Timothy Roy

Southern Specter

for flute, violin, viola, cello, and piano + video

Original video art by Richard Johnson

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2017 – 2018

Program Note

One of the most striking and defining visuals of the United States Deep South is that of the southern live oak tree (*Quercus virginiana*) shrouded in Spanish moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*). A tangled and bluish-grey flowering plant, Spanish moss can be seen draped from the sprawling, gnarled branches of oaks throughout the region, hanging ghost-like across its swampy landscape. *Southern Specter* adopts this poetic image as its subject and is comprised of two different kinds of music. The first is both *representational* and *external*, in that it seeks to be a musical embodiment of a moss-covered tree, depicting the delicate moss swaying in a gentle breeze and the tree's appearance under various gradations of sunlight. The second kind of music is *expressive* and *internal*, seeking to convey the various thoughts and feelings one might have upon viewing such an image. Having grown up on the Gulf Coast of Texas, I could not help but channel my own emotional experiences which have ranged from serenity, solemnness, and nostalgia to gloom and ominousness.

Richard Johnson's accompanying film plays with analogous concerns on the visual front: perspective, representation versus abstraction, light and shadow, and ambiguity.

Special thanks to Jungle Gardens of Avery Island, Louisiana, for film footage and inspiration.

Instrumentation

Flute
Violin
Viola
Cello
Piano

Performance Notes

Measures without meter (*senza misura*) are designated by **X** in place of a traditional time signature. The approximate duration of measure (or span of time) is indicated with a bracket and length in seconds. The placement of each event within the horizontal space of the measure gives the approximate timing of the start of the event. Players must determine entrances based on each other's parts. Dashed lines indicate coordination between players.

Although *Senza misura* passages should feel free and out-of-time, there are moments within this freedom in which particular players must adhere to an indicated tempo. Enclosed metronome indications are *local*; i.e. each affects only the part to which it is applied. These are approximate but should be followed as closely as possible, as several parts will often have competing rates of speed simultaneously.

A thick black extender indicates that a note should be held until the extender terminates. An extender may also indicate the continuation of a gesture or group of gestures inside a box.

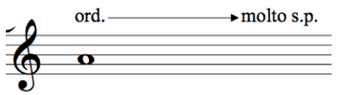
Material within repeat signs should be cycled through until indicated by the thick black extender.

Microtonal Accidentals

Arrows modify the given accidental by a ¼-tone in the direction of the arrow:

- 𝄫 ¾-tone flat (¼-tone lower than ♭)
- 𝄬 ¼-tone flat
- 𝄮 ¼-tone low
- 𝄯 ¼-tone high
- 𝄪 ¾-tone sharp (¼-tone higher than ♯)

All Instruments



gradually transition from one technique or playing method to another

Flute

Fluttertongue

aeolian tone — extremely breathy with only faint pitch
wind sound — no pitch, only the sound of air

Strings

s.p. — sul ponticello
s.t. — sul tasto
flautando (flaut.) — lighter-than-normal bow pressure, producing an unfocused sound

Piano

Ped.	sustain pedal
Sos. Ped.	sostenuto pedal

Video

Although ensembles are encouraged to present the video when performing the piece, the music certainly may be played without it. The video is not a fixed length but rather a series of shots which are cued during performance by a separate technician. The ensemble simply plays the piece and does not need to worry about coordinating with the visual; the technician follows the score and triggers cues as they come. Cueing is accomplished via a Max/MSP patch, available from the composer. It is not necessary to own a Max/MSP license to run the patch.

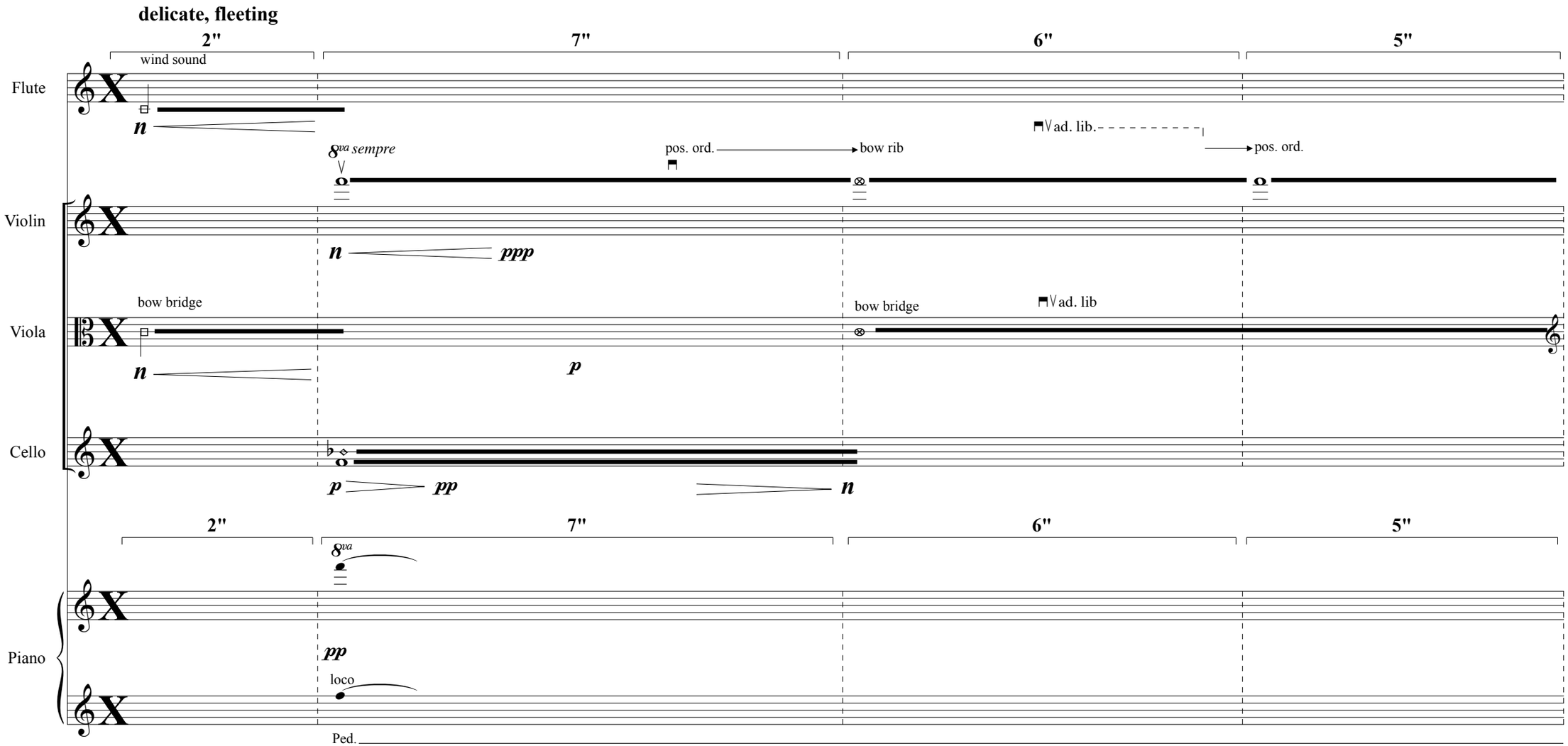
Score

Commissioned by Musiqa New Music Collective

Southern Specter

Timothy Roy

Video by Richard Johnson



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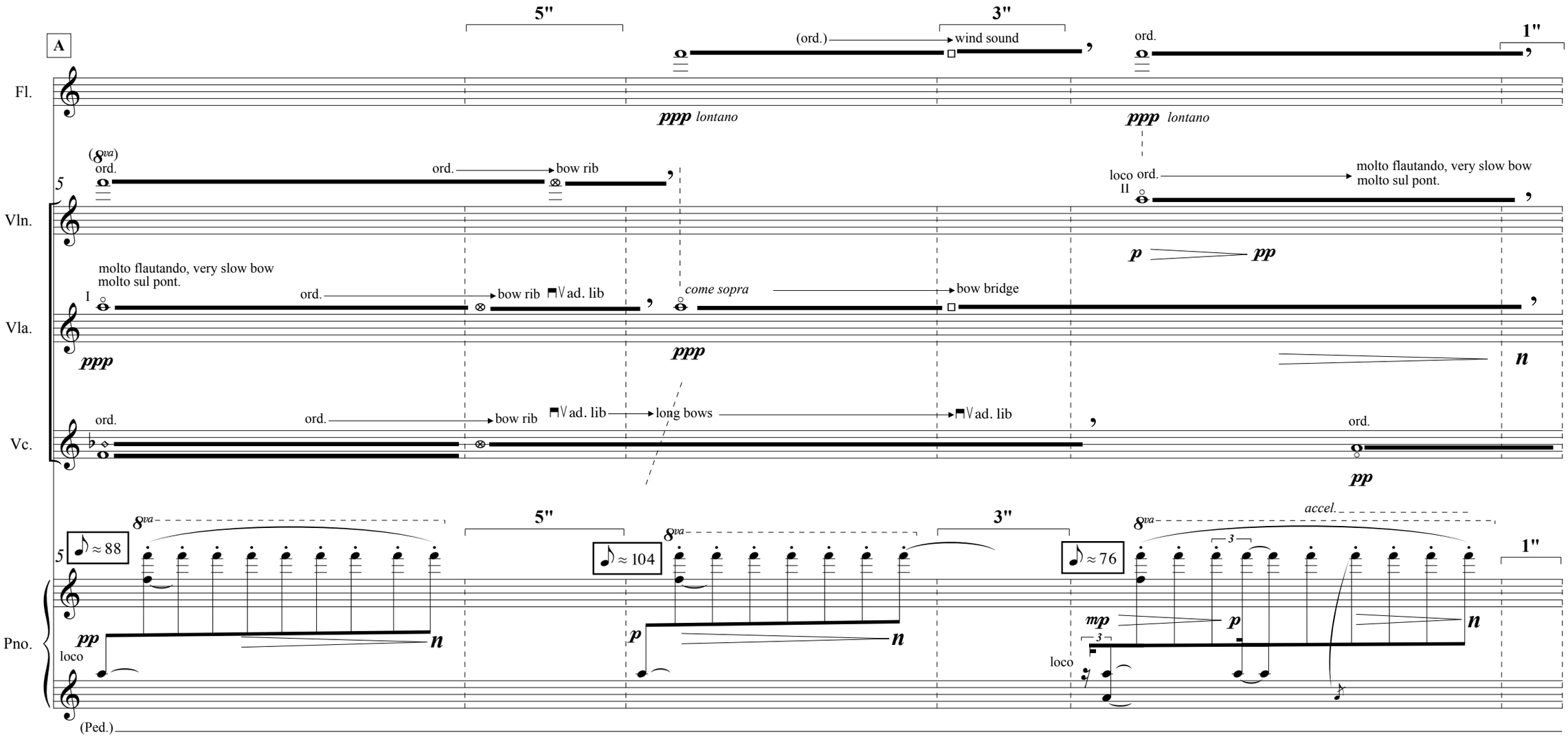
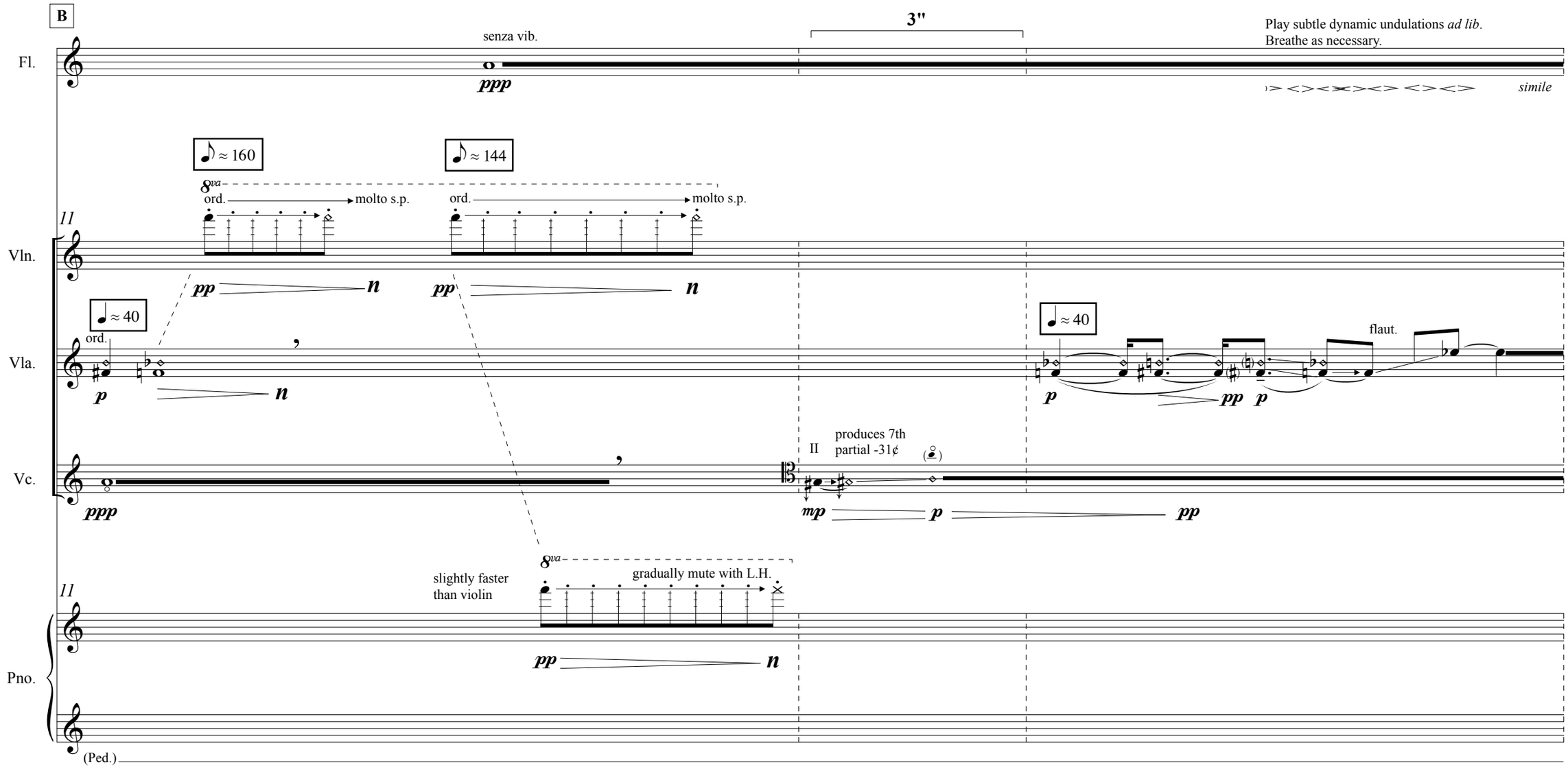
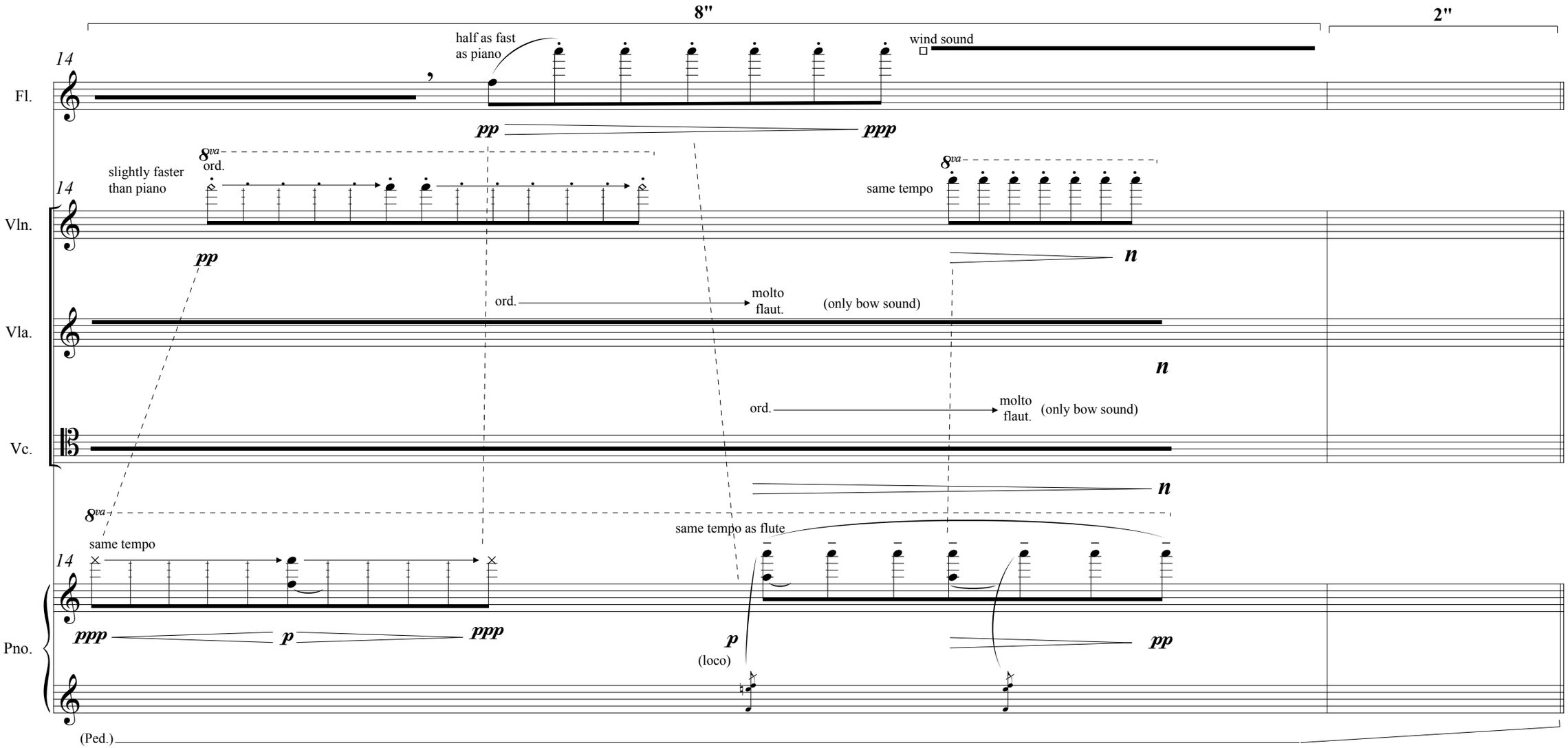
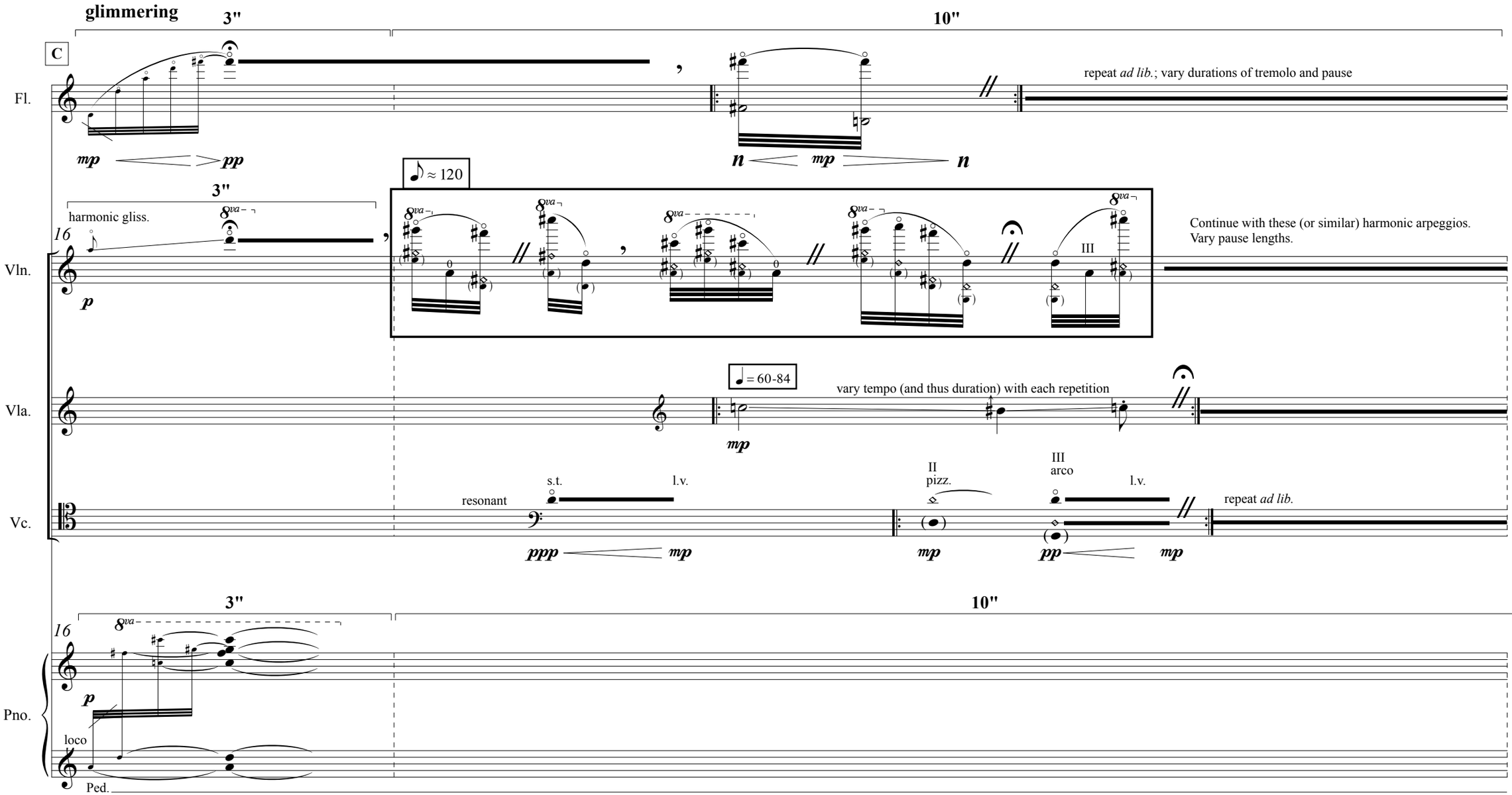
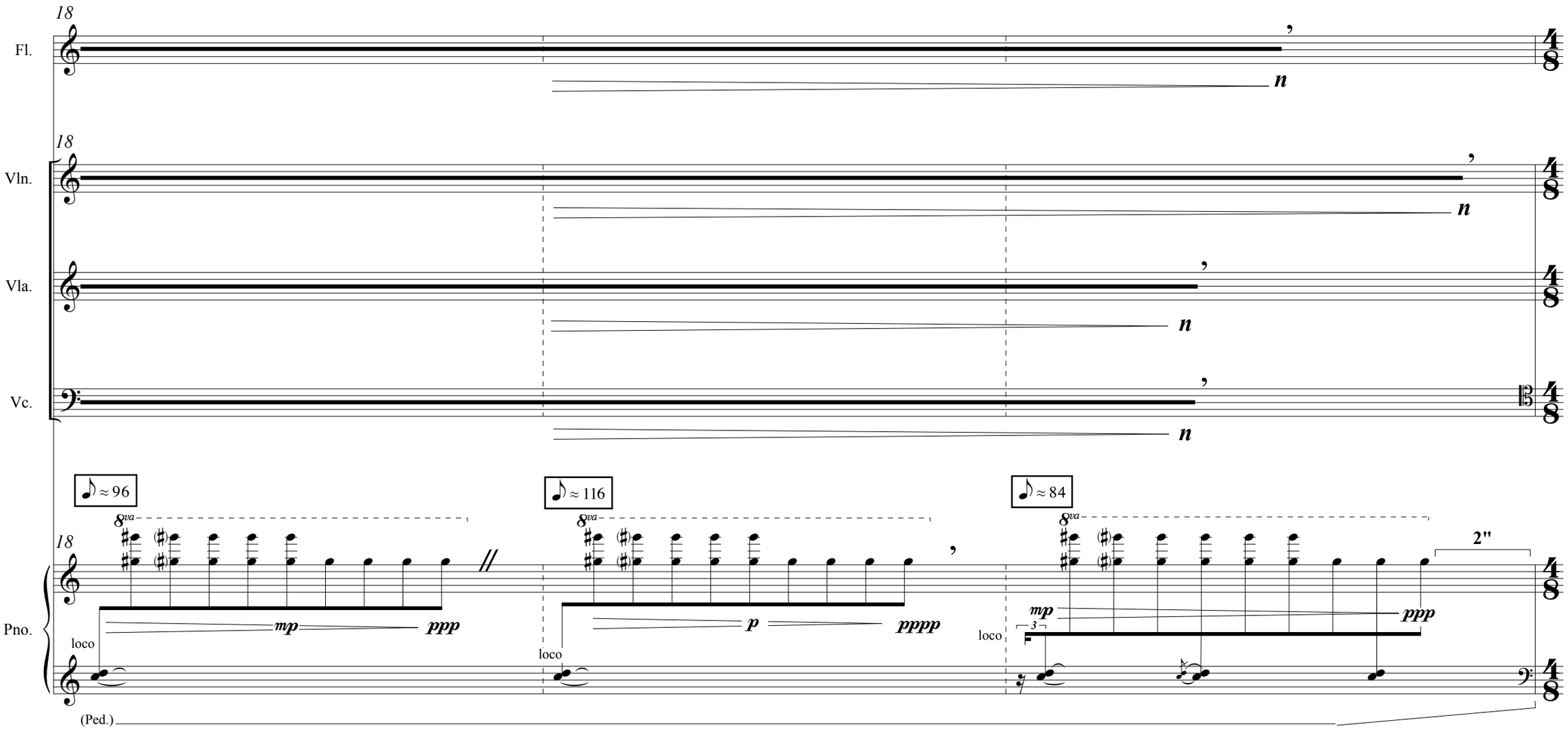
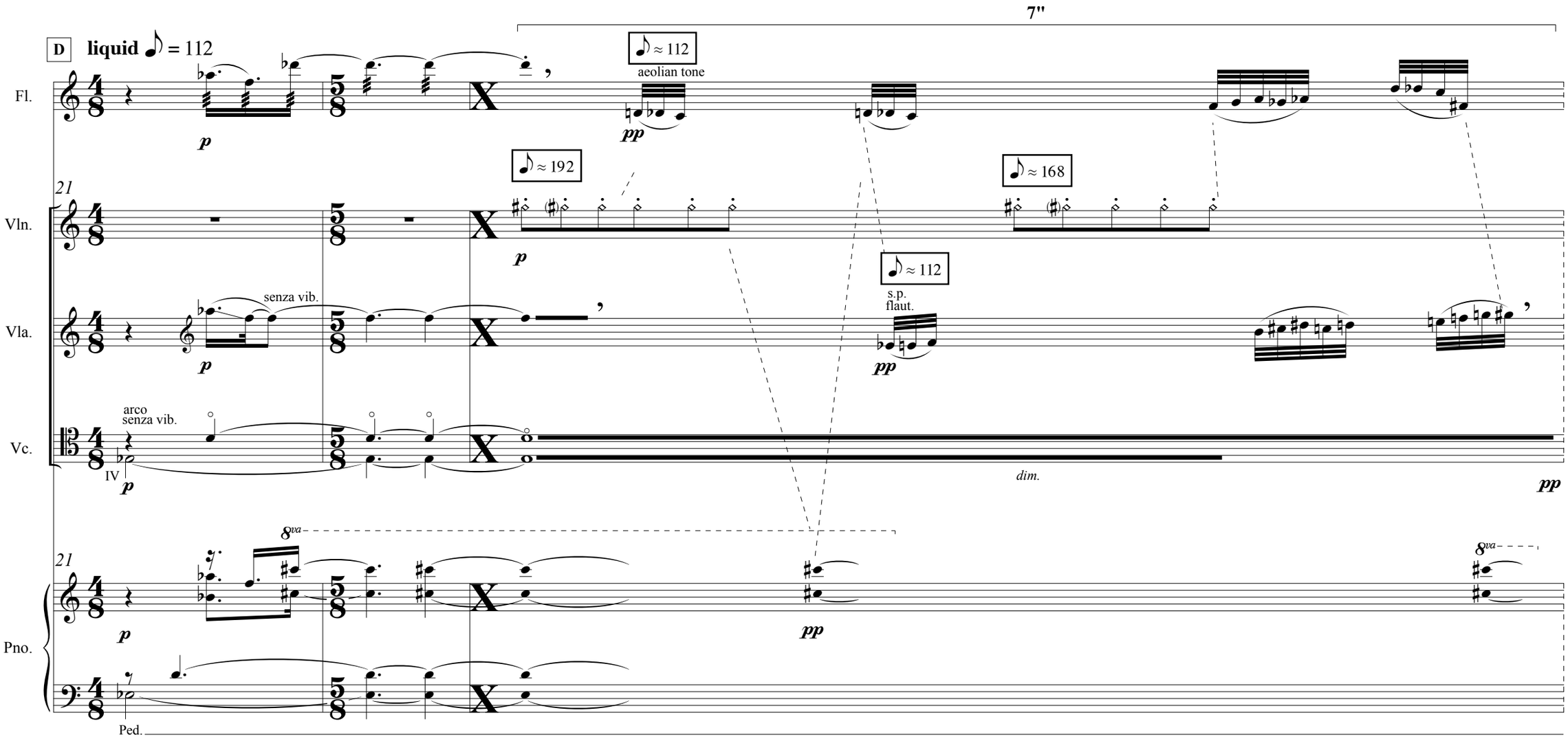

