# five songs for kate and vanessa

violin, cello, piano

I. higher
II. corner cows
III. to&fro/in&out
IV. Courante
V. jig

for Kate Stenberg and Vanessa Ruotolo

Larry Polansky
2019

*five songs for kate and vanessa* was written in 2018–19, for Kate Stenberg (violin), Vanessa Ruotolo (cello), and Amy Beal (piano). This trio premiered the piece on December 11th, at the Center for New Music in San Francisco, CA. The second performance took place two days later (Dec. 13th) at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Each of the five "songs" is based, sometimes quite loosely, on a pre-existing song or piece.

- *higher* and *jig* are based on Ruth Crawford Seeger's piano arrangements of *The Higher Up the Cherry Tree* and *Sweet Betsy from Pike*, respectively, from her *22 American Folk Songs* (1936–38)
- *corner cows* is based on my round *reconnaissance*, from my booklet *Another Round of Cohase Rounds* (2018). The round appears in its original form in the piece.
- *in&out/to&fro* and *courante* are based on sections of Johann Jakob Froberger's keyboard work *Variatione Auff die Maÿerin*. The piano part in the former is taken literally from the original Froberger, as are all three instrumental parts of *Courante* (although in Courante, each of the three parts is, independently, stretched in time).

I am grateful to the Kate Stenberg, Vanessa Ruotolo, and Amy Beal for their work on the piece, providing valuable feedback and ideas throughout its composition and rehearsal process.

Larry Polansky
Santa Cruz, CA
12/16/19

# five songs for kate and vanessa

violin and cello

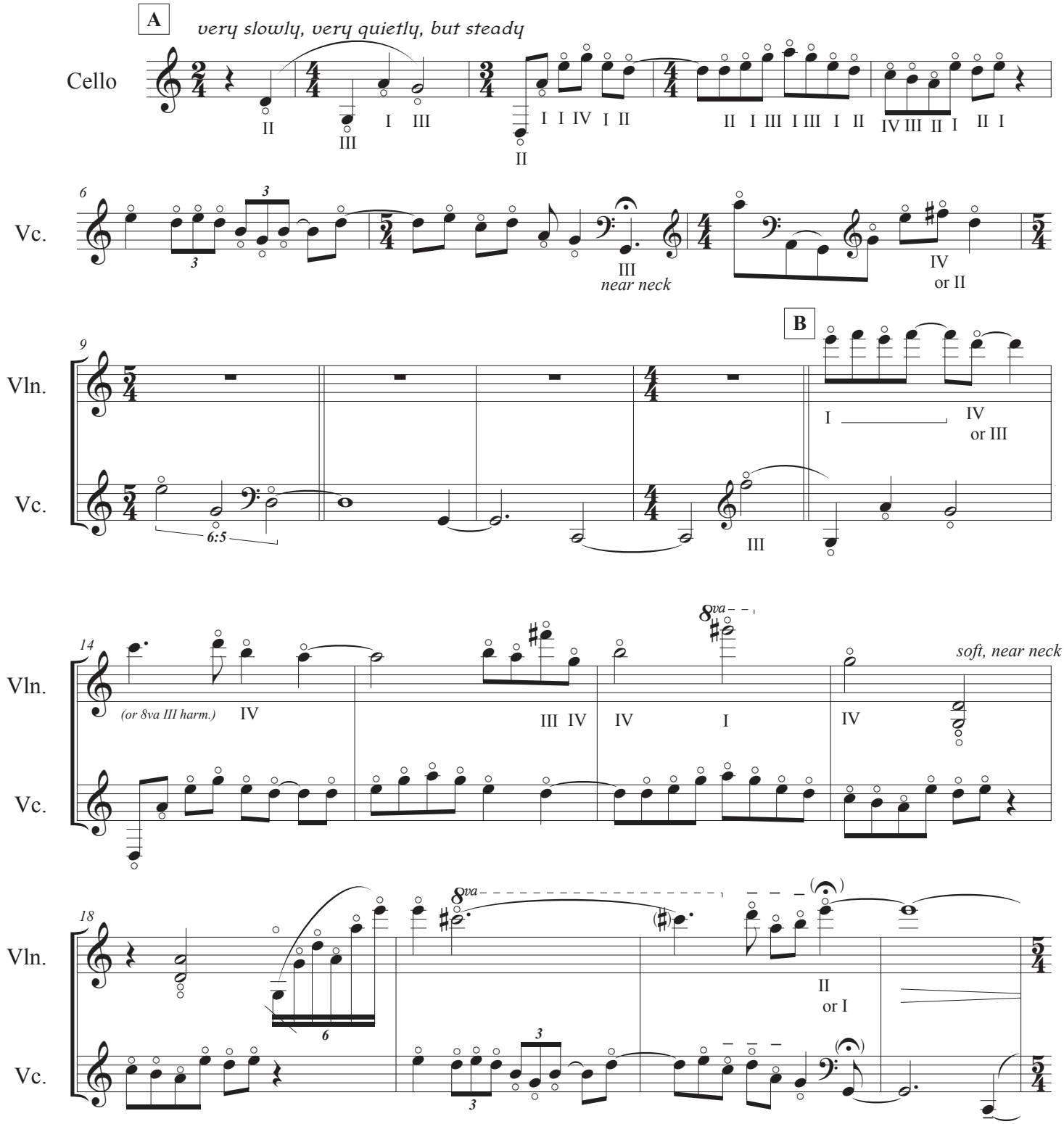
## I. higher

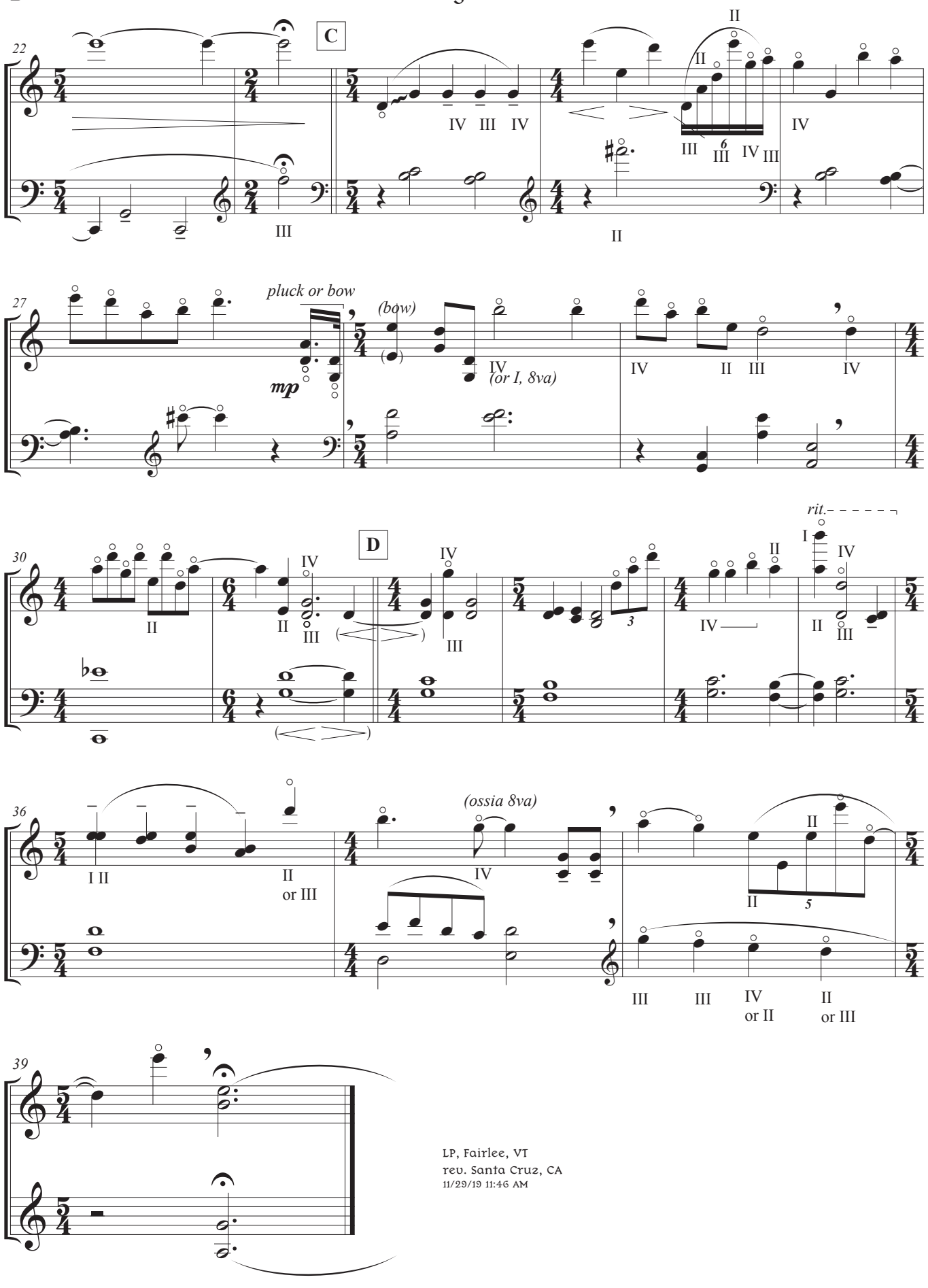
for Kate Stenberg and Vanessa Ruotolo

Larry Polansky
2019

# higher

polansky



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# five songs for kate and vanessa

violin and cello

## II. corner cows

for Kate Stenberg and Vanessa Ruotolo

Larry Polansky
2019

# corner cows

polansky

*Quickly, generally, lightly*

**1** *Prelude*

Violin

Cello

*not too loud, insistent*

*Repeat any number of times, move to next measure on cue*

*(tie, last x only)*

*(Ab, last x only)*

4

Vln.

Vc.

6

7

Vln.

Vc.

3

**2**

*gently*

*Repeat any number of times.*

11

Vln.

Vc.

I II

*bow*

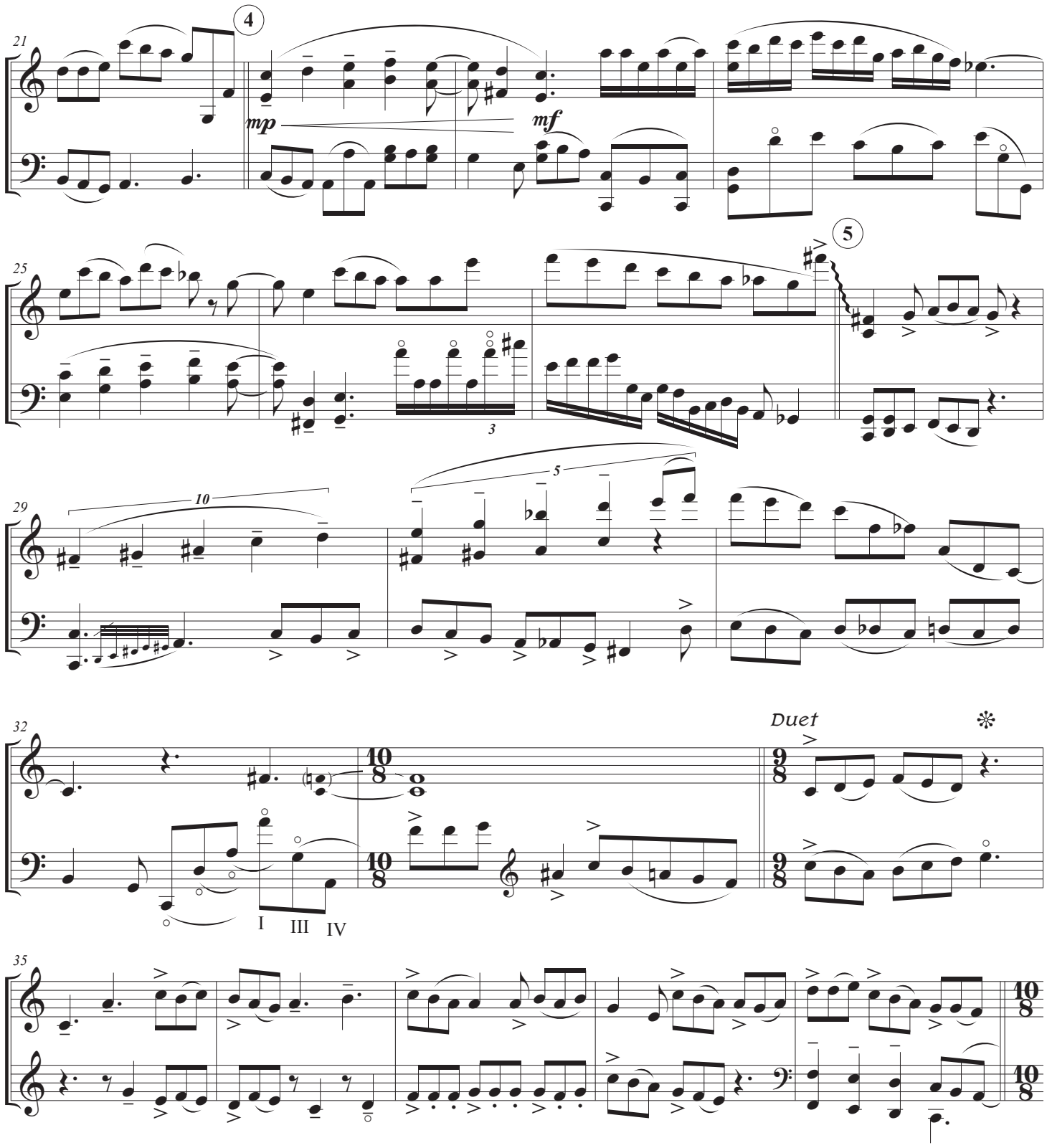
*(2x tie)*

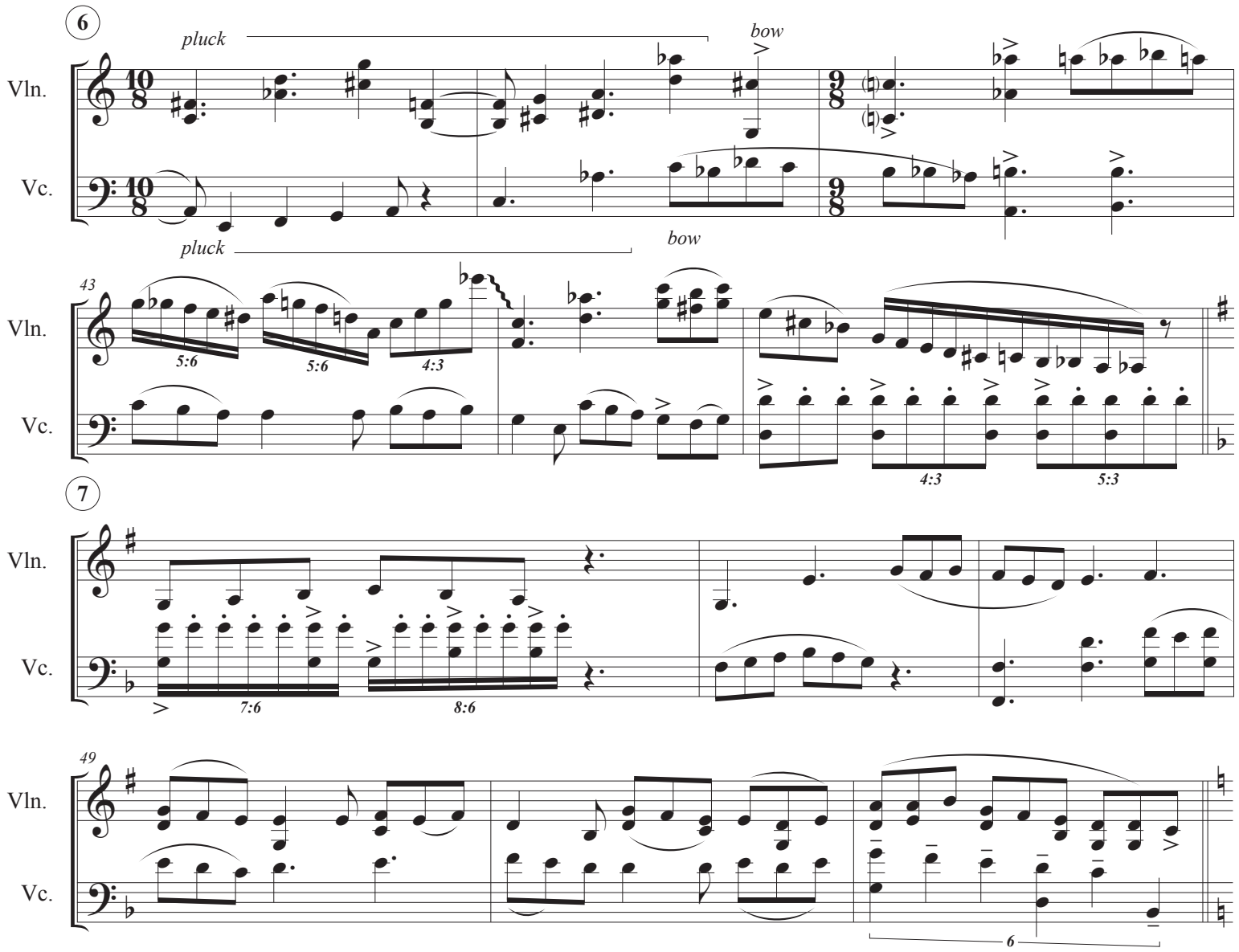
**3** *pluck*

Vln.

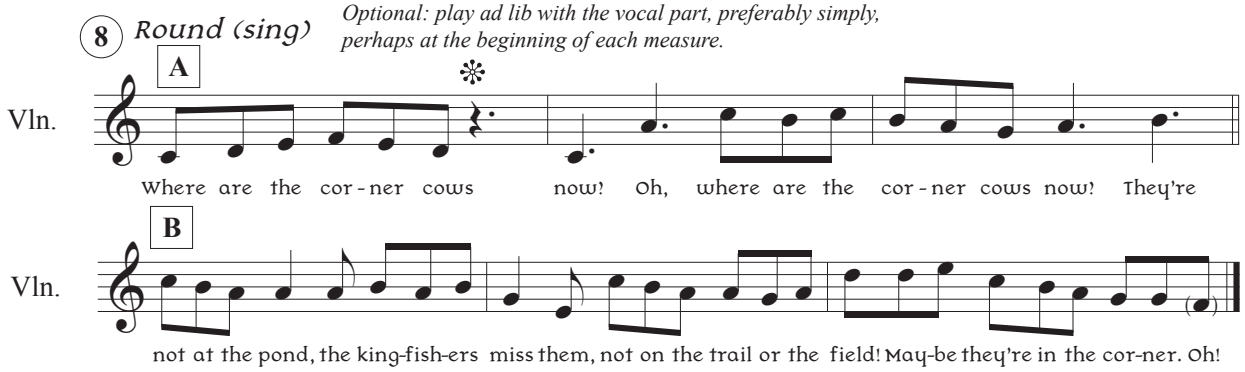
Vc.

❊ *where this sign occurs, performers may clap, shout, or make any noise, with their voice or instrument, or not*

