a still small voice

for my mother
Ruth McMullin

with love and gratitude

David McMullin

duration 6 minutes

And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

1 Kings 19:11-12

Instruments:

Flute
Clarinet in B flat
Trombone
Percussion:
- bass drum
- high hat
- 3 gongs
- marimba

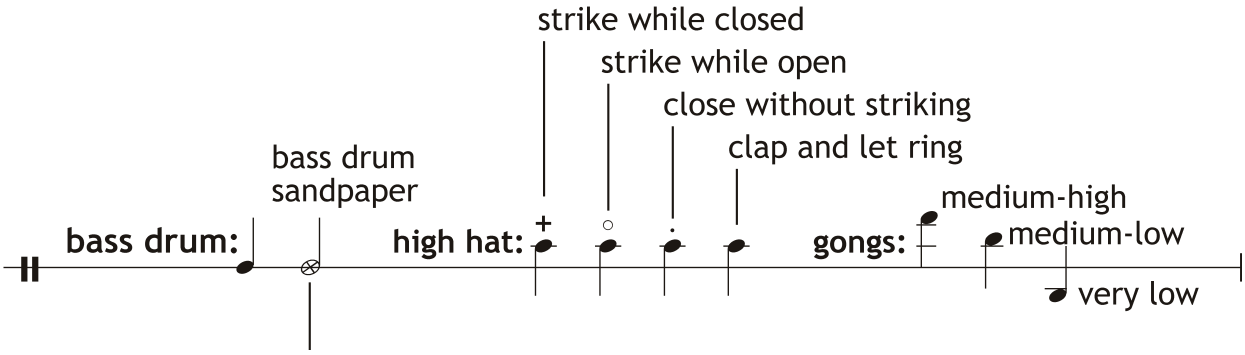
Piano (and tambourine)
Viola
Cello

Quarter-tone notation:

♯	3 quarter-tones sharp
𝄲	1 quarter-tone sharp
𝄳	1 quarter-tone flat
𝄬	3 quarter-tones flat

This is a transposed score: the clarinet sounds a major second below the written pitch. Accidentals apply throughout the measure, but are often repeated for clarity. Grace-notes should be played freely in unmeasured rhythm, but do not have to be extremely fast.

Notation key for un-pitched percussion instruments:



Tape a sheet of sandpaper, abrasive side up, to the head of the bass drum. In a continuous motion, rub this with a separate piece of sandpaper, or a sandpaper-covered wood block or stick. The desired sound should be a combination of the gentle white noise of the sandpaper amplified and deepened by the resonance of the drum–-the more bass resonance the better.

Written for Pavel Mihelčič and Ensemble MD7,
for the festival UNICUM 2008 in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

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for my mother

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Largo tranquillo

♩ = 54

Flute

air without pitch

pp ppp n p n n

Clarinet in B♭

air without pitch

pp ppp n p n n

Trombone

air without pitch

pp ppp n p n n

Percussion

bass drum with mallets

high hat

f fff ppp p pp ppp

Piano

Tambourine: With straight finger held perpendicular to head of tambourine, press into and across, bouncing finger against tambourine head to produce roll effect.

