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sink delicately

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sink delicately

for sextet

sophie mathieu

notes on the work

This piece is a reflection on my mental state during the time that I composed it. In a way, it’s a subtle commentary on the “soprano going crazy” trope from the operatic tradition. It’s about feeling like you’re at odds with your own mind, but somehow being okay with it at the end of the day.

instrumentation

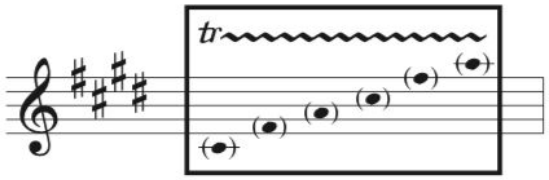
singer (must be able to whistle)
violin
cello (mute required)
toy piano
piano
percussion (glockenspiel, marimba, wine glass filled halfway with water)

all instrumentalists have limited humming in their parts

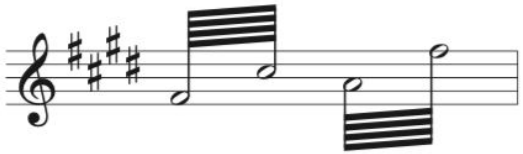
performance notes

Aleatoric notation in the percussion and piano parts is meant to achieve a sense of shimmering, fluttering motion within the piece. Percussion patterns are notated as aleatoric trills, with 4-6 options of notes for players to use. The player is not required to use all the pitches in the box.

For example, a passage notated like this:



Might be performed as this:



you say that time escapes through holes in the floor
i find myself searching for patterns in long lines of stars

we set our world ablaze searching for the truth

it never comes, does it?

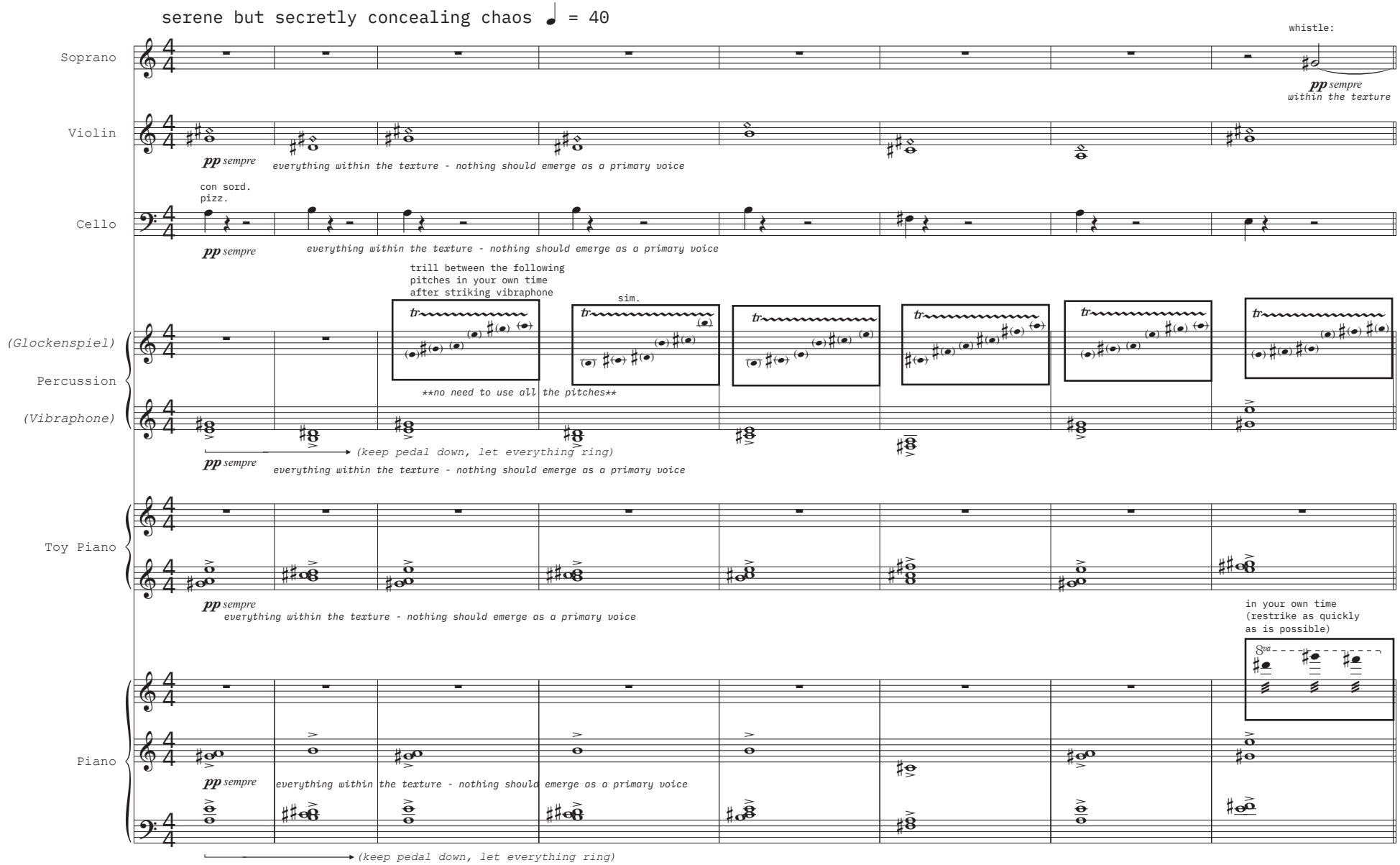
distorted slivers of memory sink delicately
far away from all that we know
to join the detritus at the bottom of the ocean

