John Howell Morrison

Conquest of Cold

for brass quintet

commissioned by the Redline Brass Quintet

composed in 2012

duration ca. 10 minutes

performance notes

Where dynamic change is indicated without arrival designation, the swell or dip is very subtle.

◕ indicates half-valve gliss; player determines valve combination which works best.

Harmon mutes are used extensively, always with stem in.

+ (closed) indicates fingers over stem, fully covering stem opening area.

o (open) indicates fingers away from stem enough that sound is not affected.

+ - - - - o indicates gradual change from closed to open or open to closed.

Care must be taken to pace movement so that change is audible throughout notated duration!

One might use the movement of single fingers to achieve the steady change desired.

For the horn, the plus sign indicates stopped notes.

Trombones also use plunger mutes, and the opening or closing notation is used for those mutes as well.

When tempo changes occur during a measure, the tempo indication will be exactly above the place in the measure the change takes effect.

Stemless note heads in parentheses are general targets for gliss arrivals. No attempt to get the exact notated pitch is expected.

program note

The title refers to the central arrival of the piece, which is the extended area with the least conventional musical motion, and comes from the book, *Absolute Zero and The Conquest of Cold* by Tom Shachtman. The piece as a whole grows from my thinking about the role of meditation in strengthening the mind, especially as it prepares one to endure hardship without breaking. It occurred to me while composing the piece that this place of arrival, where emphasis is on transforming sound with harmon mutes and which intends to suggest the experience of pure consciousness, would behave in much the same way that matter behaves as absolute zero is approached. It is there that superconductivity was discovered, and materials behave in quite unexpected ways. Once that thought had emerged, it became clear that the arousal of compassion as a result of experience meditating was likewise a conquest of cold, and that a more fitting title could not be found.

The opening was inspired by the sound of chanting in a Zen temple.

Conquest of Cold was commissioned by the Redline Brass Quintet of Boston.

JHM 1/2/13

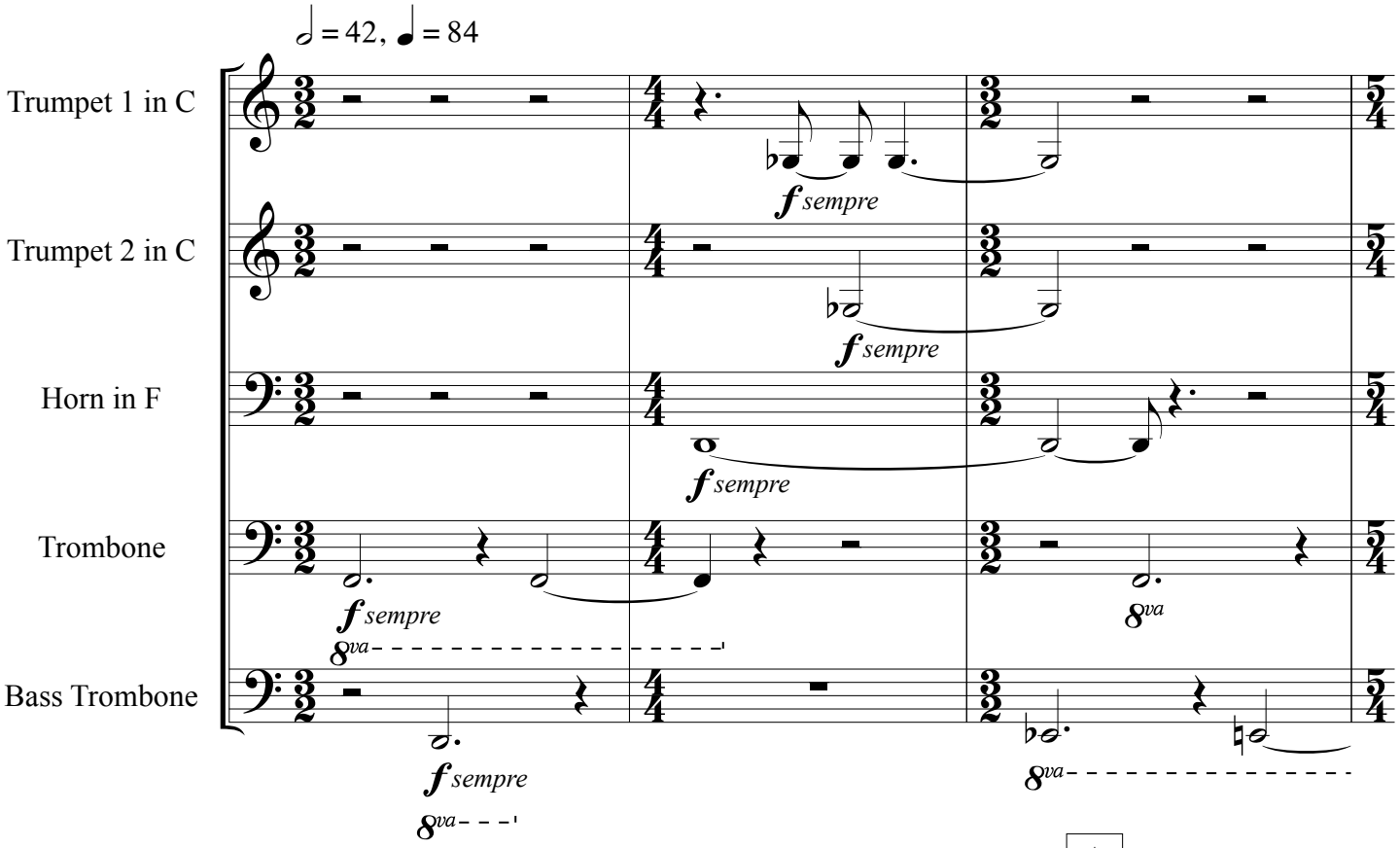
commissioned by the Redline Brass Quintet

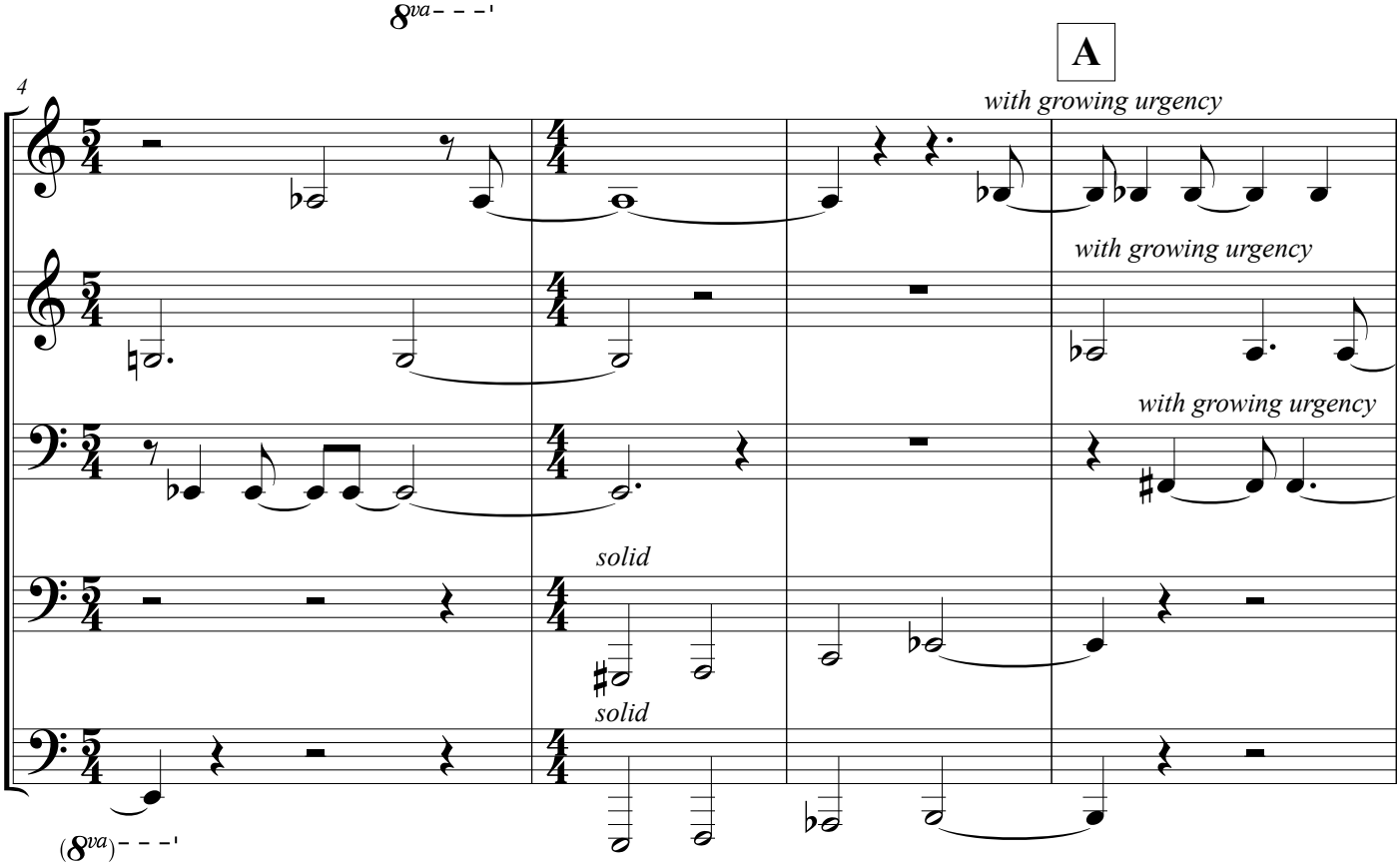
Transposed Score

Conquest of Cold

loud without blaring

John Howell Morrison





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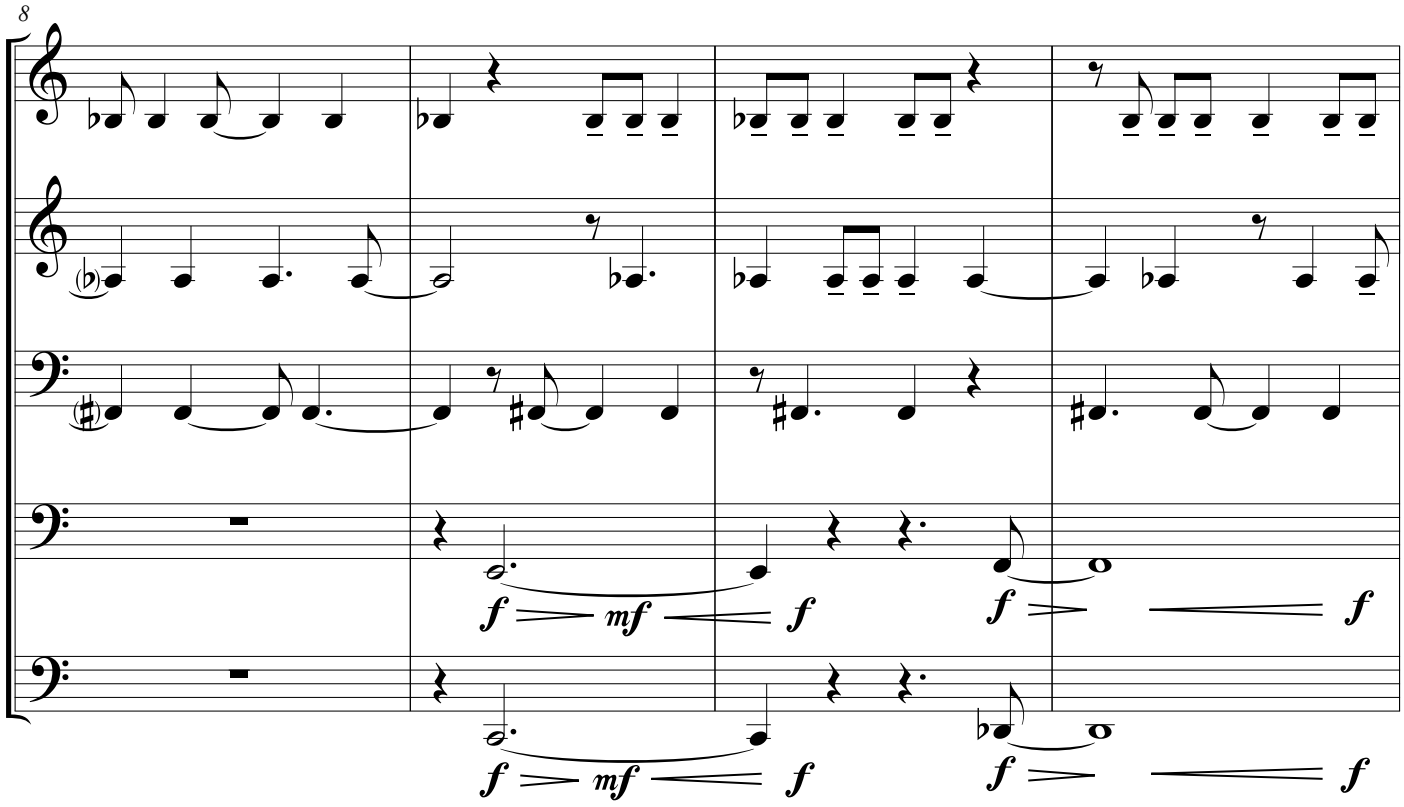
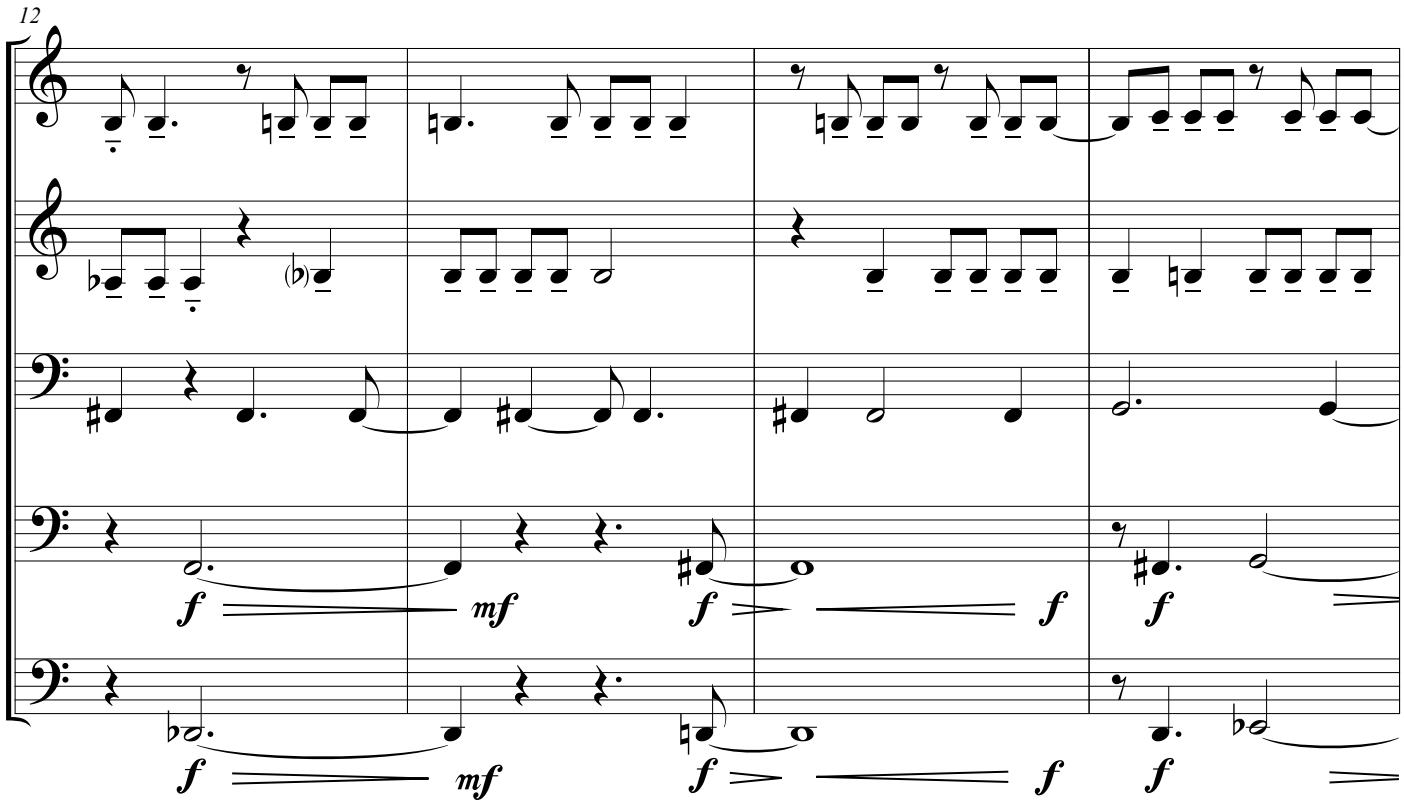

