Full Score

Тени
Shadows

for eight violoncelli

Peter Dyson
2002

It is not possible to have shadows without a source of light: the brighter the sunshine, the stronger the shadow: the low angle of the strong clear summer evening sunlight produces a forest landscape of many moods and shades of colour. The forest pictures of Kuinji describe precisely what excites me; the strong sun illuminates the silver birches and pines, creating scenes of incredible beauty and subtlety. Light has been brought into the hidden places and we see clearly all the shadows.

Among the pines at Levashovo where the victims of repression were secretly buried, individual and collective memorials have appeared. This hidden place, on the outskirts of the village that lies to the North of St Petersburg has revealed its secrets. The tall green fence that protects its privacy has a small open gate and a dramatic piece of sculpture stands opposite across the road to draw the attention of the passing traveller. Photographs and name plaques have been pinned to the trees alongside the path that runs deep into this site. Individual Orthodox crosses have been erected amongst the trees planted to disguise this place.

The first step in the process of healing is to remember. 46,771 people were executed locally during The Repression. They lie buried at Levashovo and also on the artillery range at Toksovo where a new burial site was discovered in August 2002. There are Russians, Belorussians, Ukrainians, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Poles, and Germans; 40,485 executed without trial with a single bullet in the back of the head. The small museum that has been made by the gate at Levashovo contains examples of the official documentation: the accusations, the