"if the stars align"

Leila Adu-Gilmore

Written for the Brentano String Quartet

Dedicated to Michael

Performer Instructions

I came to see the Brentano String Quartet play in New Zealand on the invitation of Euan Murdoch, head of Chamber Music NZ. I was delighted to be able to meet the performers after the show, who kindly told me how I was going to love my upcoming time in Princeton for my composition PhD.
Misha Amory said to me:
"If the stars align, you will write for us."

I begged our professor to get a slot at this concert and was told of the auspicious deadline of 12/12/12, which was also my birthday! Therefore, this piece took on some cosmic proportions to do with the numbers 12 and 3 (which is 12 in numerology.)

In addition, the piece has some spectralist qualities, with reference to the G fundamental. However, quarter tones are standard and written as standard quarter tone symbols.

On rhythm: although I am a kiwi, my father is from Ghana and I added some Ghanain highlife themes and polyrhythms; also playing on the 3 theme.
N.B. Bar 111 - *Can be felt in 5/8* - written in 5/4 for ease of reading and duple polyrhythms)

Moreover, due to all of this stellar activity, I decided to make the viola the protagonist in the piece, contrasting, colliding and coming together with the other *three* players...

Full Score

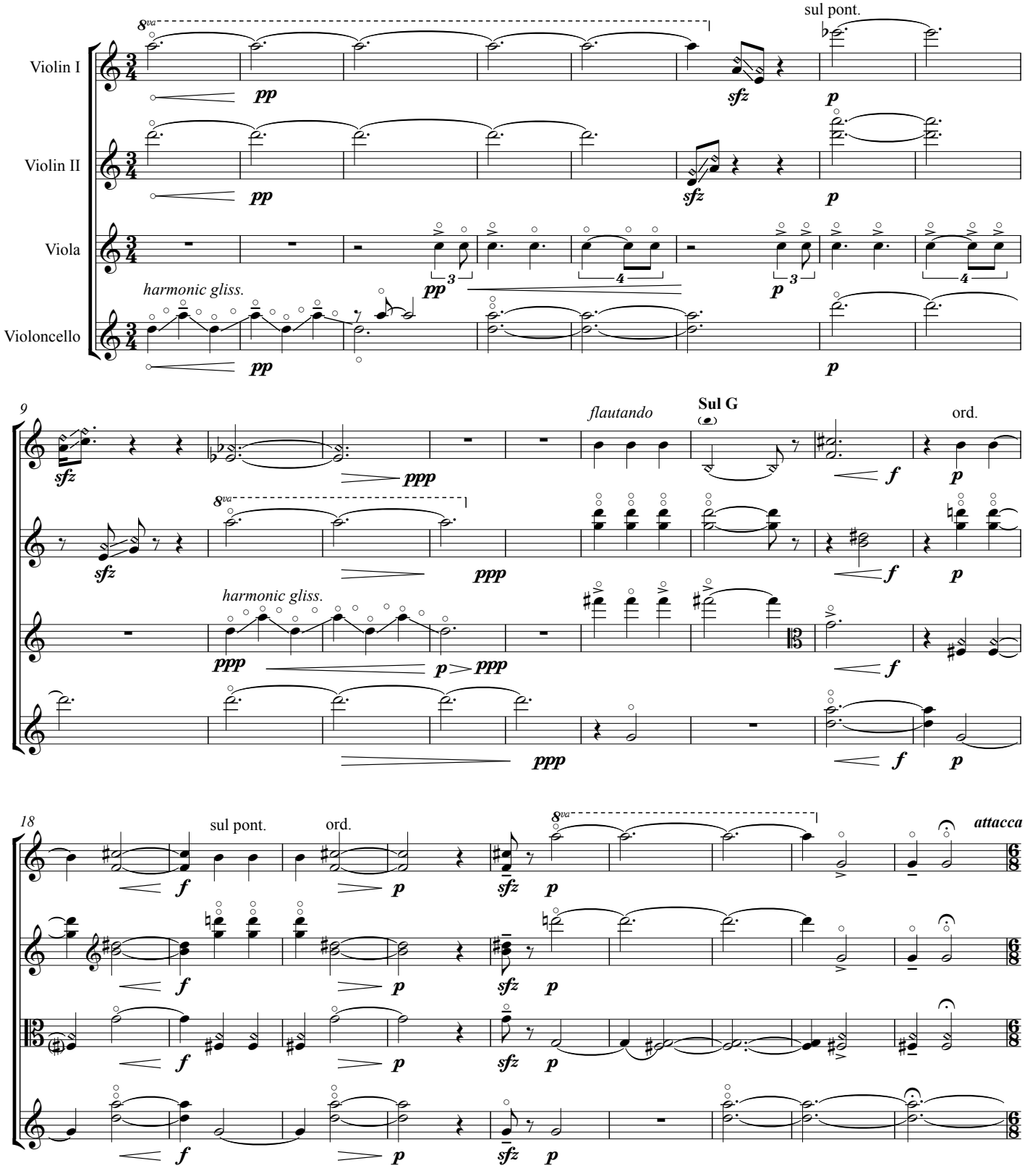
"if the stars align"

I : Shooting Stars

Vast, majestic, spacious

♩ =120

Leila Adu-Gilmore



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II : La Terra

Largo

27 ♩. =33

non vib., ***like a viol***

ppp ***p***

non vib., ***like a viol***

p ***< f p*** ***< f p*** ***< f p***

p *marcato*

35

ord. non vib

f ***mf*** *(gently touch open A)* pizz. ***p***

ord.

