Commissioned for the London International String Quartet Competition by the John S. Cohen Foundation, in connection with its Silver Jubilee.

COMPOSER'S NOTE

My **Quartet No.3** emerged from my lifelong attachment to the rustic art of Poland – especially the paper-cuts ("Wycinanki" in Polish) – symmetrical designs of magical abstract beauty and naïve charm.

Wanting to transmogrify these small geometric structures into sound, I allowed myself to imagine five paper-cuts from different areas of Poland, strongly contrasted to each other in shape and colour; each one also expressing the hidden character and temperament of the person who designed them.

On this basis, the piece was shaped into five miniature Studies, each testing different aspects of quartet-playing skills:

I **lento moderato**. A Study in the control of volume. The music is written on two planes: a rhythmical canon on the harmonics of the note G only, played *vibrato* with *crescendi* and *diminuendi* (constantly repeating the pattern of *piano-forte-piano*), superimposed on to a mirrored melodic line performed *senza vibrato* and *sempre pianissimo* – without emphasis on any note. Calmness and dynamic precision are paramount.

II **andantino rubato**. A Study demonstrating the quartet's rhythmical flexibility, singing quality of sound and warmth of lyrical expression.

III **allegretto scherzando**. A Study in the nuances and variety of *pizzicato* playing, as well as the accuracy required in producing dynamic "terraces" (no *crescendi* or *diminuendi*) without the slightest change of speed. Joyous and dance-like in character.

IV **Prestissimo possibile**. A Study in precision, vigour, power and technical brilliance. Throughout with furious agitation and utmost urgency.

V **adagio sostenuto**. A Study in fullest exploitation of the dynamic range, on the lower strings. Structurally an arch, starting *pianissimo* through gradual *crescendo* to a maximum *fortissimo*, and back to the most extreme *pianissimo*. *Molto espressivo e cantabile* throughout for violins, with the second violin shadowing the first with equal intensity.

Andrzej Panufnik, 1991

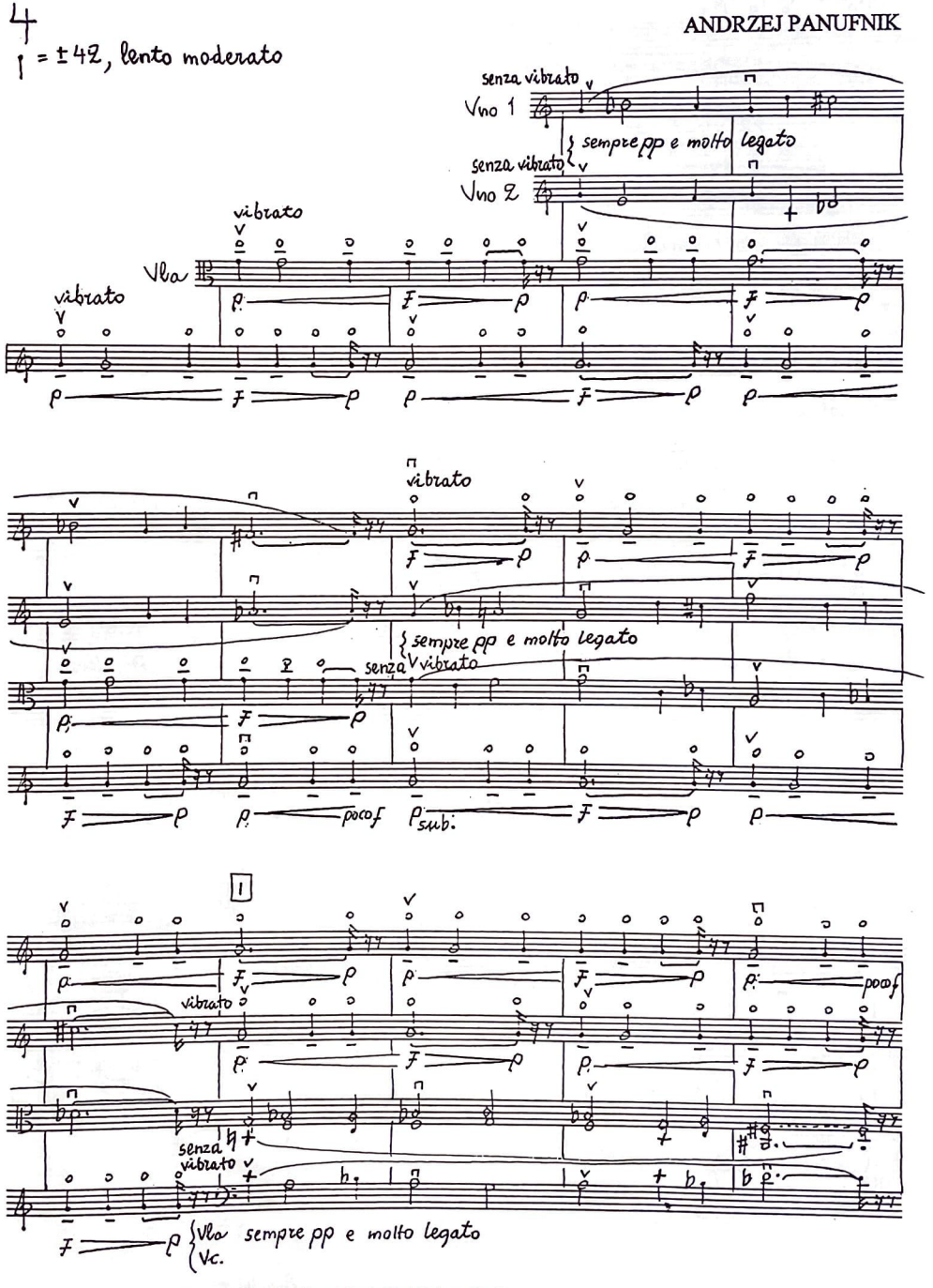
Duration: c. 11 minutes

to Roxanna and Jeremy

STRING QUARTET No.3

'Wycinanki'

