# W. Jay Sydeman

## Duo
for Two Violas
(c. 1985)

&

## Trio
For Three Violas
(c. 1985)

Arts Aeturnum Productions

*Written in the mid-eighties (when I became a latter-day violist myself), the duo is lovely in a mildly Bergian way. The contrapuntally-conceived parts are quite equal partners. This is one of the sixty-odd duos I have written, all of which are animated conversations between two instruments. The viola is all too often ignored.*

*The trio is a more developed work. What do three violists do after their third beer? Why naturally, play the Sydeman. Well, best played before the beer, as it is quite a demanding work. With the exception of a long ostinato in violas one and three (hooray, viola two gets the tune), the parts are quite independent and challenging. The work has a somewhat motoristic quality with lyric and intense interludes in-between. Accurate playing of the dynamics is extremely important to shape the piece properly. This piece attempts to fill a semi-void and is fun to play.*

– W. Jay Sydeman, February 2011

**W. Jay Sydeman**'s life mirrors the breadth and variety of his music. Born in New York in 1928 and educated at Manhattan's Mannes School of Music, he quickly became one of the most sought-after and honored composers of his generation, receiving commissions from such prestigious groups as the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, the Tanglewood Music Center, and the Boston Symphony, which premiered his orchestral work in memory of John F. Kennedy in 1966. "Sydeman uses a whole battery of far out techniques," wrote the New York Times, "but he has an uncanny ability to throw in the whole avant-garde machinery as if it were the simplest, most normal way of making music in the world ... More than many of his colleagues, he seems to know what will sound well, and he works for some remarkably attractive, pure textures. His sounds seem to grow from a physical sense of exactly what material is right."

In 1970, after a heady period that included awards from the National institute of Arts and Letters, the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Library of Congress, Sydeman left New York – and composition – to begin a journey of personal and artistic exploration.

"Around 1980," he has written, "I returned to composition – at first a large number of choral works which reconnected me to the source of all music – the human voice. Out of this new lyric impulse have evolved all of my works since that time – more romantic, more accessible. I create music for the musician."

– Howard Hersh,
Artistic Director of "Music Now"

Sydeman is part of a composers' group in Nevada City annually producing the "Wet Ink Festival of New Music." He now lives in Mendocino and hosts a bi-weekly program on KZYX, "The Mind of a Composer," 10 am to noon on Mondays, introducing and commenting on contemporary music.

**Duration**: Duo – circa 1:45
Trio – circa 4:45

**To contact the composer:**
(707) 937-1658
jaysyde@gmail.com
www.williamjaysydeman.com

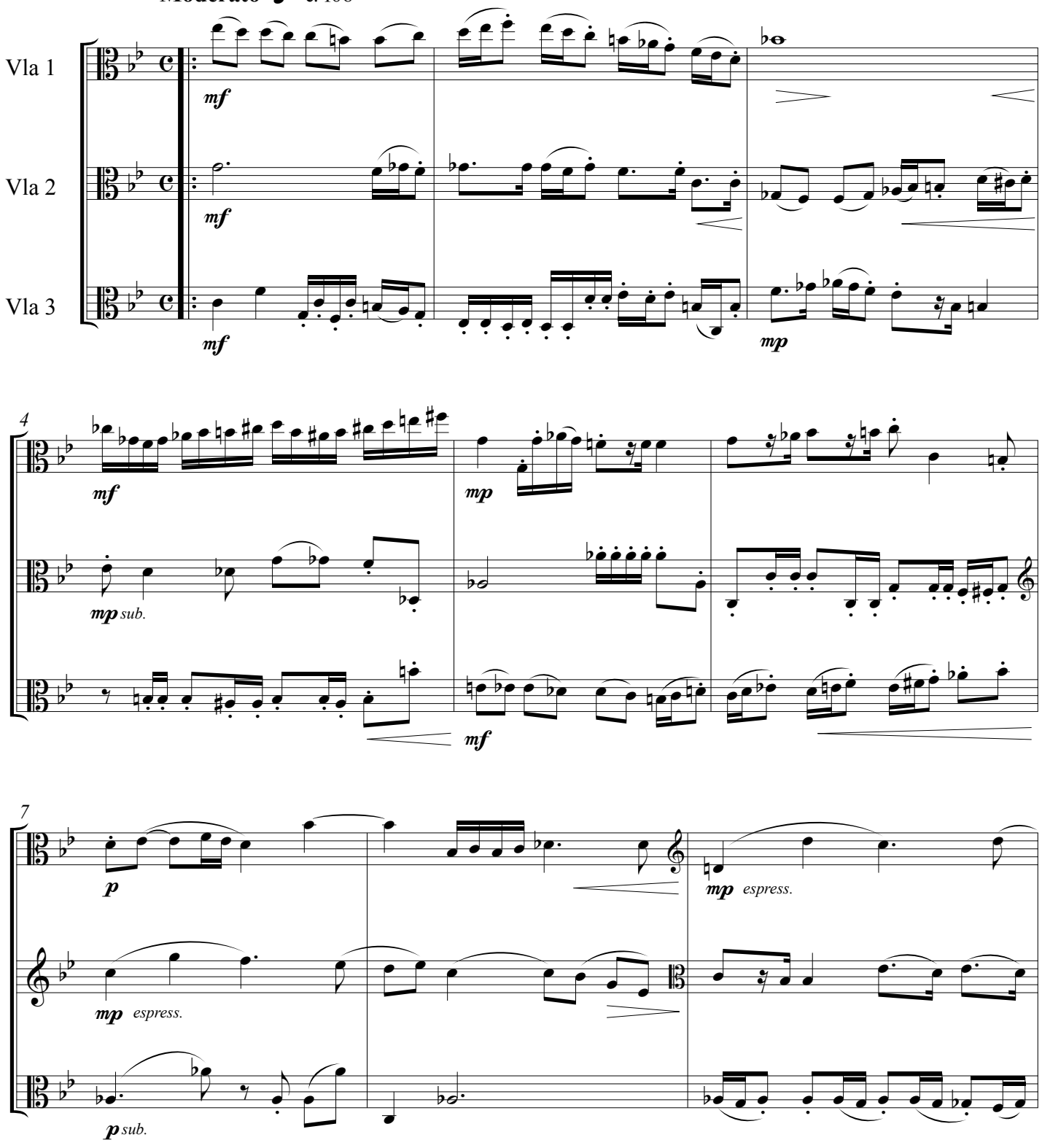
*Edited and engraved by Rick Shinozaki (Albany, CA) in consultation & collaboration with the composer.*

