Sextet

for Piano and Strings

(2012 / rev. 2016)

(I) Riding with the Devil - p.1
(II) Purgatory - p. 35
(III) A Dance of Life - p. 51

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"Riding with The Devil"

"Riding with the Devil"—a performance of which you can hear on my website—is the opening movement of my Sextet for Piano and Strings. The composition arose from reading Dante's Divine Comedy. His journey—from Hell, through Purgatory, to Heaven—was described in terms that were contemporary for him. Some of the imagery he employed in the early 14th century is distant to us now. But the journey itself, the inward emotional and ethical drama it describes, has a power and meaning which can resonate in any century. I know, it affected me very much, when I first Dante's great work decades ago as a college student, and then again in 2012. I was inspired to see whether, perhaps, I might find a purely musical, instrumental way of expressing what I felt.

The movements of the sextet are titled:

1) "Riding with the Devil"
2) "Purgatory"
3) "A Dance of Life"

The major innovation, in terms of narrative, is the third movement. I did not think I ought to try to scale "Paradise." Still, I wanted the sextet to culminate in a place very different from where it began—as opposed to it as possible. So this movement is titled "A Dance of Life." It's largely in 5/8 time.

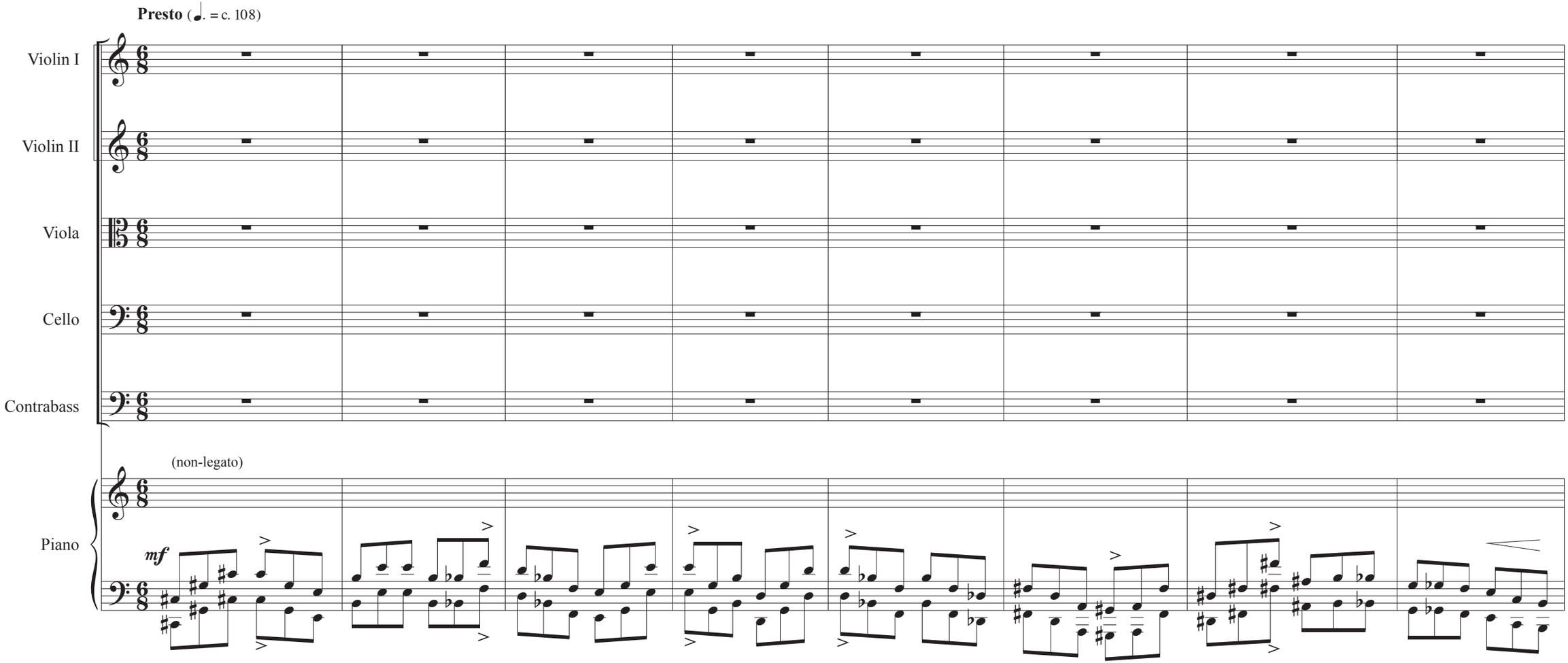
As I said, the composition began with thoughts about Dante. It also had a second large source of inspiration. Throughout the creation of this work I was assisted profoundly by thinking about this statement by the great American philosopher, Eli Siegel, with whom I had the honor to study in my 20s:

"The resolution of conflict in self is like the making one of opposites in art."

There are various conflicts which, through the language of music, I tried to deal with in this Sextet. Most obviously: agitation and serenity—the desire all people have for energy, and the desire, equally strong in us, for calm. And since the recording you may listen to is of "Riding with the Devil," I'll point to one way in which I tried to bring opposites together in that movement. As it begins, there is a short solo for the piano. It seems to be in a clear, rhythmically even 6/8. Just a steady stream of eighth notes. But there's actually a cross-rhythm there; the implied harmonies shift every 5 eighths. The Devil—after all—is a trickster! And while the movement is intense, in its Coda (p.32) I put a series of brightly ringing chords, growing ever calmer: more sustained and resonant. A vision, perhaps, in the midst of Hell of what Heaven might be.

Riding with the Devil

Edward Green



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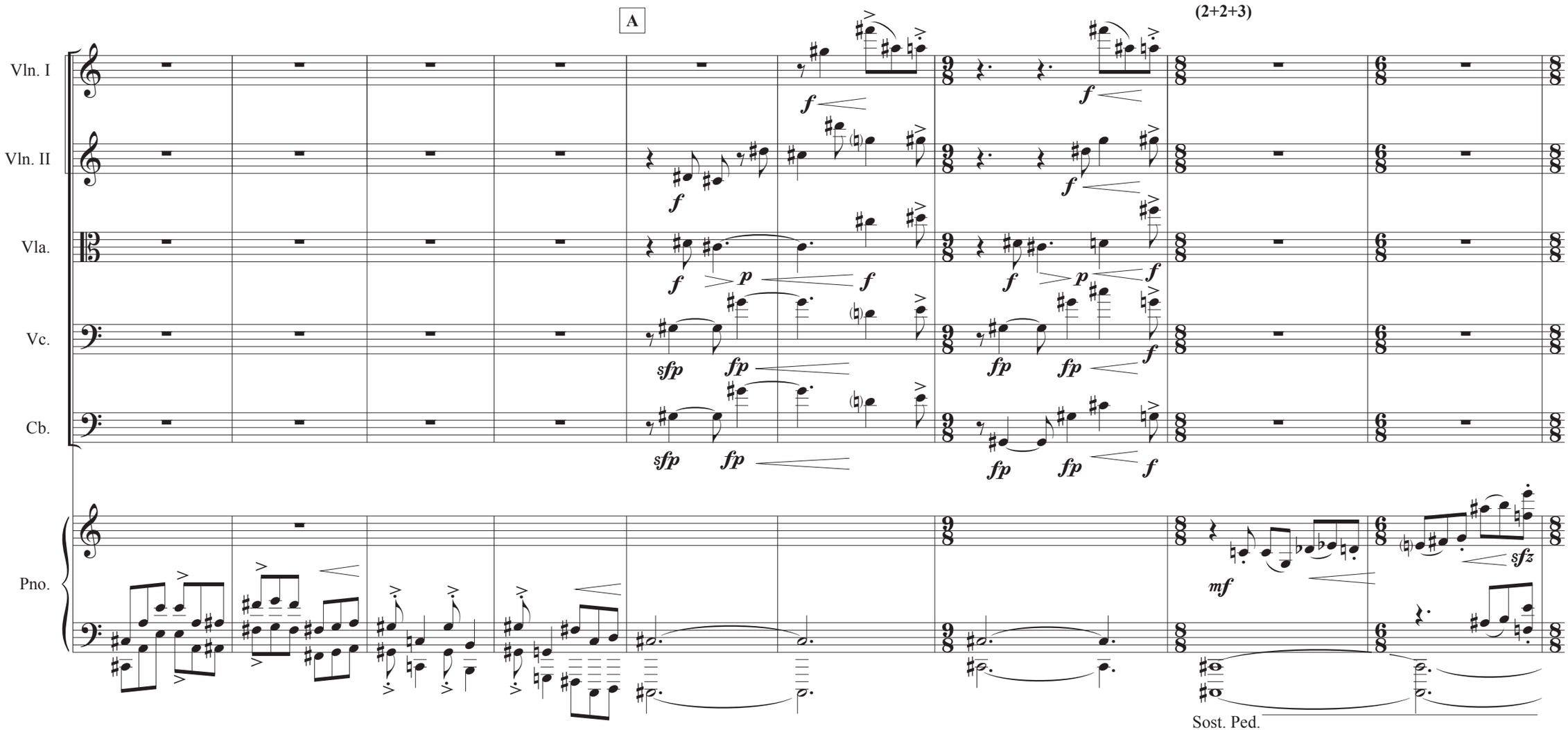
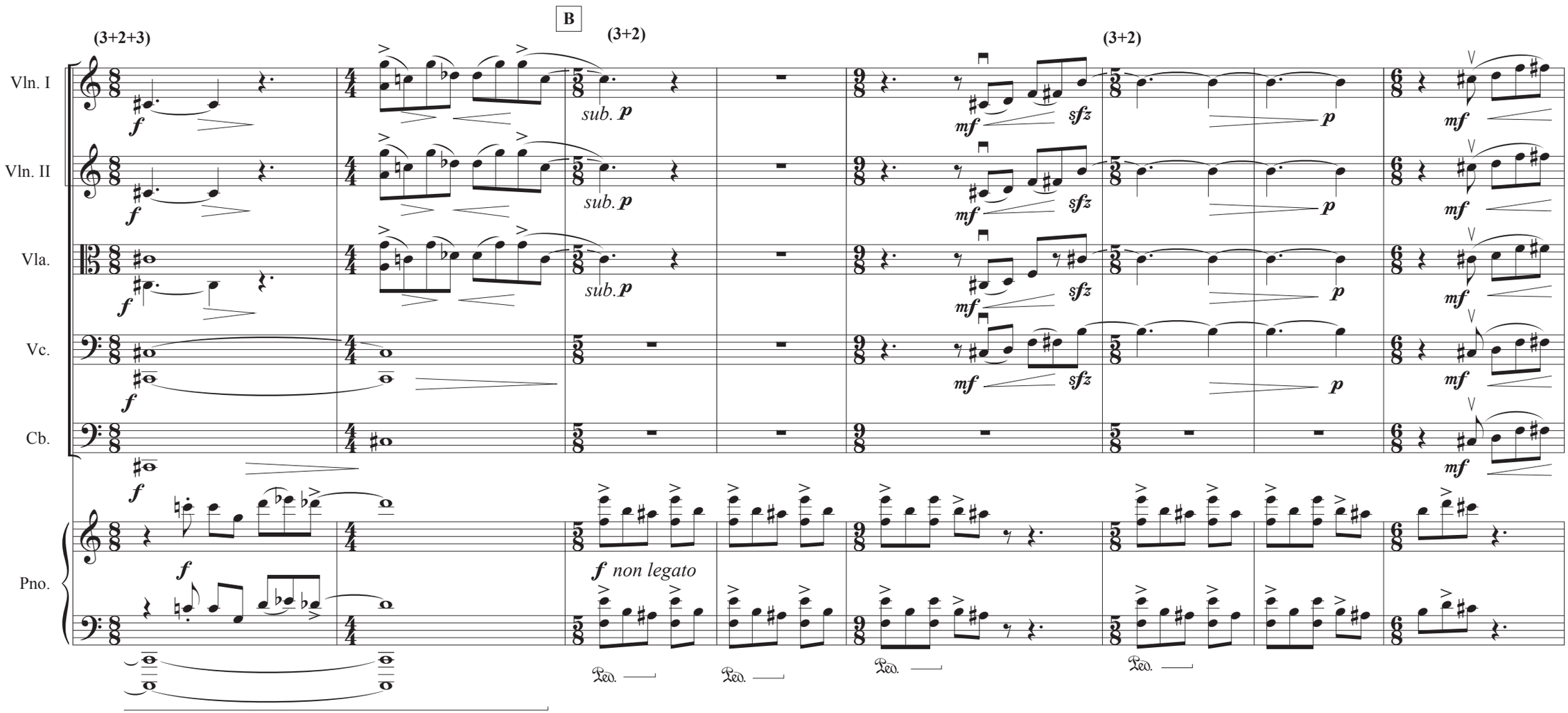
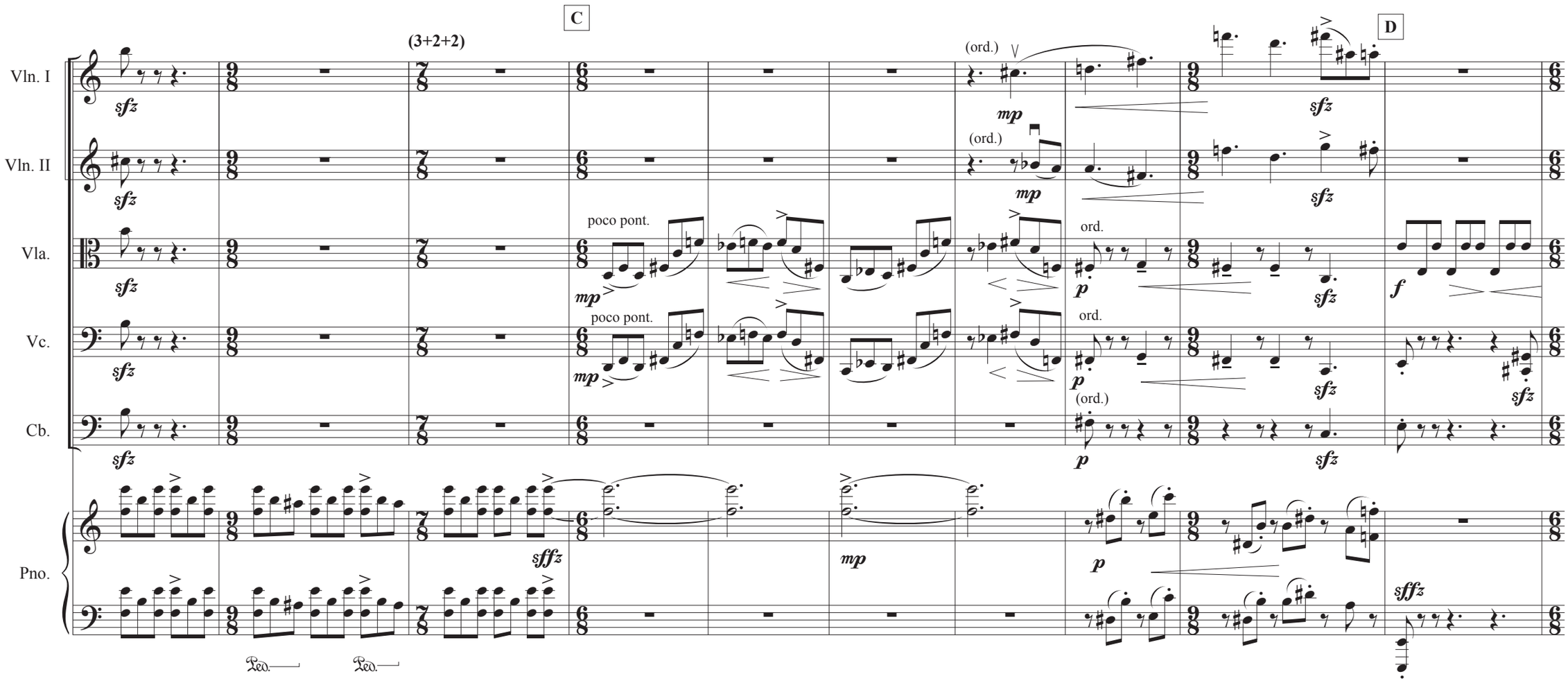
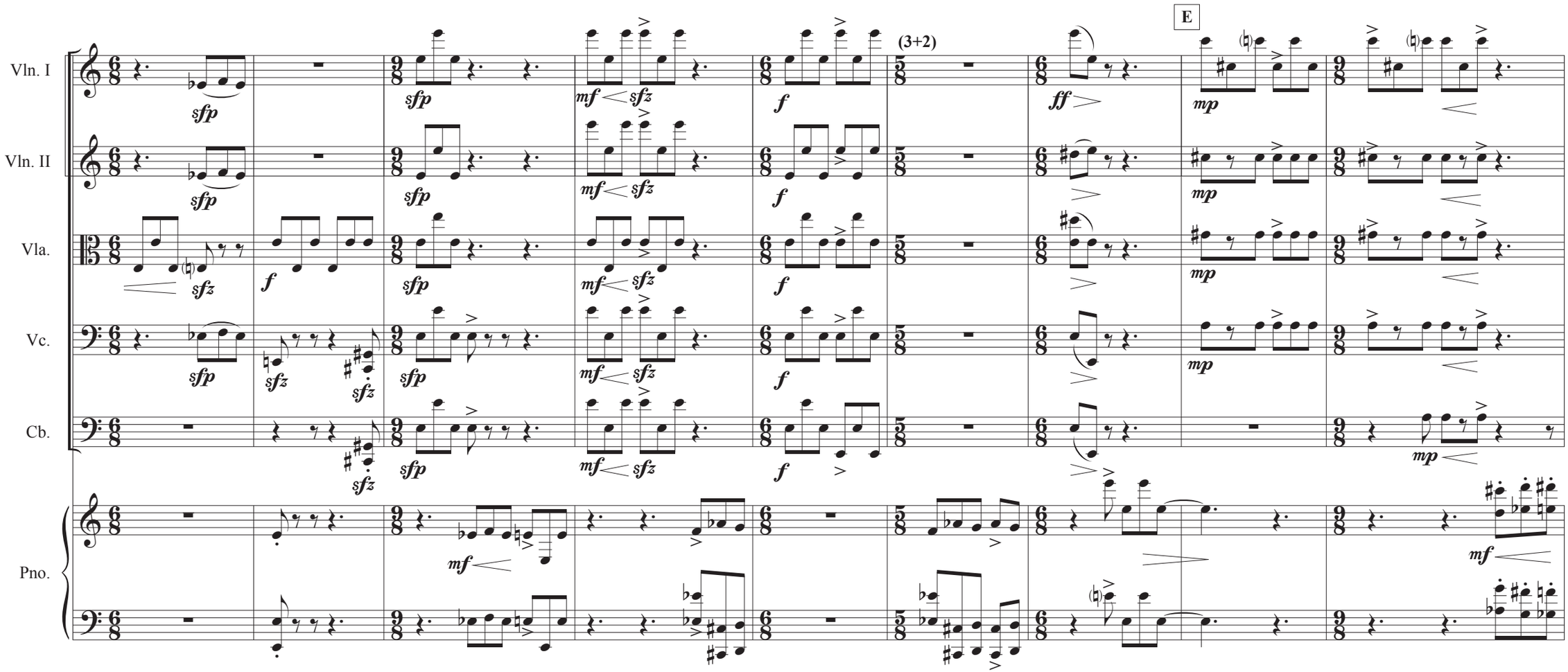
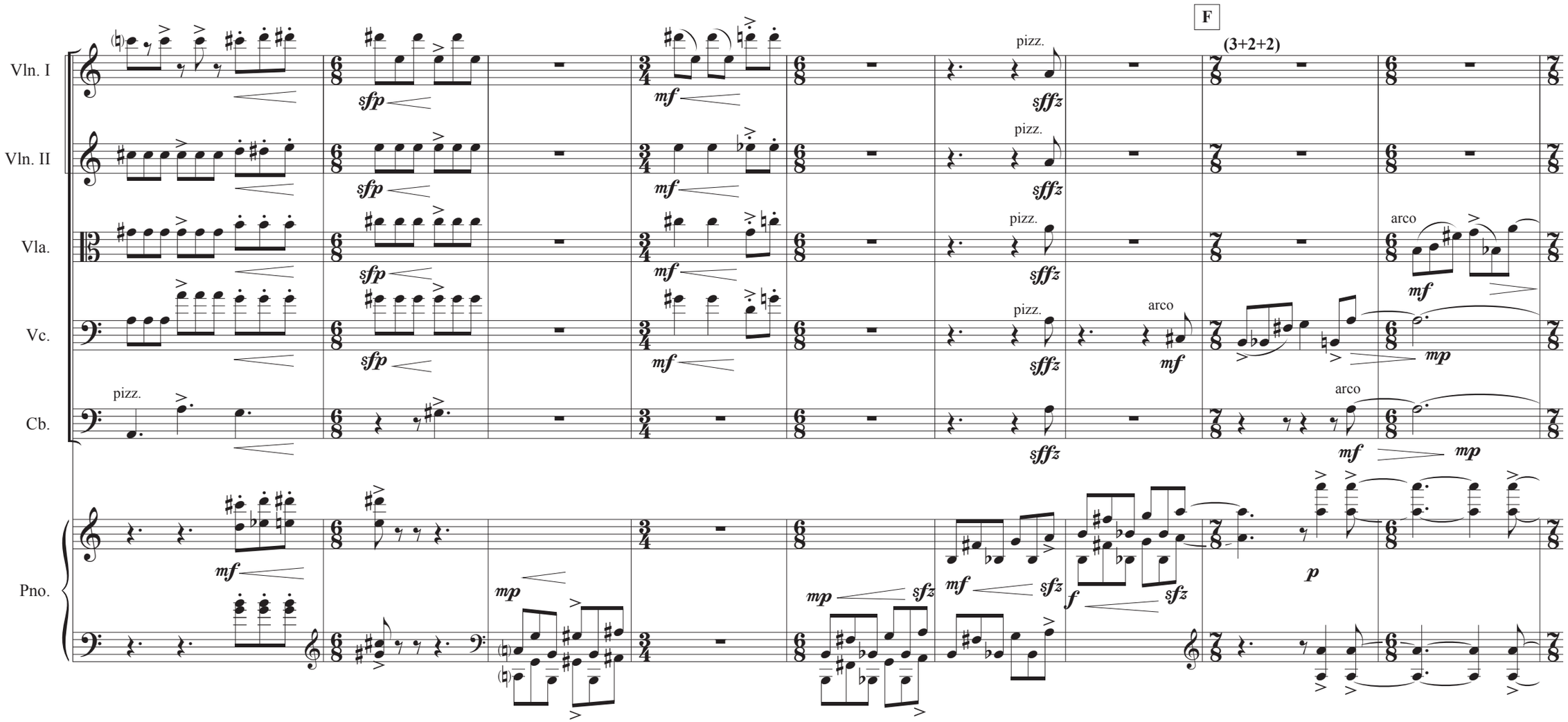
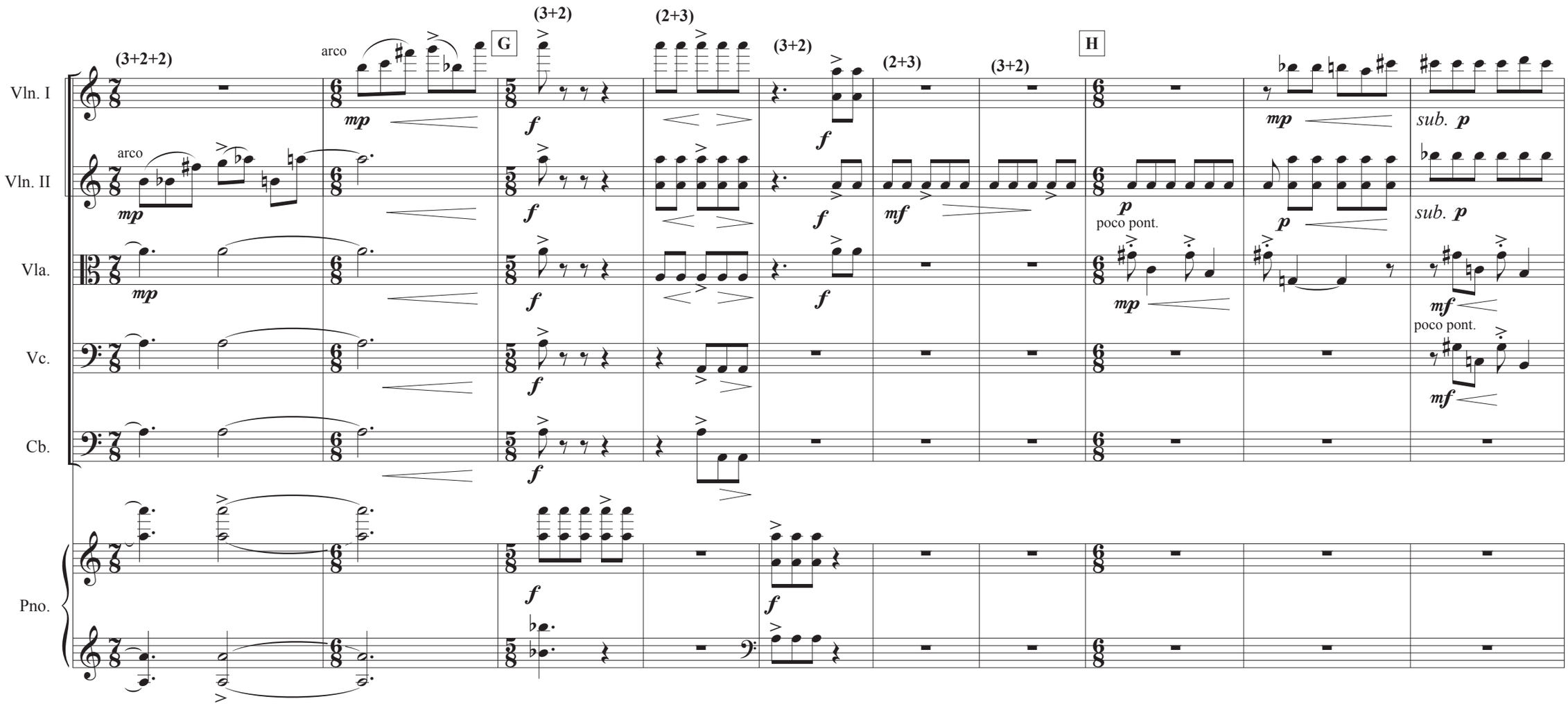

A
(2+2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
Sost. Ped.

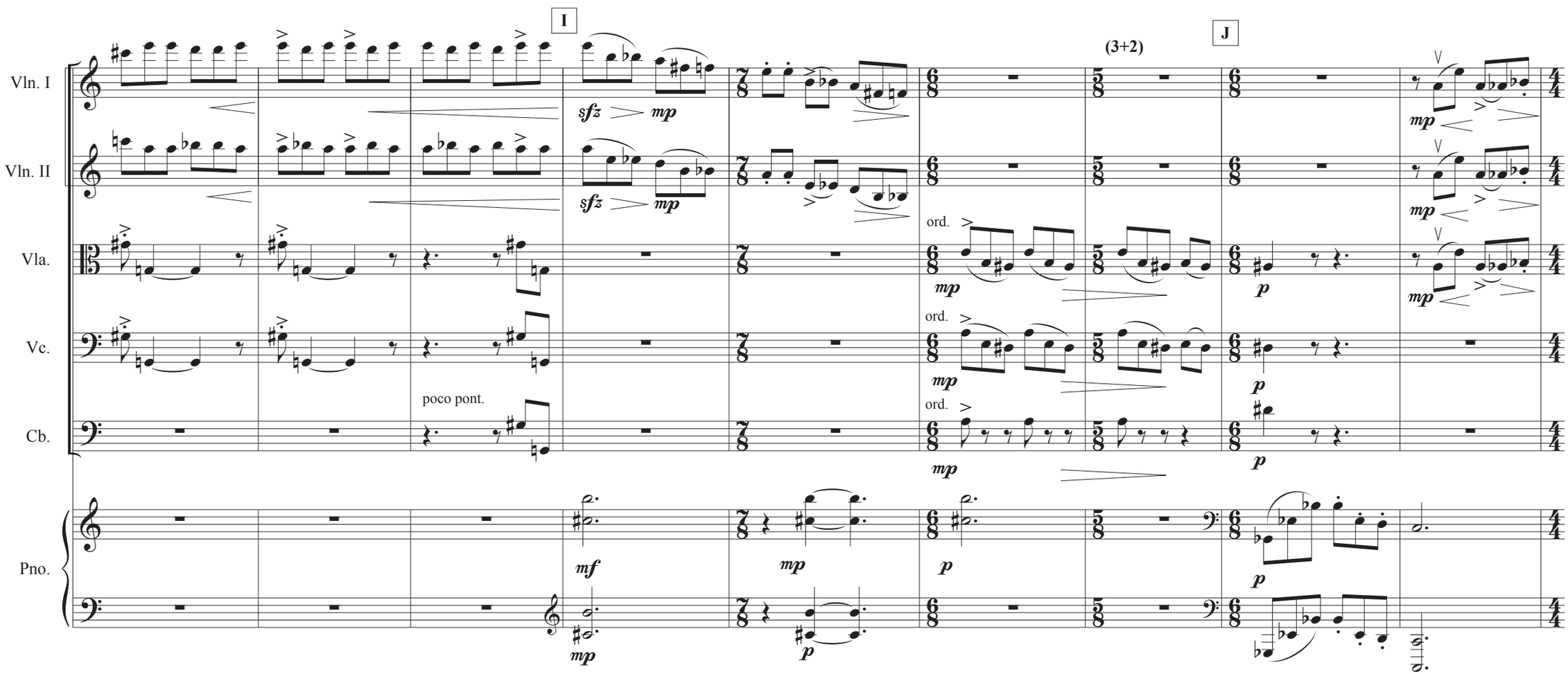

B
(3+2+3)
(3+2)
(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
f
sub. p
mf
sfz
p
f non legato
Ped.

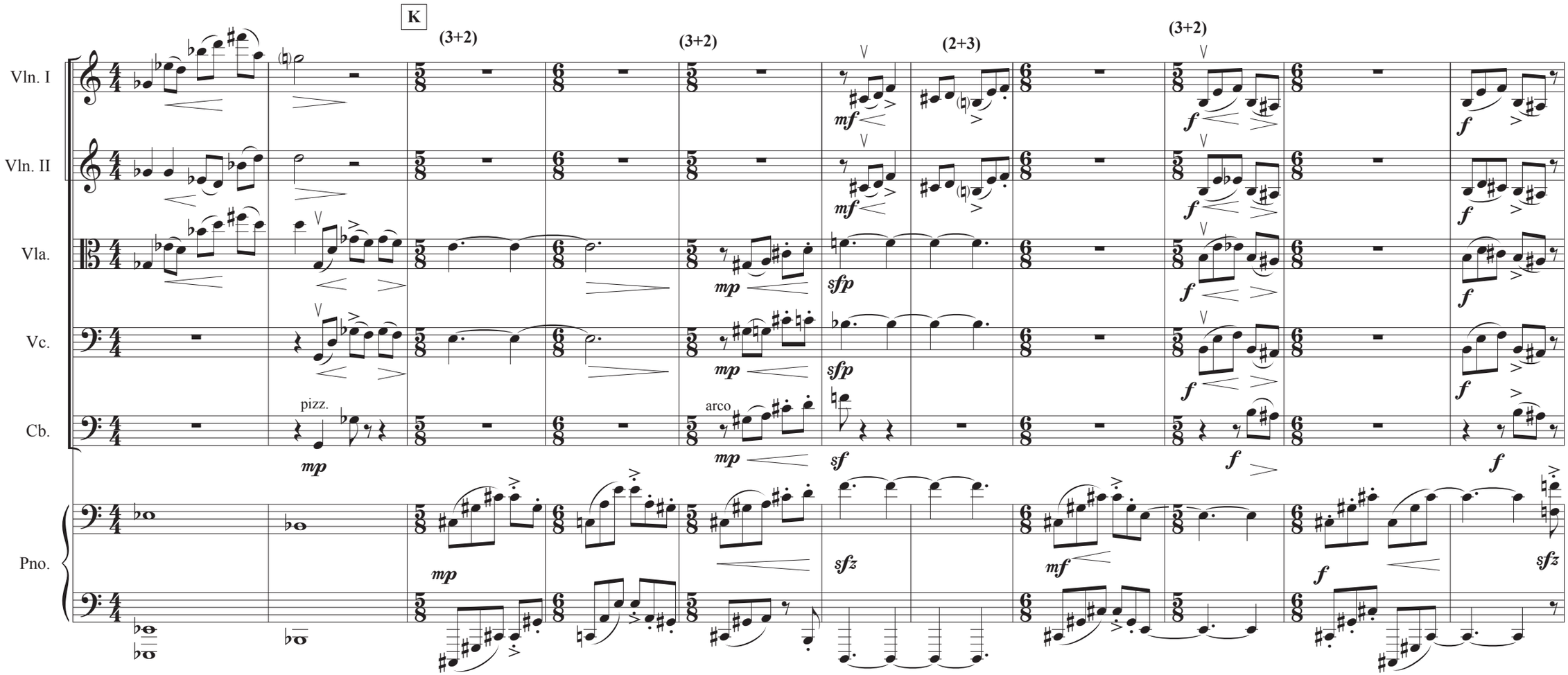

C
D
(3+2+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
sfz
mp
(ord.)
poco pont.
ord.
p
f
sffz
Ped.

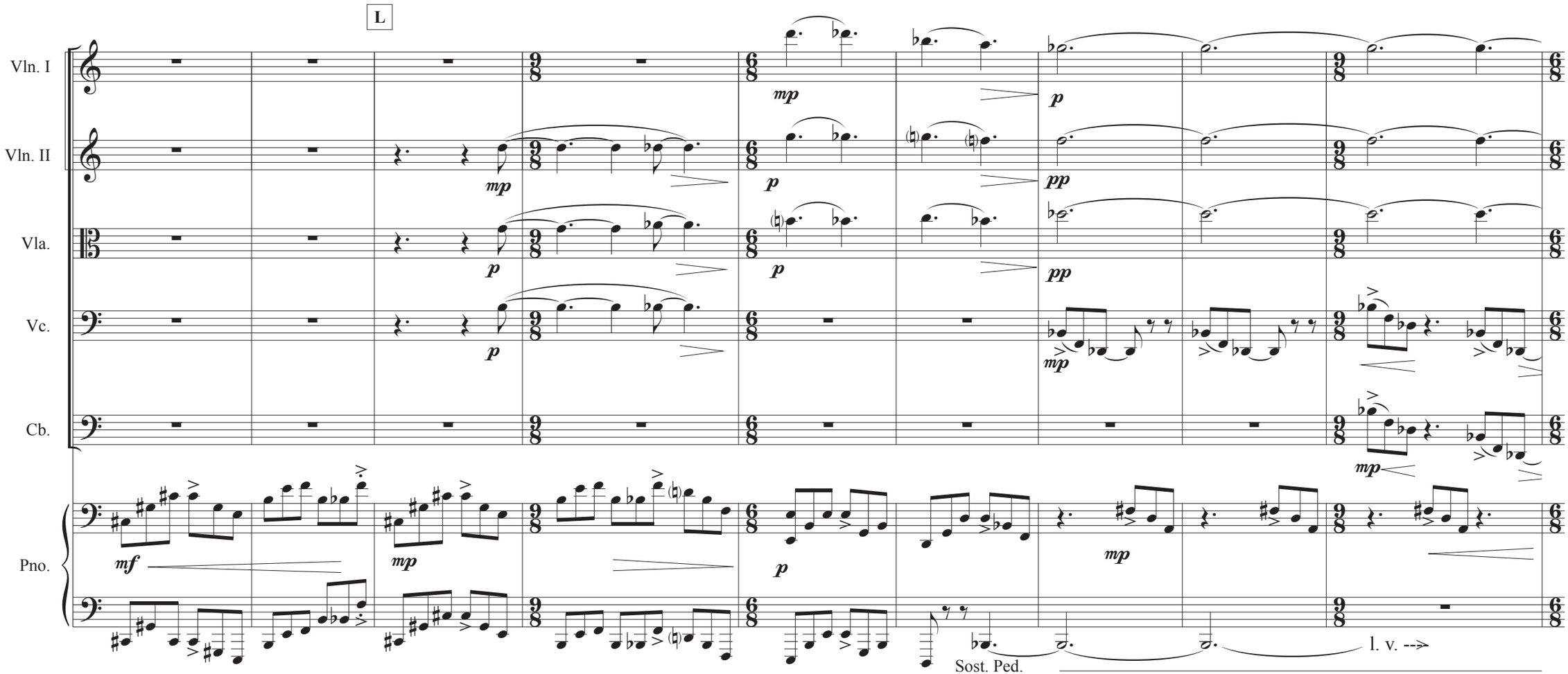

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
E
(3+2)
sfp
sfz
mf
f
ff
mp

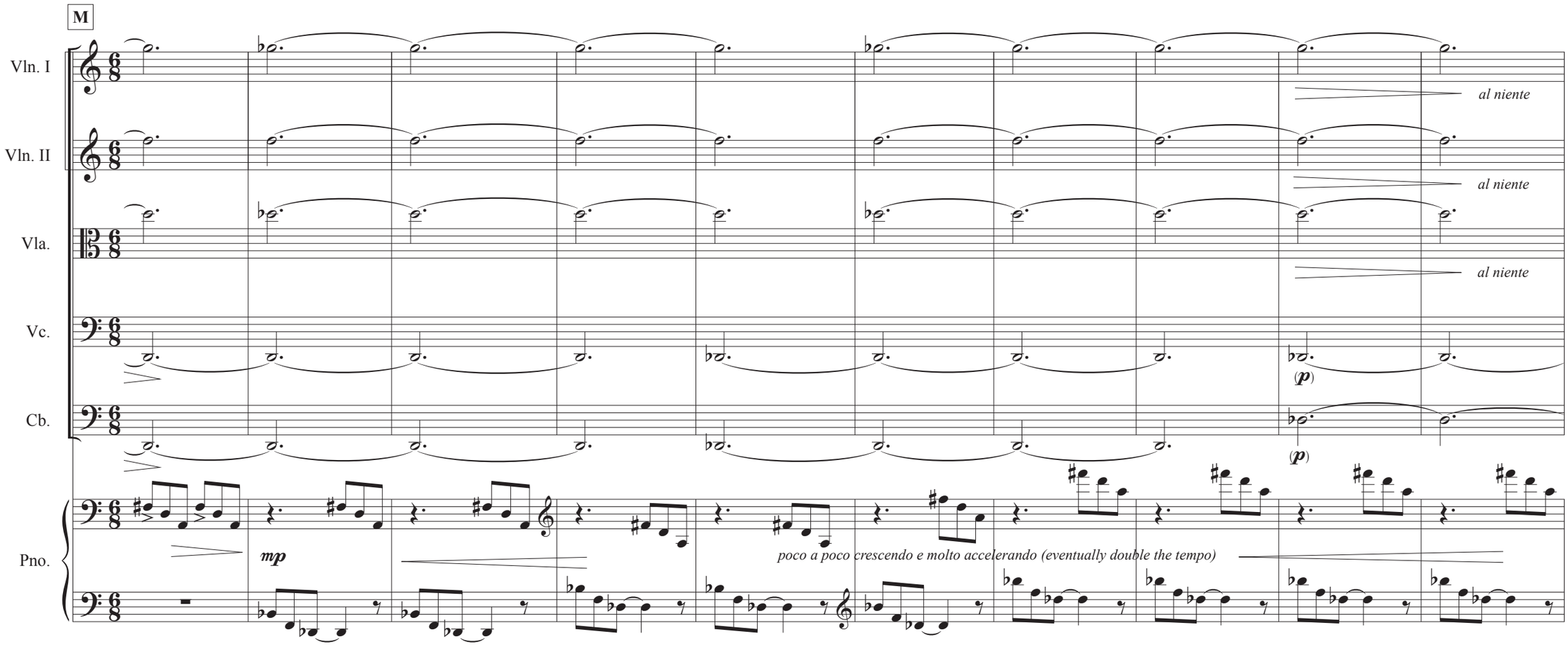

F
(3+2+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
pizz.
arco
sfp
mf
sffz
mp
sfz
f
p

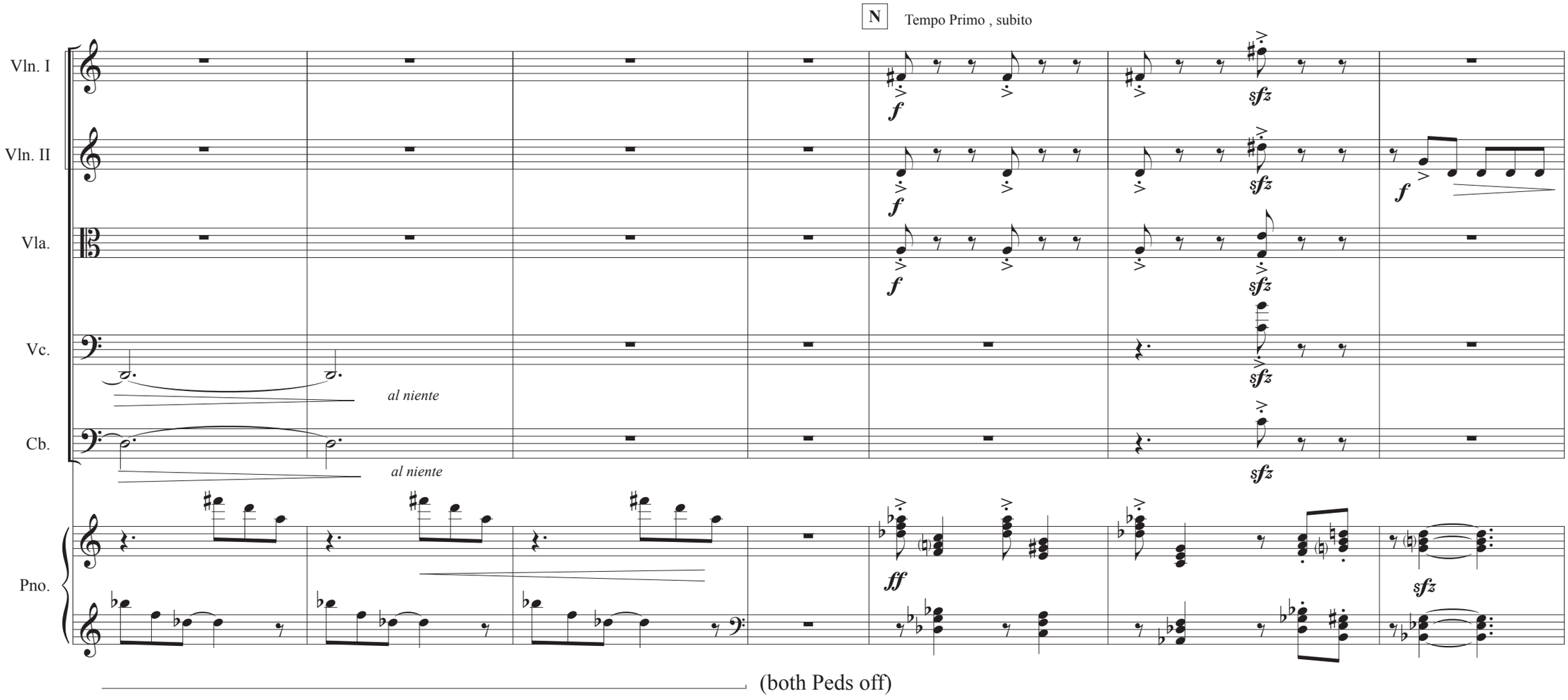

(3+2+2)
arco
G
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
H
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
mp
f
mf
p
sub. p
poco pont.

