Mathew Fuerst

String Quartet No. 2

Program Note

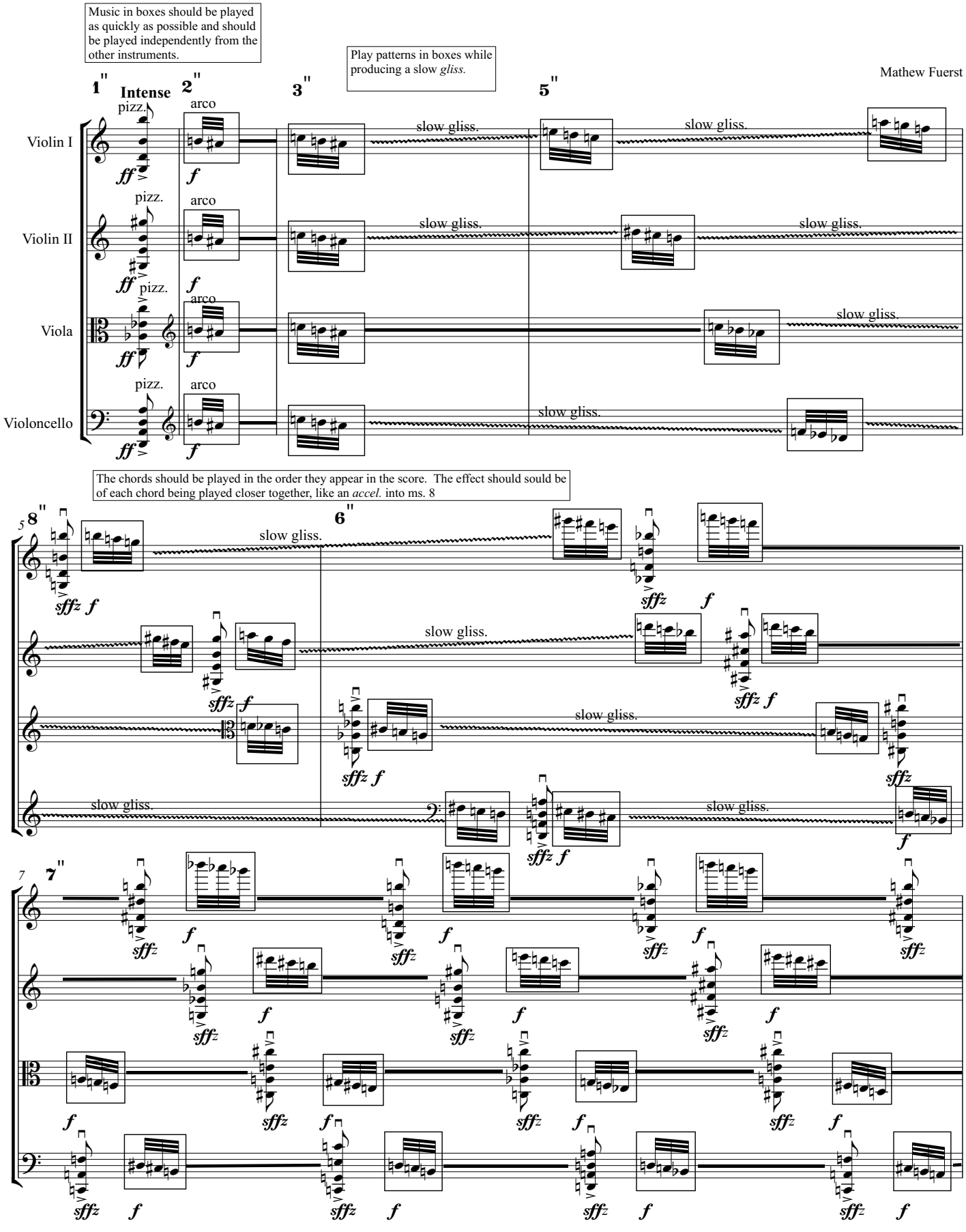
String Quartet No. 2 was written for the Amernet String Quartet. The initial inspiration for the work came from my fascination with the universe, particularly the Big Bang Theory and various theories on the ultimate fate of the universe. After reading about a varieties of theories about the end of the universe, I chose to try to depict the Big Crunch, which is the opposite of the Big Bang. This was a purely musical decision. The piece was also inspired by the concept of multiverses as I was also reading a book about that at the time.

Musically, the piece is essentially a chaconne using a 12-tone row as the basis for the root of each triad used. I decided to shape the work into three parts: the first part was inspired by the Big Bang and expansion. The chaconne progression is presented violently with the harmonies clashing against each other. The music moves from aggressively attached chords in each part to arpeggios and eventually ascends to the highest registers, where the second section begins. It starts in the highest registers of the strings via artificial harmonics and gradually the chaconne harmonies become more clear until arriving at the climax in which the 12 chord progression is presented completely clearly. It quickly breaks apart and the beginning of the quartet is presented in retrograde to illustrate the Big Crunch. The final section acts as a long coda and is played completely as natural harmonics, and the piece eventually evaporates.

The work lasts approximately 9 minutes.

Written for the Amernet String Quartet

String Quartet No. 2



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Chords should be played as quickly as possible
and uncoordinated with the other instruments.
Finish the chordal cycle before moving on to the next measure,
even if it lasts longer than specified. Repeat as often as possible.

Arpeggios should be played as queickly as possible,
and uncoordinated with the other instruments

21" **Aggressive**

A

8

ff

3"

arpeggio

5"

10

arpeggio

arpeggio

8"

