Robert Piéchaud

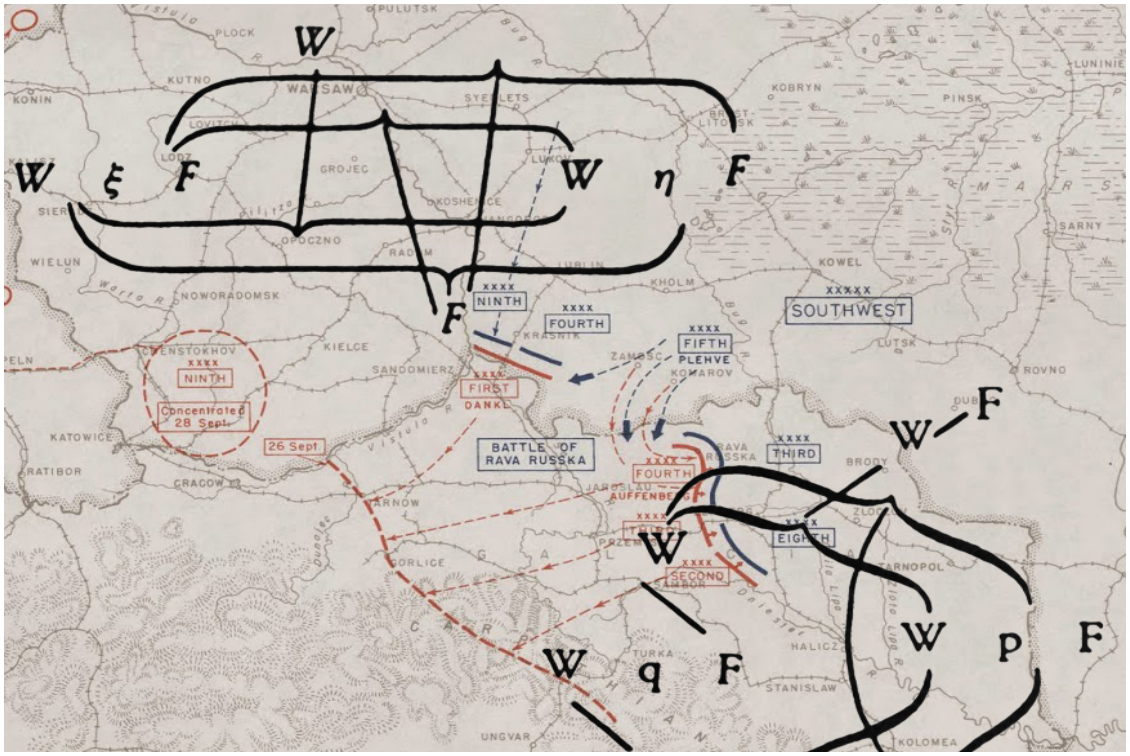
# *Wittgenstein-Lieder*

Monodrama set to texts by
Ludwig Wittgenstein and
a poem by Georg Trakl

## for voice and ensemble

(2016)

*Concert pitch score*
*German song text with English recitative (2017)*



# Instrumentation

Voice : mezzo-soprano or baritone
Flute in C / piccolo
Oboe / English horn
B♭ clarinet / bass clarinet (with low C)
Cello
Percussion :
- snare drum ("S.D.")
- high tom (side drum, "D."), a little deeper than S.D.
- bass drum ("B.D.", set horizontally )
- large tamtam ("Tam")
- suspended cymbal ("Cym.")
- charleston ("Ch.")
- triangle ("Tr.")
- xylophone (to low F, "Xyl.")
- crotales, with 2 octaves C-C, or bowable glockenspiel ("Cr.")
- 2 woodblocks ("W.")
- 2 car springs differently tuned ("Spr.")
- 2 compressors (or air spray) differently tuned ("Compr.")
- a couple of pebbles
- several jingle bells

Concert pitch score (piccolo and xylophone sound one octave higher, the crotales two octaves).

Duration: ~ 25'

Commissioned by Festival d'Automne à Paris 2016.

Dedicated to ensemble L'Instant Donné.

*In memoriam Frédérick Martin (1958-2016)*

1) Excerpts from *Tracatus Logico-Philosophicus* (*Logish-philosophische Abhandlung*), with permission of Wiley & Sons Limited.
2) Excerpts from *Carnets Secrets* 1914-1916, translated by Jean-Pierre Cometti, 2010, with permission of Éditions Chemin de ronde (adaptation and libretto by the composer, English version by Jill A. McCoy)

I - Prologue (The Boat). . . . . 4
*Wovon man nicht sprechen kann* . . . . . 13

II - Night (The Projector). . . . . 18
*Wenn man unter Ewigkeit* . . . . . 27

III - Struggling . . . . . 32

IV - Cold . . . . . 43
*Daß die Sonne morgen aufgehen wird* . . . . . 50

V - Epilogue . . . . . 53
*Klage* (Trakl's lied) . . . . . 54

*Fall 1914. The Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, who enrolled in the army at the very beginning of World War I, is assigned on the Russian front to a projector on the deck of the Goplana, a patrol boat missioned to control the Vistula's dangerous banks. But at the same time, secretly and inside, another fight is taking place with the writing of the* Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, one of the most abstract works of modern philosophy. As his ship is heading towards Krakow, Ludwig has the opportunity to meet the poet Georg Trakl, also a volunteer who is convalescing at a military hospital after the terrible battle of Grodek. Yet by turn of fate, Wittgenstein arrives too late…*

*More than a song cycle, the* Wittgenstein-Lieder *form a concise monodrama whose storyline develops around this missed encounter, using English for the recitavite and German for the songs, For the libretto, I combined texts from the* Tractatus *as well as excerpts from Wittgenstein's* Geheime Tagebücher *(secret diary), a journal written on the front. The result is an arresting mix of philosophy, poetry, and also war promiscuity, the grotesque, despondency and exaltation. Finally, poetry being for Wittgenstein the ultimate form of expression, the cycle concludes with* Klage *("Lament"), most likely Trakl's very last poem.*

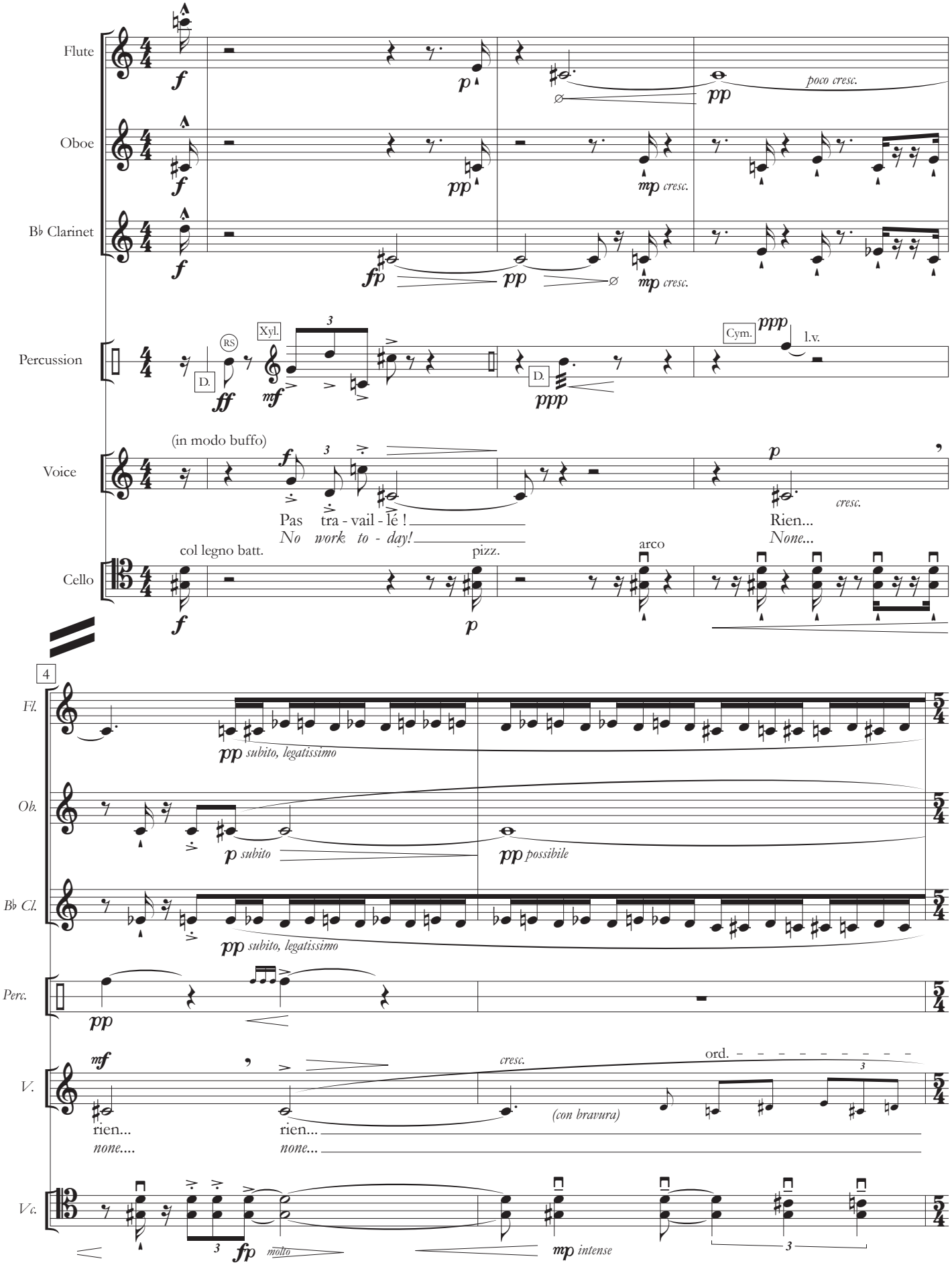
*R.P.*

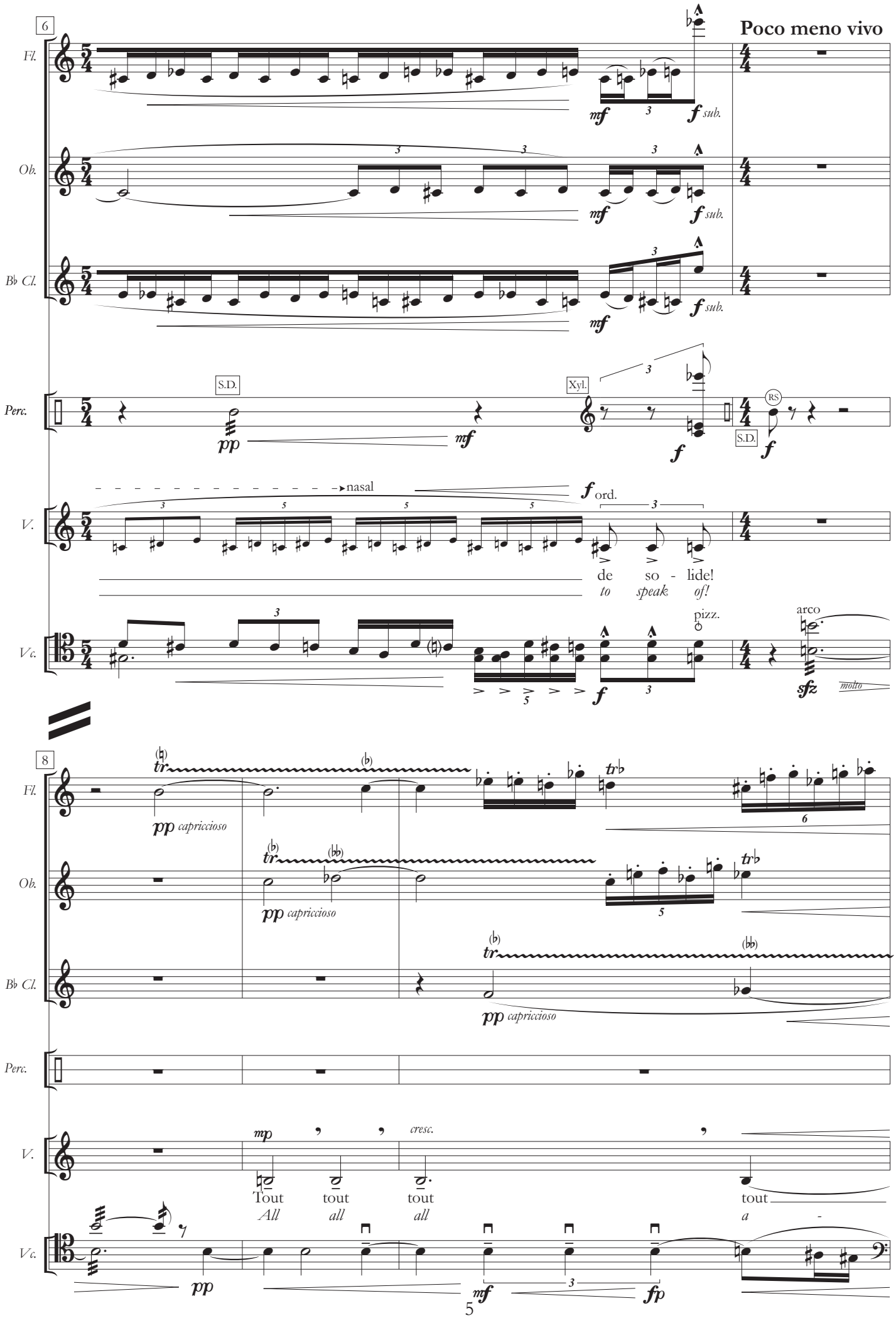
Concert pitch score

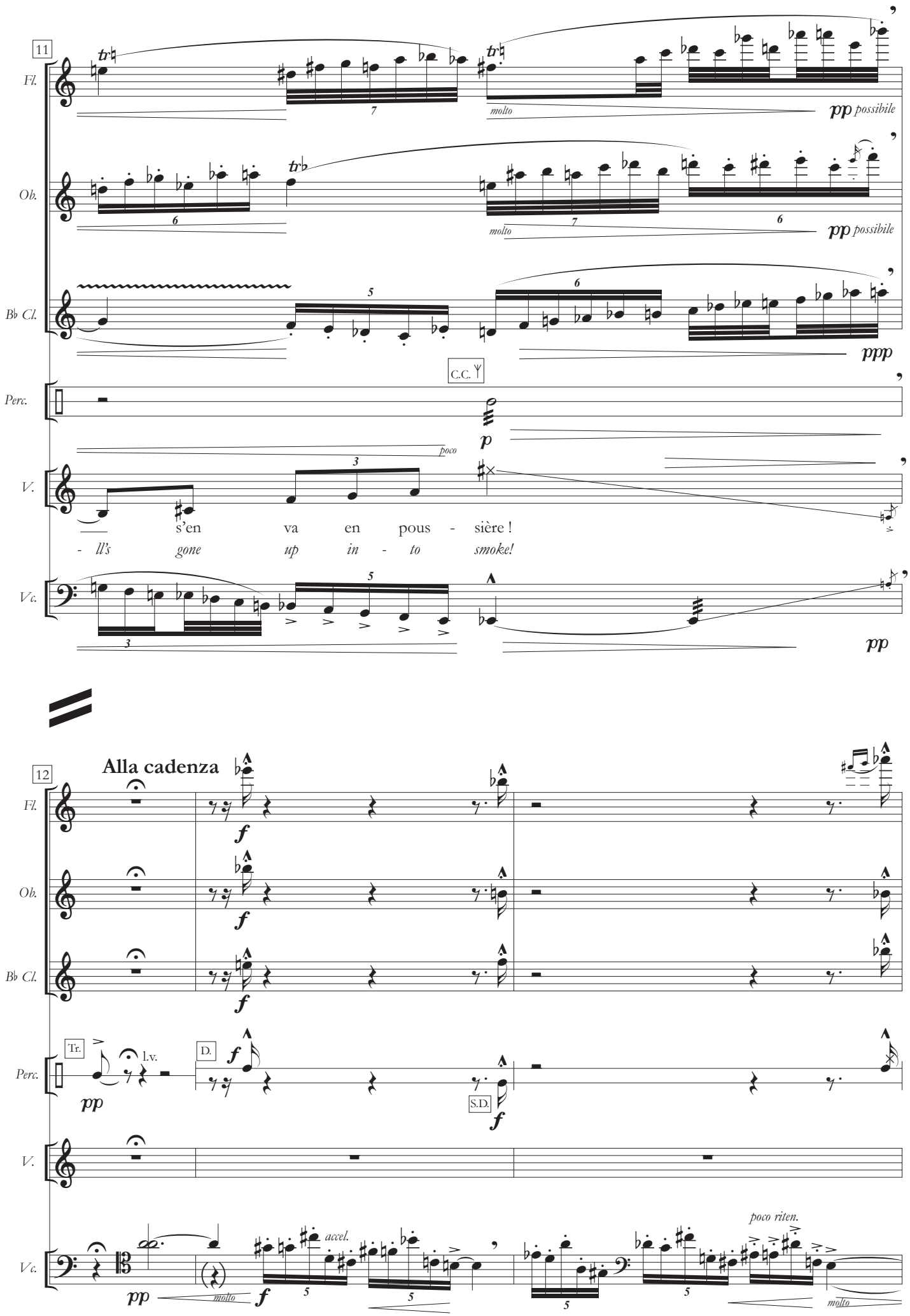
# Wittgenstein-Lieder

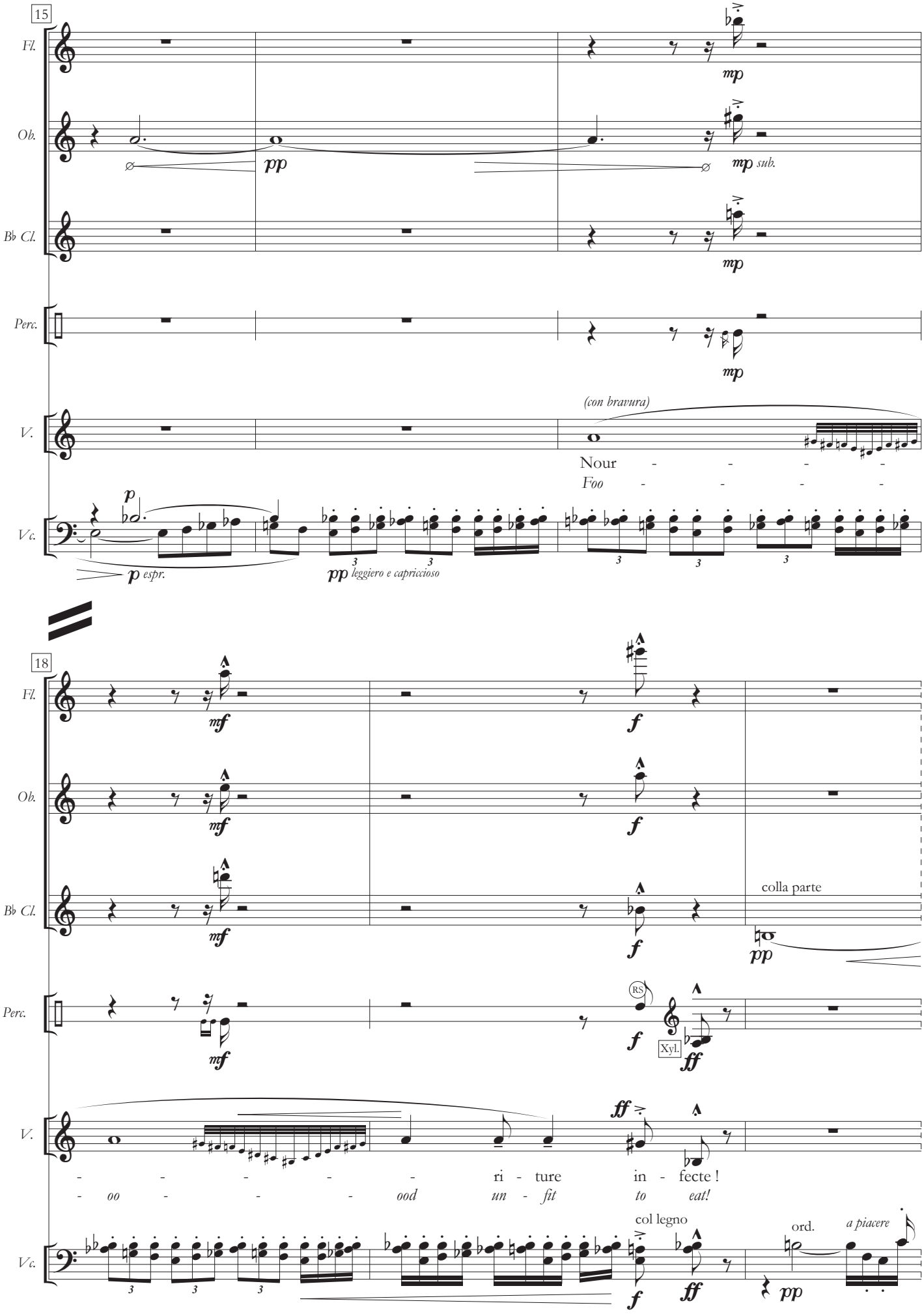
## I - Prologue (The Boat)

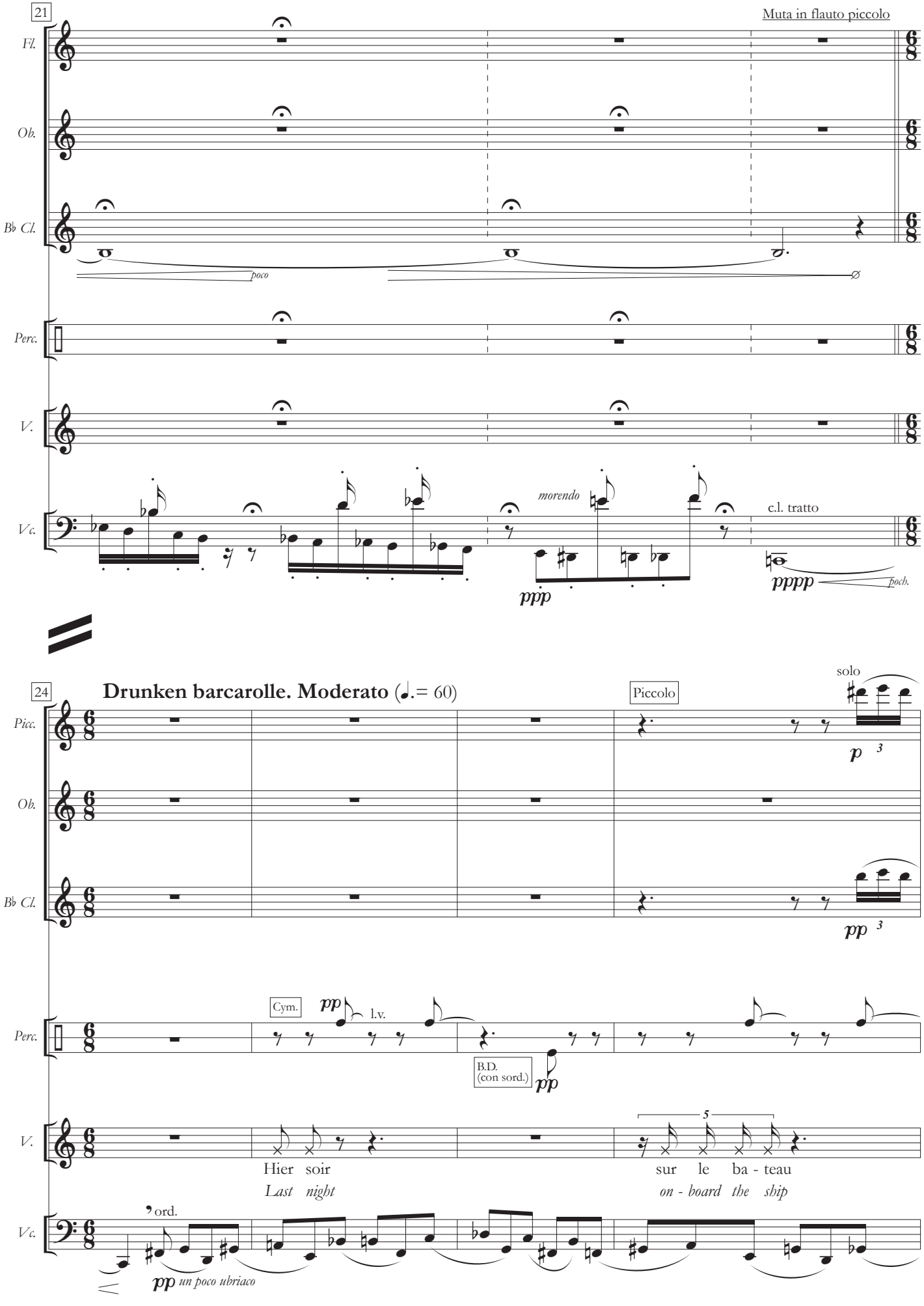
**Vivo** ( ♩ = 96 )