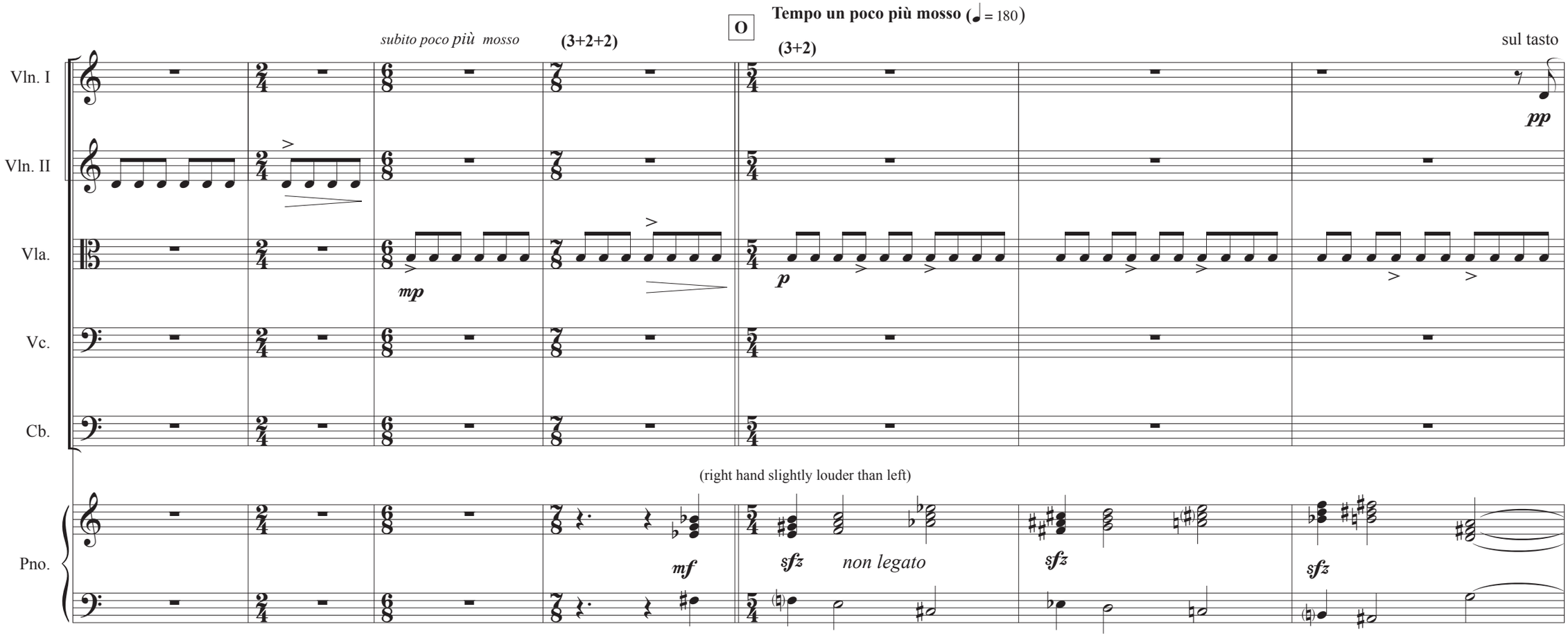

I
J
(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
sfz
mp
mf
p
ord.
poco pont.

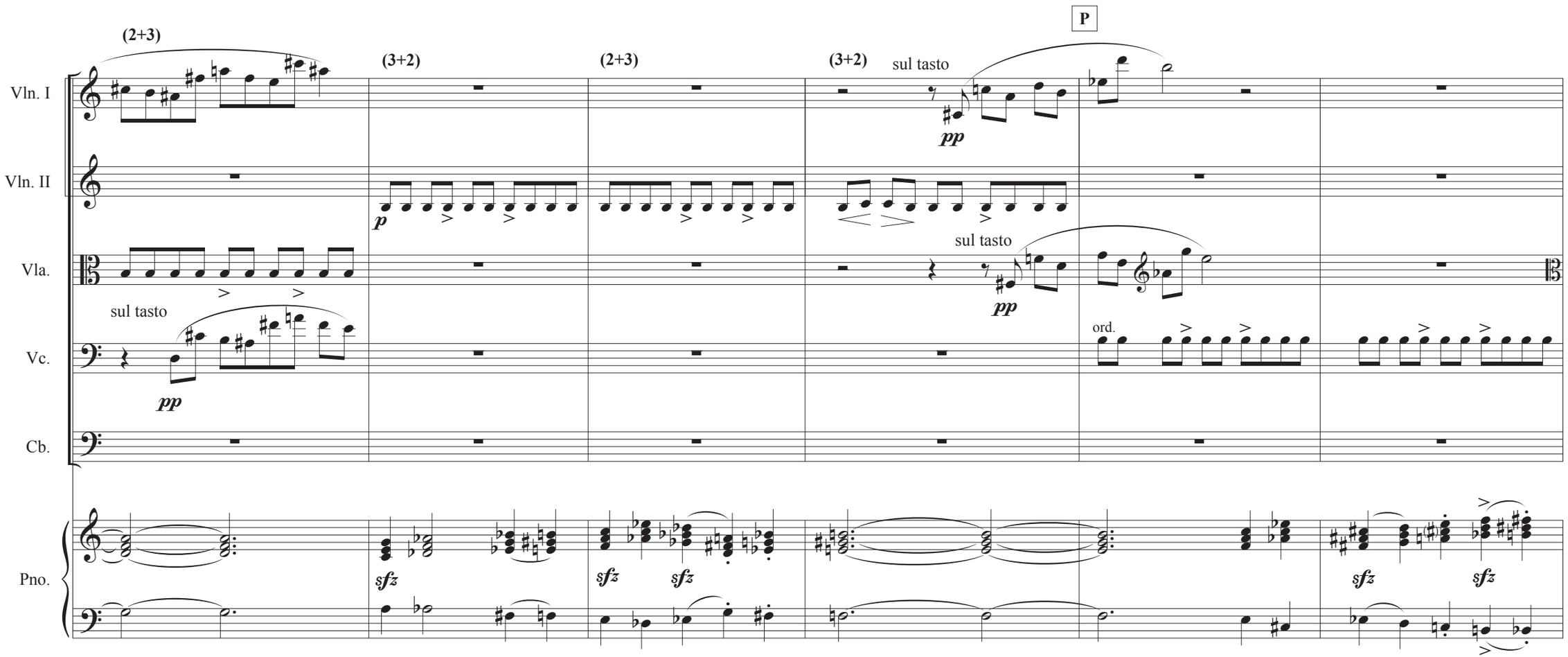

K
(3+2)
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
pizz.
arco
mp
mf
sfp
sf
sfz
f

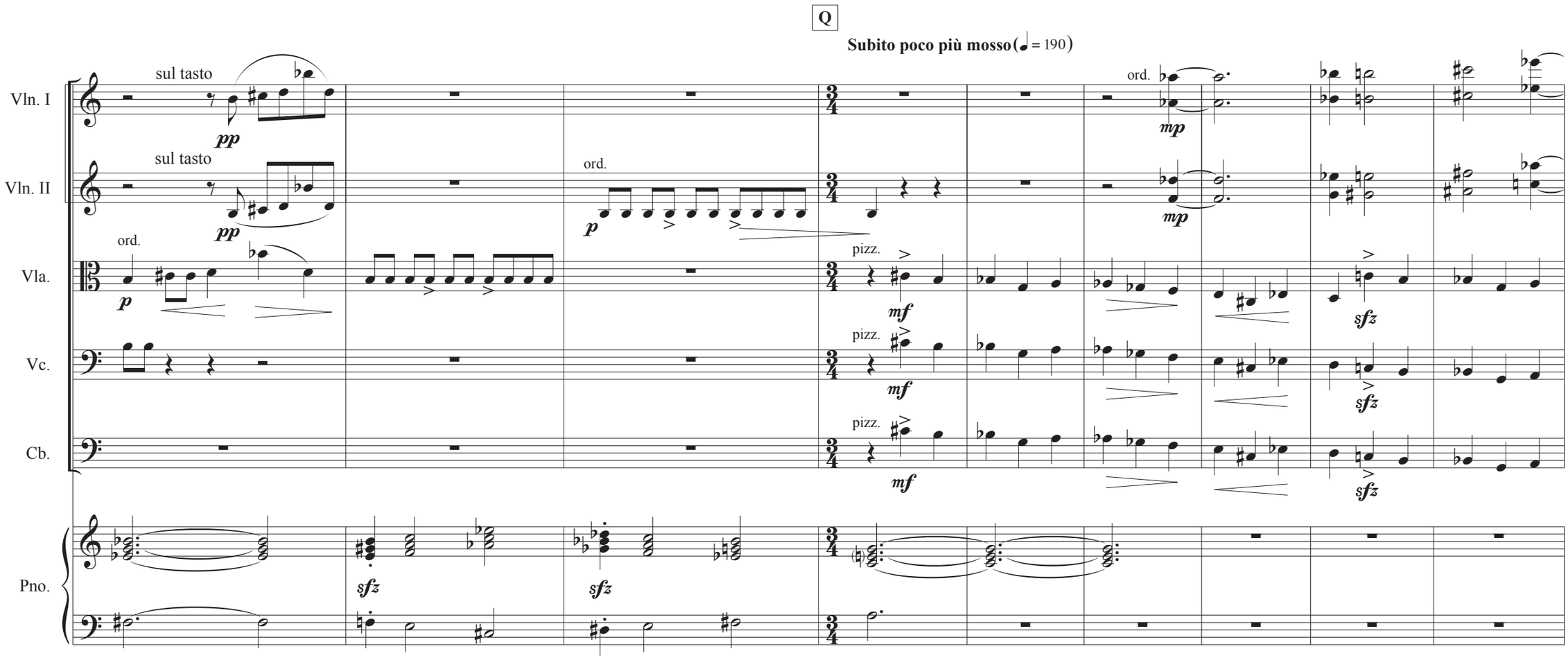

L
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
mp
p
pp
mf
Sost. Ped.
l. v. -->

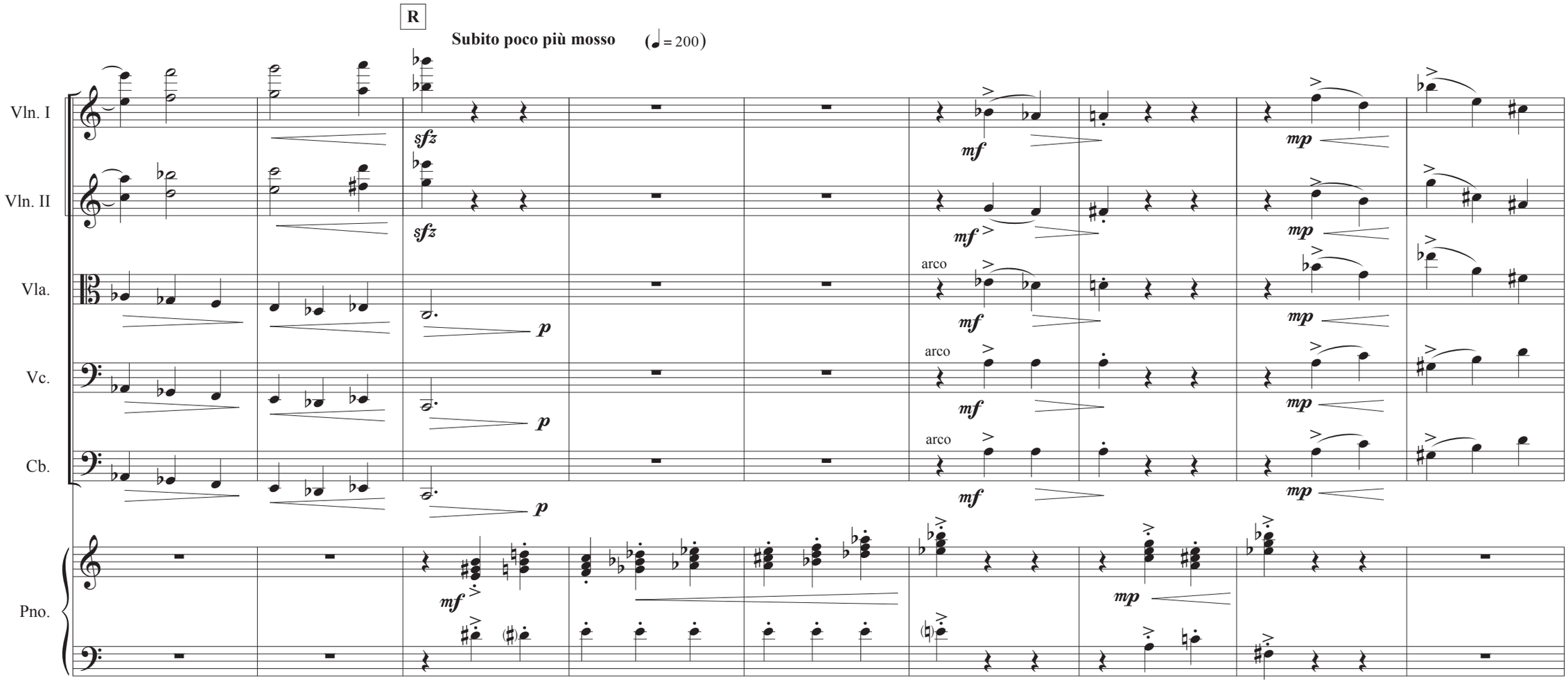

M
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
al niente
al niente
al niente
(p)
(p)
mp
poco a poco crescendo e molto accelerando (eventually double the tempo)

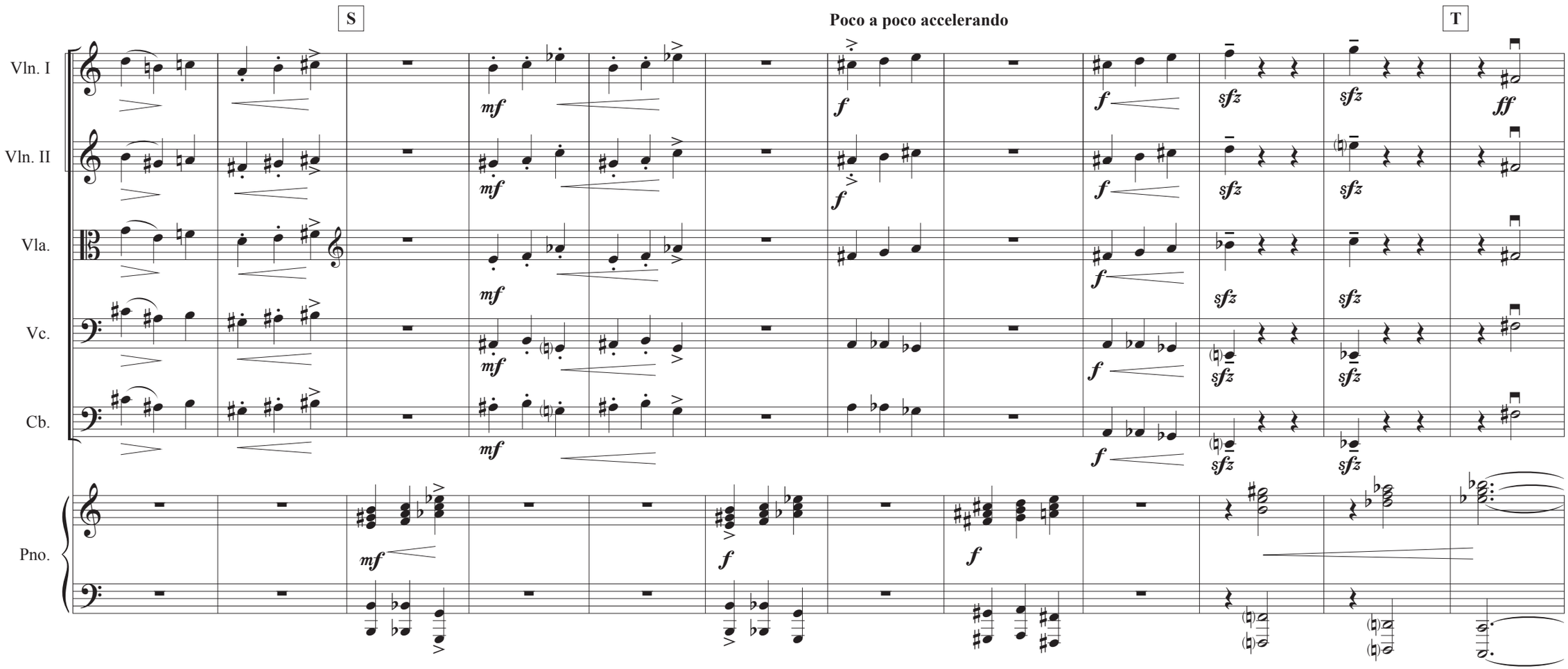

N
Tempo Primo , subito
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
al niente
al niente
(both Peds off)

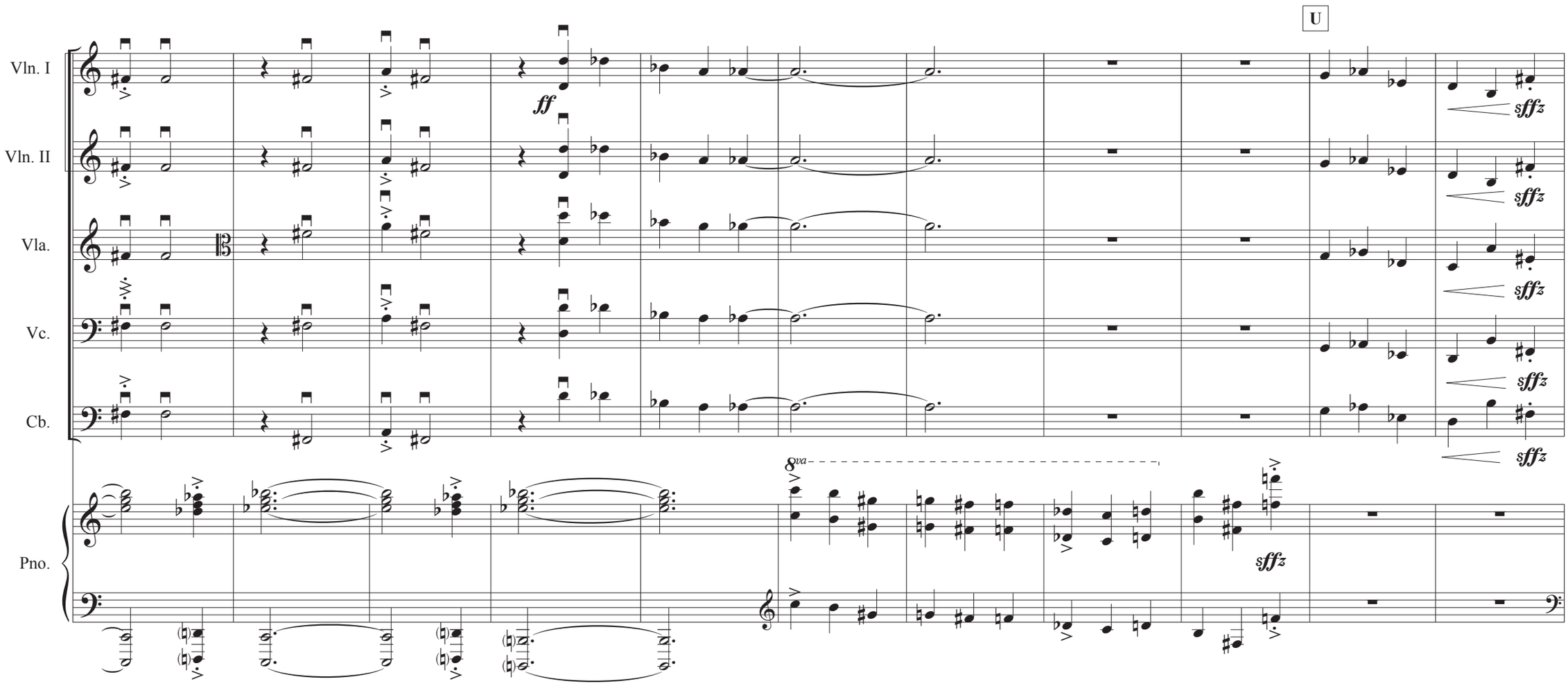

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
subito poco più mosso
(3+2+2)
O
Tempo un poco più mosso (♩= 180)
(3+2)
sul tasto
pp
mp
p
(right hand slightly louder than left)
mf
sfz
non legato
sfz
sfz

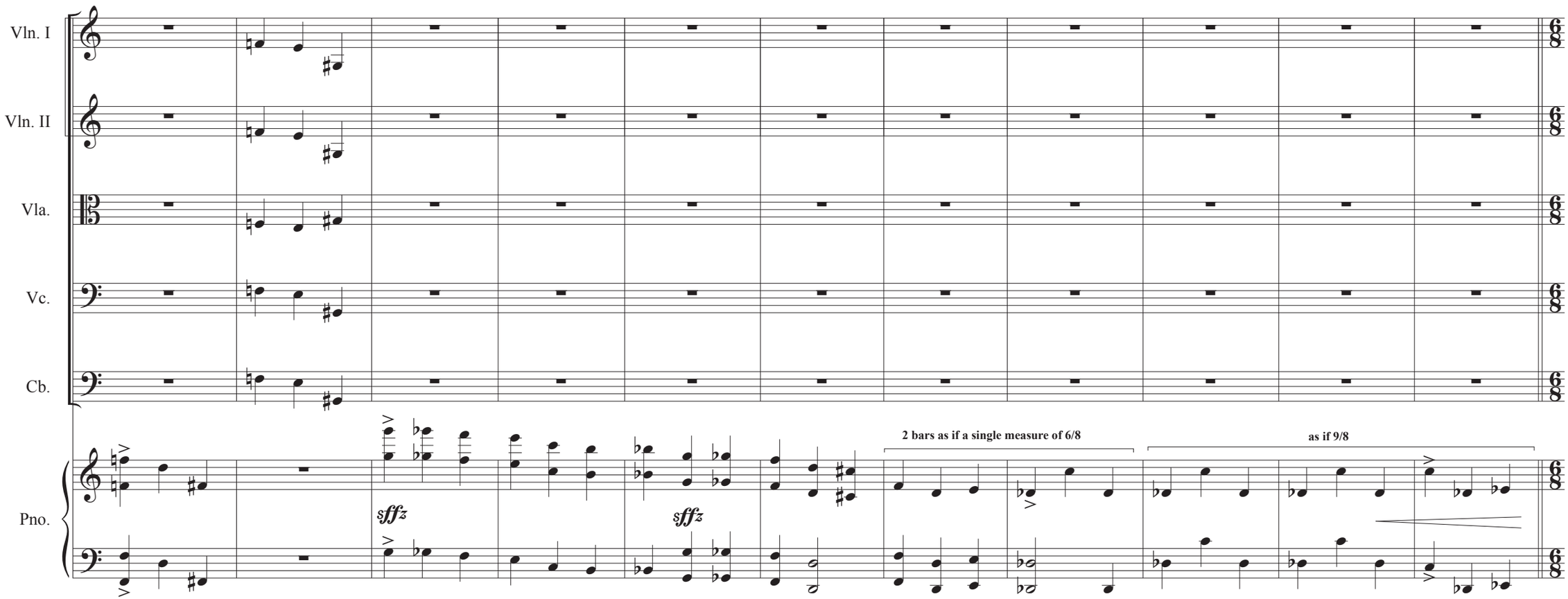

(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
P
sul tasto
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
pp
p
sul tasto
pp
sul tasto
pp
ord.
sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz

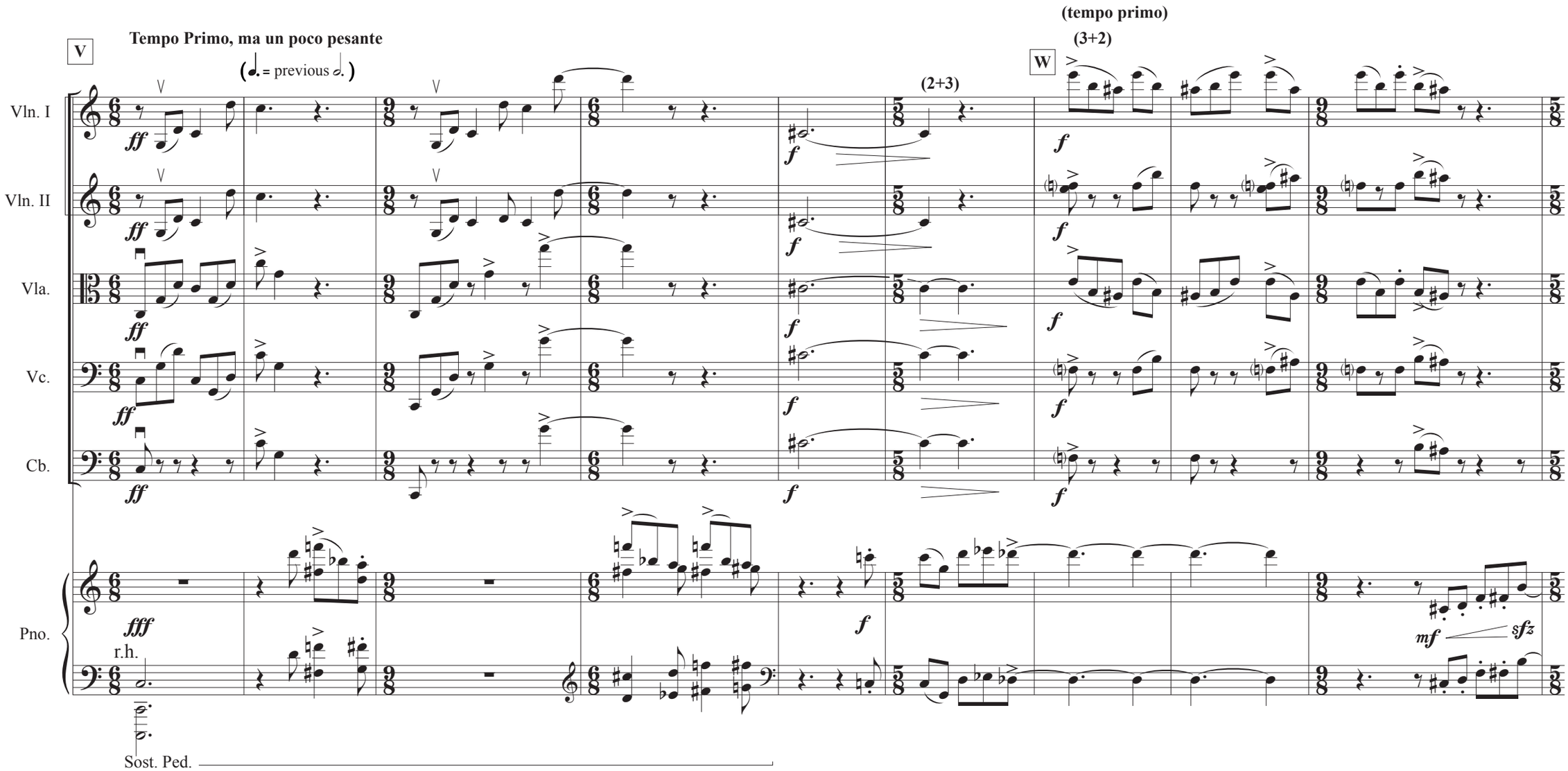

Q
Subito poco più mosso (♩ = 190)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
sul tasto
ord.
pizz.
pp
p
mf
mp
sfz

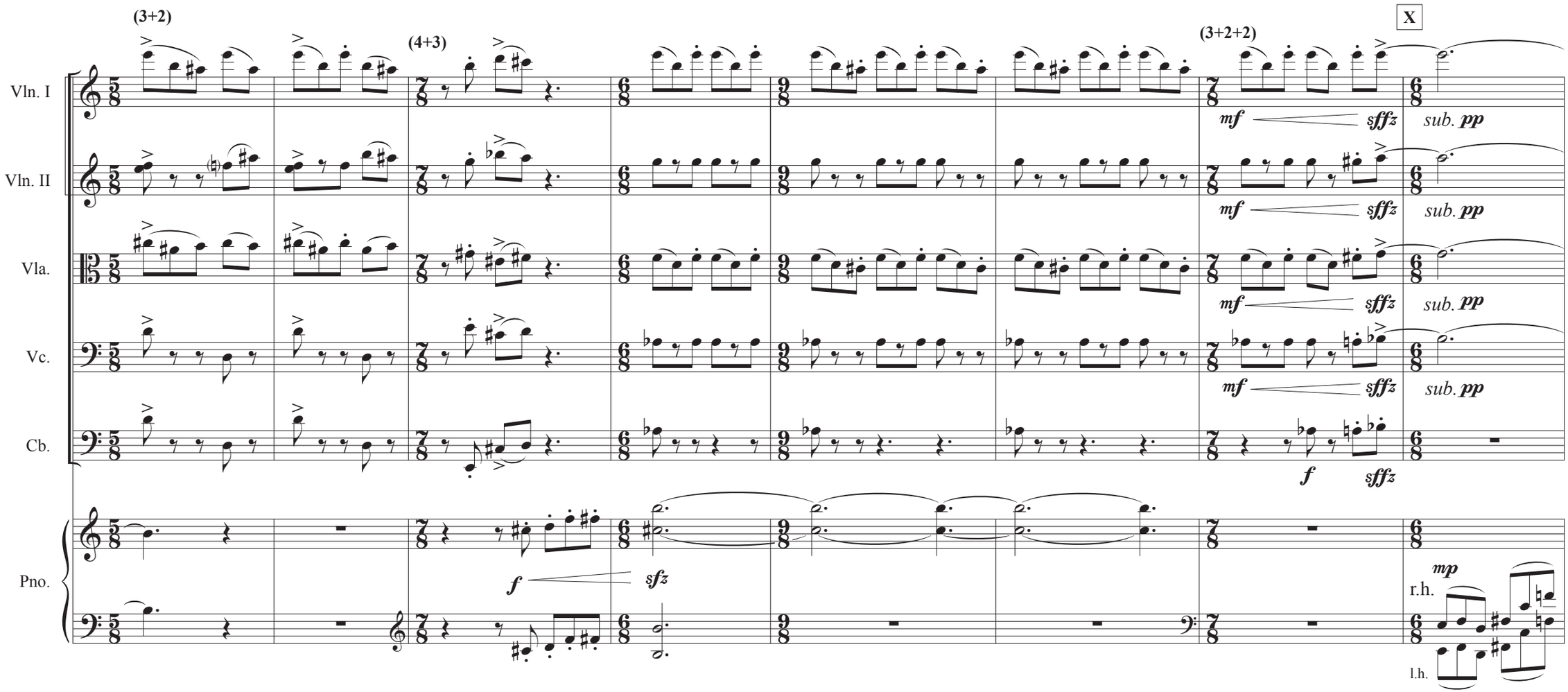

R
Subito poco più mosso
(♩= 200)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
sfz
mf
mp
p
arco

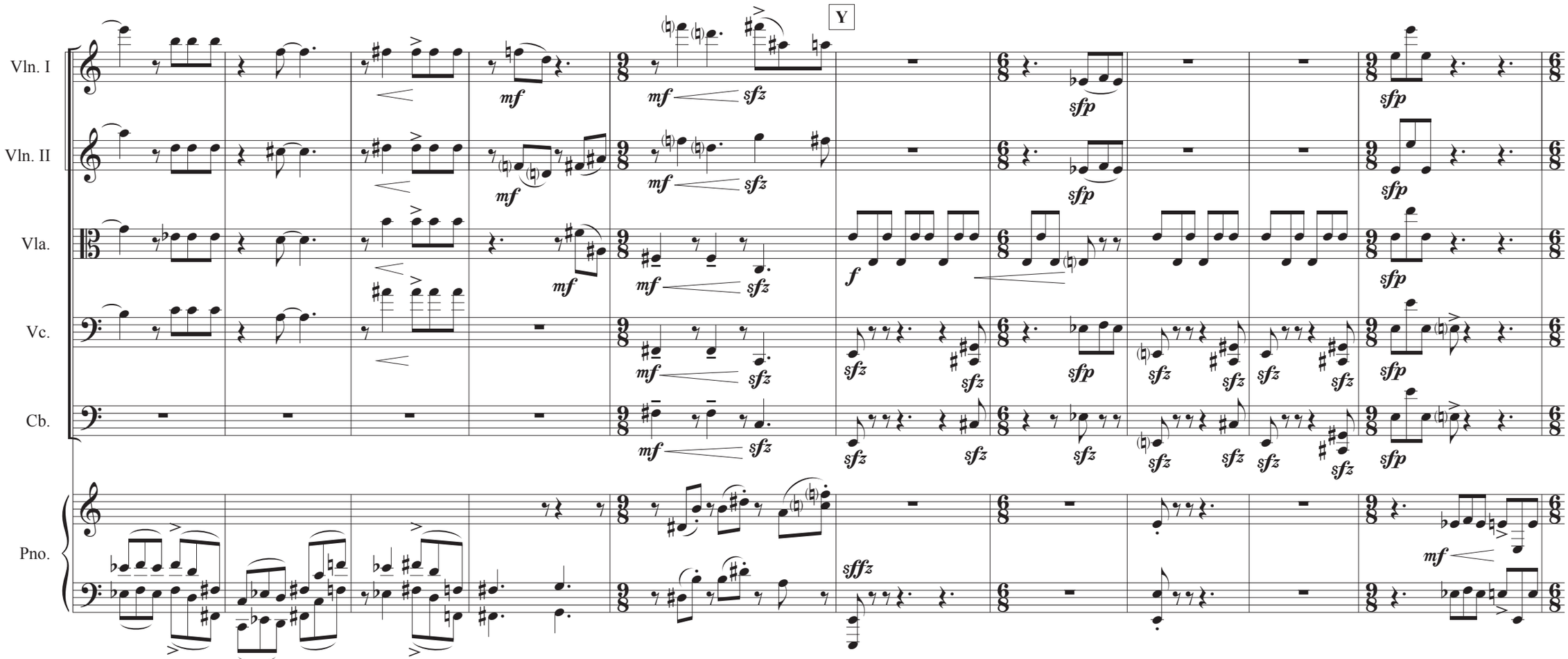

S
Poco a poco accelerando
T
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
mf
f
sfz
ff

