YITZHAK YEDID
MOTHER TONGUE

Inspired by Jenna Richards
for viola duo

Pic by Dani Ehrlich

2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Yitzhak Yedid is adjunct A/Professor at WAAPA, ECU

Mother Tongue, for Viola Duo, is a work that deals with the feeling of people whose Mother Tongue was subject to linguicide (language killing). The loss of a language is the death of a tradition and cultural heritage, and a world without traditions is like a tree without its roots.

Linguist Professor Ghi'ad Zuckermann writes that in Australia "Out of 330 Aboriginal languages, only 13 are alive and kicking today." And "Since colonisation, Indigenous Australian people have suffered the effects of wide-scale linguicide".

In writing this piece I was inspired in particular by Jenna Richards, who is a Barngarla Aboriginal woman of Port Lincoln, South Australia. Jenna is involved in a reclamation project reviving her stolen mother tongue. Jenna writes: "It is a story about my grandmother's mother tongue that was being stolen from her family through acts of genocide and linguicide and how now, that I am a mother myself, I alongside my community working towards reclaiming the language that was once considered sleeping". Jenna is bringing back her stolen mother tongue to her children so that they can keep it alive and surviving for future generations.

My three main motivations to compose Mother Tongue are: Ethical, Aesthetic and Utilitarian. In Ethical, I refer to the importance of collaborating with people who struggle to reclaim their linguicided mother tongue. I feel that my music could support the idea of righting the wrong of the past. In Aesthetic, I refer to the beauty of ancient languages and that our world would be a better place with diversity rather than with monolingual mindset. In Utilitarian, I refer to the fact that when people reclaim their heritage tongue, it improves their wellbeing as they feel empowered when reconnecting with their spirituality, cultural autonomy and intellectual sovereignty.

Mother Tongue is a personal musical response and in no way represents an Aboriginal perspective. This writing was approved by Jenna Richards from the Barngarla Language Advisory Committee (BLAC).

Mother Tongue has five parts:

Warna Yoolalyidi (Grieving, signs belly)
Ngaidyara (Hunting Party)
Ngaldi Ngoodarridhi (Grieving, Broken Liver)
Noornigidi (To Break the Neck of an Animal)
Warna Gooridi (Belly Turning Around, Out of Rage)

Yitzhak Yedid is an Israeli-born Australian orchestral and chamber-music composer, improvising pianist, researcher and educator. Yedid is a Sidney Myer Creative Fellow (2018-19).

Yedid's music described as: “eclectic, multicultural and very personal style that combines jazz and Jewish cantor music, classic European and avant-garde, randomness and a blend of techniques.” (Davis ‘17). American musicologist **Ronit Seter** wrote **"Yitzhak Yedid**, an Israeli-born Australian composer, amalgamates in his music his ancestral Syrian- and Iraqian-Jewish cantillation, Israeli East-West encounters, European and American avant-garde compositional techniques mixed with free jazz ones, and selected Australian influences, all infused with his insights as a concert pianist and improviser to create an experimental, highly expressive yet alluring modern style. Yedid’s music is therefore multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and consequently, transnational." (2019)

"Over the past couple of decades or so, Yedid has put out an almost bewilderingly eclectic range of works and recordings. His disciplinary backdrop takes in Western classical music, free improvisation, Arabic music and liturgical material. His compositions are generally viscerally and cerebrally engaging, and often visually striking, with the piano- playing role requiring a certain amount of calisthenic activity and a significant dosage of emotional and technical investment.” (Barry ‘17).

His awards include: The 2019 Azrieli Prize, the Israel Prime Minister’s Prize for Composers (’07) and the Landau Prize for Performing Arts (09). In 2008 he was awarded first composition prize at the 17th International Harp competition. In 2009 his poly-stylistic composition Oud Bass Piano Trio was nominated for Germany’s Echo Award. Yedid was awarded a composer-in-residence position at the Judith Wright Centre (Brisbane, ’10).

Twelve CDs of Yedid’s compositions have been released by prestigious international publishers and distributers including Challenge Records International, Sony, Naxos, -btl-, Muse, MCI and Kaleidos.

to Stefanie Farrands

MOTHER TONGUE

VIOLA DUO

(2019)

שפת אם

לצמד ויולנים

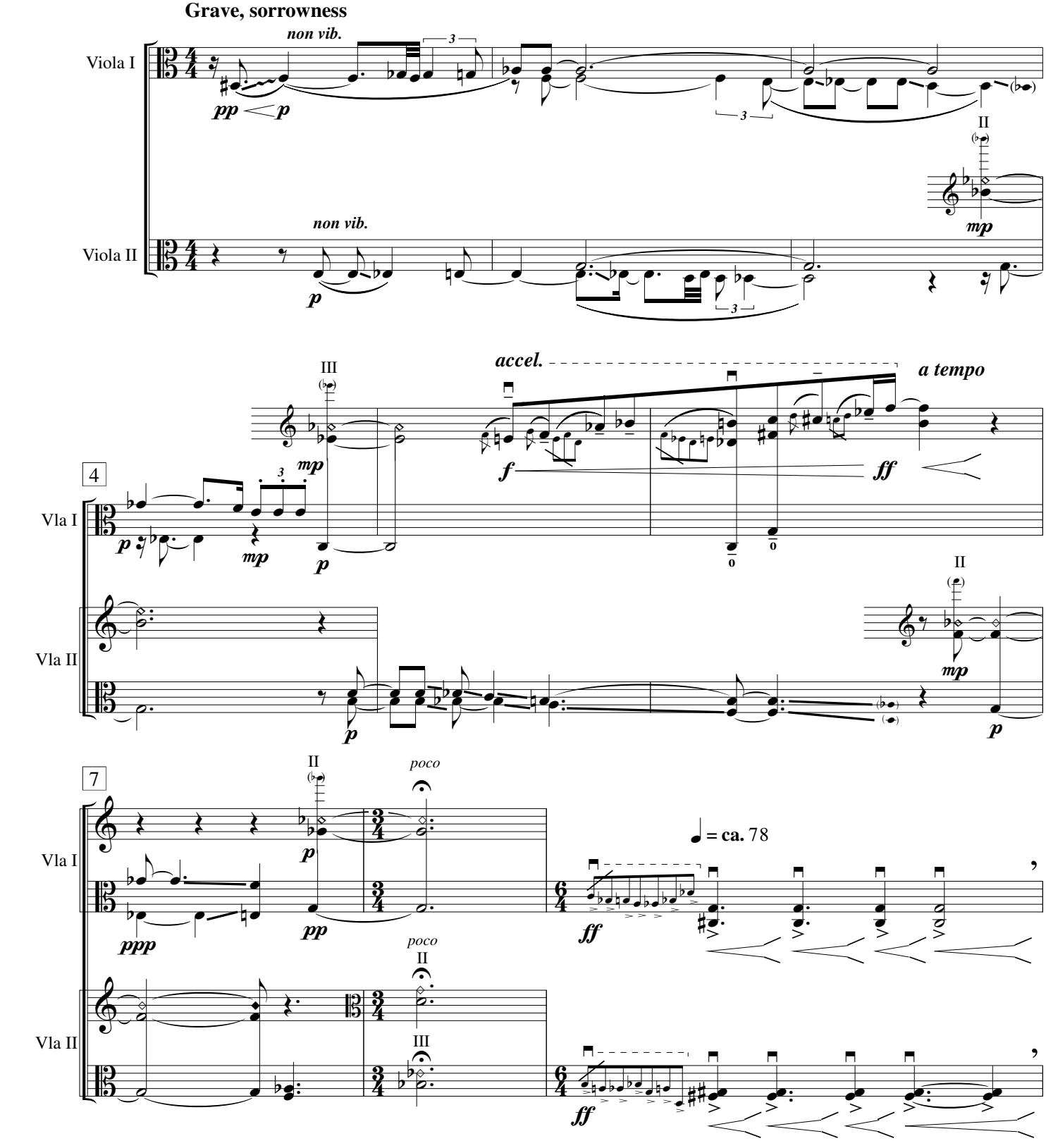
I

WARNA YOOLALYIDI

GRIEVING (SIGNS BELLY)

יצחק ידיד

YITZHAK YEDID



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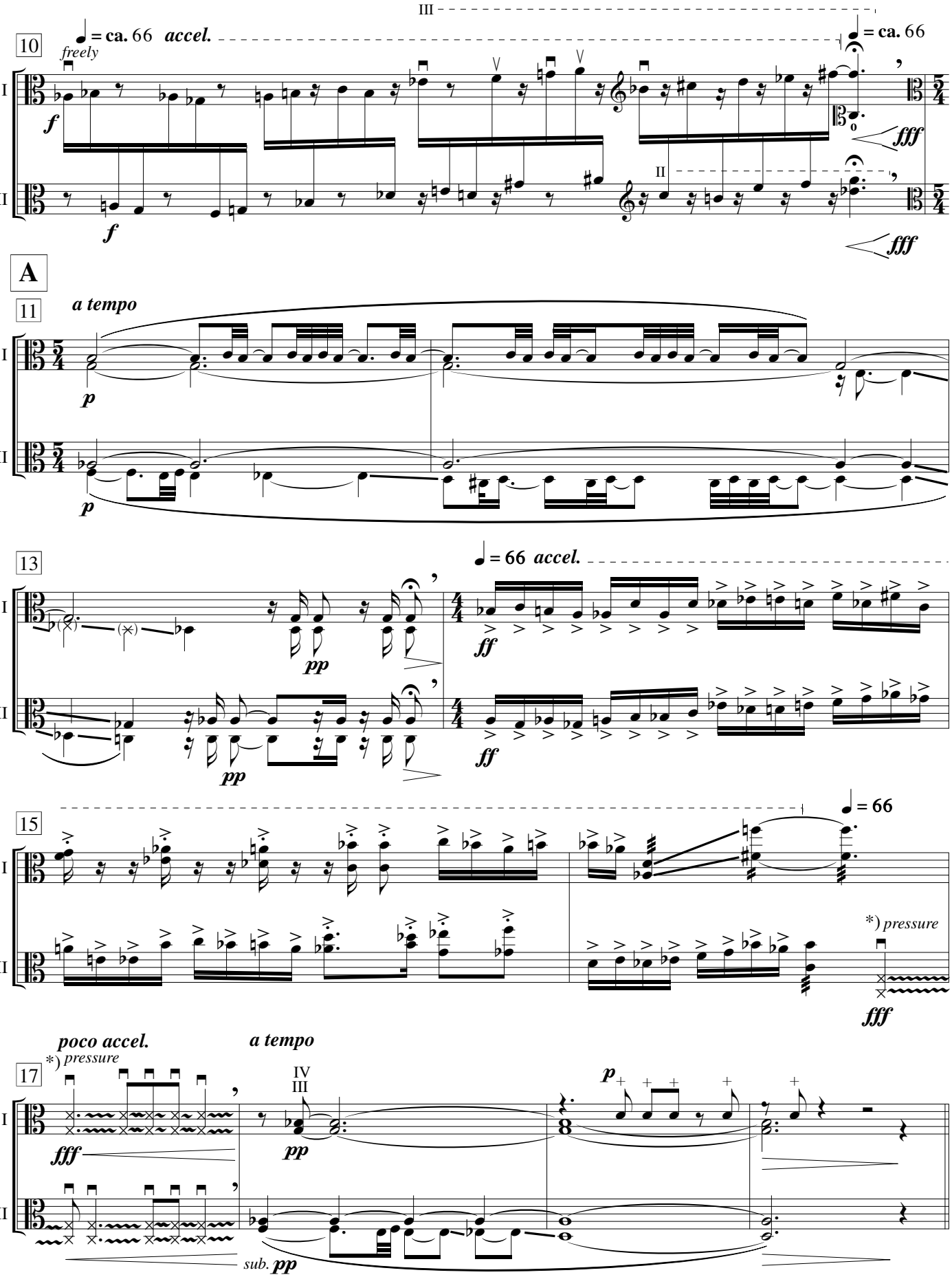