ANDRZEJ PANUFNIK



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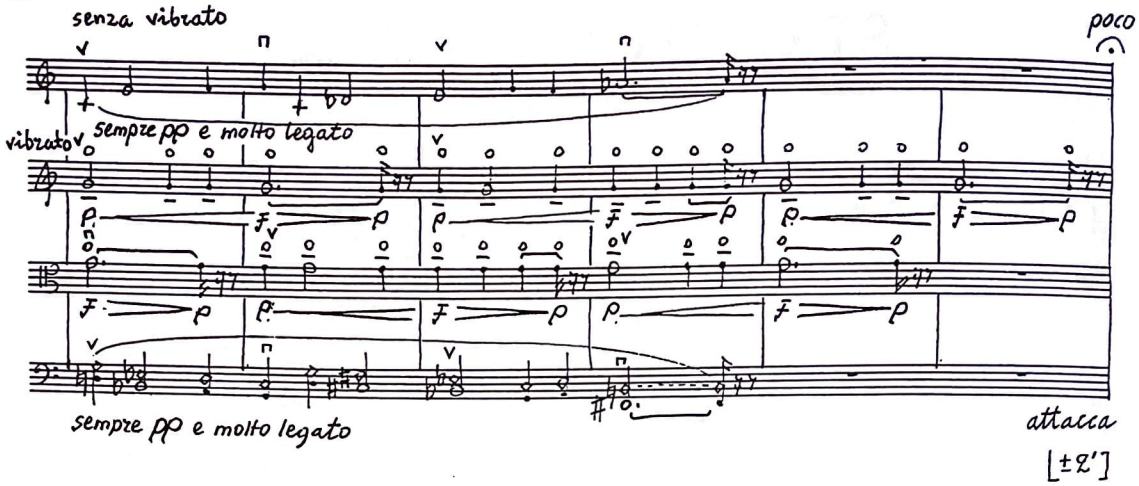
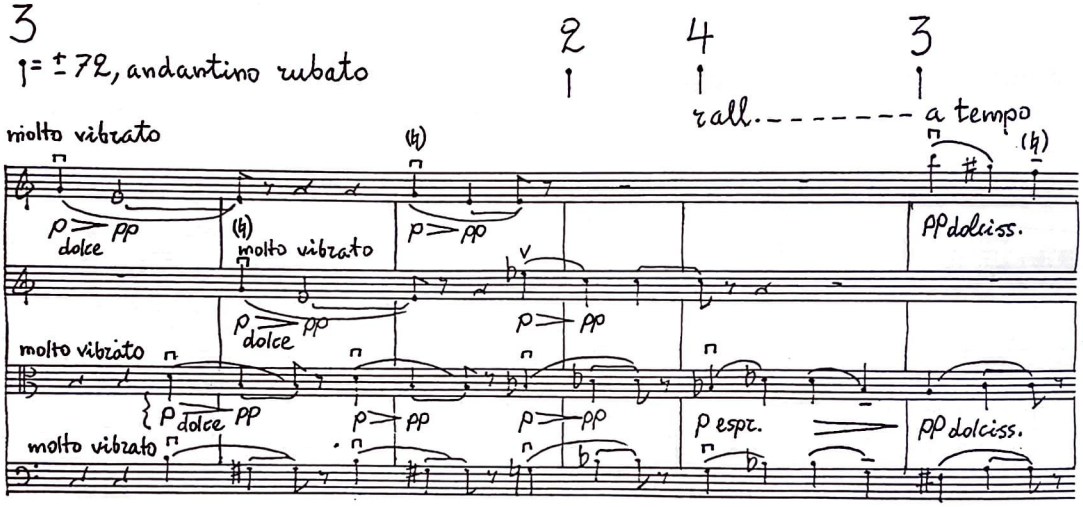


[±2']

