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...the unread pages of a journal...were unfolded, leaf by leaf...

Max Gibson

String Quartet. 2018

…the unread pages of a journal…were unfolded, leaf by leaf… is a musical response to the poetry of Aileen Ballantyne, a poet from Edinburgh, Scotland, who I collaborated with on the St Magnus Festival Composition Course 2017. Aileen wrote a triptych based on her experiences as a journalist in the Scottish town of Lockerbie, at the time of the Lockerbie Bombing in 1988. My original response to this poetry was not particularly successful, and therefore this composition is a remedy to that.

The premiere of this coincides with the 30th Anniversary of the Lockerbie Bombing.

M. G. 2018.

Performance Notes

Figure F - Here the players are to contiuously glissandi upwards (retakes of bowings and pitch are allowed), in a relentless manner, with lots of overtone and scratch tone timbres, increasing as the gesture goes on. The players may either use a stopwatch, or count, at which point at the end of their given time duration, the player is to individually move on to G.

Figure G - The players individually play this section on repeat, at any tempo they feel natural; once all players are playing this melodic fragment and have moved on from Figure F, they are to repeat it 3 times (for the final player this means that they play this section a total of 4 times). On the final playthrough the players should sustain and stick on the last note of Figure G.

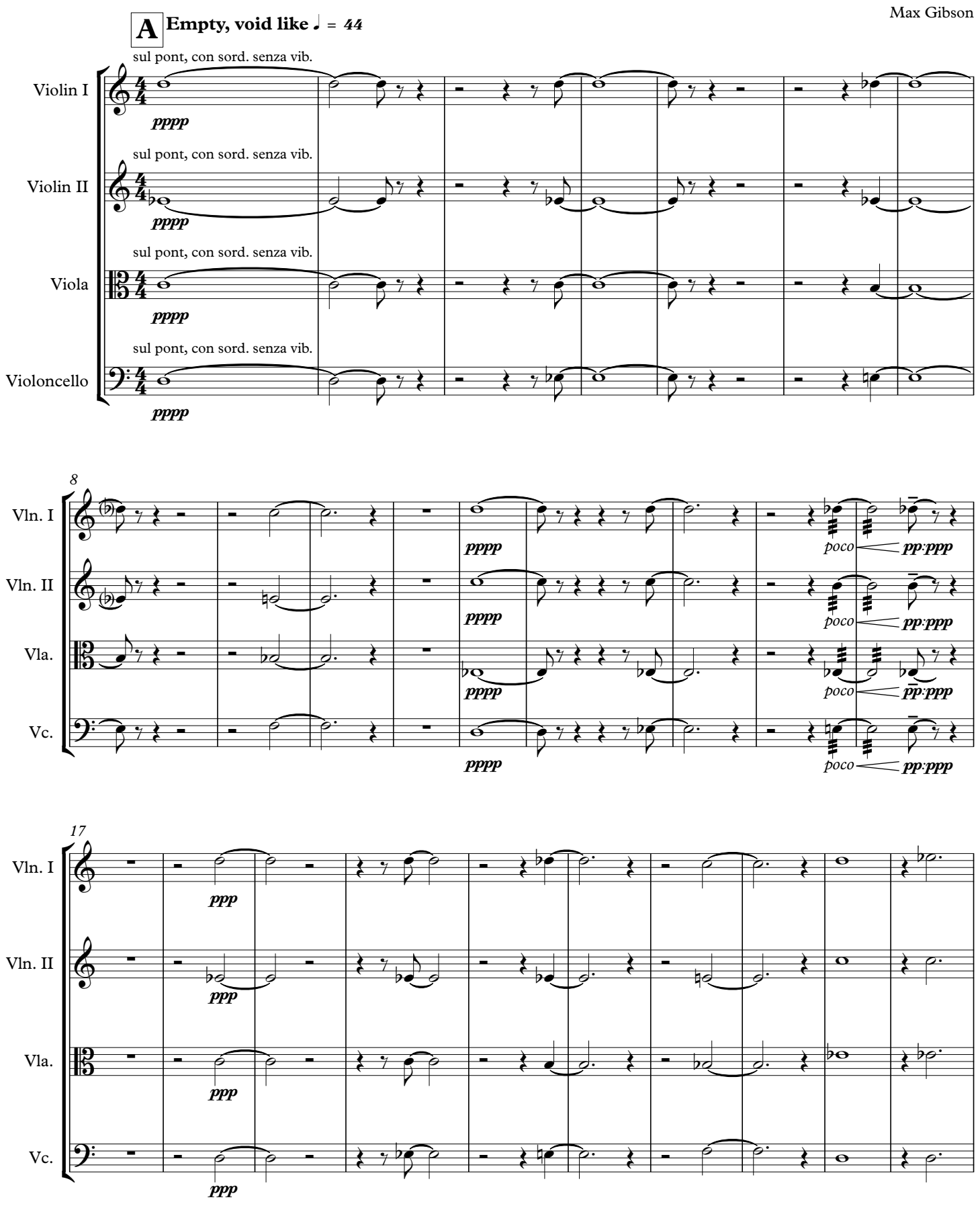
Dotted slurs/ties indicate that the player should attempt to tie the two notes, but still allows room for the retake of a phrase (it is given particularly to prepare glissandi).

All trills are by the tone, unless otherwise stated.