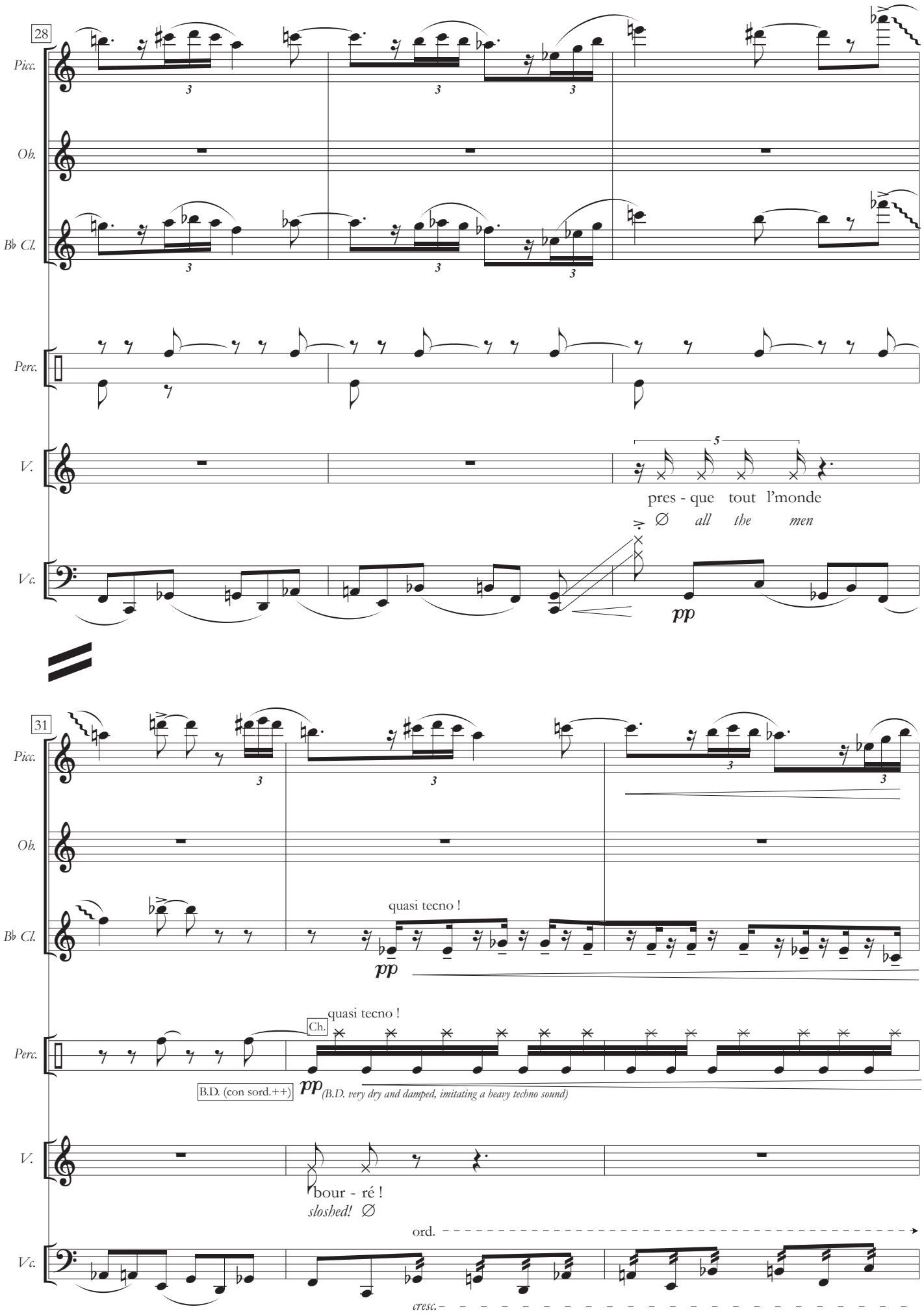


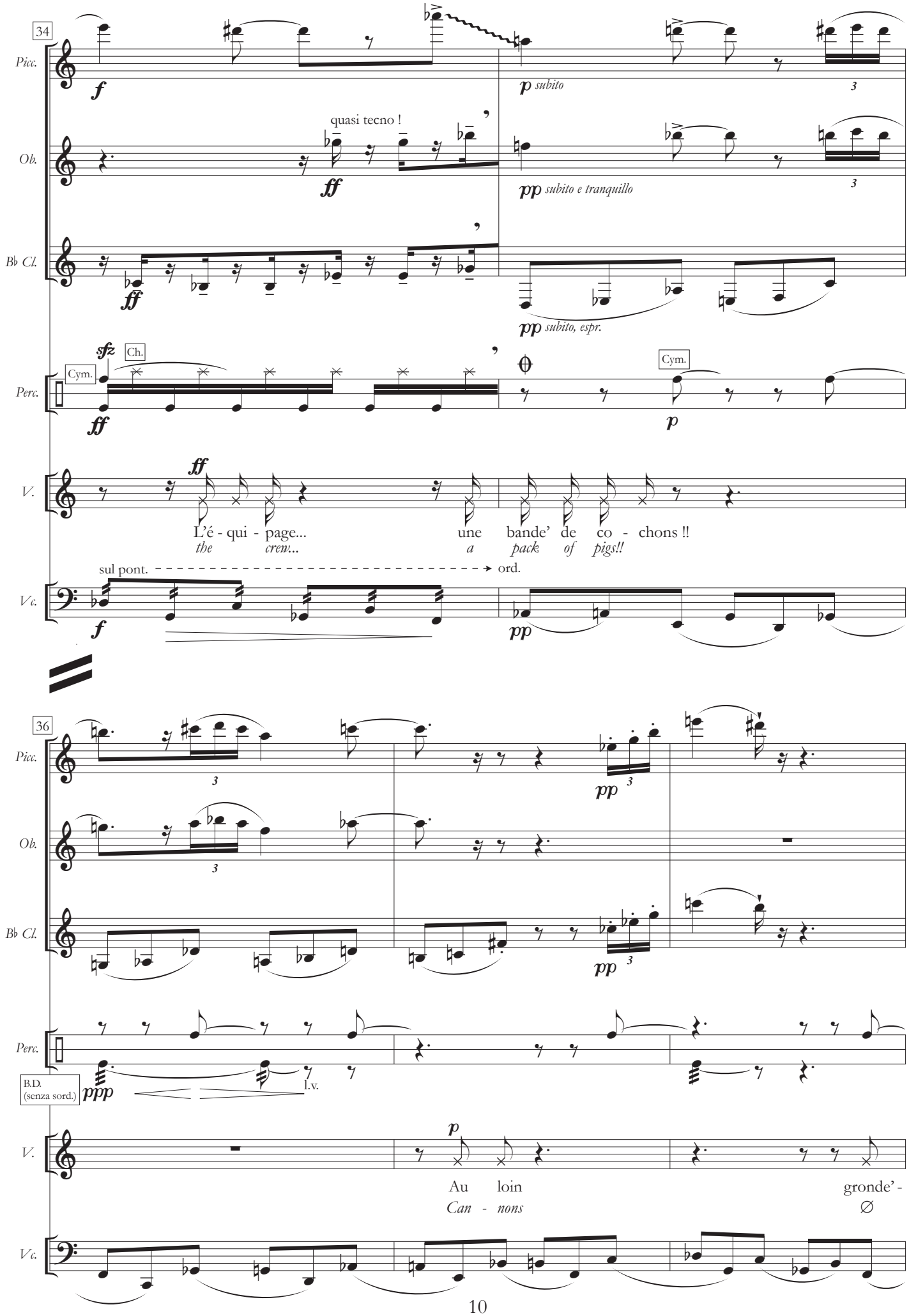

6
Poco meno vivo
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Perc.
S.D.
Xyl.
RS
V.
Vc.
nasal
ord.
de so - lide!
to speak of!
pizz.
arco
molto
8
capriccioso
Tout tout tout tout
All all all a -
cresc.

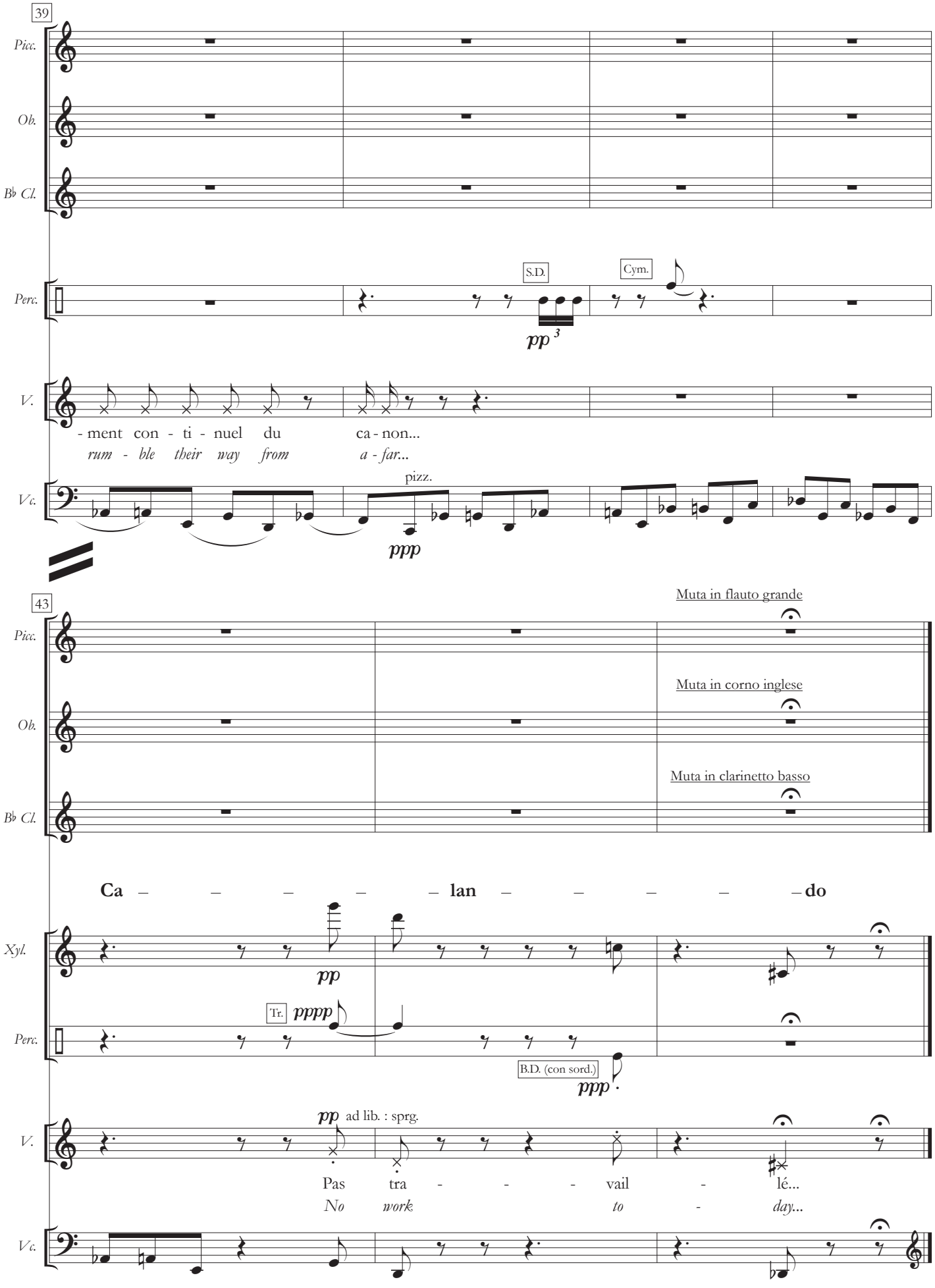

11
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Perc.
V.
Vc.
molto
pp possibile
ppp
C.C.
p
poco
s'en va en pous - sière !
- ll's gone up in - to smoke!
pp
12
Alla cadenza
f
Tr.
l.v.
D.
S.D.
accel.
poco riten.
molto


15
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Perc.
V.
Vc.
mp
pp
mp sub.
(con bravura)
Nour - - - -
Foo - - - -
p
p espr.
pp leggiero e capriccioso
18
mf
f
colla parte
RS
Xyl.
ff
- - - - - ri - ture in - fecte !
- oo - - - ood un - fit to eat!
col legno
ord.
a piacere


21
Muta in flauto piccolo
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
poco
Perc.
V.
Vc.
morendo
c.l. tratto
ppp
pppp
poch.
24
Drunken barcarolle. Moderato (♩.= 60)
Picc.
Piccolo
solo
p
3
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
pp
3
Cym.
pp
l.v.
Perc.
B.D.
(con sord.)
pp
V.
5
Hier soir
Last night
sur le ba - teau
on - board the ship
Vc.
ord.
pp un poco ubriaco

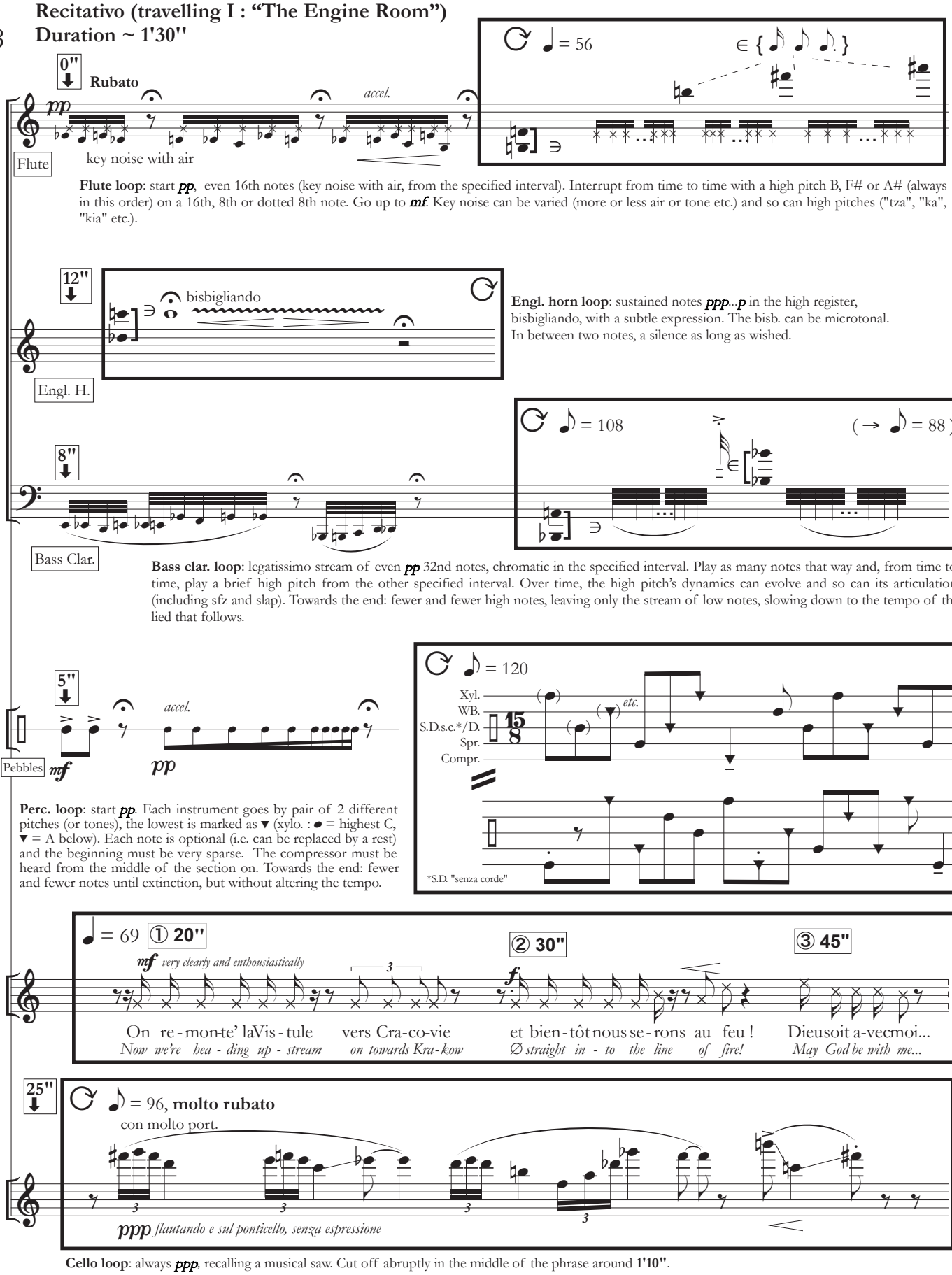

28
Picc.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Perc.
V.
Vc.
pres - que tout l'monde
∅ all the men
pp
31
quasi tecno !
quasi tecno !
Ch.
B.D. (con sord.++)
pp (B.D. very dry and damped, imitating a heavy techno sound)
bour - ré !
sloshed! ∅
ord.
cresc.


34
Picc.
Ob.
Bb Cl.
Perc.
V.
Vc.
quasi tecno !
Cym.
Ch.
sul pont.
ord.
L'é - qui - page...
the crew...
une bande' de co - chons !!
a pack of pigs!!
36
B.D.
(senza sord.)
l.v.
Au loin gronde' -
Can - nons


39
Picc.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Perc.
S.D.
Cym.
pp 3
V.
- ment con - ti - nuel du ca - non...
rum - ble their way from a - far...
Vc.
pizz.
ppp
43
Muta in flauto grande
Muta in corno inglese
Muta in clarinetto basso
Ca – – – – – lan – – – – – do
Xyl.
pp
Tr.
pppp
B.D. (con sord.)
ppp
pp ad lib. : sprg.
Pas tra - - - vail - lé...
No work to - day...

## I - B

**Recitativo (travelling I : "The Engine Room")**
**Duration ~ 1'30"**



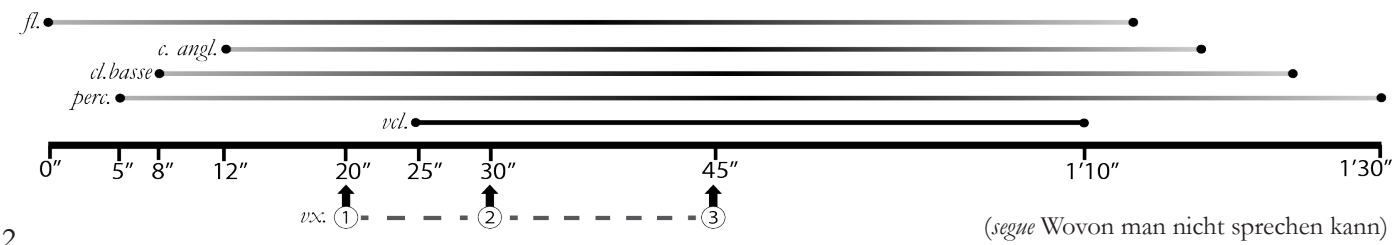

**Flute loop**: start ***pp***, even 16th notes (key noise with air, from the specified interval). Interrupt from time to time with a high pitch B, F# or A# (always in this order) on a 16th, 8th or dotted 8th note. Go up to ***mf***. Key noise can be varied (more or less air or tone etc.) and so can high pitches ("tza", "ka", "kia" etc.).

**Engl. horn loop**: sustained notes ***ppp***...***p*** in the high register, bisbigliando, with a subtle expression. The bisb. can be microtonal. In between two notes, a silence as long as wished.

**Bass clar. loop**: legatissimo stream of even ***pp*** 32nd notes, chromatic in the specified interval. Play as many notes that way and, from time to time, play a brief high pitch from the other specified interval. Over time, the high pitch's dynamics can evolve and so can its articulation (including sfz and slap). Towards the end: fewer and fewer high notes, leaving only the stream of low notes, slowing down to the tempo of the lied that follows.

**Perc. loop**: start ***pp***. Each instrument goes by pair of 2 different pitches (or tones), the lowest is marked as ▾ (xylo. : 𝅝 = highest C, ▾ = A below). Each note is optional (i.e. can be replaced by a rest) and the beginning must be very sparse. The compressor must be heard from the middle of the section on. Towards the end: fewer and fewer notes until extinction, but without altering the tempo.

**Cello loop**: always ***ppp***, recalling a musical saw. Cut off abruptly in the middle of the phrase around **1'10"**.






(*segue* Wovon man nicht sprechen kann)

# Wovon man nicht sprechen kann

**Enigmatico** (♩ = 88)

*like a soliloquy...*

Bass Clarinet

***ppp*** *quasi sussurrando*

3

B. Cl.

5

B. Cl.

*another soliloquy...*

Vc.

***ppp*** *dolcissimo*

*quasi sussurrando*

7

B. Cl.

Vc.

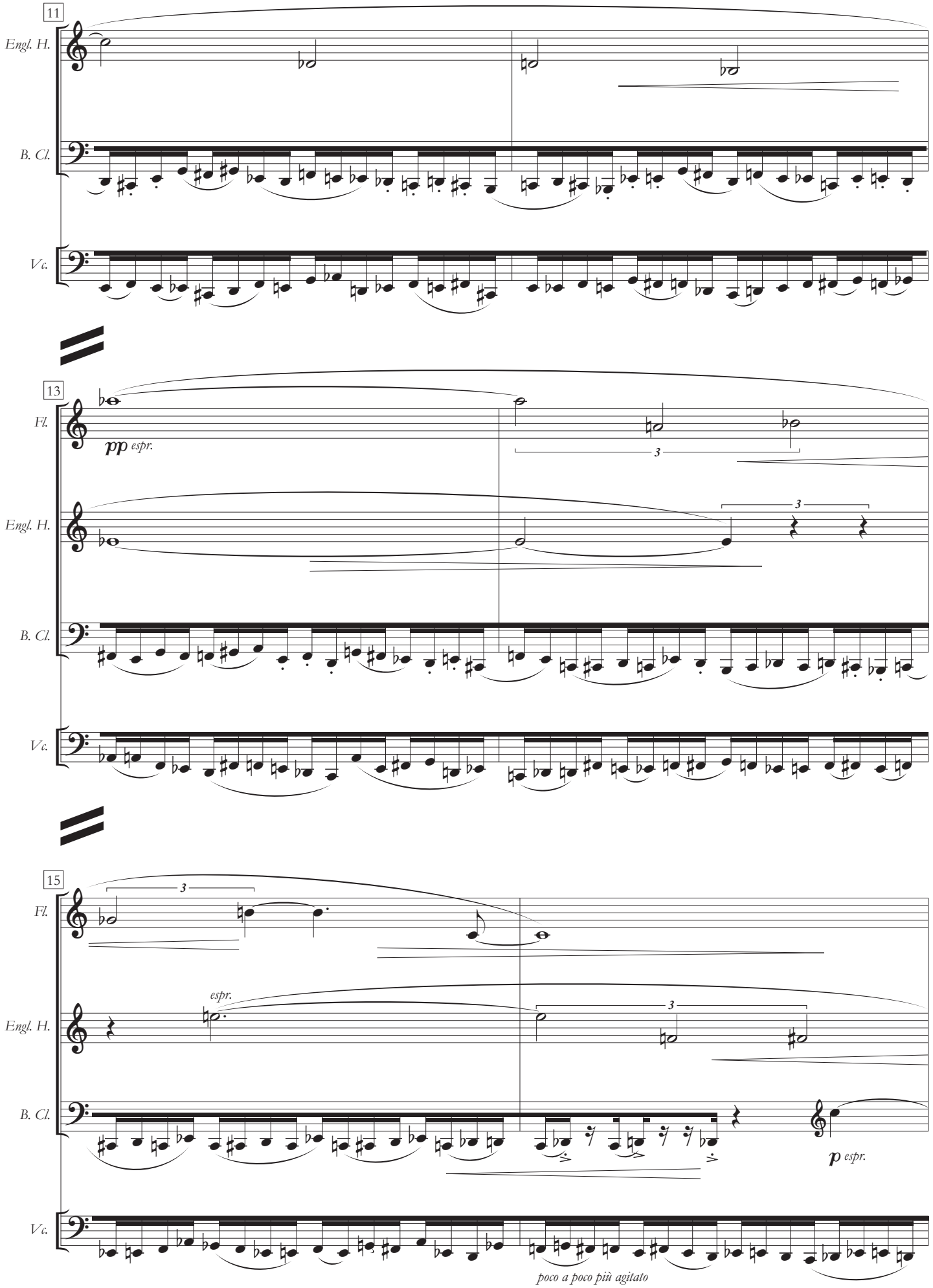
9

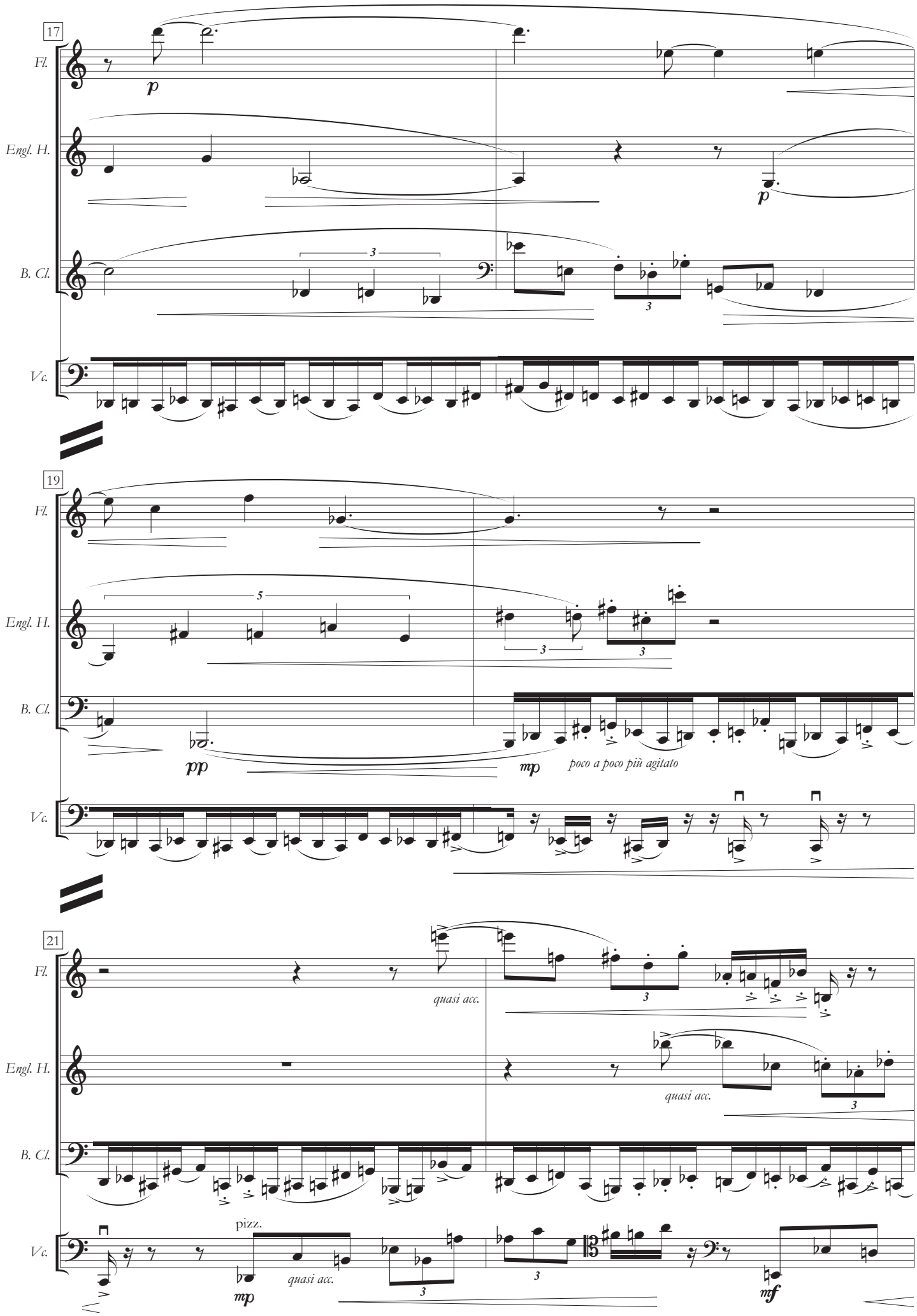
Engl. H.

