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CONCERTO FOR THE YOUNG ADVENTURER

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Music and Dance

San José State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirement for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Mark Forrest DeSimone

December 2009

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The Undersigned Thesis Committee Approves the Thesis Titled

CONCERTO FOR THE YOUNG ADVENTURER

by
Mark Forrest DeSimone

APPROVED FOR THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND DANCE

Dr. Brian Belet,	School of Music and Dance	Date 6 May 2009
Dr. Pablo E. Furman,	School of Music and Dance	Date 6 May 2009
Dr. Aaron J. Lington,	School of Music and Dance	Date 6 May 09

APPROVED FOR THE UNIVERSITY

Associate Dean	Office of Graduate Studies and Research	Date 12/4/09

ABSTRACT

CONCERTO FOR THE YOUNG ADVENTURER

by Mark Forrest DeSimone

Concerto for the Young Adventurer is a four-movement work written for cello, vibraphone and piano. Its themes are youthful adventure and exploration. Although the work is not programmatic in the strict sense, each movement is titled to guide the listener through a possible interpretation of the music's meaning. Each instrument is featured in several places, and all three provide supporting material when not in the spotlight. As a whole, the work is symphonic in its structure. Each movement serves its purpose in the larger picture, while all can function independently from one another. Recurring ideas link the movements together thematically and unify the work.

"Prologue" introduces the ensemble, sets the tone of the piece, introduces the harmonic and rhythmic vocabulary, and foreshadows several thematic ideas that appear prominently in later movements. The form of the movement is similar to sonata allegro, although the development section explores beyond the primary and secondary themes. This could also be considered a ternary form.

The material in "Crystal Cavern" is derived from several thematic cells presented in the beginning expository section of the movement. This movement's form is ternary. It can be seen as a free-form exploration of the motives and themes introduced in the opening section, although its modified recapitulation provides a partial sense of closure.

"Spiral Factory" is a farcical scherzo. Its pitch material comes directly from the Fibonacci Sequence, which produces a repeating pattern of 24 pitches. In that set of

pitches, every note in the 12-note chromatic scale is used, except for F sharp. As a result of this glaring omission, the composer purposefully uses F sharp as a pedal tone towards the end of the movement. The form of this movement is ternary as well. The opening and closing sections are angular declarations of the aforementioned sequence of pitches, and the middle section is based on the inverse of that sequence, although only 17 of the 24 pitches are used. In addition, the vibraphone uses the Fibonacci Sequence rhythmically – this usage will figure prominently in the final movement of the piece.

"Crackpot's Creation" begins with a limited set of pitches and rhythmic cells and builds off of these for a while, before arriving at a rhythmic representation of the Fibonacci Sequence. Next, a macabre dance-like section in 5/8 time reinterprets the opening gestures. Contrasting this is a lyrical fugal section introduced by the cello that ultimately gives way to an amalgamation of several established thematic elements. The opening material is never recapitulated in its original form, although the repeated two-note gesture is basic enough that it can be found in many places throughout the movement, and even elsewhere in the work.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Mark, Dawn, Robert and Johnathan Griswold. When life tried to force us to grow up too quickly, the Griswolds helped my brother and me stay young and carefree.

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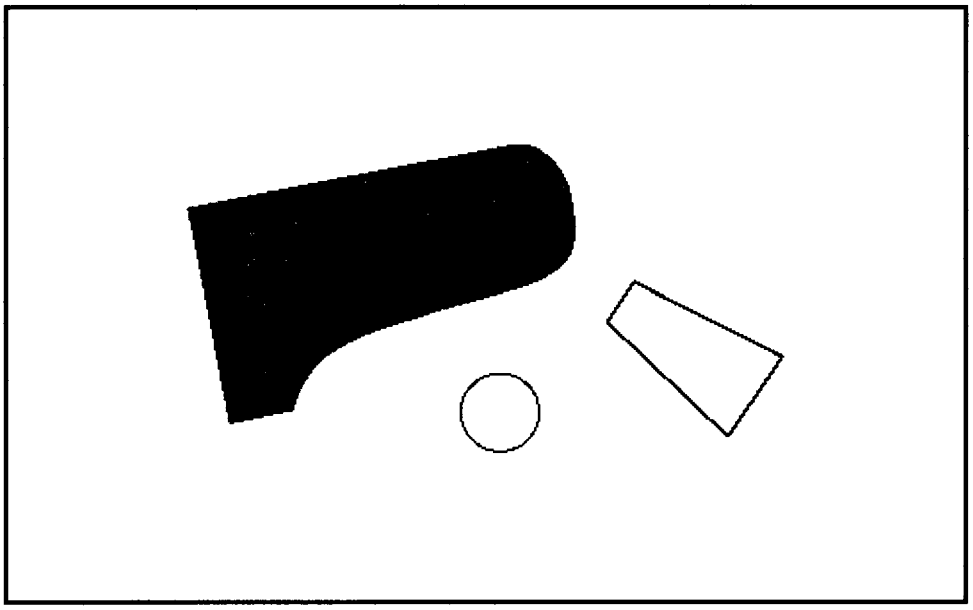
INSTRUMENTATION

Staff 1:	cello
Staff 2:	vibraphone
Staves 3 and 4:	grand staff - piano

PLACEMENT OF INSTRUMENTS

All players should be able to maintain eye contact with one another.



(Stage Front)

Figure 1: Setup Diagram

PERFORMANCE NOTES

- Accidentals carry through the entire measure, but are octave-specific.
- Trills should begin and end on the lower (notated) pitch, unless otherwise specified with a grace note. The interval between the notes should be one whole step, unless otherwise indicated.
- The vibraphonist should make note of all mallet changes. The music calls for medium-hard mallets, medium-soft mallets and bass bow.
- Pianist and vibraphonist should follow all marked pedaling.
- All articulations should be followed as closely as possible. Pianist and vibraphonist may use pedals when necessary to execute these articulations and other expressive markings.
- Vibraphonist may use half-pedal for rapid slurs.
- Pianist may use *una corda* pedal in quiet passages, or when the tone color would be appropriate. Damper pedal must be used only when necessary.

ANALYTICAL NOTES

Mood

The mood of each movement corresponds to some of the emotional states typically found in a symphonic work. The first movement is energetic, but not stern; it sets the tone for the work. The second movement is introspective, and the most ponderous of the four. Whereas the previous movement imbues the work with energy and introduces the musical vocabulary, this movement explores atmosphere and expands the established vocabulary. The third movement is a scherzo, mocking the complexities of its theoretical foundation. The fourth movement begins with innocent playfulness, and progresses through an eccentric dance, a reflective, lyrical fugue, before returning to a darker treatment of the dance material.

Subtext

This piece is not programmatic because there is not one "correct" narrative or reading for the listener to discover. However, its title and the subtitles for each movement suggest themes and subjects that can be applied to the work, should the listener desire such input. It should be noted that these titles were given by the composer after the work's completion, and as such represent the images and ideas that came to mind as the composer began to reflect on the piece. Therefore the piece can stand as separate from the themes that the titles suggest. Following is one interpretation of the piece's subtext.

The "Prologue" begins without introduction. The listener is dropped abruptly into

the exposition, as if events in the Concerto's universe have already been set in motion. The movement deals with the energy of youth, perhaps as remembered by an adult. This reading can be taken from several musical characteristics: the lively tempo, the syncopations generated through different metric subdivisions, and melodic exploration of various modalities. Also important to this reading of the movement is that it has the strongest key centers in the work. As the listener progresses through subsequent movements of weaker tonal centers, this fact is made more and more apparent, and the listener may even feel nostalgia for the stability remembered in the introductory movement.

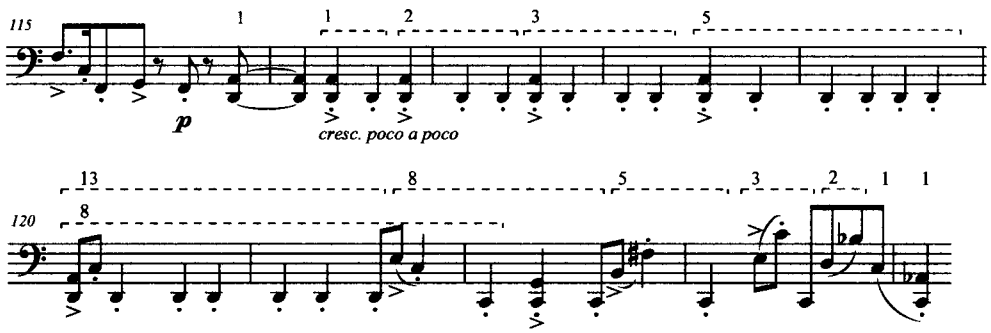
From the second movement, "Crystal Cavern," many interpretations may arise. A characteristic common to all (or at least many) of these interpretations will be introspectiveness. On the most basic level, this will come from the use of space; that is to say that the sparse introduction and various periods of relative stasis in this movement will contrast effectively with the extroverted nature of the preceding movement, which itself is portrayed through an abundance of rhythmic syncopation and higher rhythmic density (more notes per measure) as well as a much faster tempo. Also characteristic of this movement is an atmospheric quality that comes from the aforementioned use of space as well as the enigmatic, dissonant, cell-based melodic and harmonic content. Whereas the other three movements rely on an obvious pulse, this movement conspicuously lacks that property. The reflective nature of this movement could be seen as representative of a phase in a person's life in which contemplation of oneself is

common.

Following the reflective second movement is the scherzo "Spiral Factory." In terms of rhythmic vocabulary and a sense of playfulness, this movement may seem similar to the "Prologue." But a sense of sarcasm, even mockery, is new here. The movement begins with a round built on an angular exposition of an eccentric and seemingly complex melody (based upon the Fibonacci Sequence), the presentation of which is not softened for ease of assimilation. This initially gives a hint that the music to come will be theoretically complex; austere and cerebral. However, after just one nearly identical repetition of the melody, the pitch material is inverted and truncated from 24 notes to 17. Furthermore, it is colored rhythmically to produce a melody that is very different in character. In fact, the melody outlines the blues scale used frequently in jazz. The resulting melody is simple in comparison to its predecessor, and is presented in an almost cartoonish character. This is the shortest movement of the piece; it contains the least amount of themes and thematic development. As a scherzo is typically reminiscent of a joke or game, one can ultimately infer that the movement makes a joke out of the cerebral introductory melody.

The subtext in the final movement is that once lost, the innocence of youth cannot be found again. The listener can perceive this through the form of the movement. The child-like melodic vocabulary and playful rhythmic syncopations are delivered and developed in the beginning of the piece, and alluded to in later passages, which would suggest that this is important thematic material, and will return, based on the format of

previous movements as well as formal conventions established in many other classical compositions. However, the material does not return, save for a small glimpse preceding the final section. Instead, what returns is the metrically lopsided dance section, which in its first incarnation was emotionally ambiguous, but now is characterized in a much more sinister manner. The rhythmic representation of the Fibonacci sequence [Example 1] in this movement depicts a broadening of the scope of time – this represents the changing perception of time that occurs as one gets older.



Example 1: Overlapping Rhythmic Representations of Both Increasing and Decreasing Fibonacci Sequence, Cello

Form

On the largest scale, the concerto resembles a symphonic work, as detailed above. Examining the forms of each movement reveals that they all utilize rounded forms. The first three movements can be seen as having a ternary ABA form. The two outer movements share an additional similarity in that further subdivisions can be made of the first two sections. Thus, the form for the "Prologue" is *abcdca*, where *ab* comprises

A, *cdc* comprises B, and the last A is missing its *b* section. The form for "Crackpot's Creation" is similar: *ab* is A, *cdc* is B, and the listener will likely expect a return to the A section, based on the precedent set by the three preceding movements as well as formal convention. Instead, the recapitulation is absent.

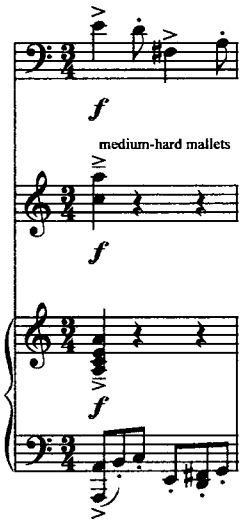
Index of Important Thematic Cells

Further in-depth formal analysis of the large-scale structure of this piece is possible, but a different focus would be more beneficial to a performer or scholar. This is due to the fact that much of the thematic material is derived from small generative cells. A cell may be defined as the smallest thematic element used in a composition. It may be composed of rhythm alone, or it may also include melody and/or harmony. In this composition, the composer defines each cell in terms of both its rhythm and melodic shape. Mutations are very common with pitch material, and less common with the rhythmic components. None of the movements are built exclusively with this technique, but the second movement is quite dependent upon its four cells, labeled as A, B, C, and D in Example 9 below, and all movements contain some use of thematic cells.

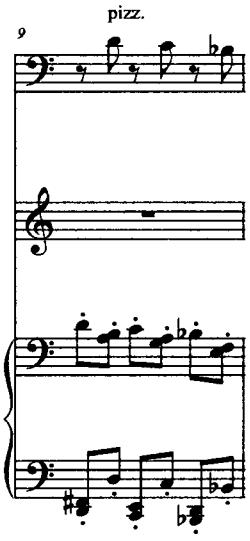
Following is an index of the important cells used in the composition. Note the appearance of some cells in several movements; this helps to unify the work as a whole. These cross-movement references are very important in their unifying functions because of the stark contrasts in character between each movement. Even within each movement these cells serve a similar function. This is most apparent in the fourth movement, which has many stylistically contrasting sections.

Notably absent from the examples and figures below are complete themes. These are more easily found than the cells, so they are not exemplified here. However, they are very important to this work's structure and should not be overlooked nor deemed of secondary importance to the thematic cells. Also note that the cells shown below appear in many forms, and may be overlooked in some cases. Therefore, performers of this piece should be aware that these cells can appear quite distinct from the following examples. Nonetheless, such references should be known to performers. Any of the following examples that are not explained are included for the sake of completeness. Finally, all of the following examples represent each cell in its initial appearance.

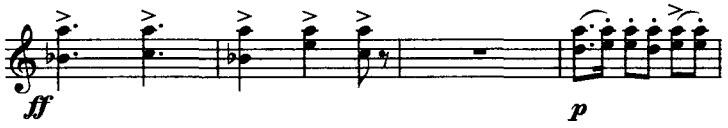
"Prologue"



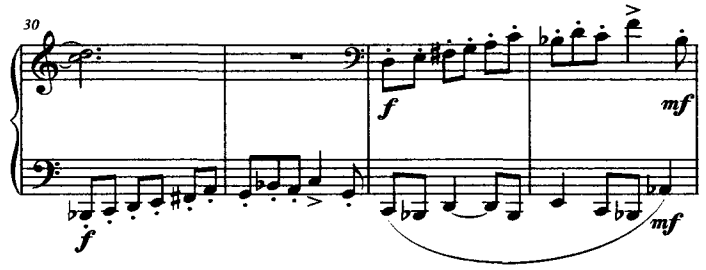
Example 2: Cell A in Cello, Cell B in Piano L.H.



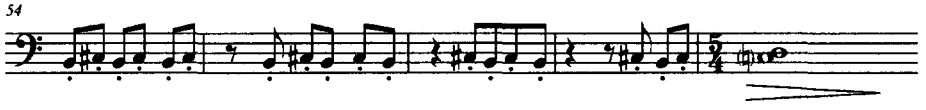
Example 3: Cell C in Piano L.H.; Reappears in Movement 2 as Cell D



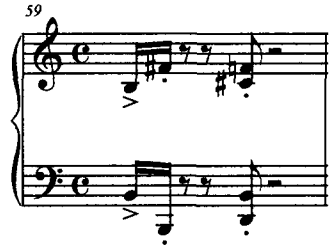
Example 4: Cell D in Vibraphone, Characterized by Re-articulated Pedal Tone; Similar Gestures Appear Prominently in Movement 4, Vibraphone



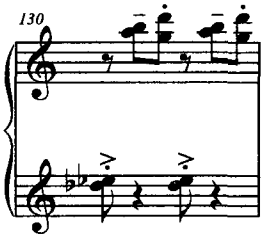
Example 5: Cell E, First in Piano L.H. then R.H.



Example 6: Decreasing Arithmetic Sequence in Cello, Related to a Rhythmic Representation of Fibonacci Sequence Occurring in Movements 3 and 4

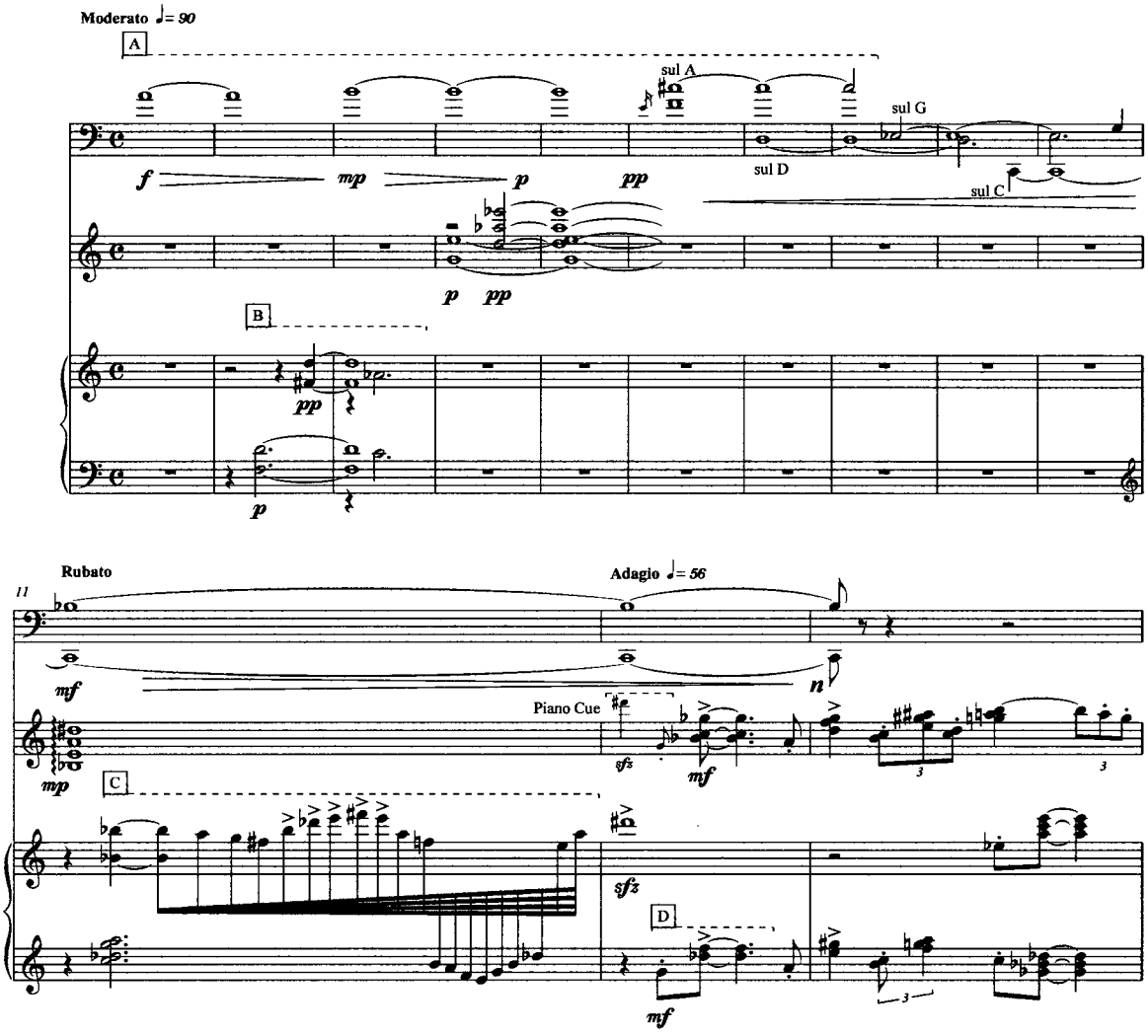


Example 7: Cell F, Piano



Example 8: Piano Foreshadows Opening of "Crackpot's Creation"

"Crystal Cavern"



Example 9: Exposition of Cells A, B, C and D

"Spiral Factory"

Theoretical Note

This movement is based on a 24-pitch tone-row [Figure 2] derived from the Fibonacci Sequence, shown with pitch class information in Figure 3. To keep the values of the sequence below 12, the math function "Modulus" is used. This function divides a number X by a divisor Y and provides the remainder, called the modulus. X represents the Fibonacci number; for example, the eighth term's value is 21. Y is the number of pitches in the Western chromatic scale, 12. Dividing 21 by 12 will yield 1, remainder 9. The Modulus is therefore 9, which is the pitch A, which is used to represent this term in the sequence.

