Score

Mountain Laurel Suite

Commissioned by the Mountain Laurel Trio:
Beth Larsen, flute; Scott Ellington, clarinet; Julie Shaffer, piano

I. Storm (*attacca*)
II. Reverie
III. Celebration

James M. Stephenson III

Mountain Laurel Suite
for Flute, Clarinet and Piano

Commissioned by the Mountain Laurel Trio, 2004

Program Notes by James Stephenson

In the spring of 2004, I was approached by the members of the Mountain Laurel Trio (Beth Larsen, Scott Ellington and Julie Shaffer) with a proposal to compose a new piece for their newly formed chamber ensemble. The idea was immediately intriguing, as I had certainly never composed anything for that instrumentation, much less even heard the combination.

I distinctly remember receiving an e-mail from Julie, politely suggesting that I compose something evocative of their name, perhaps to include mountain grandeur, flowing rivers, and even some hints of a deep south Baptist hymn. Also included in my instructions was the invitation to use all of the instruments they had available to them: alto flute, piccolo, flute, clarinets in A and B-flat and bass clarinet, and of course, the piano.

I decided I would do all of this eventually, but I wanted to start with a fierce mountain storm, hence, the 1st movement. It opens wildly, suggesting images of whistling winds rushing through the tall, imperiled pines. For a brief moment, there is a break in the storm, and the sun peers through the clouds, but this is only fleeting, as the storm quickly takes over until the very end of the movement. (Ironically this movement was composed in early August of 2004, about a week before Hurricane Charley decimated the region less than100 miles north of where we all live.)

The 2nd movement starts *attacca*, but very tentatively, as if the alto flute and clarinet are afraid to emerge for fear of another storm. This trepidation fades as the Baptist hymn is introduced, first soulfully by the clarinet and then emphatically by the piano. The movement again shies away to the material with which it opened.

The 3rd movement is a sort of square dance, but a little off. I chose the instruments with the most contrast (piccolo and bass clarinet), and with the piano, set them all off on their own on a kind of rollicking rondo that just won't quite settle. After some bickering about, they do finally settle into a stroll along the "flowing river" in a gradually growing romantic theme, only to quickly close out the piece with a remnant of the rondo.

The piece is roughly 14 ½ minutes, and is scored to include Flute, Alto Flute, Piccolo, A and B-flat Clarinets, Bass Clarinet and Piano.

James Stephenson, August, 2005

Commissioned by the Mountain Laurel Trio: Beth Larsen, flute; Scott Ellington, clarinet; Julie Shaffer, piano

Mountain Laurel Suite

I. Storm

James Stephenson

Tempestuous ♩= 88

Flute

Clarinet in B♭

Piano

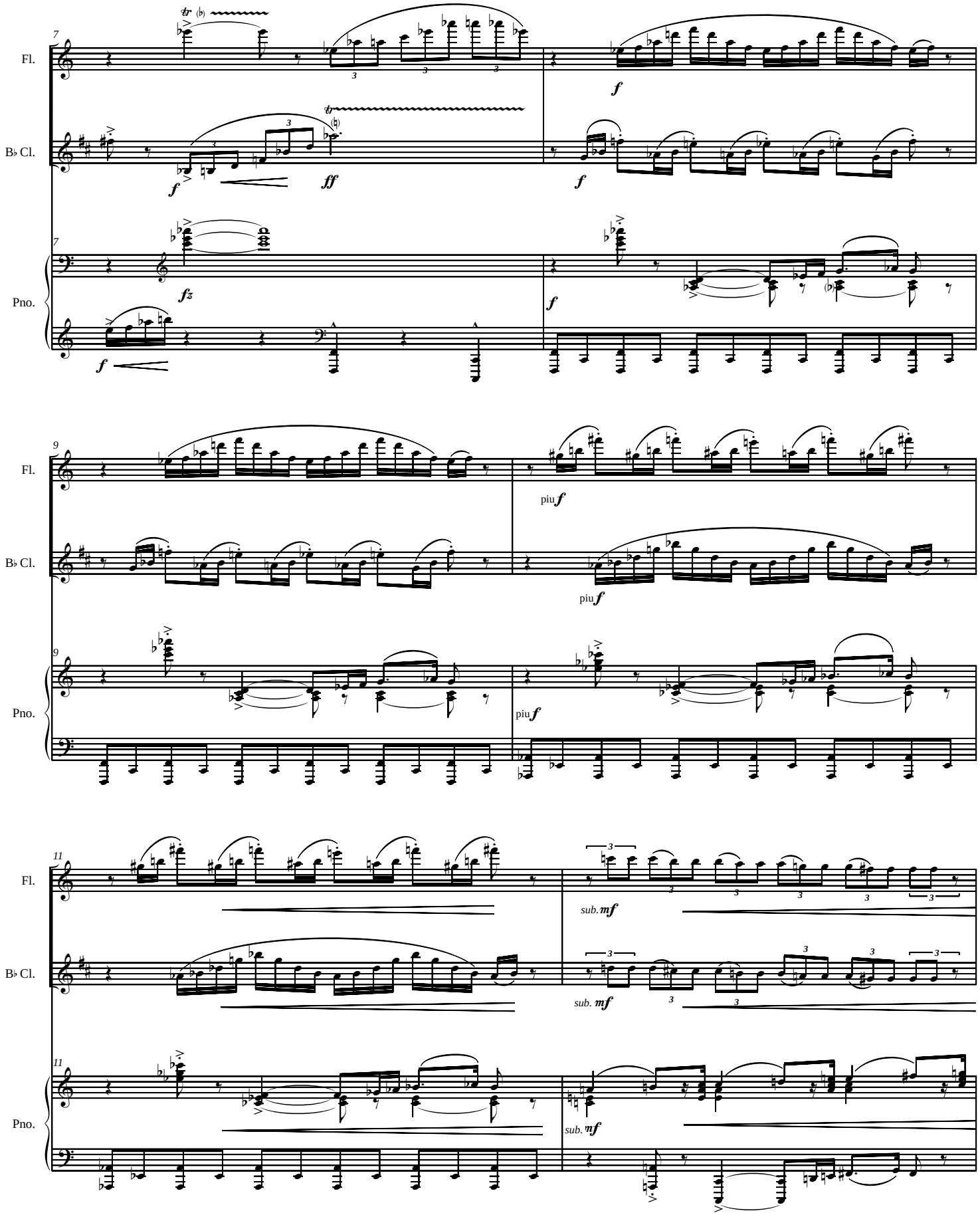
pesante

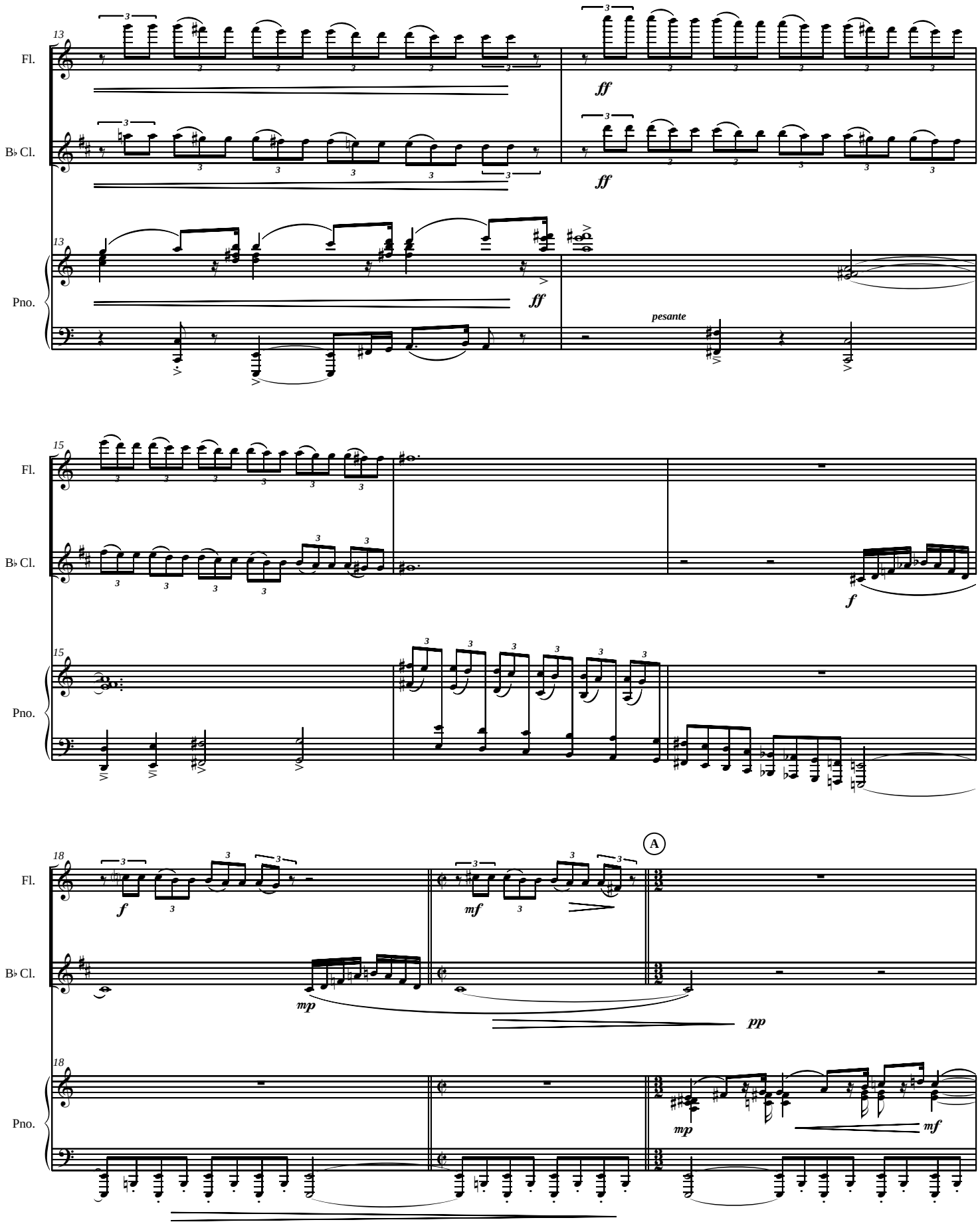
pesante

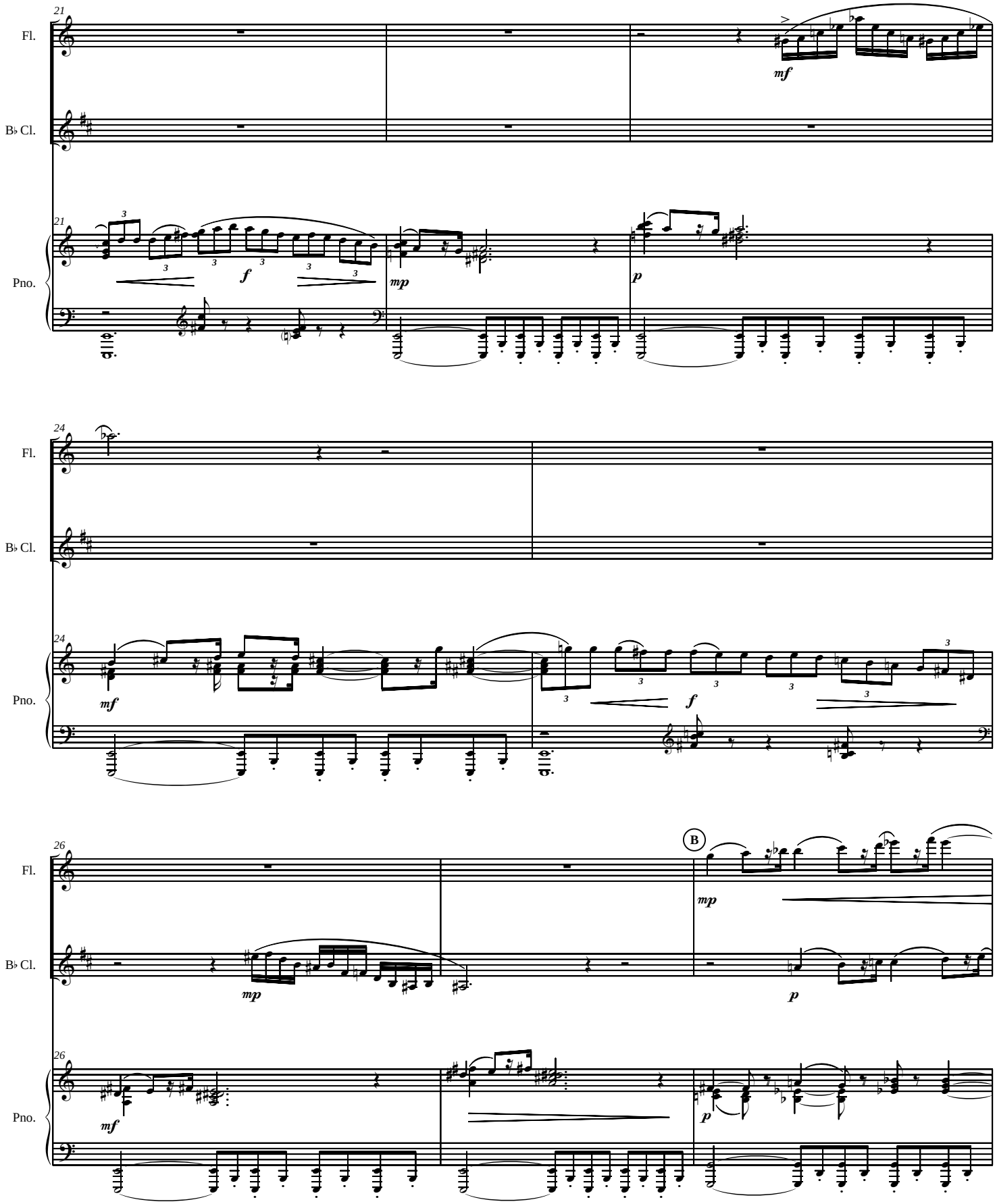
Fl.

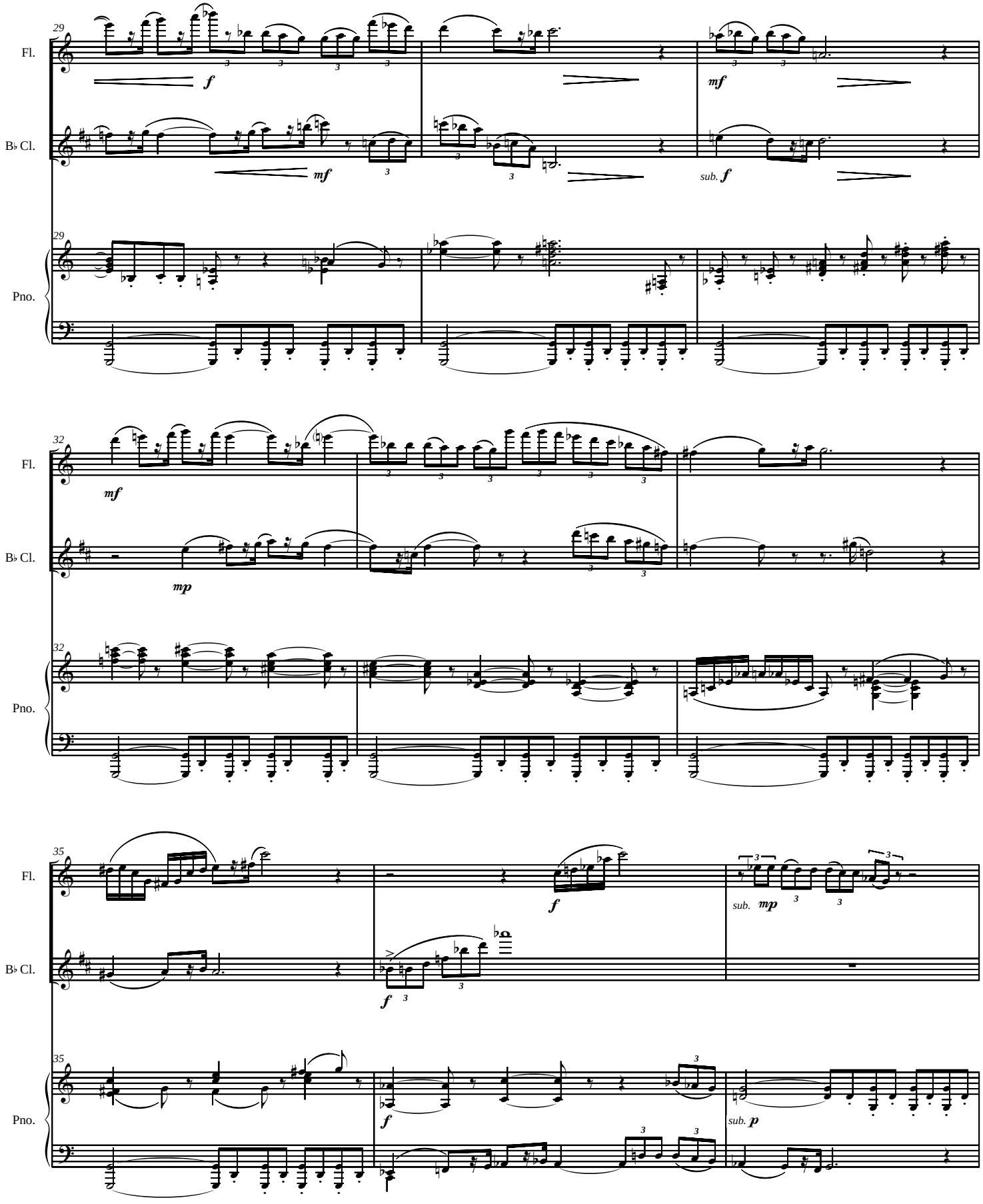
B♭ Cl.

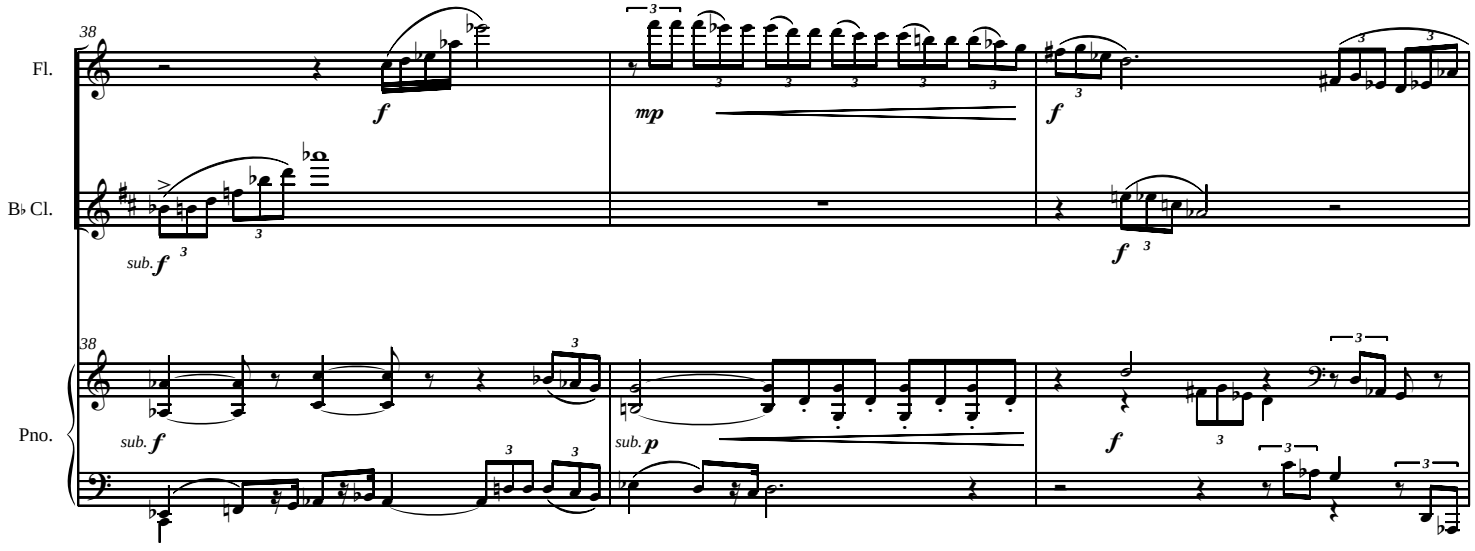
Pno.