pp

Largo tranquillo

♩ = 54

Viola

arco: "whisper" without pitch

III IV

pp ppp

Violoncello

arco: "whisper" without pitch

III IV

pp ppp

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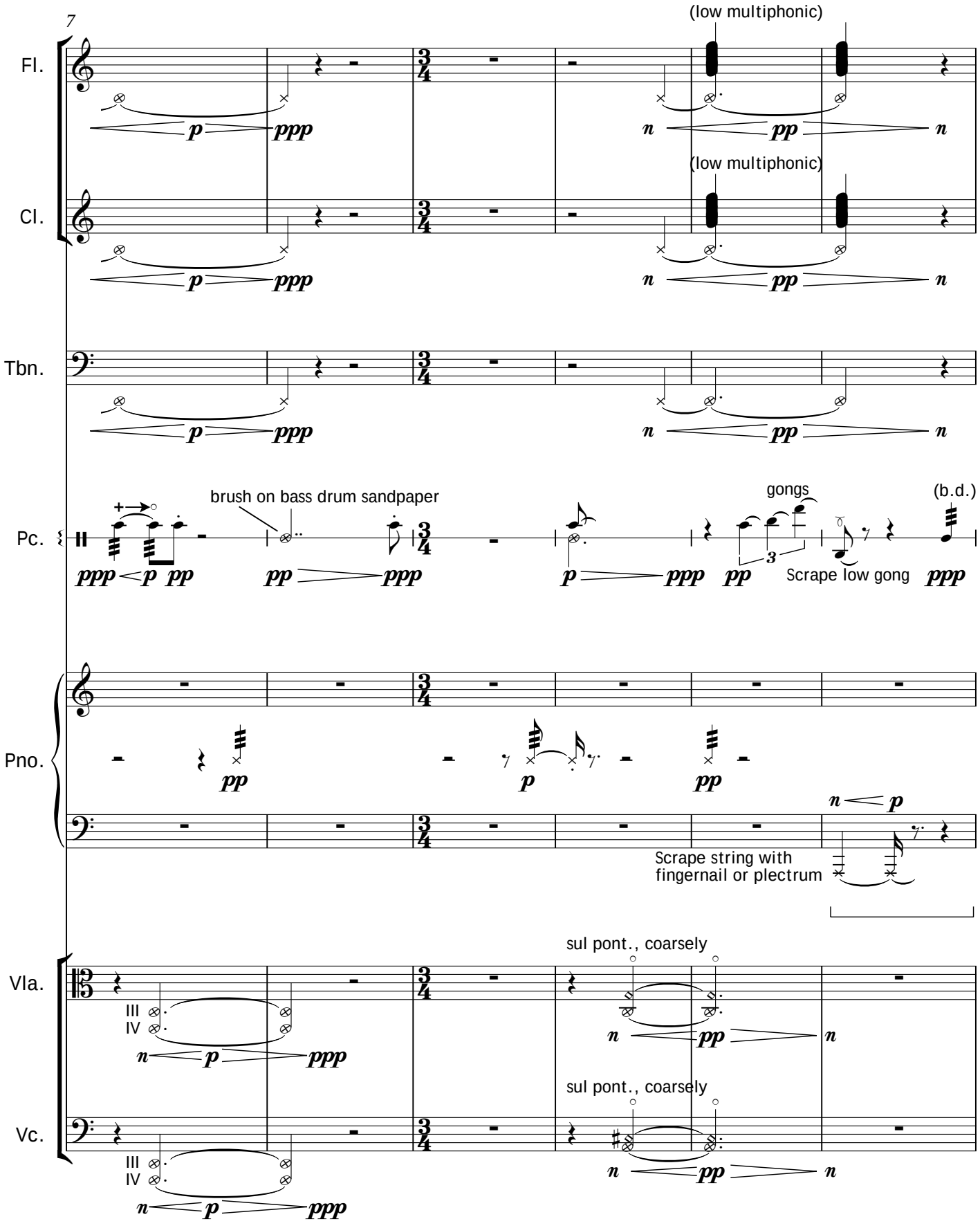