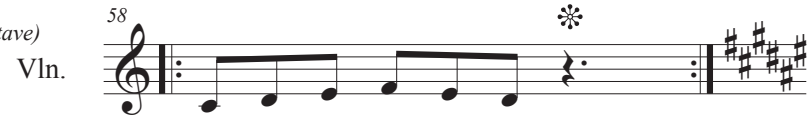

21
4
Vln.
Vc.
mp
mf
25
5
3
29
10
5
32
Duet
I III IV
35

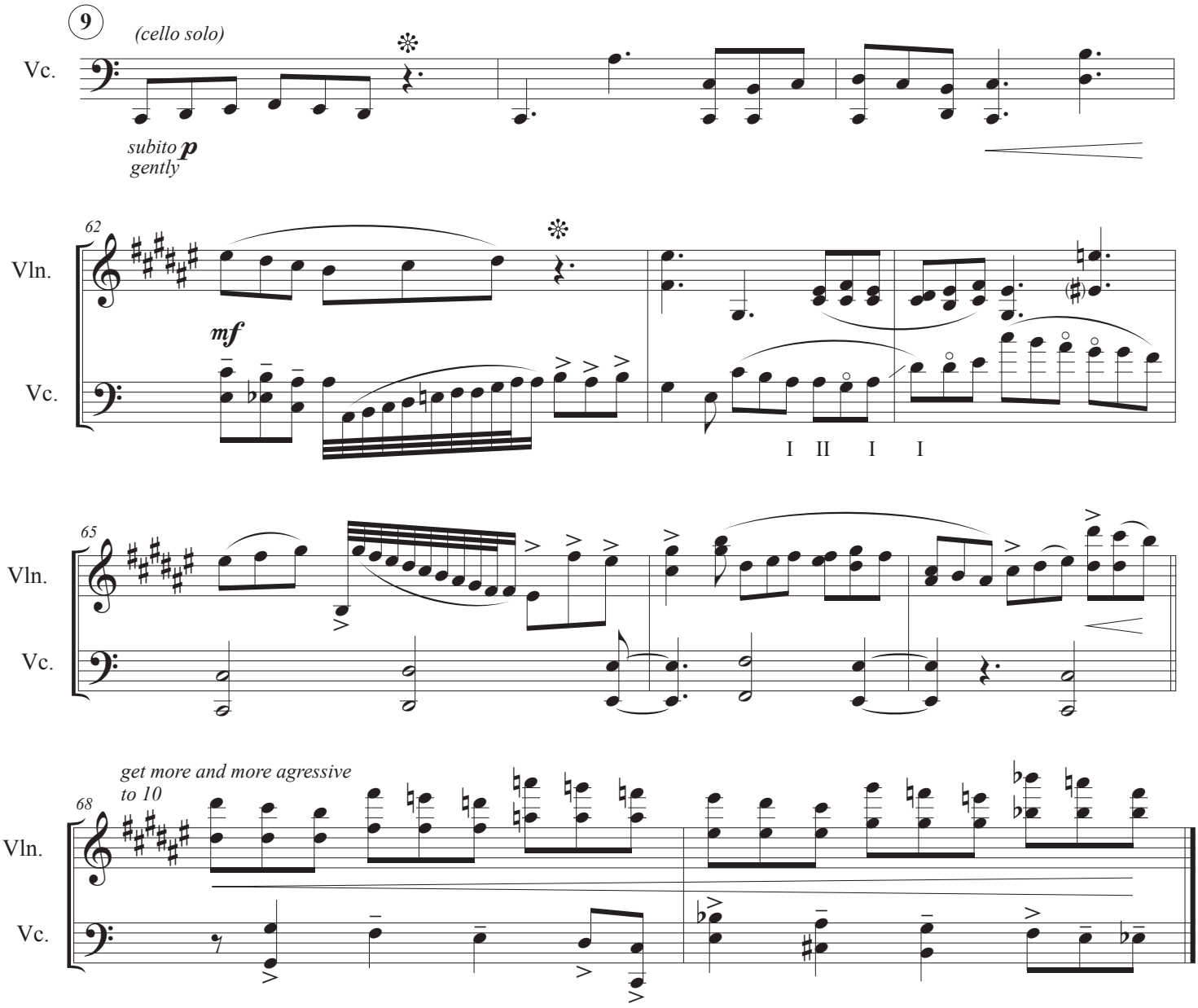


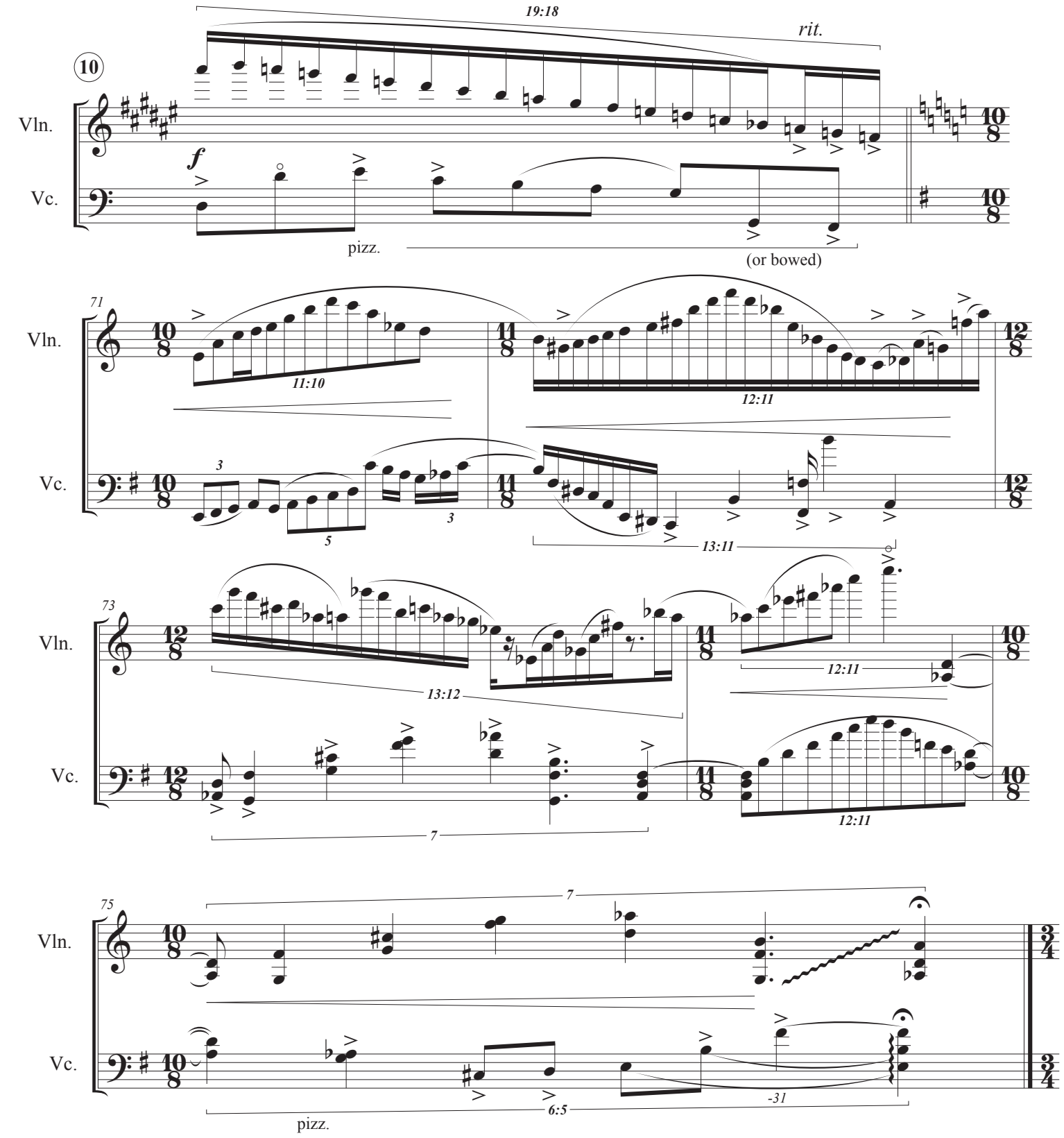

*Sing as a two-part round: once in unison, and then as a round several times,*
*ending with voice B singing the second half solo.*
*Optional: play ad lib with the vocal part, preferably simply,*
*perhaps at the beginning of each measure.*

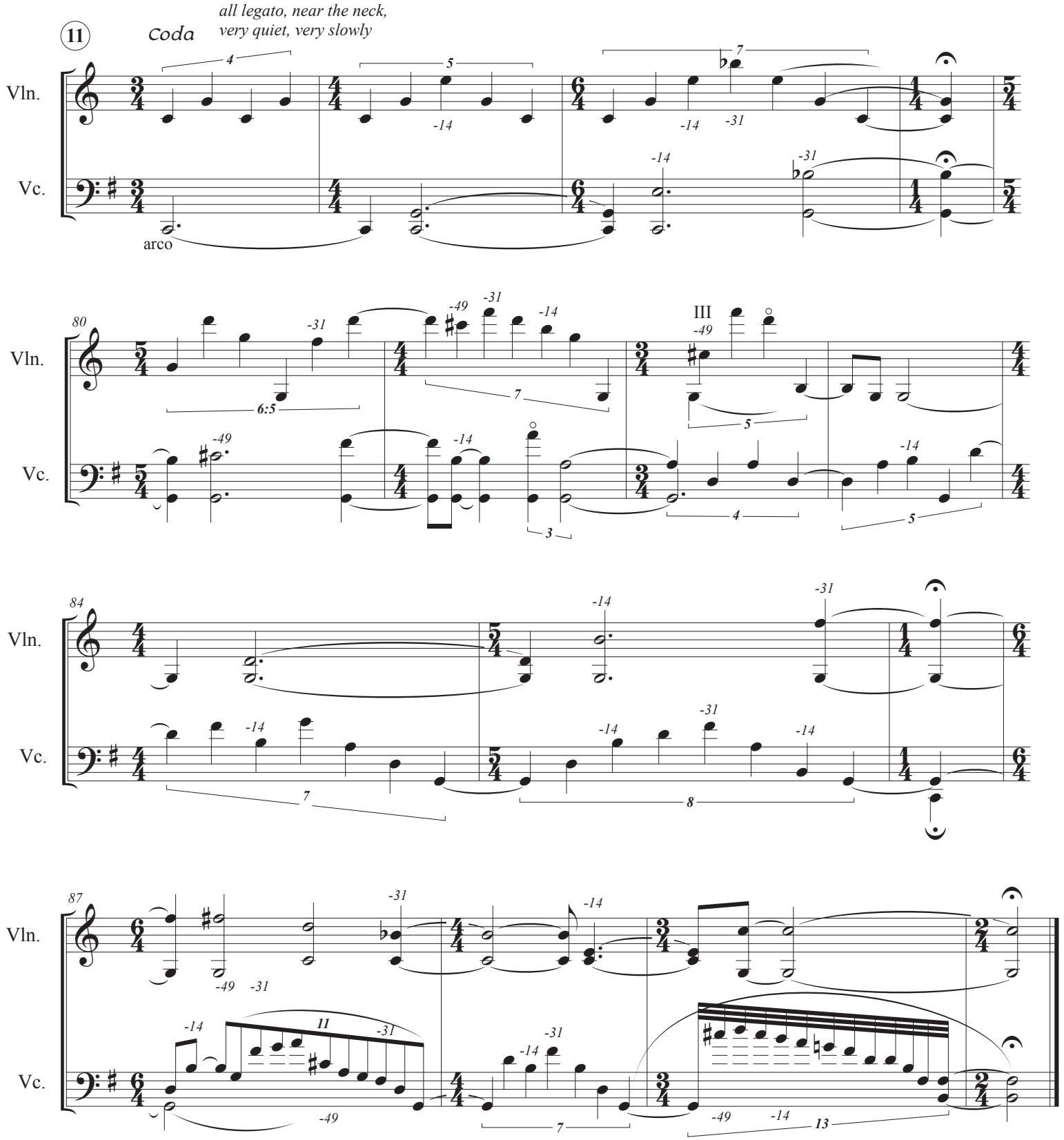



*Repeat any number of times,*
*always on the 8th pulse.*
*Transpose freely (or not) each time (any key, any octave)*
*Freely alter the final rest to be 1, 2, or 3 8th notes,*
*(so as to phase the pattern differently).*




9
(cello solo)
Vc.
subito p
gently
62
Vln.
mf
Vc.
I II I I
65
Vln.
Vc.
get more and more agressive
to 10
68
Vln.
Vc.


10
19:18
rit.
Vln.
Vc.
f
pizz.
(or bowed)
71
11:10
12:11
13:11
3
5
73
13:12
12:11
7
75
-31
6:5
pizz.




