Cameron Biles-Liddell

Fast Drones With Slow Lines

For String Quartet

Score

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For

String Quartet

Programme Note

Fast Drones With Slow Lines is a piece explores aspects of rhythmical momentum, timbral colour and melodic lines. Creatively I have been fascinated with the concept of continuous motion, often employing perpetuum mobile and ostinatos in my compositions. This quartet combines these rhythmical fascinations with melodic lines that ebb and flow between the textures, moving from clearly distinctive lines to textural material. This is most noticeable in the central episodes, where a gentle tremolo organically expands into a luscious melodic line in the violin and viola. This is subsequently contrasted with the more aggressive and driving musical material that bookend this quartet.

When approaching this ensemble, I was initially daunted. Composing for string quartet is a challenging one, where previous chambers works, such as Piano Trios and Duos, often relied on the instruments providing the contract to an opposing instrument, like the piano. This aspect combined with the sheer volume of the music canon, and the wide variety of colours found in a string quartet led to me searching for ways in which I can remain authentic to my sound-world, whilst providing fresh material to the rich history of the ensemble. As such, I wanted to capitalise on the nimble and agileness of the ensemble, where my fascination with rhythmic propulsion could be explored through the vigorous repeated notes passed around the ensemble. It was this sense of excitement and vibrancy that I wanted to capture in the string quartet, where the ideas culminate in a ricochet of notes and figurations as the gestures reach their peak.

Cameron Biles-Liddell (July 2023)

Further information about scores and parts can be found at:
https://www.cameronbiles-liddell.com/

Fast Drones With Slow Lines was composed for the *Sacconi Quartet* and was subsequently premiered at the *JAM On The Marsh Masterclass Series* in 2023.

Duration: Ca. 10′

For The Sacconi Quartet, as part of the JAM On The Marsh 'Composition Masterclass' Series.