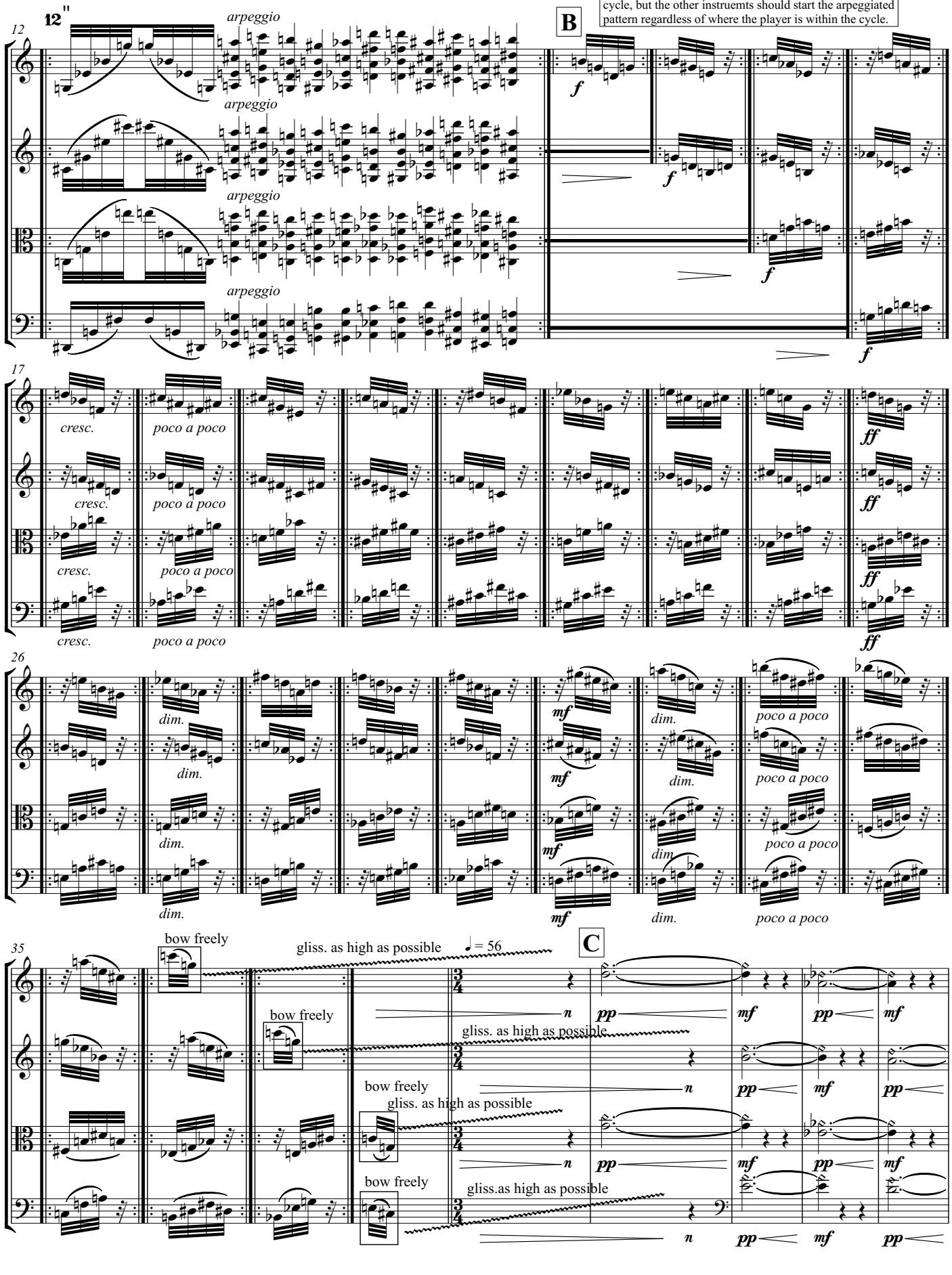
11

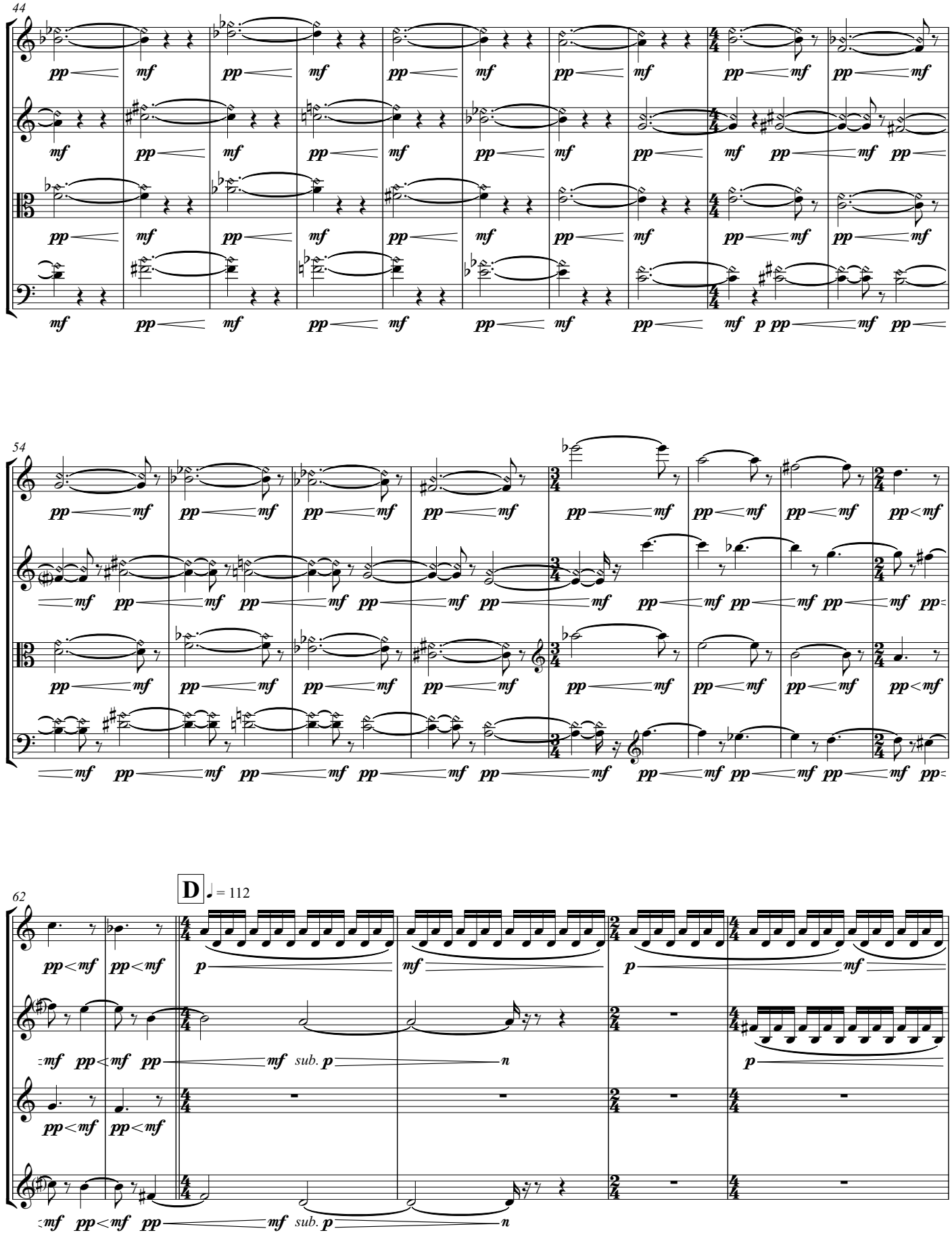
arpeggio

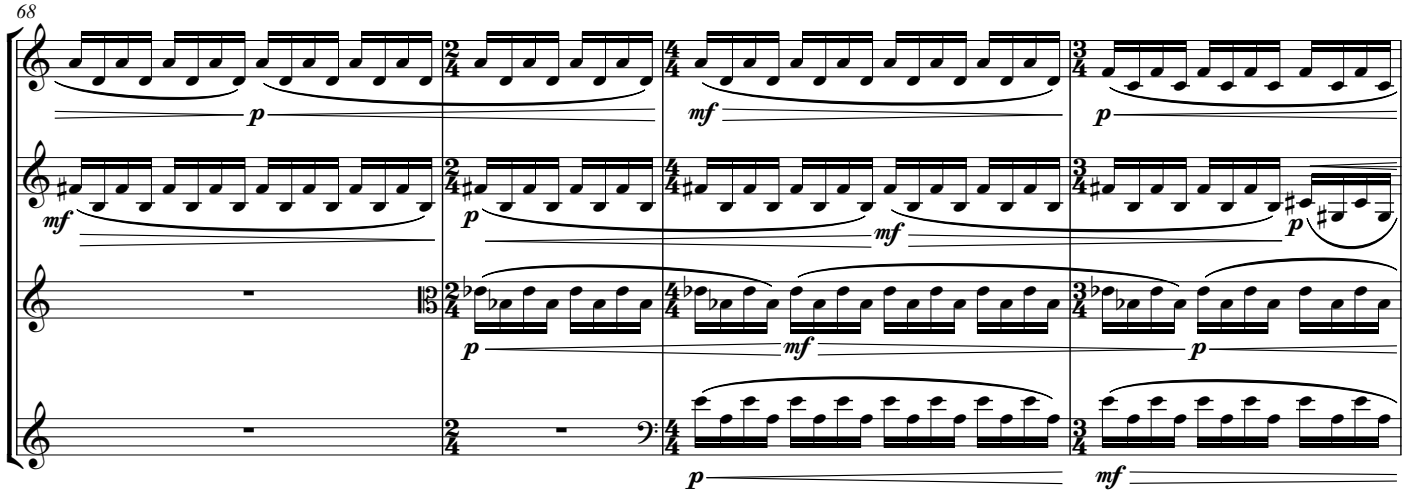
arpeggio

arpeggio

Each measure should be played for 1-2".
Repeat the pattern in the measure as often
and as fast as possible. The instruments should
not be coordinated. Violin I should finish the chordal
cycle, but the other instruemts should start the arpeggiated
pattern regardless of where the player is within the cycle.