# Trio

## for Three Viola

W. Jay Sydeman
(c. 1985)

**Moderato** ♩ = c. 108

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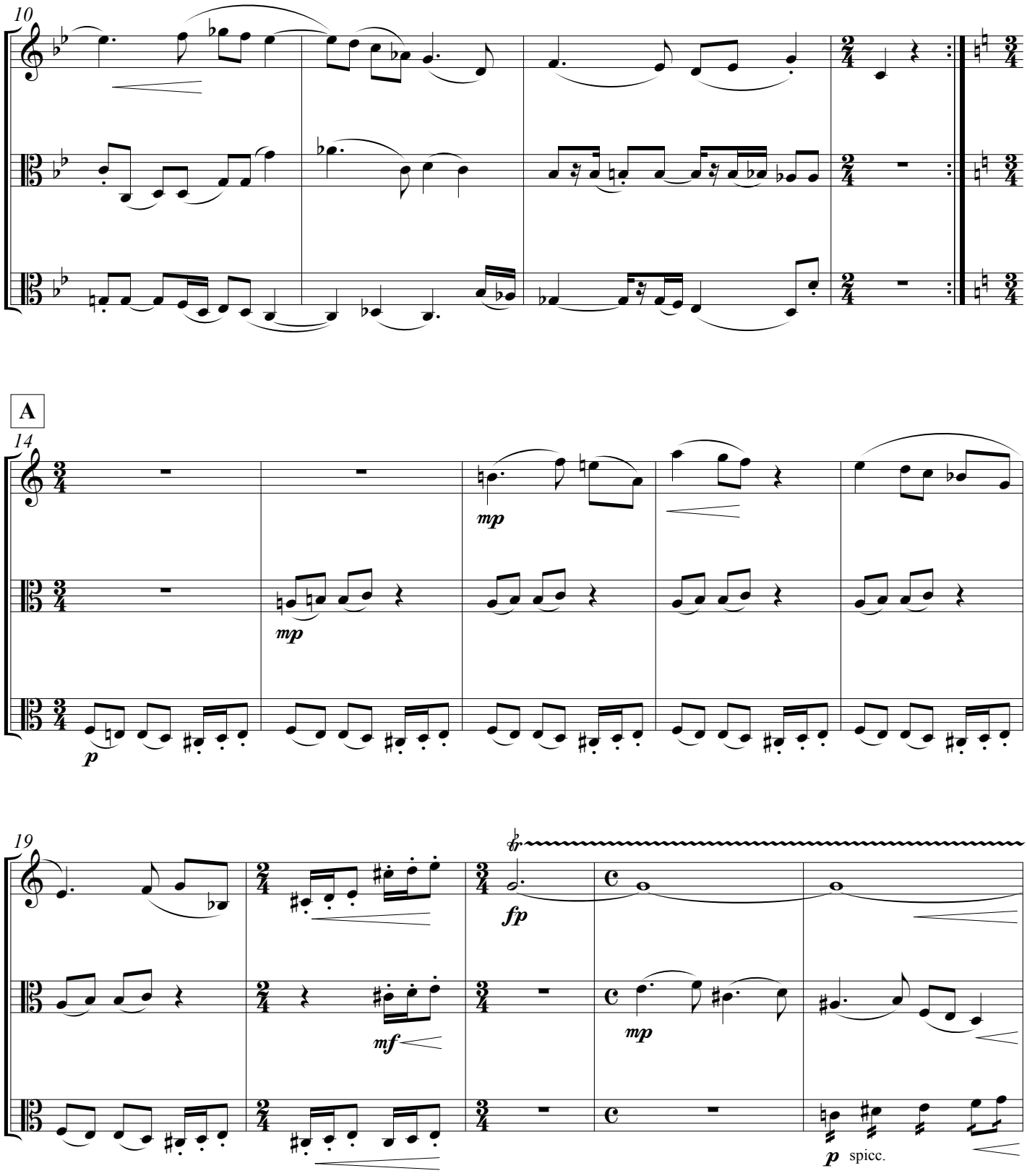
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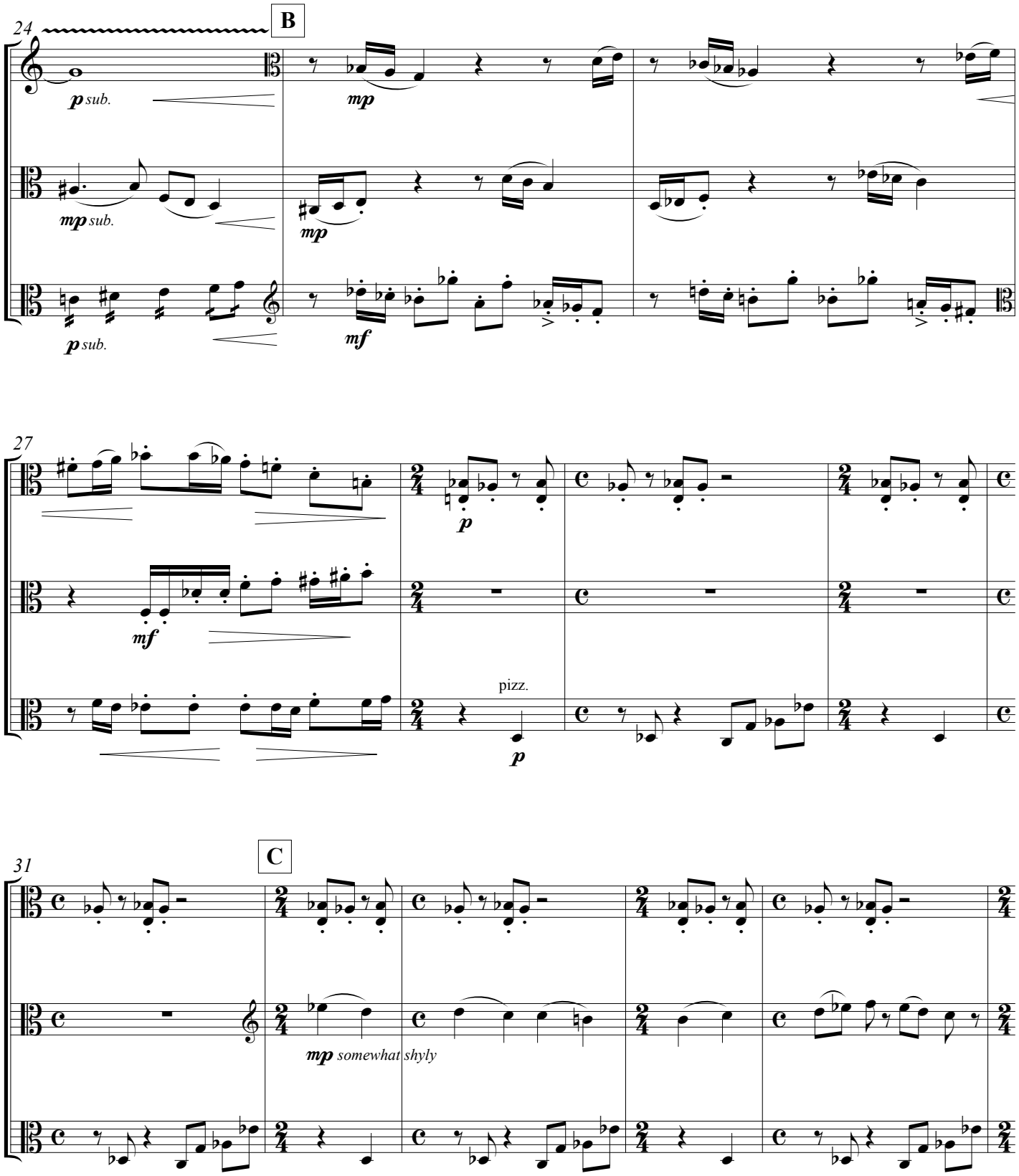
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p
31
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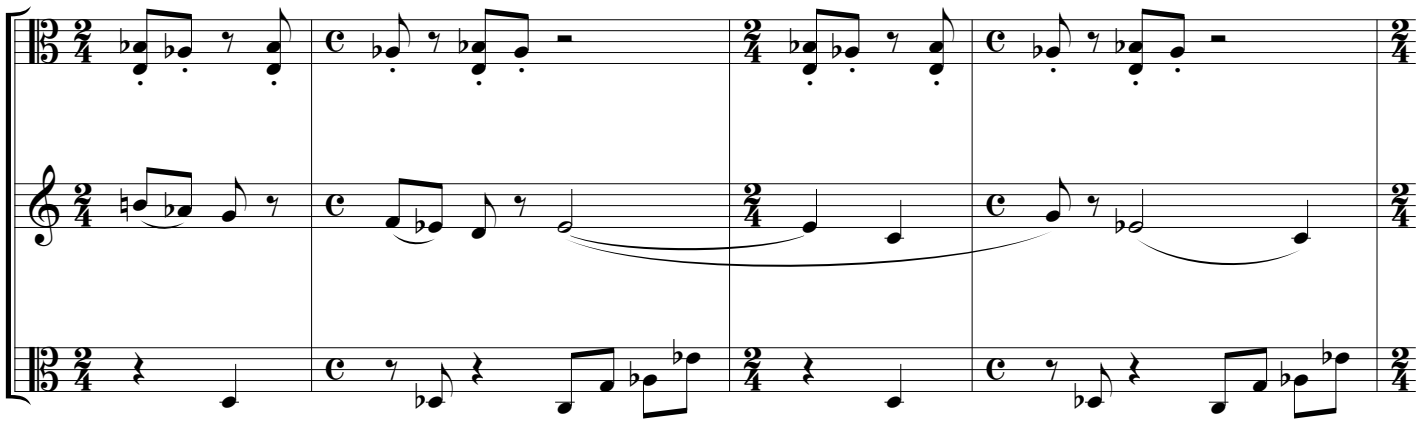
36