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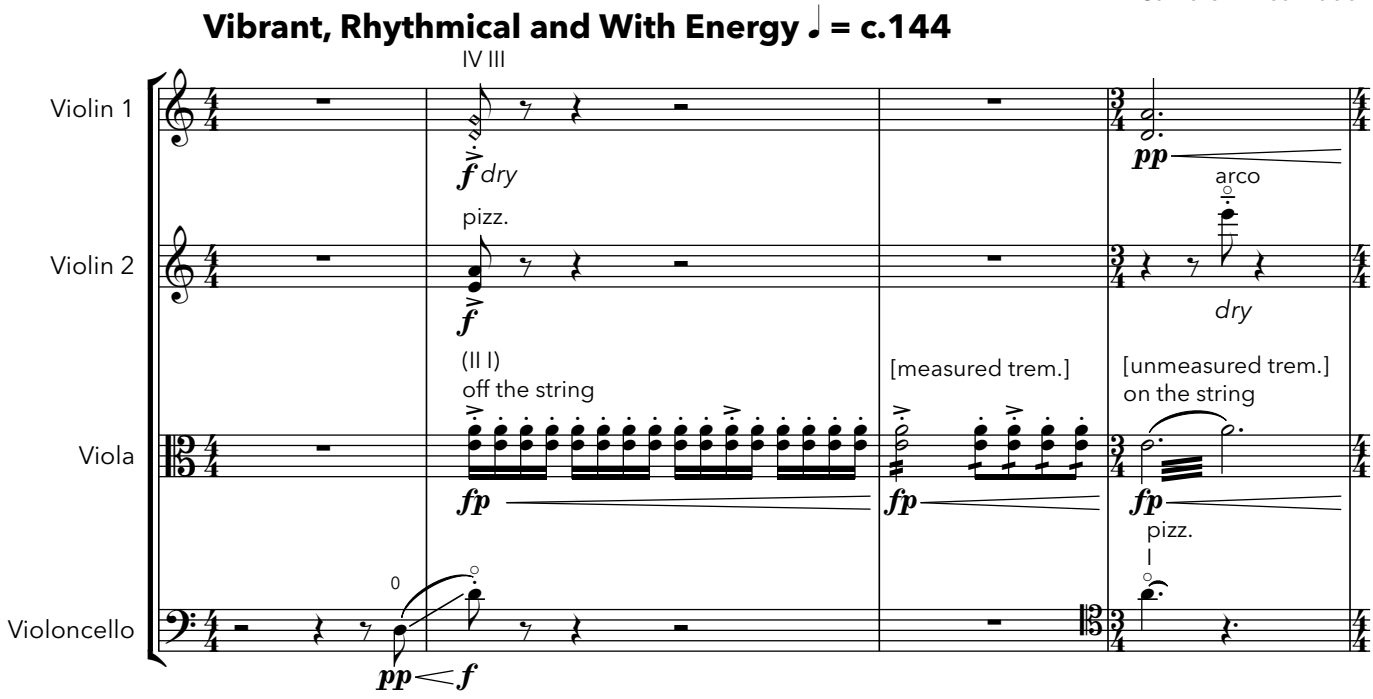
