me obruit

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

Score

Max Chung

(2025)

TITLE: me obruit
DURATION: ca' 10:40
INSTRUMENTATION: Flute, b-flat Clarinet, Violin, Cello

PROGRAM NOTES:

Max Chung's new composition 'me obruit' is translated from latin to "it buries me". The piece explores the internal experience of being overwhelmed or crushed by a larger emotional force, of being submerged underwater, tracing the long, slow process of losing energy and slipping into a dreamlike realm. It evokes the fading of breath and the gradual transition into a memory state where time becomes warped and fluid, blurring the boundary between the unconscious and conscious state.

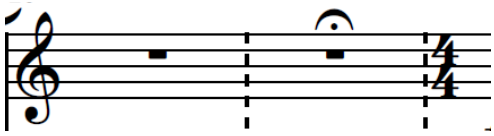
KEY:

GENERAL NOTES:
This piece works around a contrast of foreground and background, and as such the difference between the two sections should be exaggerated when possible.

Accidentals apply throughout the entire measure.

Trills should always be assumed to be whole-step trills. When there are ensemble-wide trills, they should be played at similar, but not identical, rates equal to between a thirty-second note and a sixteenth triplet of Tempo I (q = 108).

Dotted Barlines:



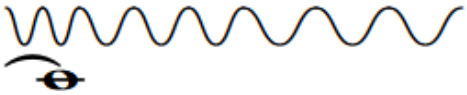
Dotted barlines indicate a resting point where time is freer, but still is approximately in the meter before it. The time signature re-establishes “strict time”.

At rehearsal letter **O**, time is measured in seconds, rather than meter represented with the open meter beforehand.

Performative Gesture Notation:
Frozen Gesture:

In the score, this symbol indicates that the performer should freeze in place like a statue after the duration of the note it is on, remaining as silent and still as possible. Maintain this frozen posture for as long as you can, only moving when necessary to prepare for the next note. When resuming, the entrance should be made with a sudden, violent gesture, creating a stark contrast to the preceding stillness.

Two-Direction Pitch Bend:



All pitch bends are a quarter-tone maximum both up and down. The rate is variable and will be specified in the score.

Glissandi:
Pitches should change at a completely linear rate.

Flute:

Jetwhistle downwards from the note. All jetwhistles are diamond noteheads and a passage will always be marked with J.W as shown in the notation above.

Violin/Cello: Overpressure

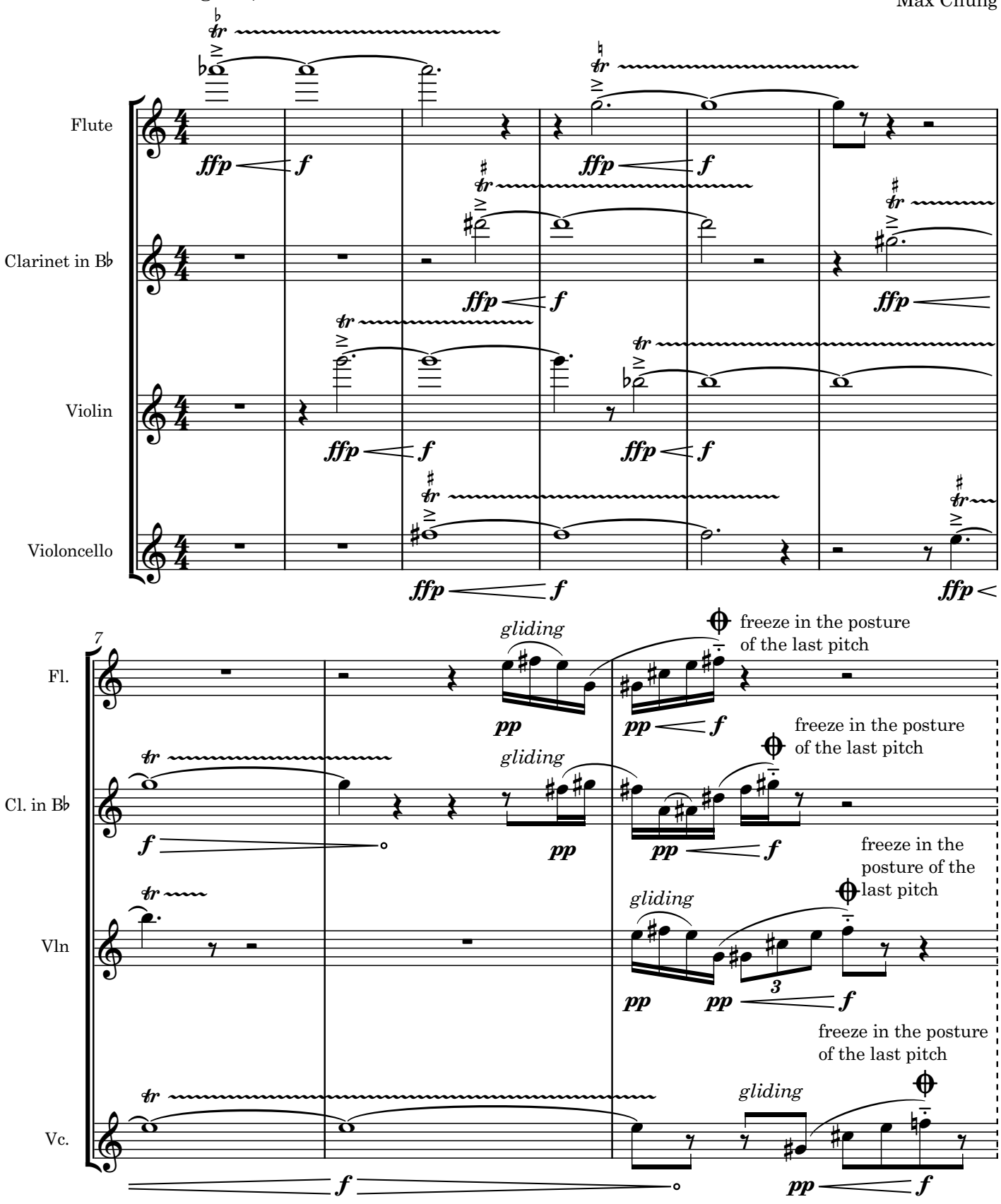
Overpressure should be applied from the onset of the note(s) and sustained throughout the entire duration as indicated in the score. The pressure should be as intense as possible, producing a dense, gritty sound rich in high-frequency noise—ideally creating a harsh, heavy, and highly textured sonic effect.

Tailpiece bowing should have a light and airy sound, with no defined pitch or inconsistent pitch if possible.

me obruit

Anguish, fear ♩ = 108

Max Chung



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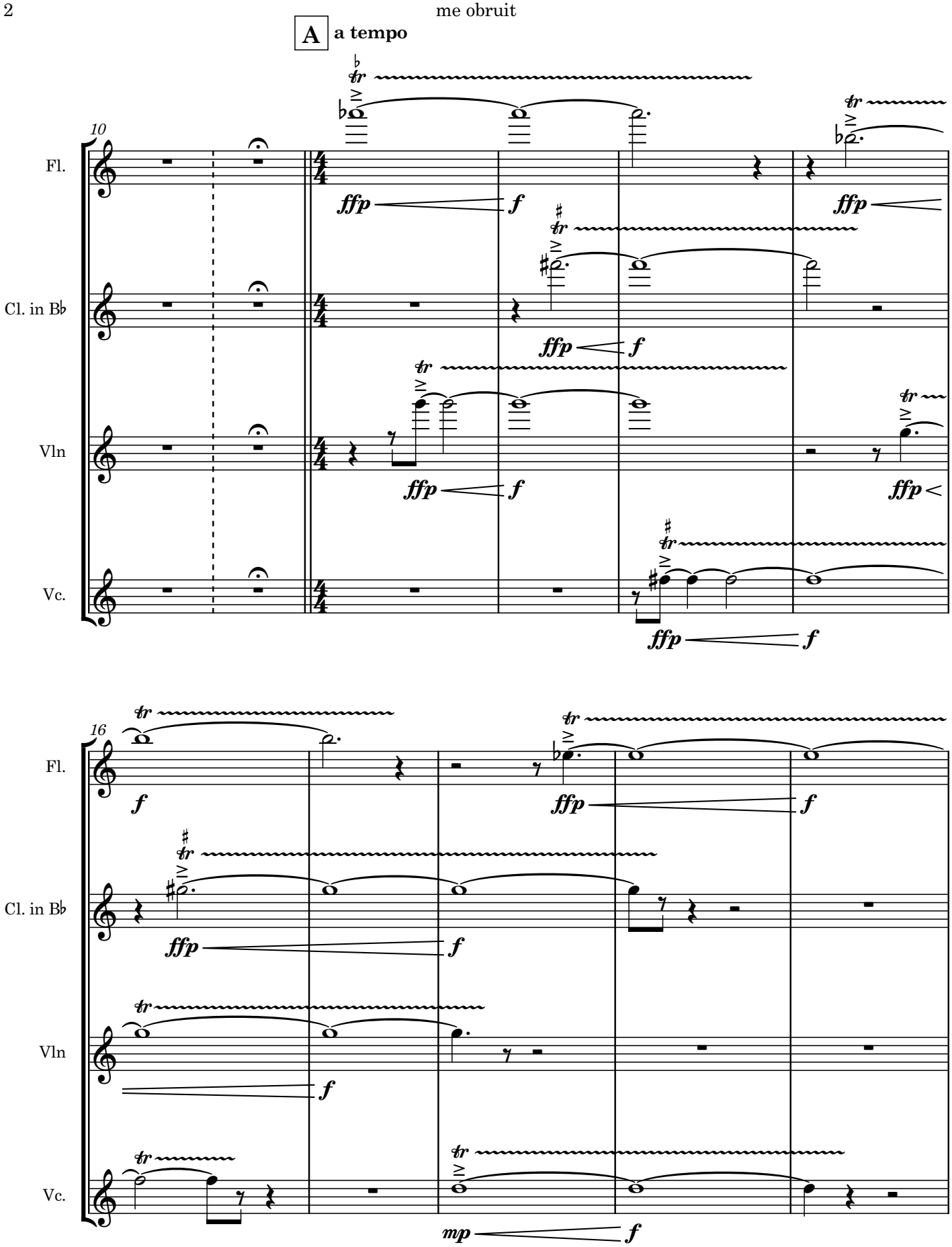
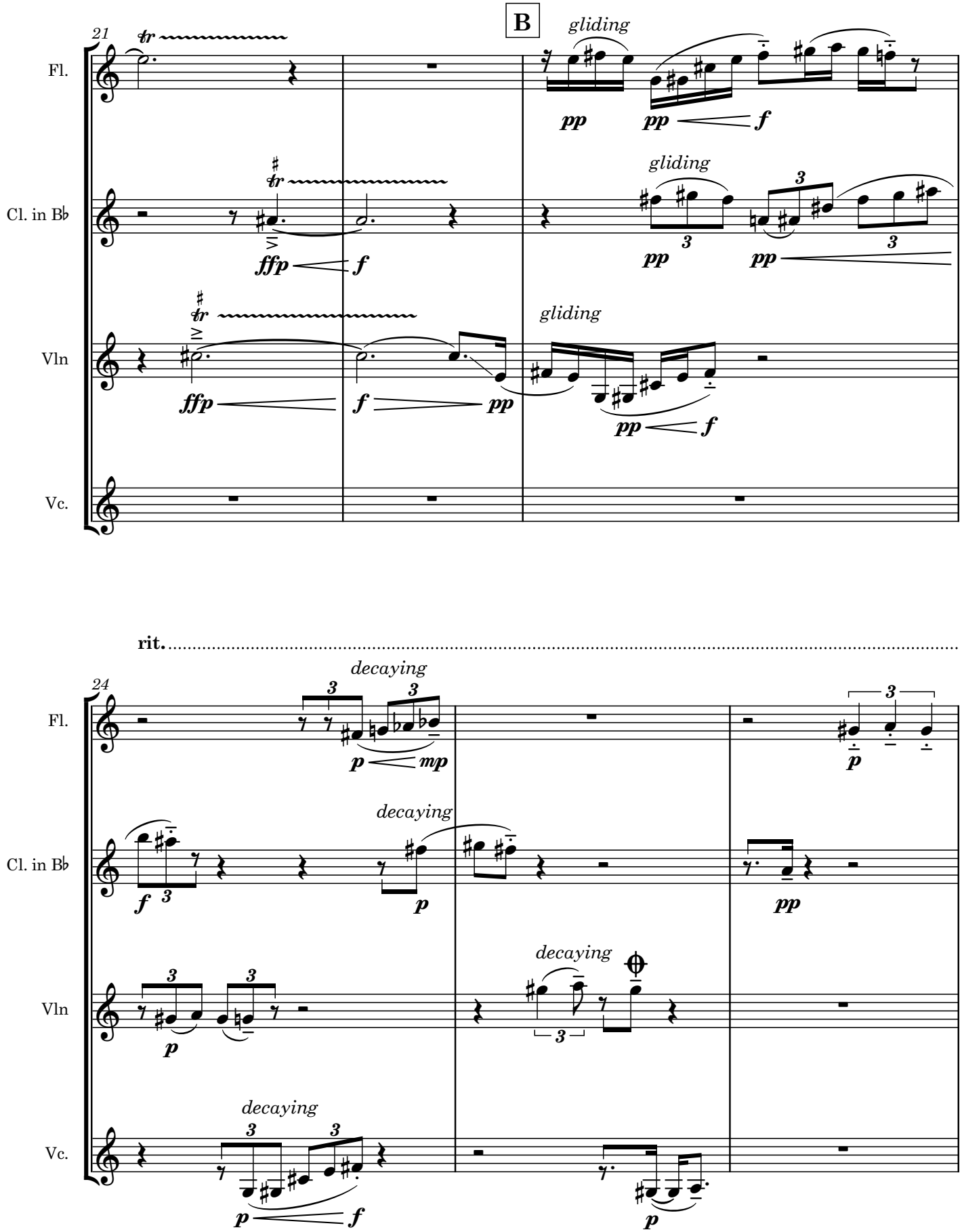
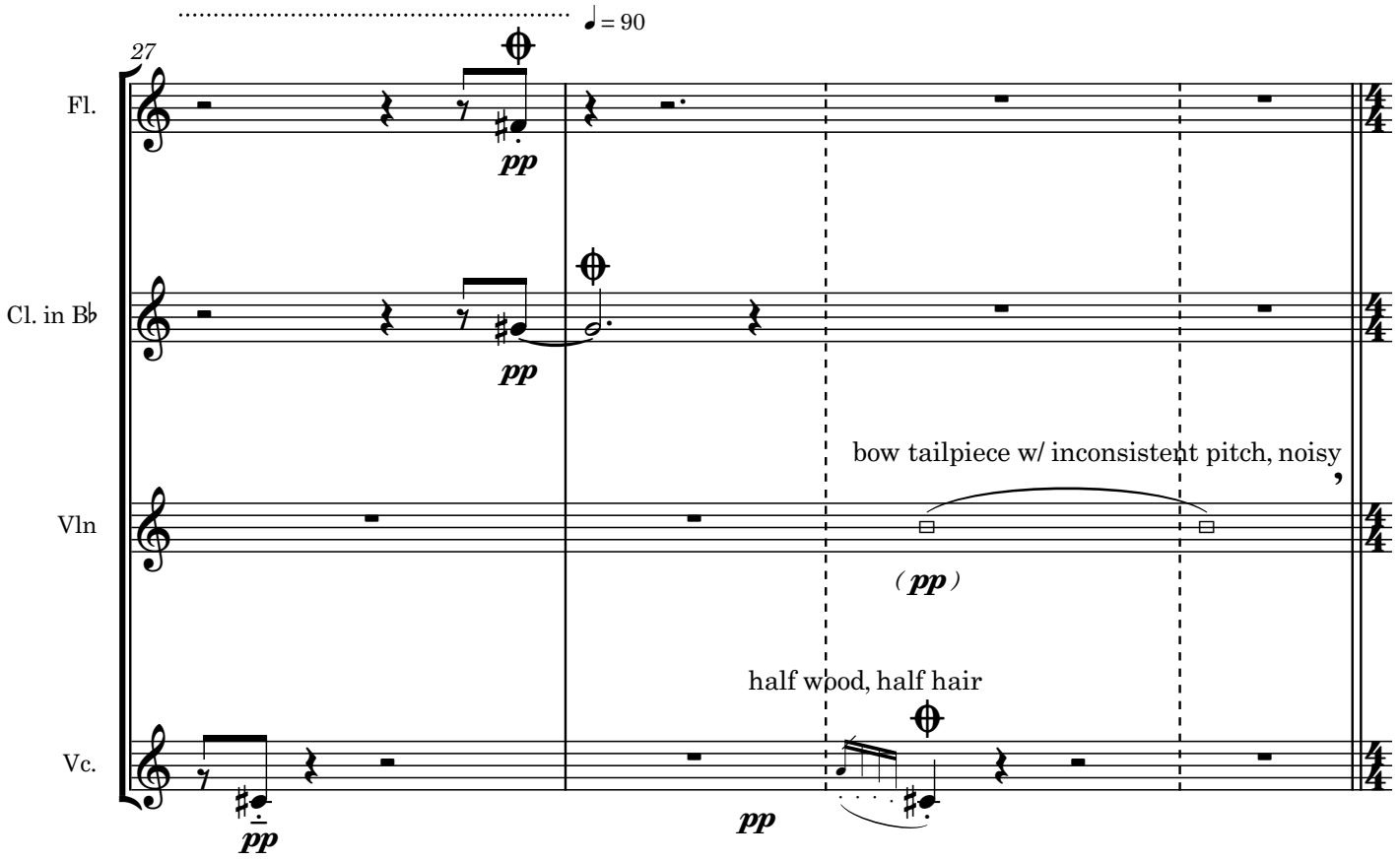
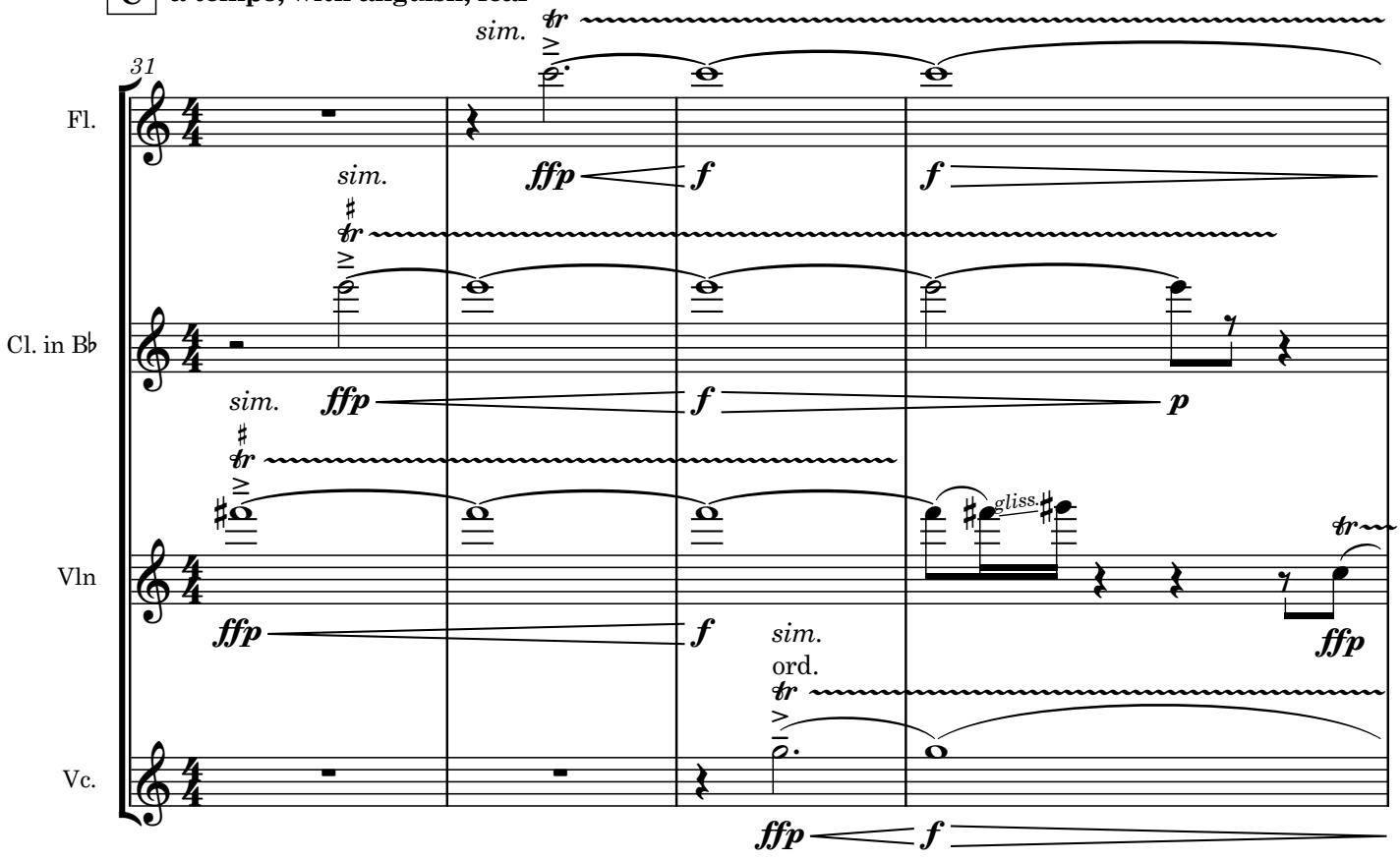
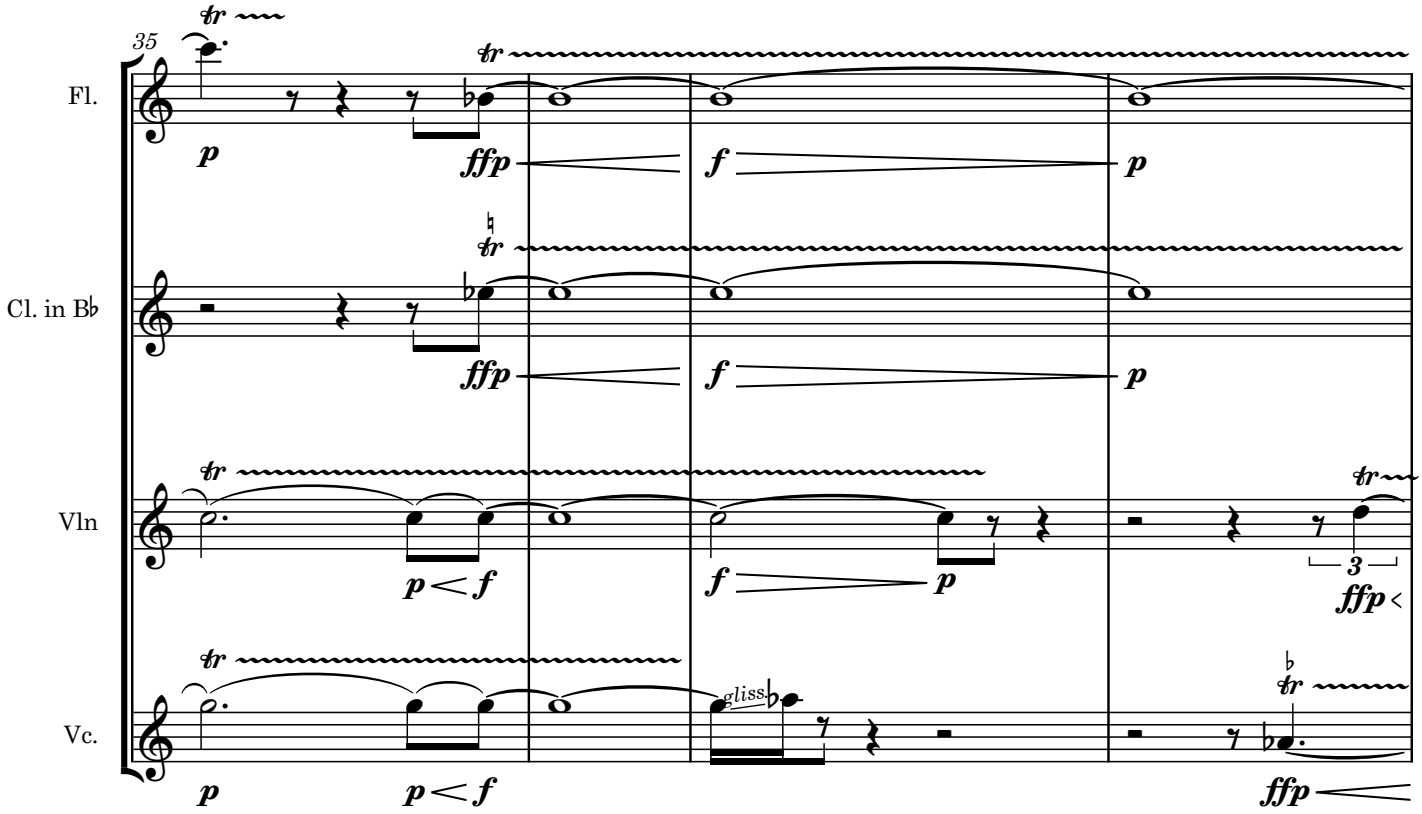

