Eurus

Music for small ensemble with improvising musician
(from 'The Four Winds')

Nigel Morgan

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ISMN 979-0-57043-160-1 (Score in C)

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About the Music

Eurus is the first part of a four movement CD and concert music project. It has been inspired by the activities of two ensembles, ArrayMusic of Toronto and members of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, and two improvising musicians, Jo Hyde and Eugene Martynec.

In September 2000 the composer began to work closely with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales on what has become known as The Remote Music Project. This project has involved introducing orchestral musicians to music technology, recording and communications technologies. The rationale for this work has been developed by the orchestra's community and education department *Resound:* to enable the orchestra to be more effective and proactive across Wales, a geographical 'difficult' country, and to open up new areas of music making using the Internet and ISDN. In April 2001 BBCNOW presented a collaboration between electroacoustic composer and digital artist Jo Hyde and composer Nigel Morgan. *Conversations in Colour,* was a simultaneous webcast of a live three way performance across Wales by musicians from BBCNOW and students from two Welsh universities - in three separate locations.

In June 2001 the Nigel Morgan visited Toronto, Canada and had the opportunity to make contact both with ArrayMusic and with the improvising musician Eugene Martynec who had, by chance, recently collaborated with ArrayMusic's Henry Kucharcyk. By a happy accident the instrumentation of ArrayMusic and the BBCNOW ensemble proved to be almost identical . . . and BBCNOW had recently worked with multi-media artist and improviser Jo Hyde.

The idea of *Eurus* (and its subsequent movements) is to devise a flexible composition that might provide both ensembles with a variety of different options and opportunities that could go beyond the usual concert performance into studio recording, Internet presentation and even collaborative performance over ISDN or broadband media. The score encourages a wide range of possibilities: from an extended studio or concert work to collections of movements exploring almost all the possible combinations the instrumentations afford. Furthermore, the role of the improvising musician adds a special dimension to the piece by making it possible for the scored music to be overlaid with improvised 'flights', dramatic tensions and interruptions and commentaries. These might include extended media sources such as real-world sounds, electroacoustic material, even music theatre, visuals and texts.

To explain something of the unusual rationale of this piece here is a section from a letter to Eugene Martynec:

> After returning from Canada I spent some time thinking myself into a new project that was supposed to have been an orchestral work. In the end I realised what I wanted was to write a large-scale small ensemble piece building on recent experiences . . . AND exploring a number of ideas that just won't go away and need resolving! I had enormous trouble starting this piece and I suppose I spent a month or so writing nothing . . . but making lots of notes in text, trying not to reject anything. If I look at these notes now I see that there were a number of recurrent preoccupations. These include:
>
> - creating a toccata-like movement full of energy but neither overtly dramatic or heavy (although the performers may decided to make it so), where the music is 'touched' (the meaning of toccata) rather than held on to;
>
> - the idea of compass points from which I took the short step into Greek mythology via Ovid's *Metamorphoses* where there is an engaging description of the creation of the four winds:
>
> > . . .
> > *And winds*
> > *To polish the bolt and the lightning.*
> >
> > *Yet he forbade the winds*
> > *To use the air as they pleased.*
> > *Even now, as they are, within their wards,*
> > *These madhouse brothers, fighting each other,*
> > *All but shake the globe to pieces.*
> >
> > *The East is given to Eurus -*
> > *Arabia, Persia, all that the morning star*
> > *Sees from the Himalayas.*
> > *Zephyr lives in the sunset.*
> > *Far to the North, beyond Scythia*
> > *Beneath the Great Bear, Boreas*
> > *Bristles and turns.*
> > *Opposite, in the South,*
> > *Auster's home*
> > *Is hidden in dripping fog.*
>
> A further preoccupation in this composition was the issue of musical synchronization. To me, there is an intrinsic difference between music played by an individual as a solo and that played by an ensemble playing synchronously. I think this is maybe why I am such an enthusiast for free collective improvisation where a different kind of synchronicity is present; it is not one that goes from beat to beat but from phrase to phrase . . . and in between there is a very particular kind of tension that (although many composers try to grasp it in complex notation) is largely missing in notated music. Part of my solution to this has been to create a work that may be played formally by the BBC group and/or ArrayMusic with the addition an improvising musician who has no written score at all. <u>This musician's role is partly to unsynchronize the music, partly to colour it with new and found sounds, sounds that connect in some way with the 4 winds and their territories, sounds that blow across and through the notated piece.</u> In that respect it's a kind of 'World Music' piece (it has real similarities to Tim Souster's work of the same name - although Souster's piece explores the world from the trajectories of the Apollo 11 spacecraft).

Eurus runs for about 16 minutes . . . and with the improviser's contribution probably up to 20 in all. *Eurus* is the East Wind and as Ovid suggests it encompasses that part of the world that, in the latter months of 2001, is very much occupying our attention right now . . . it is also the wind of Autumn.

Directions for Performance

How the score may be played:

• as a sextet
• as a septet with improvising musician
• in any combination of instruments

• in the written sequence of sections
• in a sequence of sections of the performers' choice
• in a selection of sections for smaller combinations of performers (for example: in *Eurus* a quartet of violin, double-bass, mallet instrument(s) and keyboard might play sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 12.

• the performers might view the work like a play with seven characters containing a large number of scenes (64 in the complete piece), each scene carrying the potential to present the characters in different combinations and situations. The musical score might be likened to a dramatic script, with the actors' delivery, emphasis and pacing being a matter for interpretation by performer and / or director.

How individual sections might be played:

The rationale is here is to encourage a more interactive approach between the performer and the presentation of the musical text:

- any written dynamics, expressive effects and tempo markings are guides, no more. These indications should be seen as providing a starting point from which collaborative decisions might be arrived at;

- musical material may be erased at any point to provide space for improvised or devised elements to be inserted.

- repetitions of written material may be devised to enable ostinatos or looped textures to be developed between performers and improviser;

- transposition and interval doubling, the invention and use of ornaments and figurations are encouraged;

Instrumentation

In its simplest format Eurus can be played by:

- violin,
- double bass
- clarinet
- trumpet
- piano
- vibraphone

- improvising percussionist

A more complex instrumentation (particularly for studio realisation) might include (in addition to the instruments listed above):

- folk fiddle, electric / MIDI violin,
- fretless electric bass
- single reed folk instrument(s), recorders alto / soprano sax
- cornet, flugelhorn
- electric keyboard(s), sampler / synthesiser
- mallet instruments, KAT MIDI controller

- improvising musician with interactive computer-based sampler (ex. LiSa from STEIM)

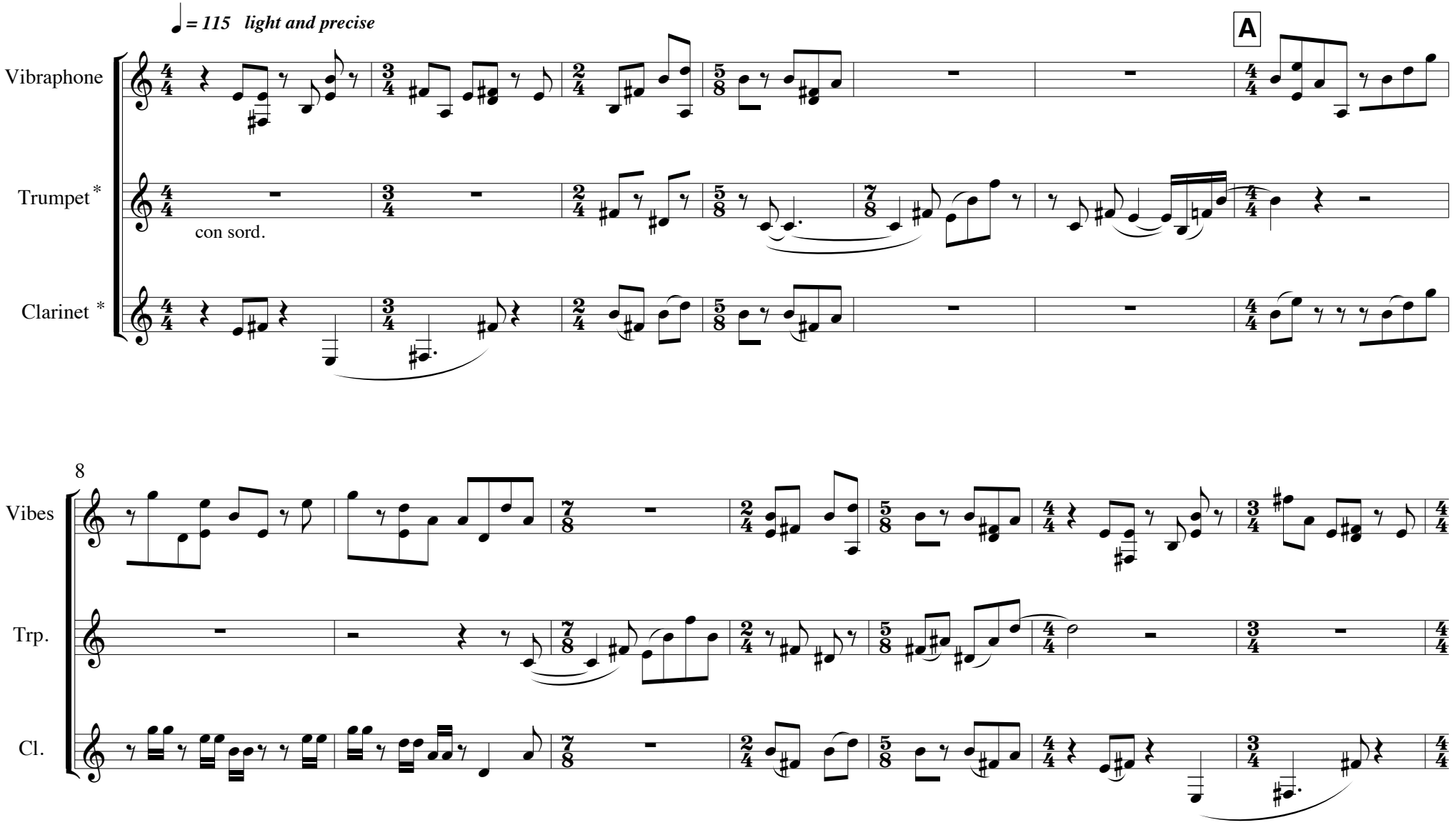
It is envisaged that the performers will collaborate in bringing together the means and the material for an additional sonic / and or musical layer. The use of texts and visual images is also encouraged - again dependent on circumstances and opportunities.

Amplification, creative mixing / sound diffusion with DSP processing is another possible performance route.

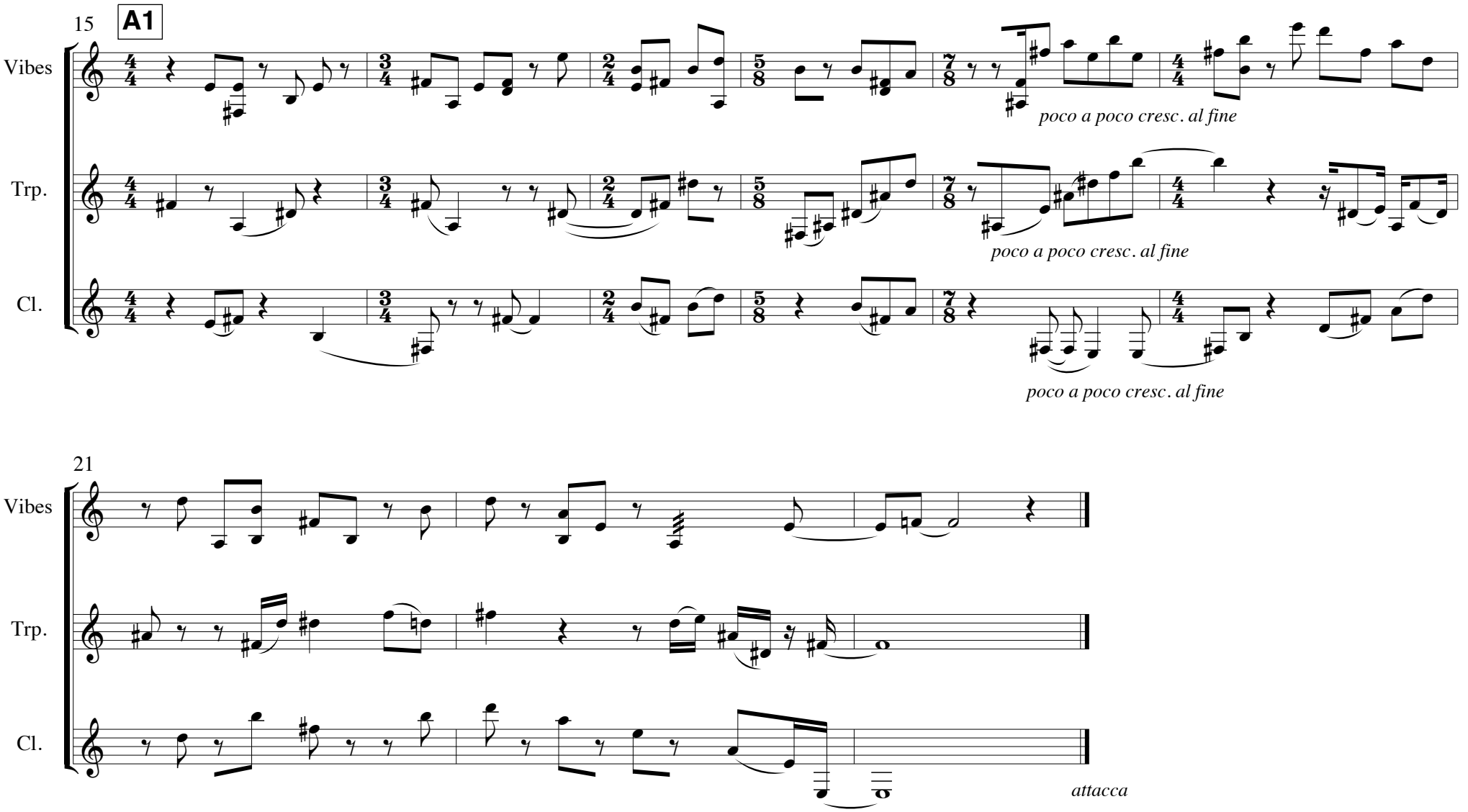
The East is given to Eurus -
Arabia, Persia, all that the morning star
Sees from the Himalayas.

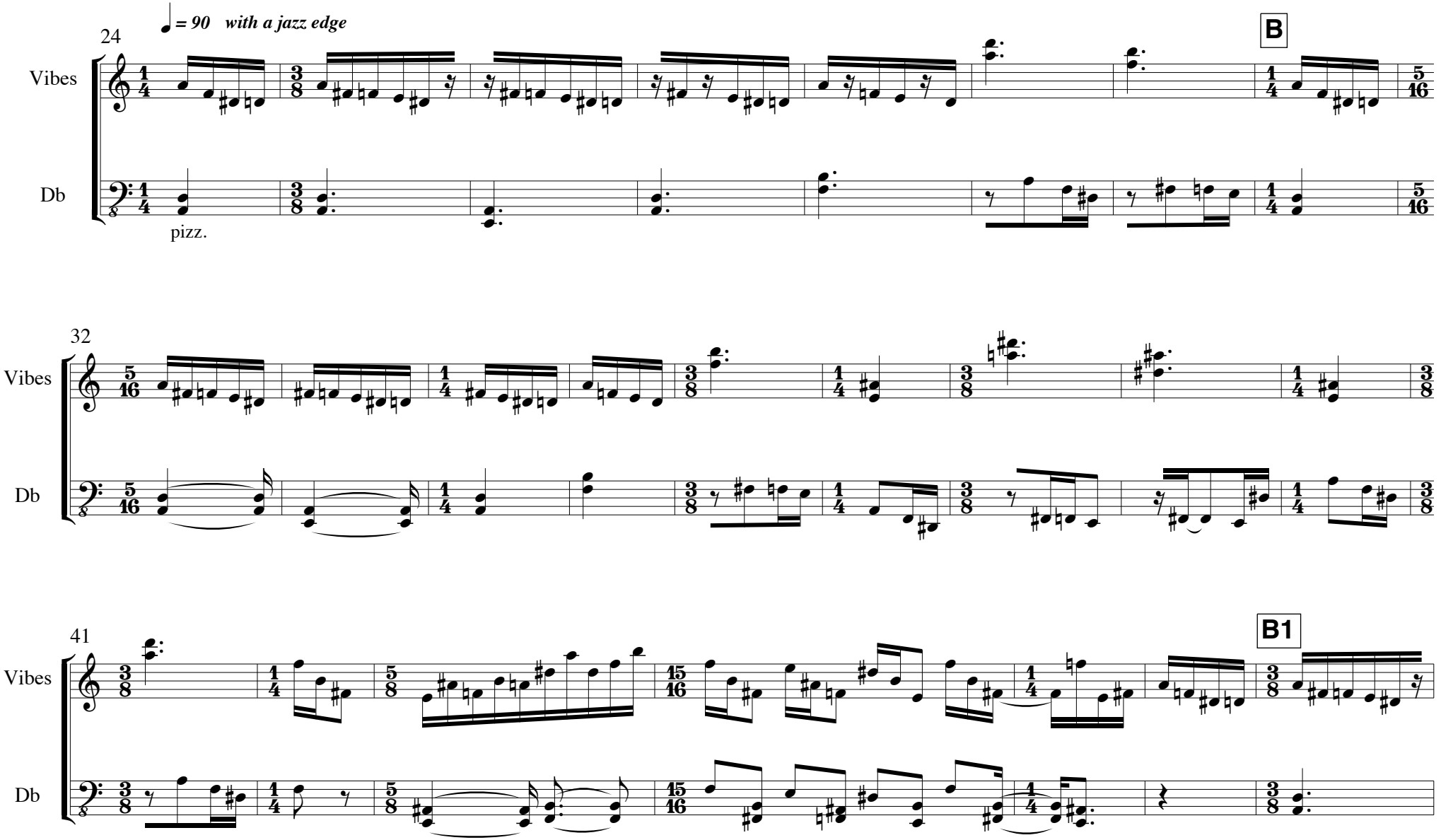
- Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book I
(trans. Ted Hughes)

