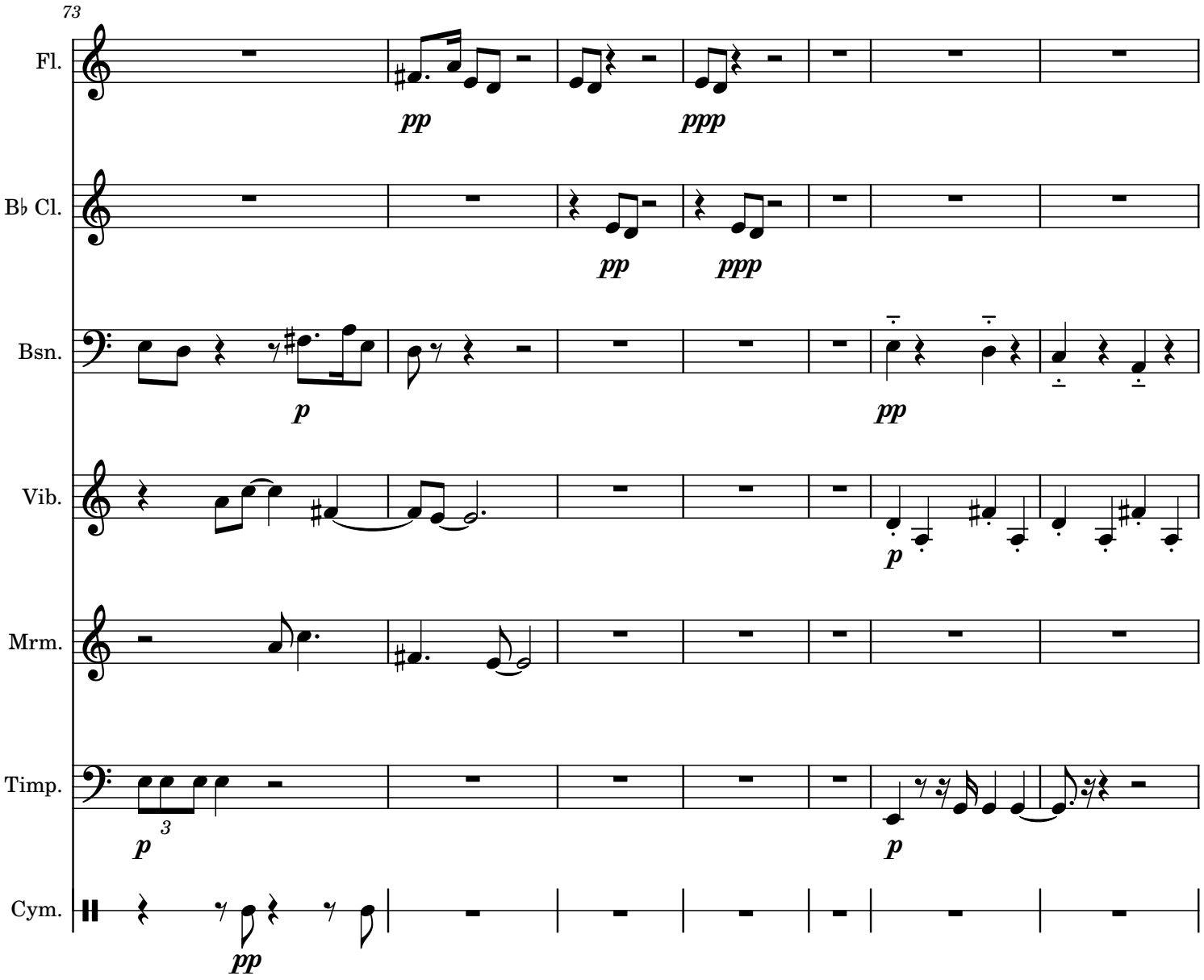
Cym.
p


73
Fl.
pp
ppp
B♭ Cl.
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ppp
Bsn.
p
pp
Vib.
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Mrm.
Timp.
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3
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Cym.
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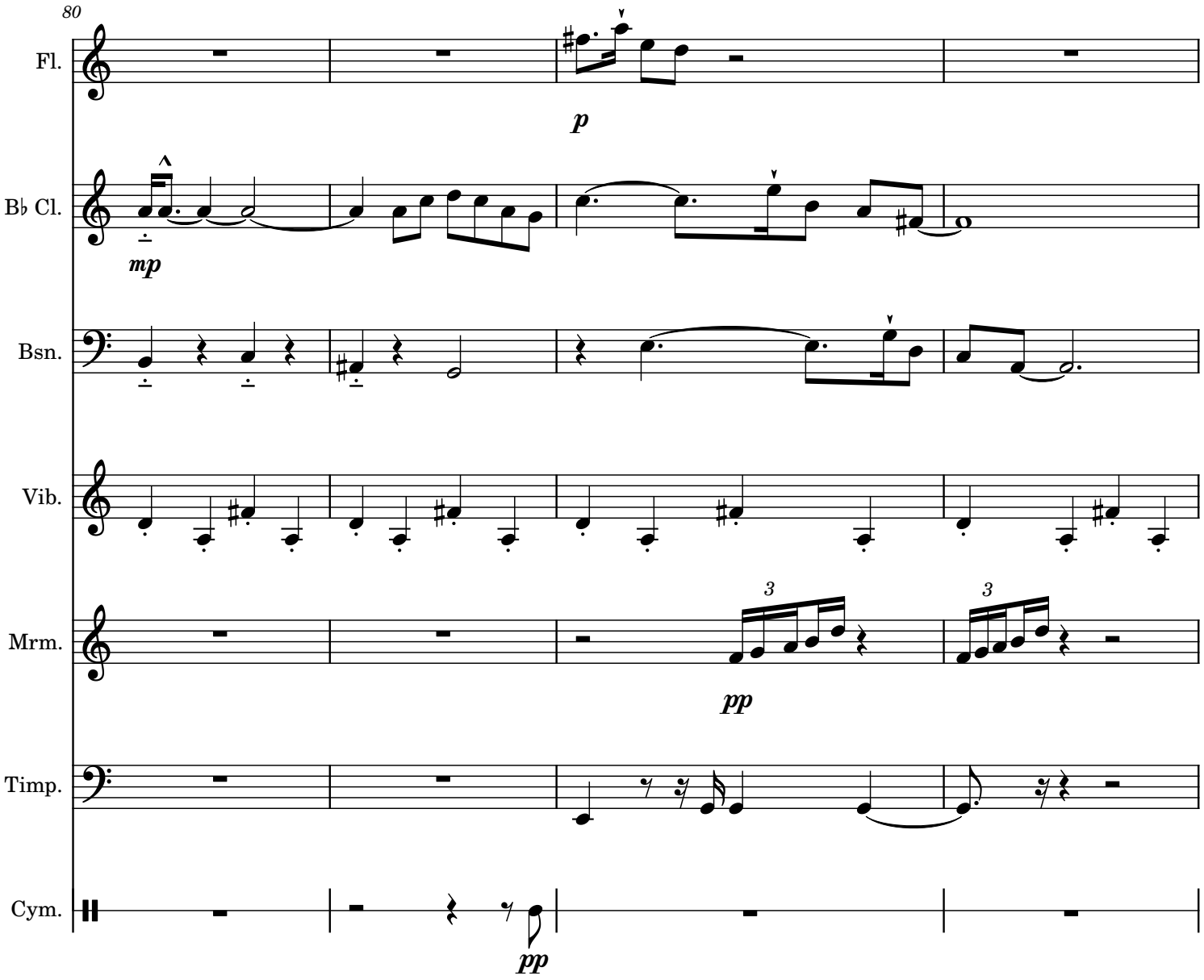
80
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Vib.
Mrm.
3
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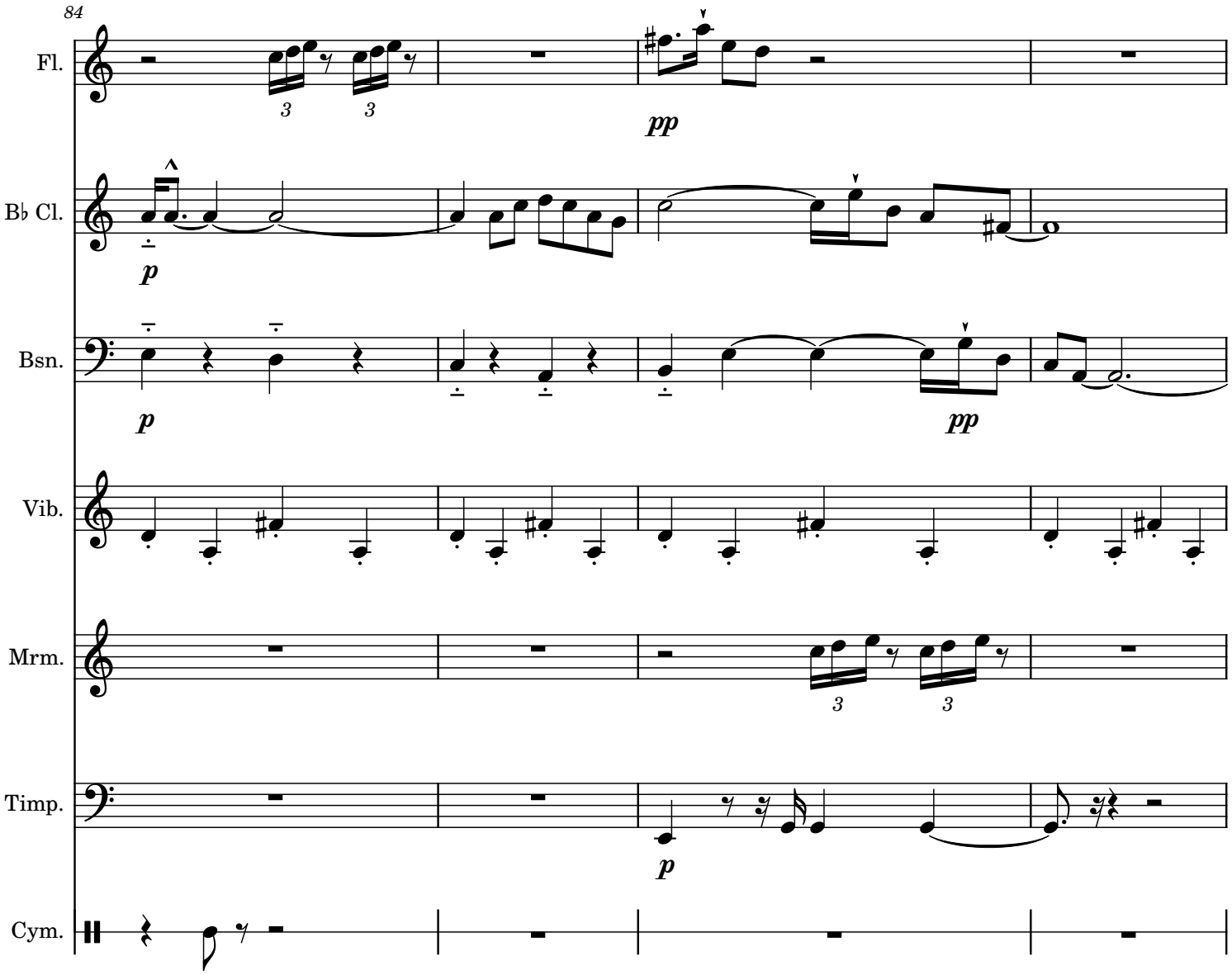
Cym.
pp


84
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Vib.
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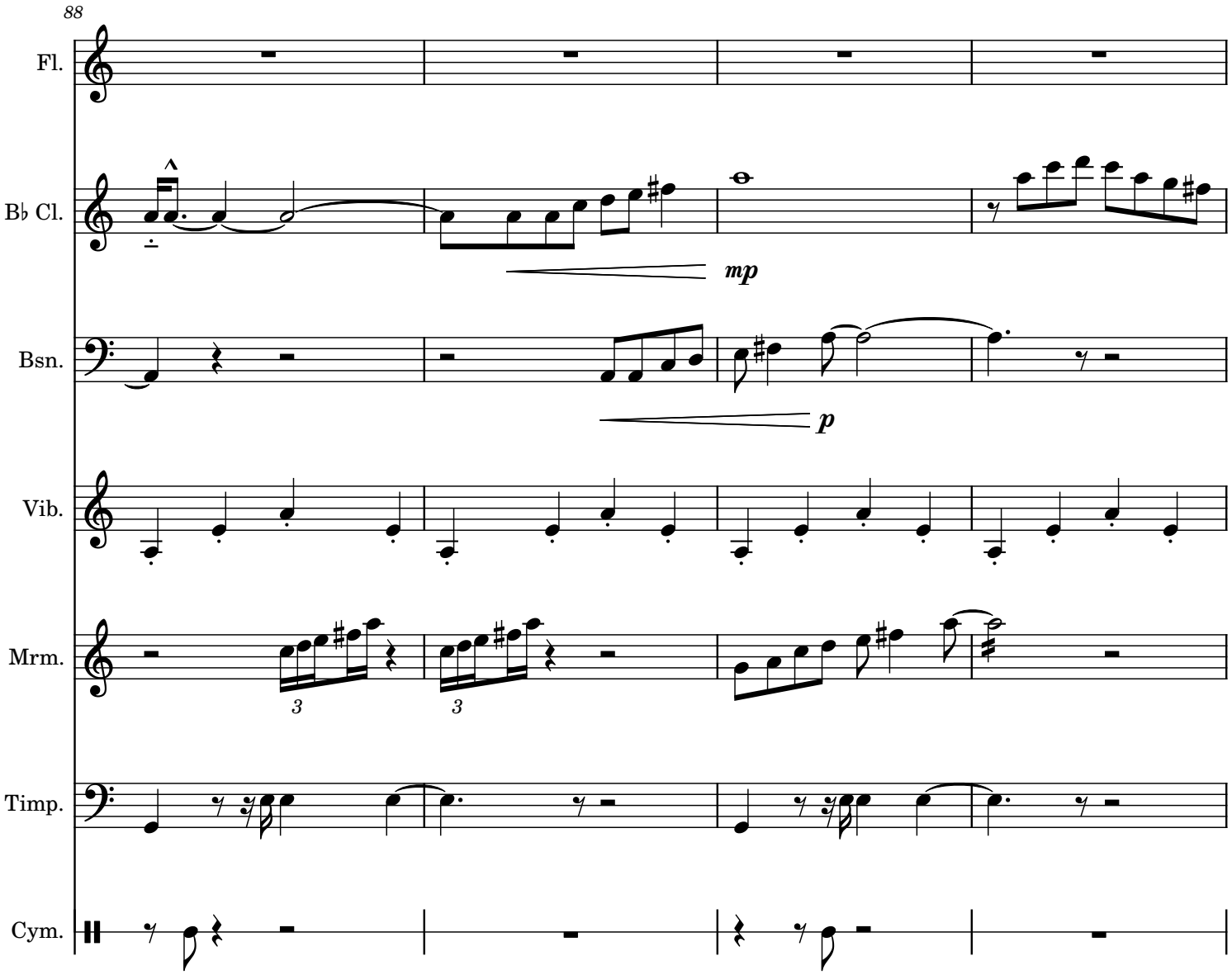
Cym.


88
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B♭ Cl.
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Vib.
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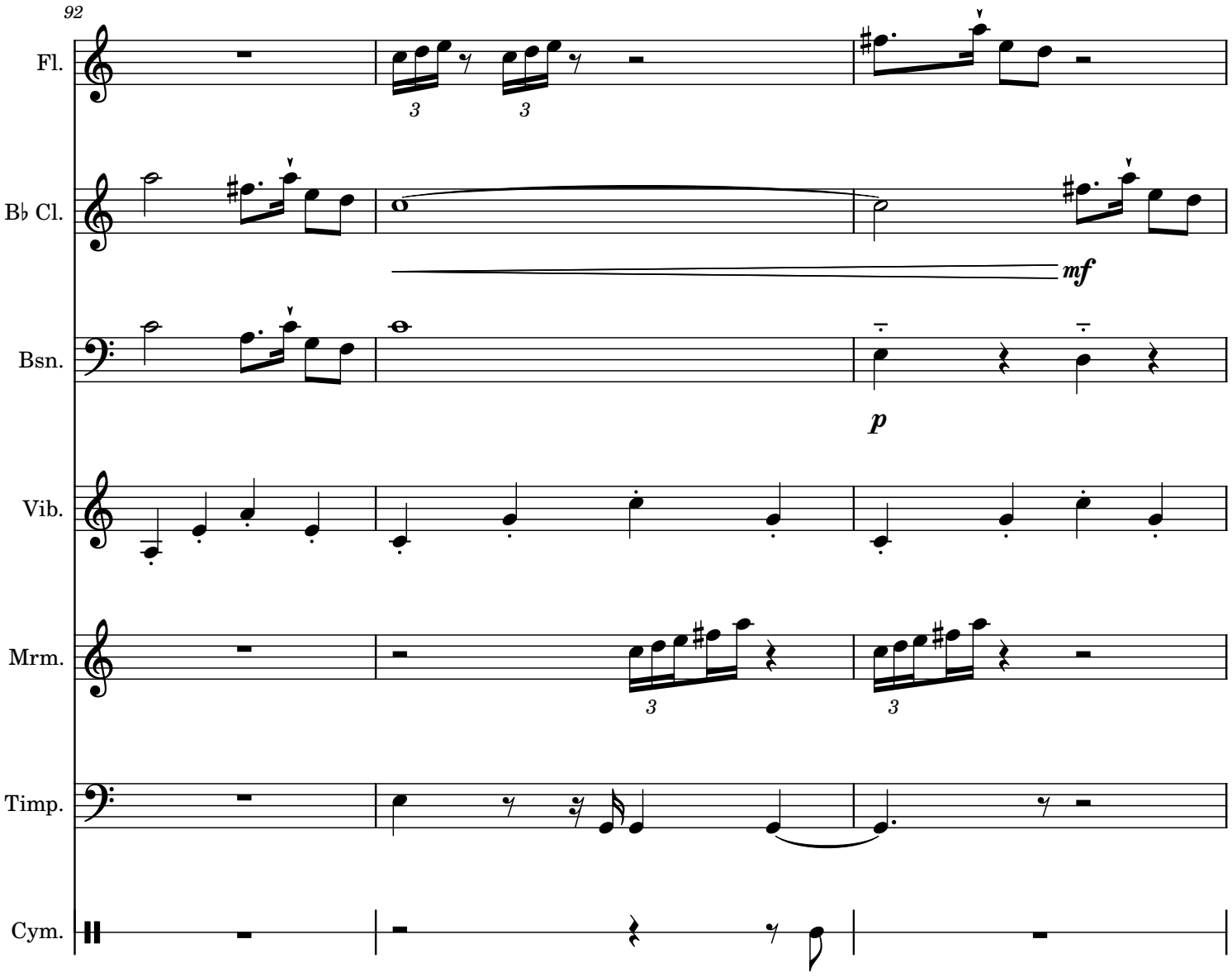
Cym.


