
Alexander Schubert
Sensate Focus
Written for +-
2014

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Explanations

Setup

Each musician is standing in front of a spot light, which is controlled by the computer. The light is switched on and off rapidly during the piece. If the spot is off the room should be pitch black and the player not visible.
The sound of each instrument is processed from time to time - depending of the section in the piece.
Beside musical playing the musicians need to perform gestures which are notated in the score as well.
The piece is performed with a click-track.
The musicians should all play standing.

Concept

There are two main ideas behind this piece.
First the lighting of the players in sync and partly out of sync is meant to shift the focus between visual and sonic aspects of a performance.
Second, the human-machine-relation is explored. The partly very mechanic playing styles and repetition lets the musicians appear in a mechanic matter whilst outbursts and free playing are partly hidden in the dark.

Explanation of the Notation

The normal musical playing is notated in standard form.
Empty measures are displayed with 1-line-systems.
Gesture are displayed in 1-line-systems as well with icons indicating the movement to be performed. See table below for description of the movements.
None of the gestures is supposed to create a sound.
Start and finish each movement with an accent.
All executed movements in the piece should be machine-like. Consider yourself a robot, a puppet or similar. This counts 100% for the artificial movements. But also the regular playing should follow this idea as much as possible. It is also good to exaggerate the playing gestures.
The notation of the gestures is not very exact, so there's a bit of room for personal interpretation. That is anticipated, but the goal should be, that the movements are reproducible and don't change every time.

Each time one of these icons occurs it's supposed to be a differrent gesture. Not every time the same!

- Slow movement in the air (cont.)
- Twitching, tremolo movement (fast, repetitive)
- Freeze - do not move. Take an artificial pose.
  If you played before this more or less means freezing where you are at that point.
  If not, you can chose a pose, it should look like a taken pose, not just standing or similar, but not too theatrical too,
  like a strange frozen playing pose perhaps.
- Stop movement, with an accent.
- Movement in the air without instrument (staccato)
  The movement should follow the sortof-machine-like style of the piece, but aside from that can be chosen freely, and can be different each time, they should also mimic the sound in some way, basically be inspired by the electronics at that part.
- P Playing gesture above the instrument.

Tempo

The piece is performed with a click-track. There are very extreme accelerandi and ritardandi in the tempo - use the click track when practicing the piece to get a feeling for it.
The accelerando is always continuous and stops at the next tempo indication.

There is one passage with an ultimate accelerando going from 65 BPM up to 999 BPM. This is of course not playable. The idea is to keep up with the acceleration for as along as possible and then continue at that highest possible tempo.
At the end either continue like this or slowly stop playing and just continue to move. Which option it will be will be settled in the rehearsals of the piece.

General

Before performing the piece it might be a good idea to warm up a little (like before doing sports) as some of the repetitive movements can be a bit rough otherwise.
The lighting on stage varies from very dark to pretty bright, which may be confusing for the performer.
It is difficult to read the score like this. I suggest to put the score on an iPad, laptop or similar. Like this it will be easier to read in the dark and it won't be necessary to use stand lights for the score.

All Instruments:

When a percussive sound is chosen for then it should stay exactly the same for the section and not change over time, like a sample that is repeated.

All glissandi should be carried out over the whole length of the notes.

The black blocks (■) at the end of the piece stand for as wild, loud, chaotic and hardcore playing as possible, not rhythmically.
Black square note heads stand for very loud, hardcore sounds, but with notated rhythm.
Square note heads (and a black arrow ⬇ over the notes) mean the same thing, and stand for very loud, hardcore sounds, but with notated rhythm. The black arrow just stresses the black noteheads. Keep the same note / phrase / instrument for one sequence and only change after pause.

E-Guitar

Effect pedals for a strong distorted sound, volume pedal, bottleneck.

Bass-Clarinet

Slaps are notated with a “x”-note-head and should be as loud and percussive as possible. Air stream without pitch is notated as an empty rectangle.

Violin

The violin needs a hard plectrum and a sponge (the yellow ones with one rough side).

	Whip Movement in the air
◢	Violin Plectrum, low (art 71)
↑	High tick sound, col legno bat.
	Scratch sound
	Wiping sound
	Scratch sound with frog and pressure
▼	Violin Plectrum, percussive sound
▽	Violin Plectrum, damped with hand (art 68)
P	Playing gesture above the instrument.

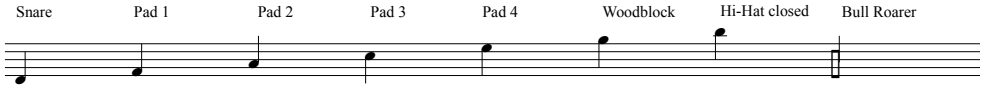
All Plectrum parts can be done with bartok pizz as well.

Percussion

Instruments needed:
- Snare
- Hi-hat
- Woodblock
- Bull roarer
- Midi Drum Pad with at least 4 drum zones


bullroarer

Legend:



Material

Together with the score several files are handed out.
For the performance of the piece a Ableton Live Set is included, which includes all samples, processes and Max4Live Patches.

For the musicians several audio files are included:
- A midi demo version of the piece giving an idea how the piece will sound
- A click track for the whole piece
- A stereo file with the click on one stereo channel and the midi demo on the other stereo channel
- The midi version of each instrument solo (helpful as it includes the sounds the composer tried out and which can be used as a reference). Both with and without processing

If

If there should be certain things unclear with regard to the descriptions, notation or anything else - please do not hesitate to contact me in advance via as@alexander-schubert.net !

TECH RIDER
ALEXANDER SCHUBERT - SENSATE FOCUS

Version: February 7, 2016 10:45 AM

AUDIO

Instruments
1. Electric Guitar with effects (minimum: distortion, gate, octaver - plus other suitable ones)
2. Violin
3. Bass-Clarinet
4. Percussion
    a. Midi Drum Pad
        - pad with a minimum of 4 trigger zones. preferably big so they are easy to hit.
    b. Percussion-Instruments
        - woodblock
        - snare
        - hi-hat
        - bull roarer

Microphones
1. Electric Guitar: Direct out of amp or close monitoring of amp
2. Violin: Very close monitoring: DPA (e.g. d:screet™ 4061) or contact microphone.
3. Bass-Clarinet : Very close monitoring: preferably DPA (e.g. d:vote™ 4099S Clip Microphone)
4. Percussion: One condenser microphone.

Routing
The microphones go into the mixing desk and are used for amplification.
They are send as direct outs / pre-fader aux sends to the computer for processing.
The computer sends a stereo signal for the tape electronics, a stereo pair for the processed instruments and a mono channel for the click track.

PA & Monitoring
A solid, loud PA is required for the piece with a strong subwoofer (a lot of low end frequencies in the electronics).
Provide a pa suitable for a techno club and not for subtle amplification of chamber music!!

Click
Click is send from laptop. Should be send to headphone amp and from there to the musicians.
A wireless click is useful, as the musicians come on stage in the dark and don't have to much time to prepare - but should be possible with wire-click as well.

LIGHT / STAGING

Room / Stage / Staging
The room should be pitch black - like a theatre. No room lights whatsoever. The stage should also be black. The piece uses its own lightning, which is turned off at the beginning or the piece. At this point it should be so dark that it is impossible to tell if a performer is on stage or not.

The players should be positioned parallel to the stage facing the audience. There should be sufficient space between the players, as each player has his own spot light and each spot should only light one player.
If it's not possible to stage the players like this it might be an alternative to spread the players in the room.

Interactive Lights
The four spot lights are controlled from the computer. Ableton Live sends out midi data. The midi data is received by MAX/MSP and sends this data via USB to the USB-DMX-Interface. This controlls the lights via DMX. It is basically plug and play and doesn't need much confuguration!
The lights are standard LED stage lights (either RGB but preferably warm theatre light). The spot lights should have a rather narrow radius. The exact type of light and the exact positioning is not so important - the only important requirement is that each light shines on exactly one player and not more and does not light the complete stage!
Ideally the lights should be hanged on a traverse above each player.

Music Stands
The light situation on stage is problematic for reading the sheet music. Using stand lights might undermine the effect of the pitch black room. It's probably the best to use a laptop or iPad or similar for the sheet music. Switch devices to inverted colors so the music appears white with black background to minimize the ambient light.

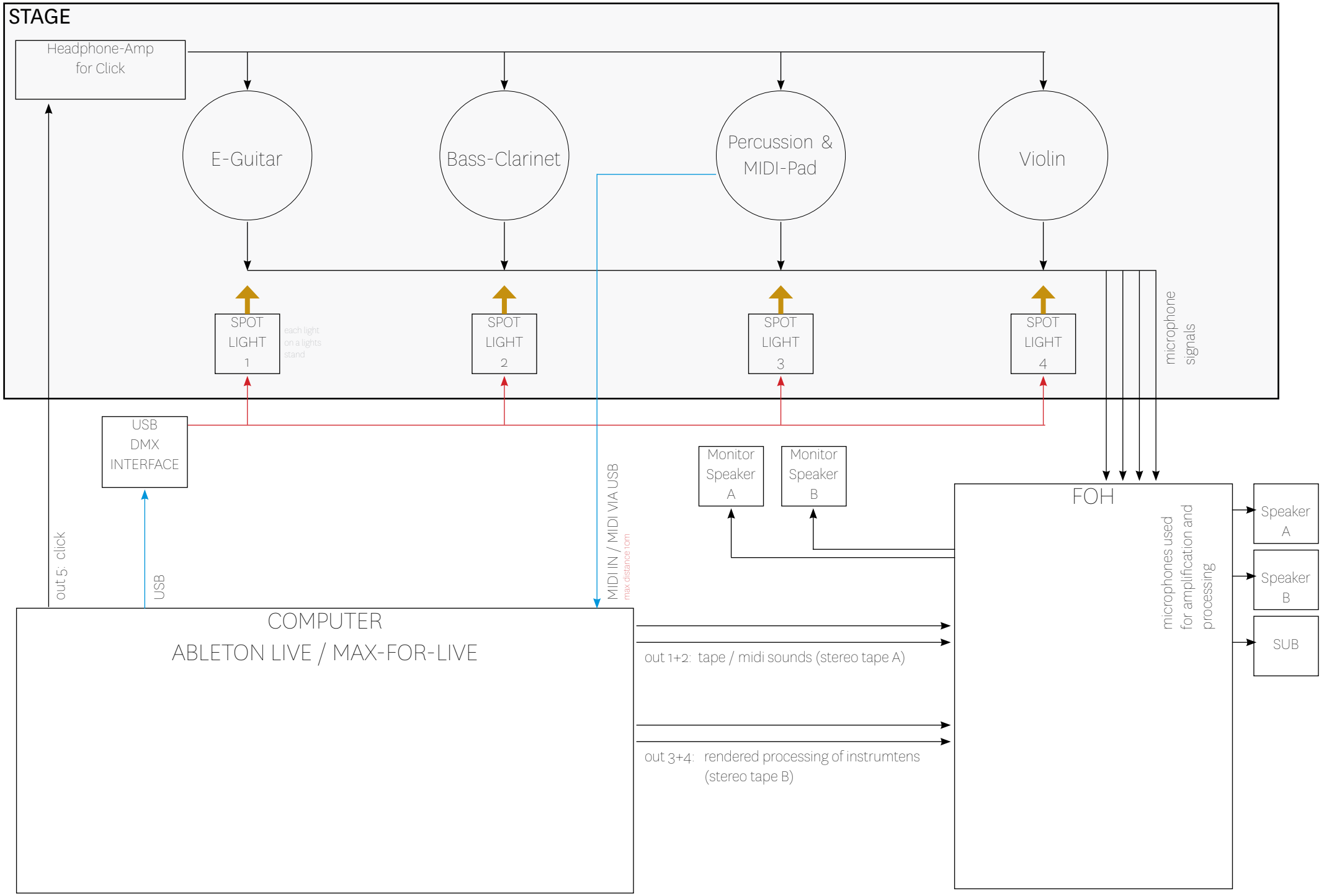
COMPUTER PROGRAM
The performance project for the piece is an Ableton live set (version 9, with Max4Live). It includes all the effects etc.