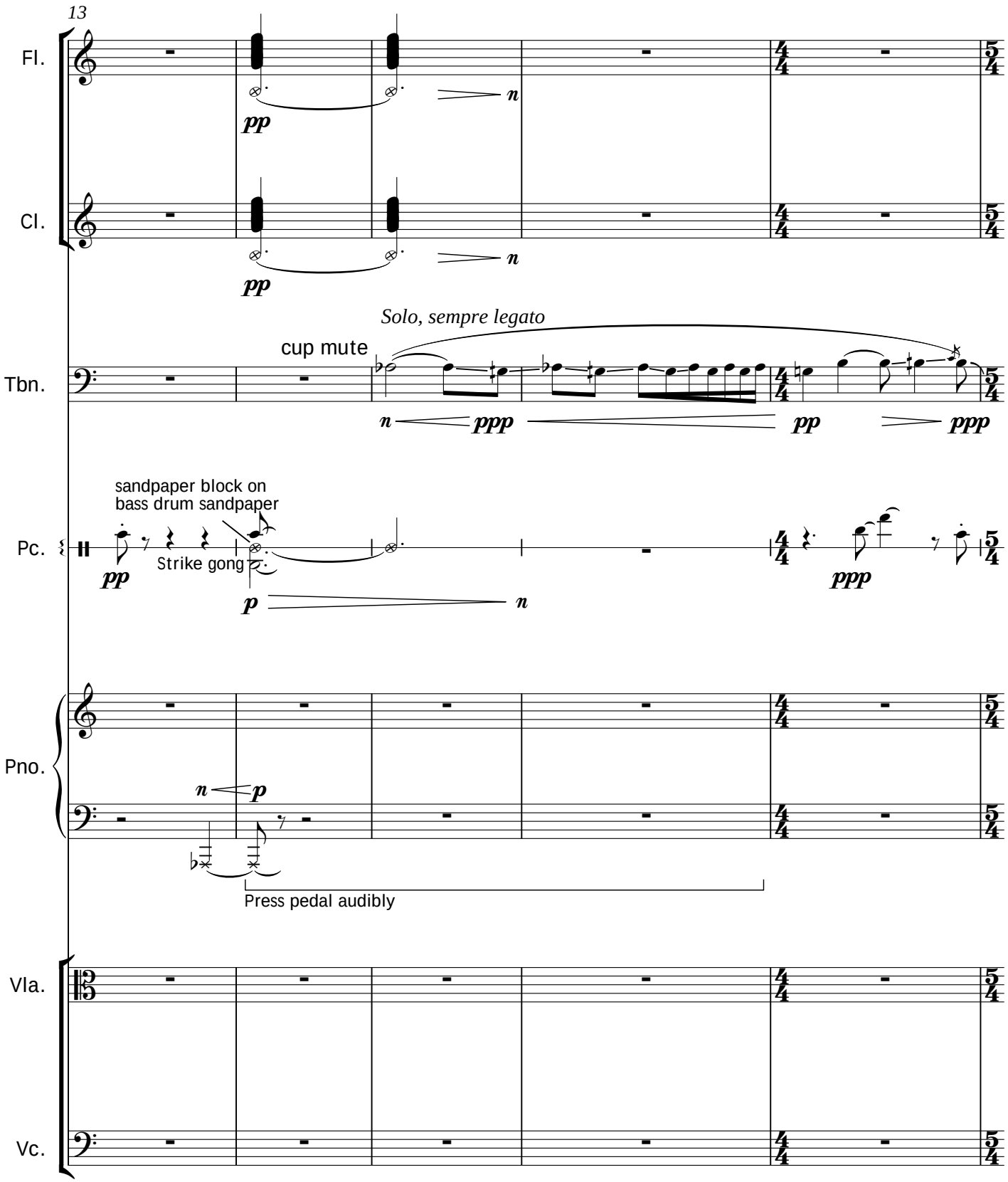
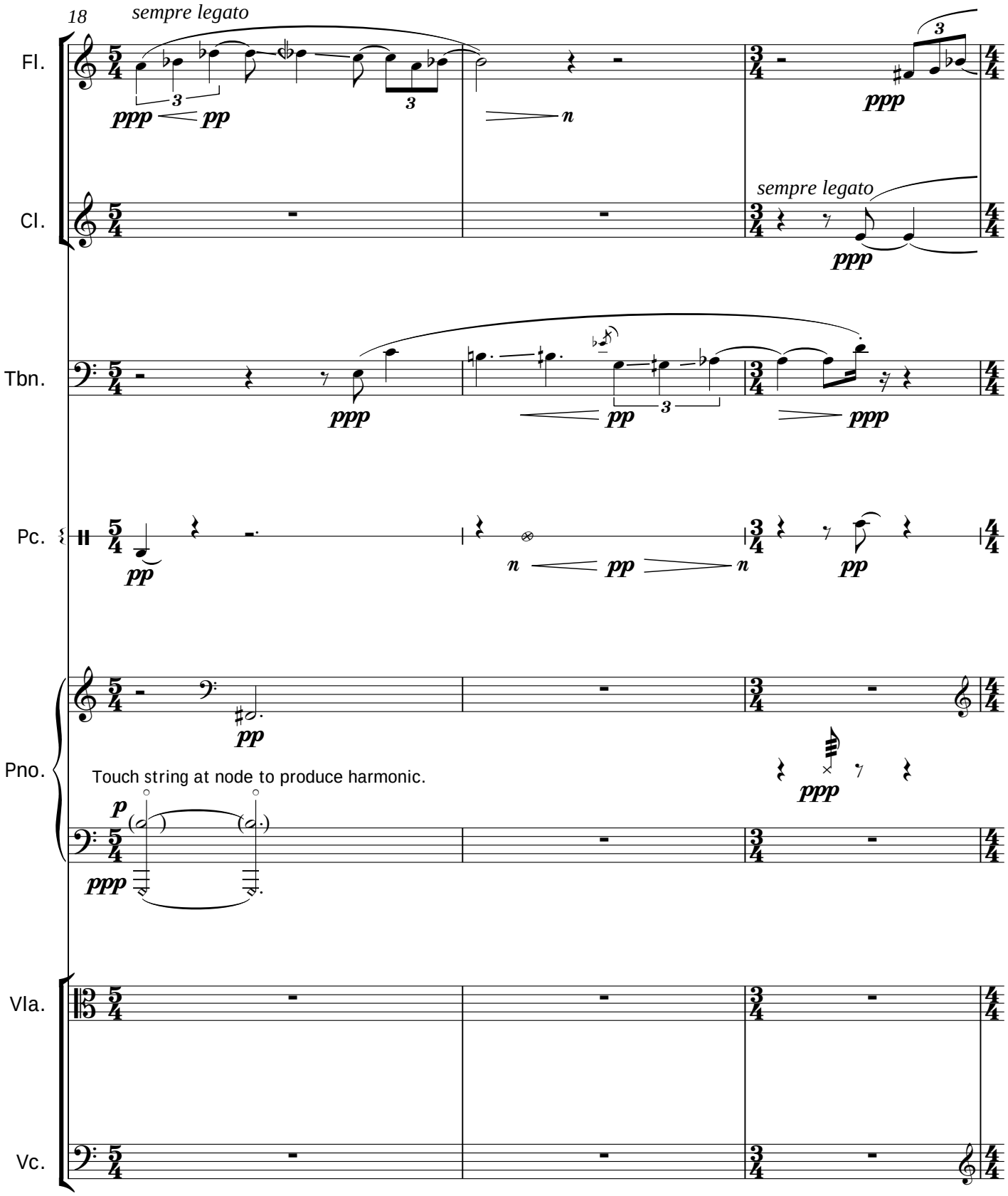
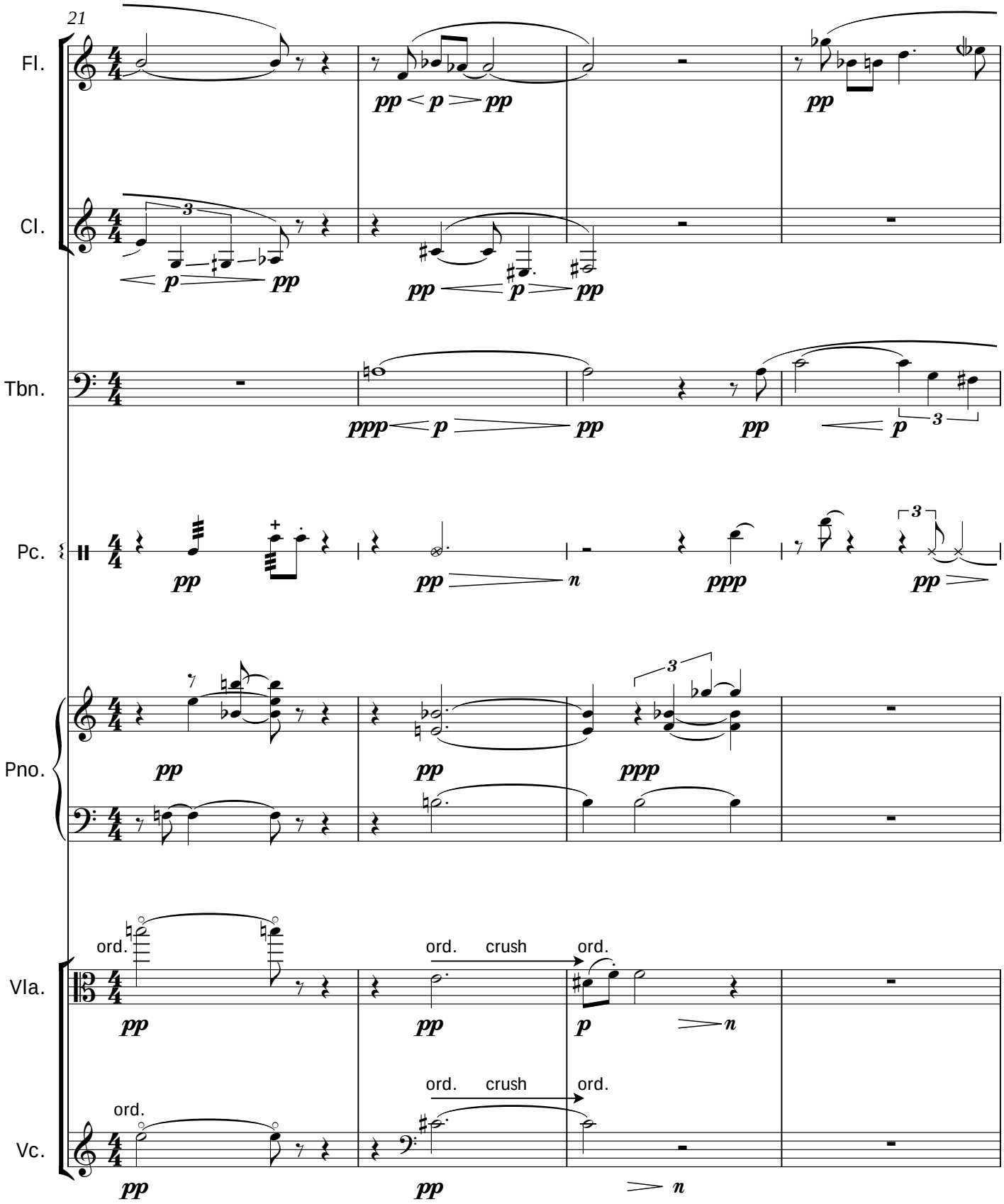
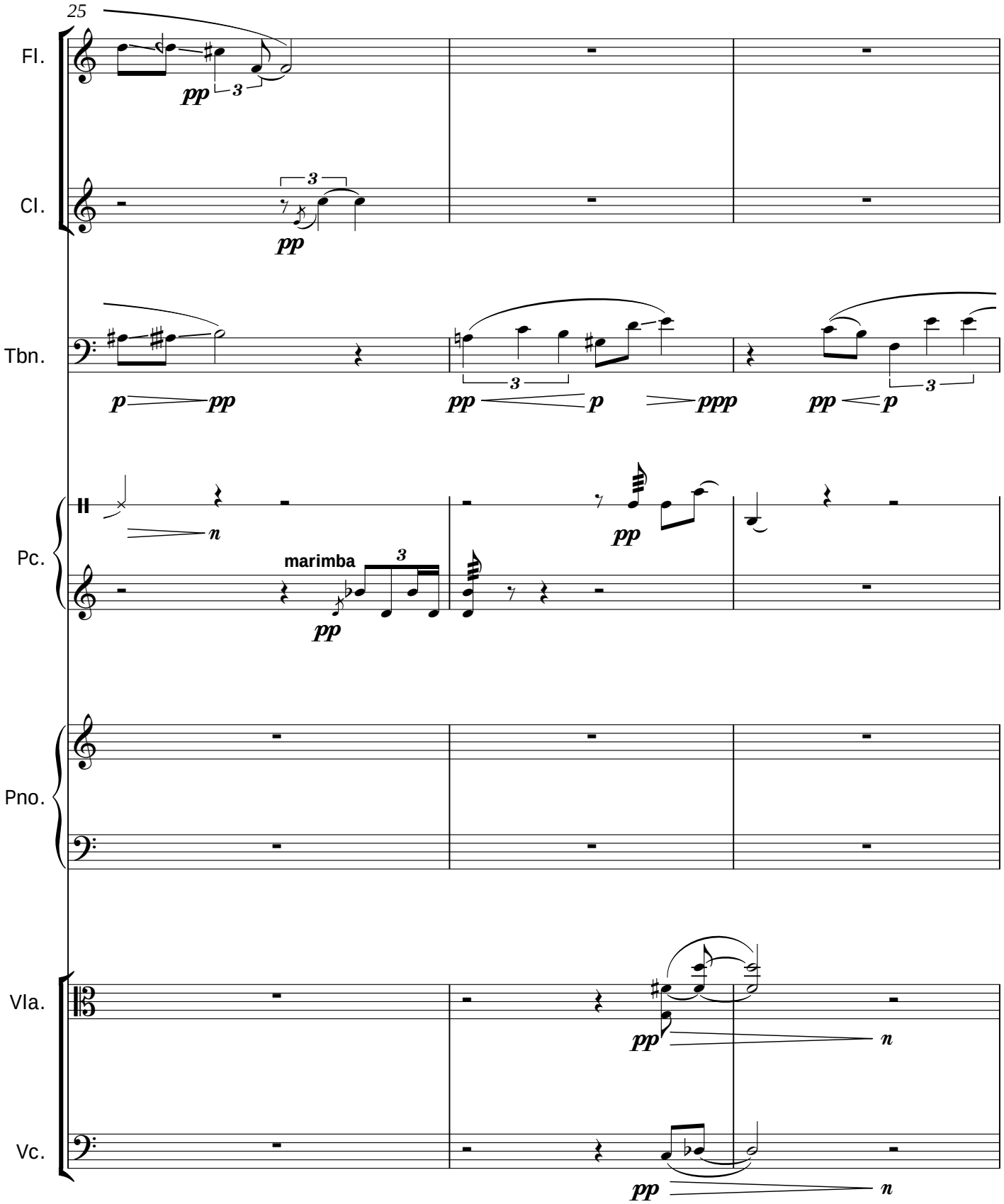
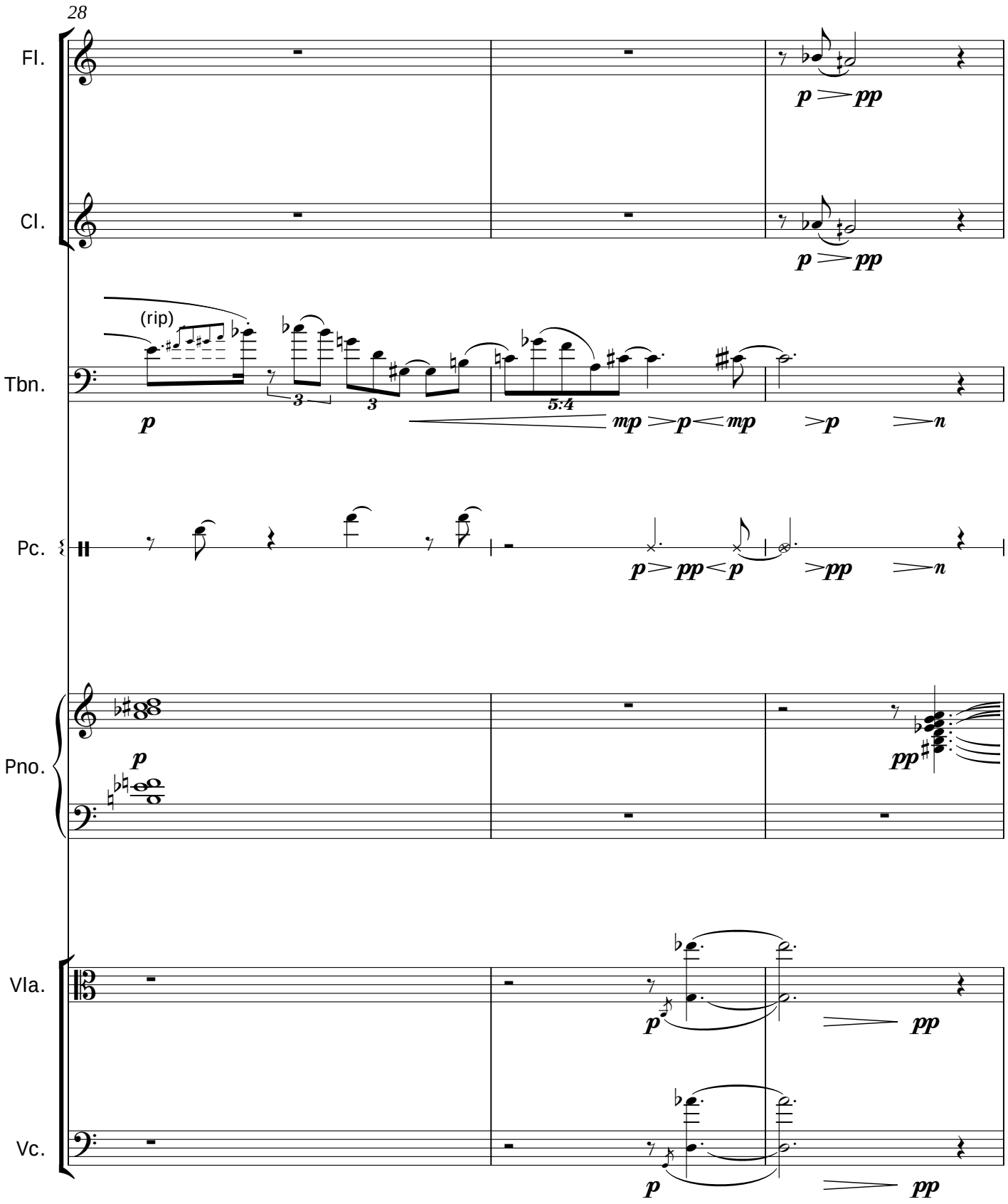