f ***mf*** ***p*** **2** **2** ***p***

f ***mf*** ***p*** pizz. ***p***

f

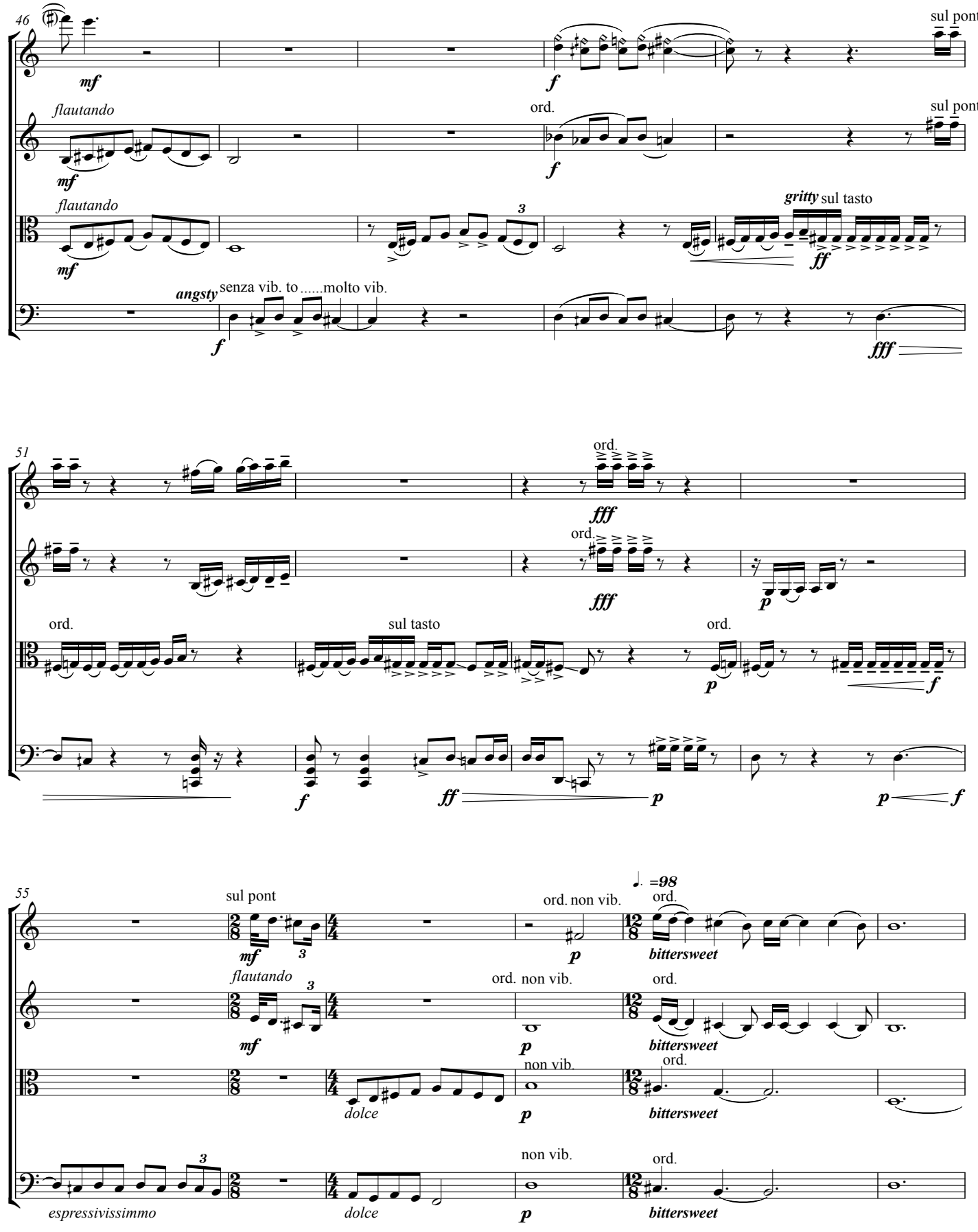
41

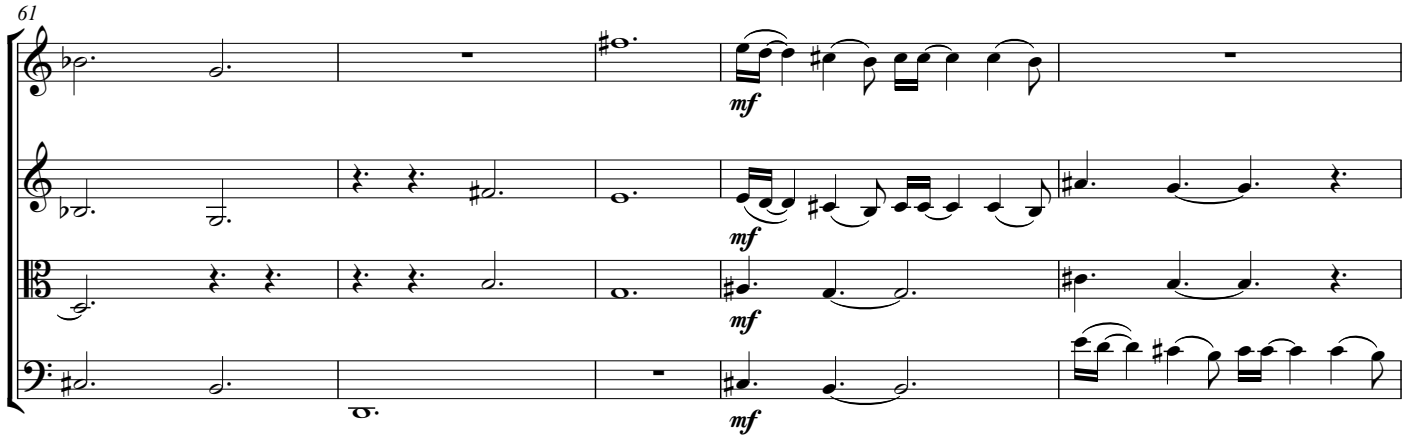
f ***mf*** arco **Sul A** molto vib..... ***f*** *espress.*

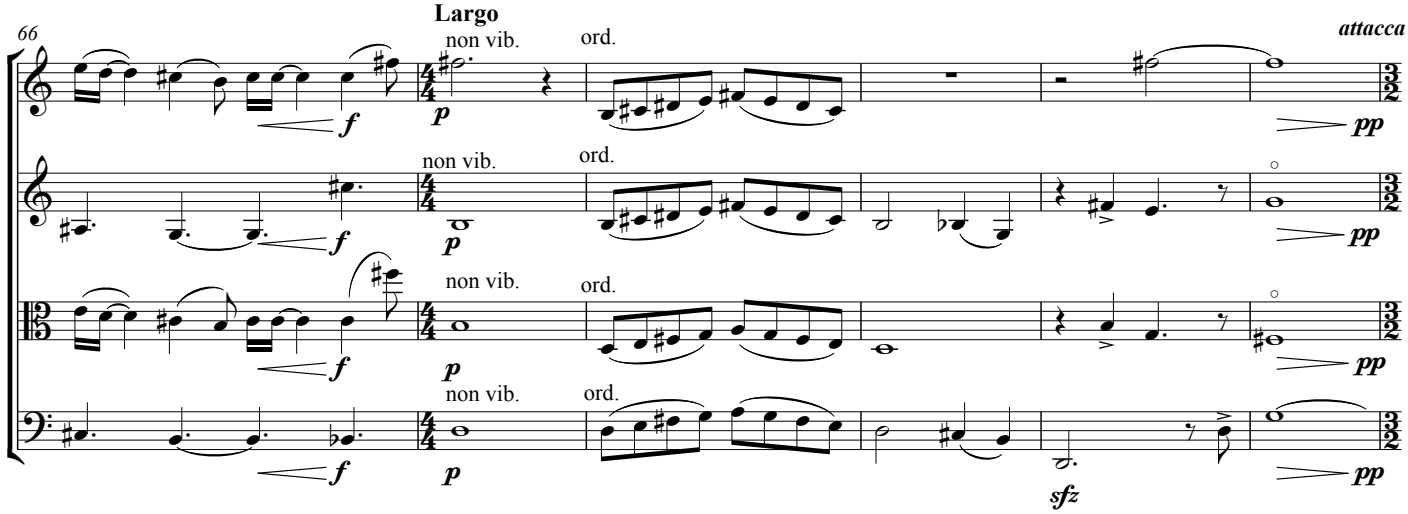
f *marcato* ***mf*** ***f*** ***mf*** ***f*** ***ff*** ***mf***

