Alex Temple

Everything is named after something lost (2023)

for flute, b-flat clarinet,
violin, cello,
piano and electronics

music + text by Alex Temple
movement + props by Katie C. Doyle

commissioned by Chatter

transposing score

ABOUT THE PIECE

Everything is named after something lost is a multimedia work consisting of music and text by Alex Temple, movement and sculpture by Katie C. Doyle, and a concept by both. The piece is about the Superstition Mountains, a range located in southeastern Arizona near the city of Apache Junction. Its texts depict our imagination of the mountain's point of view — a perspective alien to humans, taking place over geological time.

The piece is divided into eight sections. Those labeled "Prelude" or "Interlude" consist of two-channel electronic playback (some of which are accompanied by semi-improvised instrumental music), while the others are played only by the ensemble.

Note: all grace notes should be played quickly and before the beat.

Electronics 1: The Mountain Speaks. The Mountain introduces itself in distorted, otherworldly speech.

Crags and Outcroppings. The piano plays dissonant block chords, representing the firmness and solidity of the rock, while the other instruments elaborate on the Superstition Melody, an angular tune that traces the contour of the Mountain's peaks as seen from a nearby tourist attraction known as Goldfield Ghost Town.

Electronics 2: The Desert. The Mountain's speech becomes more comprehensible, and it describes the arid landscape it's situated in.

New Shapes. The instrumentalists gradually build the Superstition Melody out of its constituent motivic cells, and then turn it into an off-kilter waltz.

Electronics 3: The Pleasures of Volcanic Activity. The Mountain discusses the sensuality of geological processes, while the strings play creaking sounds suggestive of moving rock.

Let the Rest of the World Go By. The instrumentalists play with the melodies and harmonies of a song by the same title, written by Ernest R. Ball and J. Keirn Brennan in 1919. According to an exhibit at the Lost Dutchman Museum, this song was a favorite of Lucy and Julian King, who built a guest ranch in the area in the 1940s. Eventually the piano begins to interject with figures representing the local flora: saguaros, ocotillos and prickly pears.

Electronics 4: The Mountain Watches Us. The Mountain describes its experience of humans, particularly the European settlers who sought gold in its veins. Meanwhile, the instrumentalists improvise gestures representing the scurrying of animals.

The End of the World. The Superstition Melody makes a dramatic return with new, lush harmonies, but gradually disintegrates and fades away as the Earth succumbs to ever-increasing temperatures.

TEXTS

The Desert

I mark the boundary between worlds. On one side lies the plain, crossed by precise grids of streets. On the other are those like me: crags and outcroppings between the meandering paths of black rivers. The cities reach for me with bifurcating limbs, ravines where water once flowed, now lined with mesquites and palo verdes. You can see the dark lines from the air, and how they twist and separate and fade when they reach my foothills.

The Pleasures of Volcanic Activity

Do you have any idea how good it feels? The violent explosion and the collapse that follows? The heat radiating from the chamber below you, pushing you up toward the celestial dome? Your flesh cleaving itself into cliffs? The gentle touch of water slowly remaking you, creating incomprehensible new shapes out of you?

The Mountain Watches Us

Many of these small, fast-moving creatures have wandered among my limbs and excrescences. They have shed their own blood in the attempt to take mine. Trading their iron, abundant in the guts of the Earth, for my gold — formed, as I was, though violence, vast cataclysms in the black of space. My lovers have tried to dissuade them; the Wind has knocked them from my highest points, the Sun showered them in rays that peel their skin and confuse their innermost codes. They have not been dissuaded. But I will be here long after they have been reduced to a memory, carved into my stoic skin.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

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Ernest R. Ball & J. Keirn Brennan's "Let the Rest of the World Go By," which is quoted in distorted form in the section of the same name, is in the public domain.

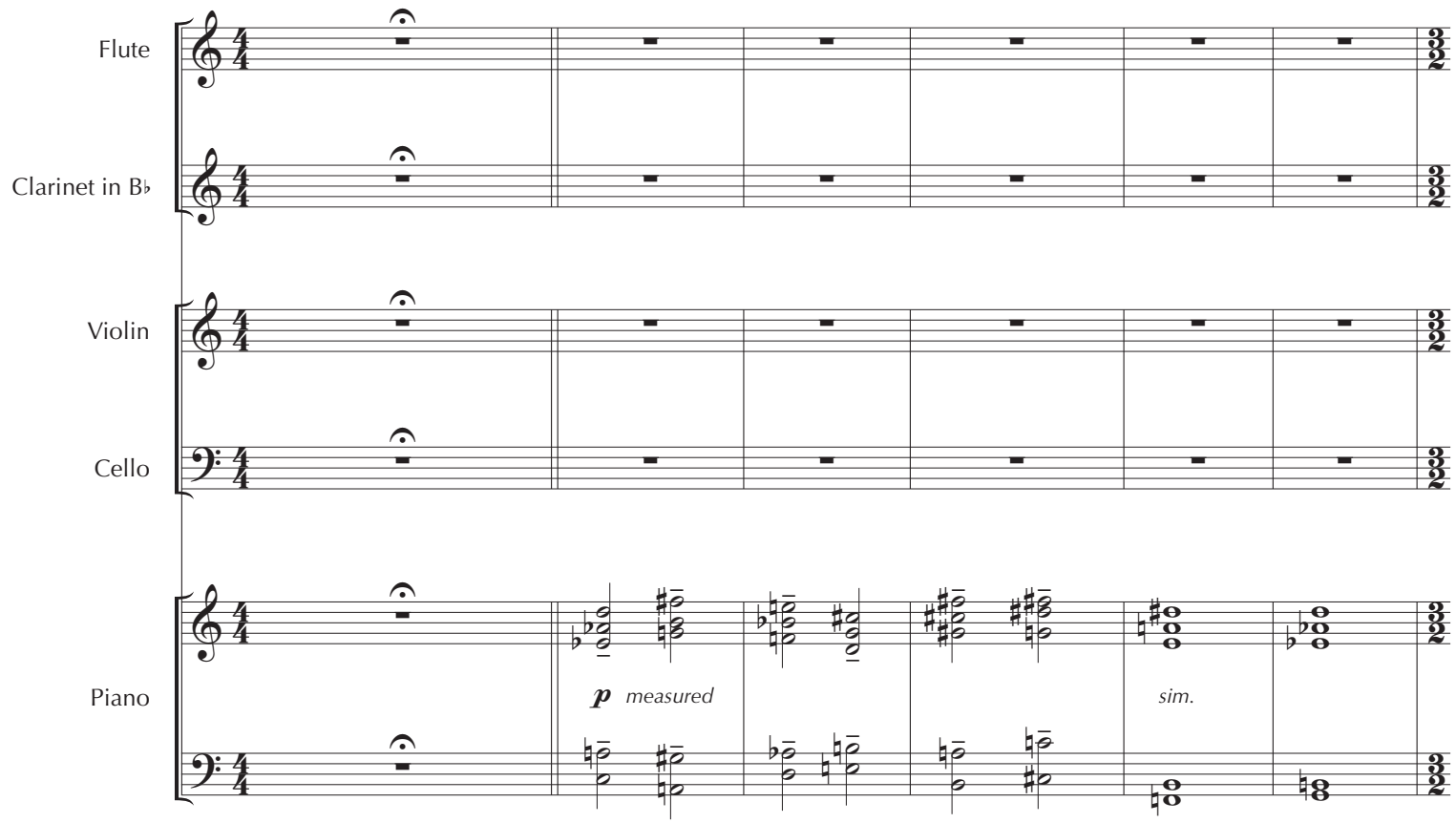
Everything is named after something lost