44
54
62
D
♩ = 112
sub.
sub.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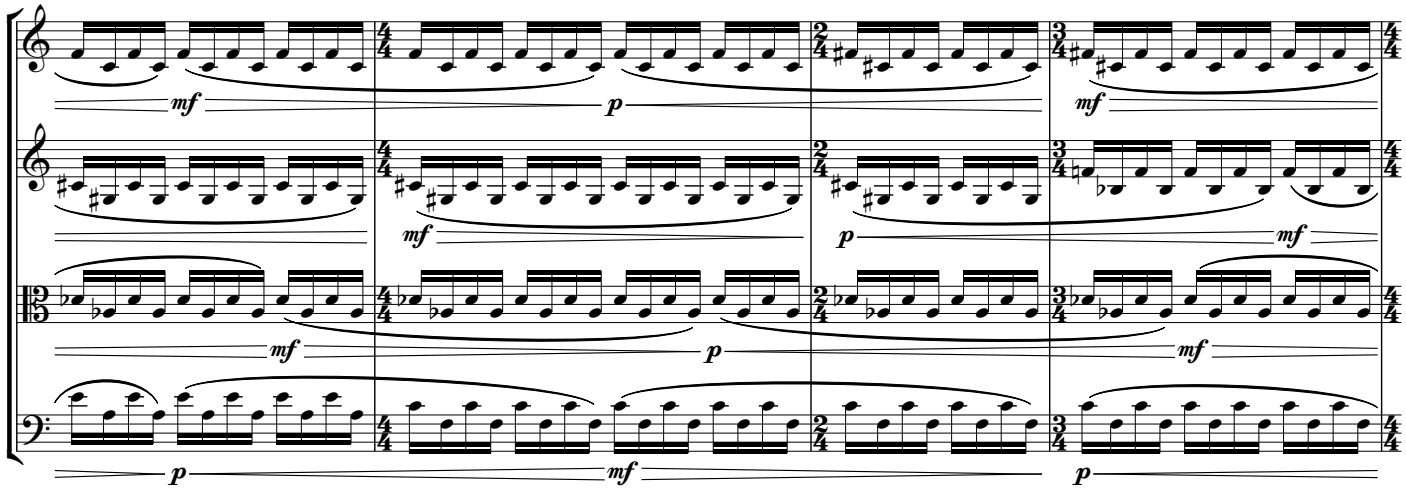
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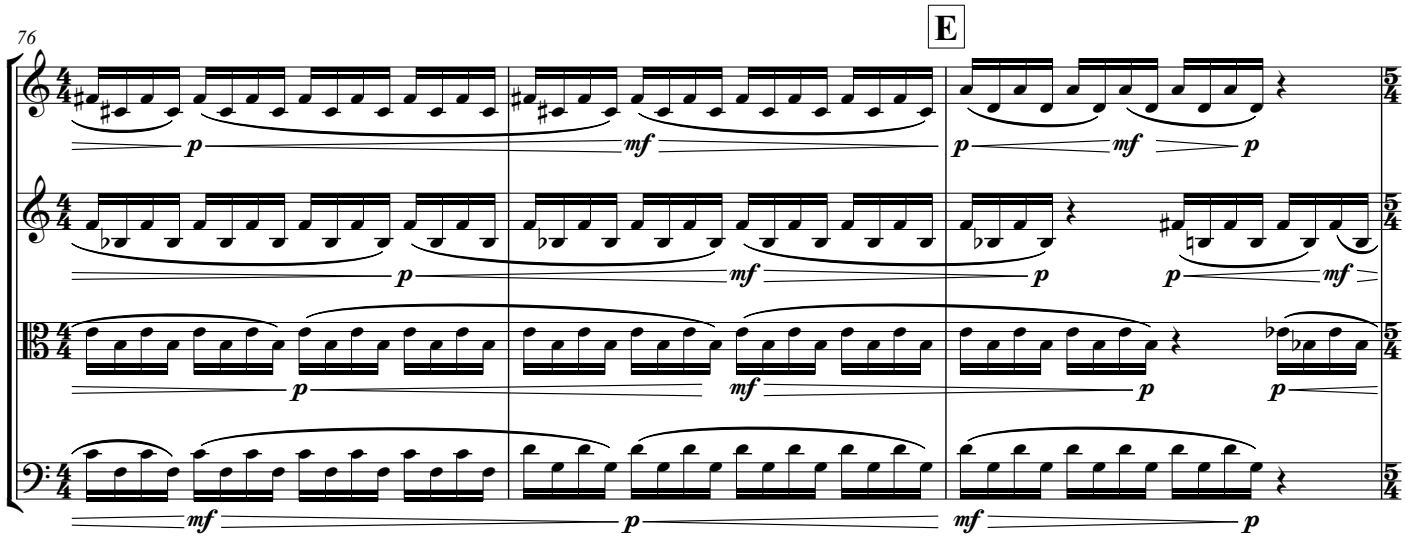
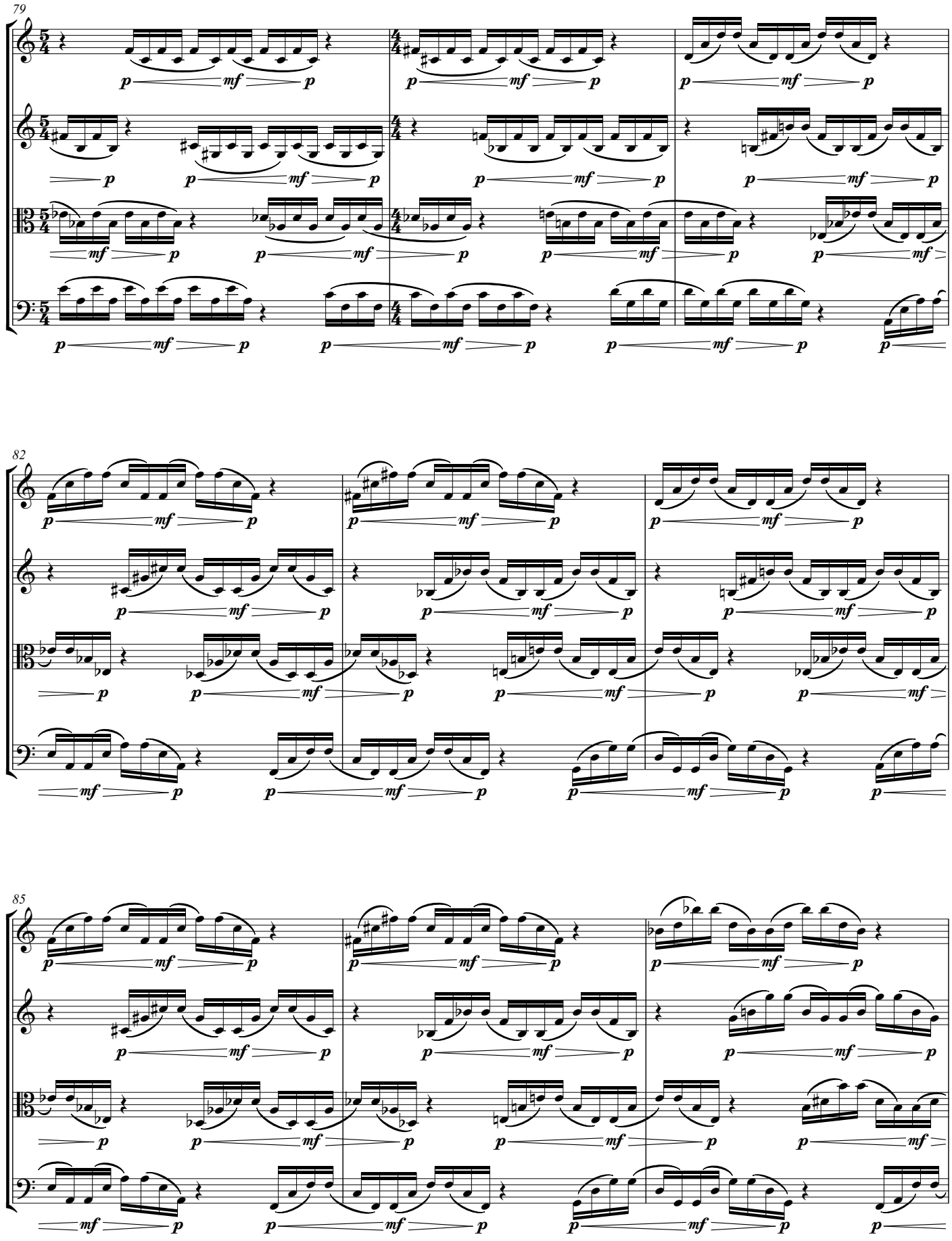