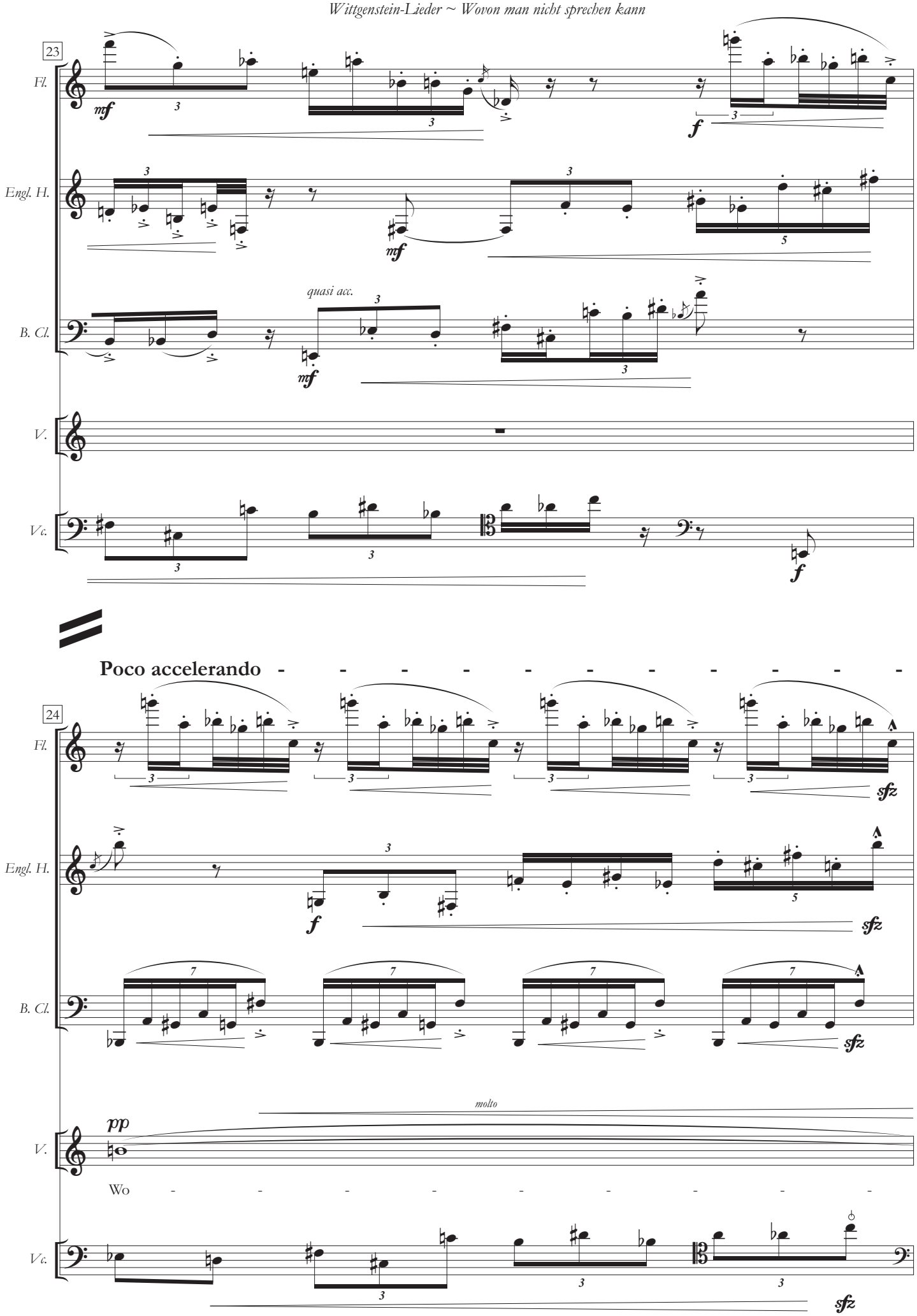
***pp*** *espr.*

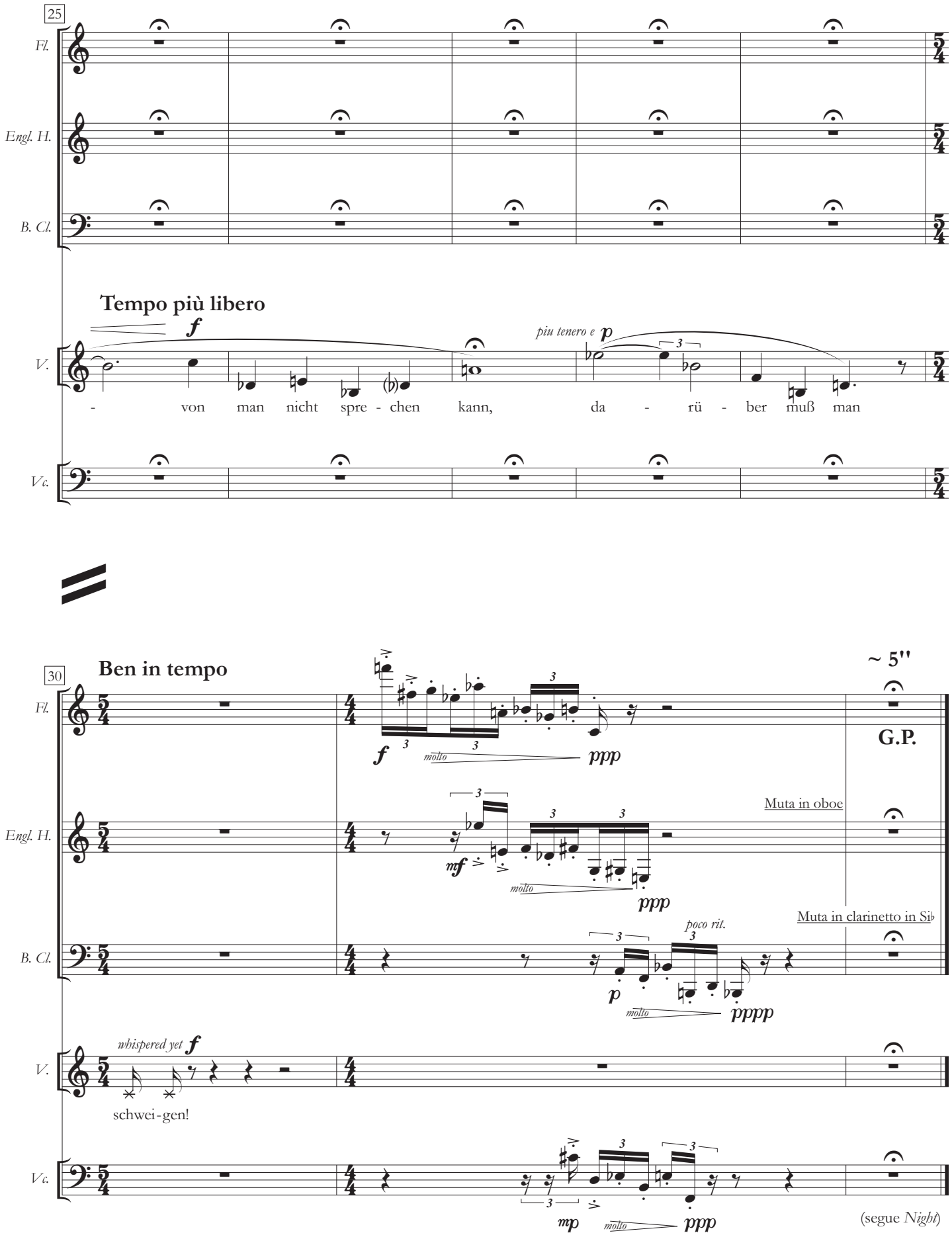
B. Cl.

Vc.

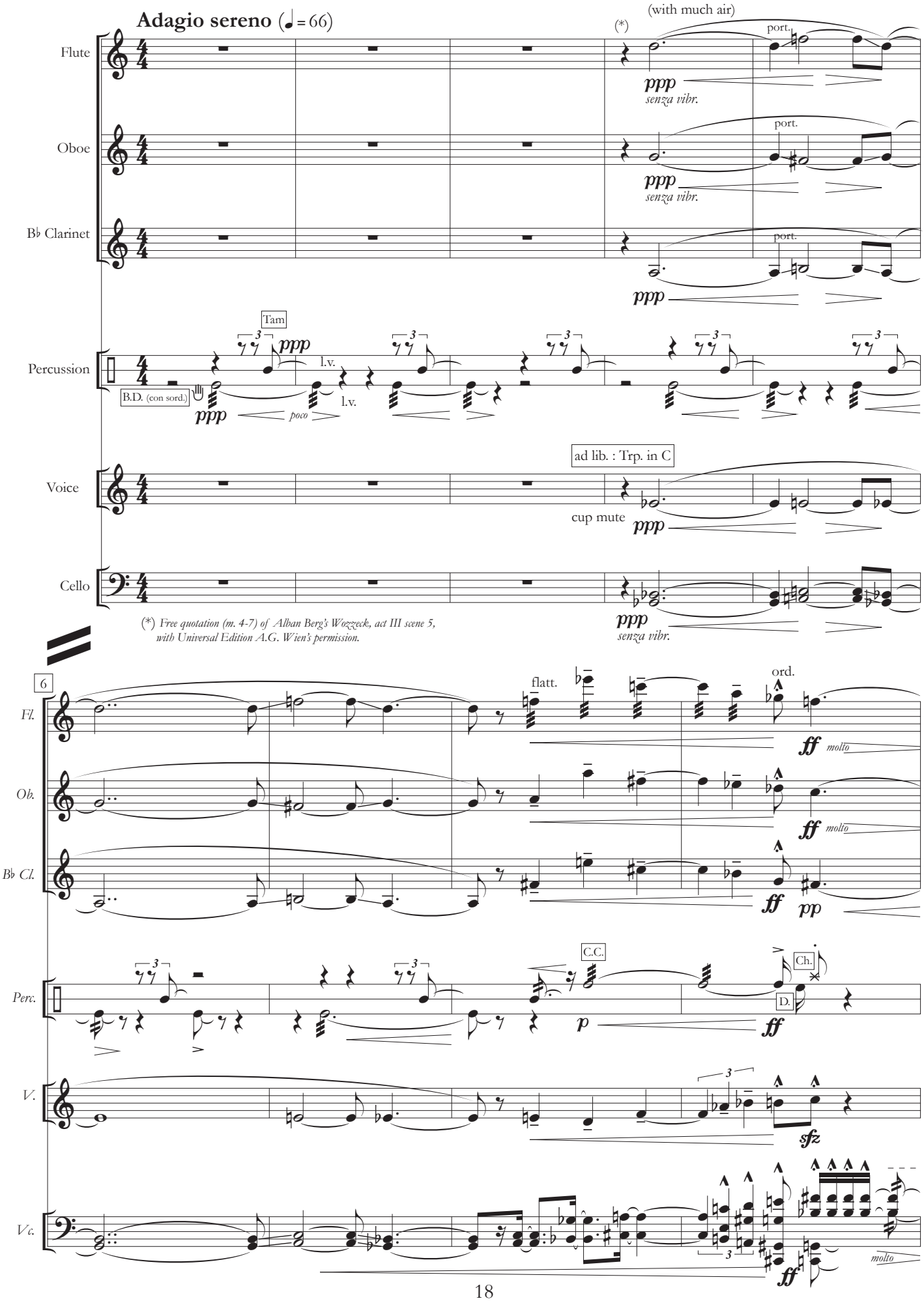

11
Engl. H.
B. Cl.
Vc.
13
Fl.
pp espr.
3
Engl. H.
3
B. Cl.
Vc.
15
Fl.
3
espr.
Engl. H.
3
B. Cl.
p espr.
Vc.
poco a poco più agitato

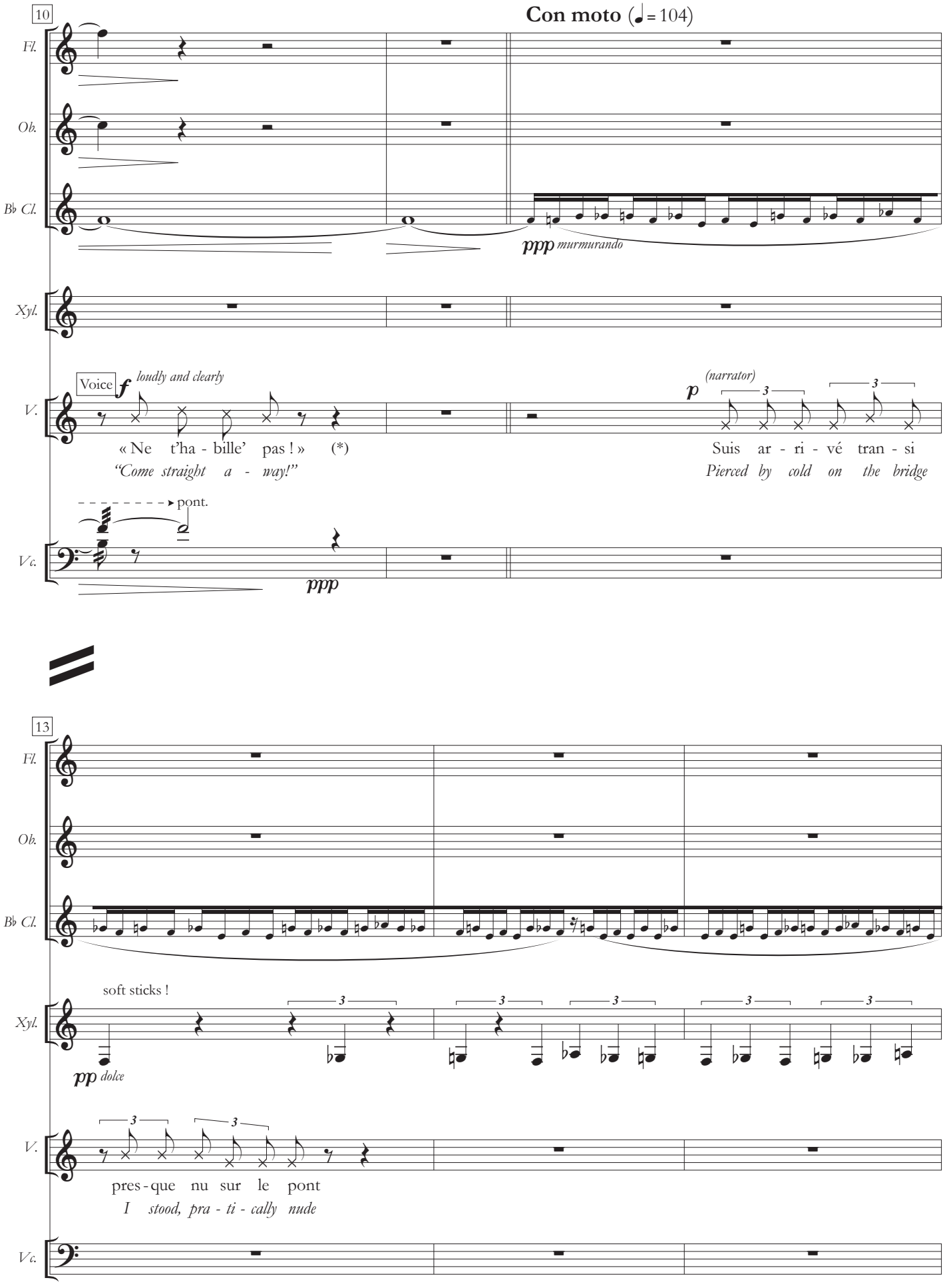

17
Fl.
Engl. H.
B. Cl.
Vc.
p
p
3
3
19
5
3
3
pp
mp
poco a poco più agitato
21
quasi acc.
quasi acc.
pizz.
mp
quasi acc.
3
3
mf


23
Fl.
Engl. H.
B. Cl.
V.
Vc.
mf
f
quasi acc.
Poco accelerando
24
sfz
molto
pp
Wo

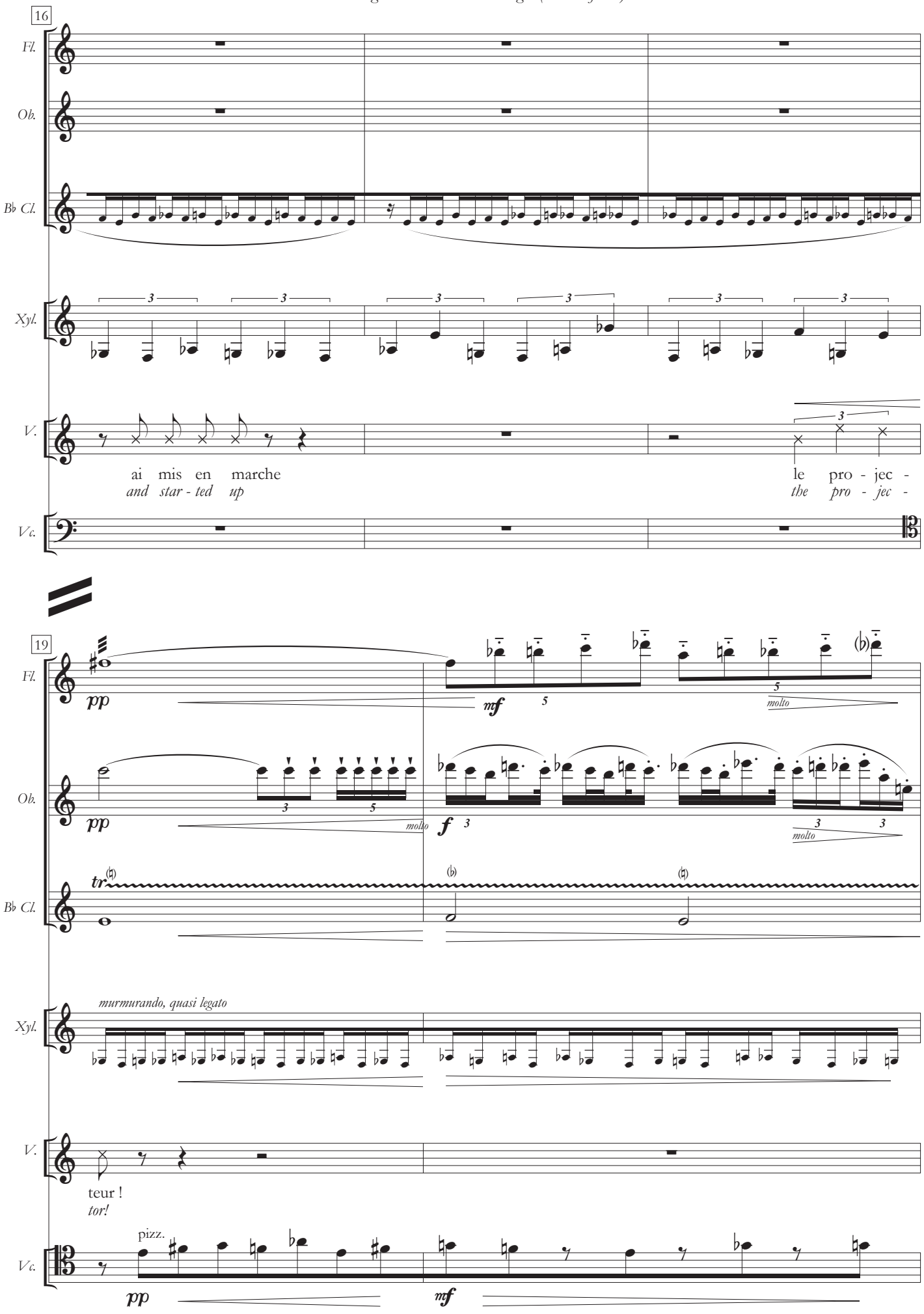

25
Fl.
Engl. H.
B. Cl.
Tempo più libero
f
piu tenero e p
V.
- von man nicht spre - chen kann, da - rü - ber muß man
Vc.
30
Ben in tempo
~ 5"
G.P.
molto
ppp
Muta in oboe
mf
Muta in clarinetto in Si♭
poco rit.
pppp
whispered yet f
schwei-gen!
mp
(segue *Night*)

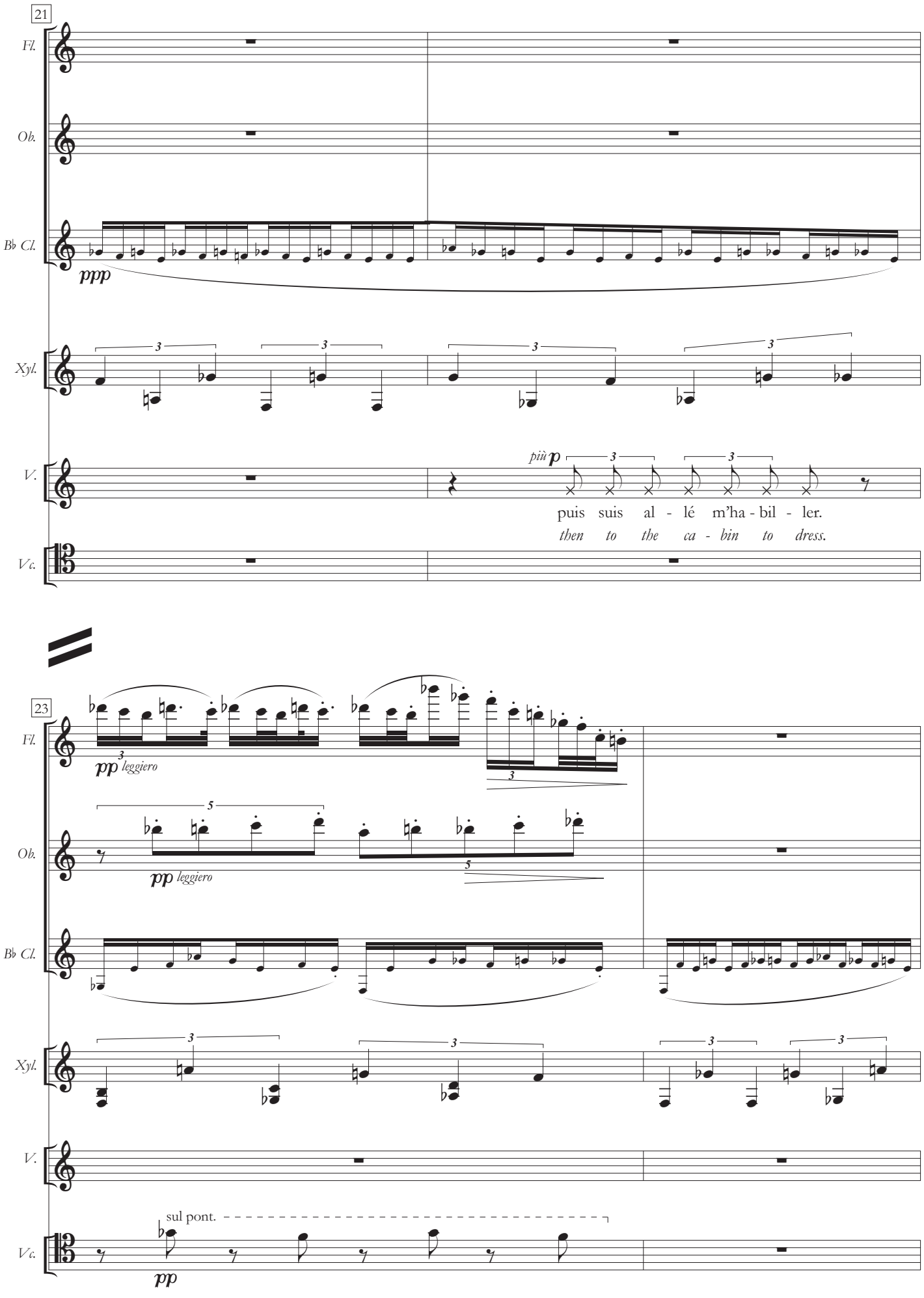
# II - Night (The Projector)

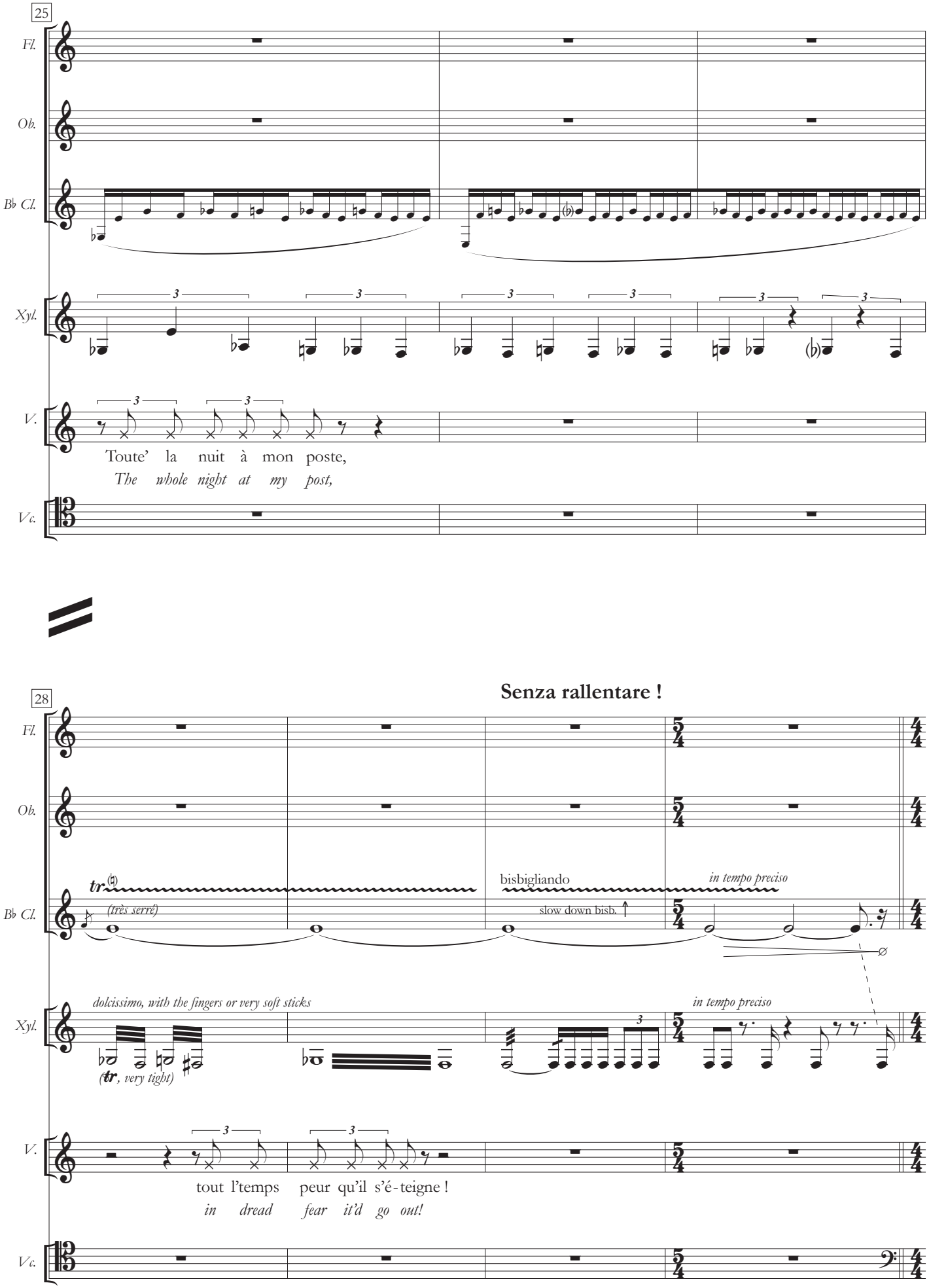


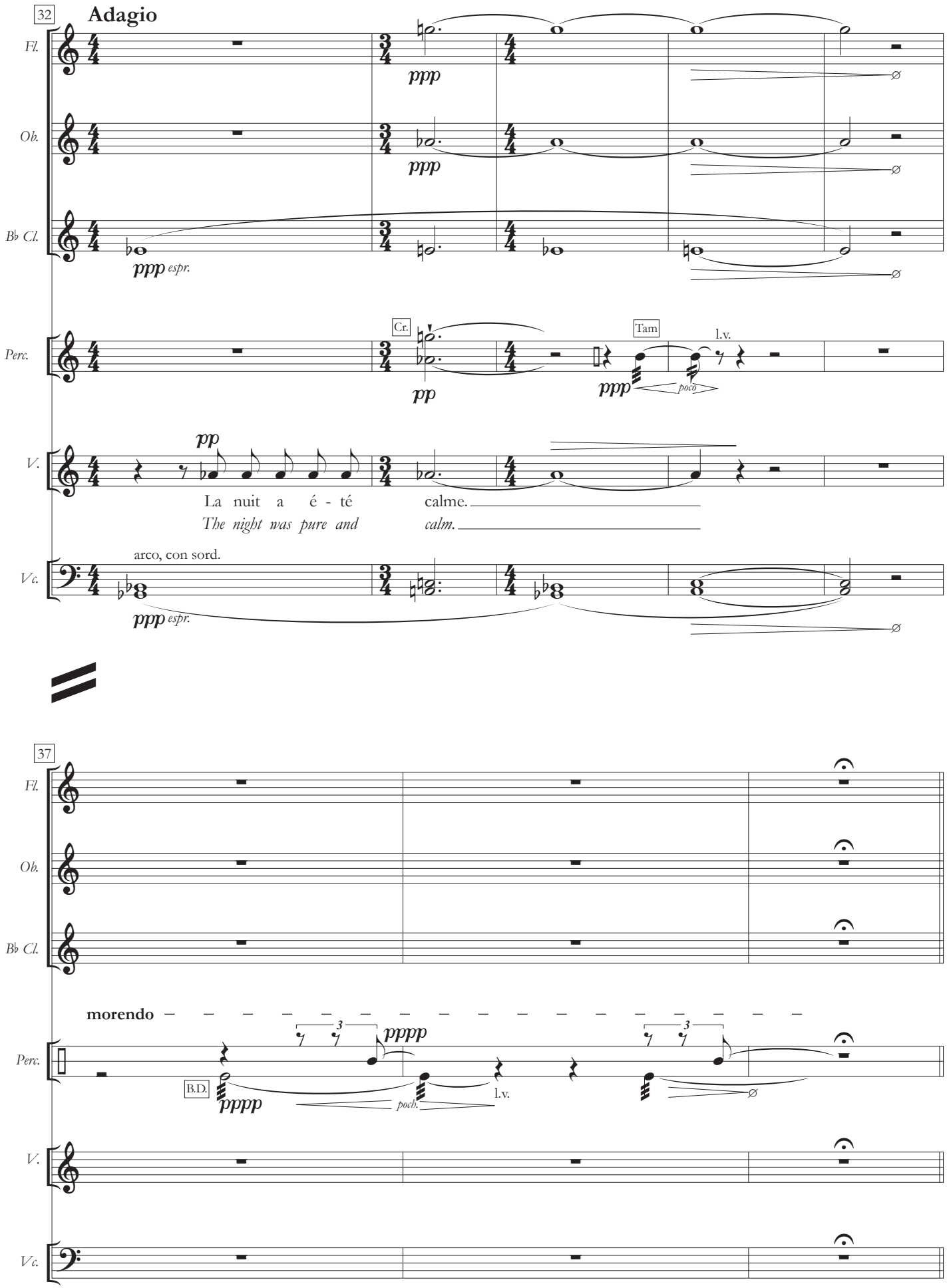


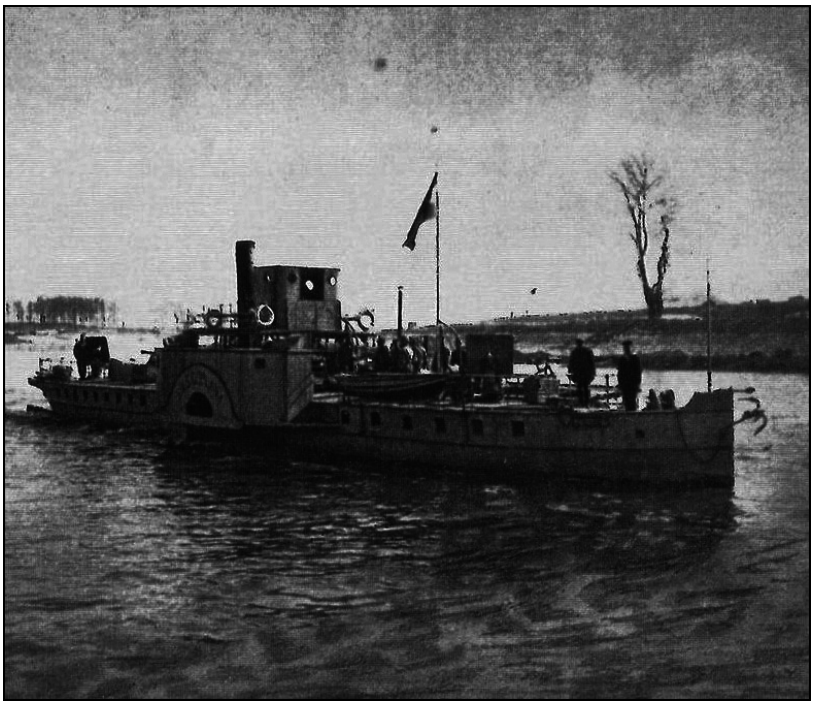

(*) Rhythm and "pitch" for the spoken part are provided as a suggestion, and not to be taken as sprechgesang. It should not sound mechanical.