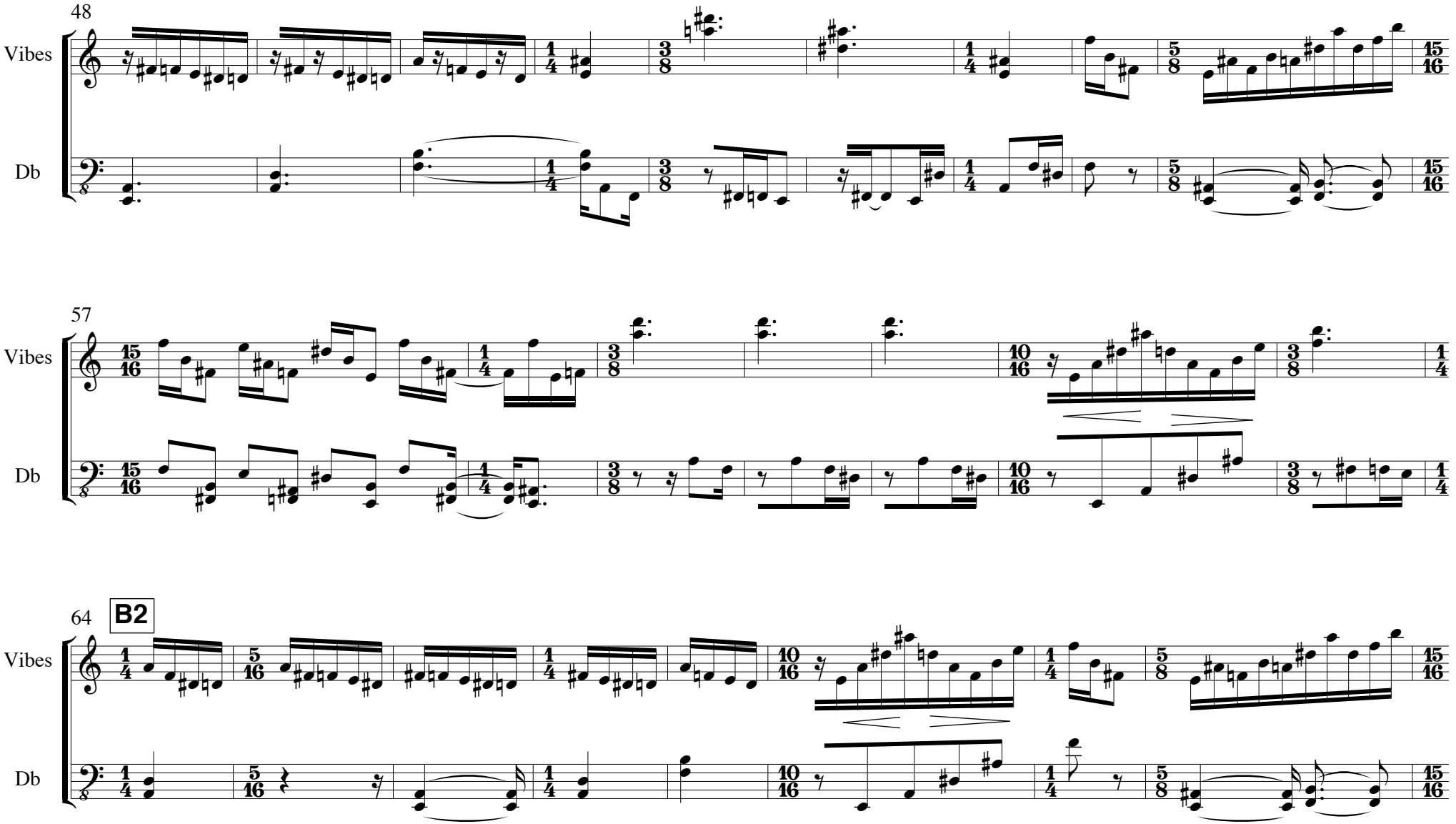
Eurus
1:13

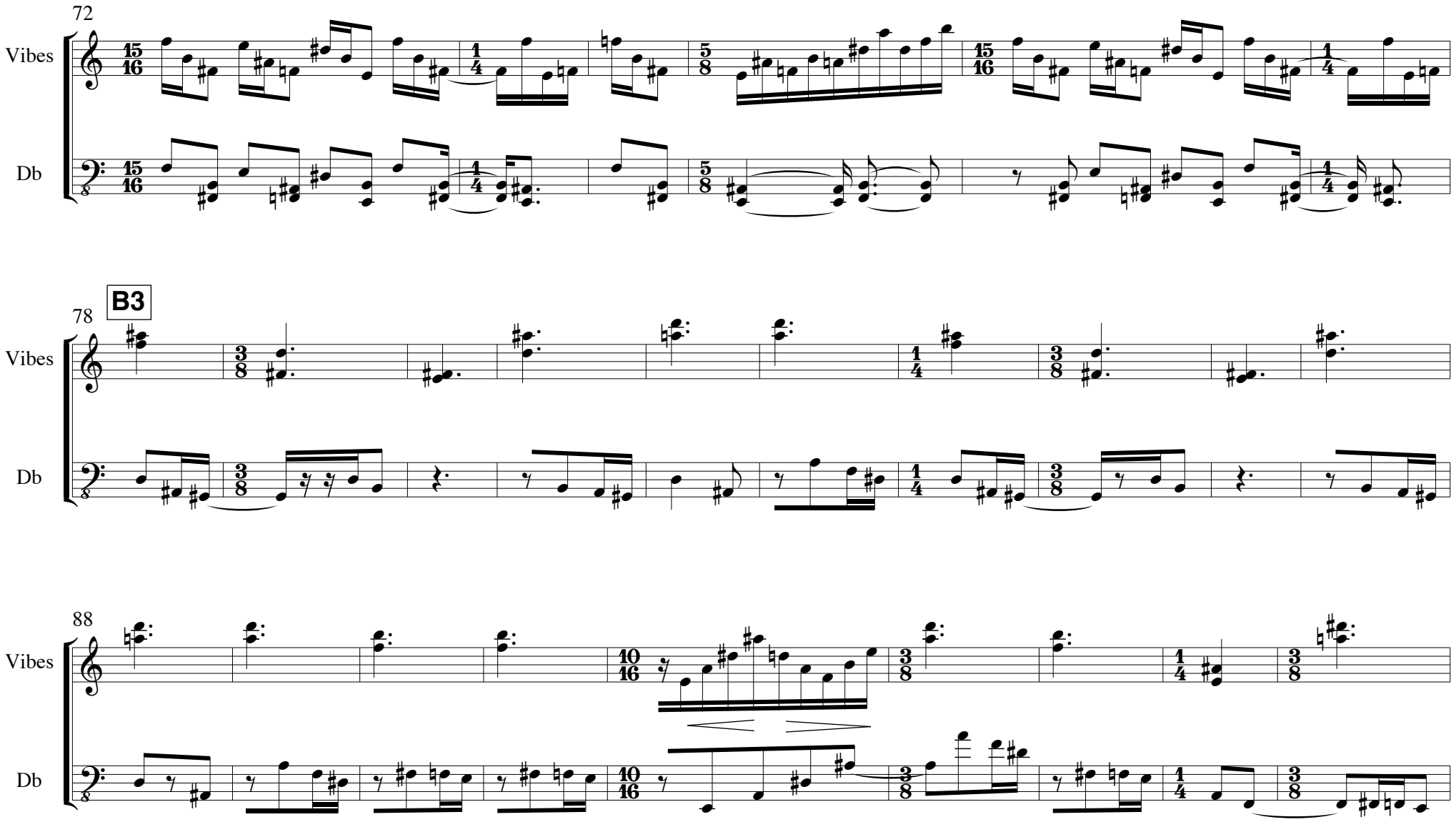


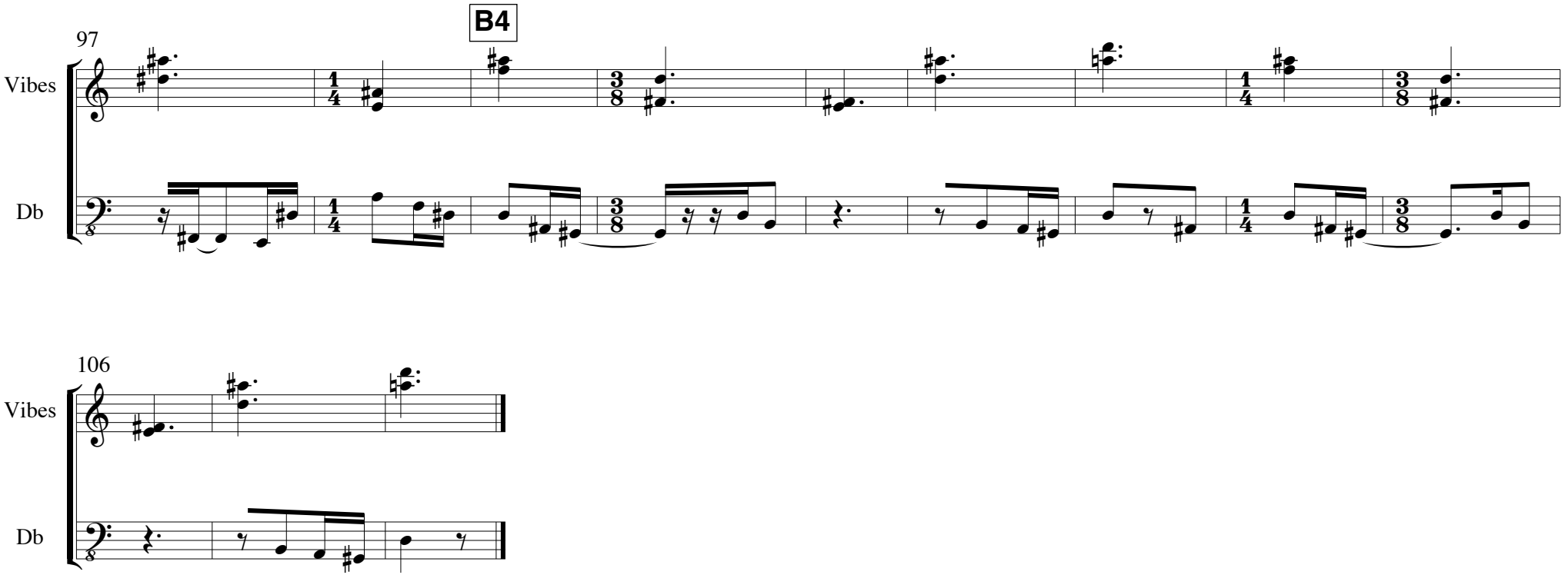
* Score in C. A separate performance score is available with appropriate transpositions for Clarinet and Trumpet.

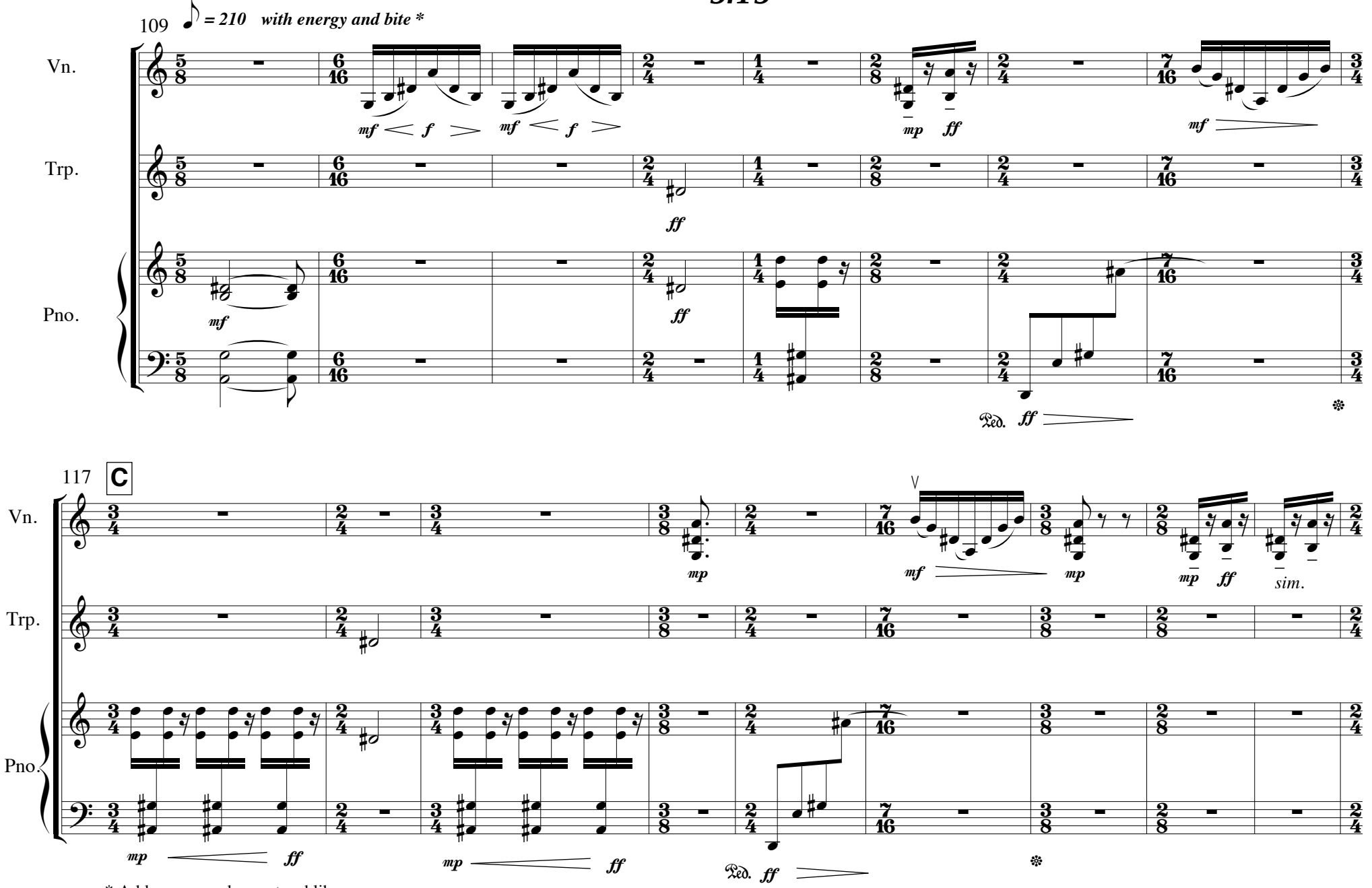

15
A1
Vibes
Trp.
Cl.
poco a poco cresc. al fine
poco a poco cresc. al fine
poco a poco cresc. al fine
21
Vibes
Trp.
Cl.
attacca


