Mathew Fuerst

Sonata No. 3

Program Note

When I was nine or ten years old, I was introduced to the music of Beethoven, playing a simplified version of his *Ode to Joy* theme on the piano. I remember liking this piece very much, and I saved up my allowance money to buy a record I thought was the Beethoven symphony containing the theme. I ended up unknowingly buying the wrong symphony and the record I bought was a recording of Beethoven's Symphony No. 3 (*Eroica*). After listening to the record I decided that I wanted to be a composer.

When violinist Jasper Wood and pianist David Riley commissioned this work (my fourth commission from them), I felt tremendous pressure with this third sonata to try to produce a piece that would be substantial within my own body of work. The period of time in which I composed this work was simultaneously the happiest and most difficult in my life. It was the happiest because I was planning my wedding with my wife Rachel. However, I was also going through a period of extreme uncertainty in the quality and direction of my work. I even at times seriously considered quitting composition altogether. Eventually, I came to the conclusion that all I should care about is writing the music I wished to hear and to forget about anything else. Because of what I hoped to accomplish with the piece and the pressure I felt, this work took over a year to compose. Looking at the piece now, I feel it is my most optimistic work and my proudest achievement to date.

The first movement was the most difficult to compose. There were seven different versions nearly finished before the completion of the movement heard here. Originally I conceived the first movement of the sonata in classical sonata form. However, I found that the music I was writing sounded more like an academic exercise than anything else. Eventually, I scratched the original ideas and settled on the idea of writing a sort of chaconne based completely on major triads. My fear in doing this, however, was that I would end up with a work that would sound old. I hoped to produce a work that sounded fresh and new. I wanted to create music that sounded like a cloud of overlapping harmonies appearing from afar and gradually becoming grounded. Numerous canonic devices are employed so that only at the climax do the violin and piano come together harmonically and present the chord progression in unison, first in its original order, then backwards and modulated. In order to create more variety, the last third of the movement brings back the beginning of the work but in retrograde so that the music ends as it began.

The second movement was originally written as a wedding gift for Rachel and was played as the processional at our wedding. I took a chord progression the she really loved from my *String Quartet No. 1*, which I wrote for the New York City Ballet's Choreographic Institute, and developed the material to a greater degree than I had in the quartet. Like the first movement, the second is also essentially a chaconne.

For the last movement, I wanted to compose a highly virtuosic work that would end brilliantly. For this movement, I initially used Brahms' last movement of his Piano Quartet in g minor, op. 25 as a formal inspiration, and simultaneously wished to emulate the fantastically exciting ending of Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3, one of my favorite pieces. Before writing it, I spent a great deal of time listening to both Hungarian gypsy violin playing (particularly the friss sections of a Csárdás) and American fiddle music, hoping to emulate the fast, exciting playing found in both idioms. That being said, I did not wish to copy the specific sounds of these idioms, but simply the type of violin playing. The movement, and the sonata itself, has gone through a number of revisions with the help of Jasper and Dave, and it would not exist in the state it is in today without the input from both of them.

for Rachel Schachter

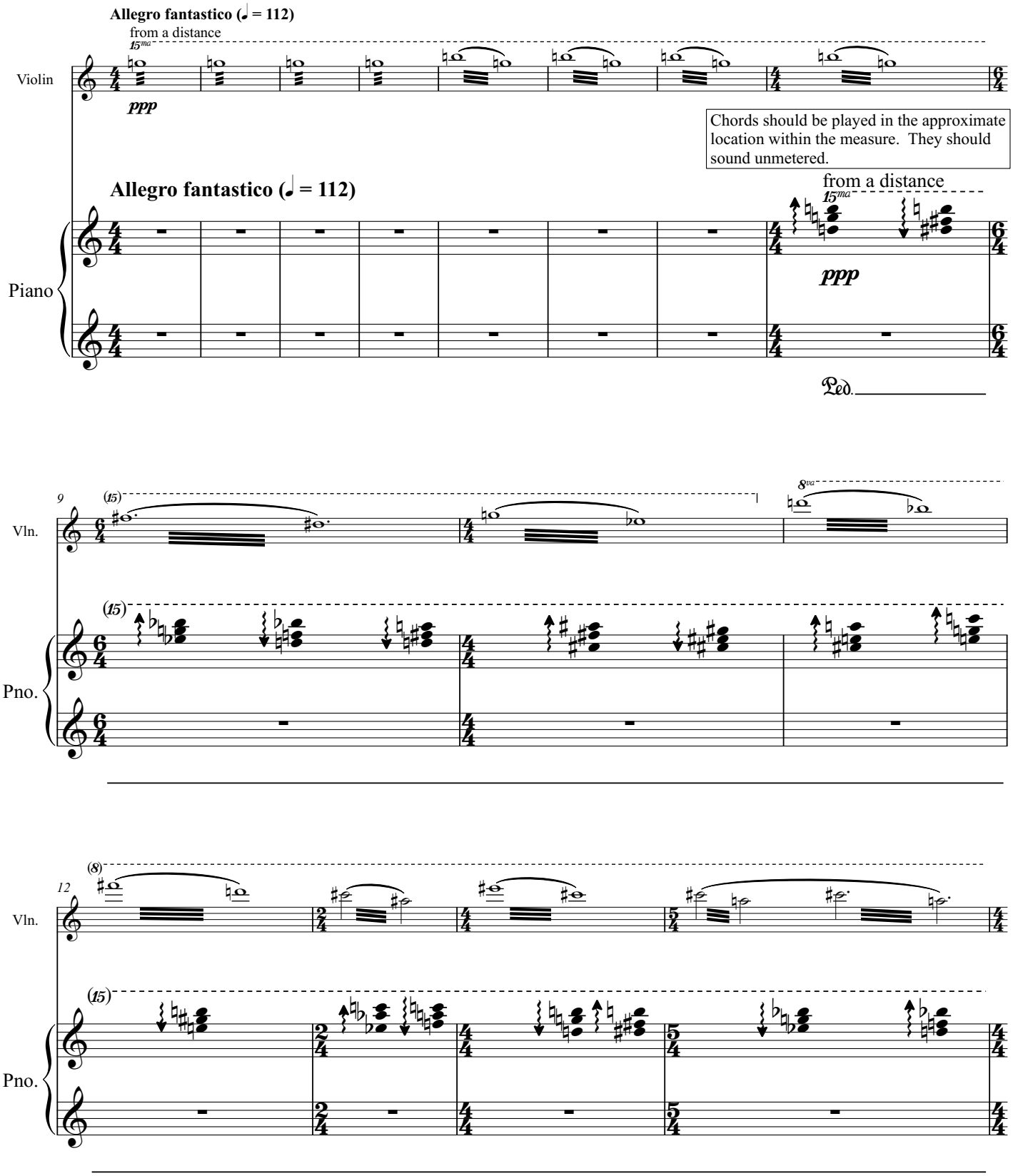
Written for Jasper Wood and David Riley

Sonata No. 3

for violin and piano

I. Fantasy

Mathew Fuerst



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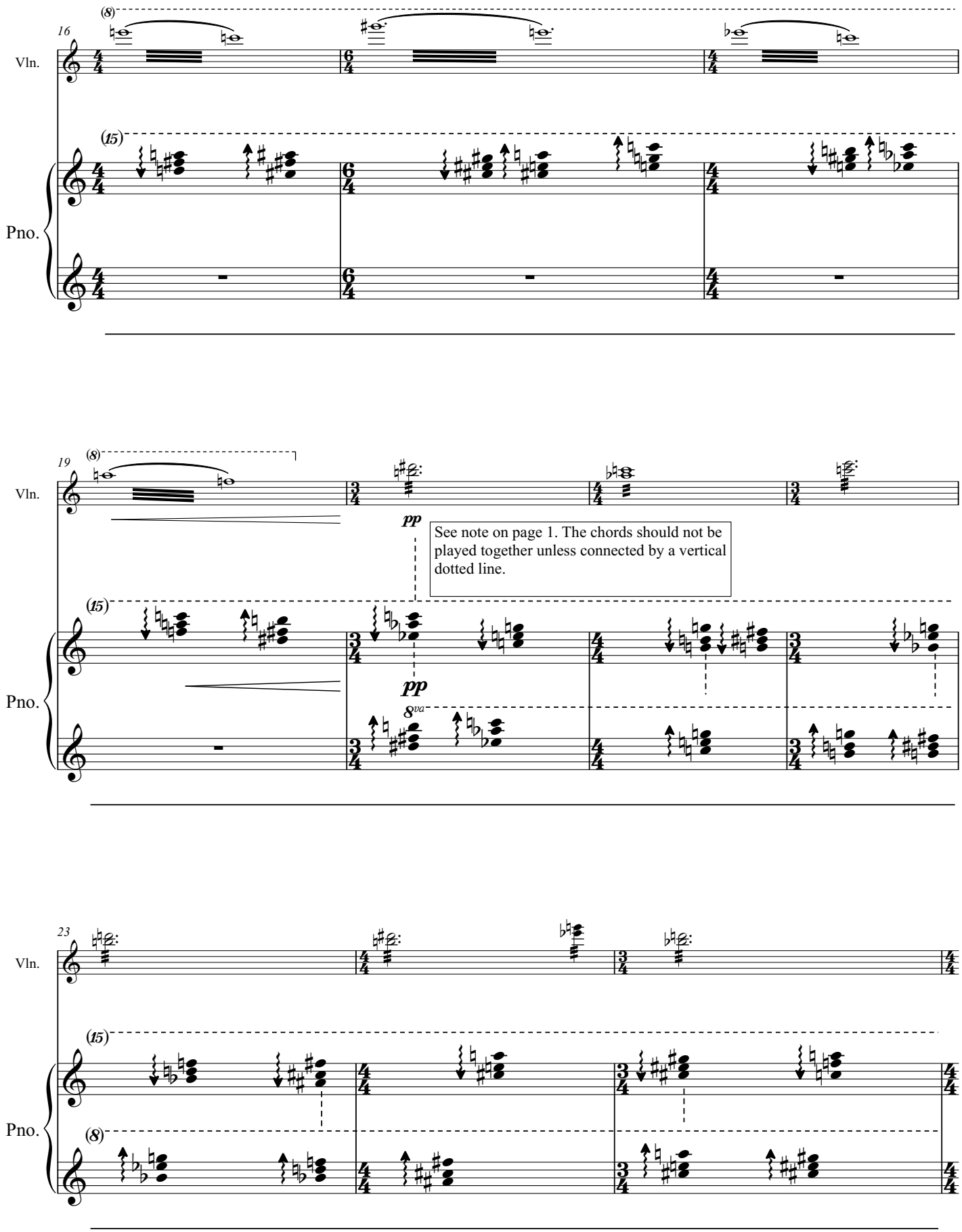
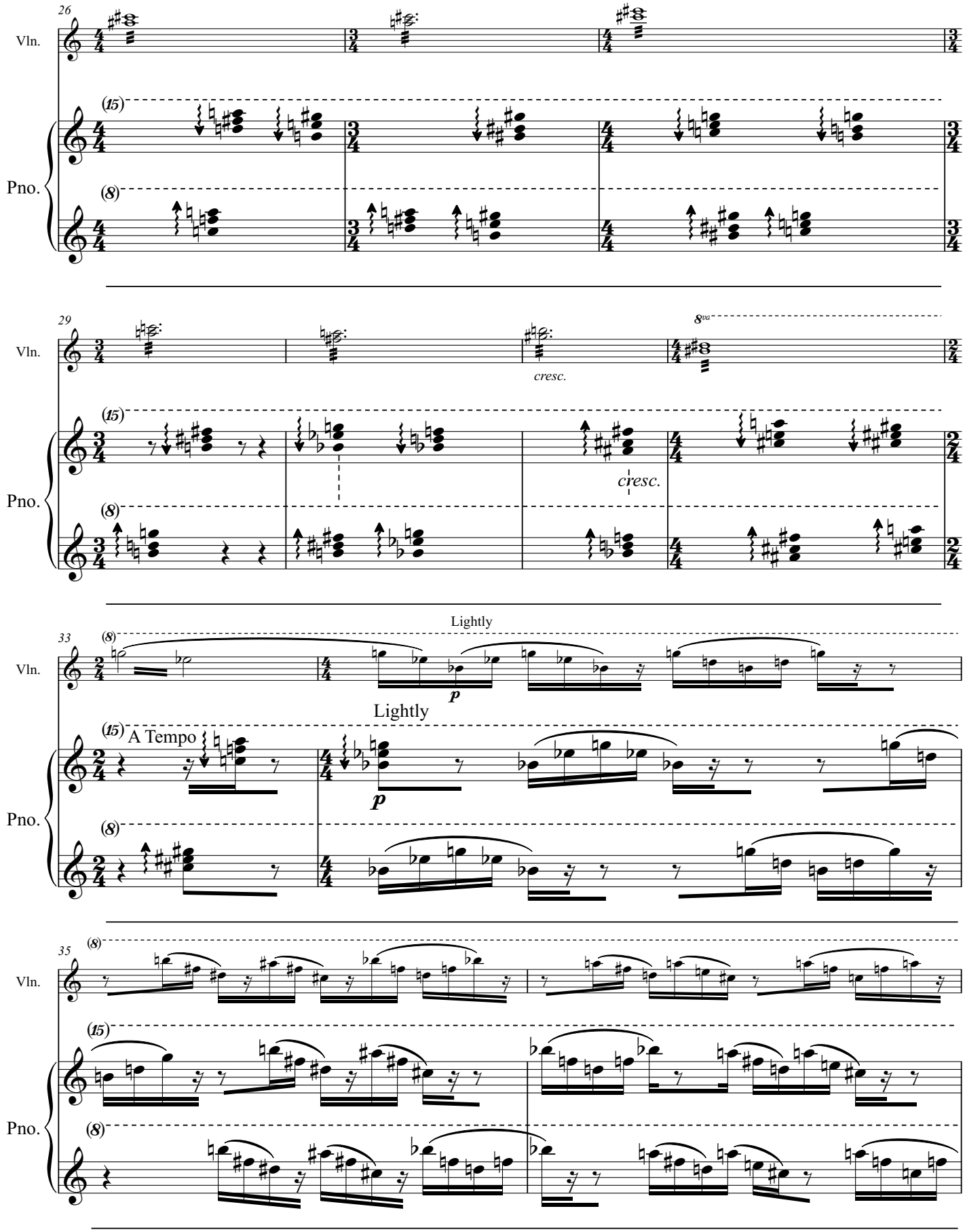
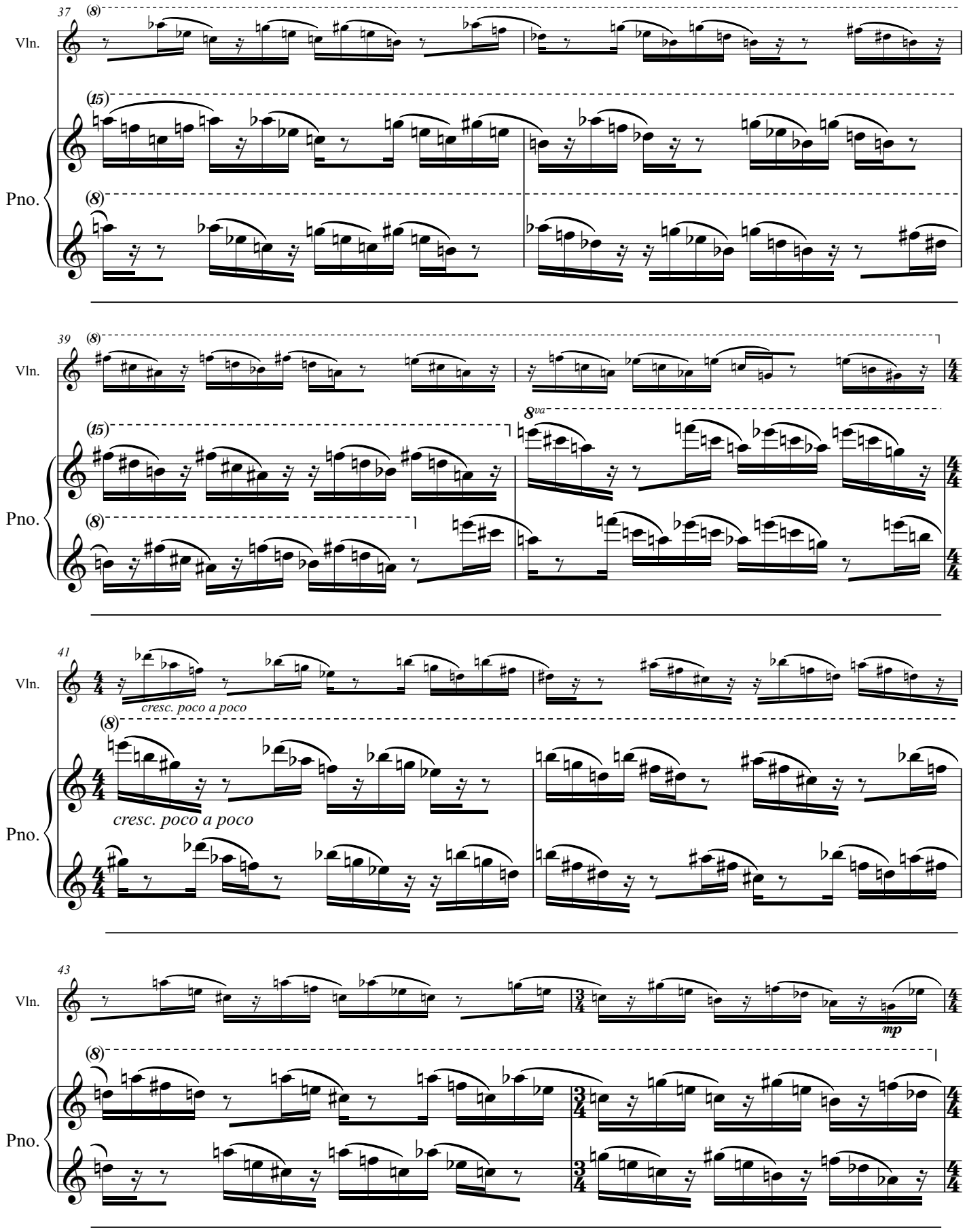
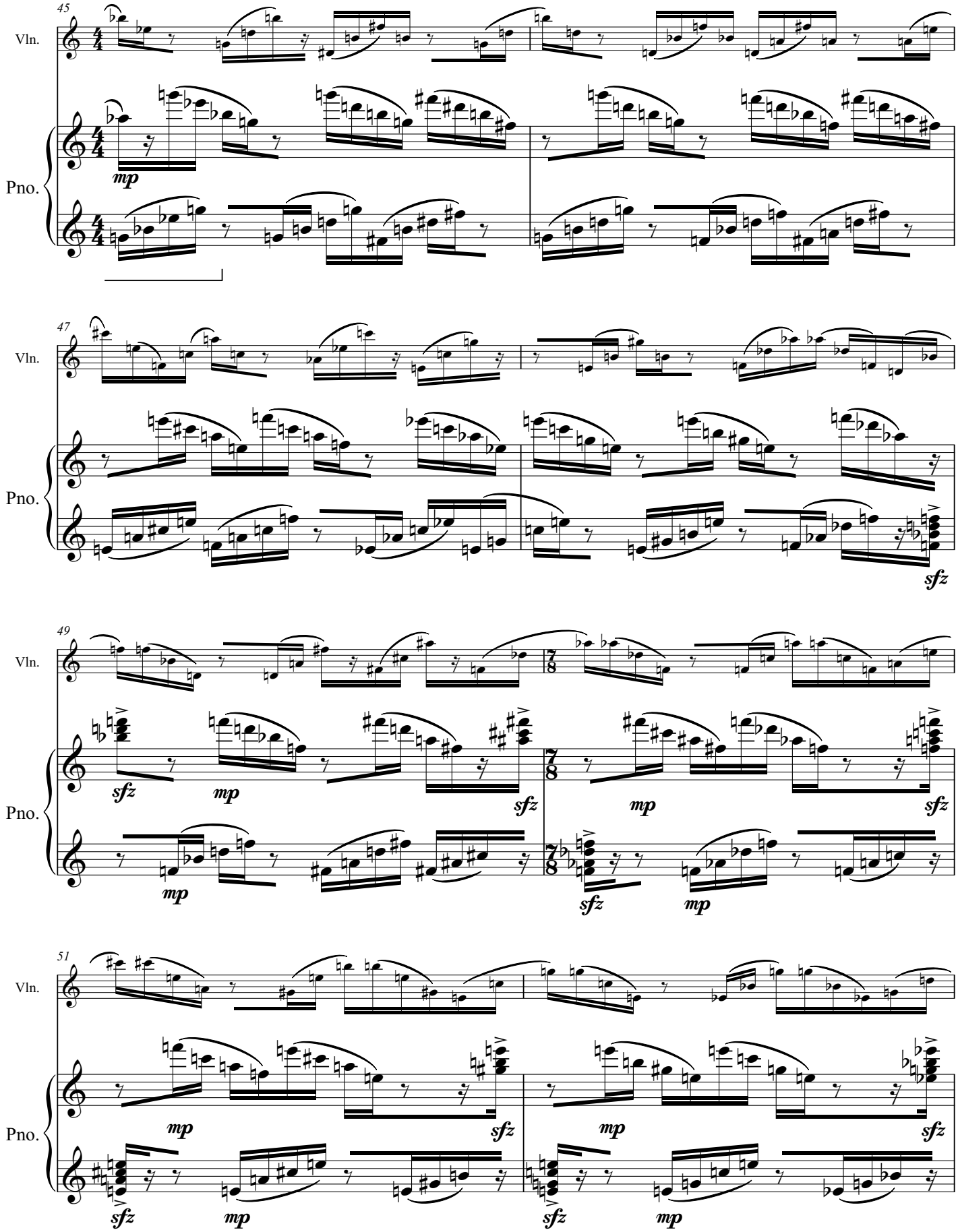
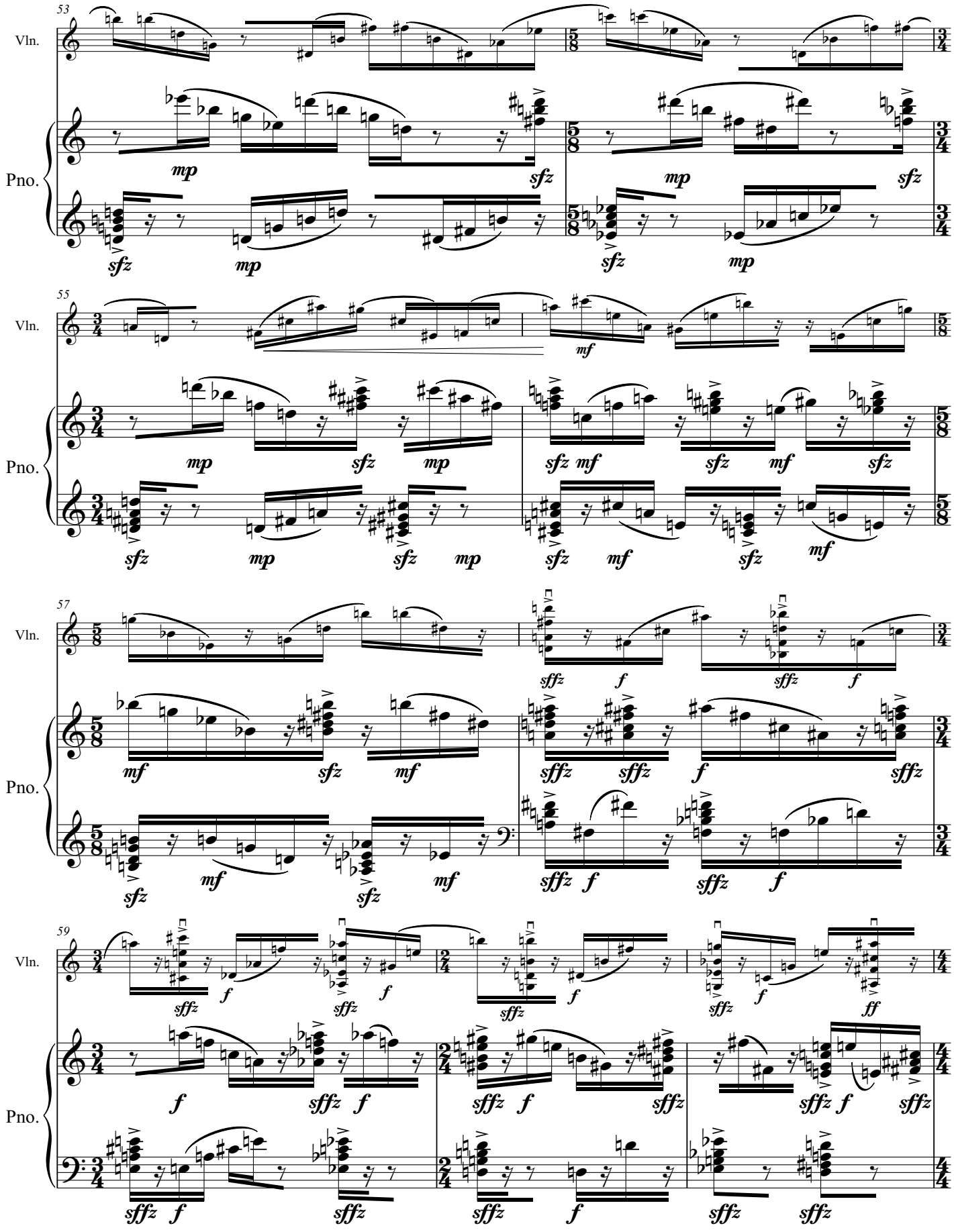
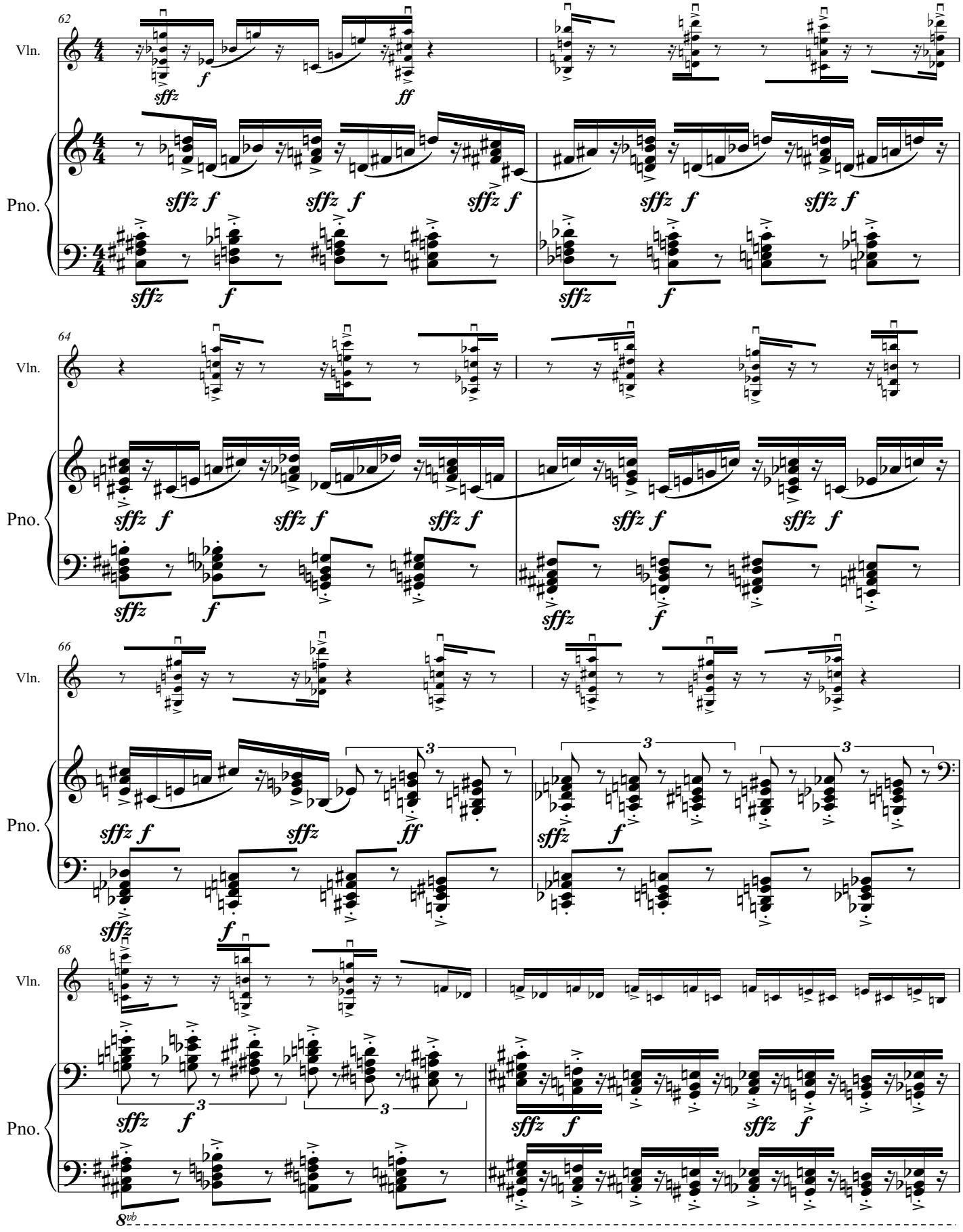