76
E


79
82
85

F

88

With quiet intensity
sul pont.

With quiet intensity
sul pont.

With quiet intensity
sul pont.

With quiet intensity
sul pont.

92

With greater intensity
ord.

With greater intensity
ord.

With greater intensity
ord.

With greater intensity
ord.

98

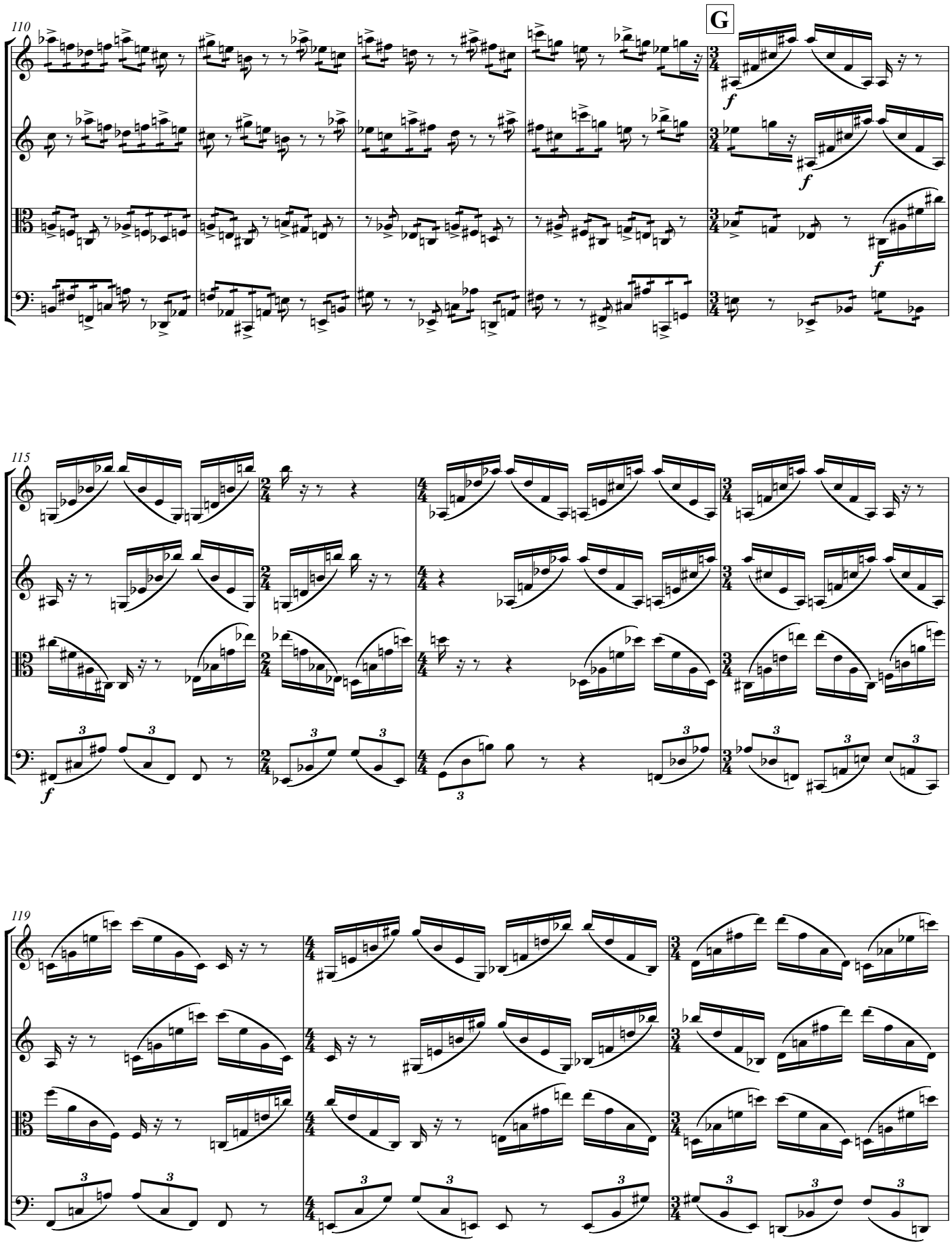
cresc.

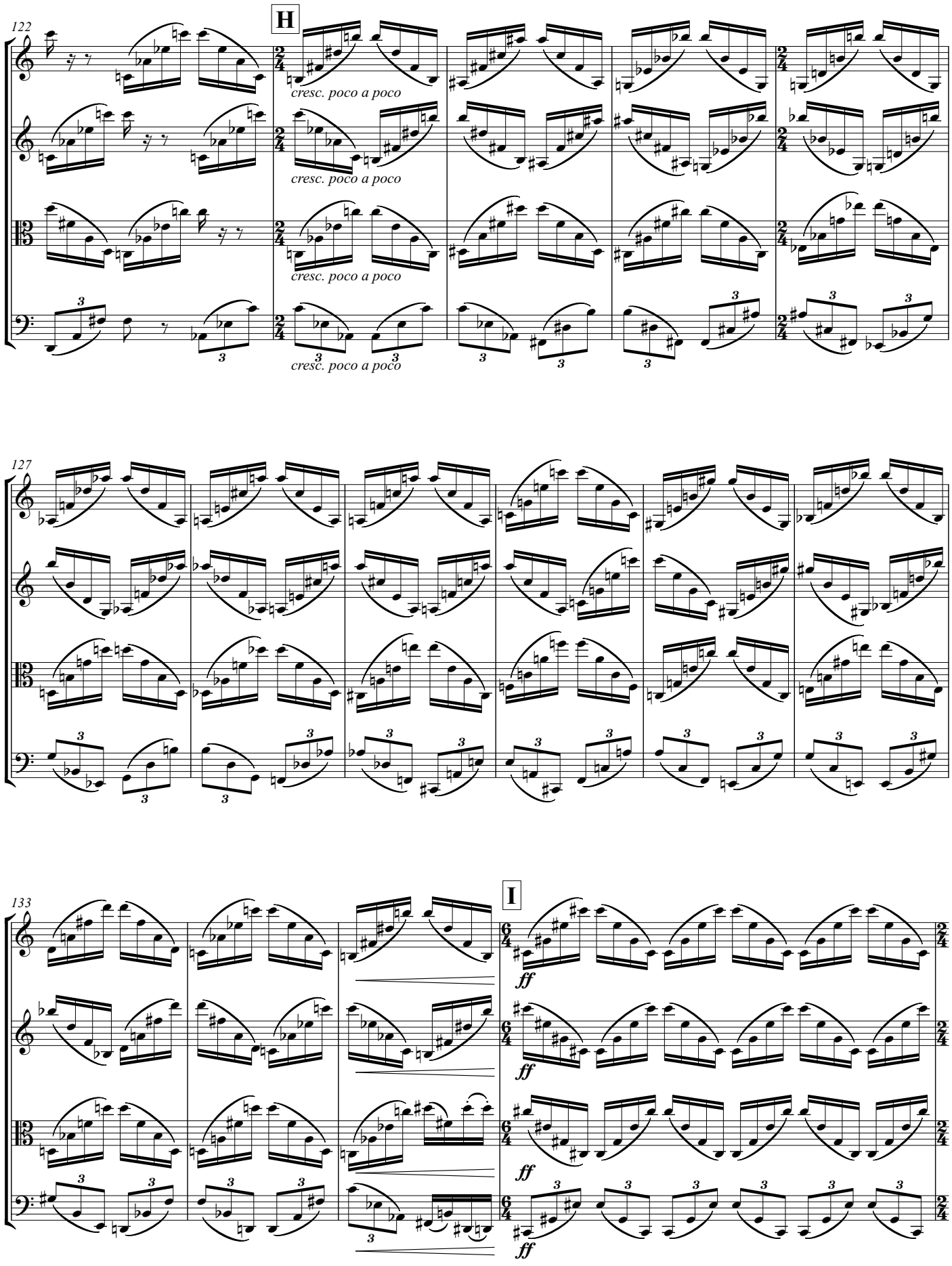
cresc.