file dossiers, the bogus and revised death certificates. It provides the following figures: 1937 - 18,719 victims : 1938 - 20,769 victims: 1934 to 1954 - 716 victims. If the figures do not add up, it all just underlines our inability to cope with more than just a handful of individual tragedies: our inability to comprehend a machine capable of 50 to 55 killings every night in this city alone. To acknowledge these events is a brave step in any society. Easier to let sleeping dogs lie.

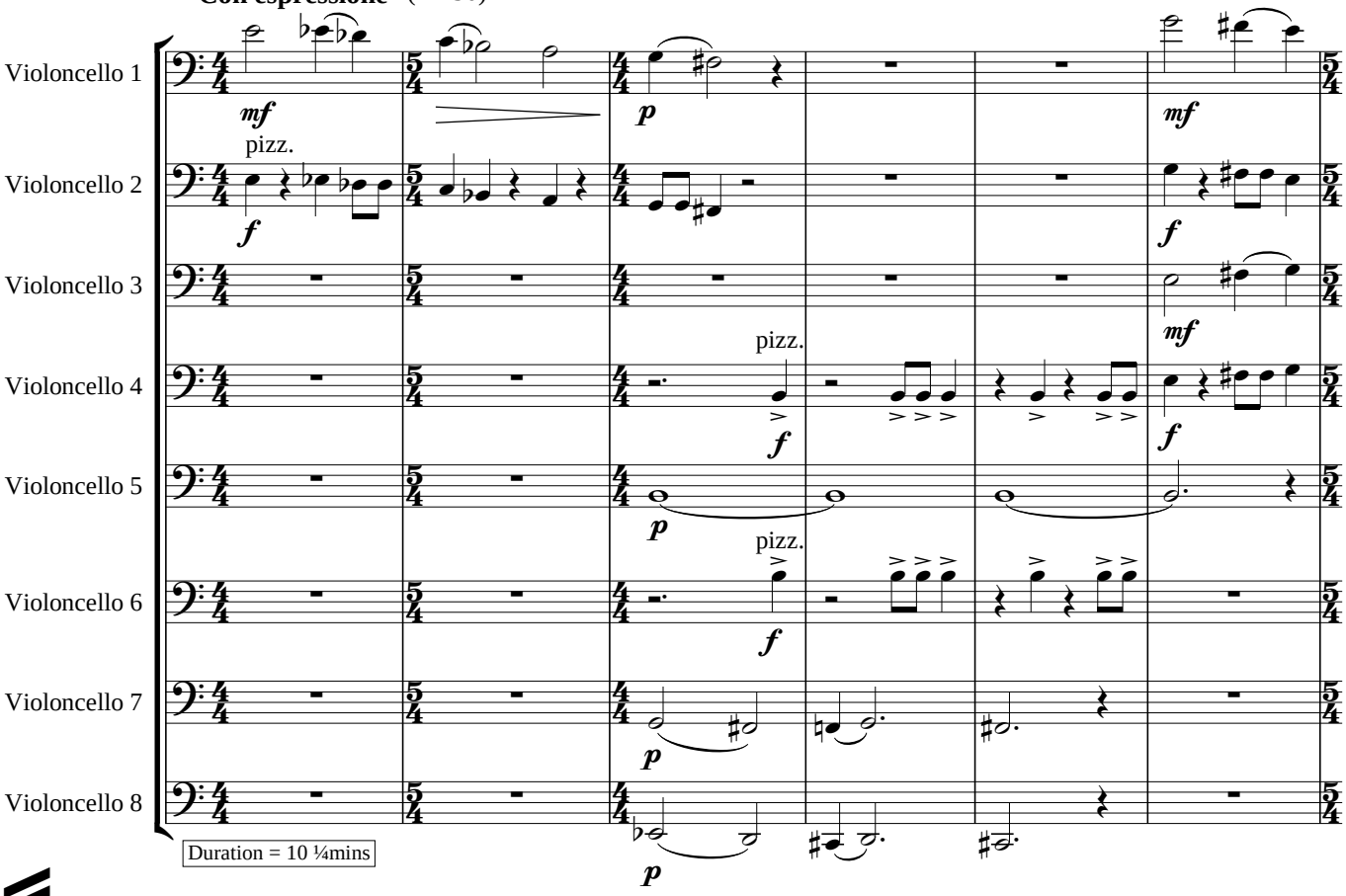
I have written a piece full of shadows. Patterns and phrases shadow themselves and reappear growing and developing as the light changes There are hints of half remembered tunes and motifs and the mood grows optimistic. The final bar contains a warning that the shadows continue to lurk. Shadows was written at the request of Natalia Timofeeva, cellist in the Murmansk State Chamber Orchestra, who asked for a piece for eight cellos, not knowing what the consequence would be.

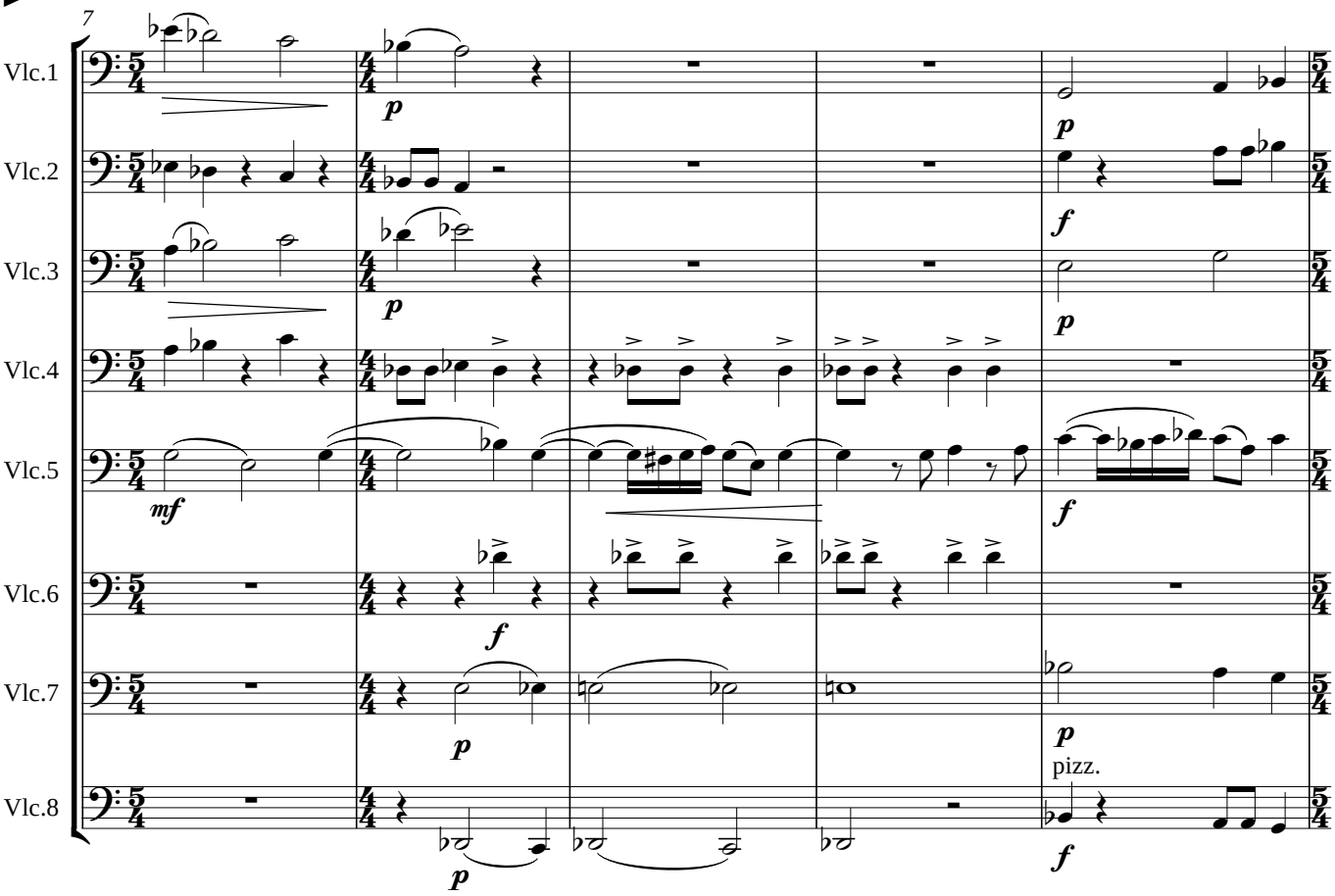
Peter Dyson

Тени
Shadows

Peter Dyson

Con espressione (♩ = 90)





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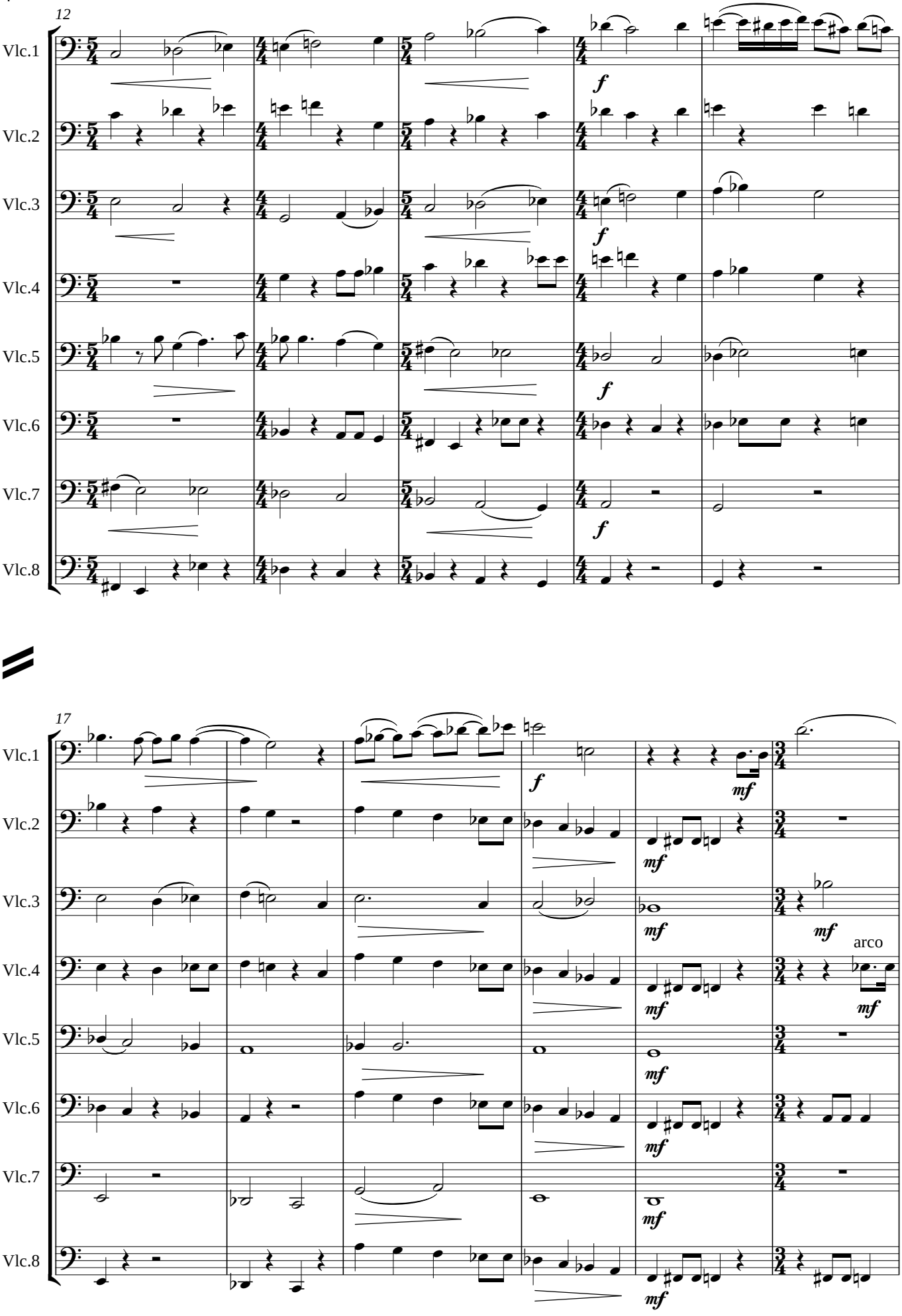
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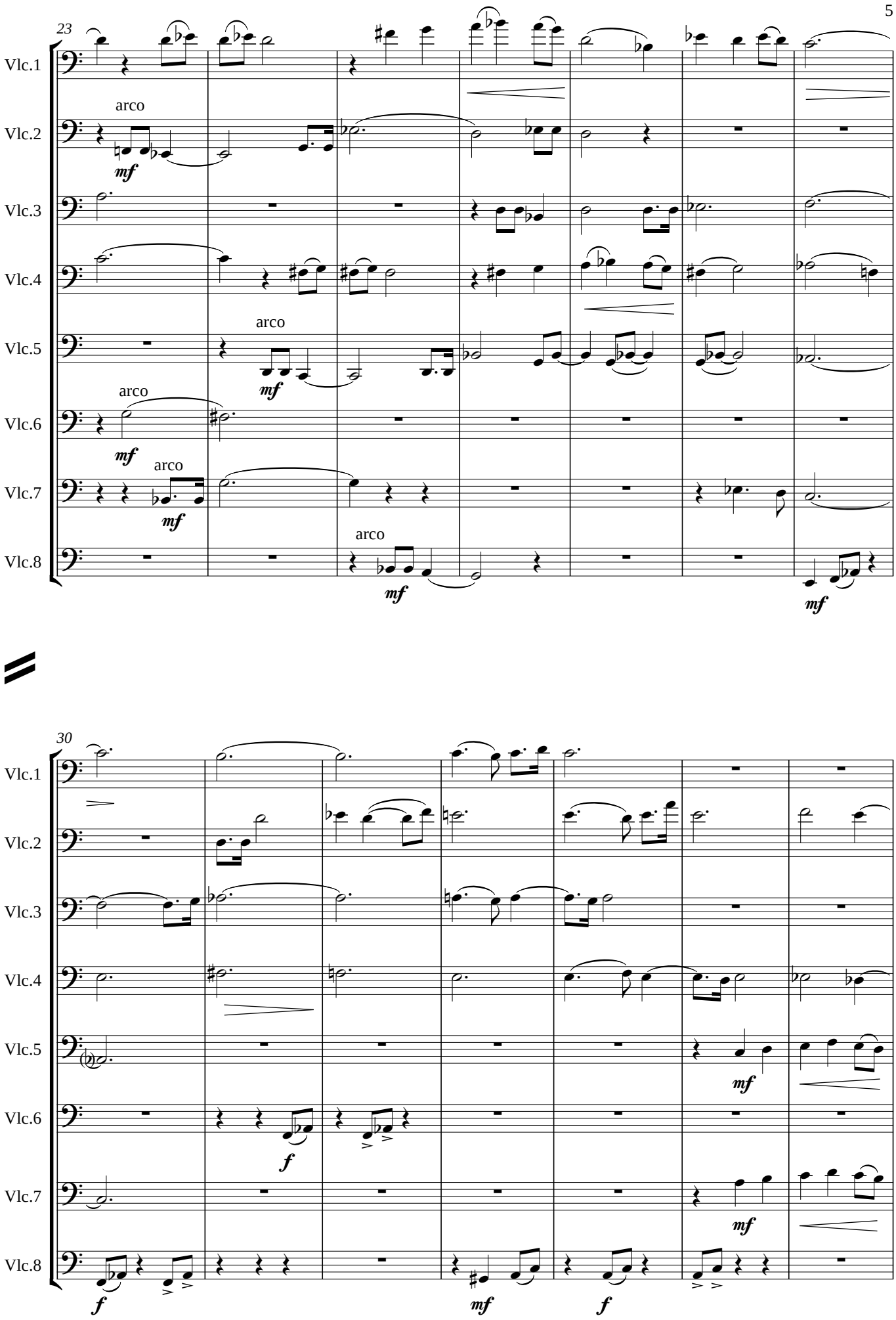
Vlc.8
f
17
mf
arco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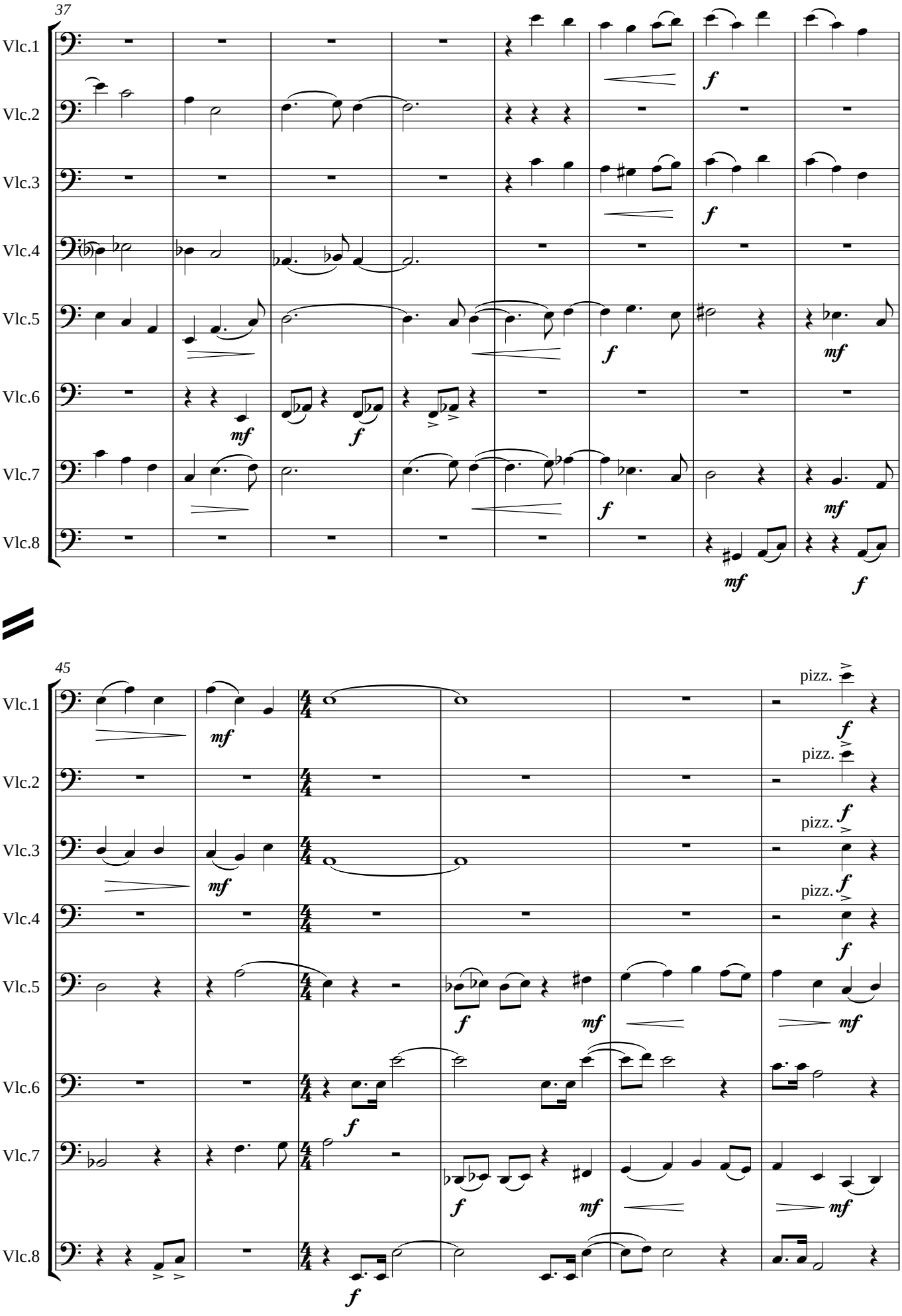
Vlc.8
arco
mf
30
f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Vlc.8
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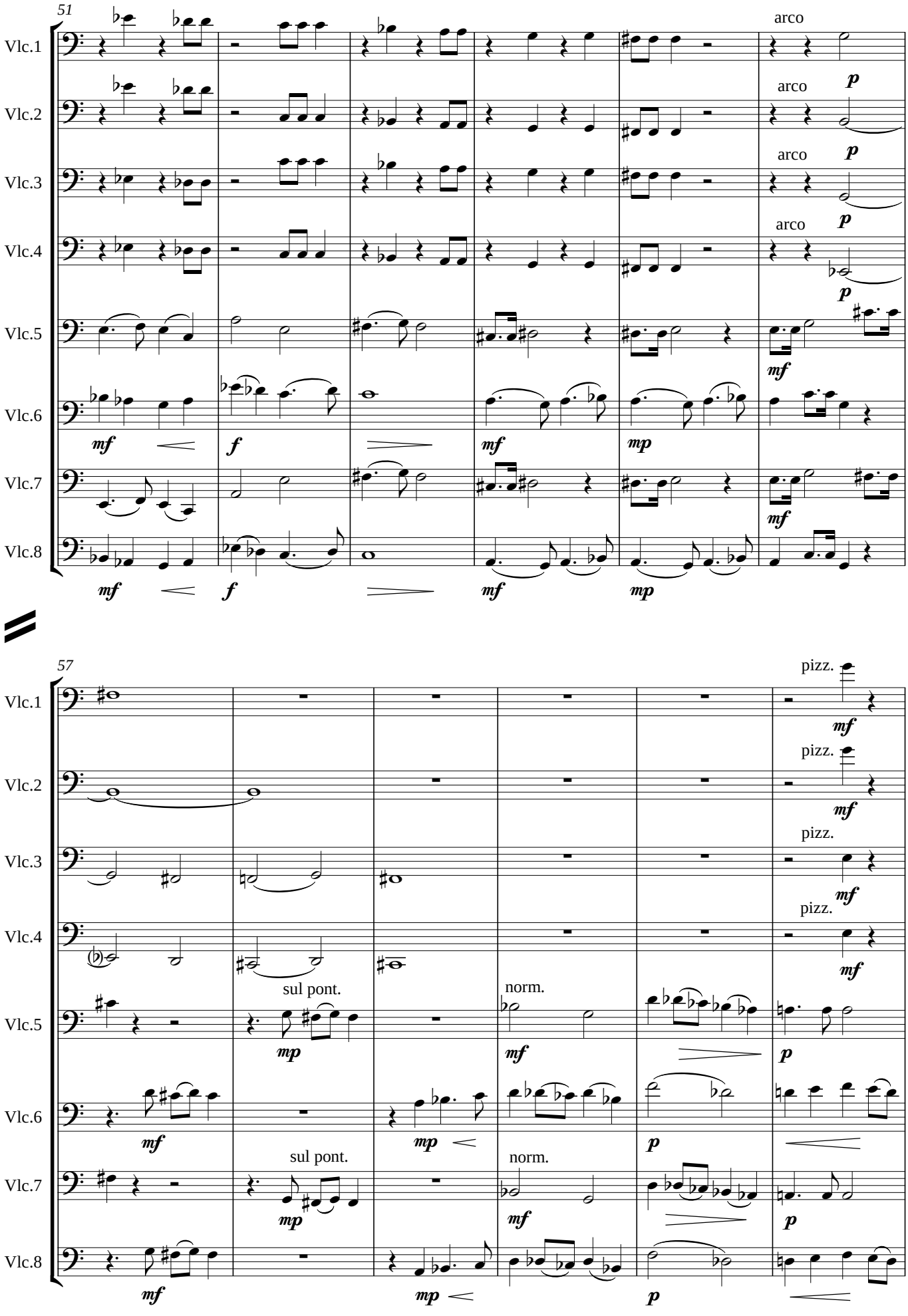
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arco
p
mf
f
mp
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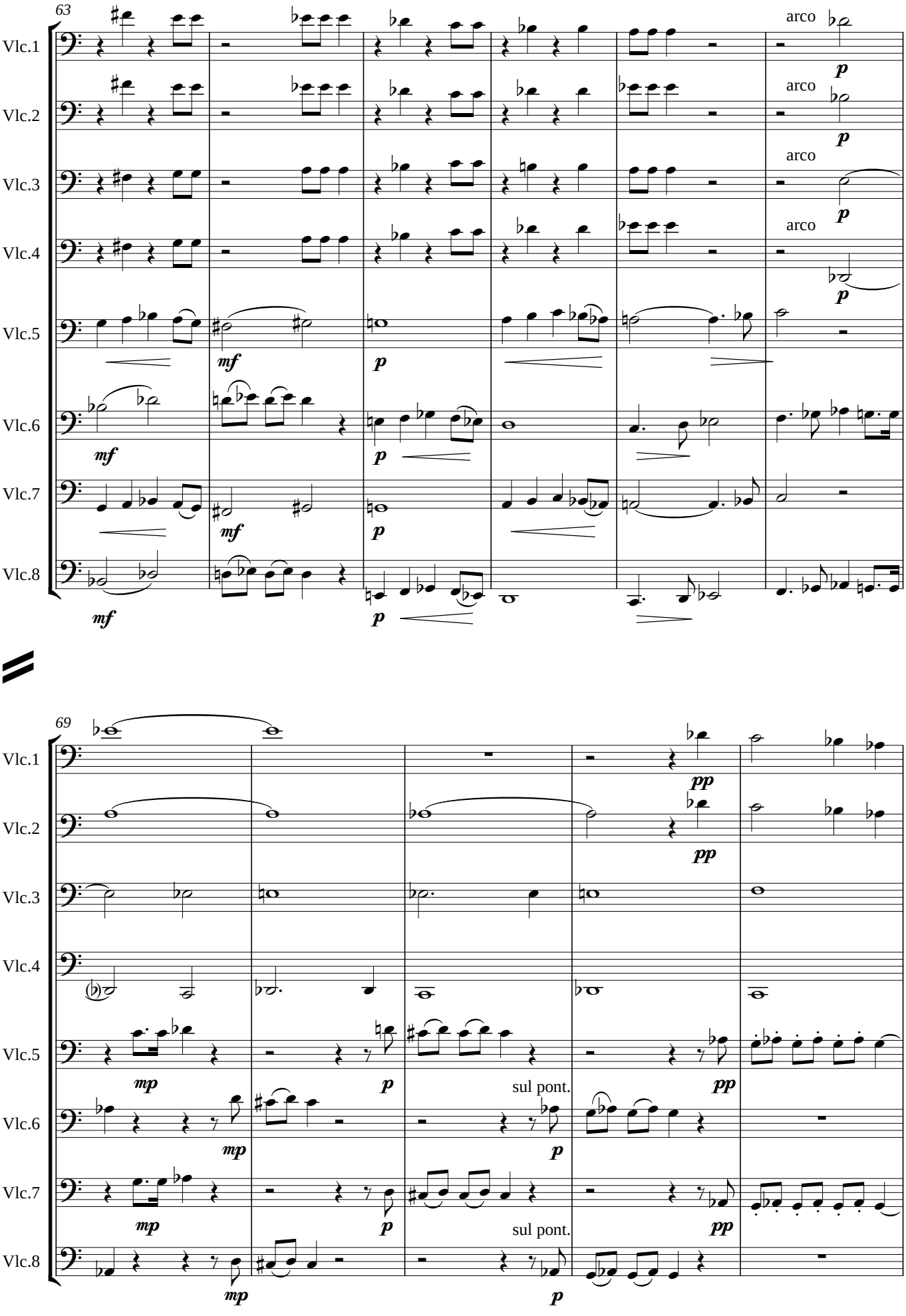
pizz.