LP, 8/24/18
Fairlee, VT
rev. Santa Cruz, 12/10/19, 4:03 PM

# five songs for kate and vanessa

violin, cello, piano

## III. to&fro/in&out

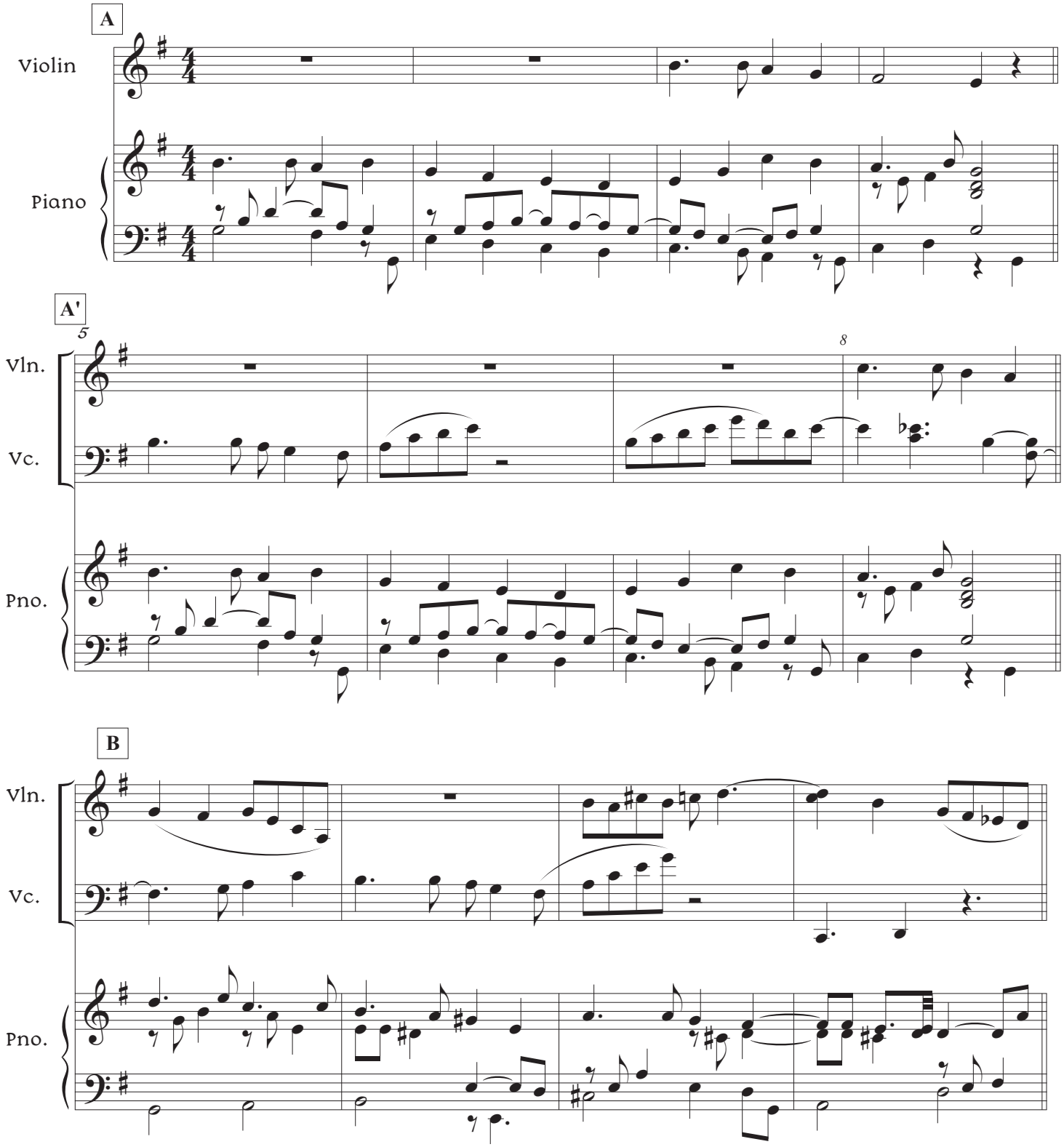
for Kate Stenberg and Vanessa Ruotolo

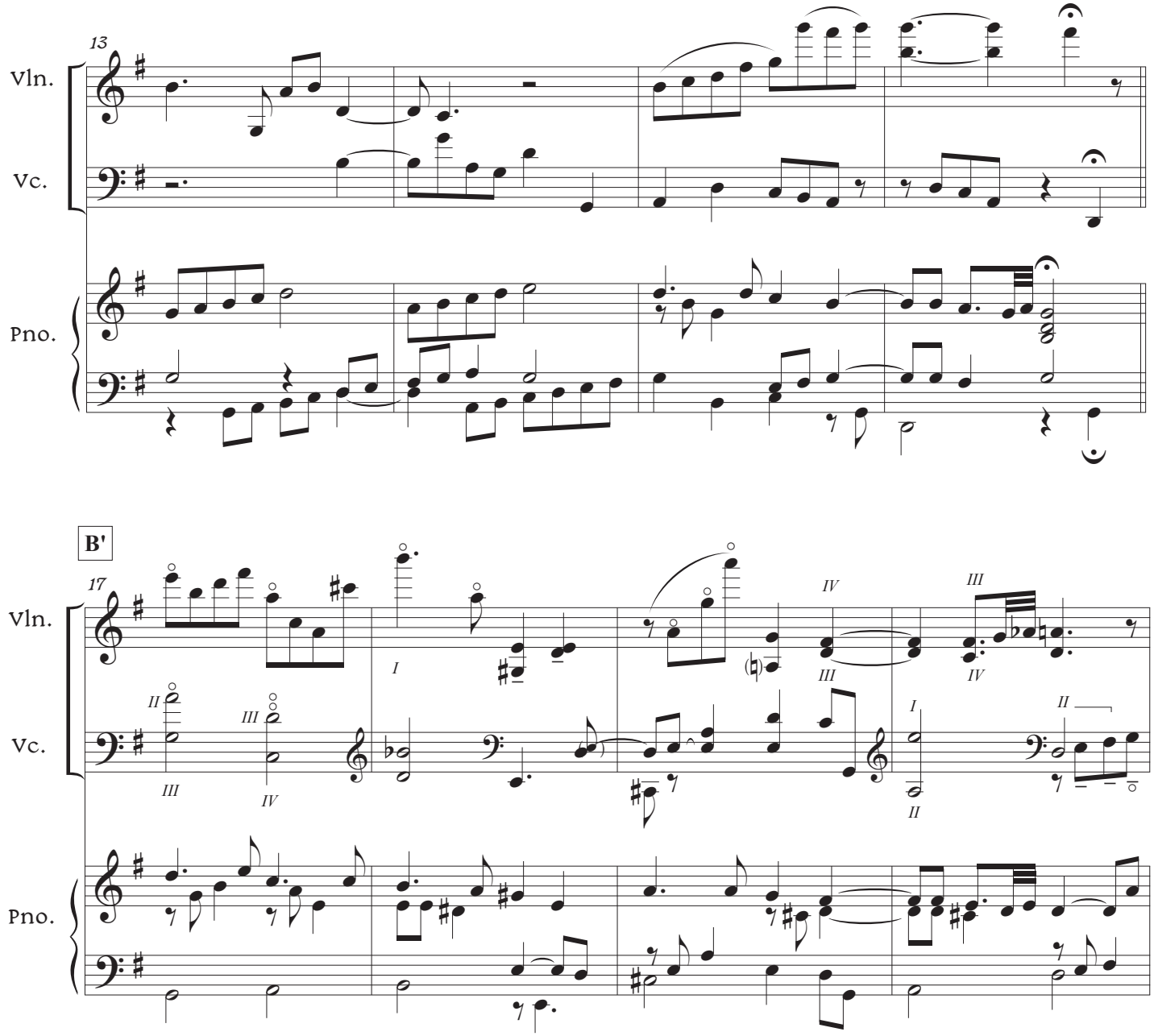
Larry Polansky
2019

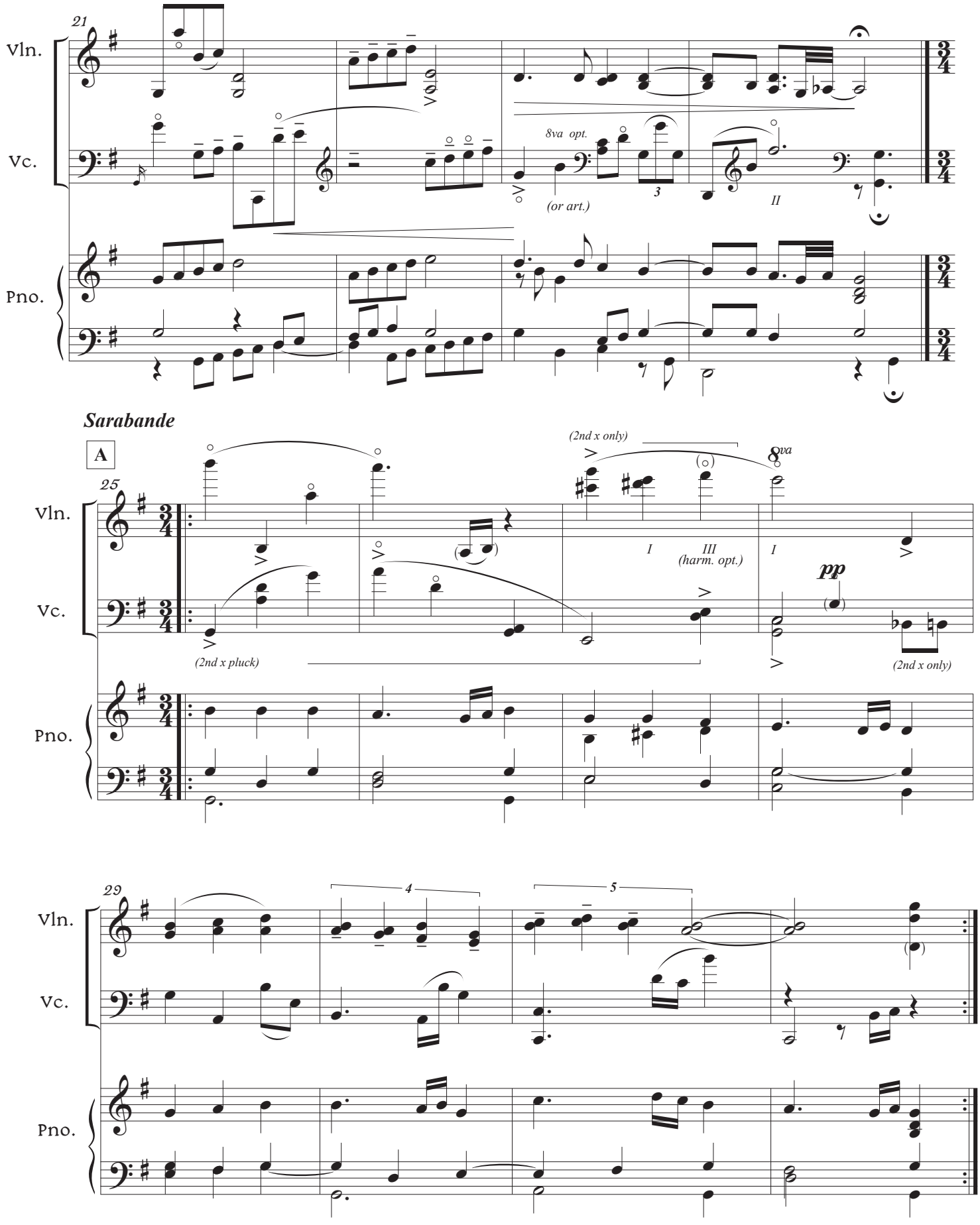
# 2&fro/in&out

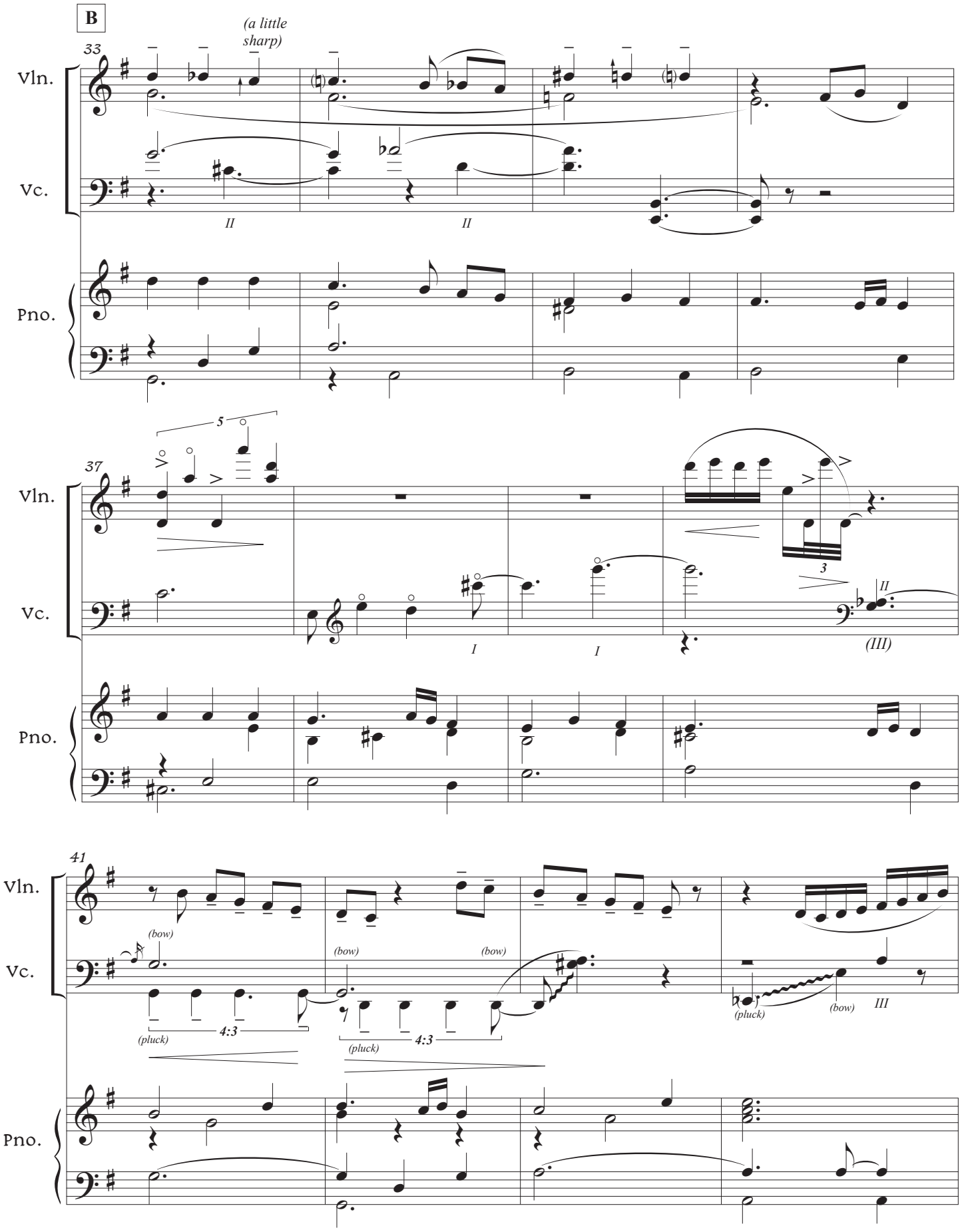
violin, cello, piano

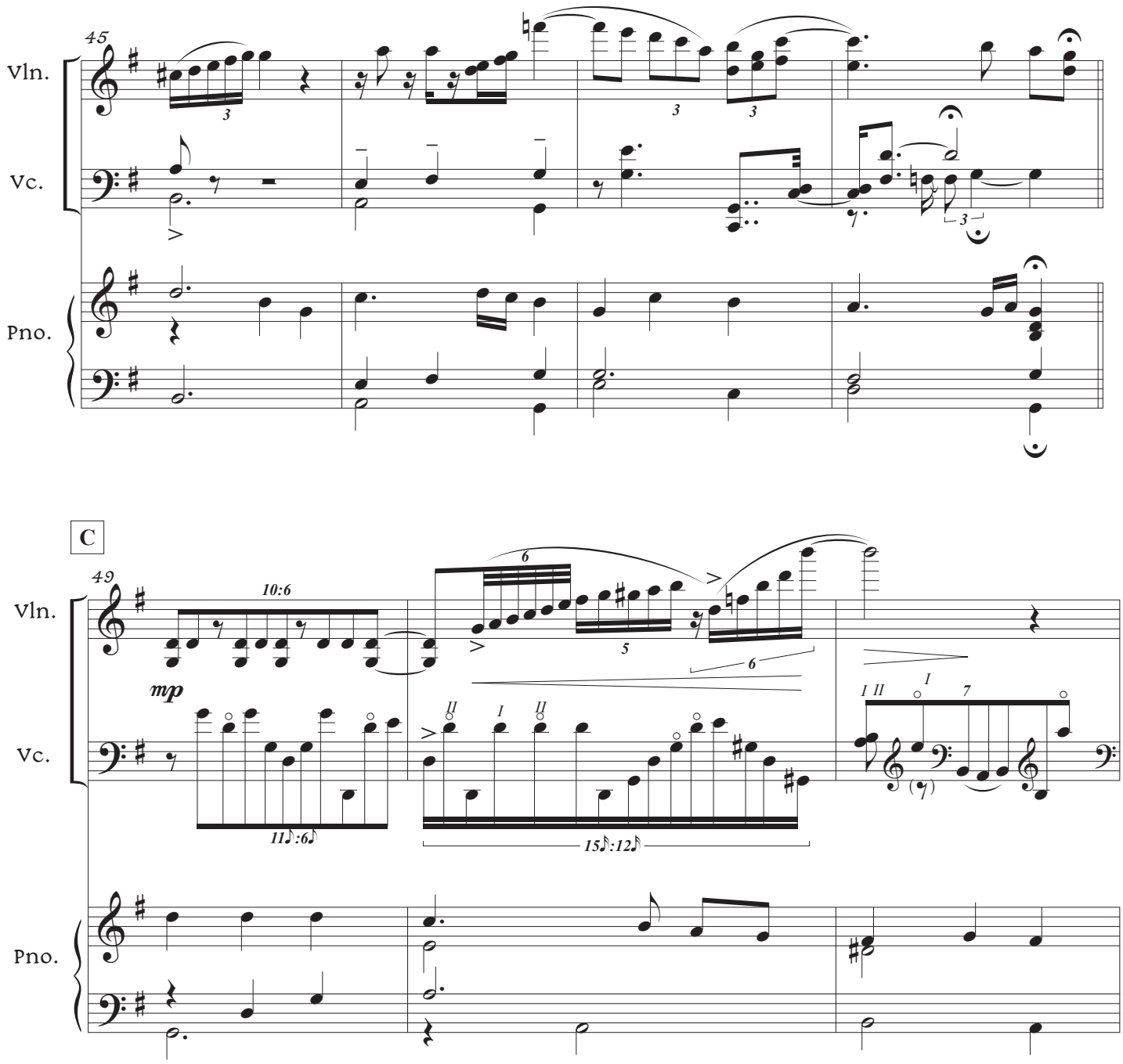
polansky

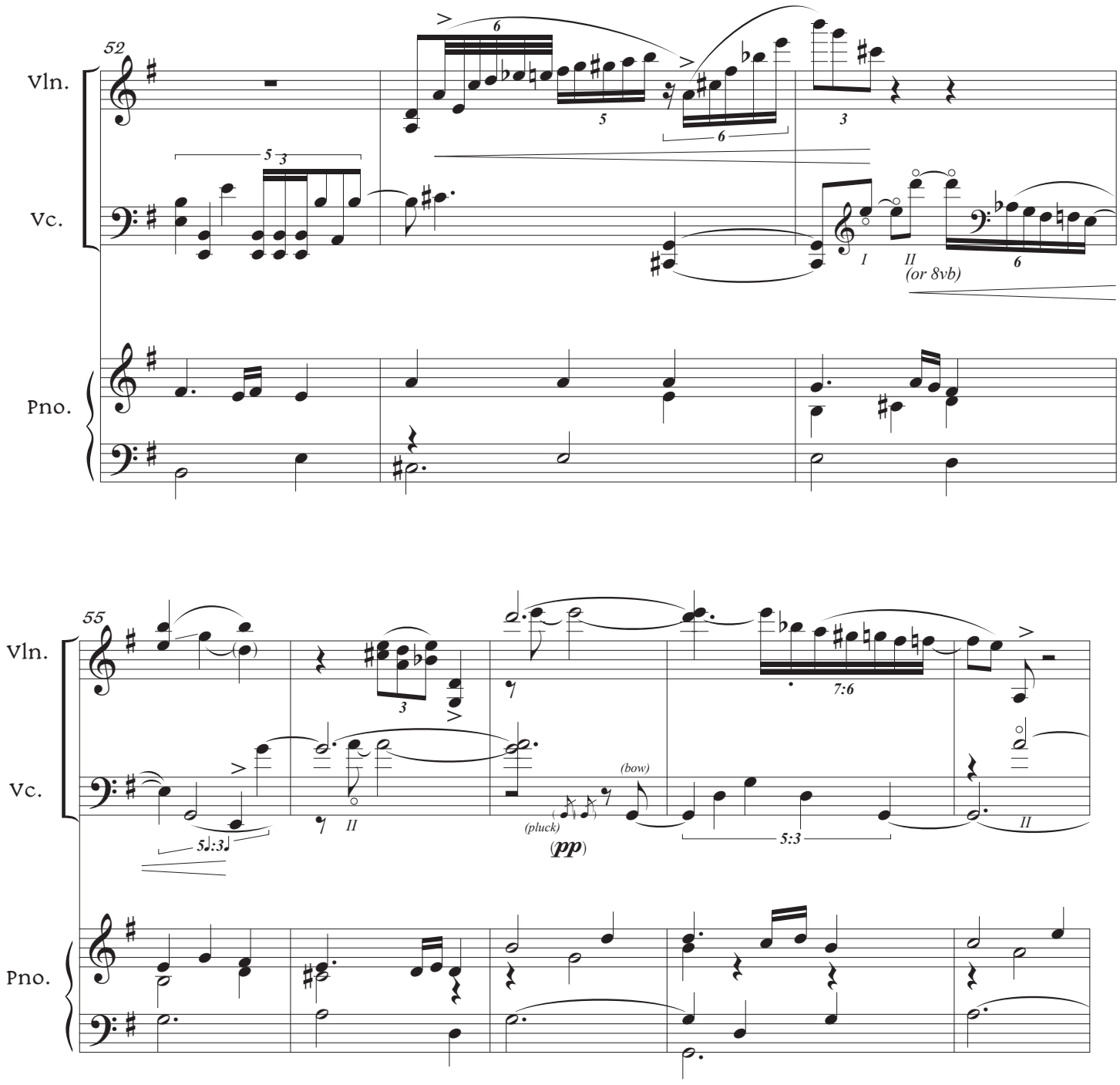


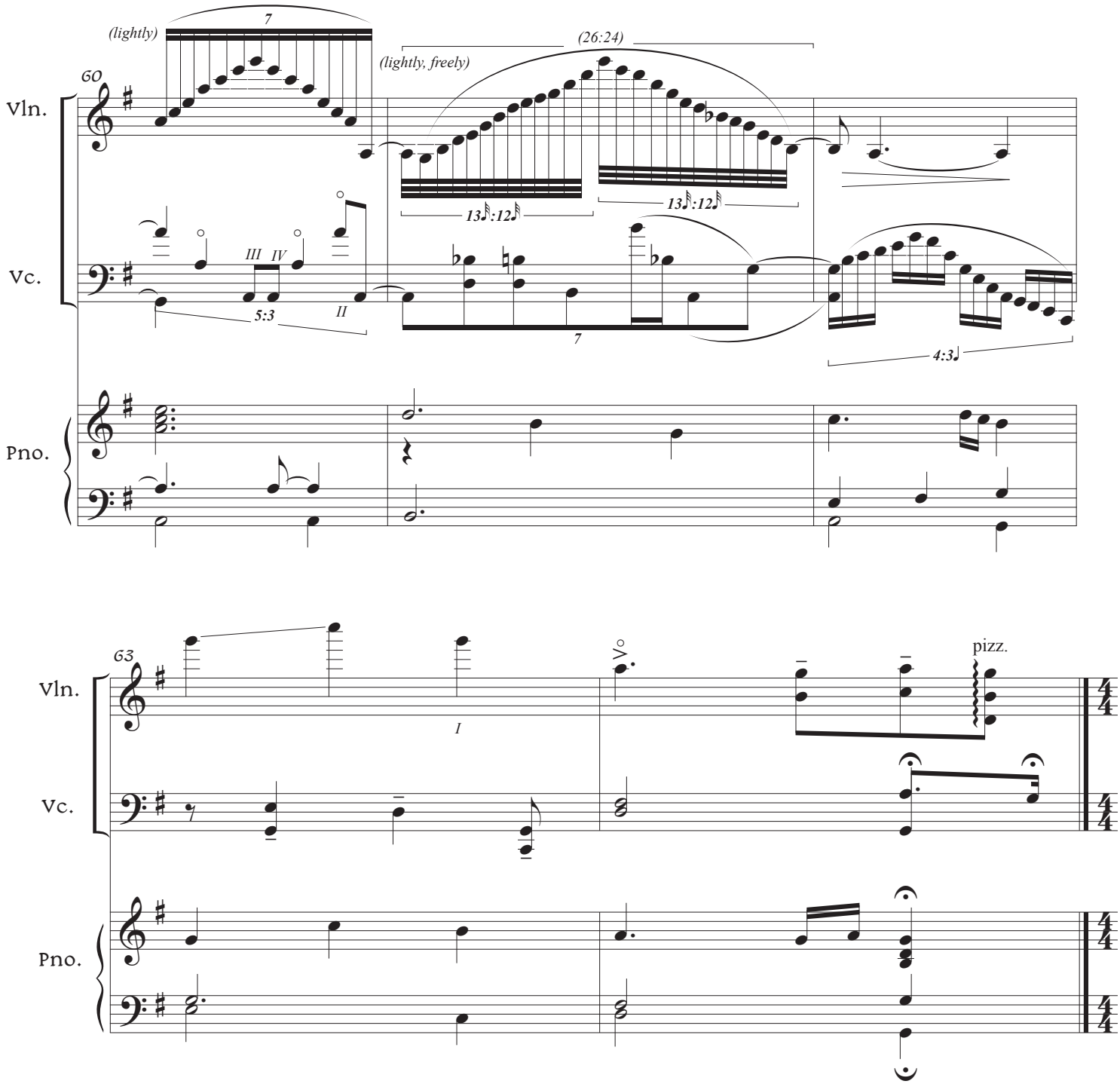

13
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
B'
17
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
I
II
III
IV


21
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
8va opt.
(or art.)
3
II
Sarabande
A
25
(2nd x only)
8va
I
III
(harm. opt.)
I
pp
(2nd x pluck)
(2nd x only)
29
4
5

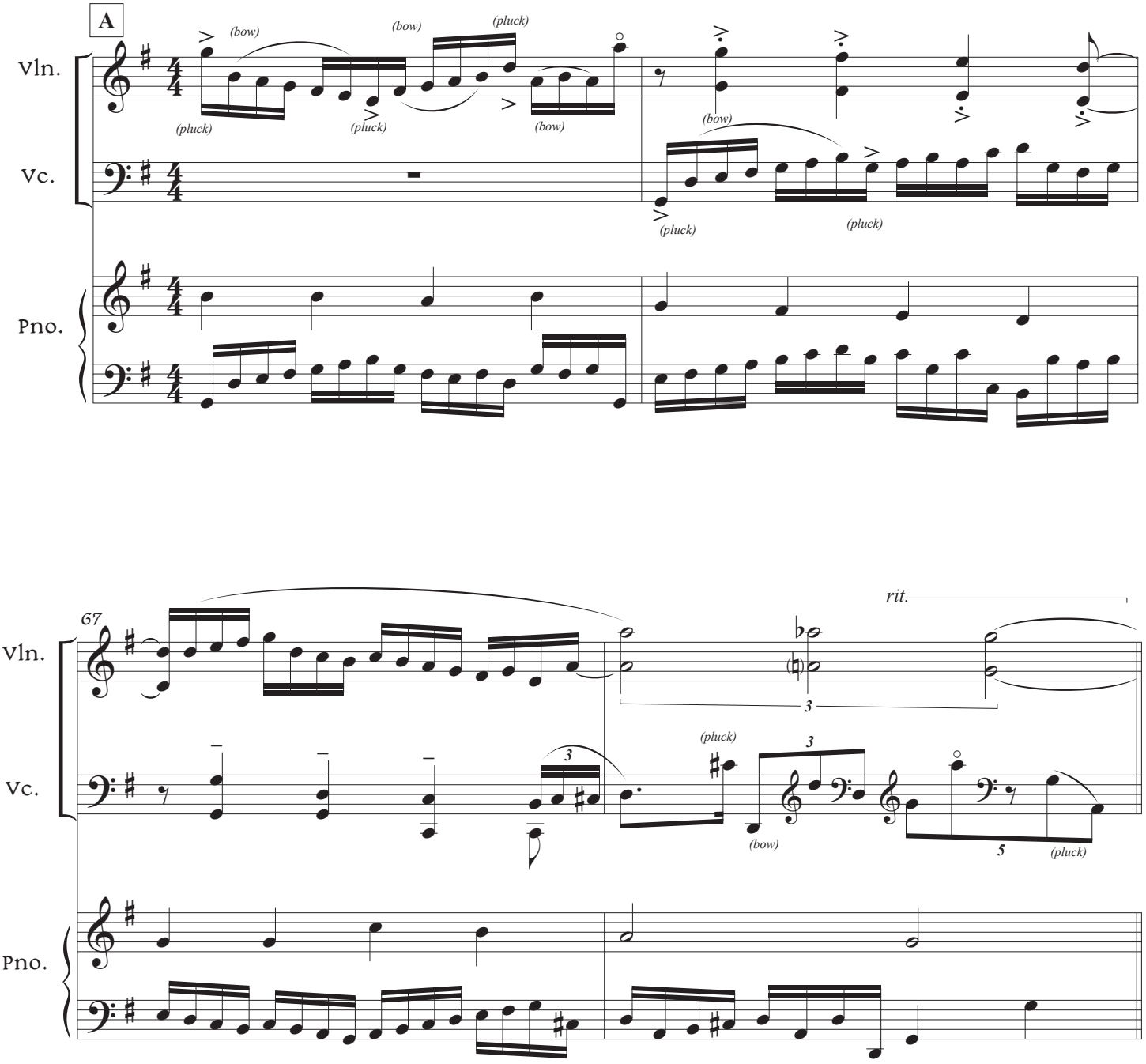

B
(a little sharp)
33
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
II
II
5
37
I
I
3
II
(III)
41
(bow)
(bow)
(bow)
(pluck)
4:3
(pluck)
4:3
(pluck)
(bow)
III


45
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
C
49
10:6
mp
11♪:6♪
15♪:12♪


52
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
I
II
(or 8vb)
55
(pluck)
(bow)
(pp)
II
II


(lightly)
7
(lightly, freely)
(26:24)
60
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
III IV
II
5:3
13:12
13:12
7
4:3
63
I
pizz.

***Fifth Part***


A
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
(bow)
(pluck)
(bow)
(pluck)
(pluck)
(bow)
(bow)
(pluck)
(pluck)
67
rit.
3
3
(pluck)
(bow)
5
(pluck)

A'

69

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

3

(bow)

(pluck)

(pluck)

5

(bow)