A
a tempo
10
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
ffp
f
16
mp

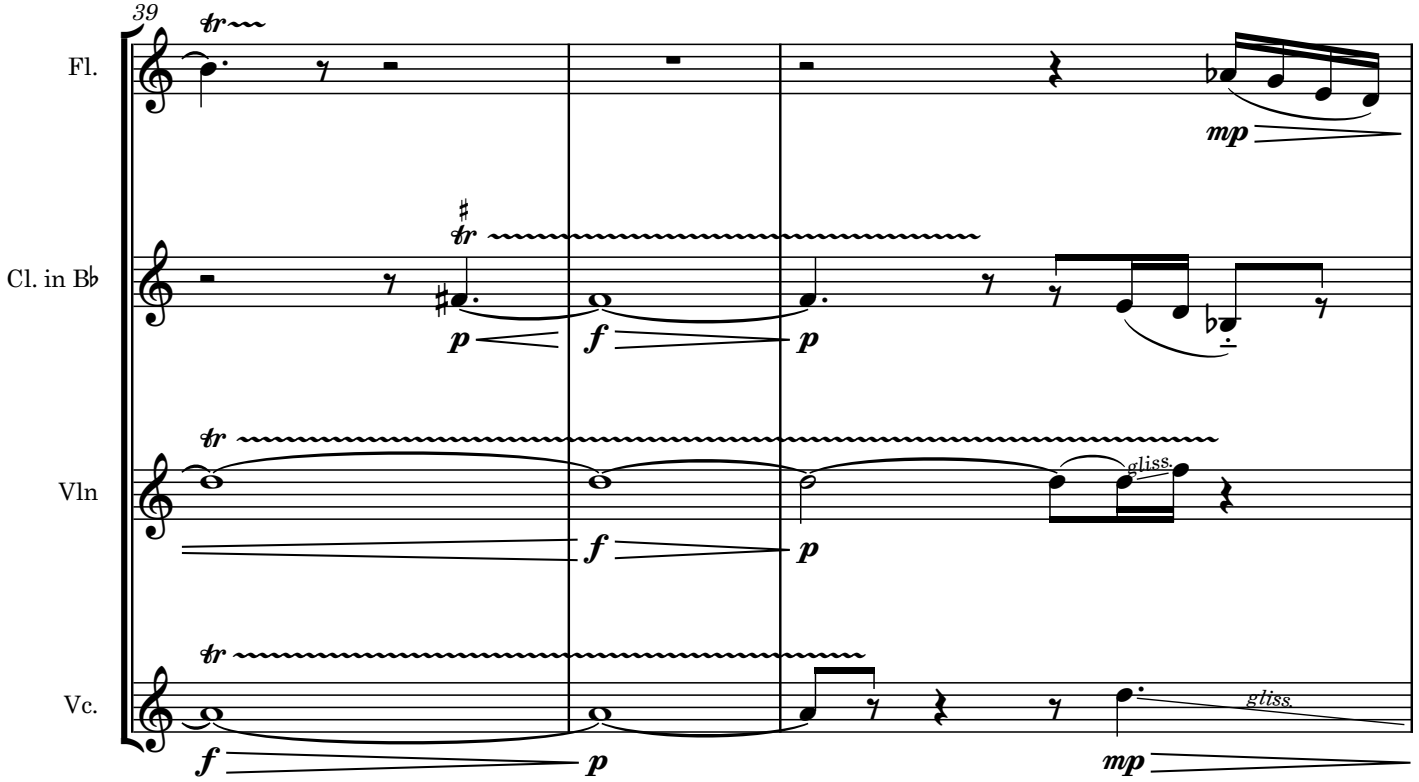

21
B
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
gliding
gliding
gliding
rit.
24
decaying
decaying
decaying
decaying

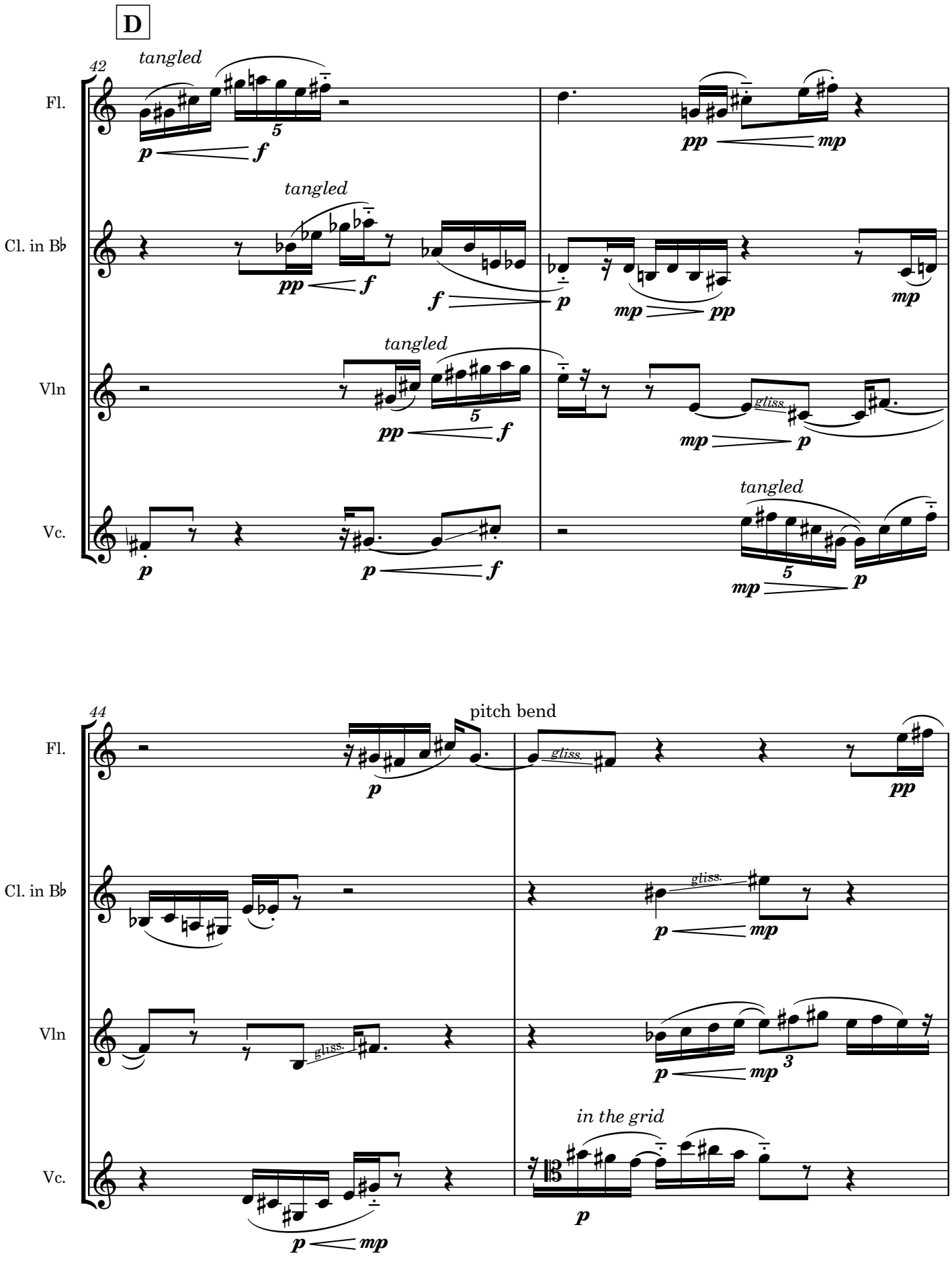


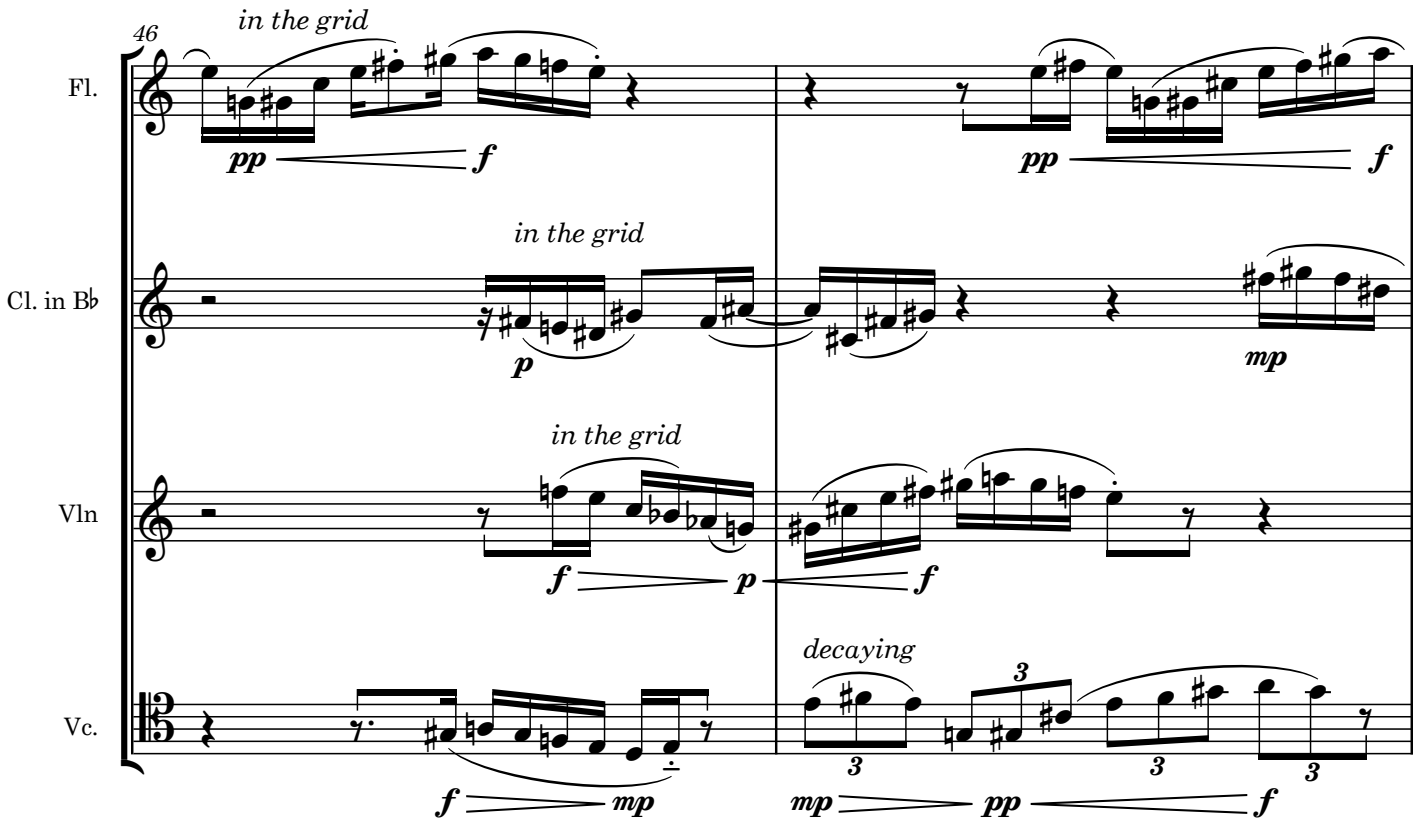
C **a tempo, with anguish, fear**

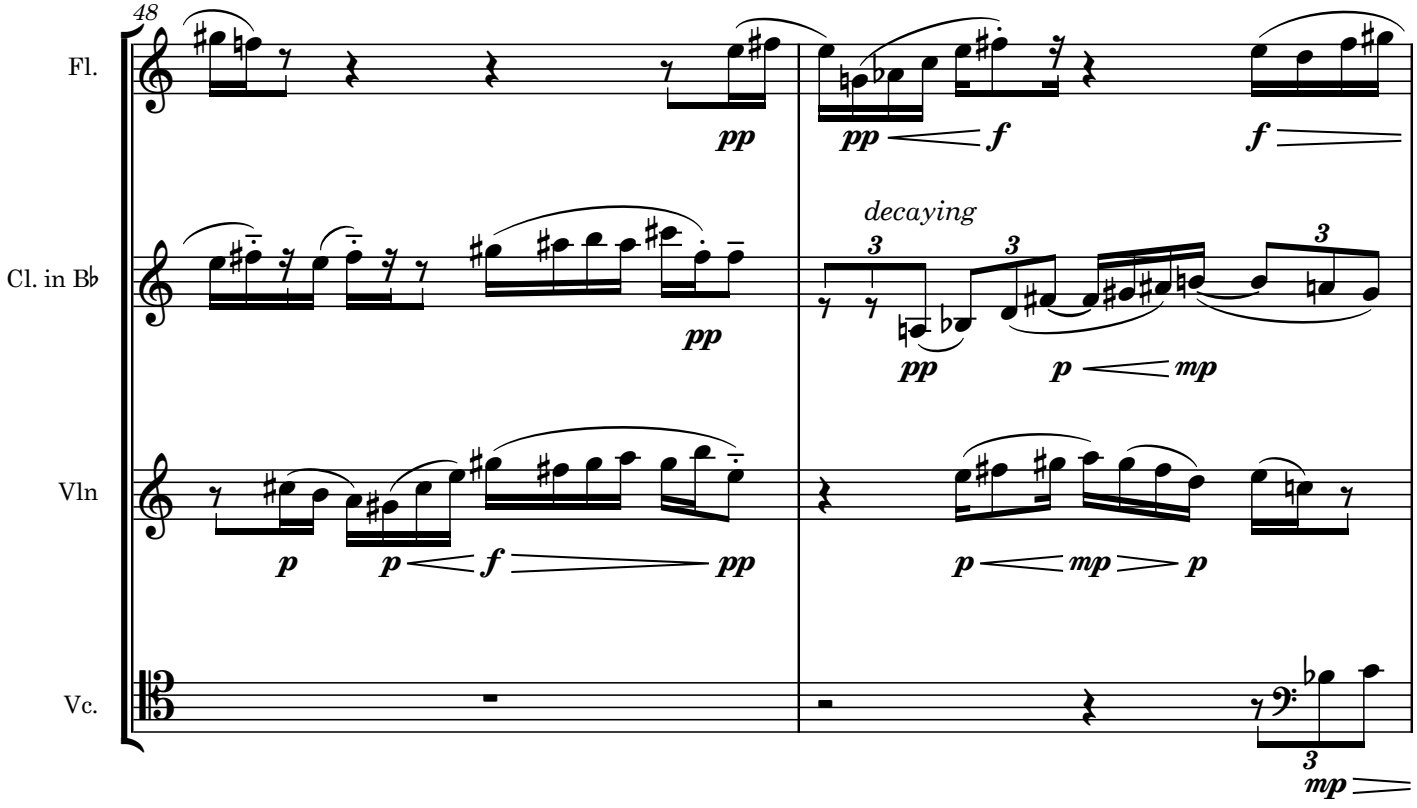


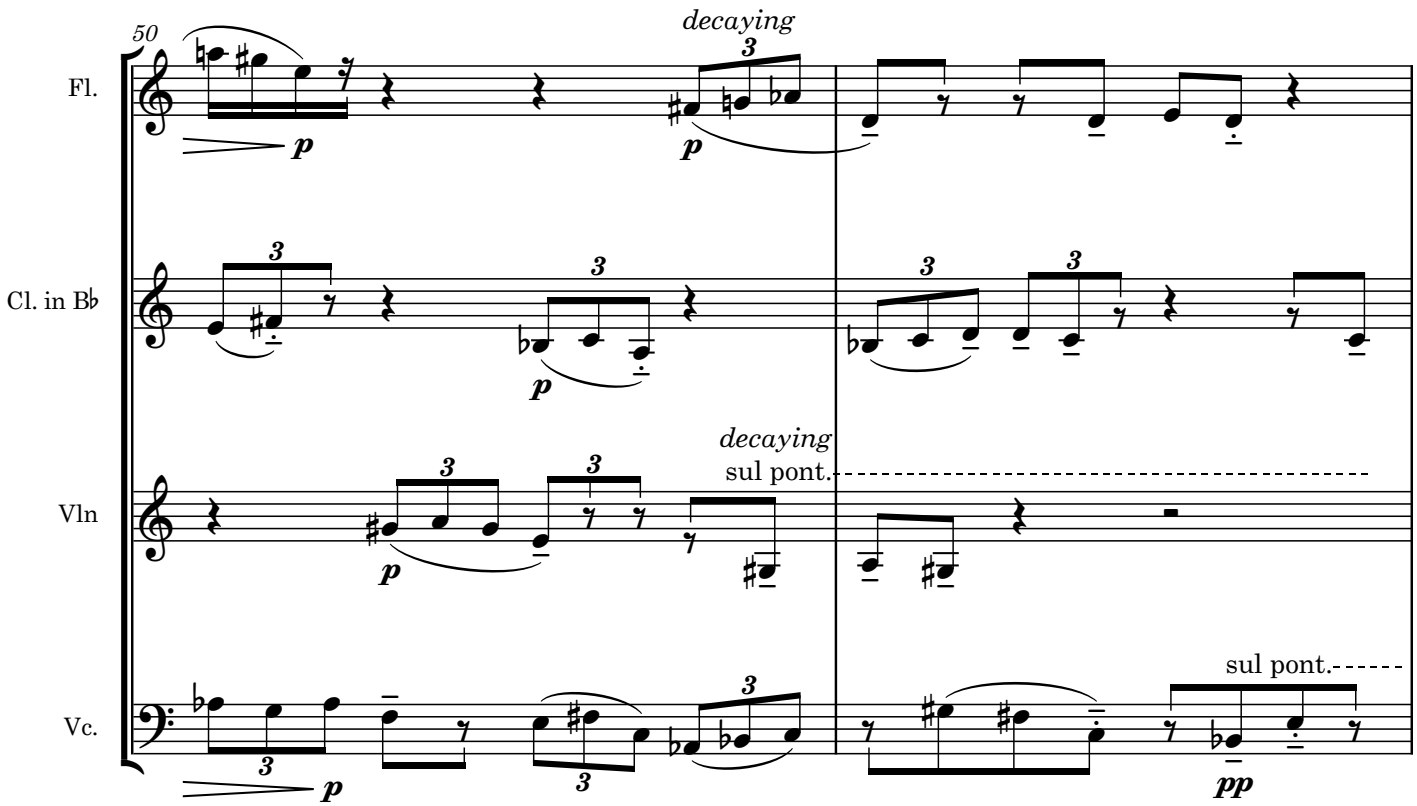

35
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
tr
p
ffp
f
p
p < f
f
p
3
ffp <
gliss.
ffp

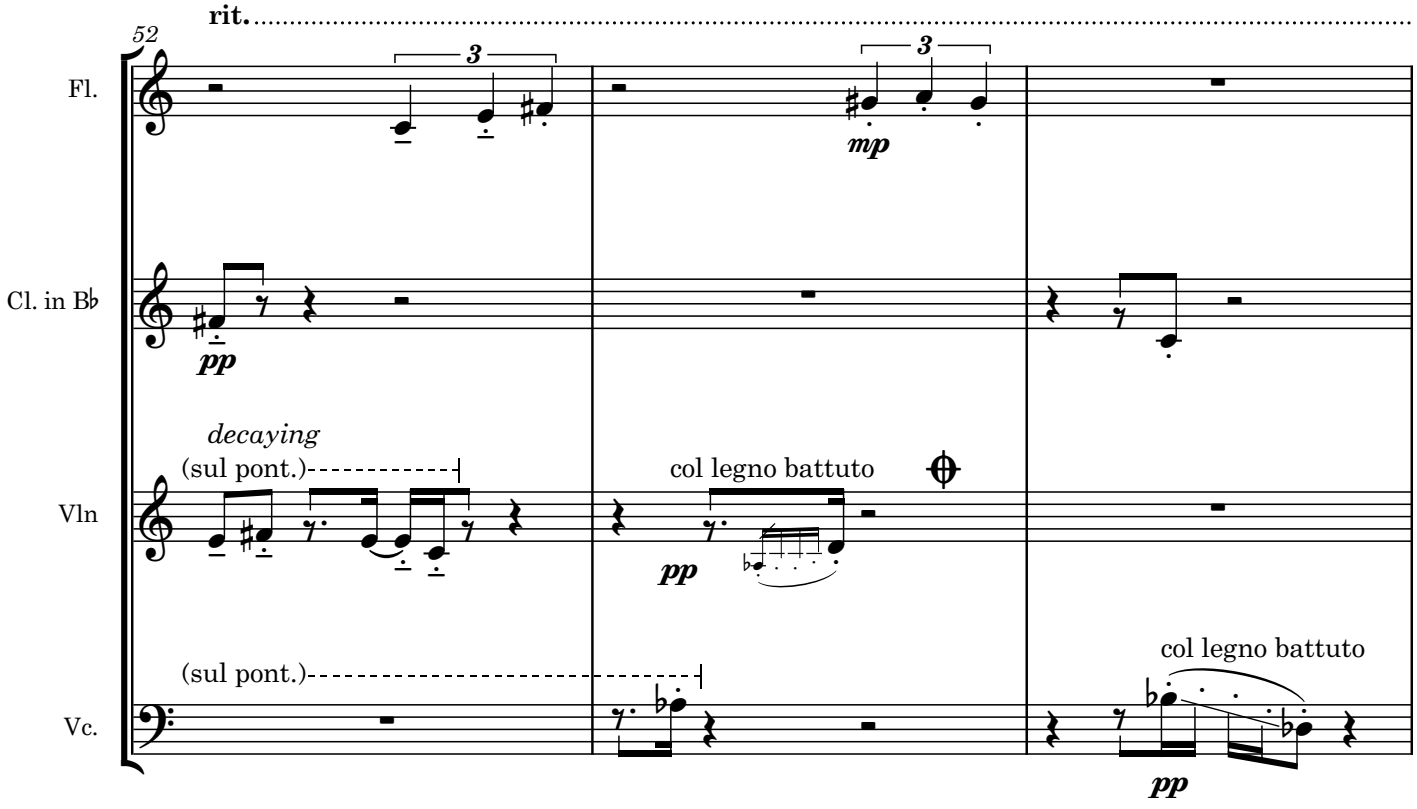

39
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
tr
mp
p
f
p
f
p
gliss.
f
p
mp
gliss.