8
f mf f
f f
f mf f
f f


12
f mf
f f
f
f mf
f f
f

B

16

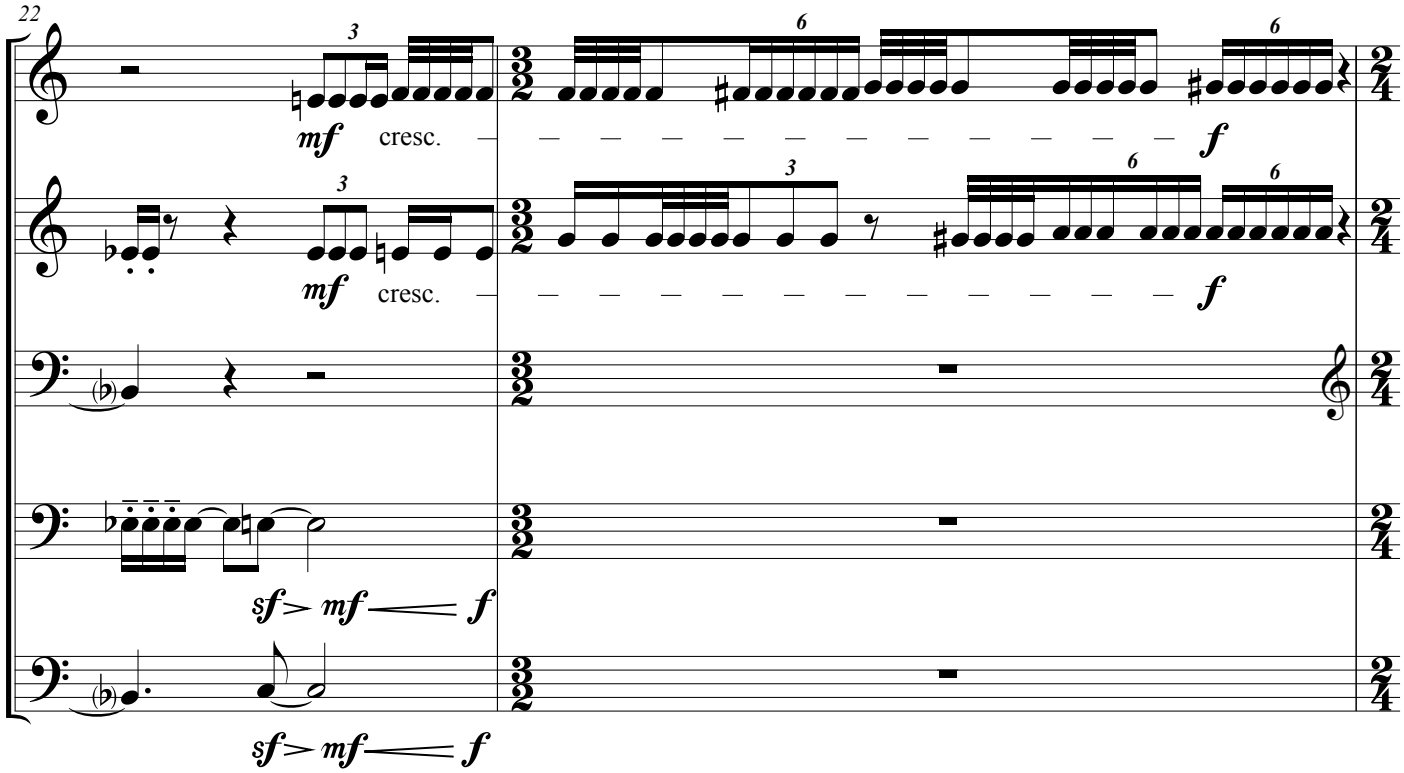
with growing urgency

mf *sf*

with growing urgency

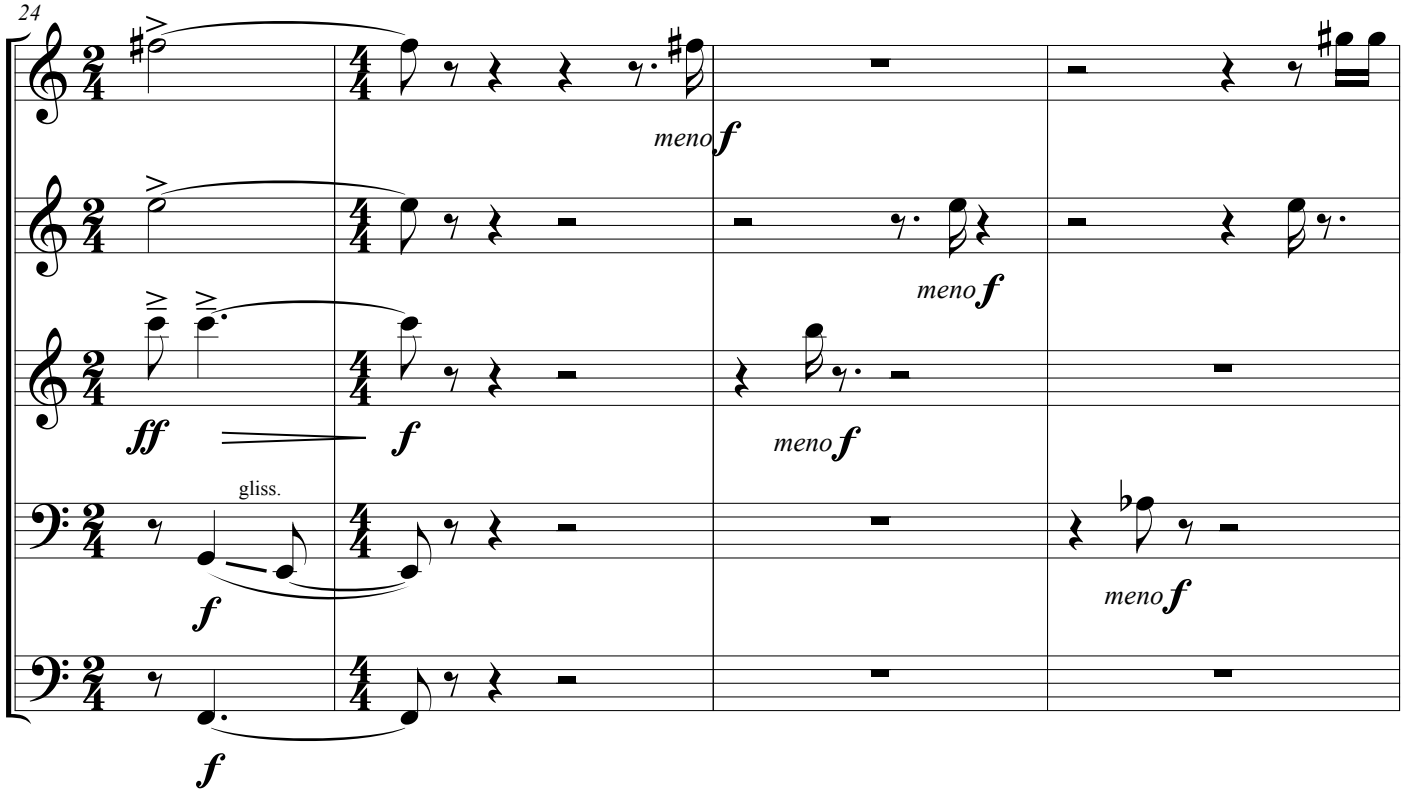
mf *sf*

19



C suddenly faster, alarmed

♩ = 120



D dig in: alternately
pushing ahead, pulling back

28

f sempre

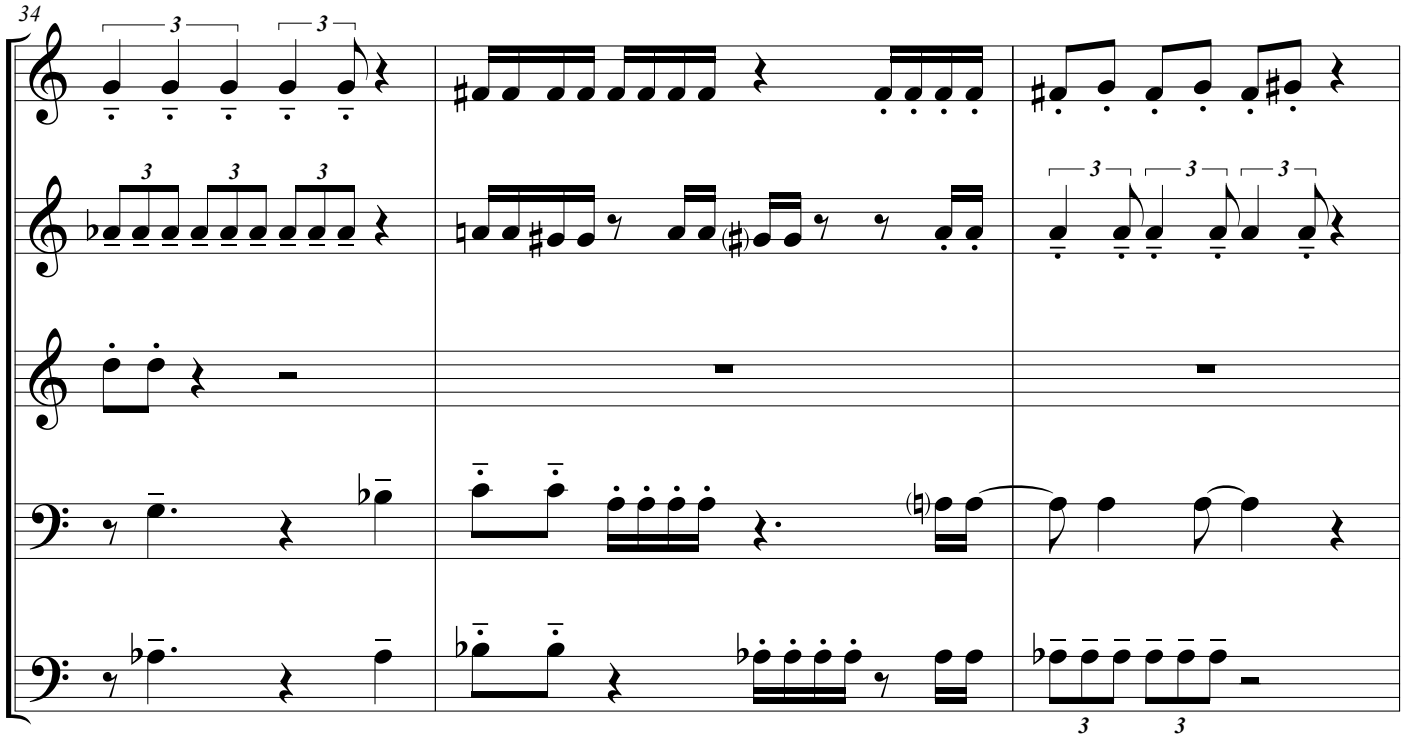
f sempre

f sempre

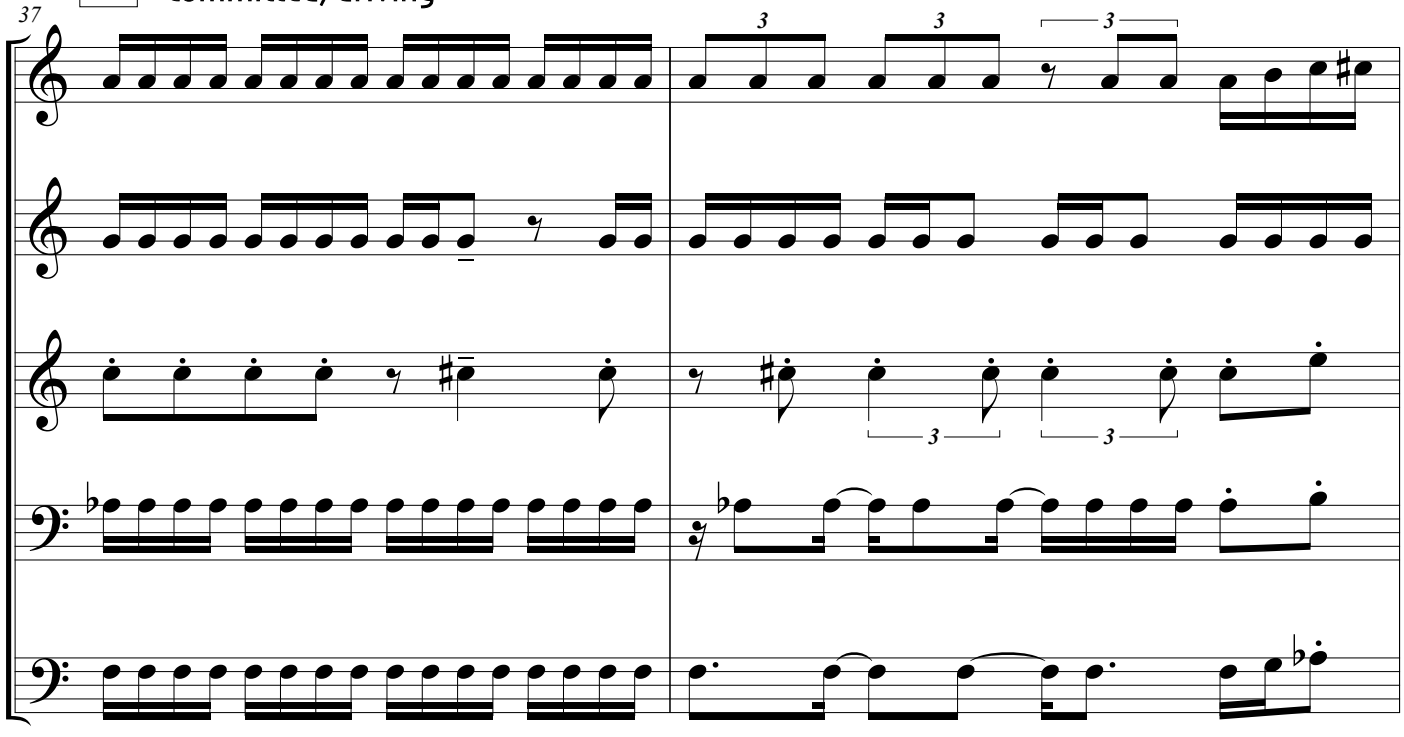
f sempre

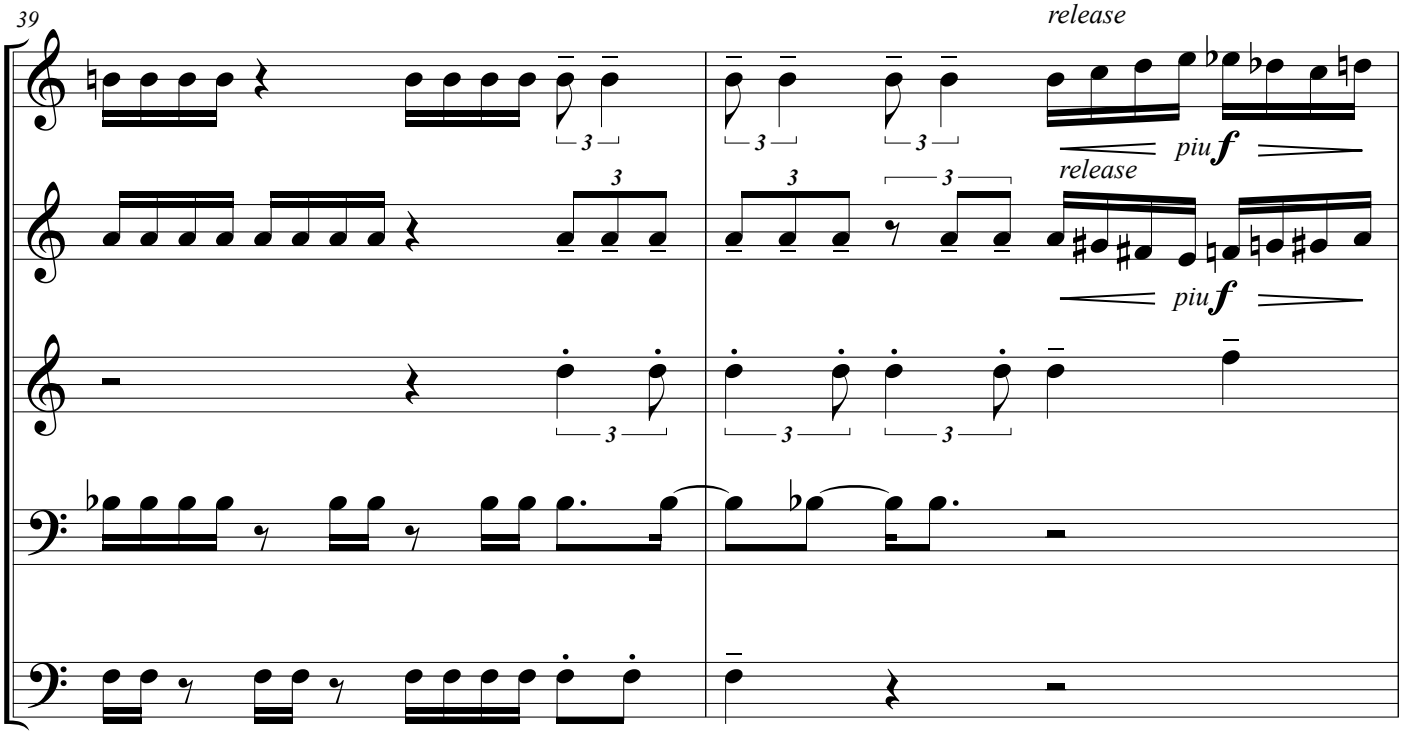
f sempre

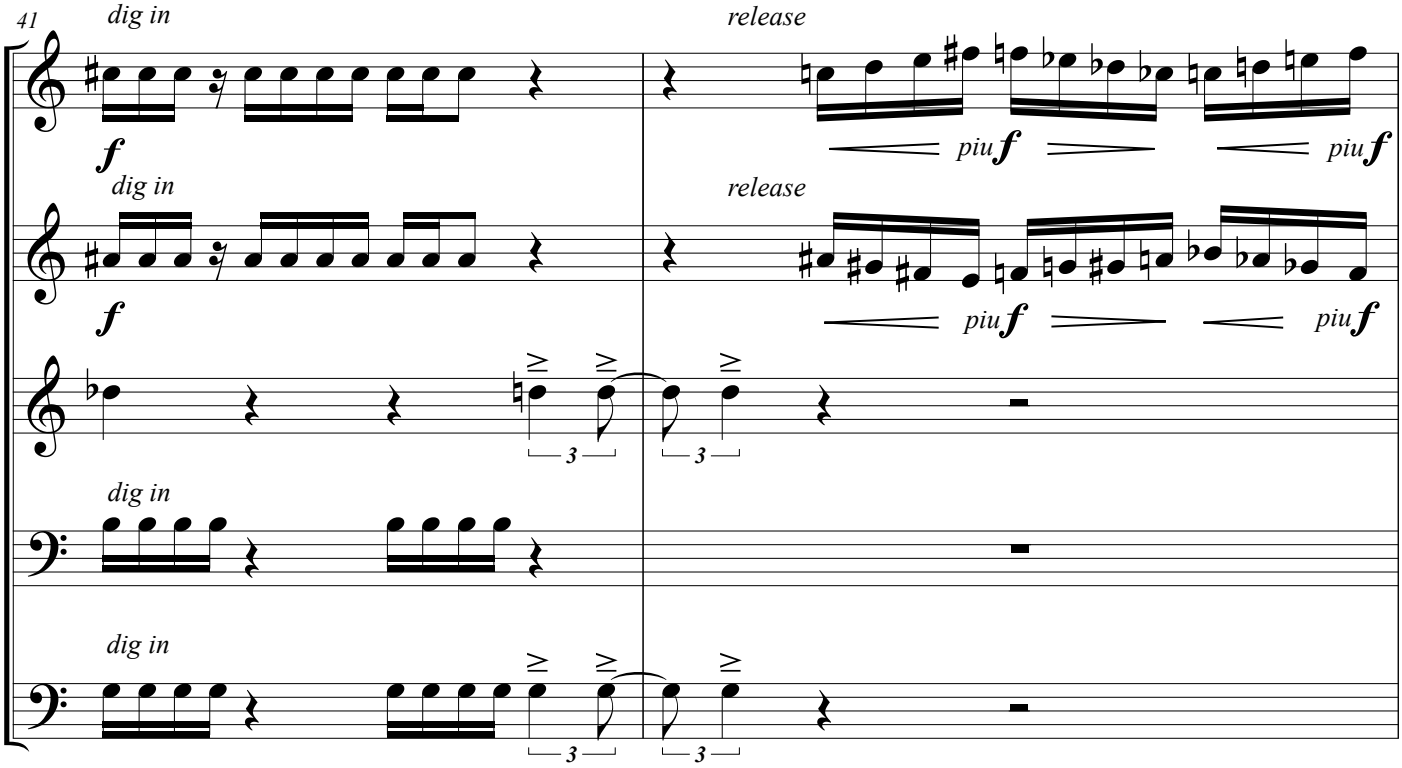
31