16
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Xyl.
V.
ai mis en marche
and star - ted up
le pro - jec -
the pro - jec -
Vc.
19
pp
mf
molto
f
tr
murmurando, quasi legato
teur !
tor!
pizz.


21
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
ppp
Xyl.
V.
più p
puis suis al - lé m'ha - bil - ler.
then to the ca - bin to dress.
Vc.
23
Fl.
pp leggiero
Ob.
pp leggiero
B♭ Cl.
Xyl.
V.
sul pont.
Vc.
pp

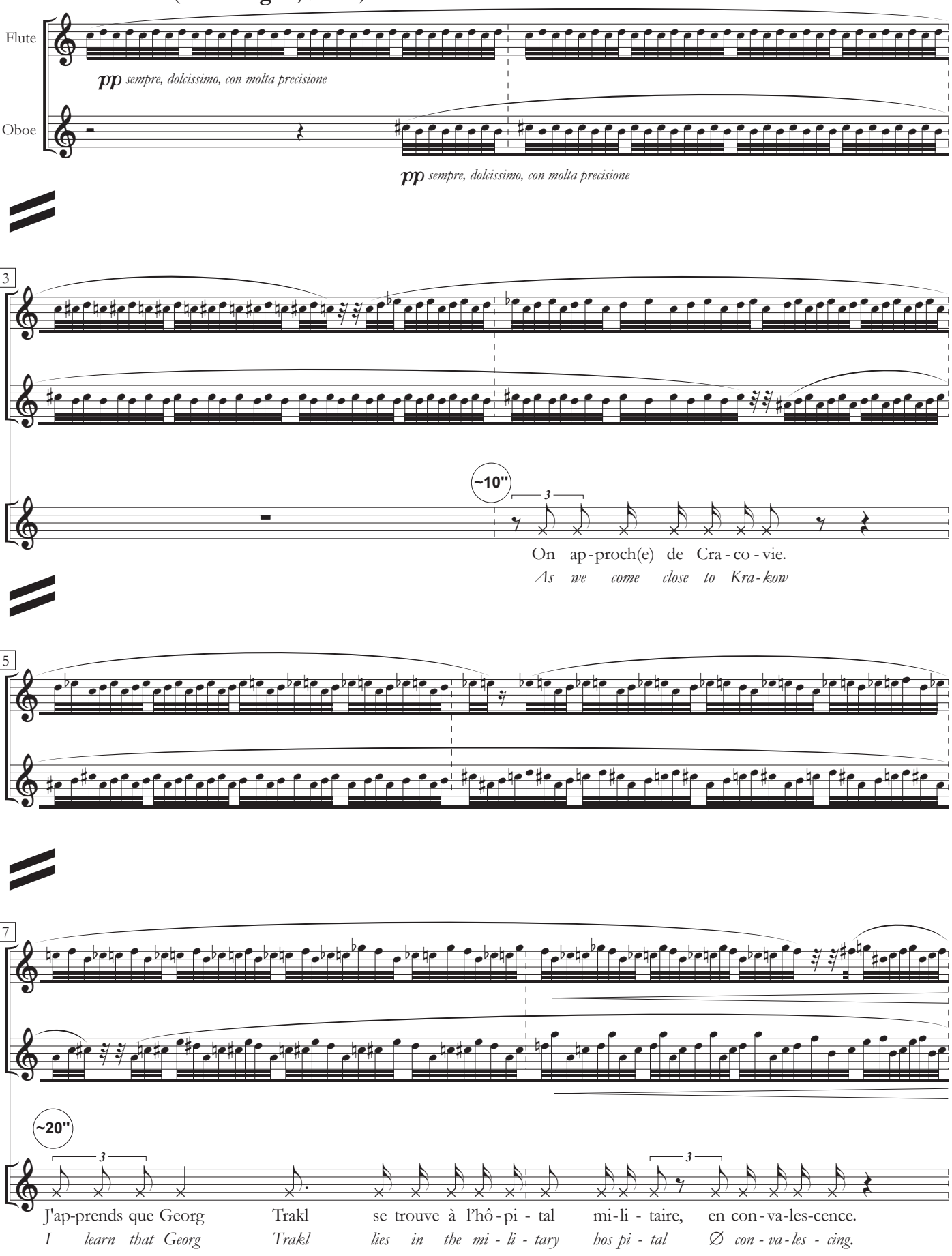

25
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Xyl.
V.
Toute' la nuit à mon poste,
*The whole night at my post,*
Vc.
28
**Senza rallentare !**
Fl.
Ob.
tr
(très serré)
bisbigliando
slow down bisb.
*in tempo preciso*
B♭ Cl.
*dolcissimo, with the fingers or very soft sticks*
*in tempo preciso*
Xyl.
(**tr**, very tight)
V.
tout l'temps peur qu'il s'é-teigne !
*in dread fear it'd go out!*
Vc.

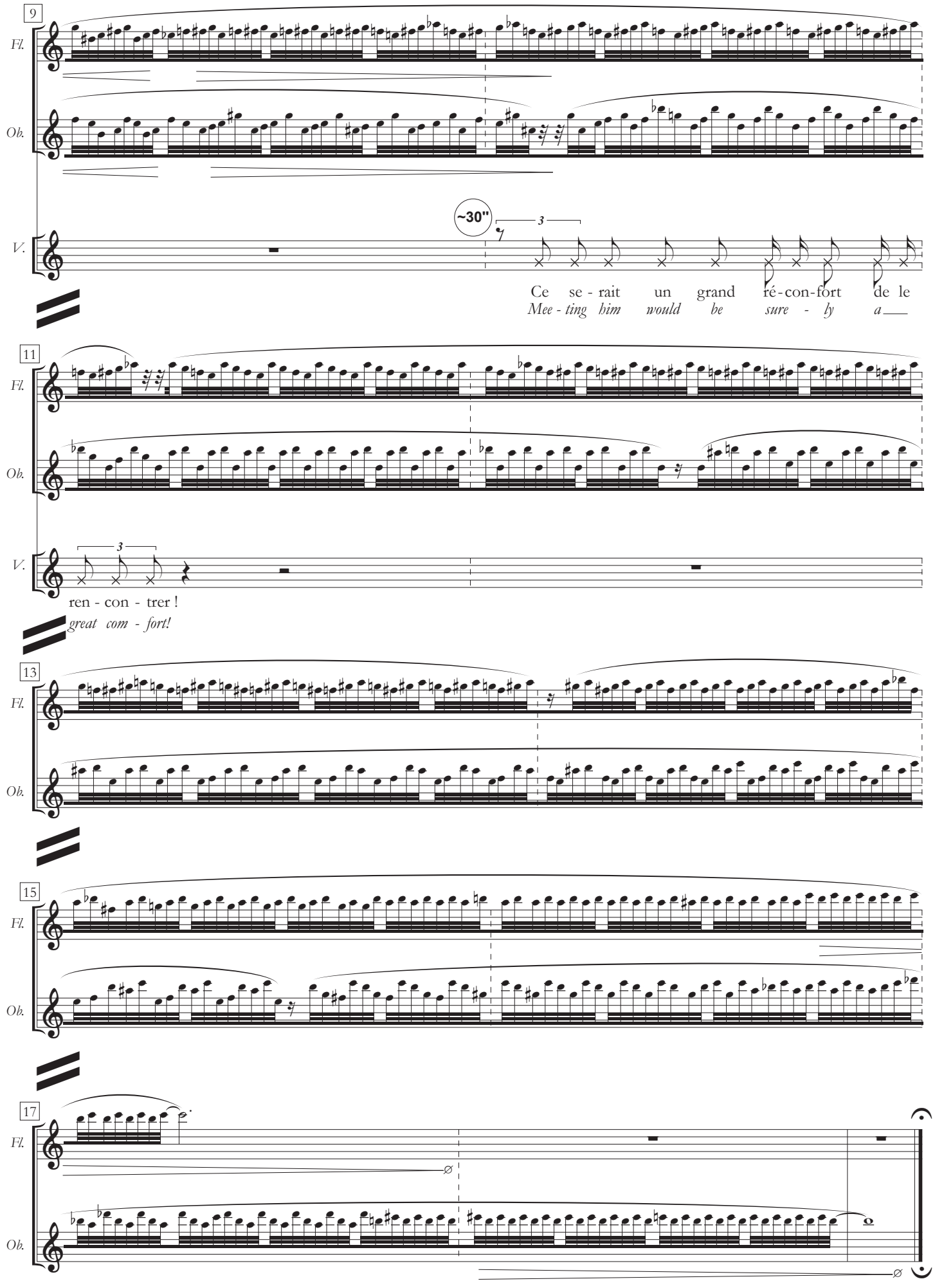

32
Adagio
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Perc.
V.
Vc.
ppp
ppp
ppp espr.
Cr.
pp
Tam
ppp
poco
l.v.
pp
La nuit a é - té calme.
The night was pure and calm.
arco, con sord.
ppp espr.
37
morendo
pppp
B.D.
pppp
poch.
l.v.



*II - B*

**Recitativo (travelling II, ♩ = 72)**

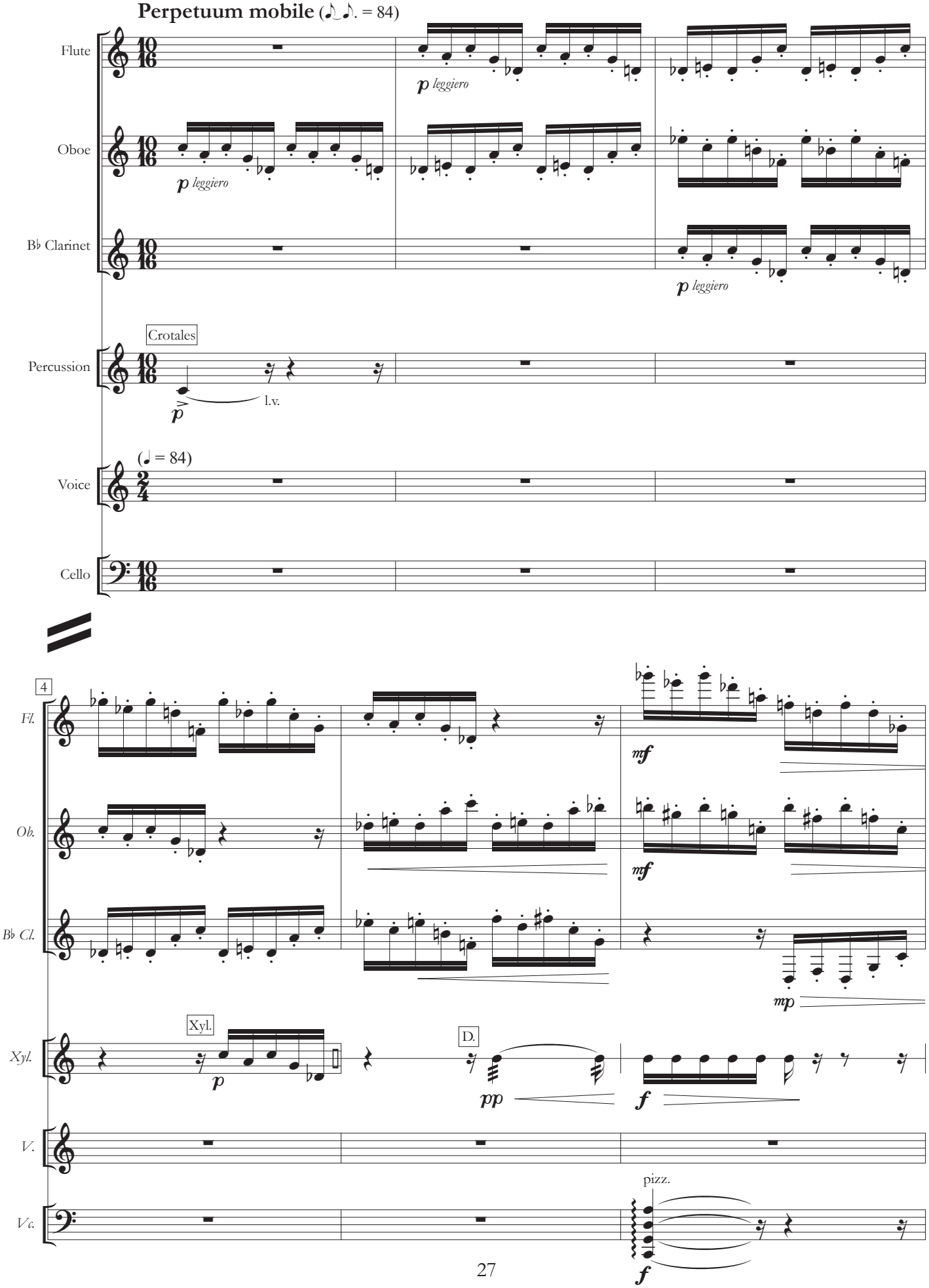


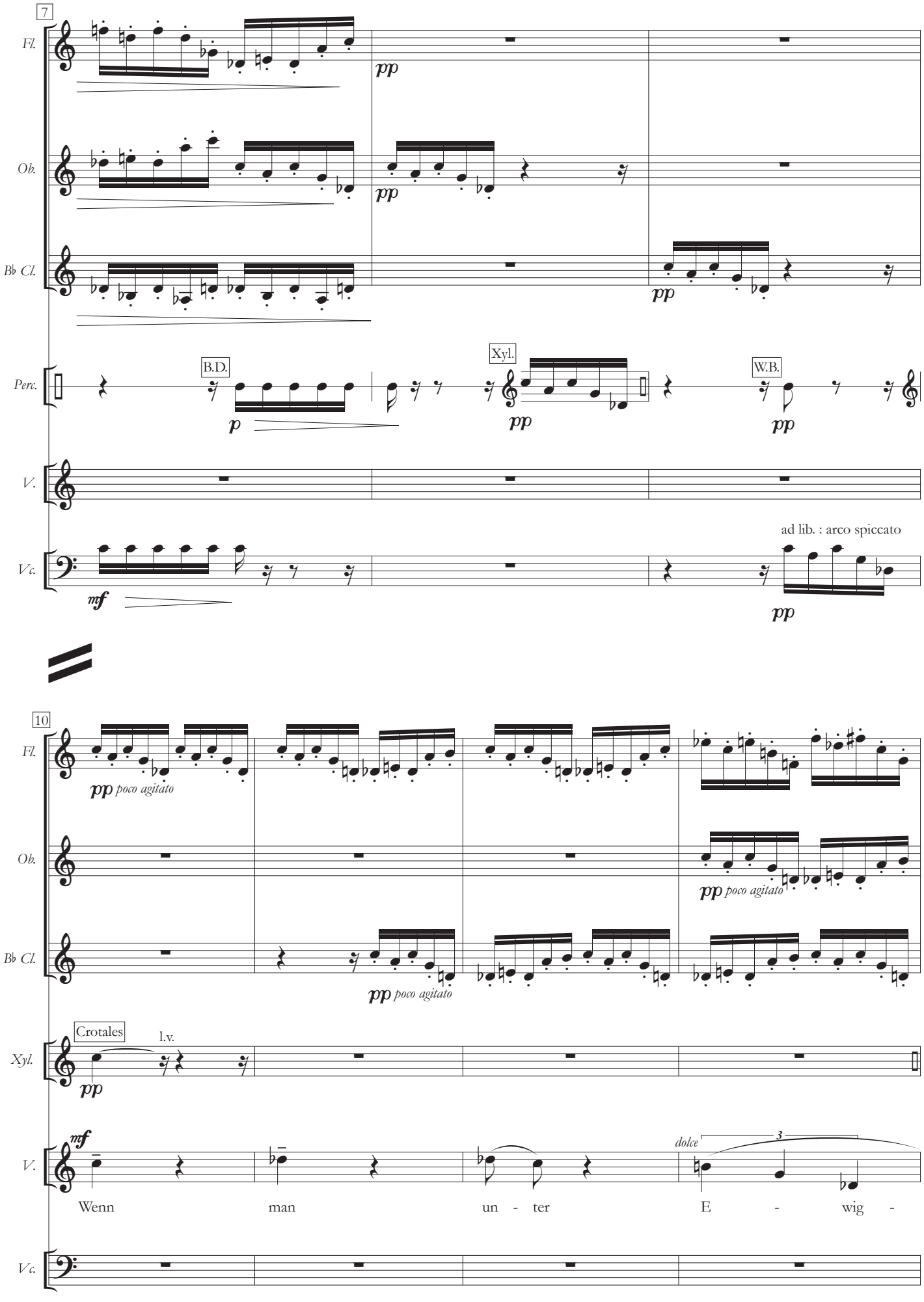


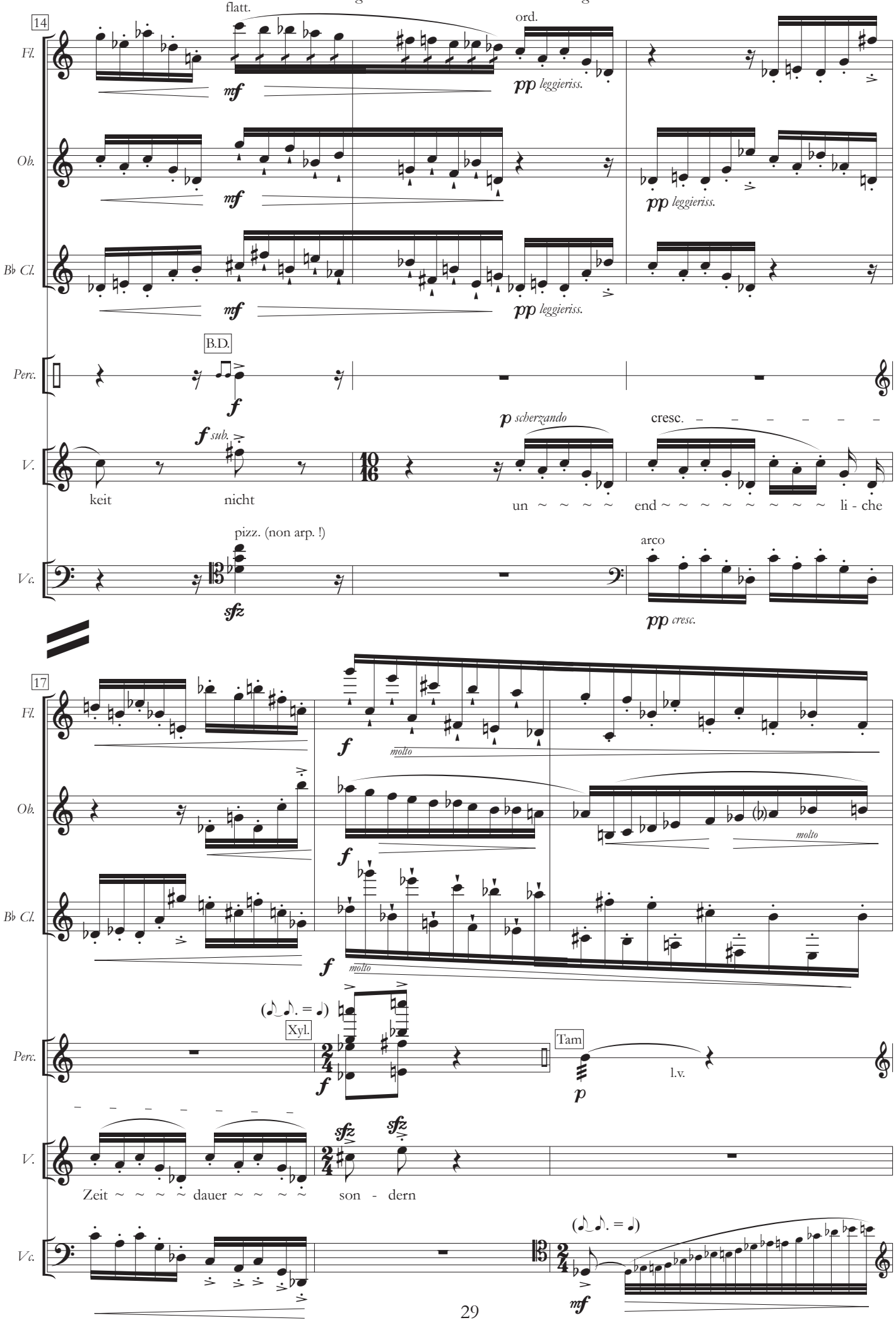

(*segue* Wenn man unter Ewigkeit)

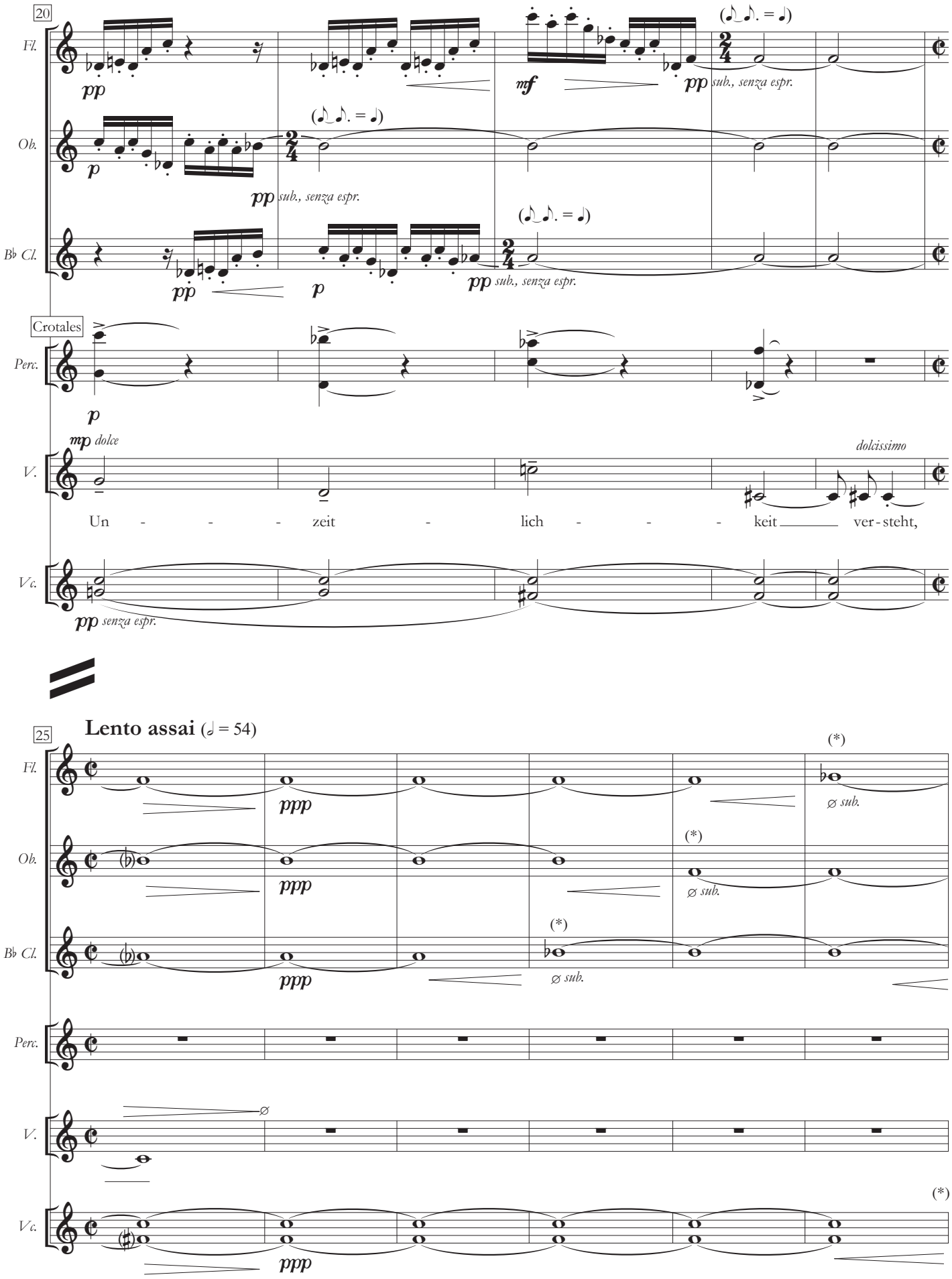
# Wenn man unter Ewigkeit

*To Jill A. McCoy*

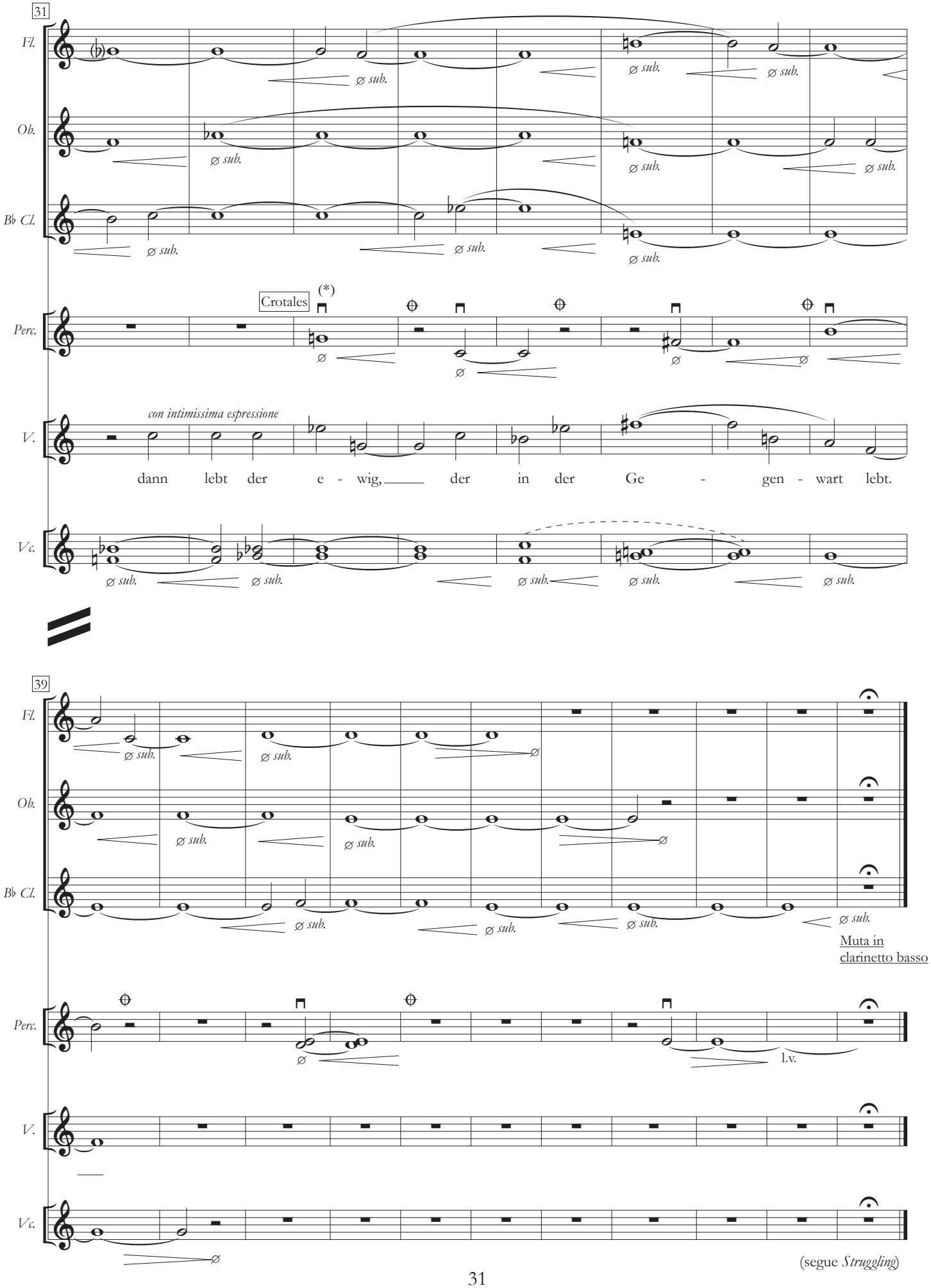



7
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Perc.
B.D.
Xyl.
W.B.
V.
Vc.
ad lib. : arco spiccato
10
poco agitato
Crotales
l.v.
dolce
Wenn man un - ter E - wig -