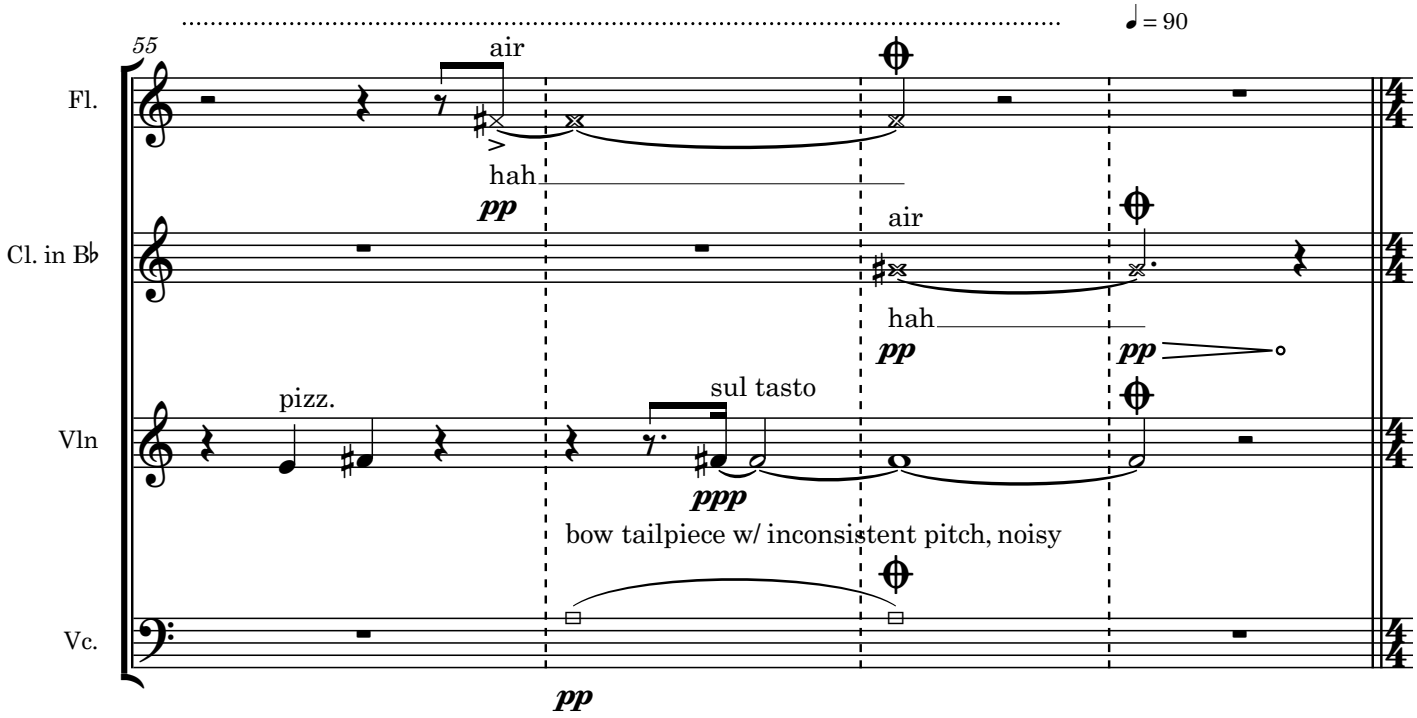

D
42
tangled
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
gliss.
44
pitch bend
in the grid

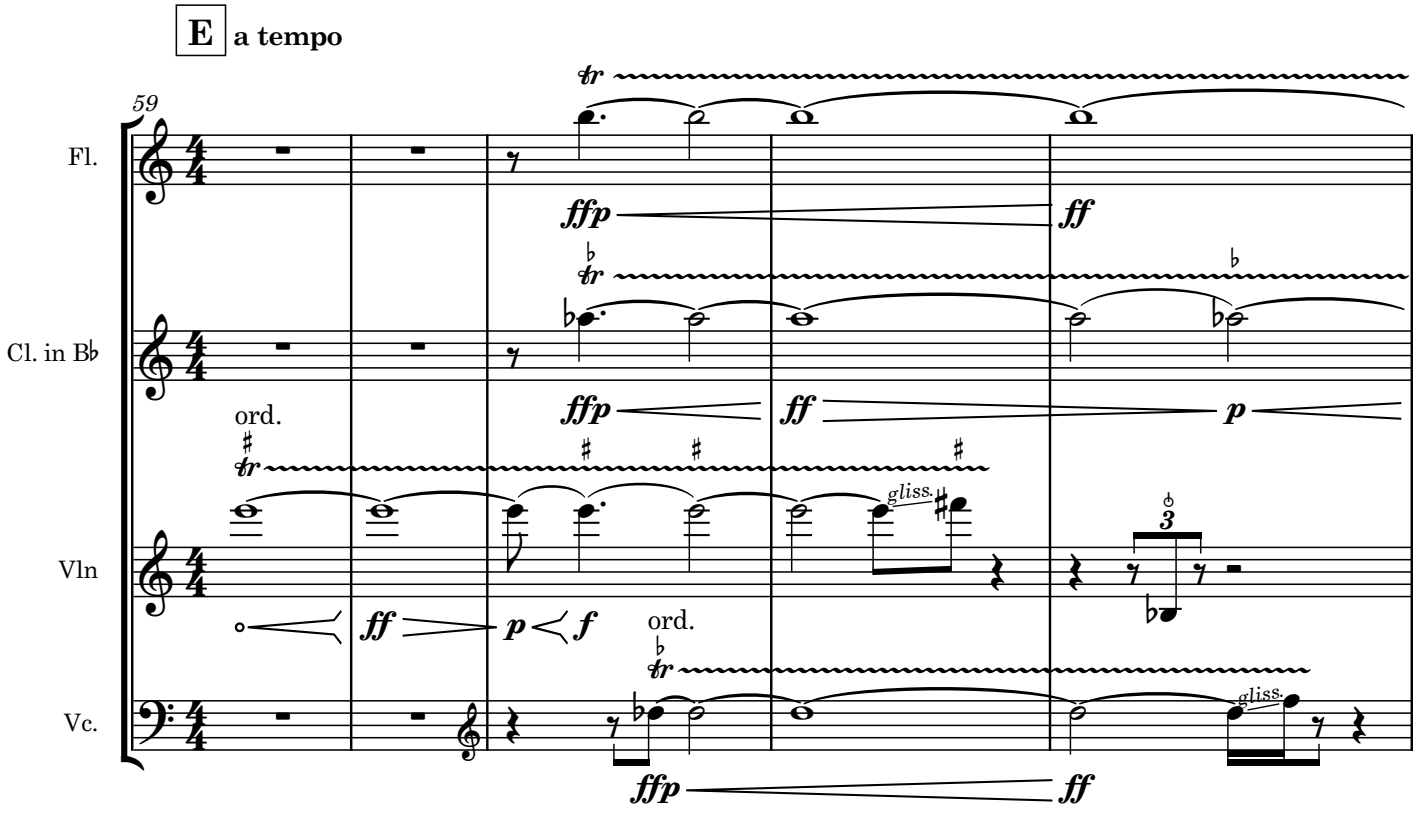

46
in the grid
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
decaying

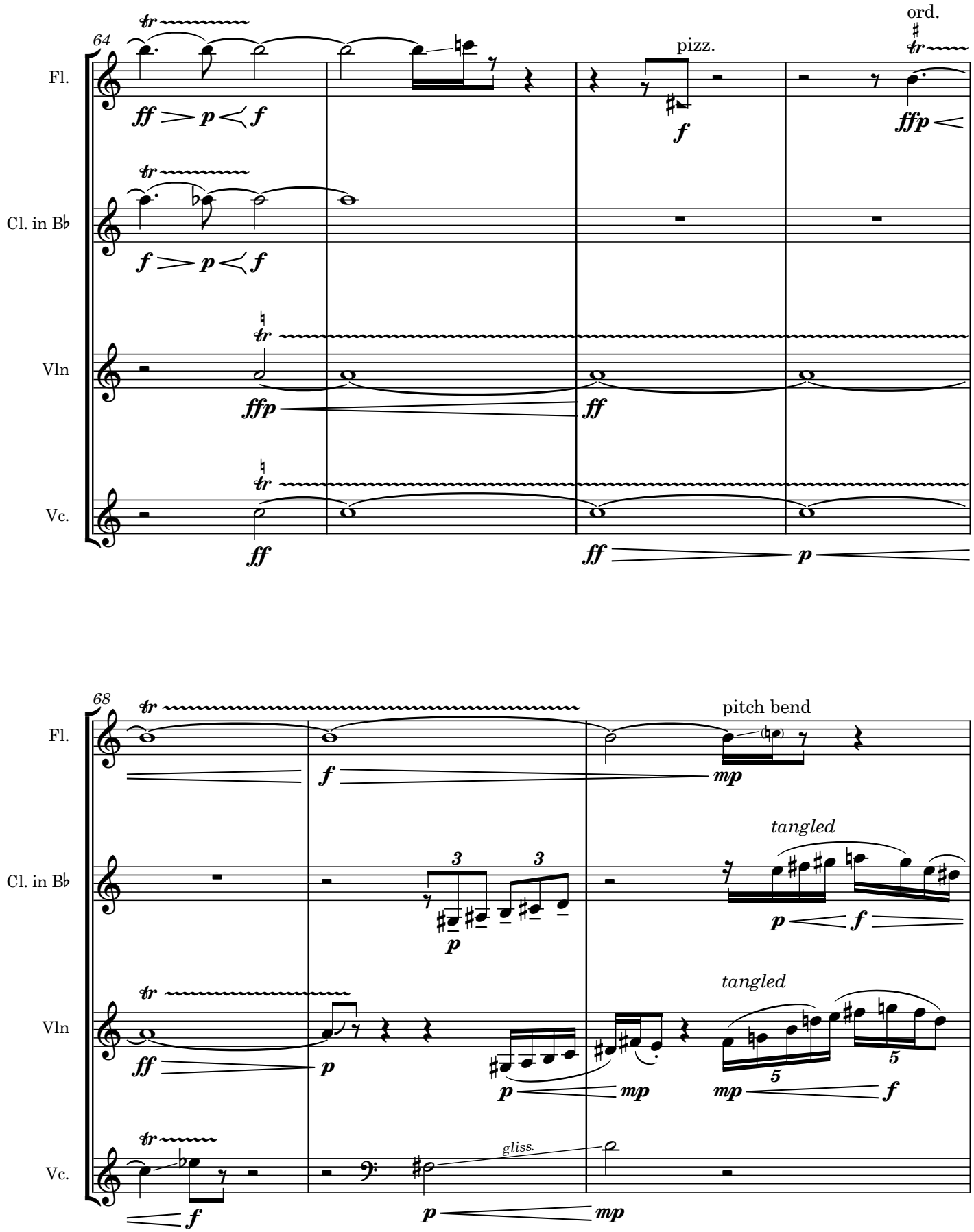

48
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
decaying

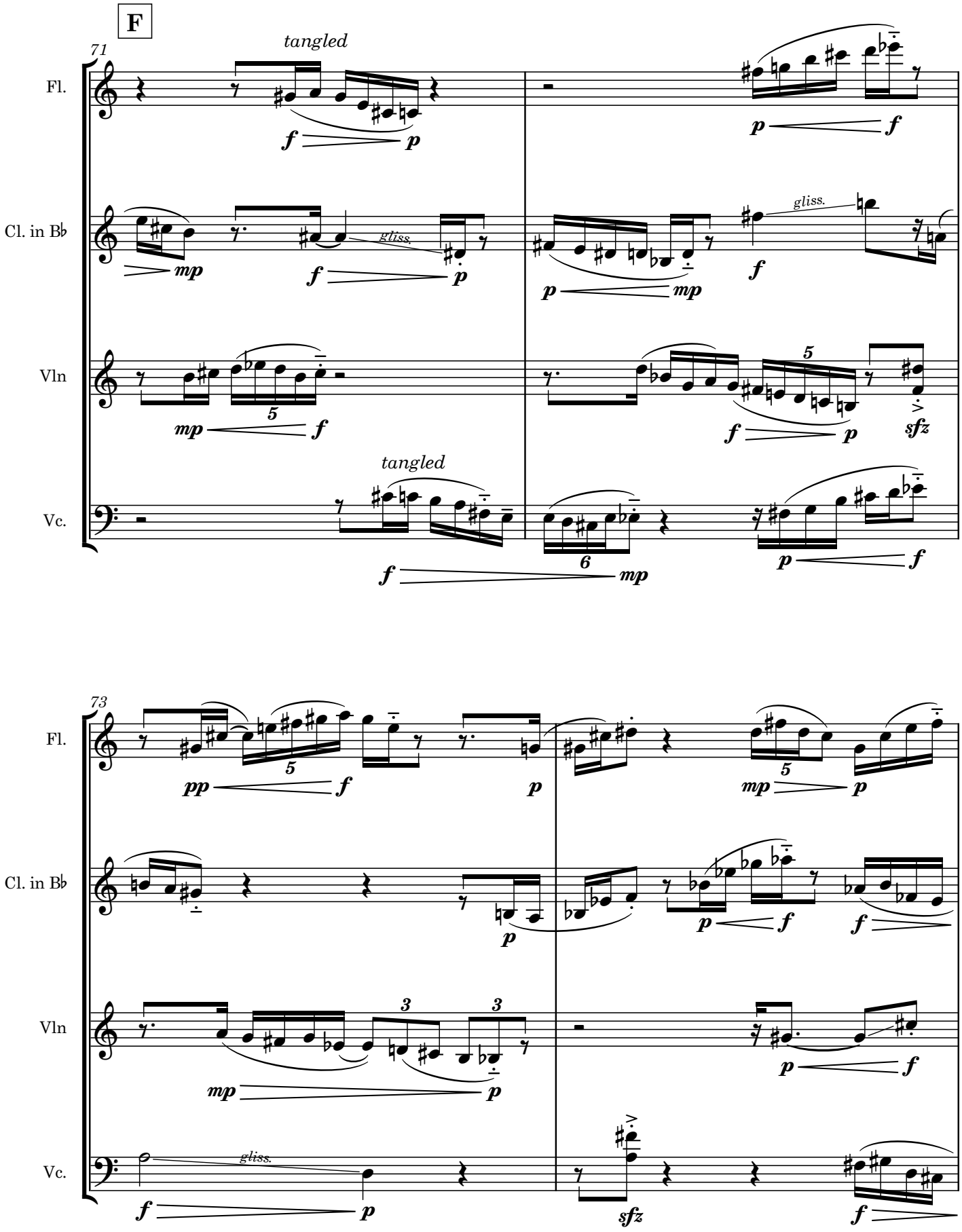

50
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
decaying
decaying
sul pont.
sul pont.

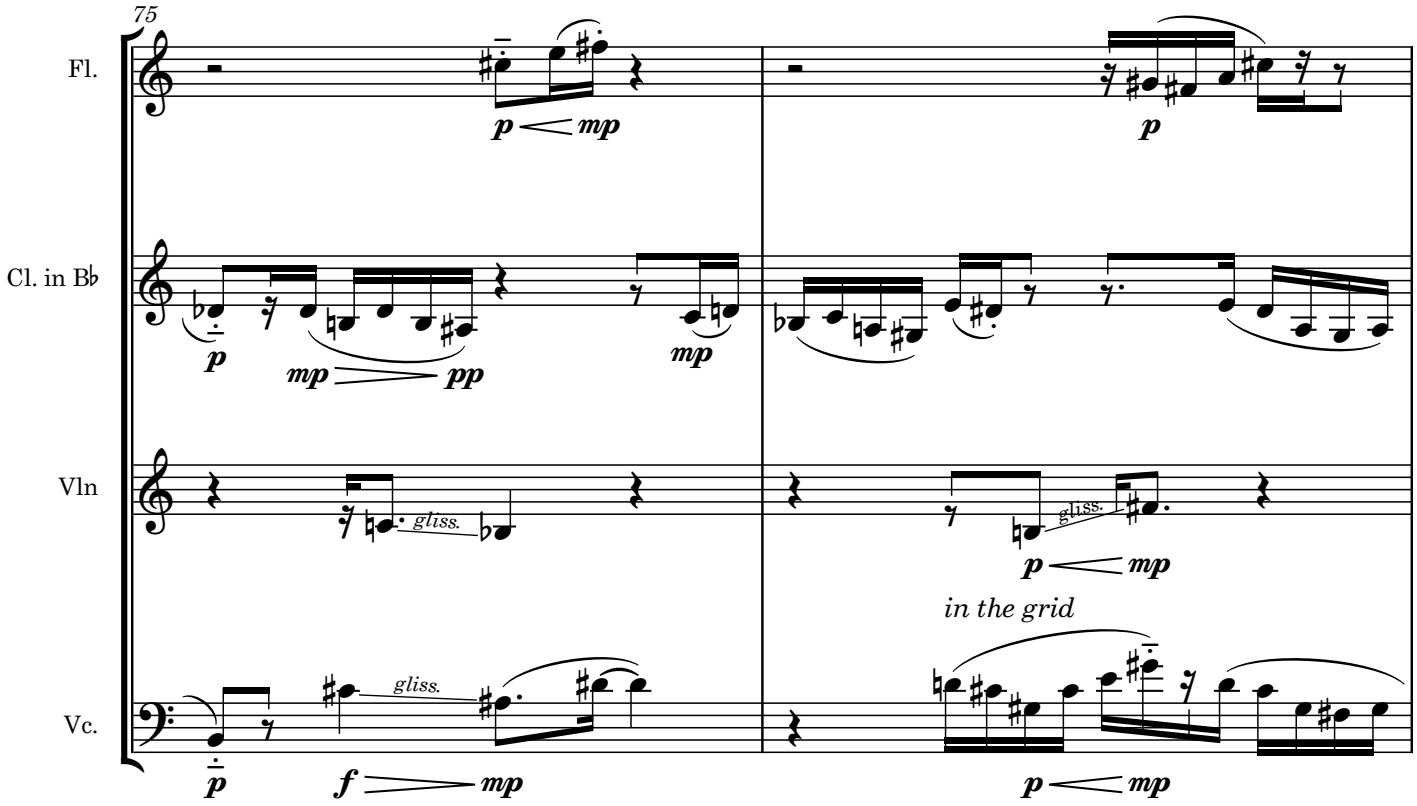

rit.
52
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
decaying
(sul pont.)
col legno battuto
(sul pont.)
col legno battuto

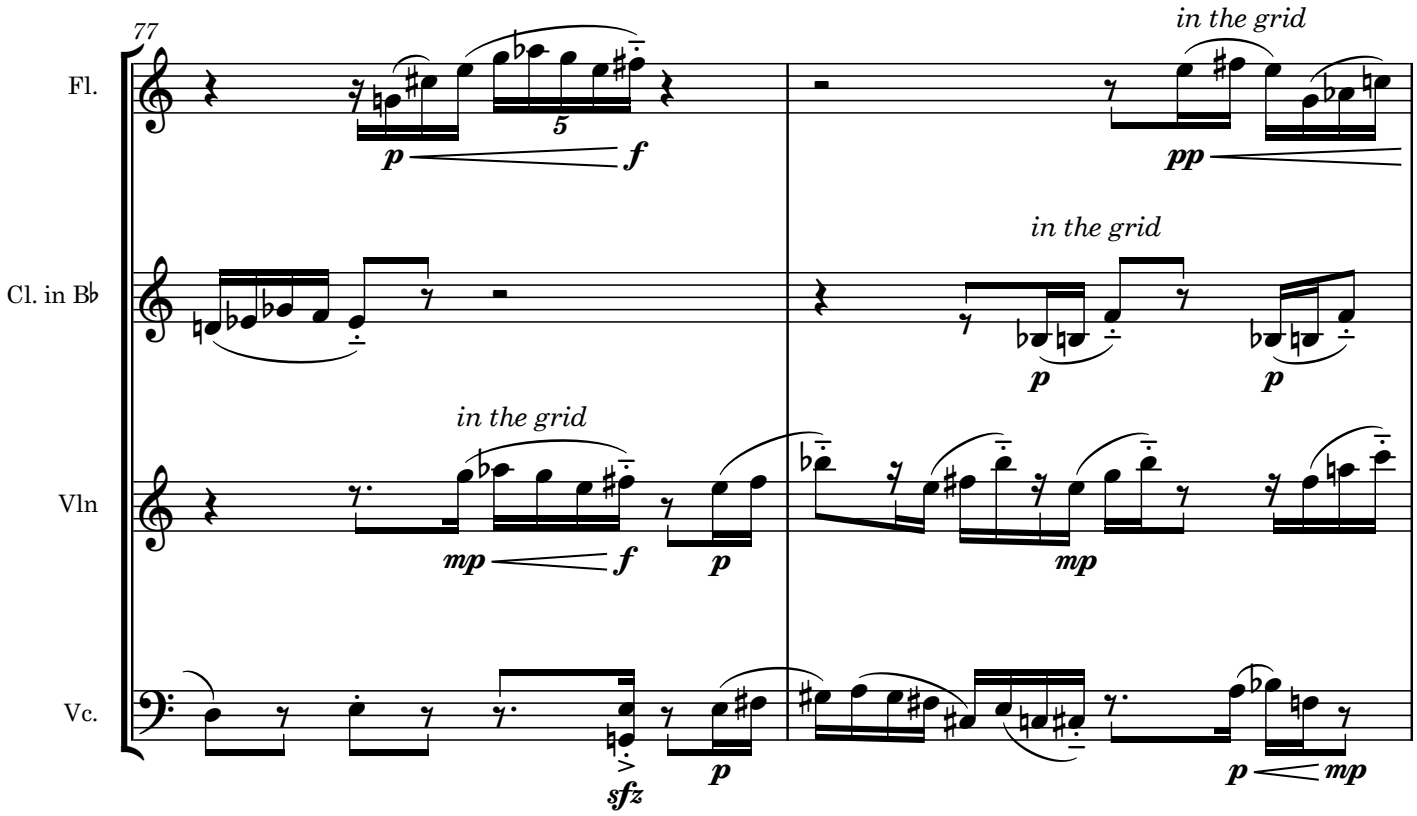

55
♩ = 90
Fl.
air
hah
pp
Cl. in B♭
air
hah
pp
pp
Vln
pizz.
sul tasto
ppp
bow tailpiece w/ inconsistent pitch, noisy
Vc.
pp

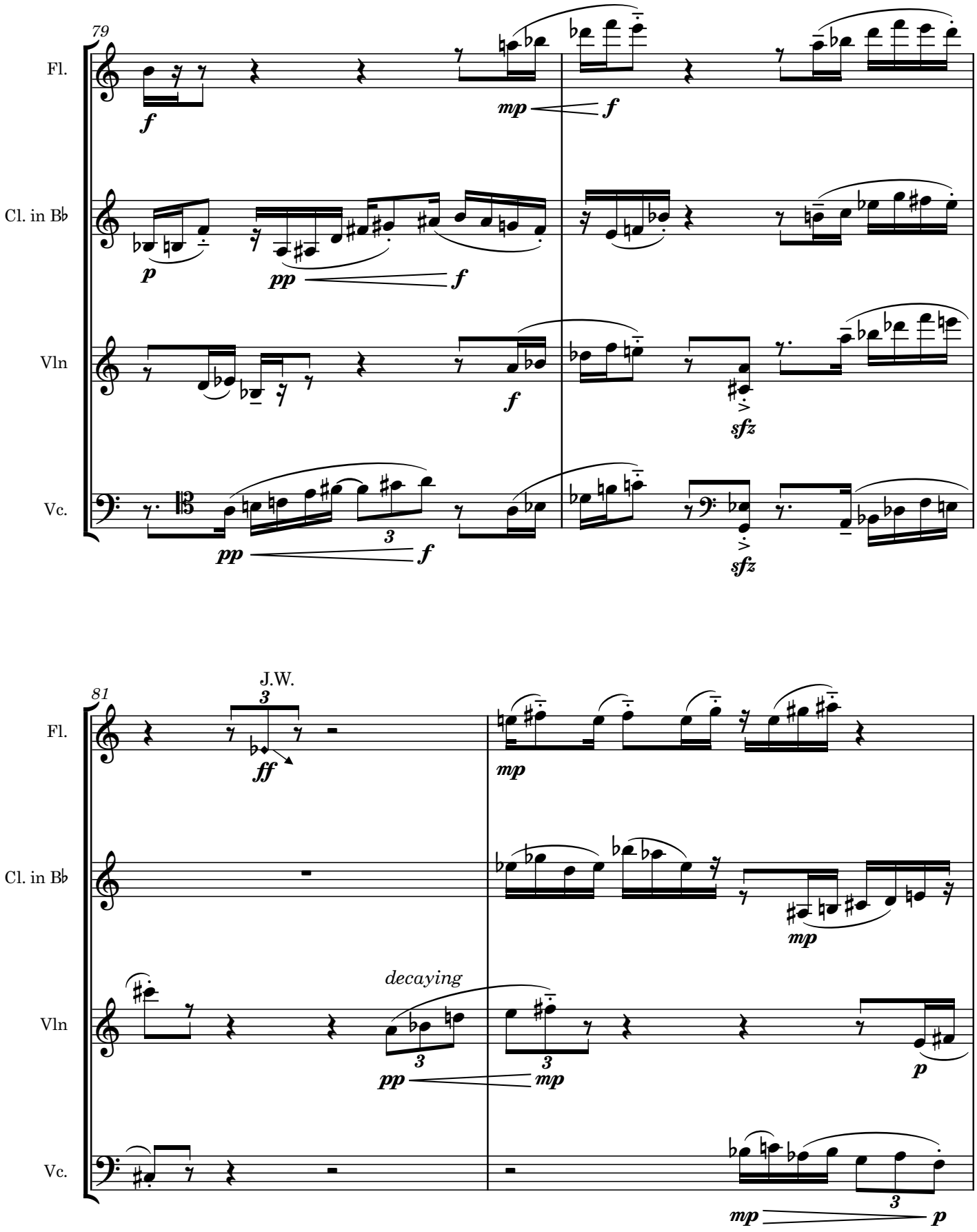

E a tempo
59
Fl.
tr
ffp
ff
Cl. in B♭
tr
ffp
ff
p
ord.
Vln
gliss.
3
ff
p
f
ord.
Vc.
tr
gliss.
ffp
ff