♩ = 90 with a jazz edge
24
Vibes
Db
pizz.
B
32
Vibes
Db
41
Vibes
Db
B1

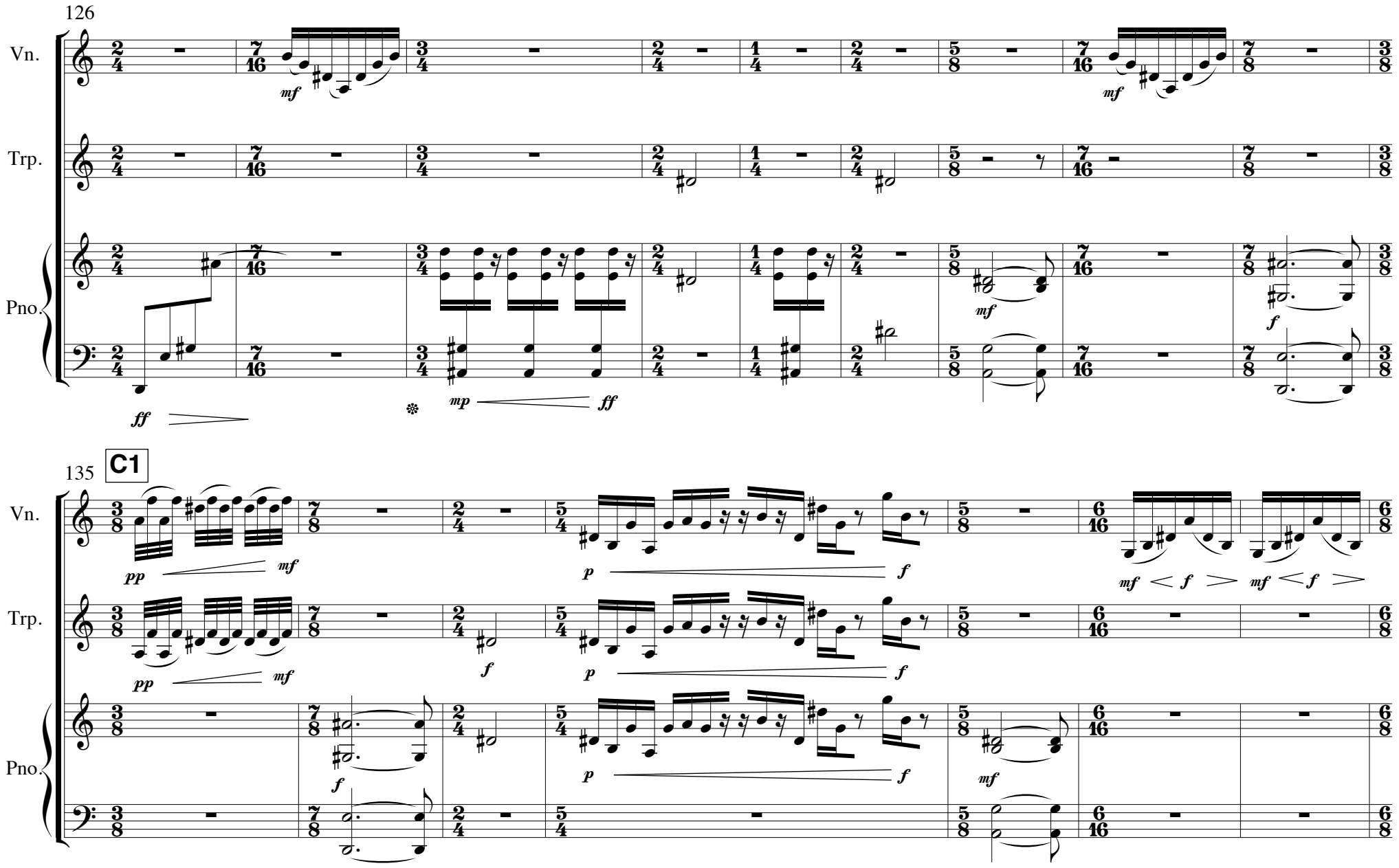

48
Vibes
Db
57
Vibes
Db
64
B2
Vibes
Db

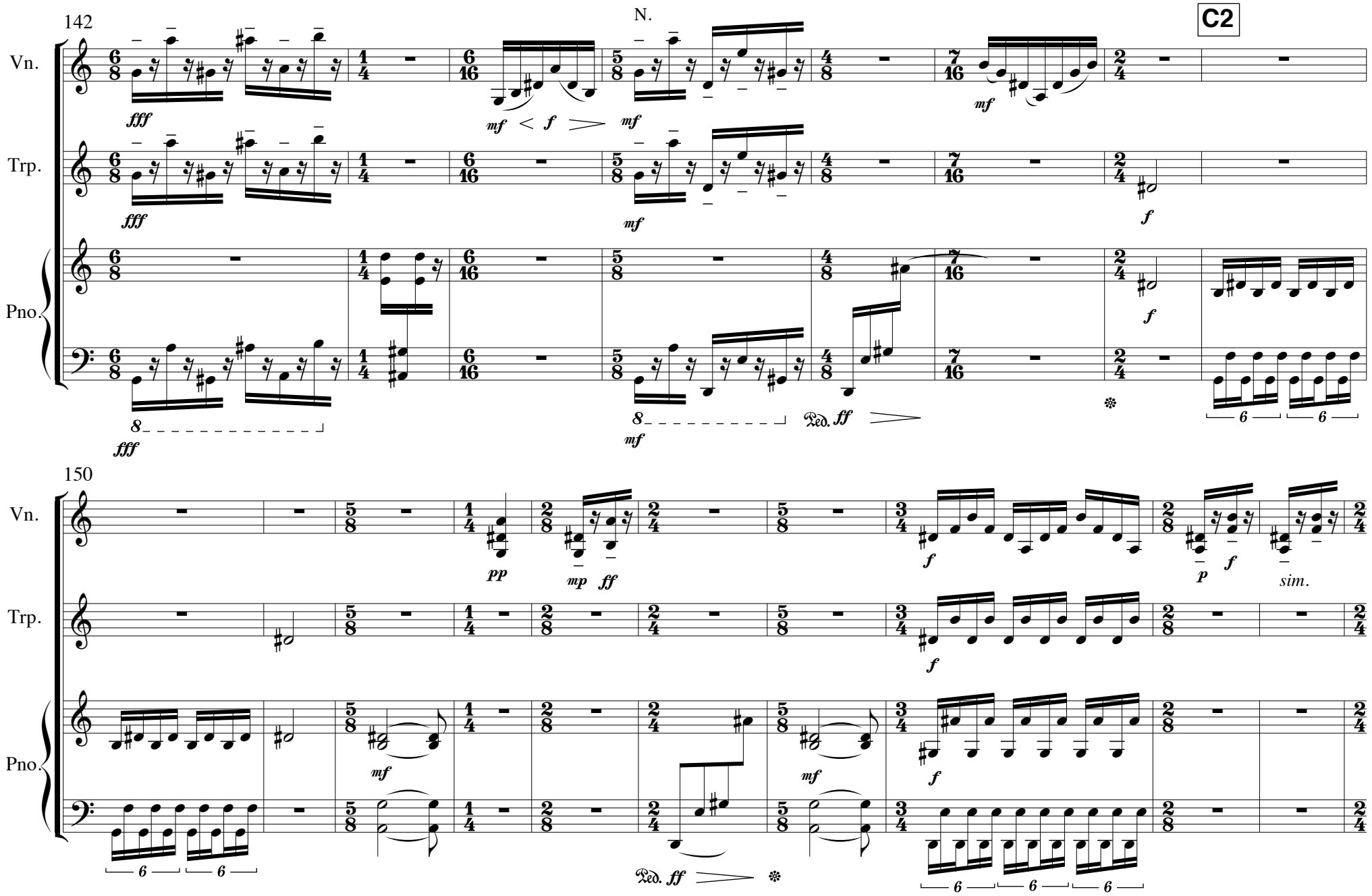

72
Vibes
Db
78
B3
Vibes
Db
88
Vibes
Db

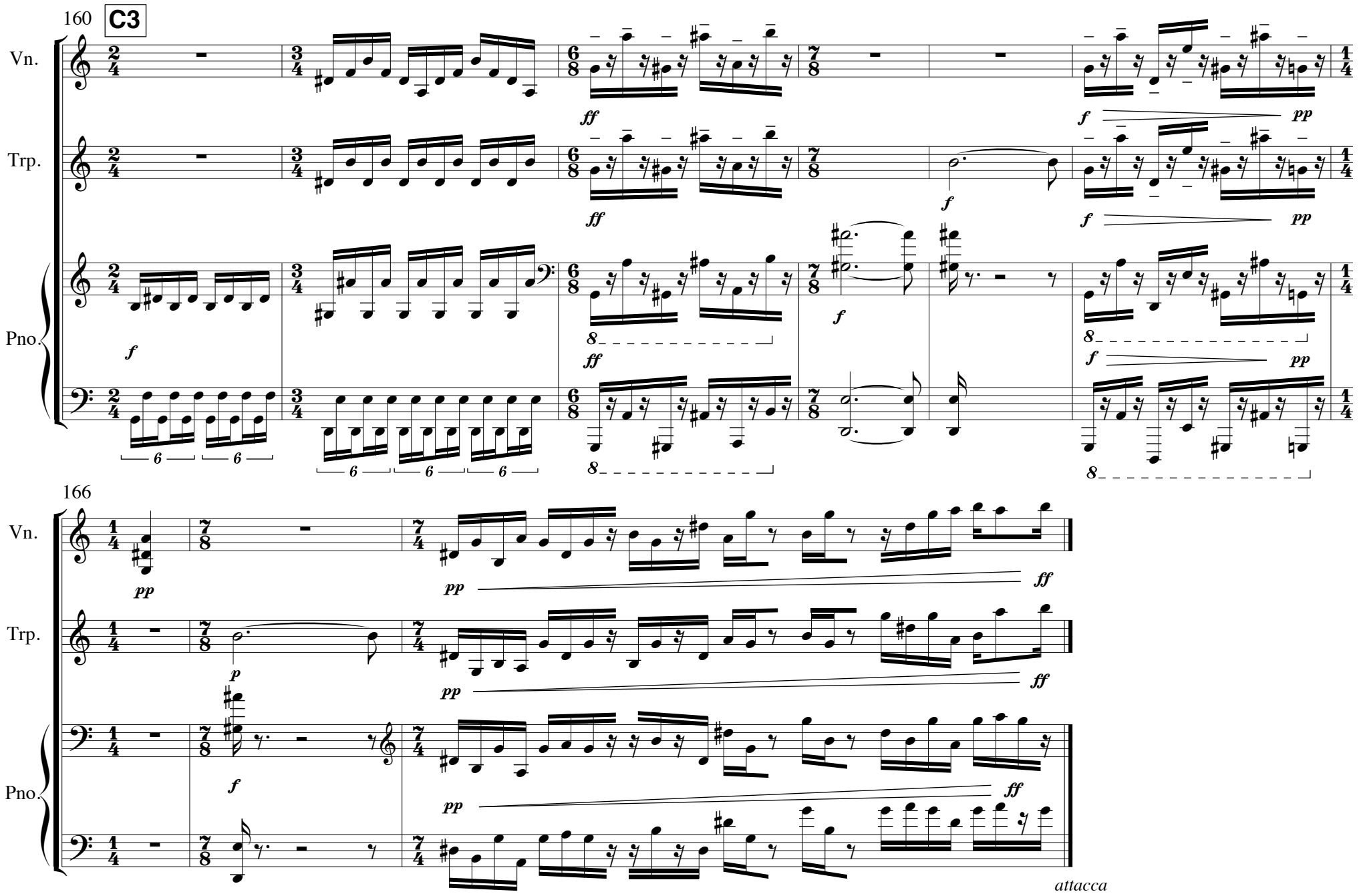

97
B4
Vibes
Db
106
Vibes
Db



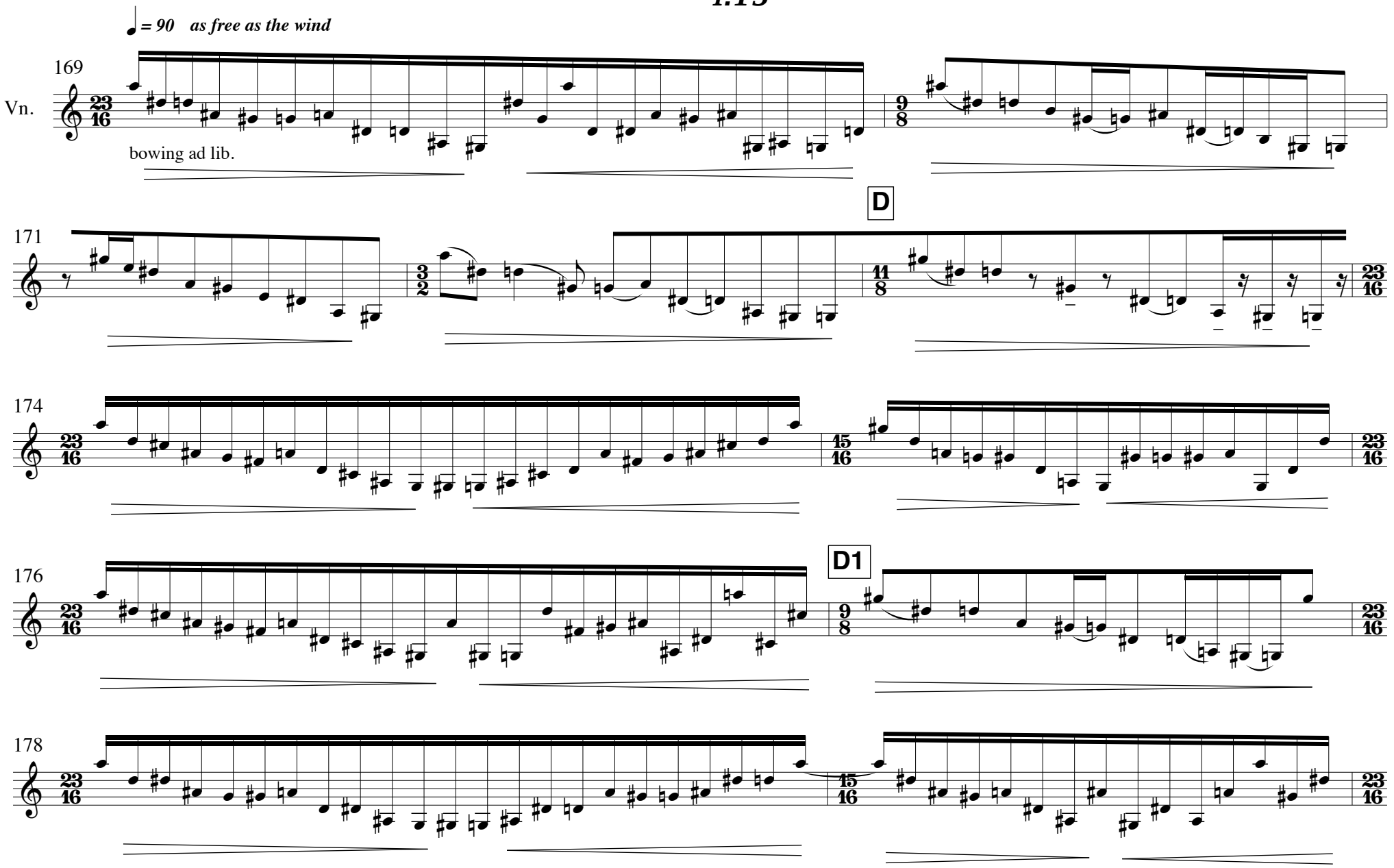
* Add pauses and repeats ad lib.

