The Colored Horses

for guitar quartet

Aubrie Powell

Duration ca. 5 minutes

Performance notes:

R.H. right hand

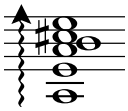
L.H. left hand

Grace notes are on the beat

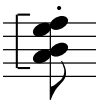
Frets are notated with numbers in italics above the pitch

Circled numbers refer to strings
①= high E
②= B
③= G

④= D
⑤= A
⑥= E

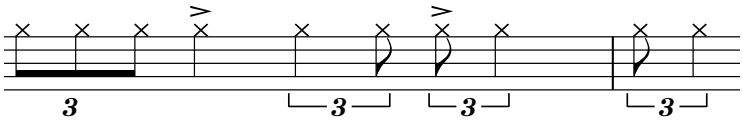


Squiggly arrow means slow roll

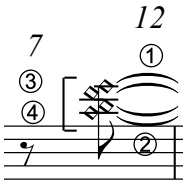


Bracket mean play the chord together, not a roll

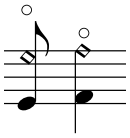
Tie to nothing is to let the sound ring, not dampening the sound to let it fade away naturally



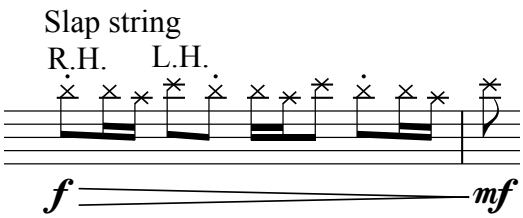
Spoken text is notated in rhythm with x note head with lyrics underneath. The speaking should be vibrant, mysterious, and driving, like a storyteller. The rhythm of the text should be similar to that of speaking and should not be robotic. The spoken text is doubled with a melody on a guitar. A performer is never asked to speak and play at the same time. For this to be effective the speaking must be done with absolute confidence and intent. It is not there for superfluous reasons and the speaker should not take it too seriously but rather have fun with it.



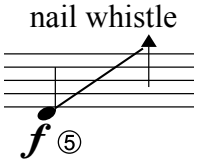
Natural harmonics are notated at pitch with open diamond note heads, italic numbers clarify fret and numbers in circle specify string.



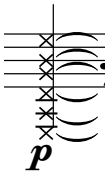
Artificial harmonics are notated with harmonic circles, diamond note head at the touch point and a normal note head for the stopped note.



Slap string is hammering the fretted pitch with the right or left fingers, not plucking. In this technique two notes emerge — one from the length of the string between the fingered fret and the bridge, and one from the length of string between the fret behind the left-hand finger and the nut.

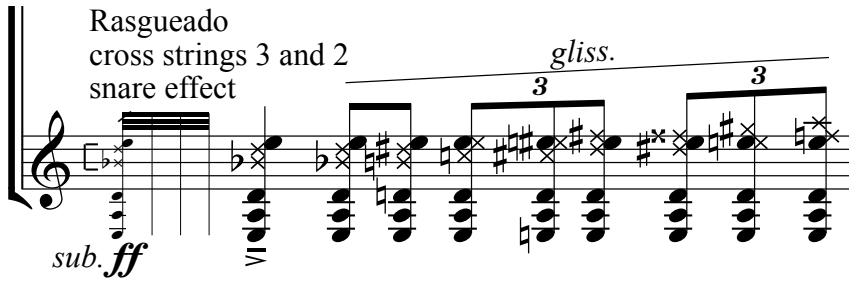


Nail whistle is a right hand glissando. Start the right hand up the fingerboard at the specified fret and slide the right hand thumb and middle fingernails from that fret past the soundhole.



The tambora effect is notated with the open strings as x note heads. The performer strikes the guitar strings just above the bridge, with the right hand thumb. The resulting sound is similar to timpani.

Snare effect specifies two strings being crossed over each other. The performer must cross the 3rd string over the 2nd string. The resulting sound gives the impression of a snare drum. This is combined with a glissando, if this is not possible take out the glissando and finger the notes on the crossed strings as best as possible. If the strings do not stay crossed in the ascension, let them slide back into place in the eventuality that they do.

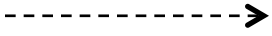


Sul ponticello
The right hand plays closer to the bridge to get a more metallic, sharp sound; playing with the nails can increase the effect.

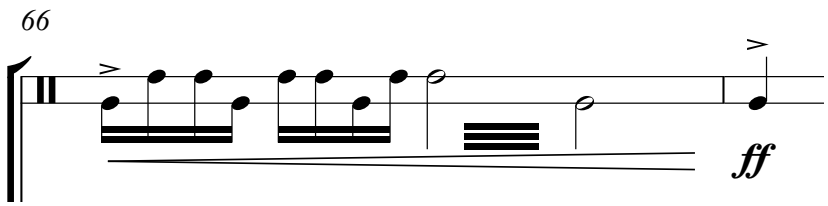
Tastiera
The right hand plays over the soundhole to produce a softer quality sound.

Sul tasto
The right hand plays over the finger board, around 12 frets above the fingered pitches to get an even softer clarinet like sound.

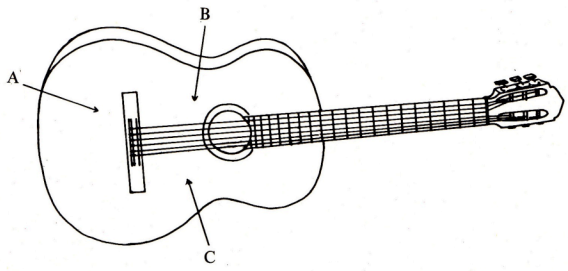
Dotted arrow signifies steady movement away to the next right hand position.

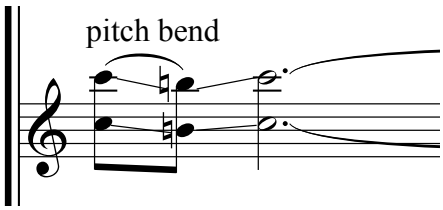


Pizz. is accomplished by resting part of the right hand on the strings close to the bridge. The flesh of the hand muffles the sound. The performer can control the amount of muting by how hard the right hand presses on the strings.



Hitting the instrument is required in a high and low stop. This is notated with a two-lined percussion stave. A good place to strike the instrument is with the thumb above the strings and the fingers below the strings (B and C in the figure). The hand is spread over the sound hole striking on either side.





The pitch bend glissando allows the performer to move up a half or whole step seamlessly by pulling the sting vertically to the side.

Glissandi are even slides over the frets through the duration of the note the glissando line starts on, even with ties. Do not rearticulate slurred glissandi but please do rearticulate glissandi that are not slurred

In the case where the markings do not make sense or there is an easier and more effective way of gaining that effect for the performer on the instrument, please make the appropriate adjustments. I am happy to discuss potential changes and better ways to notate or achieve certain effects. Please contact me through email at apowell12@mail.bw.edu or aubrie.powell@yahoo.com

The Colored Horses

Into the town rode the colored horses; the colored horses rode into the town.

And the people of the town said: "Oh my, Look at the colored horses!"

And the colored horses pranced and preened and kicked up their unshod feet in the giddy pleasure of the attention they received.

And the people of the town wanted the colored horses to stay,

But the colored horses said, "neigh" and galloped along on their way.

About this piece:

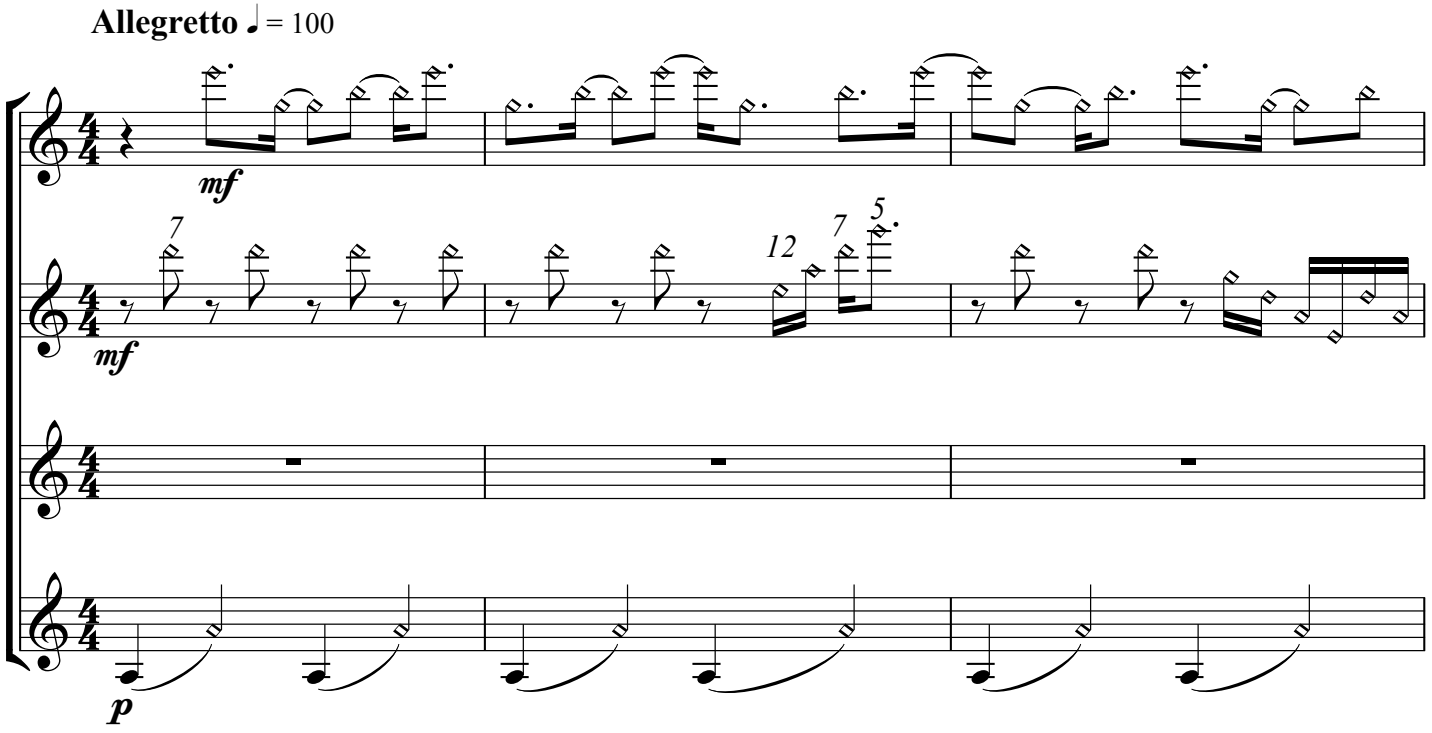
My sister extemporaneously improvised the colored horses' story while we were walking; a chalk colored horse on the sidewalk had inspired her. I have an interest in working with speaking and music because to my eyes the performers are people as much as they are instruments. They are people who have spent years working on mastering an instrument to create sound, and that is what they want to showcase in a performance. But there is a huge part of the process that is not recognized by the audience. The audience does not see the hours of practice and preparation in a recital or the number of people it takes to make such a thing possible. Most of this is taken for granted. I see speaking as a way to humanize the performers to the audience. To reach out to them and say "I am a person who has spent thousands of hours mastering my craft and I am also a person who has family and friends that I talk to and engage with by speaking."

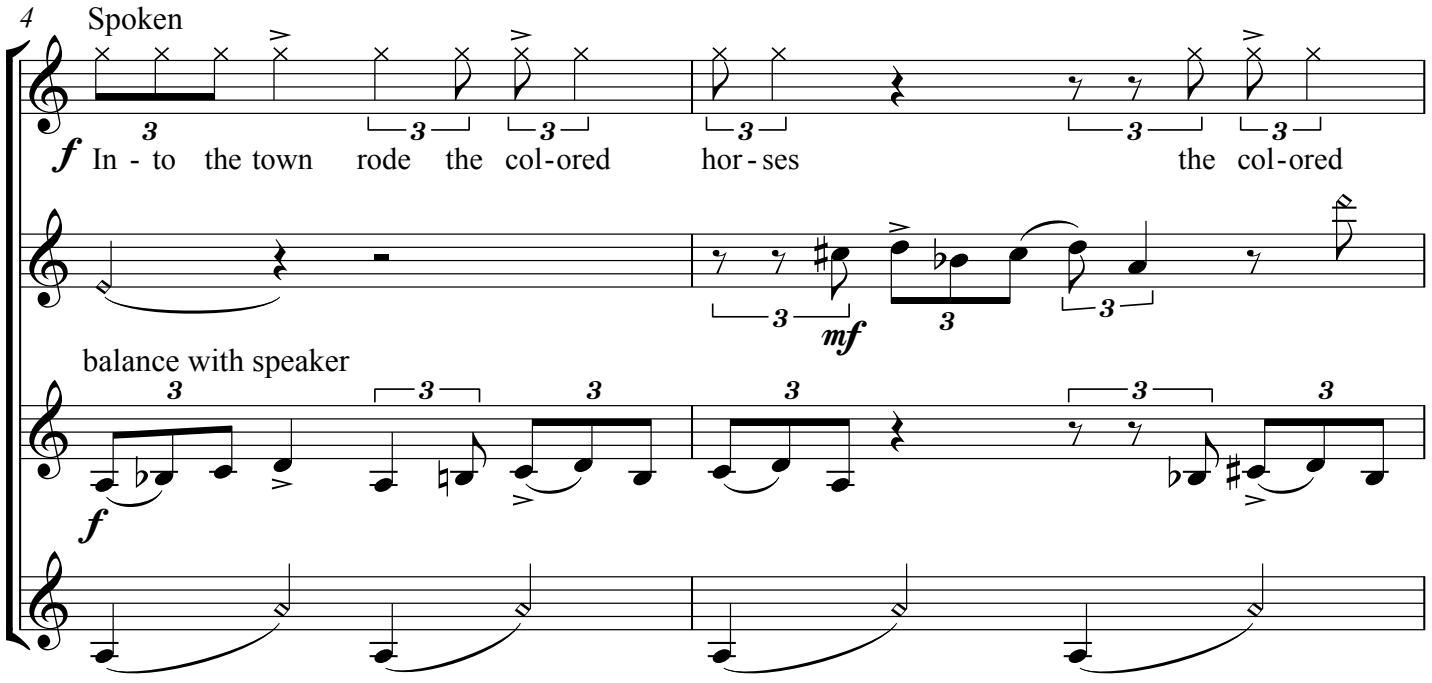
In this piece I wanted to use the humanness in storytelling and place it in a musical landscape. I am working with several textures starting with a guitar harmonic intro as the hook. I proceed with the beginning of the story with a speaking and guitar duet. A gestural build-up comprises the space between the speaking until there is a break. A bar of silence separates this from the fast moving landscape of the horses. This is minimalist influenced texture that shifts between tonalities. It is my hope this piece is interesting to play and listen to while still provoking thoughts of passing pleasure and beauty found in the natural world.