Duration: c. 16 minutes

…the unread pages of a journal…were unfolded, leaf by leaf…

Max Gibson



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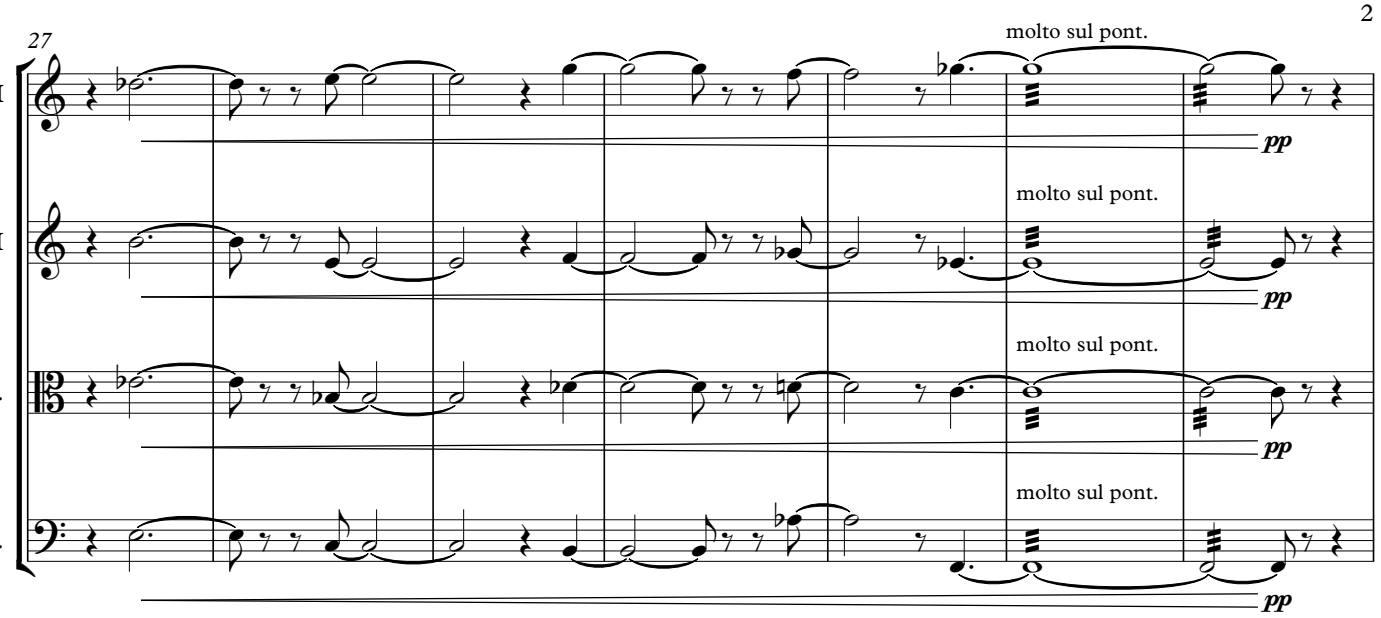