16
Vln.
Pno.
19
Vln.
Pno.
pp
See note on page 1. The chords should not be played together unless connected by a vertical dotted line.
pp
8va
23
Vln.
Pno.

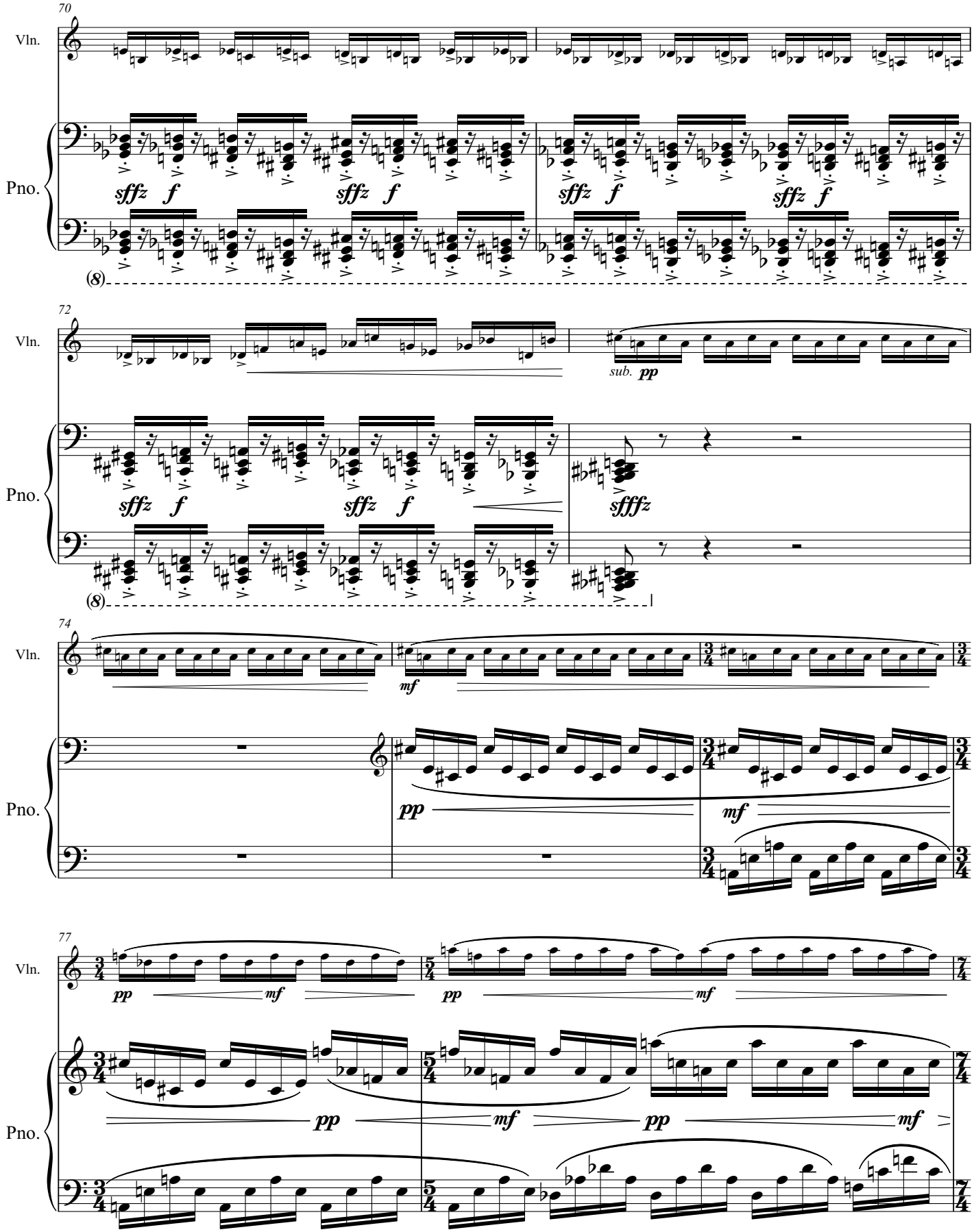

26
Vln.
Pno.
(15)
(8)
29
8va
cresc.
cresc.
33
Lightly
p
Lightly
A Tempo
p
35

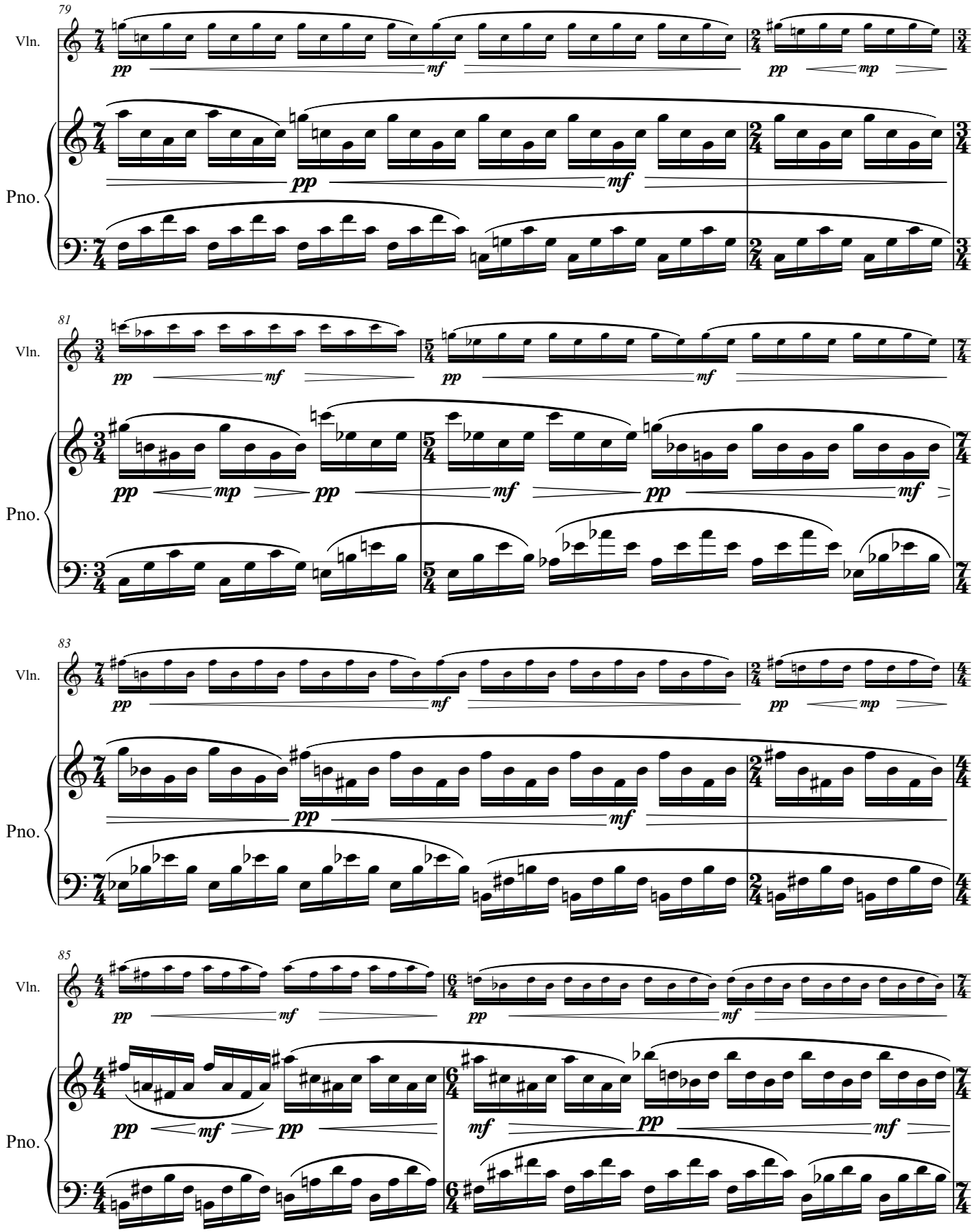

37
Vln.
Pno.
39
8va
41
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
43
mp

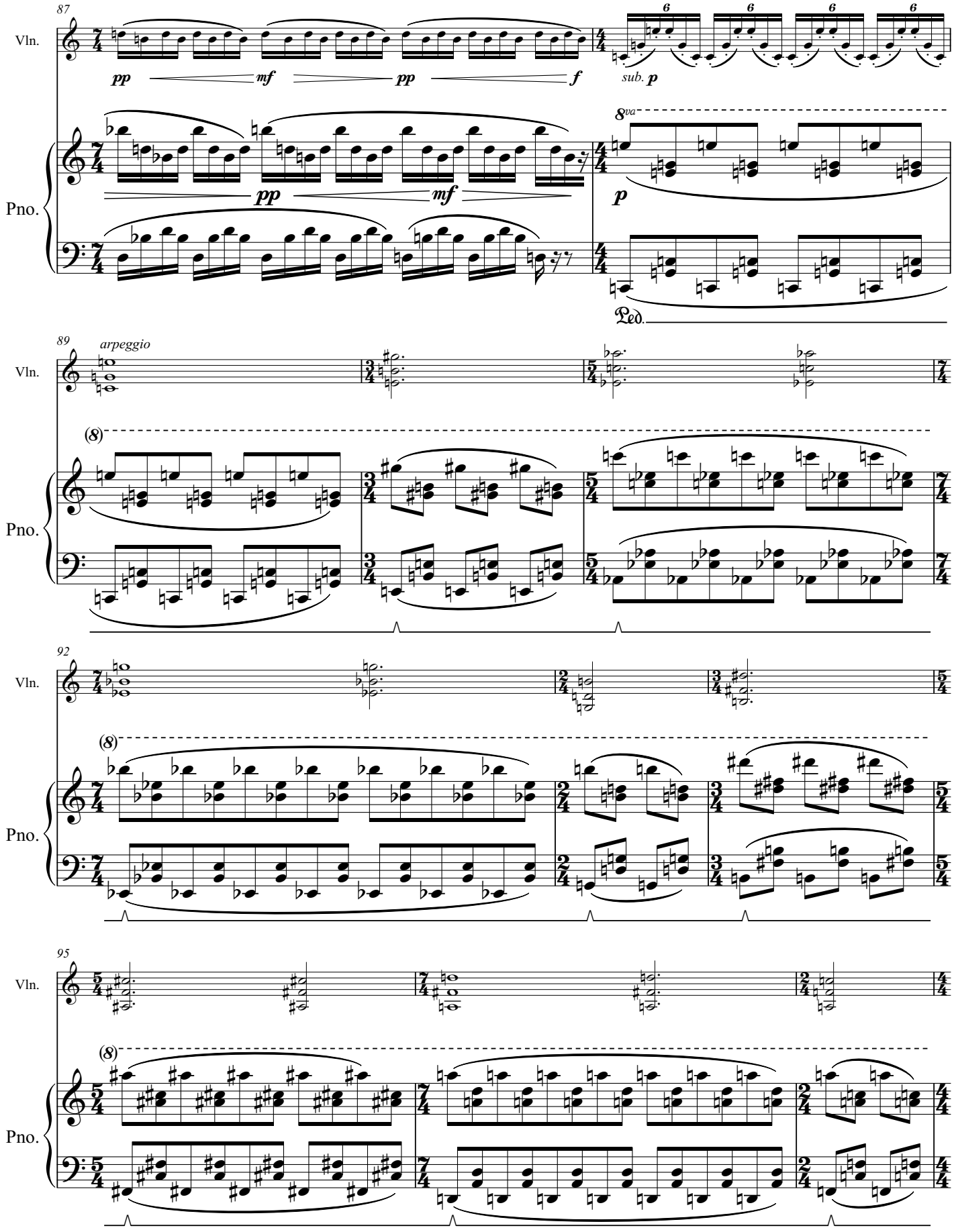

45
Vln.
Pno.
mp
47
Vln.
Pno.
sfz
49
Vln.
Pno.
sfz
mp
sfz
mp
sfz
mp
sfz
mp
51
Vln.
Pno.
mp
sfz
mp
sfz
sfz
mp
sfz
mp

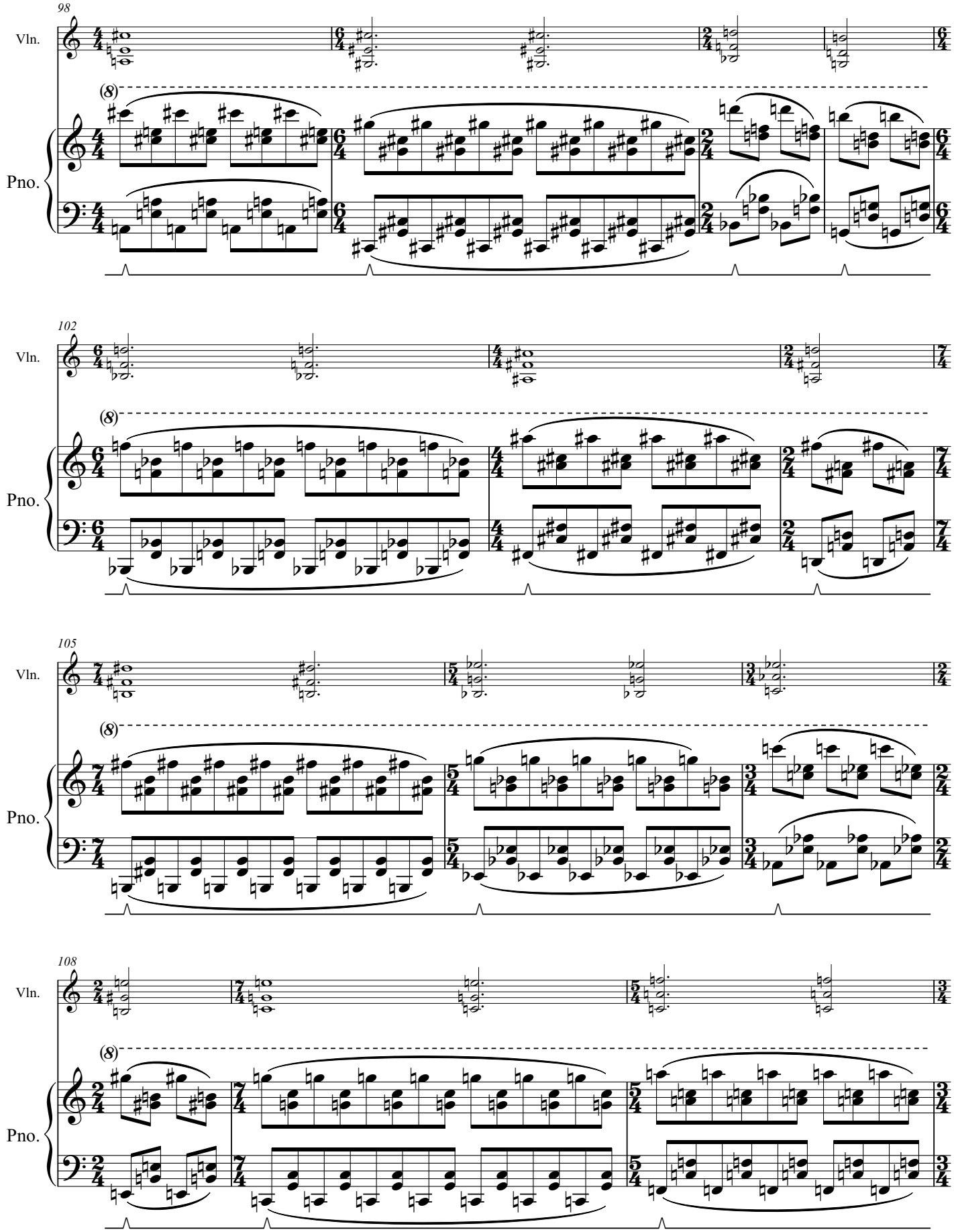

53
Vln.
Pno.
55
57
59

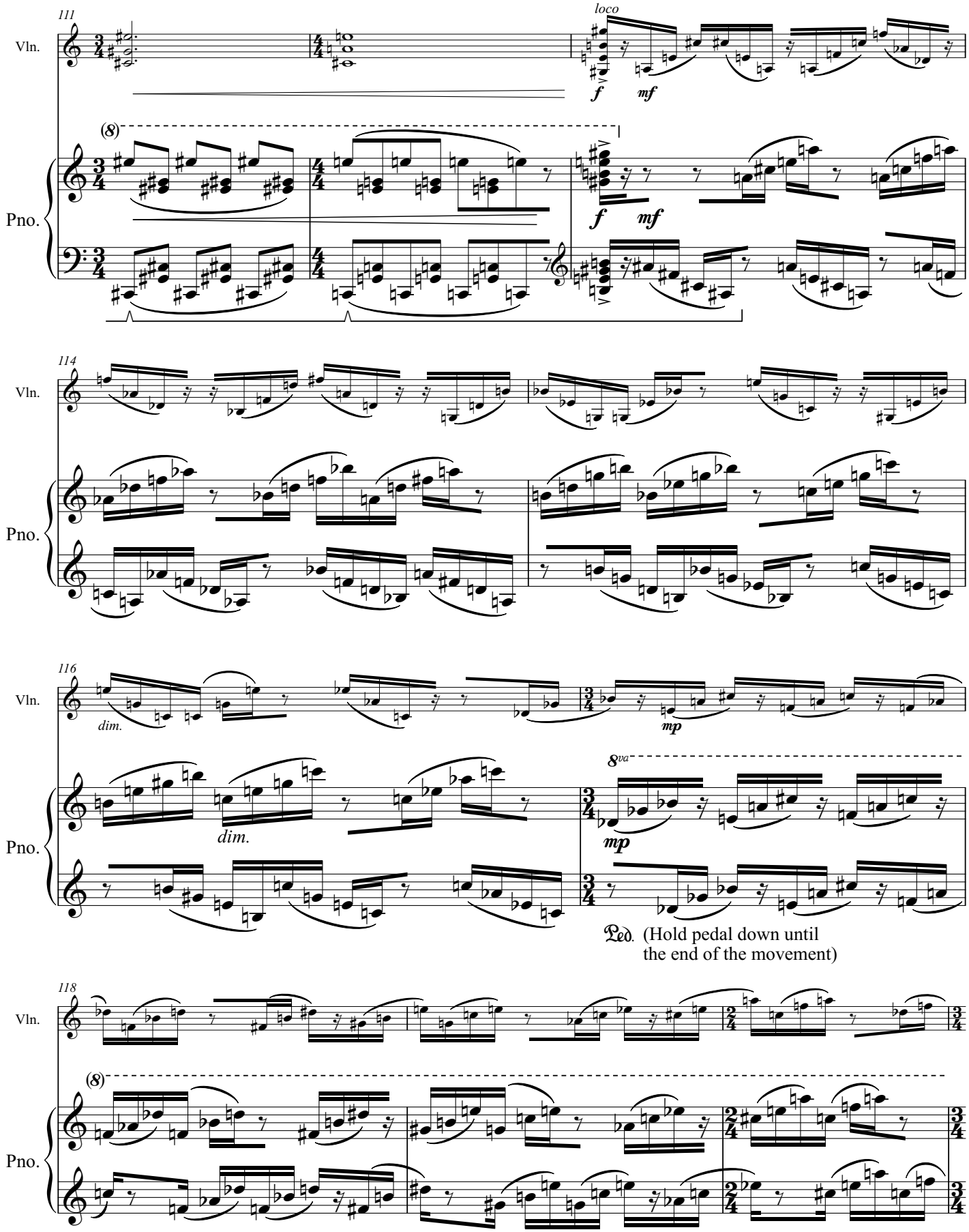

62
Vln.
Pno.
64
66
68
8vb

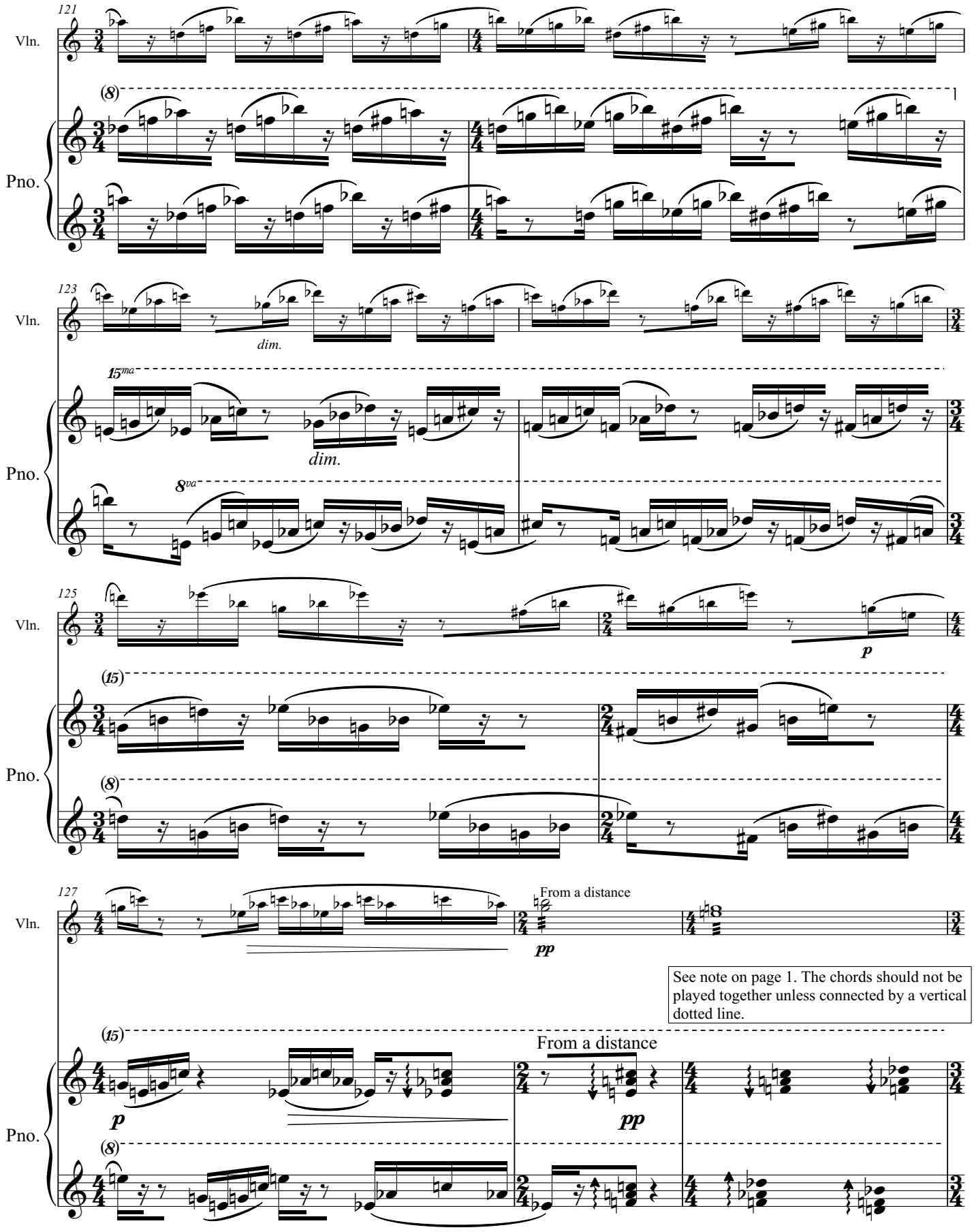

70
Vln.
Pno.
sffz f
sffz f
sffz f
sffz f
(8)
72
Vln.
sub. pp
Pno.
sffz f
sffz f
sffffz