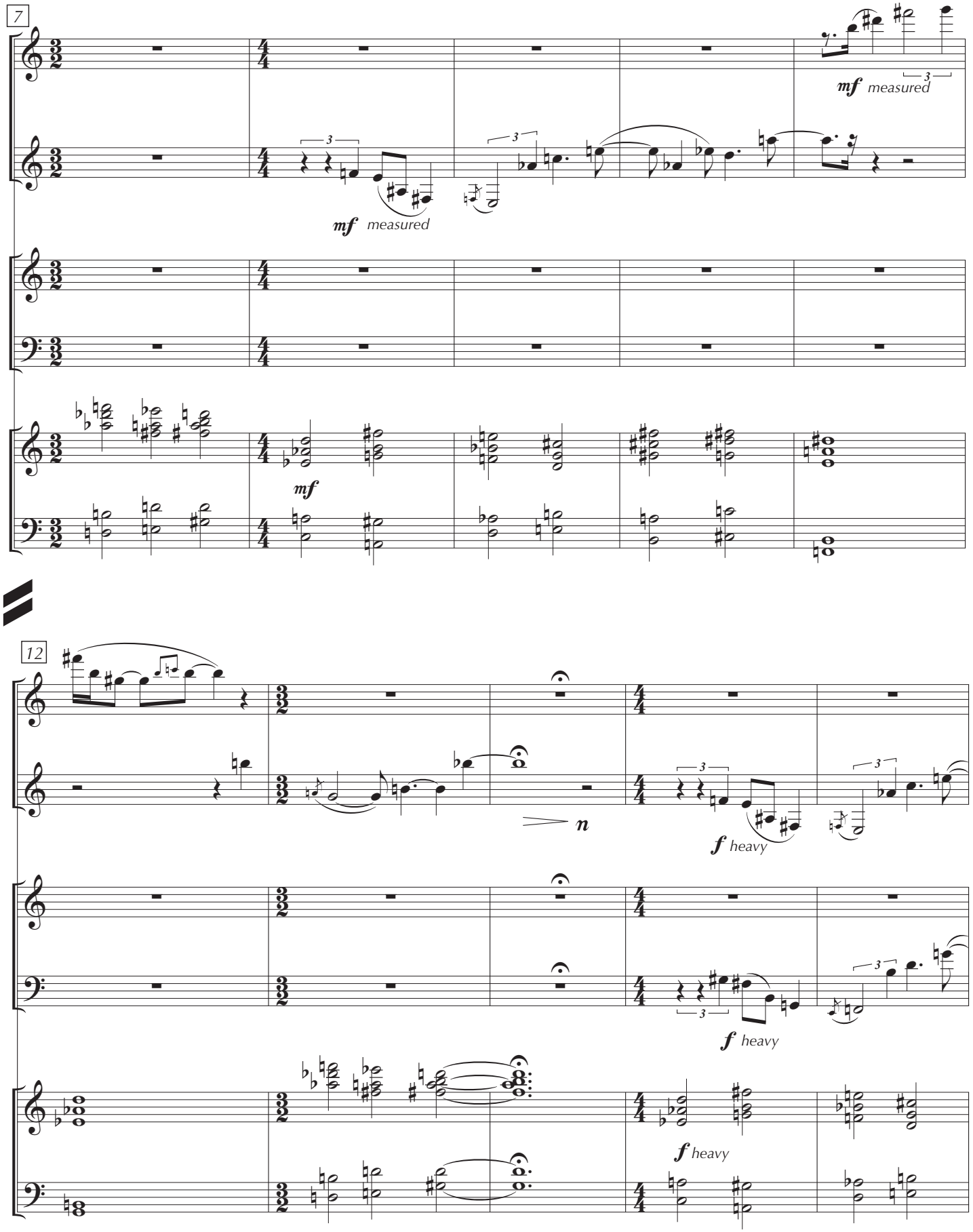
for Chatter

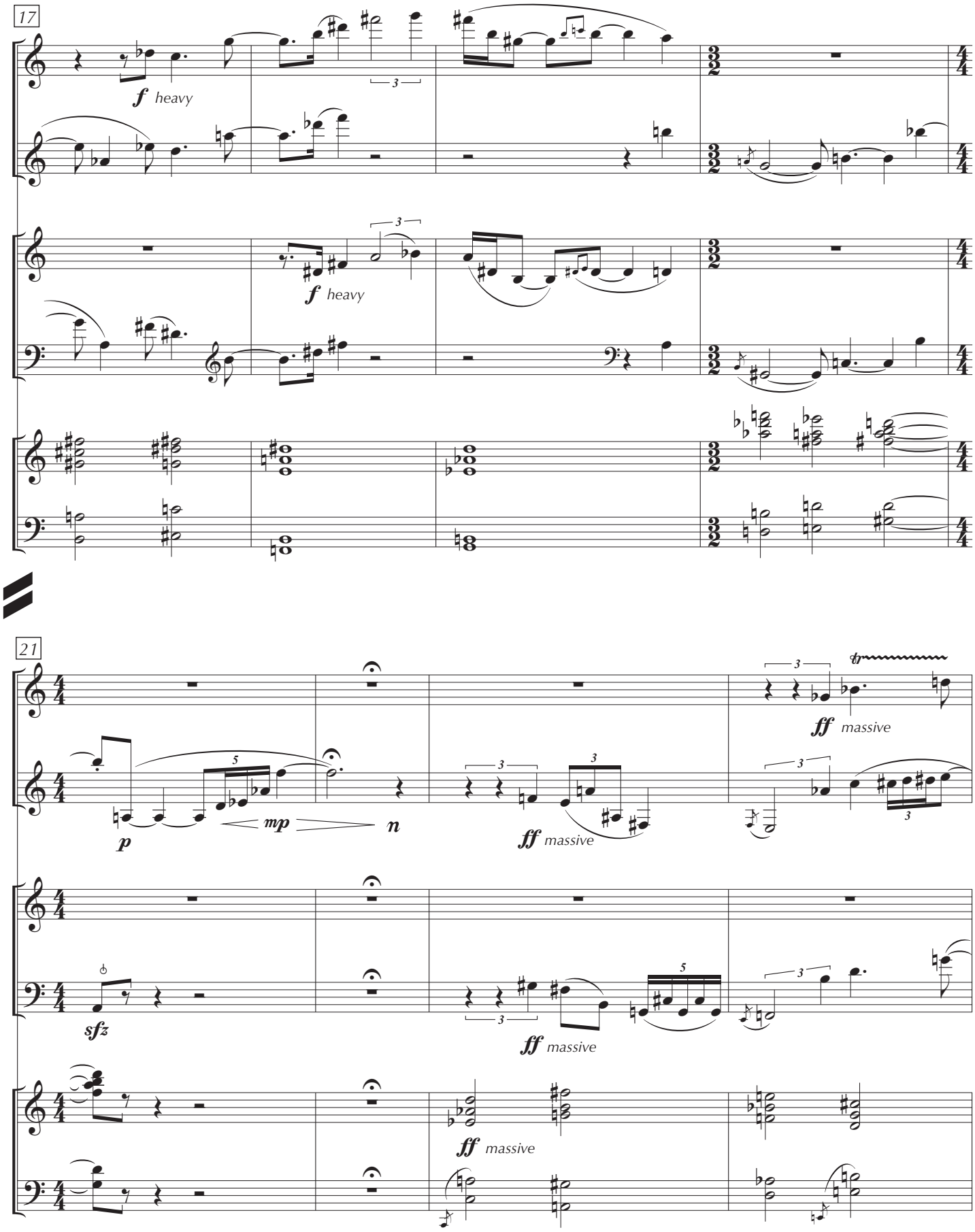
Prelude:
The Mountain Speaks

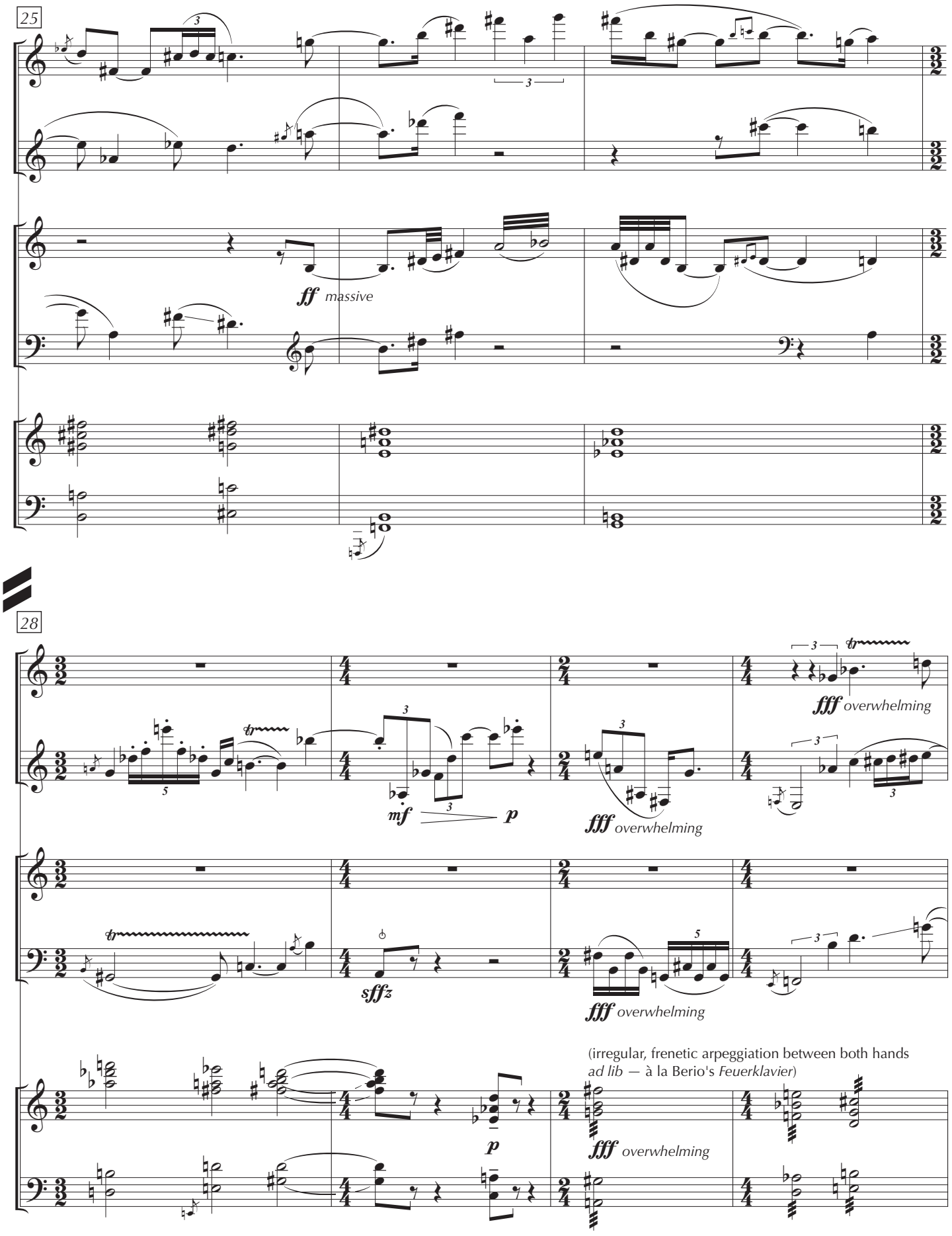
A

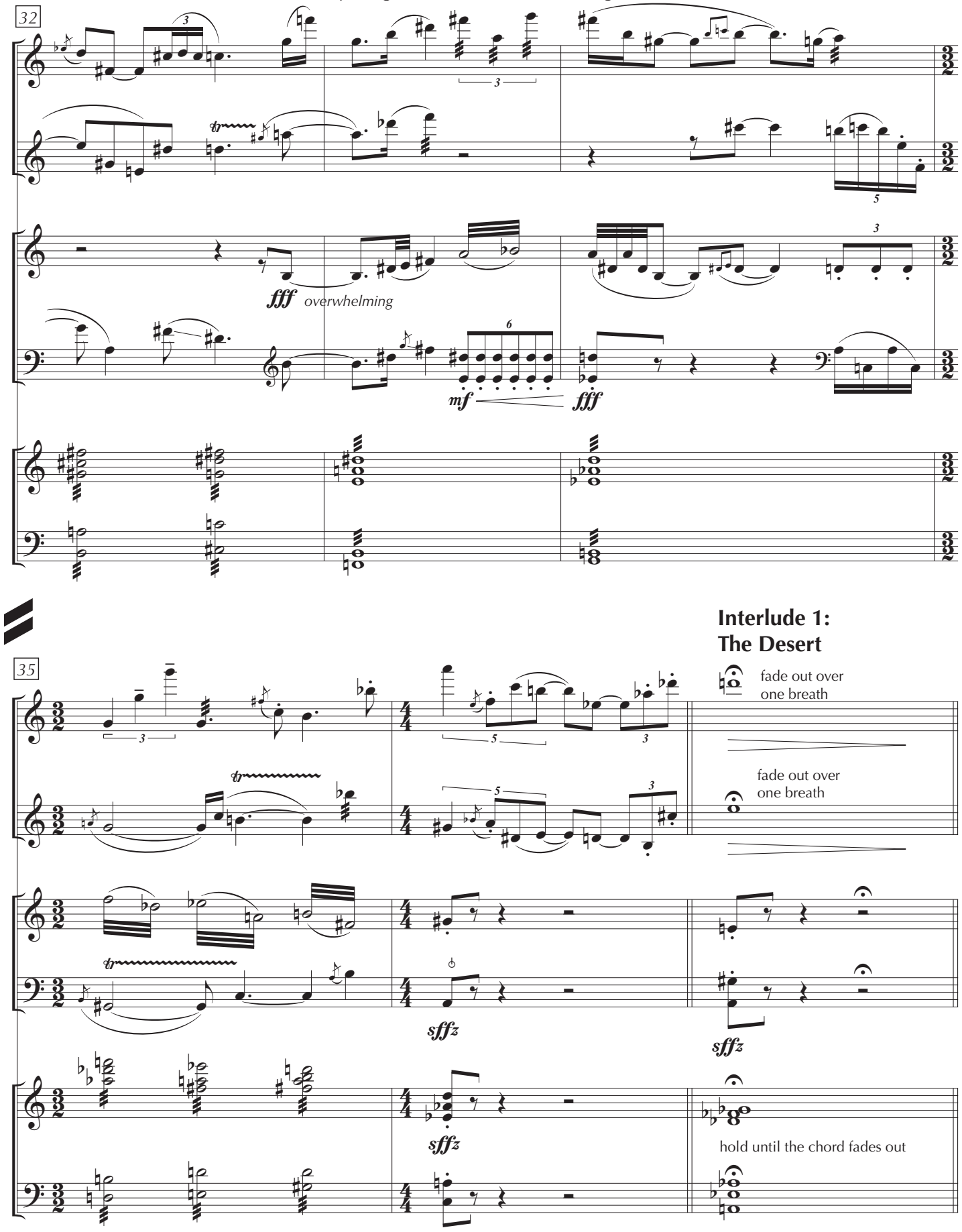
Crags and Outcroppings ♩ = 60

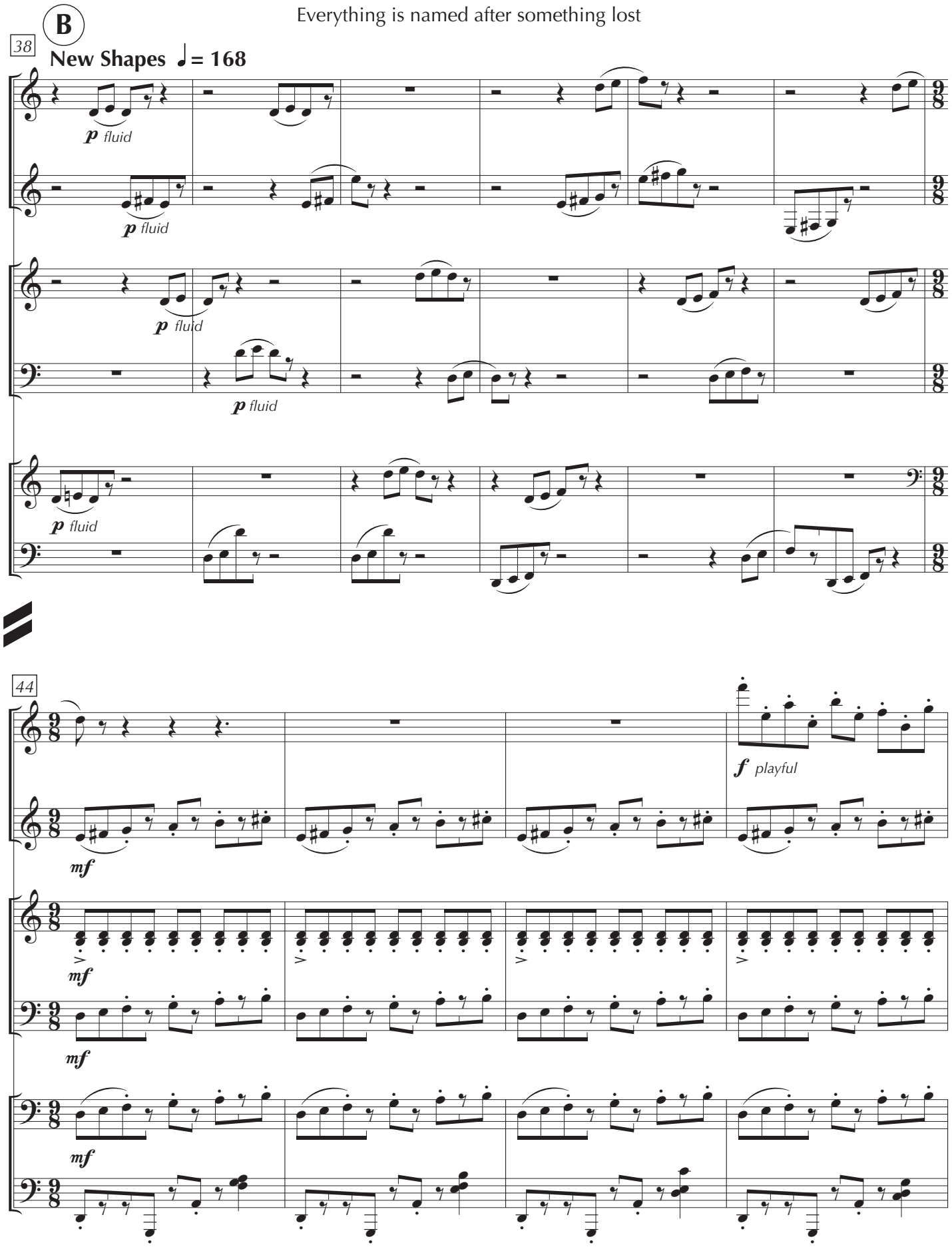


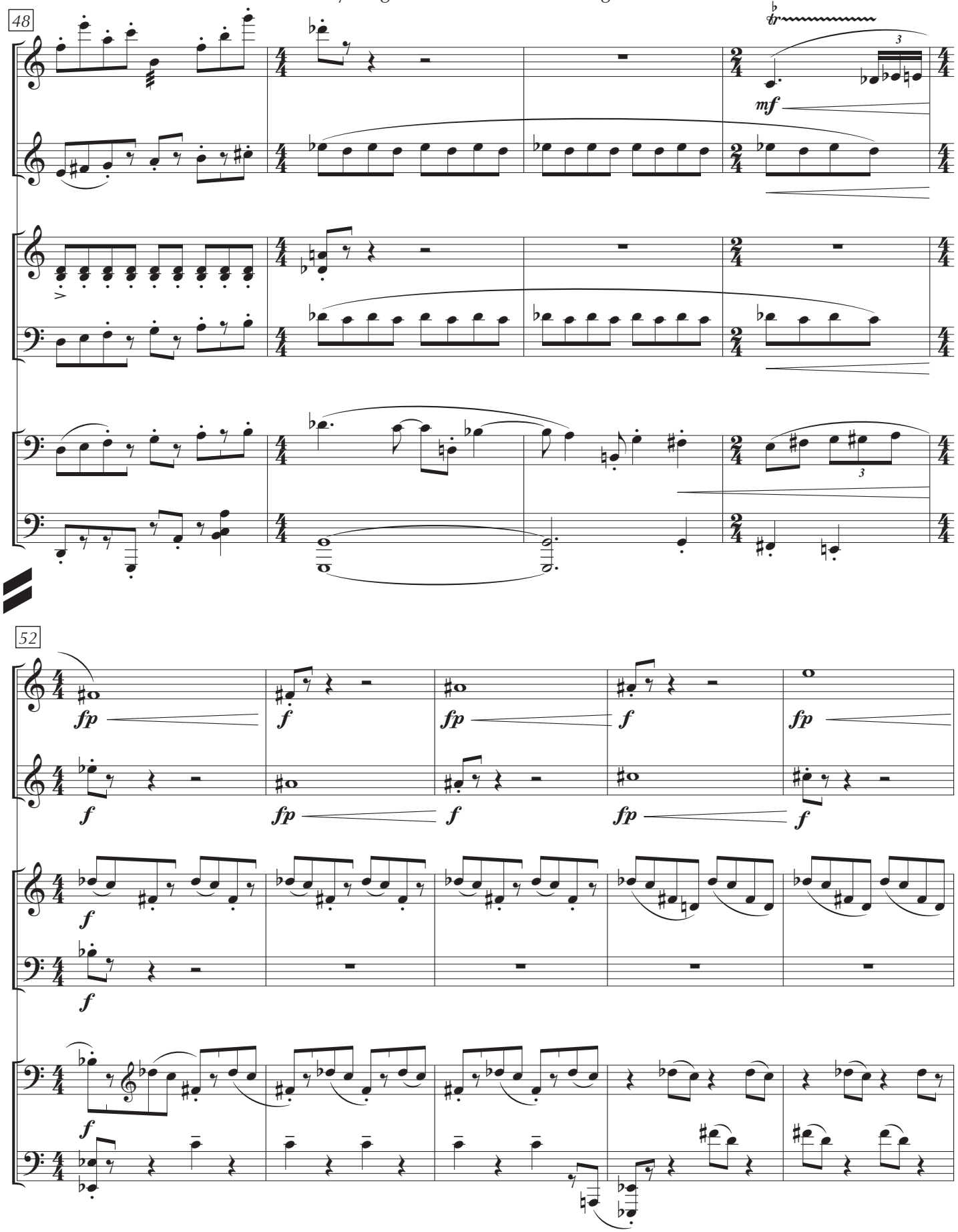

7
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
mf measured
mf measured
mf
12
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
n
f heavy
f heavy
f heavy

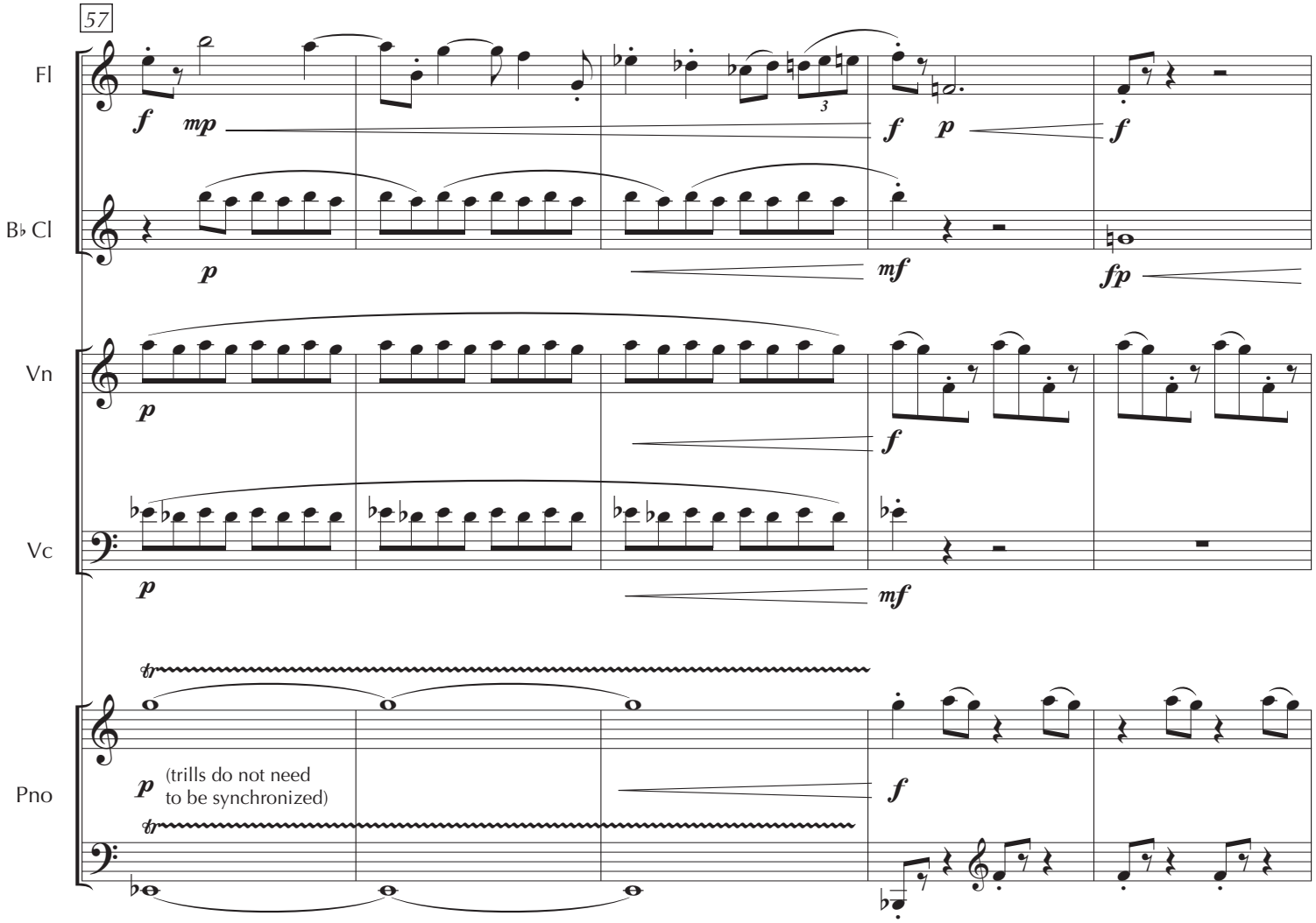

17
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
f heavy
f heavy
21
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
p
mp
n
sfz
ff massive
ff massive
ff massive
ff massive
ff massive
tr