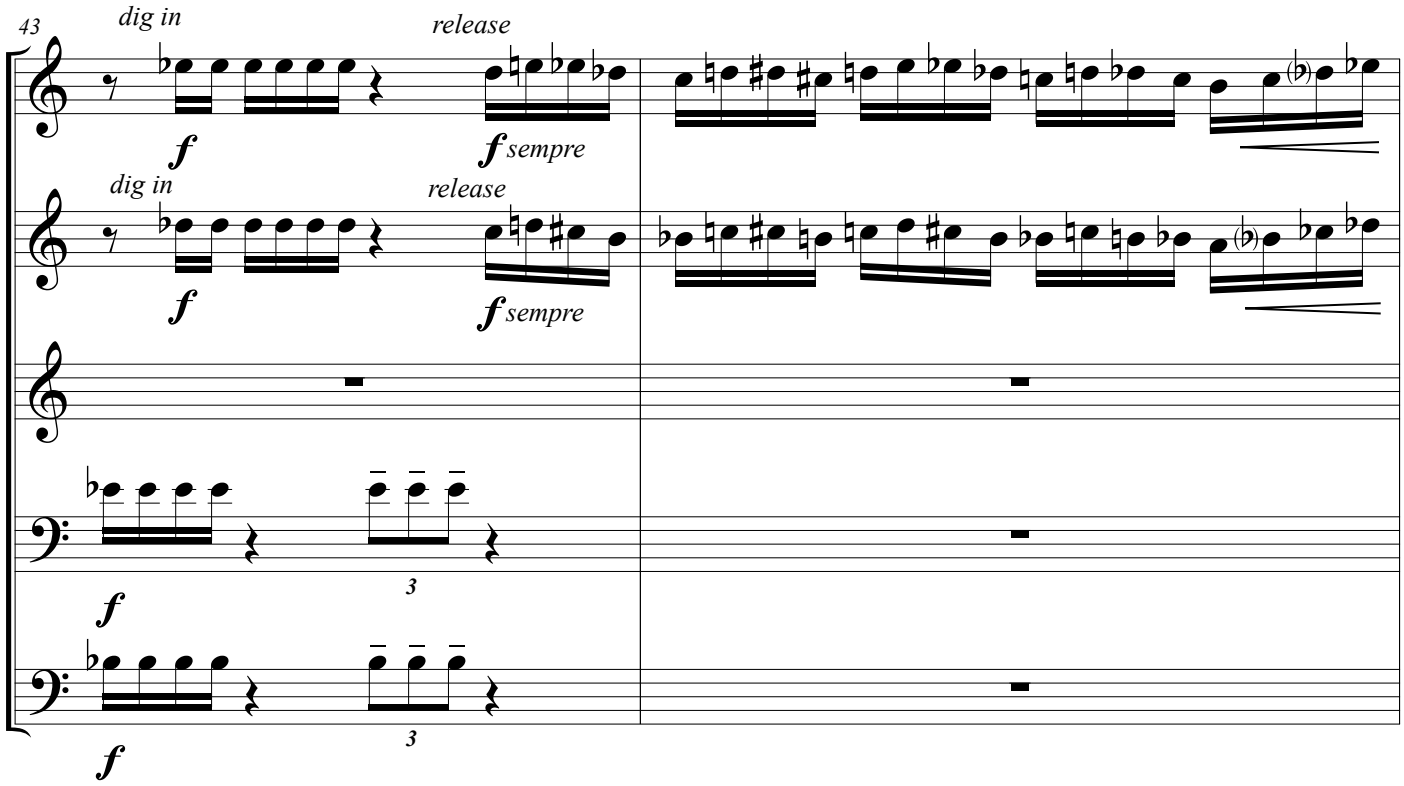


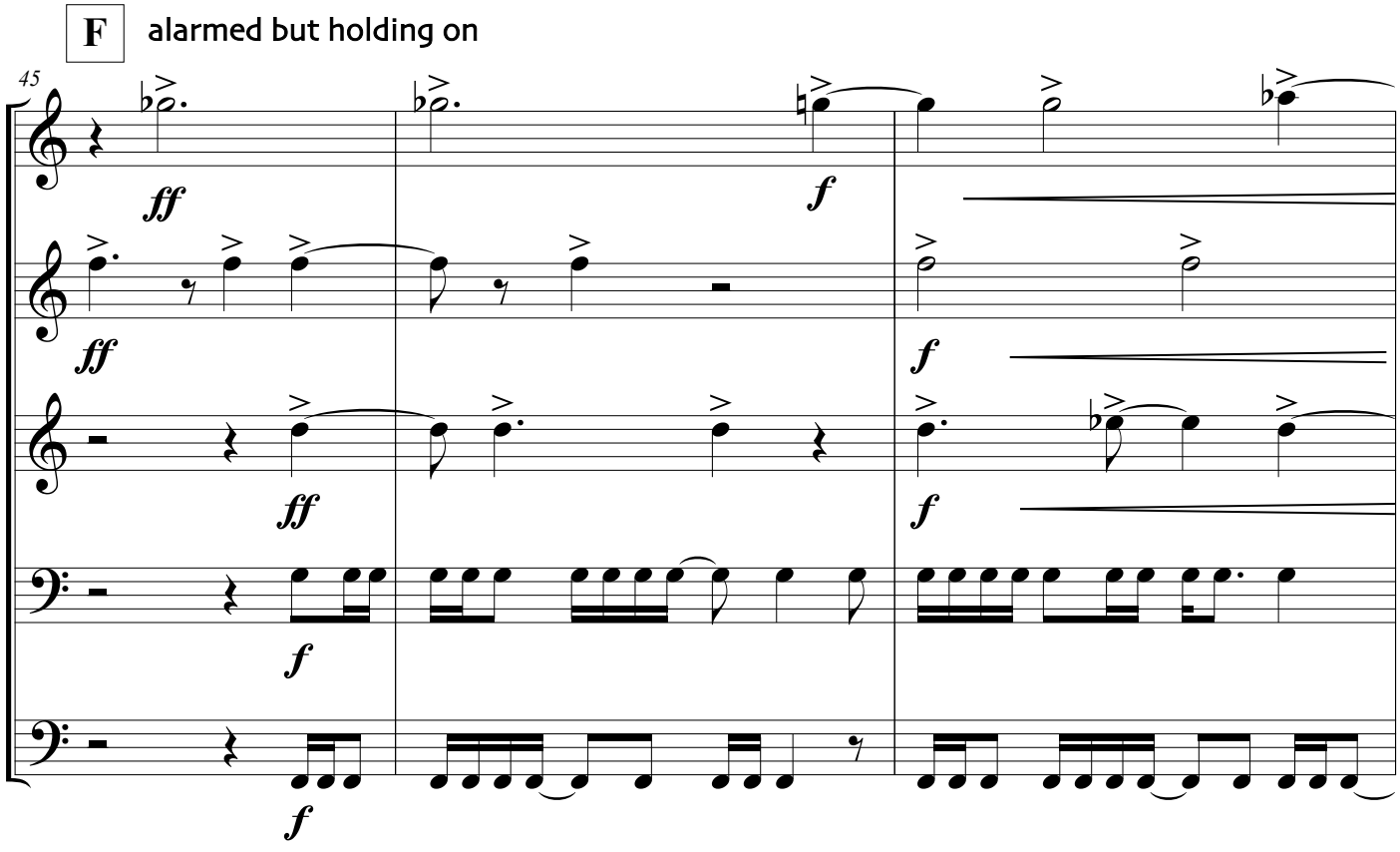
E committed, driving



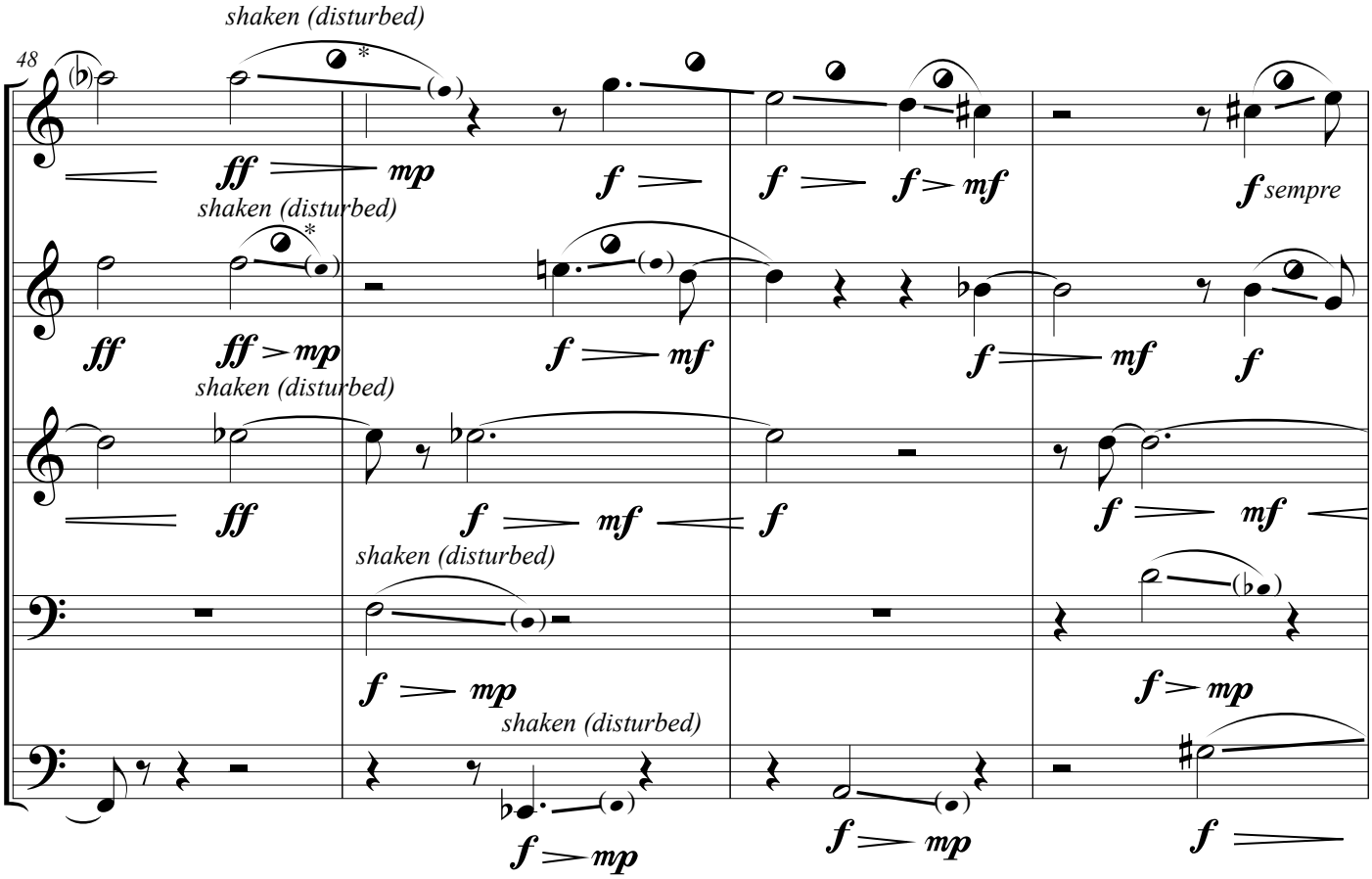

39
release
piu f
release
piu f

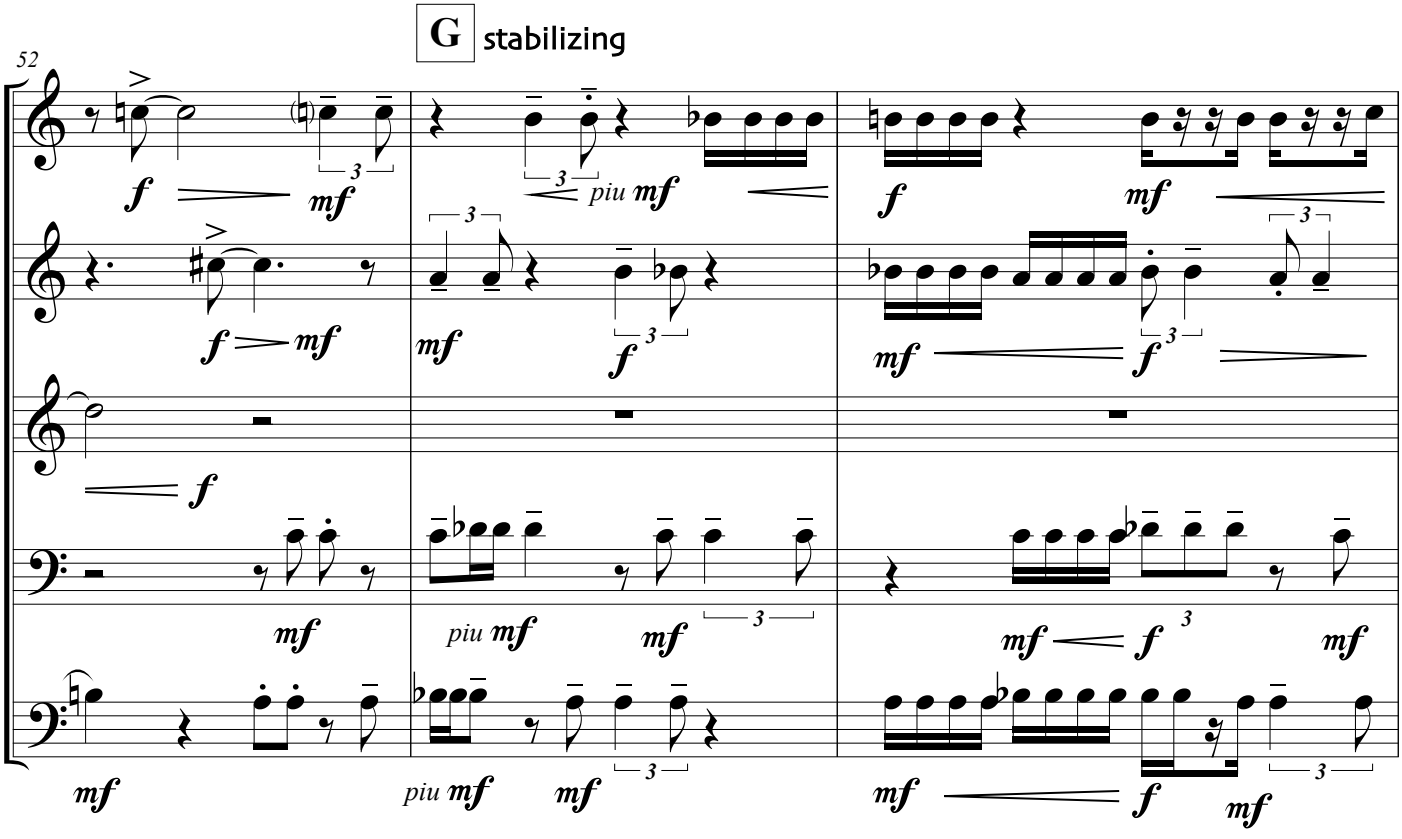

41
dig in
f
release
piu f
piu f
dig in
f
release
piu f
piu f
dig in
dig in

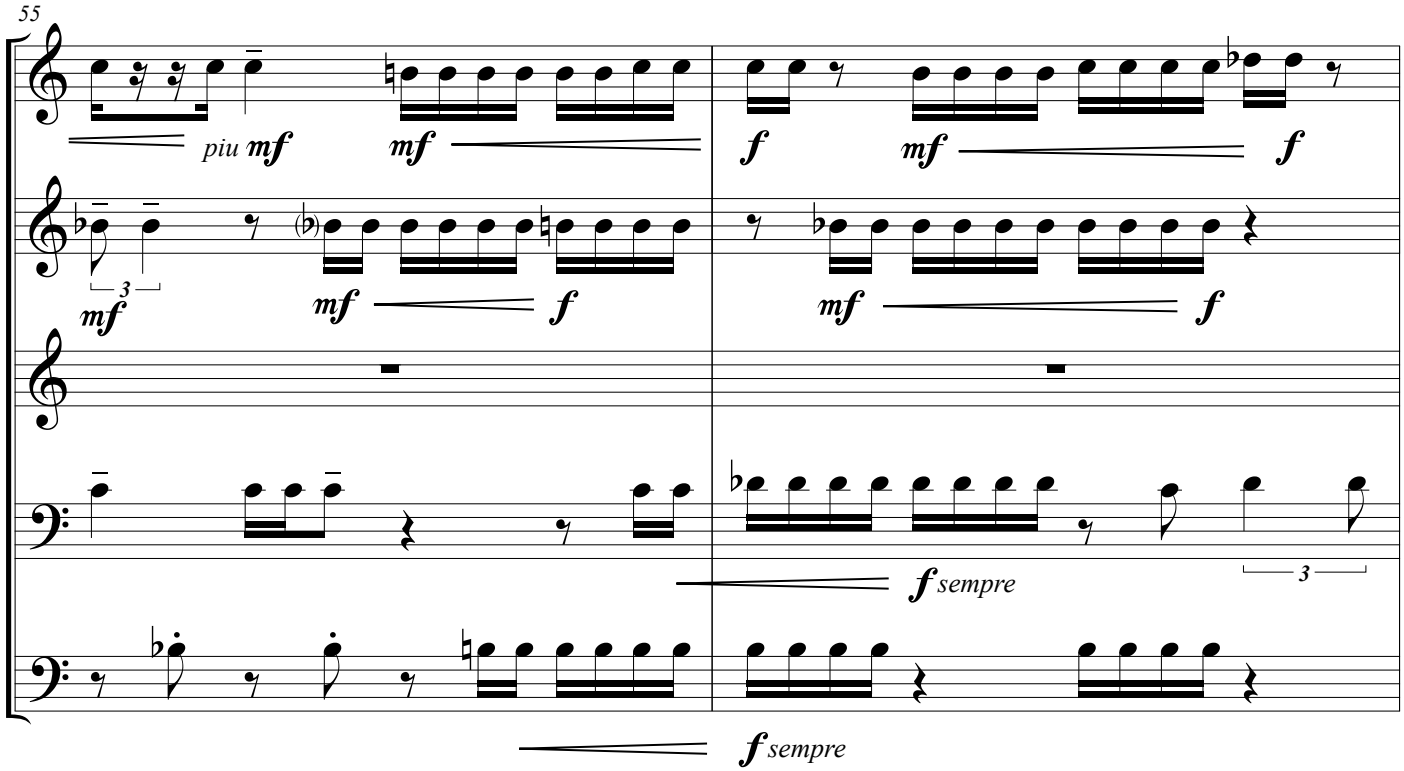

43
dig in
release
f
f sempre
dig in
release
f
f sempre
f
3
f
3
f

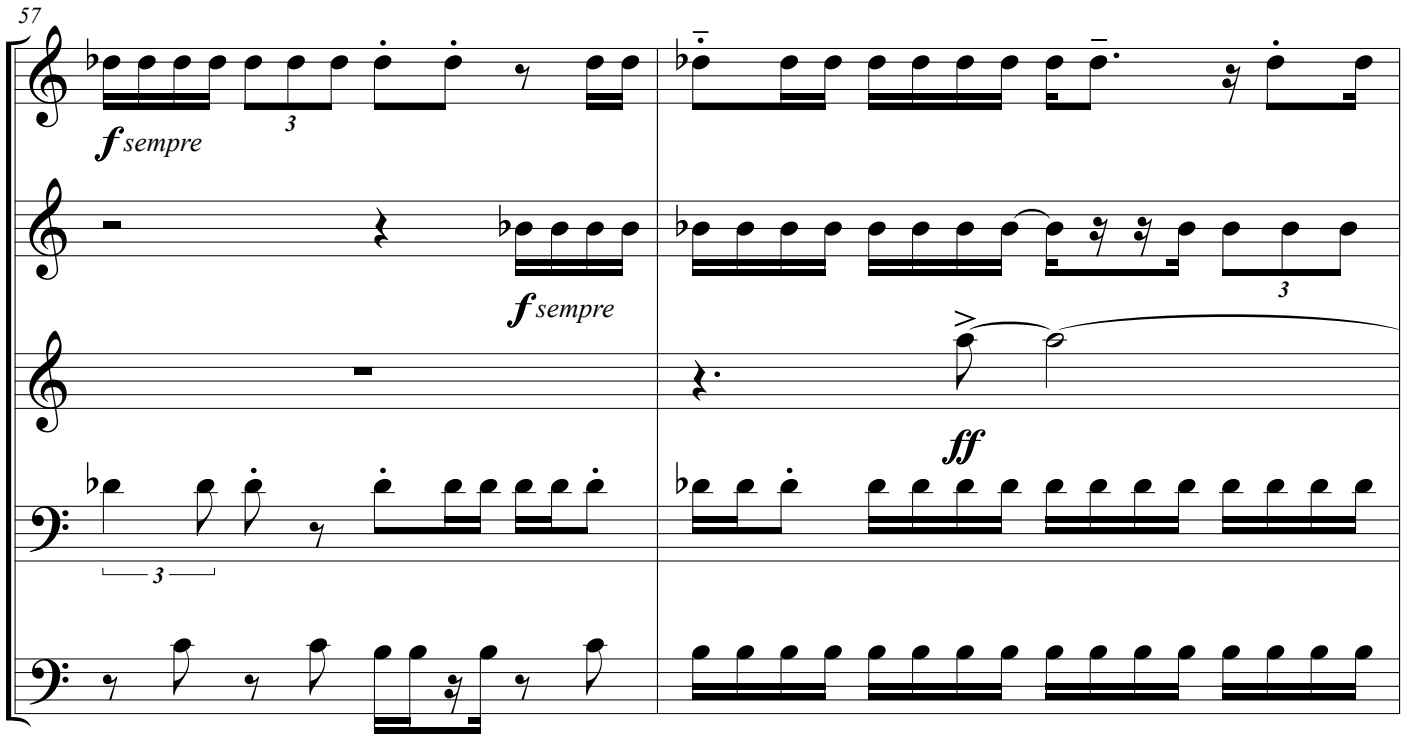

F
alarmed but holding on
45
ff
f
ff
f
ff
f
f
f

* indicates half-valve gliss.



