W. Jay Sydeman

Duo No. 1

for Viola & Cello

(c. 1982)

Arts Aeternum

The four movements for viola and cello are more examples of my love for the weaving of lines offered by the duo form. (I have written over fifty duos, but avoid the appellation of "the duo guy.") Close counterpoint and sharing of thematic materials define these works... more of a musical than technical challenge.

To the details: Movement one is canonic in a somewhat Bergian language. Movement two is a quasi-dance, lyric and expressive. Movement three is dark and even more heartfelt, while movement four is a more motoristic canon with heavy energy.

– W. Jay Sydeman, February-March 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:
I. Rubato – circa 1:15
II. Moderato, quasi-dance – circa 3:00
III. Adagio espressivo – circa 1:30
IV. Quasi-pesante – circa 1:00

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Edition by Gloria Justen and Hannah Addario-Berry, and engraved by Rick Shinozaki (Albany, CA), in consultation & collaboration with the composer.

Duo No. 1
for Viola and Cello
I.

W. Jay Sydeman
(c. 1982)
Edited by Gloria Justen and Hannah Addario-Berry

Rubato ♩ = c. 56

Vla

VC

mp *molto espr.*

mp *molto espr.*

4

A

7

10

14

pp

pp

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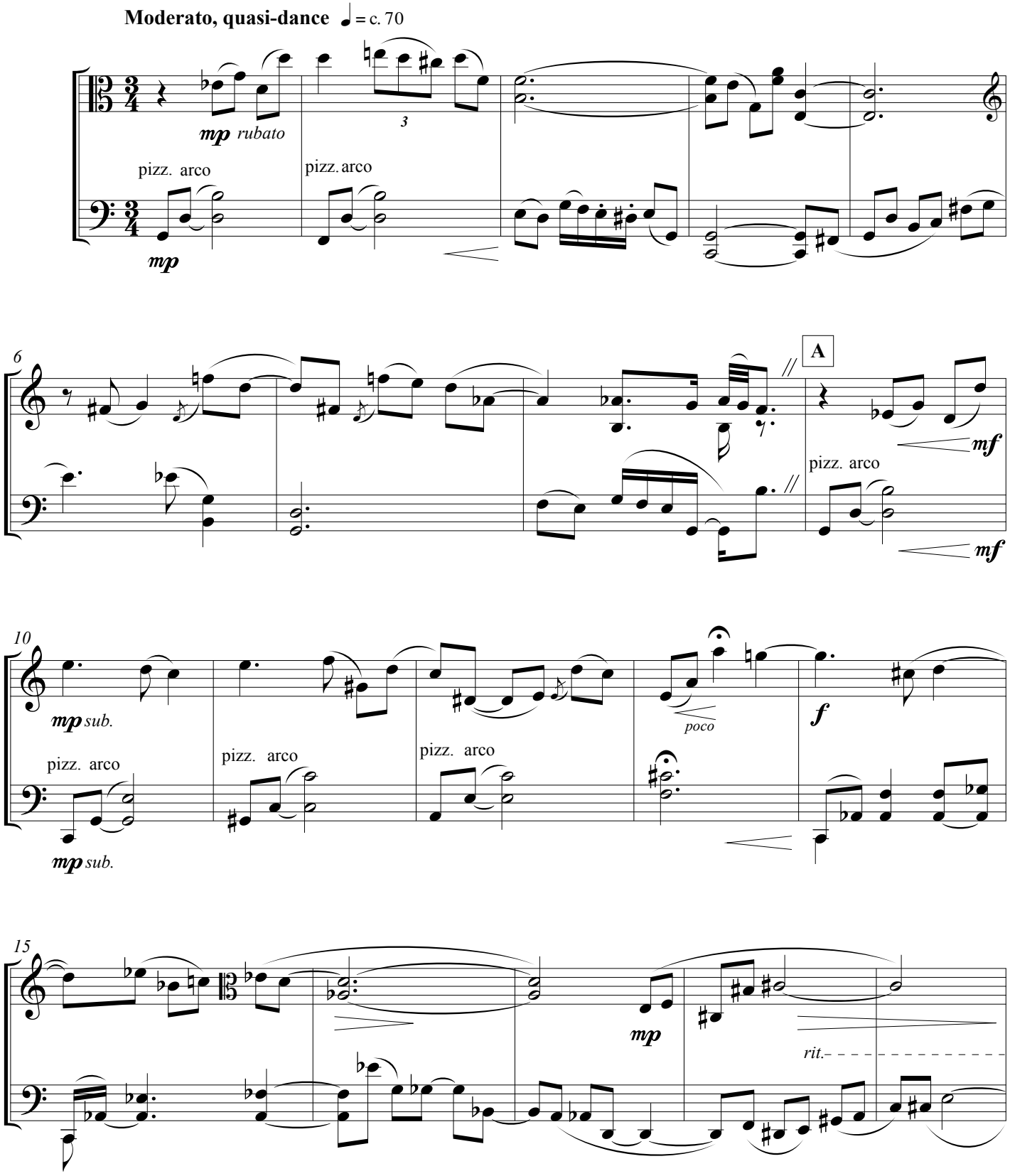
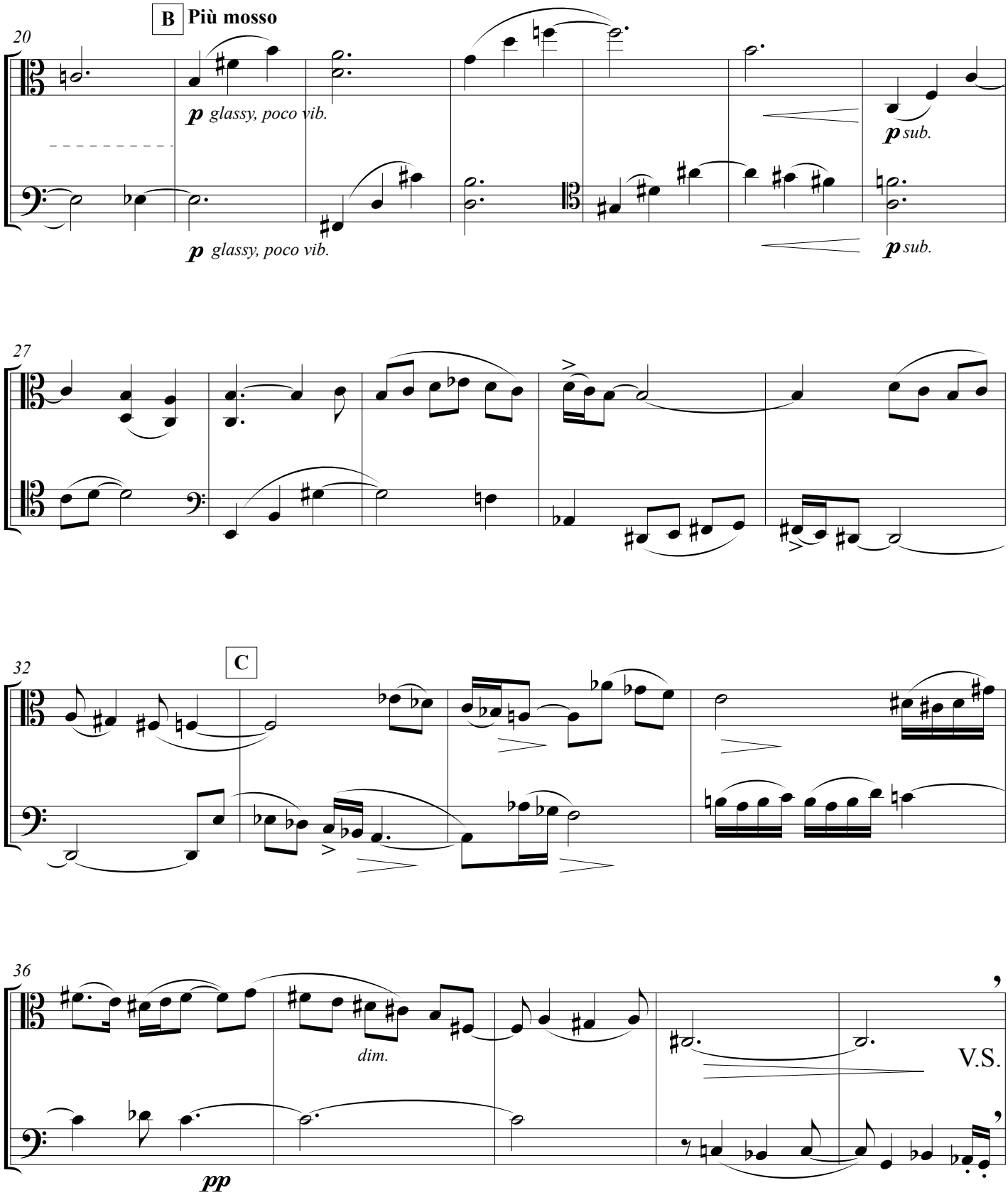
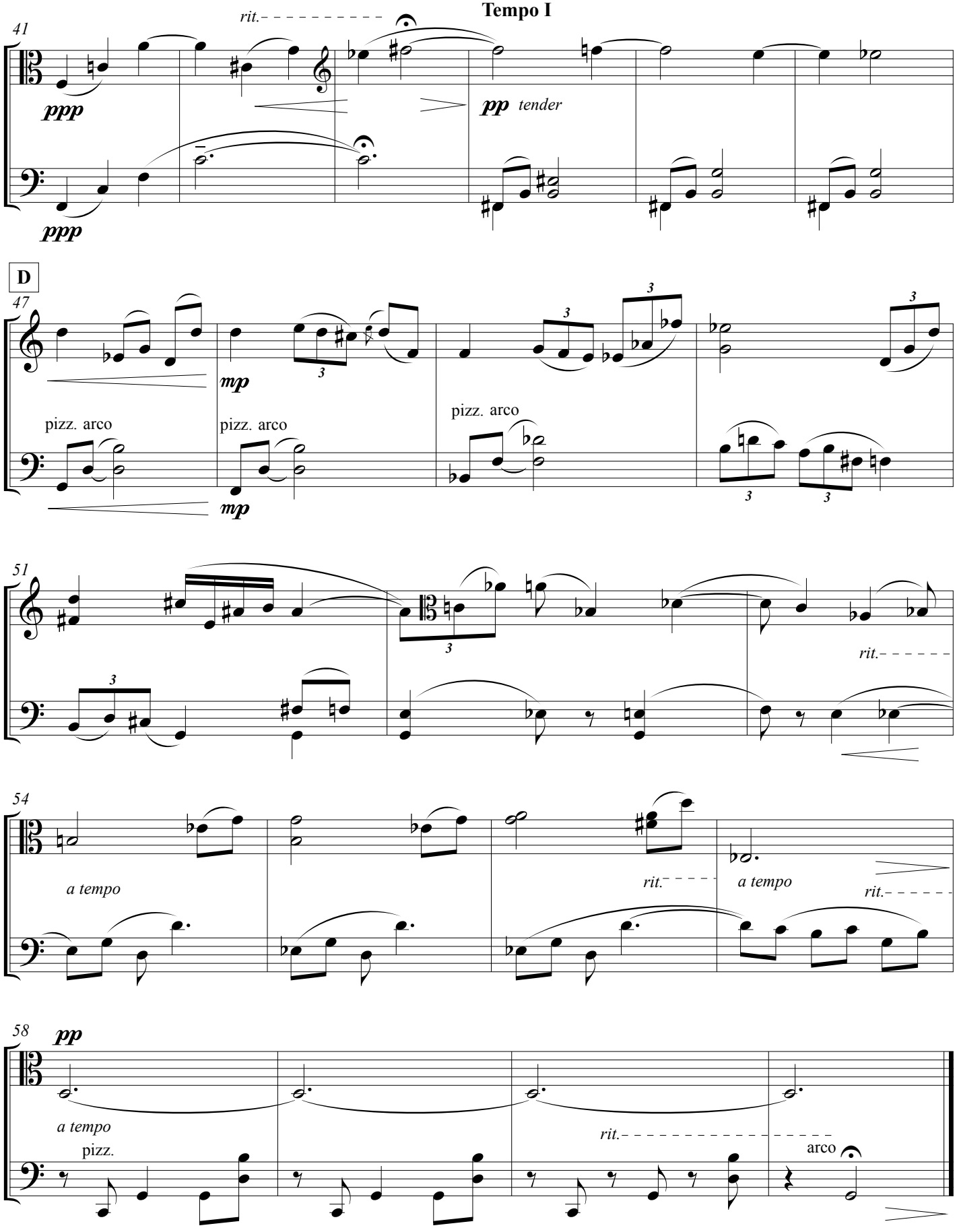
II.