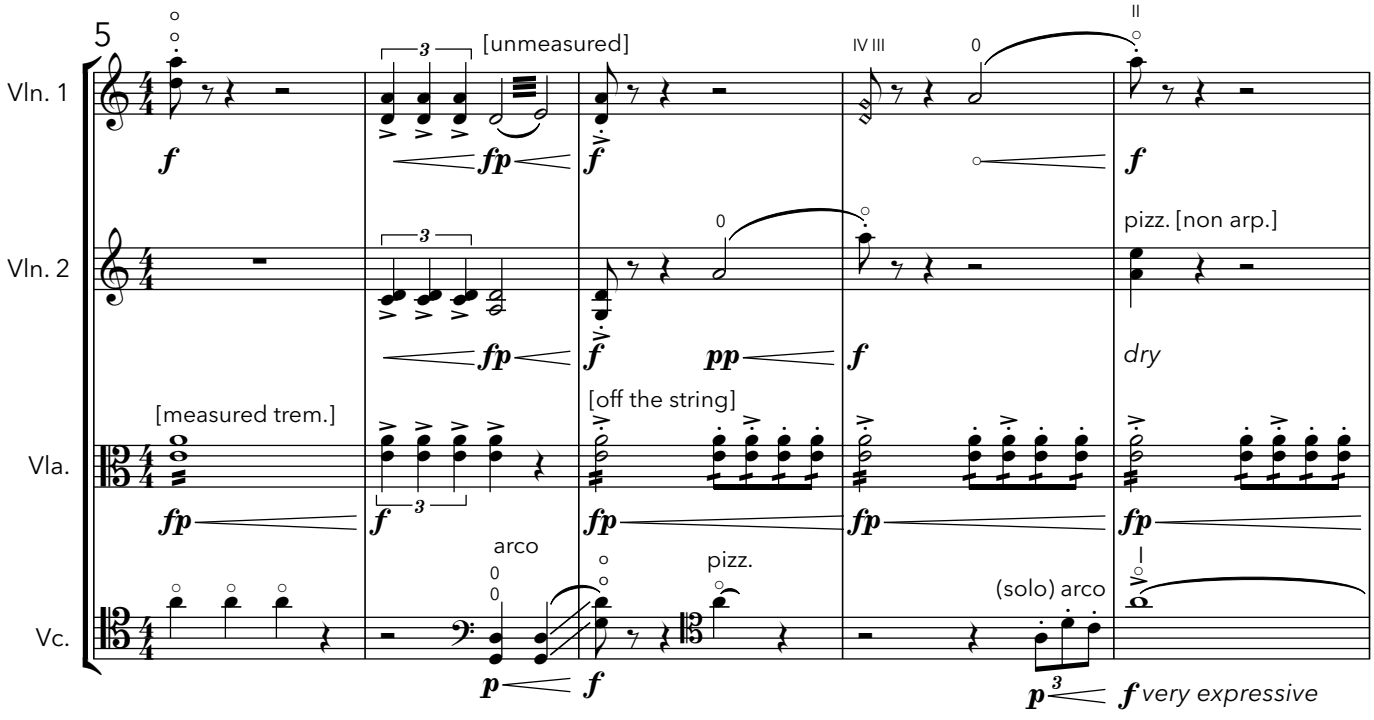