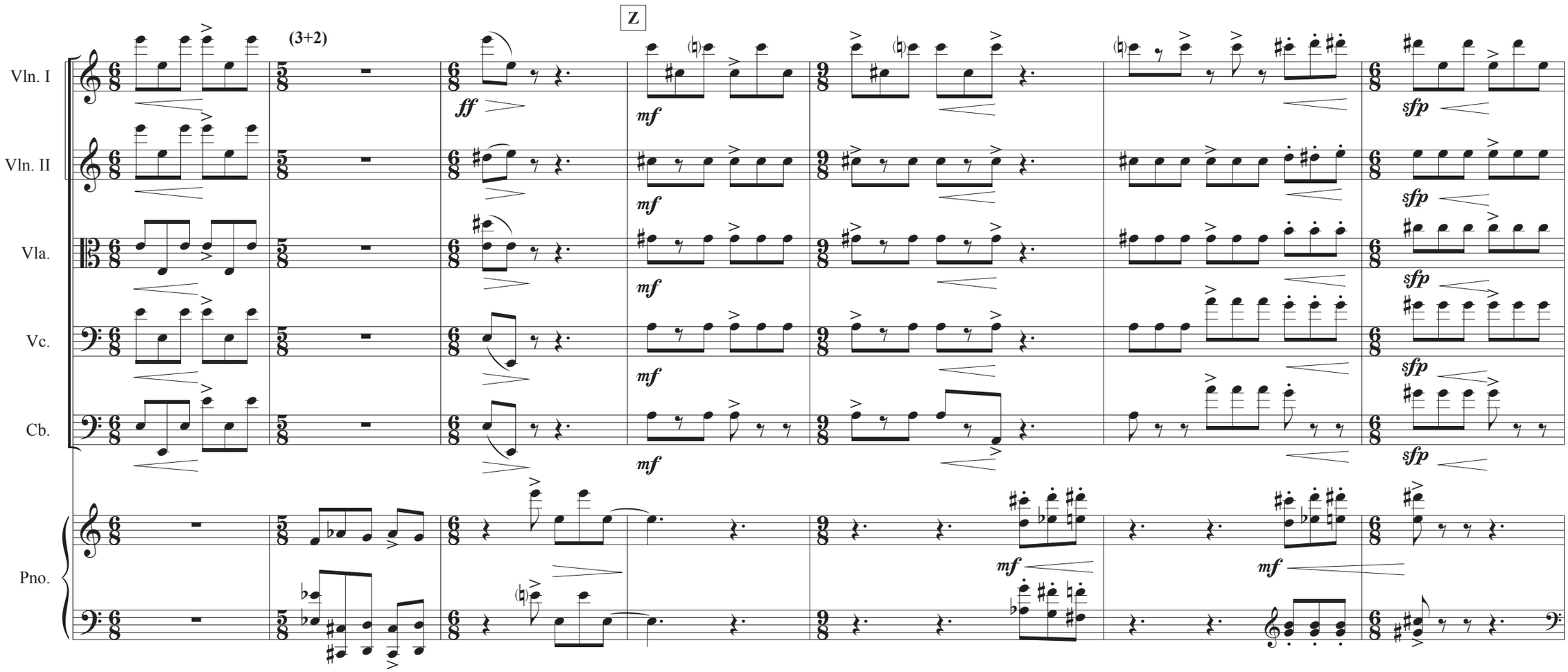

U
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
ff
sffz
8va

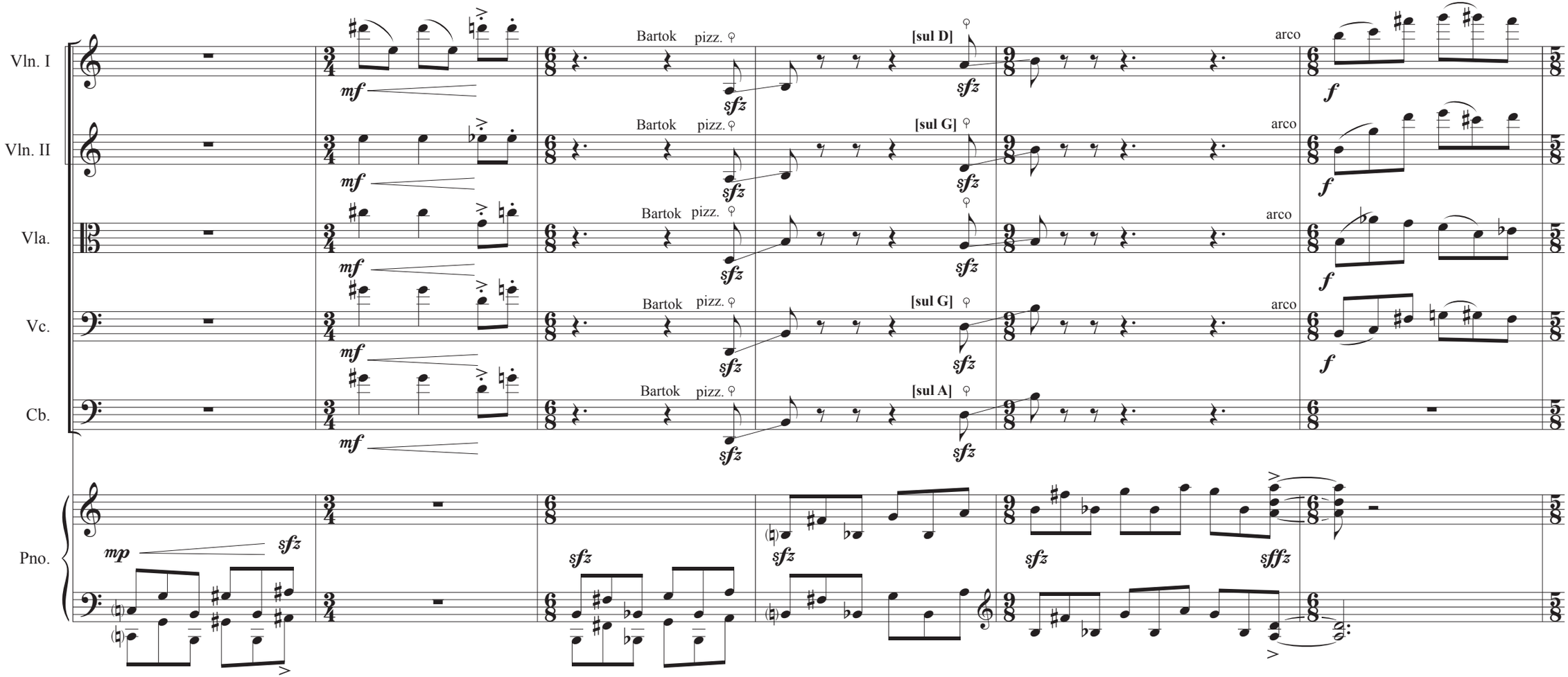

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
sffz
sffz
2 bars as if a single measure of 6/8
as if 9/8

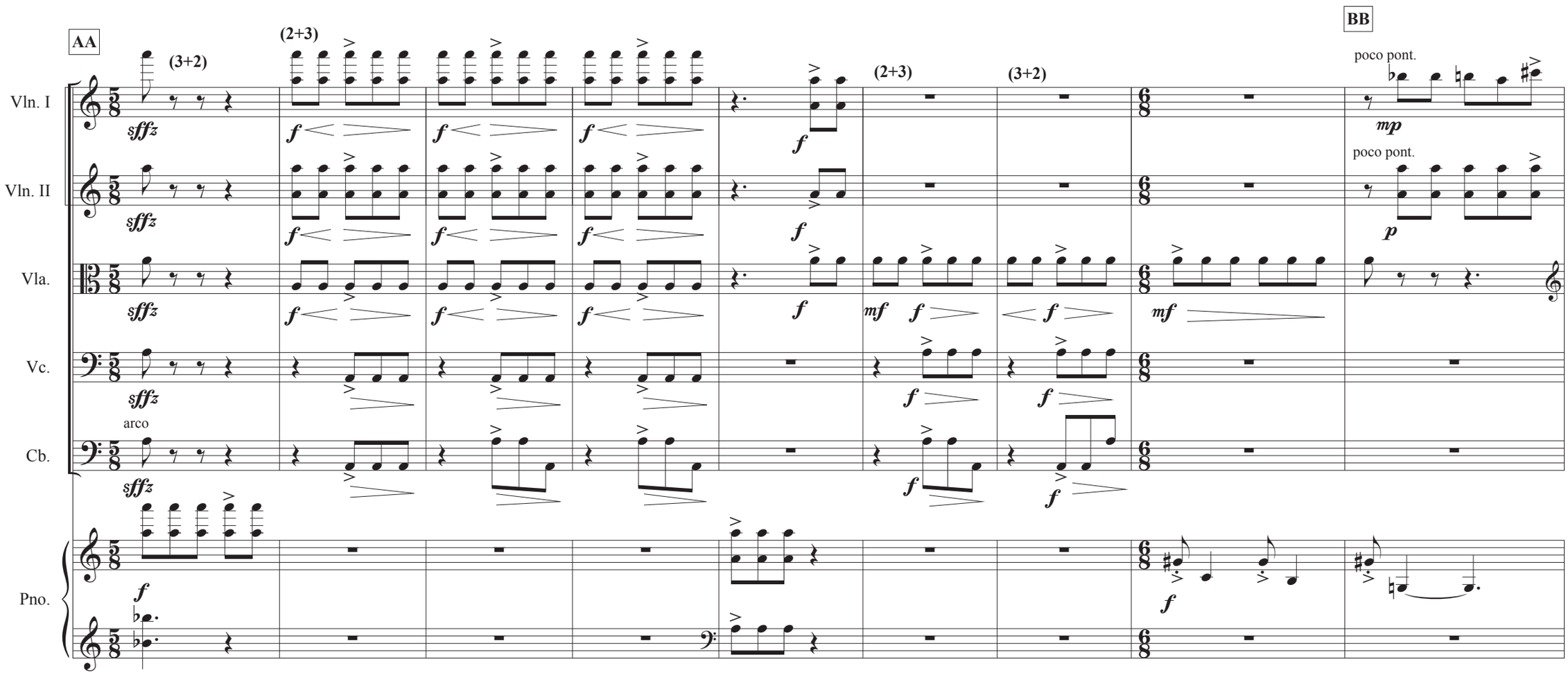

V
Tempo Primo, ma un poco pesante
(♩. = previous 𝅗𝅥.)
W
(tempo primo)
(3+2)
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
ff
f
fff
mf
sfz
r.h.
Sost. Ped.

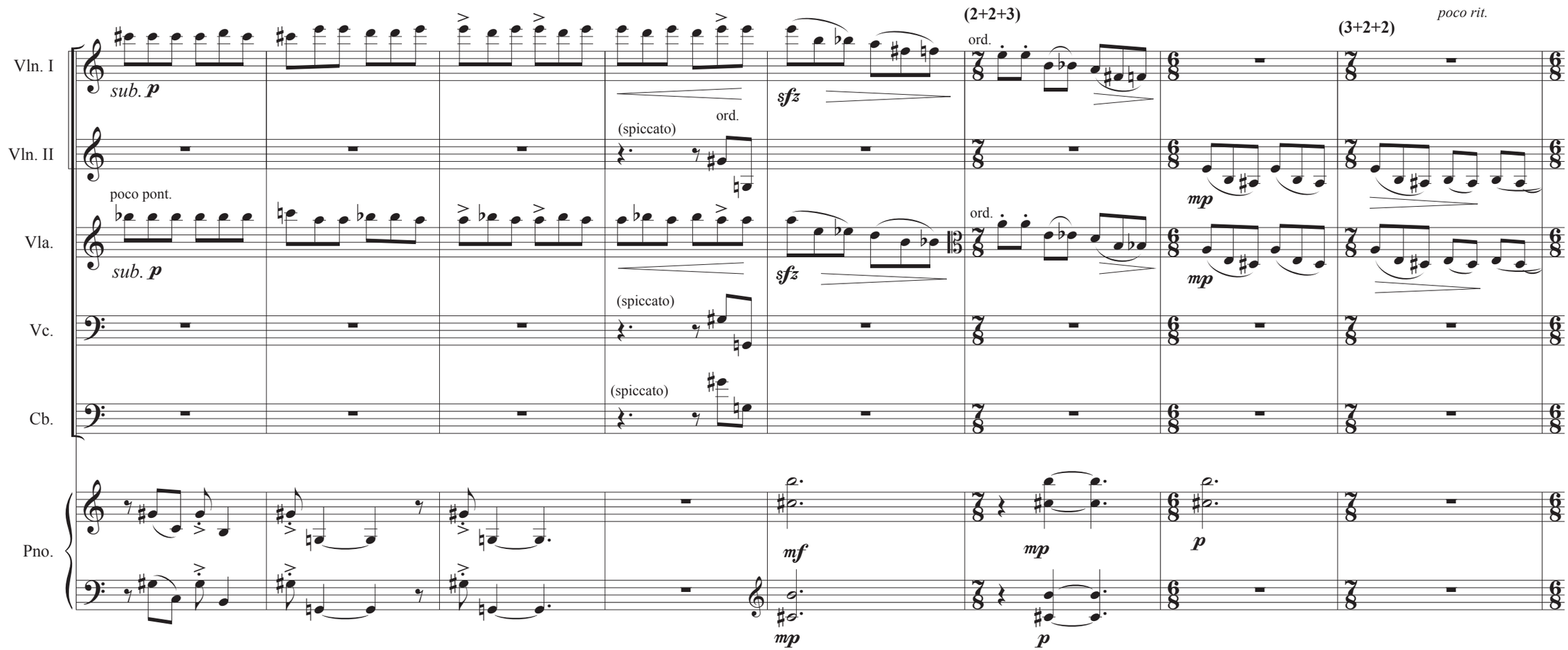

(3+2)
(4+3)
(3+2+2)
X
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
mf
sffz
sub. pp
f
sfz
mp
r.h.
l.h.

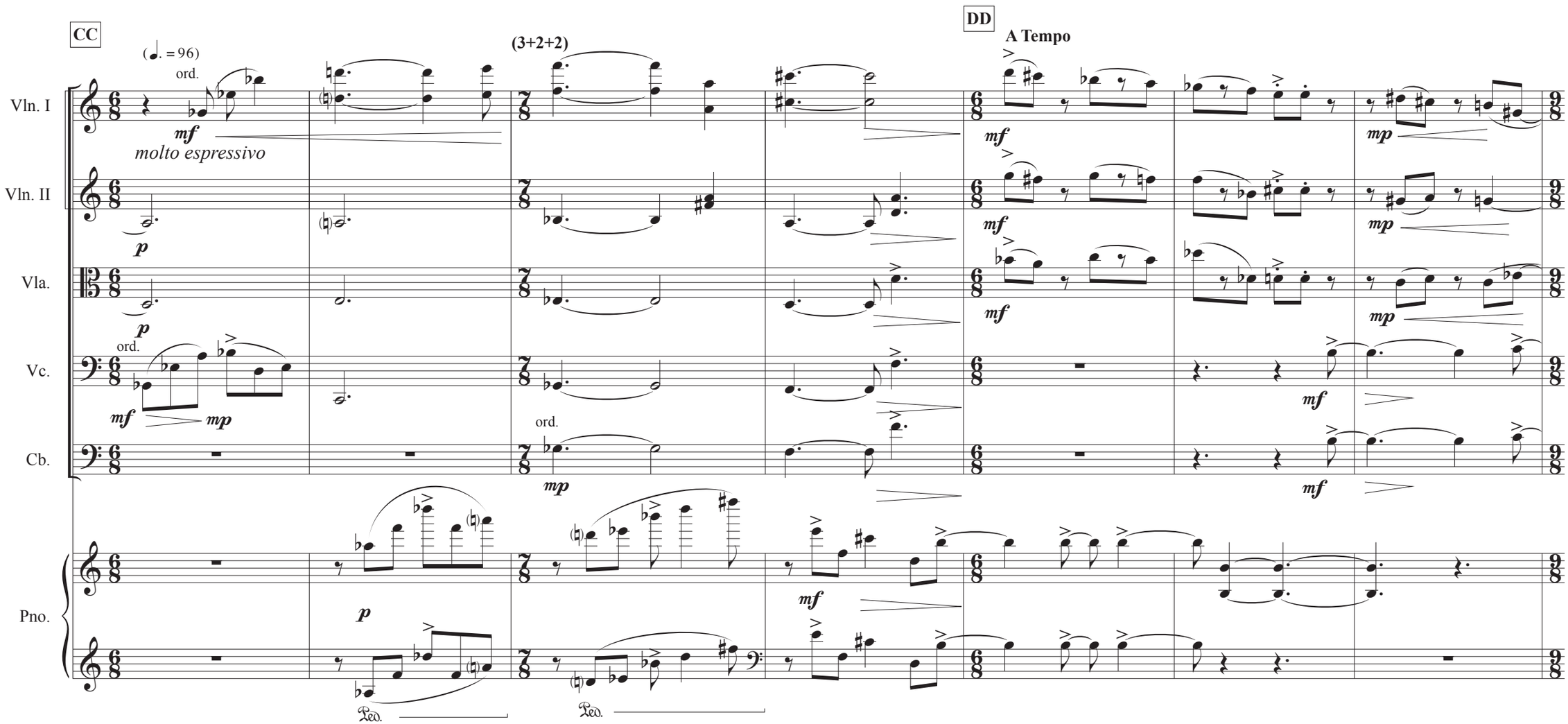

Y
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.

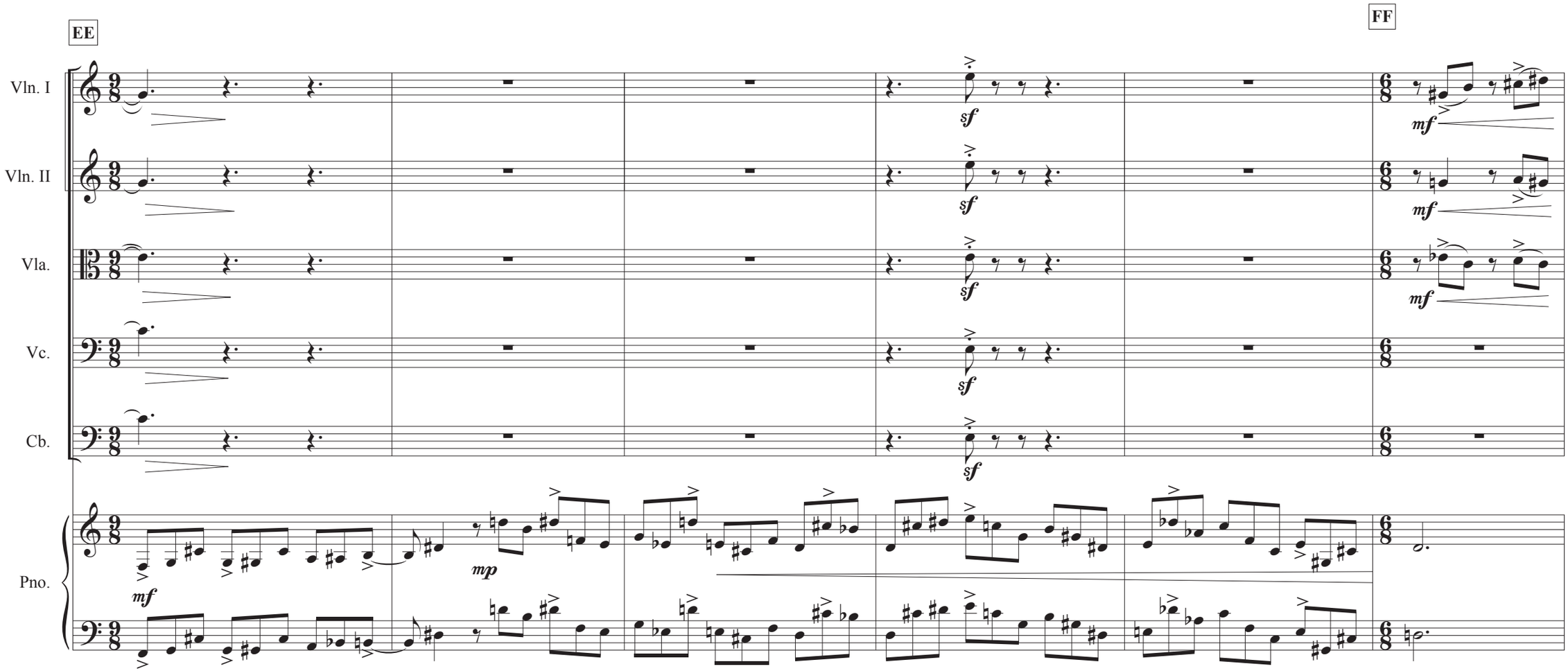

Z
(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
ff
mf
sfp

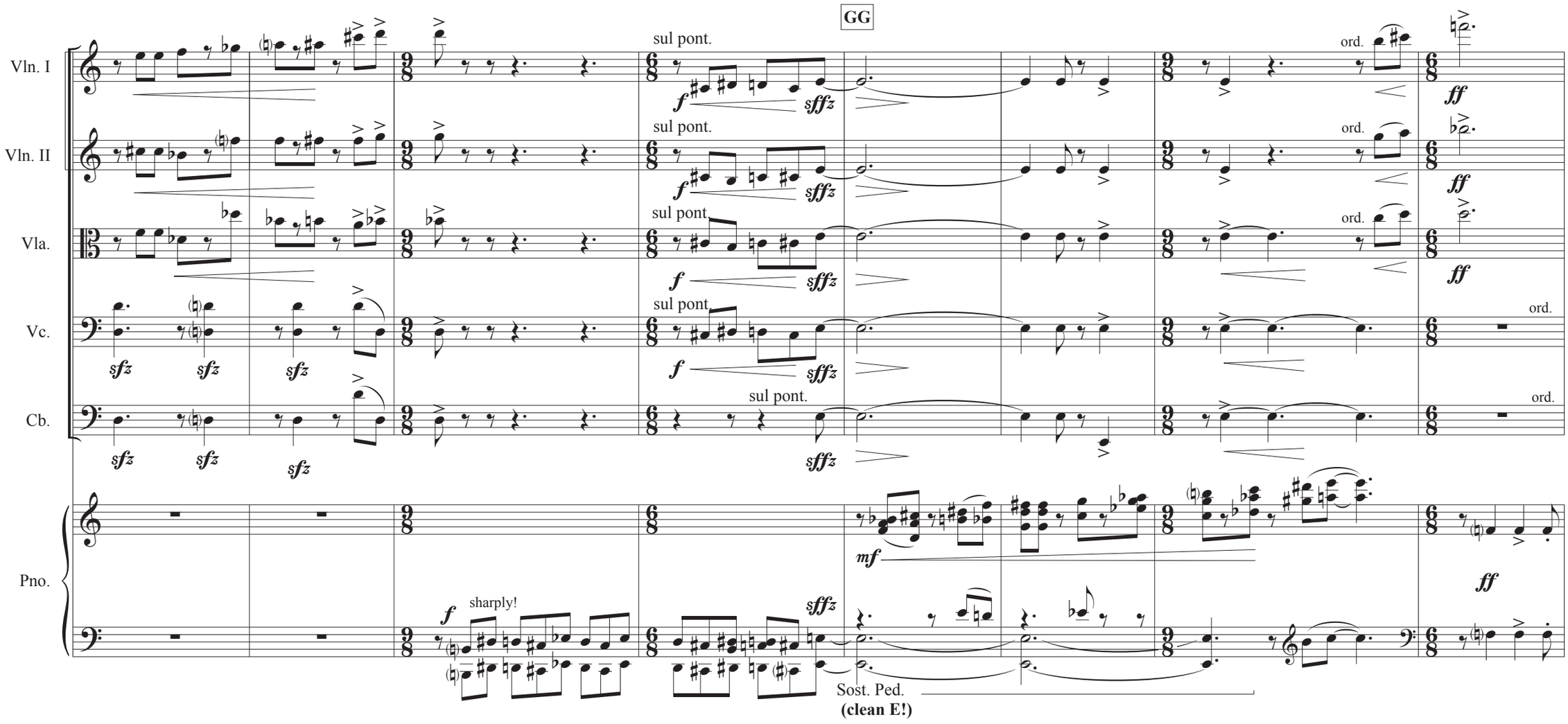

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
Bartok pizz.
[sul D]
[sul G]
[sul A]
arco
mf
sfz
mp
sffz
f

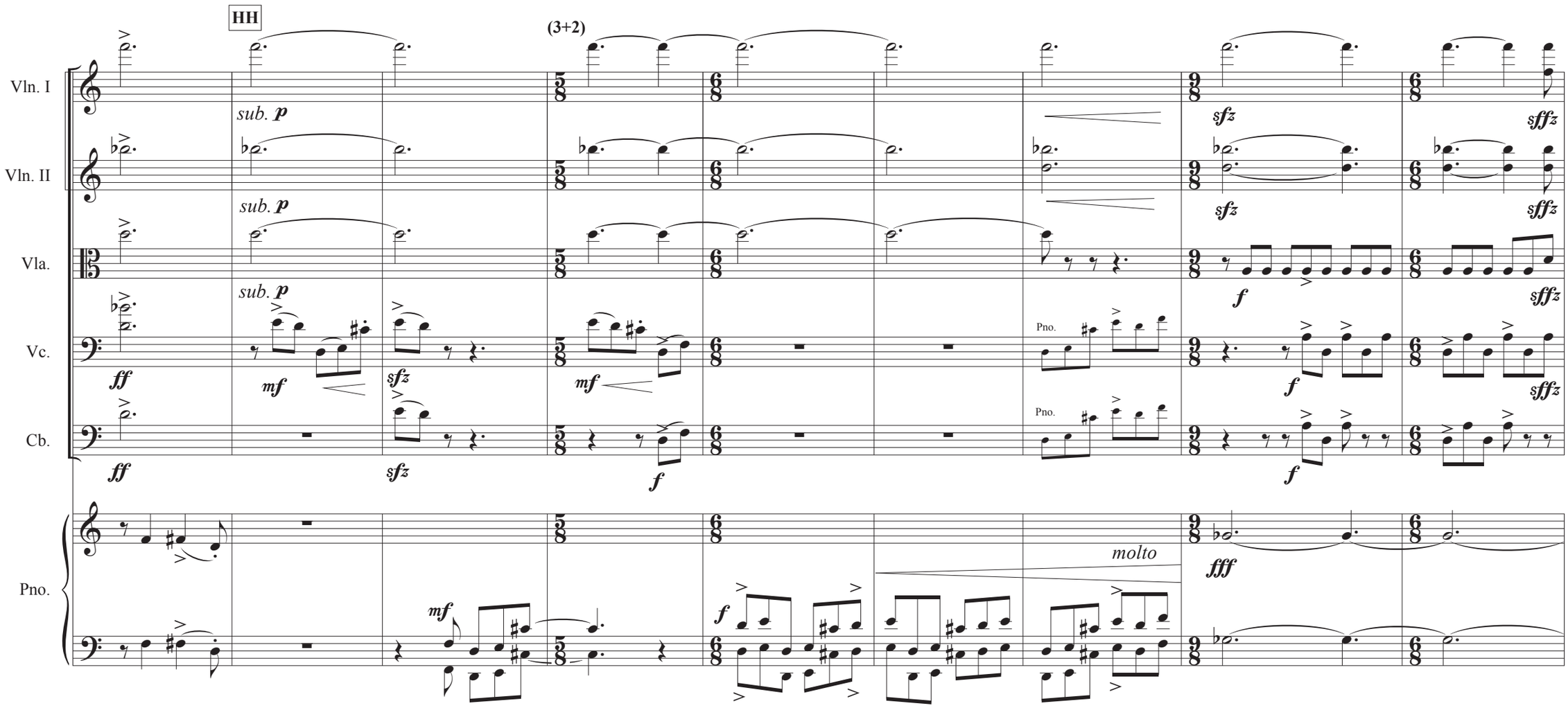

AA
BB
(3+2)
(2+3)
(2+3)
(3+2)
poco pont.
poco pont.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
arco
sffz
f
mf
mp
p

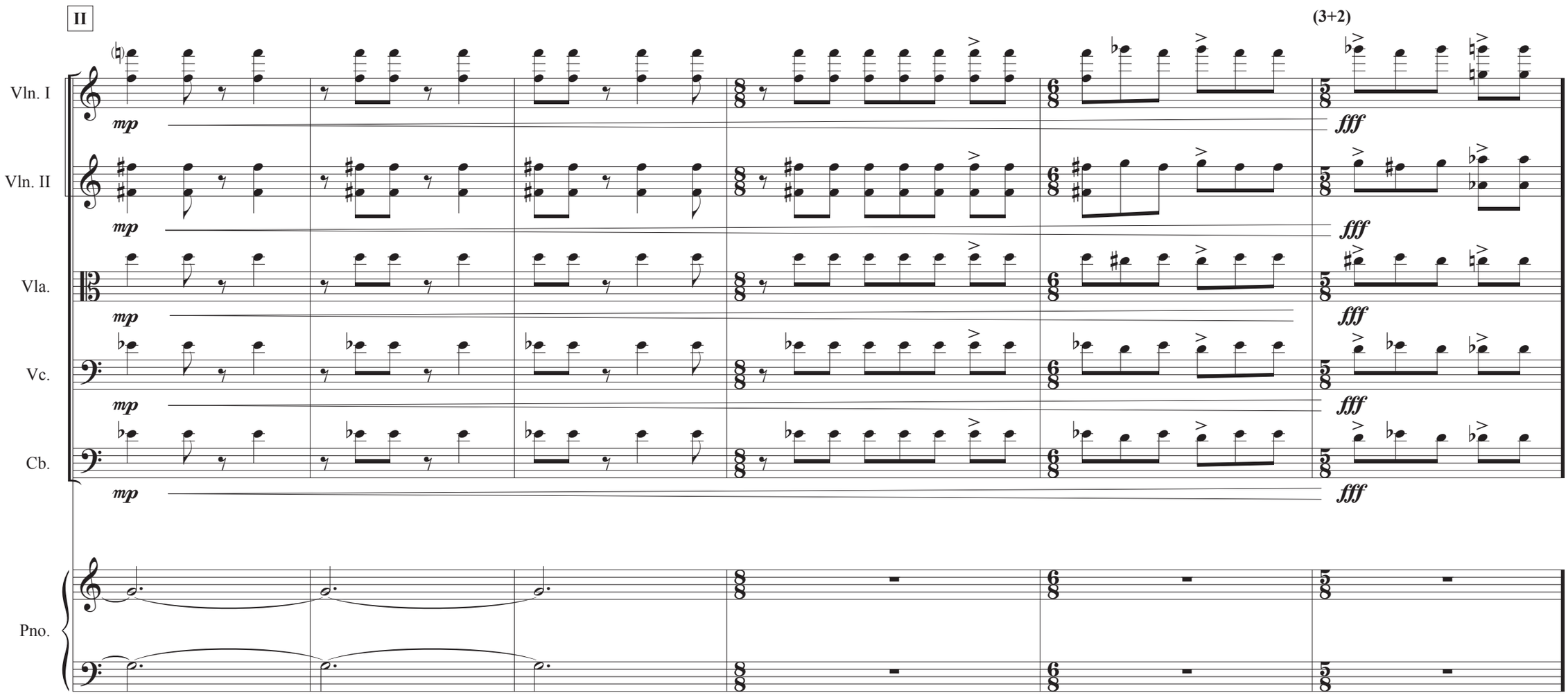

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
sub. p
poco pont.
sub. p
(spiccato)
ord.
(spiccato)
(spiccato)
sfz
sfz
(2+2+3)
ord.
ord.
mp
mp
(3+2+2)
poco rit.
mf
mp
mp
p
p

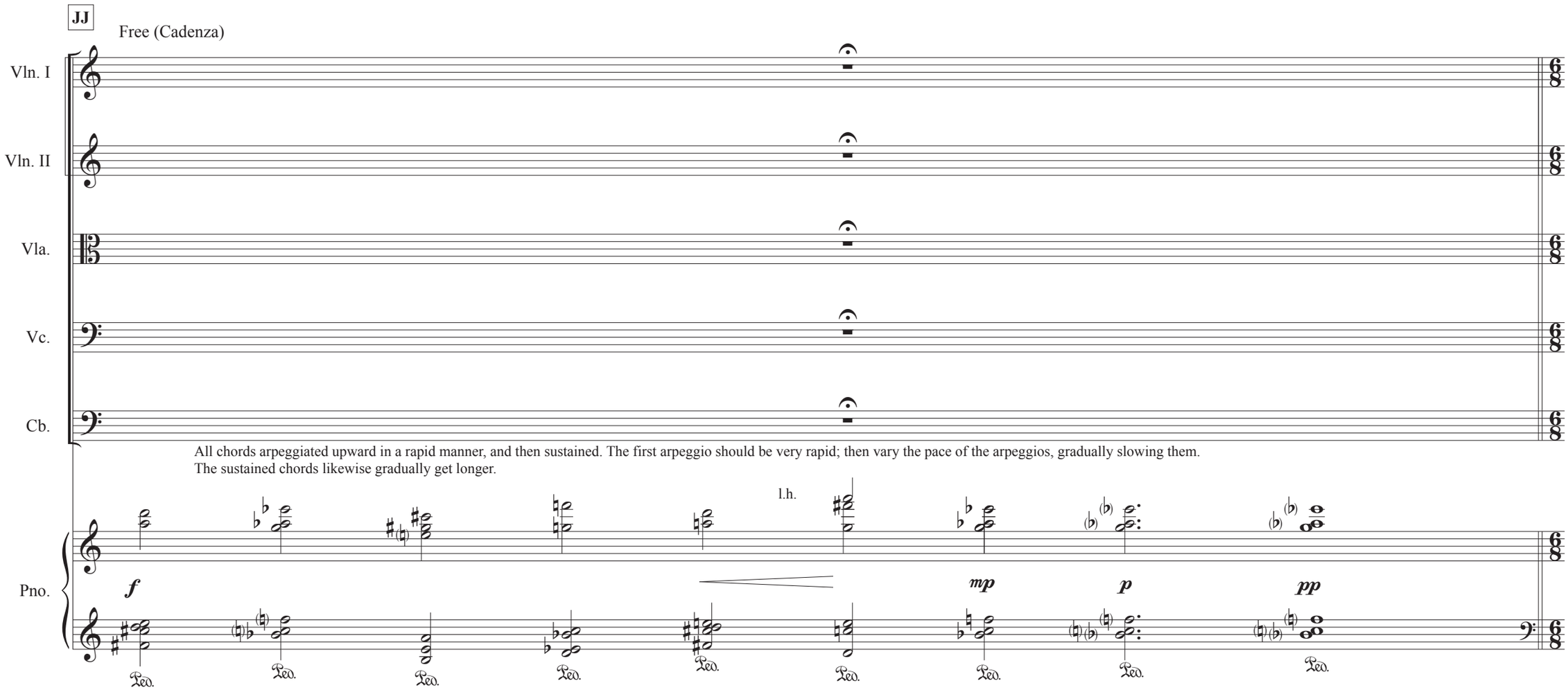

CC
(♩. = 96)
ord.
mf
molto espressivo
(3+2+2)
DD
A Tempo
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
p
mp
mf
ord.
Ped.

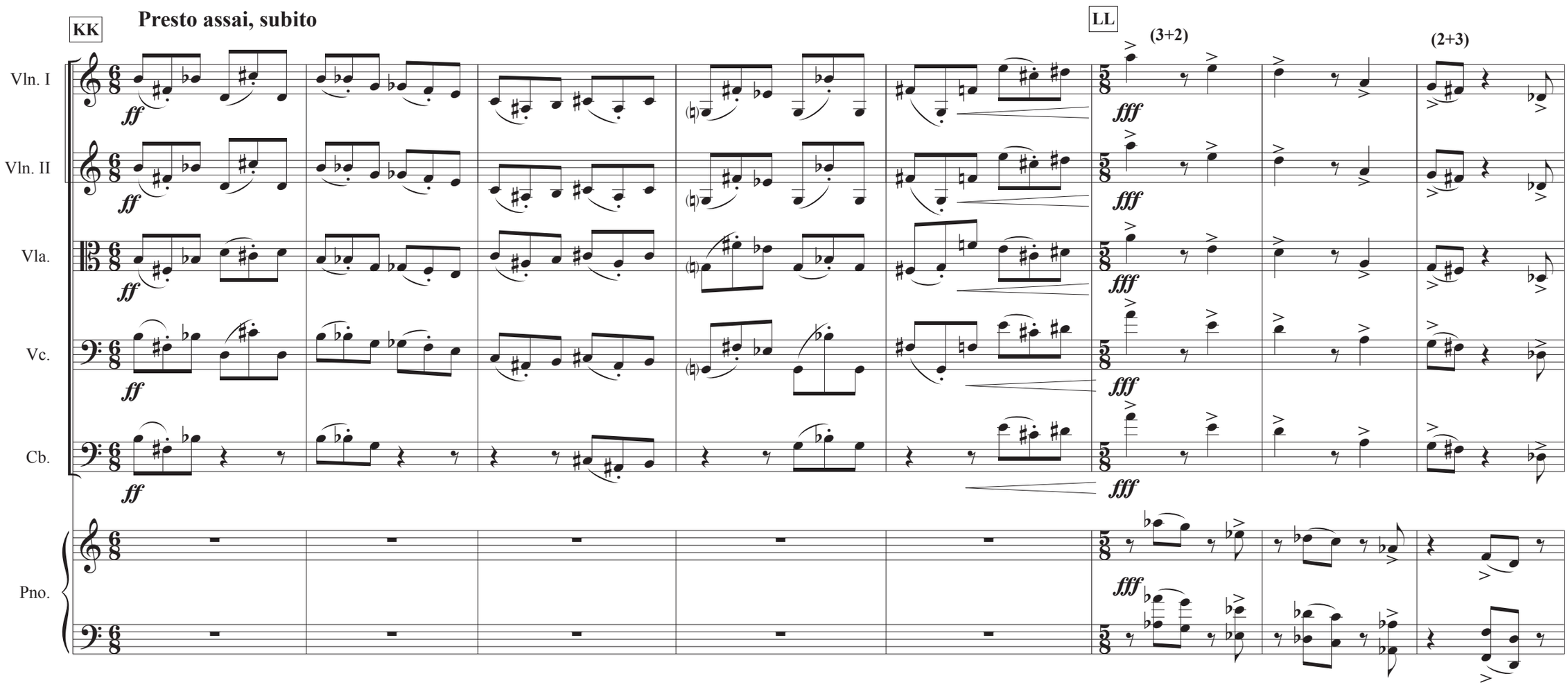

EE
FF
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
sf
mf
mp

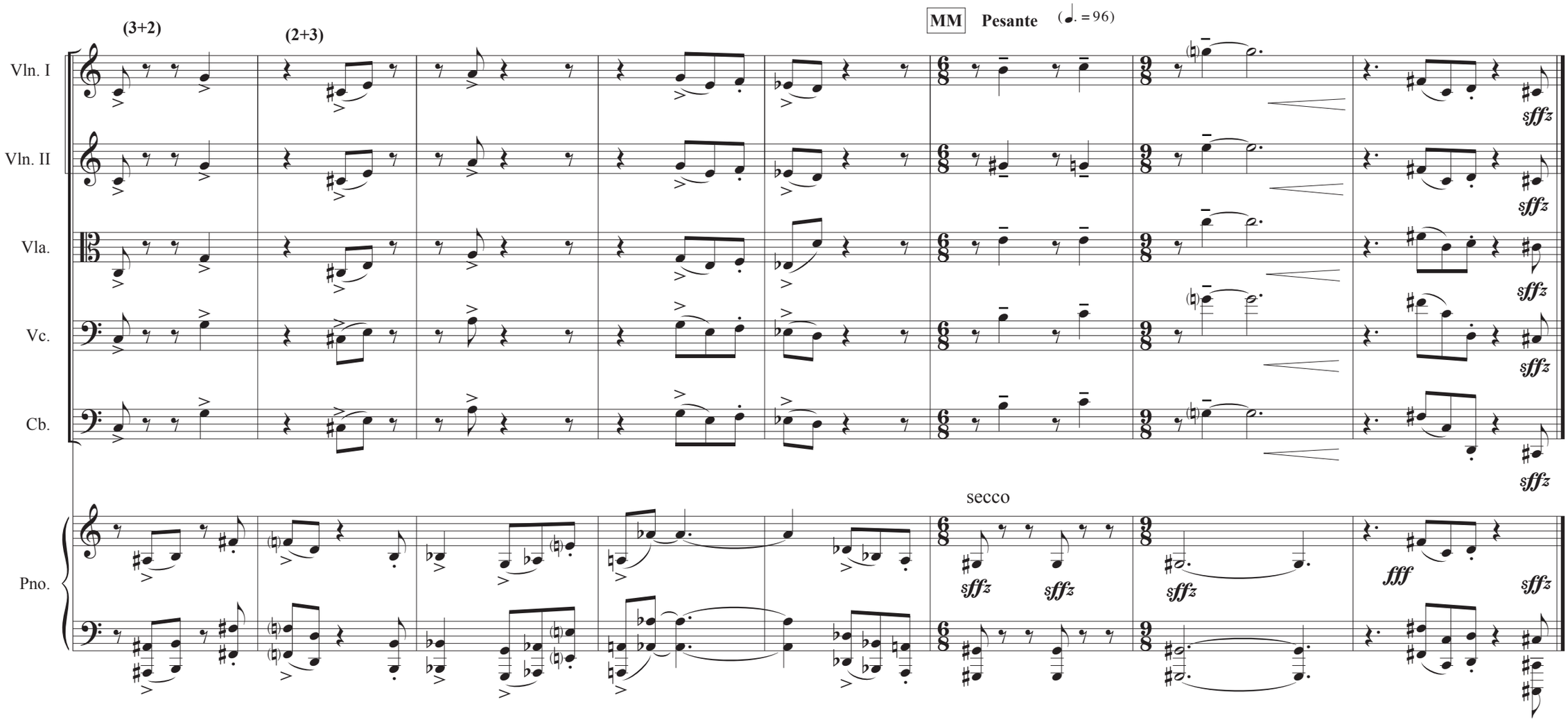

GG
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
sul pont.
ord.
sharply!
Sost. Ped.
(clean E!)