Moderato, quasi-dance ♩ = c. 70
mp rubato
pizz. arco
pizz. arco
mp
6
A
mf
pizz. arco
mf
10
mp sub.
pizz. arco
pizz. arco
pizz. arco
poco
f
mp sub.
15
mp
rit.


B Più mosso
20
p glassy, poco vib.
p sub.
p glassy, poco vib.
p sub.
27
32
C
36
dim.
V.S.
pp


41
rit.
Tempo I
ppp
ppp
pp tender
D
47
mp
pizz. arco
pizz. arco
mp
pizz. arco
51
rit.
54
a tempo
rit.
a tempo
rit.
58
pp
a tempo
pizz.
rit.
arco

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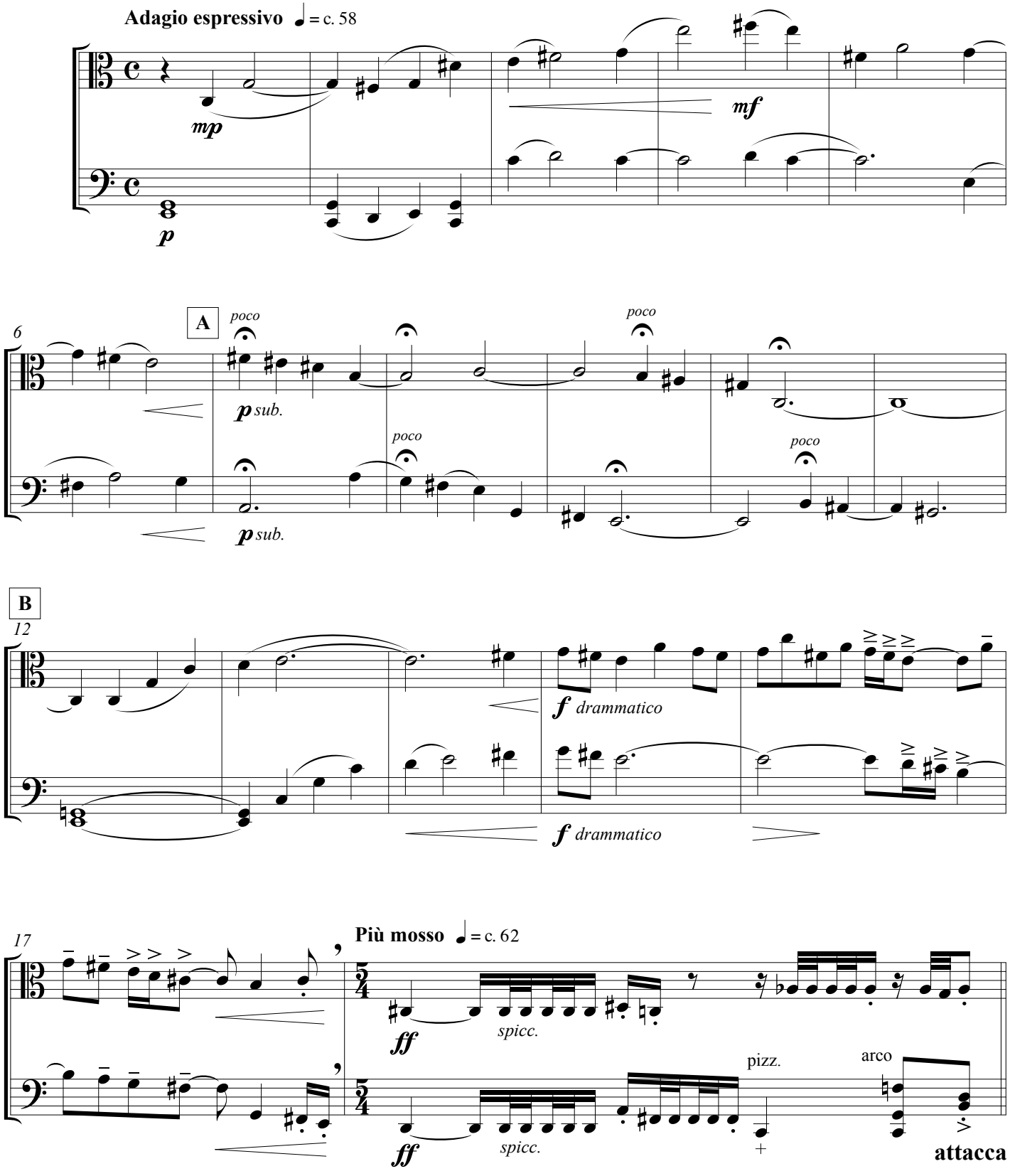
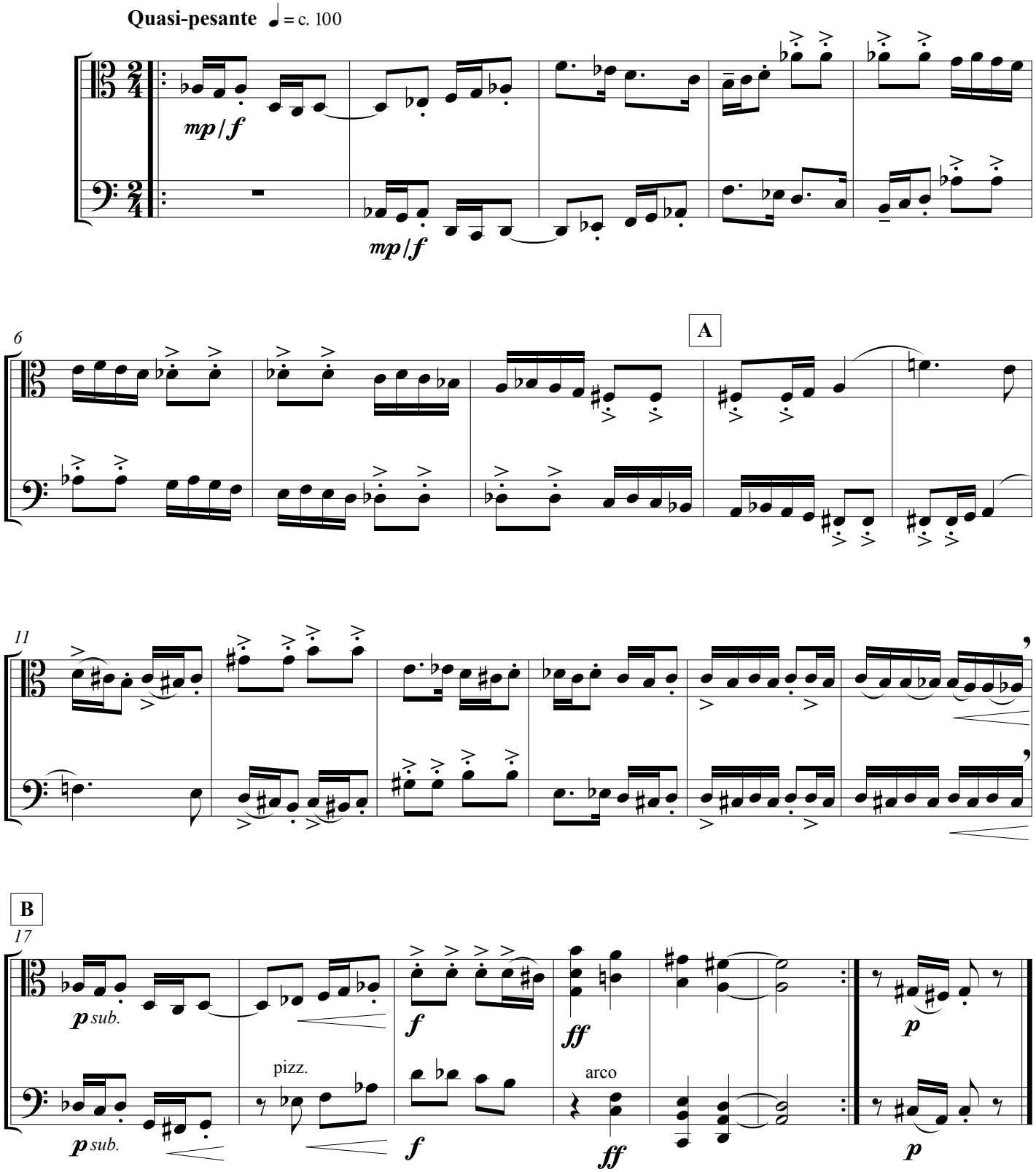
III.


Adagio espressivo ♩ = c. 58
mp
mf
p
6
A
poco
p sub.
poco
poco
poco
p sub.
B
12
f drammatico
f drammatico
17
Più mosso ♩ = c. 62
ff
spicc.
pizz.
arco
ff
spicc.
attacca

IV.


Quasi-pesante ♩ = c. 100
mp / f
mp / f
6
A
11
B
17
p sub.
pizz.
f
ff
arco
p
p sub.
f
ff
p