92
Fl.
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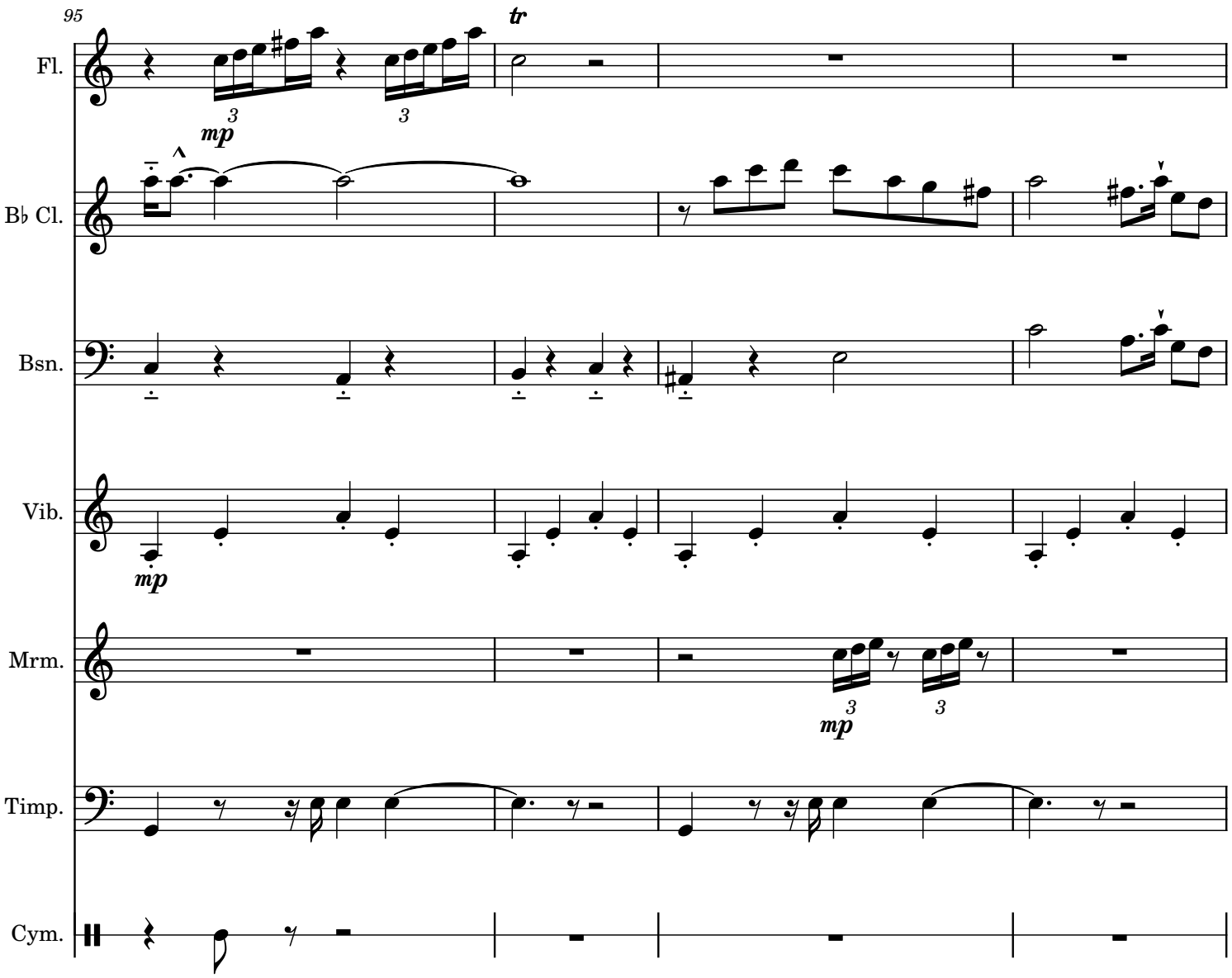
Mrm.
Timp.
Cym.


95
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
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Vib.
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Timp.
Cym.
tr
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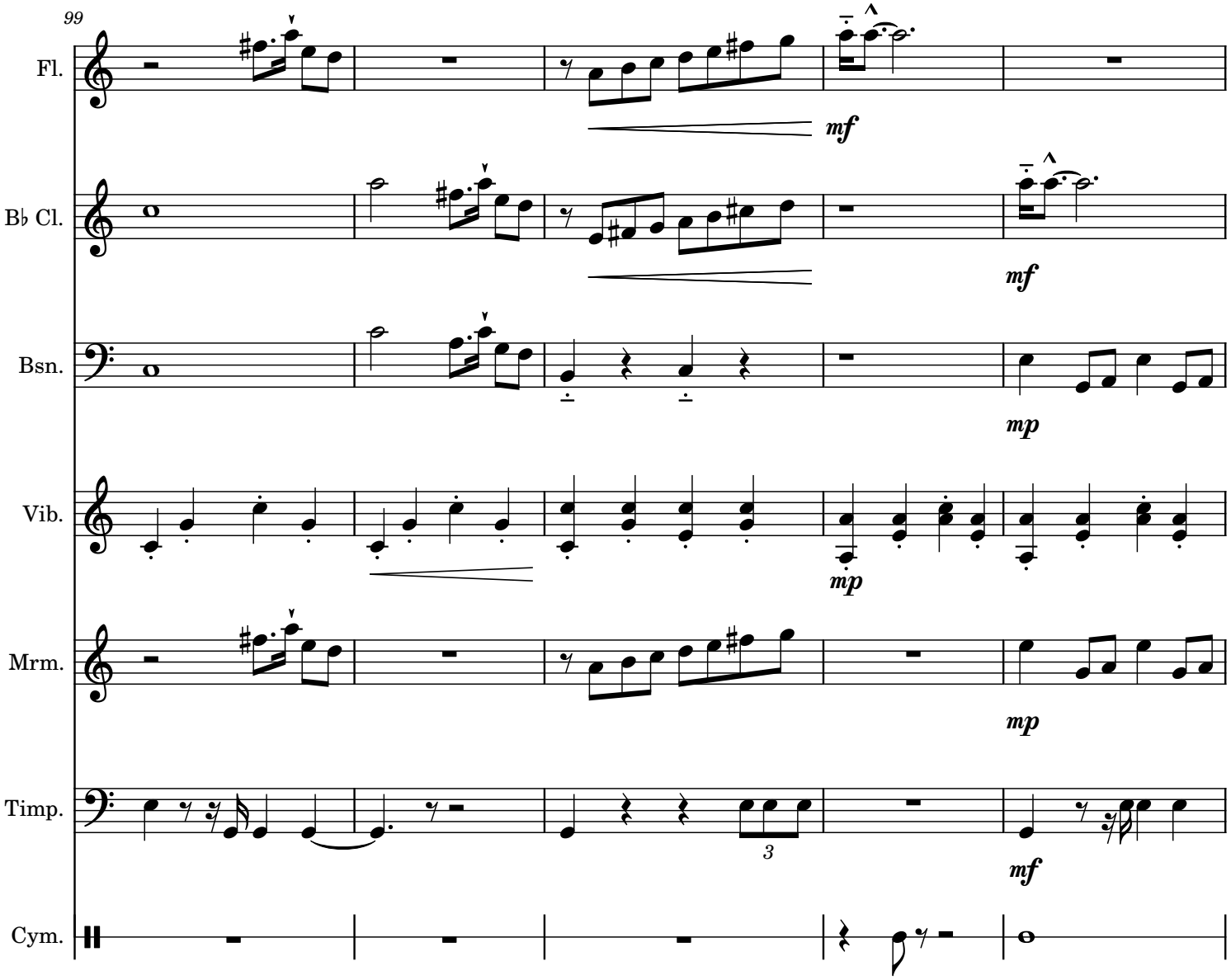
3
3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Vib.
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Timp.
Cym.
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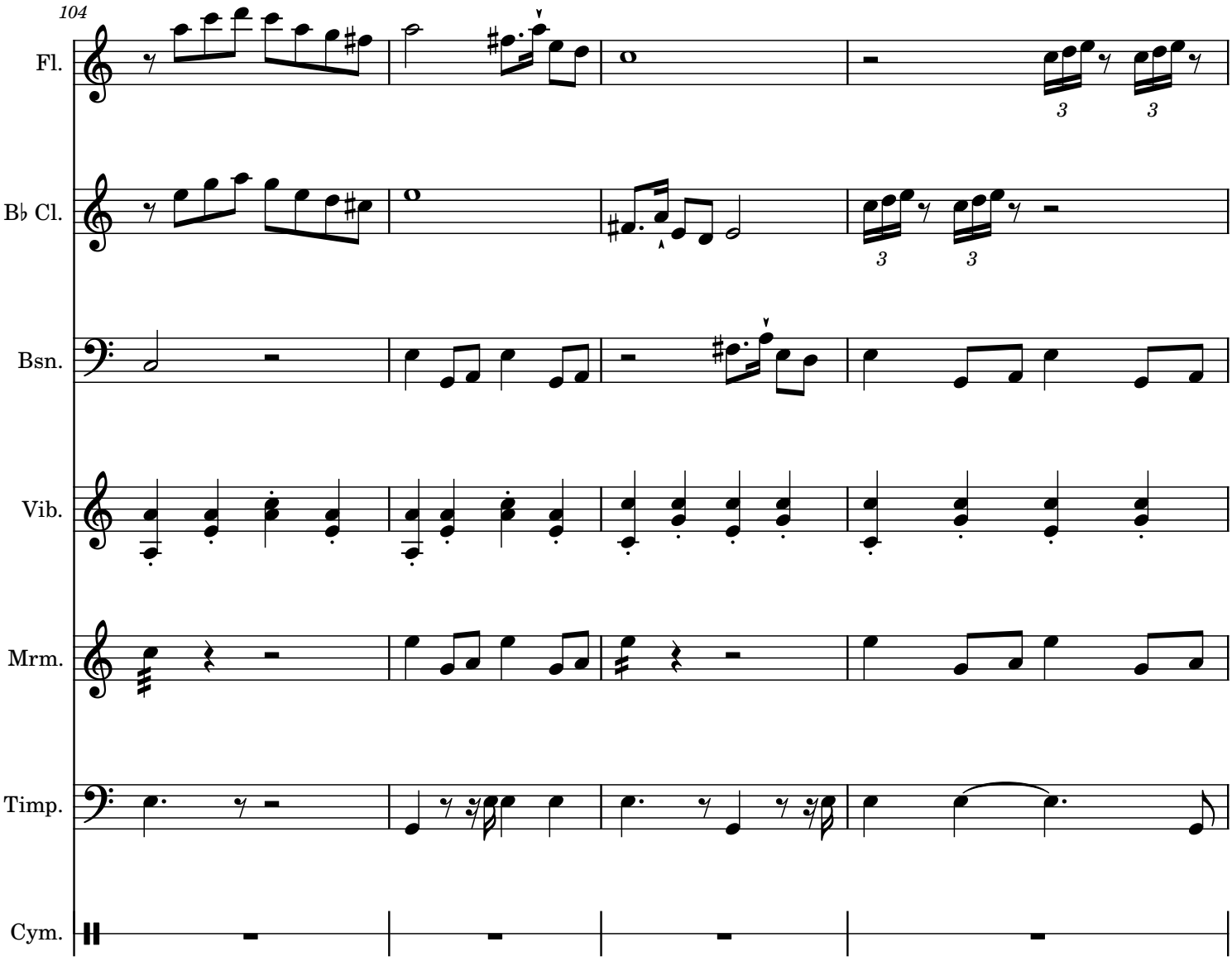
3
mf


104
Fl.
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Bsn.
Vib.
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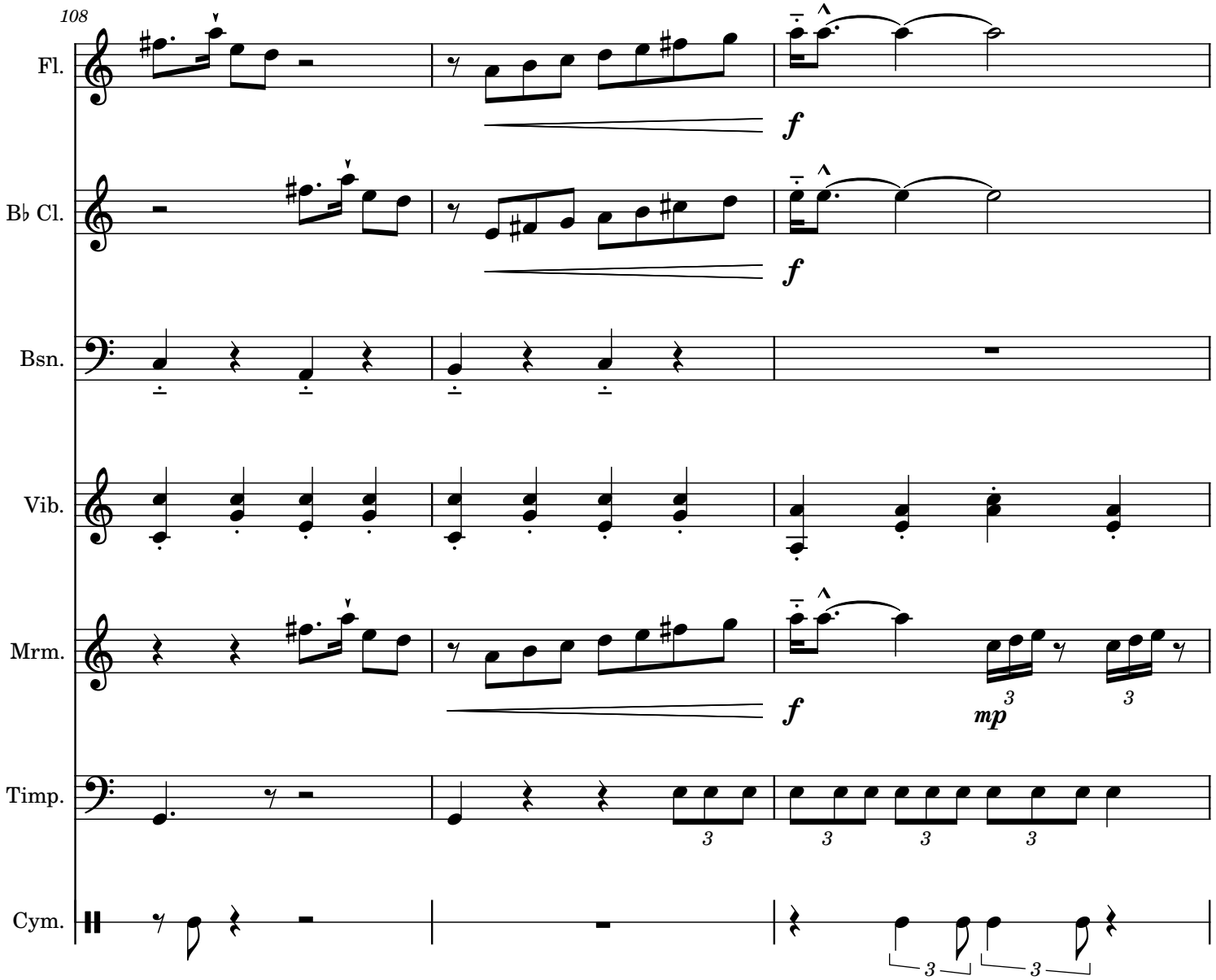
Timp.
Cym.