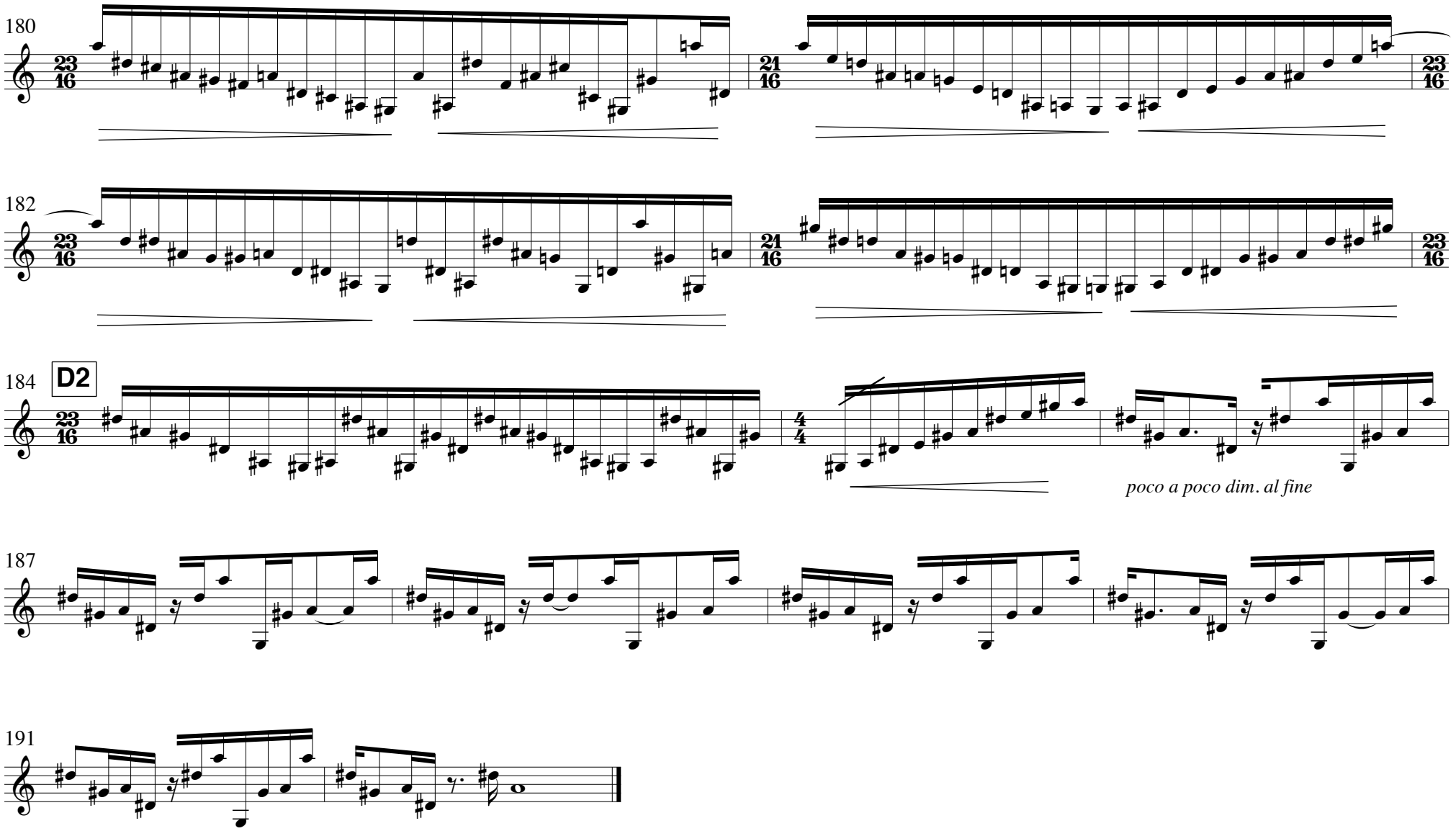

126
Vn.
Trp.
Pno.
ff
mp
ff
135
C1
Vn.
Trp.
Pno.
pp
mf
p
f
mf < f > mf < f >


142
N.
C2
Vn.
Trp.
Pno.
fff
mf
f
ff
Red.
150
pp
mp
p
sim.

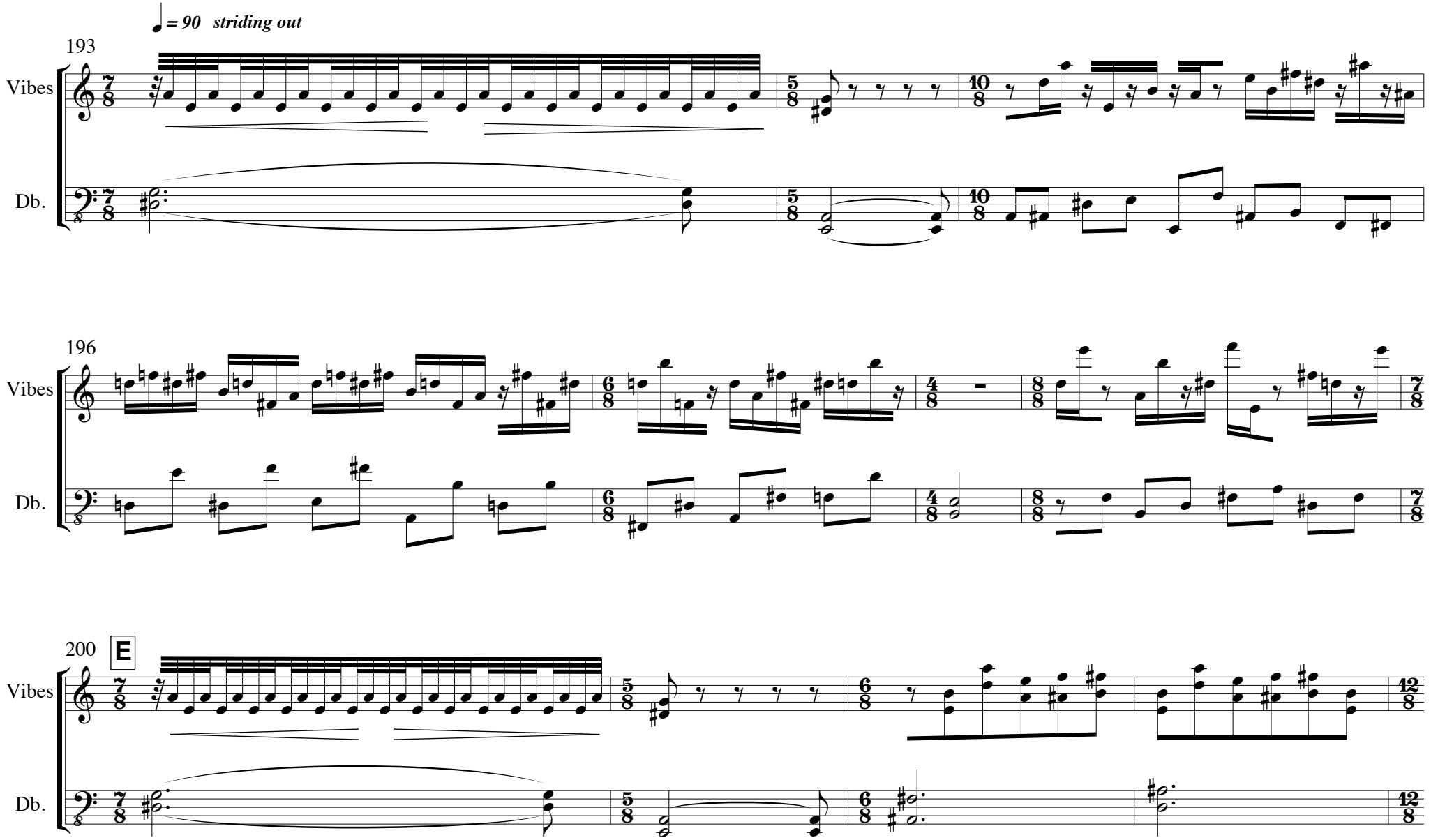

160
C3
Vn.
Trp.
Pno.
166
attacca

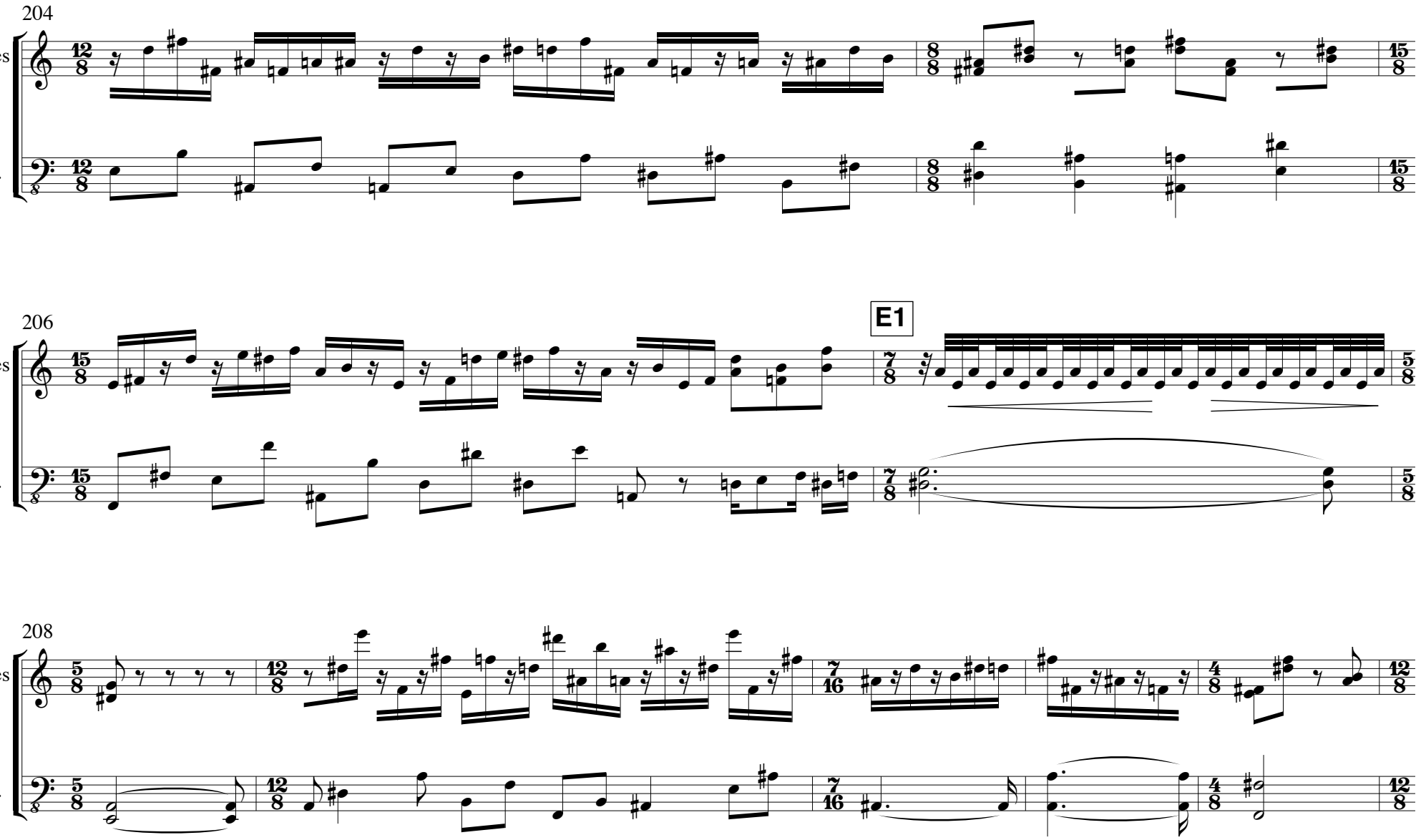
4:13

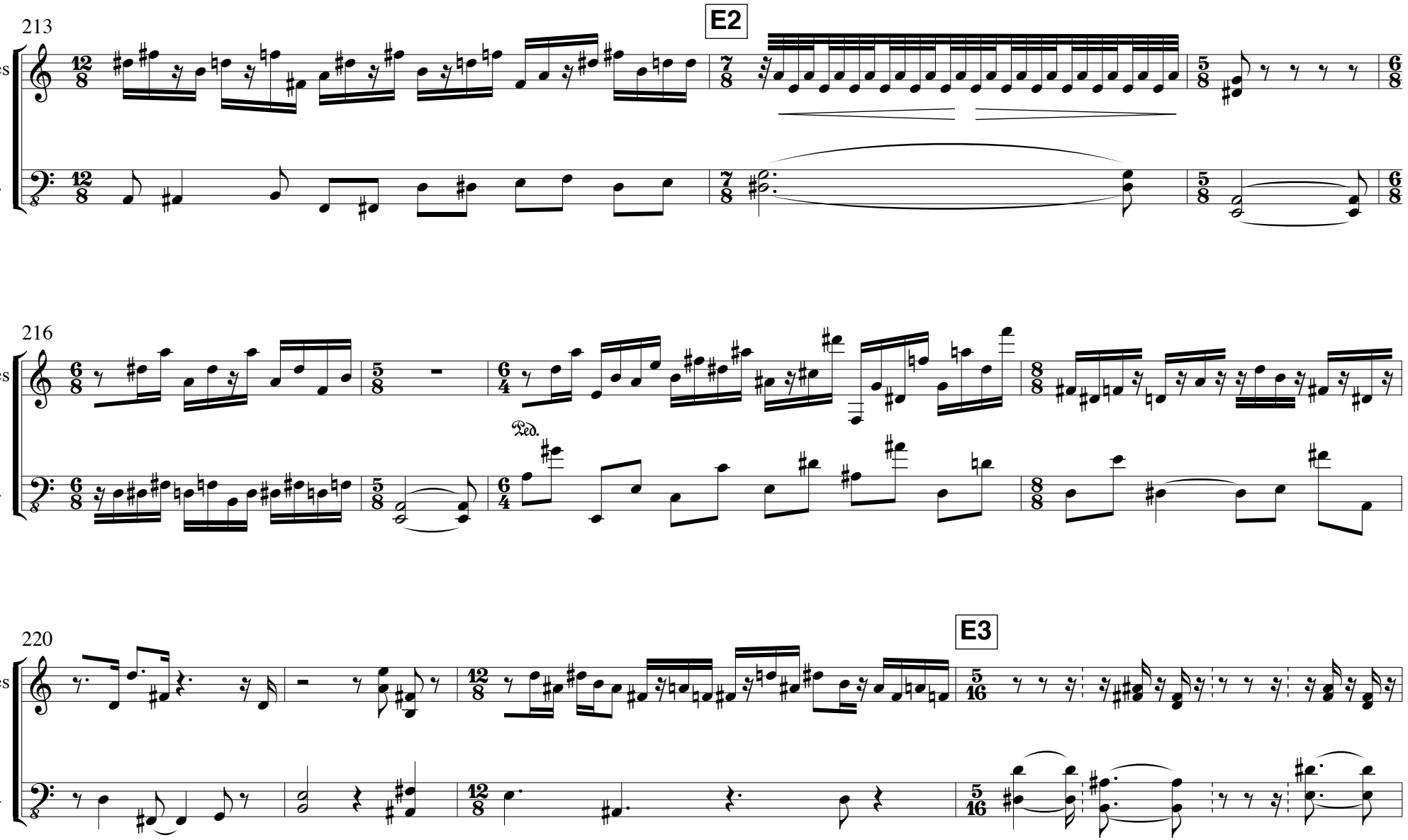


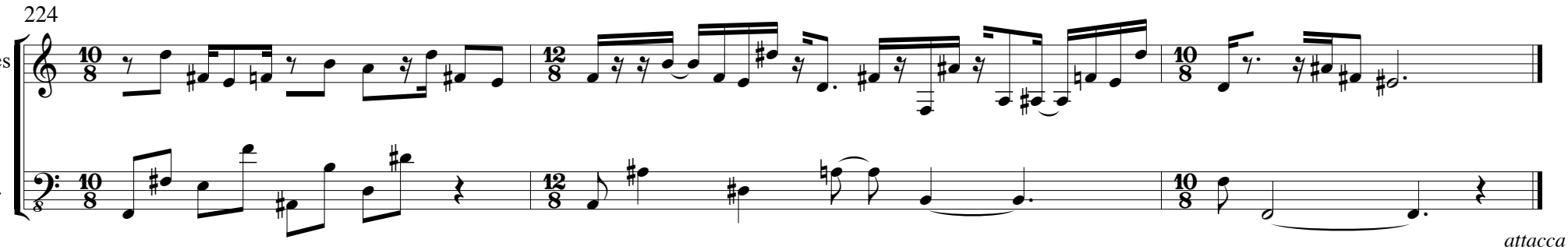

180
182
184
D2
poco a poco dim. al fine
187
191