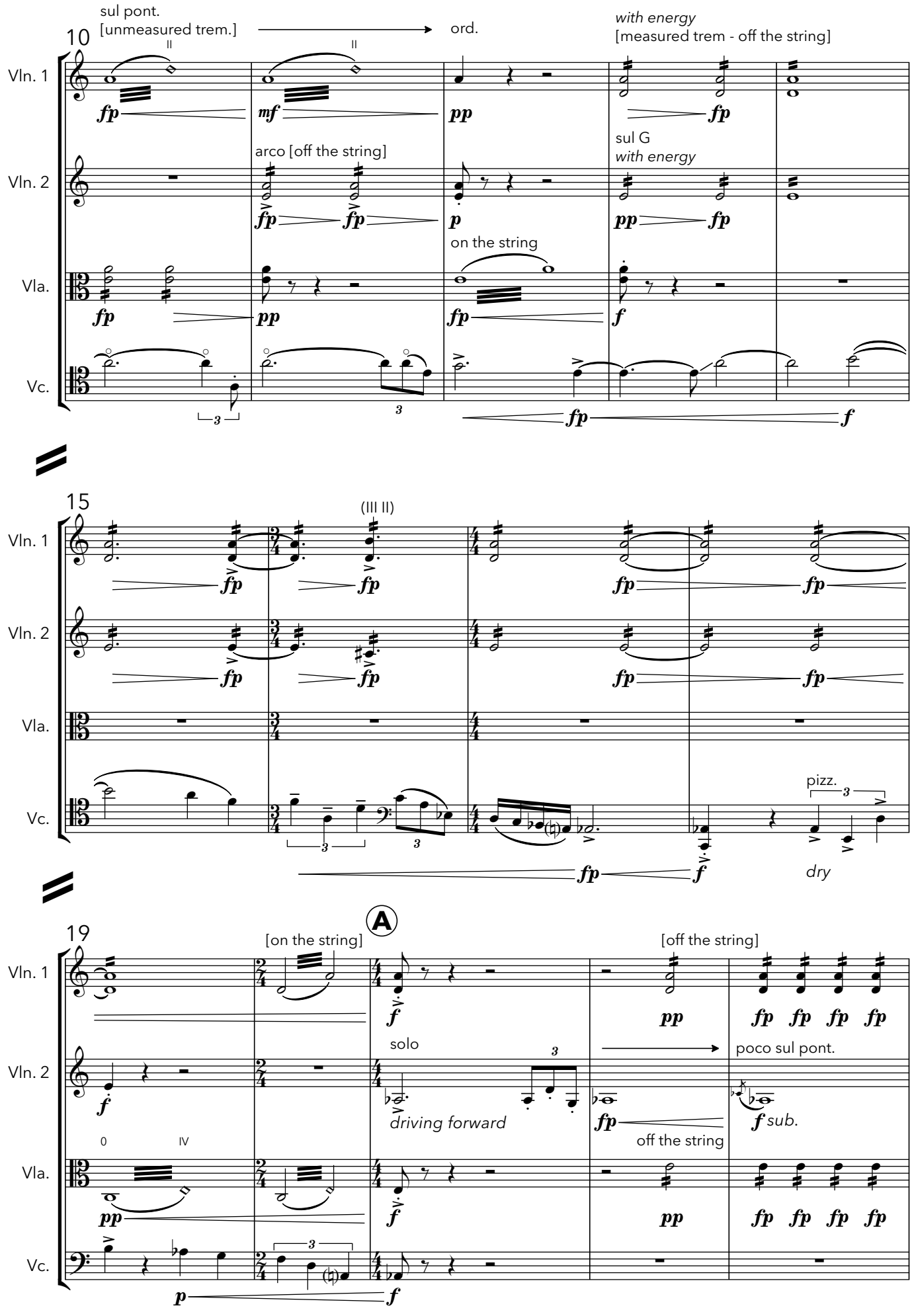
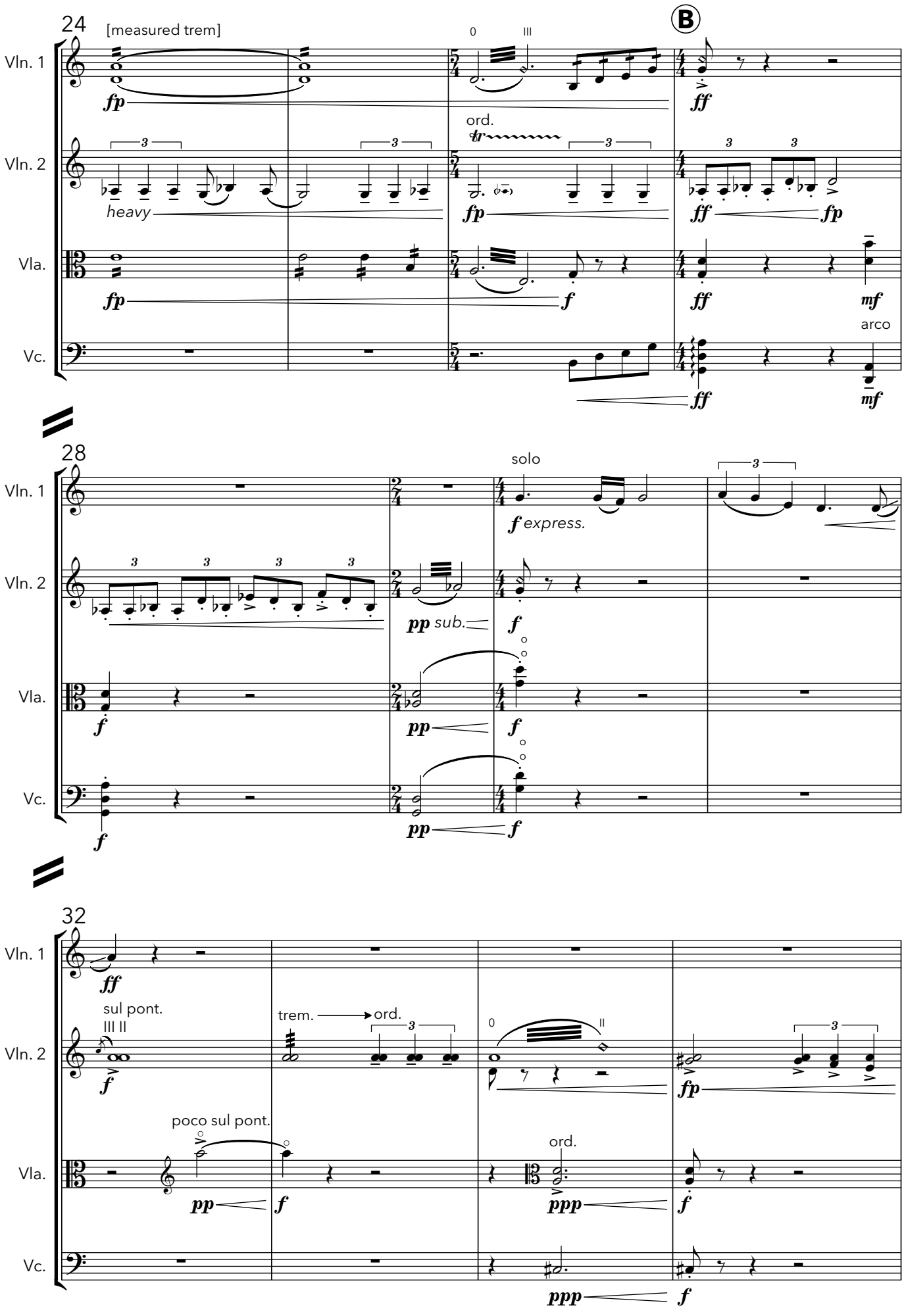