(8)
74
Vln.
mf
Pno.
pp
mf
77
Vln.
pp mf
pp mf
Pno.
pp
mf
pp
mf

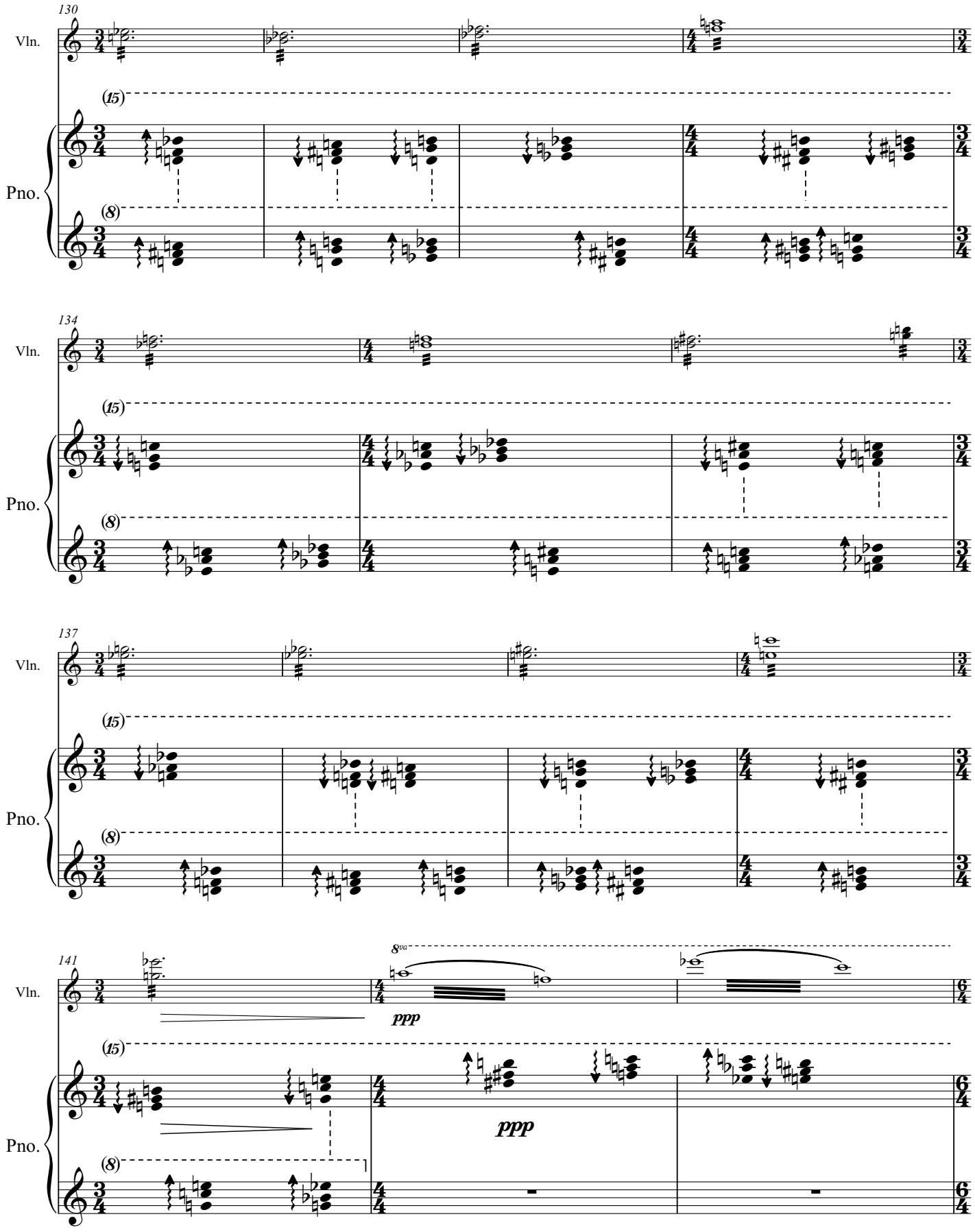

79
Vln.
Pno.
81
Vln.
Pno.
83
Vln.
Pno.
85
Vln.
Pno.

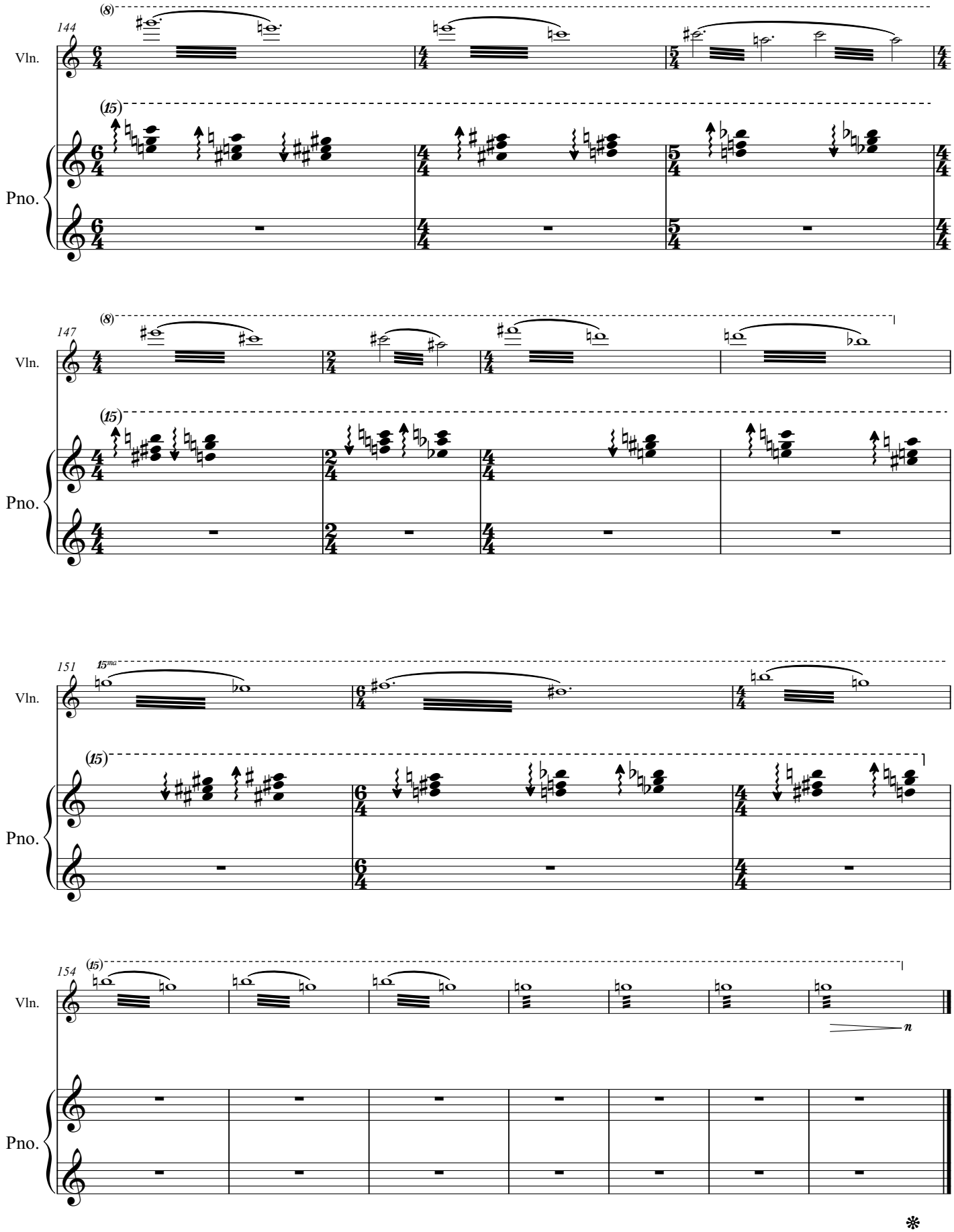

87
Vln.
pp
mf
pp
f
sub. p
8va
p
Pno.
pp
mf
Ped.
89
arpeggio
Vln.
(8)
Pno.
92
Vln.
(8)
Pno.
95
Vln.
(8)
Pno.


98
Vln.
Pno.
(8)
102
Vln.
Pno.
(8)
105
Vln.
Pno.
(8)
108
Vln.
Pno.
(8)

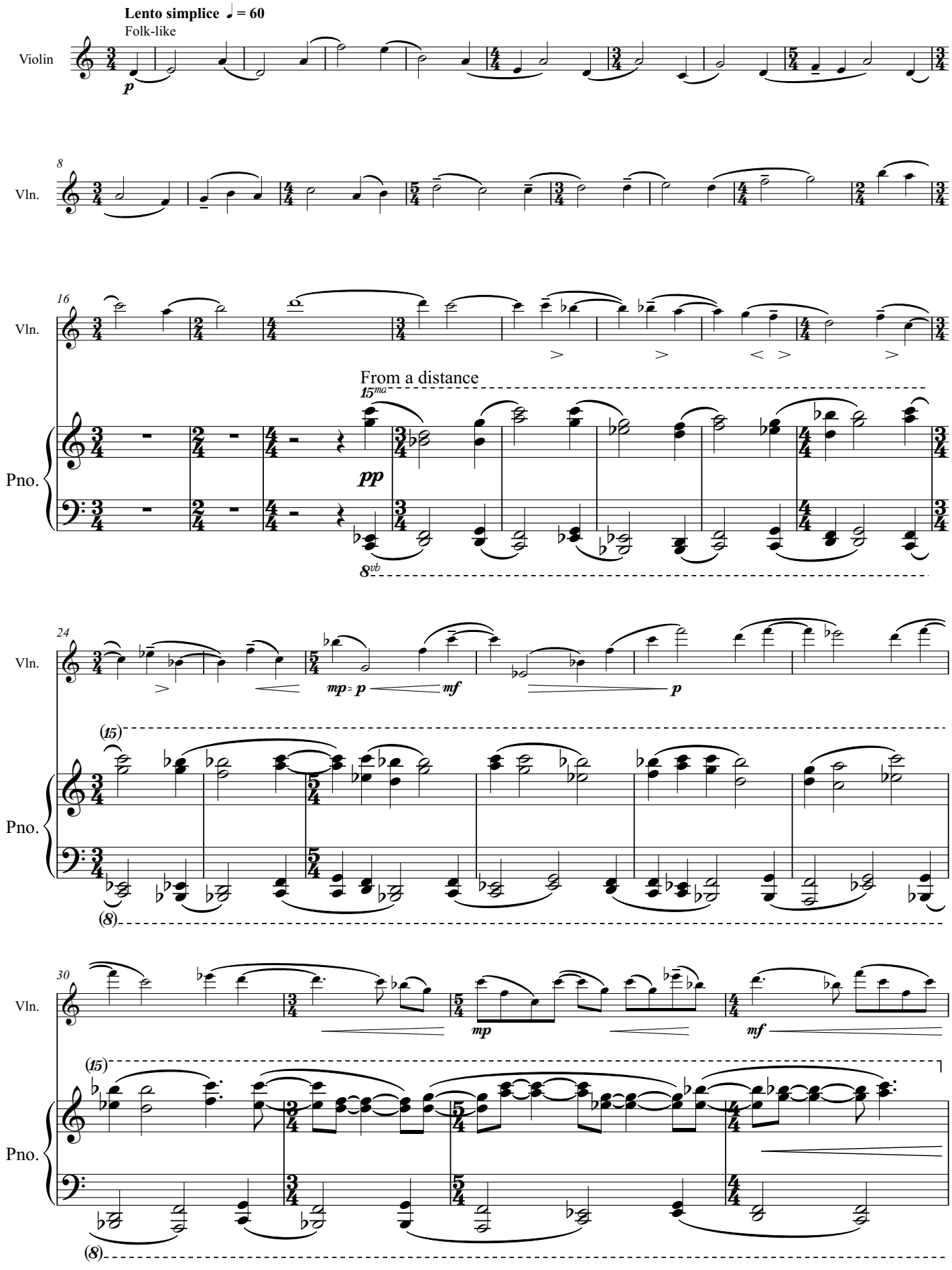

111
loco
Vln.
Pno.
f
mf
(8)
114
116
dim.
mp
8va
Ped. (Hold pedal down until the end of the movement)
118

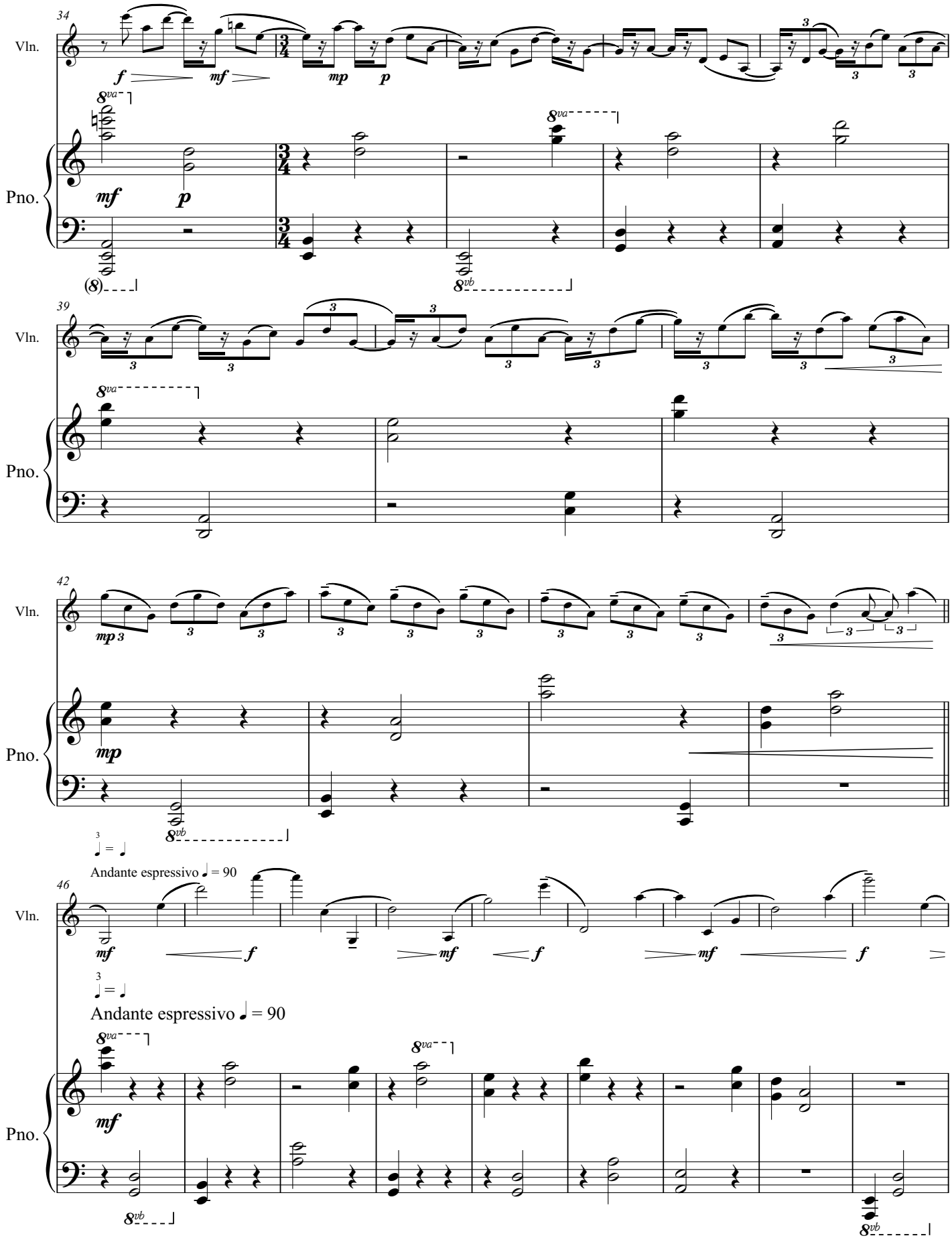

121
Vln.
(8)
Pno.
123
Vln.
dim.
15ma
dim.
Pno.
8va
125
Vln.
p
(15)
Pno.
(8)
127
Vln.
From a distance
pp
See note on page 1. The chords should not be played together unless connected by a vertical dotted line.
(15)
From a distance
p
pp
Pno.
(8)