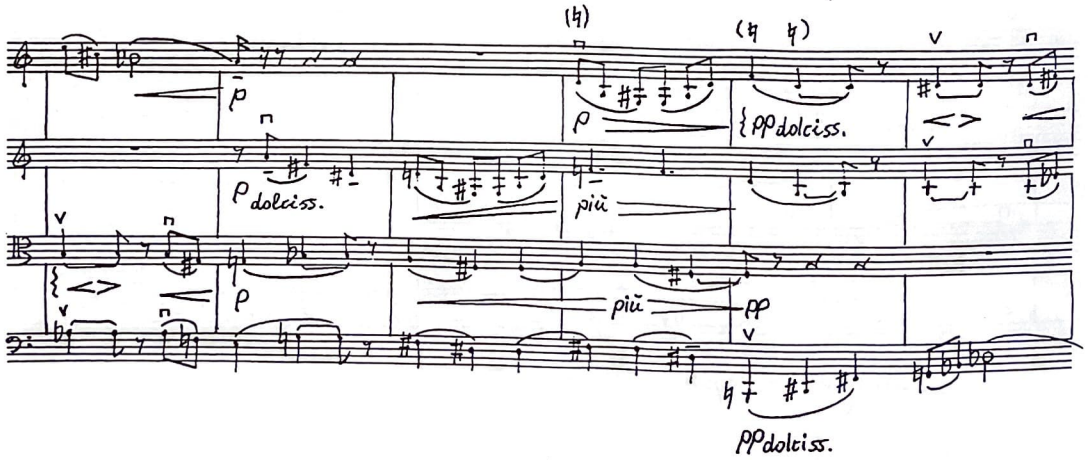
3

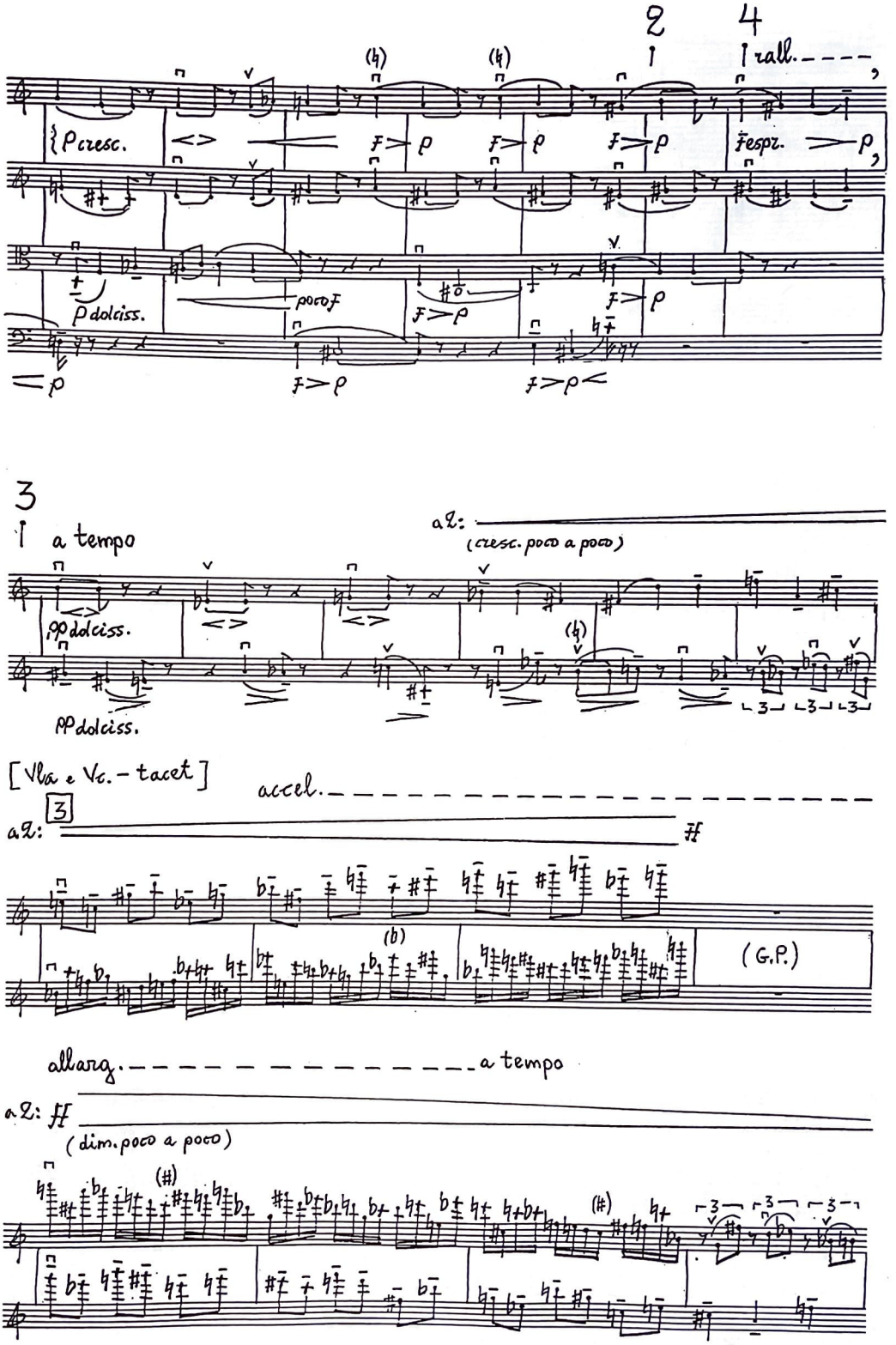
♩= ± 72, andantino rubato

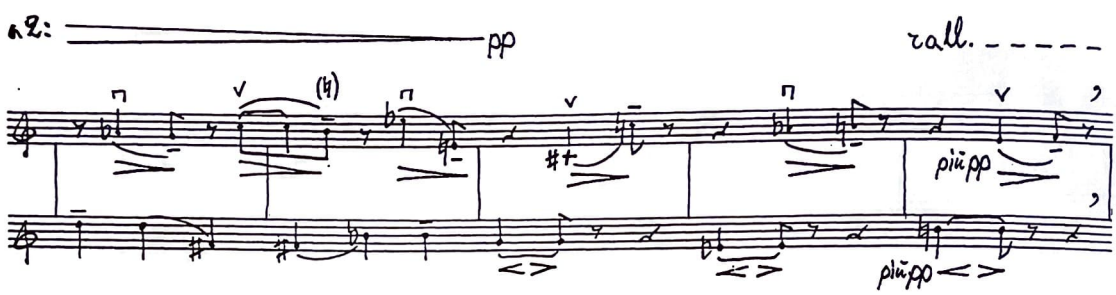


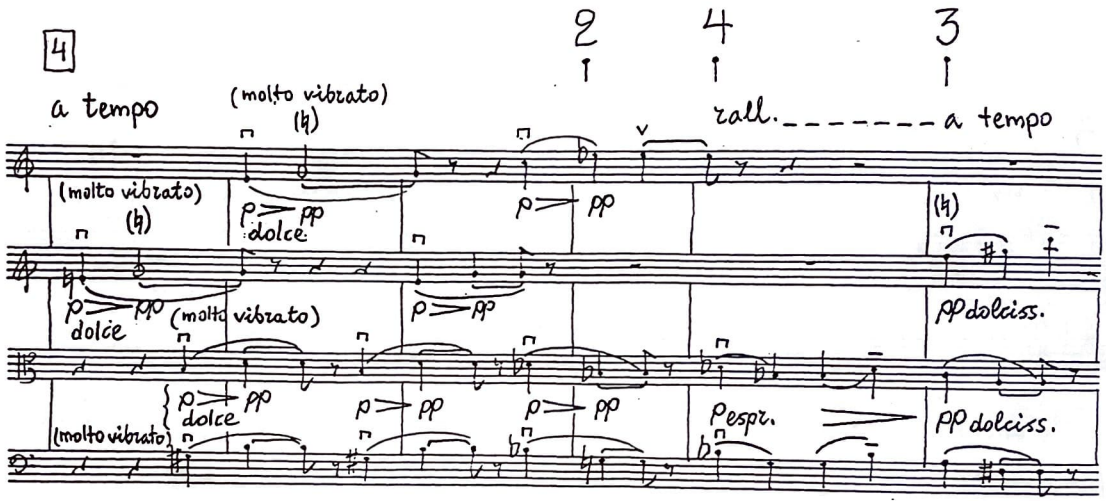
2

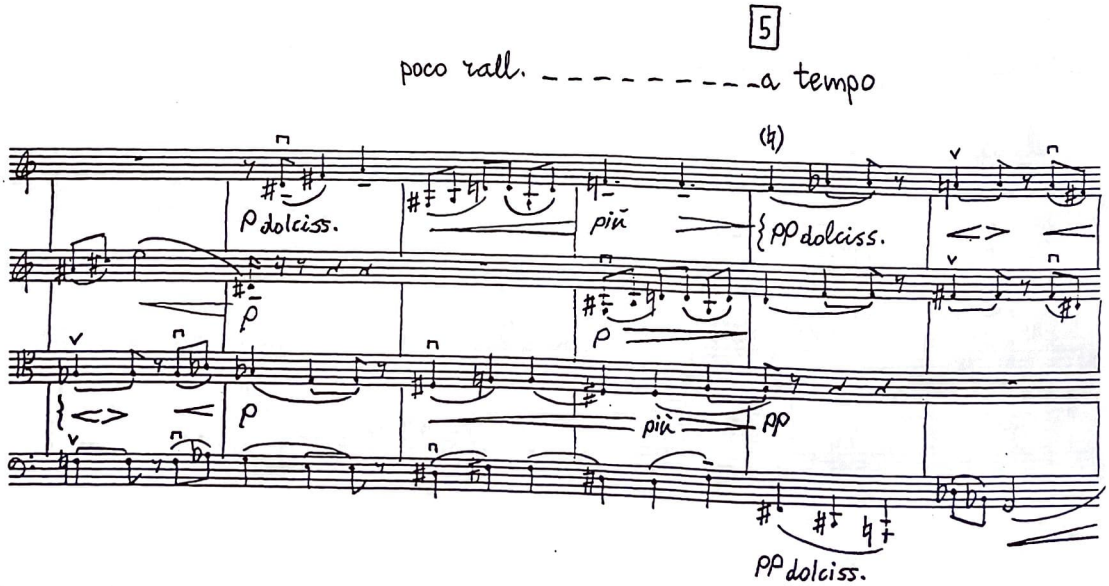
poco rall. - - - - - - - - - a tempo

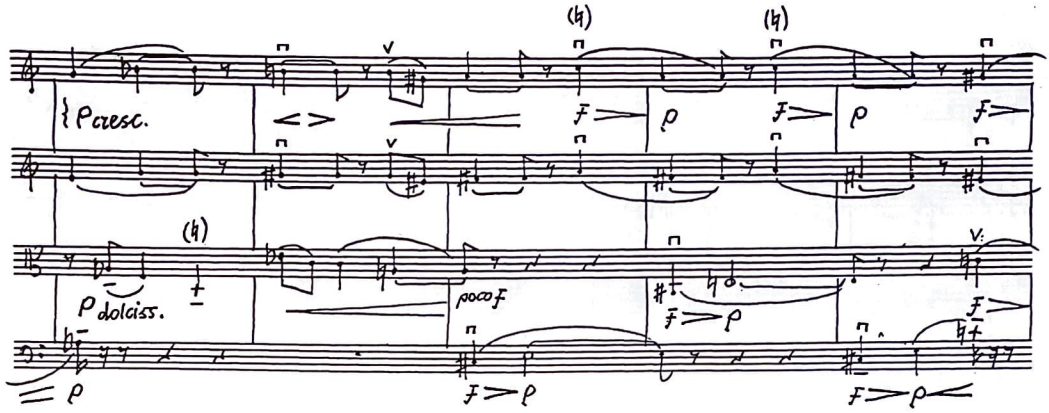


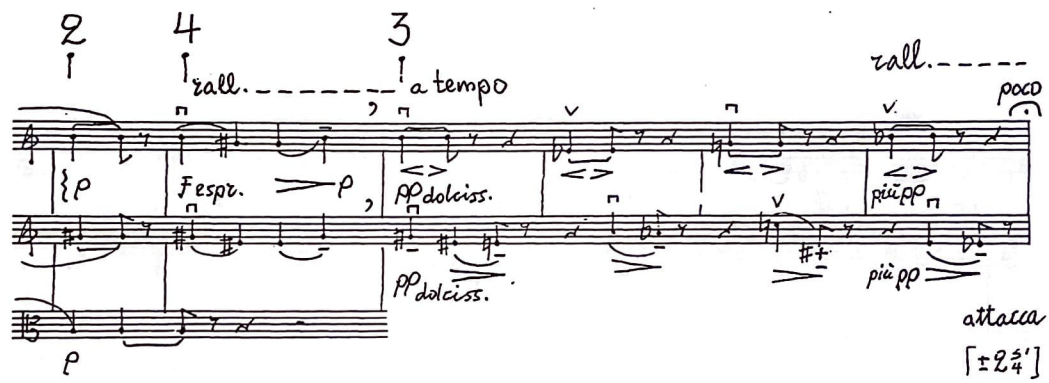

2
4
rall.
p cresc.
f > p
f espr.
p dolciss.
poco f
3
a tempo
a 2:
(cresc. poco a poco)
pp dolciss.
pp dolciss.
[Vla e Vc. - tacet]
accel.
a 2:
(G.P.)
allarg.
a tempo
a 2:
(dim. poco a poco)


pp
rall.