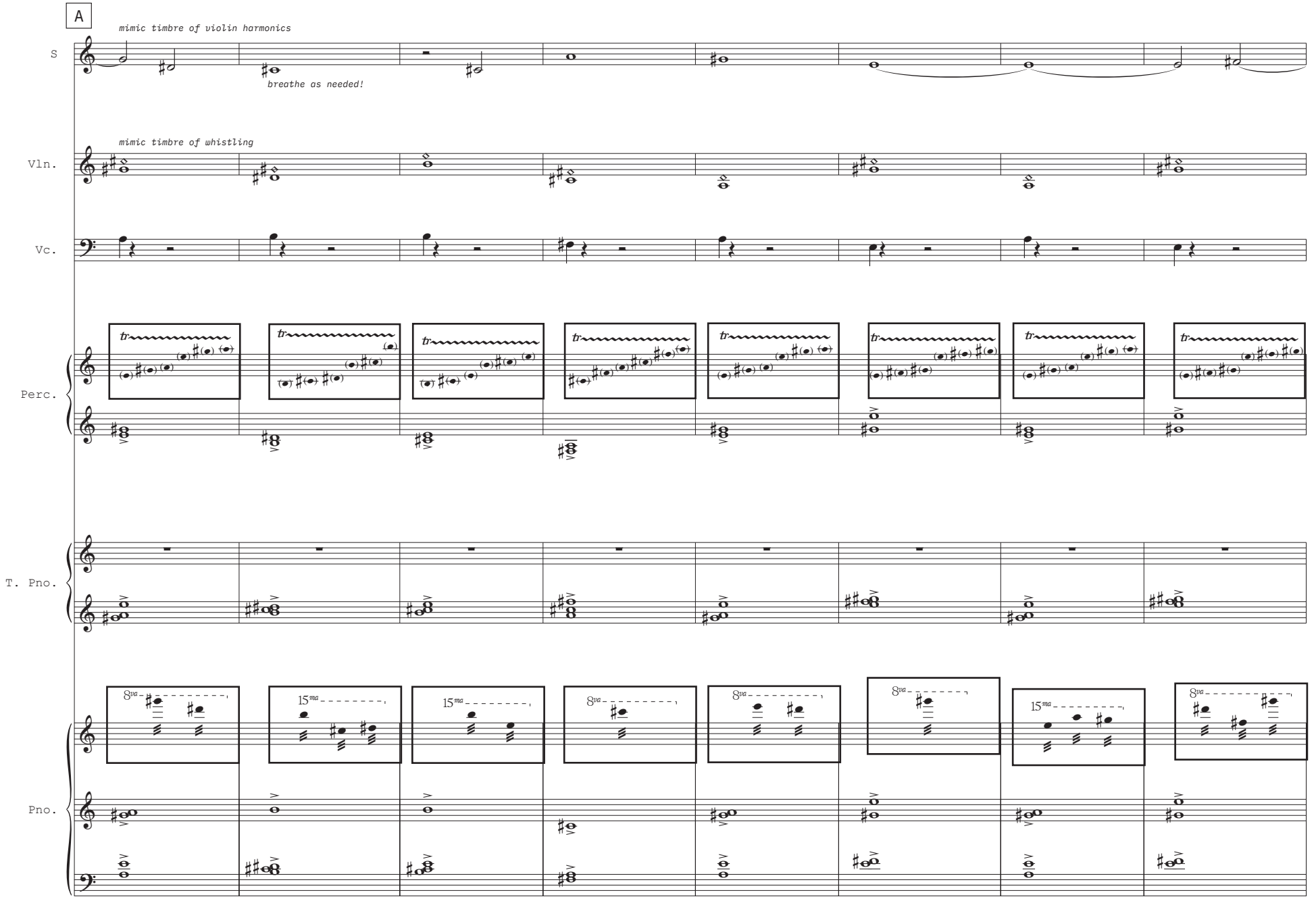
Full Score

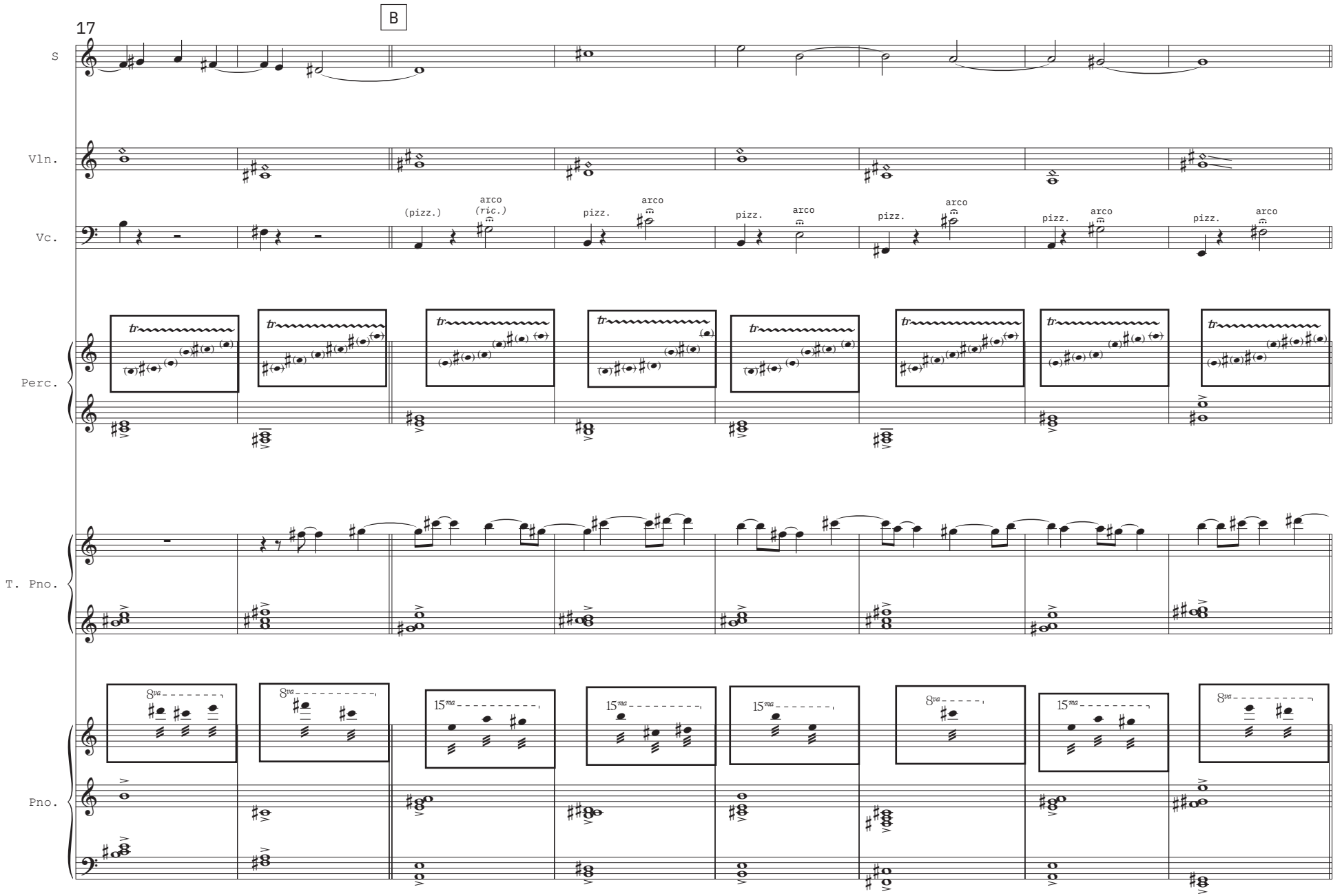
sink delicately