REQUIRED MATERIAL

- Spot lights
- PA
- Headphone amp & headphone
- Mixing desk
- Recent apple computer + sound card (4 inputs, 5 outputs)
- Software: Ableton Live (incl. Max4Live)

- USB-DMX-Interface*
- Midi Drum Pad*

*can be provided by the composer


STAGE
Headphone-Amp for Click
E-Guitar
Bass-Clarinet
Percussion & MIDI-Pad
Violin
SPOT LIGHT 1
each light on a lights stand
SPOT LIGHT 2
SPOT LIGHT 3
SPOT LIGHT 4
microphone signals
USB DMX INTERFACE
Monitor Speaker A
Monitor Speaker B
FOH
Speaker A
Speaker B
SUB
microphones used for amplification and processing
out 5: click
USB
MIDI IN / MIDI VIA USB
max distance 10m
COMPUTER
ABLETON LIVE / MAX-FOR-LIVE
out 1+2: tape / midi sounds (stereo tape A)
out 3+4: rendered processing of instrumtens (stereo tape B)

LIGHT SETUP
ALEXANDER SCHUBERT - SENSATE FOCUS

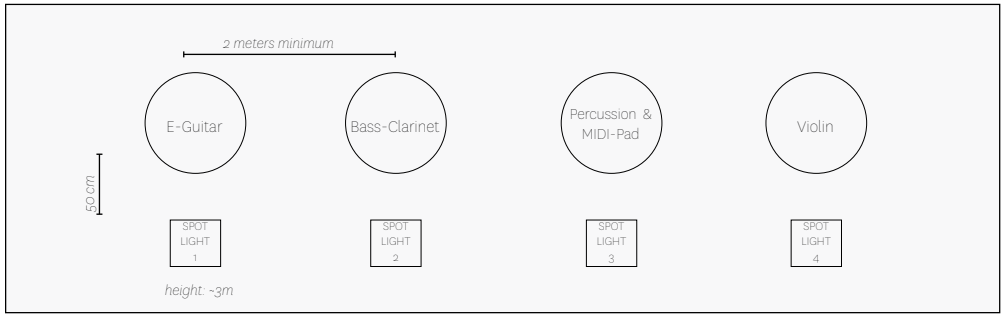
Spot Lights

For the piece you need 4 LEDs:
- it has to be LEDs (as they turn on and off very qucikly)
- They need to have 4 RGBW
- They need an DMX-adjustable focus
- at least 100W with 4-in-1-LEDs per Spot.

For example take **“Martin RUSH PAR 2 RGBW Zoom” or “glp impression X4 “**
For any other models please contact the composer and propose specific model.

The LEDs need to be hanged over the musicians.
Not too far away so that the spots don’t overlap.

The result should look roughly like this:



The DMX signal comes directly from the computer.
It should be a seperate line from the house system. So the cable goes from the DMX interface (brought by ensemble/composer) to the first spot on stage, and the next ones are daisy-chained in a row.

Explanation of the Computer Programs

General
The piece runs in Ableton Live.
You need the current version of Live for it, and also MAX4Live.

Live runs the program and sends Midi to MAX/MSP. MAX converts the MIDI to DMX signals which then controll the light.

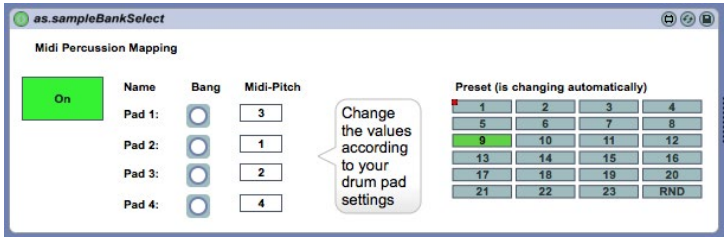
Ableton Live
In live you have a project with the following tracks:

LIGHT
This is a MIDI track. it has notes in four pitches, one for each spot light. You can see a midi note when you are supposed to see a light on stage. Then there's a automation in the track as well which controlls the master brightness for all spots.
The MIDI signal is send to a Midi port - you can chose. I suggest to use a MIDI bus from OS X - it is always visible and usable (which is better than the toMax MIDI-channels). Set this channel accordingly and set the same channel in the MAX patch (see below)!

BAR#
This track doesn't control anything - it simply states the current bar number (if you want to jump to a specific section in the piece). It's mostly the same as the bar numbers in live itself, but towards the end live can't manage a section (due to time signature and tempo settings) so you need to look here for the right measure number.

CLICK
This is a group of two channels. It hosts two audio channels which have all the click signals. One for the click itself (a Midi track which can be changed) and one with spoken cue points (i.e. measure numbers).
The volume of the click is strongly automated to be quiet in quiet sections and loud inf fortissimo sections. Adapt this automation to your needs if necessary.

Perc-Midi
This is a MIDI track and takes as the input the Midi Drum Pad. In the lower section of the track you can set the midi pitches of your drum pad accordingly - by default the pitches are 1 2 3 4 - but you can select any pitch you wish.
In different sections of the piece different samples will be triggered by the pad. This done with the patch as well - but this is automated and does not need to be changed manually. Select the right mdi device (your pad) in the input section of the track.



In the Max4Live device in the track "PERC MIDI" you can set the correct MIDI Pitches for your Mid Drum Pad (see screenshot above). Either change your drum pad so it corresponds to these values or set the midi pitches accordingly. The button next to that field will indicate if the pad is working correctly once it's hit.

Violin-Tape & Tape
Two channels for the tape that is playing parallel to the musicians.

Processing
This is a rendered version of the processing of the instrument processing. It features all (tape-) sounds based on the instruments - but the processing is not done live.

Routing
All tape channels go to channel 1 and 2.
All processing channels go to channel 3 and 4.
The (wireless!) click goes to channel 5.
Use two stereo sums at the mixing desk for channel 1-4 and send the clicktrack directly to the wireless headphone amp.

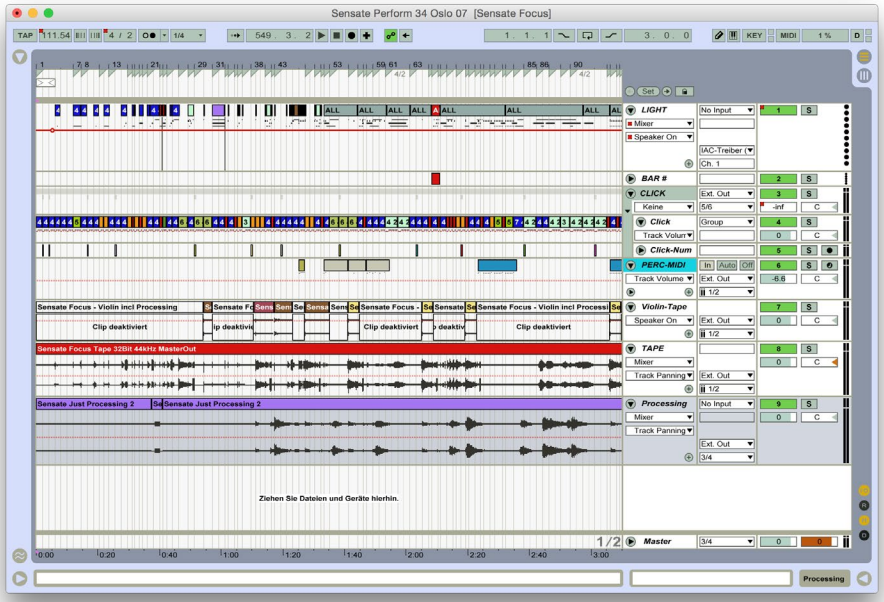
MAX/MSP
Set the Midi Channel at the top. This has to be the same as the channel in Ableton Live.
Below are the brightness values for the four spots and the master brightness. These values are controlled by the midi signal and should change accordingly. You can use them manually to test the lights too!
Below is the section for the DMX-USB-device: It needs to be connected :) [check the max window if all the externals are found and installed - see below for all points related to the DMX device].

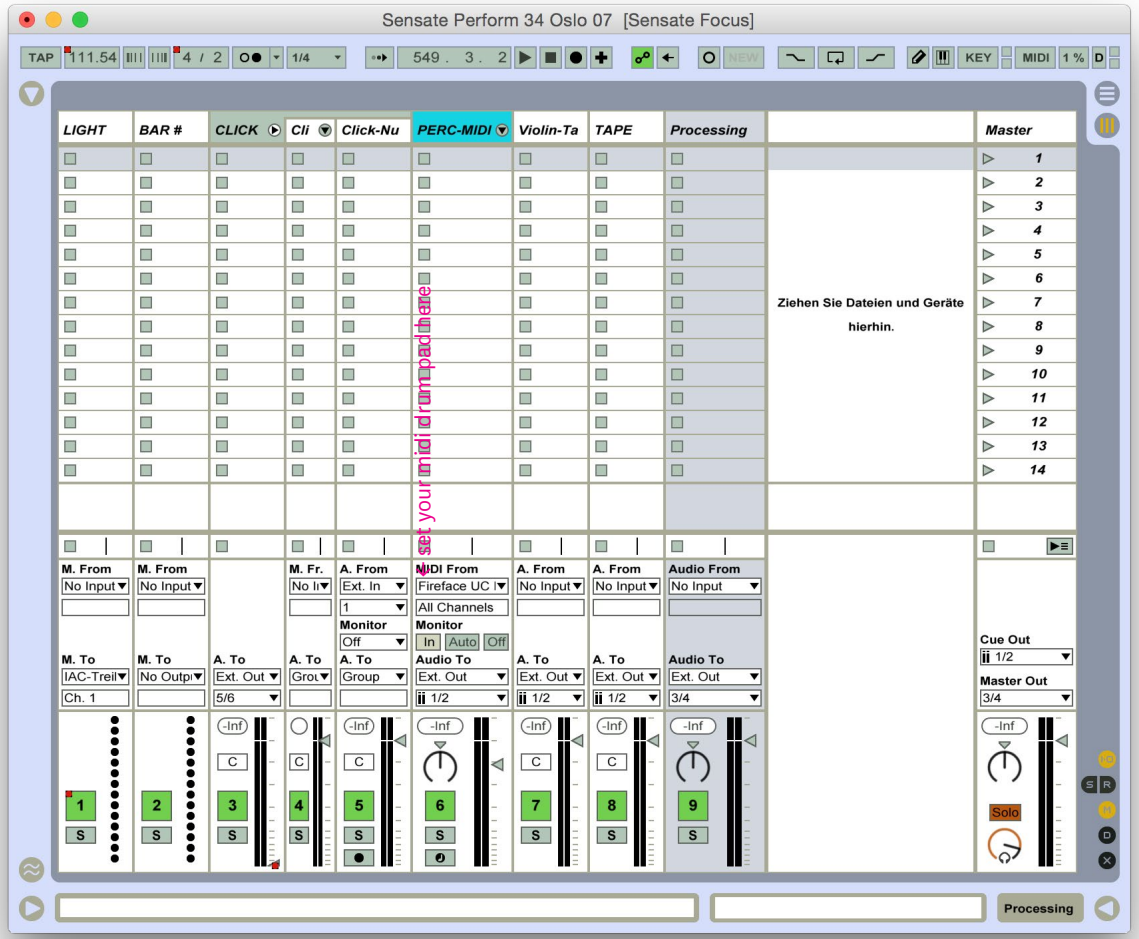
The section belows specifies the start address of the spots you are using.
You need to set the same address at the spots and in the patch. Set the spots to DMX-RGB-control.
Based on this the RGB-channel info is send as DMX. For example if your first spot has the adress 1, then you set the address 1 too in the patch. That means the patch will send the “red light brightness” on channel 1, the green light on channel 2, blue on 3 - and actually, if your spot supports it white or amber on the next channel - in this case 4. If your spot doesn’t have white/amber you need to remove this part in the patch.
If your spot needs any other control signals (i.e. spot focus or something like that - then you can set these static values at the right side of the patch).
The section below shows the brightness of the spot - so it visualizes what you should see - this is used for trouble shooting to see if the lights work correctly - it doesn’t influence the lights.
In the lowest section you can specify he color of the light. The automation in the piece just handles brightness (as one value) - here you can adjust the color for the spots. For example if the light is too blue you can reduce the amount of blue here.
The last section is at the right bottom corner. It specifies the fade time for the lights. This means that you can adjust how fast the light should change here. In the program automation the lights are often very hard - turning on and off immediately. If this is too harsh in the room you can set the value a bit higher. If you want it very stobe-like - then you can set it to “0”. This value can (and should be changed during the performance) - you can begin with a higher value and then decrease the value during the piece.
You might need to set some values for your spotlights manually (like focus, master fader, strobe setting, or similar). Do this with the values on the right side of the patch. You might need to add more of these if your lights have a lot of parameters.