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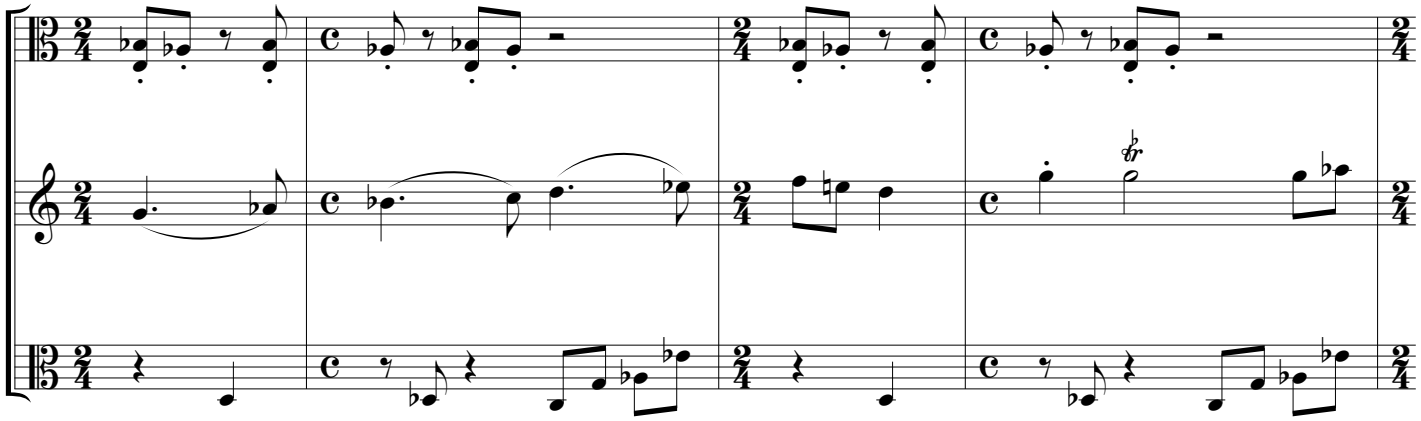

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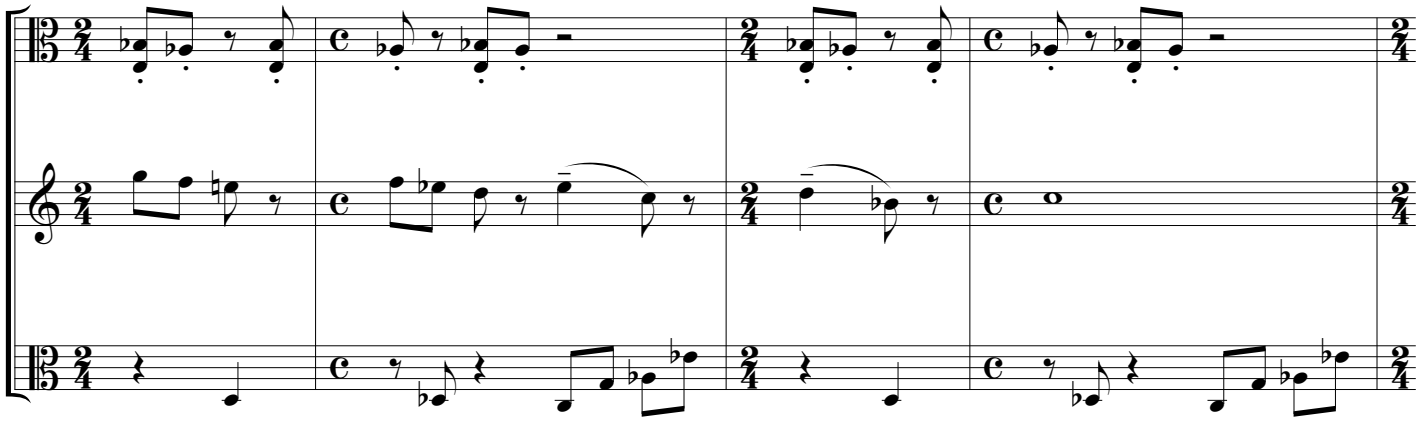