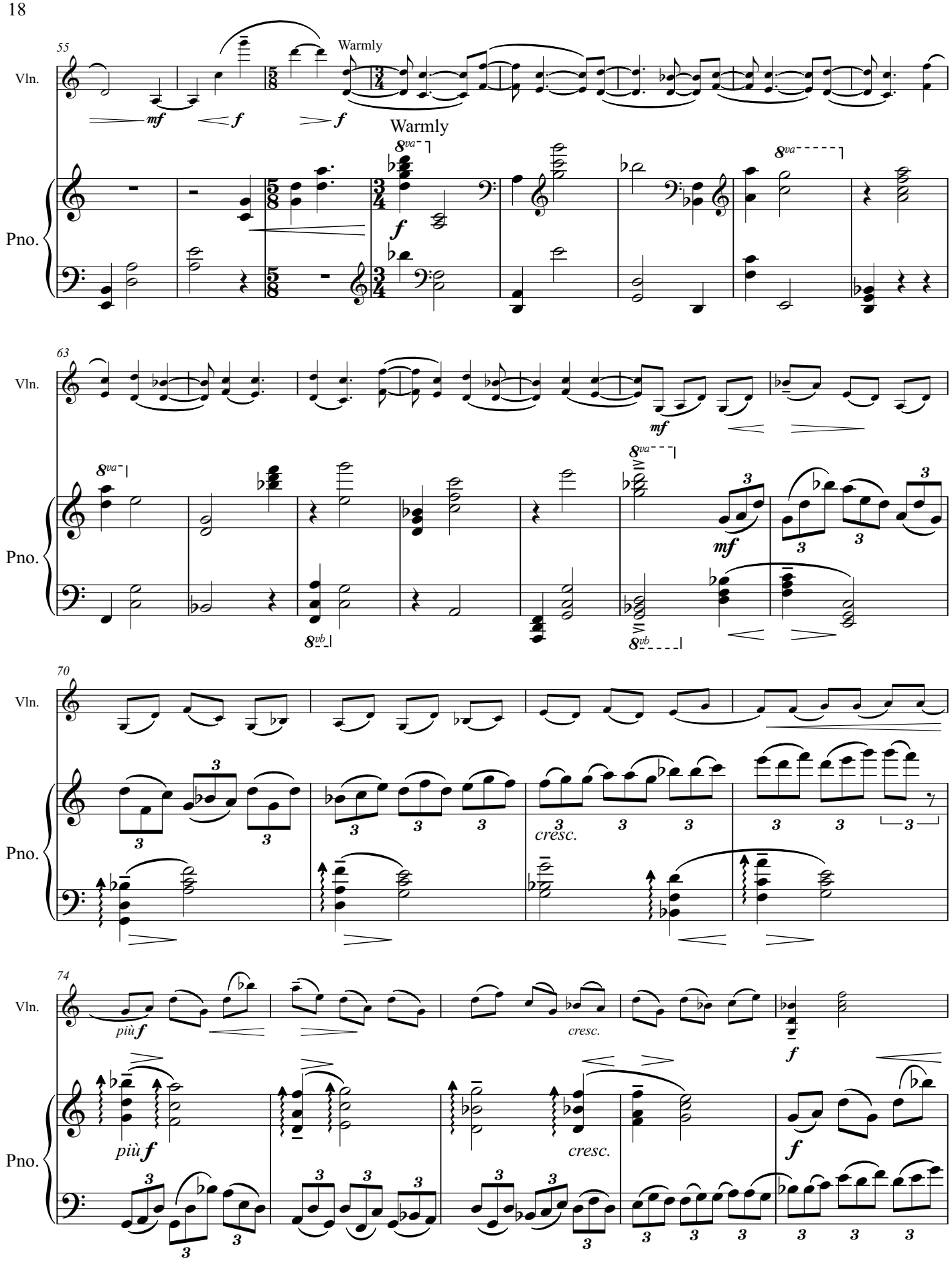

130
Vln.
Pno.
(15)
(8)
134
Vln.
Pno.
(15)
(8)
137
Vln.
Pno.
(15)
(8)
141
Vln.
Pno.
8va
ppp
ppp
(15)
(8)

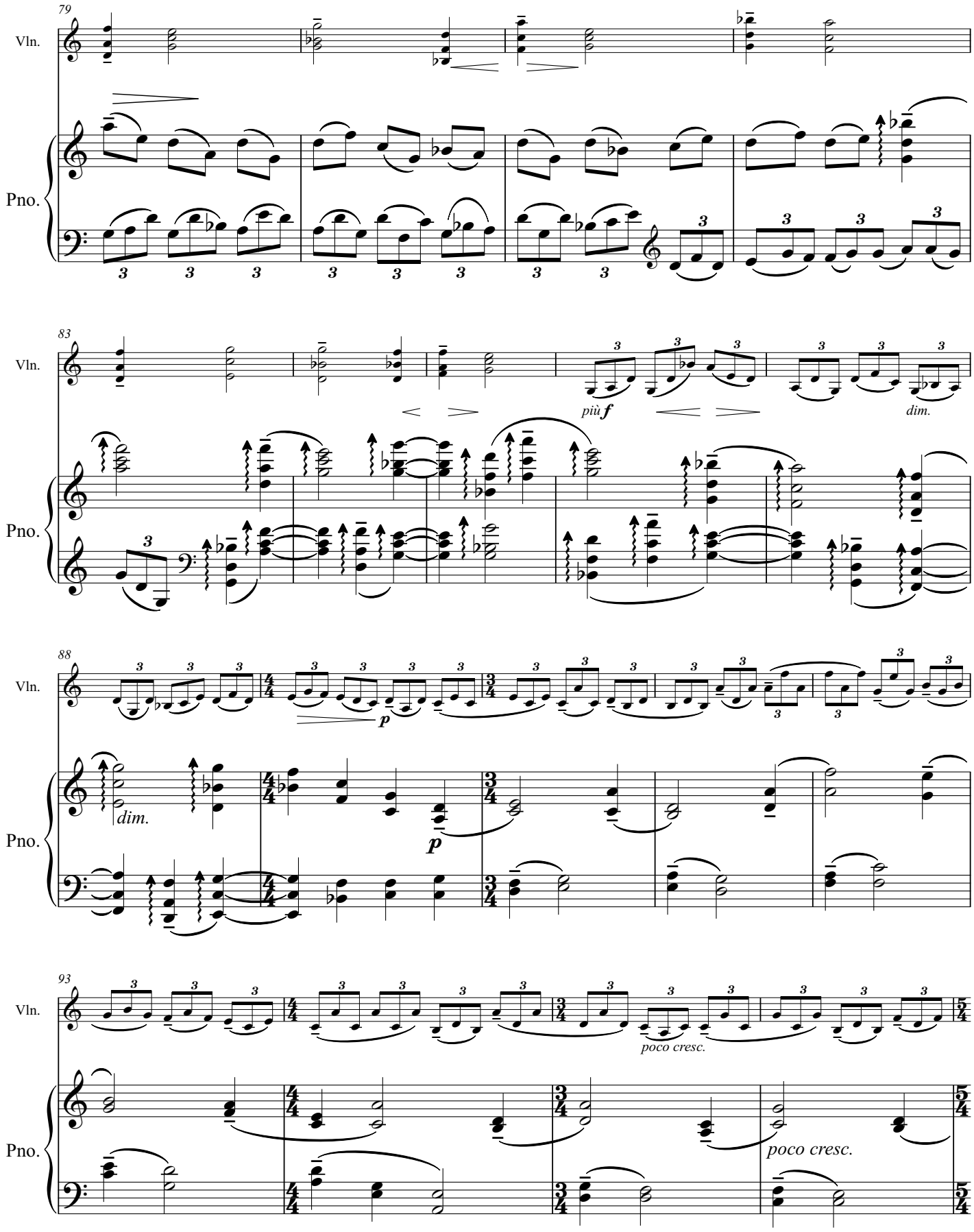

144
Vln.
Pno.
147
Vln.
Pno.
151
Vln.
Pno.
154
Vln.
Pno.
n

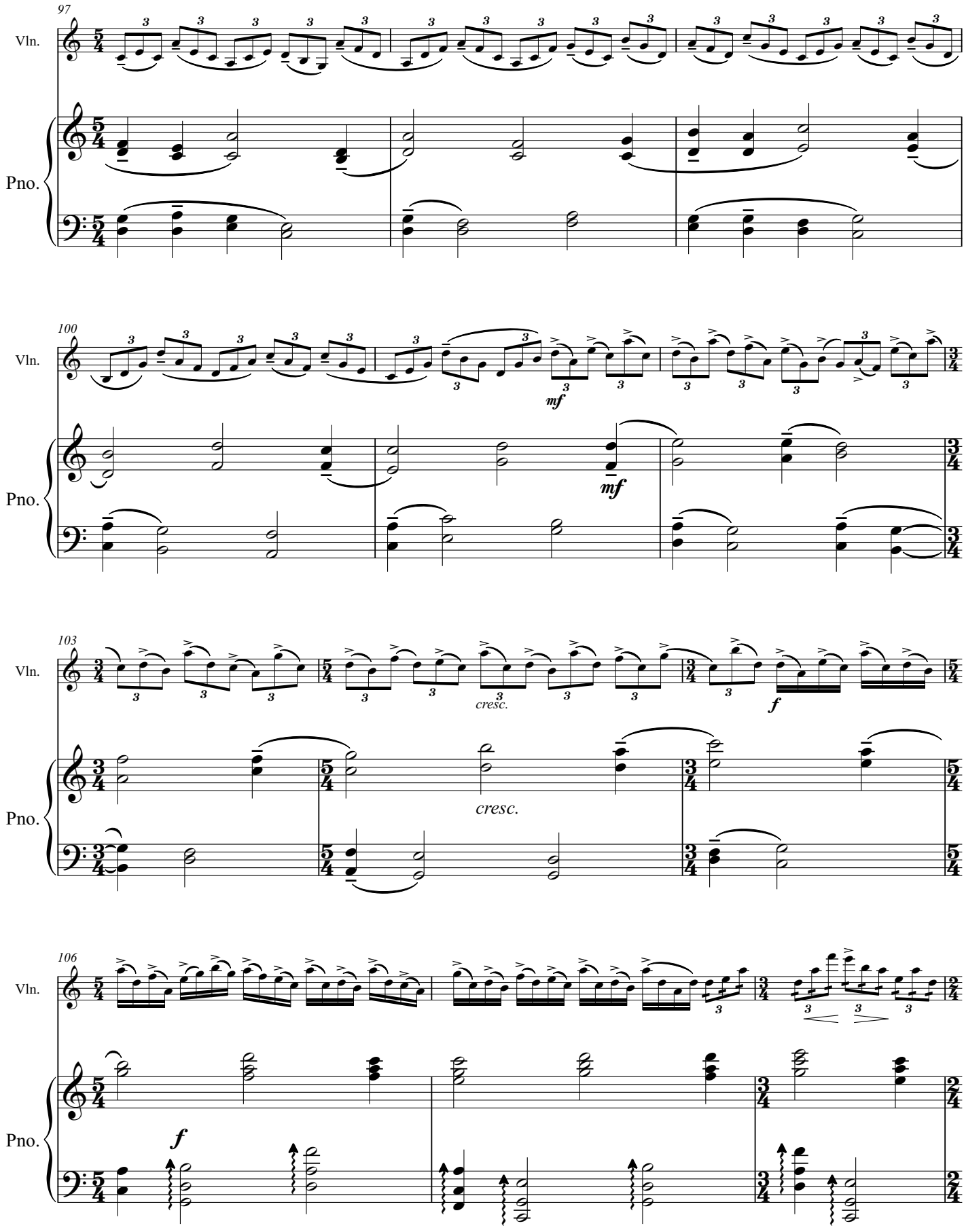
II. Liebeslied: For Rachel

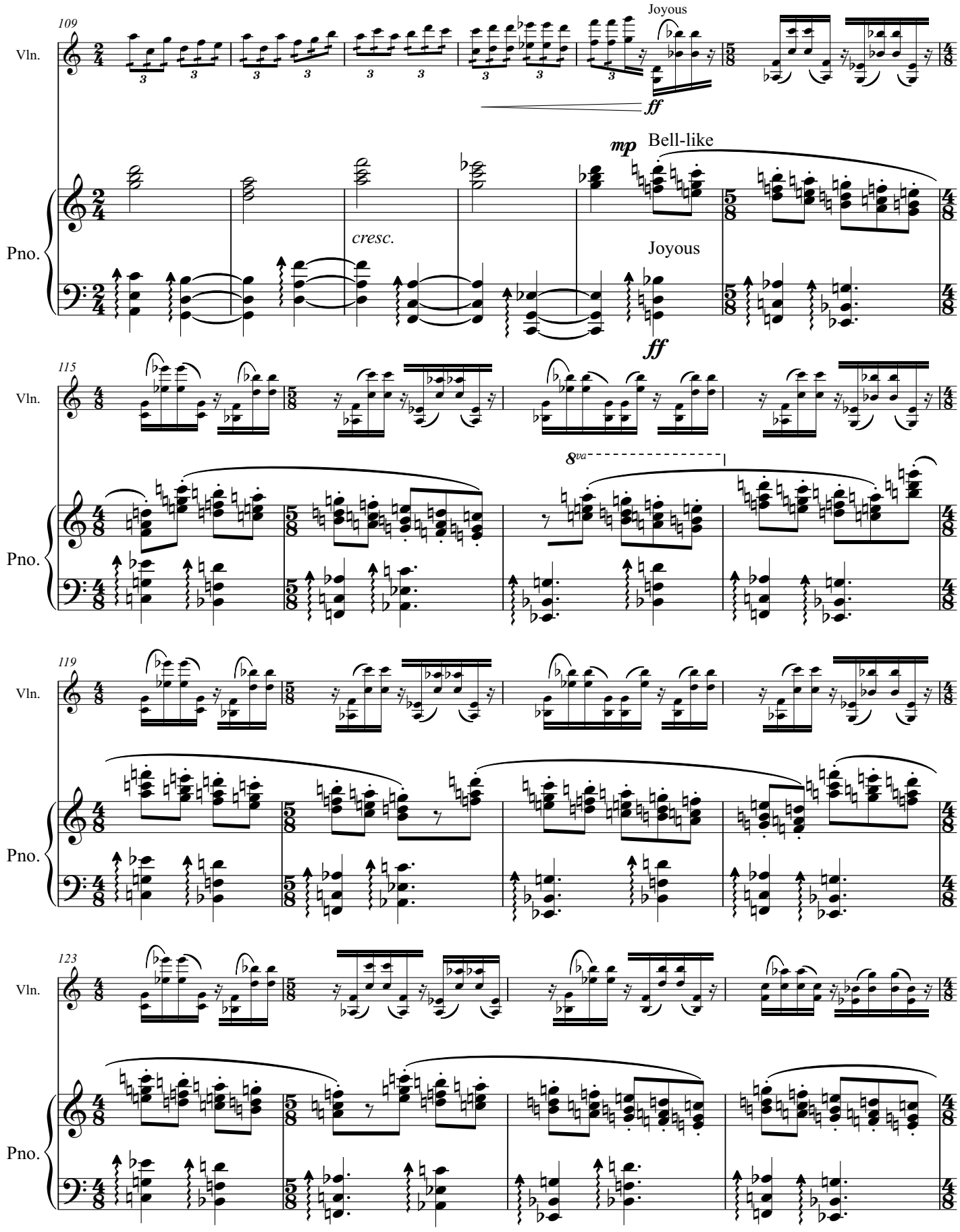


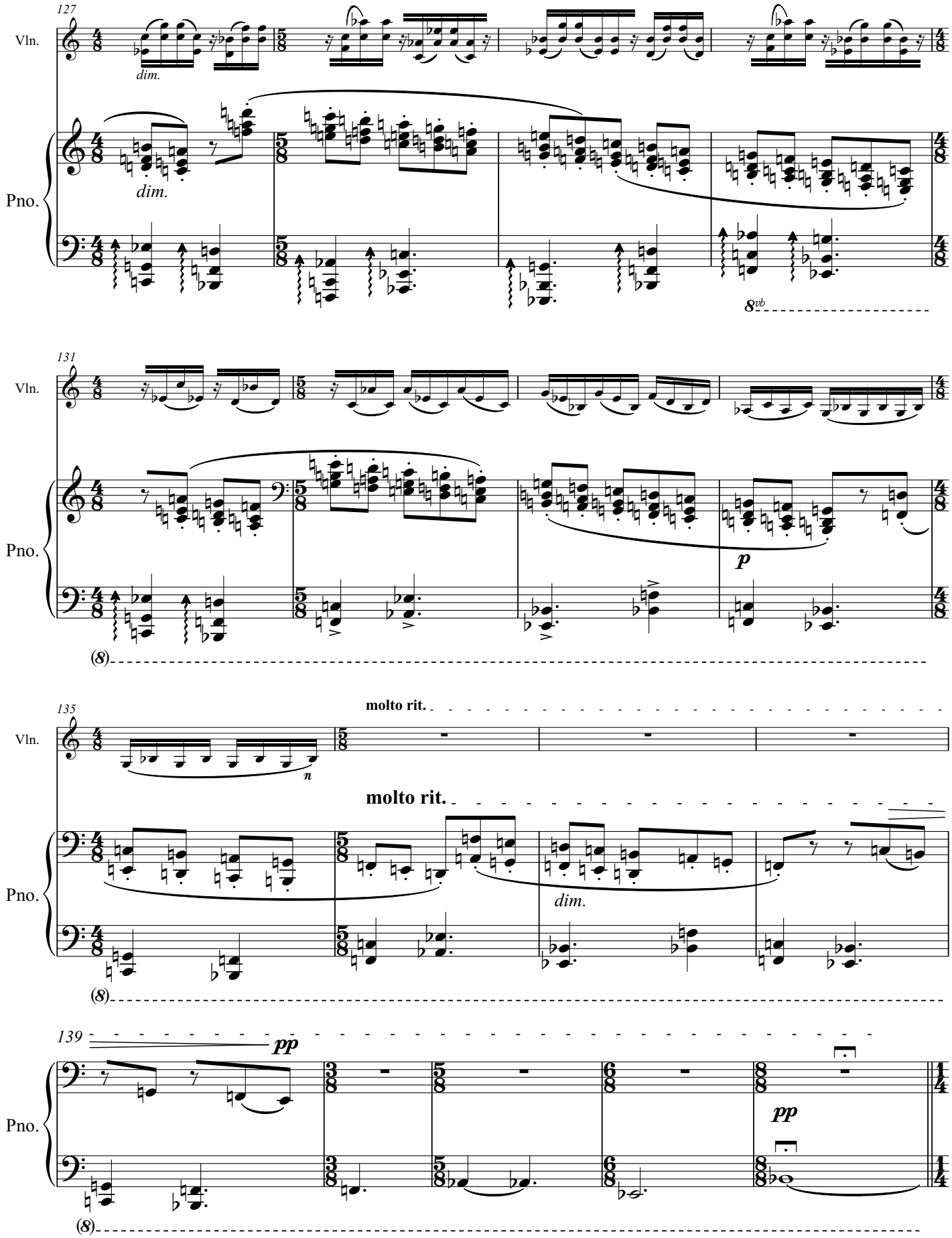

34
Vln.
Pno.
39
Vln.
Pno.
42
Vln.
Pno.
Andante espressivo ♩ = 90
46
Vln.
Pno.
Andante espressivo ♩ = 90

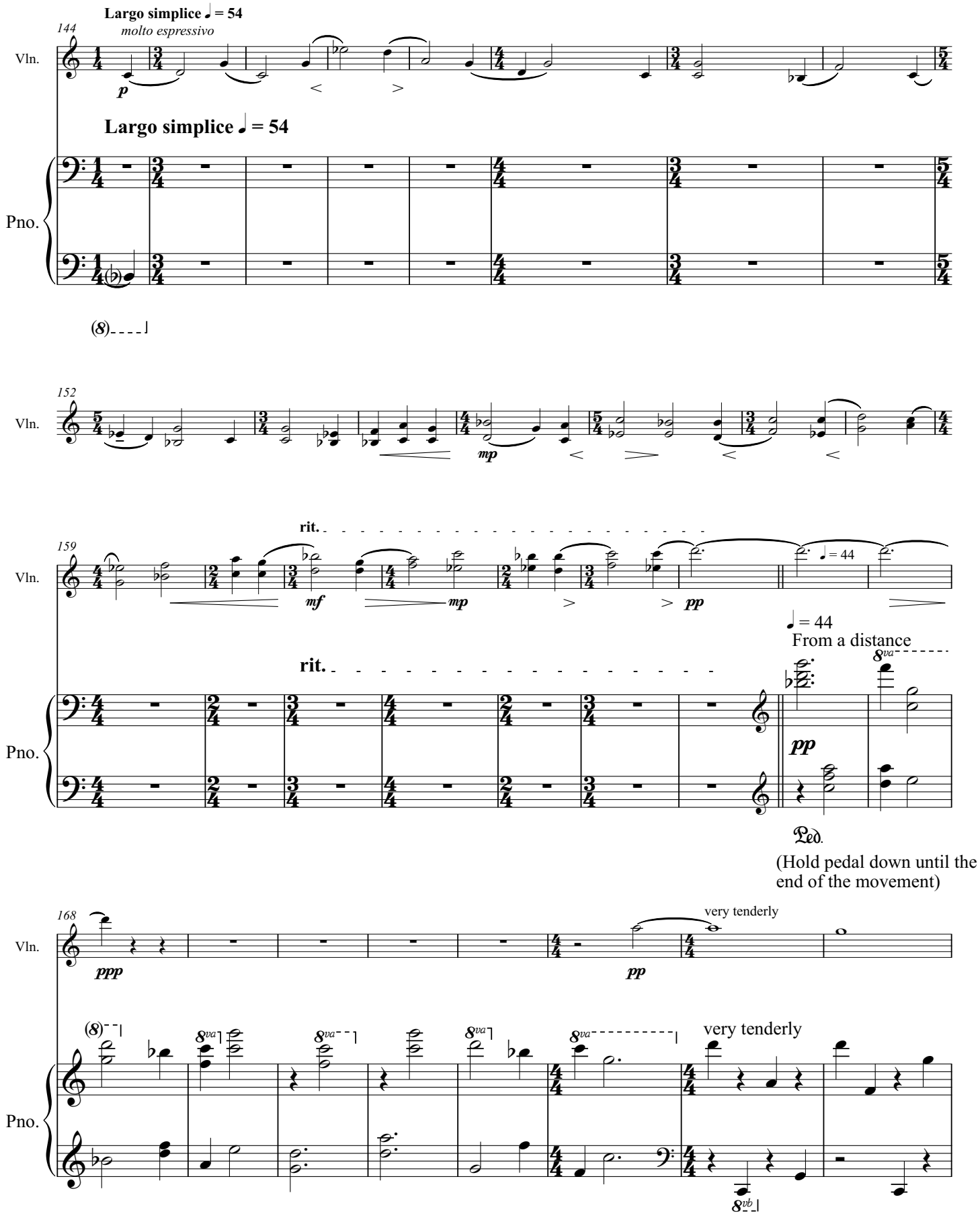

55
Vln.
Pno.
Warmly
Warmly
63
70
74
cresc.
più f

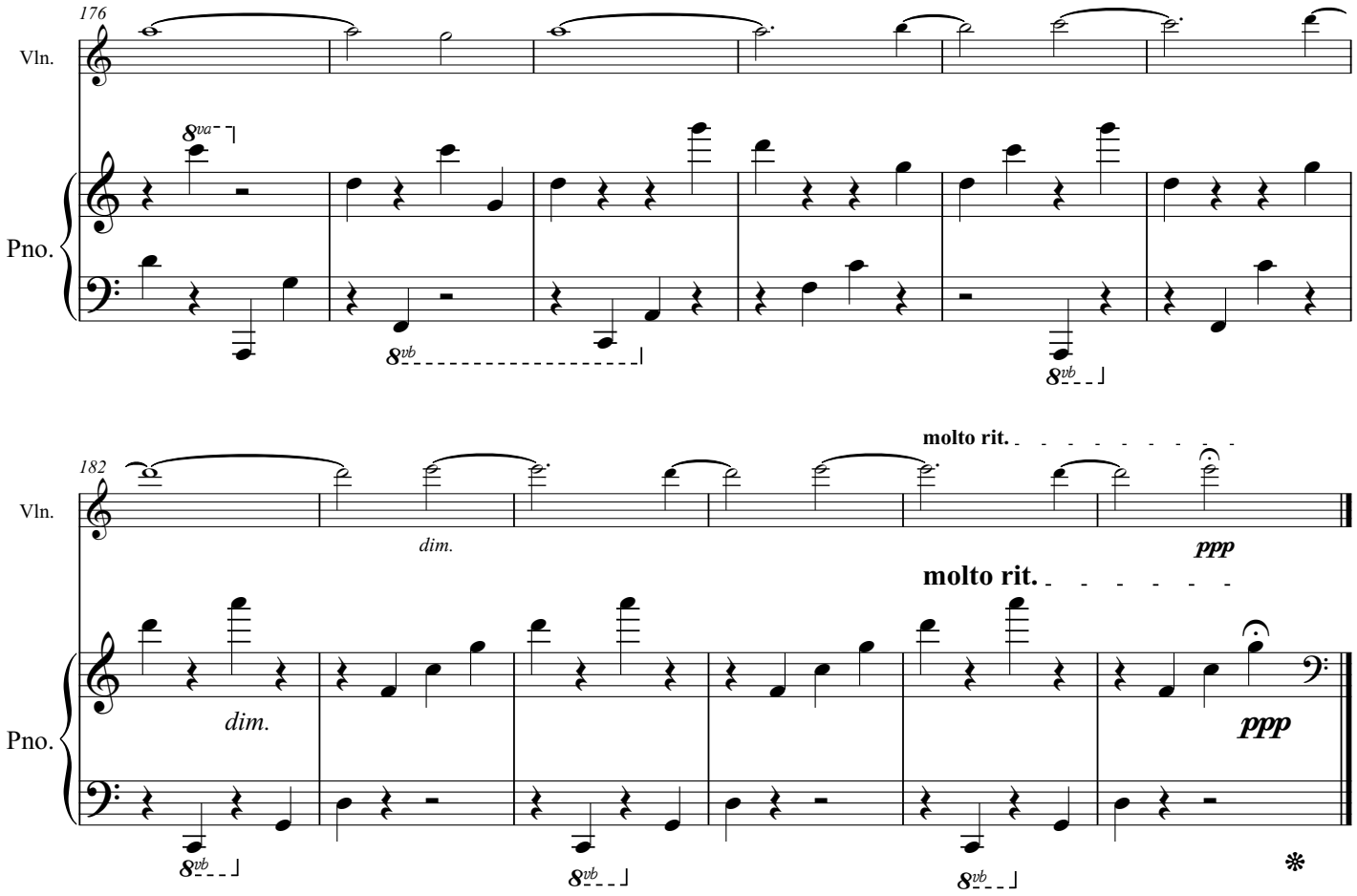

79
Vln.
Pno.
83
più f
dim.
88
p
dim.
p
93
poco cresc.