più pp
più pp


4
2
4
3
a tempo
(molto vibrato)
rall.
a tempo
(molto vibrato)
dolce
(molto vibrato)
dolce
(molto vibrato)
dolce
espr.
pp dolciss.
pp dolciss.


5
poco rall.
a tempo
dolciss.
più
pp dolciss.
più
pp
pp dolciss.

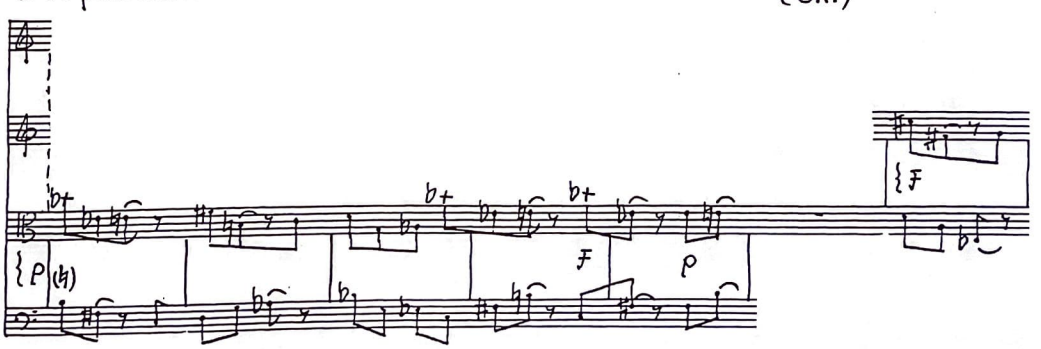




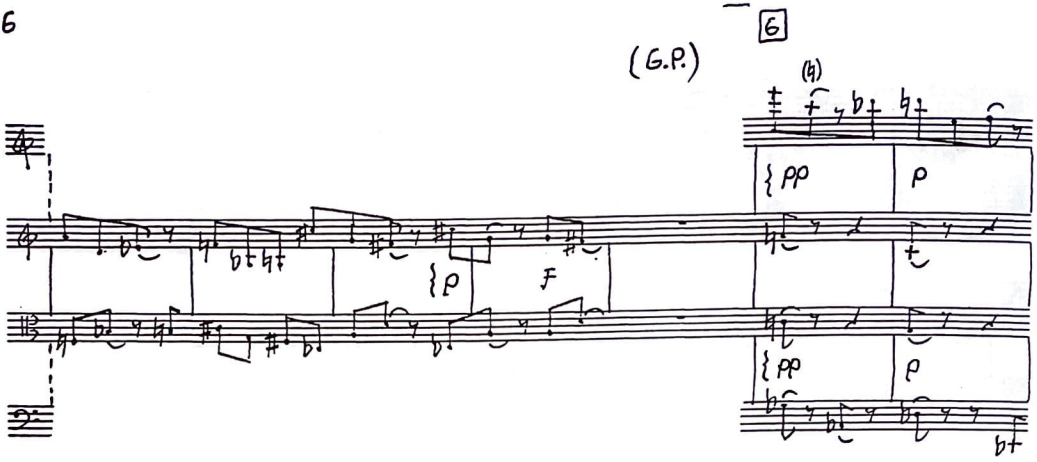
2
♩ = ± 96, allegretto scherzando

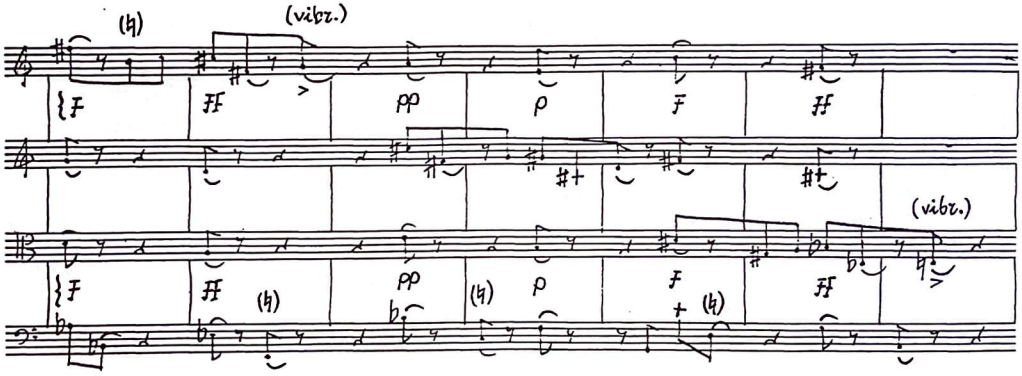
a 4: pizzicato x)

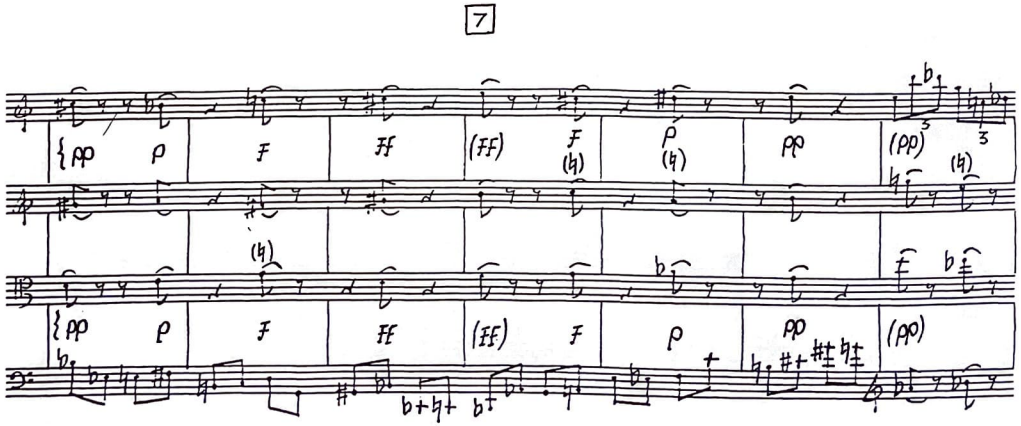
(G.P.)



x) sul tasto in pp, ordinario in p, sul pont. in F, making the string strike hard against fingerboard in ff.