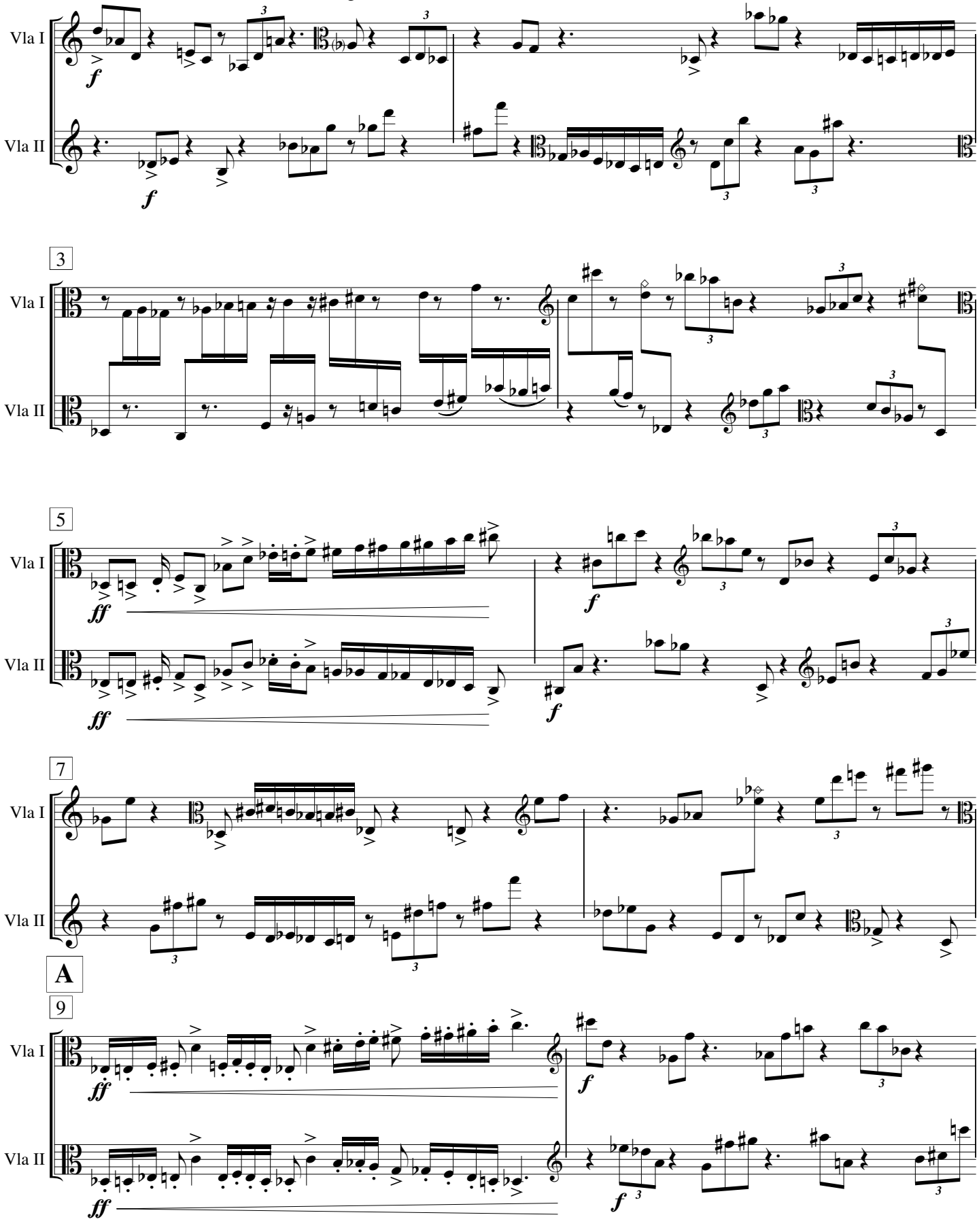
* Pressure on the strings behinde the bridge.