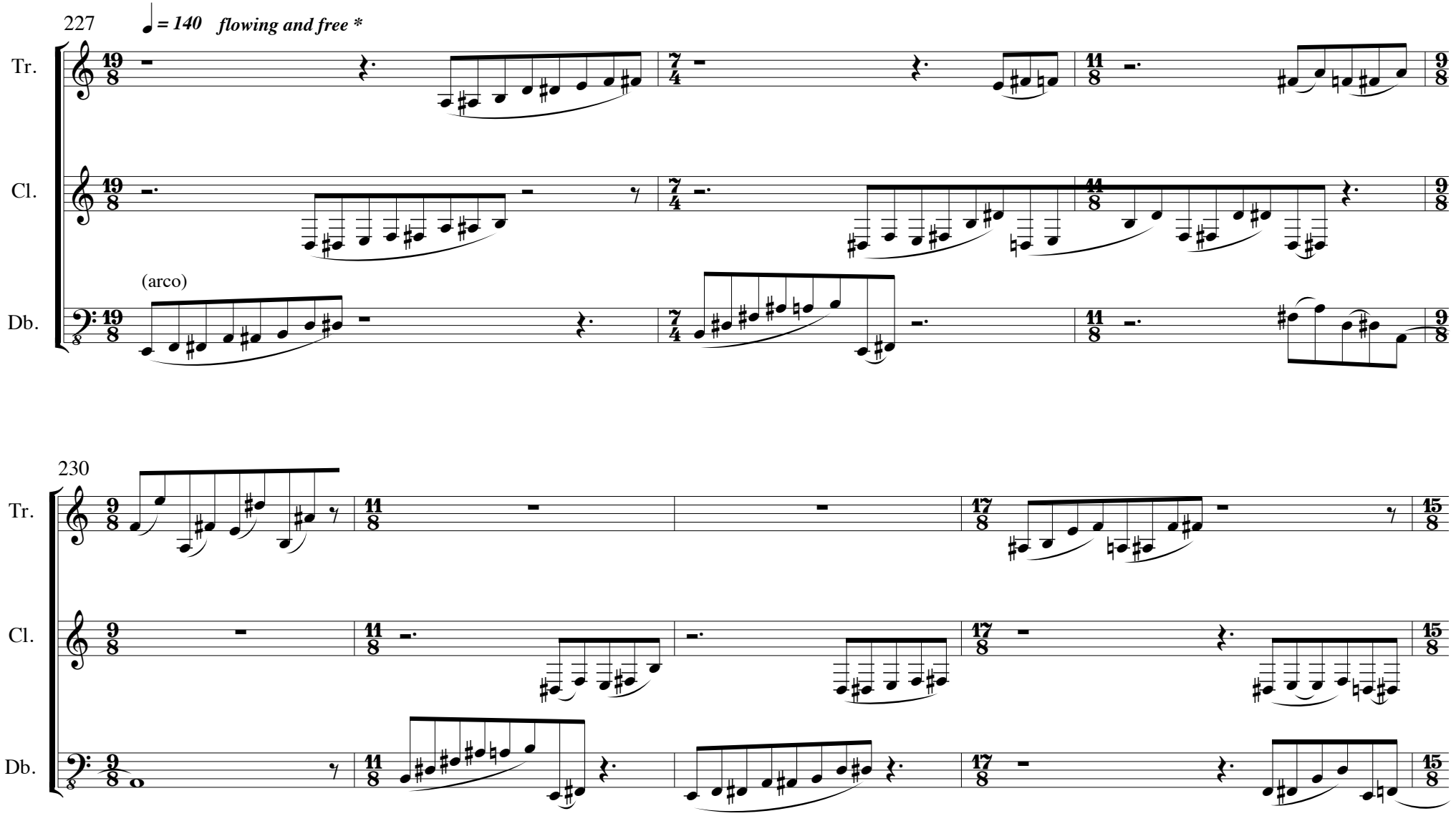
5:13



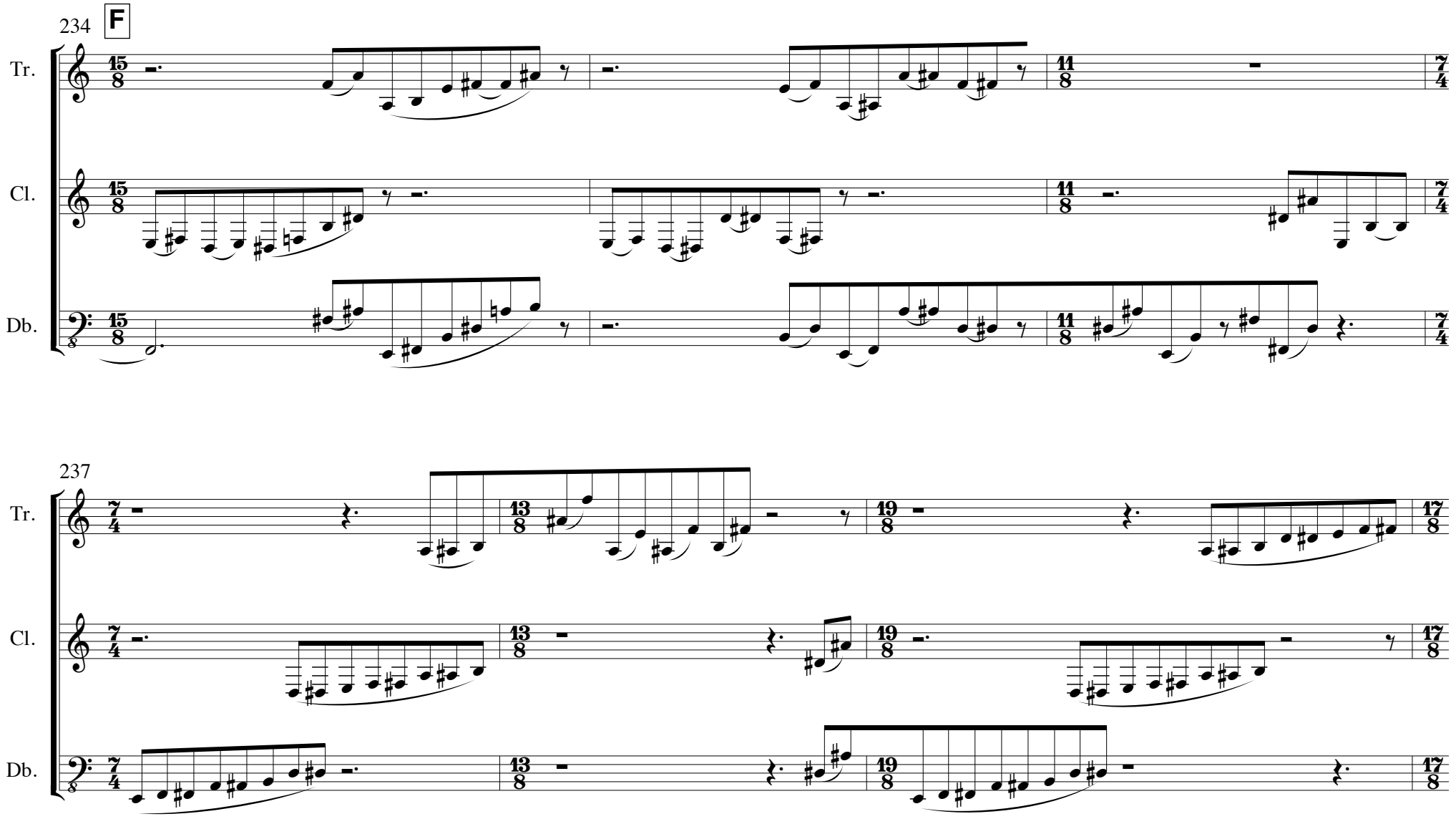

204
Vibes
Db.
206
E1
208

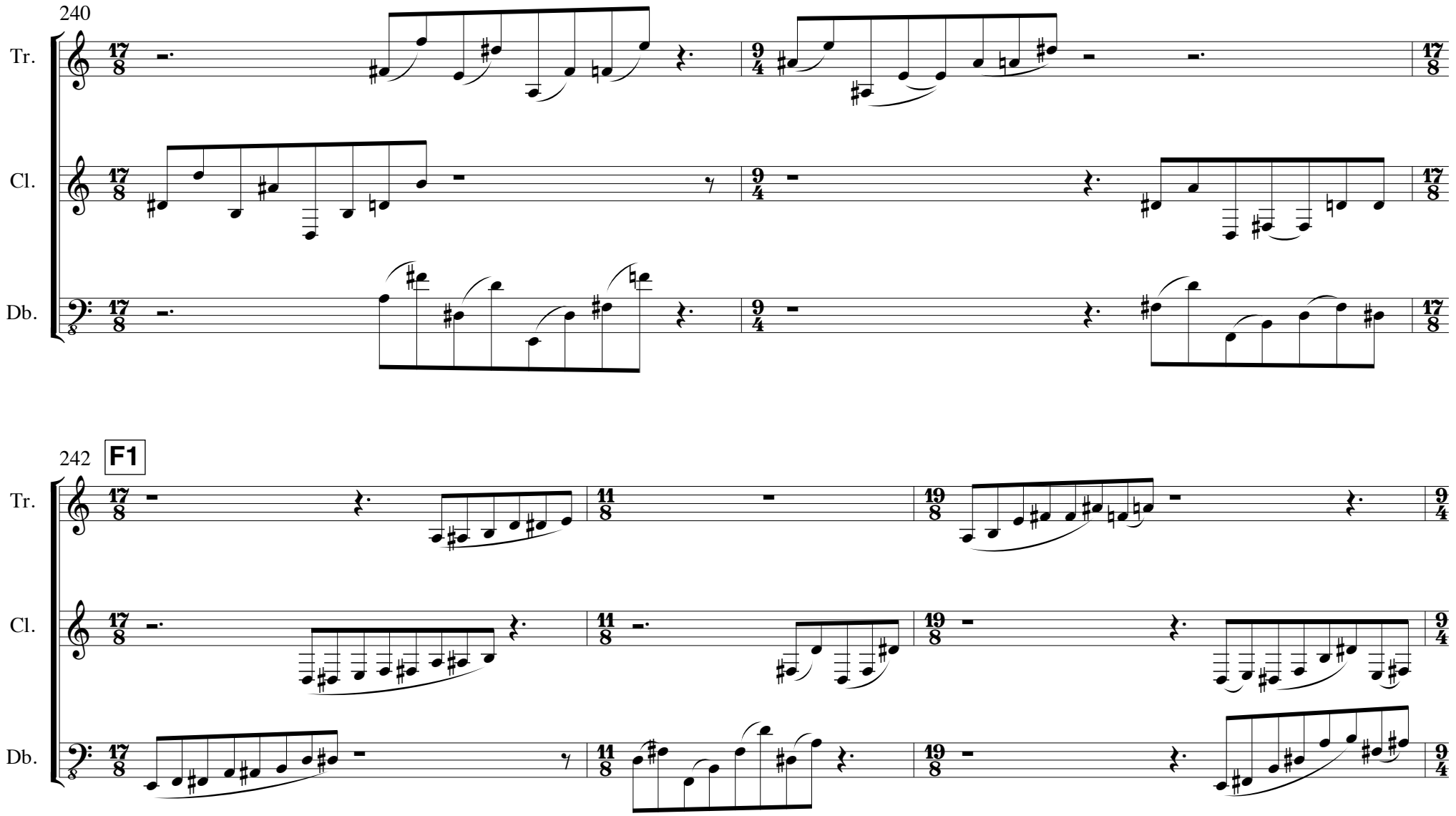

213
E2
Vibes
Db.
216
Vibes
Db.
Ped.
220
E3
Vibes
Db.

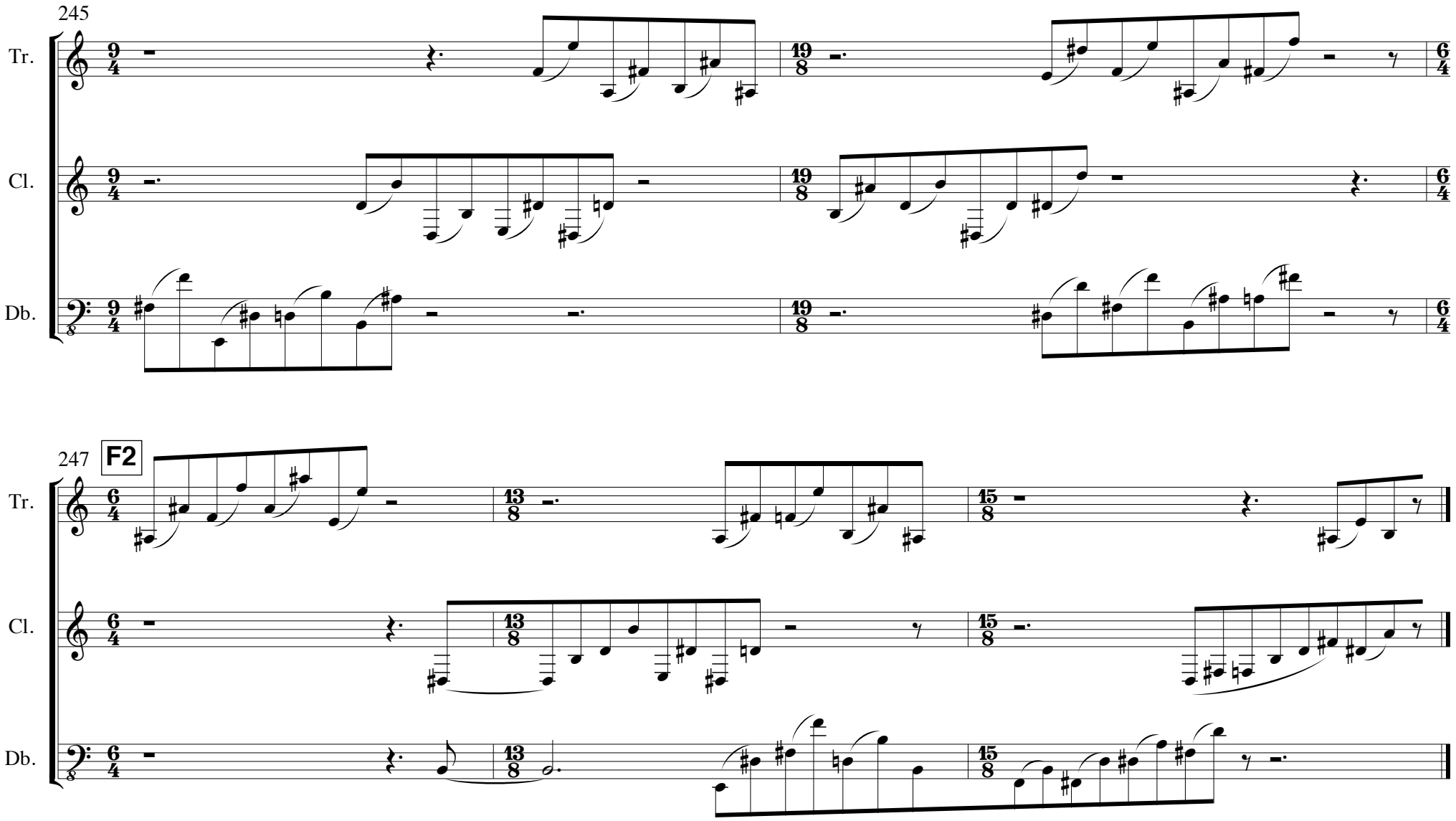

224
Vibes
Db.
attacca

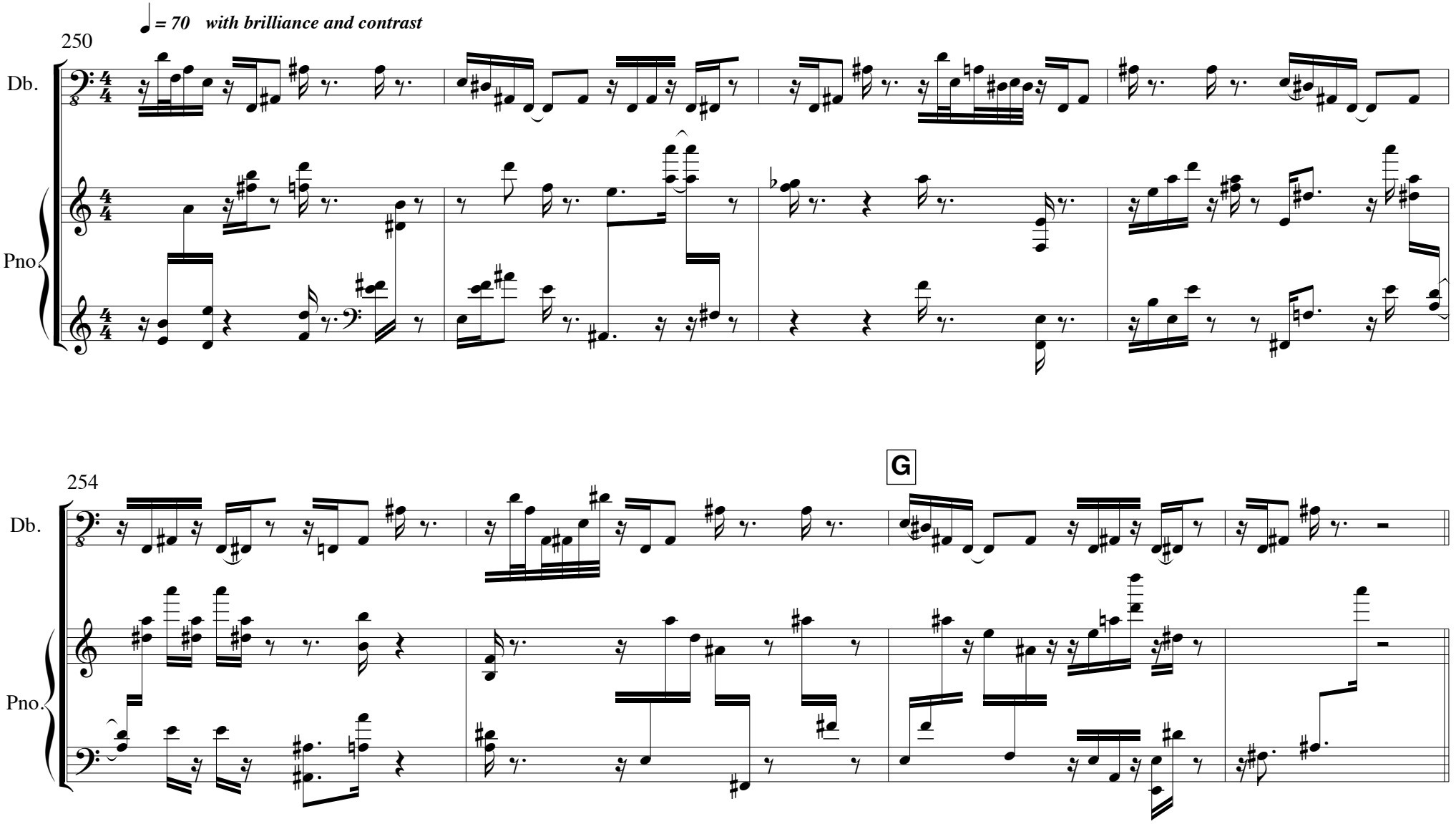


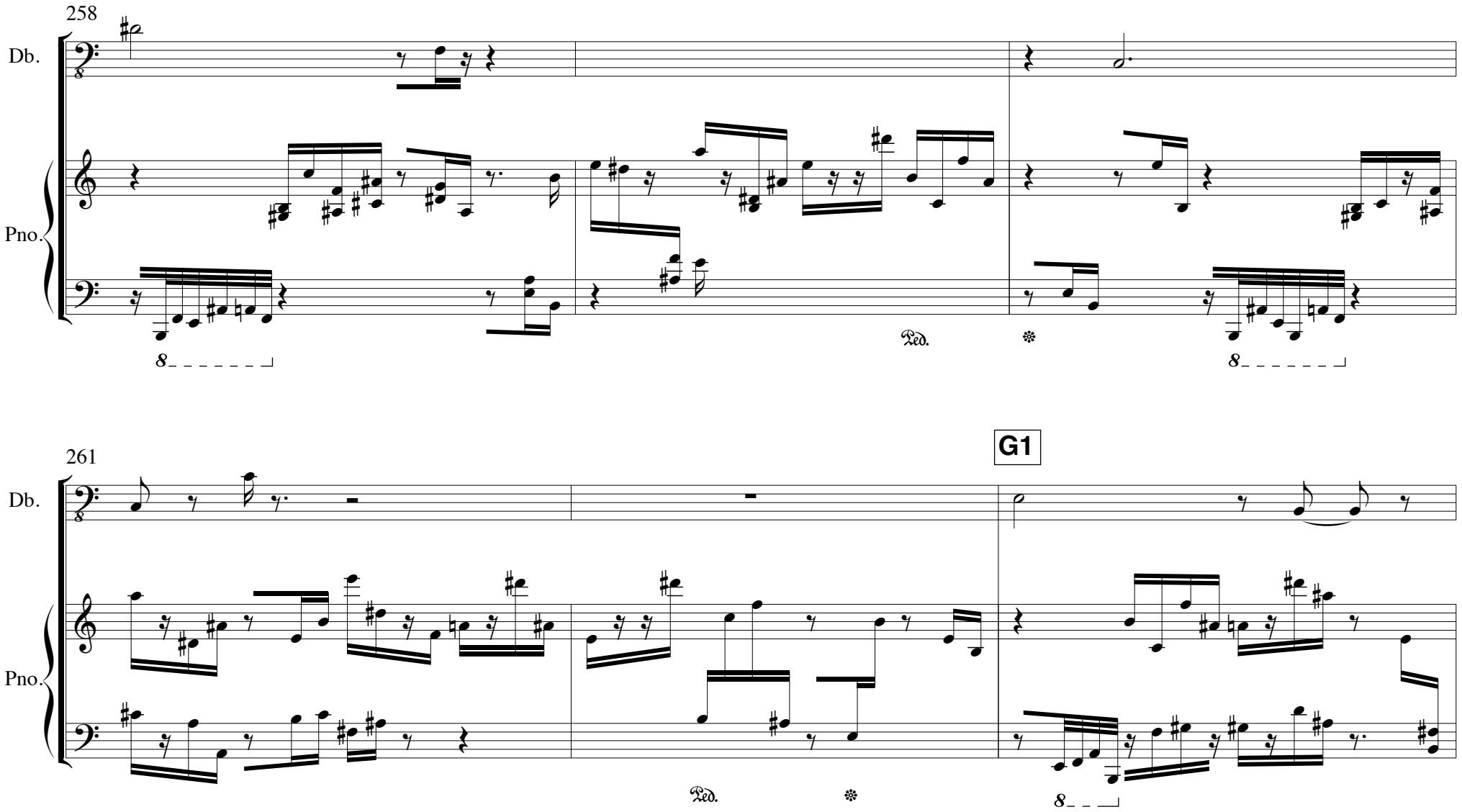
* one of the trio should play beamed sections with rhythm freedom, decided among the players.