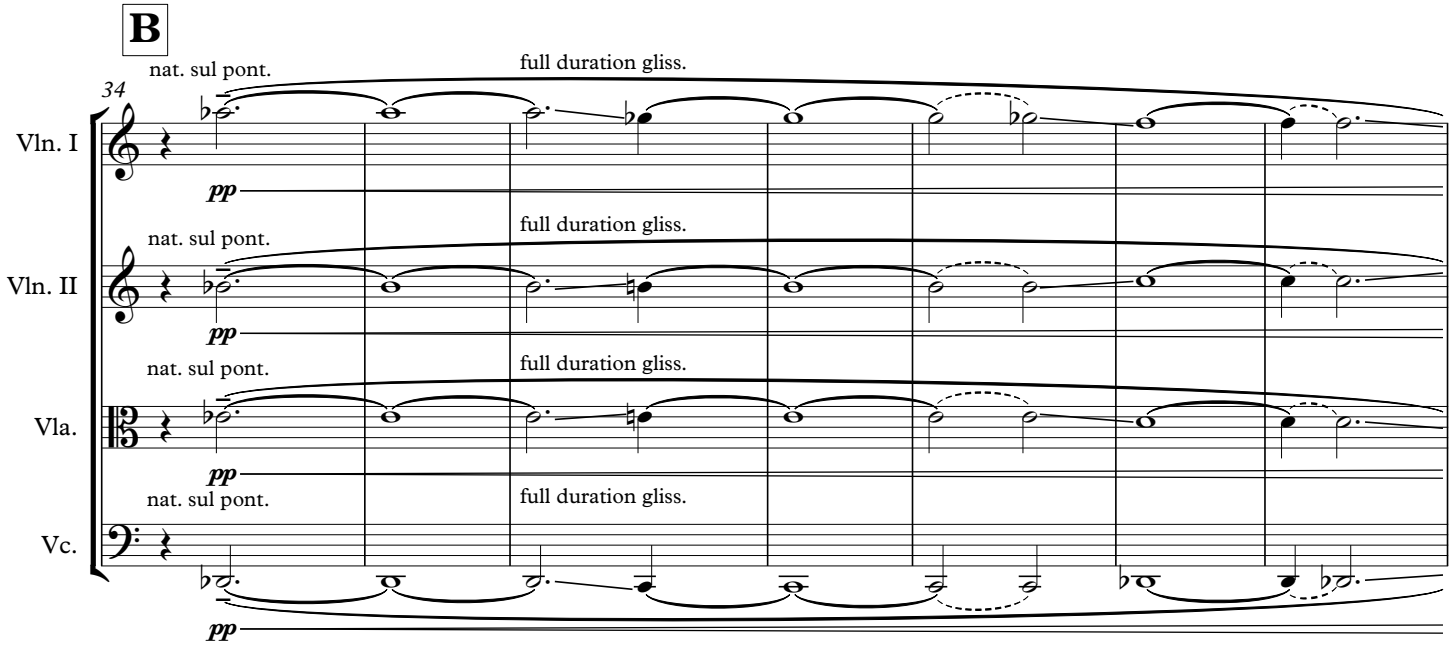
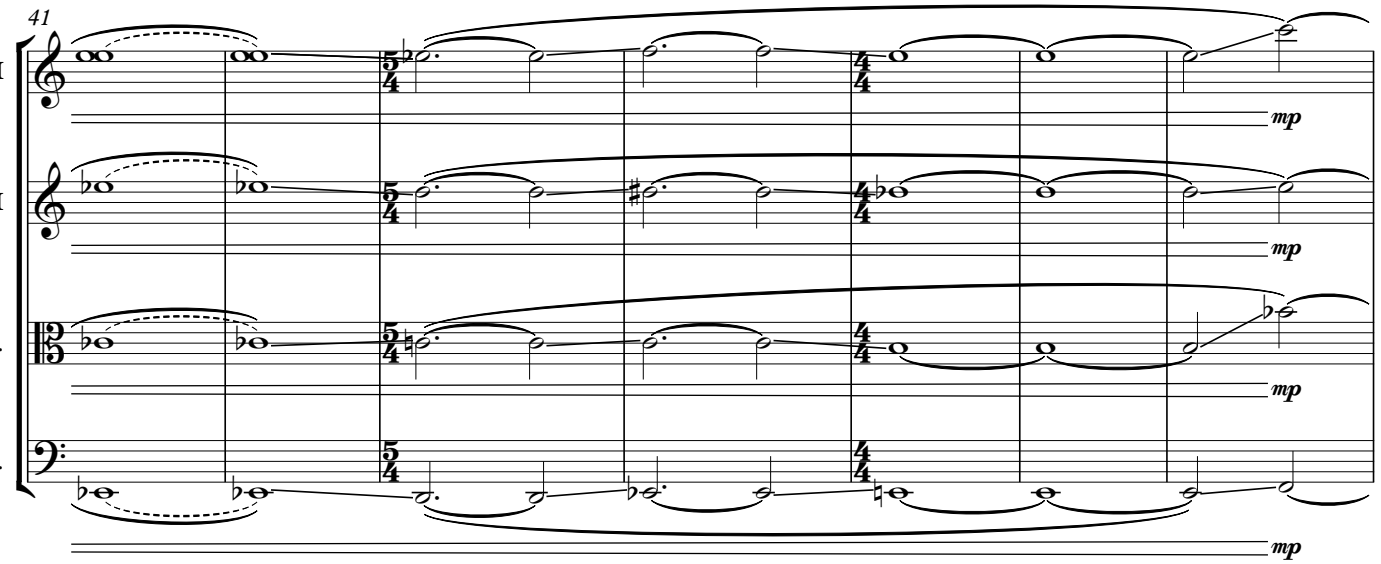
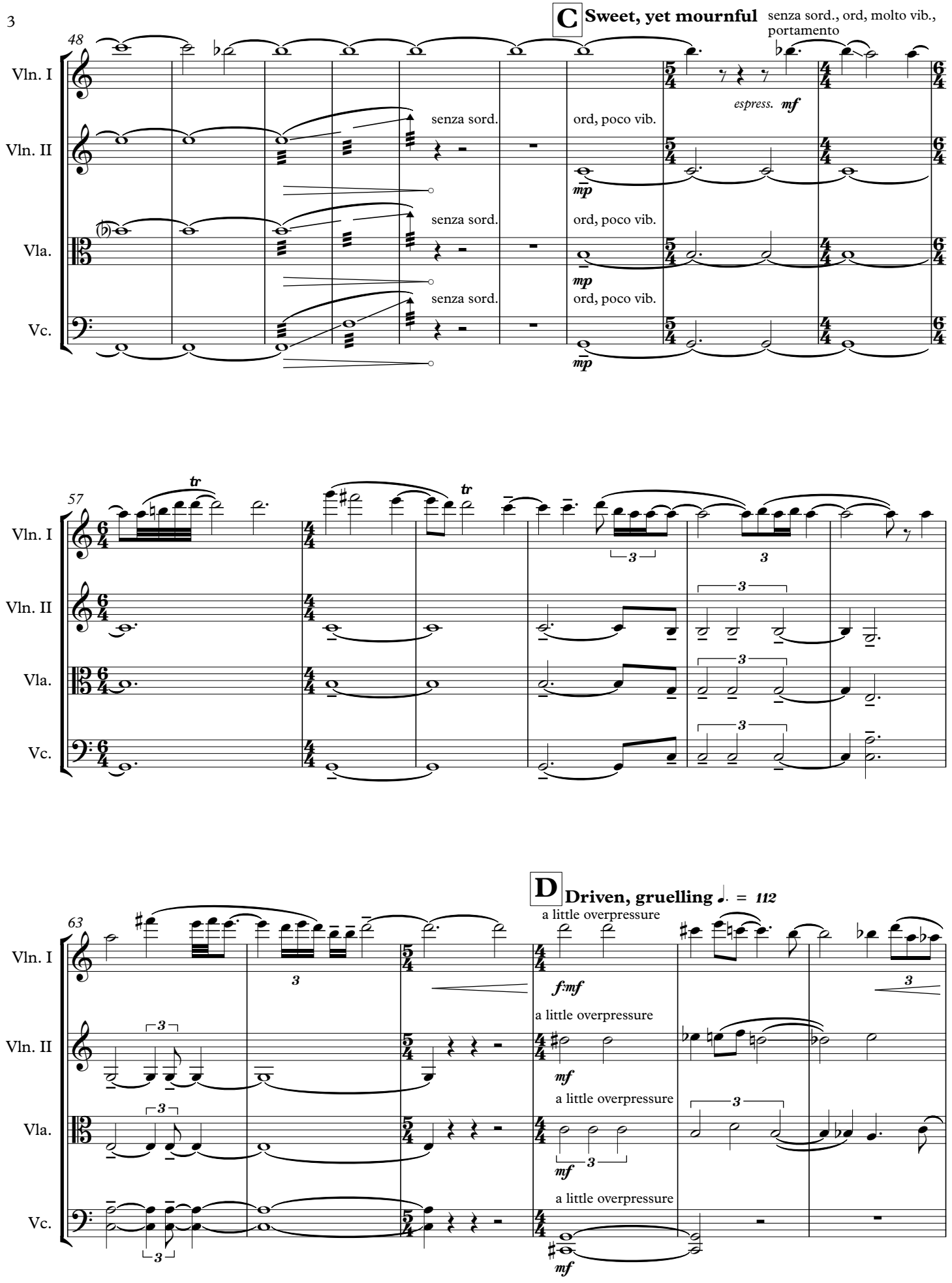
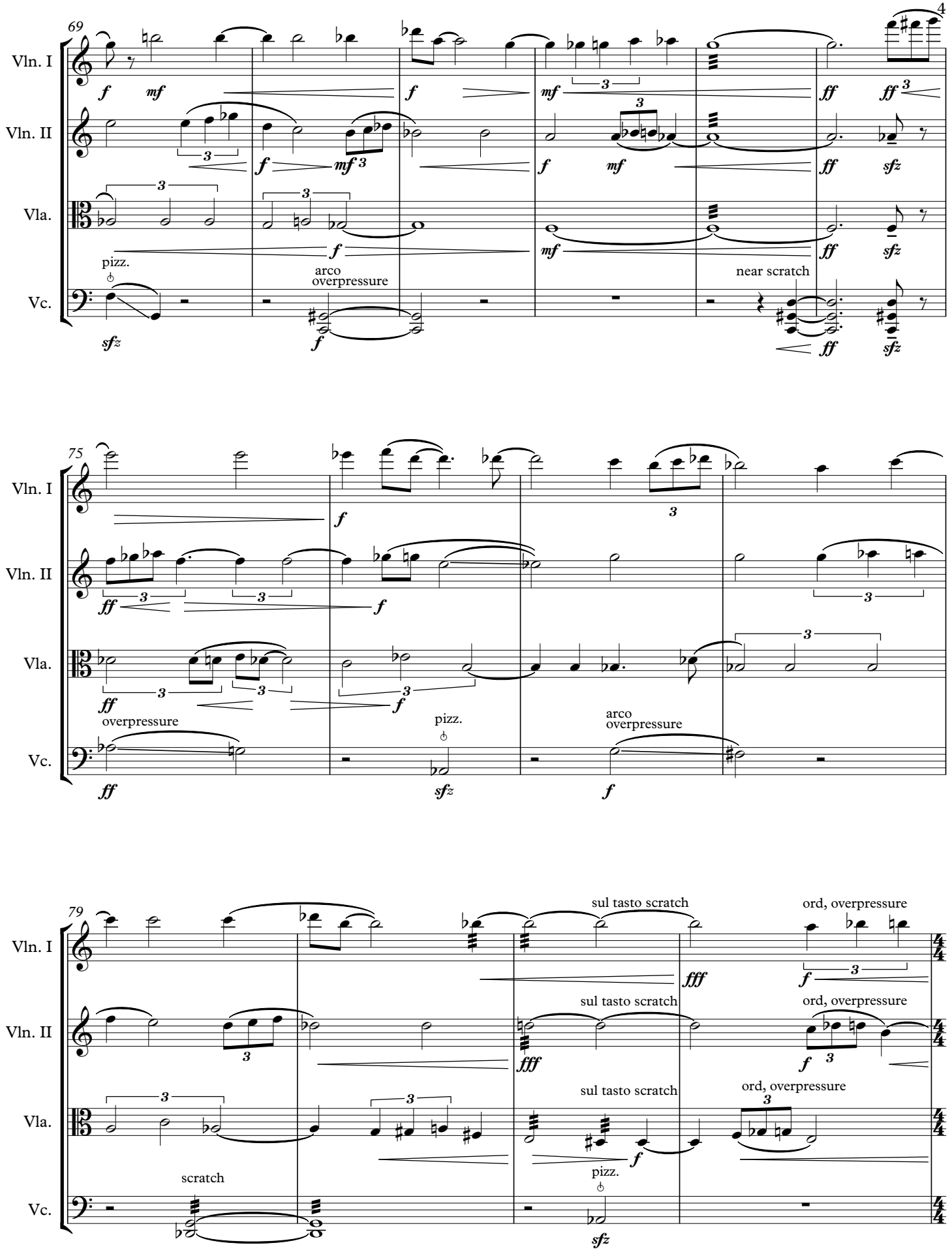
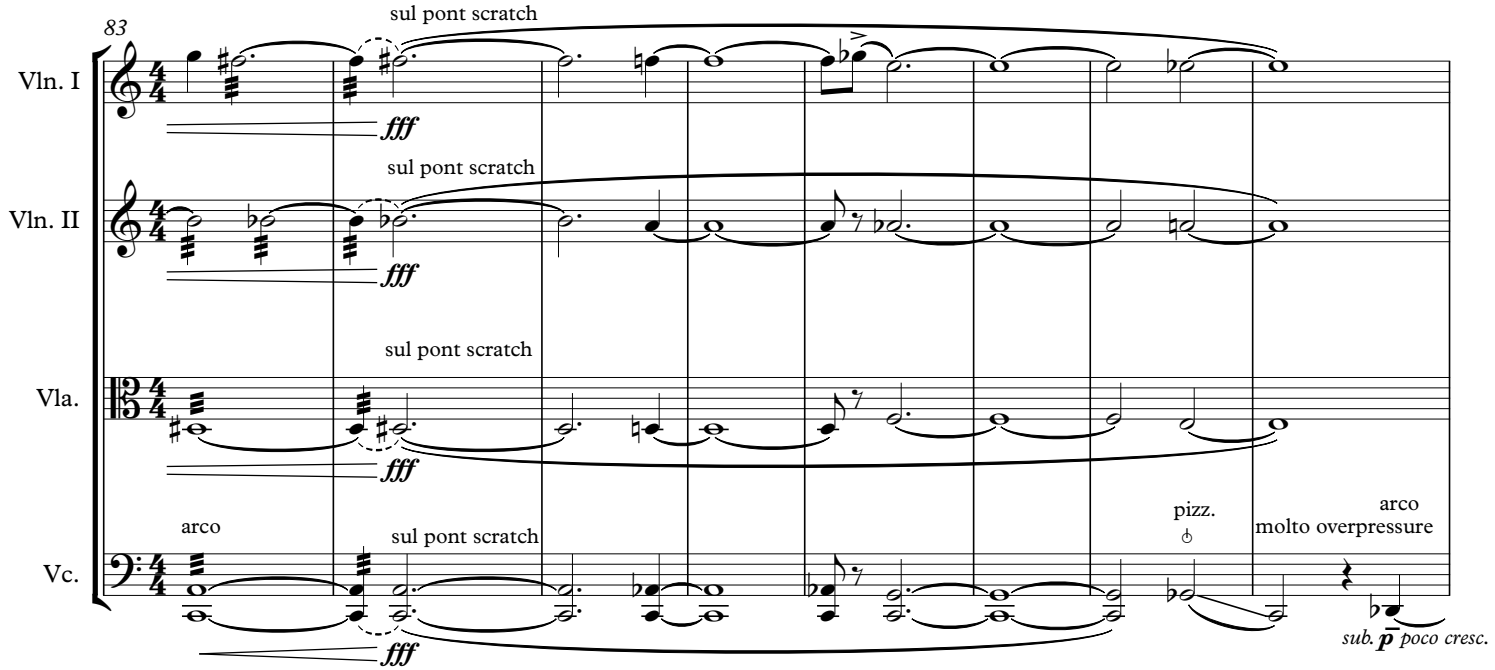