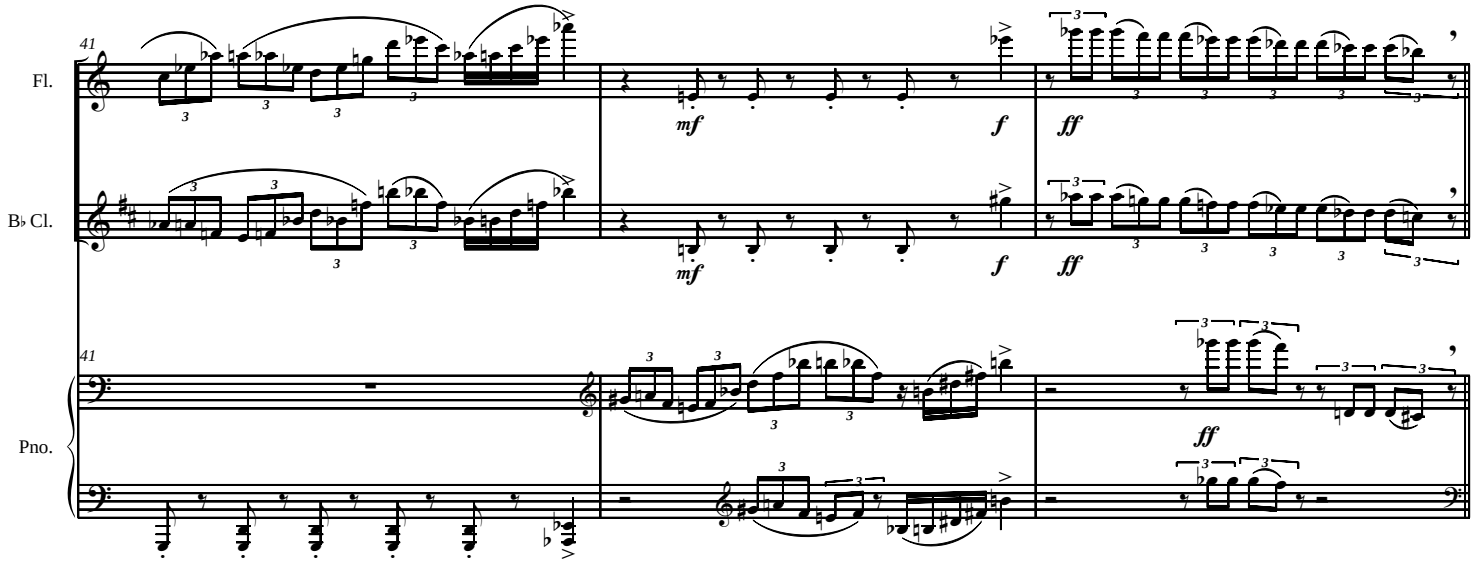

7
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
tr
f
ff
fz
9
piu f
11
sub. mf
sub. mf
sub. mf


13
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
ff
pesante
15
f
18
A
mf
mp
pp


21
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
mf
f
mp
p
24
mf
f
26
B
mp
p

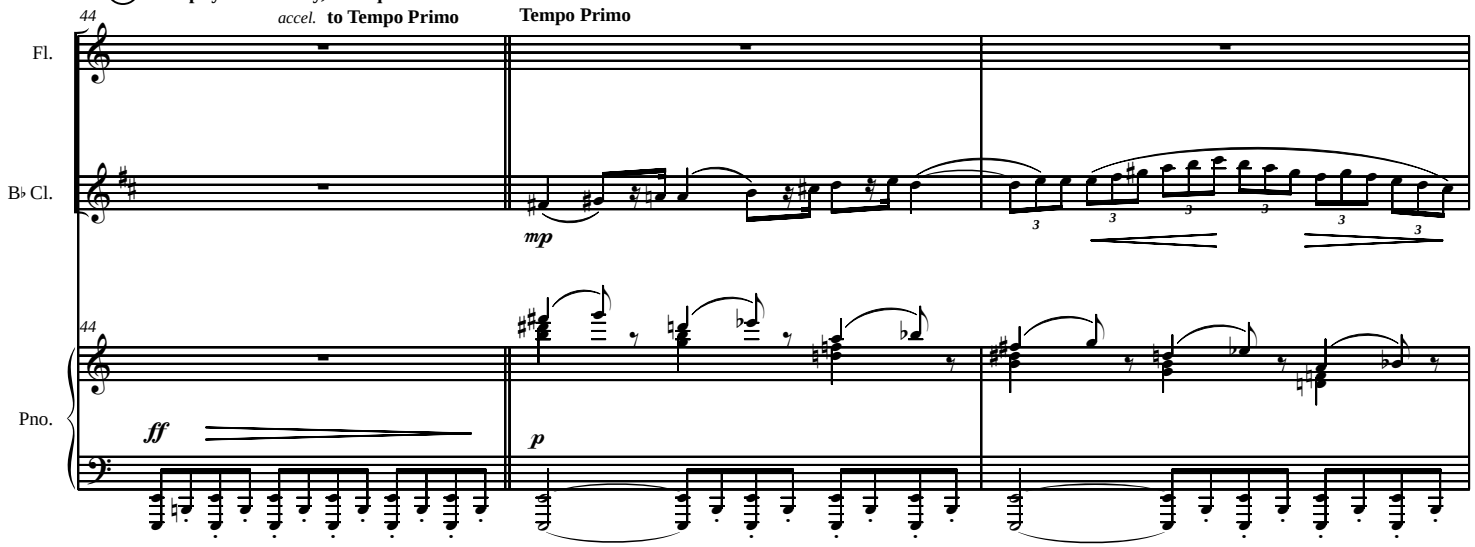

29
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
f
mf
mf
sub. f
32
mf
mp
35
f
f
sub. mp
sub. p

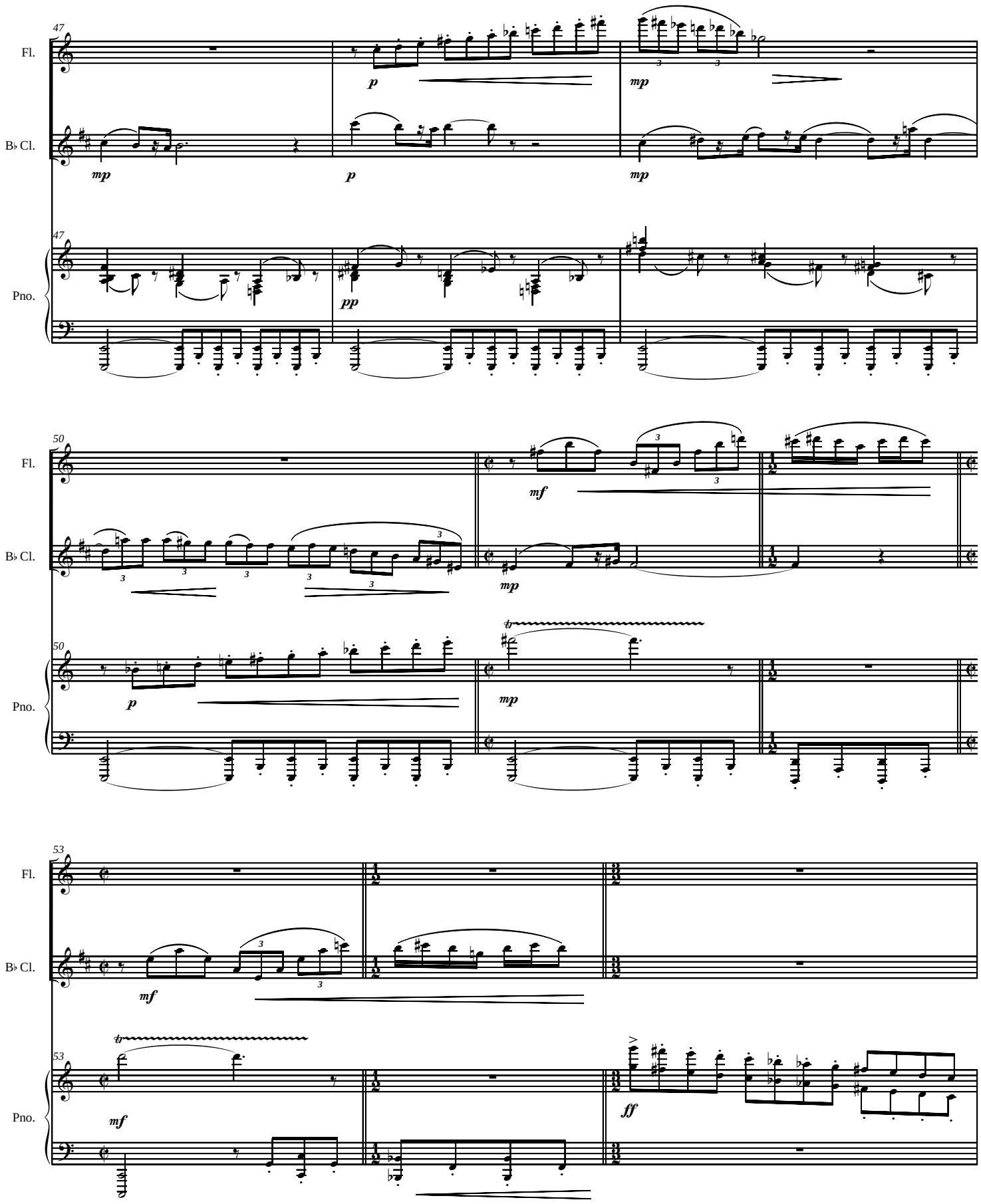


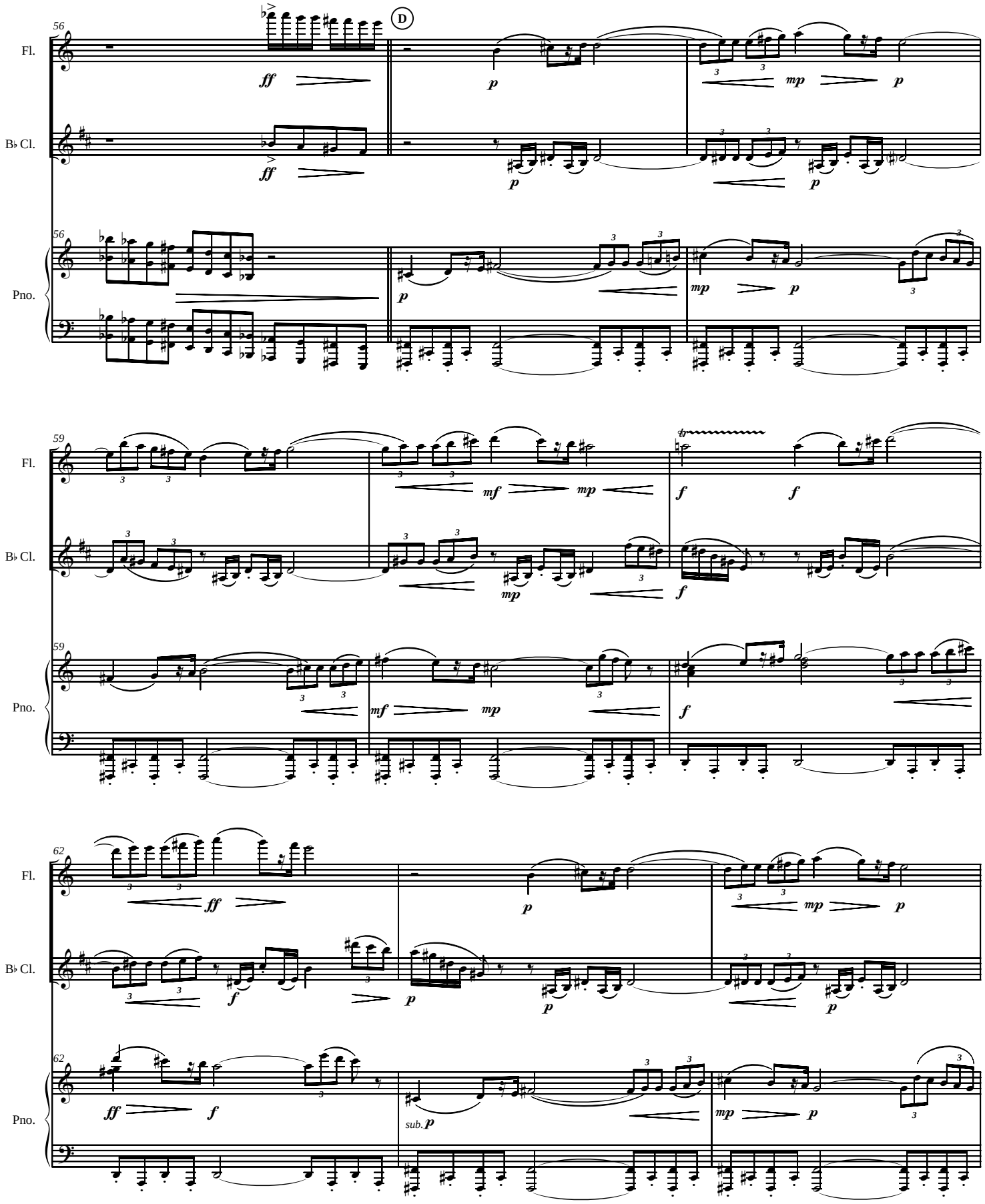


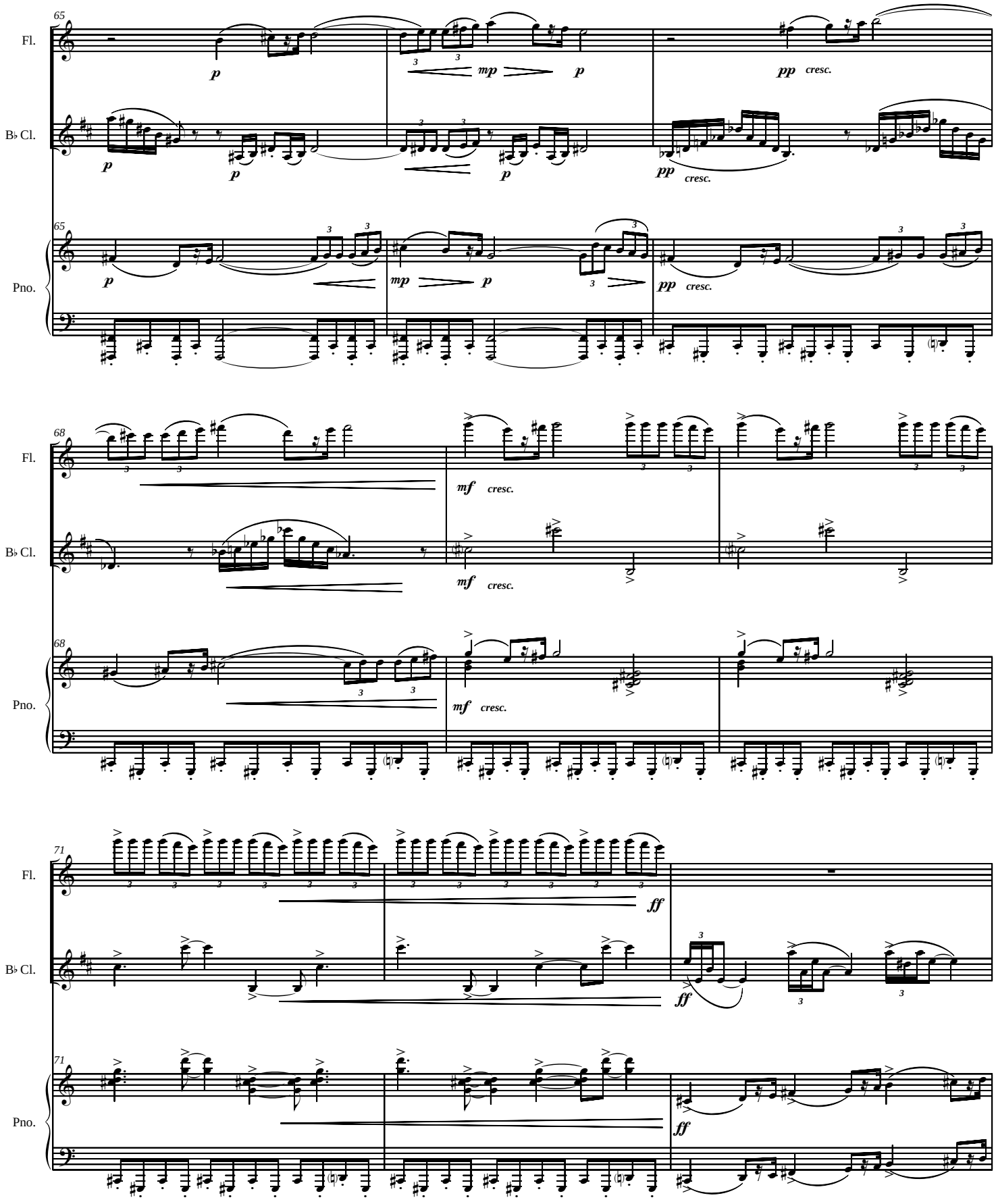
C **Abruptly Start slowly, then quick**

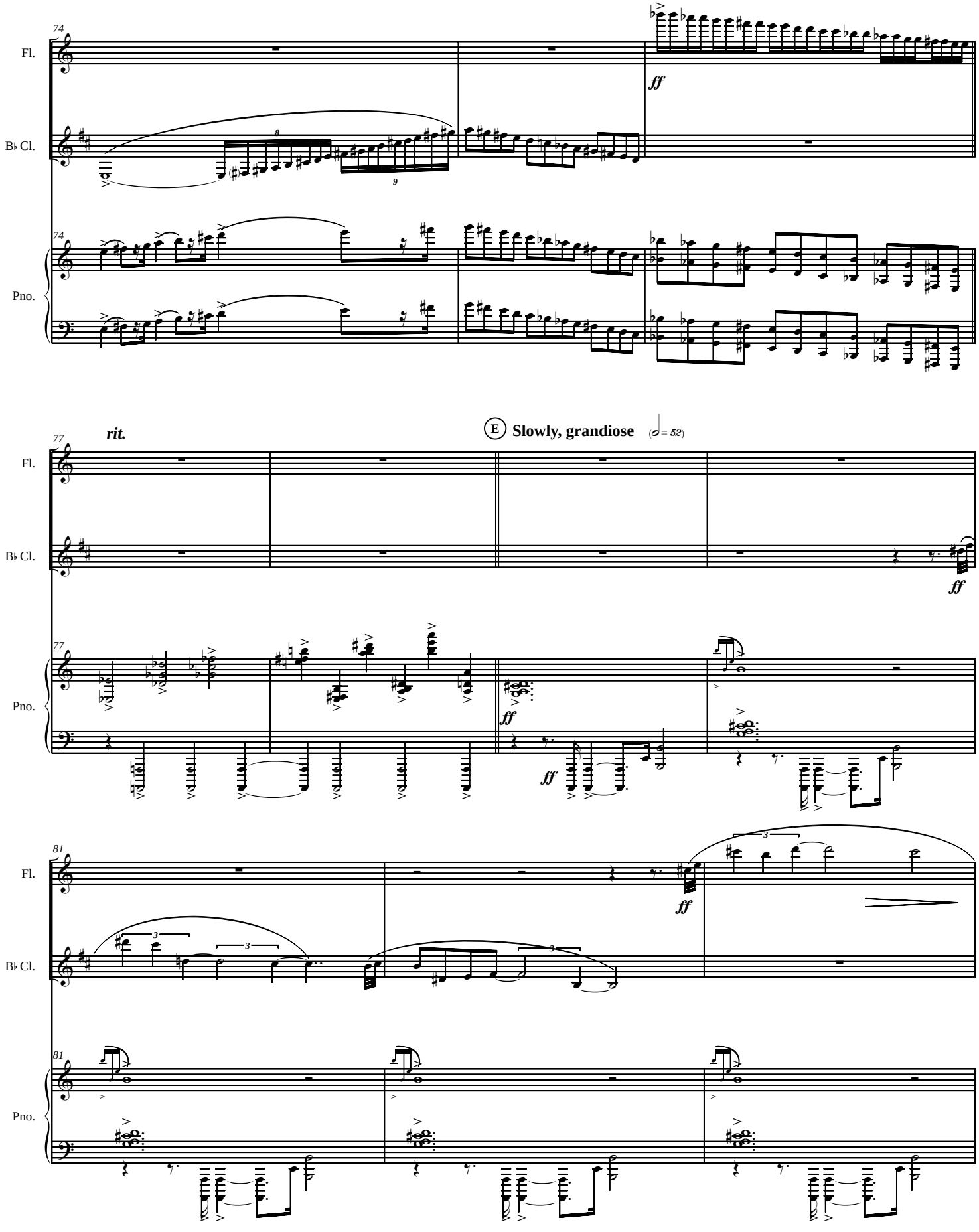
accel. **to Tempo Primo** **Tempo Primo**