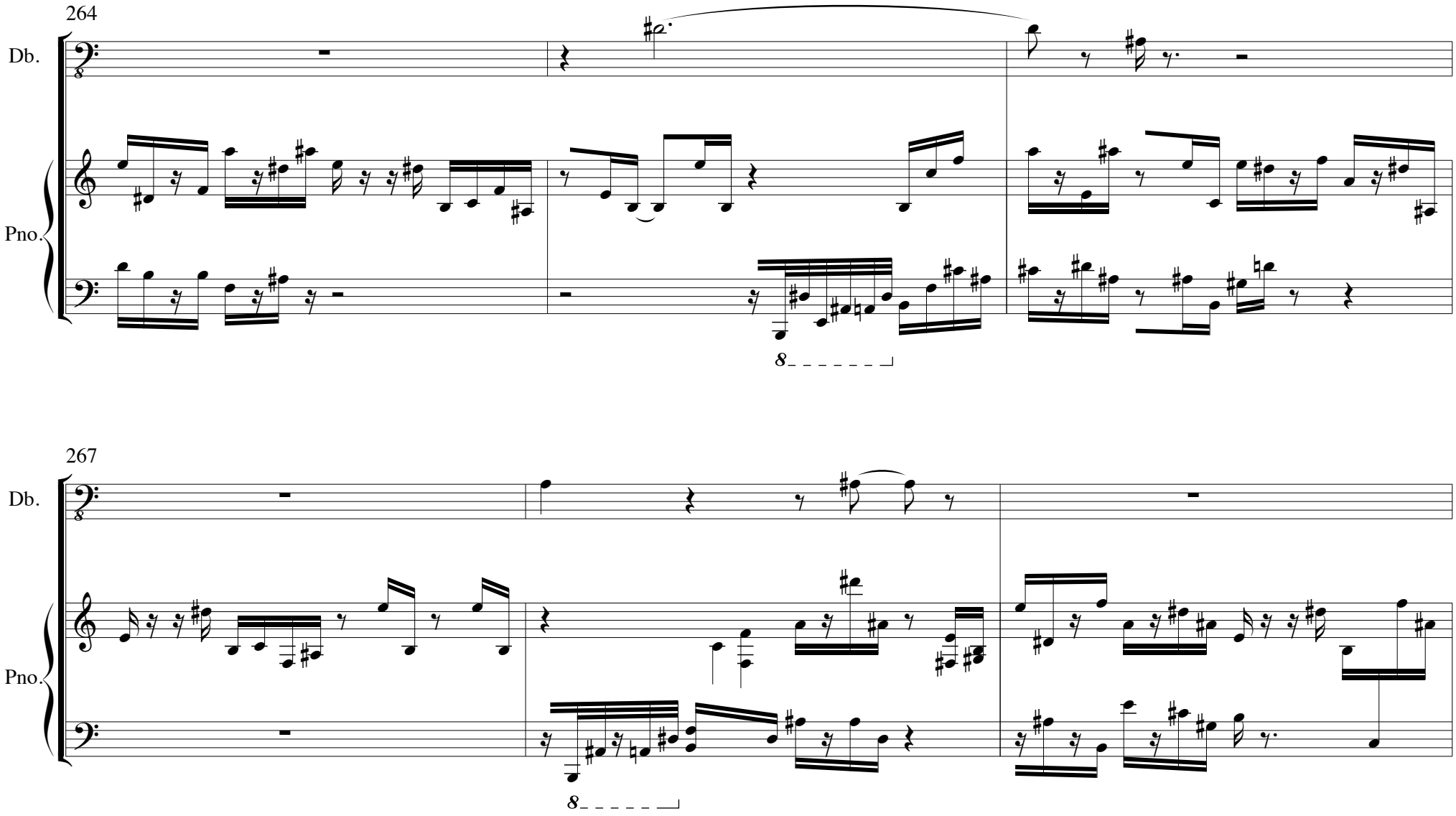

234
F
Tr.
Cl.
Db.
237
Tr.
Cl.
Db.

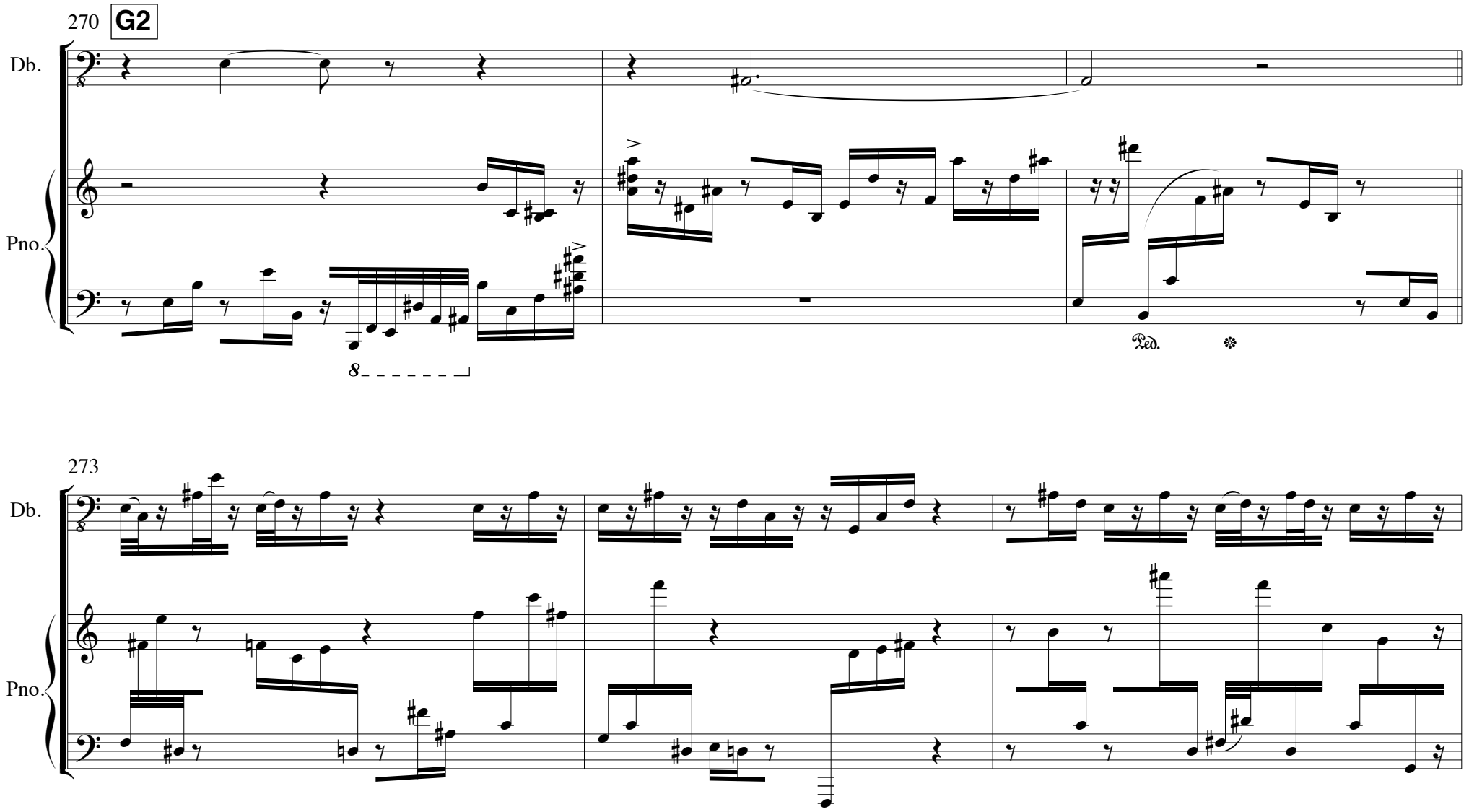

240
Tr.
Cl.
Db.
242
F1
Tr.
Cl.
Db.

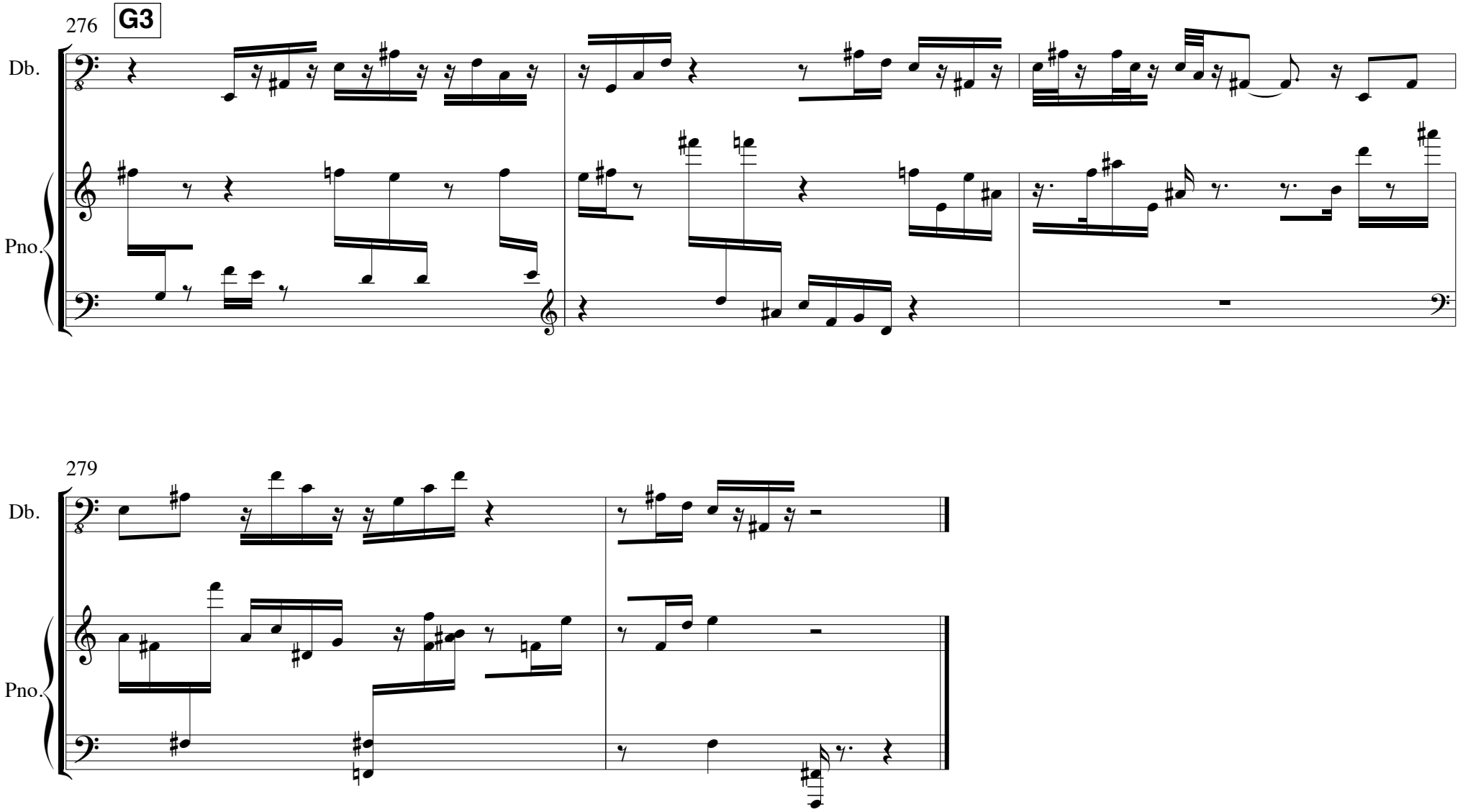

245
Tr.
Cl.
Db.
9/4
19/8
6/4
247
F2
6/4
13/8
15/8


♩ = 70 with brilliance and contrast
250
Db.
Pno.
254
G
Db.
Pno.