f ***mf*** *marcato* ***f*** ***mf*** ***f*** ***ff*** ***mf***

f arco ***sfz*** ***ff*** ***f*** *sub* ***pp***

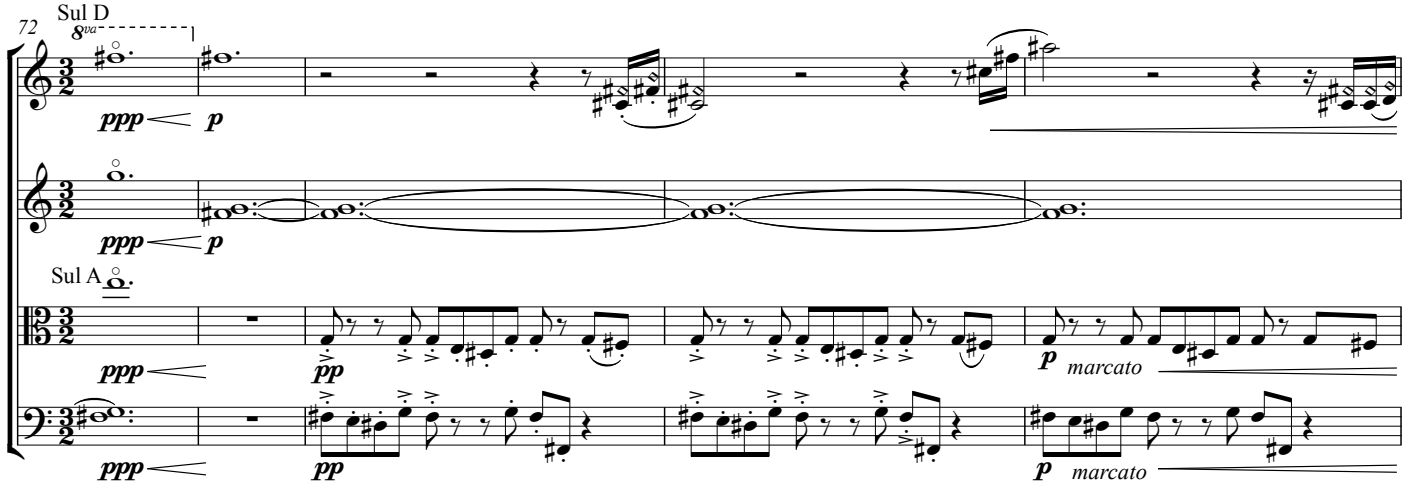

46
sul pont.
flautando
ord.
sul pont.
flautando
gritty sul tasto
angsty senza vib. to .....molto vib.
51
ord.
ord.
ord.
sul tasto
ord.
55
sul pont
ord. non vib.
♩. =98
ord.
bittersweet
flautando
ord. non vib.
ord.
bittersweet
dolce
non vib.
ord.
bittersweet
espressivissimmo
dolce
non vib.
ord.
bittersweet