A
5"
3"
1"
Fl.
(ord.)
wind sound
ord.
ppp lontano
ppp lontano
Vln.
(8va)
ord.
ord.
bow rib
loco ord.
II
molto flautando, very slow bow
molto sul pont.
p
pp
Vla.
molto flautando, very slow bow
molto sul pont.
I
ord.
bow rib
ad. lib
come sopra
bow bridge
ppp
ppp
n
Vc.
ord.
ord.
bow rib
ad. lib
long bows
ad. lib
ord.
pp
8va
5"
3"
accel.
1"
≈ 88
≈ 104
≈ 76
Pno.
pp
loco
n
p
n
mp
3
p
n
loco
(Ped.)

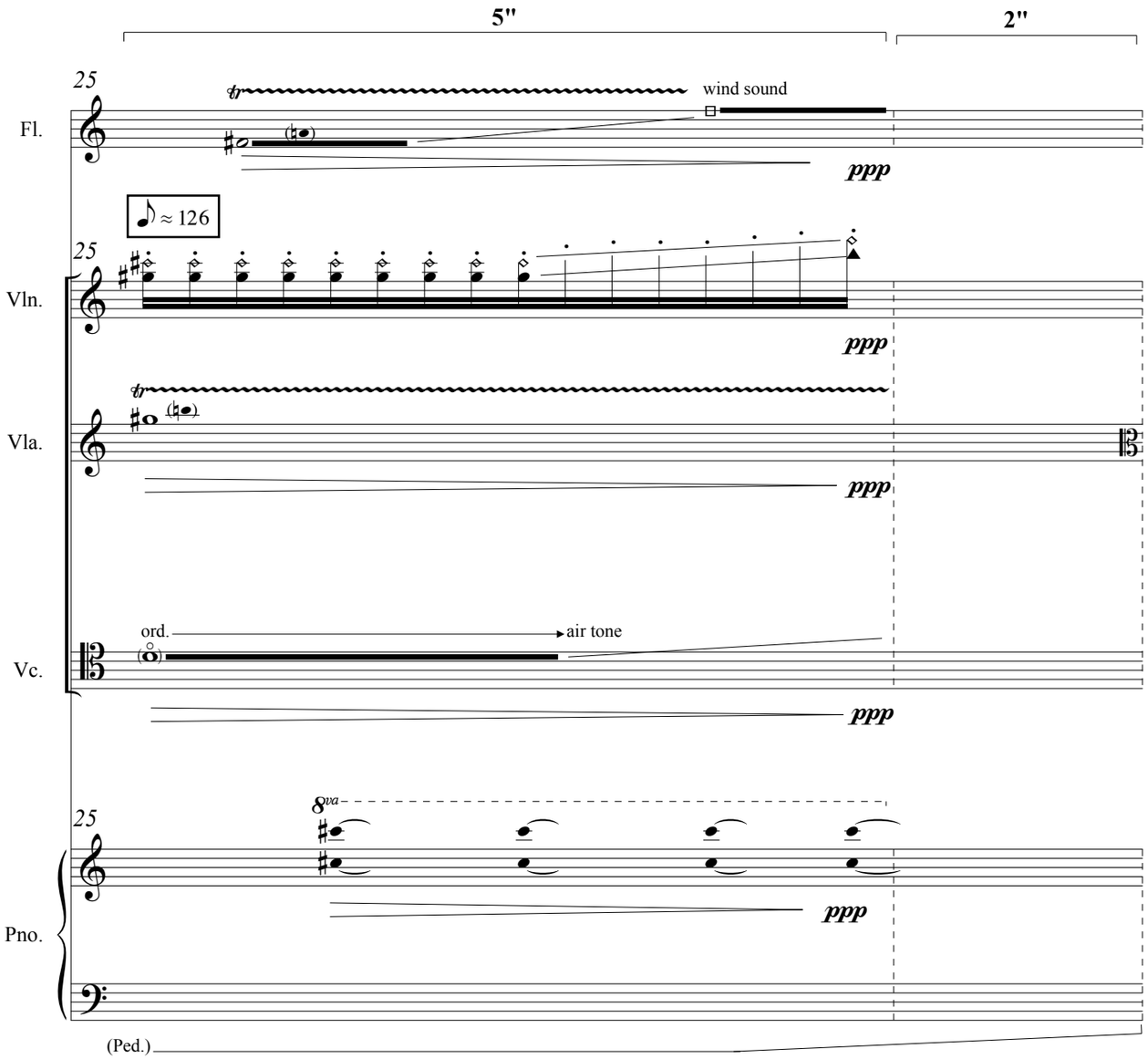

B
3"
Play subtle dynamic undulations *ad lib*.
Breathe as necessary.
Fl.
senza vib.
ppp
simile
≈ 160
≈ 144
8va
ord.
molto s.p.
ord.
molto s.p.
11
Vln.
pp
n
pp
n
≈ 40
ord.
Vla.
p
n
≈ 40
flaut.
p
pp
p
II
produces 7th
partial -31¢
Vc.
ppp
mp
p
pp
8va
slightly faster
than violin
gradually mute with L.H.
11
Pno.
pp
n
(Ped.)


8"
2"
14
Fl.
half as fast
as piano
wind sound
pp
ppp
8va
ord.
slightly faster
than piano
same tempo
Vln.
pp
n
ord.
molto
flaut.
(only bow sound)
Vla.
n
ord.
molto
flaut.
(only bow sound)
Vc.
n
8va
same tempo
same tempo as flute
Pno.
ppp
p
ppp
p
(loco)
pp
(Ped.)


glimmering
3"
10"
C
Fl.
mp
pp
n
mp
n
repeat ad lib.; vary durations of tremolo and pause
≈ 120
3"
harmonic gliss.
8va
16
Vln.
p
III
Continue with these (or similar) harmonic arpeggios.
Vary pause lengths.
= 60-84
vary tempo (and thus duration) with each repetition
Vla.
mp
resonant
s.t.
l.v.
ppp
mp
II
pizz.
mp
III
arco
l.v.
pp
mp
repeat ad lib.
Vc.
3"
10"
8va
16
Pno.
p
loco
Ped.


18
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
n
♪ ≈ 96
♪ ≈ 116
♪ ≈ 84
8va
mp
ppp
p
pppp
loco
2"
(Ped.)


7"
D
liquid ♪ = 112
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
21
21
p
pp
♪ ≈ 112
aeolian tone
♪ ≈ 192
♪ ≈ 168
♪ ≈ 112
s.p.
flaut.
senza vib.
arco
senza vib.
IV
dim.
8va
8va
Ped.



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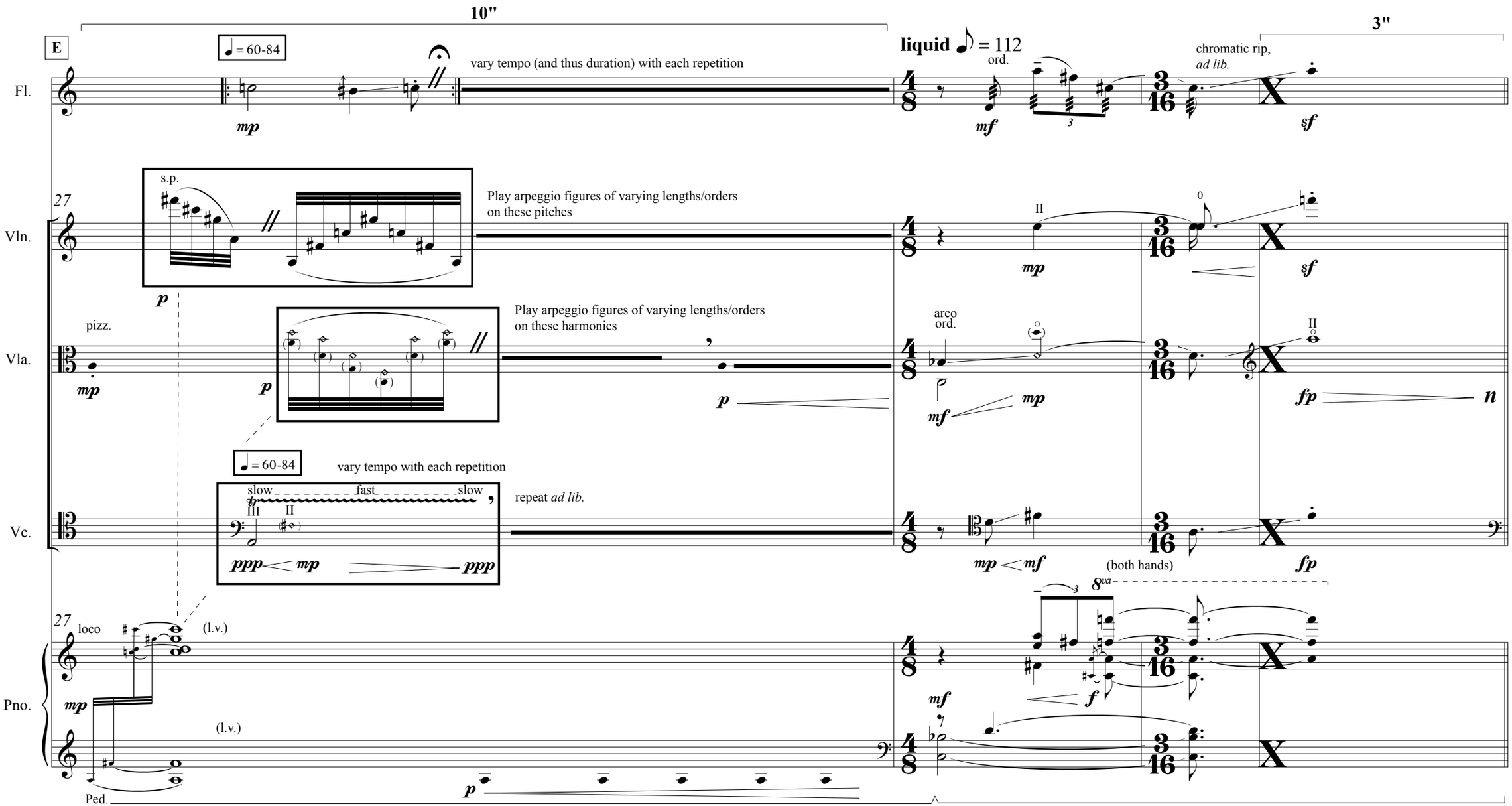
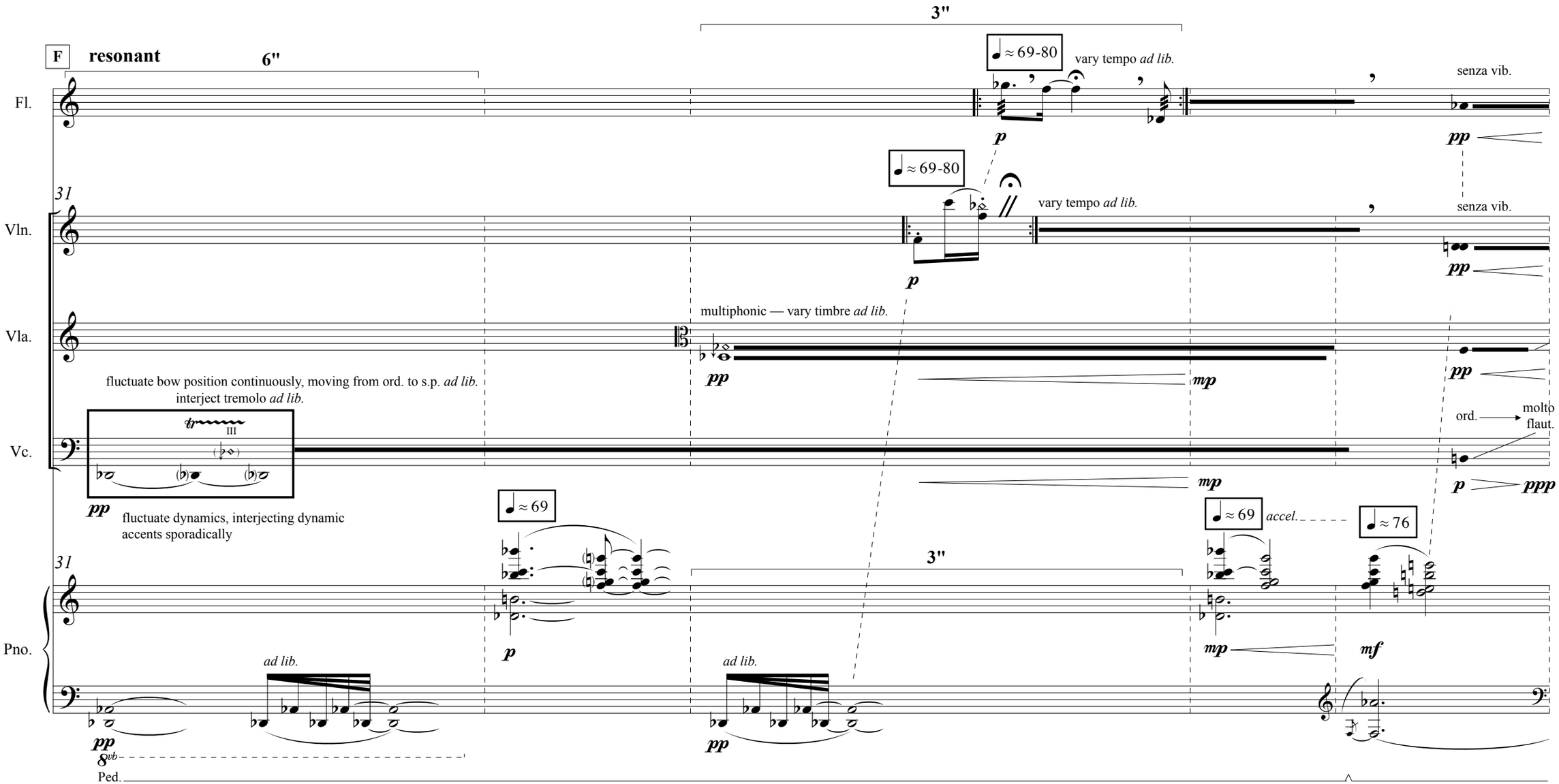
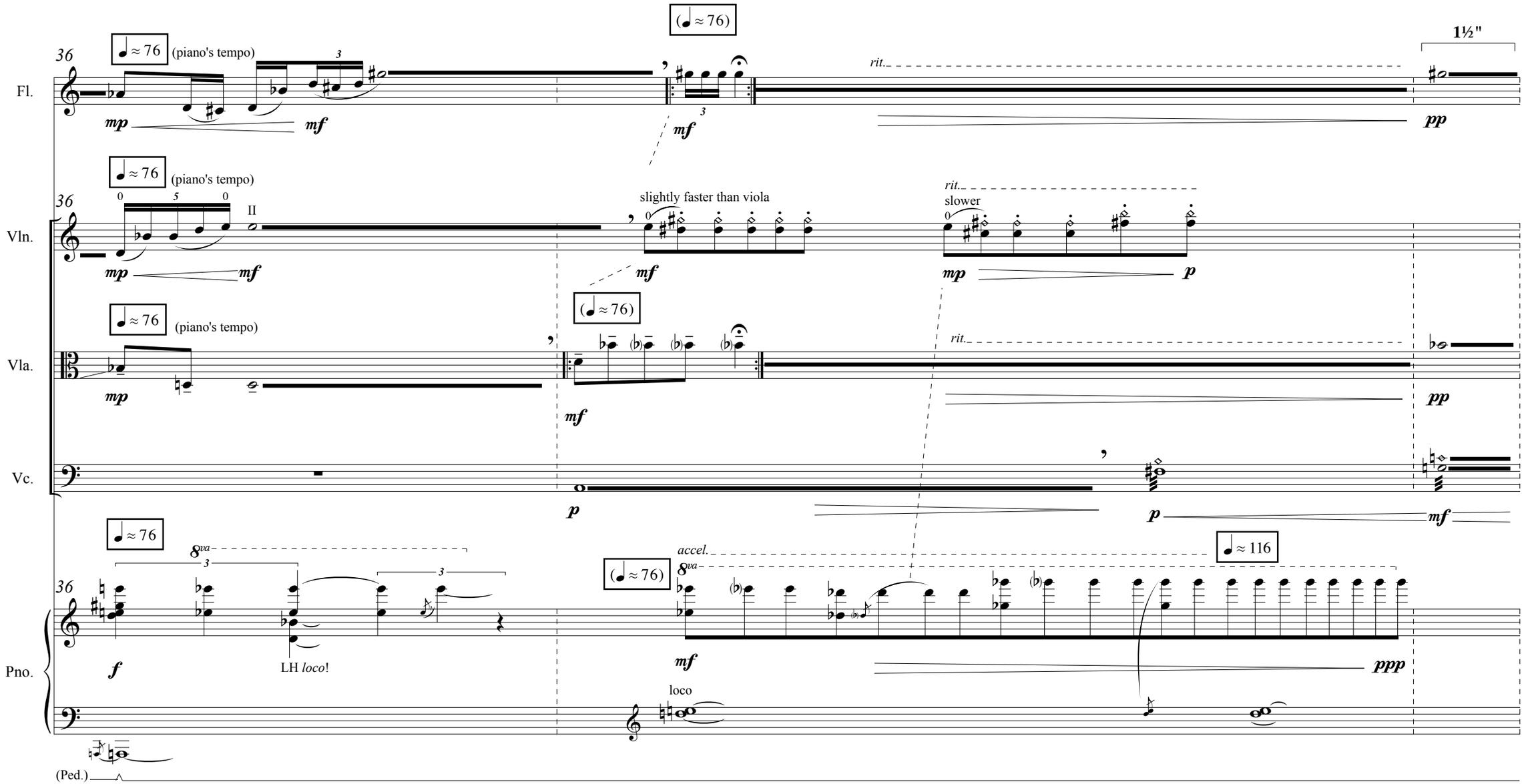
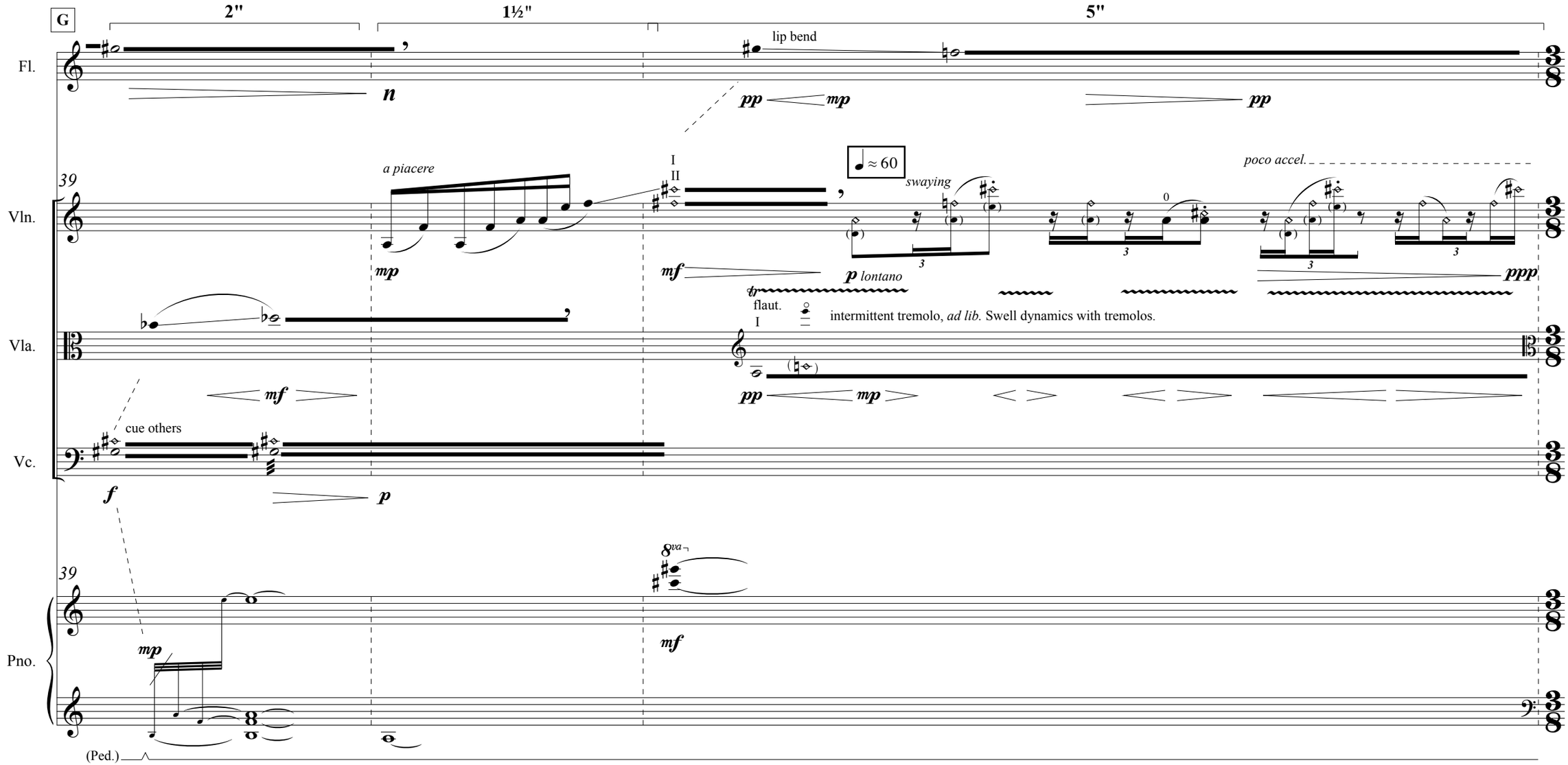
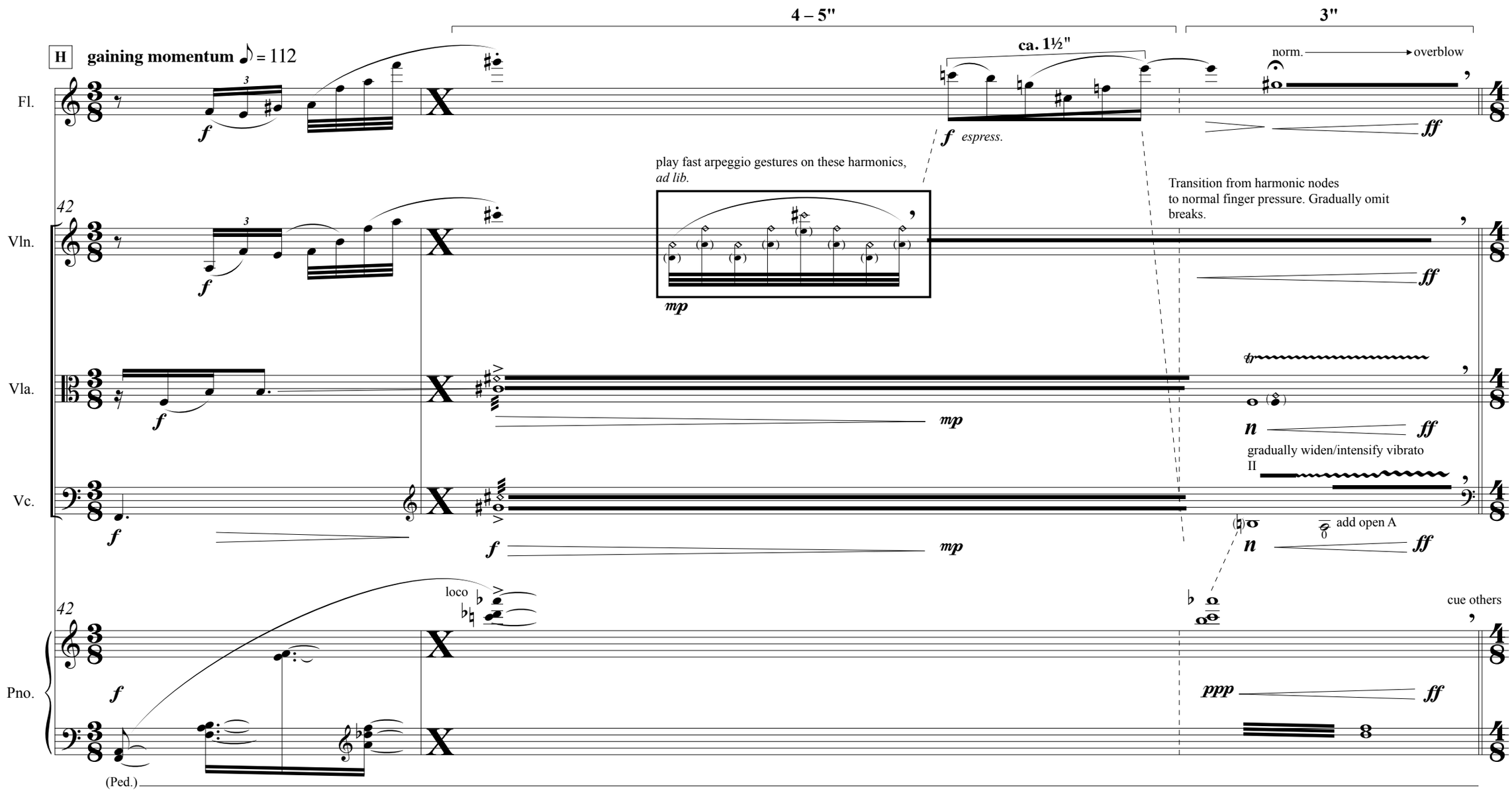
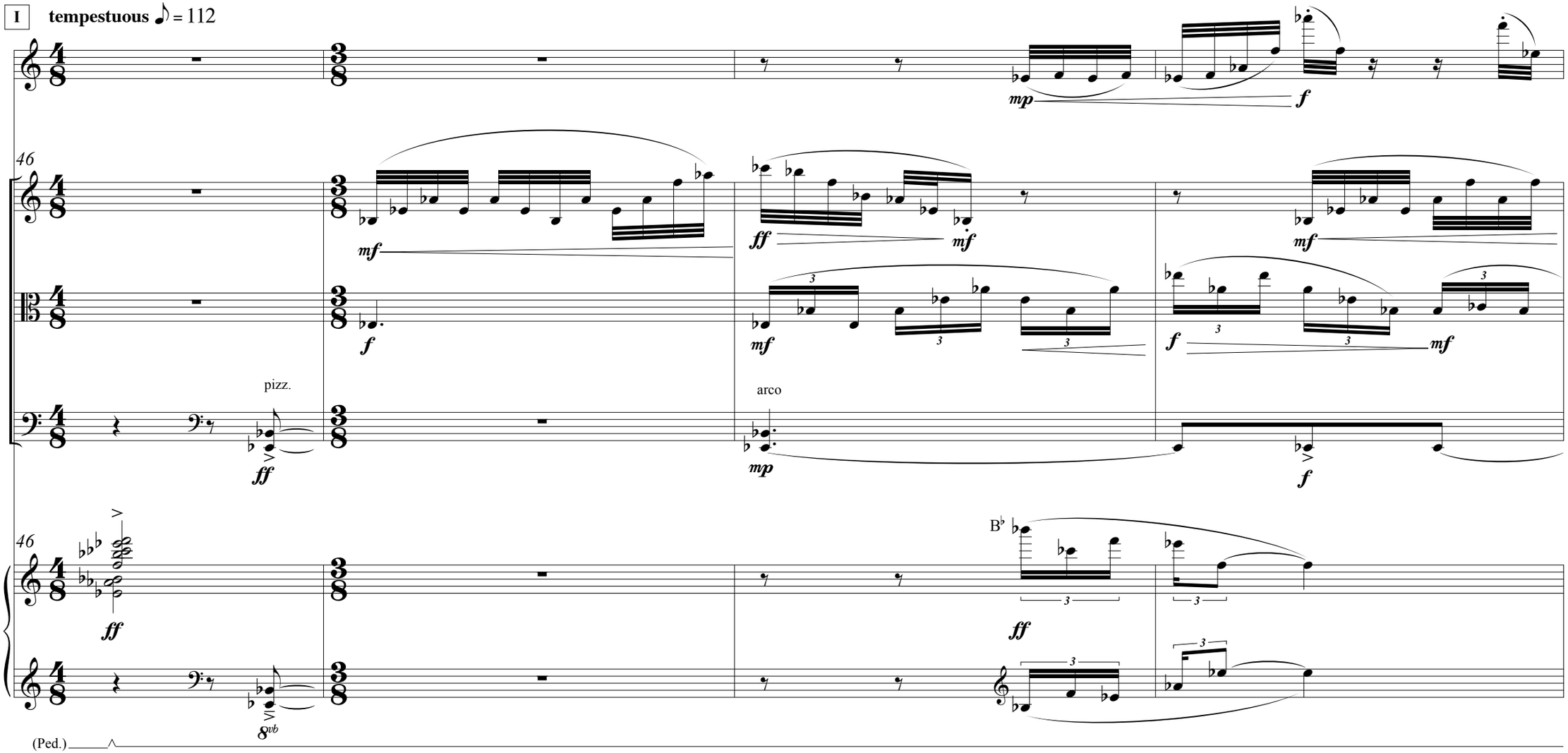