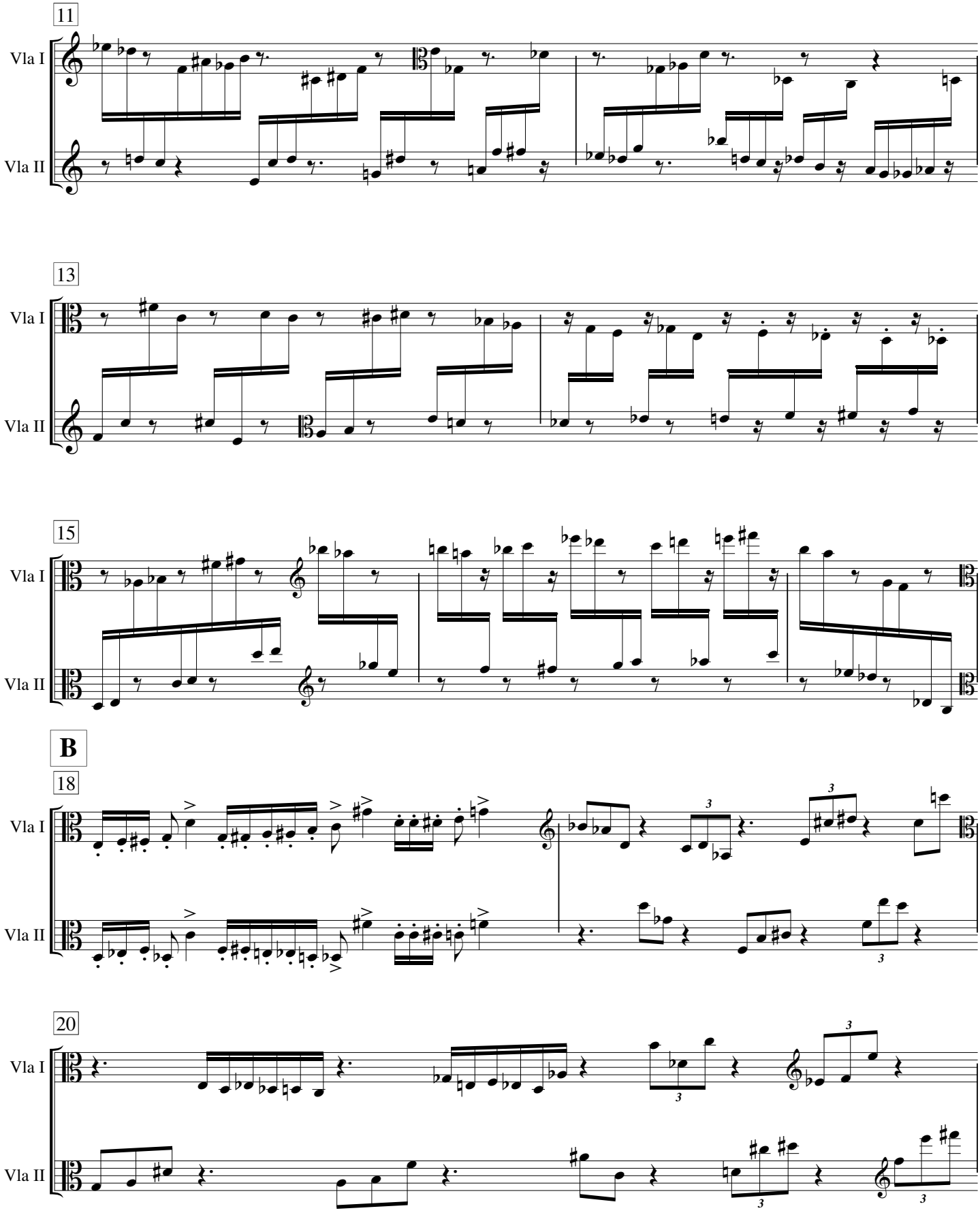
II

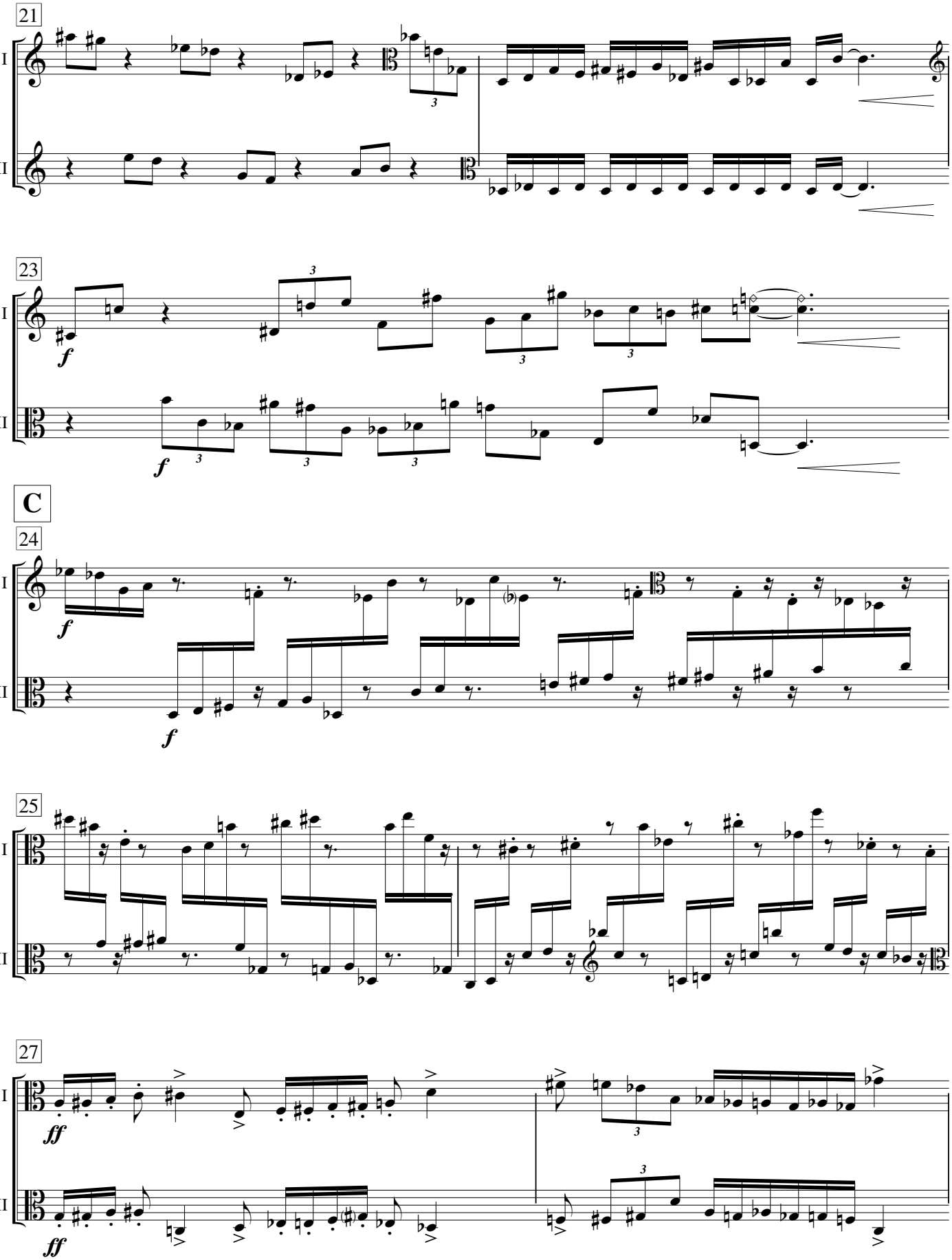
NGAIDYARA

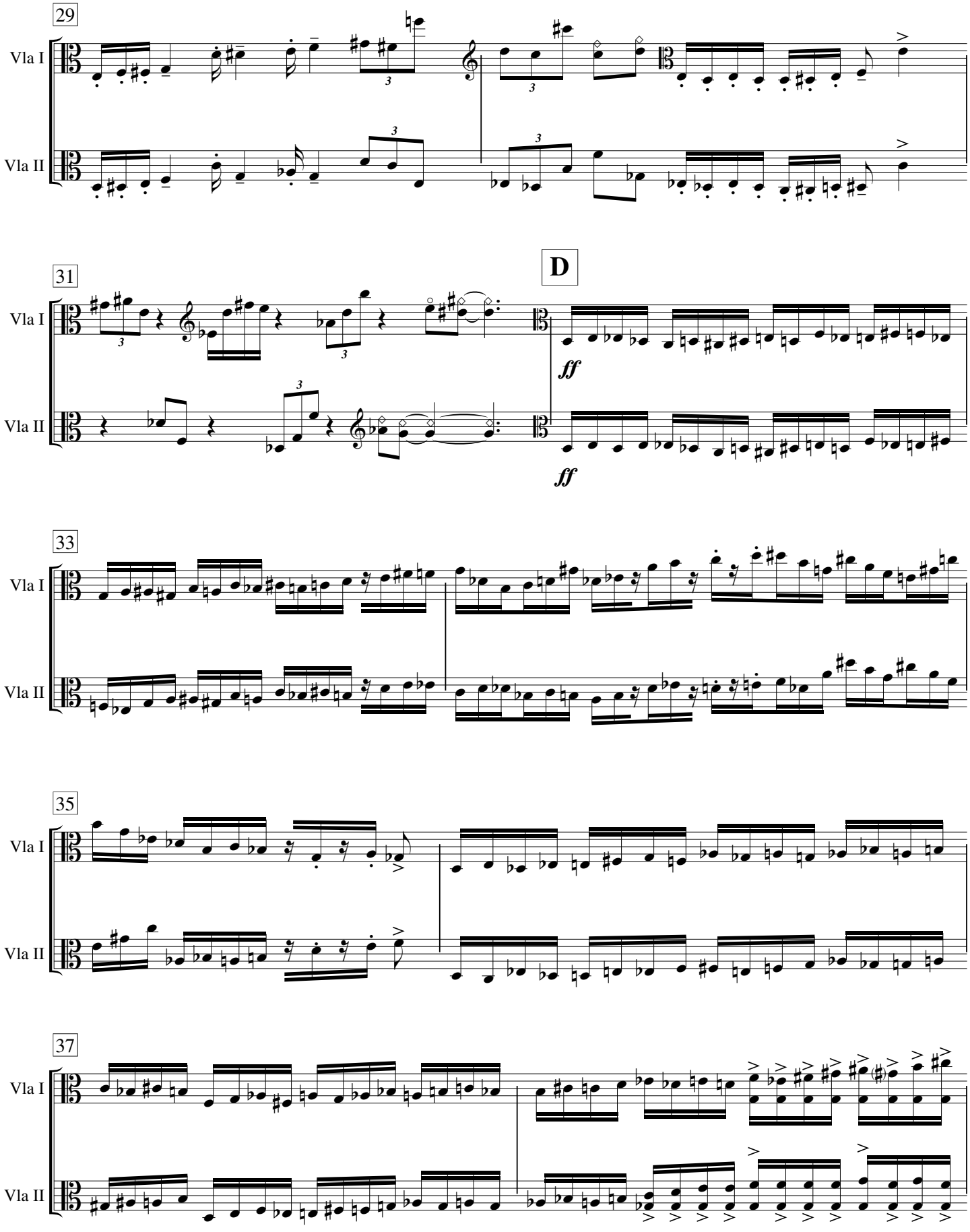
HUNTING PARTY

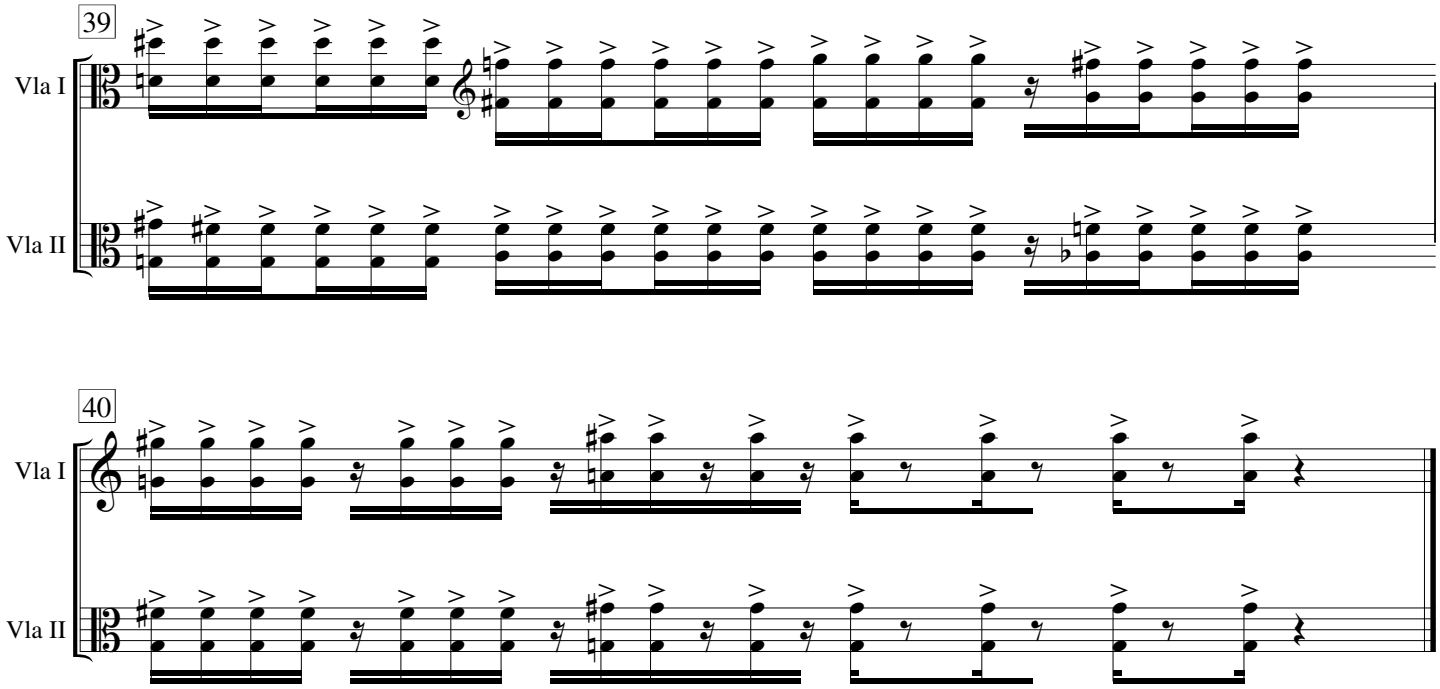
Vivacissimo staccatissimo ♩. = 160 or faster