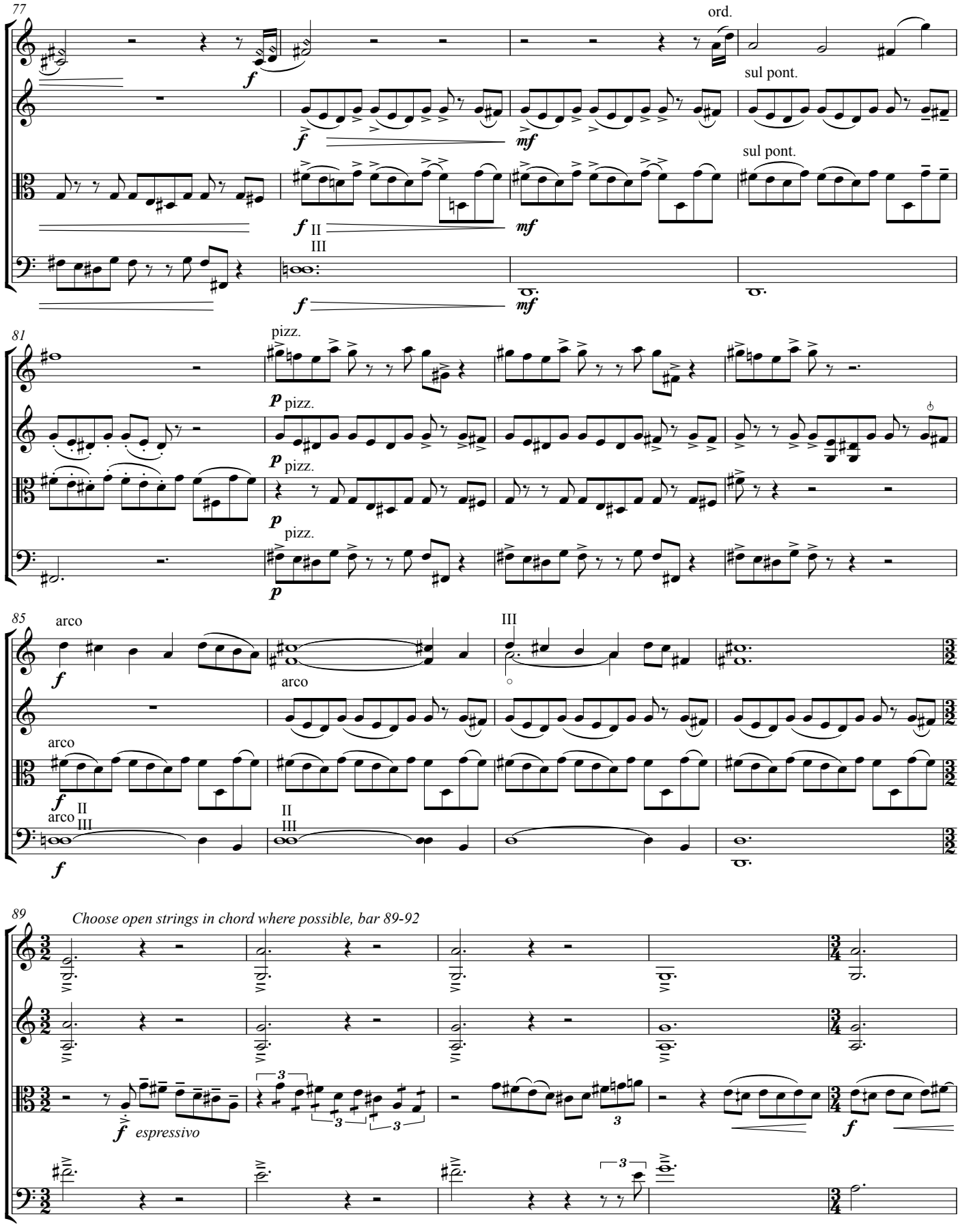


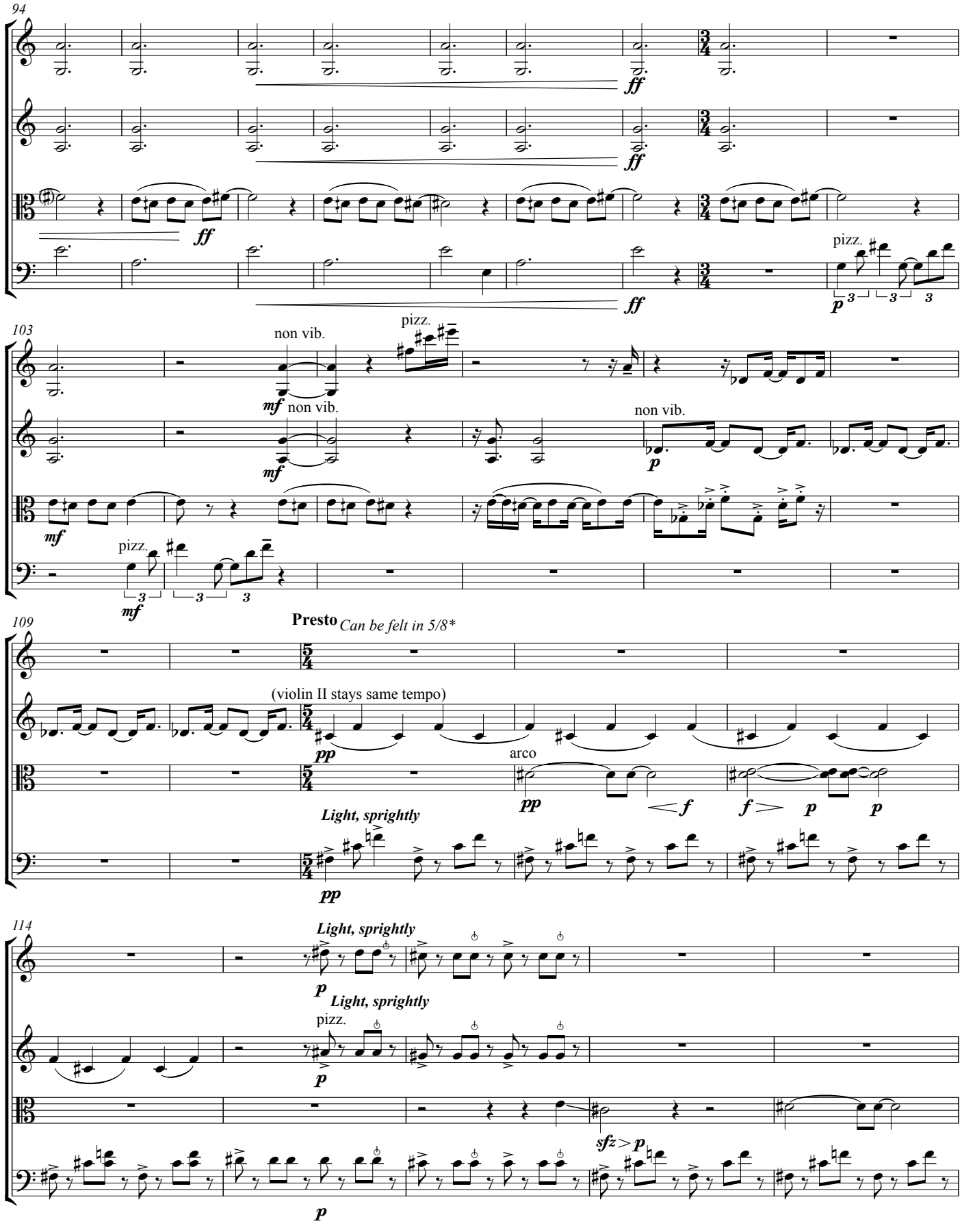


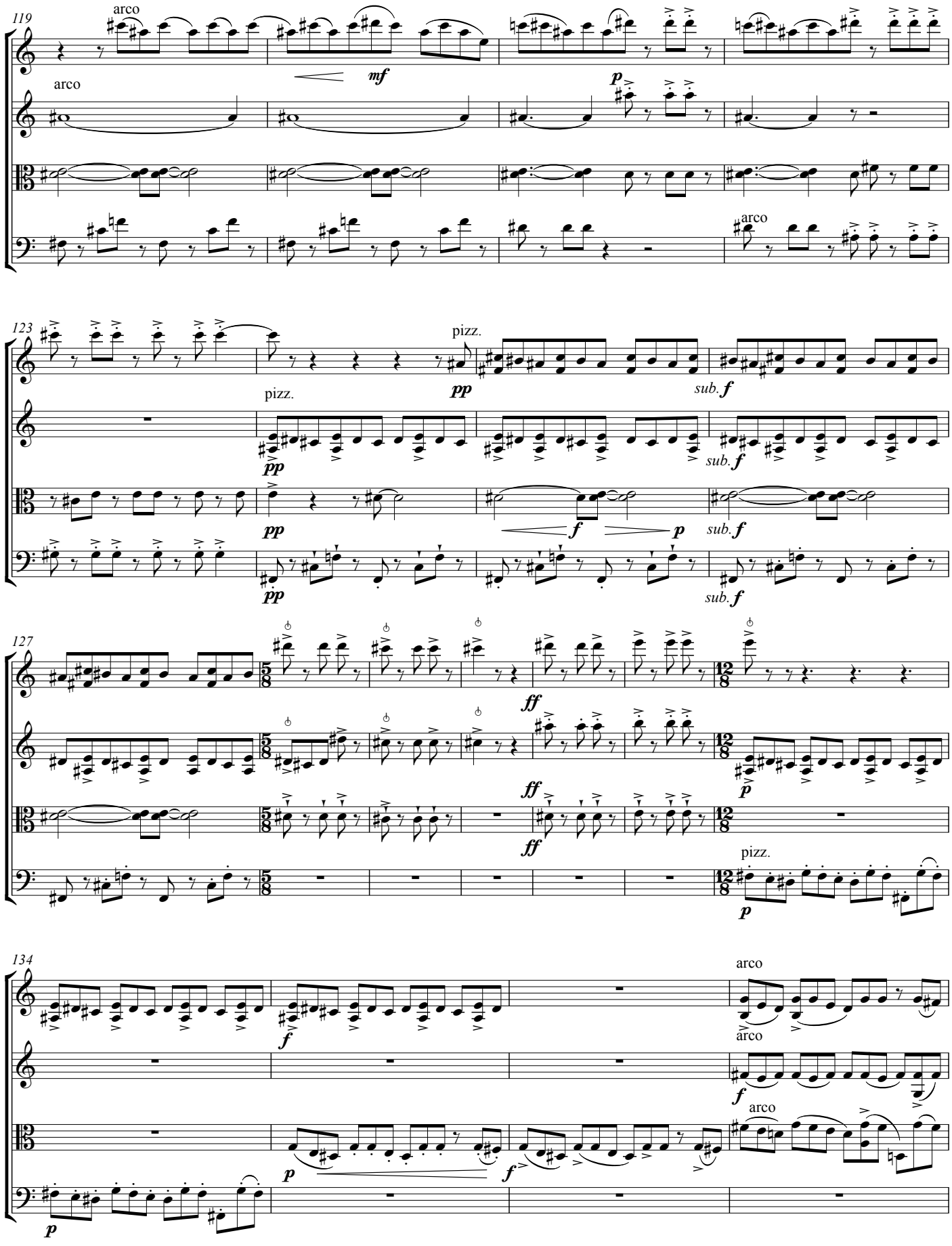
III : Sirian Highlife

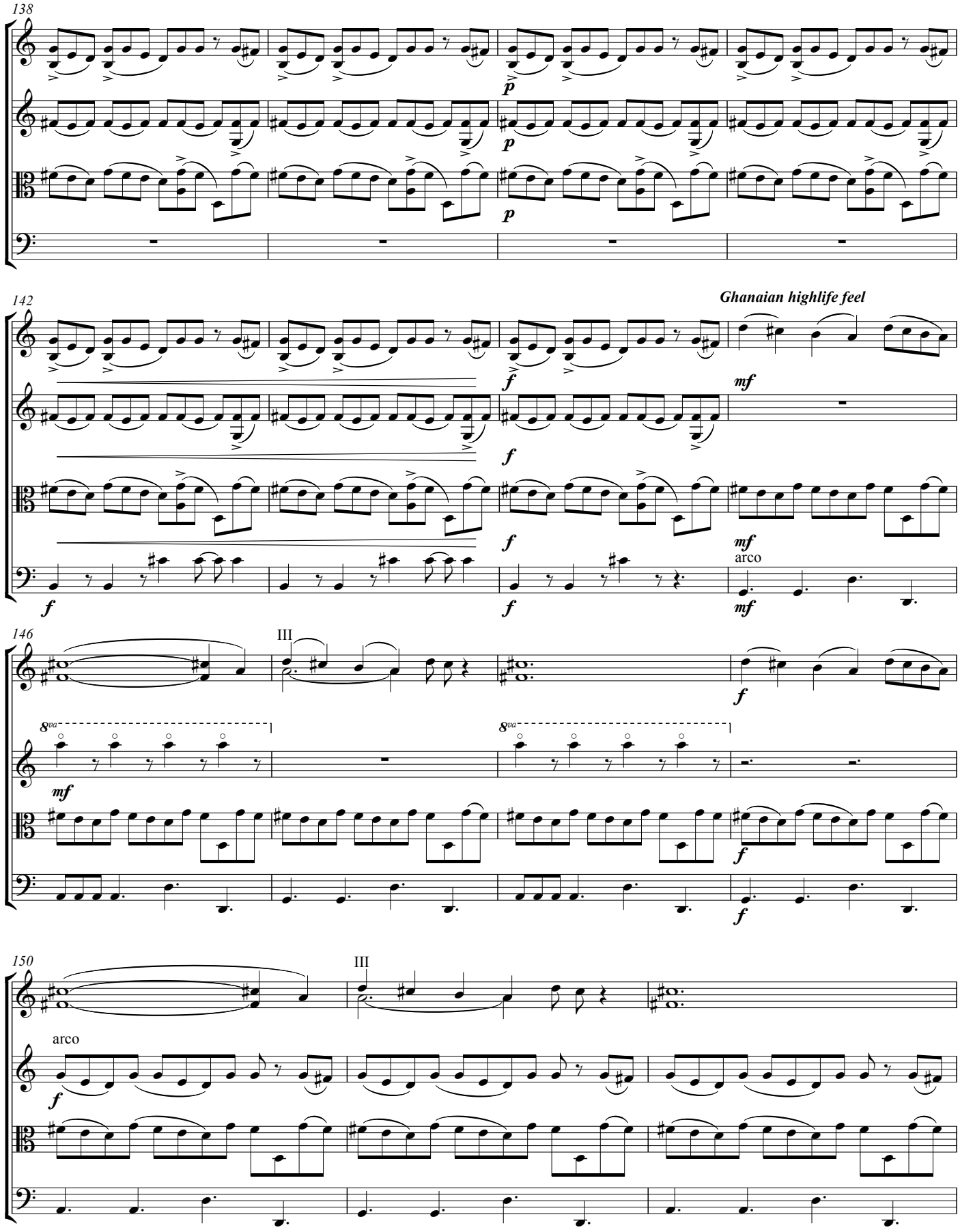
Allegro



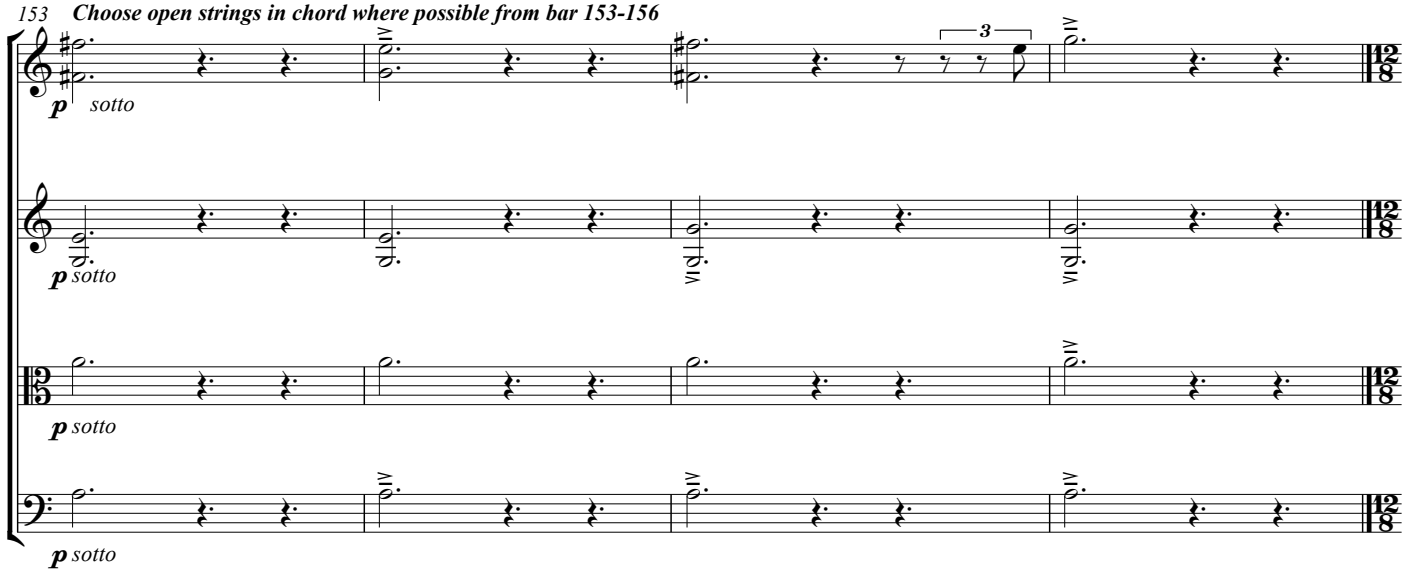

77
ord.
sul pont.
sul pont.
II
III
81
pizz.
85
arco
III
arco
II
III
89