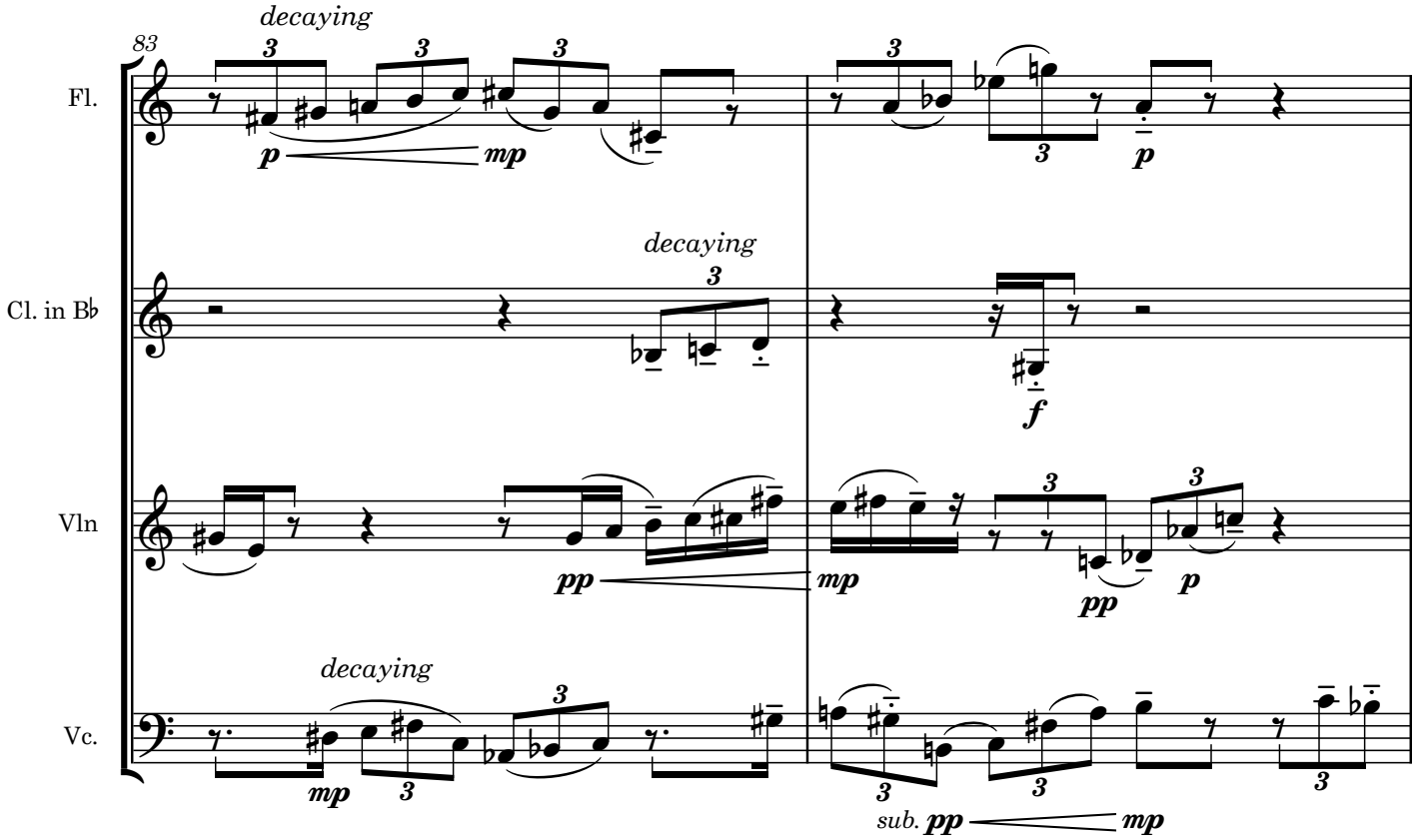

64
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
pizz.
ord.
68
pitch bend
tangled
tangled
gliss.

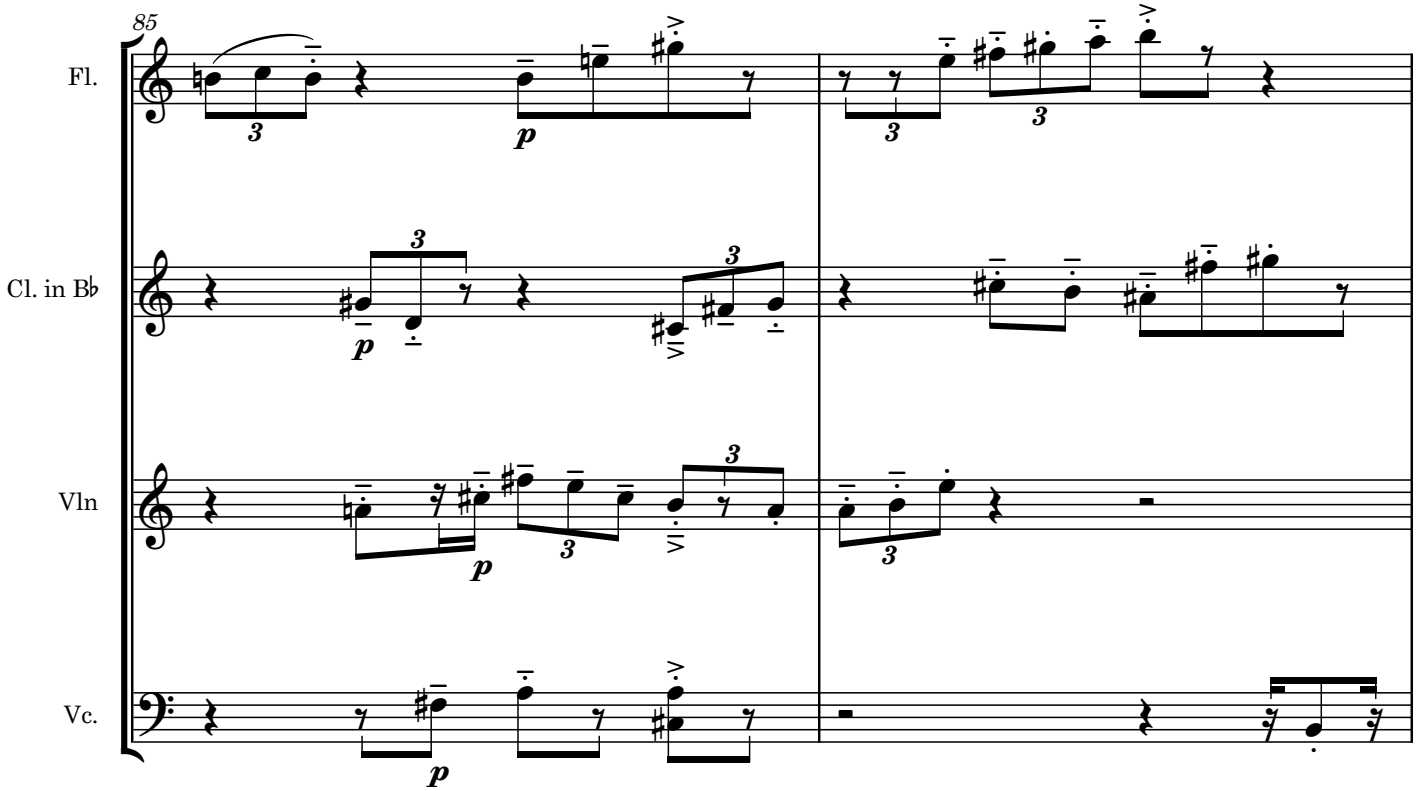

F
71
tangled
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
gliss.
tangled
73
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
gliss.

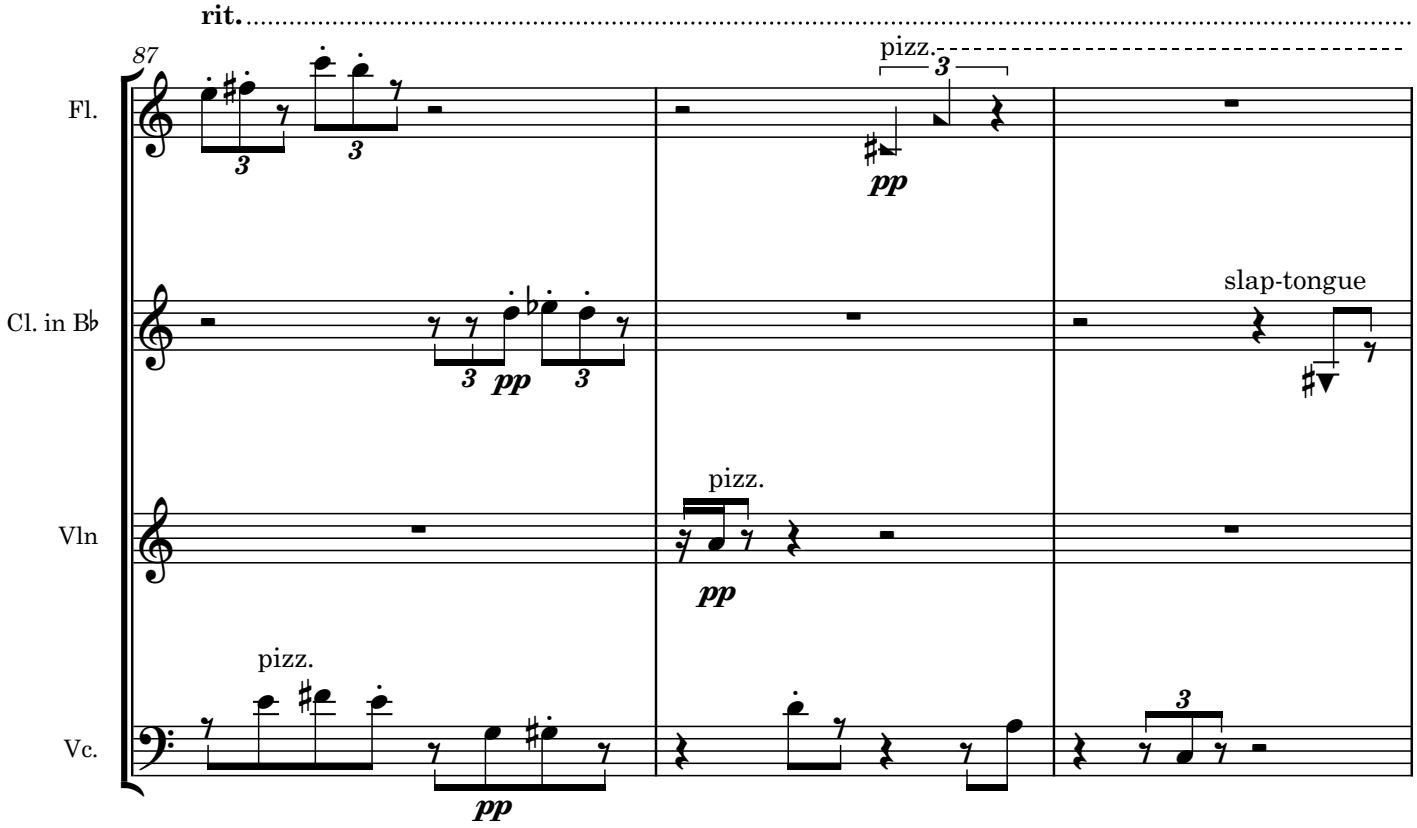

75
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
gliss.
in the grid

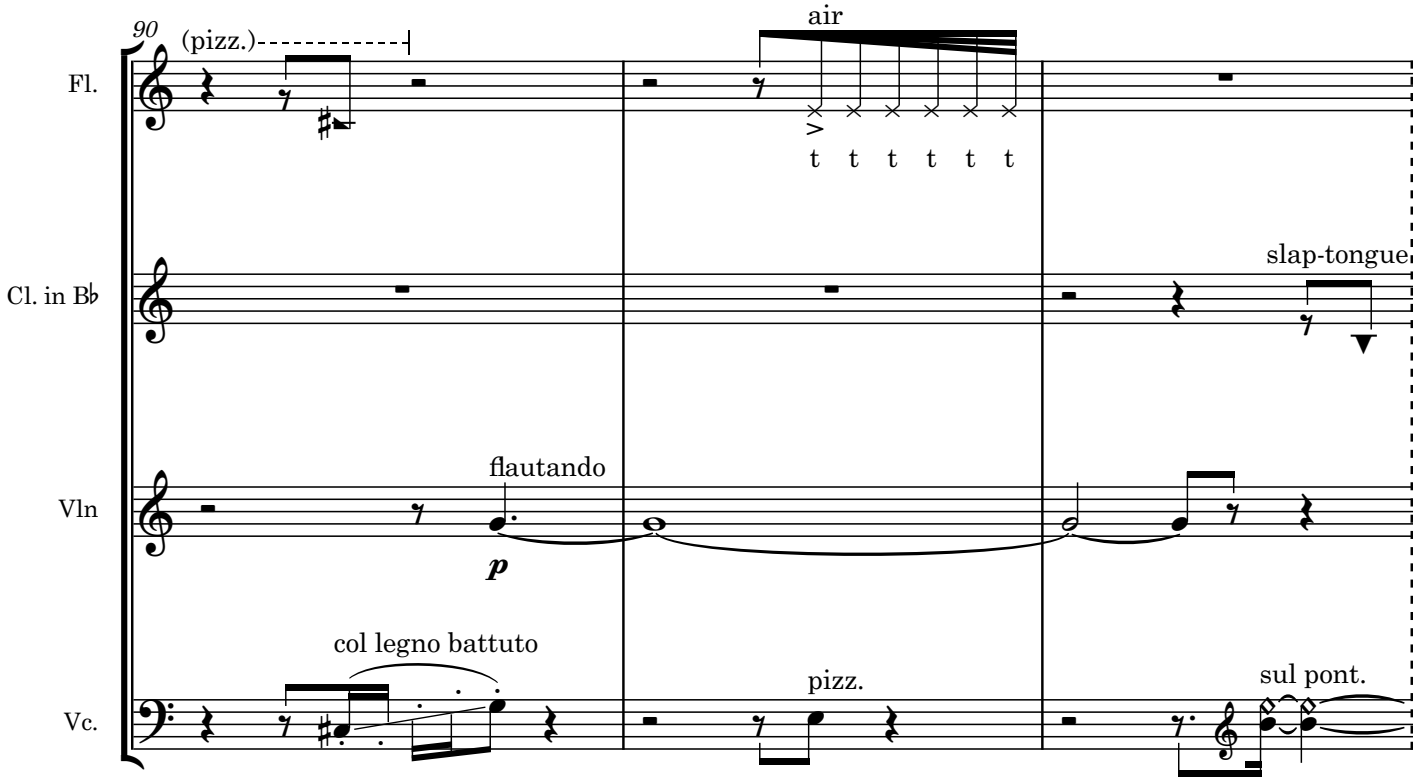

77
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
in the grid
5

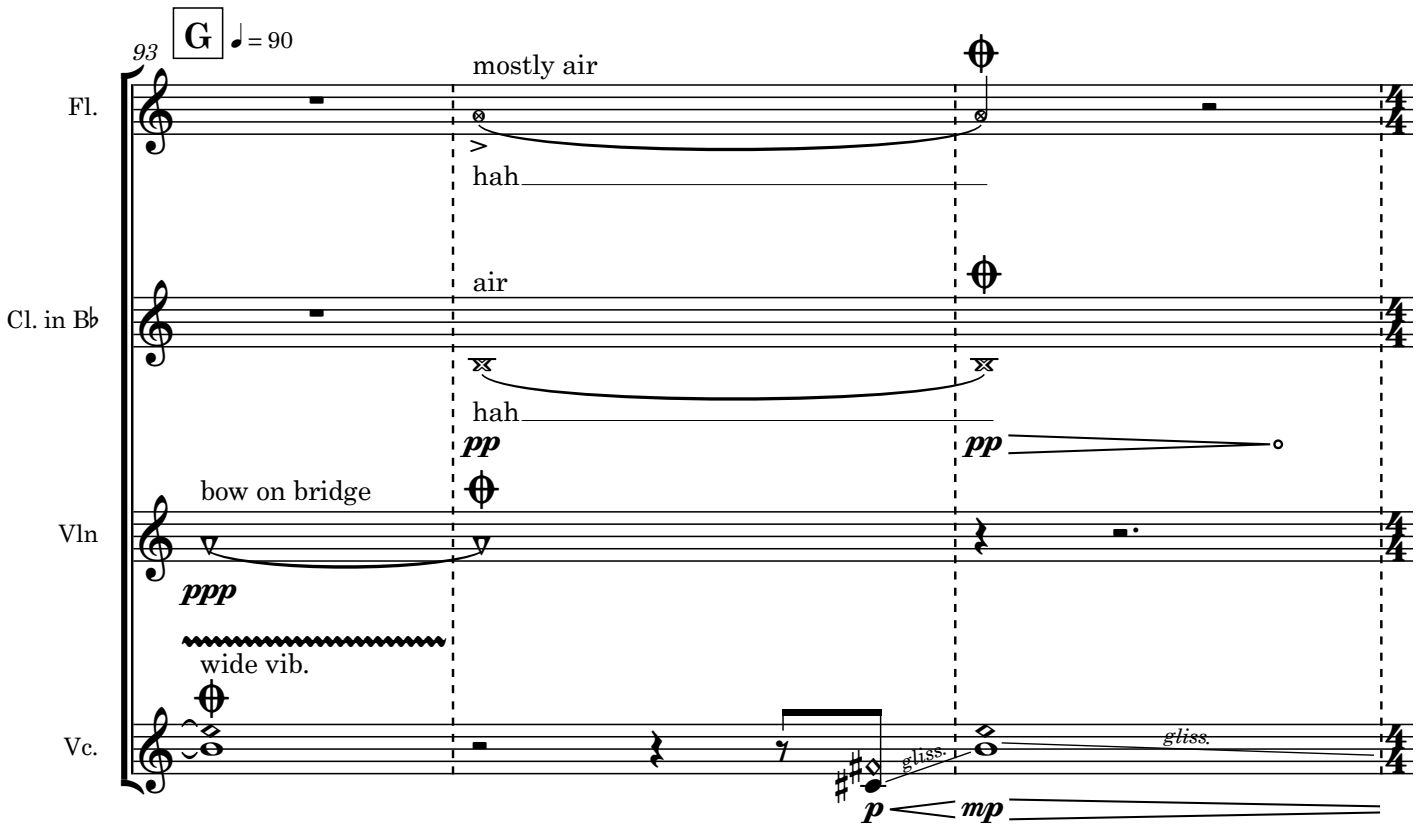

79
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
f
mp
f
p
pp
f
f
sfz
pp
3
f
sfz
81
J.W.
3
ff
mp
mp
decaying
pp
3
3
mp
p
mp
3
p

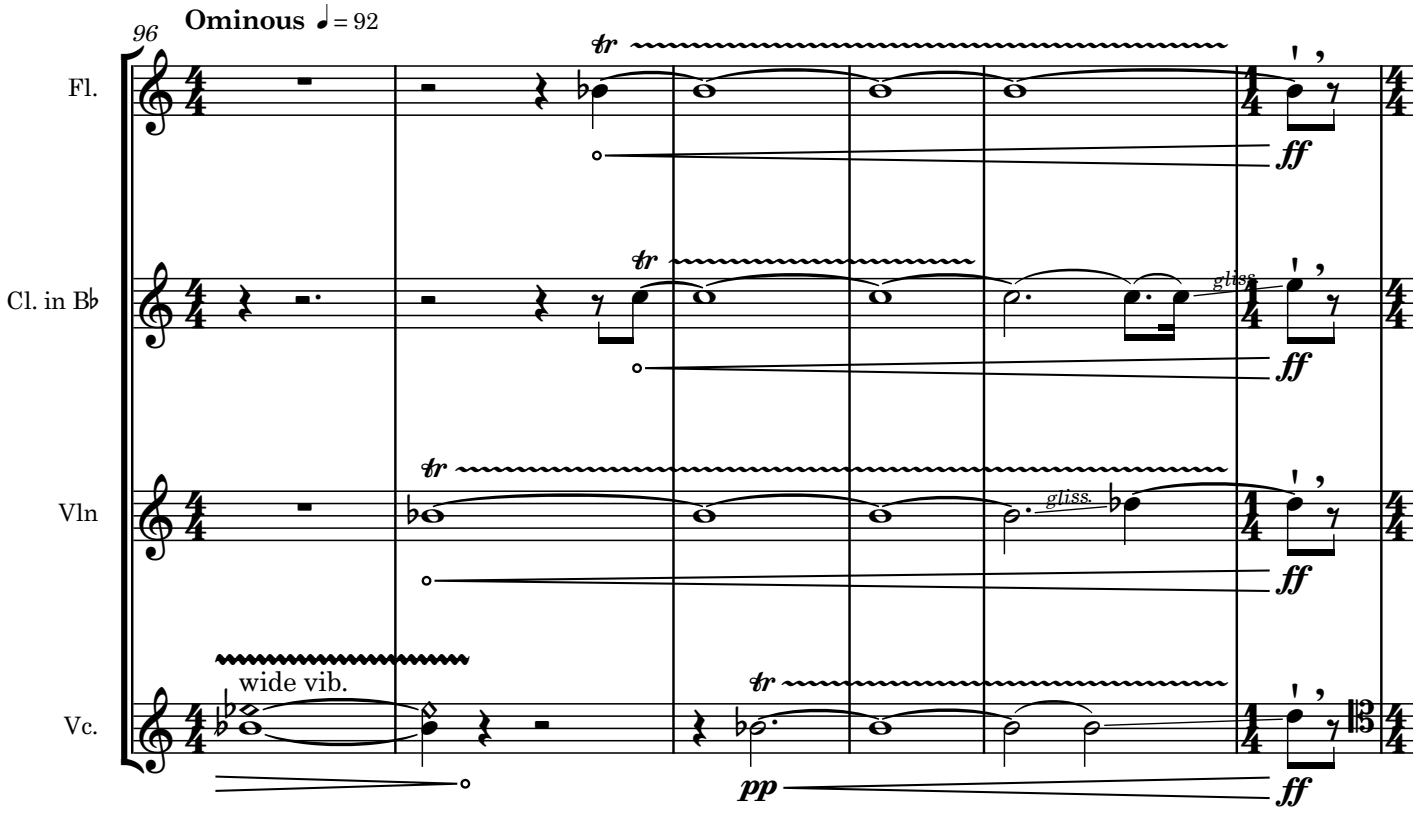

83
decaying
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
p
mp
decaying
f
pp
mp
pp
p
decaying
mp
sub. pp
mp