The Colored Horses

Emily Powell

Aubrie Powell





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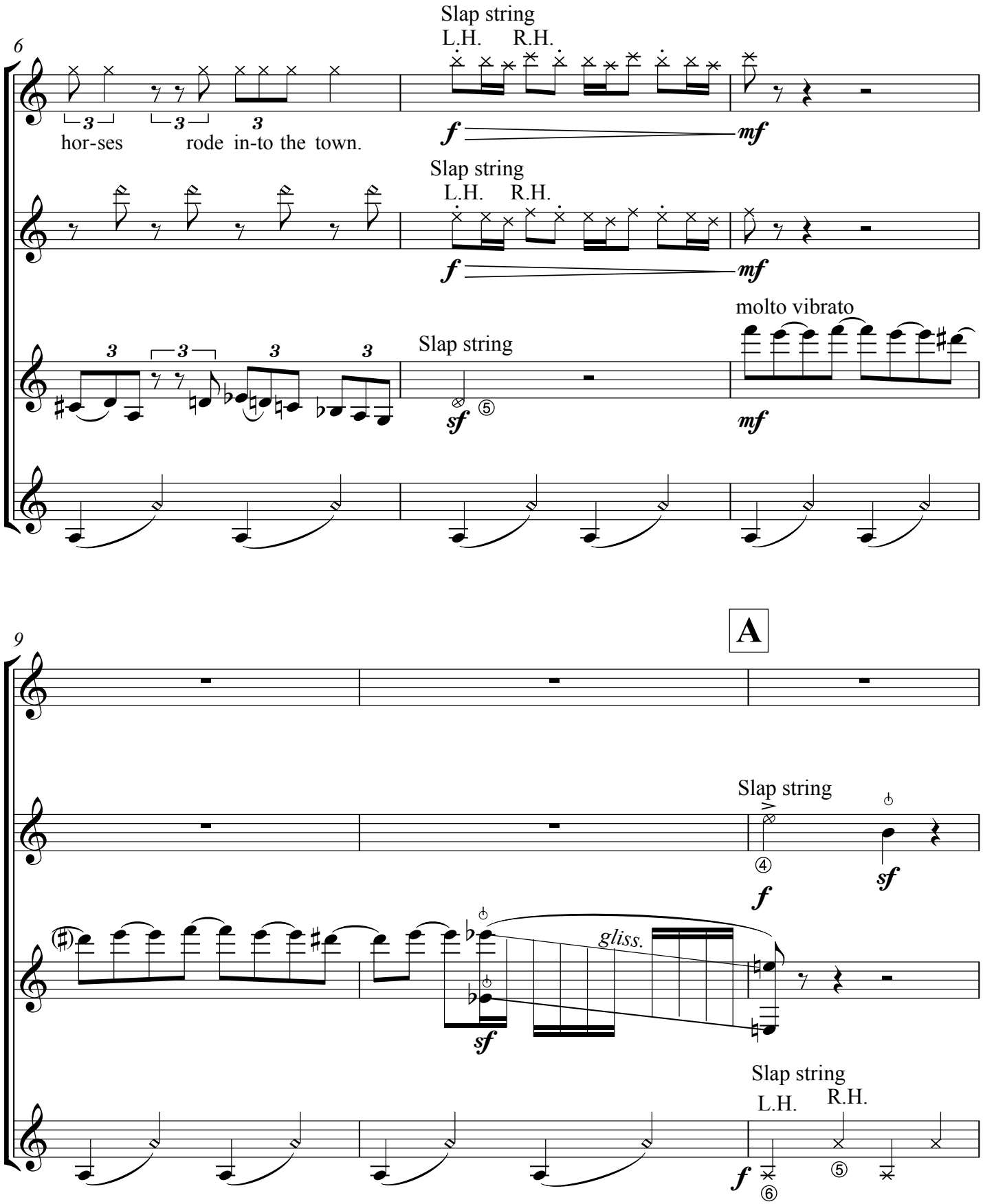
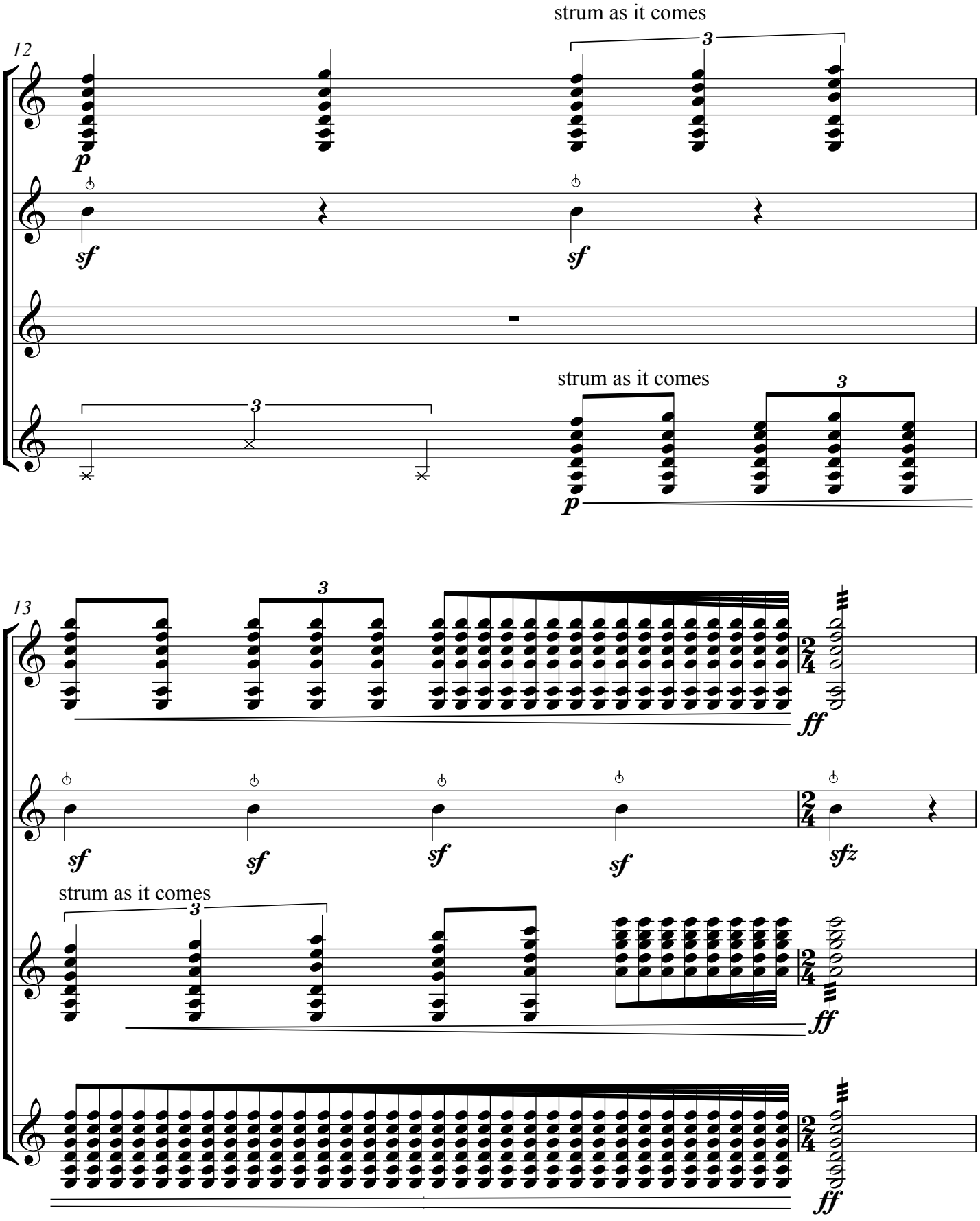
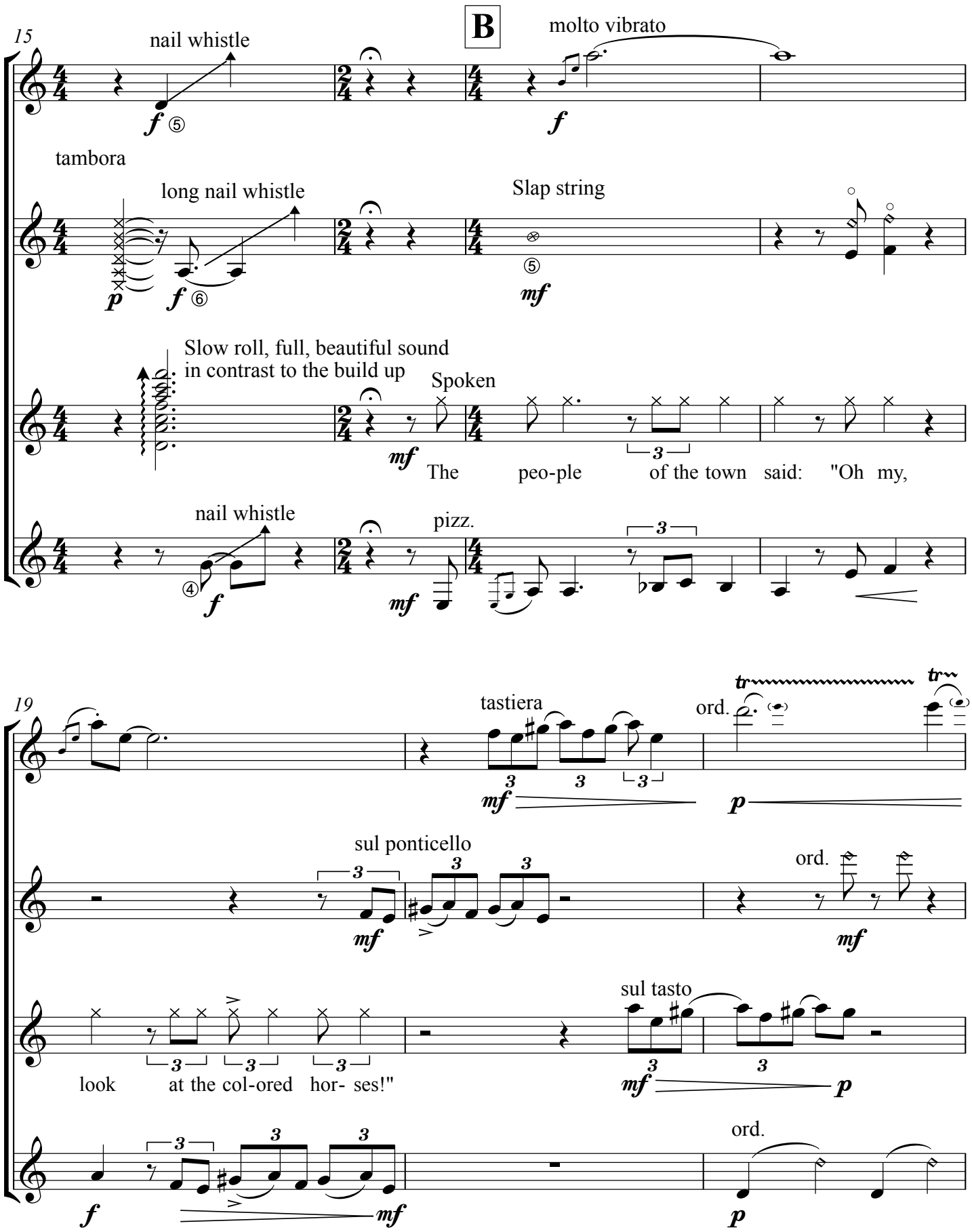
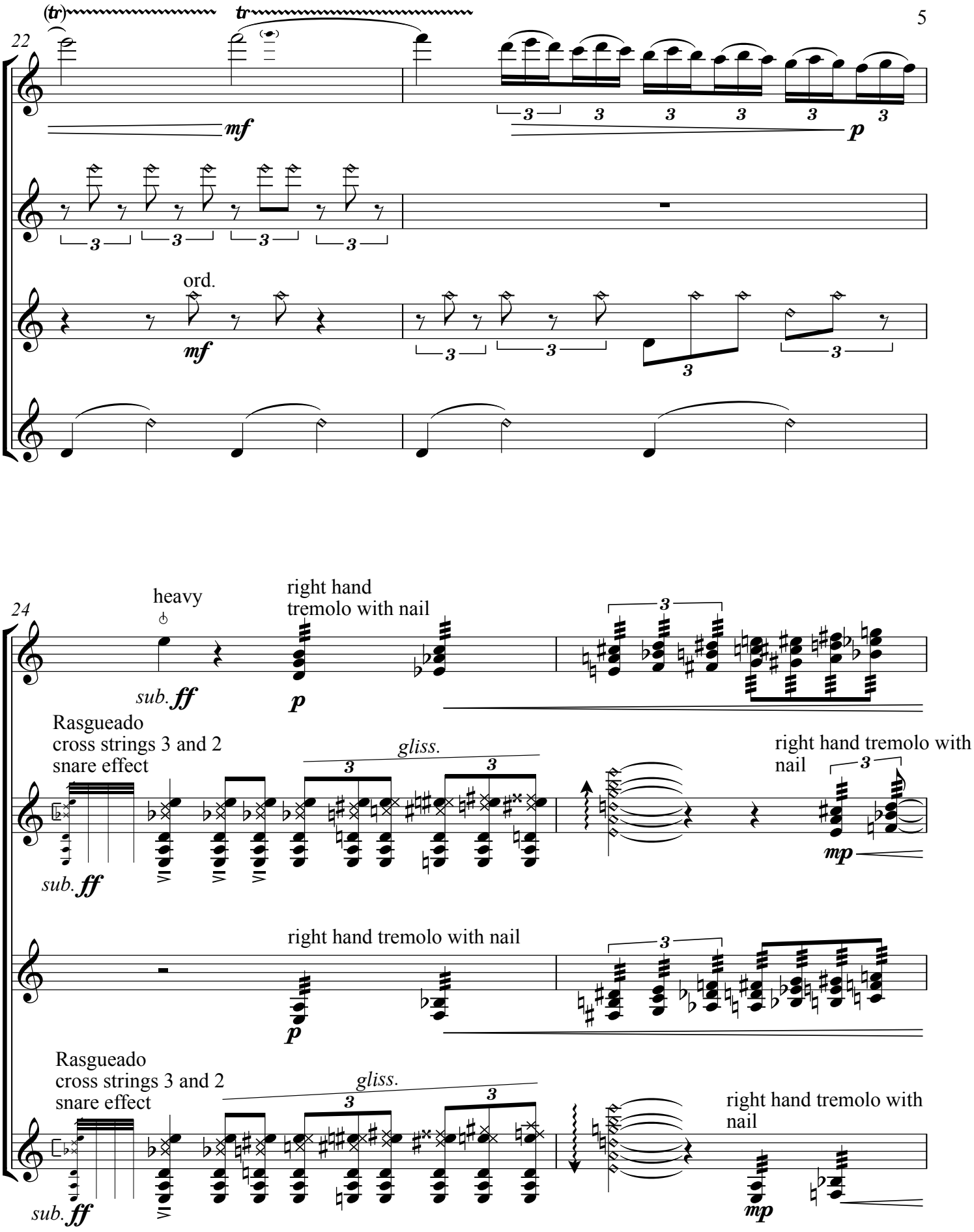
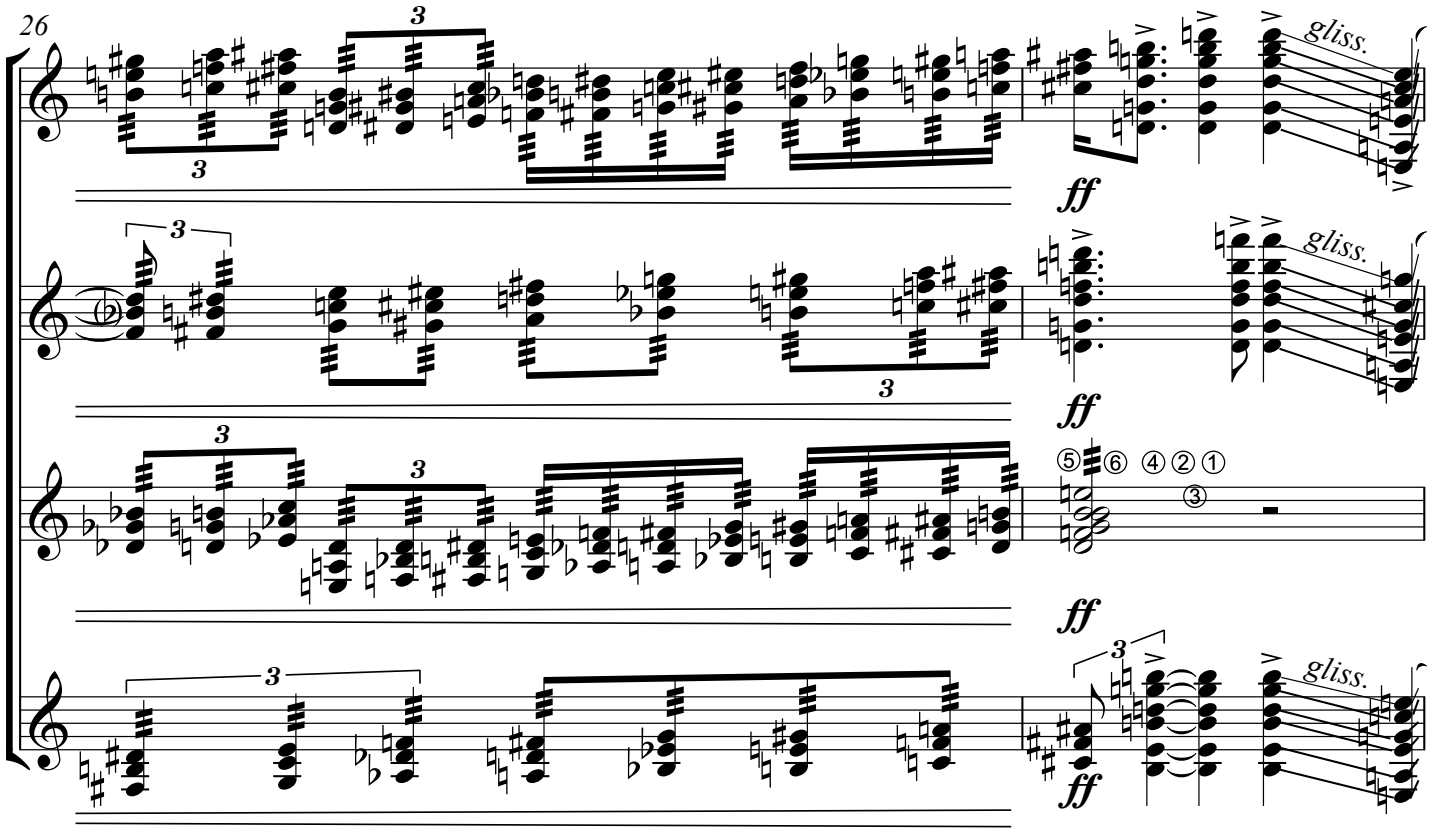
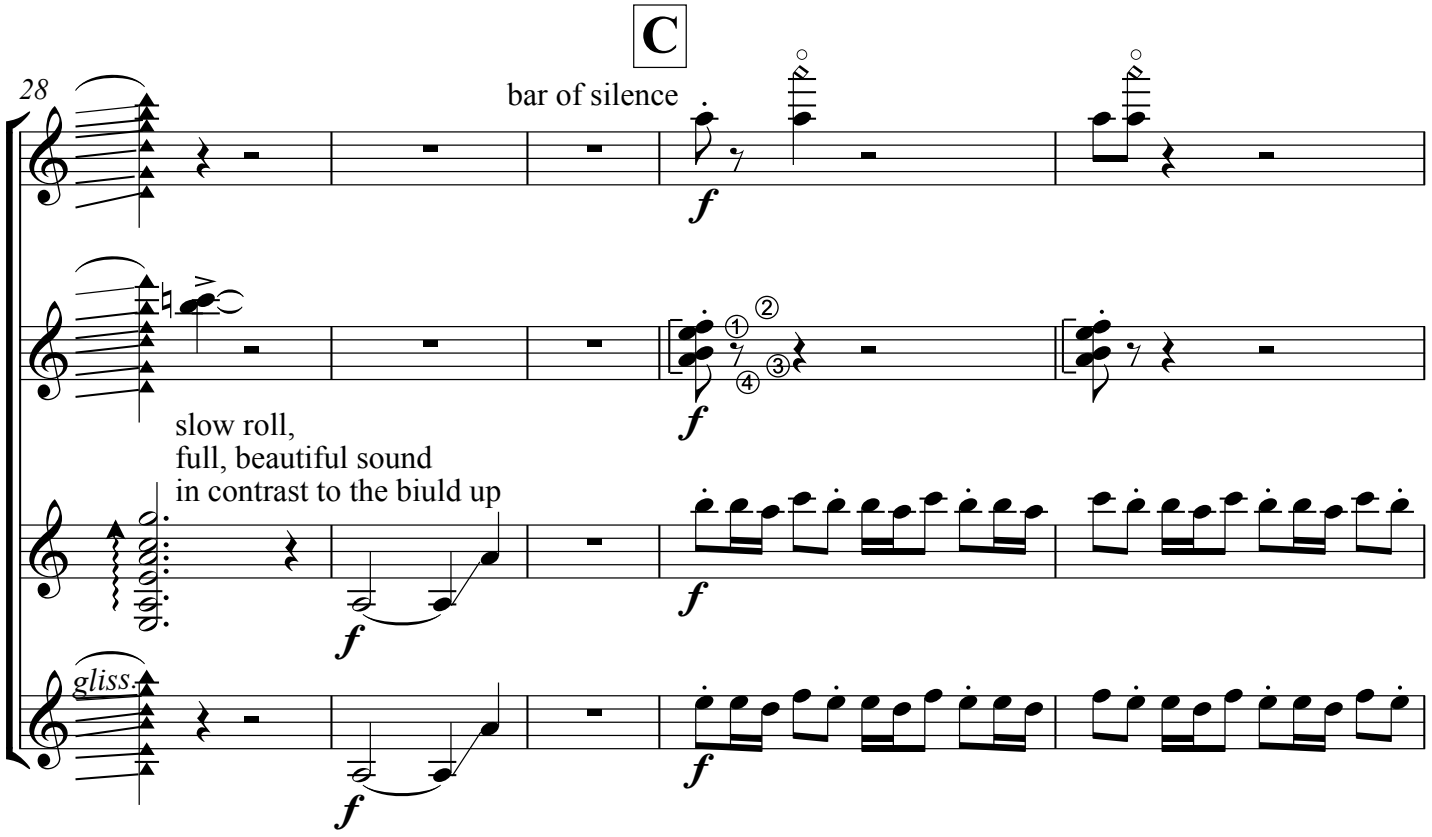

