Cello Concerto

for Violoncello and Orchestra

Bill Robinson

Cello Concerto

October 22, 2015–January 25, 2016
Duration: about 27 minutes

for Bonnie Thron and Grant Llewellyn

I have had the pleasure of making music with Principal Cellist of the NC Symphony Bonnie Thron and her husband clarinetist Fred Jacobowitz since 2008. She spoke with Grant Llewellyn, music director of the orchestra, in April 2015 about writing something for her as soloist. Grant then asked me to come up with a piece. After finishing other projects, I got to work on this concerto, after asking Grant for Welsh themes; one of his suggestions is the basis for the first movement.

I. Over the Stone (Tros y Garreg)		
	Adagio; Cyflym; Adagio; Cyflym; Cymedrol; Ychydig yn gyflymach	[9']
II. Heart Song	*Largo*	[8']
III. Contradanza	*Fidelio*	[2']
IV. Schlimmbesserung	*Vivace*	[7:20]

The theme for the first movement is the traditional Welsh song "Tros y Garreg", or "Over the Stone". The song is attributed to Rhys Bodychen, who fought at the Battle of Bosworth Field on the side of the Tutors against Richard III in 1485. The lyrics reflect on those who have fallen in battle. This melody has been altered from the original by George Thompson, who published Welsh airs in 1809, 1811, and 1817. I prefer his version for this purpose to the original. Note that the end of the melody resembles the theme from the last movement of J. S. Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No. 5*, which factors into my treatment. Also, the traditional harp music of Wales led me to have an important harp part throughout this concerto.

I made a point of using particularly incomprehensible, unspellable, and unpronounceable Welsh words for tempo markings in the first movement. *Cyflym* means "fast"; *Cymedrol* means "moderate"; *Ychydig yn gflymach* means "a little faster."

The very short third movement started life back about 1990 as the second movement of my *Fourth Sonata for Solo Violin*. (There is a total of ten such sonatas.) Until recently I thought it was a tango, as I am easily bored with details in music theory and sometimes don't look things up. In fact, it is a contradanza, a dance form originating in Havana--hence the tempo marking *Fidelio*. The solo cello part can be performed by itself in a pinch. The instrumentation in the third movement is the same as the rest of the piece, except that it lacks the second trumpet.

The fourth movement is titled *Schlimmbesserung*, which is German for "an effort to make things better that ends up making things worse".

Performance notes

Instrumentation: two flutes (second flute doubles piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, timpani, harp, solo cello, and strings.

In the first movement, measures 163-176, and 273 to the end, the solo part is marked *tutti*. The soloist is playing with the orchestra, and it doesn't matter that it cannot be heard distinctly. There are several passages through the piece where the orchestra will overpower the solo cello. In those places, the cello should be amplified, thus allowing full volume for the ensemble.

As the harp has a prominent part, it should be located in proximity to the soloist, not in the back as usual.

Accidentals hold through the measure and not beyond, and do not apply to octaves.

Cover art: frontispiece from *Musical and poetical relicks of the Welsh bards* by Edward Jones, 1784.

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billrobinsonmusic.com

Cello Concerto

I. Over the Stone (Tros y Garreg) [9']

Bill Robinson

Theme
Adagio (♩.= 52)

1 Flute
2 (dbl. Piccolo)
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in B♭
2 Bassoons
2 Horns in F
2 Trumpets in B♭
Timpani
Harp
Solo Cello
I Violin
II
Viola
Cello
Double Bass

[Sections marked between (tutti) and (solo) are optional for the solo cello.]

p *mp* *mf* *f*

Theme
Adagio (♩.= 52)

10

Solo
Vc.
DB

mp *f* *mf*

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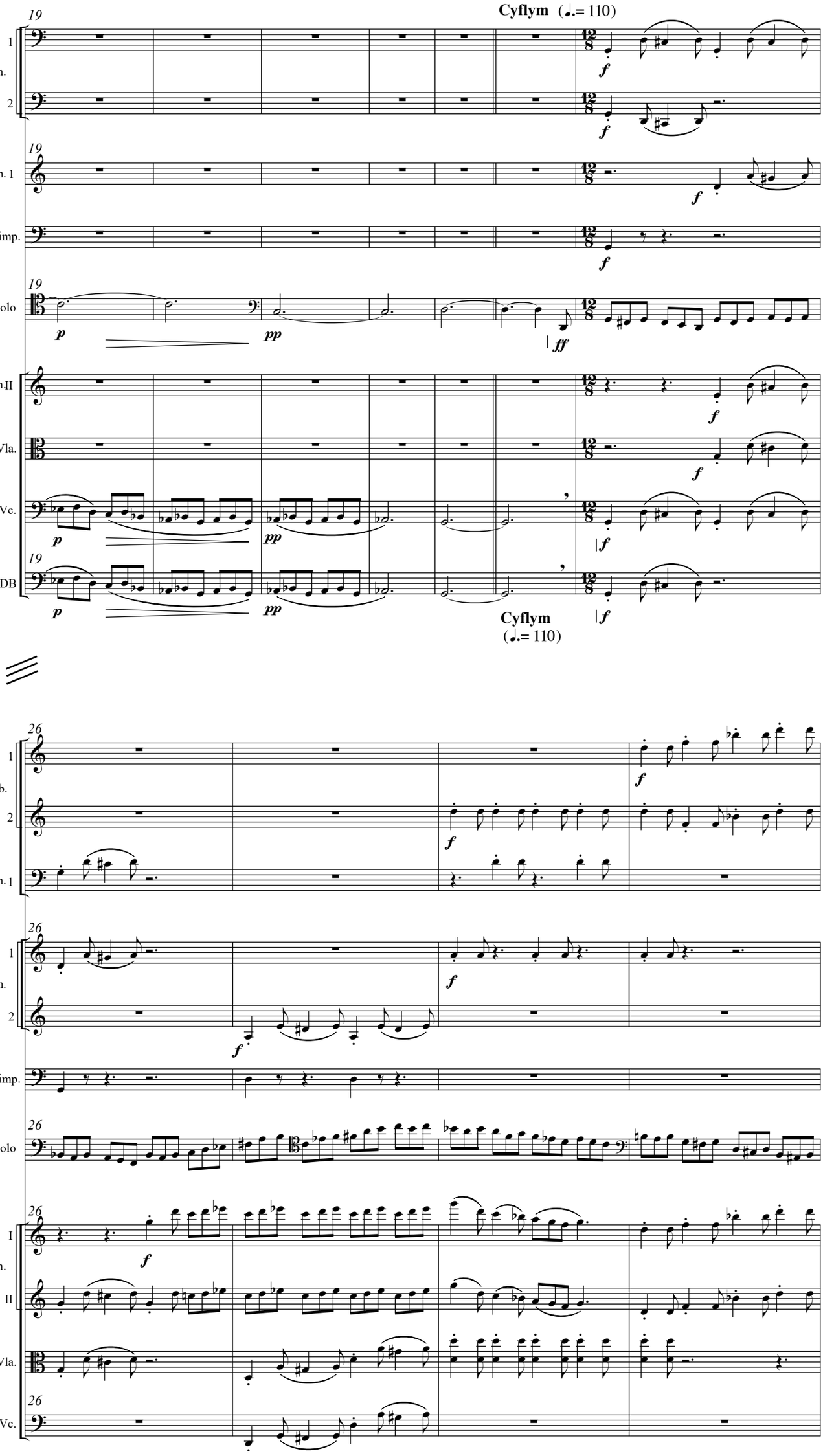
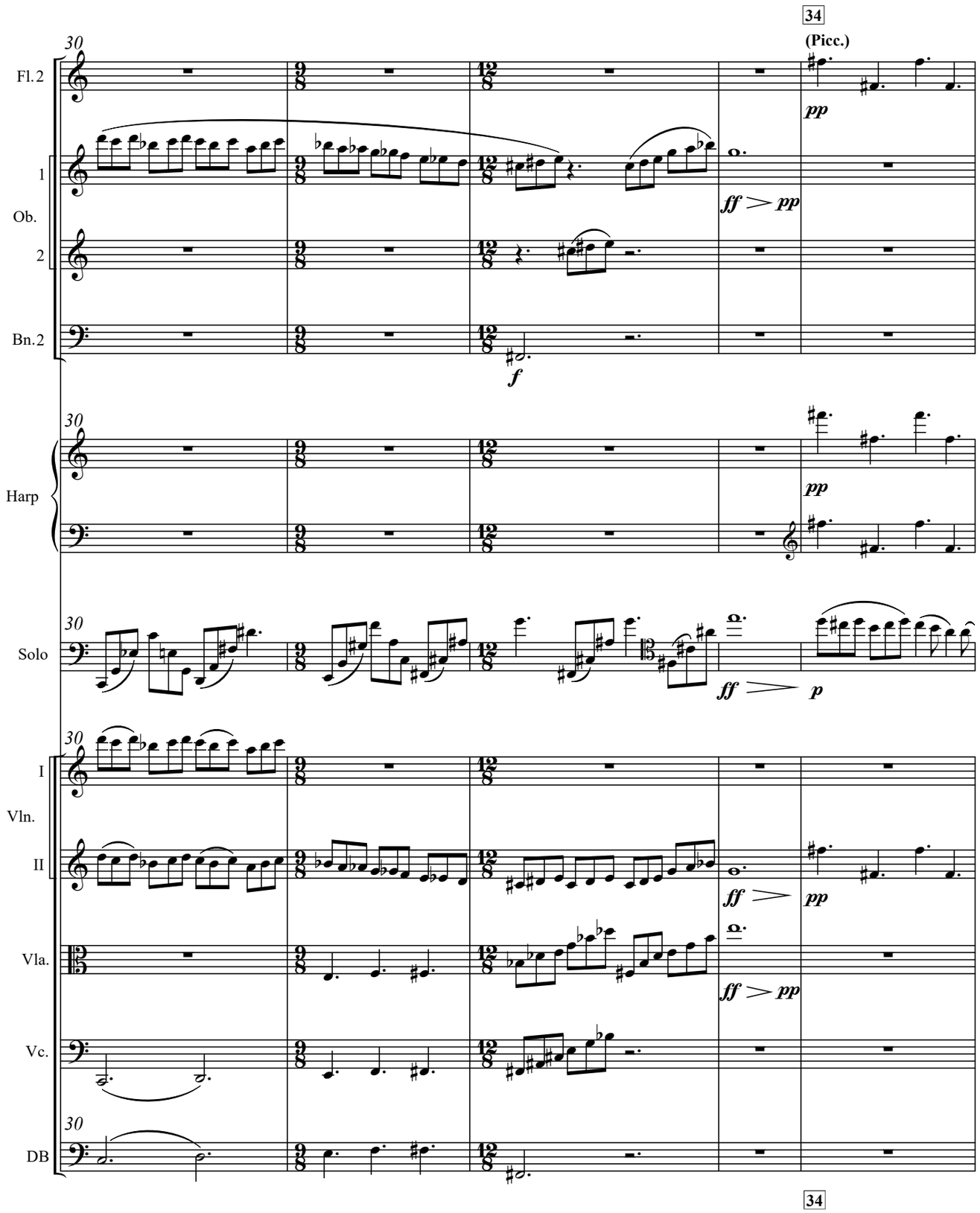
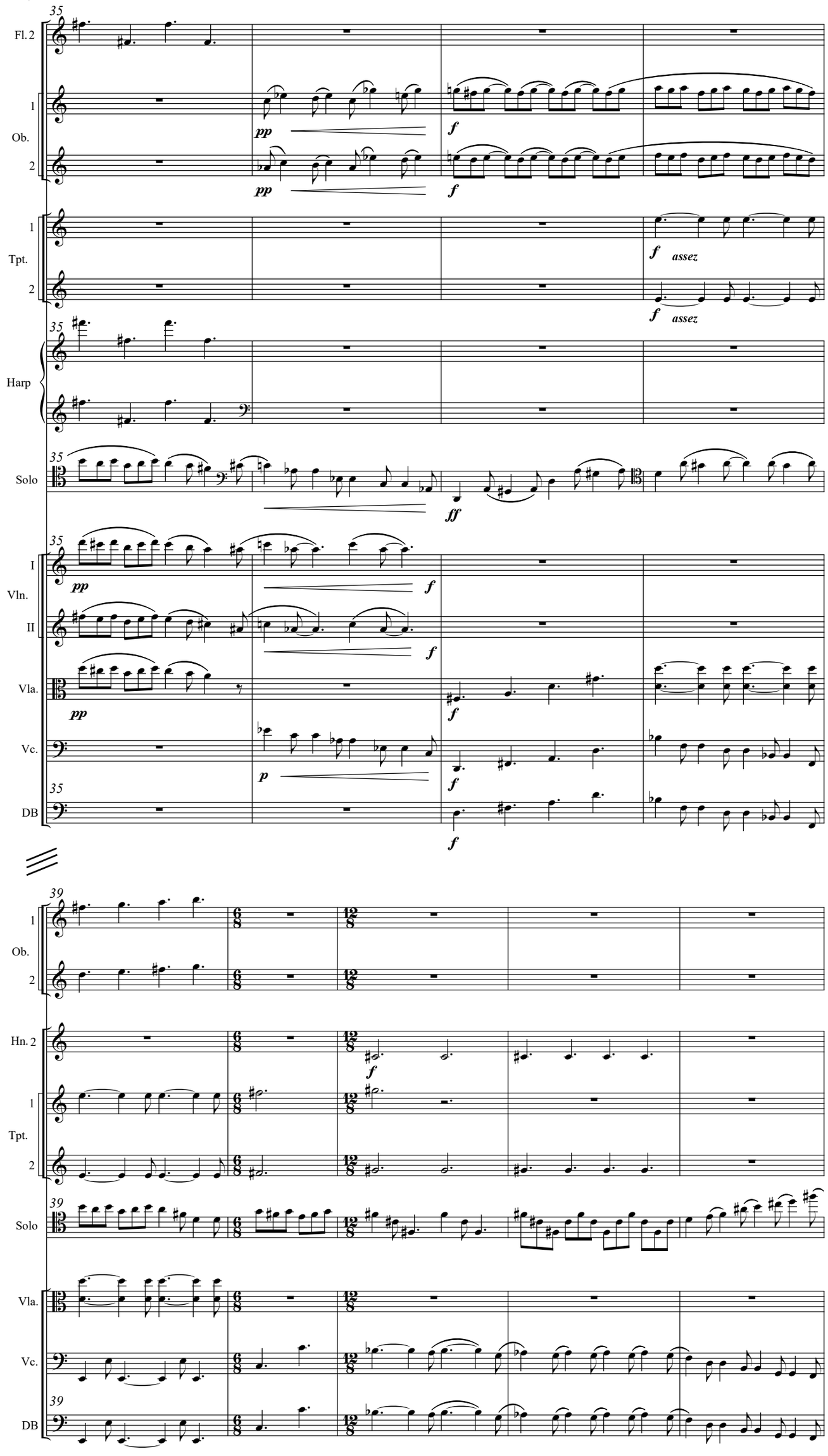
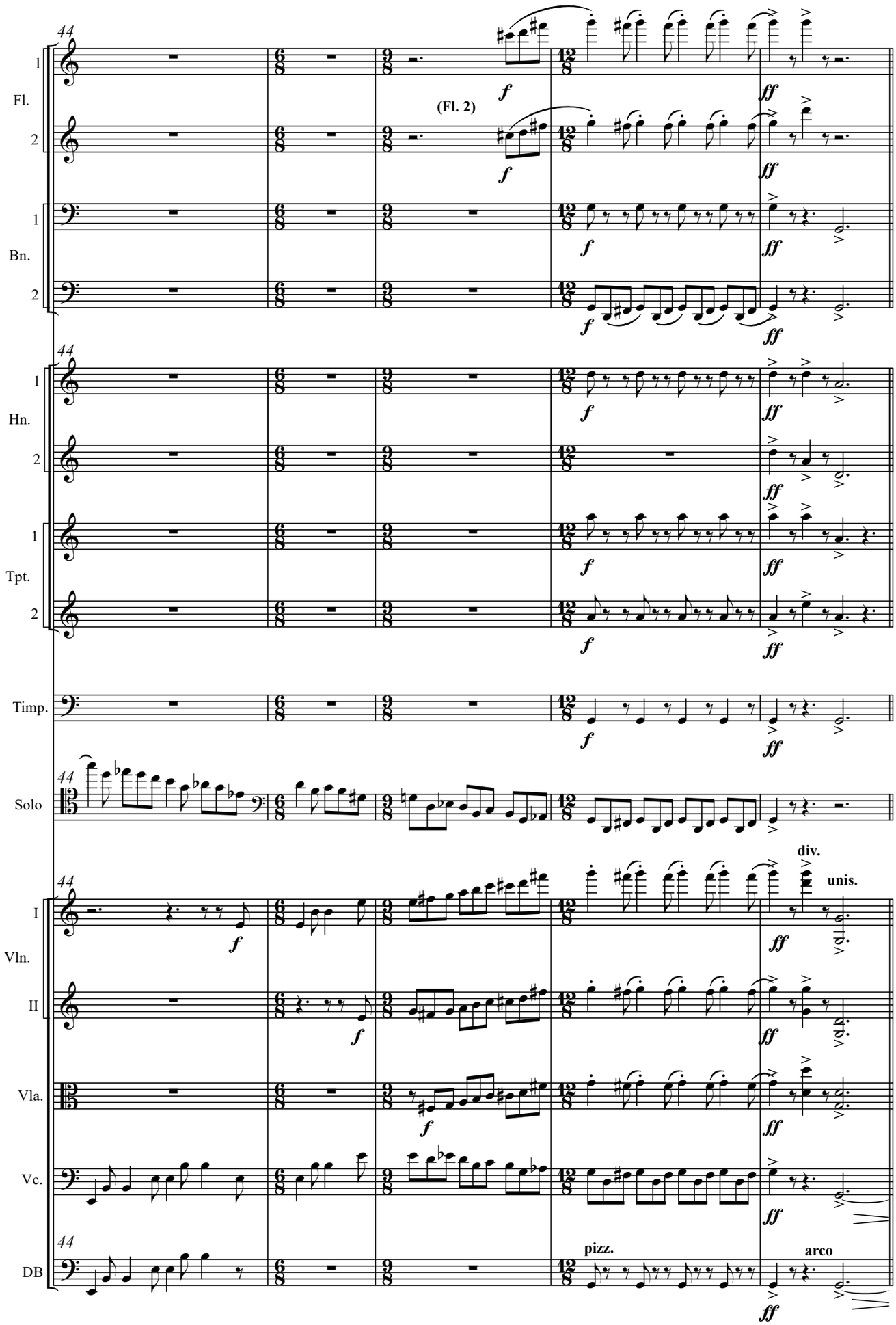
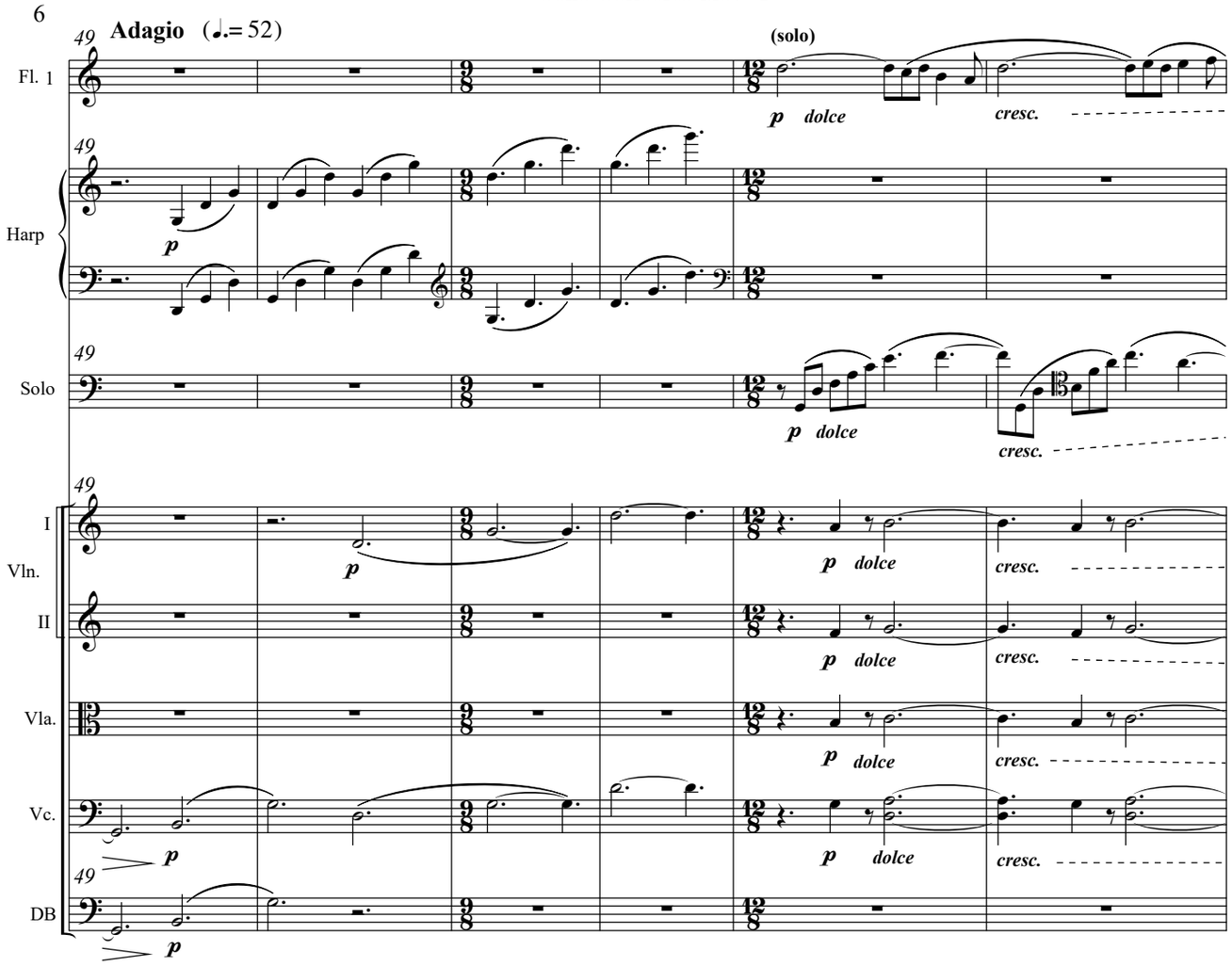
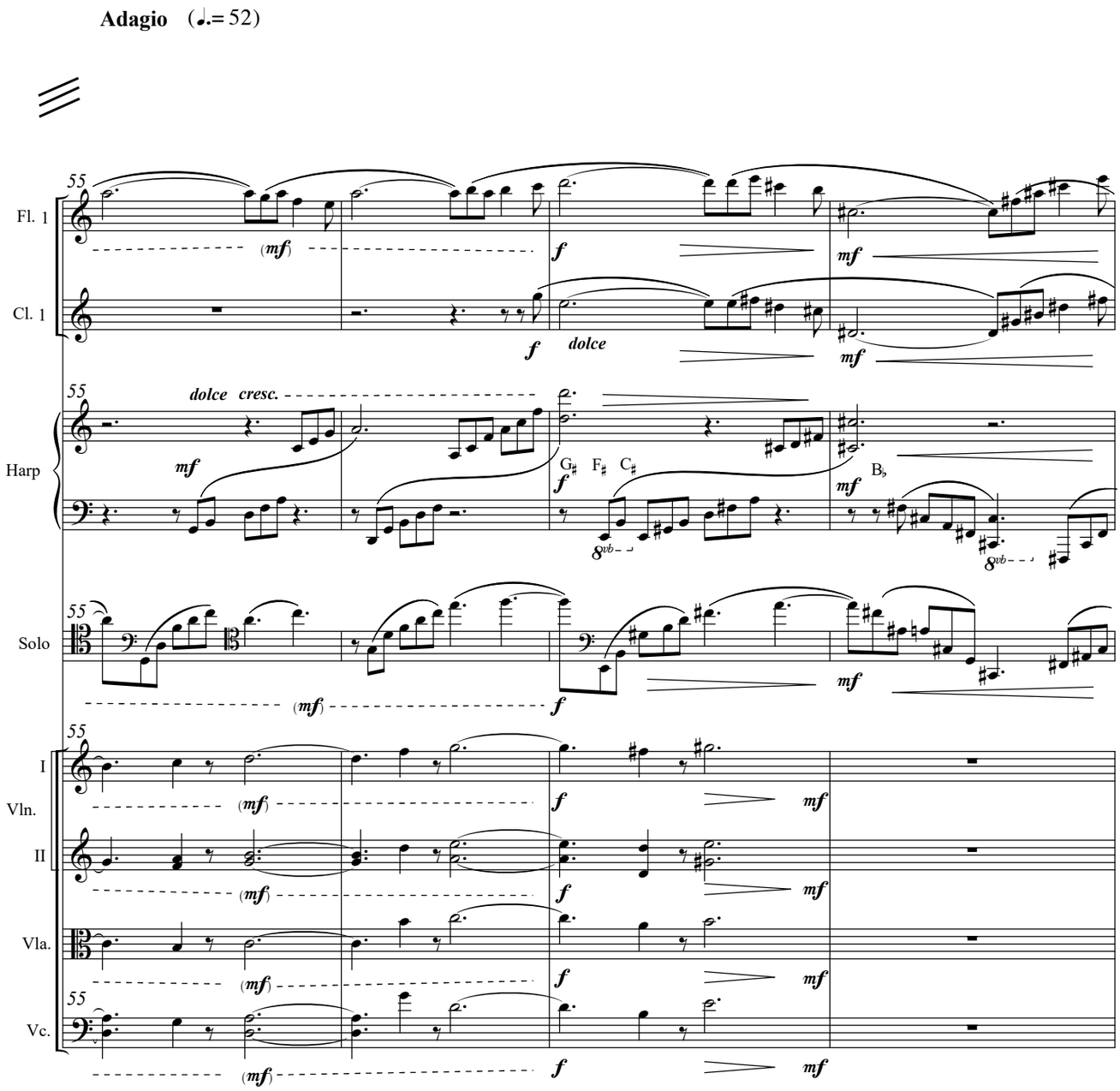

Cyflym (♩.= 110)
19
1
Bn.
2
Hn. 1
Timp.
Solo
Vln II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
f
p
pp
ff
Cyflym
(♩.= 110)
26
Ob.
Bn. 1
Hn.
I
Vln.
II

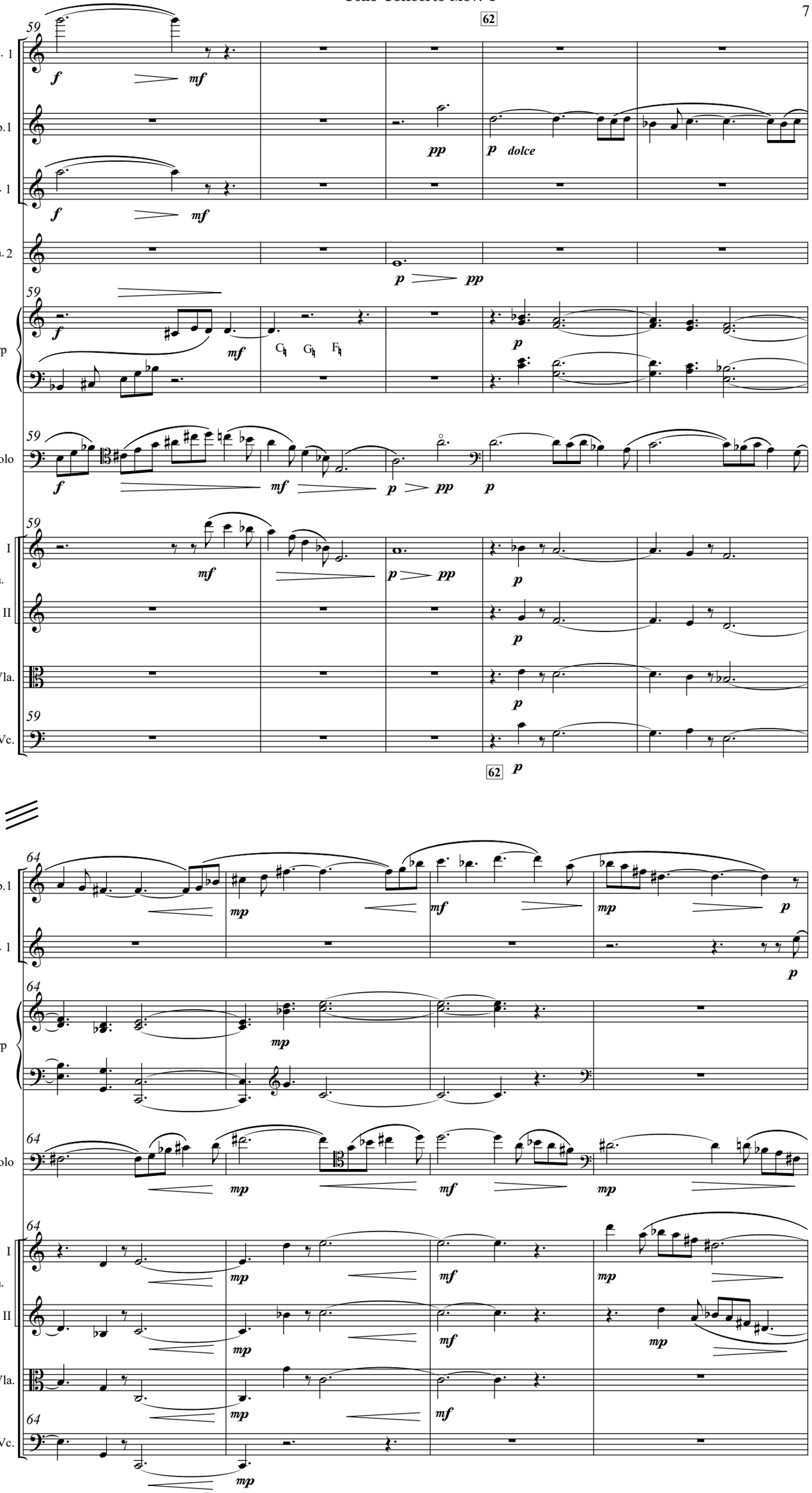

34
(Picc.)
30
Fl. 2
1
Ob.
2
Bn. 2
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
pp
ff
f
p
34

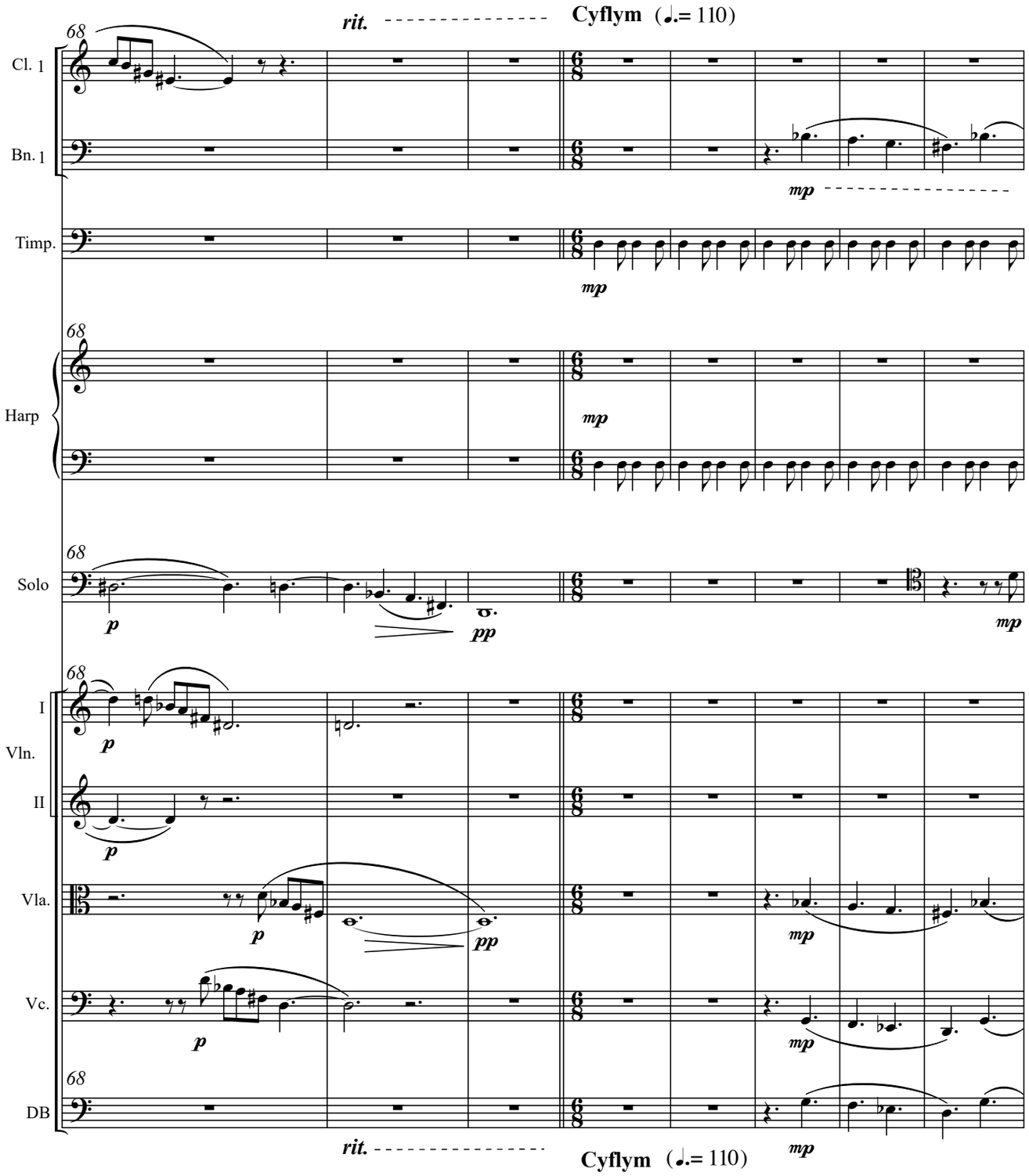

35
Fl. 2
1
Ob.
2
pp
f
1
Tpt.
2
f assez
Harp
Solo
ff
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
p
Vc.
DB
39
Hn. 2

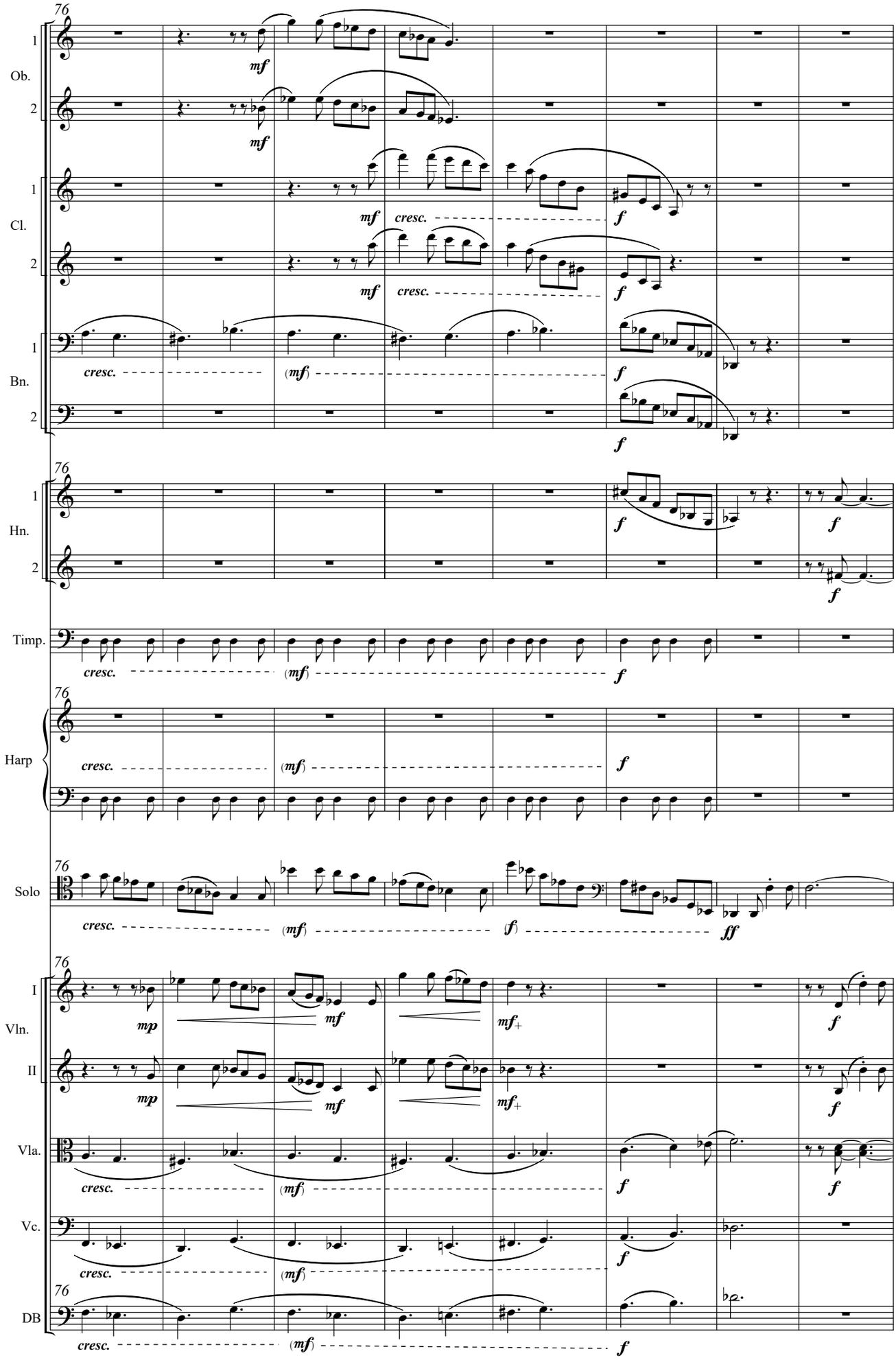

44
Fl.
1
2
(Fl. 2)
Bn.
Hn.
Tpt.
Timp.
Solo
Vln.
I
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
f
ff
div.
unis.
pizz.
arco

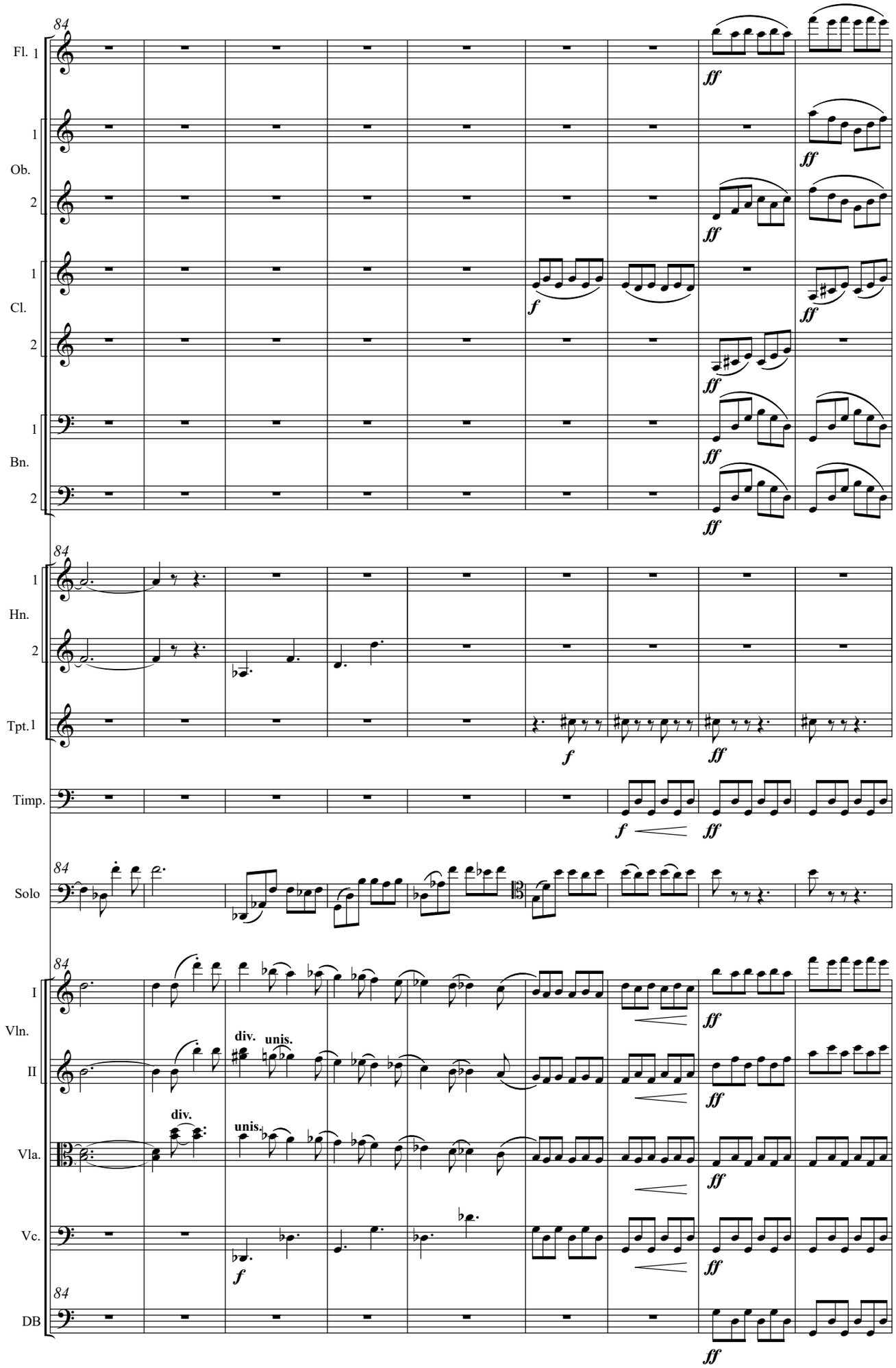

49
Adagio (♩.= 52)
(solo)
Fl. 1
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
p dolce
cresc.
p

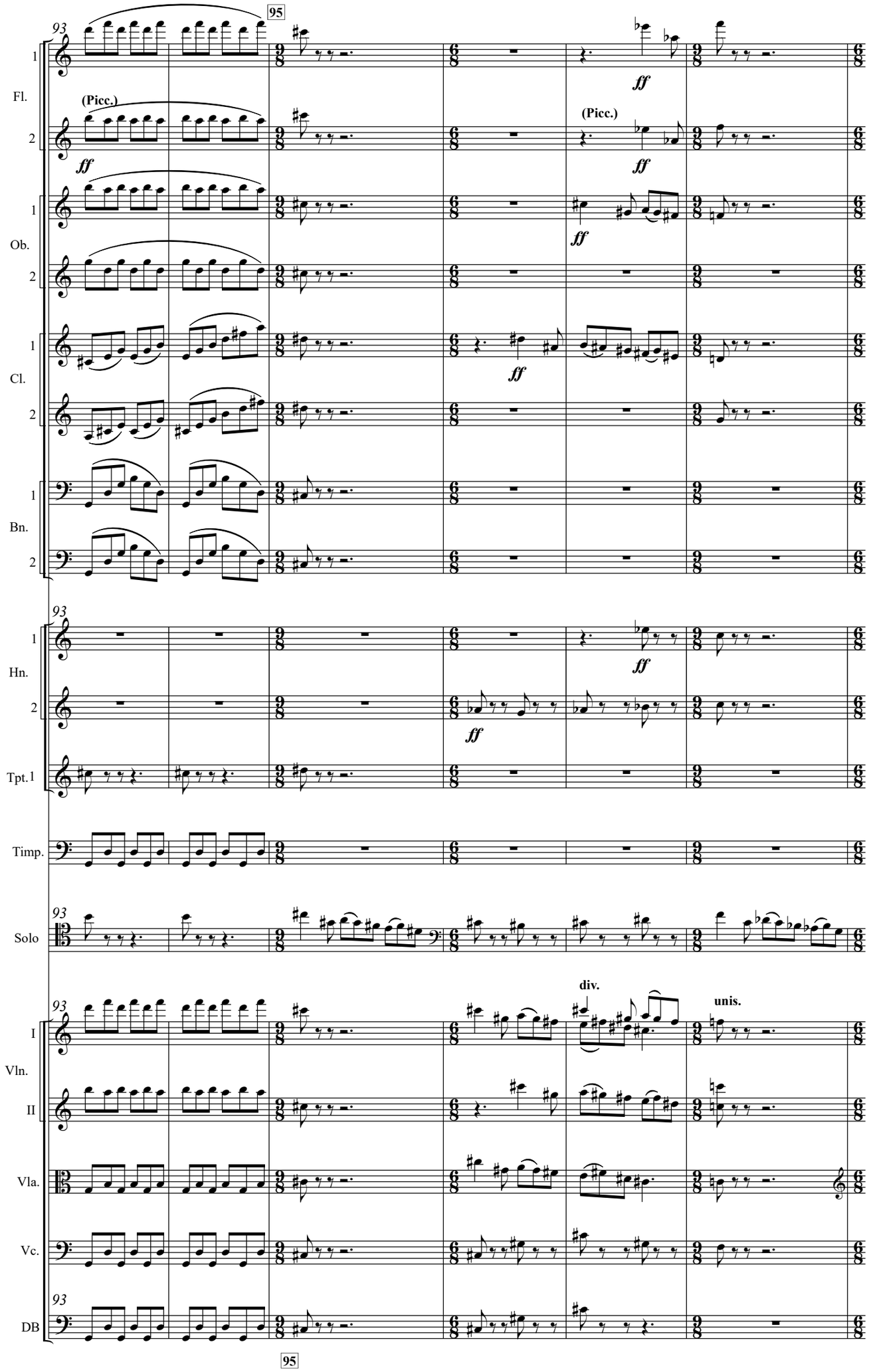

Adagio (♩.= 52)
55
Fl. 1
Cl. 1
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
(mf)
f
mf
dolce
dolce cresc.
G♯ F♯ C♯
B♭
8vb