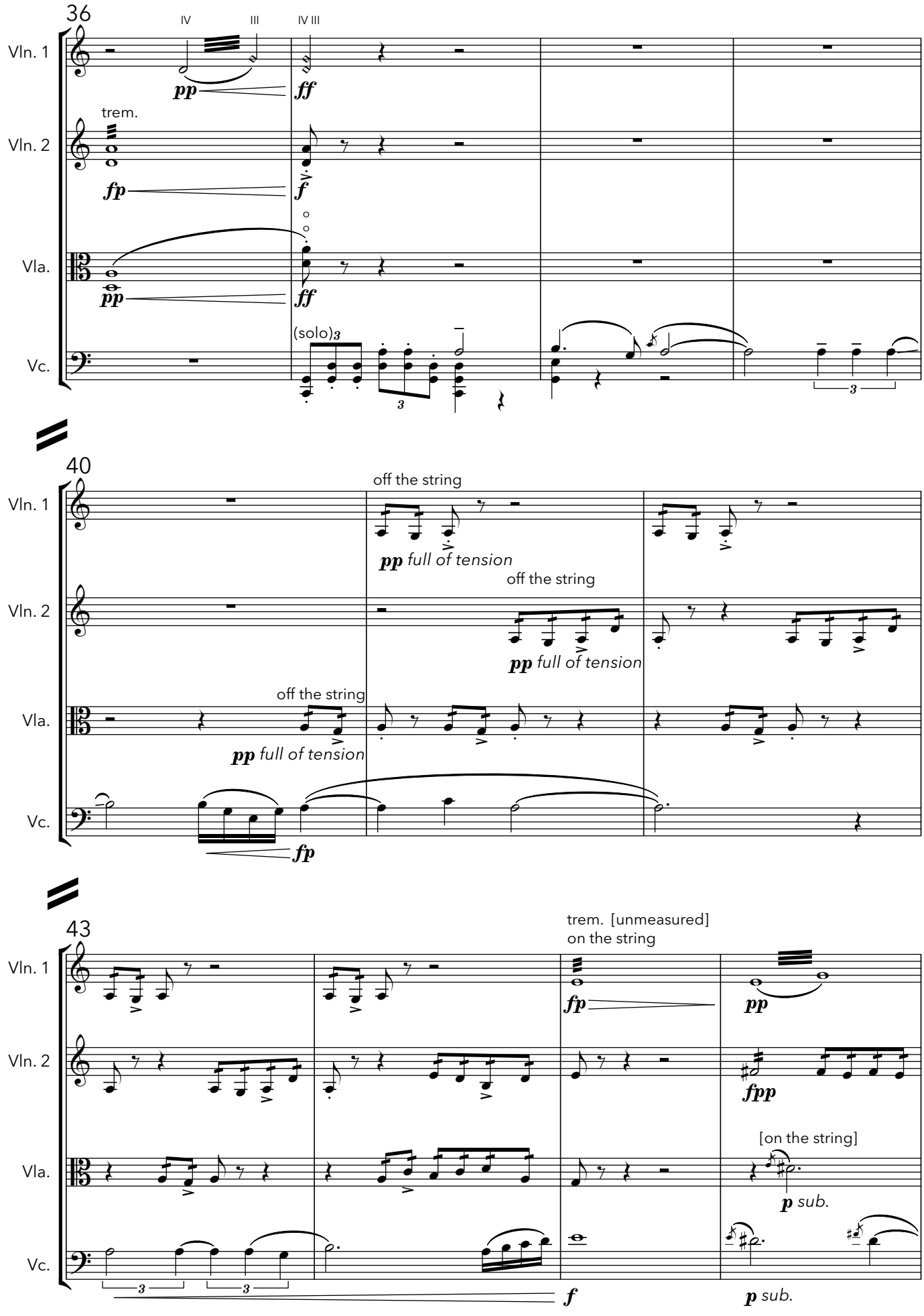
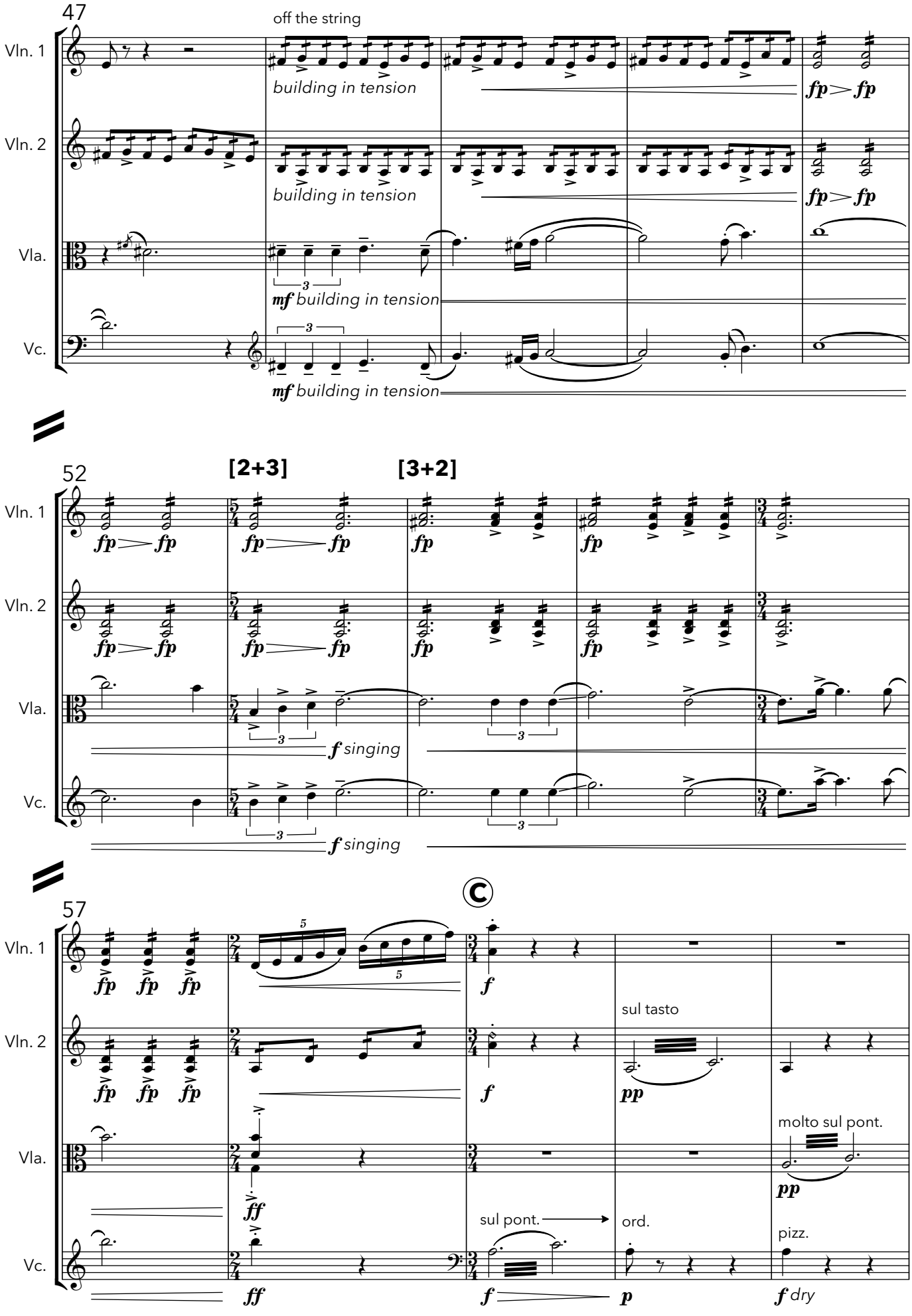