sul pont.
norm.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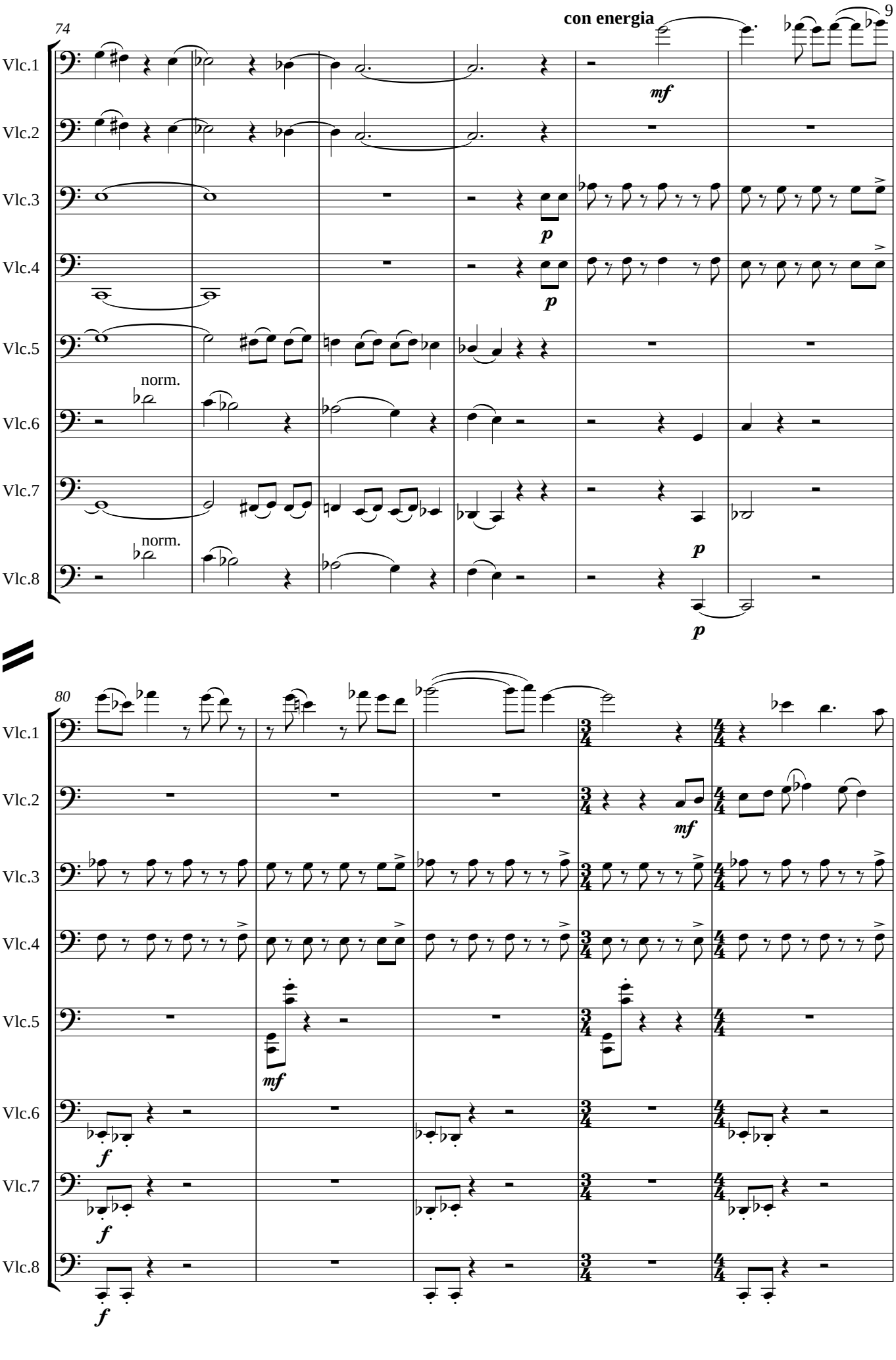
p
mf
69
pp
mp
sul pont.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con energia
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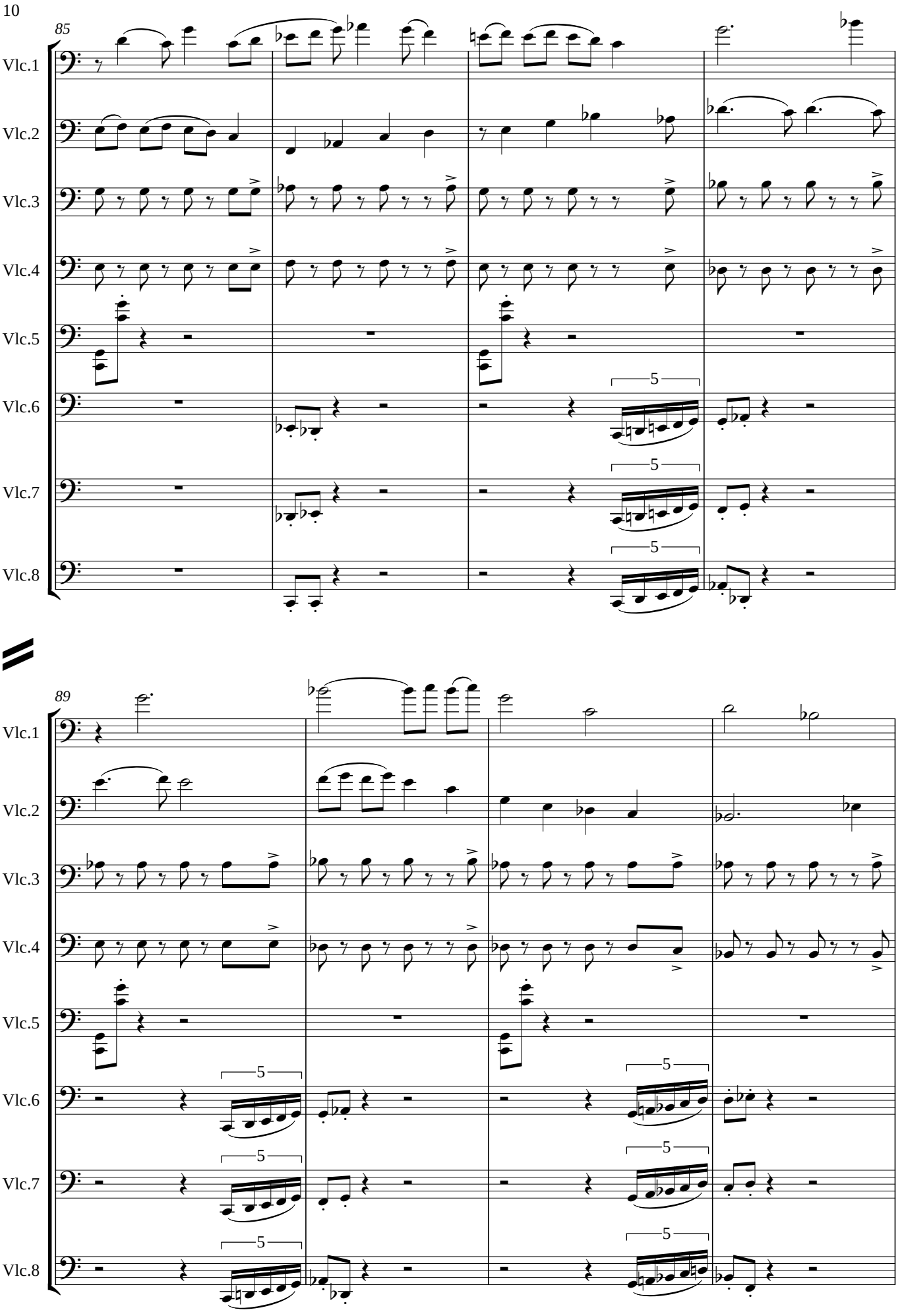
norm.
mf
p
80
f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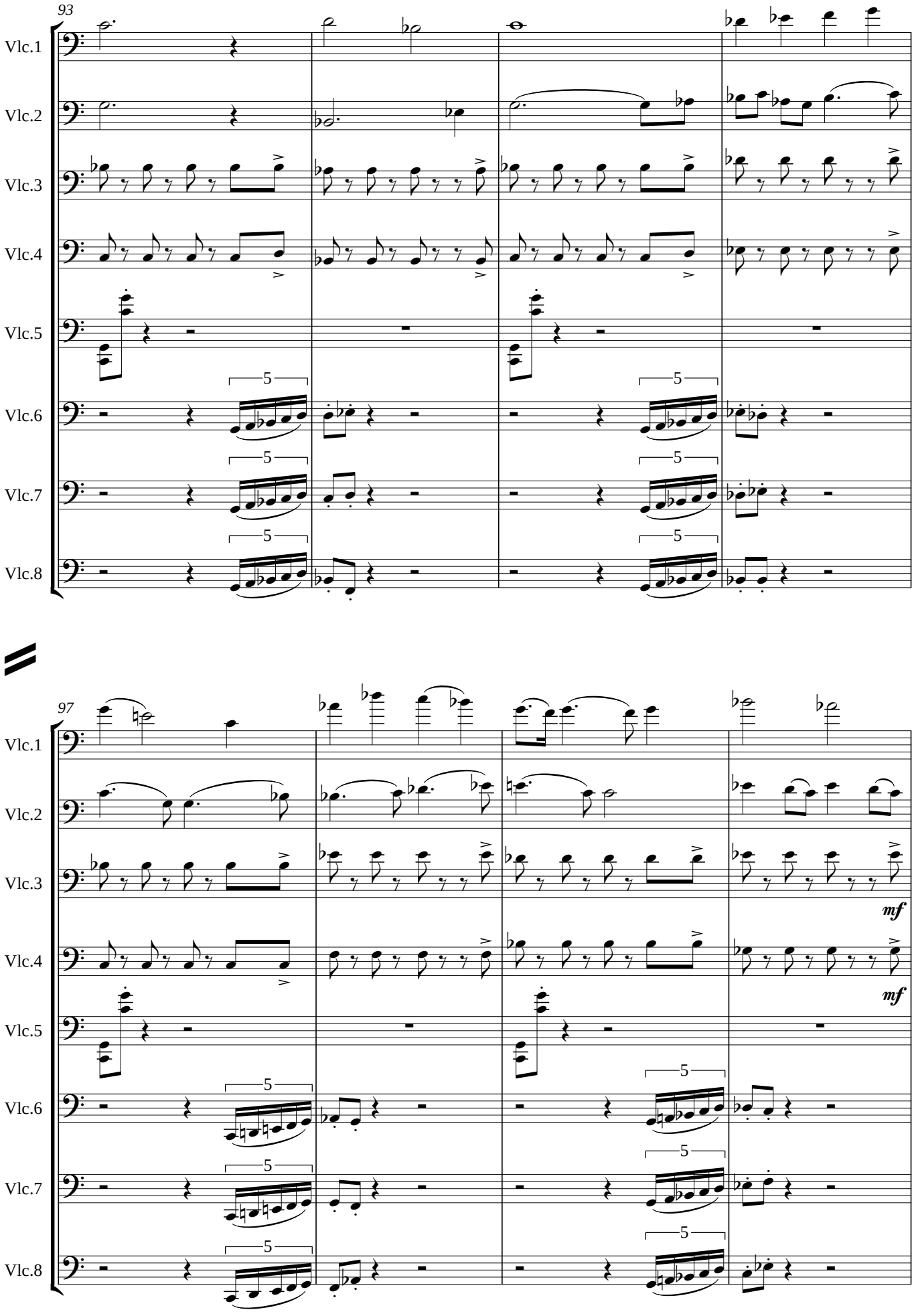