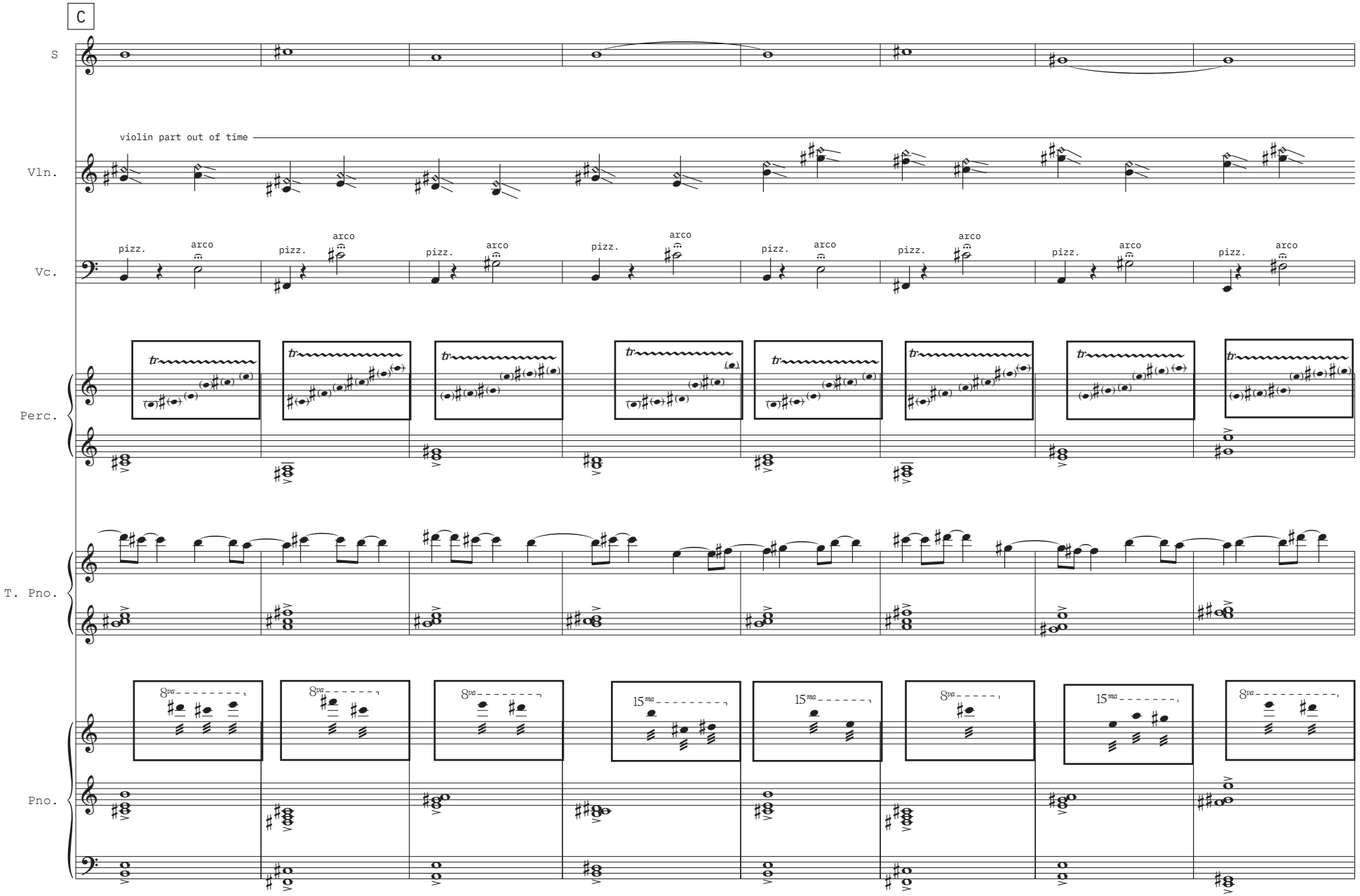
for sextet

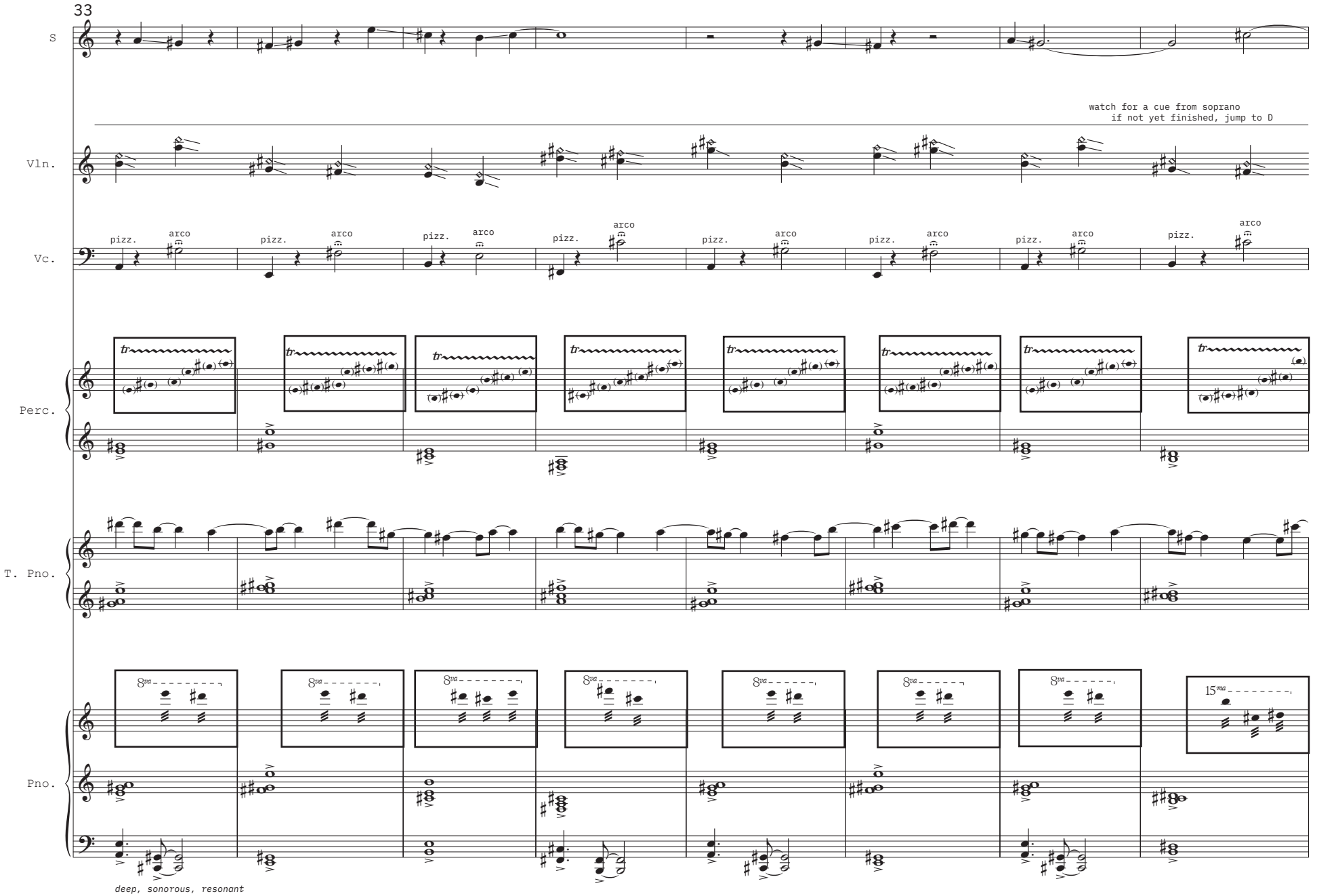
music & text by sophie mathieu