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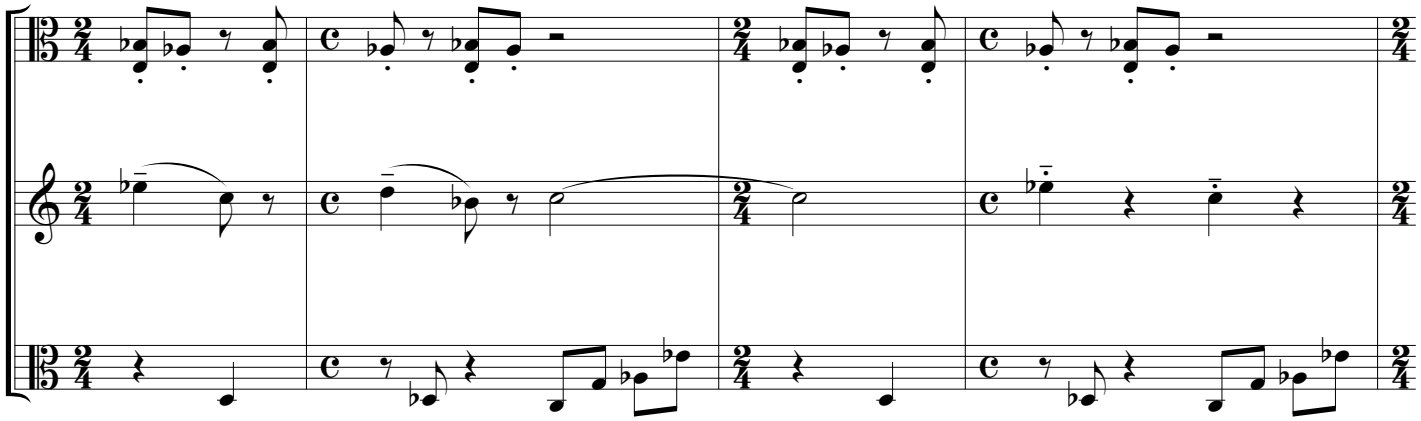

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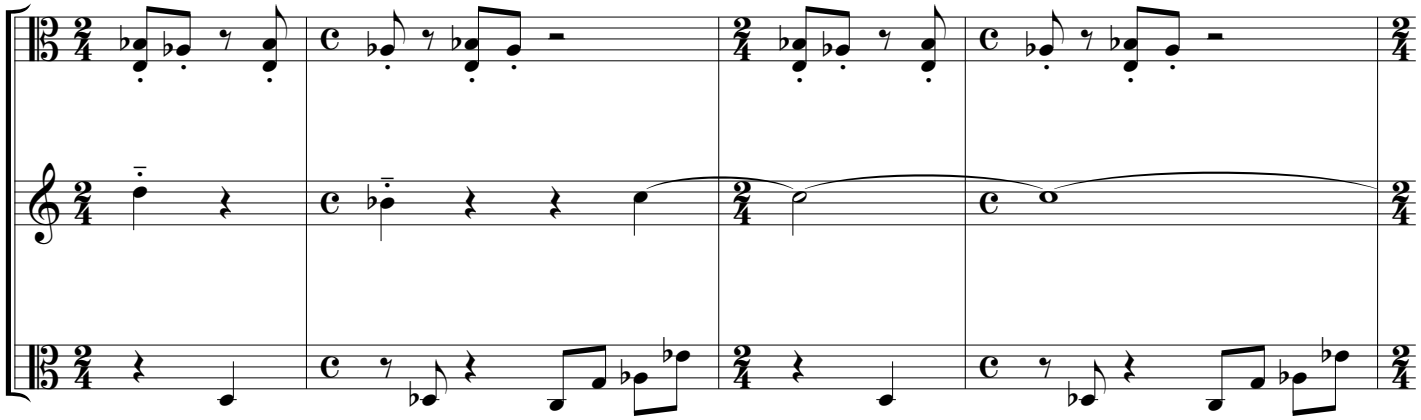

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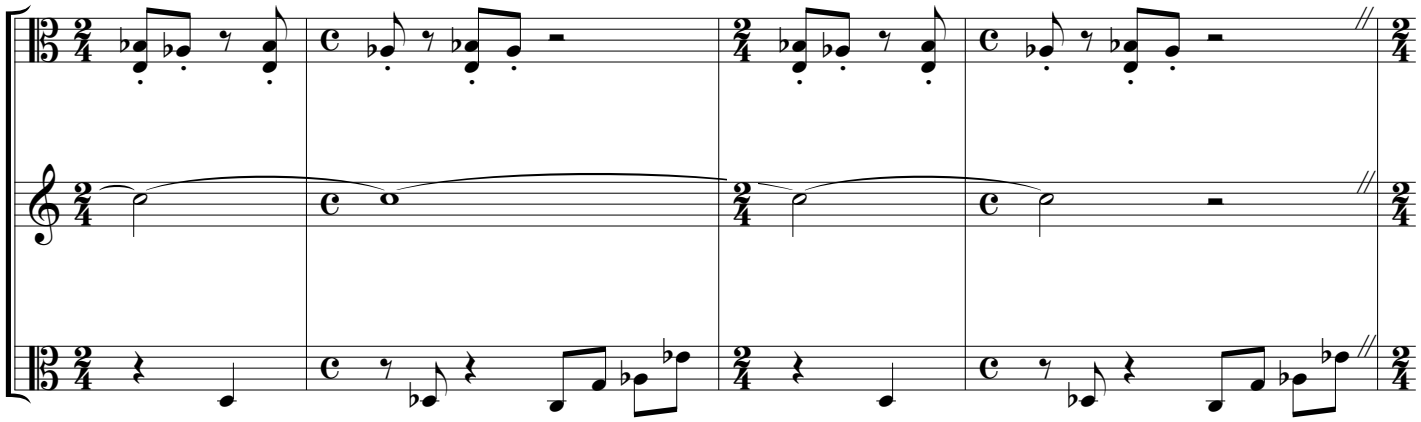