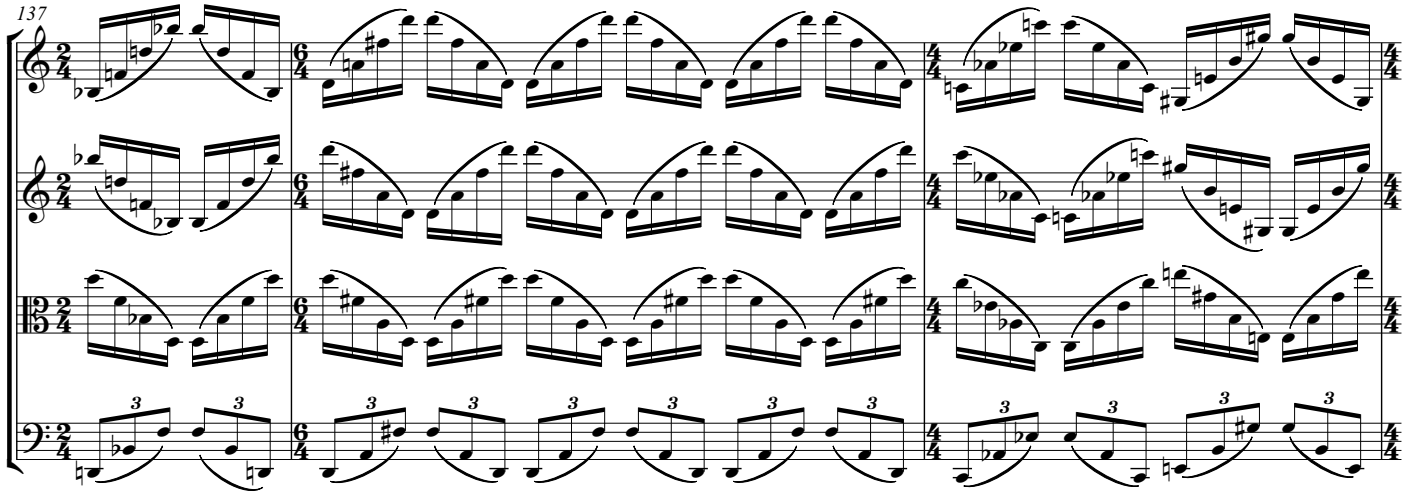
cresc.

cresc.

104


110
G
f
115
f
119


122
H
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
127
133
I
ff
ff
ff
ff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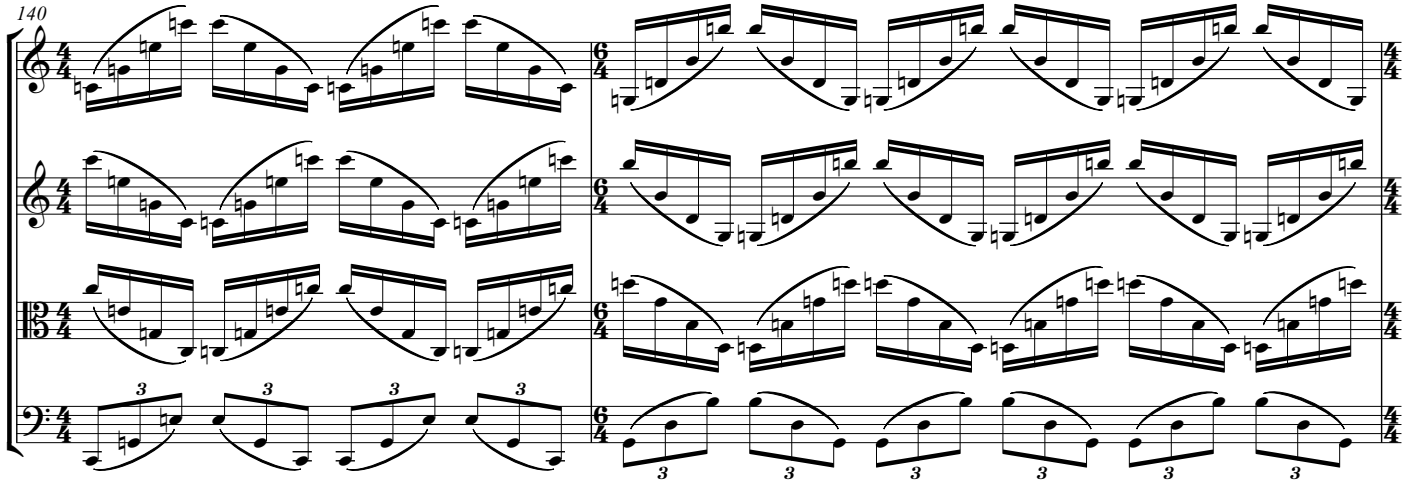
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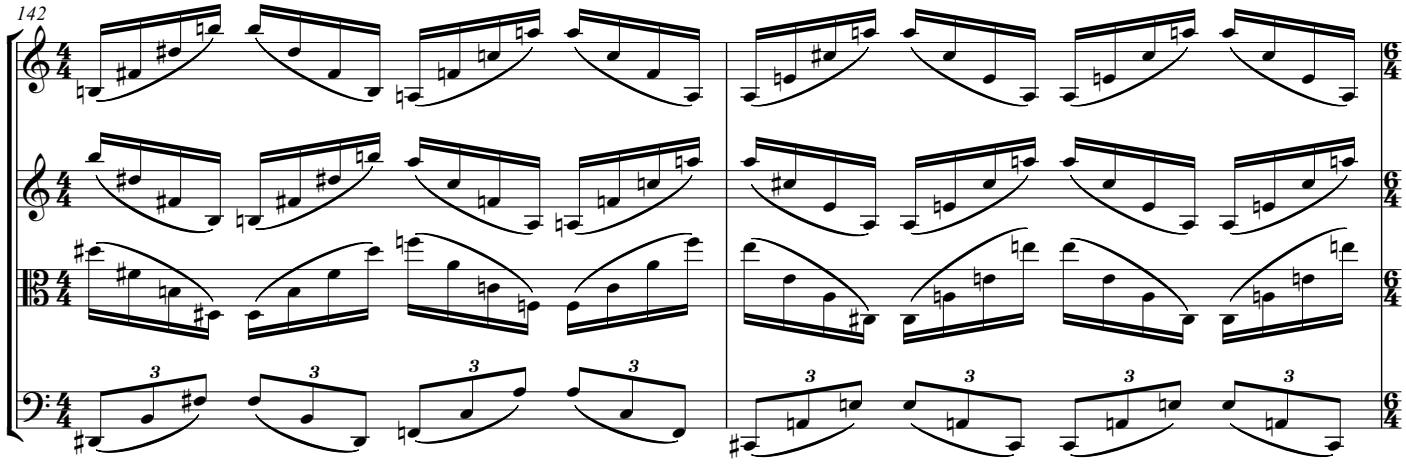

142

144

146

Music in boxes should get faster and louder independently of each other. The boxed music should overtake the cello.

molto accel.

molto accel.

molto accel.

non accel.

non cresc.