108
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
Cym.
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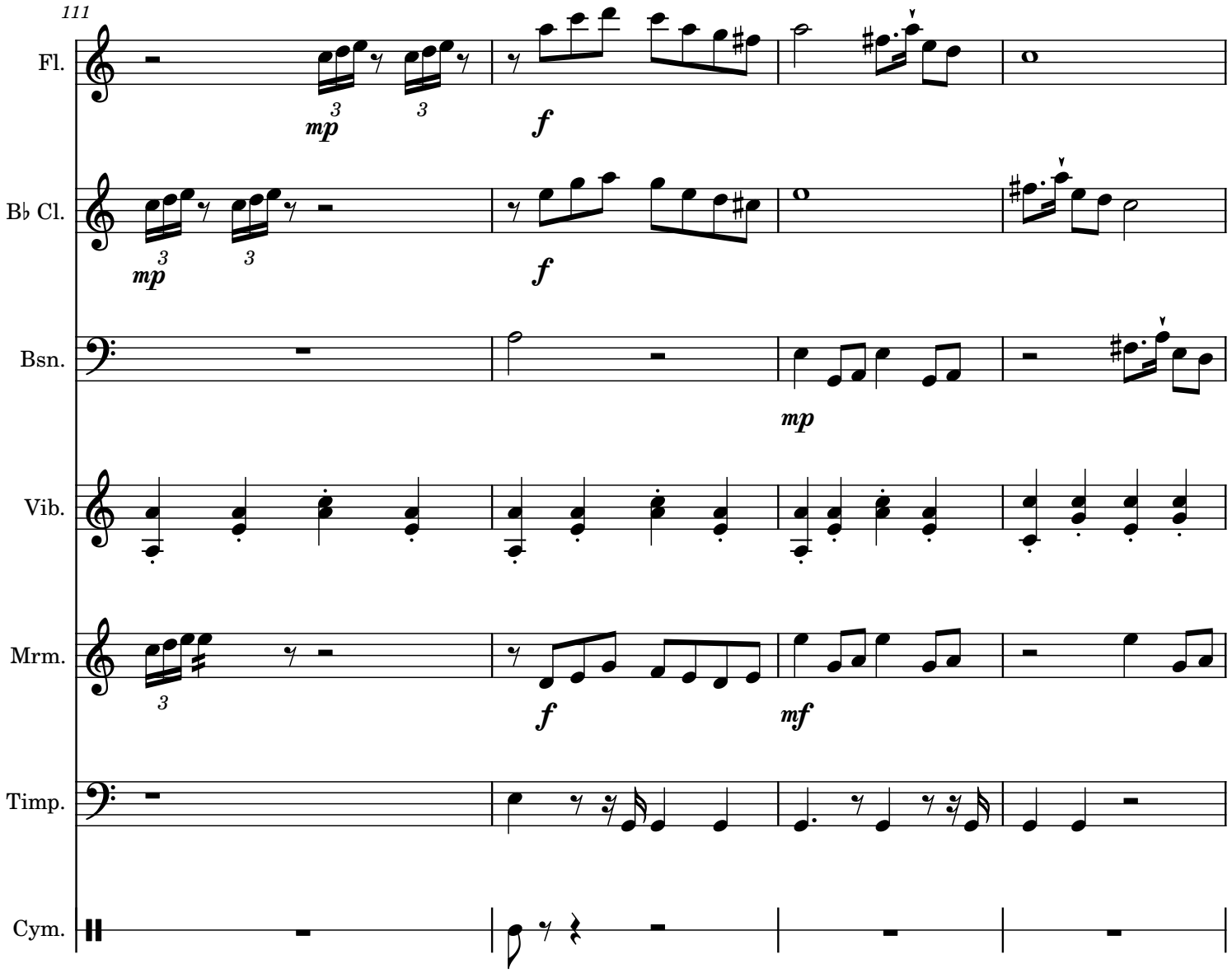
f
f
mp
3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Bsn.
Vib.
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Timp.
Cym.
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f
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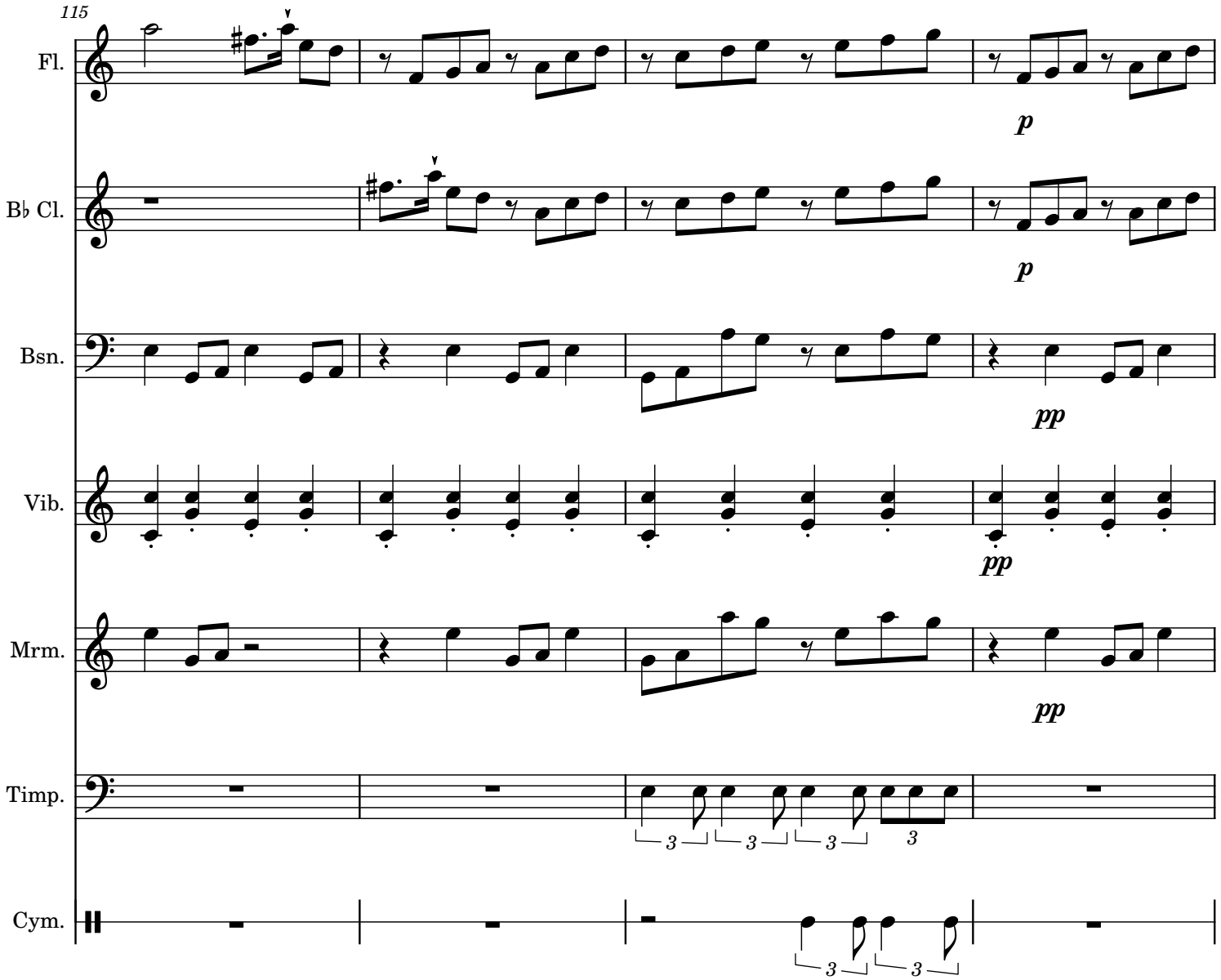
115
Fl.
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Timp.
Cym.
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3
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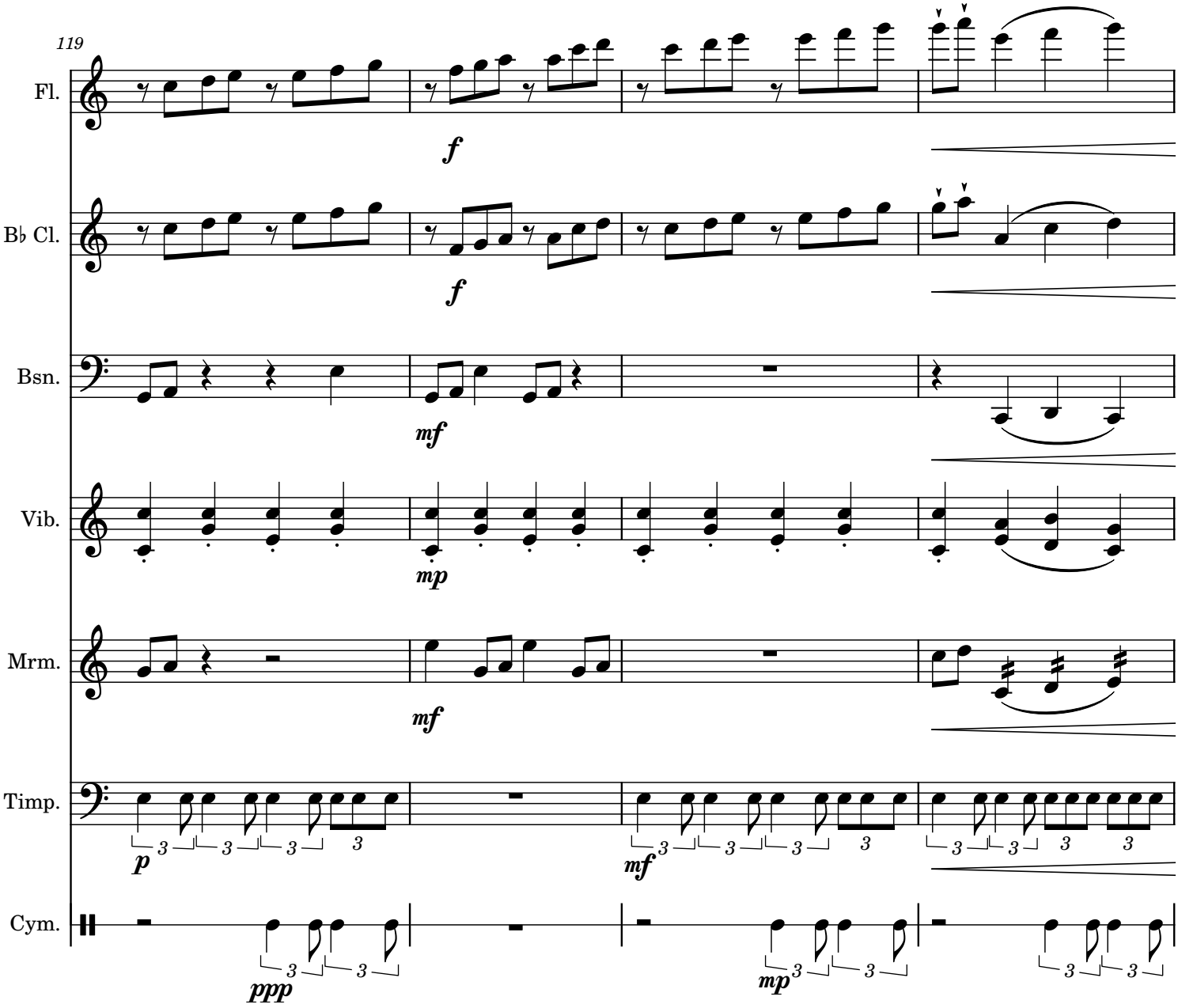
119
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Vib.
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Cym.
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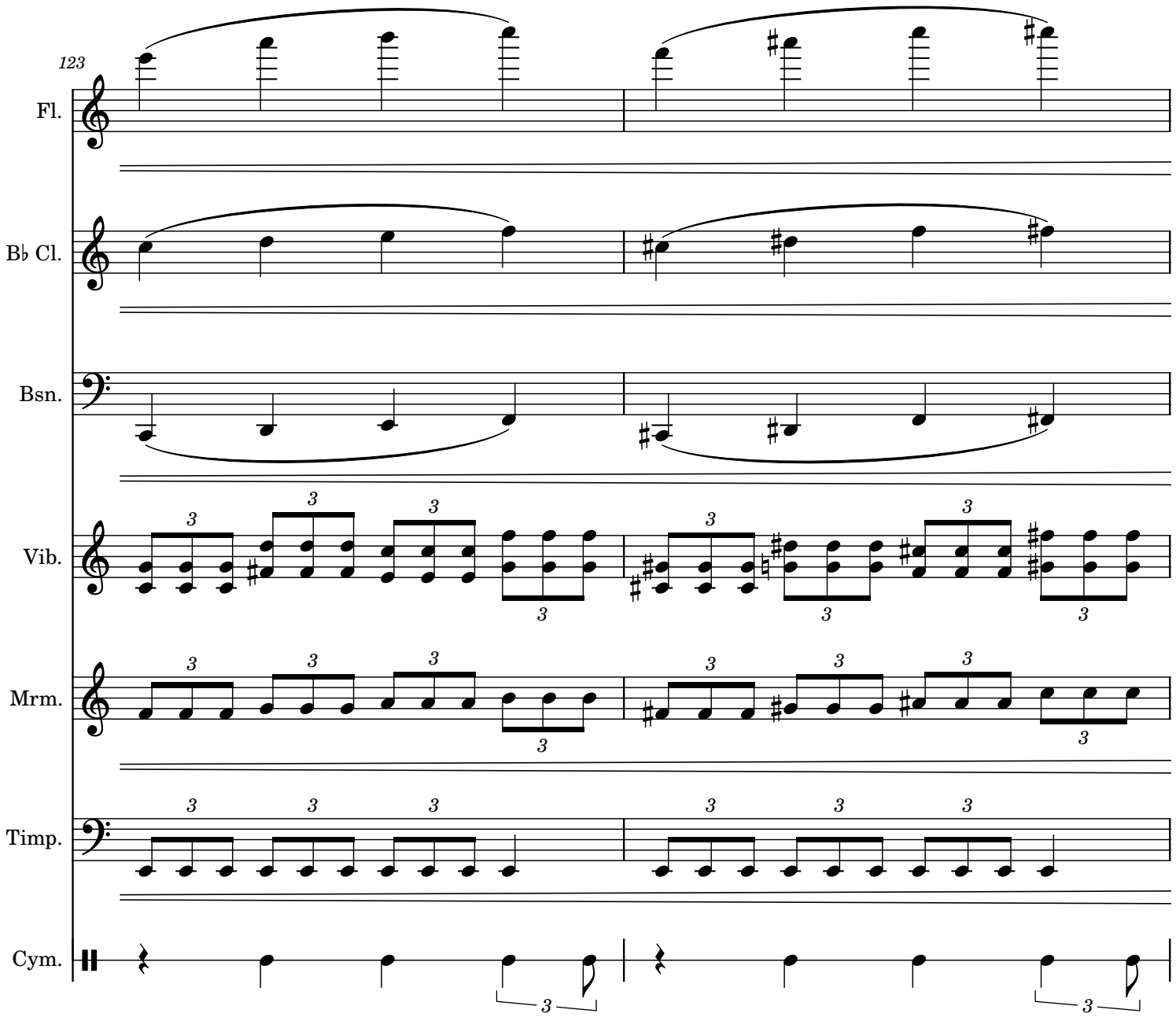
mp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B♭ Cl.
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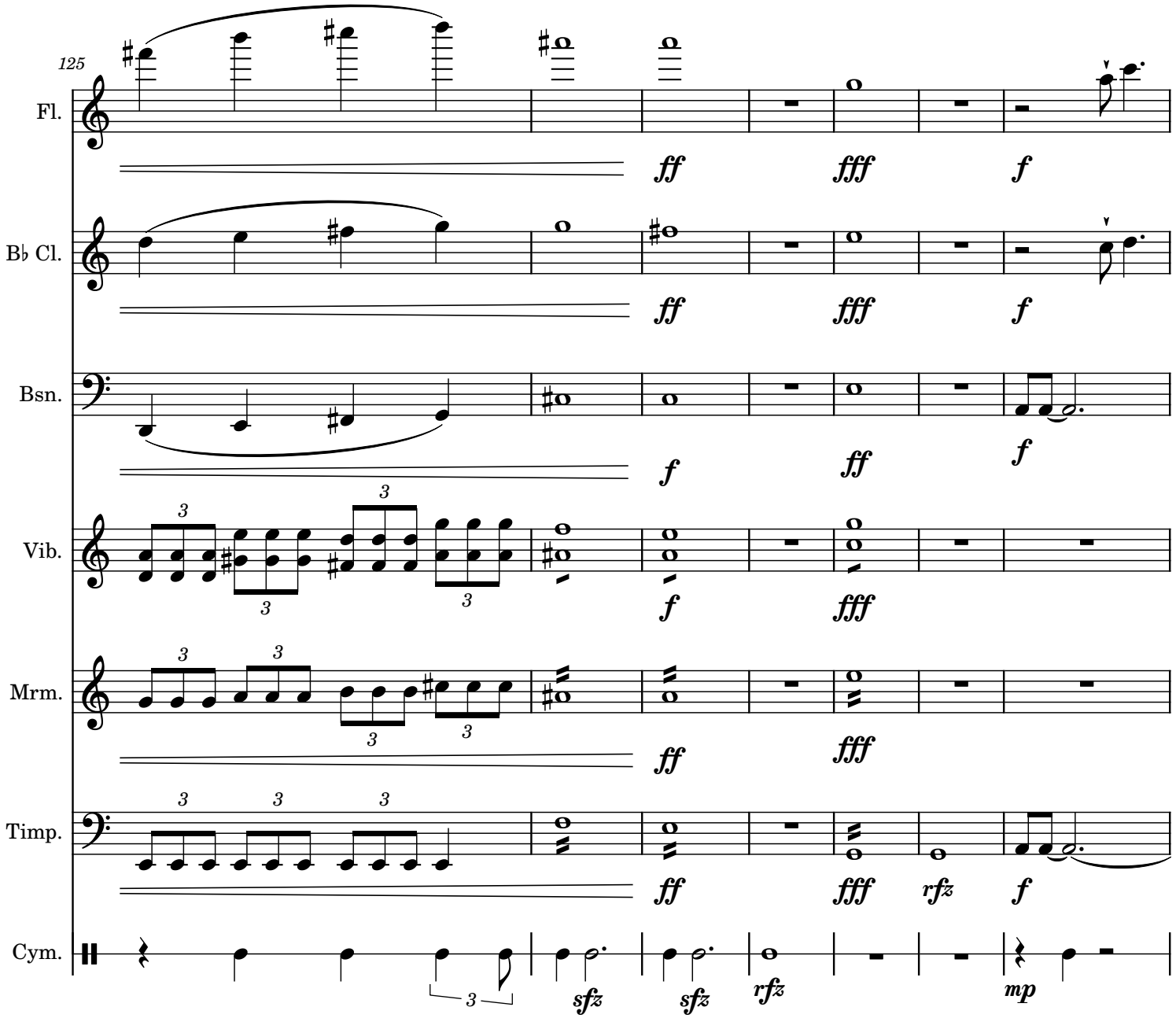
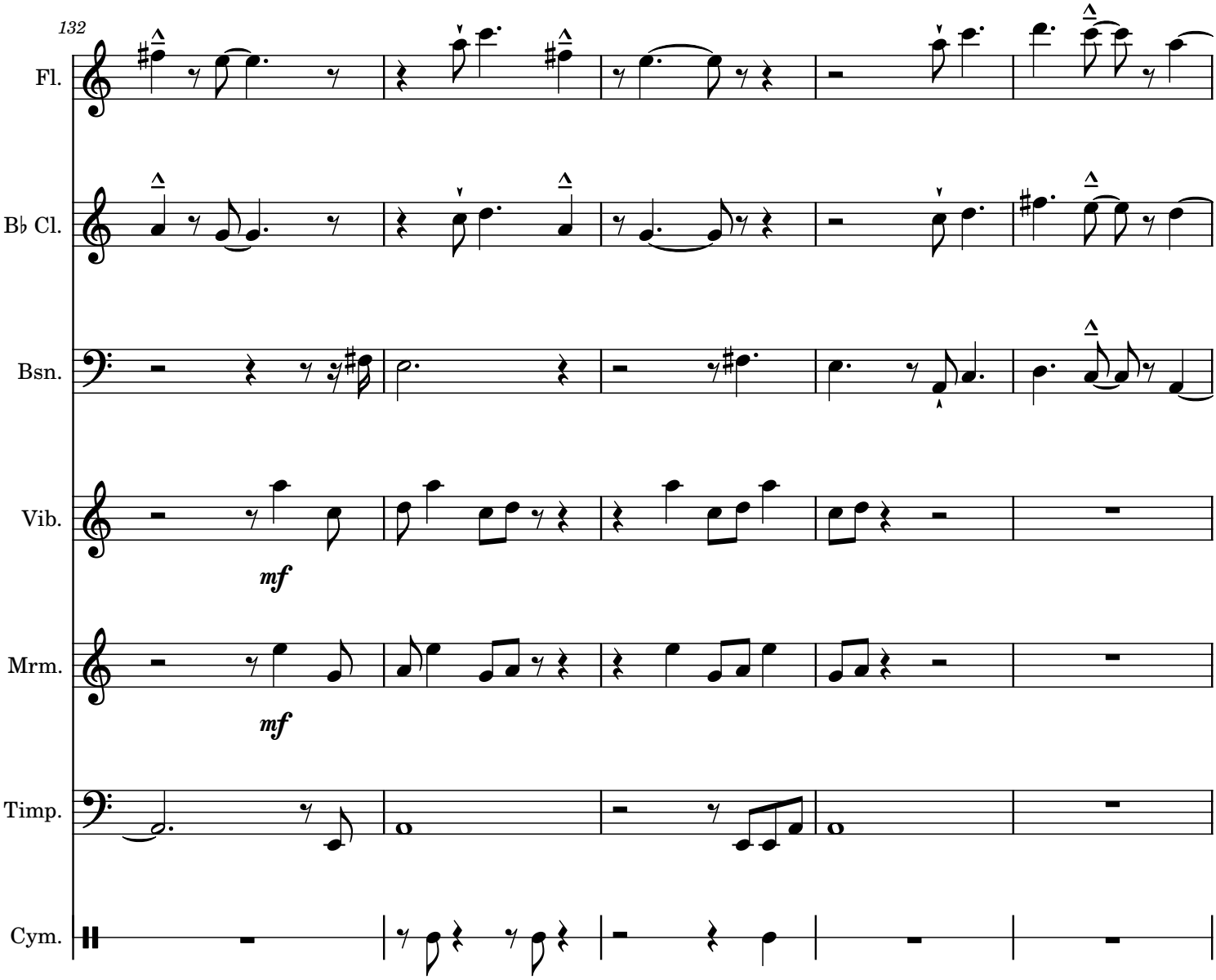
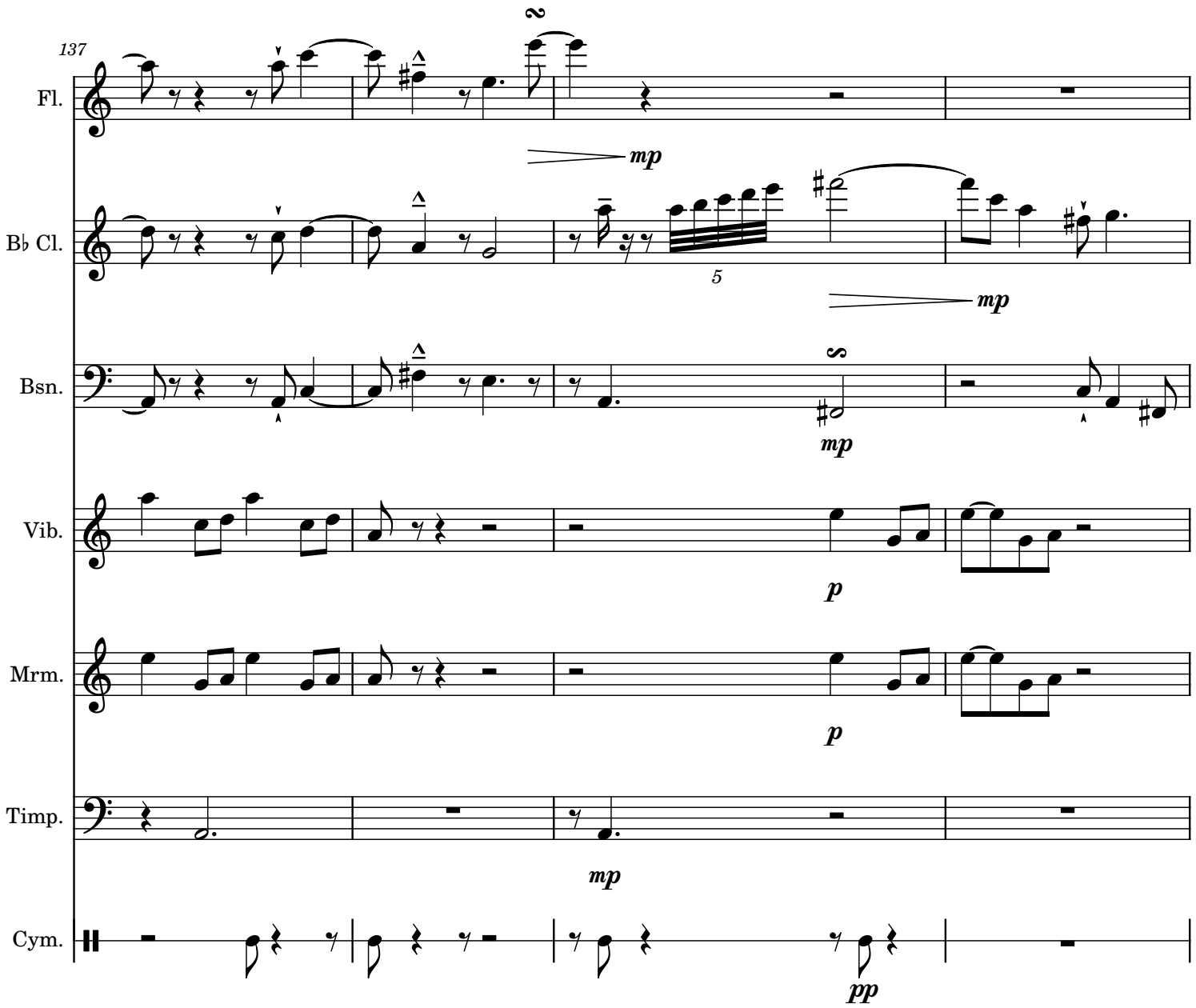
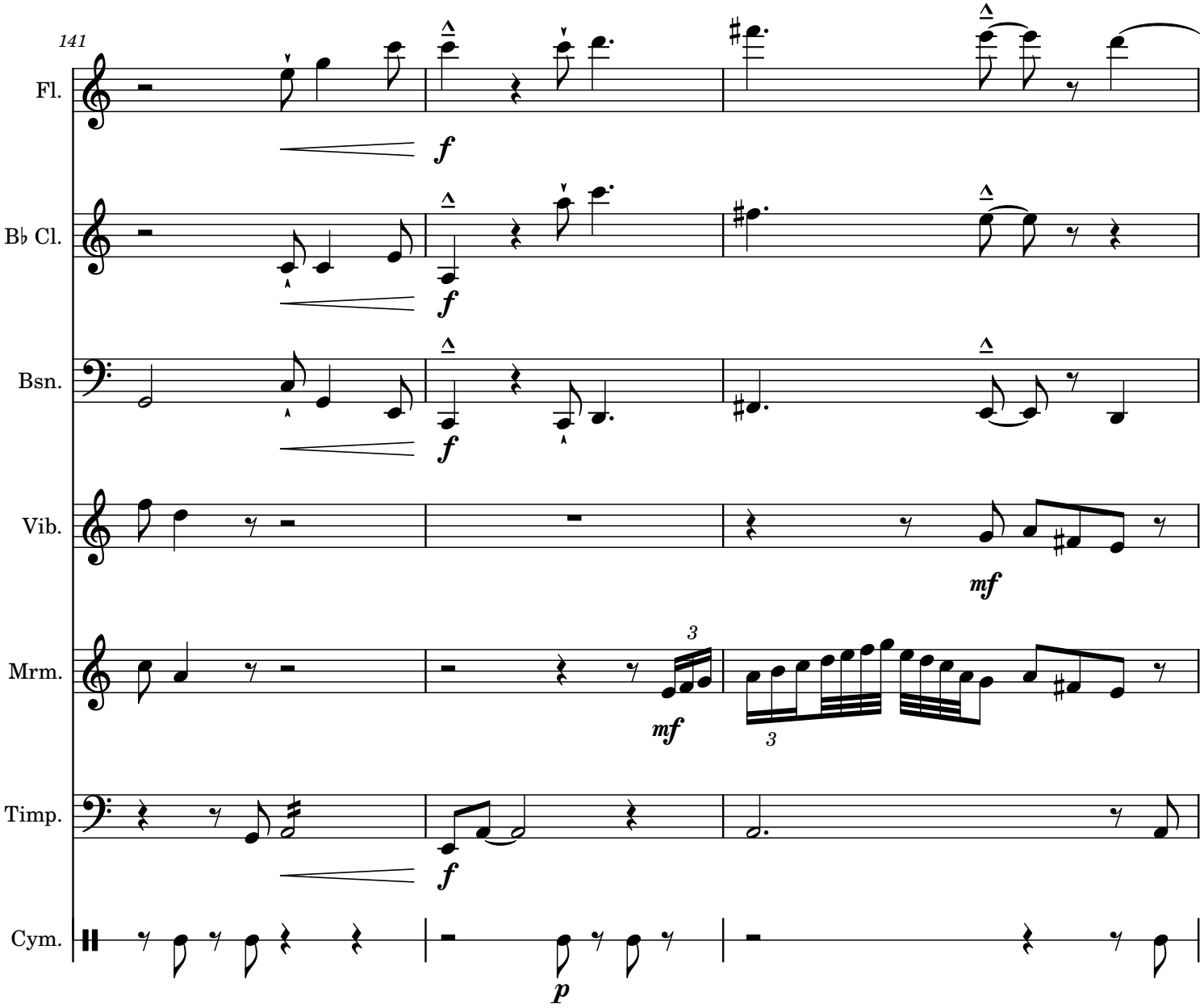
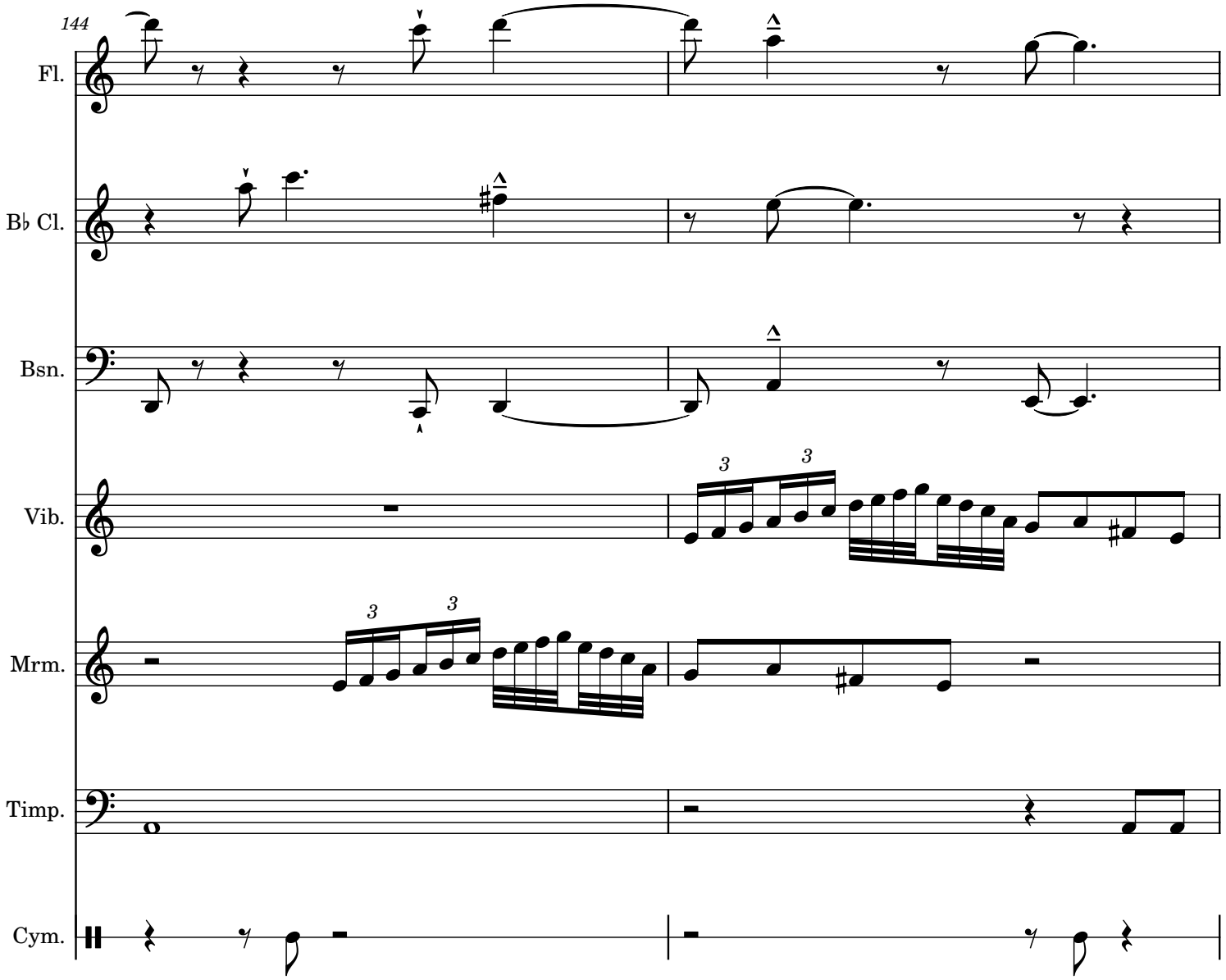
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
Cym.