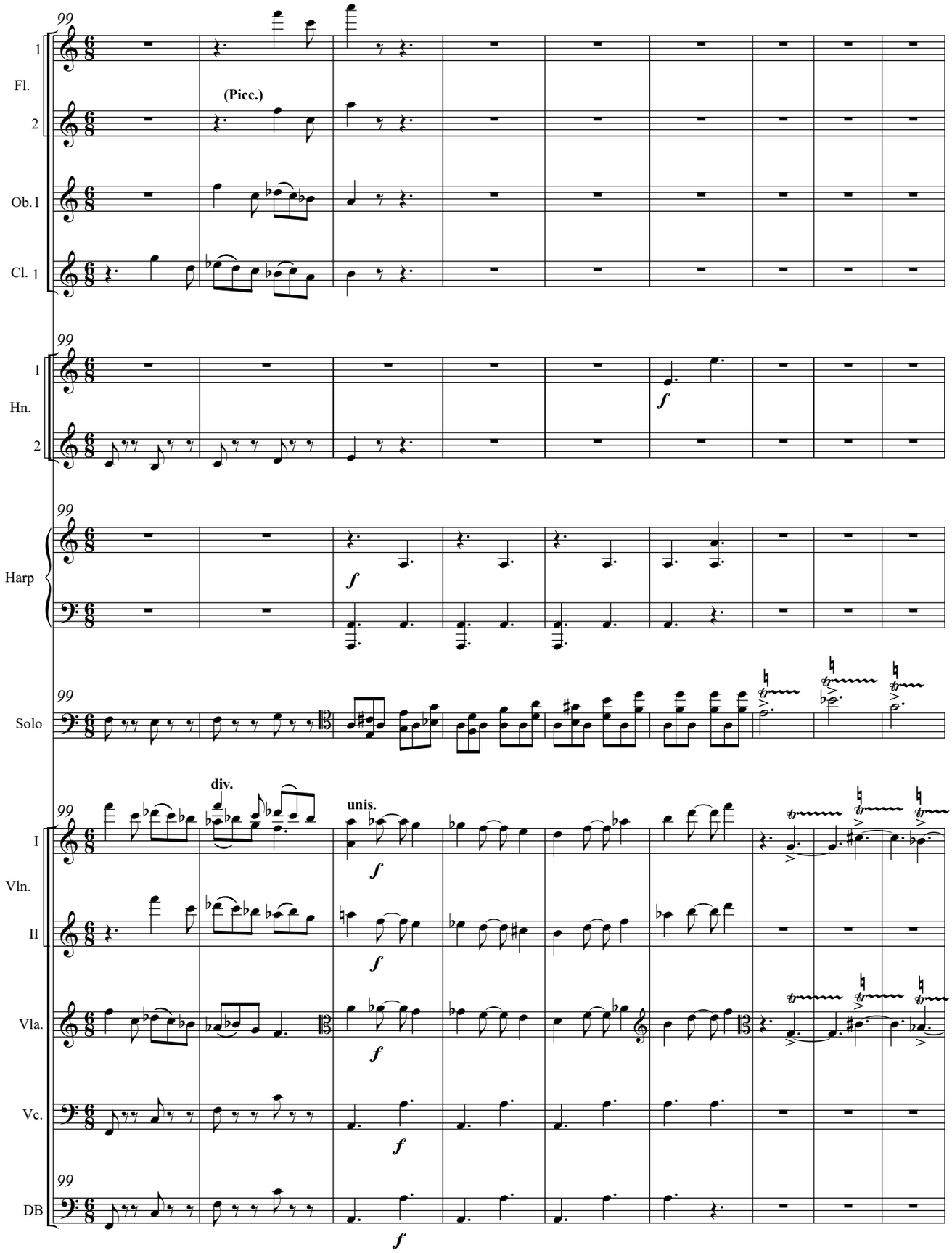

62
59
Fl. 1
Ob.1
Cl. 1
Hn. 2
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
f
mf
pp
p
dolce
62
64
mp

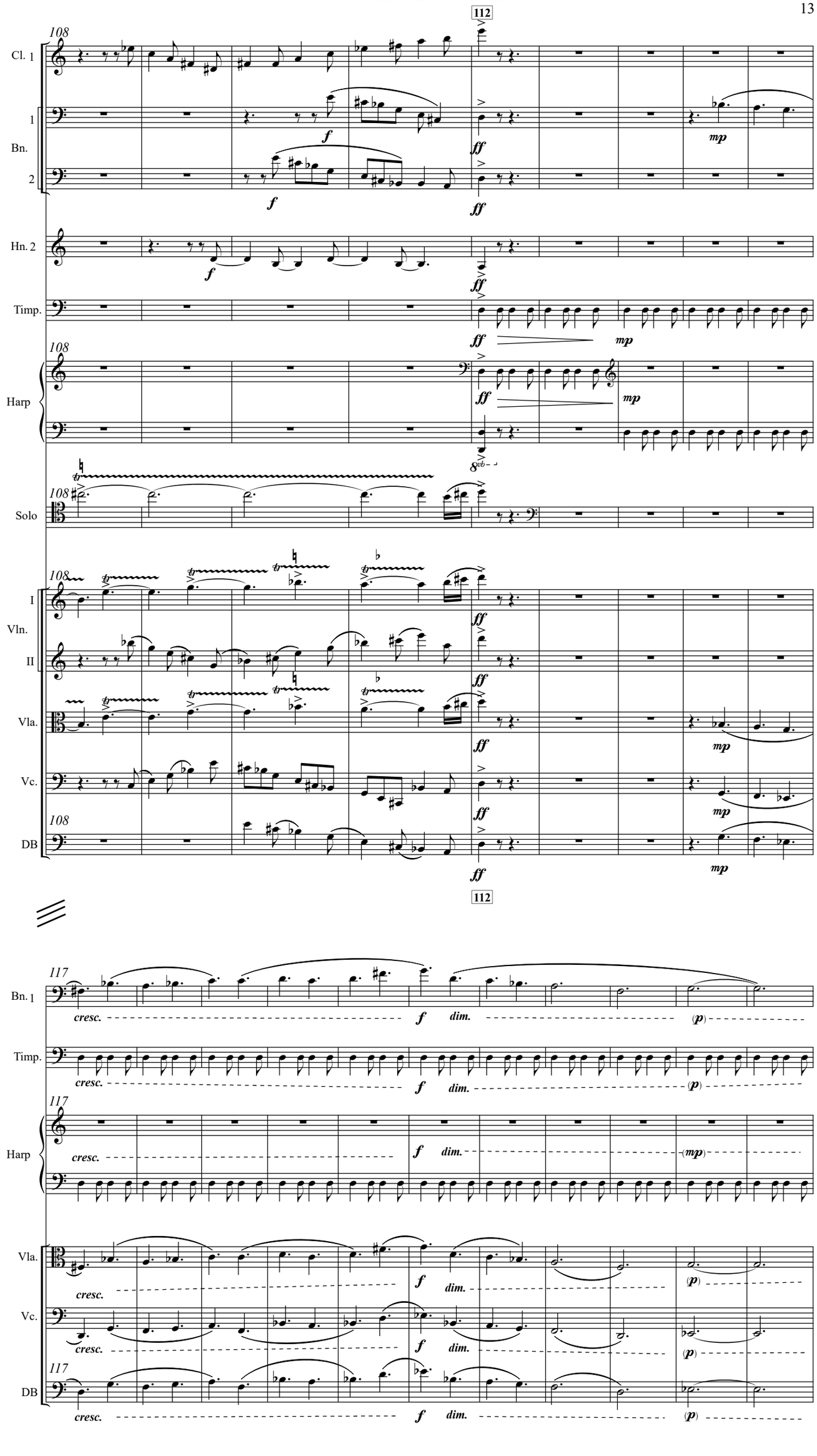

rit.
Cyflym (♩.= 110)
68
Cl. 1
Bn. 1
Timp.
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
p
pp
mp
rit.
Cyflym (♩.= 110)

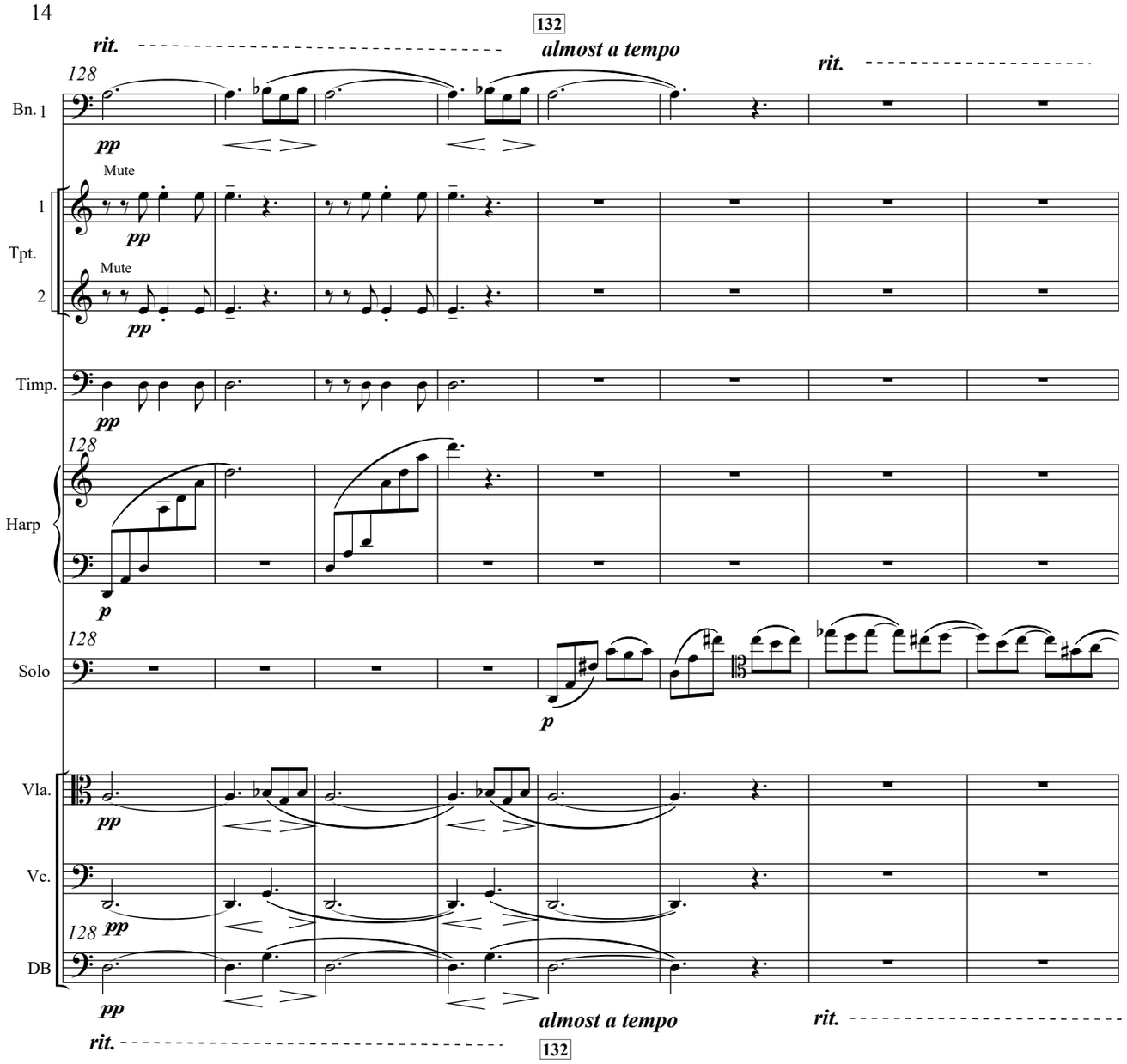

76
1
Ob.
2
mf
1
Cl.
2
mf
cresc.
f
1
Bn.
2
cresc.
(mf)
f
76
1
Hn.
2
f
Timp.
cresc.
(mf)
f
76
Harp
cresc.
(mf)
f
76
Solo
cresc.
(mf)
(f)
ff
76
I
Vln.
II
mp
mf
mf+
f
Vla.
cresc.
(mf)
f
Vc.
cresc.
(mf)
f
76
DB
cresc.
(mf)
f

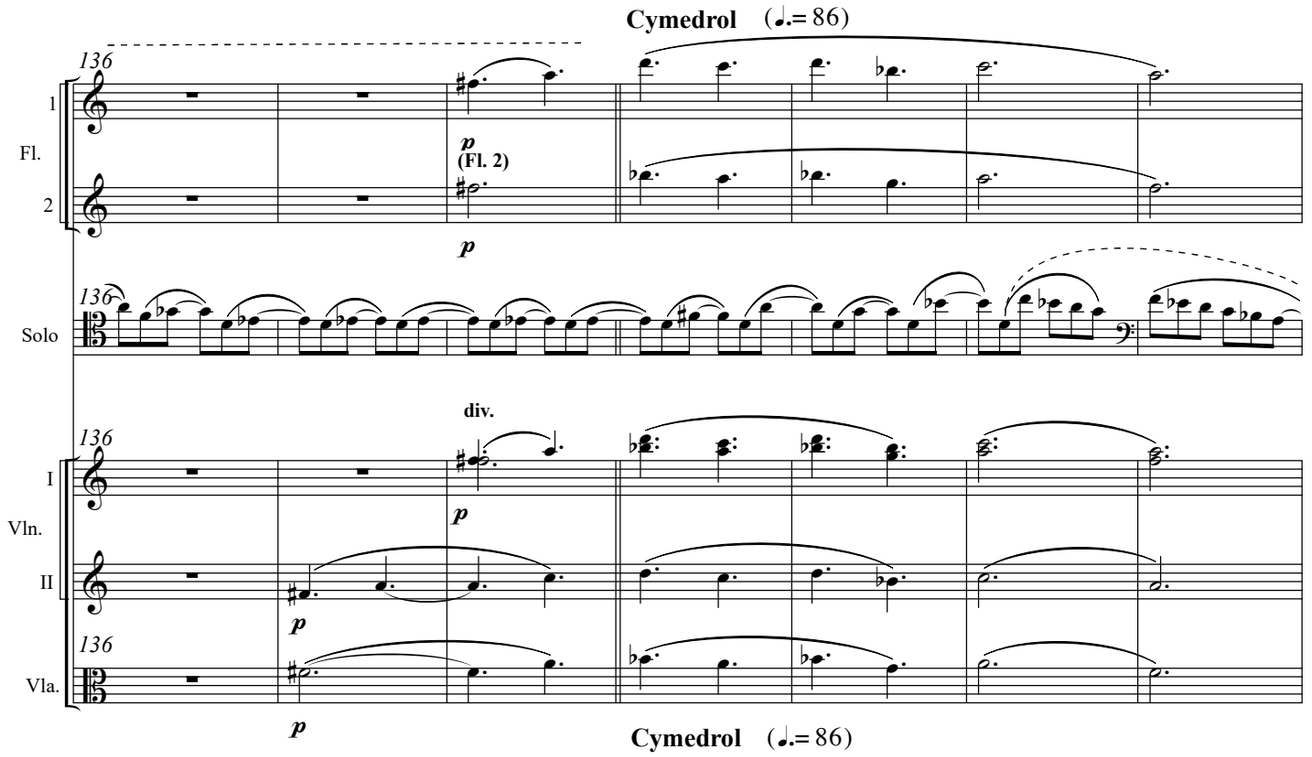

84
Fl. 1
1
Ob.
2
1
Cl.
2
1
Bn.
2
84
1
Hn.
2
Tpt. 1
Timp.
84
Solo
84
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
84
DB
ff
f
div.
unis.

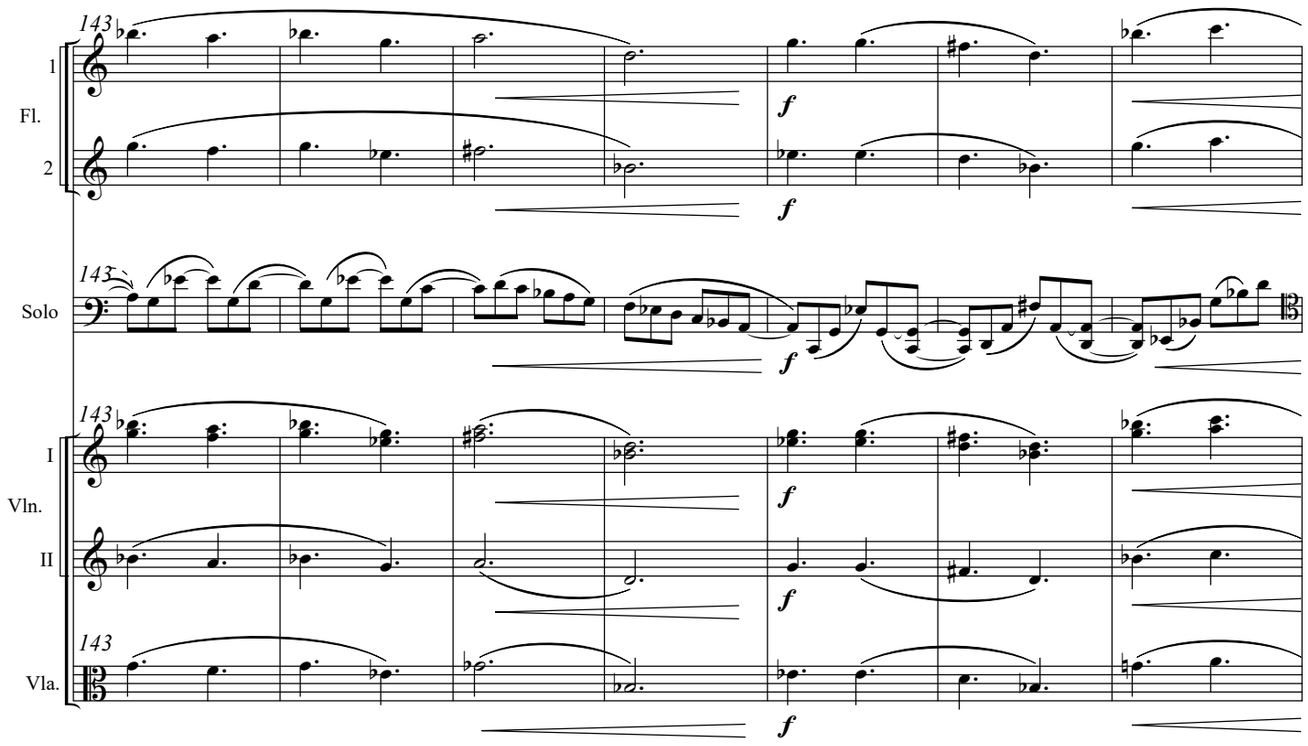

93
95
Fl.
1
2
(Picc.)
ff
Ob.
Cl.
Bn.
Hn.
Tpt.1
Timp.
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
div.
unis.

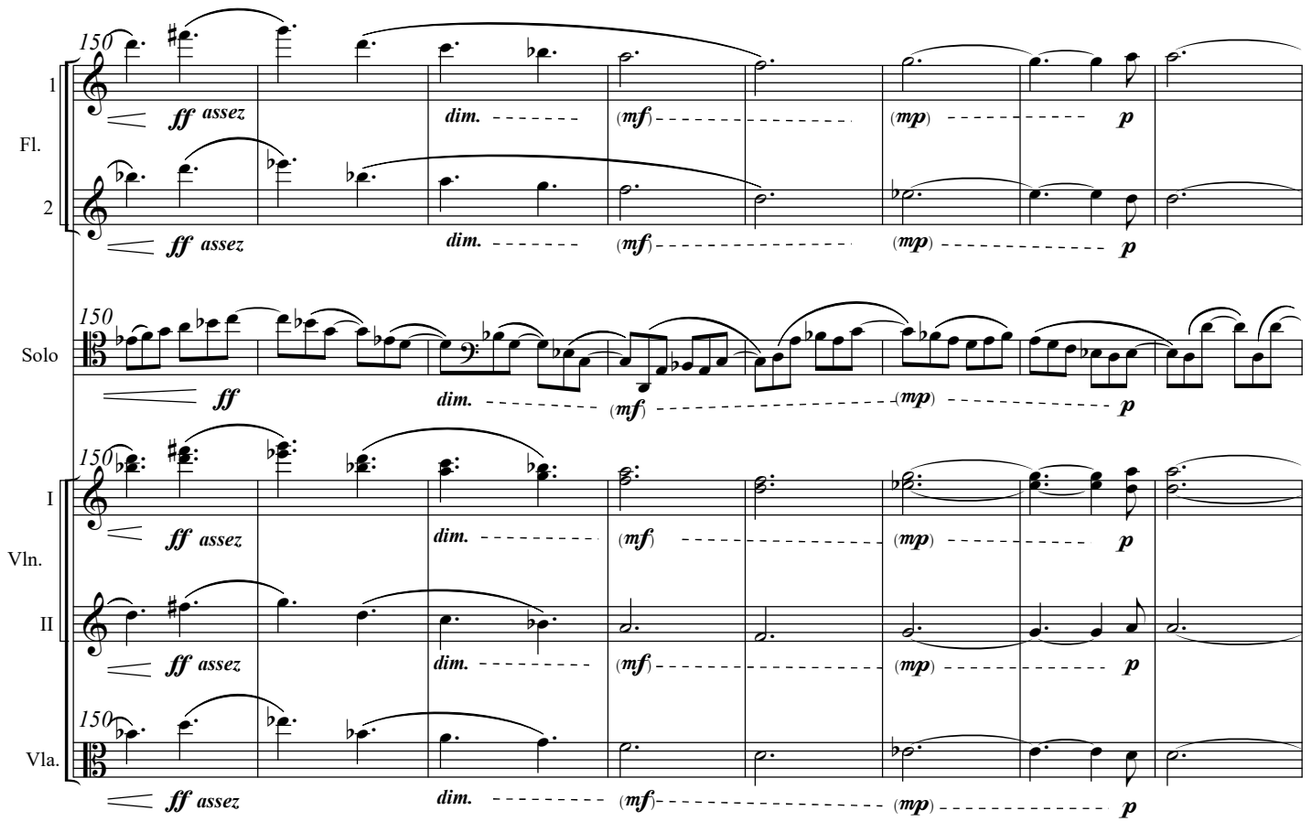

99
1
Fl.
2
(Picc.)
Ob.1
Cl. 1
99
1
Hn.
2
f
99
Harp
f
99
Solo
99
I
Vln.
II
div.
unis.
f
Vla.
f
Vc.
f
99
DB
f

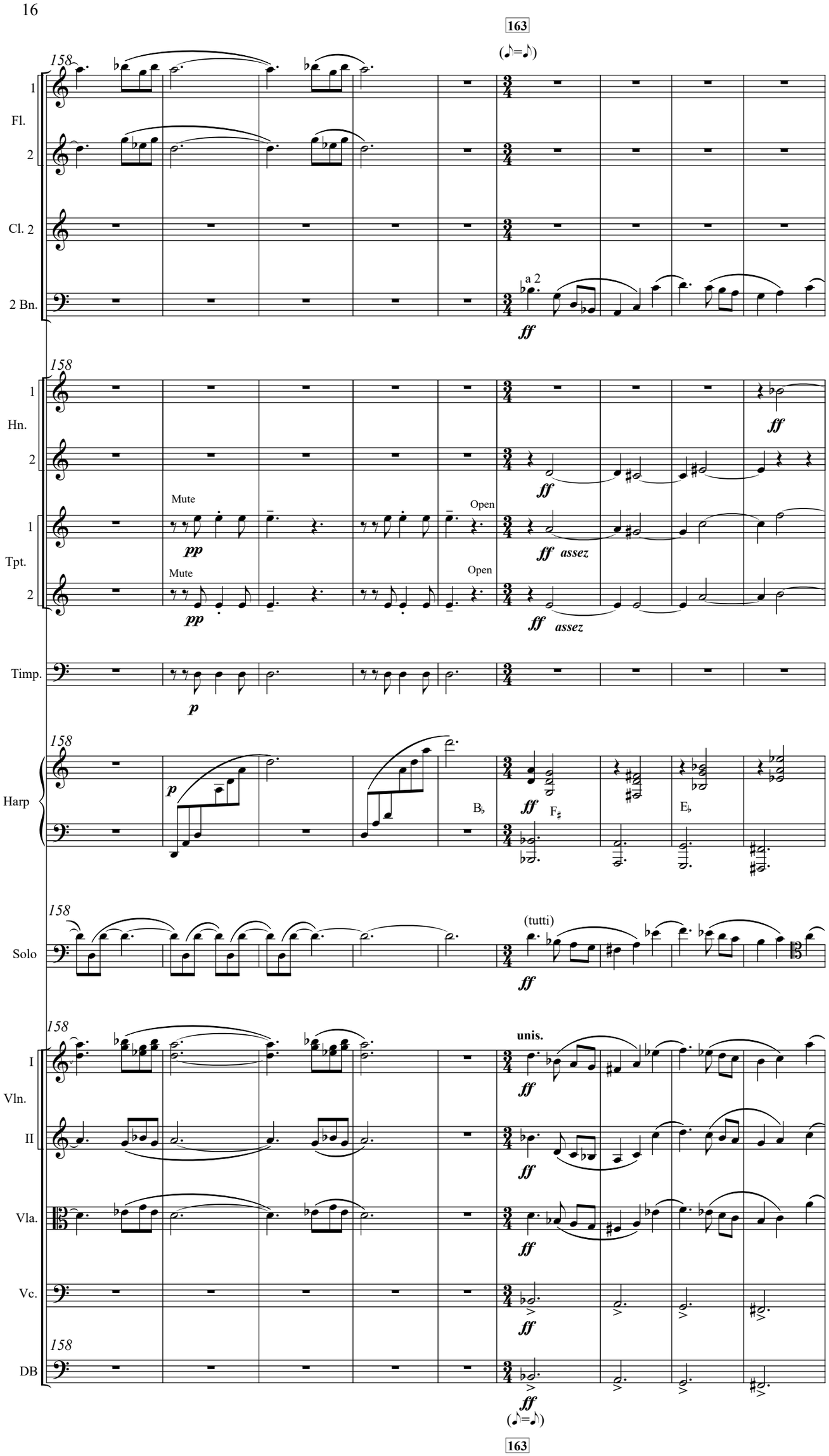

112
108
Cl. 1
1
Bn.
2
Hn. 2
Timp.
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
f
ff
mp
117
cresc.
dim.
(p)
(mp)

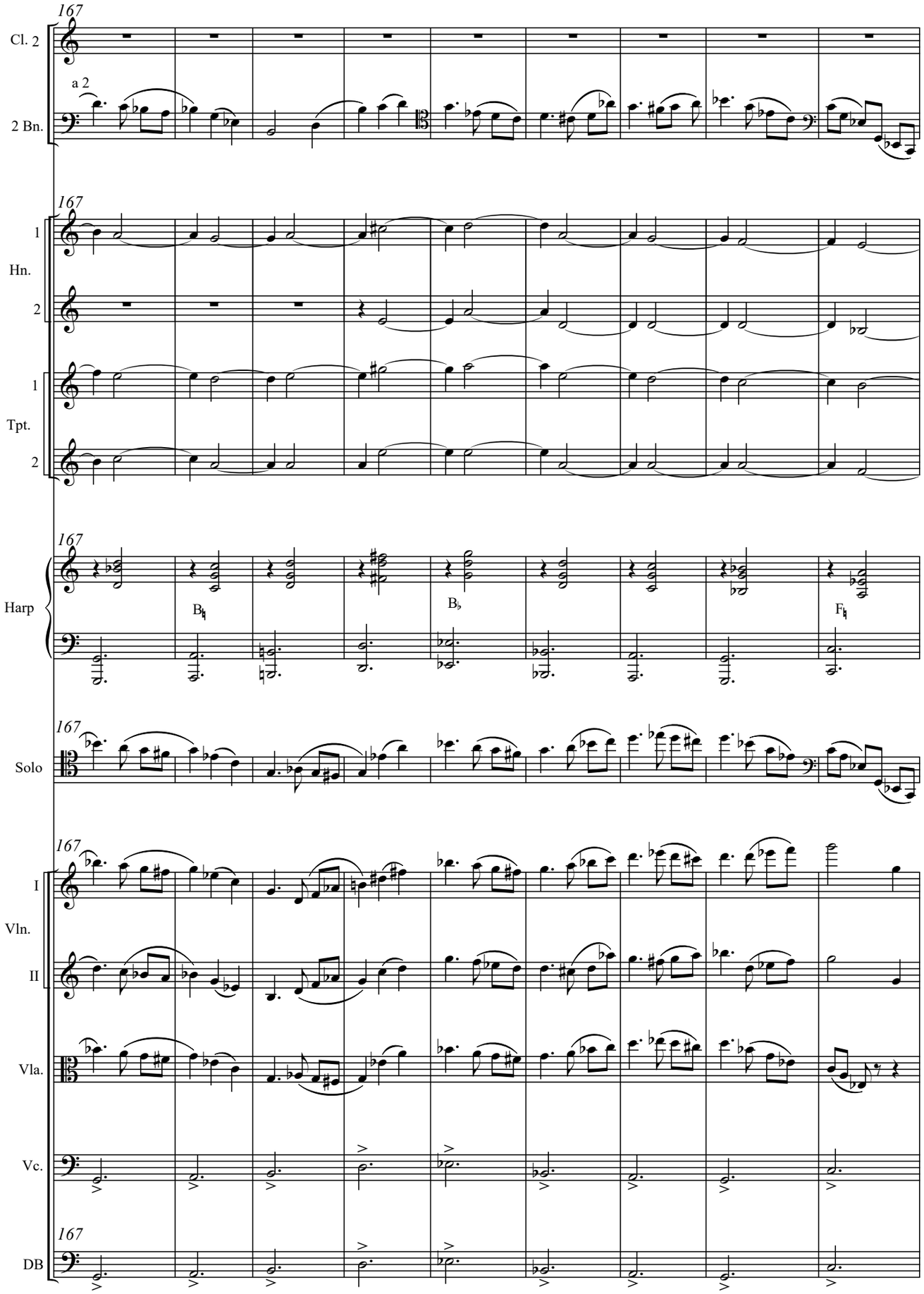

132
rit.
almost a tempo
rit.
128
Bn. 1
pp
Mute
1
Tpt.
2
Mute
pp
pp
Timp.
pp
128
Harp
p
128
Solo
p
Vla.
pp
Vc.
128 pp
DB
pp
almost a tempo
rit.
rit.
132

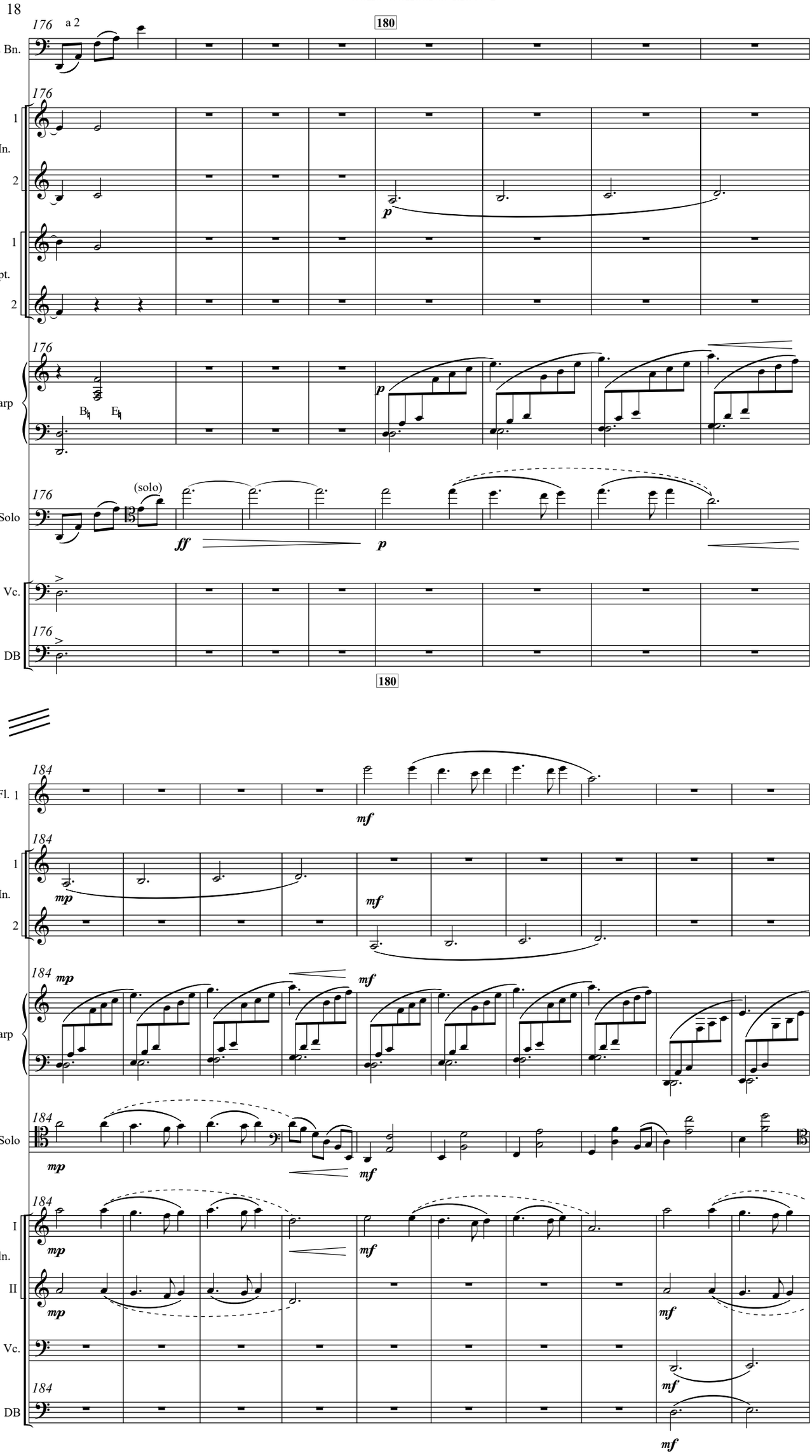

Cymedrol (♩.= 86)
136
1
Fl.
2
p
(Fl. 2)
p
136
Solo
div.
136
I
Vln.
II
p
p
136
Vla.
p
Cymedrol (♩.= 86)

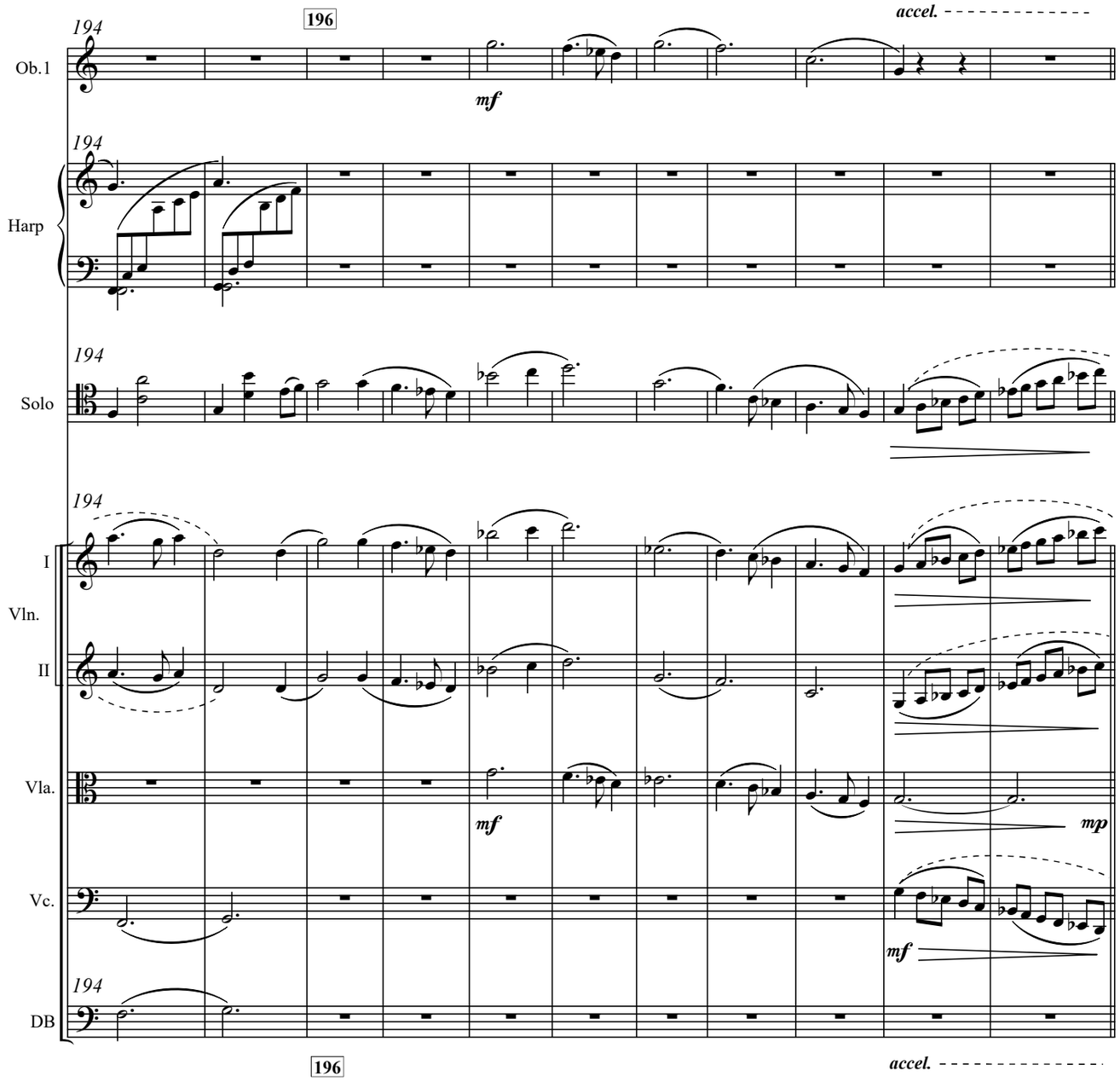

143
1
Fl.
2
f
143
Solo
f
143
I
Vln.
II
f
143
Vla.
f


150
1
Fl.
2
ff assez
dim.
(mf)
(mp)
p
150
Solo
ff
dim.
(mf)
(mp)
p
150
I
Vln.
II
ff assez
dim.
(mf)
(mp)
p
150
Vla.
ff assez
dim.
(mf)
(mp)
p