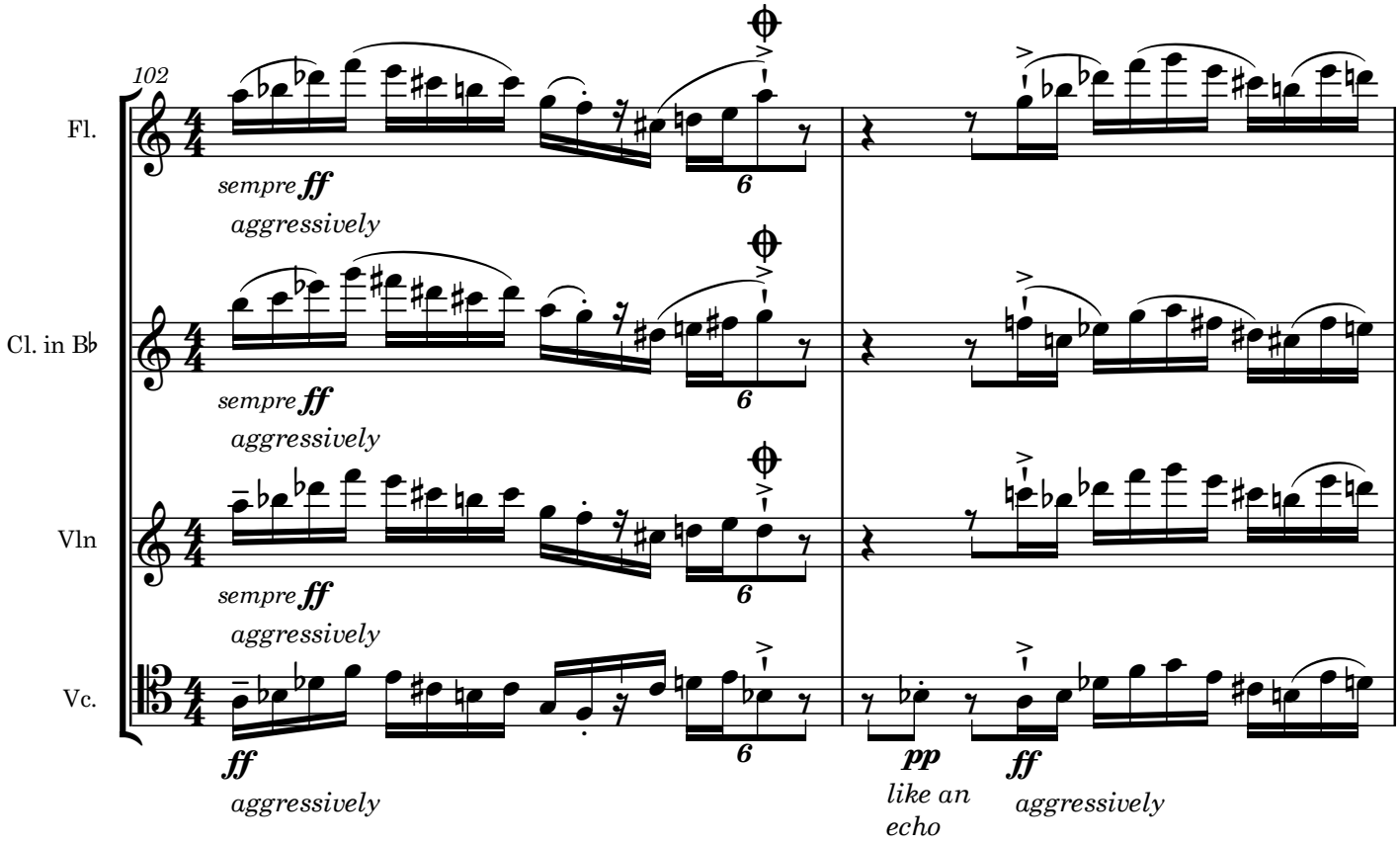

85
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
p
p
p
p

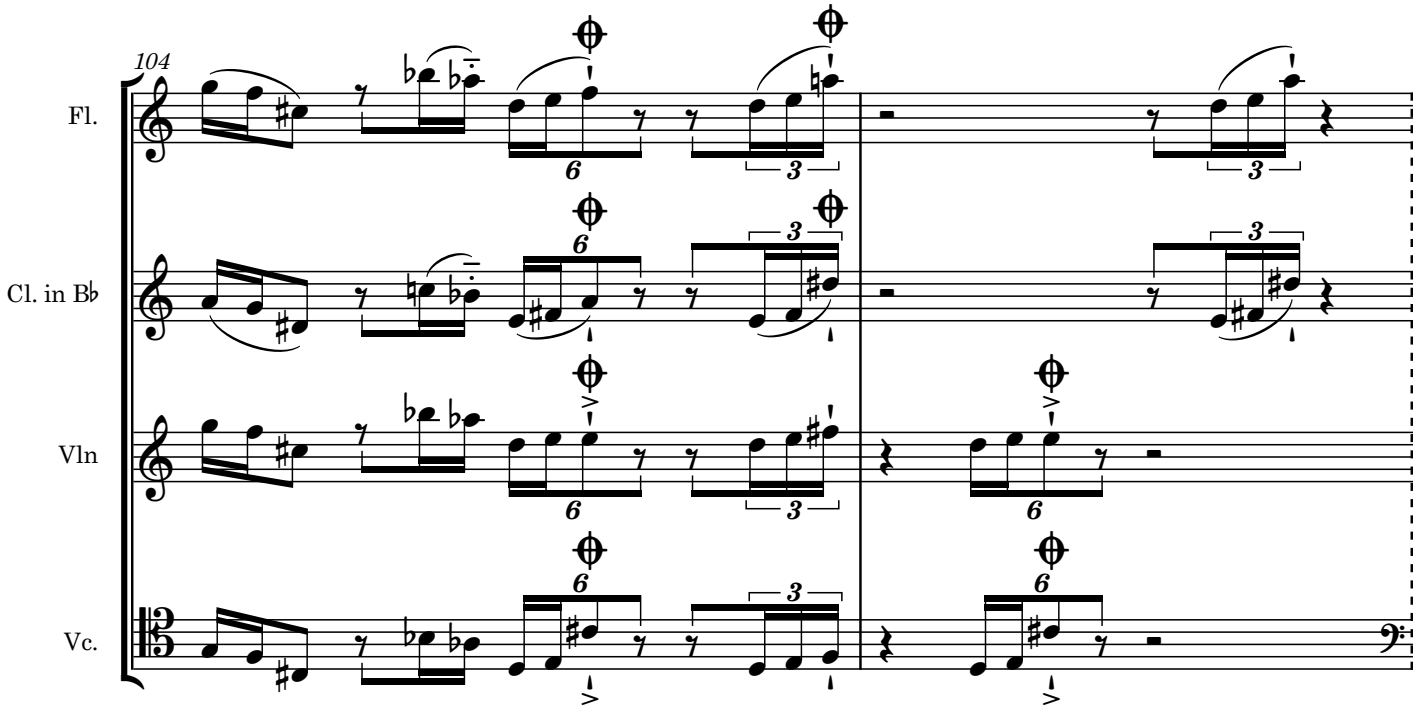

rit.
87
Fl.
pizz.
pp
Cl. in B♭
slap-tongue
Vln
pizz.
pp
Vc.
pizz.
pp


90
Fl.
(pizz.)
air
t t t t t t
Cl. in B♭
slap-tongue
Vln
flautando
p
Vc.
col legno battuto
pizz.
sul pont.


93
G
♩ = 90
Fl.
mostly air
hah
Cl. in B♭
air
hah
pp
pp
Vln
bow on bridge
ppp
wide vib.
Vc.
gliss.
gliss.
p
mp


96
Ominous ♩ = 92
Fl.
tr
ff
Cl. in B♭
tr
gliss.
ff
Vln
tr
gliss.
ff
wide vib.
Vc.
tr
pp
ff


102
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
sempre ff
aggressively
6
pp
like an
echo

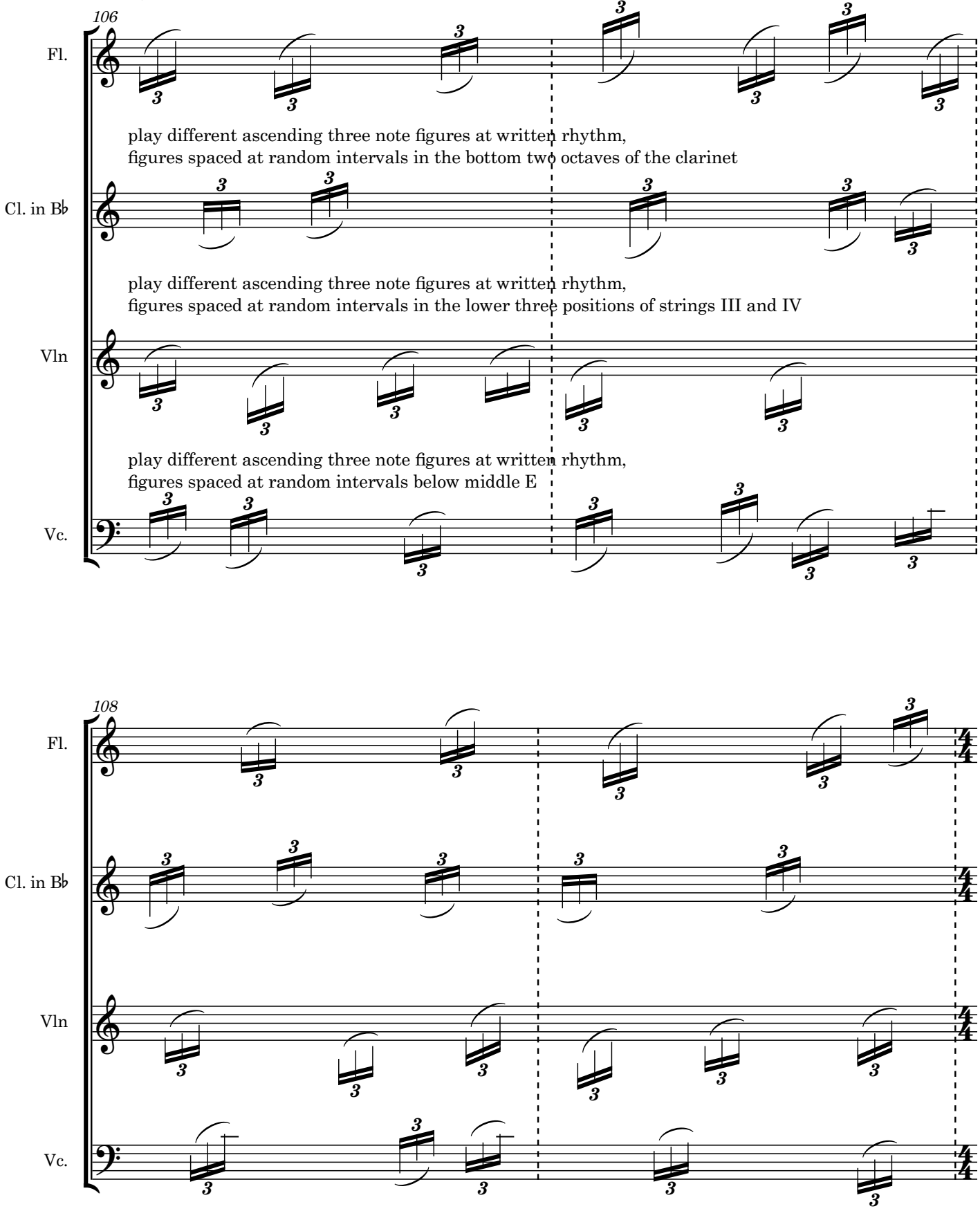

104
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
6
3

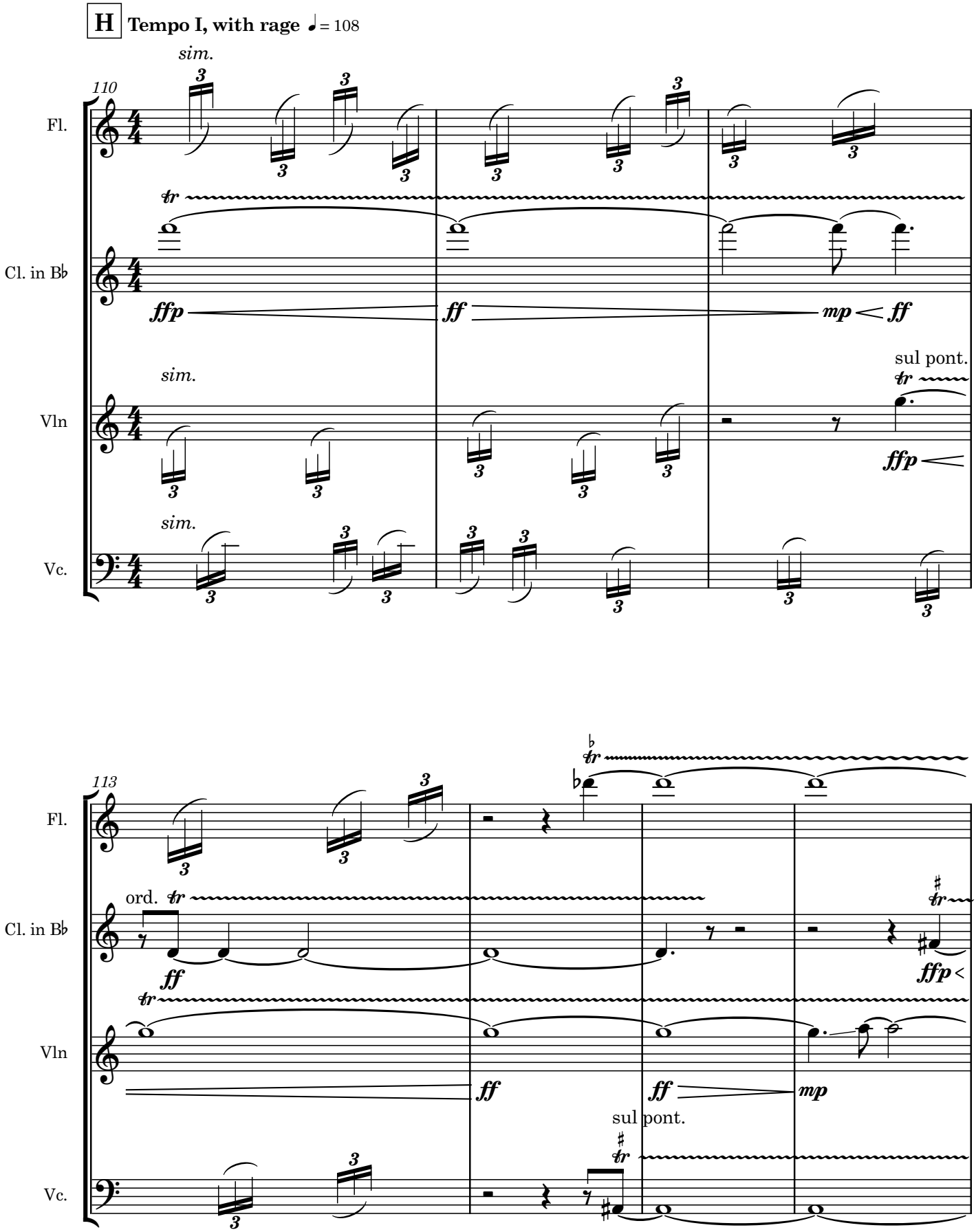
play fast ascending three note figures at written rhythm,
figures spaced at random intervals in the bottom two octaves of the flute

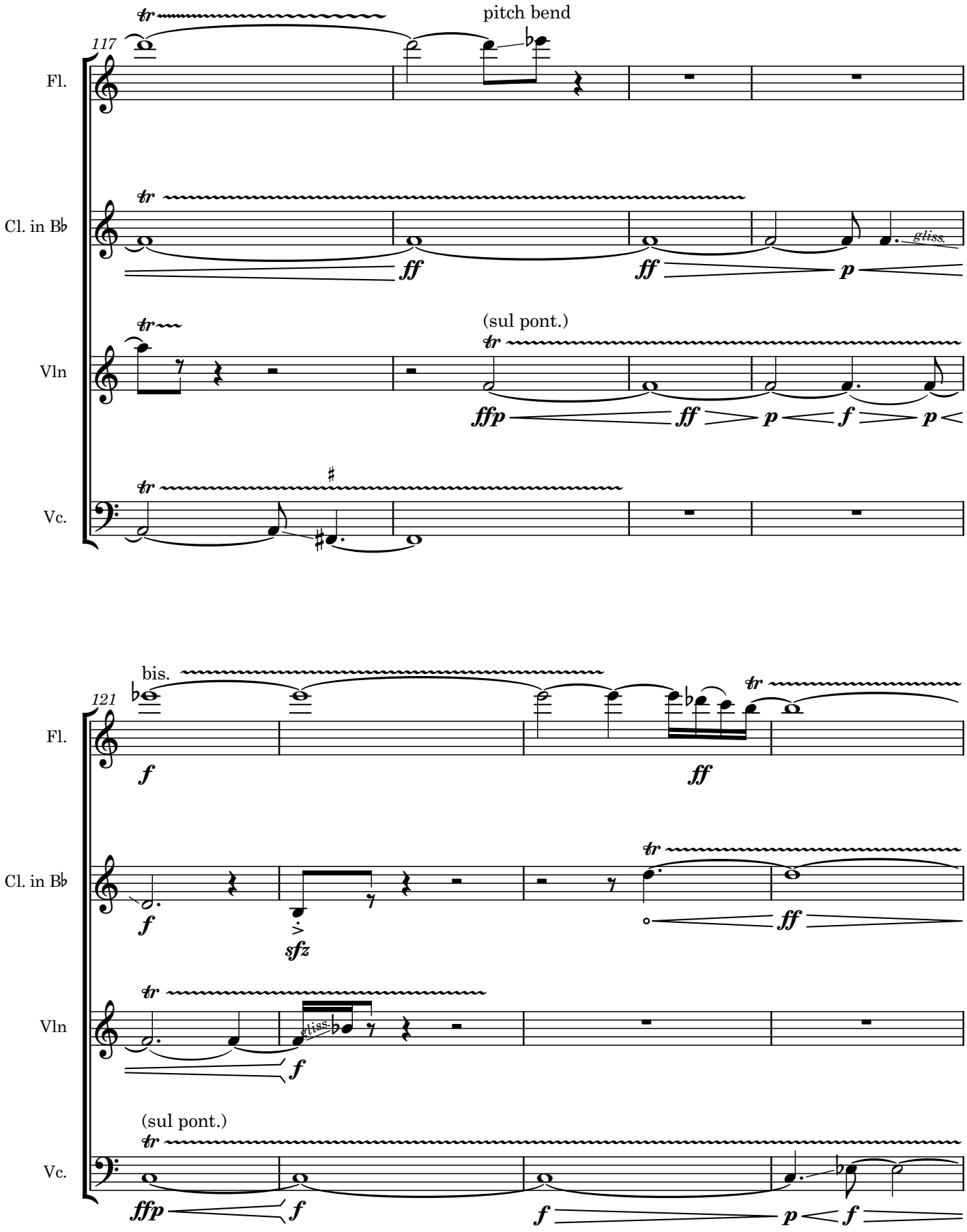
play different ascending three note figures at written rhythm,
figures spaced at random intervals in the bottom two octaves of the clarinet

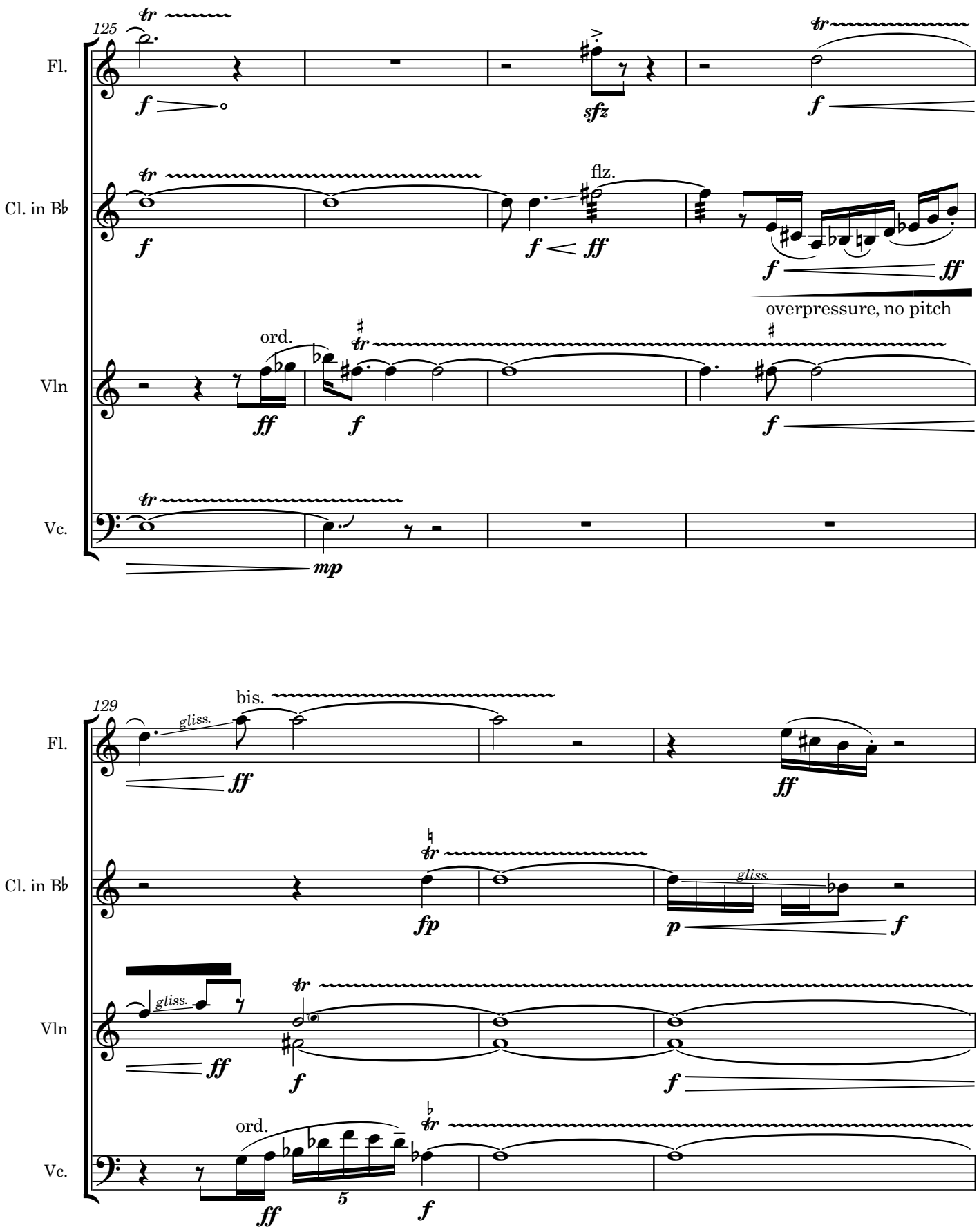
play different ascending three note figures at written rhythm,
figures spaced at random intervals in the lower three positions of strings III and IV

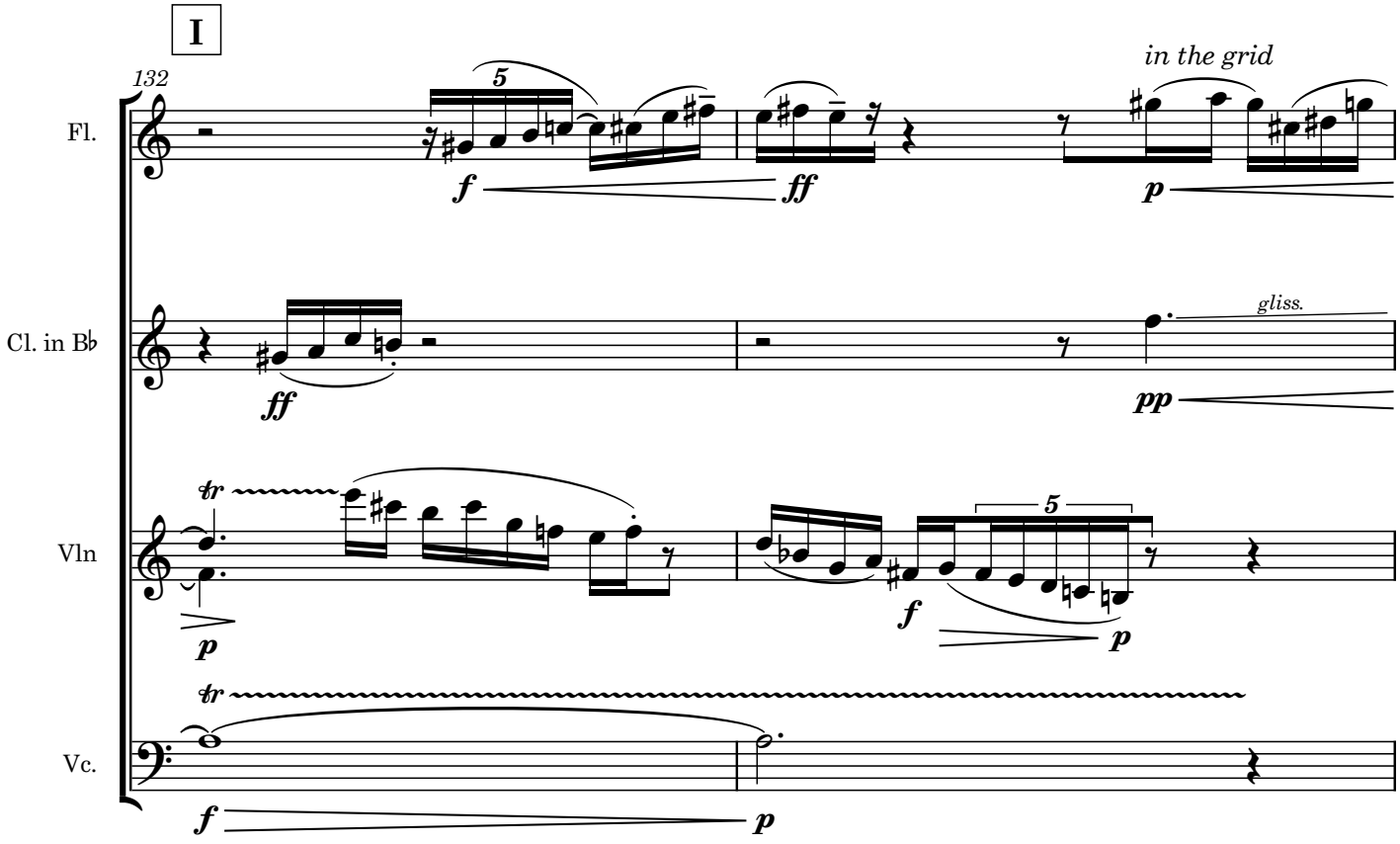
play different ascending three note figures at written rhythm,
figures spaced at random intervals below middle E