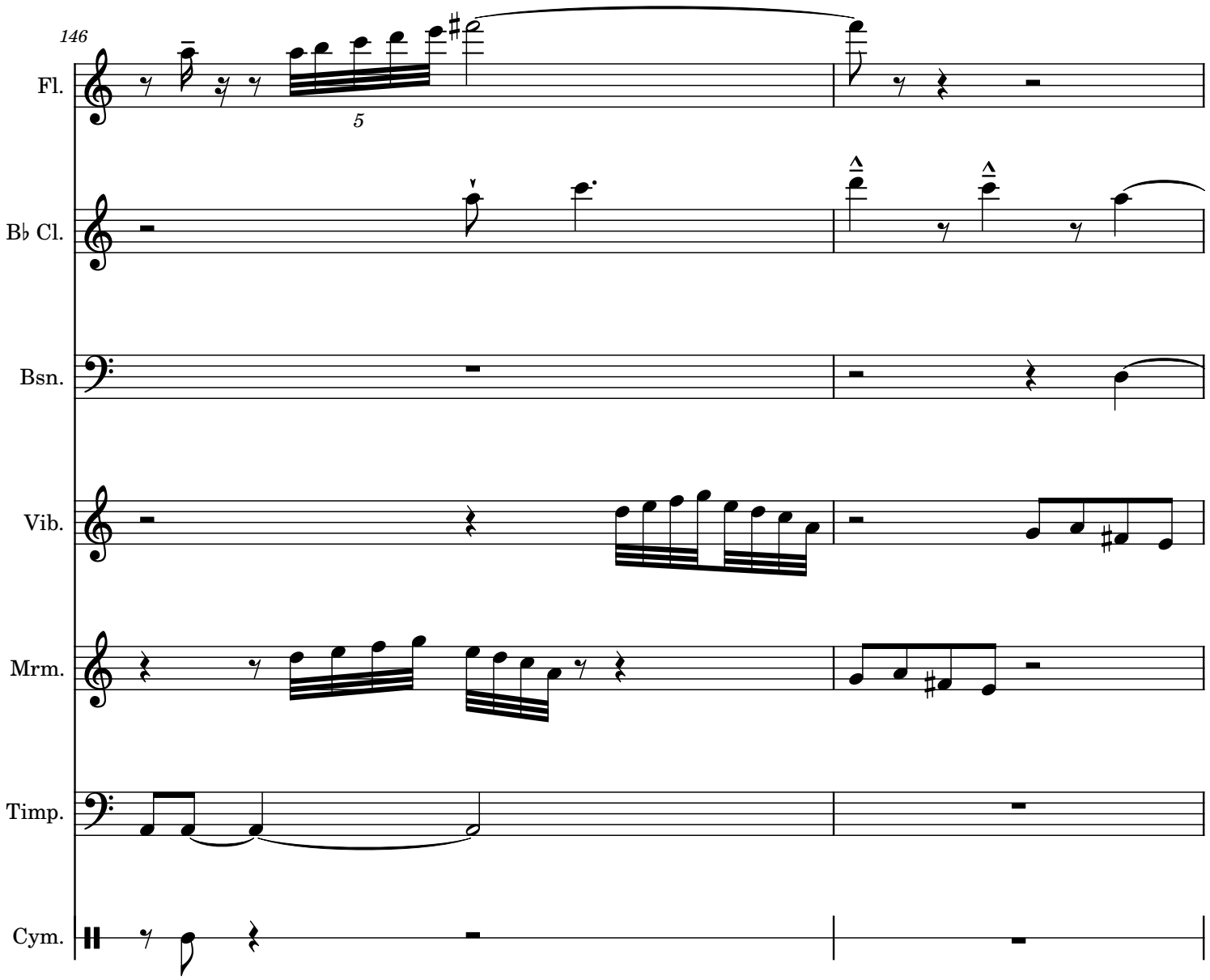

125
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
Cym.
ff
fff
f
sfz
rfz
mp


132
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
mf
Mrm.
mf
Timp.
Cym.


137
Fl.
Bb Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
Cym.
mp
mp
mp
p
p
mp
pp
5


141
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
Cym.
f
mf
p
3


144
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
Cym.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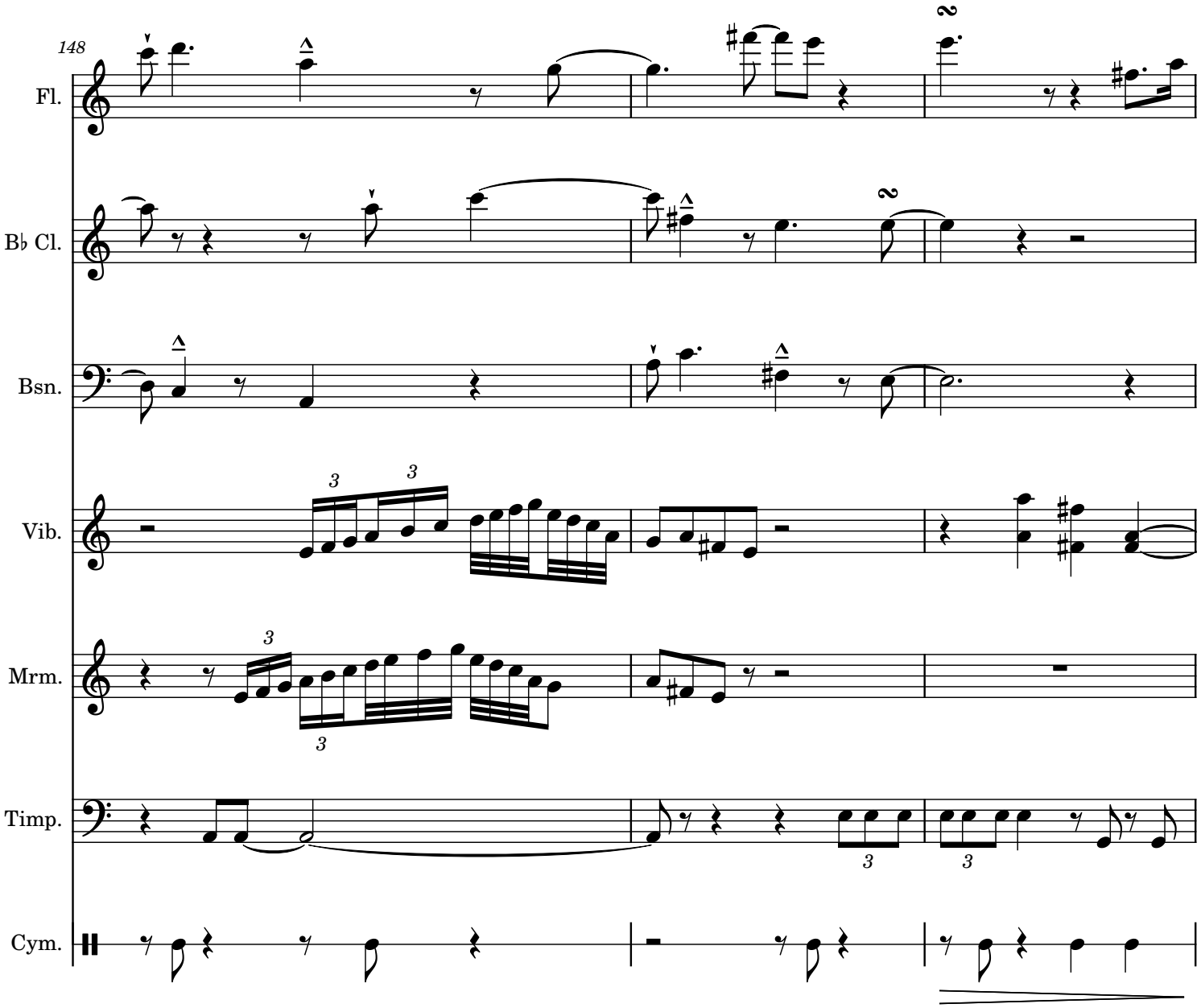
Timp.
Cym.