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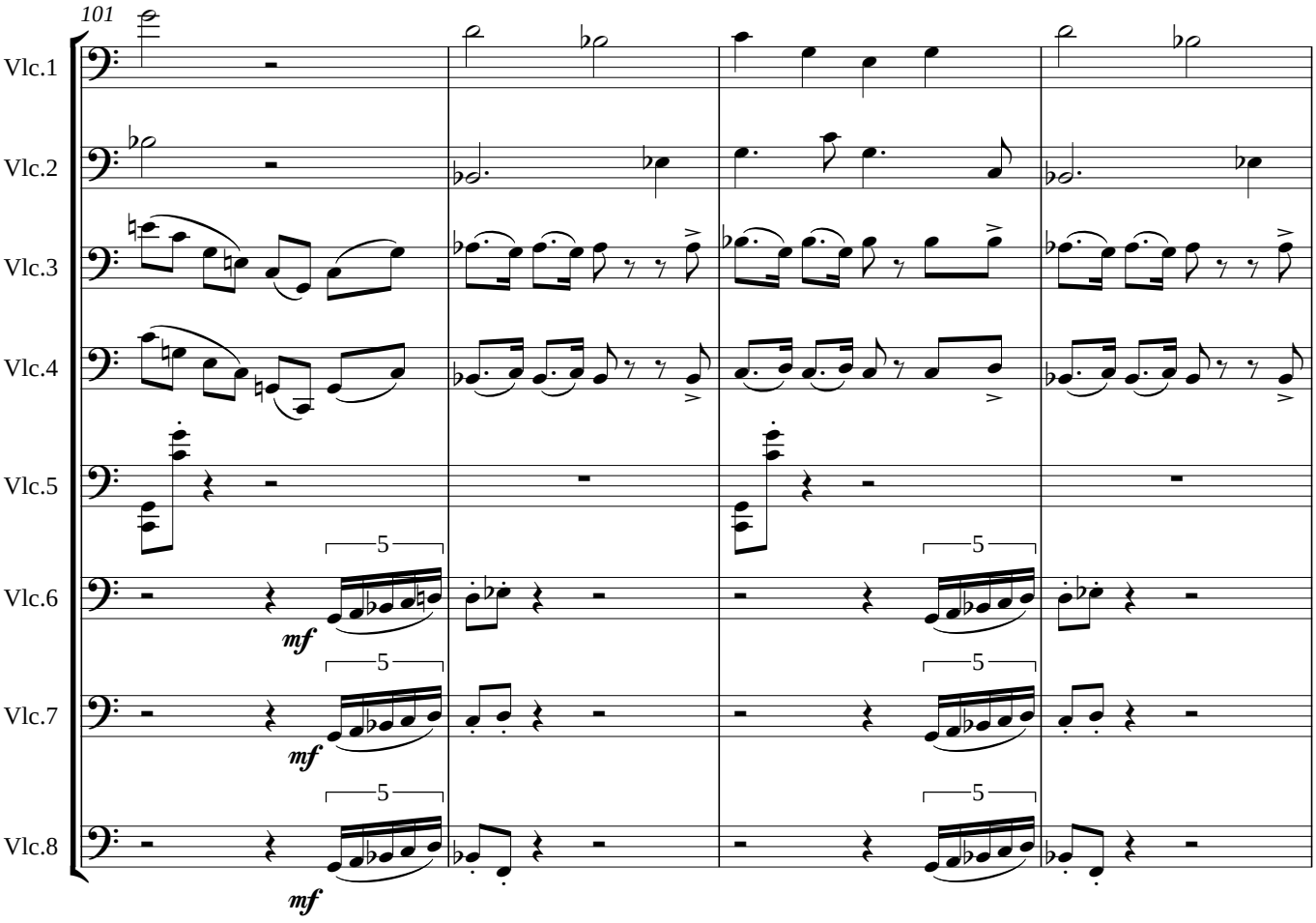
5
97
mf
mf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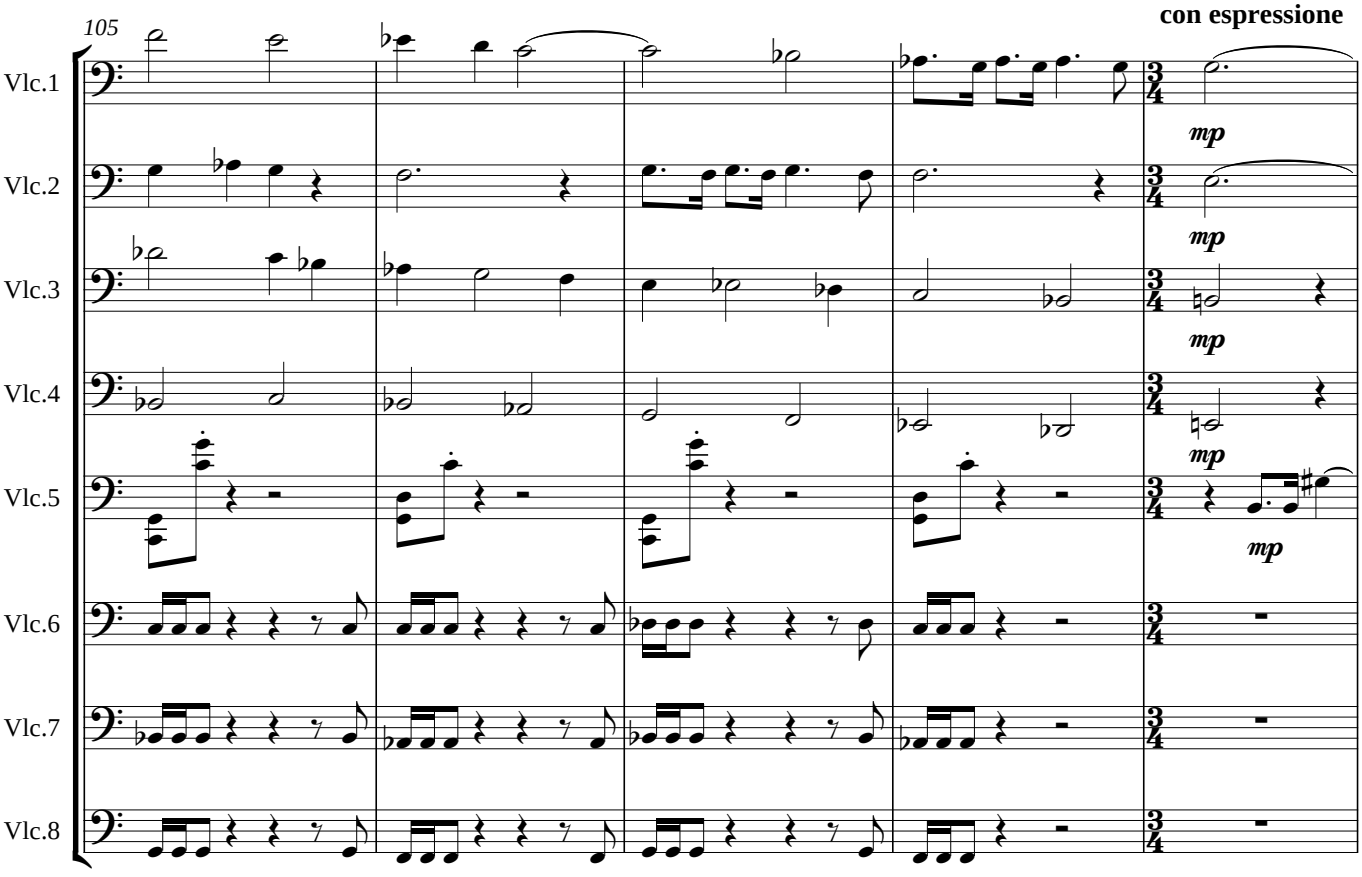
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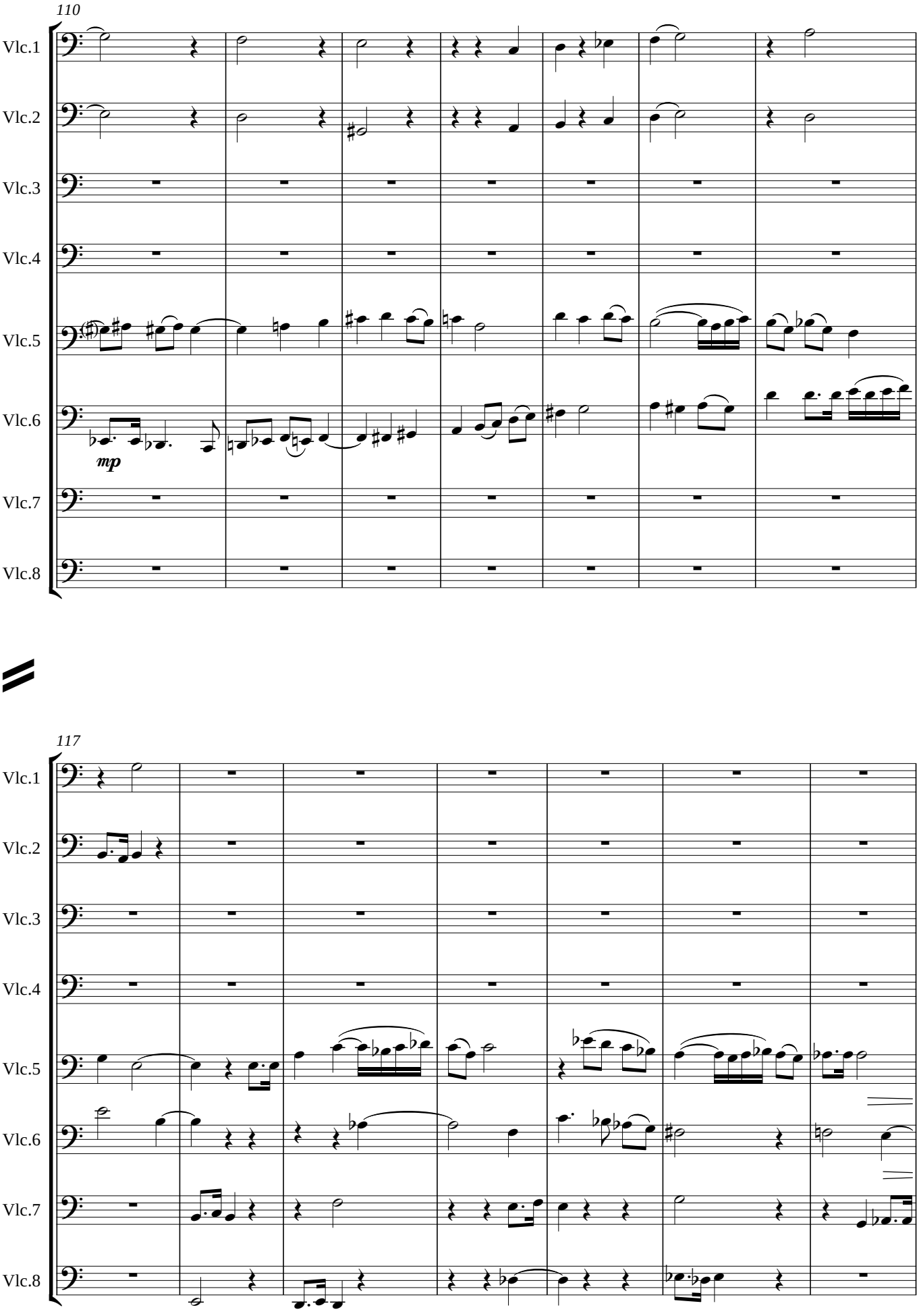
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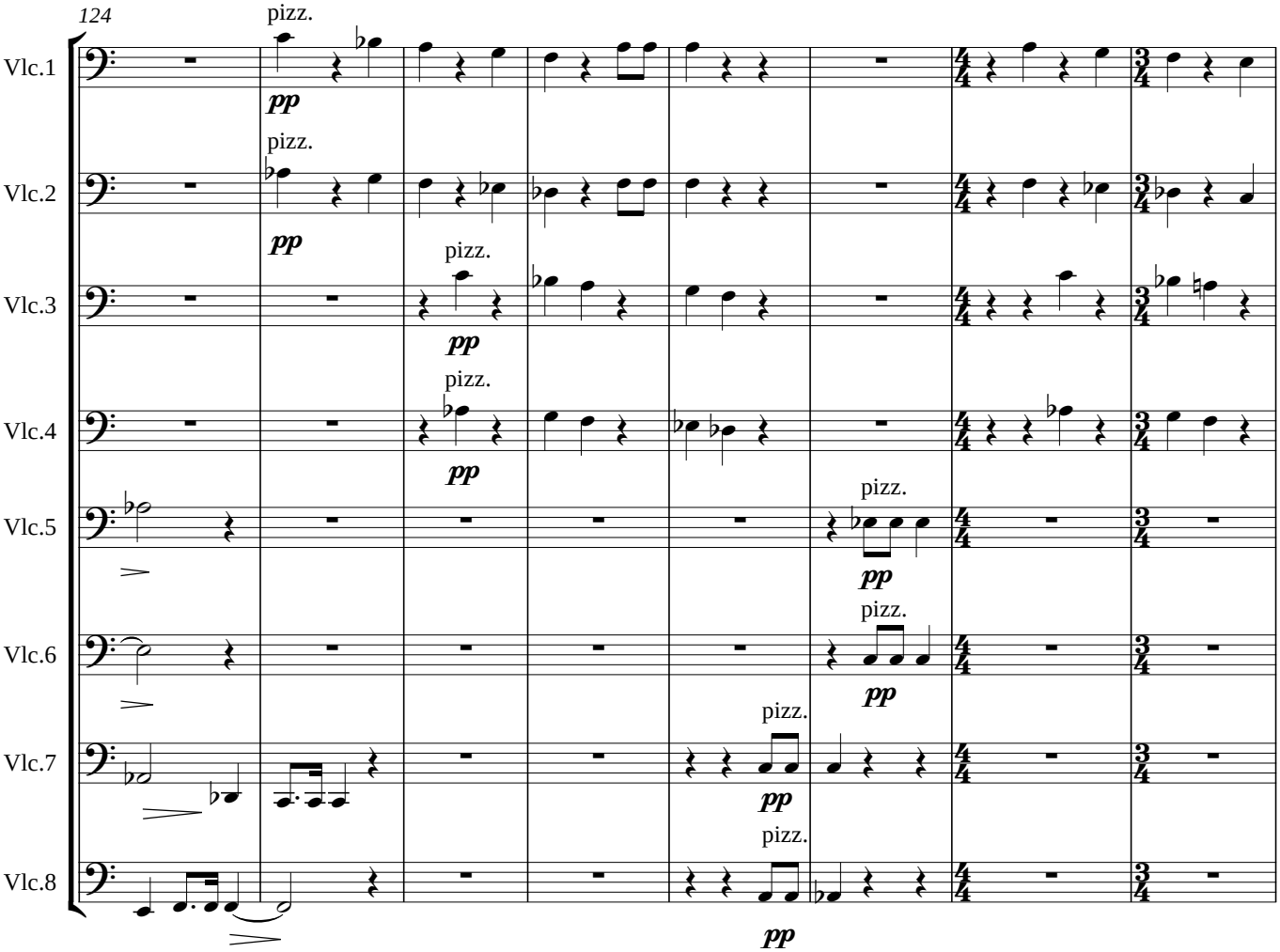
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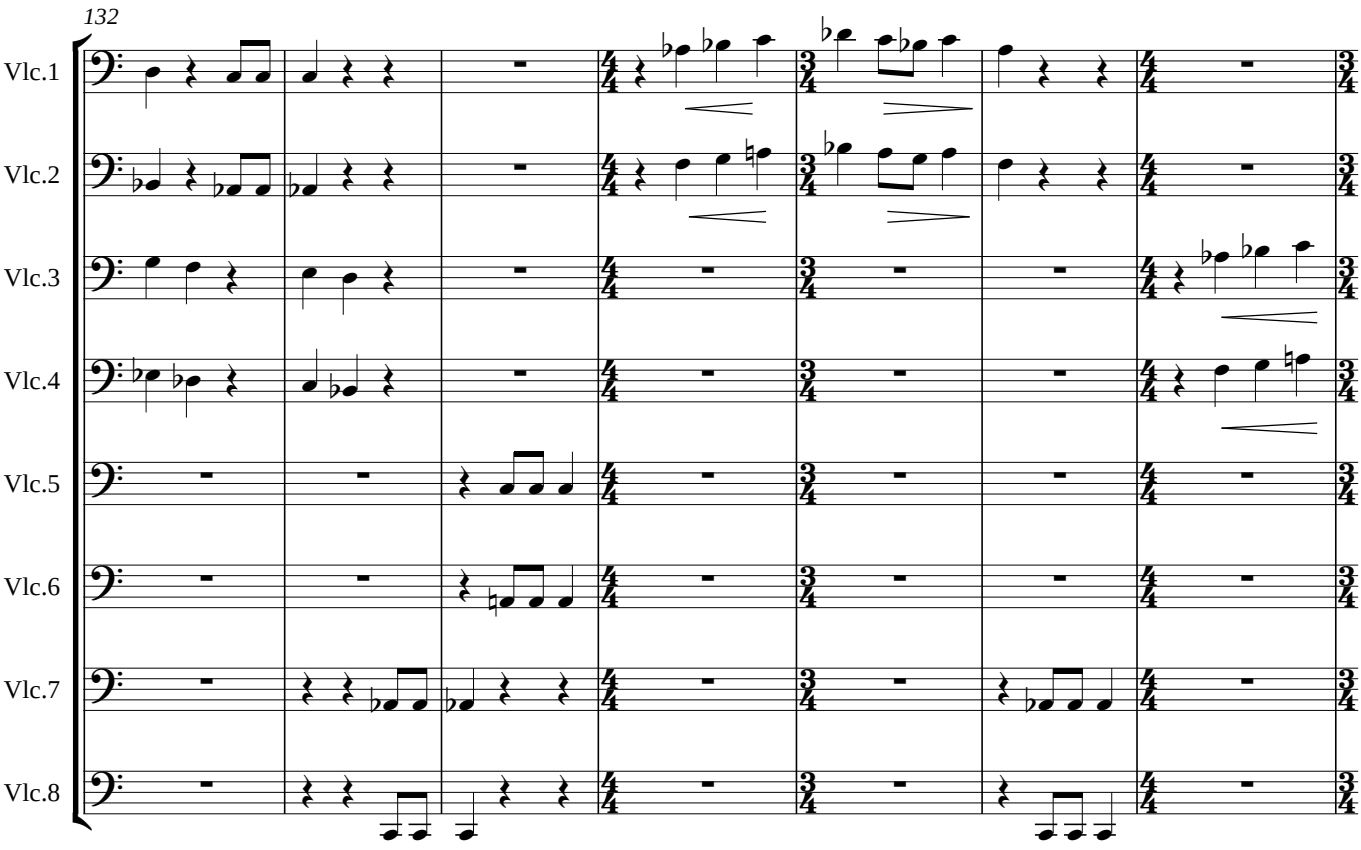
pizz.
