Full Score

Richard Wagner

Meistersinger Overture arranged for 6-Part Cello Ensemble

Synopsis and Performance Notes

In his synopsis for the Kennedy Centre, (http://www.kennedycenter.org/) Peter Laki writes: " The action of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* ("The Master Singers of Nuremberg"), completed in 1867 and first performed the following year, revolves around a singing contest and the question of what makes a good song. The opera reveals Wagner's bright, joyful, and humorous side—qualities we don't often see in his works. There are no curses, love potions, or murders this time, only a story of rivalry between a good and a bad singer (Walther von Stoltzing and Sixtus Beckmesser, respectively) for the hand of a lovely maiden (Eva Pogner). The wise poet Hans Sachs harbours tender feelings for Eva, but willingly steps aside in favour of his young friend Walther. (Sachs, a cobbler and poet, was a historical figure who lived in Nuremberg in the 16th century; many of his works have been preserved.)

The Prelude [overture] anticipates four of the opera's main melodies. After devoting a separate section to each of them, Wagner ingeniously combines the four in a final section where they can all be heard simultaneously. The first two themes are associated with the guild of the master singers. The first a march and the second a fanfare, they are heard throughout the opera whenever Hans Sachs and the other masters enter as a group or the guild is mentioned. The third theme is a variant of the song with which Walther wins the singing contest and, with it, Eva's hand. Finally, the fourth theme is introduced in conjunction with a funny, irreverent version of the master singers' melody as the apprentices imitate the masters and poke fun at them. This episode alludes to the scene in Act III where Beckmesser presents himself as a contender in the singing contest while people in the audience shake their heads in disapproval: *Scheint mir nicht der Rechte* ("Doesn't seem the right one to me"). The combination of these four themes brings the prelude to a glorious climax that, in the opera, leads directly into the beginning of Act I (the congregation singing a chorale in church); however, it is highly effective with a concert ending, too."

The present arrangement of the Prelude/Overture for 6-part cello orchestra was made for James Halsey and the Giant Cello Ensemble to perform at the Aboyne Cello Festival in North-East Scotland, in July 2014. It uses the concert ending of the overture so that the piece can stand alone without the subsequent four and a half hour opera. All the orchestral melodic lines (modified for the cello range) and harmonies have been preserved in the arrangement but the clear separation and layering of the different musical strands will need particular attention in performance. The dynamic markings in the original score are followed closely in the arrangement. However, as large parts of the overture are marked "ff" or "sempre ff" performers will no doubt want to introduce their own variations within these dynamics. Some of the cello writing is high (e.g. in Cello 1 at the beginning) . While "ossias" have been offered in some cases, the higher pitch is preferable, if possible. Bars 97-101 and 105-8 are marked as a Solo for the leader of Cellos 1 but if desired could be played Soli by all Cellos 1. In the original orchestral score these bars are played by the entire first violin section (at the same pitch as notated in the arrangement).

In the original score Wagner gives tempo and expression markings in a mixture of German and Italian. The following Italian substitutions have been made in the score and parts:
sehr- molto, immer- sempre, ausdrucksvoll- espress., zart- dolce, ein wenig- poco, markiert- marcato, allmahlich- poco a poco, gebunden- legato, gehalten- sostenuto, leidenschaftlicher -appassionato, Hauptzeitmass- a tempo, feurig- fuoco. Where the translation is less obvious, the original German has been given with an attempt at an Italian translation in brackets. Additionally, in the very first bar of the original score the woodwind and brass are marked "sehr gehalten" (very sustained) and the strings are marked "seht kraftig" (very strong or very powerful). As these comments are in brackets in the original score, and as the cellos in the arrangement are acting both as wind and strings I have omitted these expression marks from the arrangement.

Gwyn Seymour, Stonehaven, Scotland February 2014
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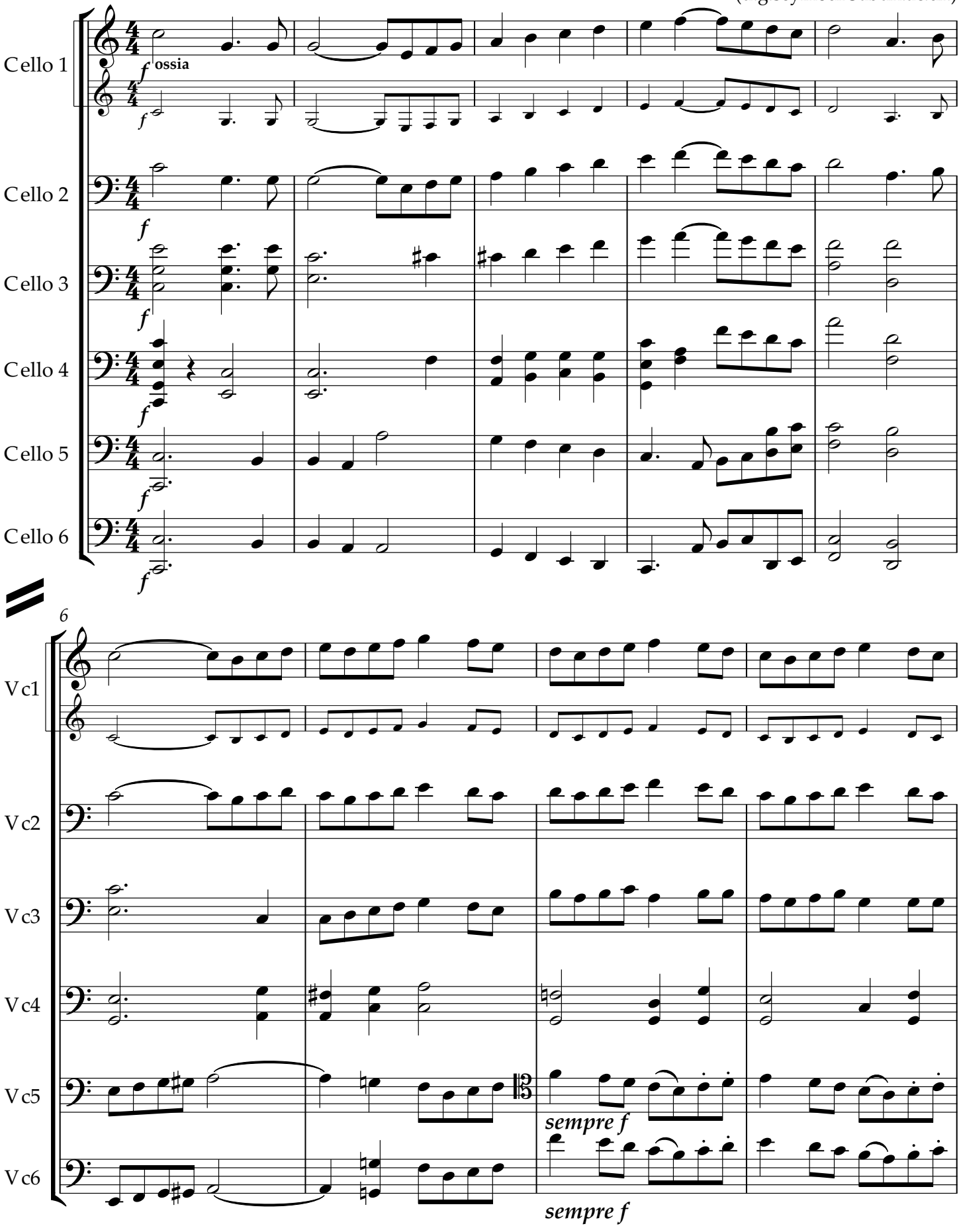
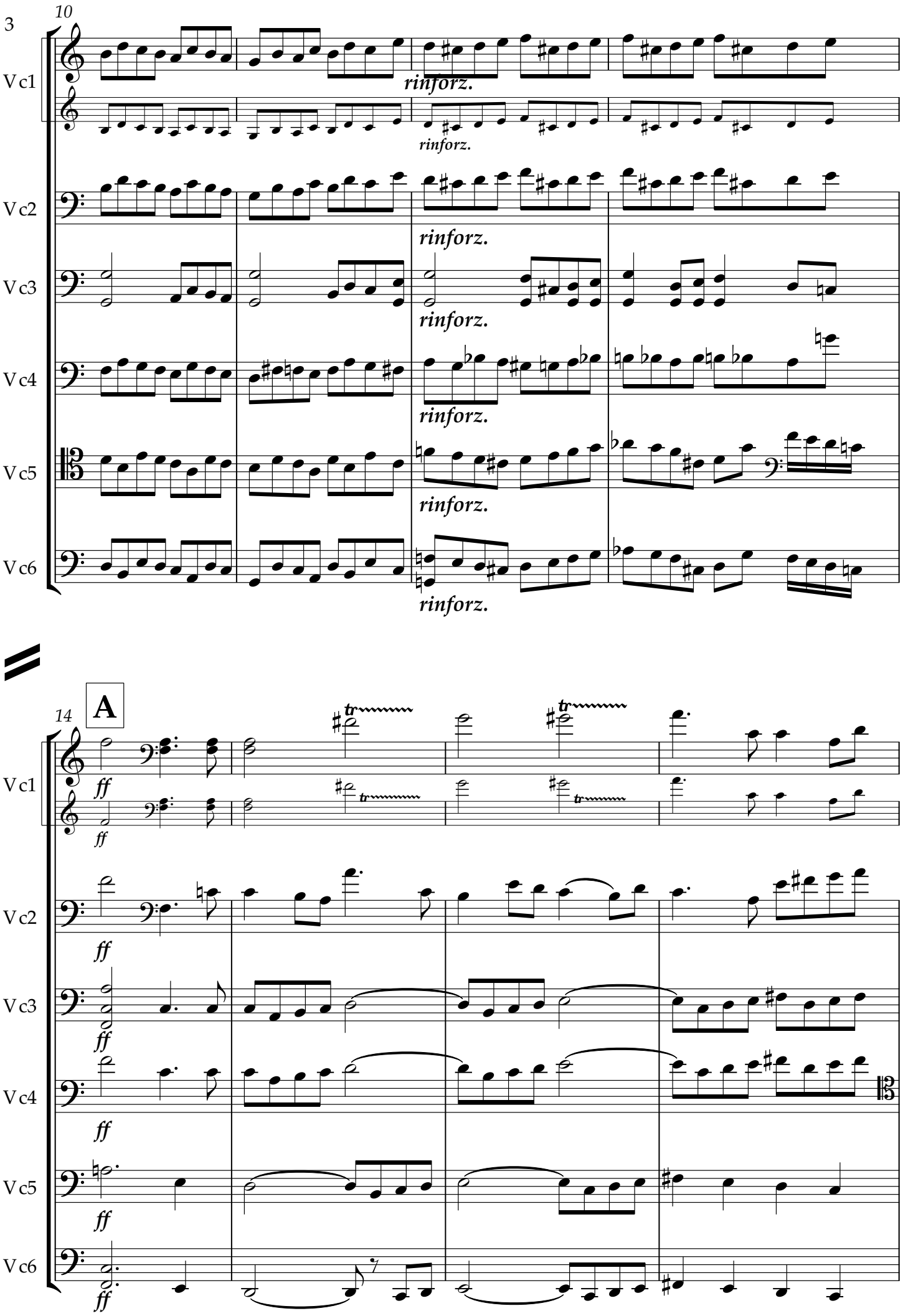
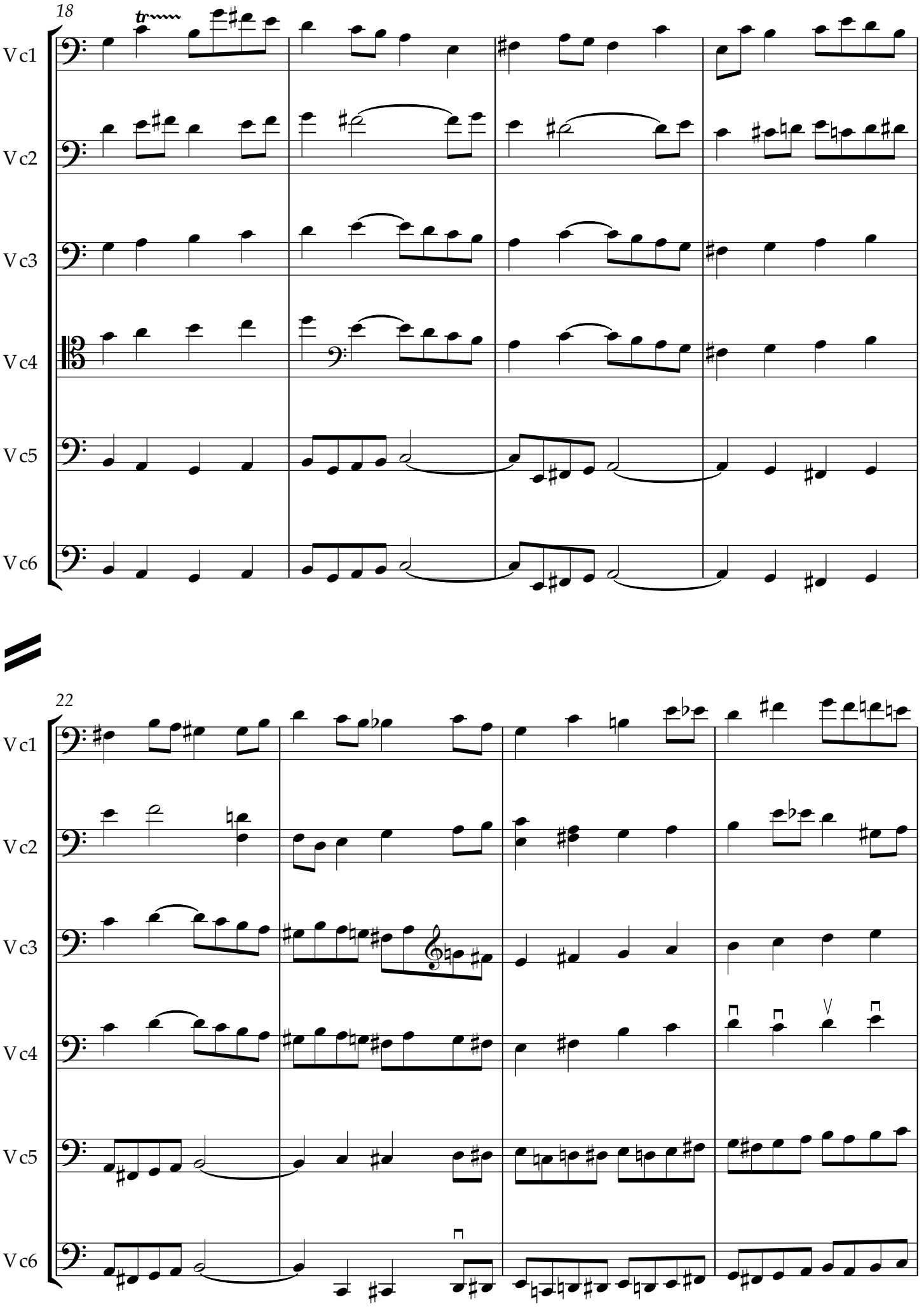
Meistersinger Overture

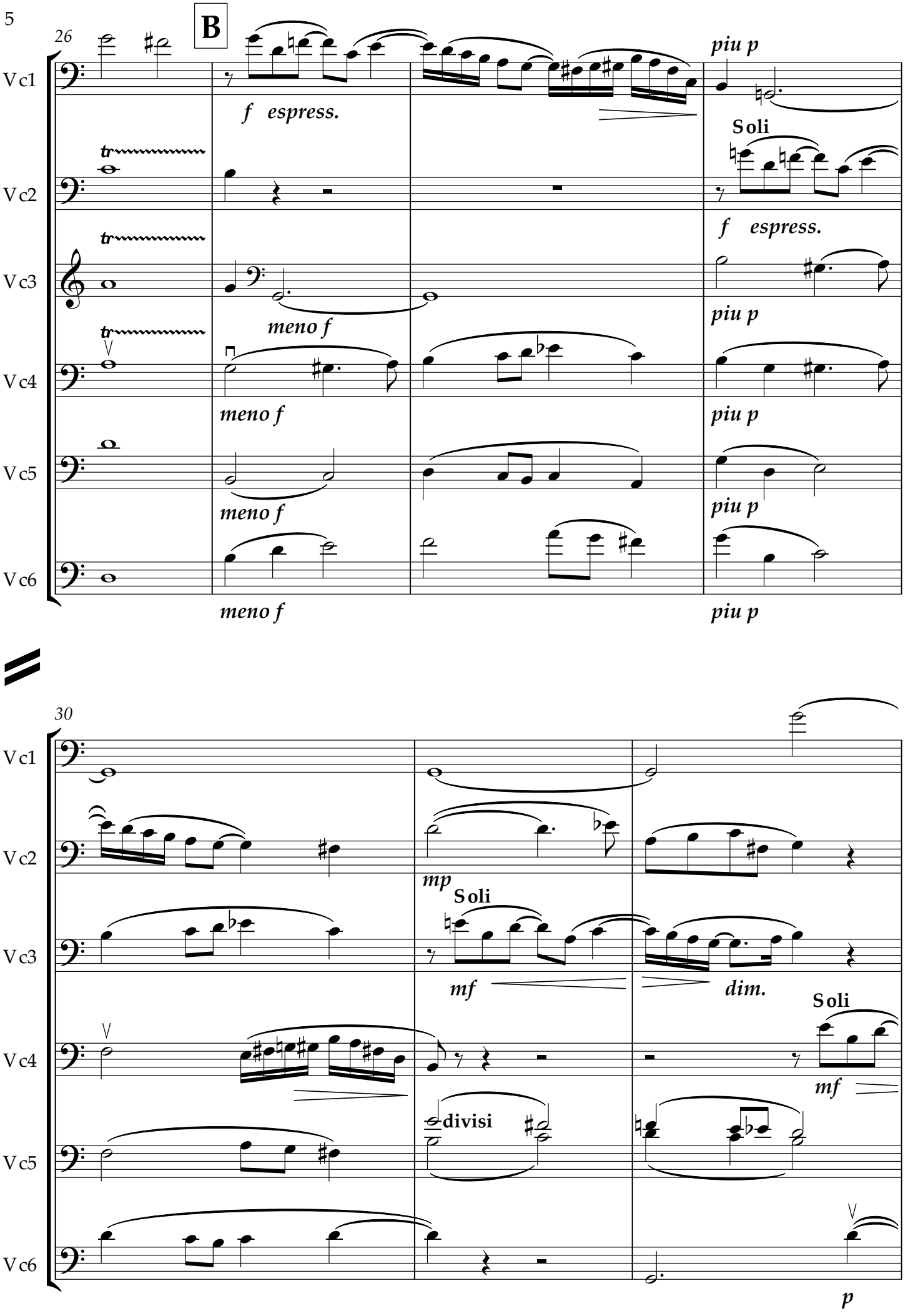
Richard Wagner
arranged by Gwyn Seymour
(d.g.seymour@abdn.ac.uk)