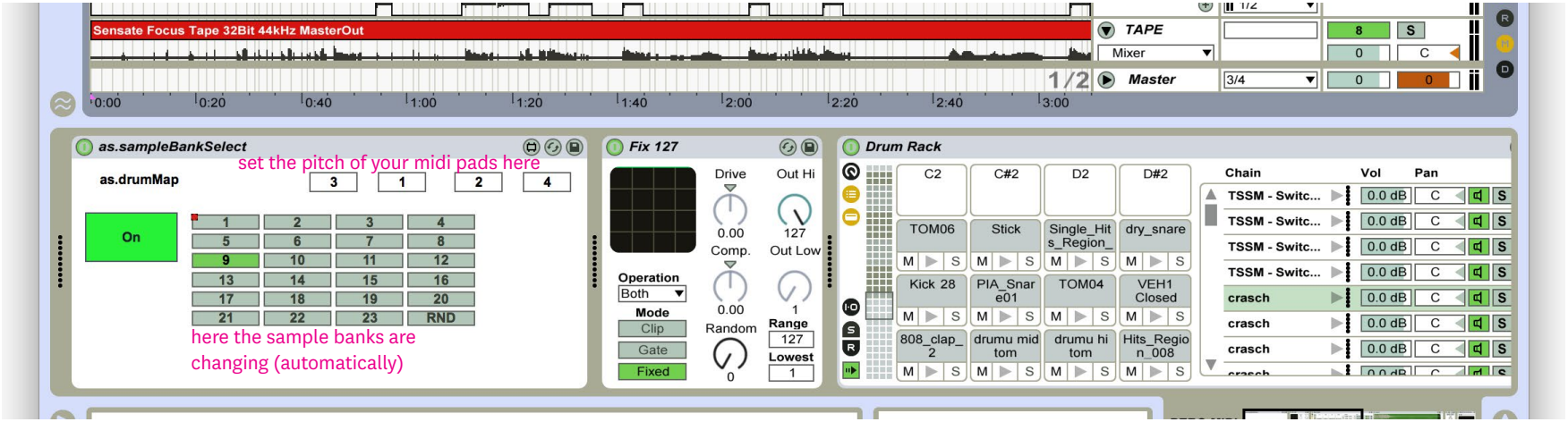
DMX-Device

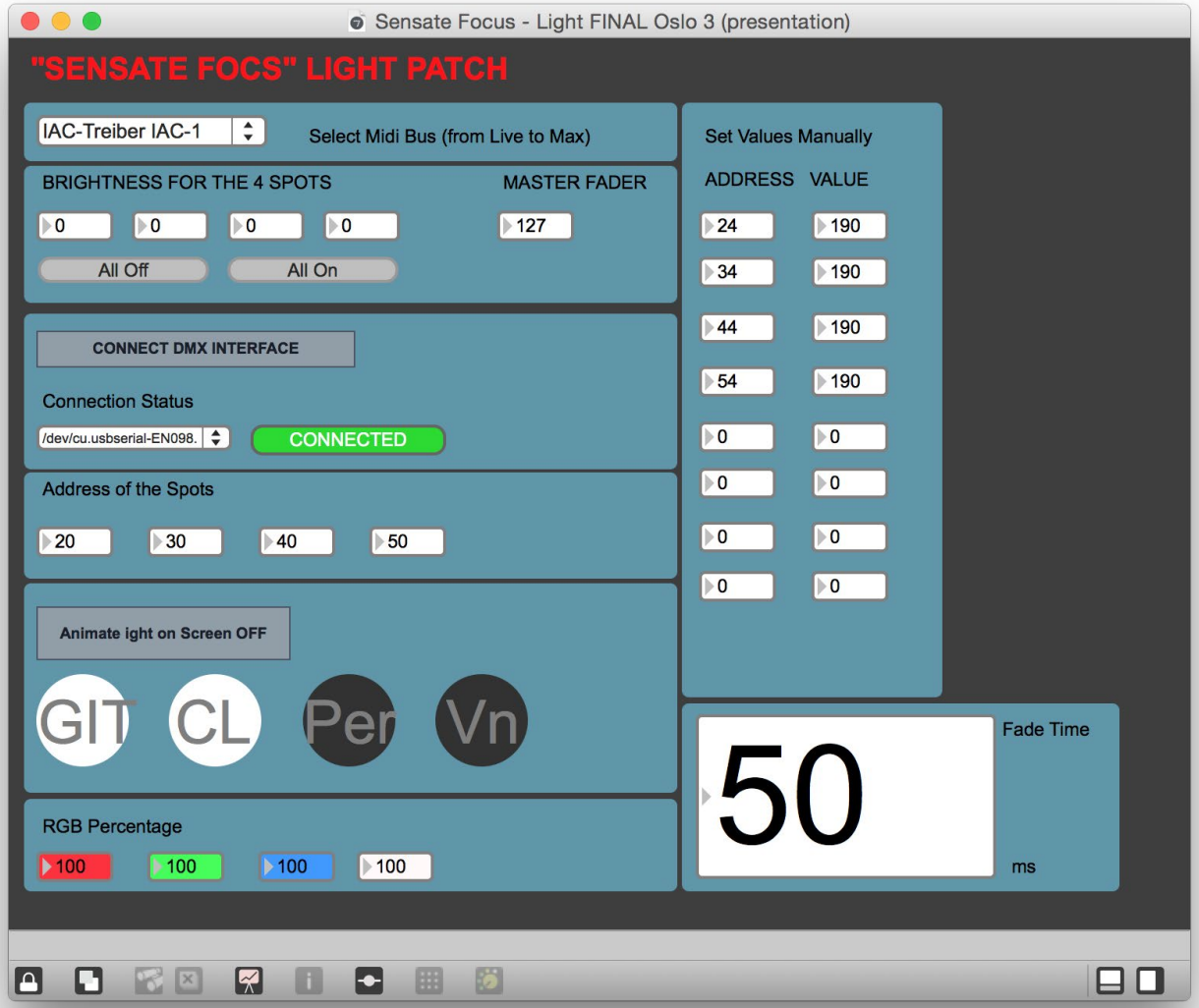
I am using this device: Enttec DMX USB Pro.
It is available here:
http://www.enttec.com/index.php?main_menu=Products&pn=70304
or can be rented from me.
It uses the max object [dmxusbpro] by Olaf Matthes.

photo of the staging of the piece


Sensate Perform 34 Oslo 07 [Sensate Focus]
Ziehen Sie Dateien und Geräte hierhin.


Sensate Perform 34 Oslo 07 [Sensate Focus]
LIGHT
BAR #
CLICK
Cli
Click-Nu
PERC-MIDI
Violin-Ta
TAPE
Processing
Master
Ziehen Sie Dateien und Geräte hierhin.
set your midi drumpad there
Processing

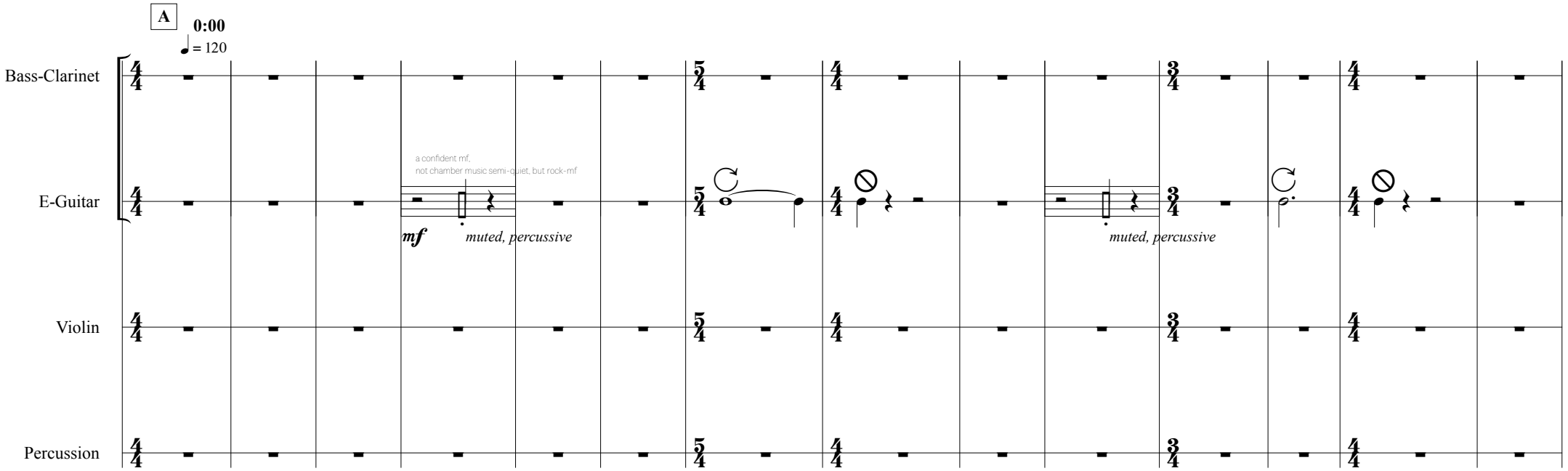

Sensate Focus Tape 32Bit 44kHz MasterOut
TAPE
Mixer
Master
as.sampleBankSelect
as.drumMap
set the pitch of your midi pads here
On
here the sample banks are
changing (automatically)
Fix 127
Drive
Out Hi
Comp.
Out Low
Operation
Both
Mode
Clip
Gate
Fixed
Random
Range
Lowest
Drum Rack
Chain
Vol
Pan
TOM06
Stick
Single_Hits_Region_
dry_snare
Kick 28
PIA_Snare01
TOM04
VEH1 Closed
808_clap_2
drumu mid tom
drumu hi tom
Hits_Region_008
crasch

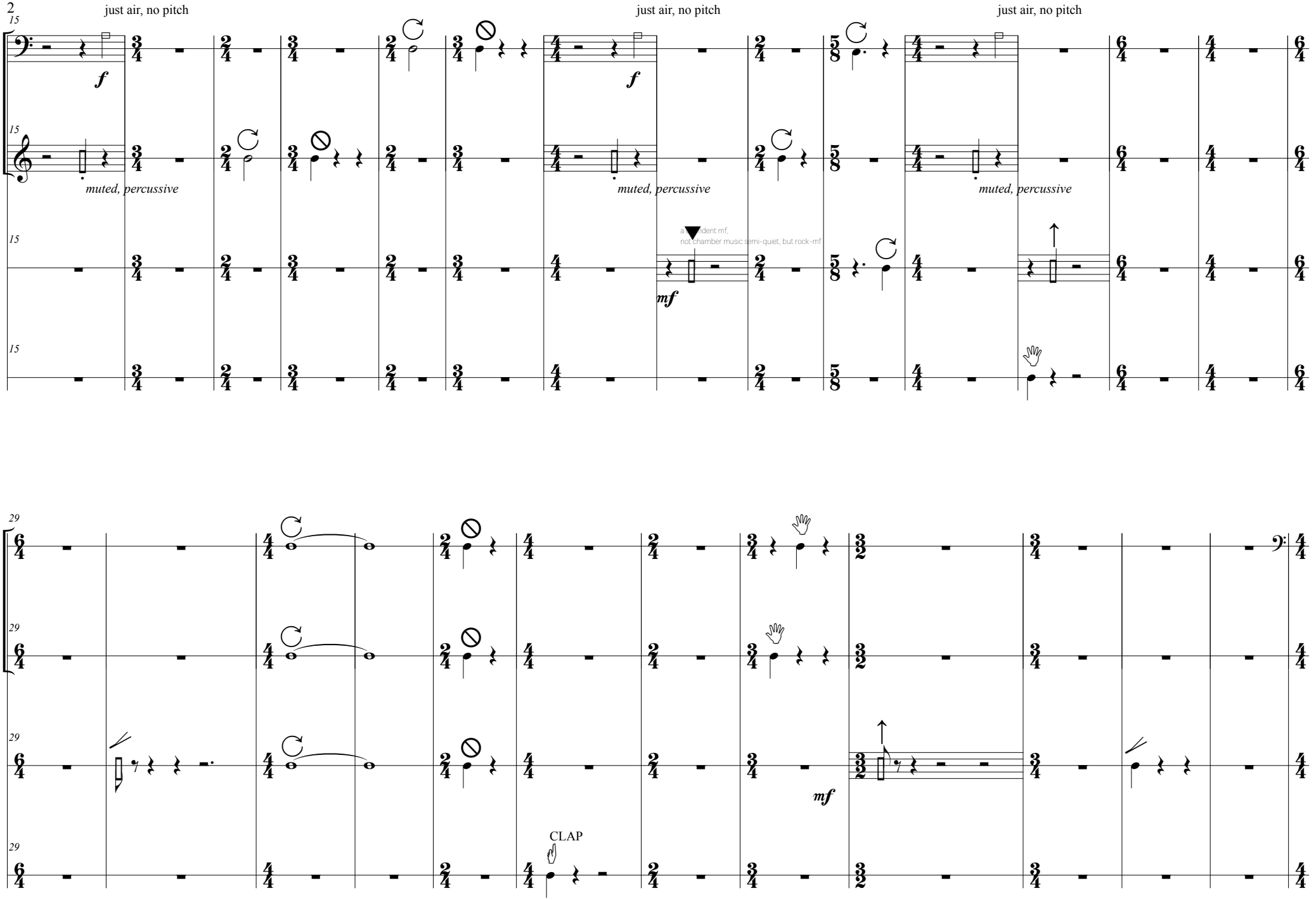

Sensate Focus - Light FINAL Oslo 3 (presentation)
"SENSATE FOCS" LIGHT PATCH
IAC-Treiber IAC-1
Select Midi Bus (from Live to Max)
BRIGHTNESS FOR THE 4 SPOTS
MASTER FADER
0
0
0
0
127
All Off
All On
CONNECT DMX INTERFACE
Connection Status
/dev/cu.usbserial-EN098.
CONNECTED
Address of the Spots
20
30
40
50
Animate ight on Screen OFF
GIT
CL
Per
Vn
RGB Percentage
100
100
100
100
Set Values Manually
ADDRESS
VALUE
24
190
34
190
44
190
54
190
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
50
Fade Time
ms