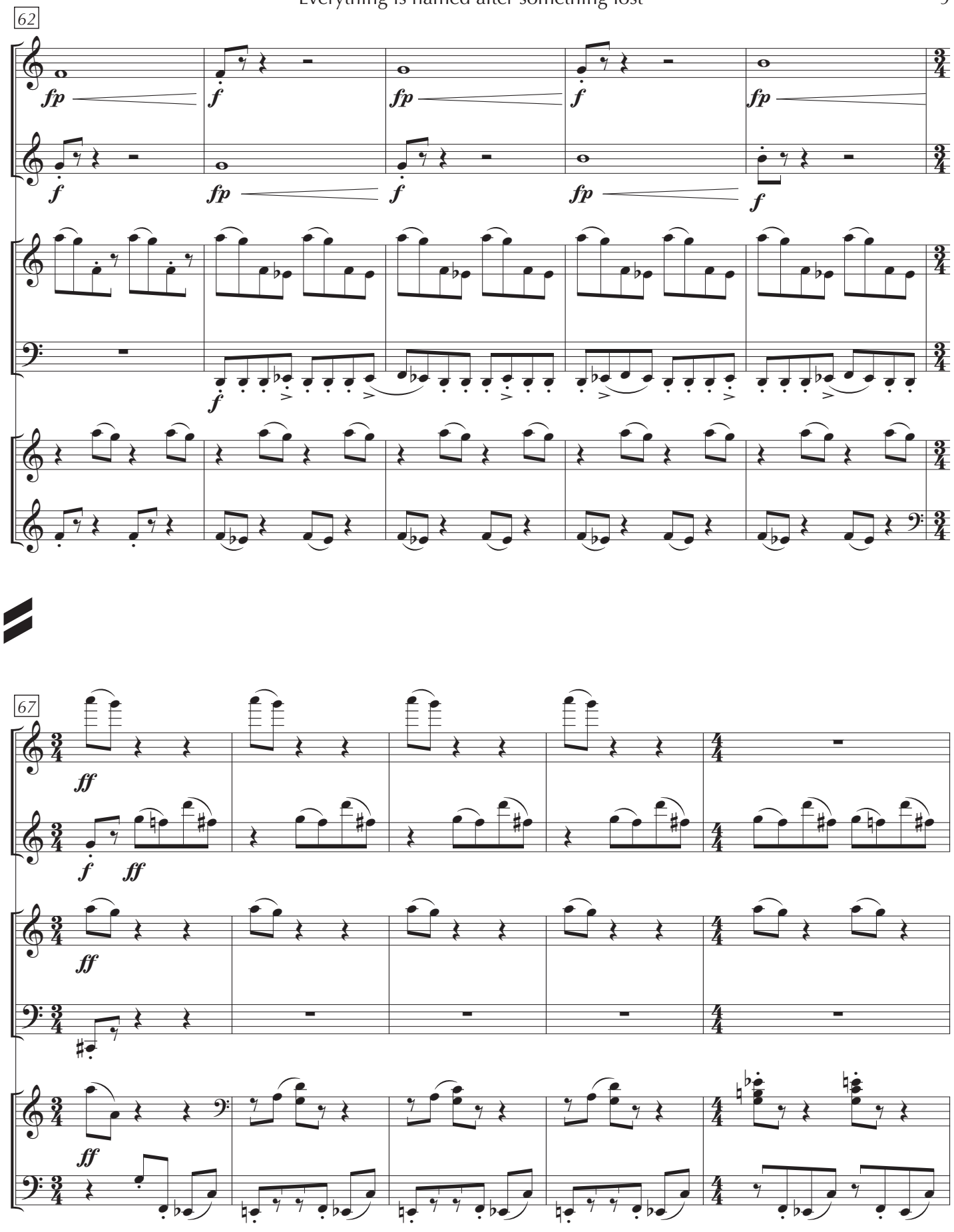

25
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
ff massive
28
mf
p
fff overwhelming
sffz
(irregular, frenetic arpeggiation between both hands
ad lib — à la Berio's Feuerklavier)

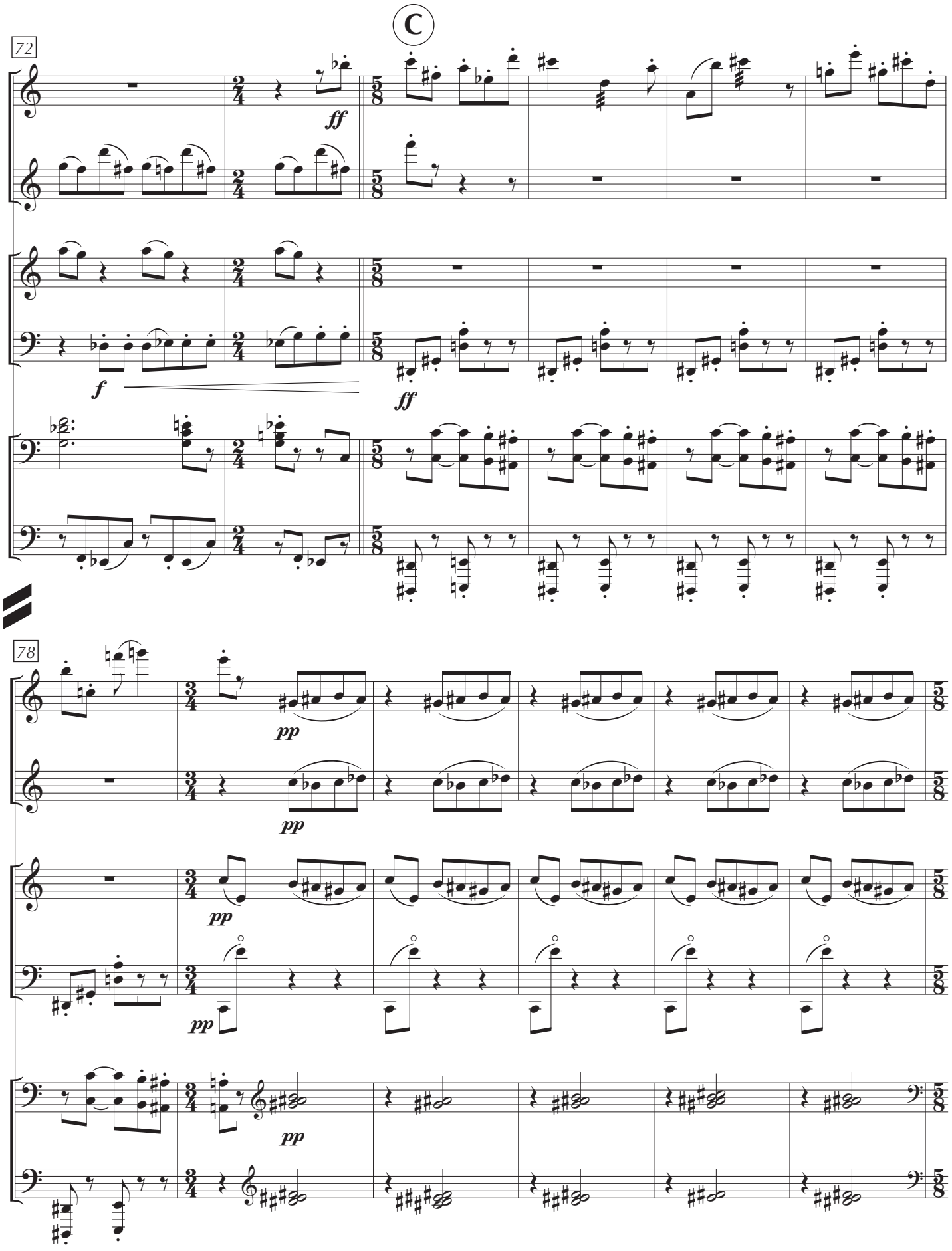

32
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
fff overwhelming
mf
fff
35
Interlude 1:
The Desert
fade out over
one breath
fade out over
one breath
sffz
sffz
sffz
hold until the chord fades out

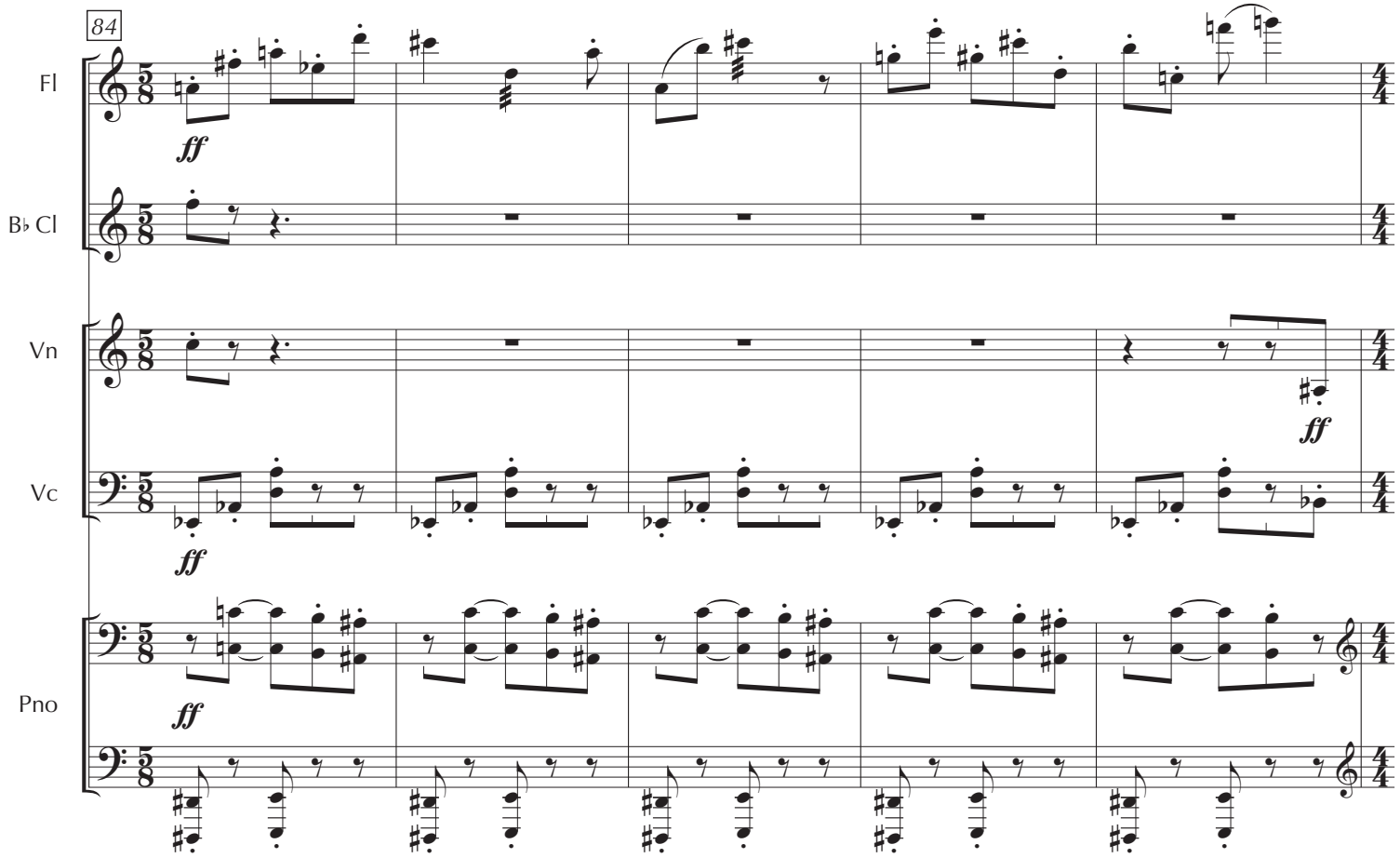

B
38
New Shapes ♩= 168
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
p fluid
44
f playful
mf

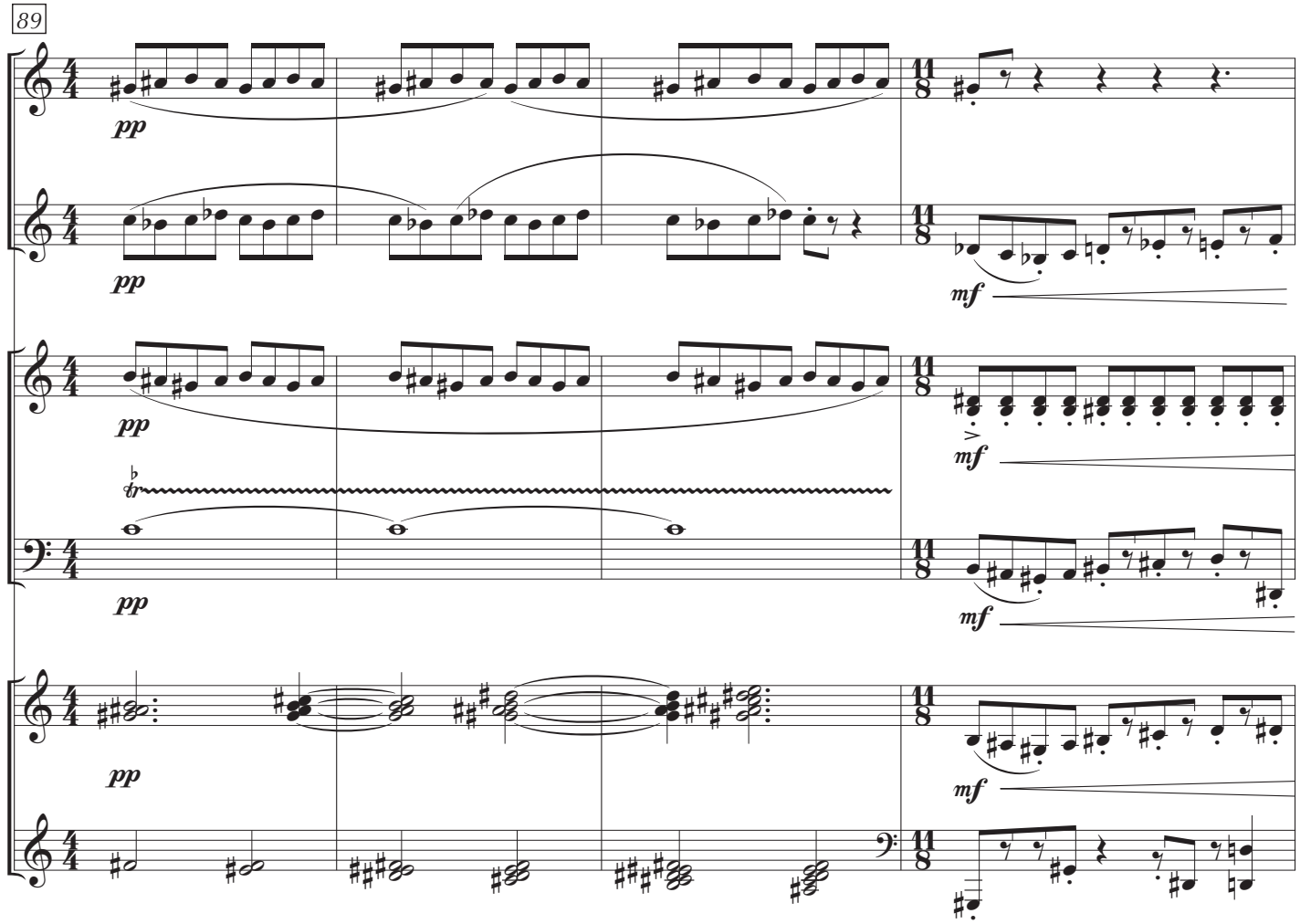

48
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
mf
52
fp
f

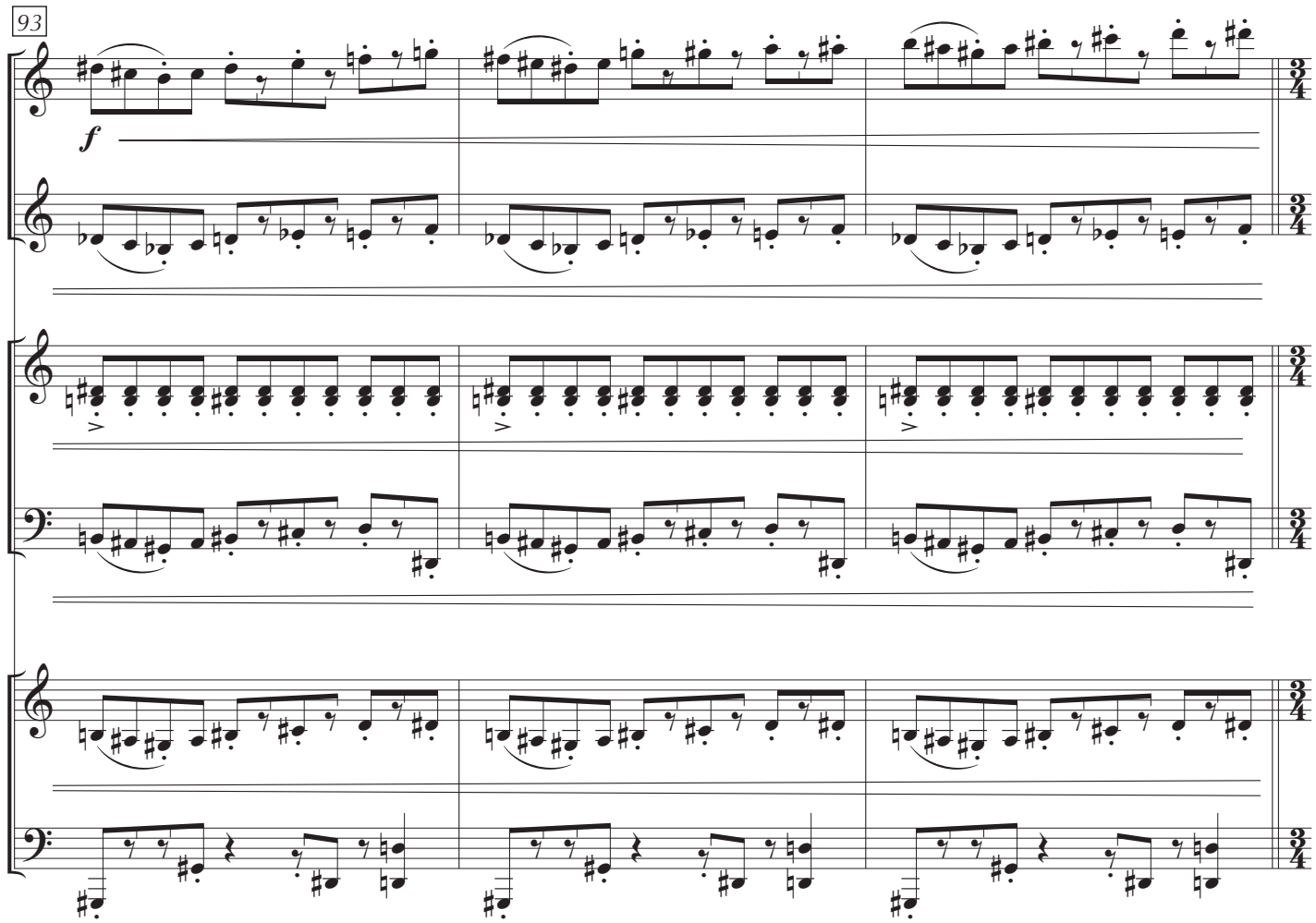

57
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
f
mp
p
f
p
f
p
mf
fp
p
f
p
mf
tr
p
(trills do not need
to be synchronized)
tr
f