7
Fl.
(low multiphonic)
Cl.
(low multiphonic)
Tbn.
Pc.
brush on bass drum sandpaper
gongs
(b.d.)
Scrape low gong
Pno.
Scrape string with
fingernail or plectrum
Vla.
sul pont., coarsely
Vc.
sul pont., coarsely

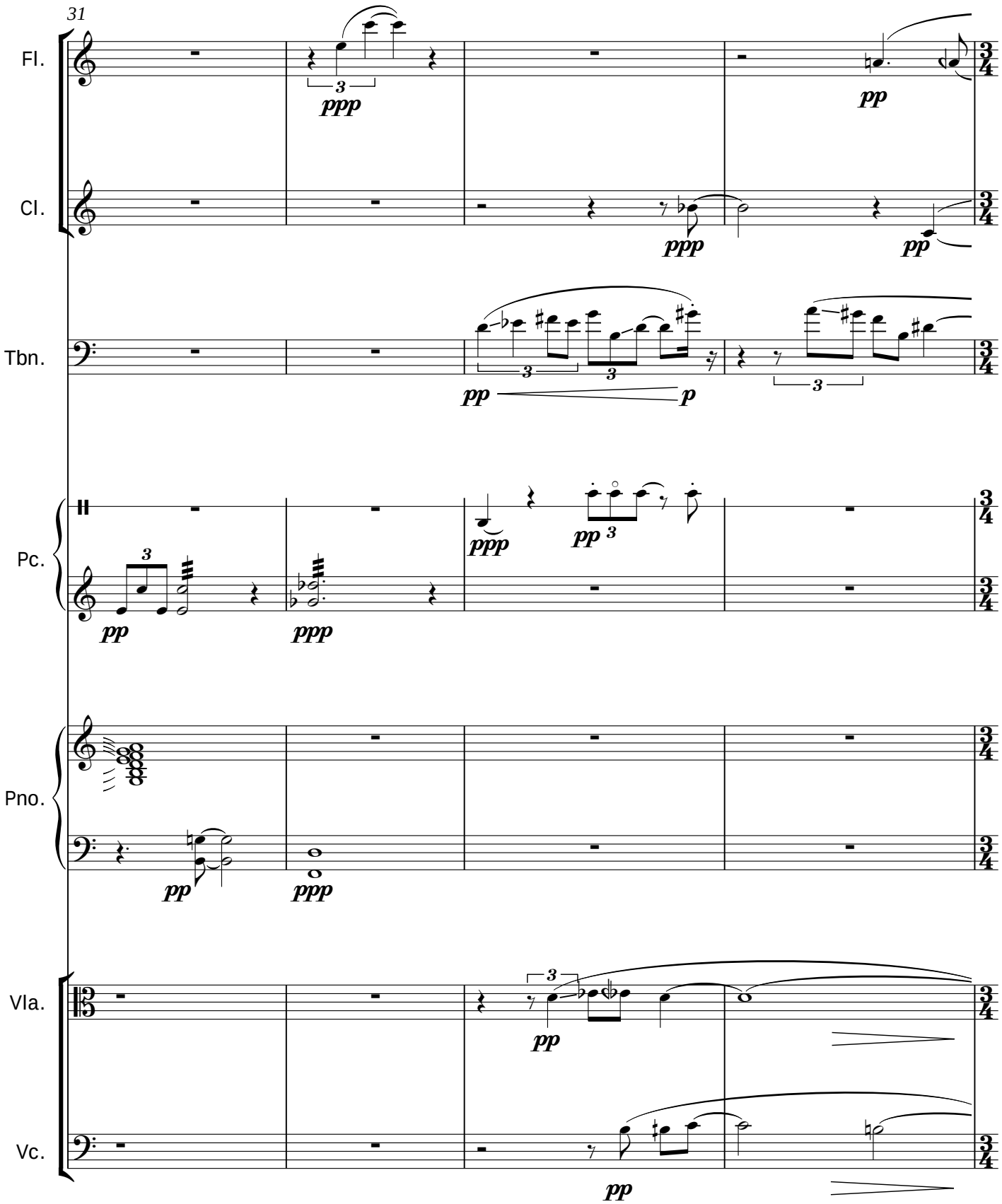

13
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
Pc.
Pno.
Vla.
Vc.
pp
n
Solo, sempre legato
cup mute
ppp
sandpaper block on
bass drum sandpaper
Strike gong
p
Press pedal audibly