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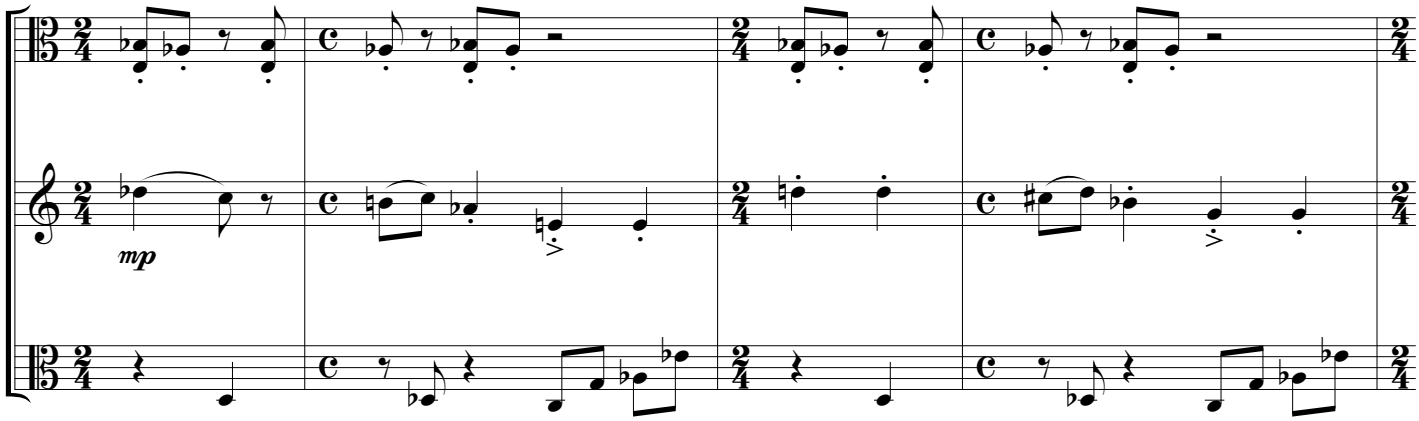


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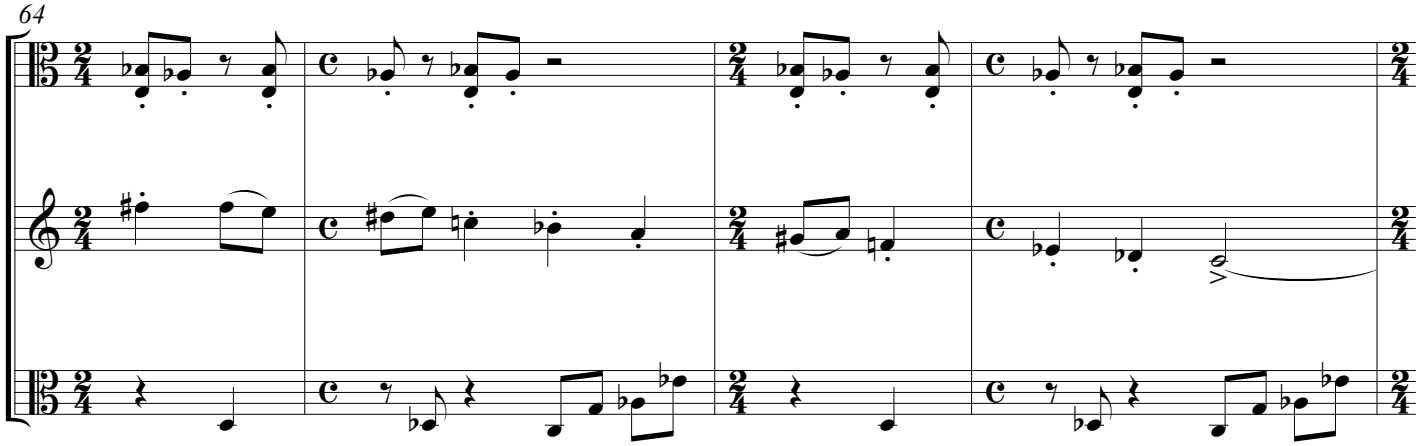

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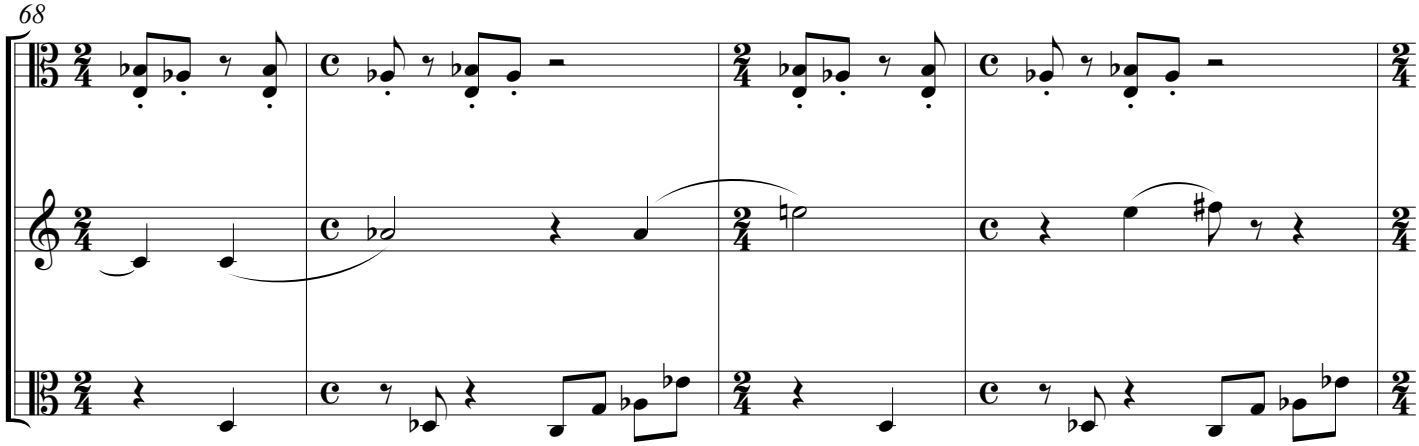

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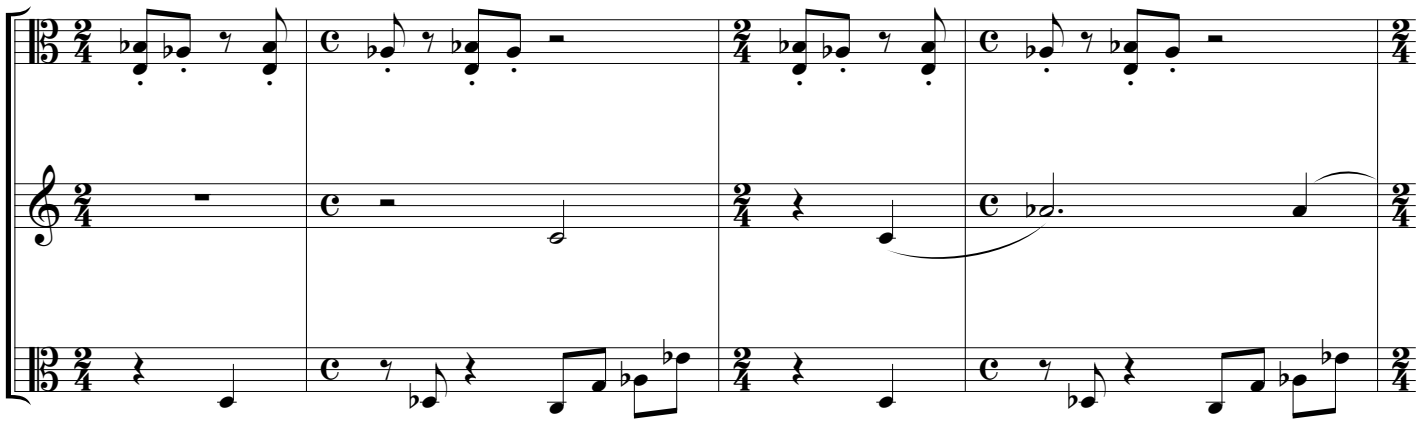