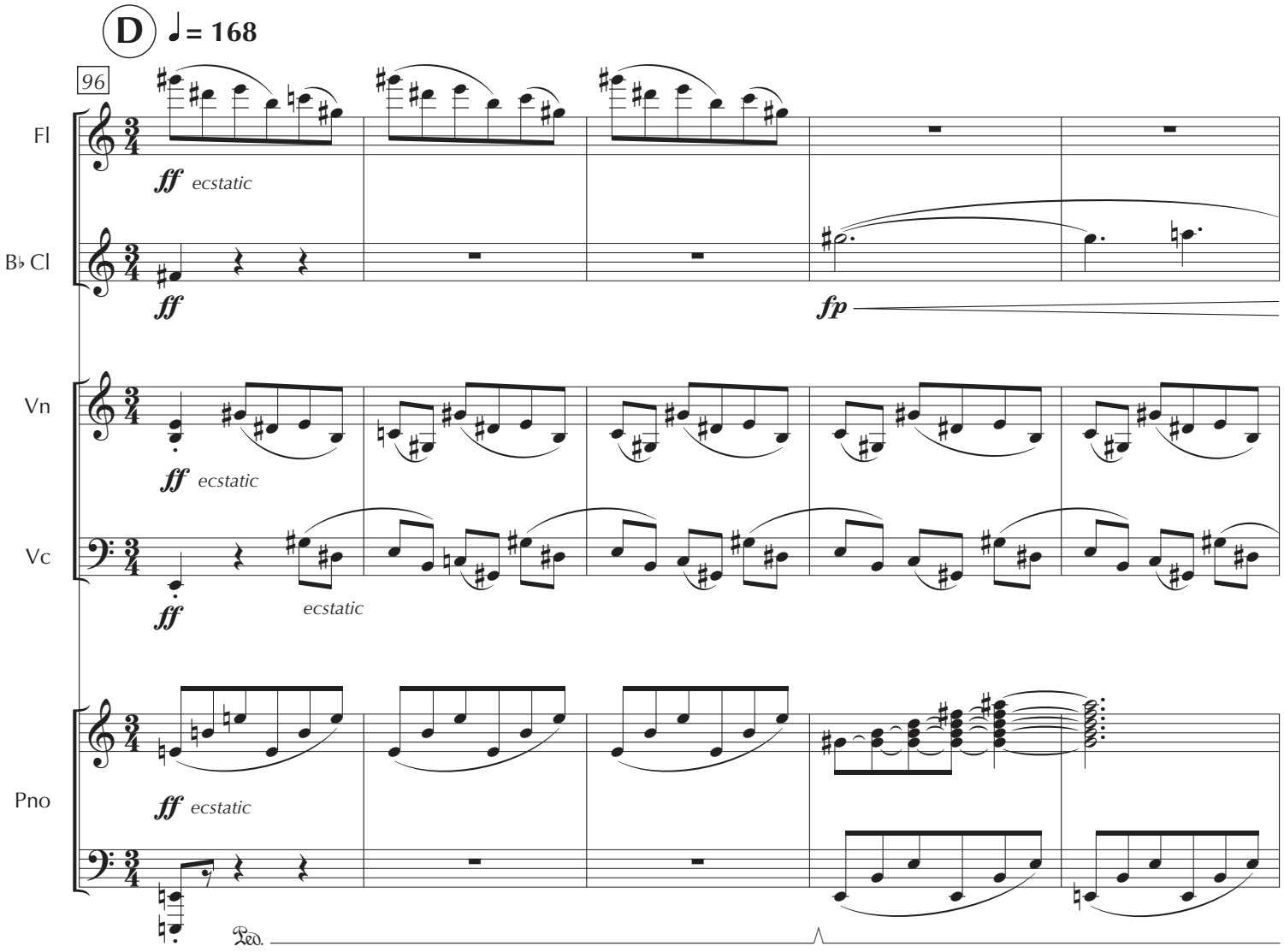

62
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
fp
f
67
ff

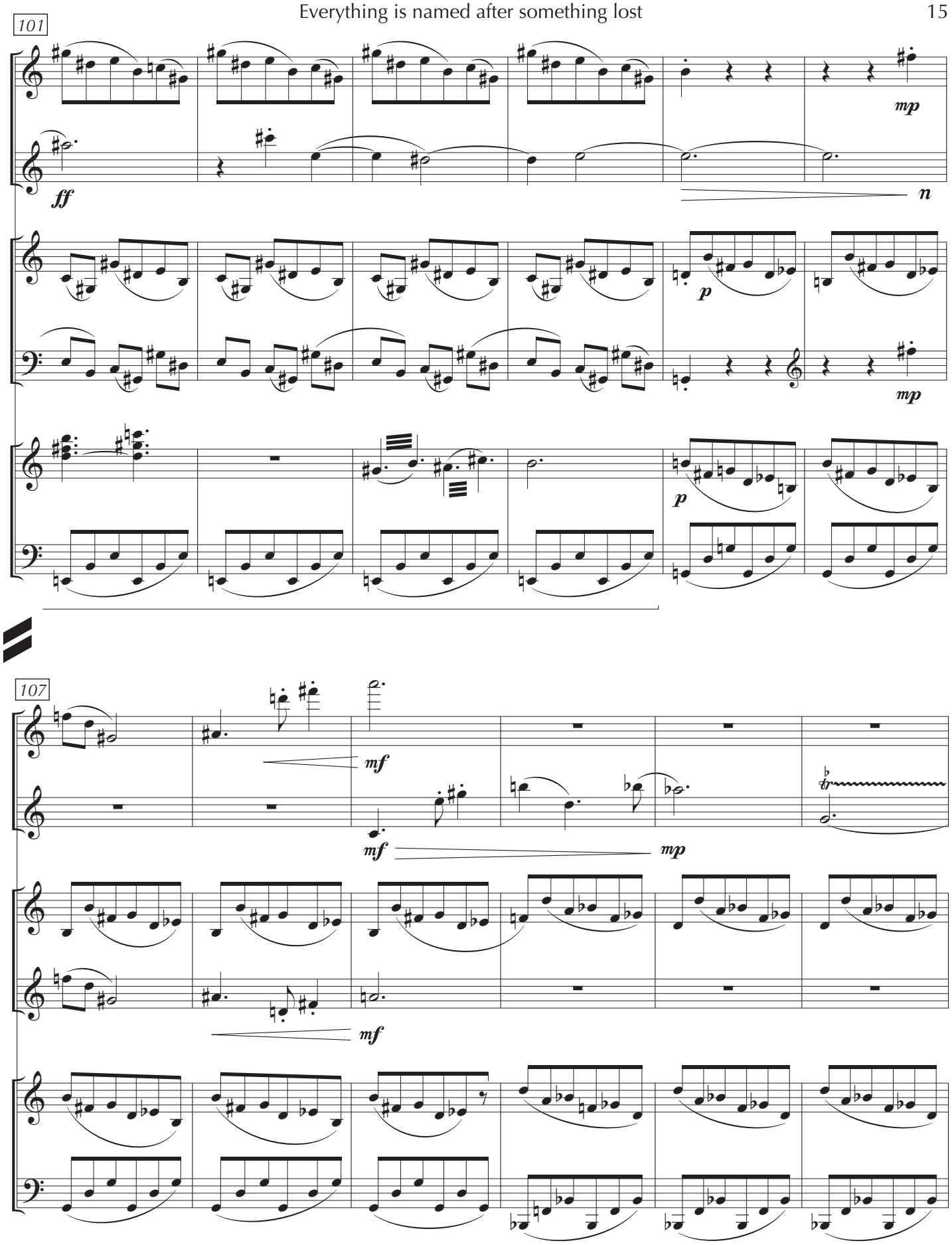

C
72
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
ff
f
ff
78
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp

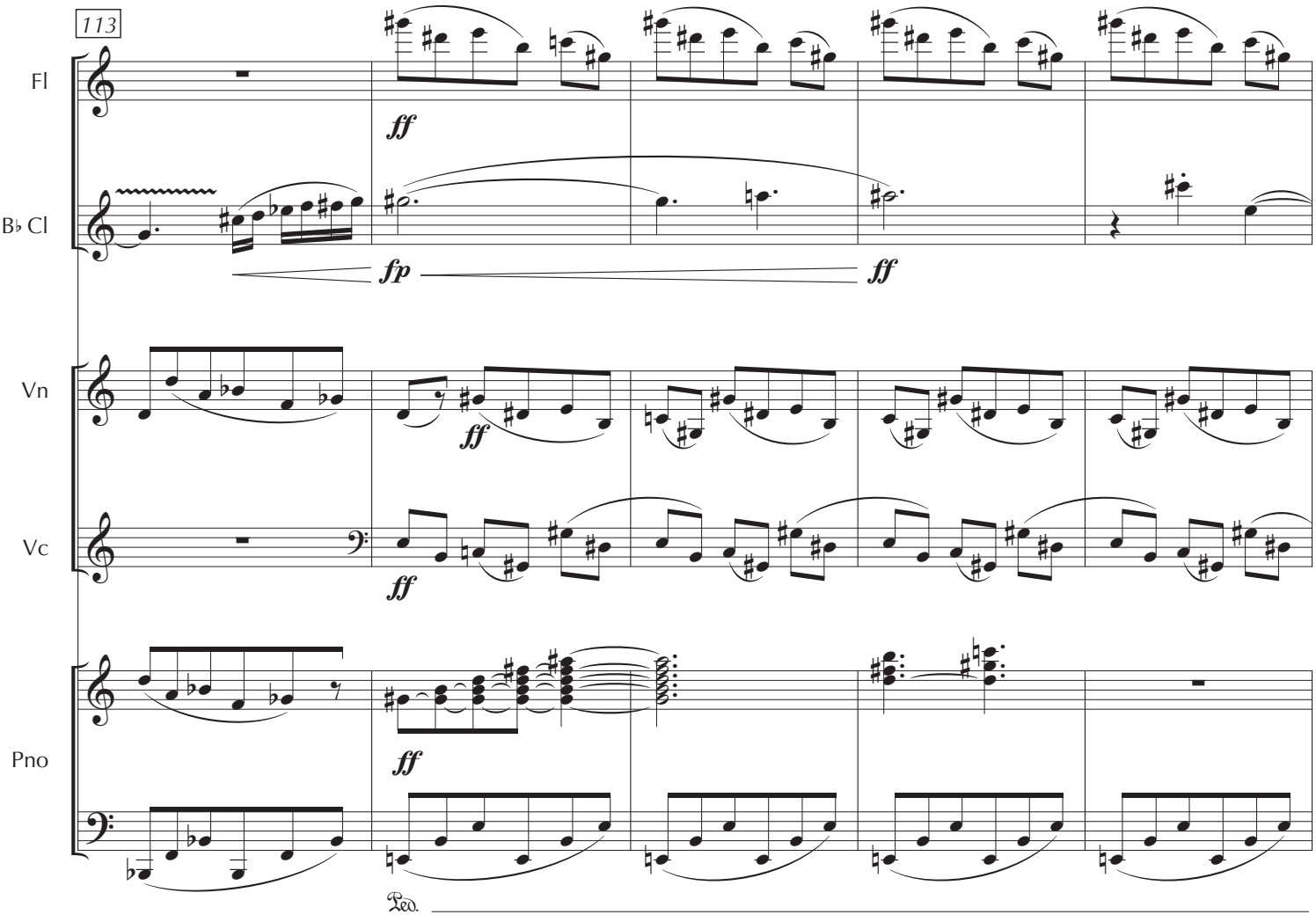

84
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
ff
ff
ff
ff

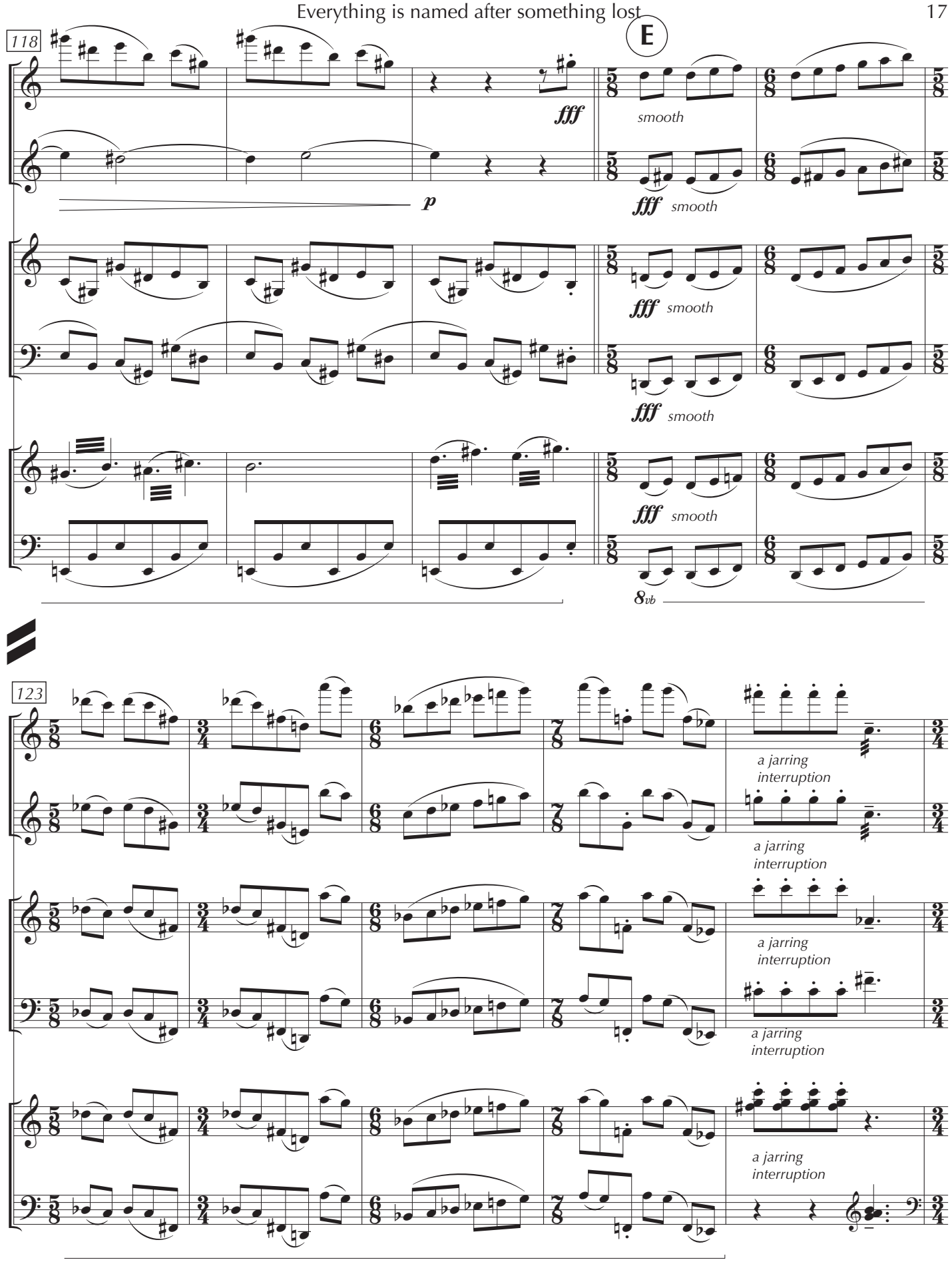

89
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
pp
mf

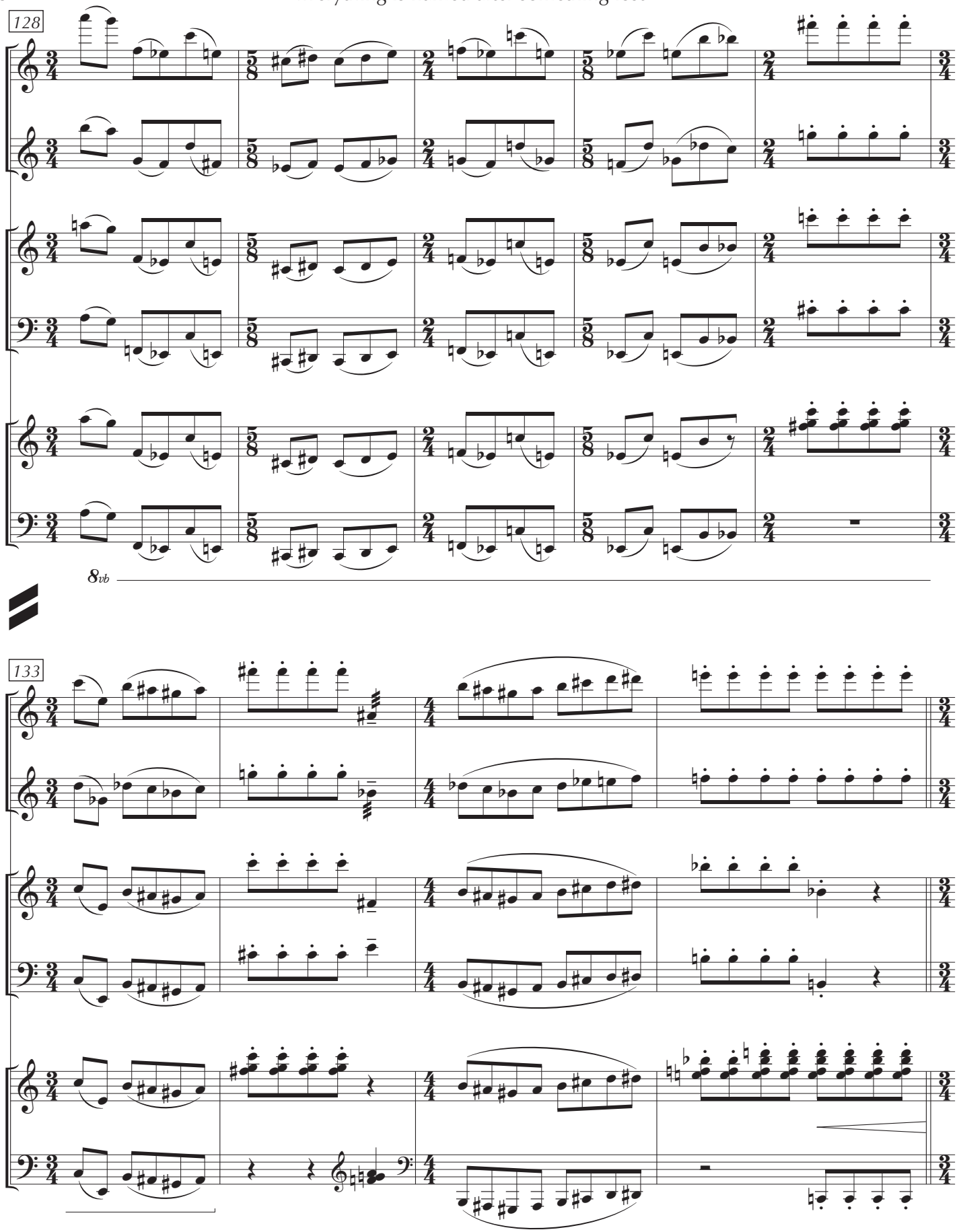

93
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
f

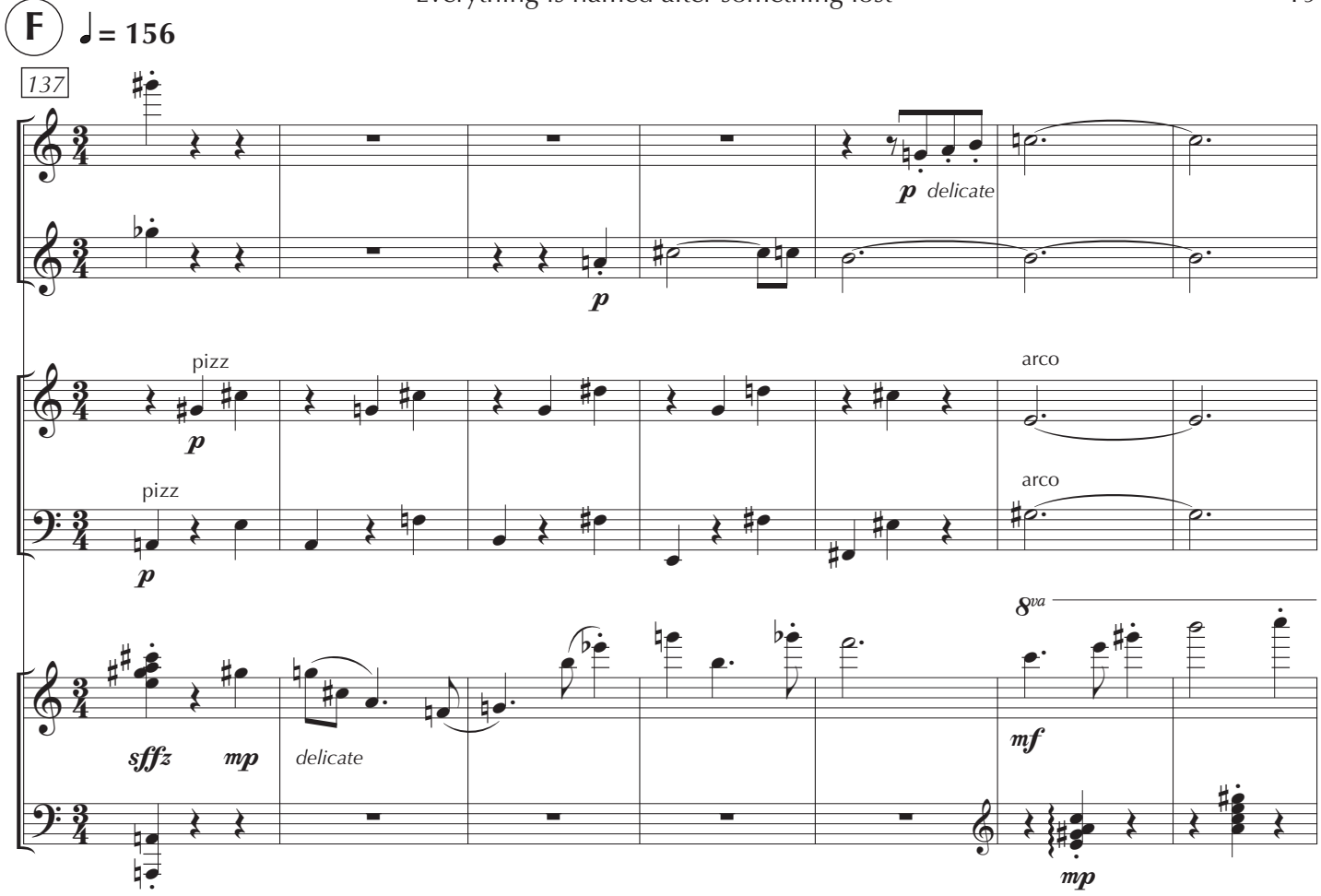

D
♩= 168
96
Fl
ff ecstatic
B♭ Cl
ff
fp
Vn
ff ecstatic
Vc
ff
ecstatic
Pno
ff ecstatic
Ped.

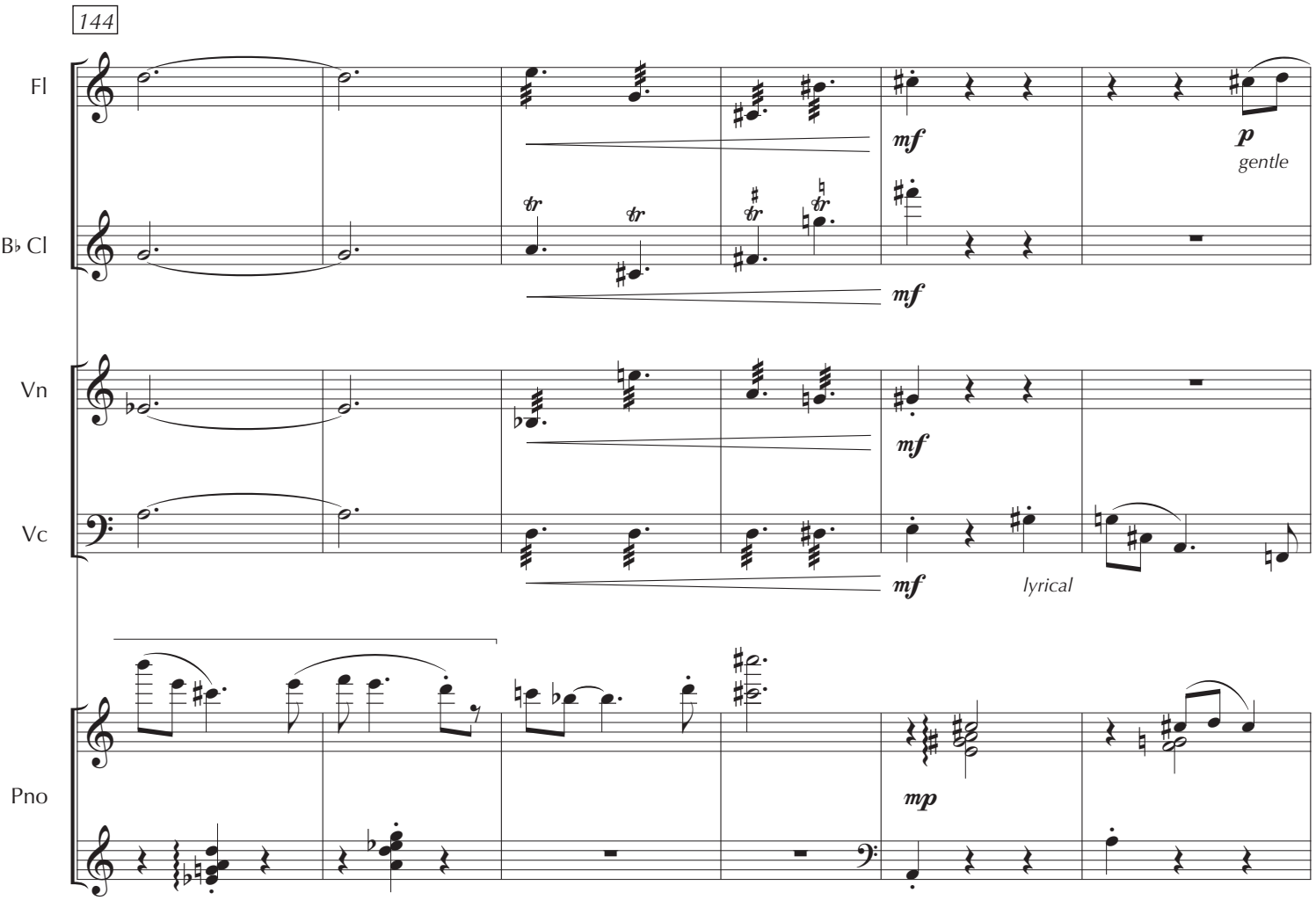

101
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
ff
mp
n
p
mp
p
107
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
mf
mf
mp
mf

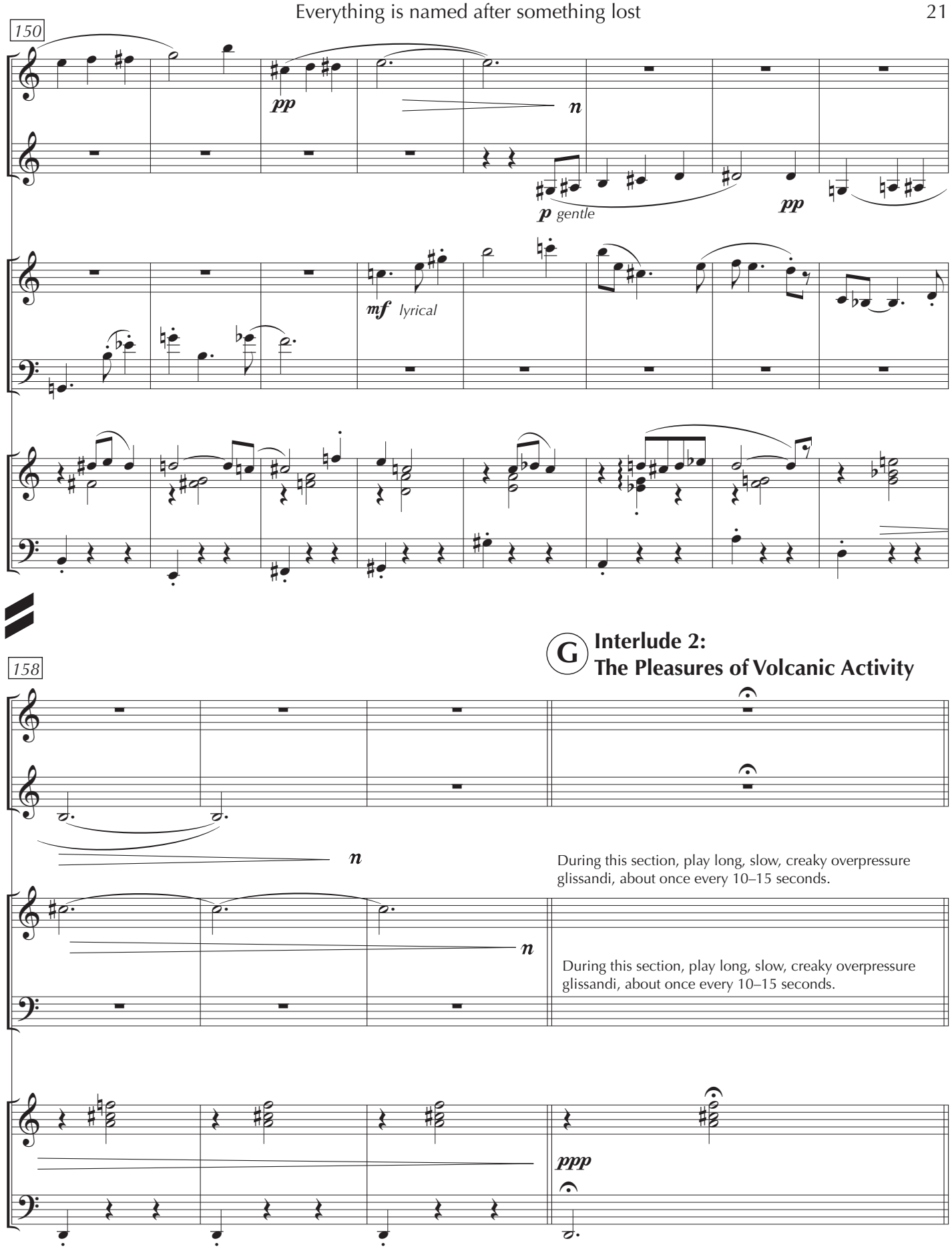

113
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
ff
fp
ff
ff
ff
ff
Ped.


118
E
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
fff
p
smooth
8vb
123
a jarring interruption

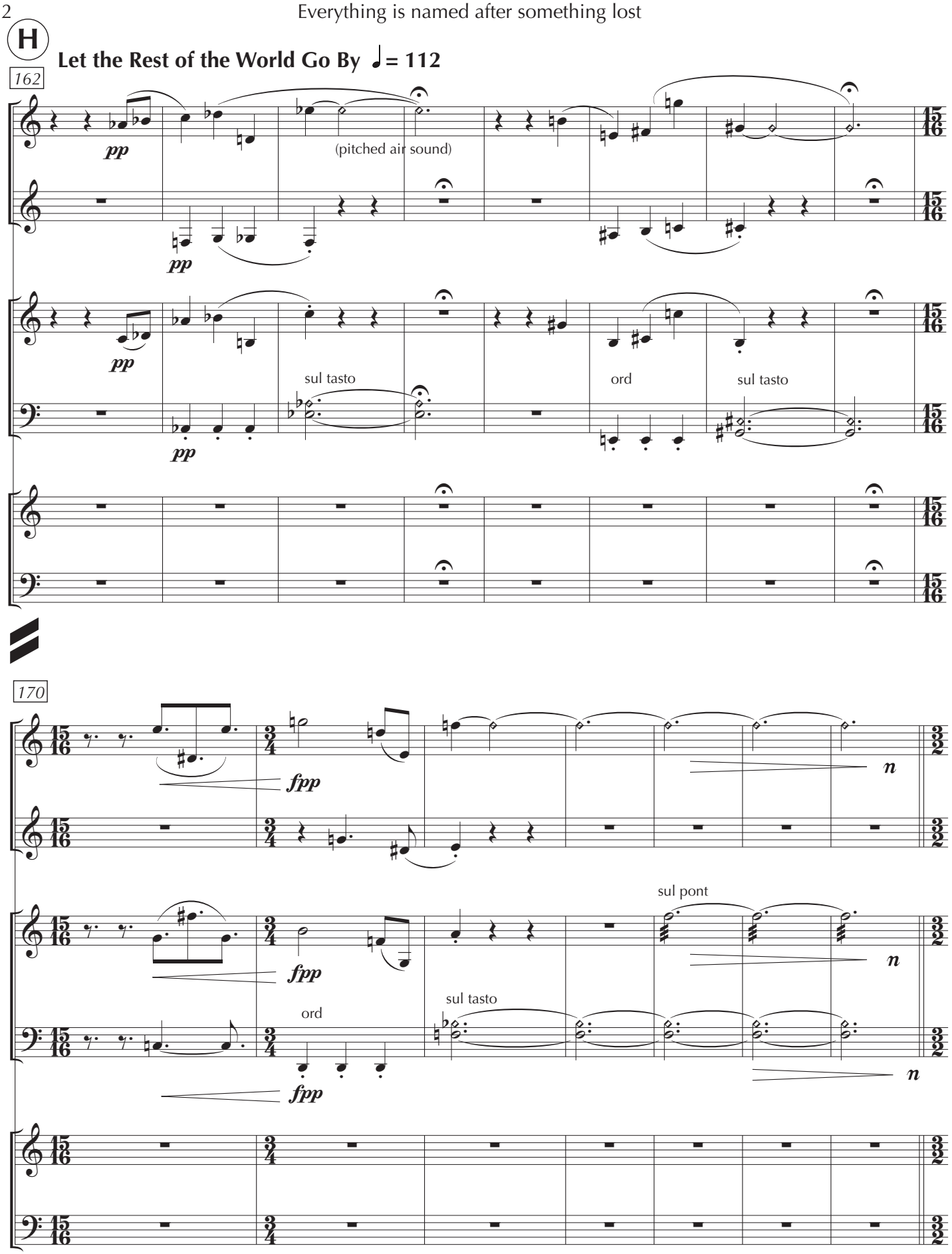

128
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
8vb
133
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno

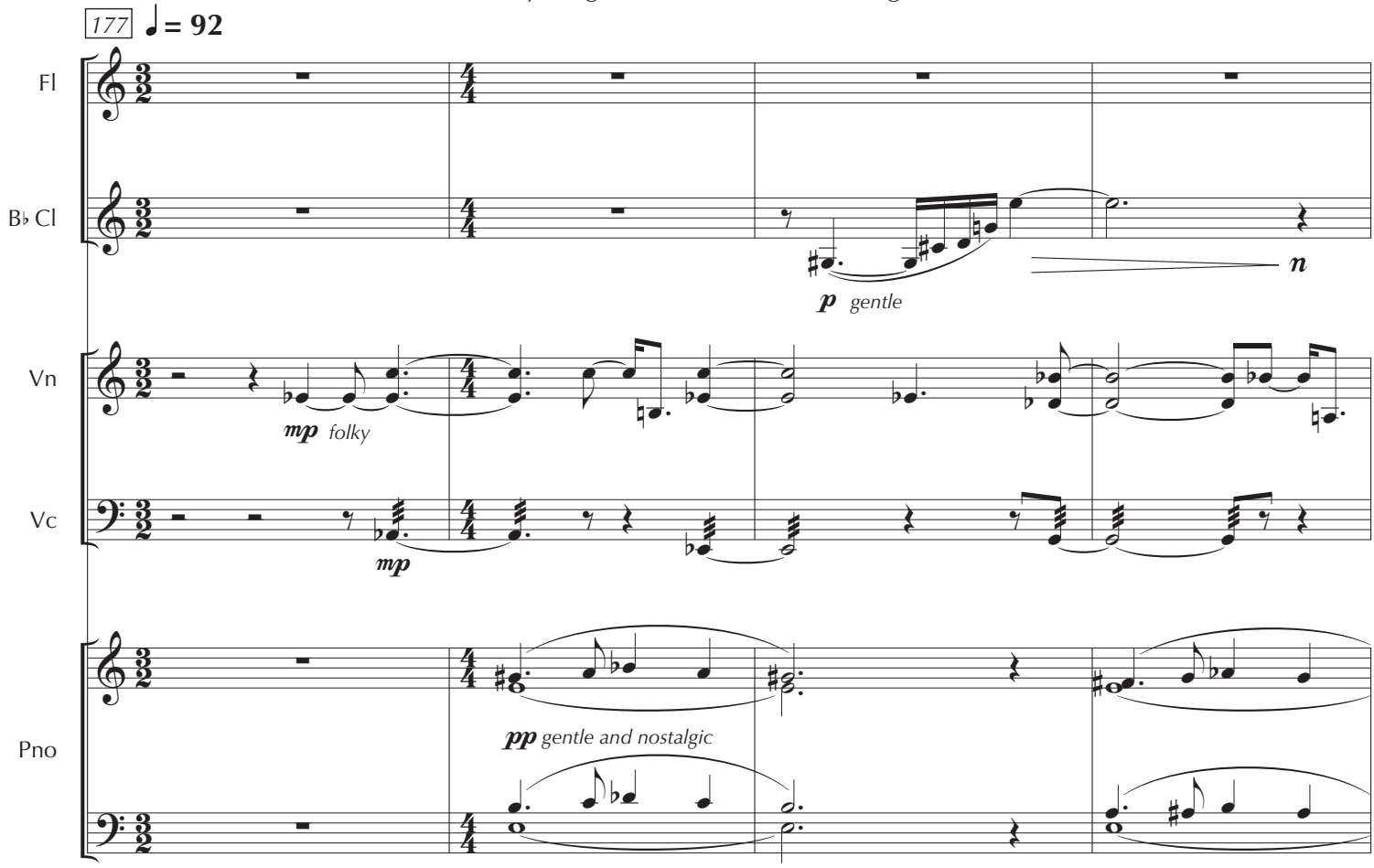

F
♩= 156
137
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
p
delicate
pizz
arco
sffz
mp
mf
8va

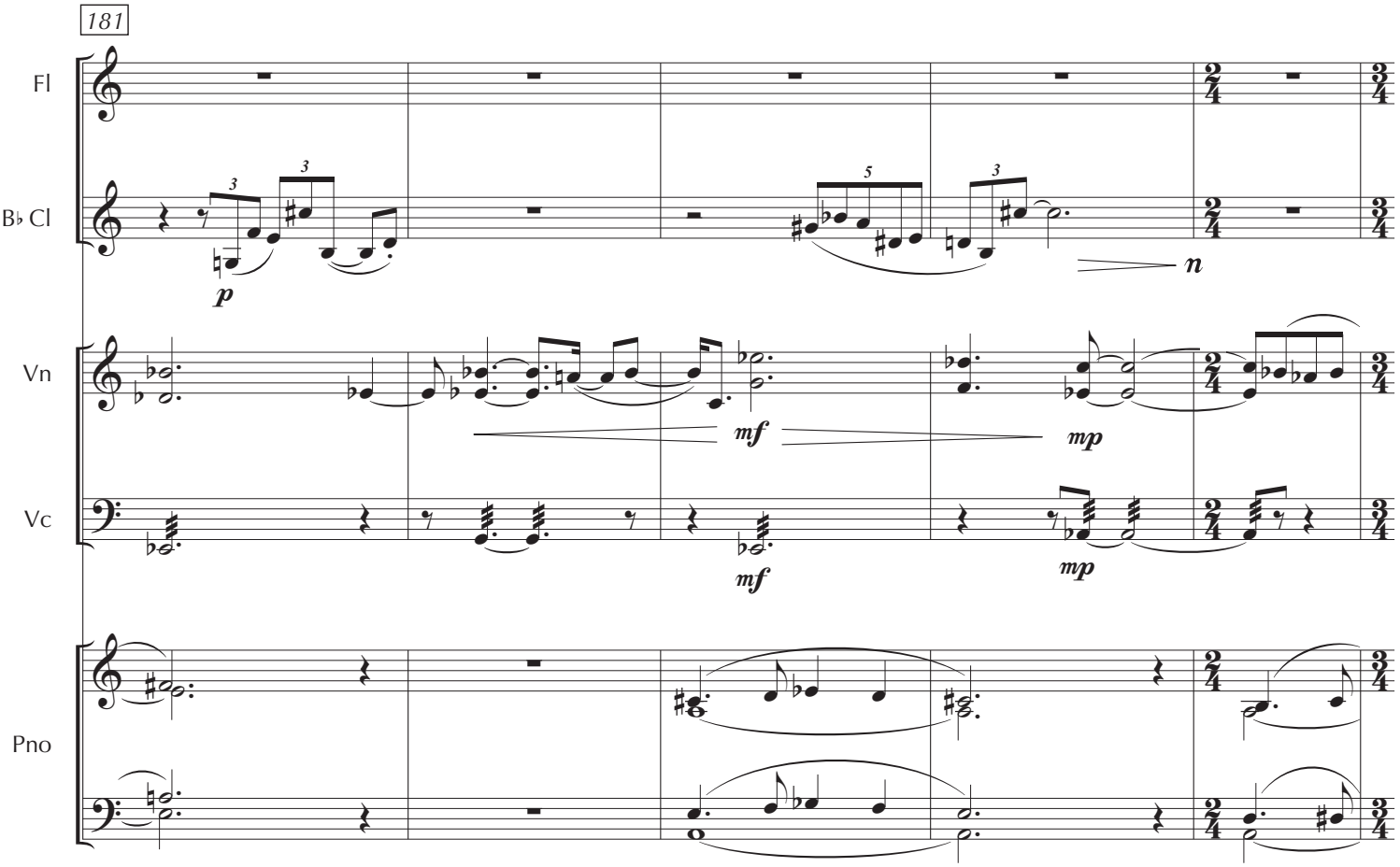

144
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
mf
p
gentle
mf
mf
mf
lyrical
mp

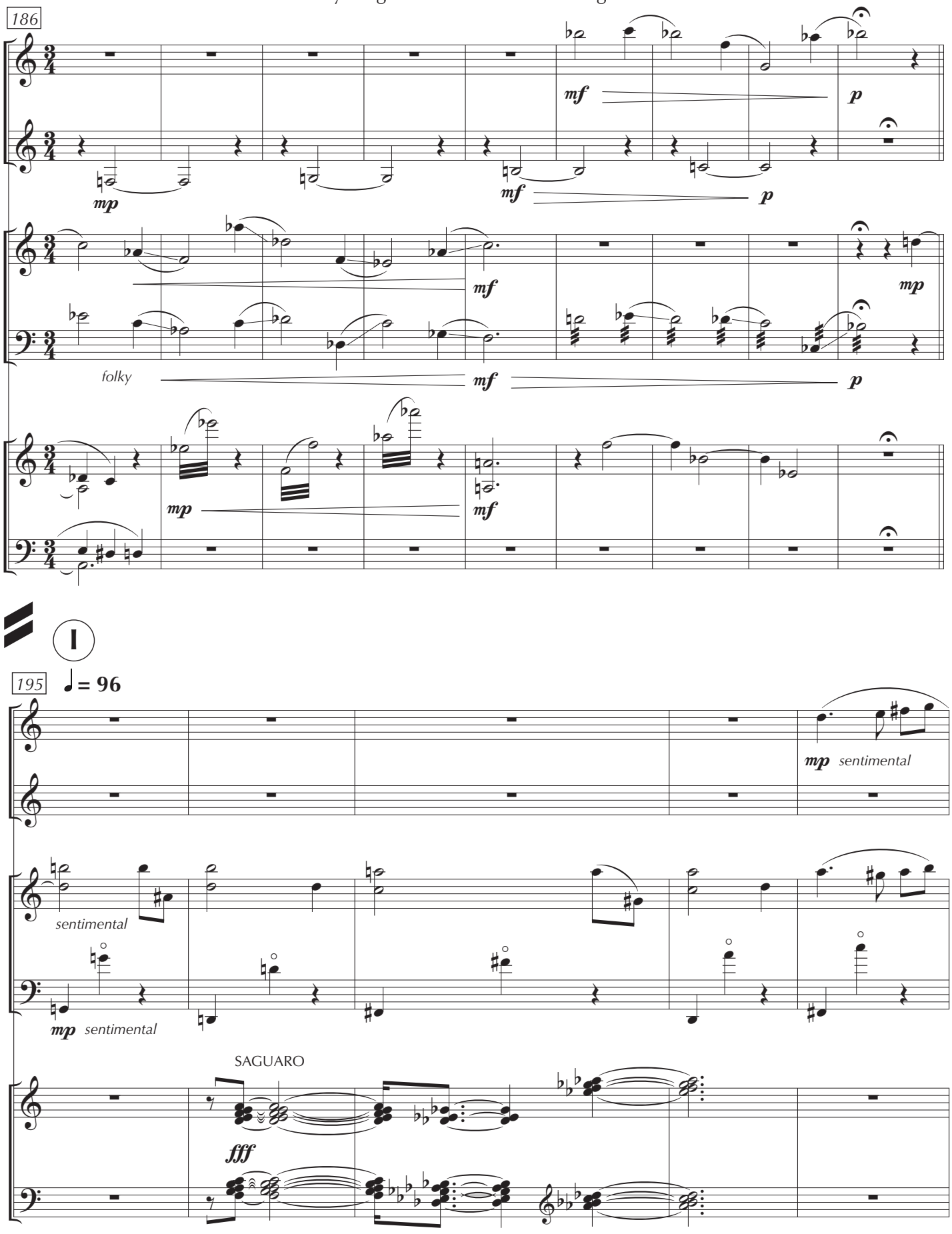


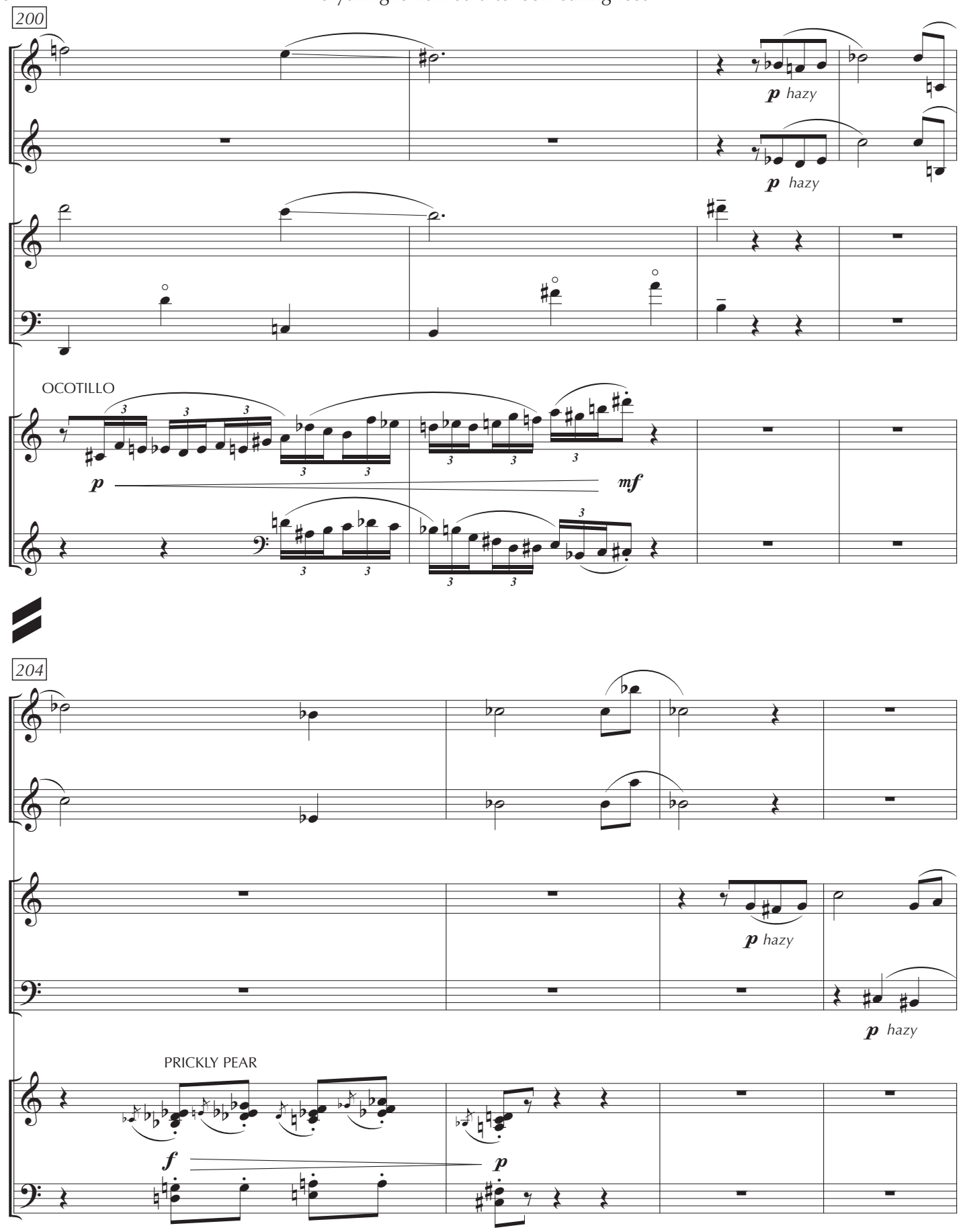
G Interlude 2: The Pleasures of Volcanic Activity