10"
3"
E
♩ = 60-84
vary tempo (and thus duration) with each repetition
liquid ♪ = 112
ord.
chromatic rip,
ad lib.
Fl.
mp
mf
sf
27
s.p.
Play arpeggio figures of varying lengths/orders
on these pitches
Vln.
p
II
0
mp
sf
pizz.
Play arpeggio figures of varying lengths/orders
on these harmonics
arco
ord.
Vla.
mp
p
mf
mp
fp
n
♩ = 60-84
vary tempo with each repetition
slow fast slow
repeat ad lib.
Vc.
III
II
ppp mp ppp
mp mf
(both hands)
fp
27
loco
(l.v.)
Pno.
mp
8va
mf
f
(l.v.)
p
Ped.

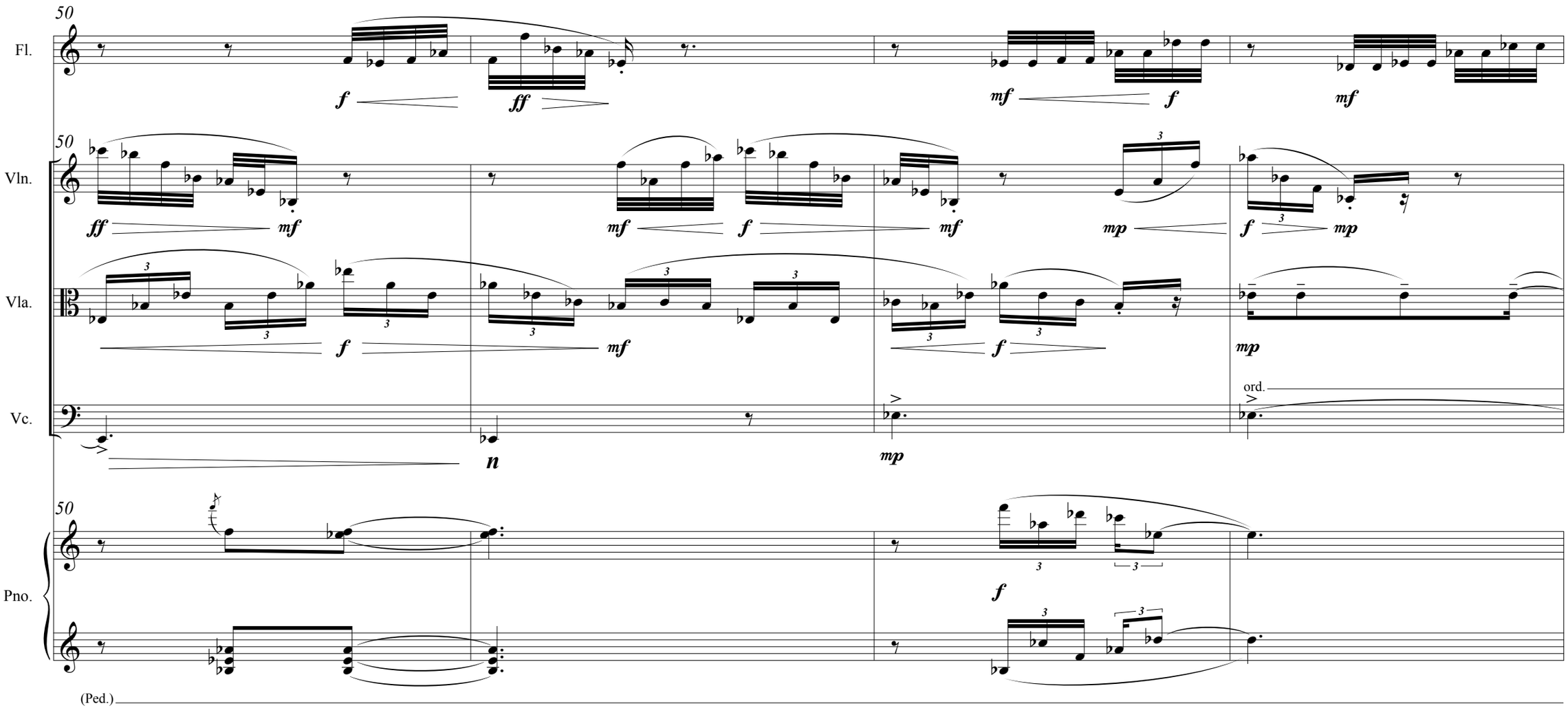

F
resonant
6"
3"
≈ 69-80
vary tempo ad lib.
senza vib.
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
31
multiphonic — vary timbre ad lib.
fluctuate bow position continuously, moving from ord. to s.p. ad lib.
interject tremolo ad lib.
fluctuate dynamics, interjecting dynamic accents sporadically
ord.
molto flaut.
≈ 69
accel.
≈ 76
ad lib.
8vb
Ped.

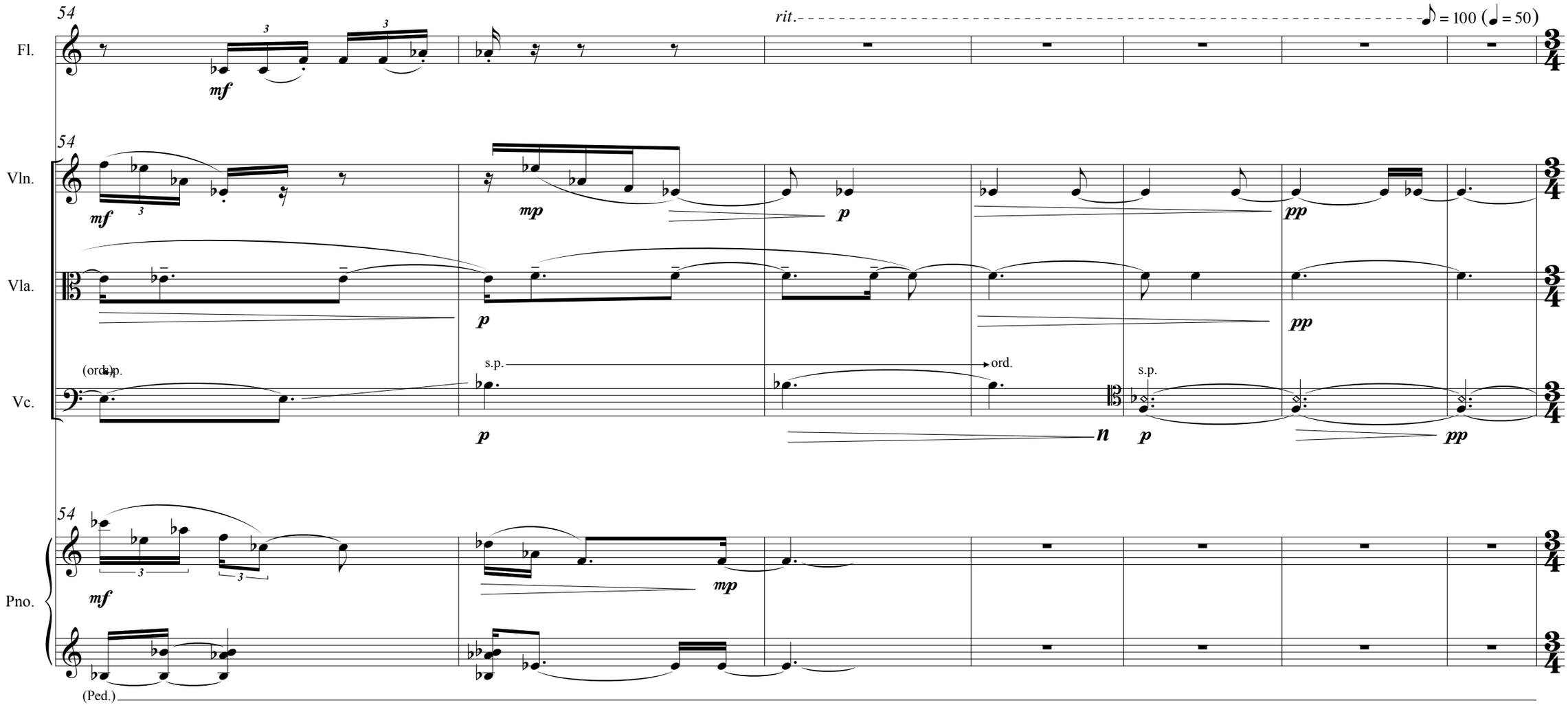

36
♩≈76 (piano's tempo)
(♩≈76)
1½"
Fl.
rit.
mp mf mf pp
♩≈76 (piano's tempo)
slightly faster than viola
rit.
slower
Vln.
II
mp mf mf mp p
♩≈76 (piano's tempo)
(♩≈76)
rit.
Vla.
mp mf pp
Vc.
p p mf
♩≈76
8va
accel.
♩≈116
(♩≈76)
Pno.
f mf ppp
LH loco!
loco
(Ped.)

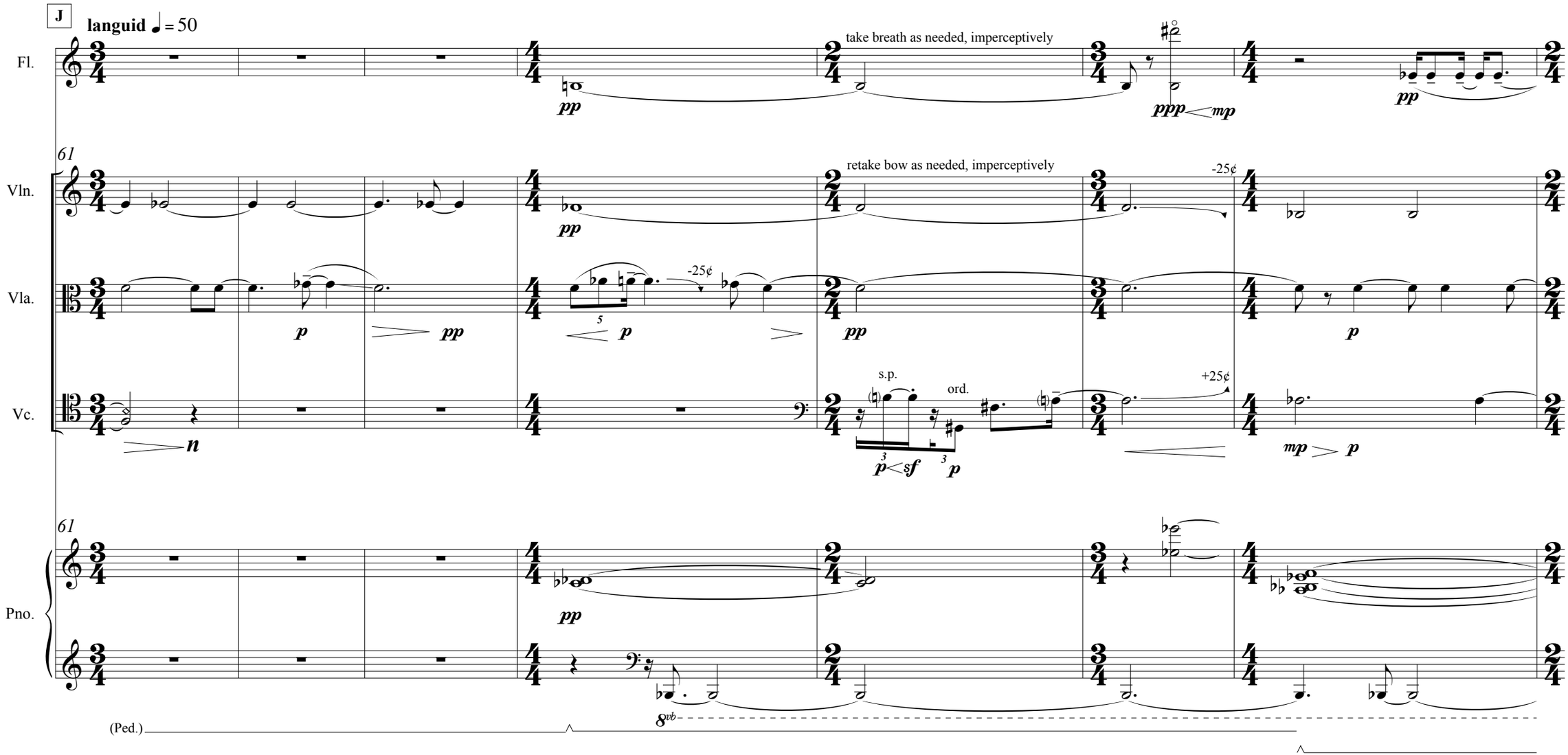

G
2"
1½"
5"
Fl.
lip bend
pp
mp
pp
39
Vln.
a piacere
mp
I
II
≈ 60
swaying
poco accel.
mf
p lontano
ppp
flaut.
I
intermittent tremolo, ad lib. Swell dynamics with tremolos.
Vla.
mf
pp
mp
cue others
Vc.
f
p
39
Pno.
8va
mp
mf
(Ped.)