11
Vla I
Vla II
13
Vla I
Vla II
15
Vla I
Vla II
B
18
Vla I
Vla II
20
Vla I
Vla II


21
Vla I
Vla II
23
Vla I
Vla II
C
24
Vla I
Vla II
25
Vla I
Vla II
27
Vla I
Vla II


29
Vla I
Vla II
31
D
ff
ff
33
35
37


39
Vla I
Vla II

40
Vla I
Vla II

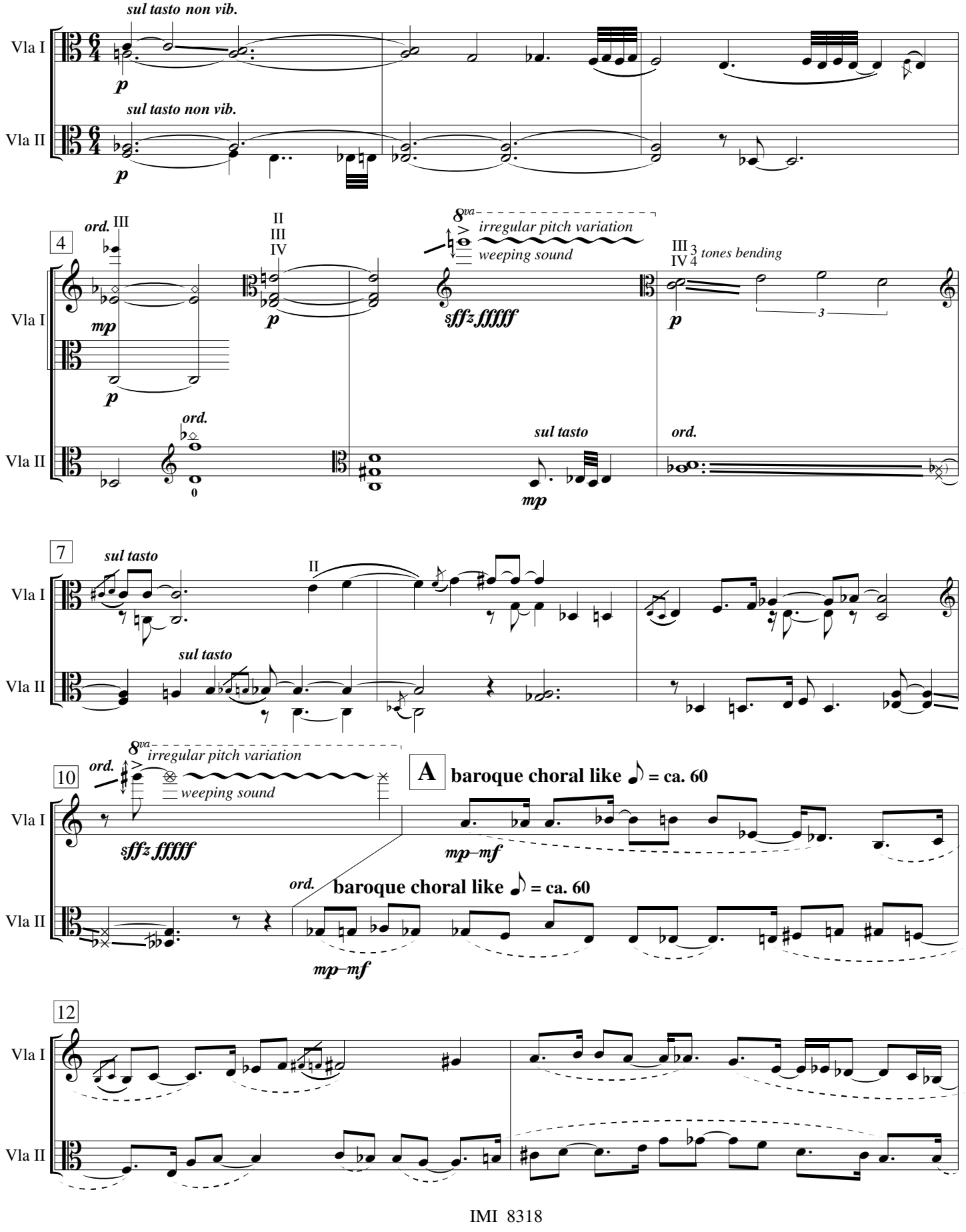
THE TENSION BETWEEN LIVELINESS AND DYINGNESS

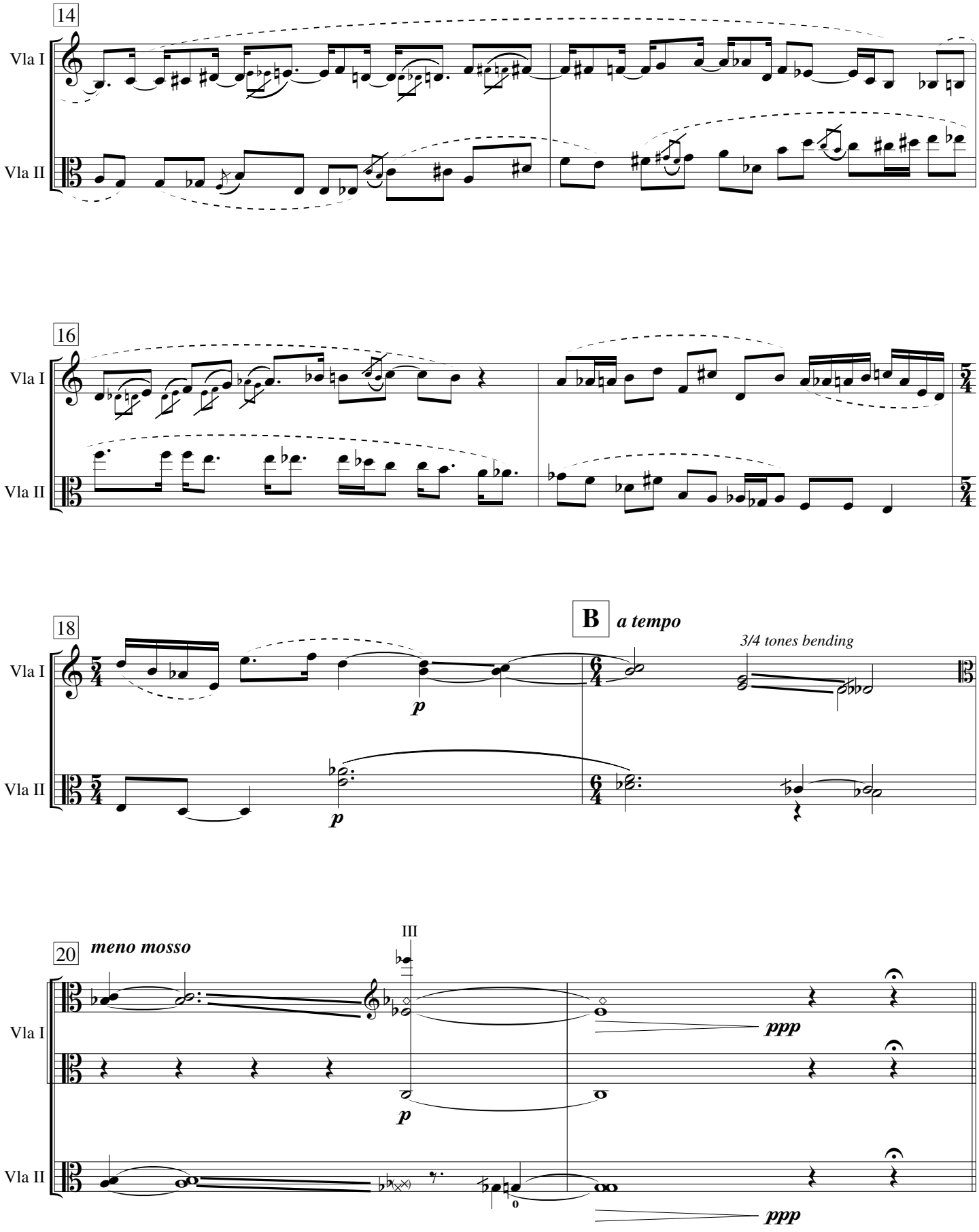
III

NGALDI NGOODARRIDHI

GRIEVING (BROKEN LIVER)