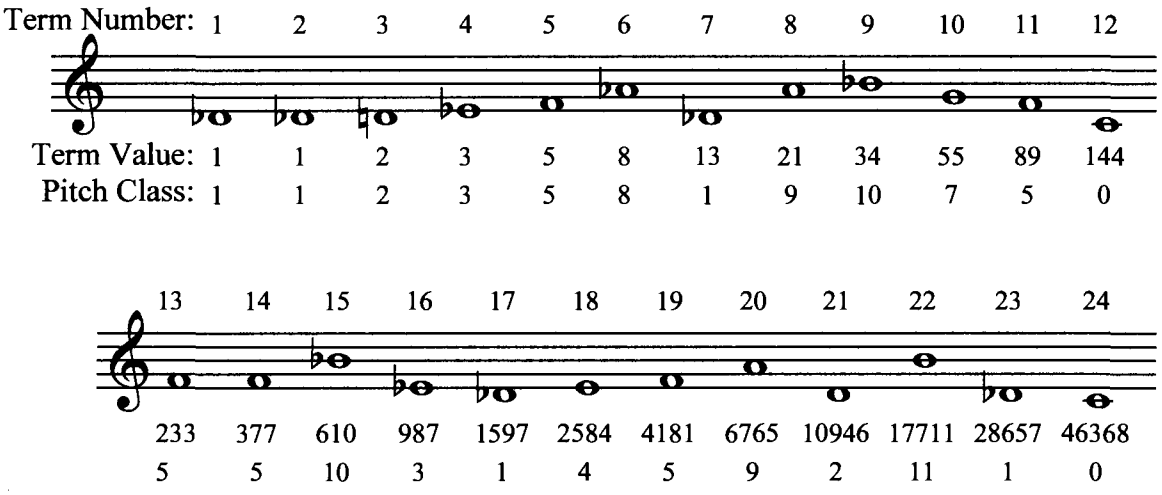


Figure 2: Fibonacci Sequence Mapped to Pitch Class System (Basis of First Theme)

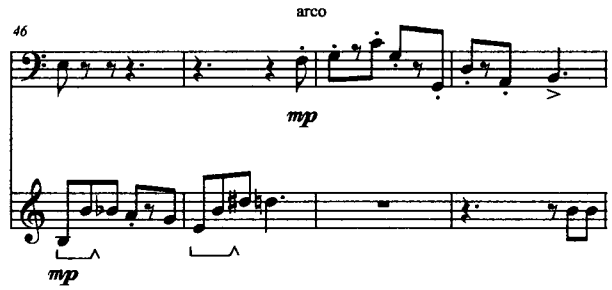
In generating this tone row, the composer discovered that there is a repeating pattern of 24 pitch values inherent in the Fibonacci Sequence when mapped to the

chromatic scale. The pattern can be seen to repeat in Figure 10. Some pitch classes occur more frequently than others. This provides D flat Major as a sort of tonal center because D flat and F are the two most common pitches, and the D flat major triad is arpeggiated in terms 5, 6 and 7. The cyclical nature of the row means that between the last note of the row and the first there is a leading tone resolution in D flat Major. D flat and F occur 5 times each; C, D, E flat, A, and B flat all occur twice; E, G, A flat and B each occur only once. The row visits all notes except for F sharp/G flat, so near the conclusion of the movement the composer includes an ostinato on this omitted pitch.

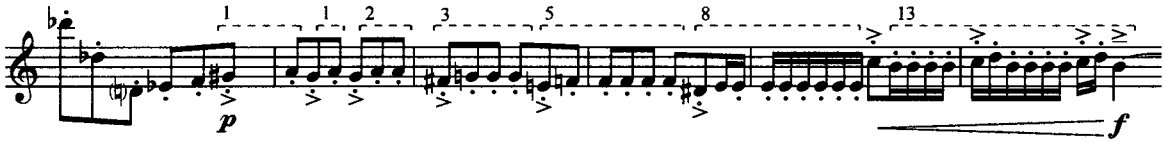
Term Number	Term Value	Term Value Modulus 12	Interval-class Inverse Of Term Value Mod 12	Term Number	Term Value	Term Value Modulus 12	Interval-class Inverse Of Term Value Mod 12
0	0	0	0				
1	1	1	11	25	75025	1	11
2	1	1	11	26	121393	1	11
3	2	2	10	27	196418	2	10
4	3	3	9	28	317811	3	9
5	5	5	7	**29**	514229	5	7
6	8	8	4	30	832040	8	4
7	13	1	11	31	1346269	1	11
8	21	9	3	32	2178309	9	3
9	34	10	2	33	3524578	10	2
10	55	7	5	34	5702887	7	5
11	89	5	7	35	9227465	5	7
12	144	0	0	36	14930352	0	0
13	233	5	7	37	24157817	5	7
14	377	5	7	38	39088169	5	7
15	610	10	2	39	63245986	10	2
16	987	3	9	40	102334155	3	9
17	1597	1	11	41	165580141	1	11
18	2584	4	8	42	267914296	4	8
19	4181	5	7	**43**	433494437	5	7
20	6765	9	3	44	701408733	9	3
21	10946	2	10	45	1134903170	2	10
22	17711	11	1	46	1836311903	11	1
23	28657	1	11	**47**	2971215073	1	11
24	46368	0	0	48	4807526976	0	0

Figure 3: Table of Fibonacci Sequence Values and Corresponding Pitch Class

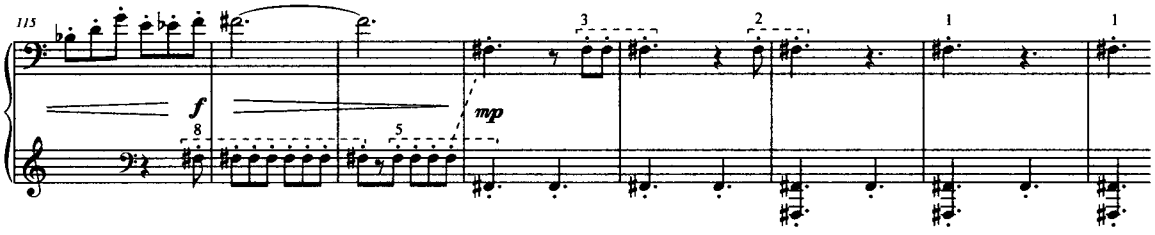
The second theme, shown in Example 10 in this movement, is built upon the first seventeen pitches in the inversion of this row.



Example 10: Inverted and Truncated Fibonacci-based Pitch Sequence (Second Theme), Vibraphone and Cello

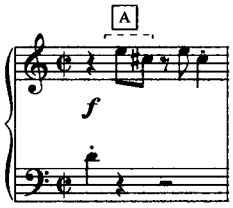


Example 11: Rhythmic Representation of Fibonacci Sequence, Vibraphone

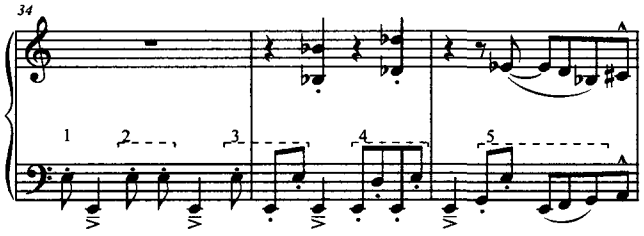


Example 12: Rhythmic Representation of Fibonacci Sequence, Piano

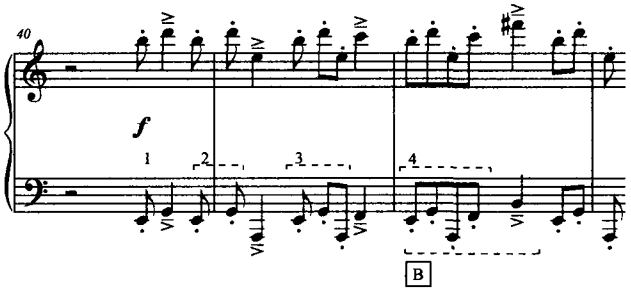
"Crackpot's Creation"



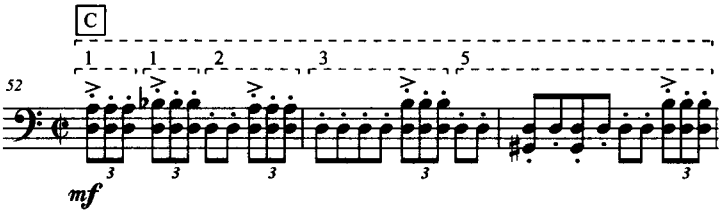
Example 13: Opening Gesture and Cell A



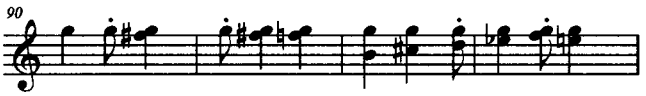
Example 14: Increasing Arithmetic Sequence, Piano L.H.



Example 15: Increasing Arithmetic Sequence Builds to Introduction of Cell B, Piano



Example 16: Beginning of Cell C, Rhythmic Representation of Fibonacci Sequence, Cello