27
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
molto sul pont.
molto sul pont.
molto sul pont.
molto sul pont.
pp
pp
pp
pp

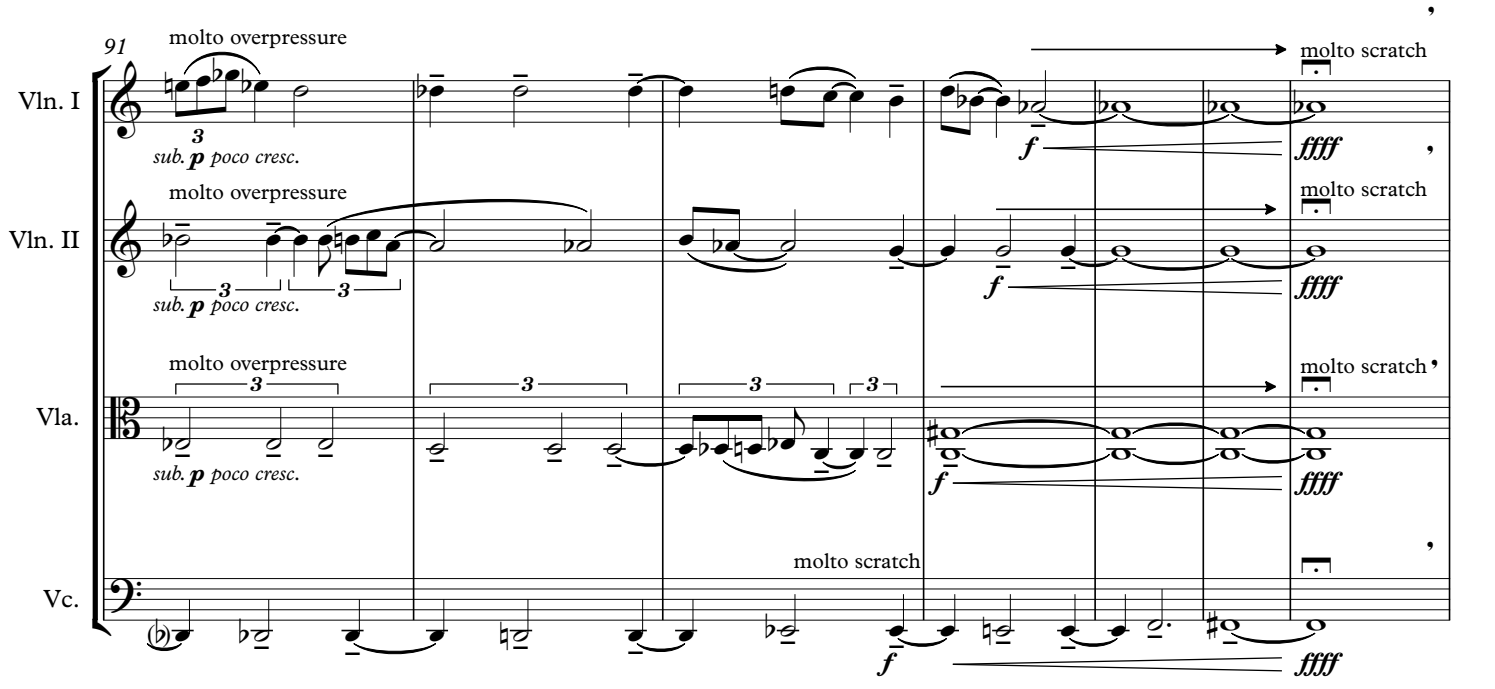

B
34
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
nat. sul pont.
full duration gliss.
nat. sul pont.
full duration gliss.
nat. sul pont.
full duration gliss.
nat. sul pont.
full duration gliss.
pp
pp
pp
pp

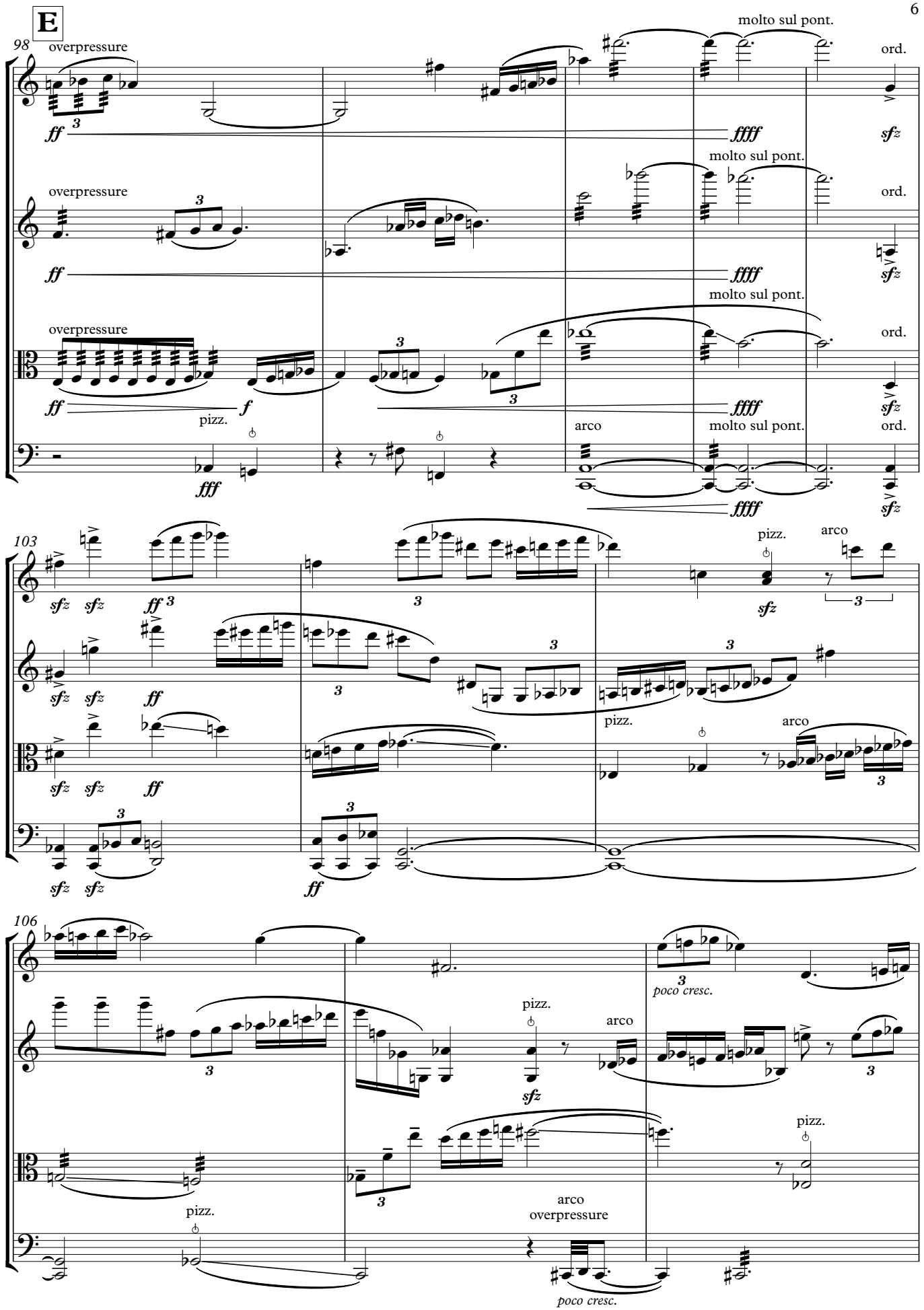

41
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
mp
mp
mp
mp

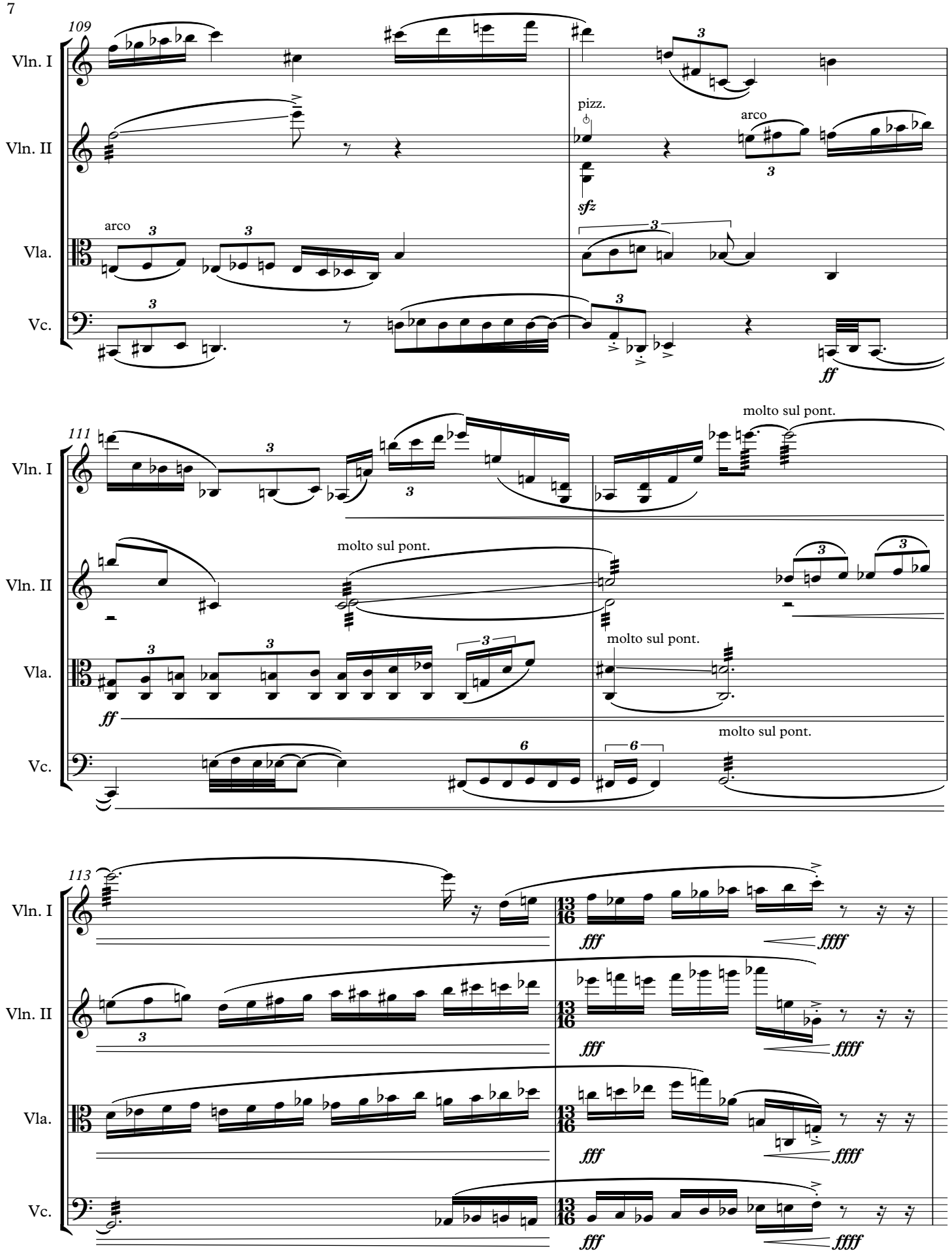

C
Sweet, yet mournful
senza sord., ord, molto vib., portamento
48
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
senza sord.
ord, poco vib.
espress.
mf
mp
57
tr
3
63
D
Driven, gruelling
112
a little overpressure
f:mf
mf


69
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
pizz.
arco
overpressure
near scratch
75
overpressure
pizz.
arco
overpressure
79
sul tasto scratch
ord, overpressure
scratch
pizz.