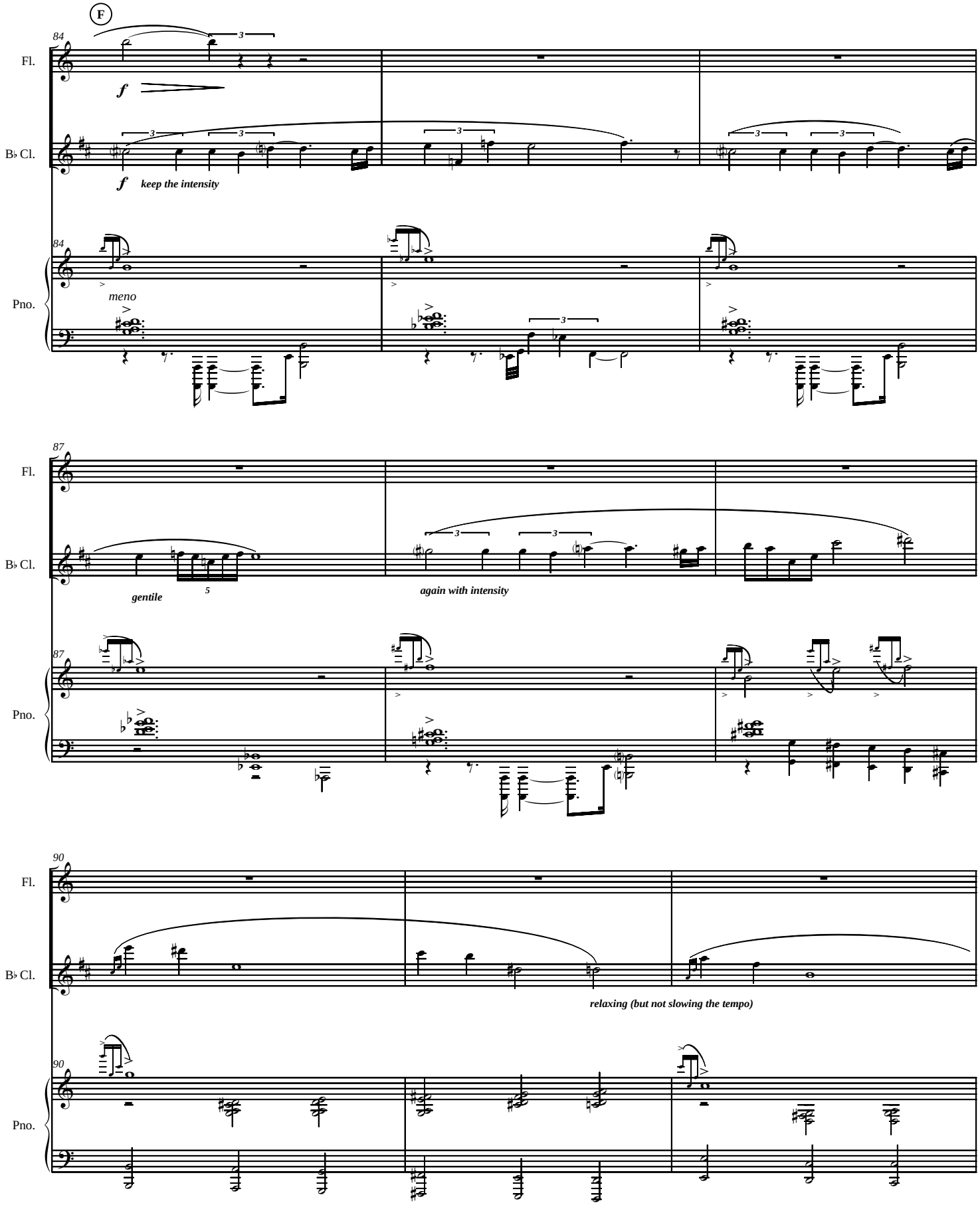


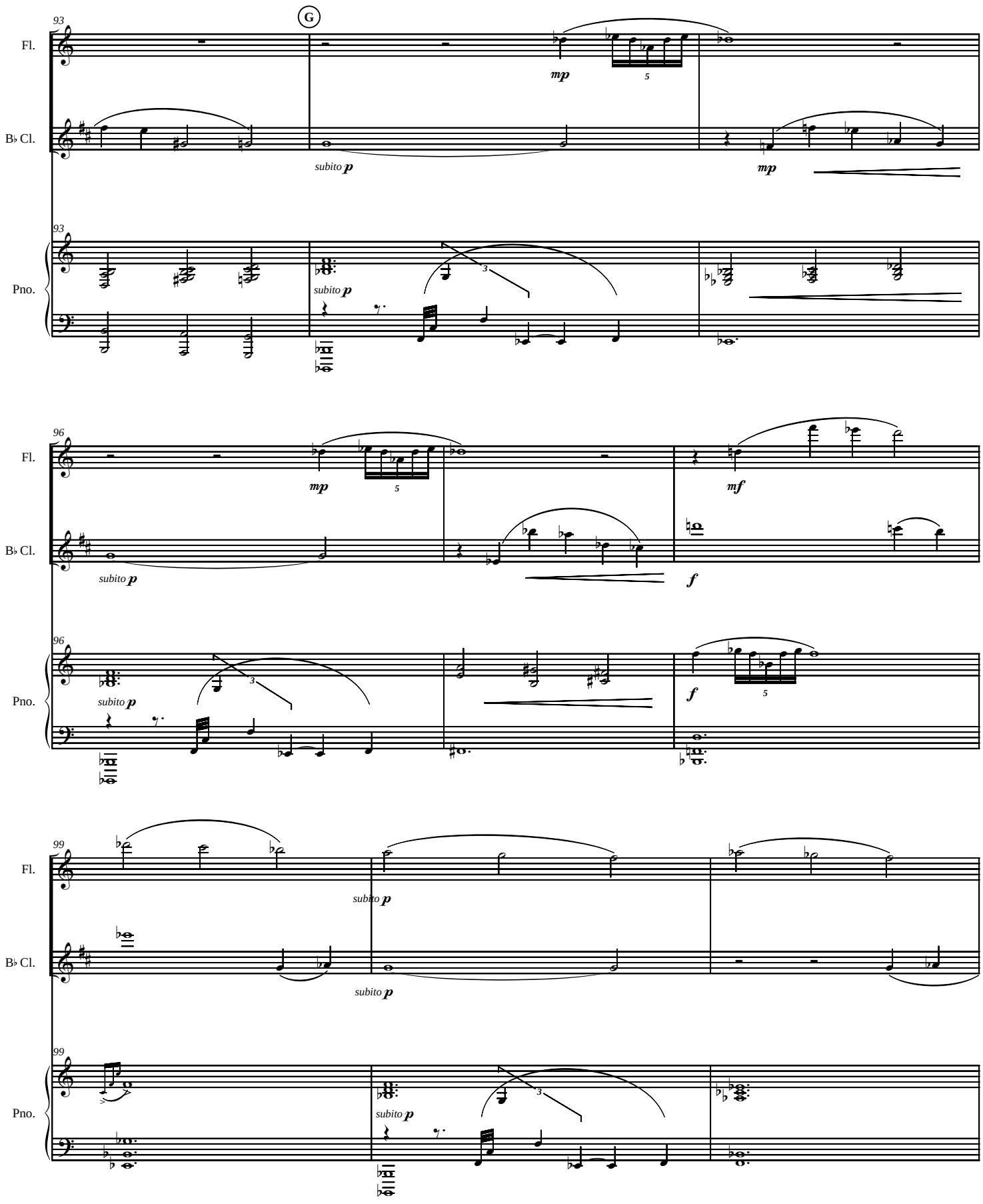

47
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
p
mp
pp
50
mf
53
ff

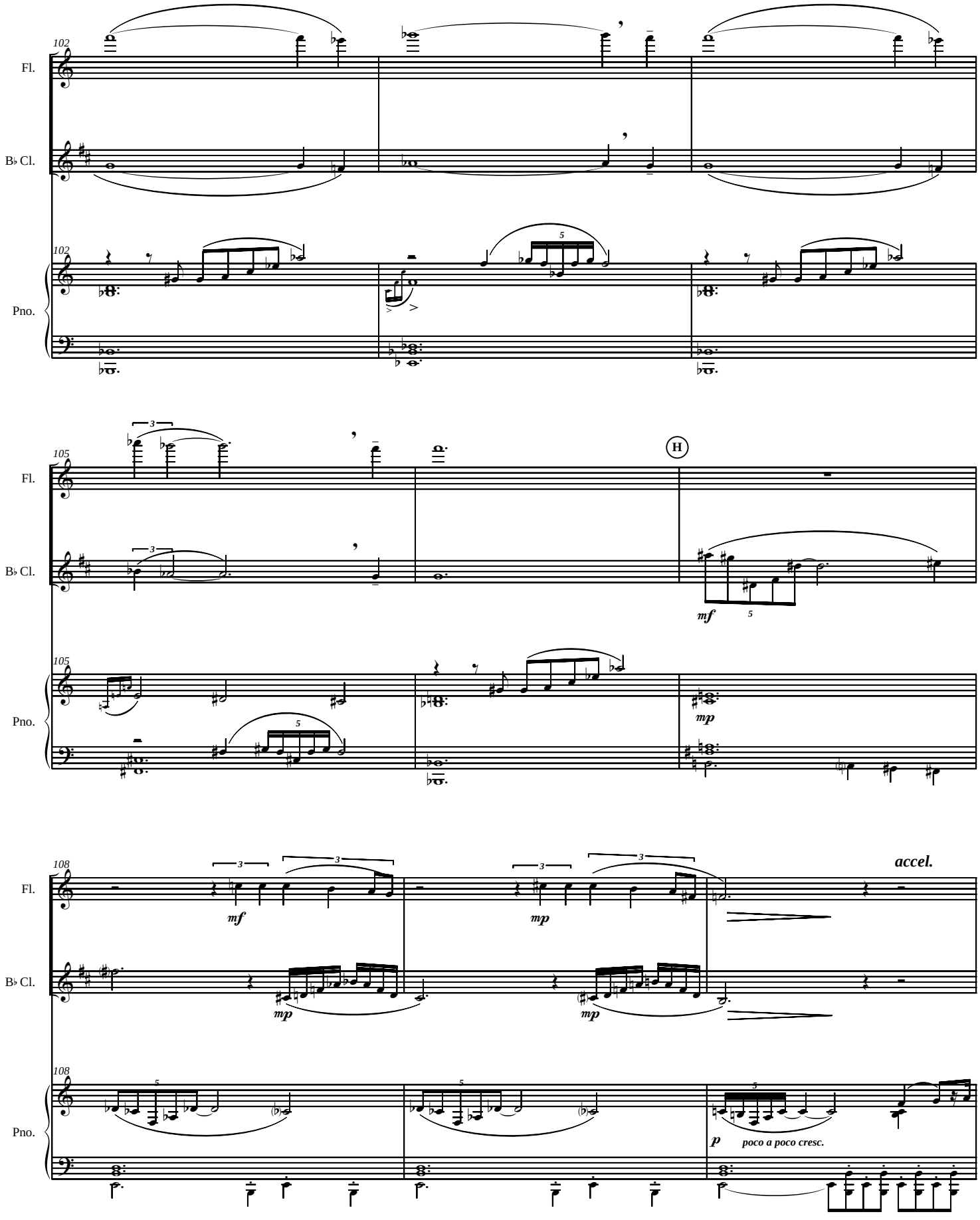

56
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
D
ff
p
mp
59
mf
f
62
sub. p

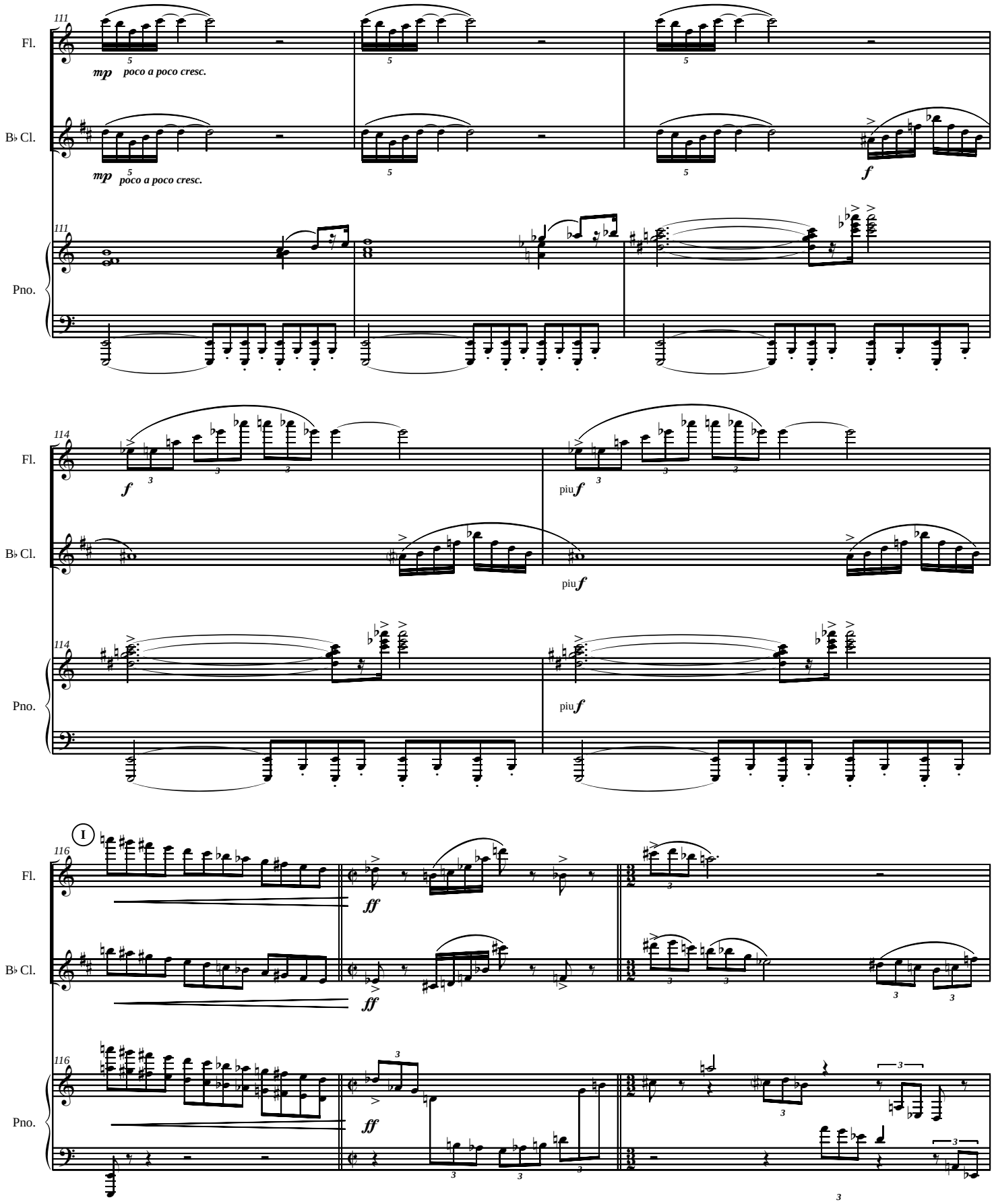

65
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
p
mp
pp
cresc.
68
mf
71
ff