Example 17: Cell D, Analogous to Cell D From "Prologue," Vibraphone

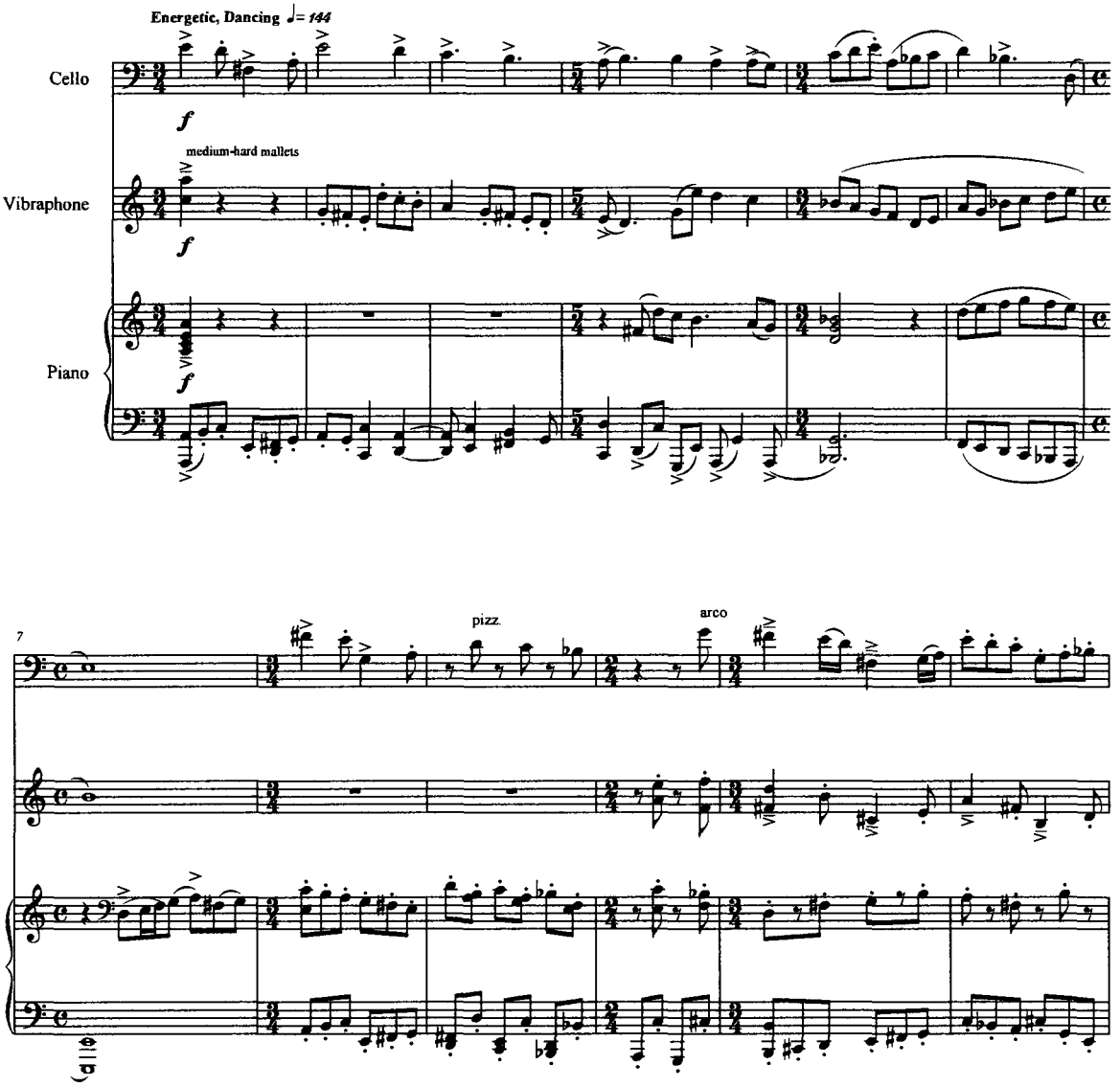
Concerto for the Young Adventurer

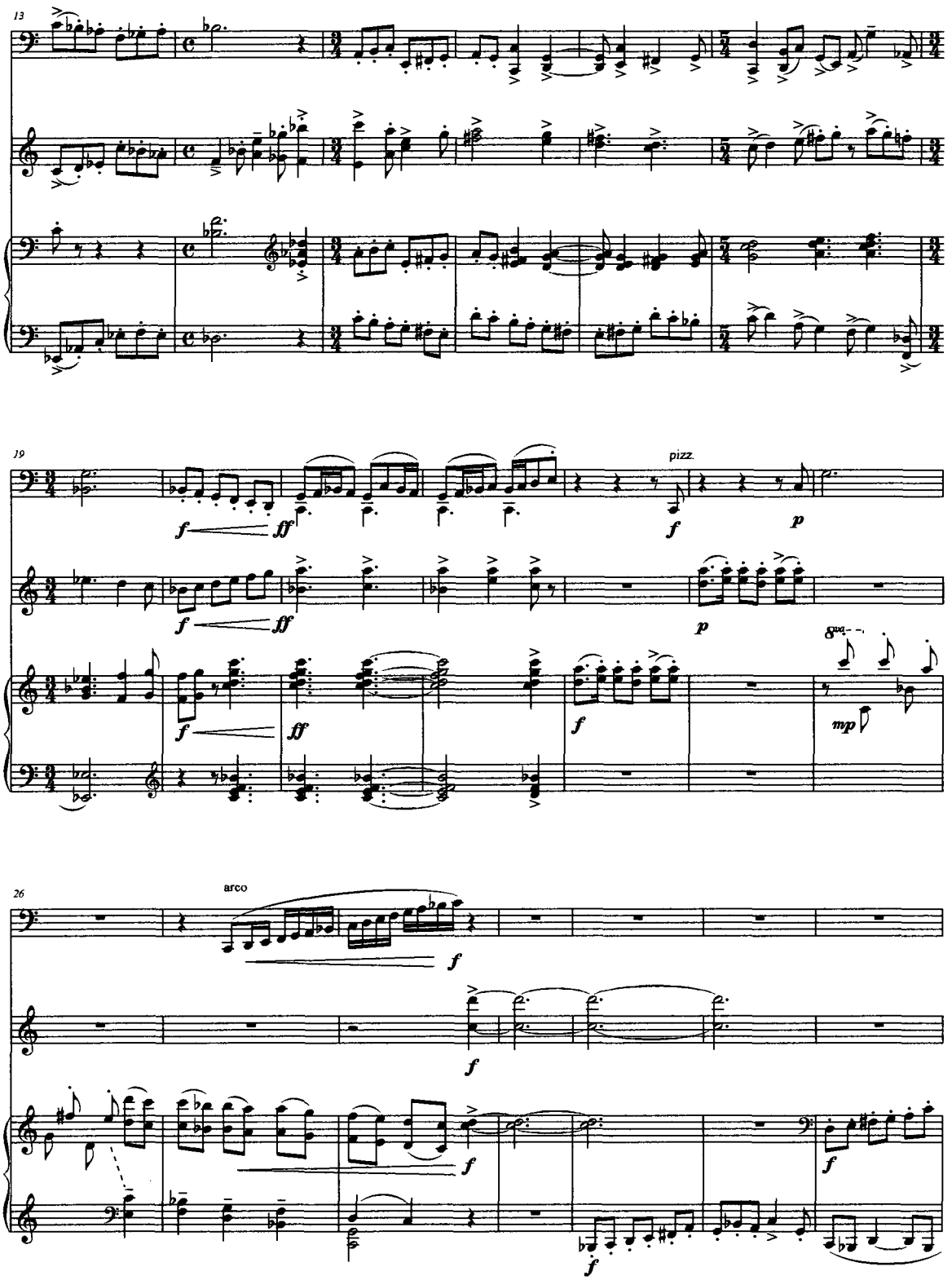
for Cello, Vibraphone, and Piano

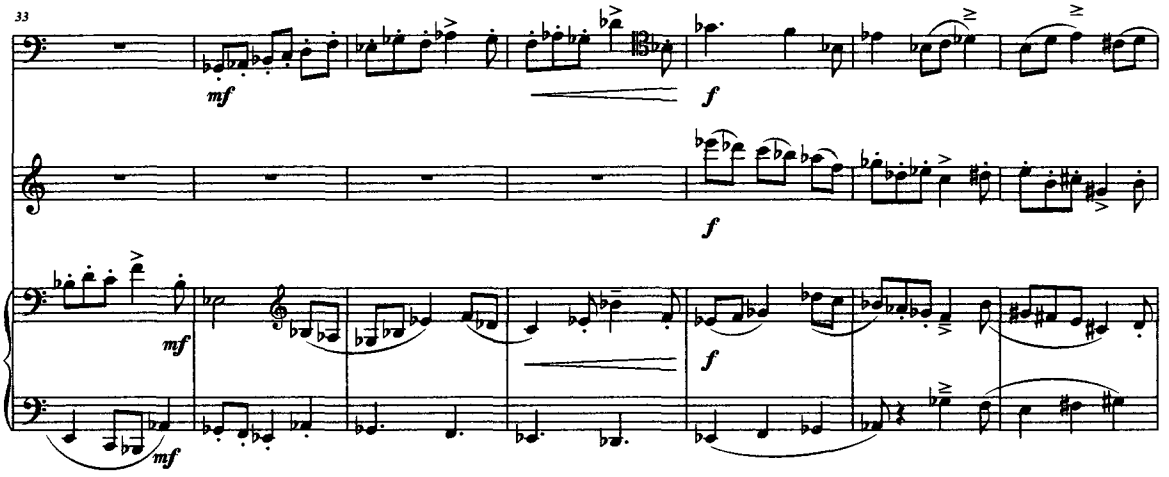
Mark DeSimone

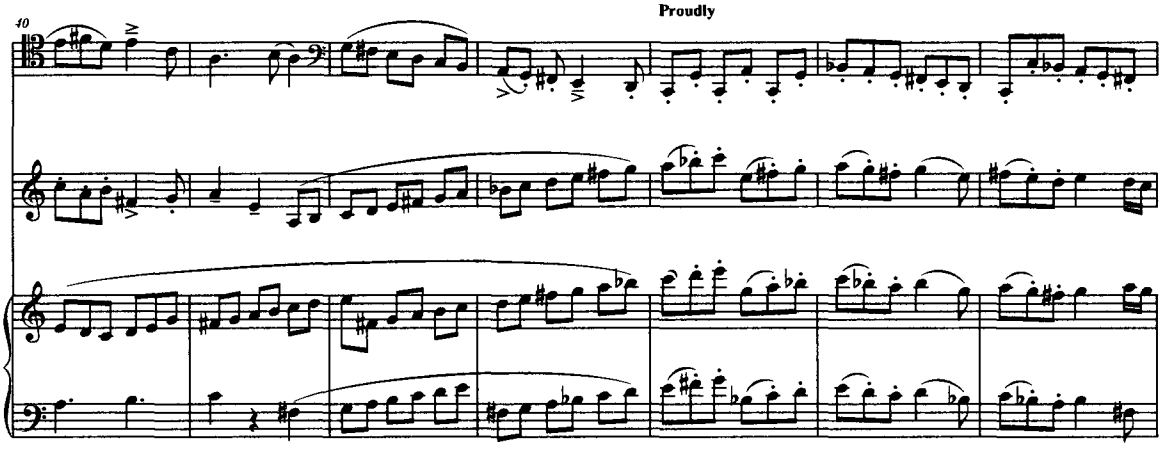
Master's Thesis

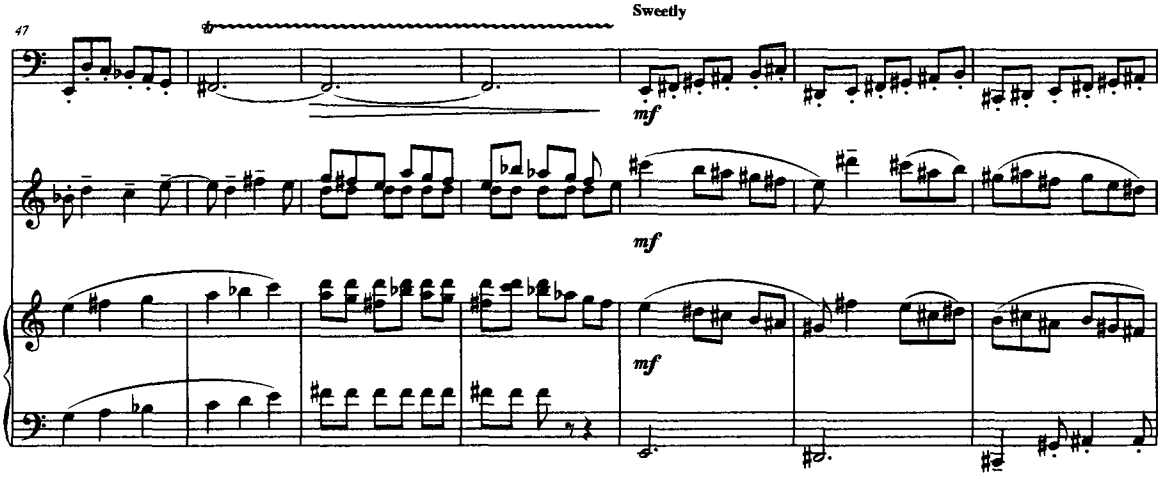
I. Prologue

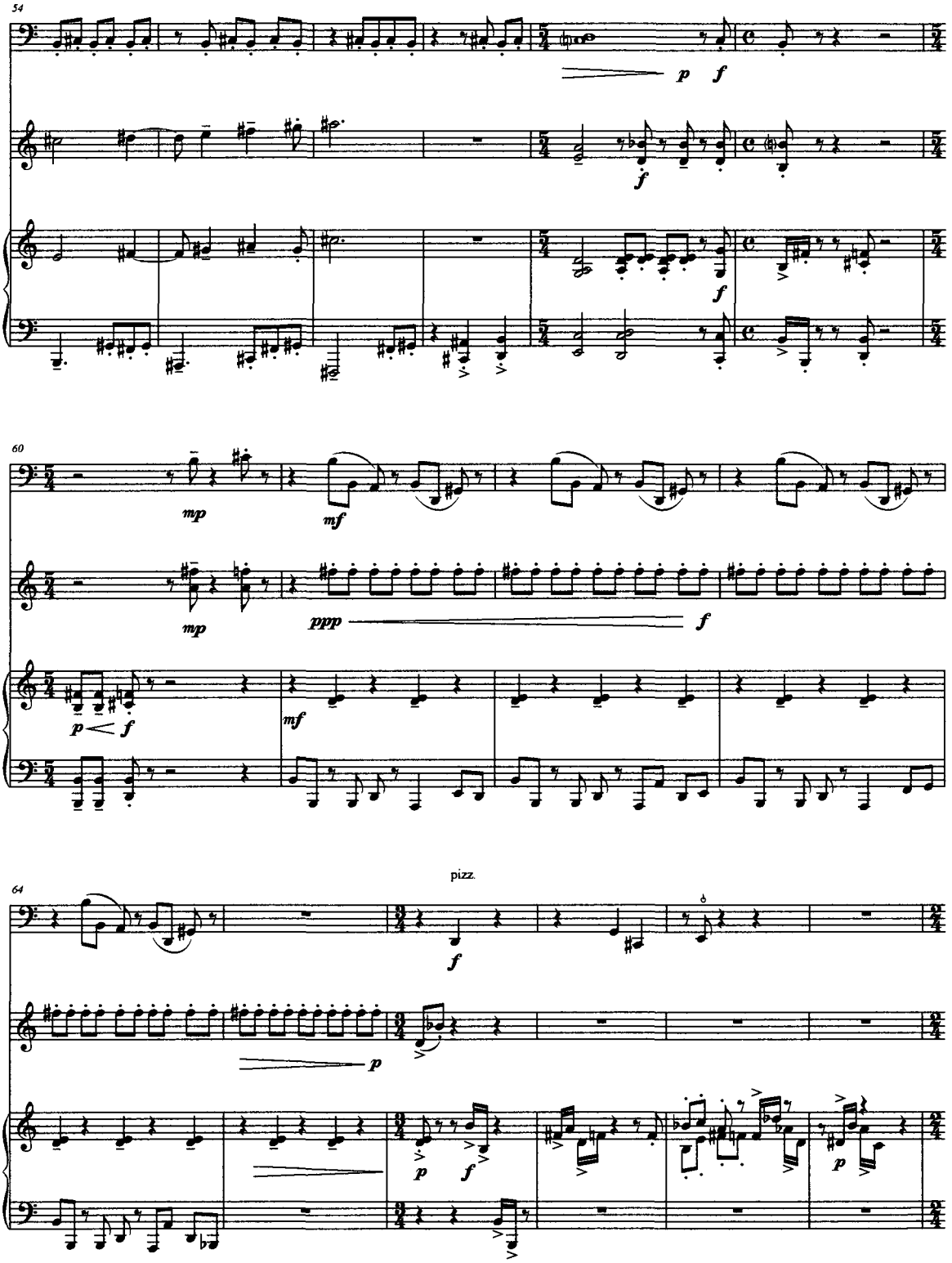

Energetic, Dancing ♩= 144
Cello
f
medium-hard mallets
Vibraphone
f
Piano
f
7
pizz.
arco