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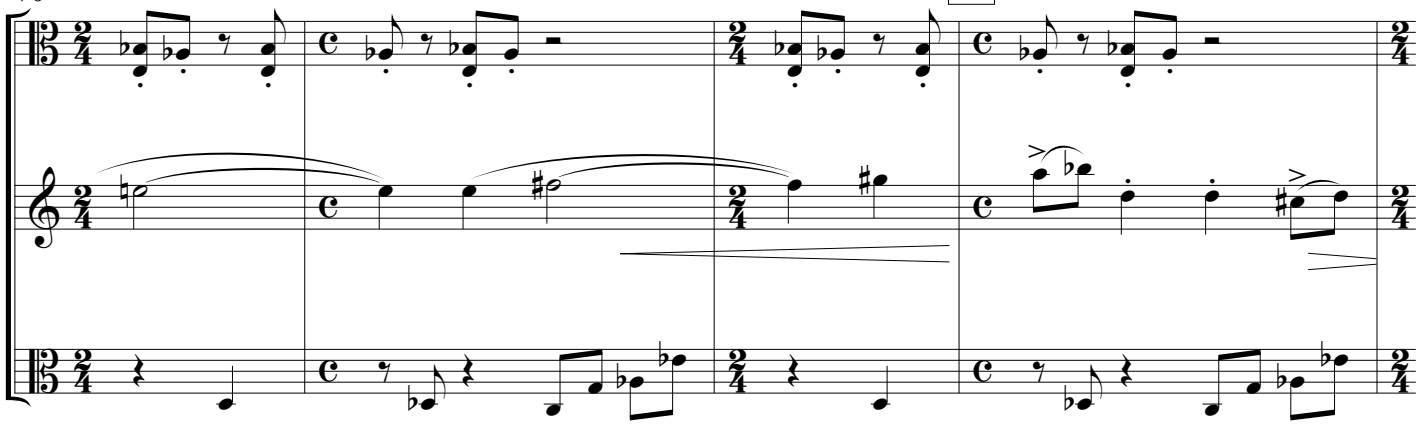

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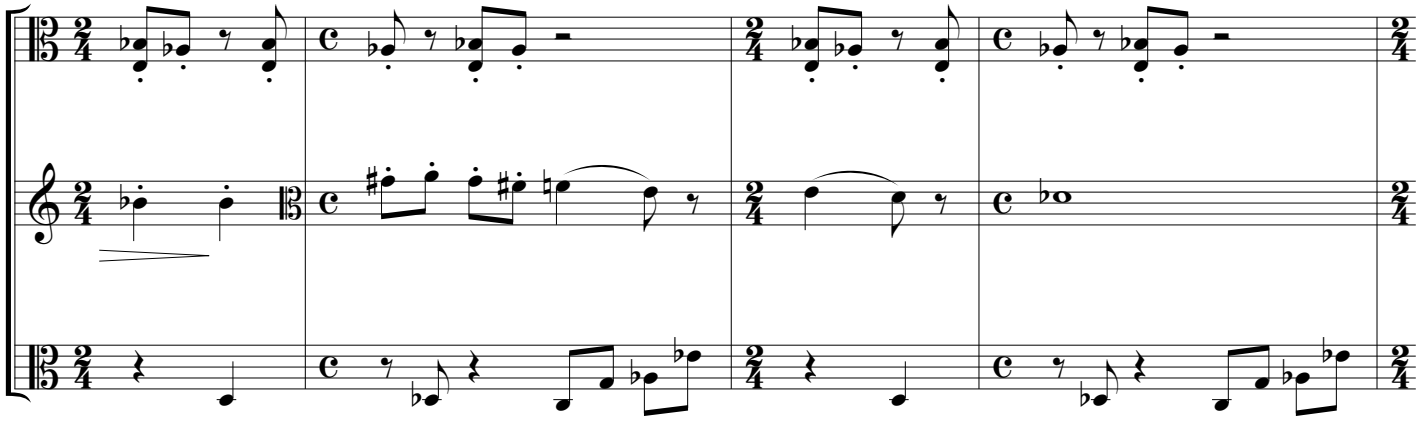