Choose open strings in chord where possible, bar 89-92
espressivo


94
ff
pizz.
p
103
non vib.
mf
pizz.
non vib.
p
109
Presto
Can be felt in 5/8*
(violin II stays same tempo)
pp
arco
f
p
Light, sprightly
114
sfz
p


119
arco
mf
p
arco
123
pizz.
pp
sub. f
pizz.
pp
sub. f
f
p
pp
sub. f
127
ff
ff
p
ff
pizz.
p
134
arco
f
arco
p
f
arco
p


138
142
Ghanaian highlife feel
146
III
8va
150
III
arco
arco

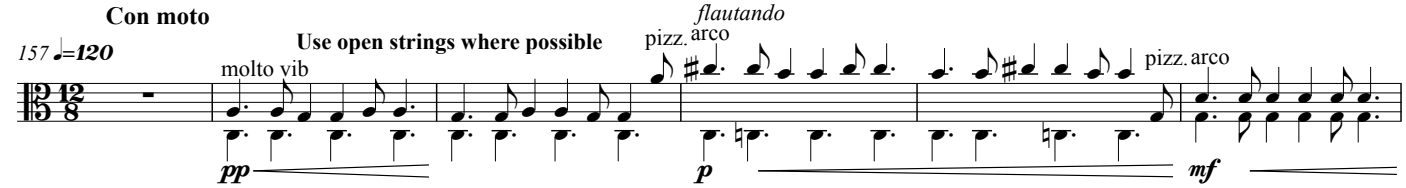
153 *Choose open strings in chord where possible from bar 153-156*



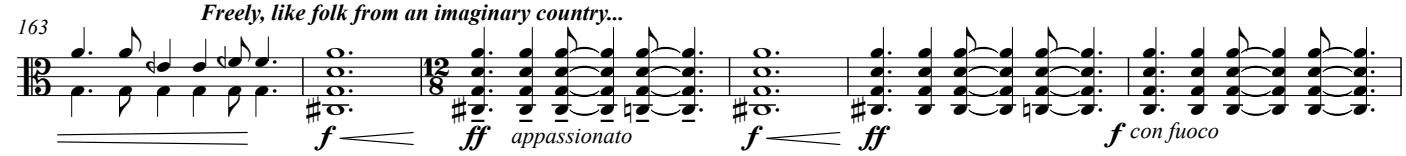
Cadenza for Viola : Blue Companion Star

Con moto

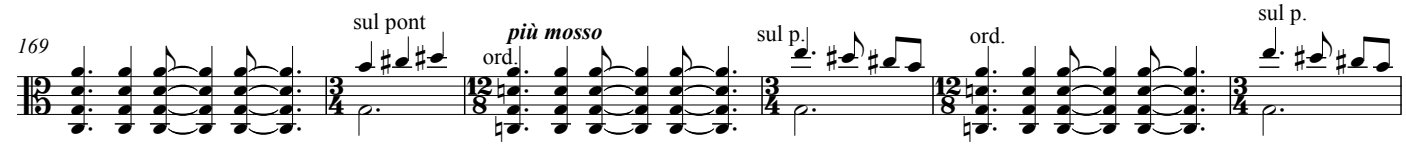
157 ♩=120 **Use open strings where possible**