71

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

3

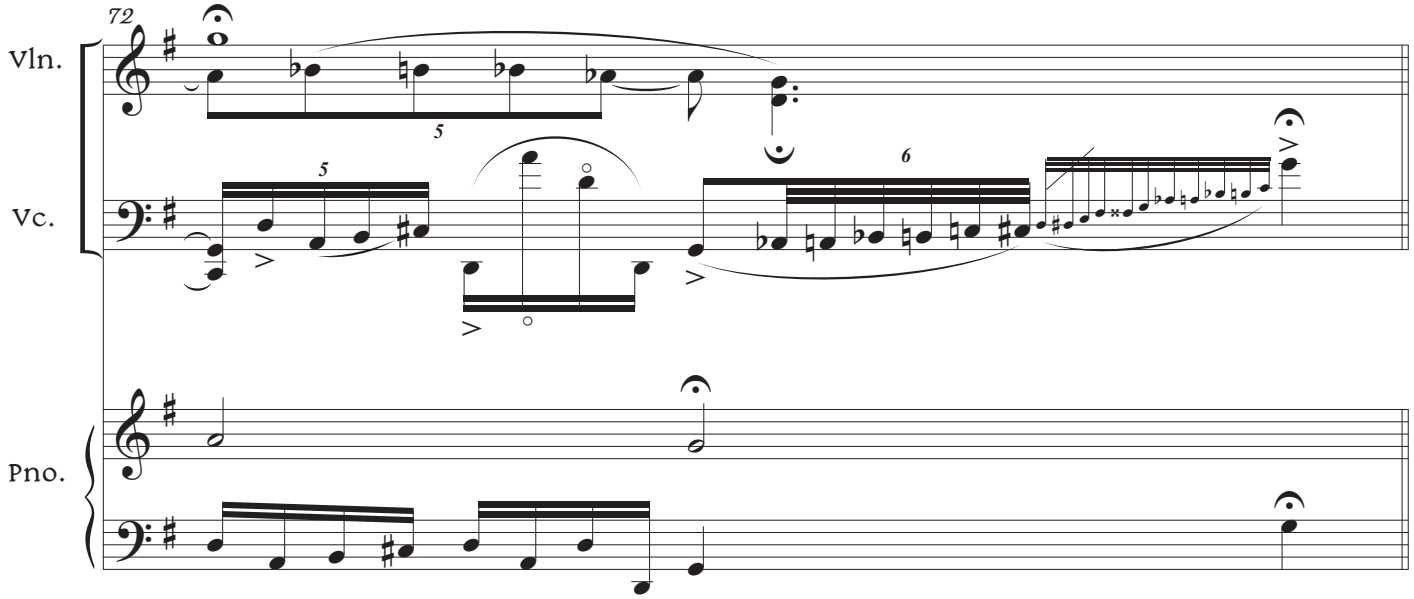
3

6

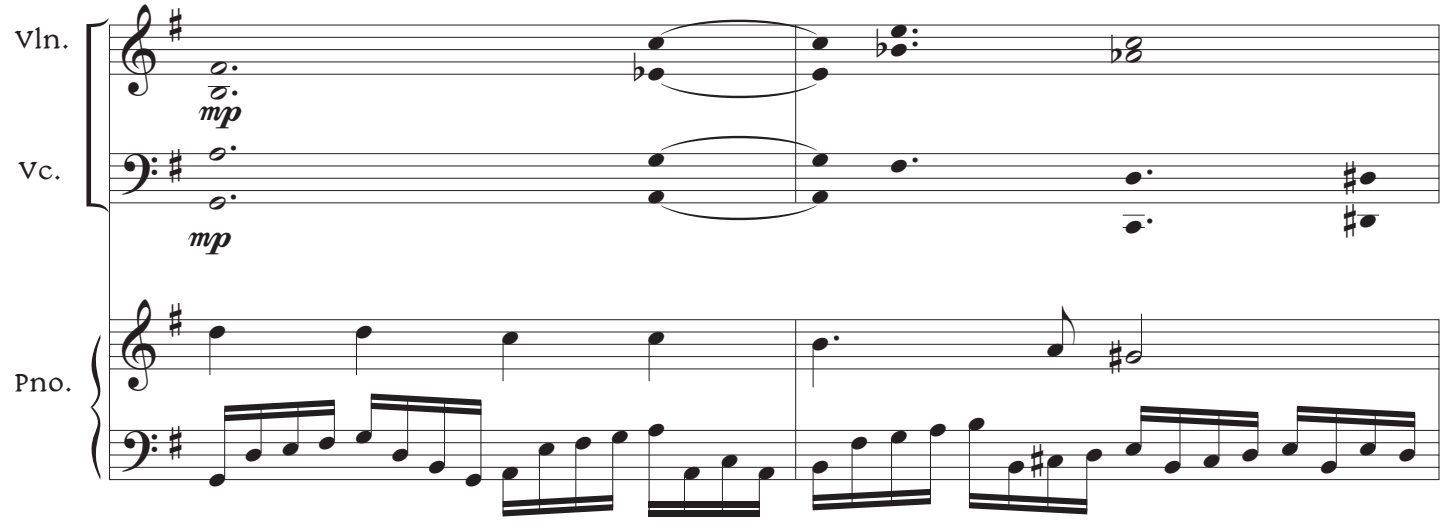
3

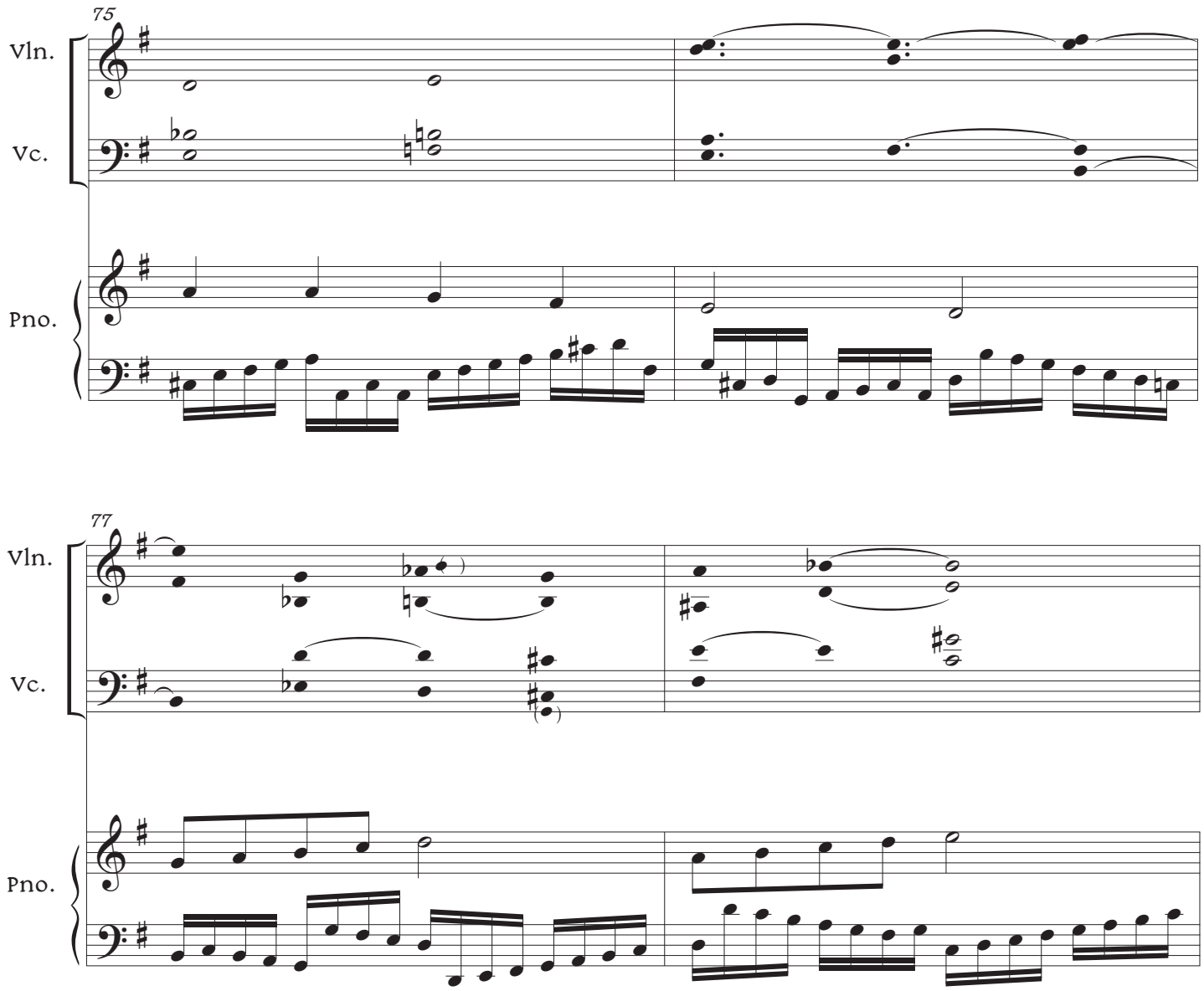
5

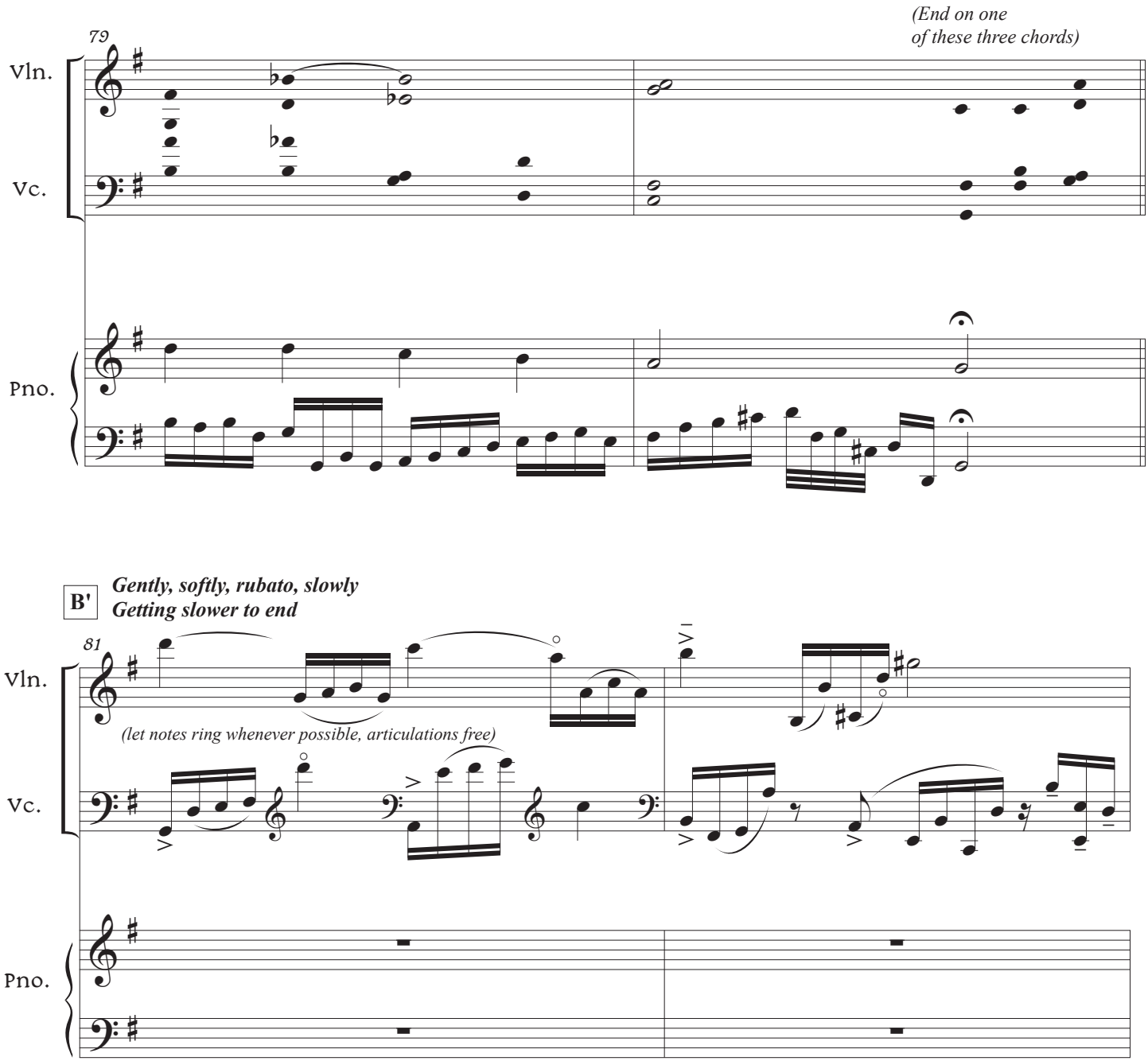
6

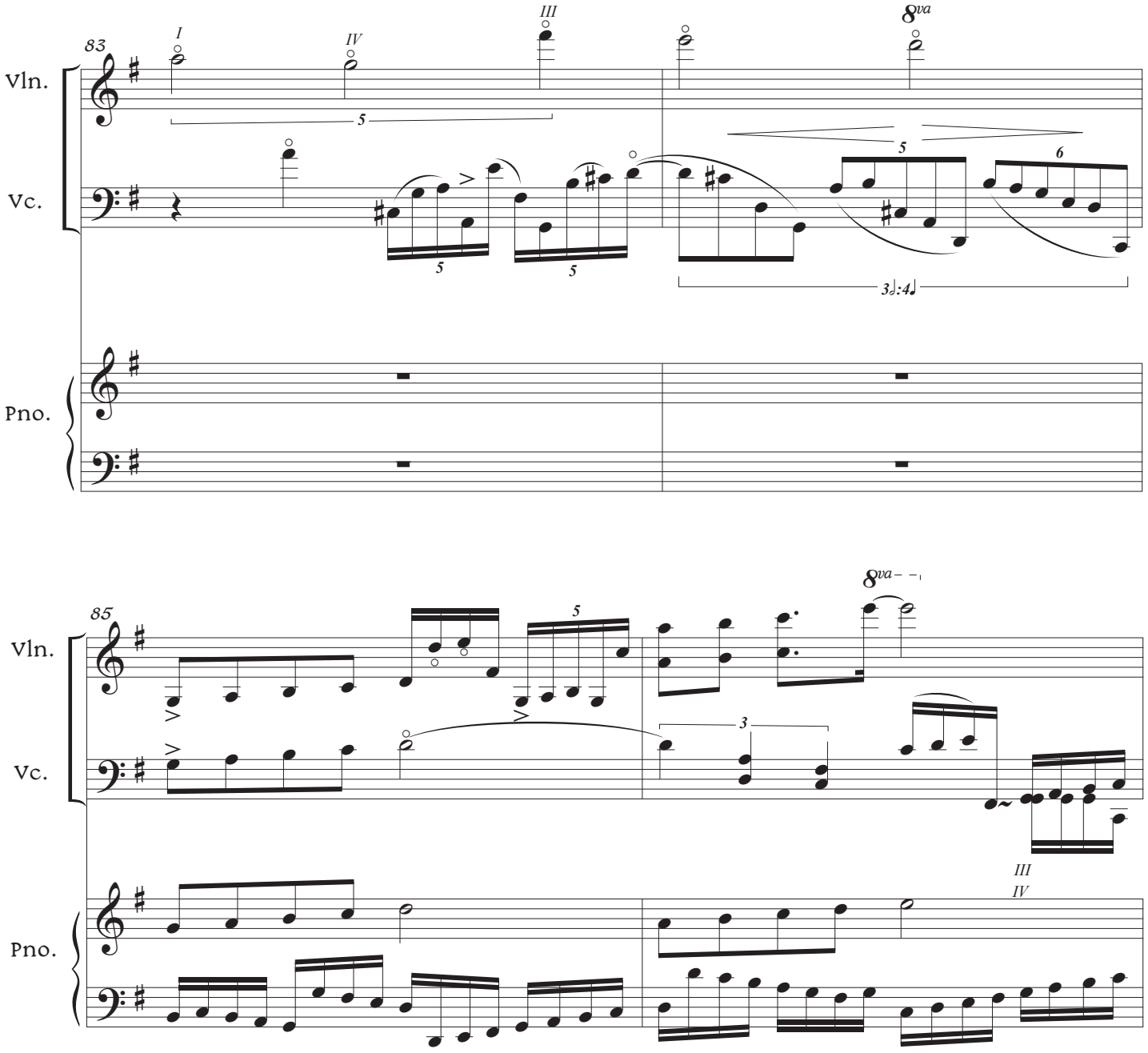


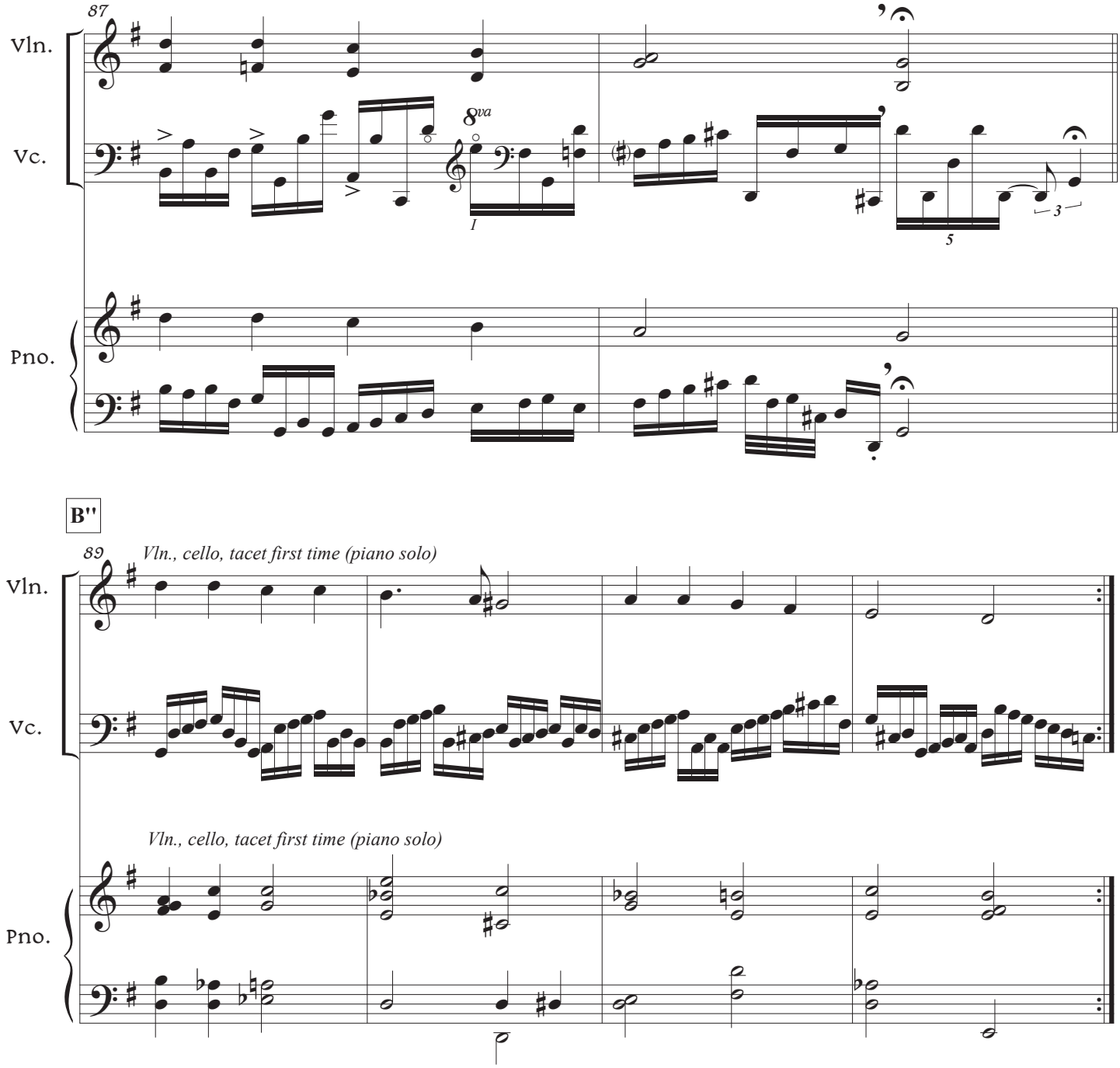

**B** *(vln., cello, chords not synchronized, but overlap, cresc. and decresc. ad lib)*

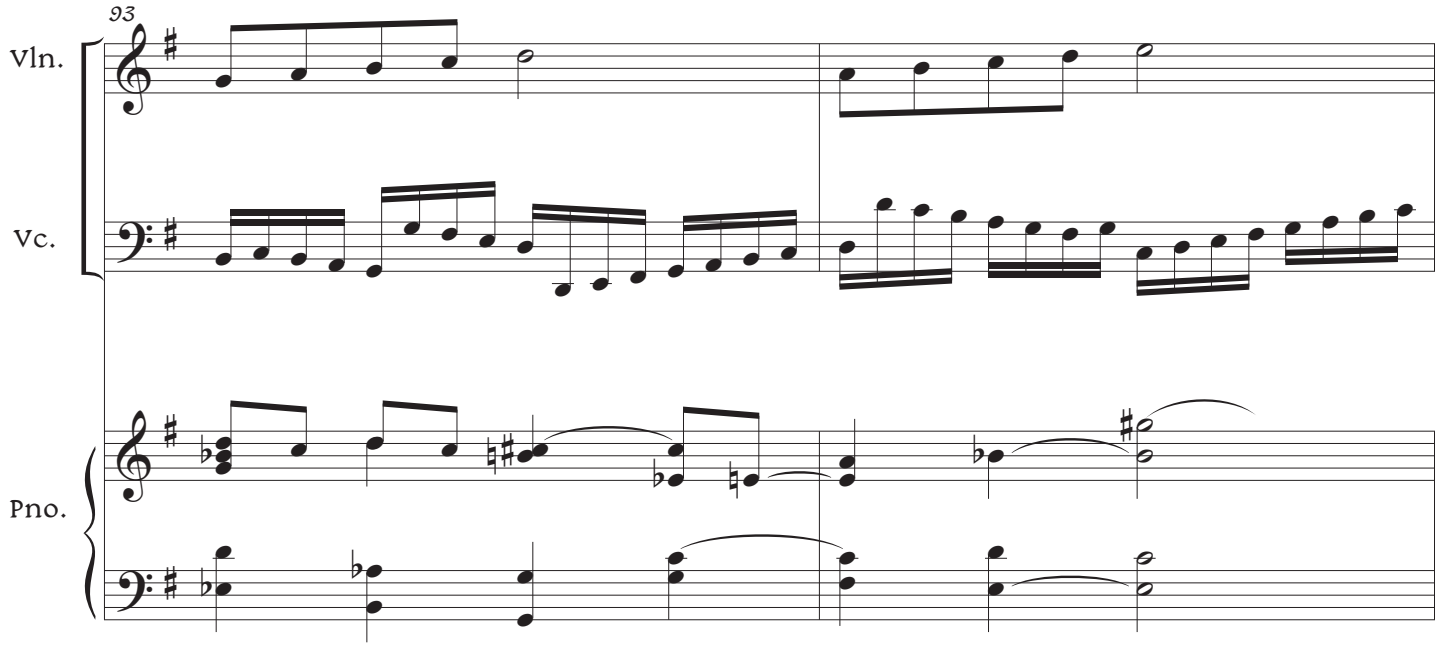


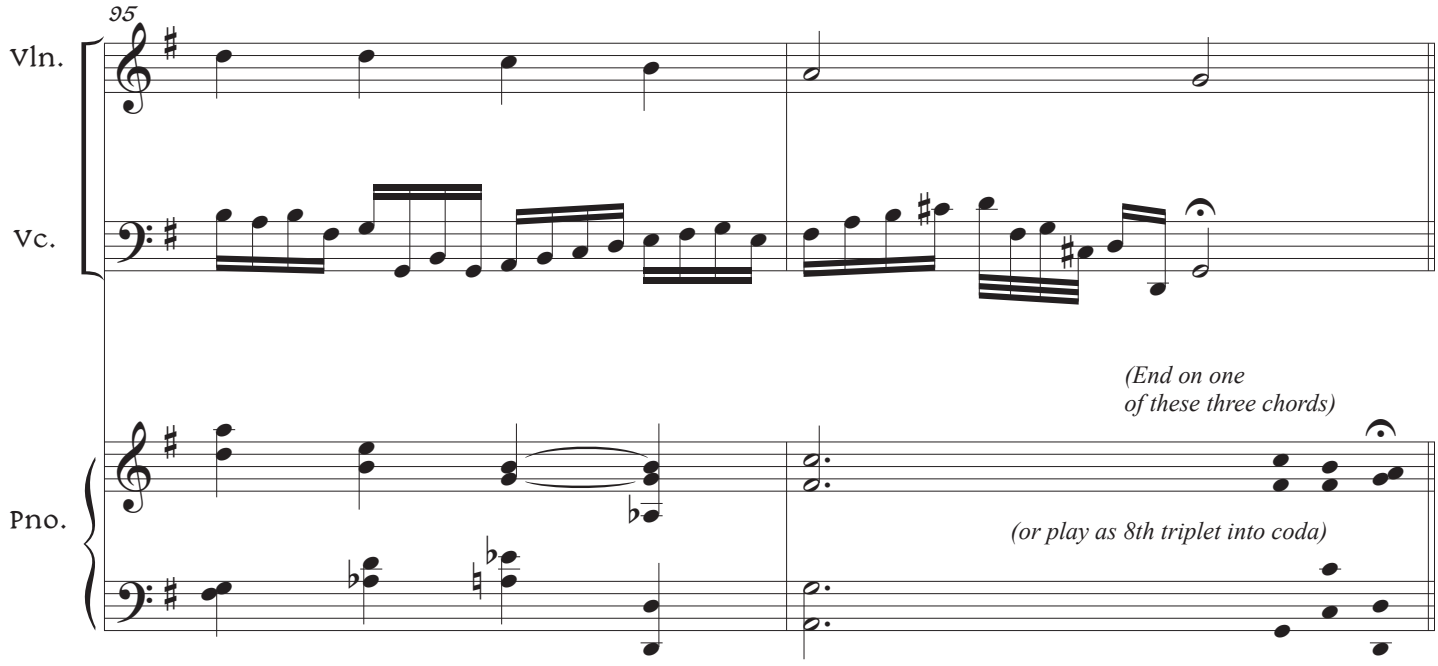

75
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
77
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.