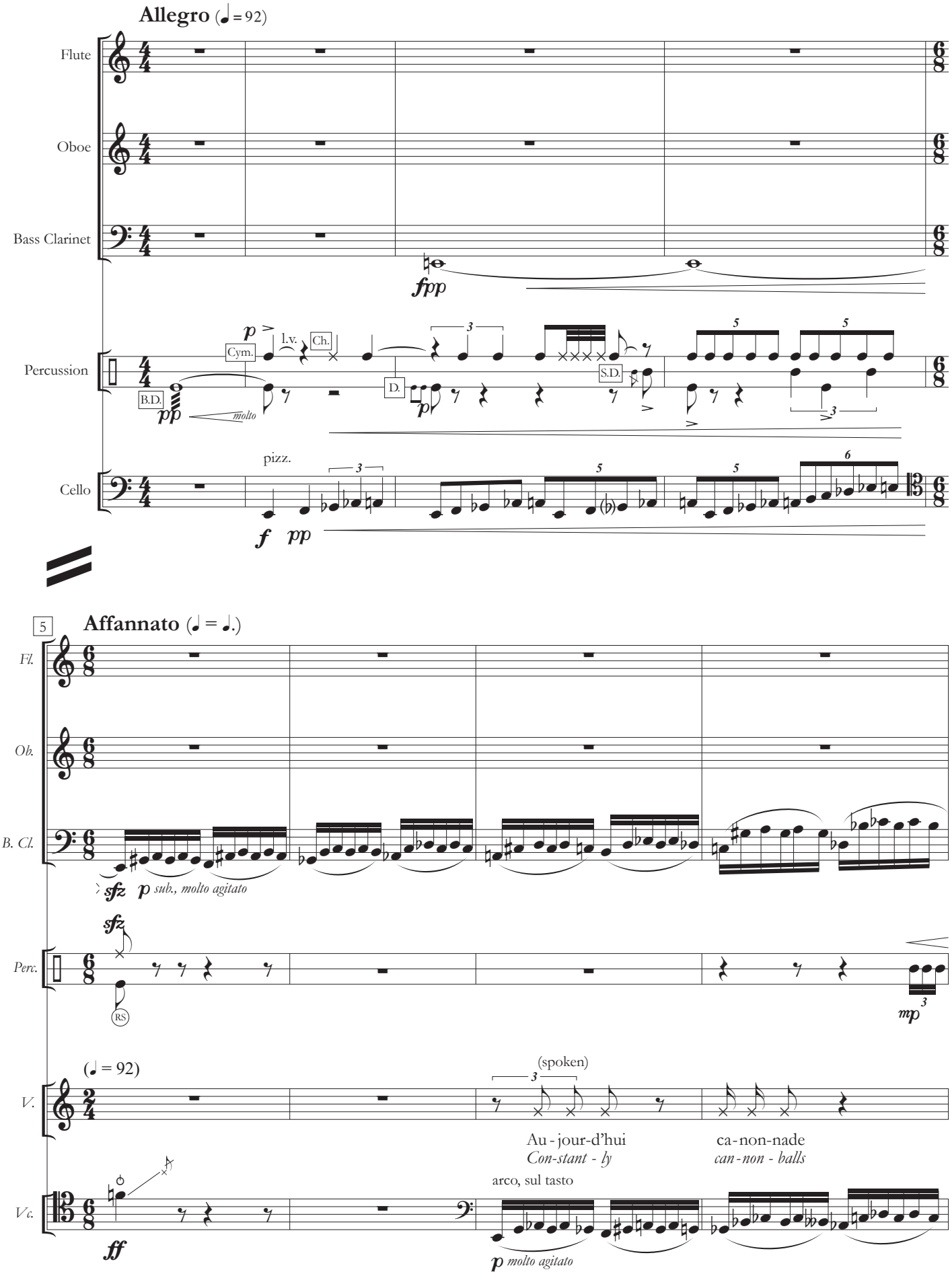

14
Fl.
flatt.
mf
ord.
pp leggieriss.
Ob.
mf
pp leggieriss.
B♭ Cl.
mf
pp leggieriss.
Perc.
B.D.
f
V.
f sub.
keit
nicht
p scherzando
cresc.
un ~ ~ ~ ~
end ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ li - che
Vc.
pizz. (non arp. !)
sfz
arco
pp cresc.
17
Fl.
f
molto
Ob.
f
molto
B♭ Cl.
f
molto
(♪♩. = ♩)
Xyl.
Perc.
f
Tam
p
l.v.
V.
sfz
sfz
Zeit ~ ~ ~ ~ dauer ~ ~ ~ ~
son - dern
Vc.
(♪♩. = ♩)
mf

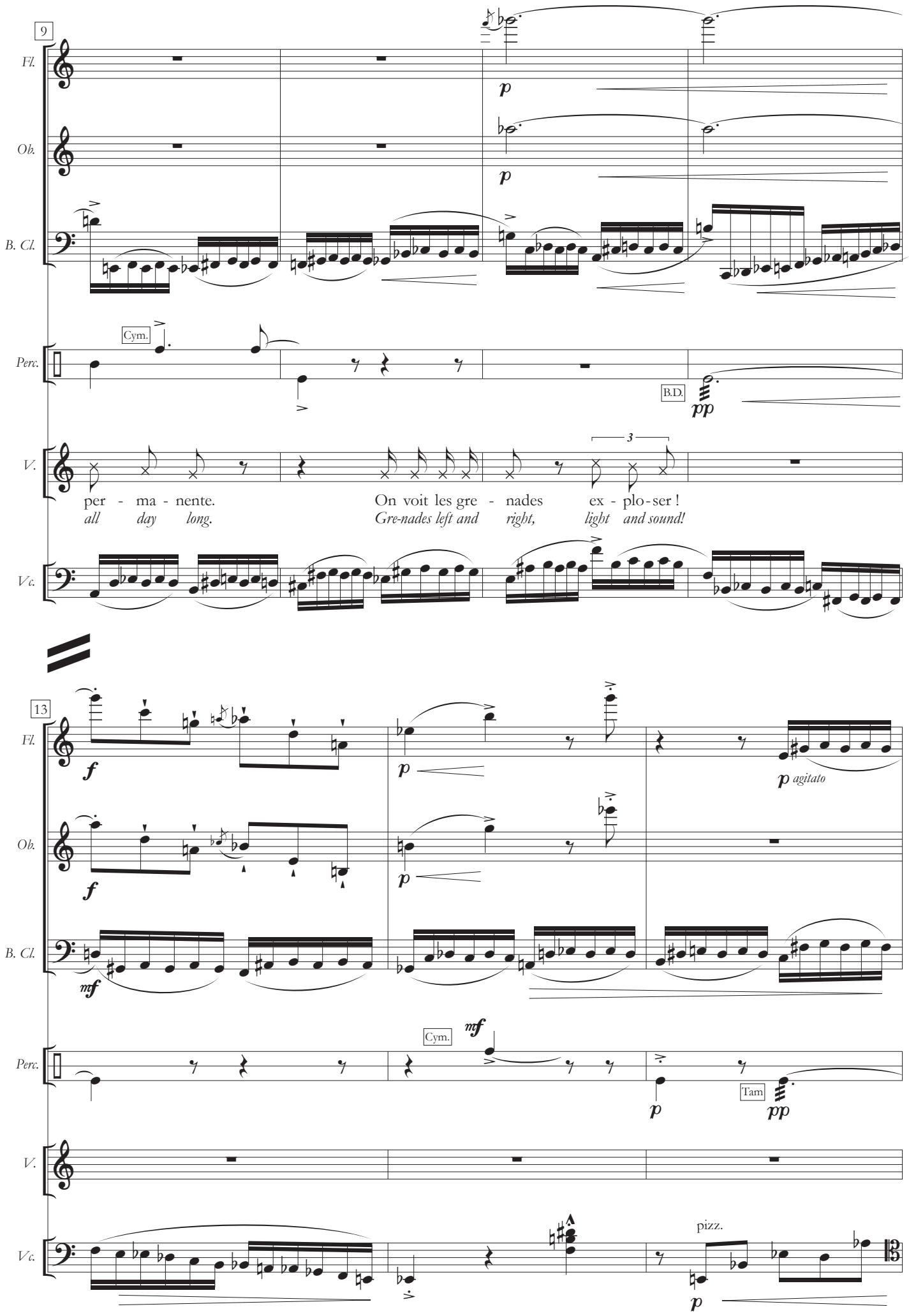


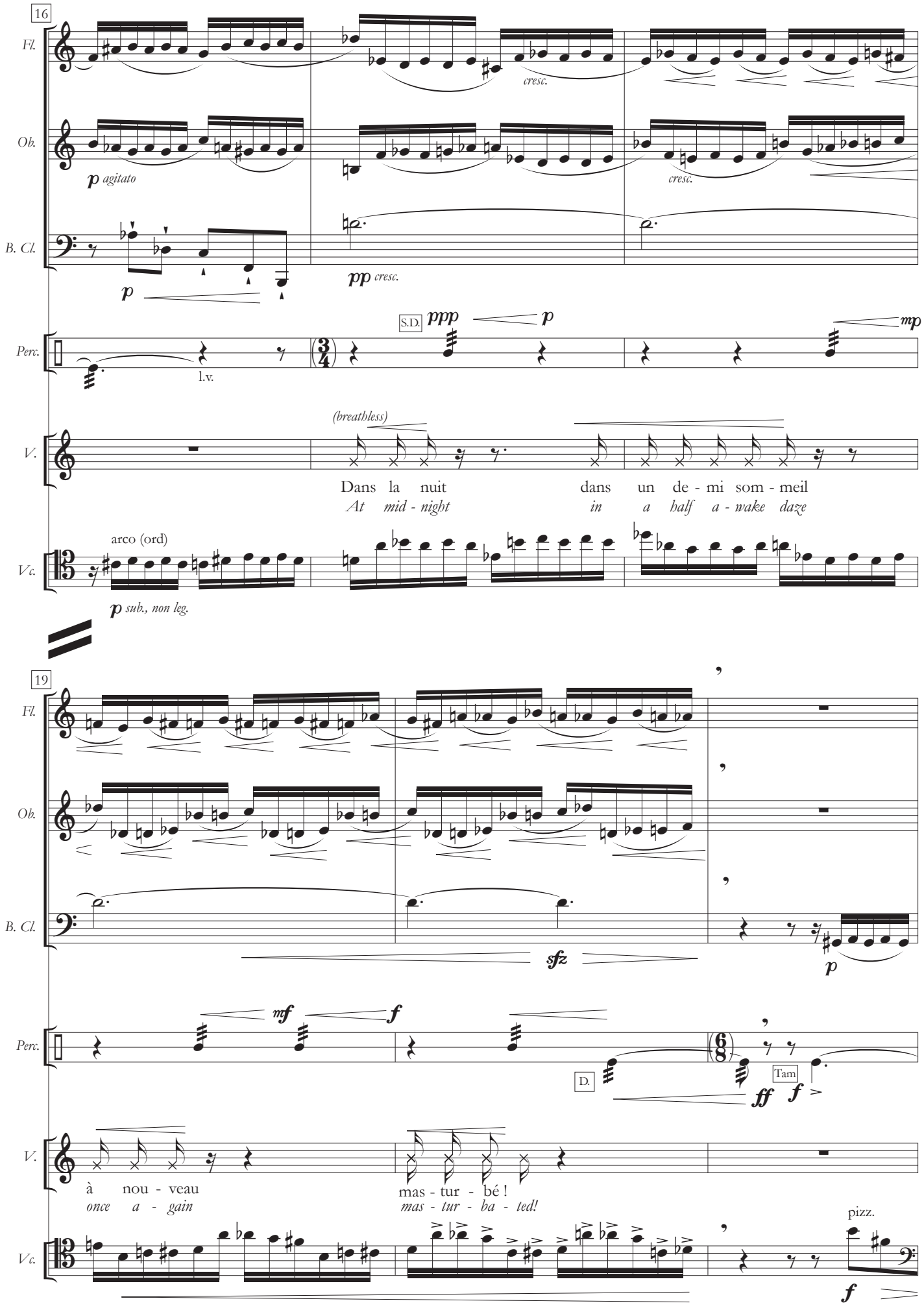

(*) "Reversed attacks" (hairpin → al niente sub.) must always very subtle and strange, and should never cover the voice.

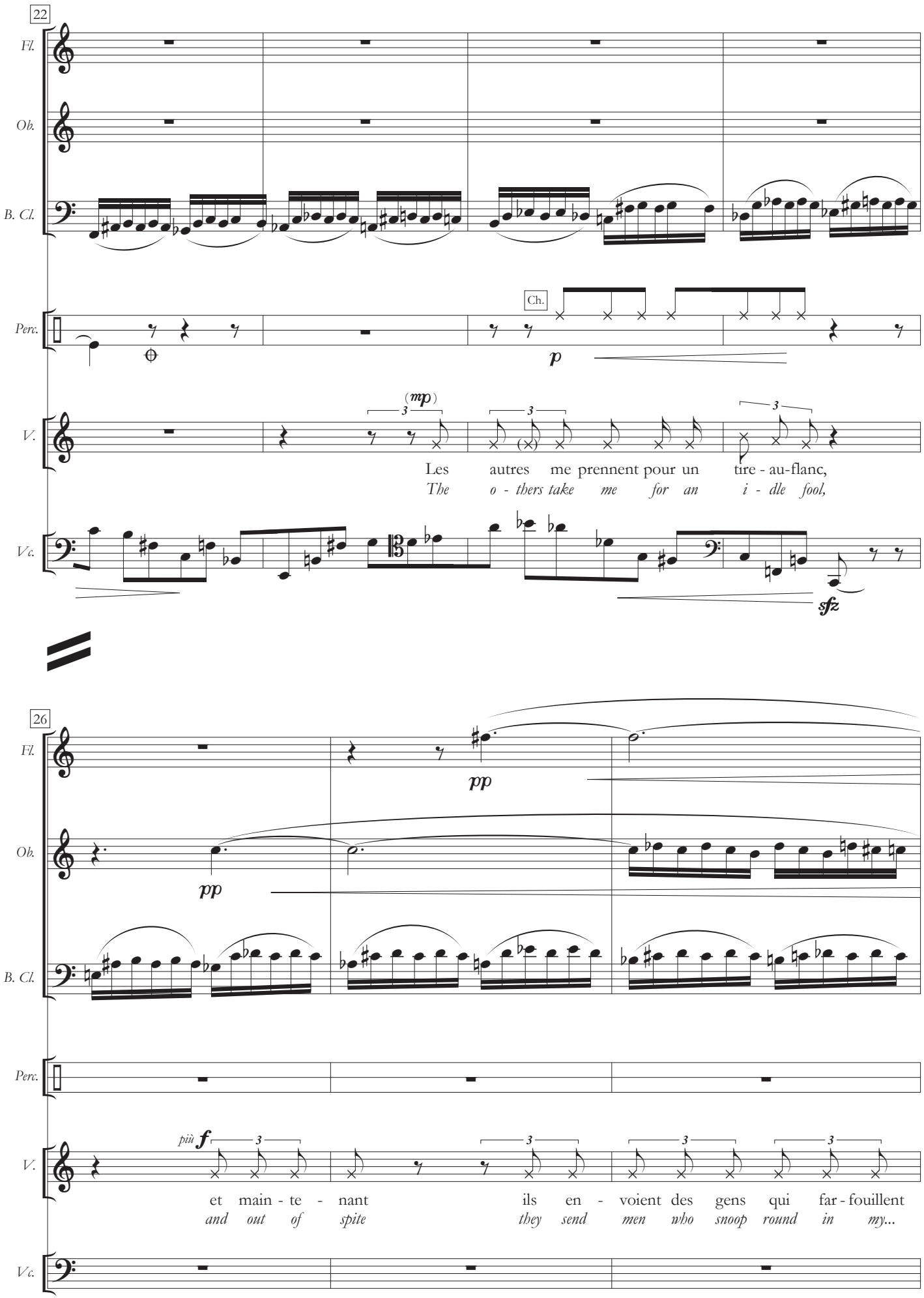

31
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Perc.
V.
Vc.
Crotales
(*)
con intimissima espressione
dann lebt der e - wig, der in der Ge - gen - wart lebt.
ø sub.
39
Muta in
clarinetto basso
l.v.
(segue *Struggling*)

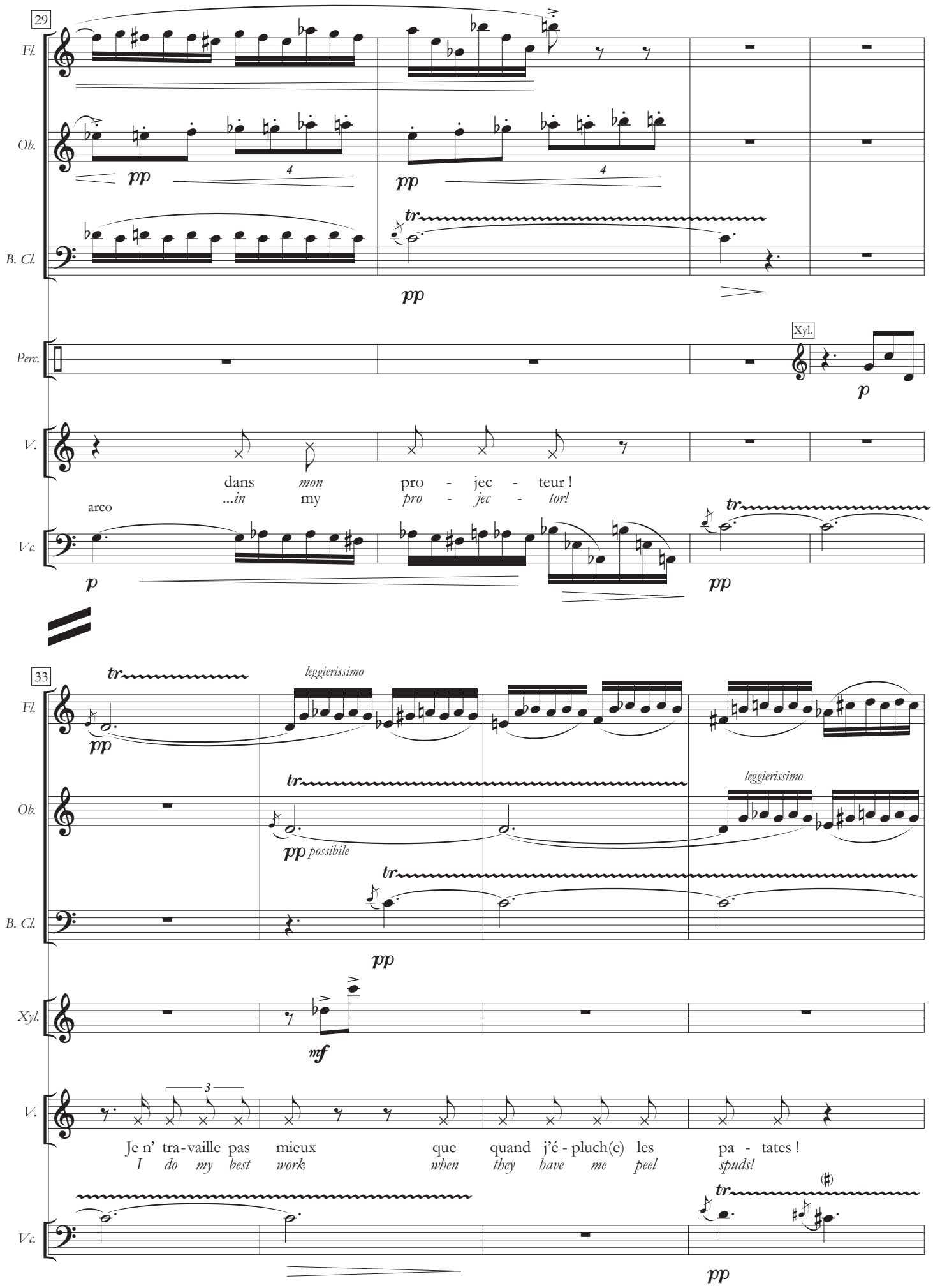
# III - Struggling

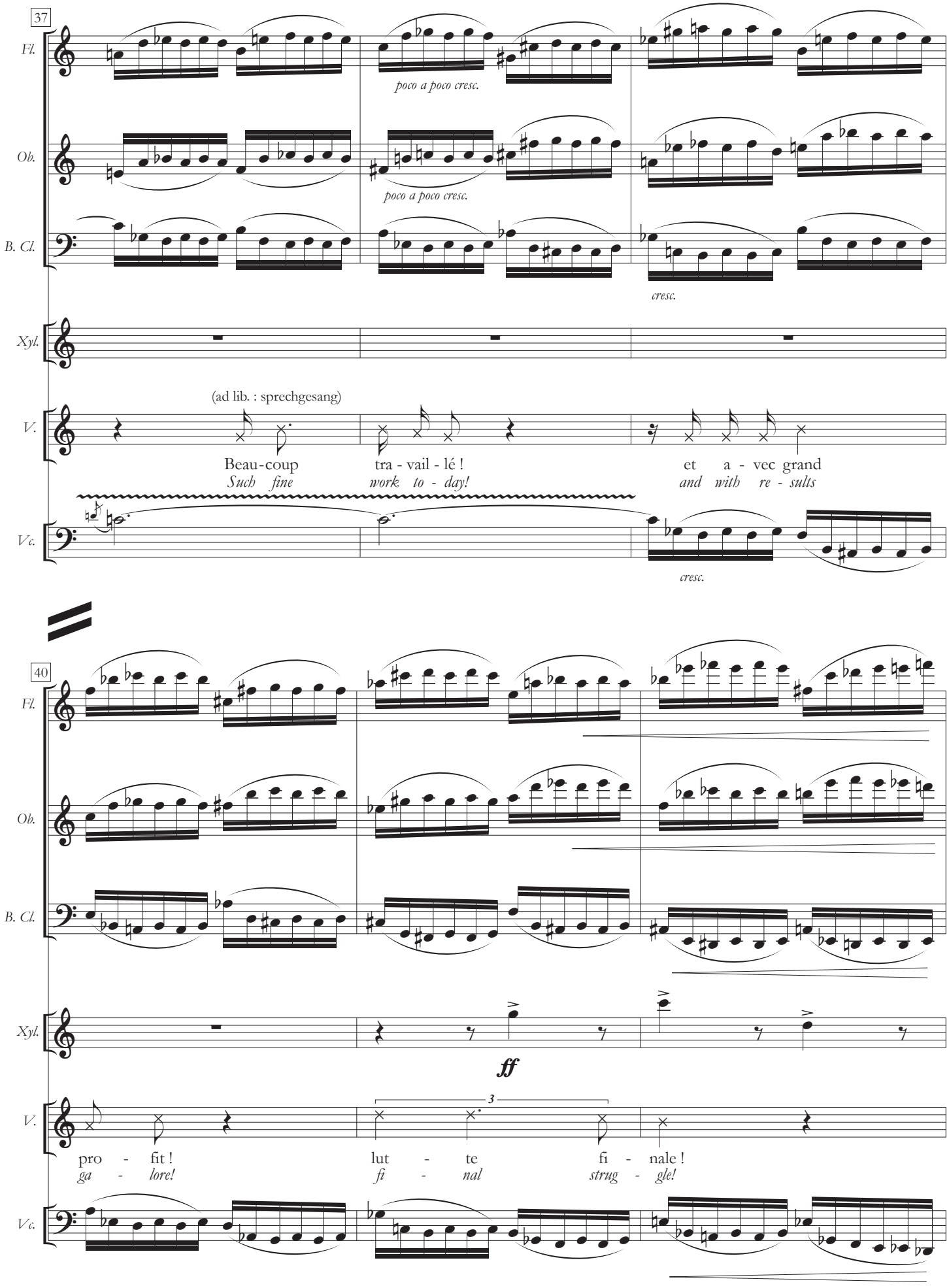


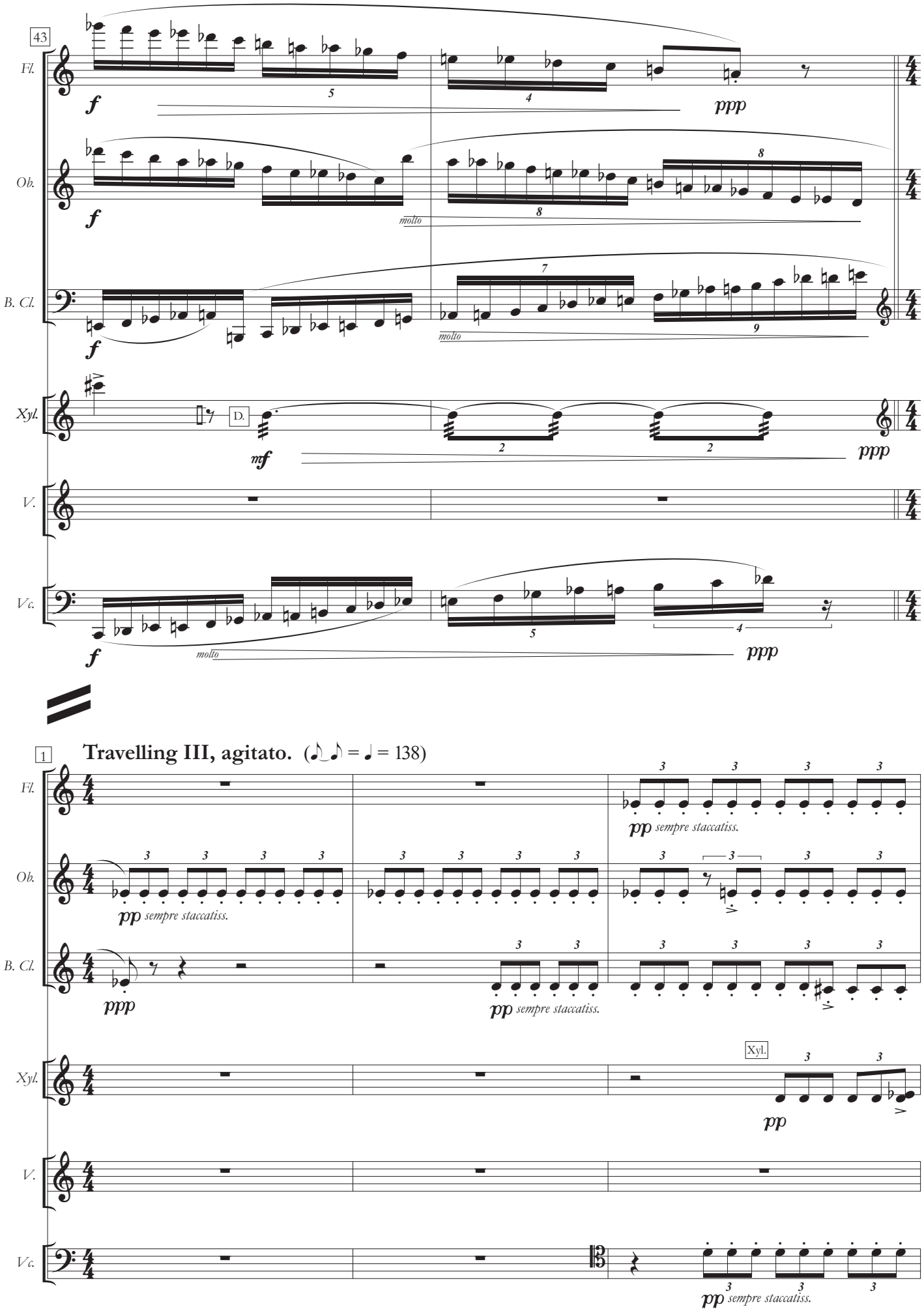

9
Fl.
Ob.
B. Cl.
Perc.
Cym.
B.D.
V.
Vc.
3
per - ma - nente.
all day long.
On voit les gre - nades ex - plo - ser !
Gre-nades left and right, light and sound!
13
agitato
Tam
pizz.