83
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
sul pont scratch
fff
arco
pizz.
arco
molto overpressure
sub. p poco cresc.


91
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
molto overpressure
sub. p poco cresc.
molto scratch
f
ffff


E
98
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
overpressure
molto sul pont.
ord.
pizz.
arco
103
106
poco cresc.


109
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
arco
pizz.
arco
sfz
ff
111
molto sul pont.
molto sul pont.
molto sul pont.
molto sul pont.
ff
113
fff
ffff

F **Unrelenting**

115

Vln. I

continuously glissando upwards with lots of overpressure and scratch tone, proceed to G after c. 1 minute 45 seconds

fff

Vln. II

continuously glissando upwards with lots of overpressure and scratch tone, proceed to G after c. 1 minute 30 seconds

fff

Vla.

continuously glissando upwards with lots of overpressure and scratch tone, proceed to G after c. 45 seconds

fff

Vc.

continuously glissando upwards with lots of overpressure and scratch tone, proceed to G after c. 2 minutes

fff

G

Start softly; on each repeat increase in volume and timbral intensity. (***ppp*** to ***fff***; tasto. to molto overpressure).
Each player is to play freely, and independent of each other, but in relation to given rhythms.
Once all the quartet are playing this melody, repeat this section 3 times; on the last repeat hold the final note.
Molto vibrato, espressivo, portamento, cry your heart out.