HH
(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
sub. p
ff
mf
sfz
f
Pno.
molto
fff
sffz


II
(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
mp
fff


JJ
Free (Cadenza)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
All chords arpeggiated upward in a rapid manner, and then sustained. The first arpeggio should be very rapid; then vary the pace of the arpeggios, gradually slowing them.
The sustained chords likewise gradually get longer.
l.h.
Pno.
f
mp
p
pp
Ped.

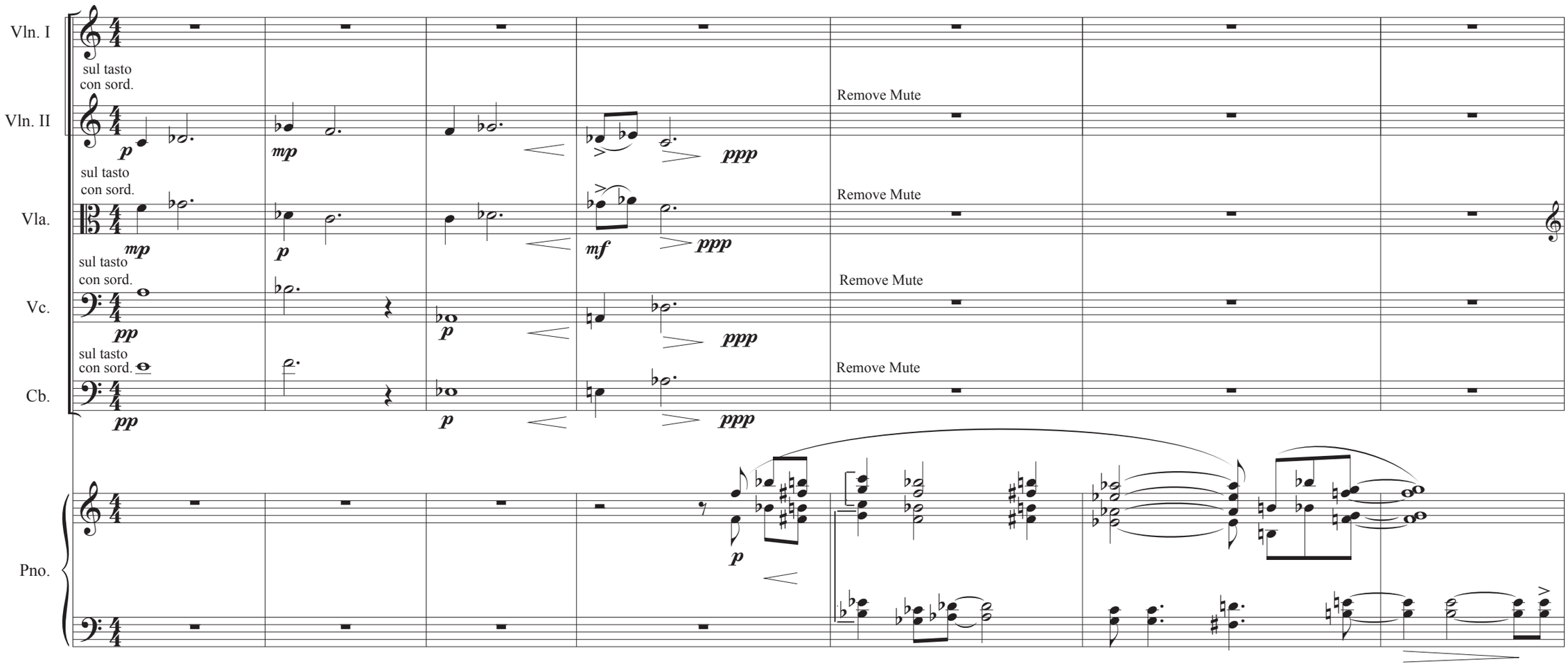

KK
Presto assai, subito
LL
(3+2)
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
ff
fff

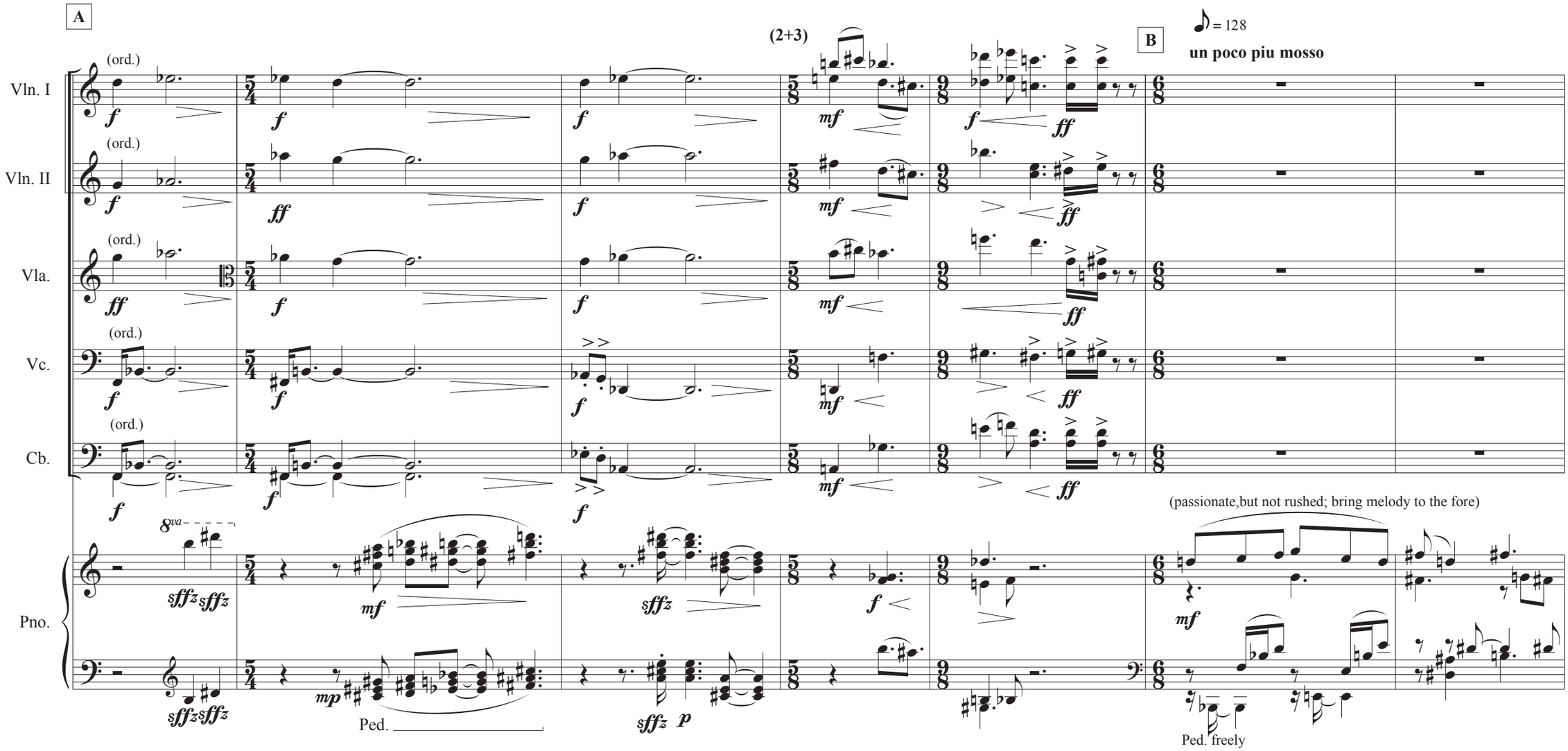

(3+2)
(2+3)
MM
Pesante
(♩. = 96)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
sffz
secco
fff

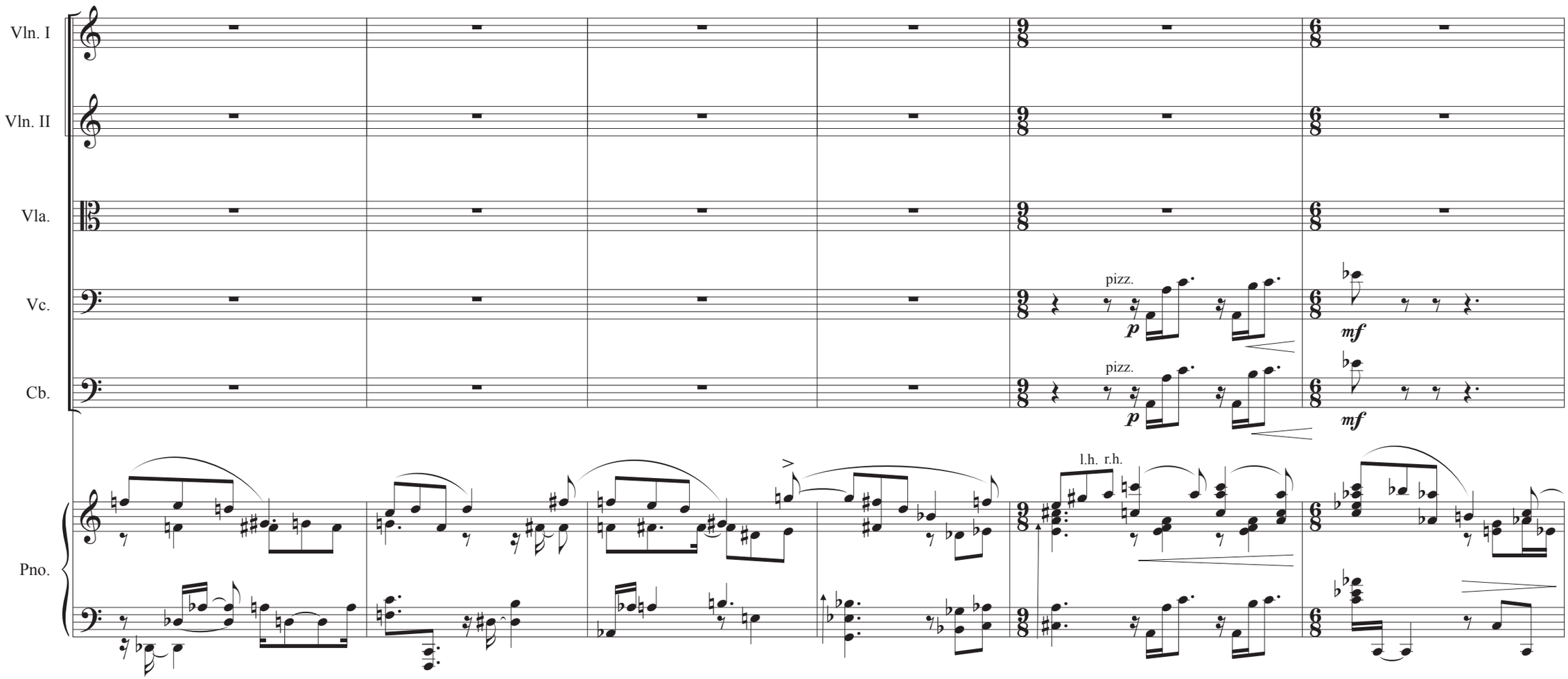
Purgatory

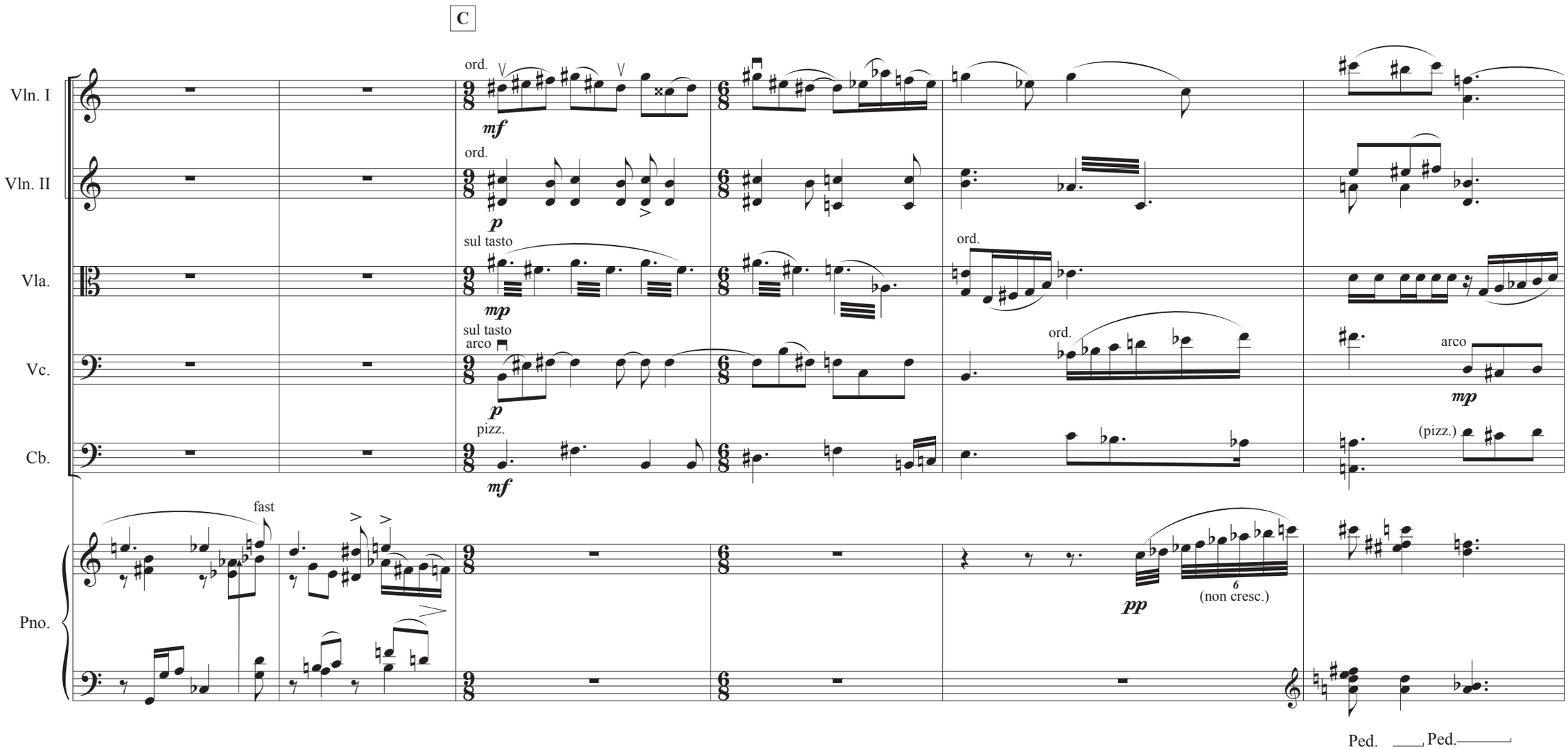
Adagio espressivo

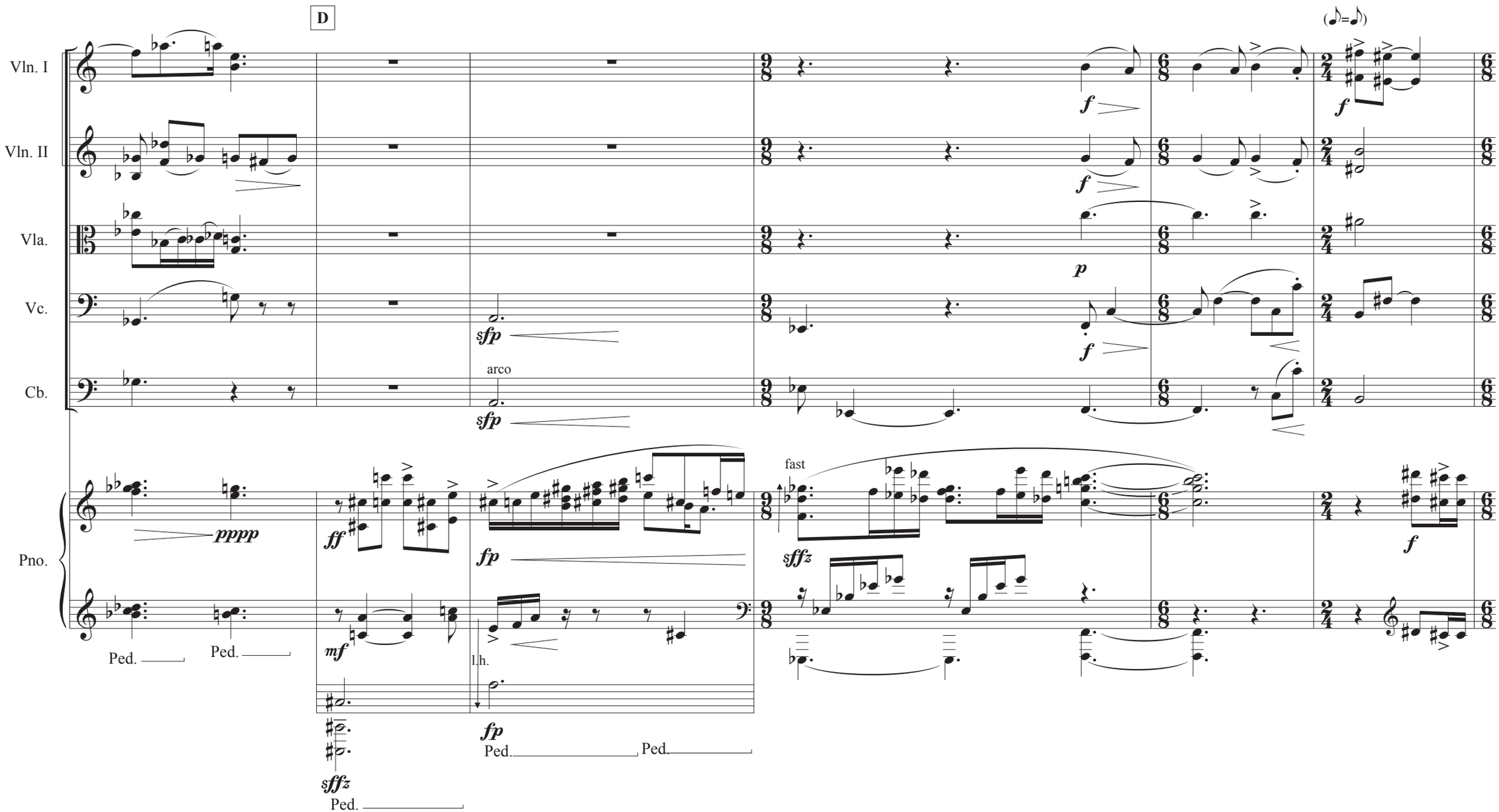
♩ = 56, **but freely**

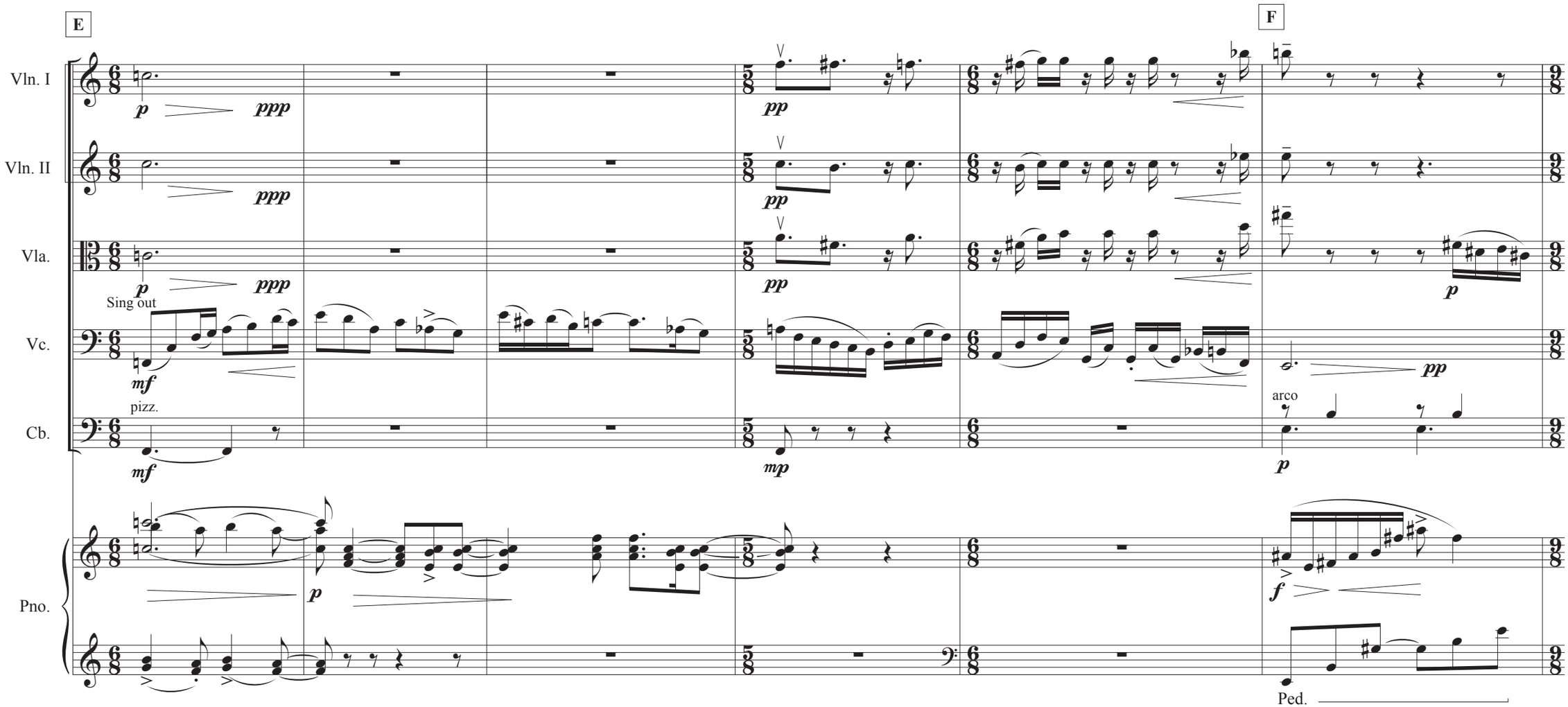


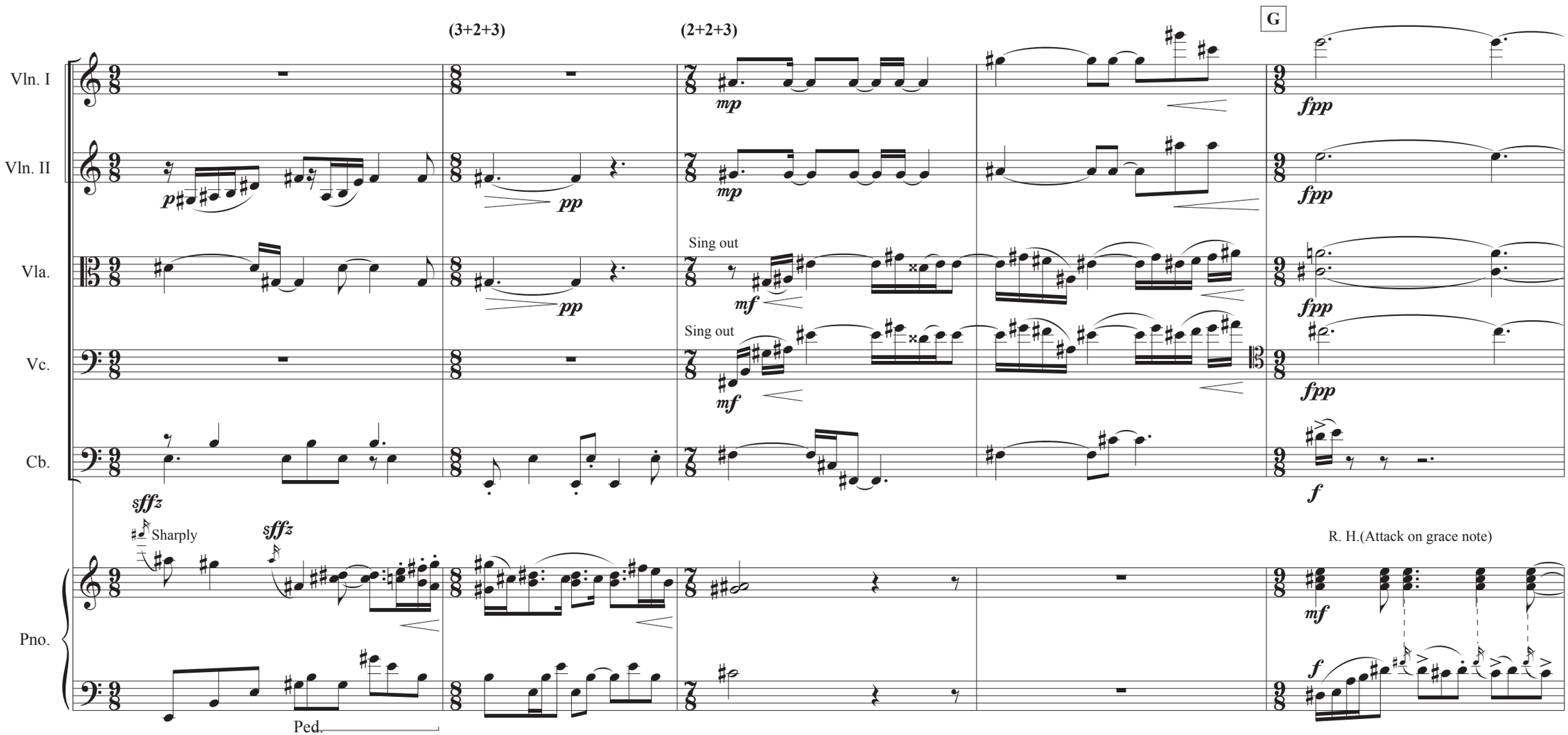

A
(2+3)
B
♪ = 128
un poco piu mosso
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
(ord.)
8va
(passionate,but not rushed; bring melody to the fore)
Ped.
Ped. freely

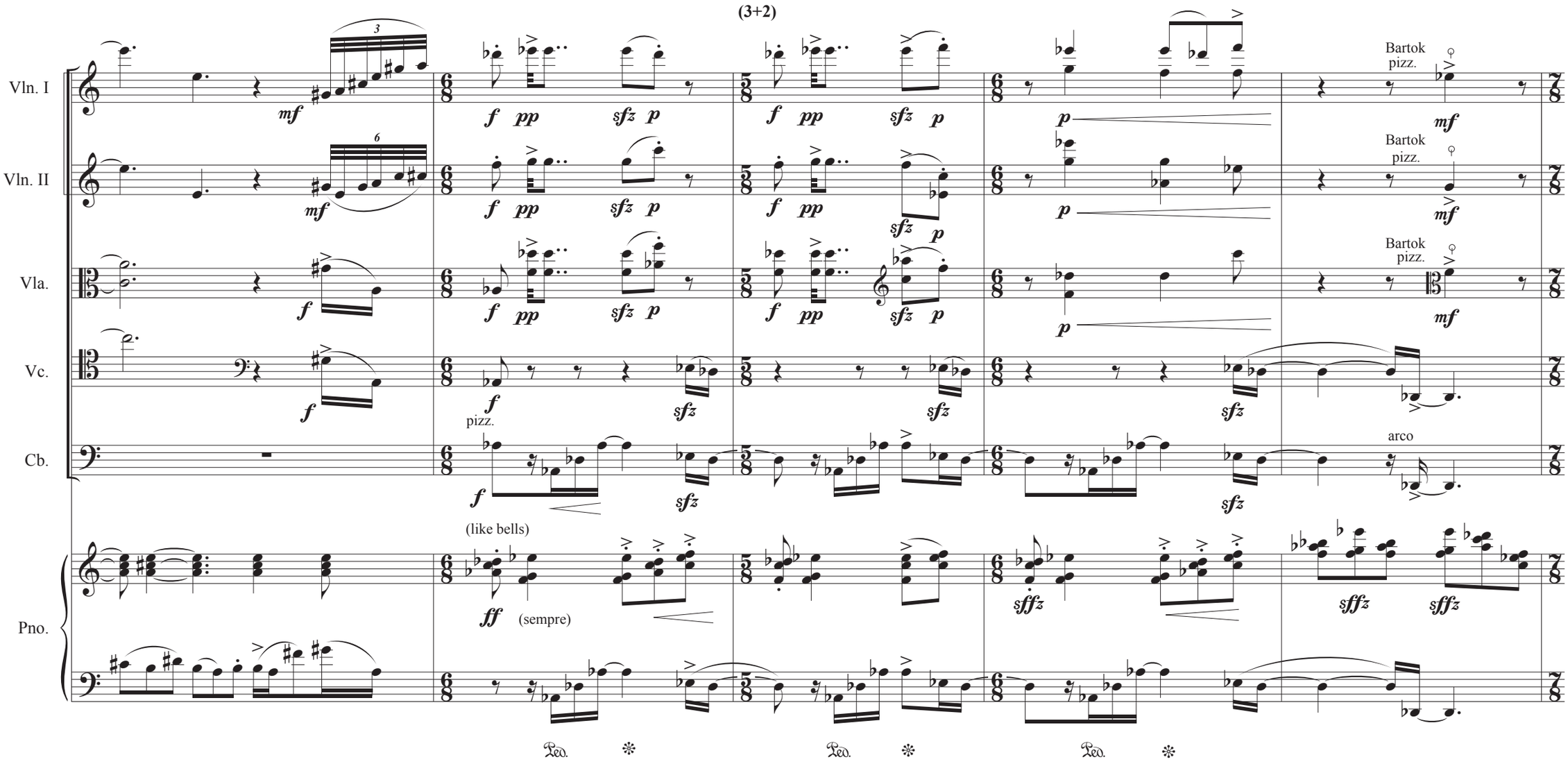

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
pizz.
p
mf
pizz.
p
mf
l.h. r.h.

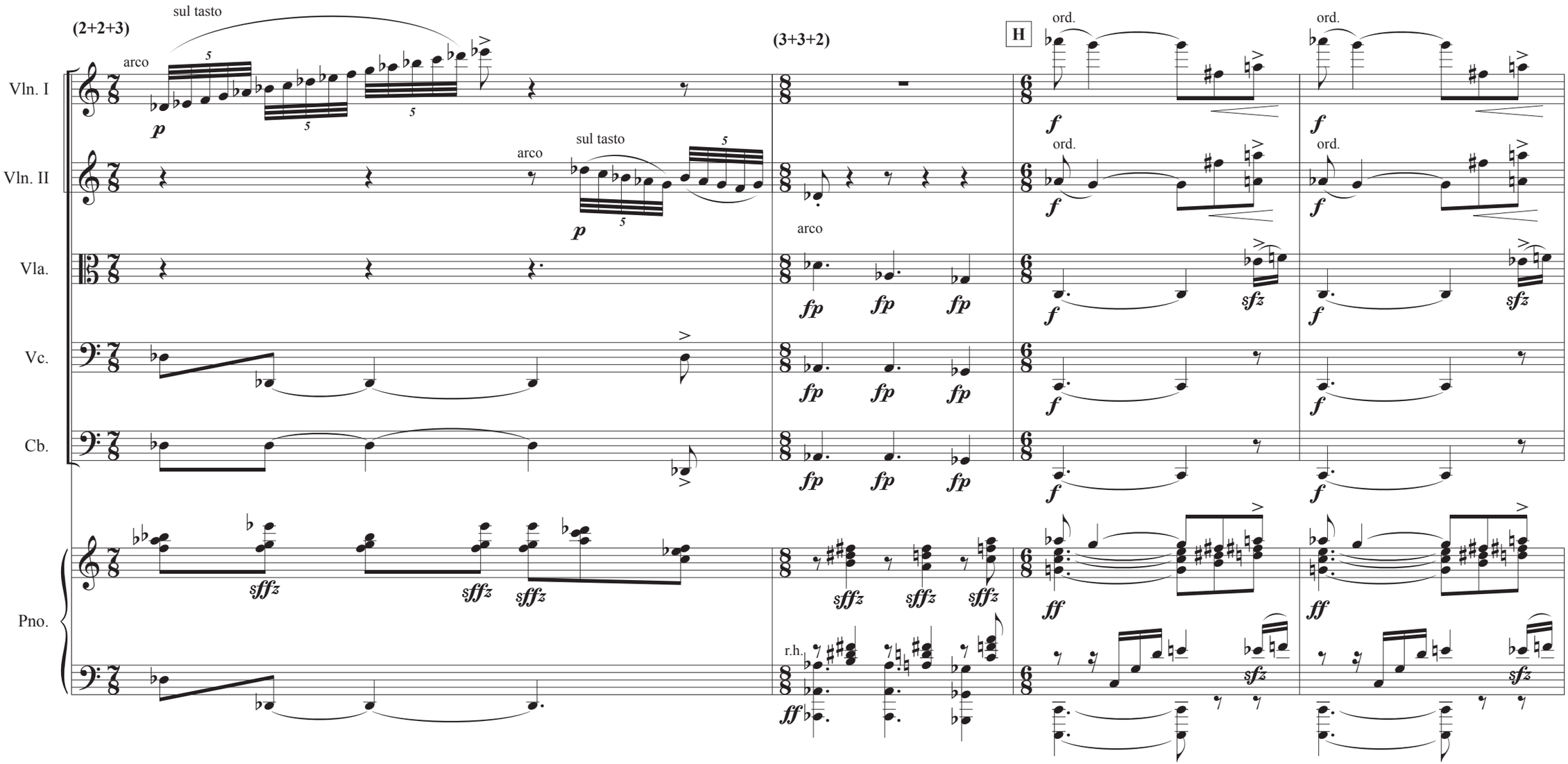

C
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
ord.
mf
ord.
p
sul tasto
mp
sul tasto
arco
p
pizz.
mf
ord.
ord.
arco
mp
(pizz.)
fast
pp
6
(non cresc.)
Ped.
Ped.

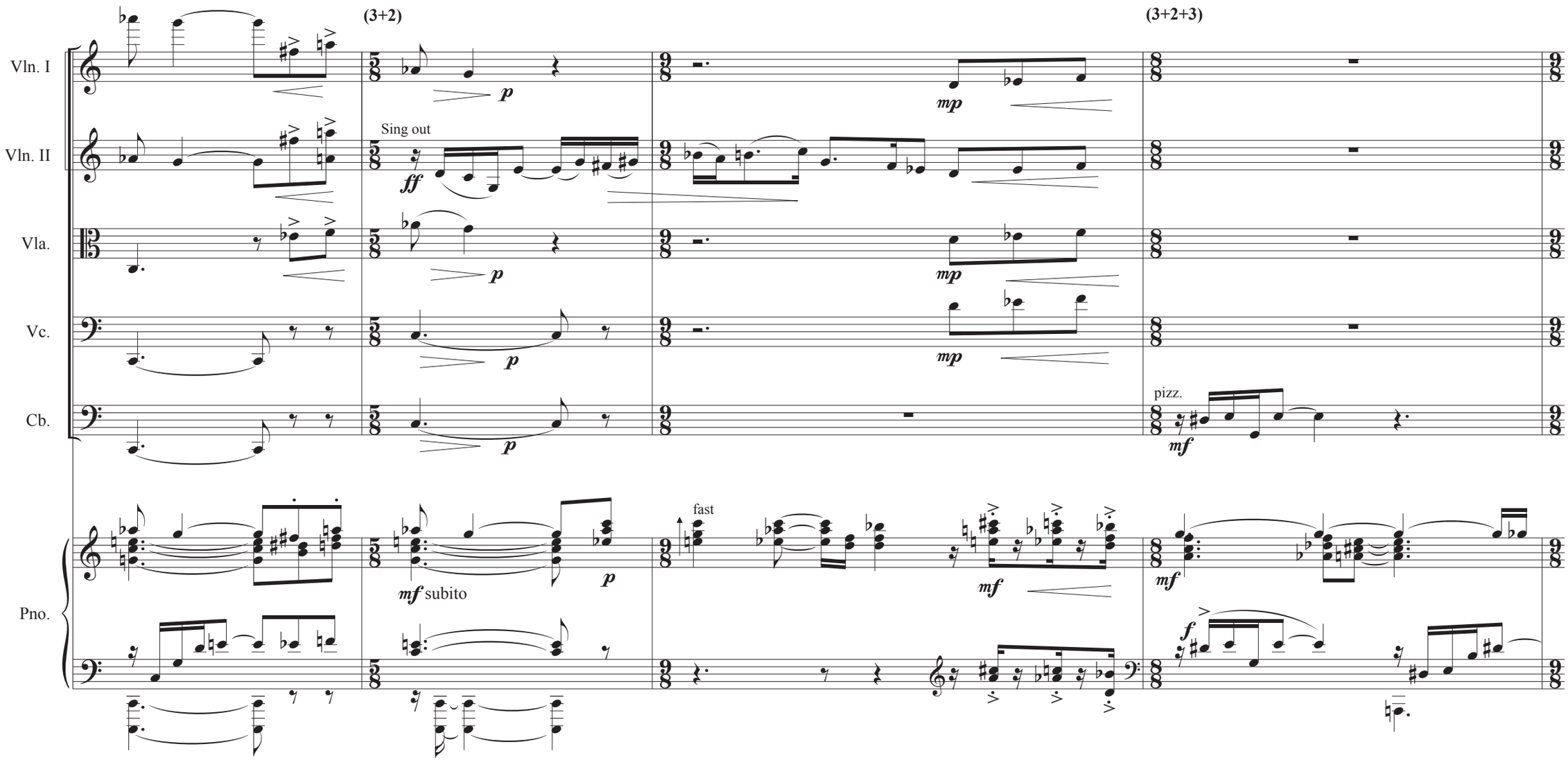

D
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
arco
fast
l.h.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.

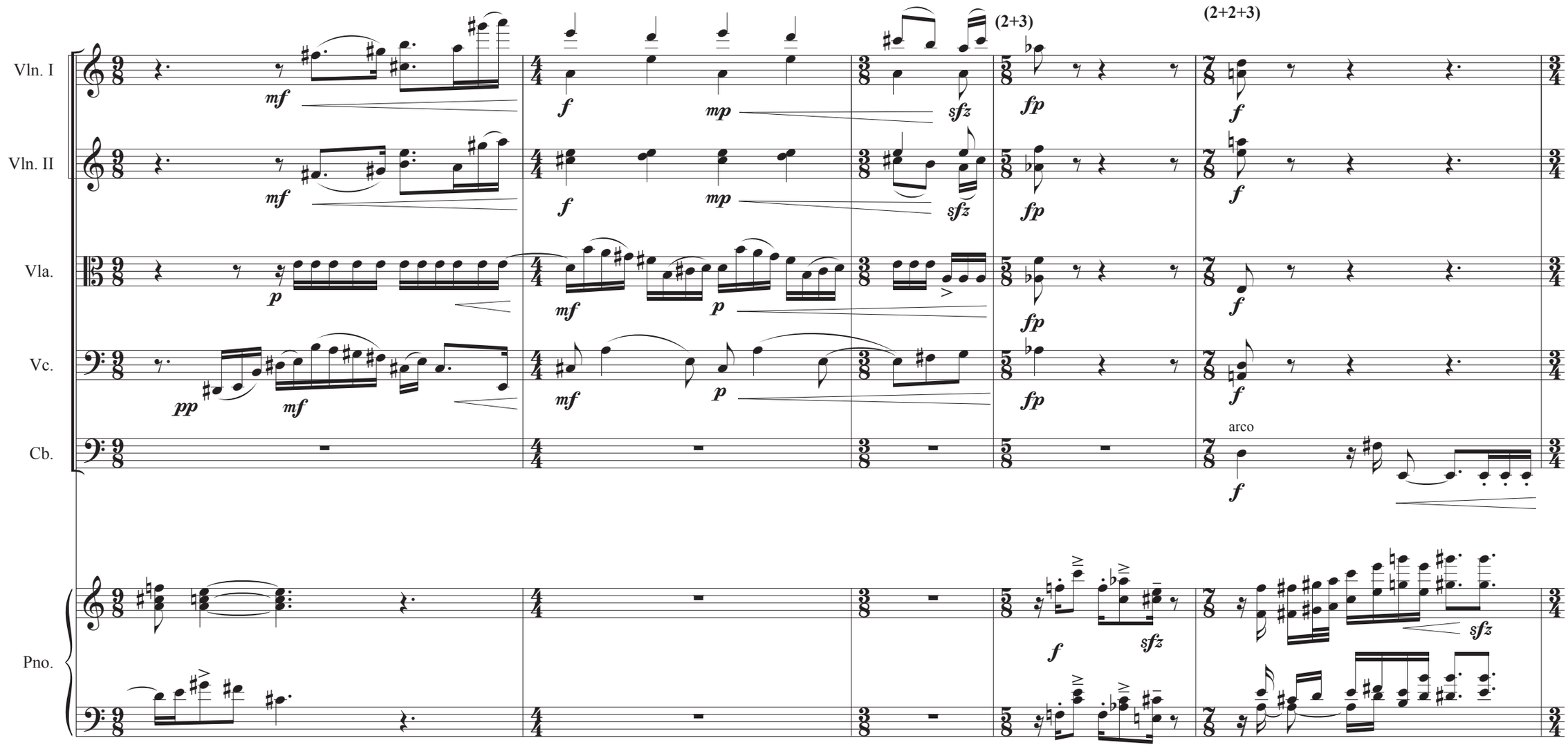

E
F
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
p
ppp
pp
mf
mp
Sing out
pizz.
arco
f
Ped.