Grave, sorrowness

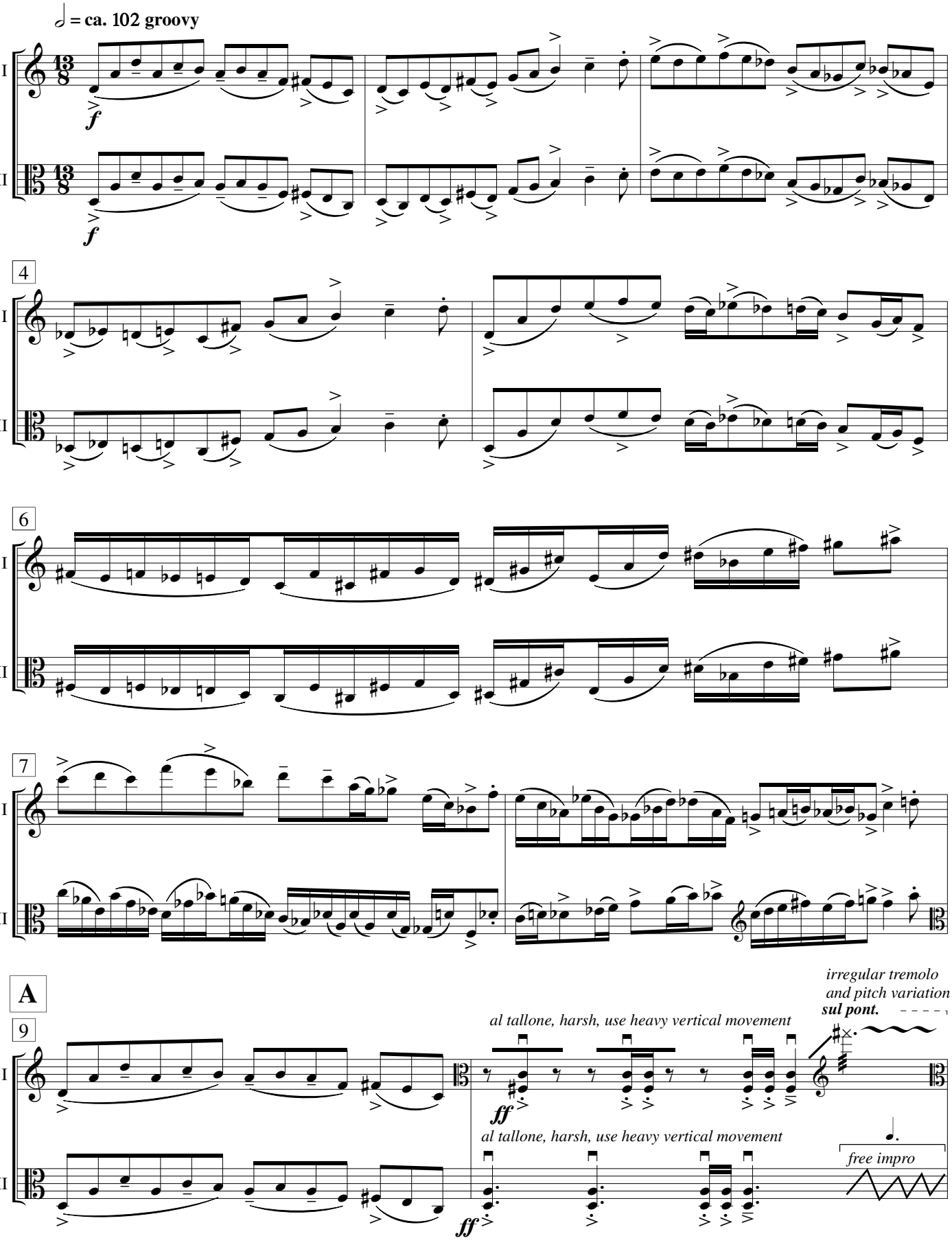


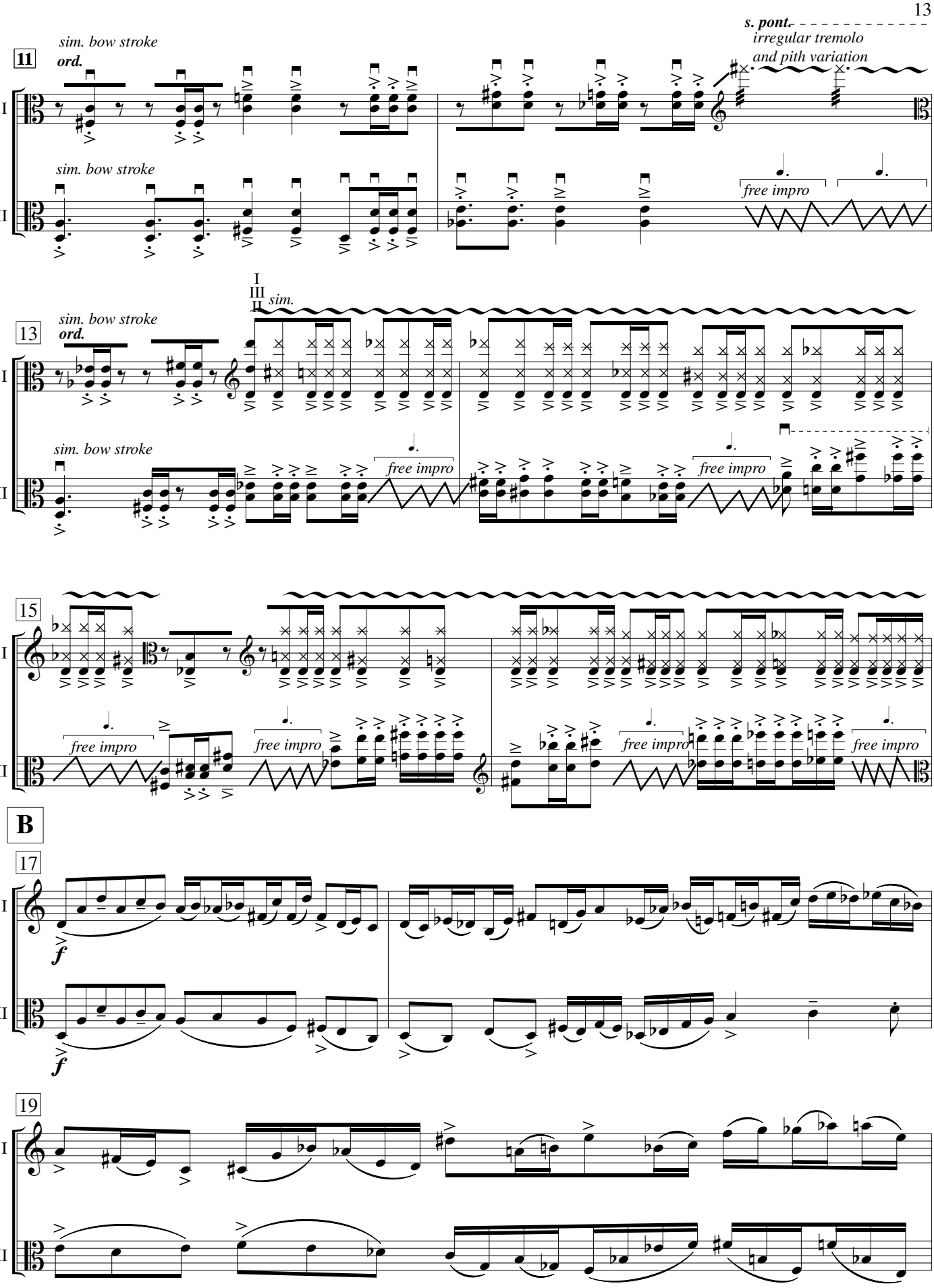

14
Vla I
Vla II
16
Vla I
Vla II
18
B
a tempo
3/4 tones bending
Vla I
Vla II
p
p
20
meno mosso
III
Vla I
Vla II
p
ppp
ppp

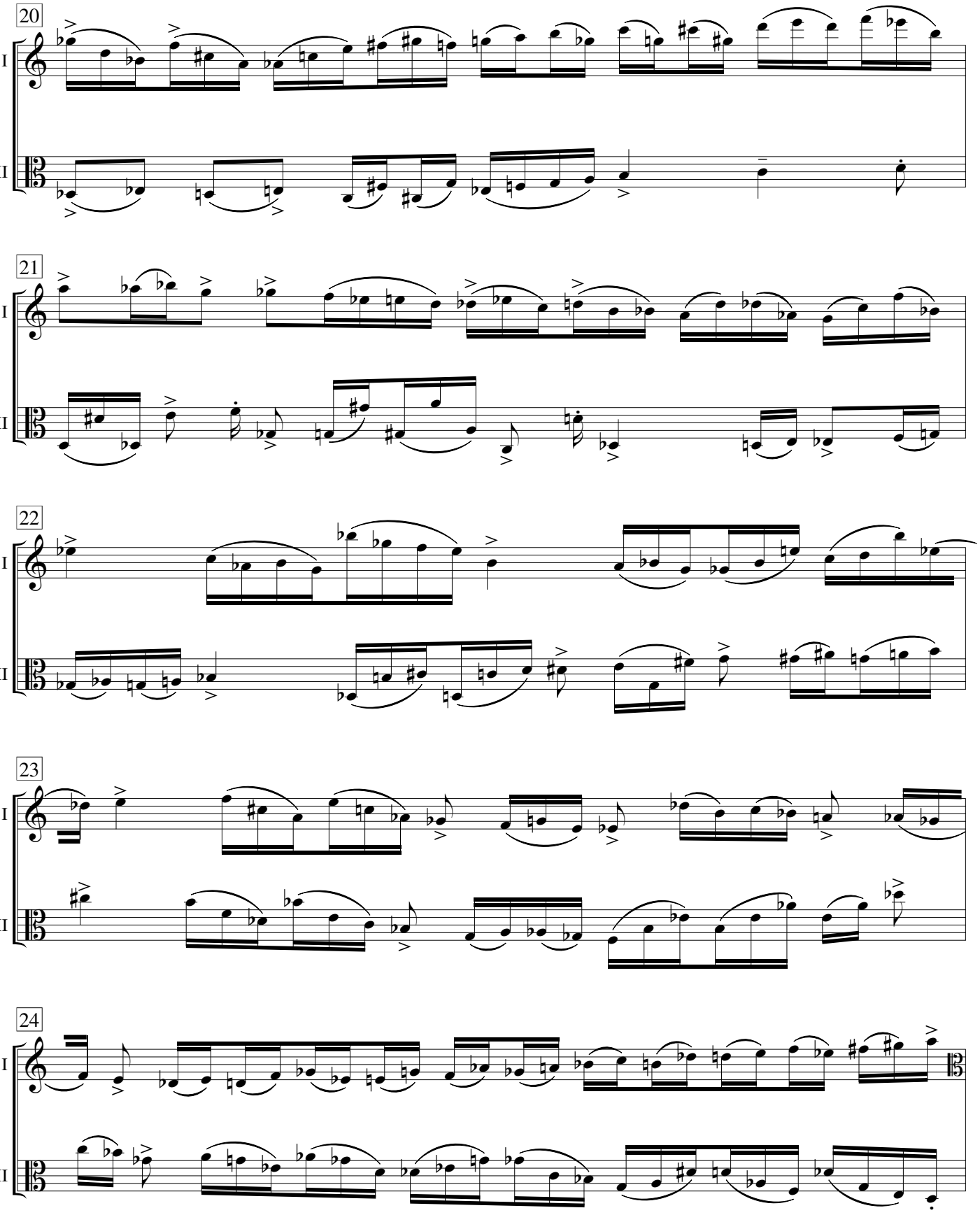
IV

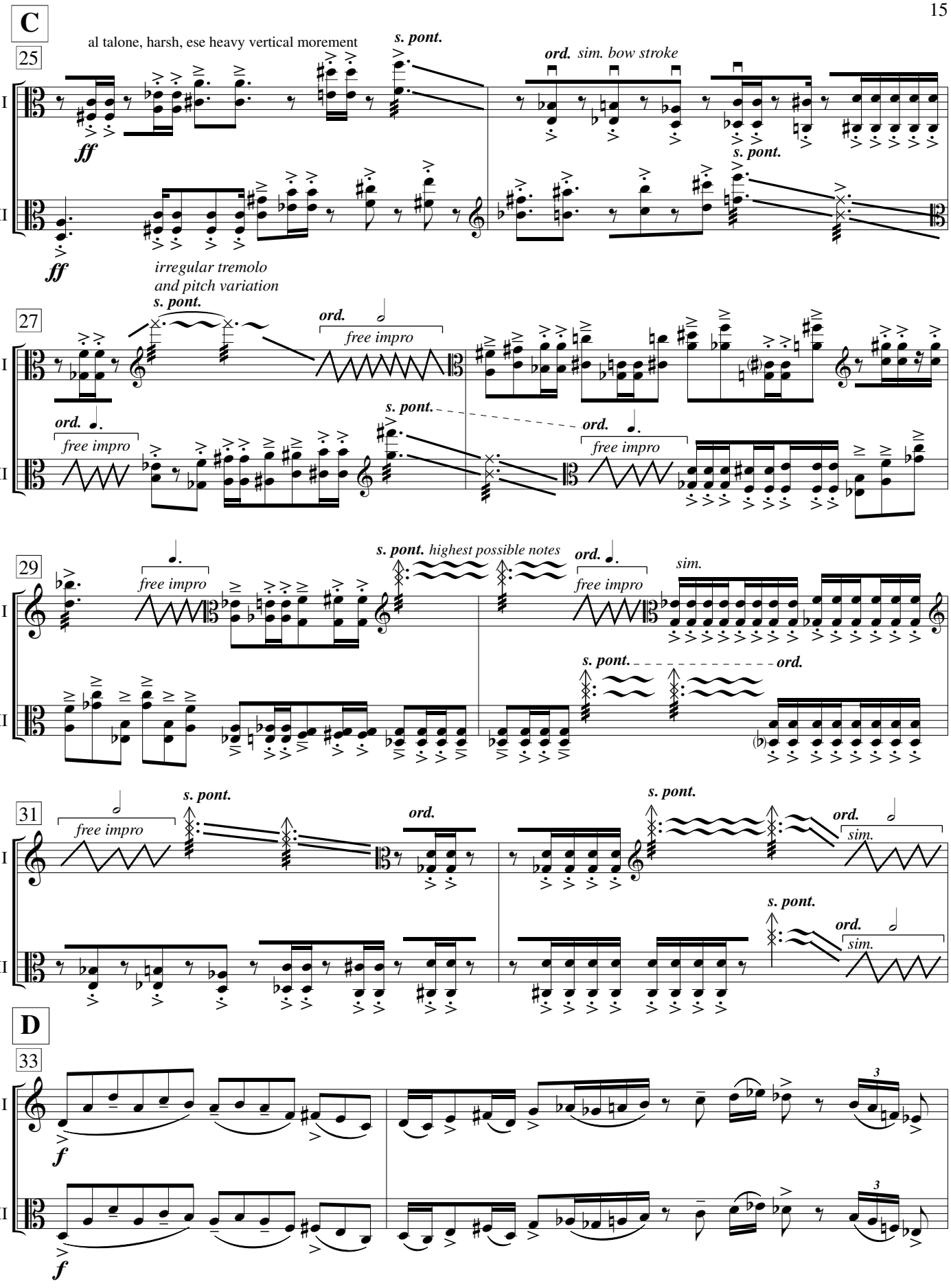
NOORNIGIDI

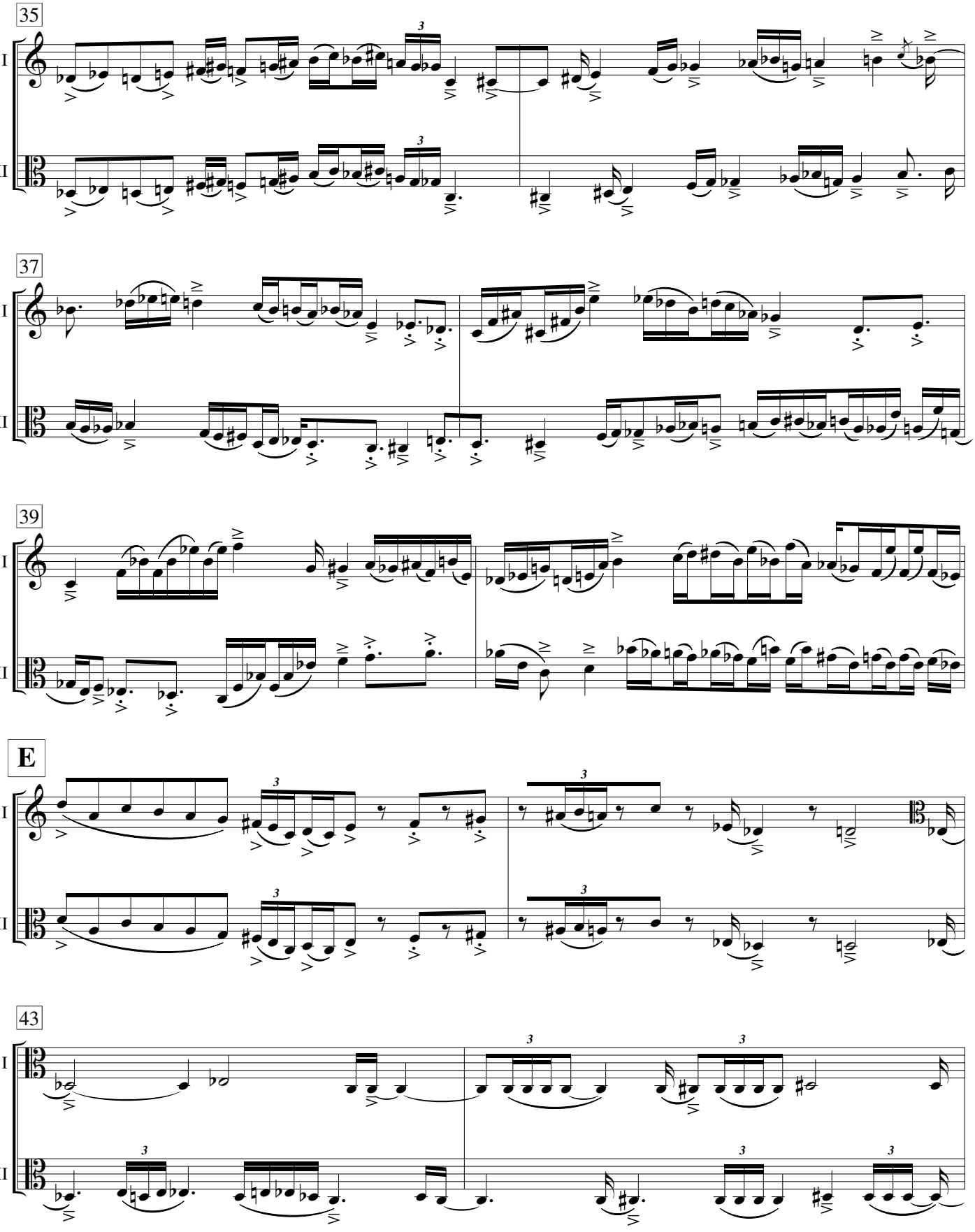
TO BREAK THE NECK OF AN ANIMAL