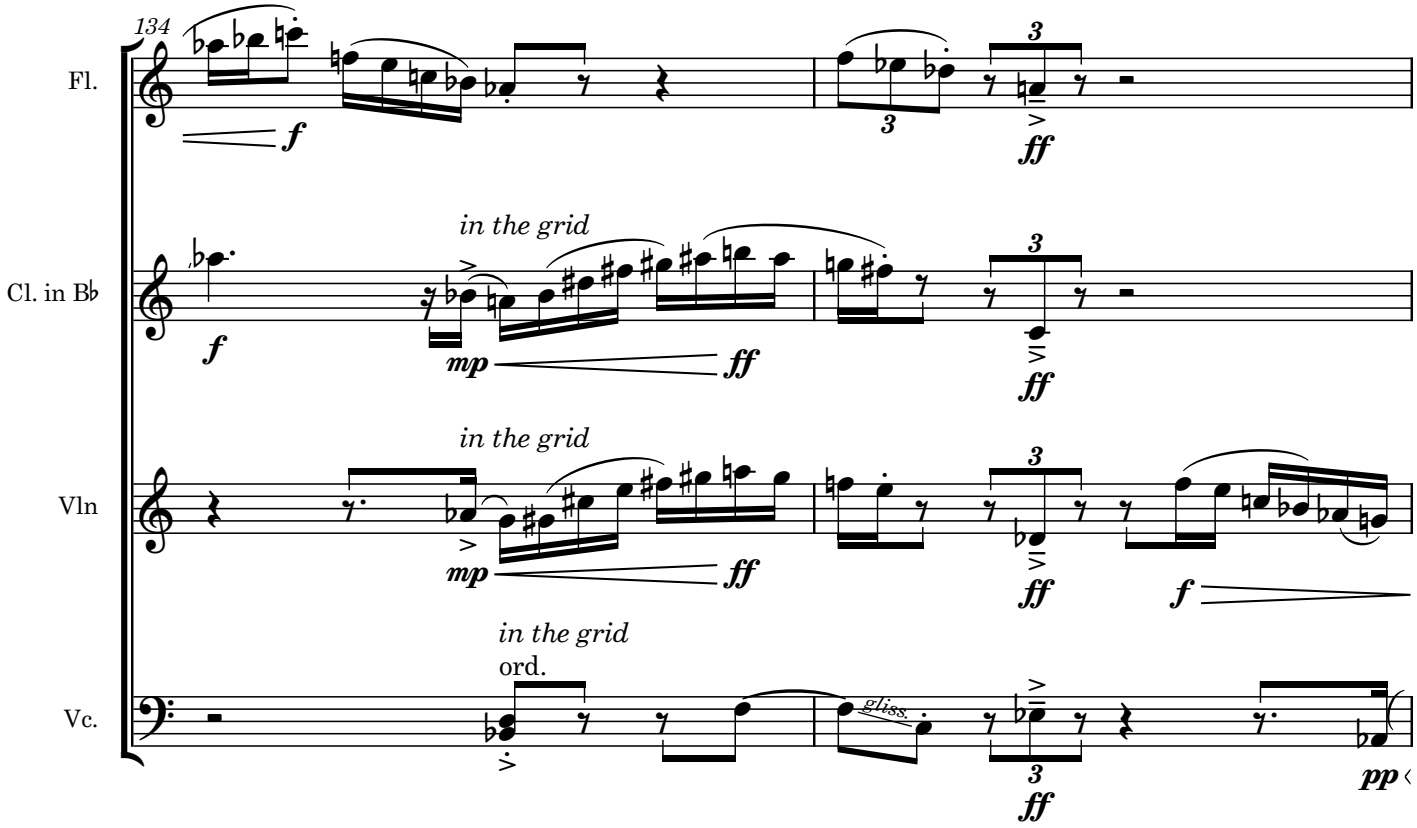


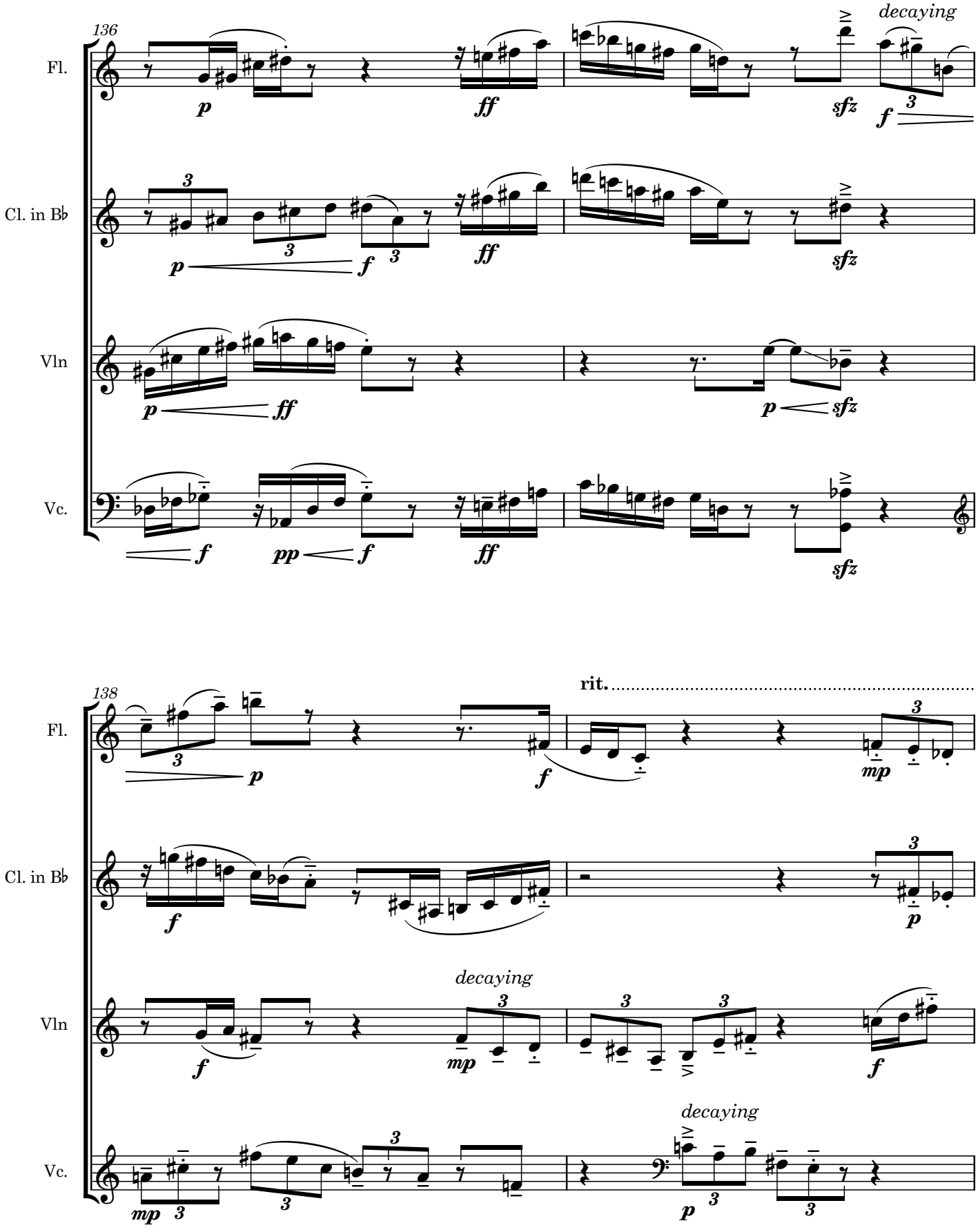

H
Tempo I, with rage ♩= 108
110
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
sim.
ffp
ff
mp
sul pont.
113
ord.
sul pont.

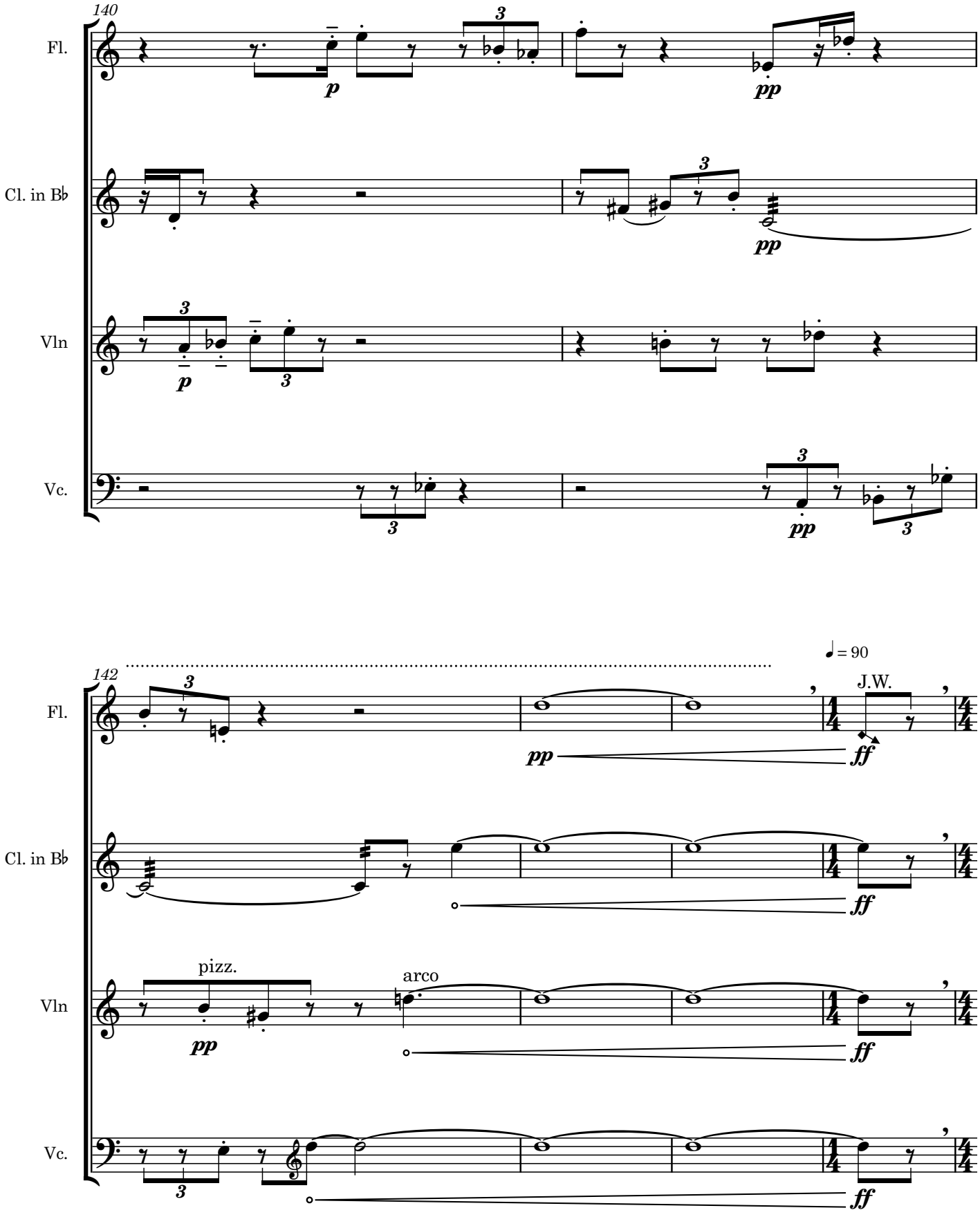

117
pitch bend
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
gliss.
Vln
(sul pont.)
Vc.
121
bis.
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
gliss.
(sul pont.)
Vc.

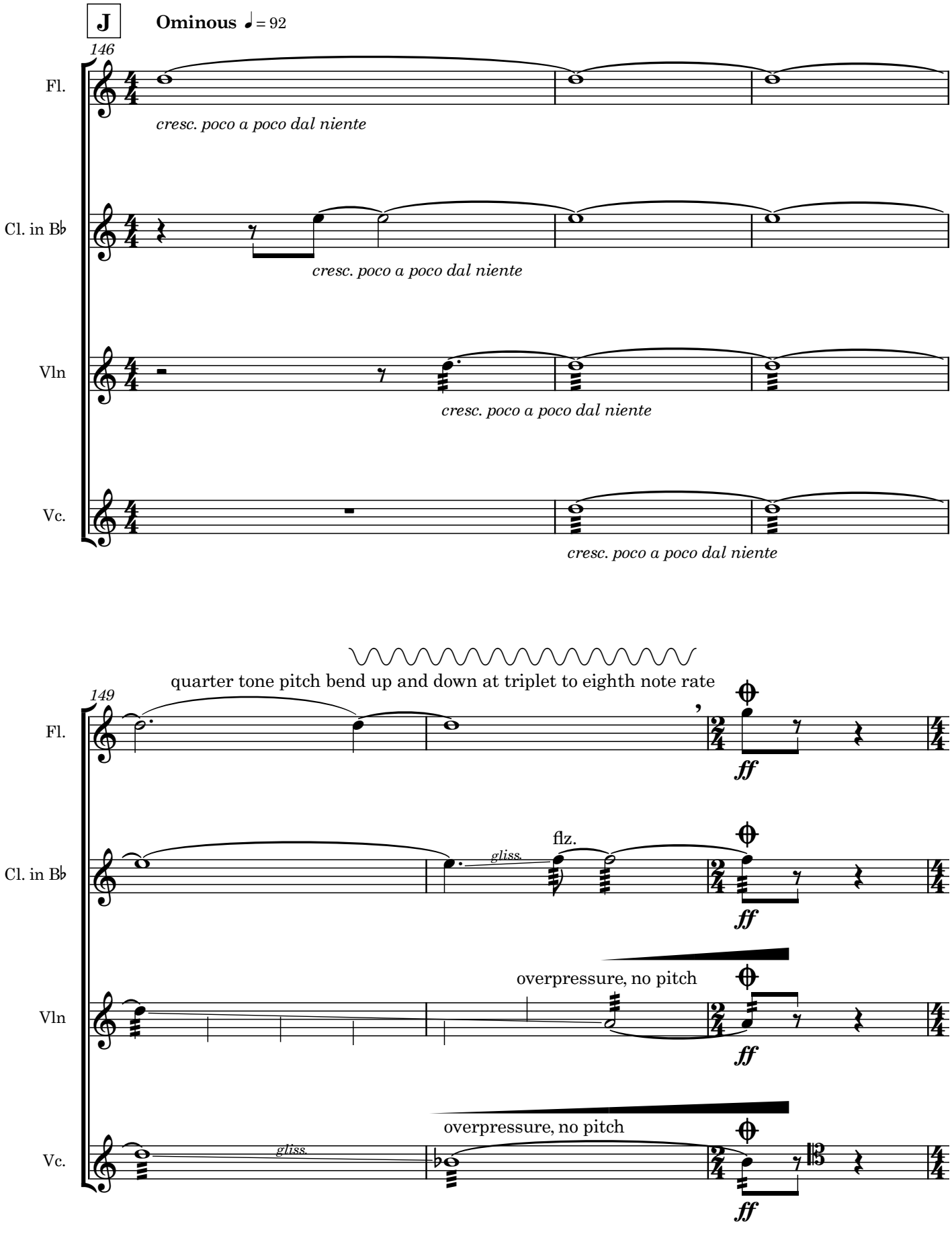

125
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
flz.
overpressure, no pitch
ord.
129
bis.
gliss.
ord.
5

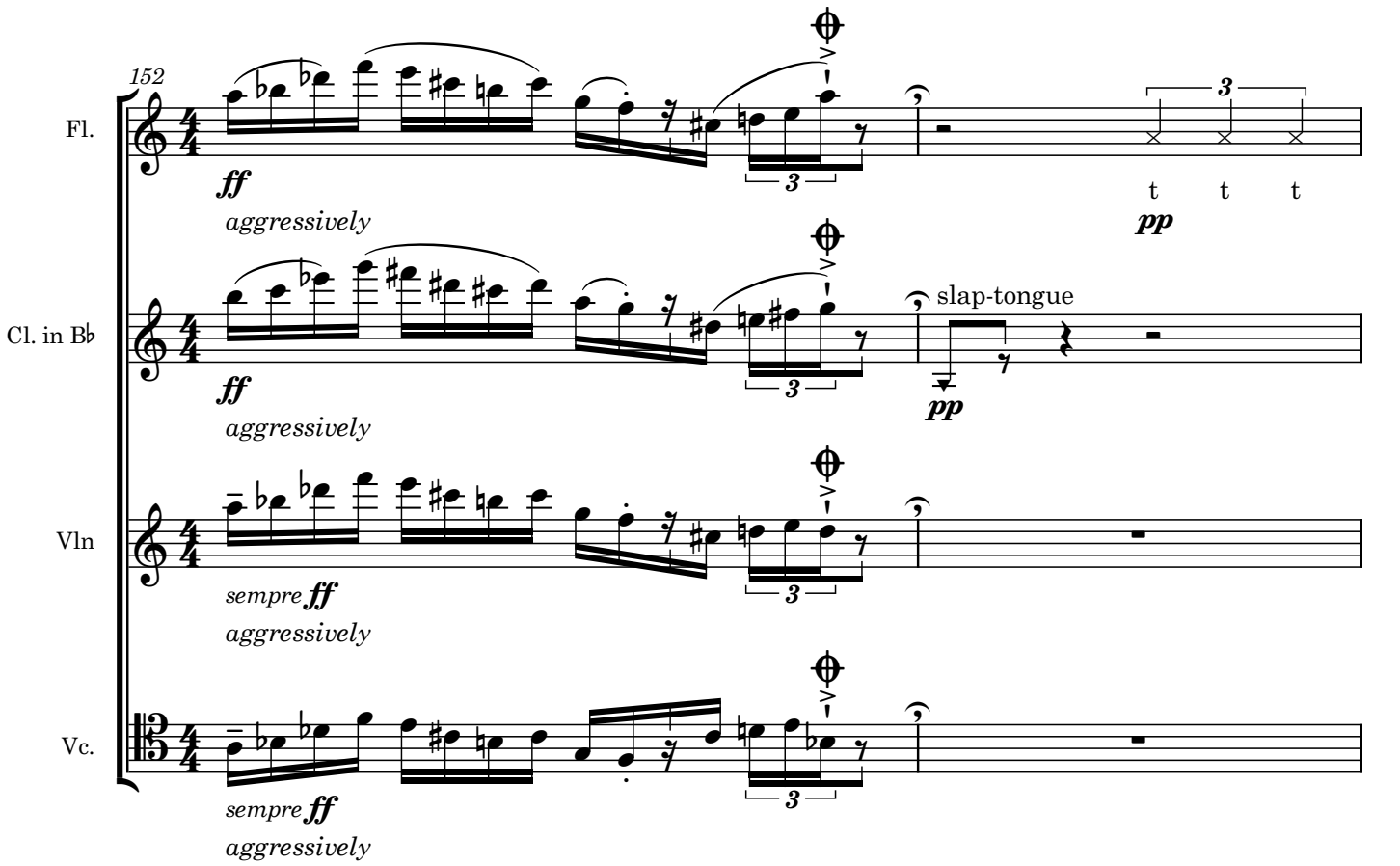

I
132
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
in the grid
gliss.
tr
f
ff
p
pp
mp
5

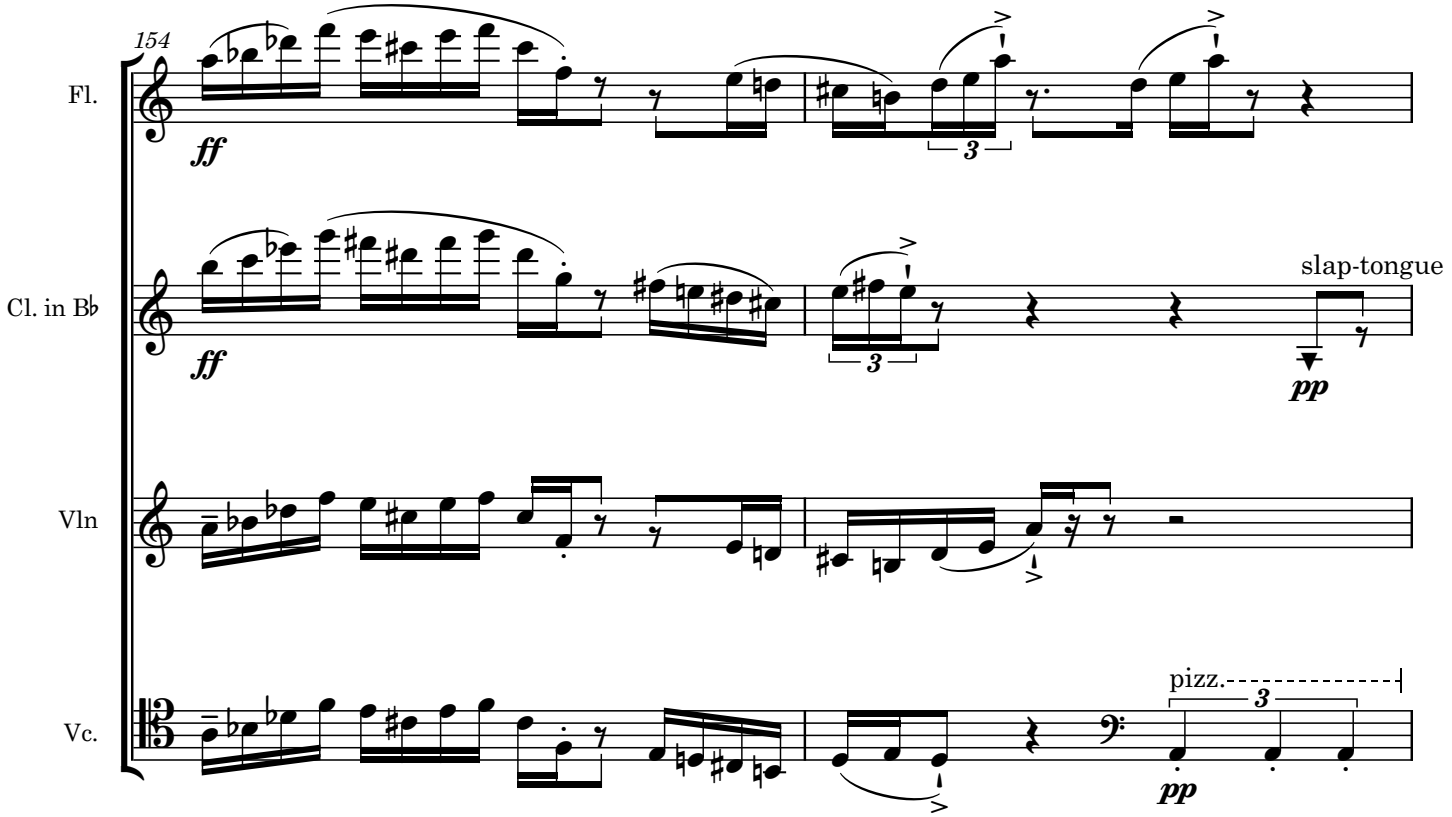

134
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
in the grid
ord.
gliss.
3
f
ff
mp
pp