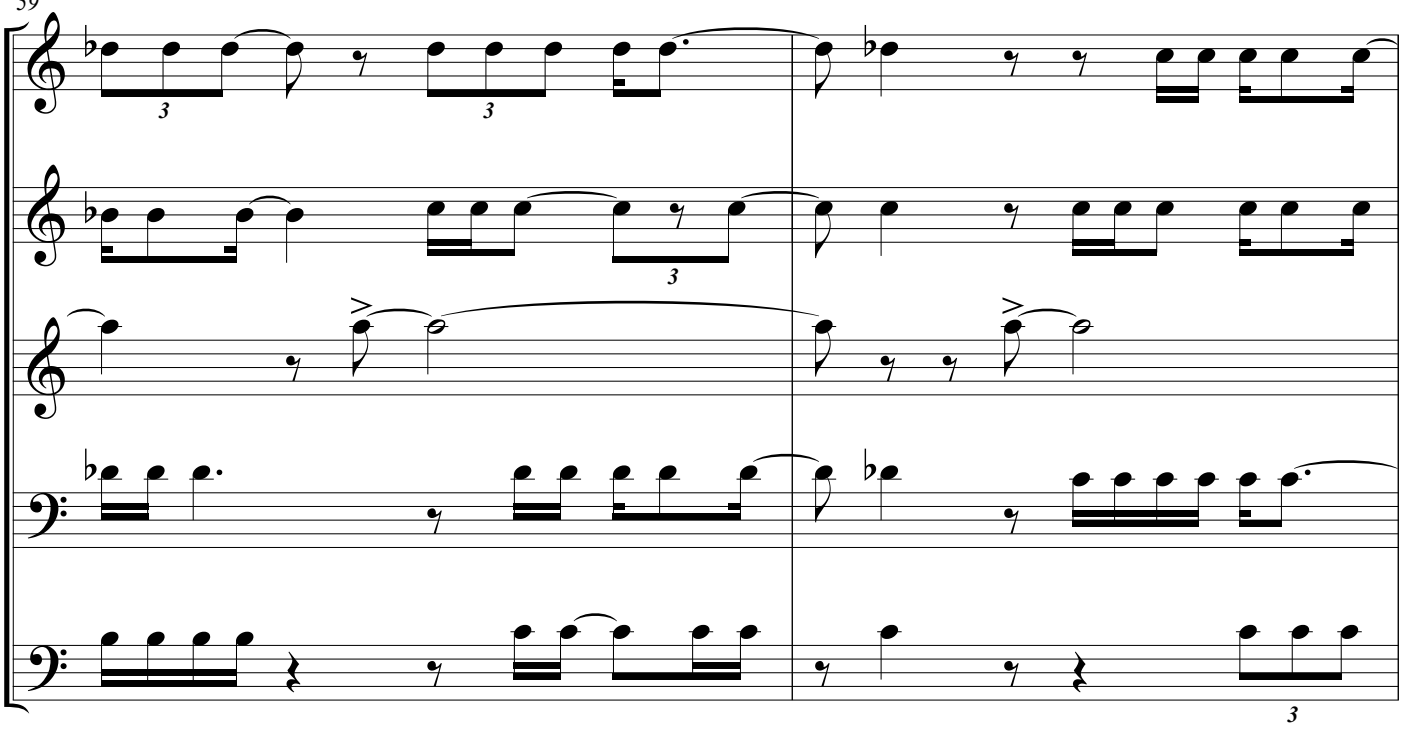



55
piu mf
mf
f
mf
f
mf
3
mf
mf
f
mf
f
f sempre
3
f sempre

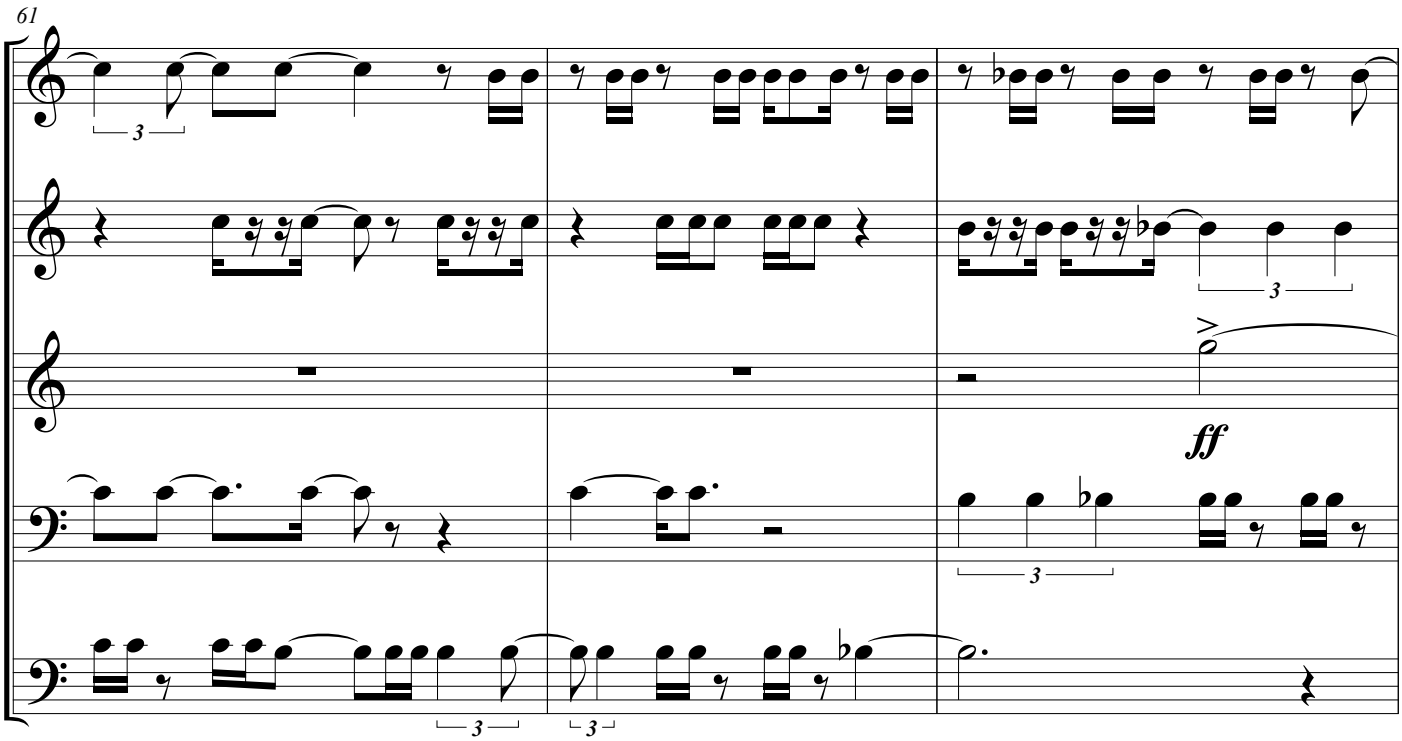

57
f sempre
3
f sempre
3
ff
3

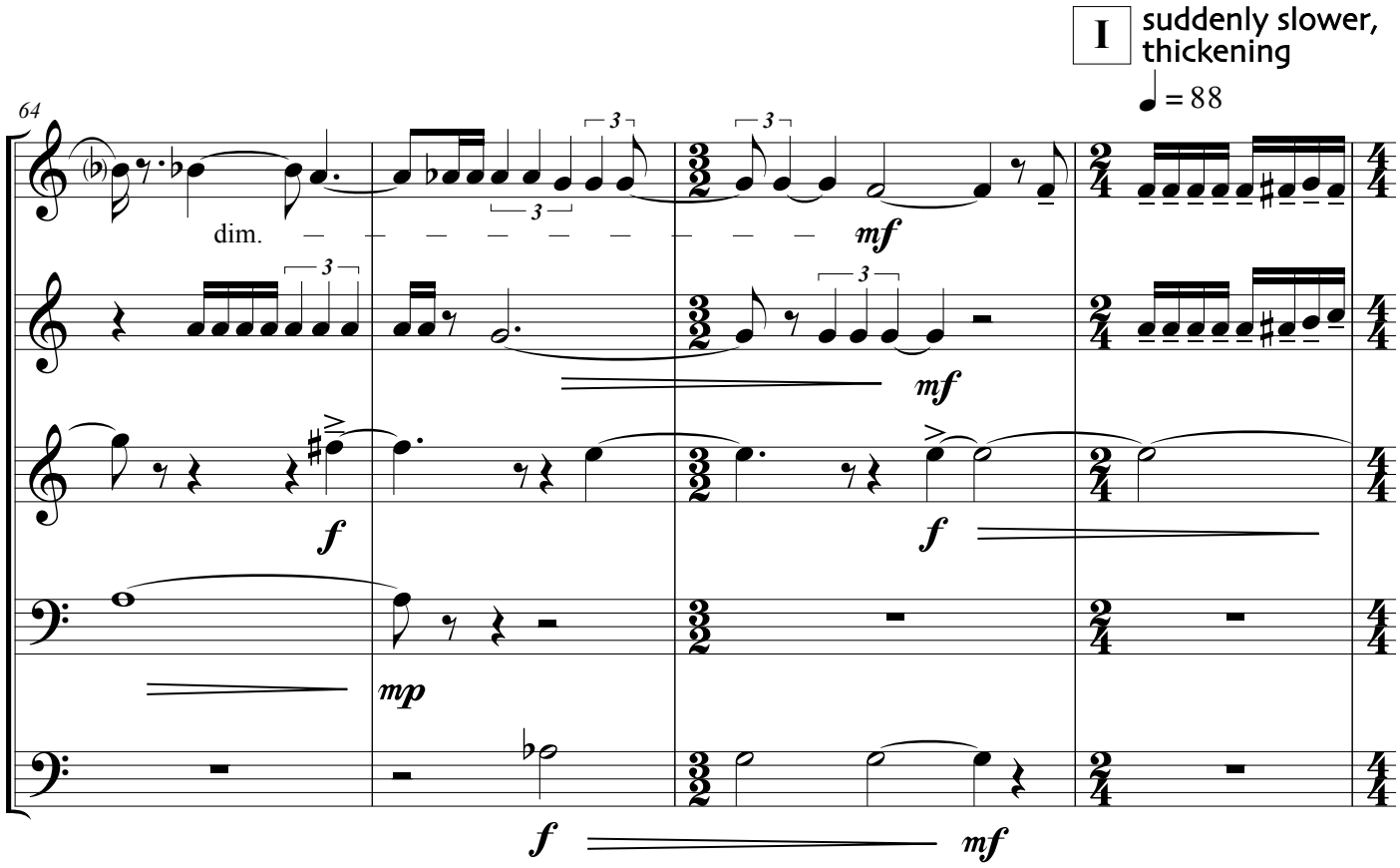
H pulling back (but not slowing)