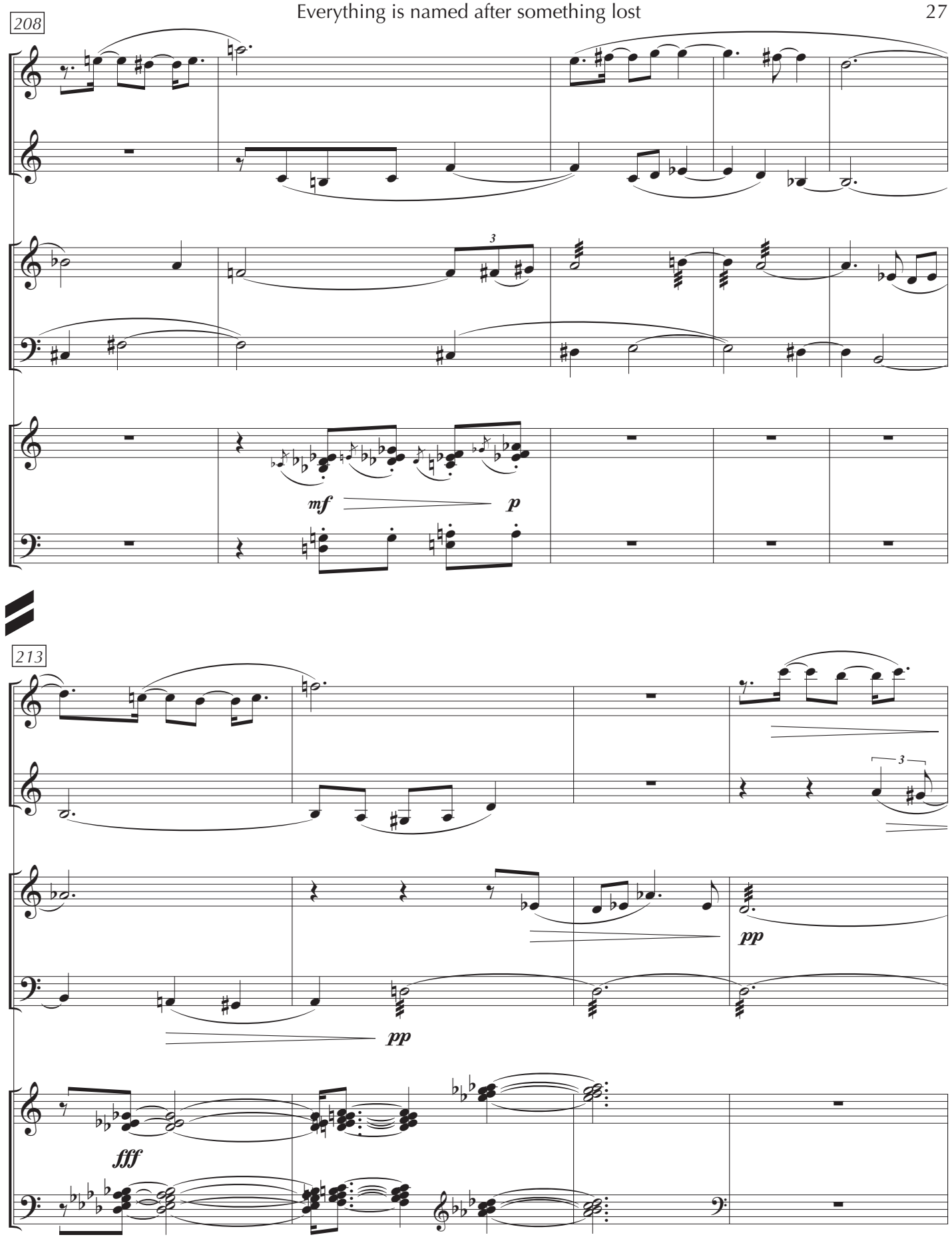

H
Let the Rest of the World Go By ♩= 112
162
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
pp
(pitched air sound)
sul tasto
ord
sul tasto
170
fpp
n
sul pont
ord
sul tasto

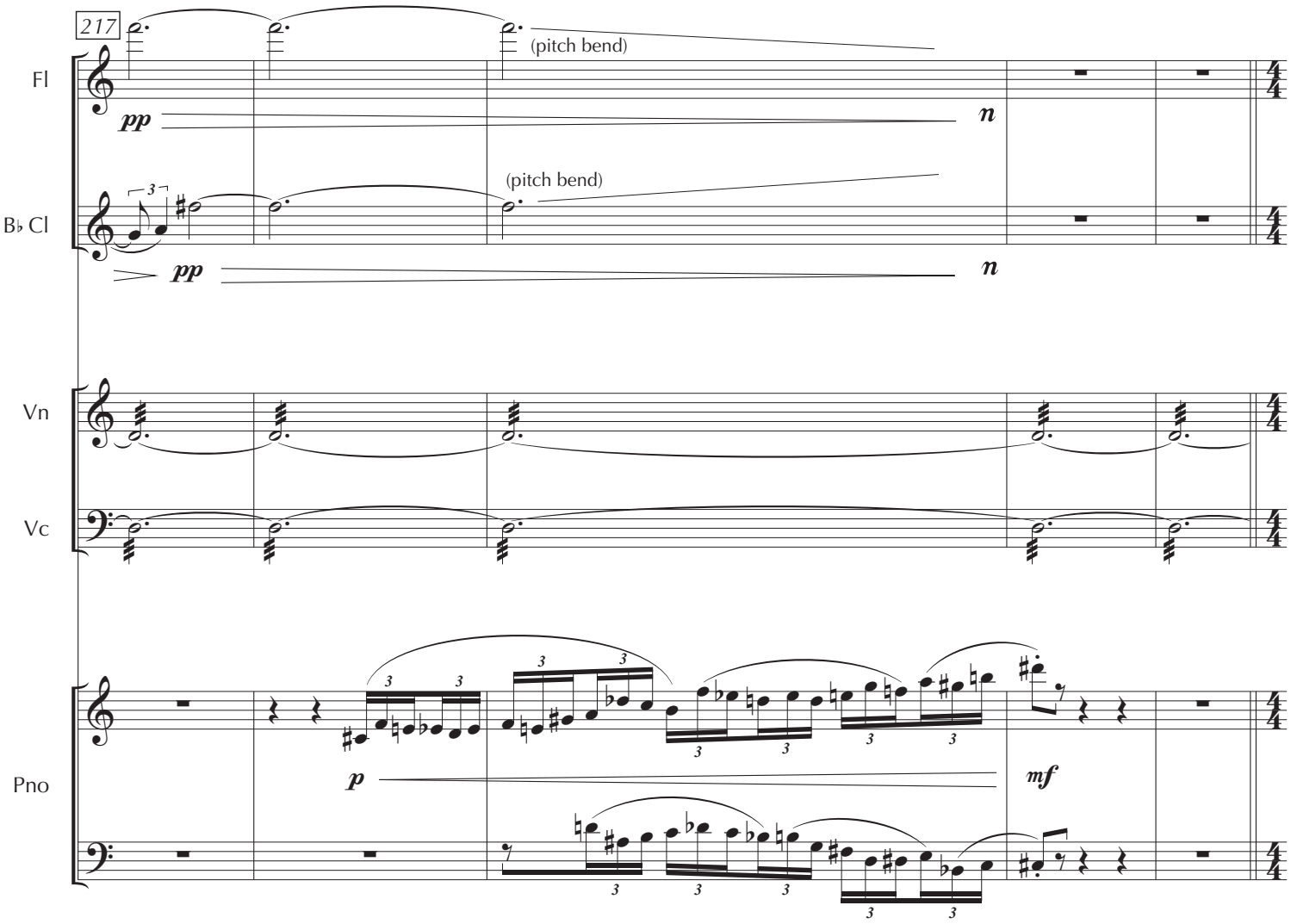

177
♩ = 92
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
p gentle
n
mp folky
mp
pp gentle and nostalgic


181
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
p
n
mf
mp
mf
mp


186
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
mp
mf
p
folky
I
195
♩= 96
sentimental
SAGUARO
fff


200
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
p hazy
p hazy
OCOTILLO
p
mf
204
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
p hazy
p hazy
PRICKLY PEAR
f
p


208
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
3
mf
p
213
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
3
pp
pp
fff


217
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
(pitch bend)
(pitch bend)
pp
pp
n
n
p
mf

J Interlude 3: The Mountain Watches Us

222

Fl

pp During this section, fade this note in and out *ad lib,* occasionally interrupting it with groups of four or five low, quiet tongue-pizz notes.

B♭ Cl

pp During this section, fade this note in and out *ad lib,* occasionally interrupting it with groups of four or five low, quiet slap-tongue notes.

Vn

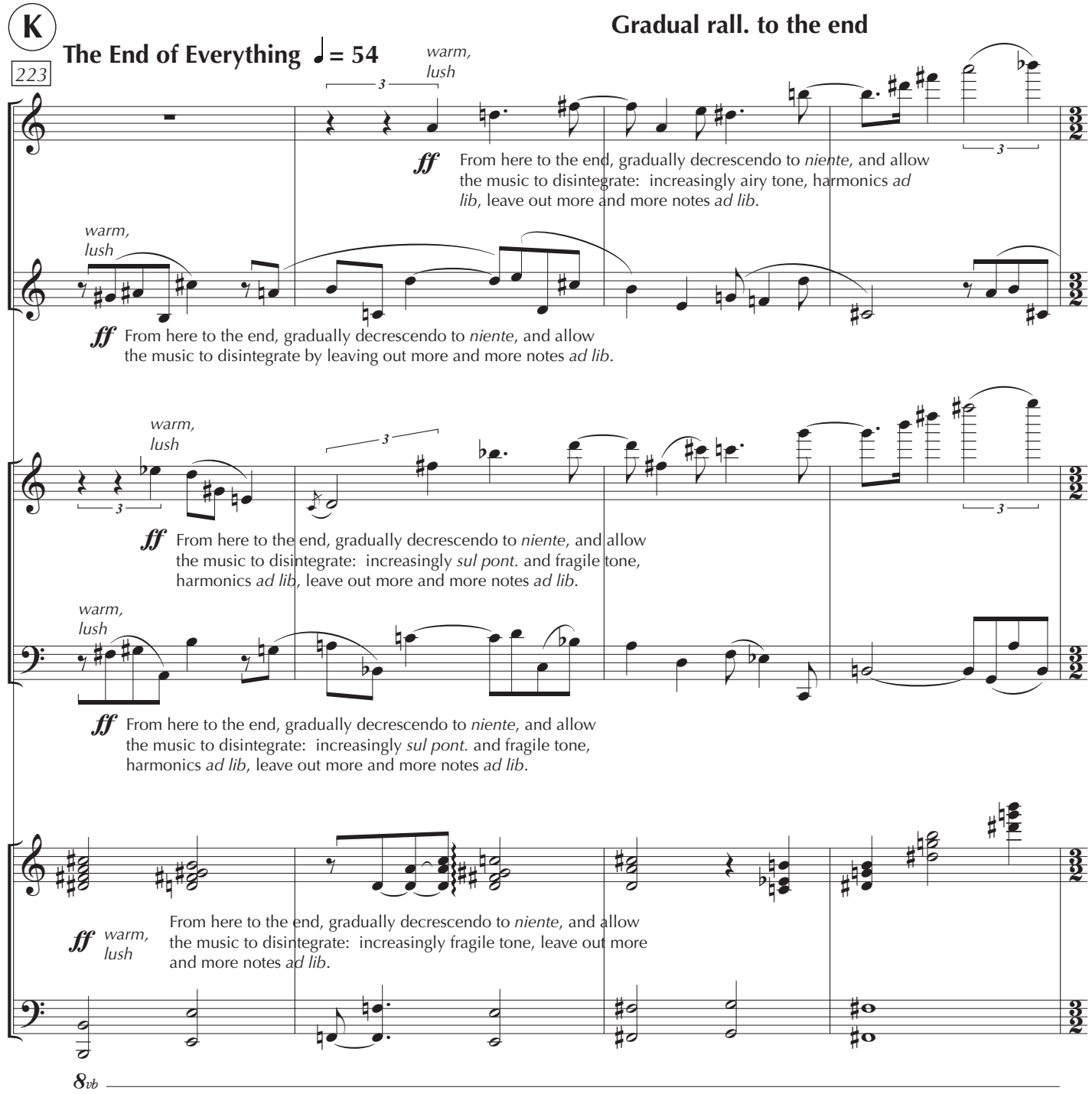
During this section, hold this tremolo, occasionally interrupting it with rapid, skittering improvised *sul pont.* figures *ad lib*.

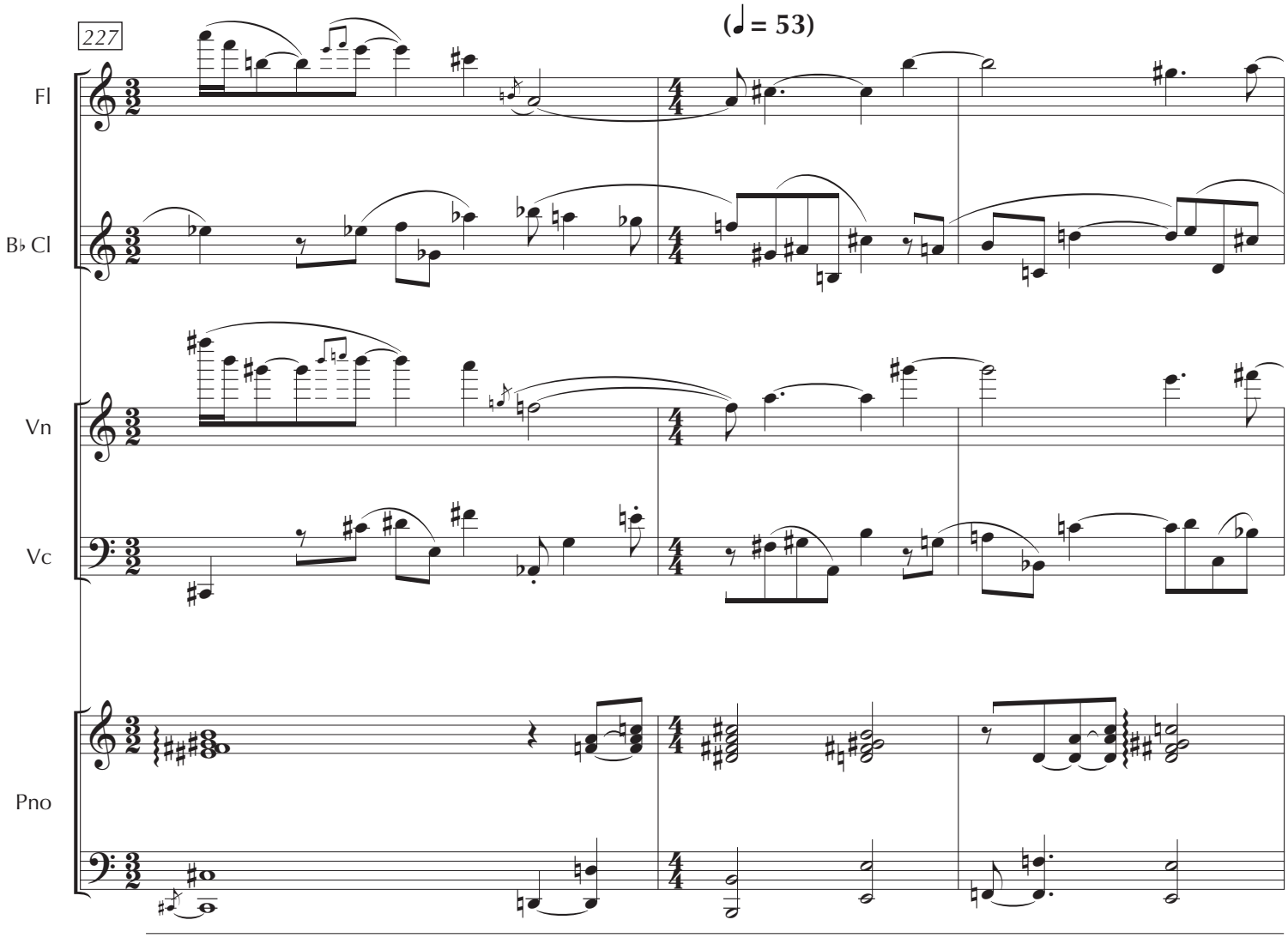
Vc

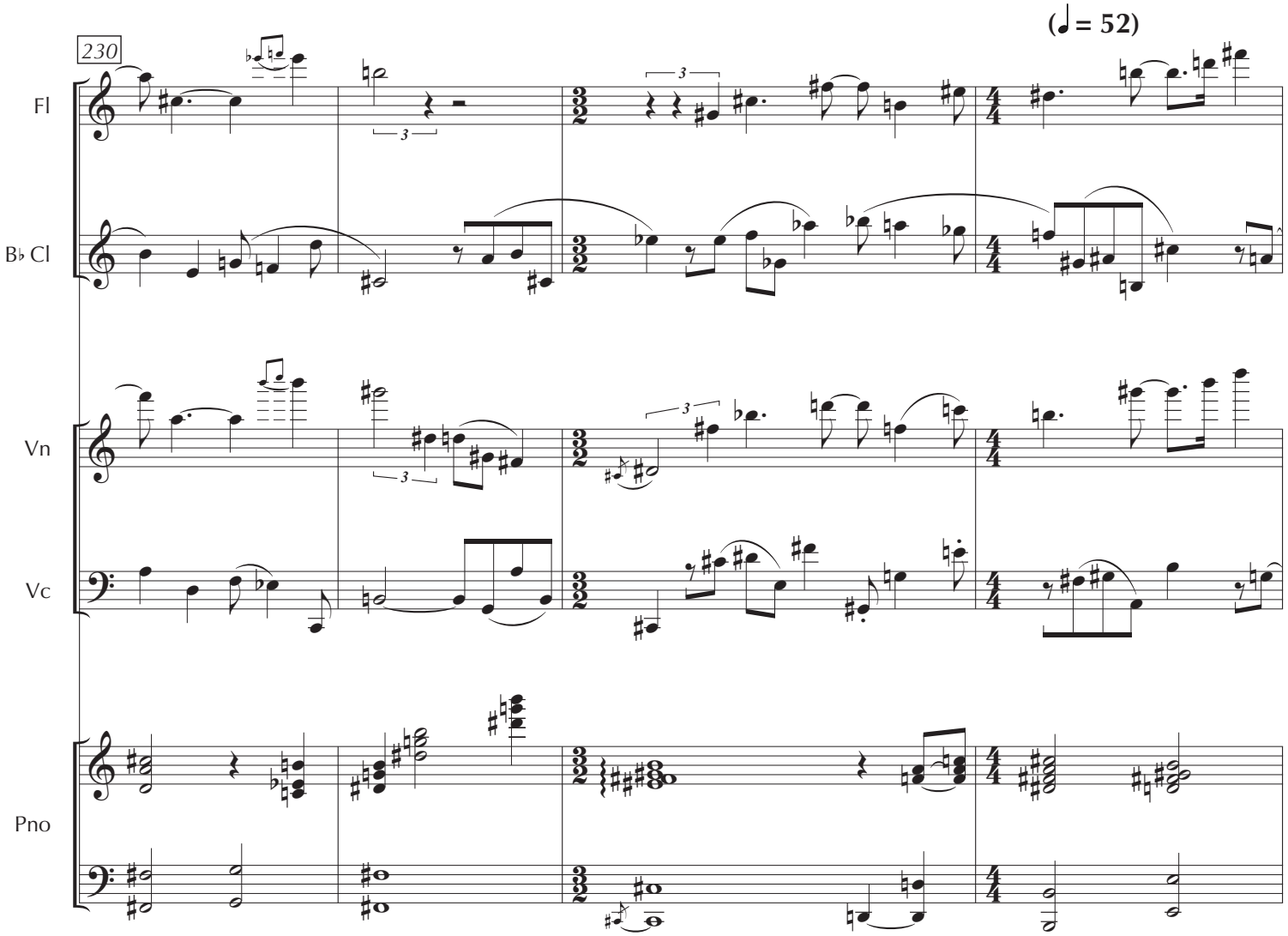
During this section, hold this tremolo, occasionally interrupting it with rapid, skittering improvised *sul pont.* figures *ad lib*.