163
(♪=♪)
158
1
Fl.
2
Cl. 2
2 Bn.
a 2
ff
Hn.
Mute
Open
Tpt.
pp
ff assez
Timp.
p
Harp
B♭
F♯
E♭
Solo
(tutti)
I
Vln.
II
unis.
Vla.
Vc.
DB

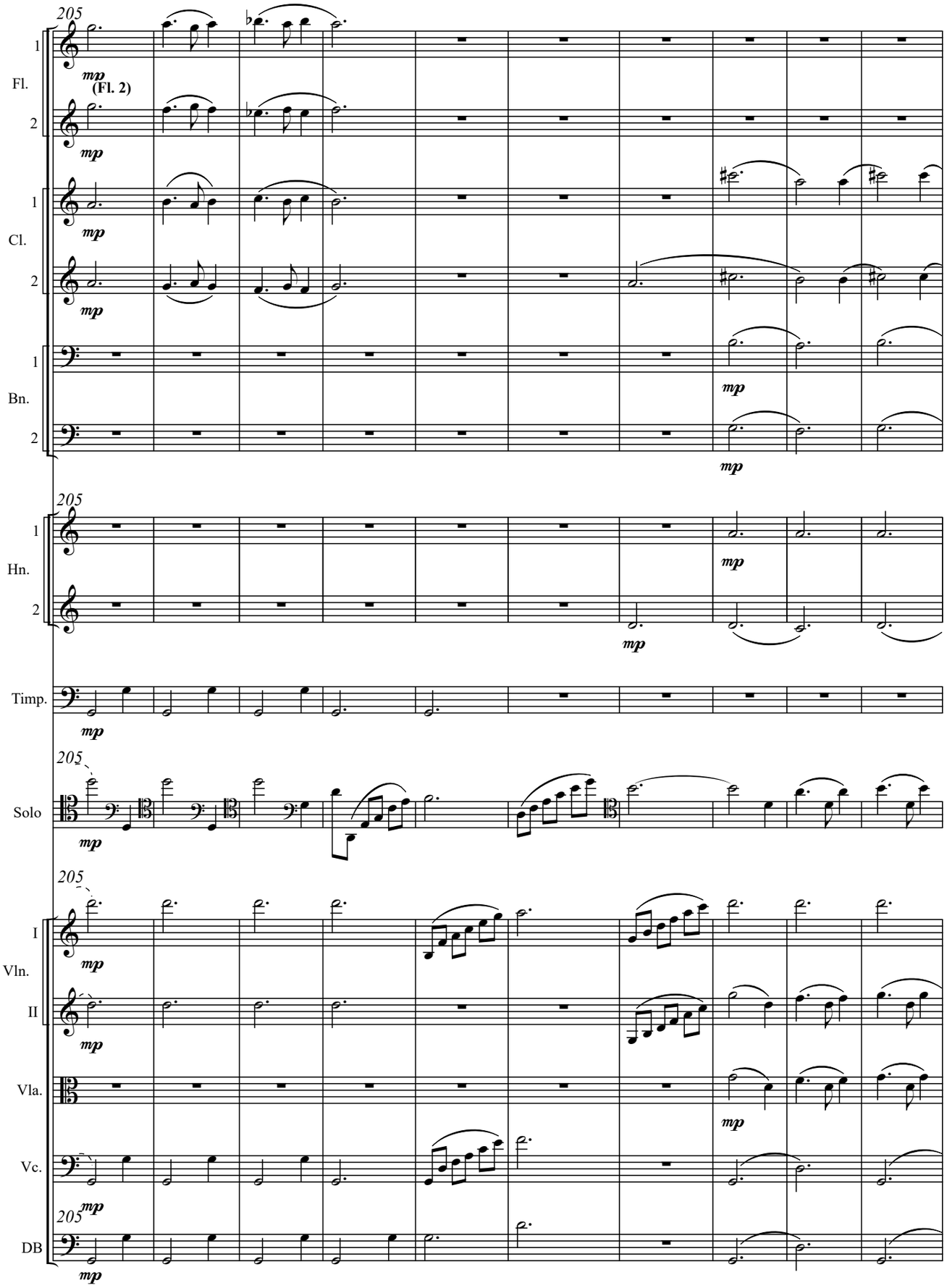

167
Cl. 2
a 2
2 Bn.
167
1
Hn.
2
1
Tpt.
2
167
Harp
B♮
B♭
F♮
167
Solo
167
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
167
DB


176
a 2
180
2 Bn.
1
Hn.
2
p
1
Tpt.
2
Harp
B♭ E♭
(solo)
Solo
ff
Vc.
DB
184
mf
mp
I
Vln.
II

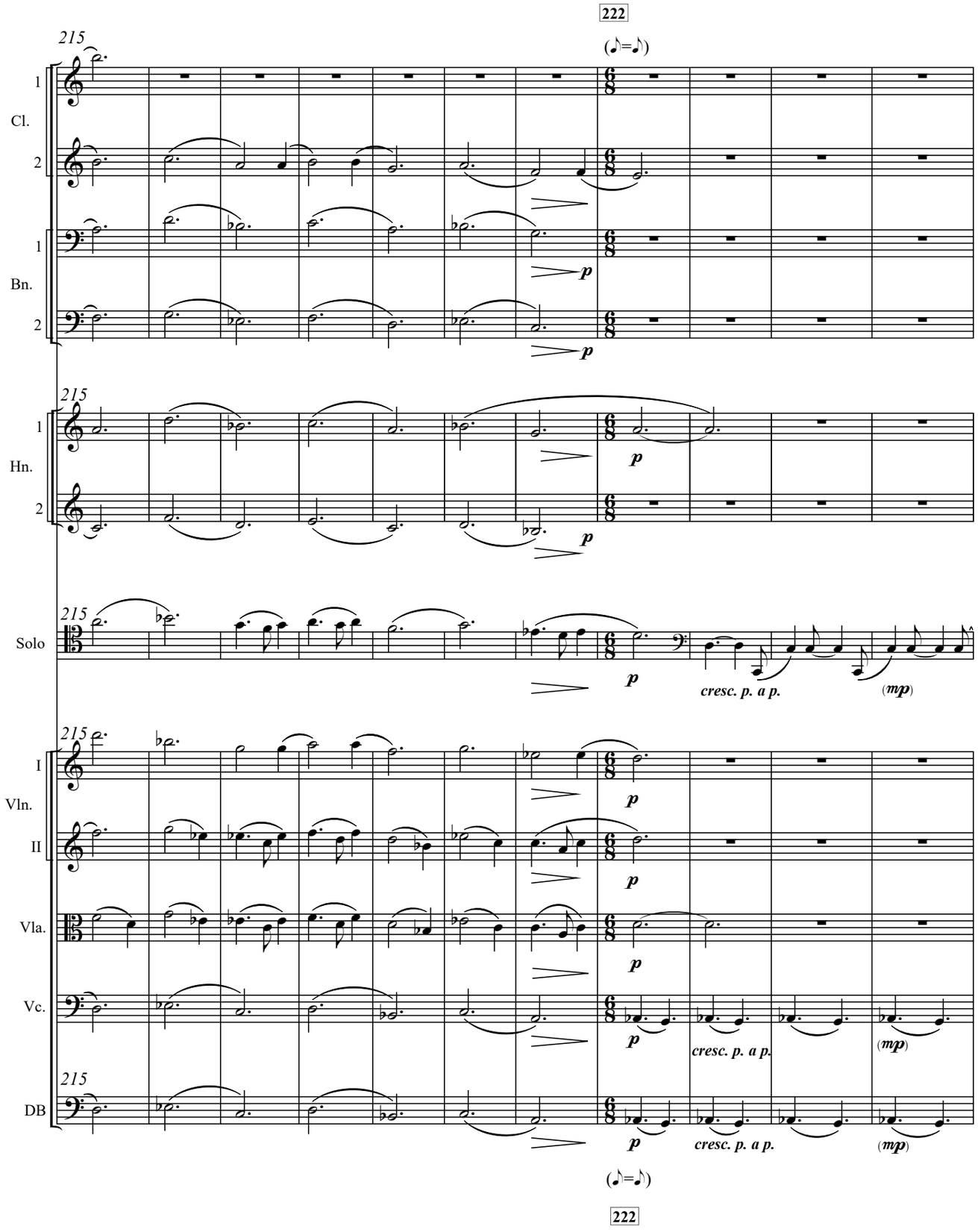

194
196
accel.
Ob.1
mf
194
Harp
194
Solo
194
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
mf
mp
Vc.
mf
194
DB
196
accel.

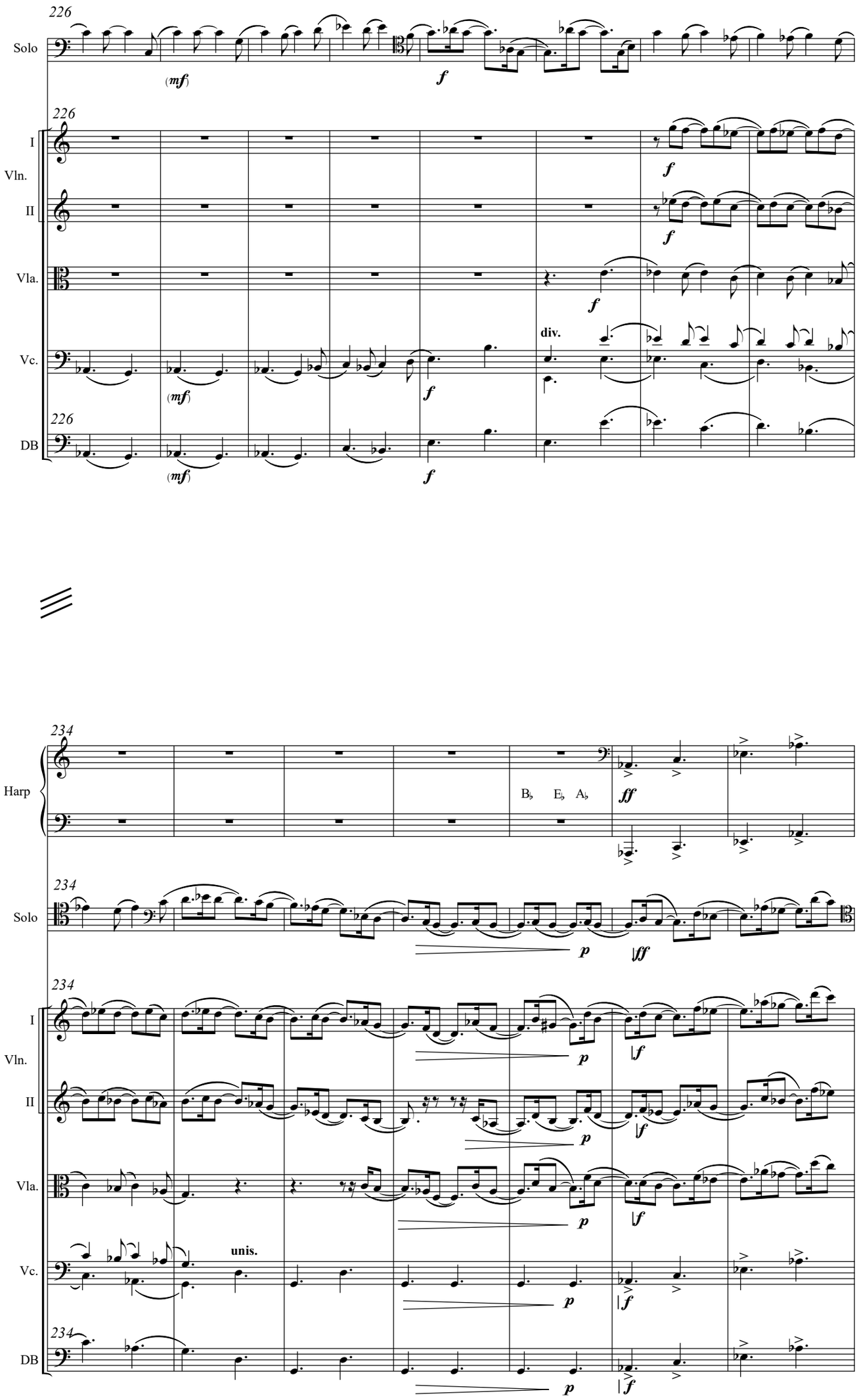
(𝅗𝅥. = 50)

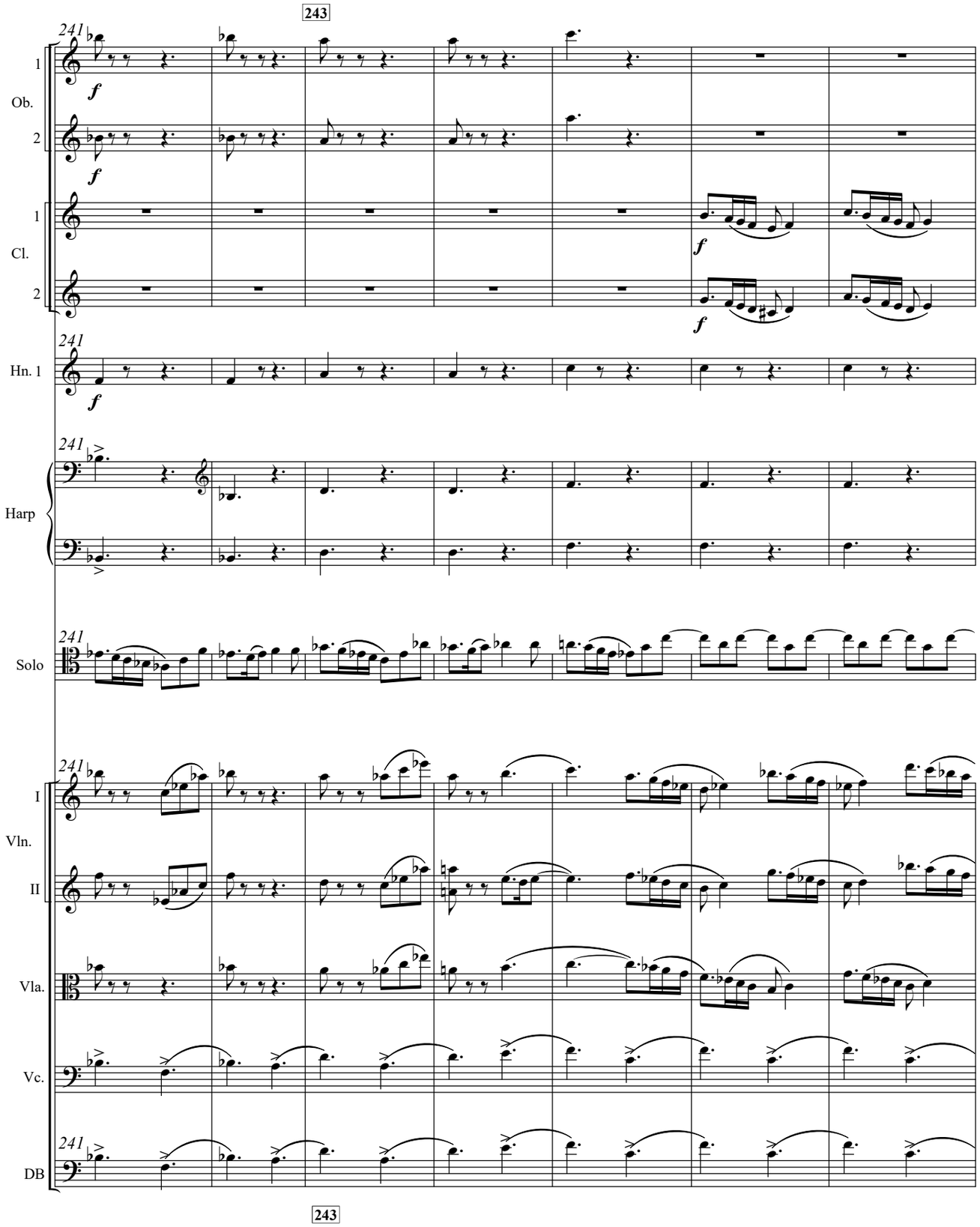
Ychydig yn gyflymach

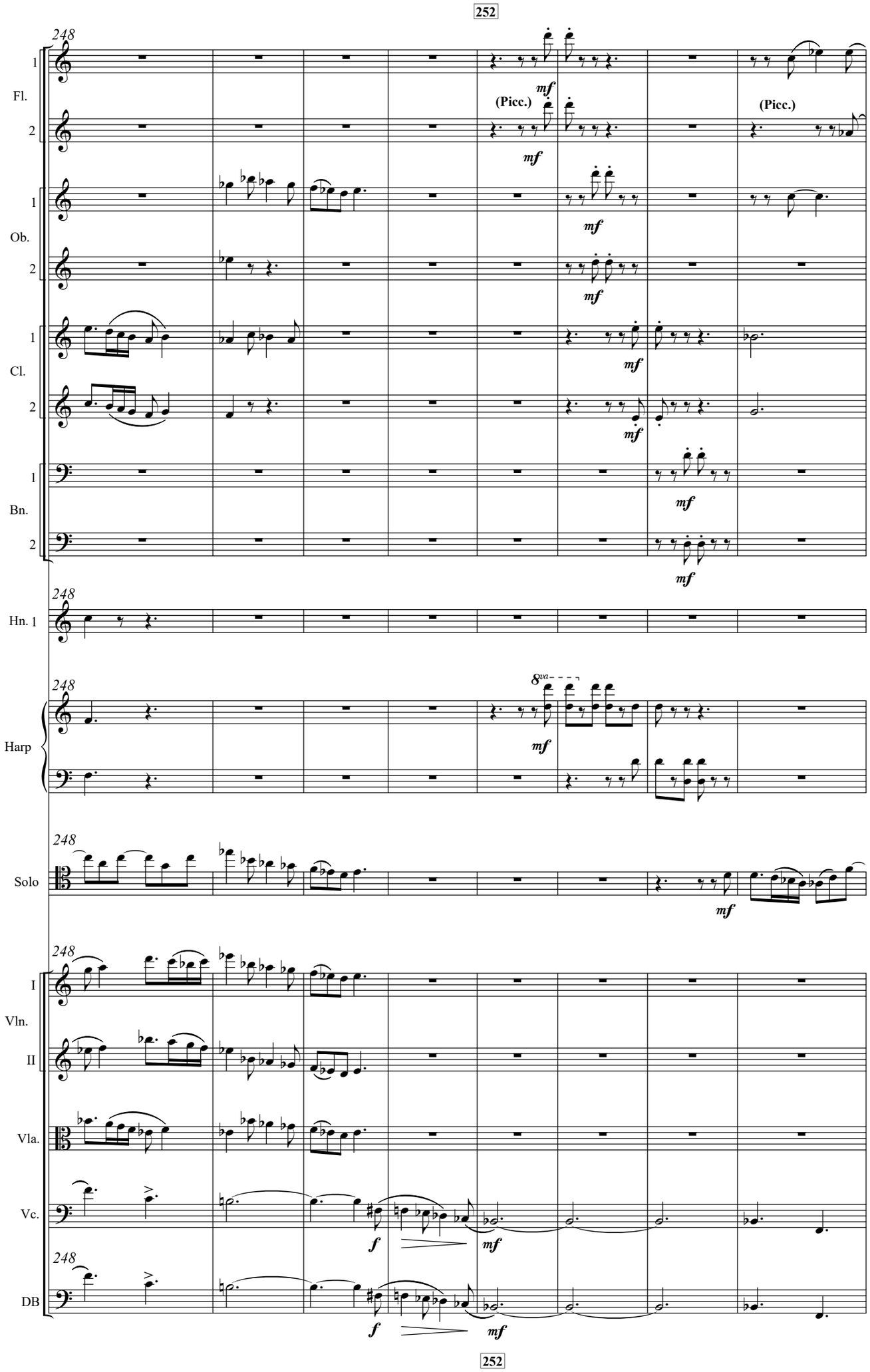


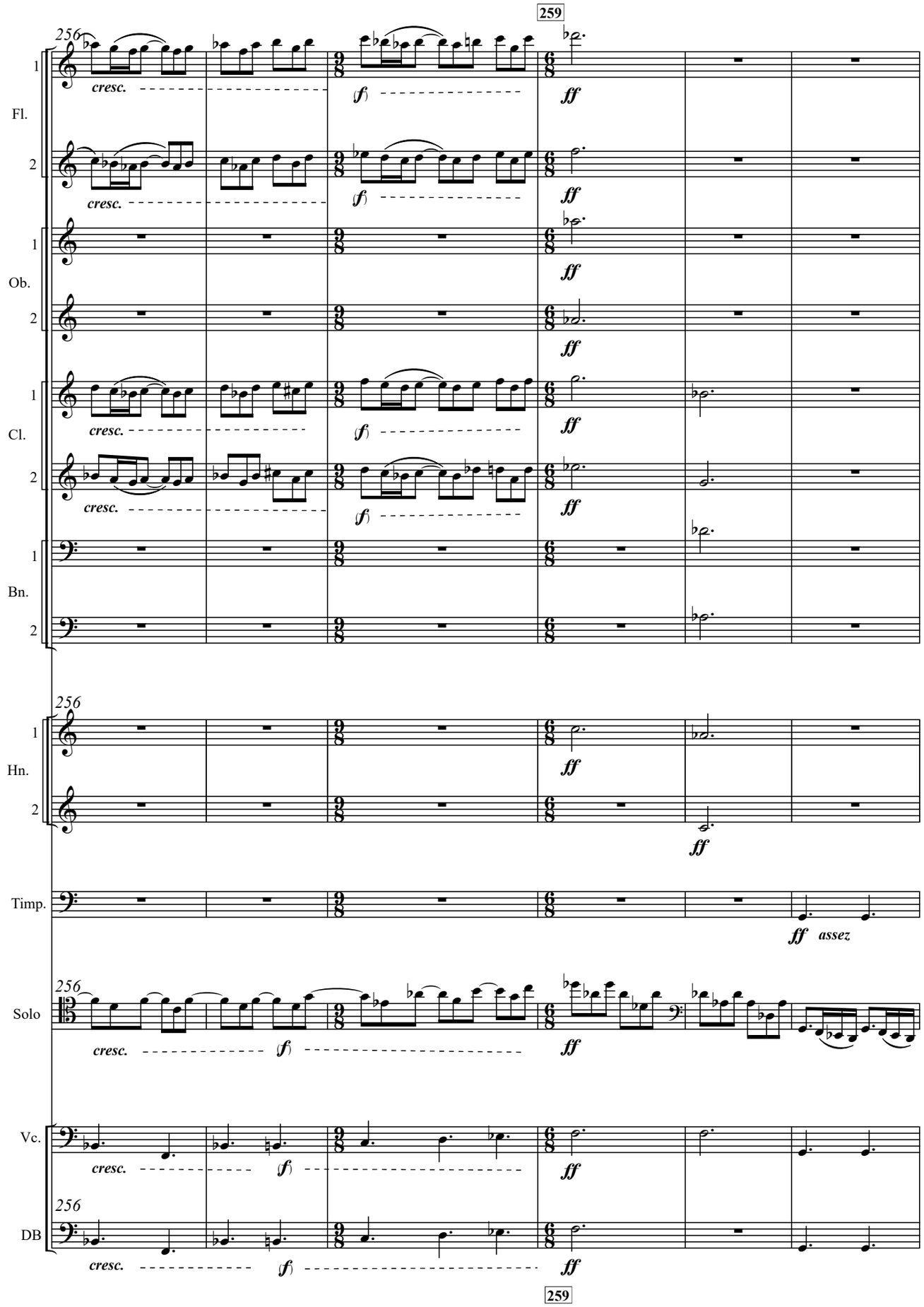
Ychydig yn gyflymach (𝅗𝅥. = 50)

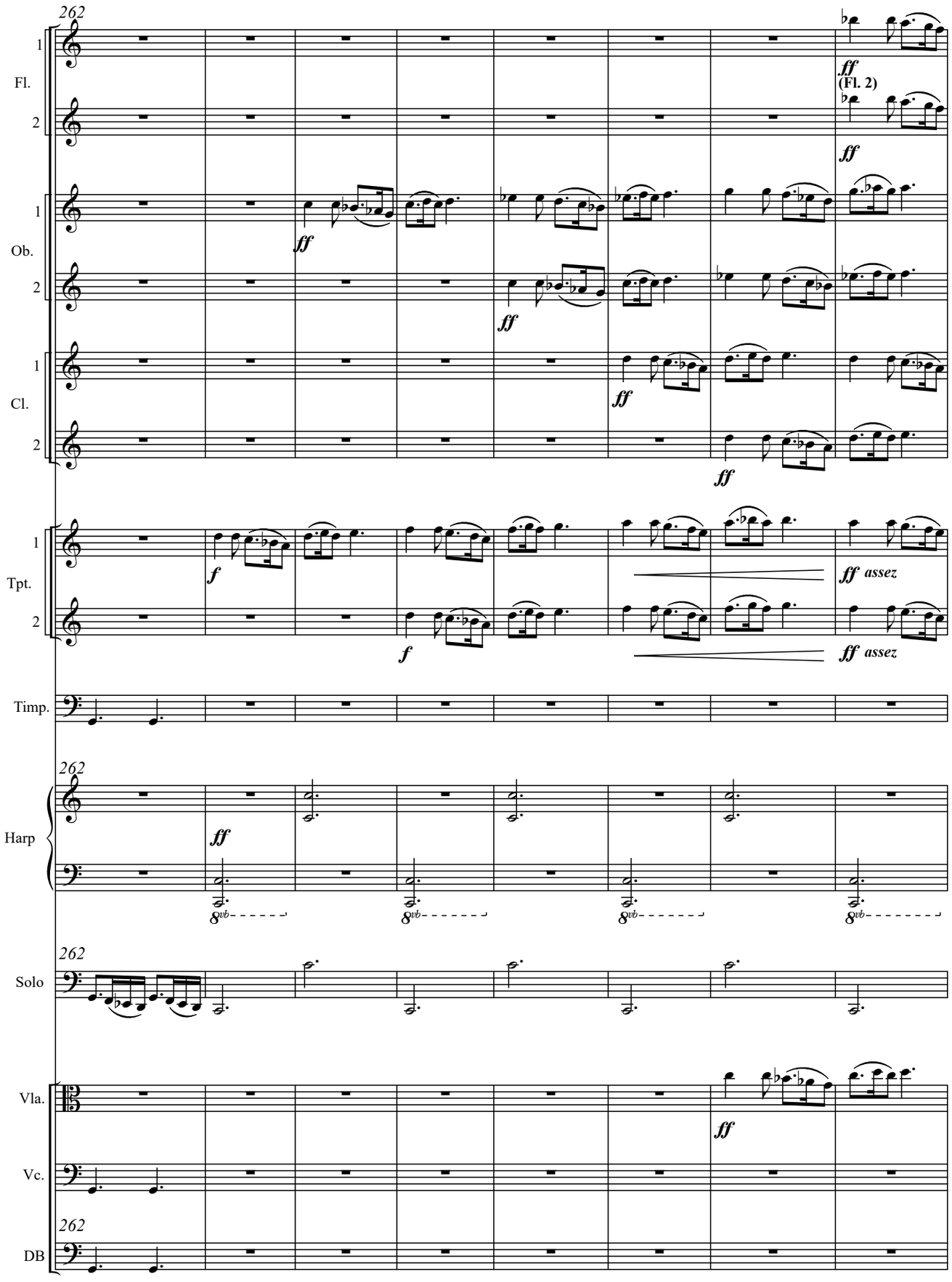

222
(♪=♪)
215
1
Cl.
2
1
Bn.
2
p
215
1
Hn.
2
p
215
Solo
p
cresc. p. a p.
(mp)
215
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
p
cresc. p. a p.
(mp)
(♪=♪)
222

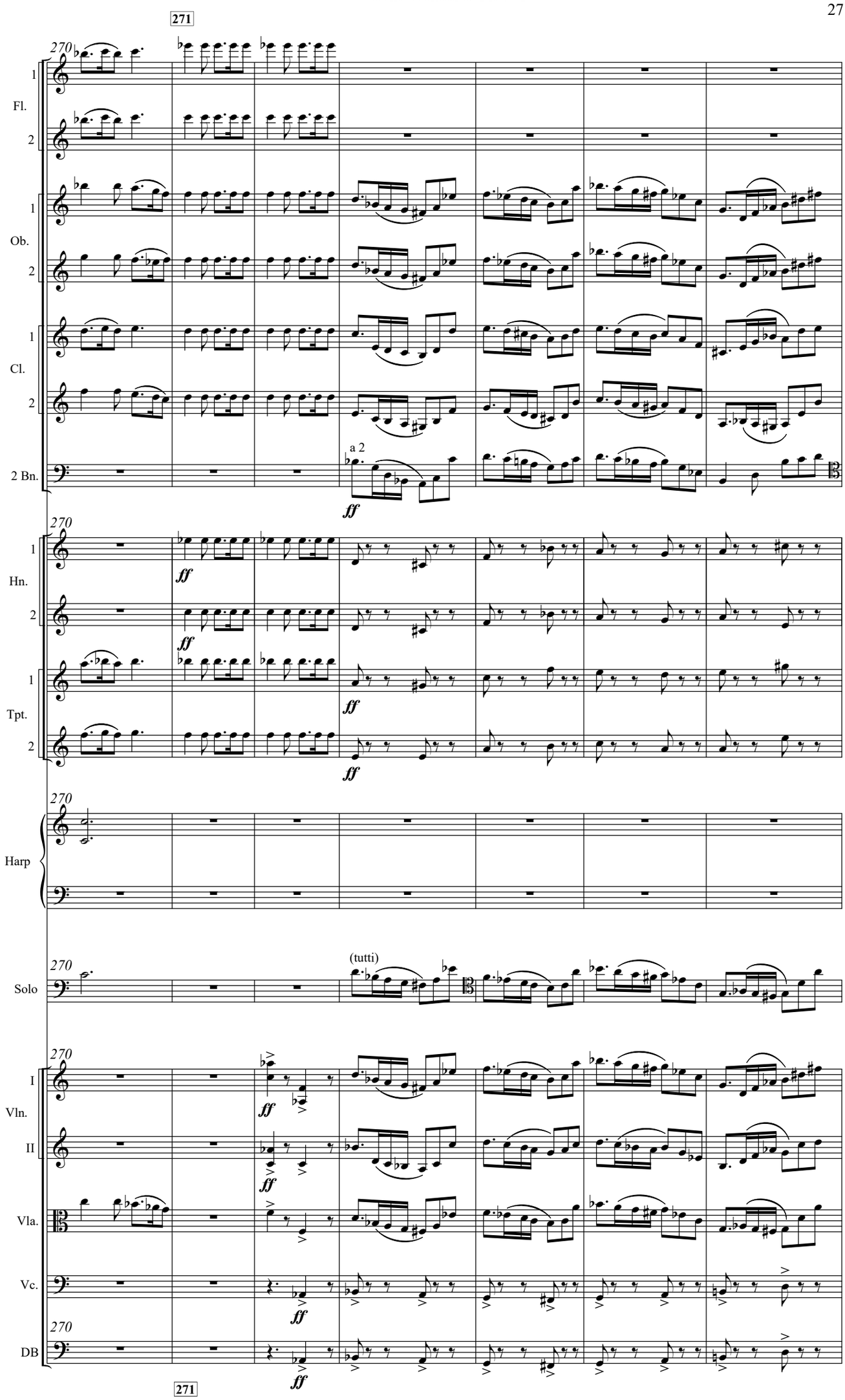

226
Solo
(mf)
f
226
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
div.
226
DB
234
Harp
B♭ E♭ A♭
ff
234
Solo
p
ff
234
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
unis.
234
DB

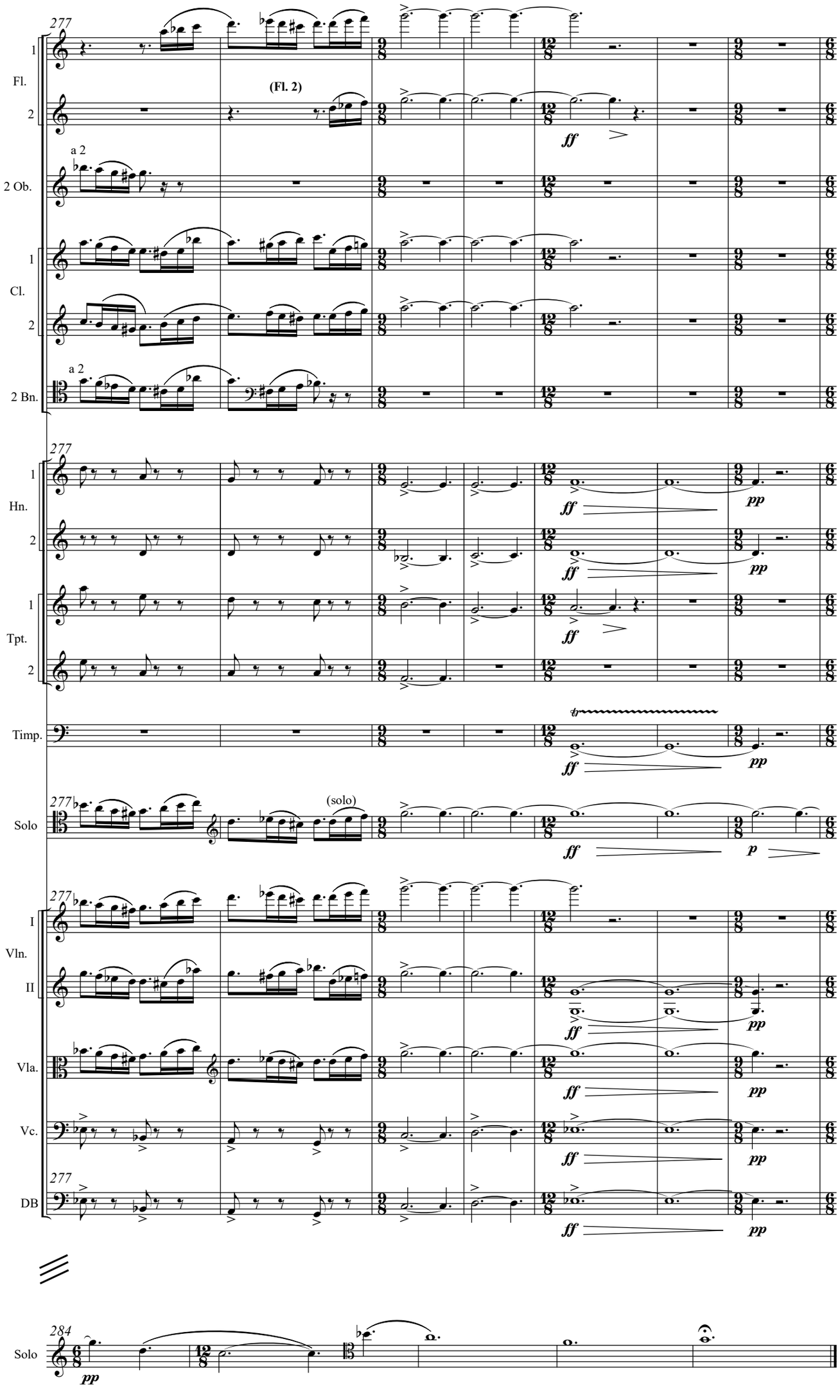

243
241
1
Ob.
2
f
1
Cl.
2
f
Hn. 1
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
243

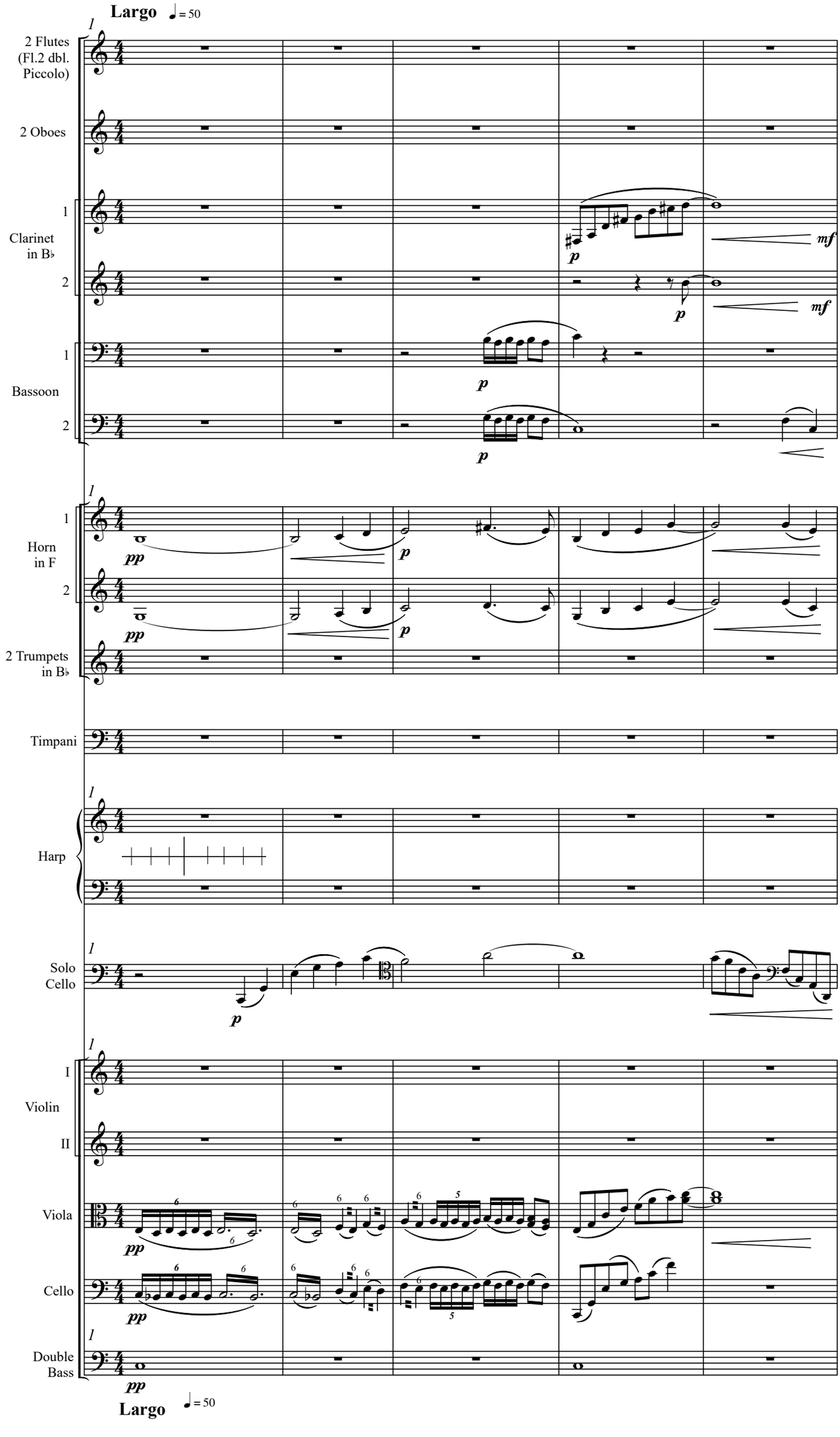

252
248
Fl.
1
2
Ob.
1
2
Cl.
1
2
Bn.
1
2
Hn. 1
Harp
Solo
I
II
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
DB
(Picc.)
(Picc.)
mf
f
8va
252

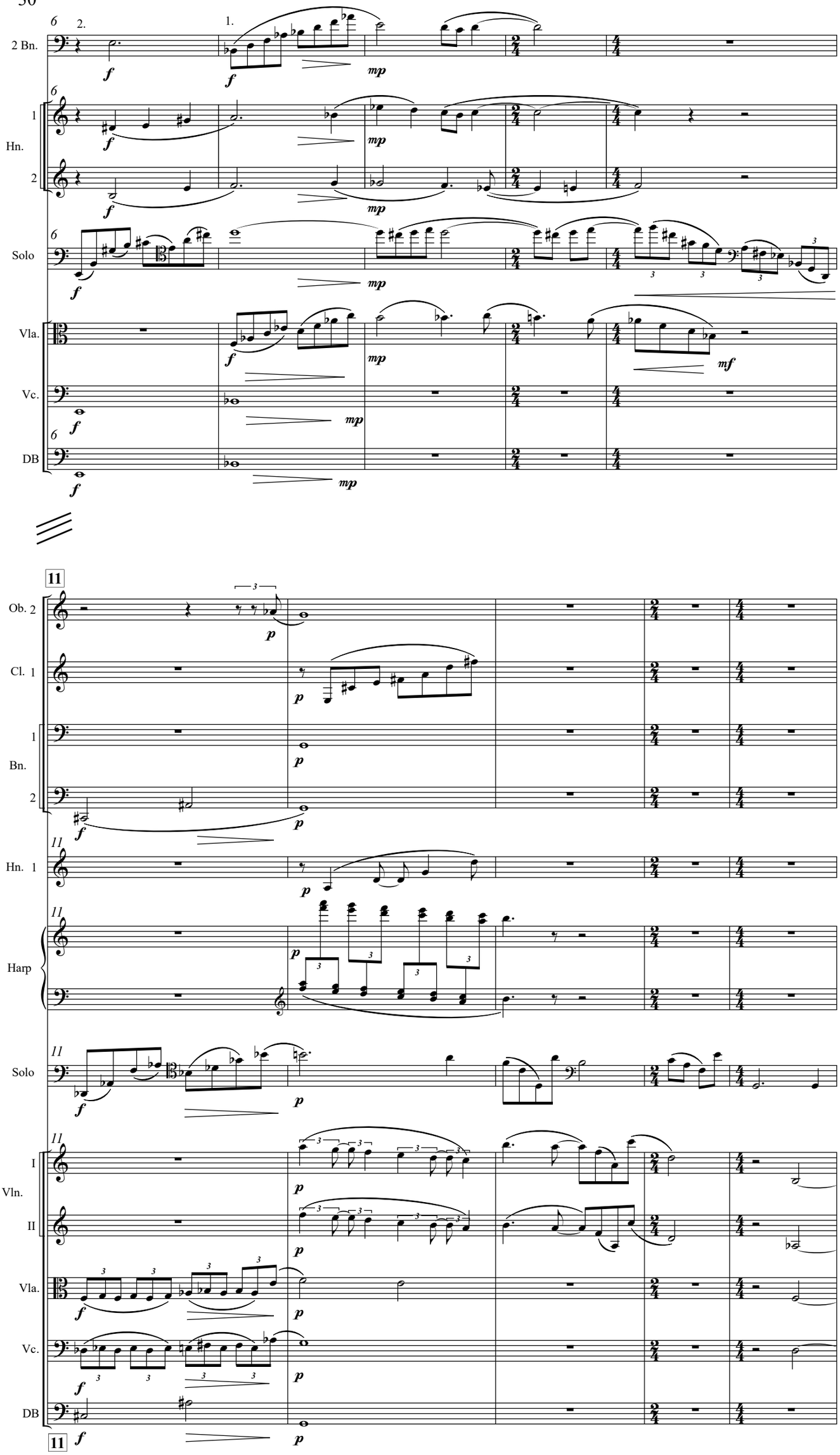

256
259
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Bn.
Hn.
Timp.
Solo
Vc.
DB
cresc.
(f)
ff
ff assez