6
(G.P.)


(vibr.)
(vibr.)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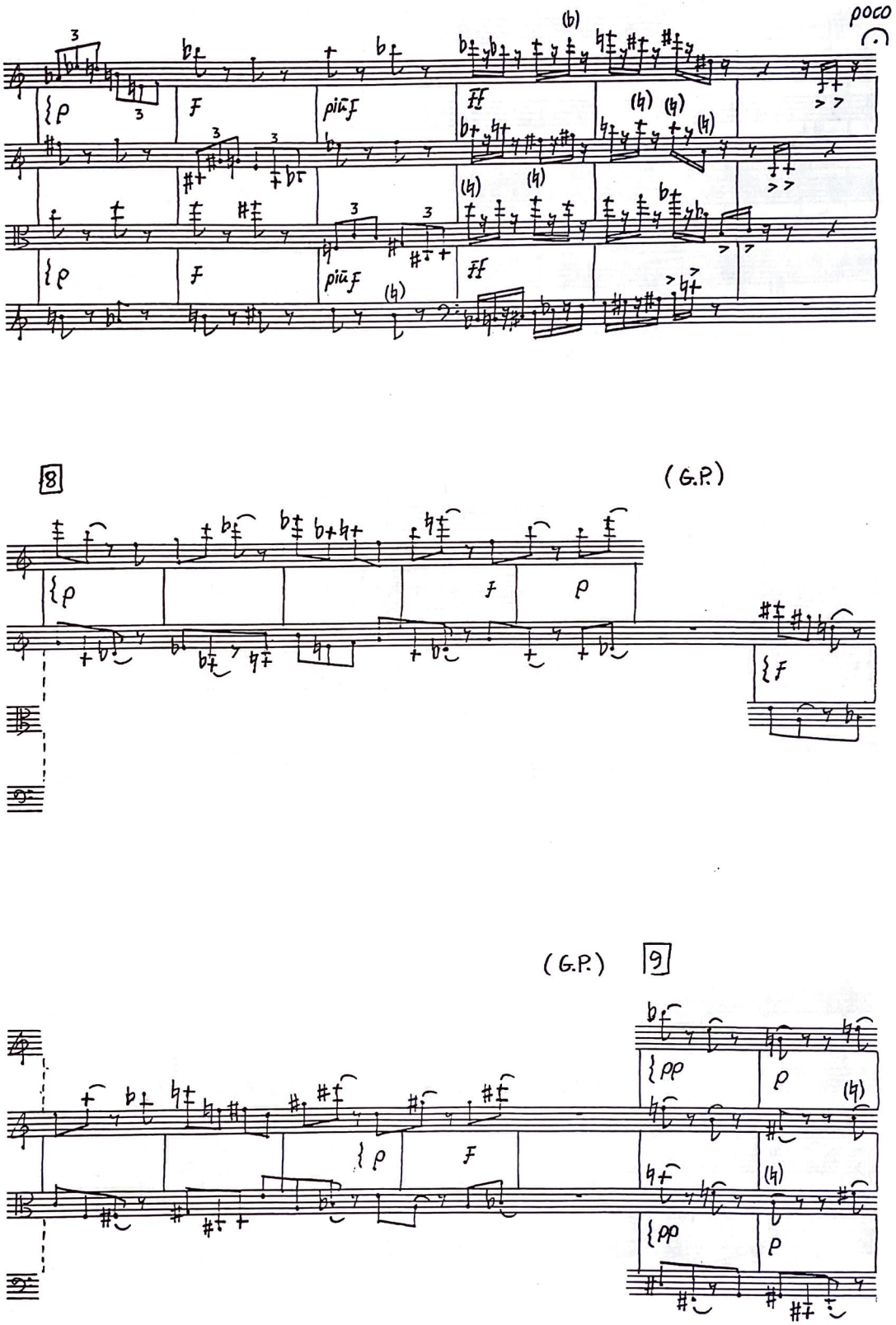
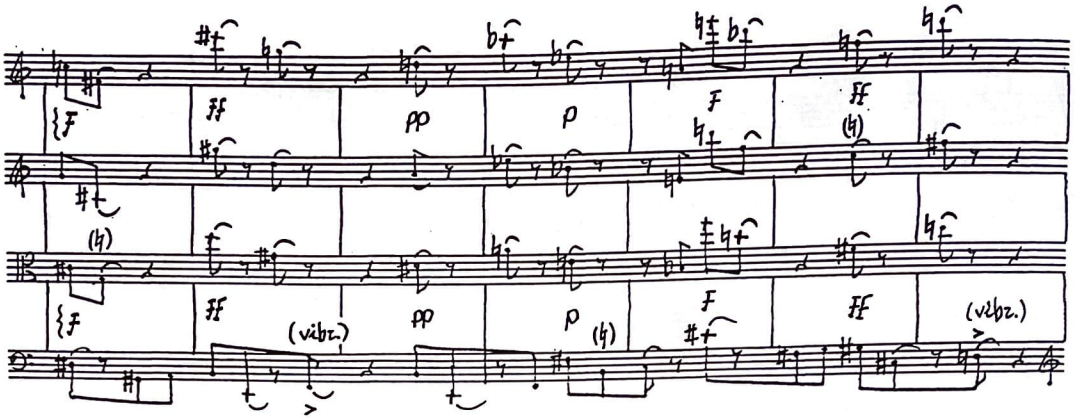

poco
p
f
più f
ff
8
(G.P.)
p
f
p
f
(G.P.)
9
pp
p
p
f
pp
p



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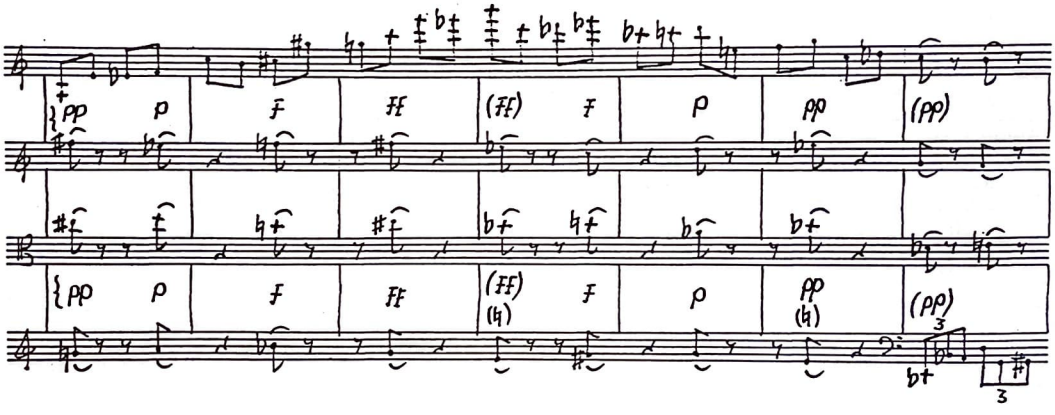
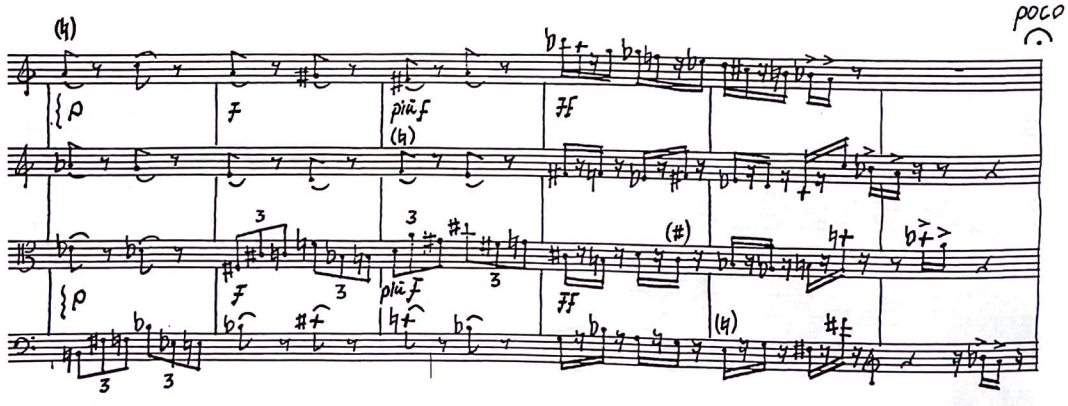