116

Freely, lament

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

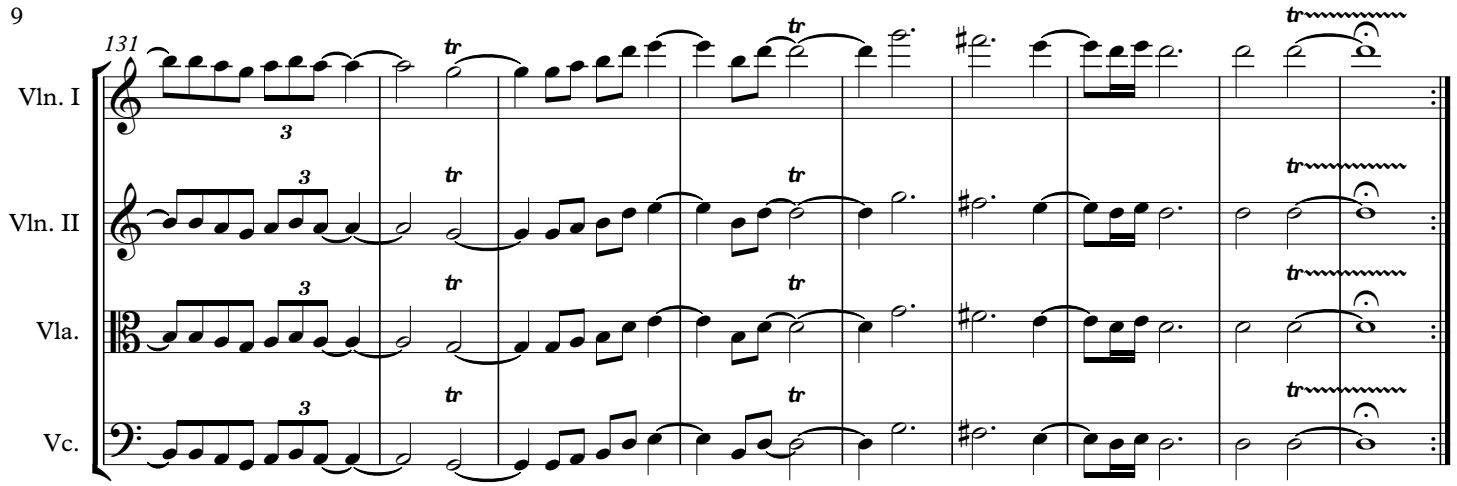
123

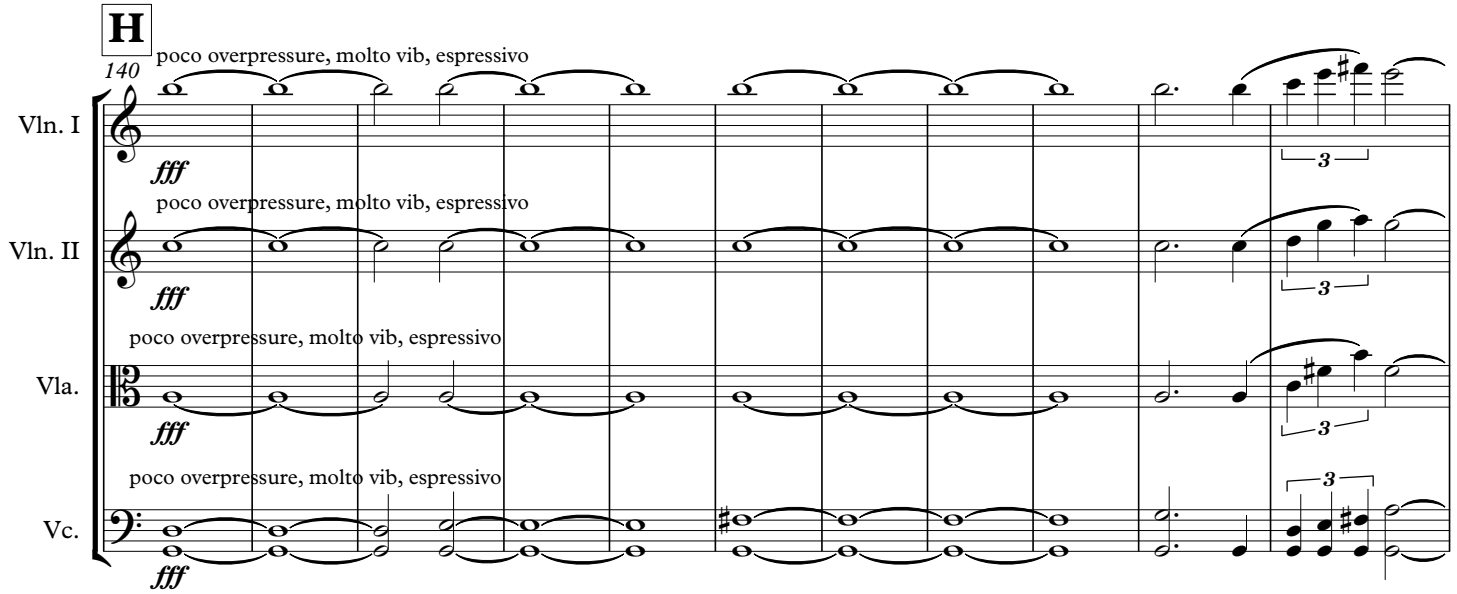
Vln. I

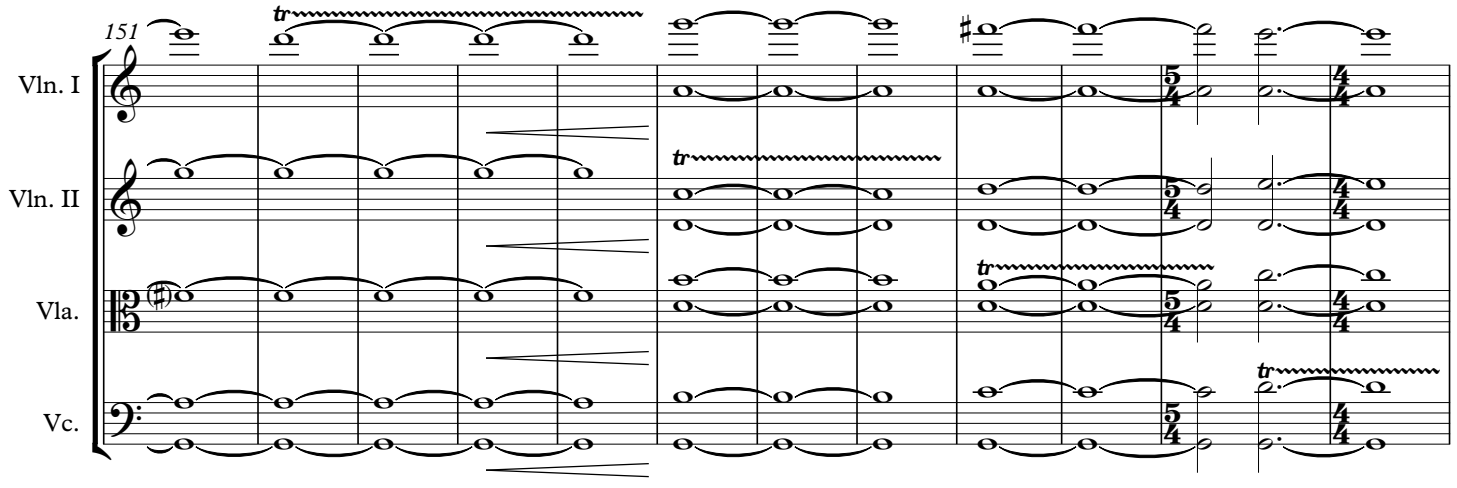
Vln. II

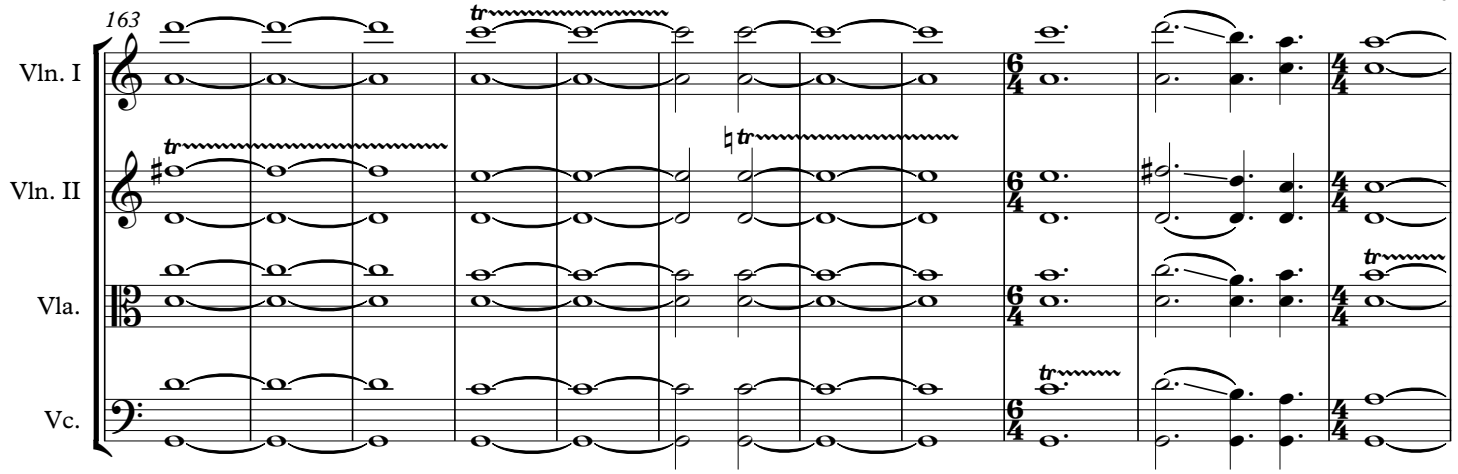
Vla.

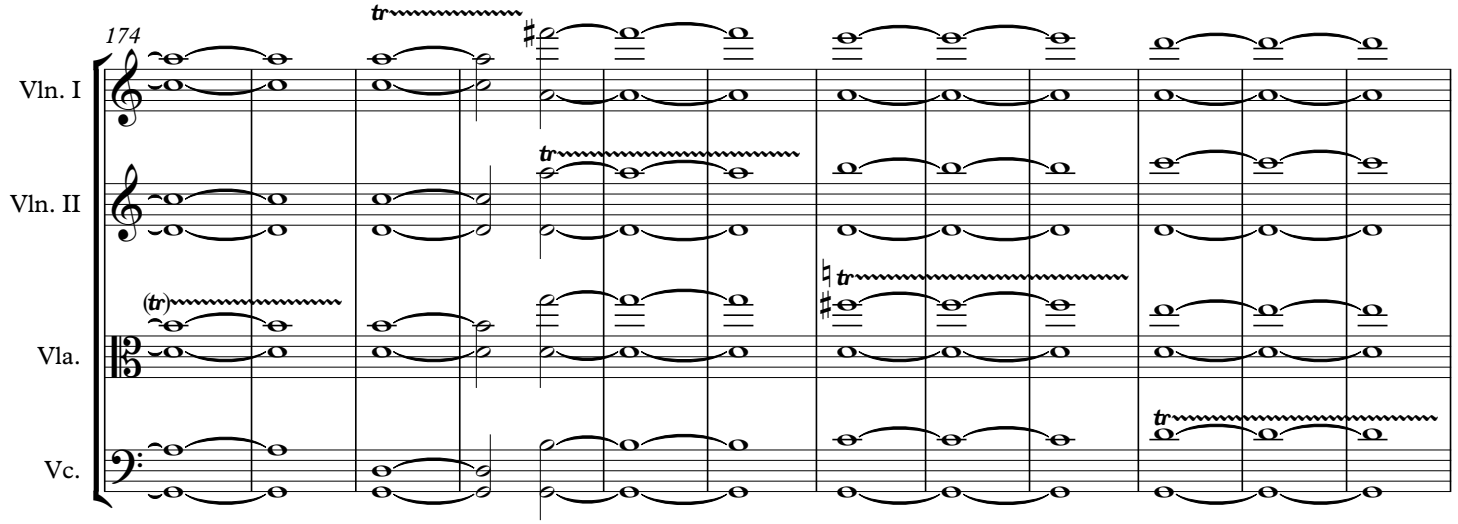
Vc.