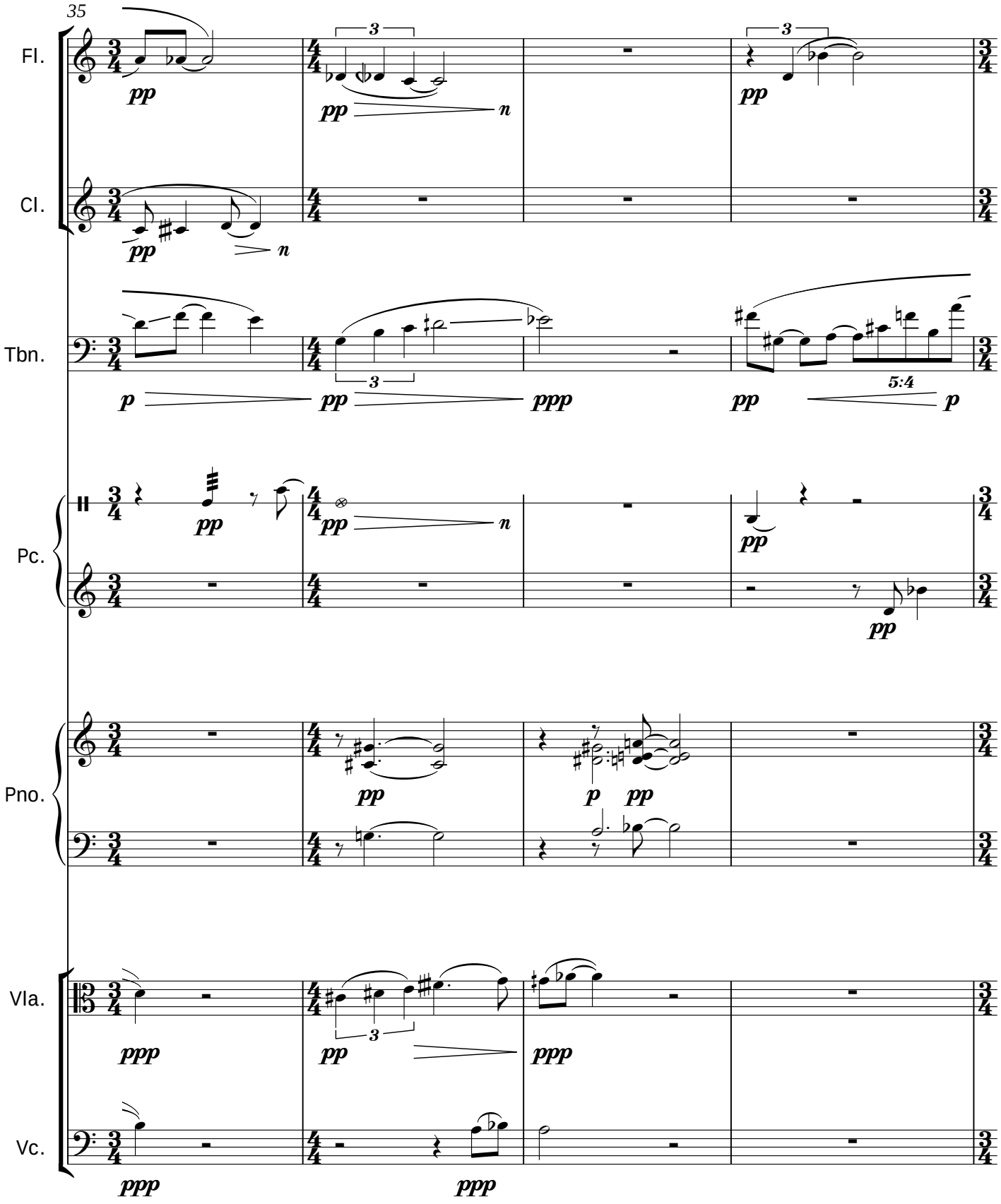

18
sempre legato
Fl.
Cl.
sempre legato
Tbn.
Pc.
Pno.
Touch string at node to produce harmonic.
Vla.
Vc.

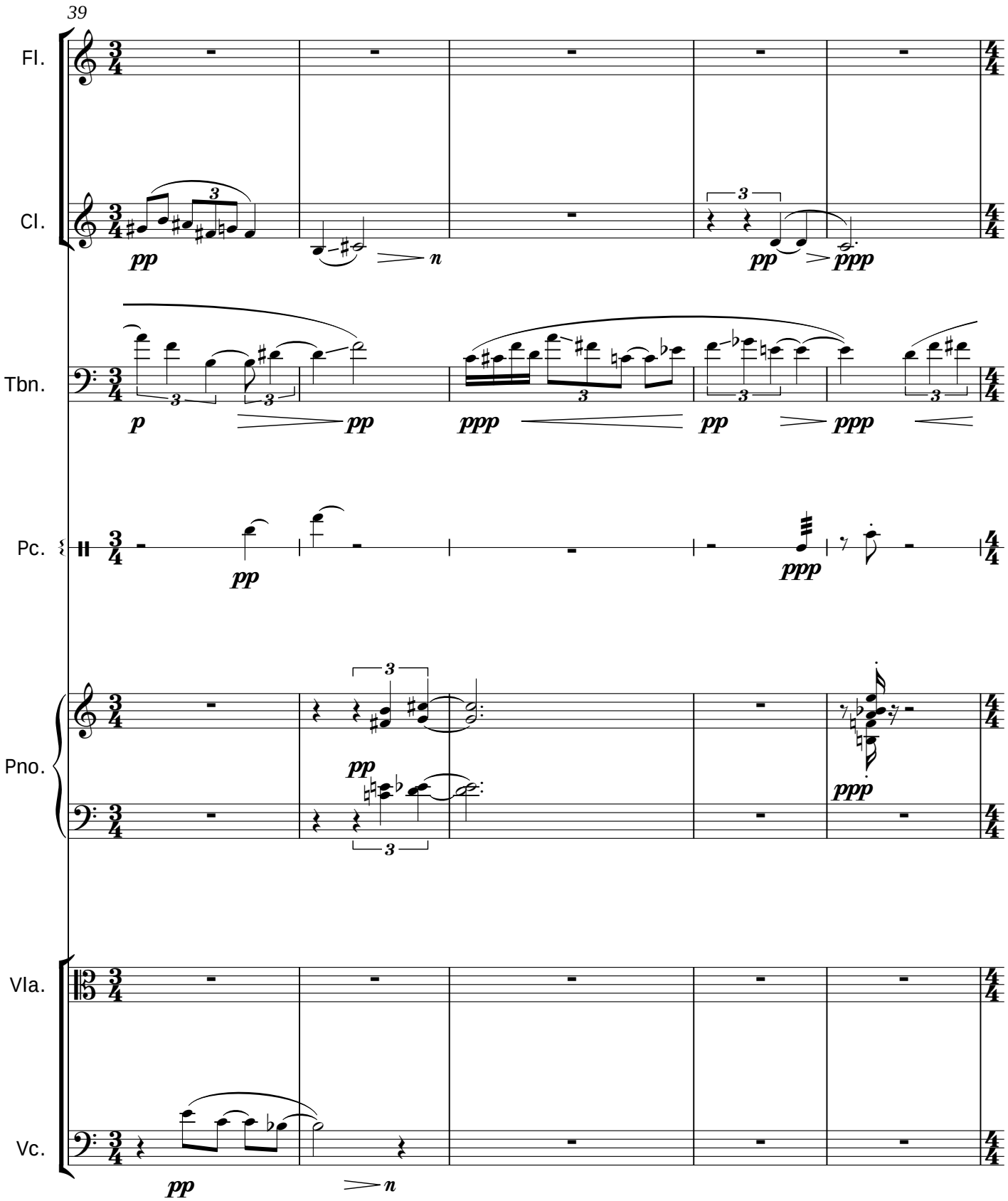

21
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
Pc.
Pno.
Vla.
Vc.
ord.
crush
ord.