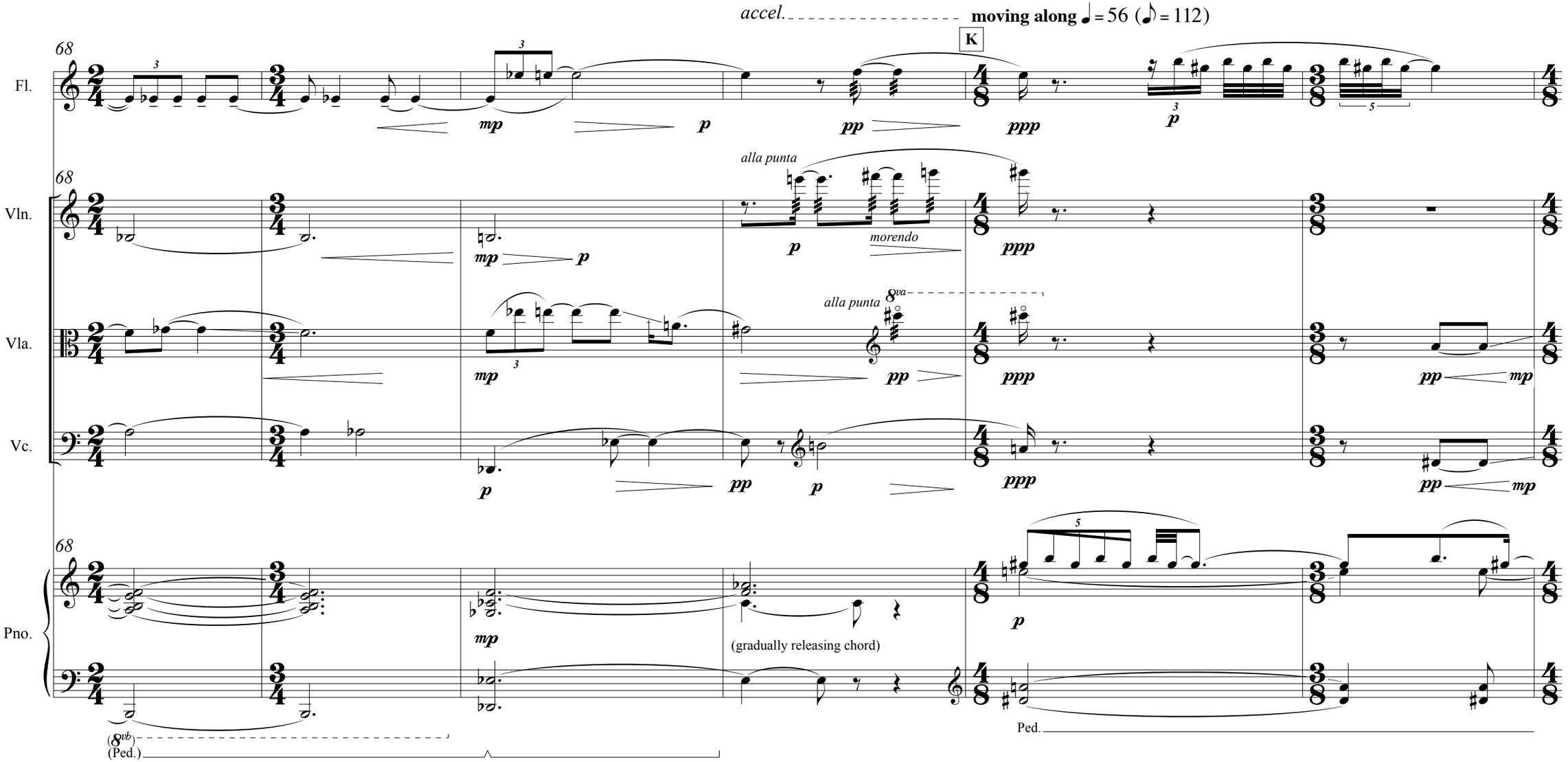

4 – 5"
3"
H
gaining momentum ♪ = 112
ca. 1½"
norm.
overblow
Fl.
f
f espress.
ff
play fast arpeggio gestures on these harmonics,
ad lib.
42
Vln.
mp
Transition from harmonic nodes
to normal finger pressure. Gradually omit
breaks.
Vla.
tr
n
gradually widen/intensify vibrato
II
Vc.
add open A
0
loco
cue others
Pno.
ppp
(Ped.)

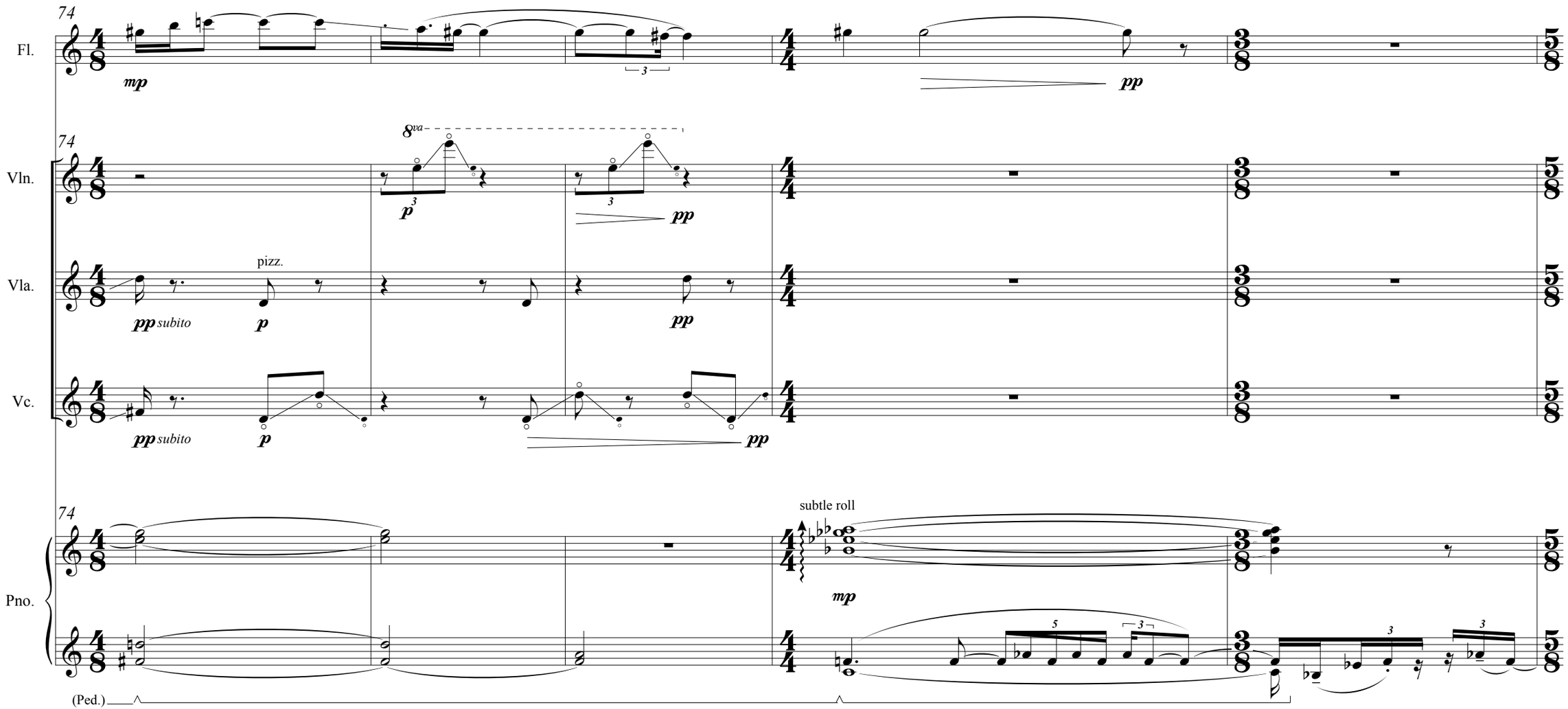

I
tempestuous ♪ = 112
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
46
pizz.
arco
B♭
8vb
(Ped.)

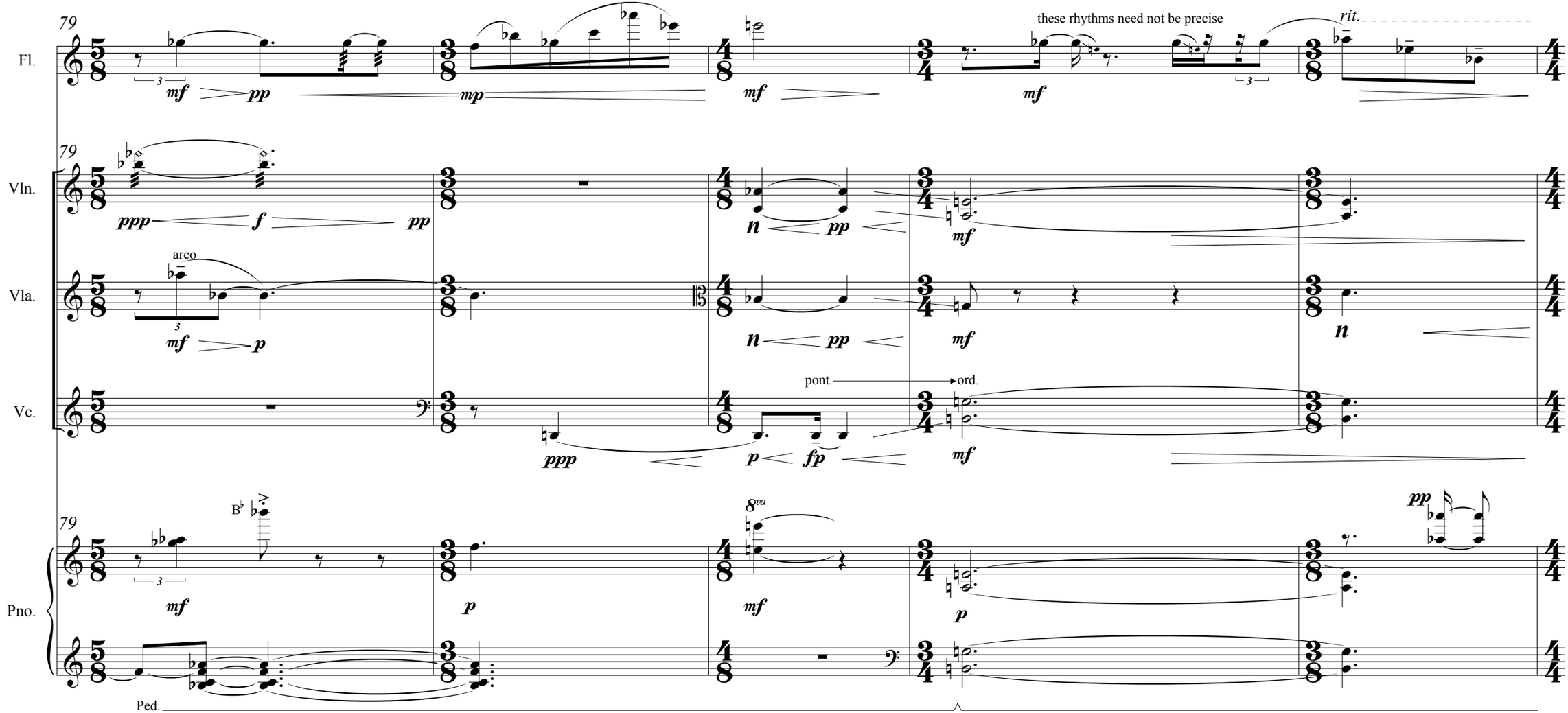

50
Fl.
f
ff
mf
f
mf
50
Vln.
ff
mf
mf
f
mf
mp
f
mp
Vla.
f
mf
f
mp
Vc.
n
mp
ord.
50
Pno.
f
(Ped.)

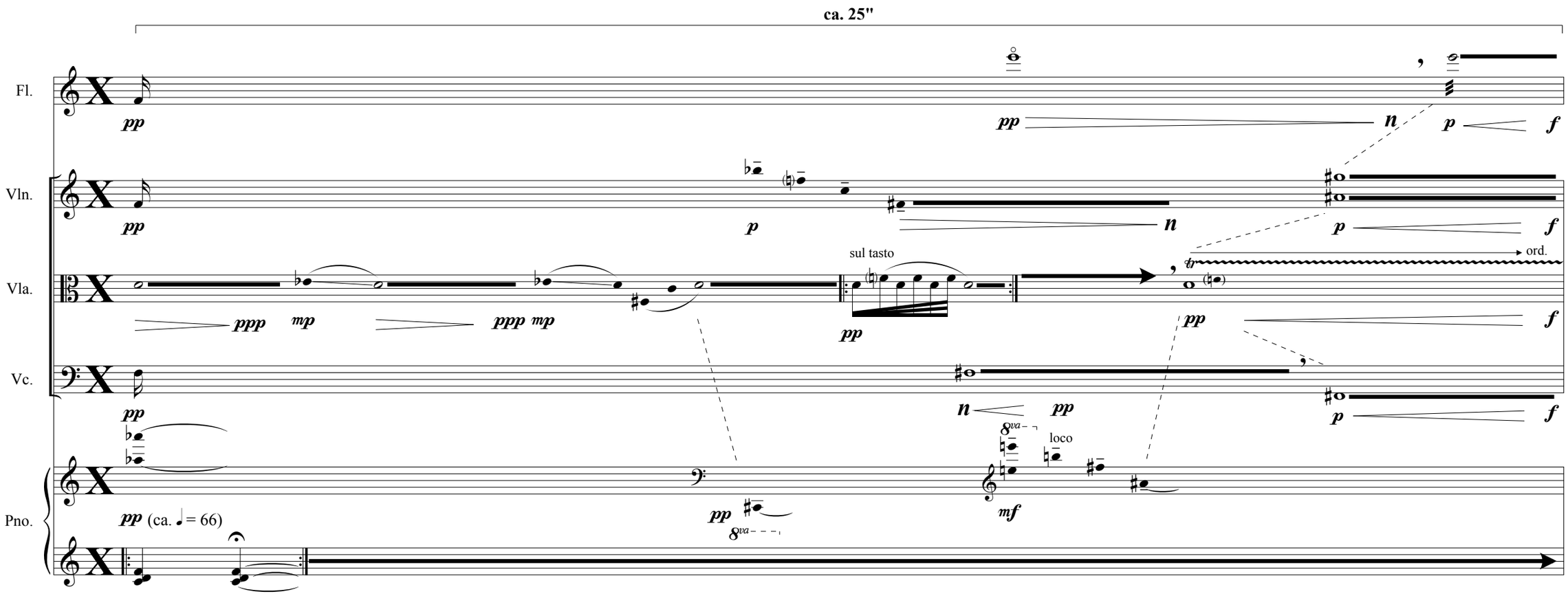

54
rit.
♪ = 100 (♩ = 50)
Fl.
mf
Vln.
mf
mp
p
pp
Vla.
p
pp
Vc.
(ord.)
s.p.
ord.
s.p.
p
n
p
pp
Pno.
mf
mp
(Ped.)

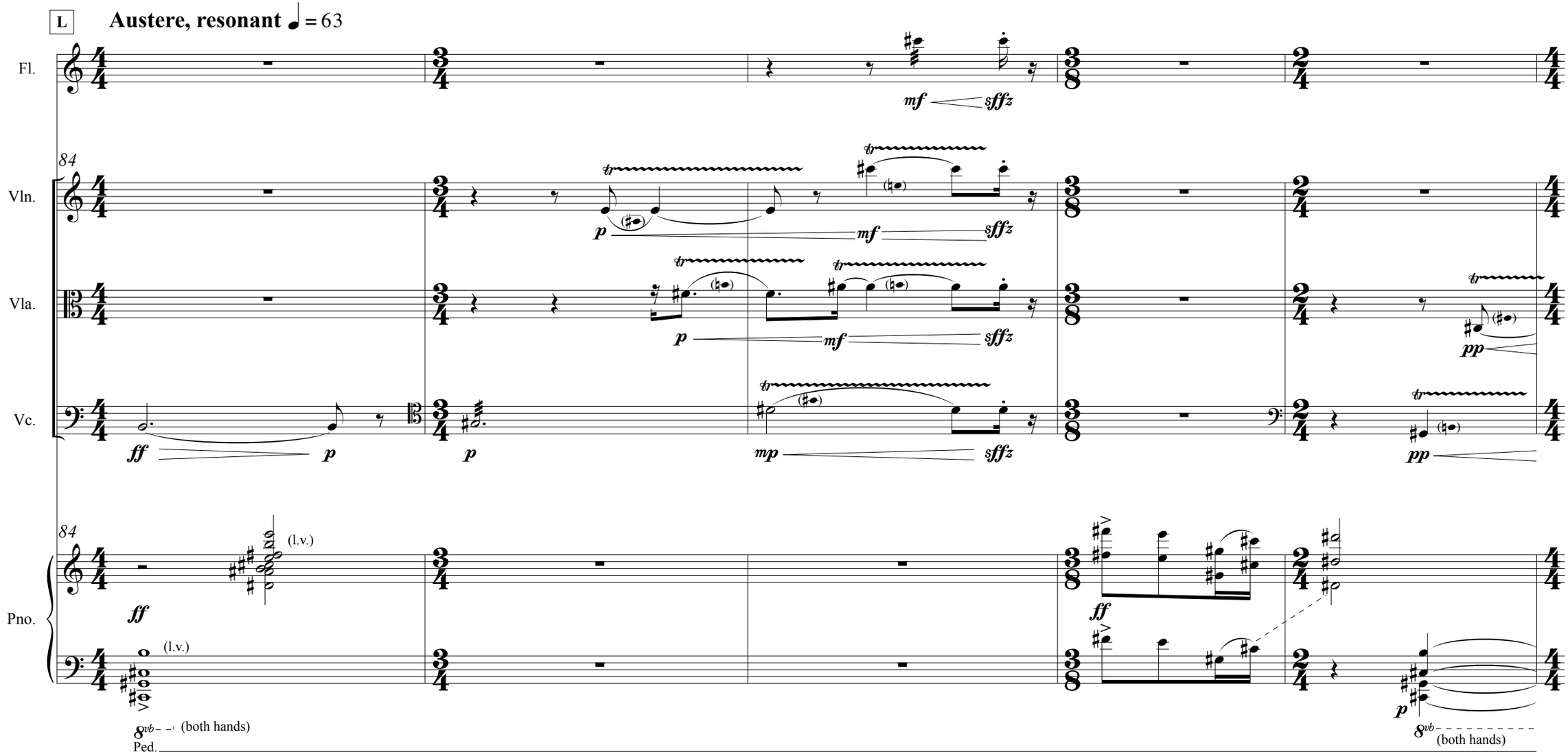

J
languid ♩= 50
Fl.
take breath as needed, imperceptively
pp
ppp
mp
pp
61
Vln.
retake bow as needed, imperceptively
-25¢
pp
pp
Vla.
-25¢
5
p
pp
p
pp
p
Vc.
s.p.
ord.
+25¢
n
p
sf
p
mp
p
61
Pno.
pp
8vb
(Ped.)

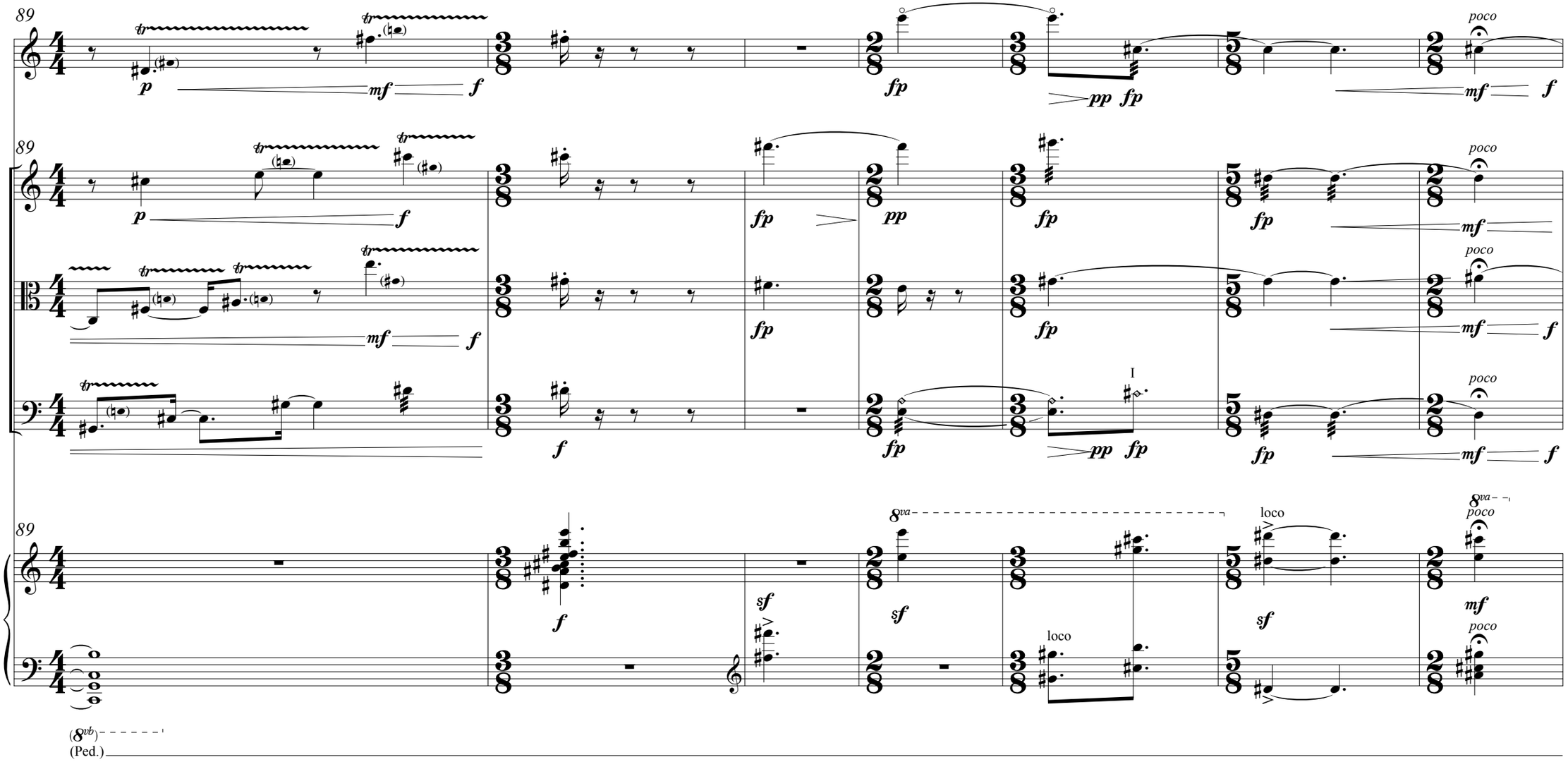

accel.
moving along ♩= 56 (♪= 112)
K
68
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
alla punta
morendo
8va
(gradually releasing chord)
(8vb)
(Ped.)
Ped.