148
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B♭ Cl.
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Vib.
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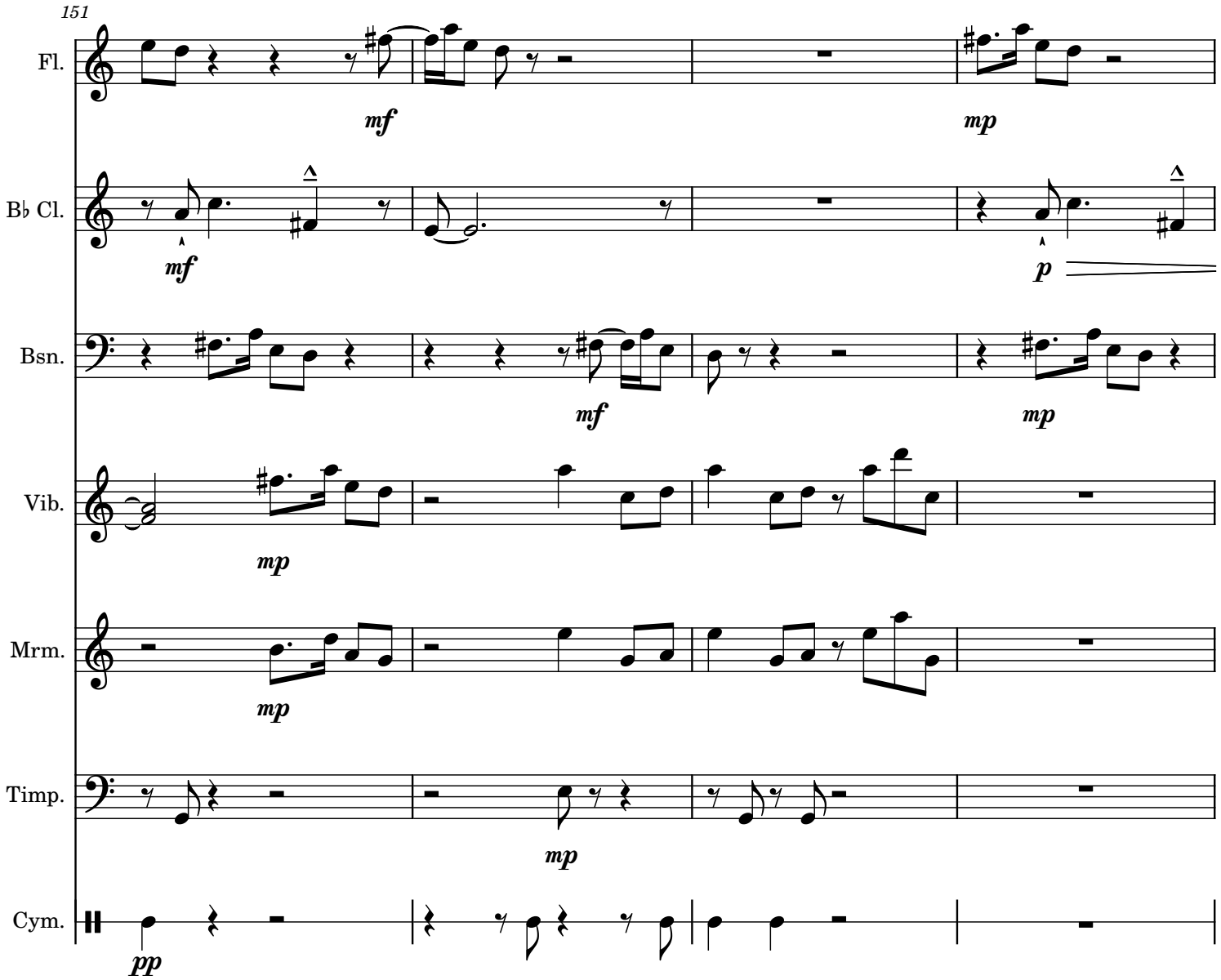
Cym.


151
Fl.
mf
mp
B♭ Cl.
mf
p
Bsn.
mf
mp
Vib.
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Mrm.
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Timp.
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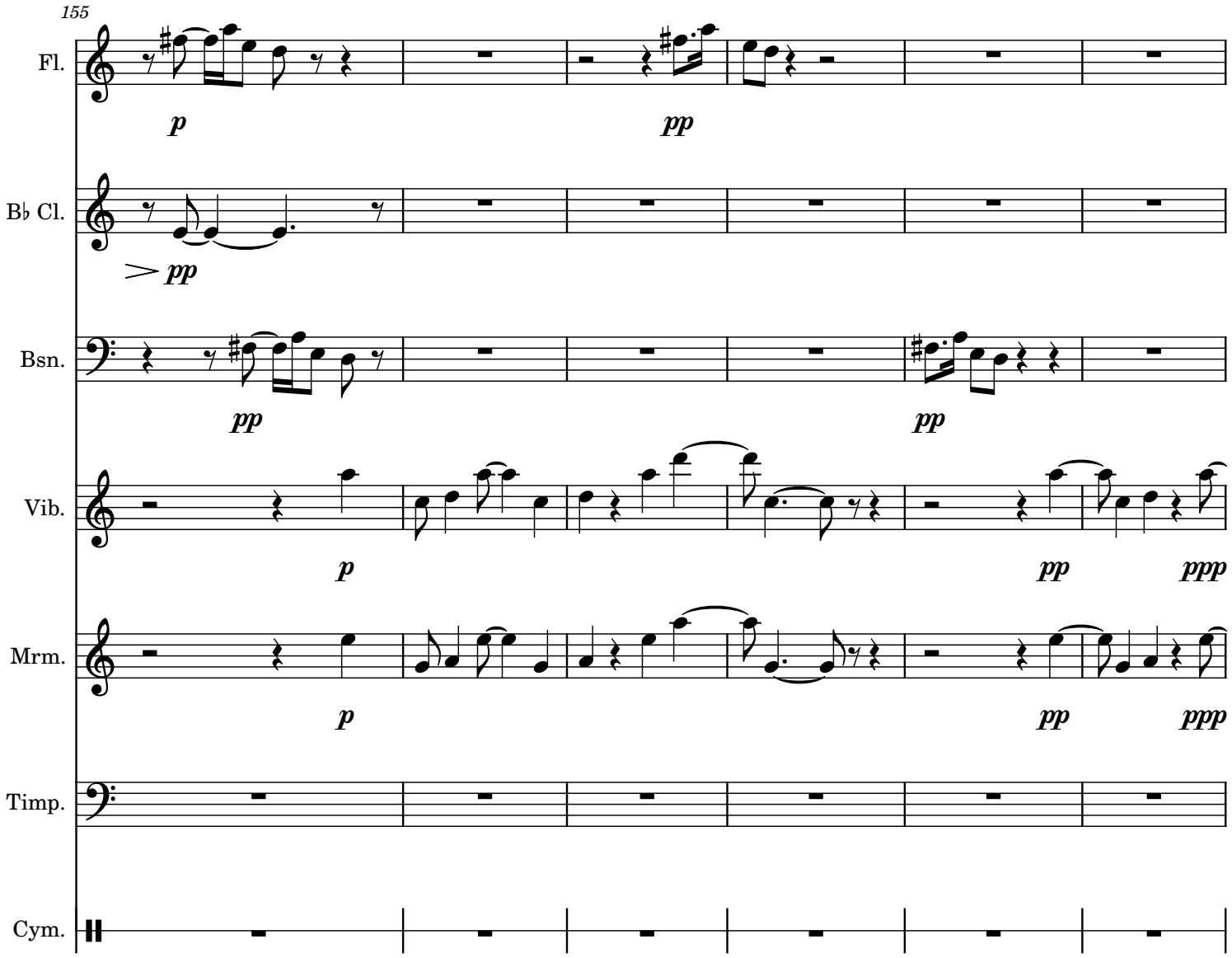
Cym.
pp


155
Fl.
p
pp
B♭ Cl.
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Bsn.
pp
pp
Vib.
p
pp
ppp
Mrm.
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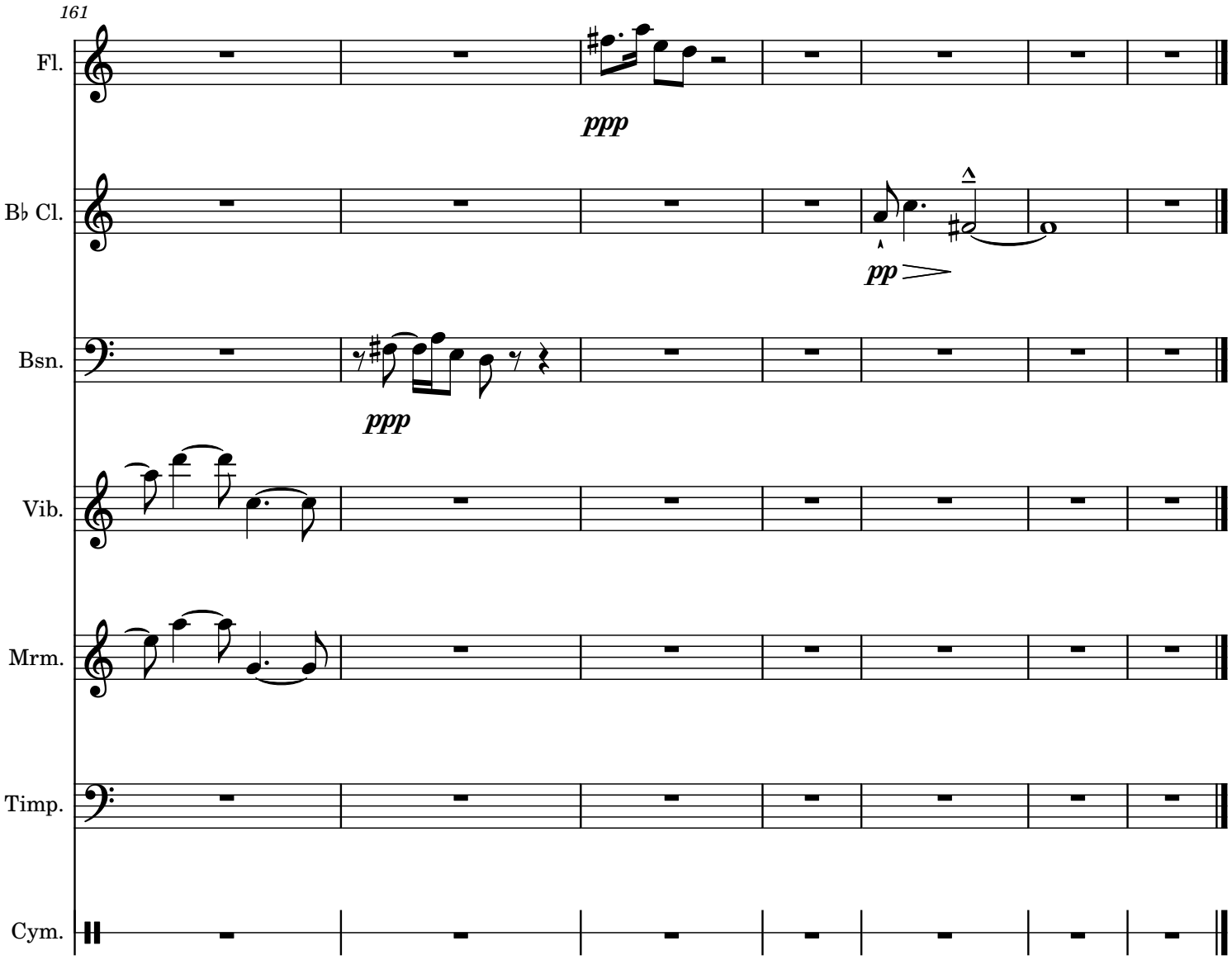
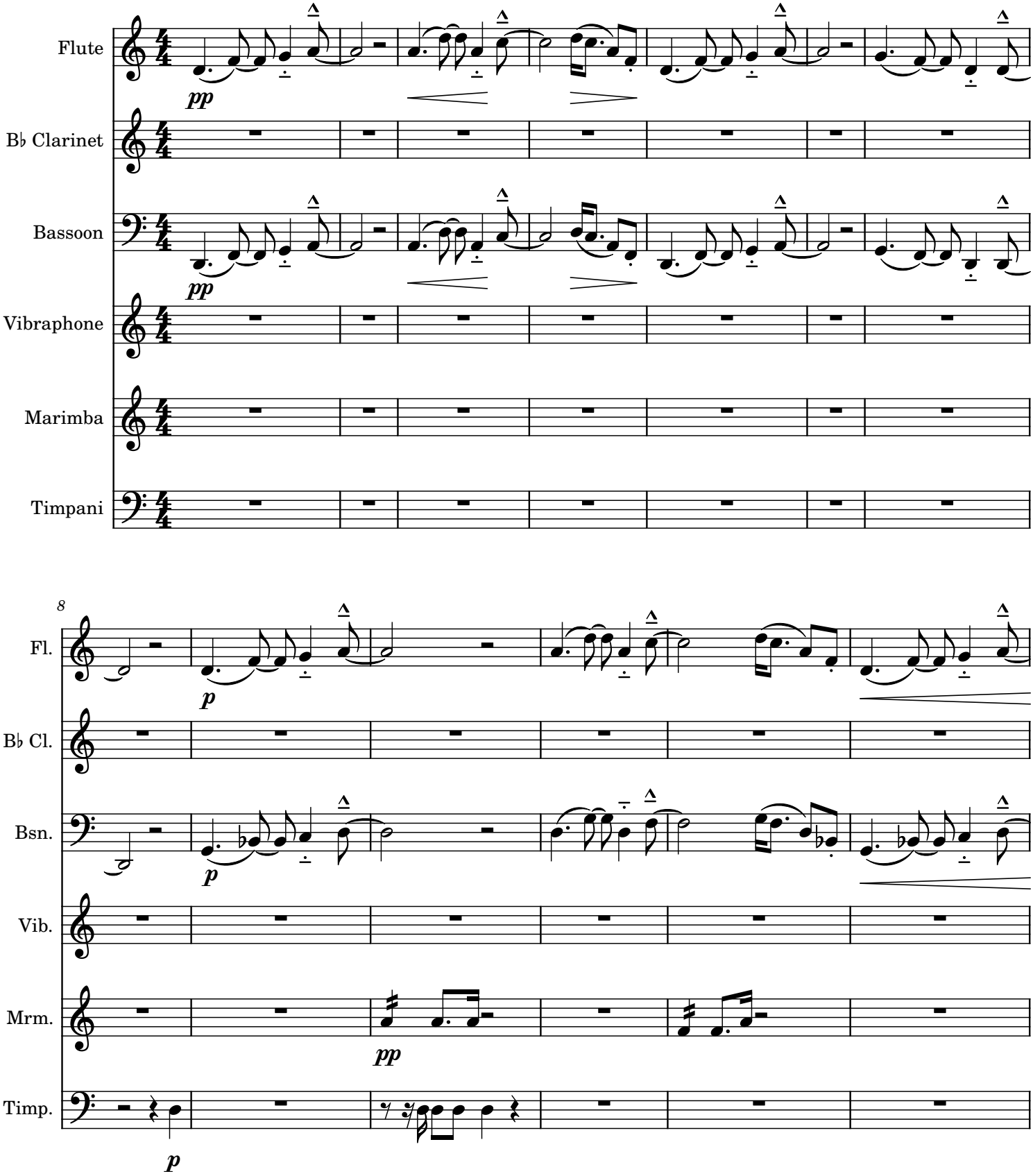
ppp
Timp.
Cym.