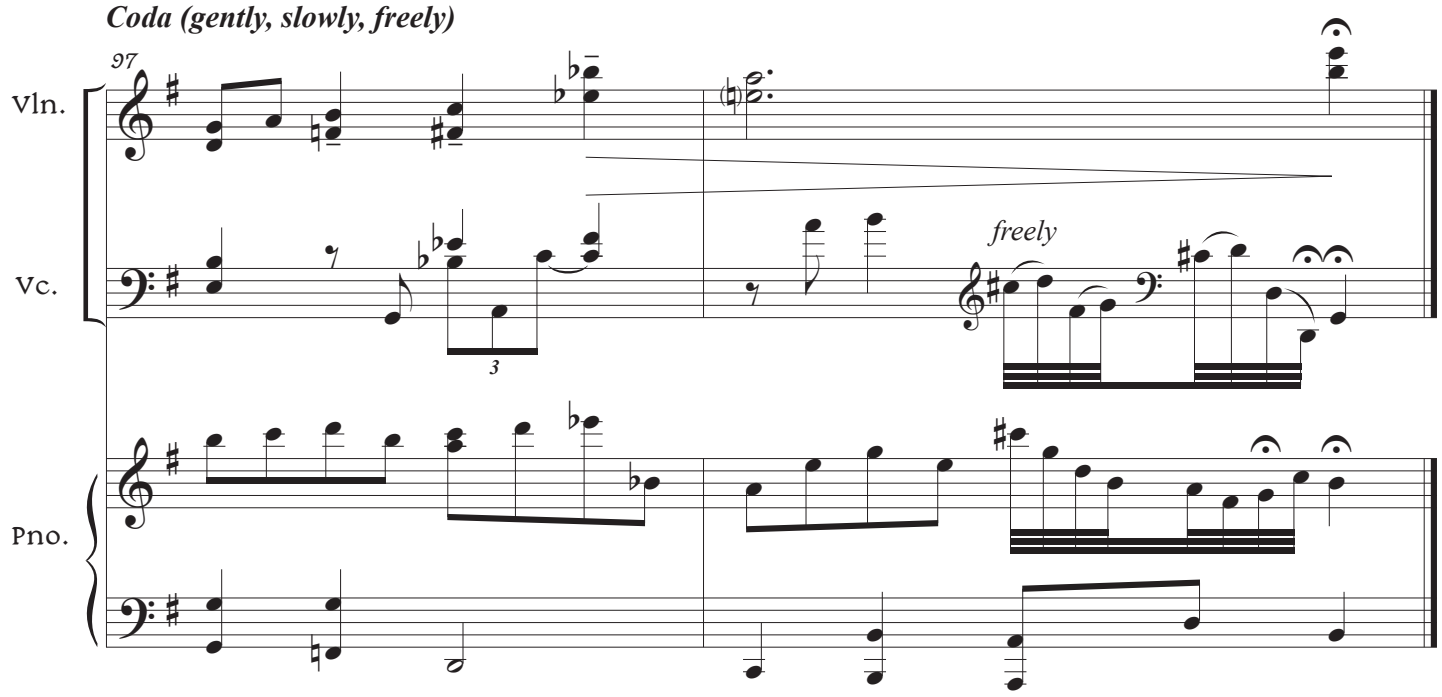

79
(End on one
of these three chords)
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
B'
Gently, softly, rubato, slowly
Getting slower to end
81
Vln.
(let notes ring whenever possible, articulations free)
Vc.
Pno.


83
I
IV
III
8va
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
5
5
5
5
6
3♪:4♩
85
8va
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
5
3
III
IV


87
Vln.
Vc.
8va
Pno.
B''
89
Vln., cello, tacet first time (piano solo)
Vln.
Vc.
Vln., cello, tacet first time (piano solo)
Pno.


93
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.


95
Vln.
Vc.
Pno.
(End on one
of these three chords)
(or play as 8th triplet into coda)

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# five songs for kate and vanessa

violin, cello, piano

## IV. Courante

for Kate Stenberg and Vanessa Ruotolo

Larry Polansky
2019

***Courante***
**(5 songs for kate and vanessa)**

**Performance Notes**

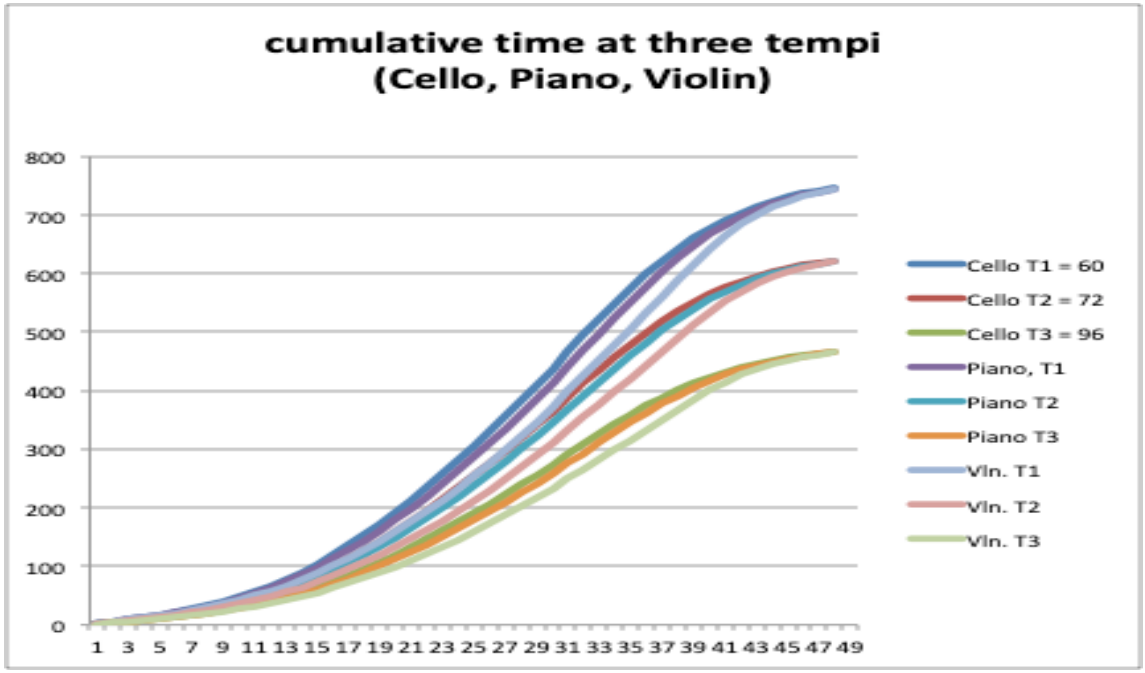
*Time*
There is no "score" for *Courante*. Each of the three parts is temporally independent. Physical measure length corresponds indicates measure duration.

Each part plays the entire Froberger Courante. Measure lengths for each part are stretched (expanded then contracted) independently over the course of the piece, starting with a minimum length at the ensemble-chosen tempo (see below), and gradually approaching some maximum length (longest duration), before, again gradually, returning to the starting duration. This expansion/compression process happens asynchronously with regard to the three parts.

*Tempi*
At the end of each line, three time values (min:seconds) are given, corresponding to starting tempi (for the first measure) of either 60, 72 and 96 bpm. The trio should select one of three tempi for the performance, meaning that the 1st and last measures (only) should be played at that tempo, and all other durations/measure lengths are slower/longer. Some digital timing display, showing minutes/seconds, should be used by each player, and started together at the beginning of the piece.

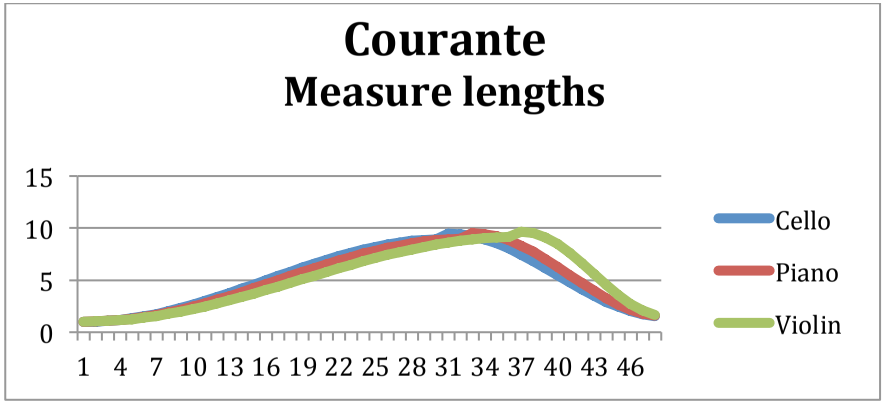
The three time values correspond to actual elapsed time at that point in the piece for the performer. For example, in the cello part, at the end of measure 10, either 0:57, 0:48, or 0:36 seconds should have elapsed (roughly), depending on which tempo (60, 72, 96 respectively) is in effect. For the piano part, at the end of the same measure, elapsed time values for the three tempi are 0:41, 0:34, and 0:25 seconds, and for the violin, 0:39, 0:32, 0:24. The performer should use these end-of-line values as "signposts" for where they should be in the piece at a given time.

All of the parts are the same length, though they have different expansion/contraction trajectories. That is, the piece is 9:20, 7:47, or 5:50 long, depending on the chosen tempo. In other words, the three performers should end, more or less, together. Temporal precision is not required (or even encouraged) over the course of the piece, the end-of-line elapsed times are meant to give the performer a guide as to where they are vis a vis the theoretically exact time at that point, allowing them to slow down or speed up to compensate throughout the piece.




*Performer Elaboration*
Corresponding to the durational expansion/contraction, players may elaborate gradually on their parts more and more towards the apex of their expansion curve (the longest measure), and gradually less and less towards the final measure. For the three instruments, the longest measures are:

*Violin: m. 37*
*Cello: m. 31*
*Piano: m. 33*




Elaborations might consist of added trills, octave displacements, use of harmonics, pizzicatti, displacement by P5th or P12th (up or down), and double-stops (in the strings) of octaves or 5ths. Other intervallic elaboration should be used sparingly, if at all. The simplest elaborative material should enter first, and be the last to fall into disuse. For example, the performer might begin by occasionally playing an octave of a given pitch, and then add the possibility of substituting a P5th instead, or a double-stop, etc., becoming more "ornate" towards the longest measure, and then roughly reverse that process towards the end. Again, precision and exactitude is not the goal, but rather a kind of "degree of playfulness" accompanying the arc of measure expansion/contraction.

The piece should be generally played at one dynamic level, or with terraced dynamics, which may occur independently in each part, and occurring at either repetition (A, A'; B, B') or at larger sections (A, B).

Larry Polansky
Santa Cruz, CA
4/7/19

# Courante

## 5 songs for kate and vanessa

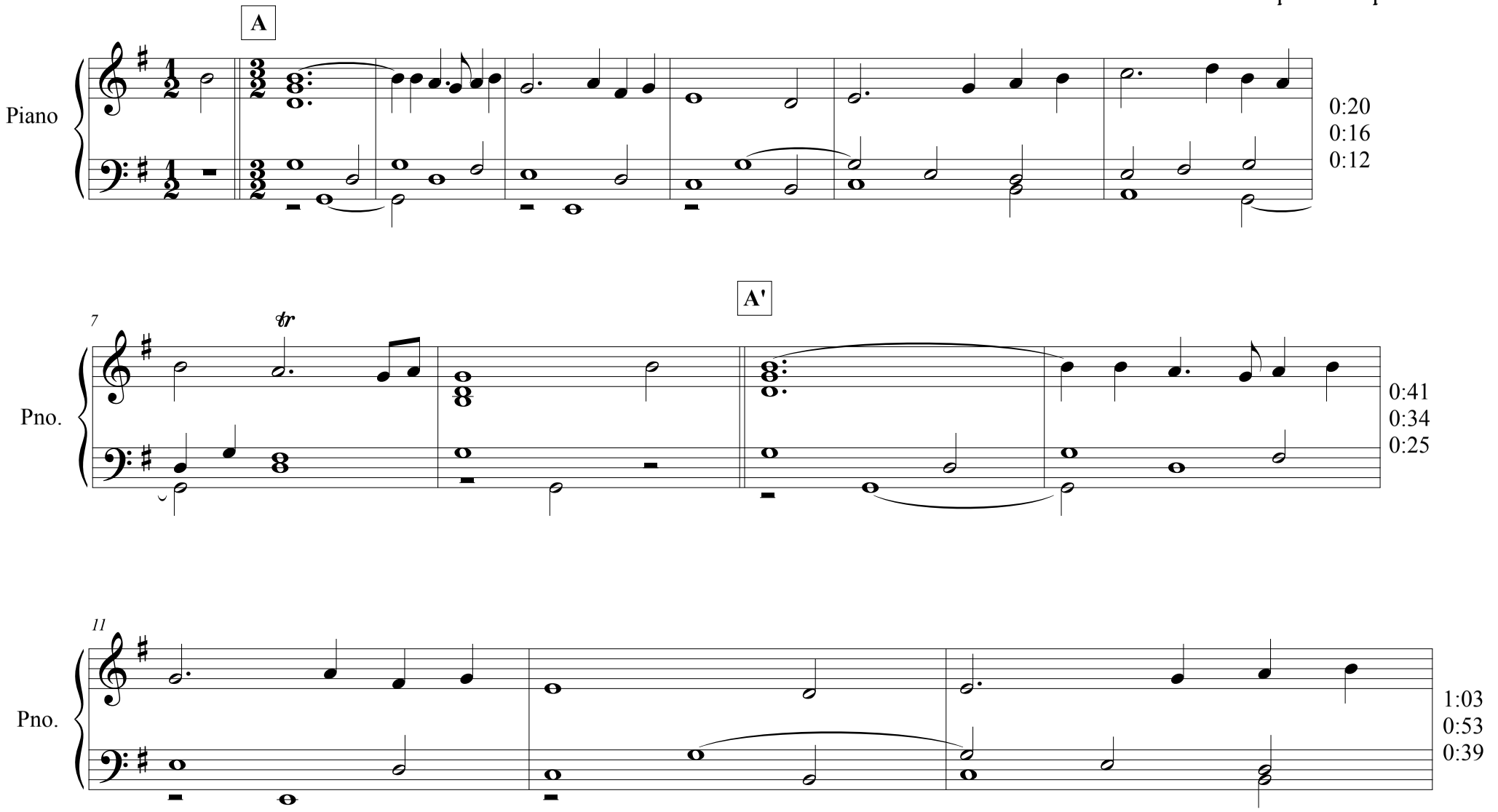
**Piano part**

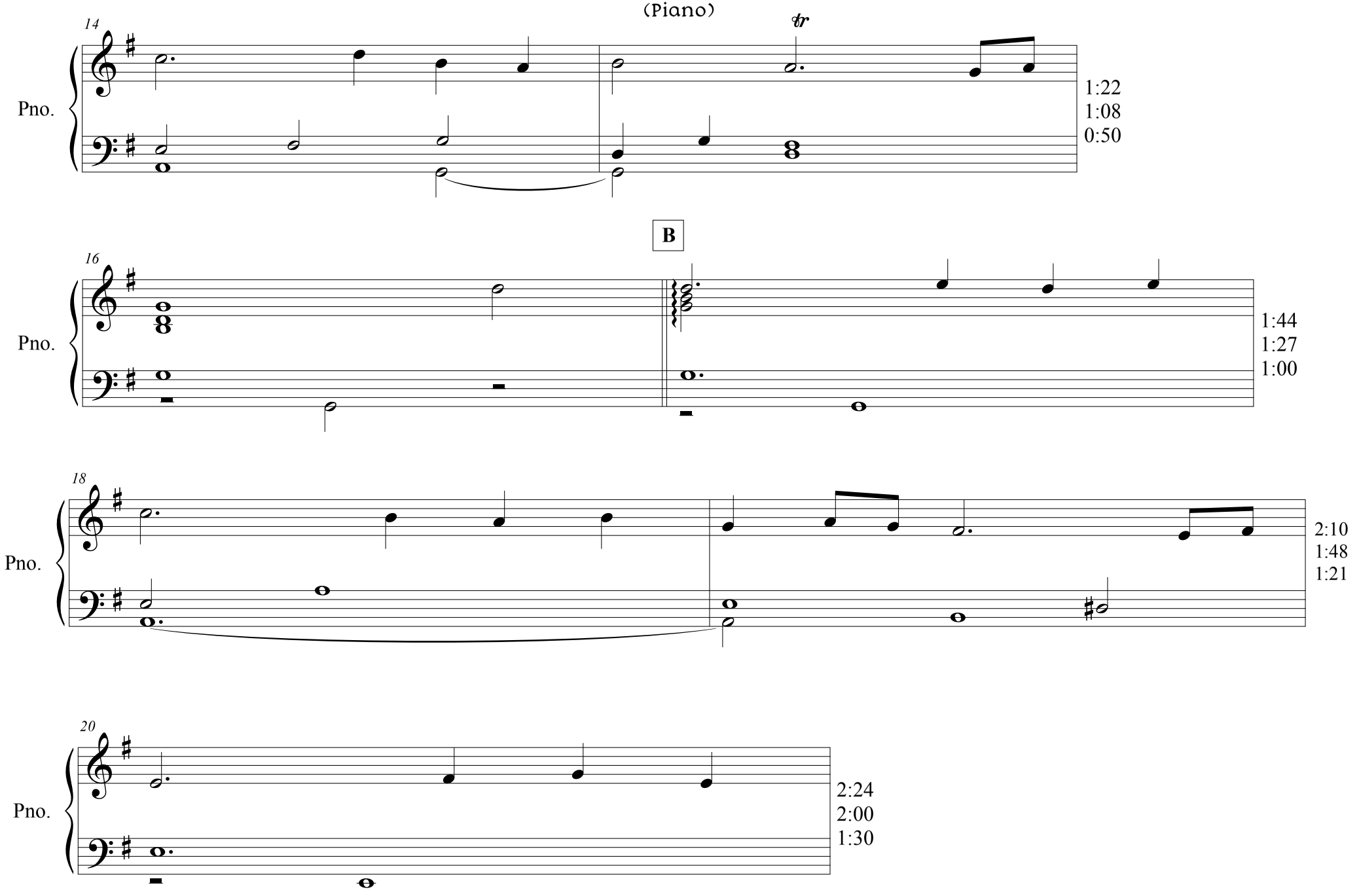
Larry Polansky
2019

# Courante

(five songs for kate and vanessa)
stretched piano

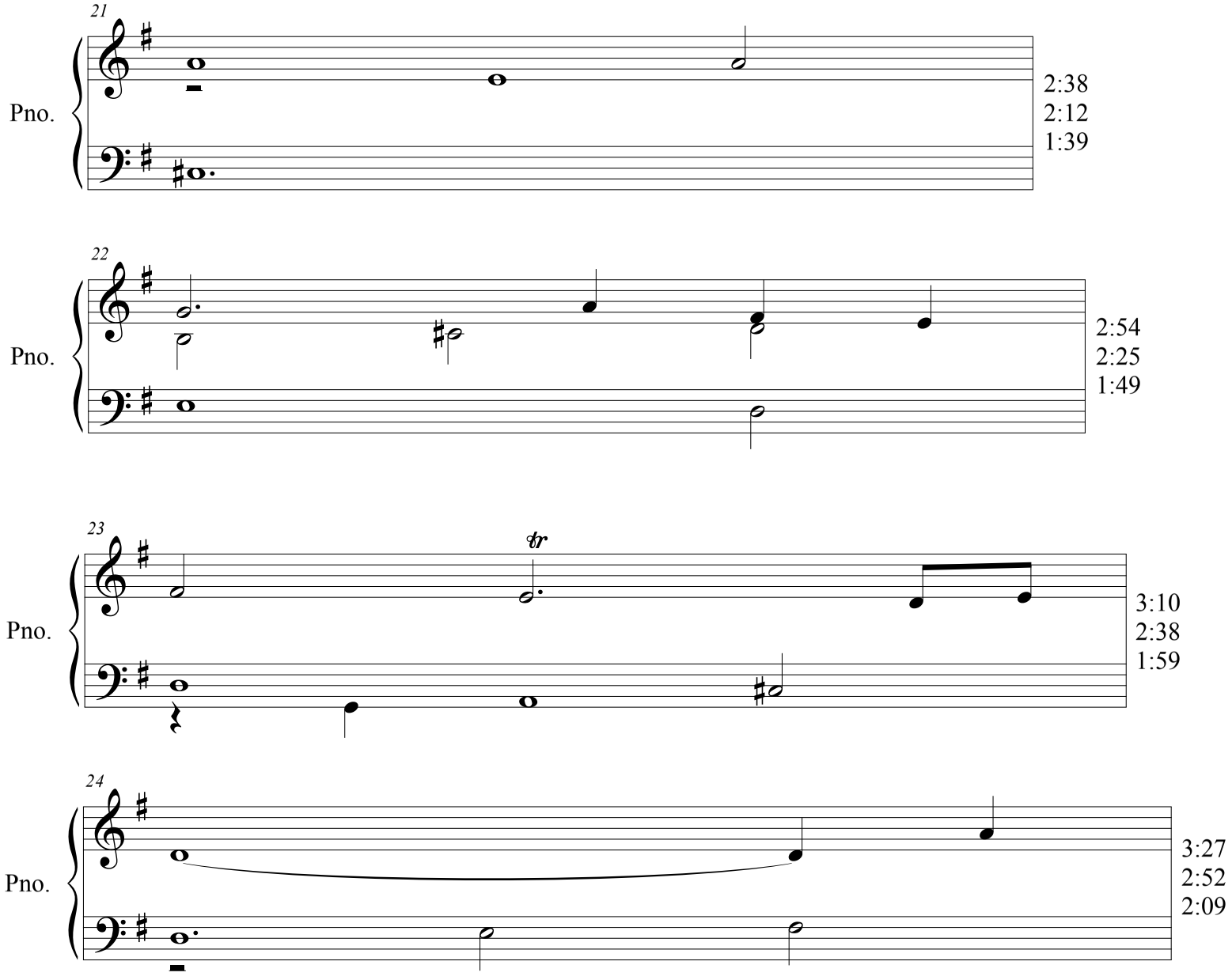
polansky




14
tr
Pno.
1:22
1:08
0:50
B
16
Pno.
1:44
1:27
1:00
18
Pno.
2:10
1:48
1:21
20
Pno.
2:24
2:00
1:30