6
Slap string
L.H. R.H.
hor-ses rode in-to the town.
f
mf
Slap string
L.H. R.H.
f
mf
molto vibrato
Slap string
sf
mf
9
A
Slap string
f
sf
gliss.
sf
Slap string
L.H. R.H.
f

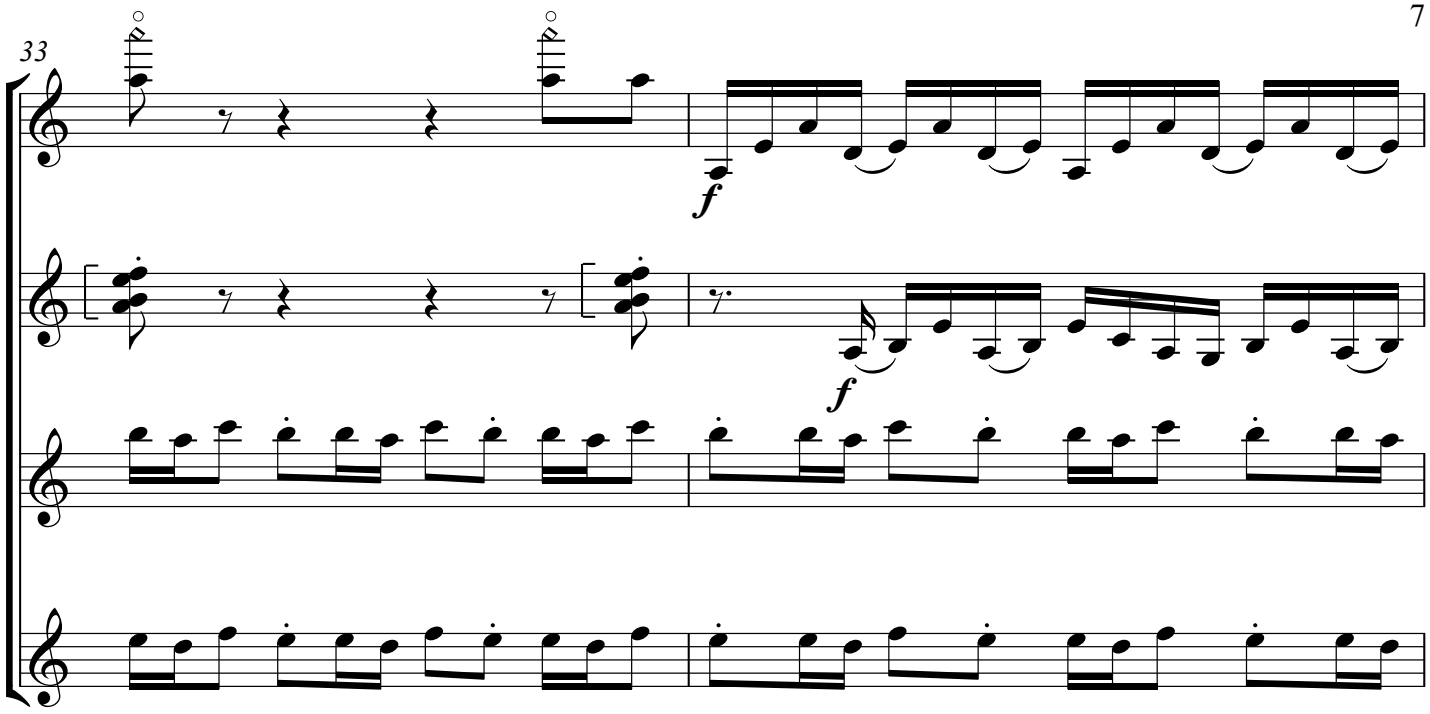

12
strum as it comes
3
p
sf
sf
3
strum as it comes
3
p
13
3
ff
sf
sf
sf
sf
sfz
strum as it comes
3
ff
ff