pp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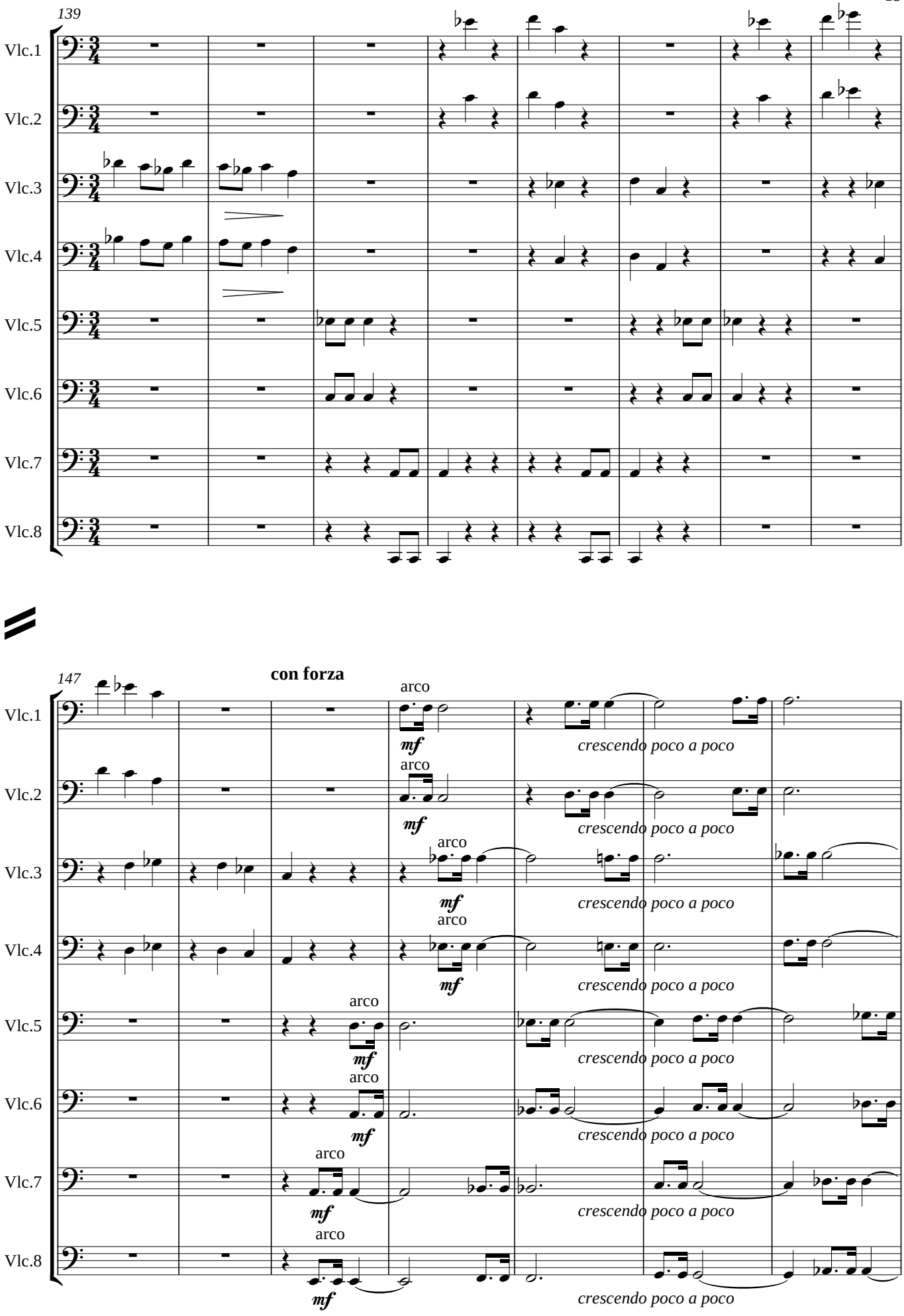
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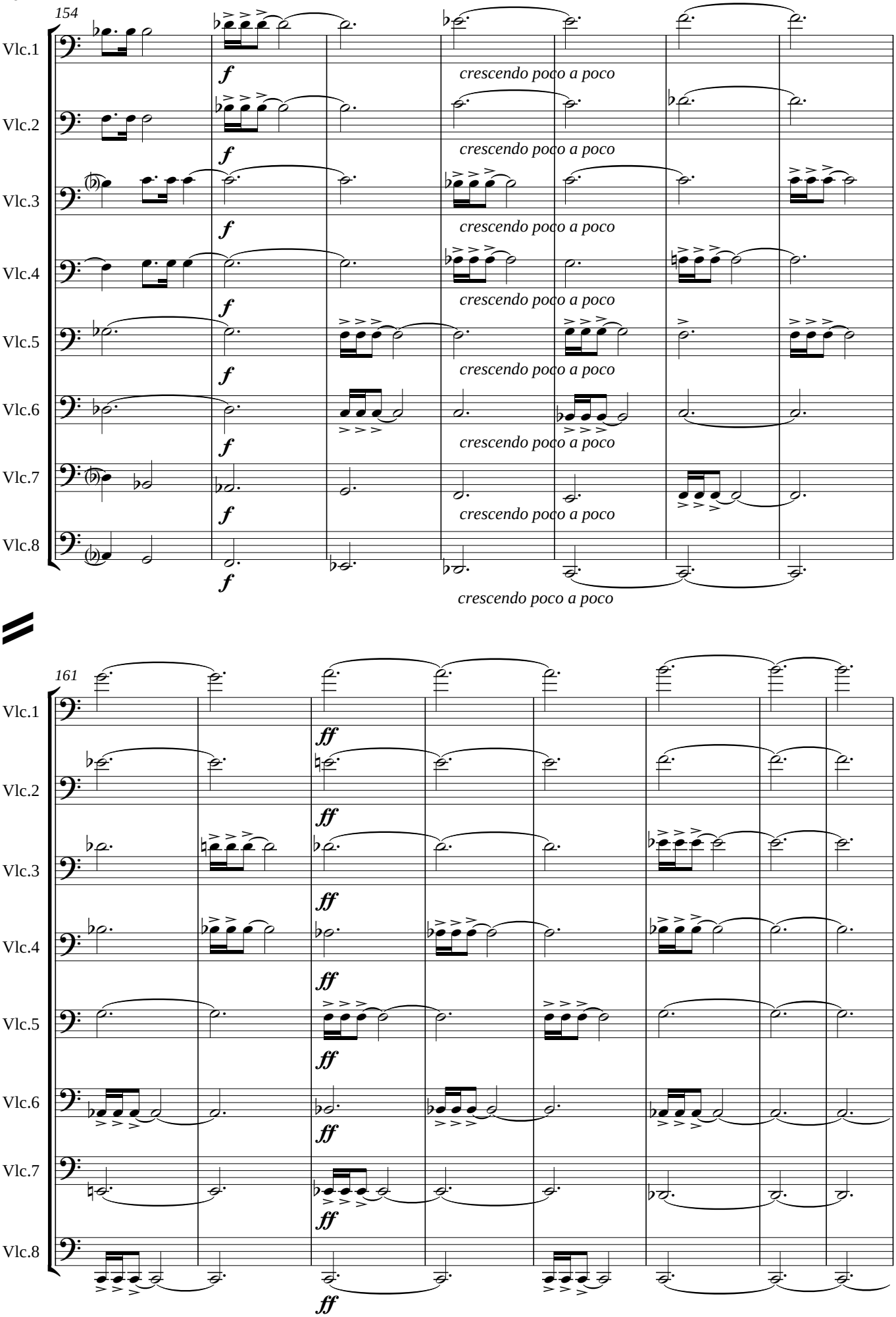
con forza
arco
mf
crescendo poco a poco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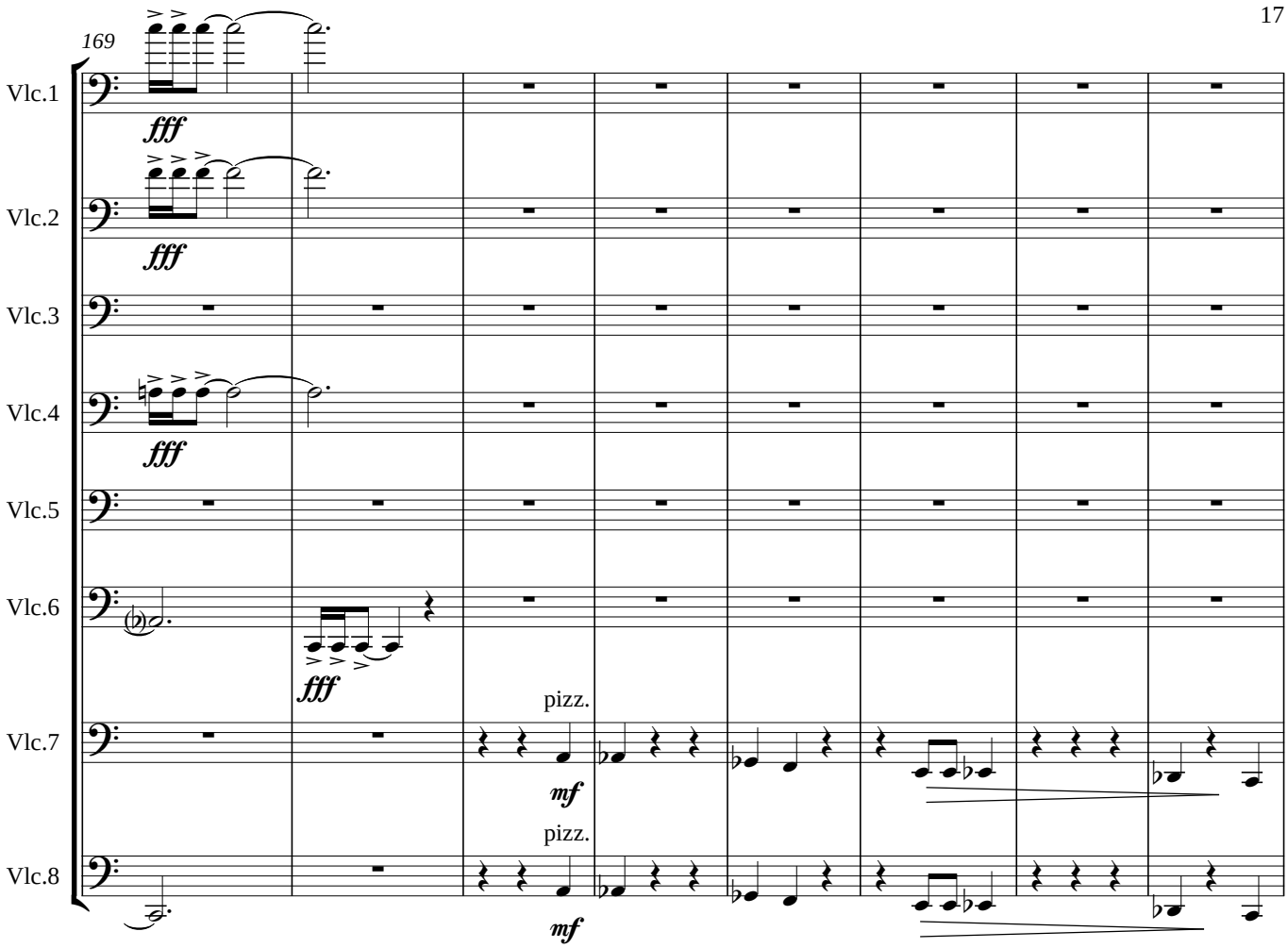