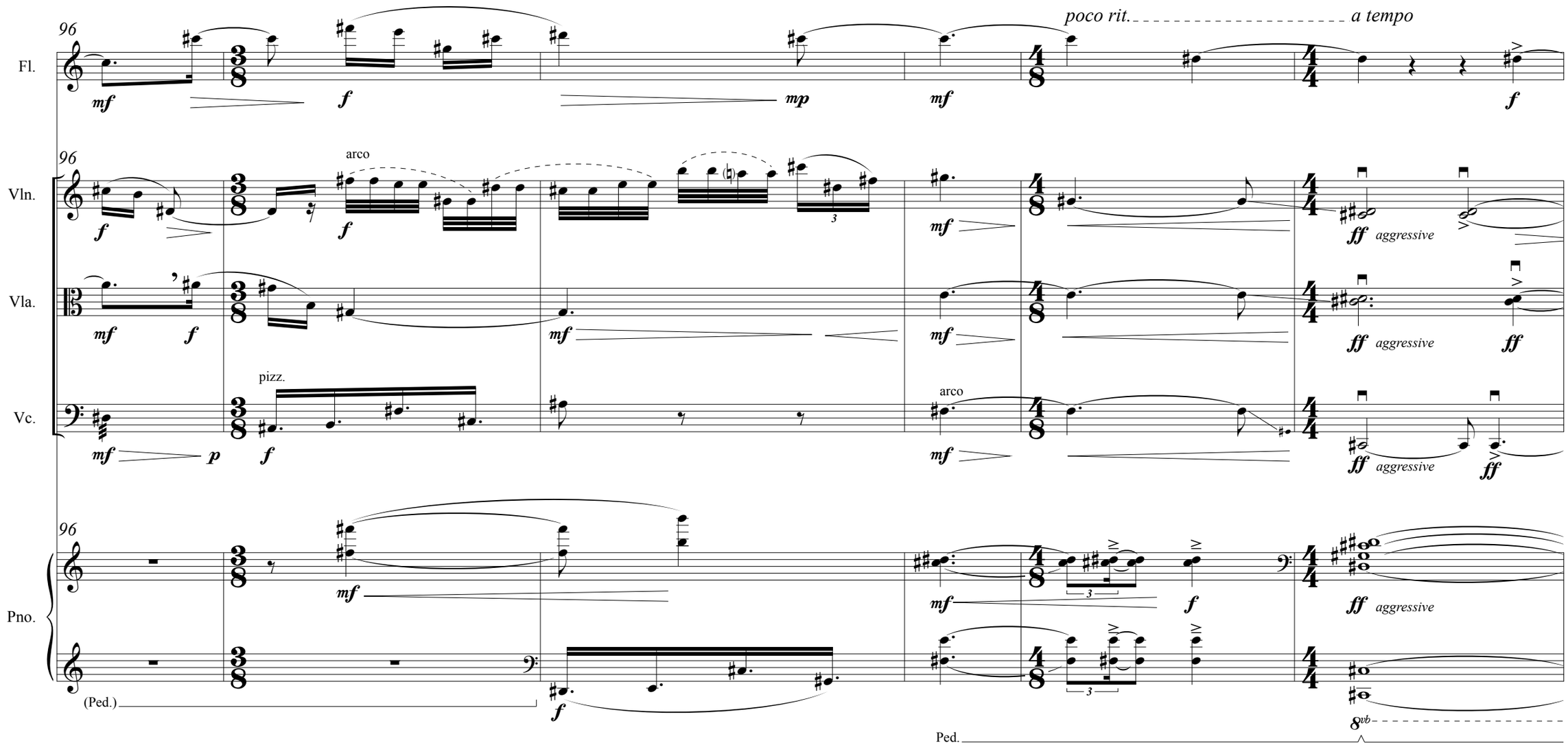

74
Fl.
mp
3
pp
74
Vln.
8va
3
p
3
pp
Vla.
pizz.
pp subito
p
pp
Vc.
pp subito
p
pp
74
Pno.
subtle roll
mp
5
3
3
3
(Ped.)

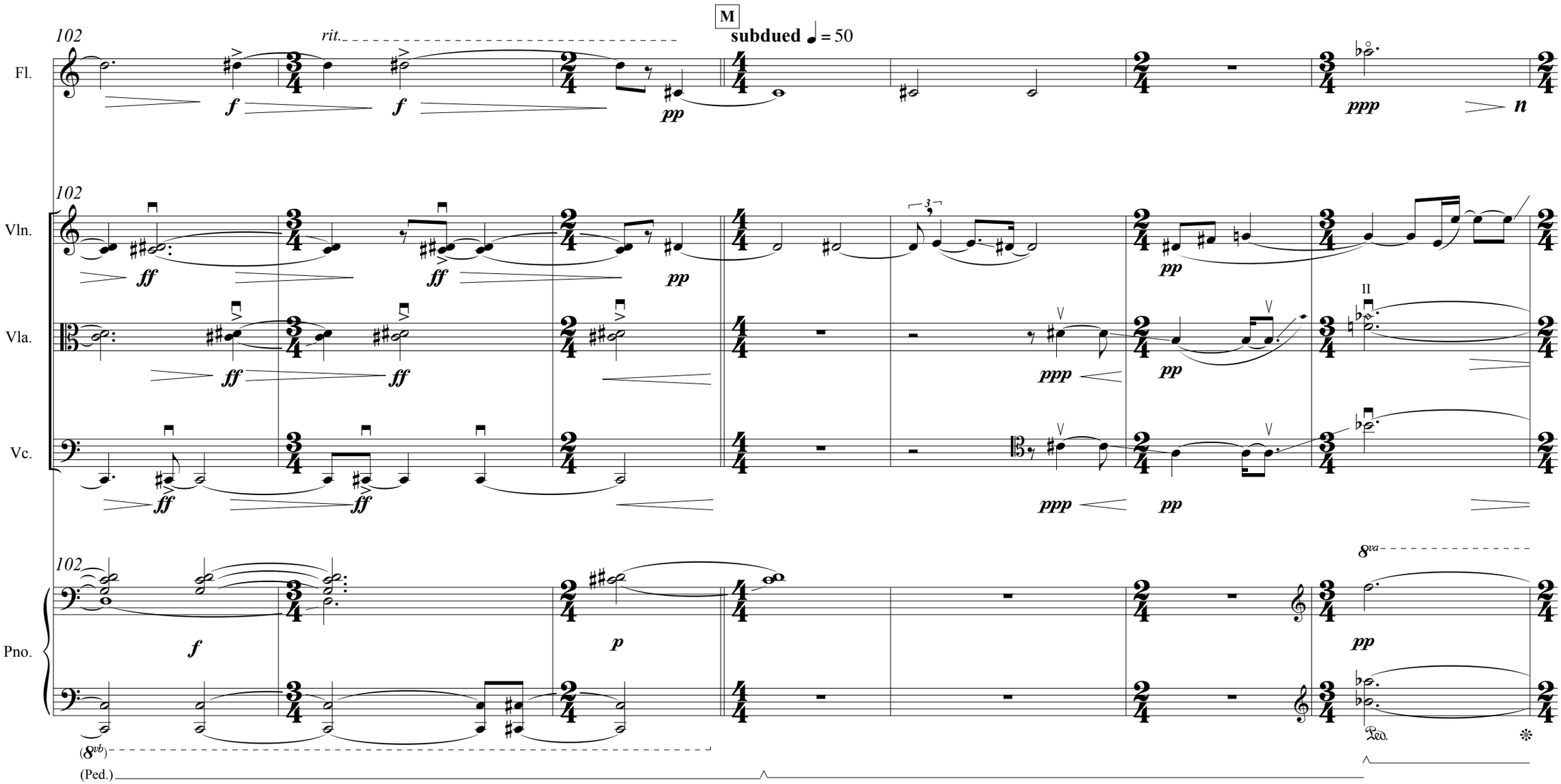

79
Fl.
these rhythms need not be precise
rit.
Vln.
arco
Vla.
pont.
ord.
Vc.
B♭
8va
Pno.
Ped.

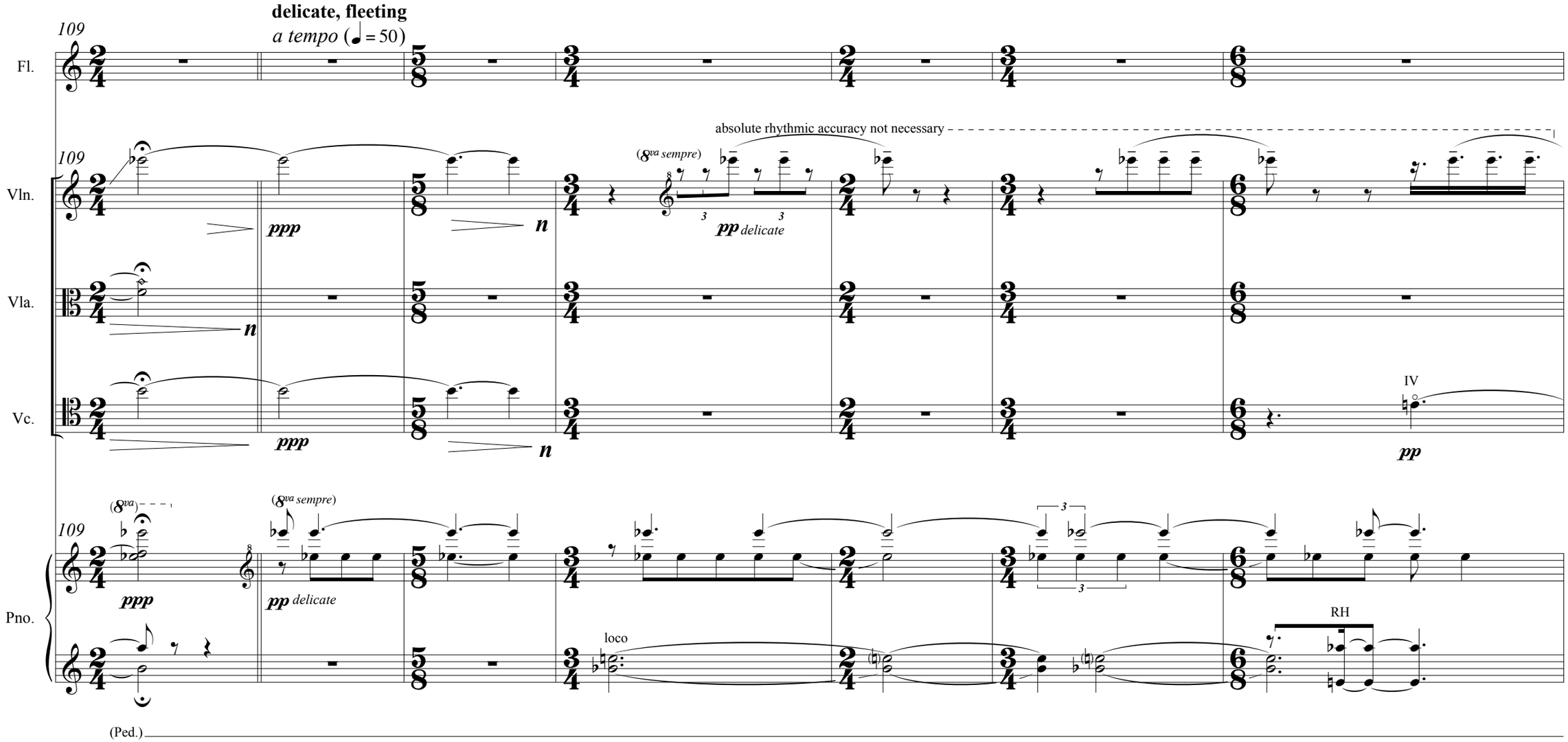

ca. 25"
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
pp
ppp
mp
p
n
f
sul tasto
ord.
tr
8va
loco
mf
pp (ca. ♩ = 66)

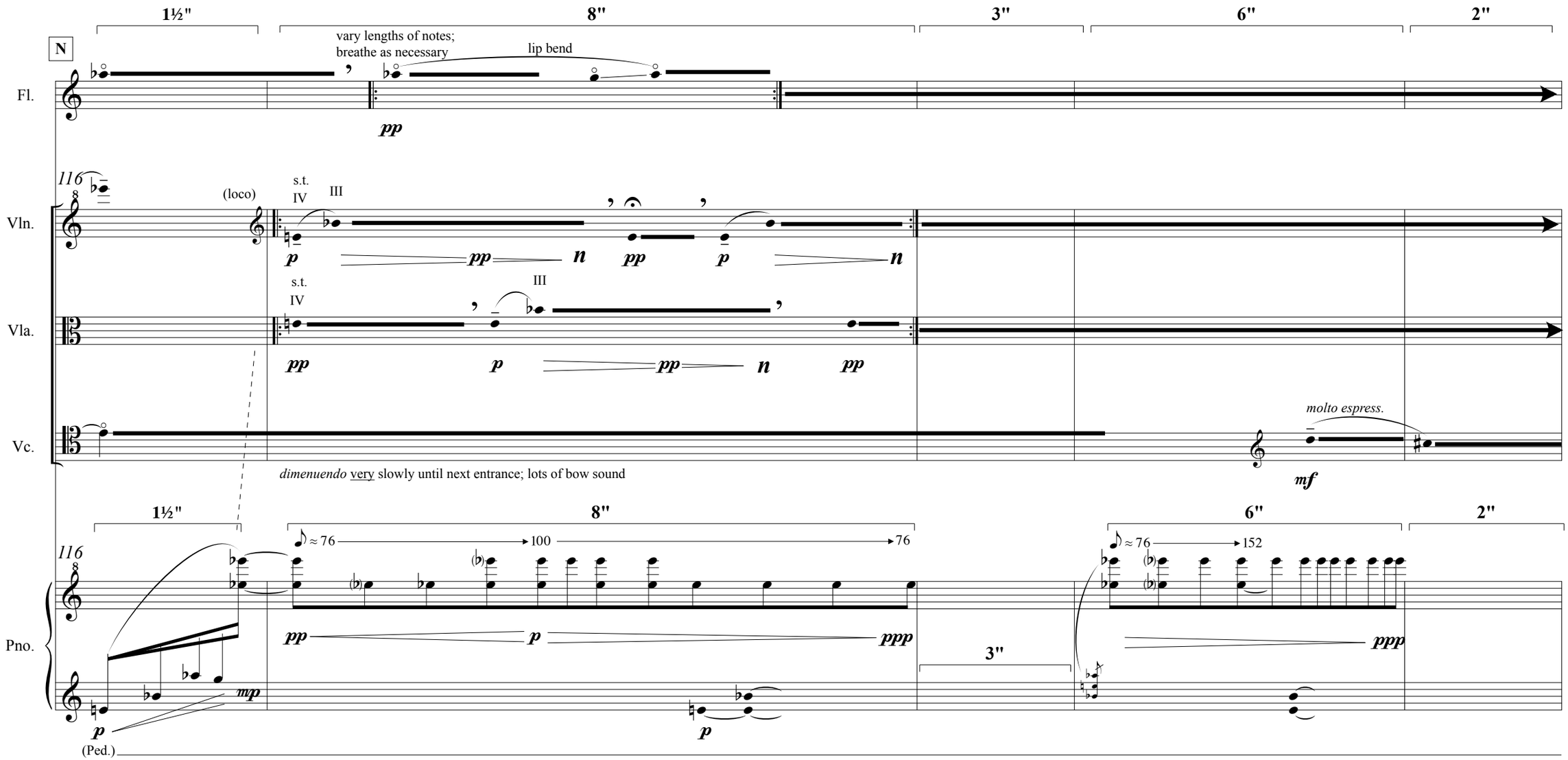

L
Austere, resonant ♩ = 63
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
84
(l.v.)
(both hands)
Ped.


89
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
poco
loco
I
(8vb)
(Ped.)


96
Fl.
mf
f
mp
mf
poco rit.
a tempo
f
96
Vln.
arco
f
f
mf
ff aggressive
Vla.
mf
f
mf
mf
ff aggressive
ff
Vc.
pizz.
mf
p
f
arco
mf
ff aggressive
ff
96
Pno.
mf
mf
3
f
ff aggressive
(Ped.)
f
8vb
Ped.

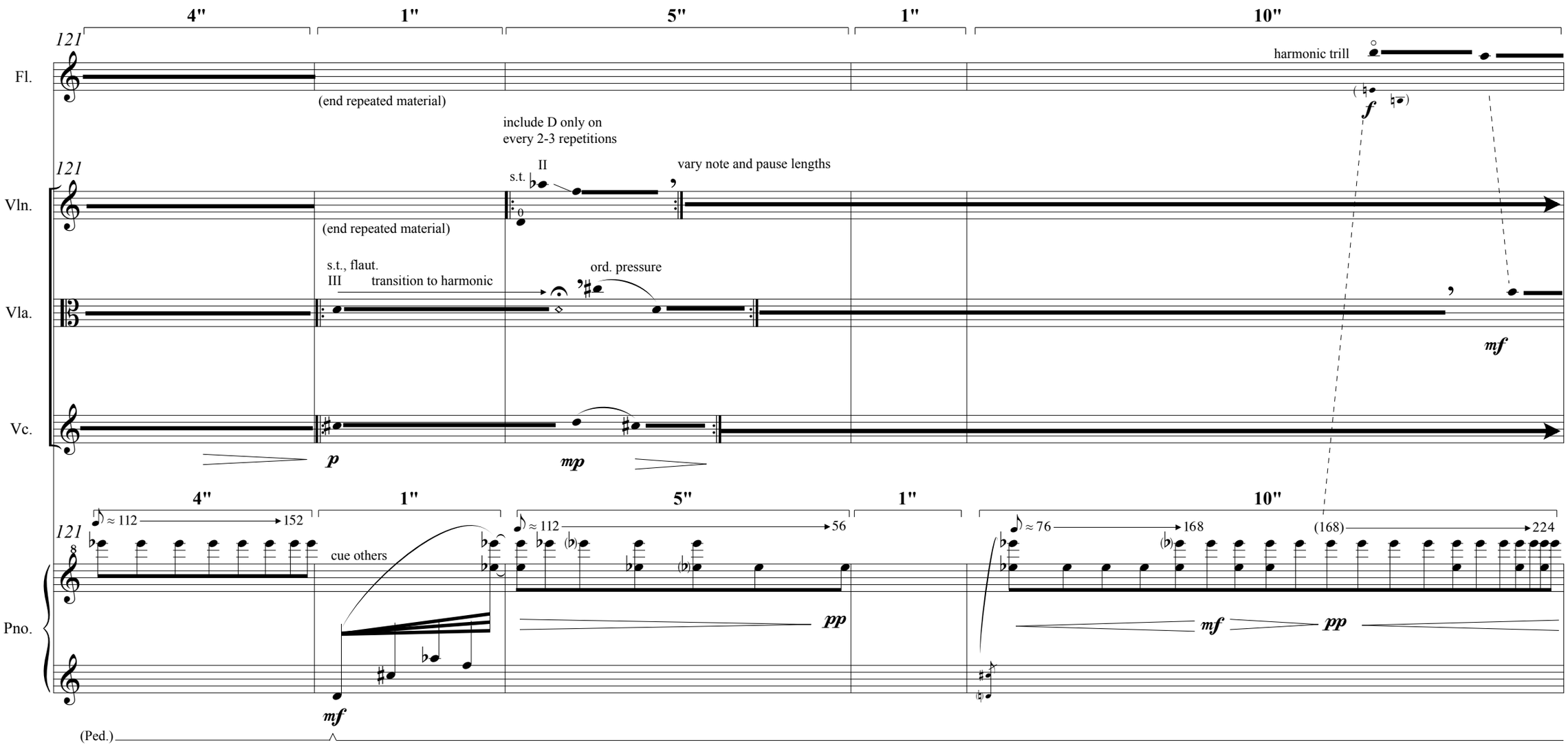

M
subdued ♩ = 50
102
rit.
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
8va
(8vb)
(Ped.)
Ped.

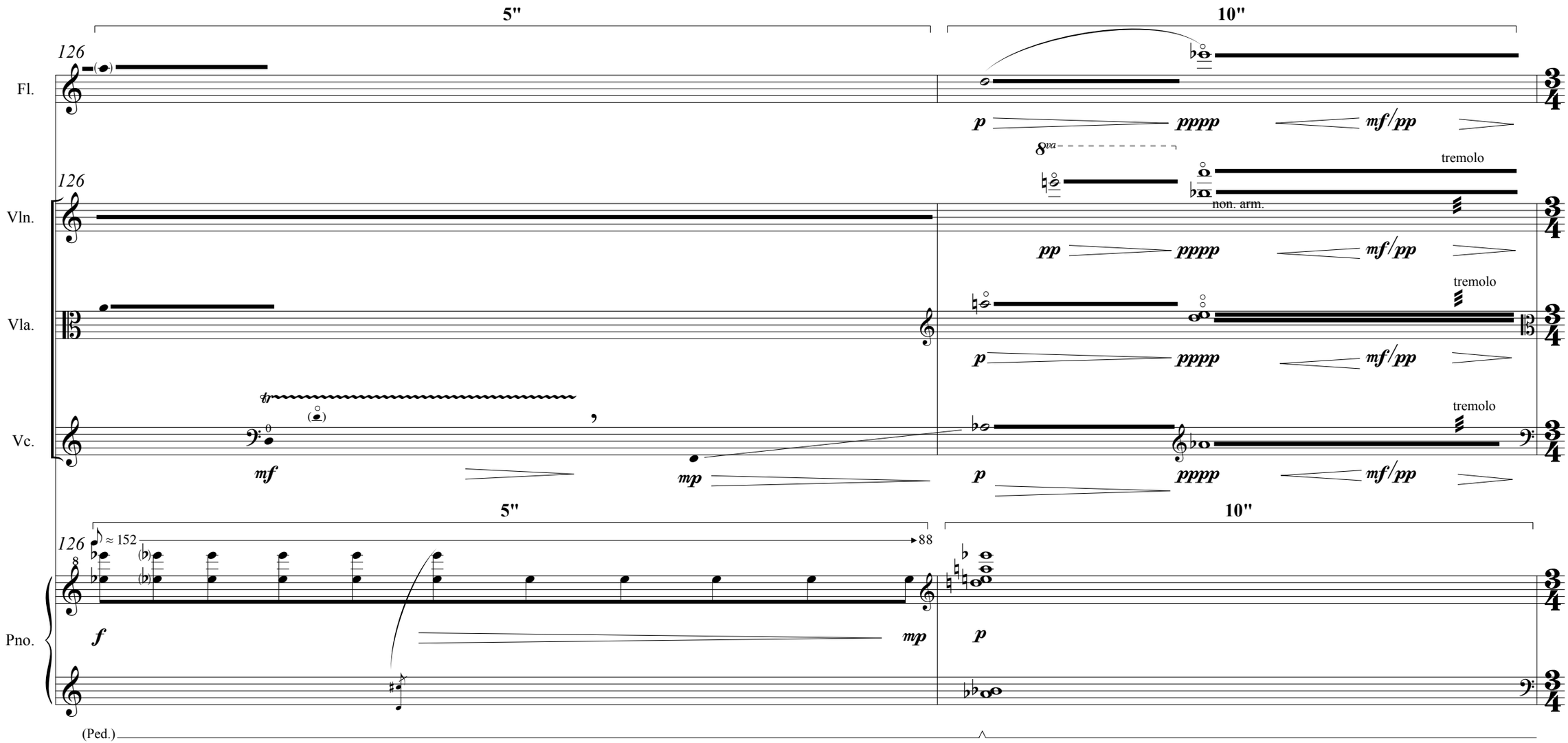

109
delicate, fleeting
a tempo (♩ = 50)
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
absolute rhythmic accuracy not necessary
(8va sempre)
ppp
pp delicate
n
IV
pp
(8va)
loco
RH
(Ped.)