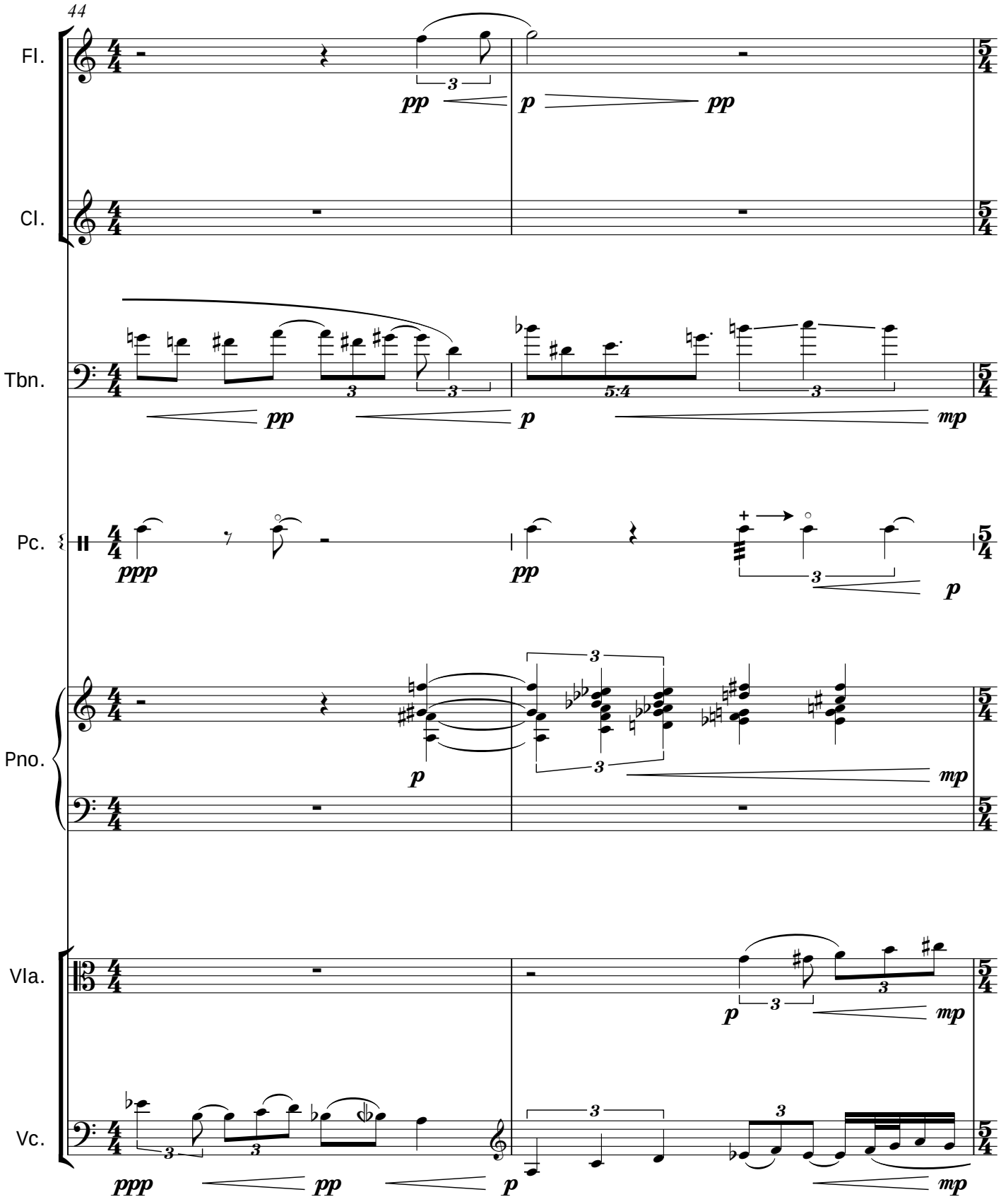

25
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
Pc.
Pno.
Vla.
Vc.
marimba

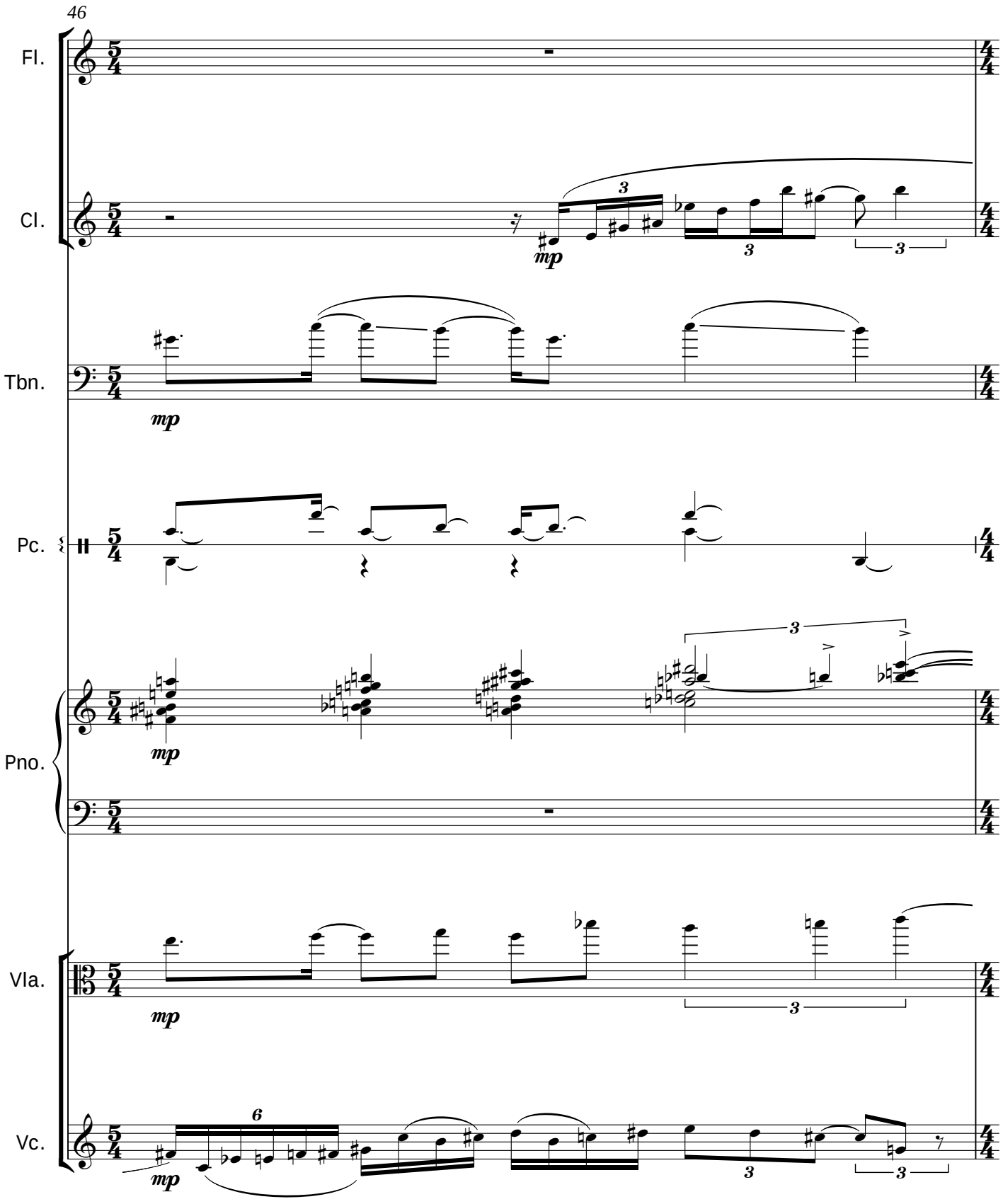

28
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
(rip)
Pc.
Pno.
Vla.
Vc.

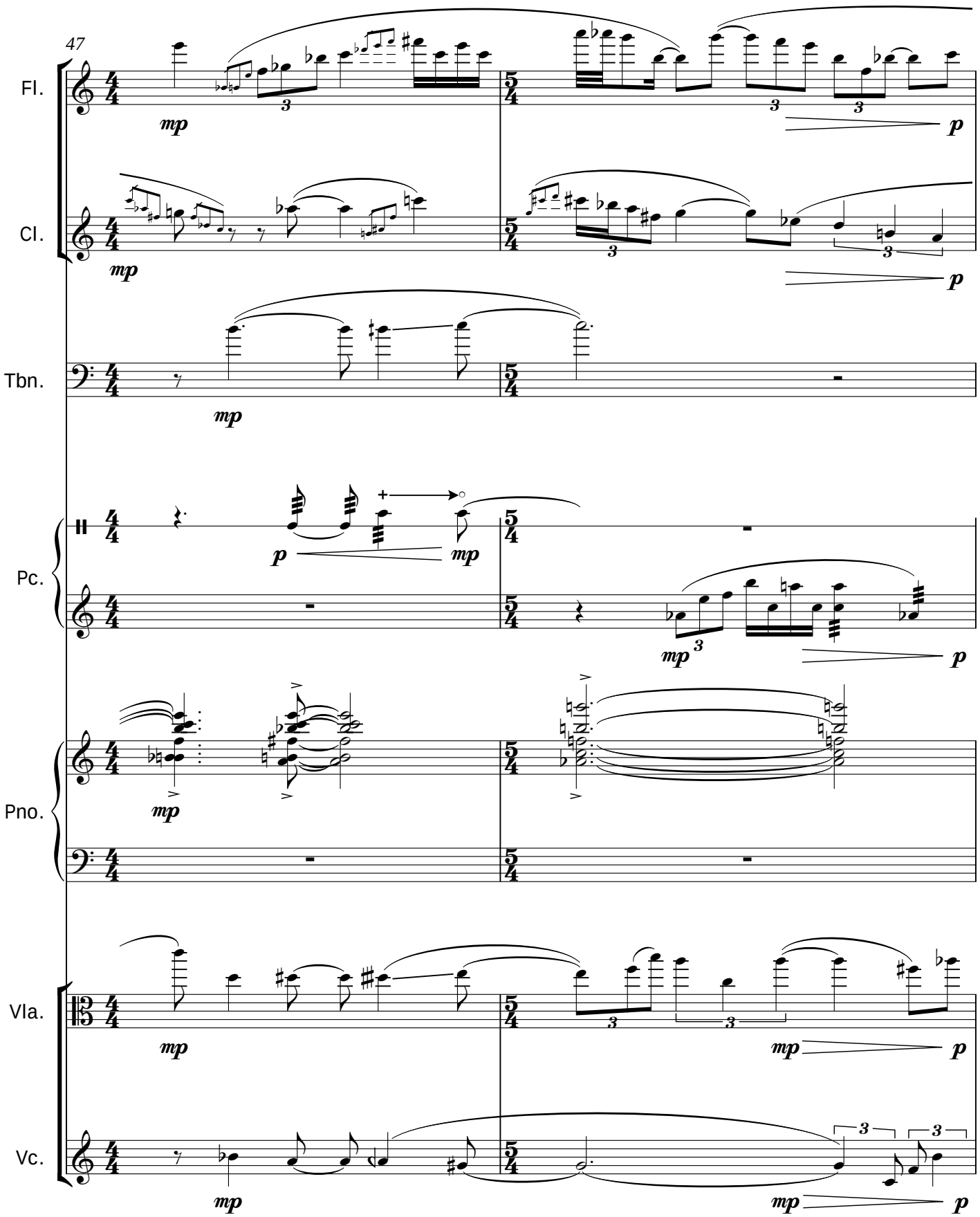

31
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
Pc.
Pno.
Vla.
Vc.
ppp
pp
p
3