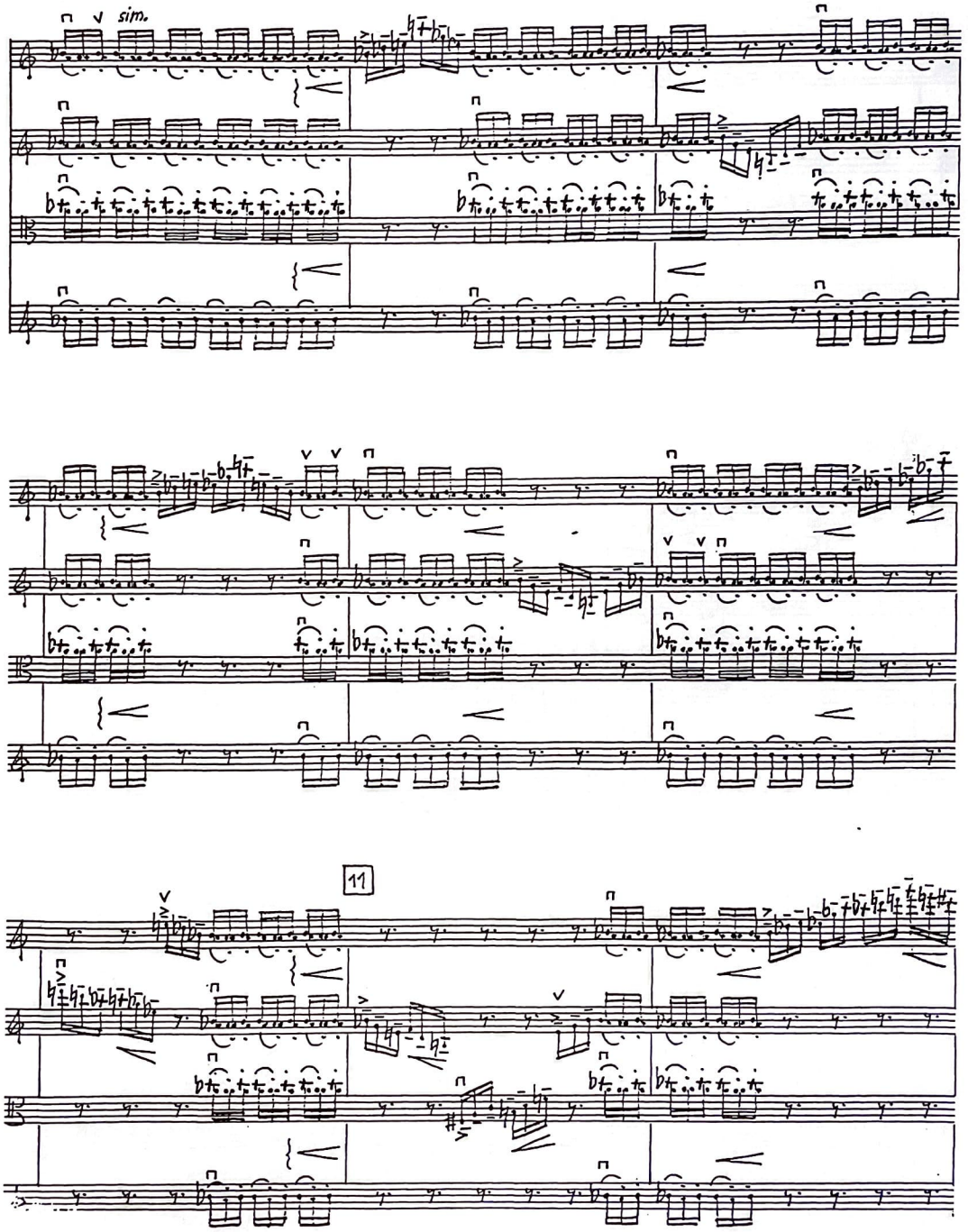


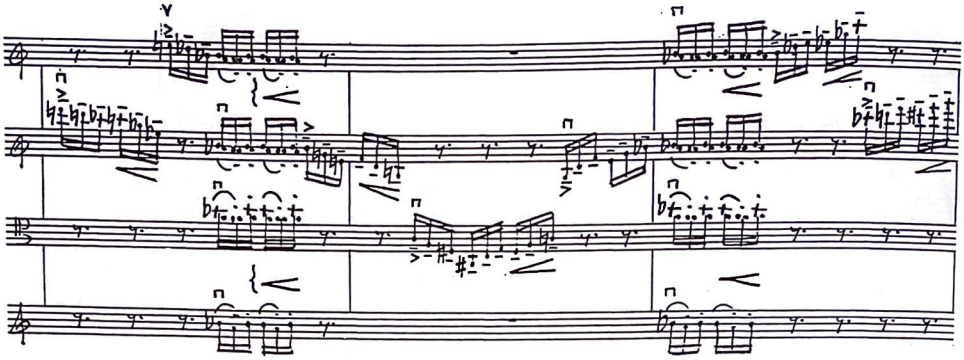
attacca
[±1½']