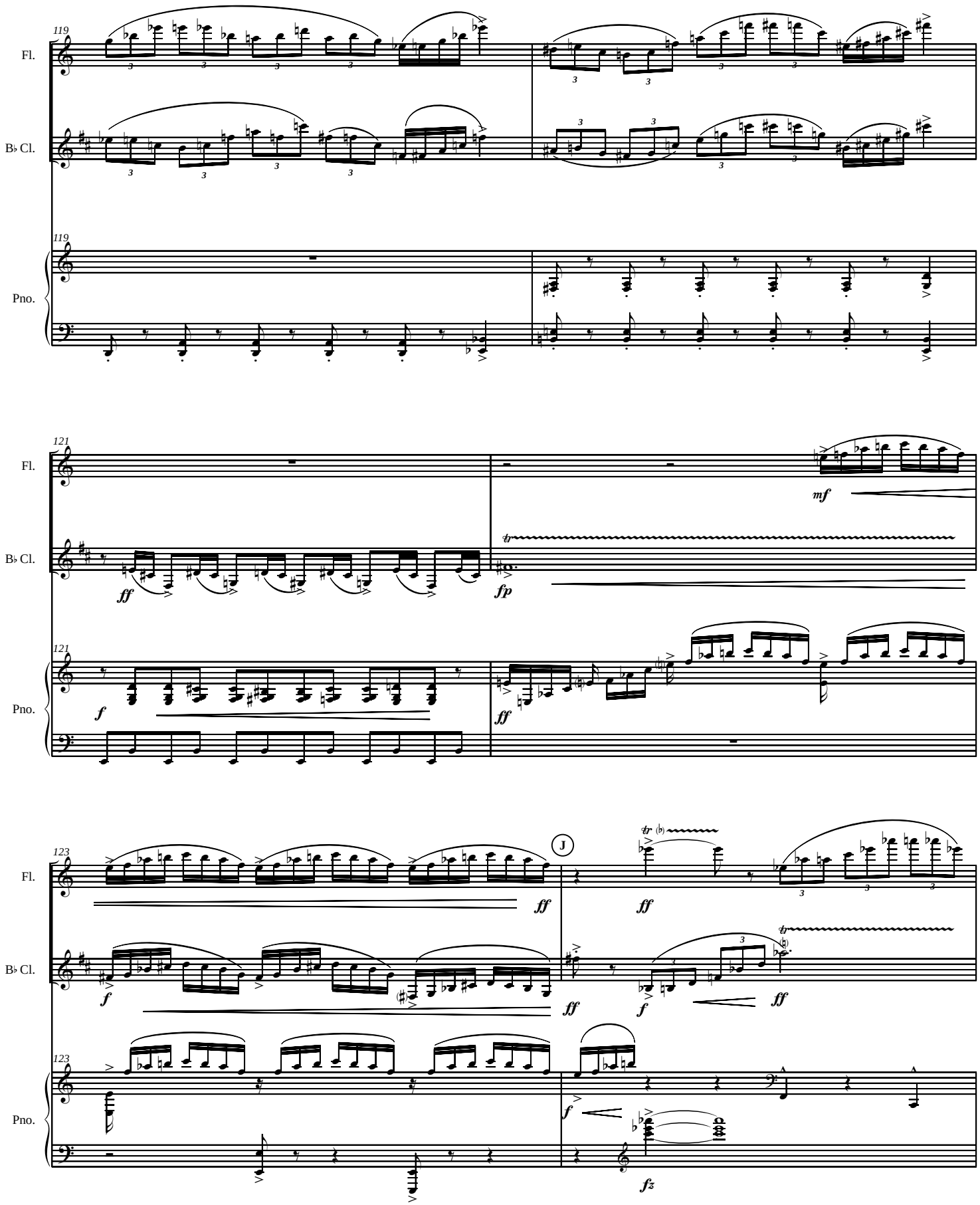

74
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
ff
77
rit.
E
Slowly, grandiose
(𝅗𝅥 = 52)
81

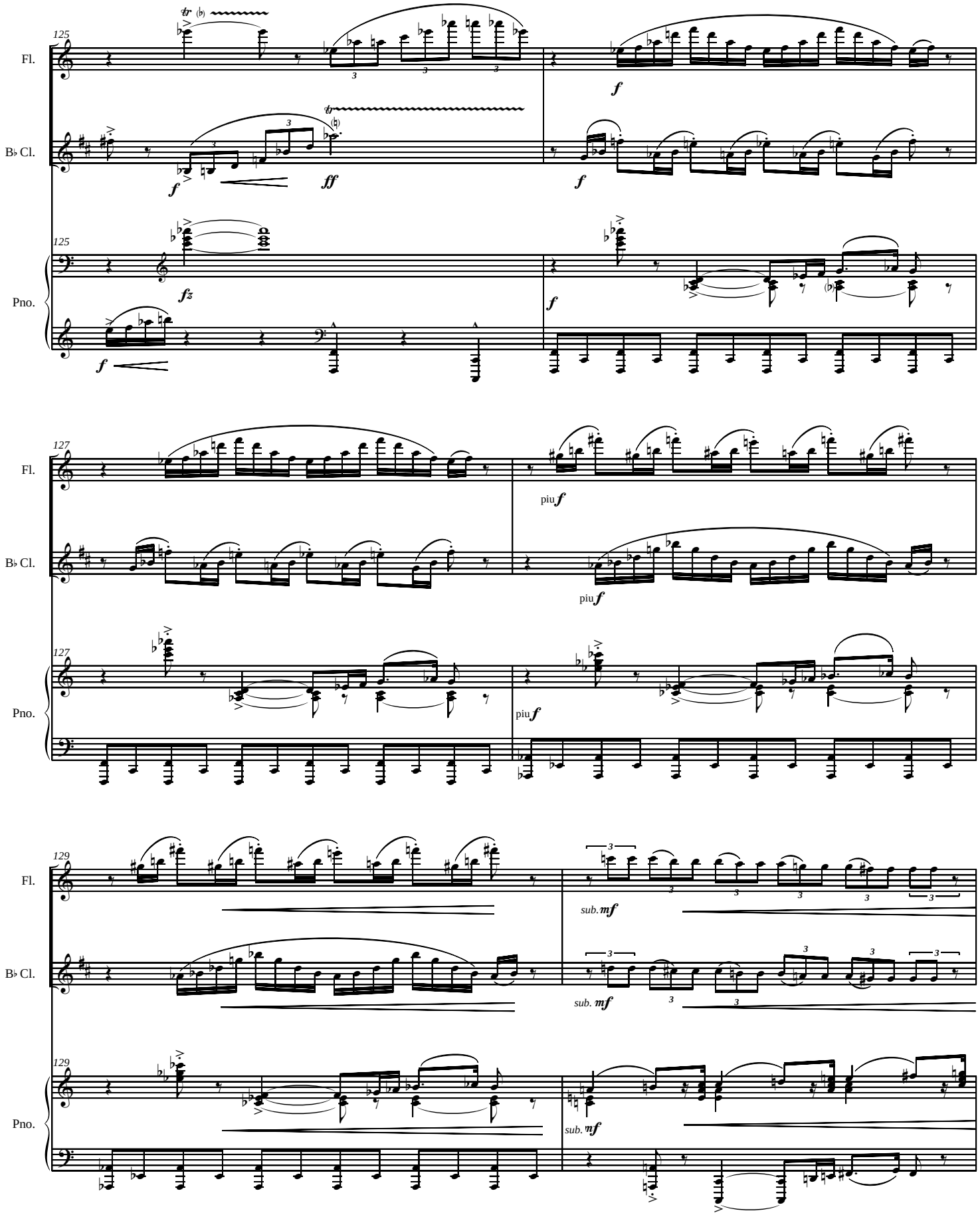

F
84
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
f
keep the intensity
meno
87
gentile
again with intensity
90
relaxing (but not slowing the tempo)

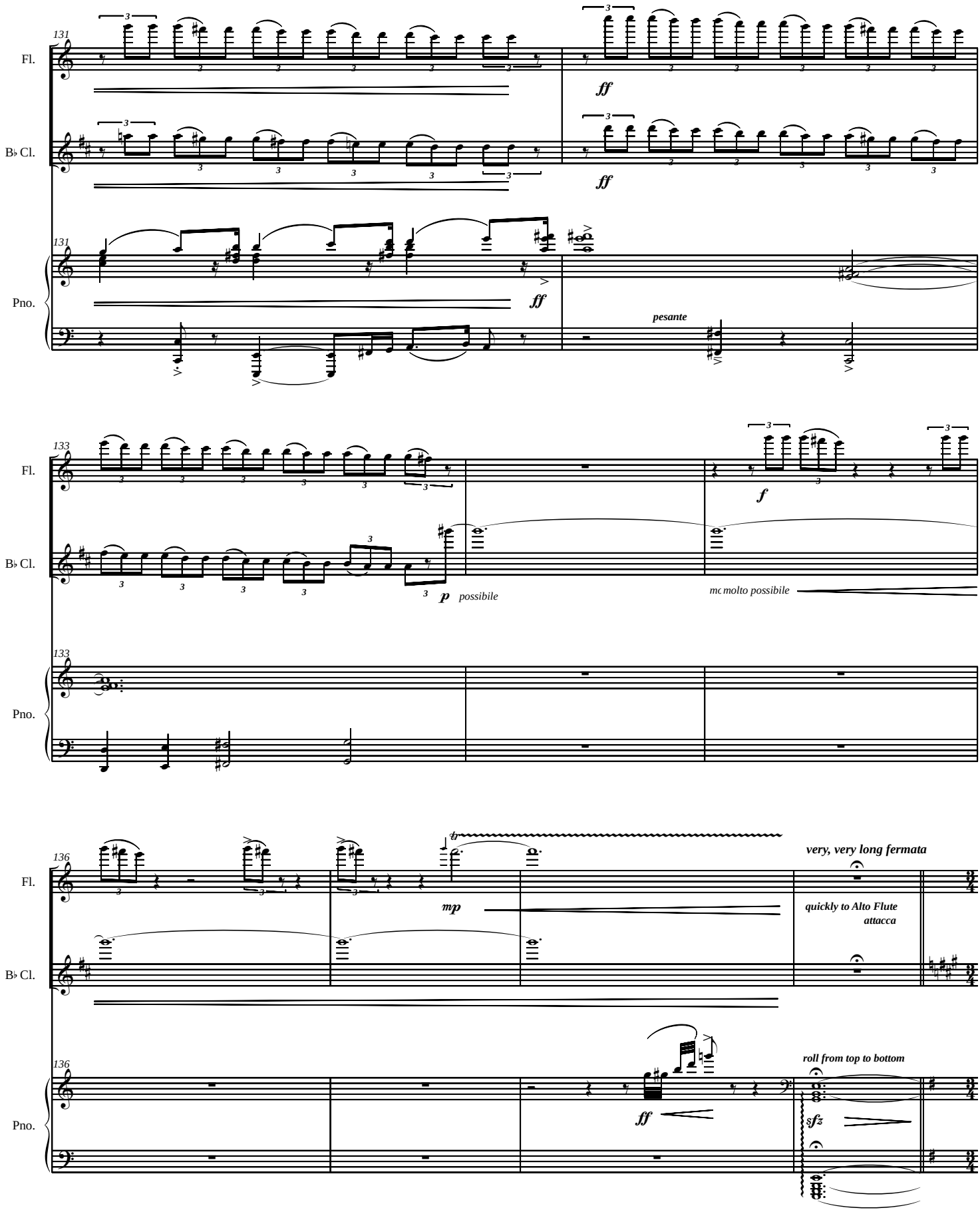

93
G
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
mp
subito p
96
mf
f
99


102
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
105
H
mf
mp
108
accel.
poco a poco cresc.

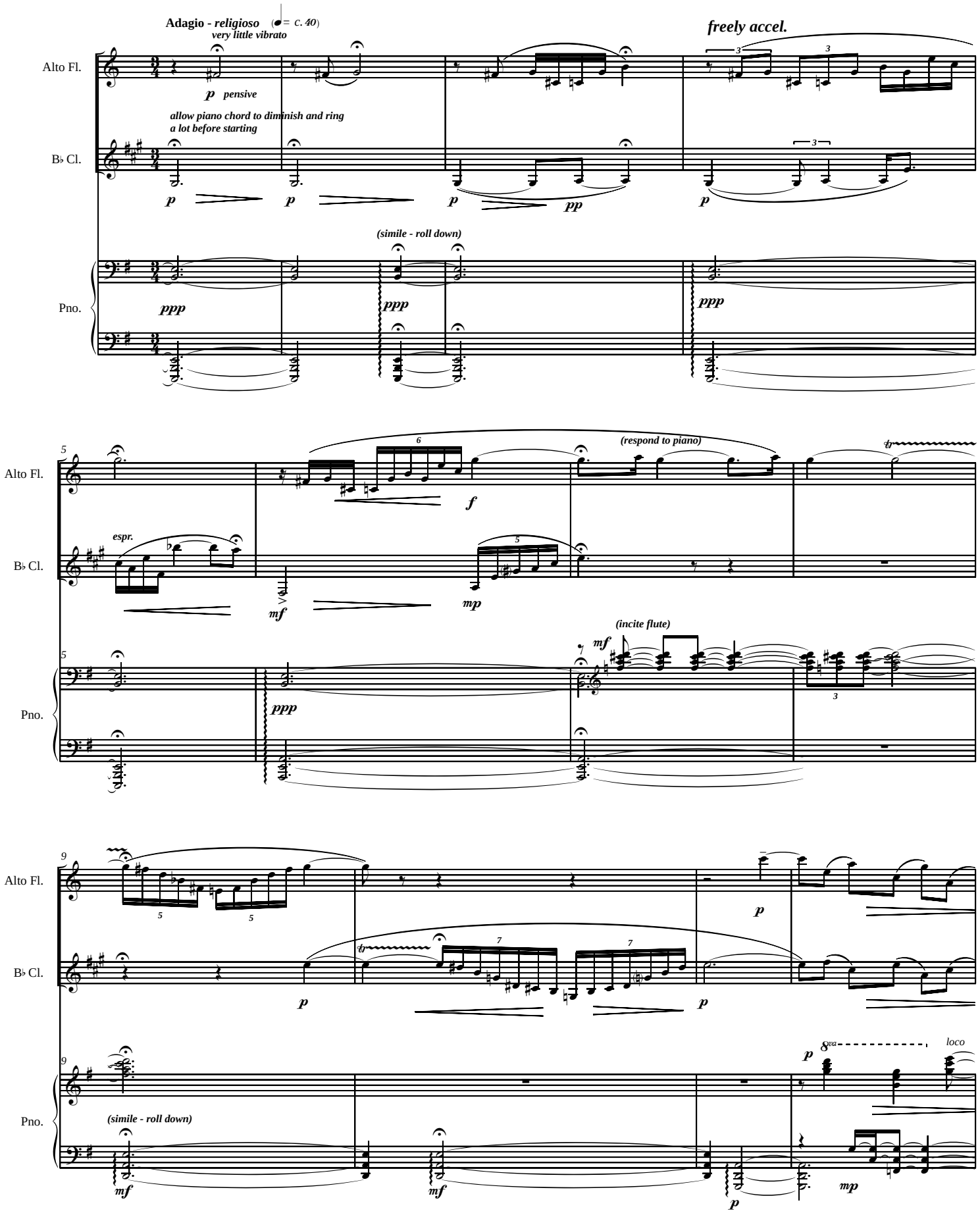

111
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
mp poco a poco cresc.
f
114
piu f
I
116
ff

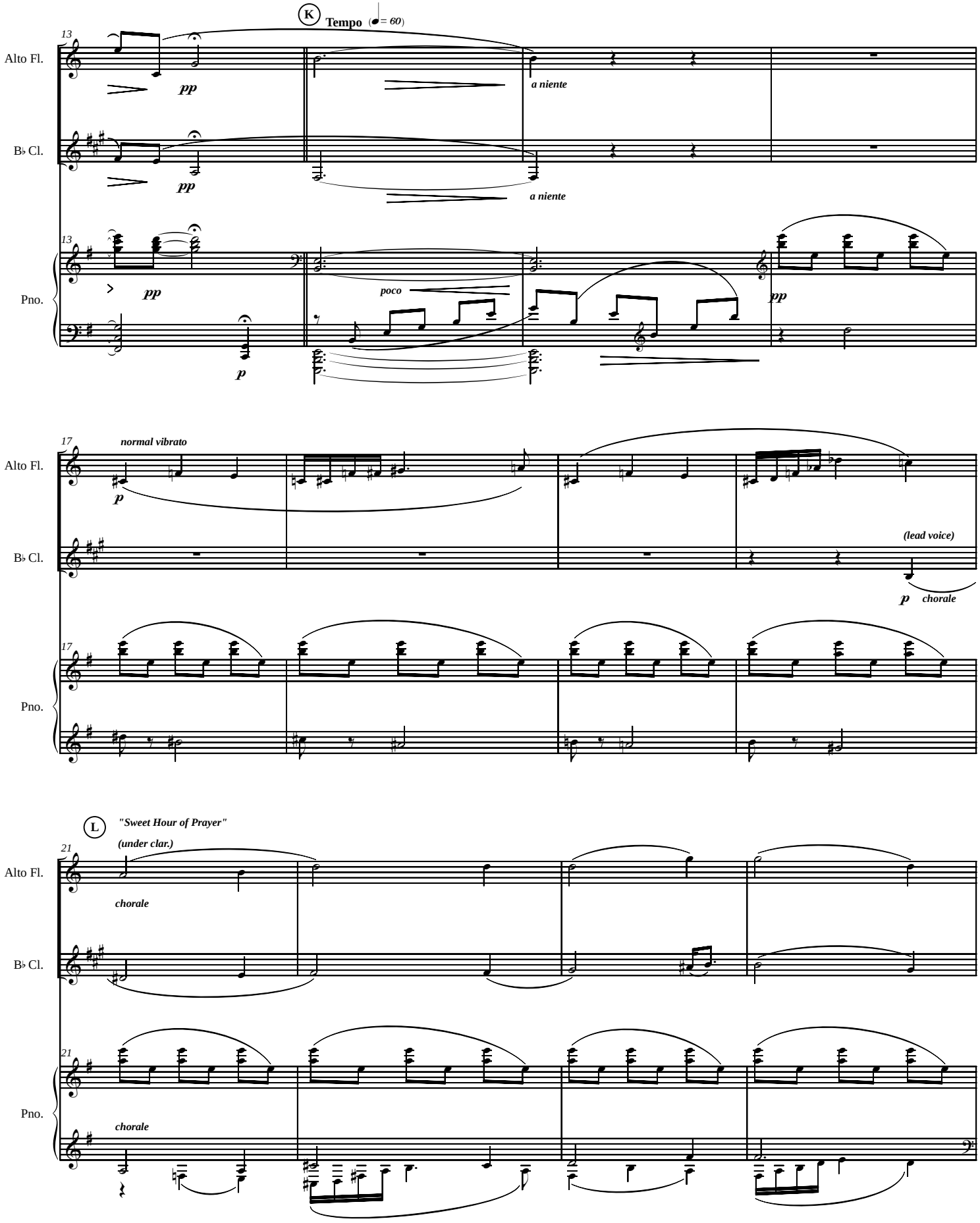

119
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
119
Pno.
121
Fl.
mf
B♭ Cl.
ff
fp
121
Pno.
f
ff
123
J
Fl.
ff
ff
B♭ Cl.
f
ff
f
ff
123
Pno.
f
fz