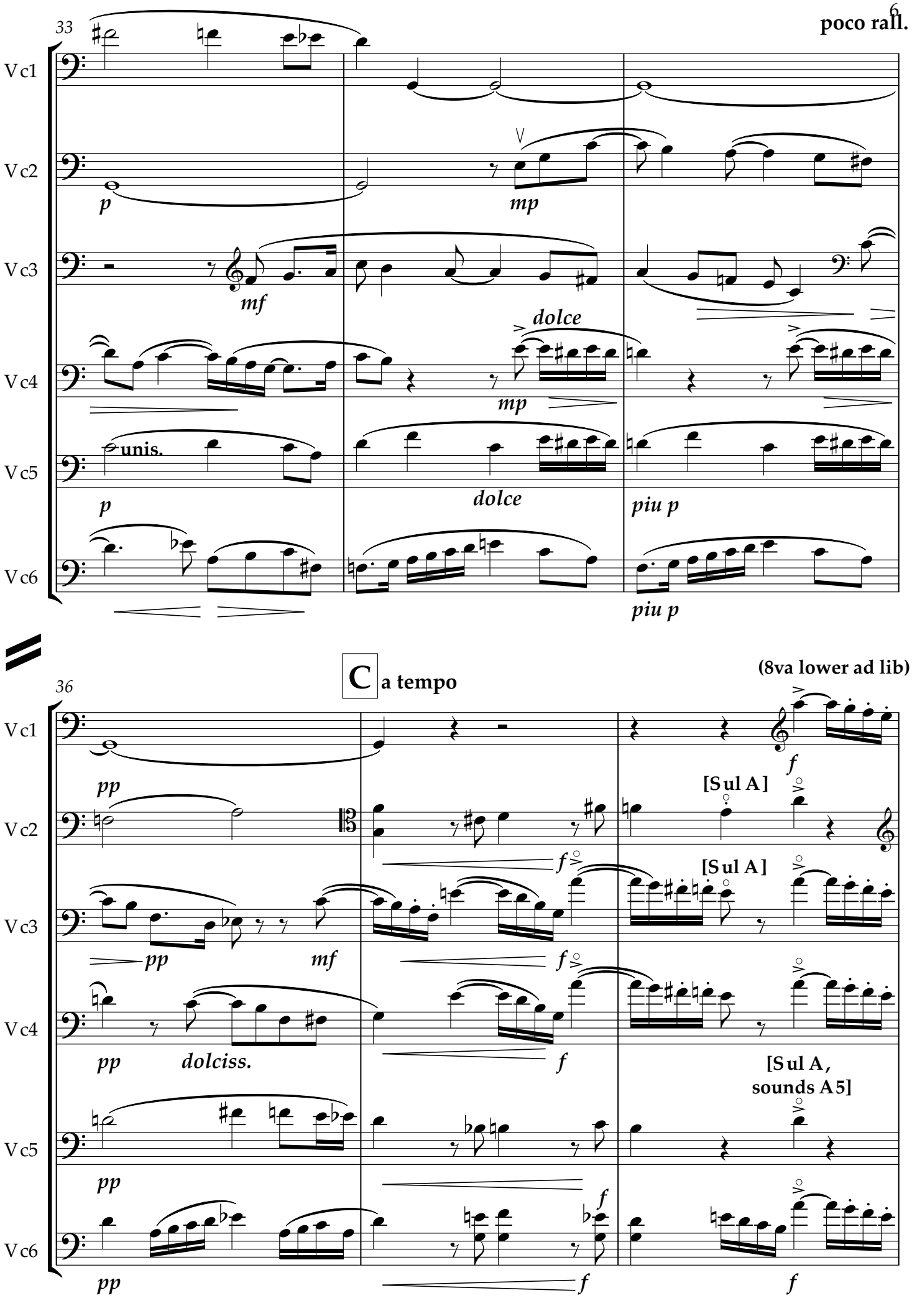
Sehr massig bewegt [Molto Moderato]

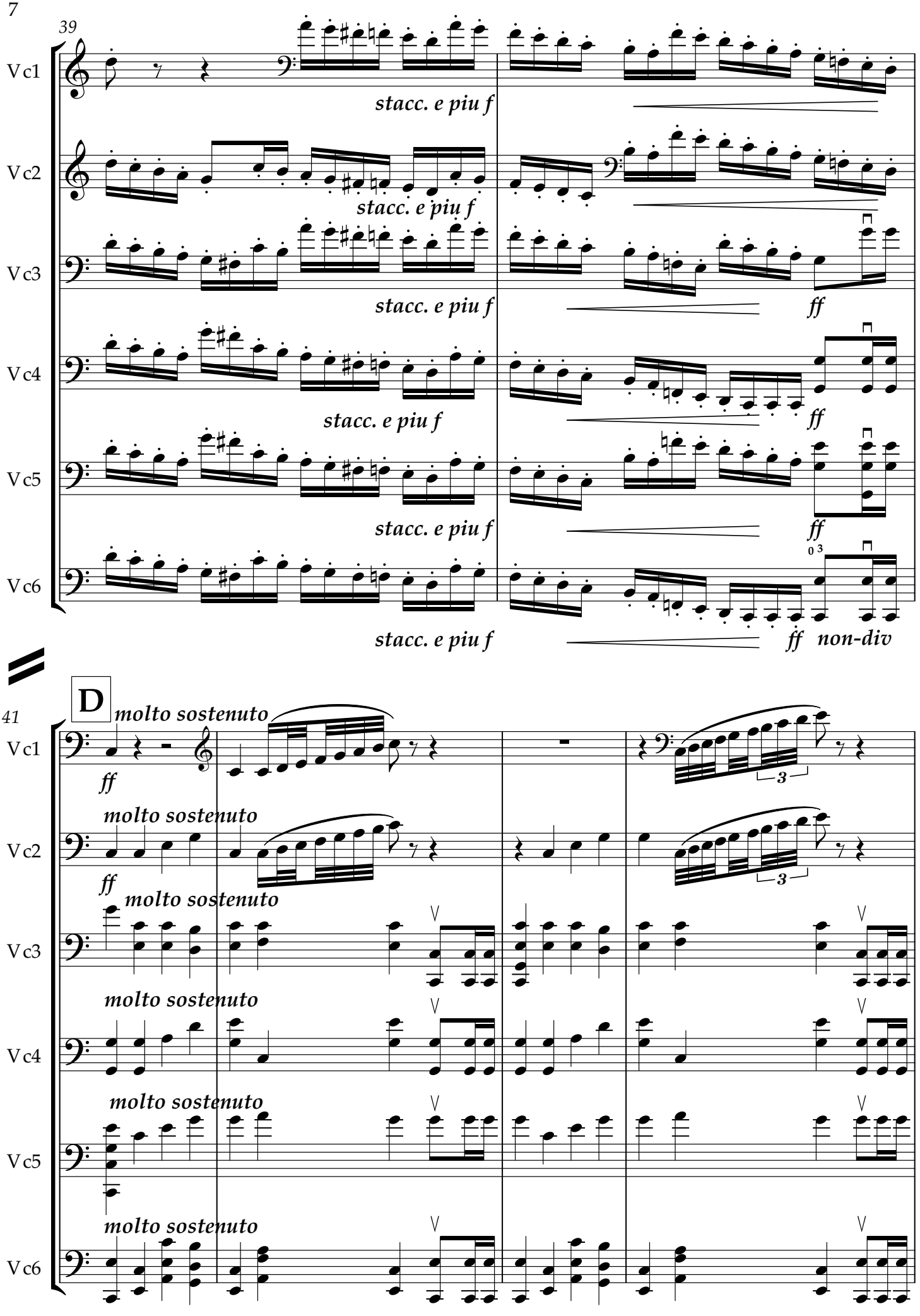


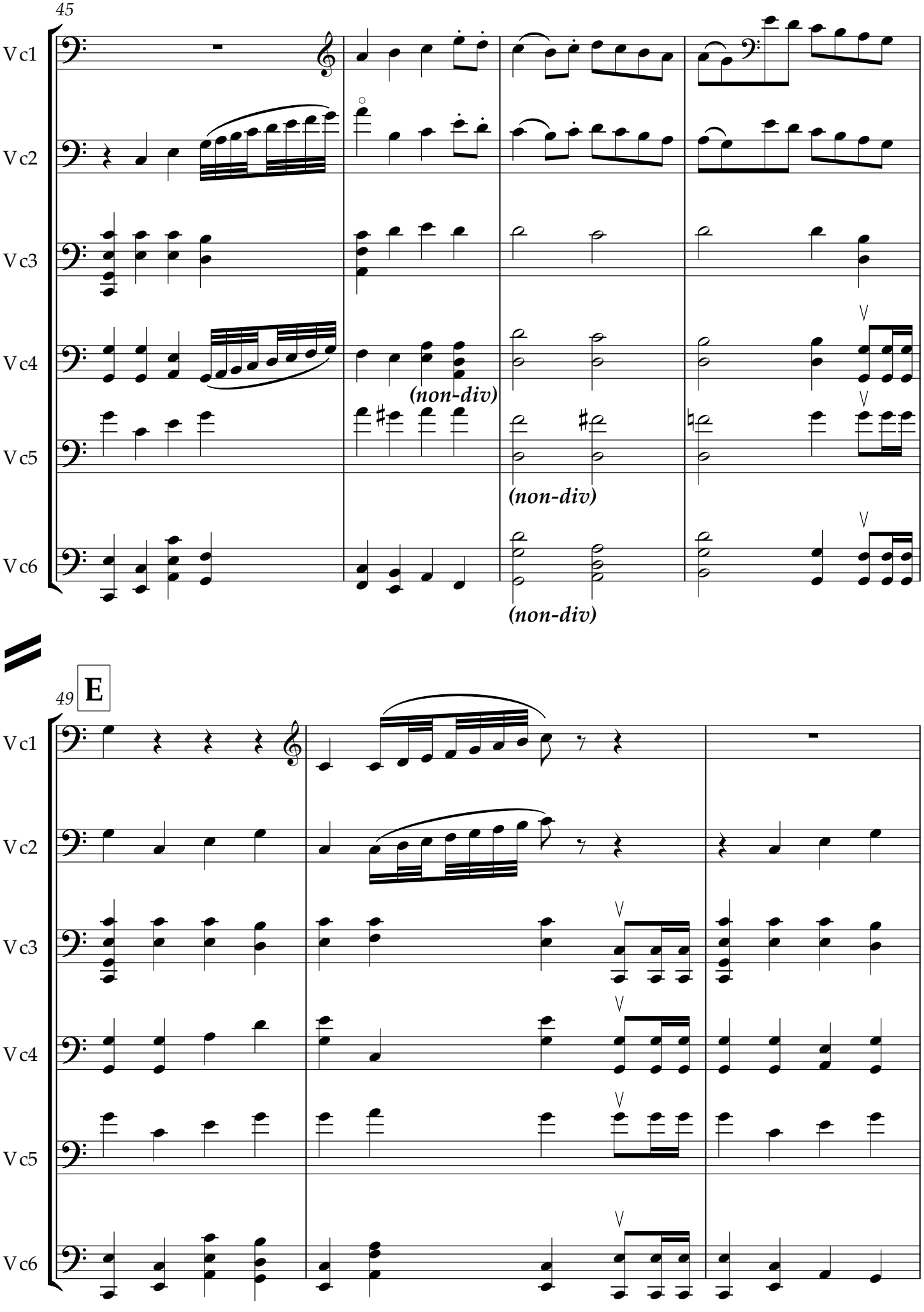

10
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
rinforz.
14
A
ff

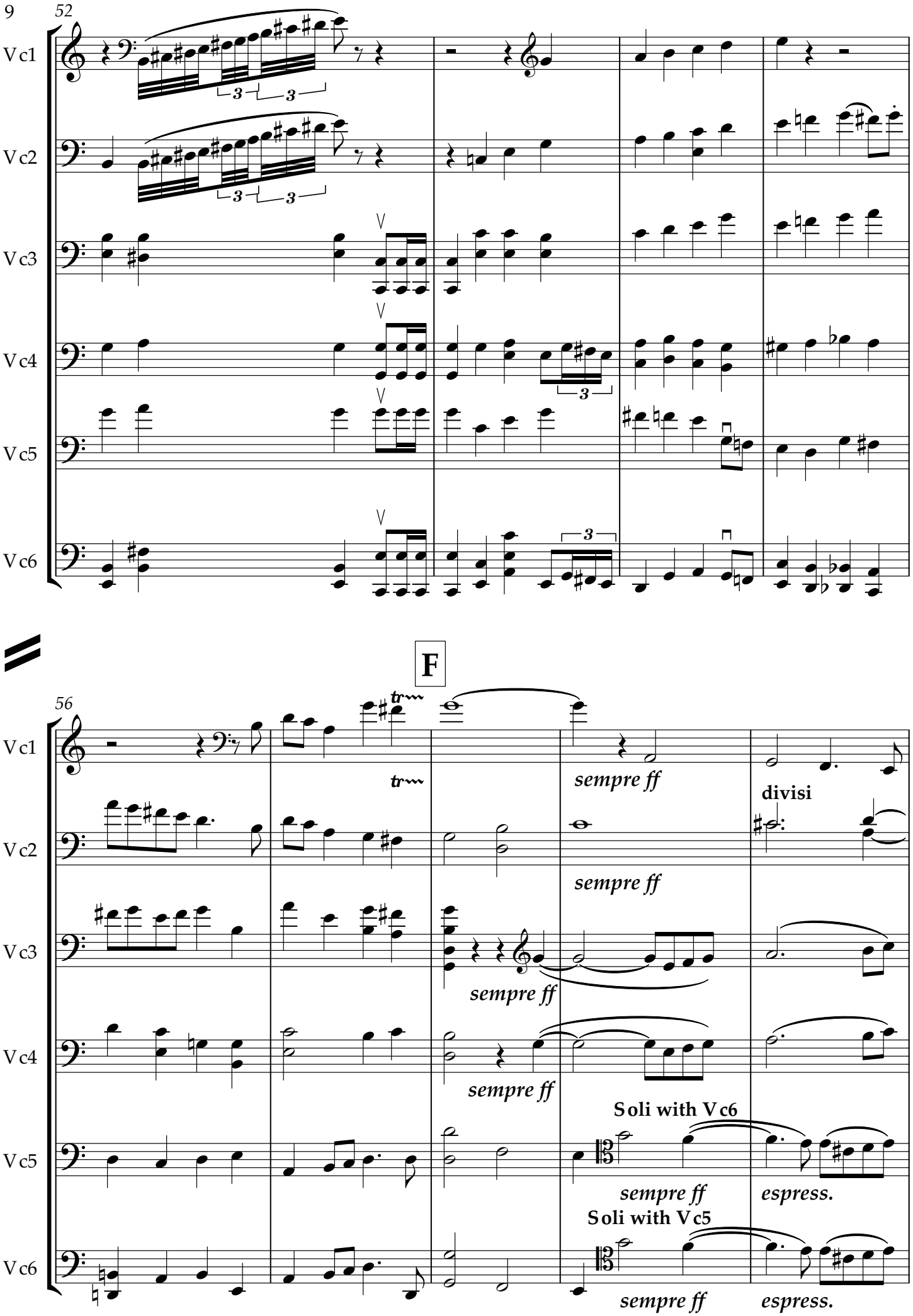

18
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
22
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6