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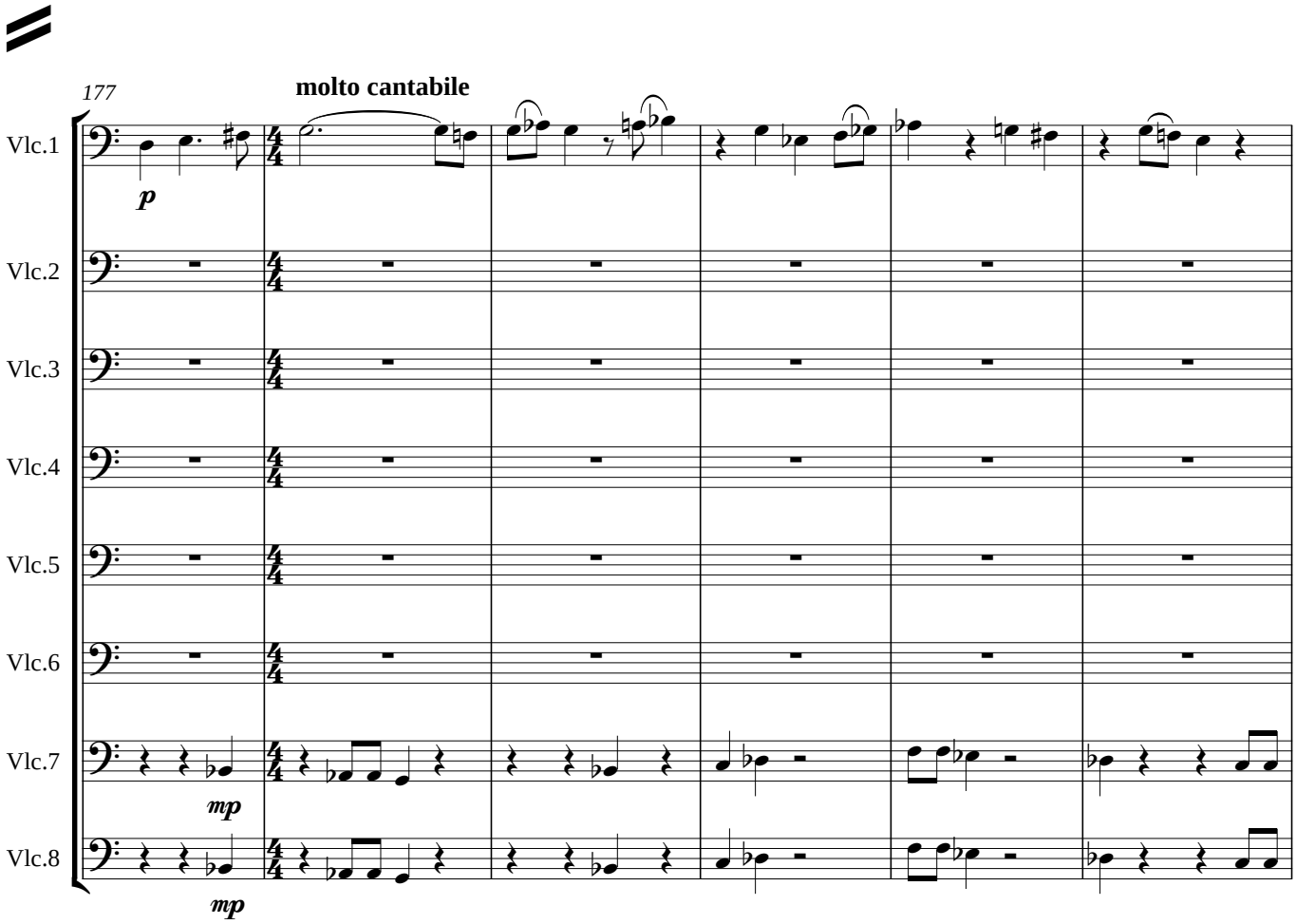
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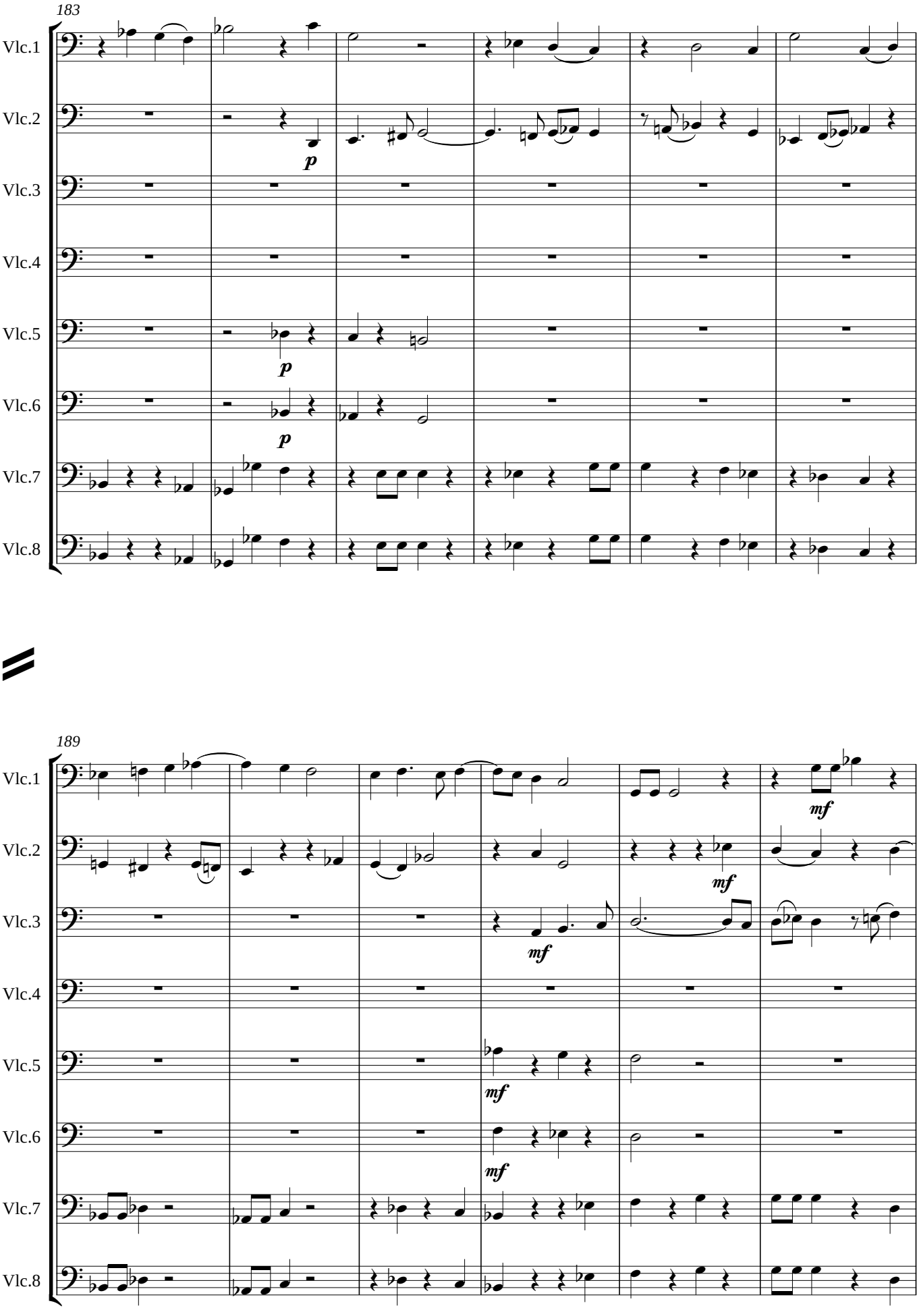
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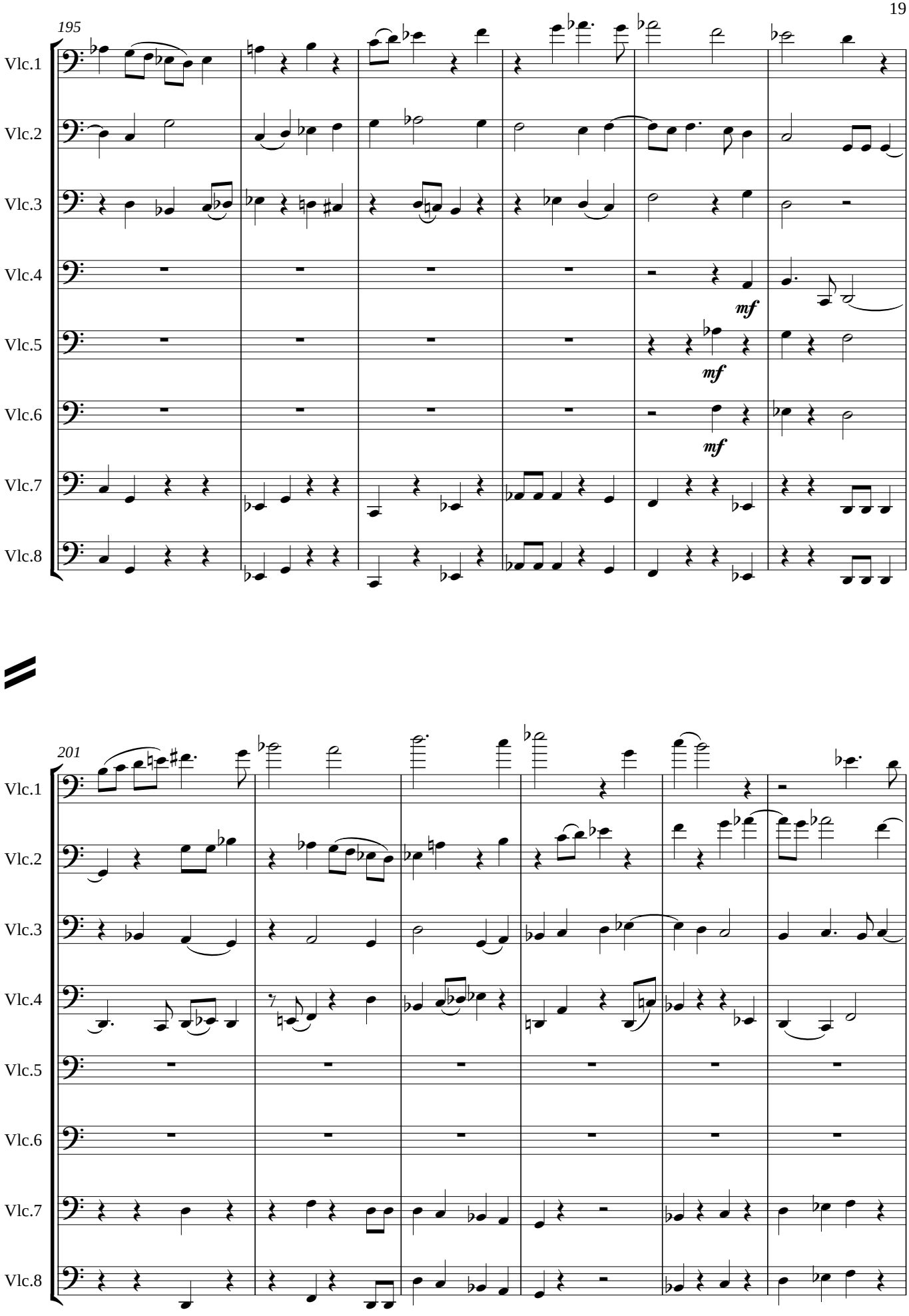
mf
mf
mf
mf
mf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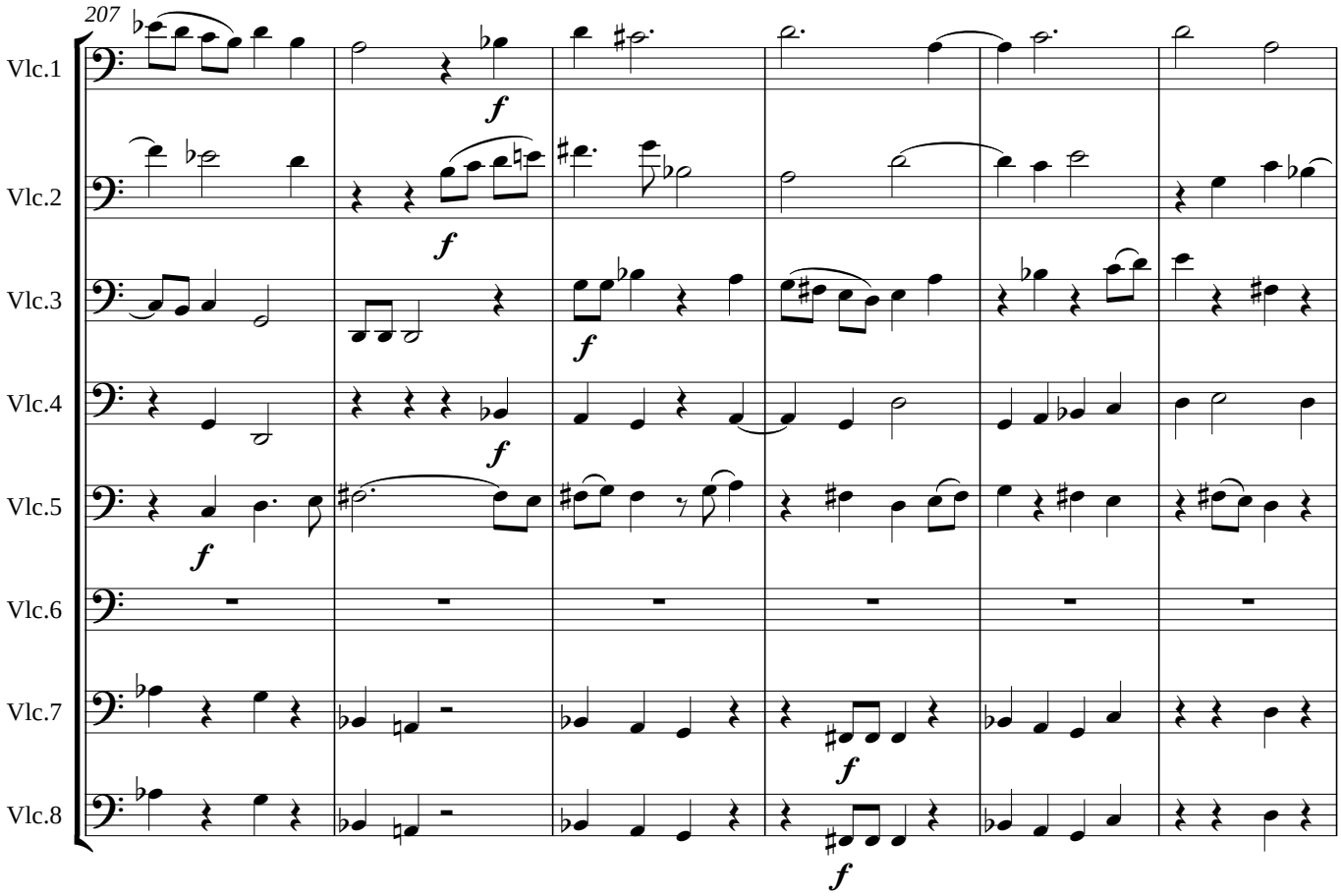