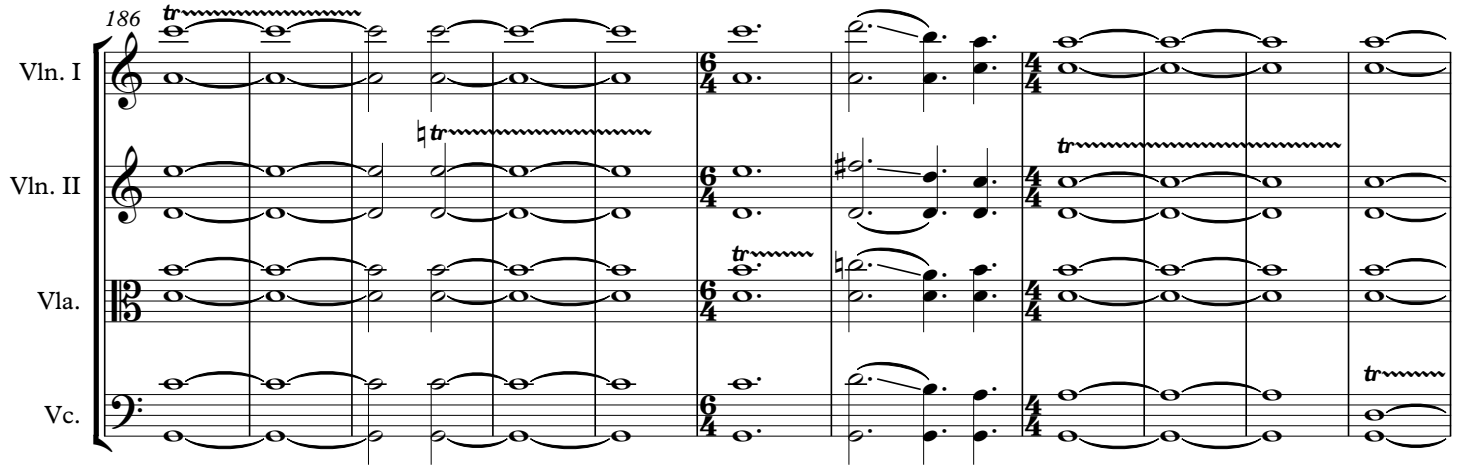

131
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
3
tr

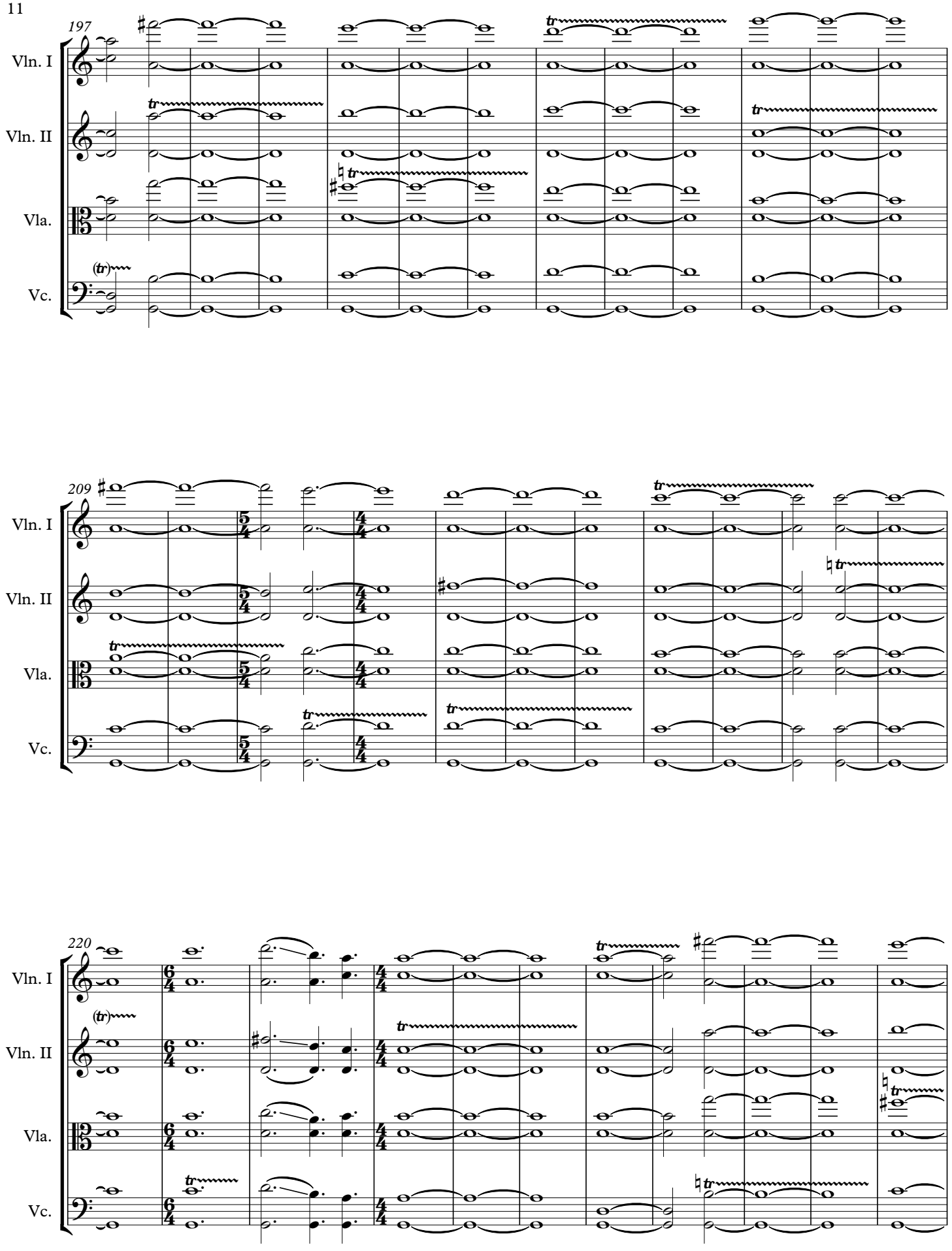

H
140
poco overpressure, molto vib, espressivo
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
fff
3

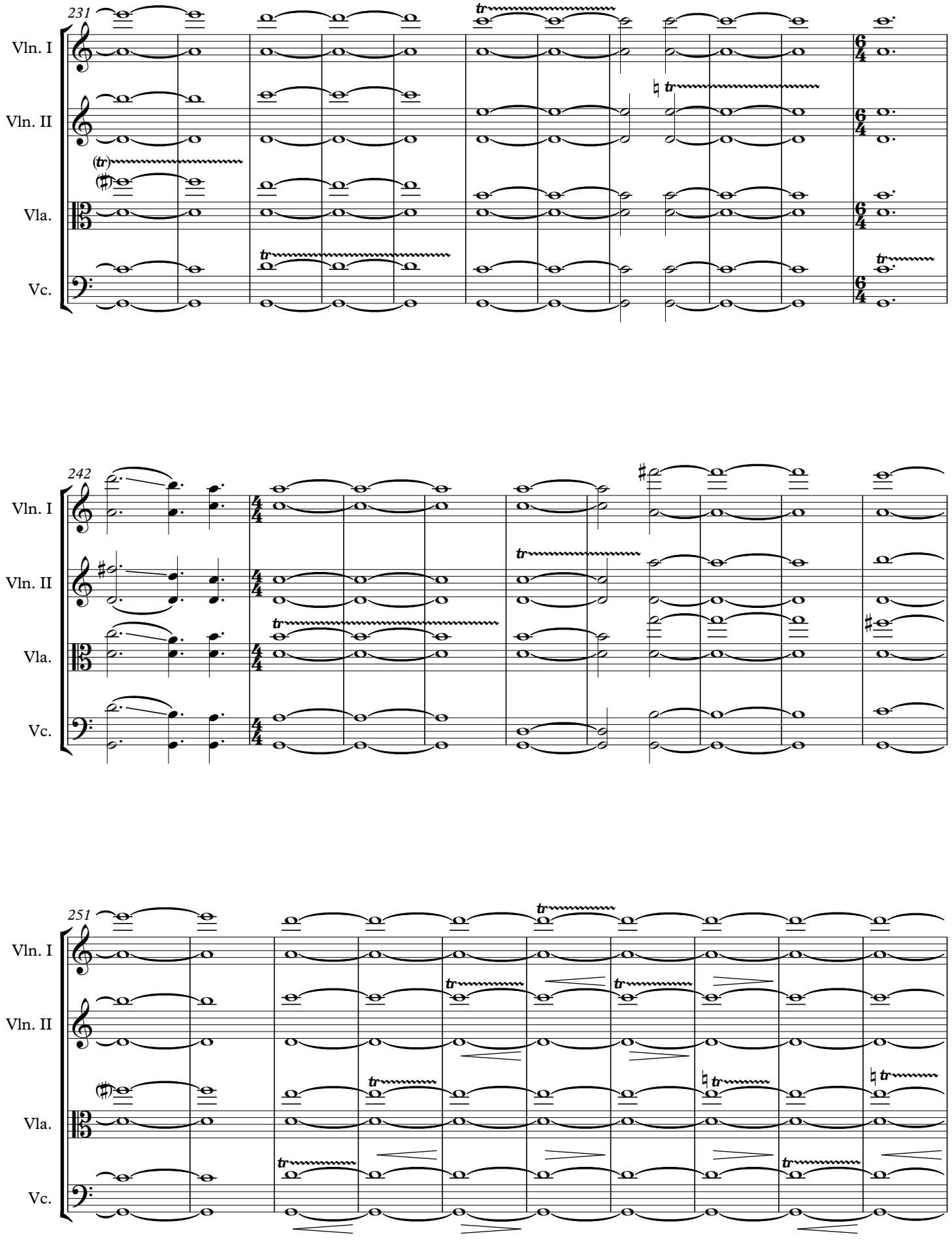

151
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
tr

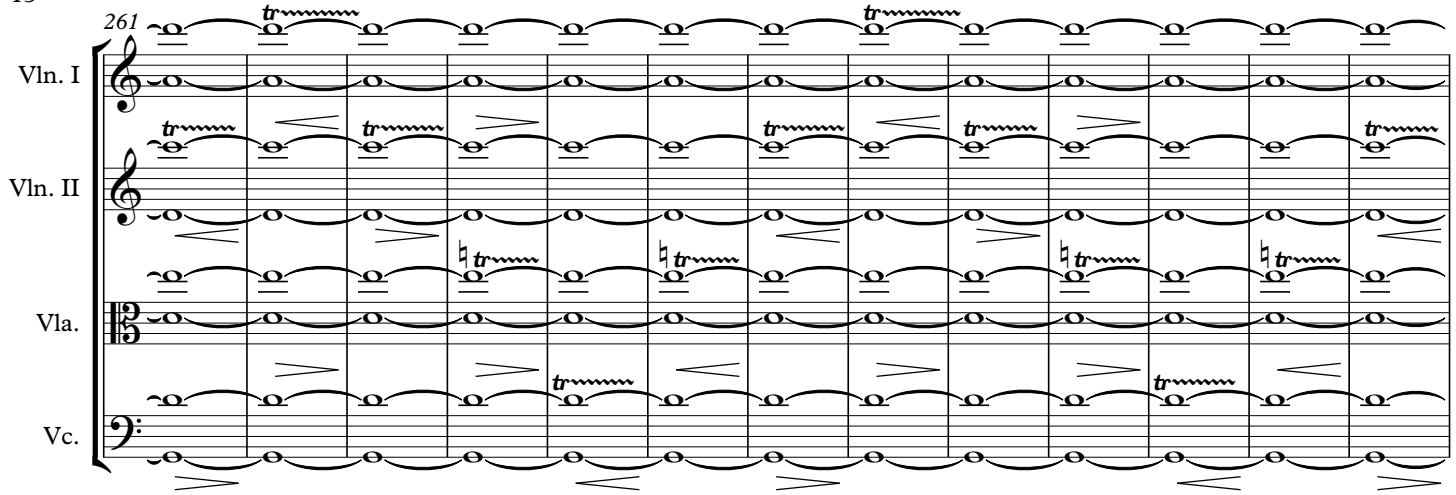

163
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.