poco cresc.


97
Vln.
Pno.
100
Vln.
mf
mf
Pno.
103
Vln.
cresc.
f
cresc.
Pno.
106
Vln.
f
Pno.

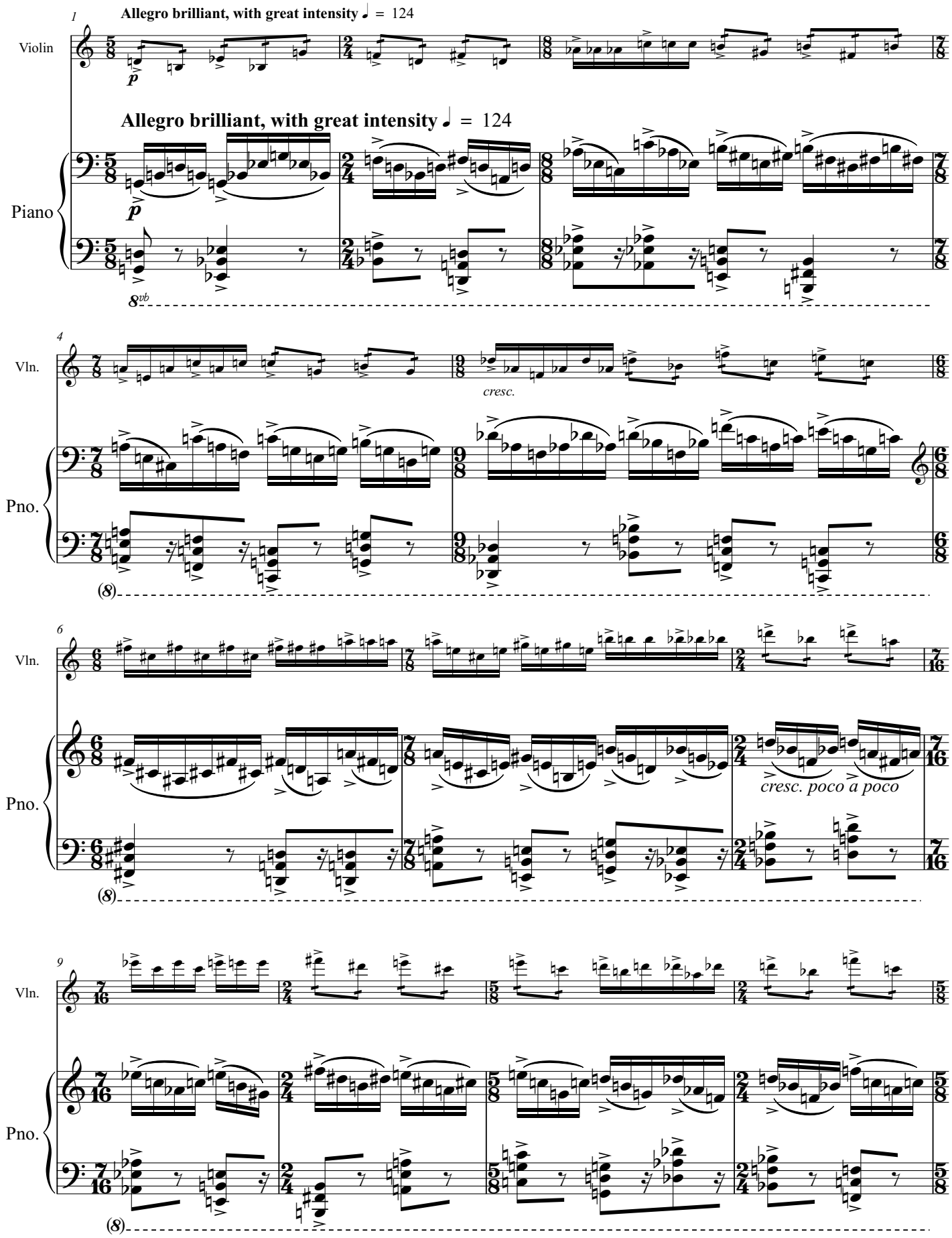

109
Vln.
Joyous
ff
Pno.
mp
Bell-like
cresc.
Joyous
ff
115
Vln.
8va
Pno.
119
Vln.
Pno.
123
Vln.
Pno.

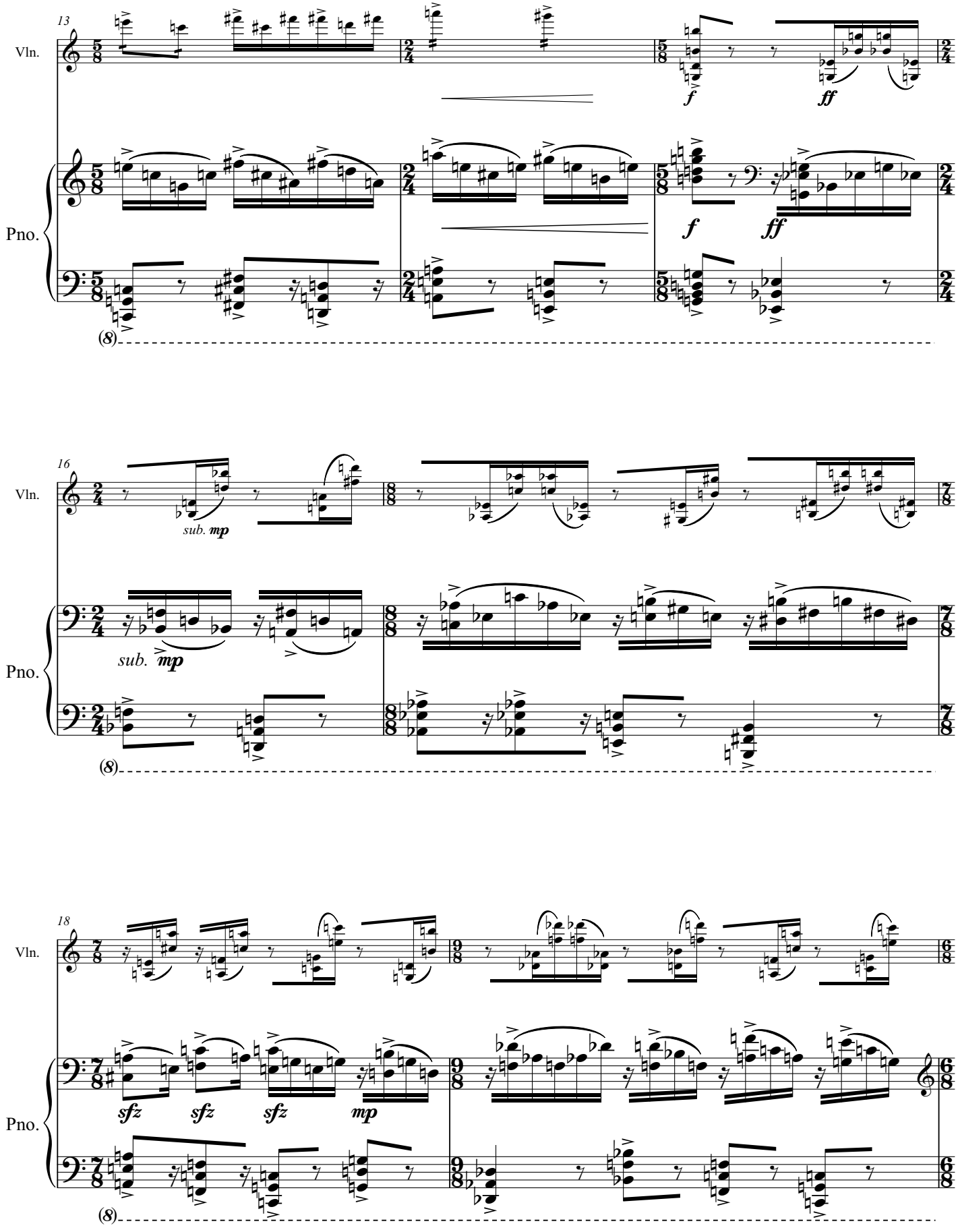

127
Vln.
dim.
Pno.
dim.
8vb
131
Vln.
Pno.
p
(8)
135
molto rit.
Vln.
n
molto rit.
Pno.
dim.
(8)
139
pp
Pno.
pp
(8)

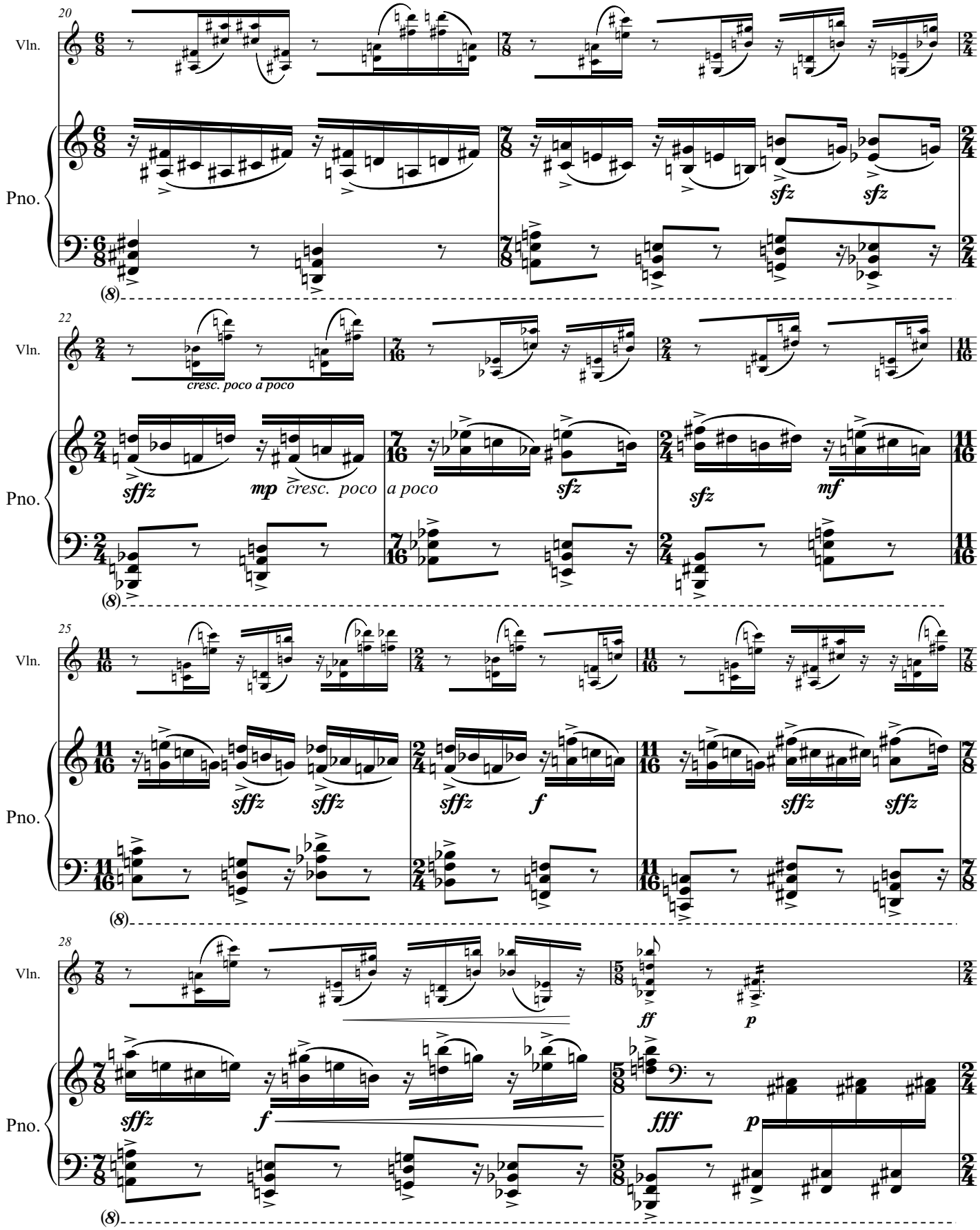

Largo simplice ♩ = 54
molto espressivo
144
Vln.
p
Largo simplice ♩ = 54
Pno.
(8)
152
Vln.
mp
159
Vln.
rit.
mf
mp
pp
♩ = 44
From a distance
rit.
8va
pp
Pno.
Ped.
(Hold pedal down until the end of the movement)
168
Vln.
very tenderly
ppp
pp
(8)
8va
very tenderly
Pno.
8vb