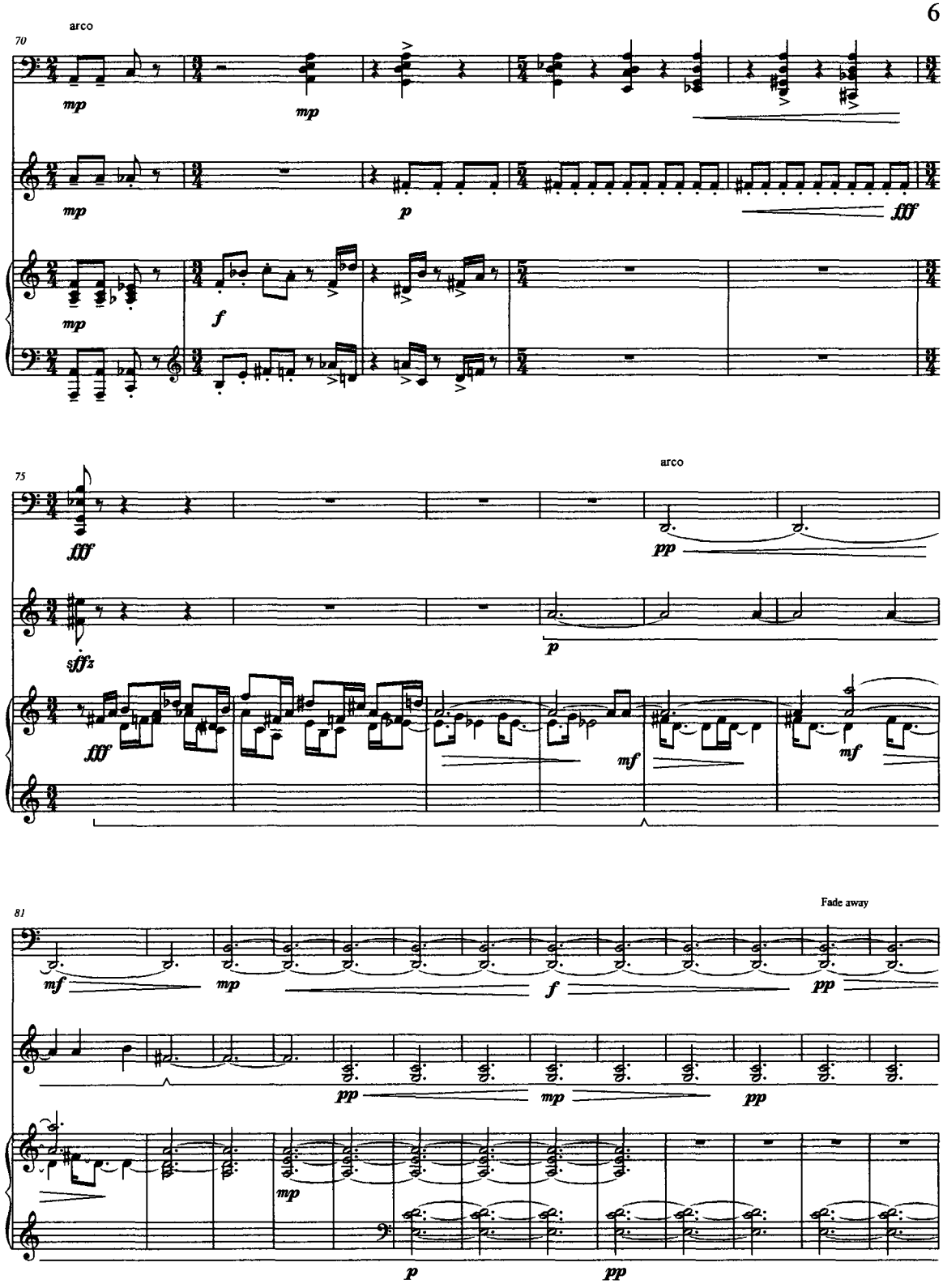

13
19
pizz.
8va
26
arco

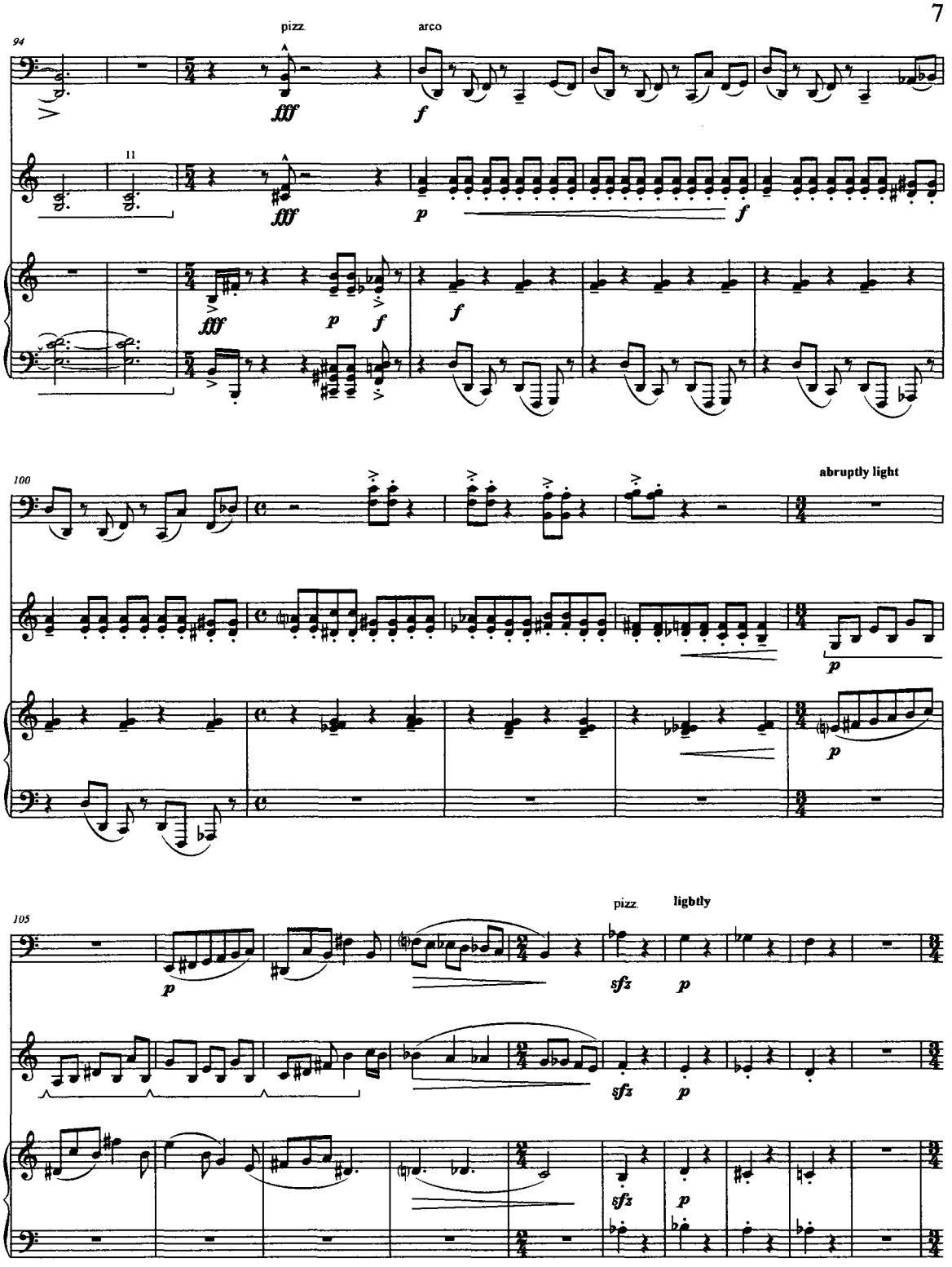

33
mf
f
f
mf
mf

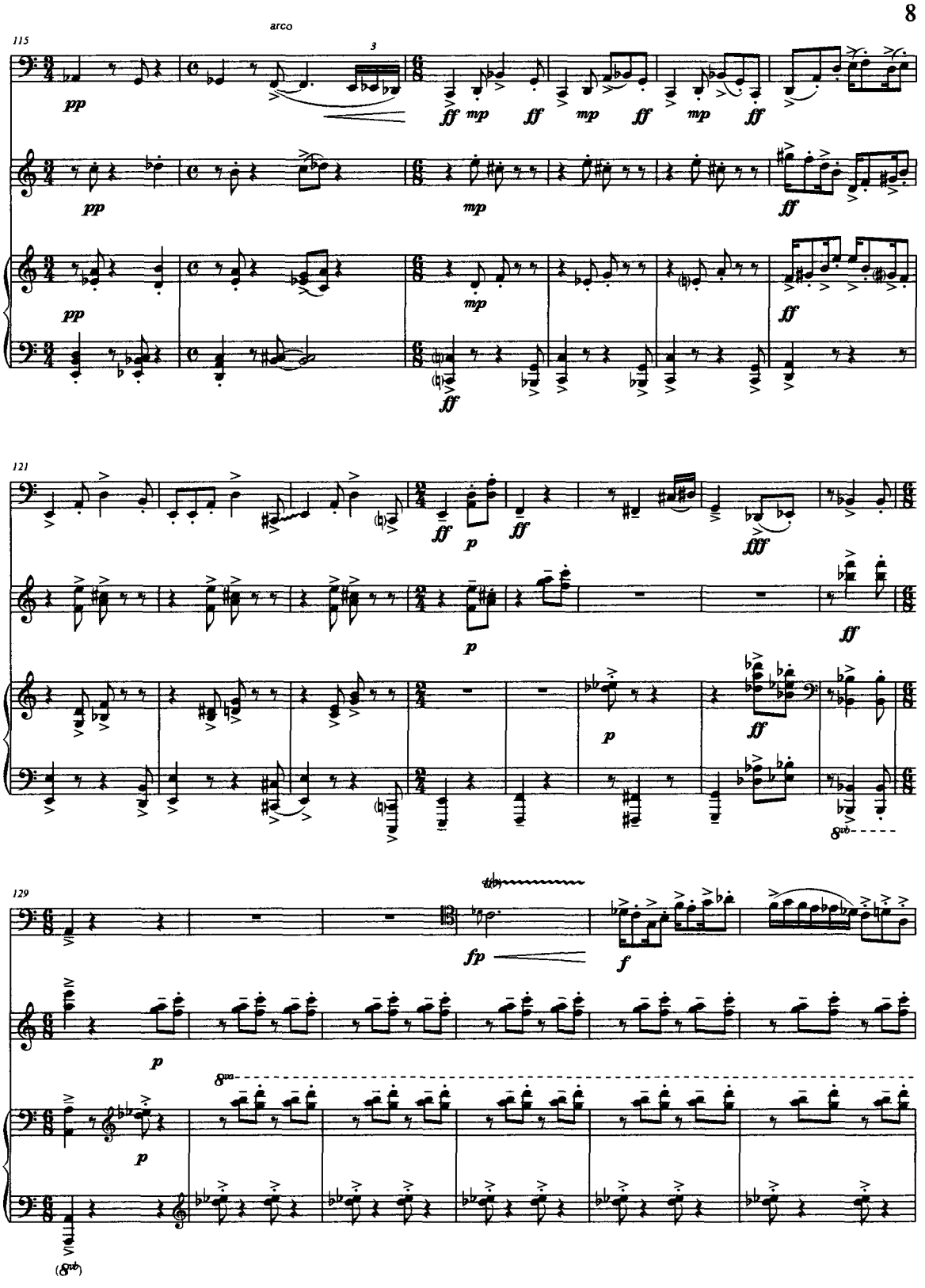

40
Proudly

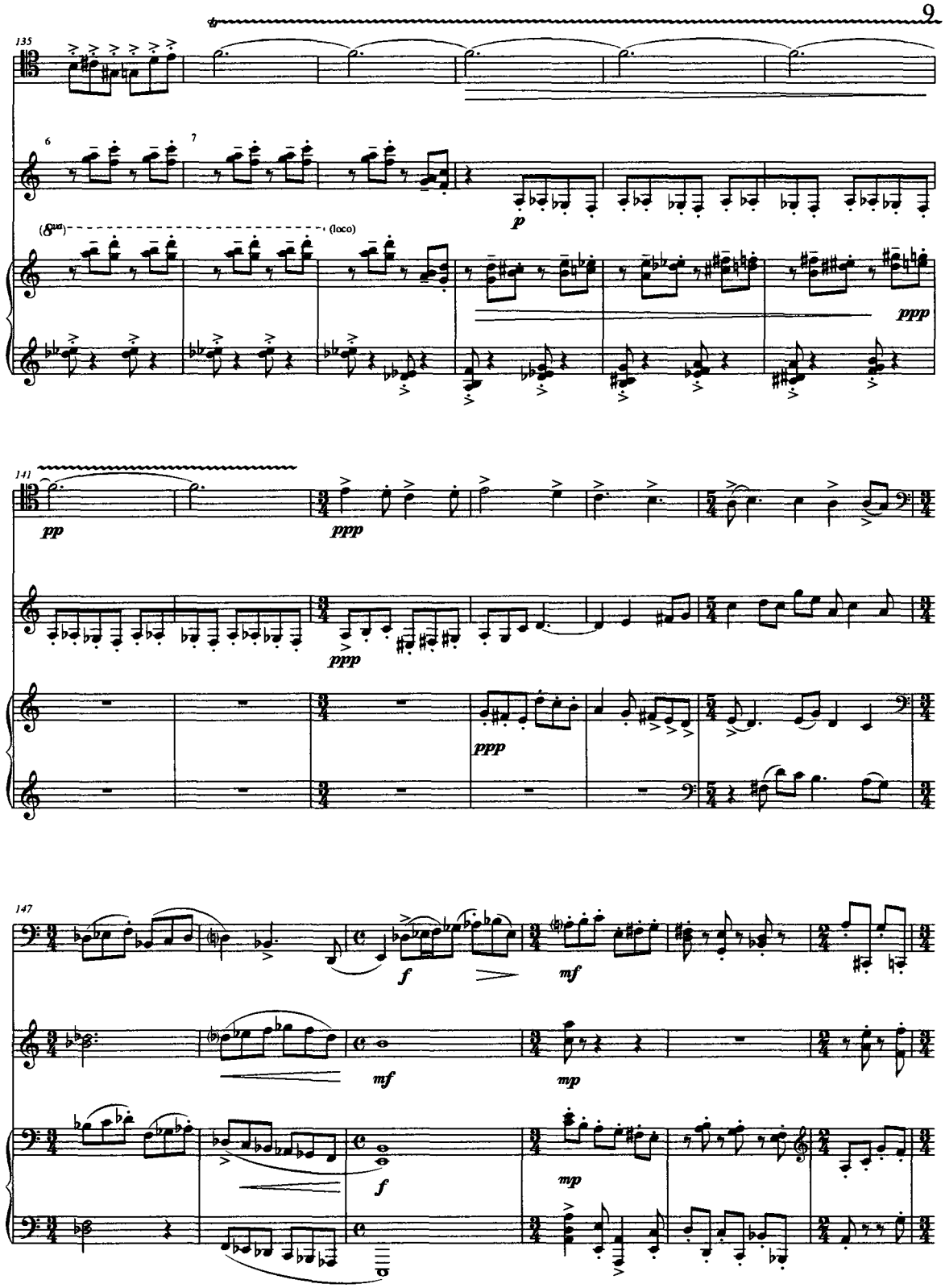

47
Sweetly
mf
mf
mf

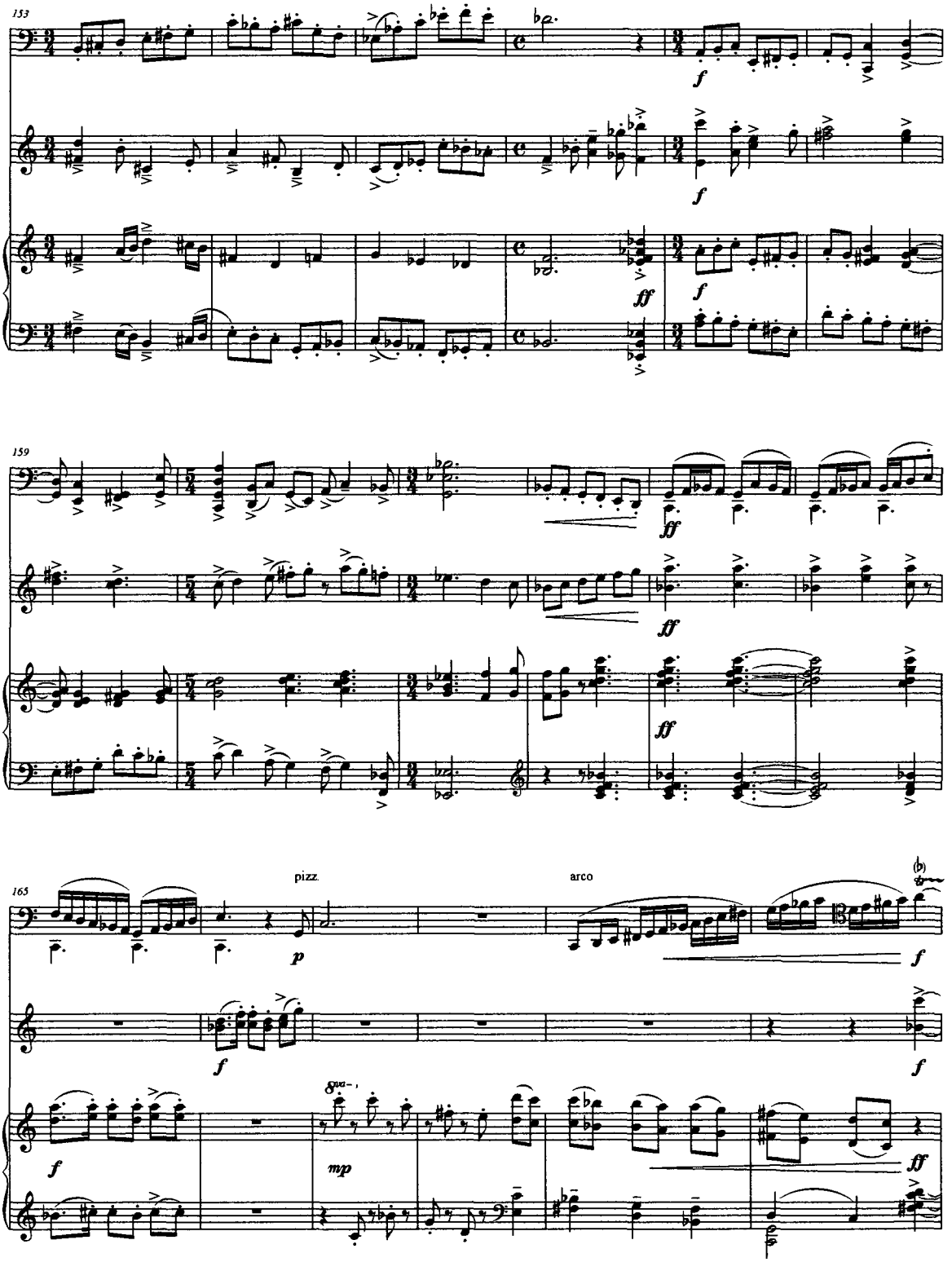

54
p
f
f
f
60
mp
mf
mp
ppp
f
p
f
mf
64
pizz.
f
p
p
f
p

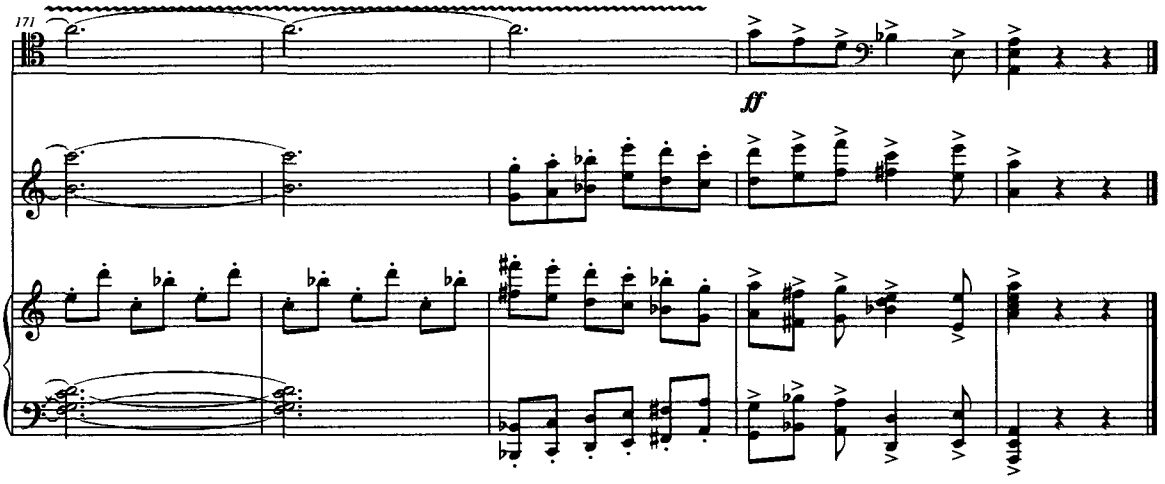

arco
70
mp
mp
mp
p
fff
mp
f
75
fff
sffz
arco
pp
p
fff
mf
mf
81
Fade away
mf
mp
f
pp
pp
mp
pp
mp
p
pp


94
pizz.
arco
fff
f
11
fff
p
f
fff
p
f
f
100
abruptly light
p
p
105
p
pizz.
ligbtly
sfz
p
sfz
p
sfz
p