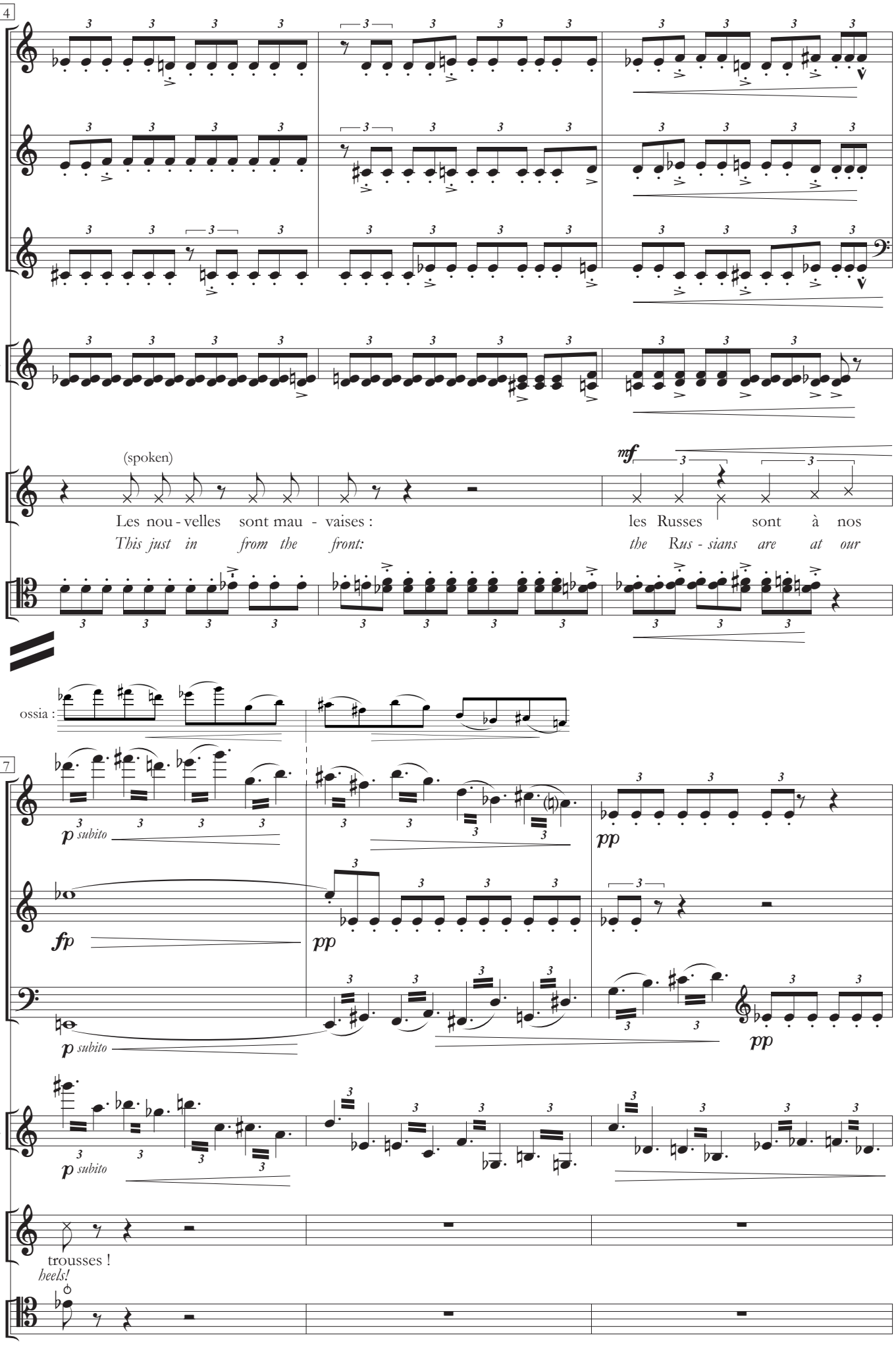

16
Fl.
Ob.
B. Cl.
Perc.
V.
Vc.
p agitato
cresc.
pp cresc.
S.D. ppp
p
mp
l.v.
(breathless)
Dans la nuit dans un de - mi som - meil
At mid - night in a half a - wake daze
arco (ord)
p sub., non leg.
19
sfz
p
mf
f
D.
ff
Tam
f
à nou - veau
once a - gain
mas - tur - bé !
mas - tur - ba - ted!
pizz.
f

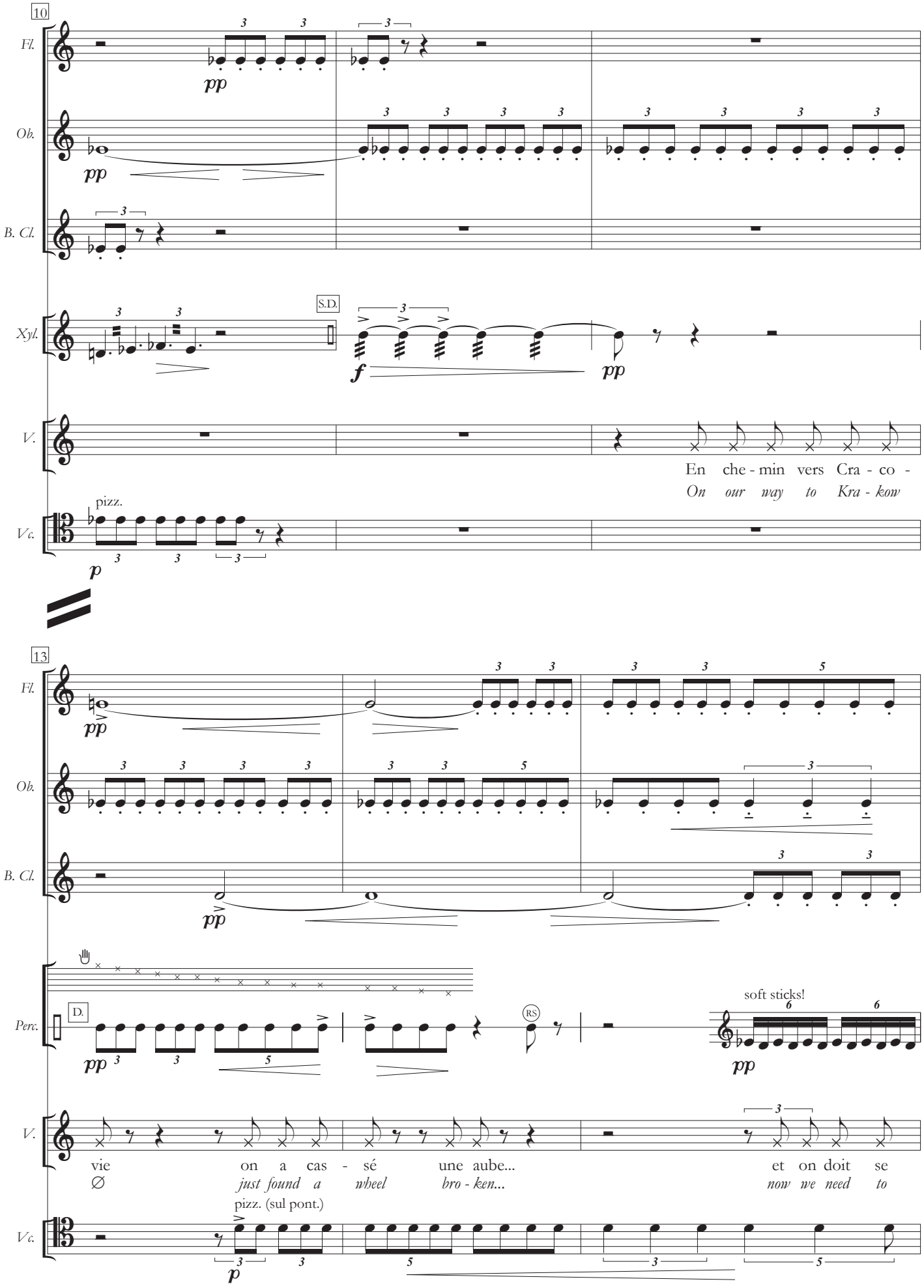

22
Fl.
Ob.
B. Cl.
Perc.
Ch.
p
V.
(mp)
Les autres me prennent pour un tire - au-flanc,
The o - thers take me for an i - dle fool,
Vc.
sfz
26
Fl.
pp
Ob.
pp
B. Cl.
Perc.
V.
più f
et main - te - nant ils en - voient des gens qui far - fouillent
and out of spite they send men who snoop round in my...
Vc.

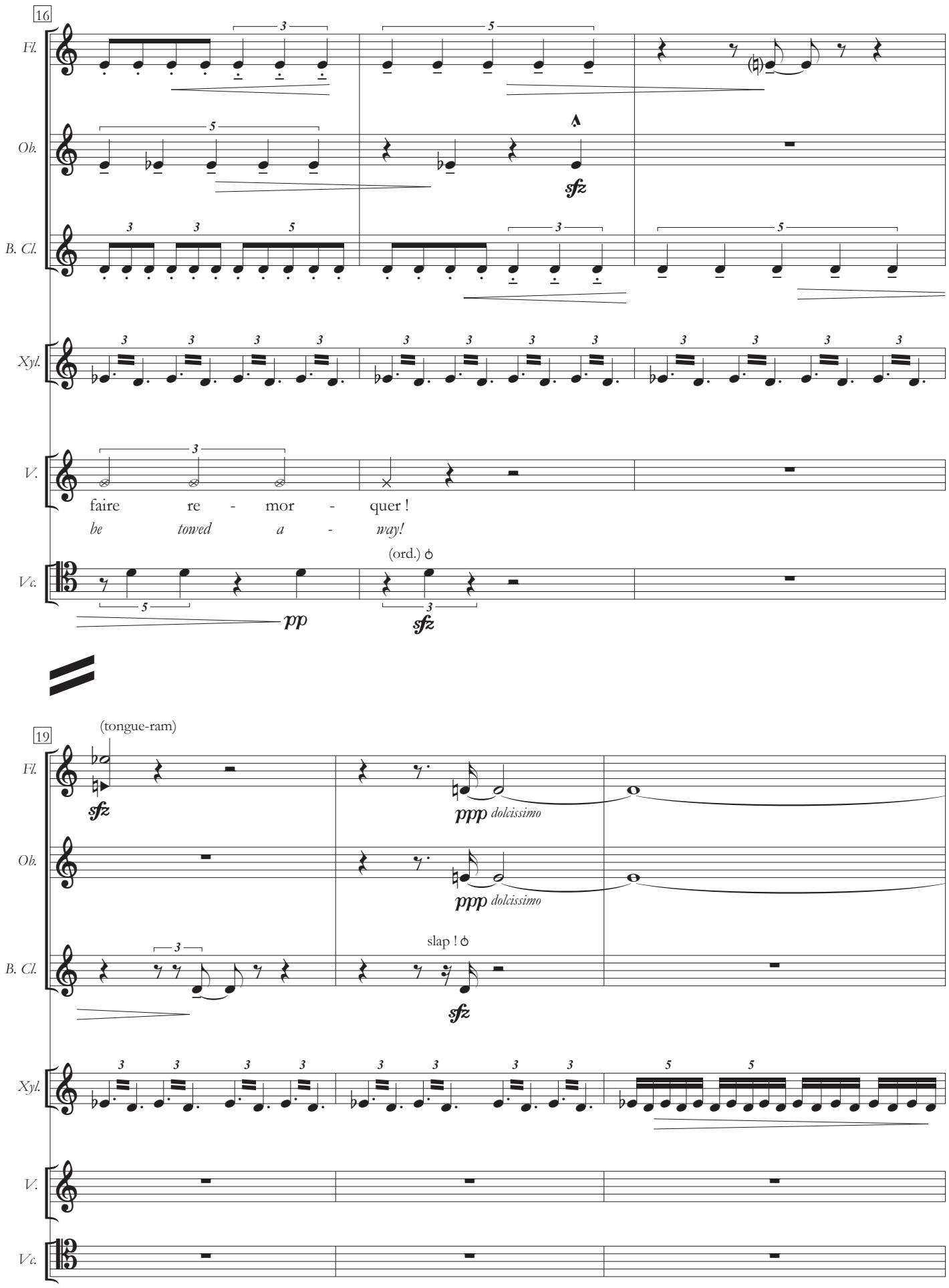

29
Fl.
Ob.
B. Cl.
Perc.
Xyl.
V.
Vc.
pp
4
tr
p
dans mon pro - jec - teur !
...in my pro - jec - tor!
arco
33
leggierissimo
pp possibile
mf
3
Je n' tra-vaille pas mieux que quand j'é - pluch(e) les pa - tates !
I do my best work when they have me peel spuds!

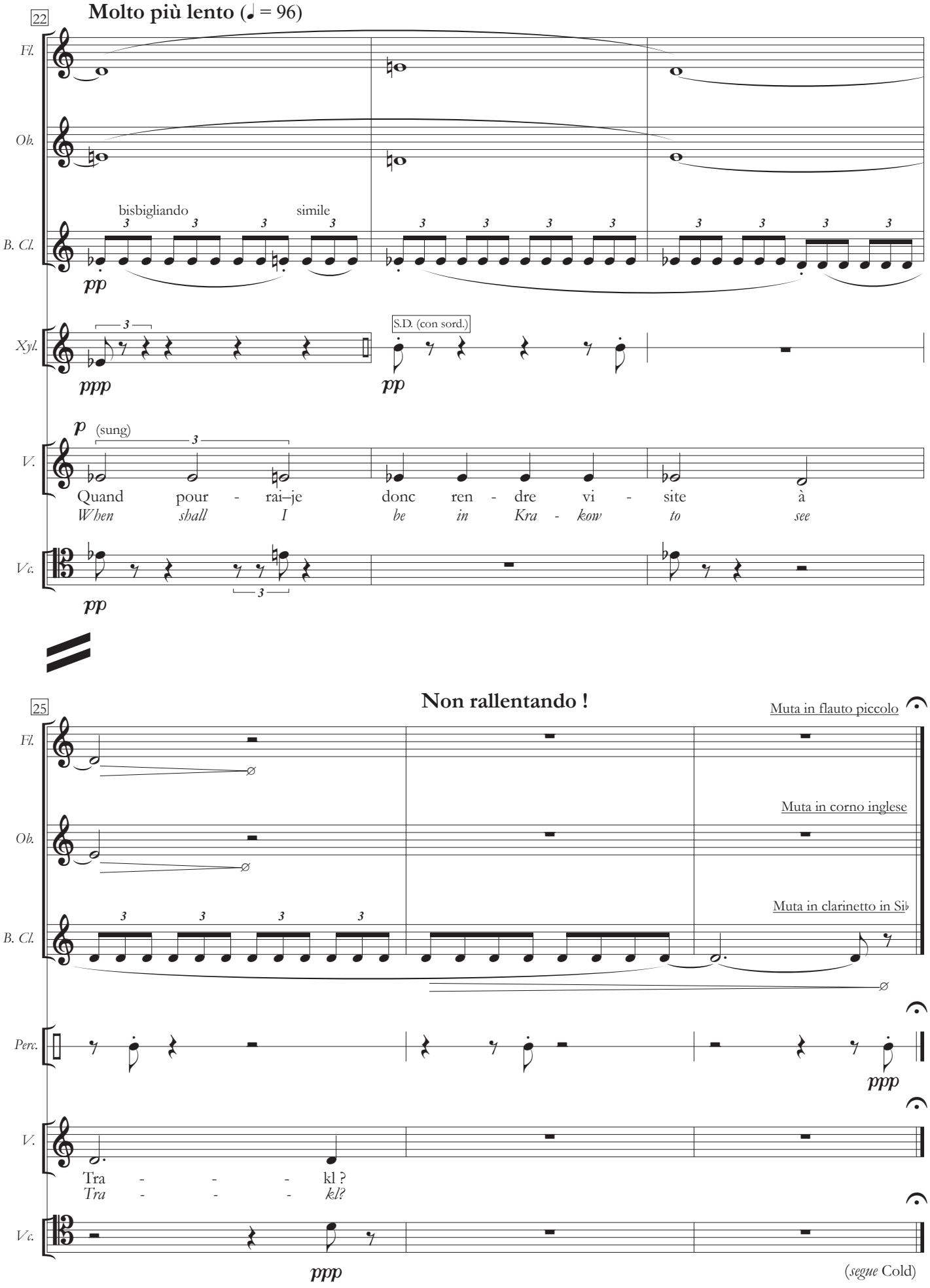

37
Fl.
Ob.
B. Cl.
Xyl.
V.
Vc.
poco a poco cresc.
poco a poco cresc.
cresc.
(ad lib. : sprechgesang)
Beau-coup tra - vail - lé ! et a - vec grand
Such fine work to - day! and with re - sults
cresc.
40
Fl.
Ob.
B. Cl.
Xyl.
ff
V.
3
pro - fit ! lut - te fi - nale !
ga - lore! fi - nal strug - gle!
Vc.


43
Fl.
Ob.
B. Cl.
Xyl.
V.
Vc.
D.
molto
1
Travelling III, agitato. (♪♪ = ♩ = 138)
pp sempre staccatiss.
ppp
Xyl.

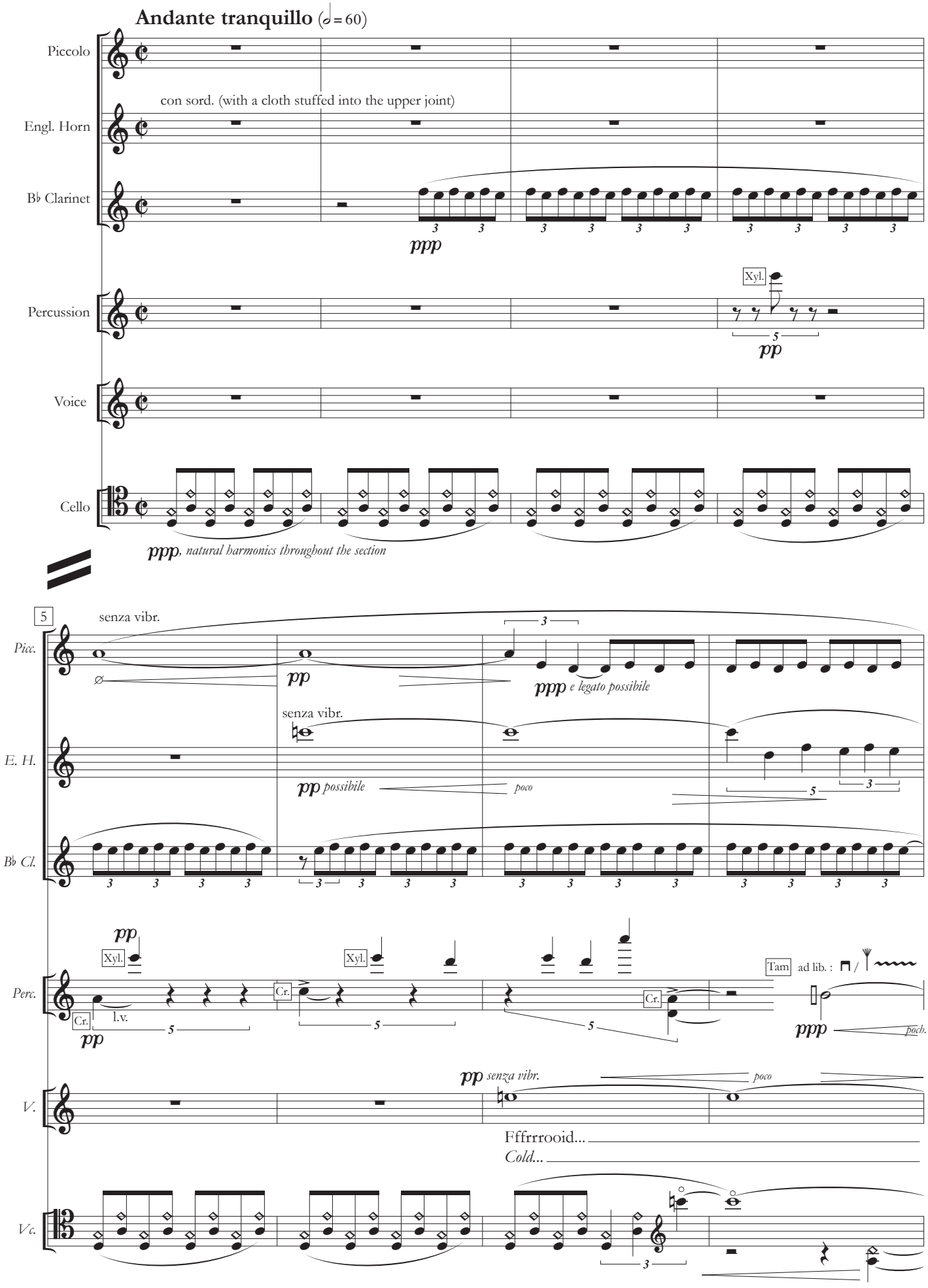

4
Fl.
Ob.
B. Cl.
Xyl.
(spoken)
V.
mf
Les nou - velles sont mau - vaises :
les Russes sont à nos
This just in from the front:
the Rus - sians are at our
Vc.
ossia :
7
p subito
pp
fp
pp
p subito
pp
p subito
trousses !
heels!

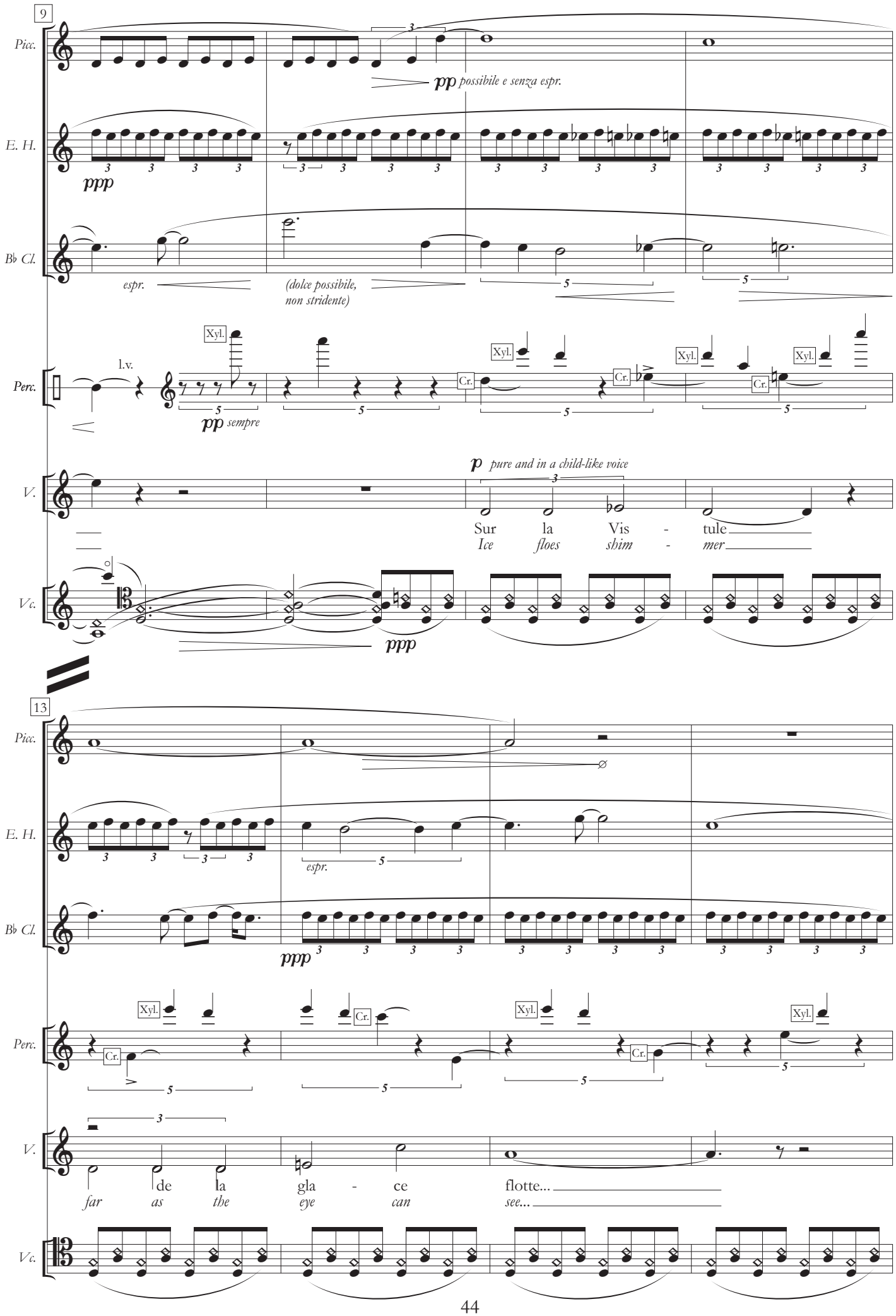

10
Fl.
Ob.
B. Cl.
Xyl.
S.D.
V.
En che - min vers Cra - co -
On our way to Kra - kow
pizz.
Vc.
13
Fl.
Ob.
B. Cl.
Perc.
D.
RS
soft sticks!
V.
vie on a cas - sé une aube... et on doit se
∅ just found a wheel bro - ken... now we need to
pizz. (sul pont.)
Vc.