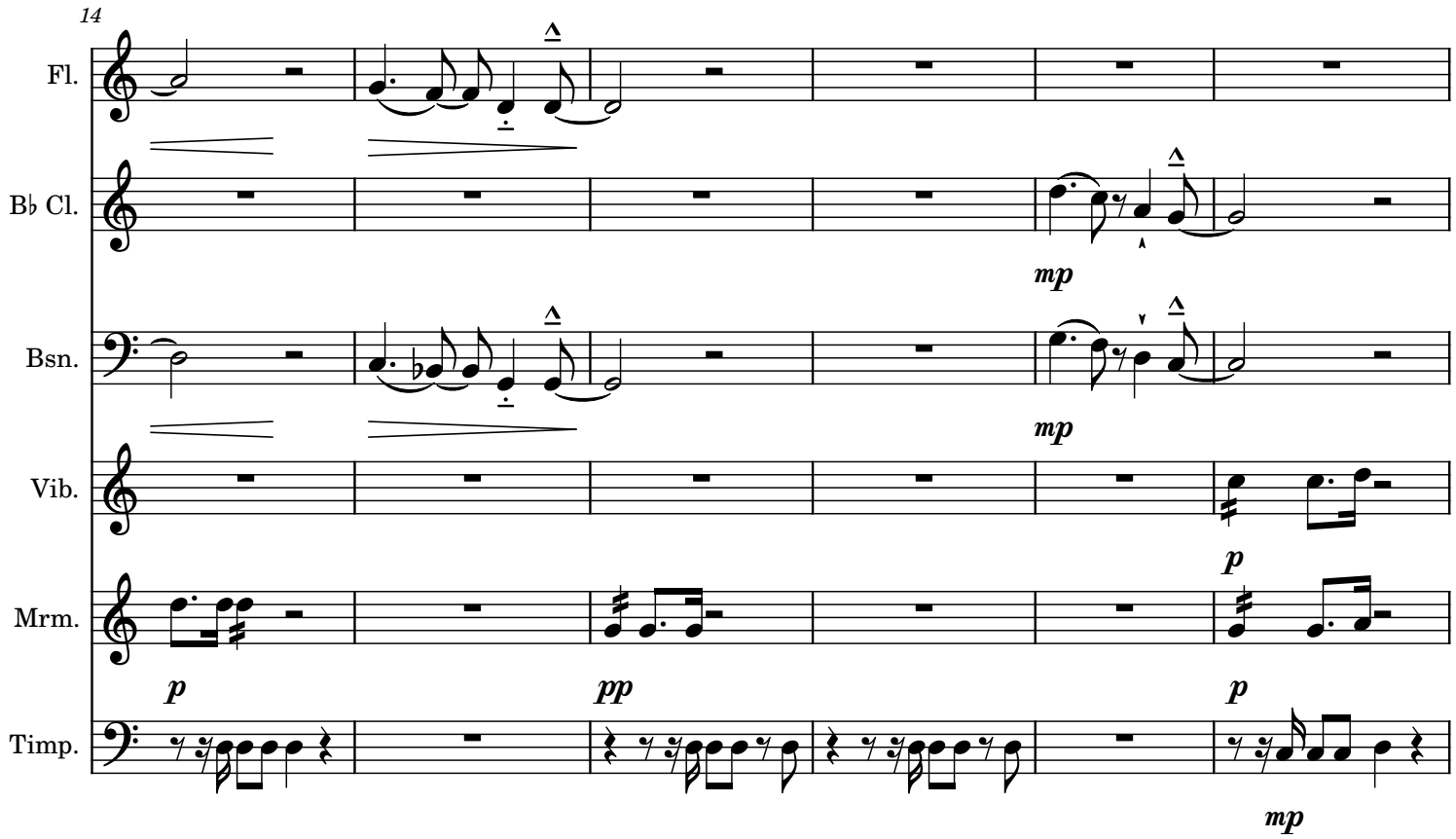

161
Fl.
ppp
B♭ Cl.
pp
Bsn.
ppp
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
Cym.

3. Re-awakening

Elizabeth Lemmer

Affettuoso con brio




14
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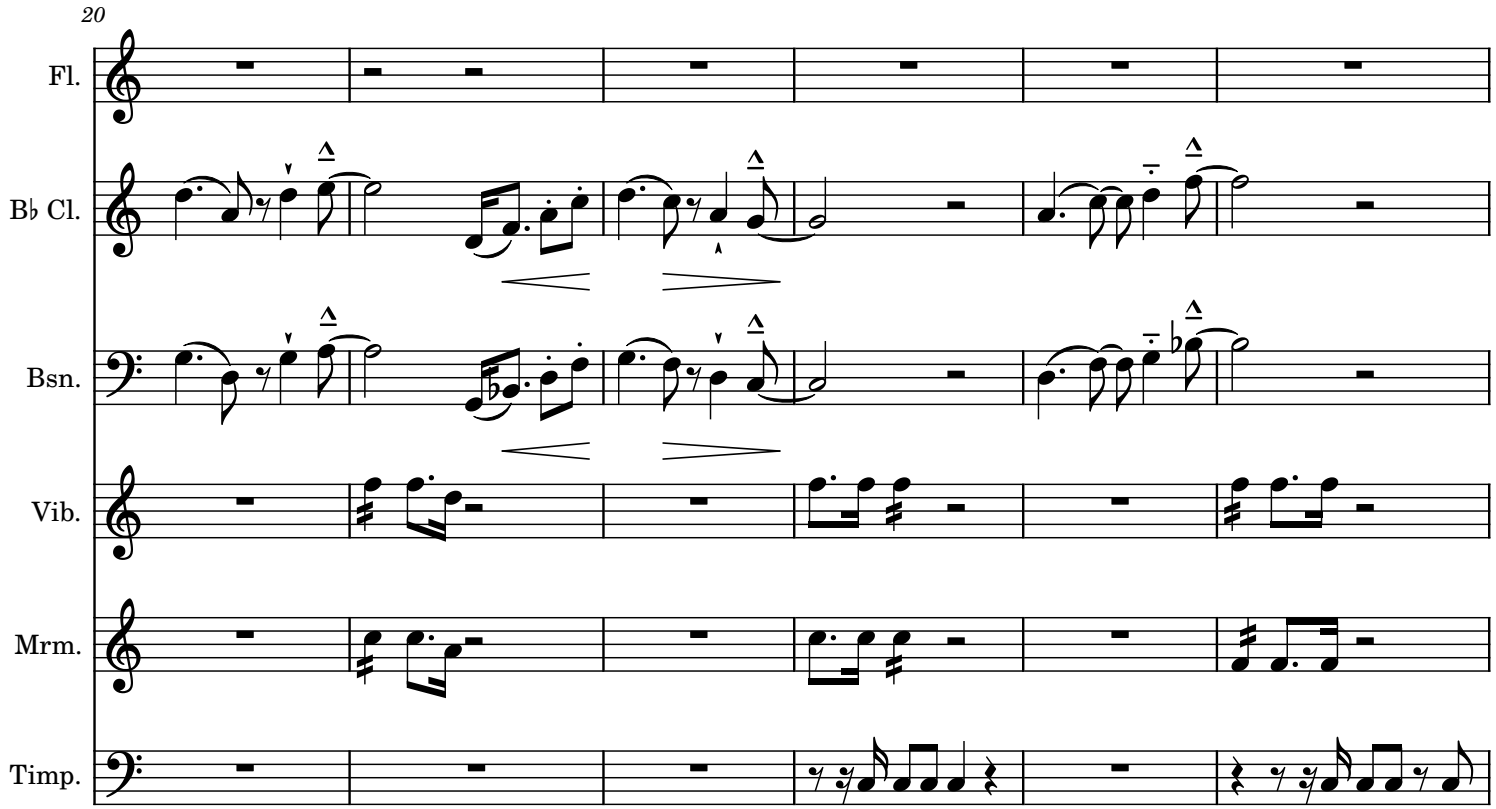
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
mp
mp
p
p
pp
p
mp


20
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Vib.
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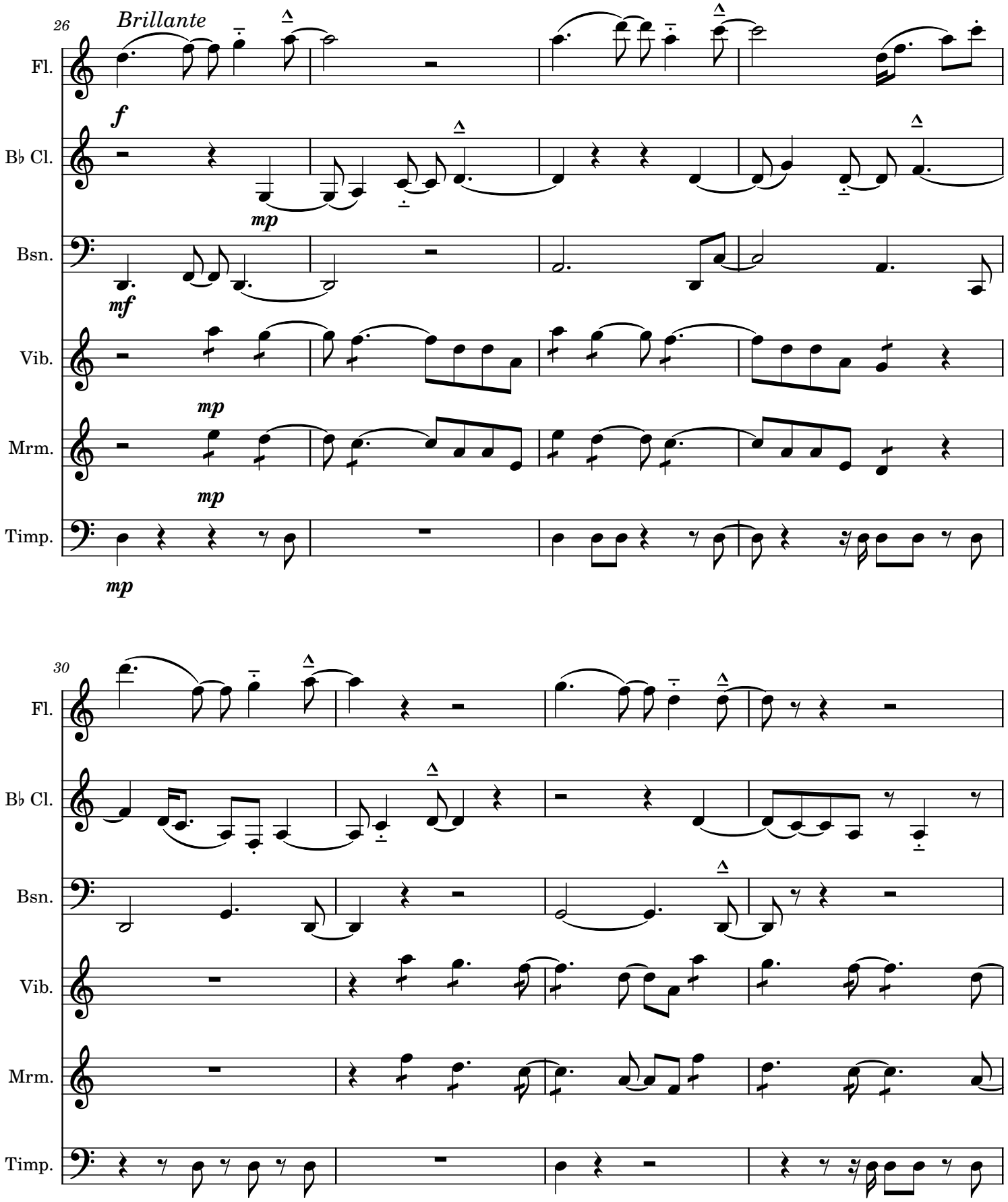
Timp.


26
Brillante
Fl.
f
B♭ Cl.
mp
Bsn.
mf
Vib.
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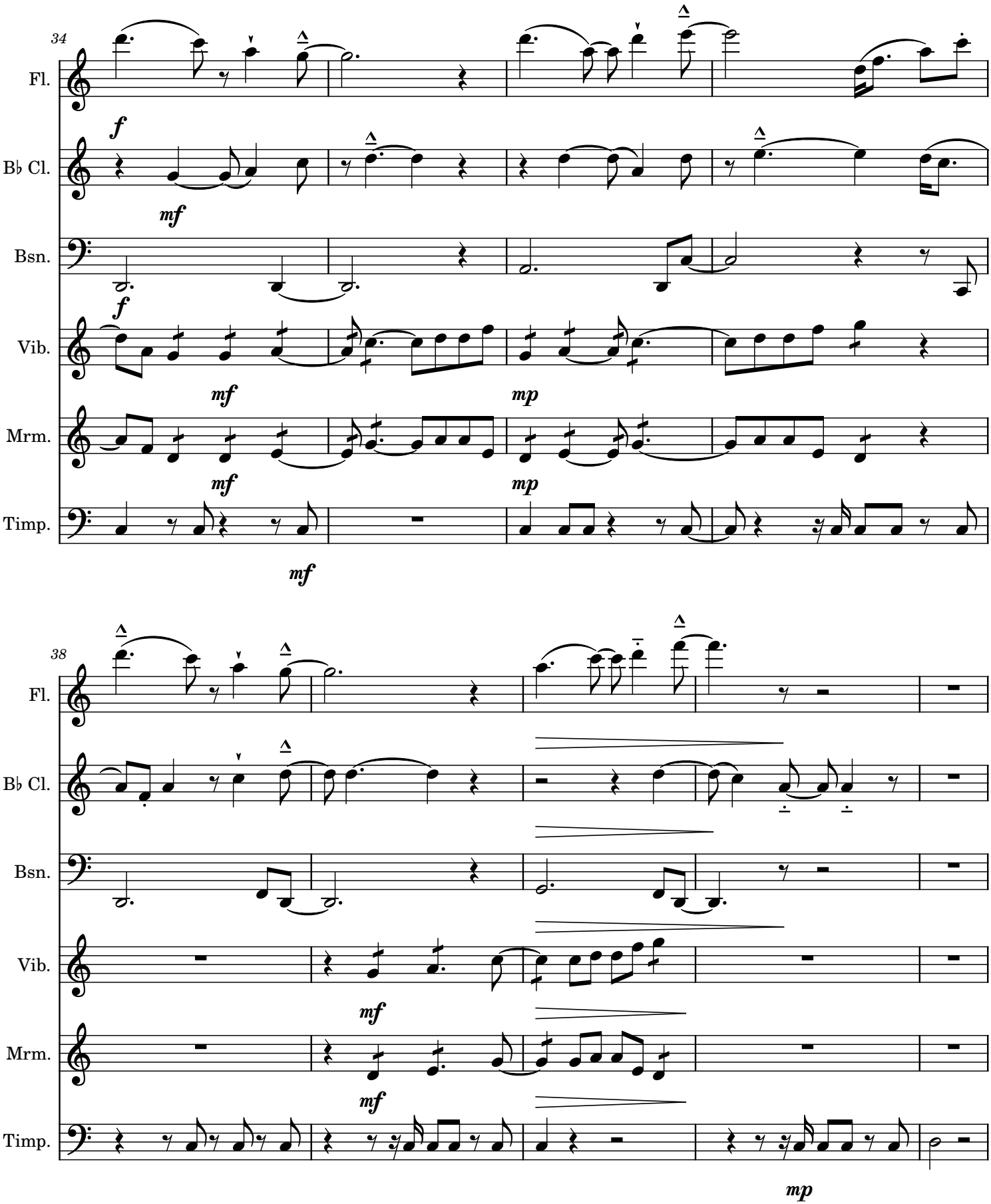
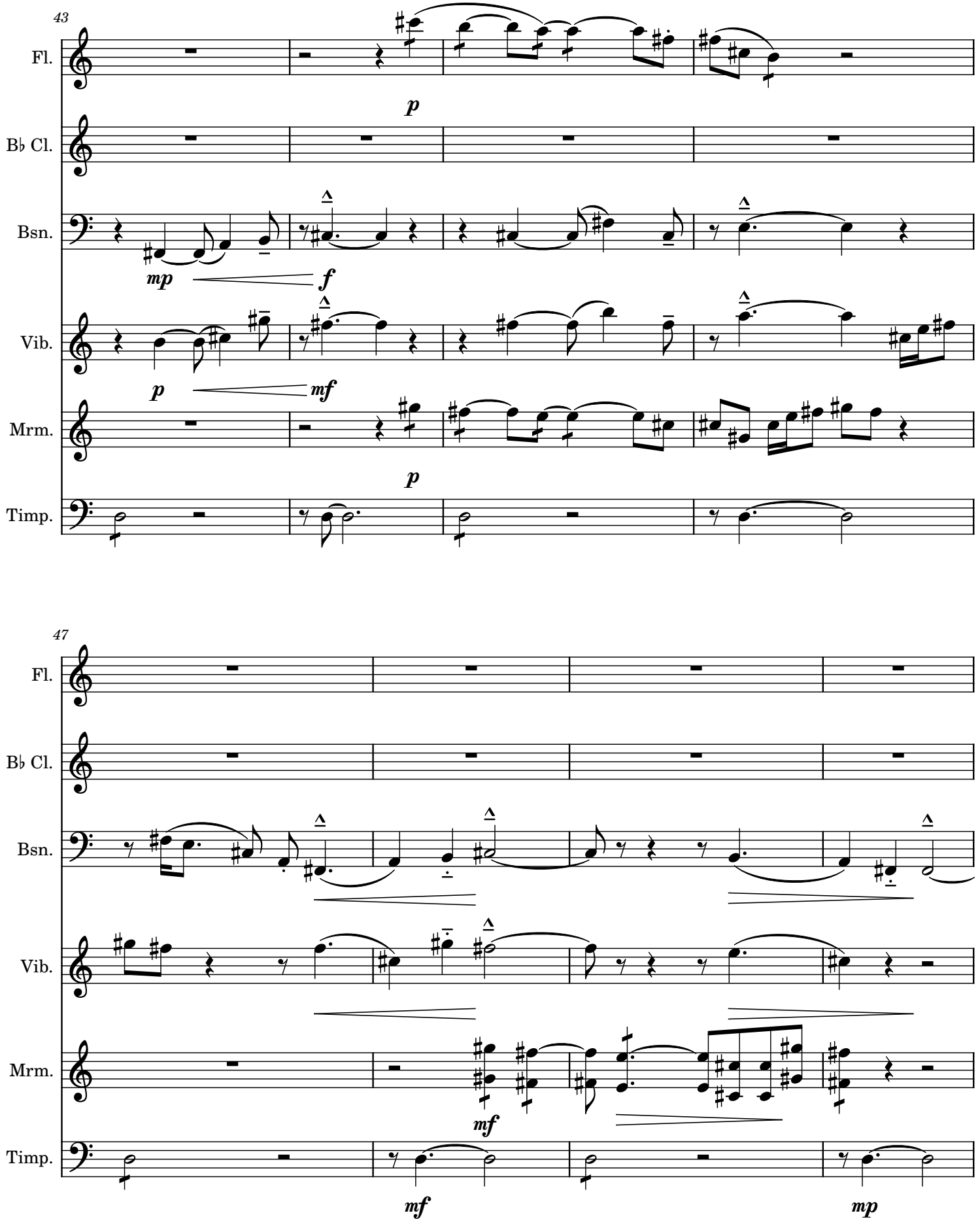
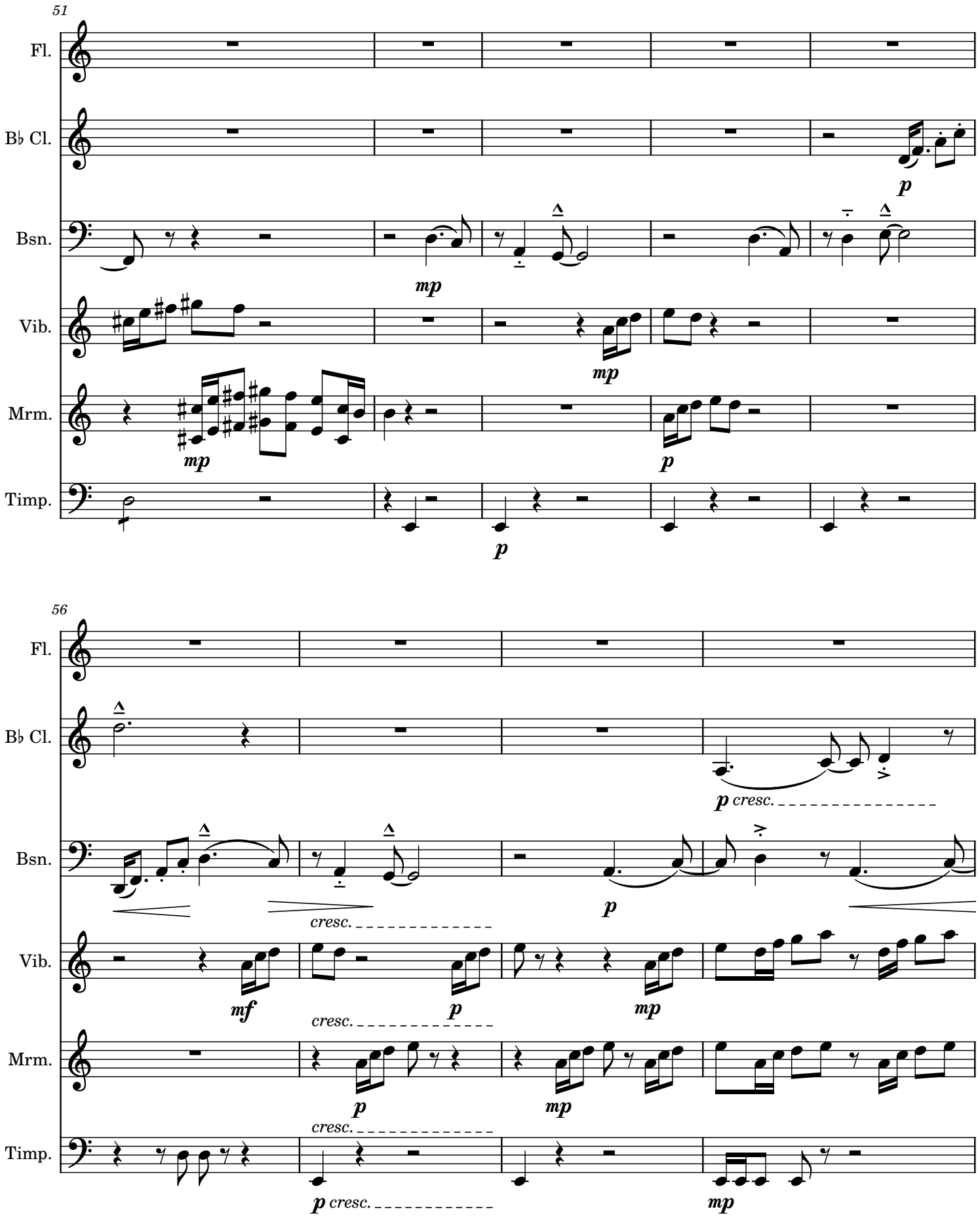
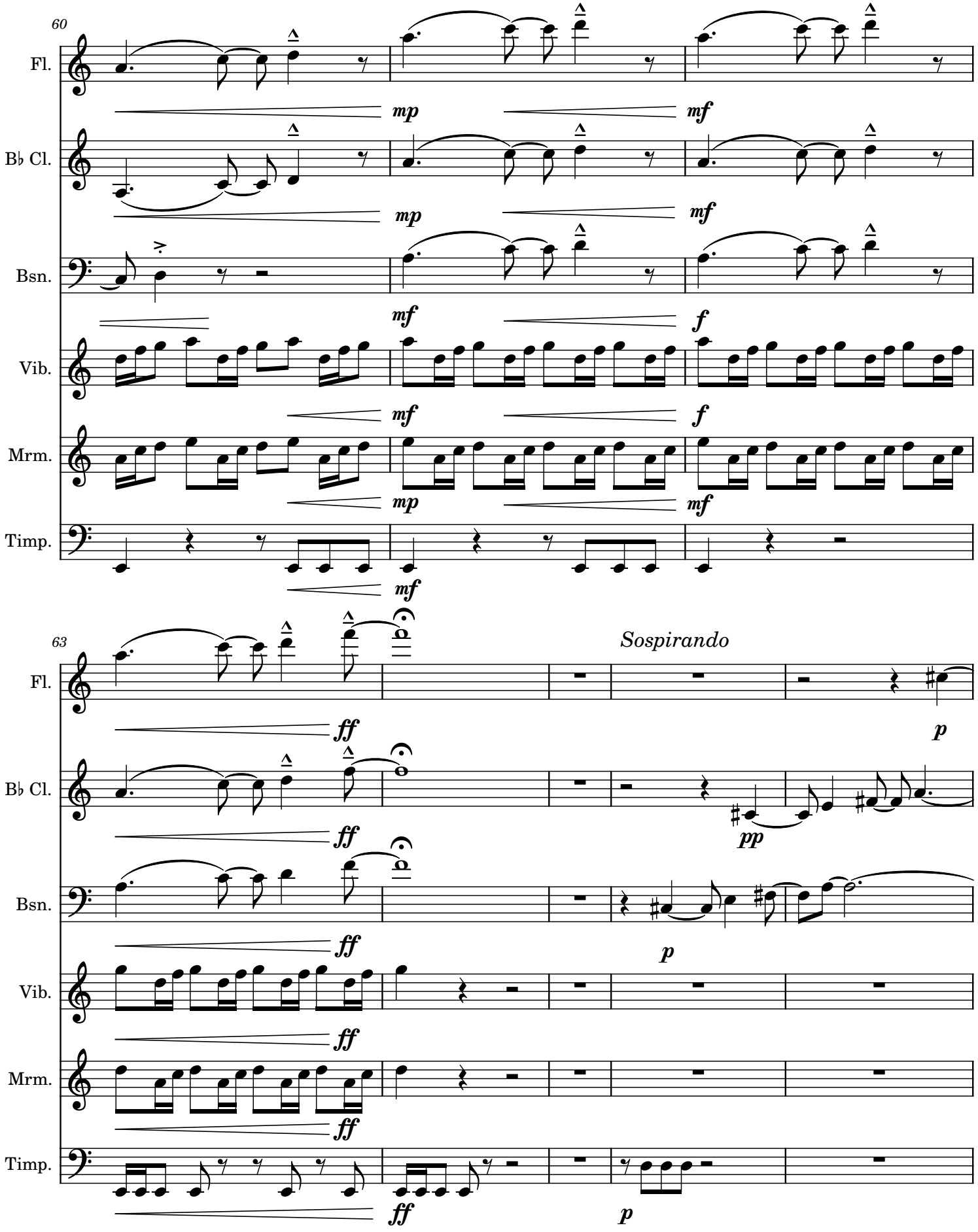
Mrm.
mp
Timp.
mp
30
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.