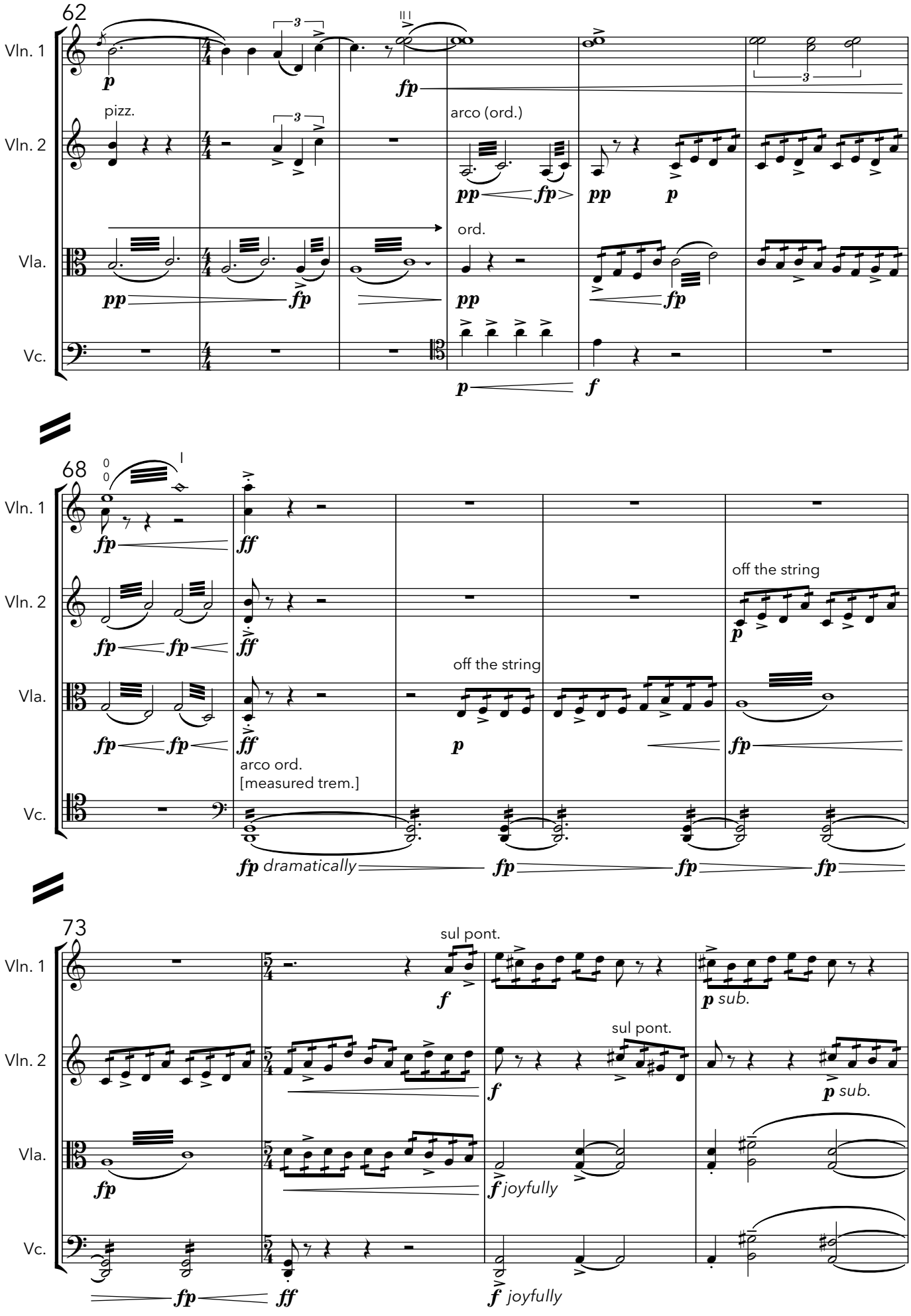


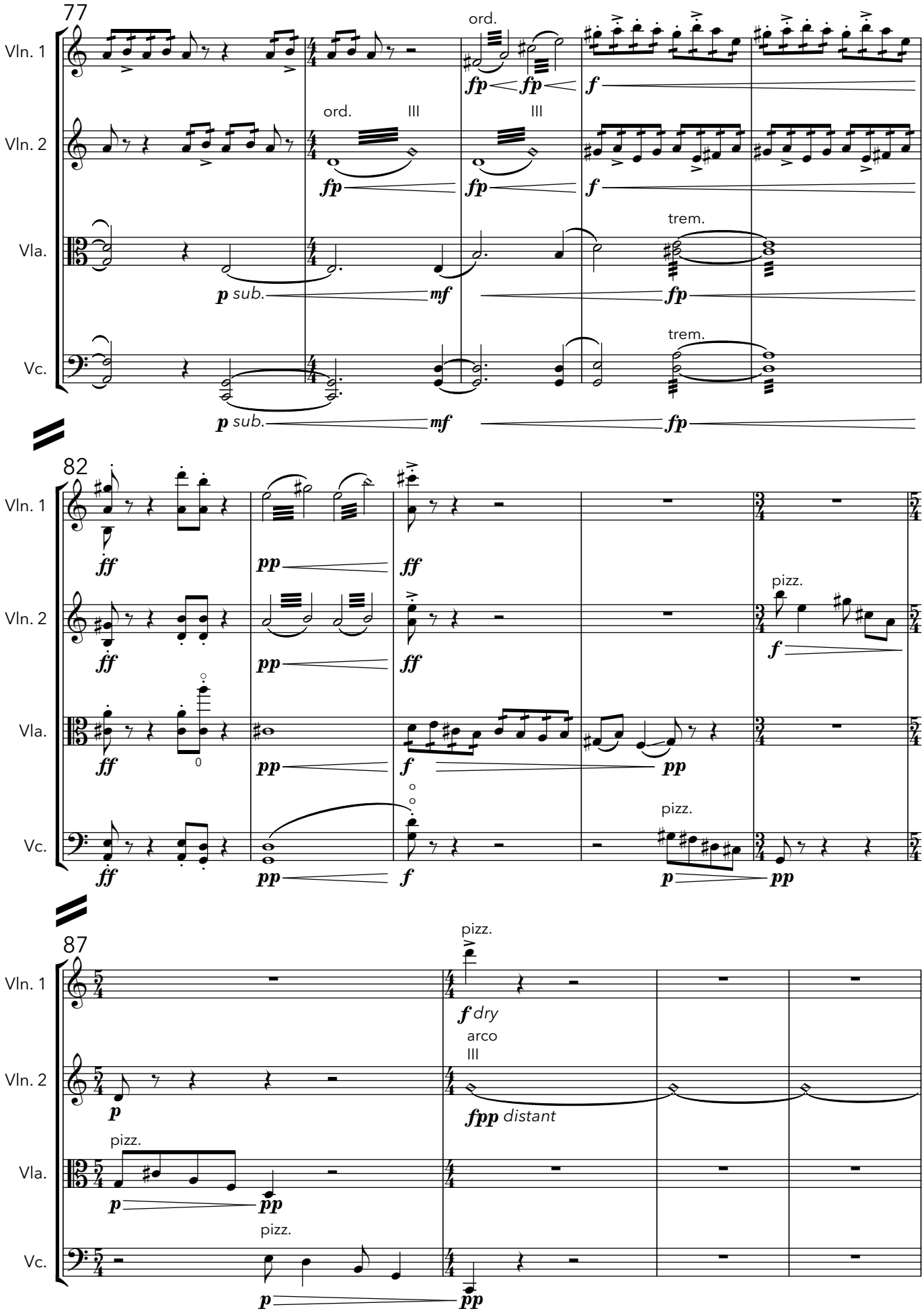

10
sul pont.
[unmeasured trem.]
ord.
with energy
[measured trem - off the string]
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
arco [off the string]
sul G
with energy
on the string
15
(III II)
pizz.
dry
19
A
[on the string]
[off the string]
solo
driving forward
poco sul pont.
off the string
sub.