163 ***Freely, like folk from an imaginary country...***



169



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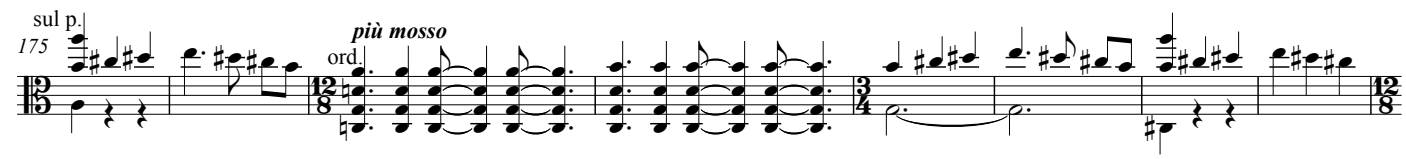
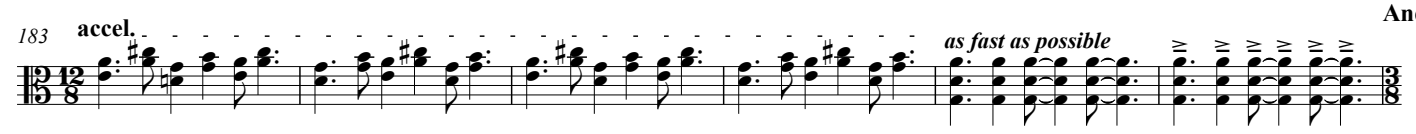
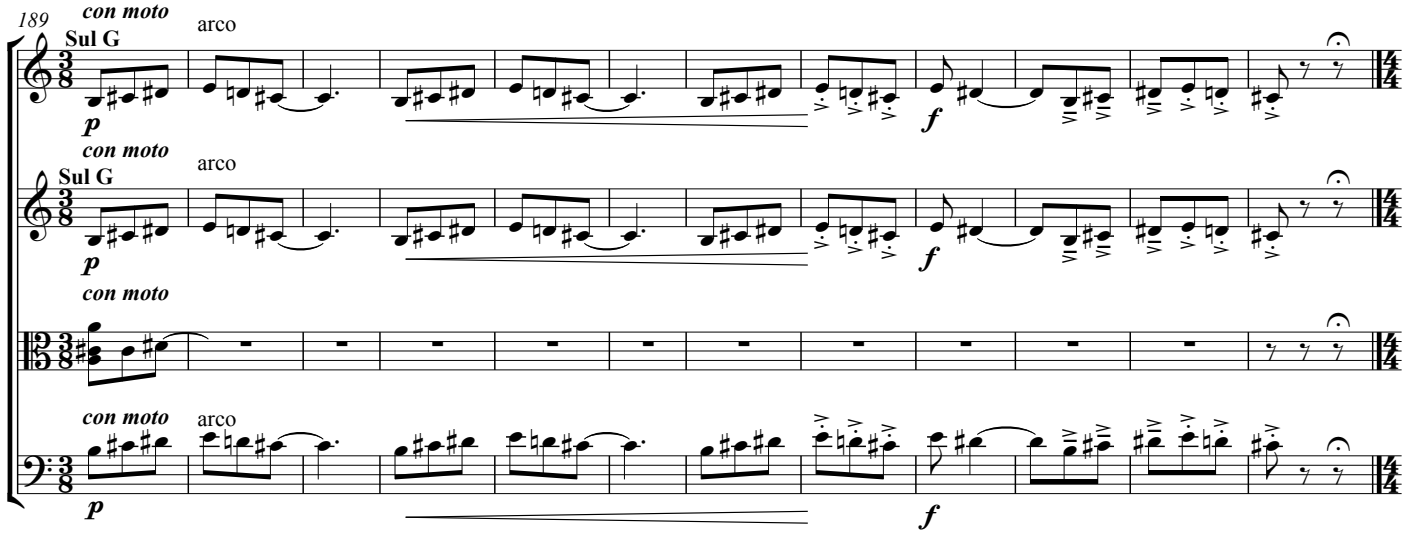
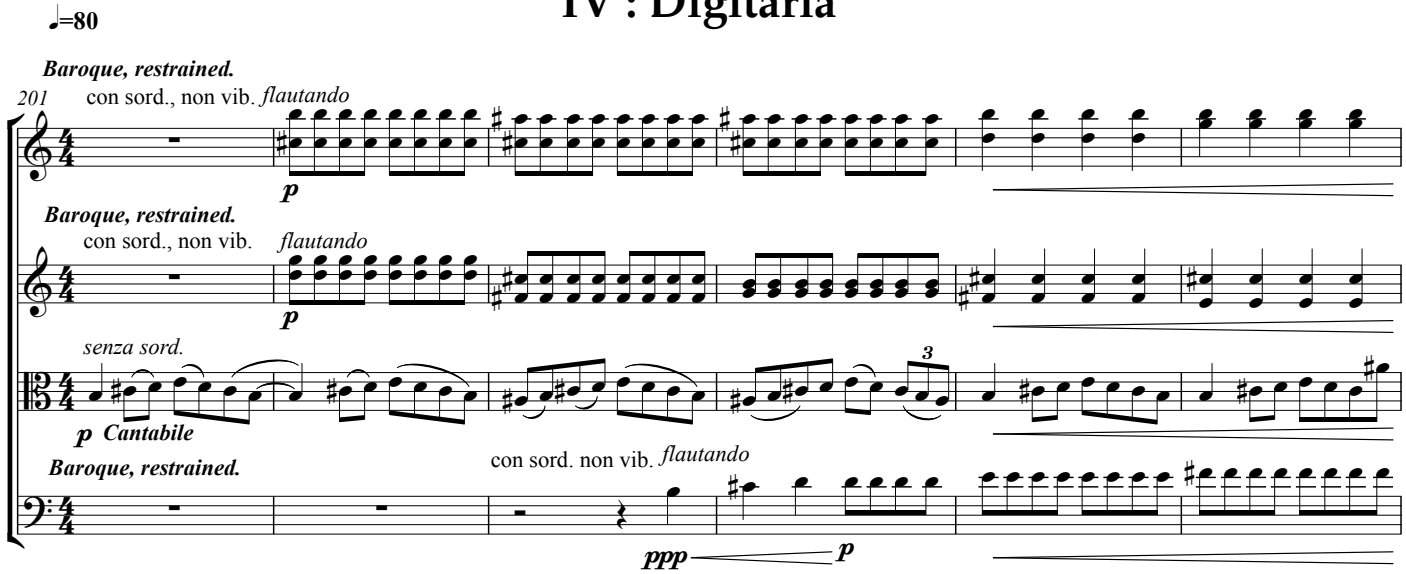