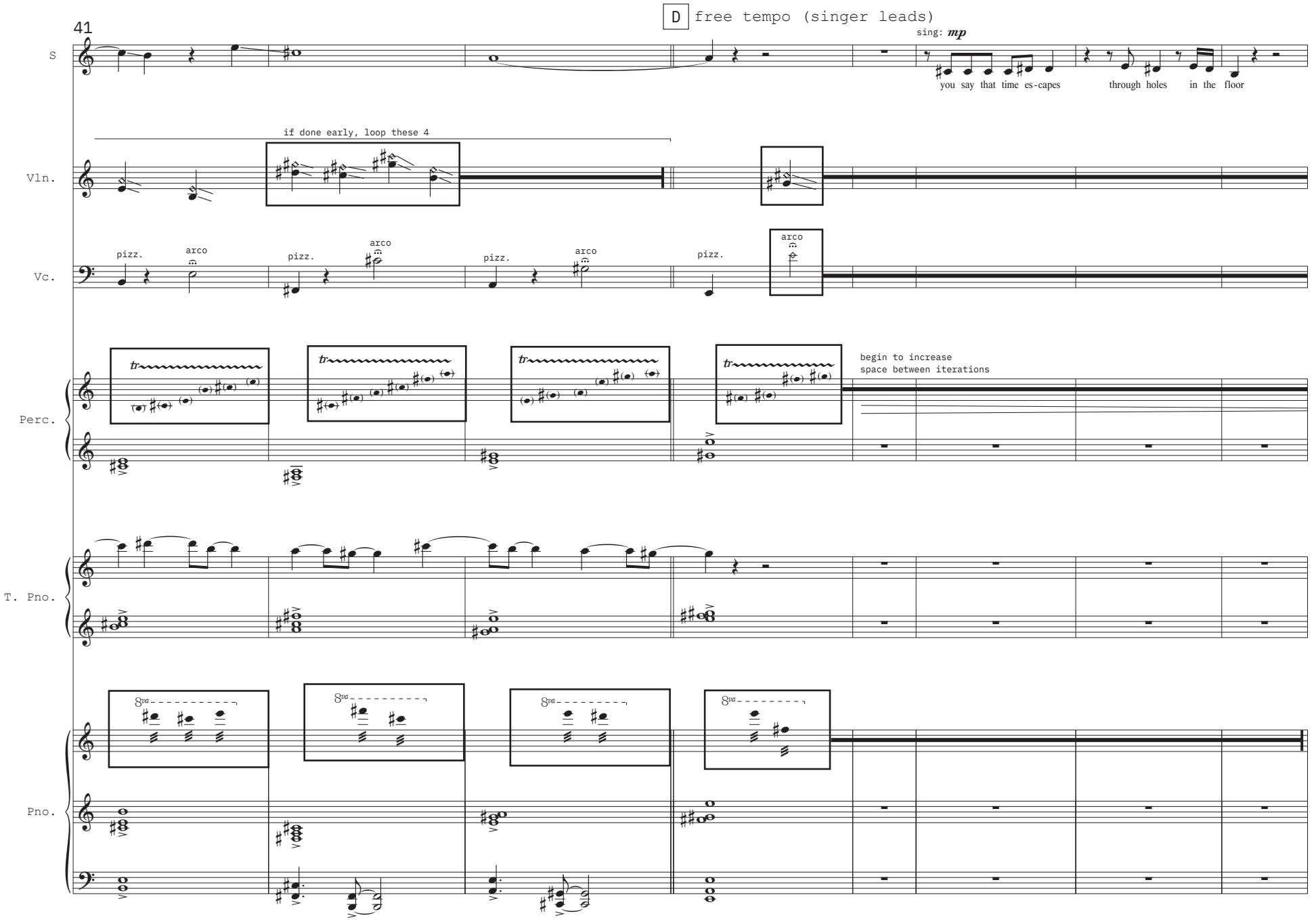


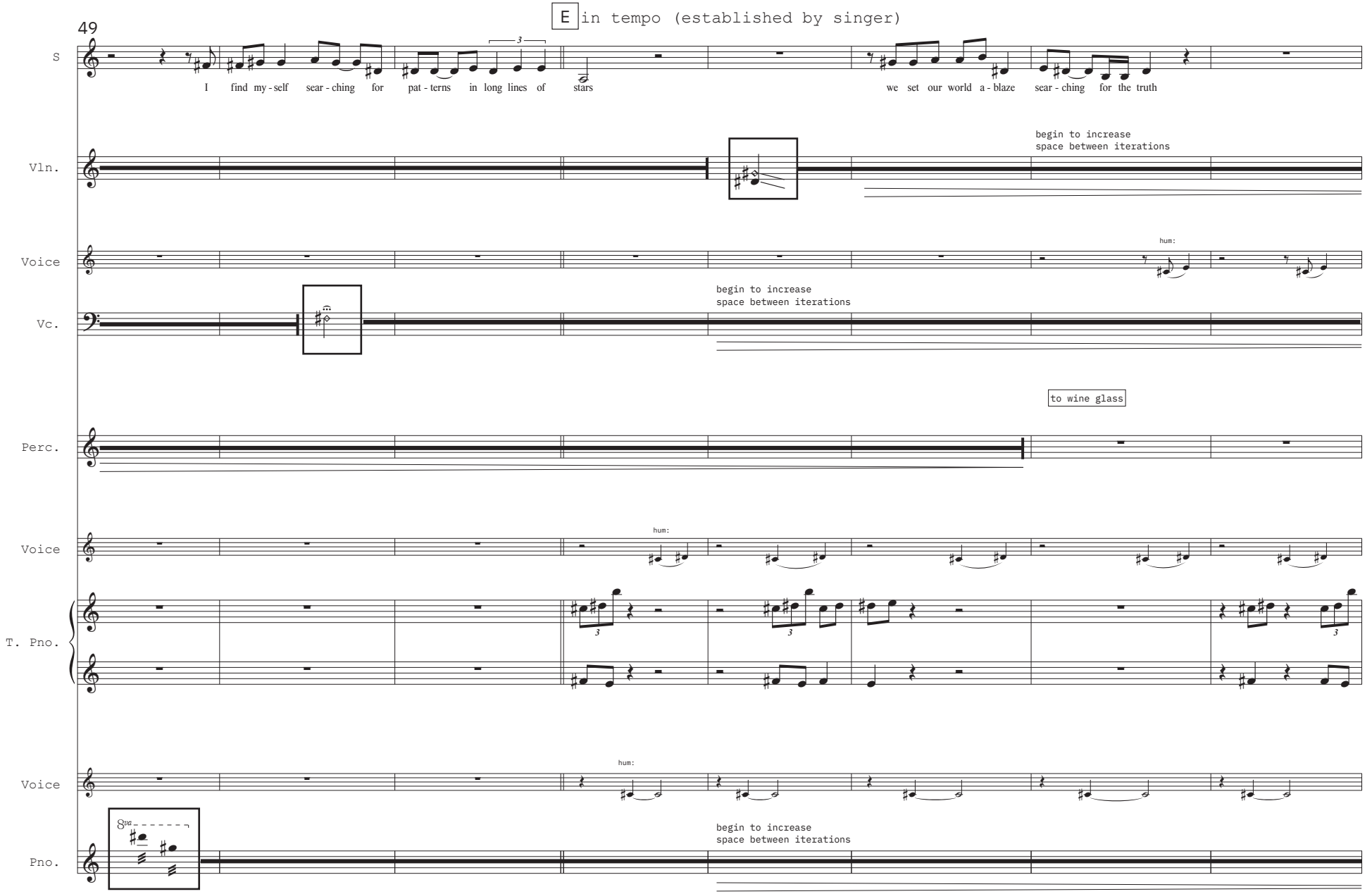

A
mimic timbre of violin harmonics
S
breathe as needed!
mimic timbre of whistling
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
T. Pno.
Pno.