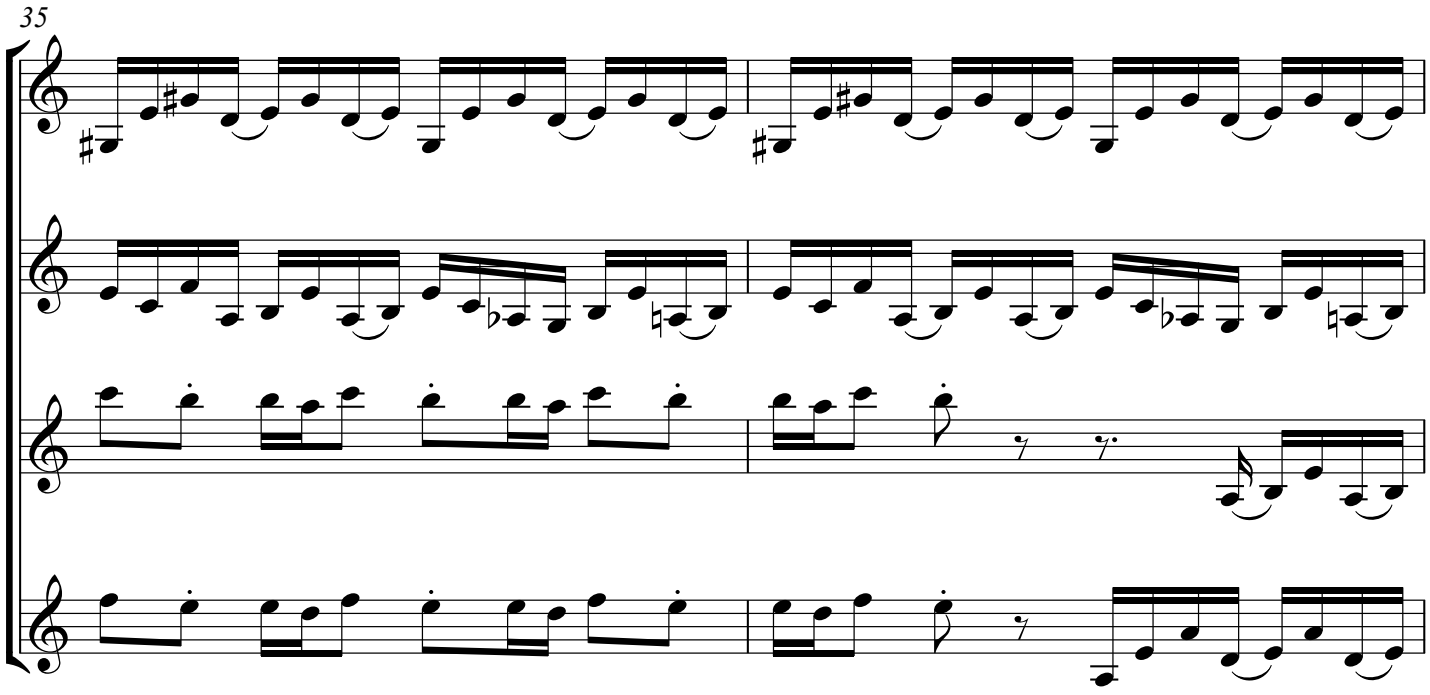

15
nail whistle
B
molto vibrato
tambora
long nail whistle
Slap string
Slow roll, full, beautiful sound
in contrast to the build up
Spoken
The peo-ple of the town said: "Oh my,
nail whistle
pizz.
19
tastiera
ord.
sul ponticello
ord.
look at the col-ored hor- ses!"
sul tasto
ord.

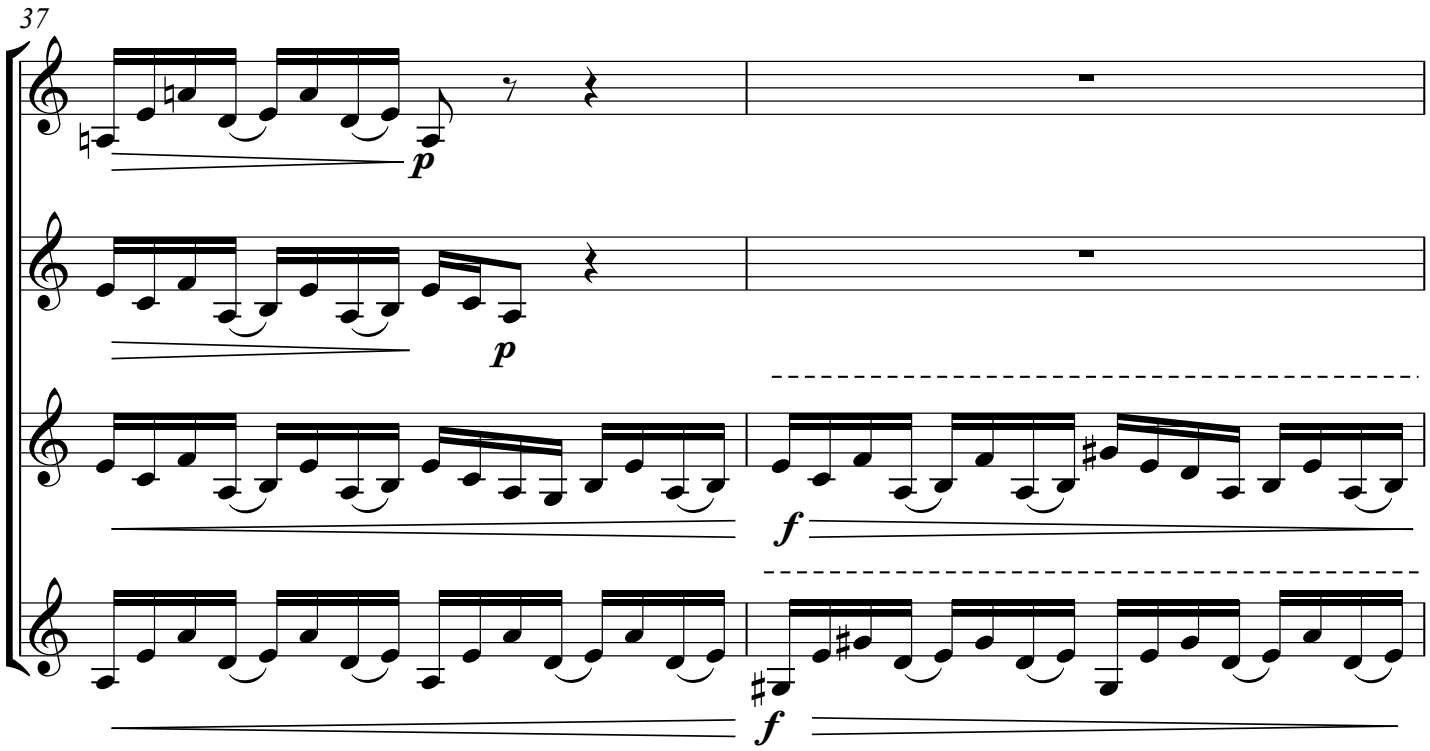

22
(tr)
tr
mf
p
ord.
mf
24
heavy
sub. ff
p
right hand
tremolo with nail
Rasgueado
cross strings 3 and 2
snare effect
gliss.
sub. ff
right hand tremolo with
nail
mp
right hand tremolo with nail
p
Rasgueado
cross strings 3 and 2
snare effect
gliss.
sub. ff
right hand tremolo with
nail
mp

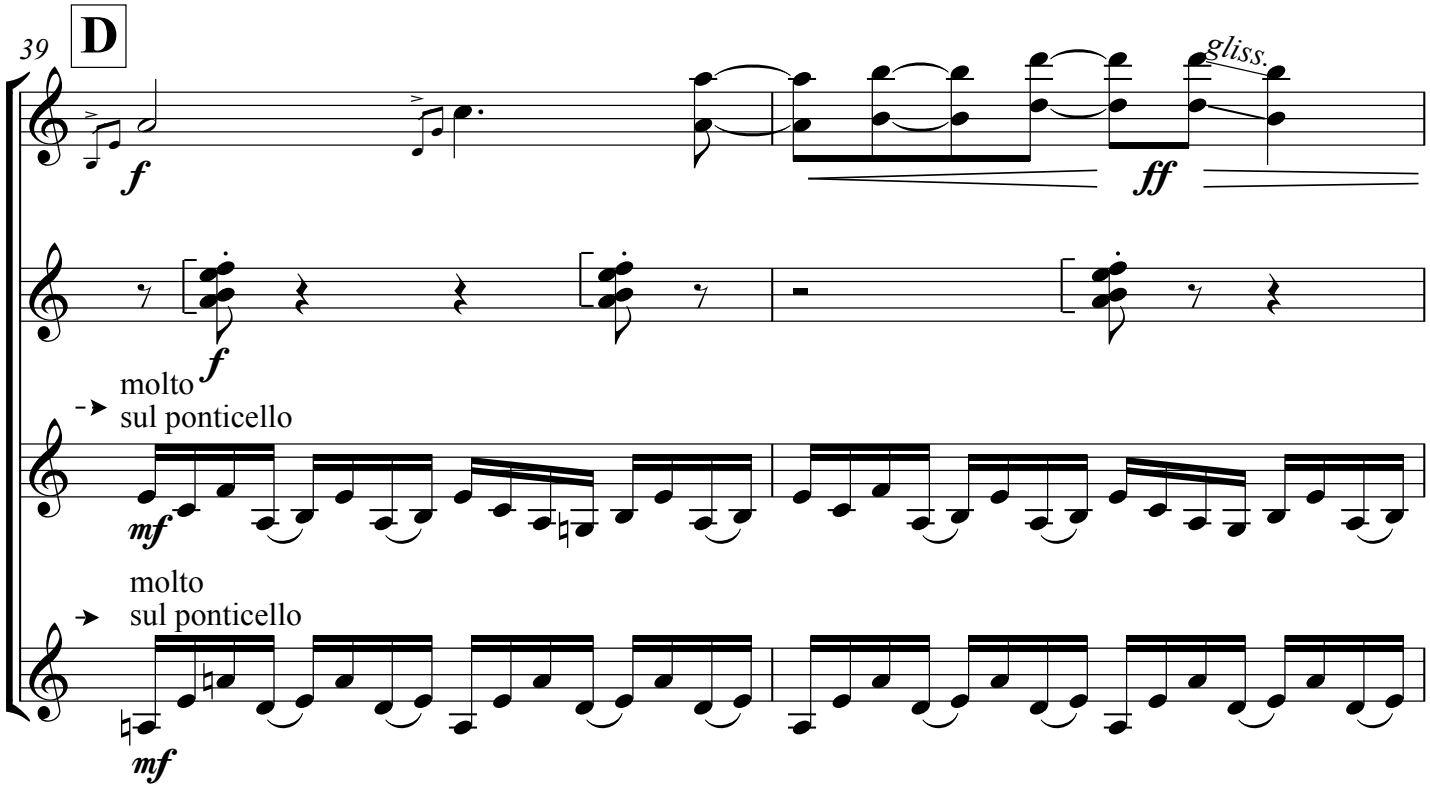

26
gliss.
ff
gliss.
ff
⑤⑥ ④②① ③
ff
gliss.
ff


C
28
bar of silence
f
f
slow roll,
full, beautiful sound
in contrast to the biuld up
f
gliss.
f
f


33
f
f


35


37
p
p
f
f


39
D
f
gliss.
ff
f
molto
sul ponticello
mf
molto
sul ponticello
mf

41

molto
sul ponticello

p

molto
sul ponticello

p

p

p

43

ord.

f

ord.