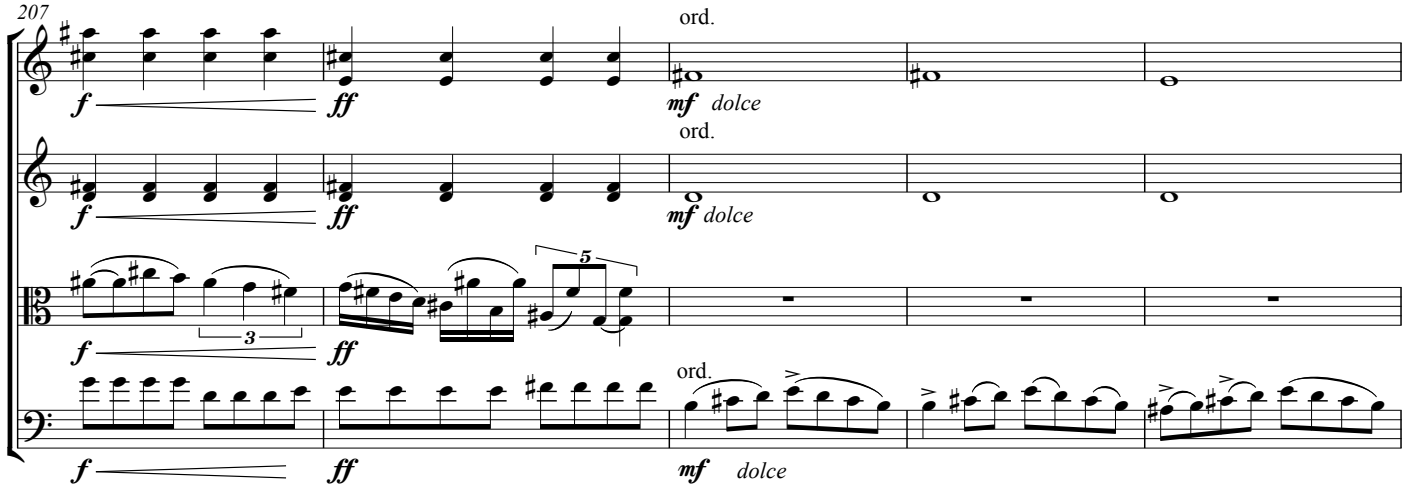
183 **accel.** ***as fast as possible*** **Andante**

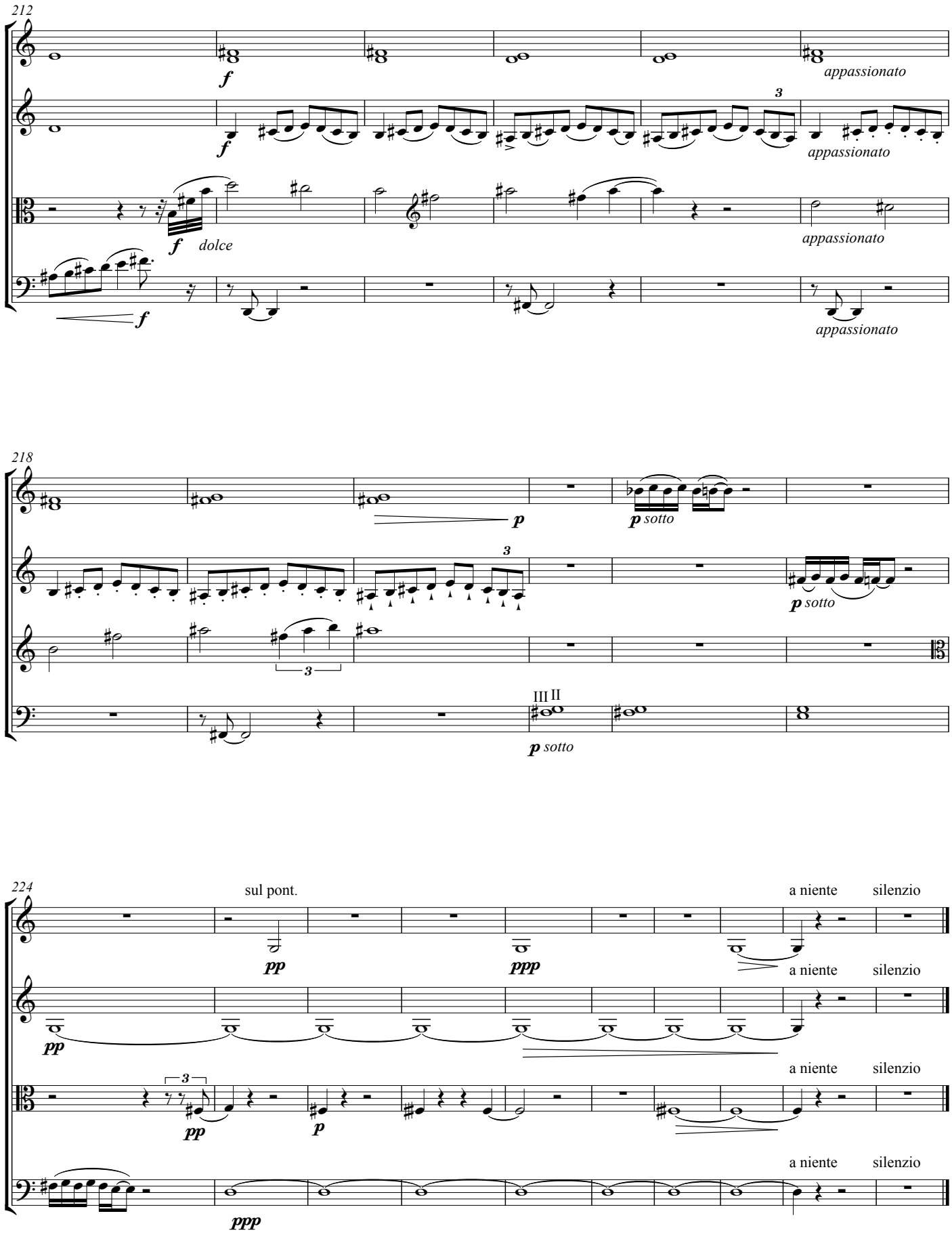




IV : Digitaria






212
f
appassionato
3
f
appassionato
f
dolce
appassionato
f
appassionato
218
p
p sotto
3
p sotto
3
III II
p sotto
224
sul pont.
a niente
silenzio
pp
ppp
a niente
silenzio
pp
a niente
silenzio
3
pp
p
a niente
silenzio
ppp