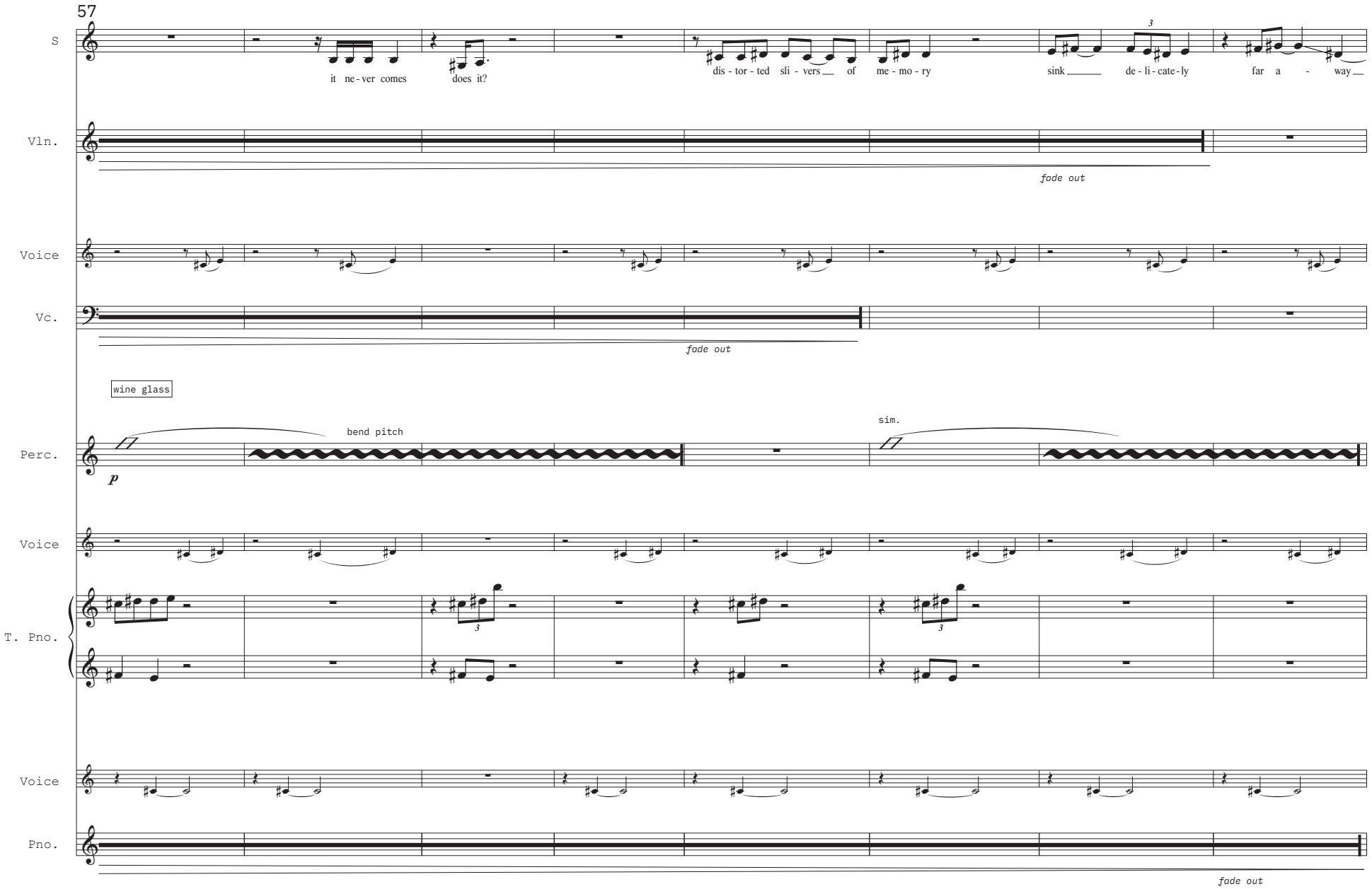

17
B
S
Vln.
Vc.
(pizz.)
arco
(ric.)
pizz.
arco
pizz.
arco
pizz.
arco
pizz.
arco
pizz.
arco
Perc.
T. Pno.
Pno.
8va
15ma

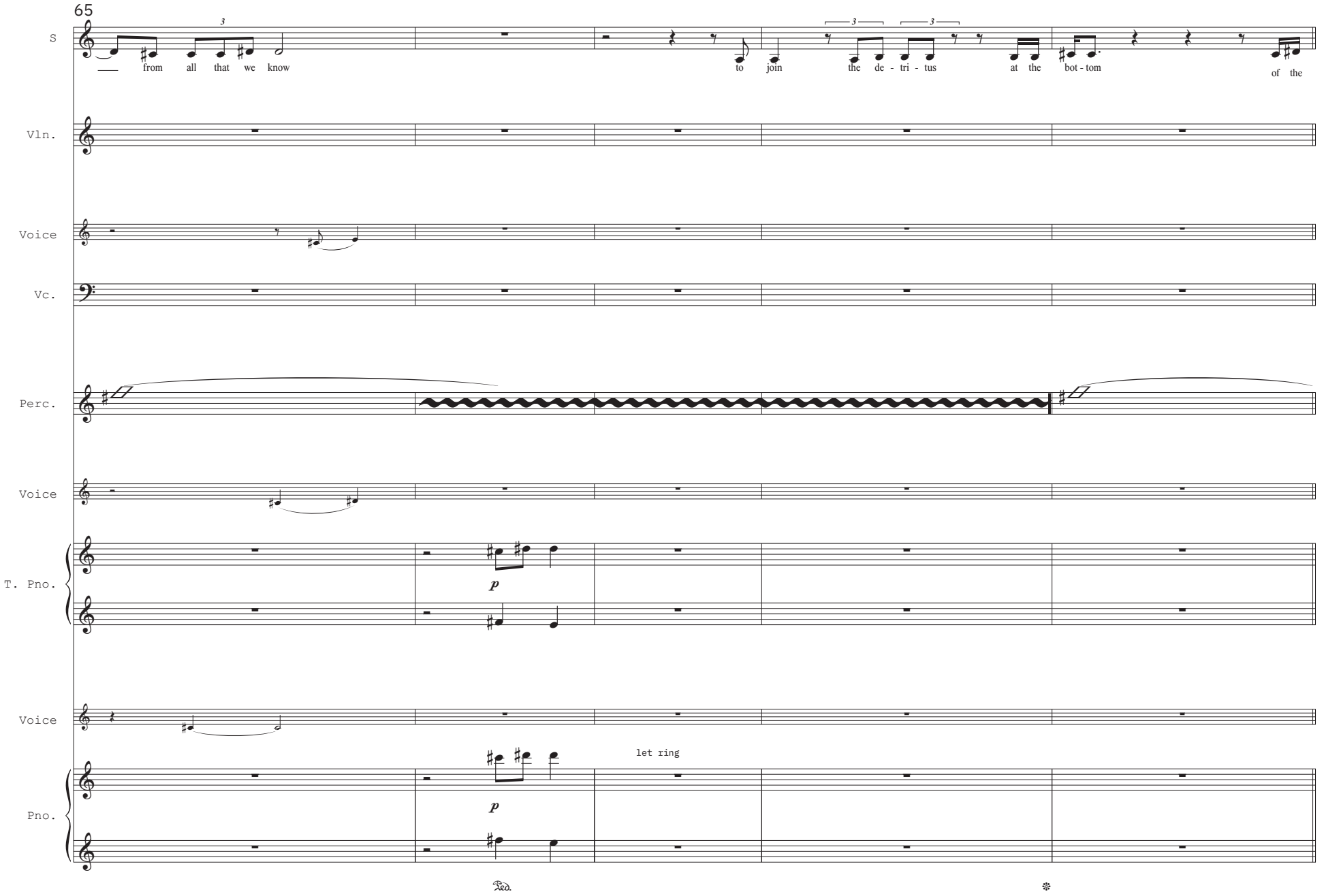

C
S
violin part out of time
Vln.
Vc.
pizz.
arco
Perc.
T. Pno.
Pno.
8va
15ma

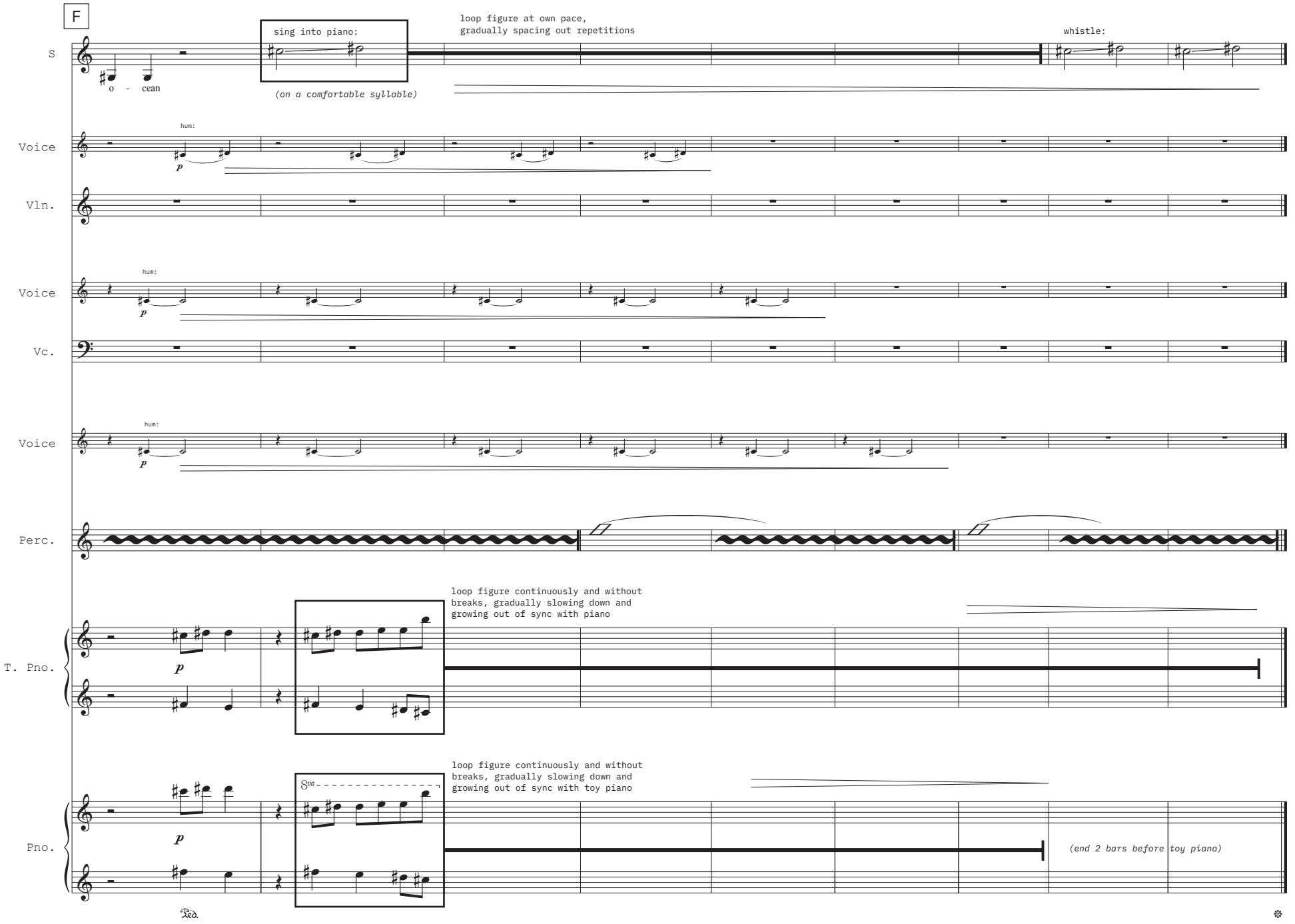

33
S
Vln.
watch for a cue from soprano
if not yet finished, jump to D
Vc.
pizz.
arco
Perc.
T. Pno.
Pno.
8va
15ma
deep, sonorous, resonant


41
D free tempo (singer leads)
S
sing: mp
you say that time es-capes through holes in the floor
Vln.
if done early, loop these 4
Vc.
pizz.
arco
Perc.
tr