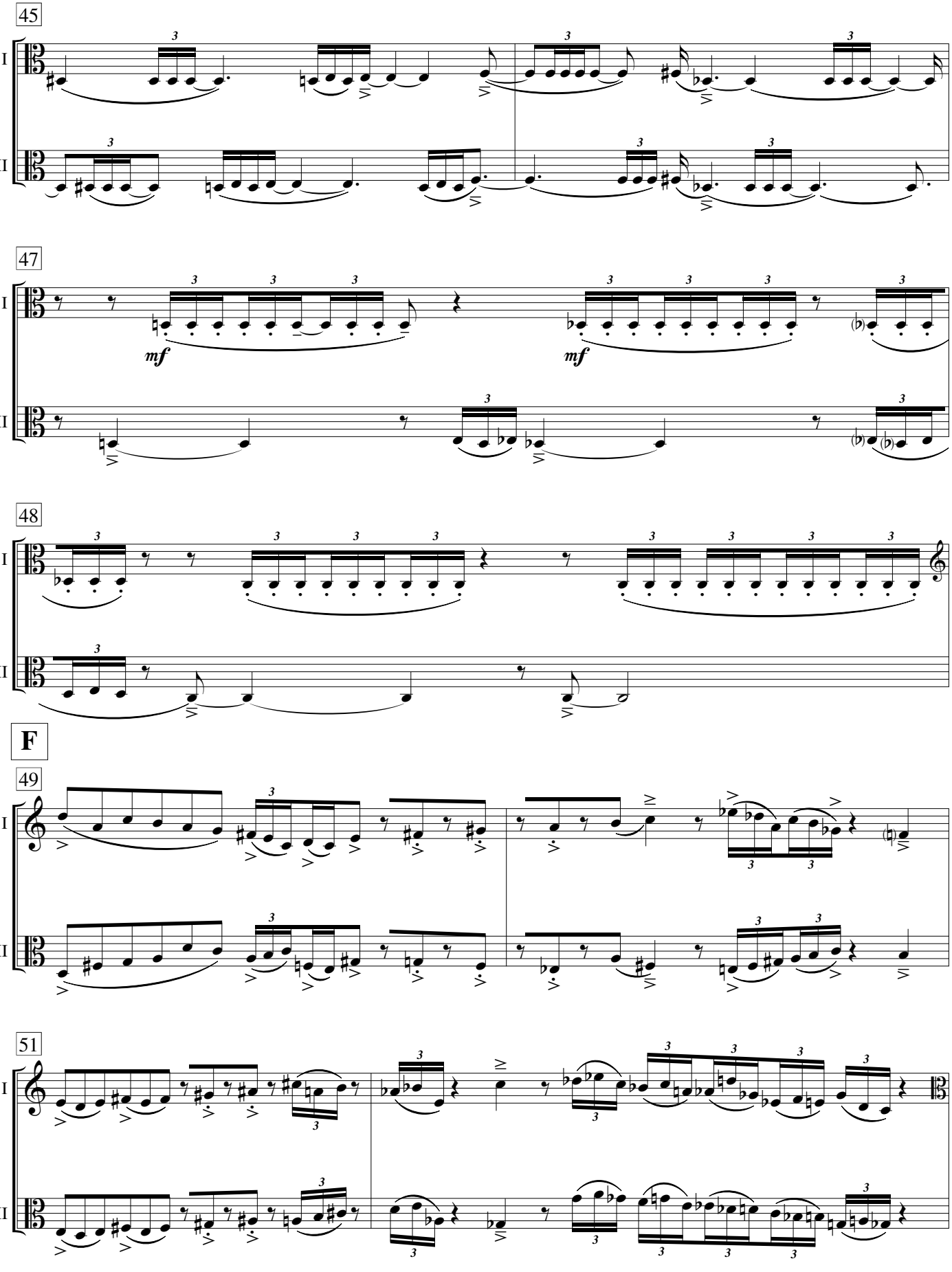


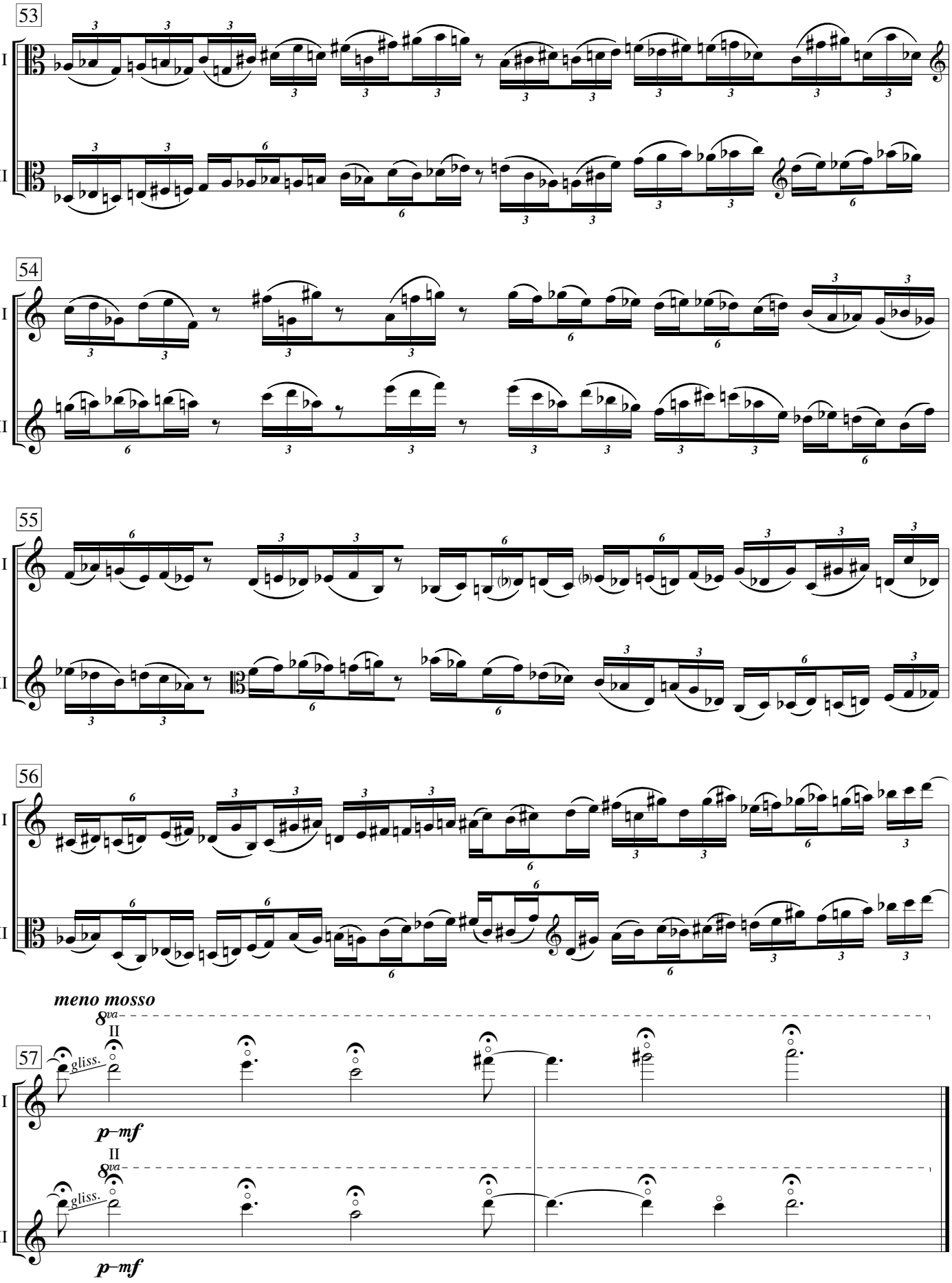

11
sim. bow stroke
ord.
s. pont.
irregular tremolo
and pith variation
Vla I
sim. bow stroke
Vla II
free impro
I
III
II
sim.
13
sim. bow stroke
ord.
Vla I
sim. bow stroke
Vla II
free impro
free impro
15
Vla I
Vla II
free impro
free impro
free impro
free impro
B
17
Vla I
f
Vla II
f
19
Vla I
Vla II