35
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
Pc.
Pno.
Vla.
Vc.
pp
ppp
p
n
3
5:4


39
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
Pc.
Pno.
Vla.
Vc.
pp
n
ppp
p


44
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
Pc.
Pno.
Vla.
Vc.
ppp
pp
p
mp
3
5:4


46
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
Pc.
Pno.
Vla.
Vc.
mp
3
6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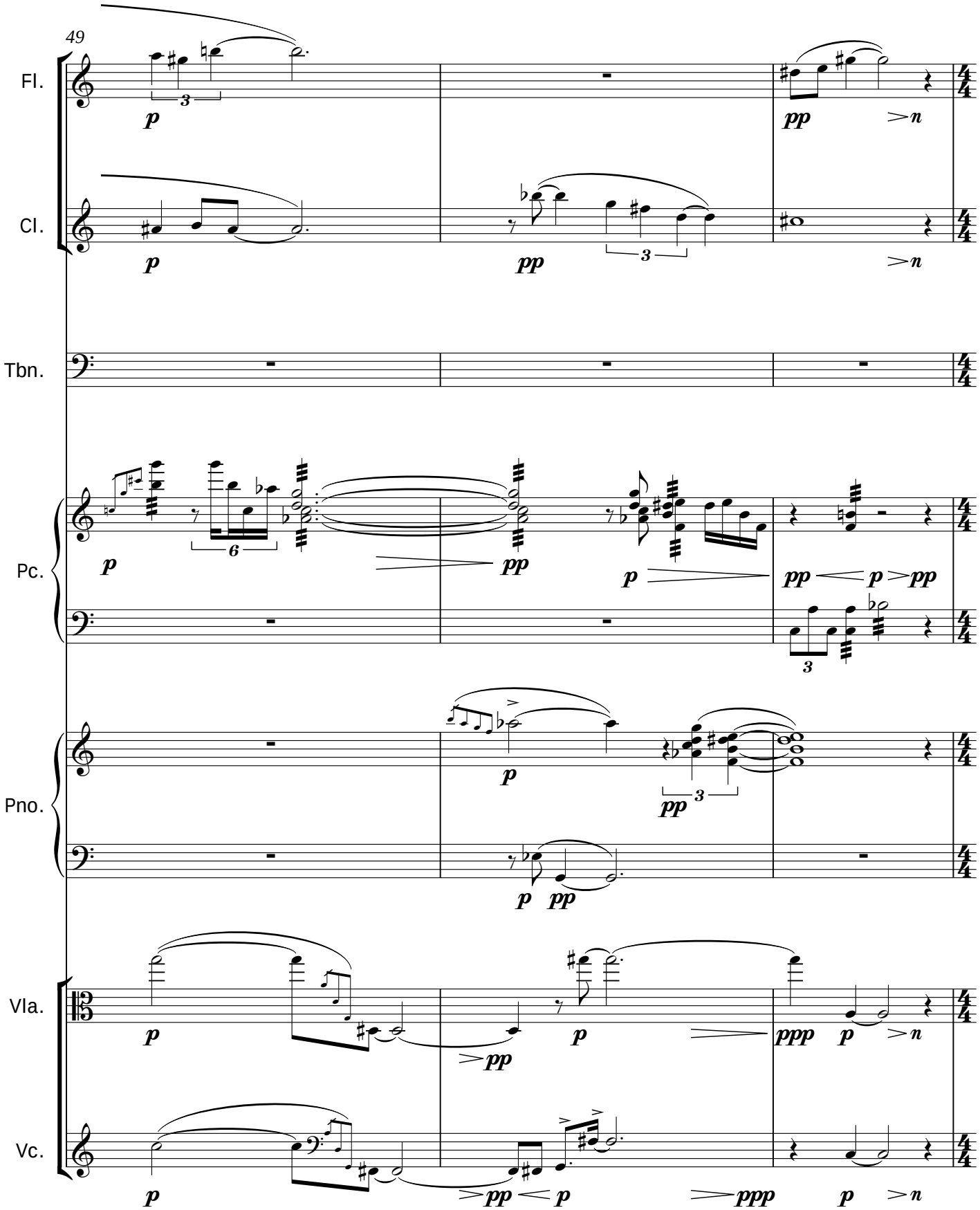
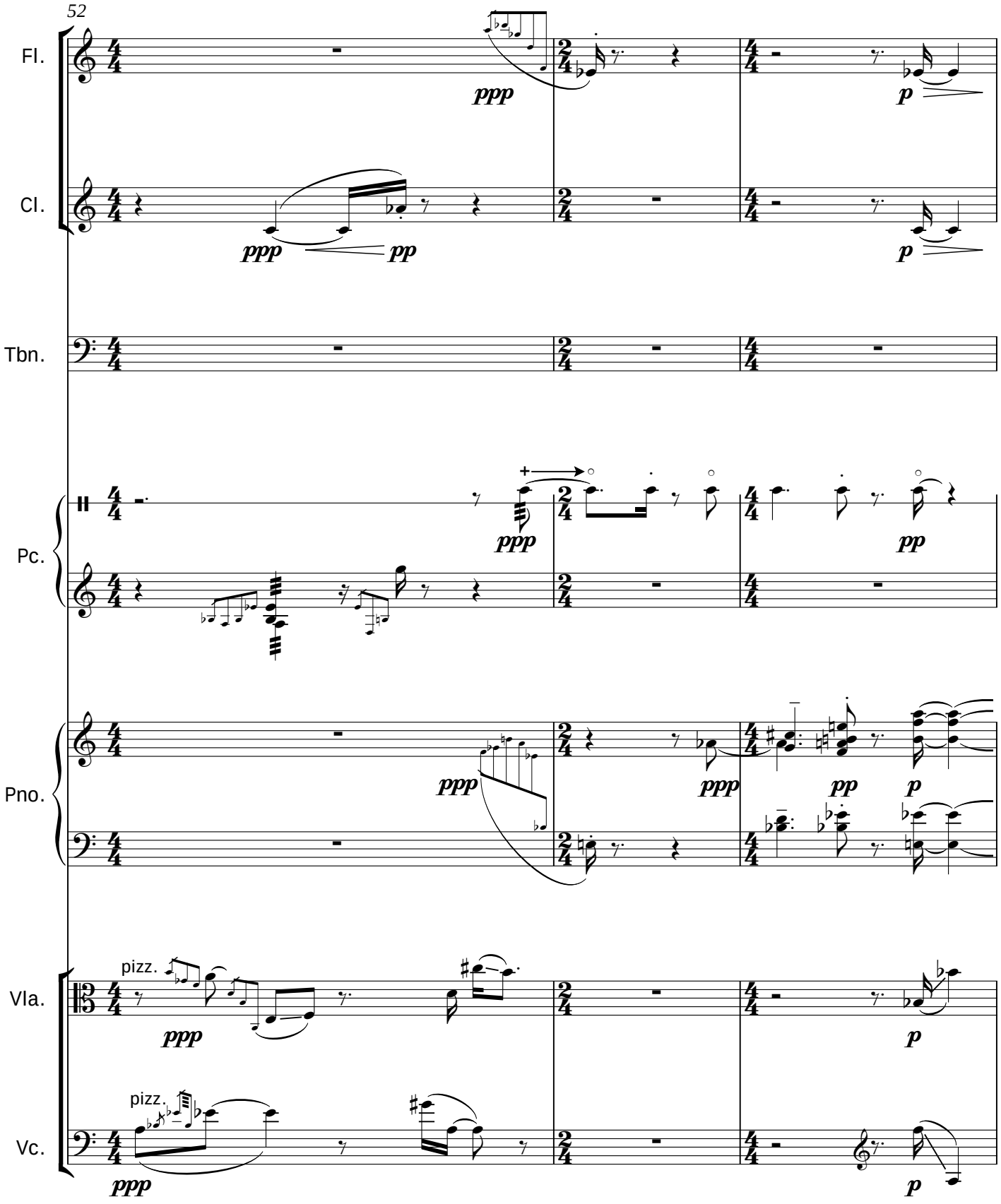
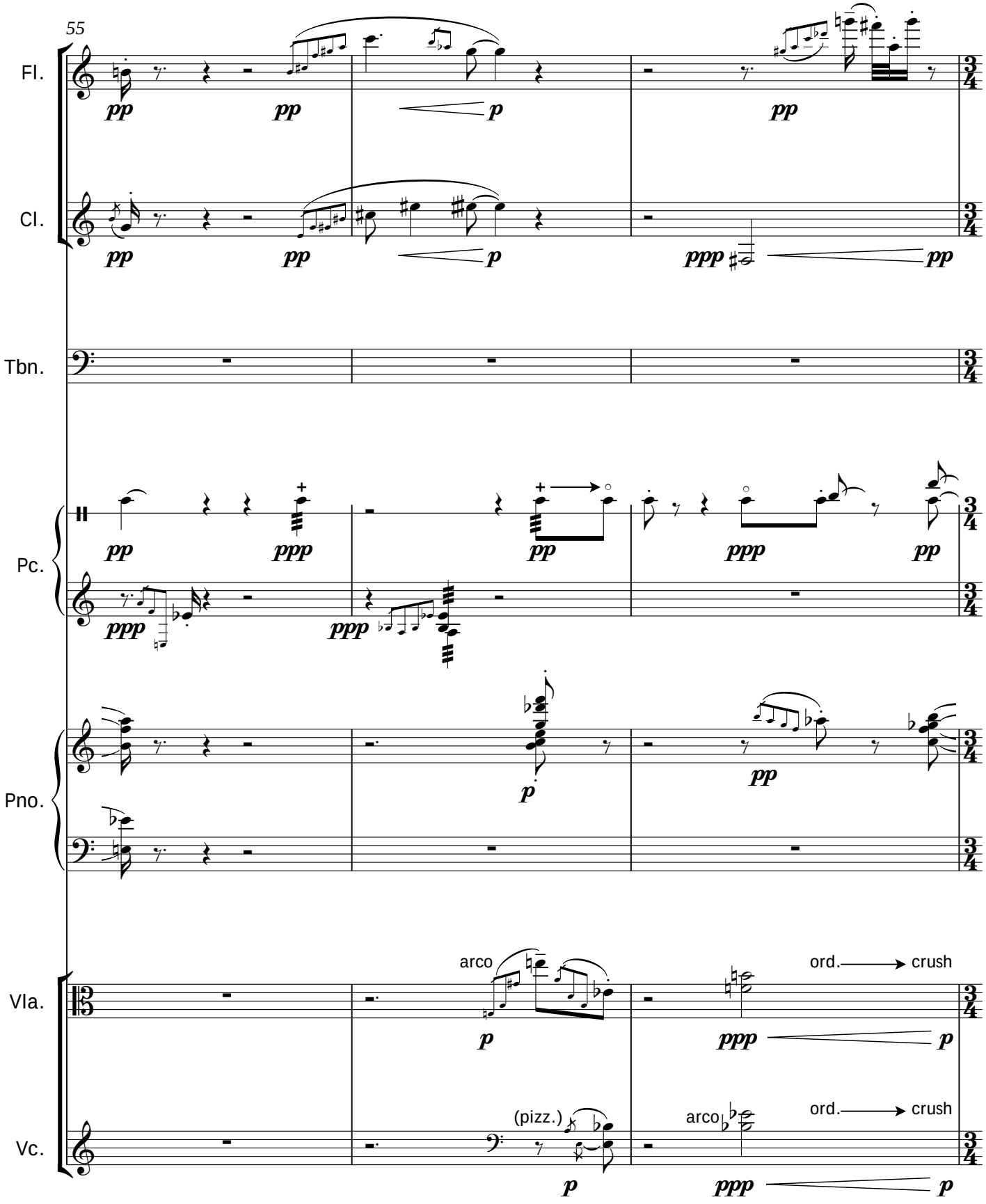
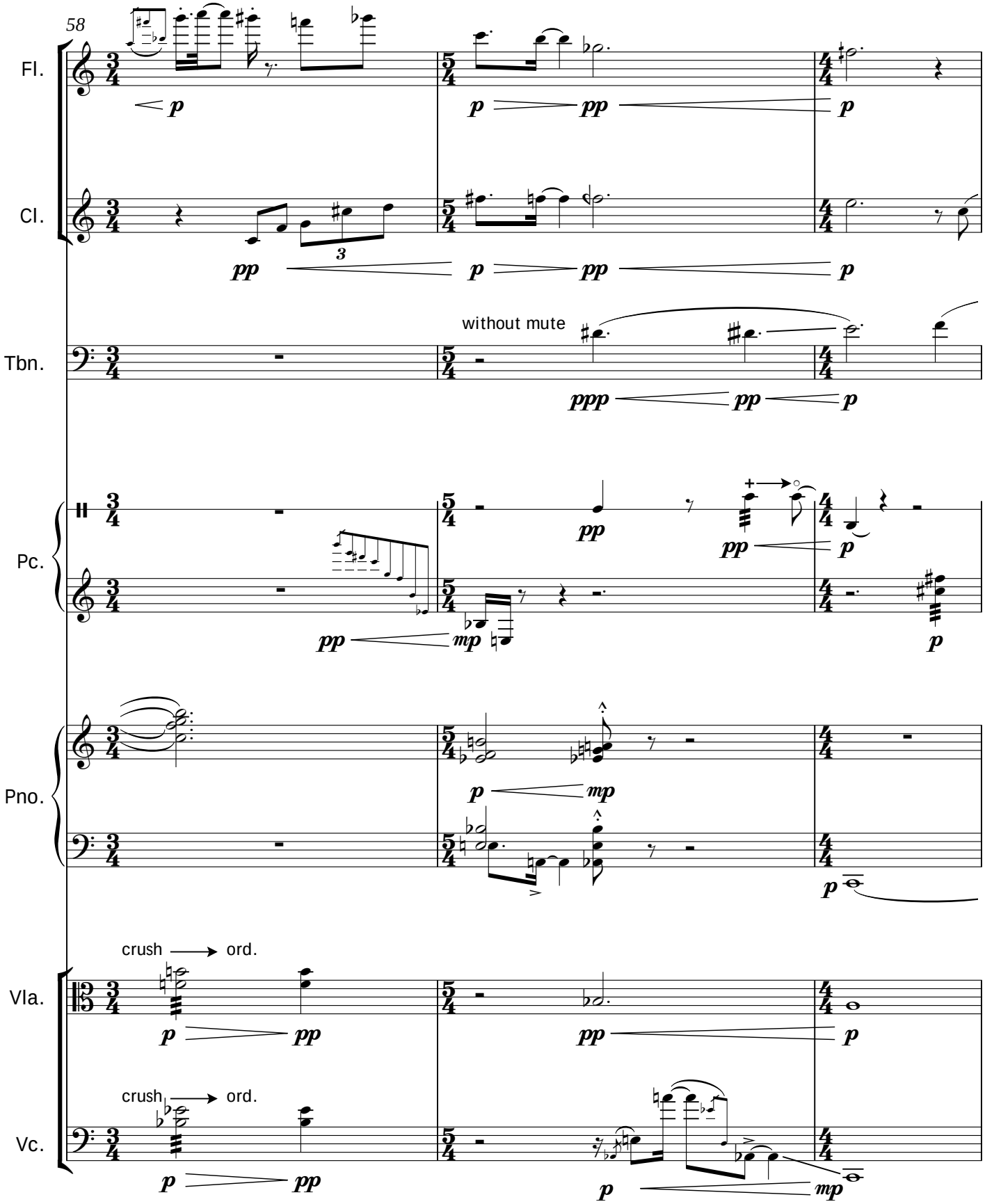
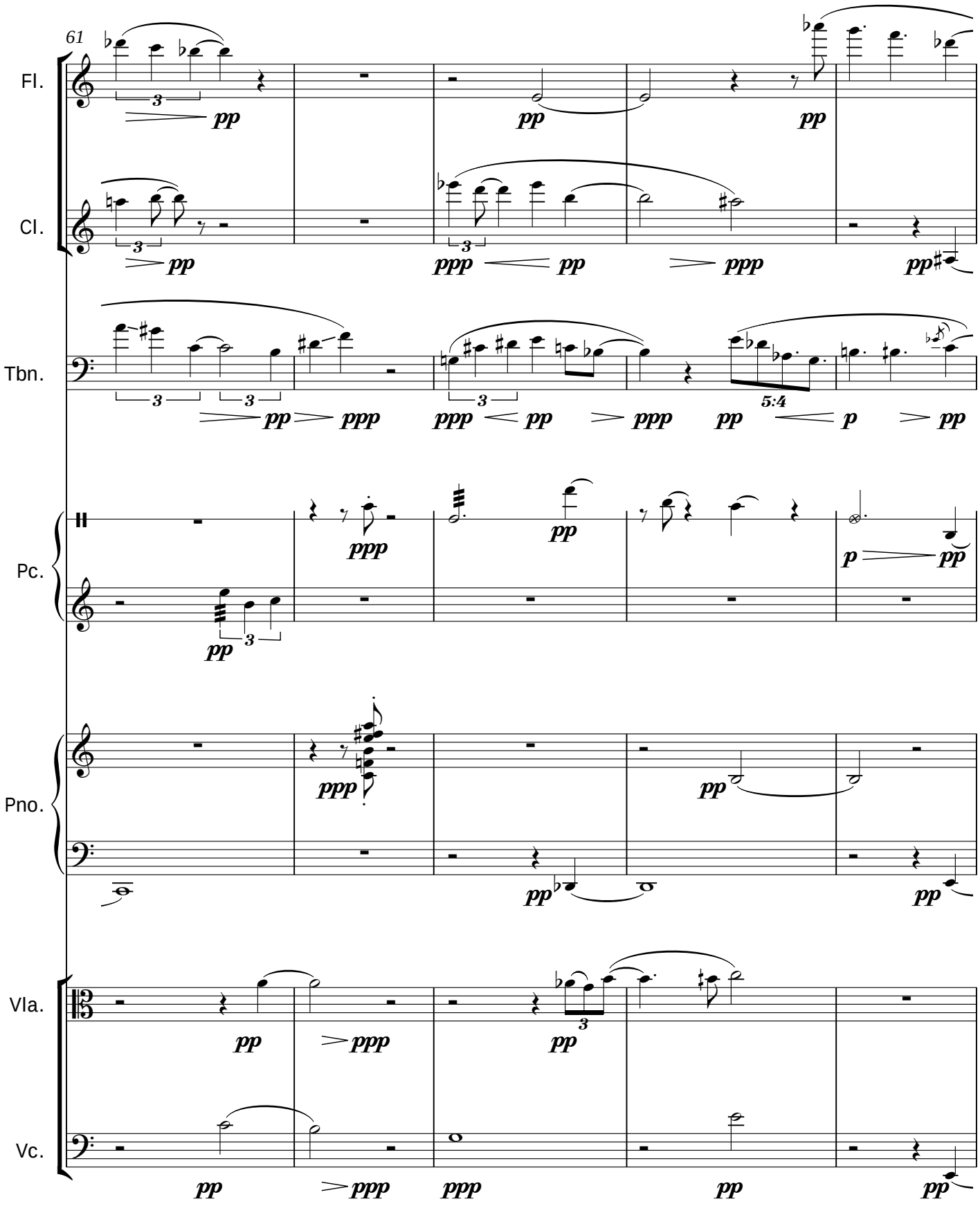
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
Pc.
Pno.
Vla.
Vc.
mp
p


49
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
Pc.
Pno.
Vla.
Vc.