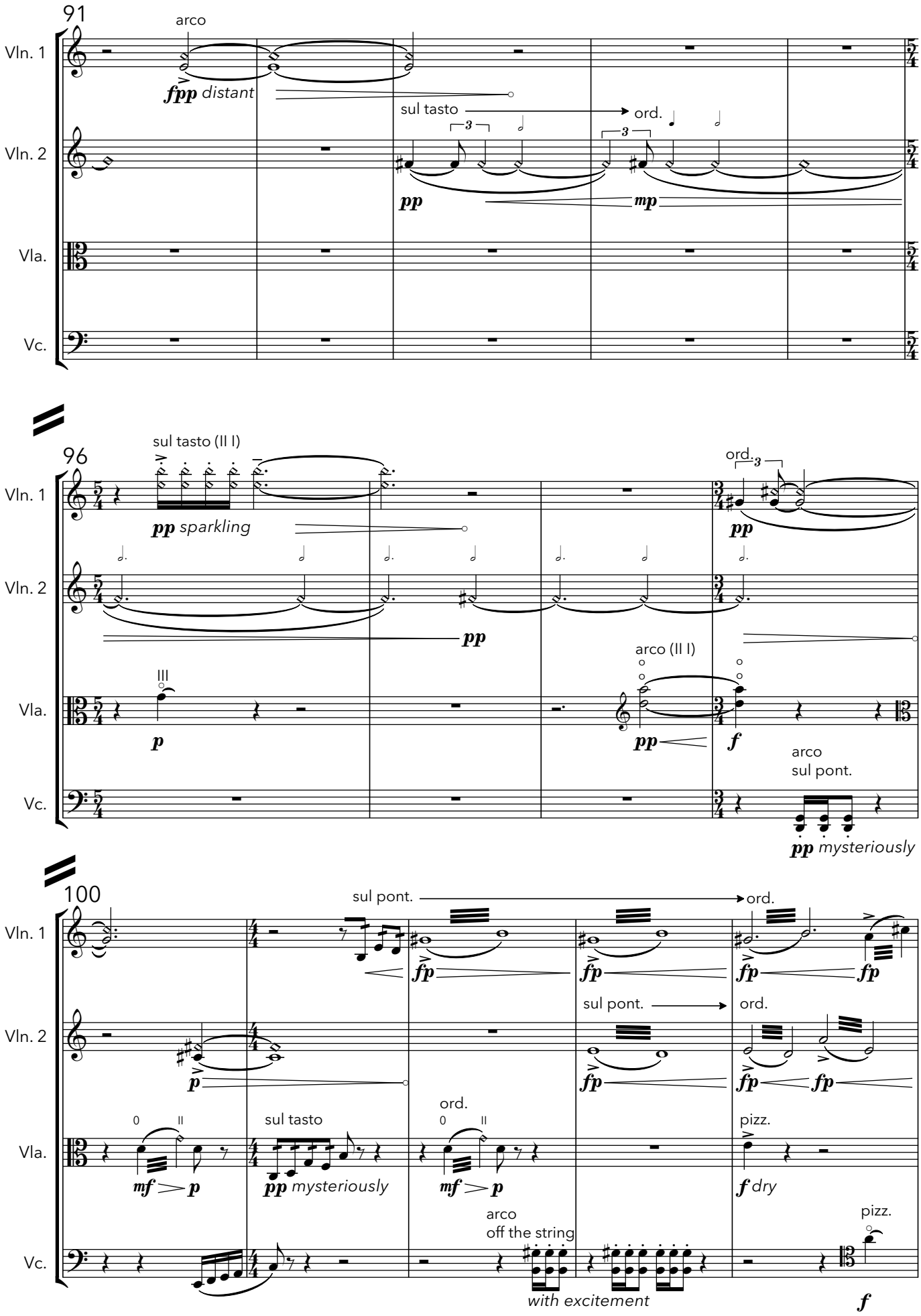

24
[measured trem]
B
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
fp
heavy
ord.
f
ff
mf
arco
28
solo
express.
pp sub.
pp
32
sul pont.
III II
trem.
ord.
poco sul pont.
ppp