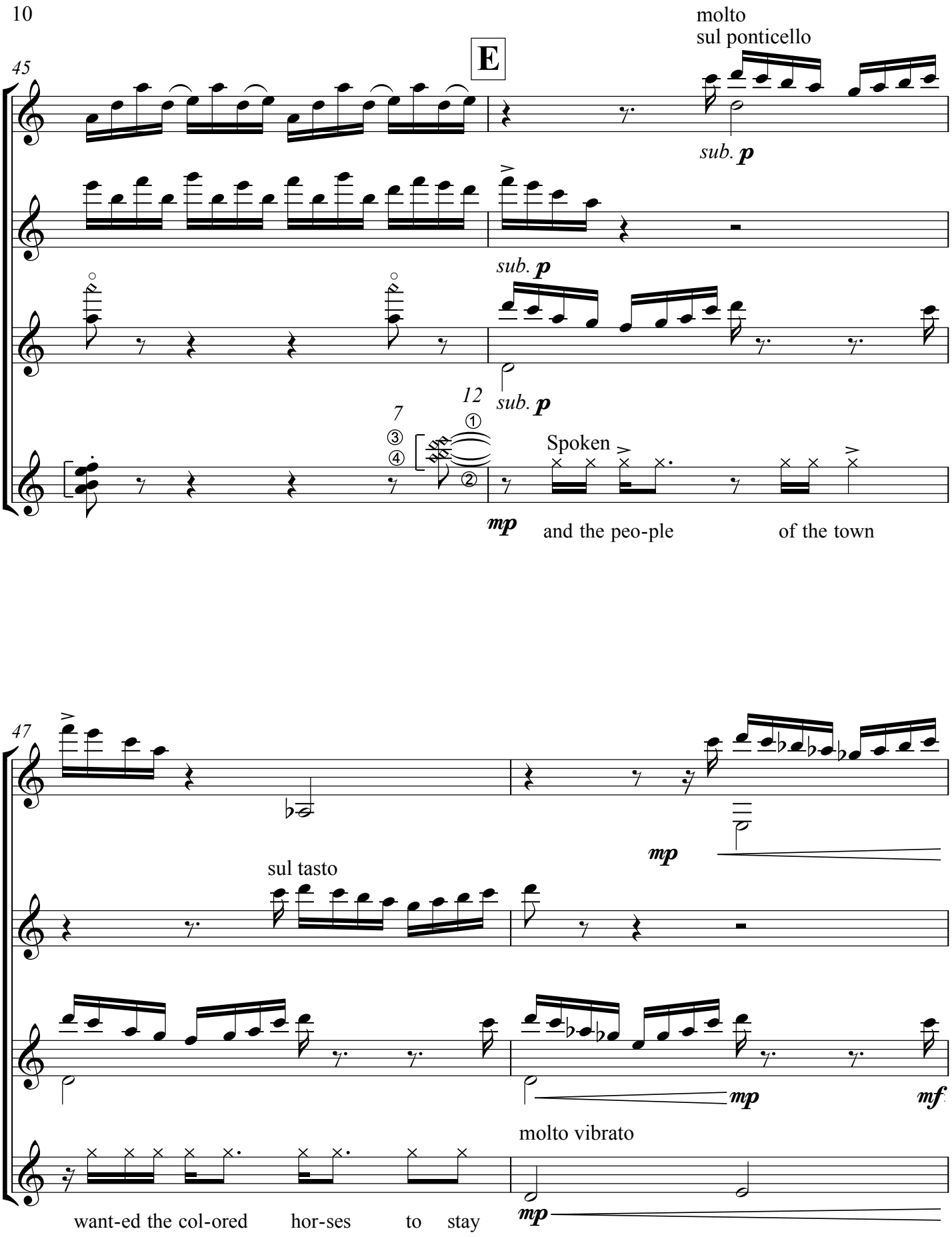
f

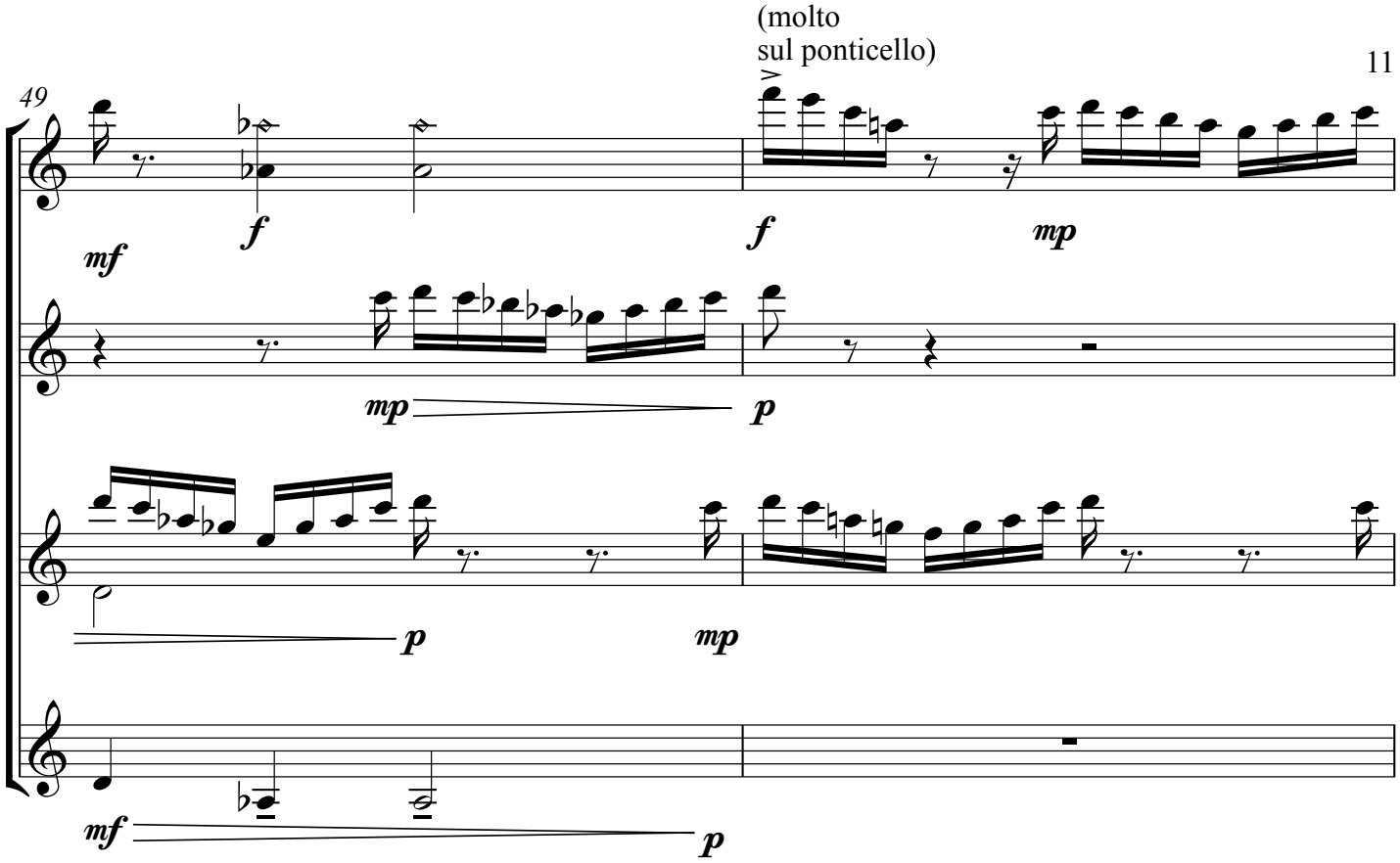
ord.

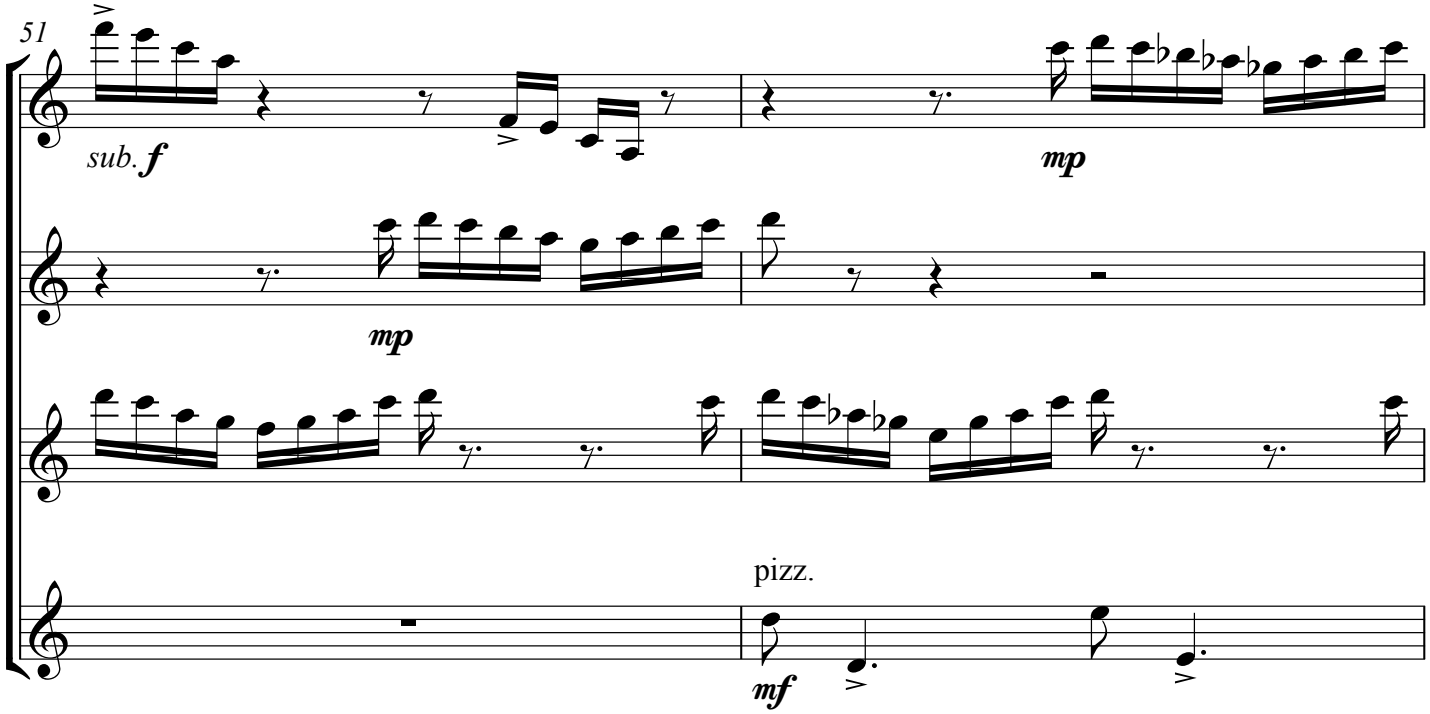
f

ord.

f


45
E
molto
sul ponticello
sub. p
sub. p
12
sub. p
7
Spoken
mp
and the peo-ple
of the town
47
mp
sul tasto
mp
mf
molto vibrato
mp
want-ed the col-ored
hor-ses
to
stay


(molto
sul ponticello)
49
mf
f
f
mp
mp
p
p
mp
mf
p


51
sub. f
mp
mp
pizz.
mf

53

ord.
vibrato

p *pp*

pp

p *pp*

ord.
vibrato

p *pp*

55 **F**

sub. ***f***

molto
sul ponticello

ord.