Score

Sensate Focus

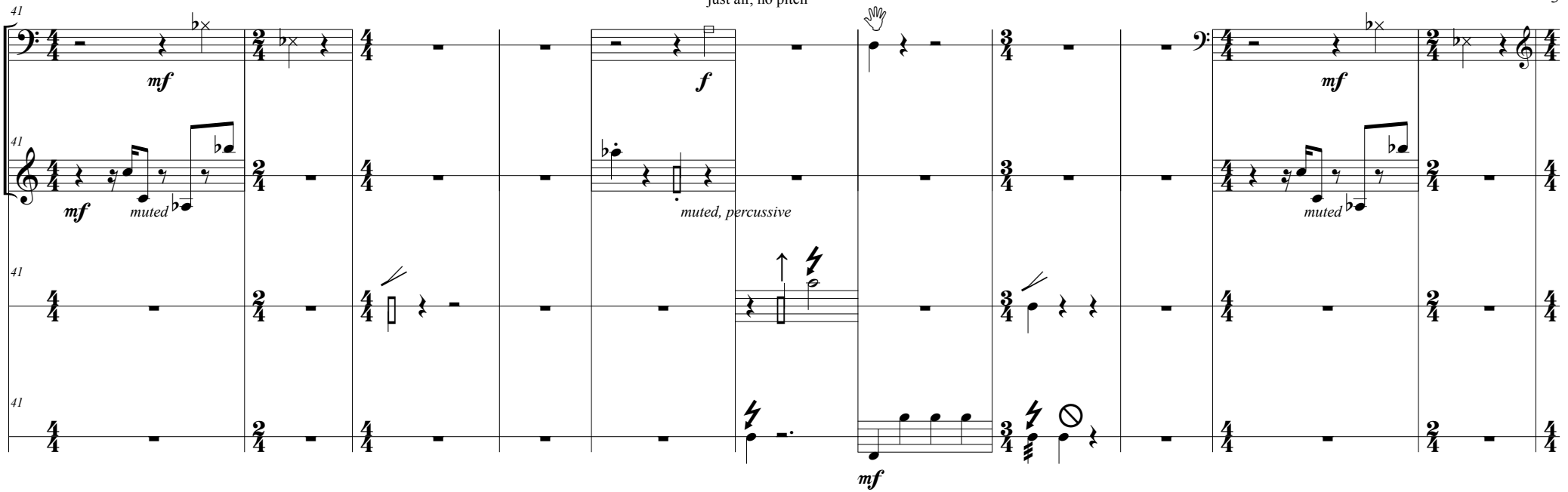
Alexander Schubert

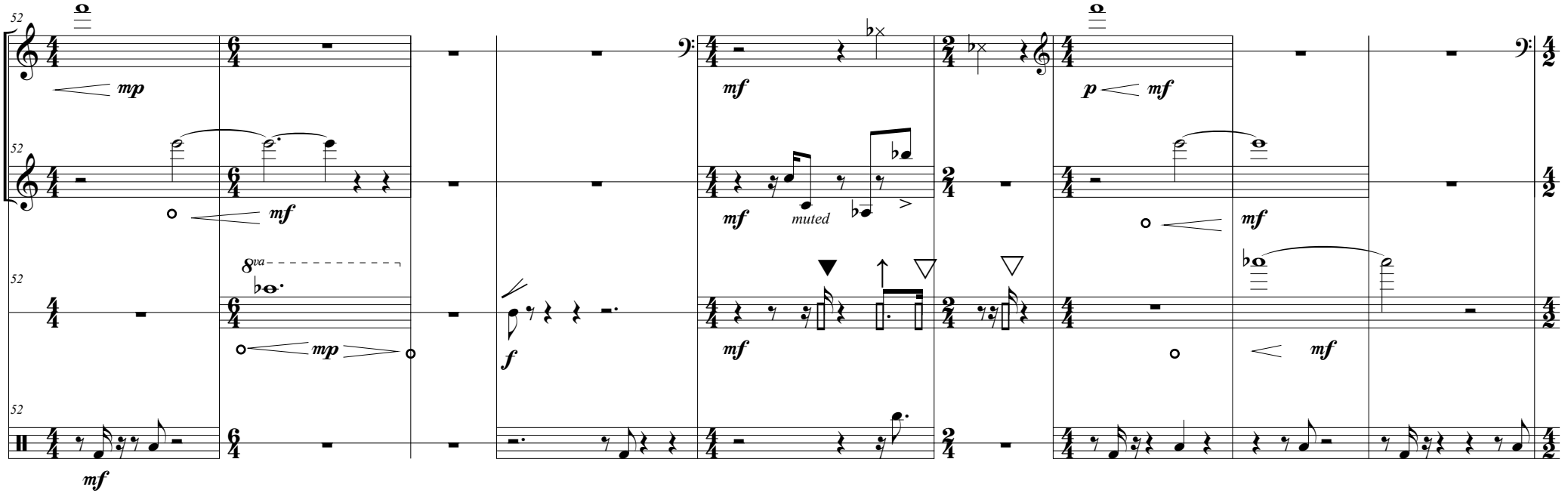


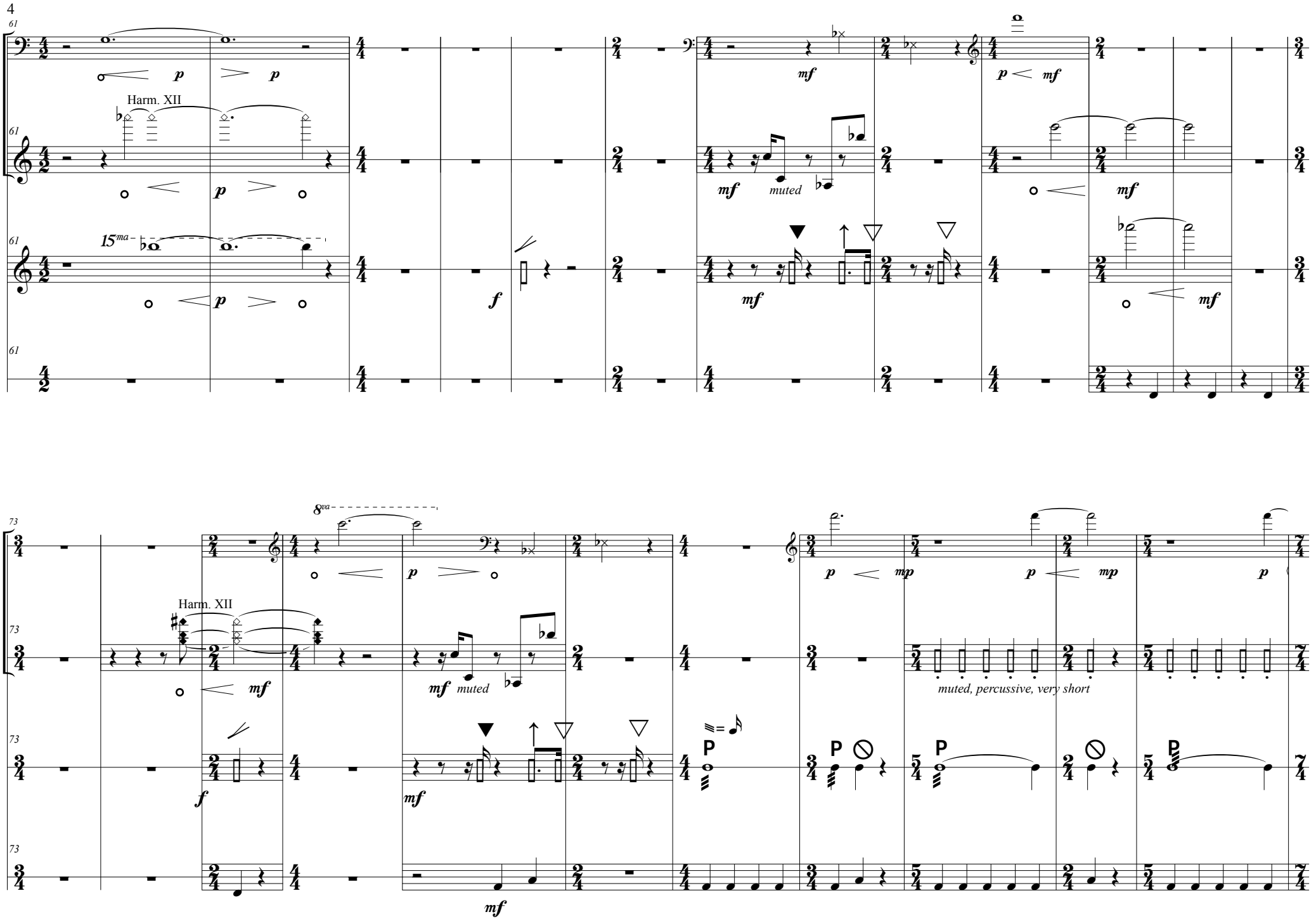

just air, no pitch
just air, no pitch
just air, no pitch
cl
el g
vn
p
muted, percussive
muted, percussive
muted, percussive
f
f
mf
mf
CLAP

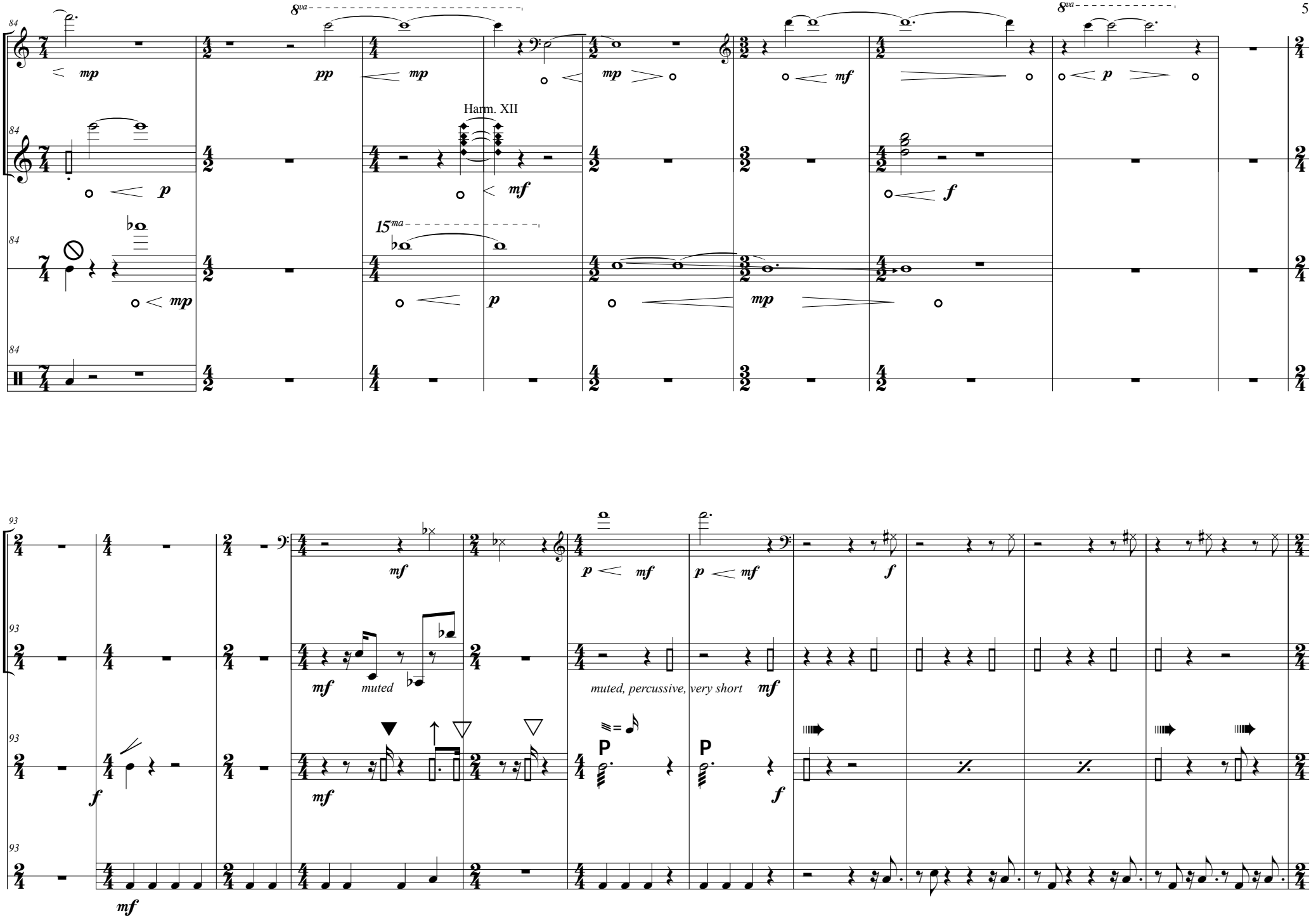
a confident mf,
not chamber music semi-quiet, but rock-mf