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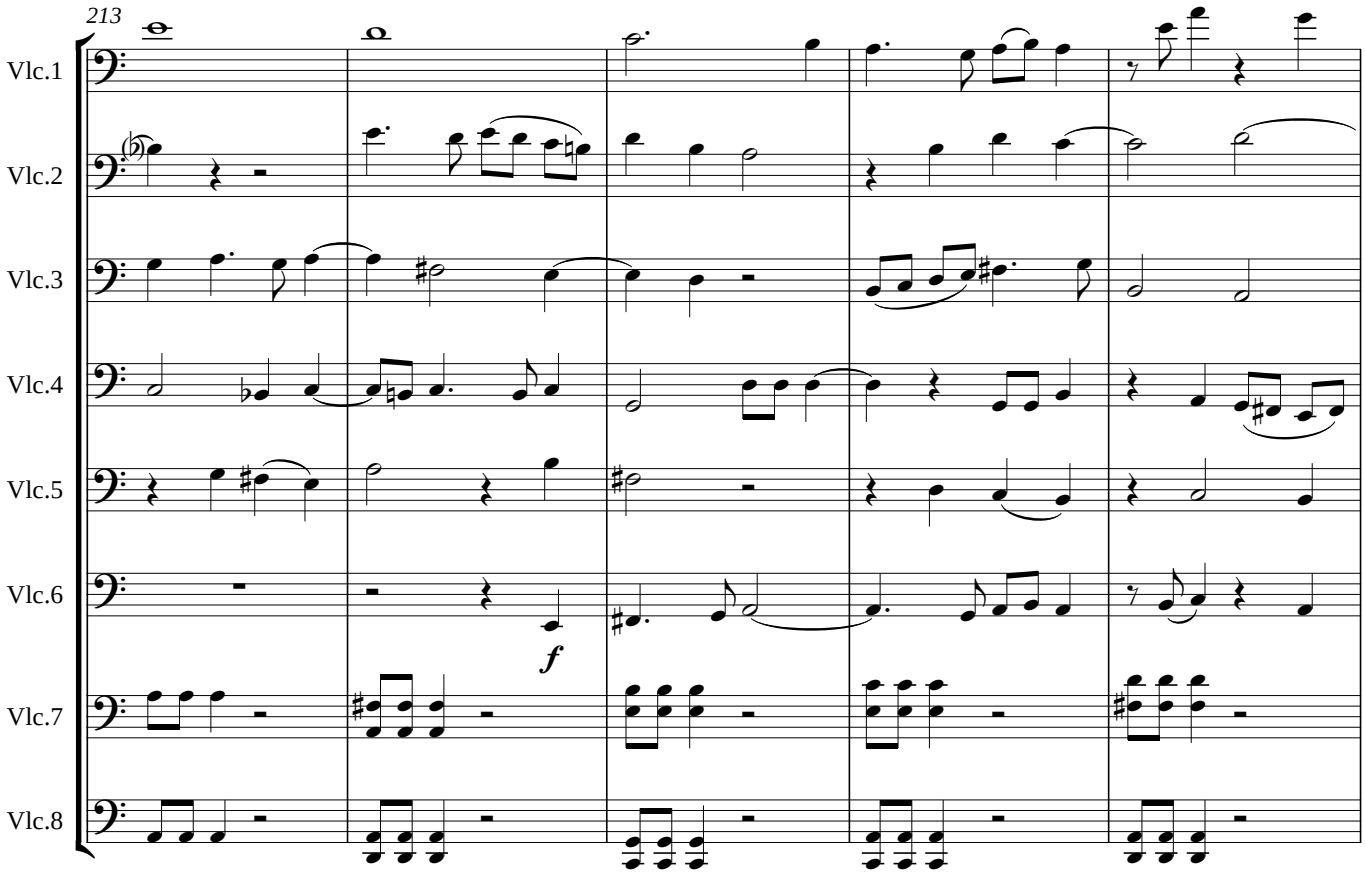
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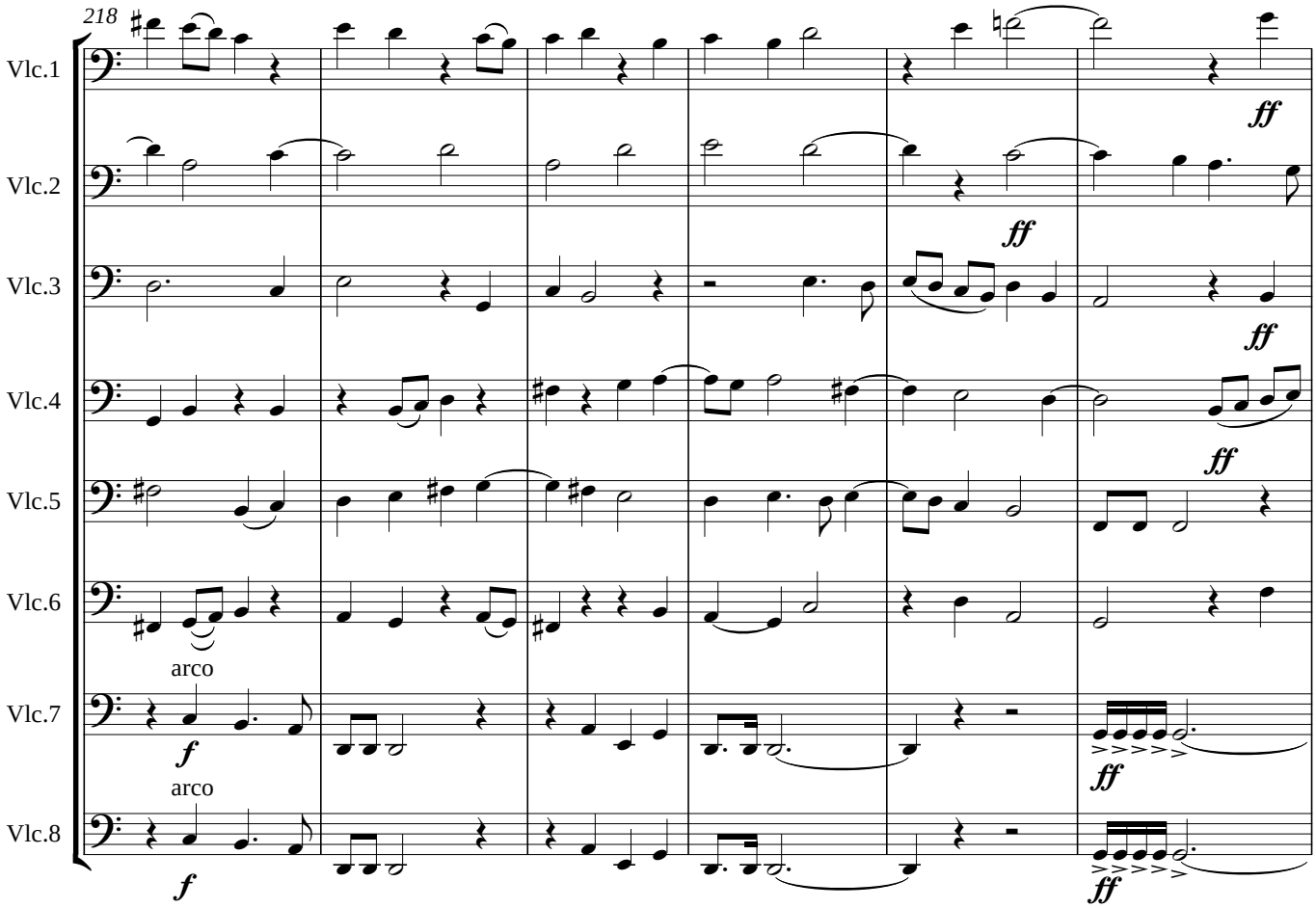
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ff
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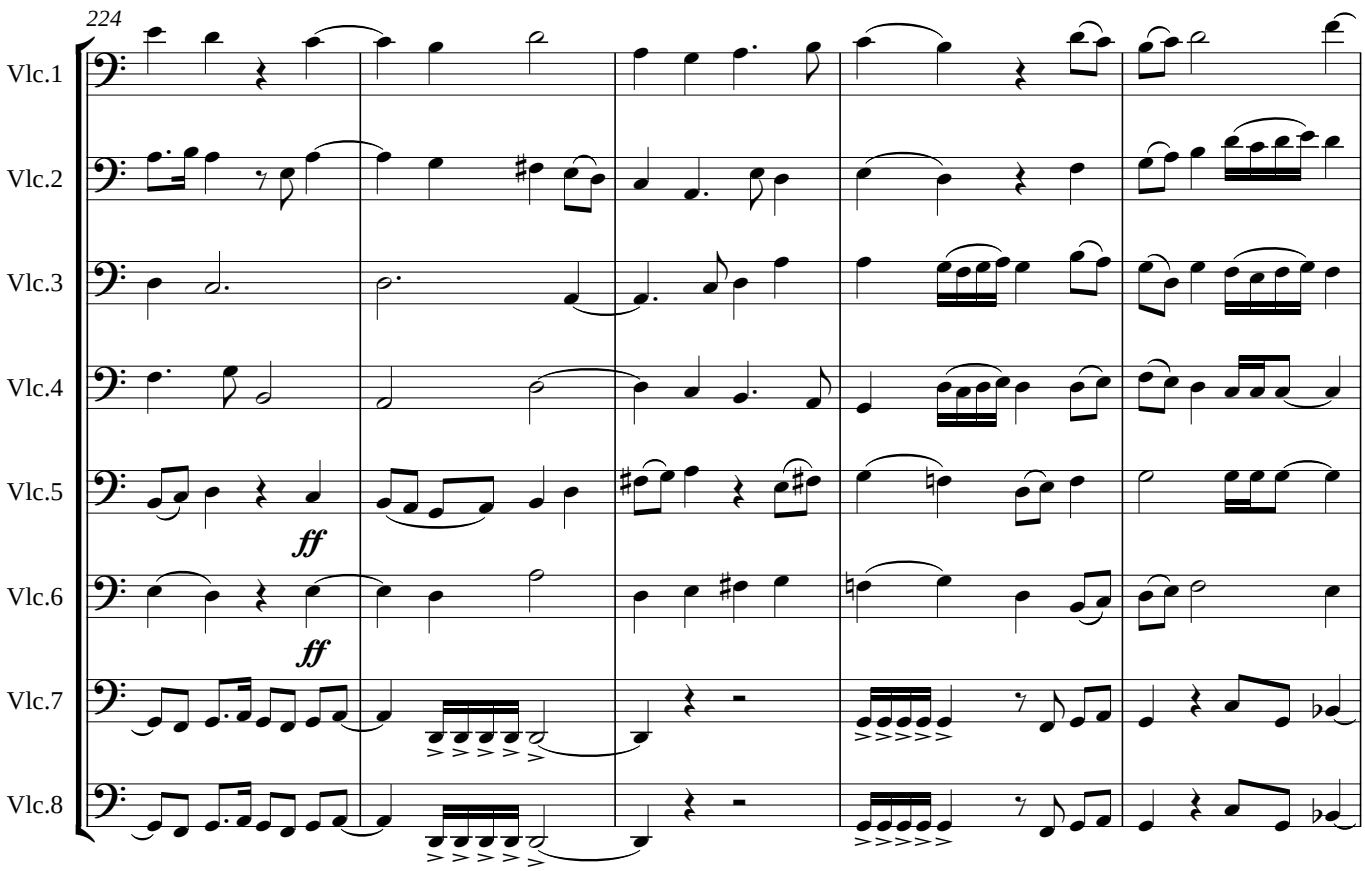