sub. ***f***

molto
sul ponticello

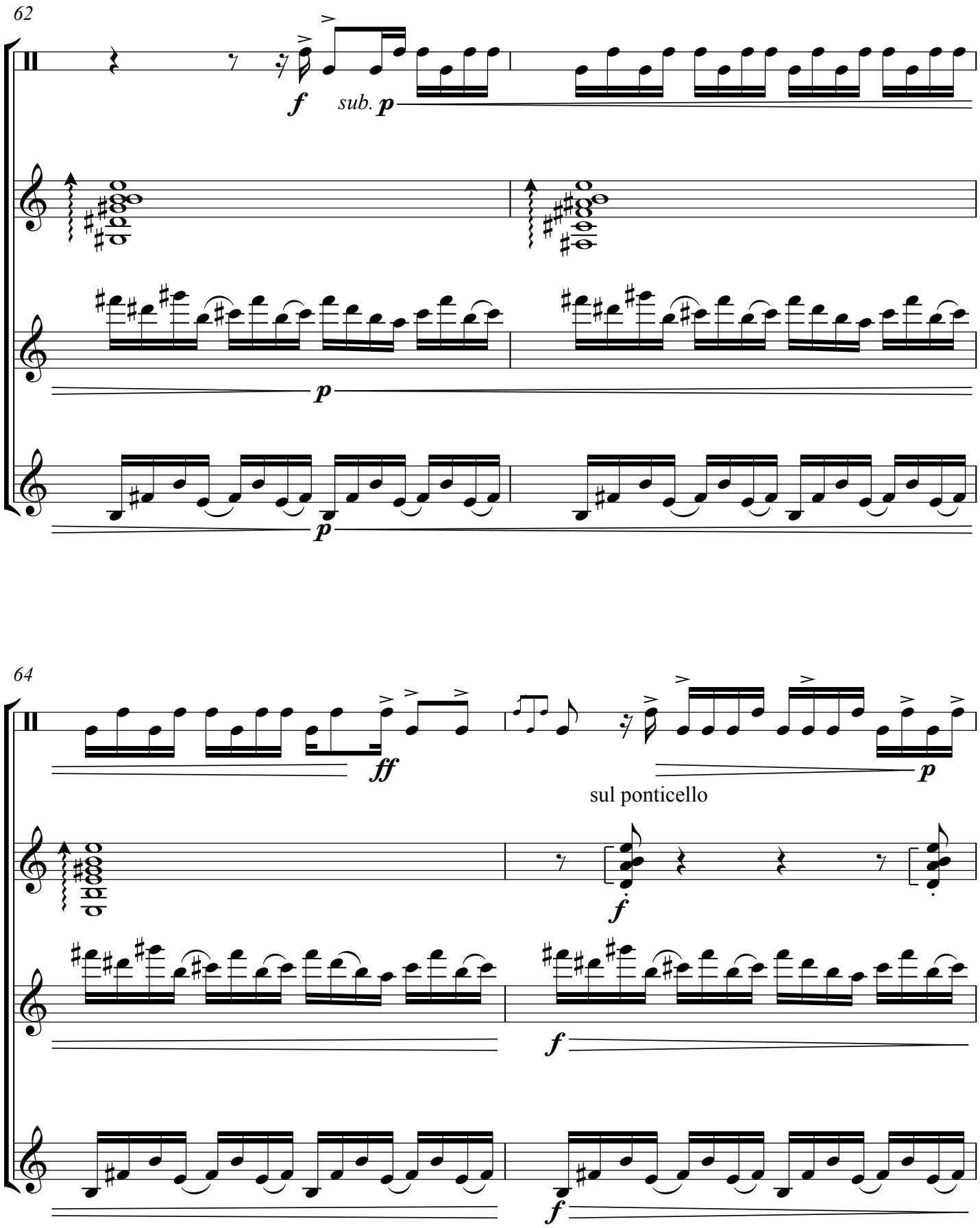
sub. ***f***

sub. ***f***

58

60

ord.
slow roll,
full, beautiful sound


62
f
sub. p
p
p
64
ff
p
sul ponticello
f
f
f

66

ff

p *f*

p *f*

G

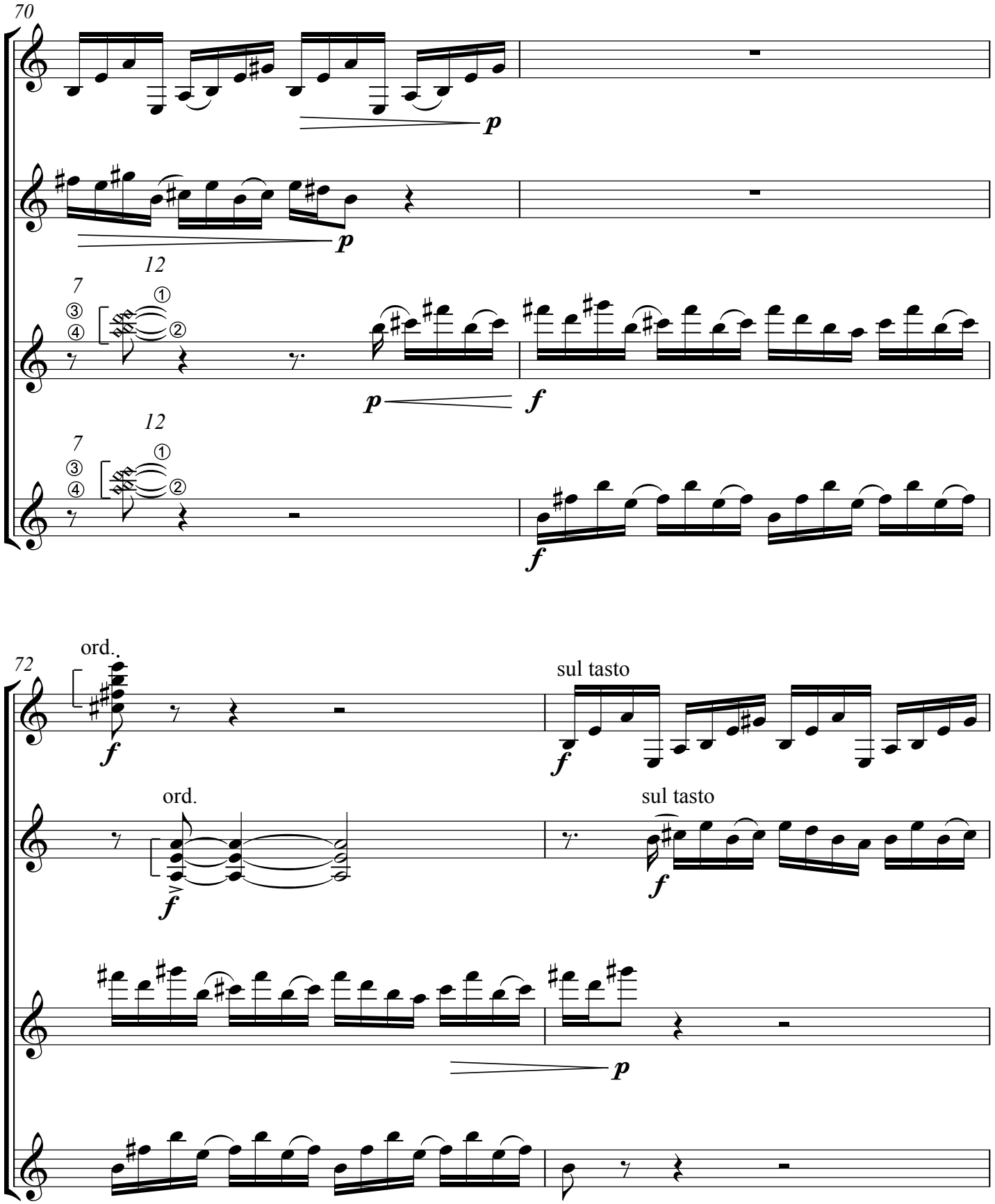
68

pizz.

f

pizz.

f


70
p
p
12
7
p
f
12
7
f
72
ord.
f
sul tasto
f
ord.
f
sul tasto
f
p

74

p

p

slap string with both RH and LH
as loud as can be reasonably played

f

f

f

76

H

mp

ord.

mp

slap string with both RH and LH
as loud as can be reasonably played

f

78

slap string with both R.H. and L.H.
as loud as can be reasonably played

f

slap string with both RH and LH
as loud as can be reasonably played

f

sul tasto

p

81

sul ponticello

mf

aggressive!