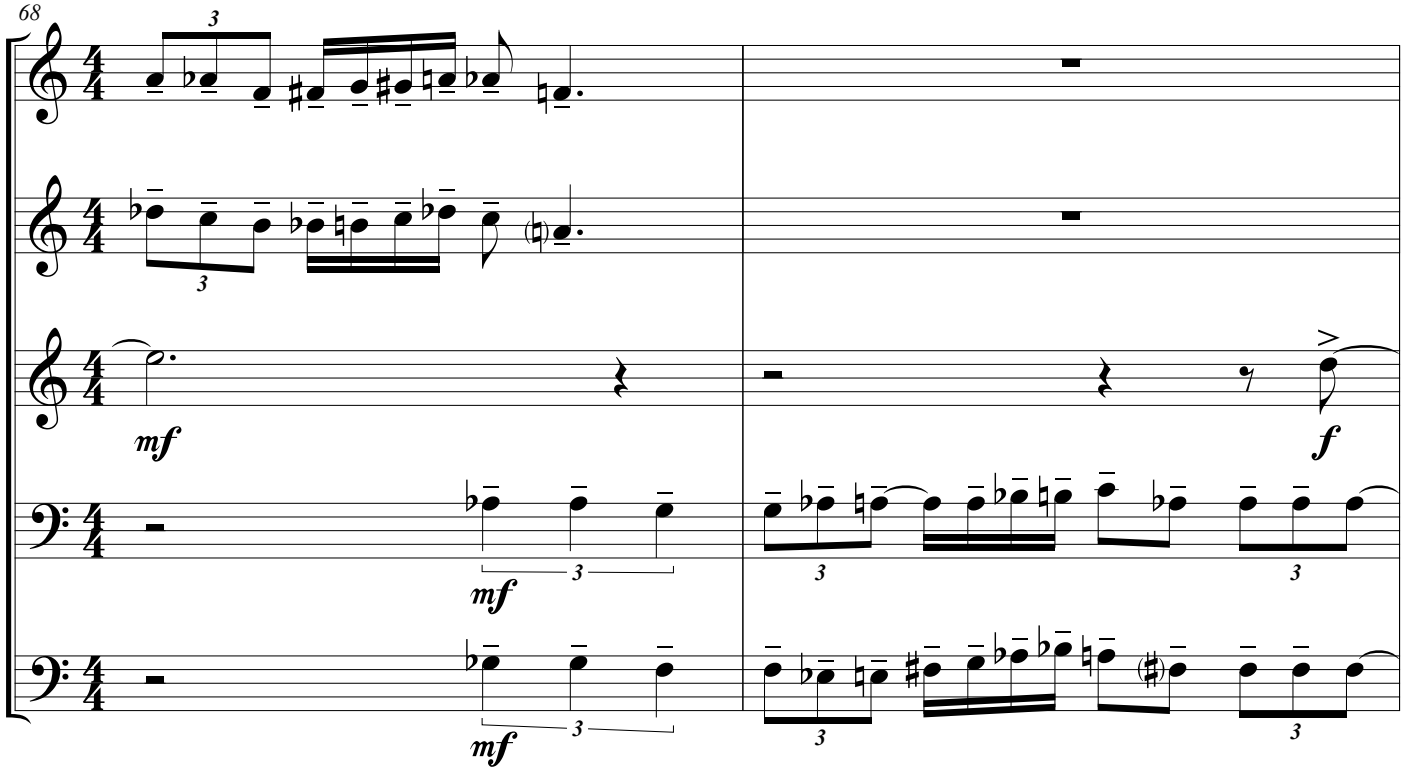
59

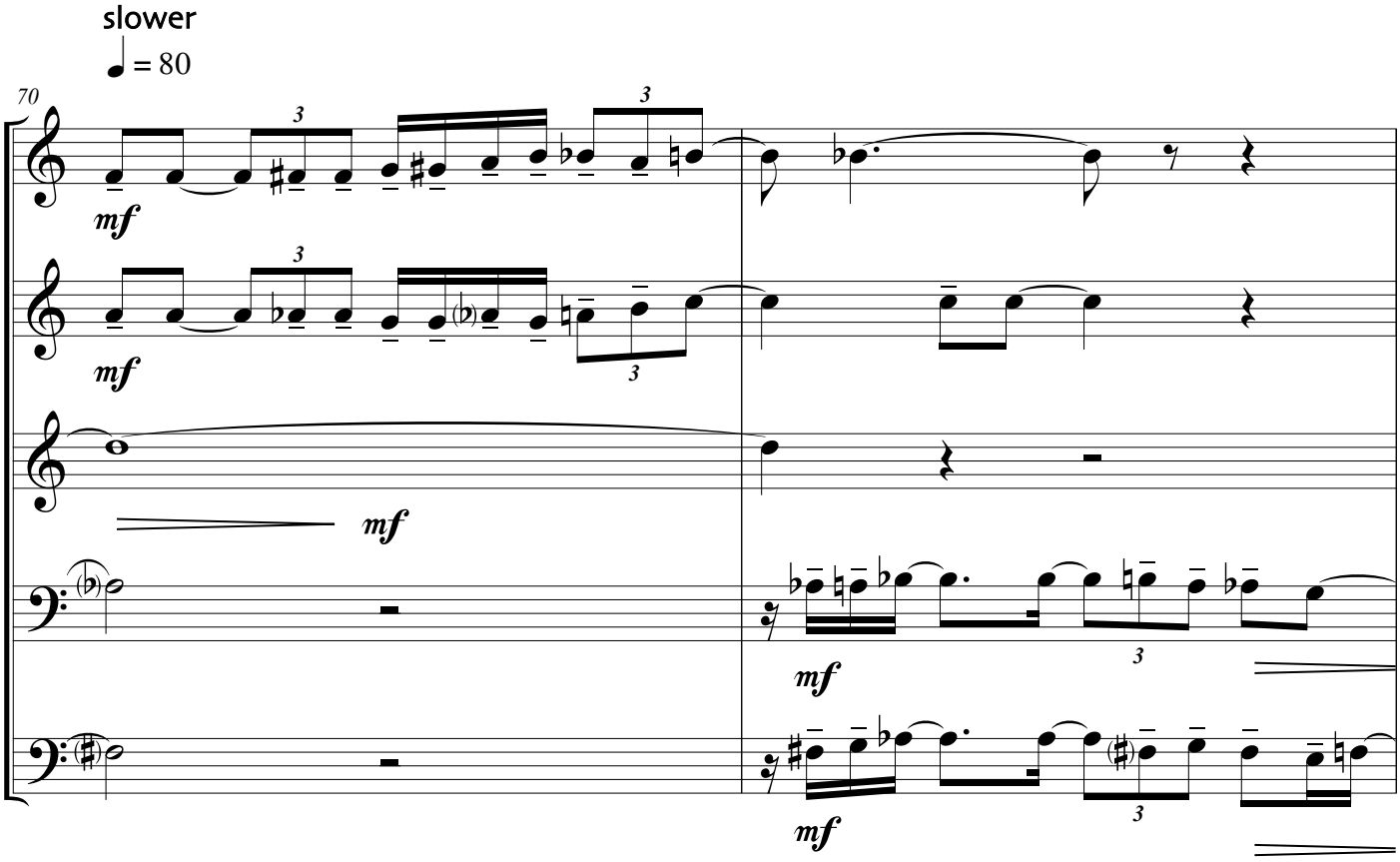


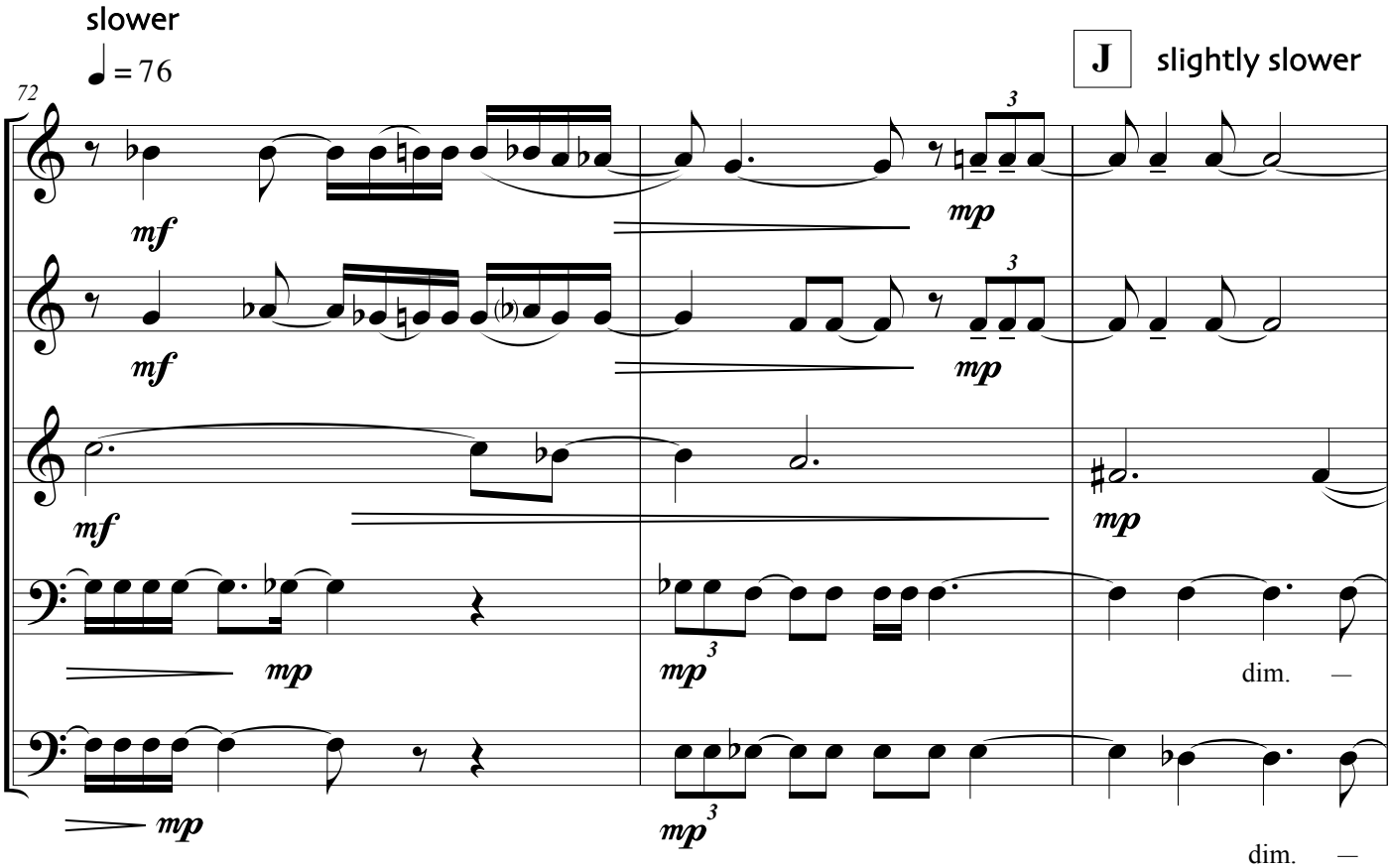
61

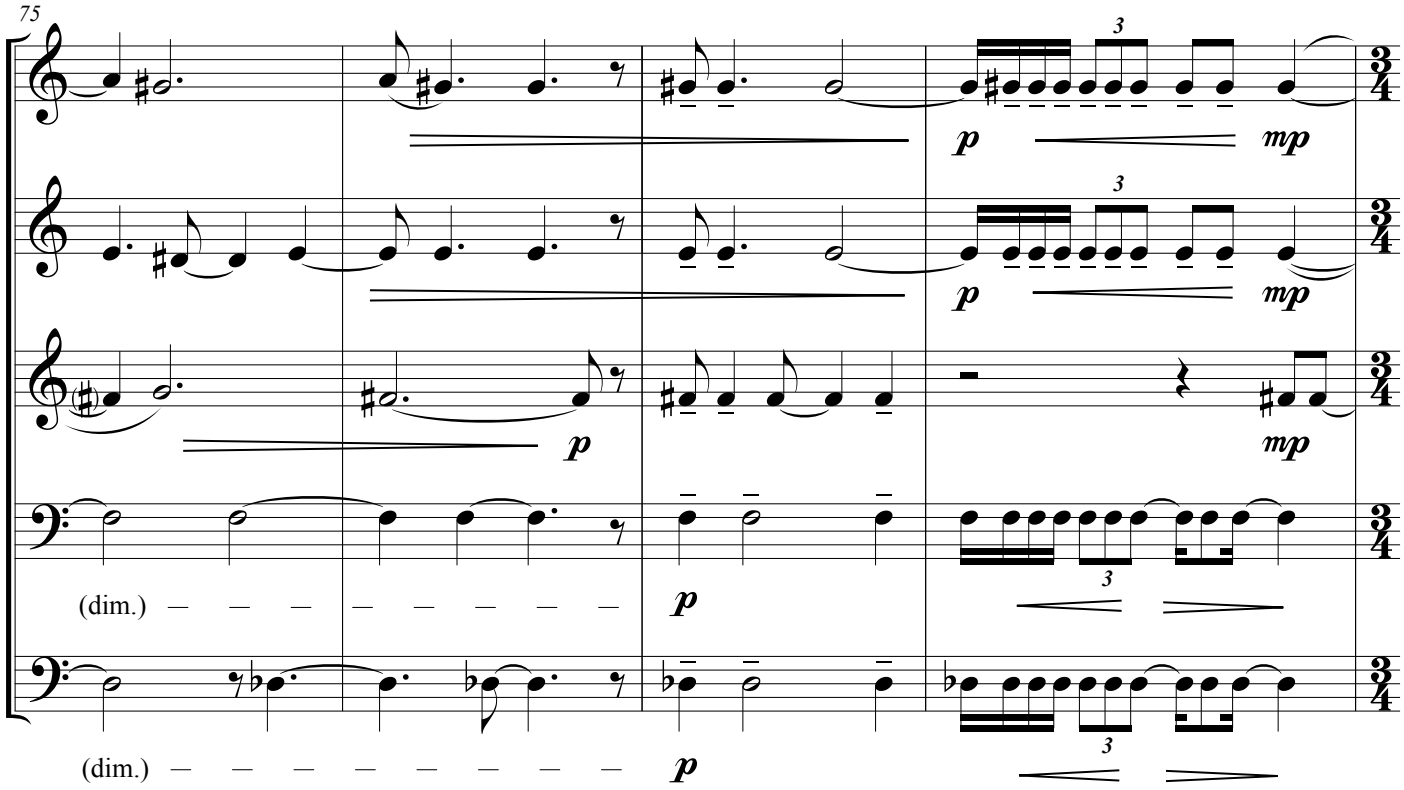


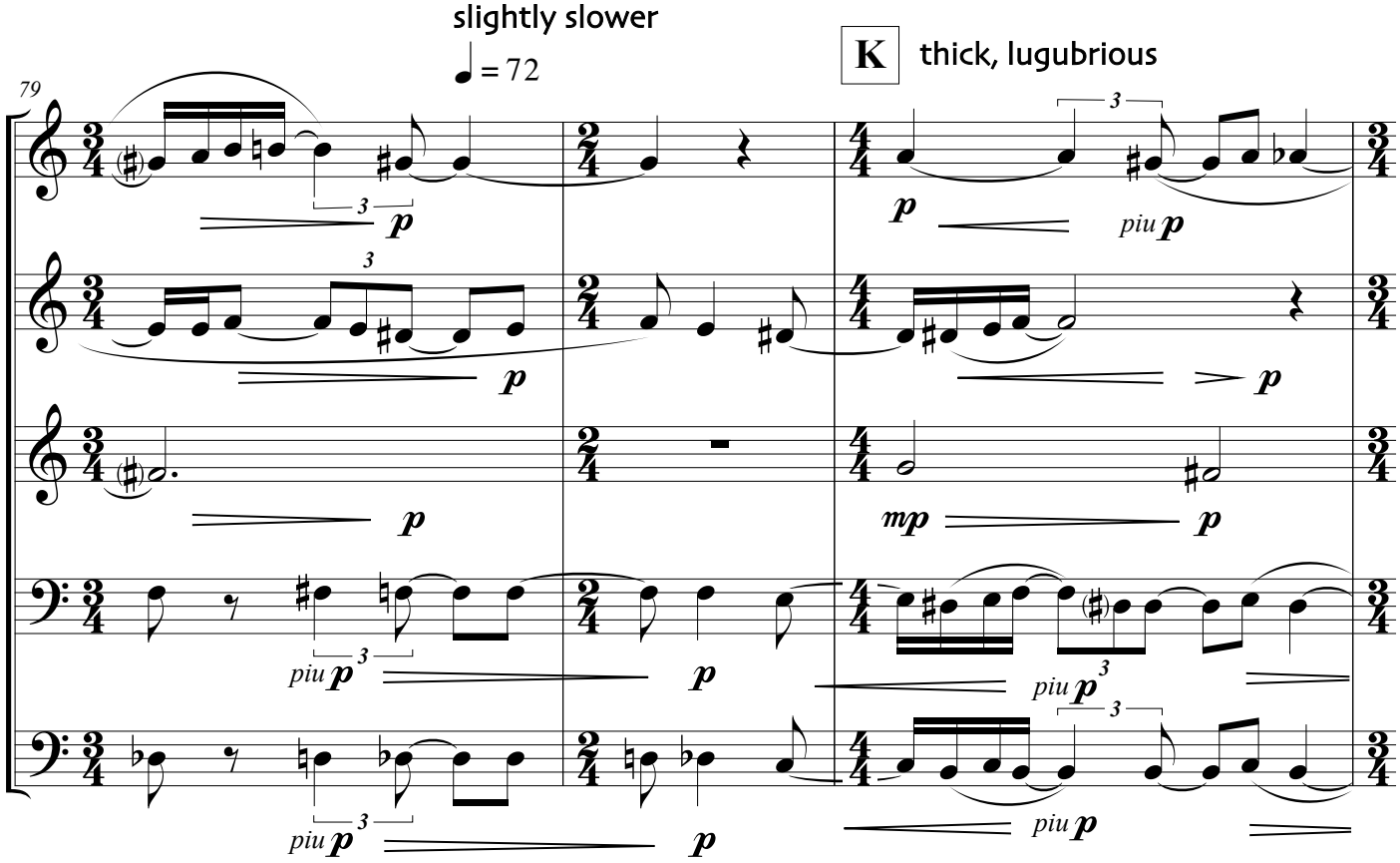

I
suddenly slower, thickening
♩ = 88
64
dim.
mf
mf
f
f
mp
f
mf

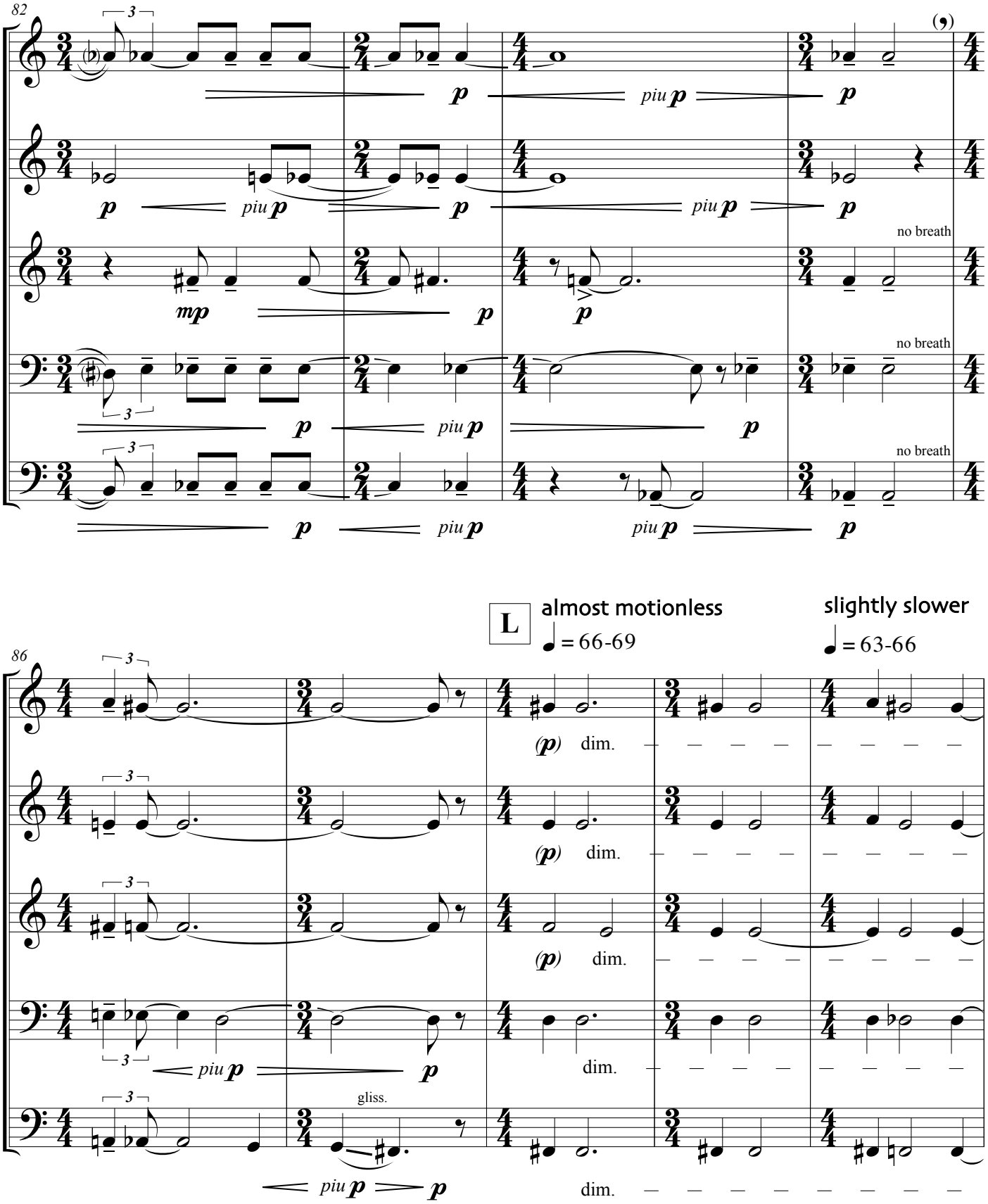

68
mf
f
mf
mf

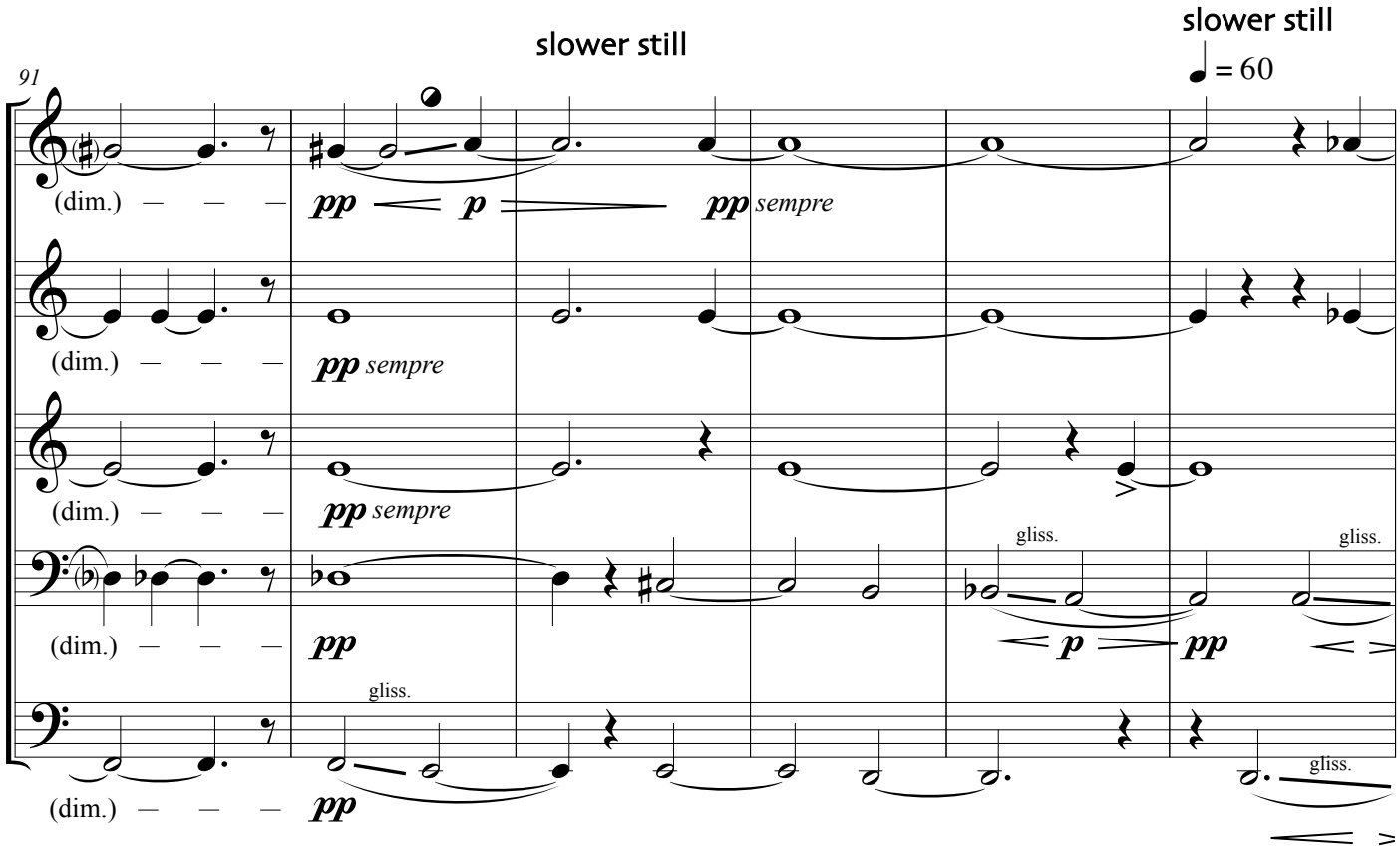

slower
♩ = 80
70
mf
mf
mf
mf
mf

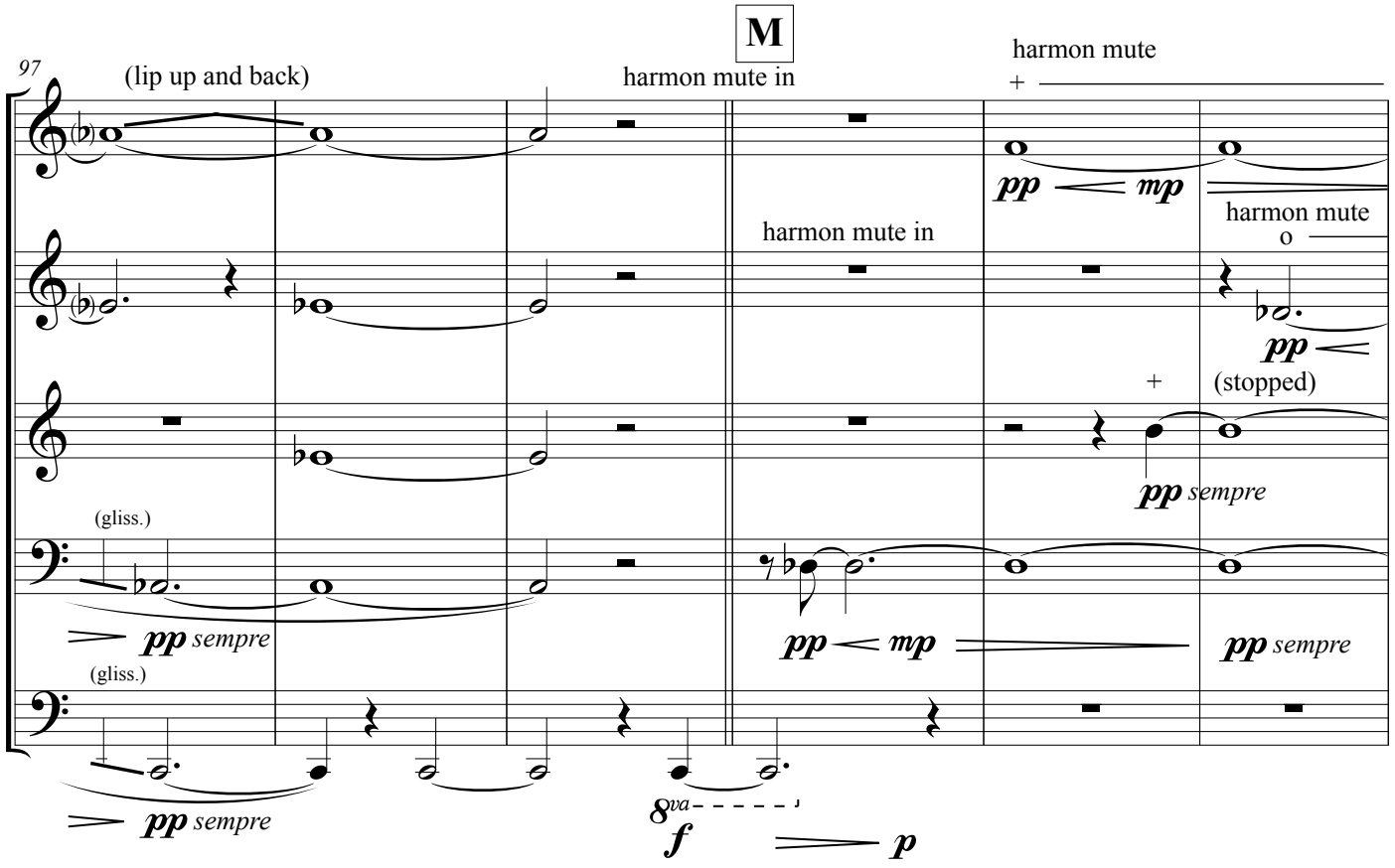

slower
♩ = 76
72
J
slightly slower
mf
mf
mf
mp
mp
mp
mp
mp
mp
dim.
dim.

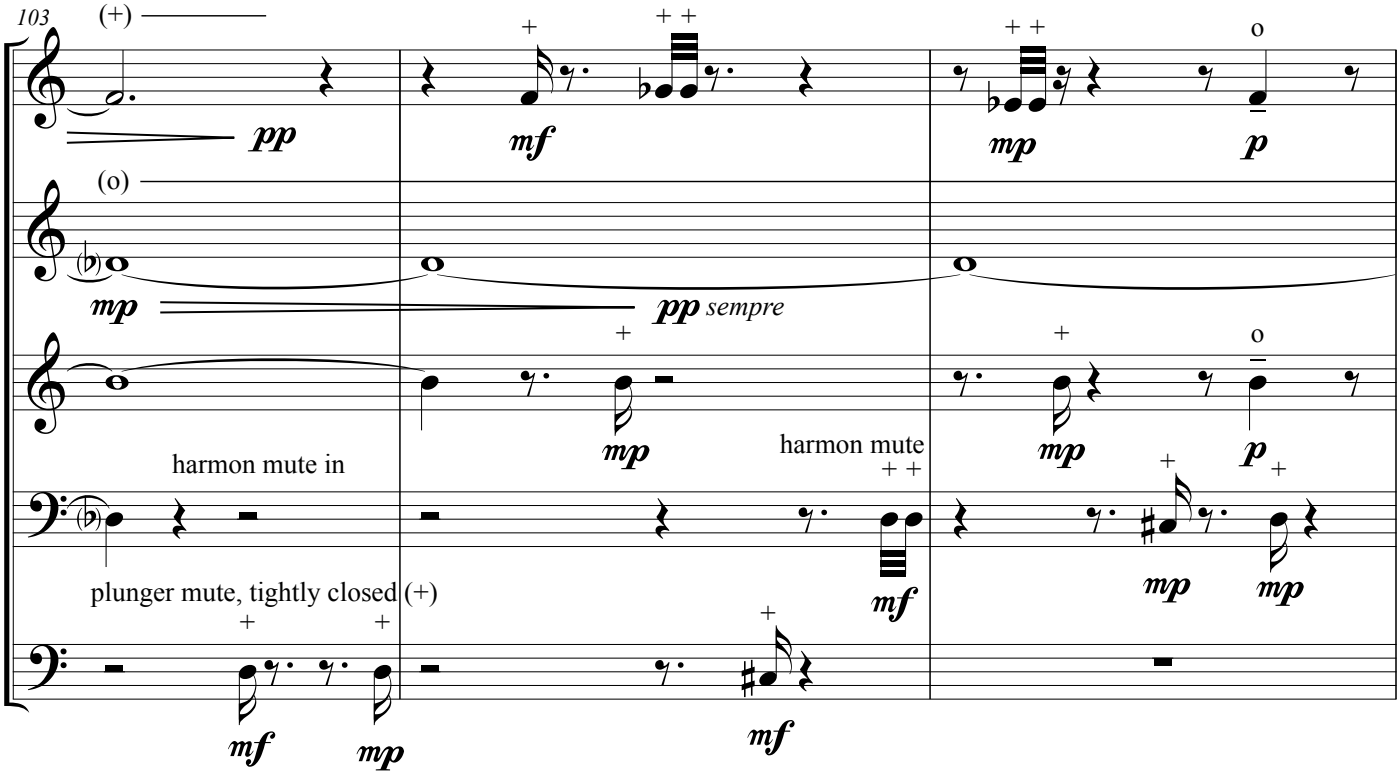

75
(dim.)
(dim.)

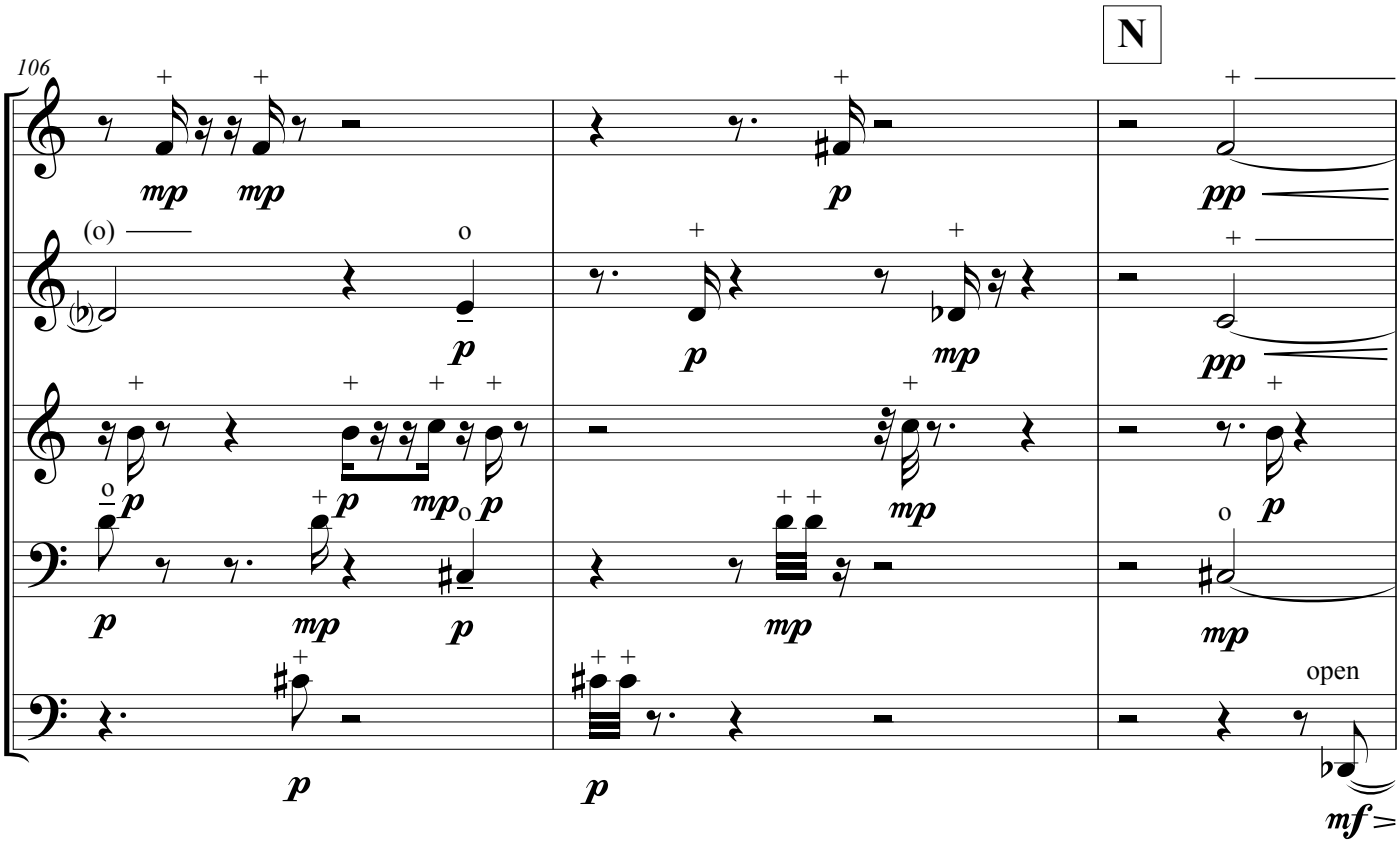

slightly slower
♩ = 72
K
thick, lugubrious
79

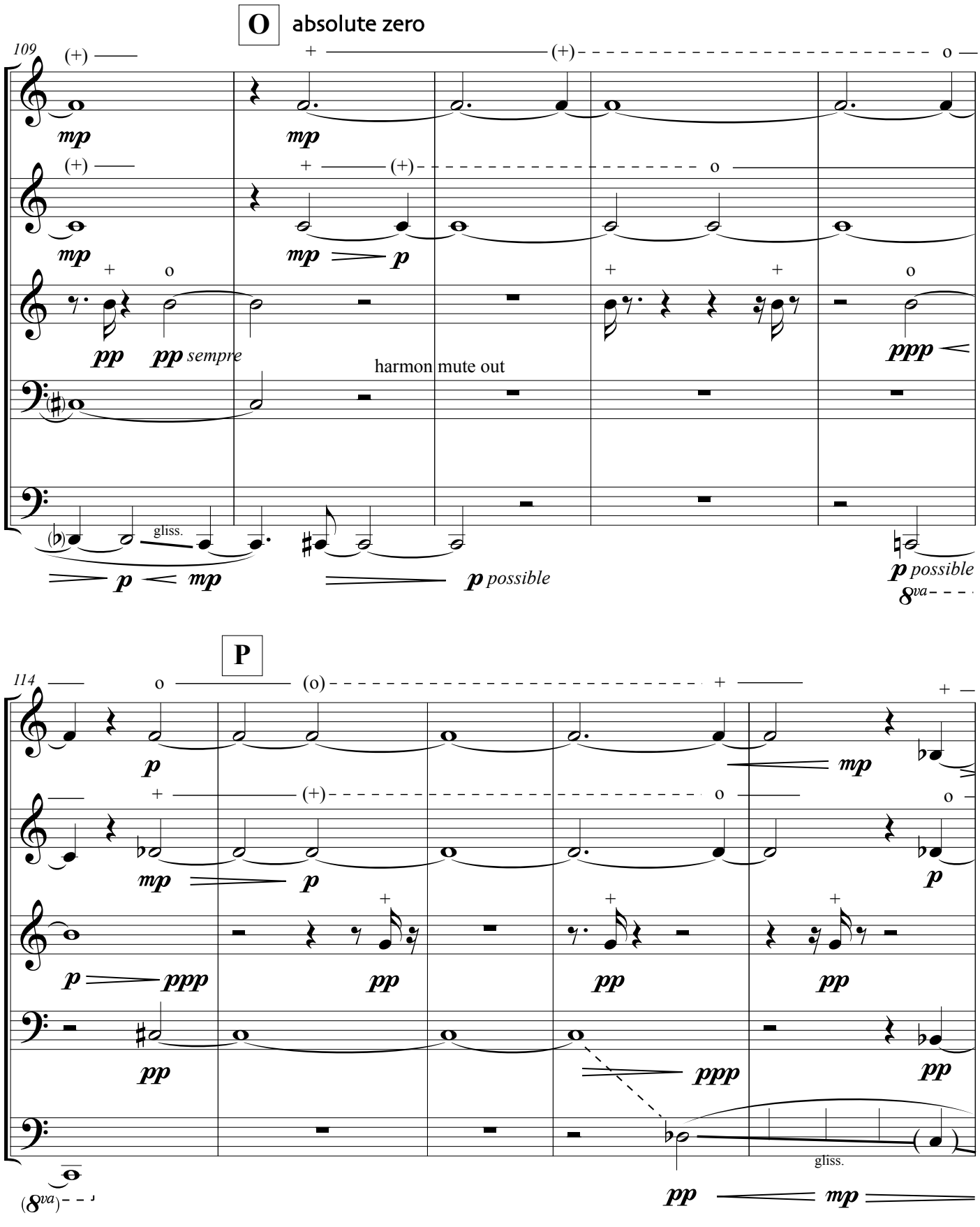

82
no breath
no breath
no breath
L
almost motionless
♩ = 66-69
slightly slower
♩ = 63-66
86
dim.
gliss.