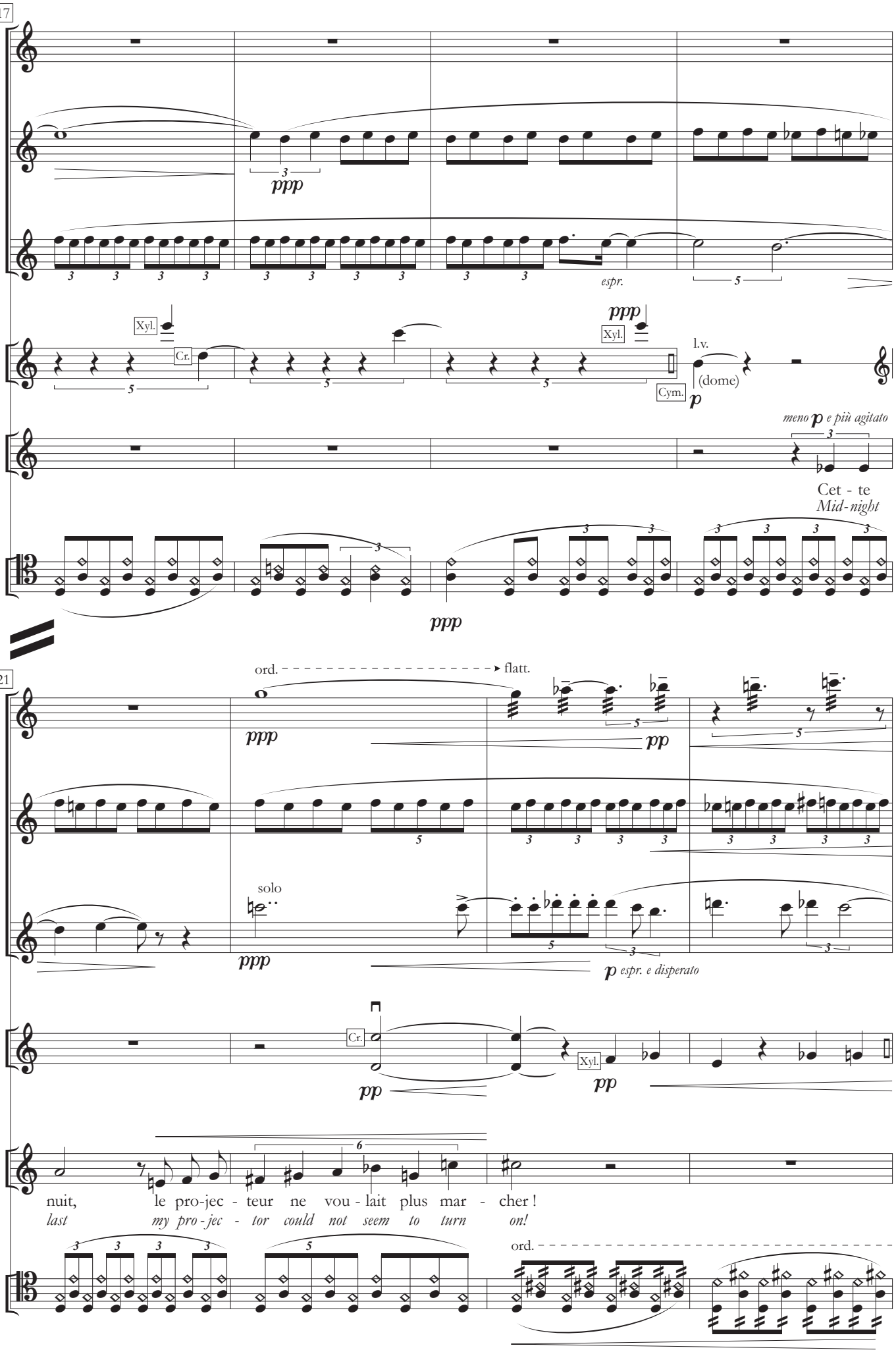

16
Fl.
Ob.
B. Cl.
Xyl.
V.
Vc.
sfz
faire re - mor - quer !
be towed a - way!
(ord.)
pp
sfz
19
(tongue-ram)
sfz
ppp dolcissimo
ppp dolcissimo
slap !
sfz

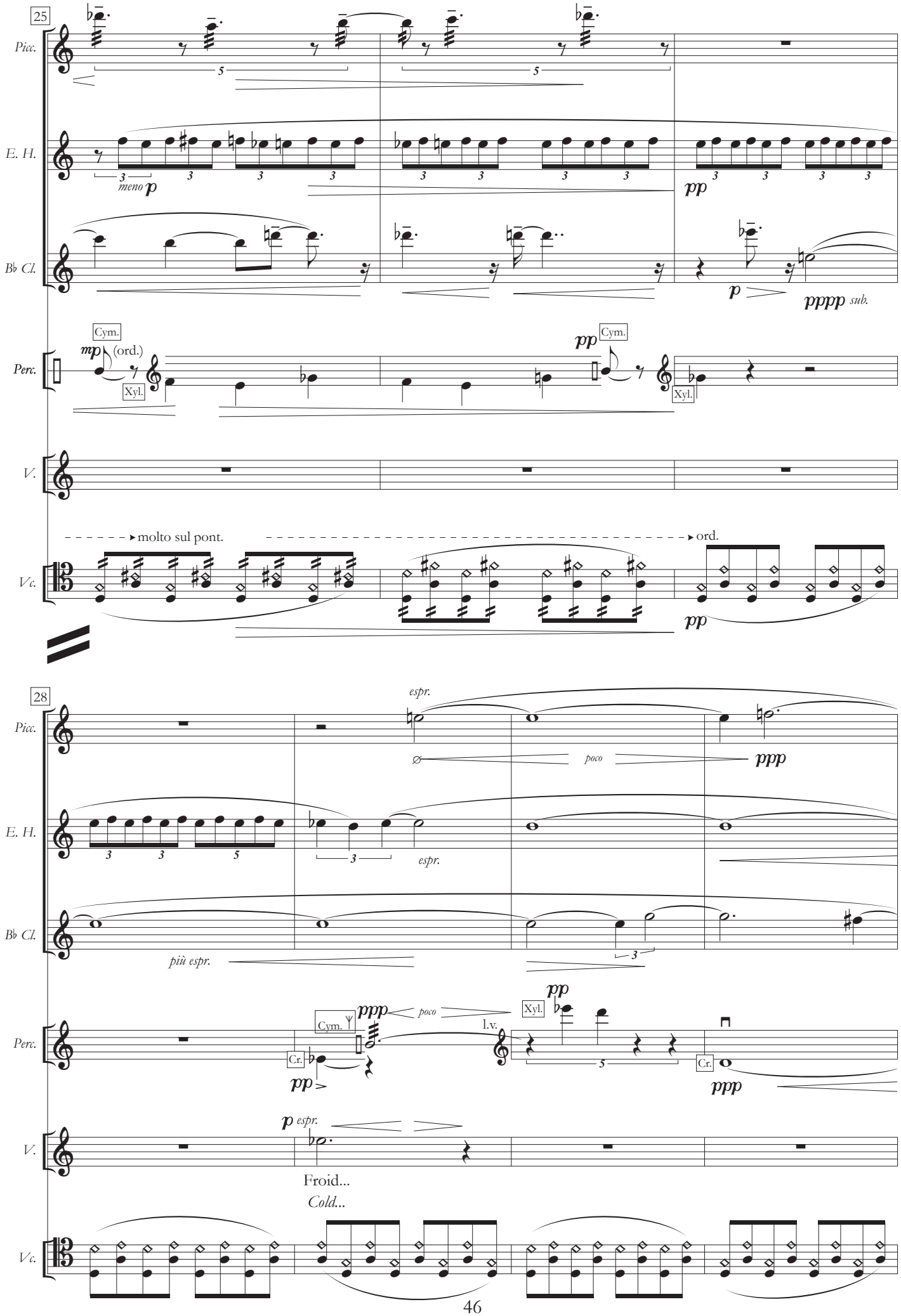

22
Molto più lento (♩ = 96)
Fl.
Ob.
B. Cl.
bisbigliando
simile
pp
Xyl.
ppp
S.D. (con sord.)
pp
p (sung)
V.
Quand pour - rai–je donc ren - dre vi - site à
When shall I be in Kra - kow to see
Vc.
pp
25
Non rallentando !
Muta in flauto piccolo
Muta in corno inglese
Muta in clarinetto in Si♭
Perc.
ppp
Tra - - - kl ?
Tra - - - kl?
ppp
(segue Cold)

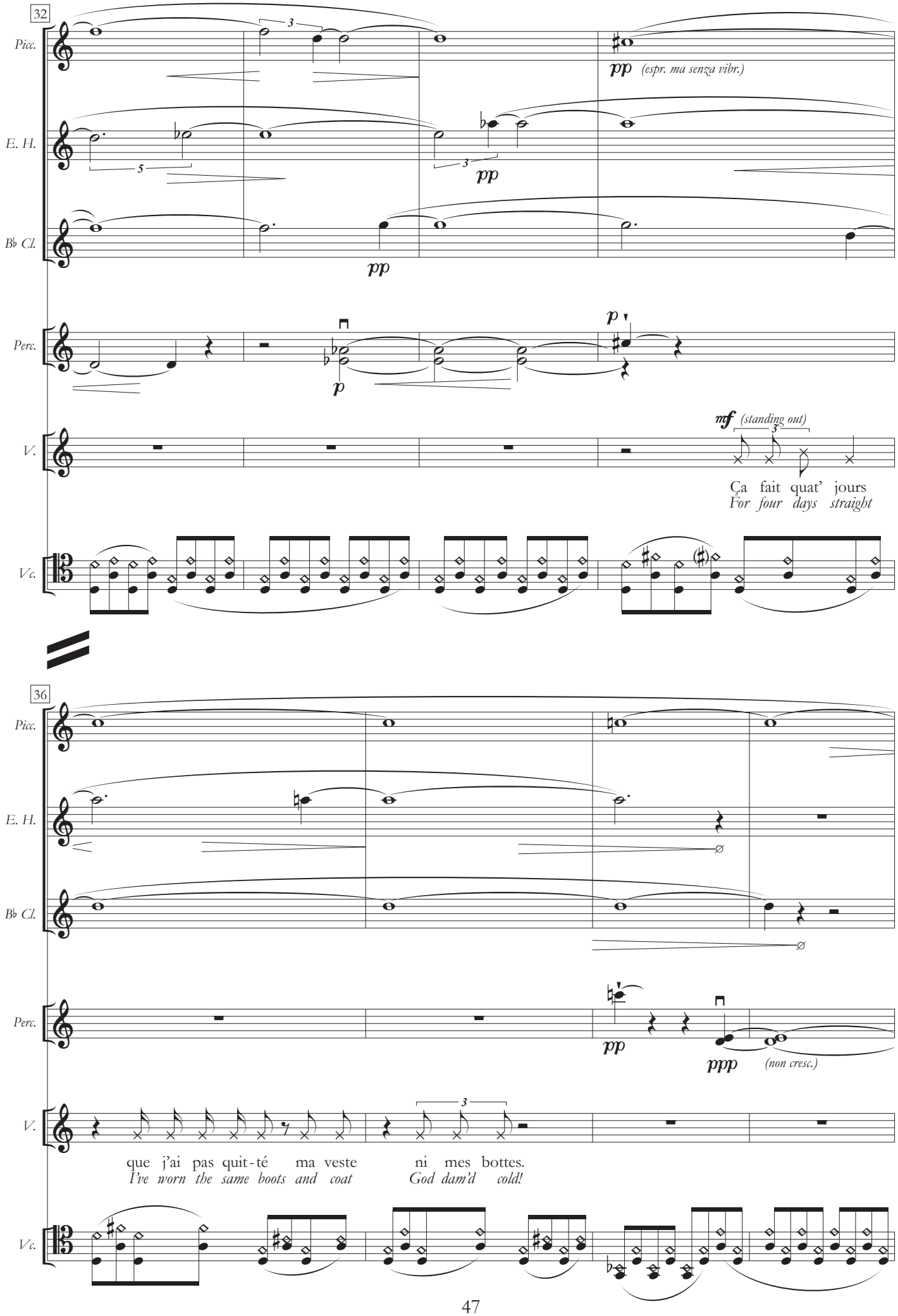
# IV - Cold

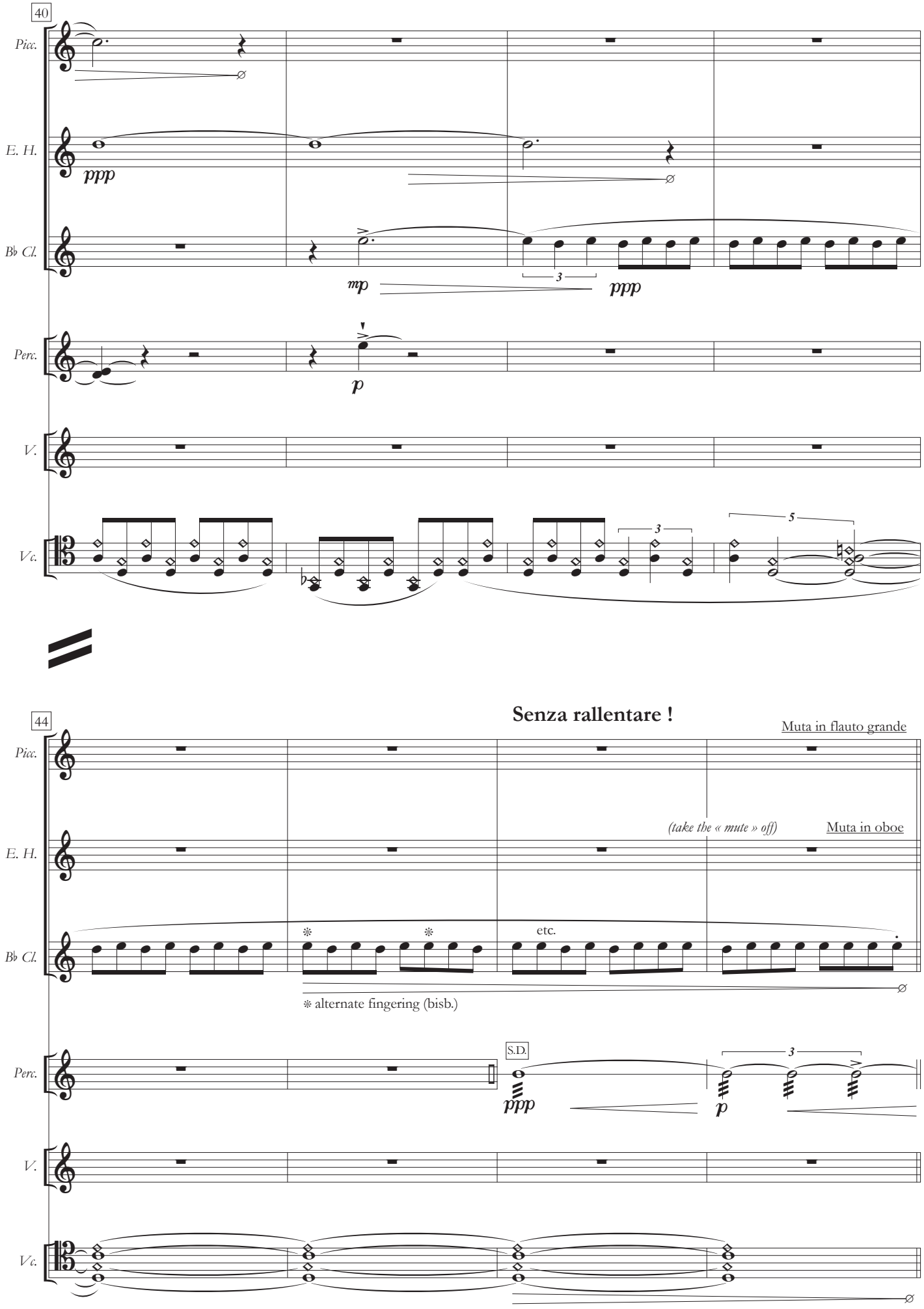

Andante tranquillo (♩ = 60)
Piccolo
con sord. (with a cloth stuffed into the upper joint)
Engl. Horn
B♭ Clarinet
ppp
Percussion
Xyl.
pp
Voice
Cello
ppp, natural harmonics throughout the section
5
senza vibr.
Picc.
pp
ppp e legato possibile
senza vibr.
E. H.
pp possibile
poco
B♭ Cl.
pp
Xyl.
Xyl.
Perc.
Cr.
l.v.
Cr.
Cr.
Tam
ad lib. :
ppp
poch.
pp senza vibr.
poco
V.
Fffrrrooid...
Cold...
Vc.


9
Picc.
E. H.
B♭ Cl.
Perc.
V.
Vc.
pp possibile e senza espr.
ppp
espr.
(dolce possibile, non stridente)
Xyl.
Cr.
l.v.
pp sempre
p pure and in a child-like voice
Sur la Vis - tule
Ice floes shim - mer
ppp
13
Picc.
E. H.
B♭ Cl.
Perc.
V.
Vc.
espr.
ppp
Xyl.
Cr.
de la gla - ce flotte...
far as the eye can see...


17
Picc.
E. H.
Bb Cl.
Perc.
V.
Vc.
ppp
espr.
Xyl.
Cr.
Cym.
l.v.
(dome)
p
meno p e più agitato
Cet - te
Mid-night
21
ord.
flatt.
pp
solo
p espr. e disperato
nuit, le pro-jec - teur ne vou - lait plus mar - cher !
last my pro - jec - tor could not seem to turn on!

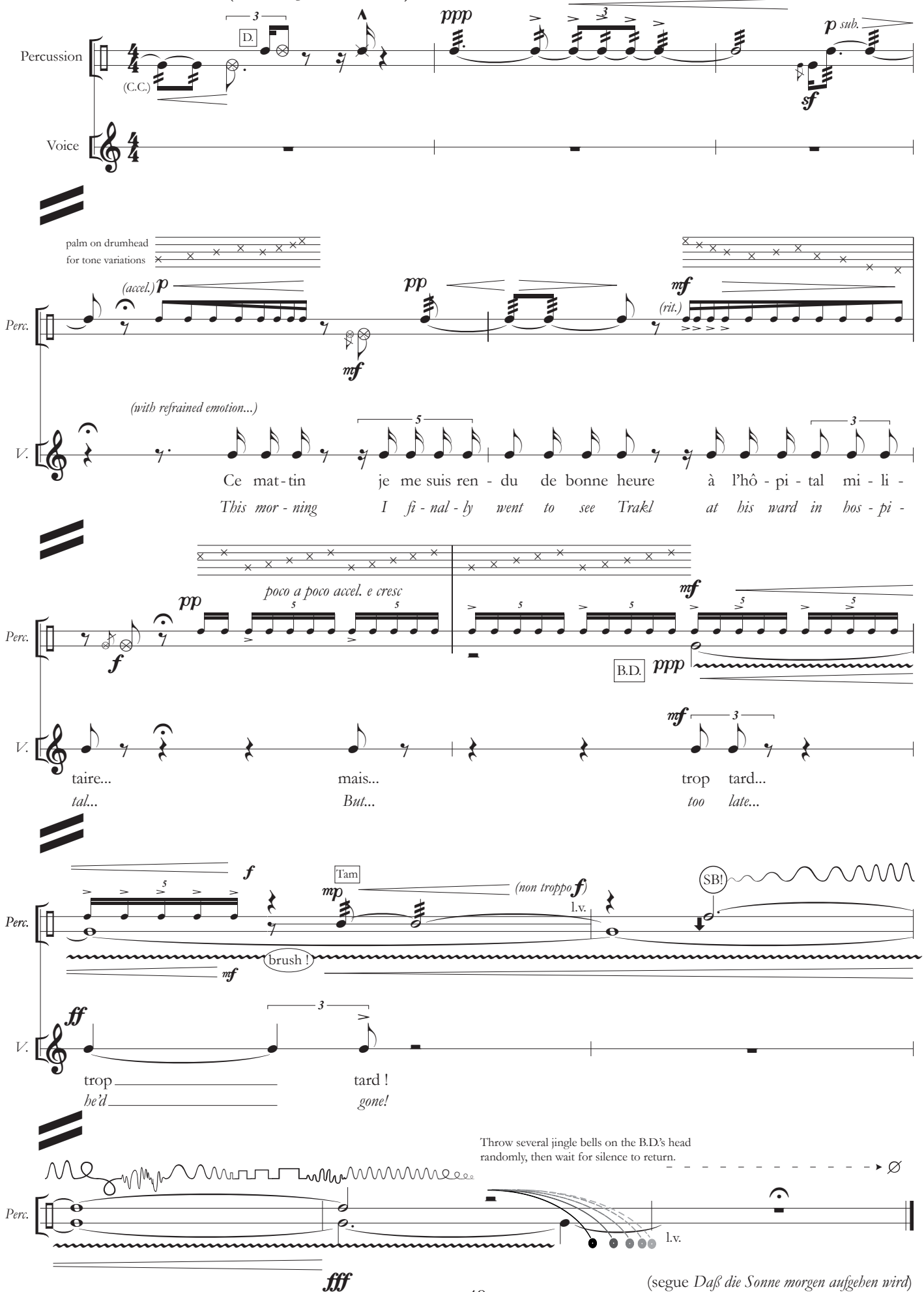

25
Picc.
E. H.
meno p
pp
Bb Cl.
p
pppp sub.
Cym.
mp (ord.)
Xyl.
pp
Perc.
V.
molto sul pont.
ord.
Vc.
pp
28
espr.
poco
ppp
più espr.
l.v.
Cr.
p espr.
Froid...
Cold...


32
Picc.
E. H.
B♭ Cl.
Perc.
V.
Vc.
pp (espr. ma senza vibr.)
pp
pp
p
p
mf (standing out)
Ça fait quat' jours
For four days straight
36
Picc.
E. H.
B♭ Cl.
Perc.
V.
Vc.
pp
ppp (non cresc.)
que j'ai pas quit-té ma veste ni mes bottes.
I've worn the same boots and coat God dam'd cold!


40
Picc.
E. H.
ppp
B♭ Cl.
mp
3
ppp
Perc.
p
V.
Vc.
3
5
44
Senza rallentare !
Muta in flauto grande
Picc.
(take the « mute » off)
Muta in oboe
E. H.
B♭ Cl.
etc.
alternate fingering (bisb.)
S.D.
Perc.
ppp
3
p
V.
Vc.

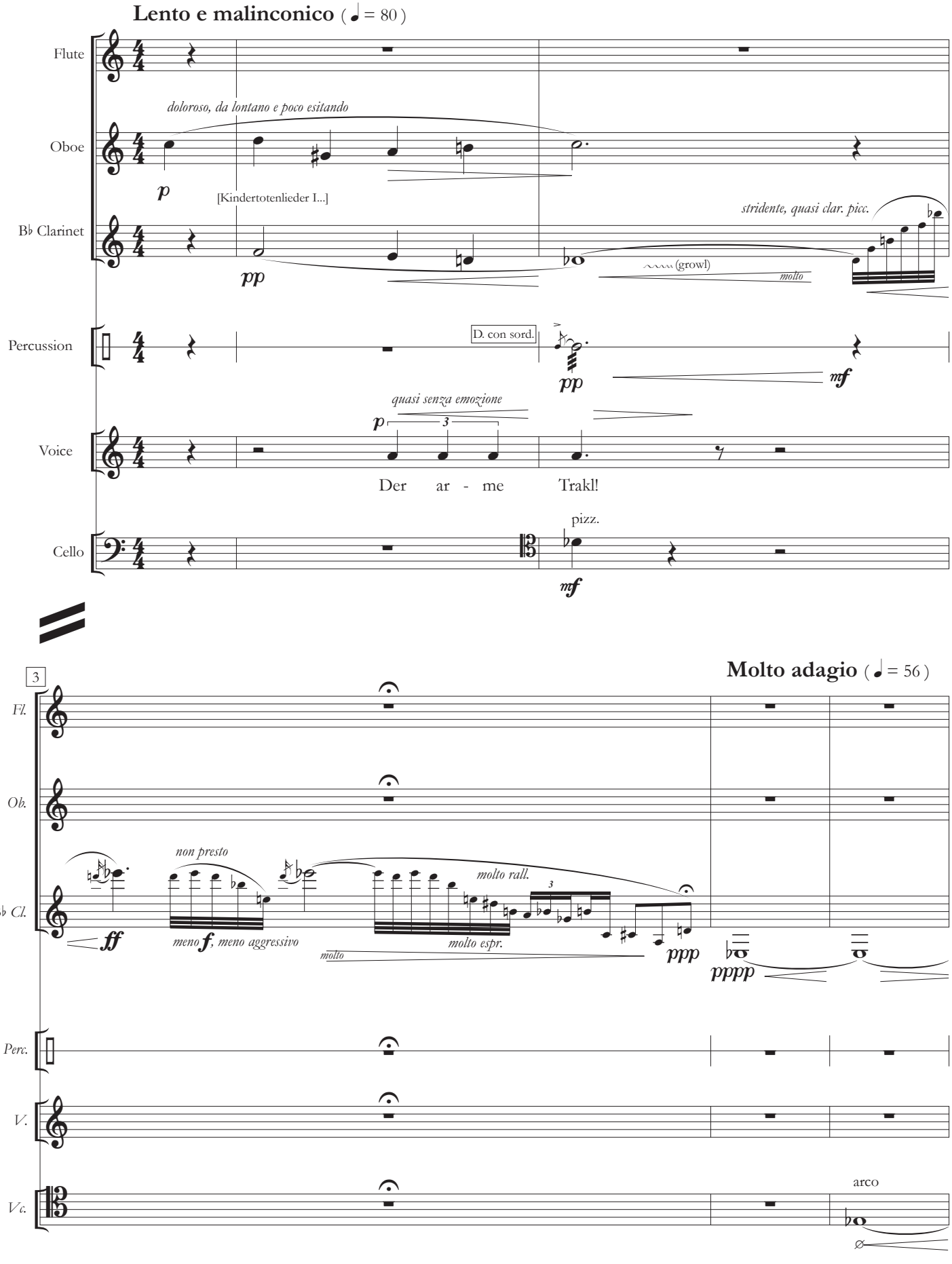
## *IV - B*

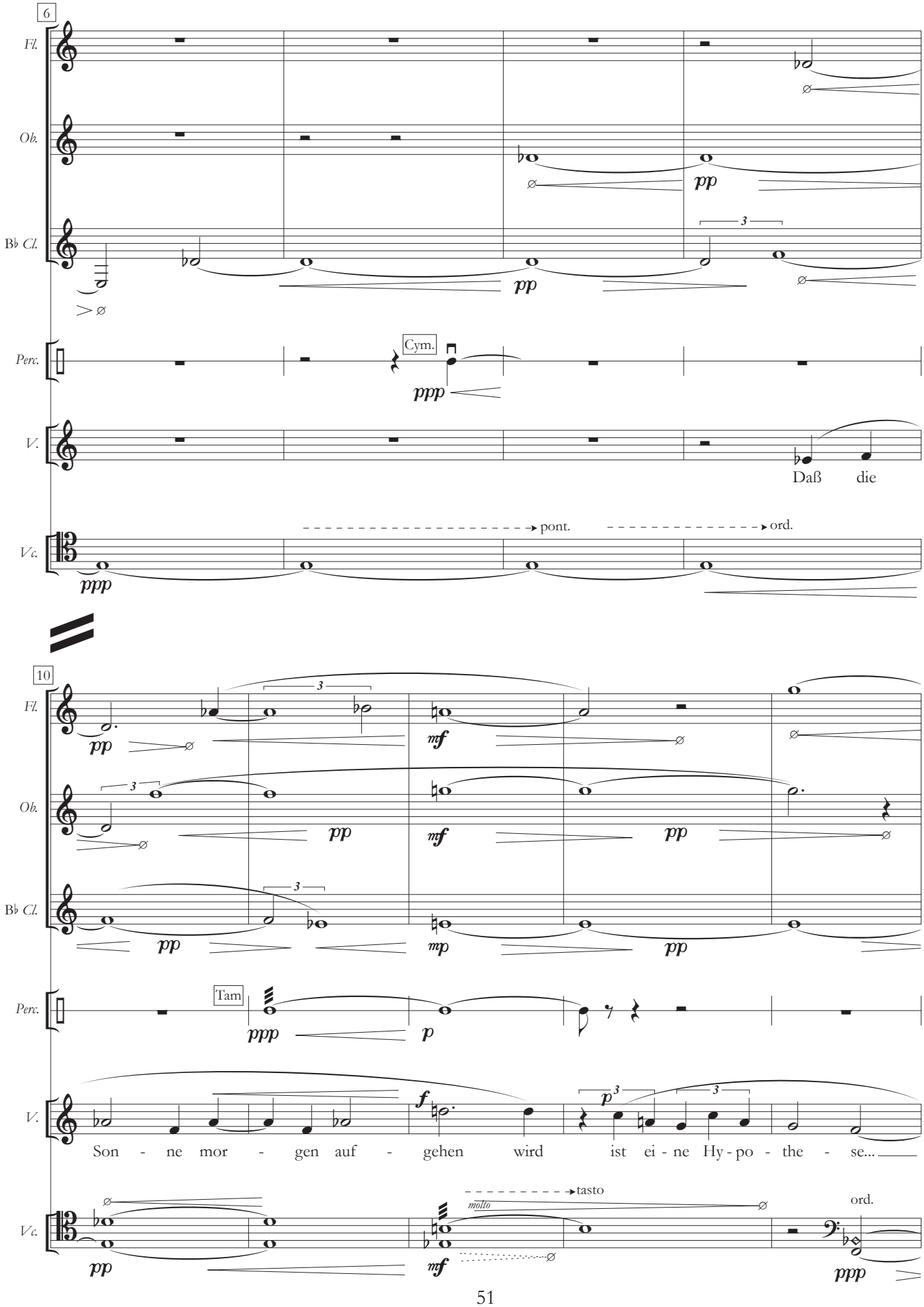
**Recitativo** (♩ = 𝅗𝅥 of previous section)