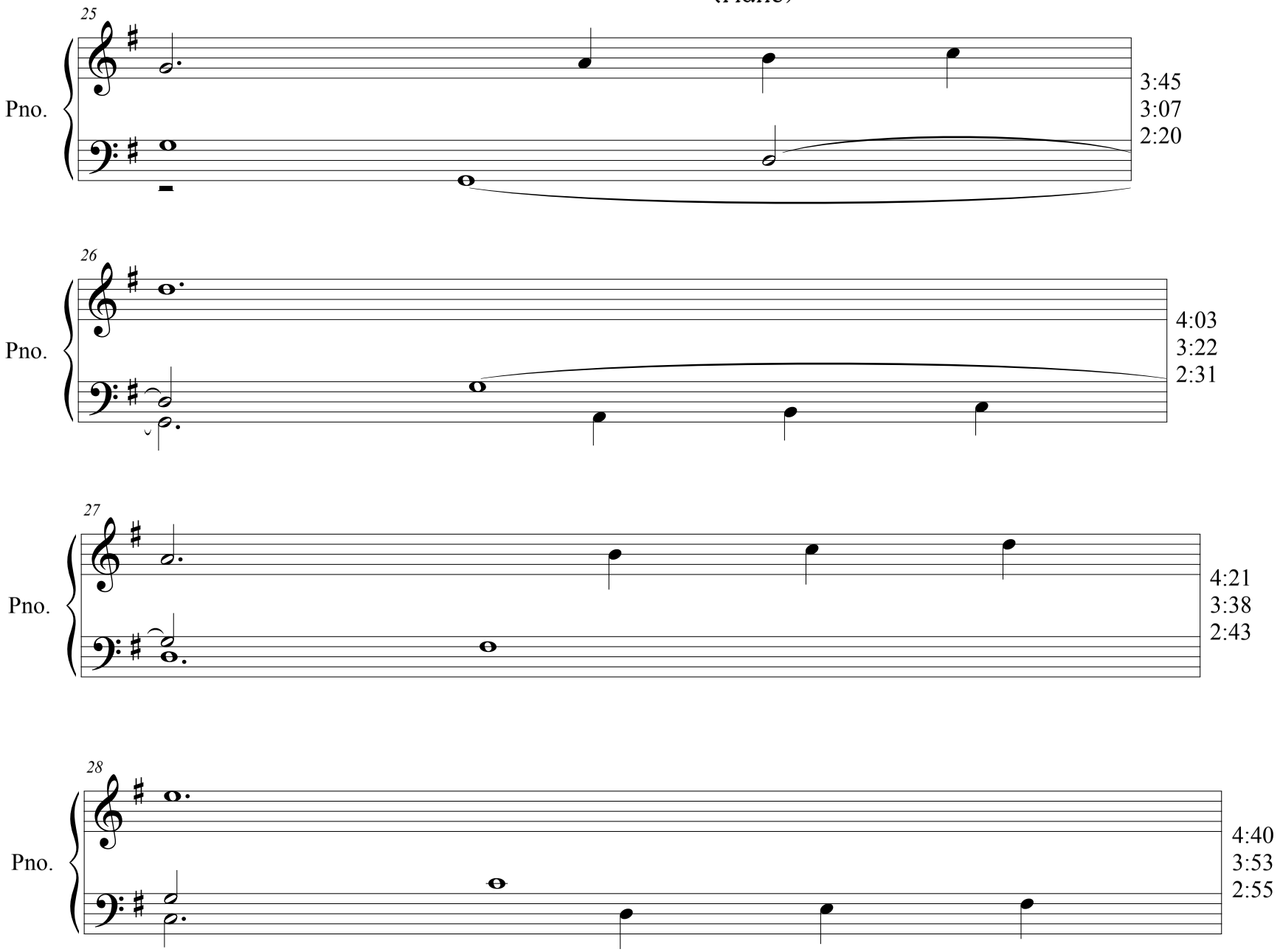
# Courante

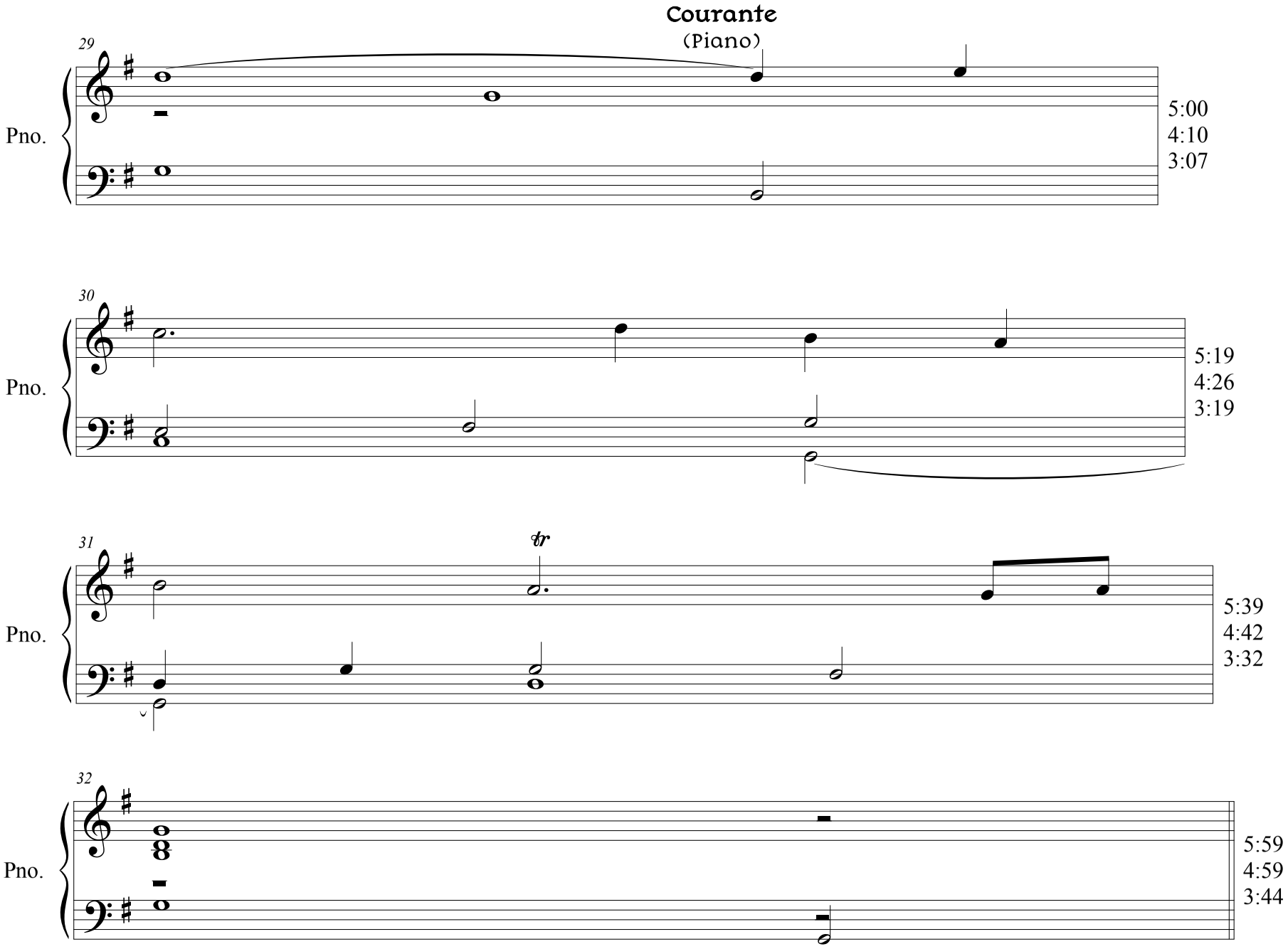
(Piano)

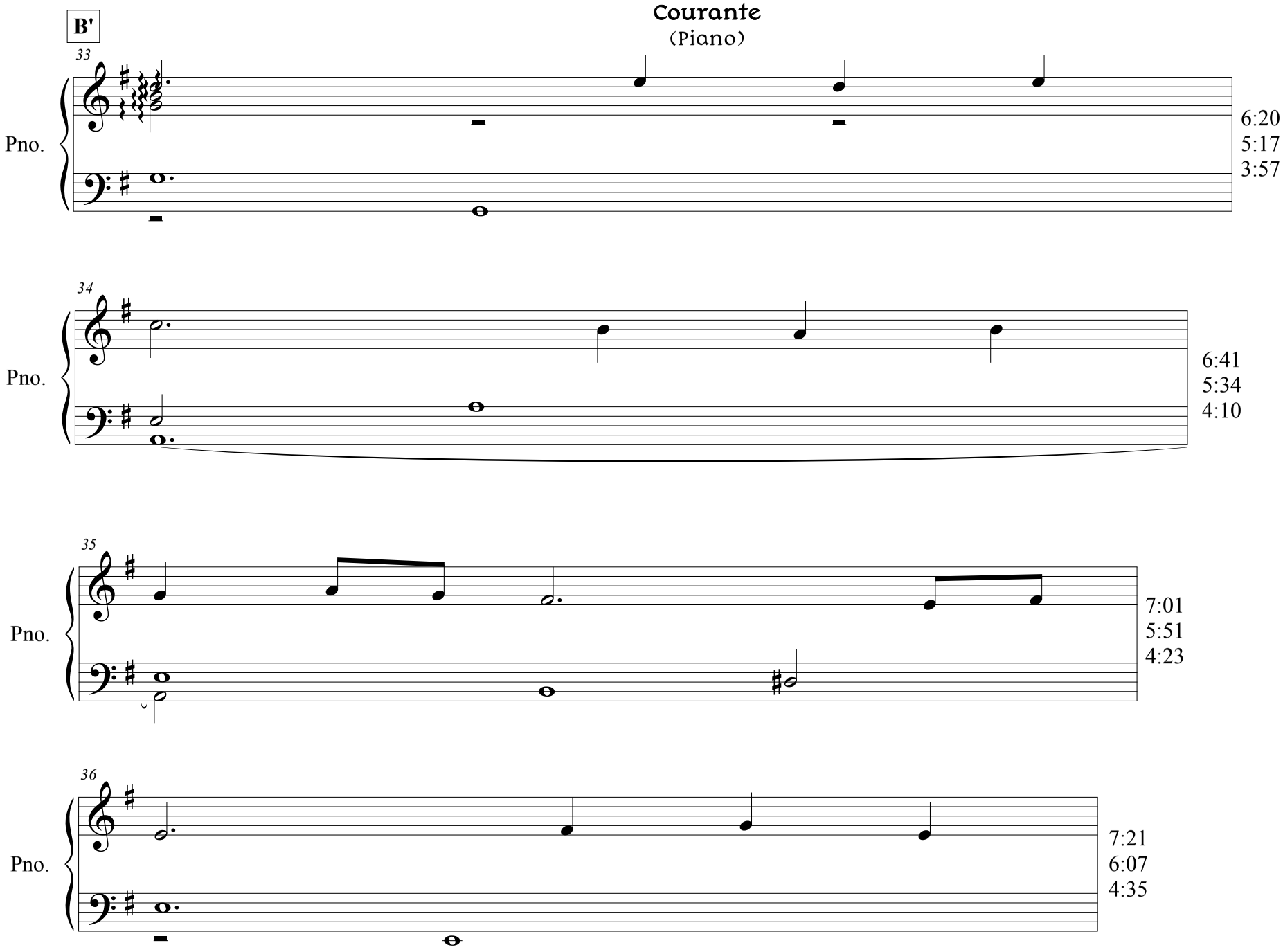


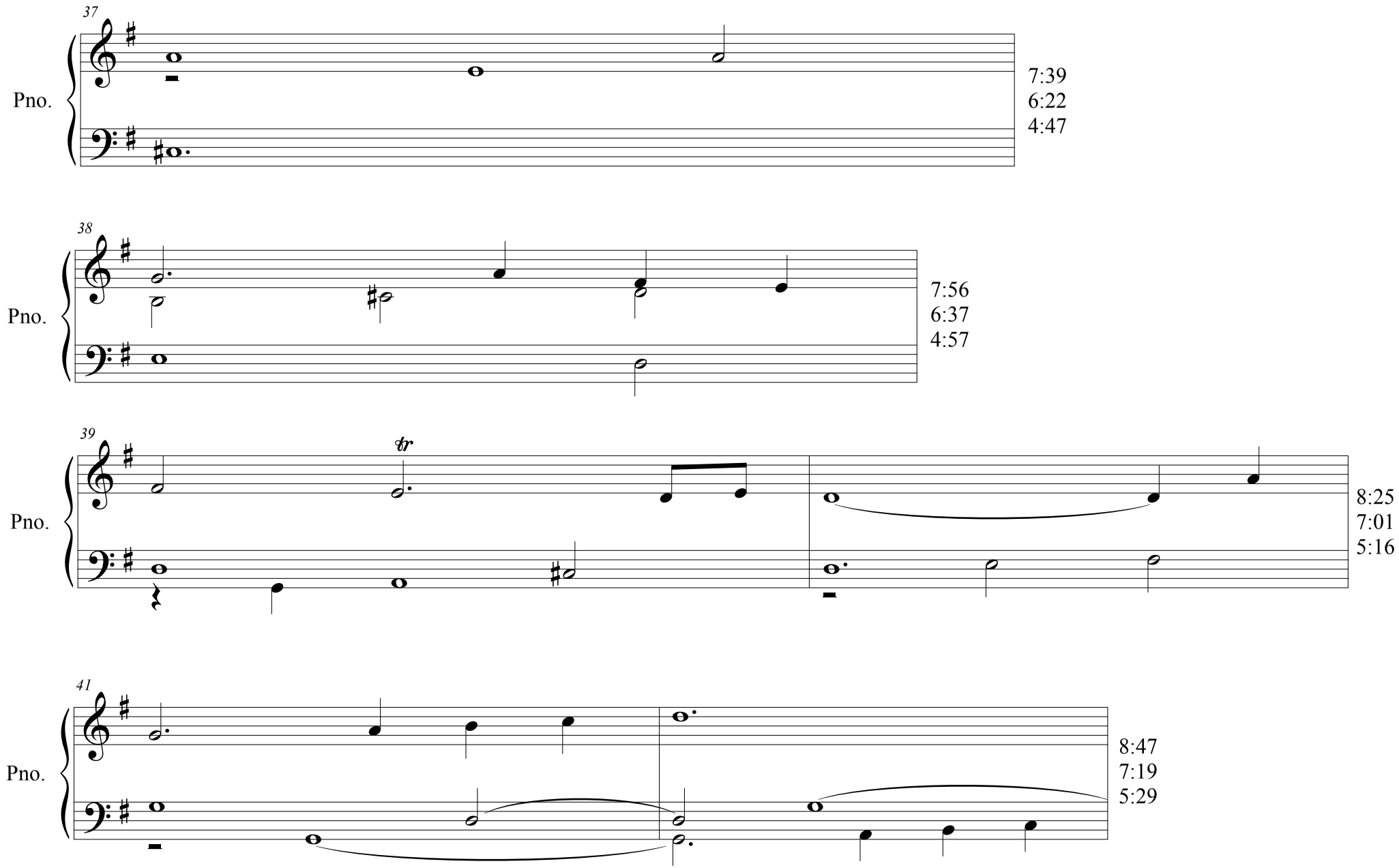
# Courante

(Piano)



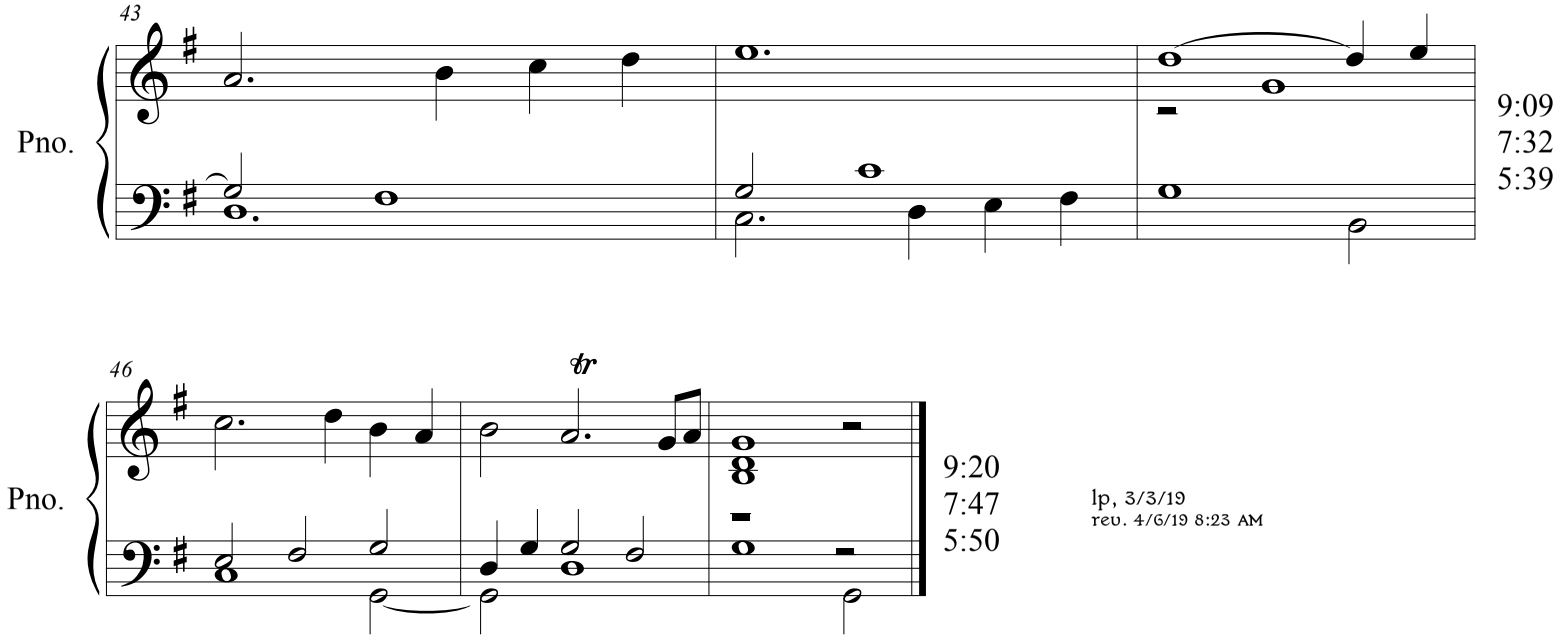

Courante
(Piano)
29
Pno.
5:00
4:10
3:07
30
Pno.
5:19
4:26
3:19
31
tr
Pno.
5:39
4:42
3:32
32
Pno.
5:59
4:59
3:44


Courante
(Piano)
B'
33
Pno.
6:20
5:17
3:57
34
Pno.
6:41
5:34
4:10
35
Pno.
7:01
5:51
4:23
36
Pno.
7:21
6:07
4:35


37
Pno.
7:39
6:22
4:47
38
Pno.
7:56
6:37
4:57
39
tr
Pno.
8:25
7:01
5:16
41
Pno.
8:47
7:19
5:29

# Courante

(Piano)




lp, 3/3/19
rev. 4/6/19 8:23 AM

# Courante

## 5 songs for kate and vanessa

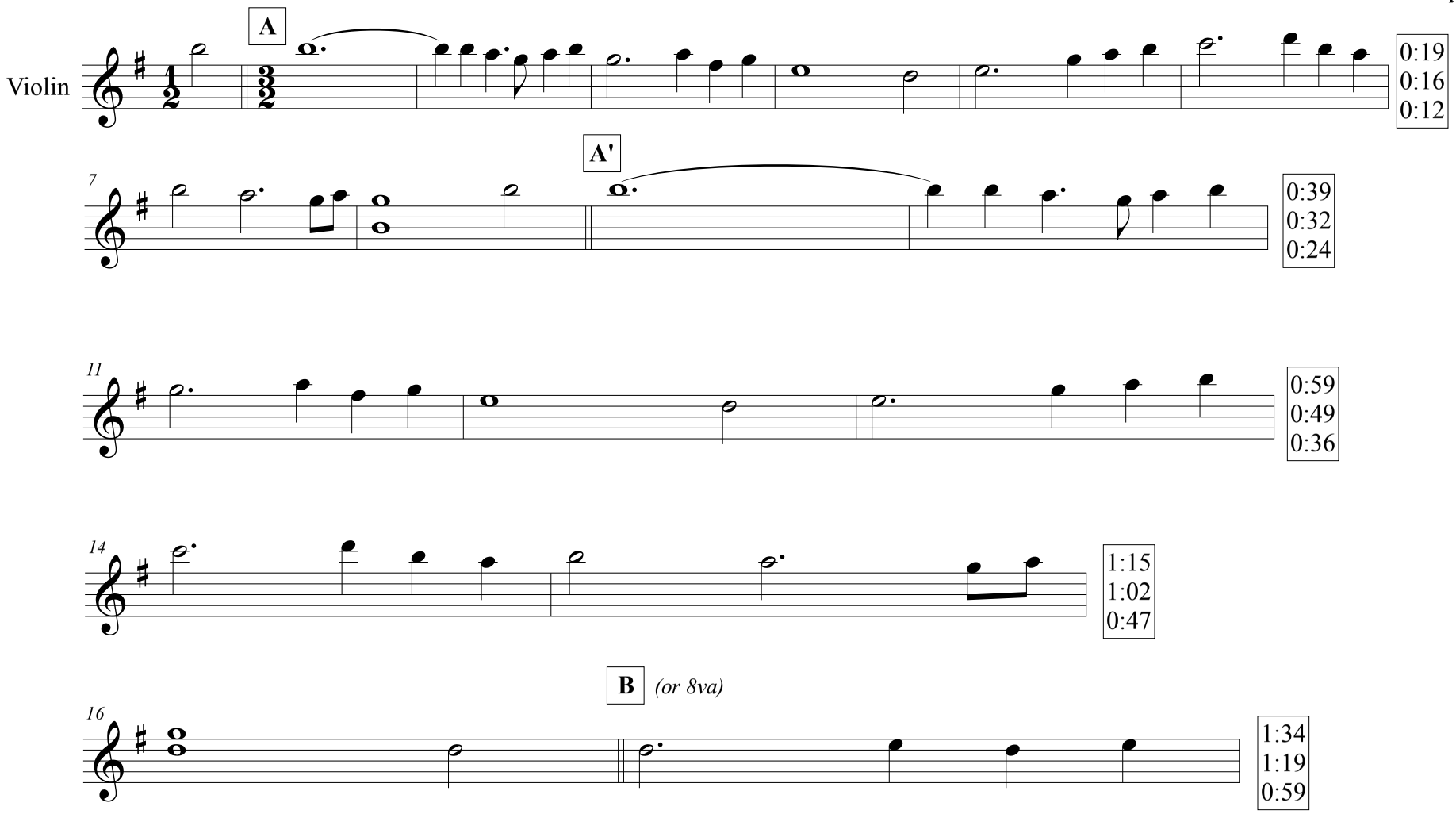
**Violin part**

Larry Polansky
2019

# Courante

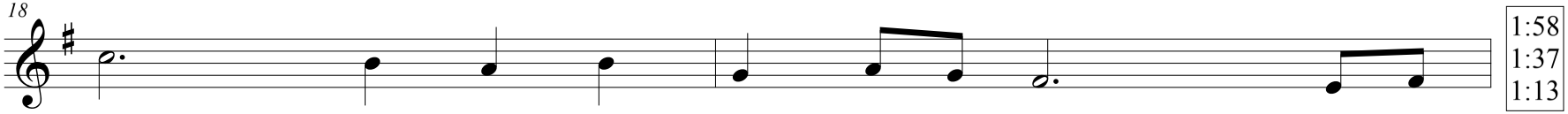
(five songs for kate and vanessa)
stretched violin

polansky



# Courante
(Violin)

18

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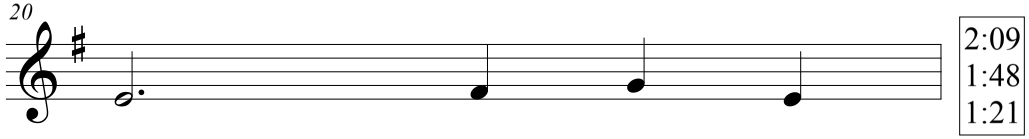