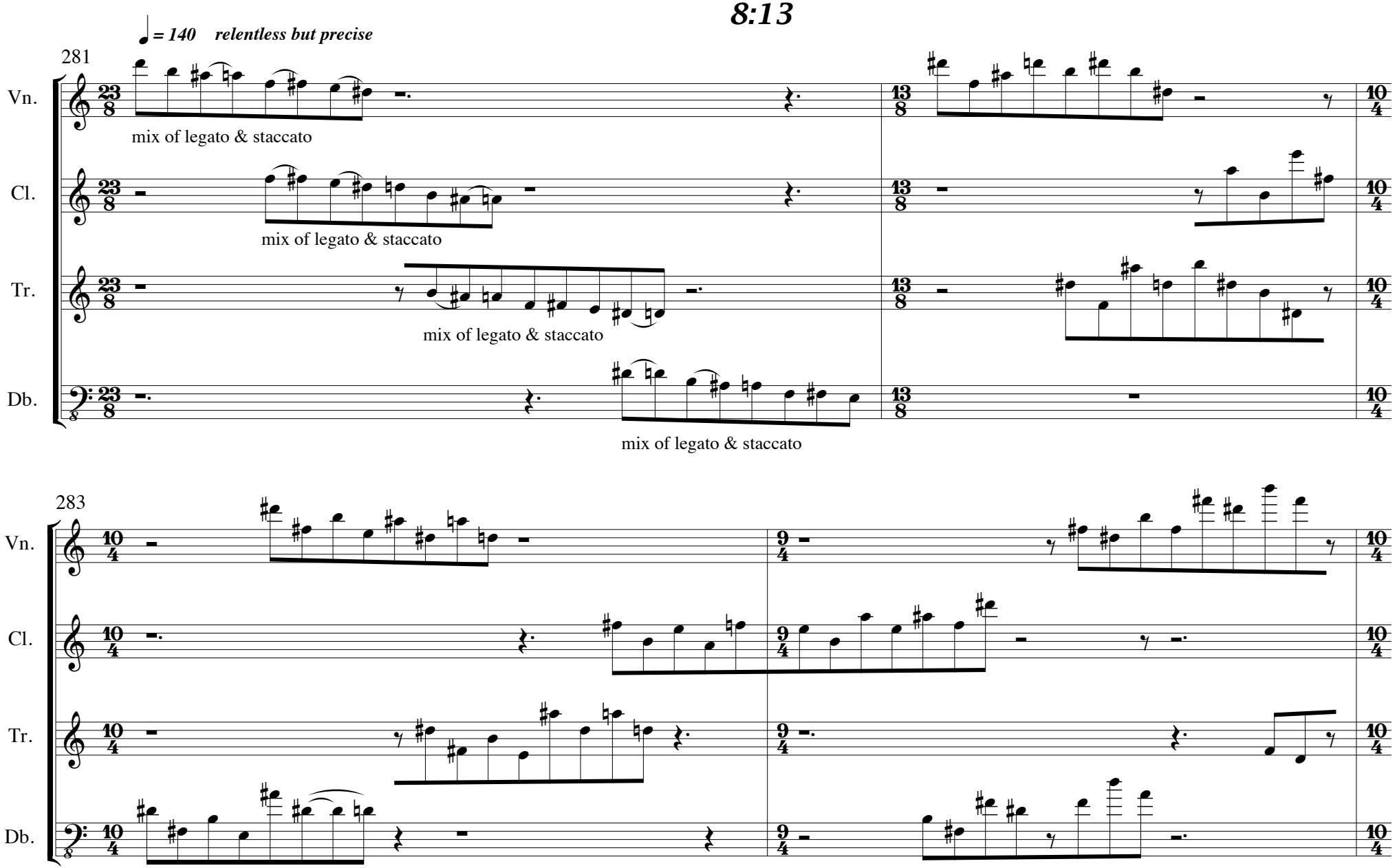

258
Db.
Pno.
Ped.
261
G1
Db.
Pno.
Ped.

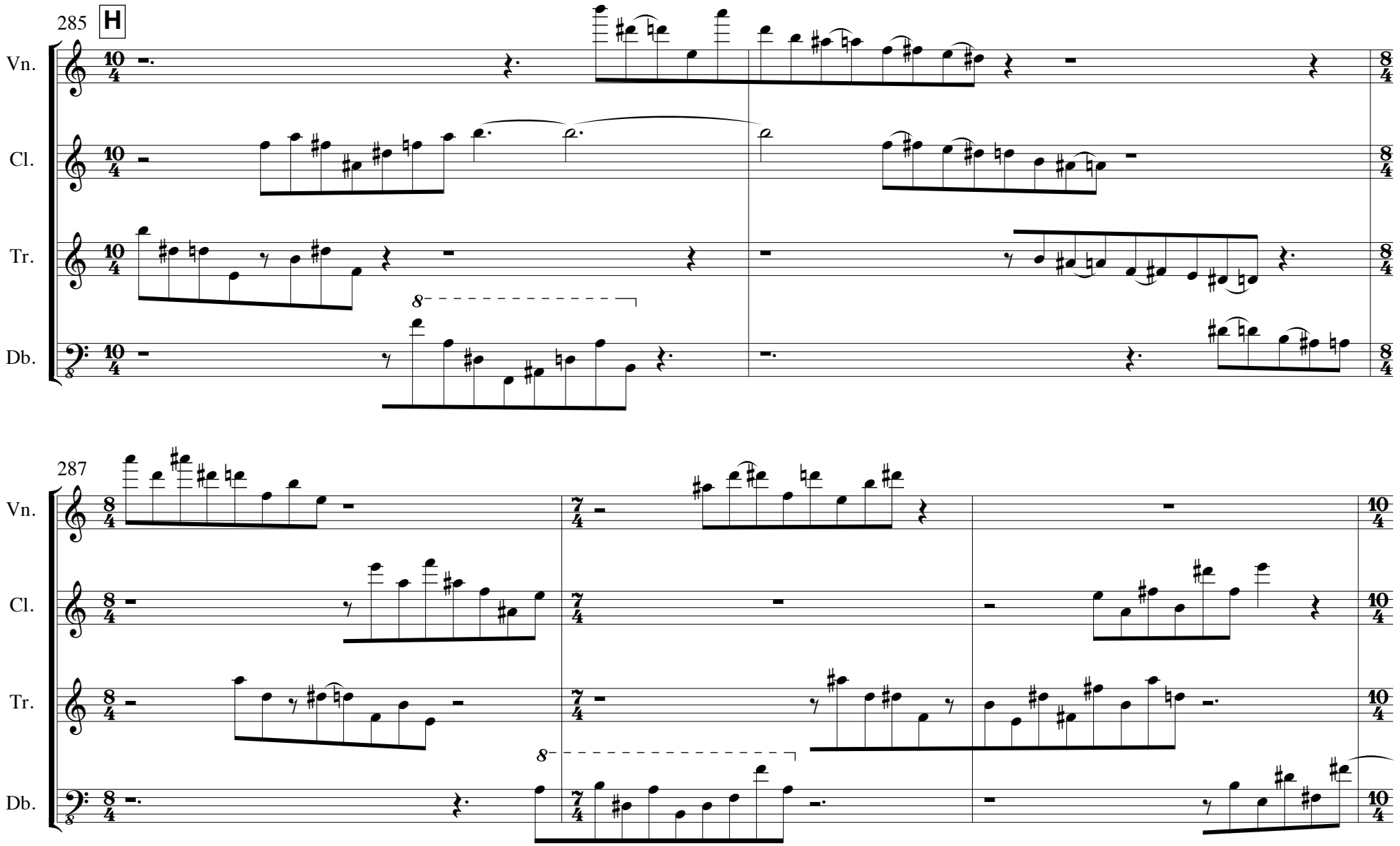

264
Db.
Pno.
8
267
Db.
Pno.
8

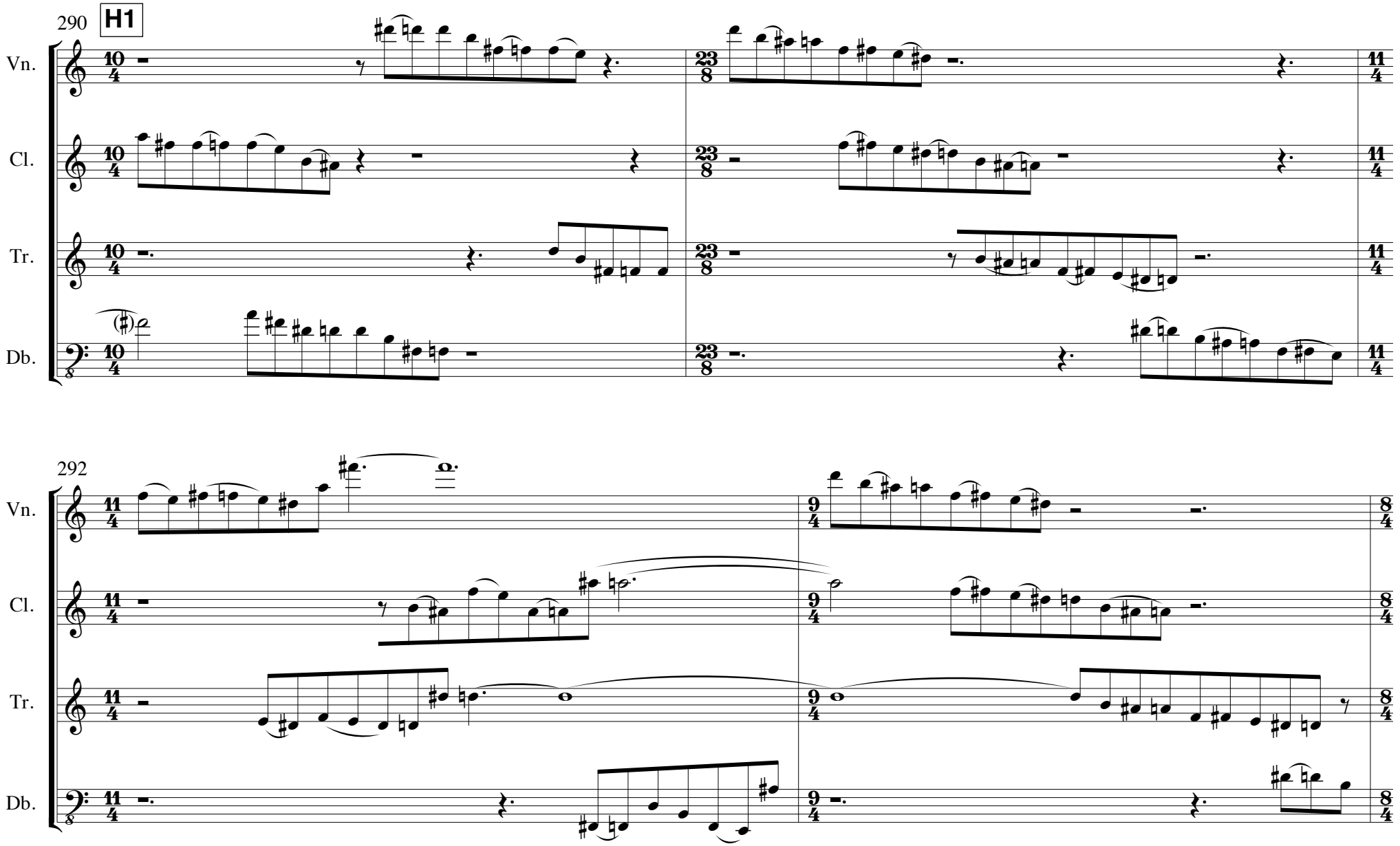

270
G2
Db.
Pno.
8
Ped.
273
Db.
Pno.

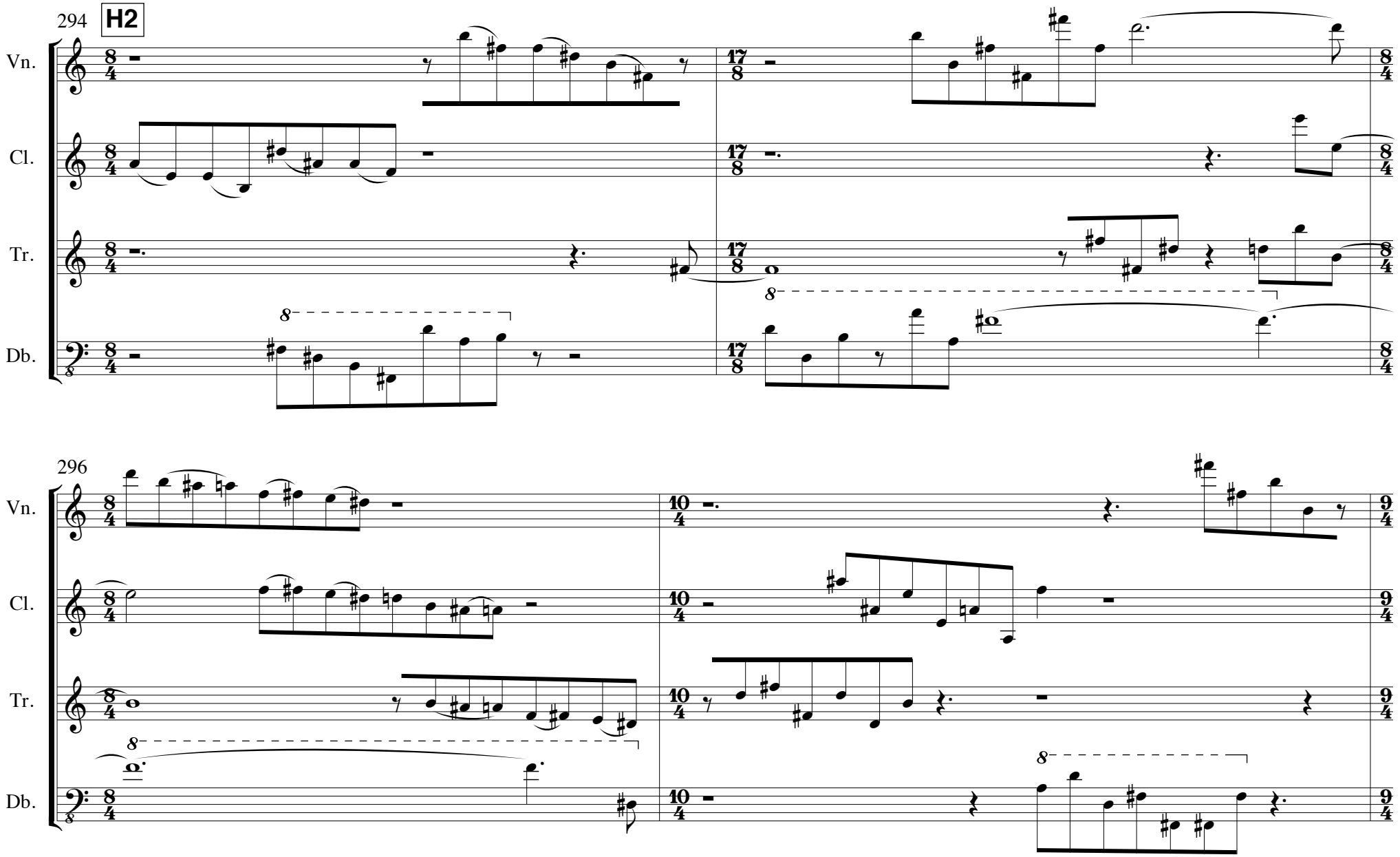

276
G3
Db.
Pno.
279
Db.
Pno.

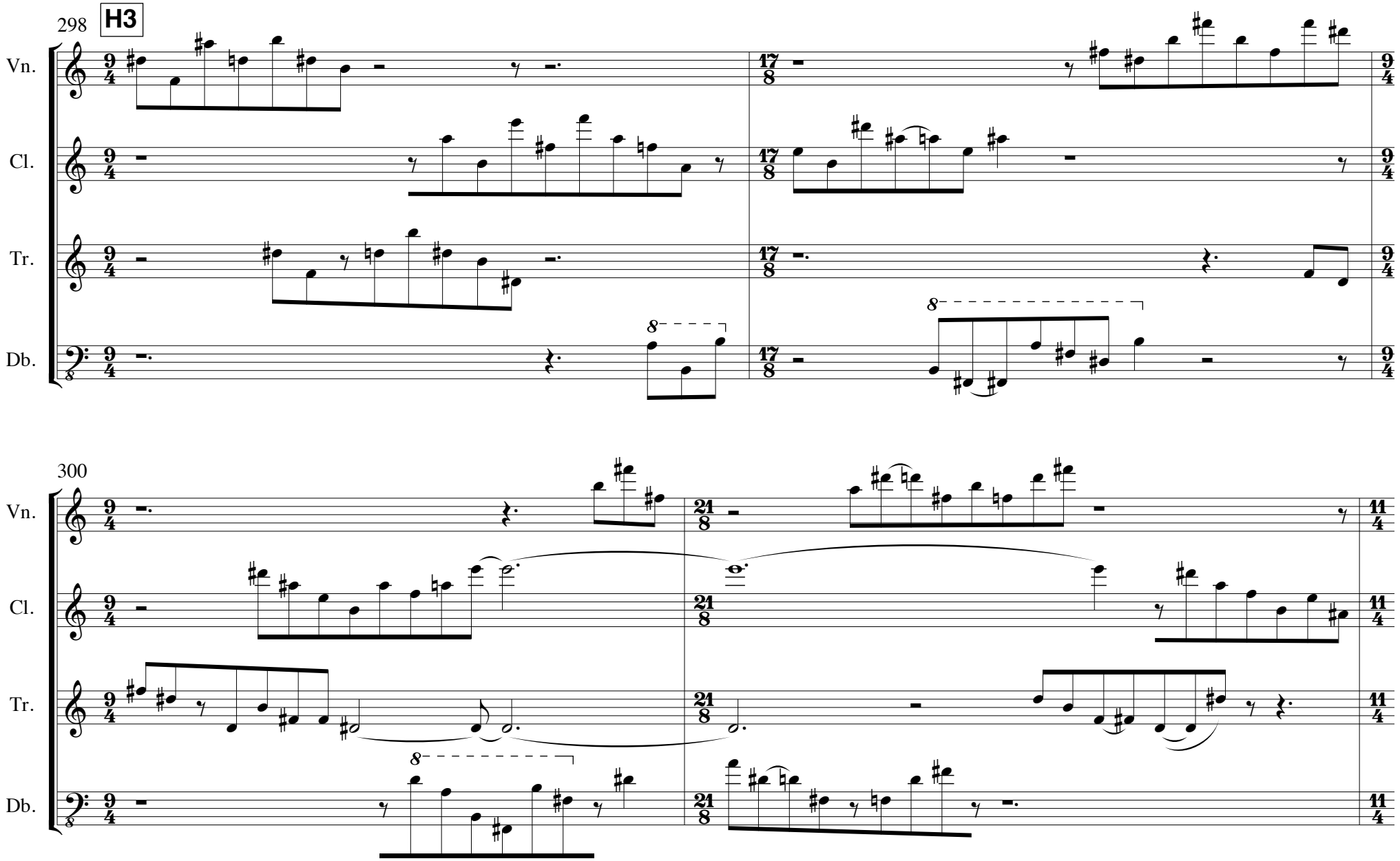
8:13

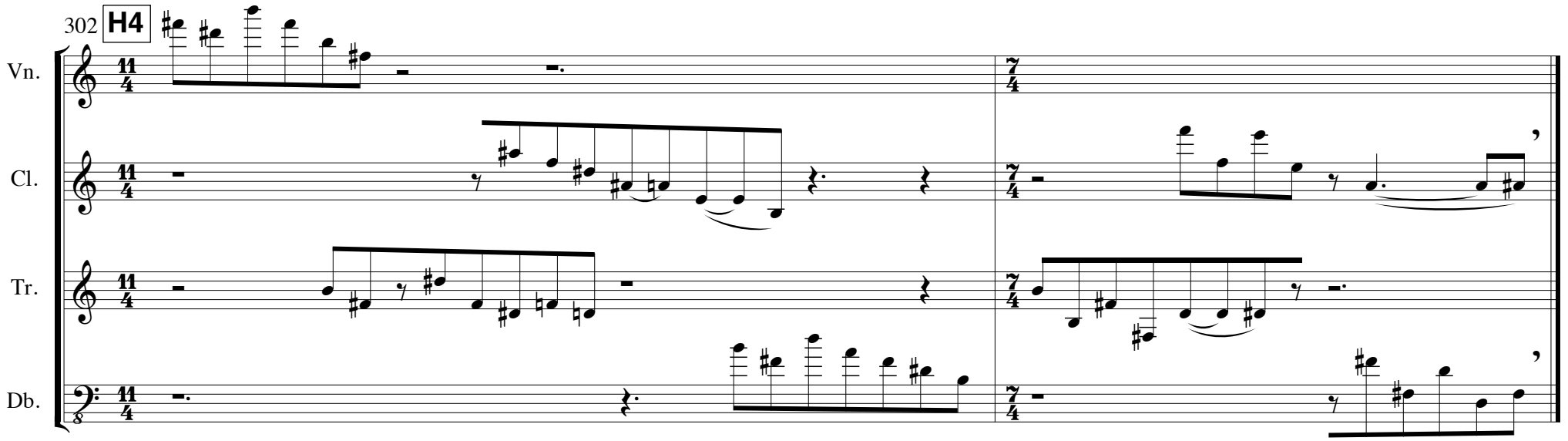

♩ = 140 relentless but precise
281
Vn.
Cl.
Tr.
Db.
mix of legato & staccato
mix of legato & staccato
mix of legato & staccato
mix of legato & staccato
283
Vn.
Cl.
Tr.
Db.