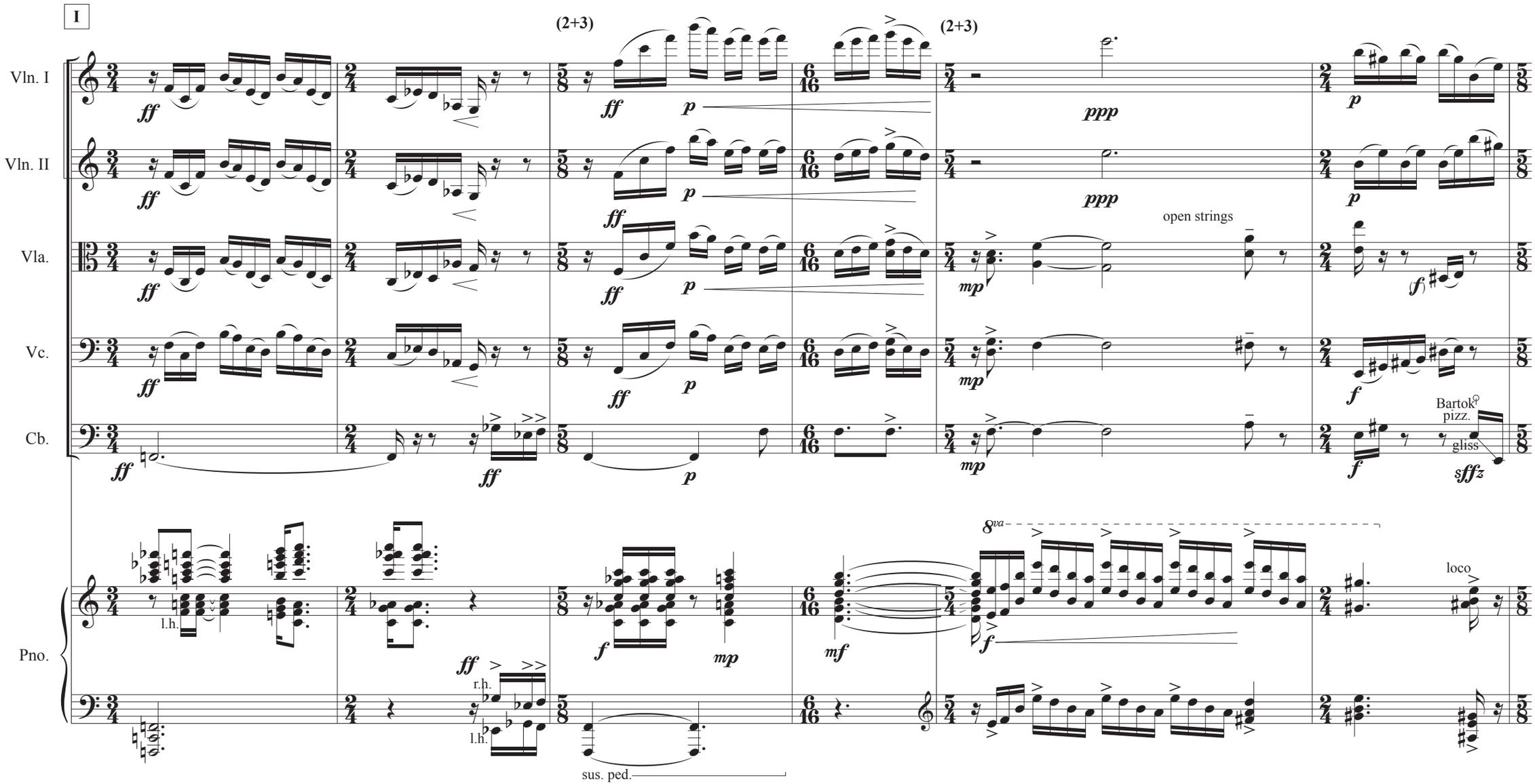

(3+2+3)
(2+2+3)
G
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
mp
pp
fpp
Sing out
mf
f
sffz
Sharply
R. H.(Attack on grace note)
Ped.

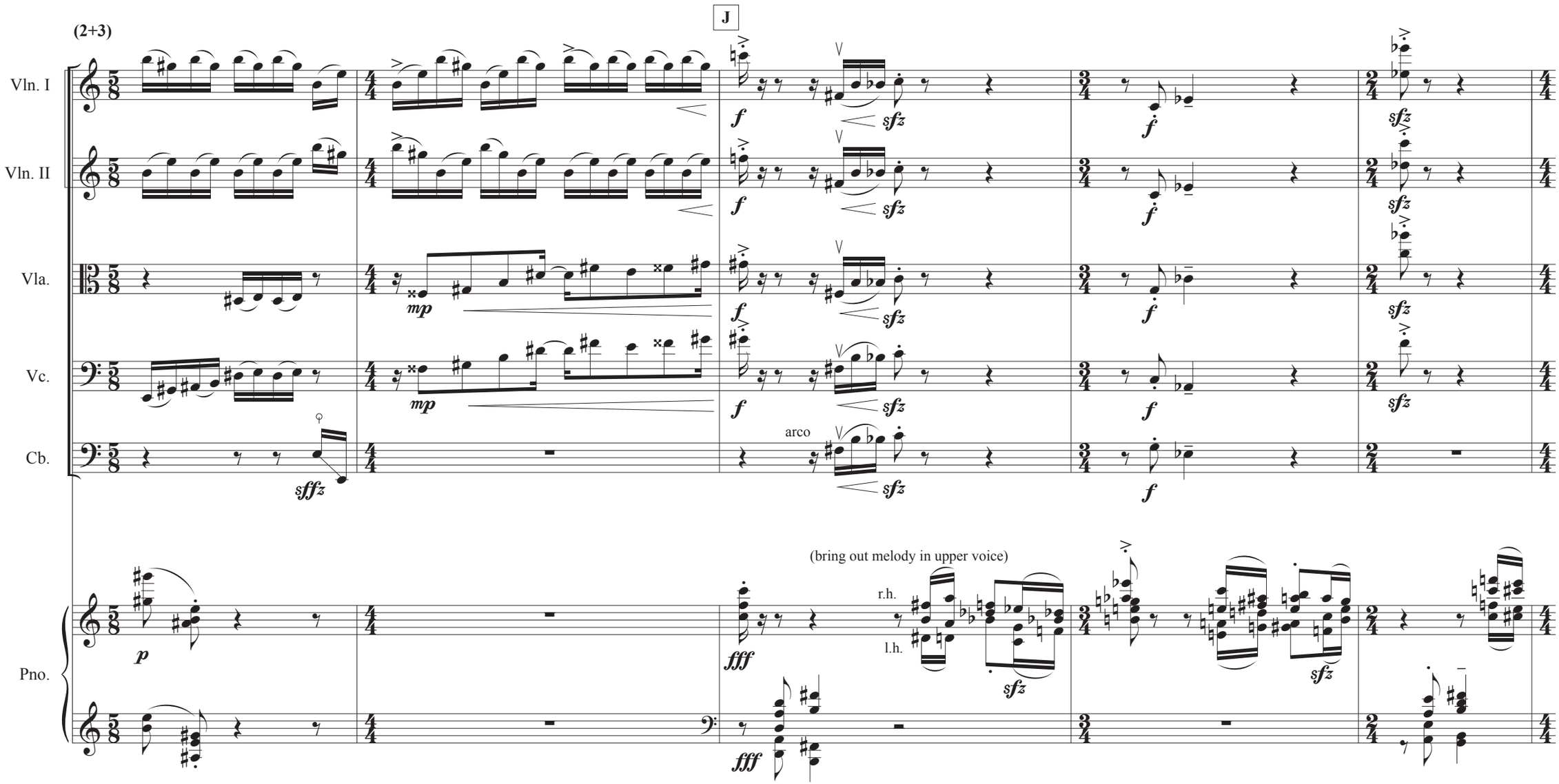

(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
Bartok pizz.
arco
pizz.
(like bells)
(sempre)
Ped.

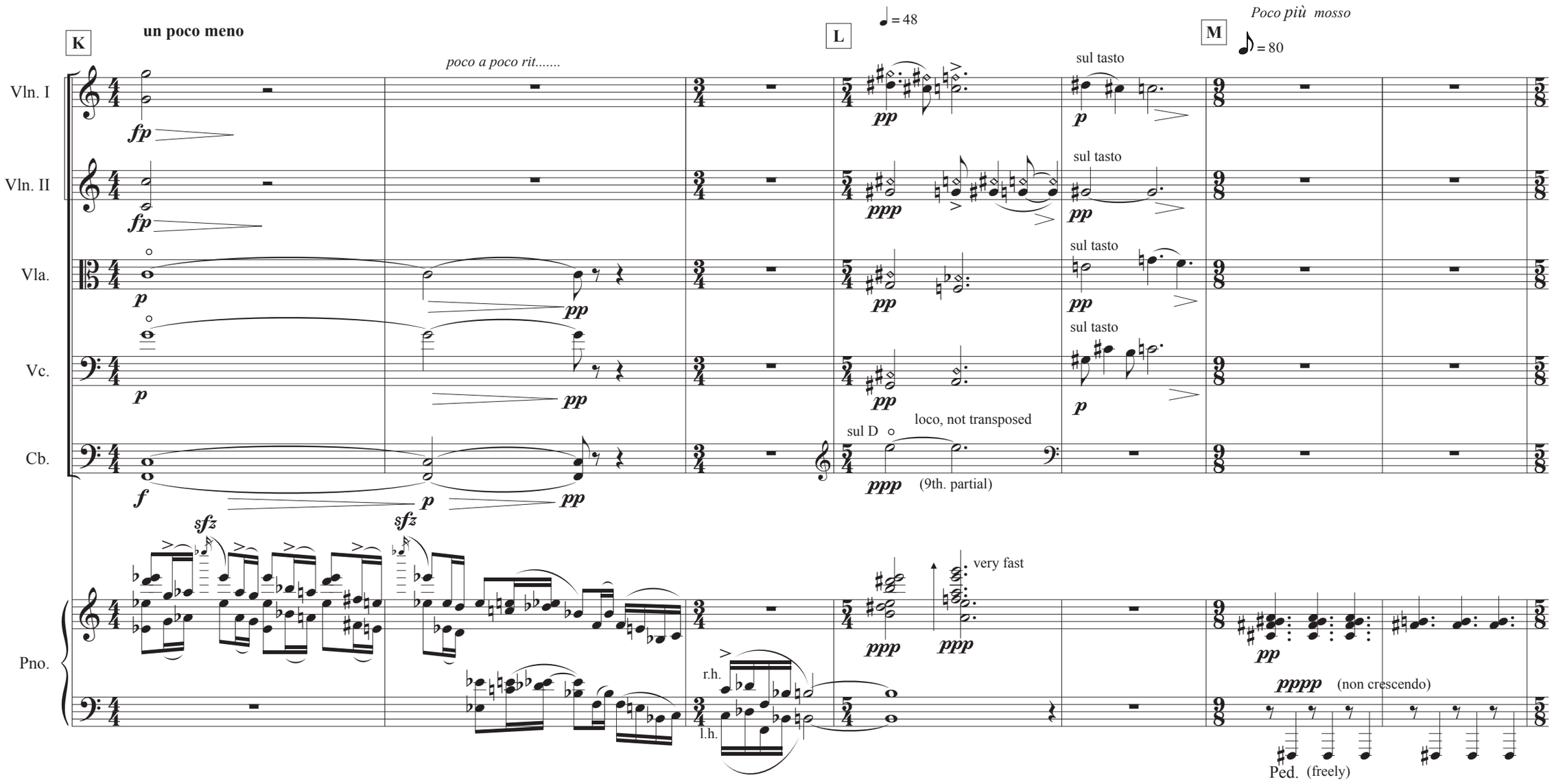

(2+2+3)
sul tasto
arco
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
(3+3+2)
H
ord.
r.h.

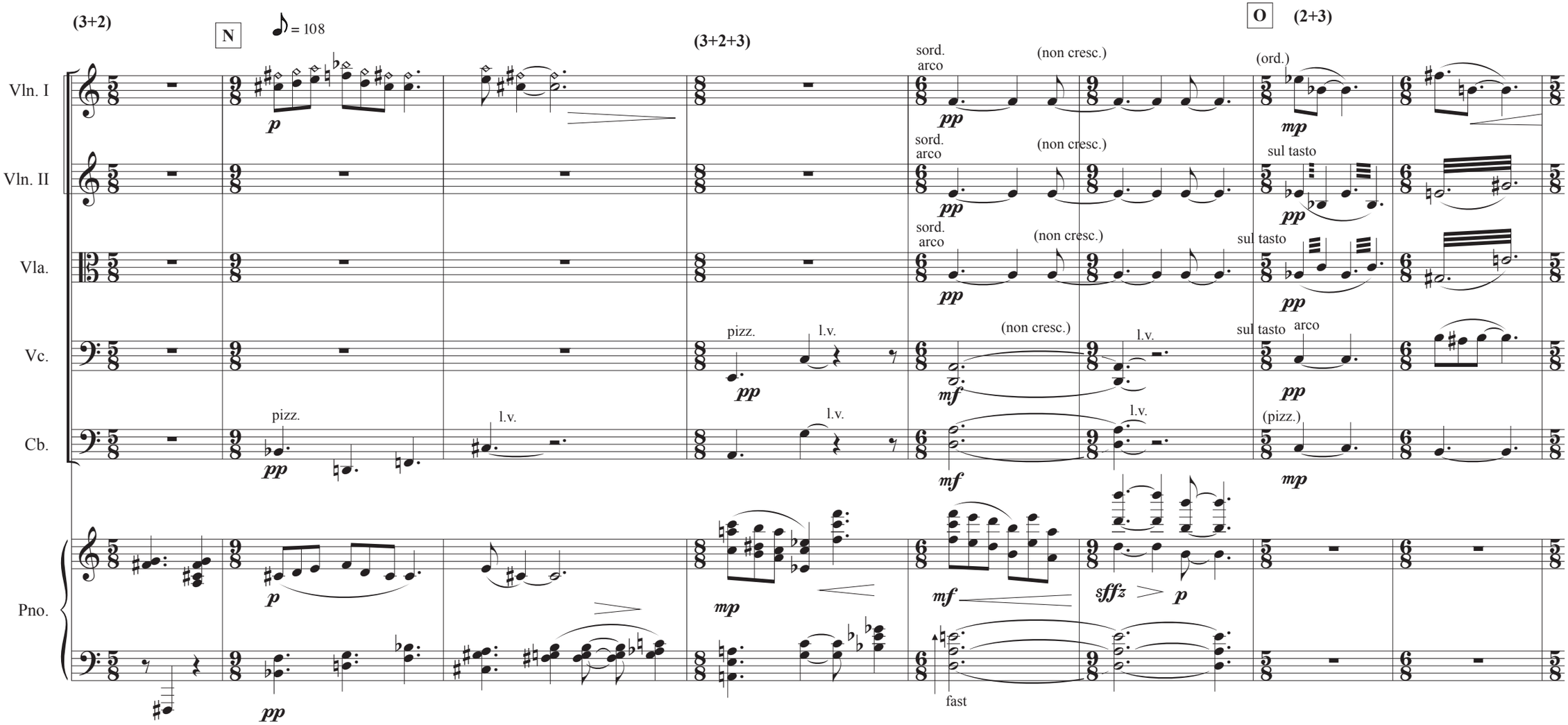

(3+2)
(3+2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
Sing out
pizz.
fast
mf subito

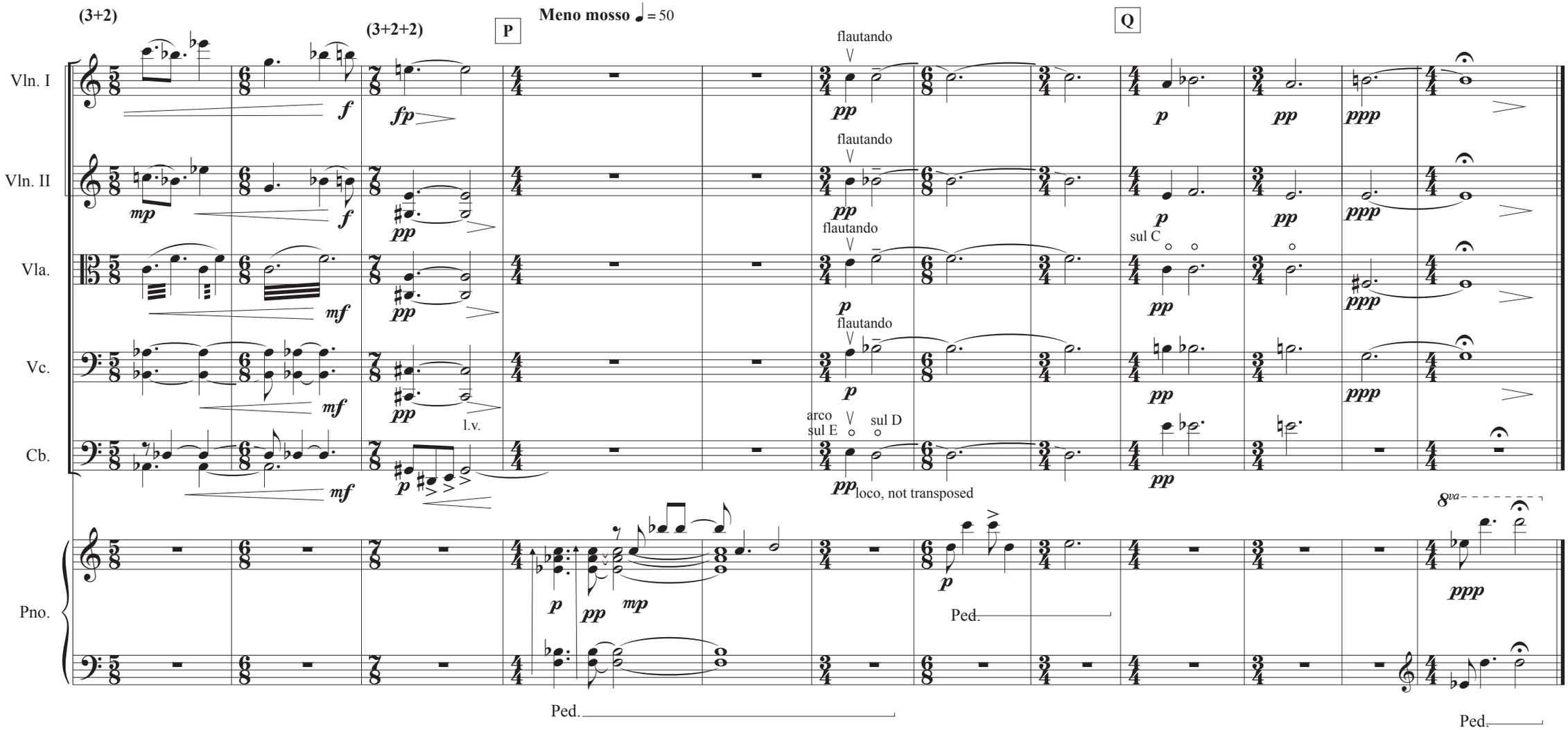

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
(2+3)
(2+2+3)
arco


I
(2+3)
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
ff
p
ppp
mp
f
sffz
open strings
Bartok pizz.
gliss
8va
loco
mf
l.h.
r.h.
sus. ped.

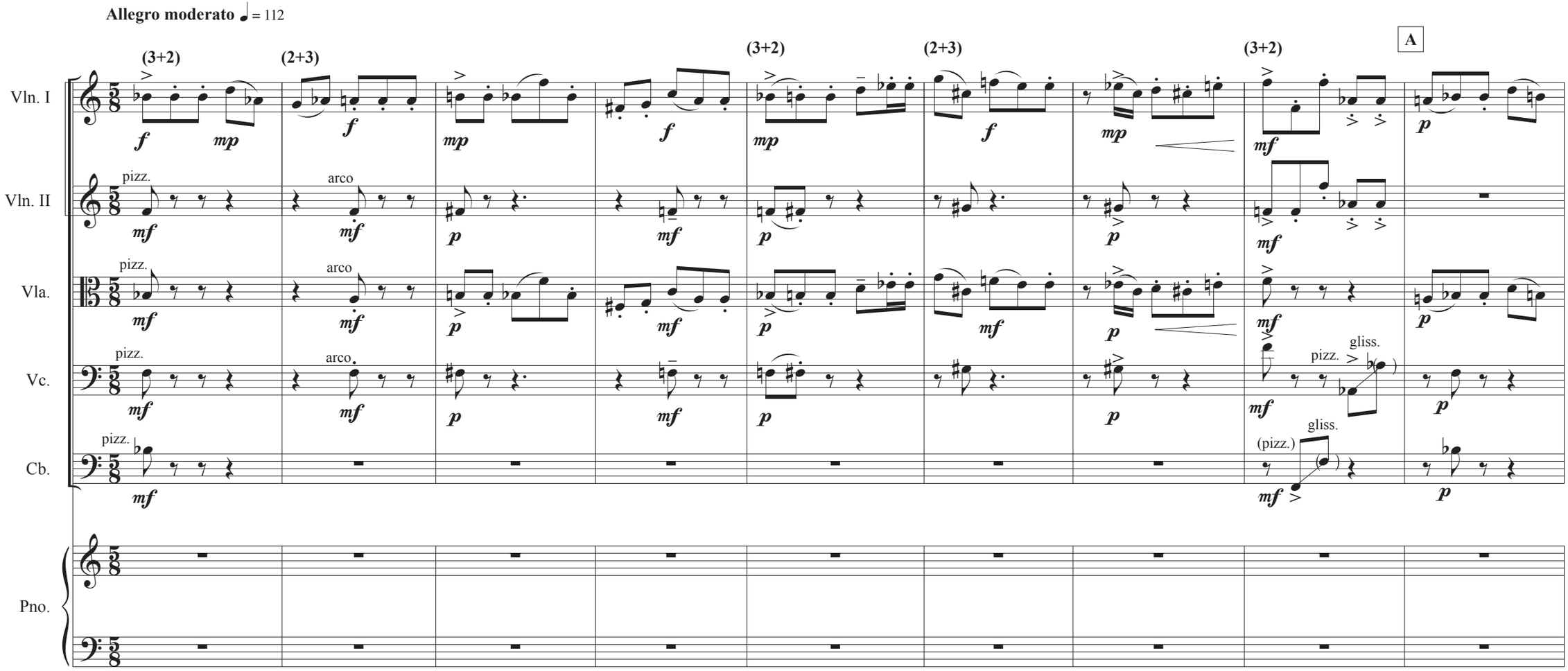

(2+3)
J
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
arco
(bring out melody in upper voice)
r.h.
l.h.

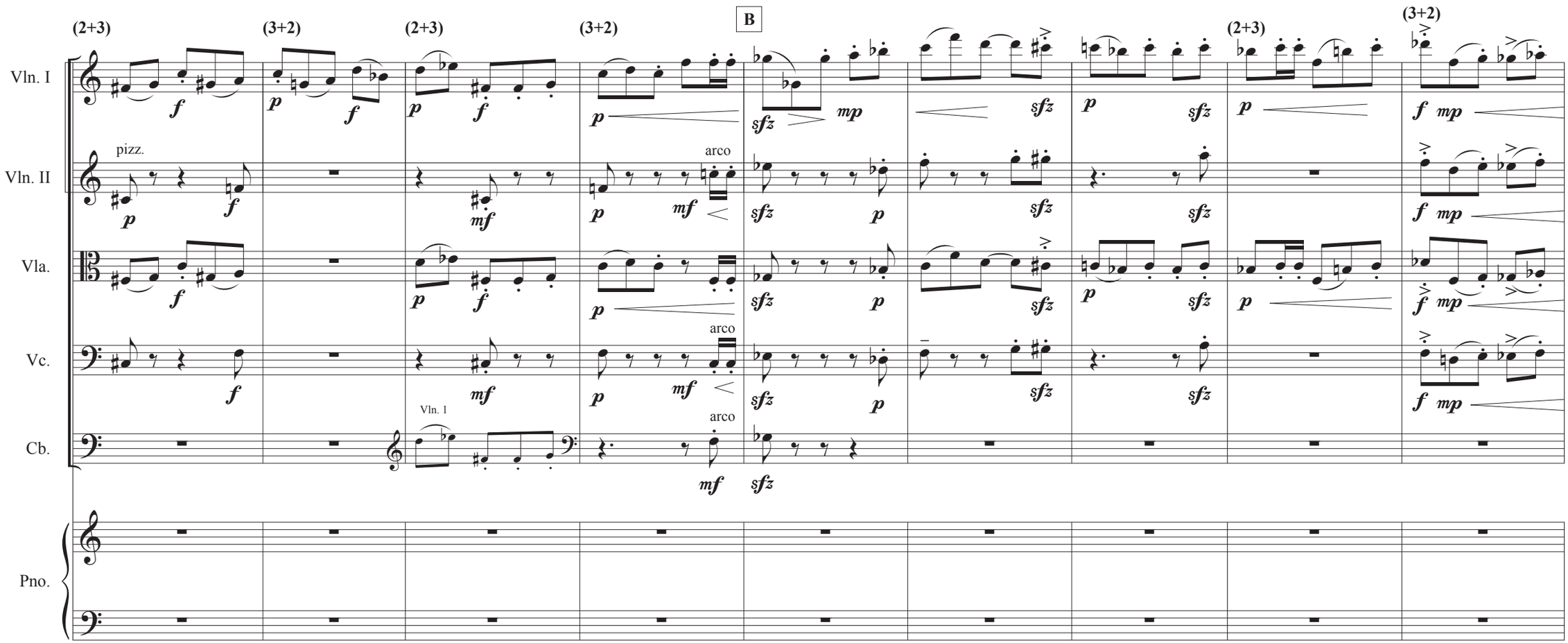

K
un poco meno
poco a poco rit.....
L
♩ = 48
M
Poco più mosso
♪ = 80
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
fp
p
pp
f
sfz
sul tasto
sul D
loco, not transposed
(9th. partial)
ppp
very fast
r.h.
l.h.
pppp
(non crescendo)
Ped.
(freely)

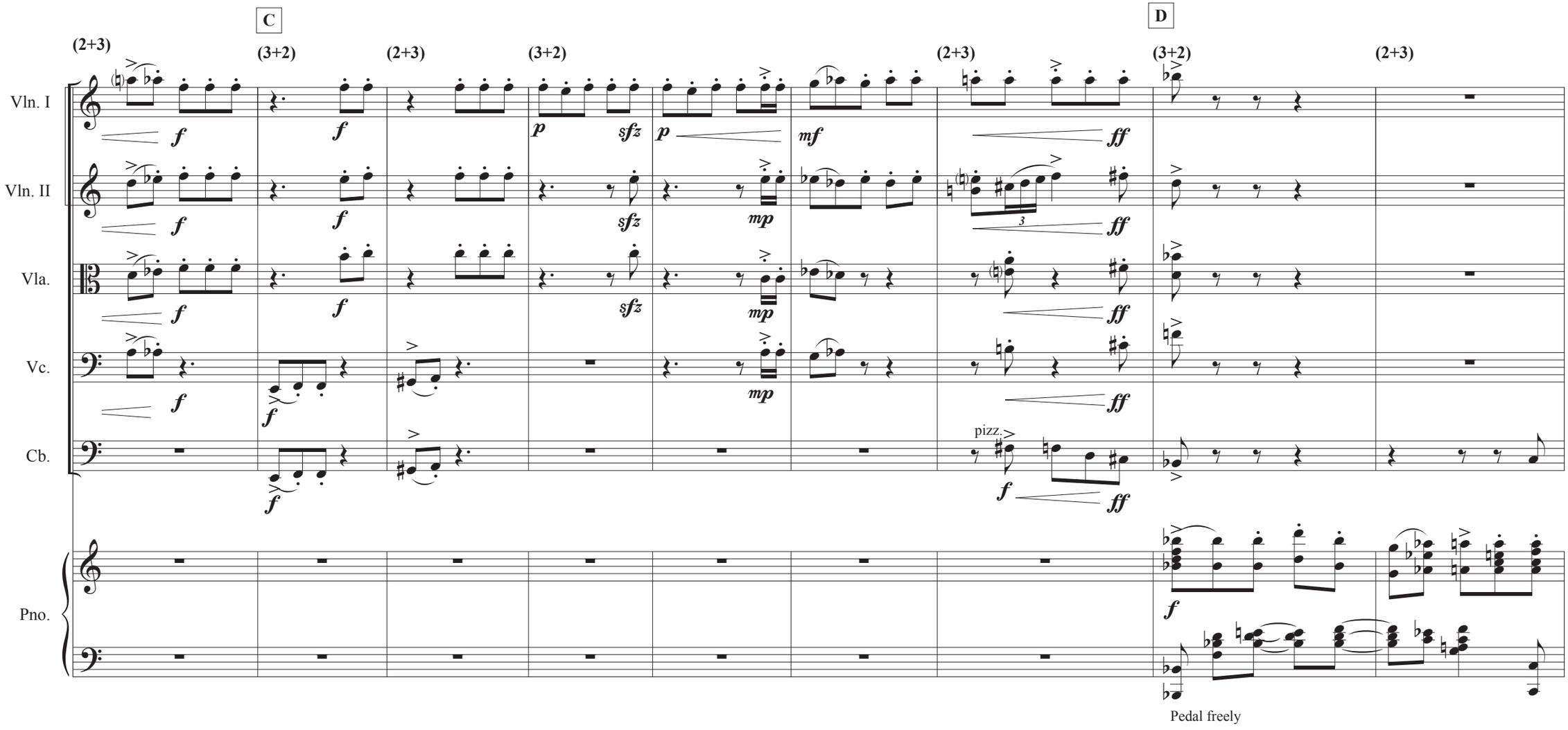

(3+2)
N
♪ = 108
(3+2+3)
O
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
p
pp
mp
mf
sffz
pizz.
l.v.
sord.
arco
(non cresc.)
(ord.)
sul tasto
(pizz.)
fast

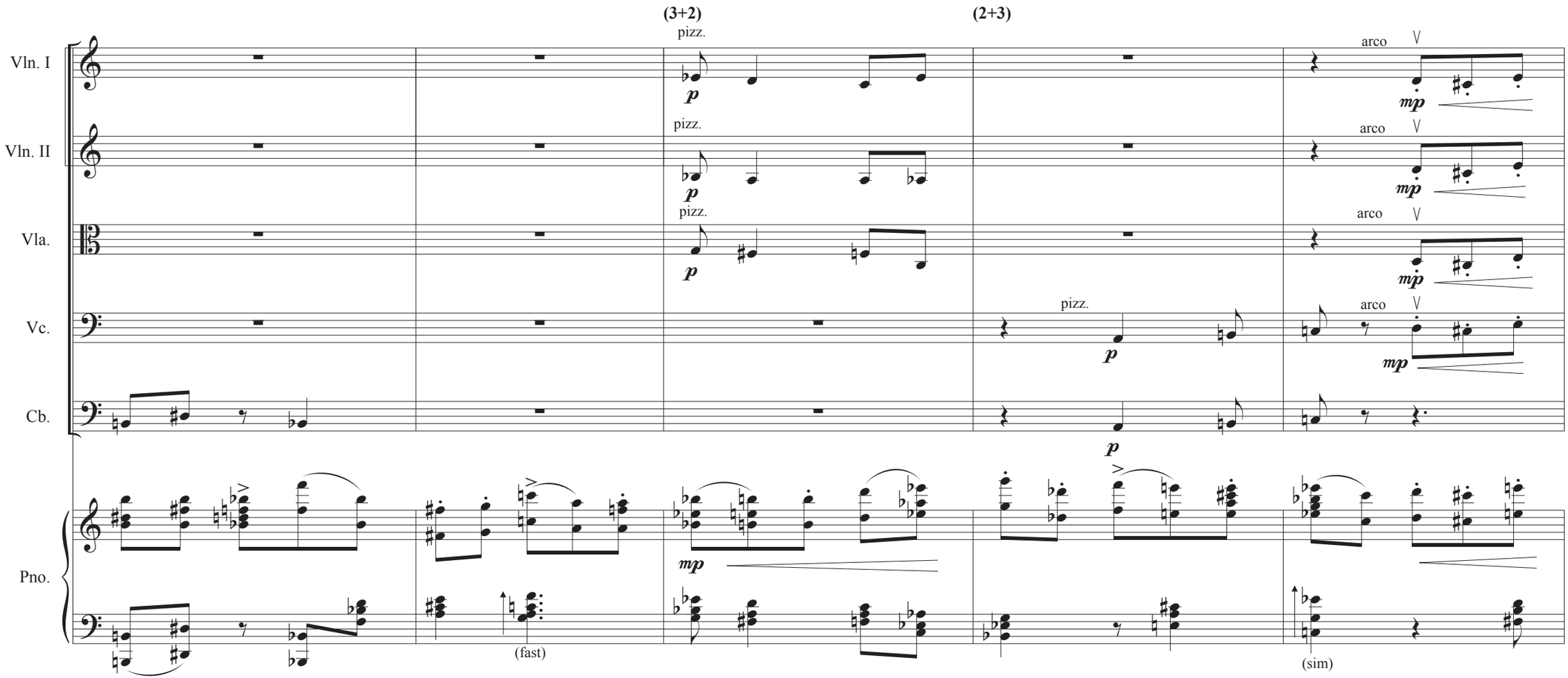

(3+2)
(3+2+2)
P
Meno mosso ♩ = 50
Q
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
flautando
sul C
arco
sul E
sul D
l.v.
loco, not transposed
8va
Ped.