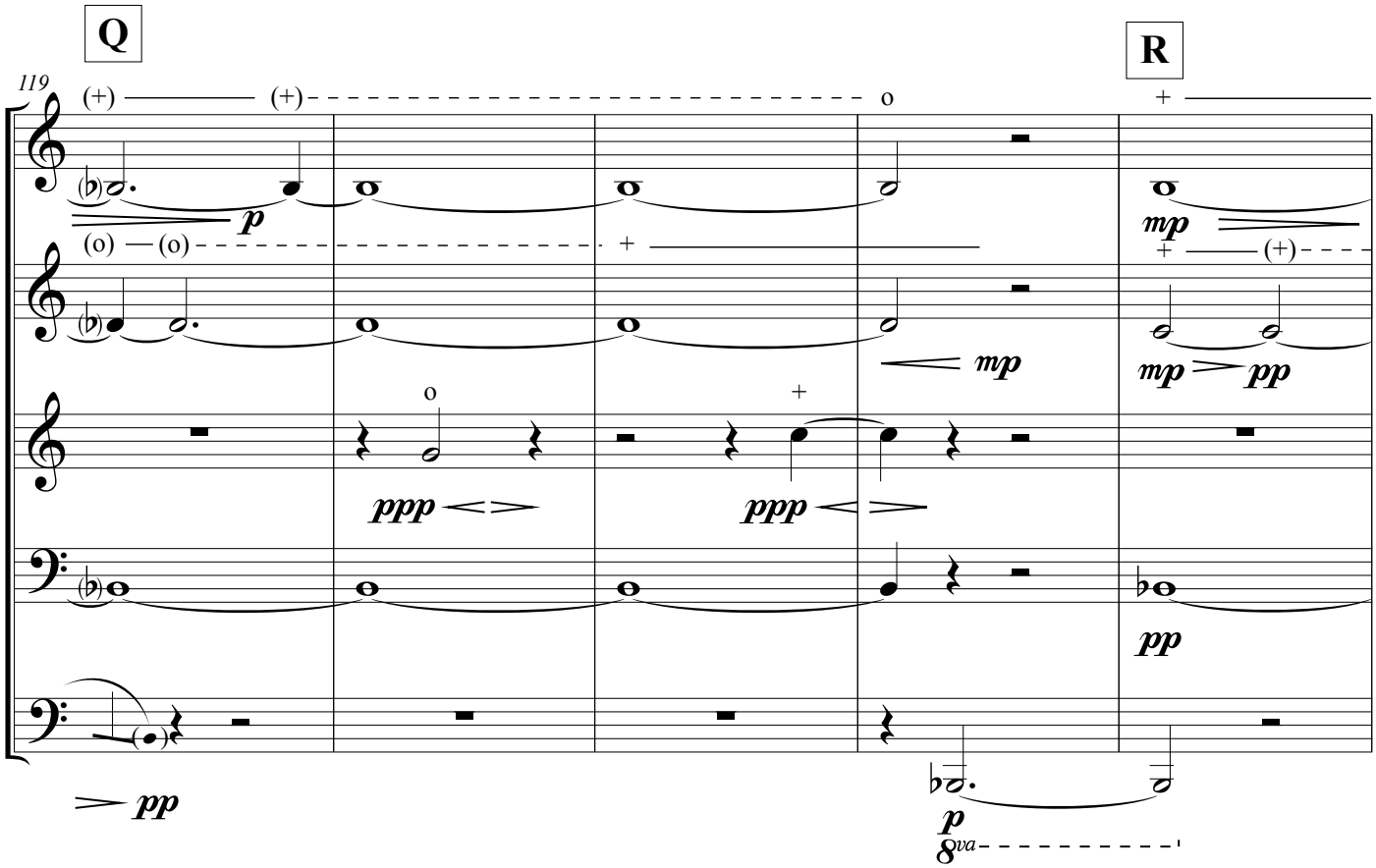

slower still
slower still
♩ = 60
91
(dim.)
pp
p
pp sempre
gliss.

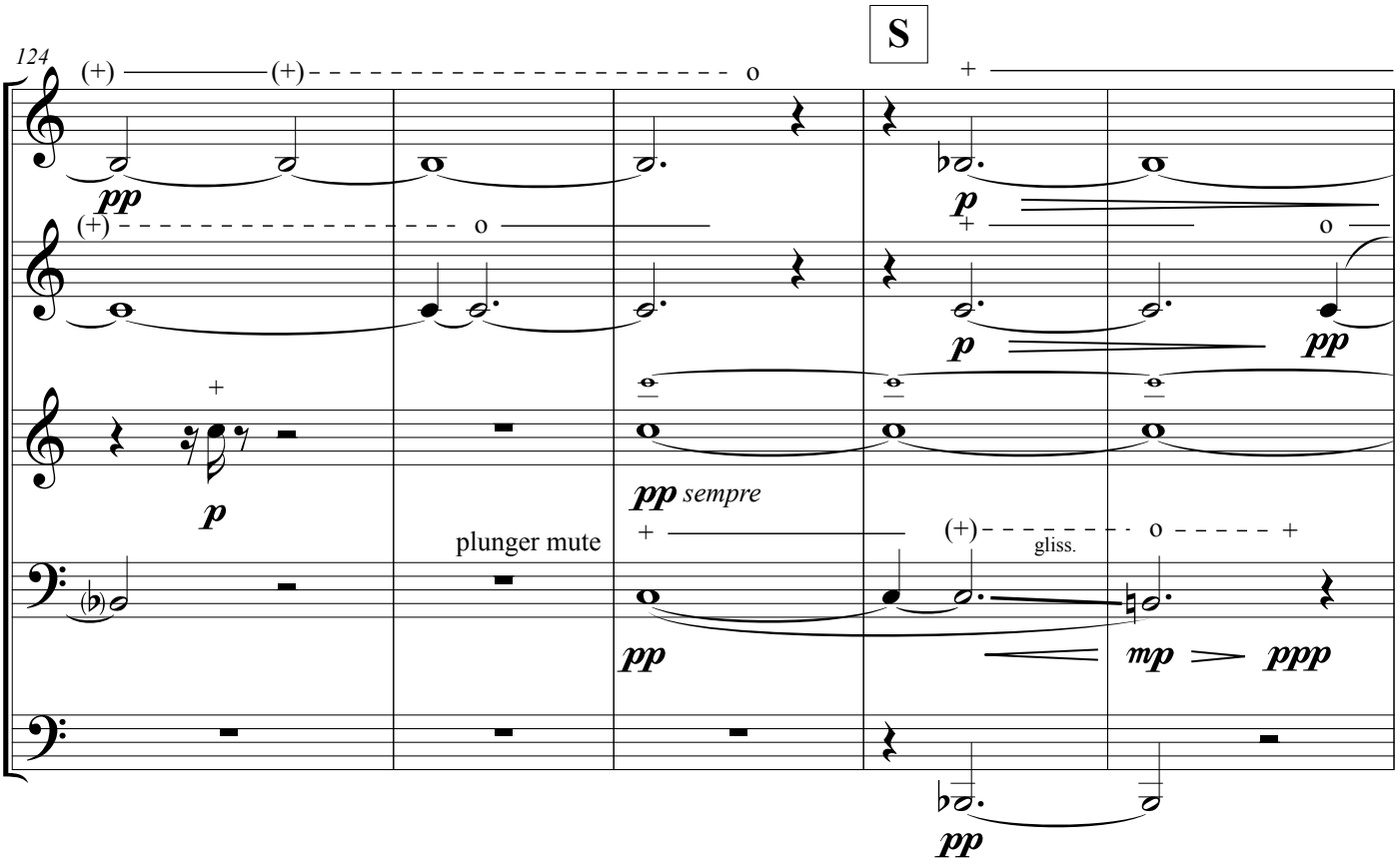

M
97
(lip up and back)
harmon mute in
harmon mute
harmon mute in
(stopped)
(gliss.)
pp sempre
mp
8va
f
p

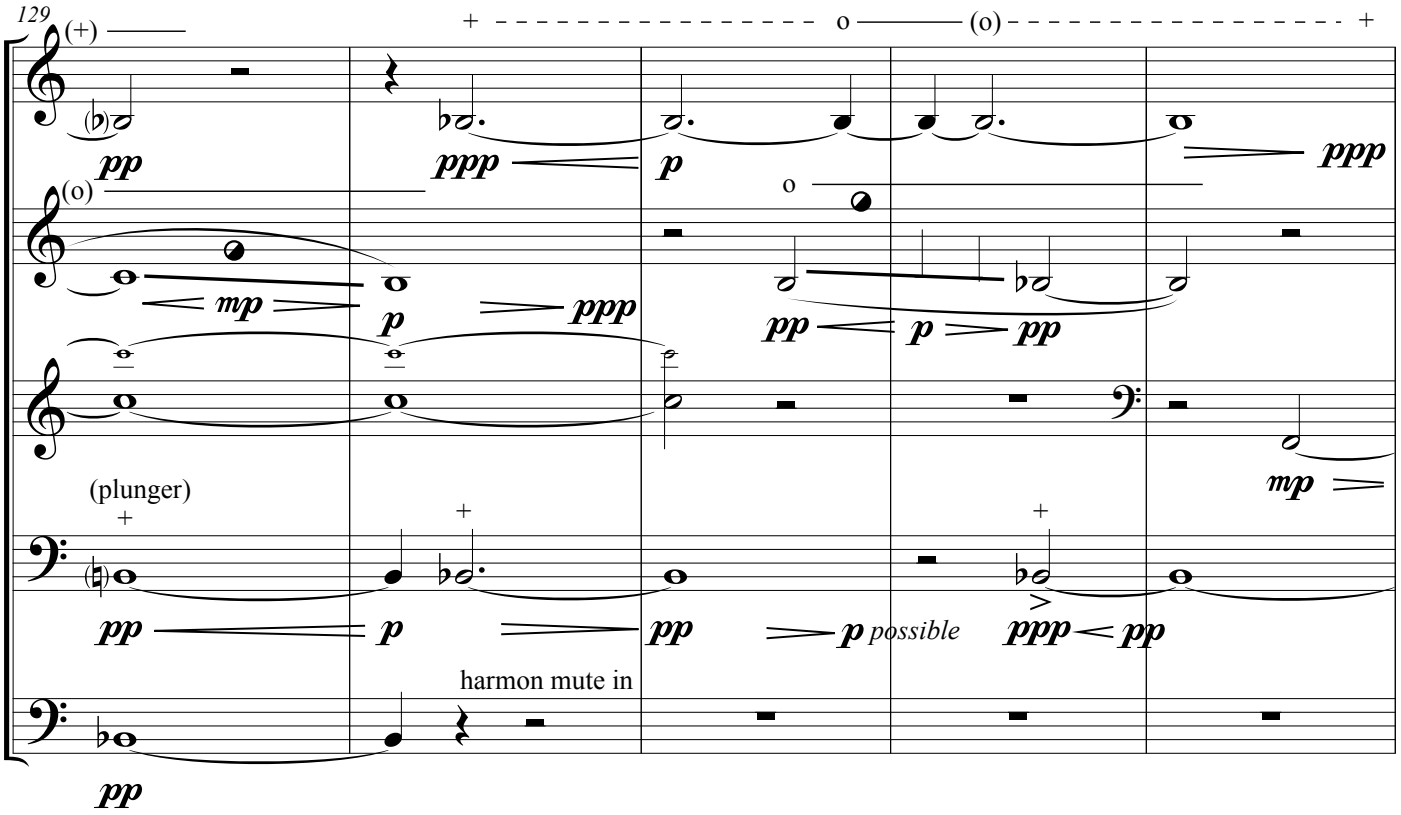

103
(+)
pp
mf
mp
p
(o)
mp
pp sempre
mp
harmon mute in
harmon mute
mf
plunger mute, tightly closed (+)
mf
mp
mf

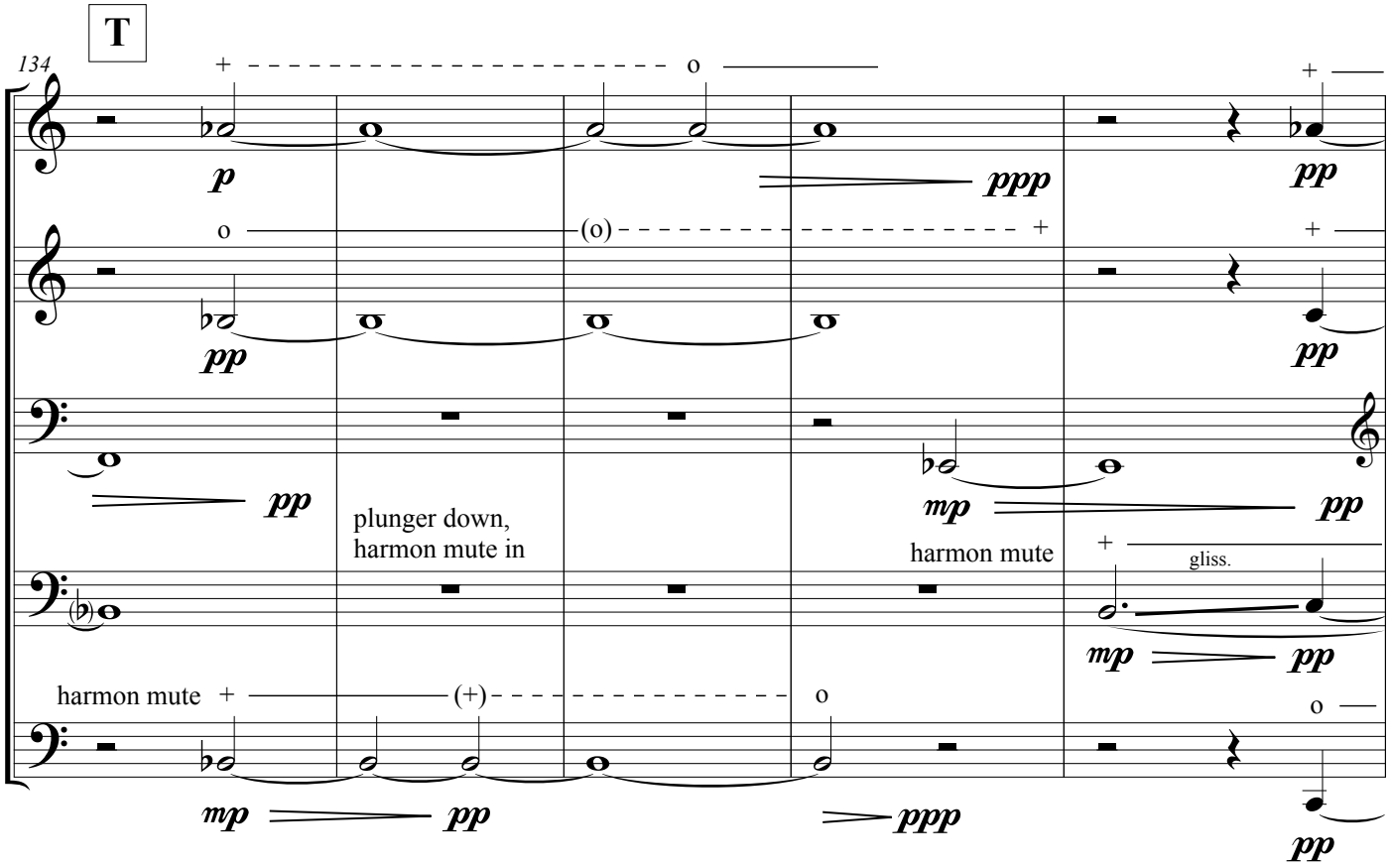

N
106
mp
mp
p
pp
(o)
p
p
mp
pp
p
p
mp
p
mp
p
p
mp
p
mp
mp
open
p
p
mf

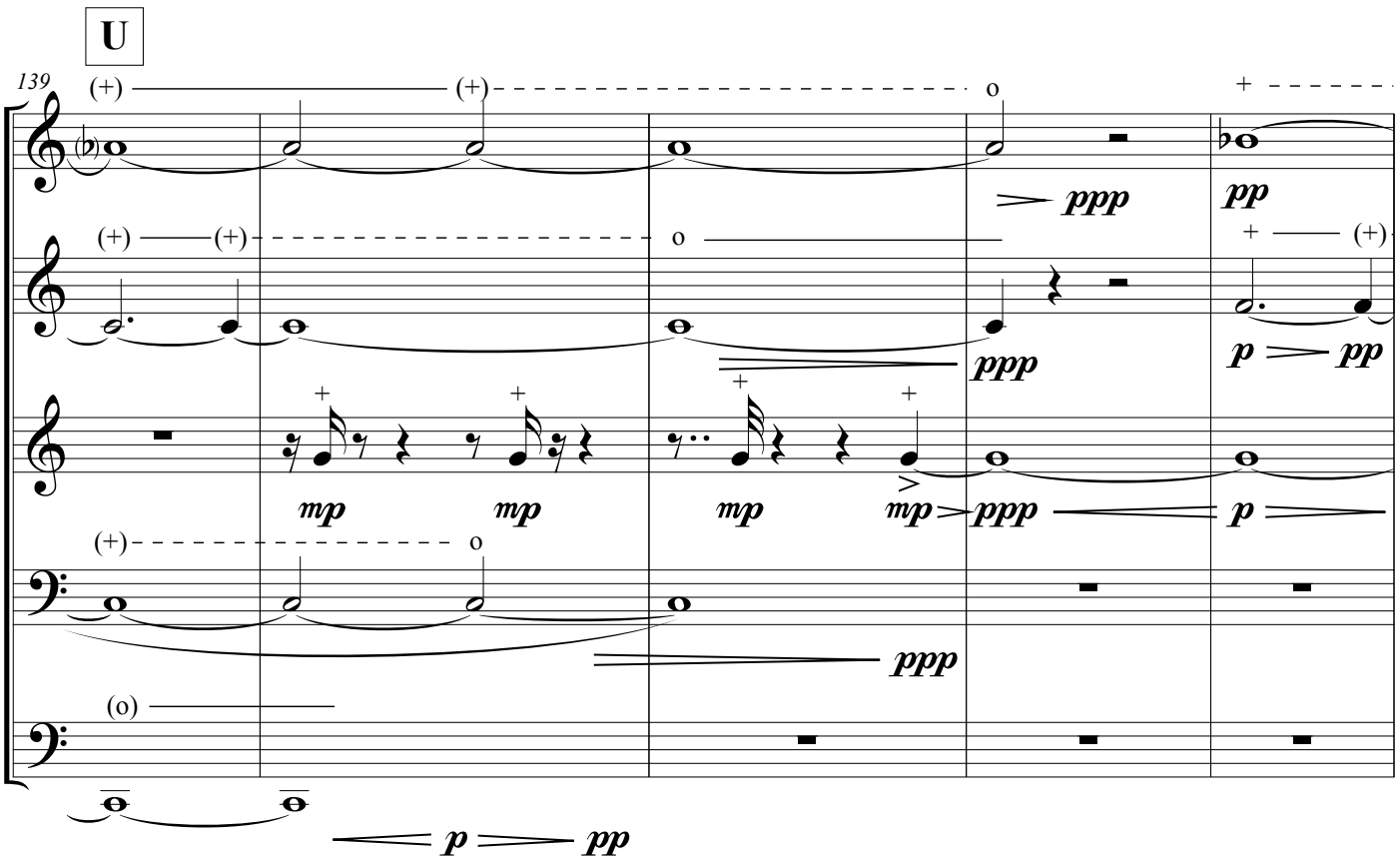

O
absolute zero
109
mp
mp
mp
mp
p
pp
pp sempre
harmon mute out
ppp
gliss.
p
mp
p possible
p possible
8va
P
114
p
mp
mp
p
p
p
ppp
pp
pp
pp
pp
ppp
pp
gliss.
pp
mp
(8va)