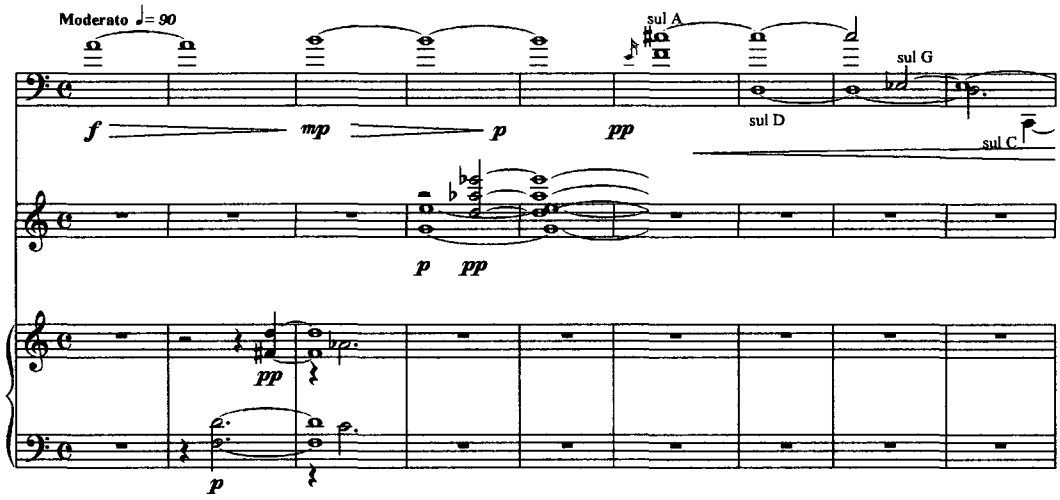

arco
115
121
129

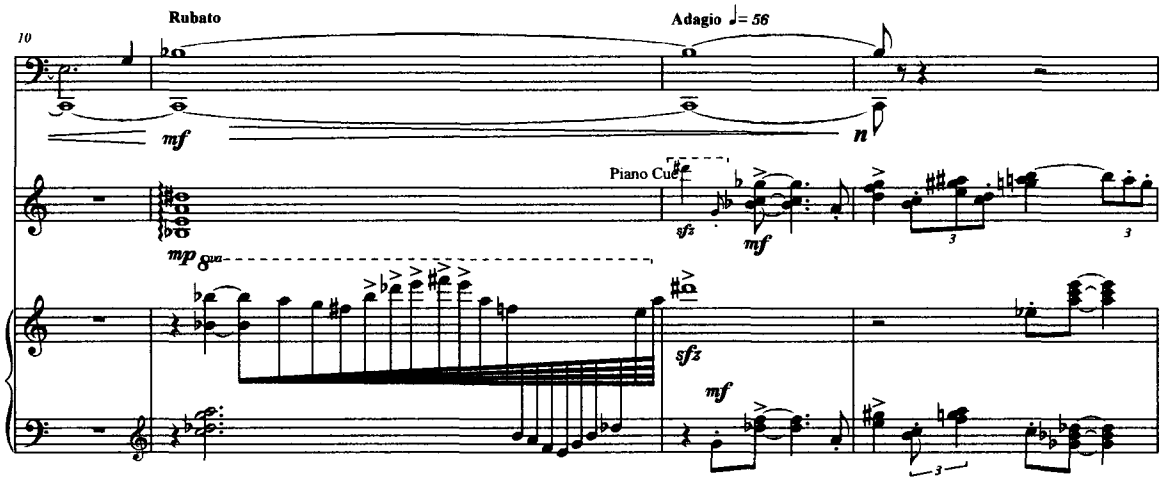

135
6
7
(8va)
(loco)
p
ppp
141
pp
ppp
ppp
ppp
147
f
mf
mf
mp
f
mp

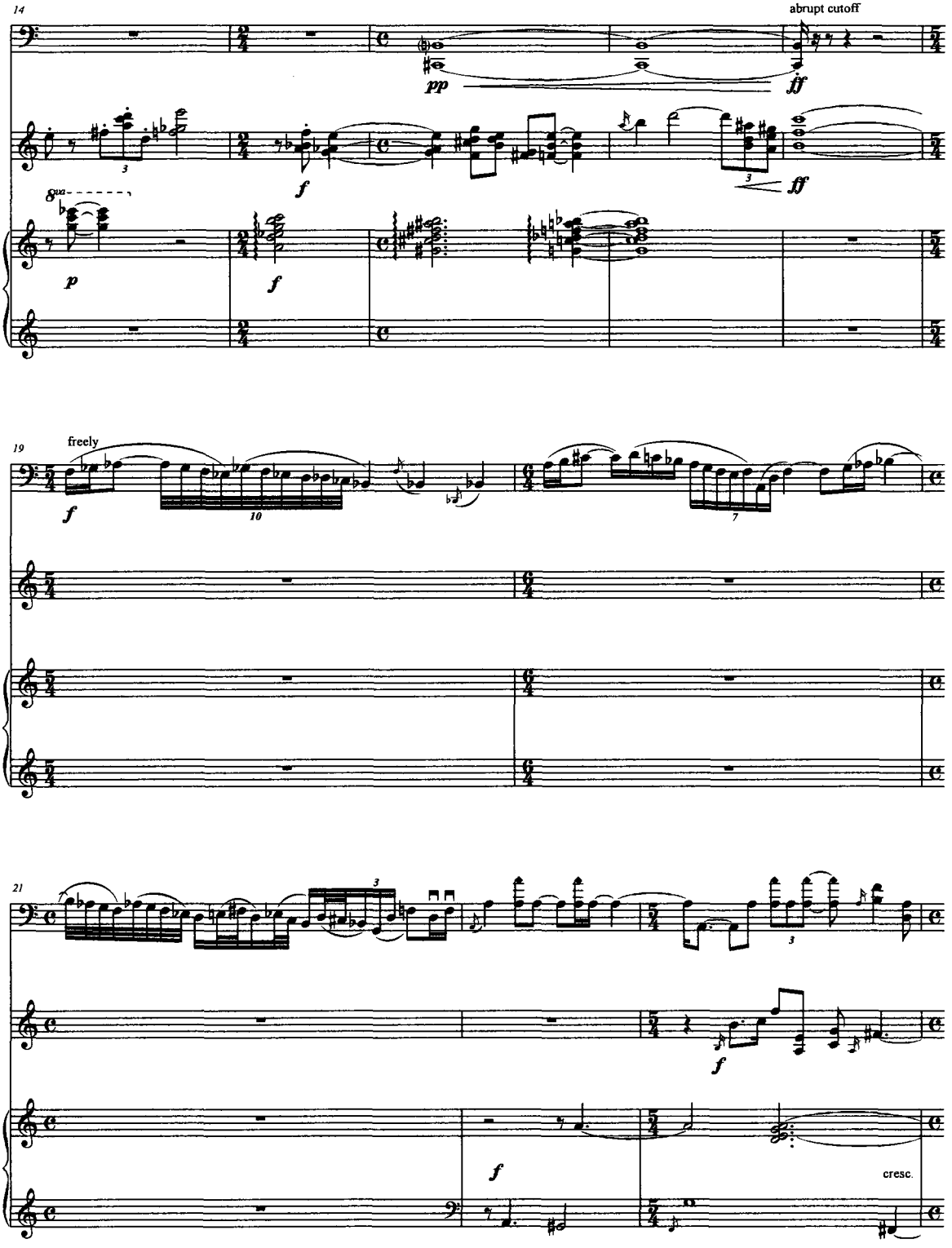

153
159
165
pizz.
arco

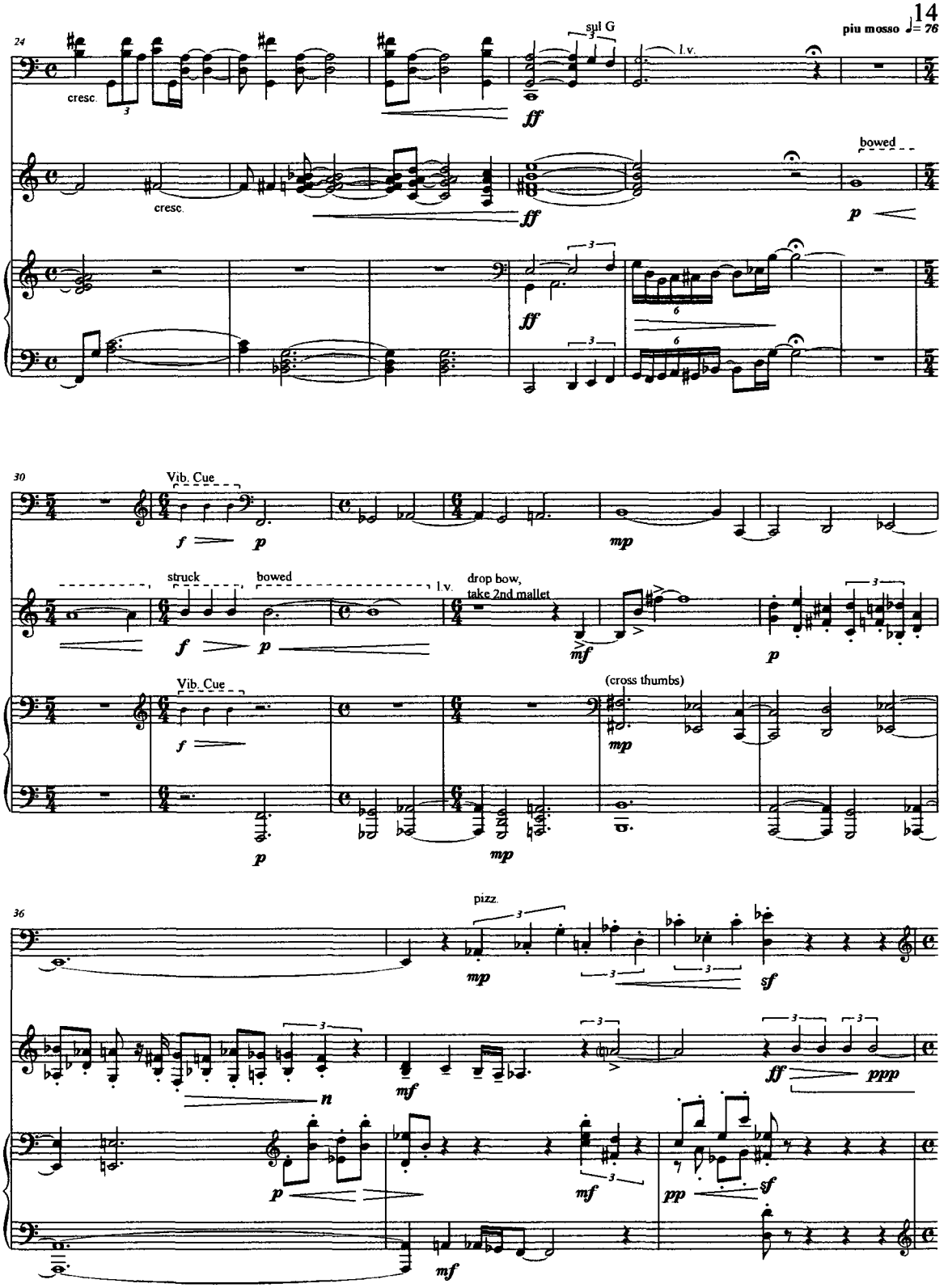

171
ff

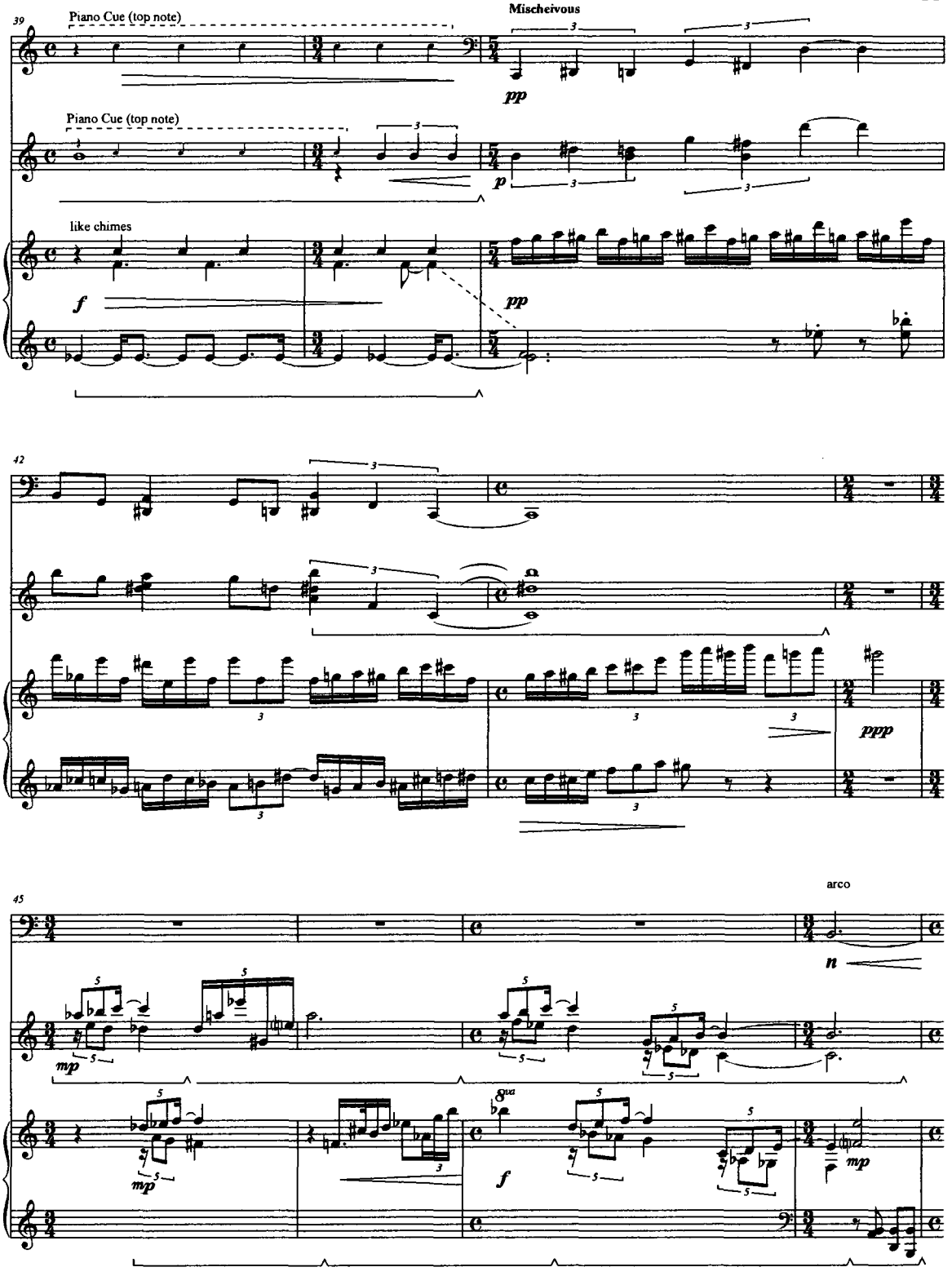
II. Crystal Cavern

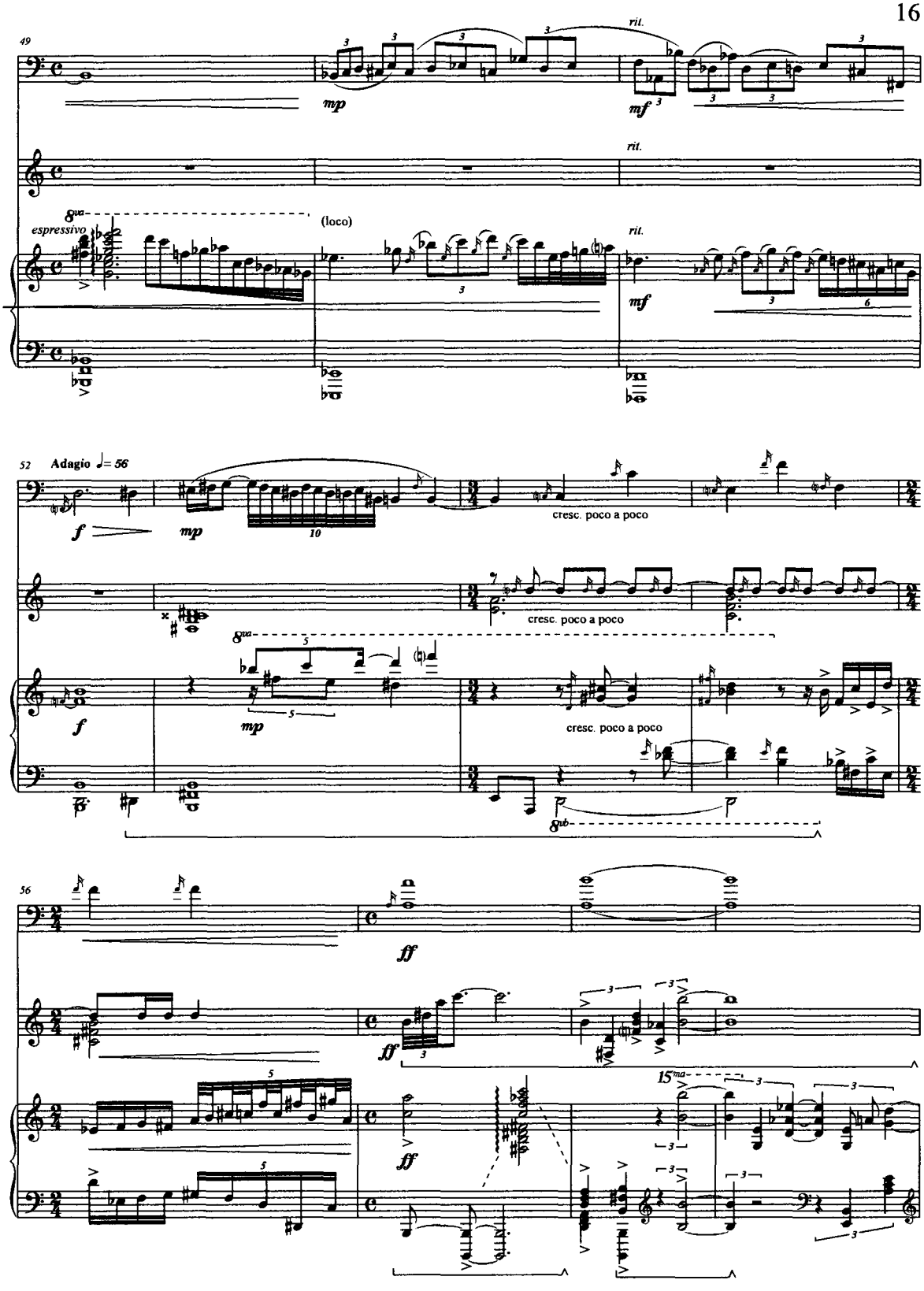


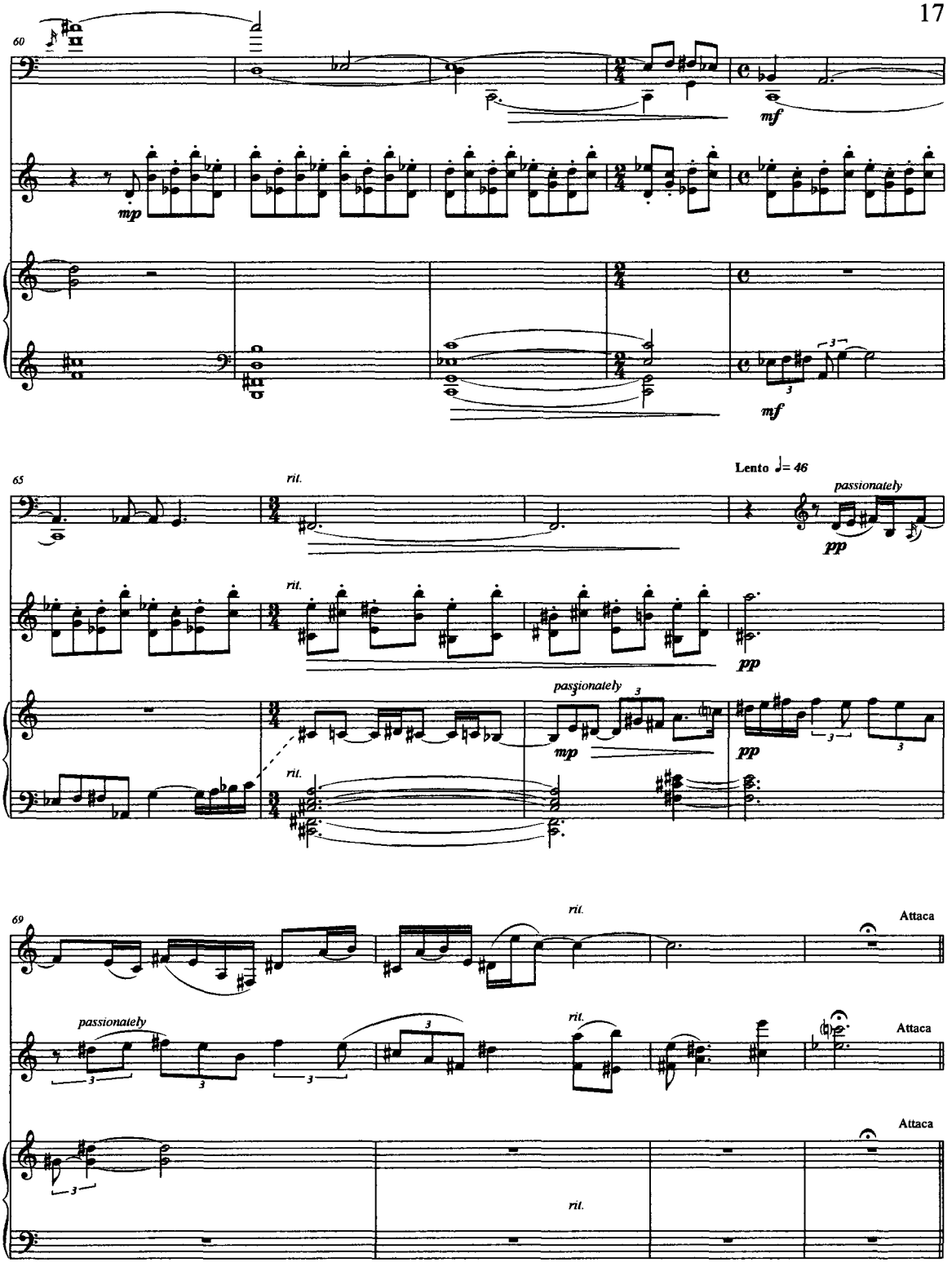



14
abrupt cutoff
pp
ff
f
ff
8va
p
f
19
freely
f
10
7
21
f
f
cresc.

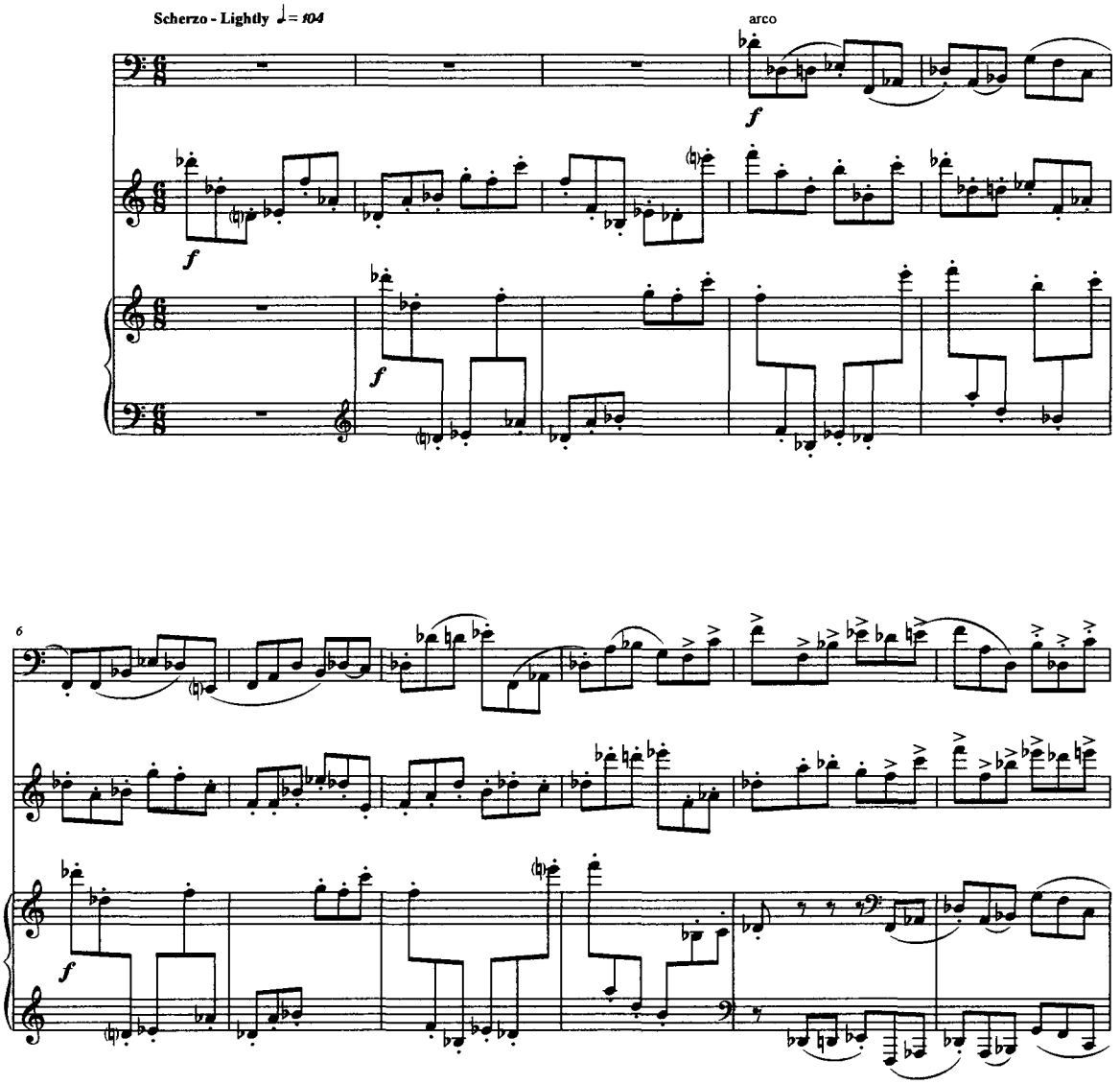

24
piu mosso ♩= 76
cresc.
sul G
l.v.
ff
bowed
p
30
Vib. Cue
f
p
mp
struck
bowed
drop bow,
take 2nd mallet
mf
(cross thumbs)
36
pizz.
sf
ppp
pp
n