J

Wild and agressive

The pattern at the start of the measure should be continued with each chord change. The pattern should be played as fast and violently as possible, and should not be synchronized with the other instruments.

149

21"

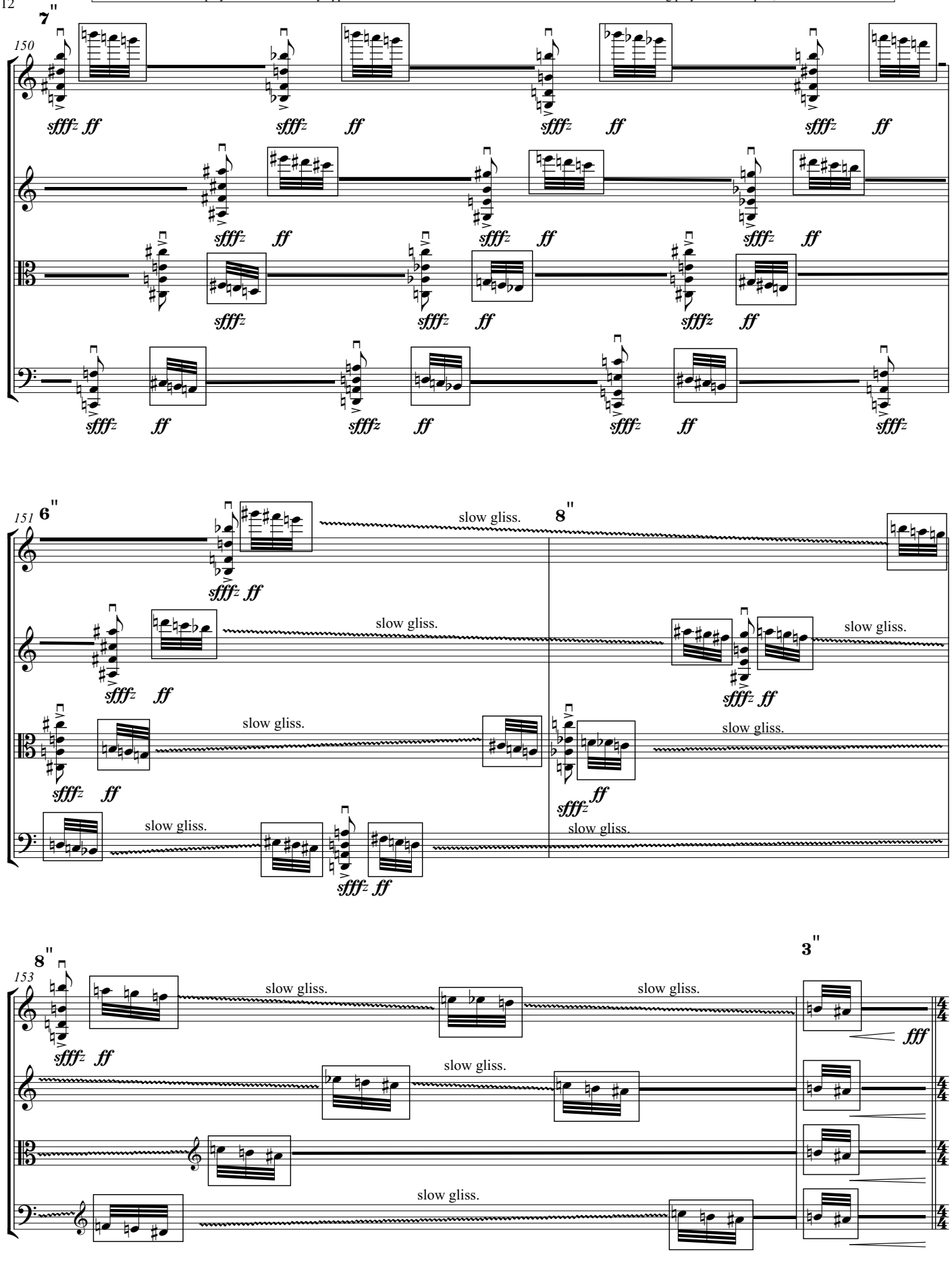
più ***ff***

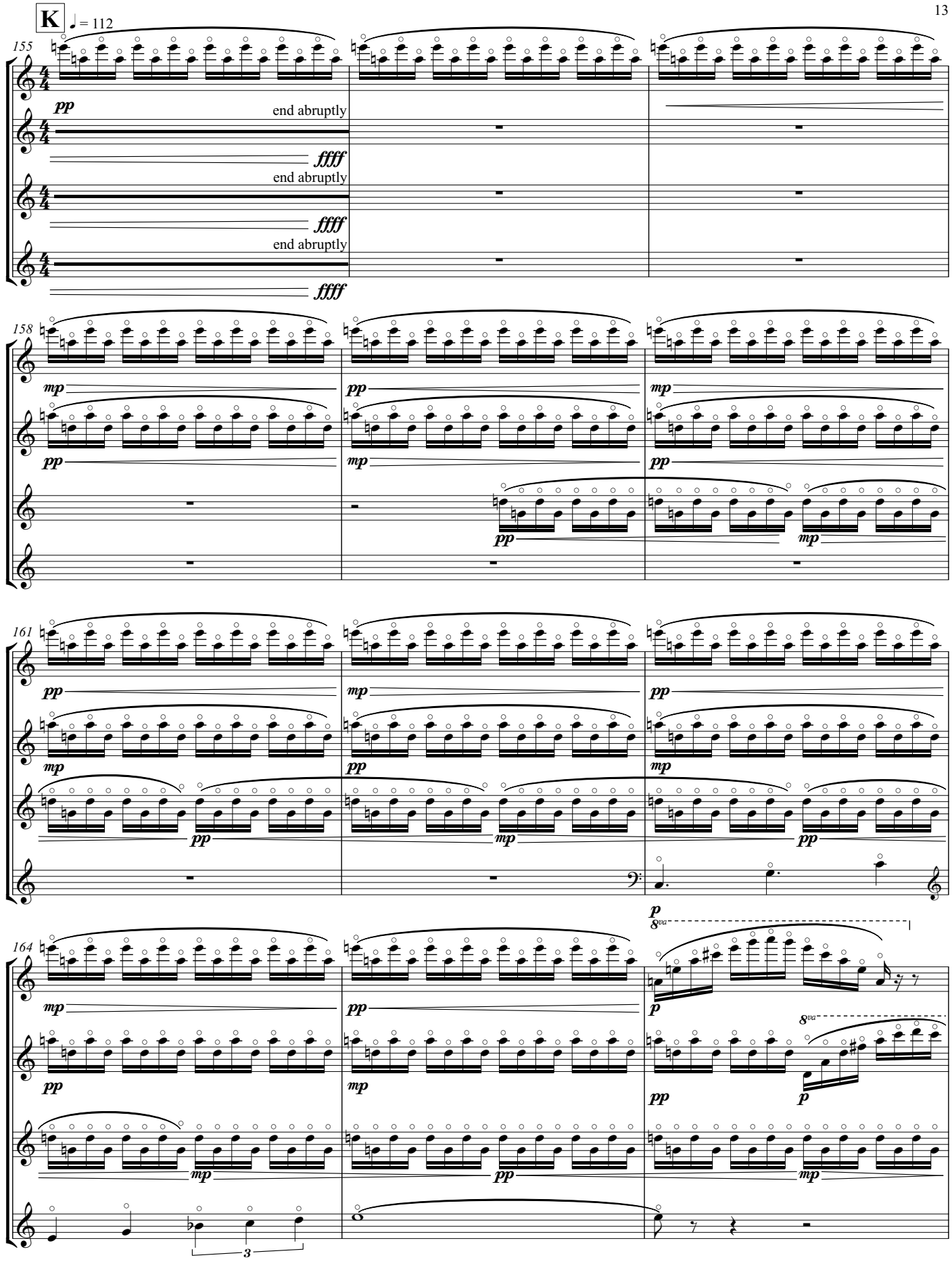
più ***ff***

più ***ff***

più ***ff***

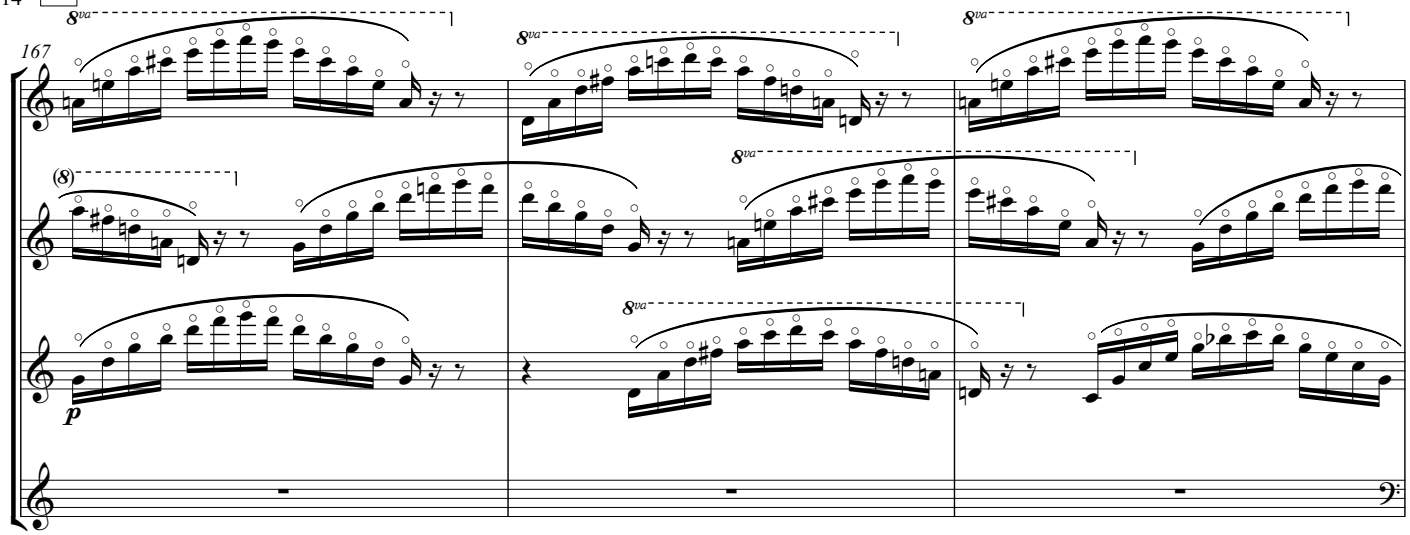