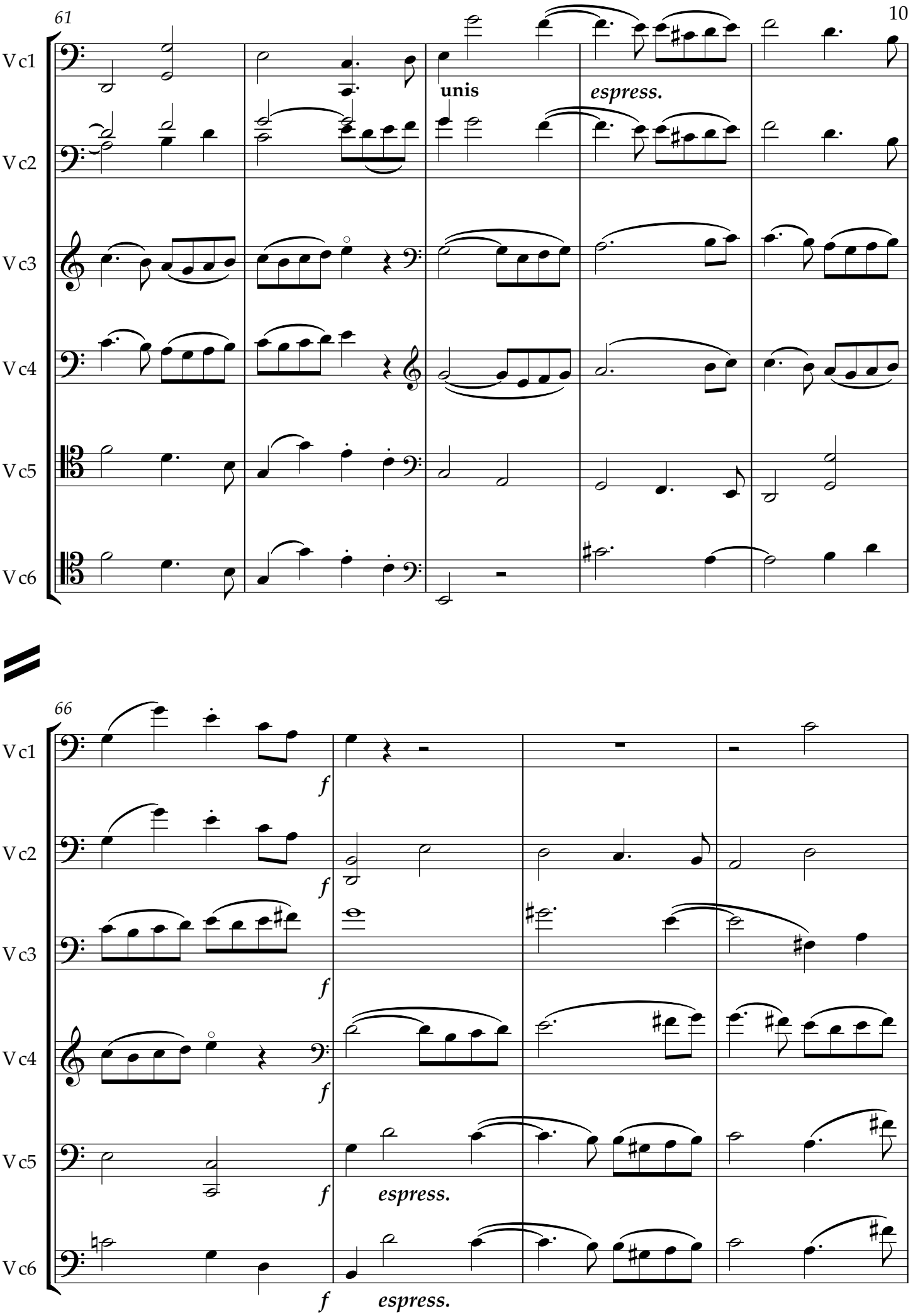

B
26
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
f espress.
piu p
Soli
f espress.
meno f
piu p
meno f
piu p
meno f
piu p
meno f
piu p
30
mp
Soli
mf
dim.
Soli
mf
divisi
p

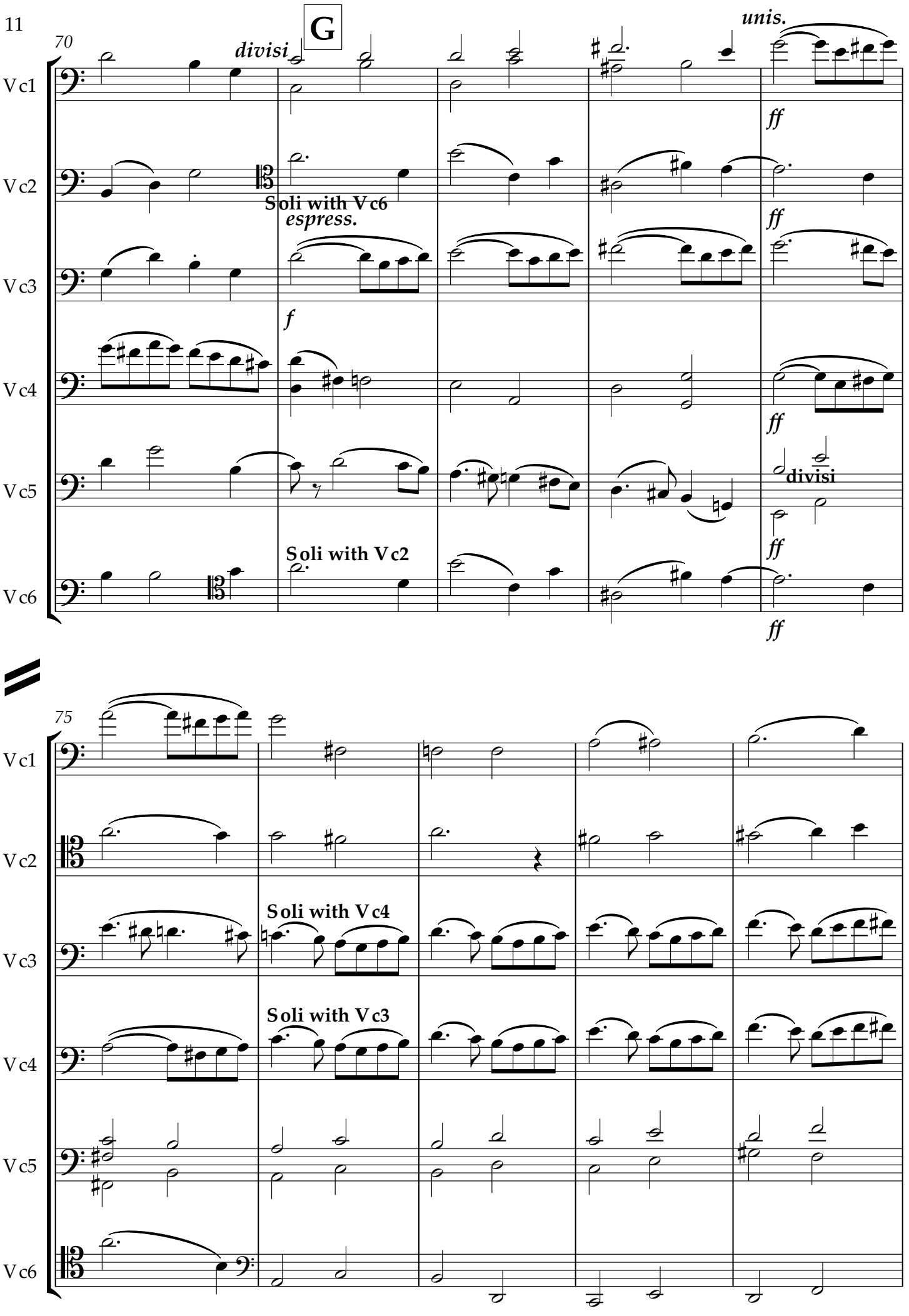

poco rall.
33
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
p
mp
mf
dolce
mp
unis.
p
dolce
piu p
piu p
C a tempo
(8va lower ad lib)
36
pp
f
[Sul A]
[Sul A]
pp
mf
f
pp
dolciss.
f
[Sul A,
sounds A5]
pp
f
pp
f
f


39
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
stacc. e piu f
ff
non-div
41
D
molto sostenuto
ff
3


45
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
(non-div)
(non-div)
(non-div)
49
E
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6


52
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
F
56
sempre ff
divisi
Soli with Vc6
espress.
Soli with Vc5


61
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
unis
espress.
66
f
espress.


G
70
divisi
unis.
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
ff
Soli with Vc6
espress.
f
Soli with Vc2
divisi
75
Soli with Vc4
Soli with Vc3