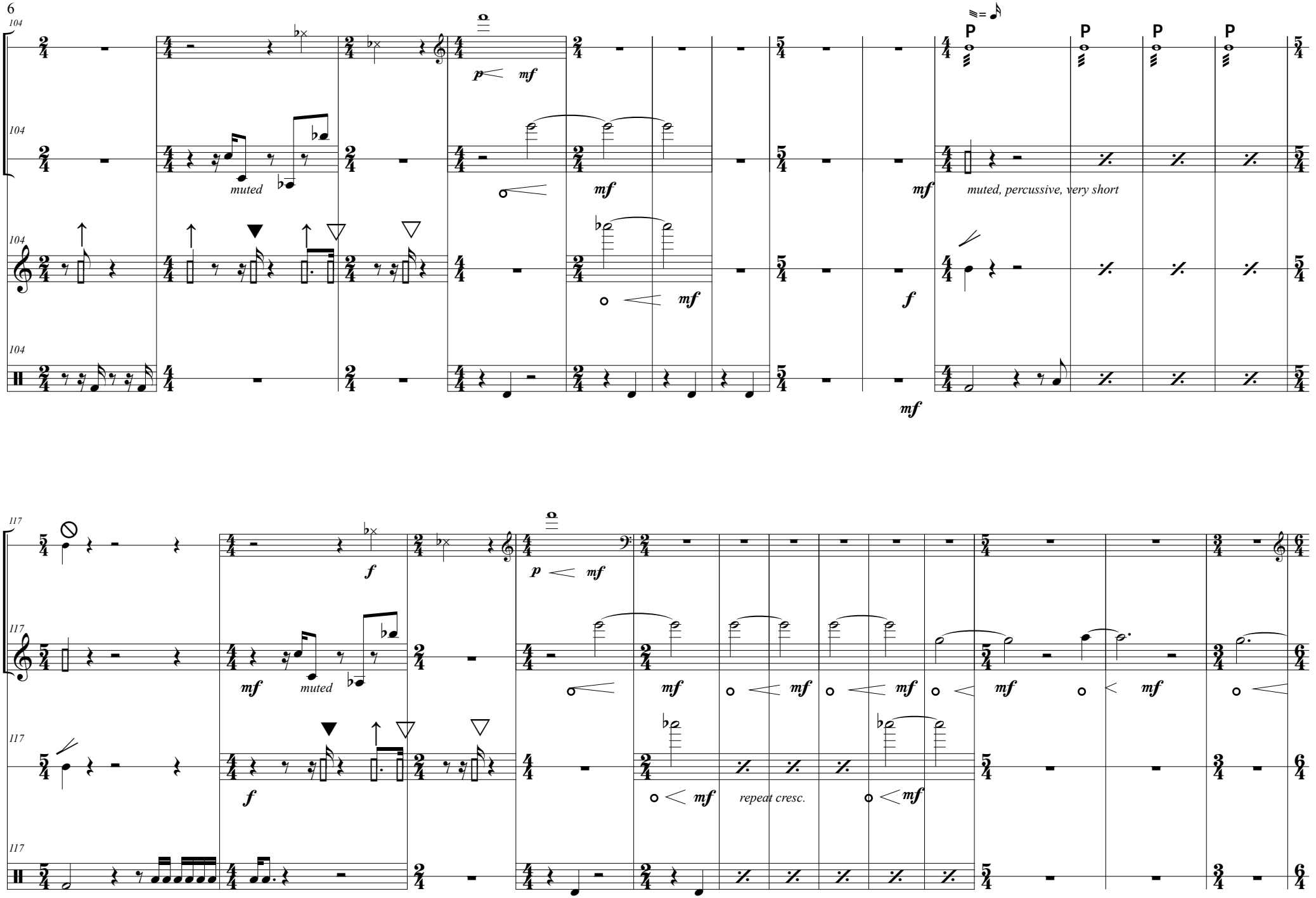
just air, no pitch

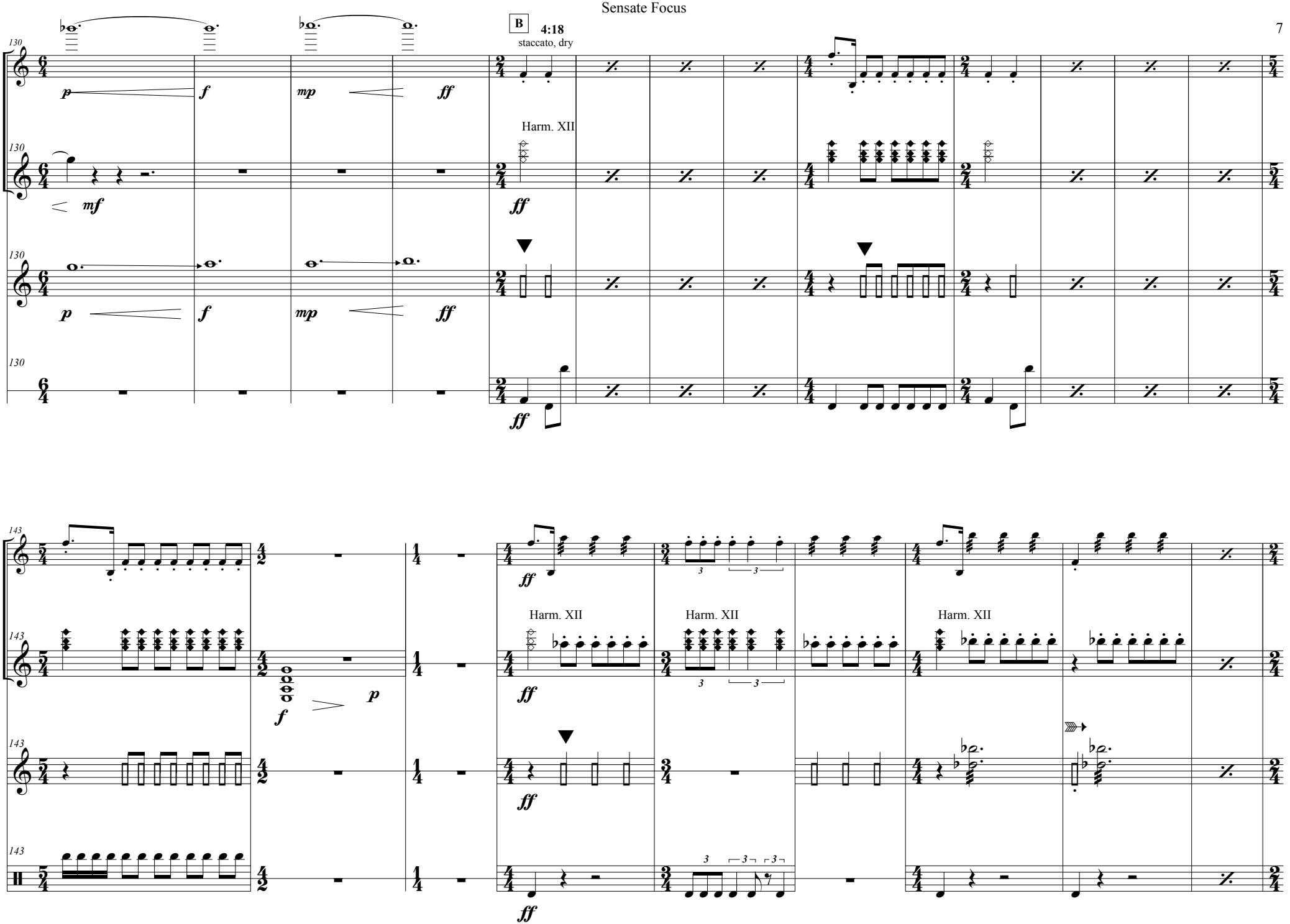




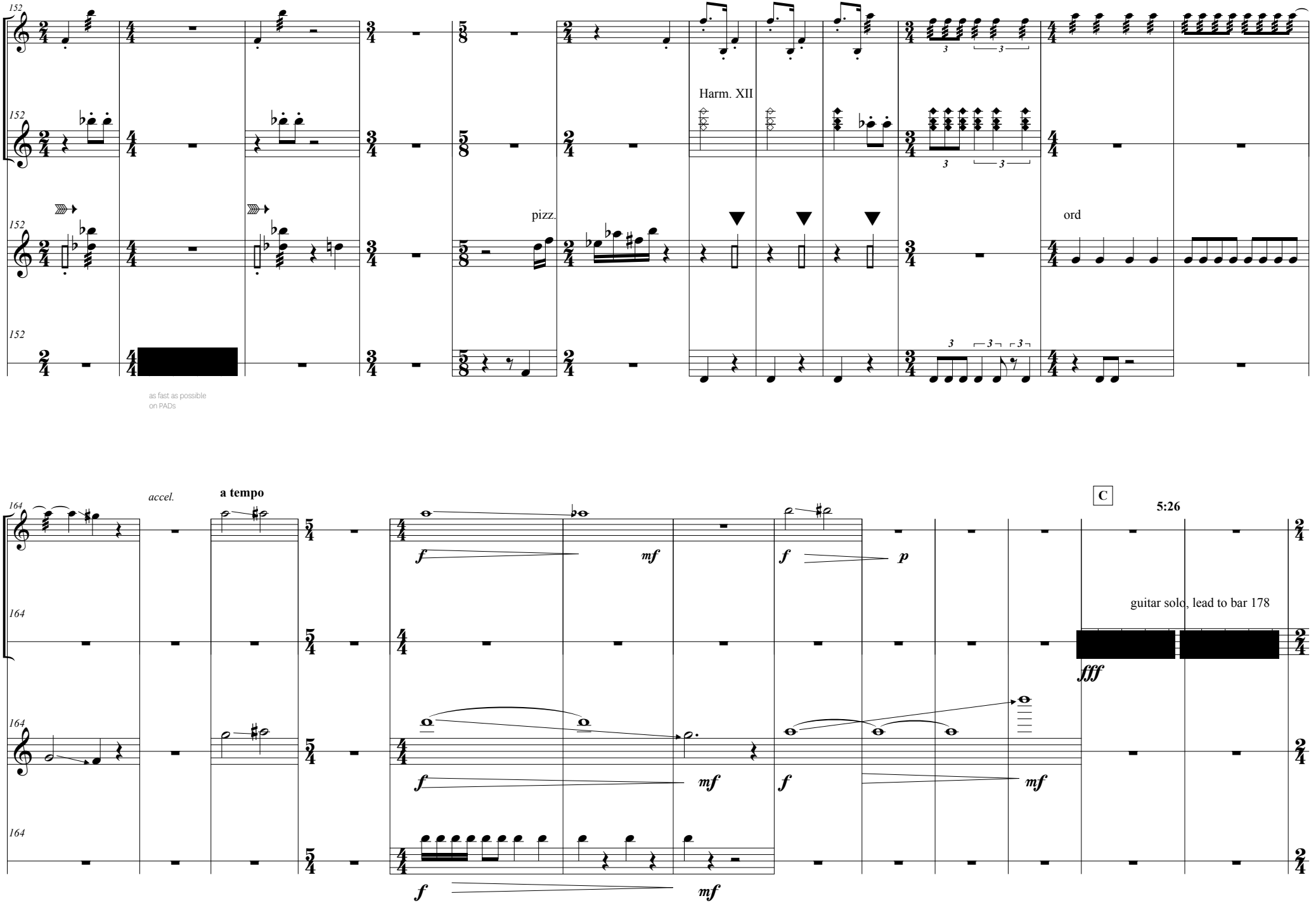

cl
el g
vn
p
Harm. XII
15ma
muted
8va
Harm. XII
muted
muted
muted, percussive, very short