The next five measures shoudl be played in a similar manner as the opening, but more intensely and with greater violence.
The chords should be played in the order they appear in the score. The effect should sound as if each chord is being played further apart, like a rit. into ms. 153




K
♩ = 112
155
pp
end abruptly
ffff
end abruptly
ffff
end abruptly
ffff
158
mp
pp
161
164
8va
3

L

167



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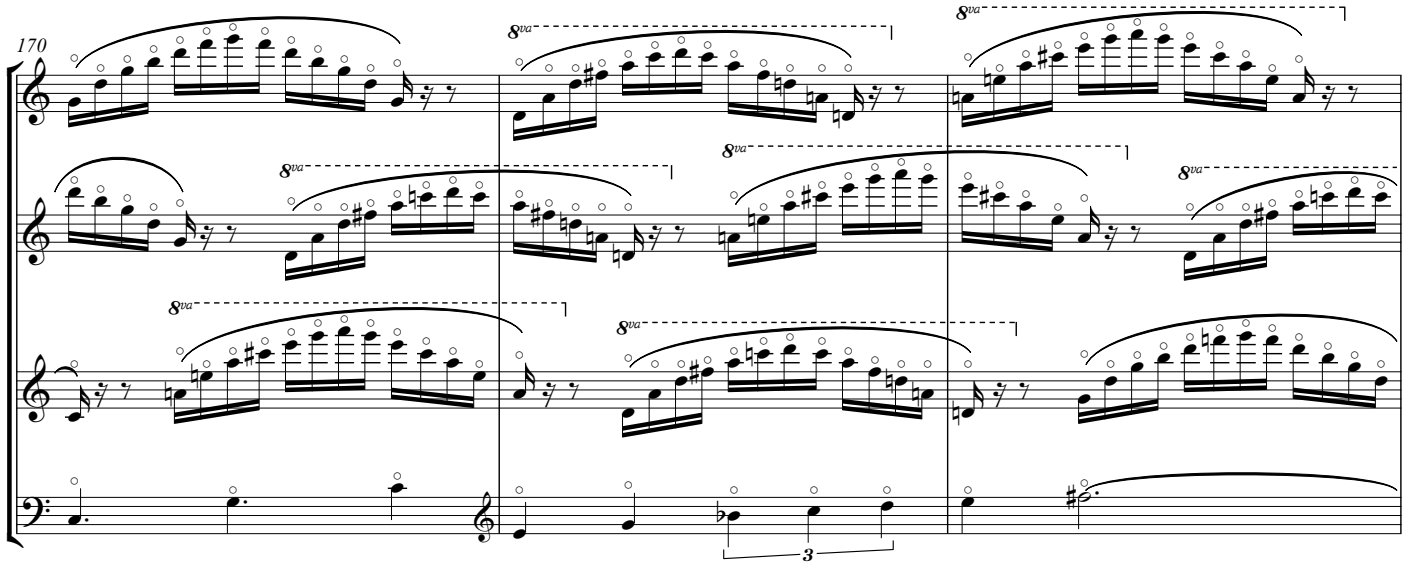