H

80

Vc1

Vc2

Vc3

Vc4

Vc5

Vc6

f

f

f

f

f

divisi

83

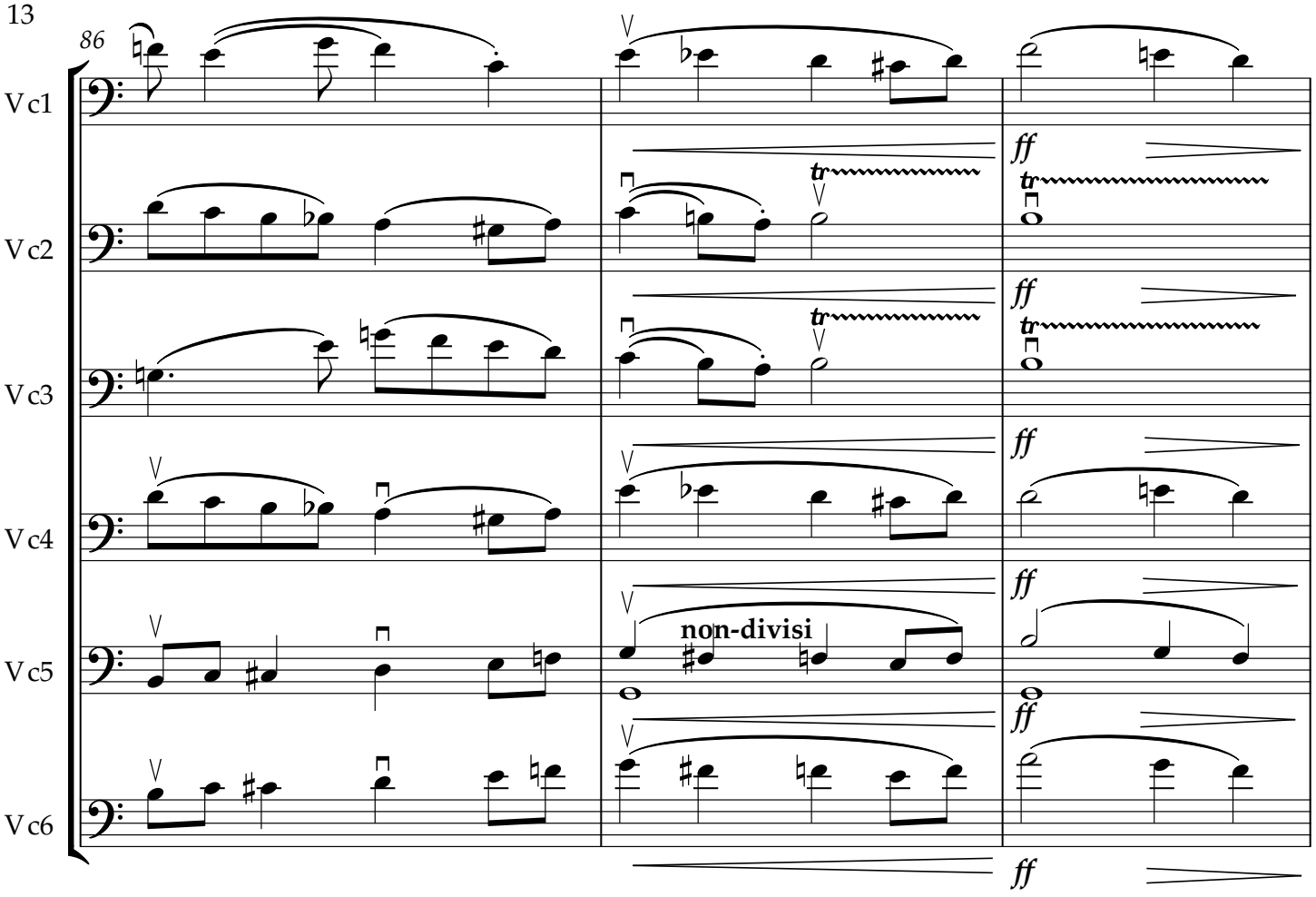
tr

tr

f

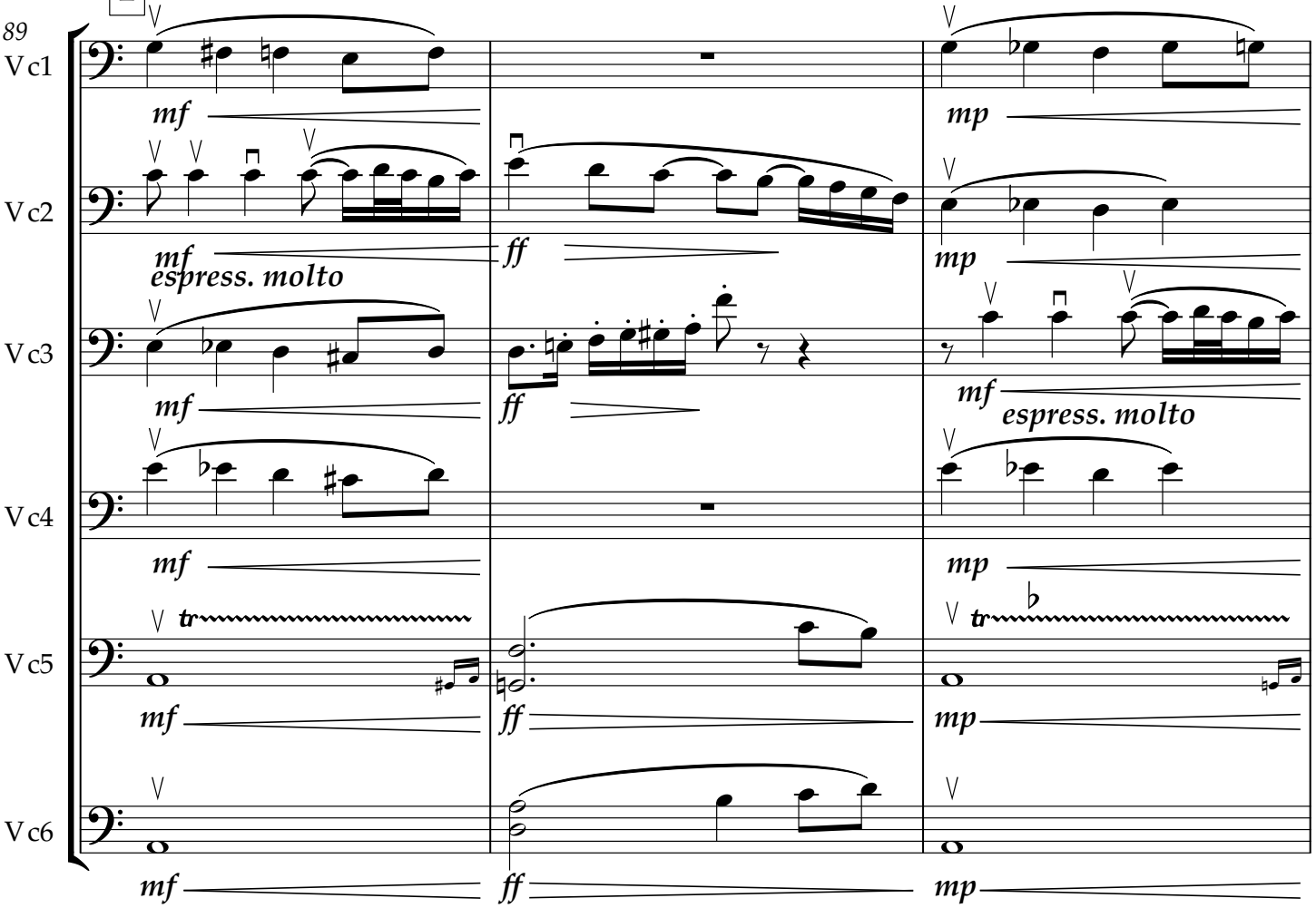
f

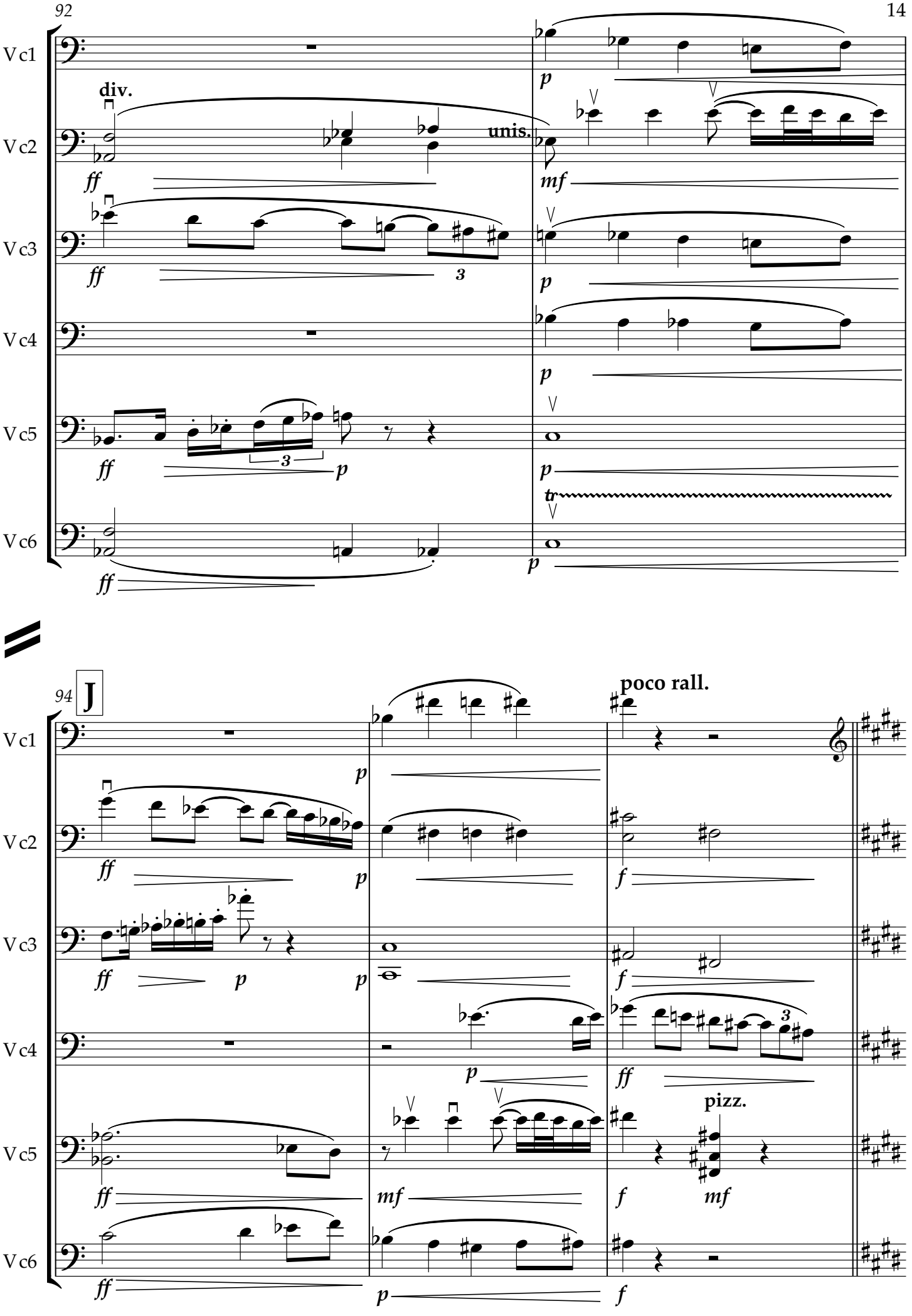
unis



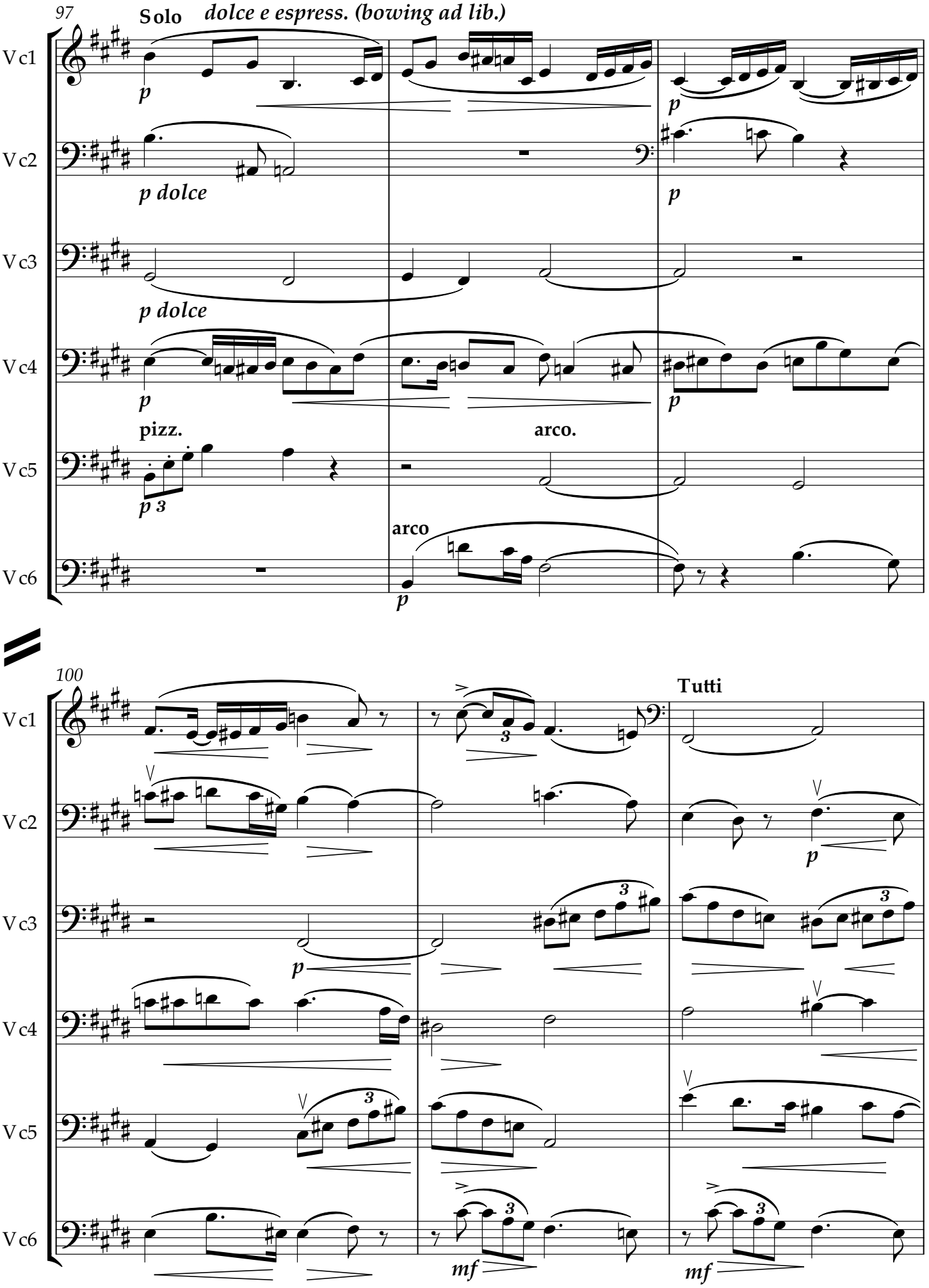
Bewegt, doch immer noch etwas breit

I **[piu mosso ma sempre un poco largo]**




Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
div.
unis.
ff
mf
p
tr
94
J
poco rall.
f
pizz.

Massig im Hauptzeitmass[Tempo Primo, moderato]



(appassionato)