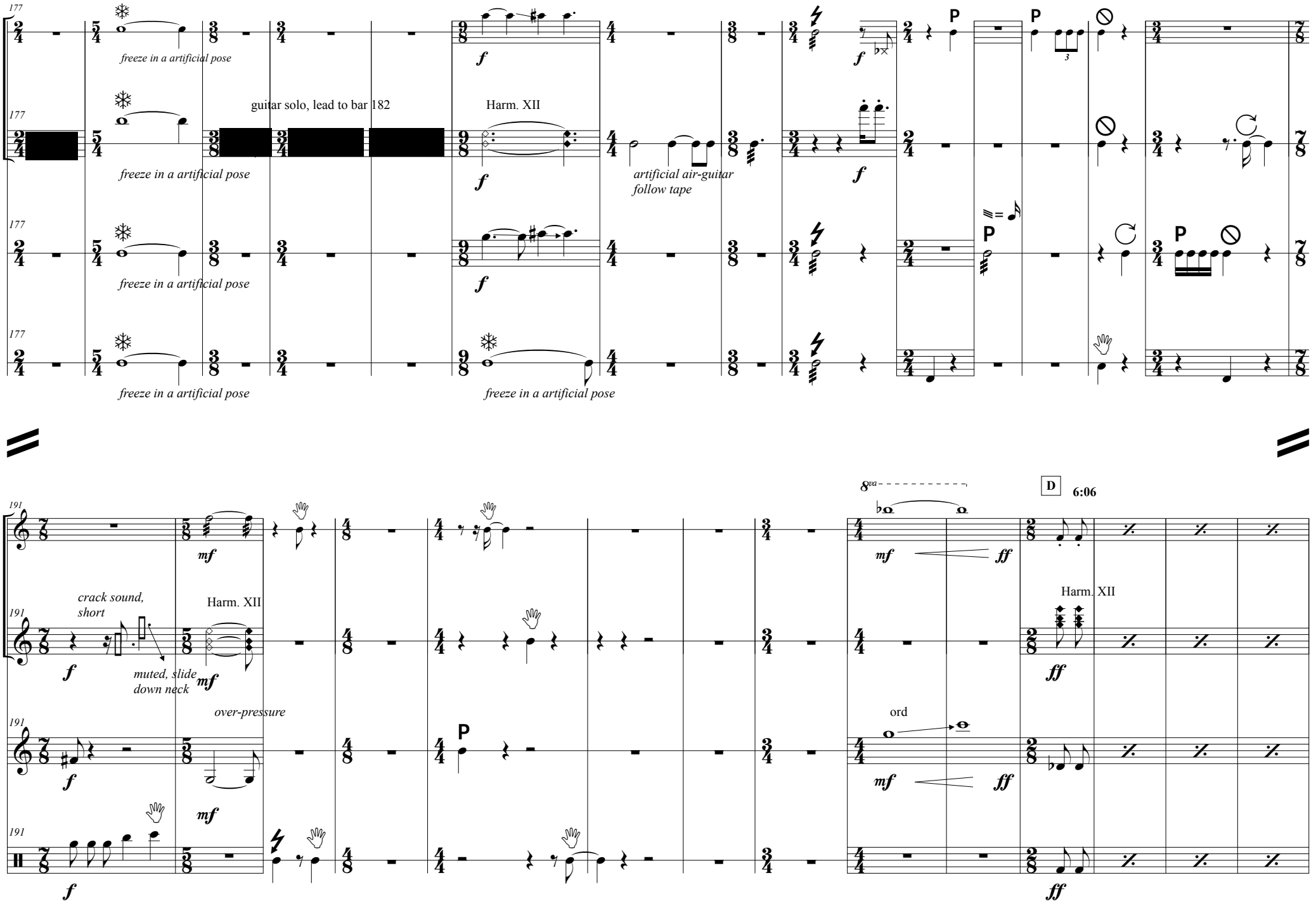

cl
el g
vn
p
Harm. XII
muted
muted, percussive, very short


104
cl
el g
vn
p
muted
muted, percussive, very short
117
repeat cresc.

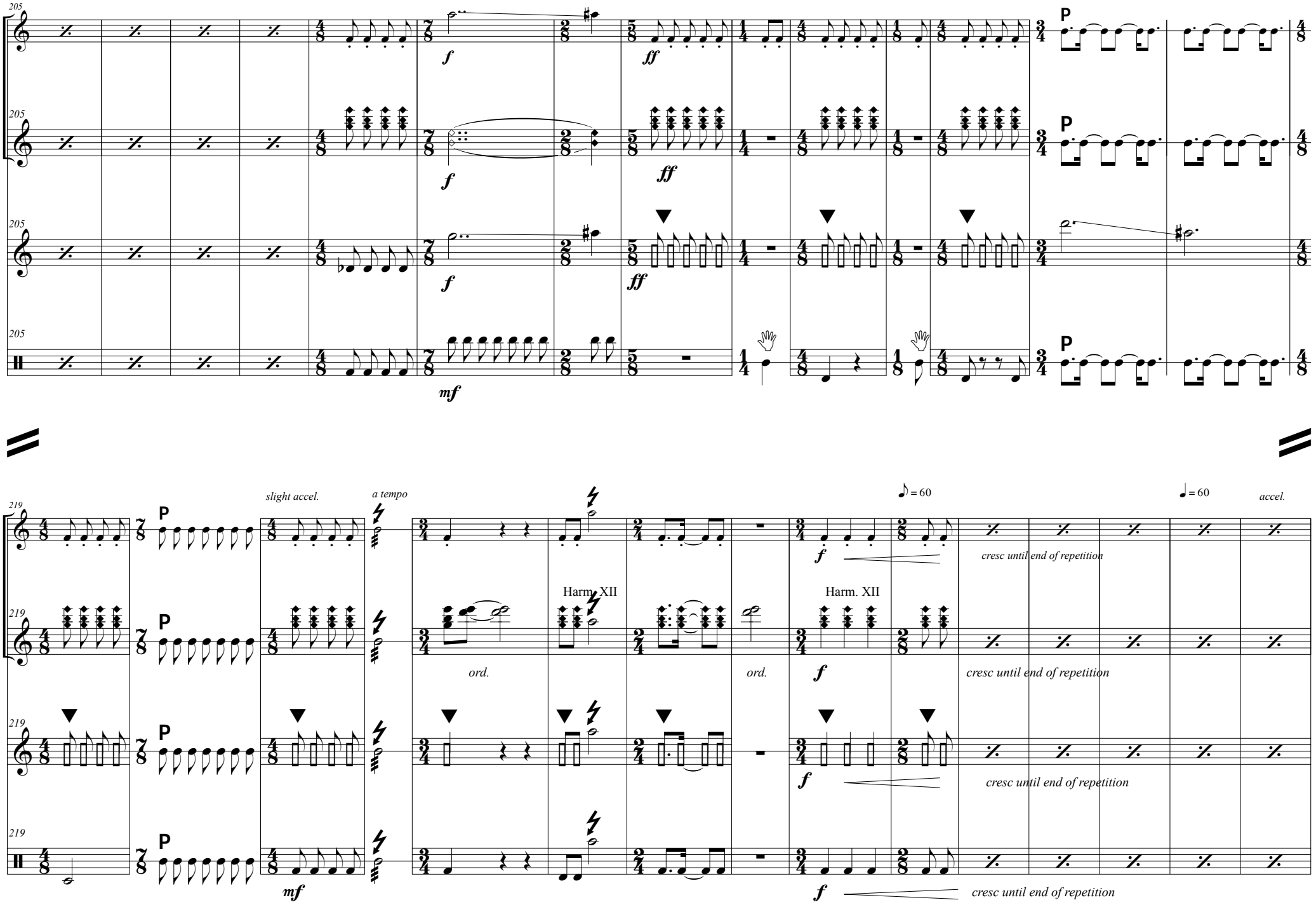

B
4:18
staccato, dry
cl
el g
vn
p
Harm. XII
Harm. XII
Harm. XII
Harm. XII

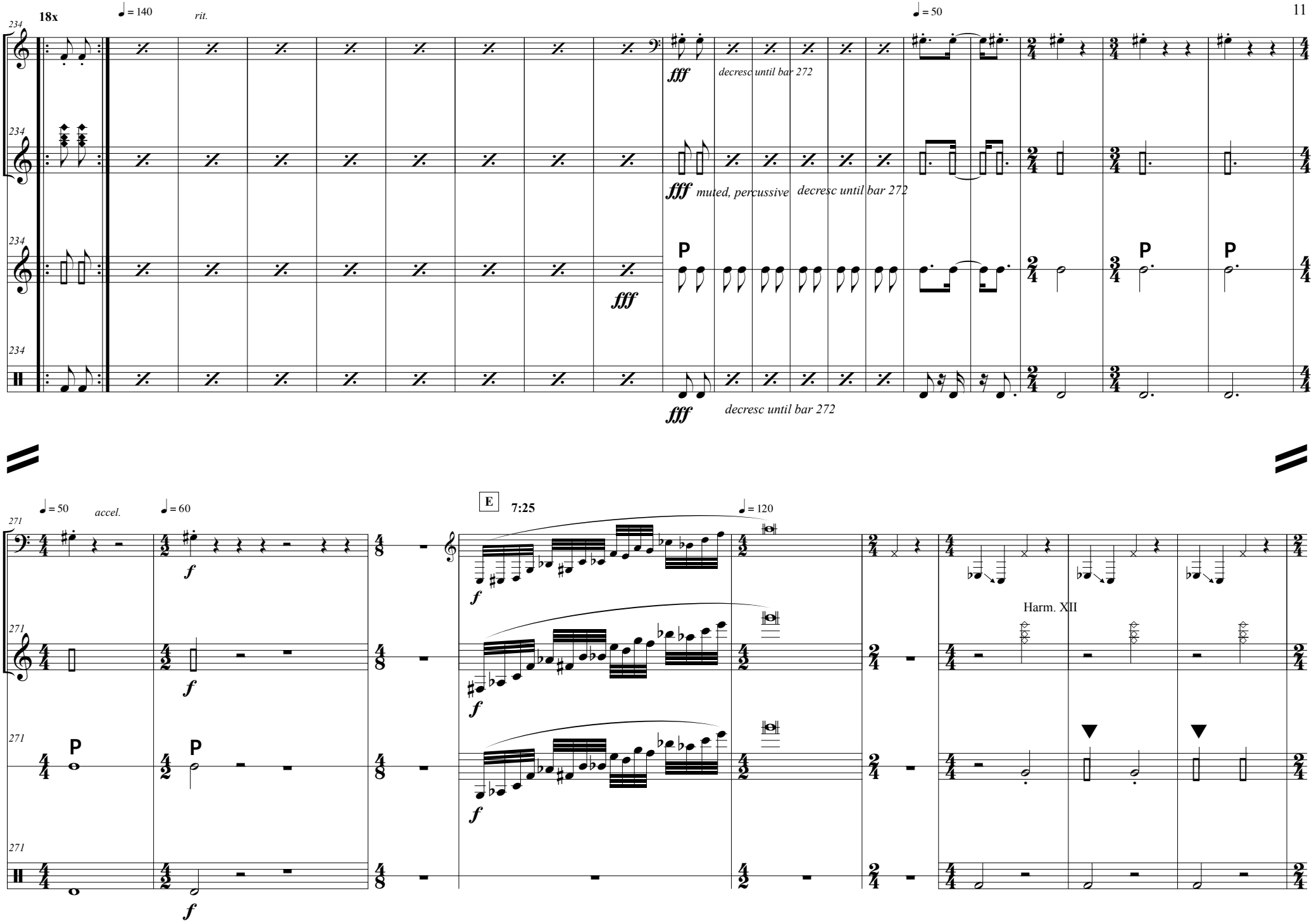
8

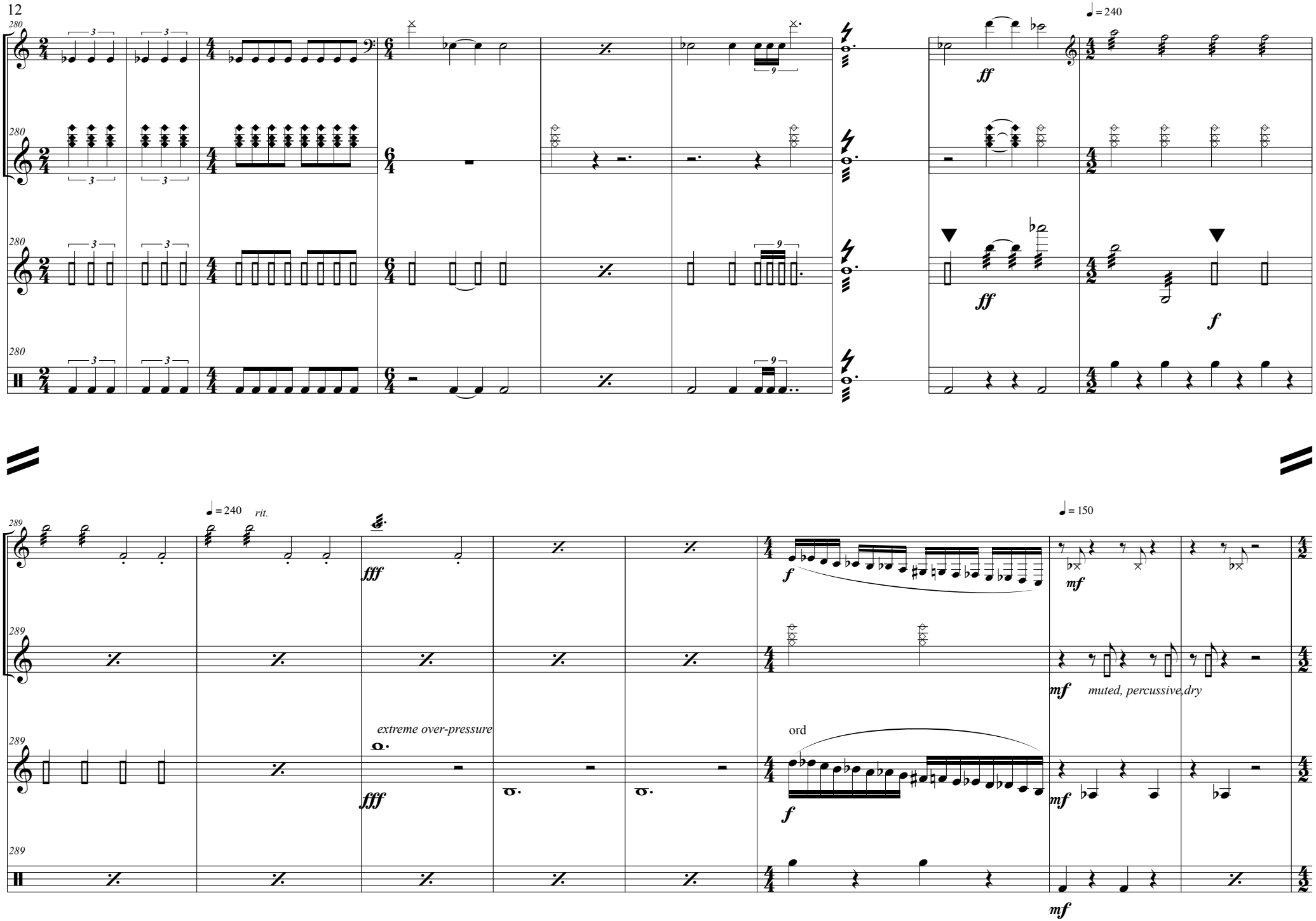

152
cl
el g
vn
p
Harm. XII
pizz.
ord
as fast as possible
on PADs
accel.
a tempo
164
f
mf
p
C
5:26
guitar solo, lead to bar 178
fff