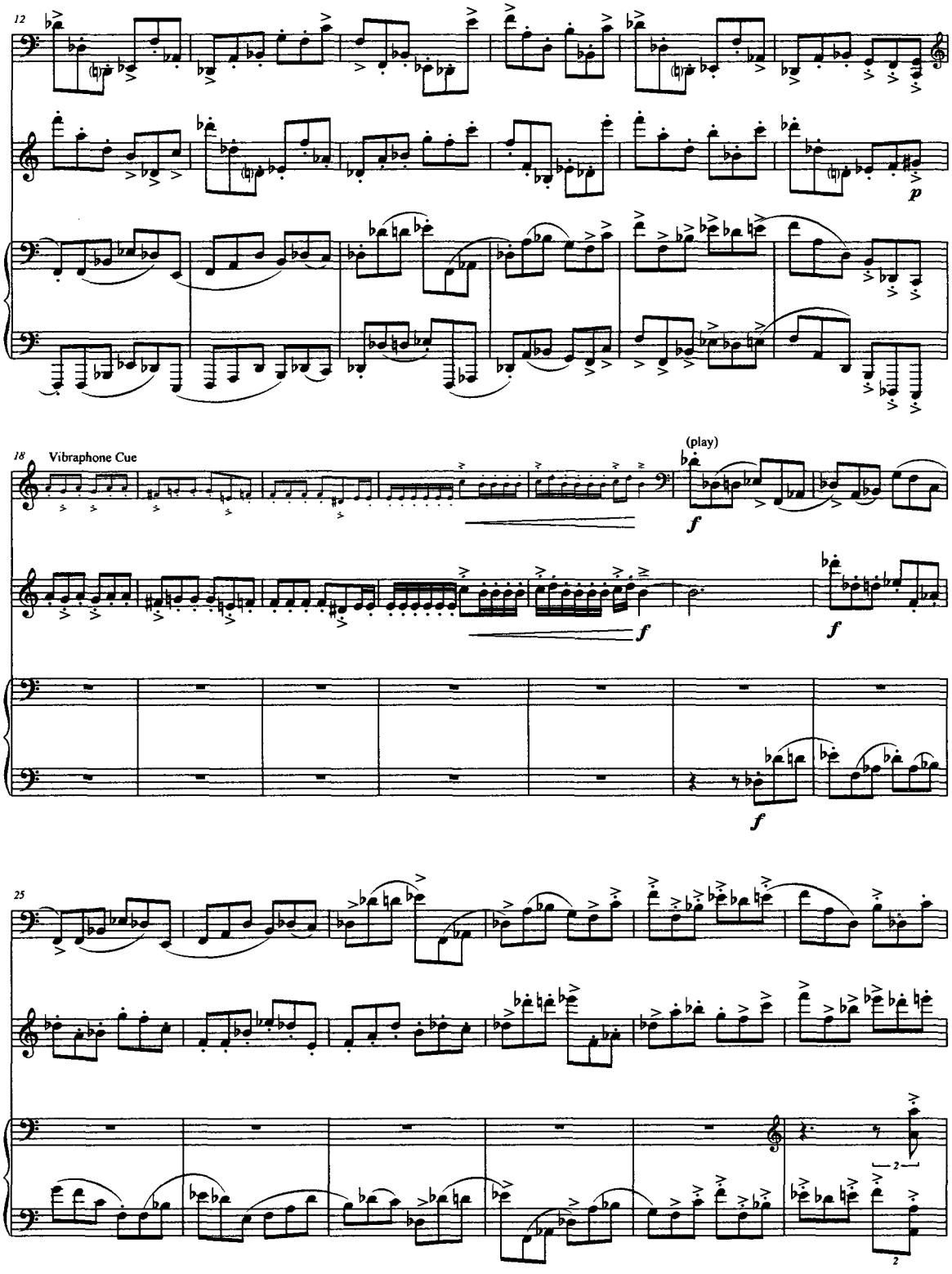

39
Piano Cue (top note)
Mischeivous
pp
Piano Cue (top note)
p
like chimes
f
pp
42
ppp
45
arco
n
mp
mp
8va
f
mp

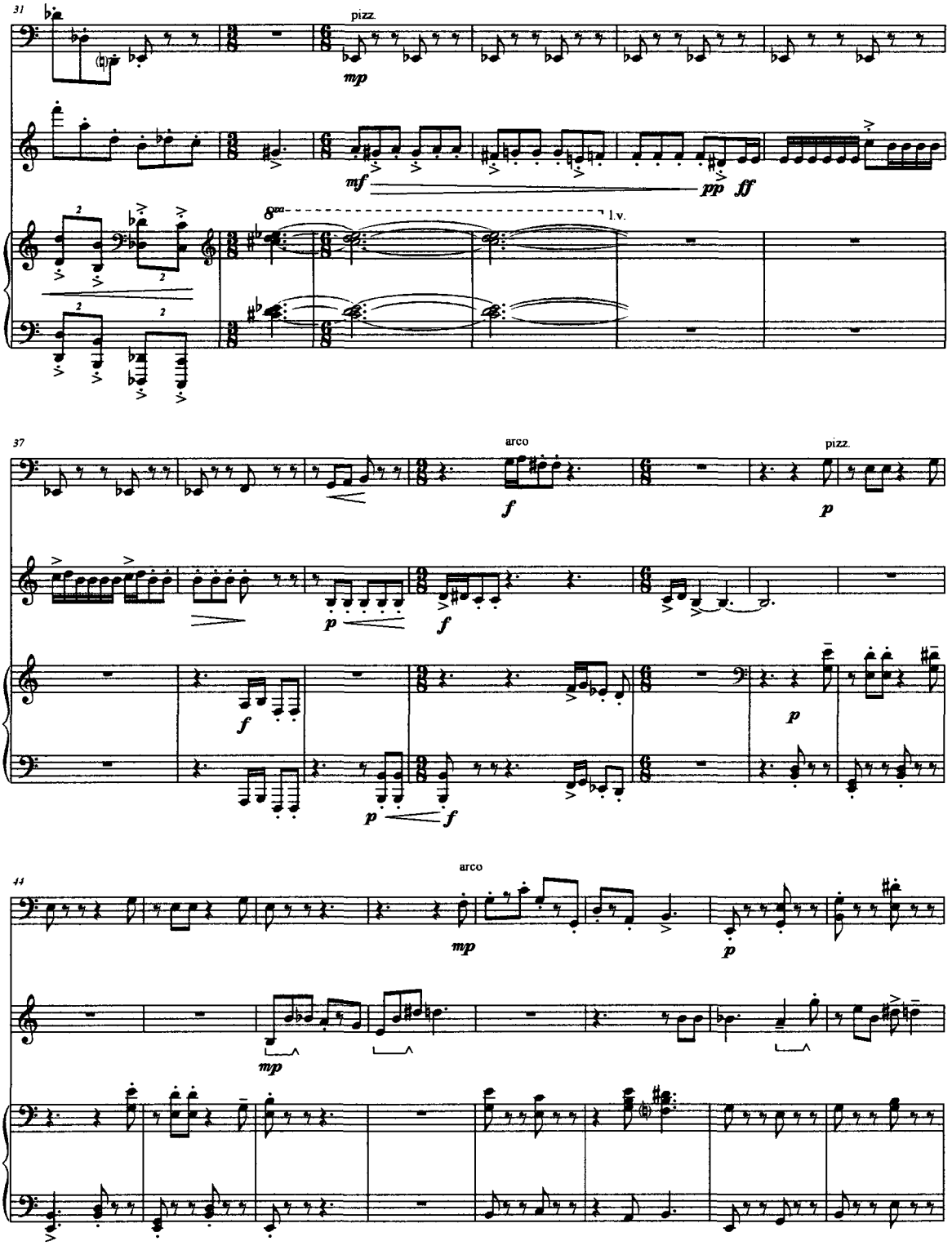

49
rit.
mp
mf
rit.
8va
espressivo
(loco)
rit.
mf
52
Adagio ♩= 56
f
mp
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
8va
f
mp
cresc. poco a poco
8vb
56
ff
ff
15ma
ff

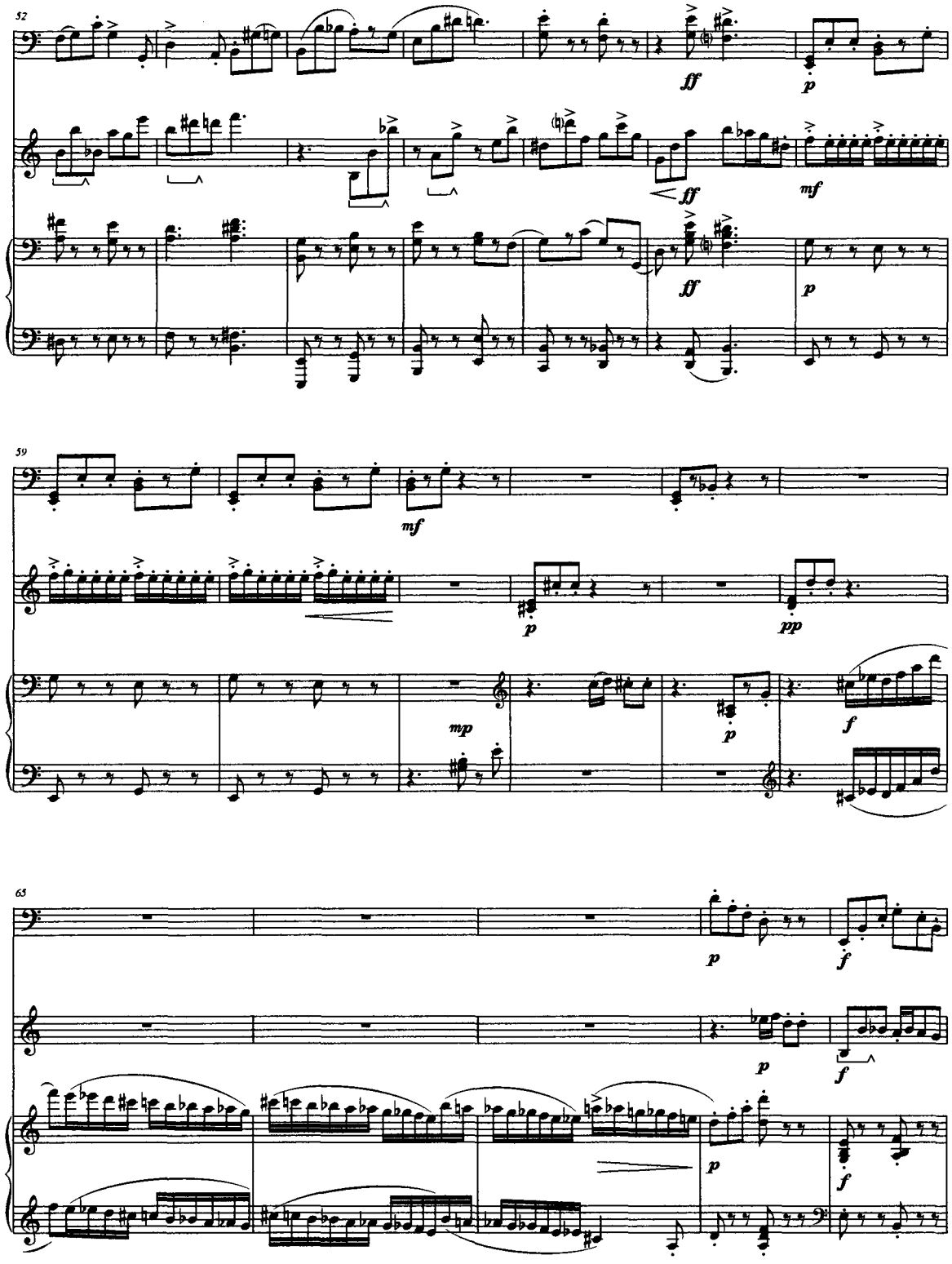

60
mp
mf
mf
65
rit.
Lento ♩= 46
passionately
pp
rit.
pp
passionately
mp
pp
rit.
69
rit.
Attaca
passionately
rit.
Attaca
Attaca
rit.