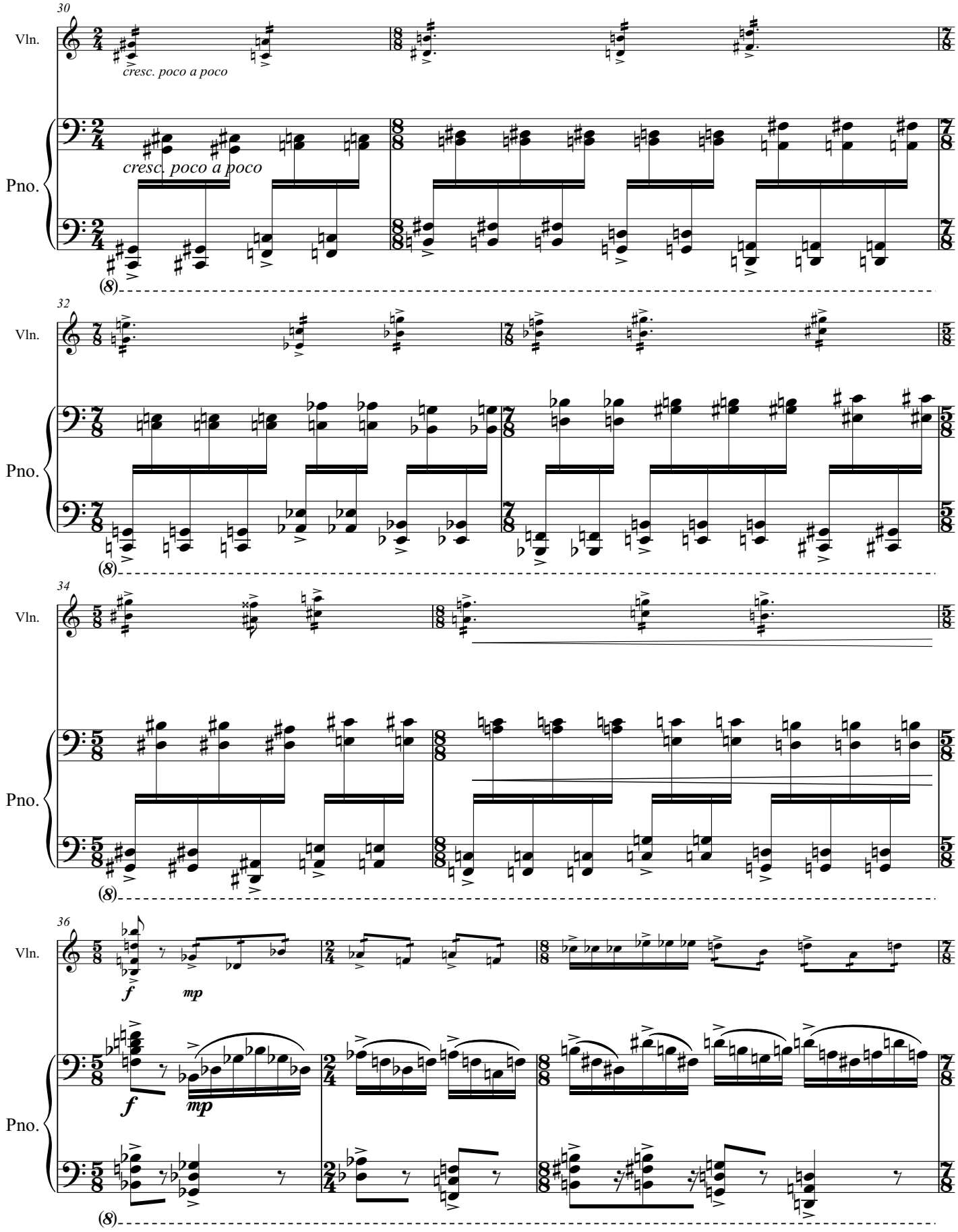

176
Vln.
Pno.
8va
8vb
8vb
8vb
molto rit.
182
Vln.
dim.
ppp
molto rit.
Pno.
dim.
ppp
8vb
8vb
8vb

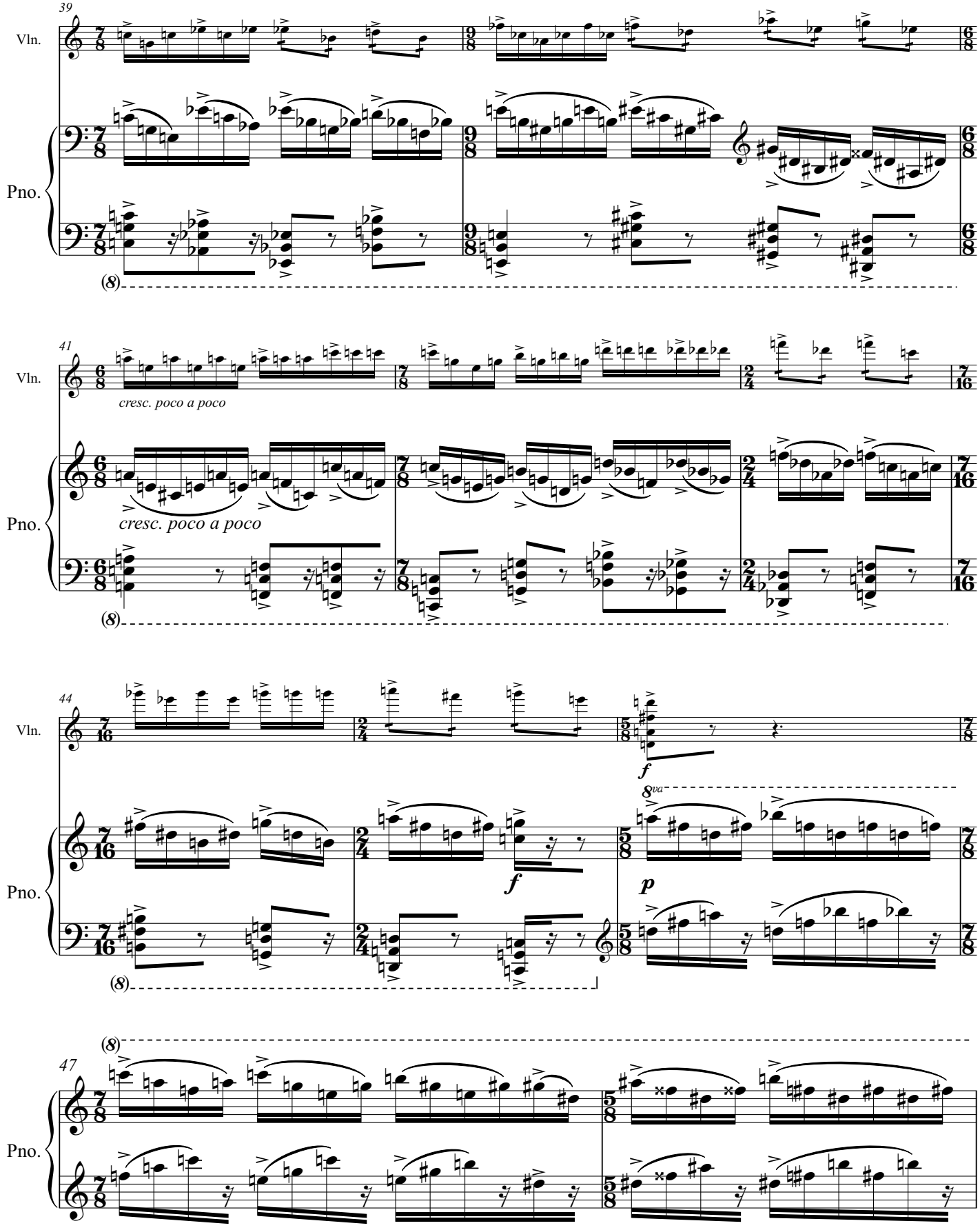
III. Moto Perpetuo

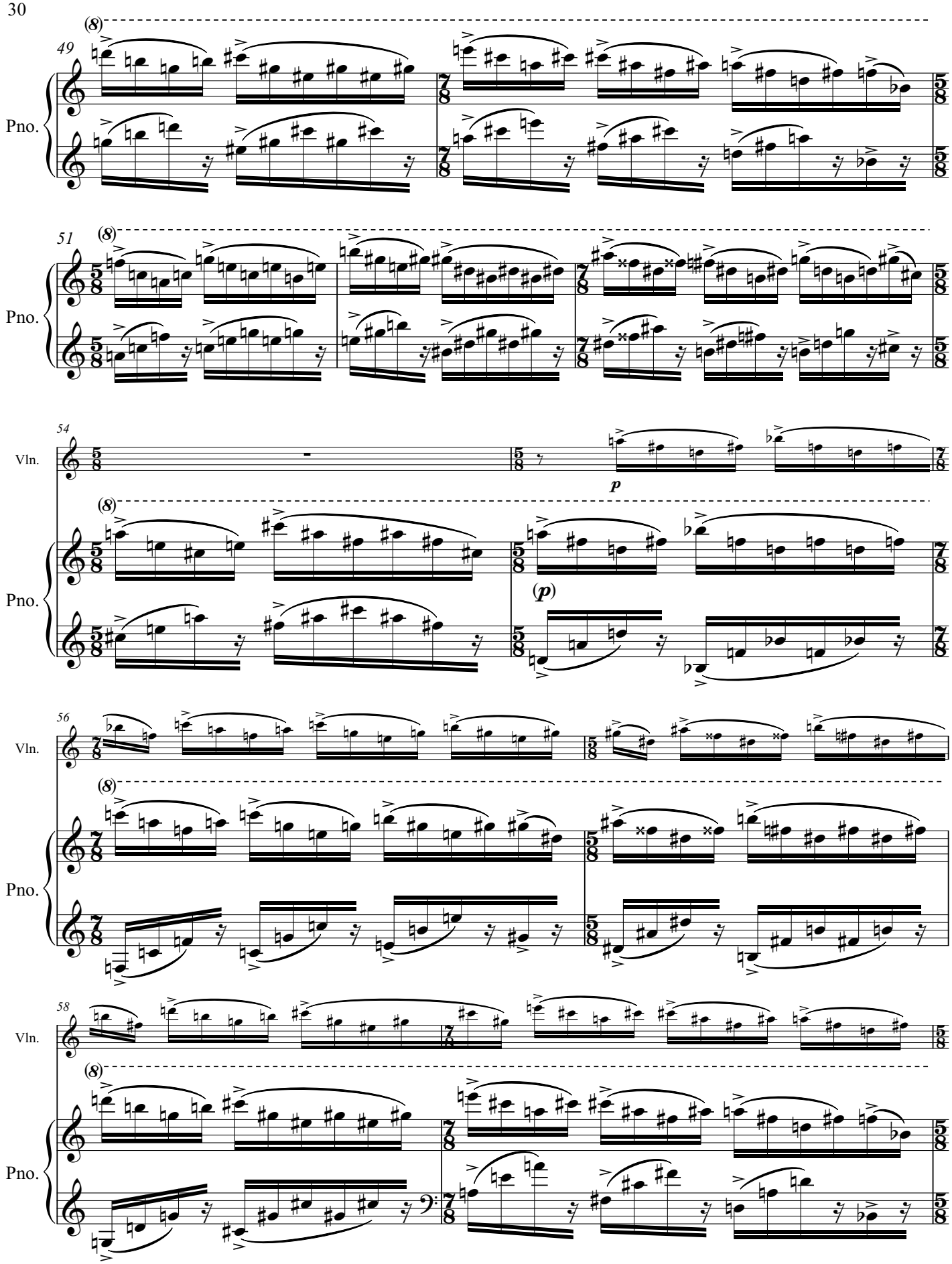


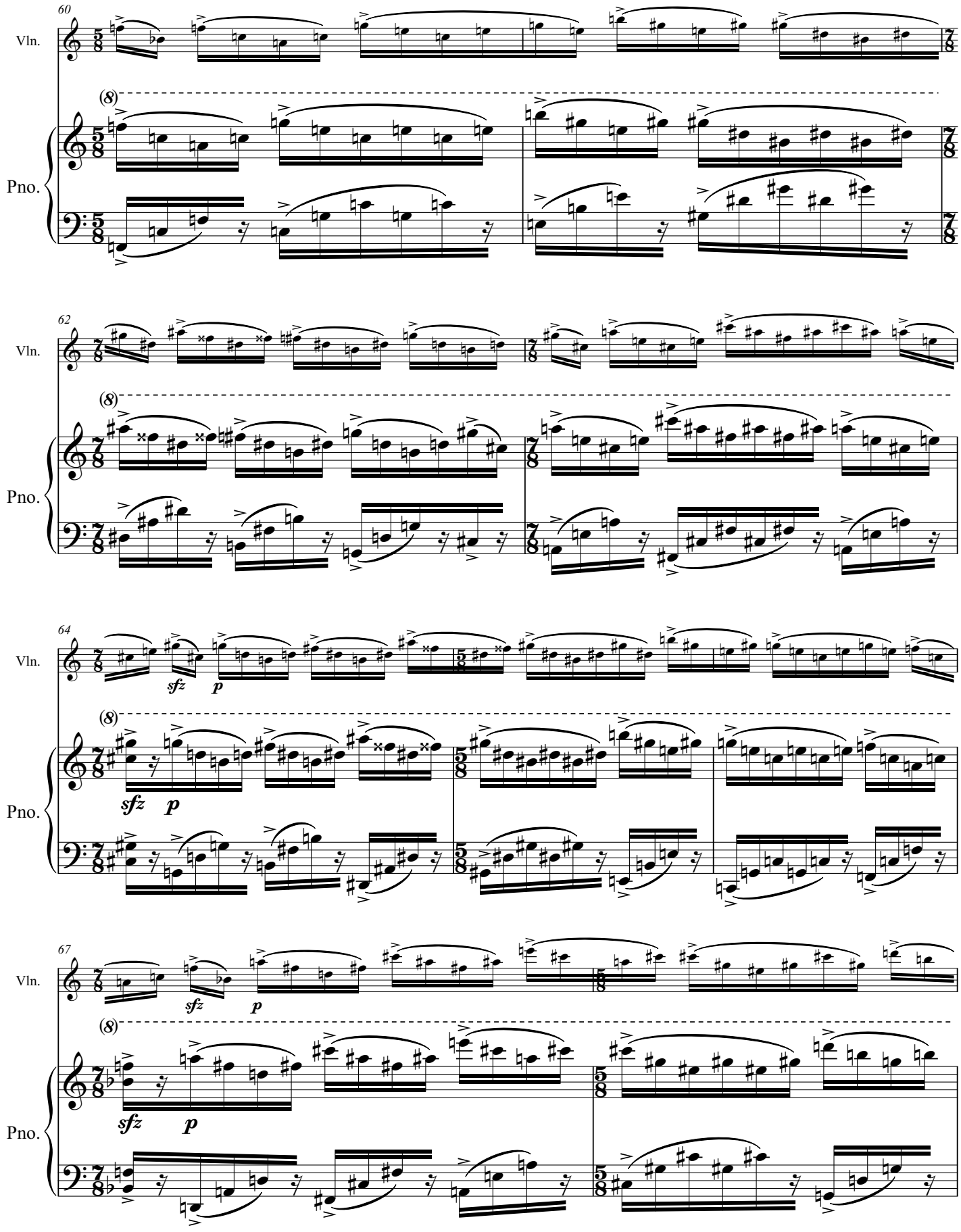

13
Vln.
Pno.
f
ff
f
ff
(8)
16
Vln.
Pno.
sub. mp
sub. mp
(8)
18
Vln.
Pno.
sfz
sfz
sfz
mp
(8)

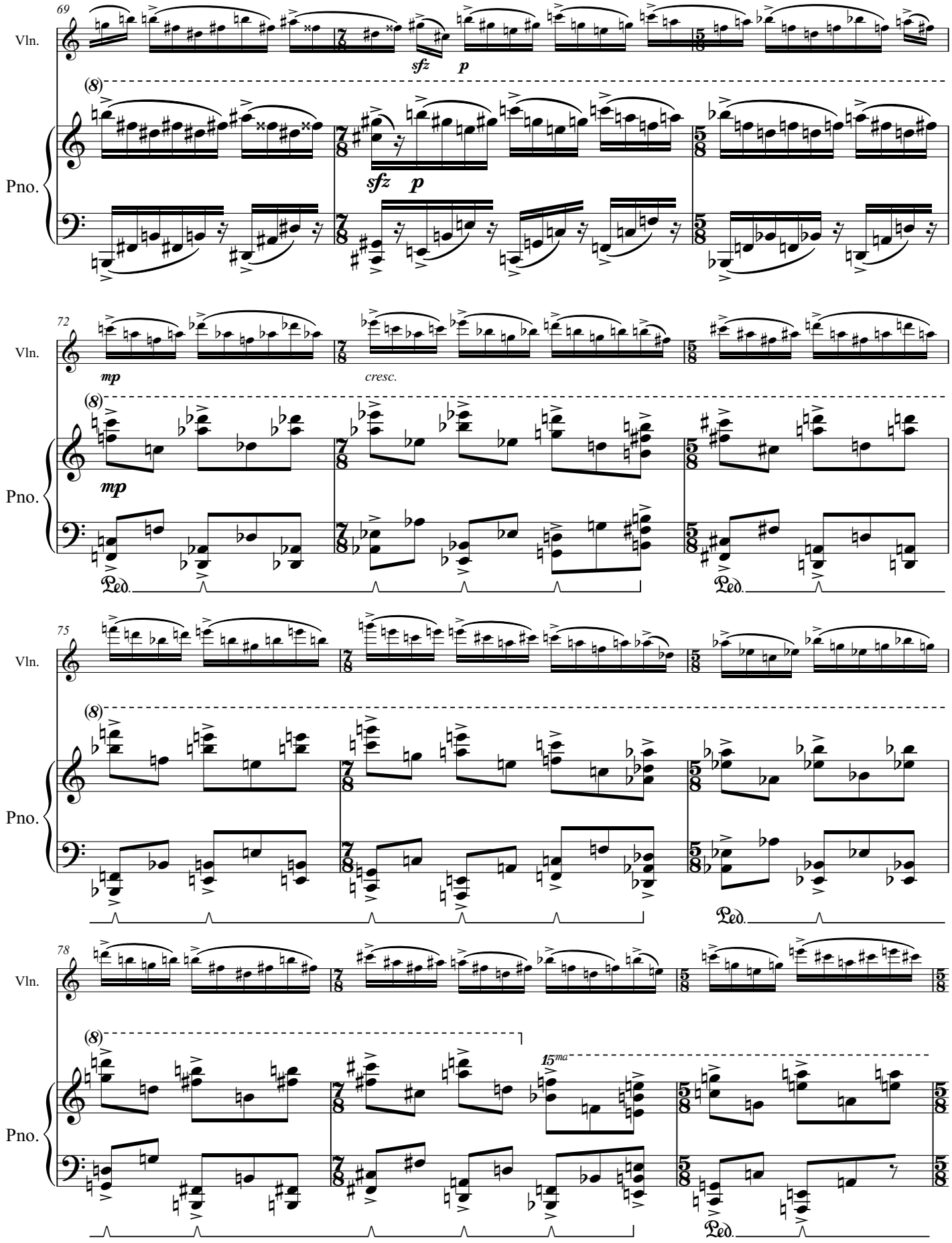

20
Vln.
Pno.
(8)
22
Vln.
cresc. poco a poco
Pno.
sffz
mp
cresc. poco
a poco
sfz
sfz
mf
(8)
25
Vln.
Pno.
sffz
sffz
sffz
f
sffz
sffz
(8)
28
Vln.
ff
p
Pno.
sffz
f
fff
p
(8)