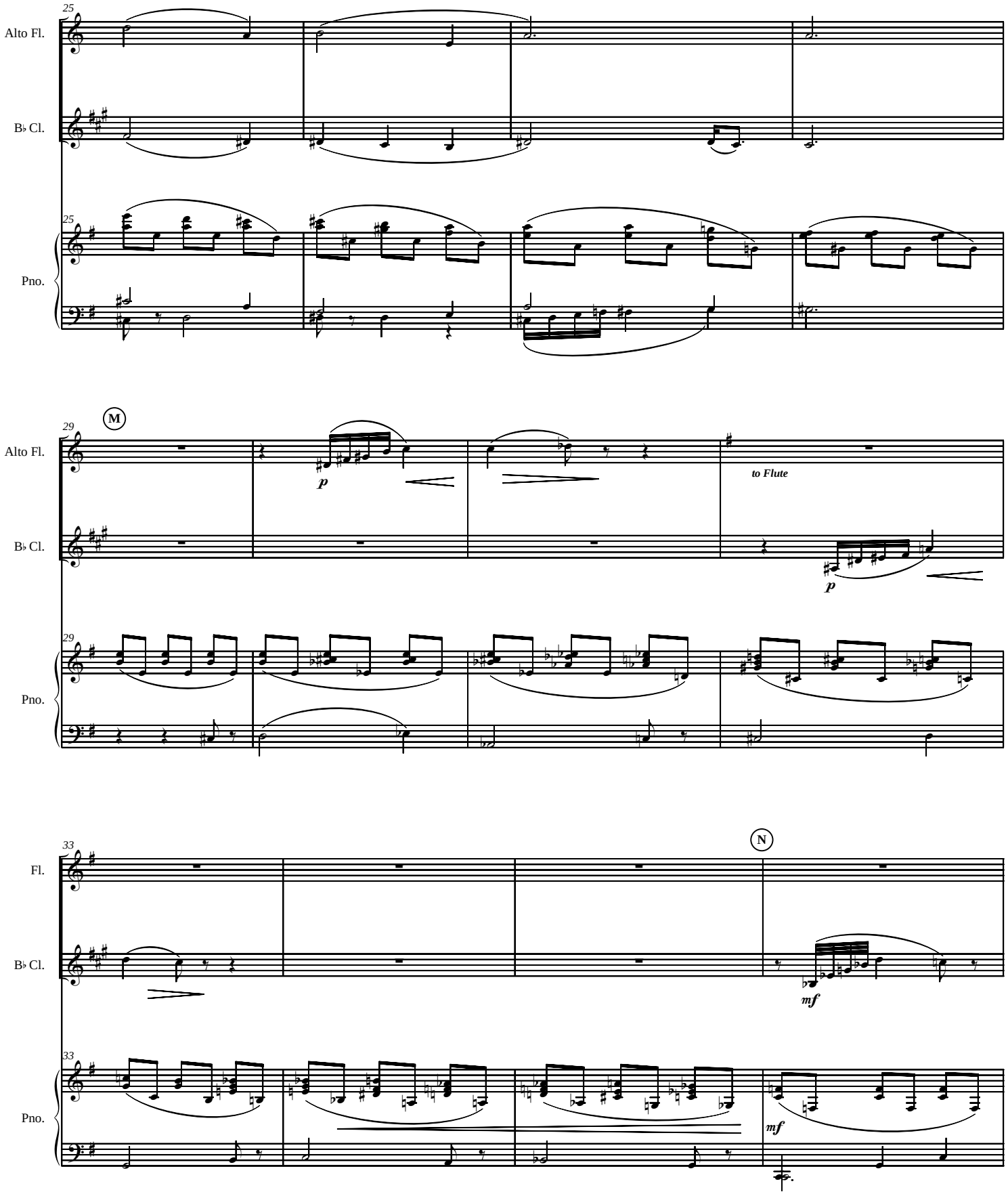

125
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
tr
f
ff
fz
127
piu f
129
sub. mf
sub. mf
sub. mf

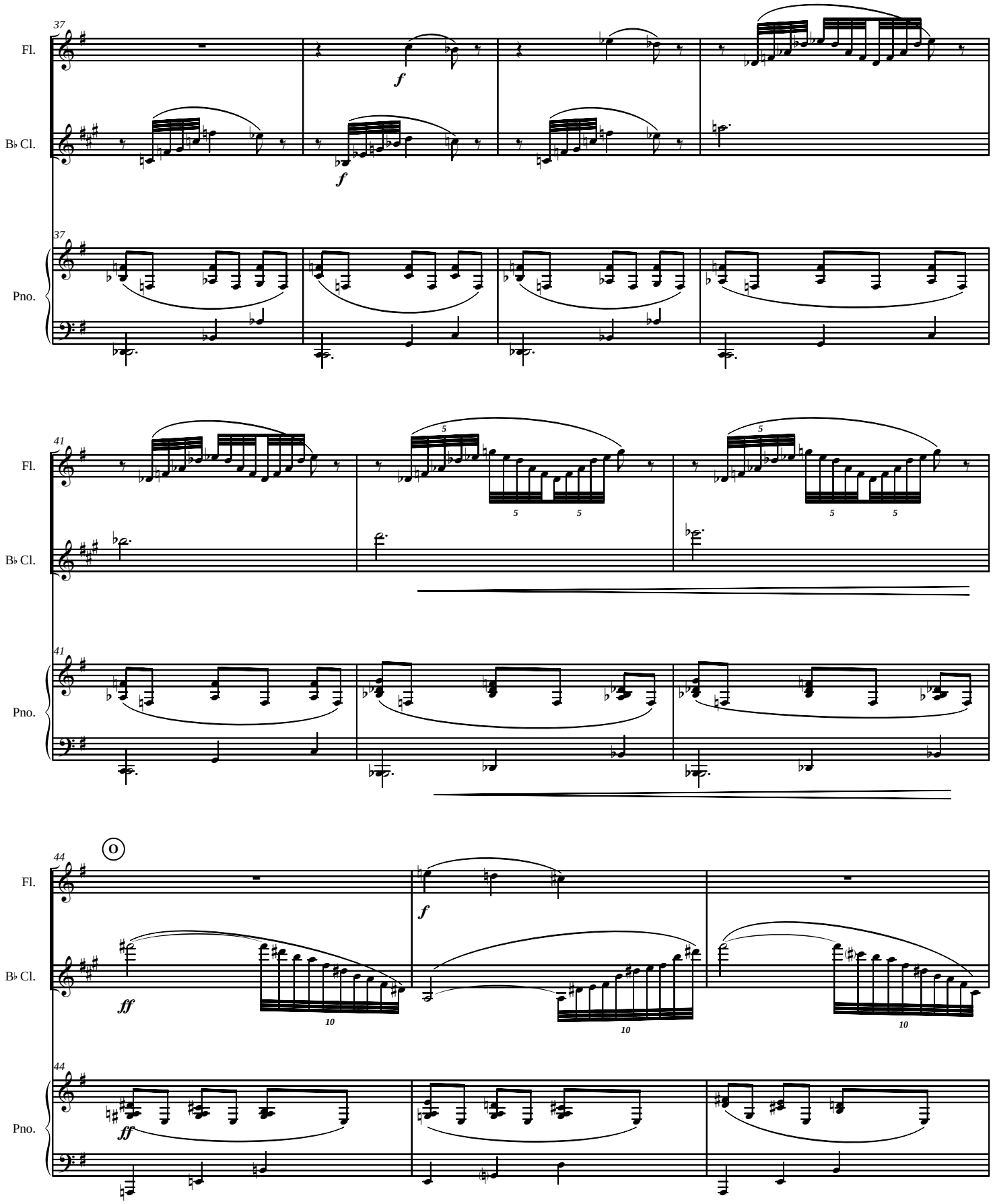

131
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
ff
pesante
133
f
p possibile
molto possibile
136
tr
mp
very, very long fermata
quickly to Alto Flute
attacca
roll from top to bottom
sfz

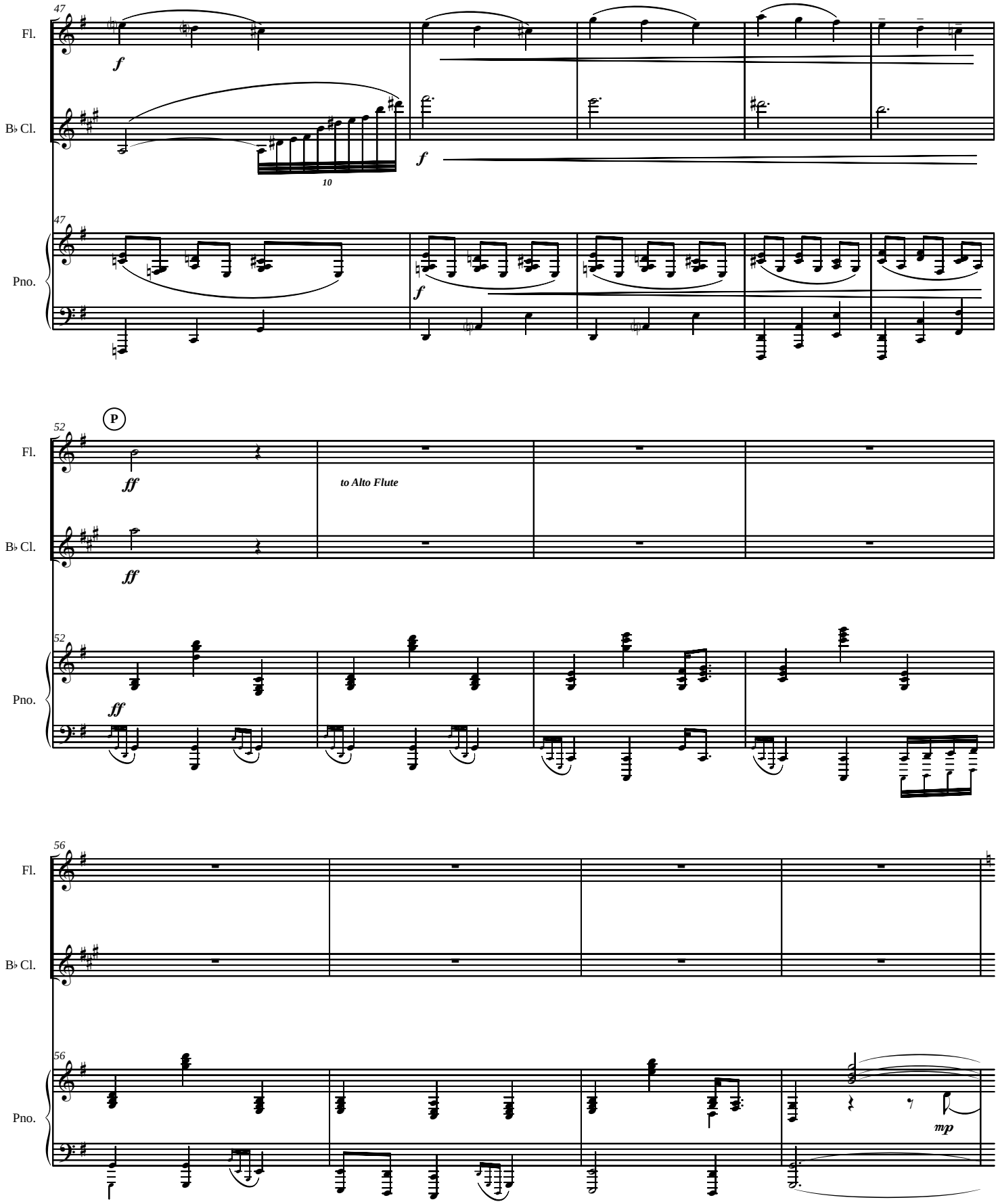
II. Reverie

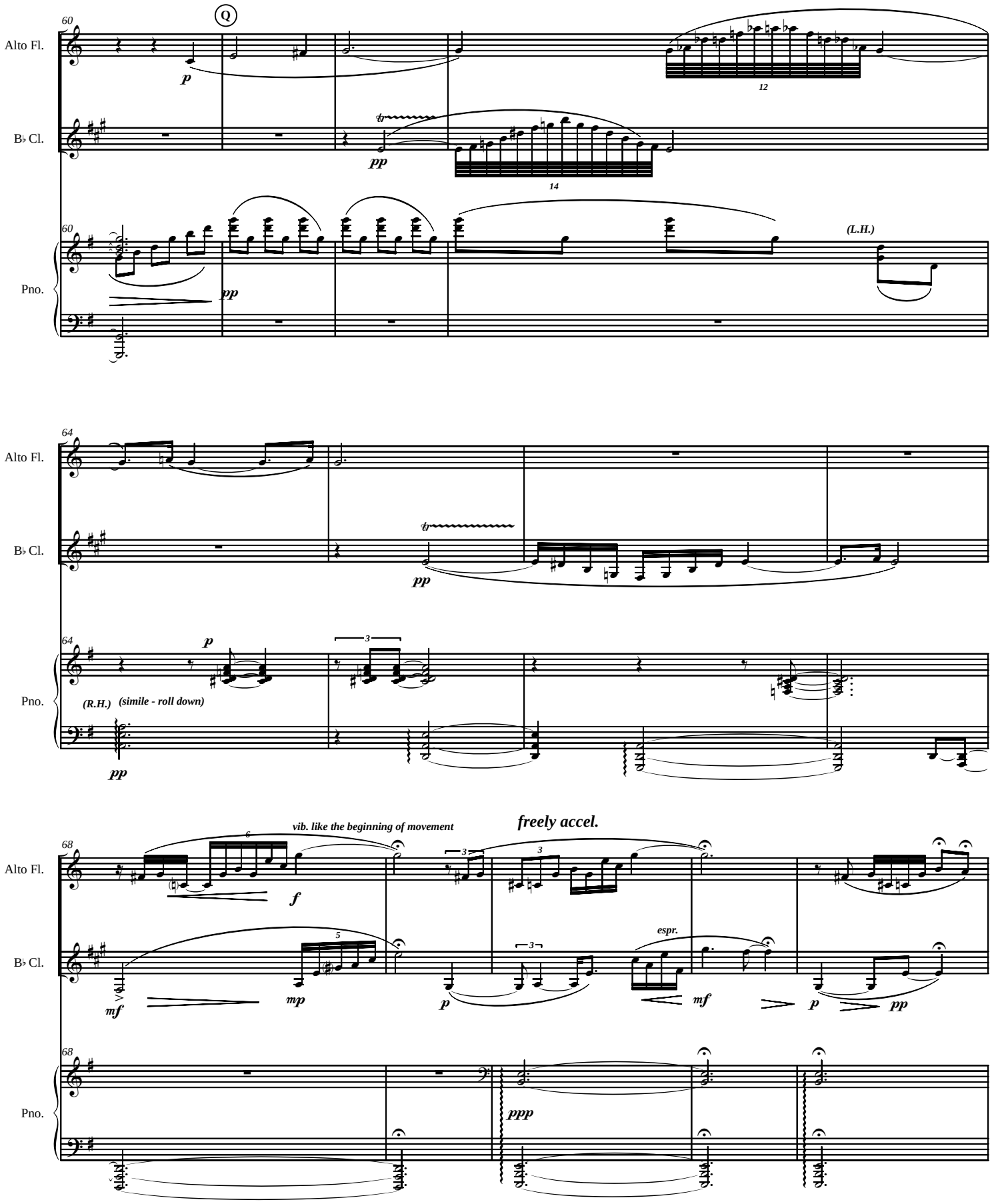

Adagio - religioso (♩= c. 40)
very little vibrato
freely accel.
Alto Fl.
p pensive
allow piano chord to diminish and ring
a lot before starting
B♭ Cl.
p
p
p
pp
p
(simile - roll down)
Pno.
ppp
ppp
ppp
Alto Fl.
f
(respond to piano)
B♭ Cl.
espr.
mf
mp
(incite flute)
mf
Pno.
ppp
Alto Fl.
p
B♭ Cl.
p
p
Pno.
(simile - roll down)
mf
mf
p
8va
loco
mp

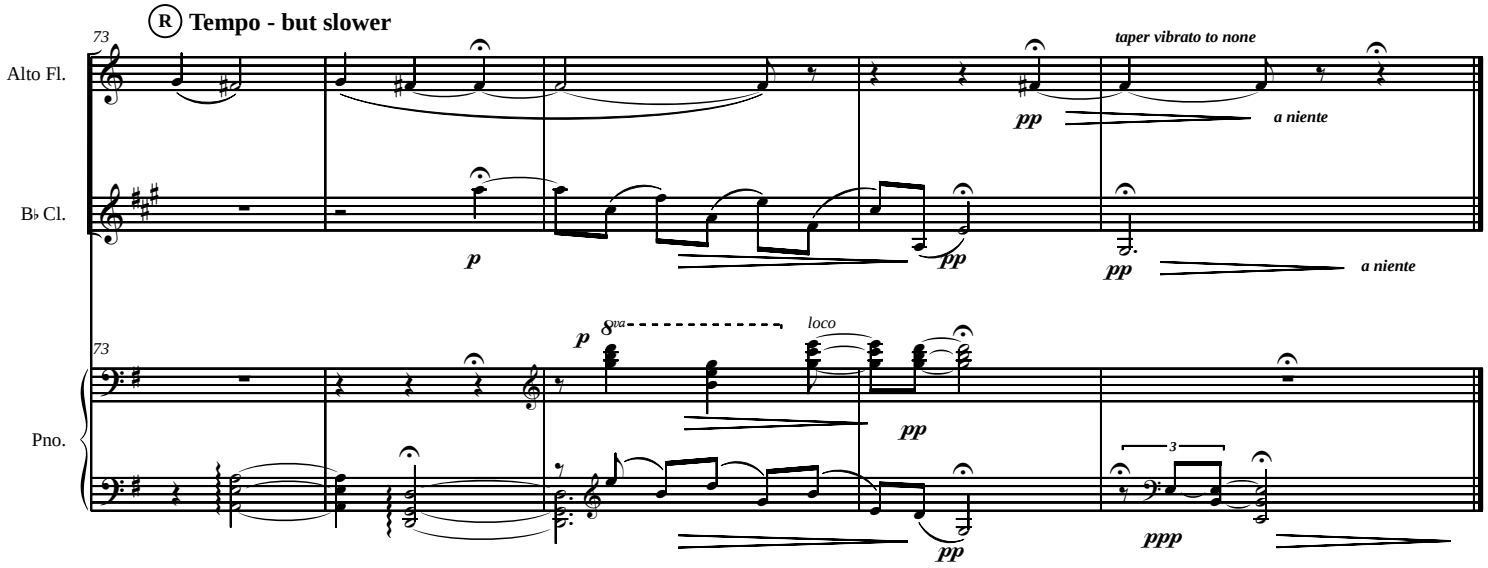

K
Tempo (♩= 60)
13
Alto Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
pp
a niente
poco
p
17
normal vibrato
(lead voice)
chorale
L
"Sweet Hour of Prayer"
(under clar.)
21


25
Alto Fl.
B♭ Cl.
25
Pno.
29
M
Alto Fl.
p
to Flute
B♭ Cl.
p
29
Pno.
33
N
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
mf
33
Pno.
mf


37
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
f
f
41
5
5
5
5
44
O
ff
ff
10
10
10


47
Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
f
10
P
52
ff
to Alto Flute
56
mp