20
Vla I
Vla II
21
Vla I
Vla II
22
Vla I
Vla II
23
Vla I
Vla II
24
Vla I
Vla II


C
al talone, harsh, ese heavy vertical morement
s. pont.
ord. sim. bow stroke
25
Vla I
Vla II
ff
irregular tremolo
and pitch variation
27
free impro
29
highest possible notes
sim.
31
D
33
f
3


35
Vla I
Vla II
37
Vla I
Vla II
39
Vla I
Vla II
E
Vla I
Vla II
43
Vla I
Vla II

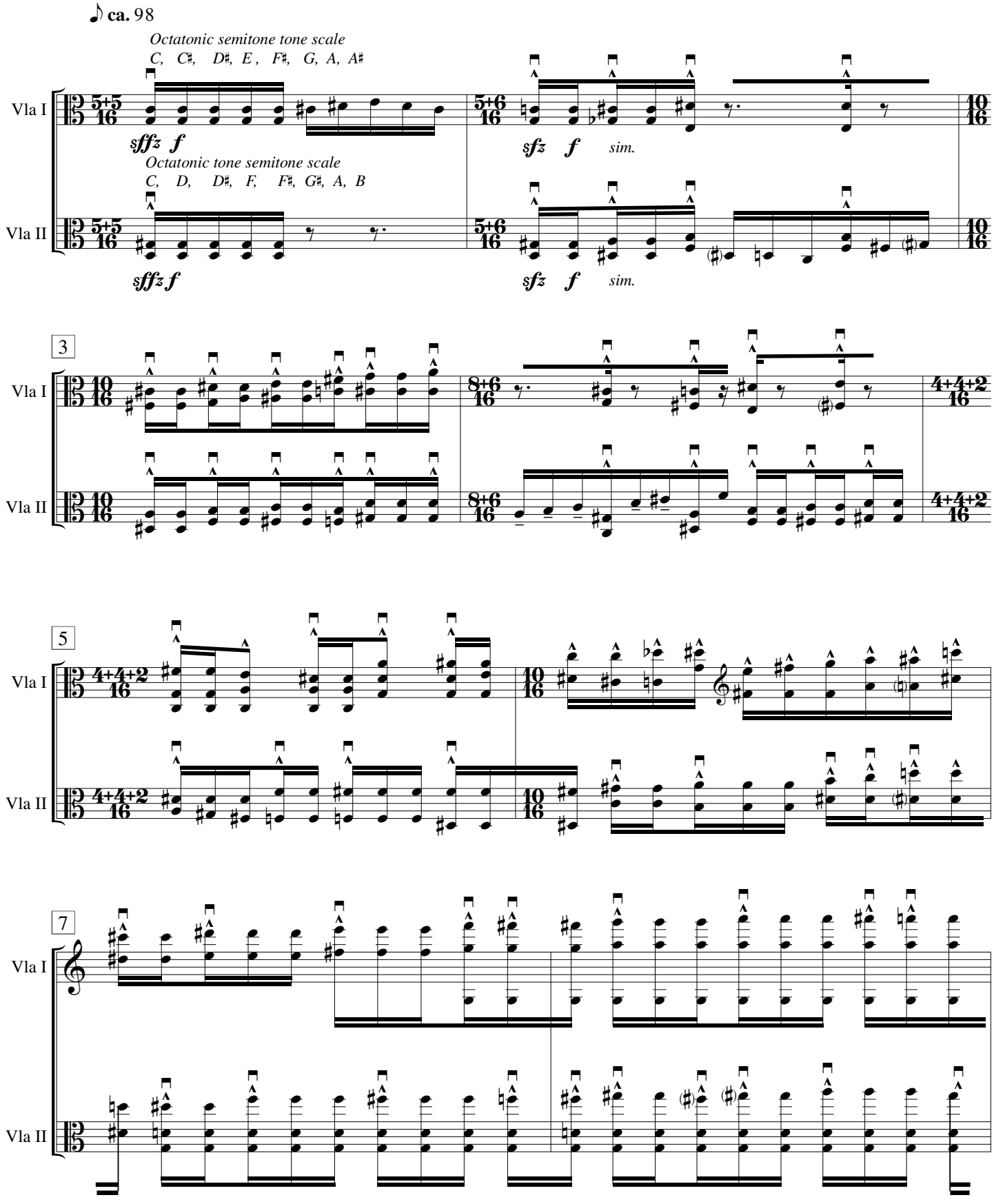

45
Vla I
Vla II
47
mf
mf
48
F
49
51

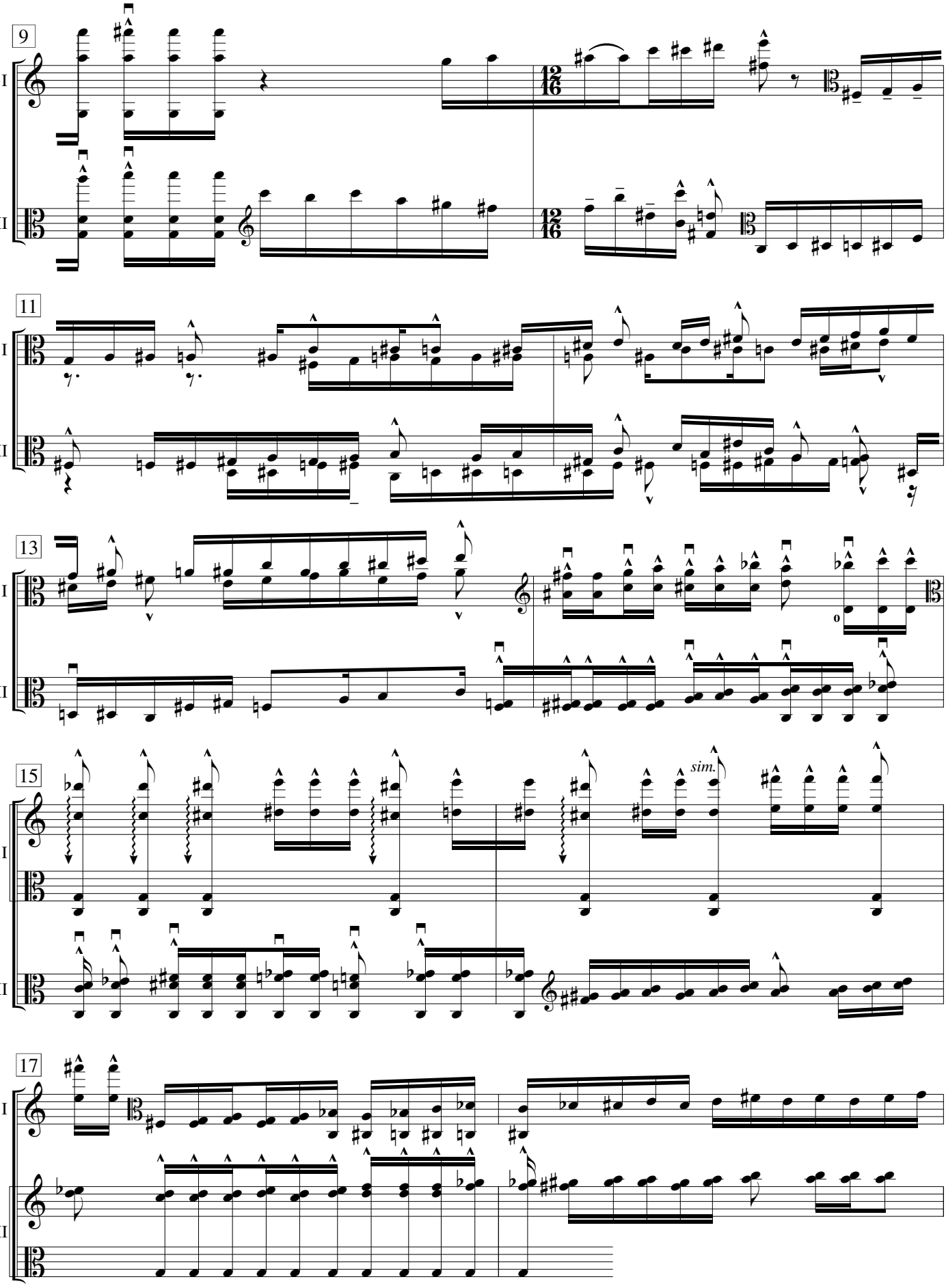

53
Vla I
Vla II
54
Vla I
Vla II
55
Vla I
Vla II
56
Vla I
Vla II
meno mosso
8va
II
57
gliss.
Vla I
p–mf
II
8va
gliss.
Vla II
p–mf