52
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
Pc.
Pno.
Vla.
Vc.
pizz.
pizz.
ppp
pp
p


55
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
Pc.
Pno.
Vla.
Vc.
arco
ord. crush
(pizz.)
arco
ord. crush


58
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
without mute
Pc.
Pno.
crush → ord.
Vla.
crush → ord.
Vc.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Cl.
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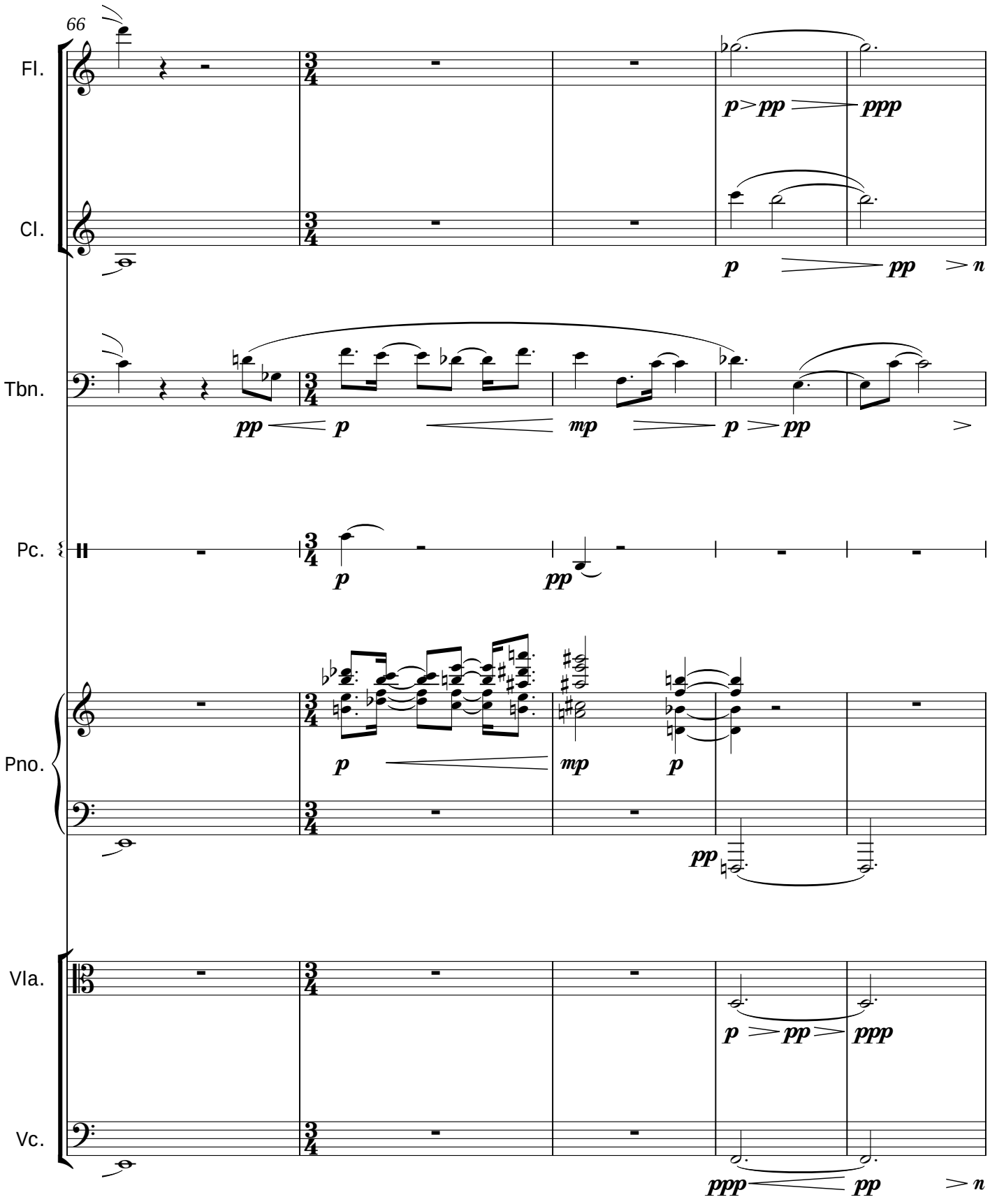
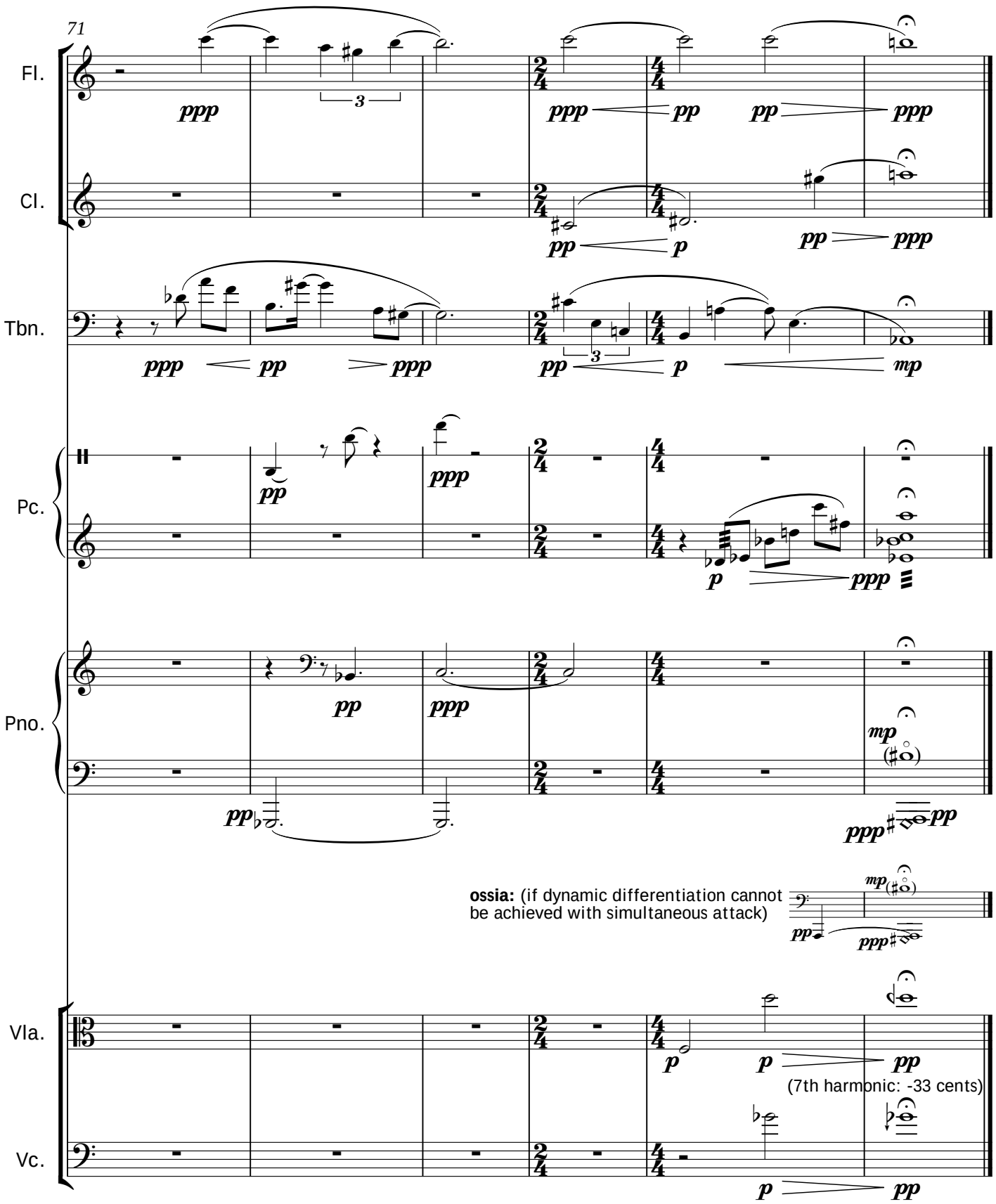
Vla.
Vc.
pp
ppp
p
3
5:4


66
Fl.
Cl.
Tbn.
Pc.
Pno.
Vla.
Vc.
p > pp ppp
p pp > n
pp p mp p > pp >
p pp
p mp p
pp
p > pp > ppp
ppp pp > n



Boston, February 29, 2008