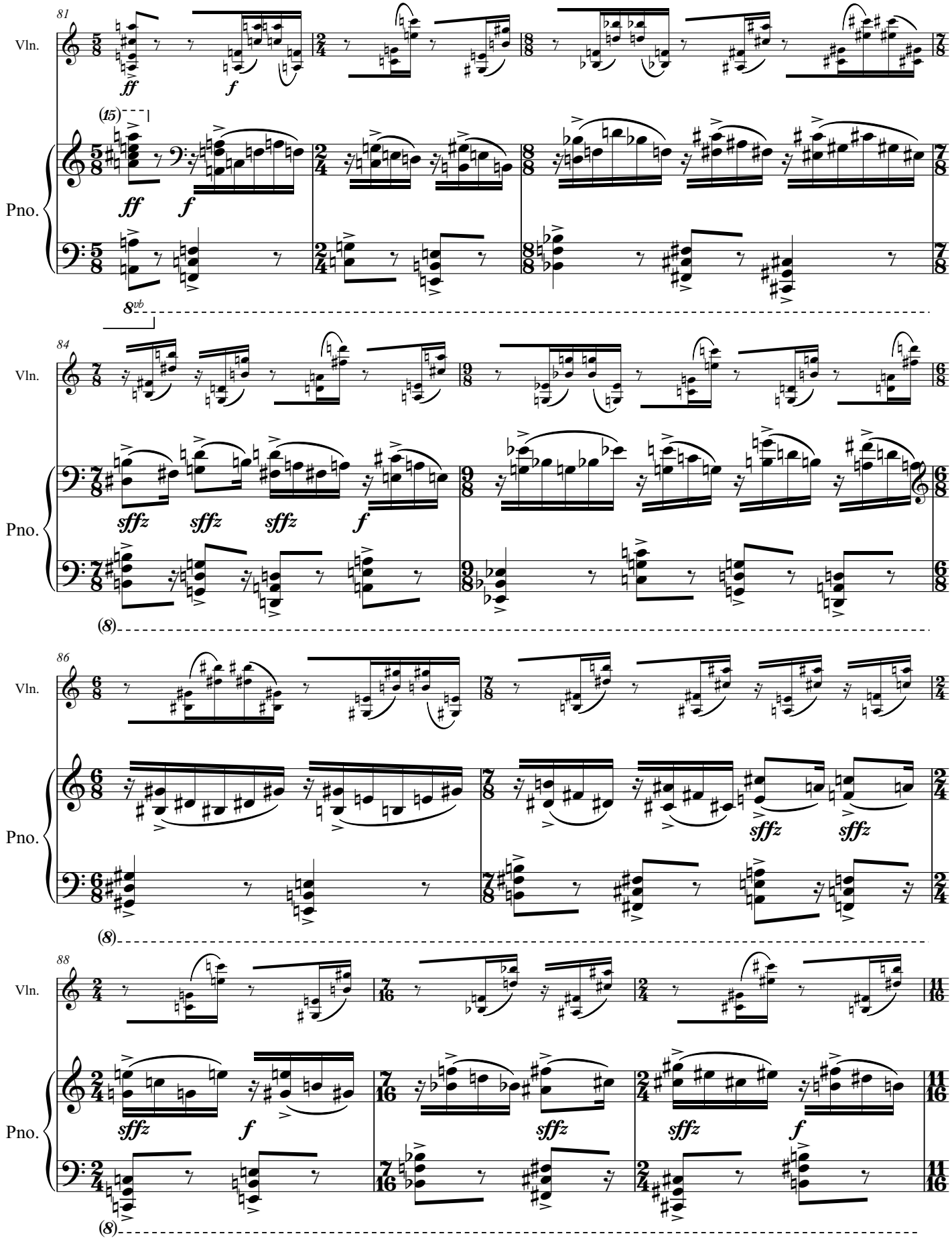

30
Vln.
cresc. poco a poco
Pno.
cresc. poco a poco
(8)
32
Vln.
Pno.
(8)
34
Vln.
Pno.
(8)
36
Vln.
f
mp
Pno.
f
mp
(8)

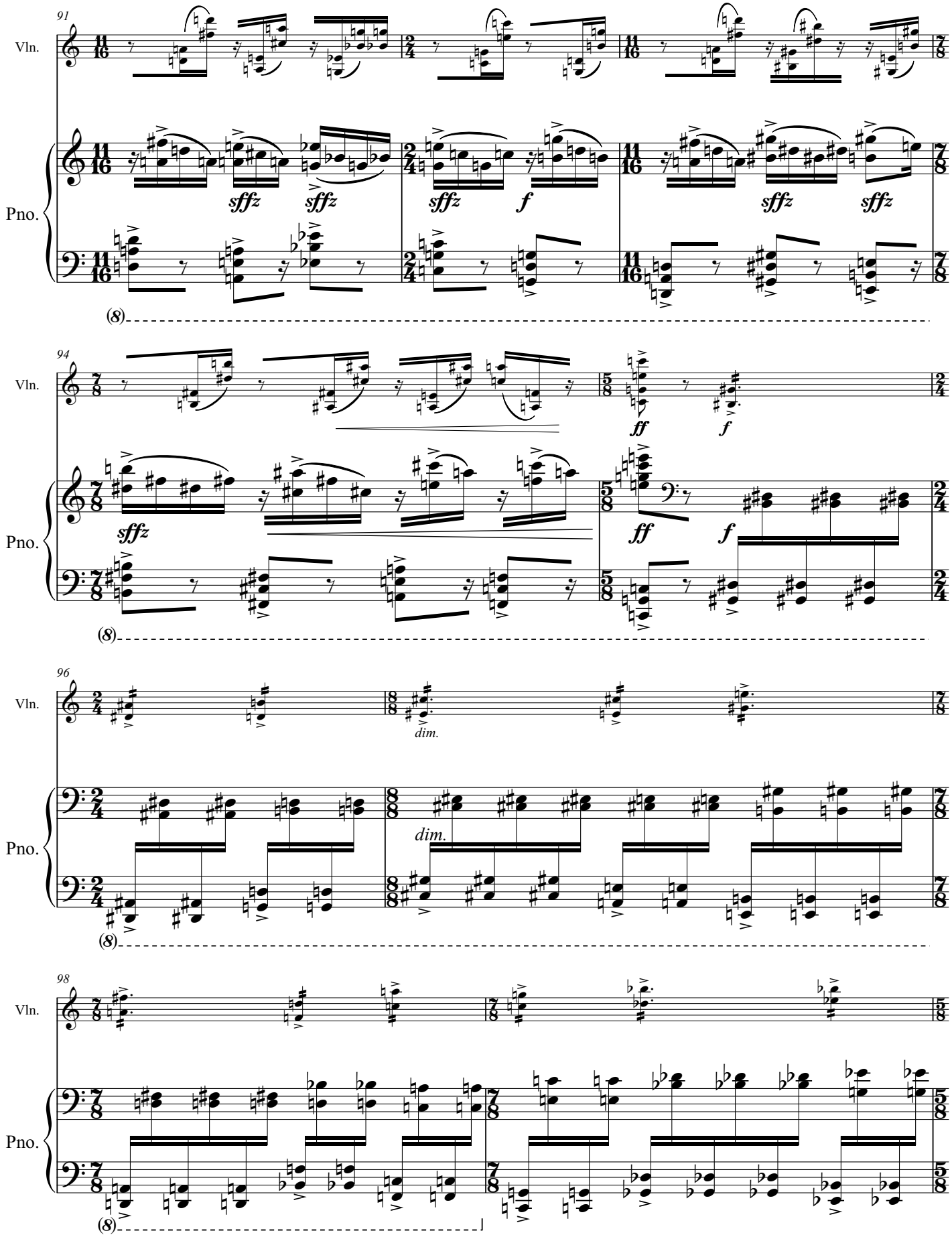

39
Vln.
Pno.
(8)
41
Vln.
cresc. poco a poco
Pno.
cresc. poco a poco
(8)
44
Vln.
f
8va
Pno.
f
p
(8)
(8)
47
Pno.

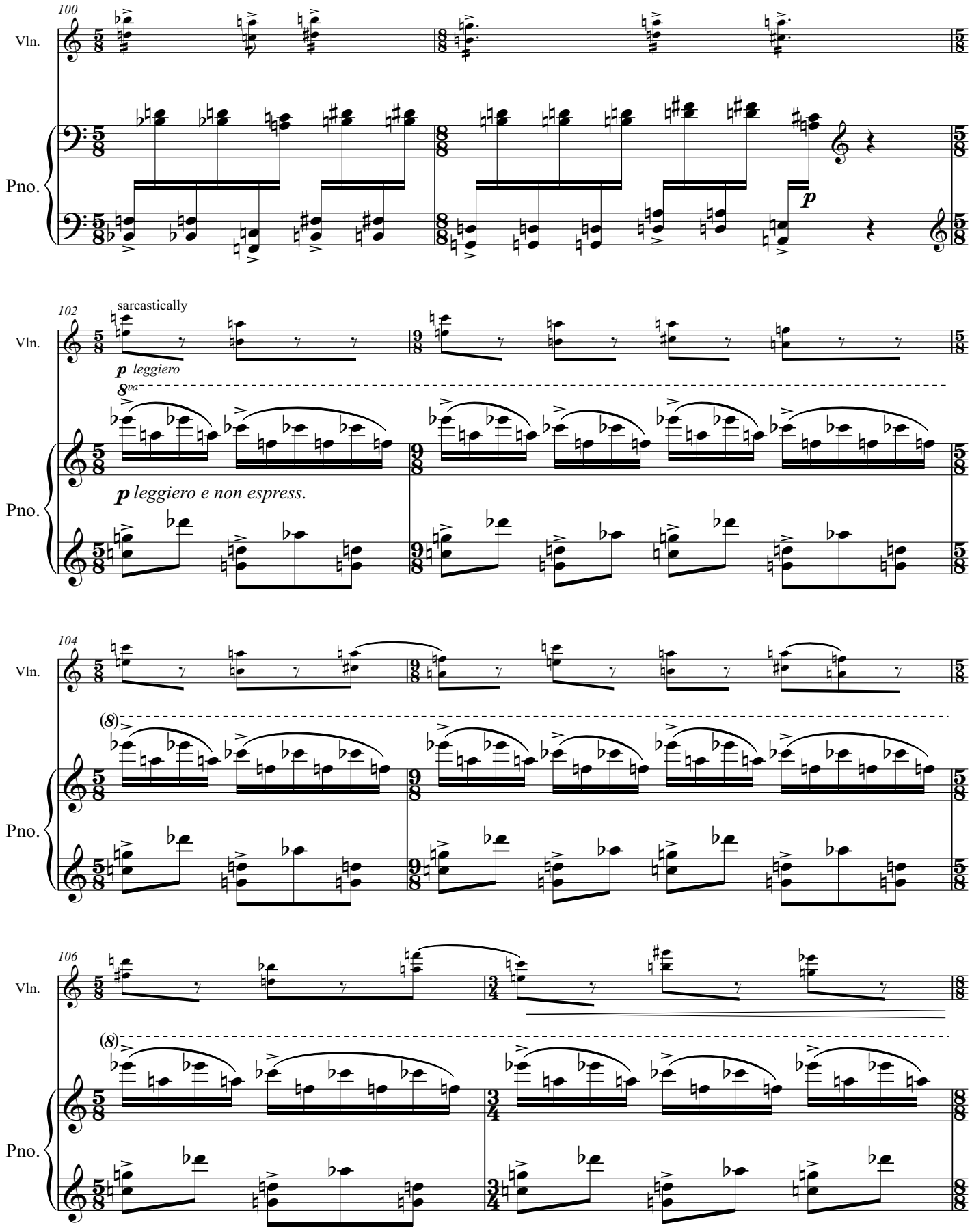

49
Pno.
51
Pno.
54
Vln.
p
Pno.
(p)
56
Vln.
Pno.
58
Vln.
Pno.

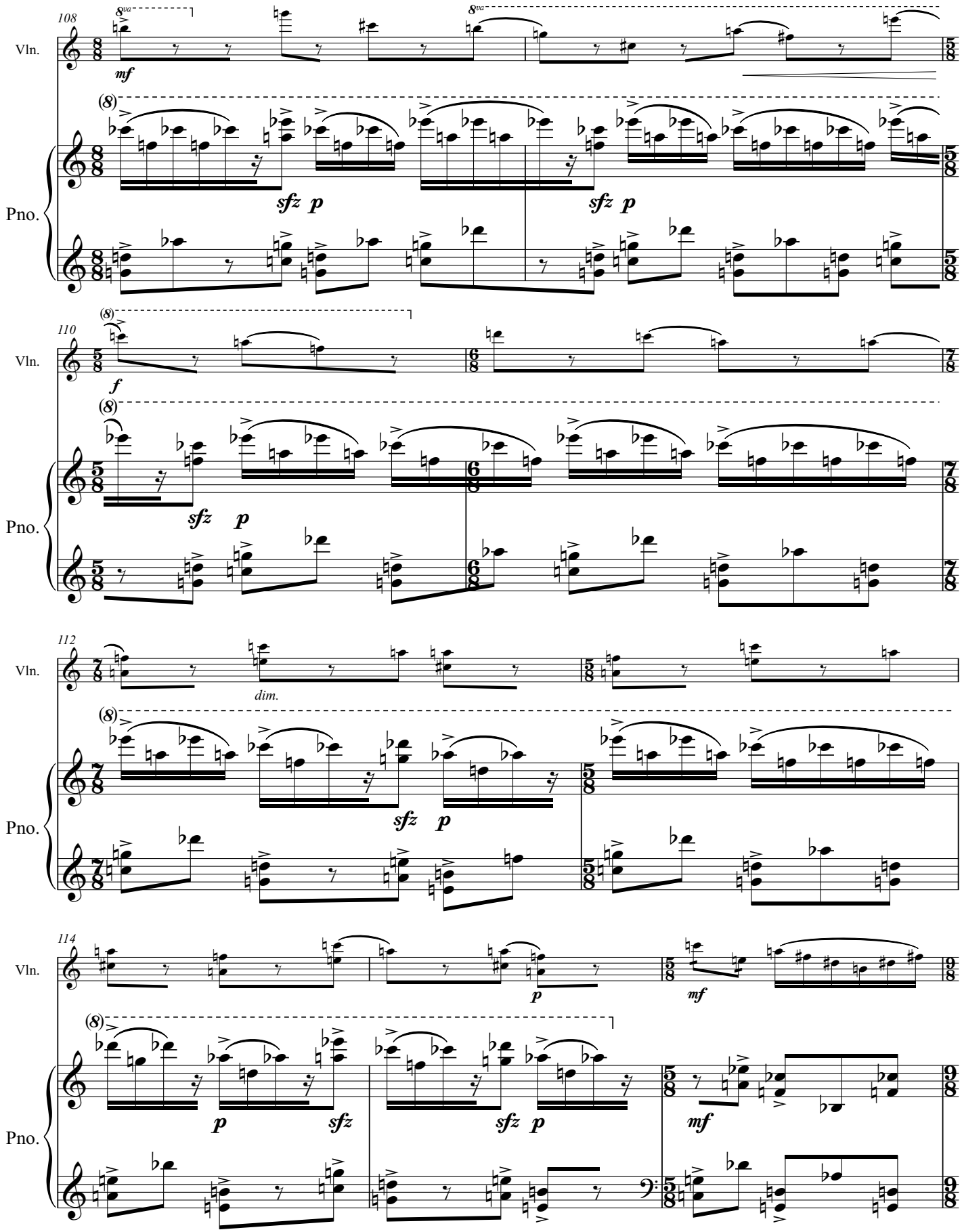

60
Vln.
(8)
Pno.
62
Vln.
(8)
Pno.
64
Vln.
sfz
p
(8)
sfz
p
Pno.
67
Vln.
sfz
p
(8)
sfz
p
Pno.

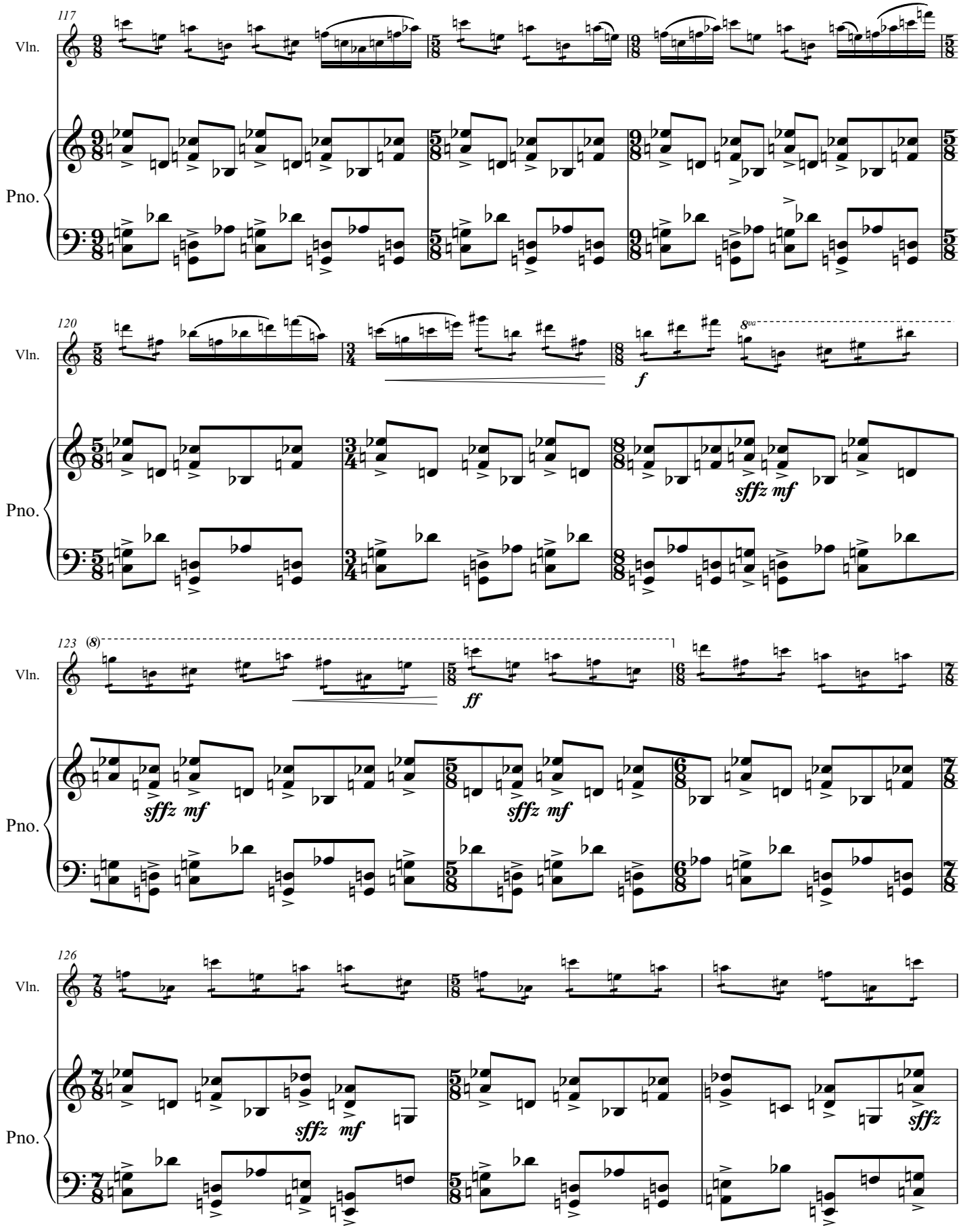

69
Vln.
sfz
p
(8)
Pno.
sfz
p
72
Vln.
mp
cresc.
(8)
Pno.
mp
Ped.
Ped.
75
Vln.
(8)
Pno.
Ped.
78
Vln.
(8)
15ma
Pno.
Ped.

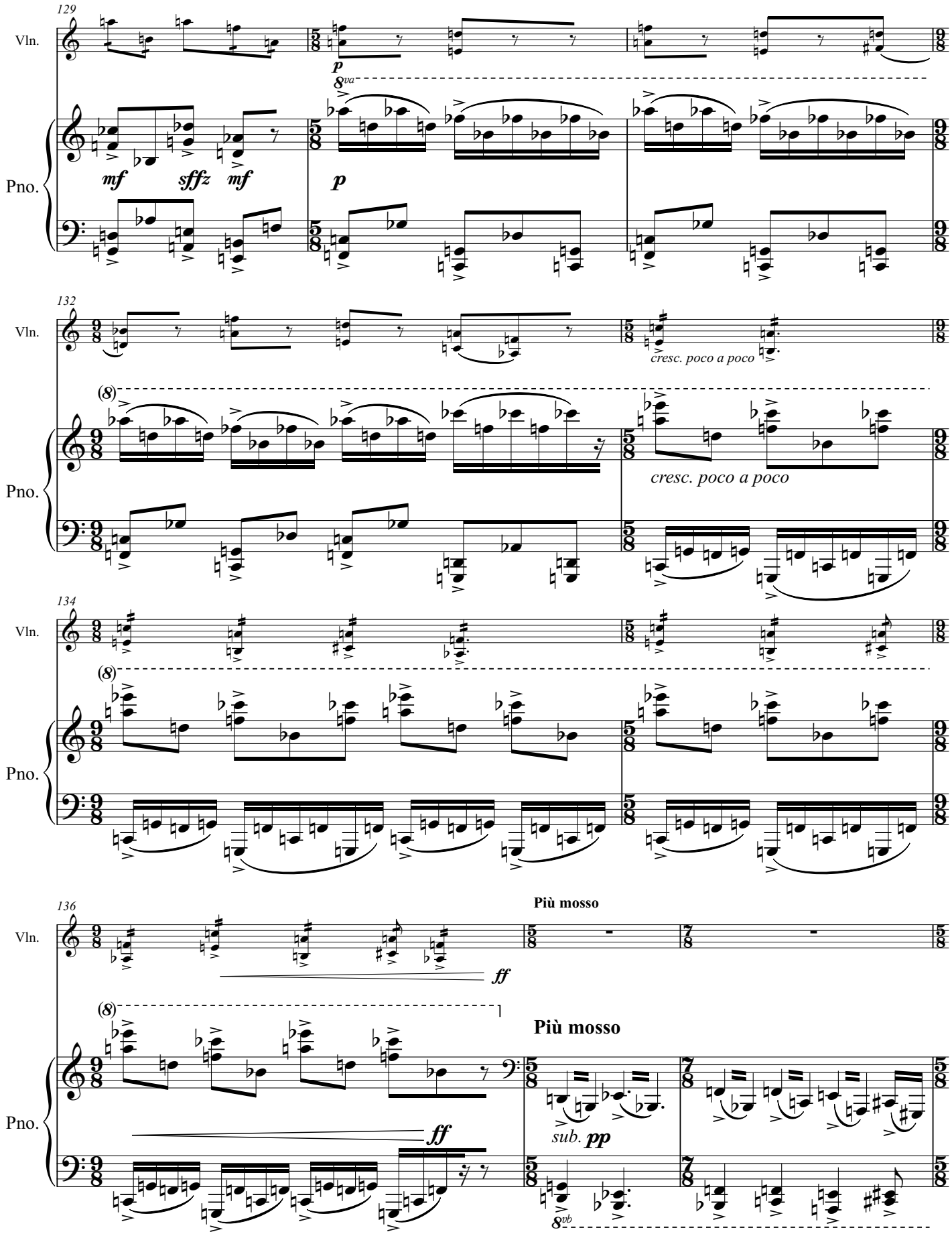

81
Vln.
Pno.
ff
f
(15)
8vb
84
sffz
sffz
sffz
f
(8)
86
sffz
sffz
(8)
88
sffz
f
sffz
sffz
f
(8)

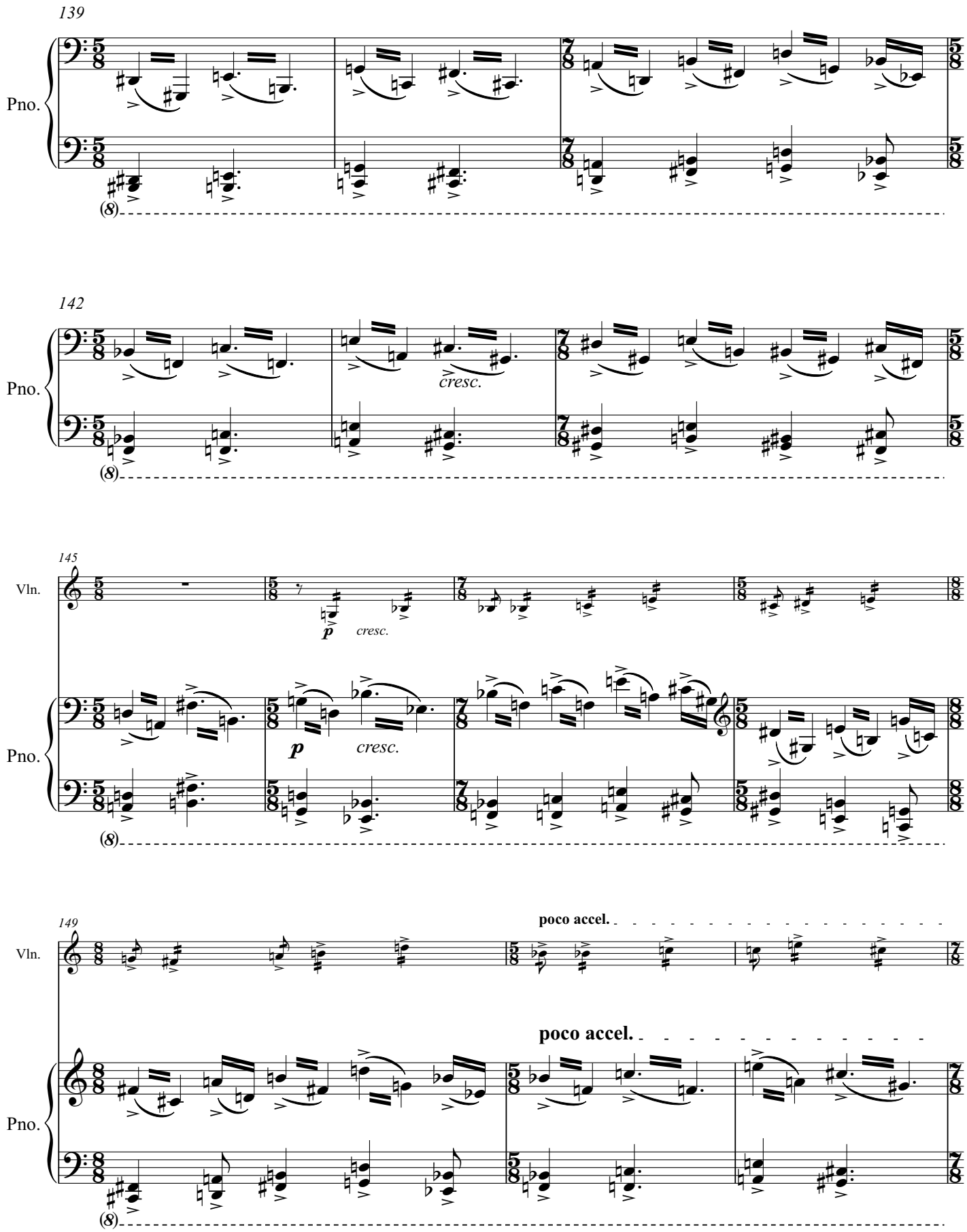

91
Vln.
Pno.
sffz
sffz
sffz
f
sffz
sffz
(8)
94
Vln.
Pno.
ff
f
sffz
ff
f
(8)
96
Vln.
Pno.
dim.
dim.
(8)
98
Vln.
Pno.
(8)

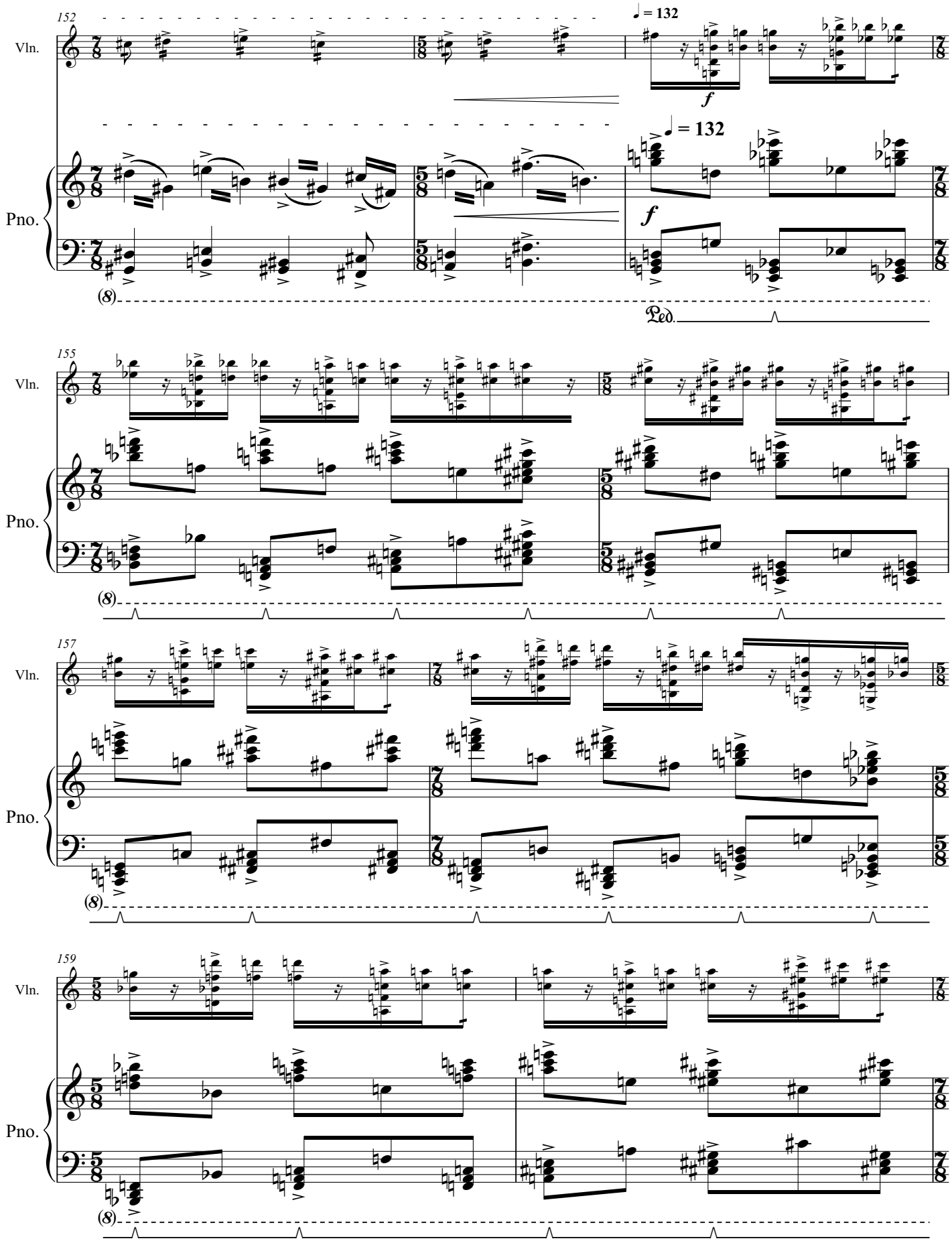

100
Vln.
Pno.
p
102
sarcastically
p leggiero
8va
p leggiero e non espress.
104
(8)
106

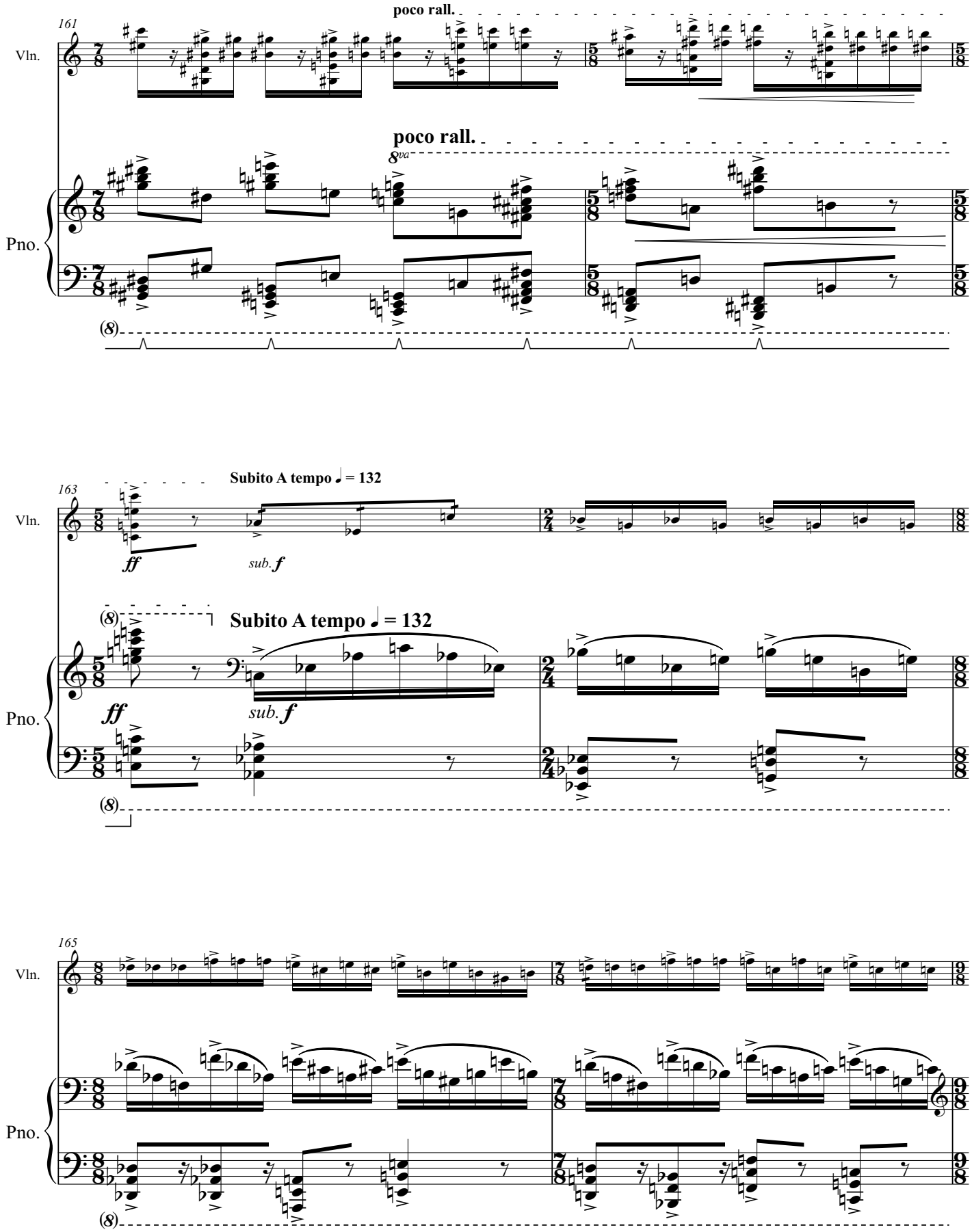

108
Vln.
Pno.
mf
sfz p
sfz p
110
f
sfz p