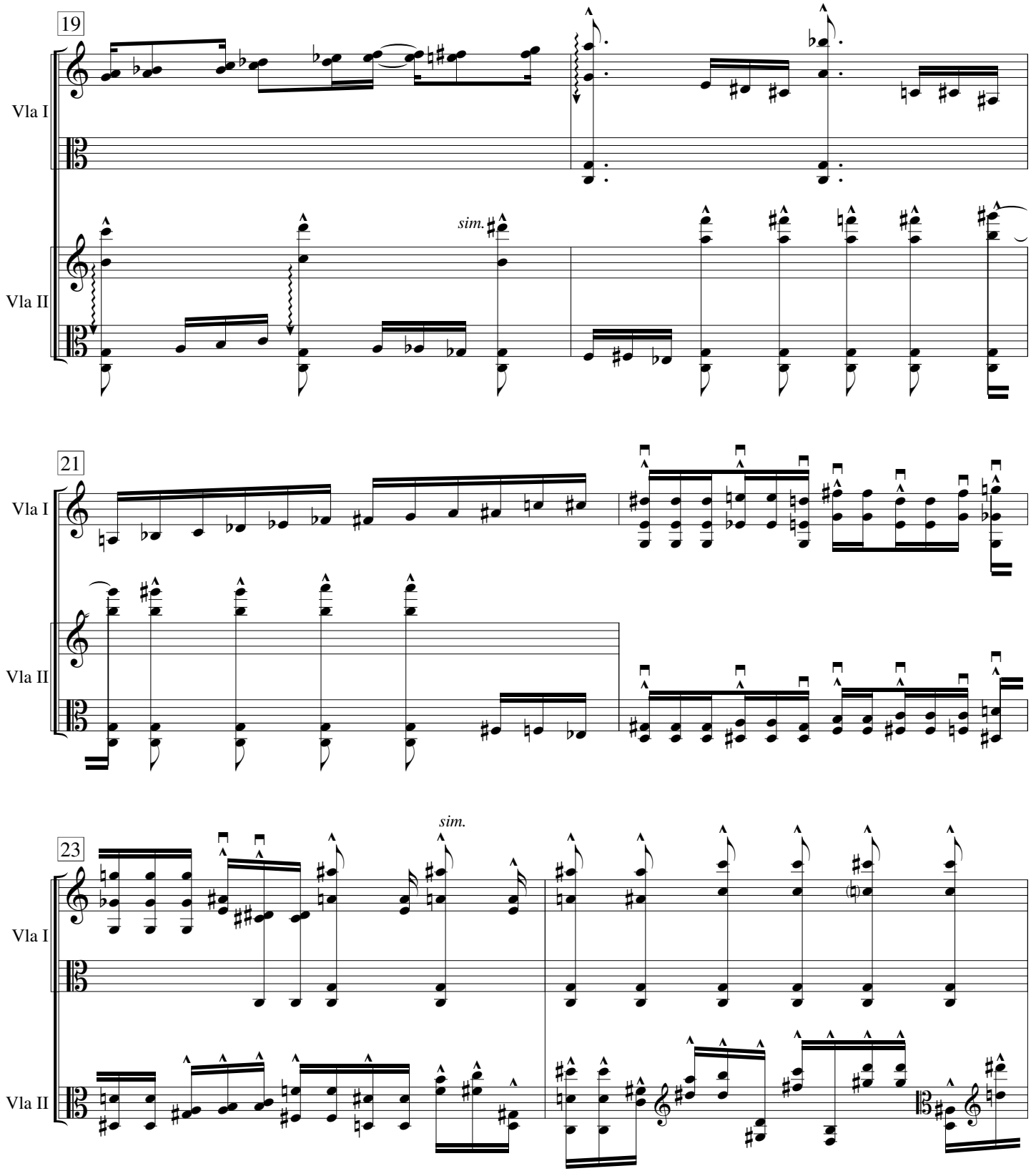
V

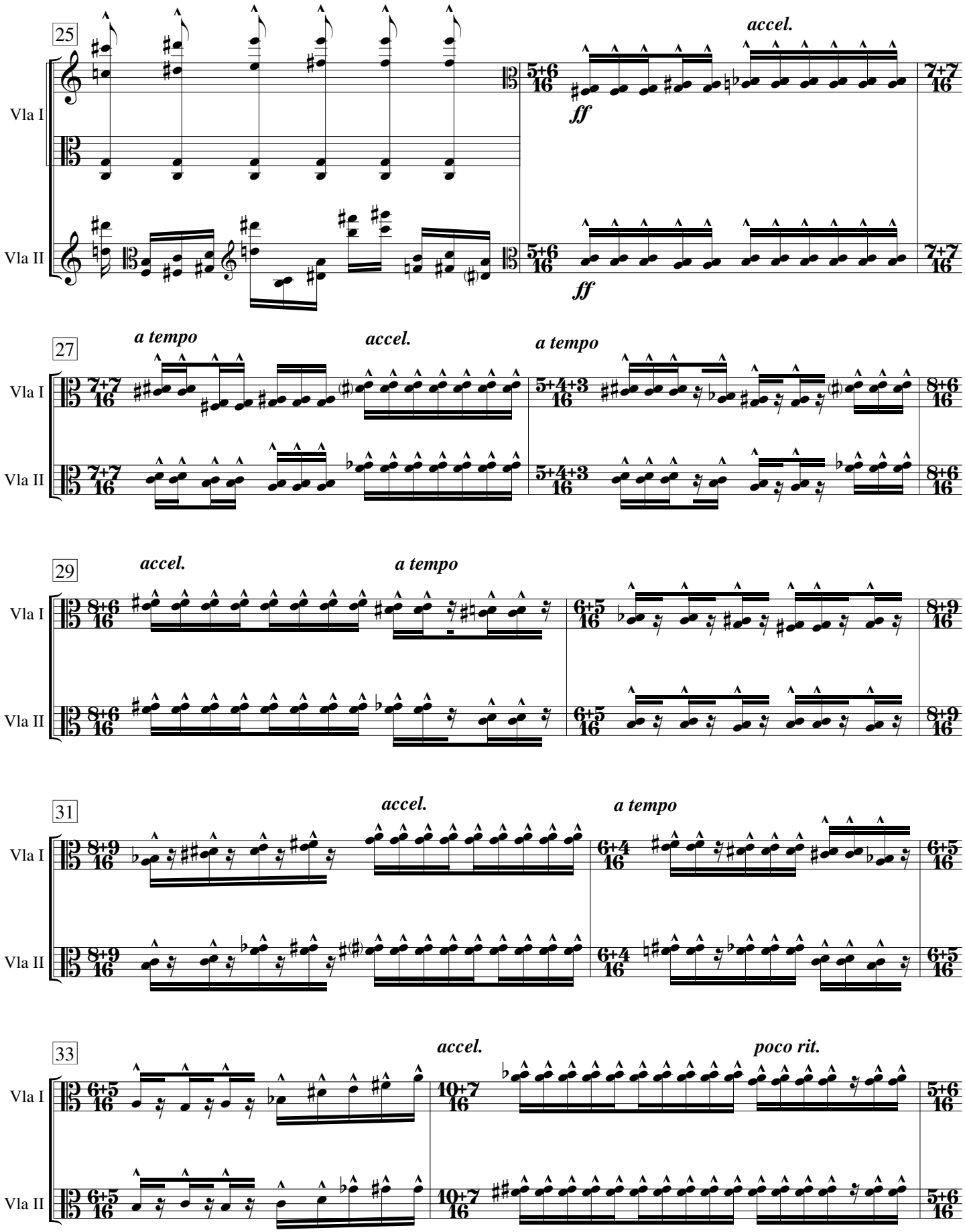
WARNA GOORIDI

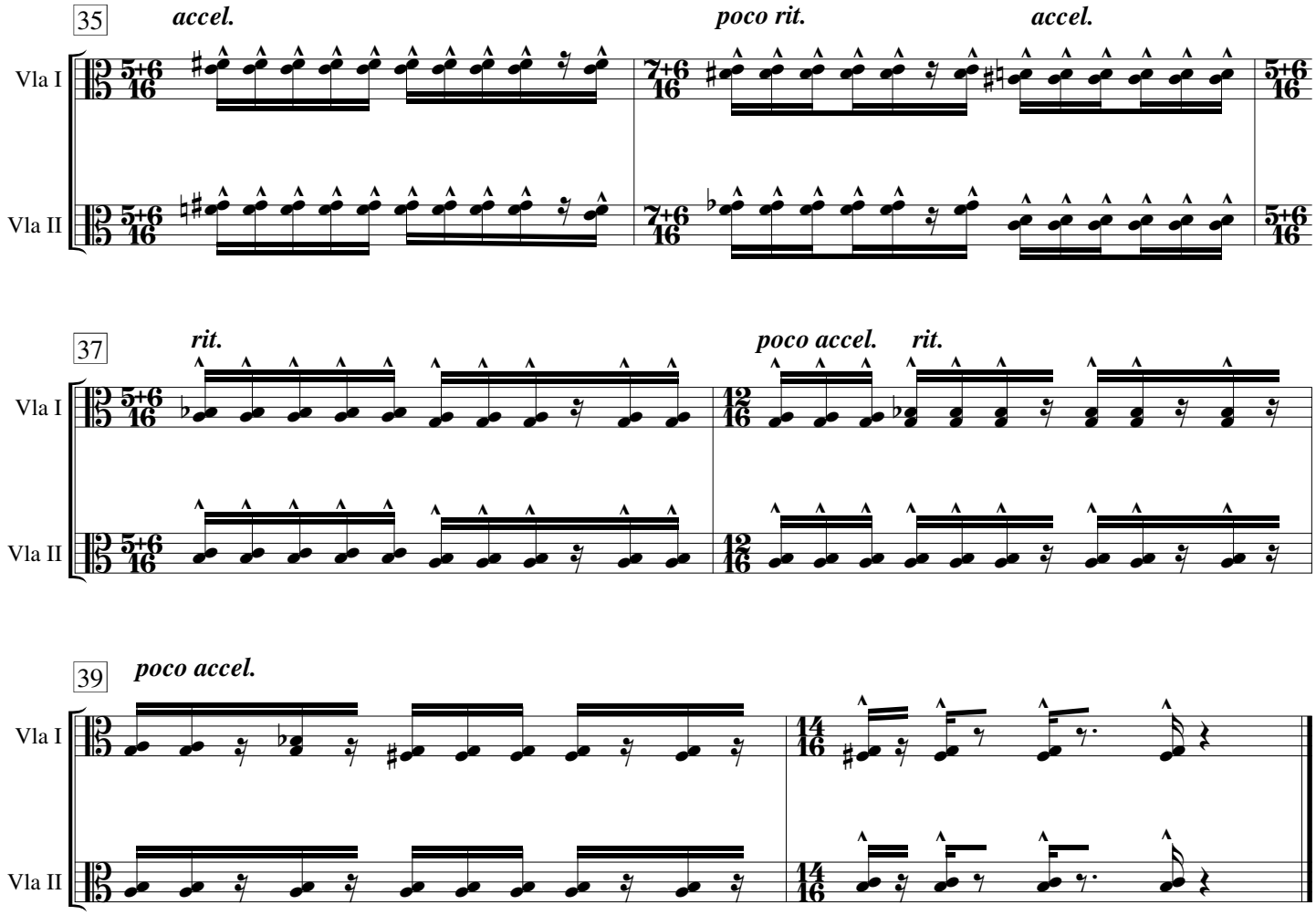
BELLY TURNING AROUND (OUT OF RAGE)




9
Vla I
Vla II
11
Vla I
Vla II
13
Vla I
Vla II
15
sim.
Vla I
Vla II
17
Vla I
Vla II


19
Vla I
Vla II
sim.
21
Vla I
Vla II
23
sim.
Vla I
Vla II


25
accel.
ff
Vla I
Vla II
27
a tempo
accel.
a tempo
29
accel.
a tempo
31
accel.
a tempo
33
accel.
poco rit.


35
accel.
poco rit.
accel.
Vla I
Vla II
37
rit.
poco accel.
rit.
Vla I
Vla II
39
poco accel.
Vla I
Vla II