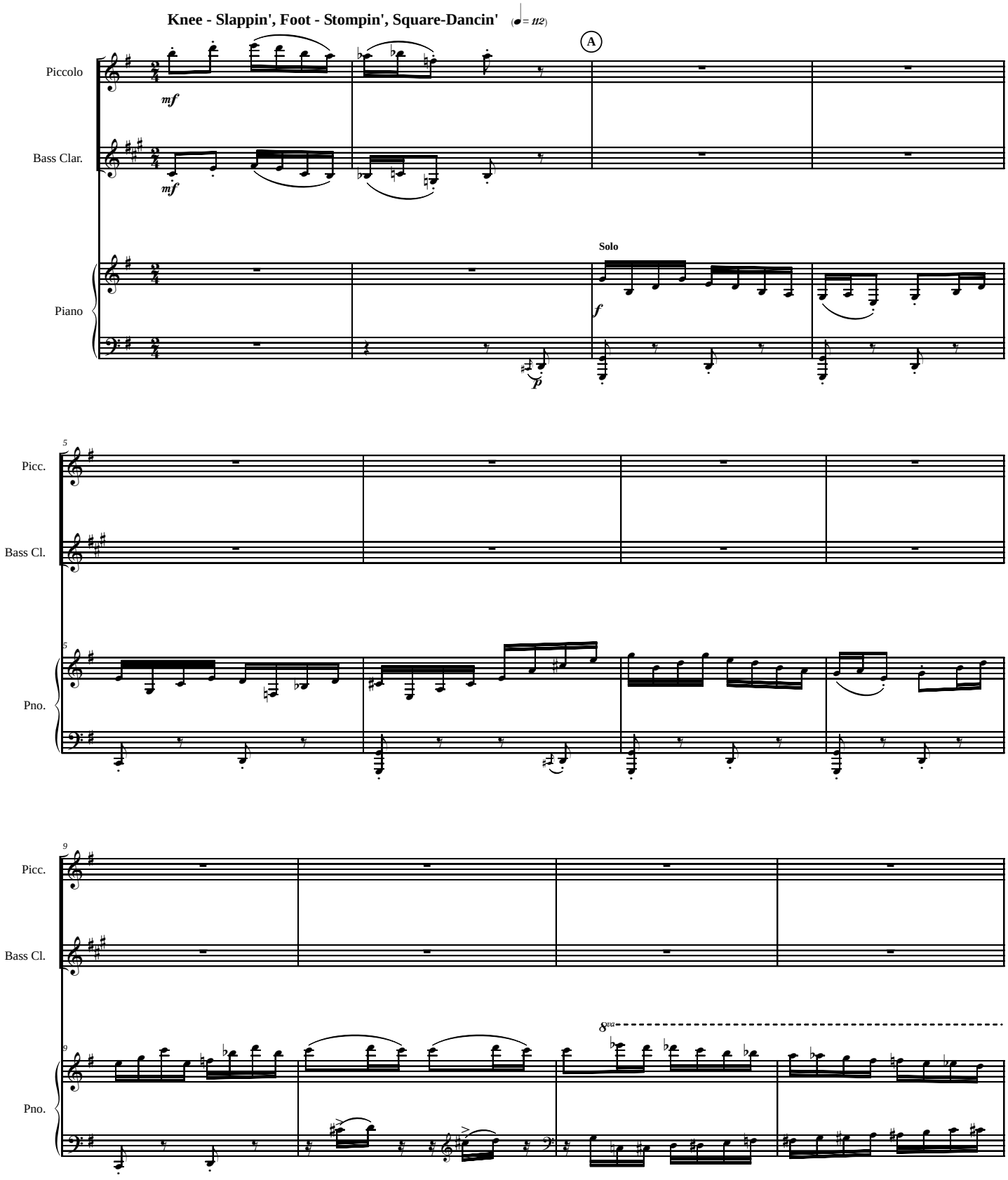

60
Q
Alto Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
p
pp
12
14
(L.H.)
64
(R.H.)
(simile - roll down)
68
vib. like the beginning of movement
freely accel.
f
mf
mp
espr.
ppp

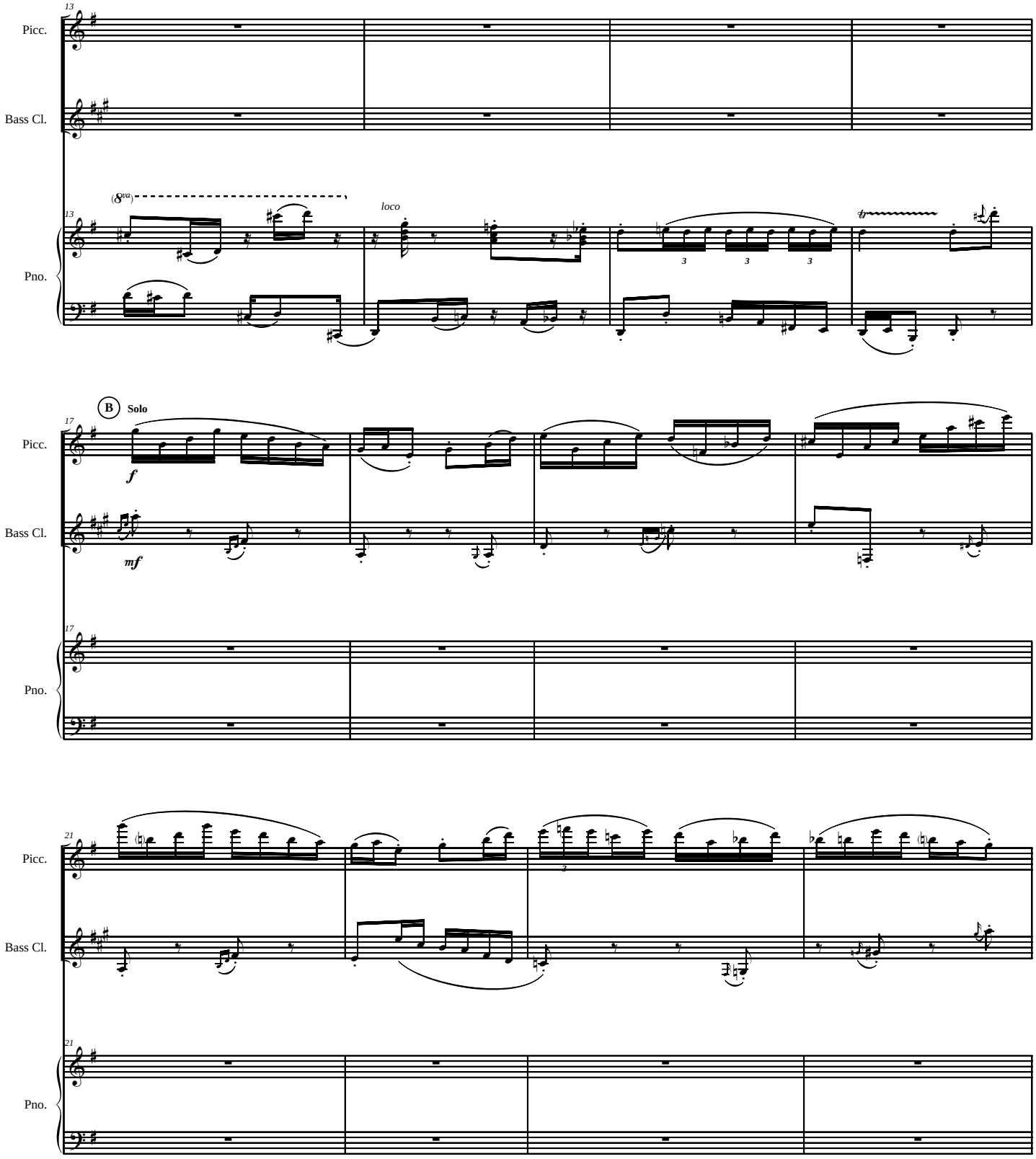

R Tempo - but slower
73
Alto Fl.
B♭ Cl.
Pno.
taper vibrato to none
pp
a niente
p
pp
a niente
8va
loco
p
pp
3
ppp
pp

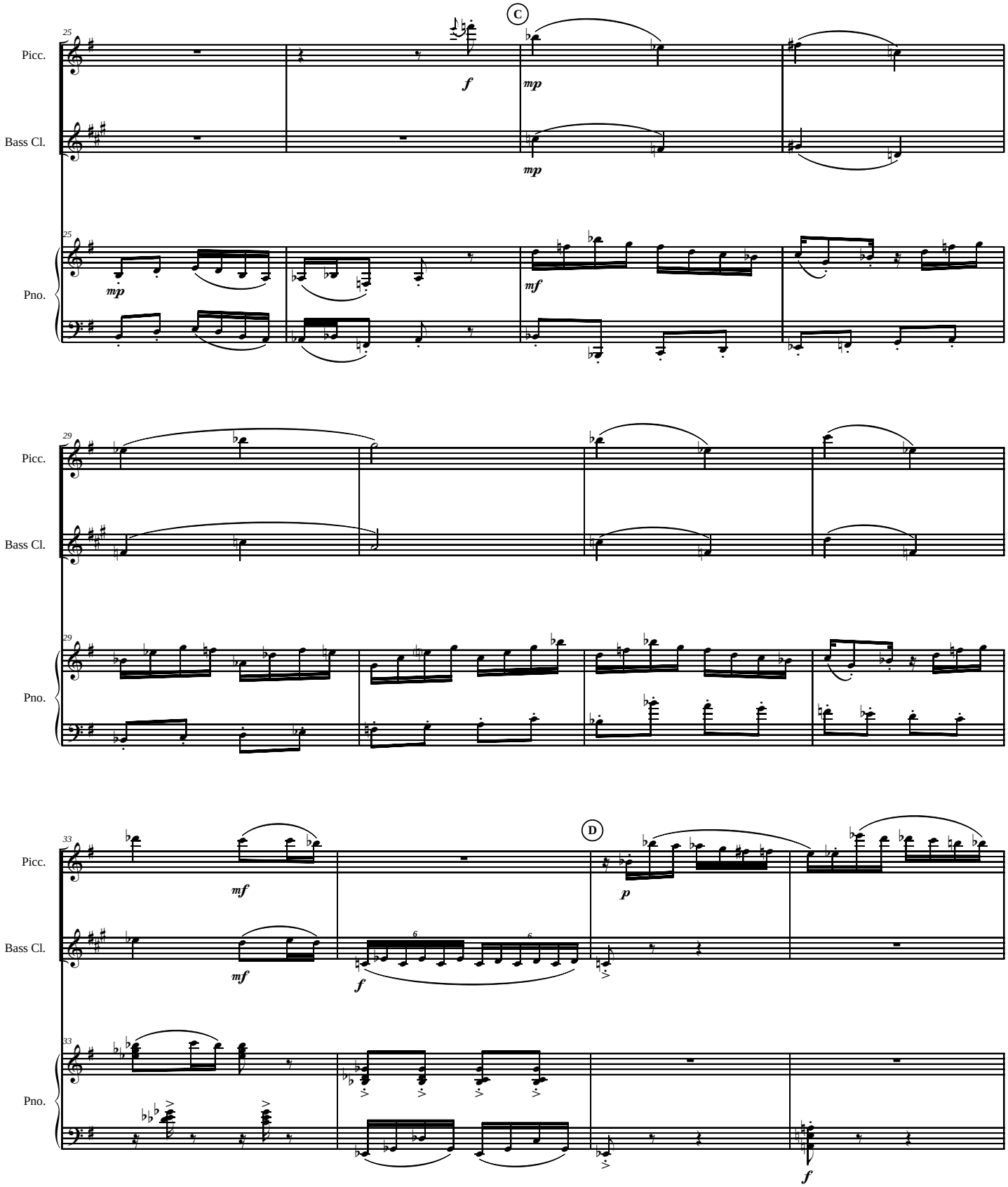
Mt. Laurel Suite

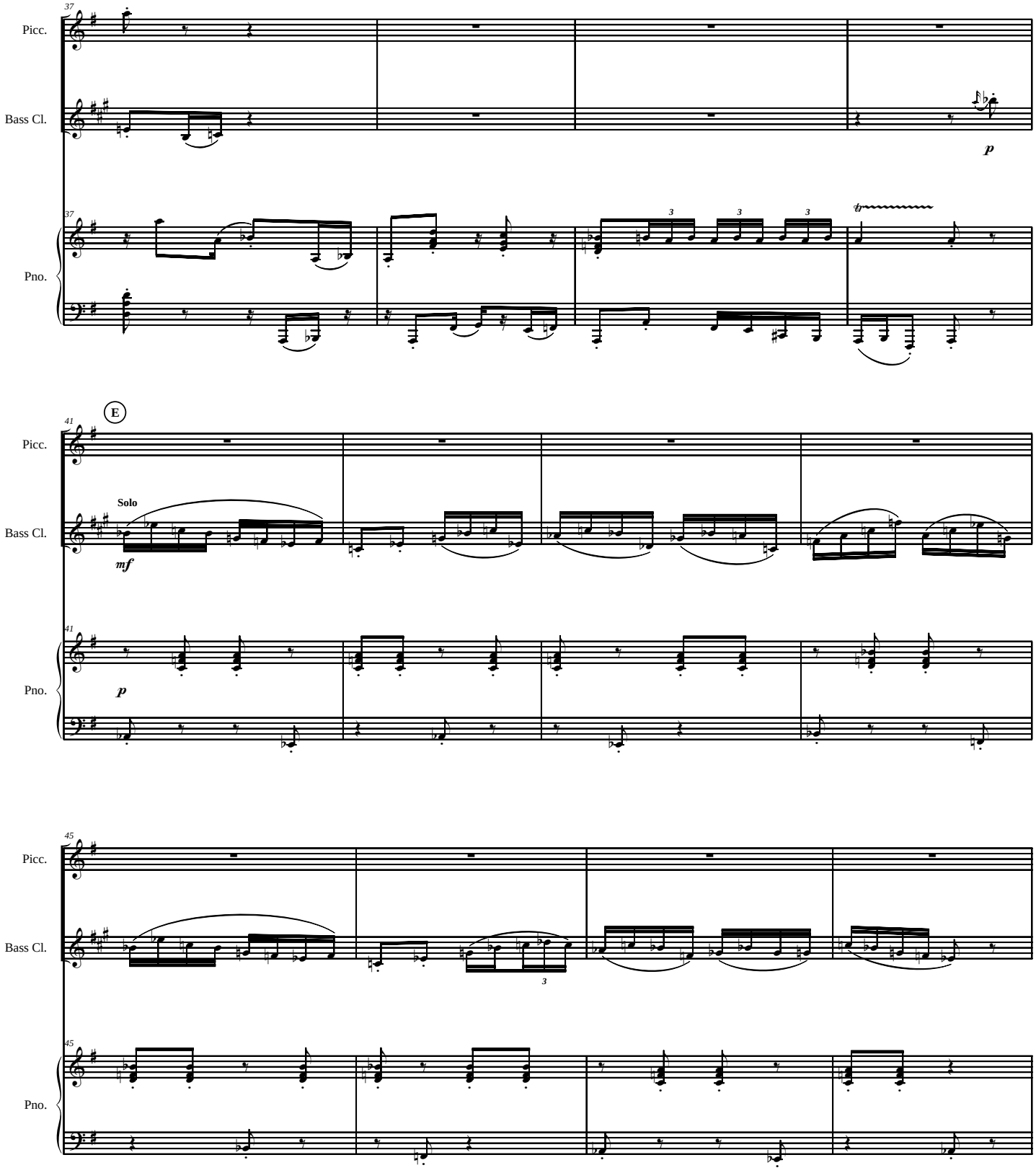
III. Celebration

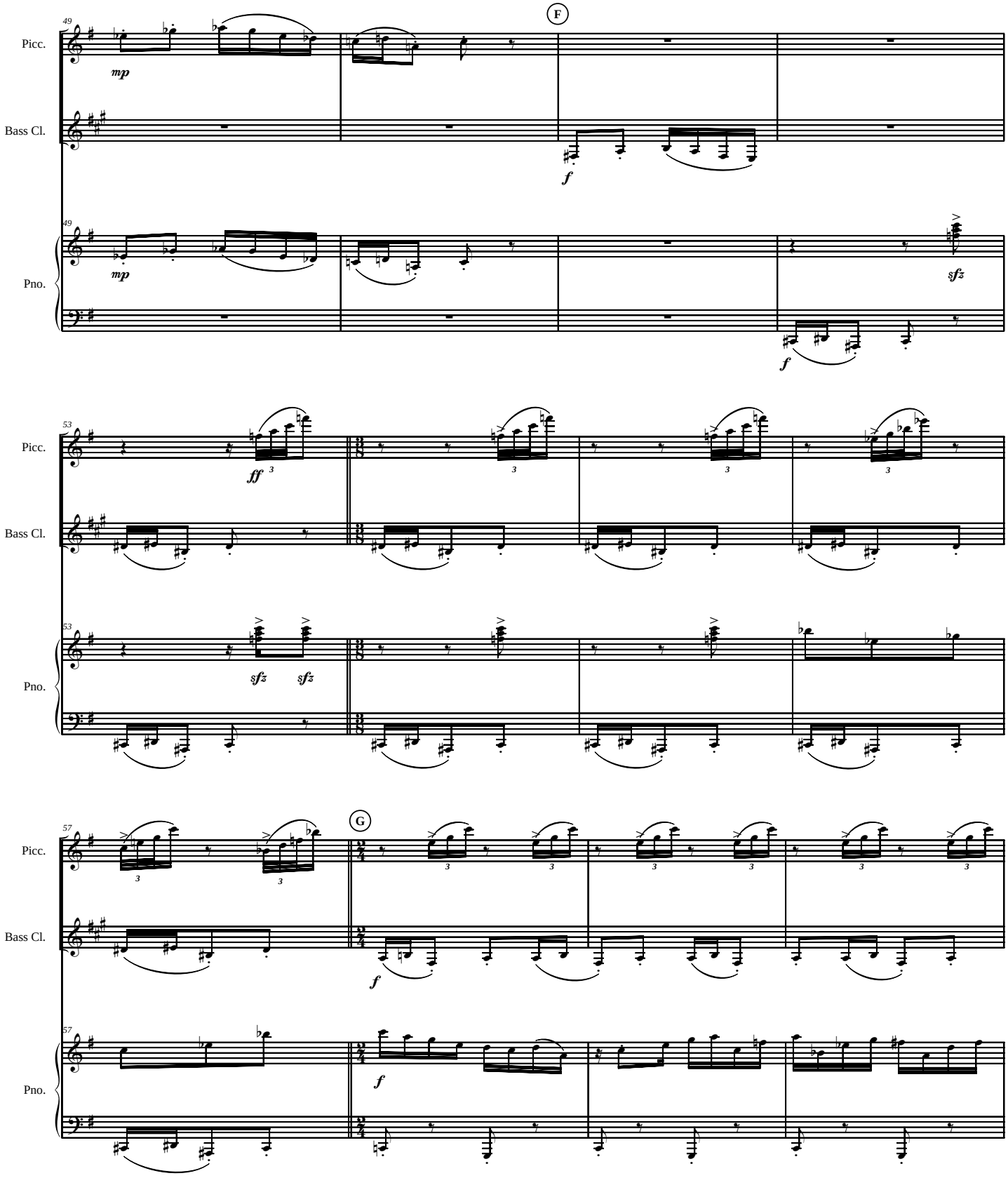
Knee - Slappin', Foot - Stompin', Square-Dancin' (♩ = 112)