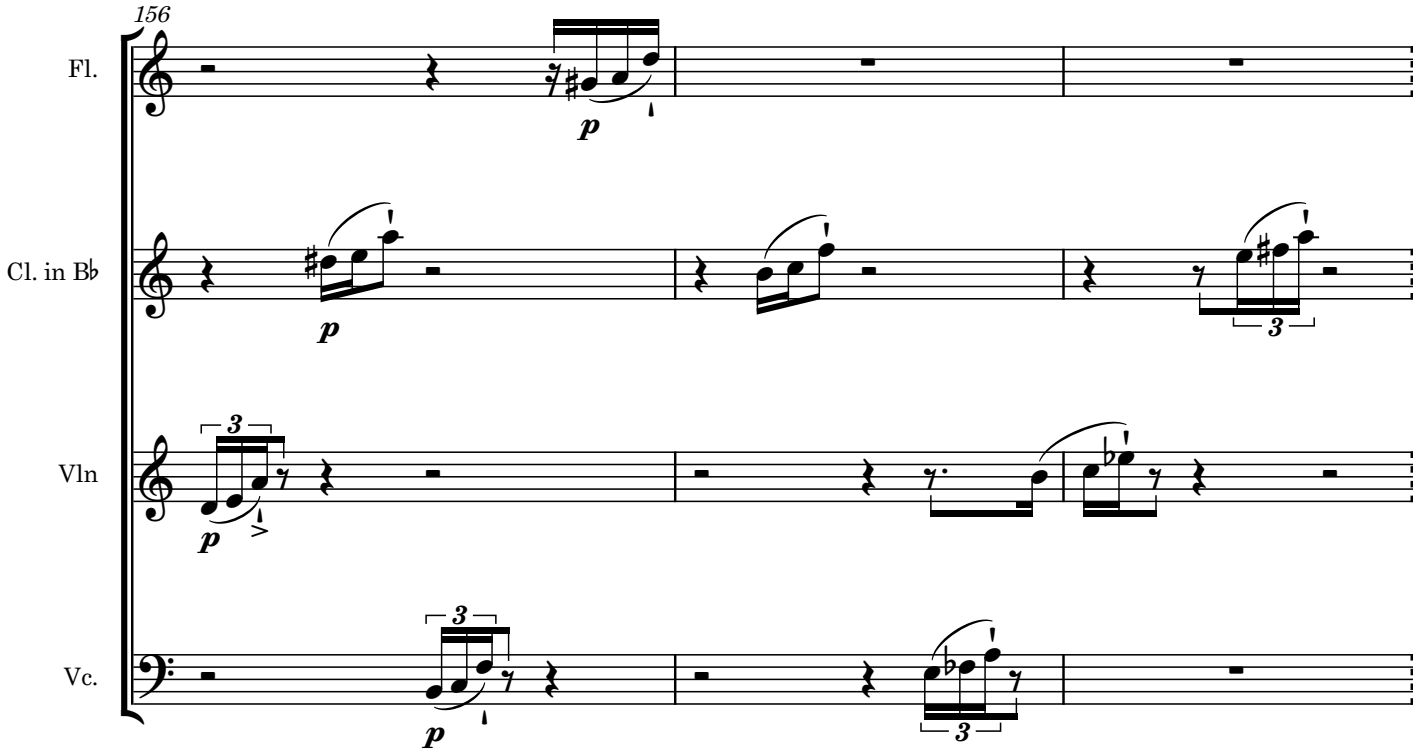

136
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
decaying
138
rit.
decaying
decaying


140
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
p
pp
142
♩ = 90
J.W.
ff
pizz.
arco


J
Ominous ♩= 92
146
Fl.
cresc. poco a poco dal niente
Cl. in B♭
cresc. poco a poco dal niente
Vln
cresc. poco a poco dal niente
Vc.
cresc. poco a poco dal niente
quarter tone pitch bend up and down at triplet to eighth note rate
149
Fl.
ff
Cl. in B♭
gliss.
flz.
ff
Vln
overpressure, no pitch
ff
Vc.
gliss.
overpressure, no pitch
ff

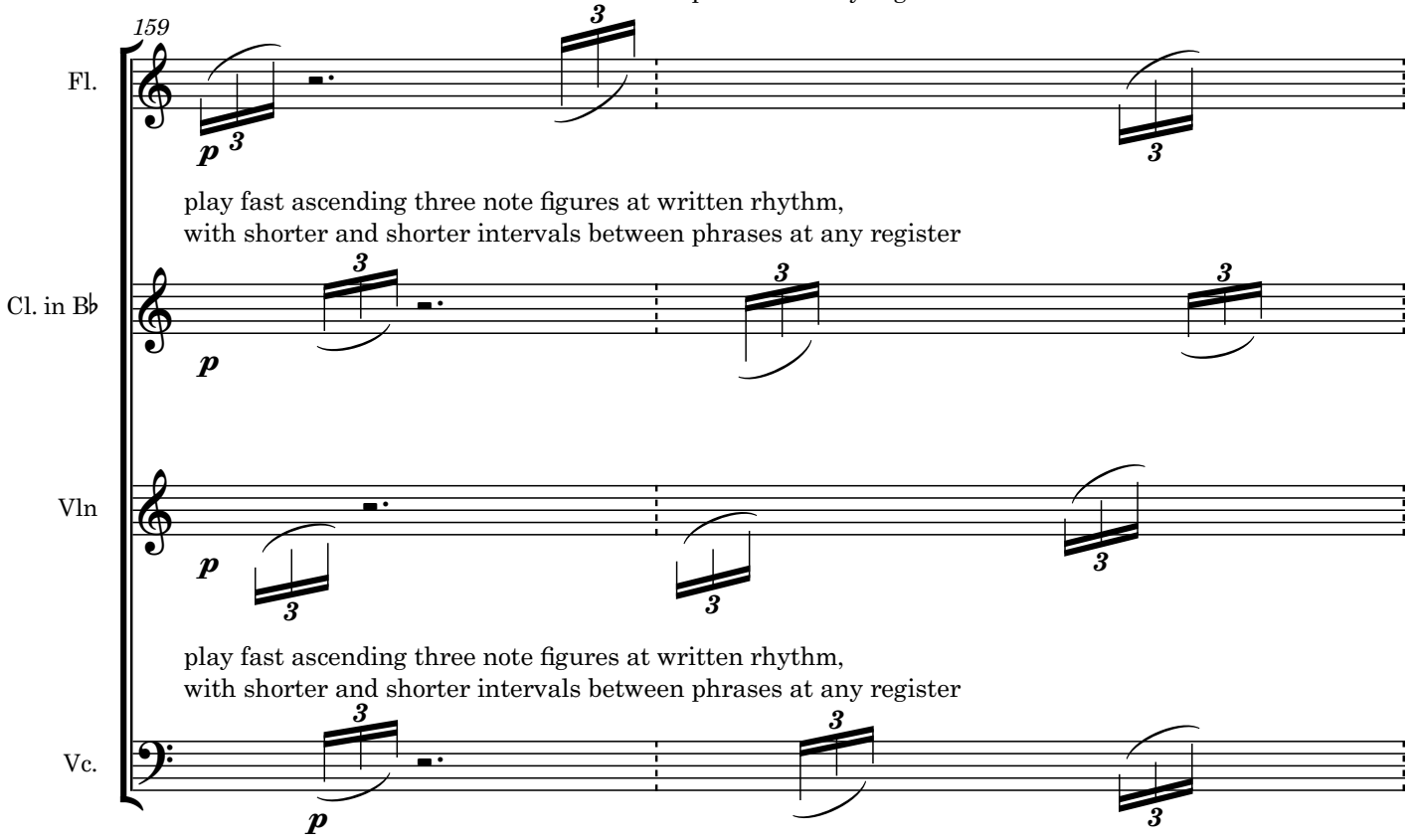

152
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
ff
aggressively
pp
t t t
slap-tongue
sempre ff
aggressively
3

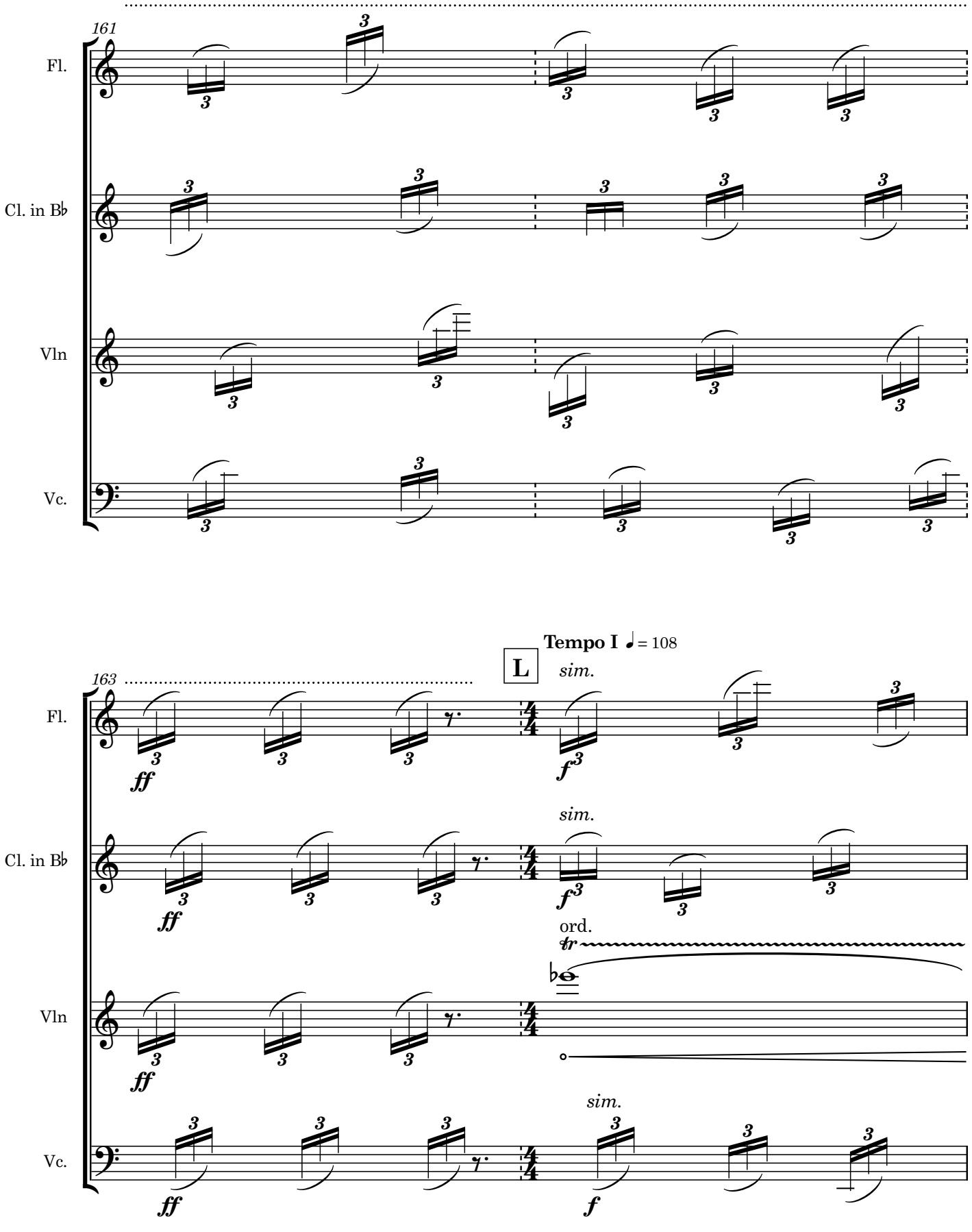

154
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
ff
pp
slap-tongue
pizz.
3

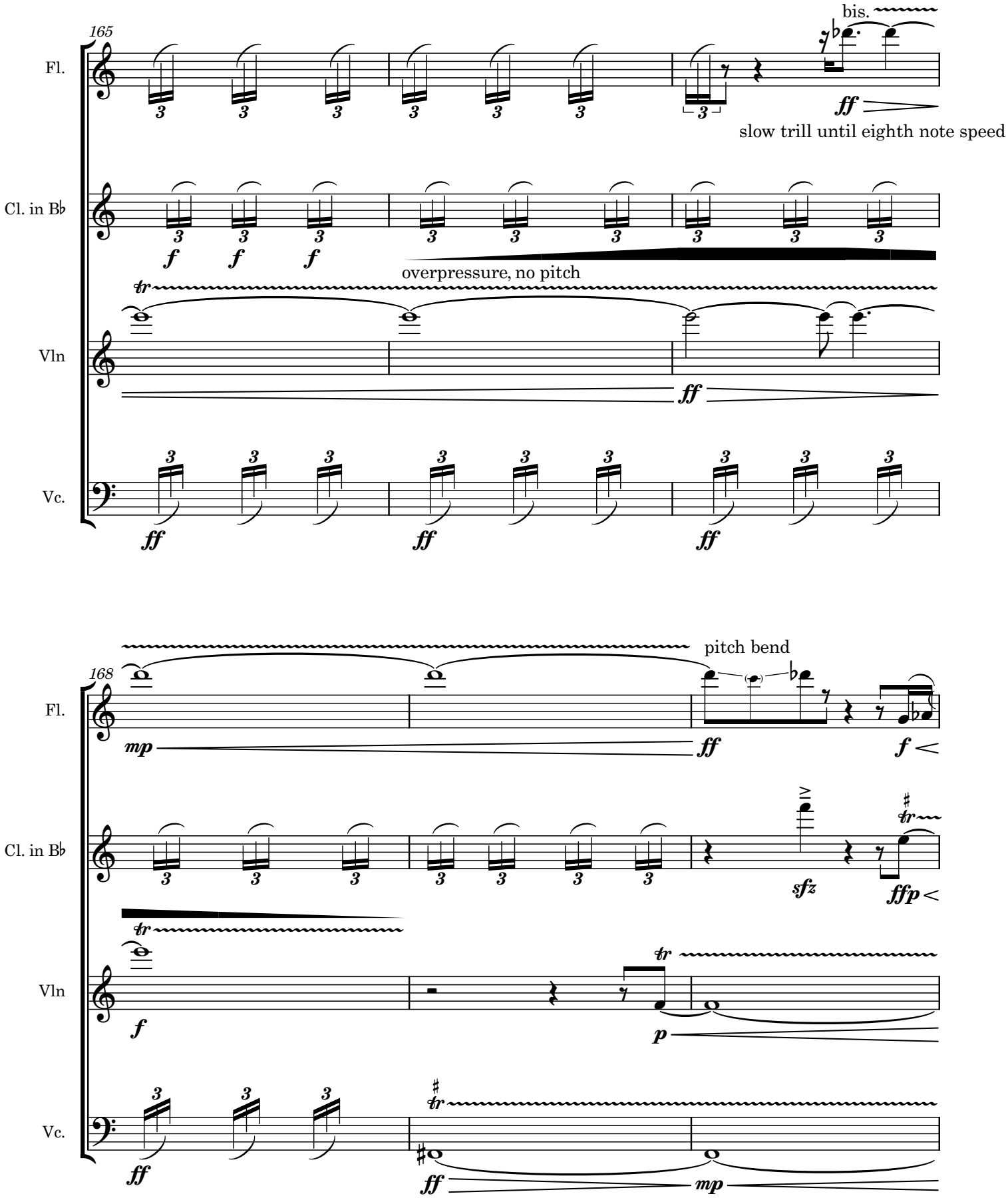


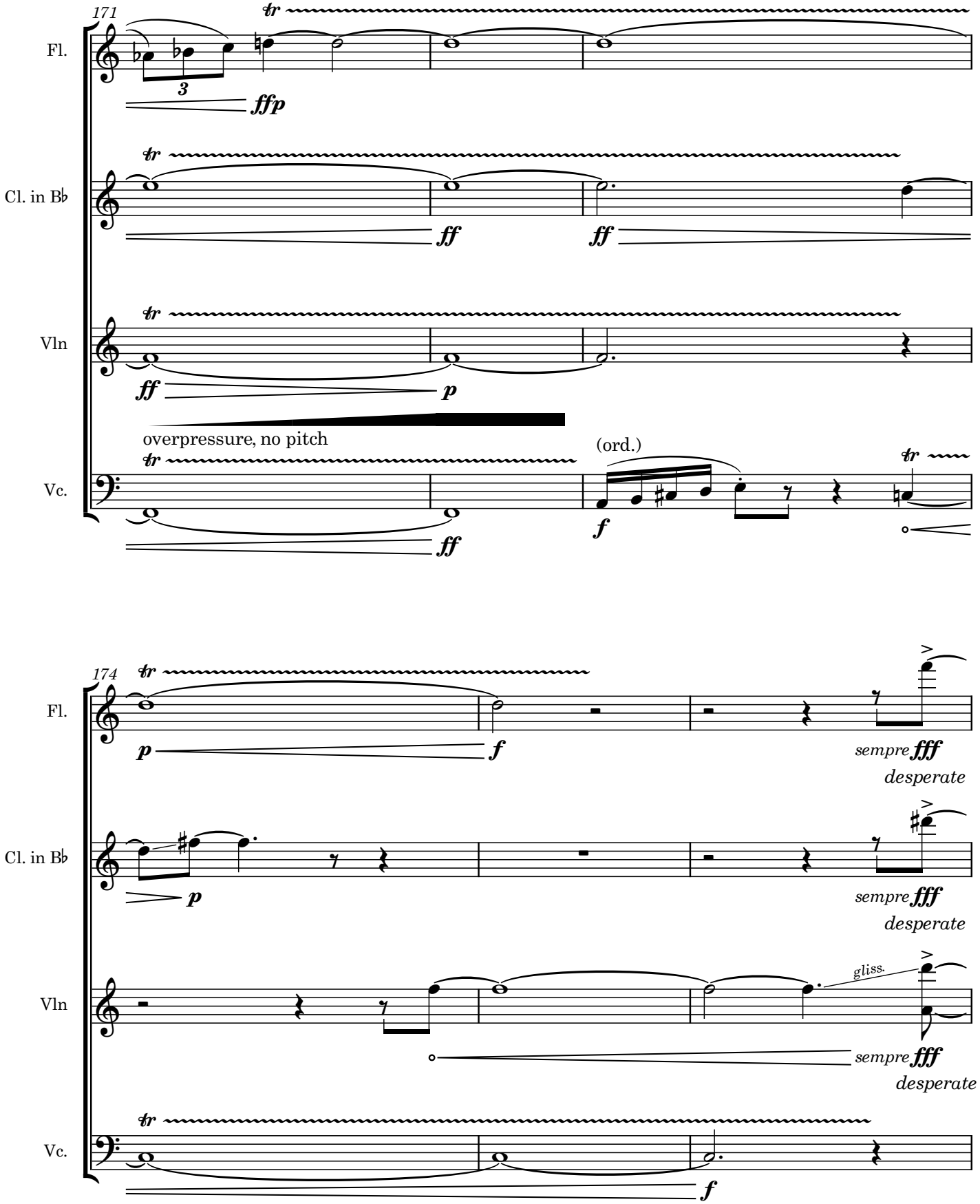
K **poco accel.**

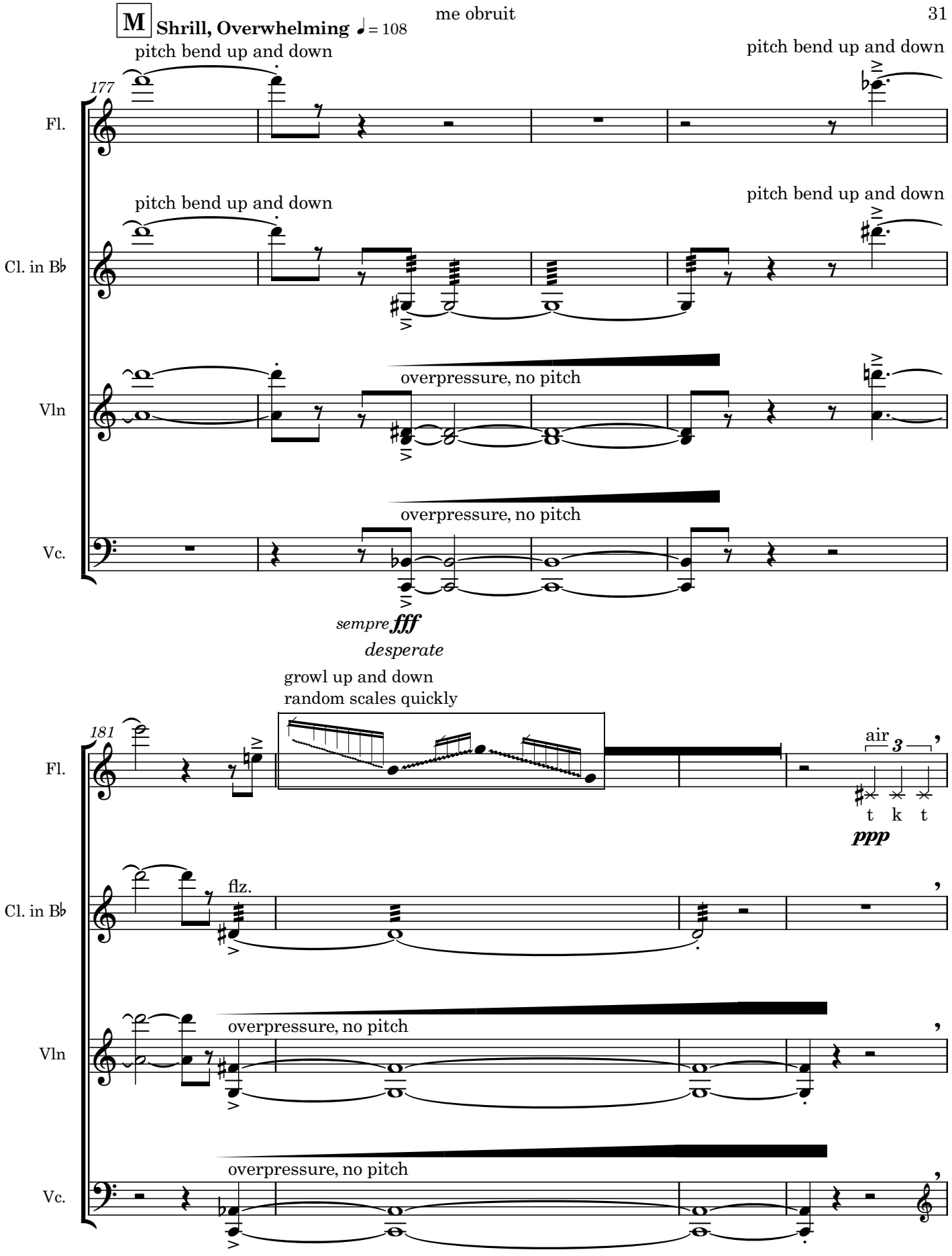
play fast ascending three note figures at written rhythm,
with shorter and shorter intervals between phrases at any register