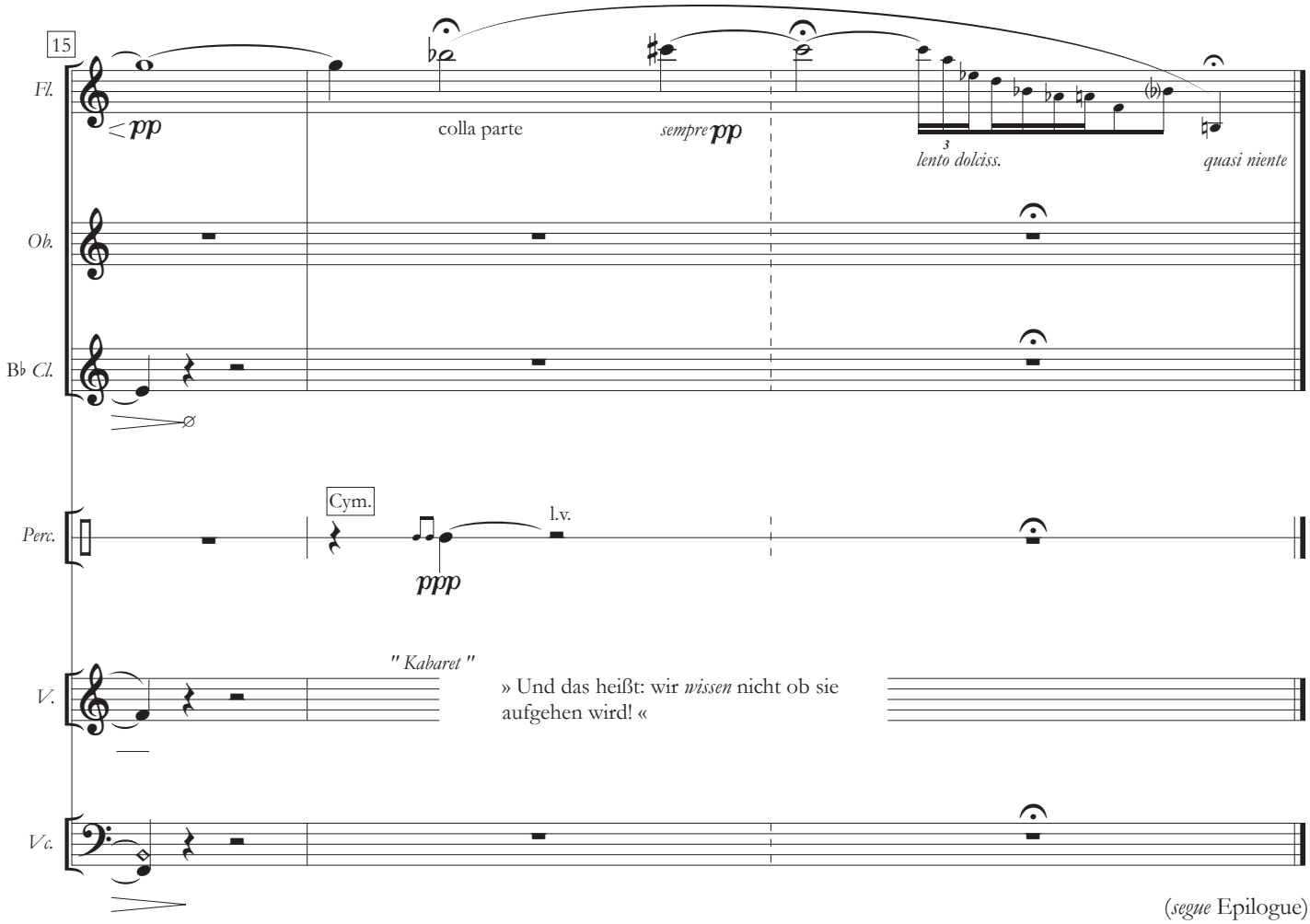



(segue *Daß die Sonne morgen aufgehen wird*)

# Daß die Sonne morgen aufgehen wird

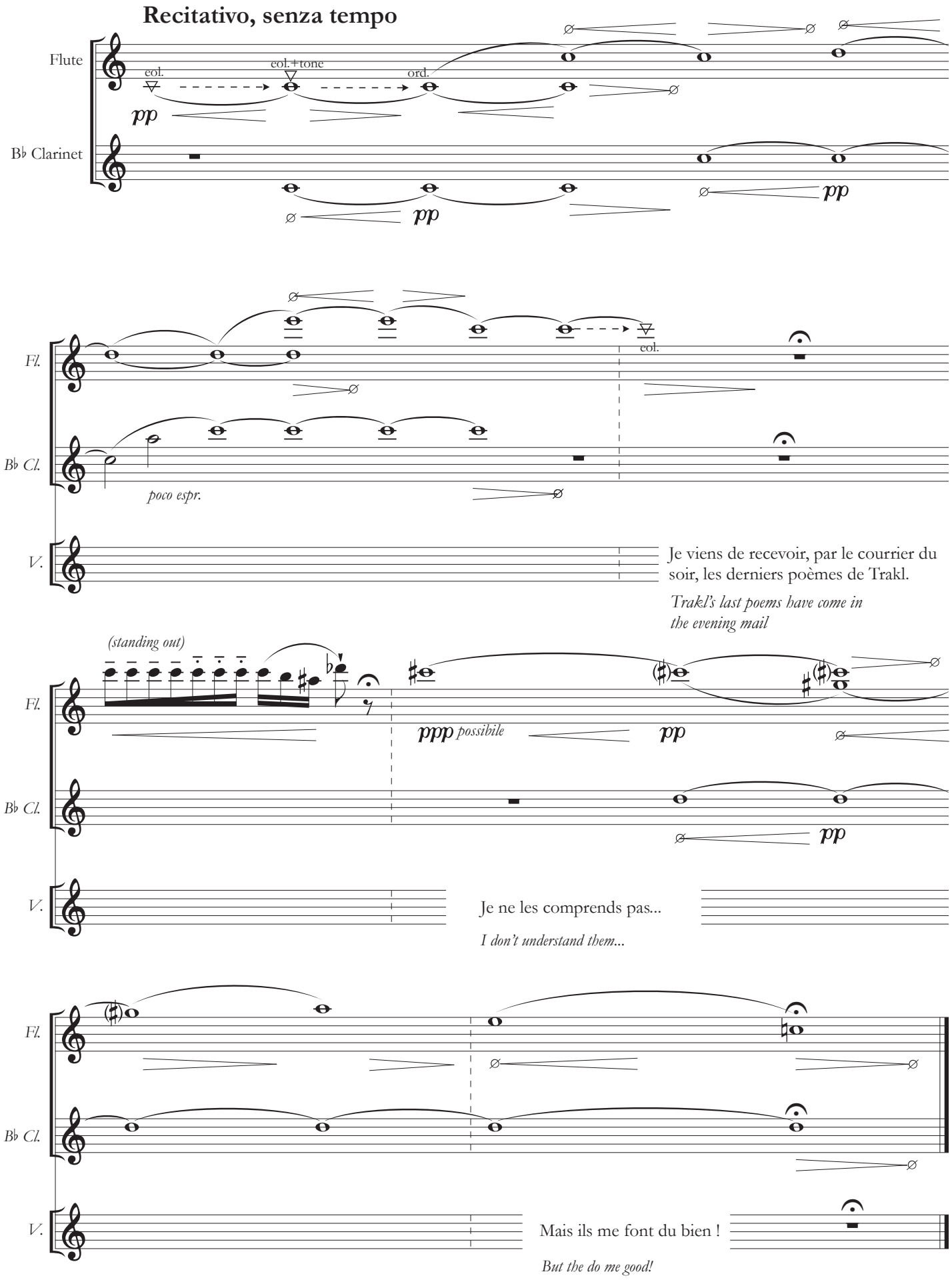



6
Fl.
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Perv.
Cym.
V.
Daß die
Vc.
pont.
ord.
10
Tam
Son - ne mor - gen auf - gehen wird ist ei - ne Hy - po - the - se...
molto
tasto
ord.


15
Fl.
pp
colla parte
sempre pp
3
lento dolciss.
quasi niente
Ob.
B♭ Cl.
Perc.
Cym.
l.v.
ppp
" Kabaret "
V.
» Und das heißt: wir *wissen* nicht ob sie aufgehen wird! «
Vc.
(*segue* Epilogue)

# V - Epilogue

**Recitativo, senza tempo**



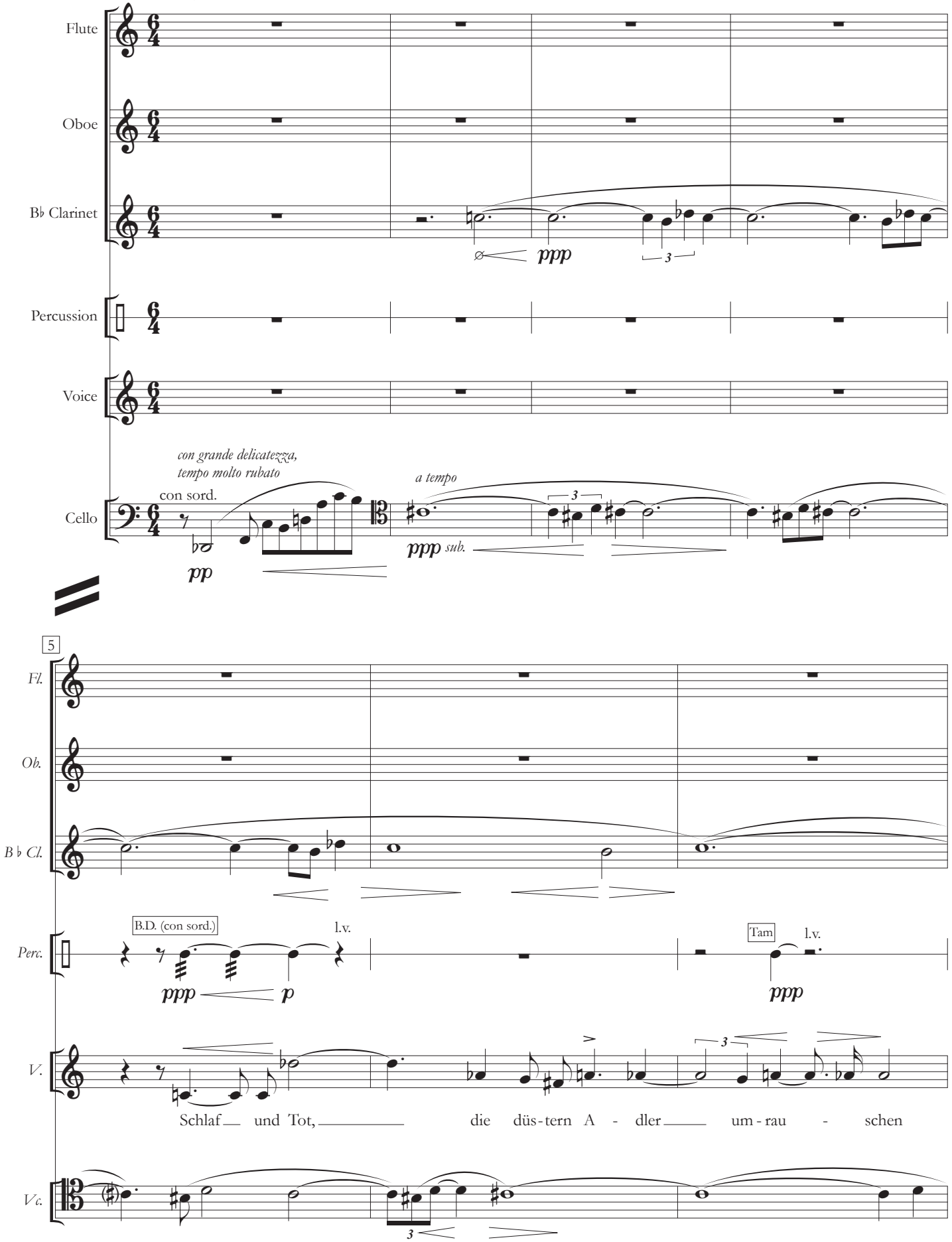



(*segue* Klage)

# Klage

*To David Sanson.*

**Adagio meditativo** (♩ = 54)



8

*espr.*

*Fl.*

*Ob.*

*ppp*

*B♭ Cl.*

*Perc.*

Cym.

l.v.

*ppp*

*V.*

nacht - lang dieses Haupt: des Men - schen gold - nes Bild - nis

*Vc.*

senza sord.

sul tasto

*ppp*

11

*Fl.*

*ppp* *pp*

*Ob.*

*pp cresc.*

*B♭ Cl.*

*pp cresc.*

*Perc.*

Cym.

l.v.

Crotales

l.v.

(center)

*pp* *p* *mp* *mf*

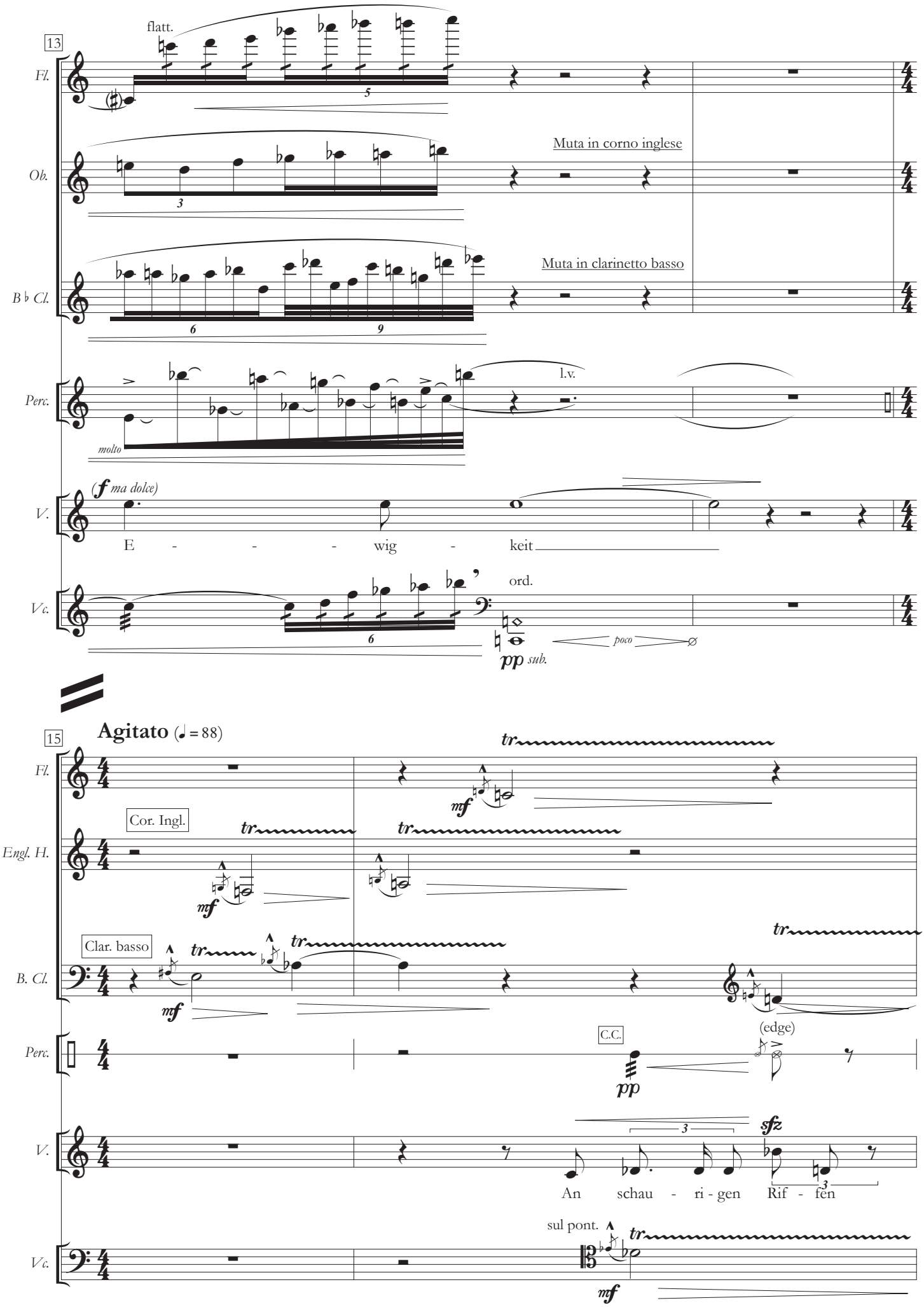
*V.*

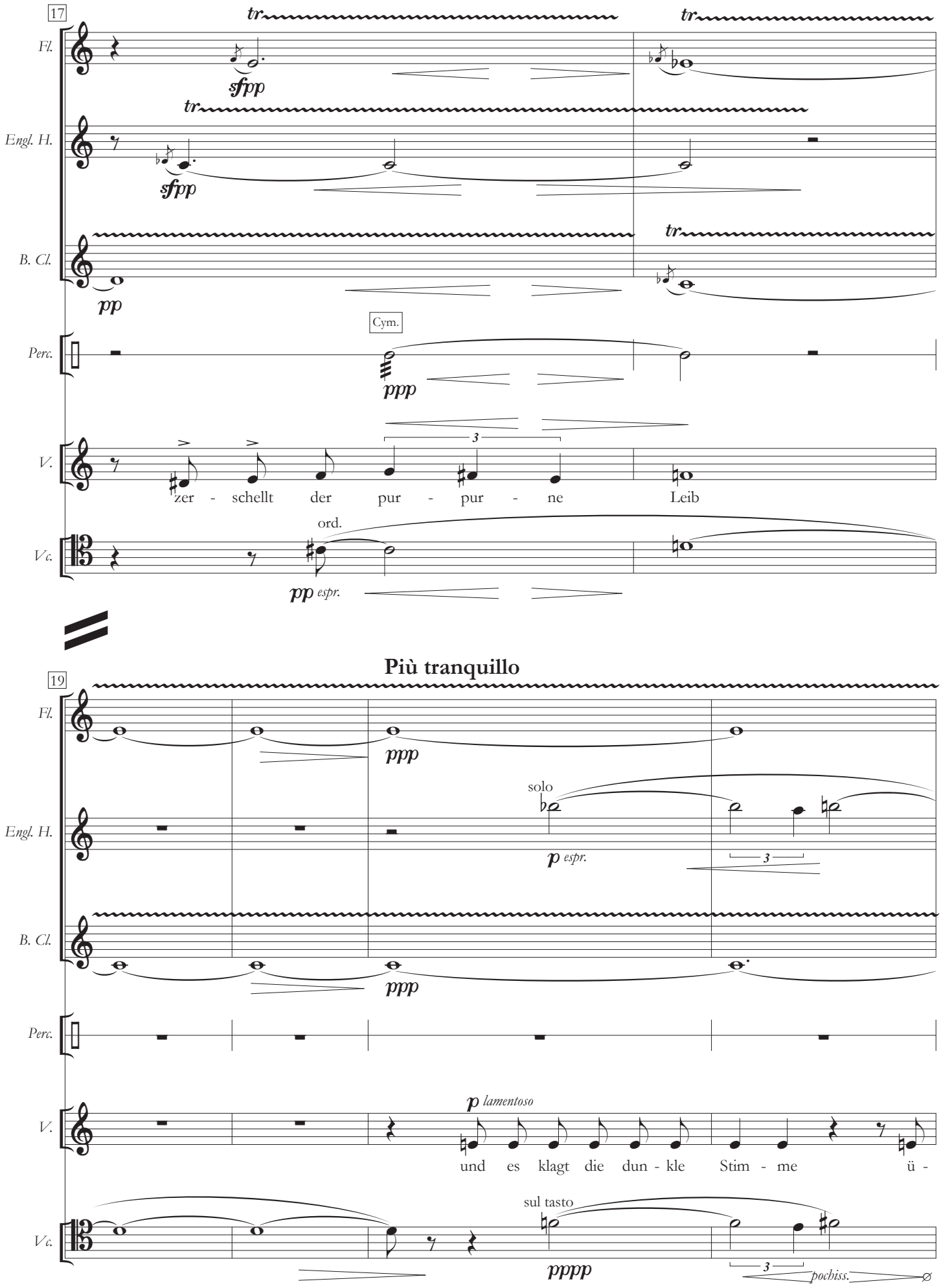
ver-schlän-ge die ei - si - ge Wo - - - ge der

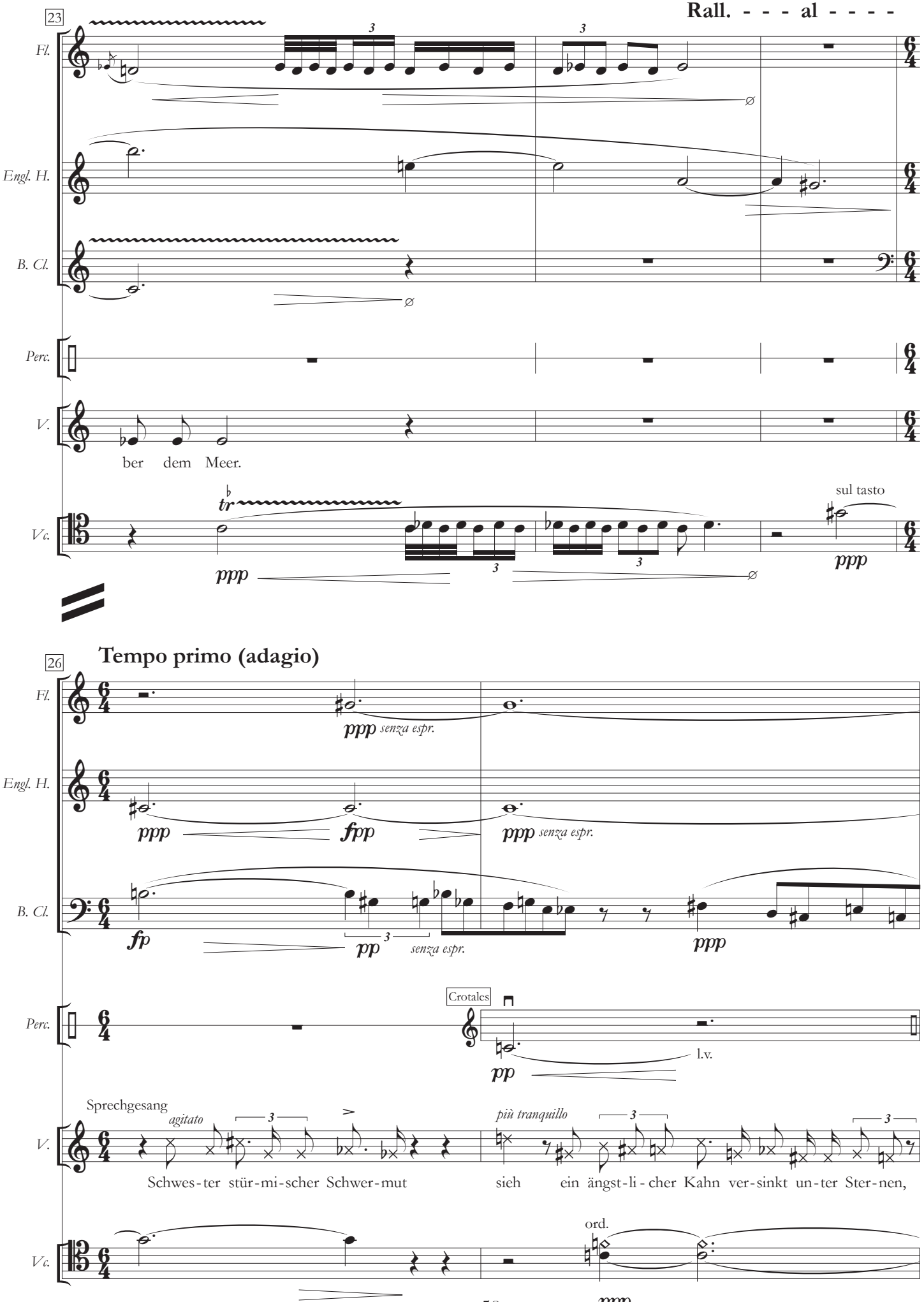
*Vc.*

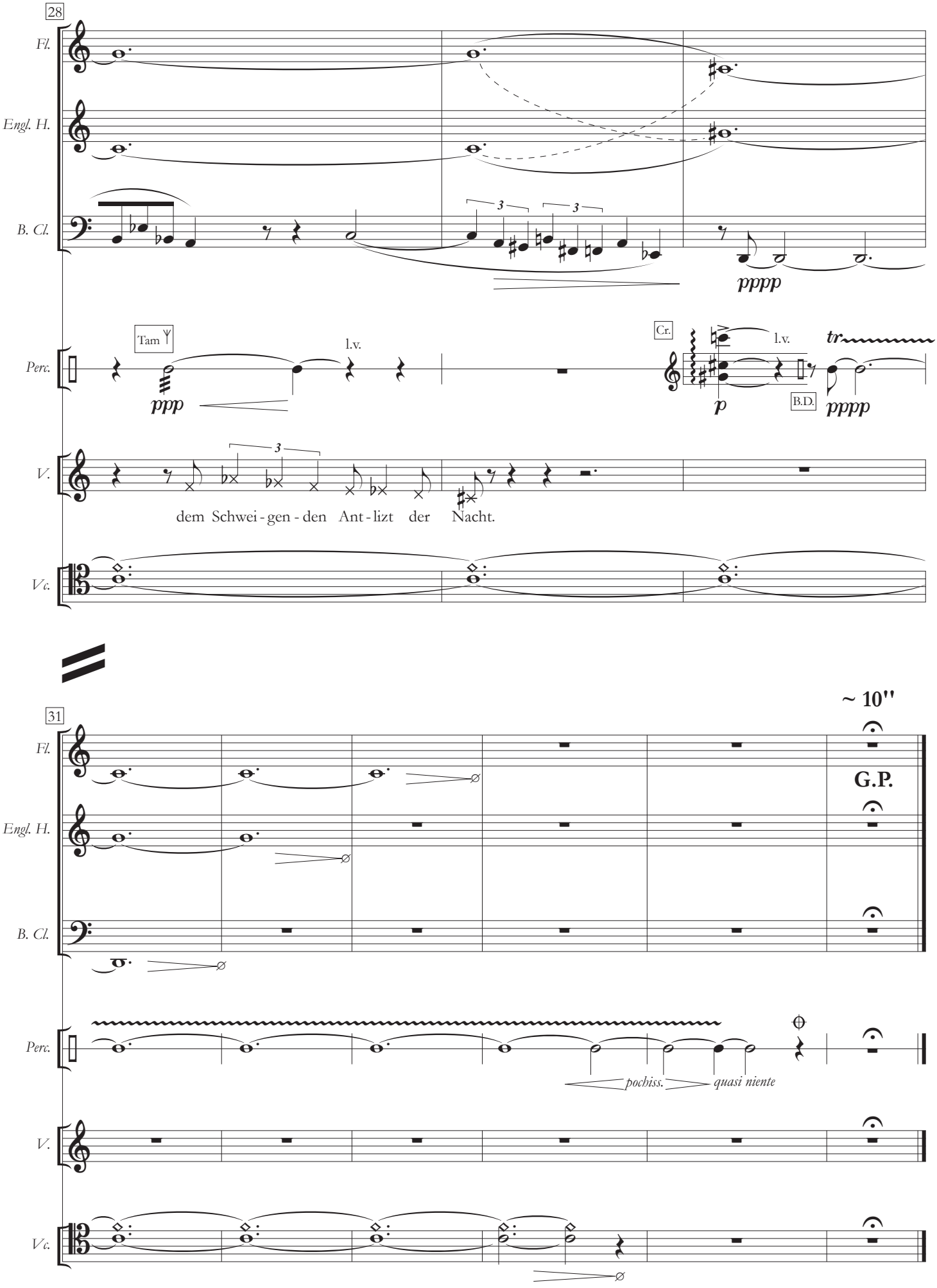
ord. ▸pont.

*ppp*


13
flatt.
Fl.
Muta in corno inglese
Ob.
Muta in clarinetto basso
B♭ Cl.
l.v.
molto
Perc.
(f ma dolce)
V.
E - - - wig - keit
ord.
Vc.
poco
pp sub.
15
Agitato (♩ = 88)
Fl.
Cor. Ingl.
Engl. H.
Clar. basso
B. Cl.
mf
C.C.
pp
(edge)
Perc.
sfz
V.
An schau - ri - gen Rif - fen
sul pont.
Vc.


17
Fl.
Engl. H.
B. Cl.
Perc.
V.
Vc.
tr
sfpp
pp
Cym.
ppp
3
zer - schellt der pur - pur - ne Leib
ord.
pp espr.
Più tranquillo
19
solo
p espr.
p lamentoso
und es klagt die dun - kle Stim - me ü -
sul tasto
pppp
pochiss.


23
Rall. - - - al - - - -
Fl.
Engl. H.
B. Cl.
Perc.
V.
ber dem Meer.
Vc.
ppp
sul tasto
ppp
26
Tempo primo (adagio)
Fl.
ppp senza espr.
Engl. H.
ppp
fpp
ppp senza espr.
B. Cl.
fp
pp
senza espr.
ppp
Perc.
Crotales
pp
l.v.
Sprechgesang
agitato
più tranquillo
V.
Schwes-ter stür-mi-scher Schwer-mut
sieh ein ängst-li-cher Kahn ver-sinkt un-ter Ster-nen,
Vc.
ord.
ppp




*End of the* Wittgenstein-Lieder.