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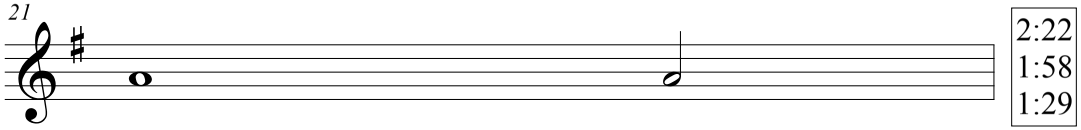


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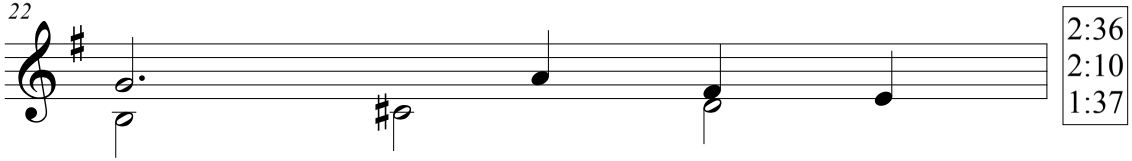


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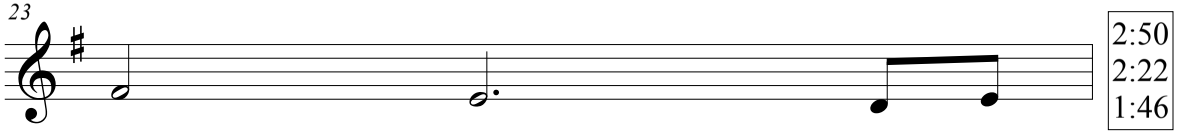


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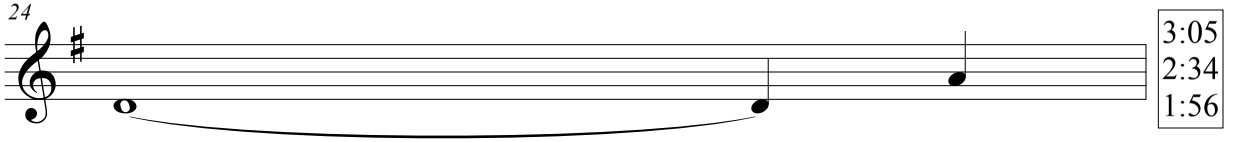


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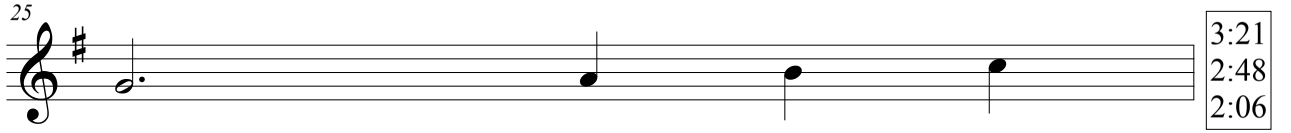
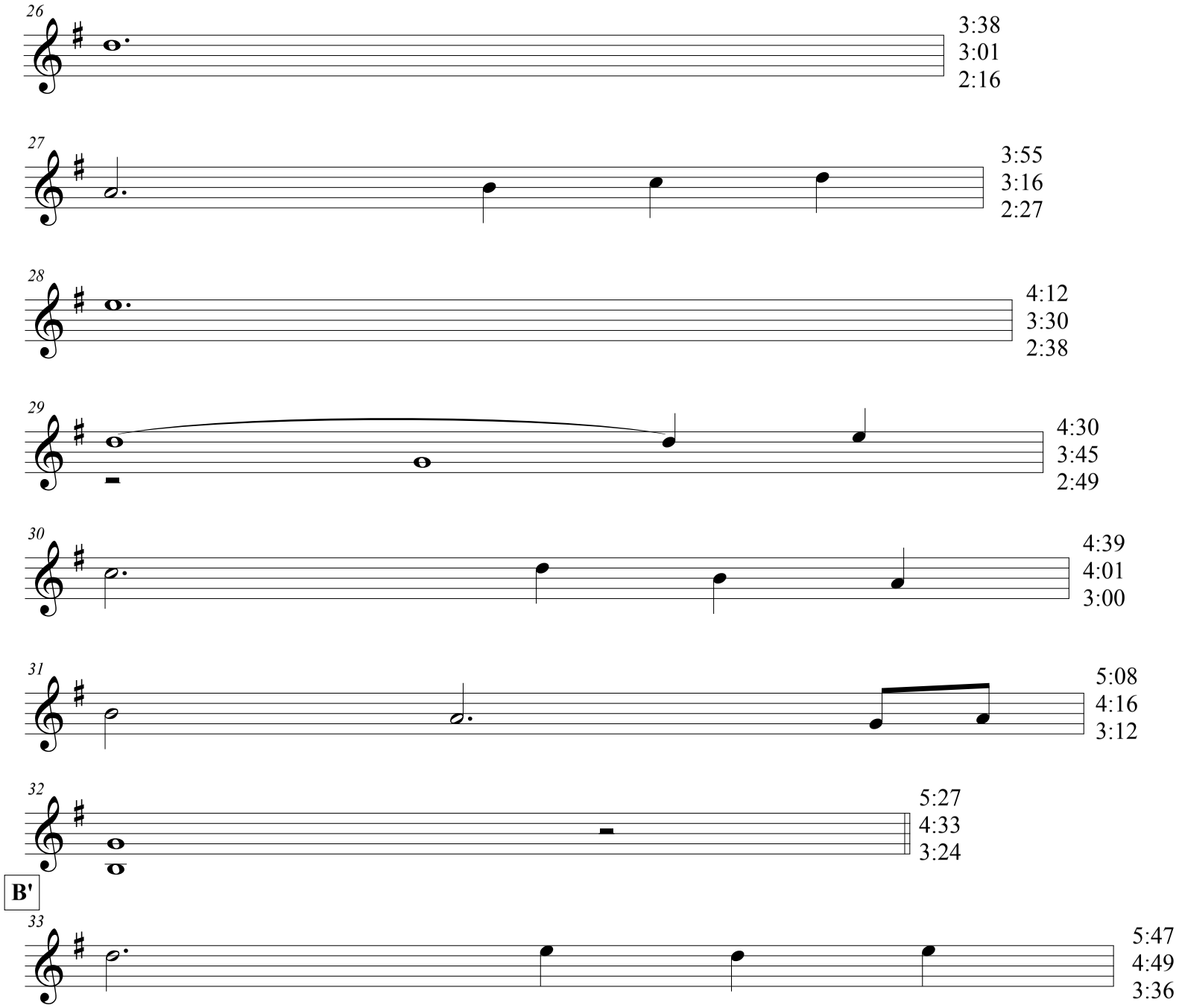
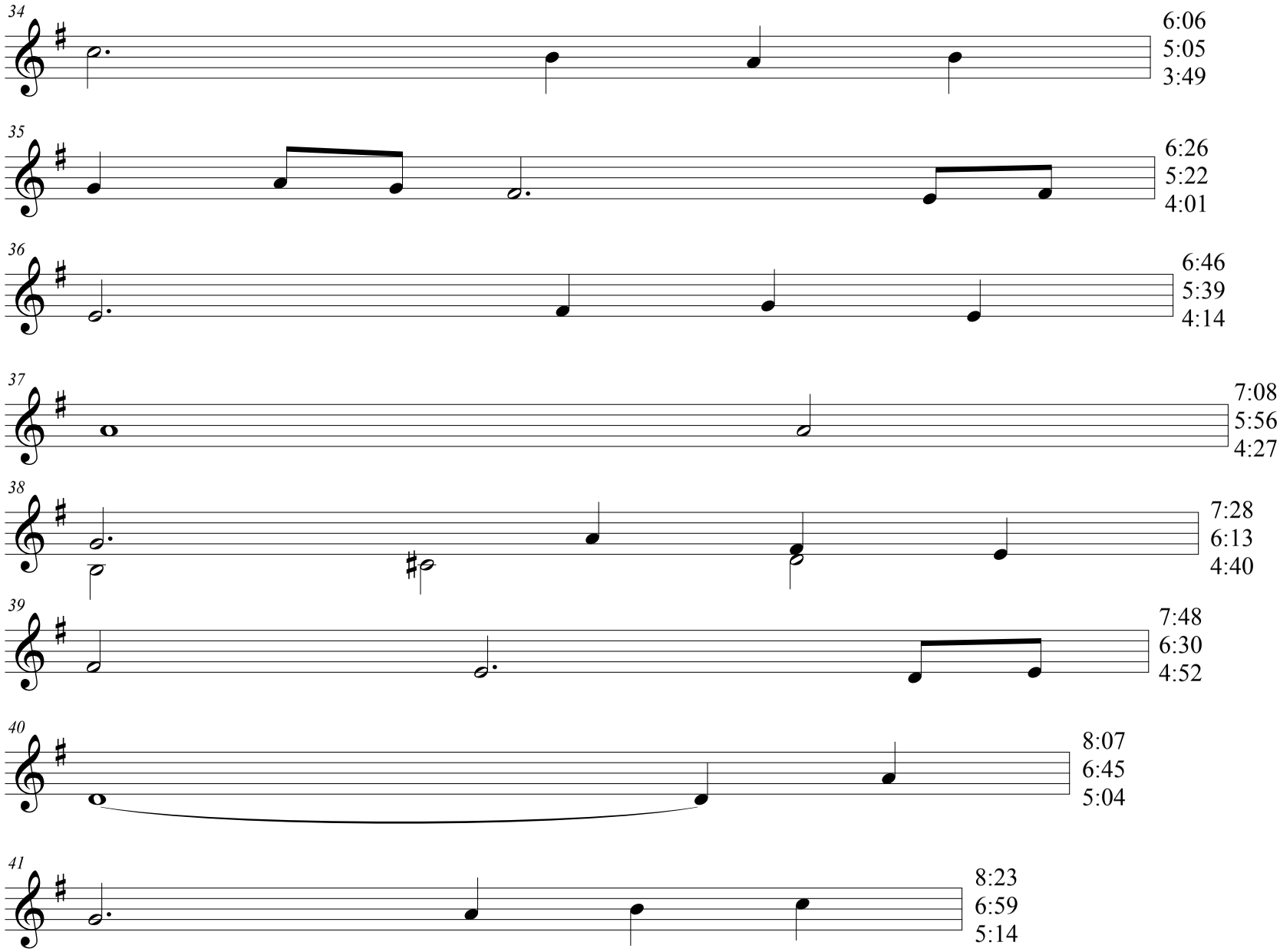
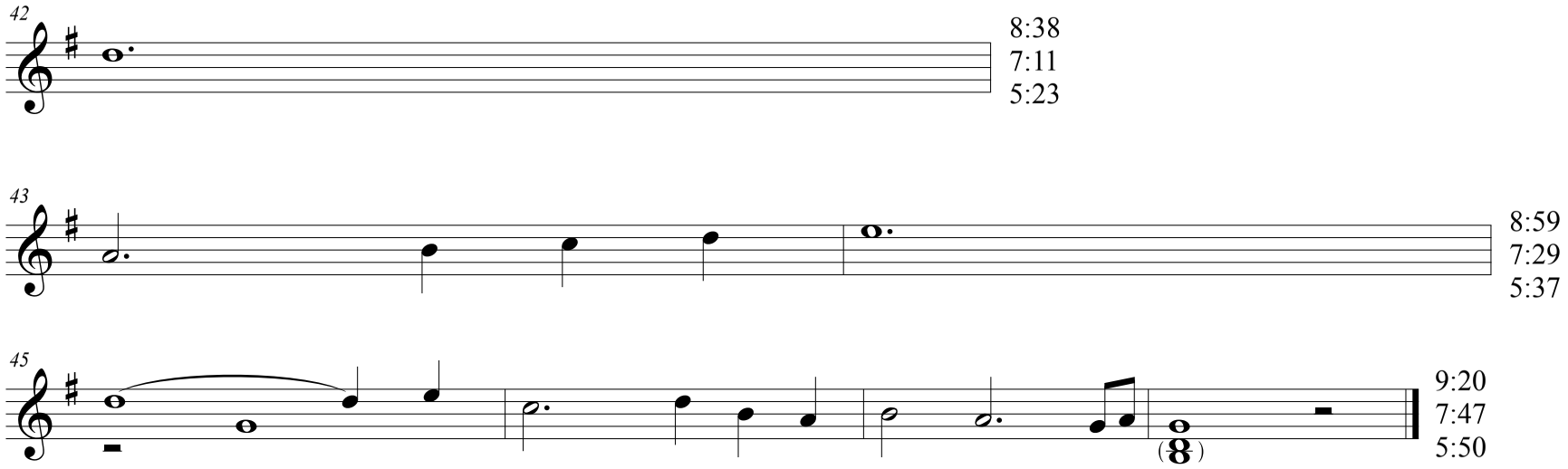



26
3:38
3:01
2:16
27
3:55
3:16
2:27
28
4:12
3:30
2:38
29
4:30
3:45
2:49
30
4:39
4:01
3:00
31
5:08
4:16
3:12
32
5:27
4:33
3:24
B'
33
5:47
4:49
3:36


34
6:06
5:05
3:49
35
6:26
5:22
4:01
36
6:46
5:39
4:14
37
7:08
5:56
4:27
38
7:28
6:13
4:40
39
7:48
6:30
4:52
40
8:07
6:45
5:04
41
8:23
6:59
5:14

# Courante
(Violin)




lp, 4/5/19
rev. 4/6/19 8:25 AM

# Courante

## (5 songs for kate and vanessa)

**Cello part**

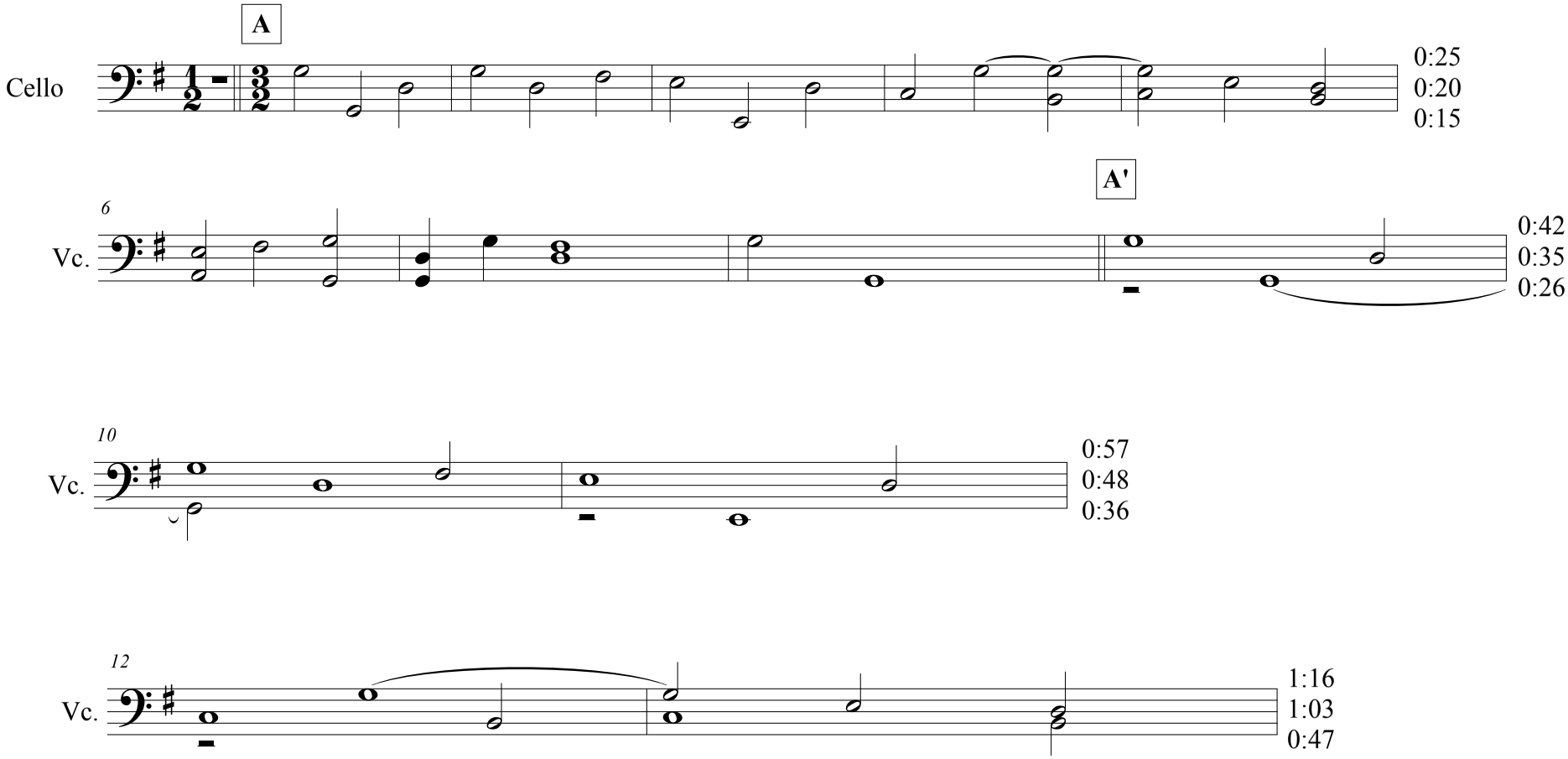
Larry Polansky
2019

# Courante

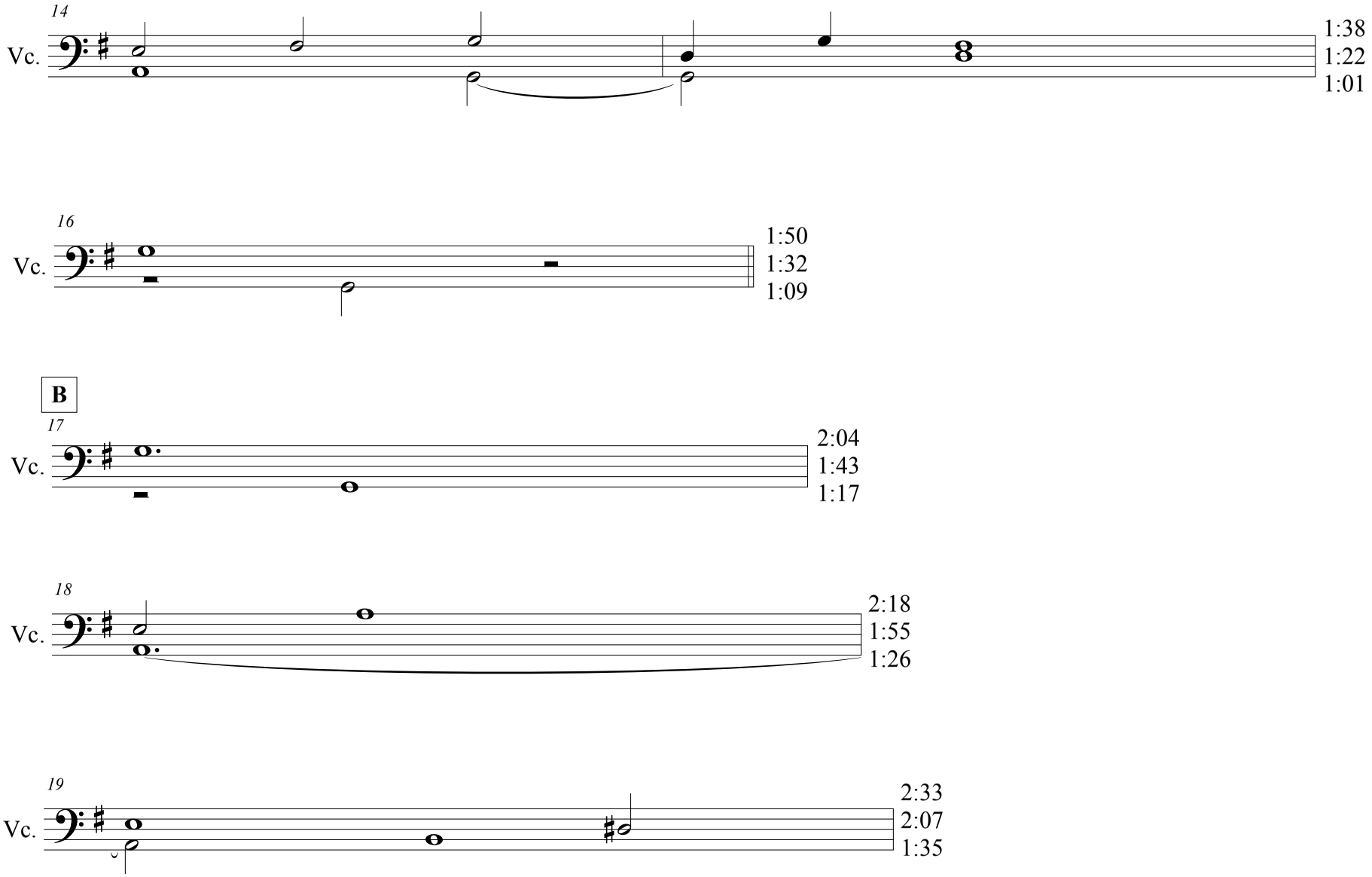
(five songs for kate and vanessa)