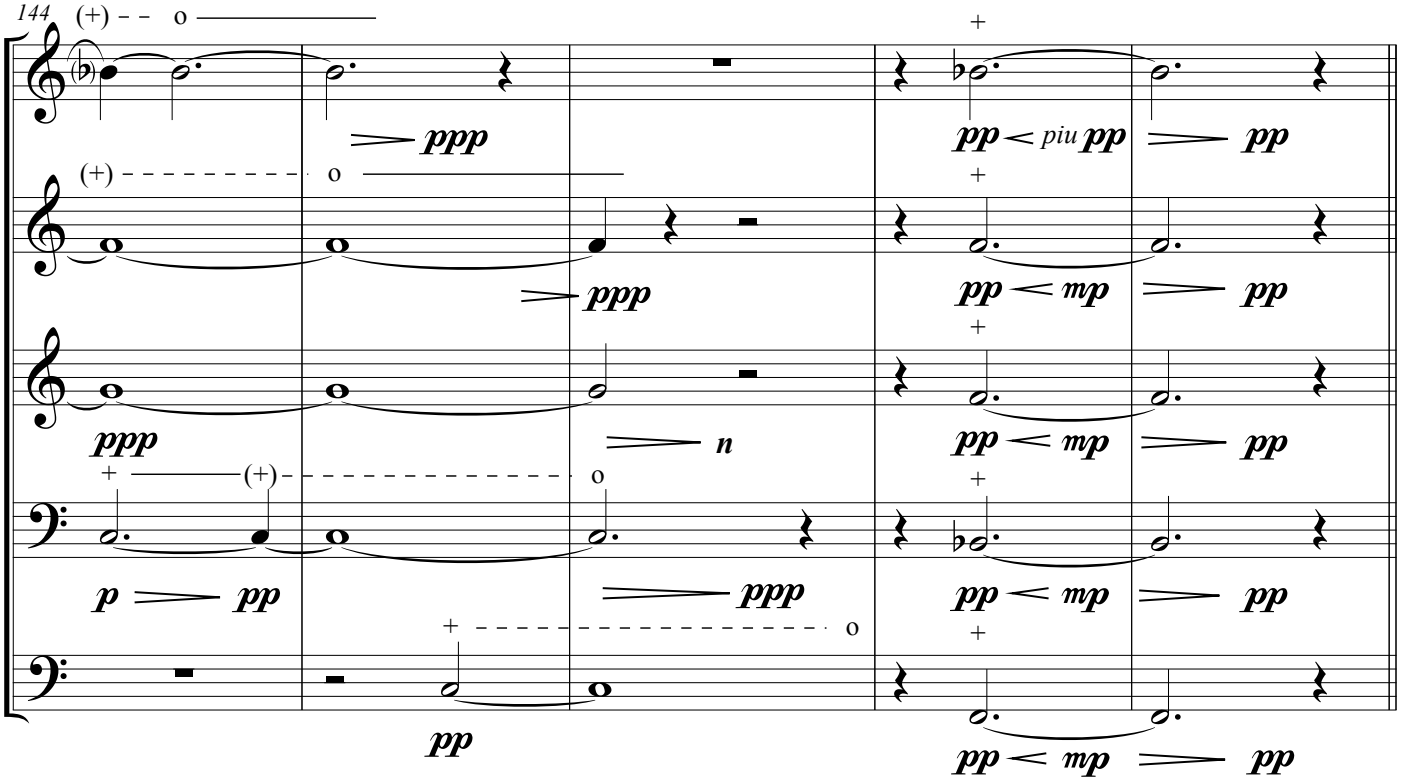

Q
R
119
p
mp
mp
mp
pp
ppp
ppp
pp
pp
p
8va

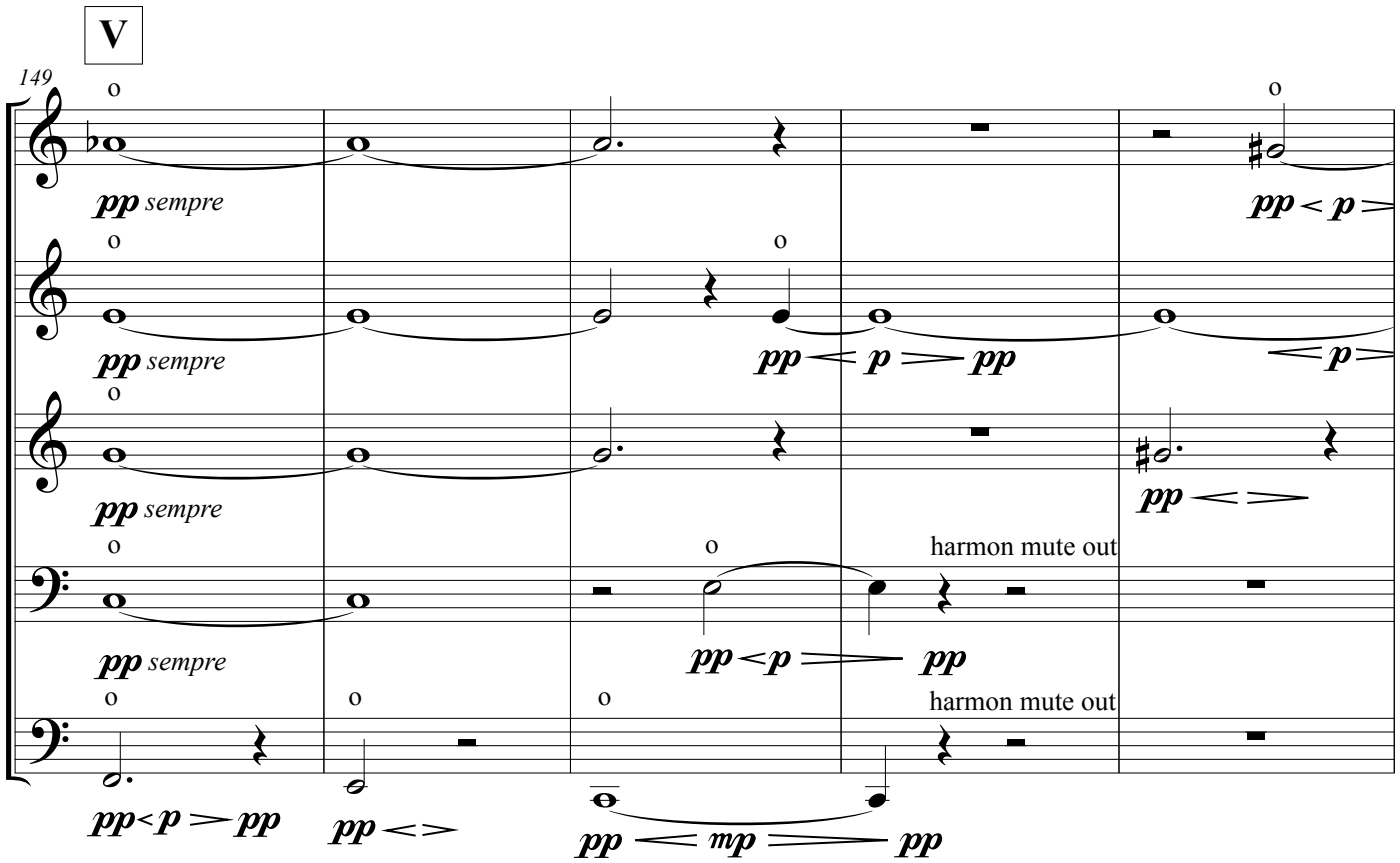

S
124
pp
p
p
pp
p
pp sempre
plunger mute
gliss.
pp
mp
ppp
pp

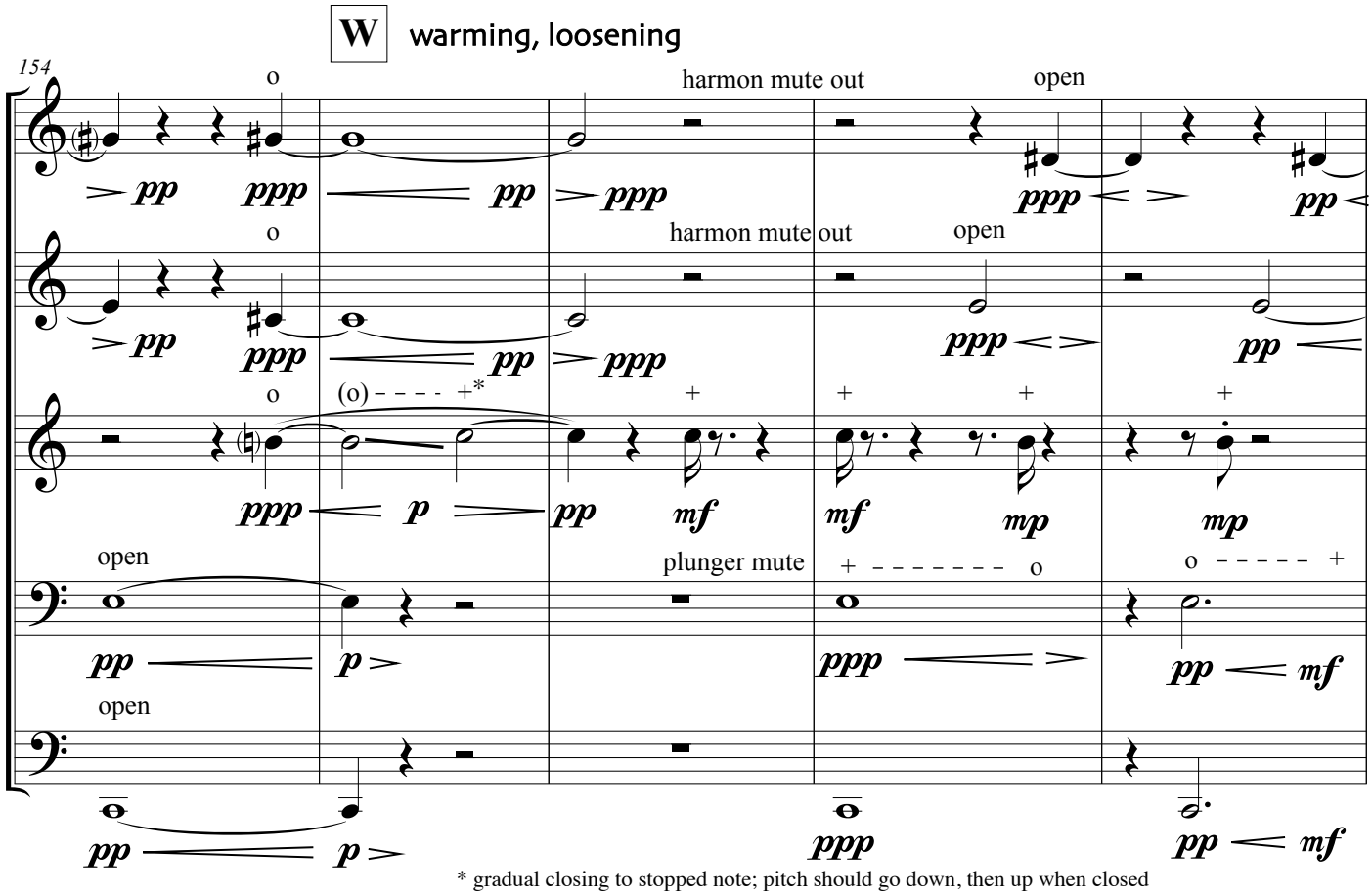

129
(+)
o
(o)
(plunger)
harmon mute in
possible


T
134
plunger down,
harmon mute in
harmon mute
gliss.
harmon mute

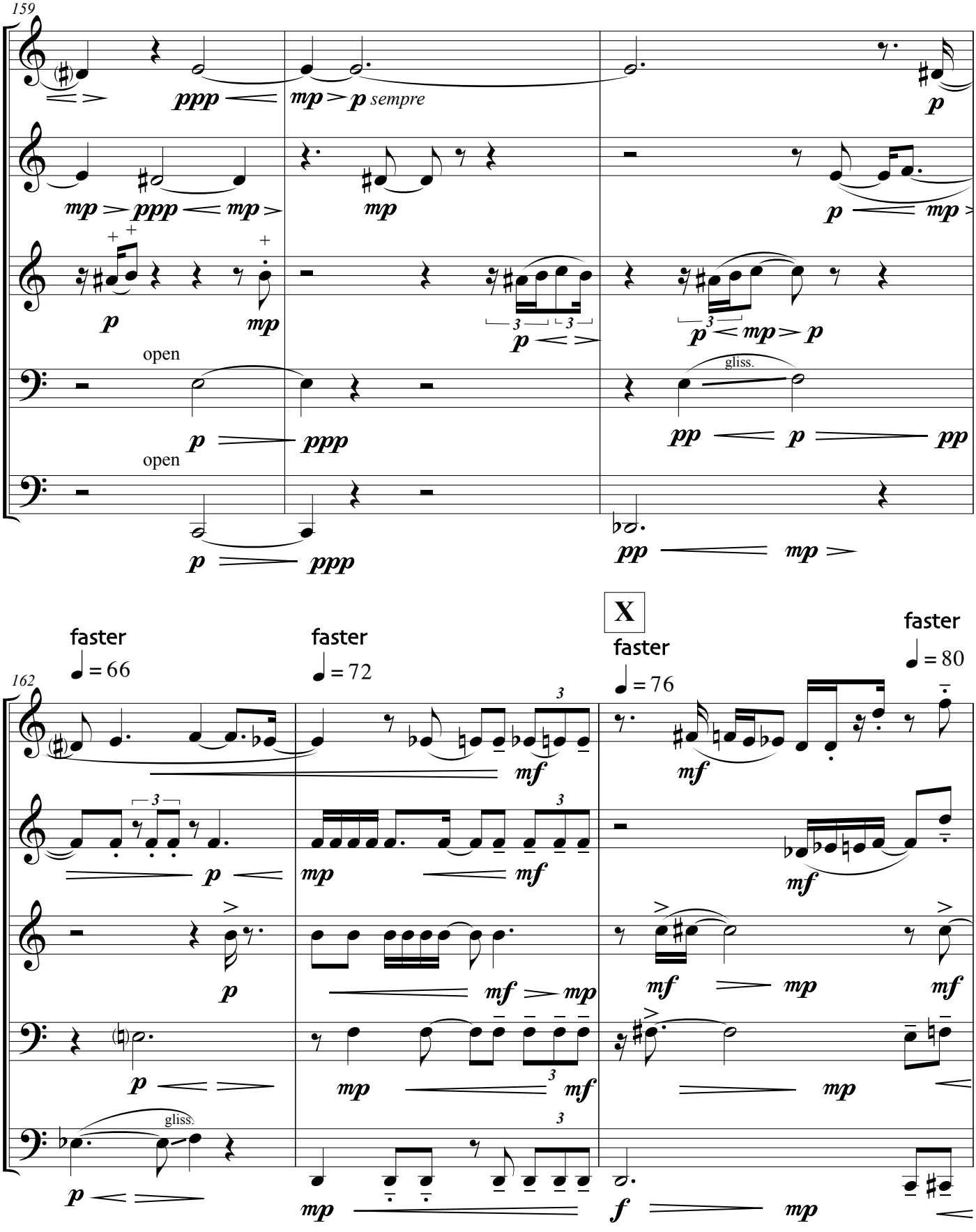

U
139
(+)
(+)
o
ppp
pp
(+)
(+)
o
ppp
p
pp
mp
mp
mp
mp
ppp
p
(+)
o
ppp
(o)
p
pp

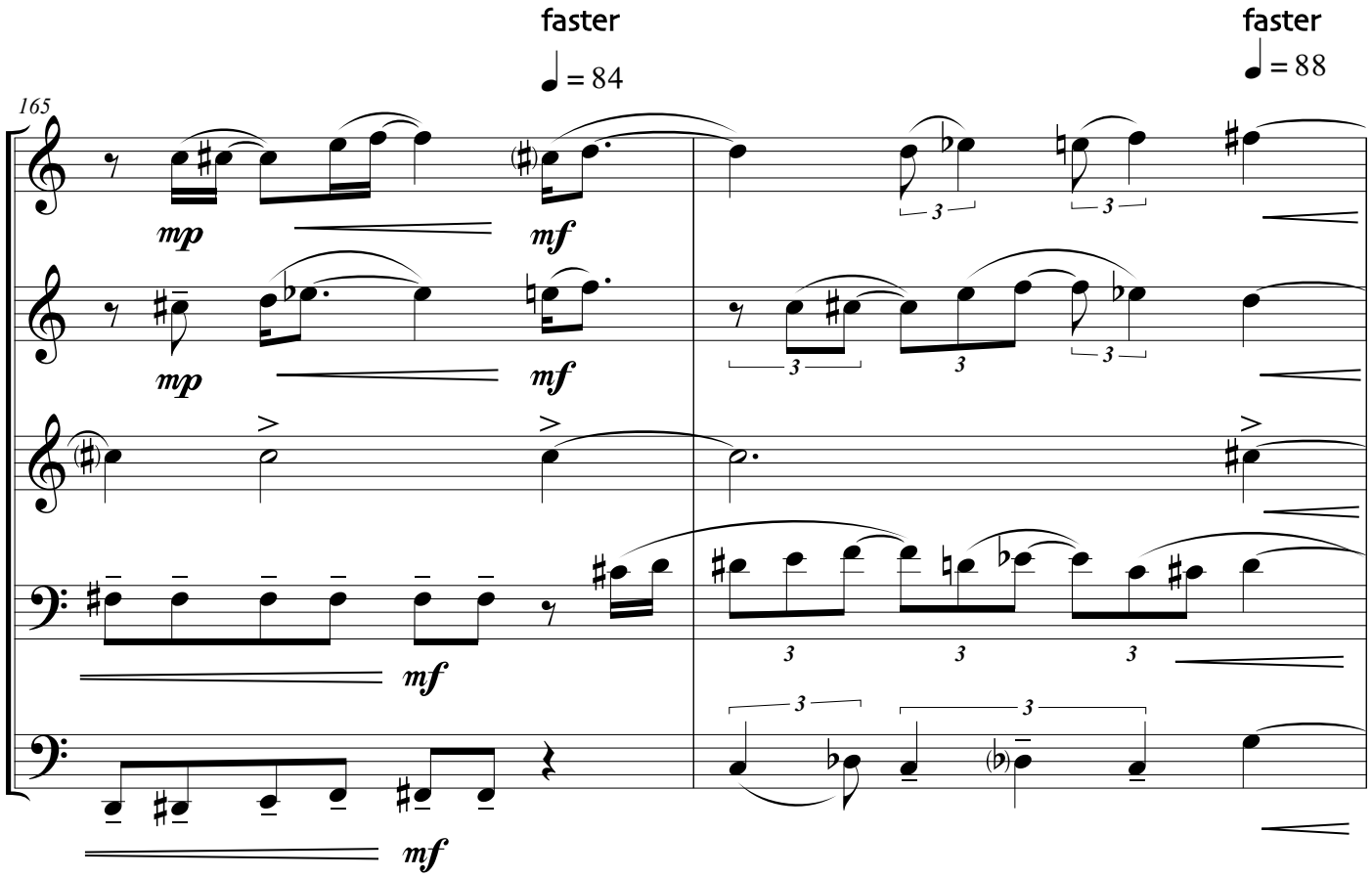

144
(+)
o
ppp
pp
piu
pp
pp
(+)
o
ppp
pp
mp
pp
ppp
n
pp
mp
pp
p
pp
(+)
o
ppp
pp
mp
pp
pp
o
pp
pp
mp
pp