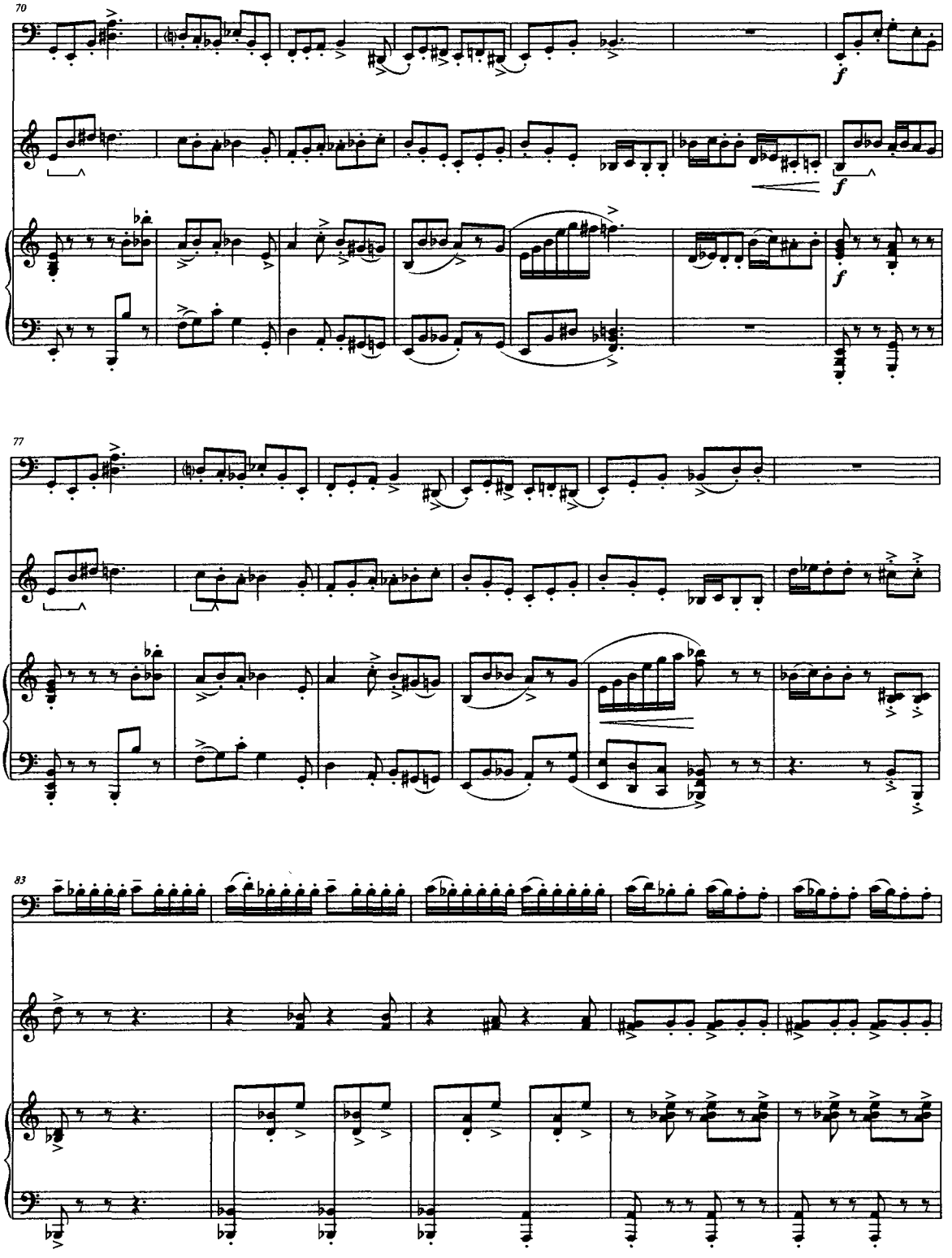
III. Spiral Factory

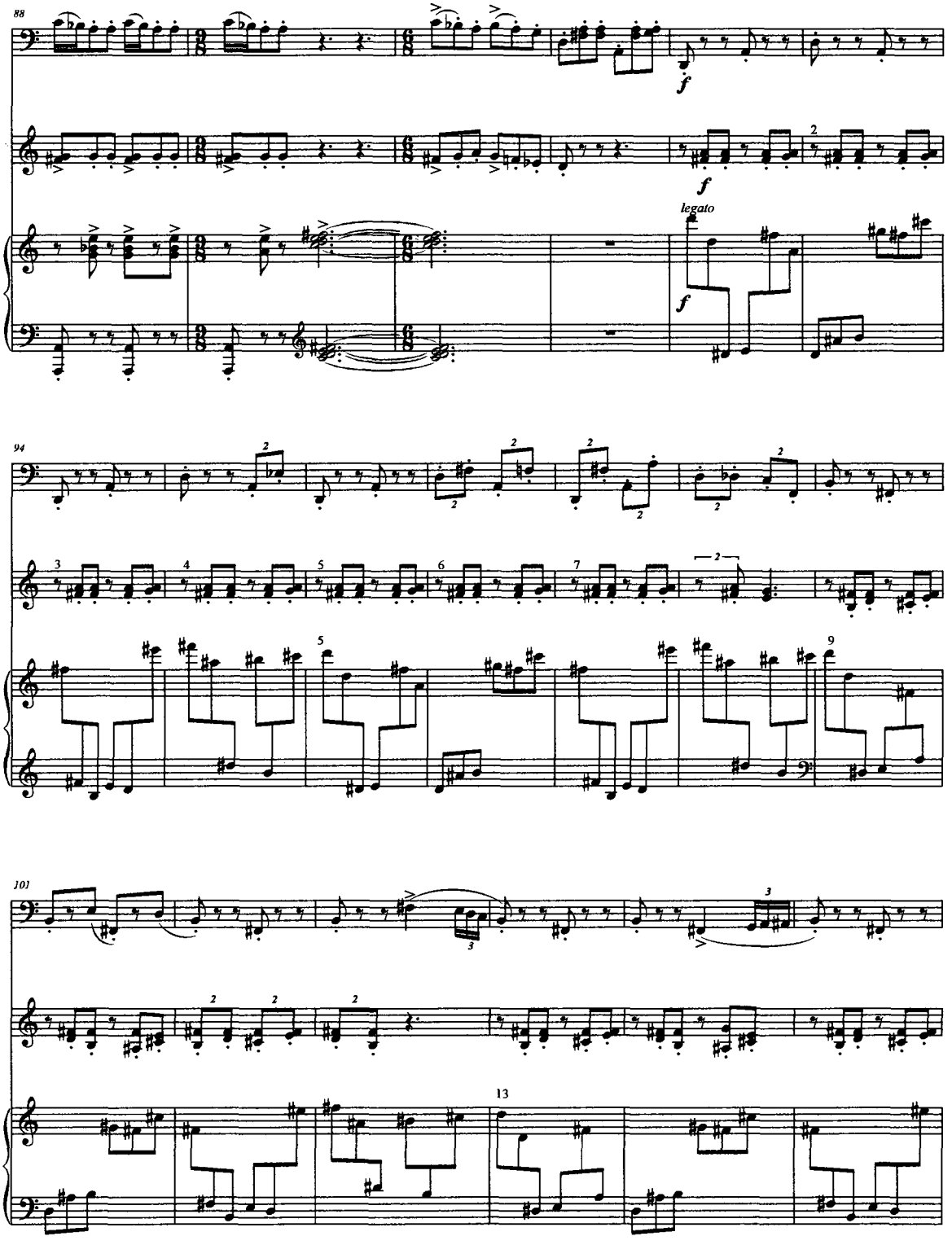


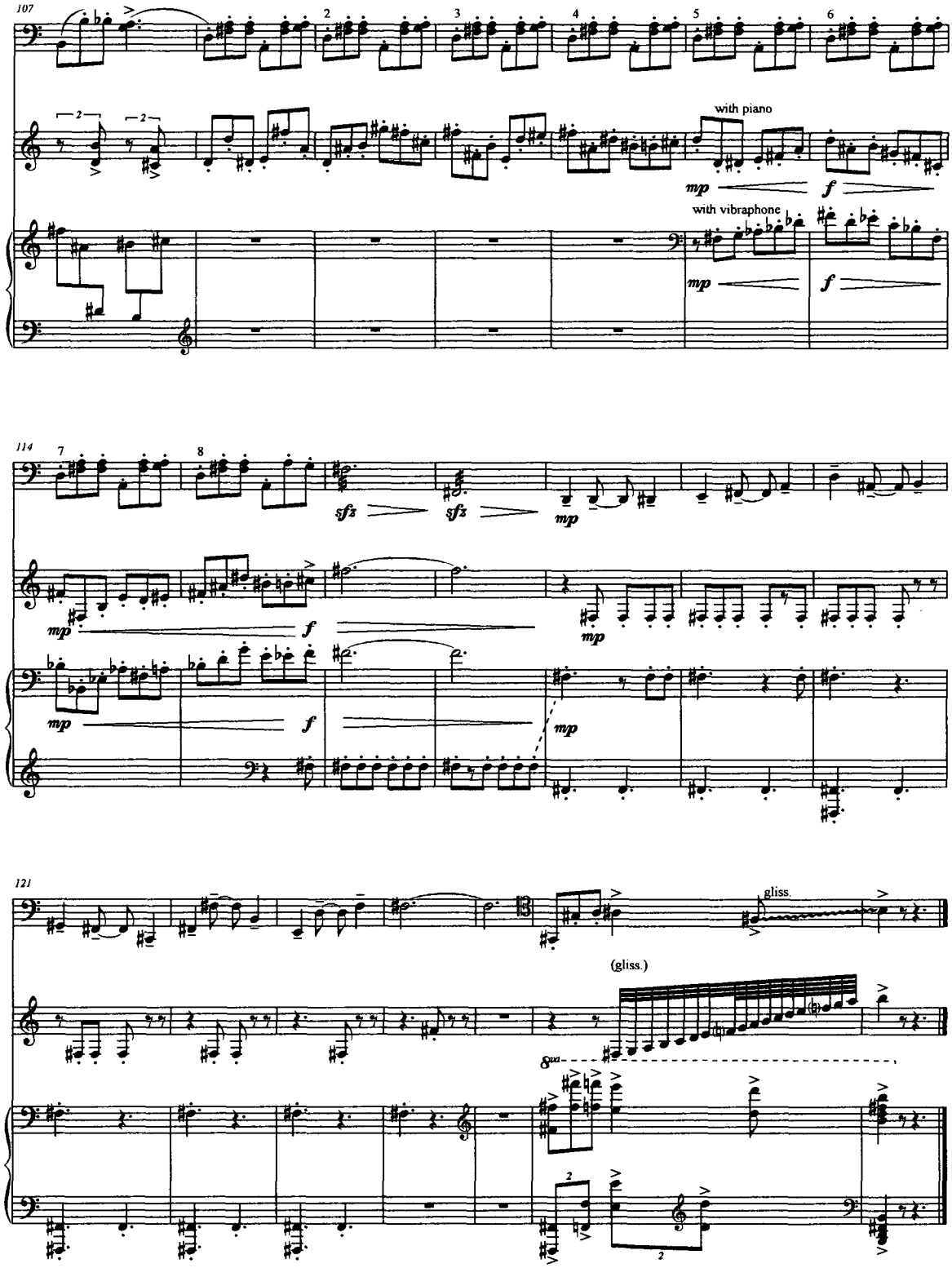

12
p
18
Vibraphone Cue
(play)
f
f
f
f
25


31
pizz.
mp
mf
pp
ff
8va
l.v.
37
arco
f
pizz.
p
44
arco
mp
p

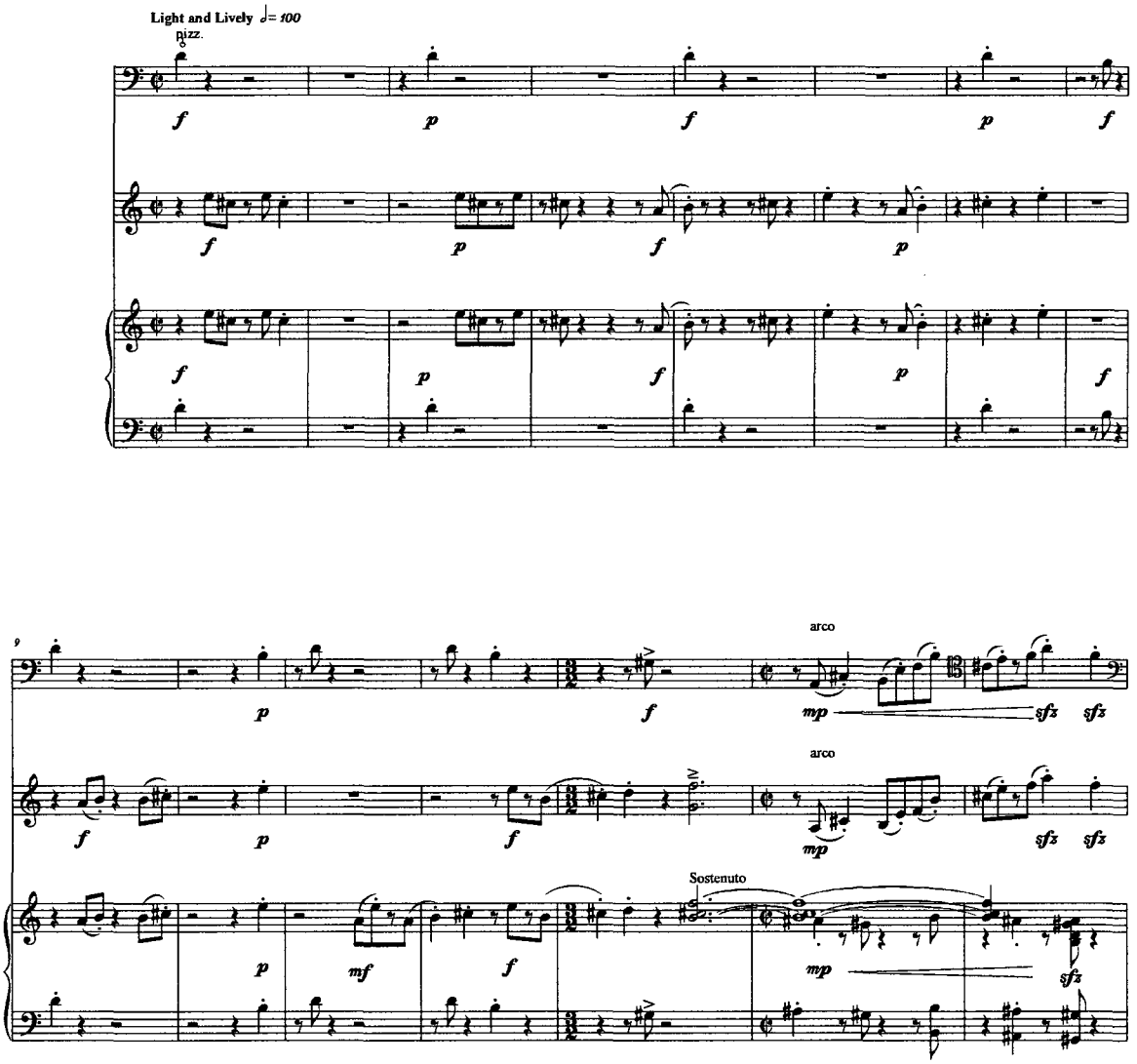

52
ff
p
ff
mf
ff
p
59
mf
p
pp
mp
p
f
65
p
f
p
f
p
f

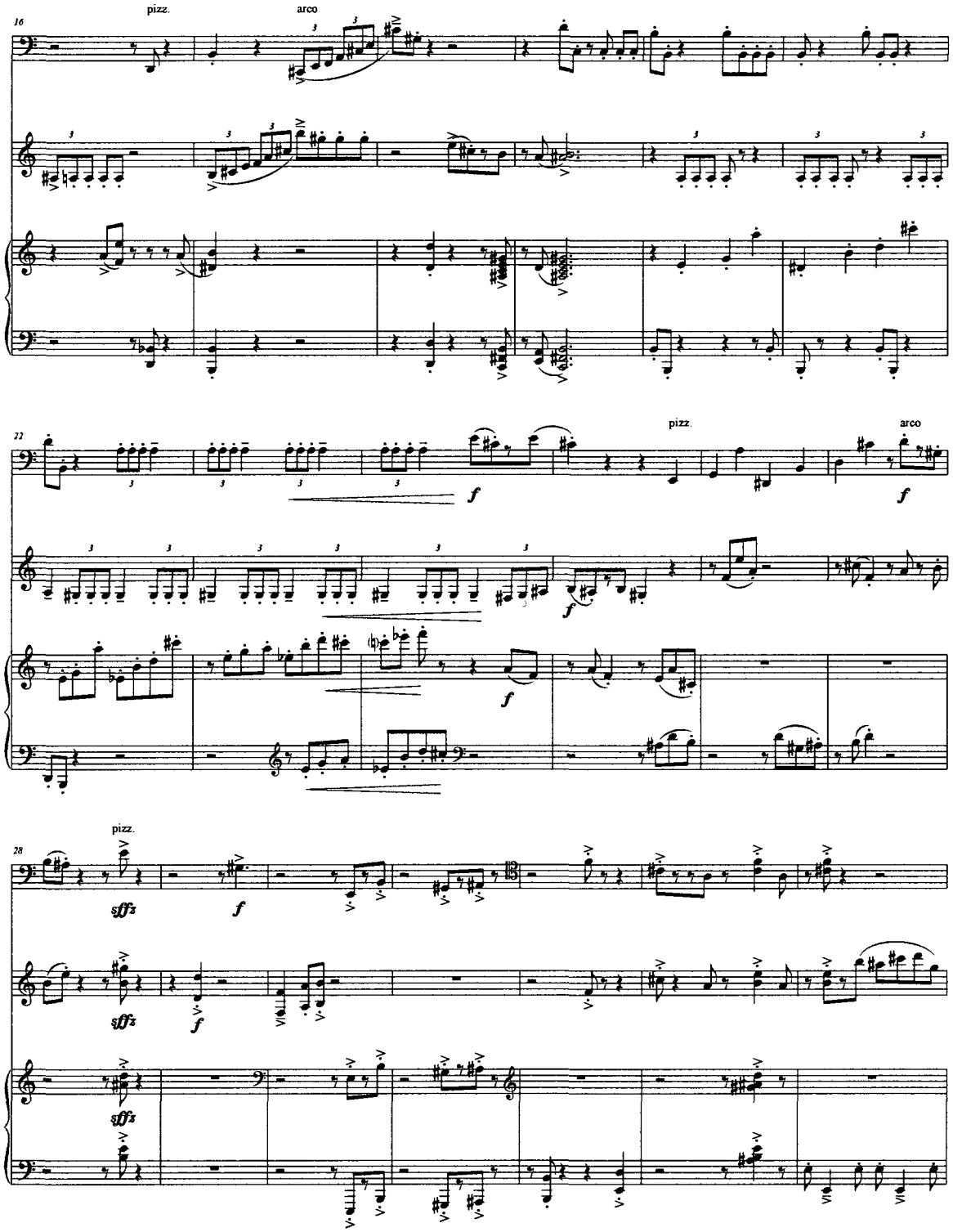

70
f
f
f
77
83

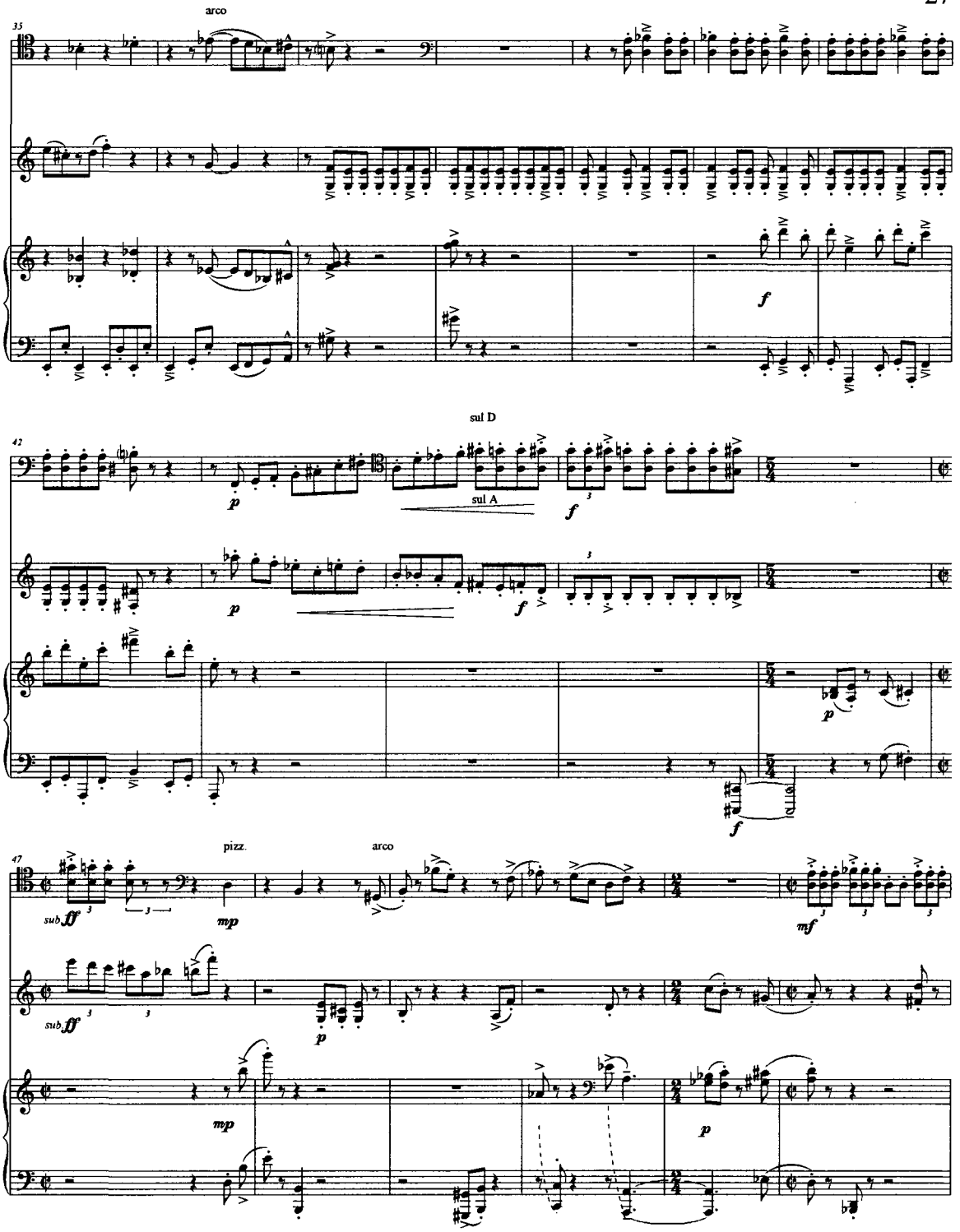

88
f
f
legato
f
94
101
13

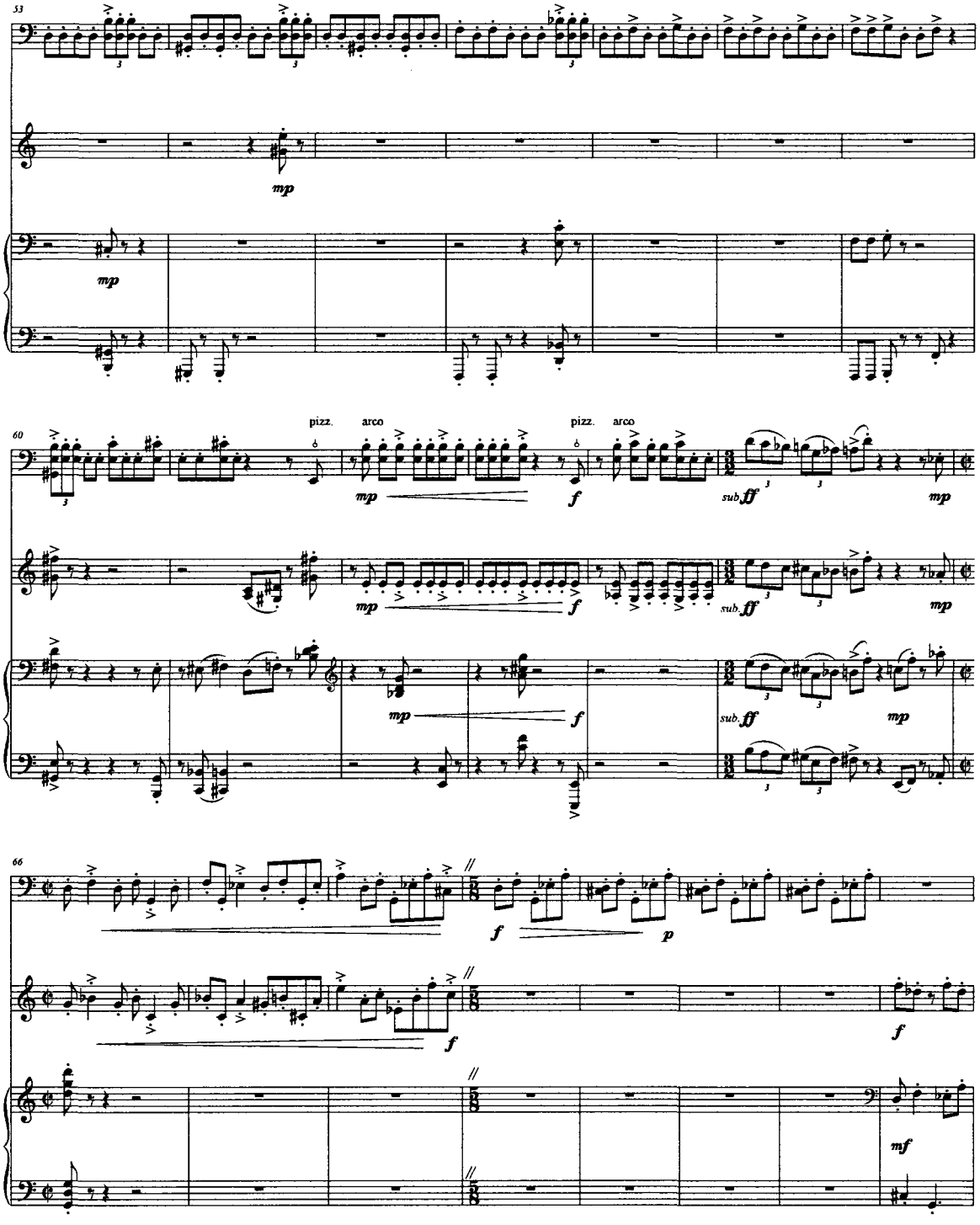

107
2
3
4
5
6
with piano
mp
f
with vibraphone
mp
f
114
7
8
sfz
sfz
mp
mp
f
mp
f
mp
121
gliss.
(gliss.)
8va