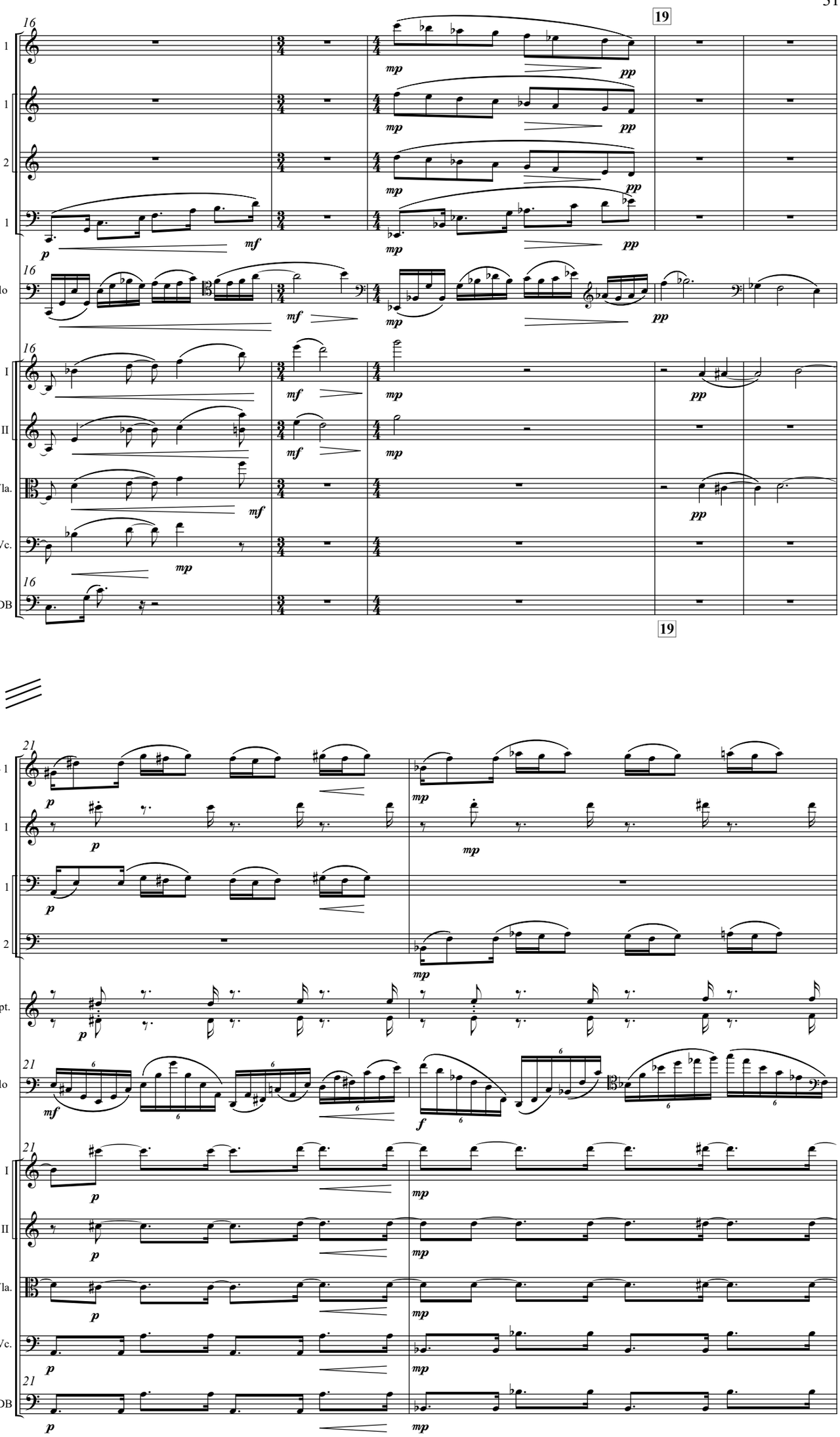

262
Fl.
1
2
Ob.
Cl.
Tpt.
Timp.
Harp
Solo
Vla.
Vc.
DB
ff
(Fl. 2)
f
ff assez
8vb


271
270
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
2 Bn.
a 2
ff
Hn.
Tpt.
Harp
Solo
(tutti)
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
271

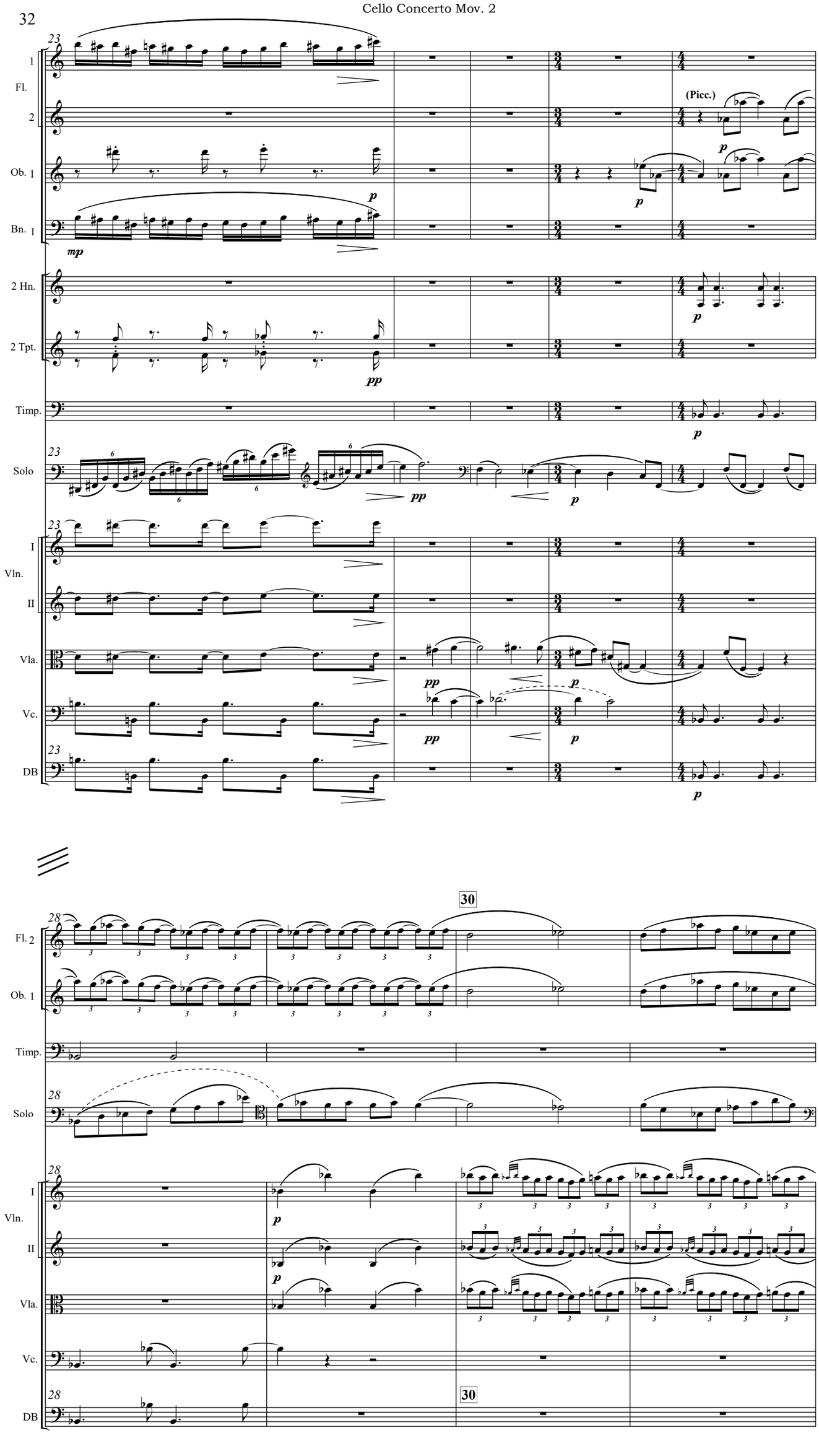

277
1
Fl.
2
(Fl. 2)
ff
a 2
2 Ob.
1
Cl.
2
a 2
2 Bn.
277
1
Hn.
2
ff
pp
1
Tpt.
2
Timp.
tr
277
Solo
(solo)
p
277
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
277
DB
284
Solo
pp

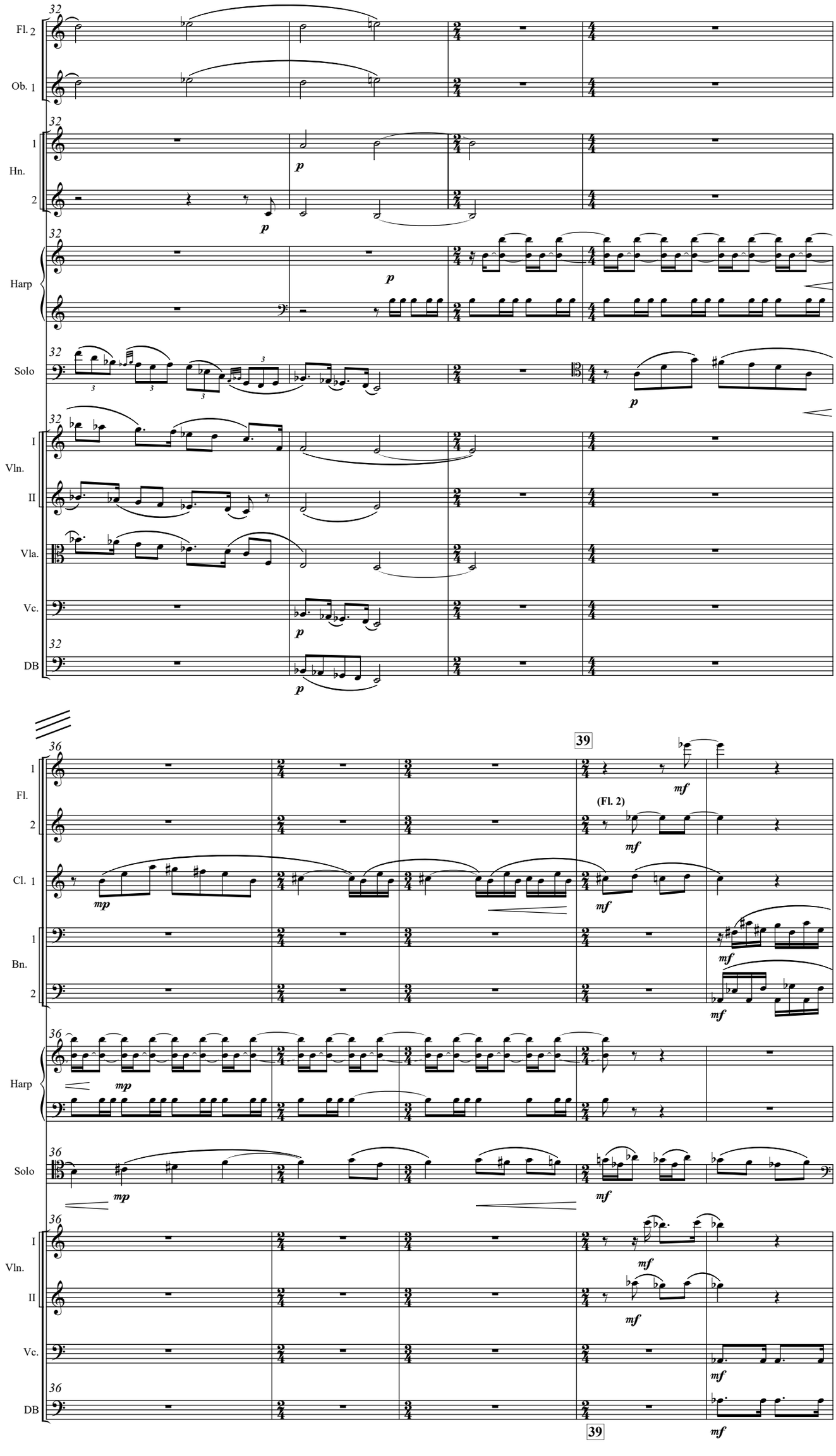

Largo ♩= 50
2 Flutes (Fl.2 dbl. Piccolo)
2 Oboes
Clarinet in B♭
1
2
Bassoon
1
2
Horn in F
1
2
2 Trumpets in B♭
Timpani
Harp
Solo Cello
Violin
I
II
Viola
Cello
Double Bass
pp
p
mf
Largo ♩= 50

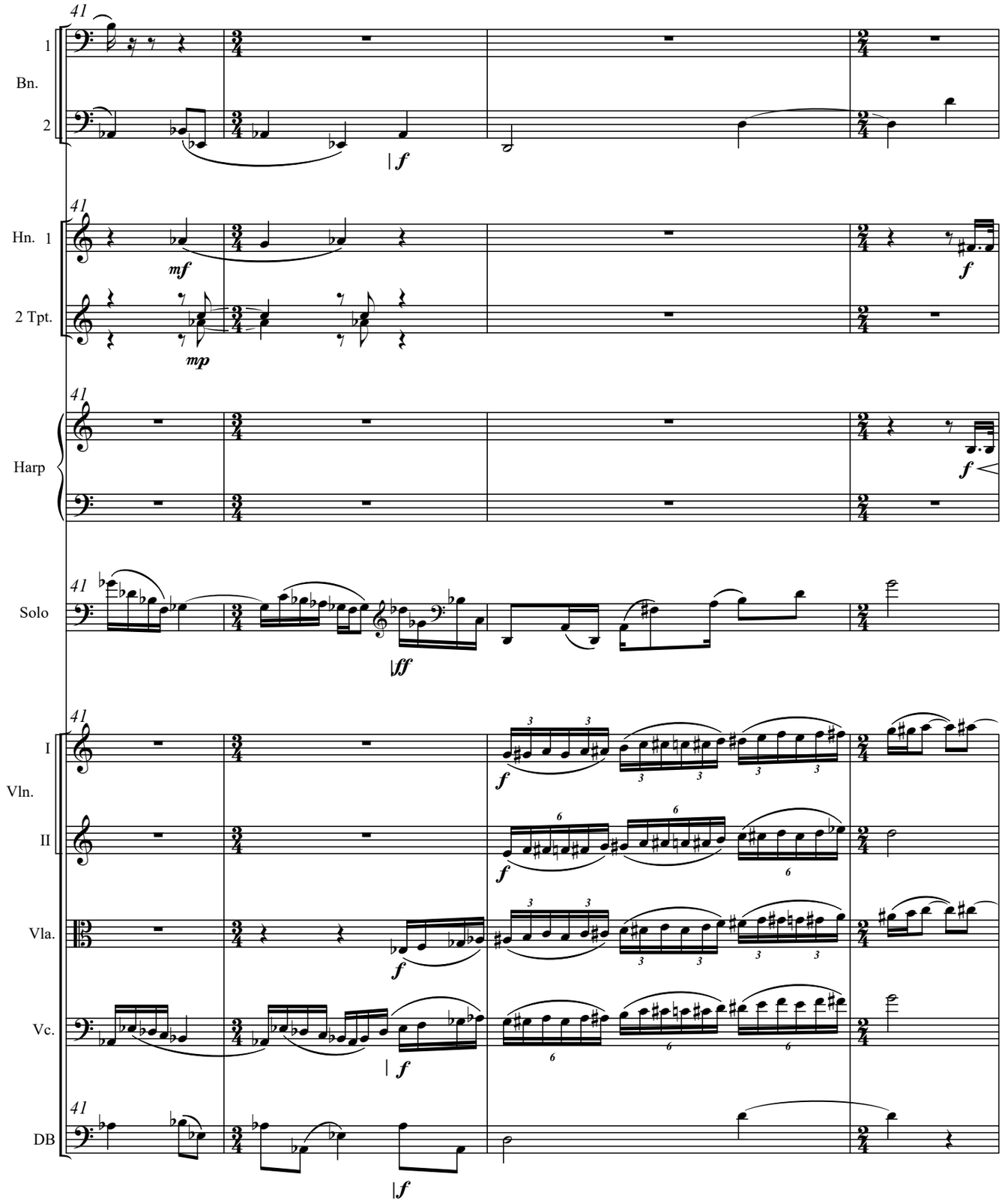

2 Bn.
1
Hn.
2
Solo
Vla.
Vc.
DB
11
Ob. 2
Cl. 1
1
Bn.
2
Hn. 1
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB

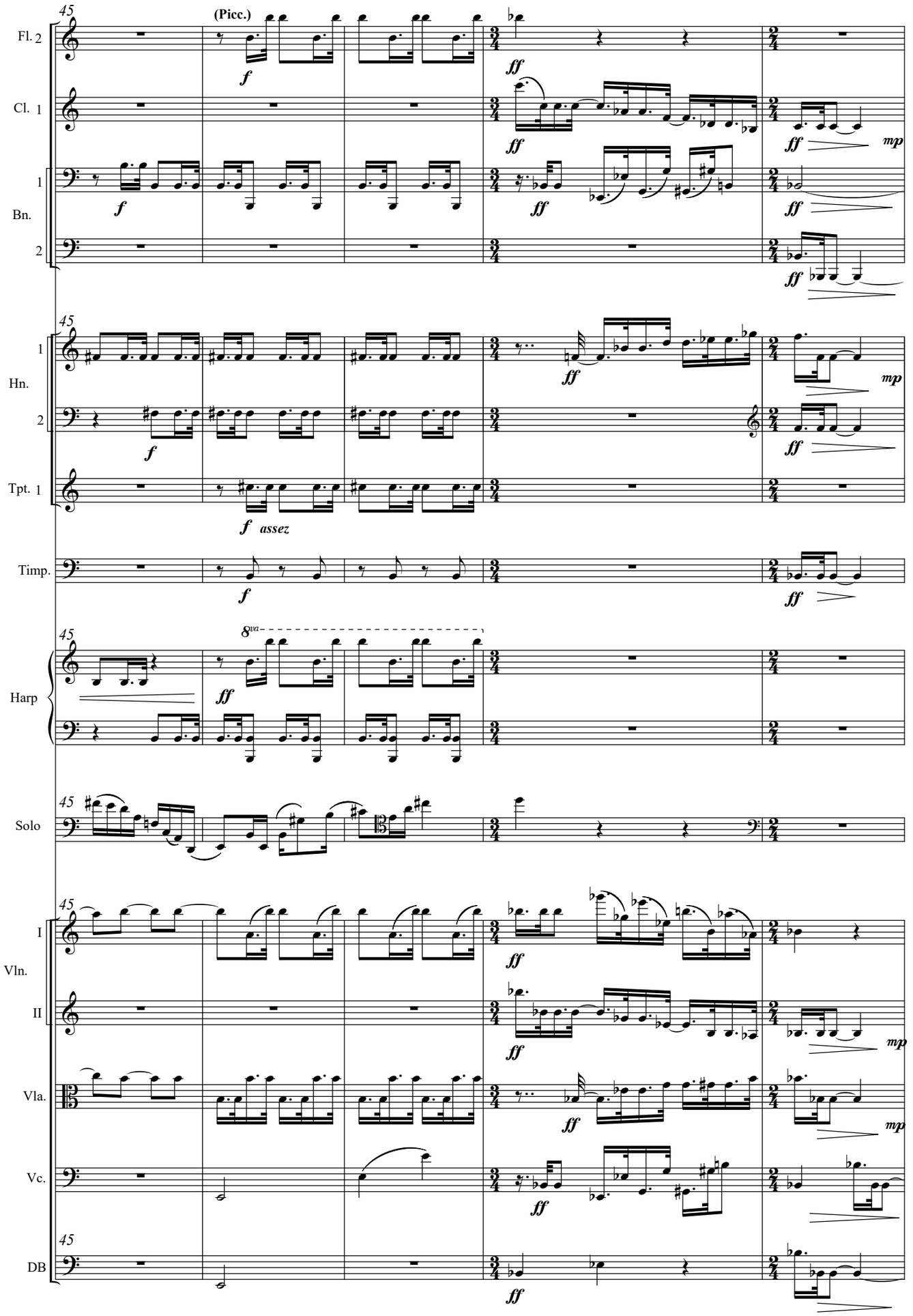

16
19
Ob. 1
Cl. 1
Cl. 2
Bn. 1
Solo
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
mp
pp
mf
p

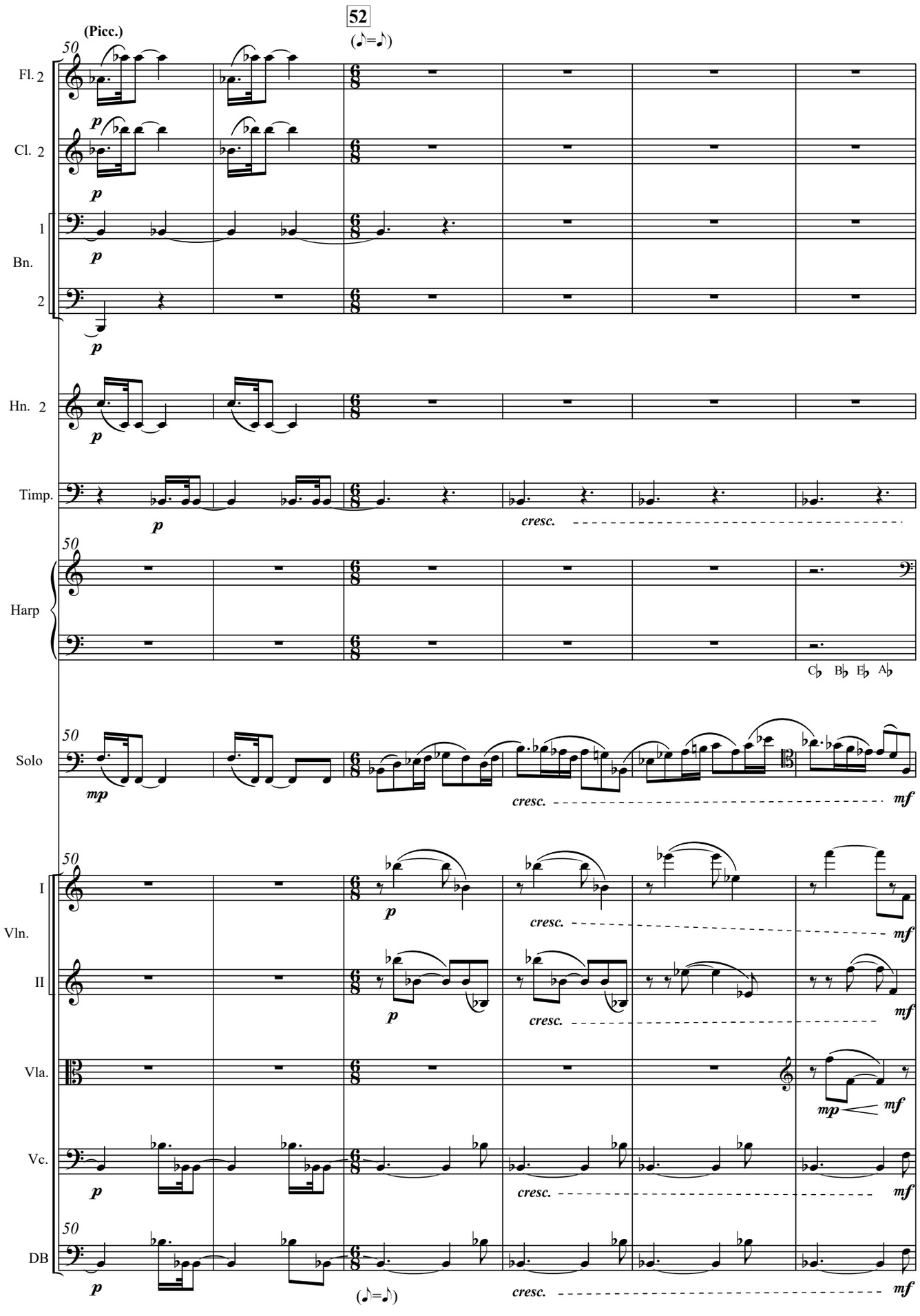
21
Fl. 1
Ob. 1
Bn. 1
Bn. 2
2 Tpt.
Solo
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
p
mp
mf
f

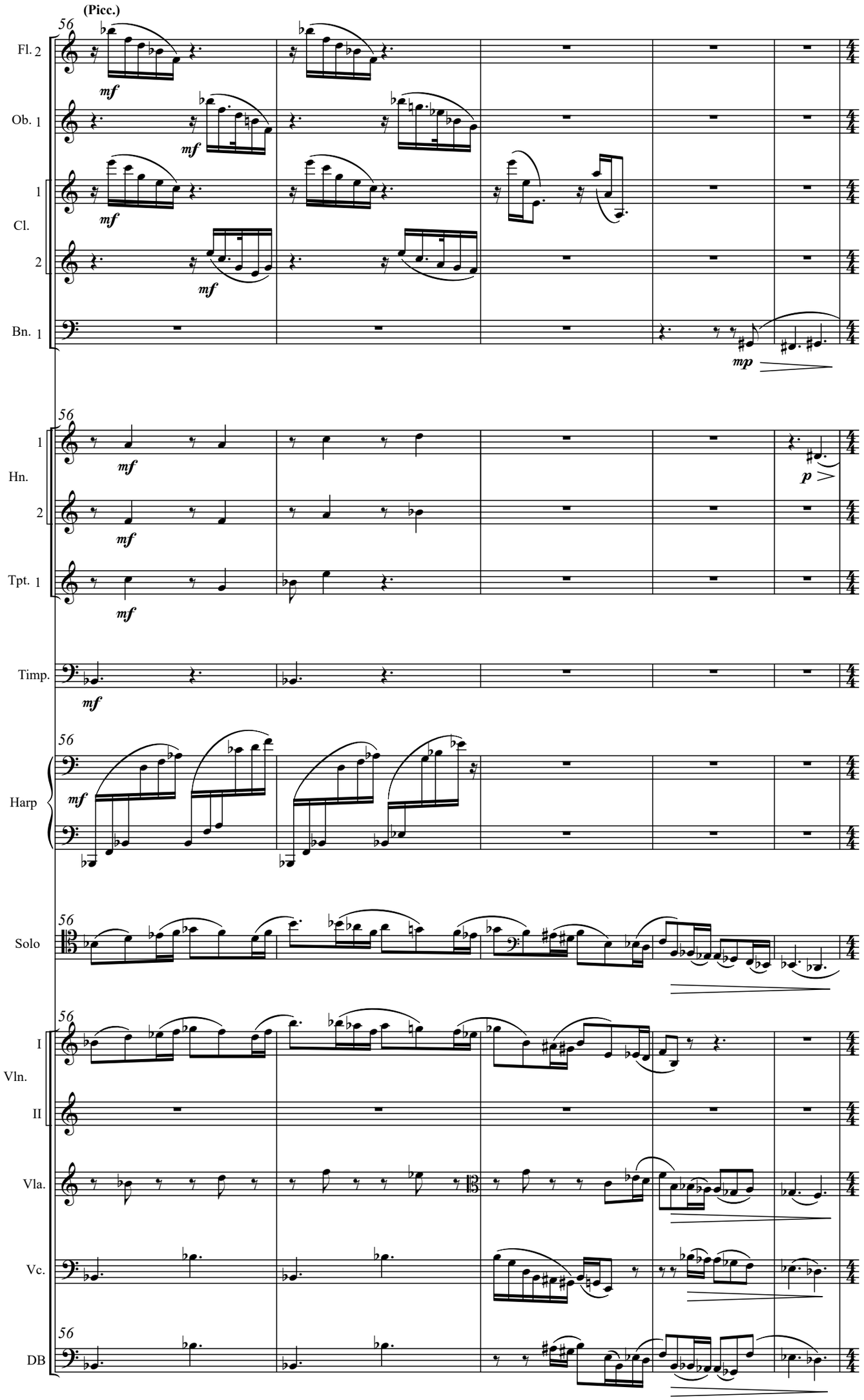

23
Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Ob. 1
Bn. 1
2 Hn.
2 Tpt.
Timp.
Solo
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
(Picc.)
mp
p
pp
28
30

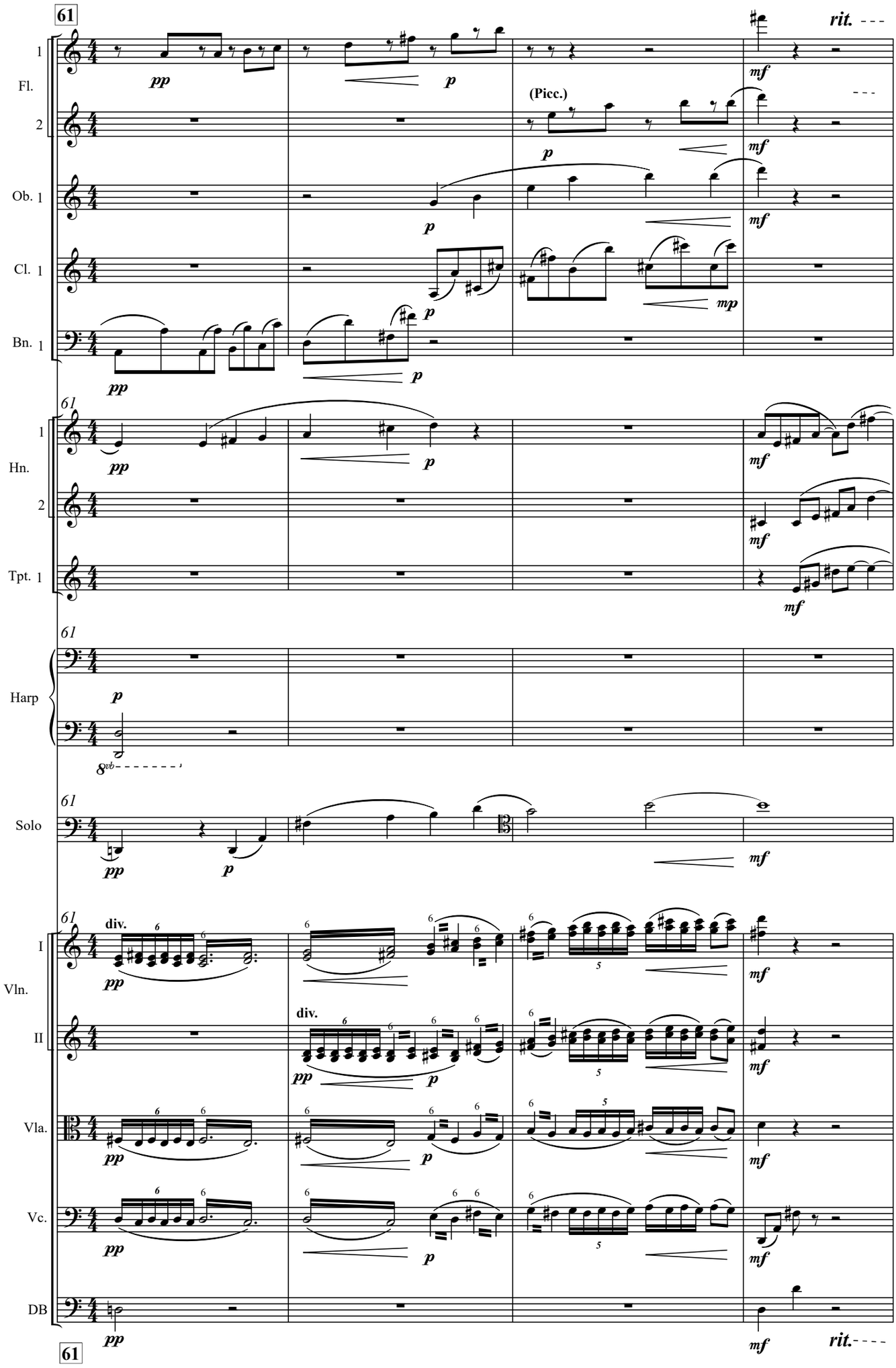

32
Fl. 2
Ob. 1
Hn. 1 2
Harp
Solo
Vln. I II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
p
36
39
Fl. 1 2
Cl. 1
Bn. 1 2
(Fl. 2)
mp
mf

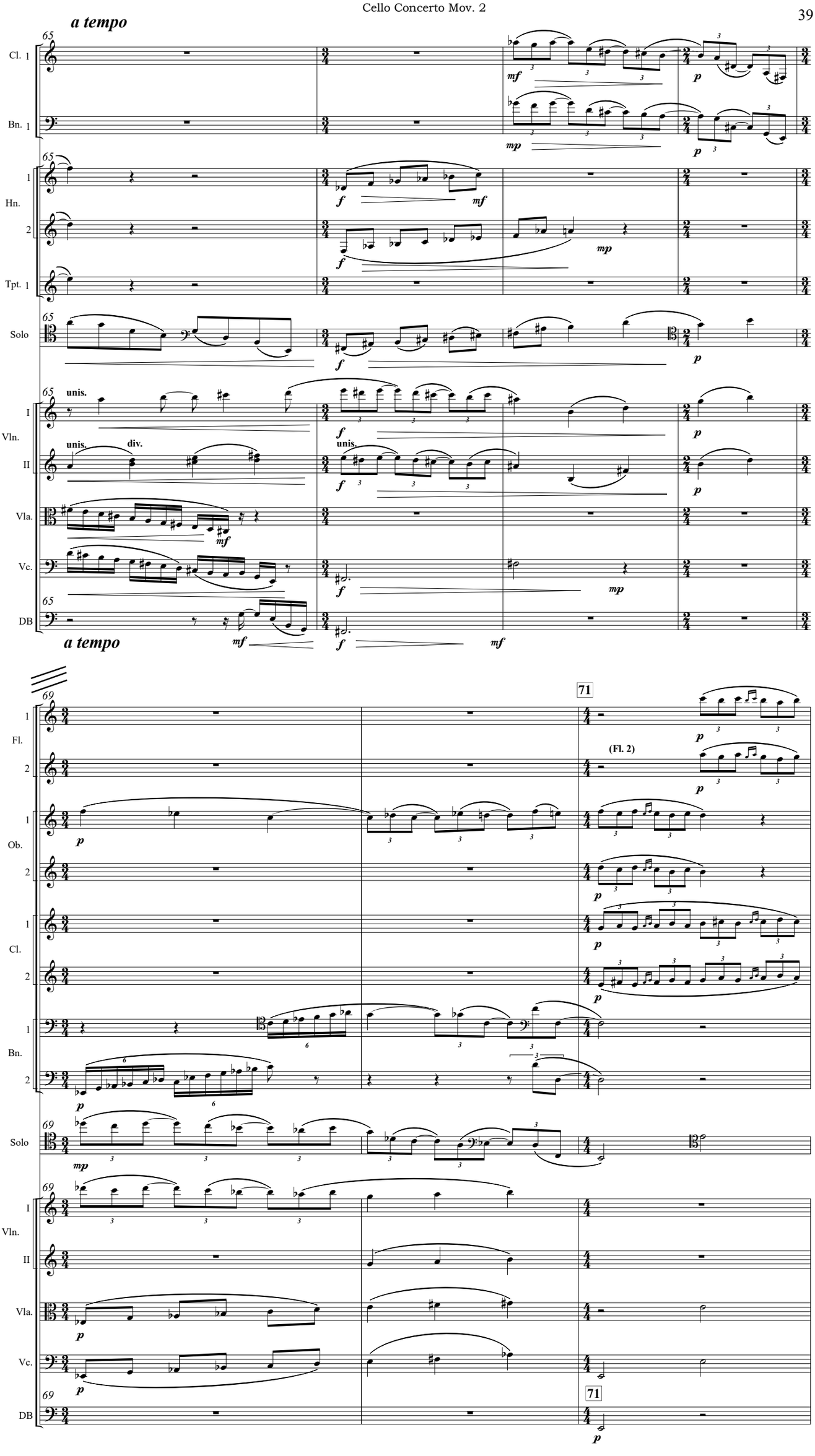

41
1
Bn.
2
f
41
Hn. 1
2 Tpt.
mf
mp
f
41
Harp
f
41
Solo
ff
41
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
f
f
f
f
f

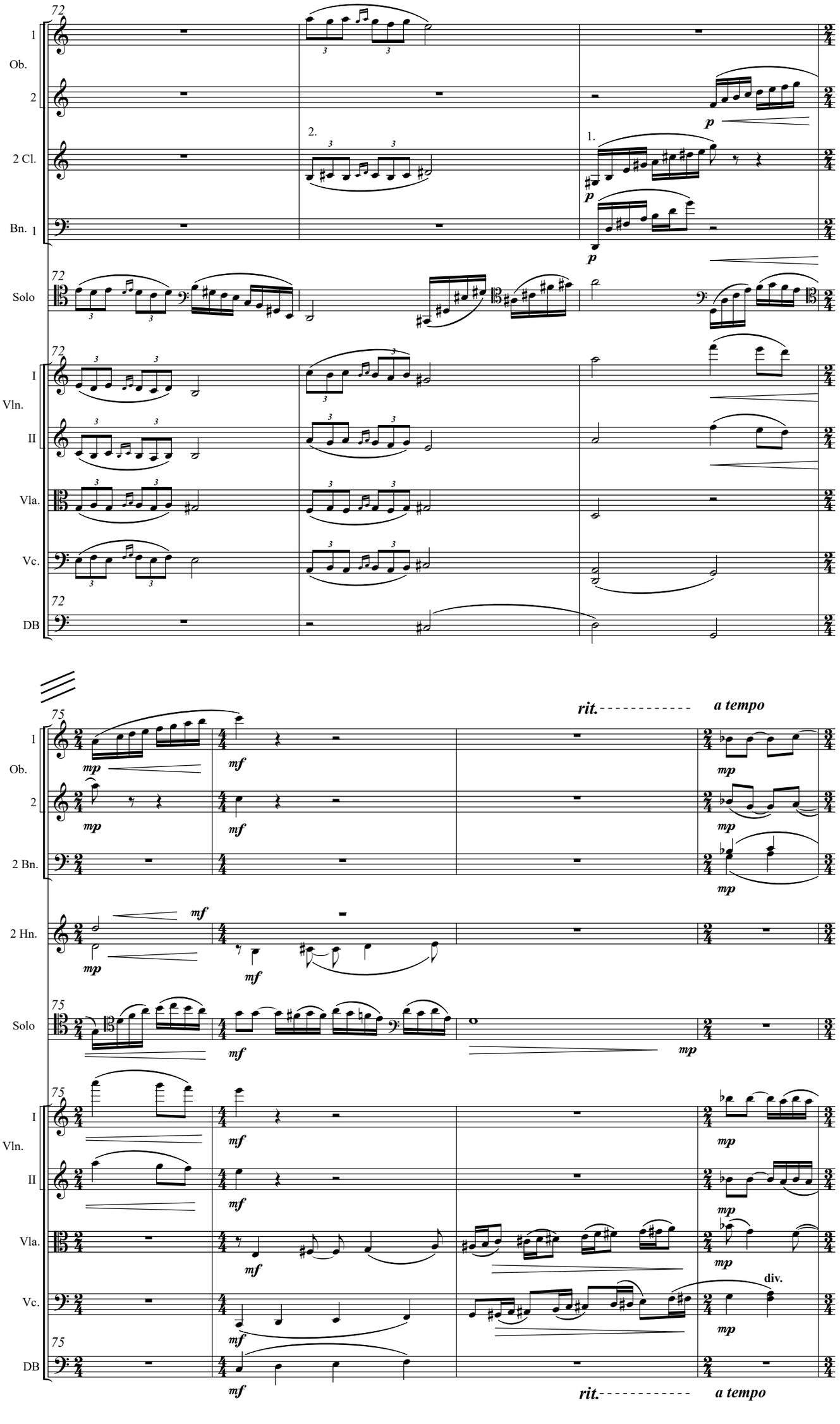

45
(Picc.)
Fl. 2
Cl. 1
1
Bn.
2
Hn.
Tpt. 1
Timp.
Harp
8va
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
f
ff
mp
assez