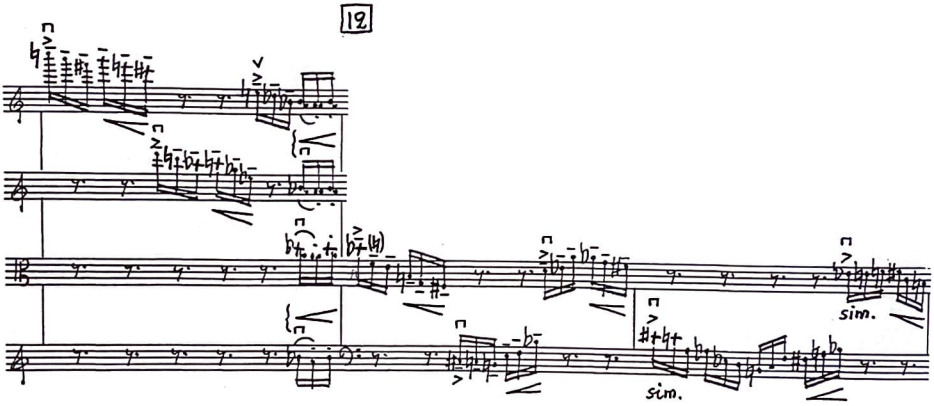
6

♩ = ± 160, prestissimo possibile

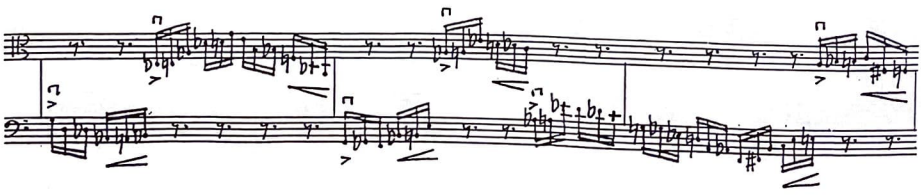
a 4: arco, sempre ff

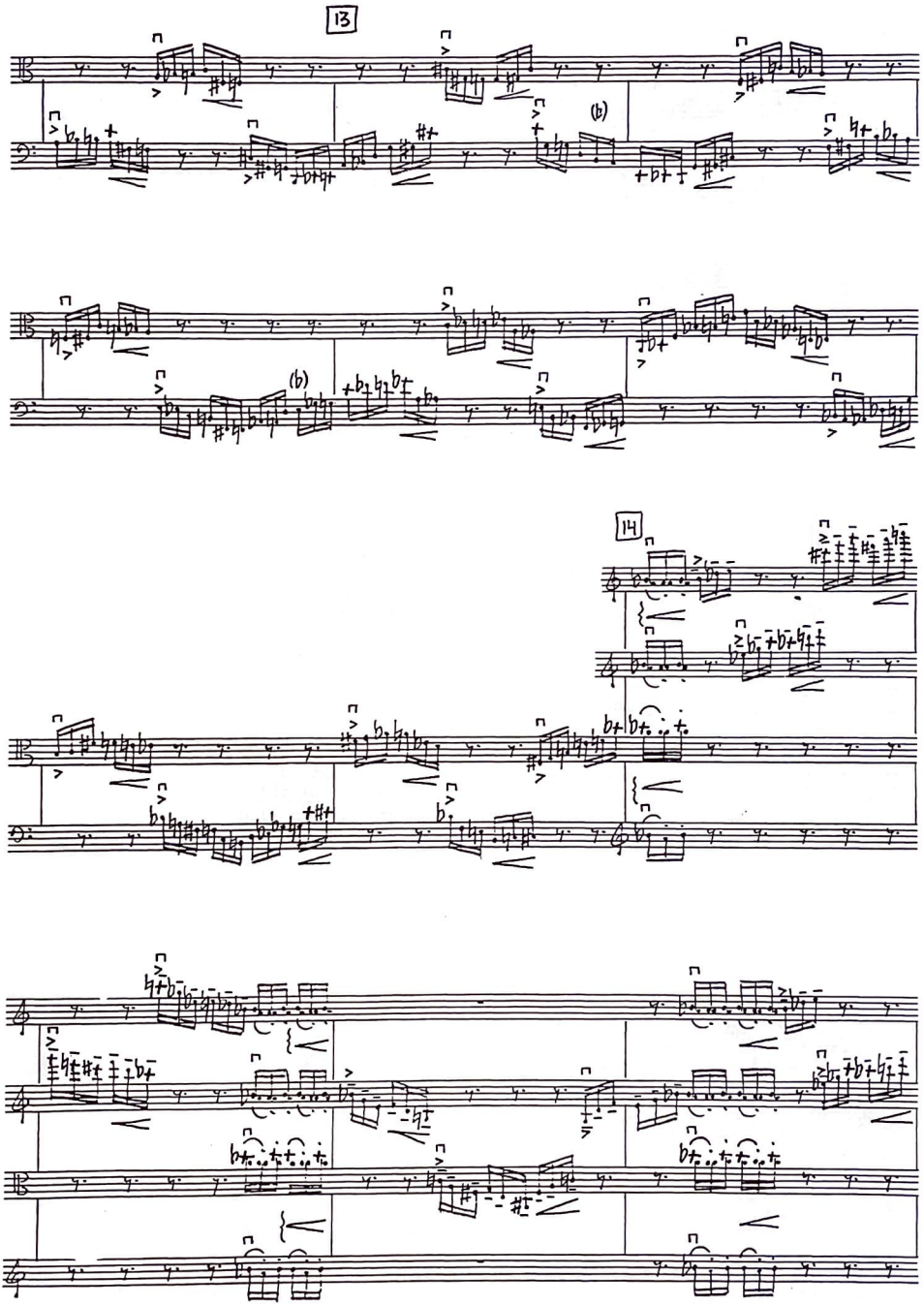




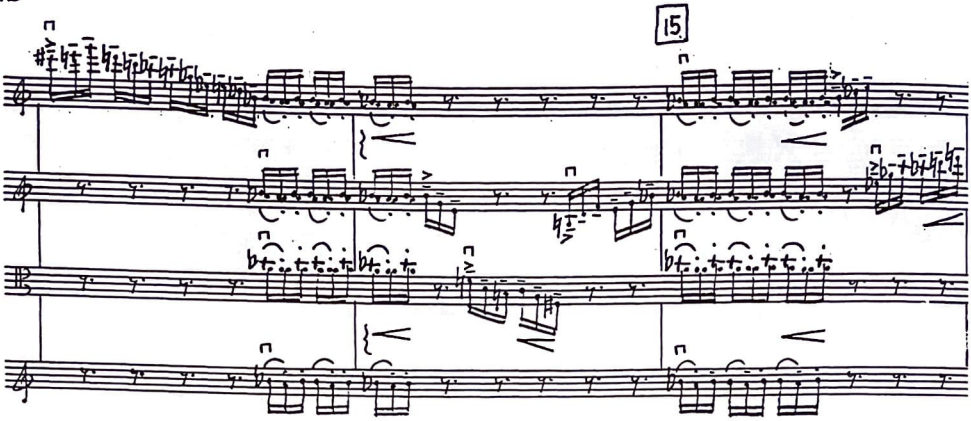


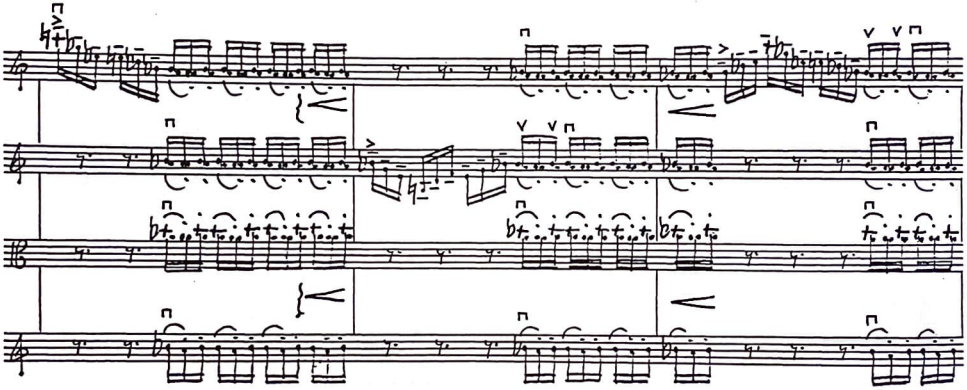
[Vni-tacet]