103

Solo

Vc1

Vc2

Vc3

Vc4

Vc5

Vc6

mf

p *dolce*

p *dolce*

divisi

p

p *dolce*

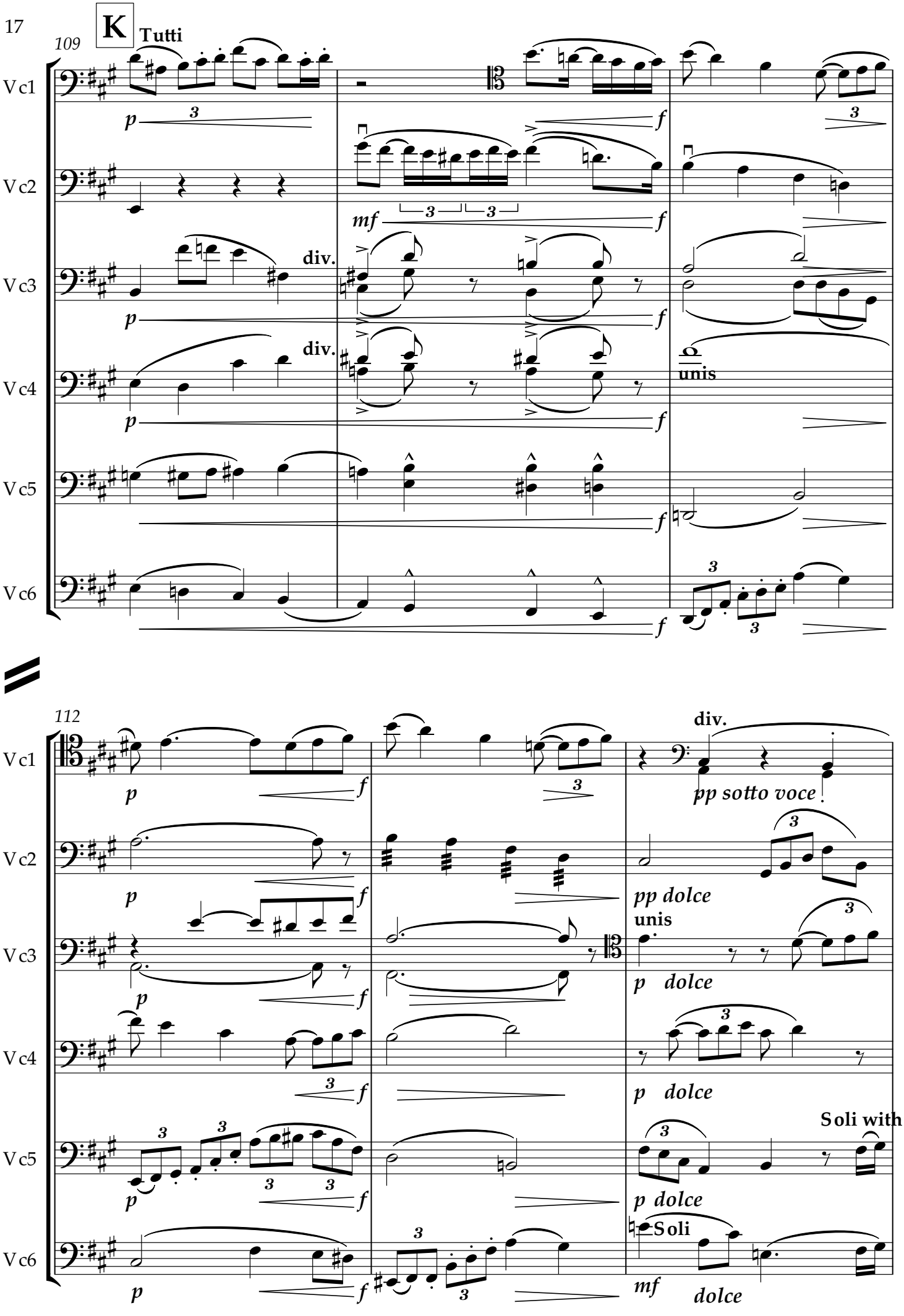
106

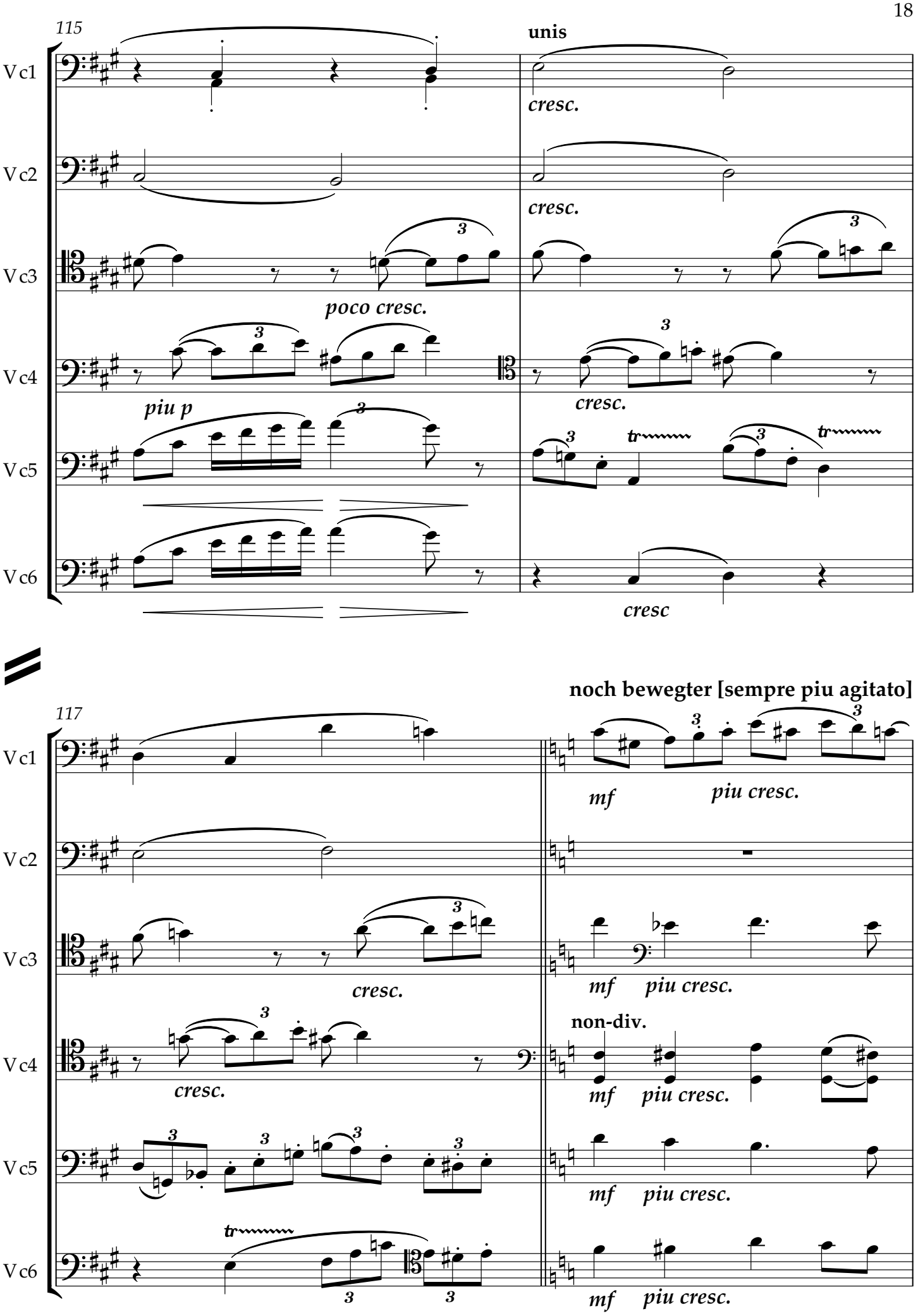
f

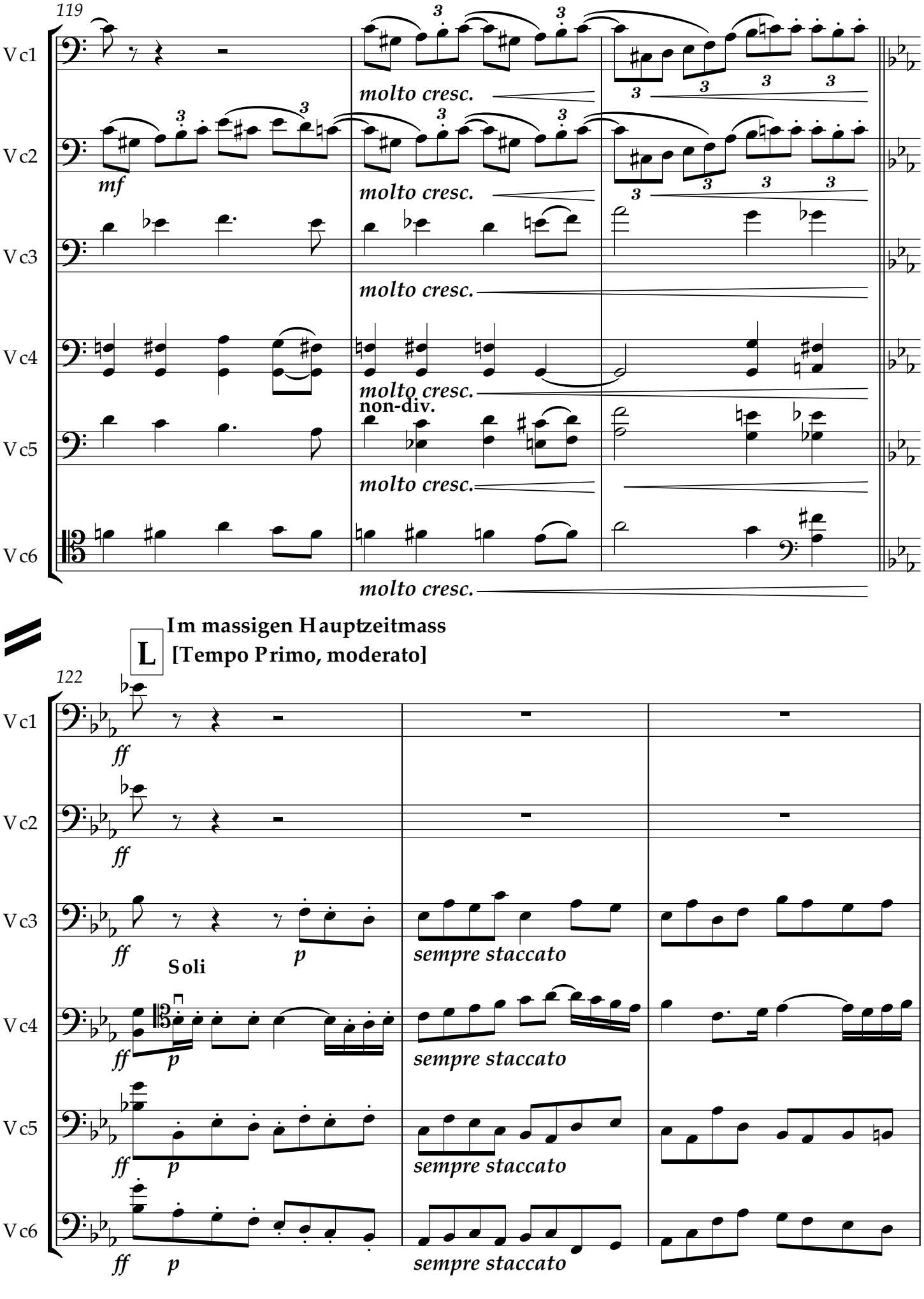
p *dolce*

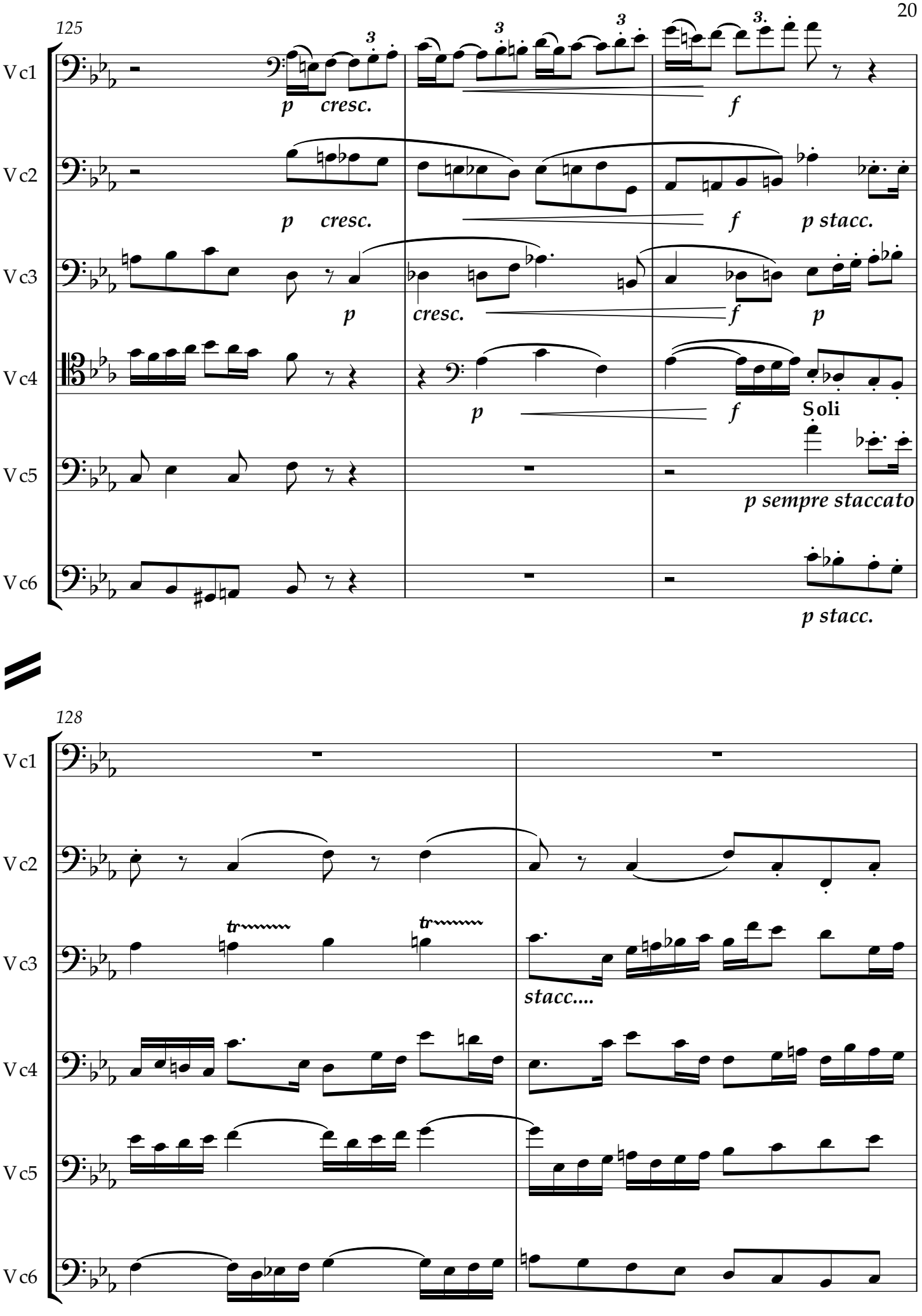
p espress.

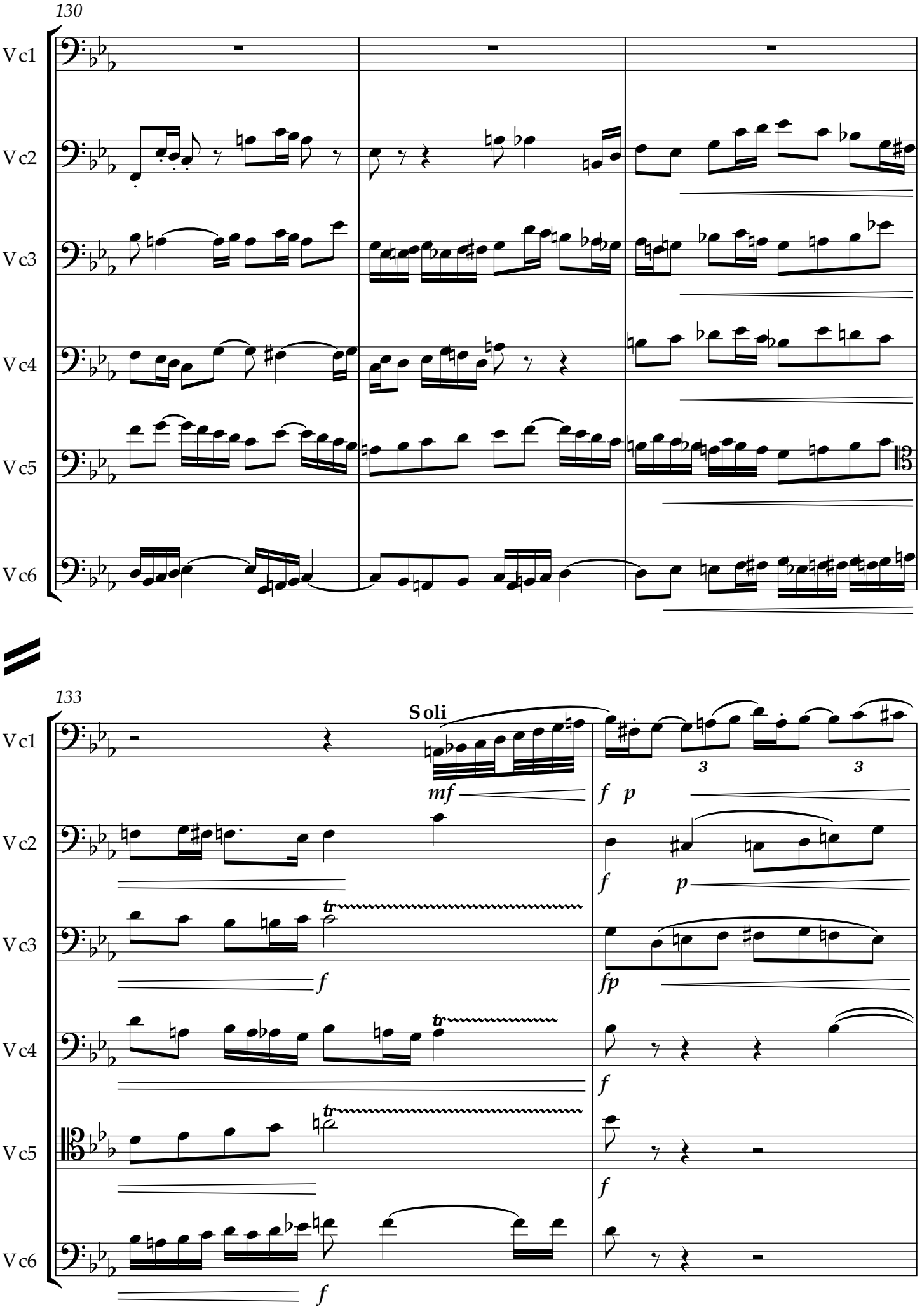
unis.

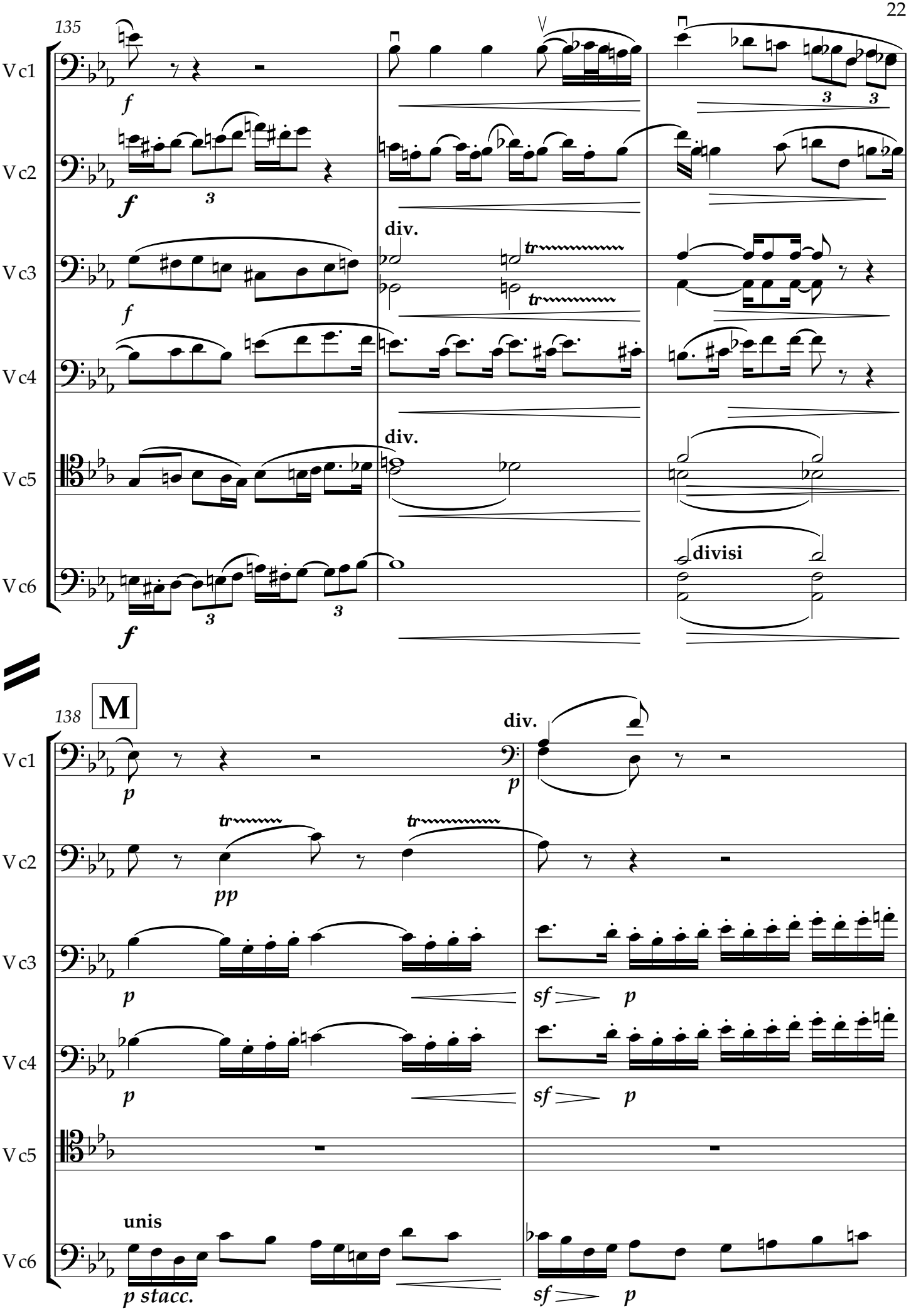

K
Tutti
109
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
p
f
mf
div.
unis
112
pp sotto voce
pp dolce
p dolce
Soli with Vc6
Soli
mf
dolce

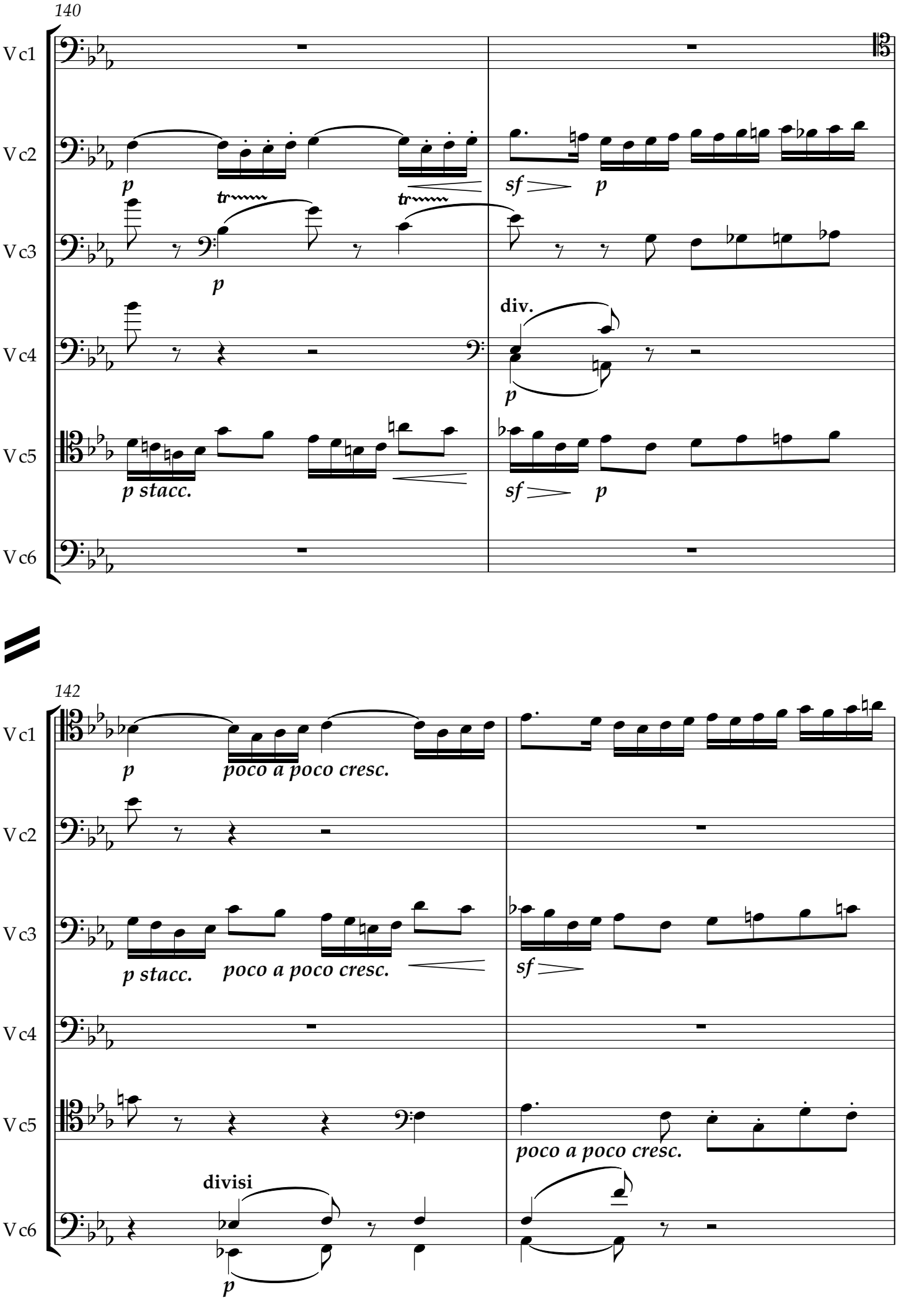

115
unis
Vc1
cresc.
Vc2
cresc.
Vc3
poco cresc.
Vc4
cresc.
piu p
Vc5
Vc6
cresc
117
noch bewegter [sempre piu agitato]
mf
piu cresc.
cresc.
non-div.

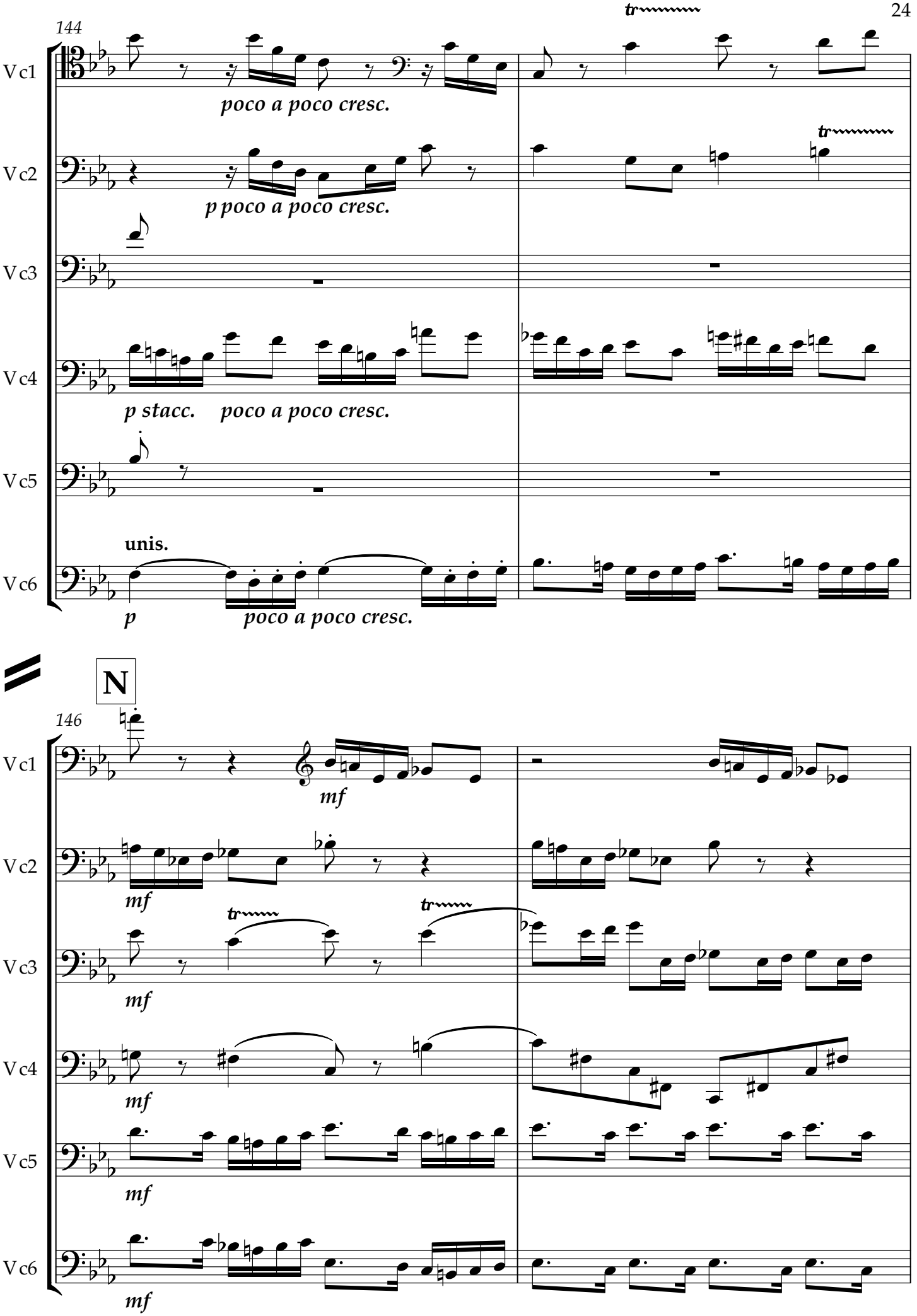

119
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
mf
molto cresc.
non-div.
L
Im massigen Hauptzeitmass
[Tempo Primo, moderato]
122
ff
p
Soli
sempre staccato