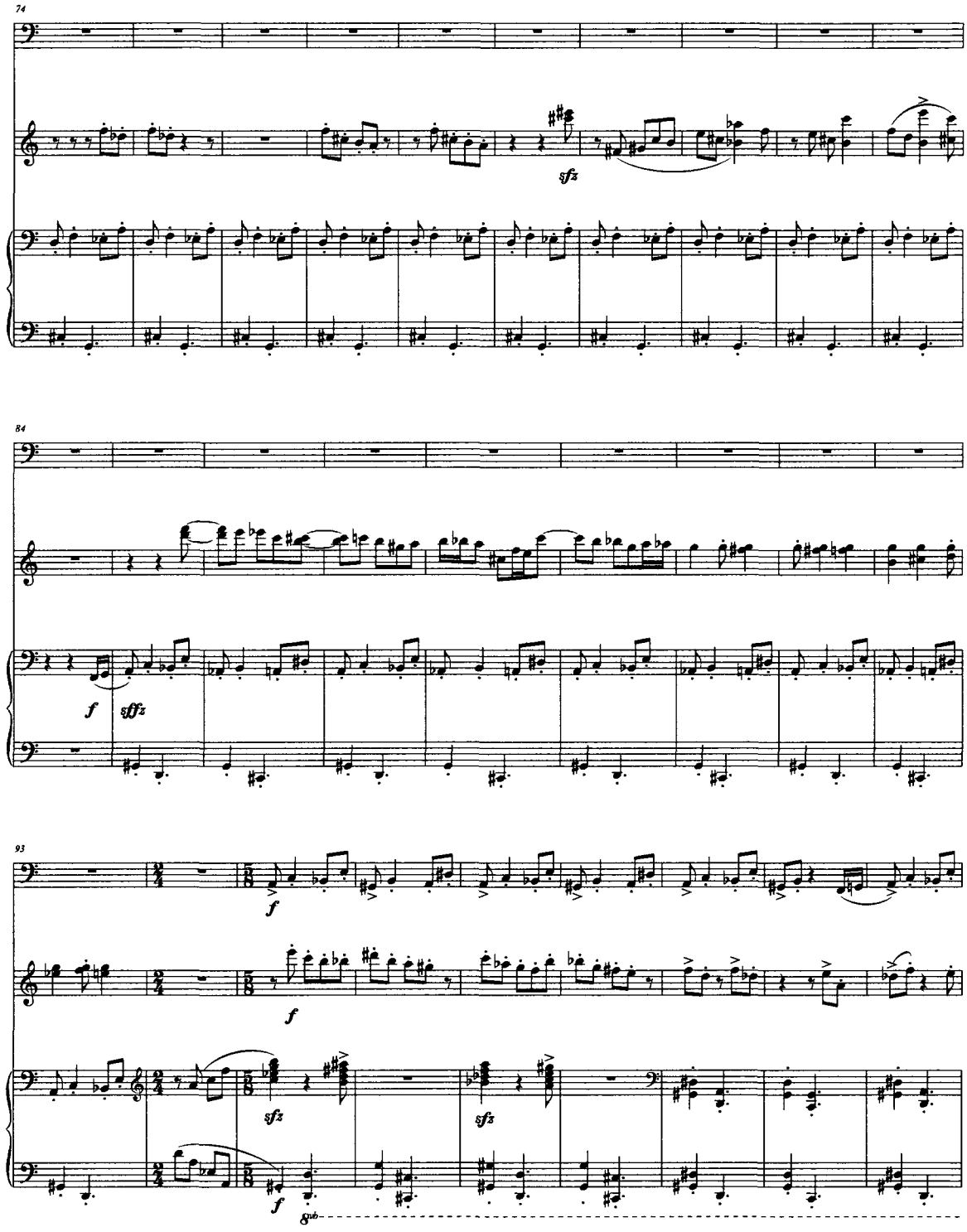
IV. Crackpot's Creation

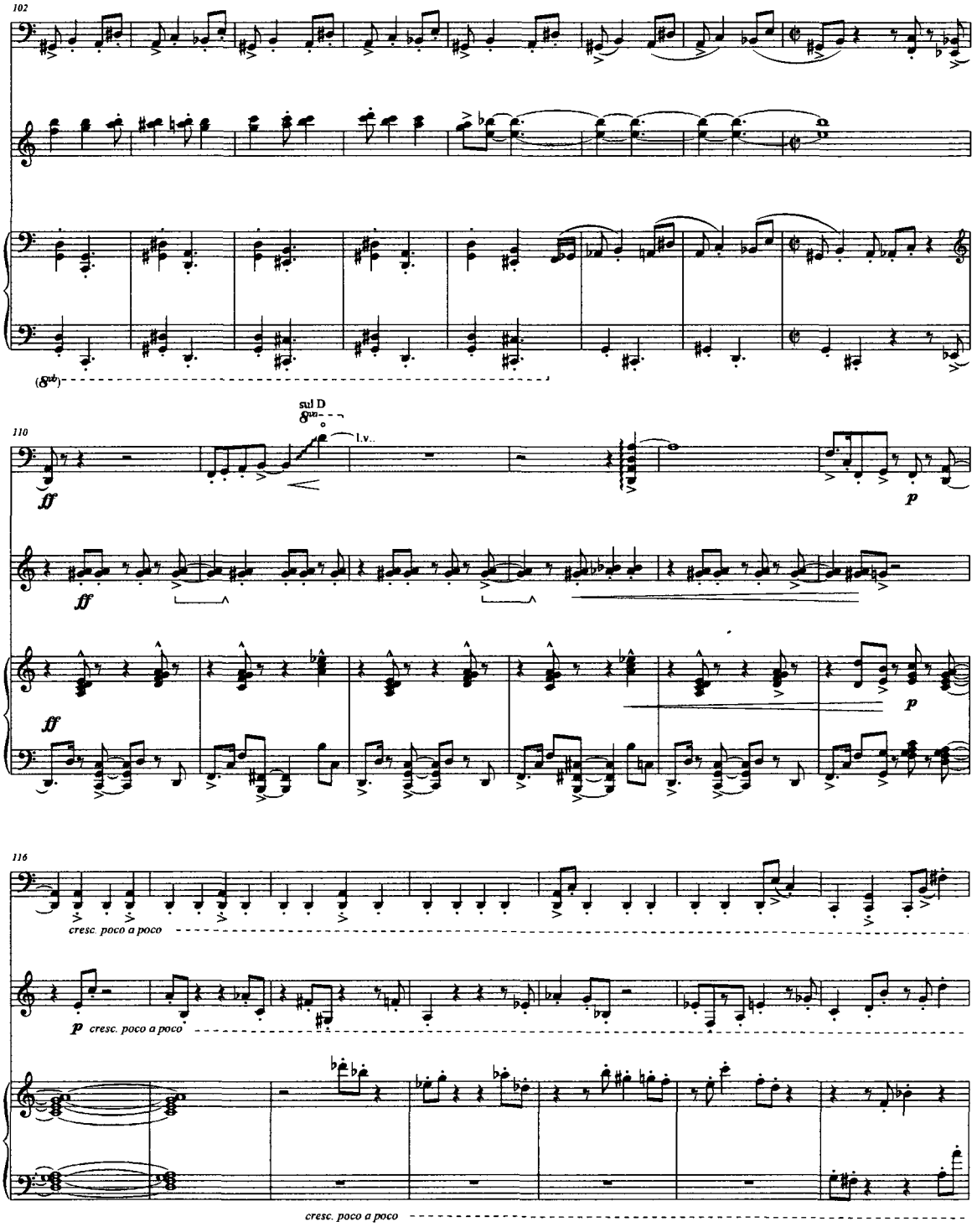


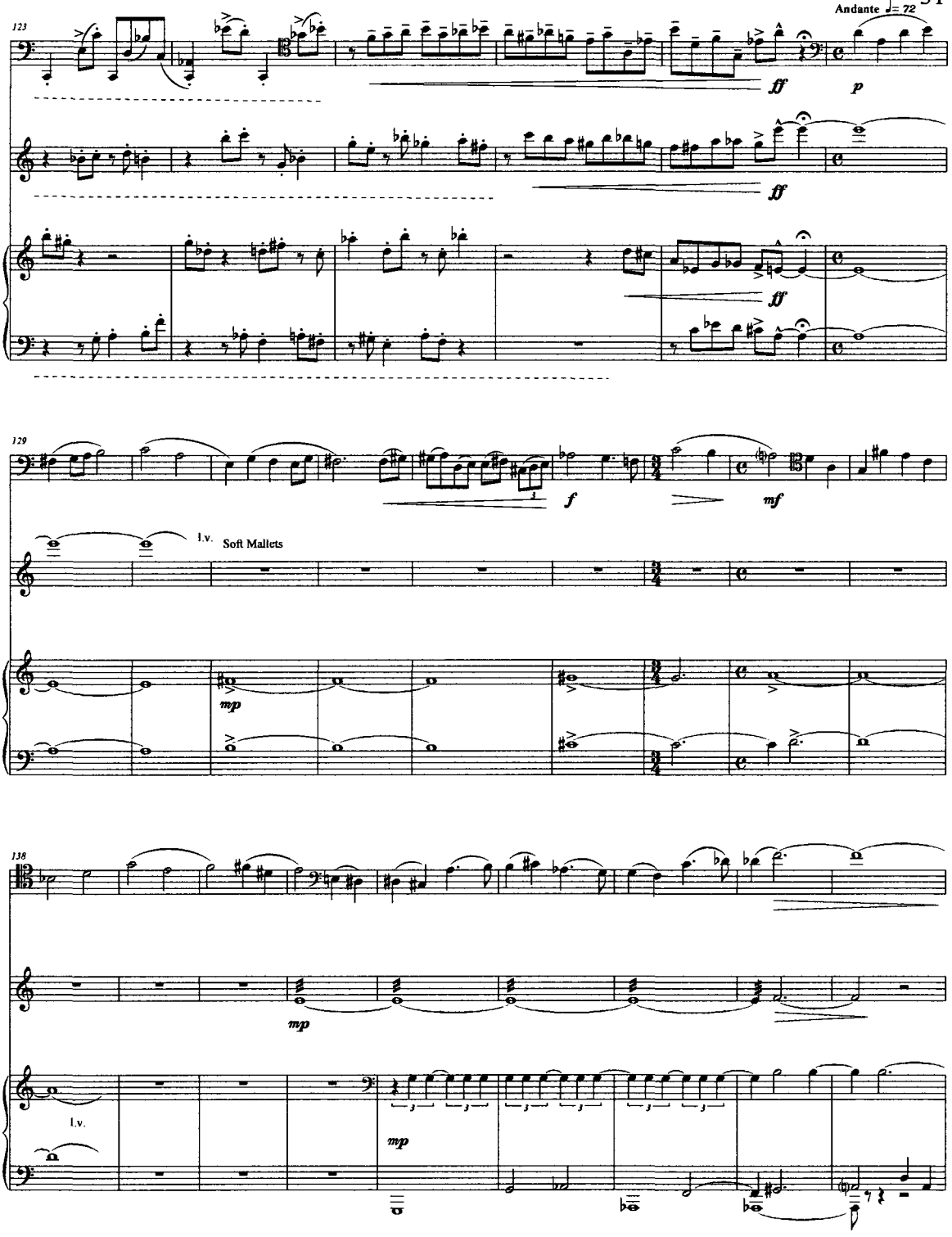

16
pizz.
arco
22
f
pizz.
arco
f
28
pizz.
sffz
f

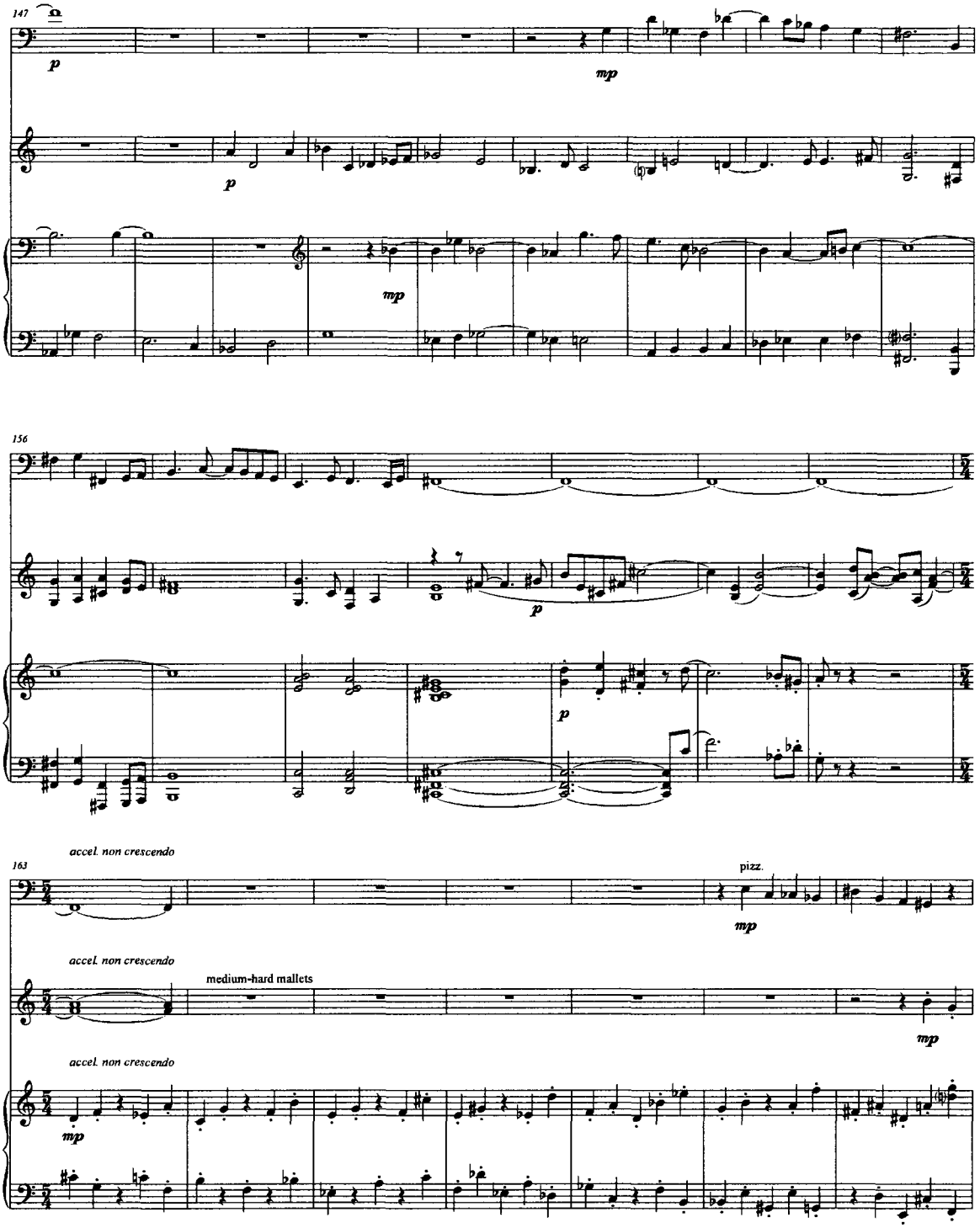

35
arco
f
42
sul D
sul A
p
f
47
pizz.
arco
sub ff
mp
mf
p

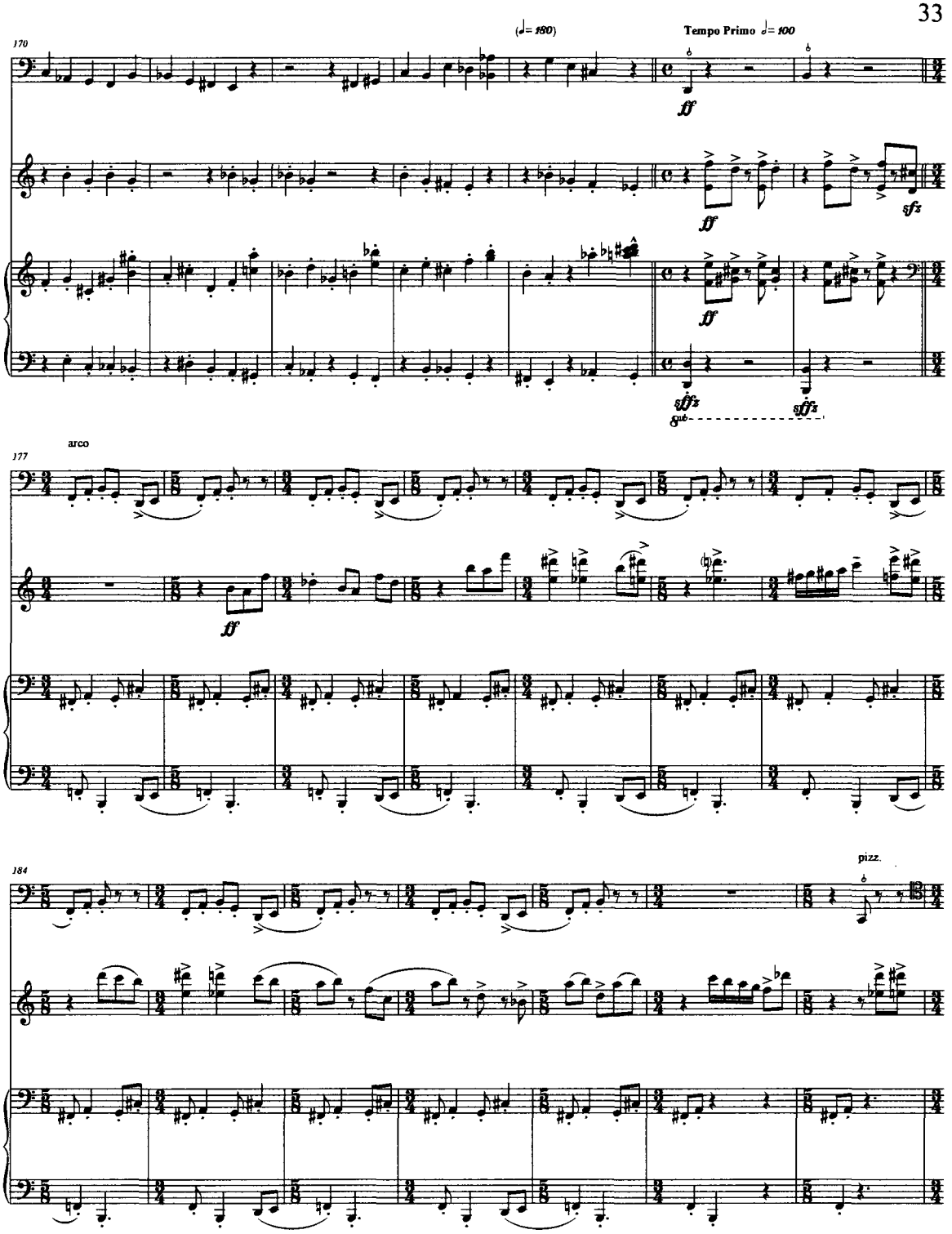

53
mp
mp
60
pizz.
arco
mp
f
pizz.
arco
sub.ff
mp
mp
f
sub.ff
mp
mp
f
sub.ff
mp
66
f
p
f
f
mf

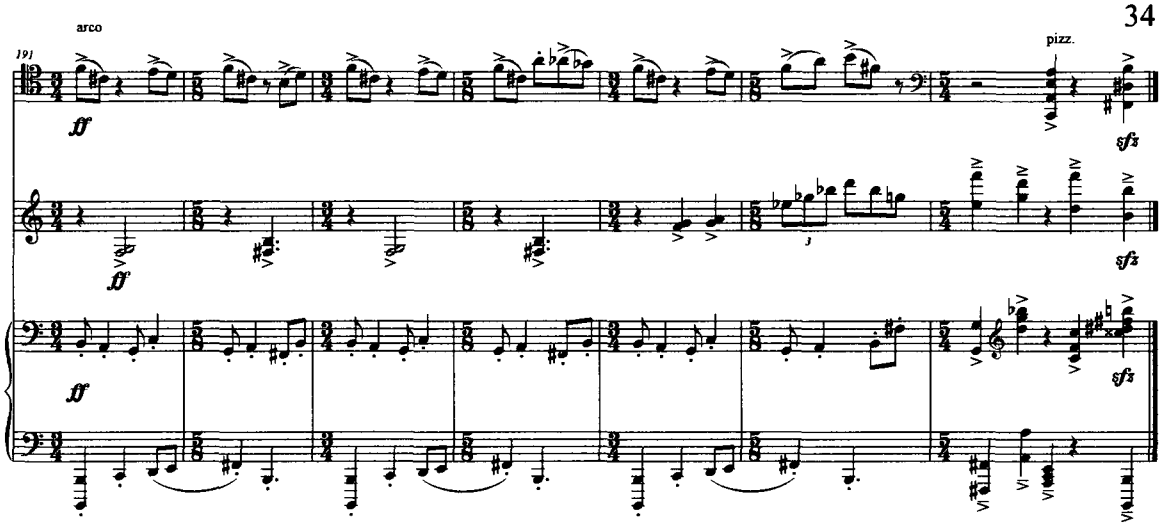

74
sfz
84
f
sffz
93
f
f
sfz
sfz
f
8vb


102
(8va)
110
sul D
l.v.
ff
p
116
cresc. poco a poco
p cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco


Andante ♩= 72
123
ff
p
ff
ff
129
f
mf
l.v.
Soft Mallets
mp
138
mp
l.v.
mp


147
p
mp
p
mp
156
p
p
163
accel. non crescendo
pizz.
mp
accel. non crescendo
medium-hard mallets
mp
accel. non crescendo
mp


170
(♩= 180)
Tempo Primo ♩= 100
ff
ff
sfz
ff
sffz
8va
sffz
177
arco
ff
184
pizz.


191
arco
pizz.
ff
sfz