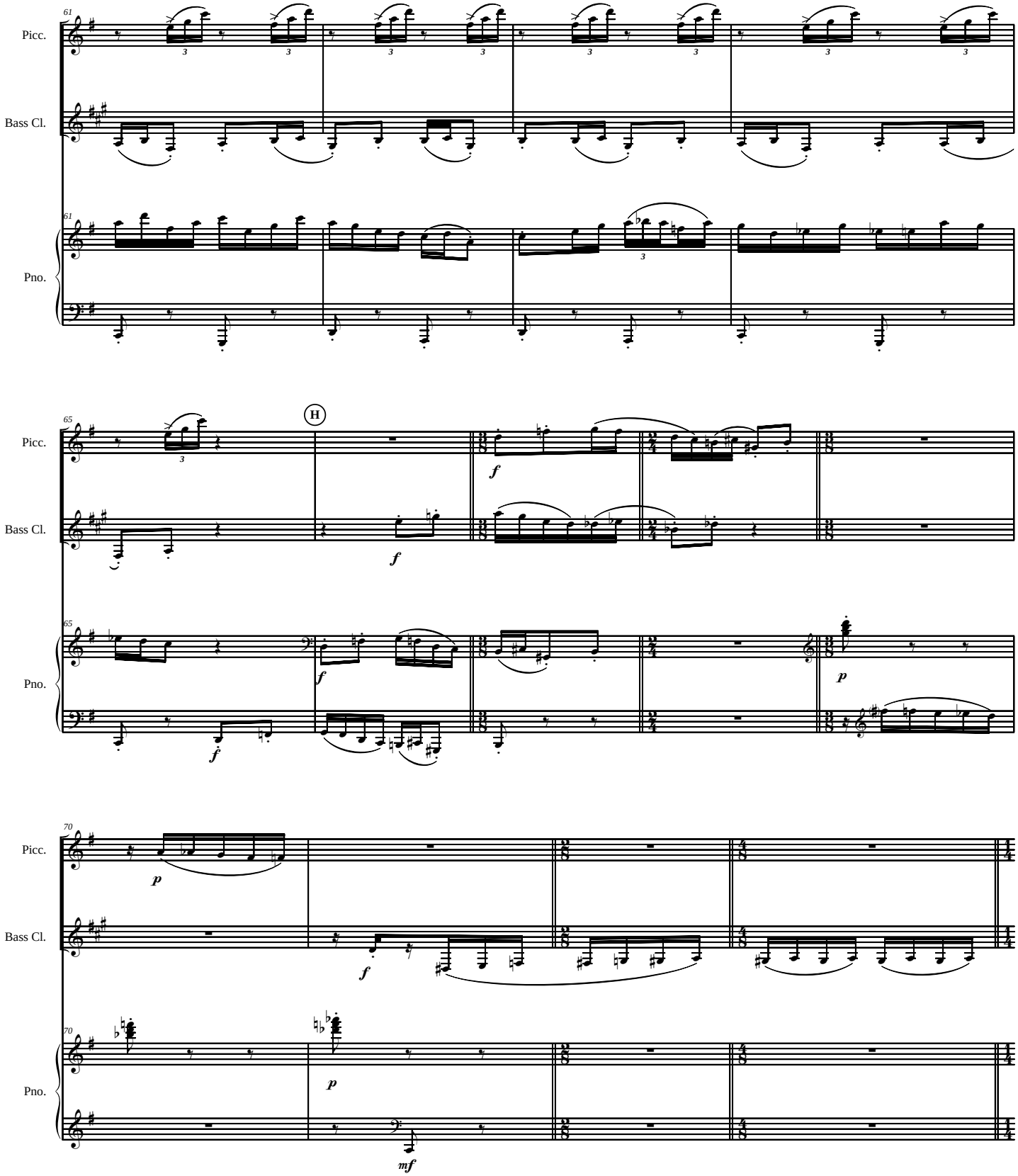


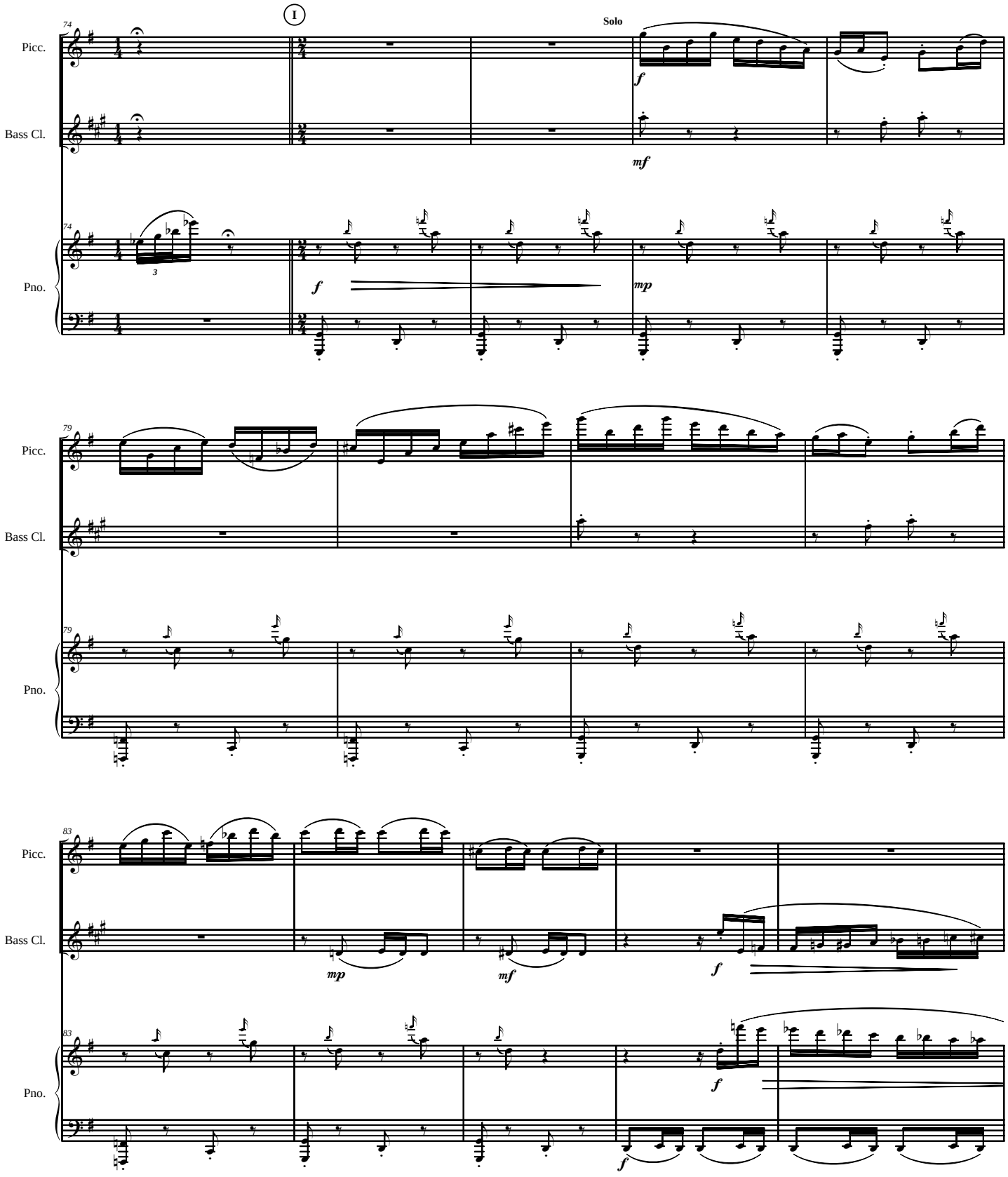

13
Picc.
Bass Cl.
(8va)
loco
Pno.
B
Solo
17
f
mf
21

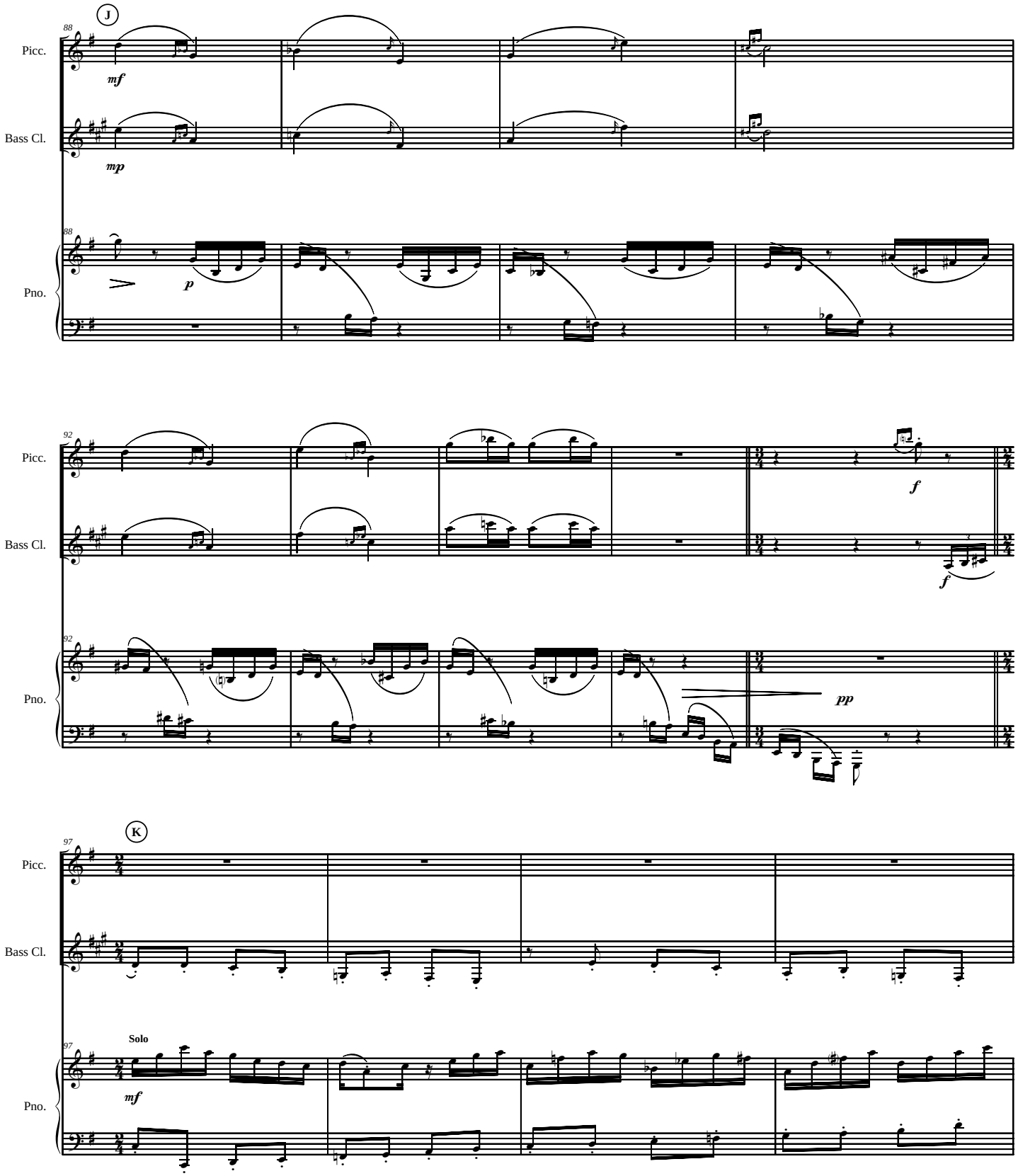

C
25
Picc.
Bass Cl.
Pno.
f
mp
mp
mp
mf
29
Picc.
Bass Cl.
Pno.
33
Picc.
Bass Cl.
Pno.
mf
mf
f
D
p
f