112
dim.
sfz p
114
p
mf
p sfz
sfz p
mf

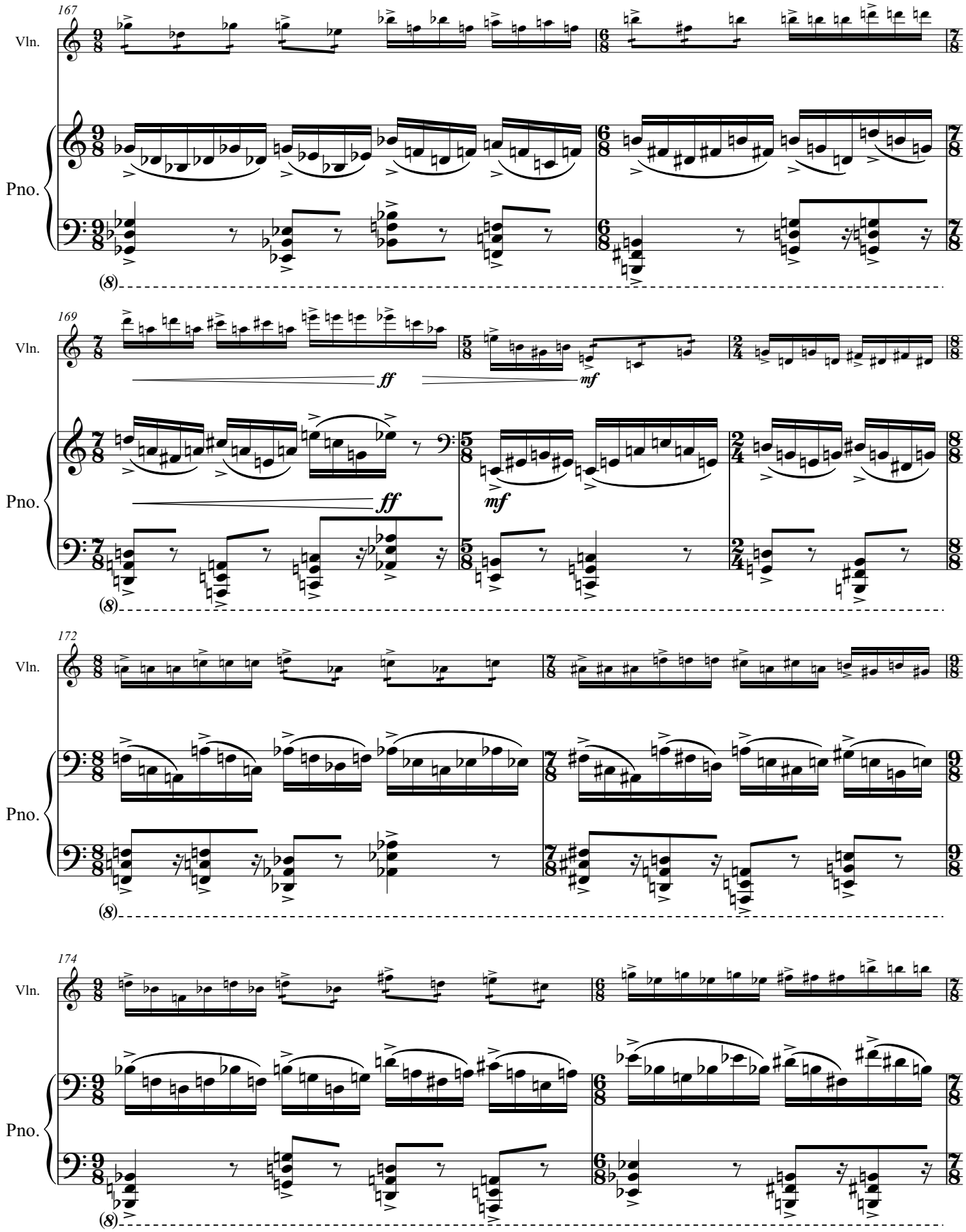

117
Vln.
Pno.
120
Vln.
Pno.
8va
f
sffz mf
123
(8)
Vln.
ff
Pno.
sffz mf
sffz mf
126
Vln.
Pno.
sffz mf
sffz

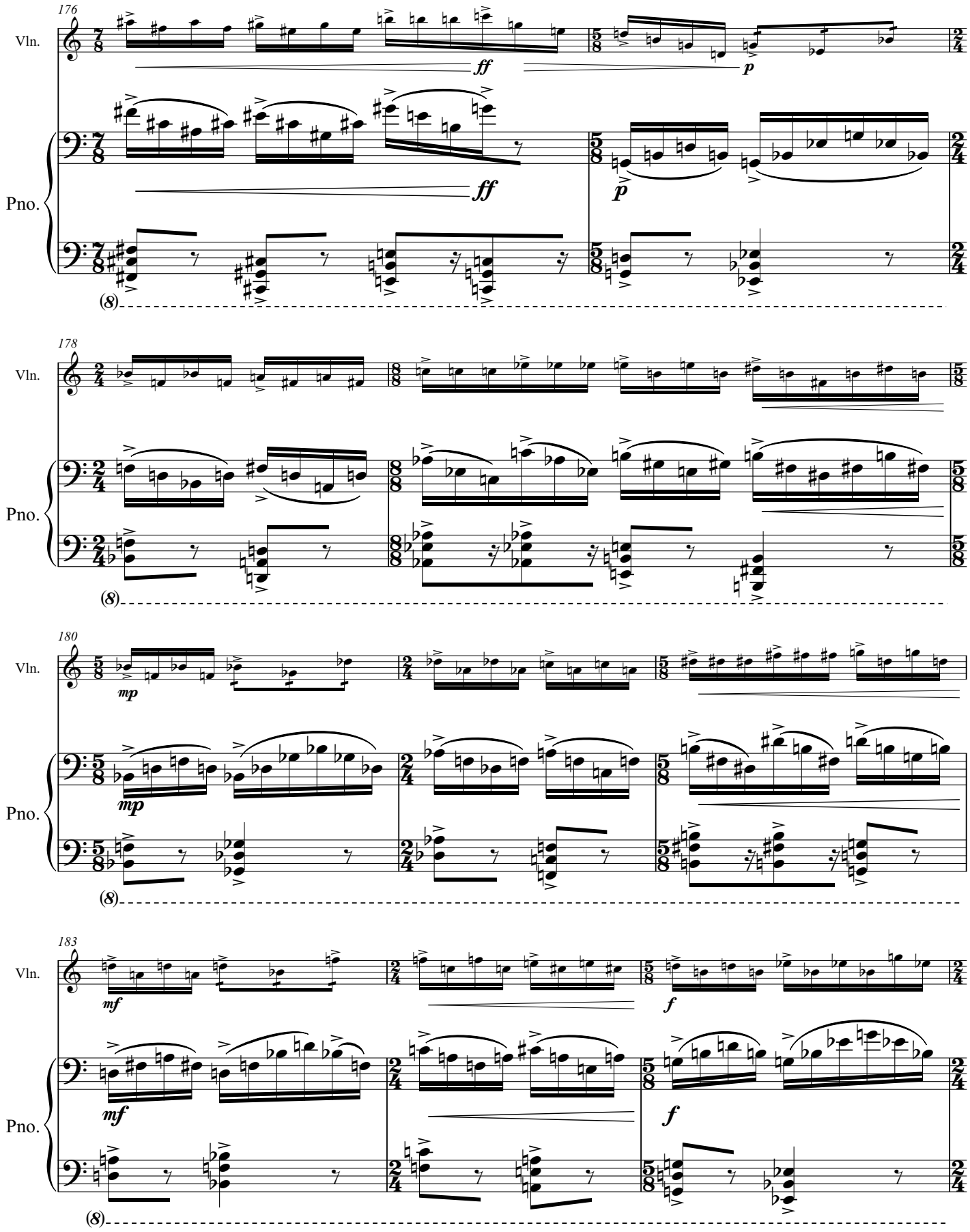

129
Vln.
Pno.
mf
sffz
mf
8va
p
132
cresc. poco a poco
(8)
134
136
Più mosso
ff
sub. pp
8vb

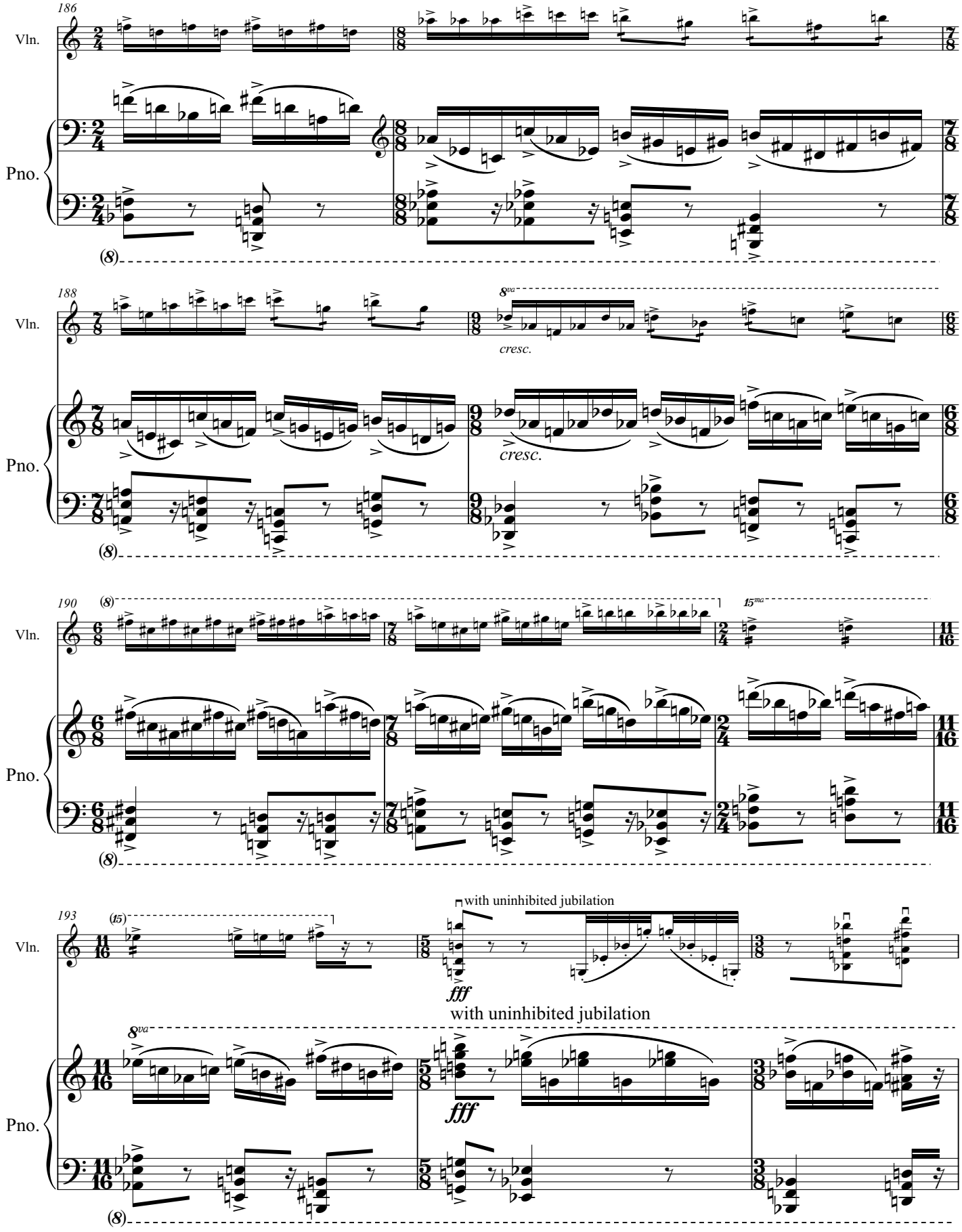

139
Pno.
(8)
142
Pno.
cresc.
(8)
145
Vln.
p
cresc.
Pno.
p
cresc.
(8)
149
poco accel.
Vln.
poco accel.
Pno.
(8)

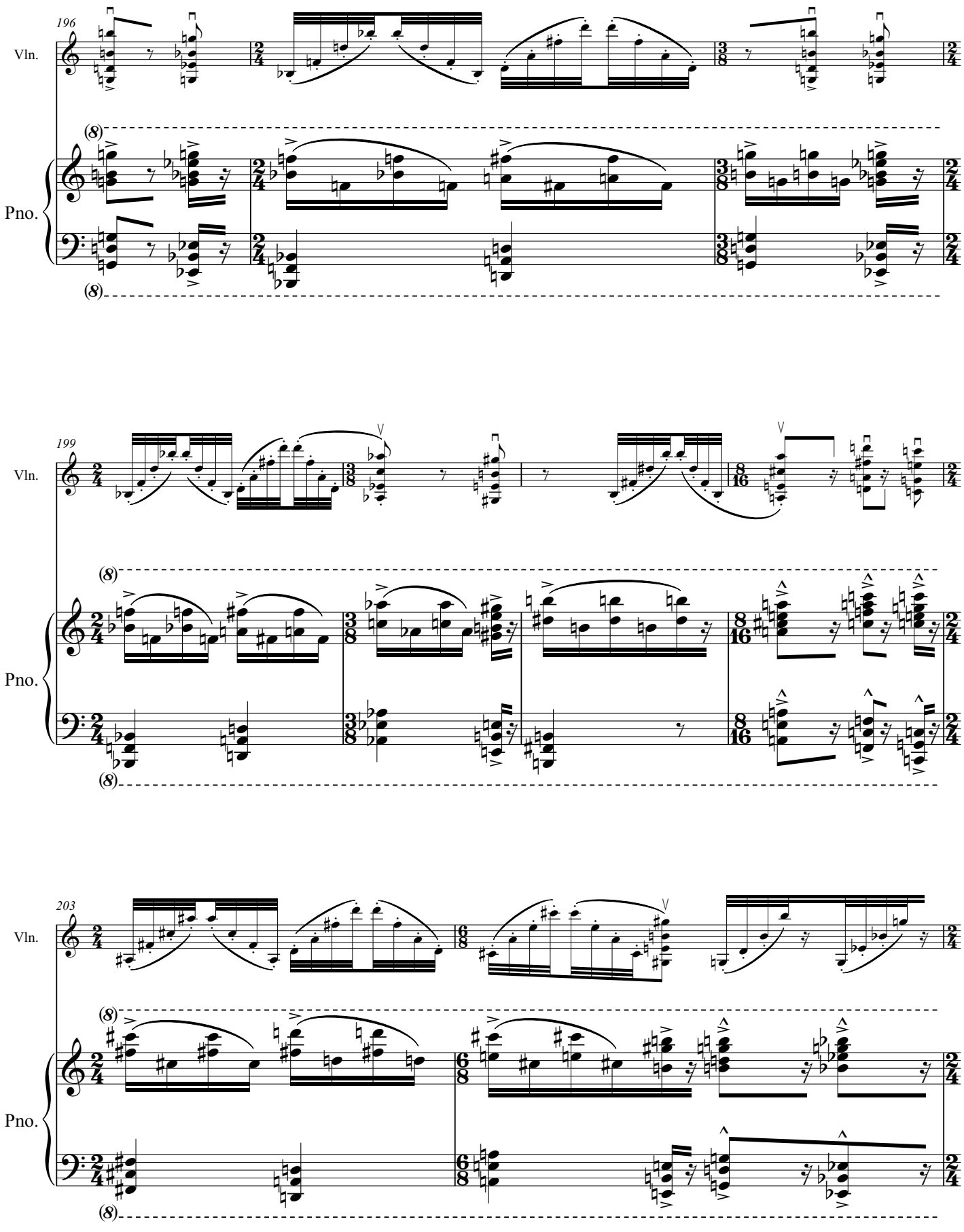

152
Vln.
♩ = 132
f
Pno.
♩ = 132
f
(8)
Ped.
155
Vln.
Pno.
(8)
157
Vln.
Pno.
(8)
159
Vln.
Pno.
(8)

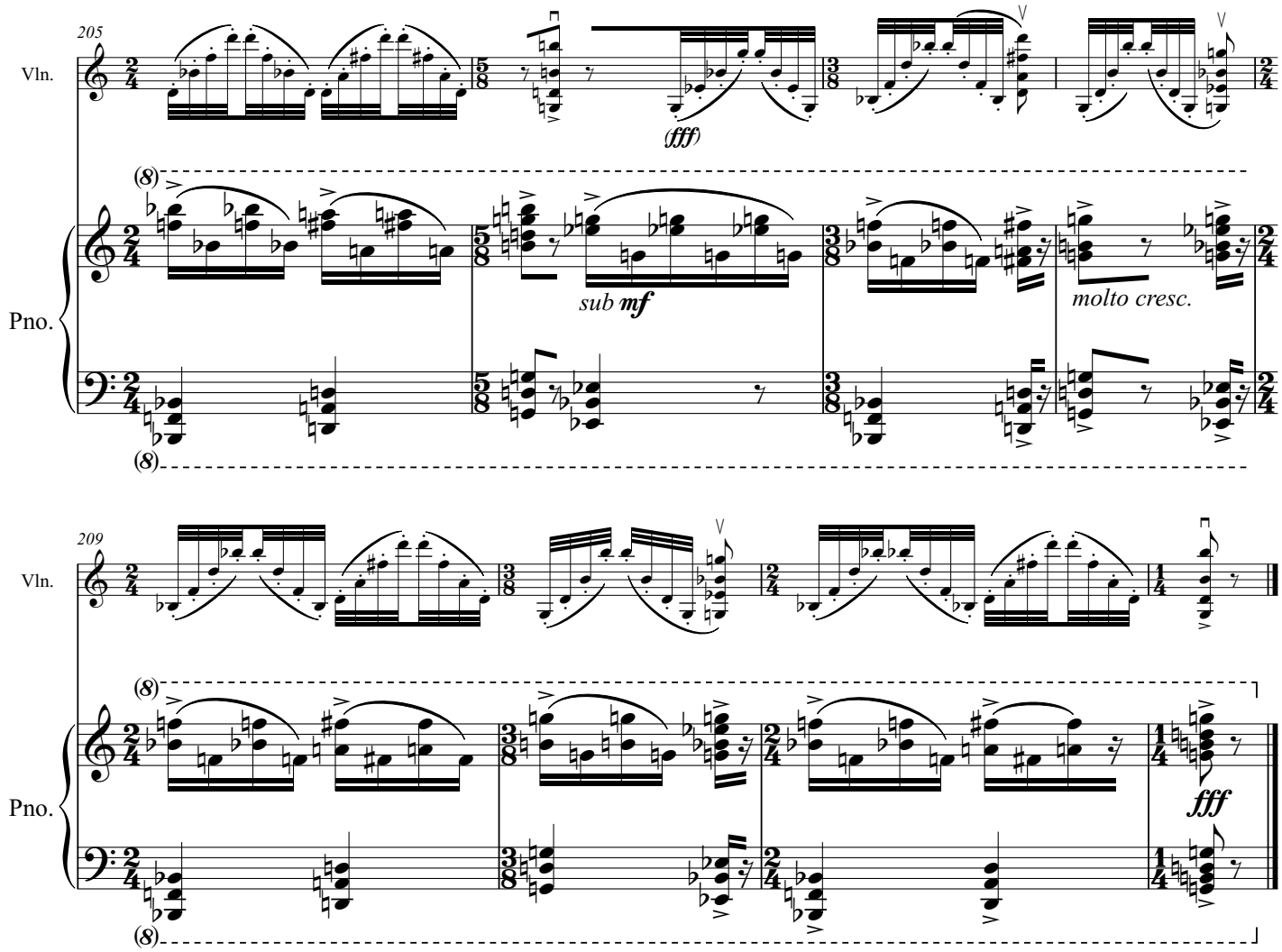

161
Vln.
poco rall.
Pno.
poco rall.
8va
(8)
163
Vln.
Subito A tempo ♩ = 132
ff
sub. f
Pno.
(8)
Subito A tempo ♩ = 132
ff
sub. f
(8)
165
Vln.
Pno.
(8)


167
Vln.
Pno.
(8)
169
Vln.
ff
mf
Pno.
ff
mf
(8)
172
Vln.
Pno.
(8)
174
Vln.
Pno.
(8)


176
Vln.
Pno.
ff
p
178
mp
180
mf
183
f


186
Vln.
Pno.
(8)
188
Vln.
8va
cresc.
Pno.
(8)
190
(8)
15ma
Vln.
Pno.
(8)
193
(15)
with uninhibited jubilation
fff
with uninhibited jubilation
Vln.
8va
fff
Pno.
(8)


196
Vln.
Pno.
199
Vln.
Pno.
203
Vln.
Pno.


205
Vln.
(fff)
(8)
Pno.
sub mf
molto cresc.
(8)
209
Vln.
(8)
Pno.
fff
(8)