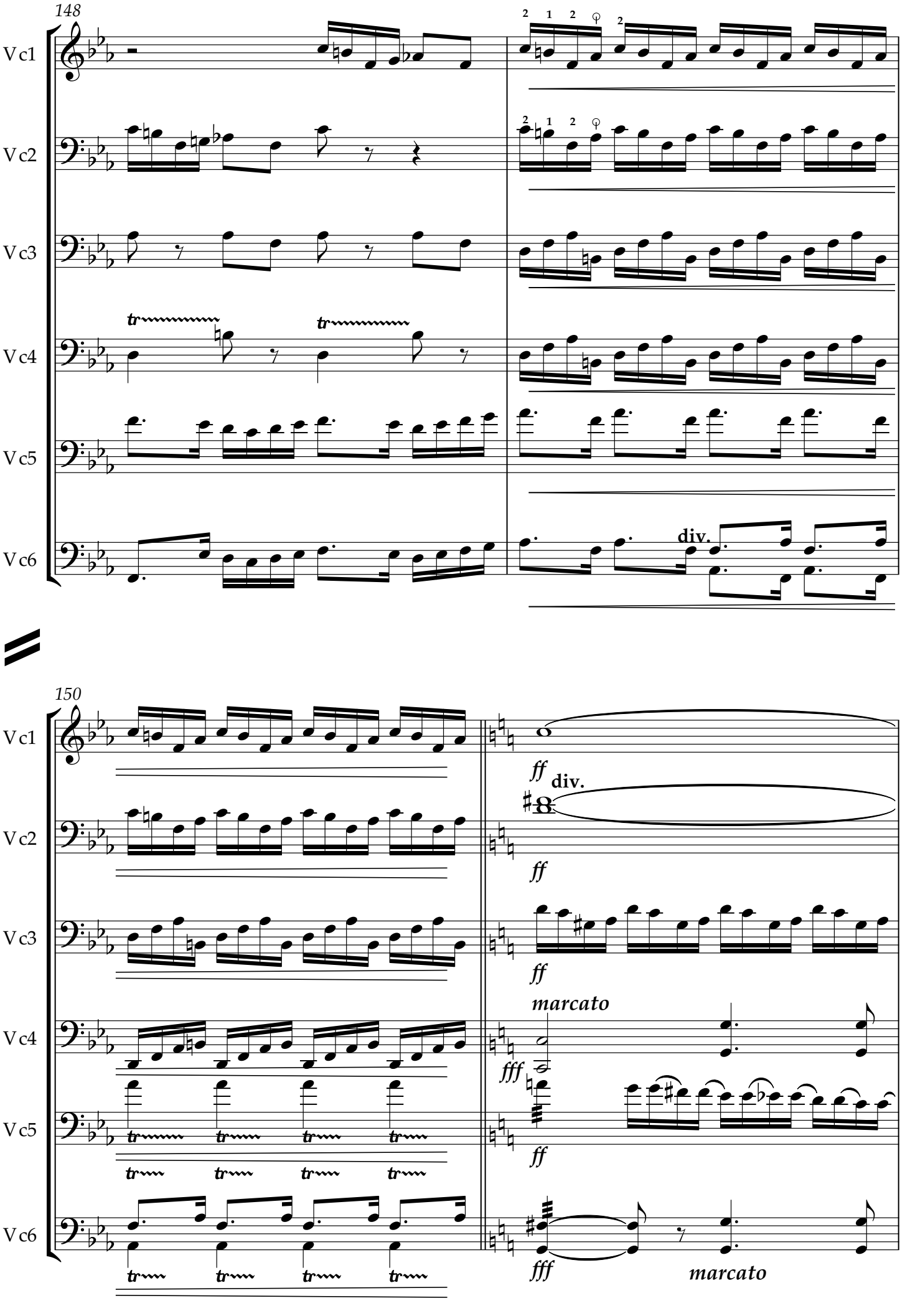

125
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
p cresc.
f
p stacc.
p
cresc.
f
p
p
f
Soli
p sempre staccato
p stacc.
128
tr
tr
stacc....

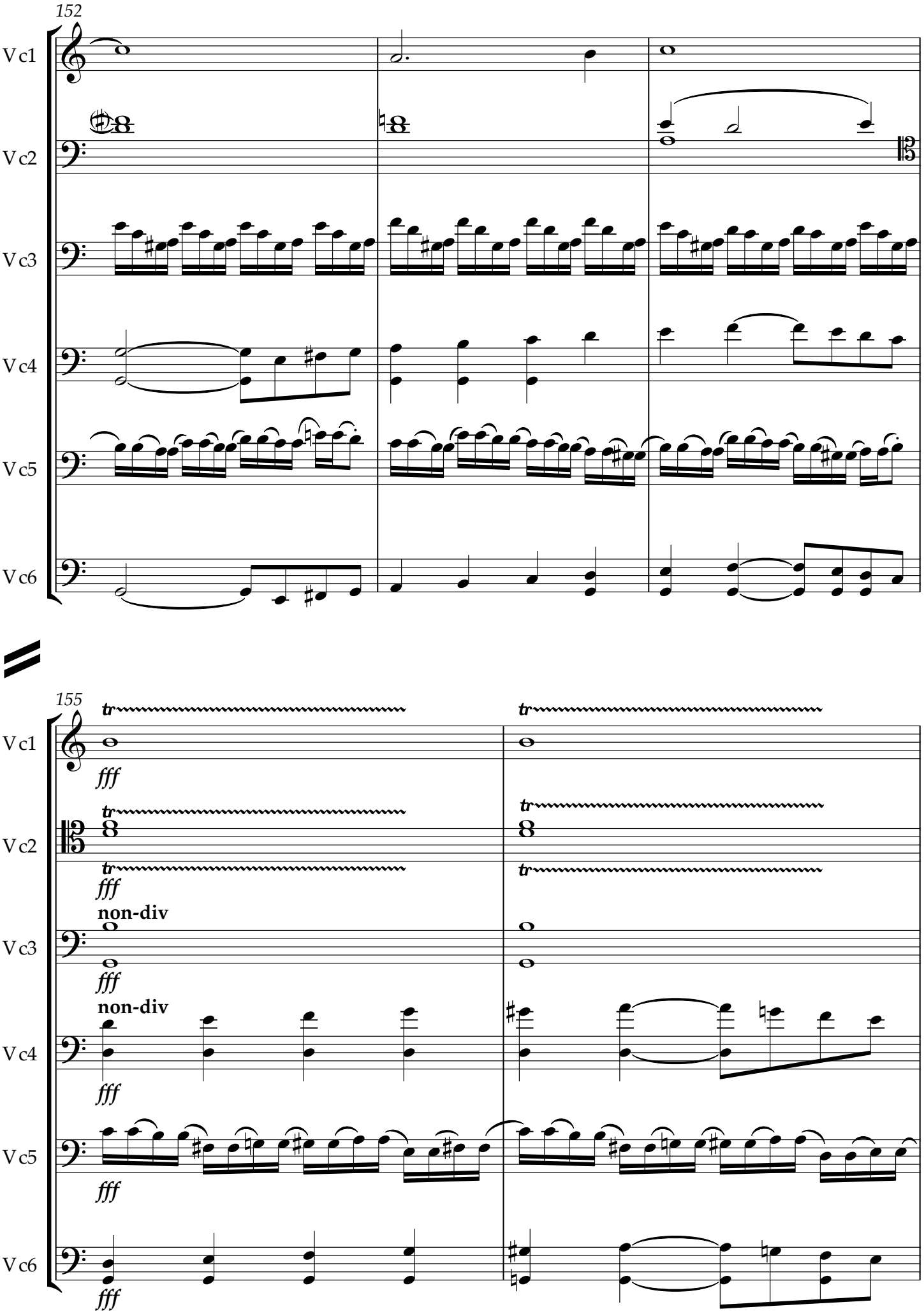

130
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
133
Soli
mf
f p
f
p
fp
tr
3


135
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
f
3
div.
tr
divisi
138
M
p
pp
sf
unis
p stacc.


140
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
p
tr
tr
sf
p
p
div.
p
p stacc.
sf
p
142
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
p
poco a poco cresc.
p stacc.
poco a poco cresc.
sf
poco a poco cresc.
divisi
p


144
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
poco a poco cresc.
p poco a poco cresc.
p stacc. poco a poco cresc.
unis.
p
poco a poco cresc.
tr
N
146
mf


148
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
tr
div.
150
ff
div.
ff
ff
marcato
fff
ff
fff
marcato


152
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
155
tr
fff
non-div

O

157

Vc1

(sotto voce)

p scherzando

Vc2

unis.

(sotto voce)

Vc3

p scherzando

(sotto voce)

p scherzando

Vc4

(molto espress.)

Vc5

(molto espress.)

Vc6

mf (molto marcato)