34
Fl.
Bb Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
f
mf
mp
38


43
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
p
mp
f
p
mf
p
47
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
mf
mf
mp


51
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
56
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
cresc.


60
Fl.
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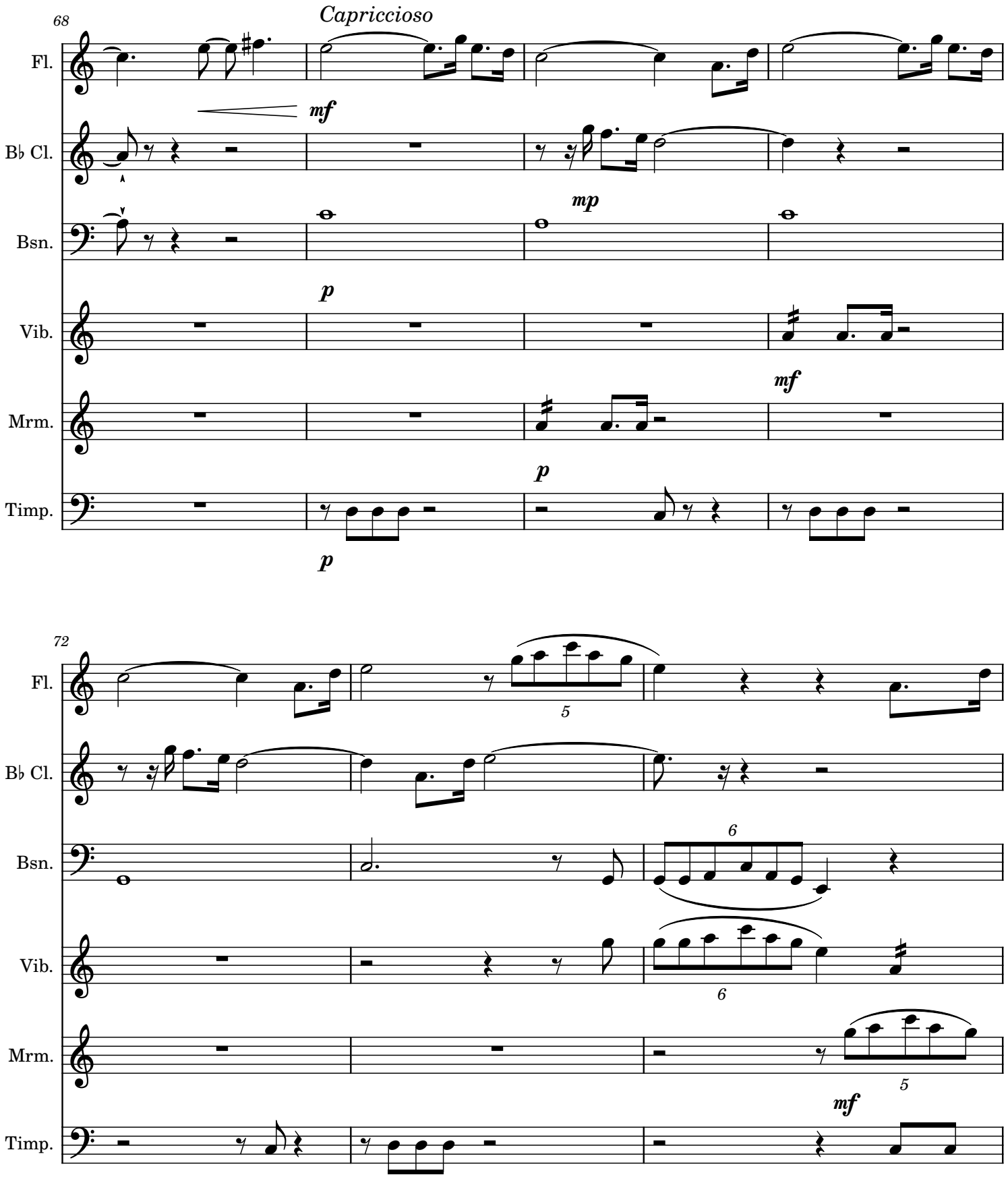
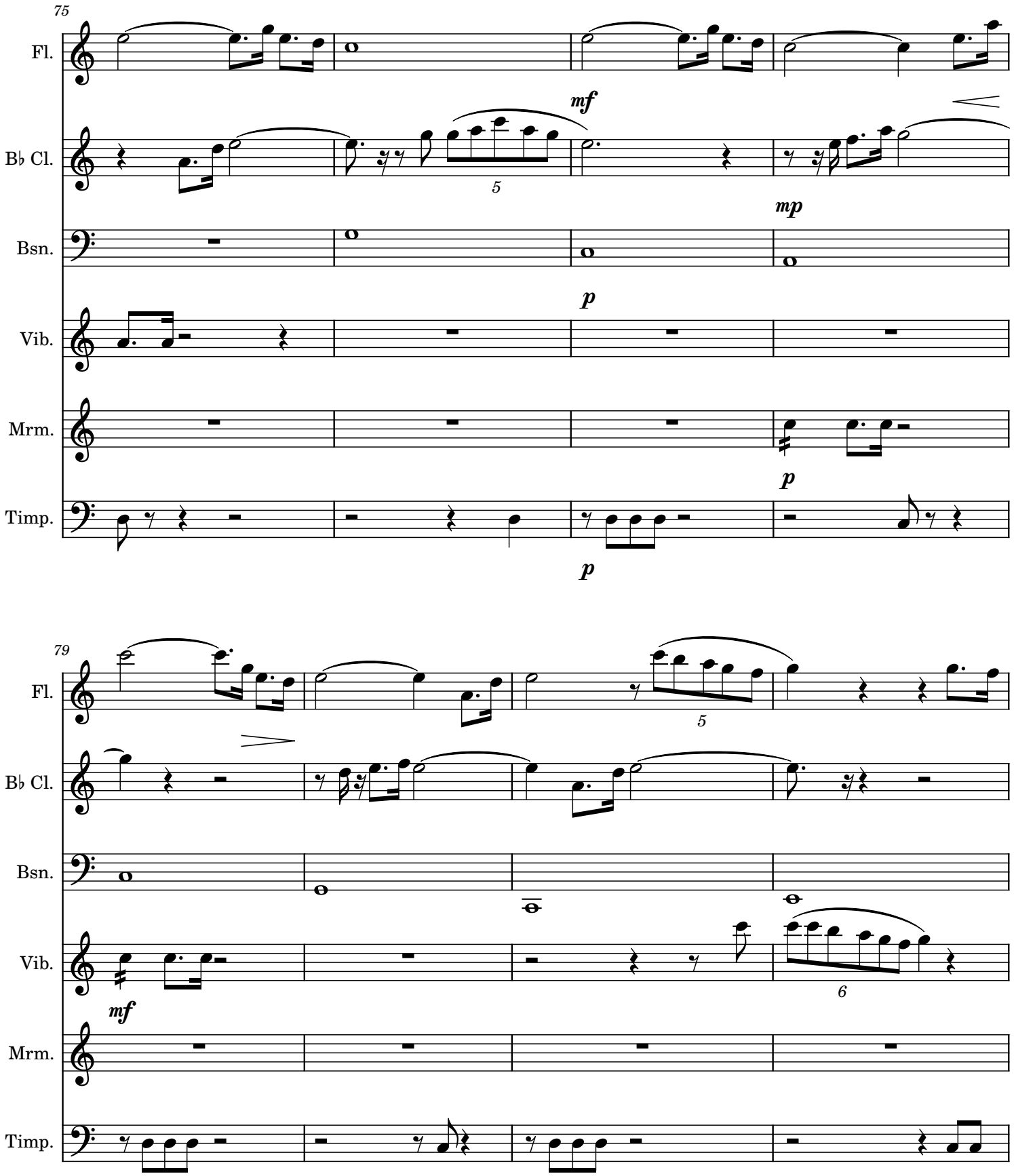
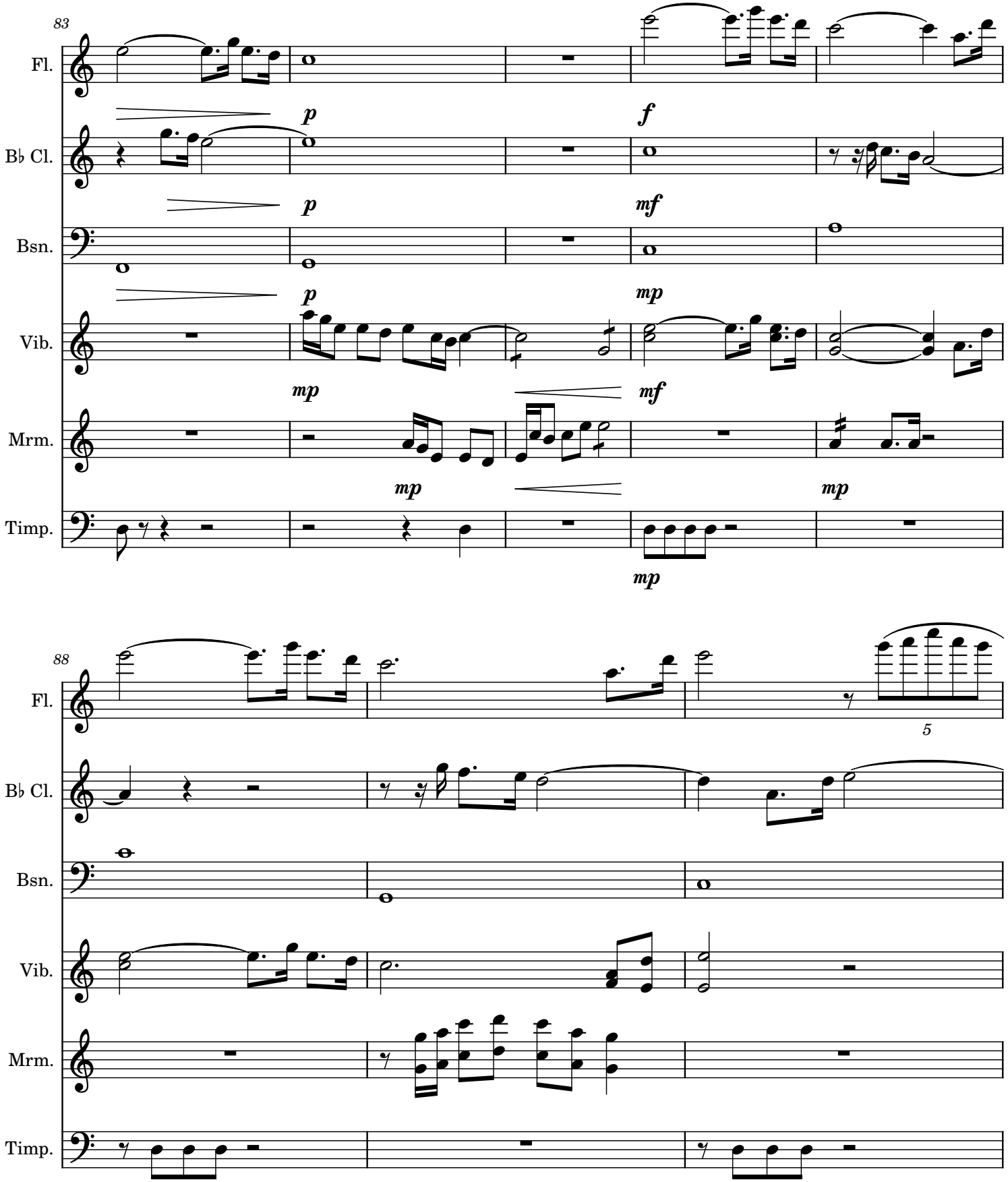
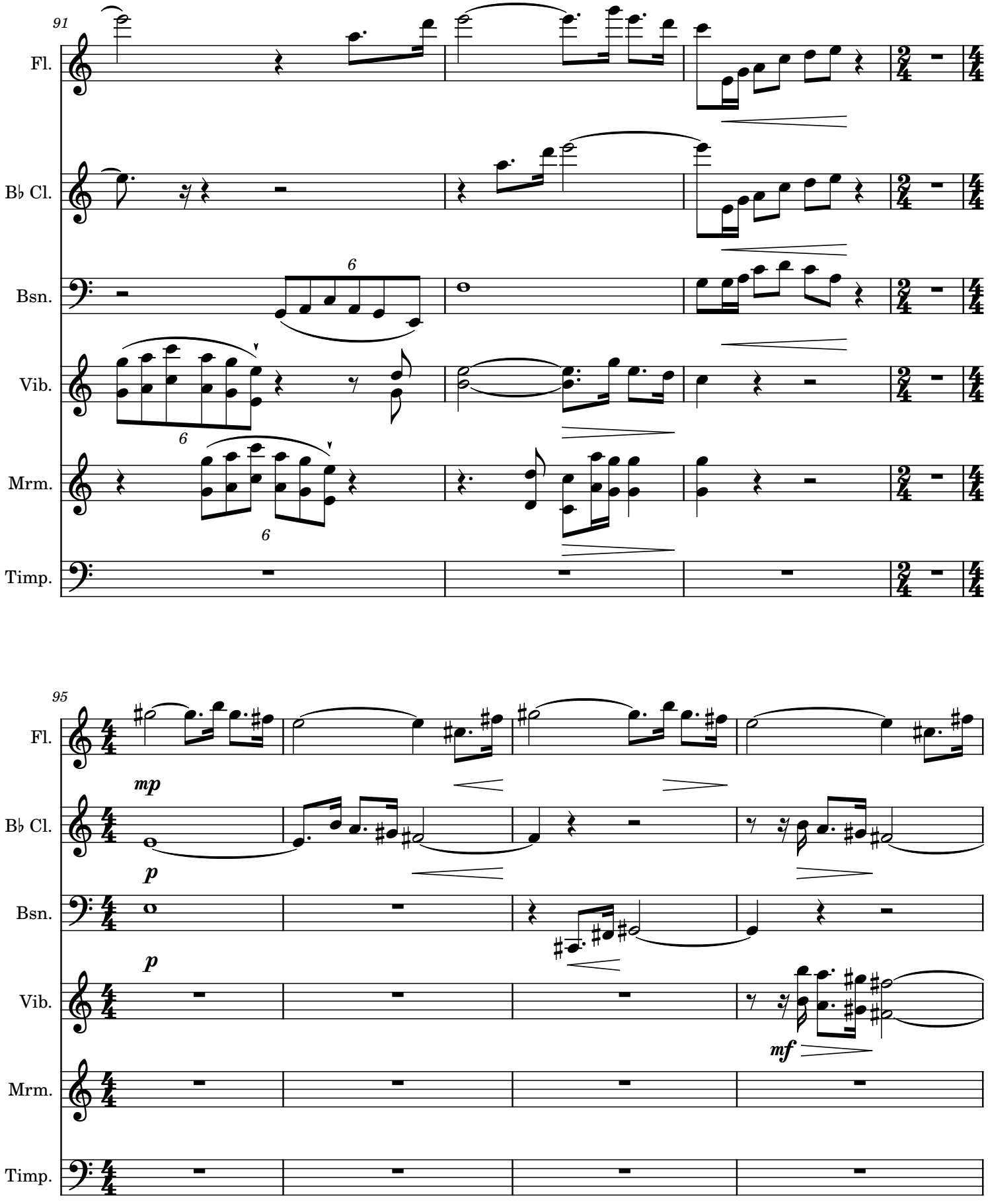
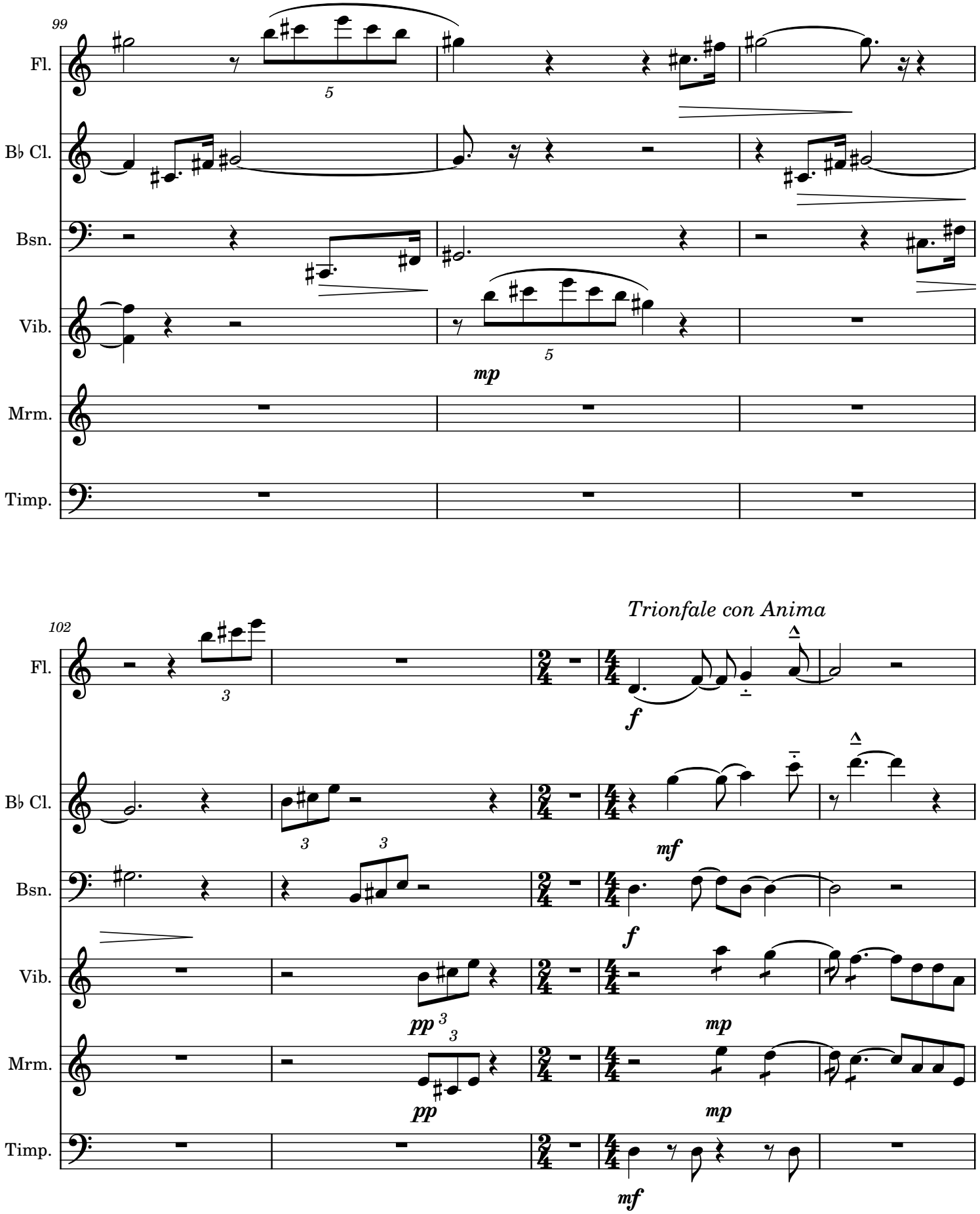
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
mp
mf
f
63
Sospirando
ff
pp
p