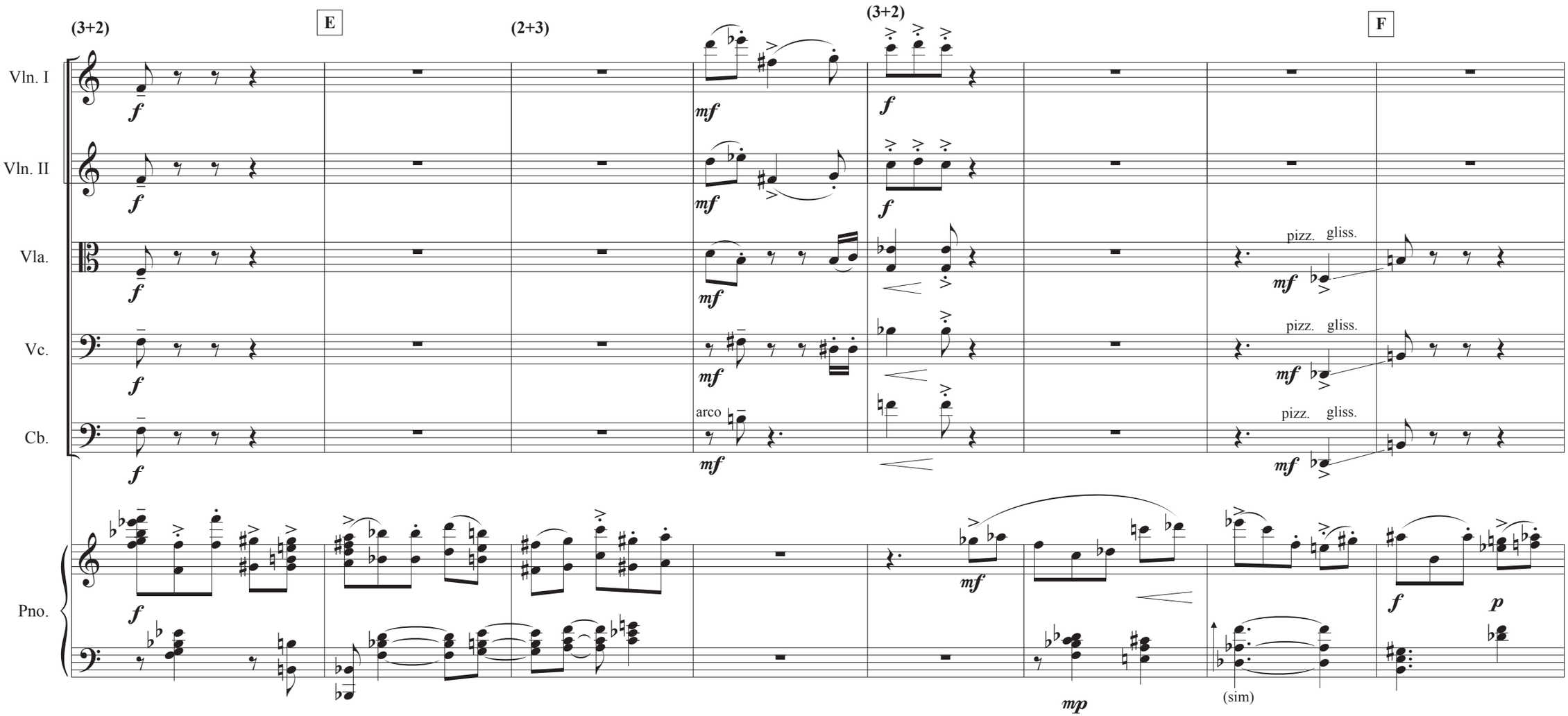
A Dance of Life

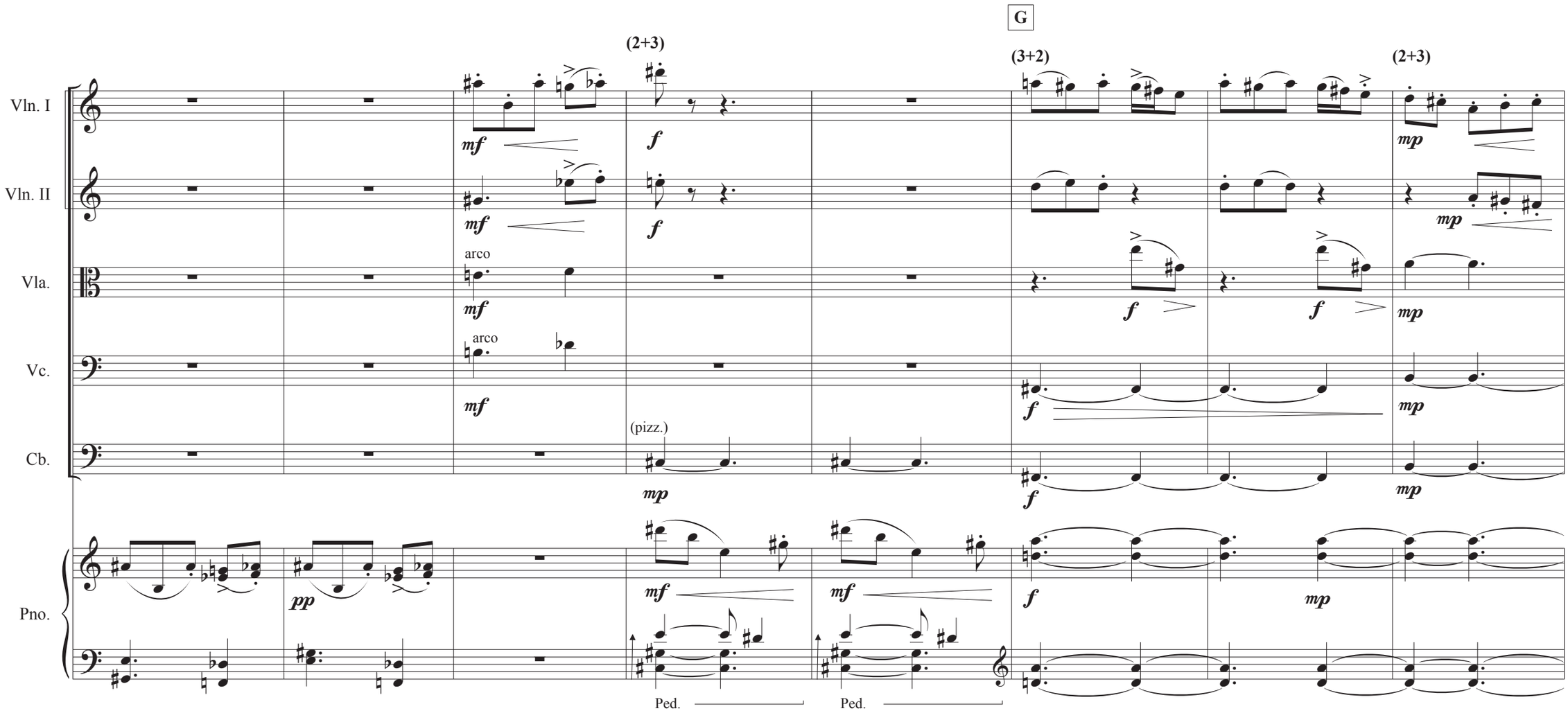


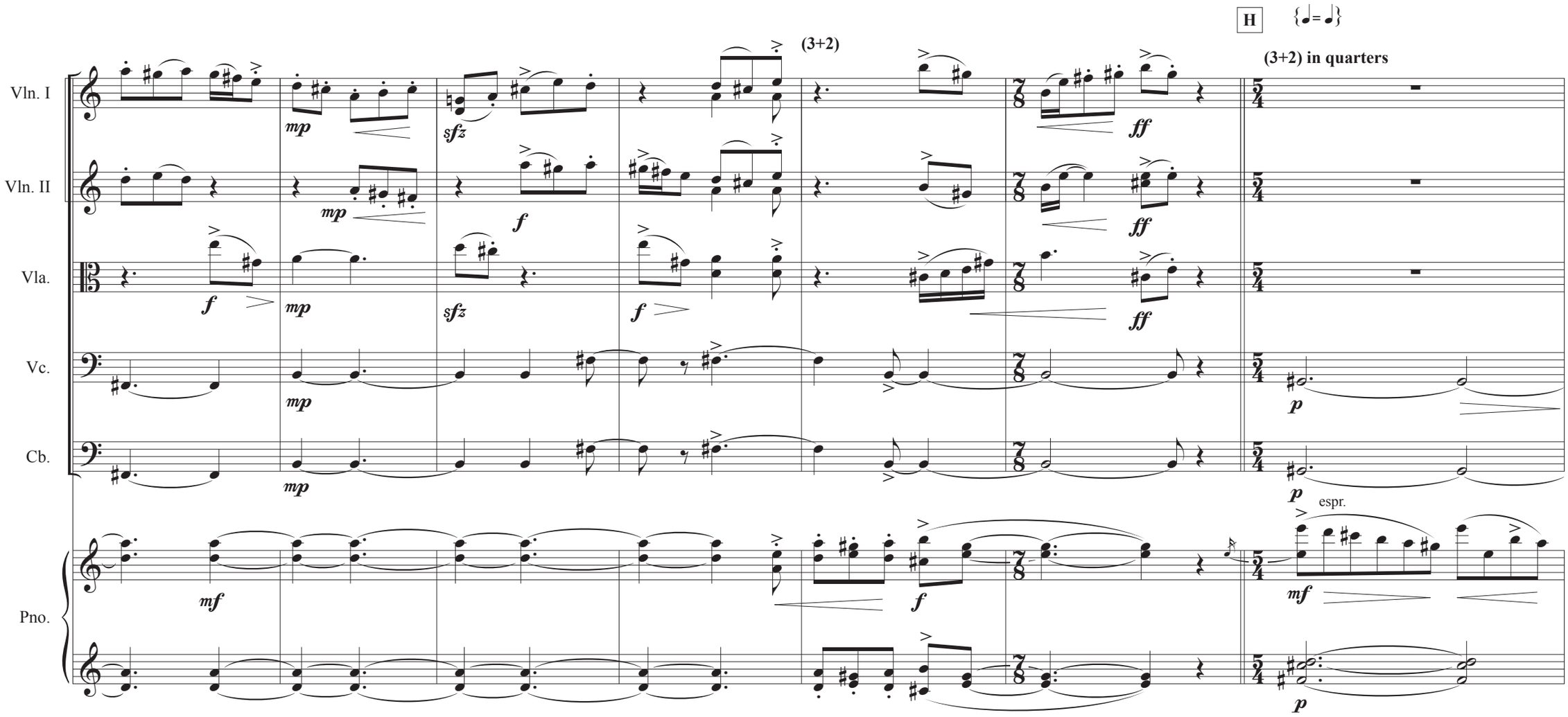

(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
B
(2+3)
(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
pizz.
arco
Vln. 1
arco
arco

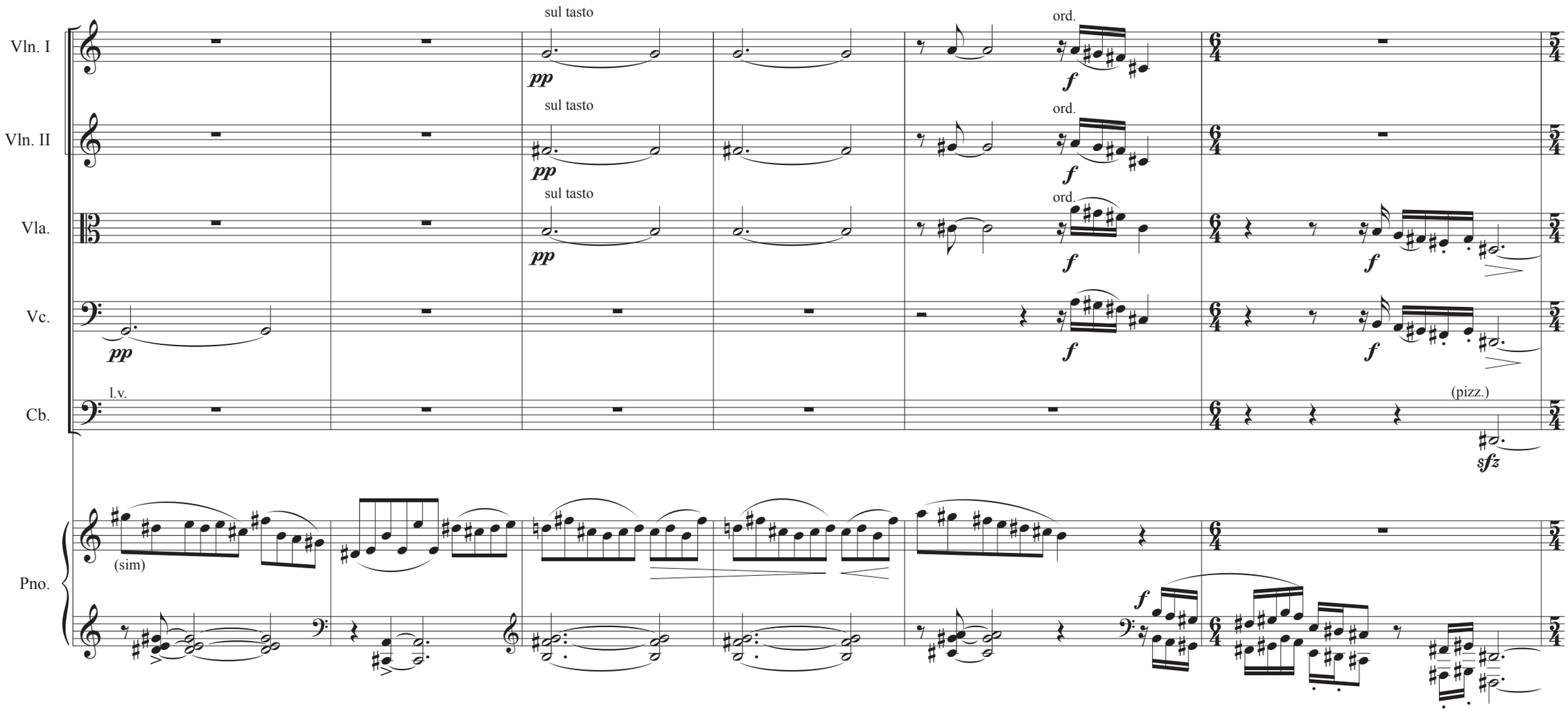

C
D
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
pizz.
Pedal freely

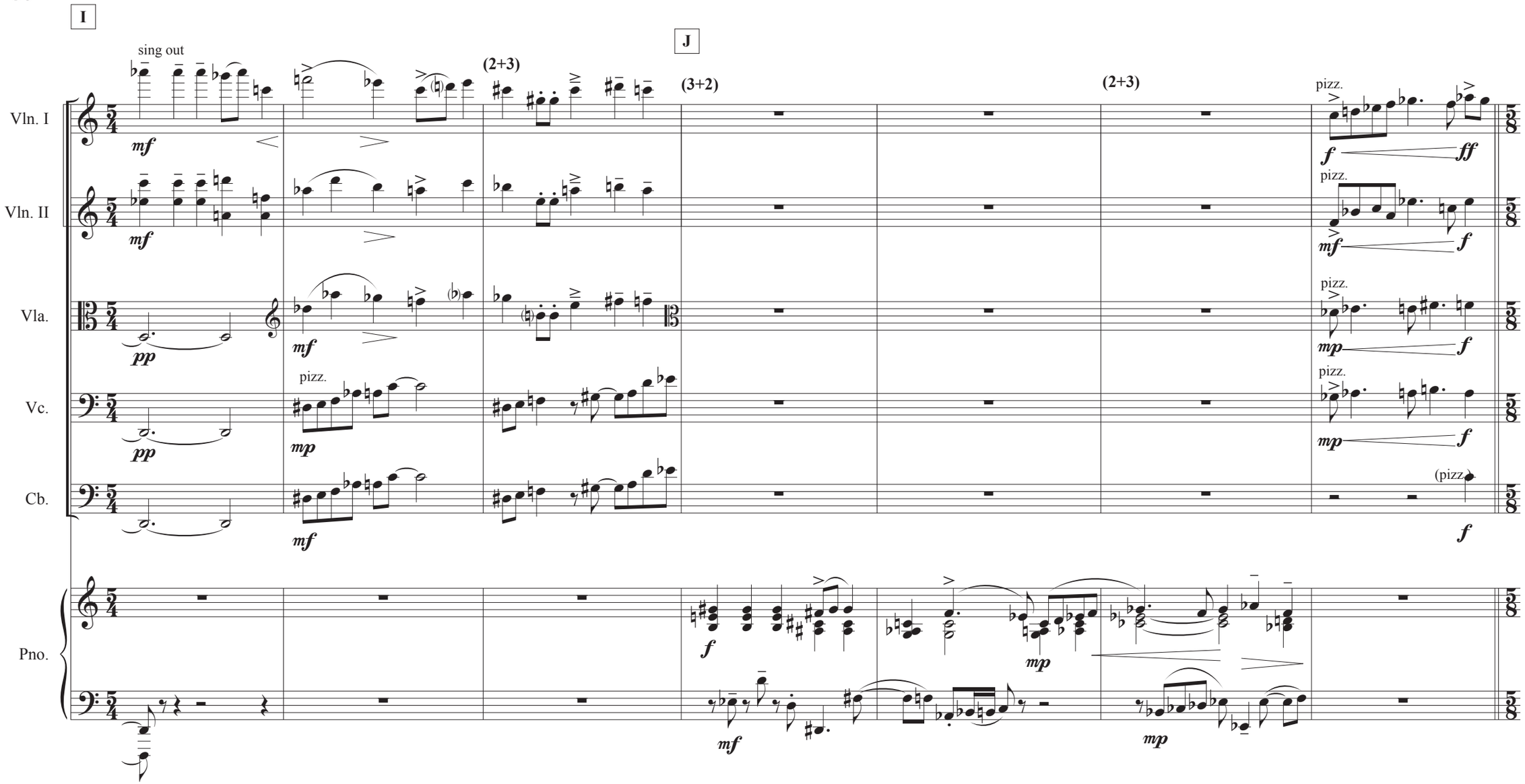

(3+2)
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
pizz.
arco
(fast)
(sim)

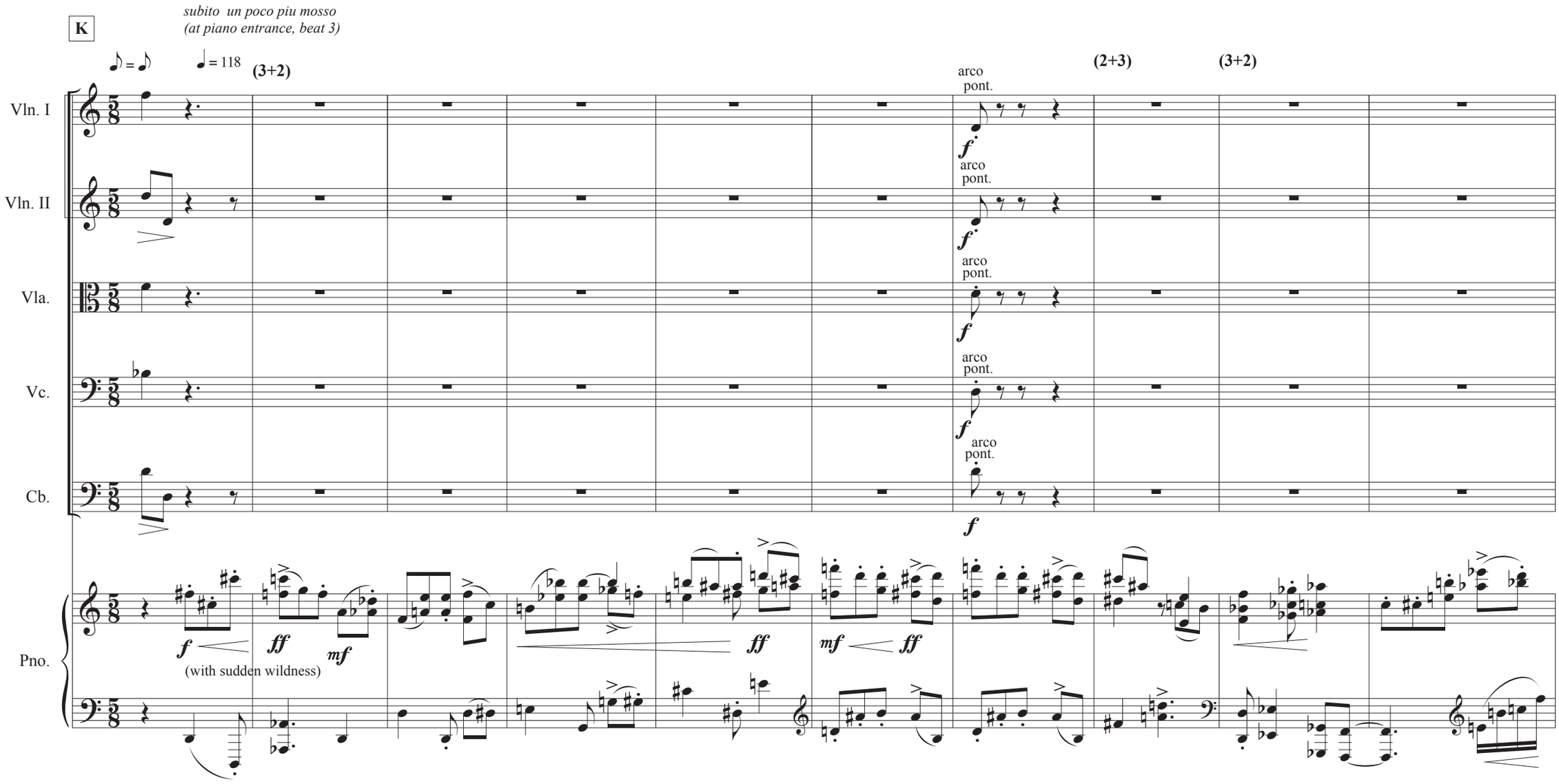

(3+2)
E
(2+3)
(3+2)
F
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
f
mf
pizz. gliss.
arco
mp
(sim)
p

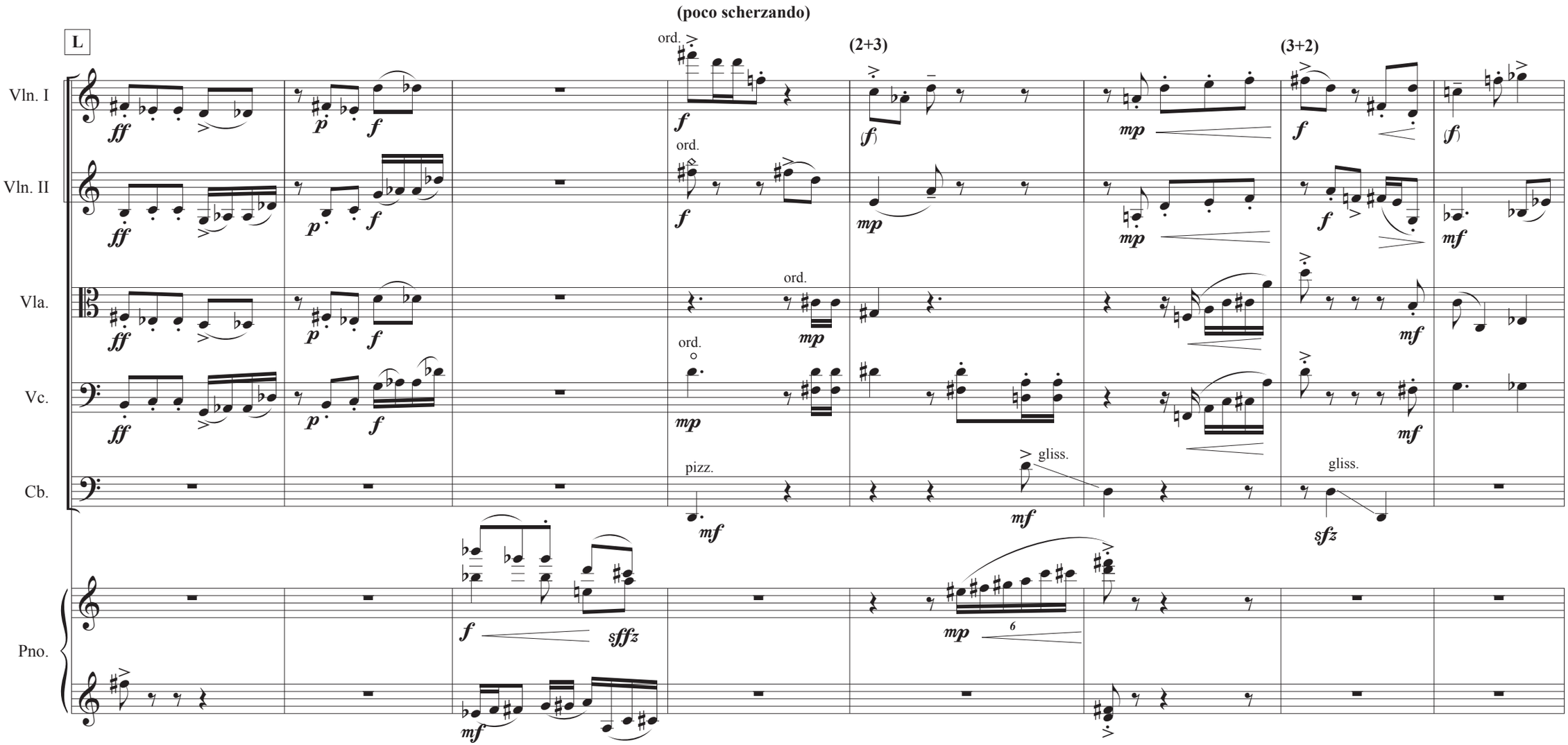

G
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
arco
arco
(pizz.)
mf
f
mp
pp
Ped.
Ped.

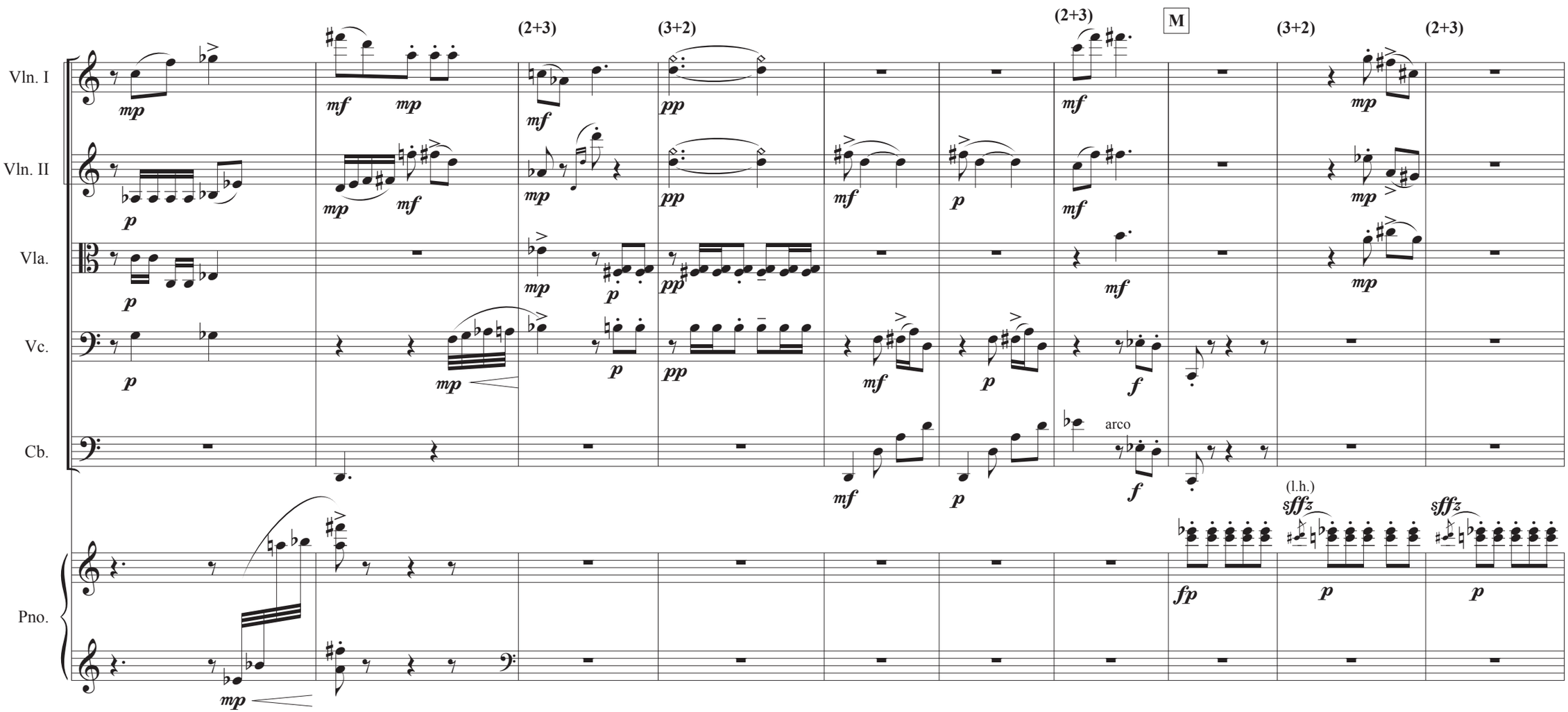

H
{♩= ♩}
(3+2)
(3+2) in quarters
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
mp
sfz
f
ff
mf
p
espr.

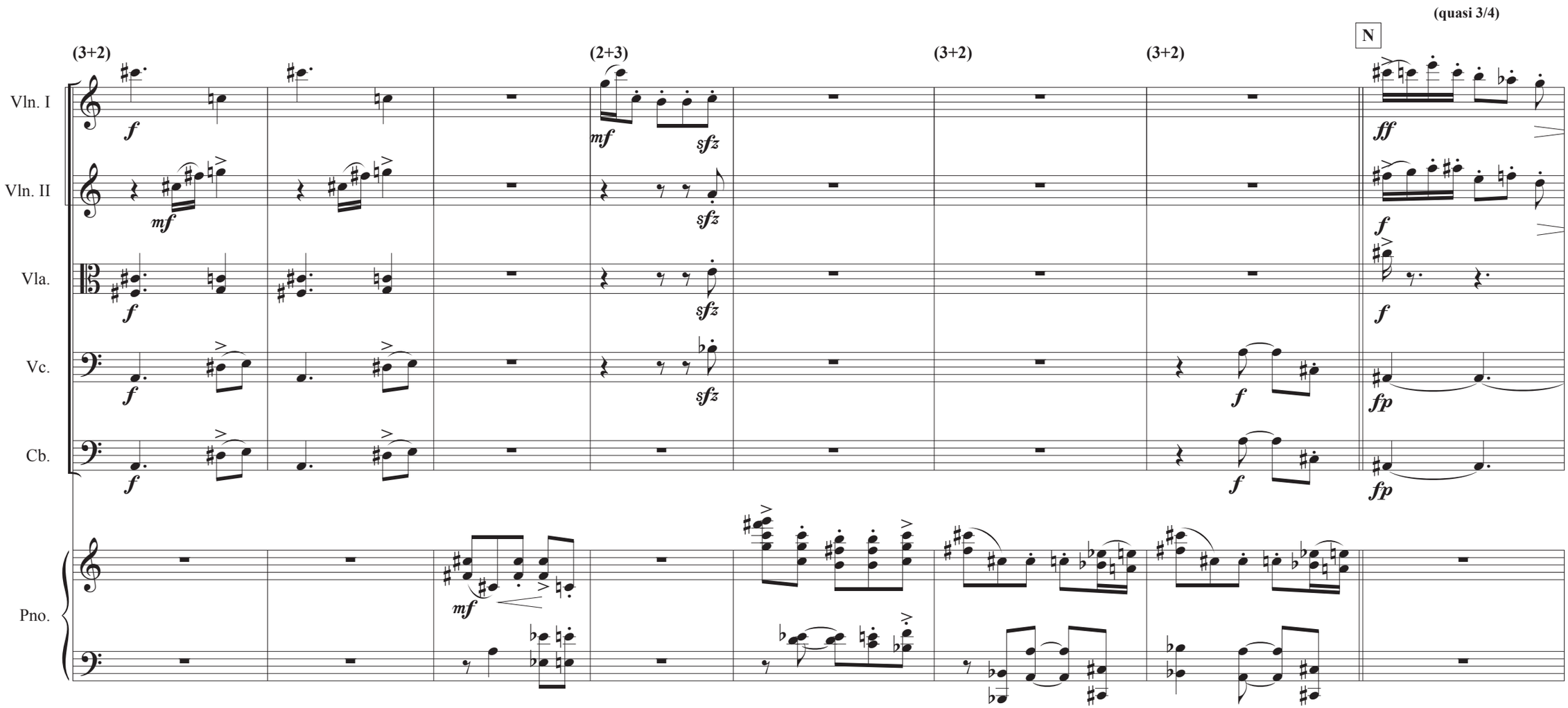

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
sul tasto
ord.
pp
f
l.v.
(pizz.)
sfz
(sim)
6/4
5/4

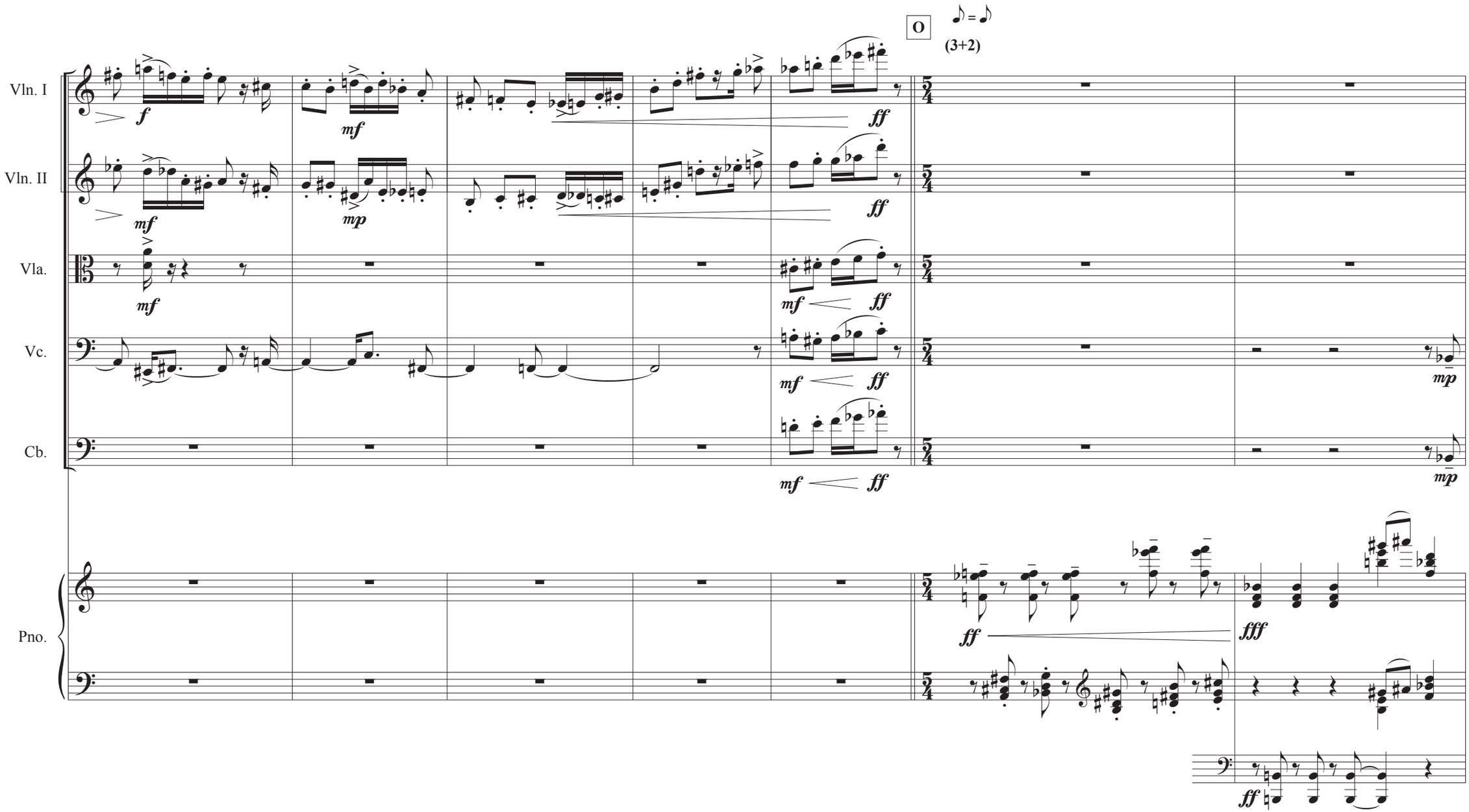

I
J
sing out
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
pizz.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
mf
pp
mp
f
ff
(pizz.)

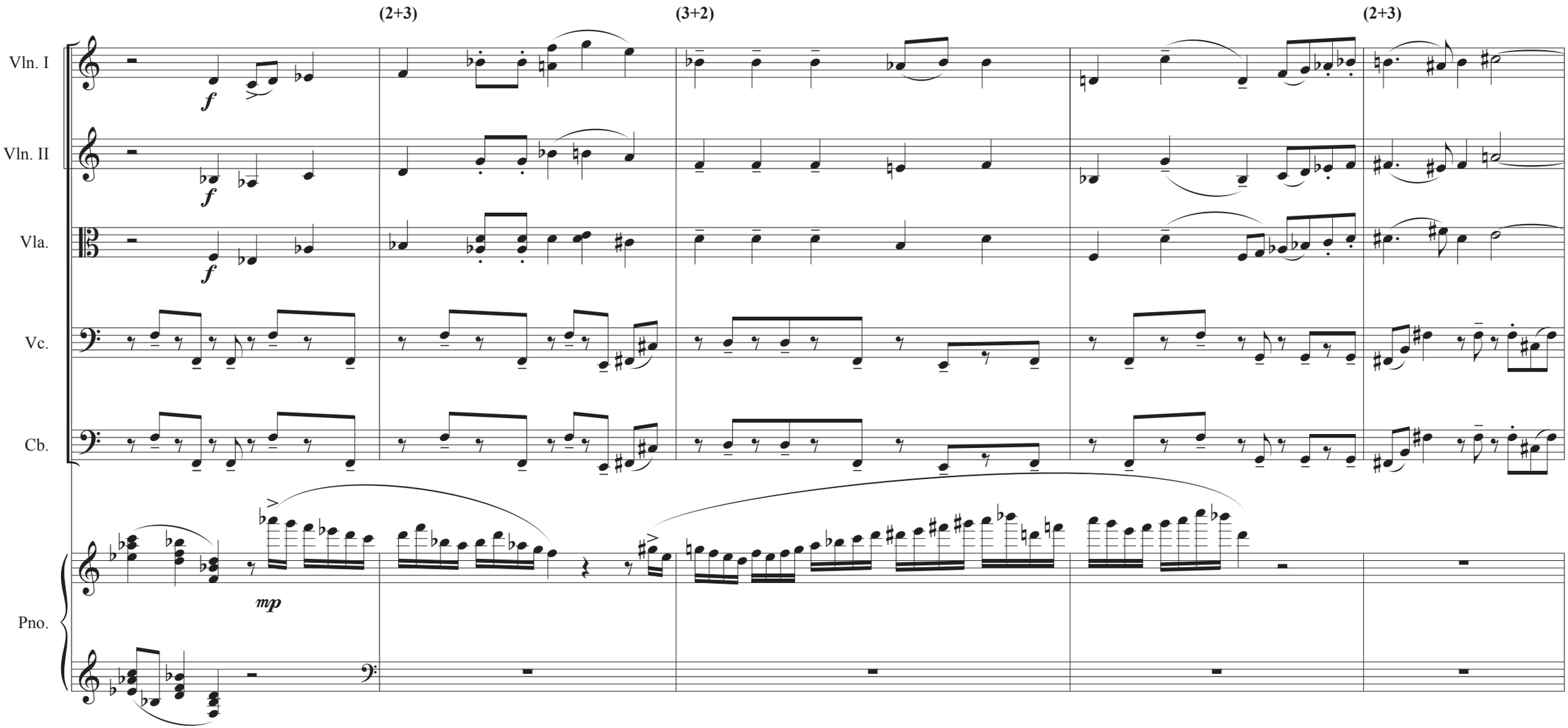

K
subito un poco piu mosso
(at piano entrance, beat 3)
♪ = ♪
♩ = 118
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
arco
pont.
f
ff
mf
(with sudden wildness)

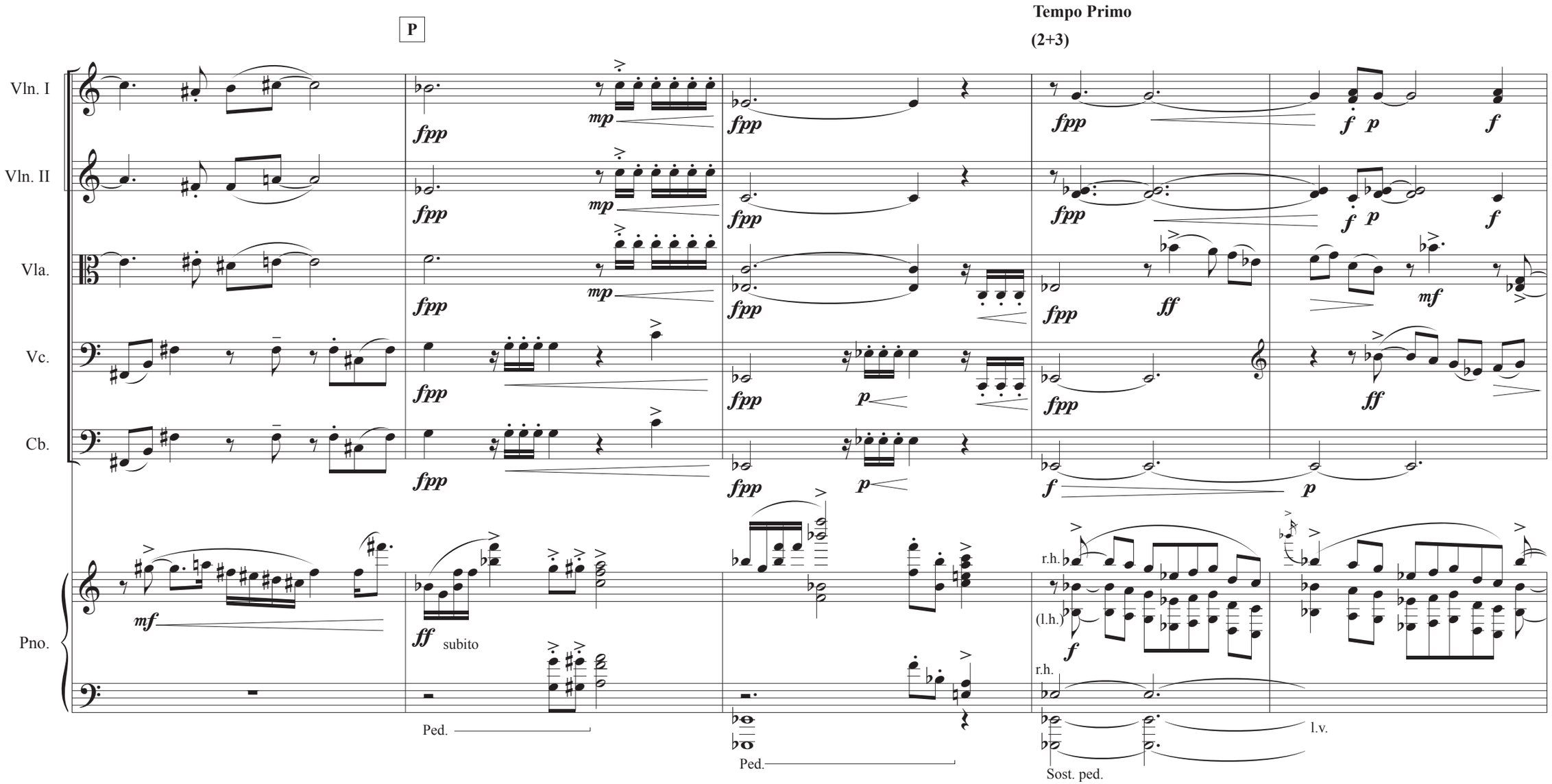

(poco scherzando)
L
(2+3)
(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
ord.
pizz.
gliss.
ff
p
f
mp
mf
sfz
sffz
(f)
6