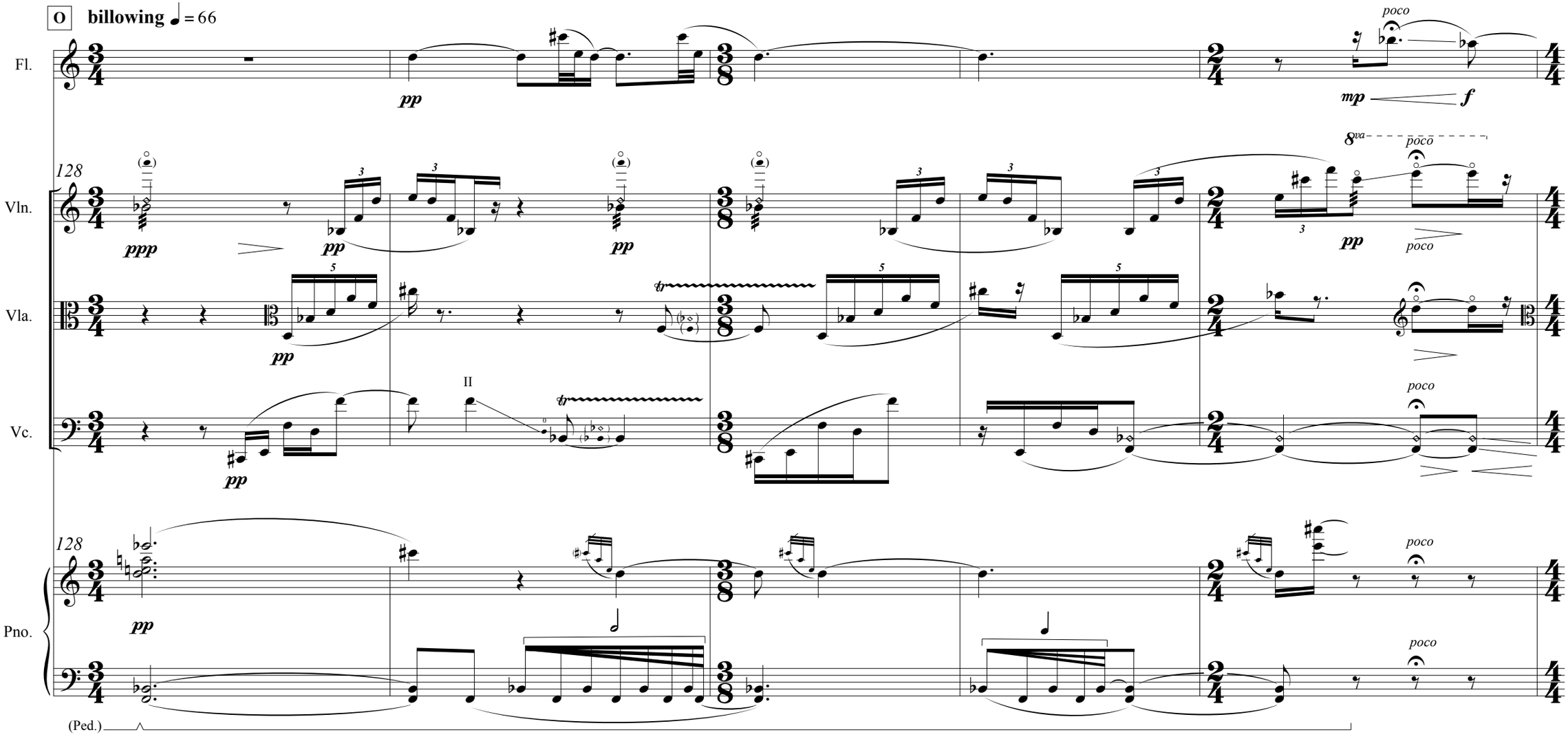


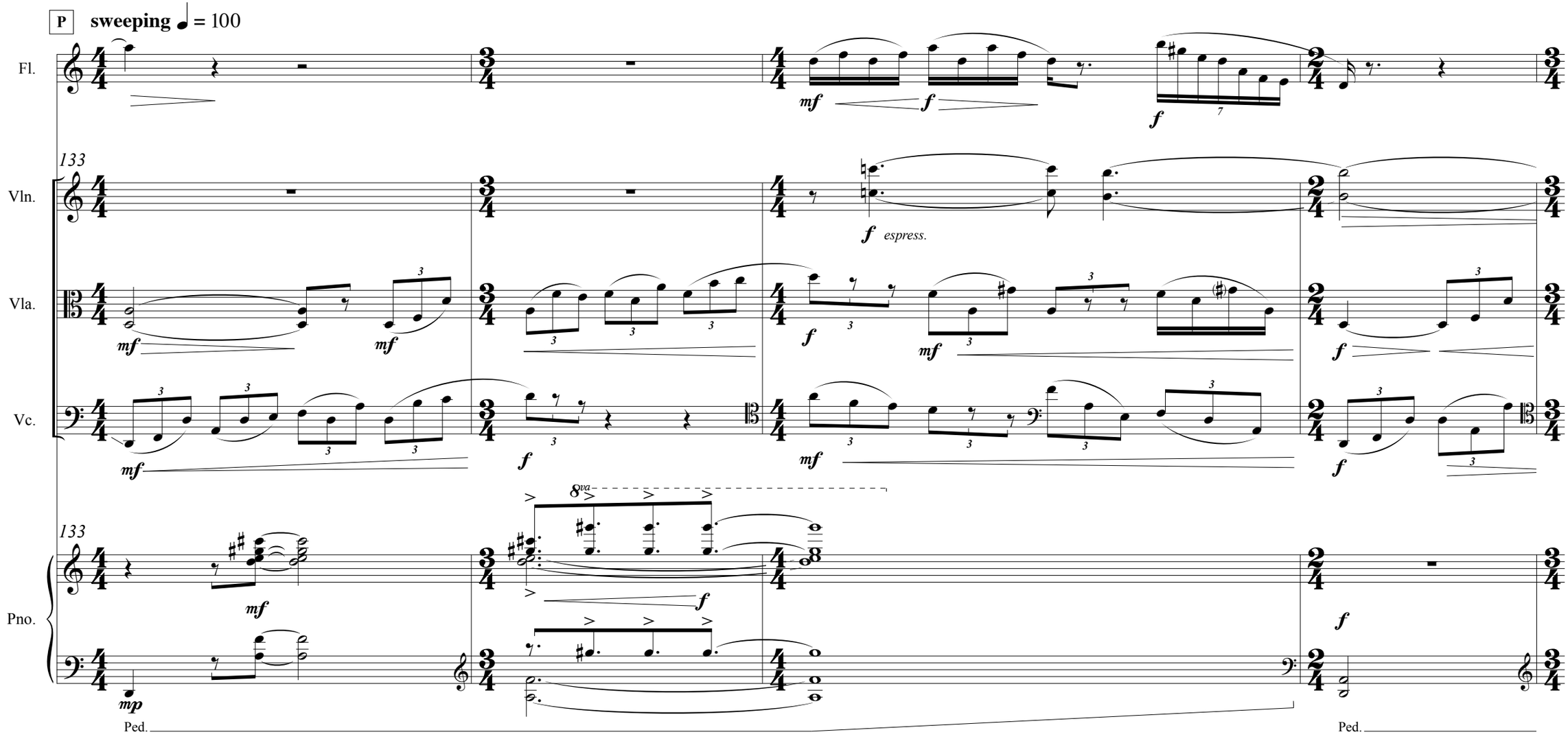
Piano: Tempo indications (always 8th-note pulse) are approximate and must only be roughly adhered to. Measure durations are also approximate and invite moderate flexibility. Pianist is tasked with cueing changes in other parts where noted.

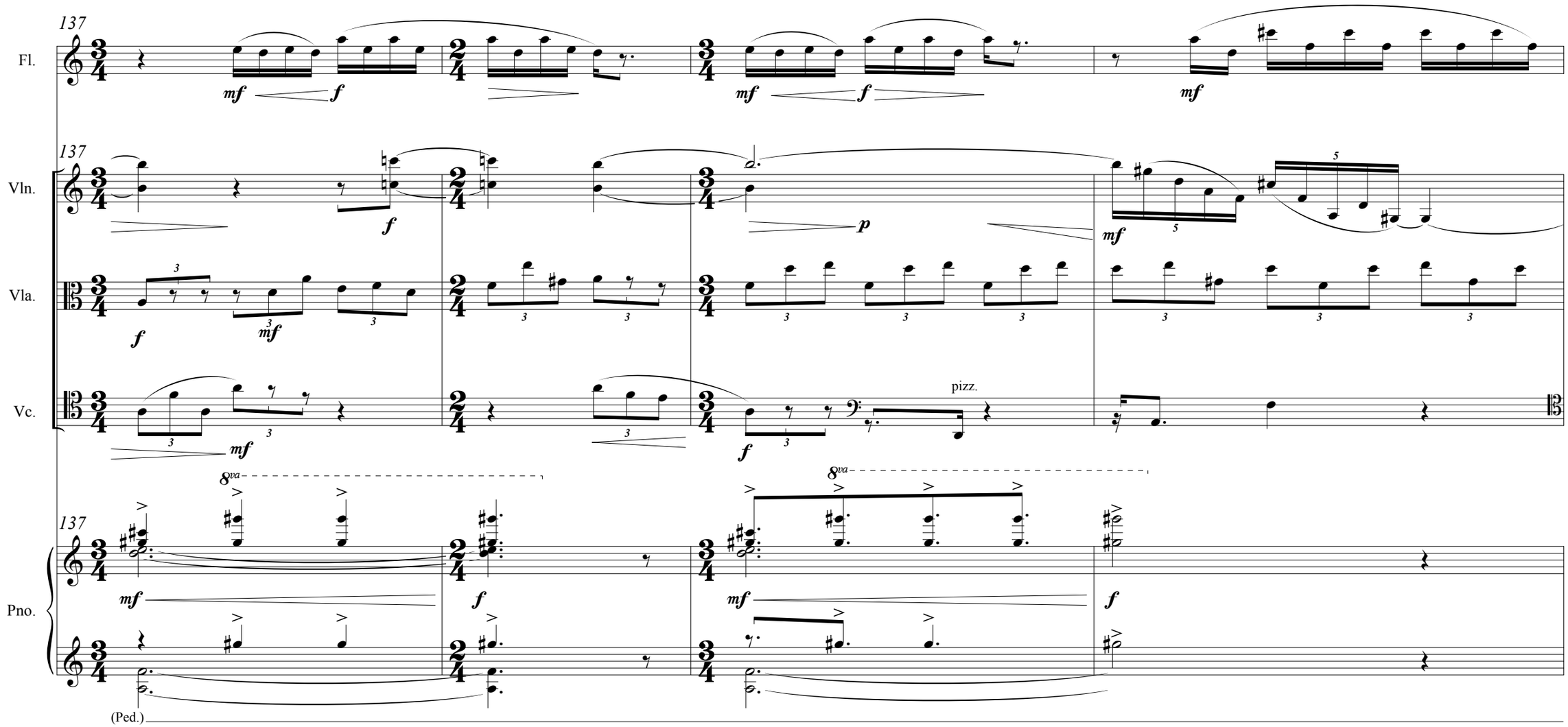
All other parts receive visual cues from pianist, who signals changes/terminations of repeated material and entrances of melodic lines.

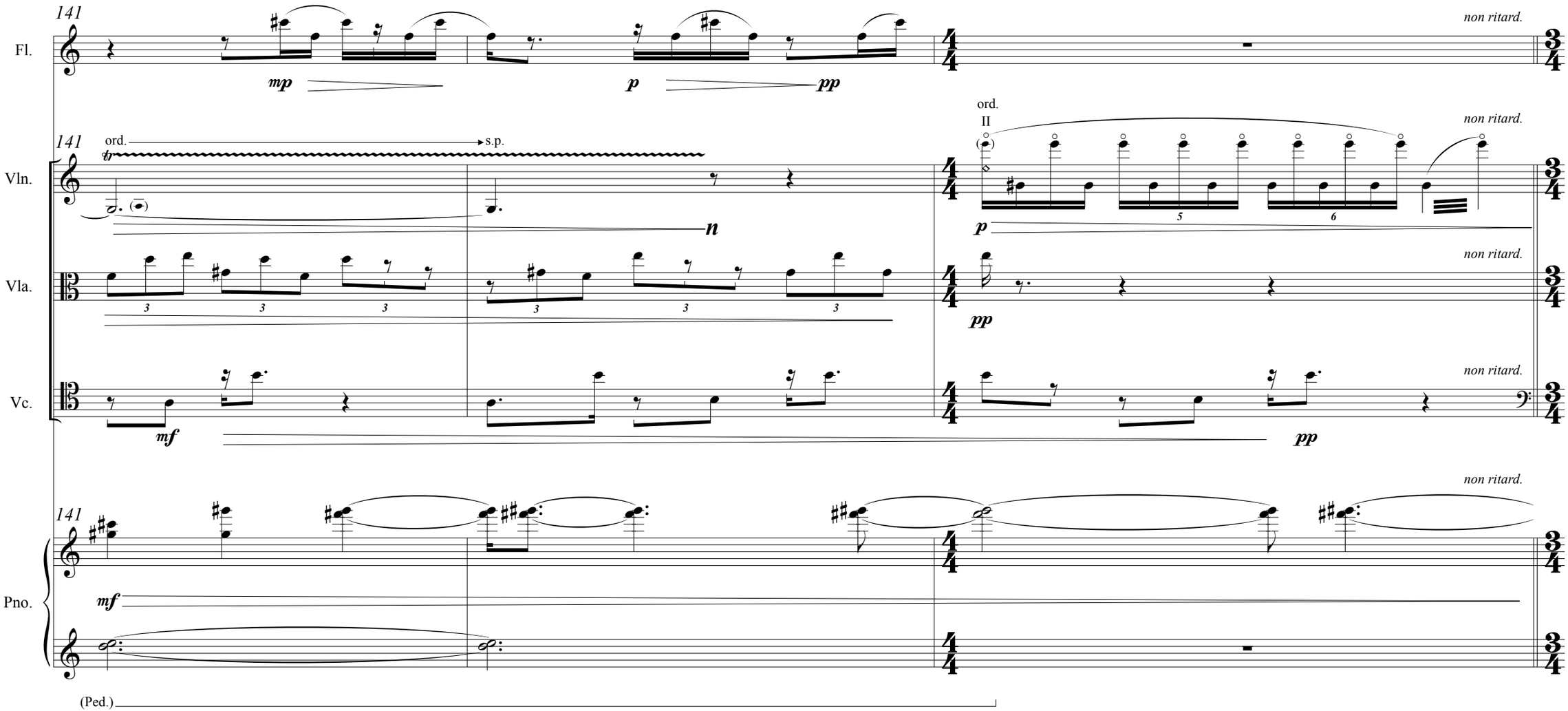

4"
1"
5"
1"
10"
121
Fl.
(end repeated material)
harmonic trill
f
include D only on
every 2-3 repetitions
II
s.t.
vary note and pause lengths
Vln.
(end repeated material)
s.t., flaut.
III
transition to harmonic
ord. pressure
Vla.
mf
Vc.
p
mp
4"
1"
5"
1"
10"
≈ 112
152
≈ 112
56
≈ 76
168
(168)
224
Pno.
cue others
mf
pp
mf
pp
(Ped.)

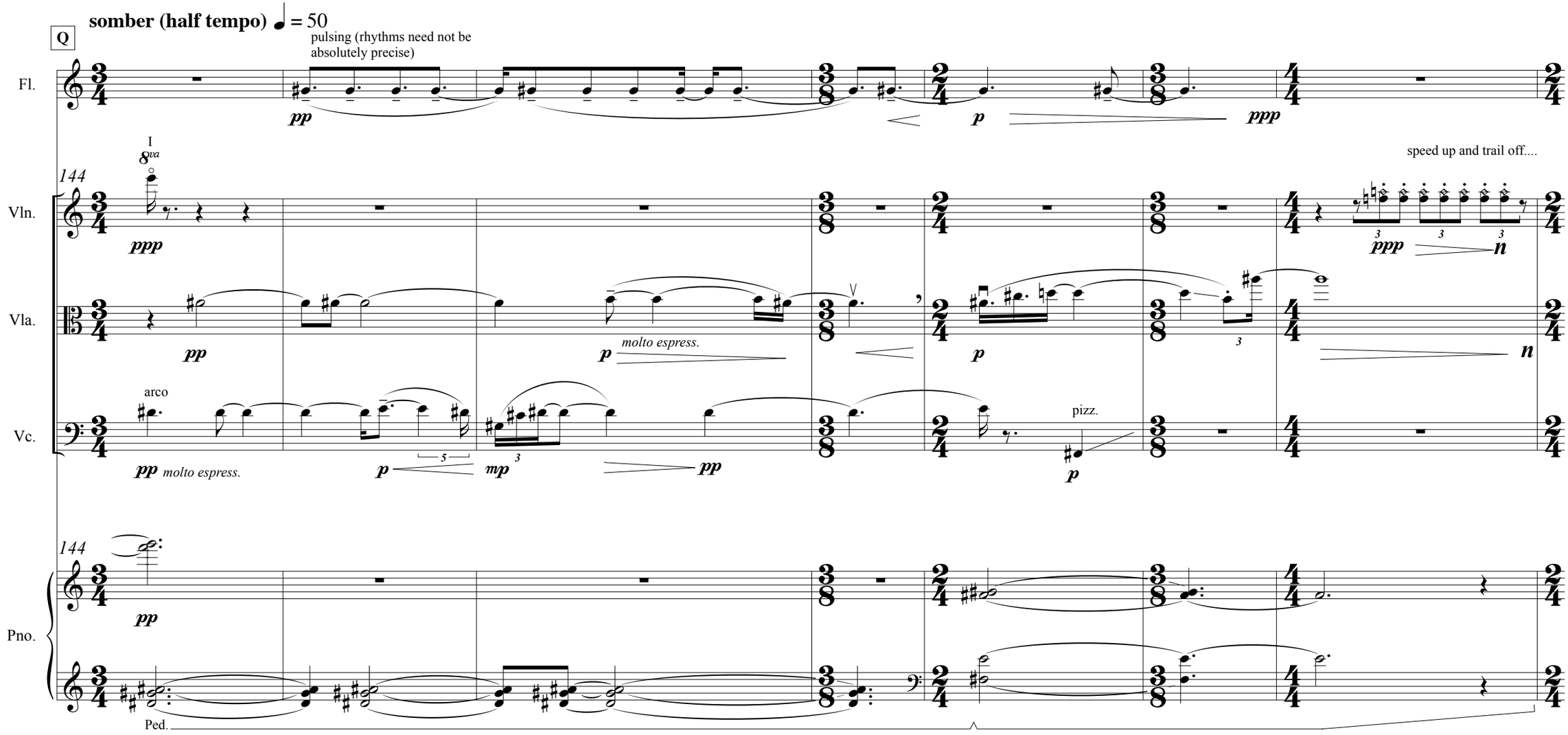

5"
10"
126
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
p
pppp
mf/pp
8va
tremolo
non. arm.
pp
mf
mp
tr
≈ 152
88
f
(Ped.)

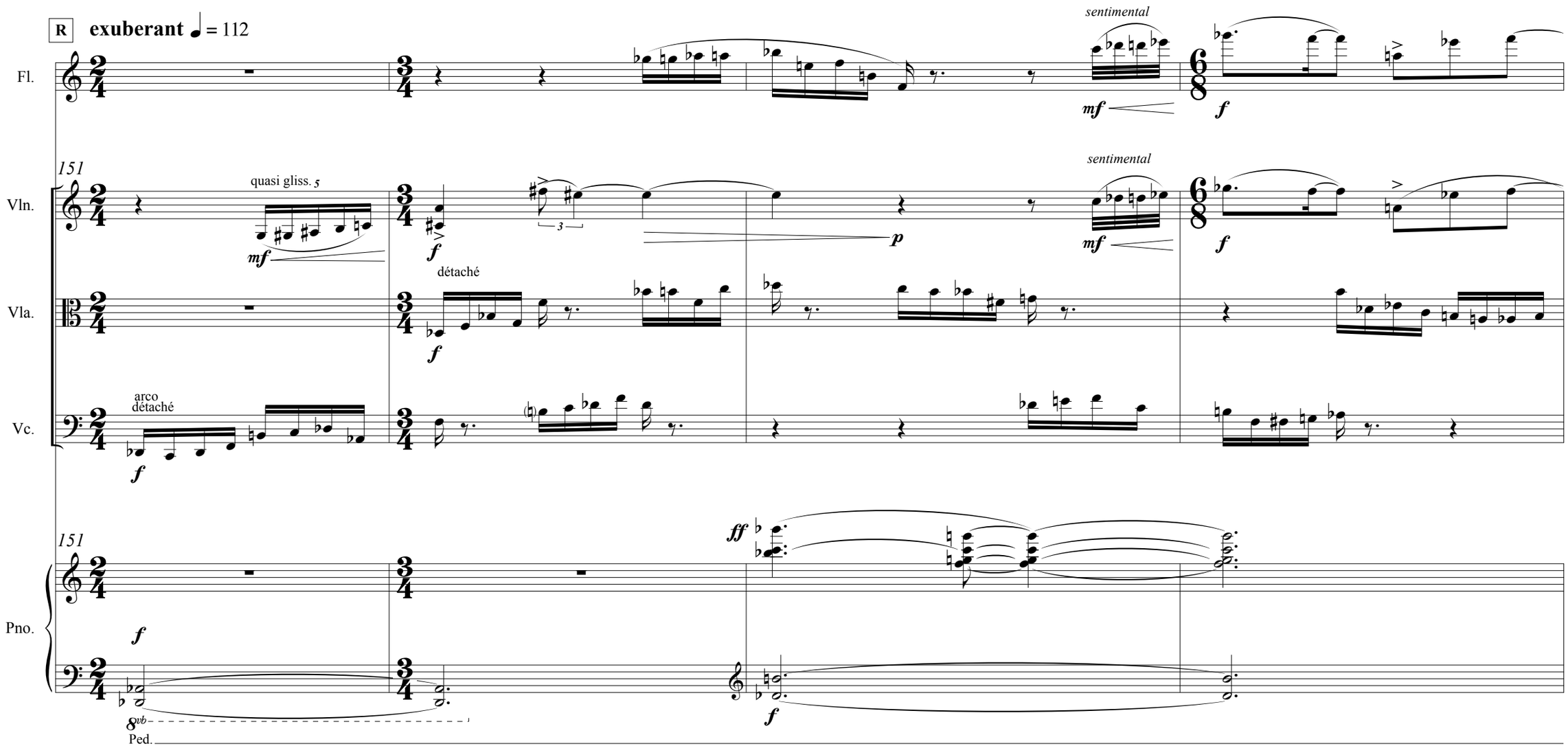

O
billowing ♩ = 66
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
128
ppp
pp
mp
f
poco
8va
II
(Ped.)

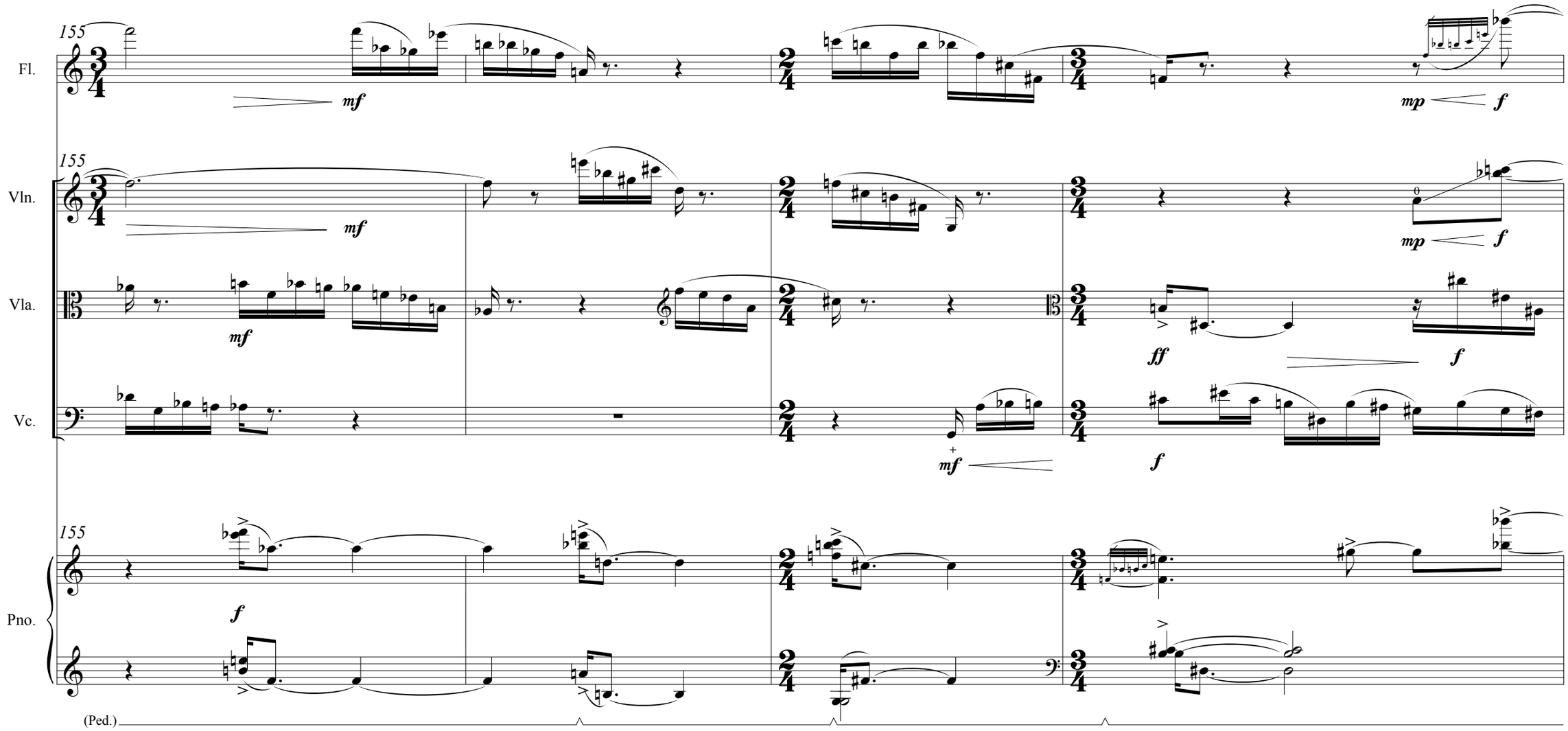

P
sweeping ♩ = 100
Fl.
133
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
133
Pno.
espress.
8va
Ped.
Ped.