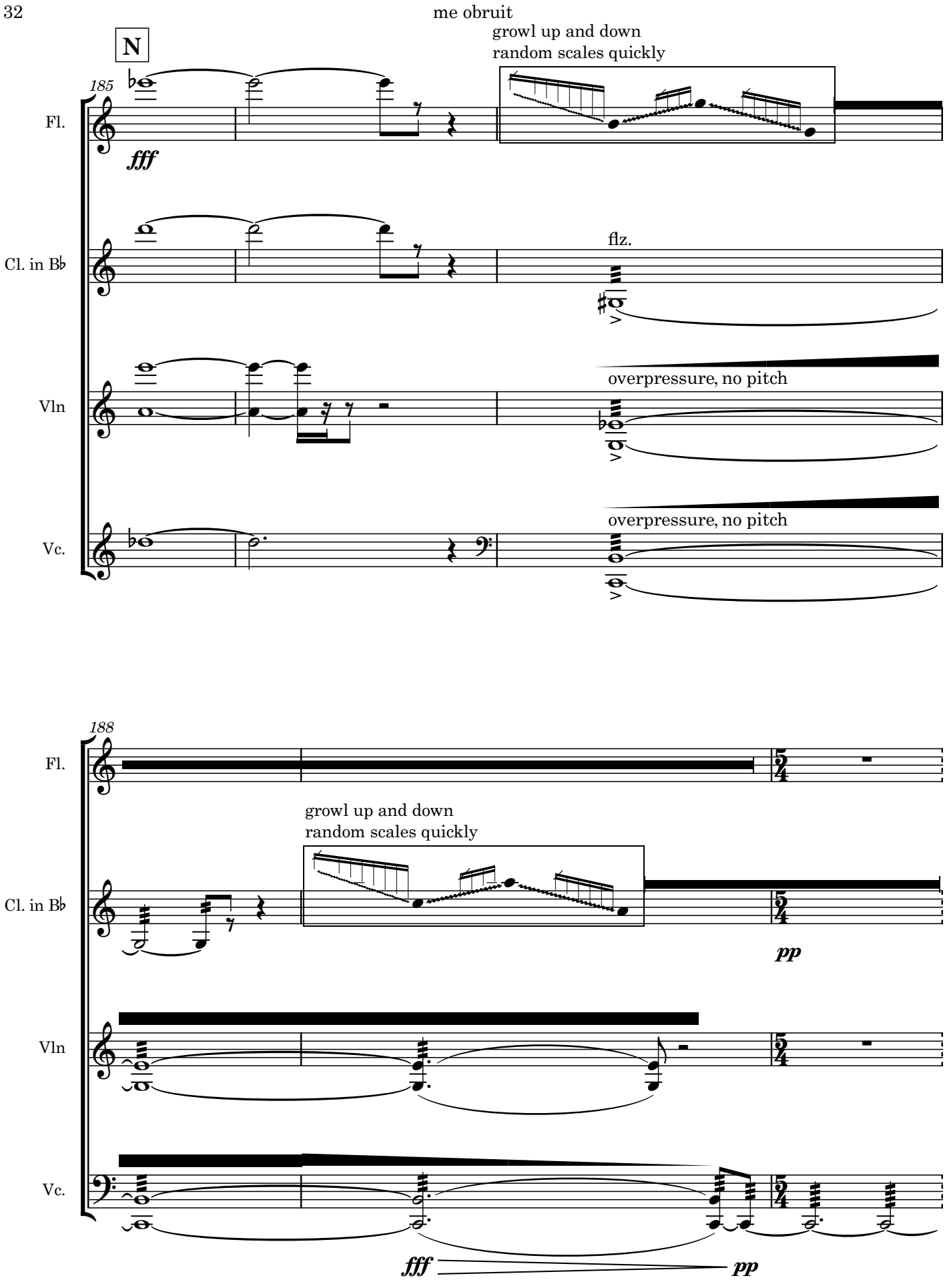


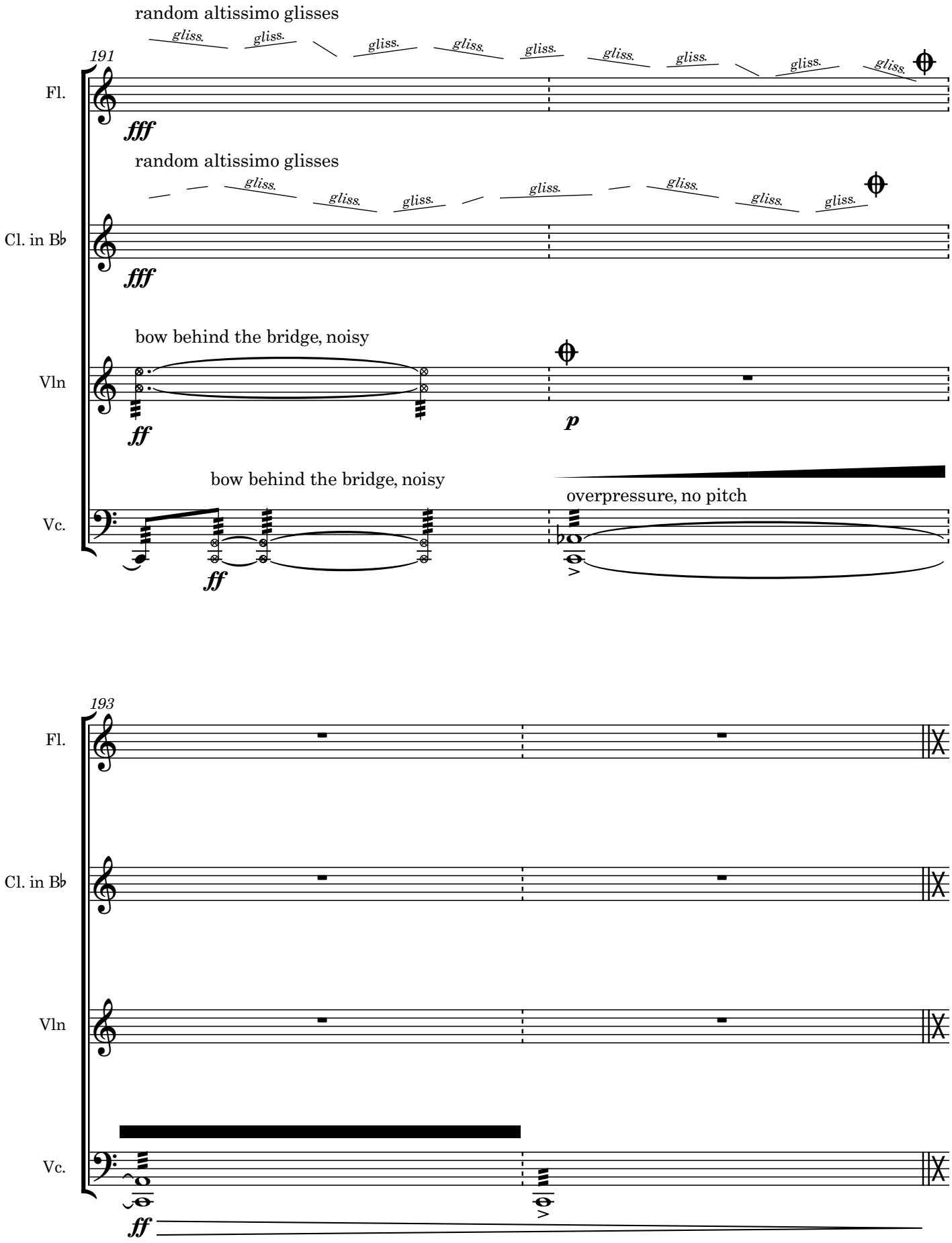

161
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
Tempo I ♩ = 108
L
163
sim.
ord.
tr
ff
f


165
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
bis.
ff
slow trill until eighth note speed
f
overpressure, no pitch
tr
168
mp
pitch bend
sfz
ffp
p

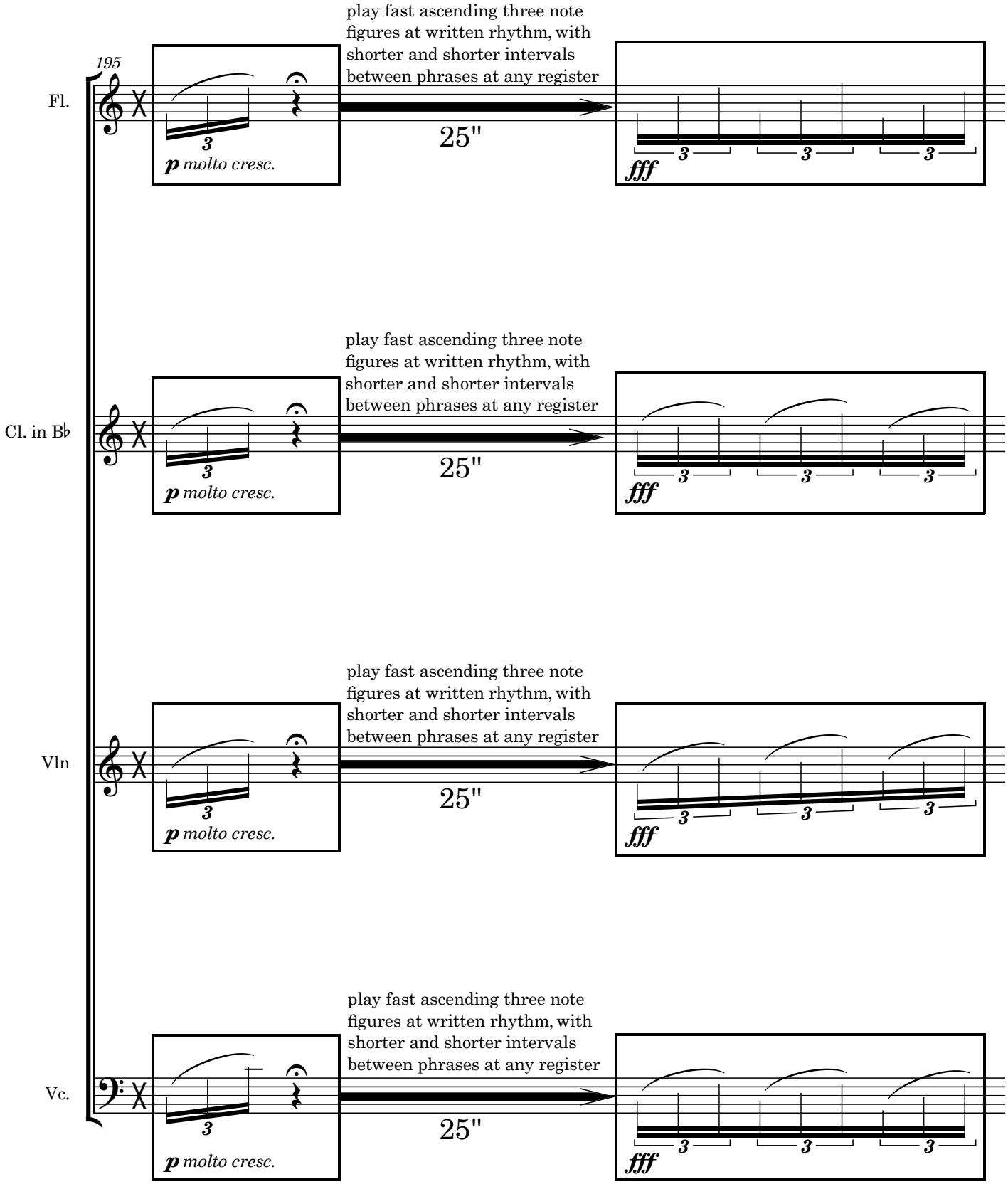

171
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
tr
3
ffp
ff
p
overpressure, no pitch
(ord.)
f
174
sempre fff
desperate
gliss.

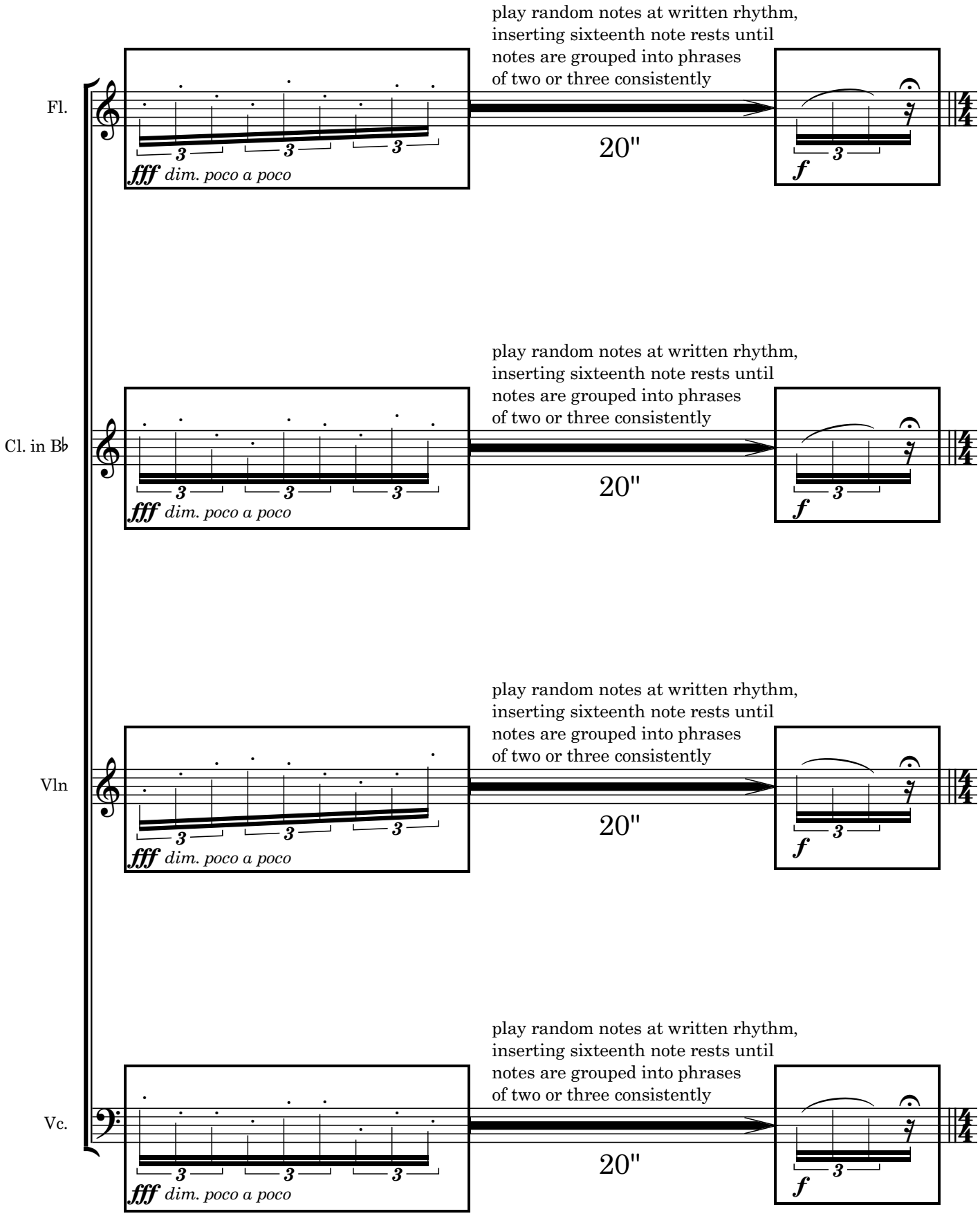

M
Shrill, Overwhelming ♩= 108
pitch bend up and down
pitch bend up and down
177
Fl.
pitch bend up and down
pitch bend up and down
Cl. in B♭
overpressure, no pitch
Vln
overpressure, no pitch
Vc.
sempre fff
desperate
growl up and down
random scales quickly
181
Fl.
air
3
t k t
ppp
flz.
Cl. in B♭
overpressure, no pitch
Vln
overpressure, no pitch
Vc.


me obruit
N
185
Fl.
fff
growl up and down
random scales quickly
Cl. in B♭
flz.
Vln
overpressure, no pitch
Vc.
overpressure, no pitch
188
Fl.
growl up and down
random scales quickly
Cl. in B♭
pp
Vln
Vc.
fff
pp


random altissimo glisses
191
Fl.
fff
random altissimo glisses
Cl. in B♭
fff
bow behind the bridge, noisy
Vln
ff
p
bow behind the bridge, noisy
overpressure, no pitch
Vc.
ff
193
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
ff

O **A last struggle**




play random notes at written rhythm, inserting sixteenth note rests until notes are grouped into phrases of two or three consistently
Fl.
fff dim. poco a poco
20"
f
play random notes at written rhythm, inserting sixteenth note rests until notes are grouped into phrases of two or three consistently
Cl. in B♭
fff dim. poco a poco
20"
f
play random notes at written rhythm, inserting sixteenth note rests until notes are grouped into phrases of two or three consistently
Vln
fff dim. poco a poco
20"
f
play random notes at written rhythm, inserting sixteenth note rests until notes are grouped into phrases of two or three consistently
Vc.
fff dim. poco a poco
20"
f

P

Defeated, accepting fate ♩ = 96

196

Fl.

f

disintegrating slowly

Cl. in B♭

f

disintegrating slowly

Vln

f

disintegrating slowly

Vc.

f

disintegrating slowly

198

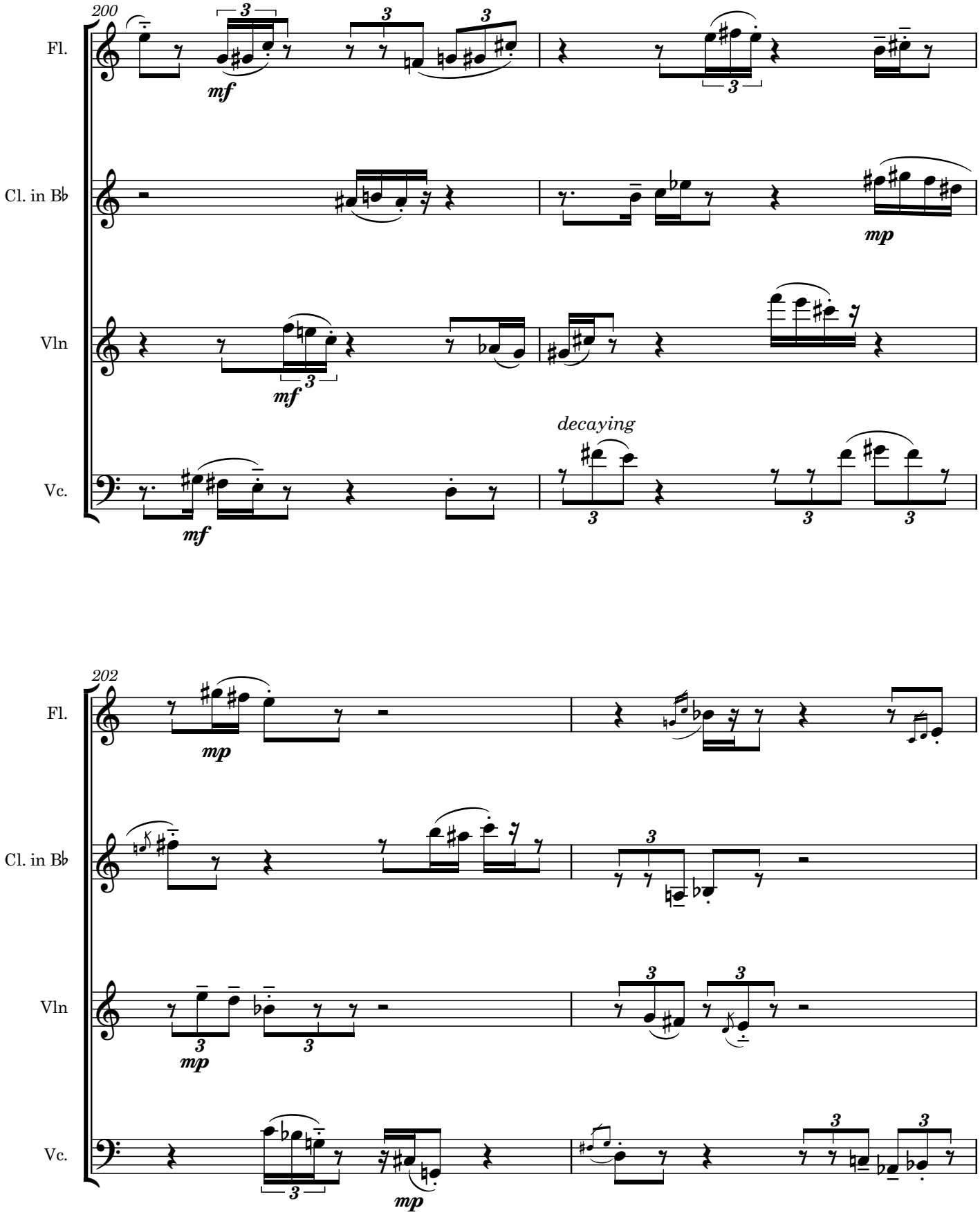
Fl.

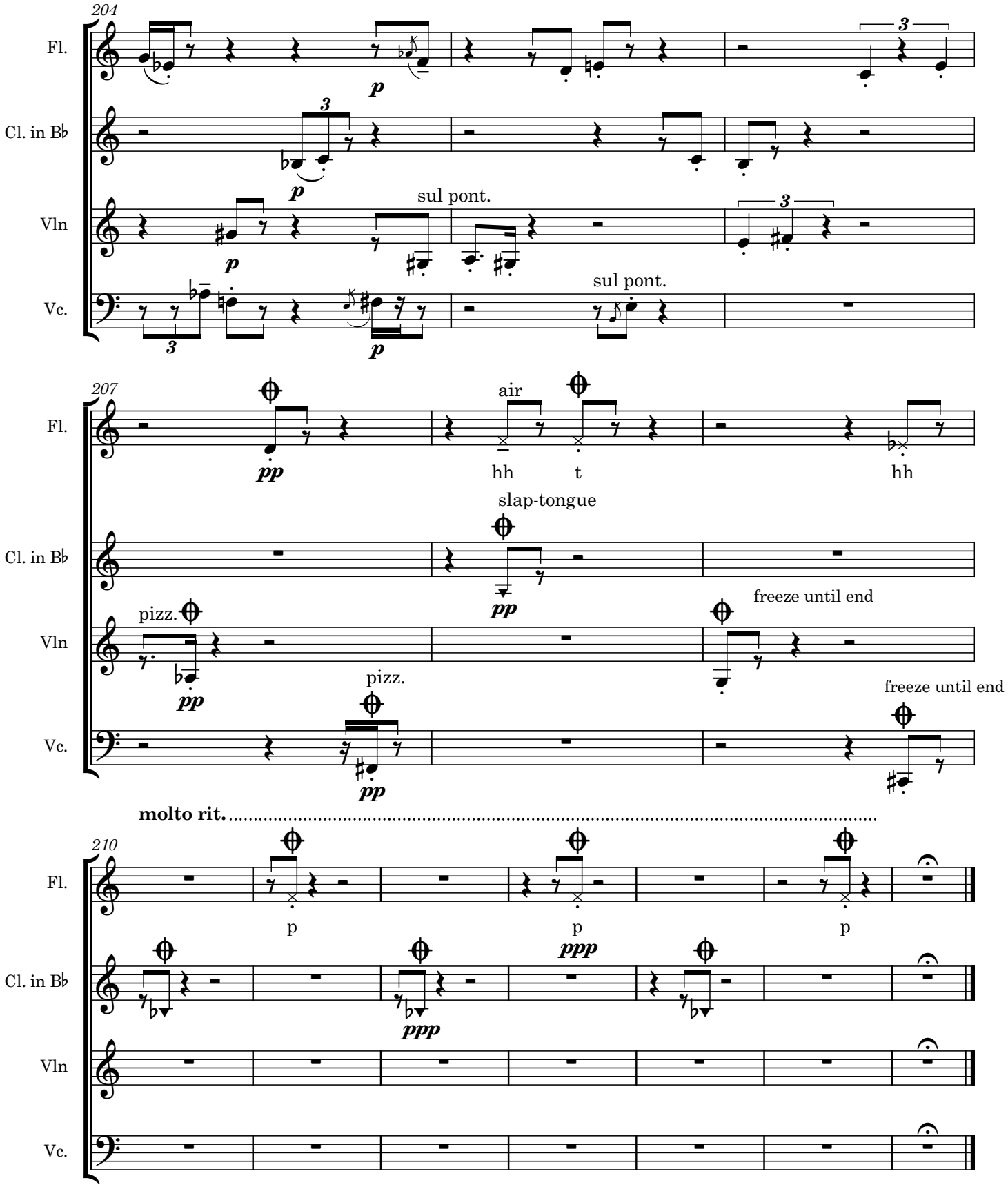
Cl. in B♭

mf

Vln

Vc.


200
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
mf
mp
decaying
202
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
mp


204
Fl.
Cl. in B♭
Vln
Vc.
sul pont.
sul pont.
207
air
hh
t
hh
slap-tongue
freeze until end
pizz.
pizz.
freeze until end
molto rit.
210
p
p
p