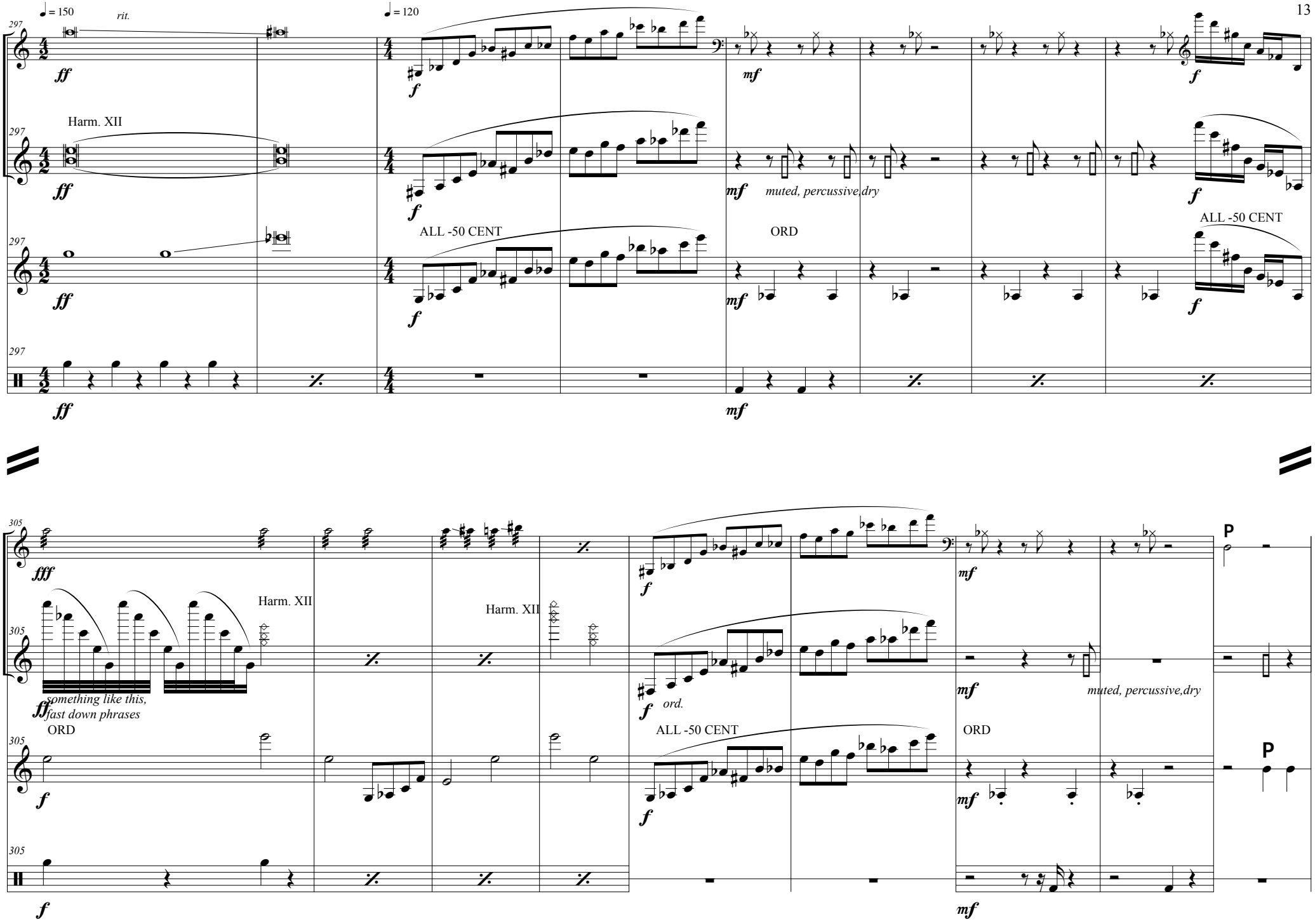

177
cl
el g
vn
p
freeze in a artificial pose
guitar solo, lead to bar 182
Harm. XII
artificial air-guitar
follow tape
191
crack sound,
short
muted, slide
down neck
over-pressure
ord
8va
D
6:06

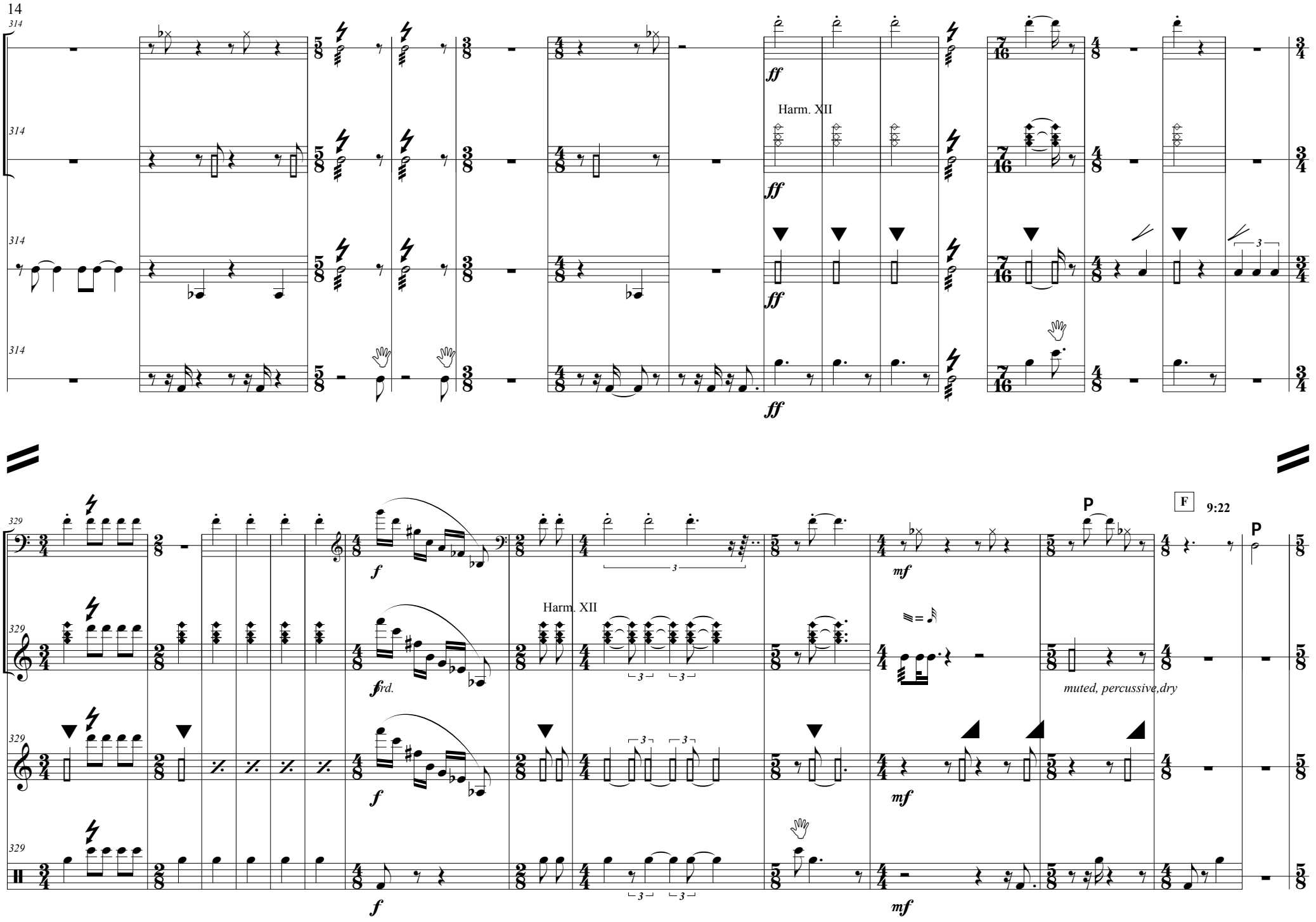
10

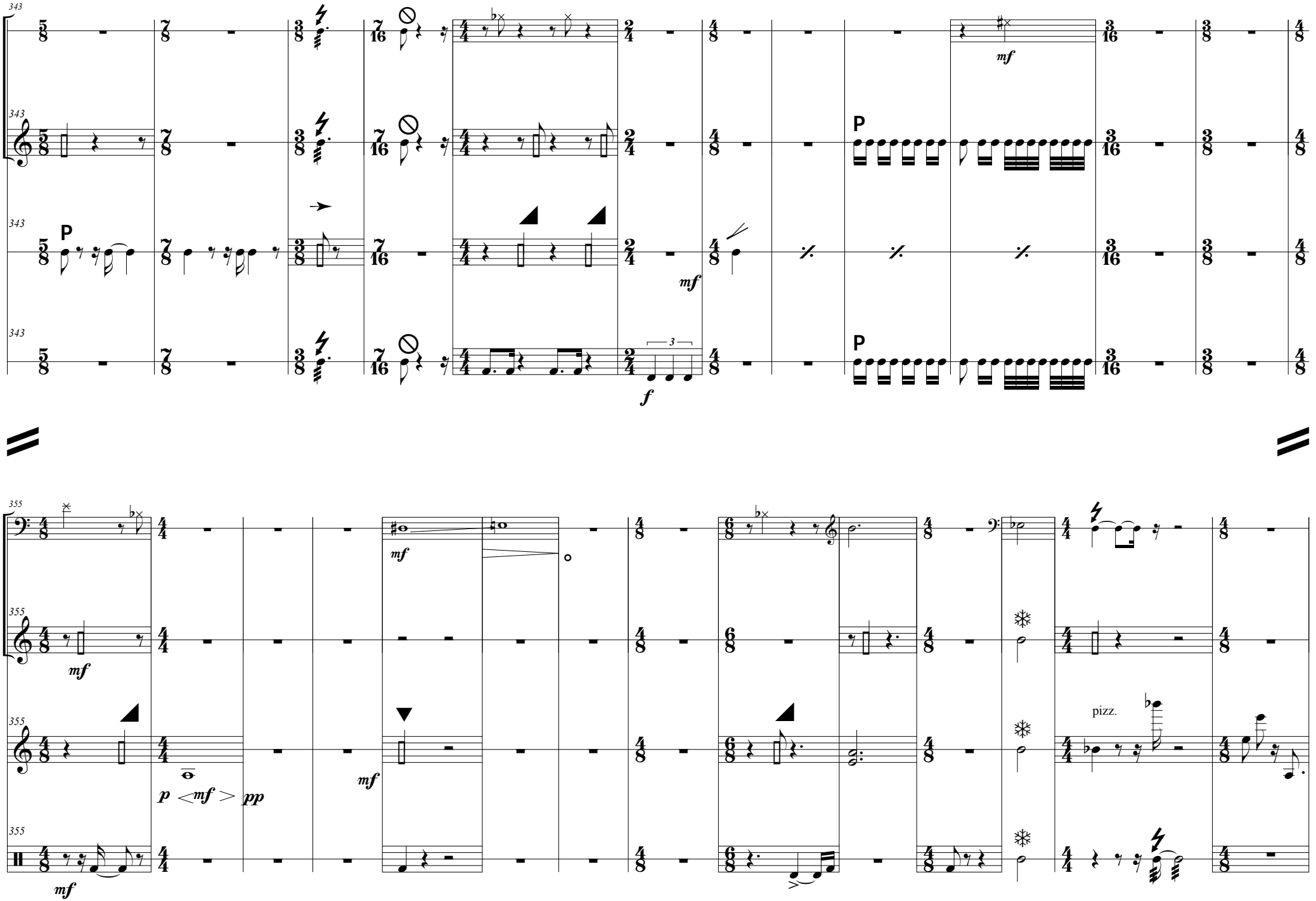

205
cl
el g
vn
p
f
ff
mf
P
219
slight accel.
a tempo
Harm. XII
ord.
= 60
accel.
cresc until end of repetition