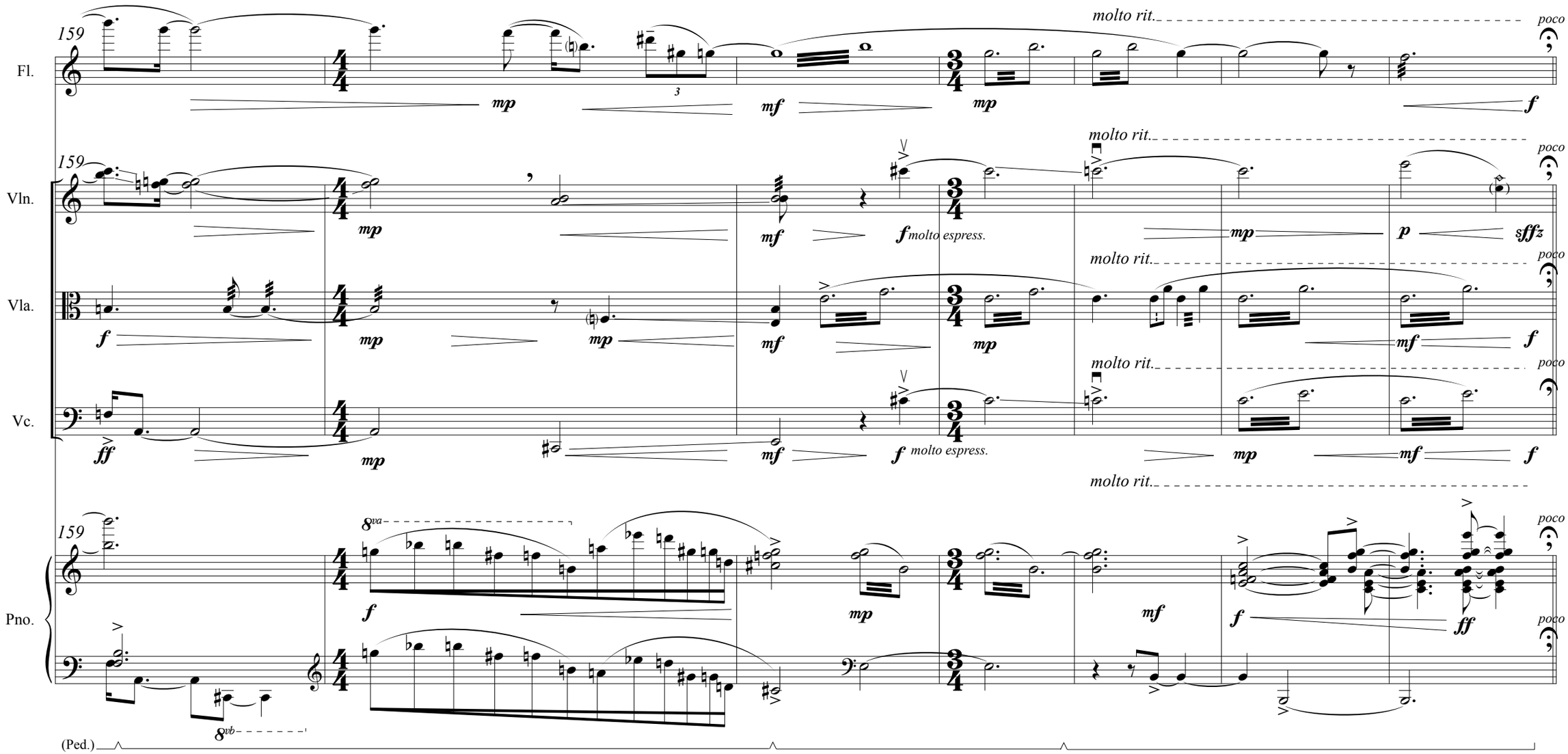

137
Fl.
mf
f
mf
f
mf
137
Vln.
f
p
mf
5
5
Vla.
f
3
mf
3
3
3
3
3
3
Vc.
mf
3
3
3
f
3
pizz.
137
8va
8va
Pno.
mf
f
mf
f
(Ped.)

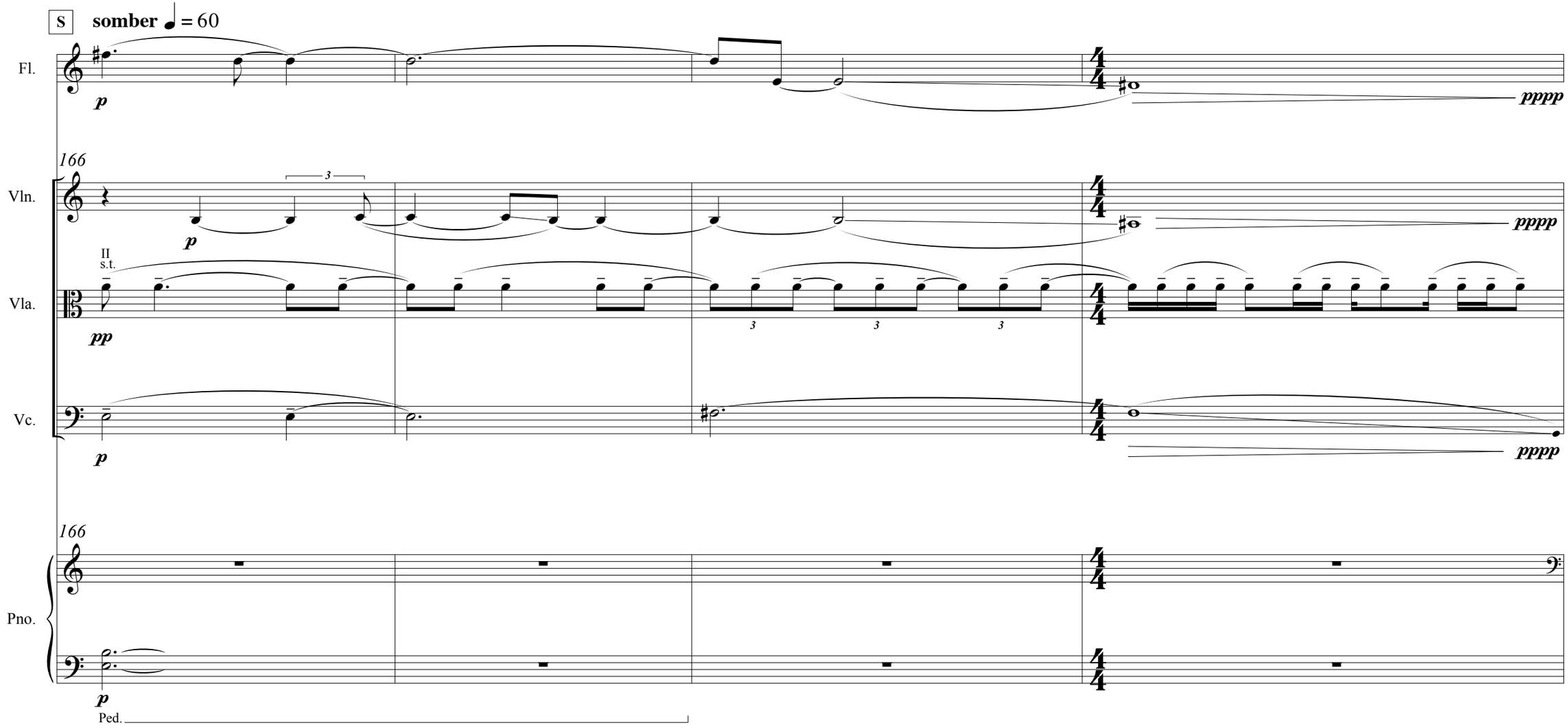

141
Fl.
mp
p
pp
non ritard.
141
ord.
s.p.
Vln.
n
ord.
II
p
non ritard.
Vla.
pp
non ritard.
Vc.
mf
pp
non ritard.
141
Pno.
mf
non ritard.
(Ped.)

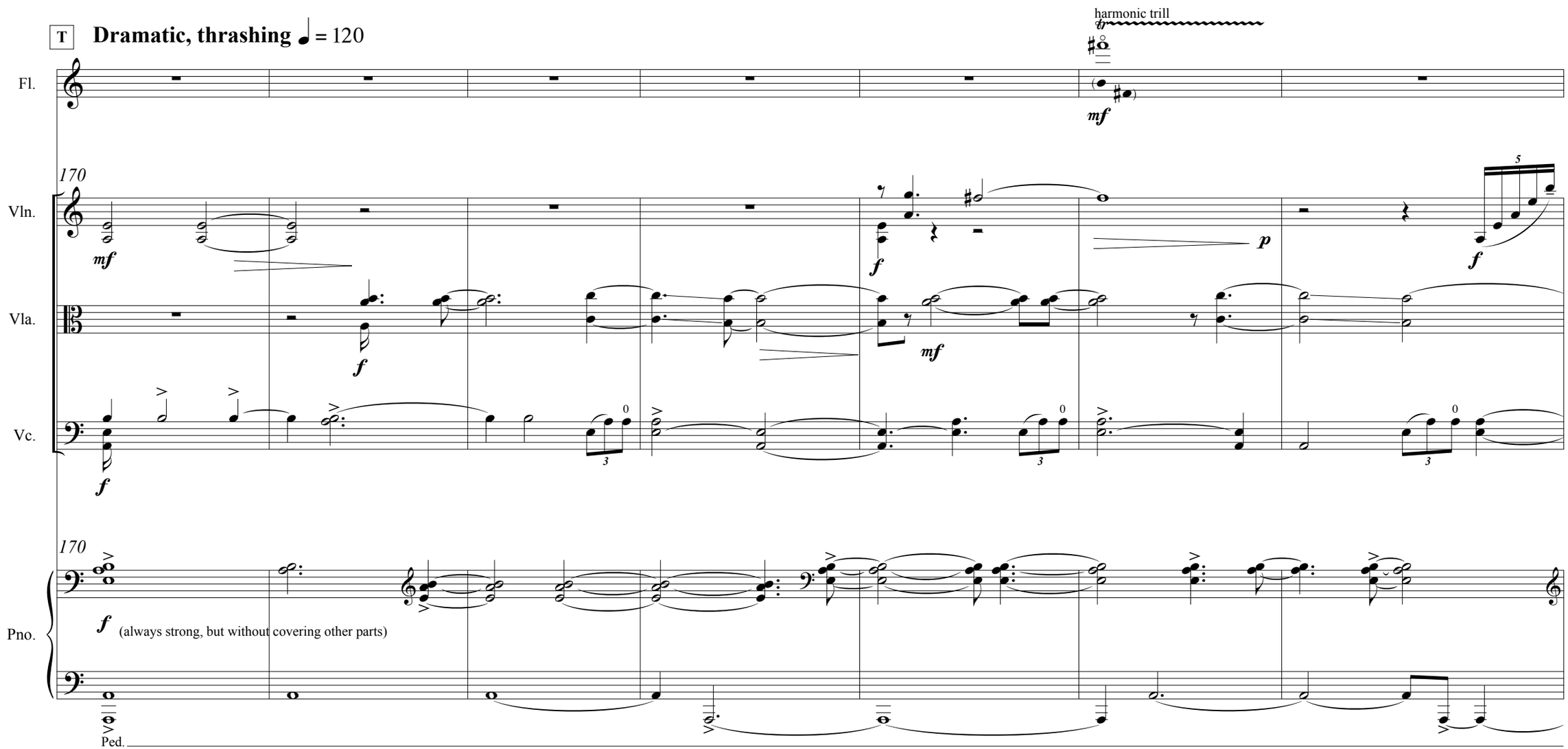

Q
somber (half tempo) ♩ = 50
pulsing (rhythms need not be absolutely precise)
Fl.
pp
p
ppp
I
8va
144
Vln.
ppp
speed up and trail off....
Vla.
pp
p molto espress.
p
n
arco
Vc.
pp molto espress.
p
mp
pp
pizz.
p
144
Pno.
pp
Ped.

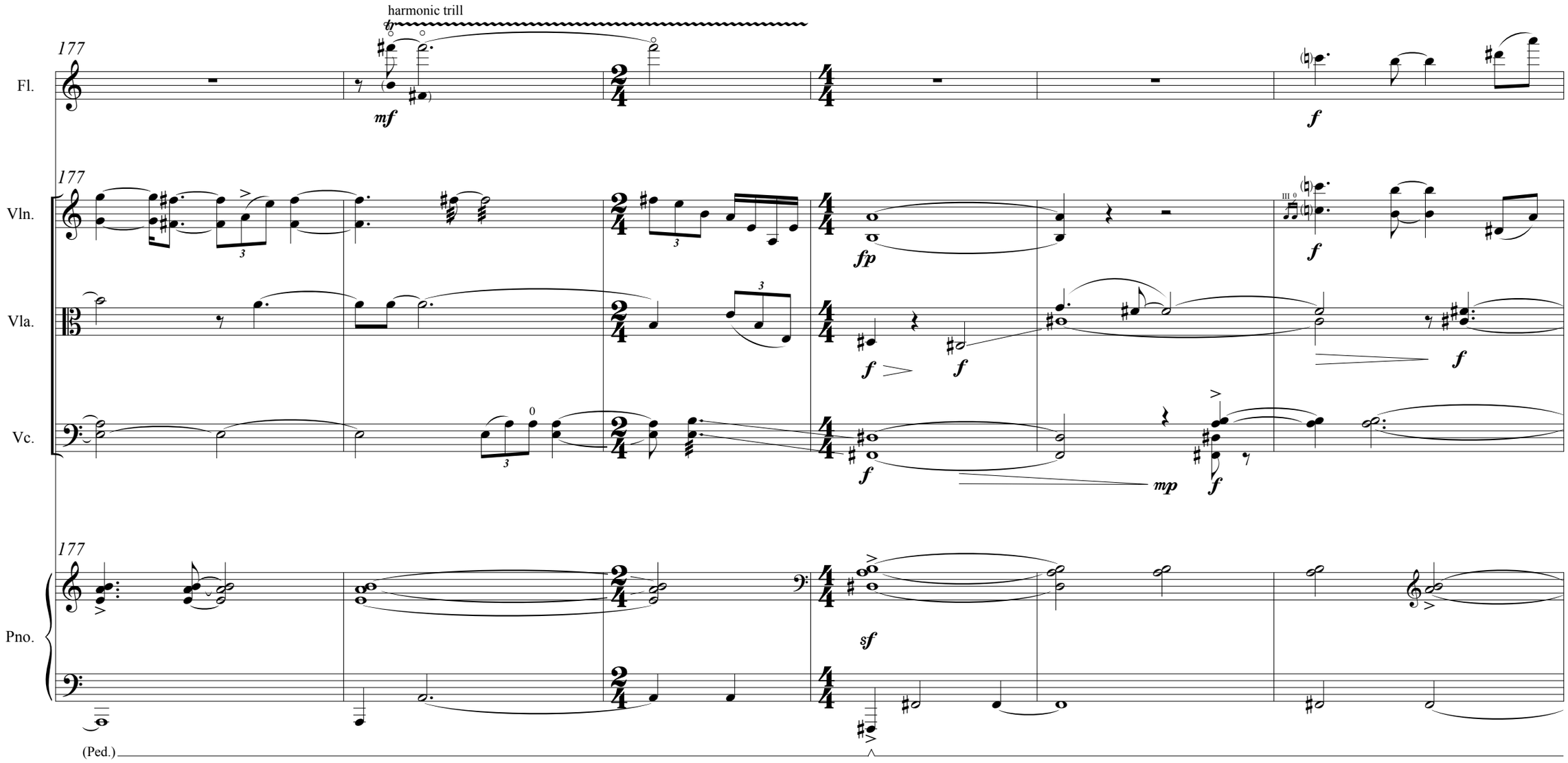

R
exuberant ♩ = 112
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
151
quasi gliss. 5
mf
f
p
détaché
arco
détaché
sentimental
ff
8vb
Ped.

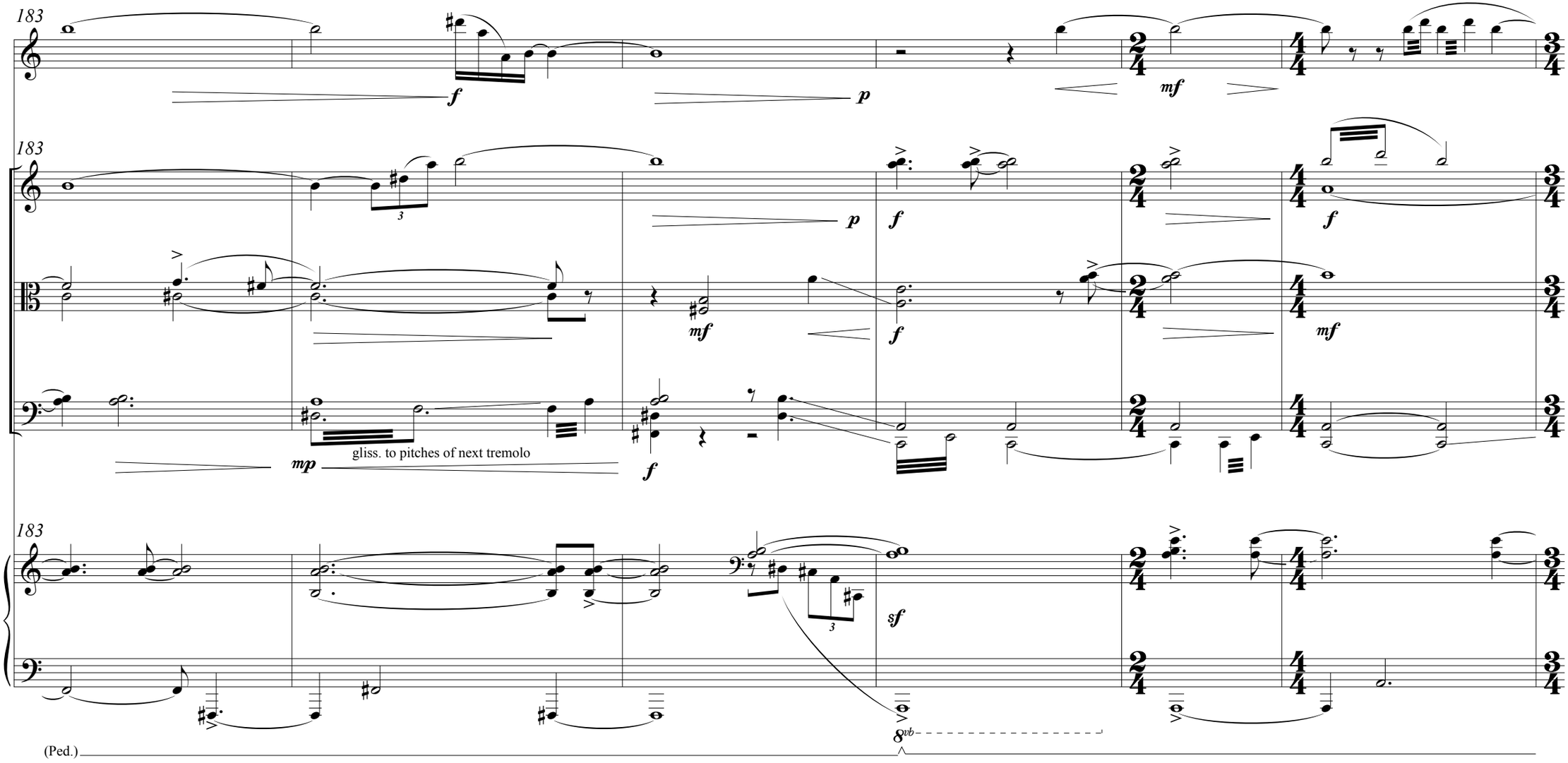

155
Fl.
mf
mp
f
155
Vln.
mf
mp
f
Vla.
mf
ff
f
Vc.
mf
f
155
Pno.
f
(Ped.)

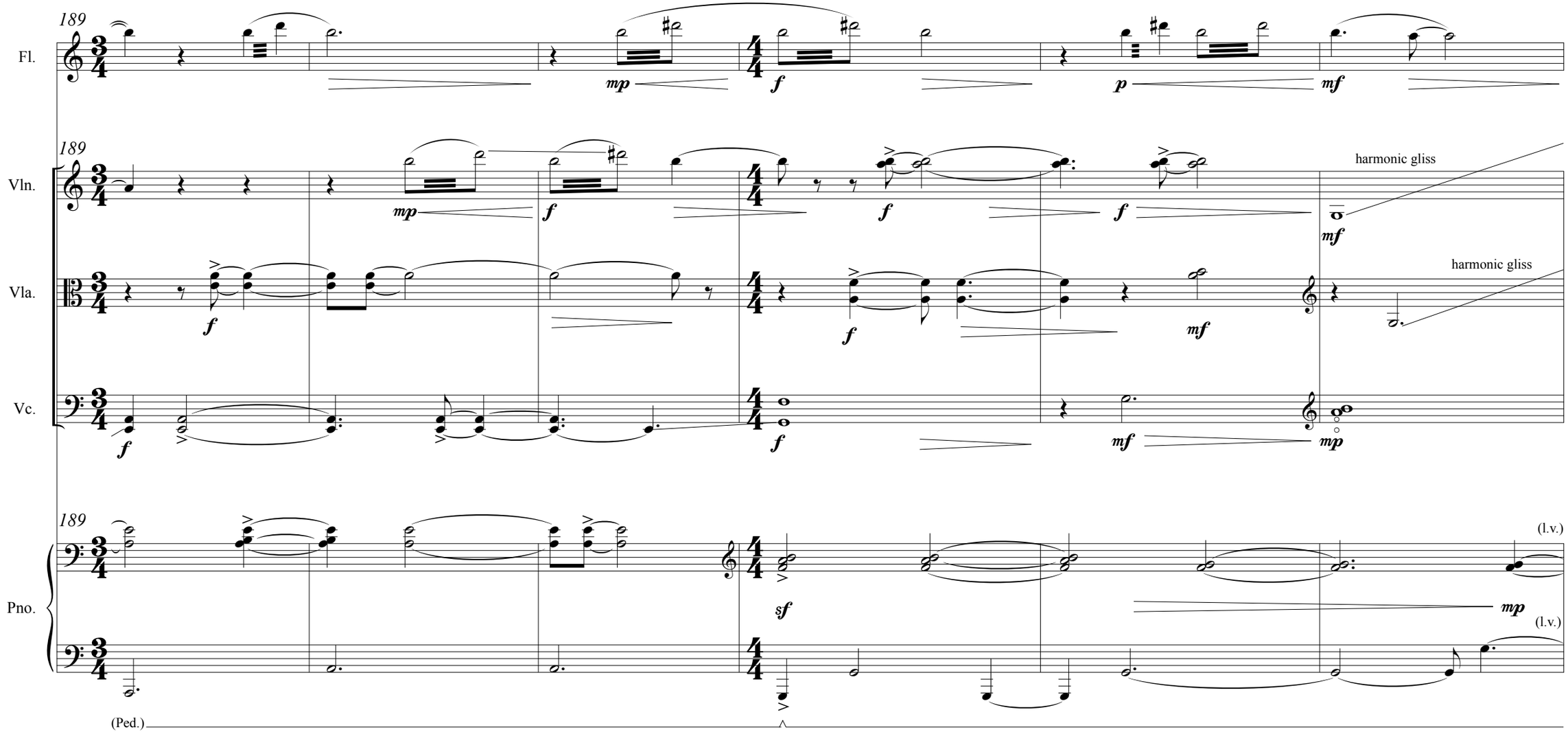

159
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
(Ped.)
molto rit.
poco
mp
mf
f
ff
p
sfffz
molto espress.
8va
8vb

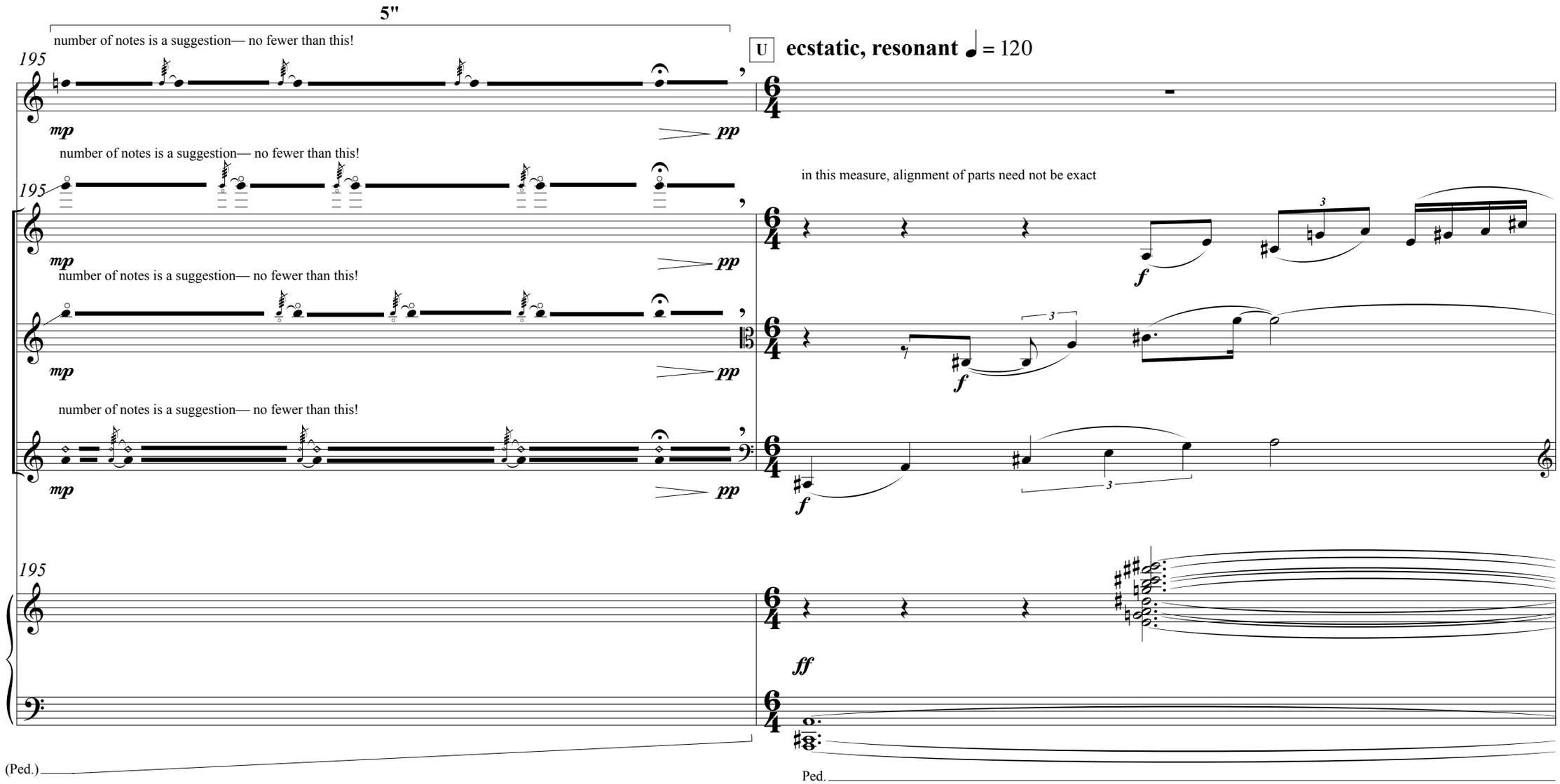

S
somber ♩ = 60
Fl.
p
pppp
166
Vln.
3
p
pppp
II
s.t.
Vla.
pp
3
3
3
Vc.
p
pppp
166
Pno.
p
Ped.