160

Vc1

leggiero

Vc2

leggiero

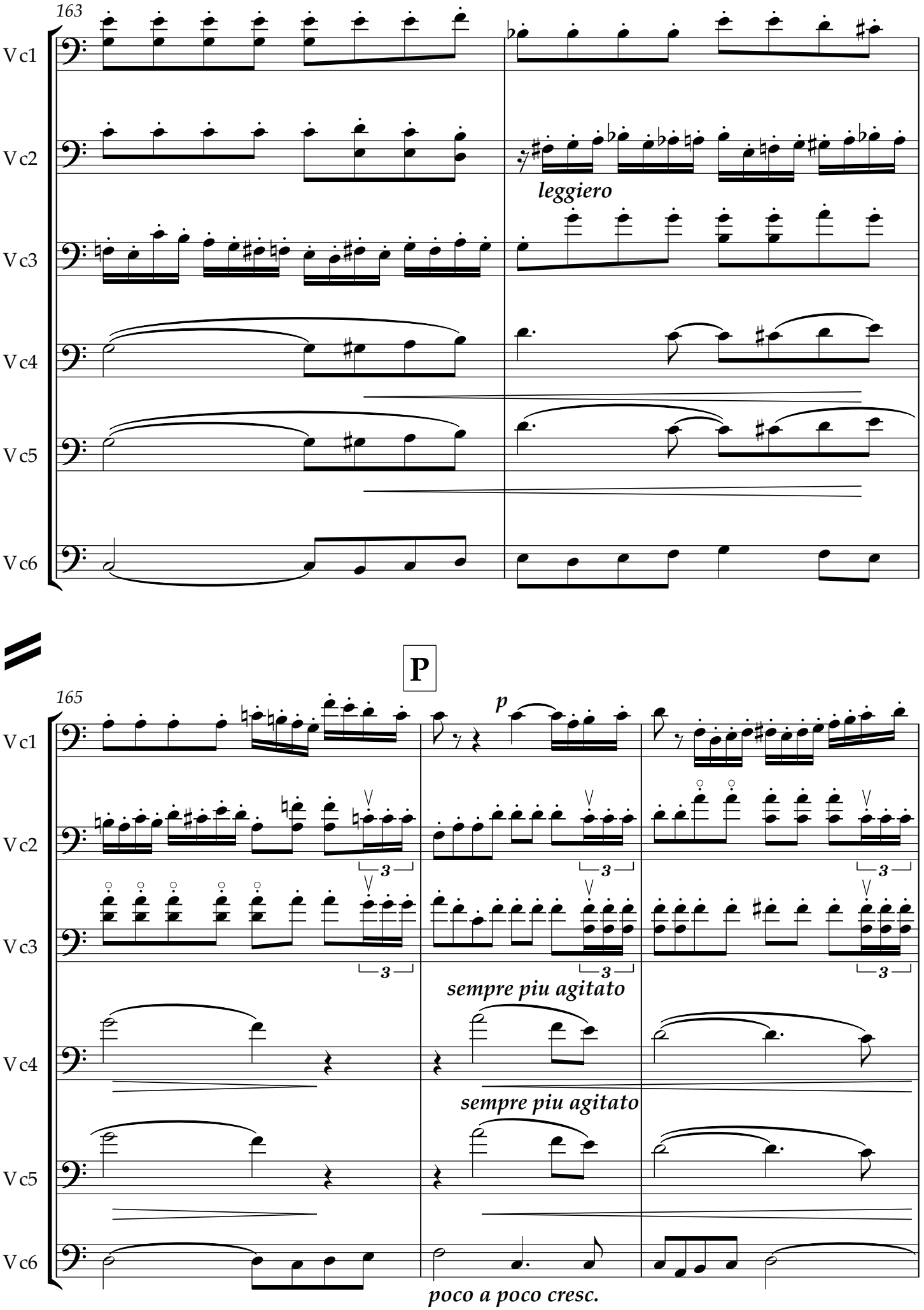
Vc3

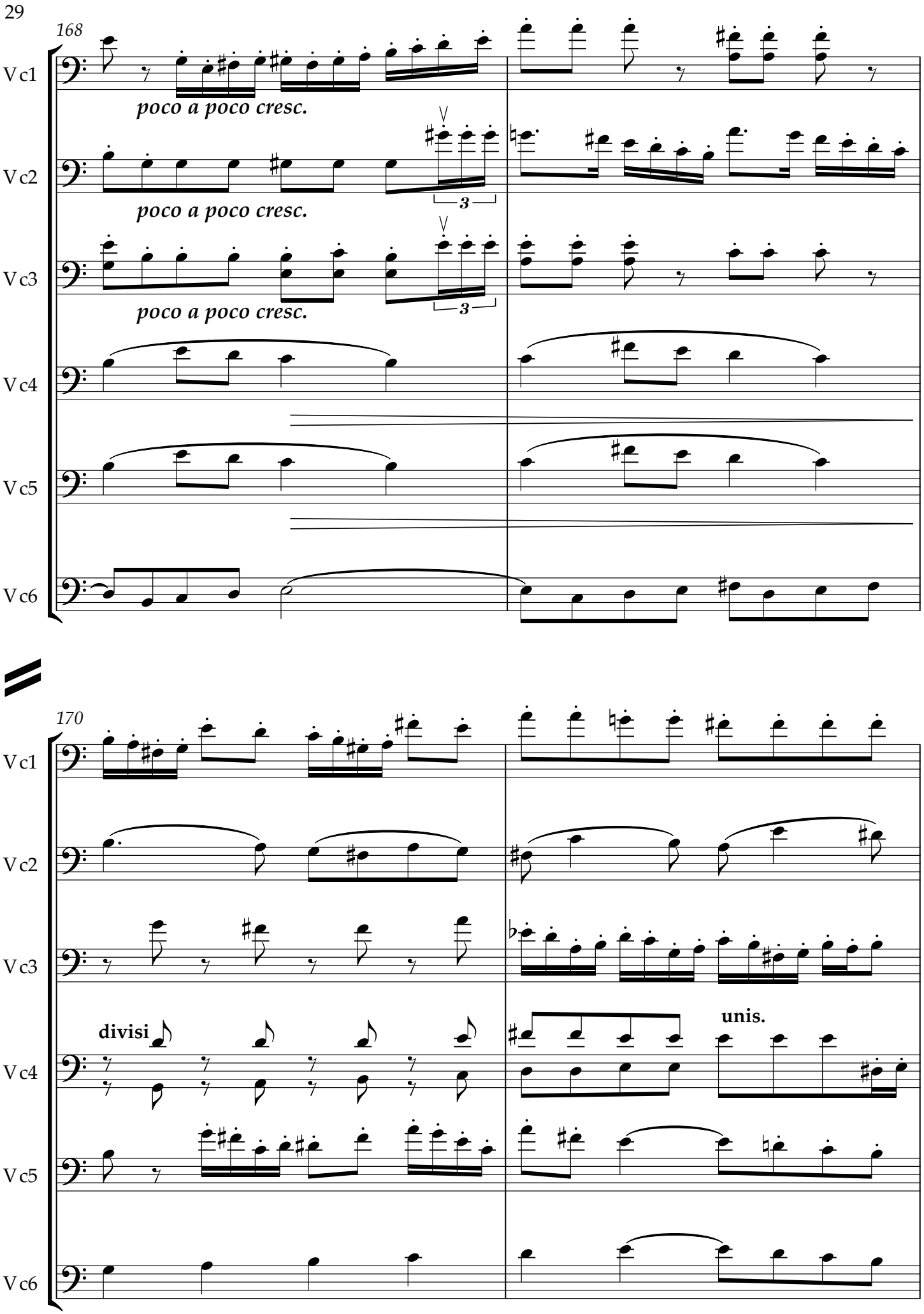
leggiero

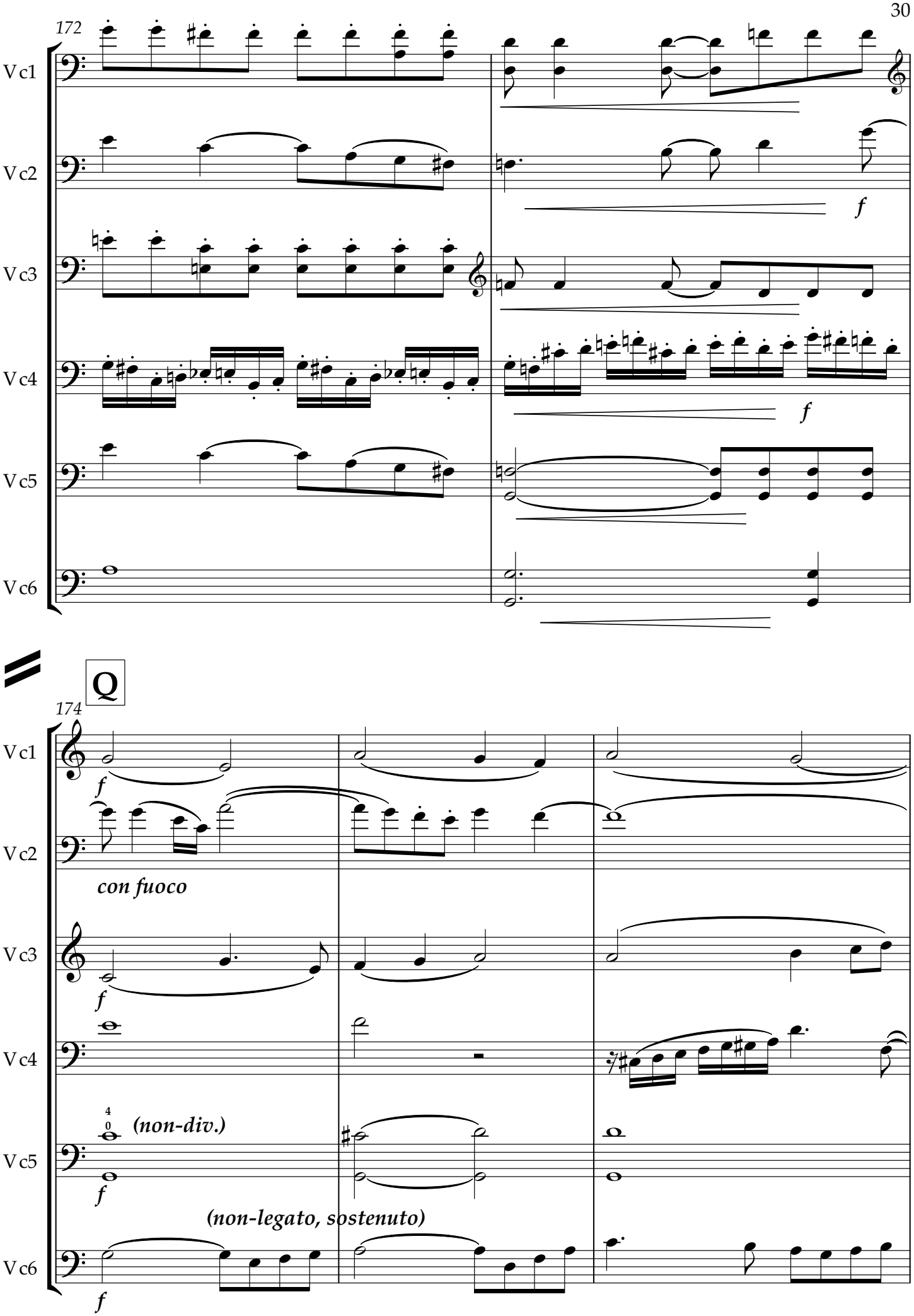
Vc4

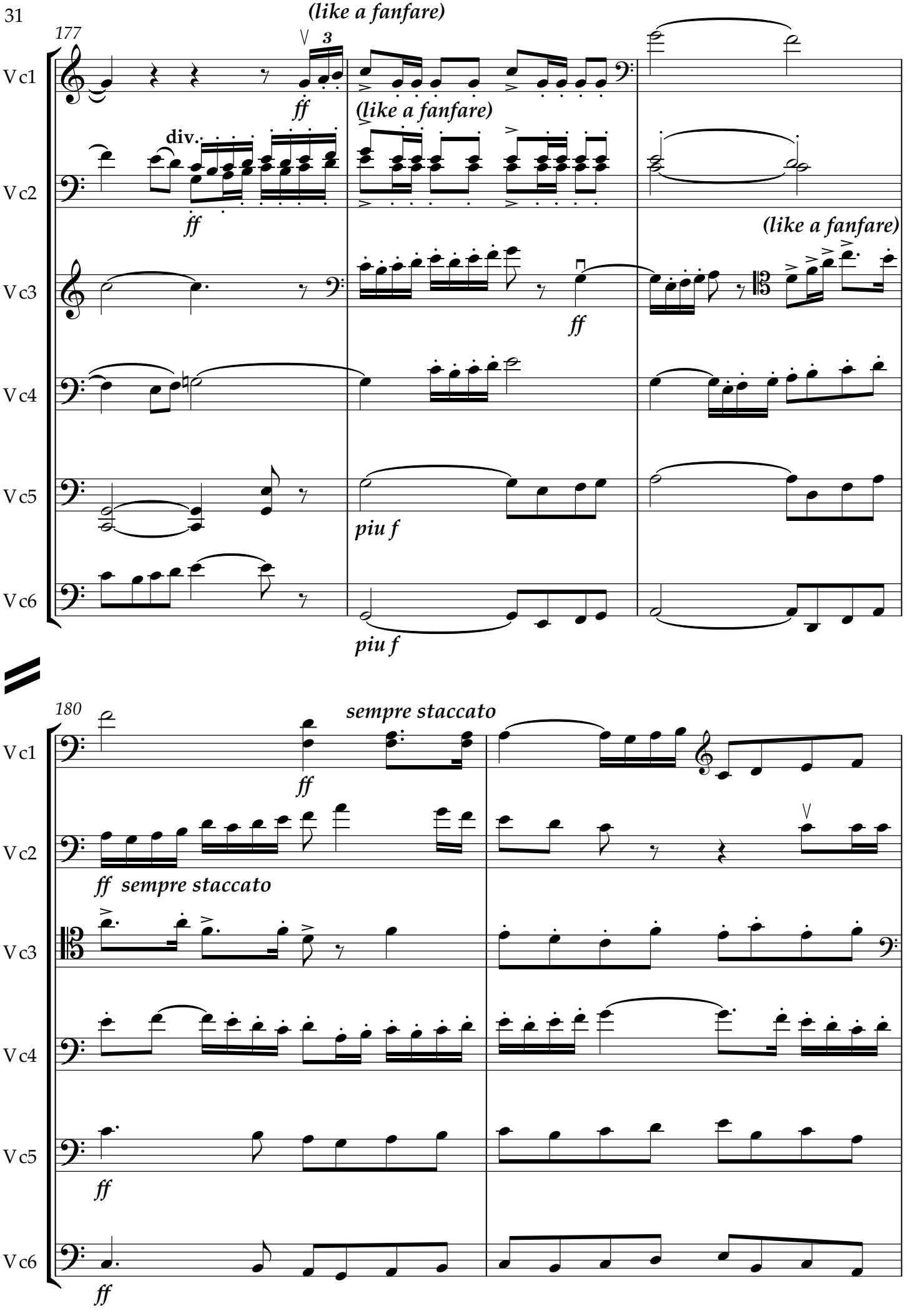
Vc5

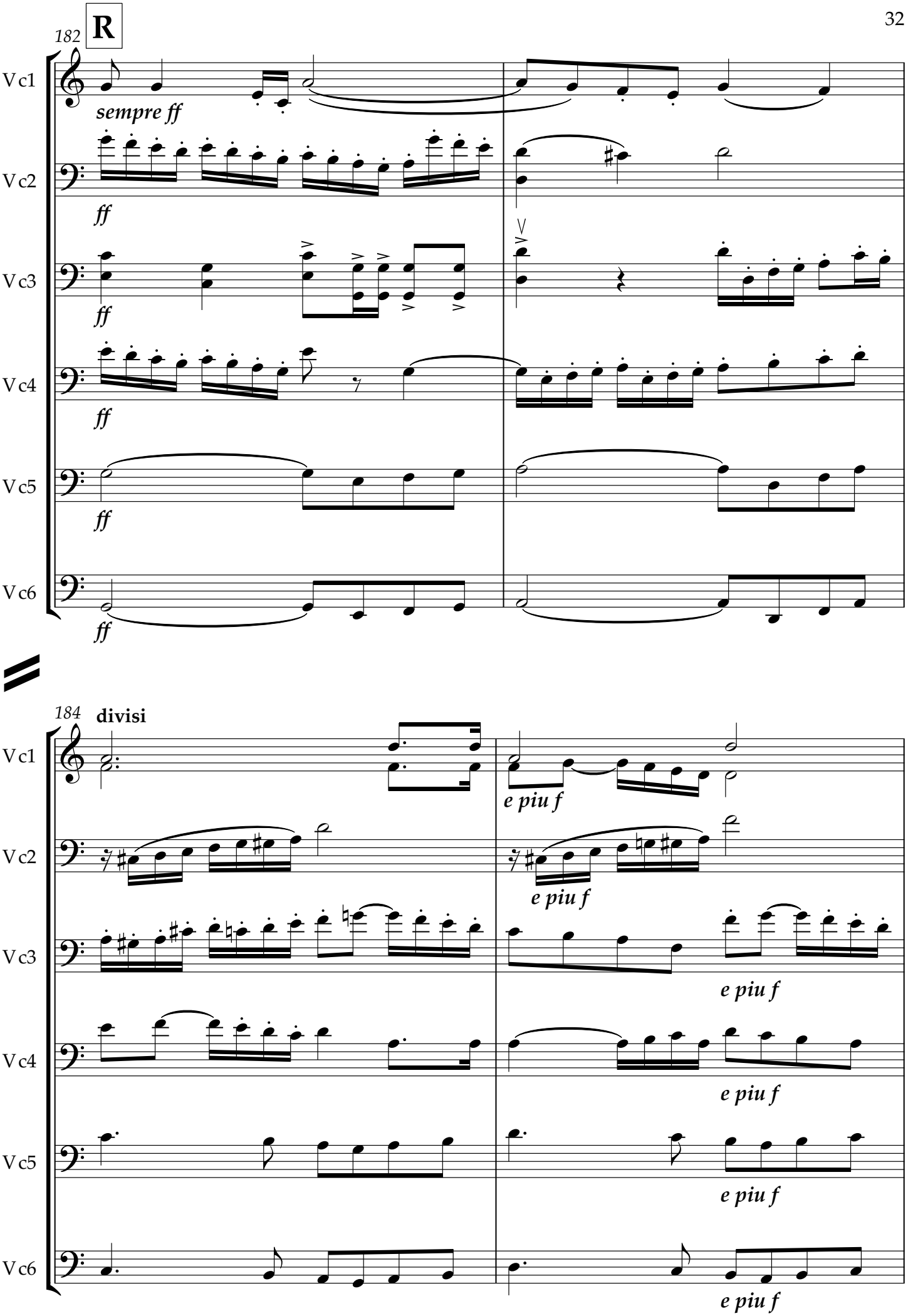
Vc6

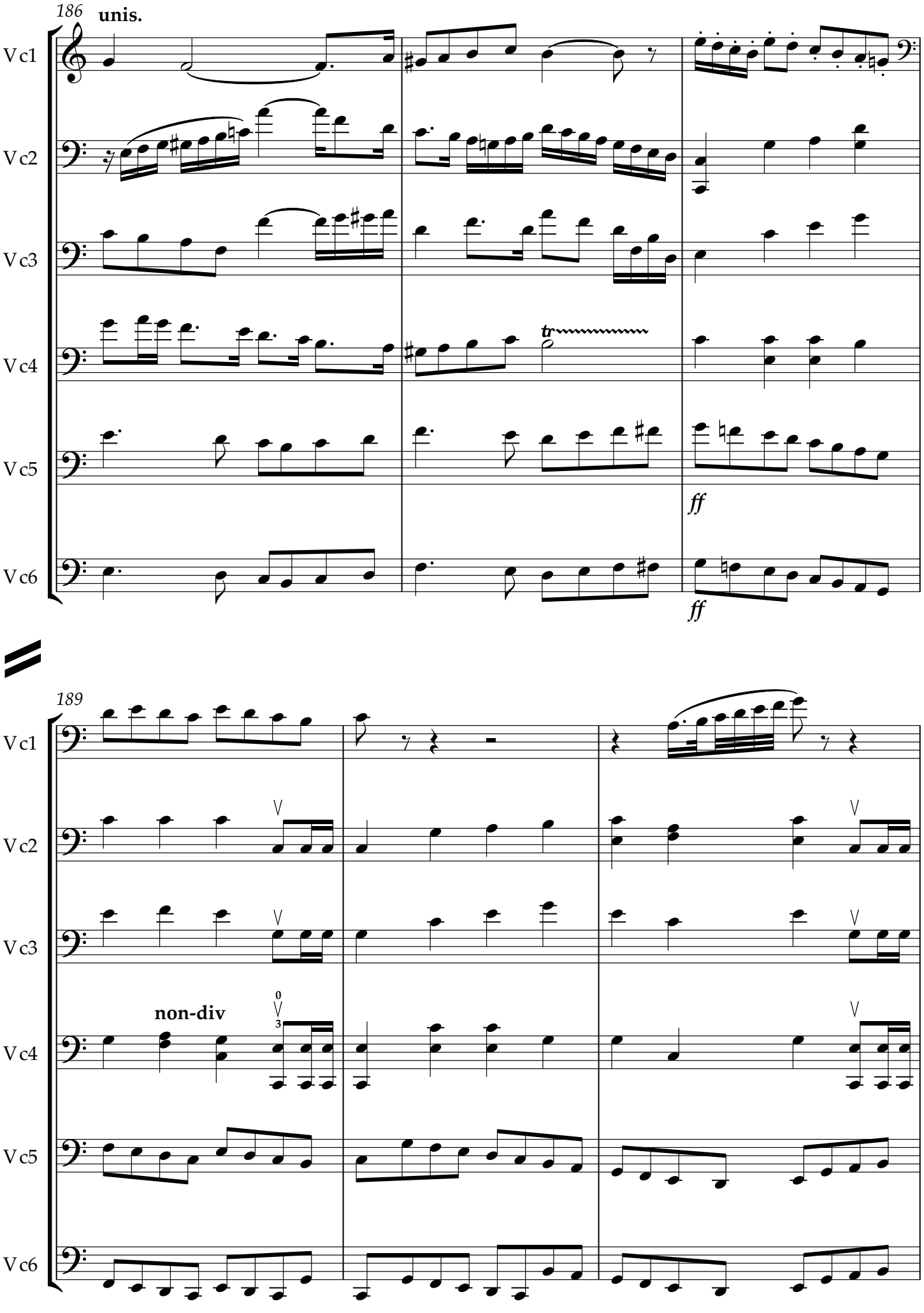

163
Vc1
Vc2
leggiero
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
P
165
p
sempre piu agitato
sempre piu agitato
poco a poco cresc.