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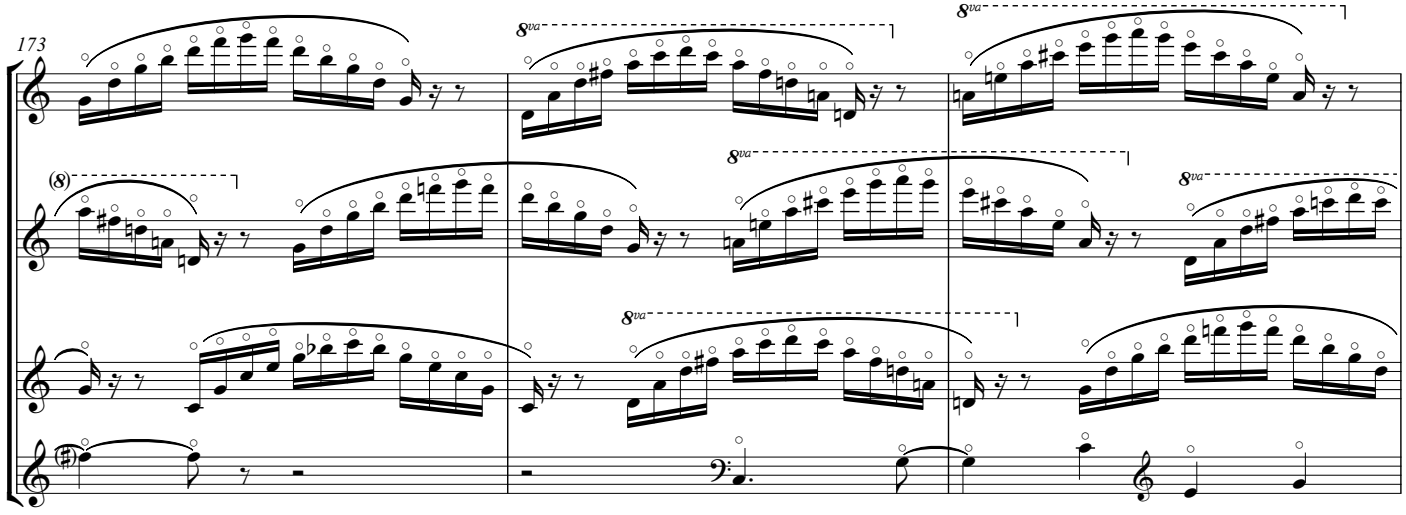
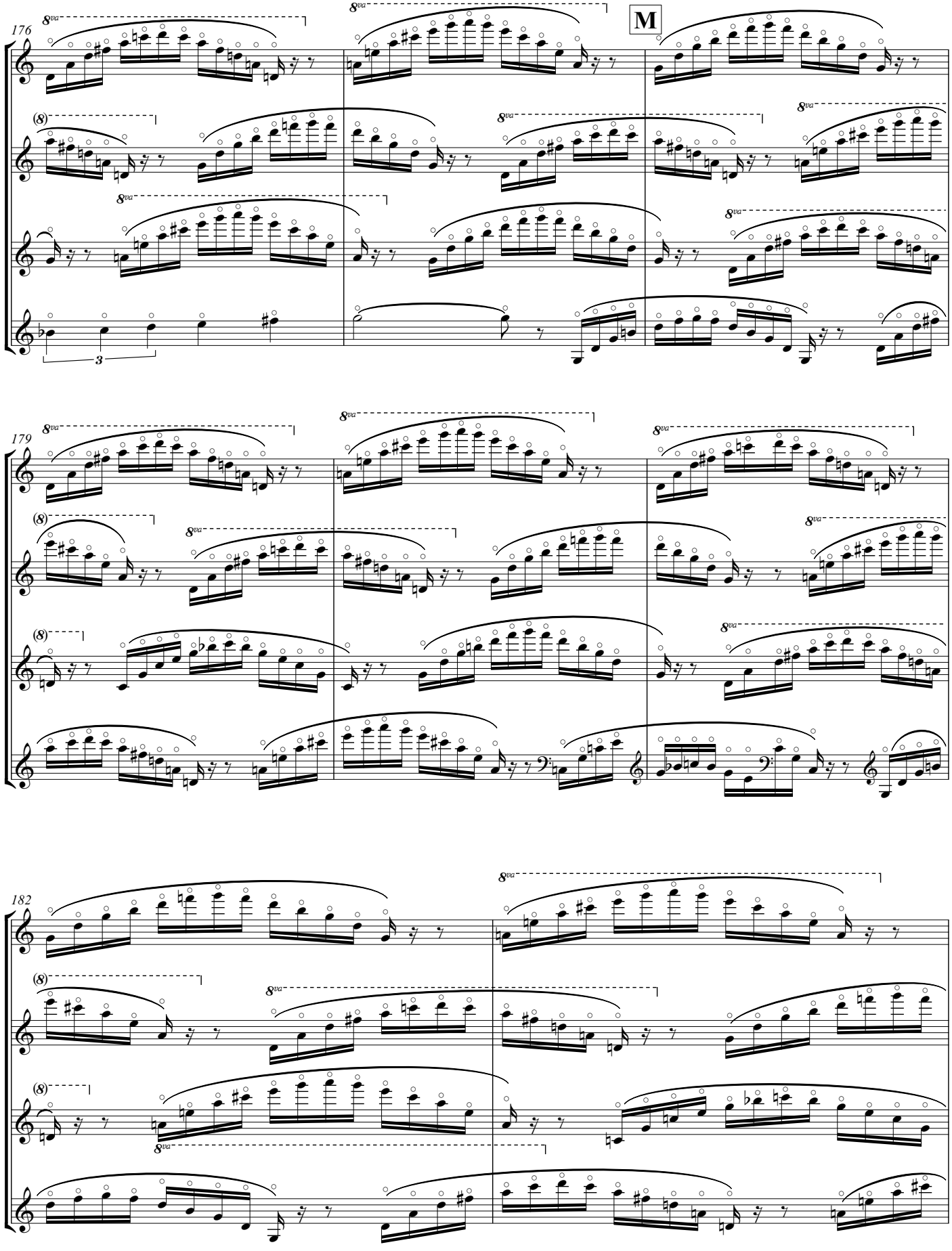
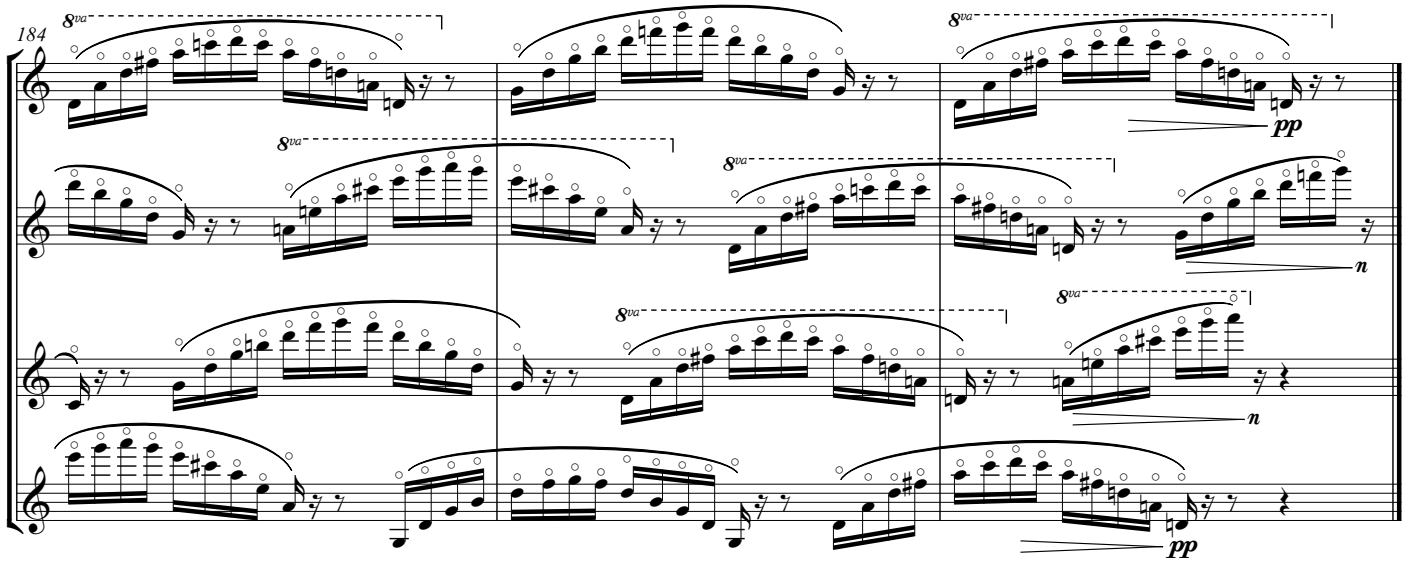



176
M
179
182


184
8va
8va
8va
8va
8va
8va
pp
n
n
pp