begin to increase
space between iterations
T. Pno.
Pno.
8va


E in tempo (established by singer)
49
S
I find my - self sear - ching for pat - terns in long lines of stars
we set our world a - blaze sear - ching for the truth
Vln.
begin to increase space between iterations
Voice
hum:
Vc.
begin to increase space between iterations
to wine glass
Perc.
Voice
hum:
T. Pno.
Voice
hum:
8va
Pno.
begin to increase space between iterations


57
S
it ne - ver comes
does it?
dis - tor - ted sli - vers of me - mo - ry
sink de - li - cate - ly
far a - way
Vln.
fade out
Voice
Vc.
fade out
wine glass
Perc.
bend pitch
p
sim.
Voice
T. Pno.
Voice
Pno.
fade out


65
S
from all that we know
to join the de - tri - tus at the bot - tom of the
Vln.
Voice
Vc.
Perc.
Voice
T. Pno.
p
Voice
let ring
Pno.
p
Ped.
*


F
S
o - cean
sing into piano:
(on a comfortable syllable)
loop figure at own pace,
gradually spacing out repetitions
whistle:
Voice
hum:
p
Vln.
Voice
hum:
p
Vc.
Voice
hum:
p
Perc.
T. Pno.
p
loop figure continuously and without
breaks, gradually slowing down and
growing out of sync with piano
Pno.
p
8va
loop figure continuously and without
breaks, gradually slowing down and
growing out of sync with toy piano
(end 2 bars before toy piano)
Ped.