18x
♩= 140
rit.
♩= 50
234
cl
el g
vn
p
fff
decresc until bar 272
muted, percussive
P
271
♩= 50
accel.
♩= 60
E
7:25
♩= 120
f
Harm. XII

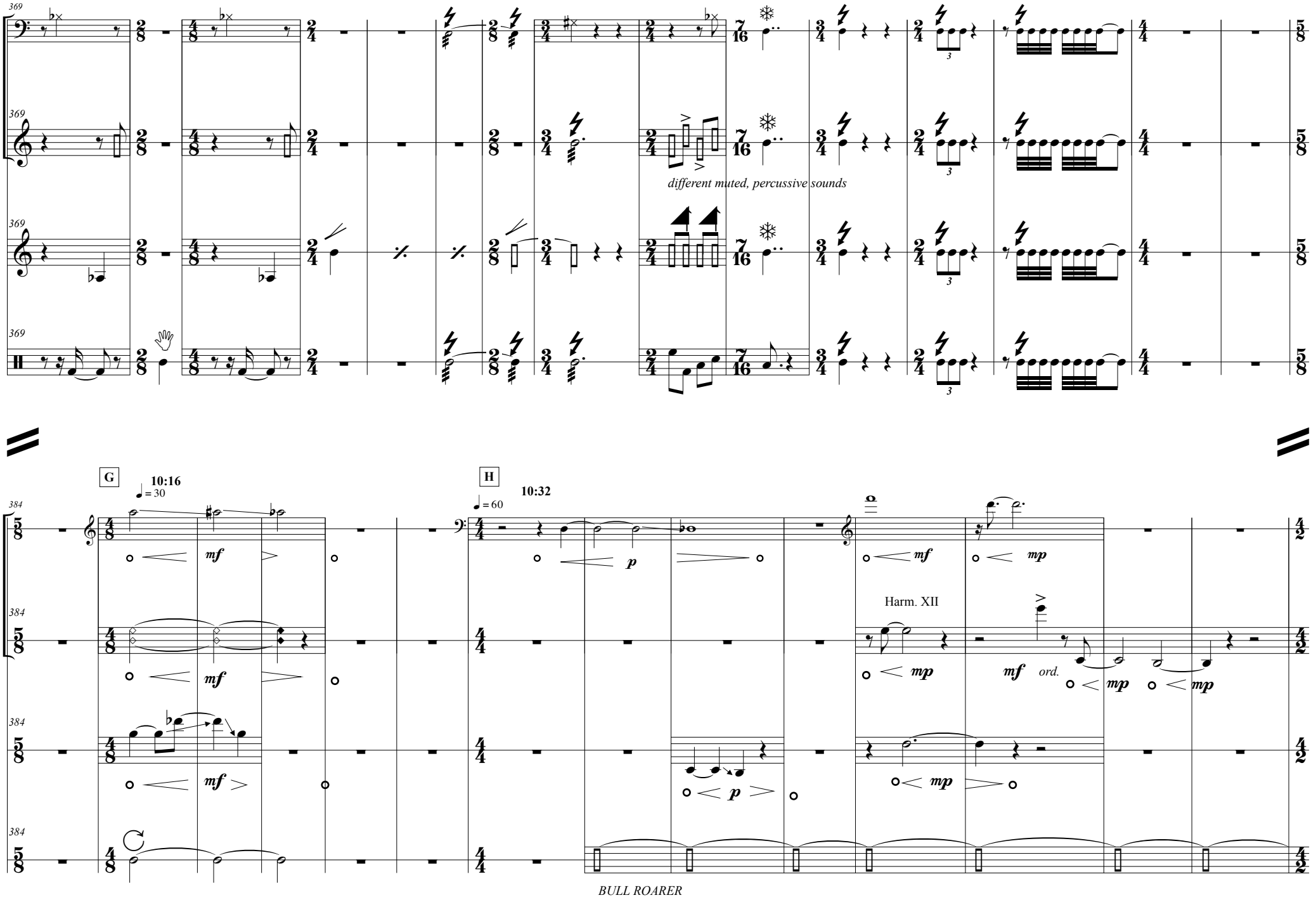

cl
el g
vn
p
280
289
♩ = 240
rit.
♩ = 150
ff
f
fff
mf
muted, percussive, dry
extreme over-pressure
ord

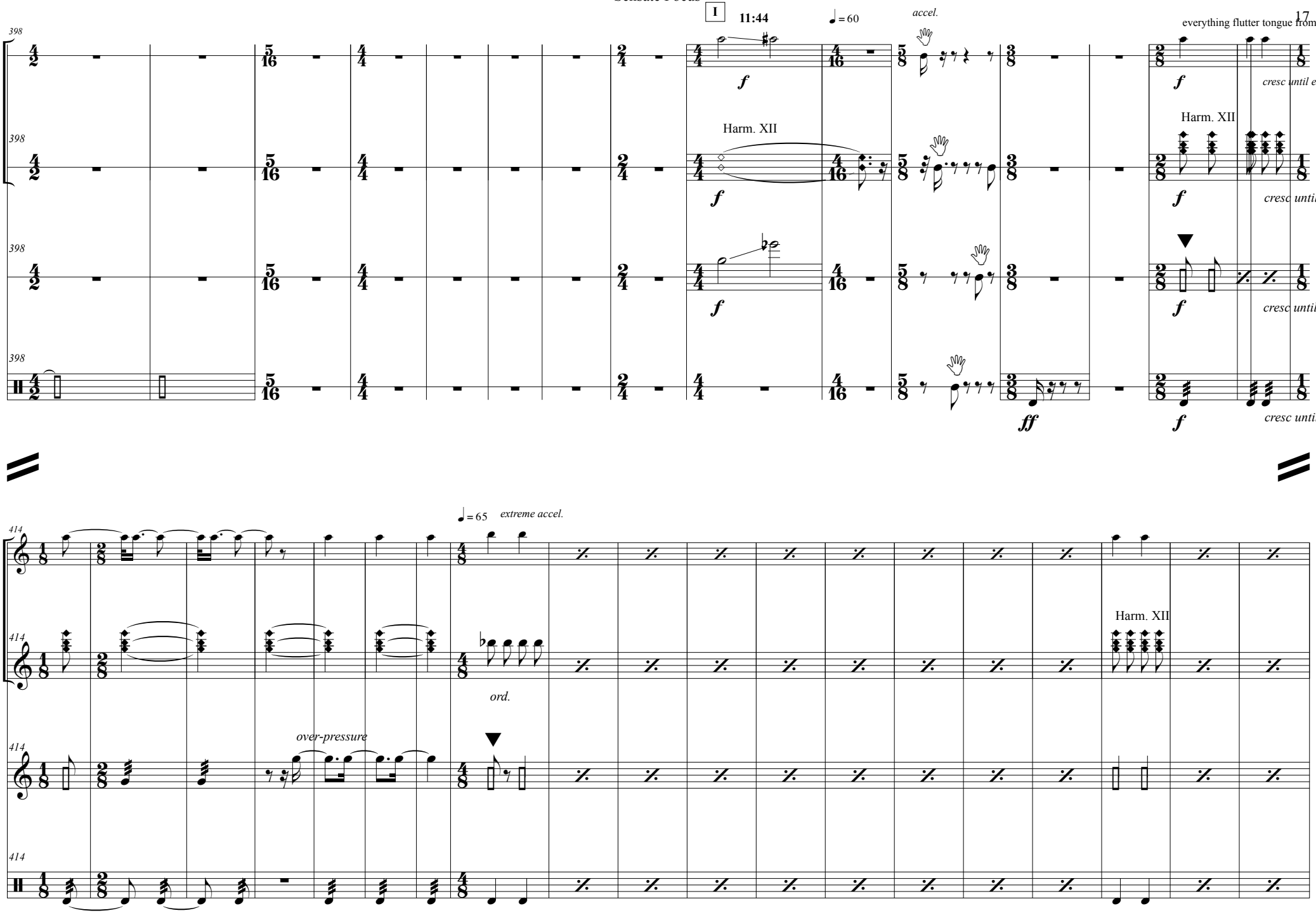

♩ = 150
rit.
♩ = 120
297
cl
el g
vn
p
ff
f
mf
Harm. XII
muted, percussive,dry
ALL -50 CENT
ORD
305
fff
something like this,
fast down phrases
P


314
cl
el g
vn
p
ff
Harm. XII
329
f
frd.
mf
P
F
9:22
muted, percussive,dry


343
cl
el g
vn
p
P
mf
f
3
355
pizz.
pp

16


cl
el g
vn
p
different muted, percussive sounds
G
10:16
H
10:32
Harm. XII
ord.
BULL ROARER


I
11:44
♩= 60
accel.
everything flutter tongue from here on
398
cl
el g
vn
p
Harm. XII
f
ff
cresc until end of repetit
cresc until end of rep
414
♩= 65
extreme accel.
ord.
over-pressure

18

64x

♩= 999

J

♩= 128

cl

el g

vn

p

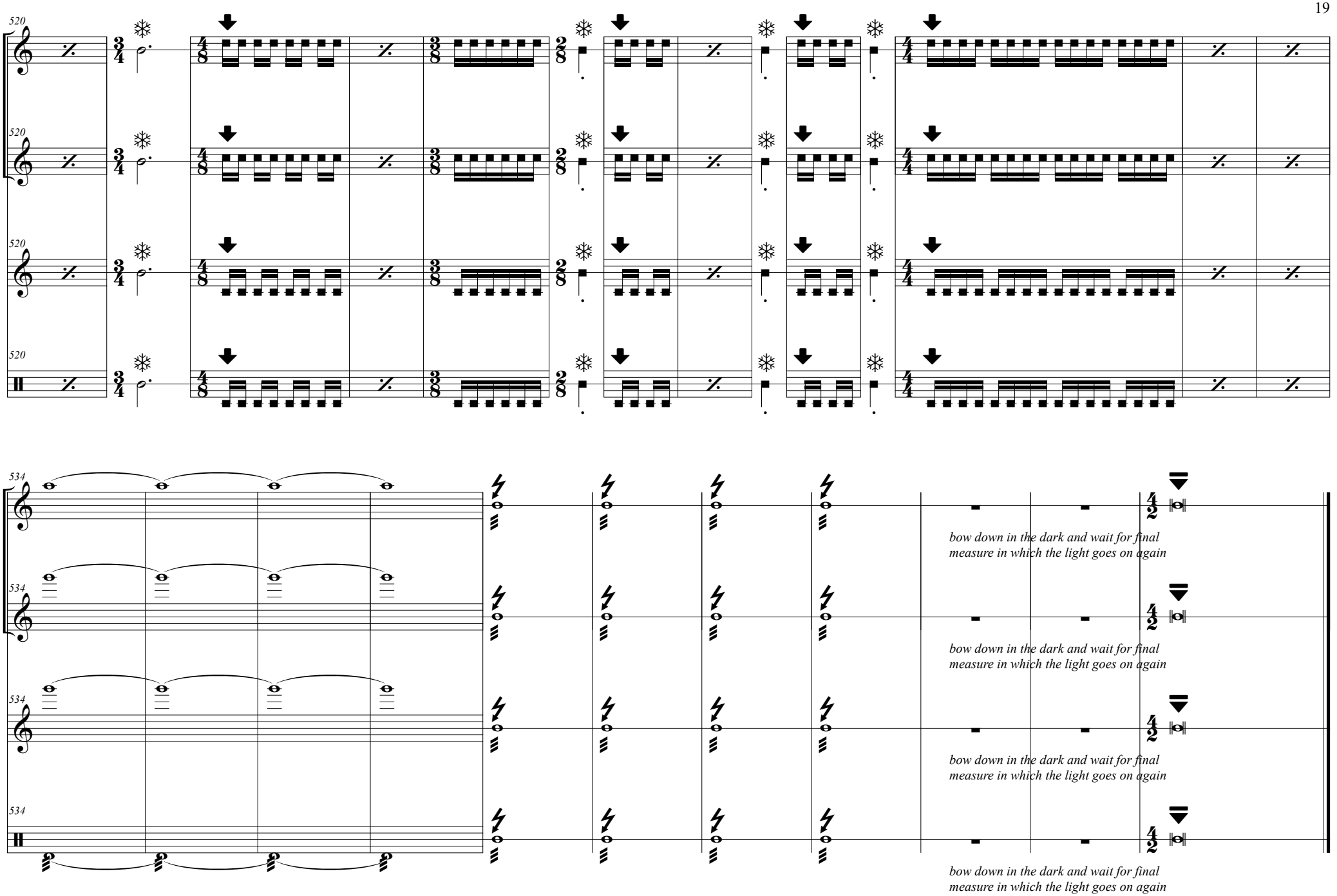
433

ord.

fffff

507

fff as wild, fast, loud ad hardcore as possible


520
cl
520
el g
520
vn
520
p
534
cl
534
el g
534
vn
534
p
bow down in the dark and wait for final measure in which the light goes on again
bow down in the dark and wait for final measure in which the light goes on again
bow down in the dark and wait for final measure in which the light goes on again
bow down in the dark and wait for final measure in which the light goes on again