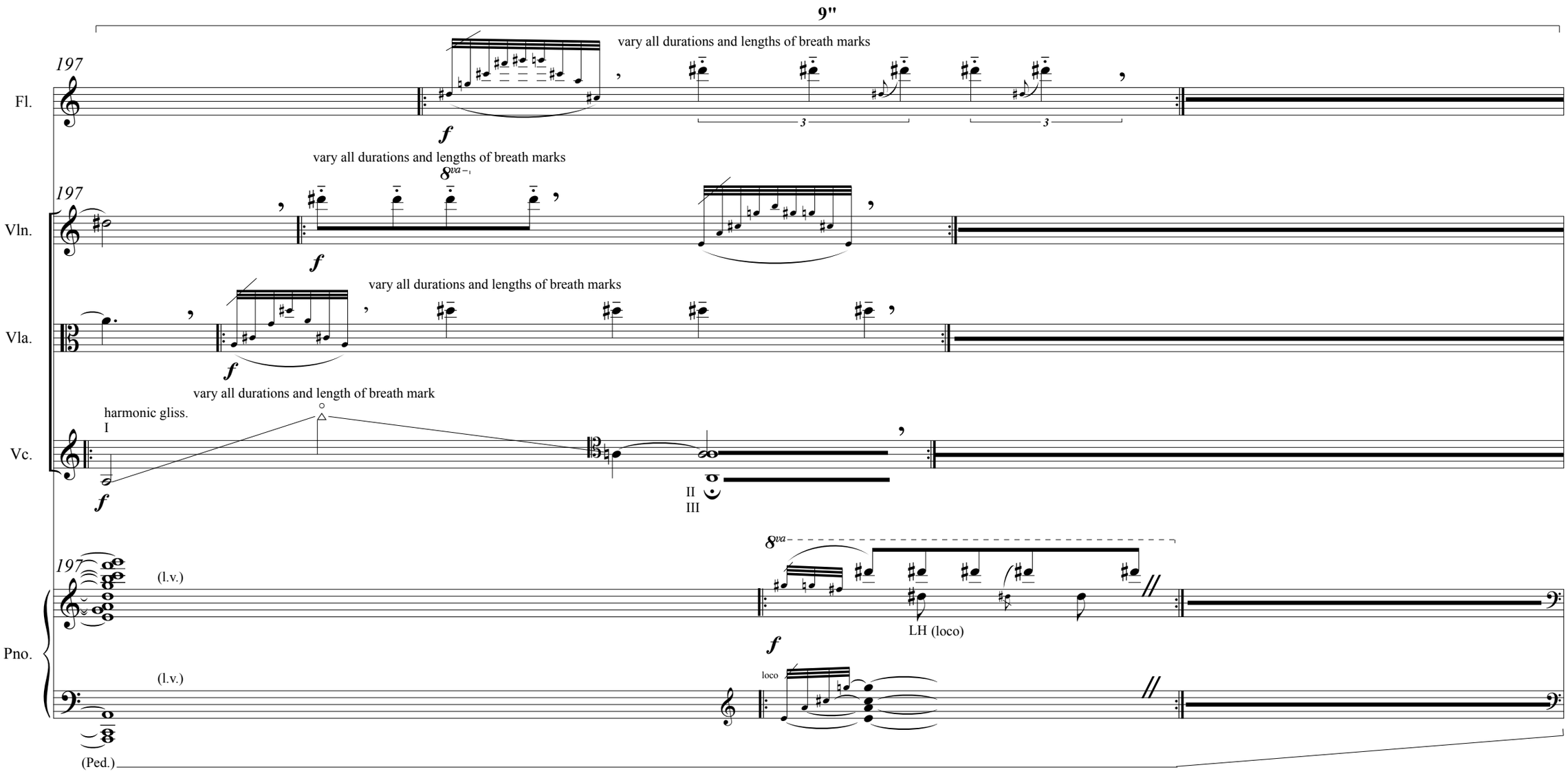

T
Dramatic, thrashing ♩ = 120
harmonic trill
Fl.
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
Pno.
170
mf
f
mf
p
f
(always strong, but without covering other parts)
Ped.

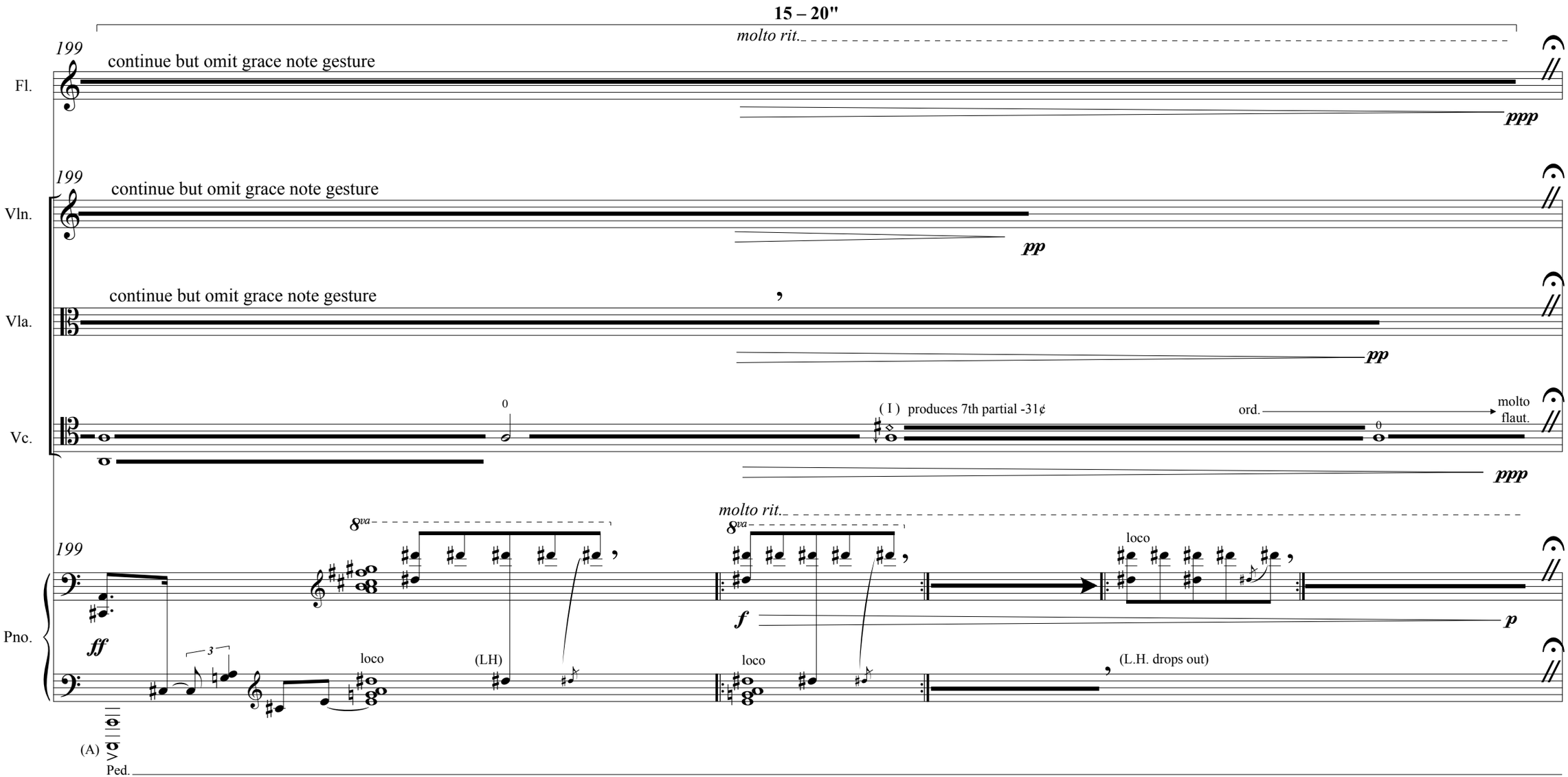

harmonic trill
177
Fl.
mf
f
177
Vln.
fp
f
Vla.
f
f
f
Vc.
f
mp
f
177
Pno.
sf
(Ped.)

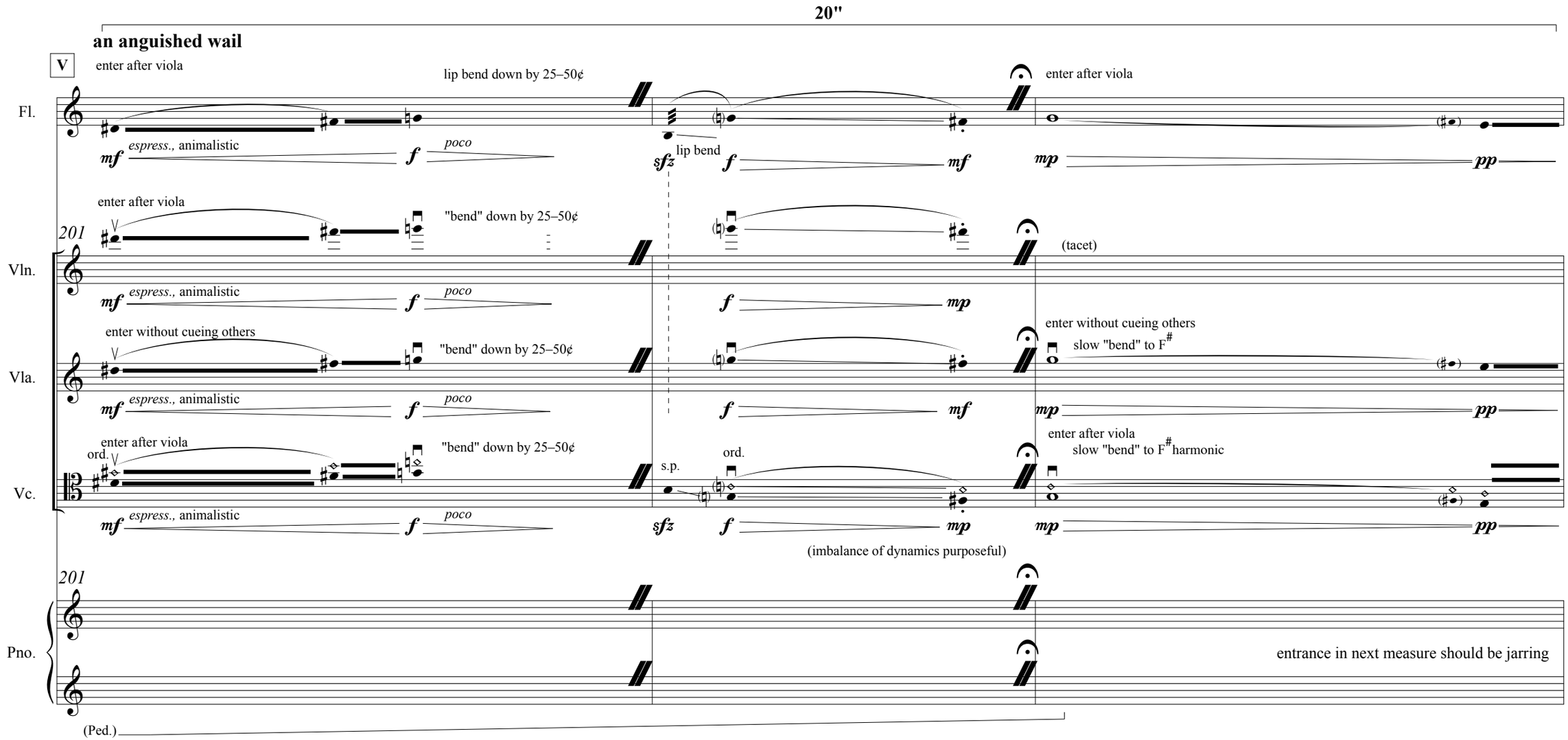

183
Fl.
f
p
mf
183
Vln.
p
f
f
Vla.
mf
f
mf
Vc.
mp
gliss. to pitches of next tremolo
f
183
Pno.
sf
8vb
(Ped.)


189
Fl.
mp
f
p
mf
189
Vln.
mp
f
f
f
harmonic gliss
mf
Vla.
f
f
mf
harmonic gliss
Vc.
f
f
mf
mp
189
Pno.
sf
(l.v.)
mp
(l.v.)
(Ped.)

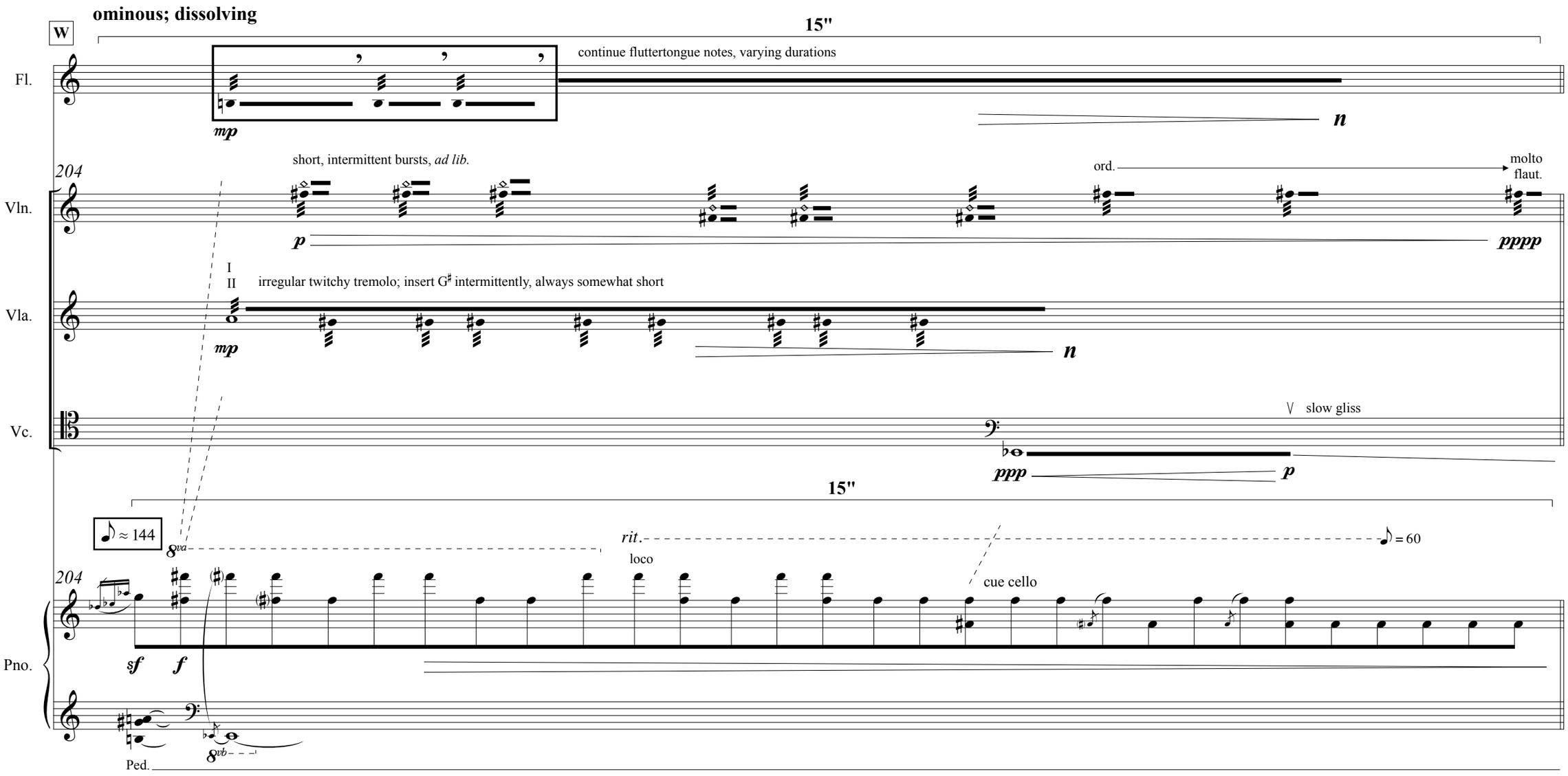

5"
number of notes is a suggestion— no fewer than this!
U
ecstatic, resonant ♩ = 120
195
Fl.
mp
pp
number of notes is a suggestion— no fewer than this!
195
Vln.
mp
pp
in this measure, alignment of parts need not be exact
f
3
number of notes is a suggestion— no fewer than this!
Vla.
mp
pp
f
3
number of notes is a suggestion— no fewer than this!
Vc.
mp
pp
f
3
195
Pno.
ff
(Ped.)
Ped.

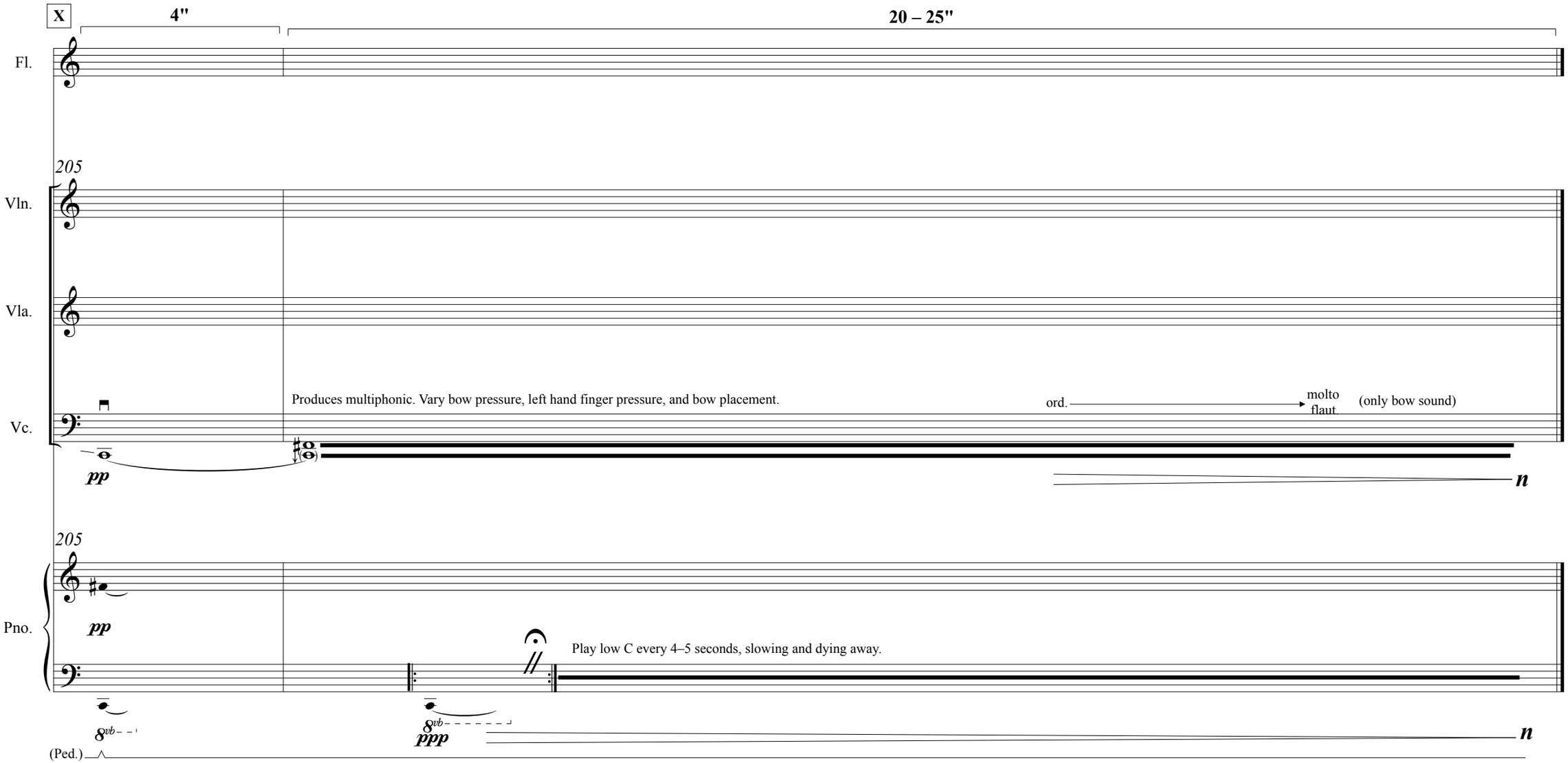

9"
197
Fl.
vary all durations and lengths of breath marks
f
3
3
197
Vln.
vary all durations and lengths of breath marks
8va
f
Vla.
vary all durations and lengths of breath marks
f
vary all durations and length of breath mark
harmonic gliss.
I
Vc.
f
II
III
197
Pno.
(l.v.)
8va
LH (loco)
f
(l.v.)
loco
(Ped.)


15 – 20"
molto rit.
199
Fl.
continue but omit grace note gesture
ppp
199
Vln.
continue but omit grace note gesture
pp
Vla.
continue but omit grace note gesture
pp
Vc.
0
(I) produces 7th partial -31¢
ord.
molto flaut.
0
ppp
molto rit.
199
Pno.
8va
ff
3
loco
(LH)
8va
f
loco
loco
p
(L.H. drops out)
(A)
Ped.



For this system: The beginnings and endings — as well as middles — of phrases should not be coordinated between parts (the only exception being the alignment between flute and cello in the second measure). In the first and third bars, the violist begins without giving a cue. The other players enter shortly after, independently.


ominous; dissolving
W
15"
Fl.
continue fluttertongue notes, varying durations
mp
n
204
Vln.
short, intermittent bursts, ad lib.
ord.
molto flaut.
p
pppp
I
II
Vla.
irregular twitchy tremolo; insert G♯ intermittently, always somewhat short
mp
n
Vc.
slow gliss
ppp
p
15"
♪ ≈ 144
8va
rit.
♪ = 60
204
loco
cue cello
Pno.
sf
f
8vb
Ped.


X
4"
20 – 25"
Fl.
205
Vln.
Vla.
Produces multiphonic. Vary bow pressure, left hand finger pressure, and bow placement.
ord.
molto flaut
(only bow sound)
Vc.
pp
n
205
Pno.
pp
Play low C every 4–5 seconds, slowing and dying away.
8vb
ppp
n
(Ped.)