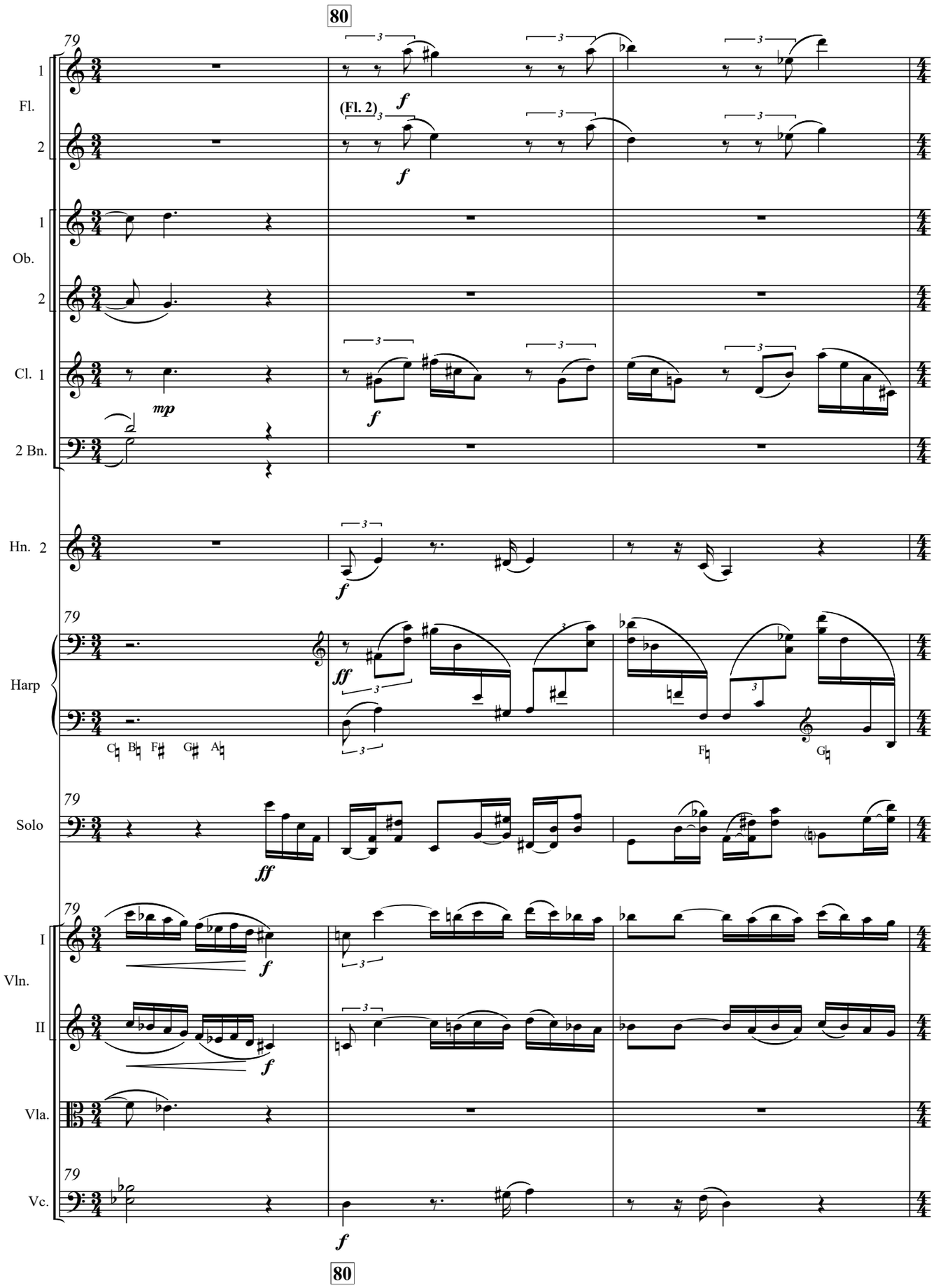

52
(Picc.)
(♪=♪)
Fl. 2
Cl. 2
1
Bn.
2
Hn. 2
Timp.
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
cresc.
mf
mp
(♪=♪)
52

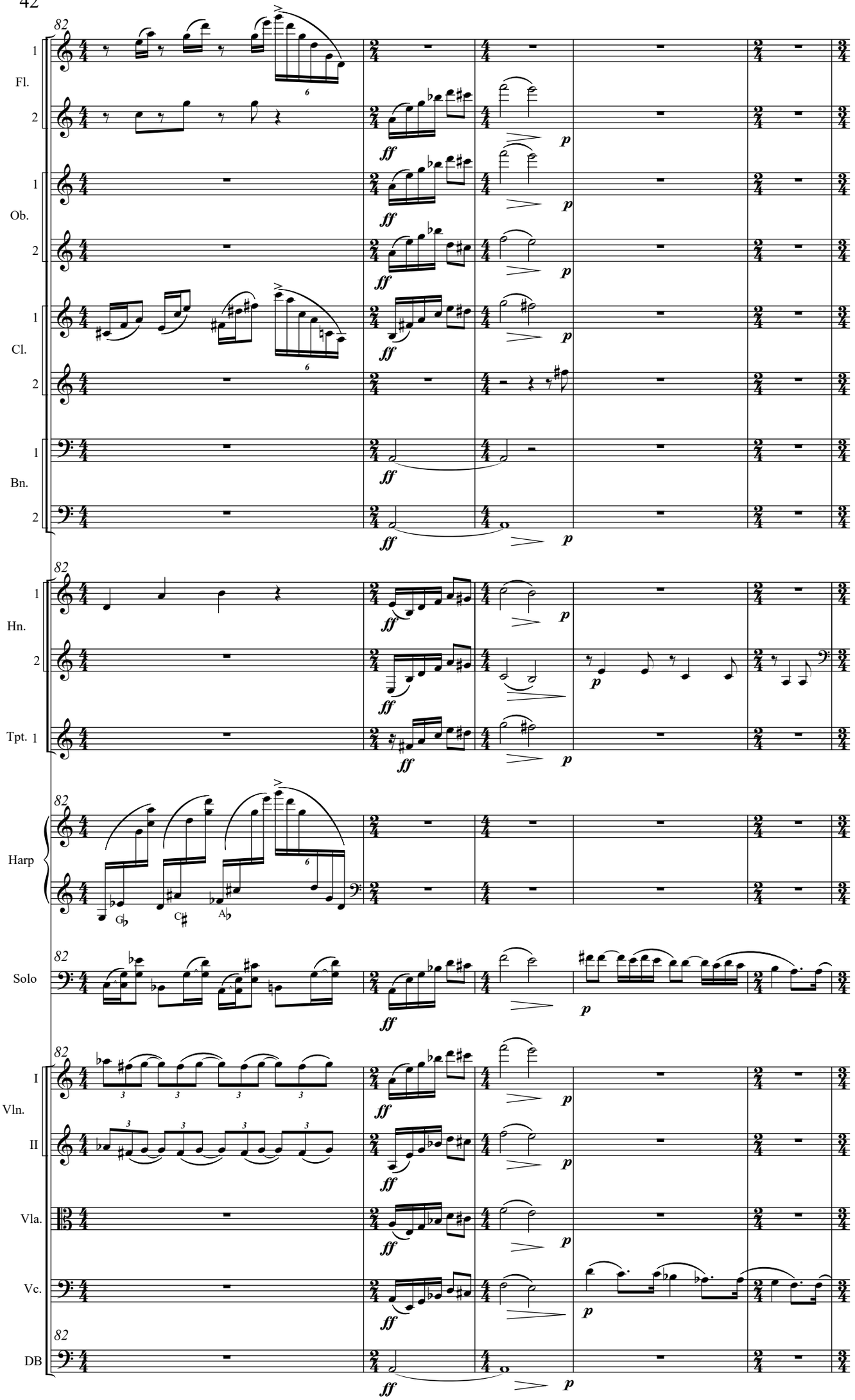

(Picc.)
56
Fl. 2
Ob. 1
1
Cl.
2
Bn. 1
mf
mp
1
Hn.
2
Tpt. 1
p
Timp.
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB

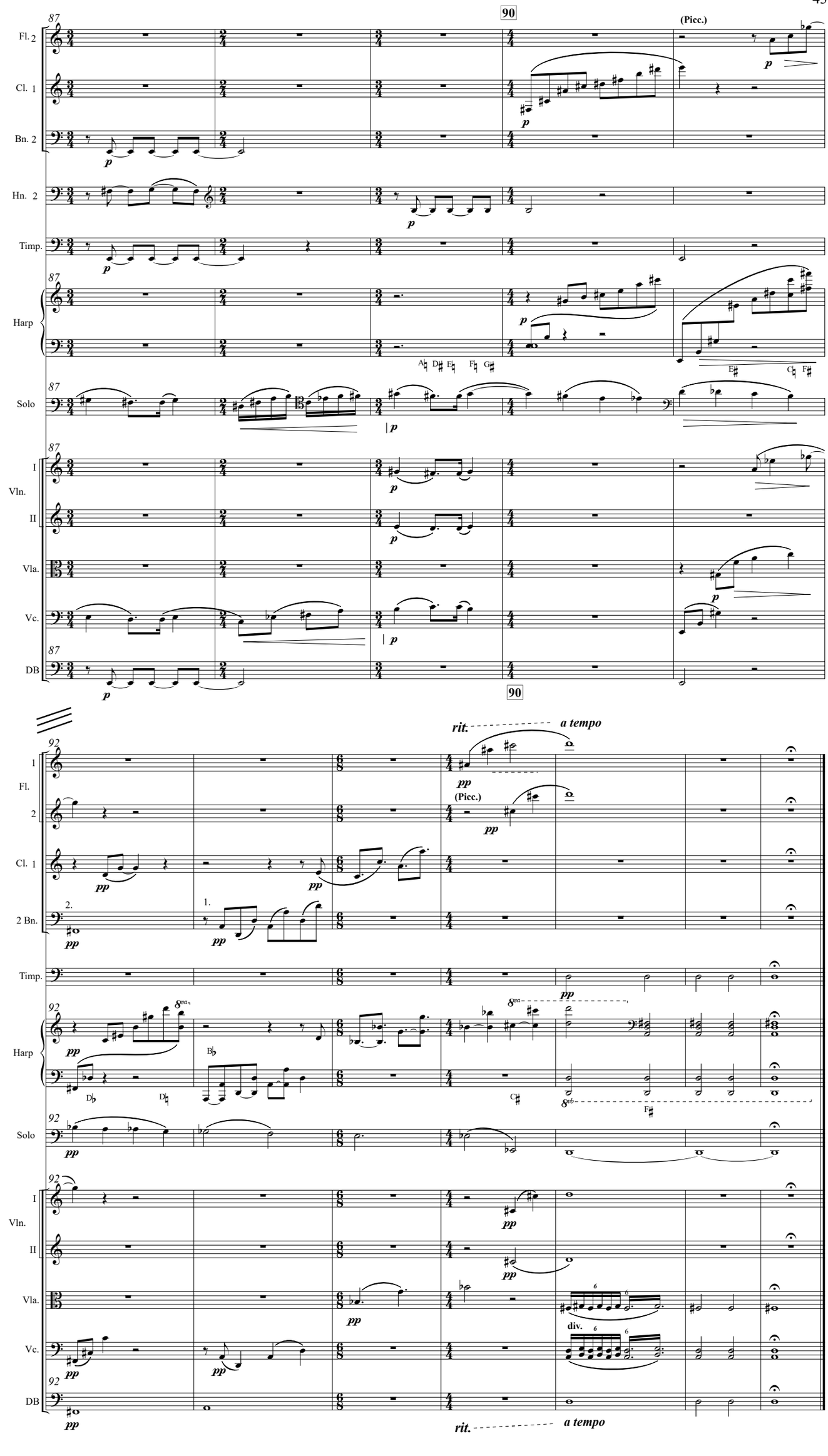

61
rit.
Fl. 1
2
Ob. 1
Cl. 1
Bn. 1
(Picc.)
pp
p
mf
mp
Hn. 1
2
Tpt. 1
Harp
8vb
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
div.
rit.


a tempo
Cl. 1
Bn. 1
Hn. 1
2
Tpt. 1
Solo
Vln. I
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
unis.
div.
(Fl. 2)
71

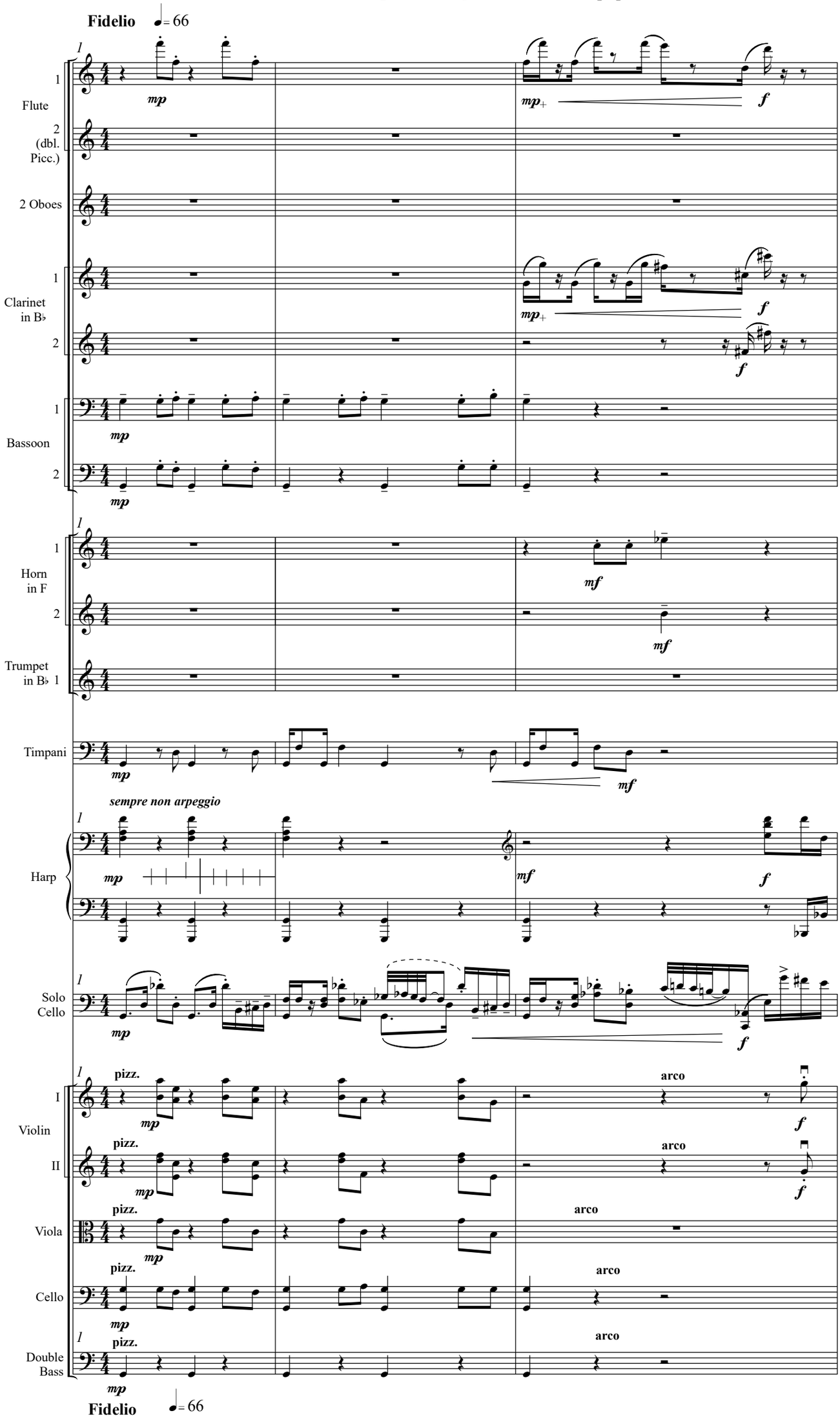

72
1
Ob.
2
2 Cl.
Bn. 1
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
2.
1.
p
75
mp
mf
rit.
a tempo
2 Bn.
2 Hn.
div.

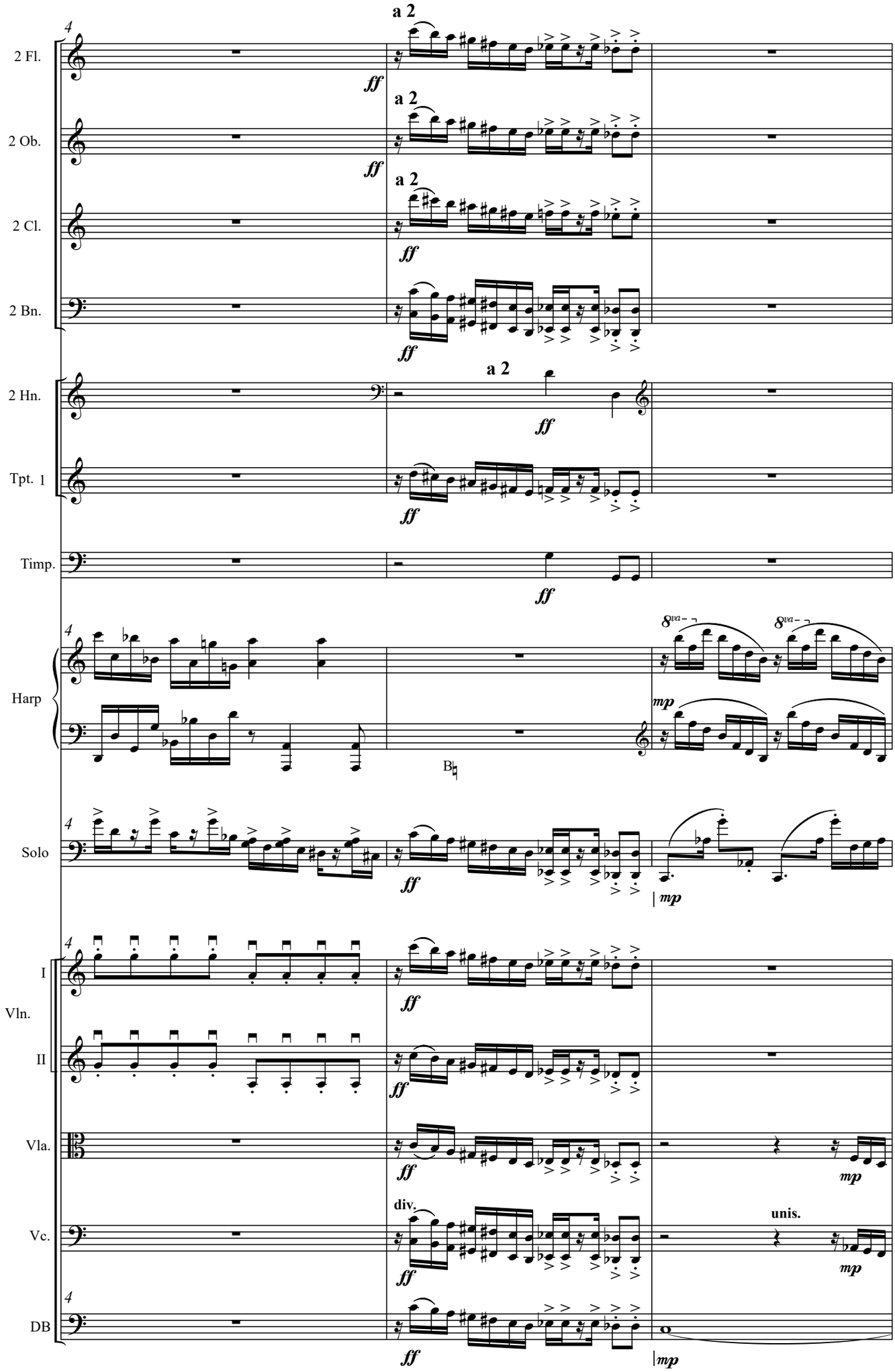

80
79
1
Fl.
2
(Fl. 2)
f
1
Ob.
2
Cl. 1
mp
2 Bn.
Hn. 2
Harp
ff
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
80

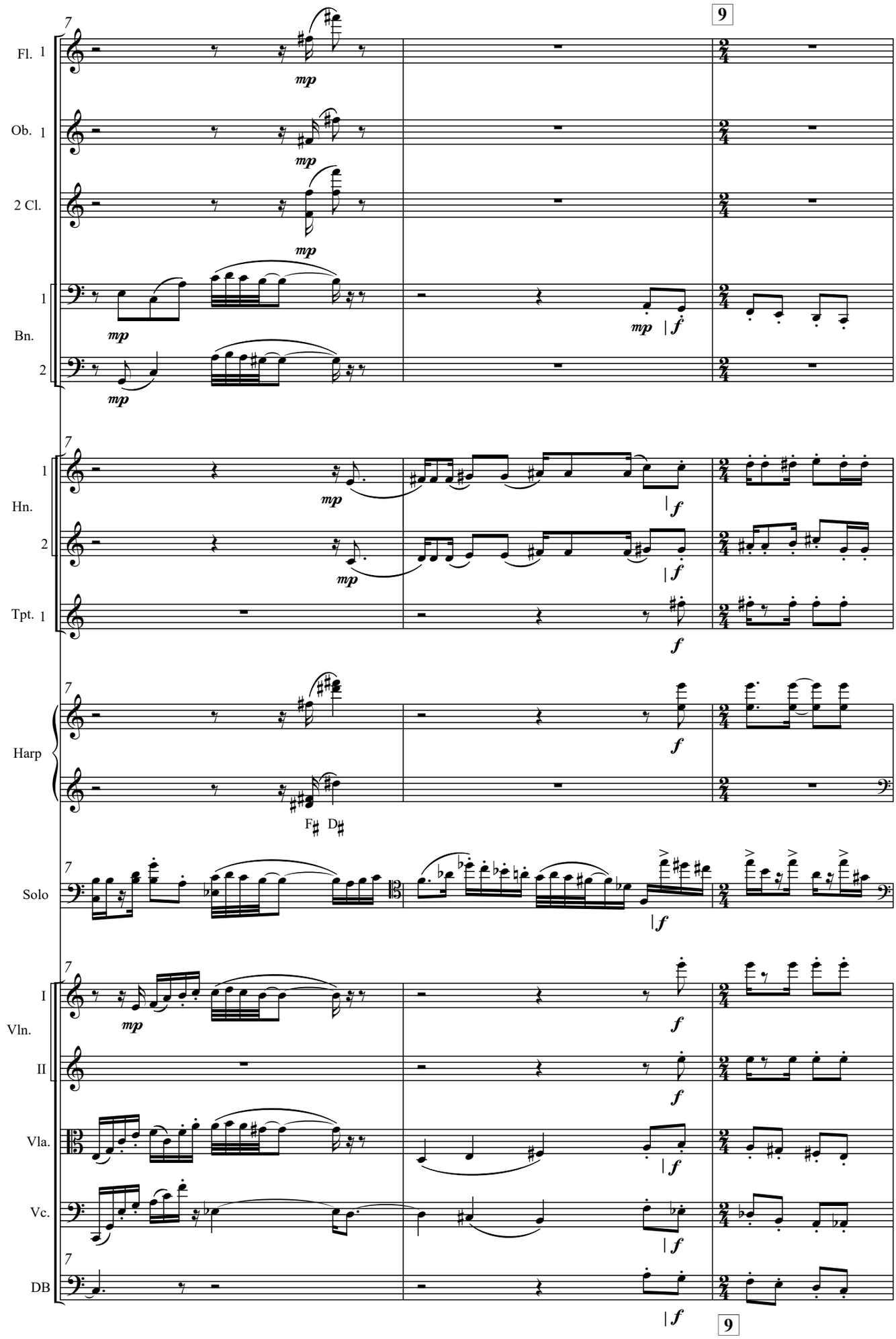

82
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Bn.
Hn.
Tpt. 1
Harp
Solo
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
ff
p

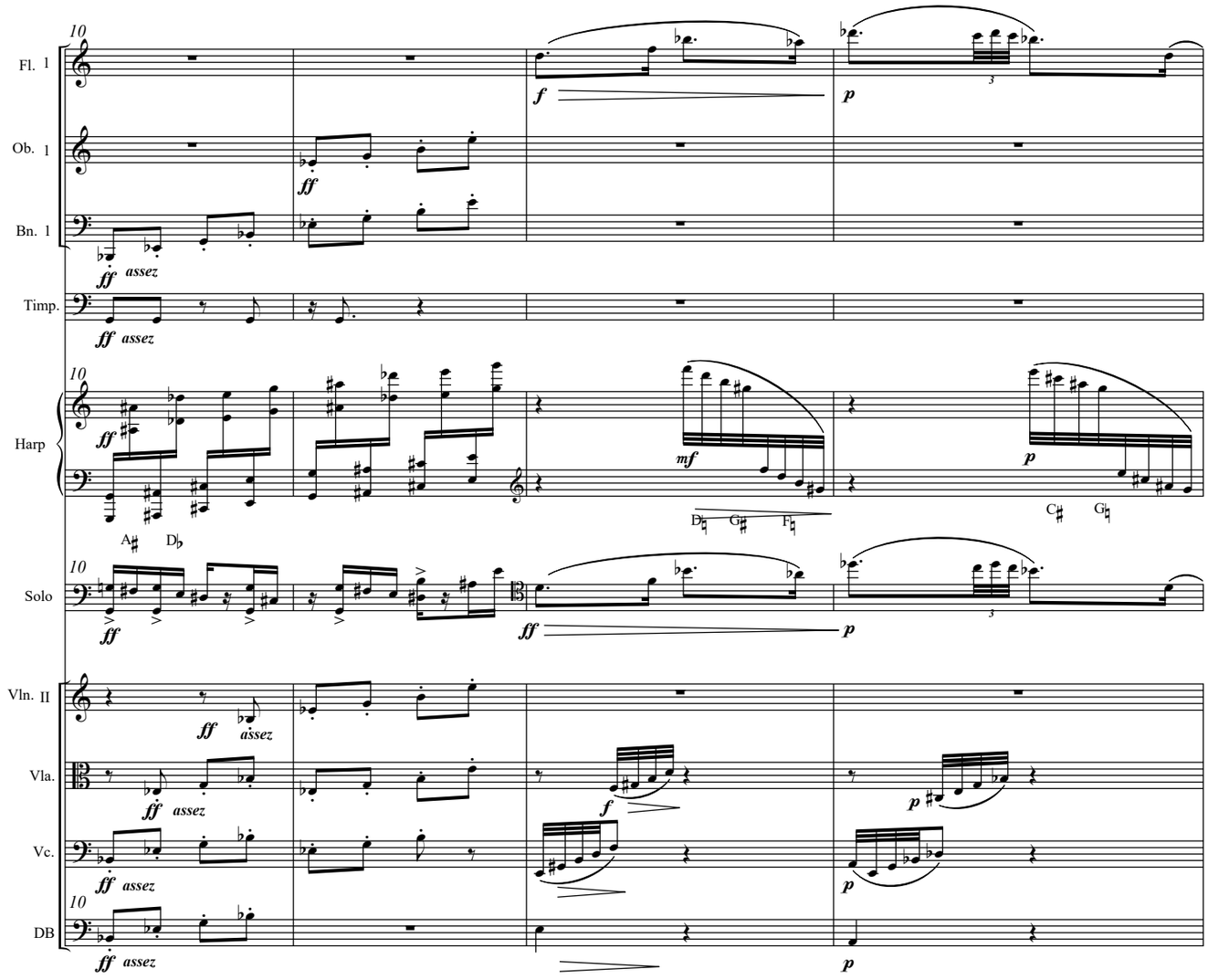

87
90
Fl. 2
Cl. 1
Bn. 2
Hn. 2
Timp.
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
(Picc.)
p
92
rit.
a tempo
pp
(Picc.)
1.
2.
div.

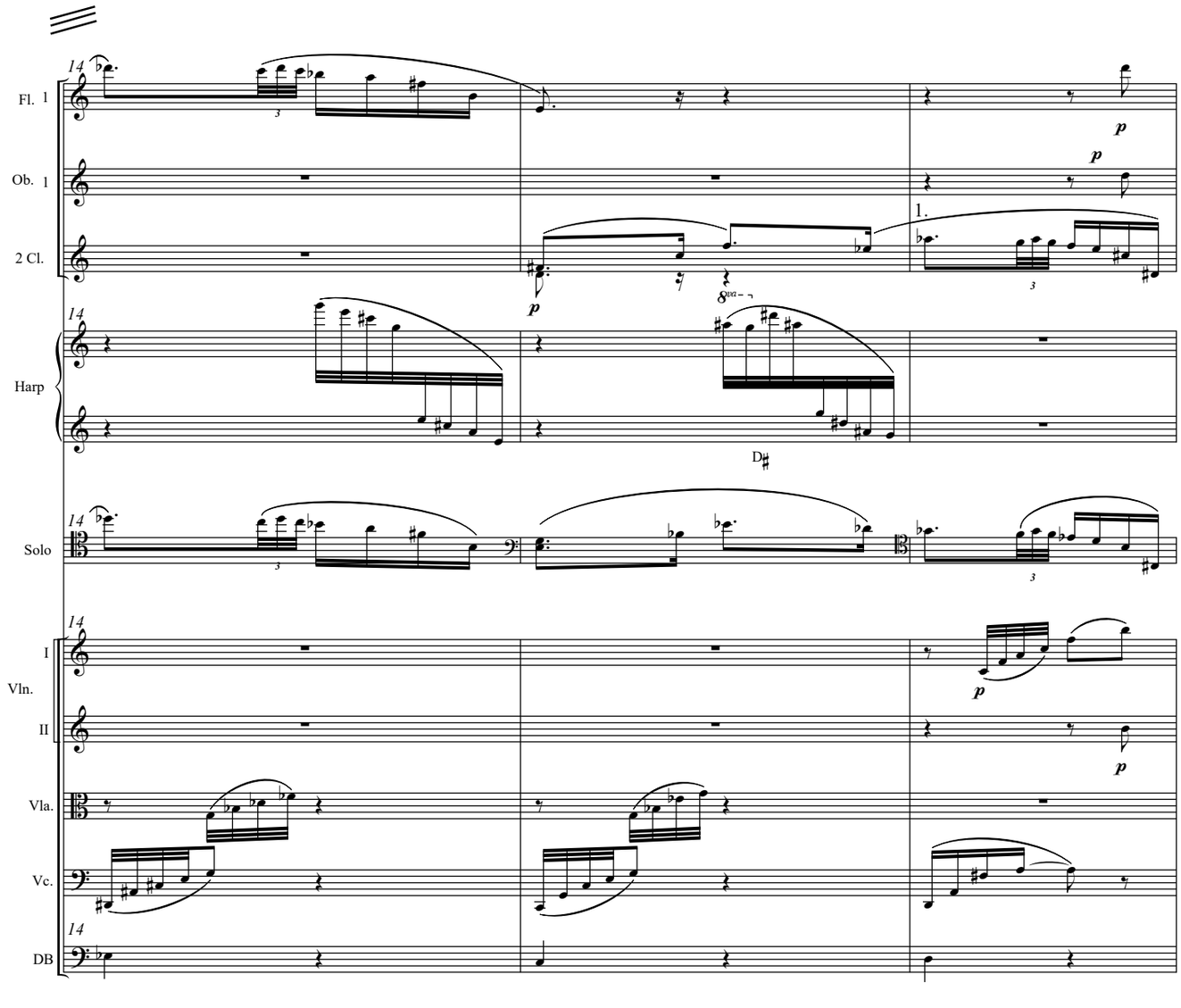
III. Contradanza [2']

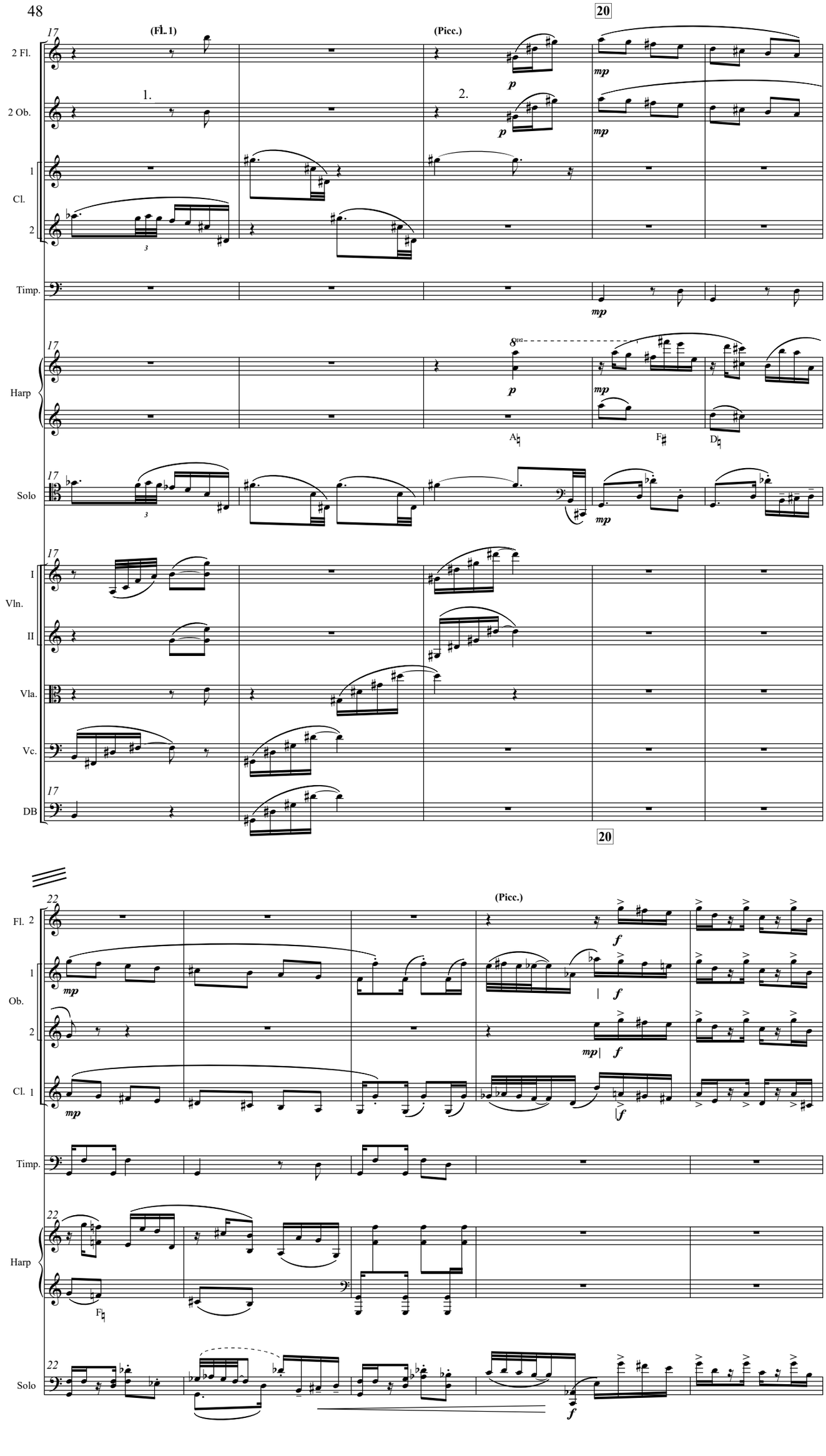


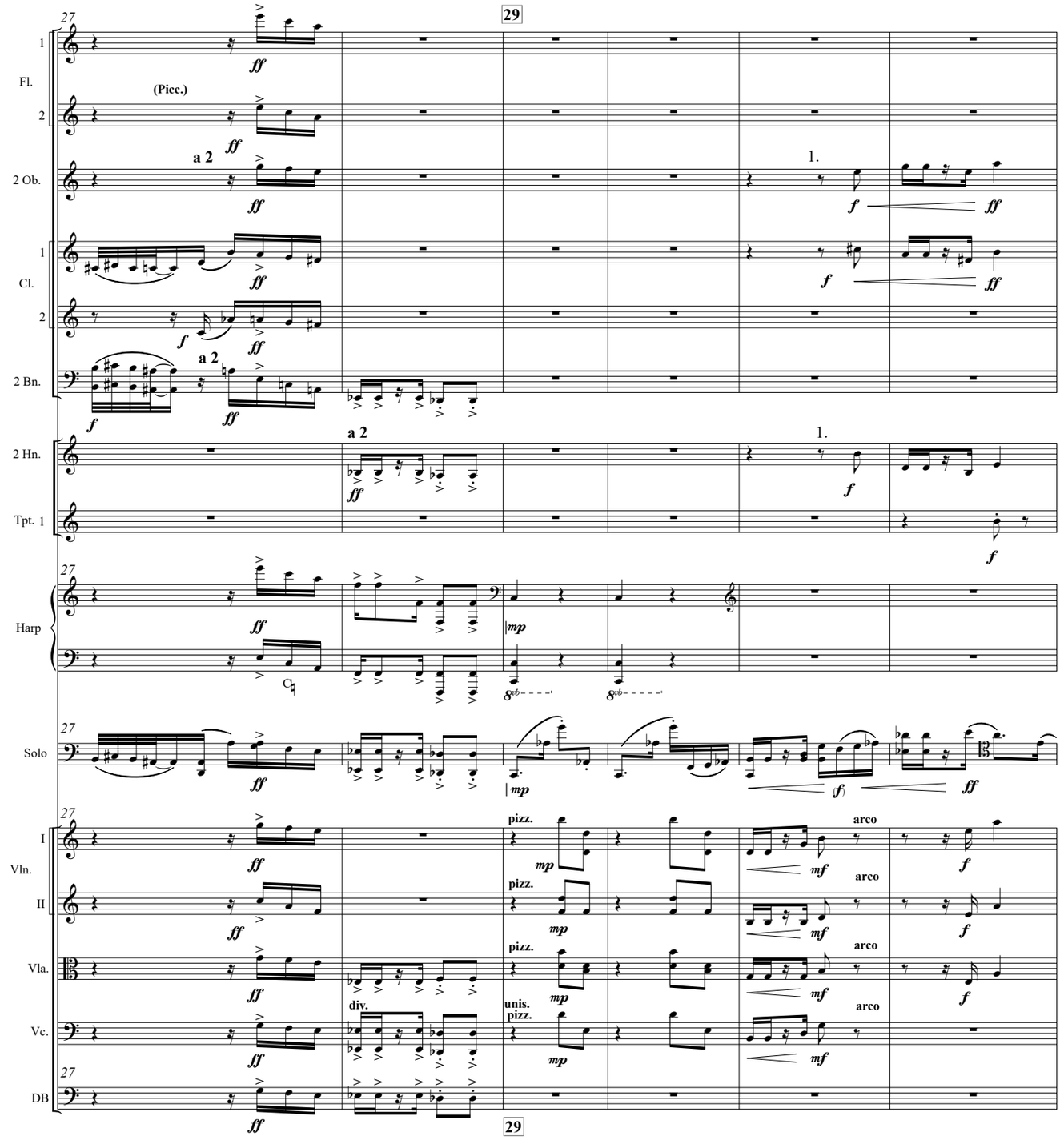

2 Fl.
2 Ob.
2 Cl.
2 Bn.
2 Hn.
Tpt. 1
Timp.
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
a 2
ff
mp
8va
B♮
div.
unis.