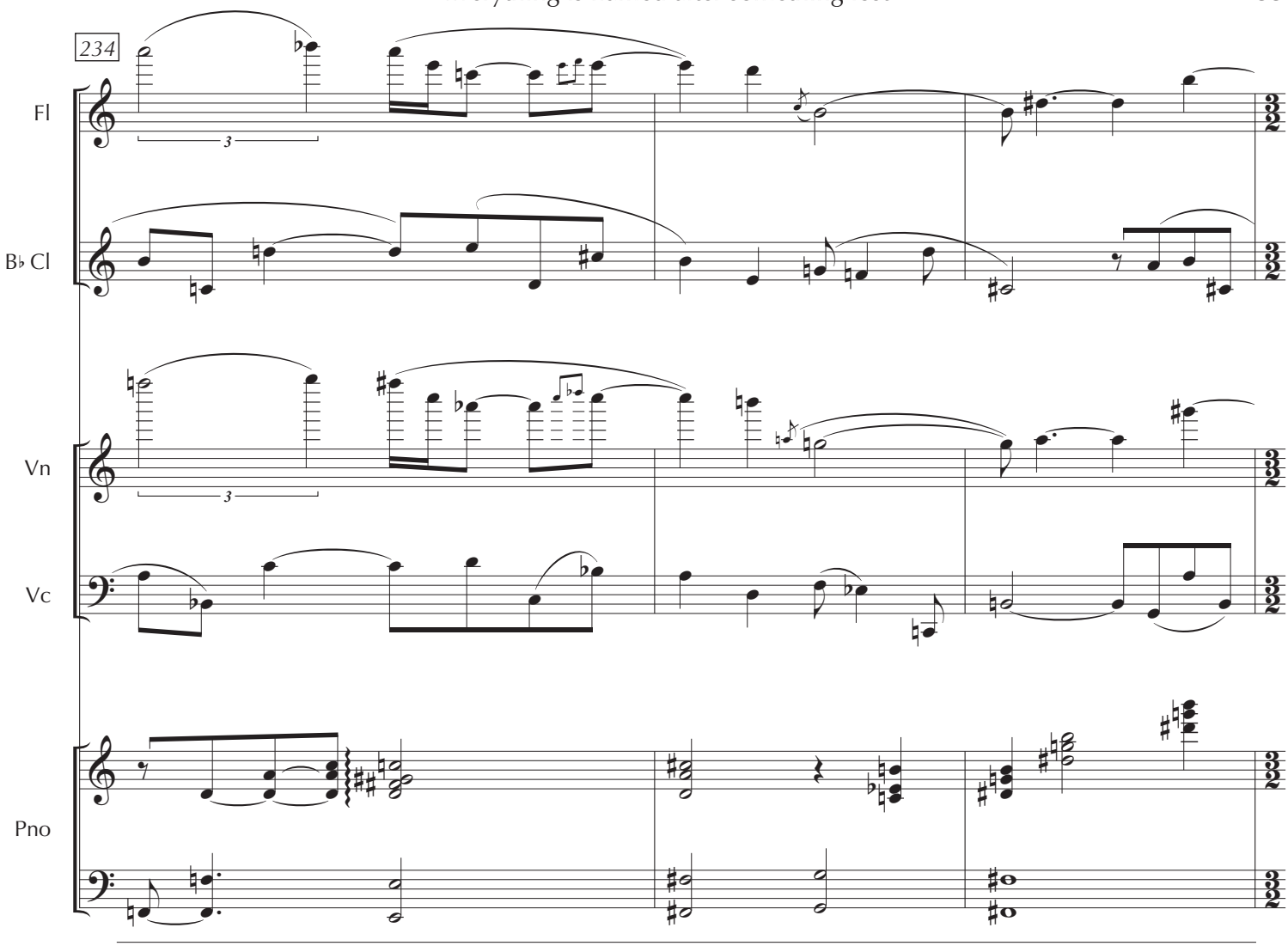
Pno

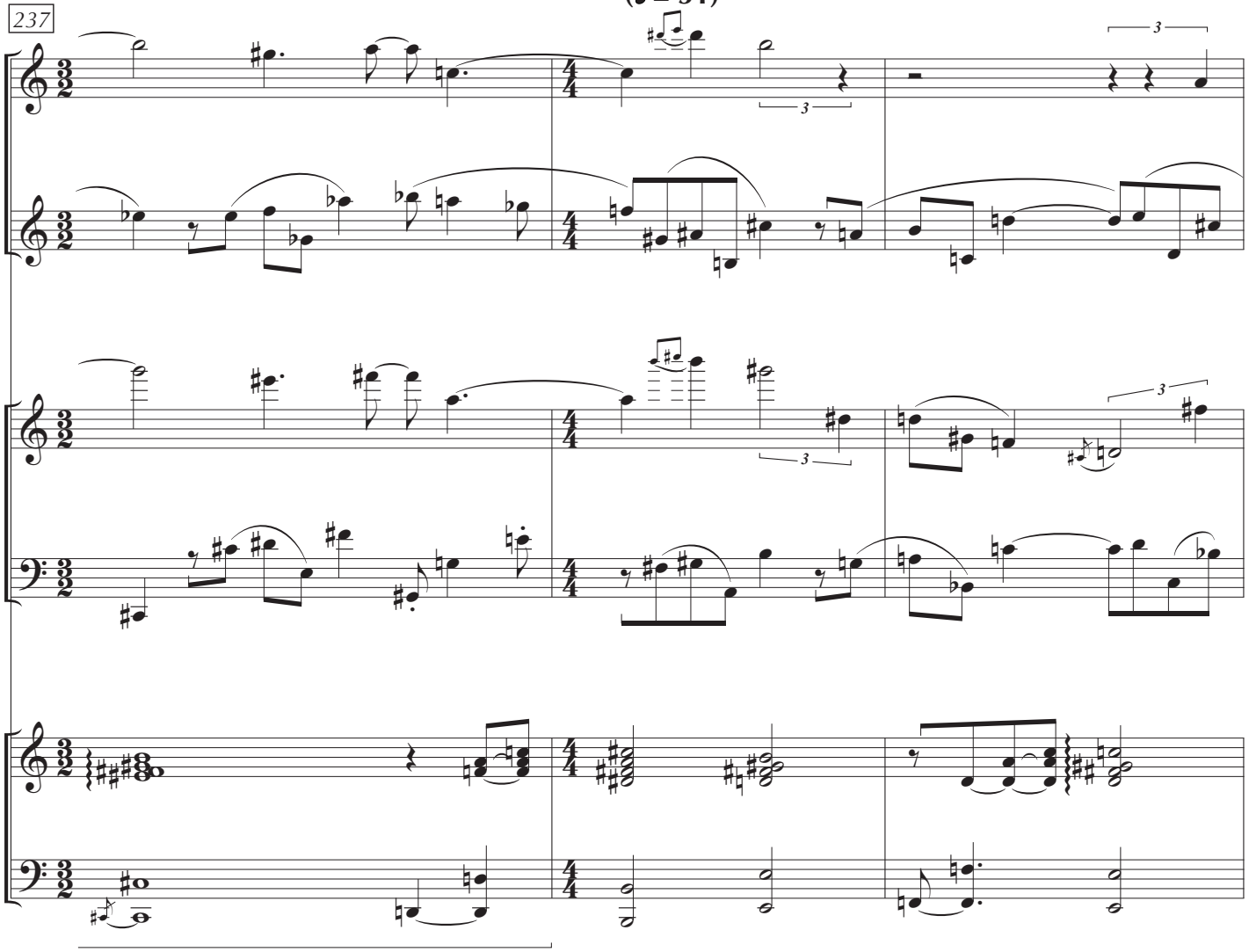
During this section, occasionally play the SAGUARO, OCOTILLO and PRICKLY PEAR figures, anywhere from *pp* to *mf*. Feel free to vary them *ad lib*.

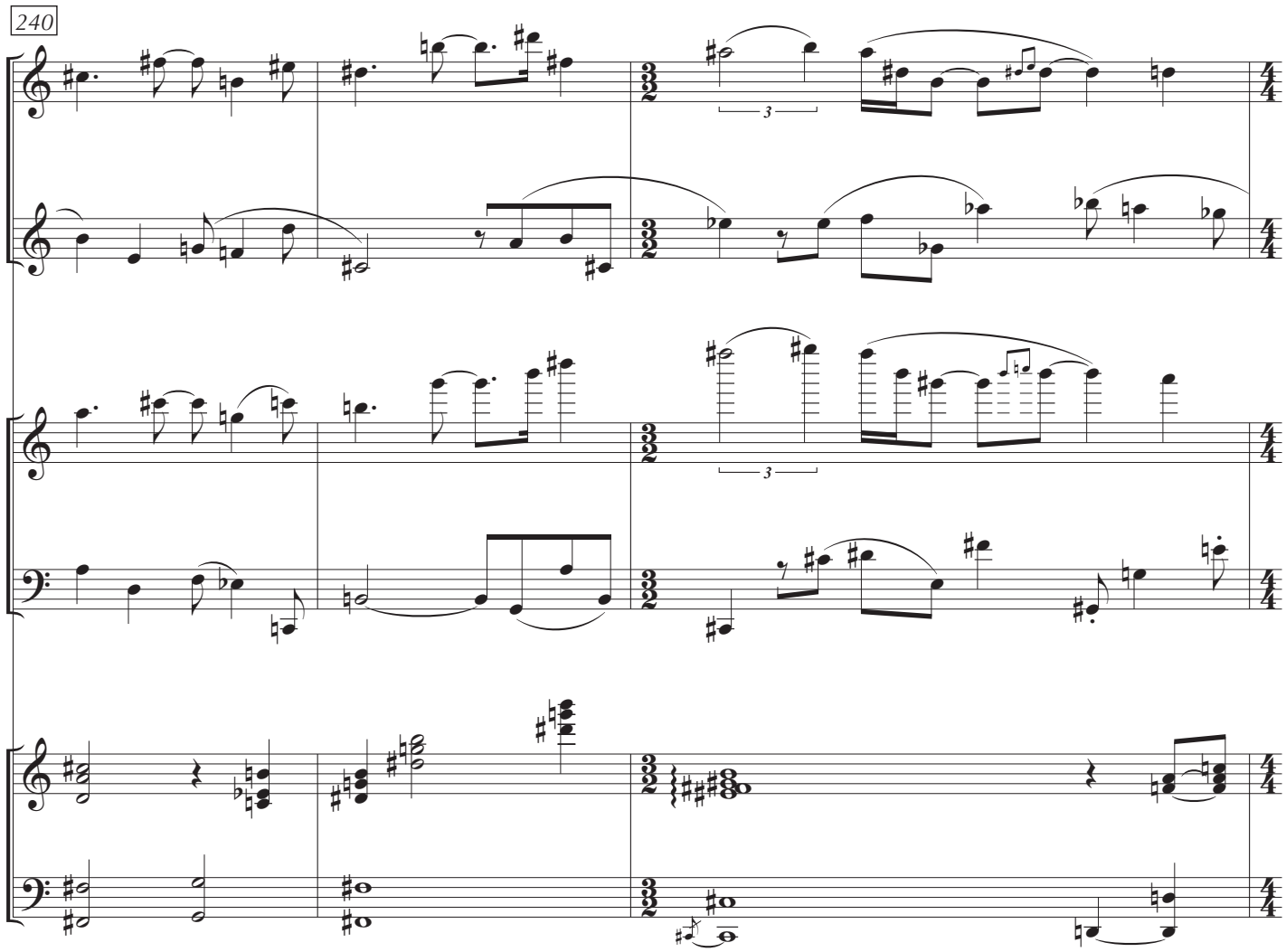

K
223
The End of Everything ♩ = 54
Gradual rall. to the end
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
warm, lush
ff From here to the end, gradually decrescendo to niente, and allow the music to disintegrate: increasingly airy tone, harmonics ad lib, leave out more and more notes ad lib.
ff From here to the end, gradually decrescendo to niente, and allow the music to disintegrate by leaving out more and more notes ad lib.
ff From here to the end, gradually decrescendo to niente, and allow the music to disintegrate: increasingly sul pont. and fragile tone, harmonics ad lib, leave out more and more notes ad lib.
ff From here to the end, gradually decrescendo to niente, and allow the music to disintegrate: increasingly sul pont. and fragile tone, harmonics ad lib, leave out more and more notes ad lib.
ff warm, lush From here to the end, gradually decrescendo to niente, and allow the music to disintegrate: increasingly fragile tone, leave out more and more notes ad lib.
8vb


227
(♩ = 53)
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno

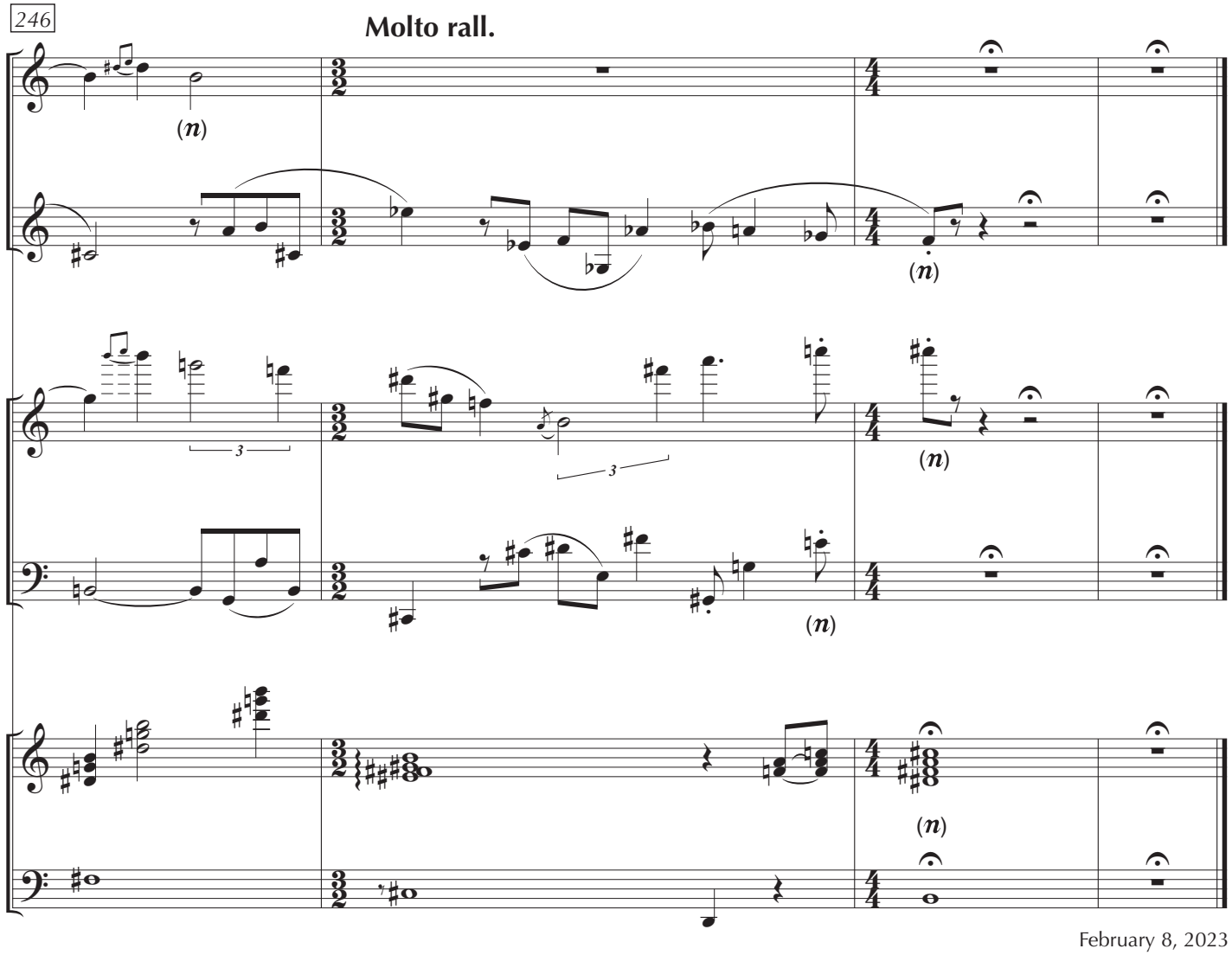

(♩ = 52)
230
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno


234
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
3
3


(♩ = 51)
237
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
3
3
3


240
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno
3
3

243
(♩= 50)
Fl
B♭ Cl
Vn
Vc
Pno



February 8, 2023
Tempe, AZ
/ Needham, MA
/ Albuquerque, NM
/ Apache Junction, AZ