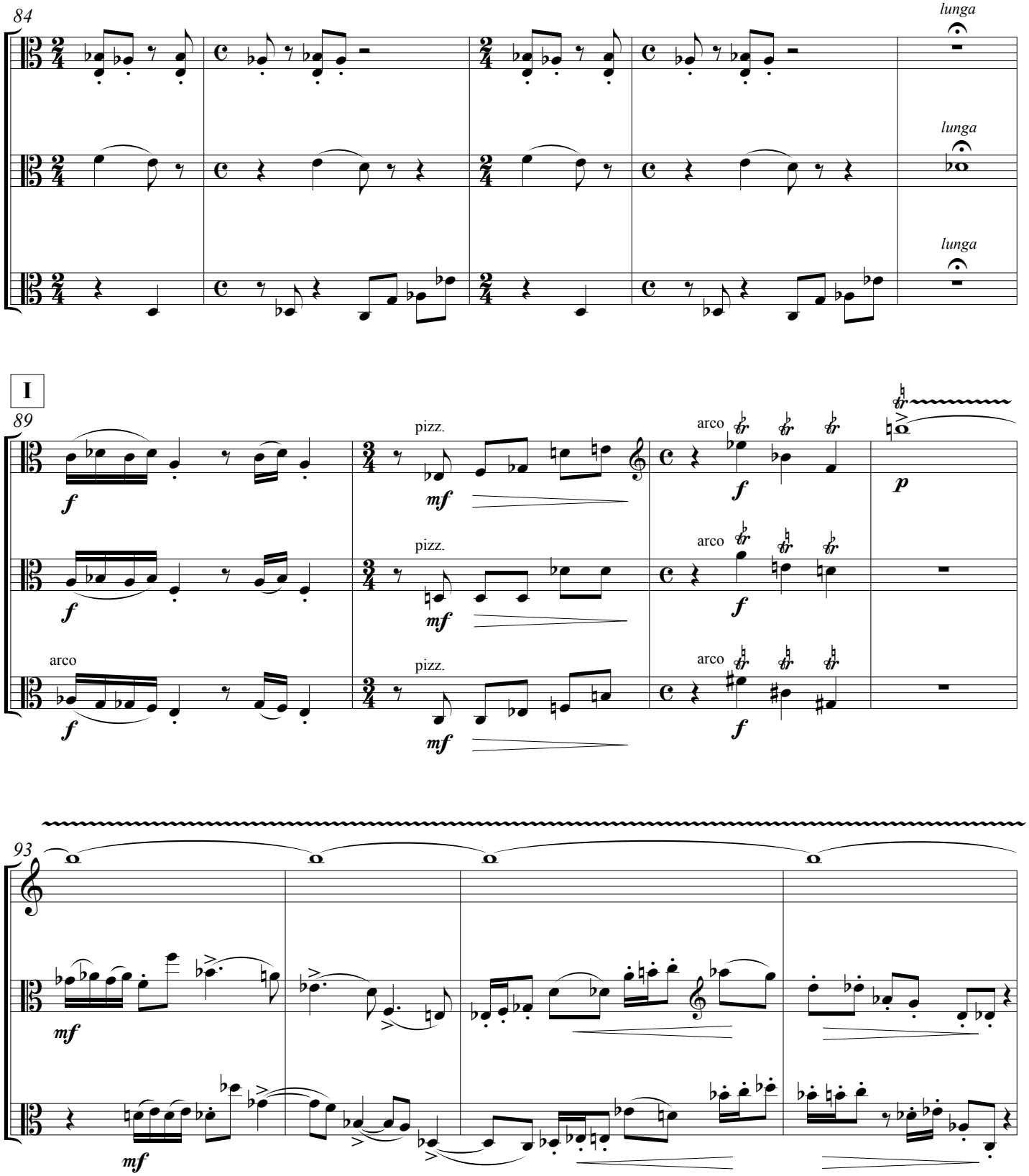
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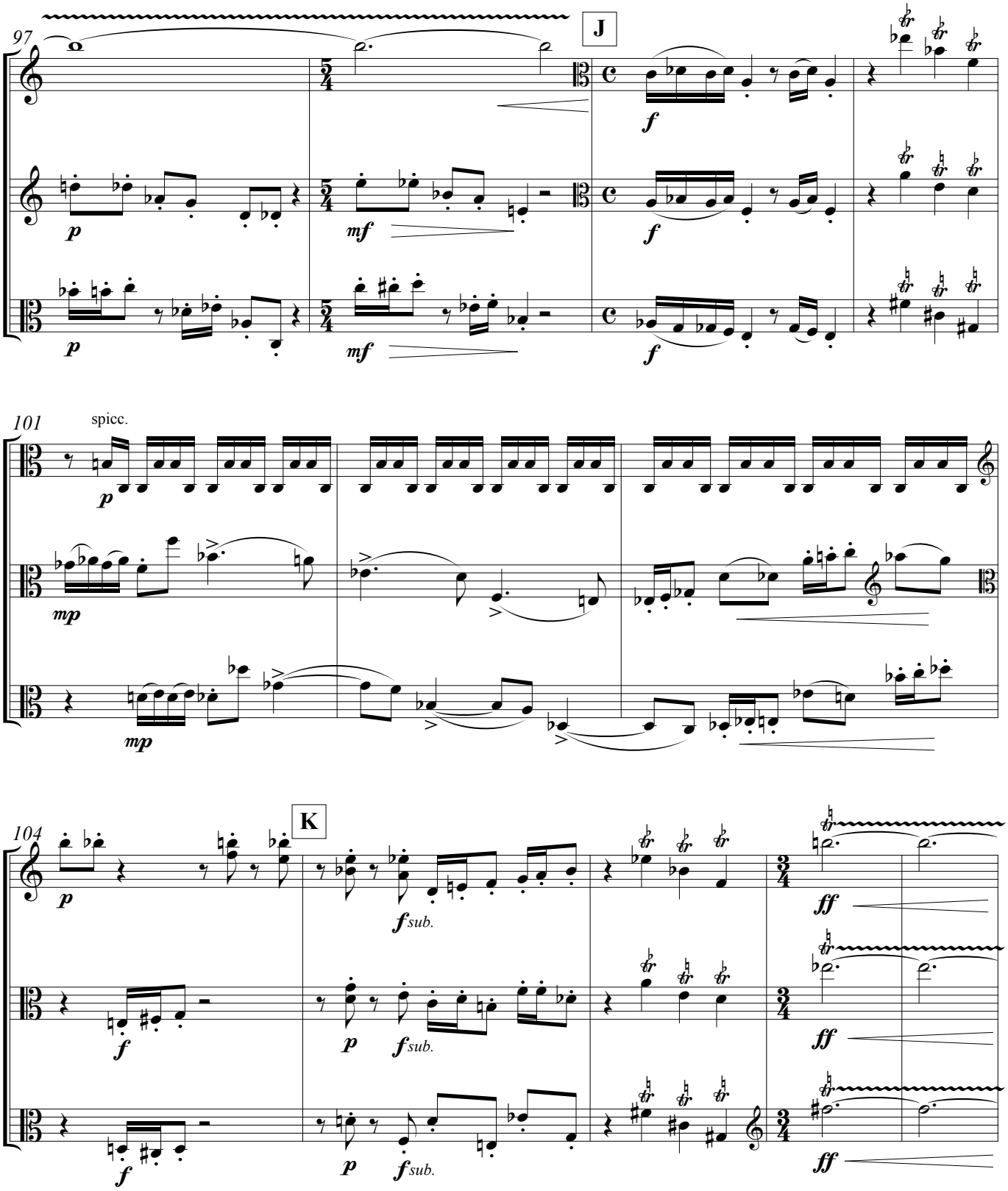
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104