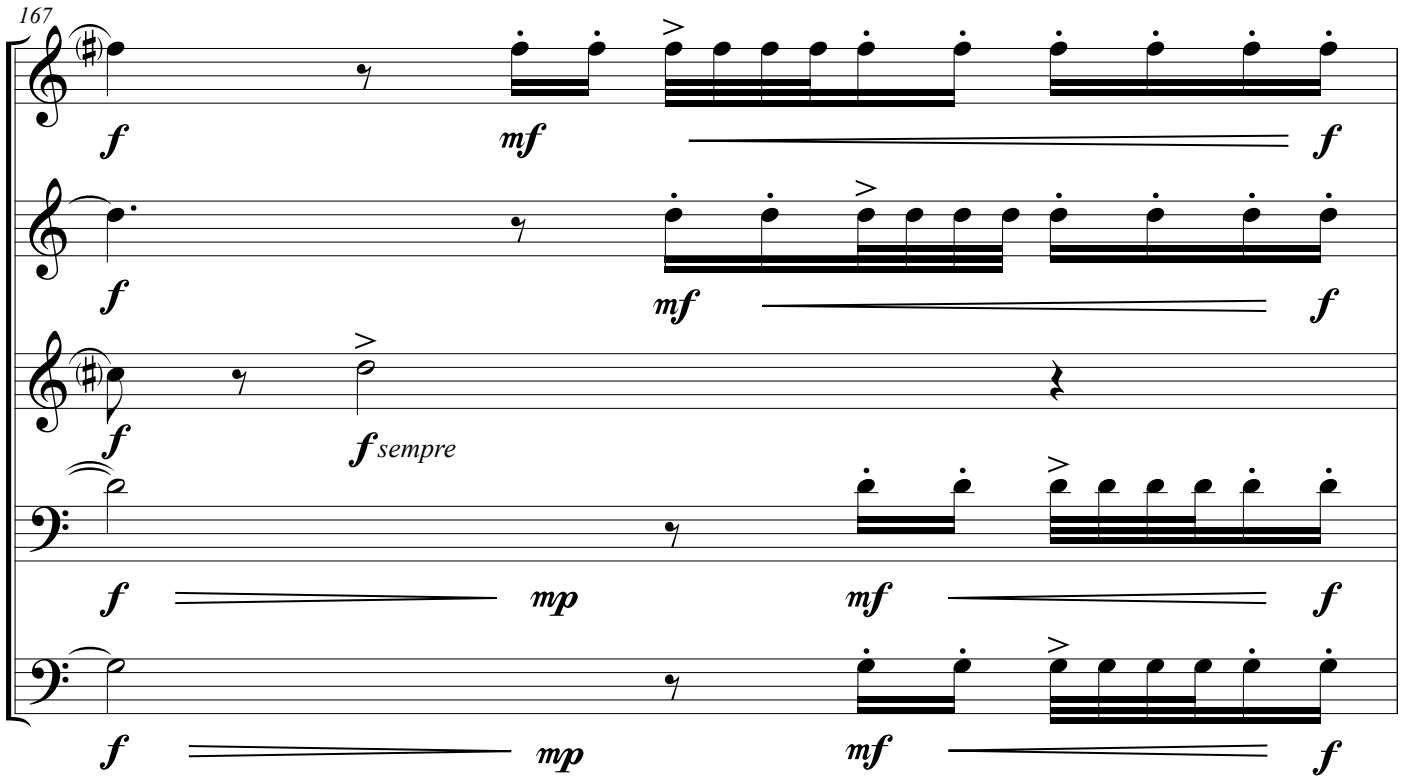


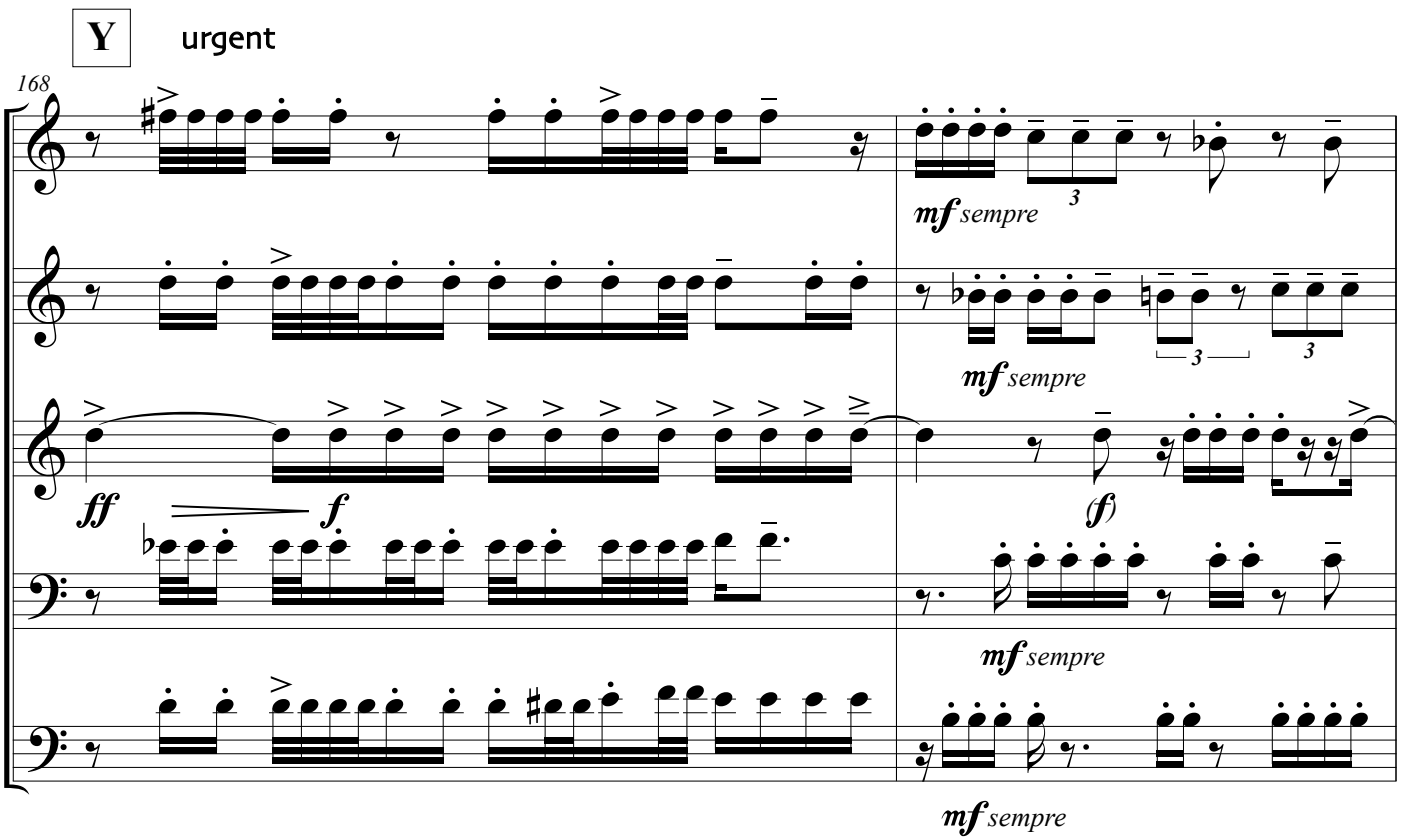


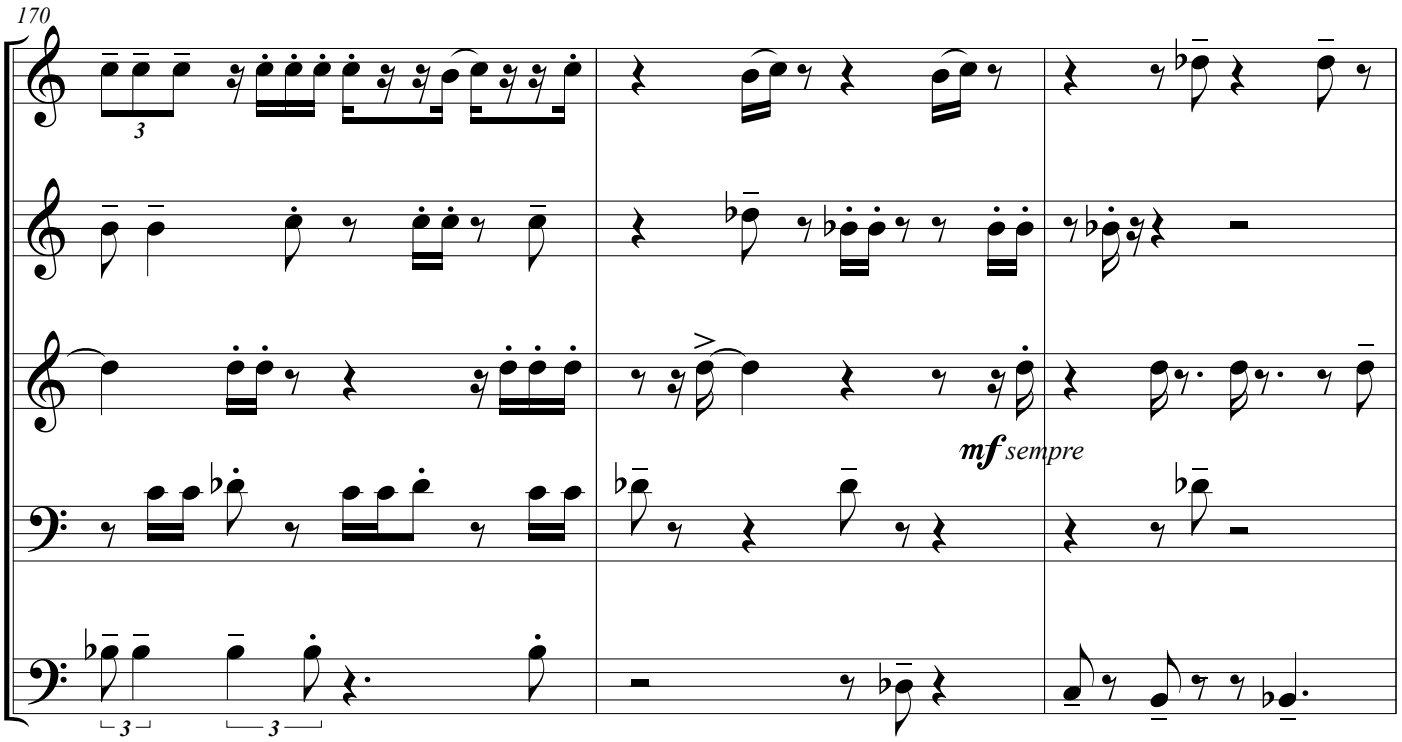
* gradual closing to stopped note; pitch should go down, then up when closed

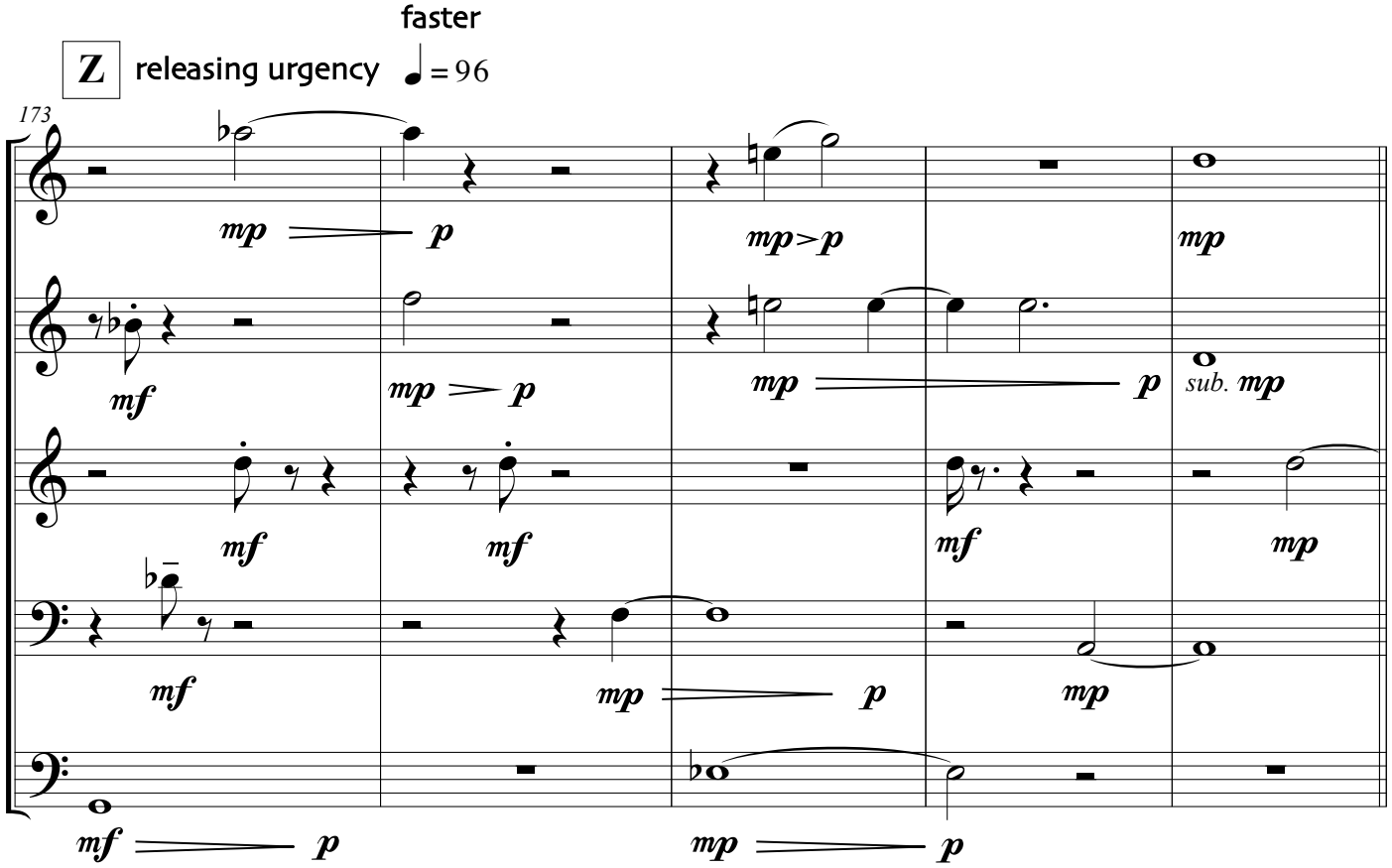

159
ppp
mp
p sempre
p
mp
ppp
mp
mp
p
mp
p
mp
p
mp
p
mp
p
open
gliss.
p
ppp
pp
p
pp
open
p
ppp
pp
mp
X
faster
♩ = 66
faster
♩ = 72
faster
♩ = 76
faster
♩ = 80
162
mf
mf
p
mp
mf
mf
p
mf
mp
mf
mp
mf
p
mp
mf
mp
gliss.
p
mp
f
mp


faster
♩ = 84
faster
♩ = 88
165
mp
mf
mp
mf
mf
mf


167
f
mf
f
f
mf
f
f
f sempre
f
mp
mf
f
f
mp
mf
f


Y
urgent
168
mf sempre
mf sempre
ff
f
(f)
mf sempre
mf sempre


170
mf sempre


faster
Z releasing urgency ♩ = 96
173
mp
p
mp > p
mp
mf
mp > p
mp
p
sub. mp
mf
mf
mf
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mp
p
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mf
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mp
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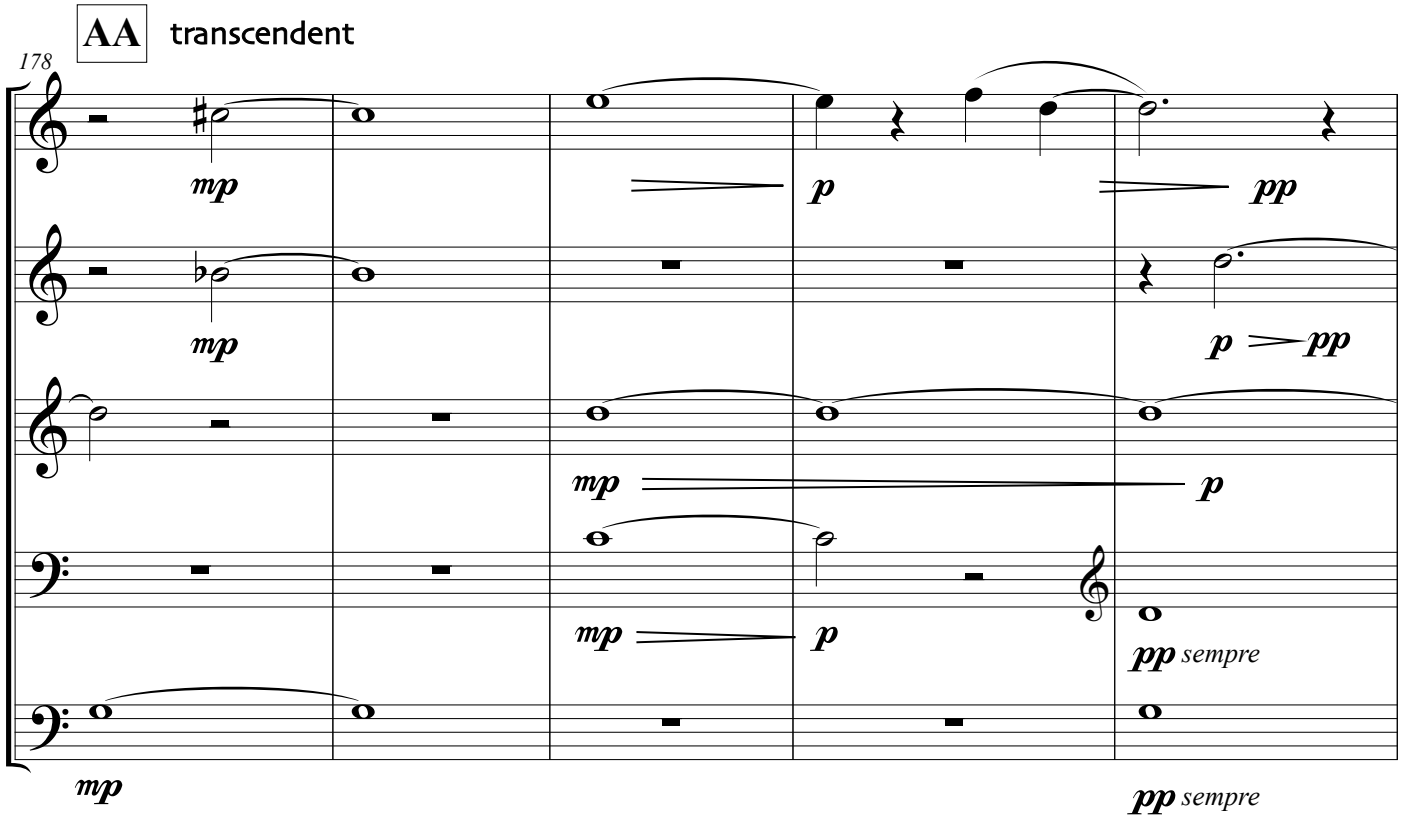
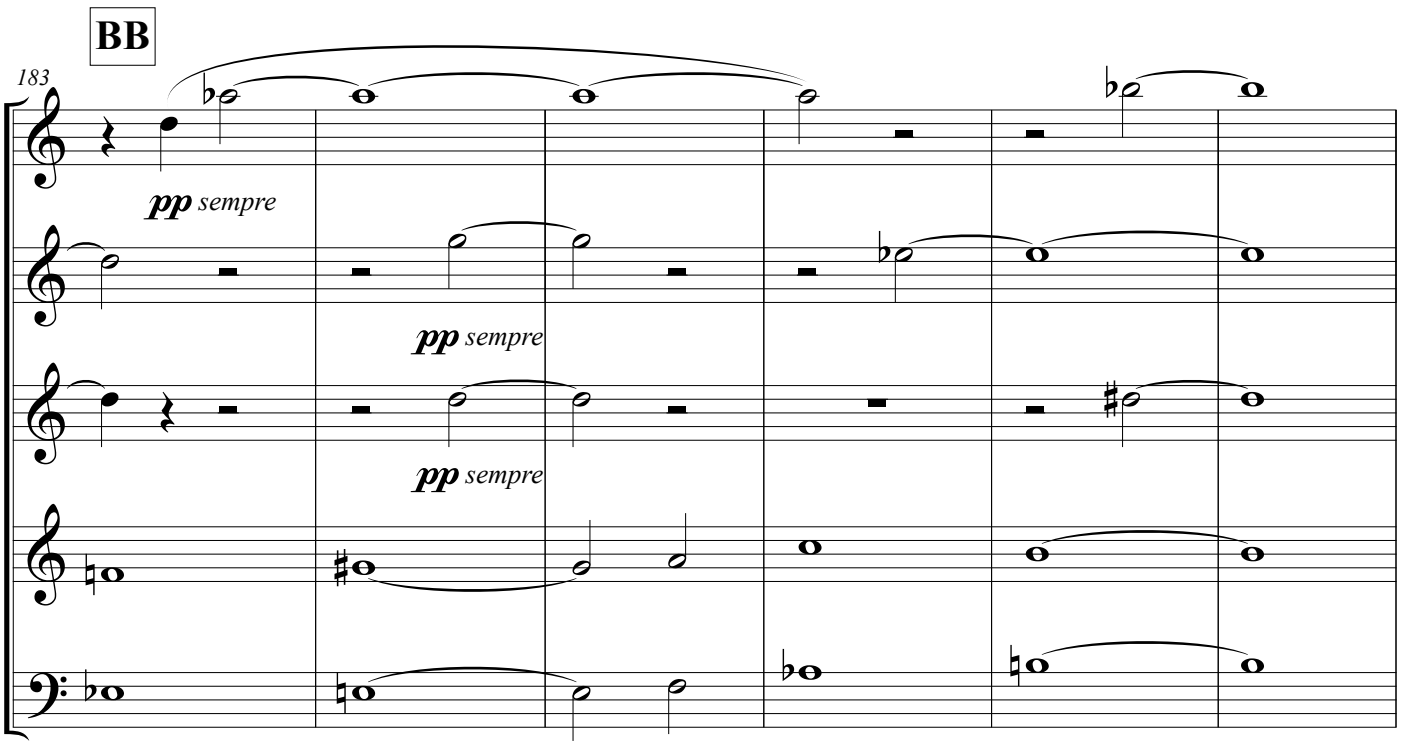
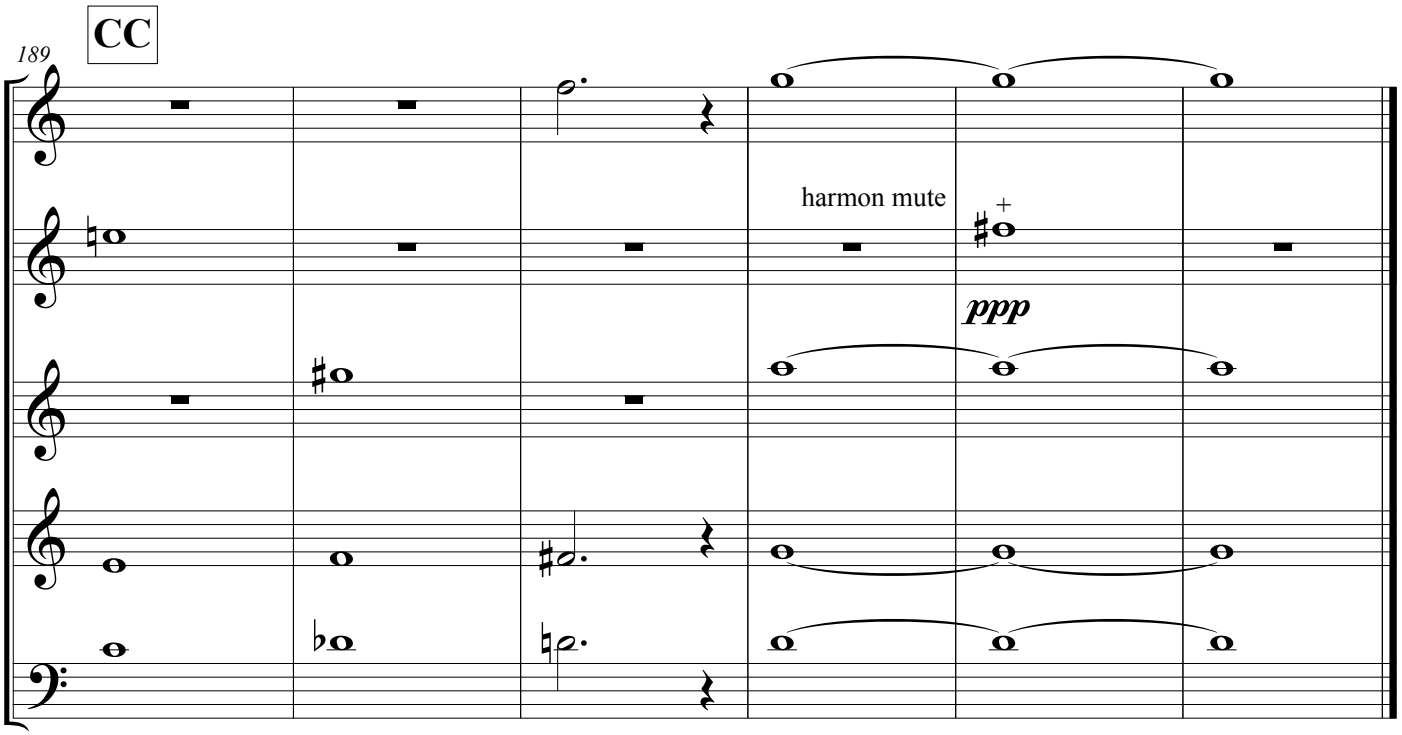

AA transcendent
178
mp
p
pp
mp
p > pp
mp
p
mp
p
pp sempre
mp
pp sempre





12/31/12
JHM
Medford, MA

duration ca. 10'