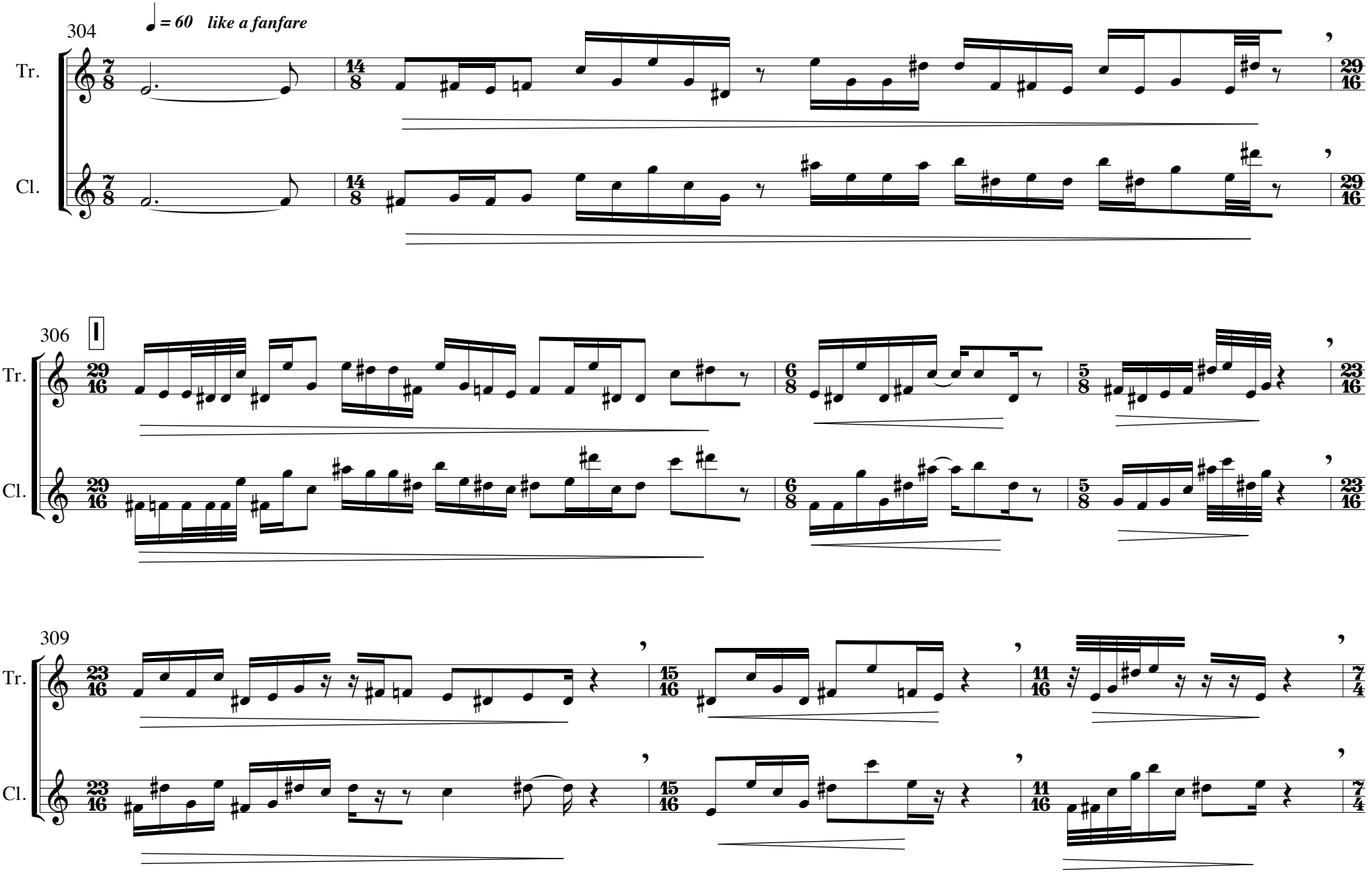

285
H
Vn.
Cl.
Tr.
Db.
287
Vn.
Cl.
Tr.
Db.

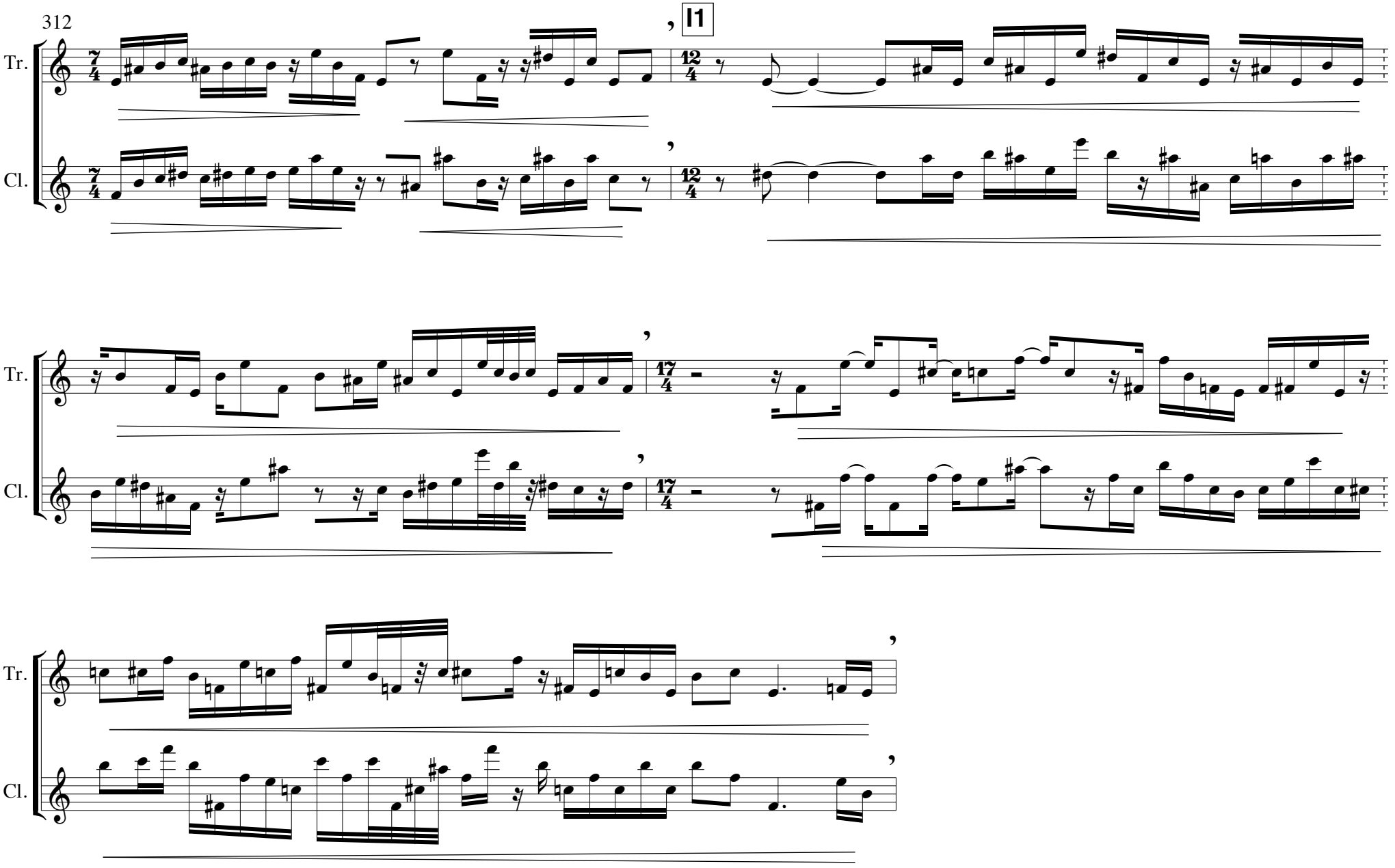

290
H1
Vn.
Cl.
Tr.
Db.
292
Vn.
Cl.
Tr.
Db.

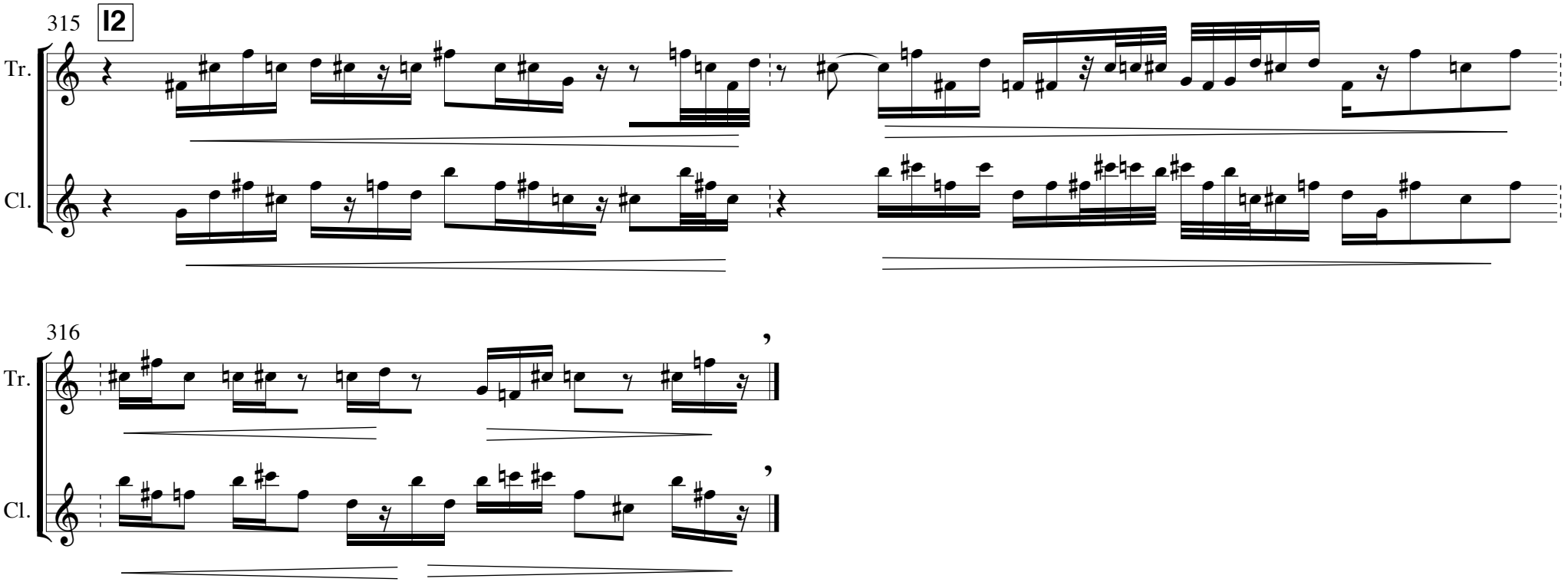

294
H2
Vn.
Cl.
Tr.
Db.
296
Vn.
Cl.
Tr.
Db.


298
H3
Vn.
Cl.
Tr.
Db.
300
Vn.
Cl.
Tr.
Db.


302
H4
Vn.
Cl.
Tr.
Db.


304
♩ = 60 like a fanfare
Tr.
Cl.
306
I
Tr.
Cl.
309
Tr.
Cl.


312
I1
Tr.
Cl.
7/4
12/4
17/4


315
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316
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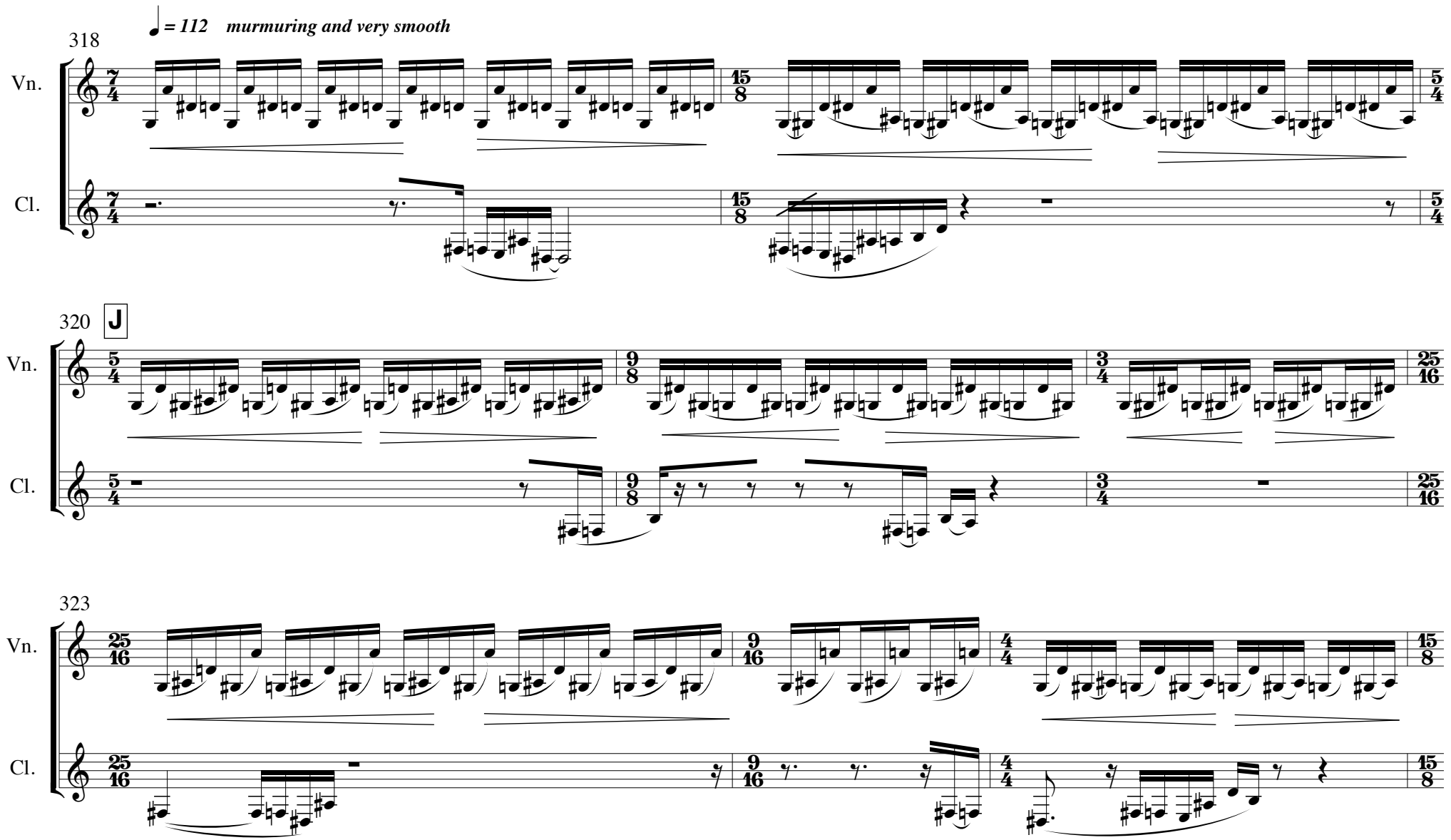
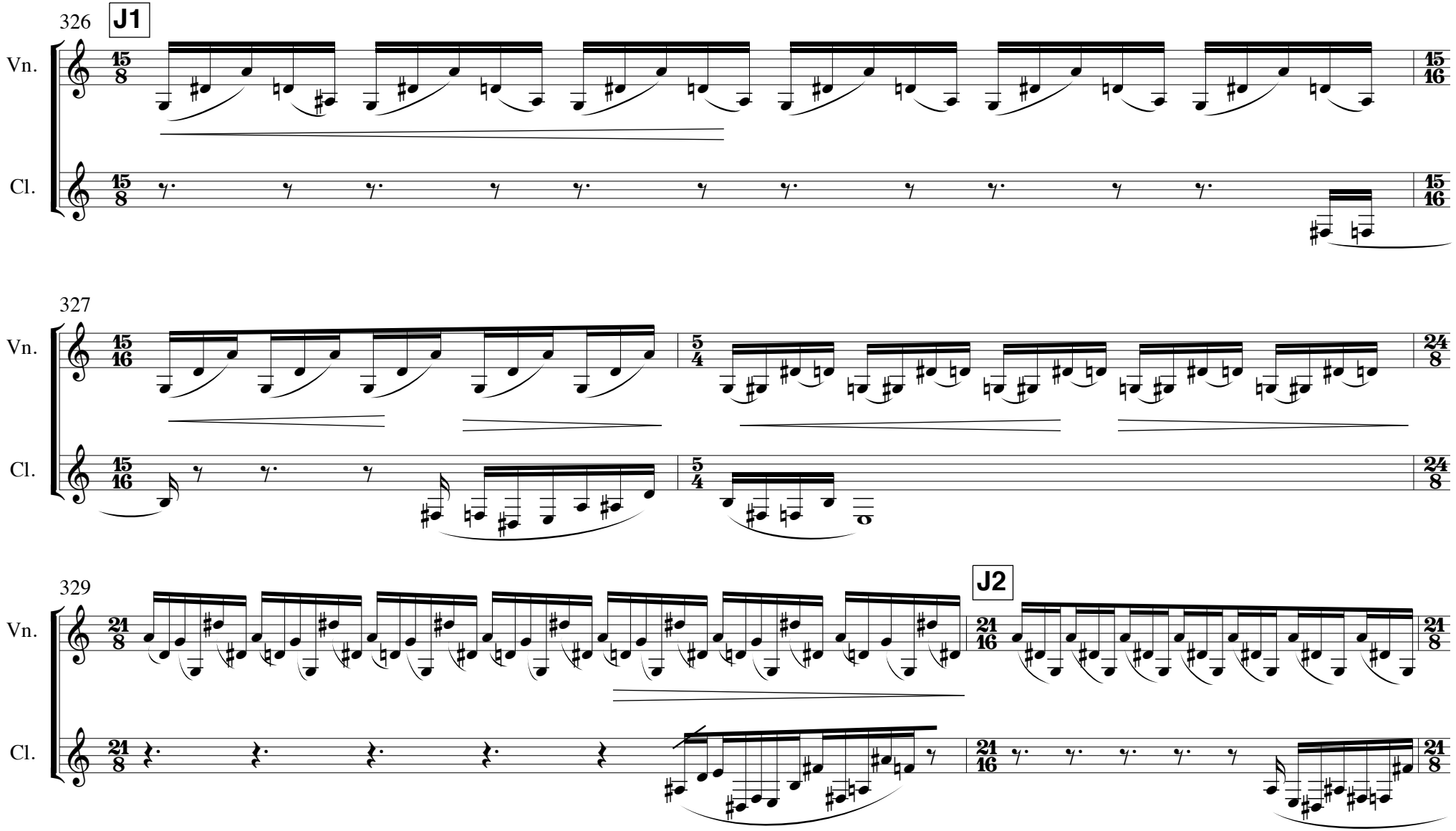
Cl.

10:13




326
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327
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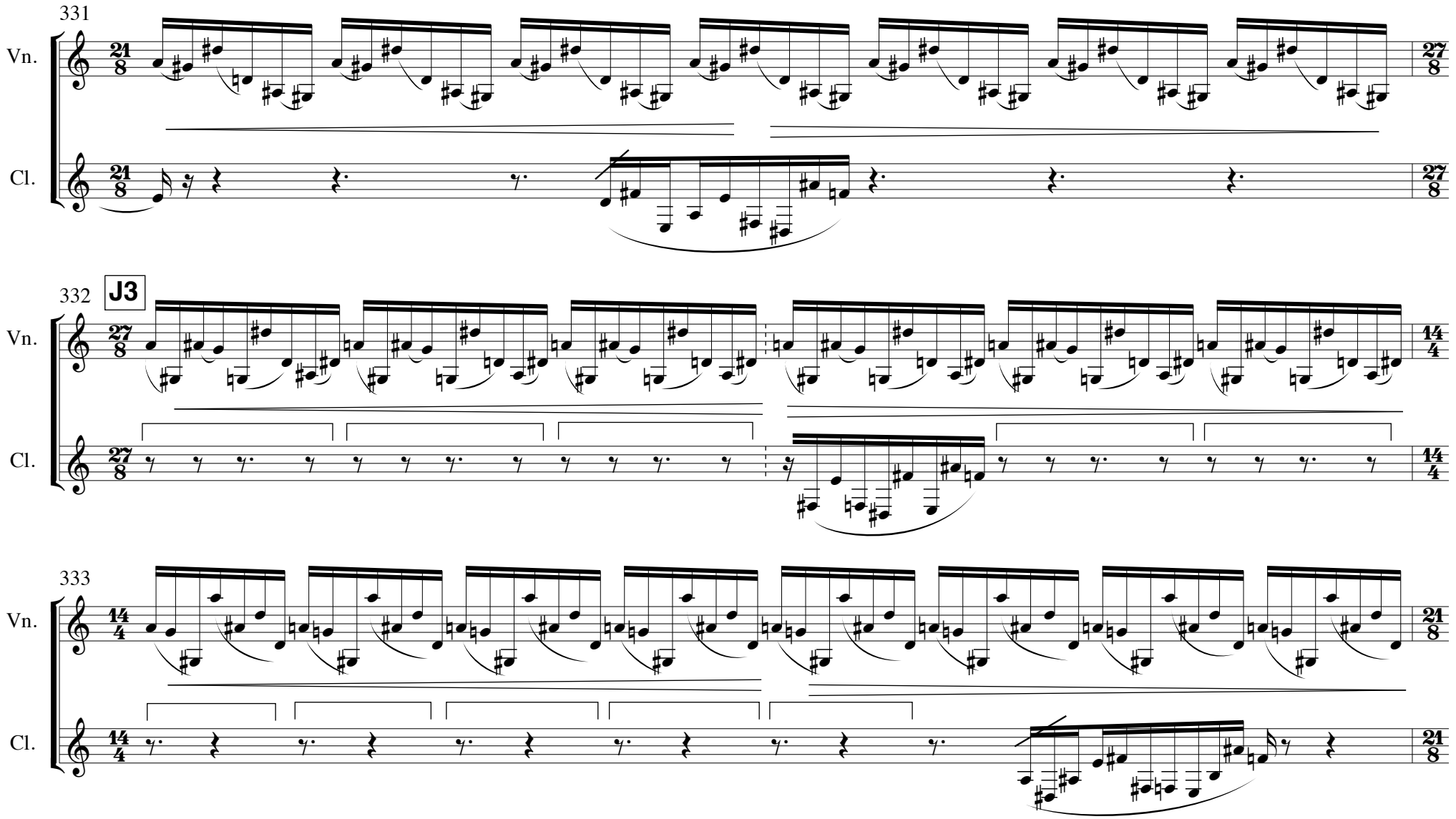
Cl.
329
J2
Vn.
Cl.


331
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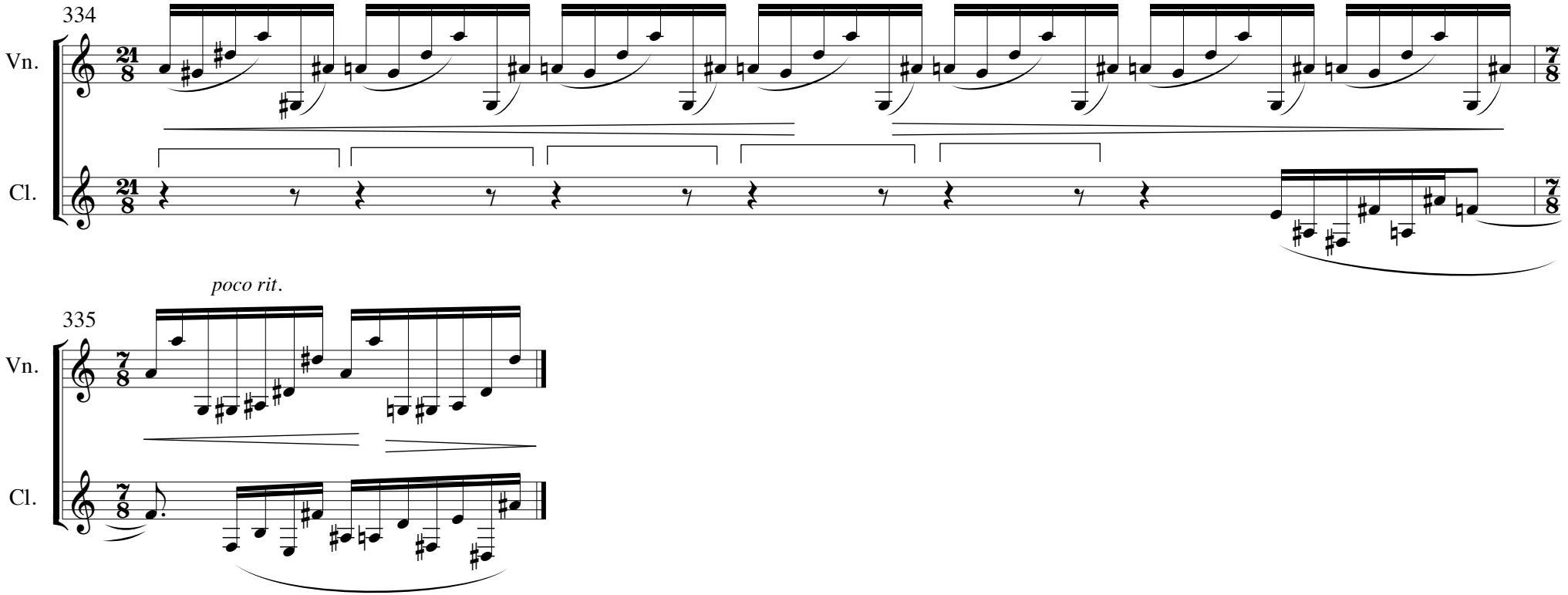
21/8
27/8
332
J3
14/4
333


334
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