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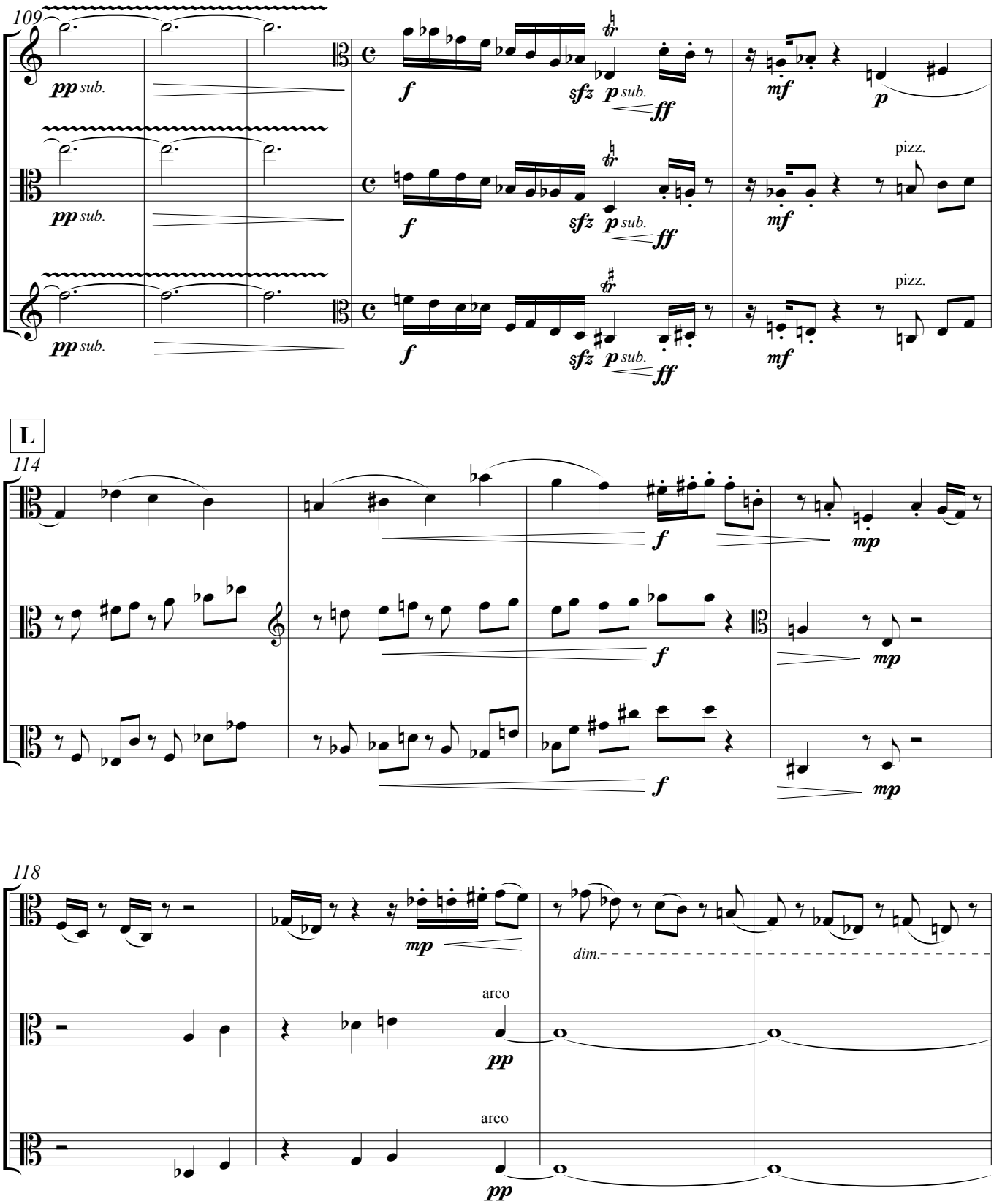
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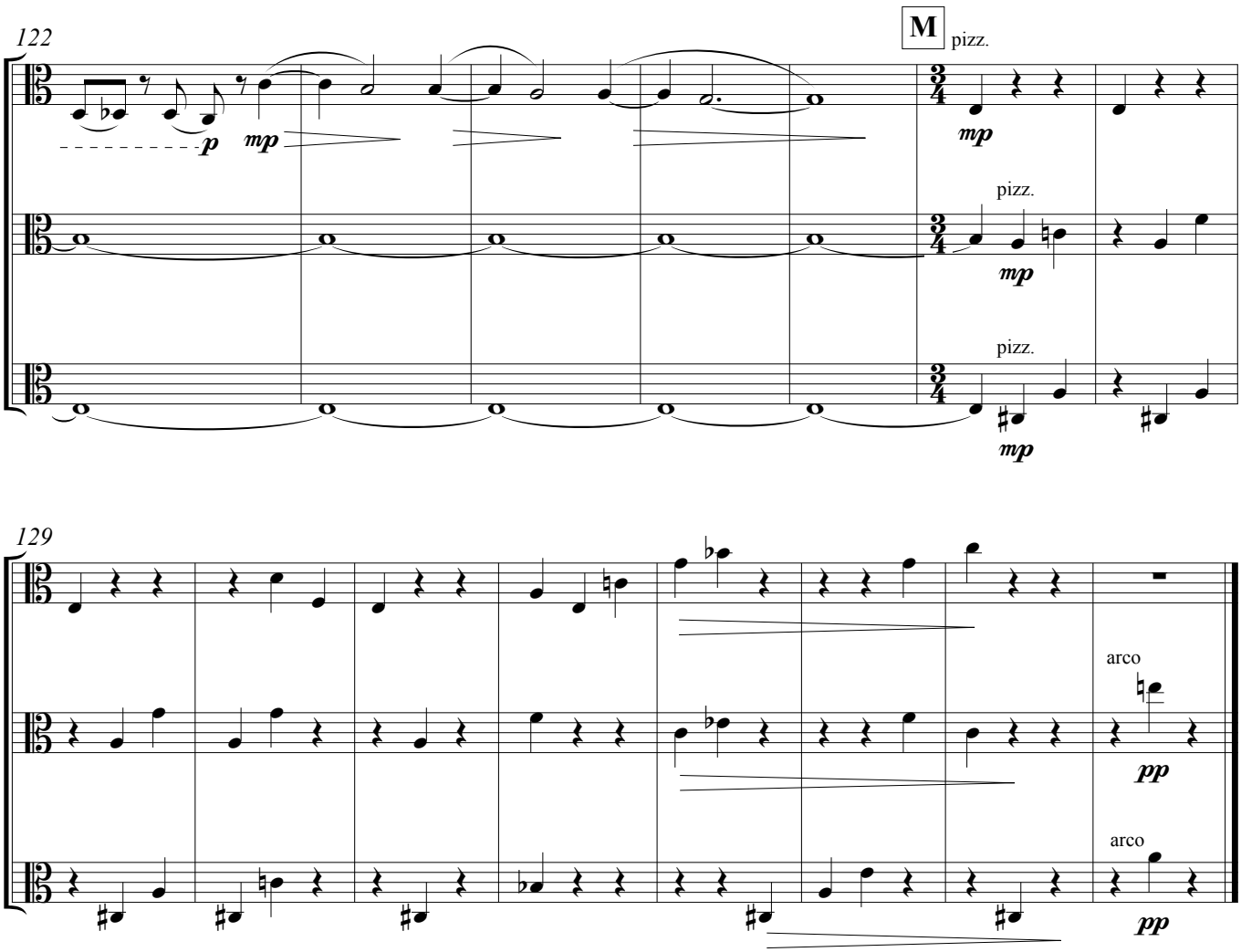
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