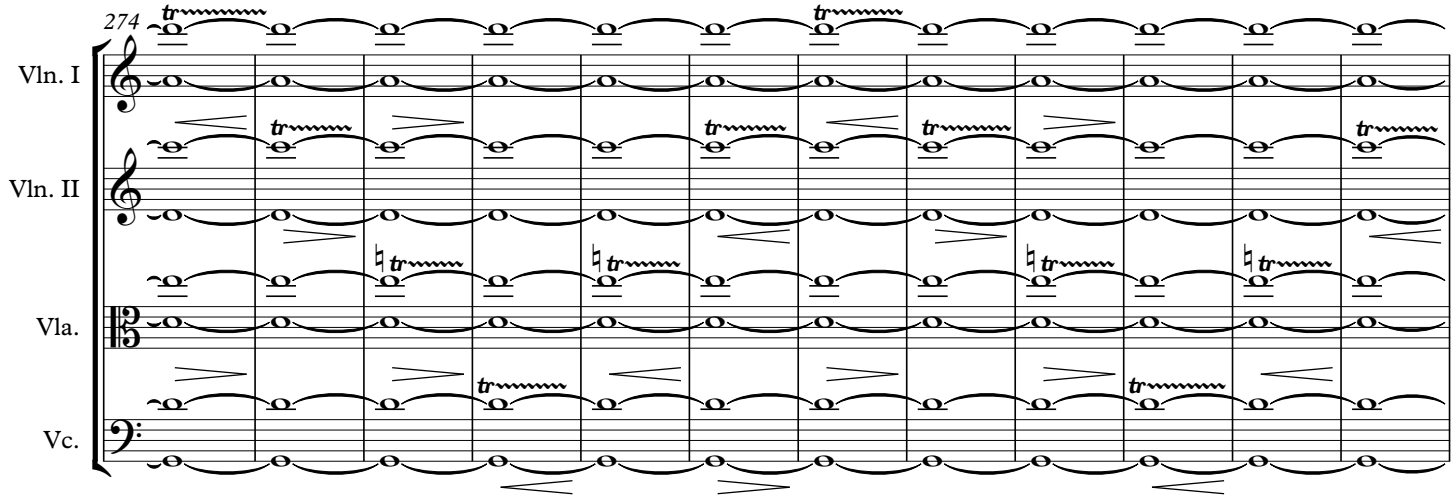

174
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.

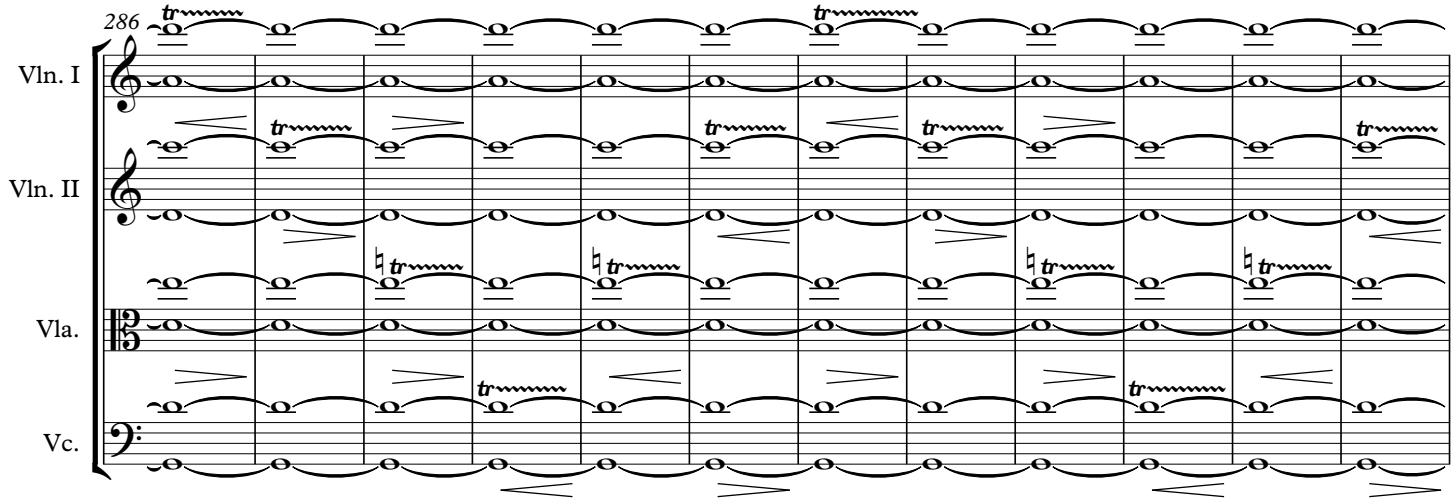

186
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.

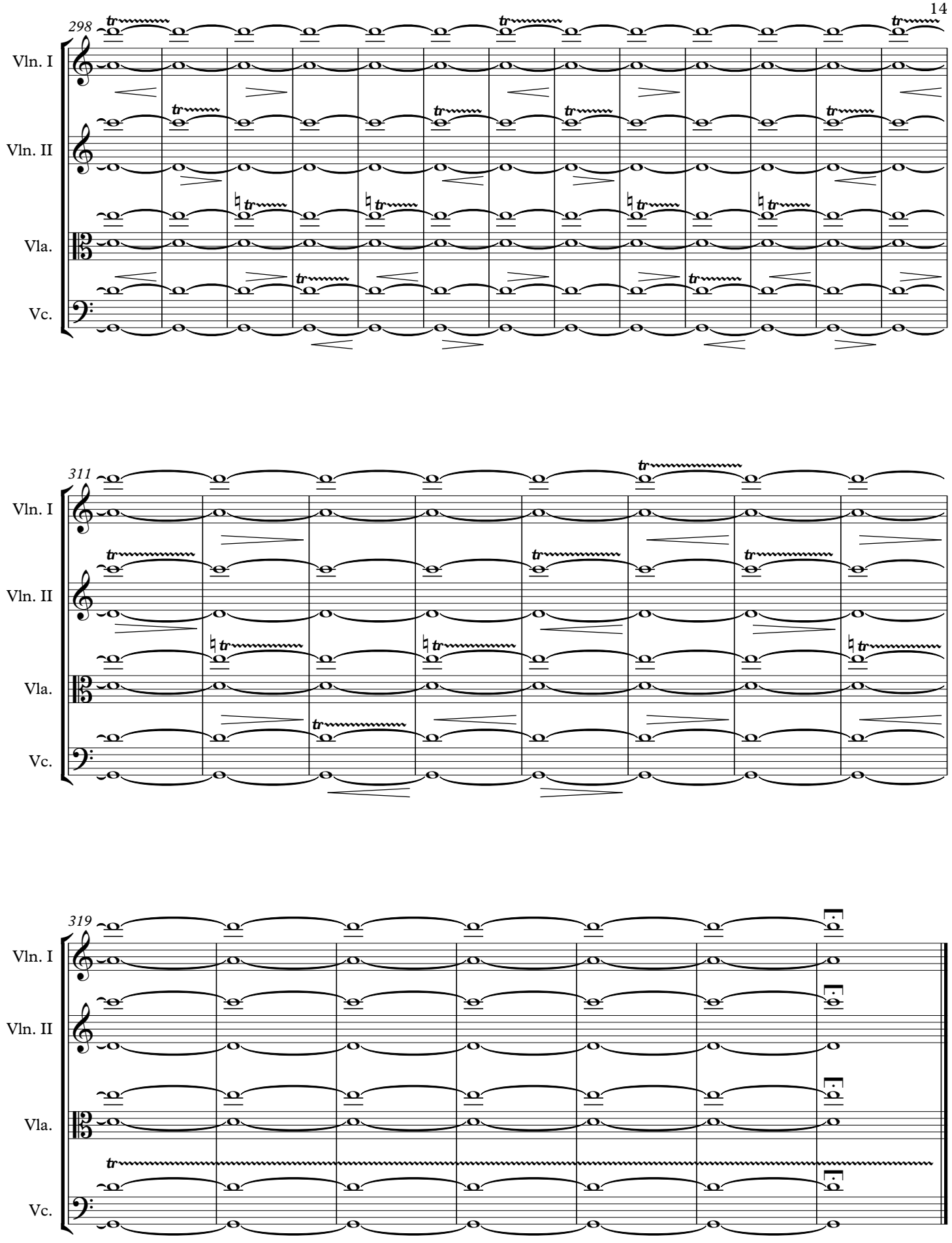

197
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
209
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
220
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.


231
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
242
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
251
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.


261
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.


274
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.


286
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.


298
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
311
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
319
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.