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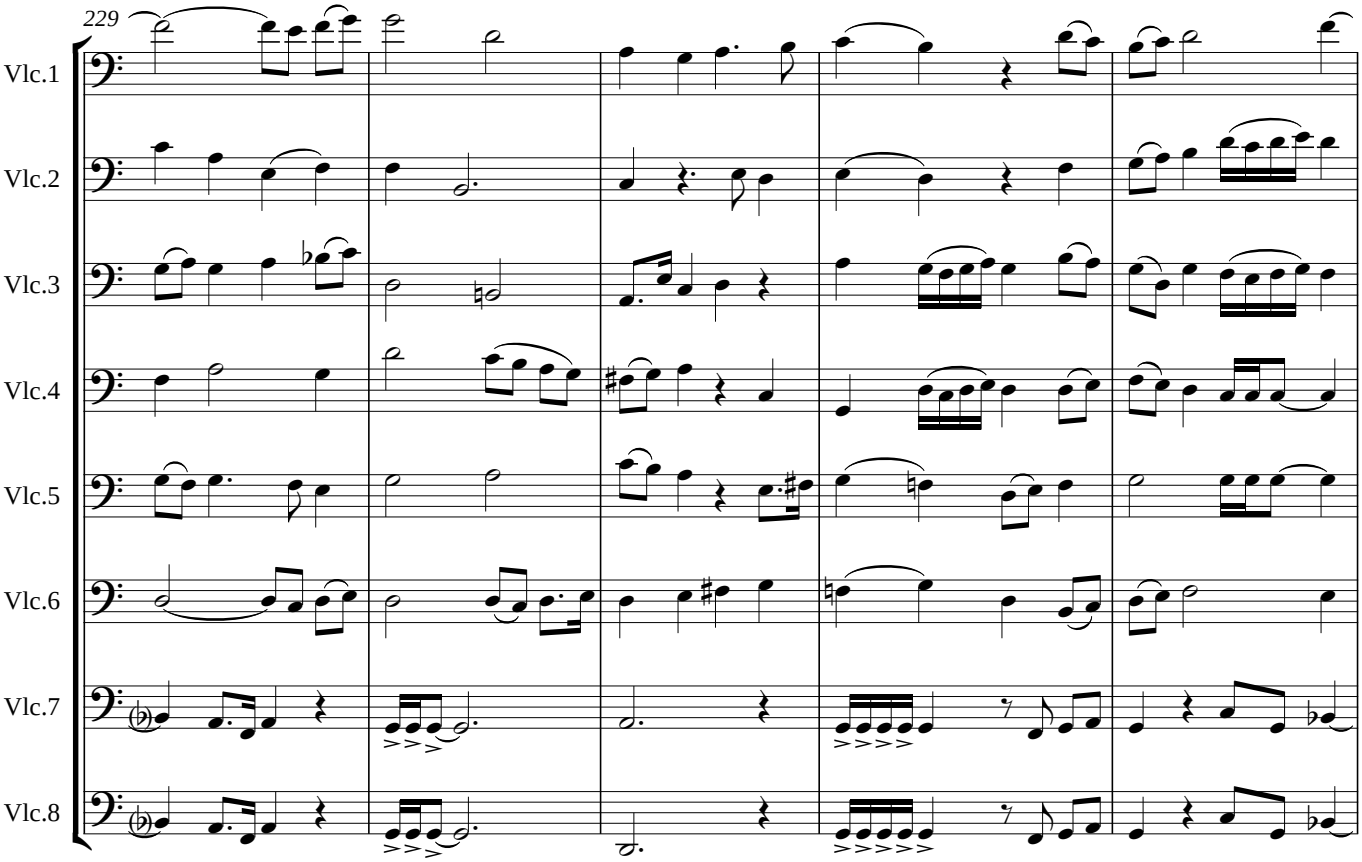
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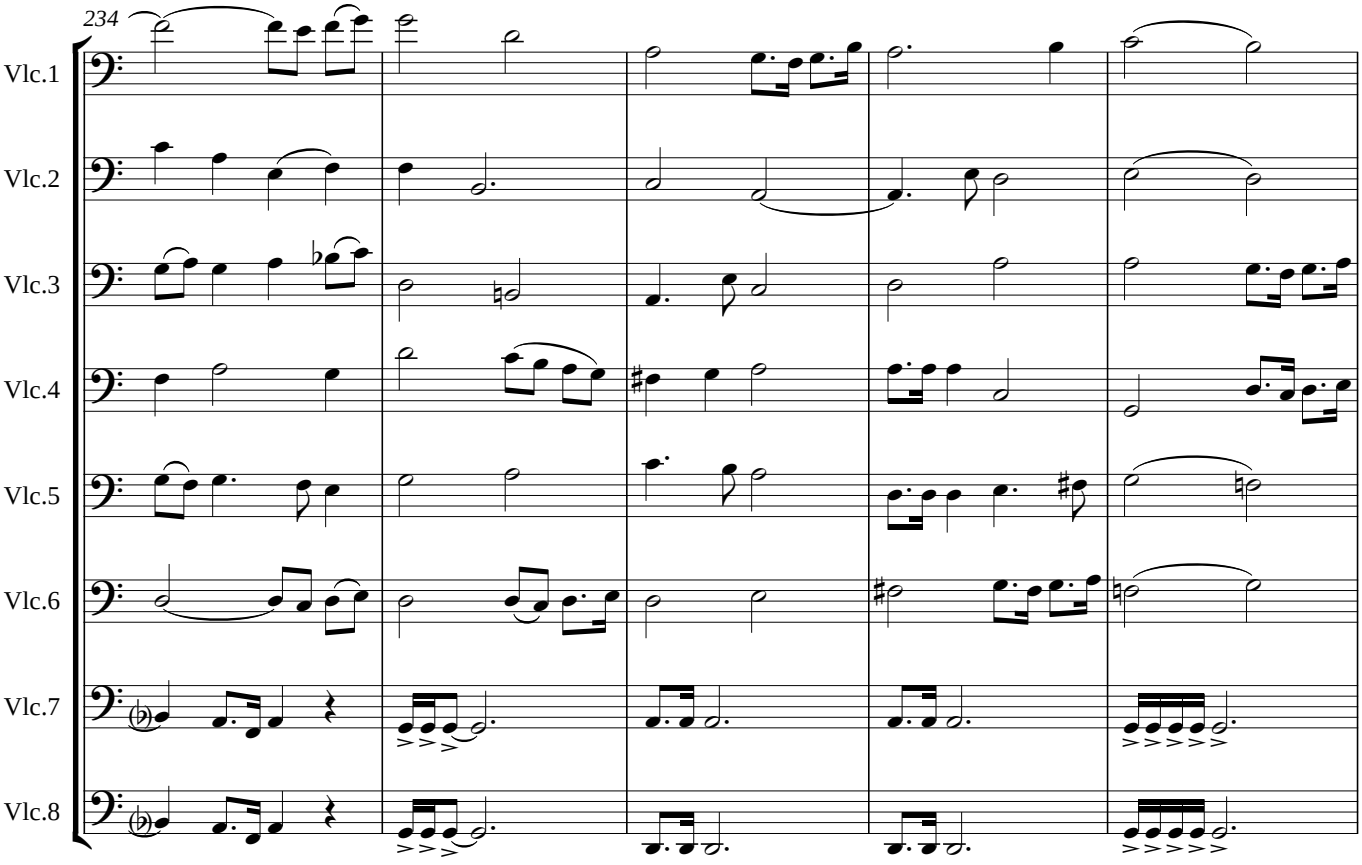
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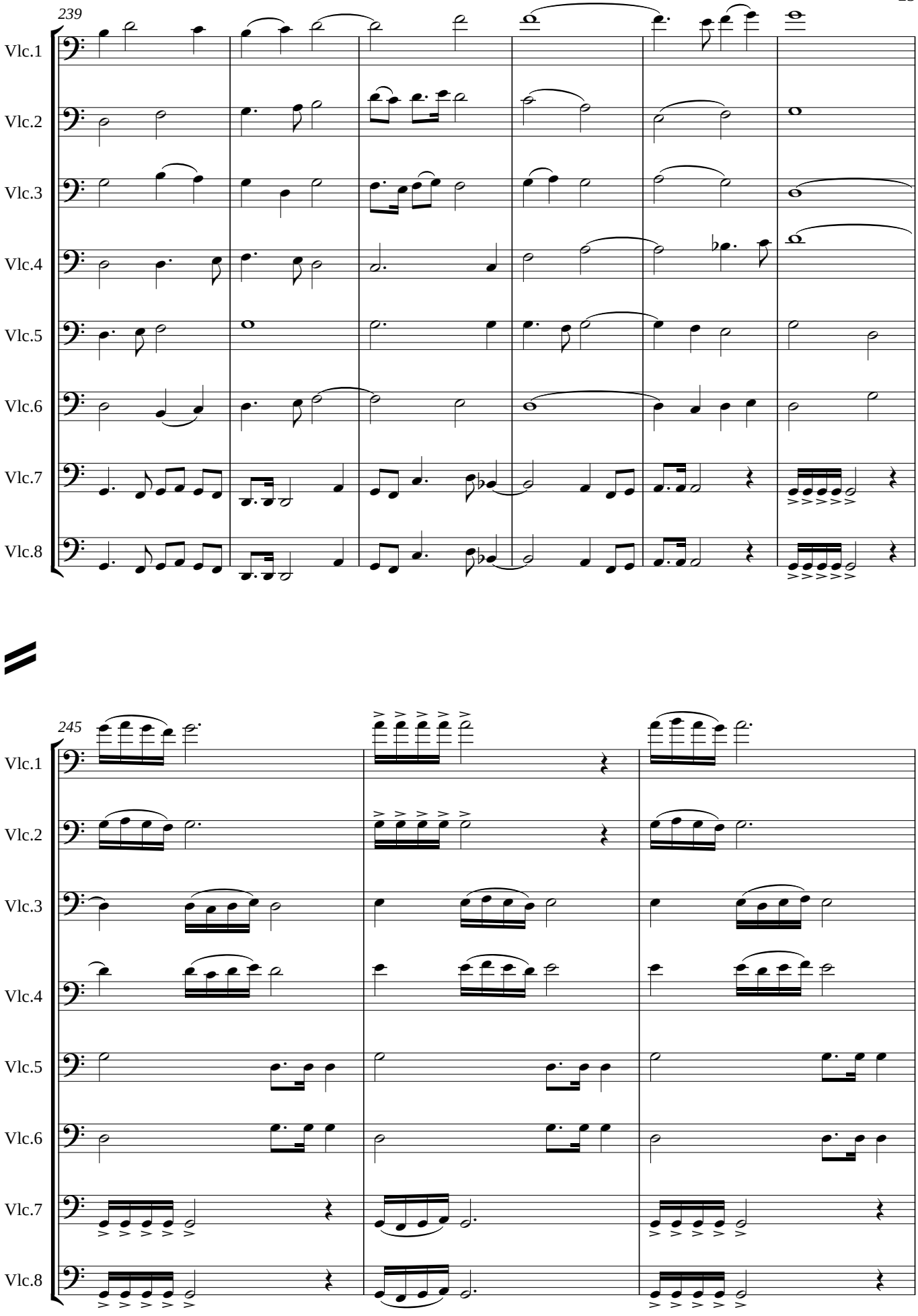
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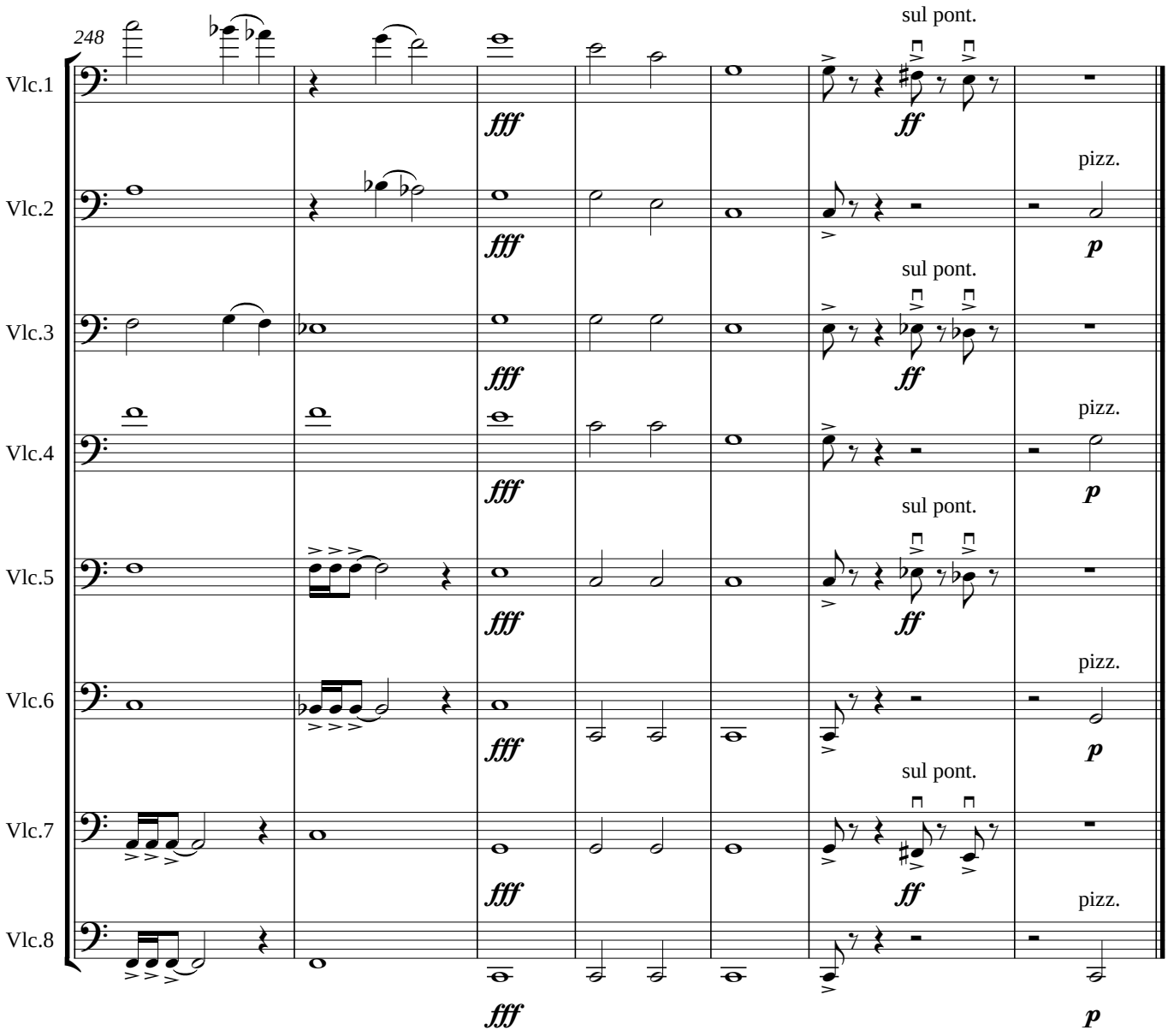
St Petersburg 24th June 2002