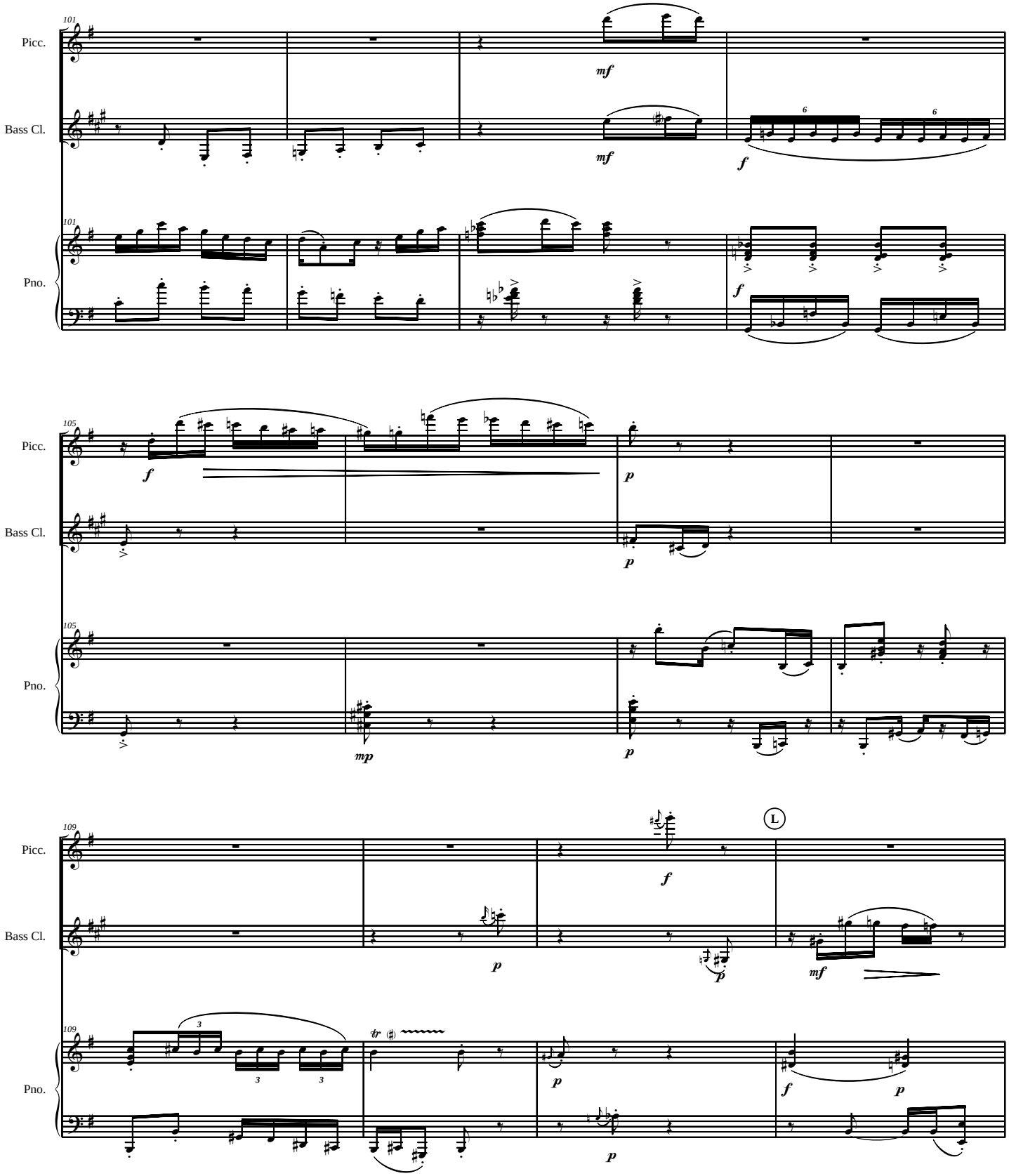

37
Picc.
Bass Cl.
Pno.
p
41
E
Solo
mf
p
45

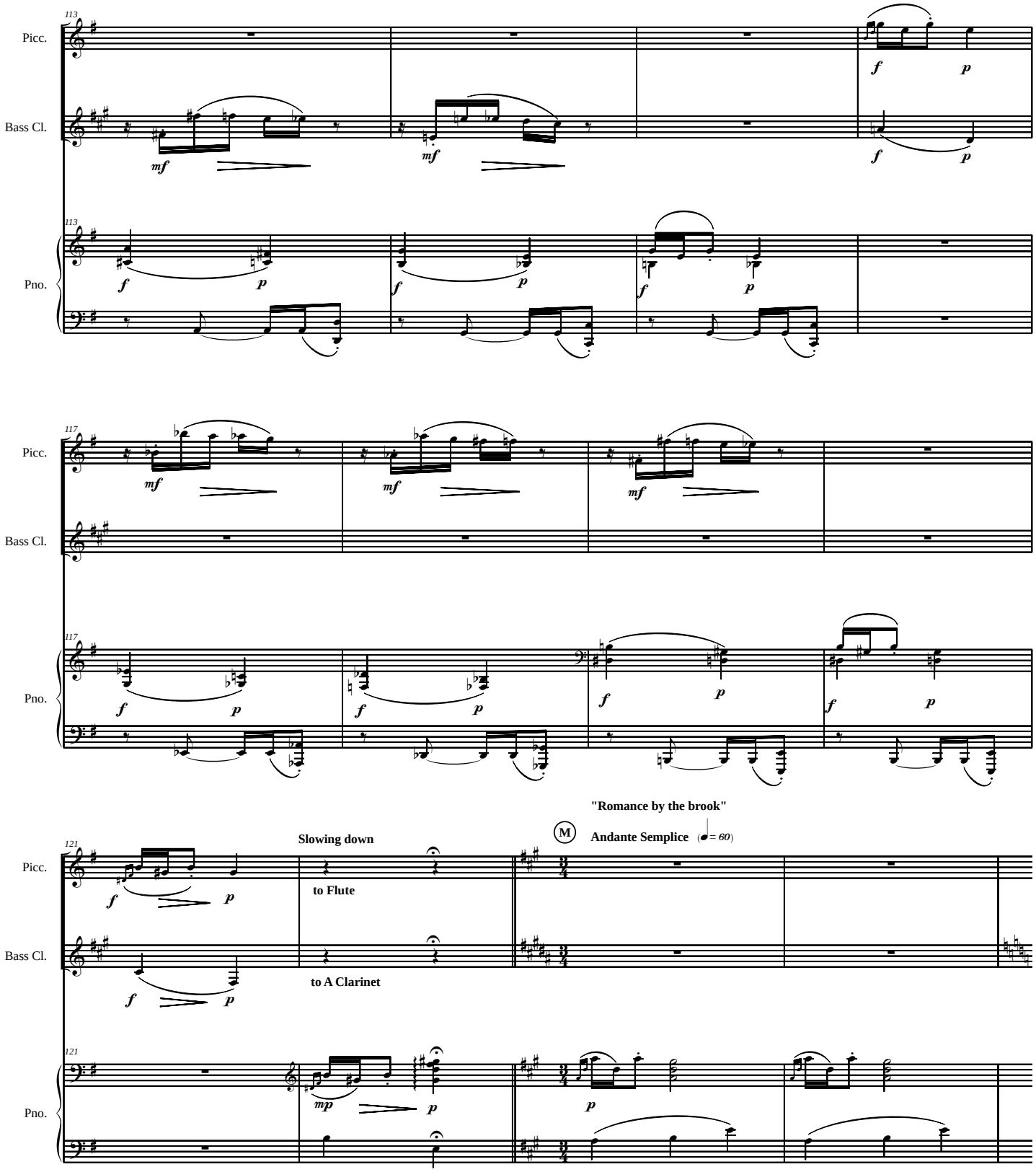

49
F
Picc.
Bass Cl.
Pno.
mp
f
sfz
53
ff
3
sfz
57
G

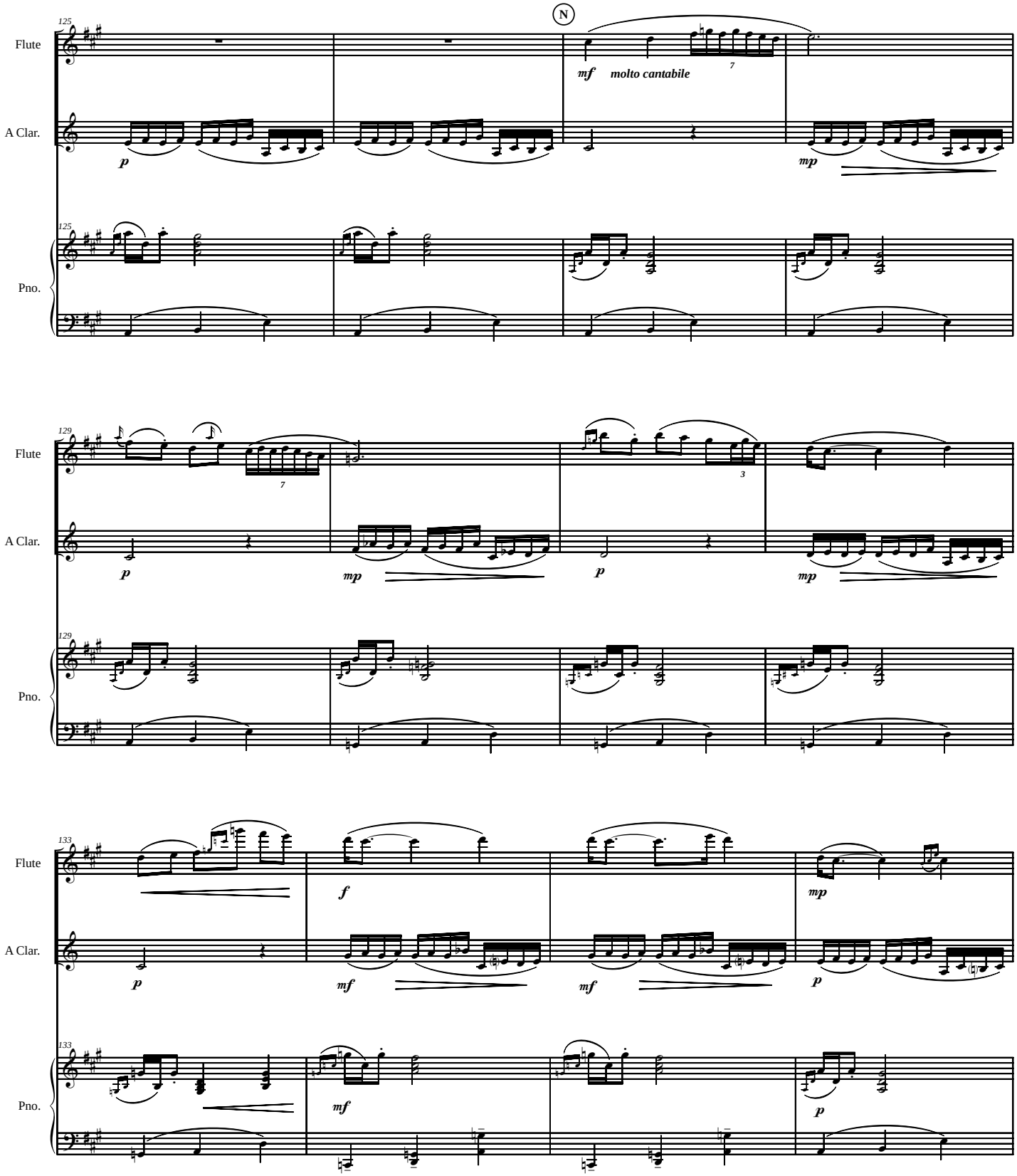

61
Picc.
Bass Cl.
61
Pno.
65
H
Picc.
Bass Cl.
65
Pno.
70
Picc.
Bass Cl.
70
Pno.

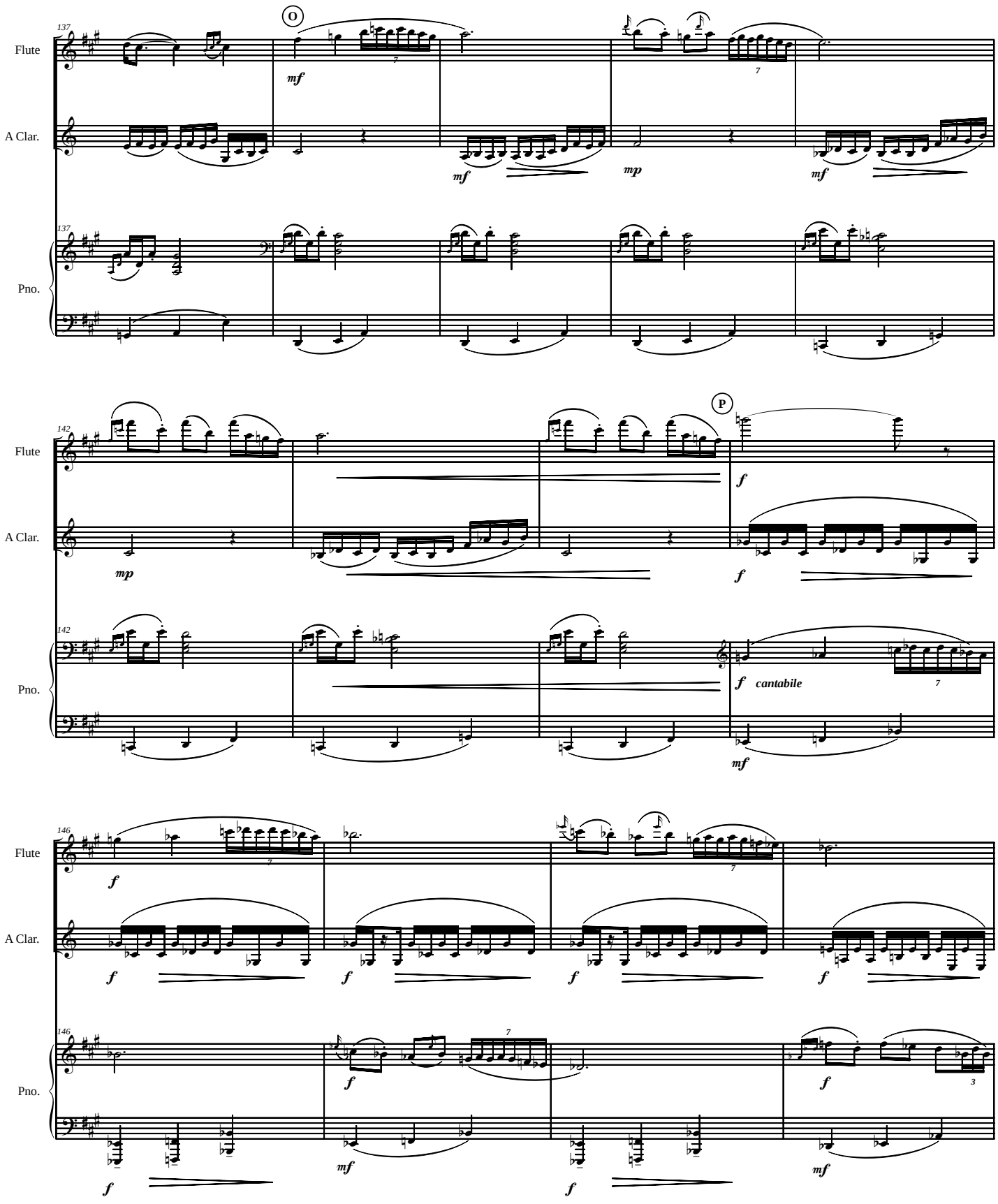

I
Solo
74
Picc.
Bass Cl.
Pno.
f
mf
mp
79
83

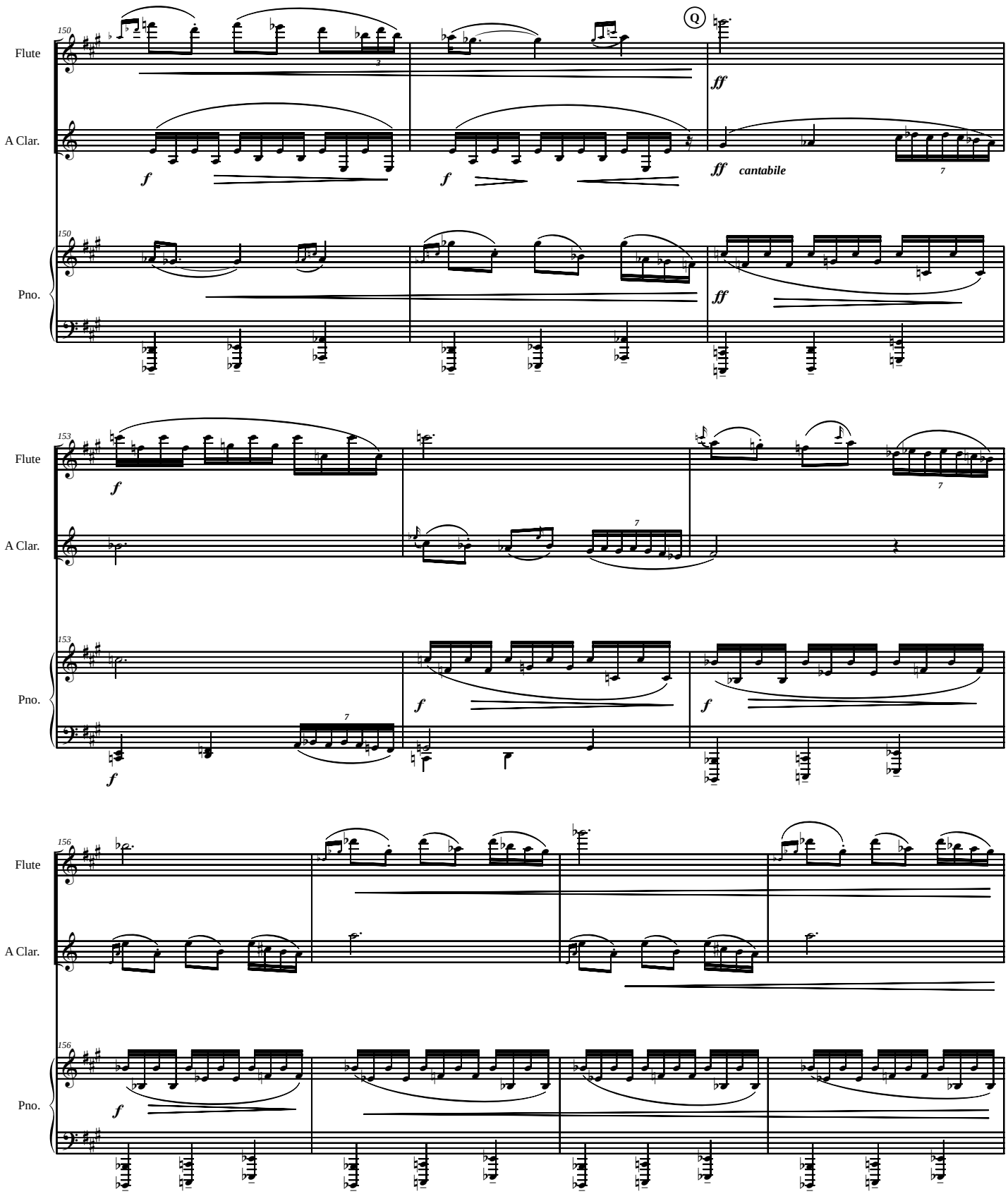

J
88
Picc.
mf
Bass Cl.
mp
88
Pno.
p
92
Picc.
f
Bass Cl.
f
92
Pno.
pp
K
97
Picc.
Bass Cl.
Solo
97
mf
Pno.


101
Picc.
Bass Cl.
Pno.
mf
mf
f
6
6
f
105
Picc.
Bass Cl.
Pno.
f
p
p
mp
p
109
Picc.
Bass Cl.
Pno.
f
L
p
p
mf
3
3
3
tr
p
p
f
p


113
Picc.
Bass Cl.
Pno.
117
Picc.
Bass Cl.
Pno.
"Romance by the brook"
Slowing down
M
Andante Semplice (♩= 60)
121
Picc.
to Flute
Bass Cl.
to A Clarinet
Pno.


125
Flute
A Clar.
Pno.
N
mf molto cantabile
p
mp
129
mp
p
133
f
mf


137
O
Flute
A Clar.
Pno.
mf
mp
mf
142
P
f
cantabile
146


150
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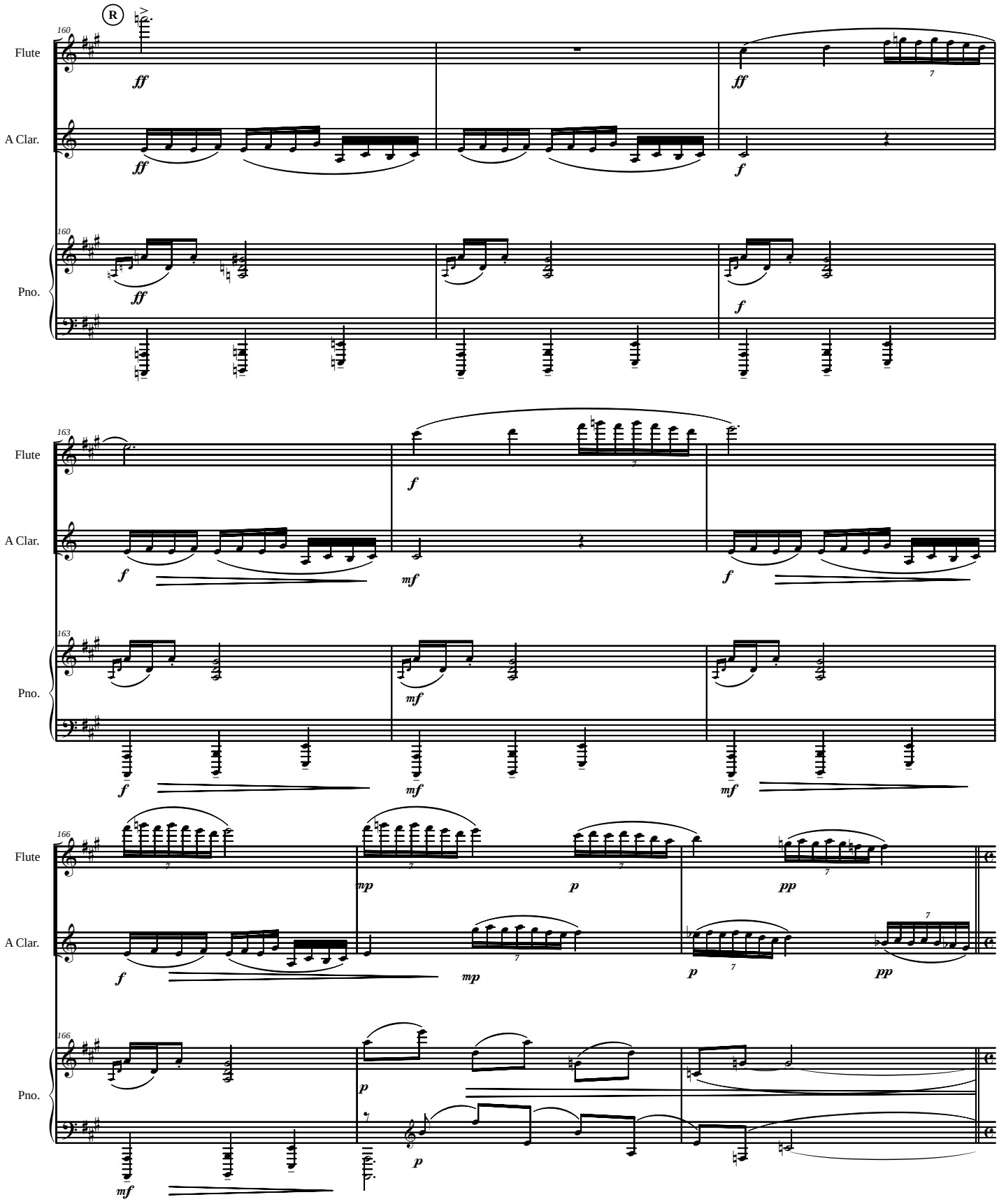
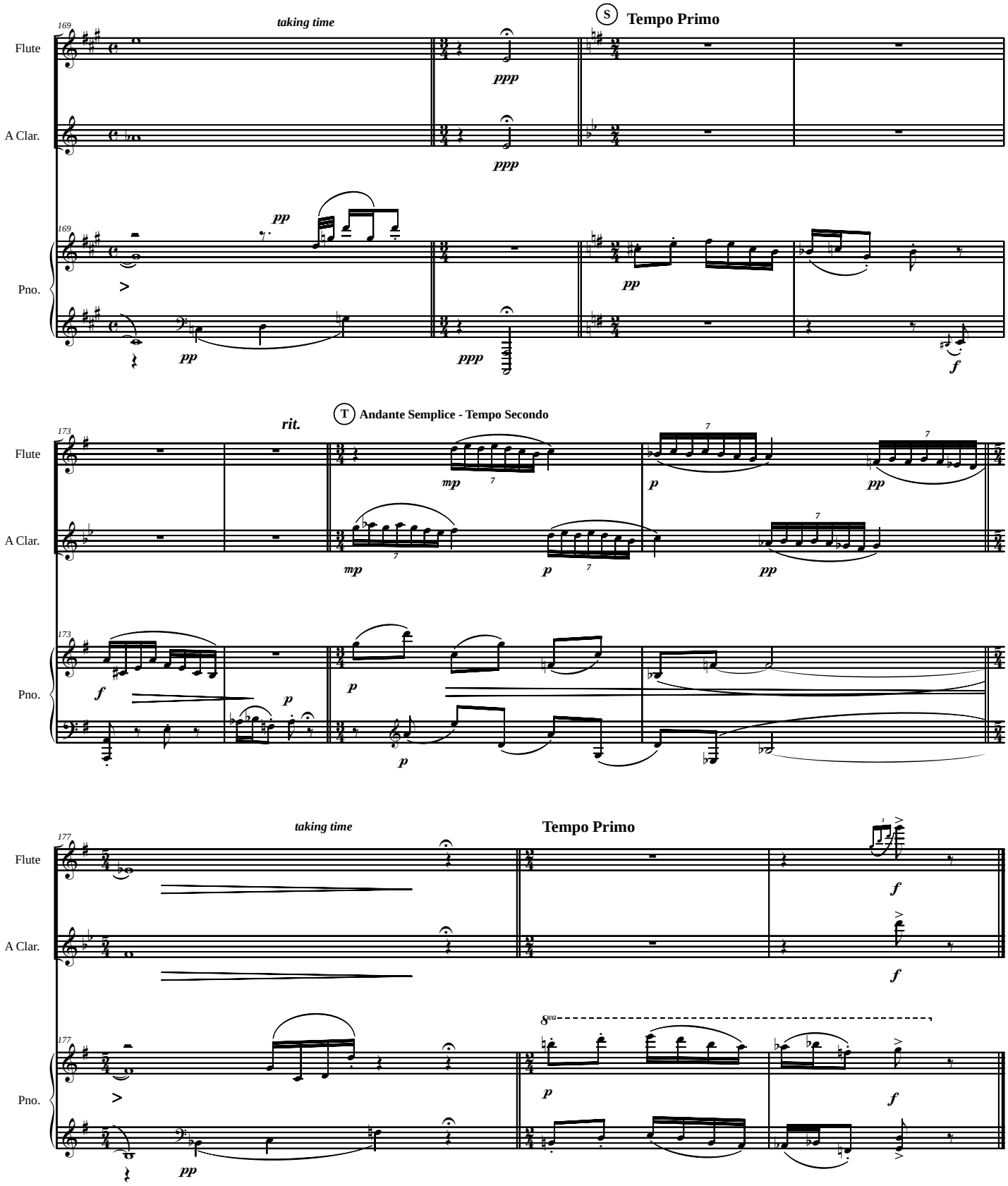
A Clar.
Pno.
Q
ff
f
cantabile
153
156


R
160
Flute
A Clar.
Pno.
ff
f
163
mf
166
mp
p
pp


169
taking time
S
Tempo Primo
Flute
A Clar.
Pno.
ppp
pp
f
173
rit.
T
Andante Semplice - Tempo Secondo
mp
p
177
taking time
Tempo Primo
8va