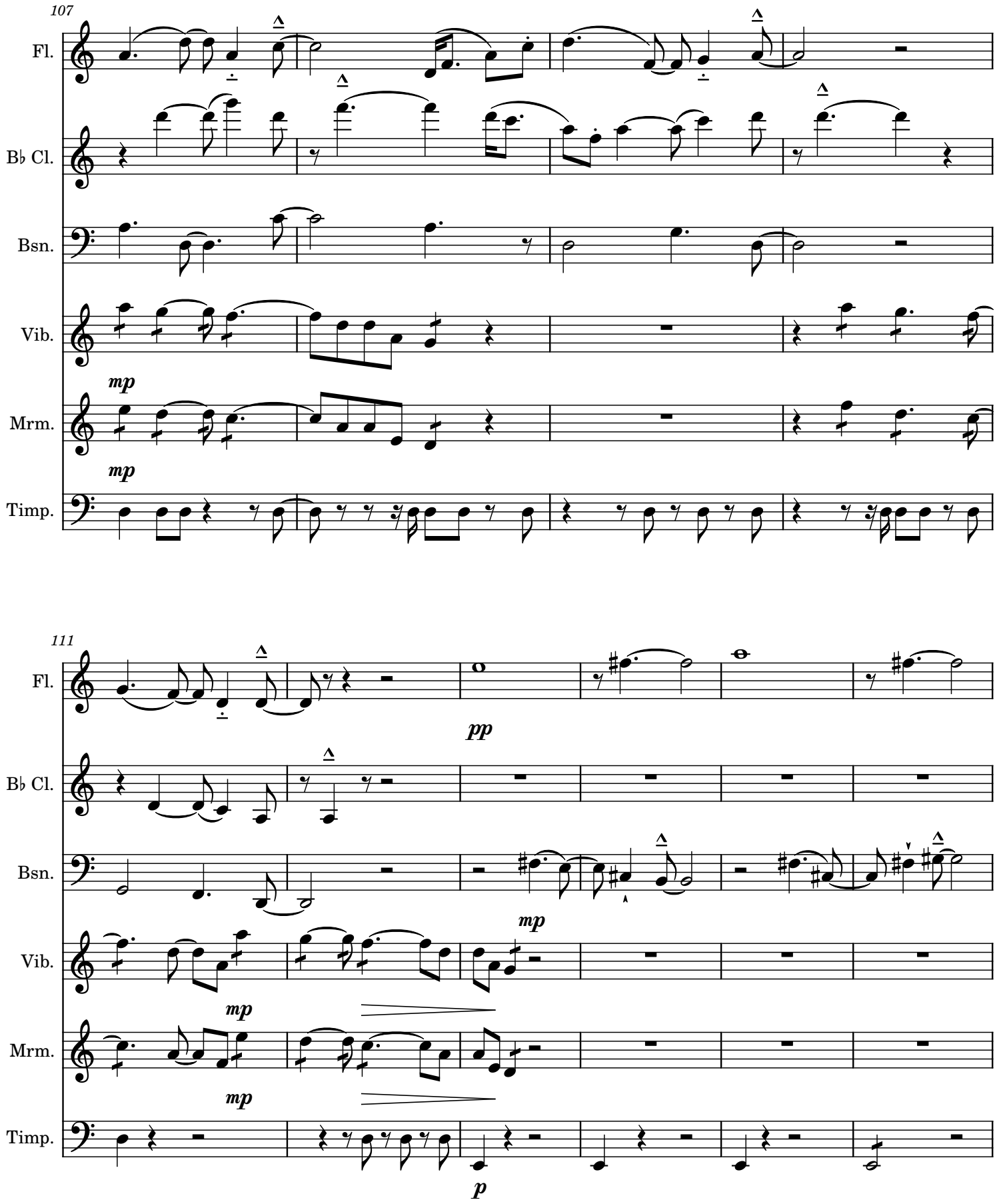

68
Capriccioso
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
mf
mp
p
mf
p
p
72
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
5
6
6
5
mf


75
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
mf
mp
p
p
p
5
79
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
mf
5
6


83
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
p
f
mf
mp
88
5


91
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
6
6
6
95
mp
p
p
mf


99
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
Mrm.
Timp.
5
5
mp
102
Trionfale con Anima
3
3
3
f
mf
f
pp
3
3
mp
pp
mp
mf


107
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
Vib.
mp
Mrm.
mp
Timp.
111
Fl.
pp
B♭ Cl.
Bsn.
mp
Vib.
mp
Mrm.
mp
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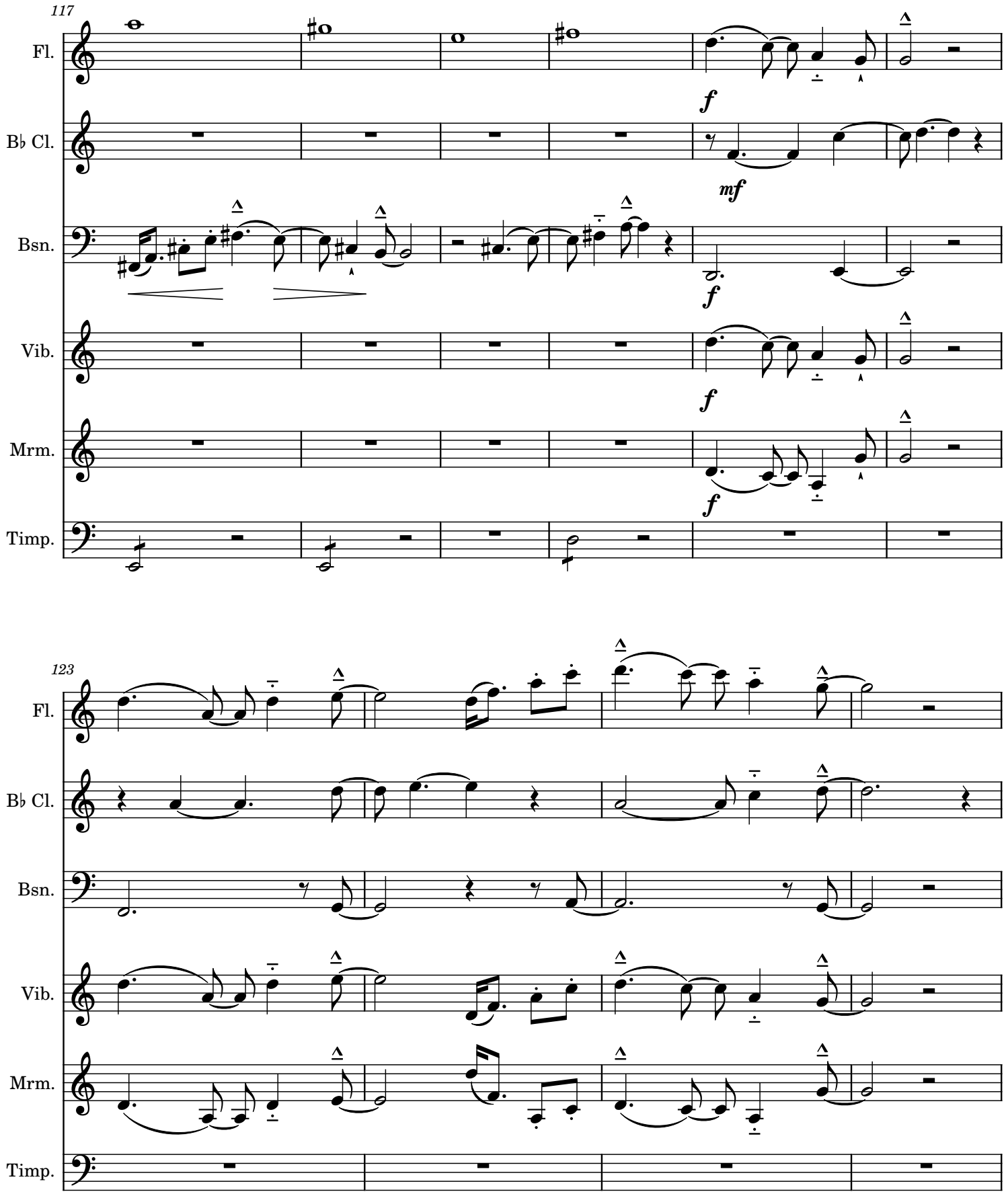
p


117
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Vib.
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123
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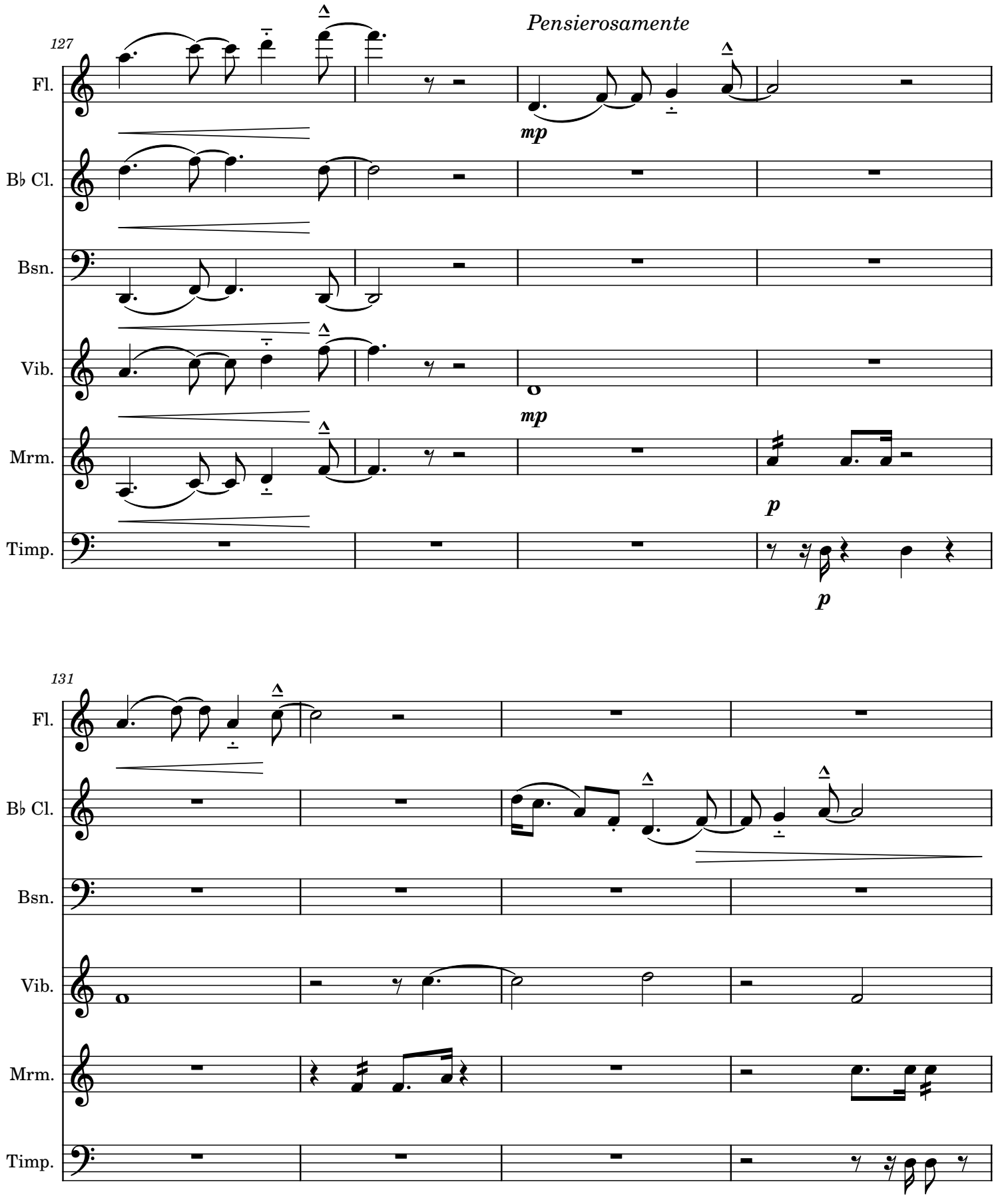
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127
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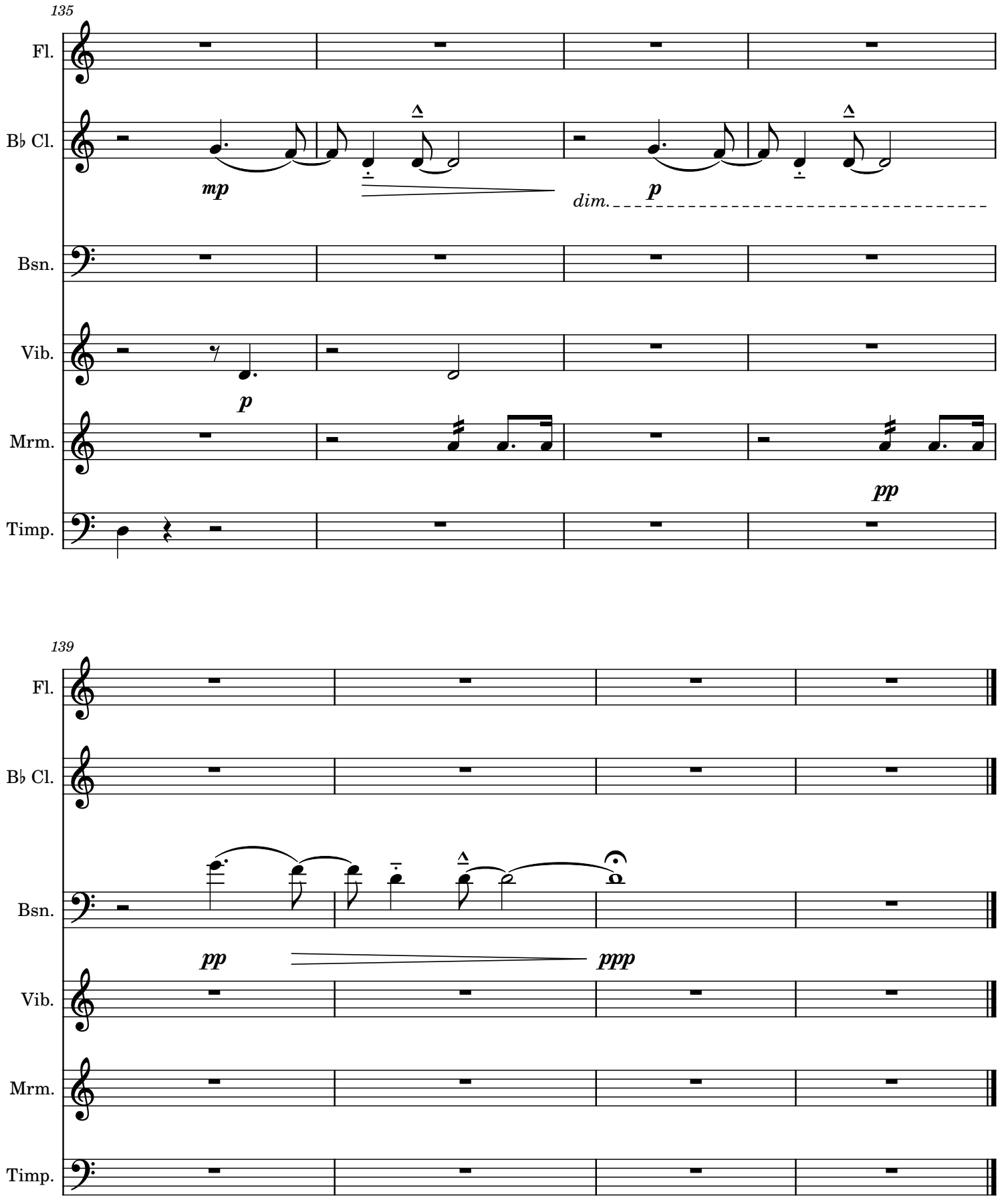
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