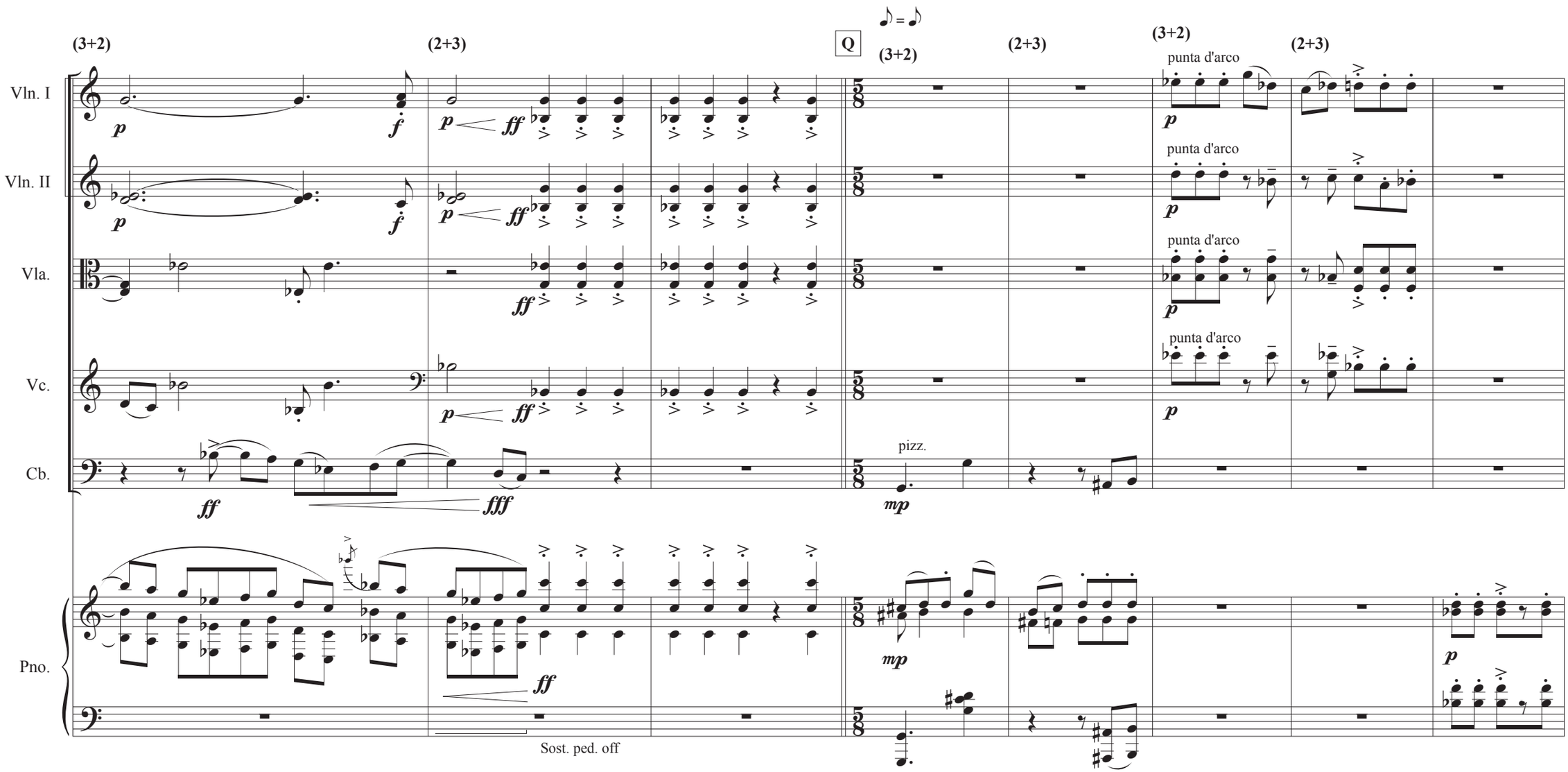

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
M
(3+2)
(2+3)
arco
(l.h.)
mp
mf
pp
p
f
fp
sffz

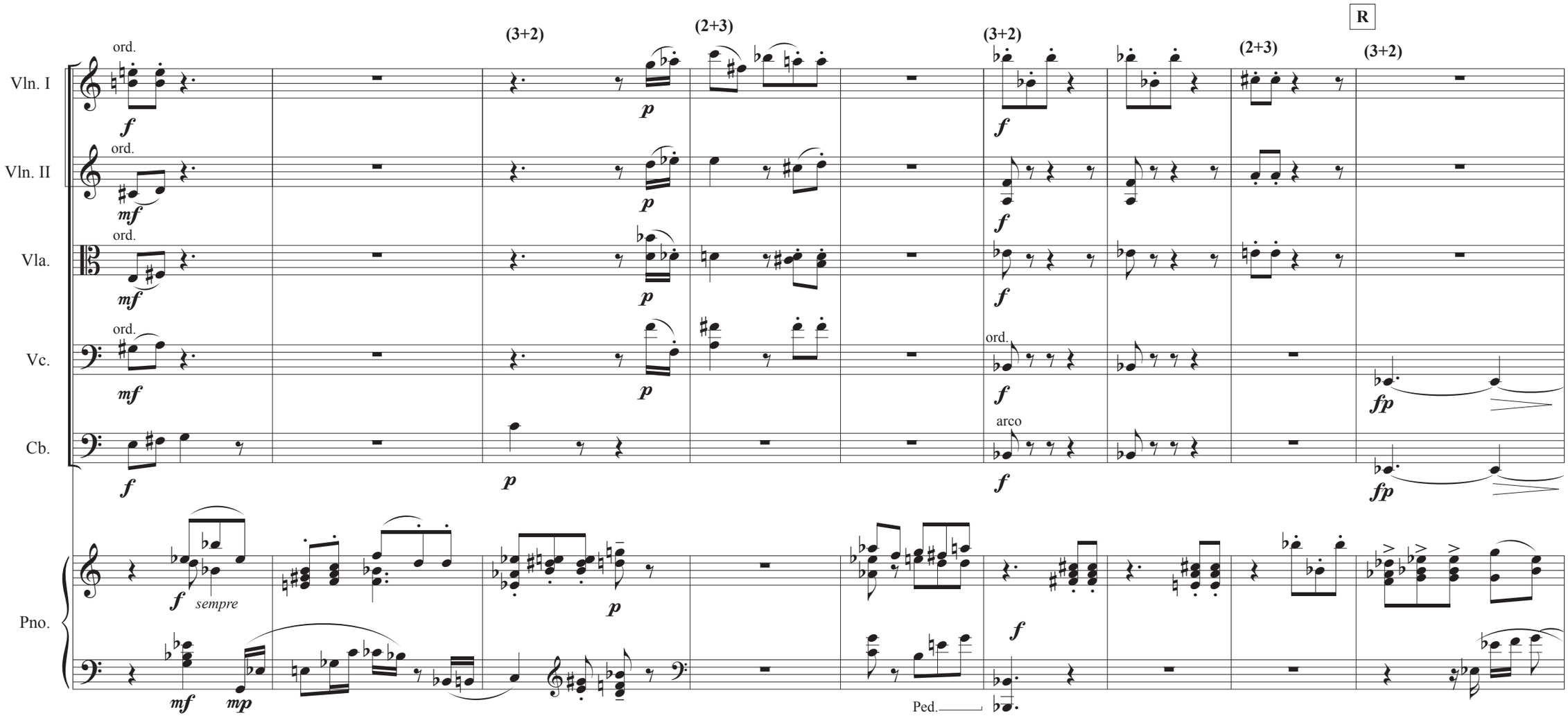

(quasi 3/4)
N
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
f
mf
sfz
ff
fp

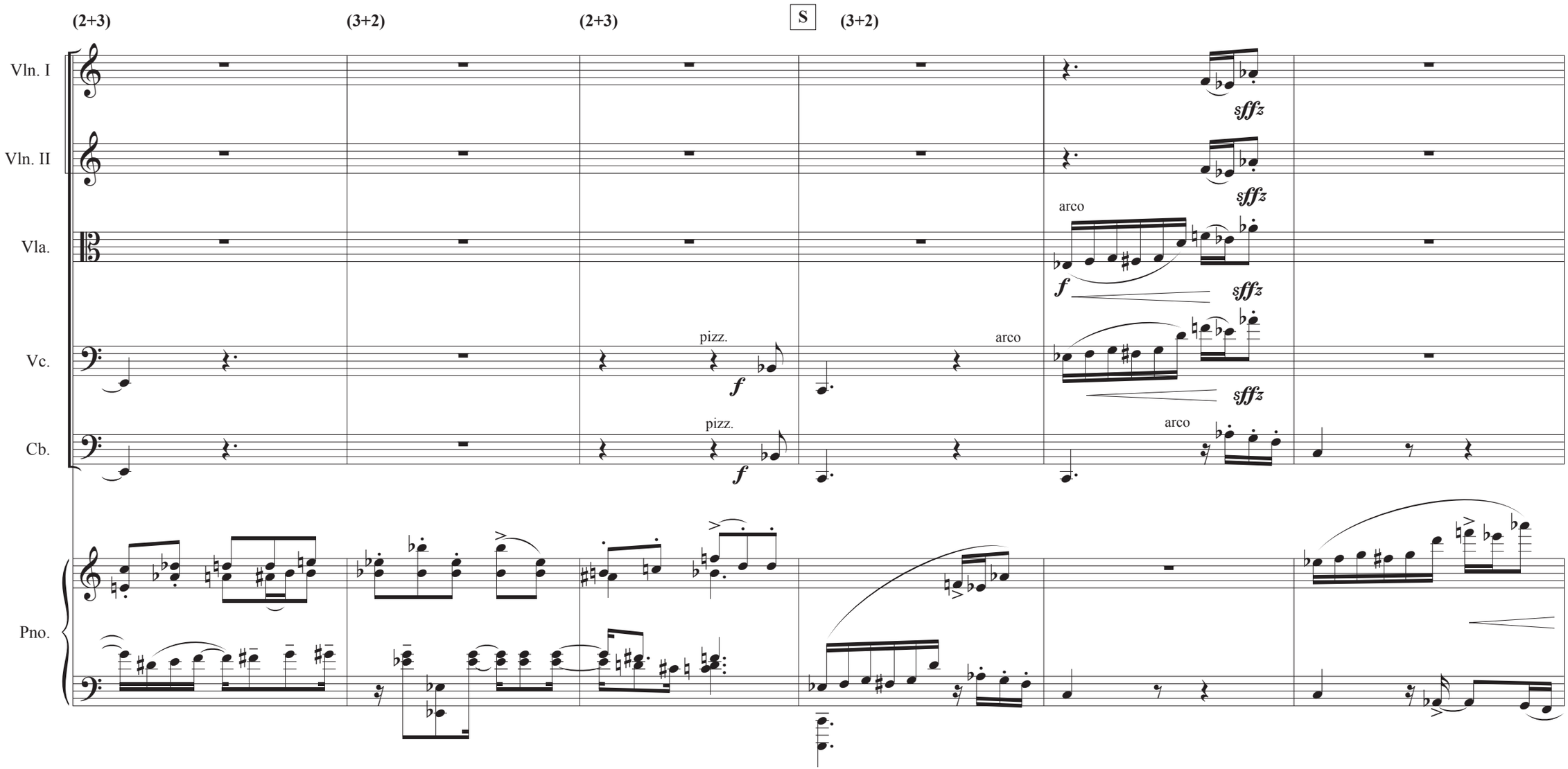

O
(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
f
mf
mp
ff
fff

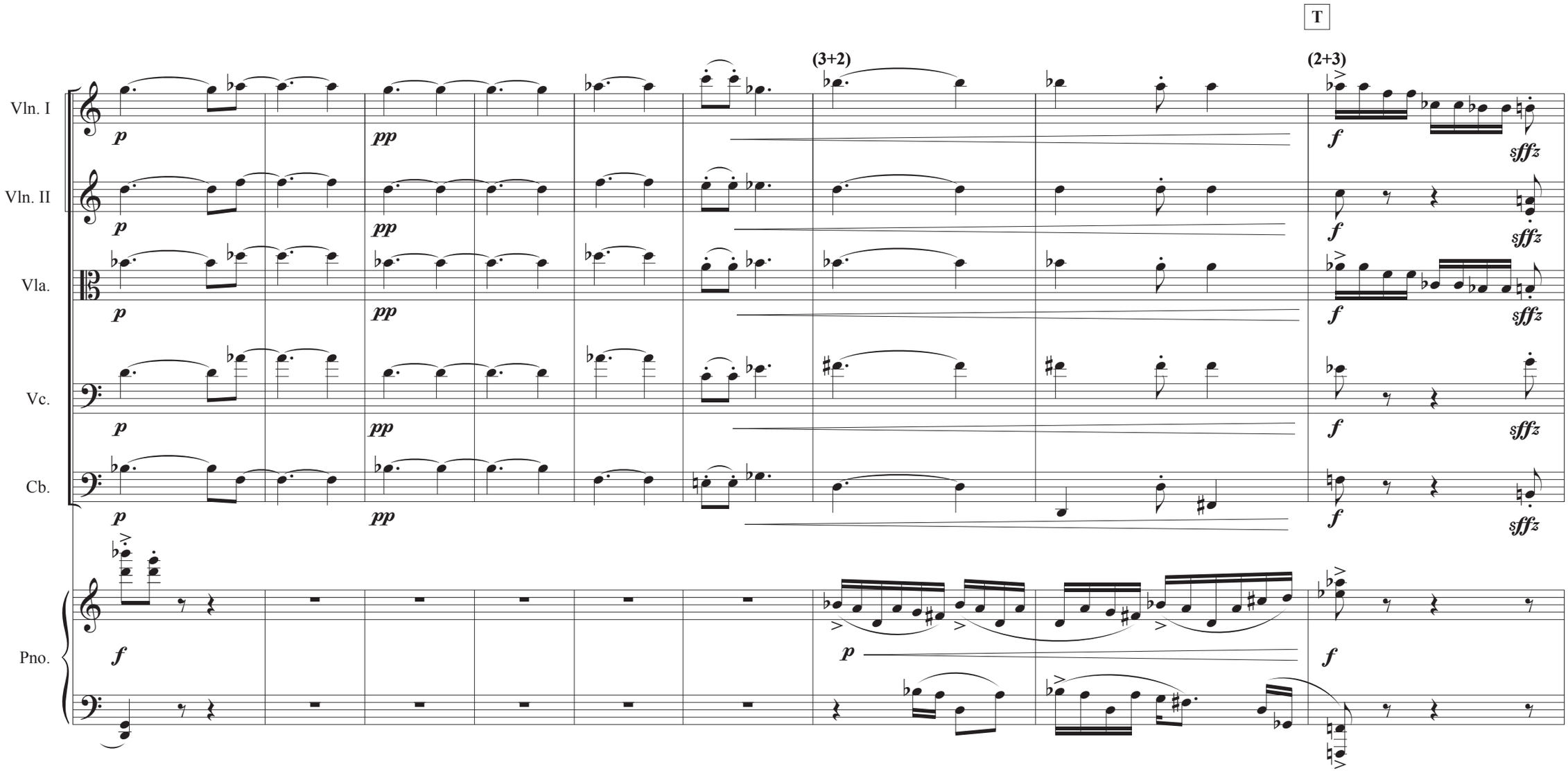

(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
f
f
f
mp

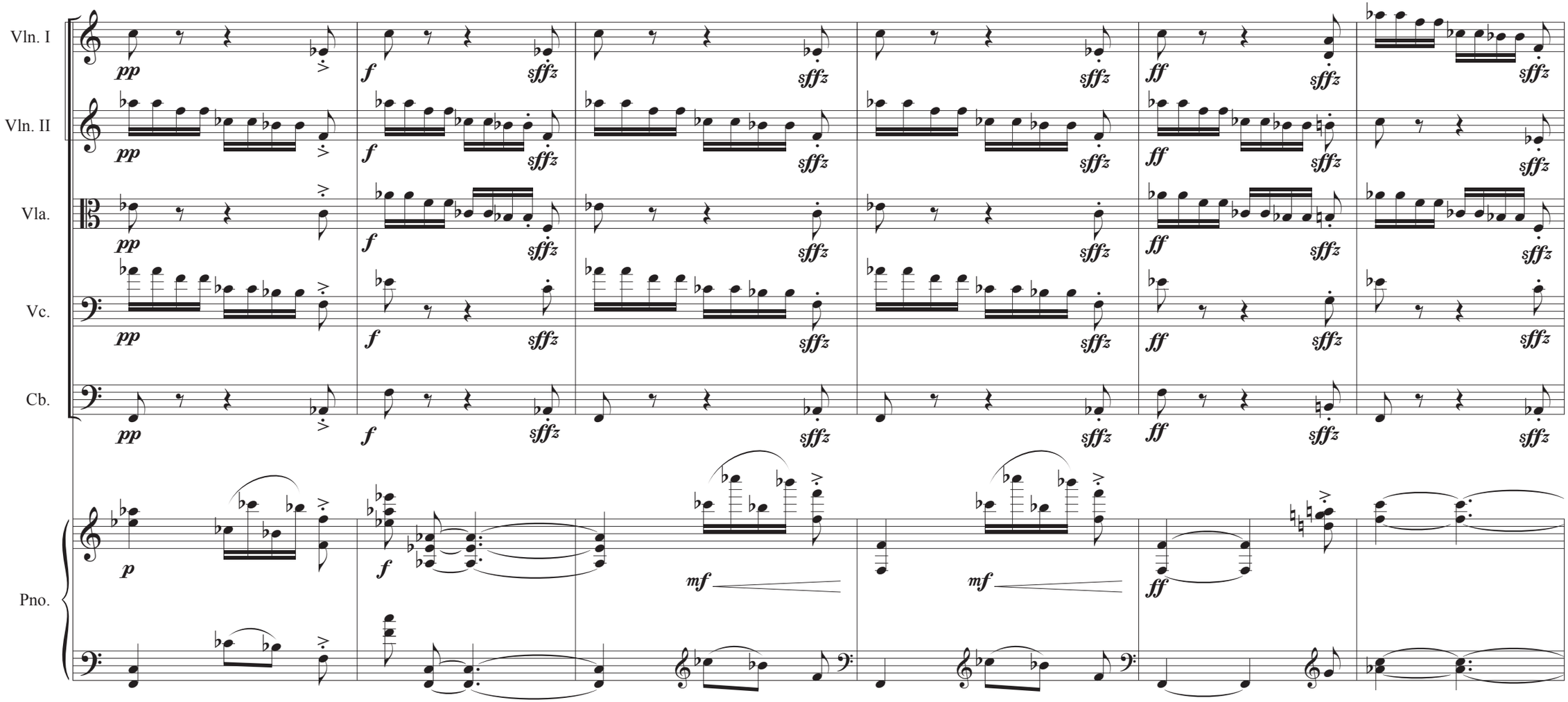

P
Tempo Primo
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
fpp
mp
p
f
ff
mf
subito
r.h.
(l.h.)
Ped.
l.v.
Sost. ped.

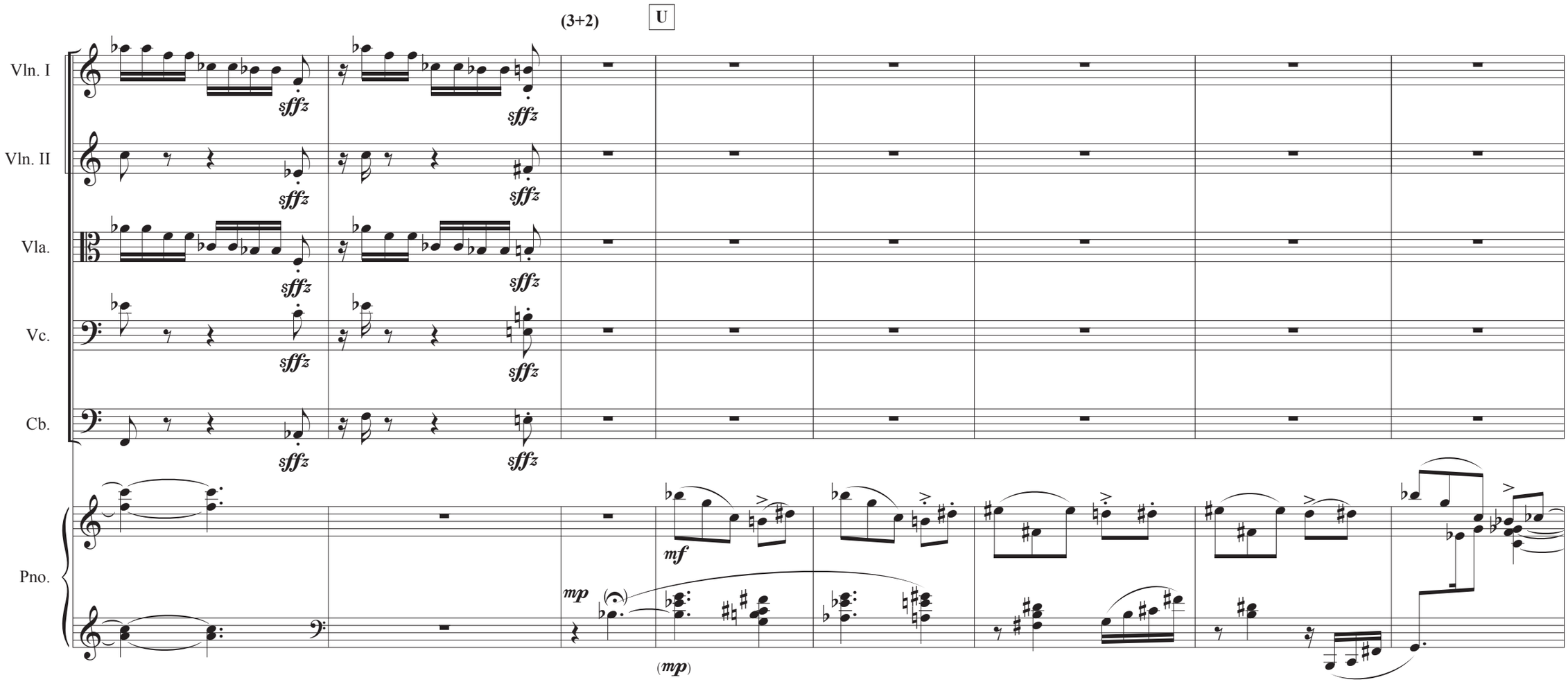

(3+2)
(2+3)
Q
♪ = ♪
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
punta d'arco
pizz.
Sost. ped. off

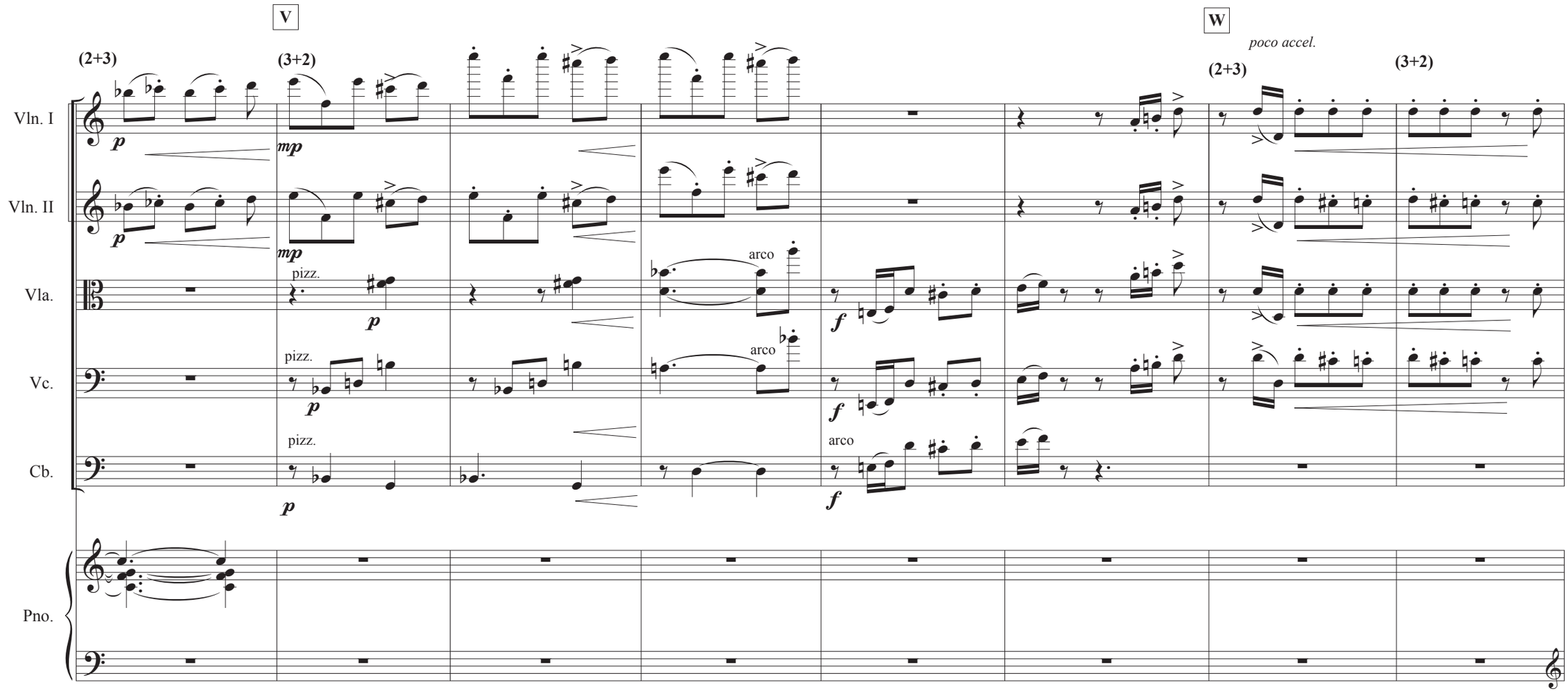

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
ord.
arco
(3+2)
(2+3)
R
f
mf
p
fp
sempre
Ped.

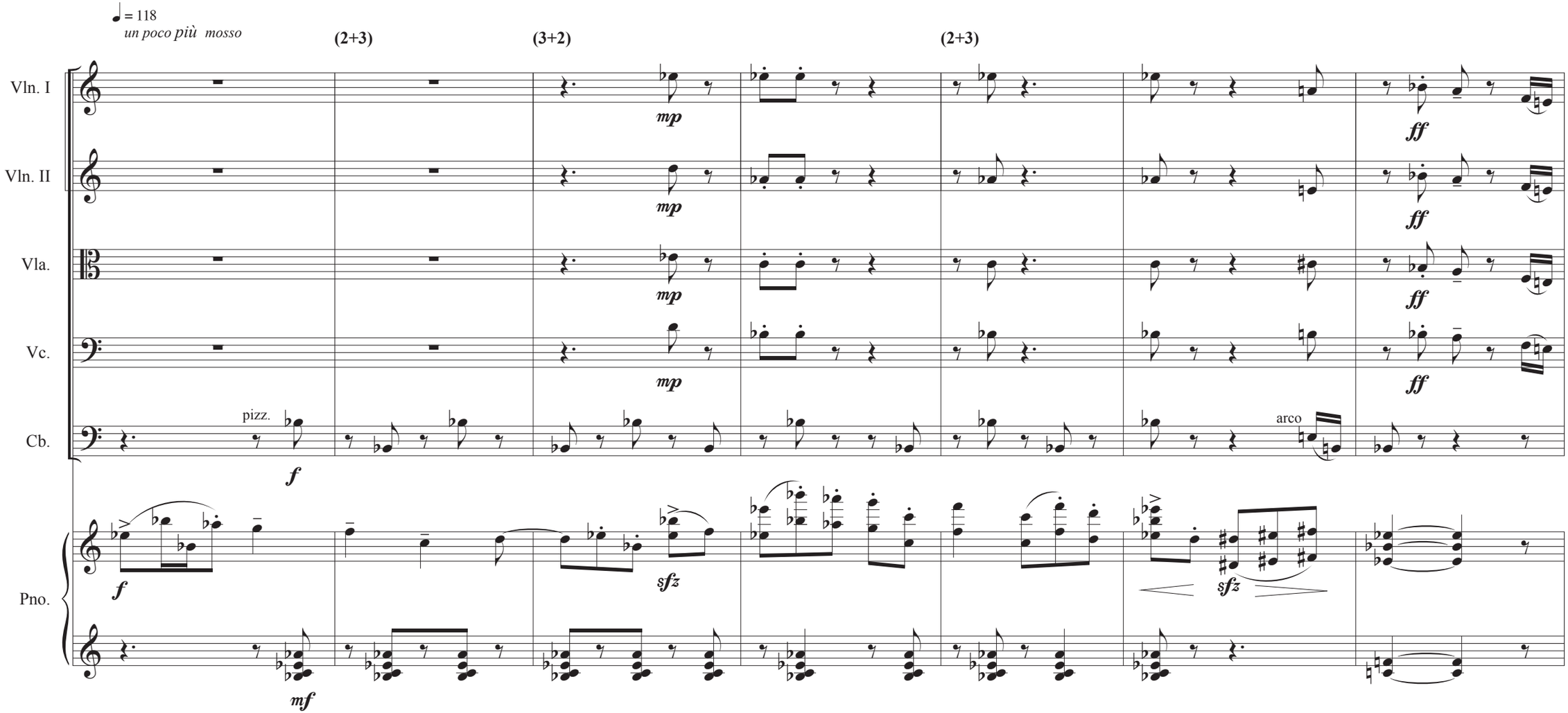

(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
S
(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
sffz
arco
f
pizz.

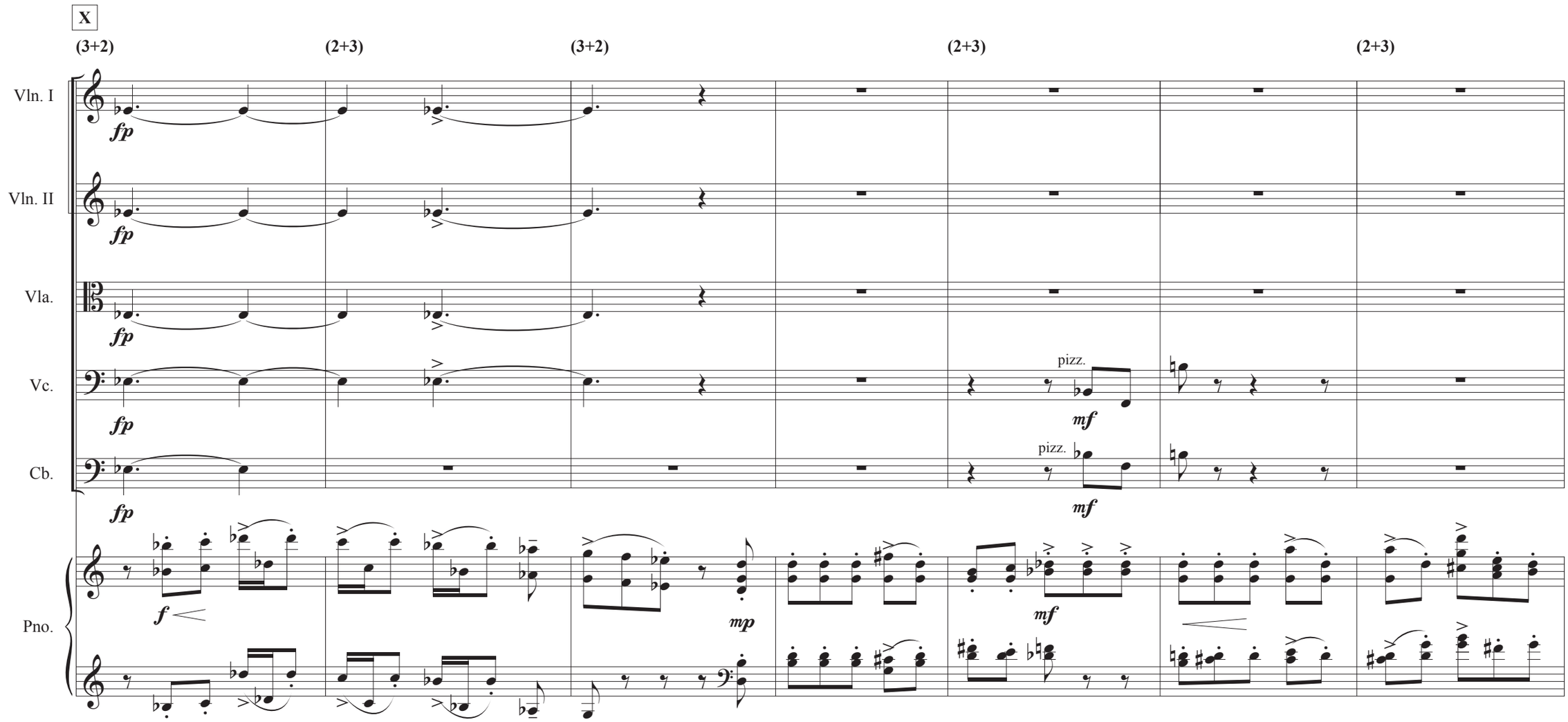

T
(3+2)
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
p
pp
f
sffz

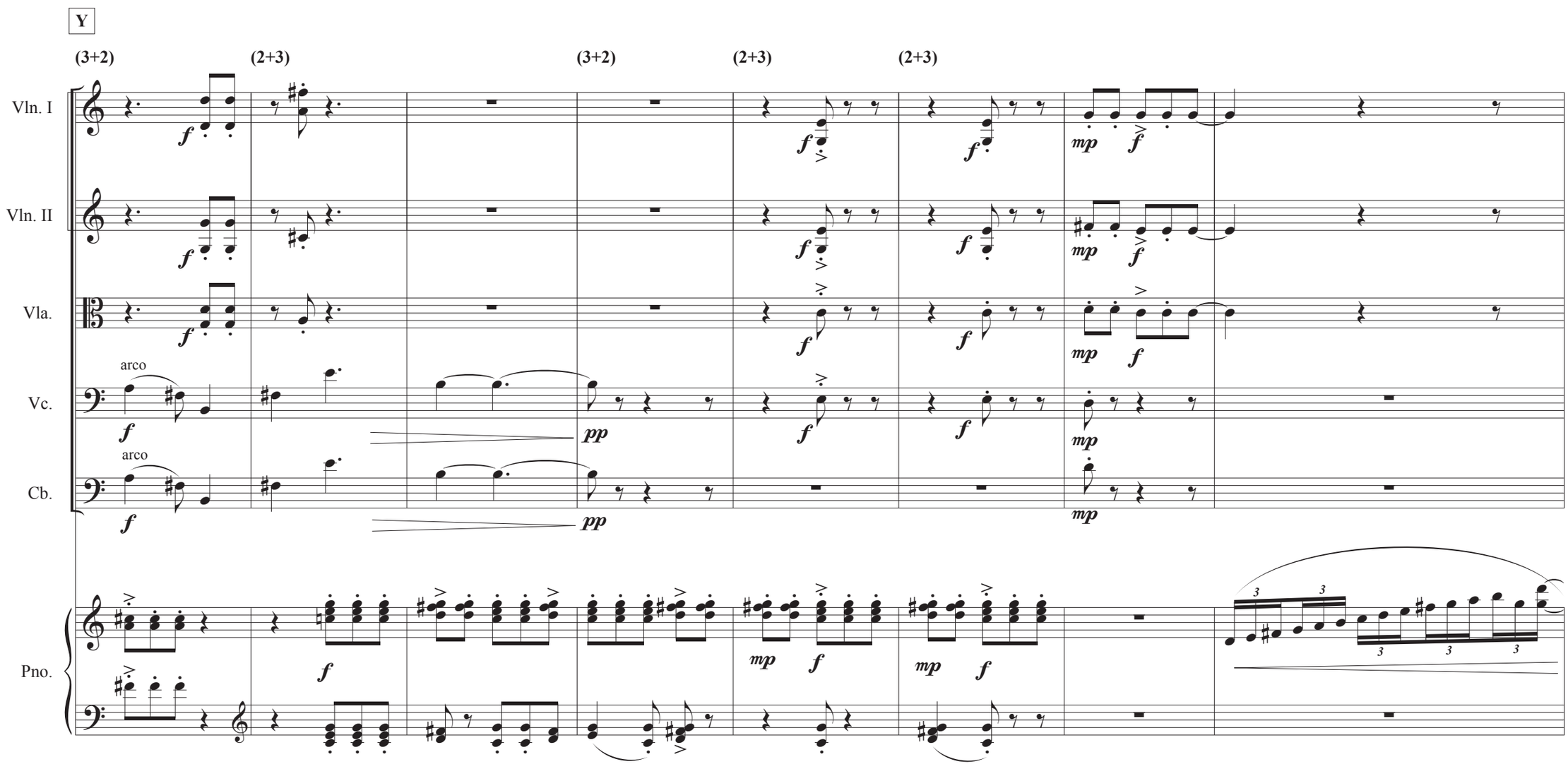

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
pp
f
sffz
ff
p
mf

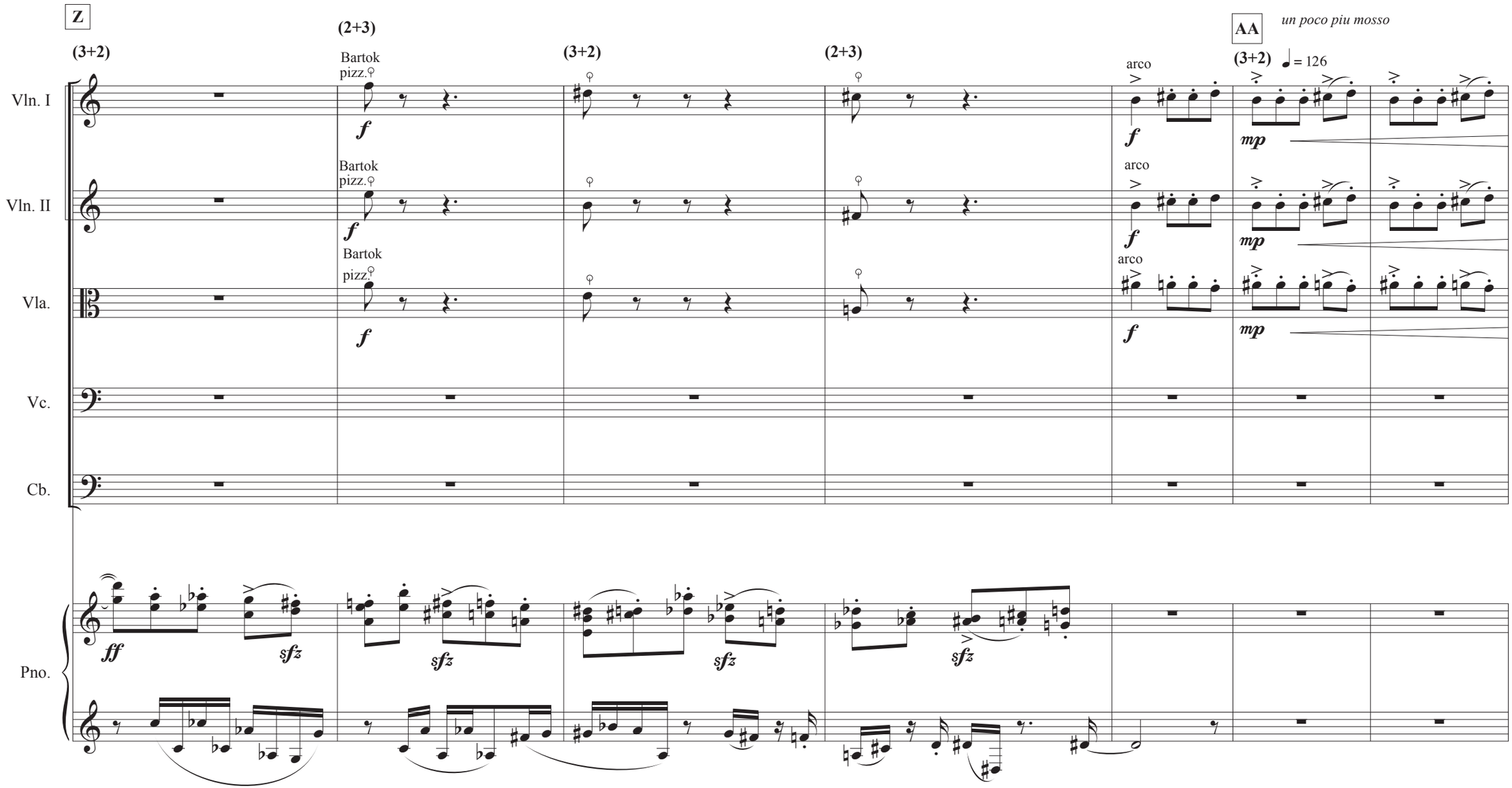

(3+2)
U
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
sffz
mf
mp
(mp)