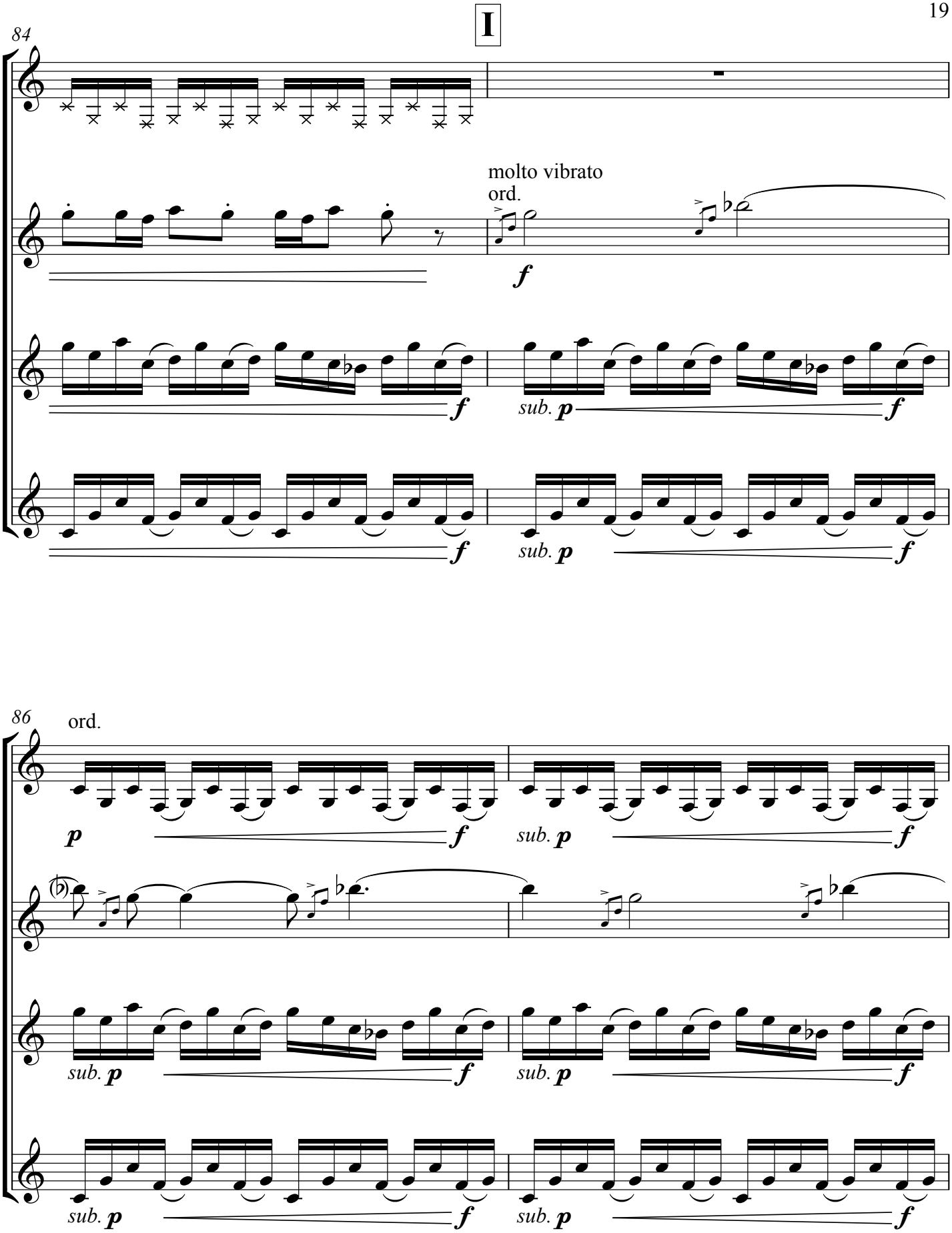
f

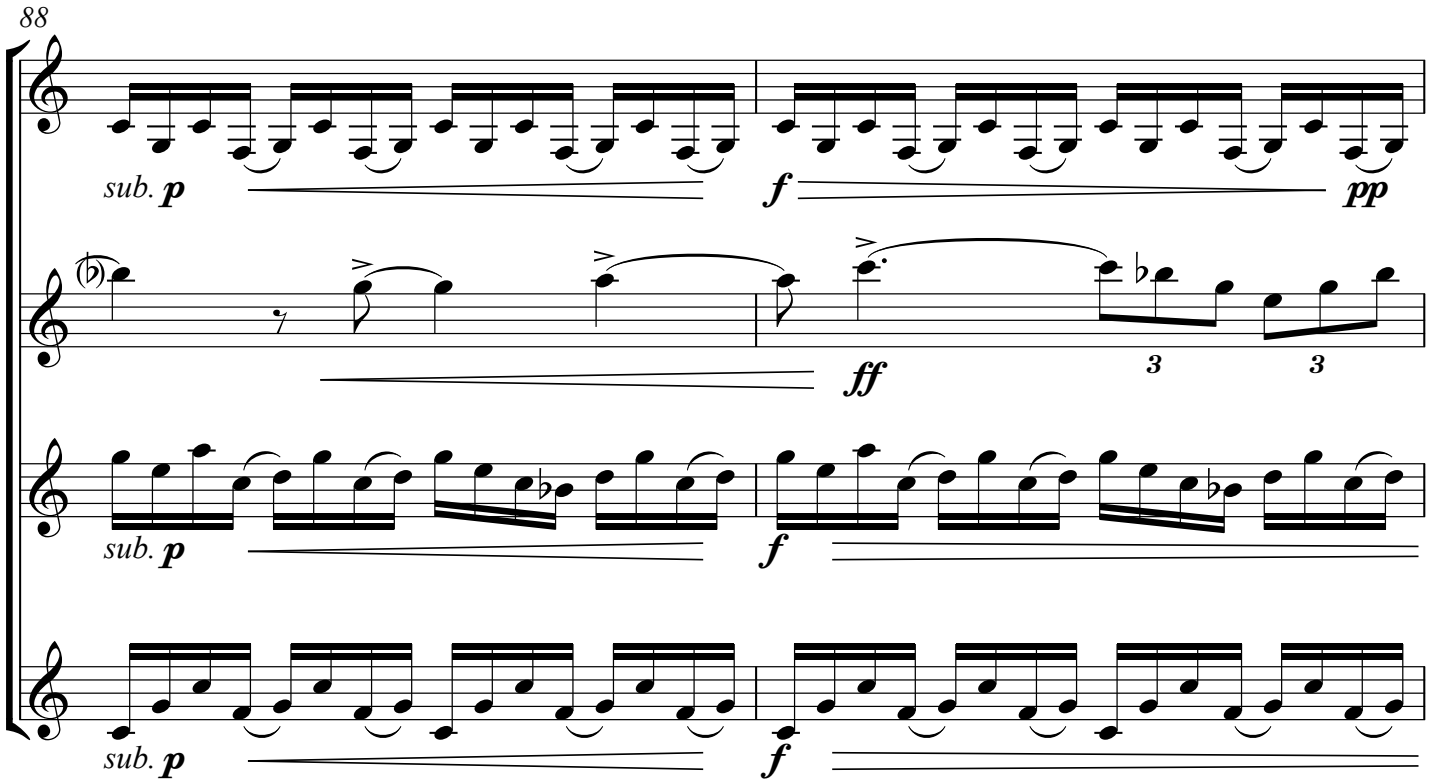
sul ponticello

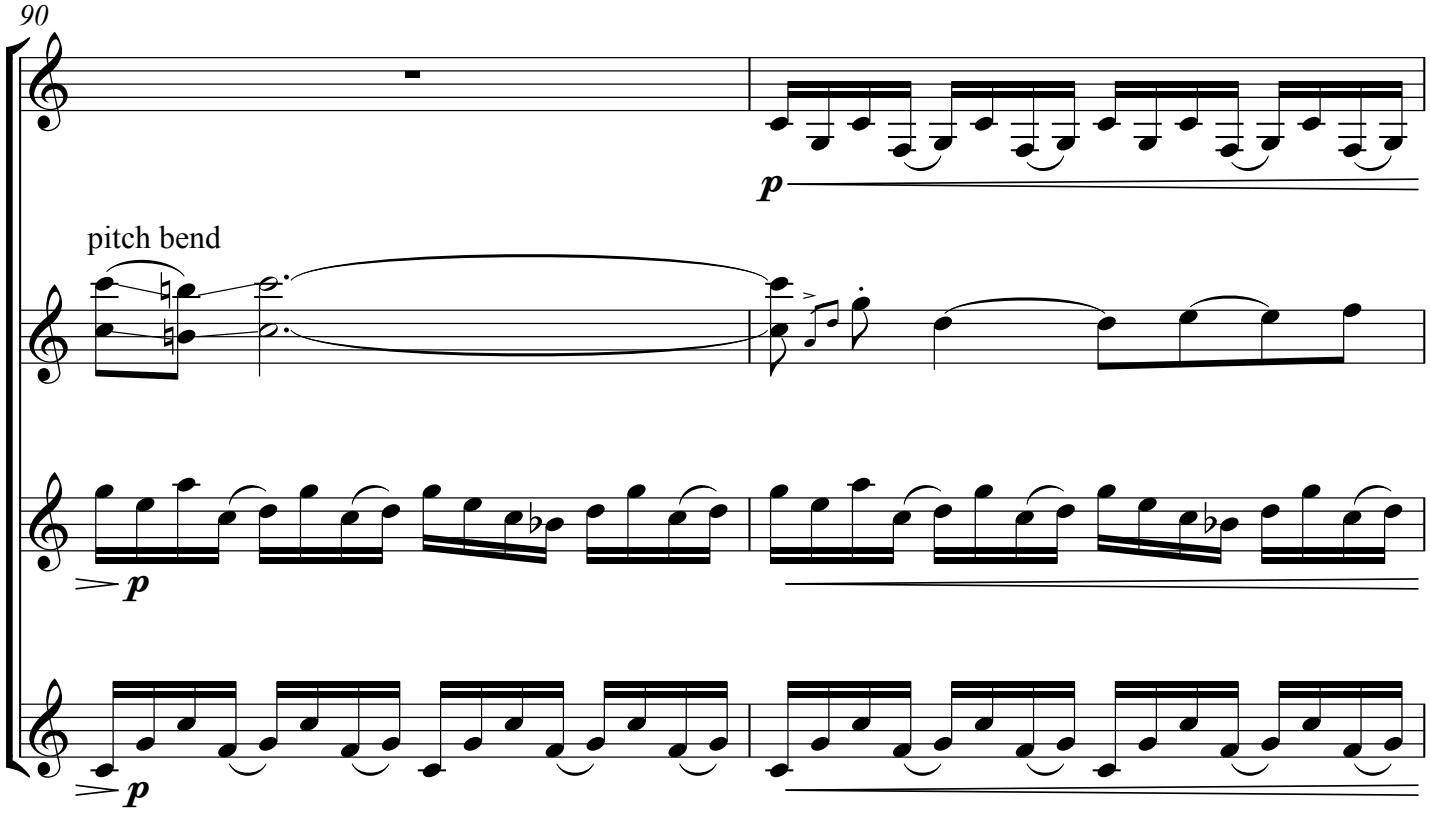
mp

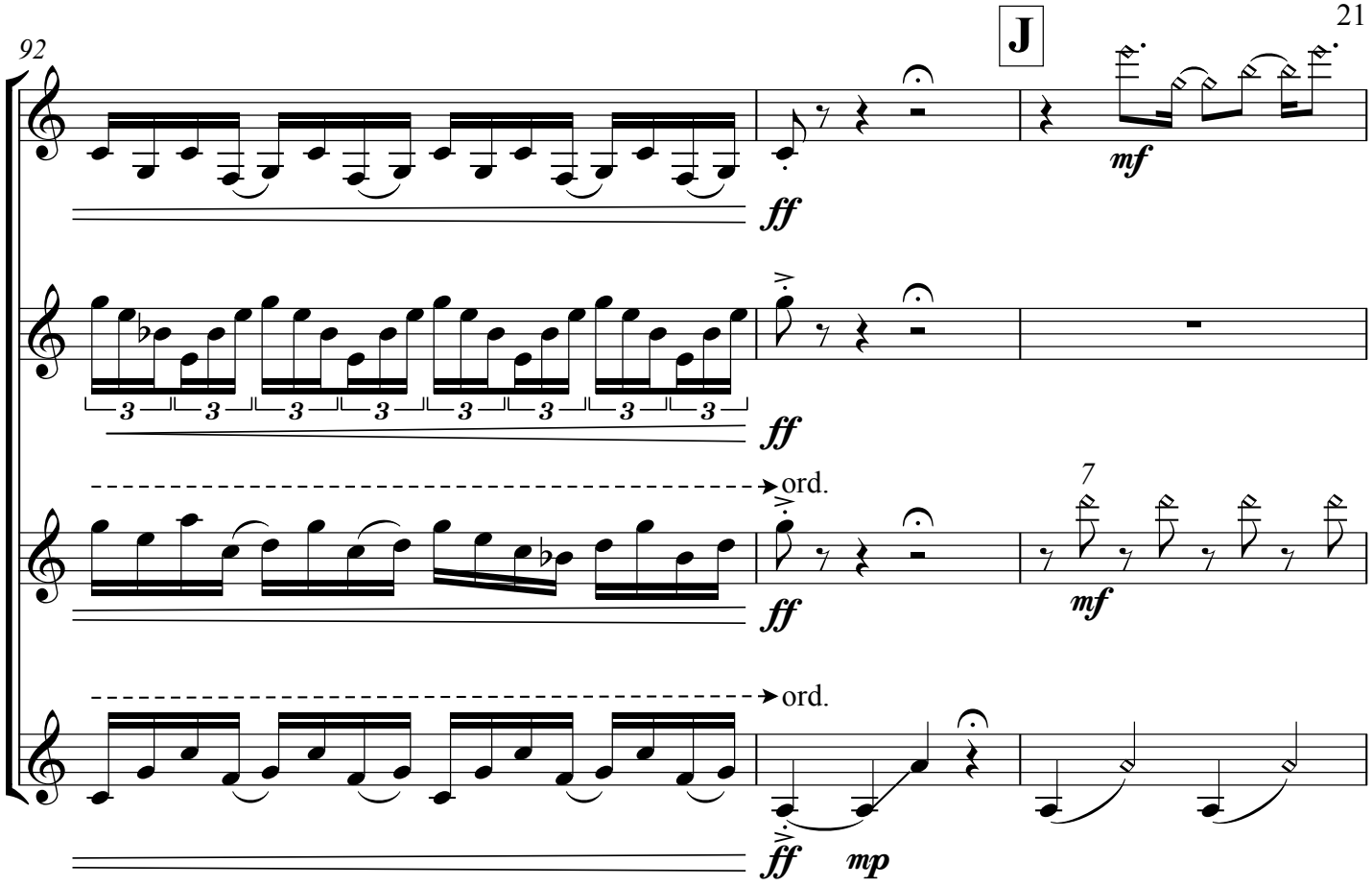
sul tasto

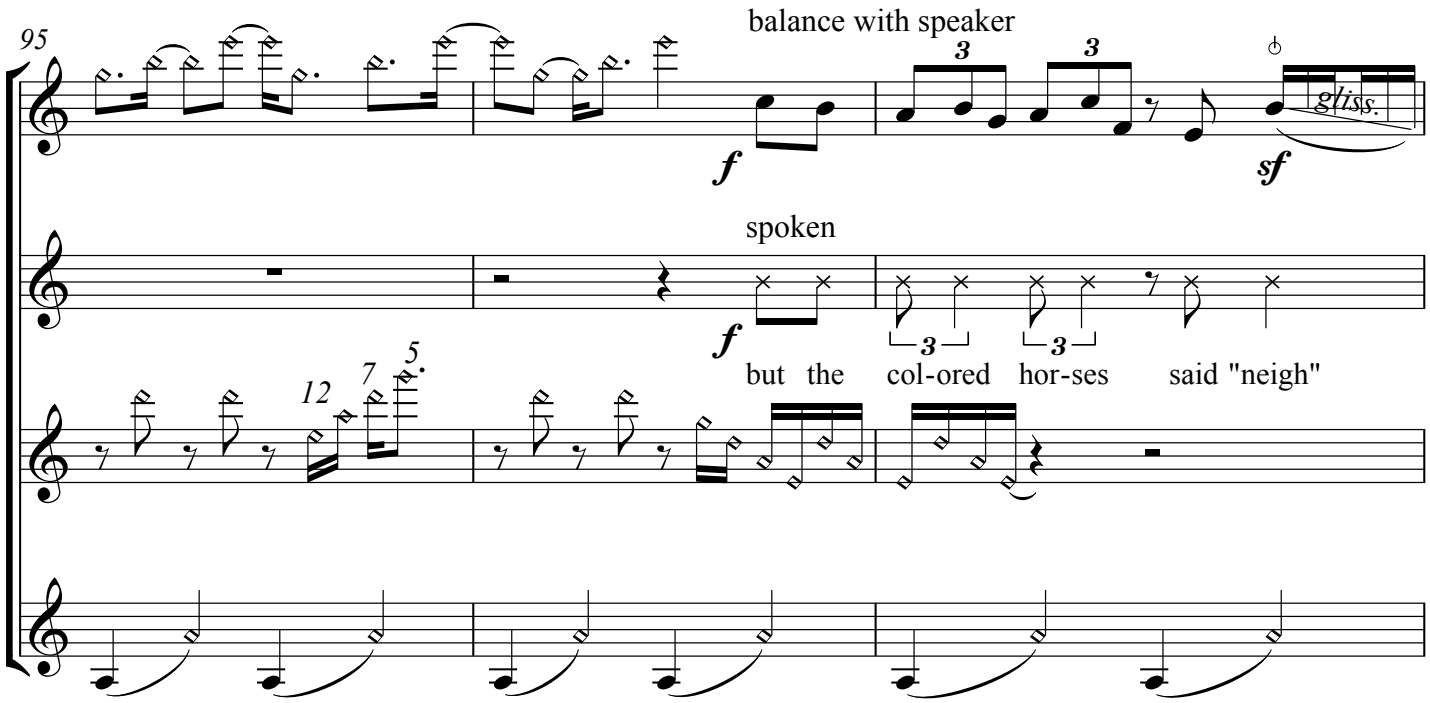
p

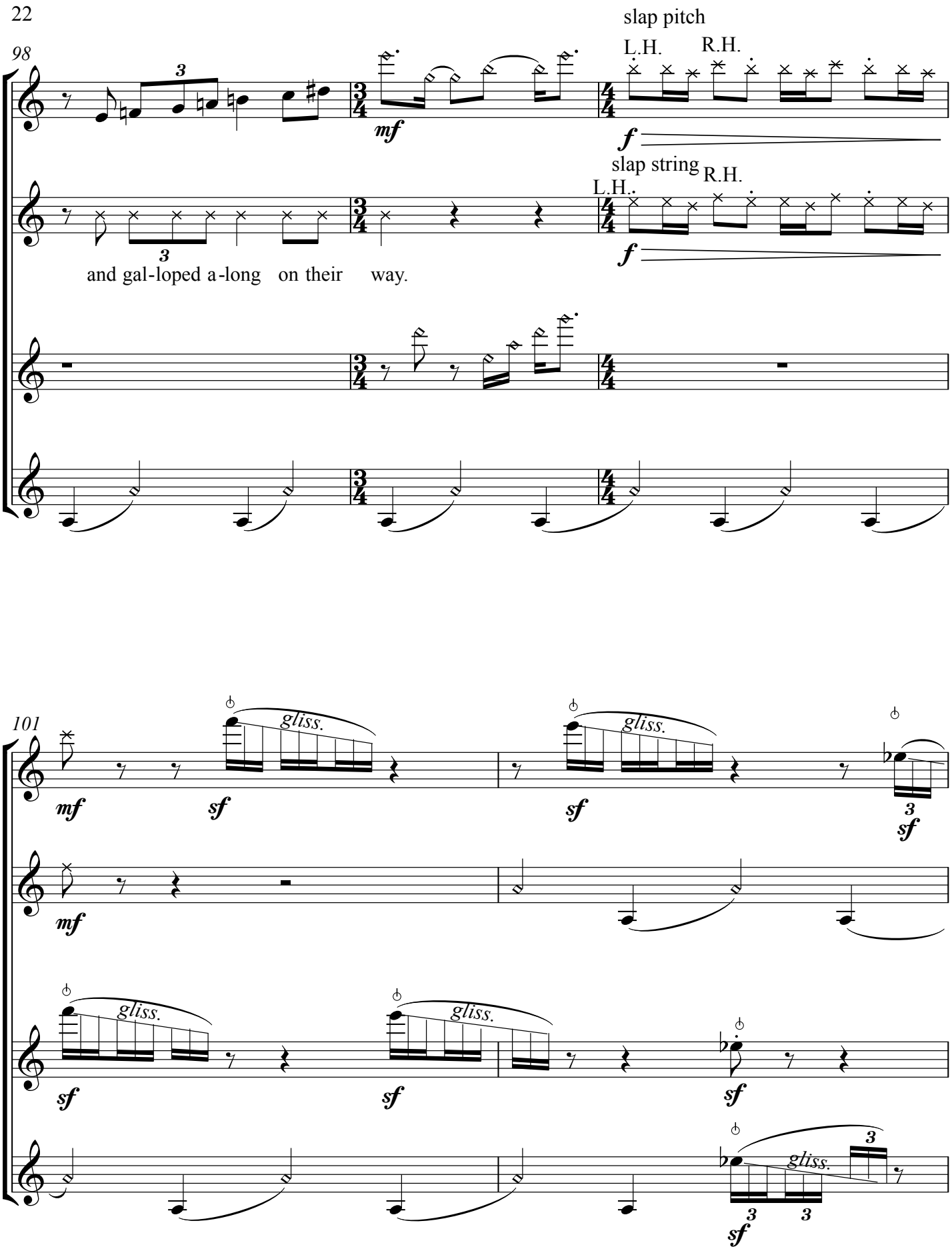

I
84
molto vibrato
ord.
f
sub. p
86
ord.
p
sub. p

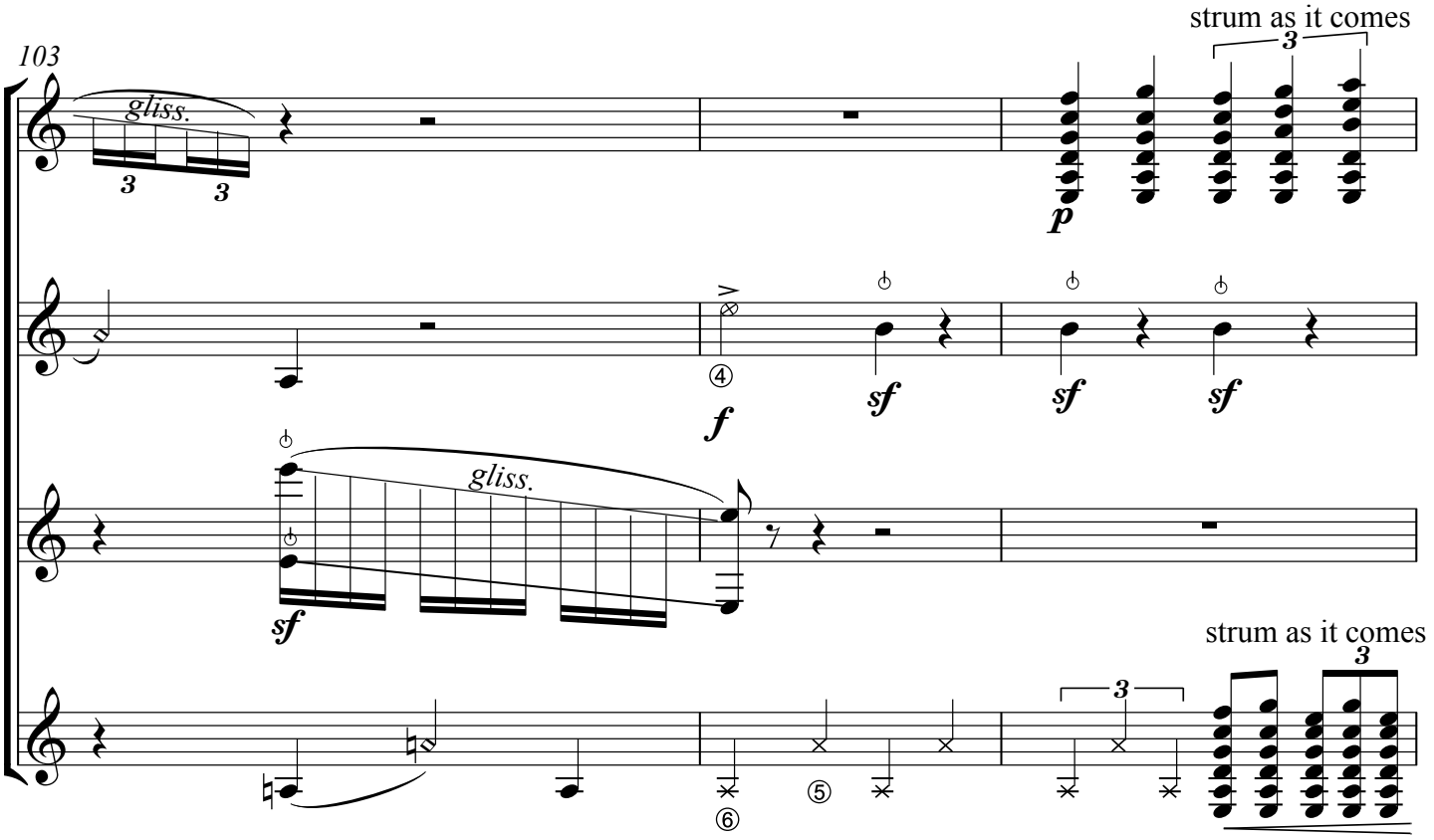

88
sub. p
f
pp
ff
3
3
sub. p
f
sub. p
f

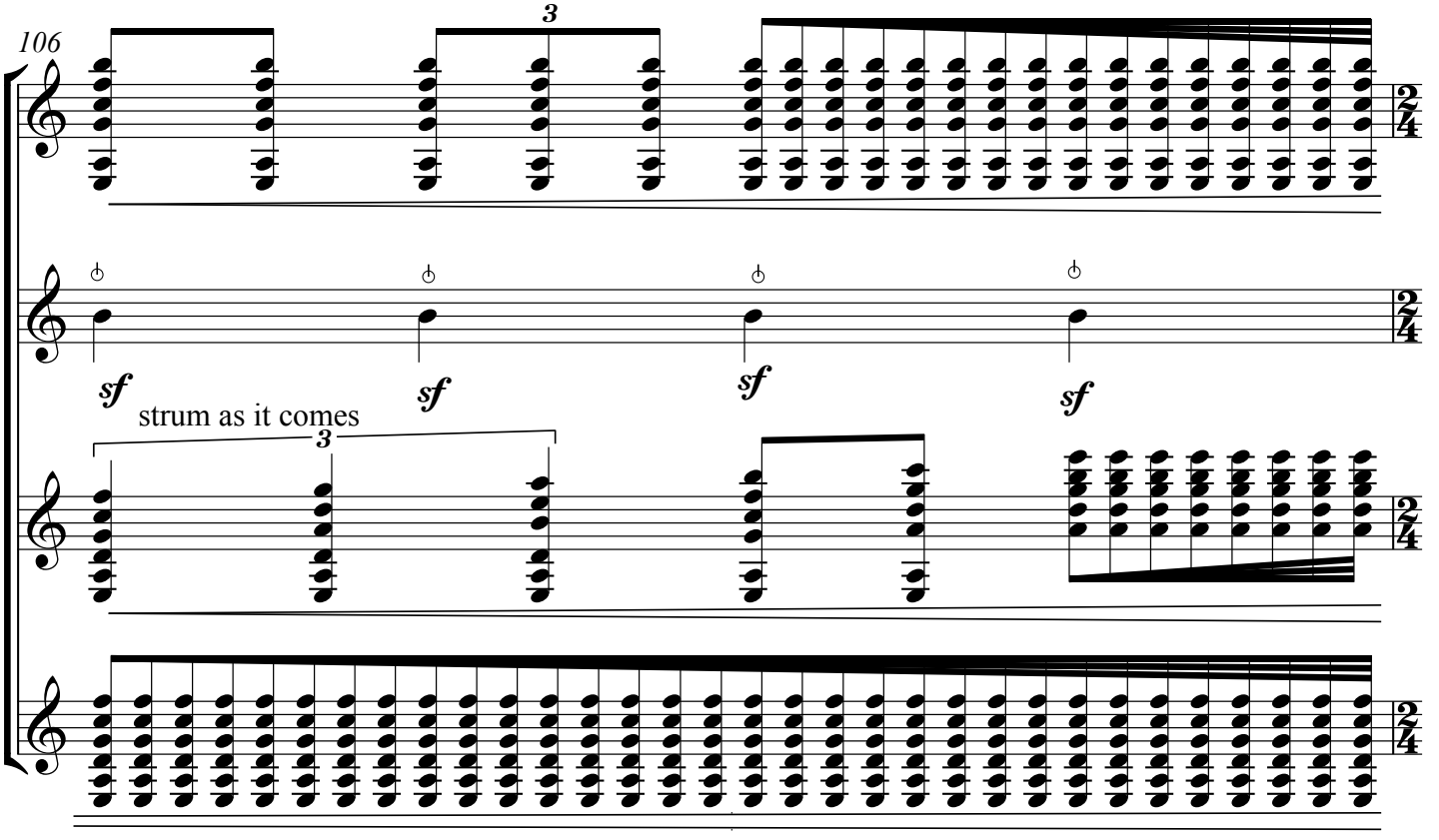

90
p
pitch bend
p