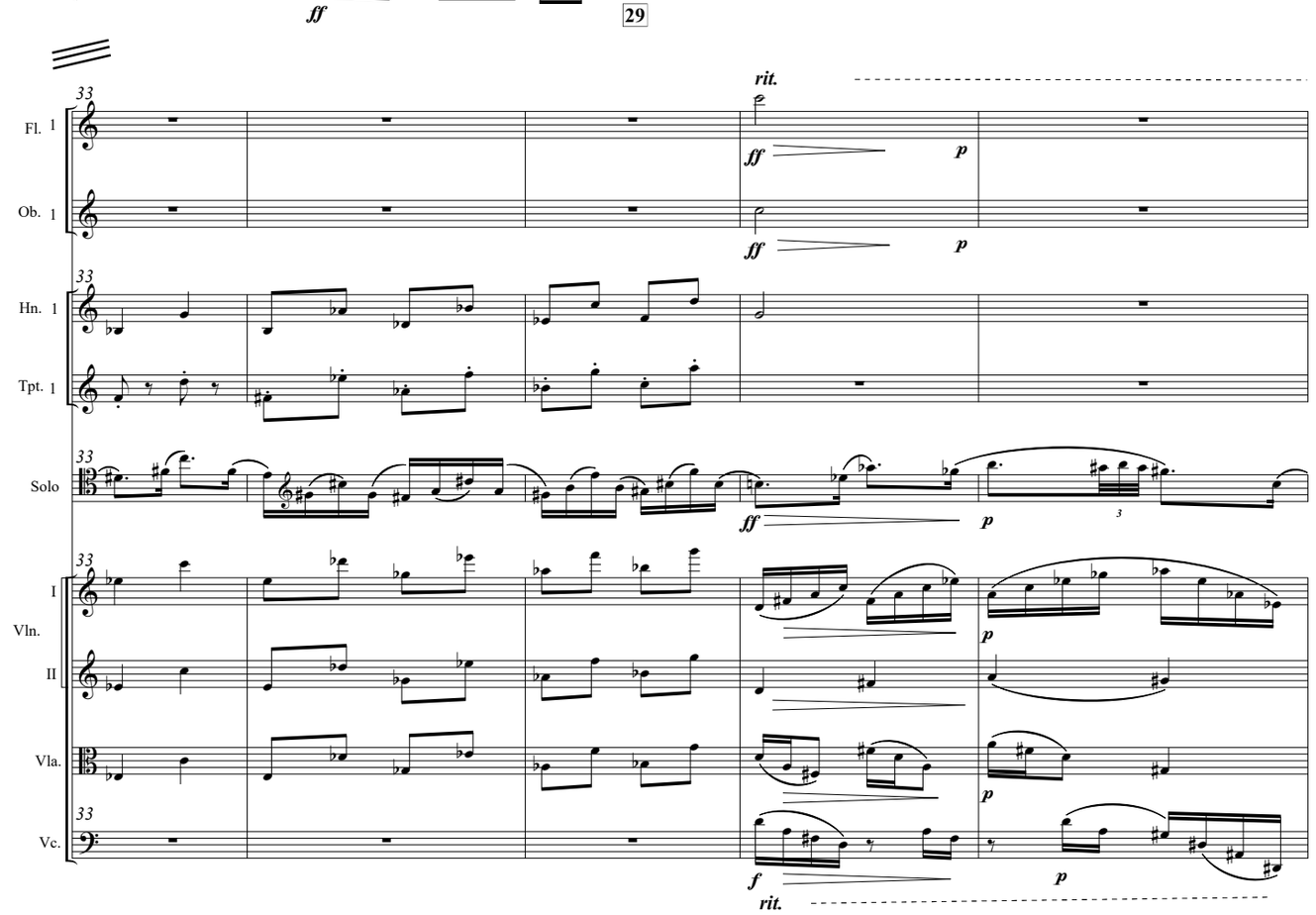

9
Fl. 1
Ob. 1
2 Cl.
Bn. 1
2
Hn. 1
2
Tpt. 1
Harp
Solo
Vln. I
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
mp
f
F♯ D♯
9

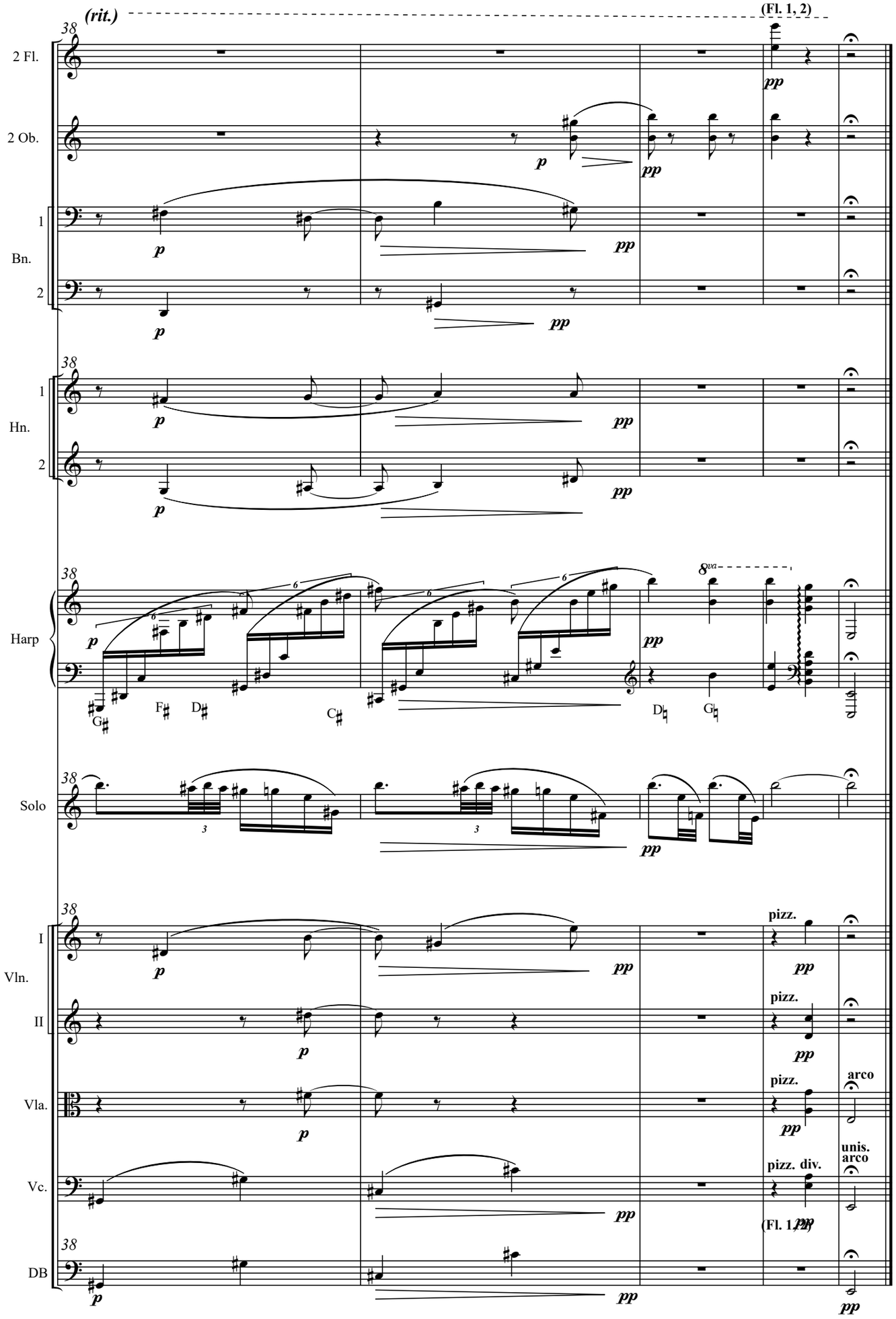

10
Fl. 1
Ob. 1
Bn. 1
Timp.
Harp
Solo
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
ff
assez
mf
p
f
A♯ D♭
D♭ G♯ F♮
C♯ G♮

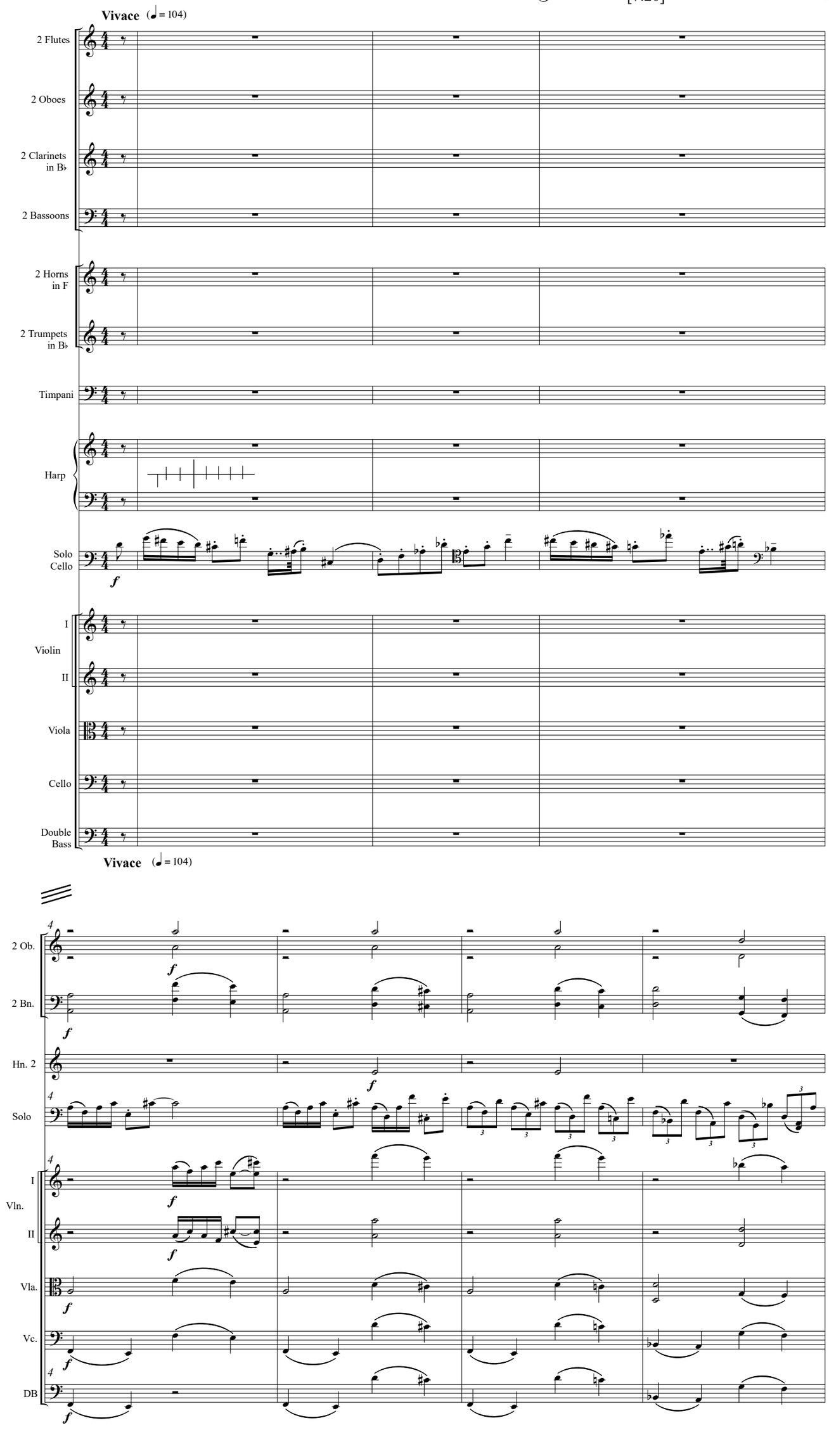

14
Fl. 1
Ob. 1
2 Cl.
Harp
Solo
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
p
1.
8va
D♯

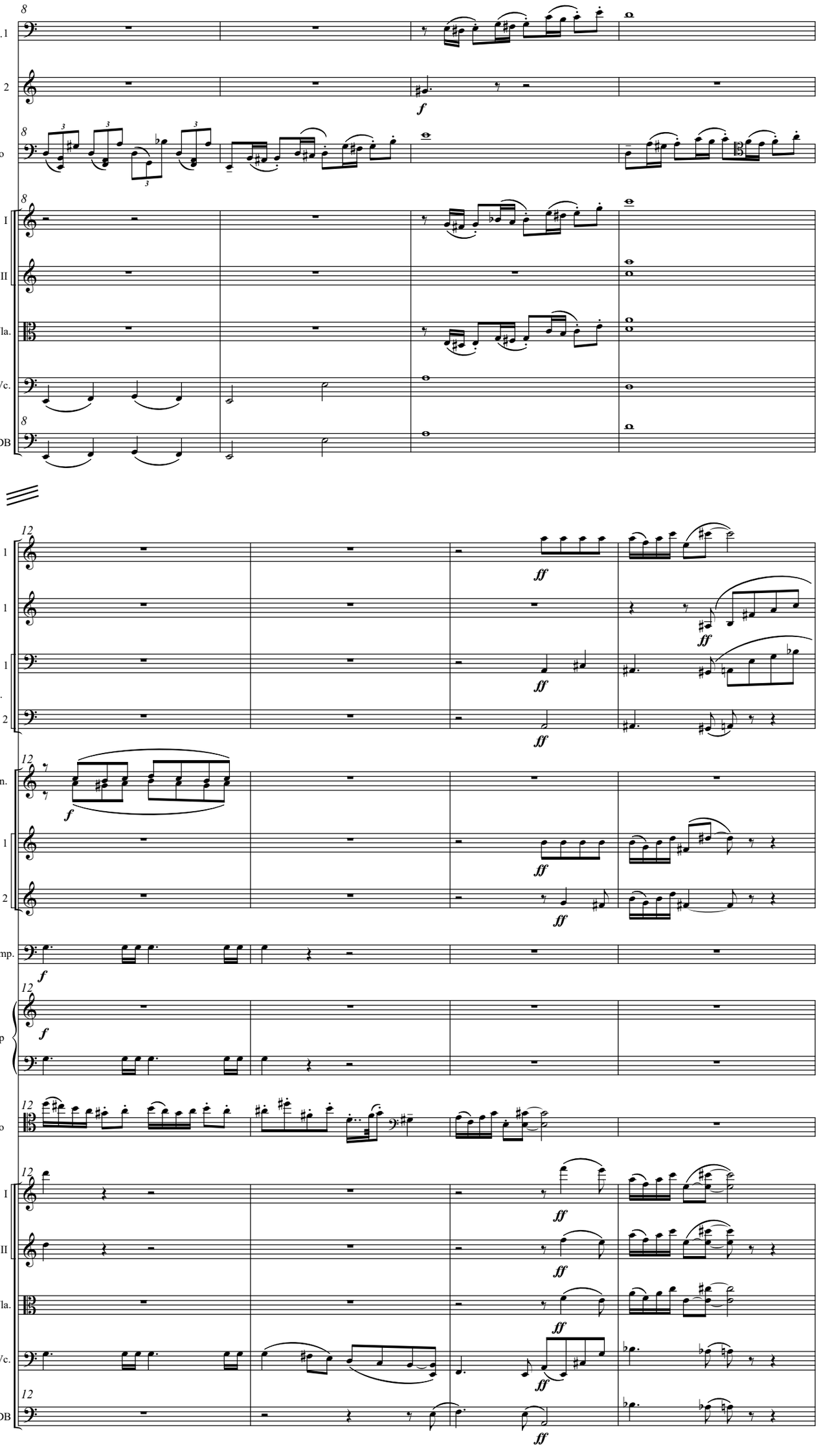

20
(Fl. 1)
(Picc.)
2 Fl.
2 Ob.
1
Cl.
2
Timp.
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
1.
2.
mp
p
A♮
F♯
D♮
20
(Picc.)
Fl. 2
1
Ob.
2
Cl. 1
Timp.
Harp
Solo
F♮
f

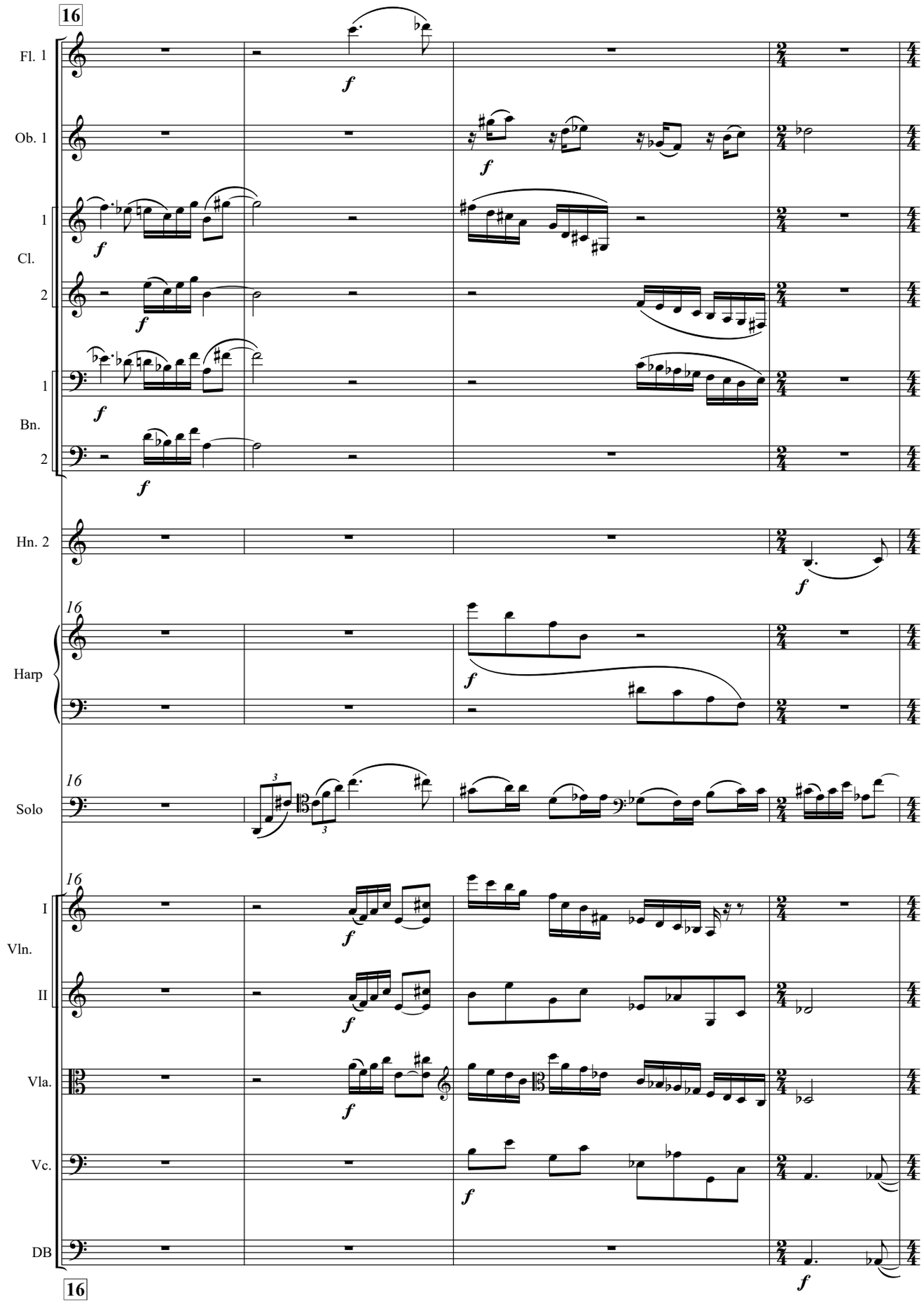

27
29
Fl. 1
(Picc.)
2
2 Ob.
a 2
1.
Cl. 1
2
2 Bn.
2 Hn.
Tpt. 1
Harp
Solo
Vln. I
pizz.
arco
II
Vla.
div.
unis.
Vc.
DB
ff
mp
mf
f
p

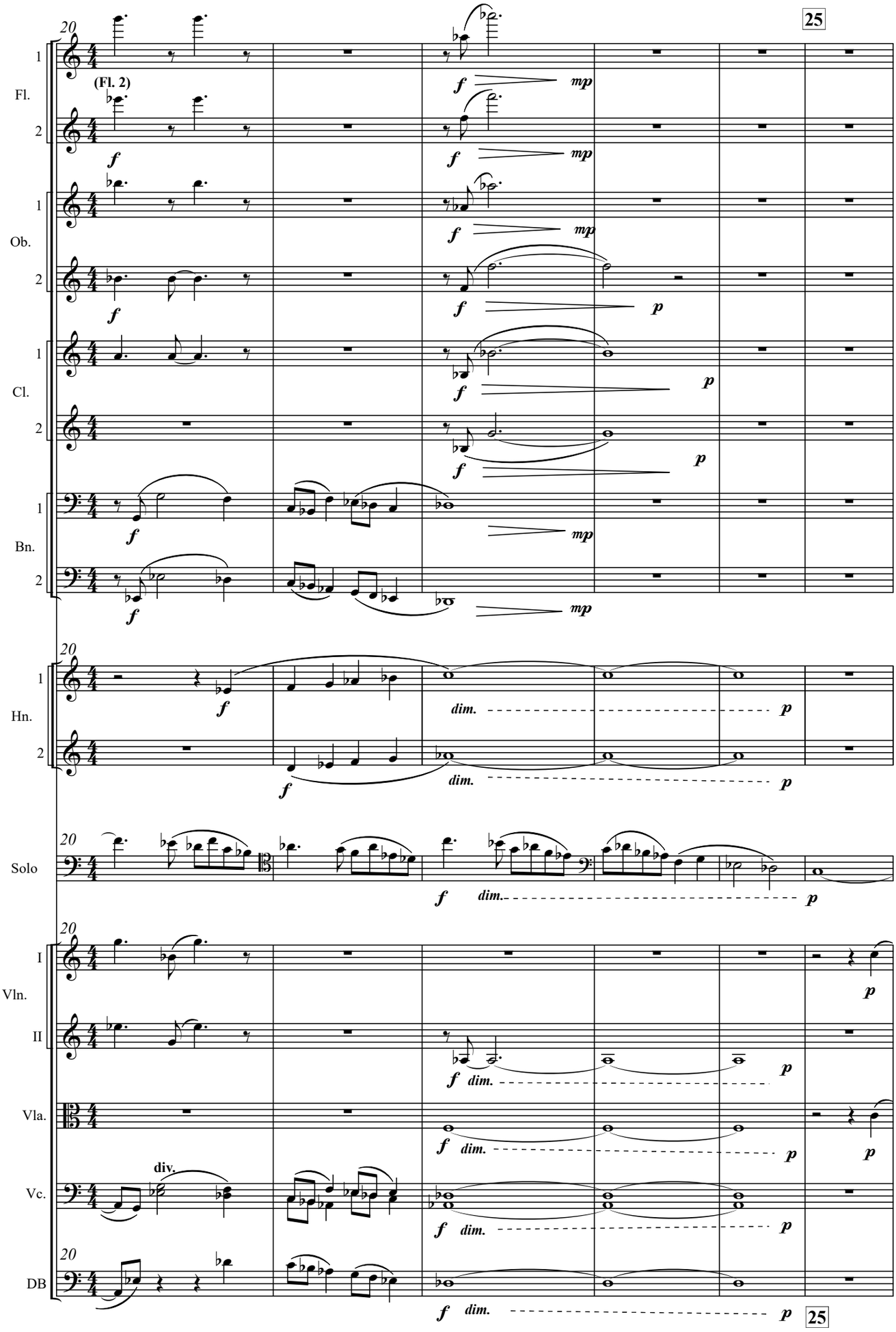

33
rit.
Fl. 1
Ob. 1
Hn. 1
Tpt. 1
Solo
Vln. I
II
Vla.
Vc.
ff
p
f

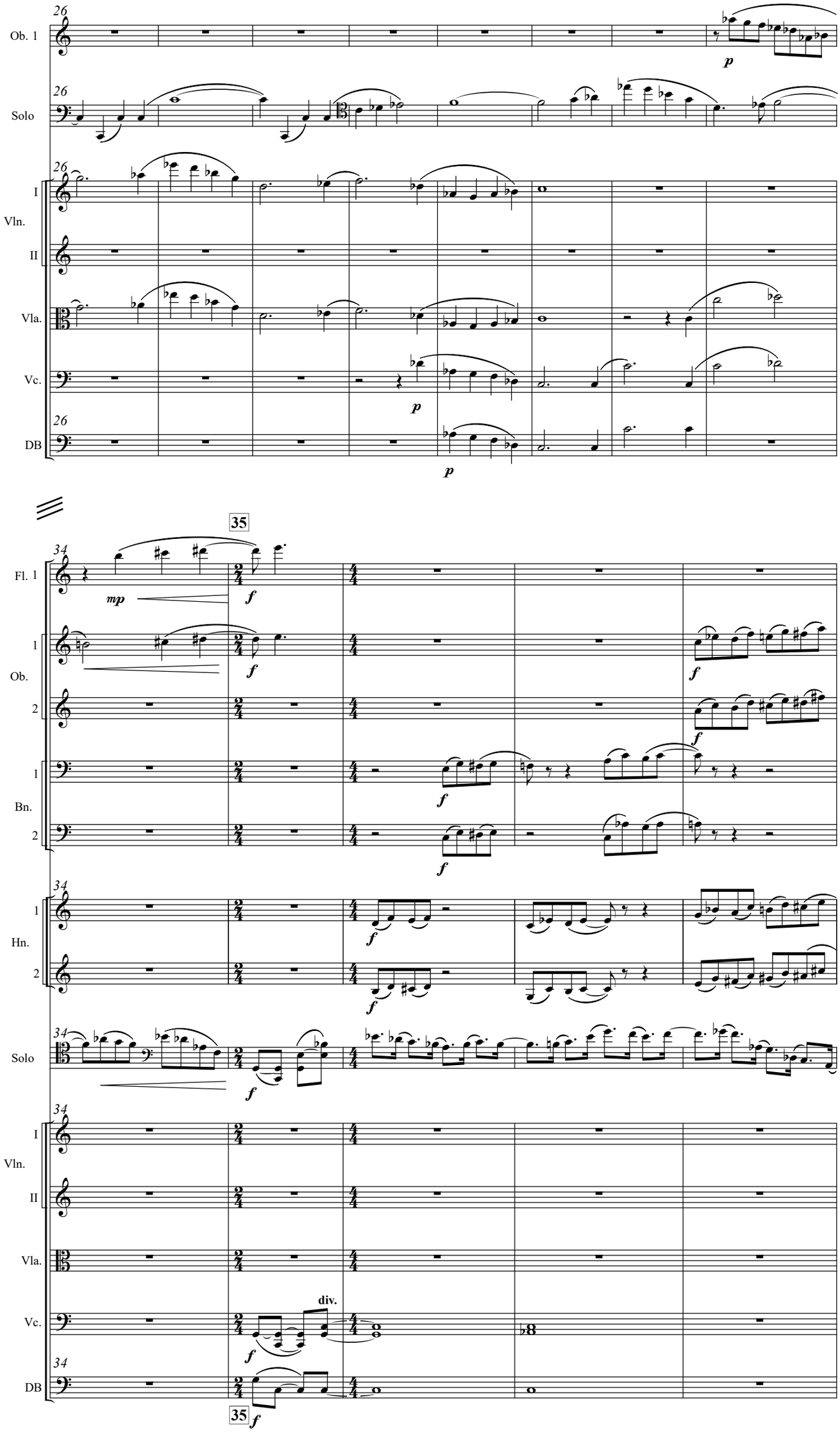

(rit.)
(Fl. 1, 2)
38
2 Fl.
2 Ob.
1
Bn.
2
Hn.
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
pp
p
8va
pizz.
arco
unis.
pizz. div.
(Fl. 1, 2)
(rit.)

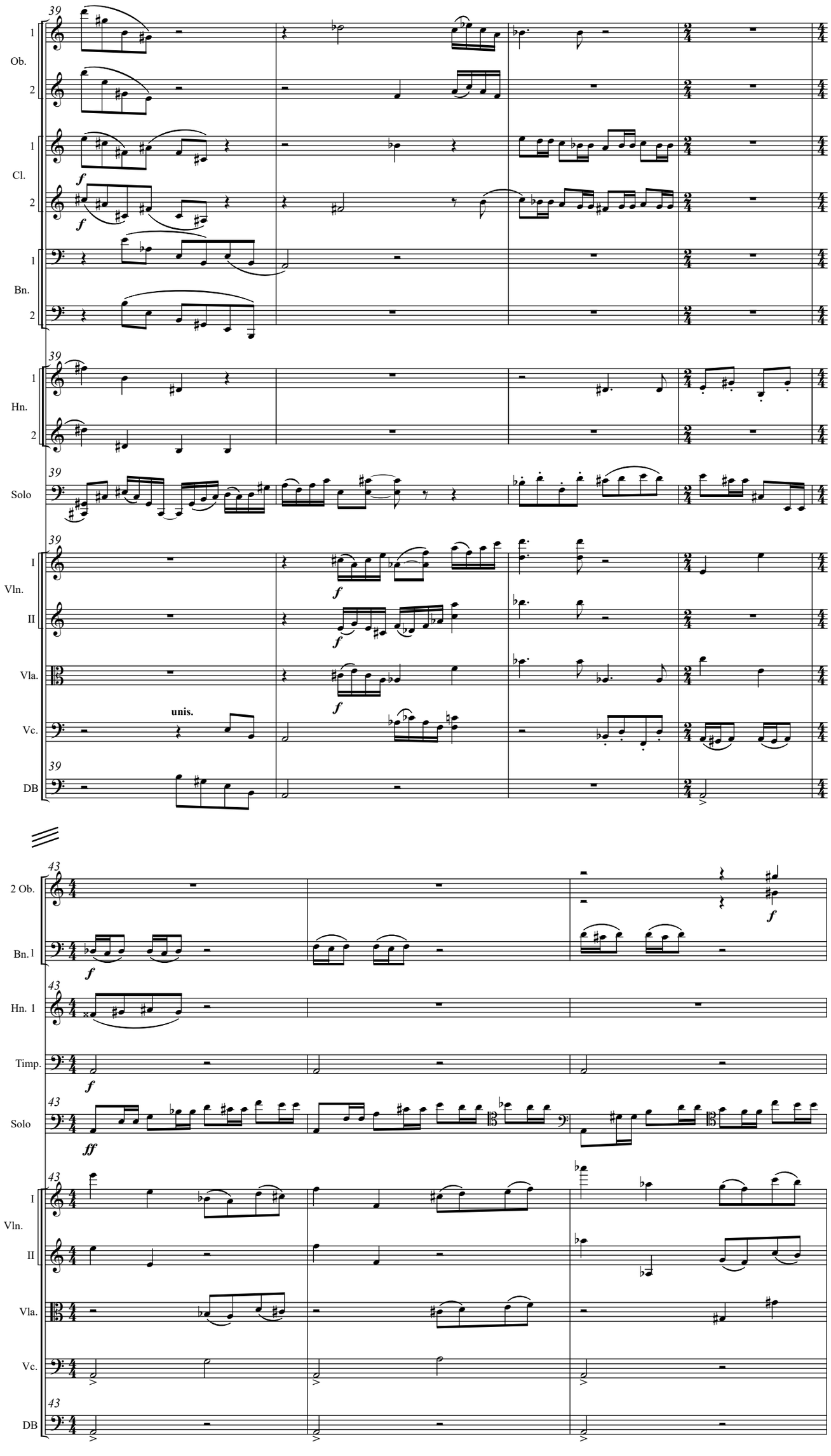

Vivace (♩= 104)
2 Flutes
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in B♭
2 Bassoons
2 Horns in F
2 Trumpets in B♭
Timpani
Harp
Solo Cello
I Violin II
Viola
Cello
Double Bass
Vivace (♩= 104)
2 Ob.
2 Bn.
Hn. 2
Solo
I Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
DB

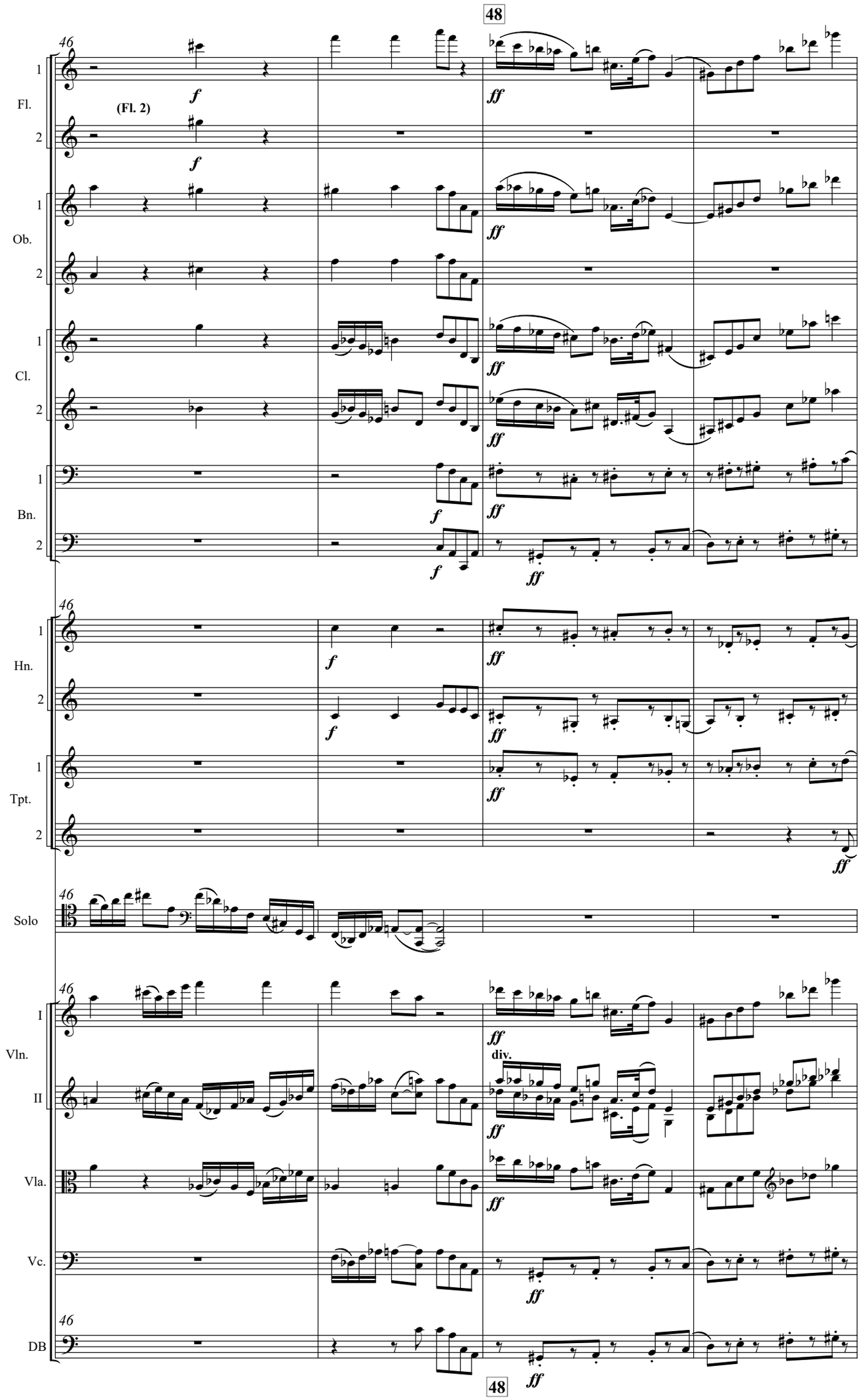

Bn. 1
Hn. 2
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
Ob. 1
Cl. 1
1
Bn.
2
2 Hn.
1
Tpt.
2
Timp.
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB

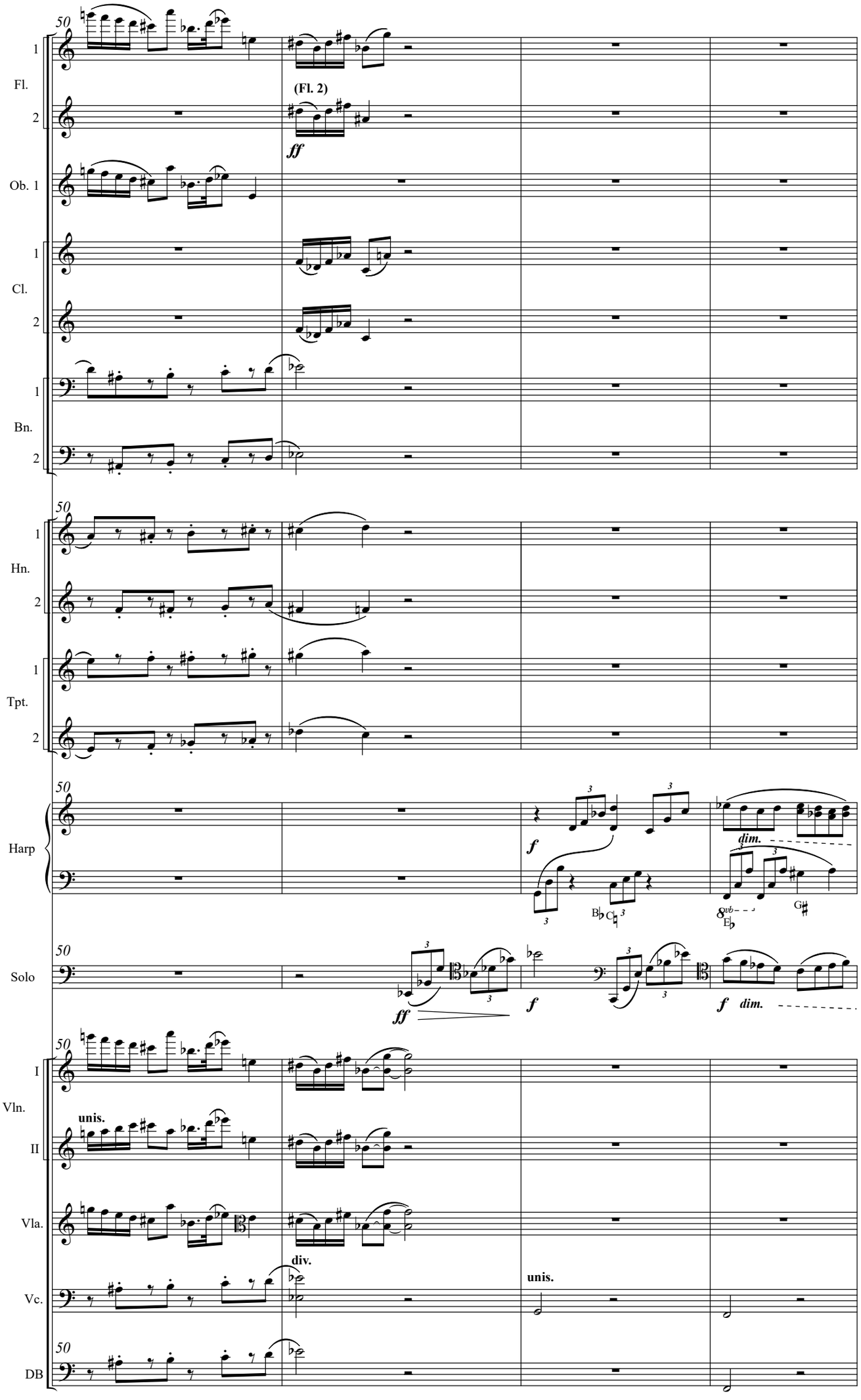

16
Fl. 1
Ob. 1
1
Cl.
2
1
Bn.
2
Hn. 2
16
Harp
16
Solo
16
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
16

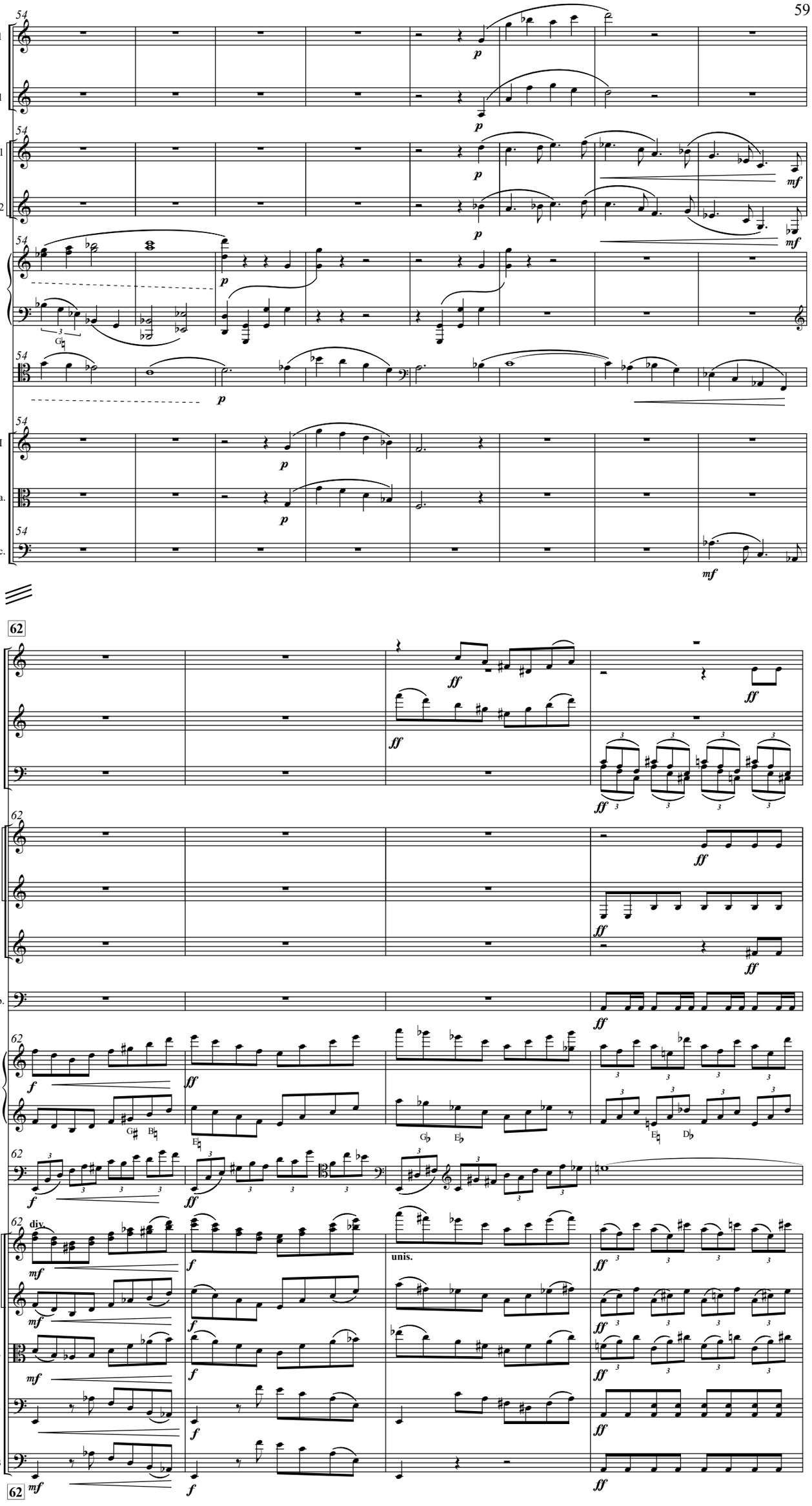

20
25
Fl.
1
2
(Fl. 2)
Ob.
Cl.
Bn.
Hn.
Solo
Vln.
I
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
div.
f
mp
p
dim.