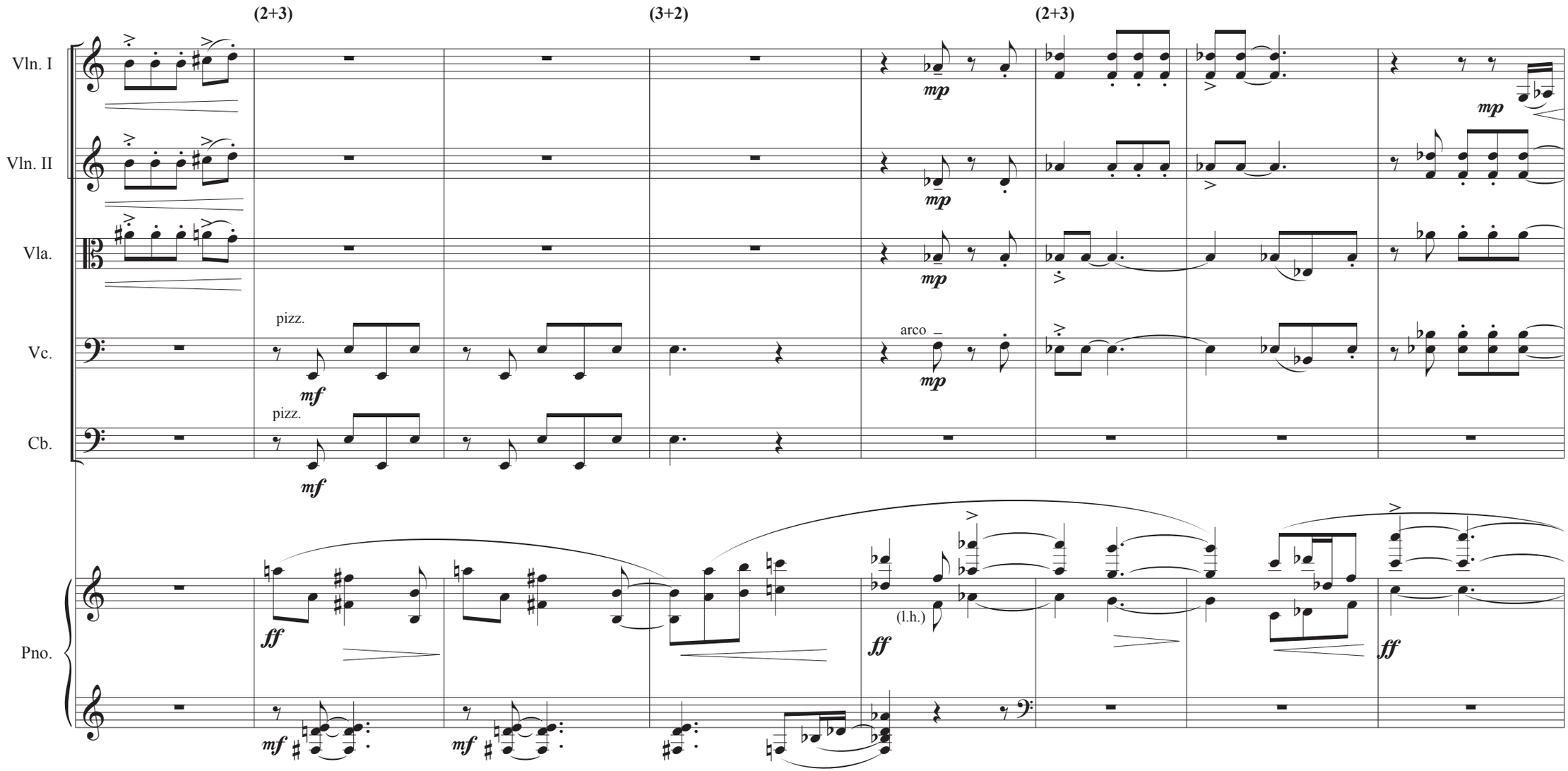

V
W
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
poco accel.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
p
mp
f
pizz.
arco

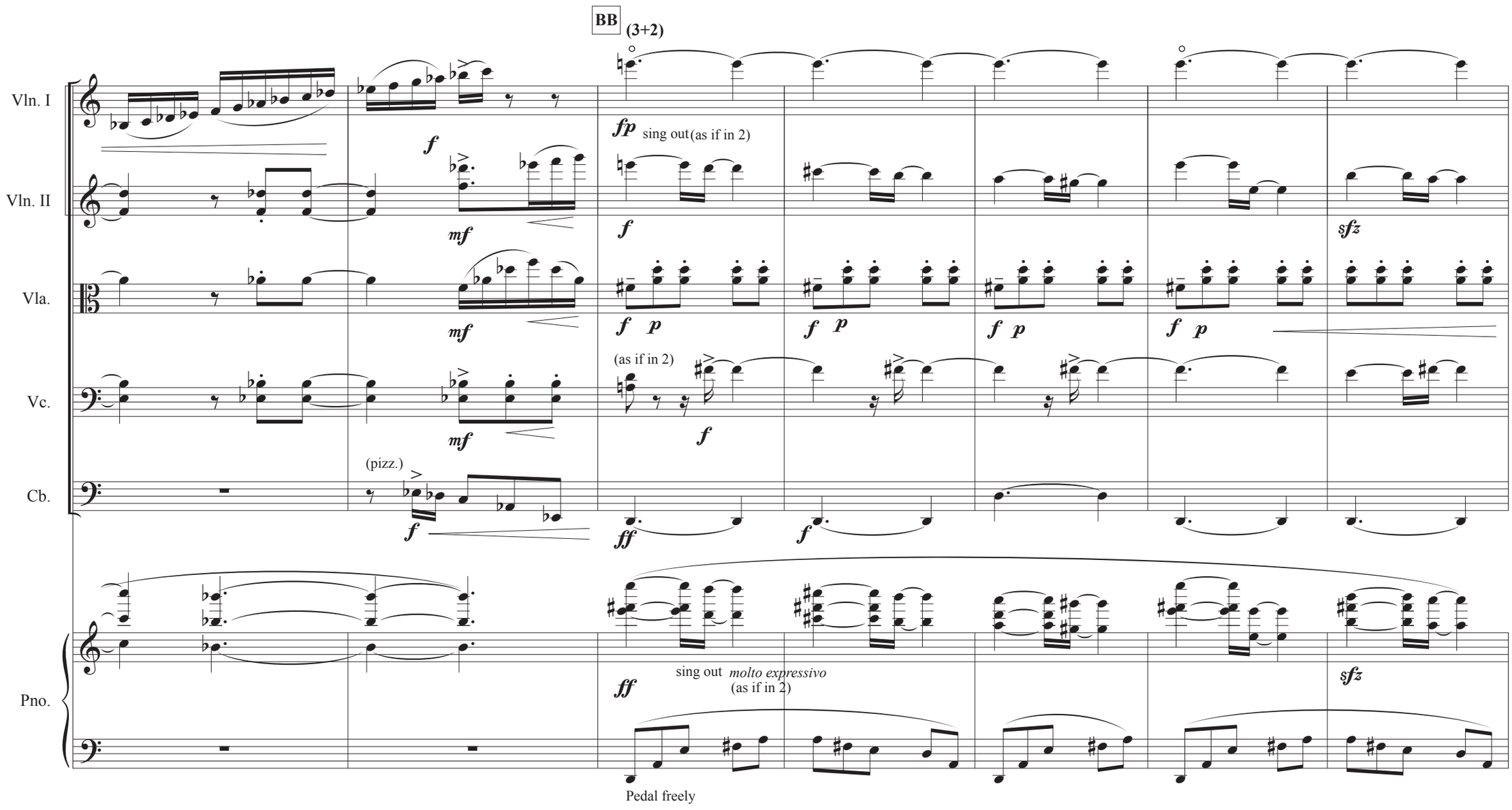

♩ = 118
un poco più mosso
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
pizz.
arco
mp
ff
f
sfz
mf

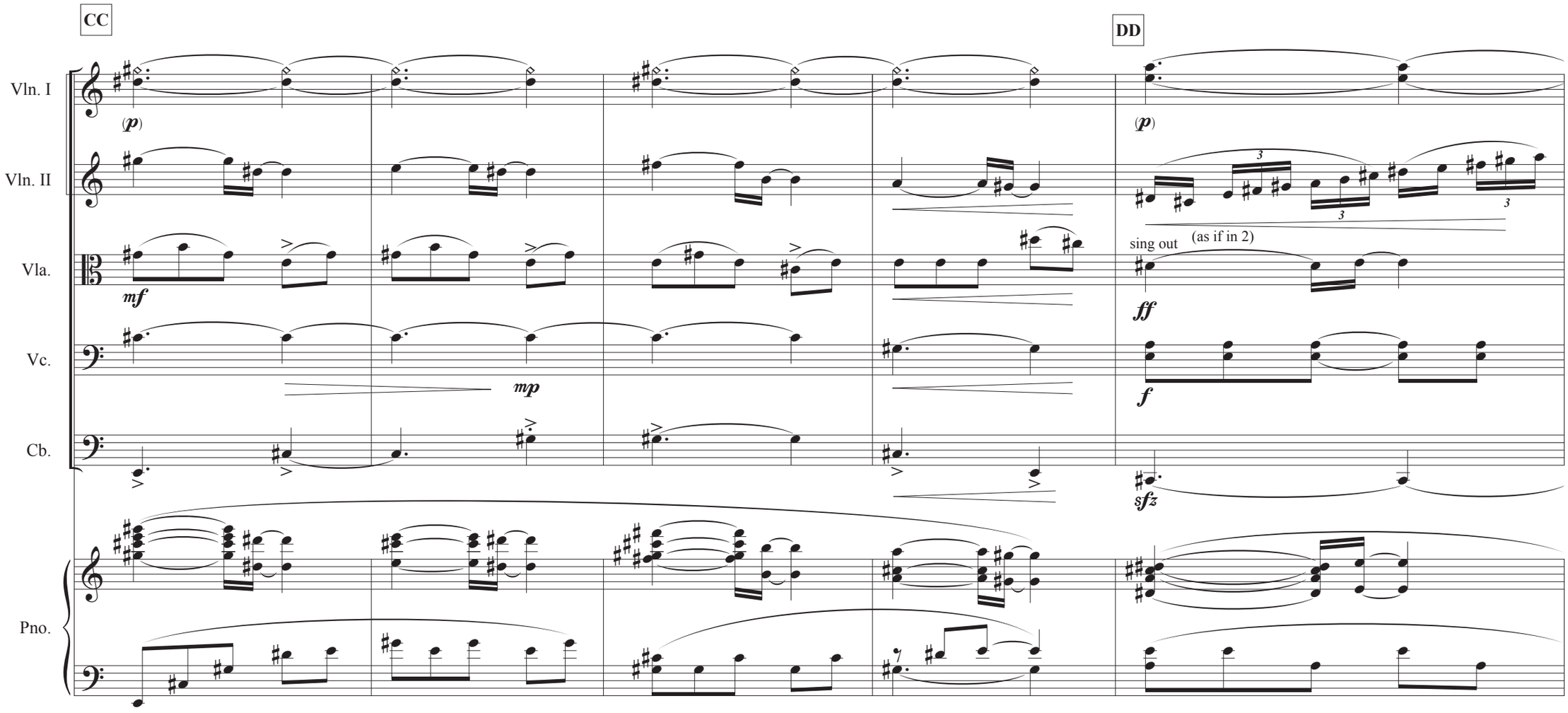

X
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
fp
pizz.
mf
f
mp

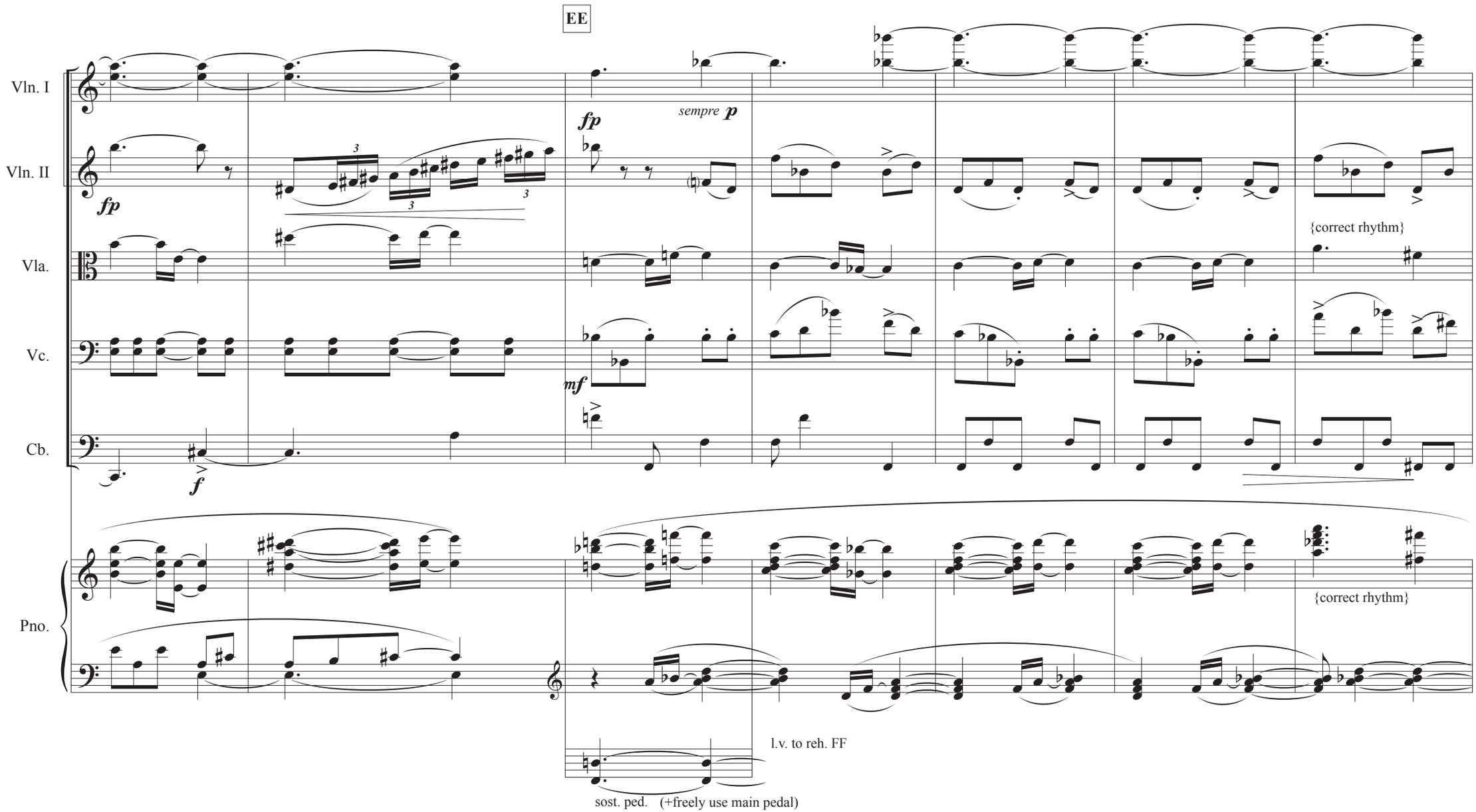

Y
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
arco
arco

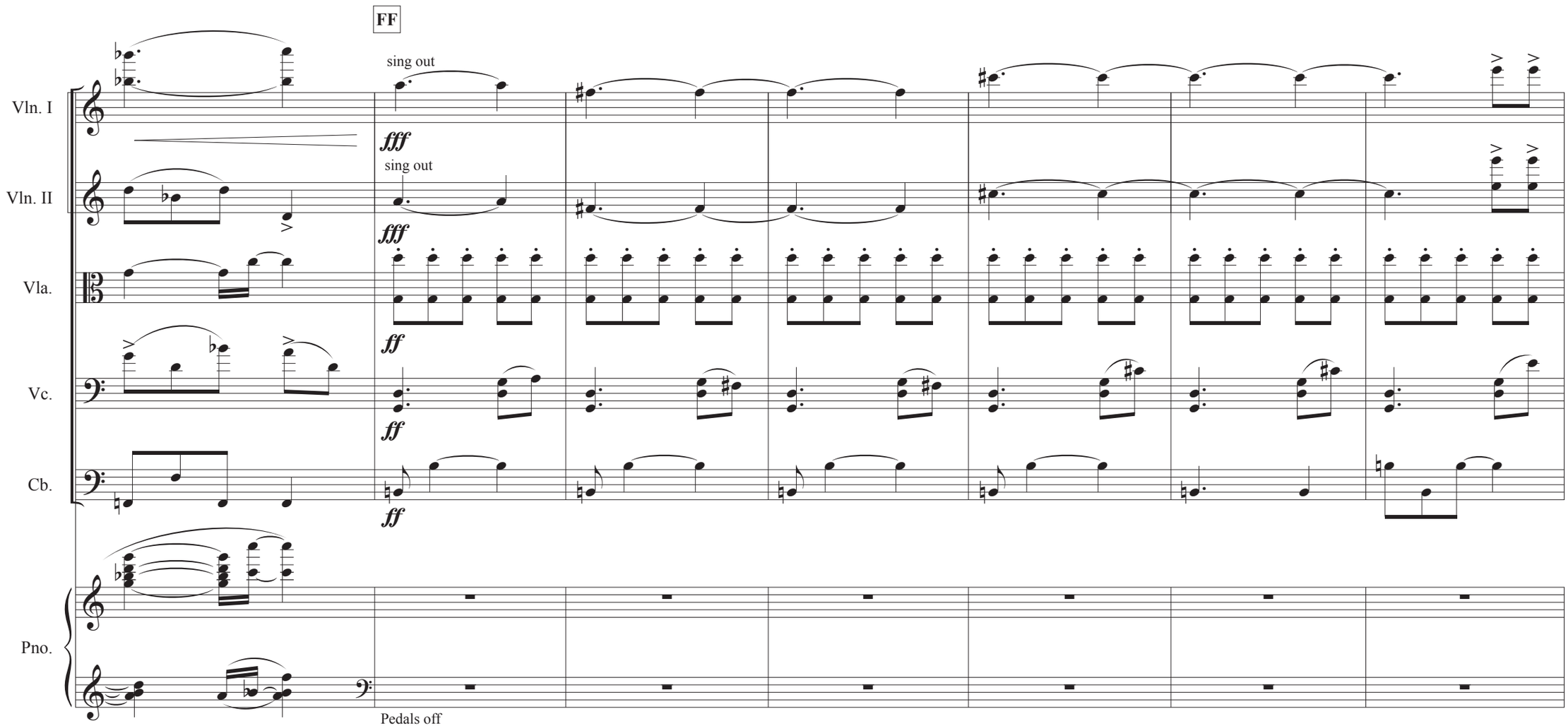

Z
(3+2)
(2+3)
Bartok pizz.
(3+2)
(2+3)
AA
un poco piu mosso
(3+2)
♩= 126
arco
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
f
mp
ff
sfz

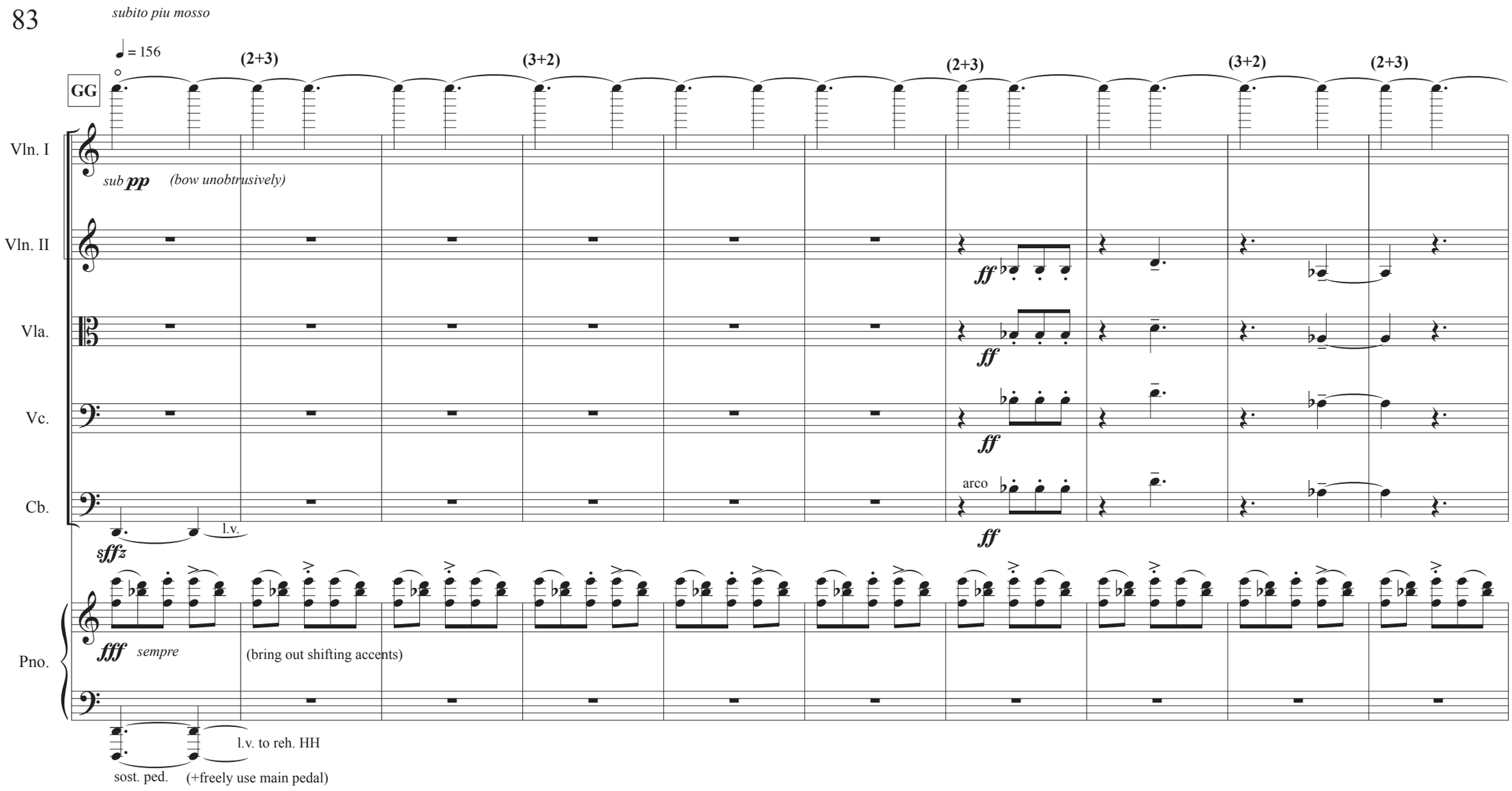

(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
pizz.
pizz.
arco
(l.h.)
mp
mf
ff

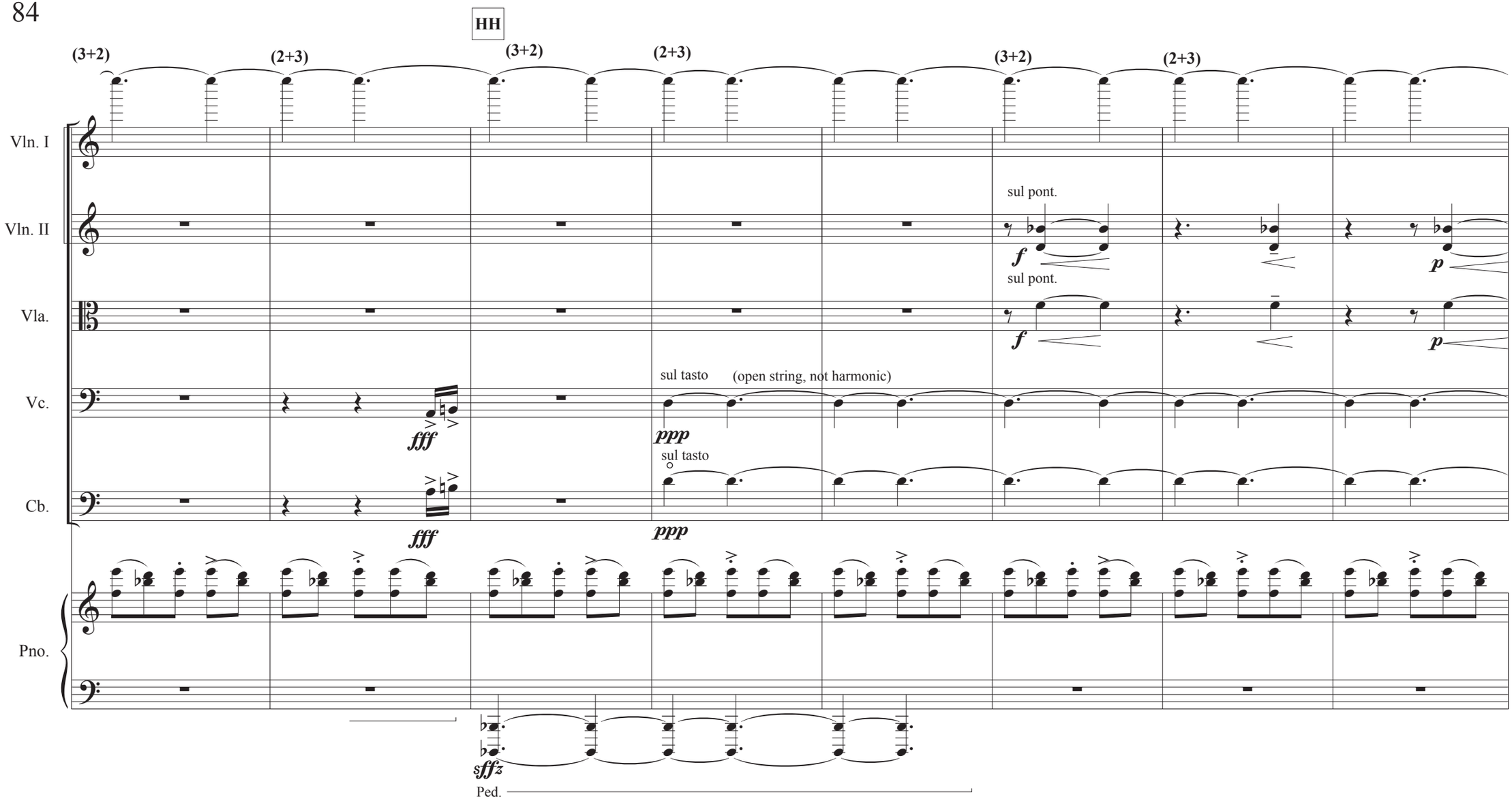

BB
(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
f
fp
sing out (as if in 2)
mf
sfz
(as if in 2)
(pizz.)
ff
sing out molto expressivo
(as if in 2)
Pedal freely

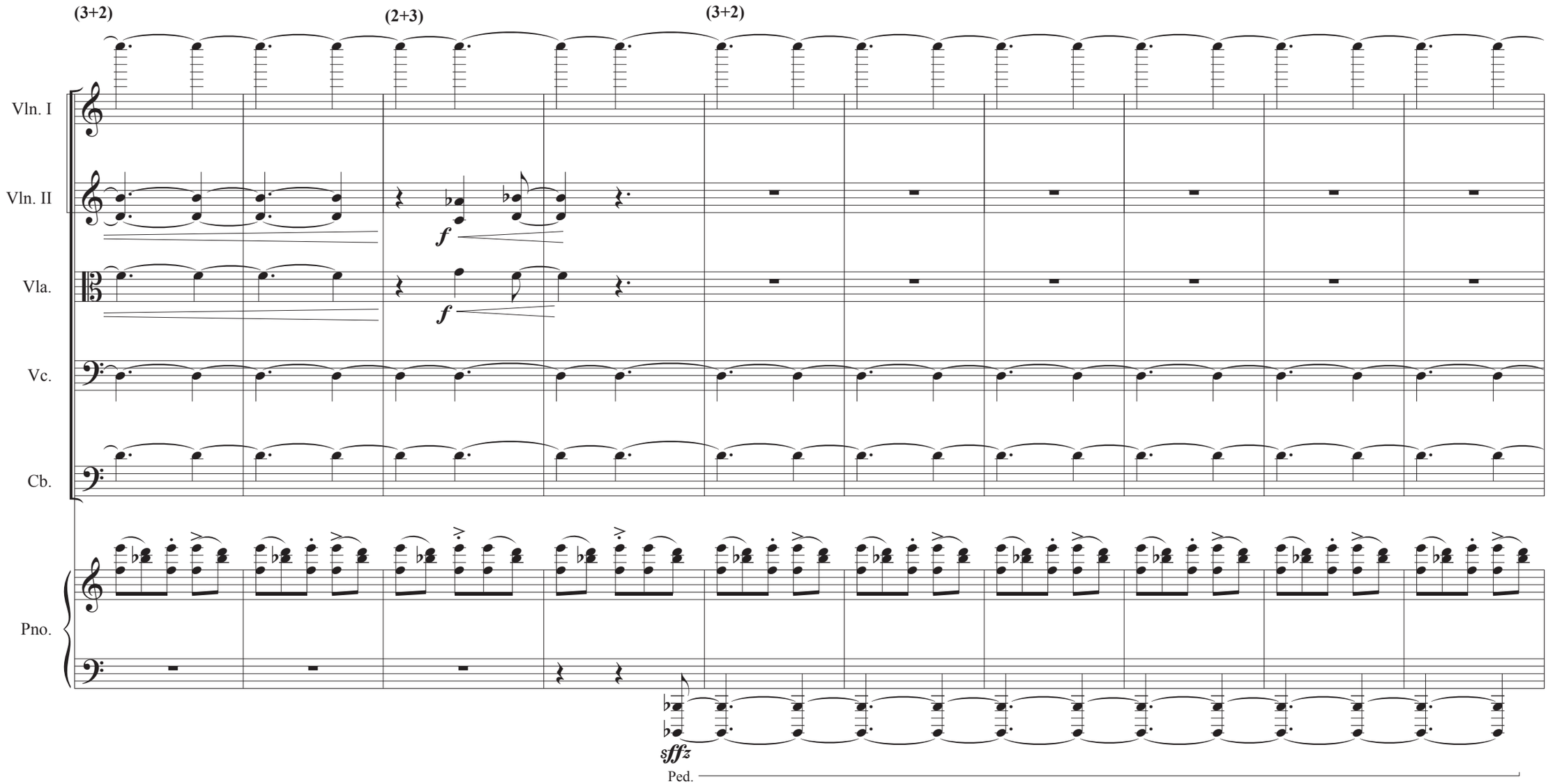

CC
DD
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
(p)
mf
mp
(p)
sing out
(as if in 2)
ff
f
sfz

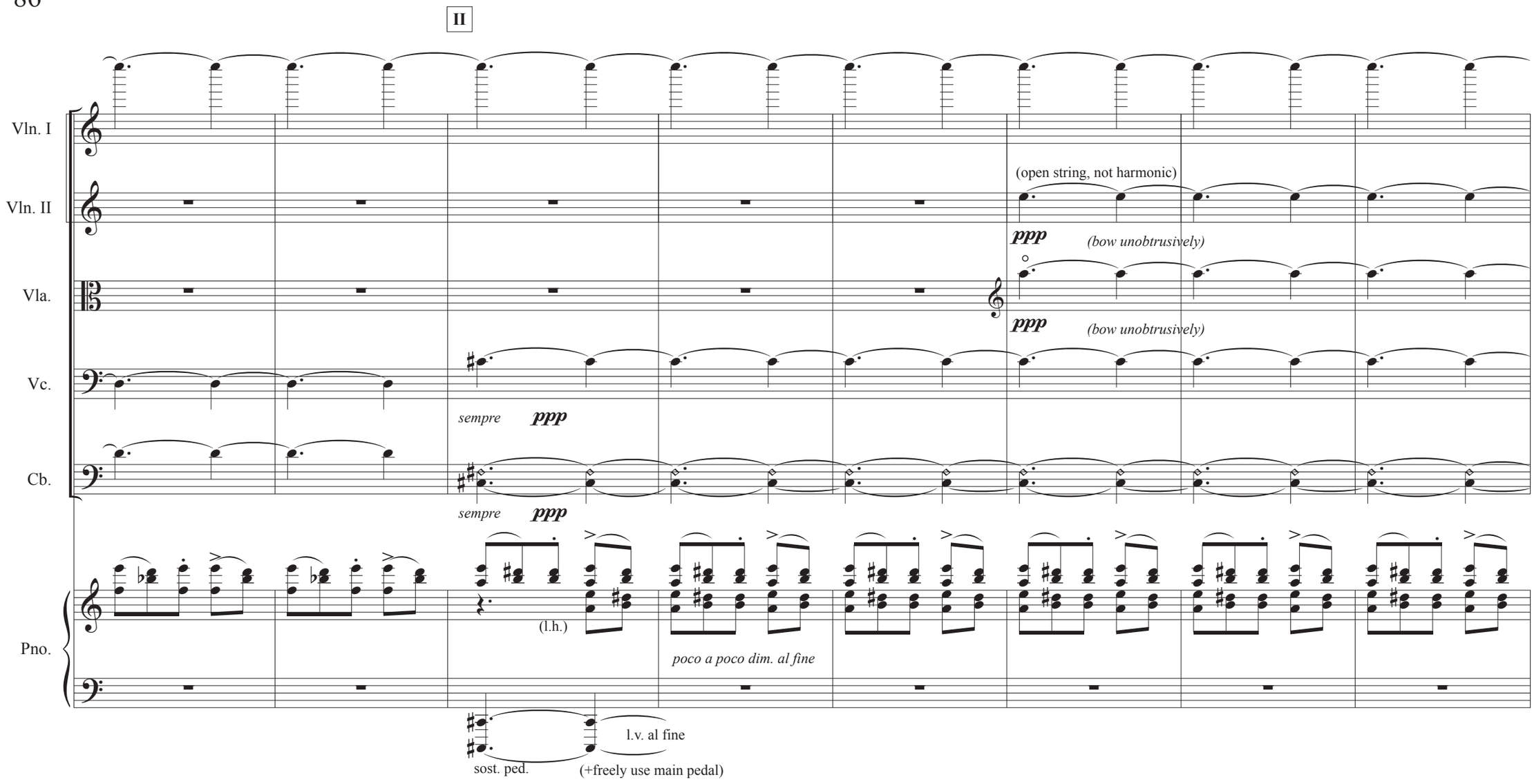

EE
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
fp
fp
sempre p
mf
f
{correct rhythm}
{correct rhythm}
l.v. to reh. FF
sost. ped. (+freely use main pedal)

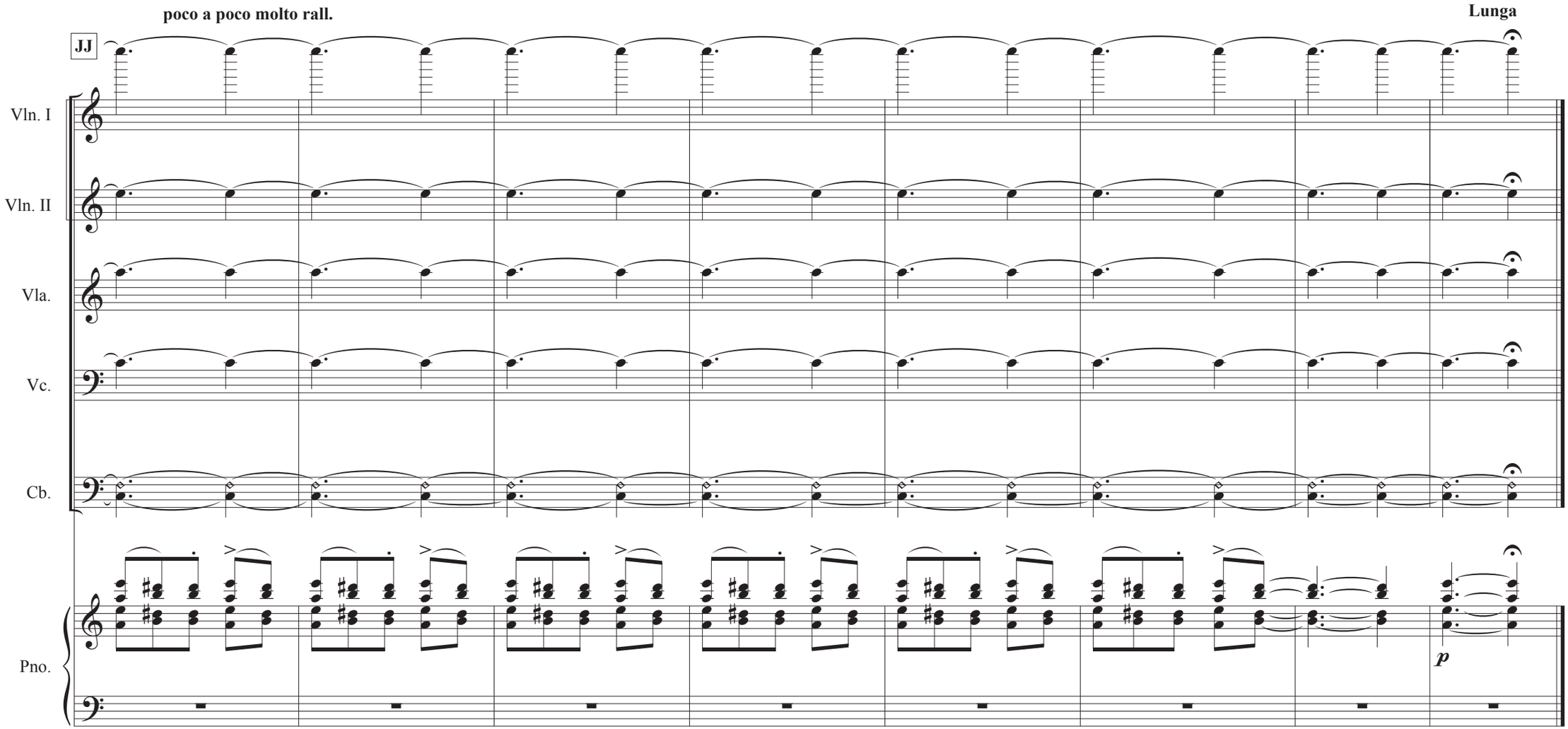

FF
sing out
fff
Vln. I
sing out
fff
Vln. II
Vla.
ff
Vc.
ff
Cb.
ff
Pno.
Pedals off


subito piu mosso
♩ = 156
GG
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
Vln. I
sub pp
(bow unobtrusively)
Vln. II
ff
Vla.
ff
Vc.
ff
Cb.
arco
ff
l.v.
sfffz
Pno.
fff
sempre
(bring out shifting accents)
l.v. to reh. HH
sost. ped.
(+freely use main pedal)


HH
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
(2+3)
Vln. I
Vln. II
sul pont.
f
sul pont.
p
Vla.
f
p
Vc.
sul tasto
(open string, not harmonic)
fff
ppp
sul tasto
Cb.
fff
ppp
Pno.
sffz
Ped.


(3+2)
(2+3)
(3+2)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
f
f
sfffz
Ped.


II
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
(open string, not harmonic)
ppp
(bow unobtrusively)
ppp
(bow unobtrusively)
sempre
ppp
sempre
ppp
(l.h.)
poco a poco dim. al fine
l.v. al fine
sost. ped.
(+freely use main pedal)


poco a poco molto rall.
Lunga
JJ
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Pno.
p