p

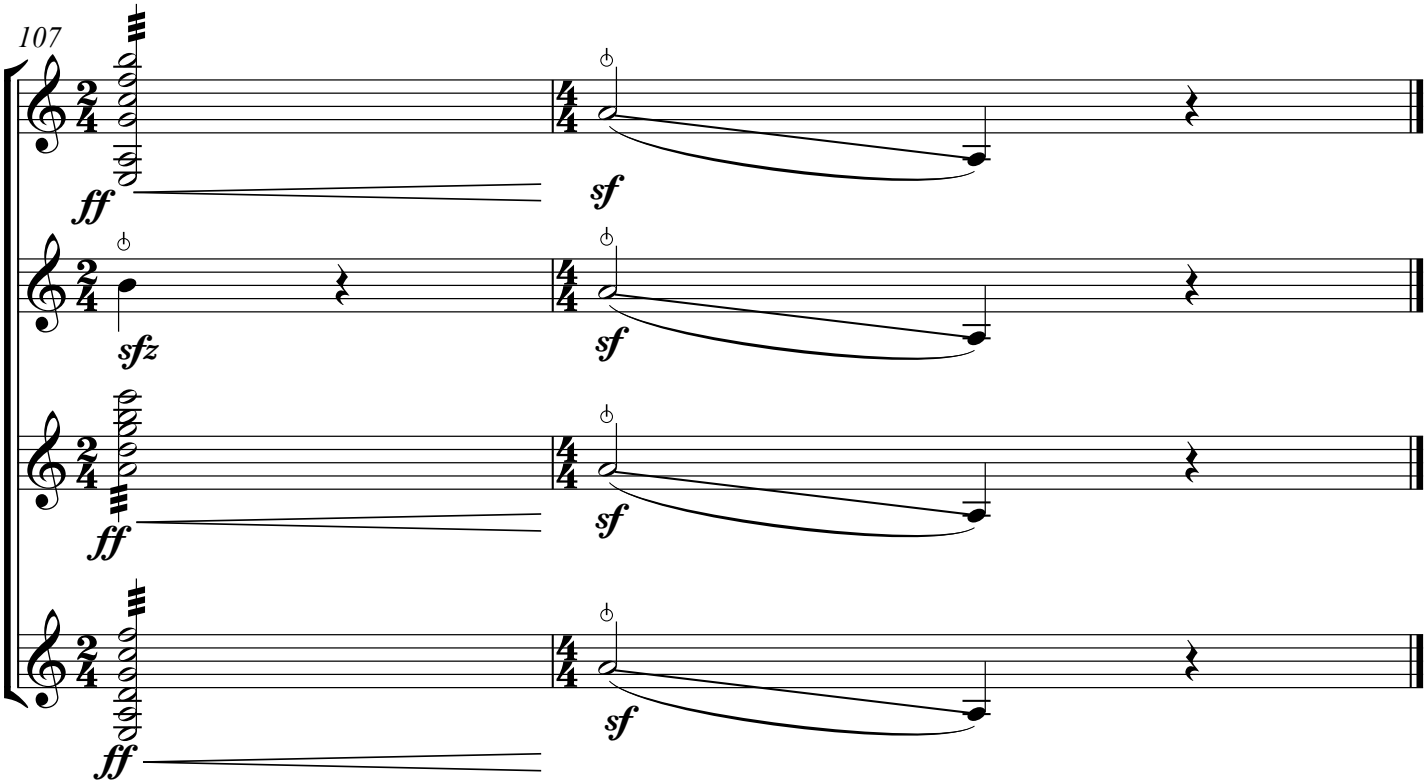

92
J
ff
mf
ff
ord.
ff
7
mf
ord.
ff
mp


95
balance with speaker
f
gliss.
sf
spoken
f
but the col-ored hor-ses said "neigh"
12
7
5


98
slap pitch
L.H.
R.H.
mf
f
slap string
L.H.
R.H.
f
and gal-loped a-long on their way.
101
mf
sf
gliss.
sf
gliss.
3
sf
mf
sf
gliss.
sf
gliss.
sf
3
gliss.
3
3
sf


103
gliss.
strum as it comes
gliss.
strum as it comes


106
strum as it comes


107
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