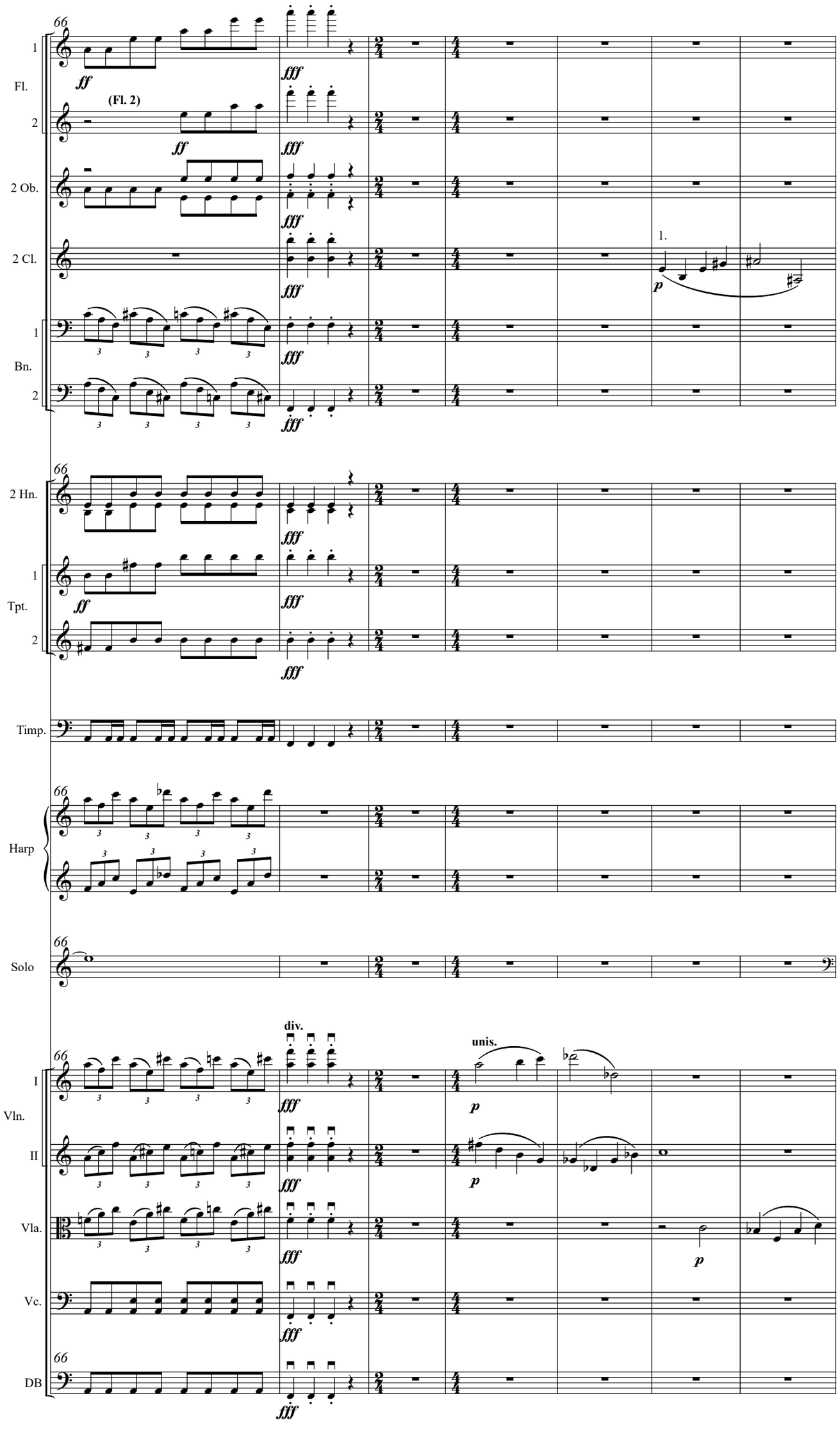

26
Ob. 1
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
p
35
34
Fl. 1
mp
f
1
Ob.
2
Bn.
Hn.
div.

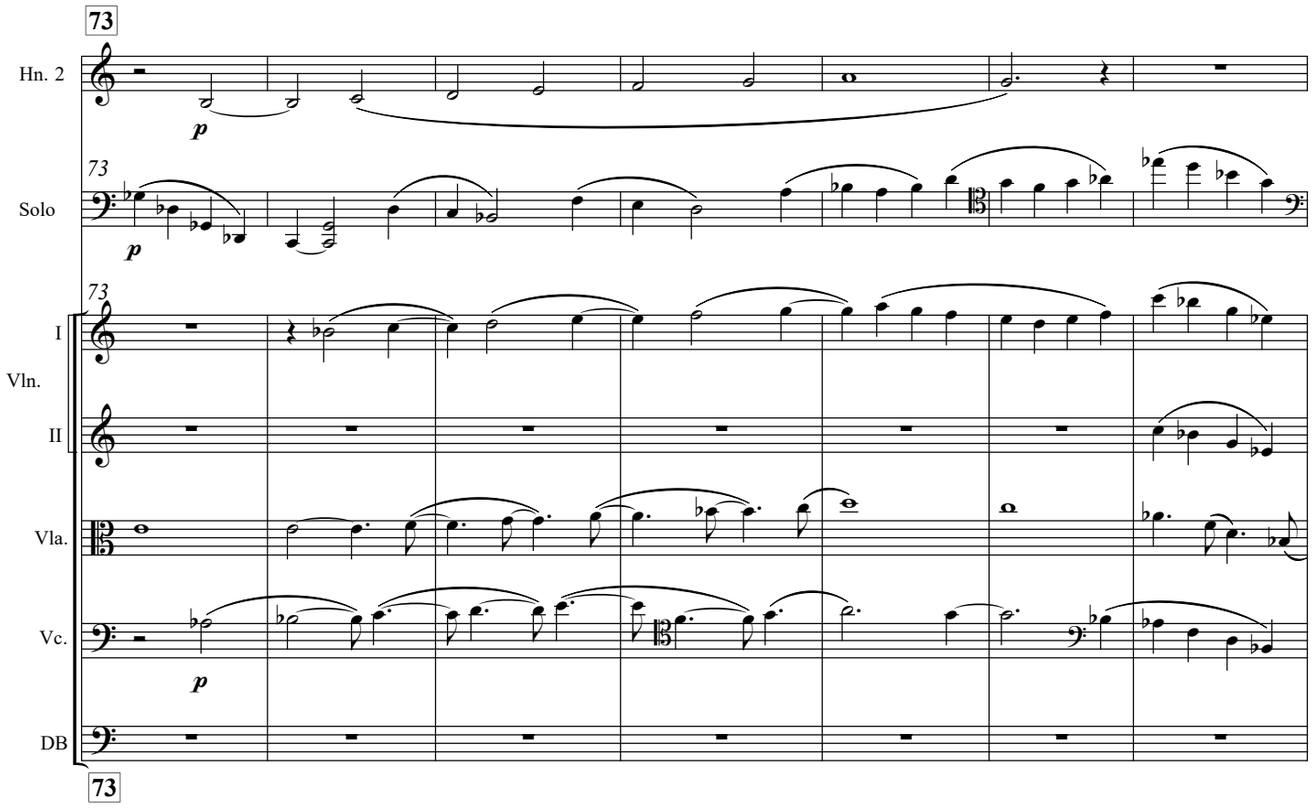

39
1
Ob.
2
1
Cl.
2
f
f
1
Bn.
2
39
1
Hn.
2
39
Solo
39
I
Vln.
II
f
f
Vla.
f
unis.
Vc.
39
DB
43
2 Ob.
f
Bn.1
f
43
Hn. 1
Timp.
f
43
Solo
ff
43
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
43
DB

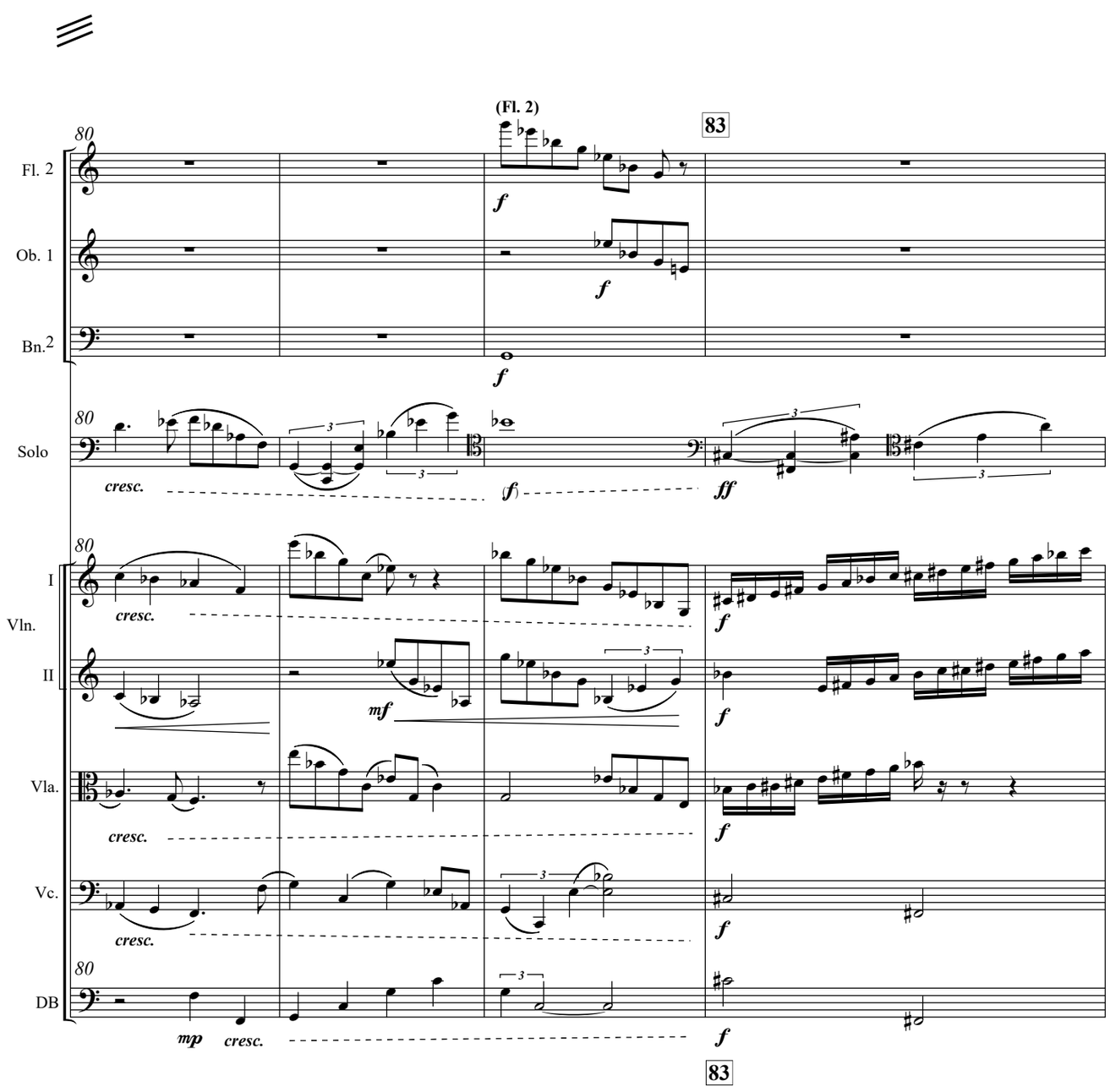

48
46
Fl.
1
2
(Fl. 2)
Ob.
Cl.
Bn.
Hn.
Tpt.
Solo
Vln.
I
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
f
ff
div.

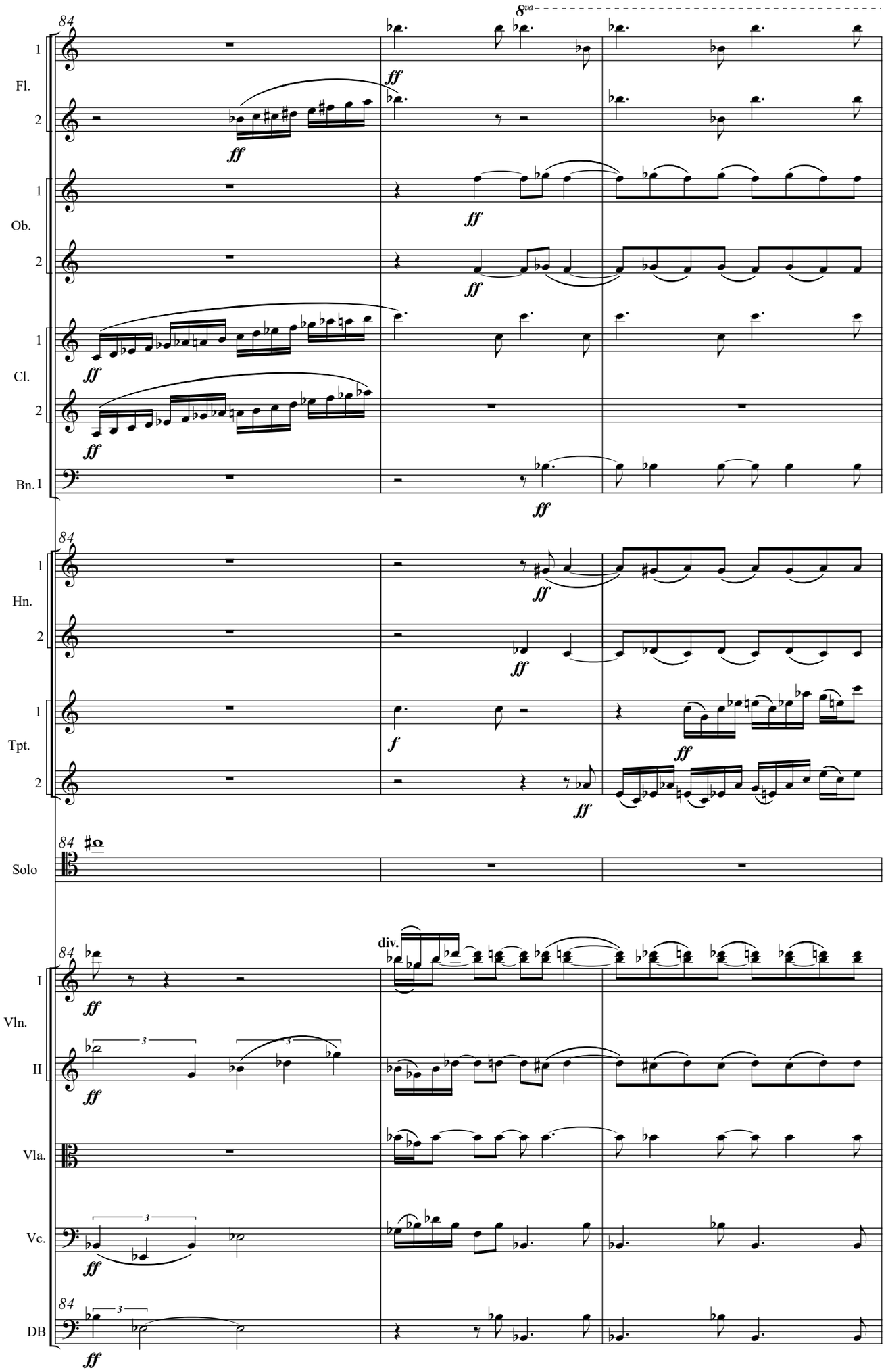

50
1
Fl.
2
(Fl. 2)
ff
Ob. 1
1
Cl.
2
1
Bn.
2
50
1
Hn.
2
1
Tpt.
2
50
Harp
f
dim.
50
Solo
ff
f
f
dim.
50
I
Vln.
II
unis.
Vla.
div.
unis.
Vc.
50
DB

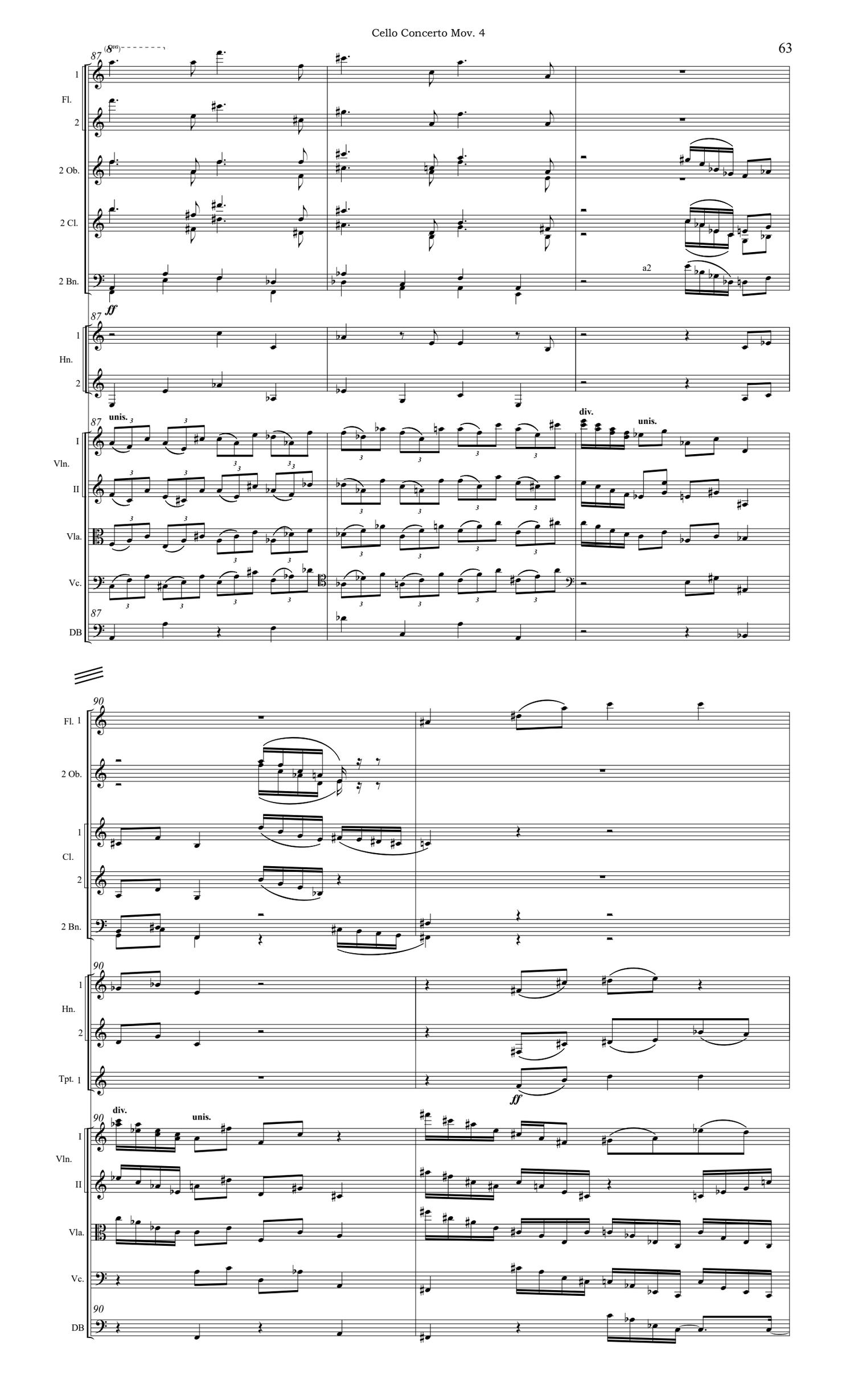

54
Fl. 1
Cl. 1
Hn. 1 2
Harp
Solo
Vln. I
Vla.
Vc.
62
2 Ob.
Cl. 1
2 Bn.
Hn. 1 2
Tpt. 2
Timp.
Harp
Solo
Vln. I II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
div.
unis.

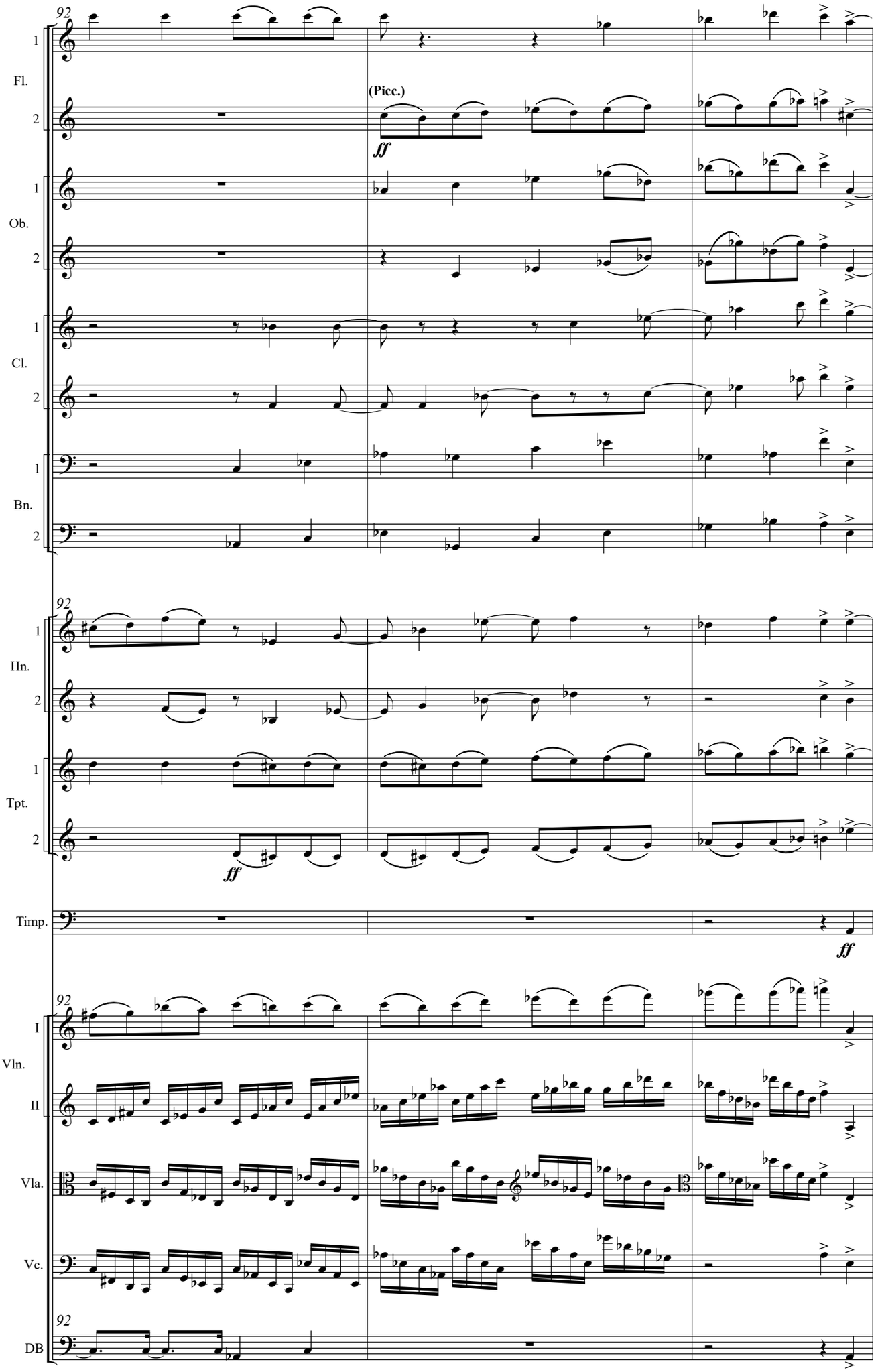

66
1
Fl.
2
(Fl. 2)
2 Ob.
2 Cl.
1.
1
Bn.
2
2 Hn.
1
Tpt.
2
Timp.
Harp
Solo
div.
unis.
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
ff
fff
p

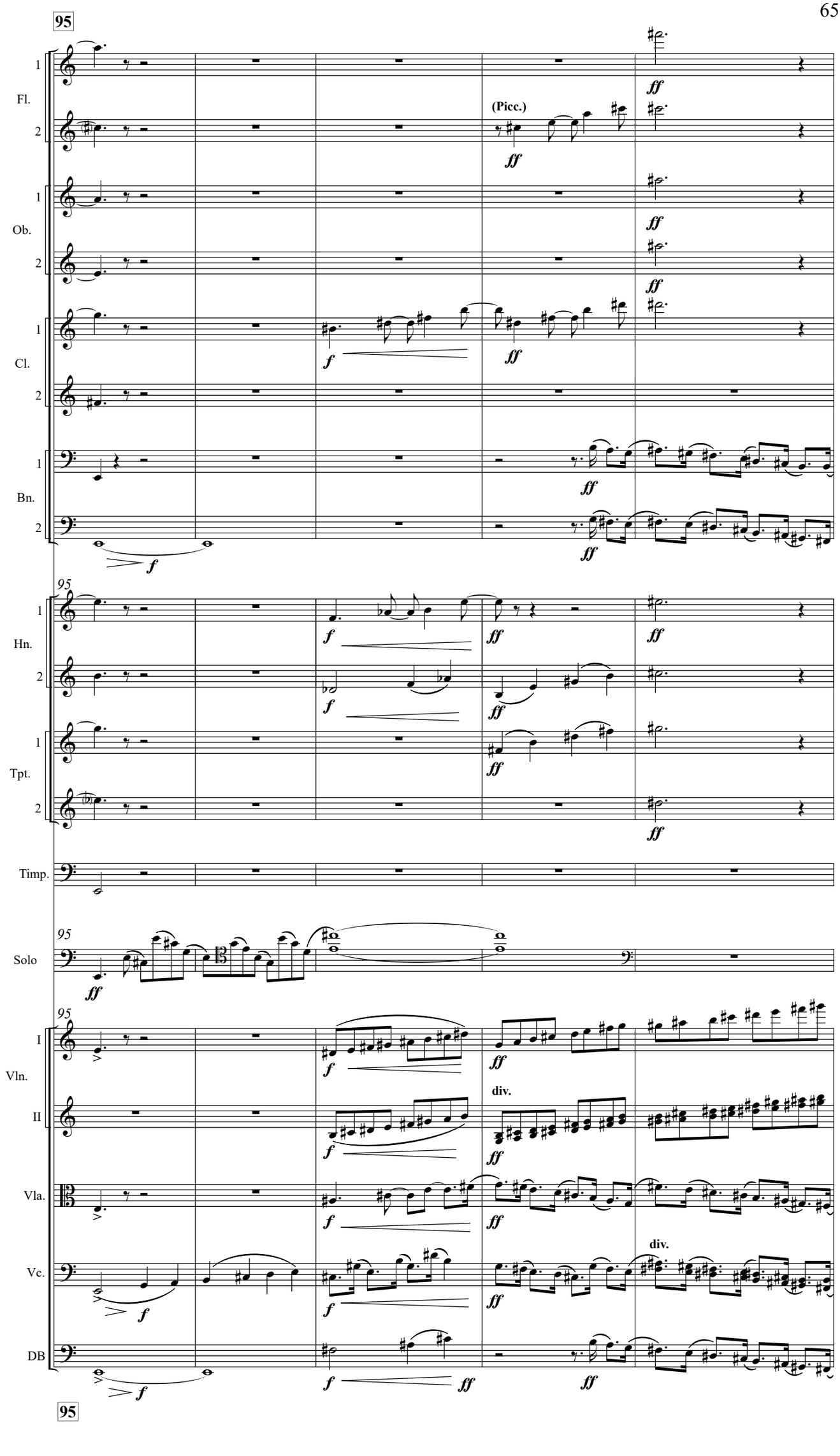

73
Hn. 2
p
73
Solo
p
73
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
p
DB
73

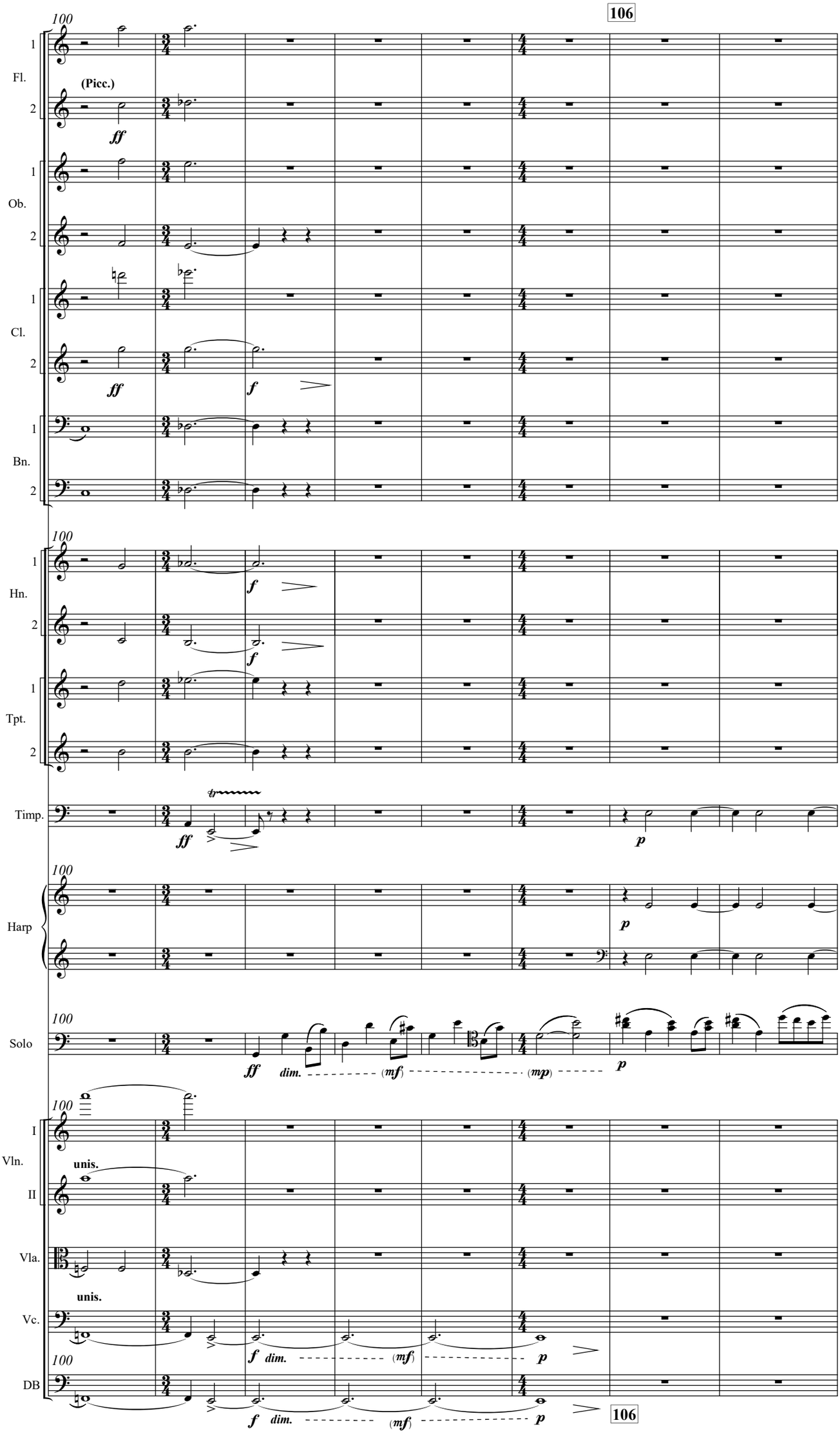

(Fl. 2)
80
83
Fl. 2
f
Ob. 1
f
Bn. 2
f
80
Solo
cresc.
(f)
ff
80
I
Vln.
II
cresc.
mf
f
Vla.
cresc.
f
Vc.
cresc.
f
80
DB
mp
cresc.
f
83

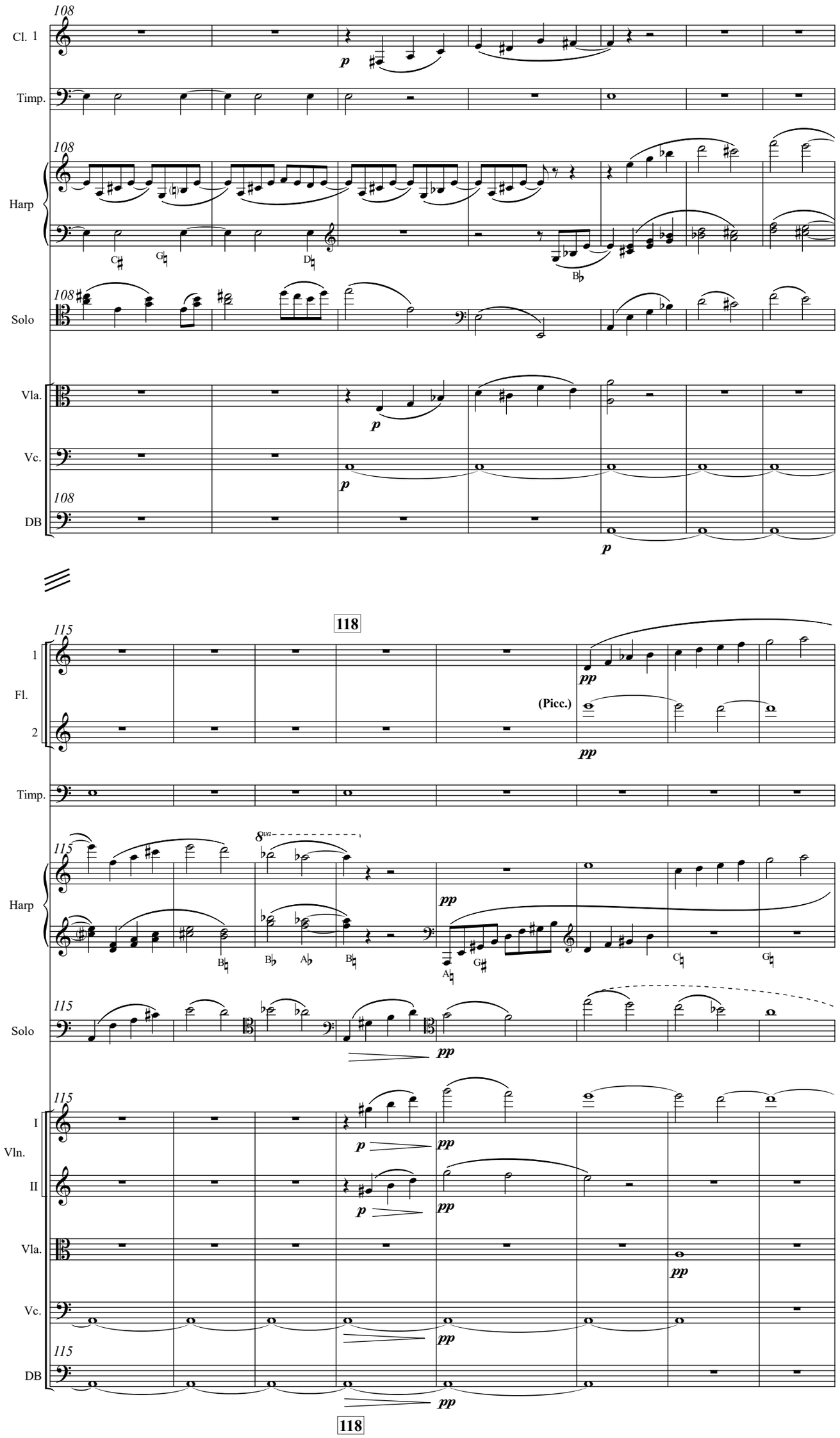

8va
84
1
Fl.
2
1
Ob.
2
1
Cl.
2
Bn. 1
ff
84
1
Hn.
2
1
Tpt.
2
f
84
Solo
84
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
84
DB
div.

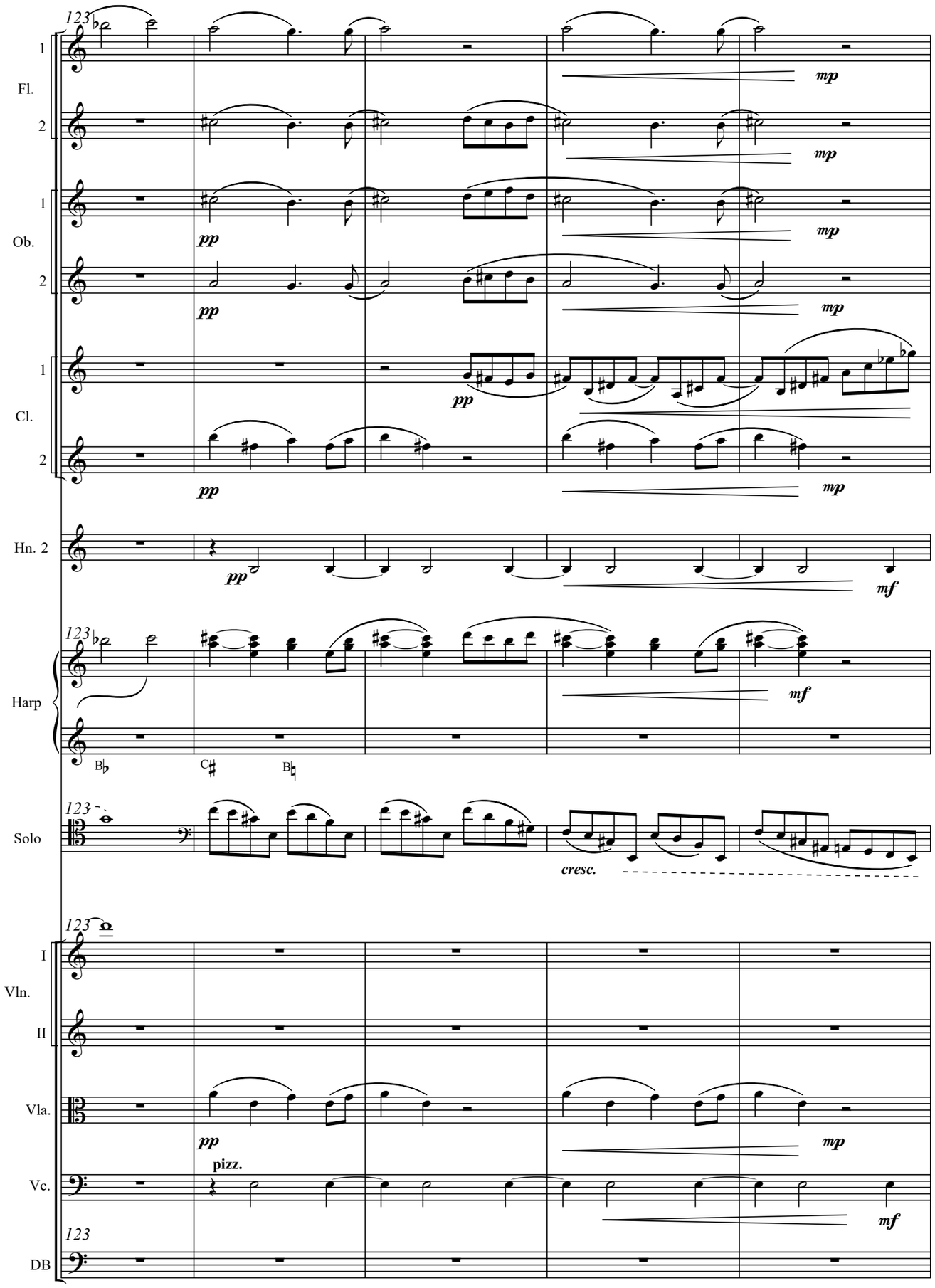

87
(8va)
1
Fl.
2
2 Ob.
2 Cl.
2 Bn.
a2
ff
1
Hn.
2
unis.
div.
unis.
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
90
Fl. 1
2 Ob.
1
Cl.
2
2 Bn.
1
Hn.
2
Tpt. 1
ff
div.
unis.
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB

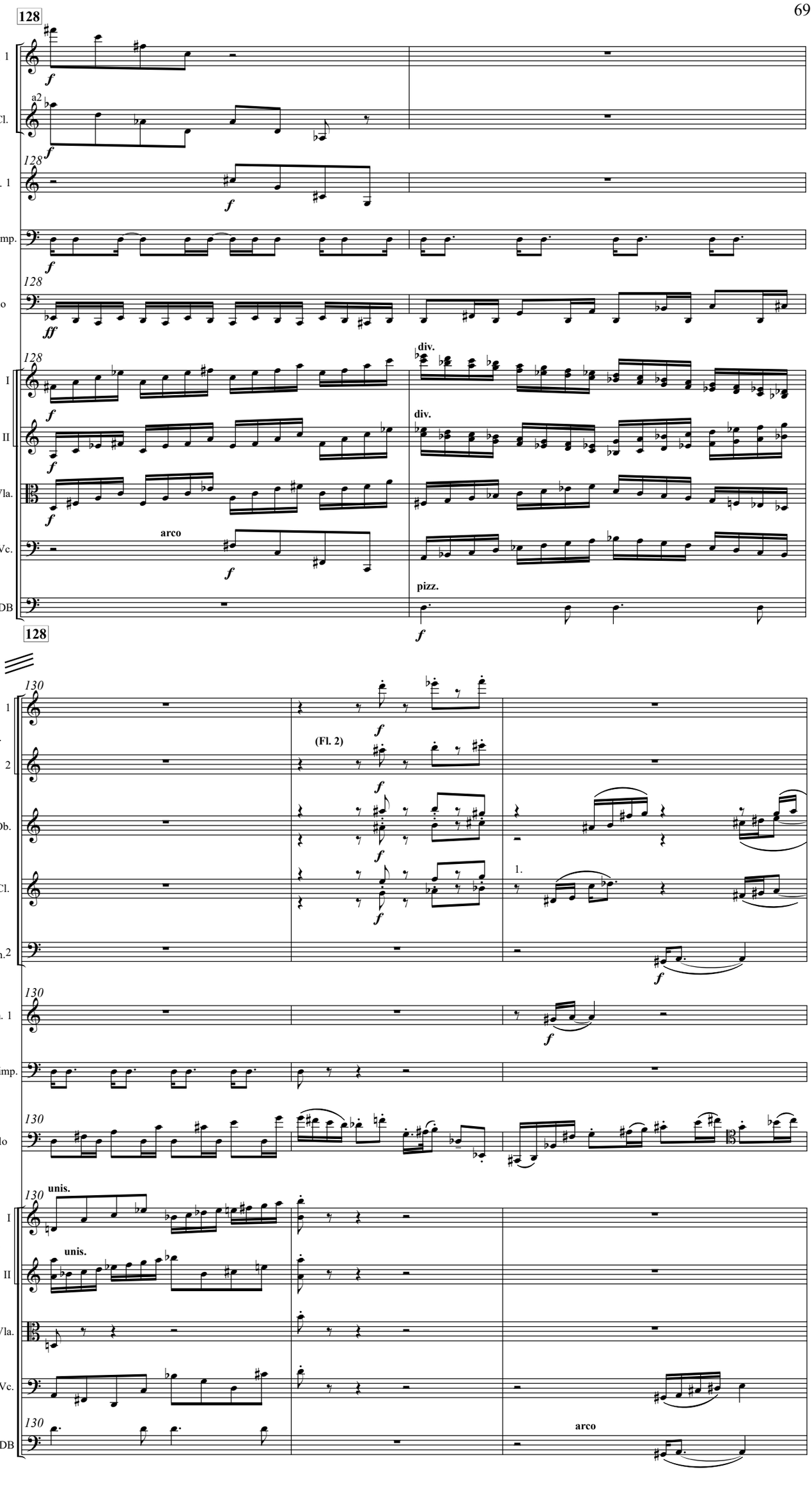

92
1
Fl.
2
(Picc.)
ff
1
Ob.
2
1
Cl.
2
1
Bn.
2
92
1
Hn.
2
1
Tpt.
2
ff
Timp.
ff
92
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
92
DB

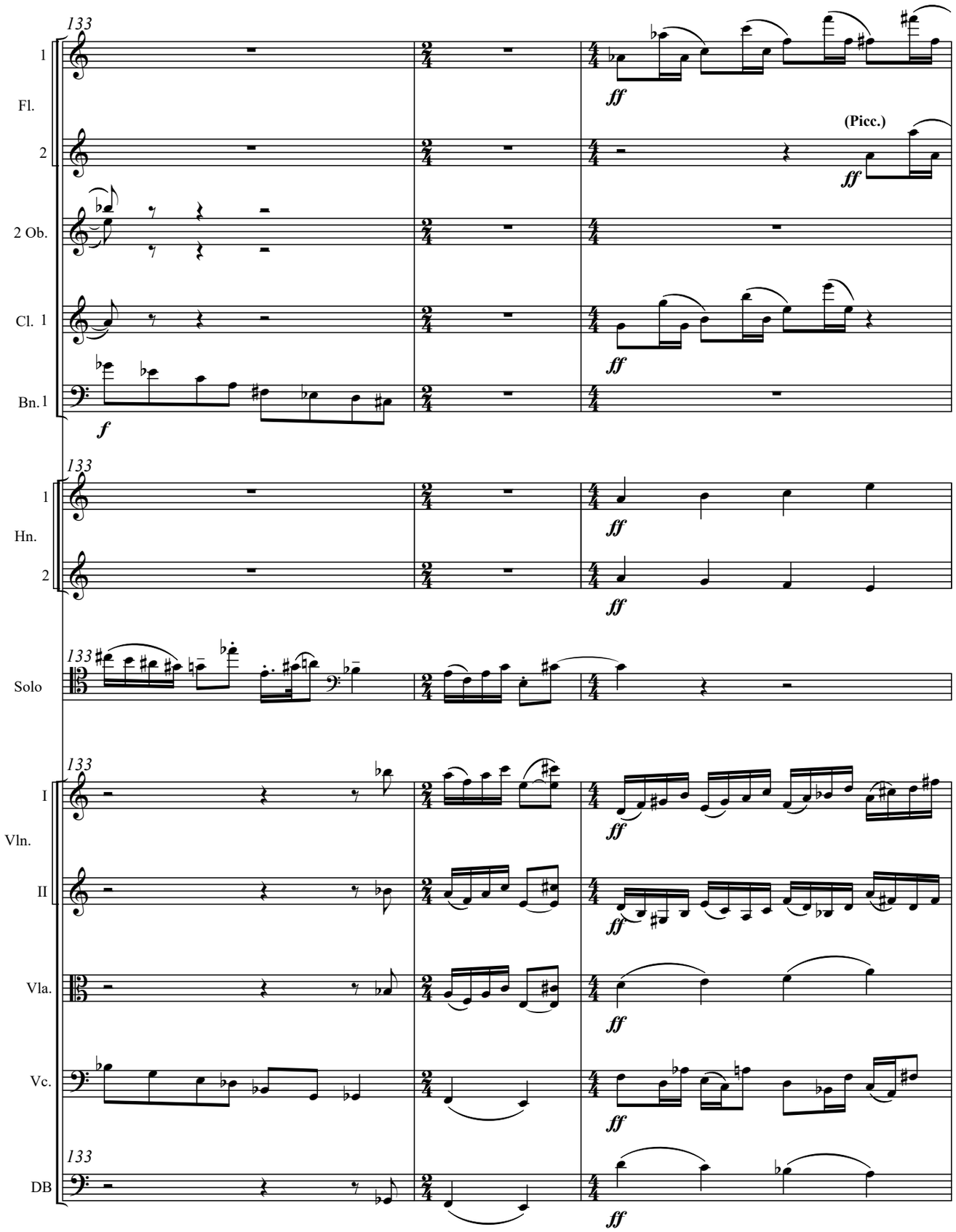

95
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Bn.
Hn.
Tpt.
Timp.
Solo
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
DB
(Picc.)
div.
ff
f