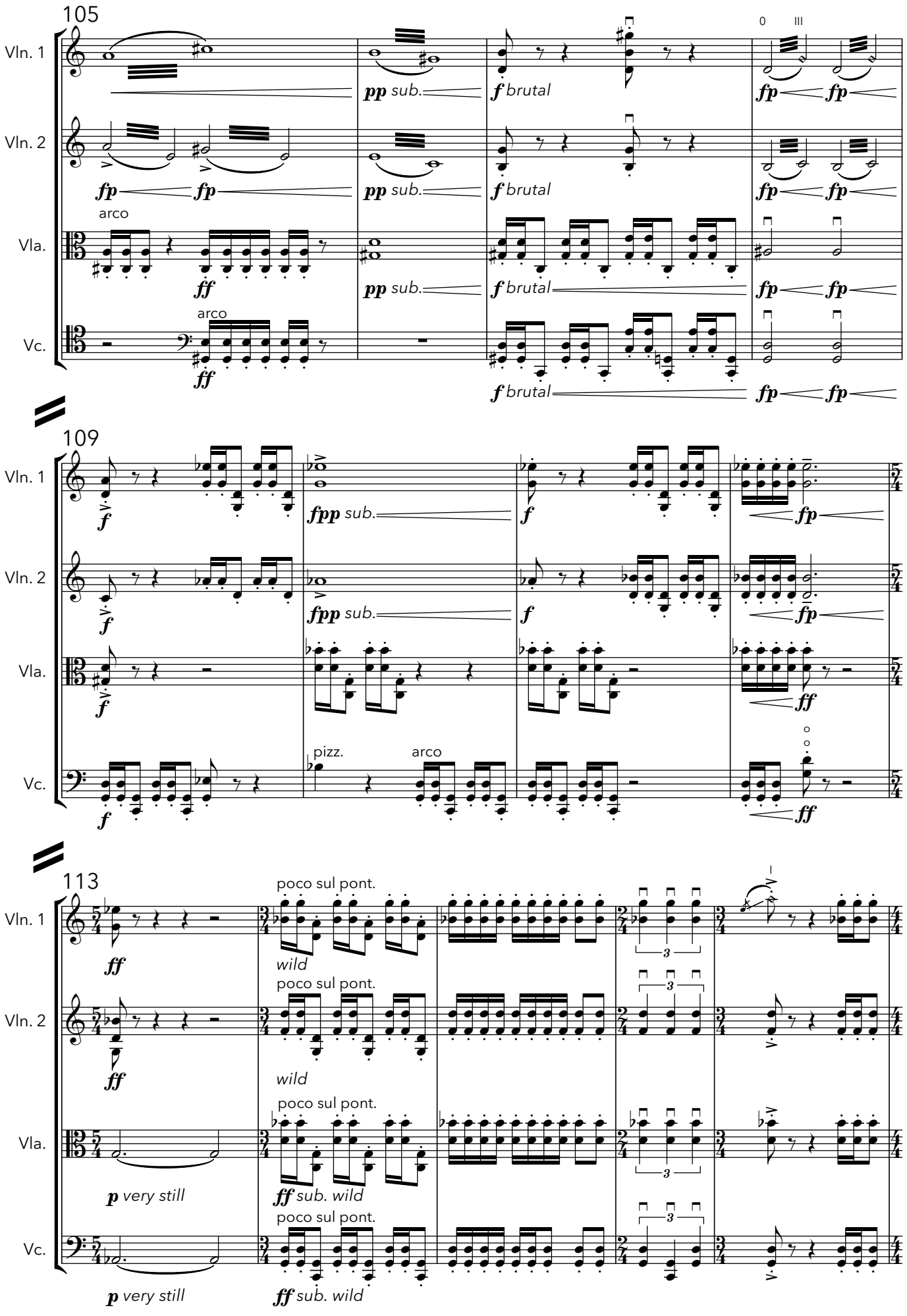

36
IV
III
IV III
Vln. 1
pp
ff
trem.
Vln. 2
fp
f
Vla.
pp
ff
Vc.
(solo)3
3
3
40
off the string
Vln. 1
pp full of tension
off the string
Vln. 2
pp full of tension
off the string
Vla.
pp full of tension
Vc.
fp
43
trem. [unmeasured]
on the string
Vln. 1
fp
pp
Vln. 2
fpp
[on the string]
Vla.
p sub.
Vc.
3
3
f
p sub.


47
off the string
Vln. 1
building in tension
fp fp
Vln. 2
building in tension
fp fp
Vla.
mf building in tension
Vc.
mf building in tension
52
[2+3]
[3+2]
Vln. 1
fp fp
Vln. 2
fp fp
Vla.
f singing
Vc.
f singing
57
C
Vln. 1
fp fp fp
f
Vln. 2
fp fp fp
sul tasto
f
pp
Vla.
ff
molto sul pont.
pp
Vc.
ff
sul pont.
f
ord.
p
pizz.
f dry


62
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
pizz.
arco (ord.)
ord.
68
off the string
arco ord.
[measured trem.]
dramatically
73
sul pont.
sub.
joyfully


77
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
ord.
III
trem.
82
pizz.
87
arco
dry
distant


91
arco
Vln. 1
fpp distant
sul tasto
ord.
Vln. 2
pp
mp
Vla.
Vc.
96
sul tasto (II I)
ord.
Vln. 1
pp sparkling
pp
Vln. 2
pp
arco (II I)
III
Vla.
p
pp
f
arco
sul pont.
Vc.
pp mysteriously
100
sul pont.
ord.
Vln. 1
fp
fp
fp
fp
sul pont.
ord.
Vln. 2
p
fp
fp
fp
0
II
sul tasto
ord.
0
II
pizz.
Vla.
mf
p
pp mysteriously
mf
p
f dry
arco
off the string
pizz.
Vc.
with excitement
f


105
Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vla.
Vc.
arco
pp sub.
f brutal
fp
ff
109
fpp sub.
f
pizz.
arco
113
poco sul pont.
wild
p very still
ff sub. wild