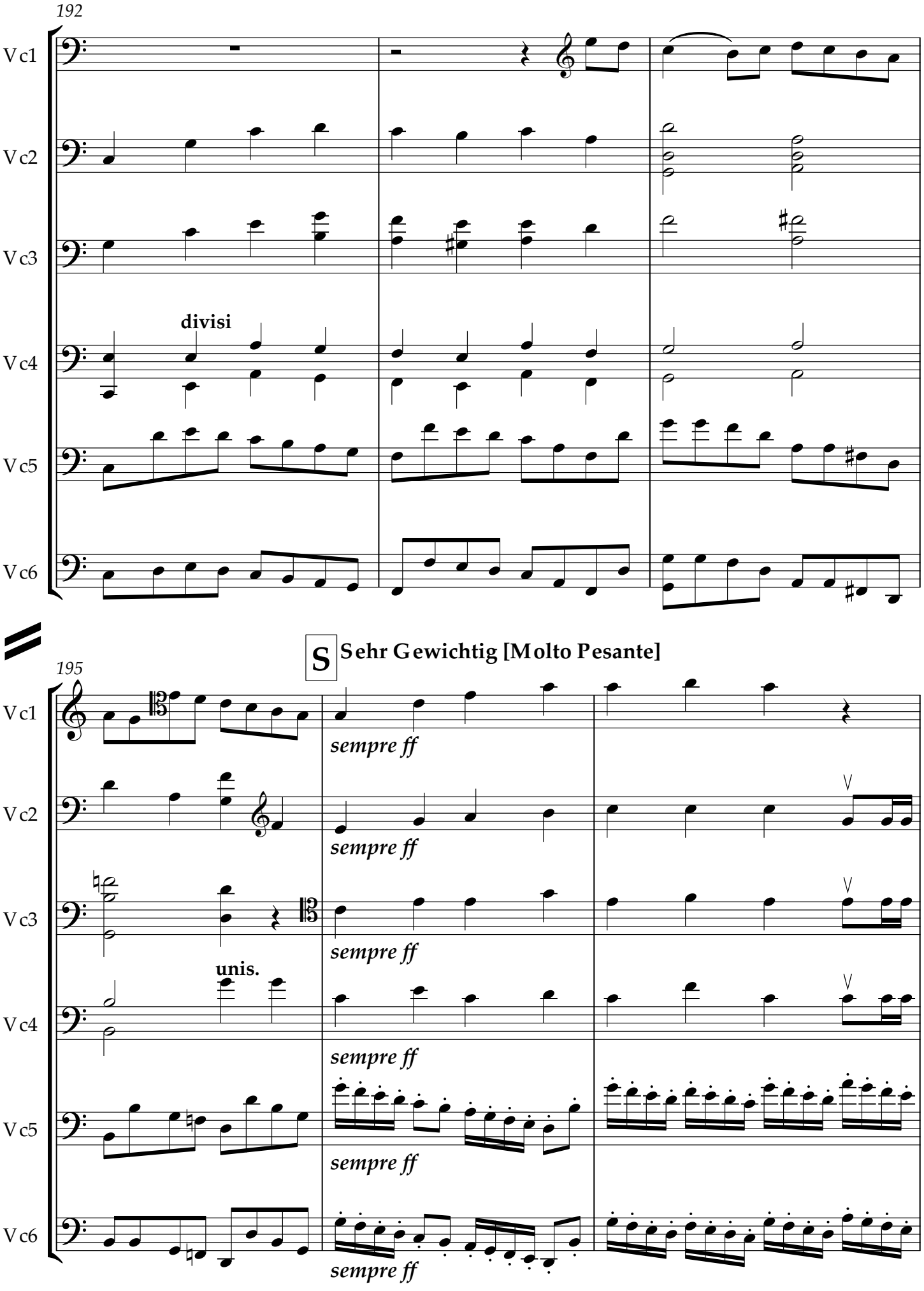

168
Vc1
poco a poco cresc.
Vc2
poco a poco cresc.
3
Vc3
poco a poco cresc.
3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
170
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
divisi
unis.
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6

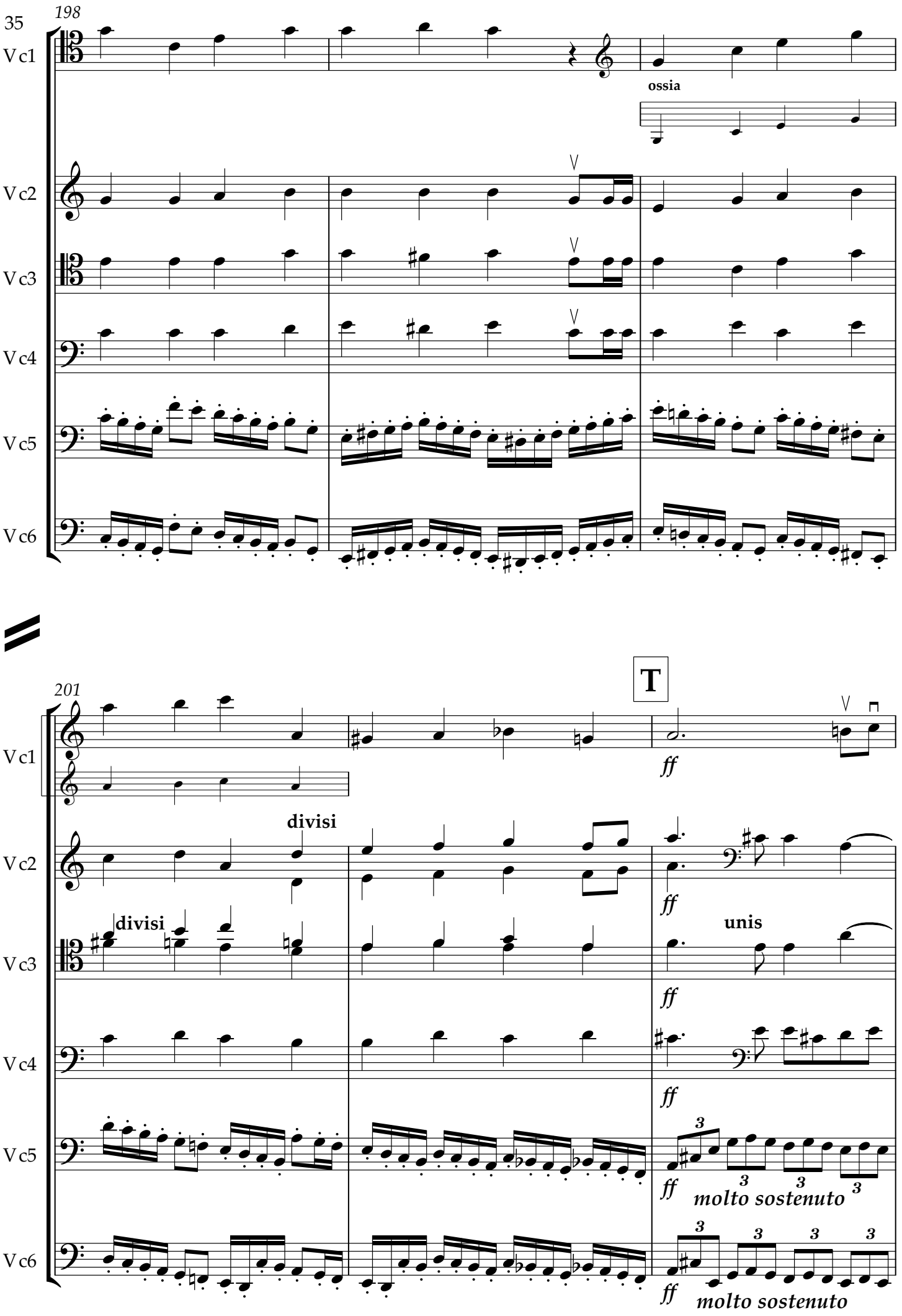

172
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
f
f
Q
174
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
f
con fuoco
f
(non-div.)
f
(non-legato, sostenuto)
f

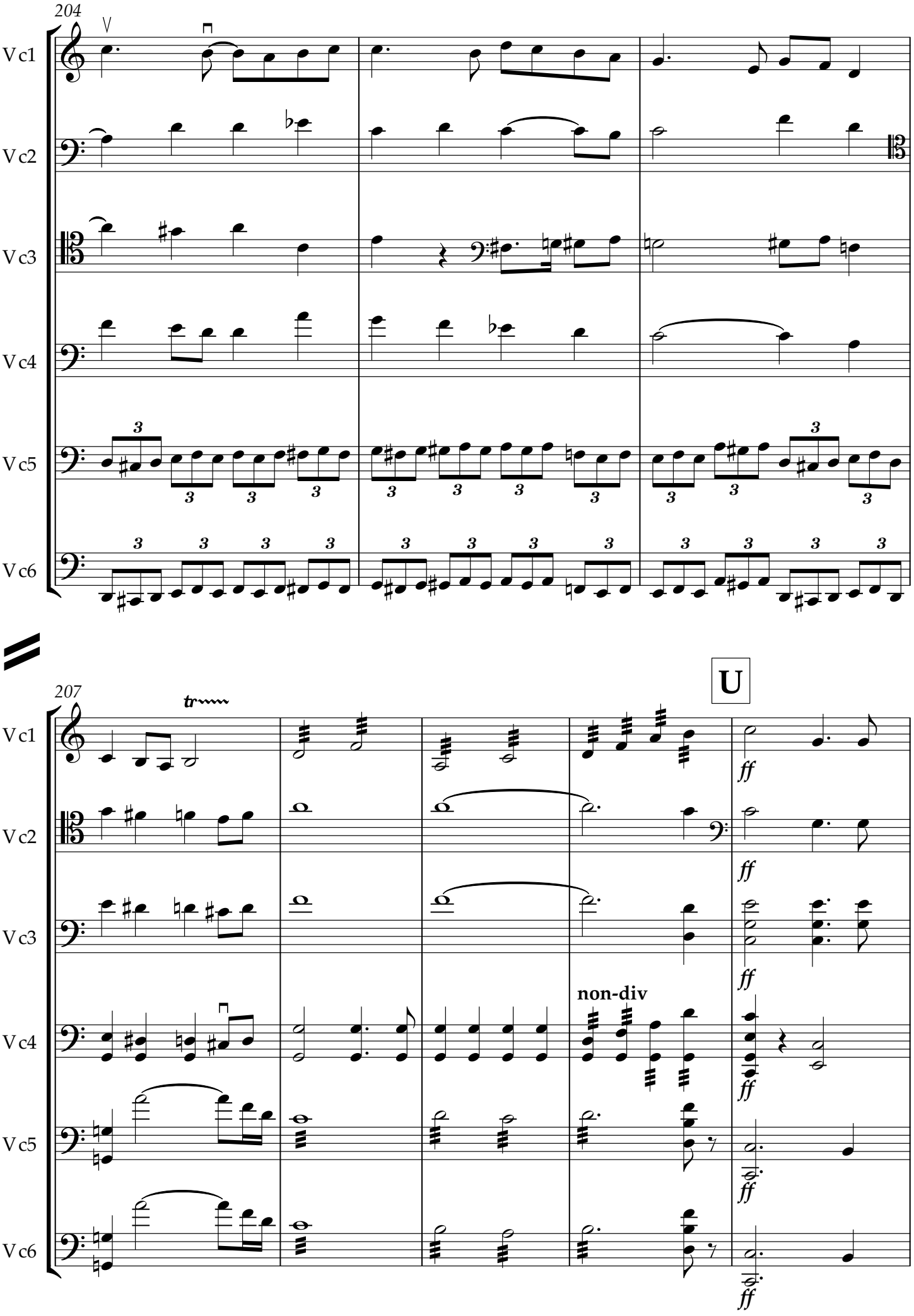

(like a fanfare)
177
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
ff
3
(like a fanfare)
div.
ff
(like a fanfare)
ff
piu f
piu f
180
sempre staccato
ff
ff sempre staccato
ff
ff

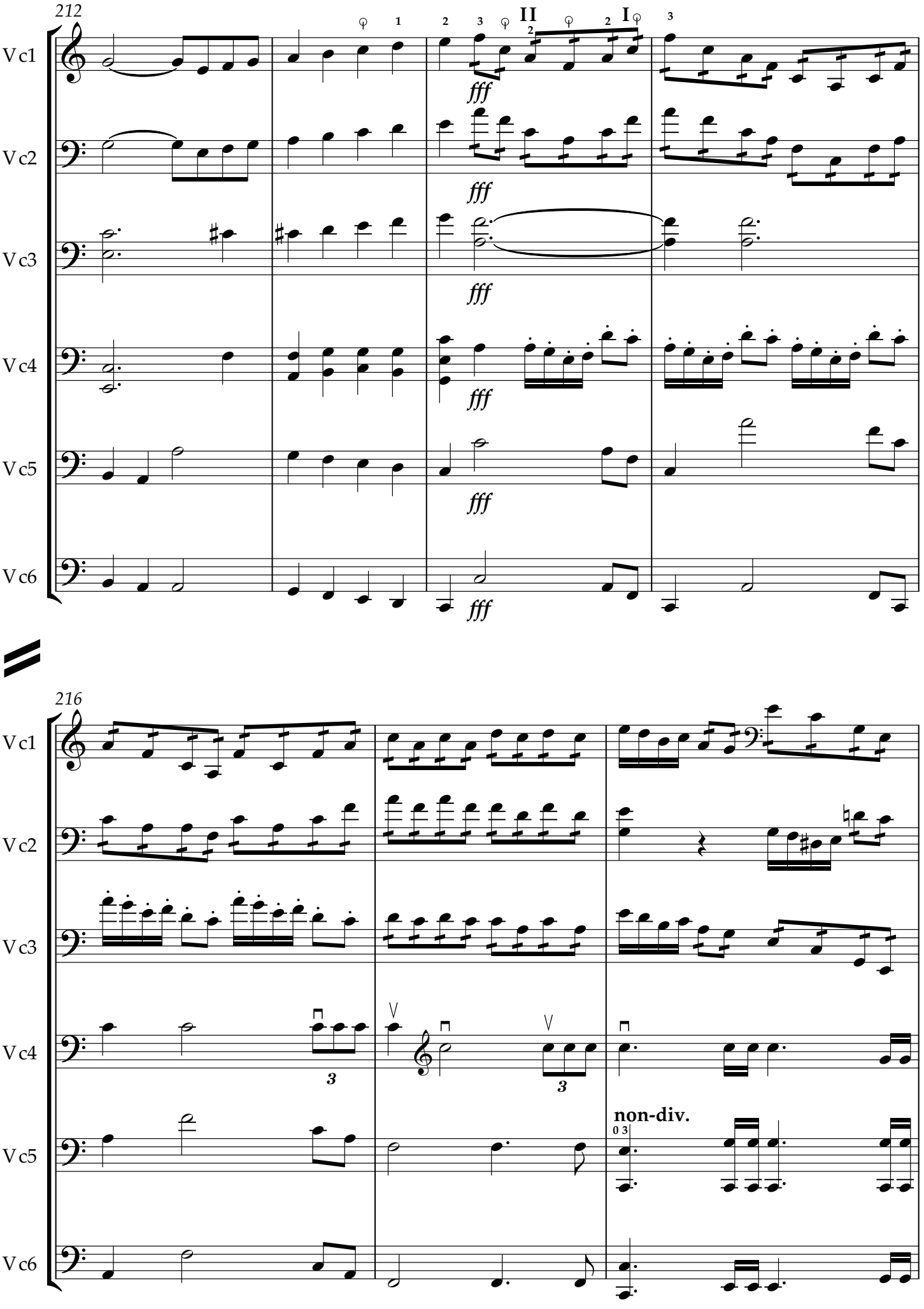

182
R
Vc1
sempre ff
Vc2
ff
Vc3
ff
Vc4
ff
Vc5
ff
Vc6
ff
184
divisi
Vc1
e piu f
Vc2
e piu f
Vc3
e piu f
Vc4
e piu f
Vc5
e piu f
Vc6
e piu f

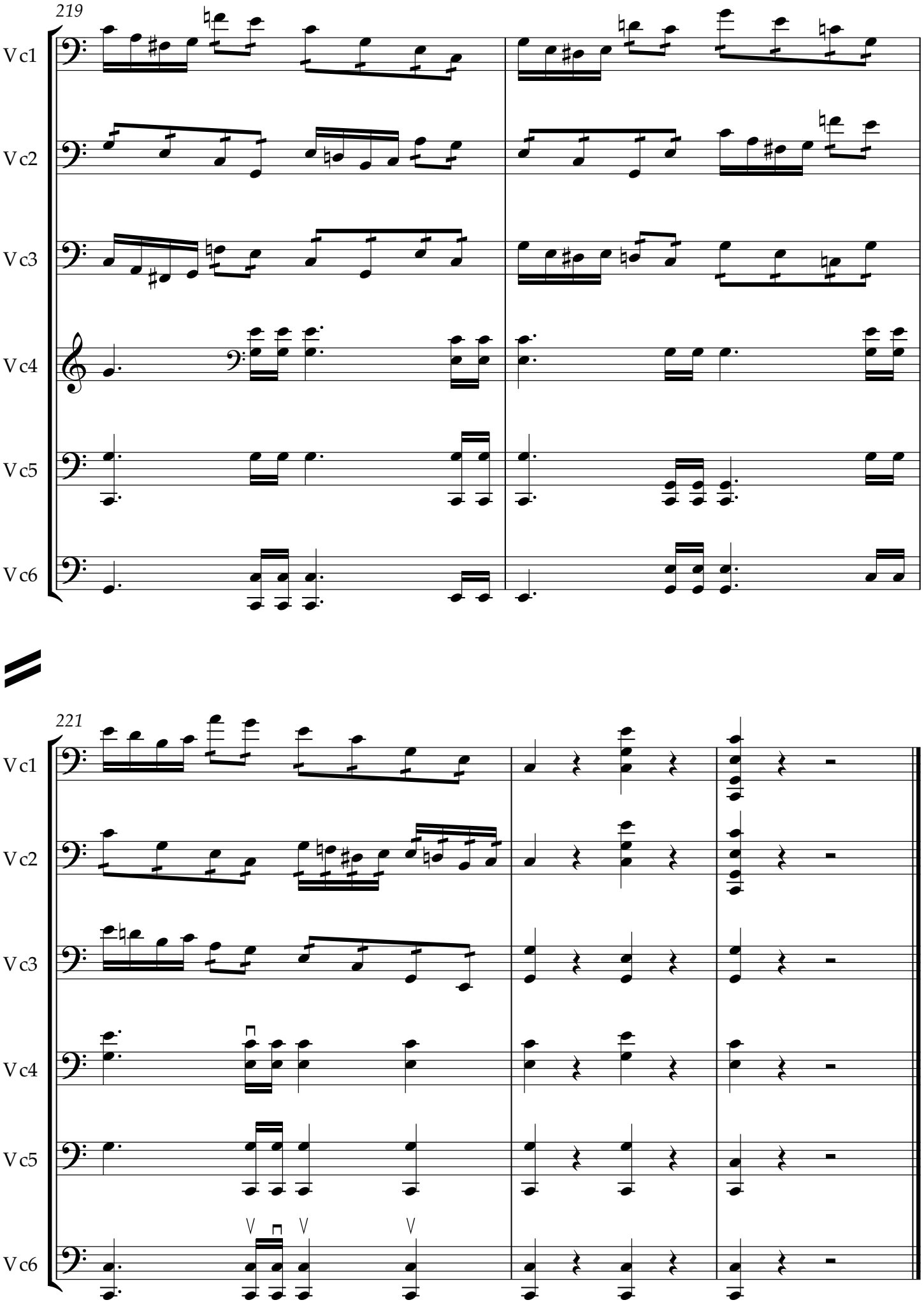

186
unis.
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
tr
ff
ff
189
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
non-div
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6


192
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
divisi
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
S
Sehr Gewichtig [Molto Pesante]
195
Vc1
sempre ff
Vc2
sempre ff
Vc3
sempre ff
unis.
Vc4
sempre ff
Vc5
sempre ff
Vc6
sempre ff


35
198
Vc1
ossia
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
201
T
divisi
ff
unis
molto sostenuto


204
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
207
U
tr
non-div
ff


212
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
II
I
fff
216
non-div.


219
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6
221
Vc1
Vc2
Vc3
Vc4
Vc5
Vc6