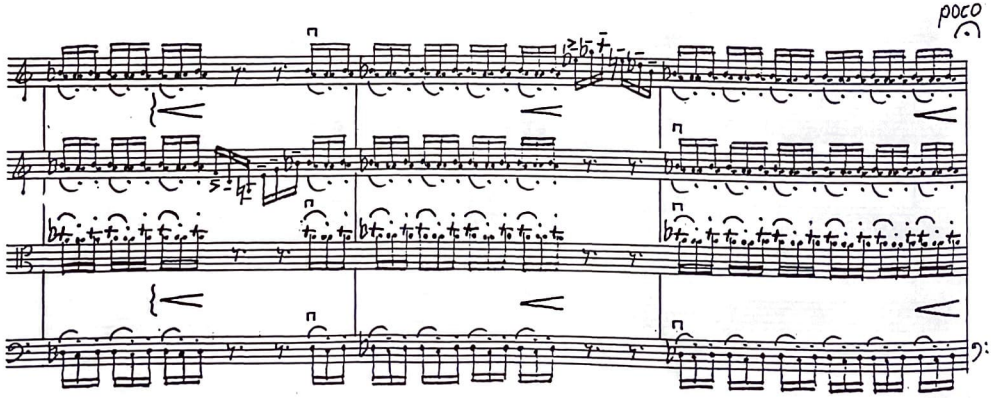

13
(b)
(b)
14

15





poco

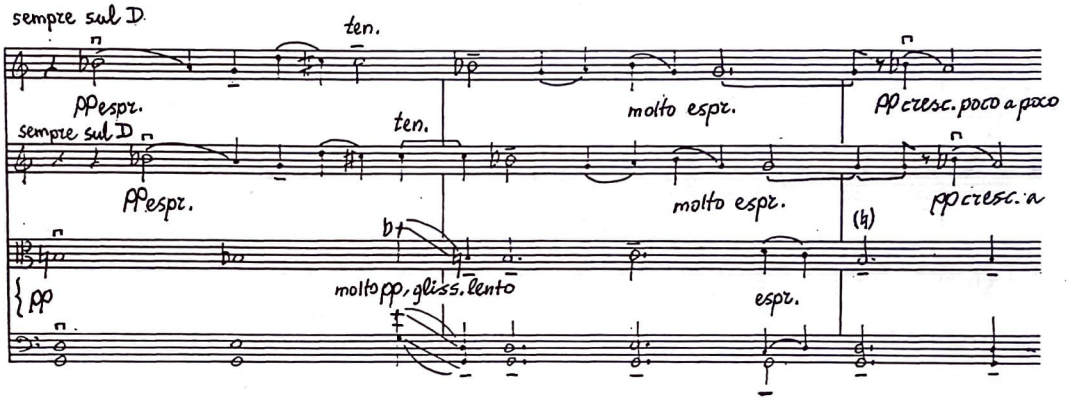


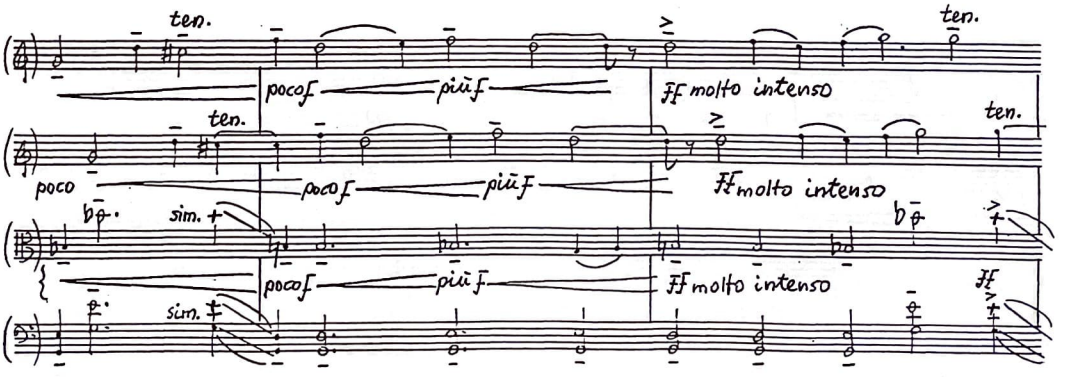
attacca

[±1½']

9

♩ = ± 36, adagio sostenuto





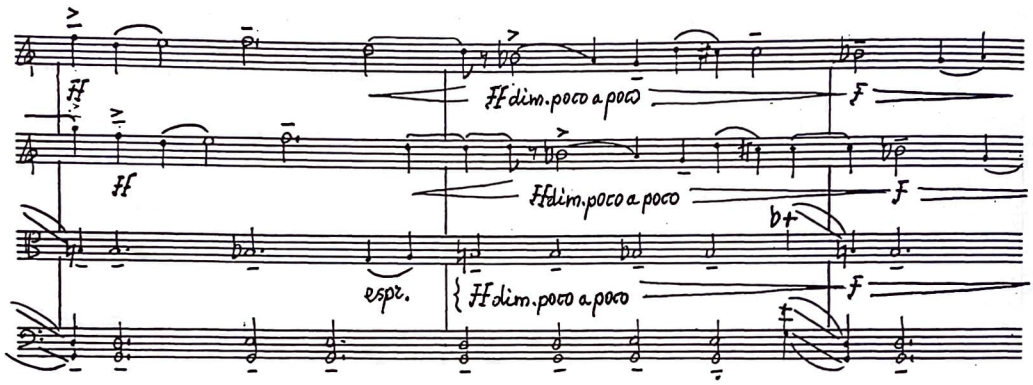
rall. poco a poco

ff

ff dim. poco a poco

f

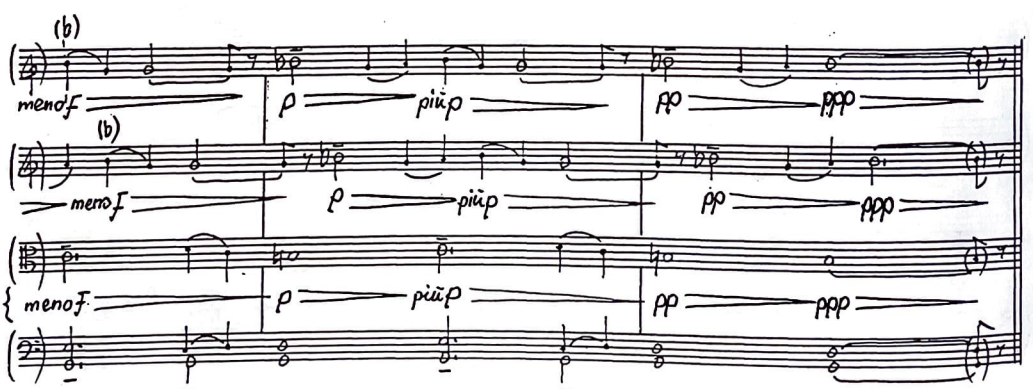
ff



ff dim. poco a poco

f

espr.



ff dim. poco a poco

f

(più) (molto)

(b)

meno f

p

più p

pp

ppp

(b)

meno f

p

più p

pp

ppp

meno f

p

più p

pp

ppp

[±3']

Ende; Pam Smith, 1990, Riverside House, Twickenham.