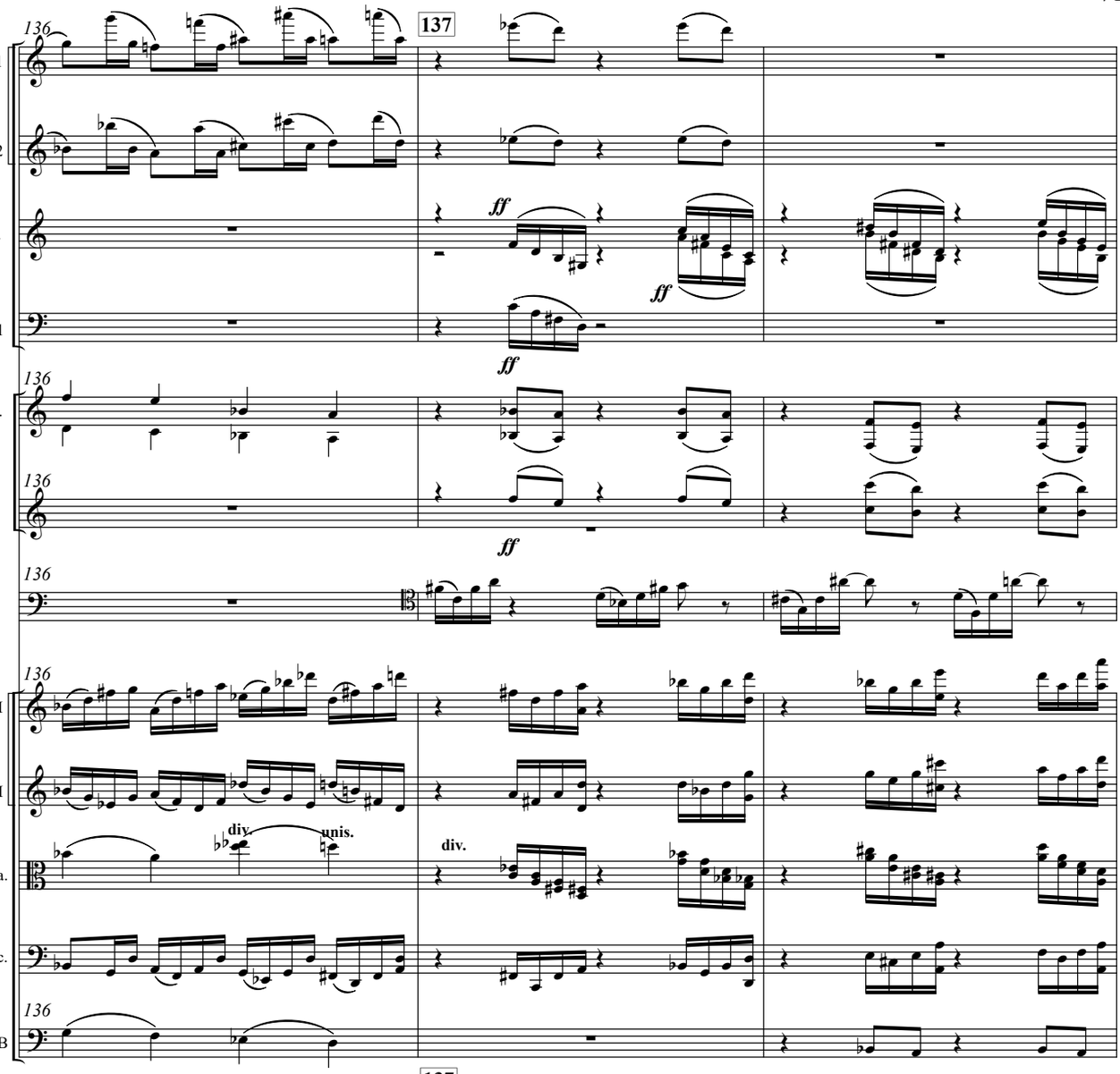

106
100
Fl.
1
2
(Picc.)
ff
Ob.
Cl.
f
Bn.
Hn.
Tpt.
Timp.
tr
p
Harp
Solo
dim.
(mf)
(mp)
Vln.
I
II
unis.
Vla.
Vc.
DB
106

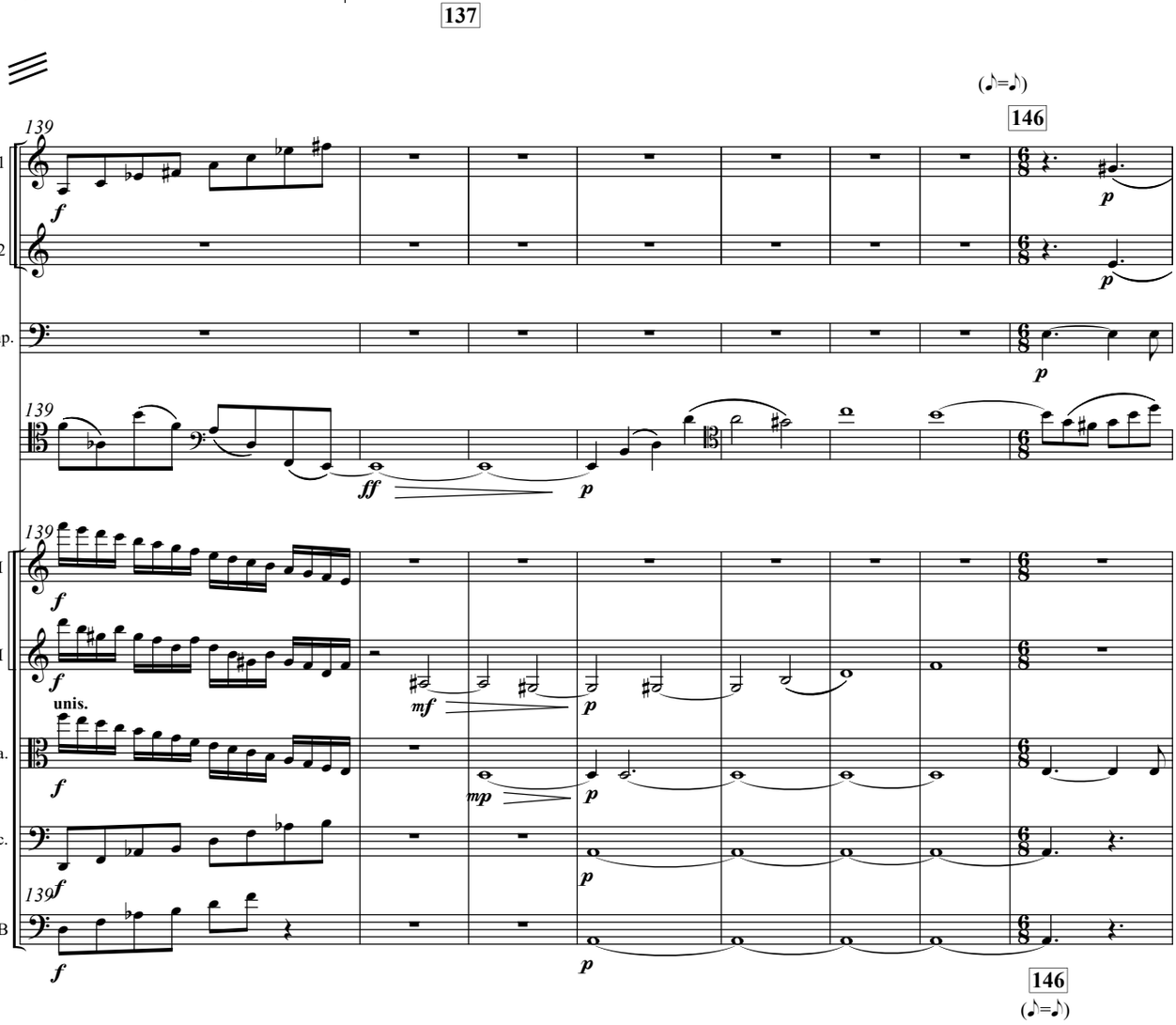

108
Cl. 1
Timp.
Harp
Solo
Vla.
Vc.
DB
p
118
115
1
Fl.
2
(Picc.)
pp
8va
I
Vln.
II

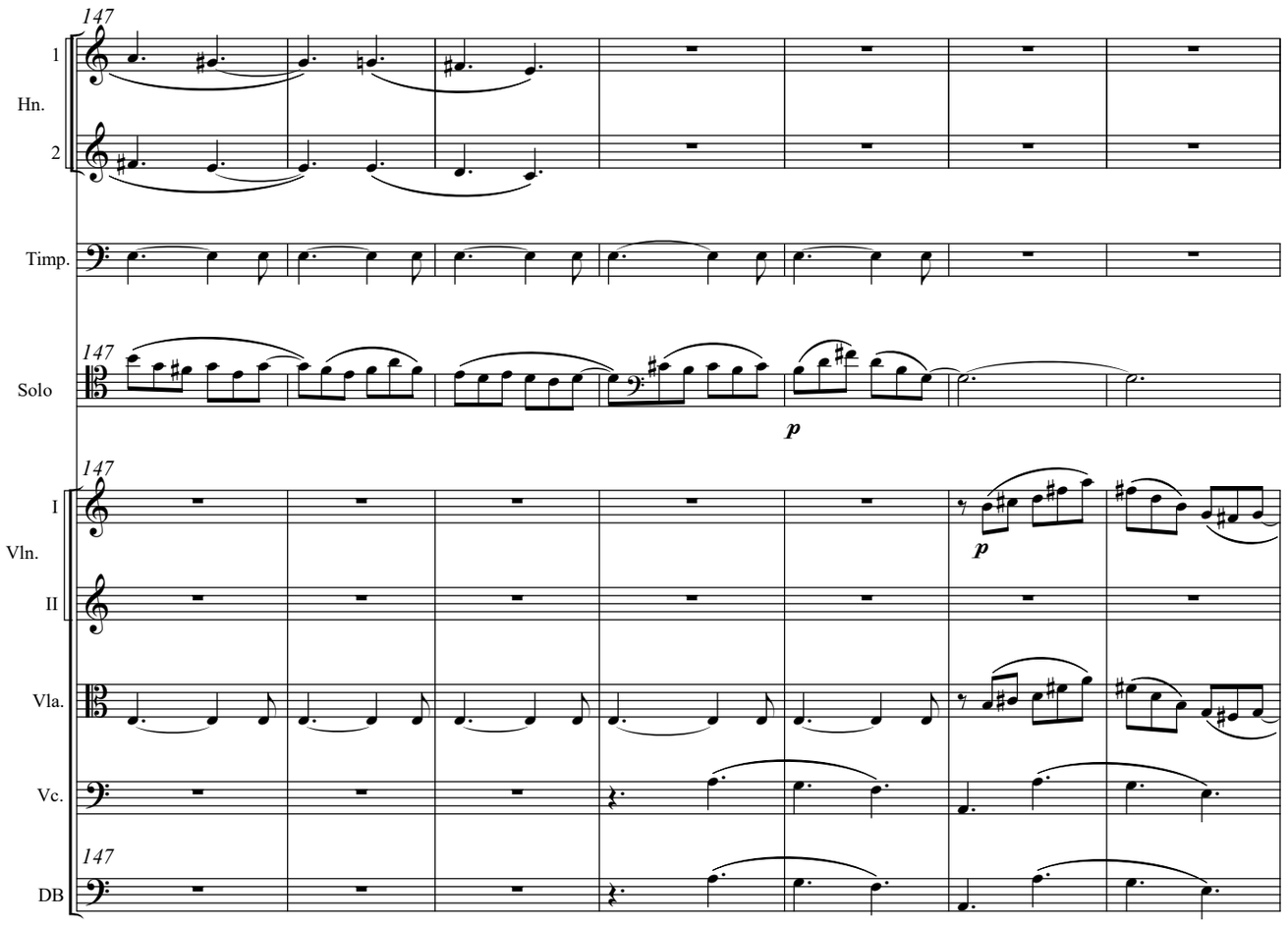

123
Fl.
1
2
Ob.
1
2
Cl.
1
2
Hn. 2
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
pp
mp
mf
pizz.
cresc.

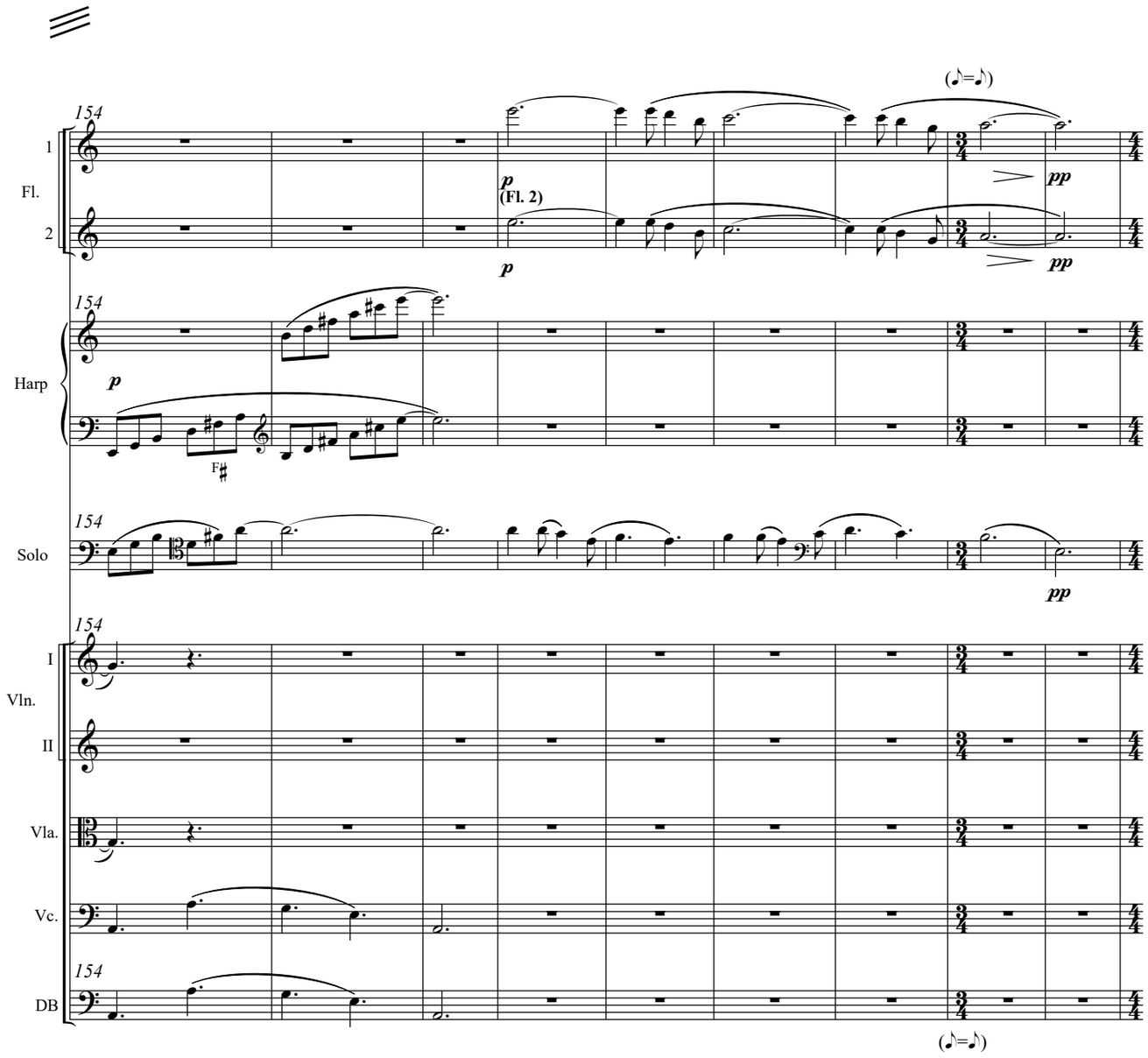

128
Fl. 1
2 Cl.
a2
Hn. 1
Timp.
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
div.
arco
pizz.
130
1
Fl.
2
(Fl. 2)
2 Ob.
2 Cl.
1.
Bn.2
Hn. 1
Timp.
Solo
unis.
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
arco

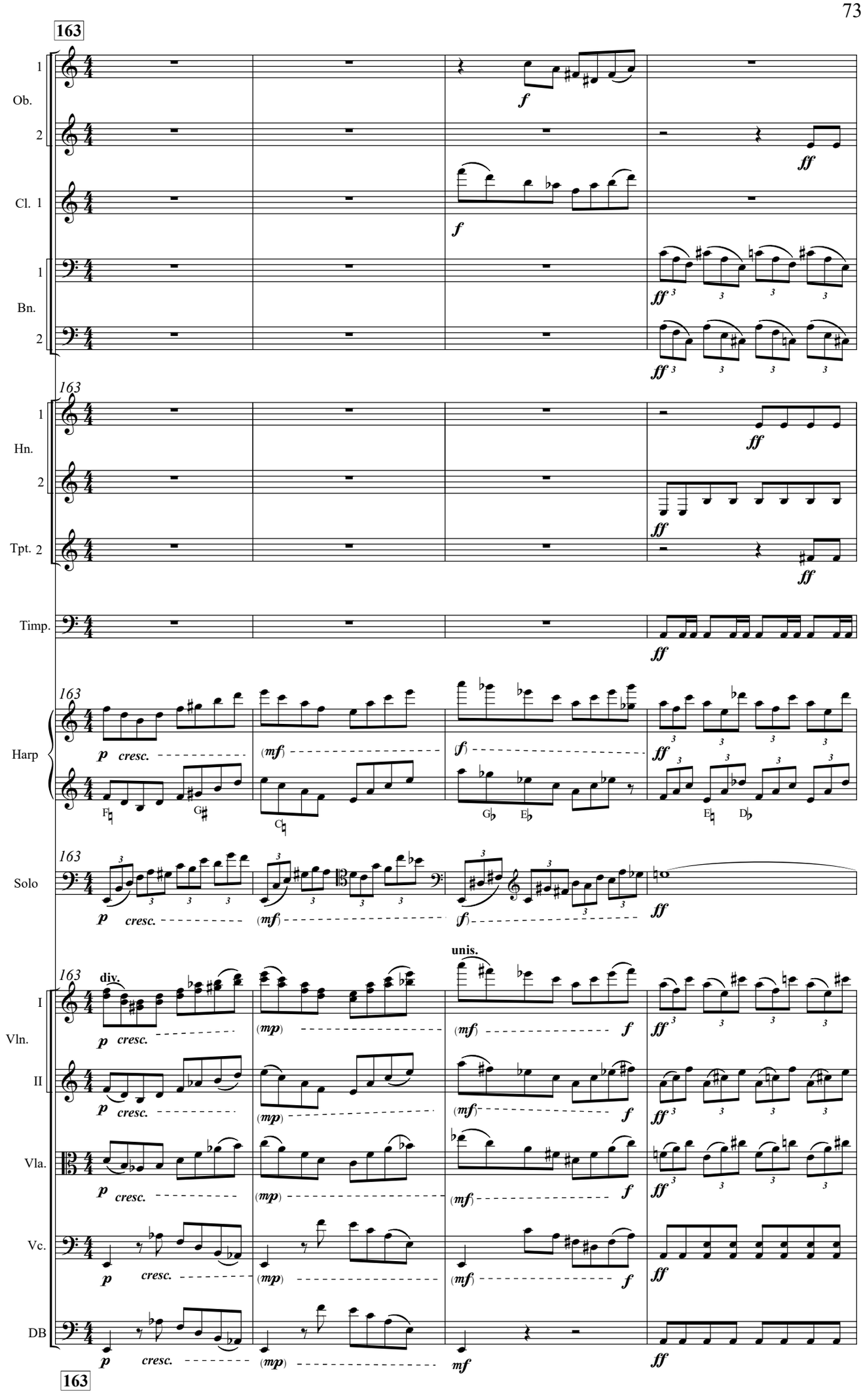

133
1
Fl.
2
2 Ob.
Cl. 1
Bn. 1
(Picc.)
ff
f
133
1
Hn.
2
ff
133
Solo
133
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
ff

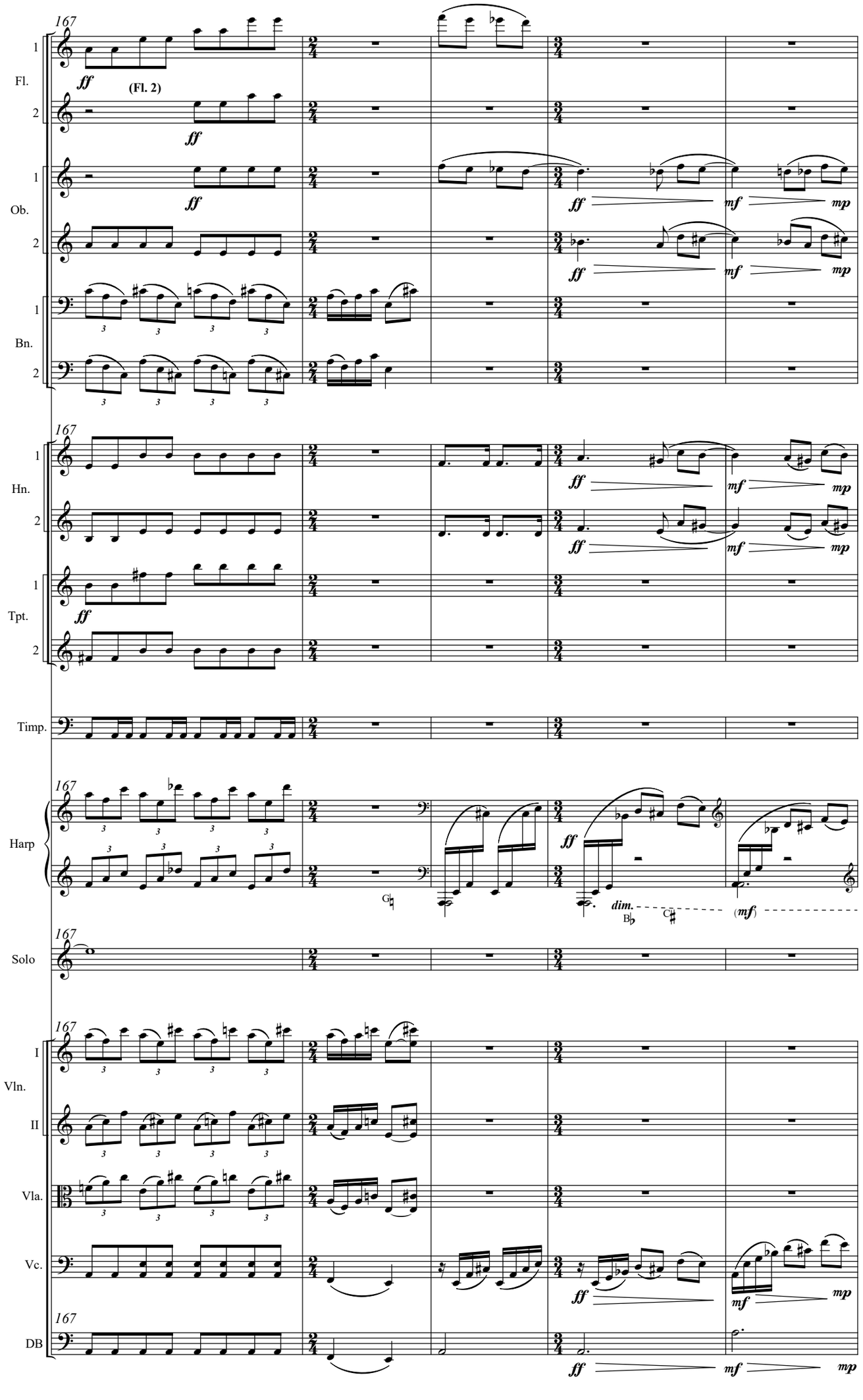

136
137
1
Fl.
2
2 Cl.
Bn. 1
ff
2 Hn.
2 Tpt.
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
div.
unis.

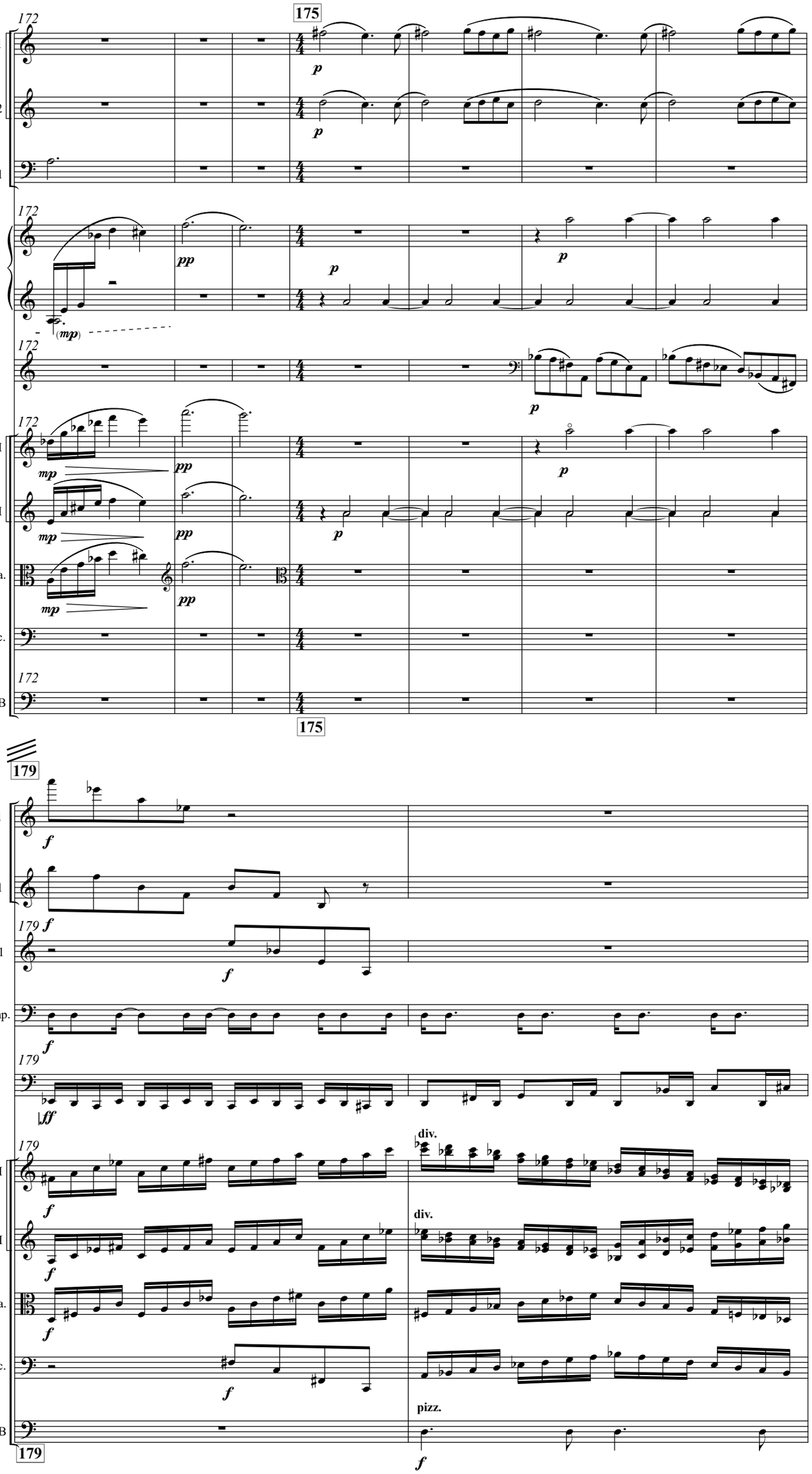

137
(♪=♪)
146
139
1
Hn.
2
Timp.
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
f
ff
p
mf
mp
unis.
146
(♪=♪)

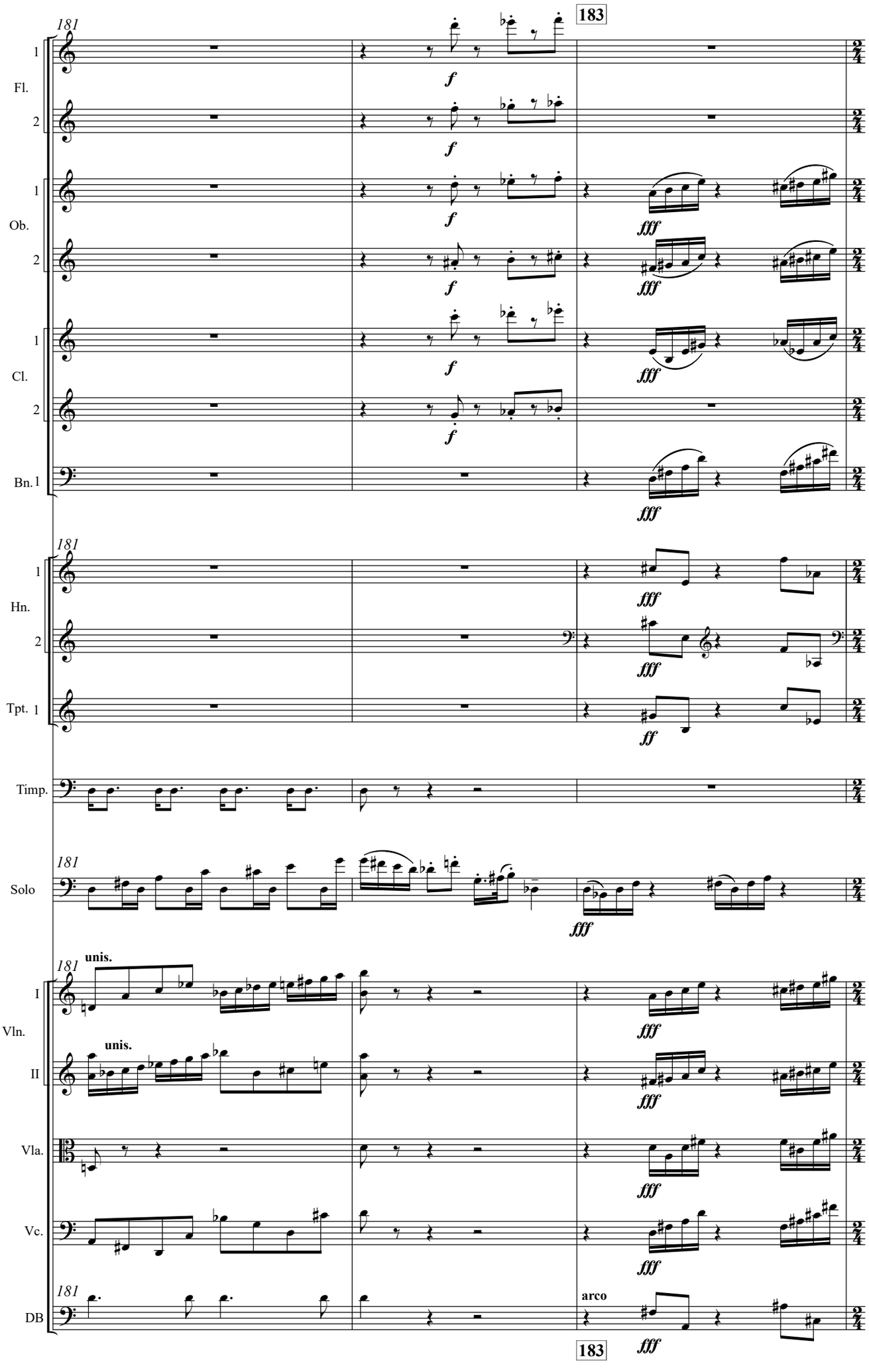

147
1
Hn.
2
Timp.
147
Solo
p
147
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
147
DB
p

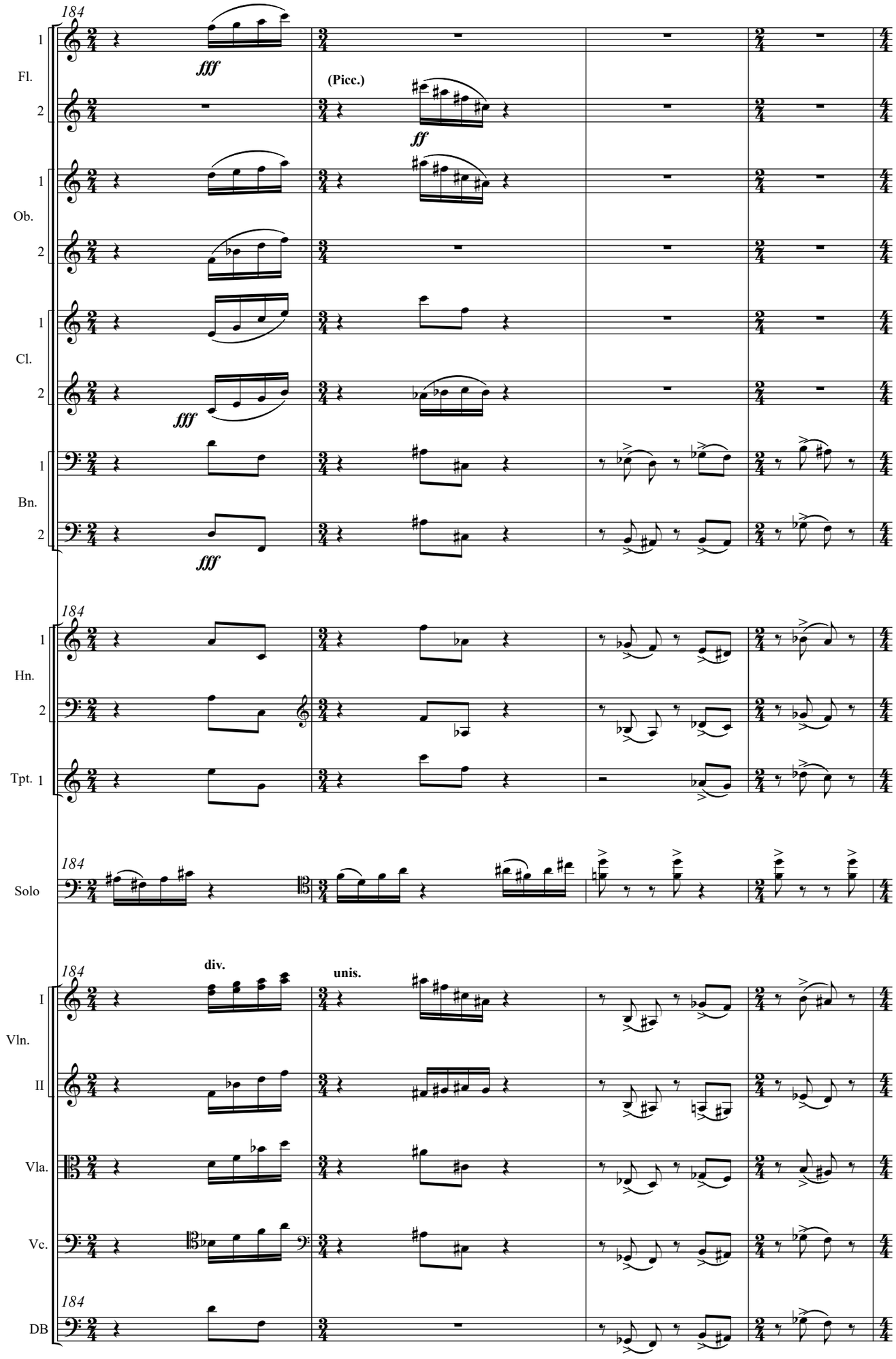

(♪=♪)
154
1
Fl.
2
p
(Fl. 2)
p
pp
pp
154
Harp
p
F♯
154
Solo
pp
154
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
154
DB
(♪=♪)

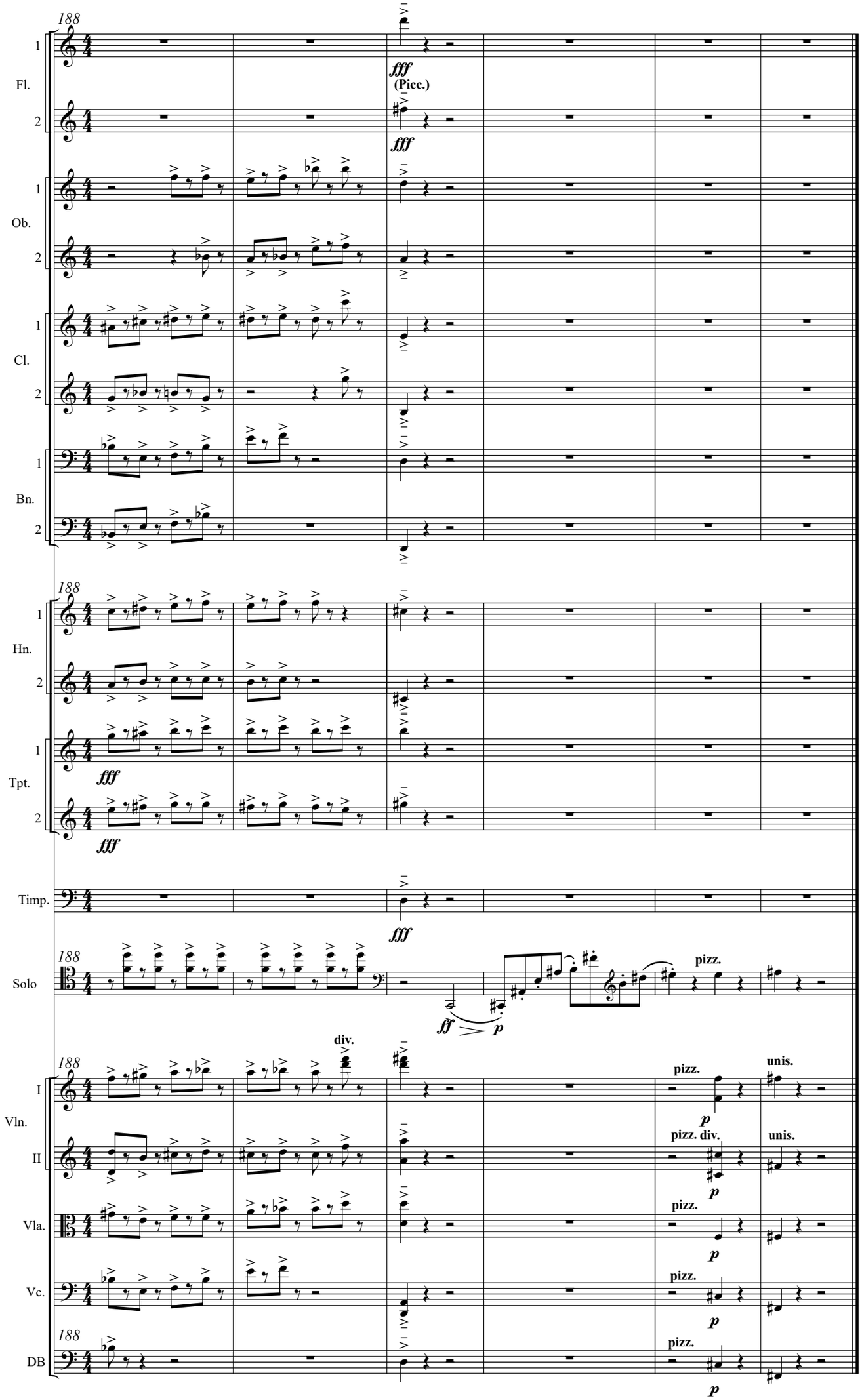

163
Ob.
Cl. 1
Bn.
Hn.
Tpt. 2
Timp.
Harp
Solo
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
div.
unis.
cresc.


167
Fl.
Ob.
Bn.
Hn.
Tpt.
Timp.
Harp
Solo
Vln.
I
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
(Fl. 2)
ff
mf
mp
dim.
(mf)


172
175
1
Ob.
2
Bn.1
Harp
Solo
I
Vln.
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
p
pp
mp
(mp)
179
Fl. 1
Cl. 1
Hn. 1
Timp.
f
ff
div.
pizz.


181
183
Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Bn.
Hn.
Tpt.
Timp.
Solo
Vln.
I
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
unis.
arco
f
fff
ff


184
Fl.
1
2
fff
(Picc.)
ff
Ob.
Cl.
Bn.
Hn.
Tpt. 1
Solo
div.
unis.
I
II
Vln.
Vla.
Vc.
DB


188
Fl.
1
2
fff
(Picc.)
Ob.
Cl.
Bn.
Hn.
Tpt.
Timp.
Solo
ff
p
pizz.
div.
unis.
Vln.
I
II
Vla.
Vc.
DB
pizz. div.