stretched cello

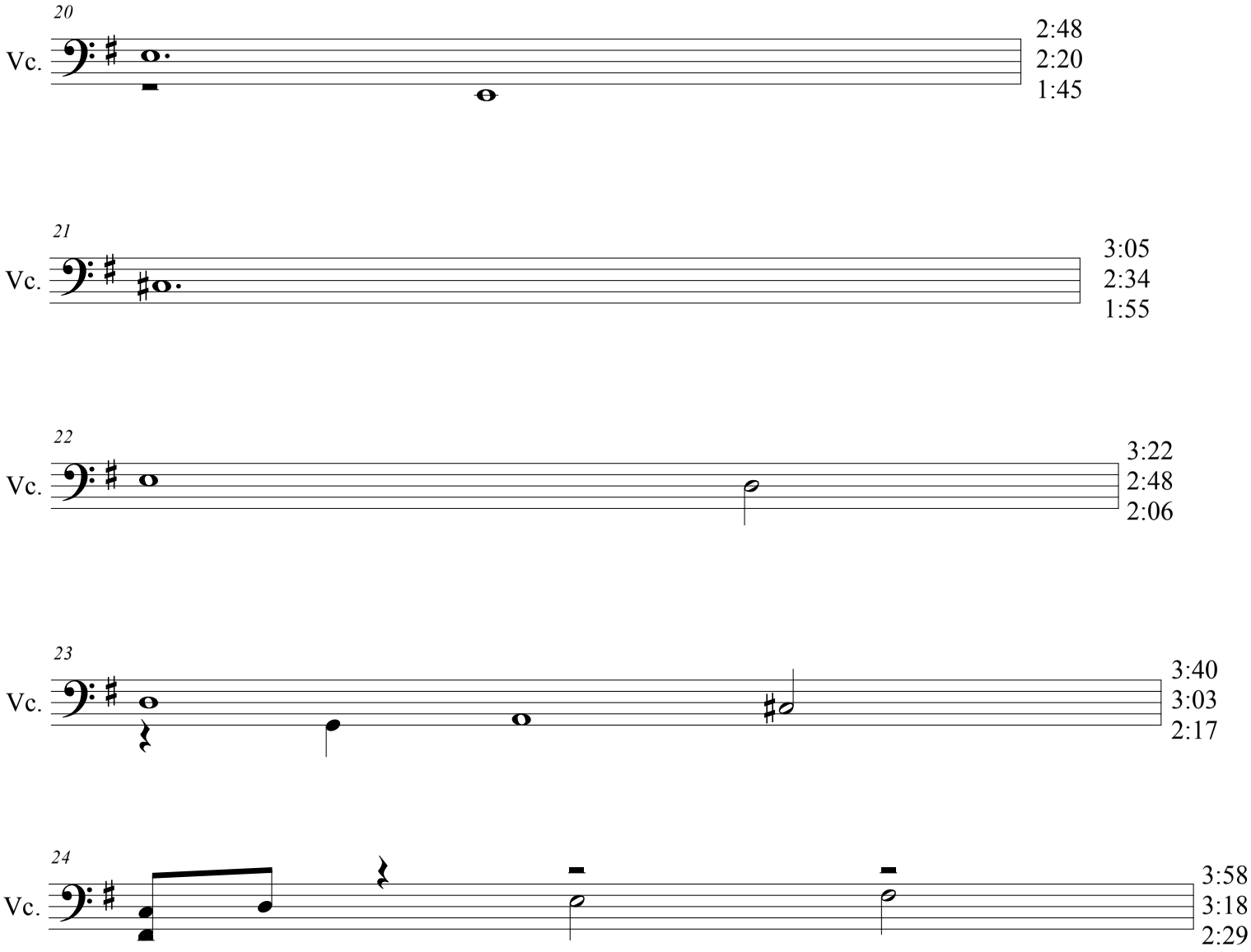
polansky



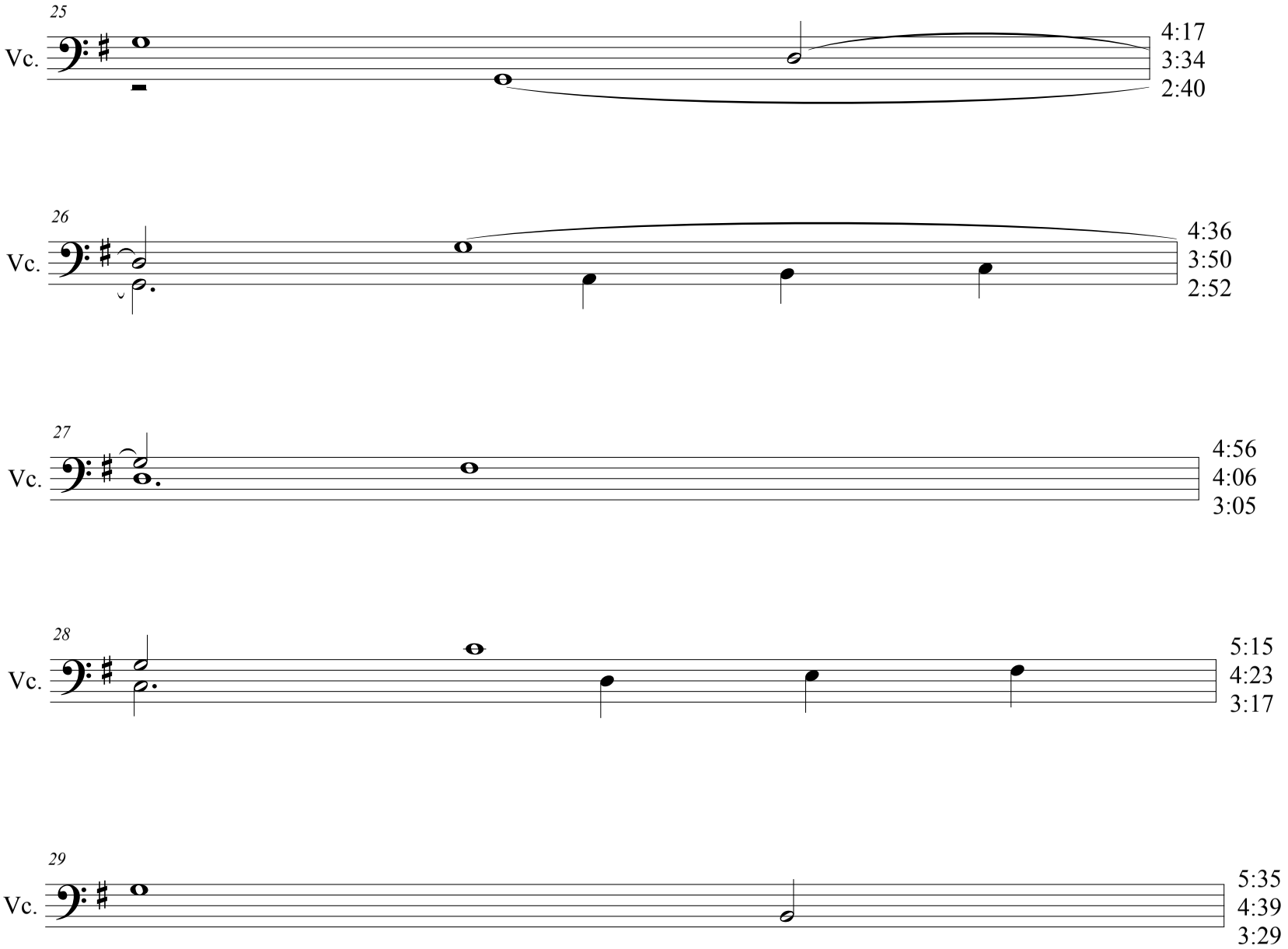
# Courante
(cello)



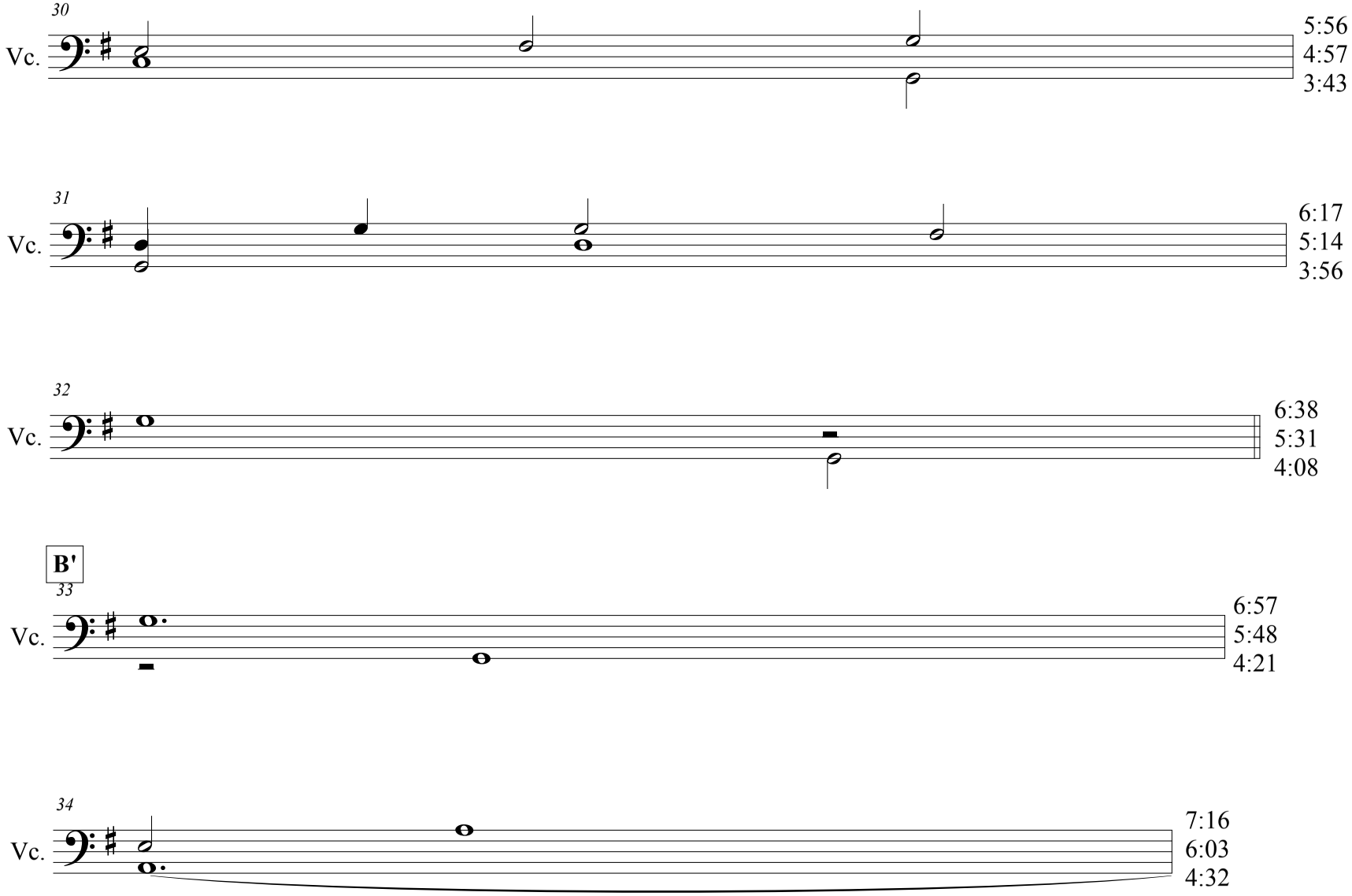
# Courante
(cello)



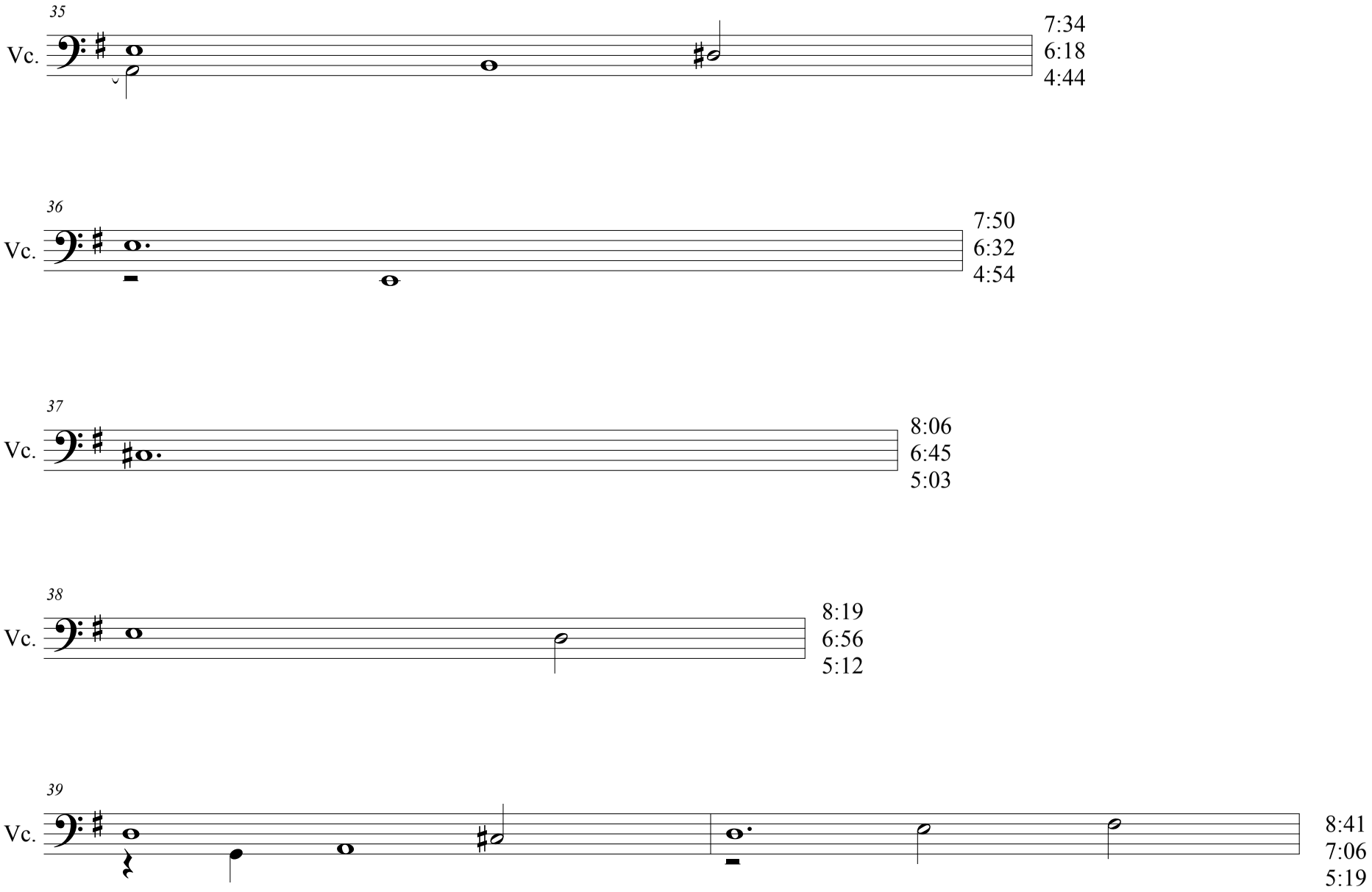
# Courante
(cello)



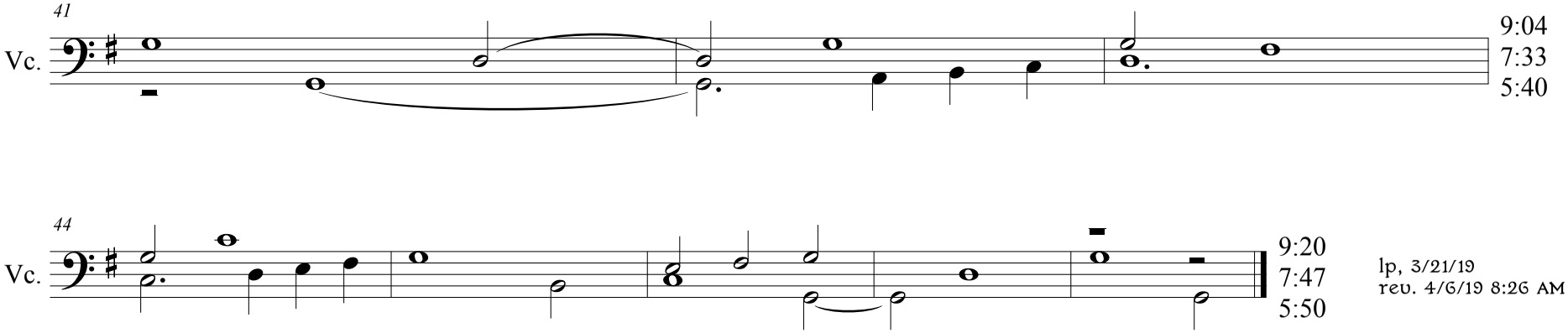
# Courante
(cello)



# Courante
(cello)



# Courante
(cello)




lp, 3/21/19
rev. 4/6/19 8:26 AM

# five songs for kate and vanessa

violin and cello

## V. jig

for Kate Stenberg and Vanessa Ruotolo

Larry Polansky
2019

# jig

polansky

A (♩ = ca. 126)

*Kick-off*

*Fast, as a fiddle tune!*

IV III

*Repeat ad lib*

IV III

Violin

'Cello

5

*Repeat ad lib*

Vln.

'Cello

7

*Repeat ad lib*

Vln.

*Vln. ad lib accents*

'Cello

*Strum, with fingers*

*(hammer-on slur)*

*Repeat ad lib*

*all out!*

9

Vln.

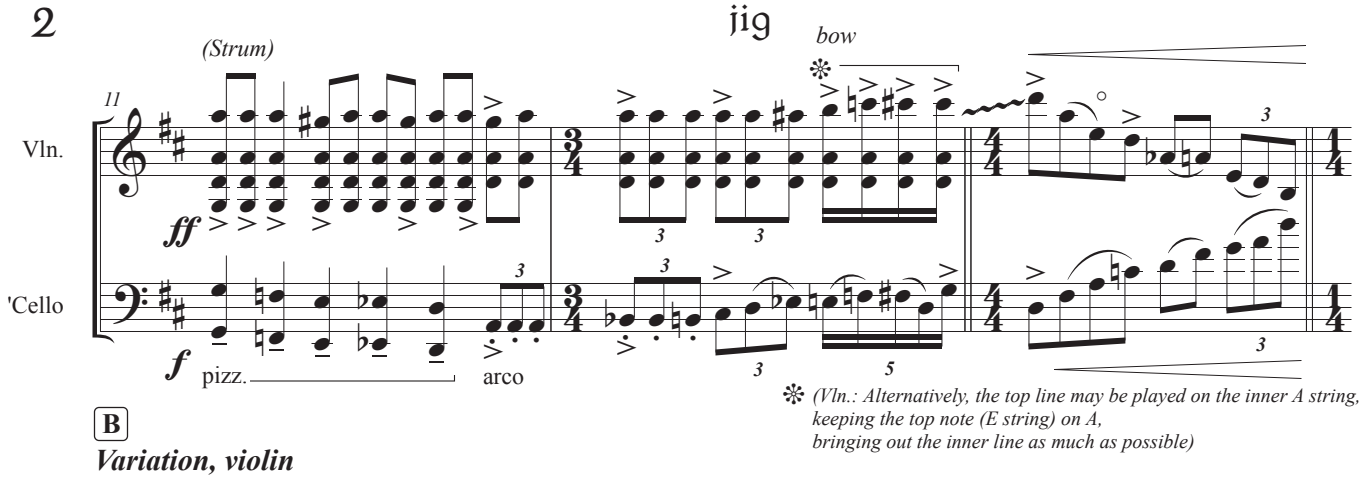
*start a little louder, end a little louder, each repeat*

*mp*

*mf*

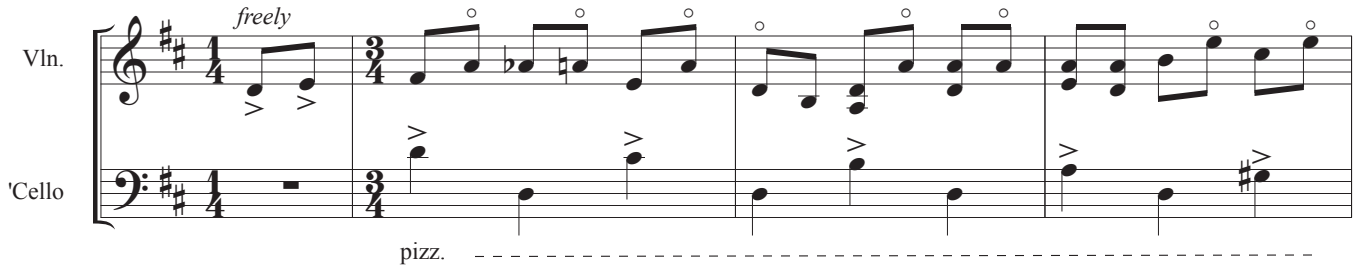
'Cello

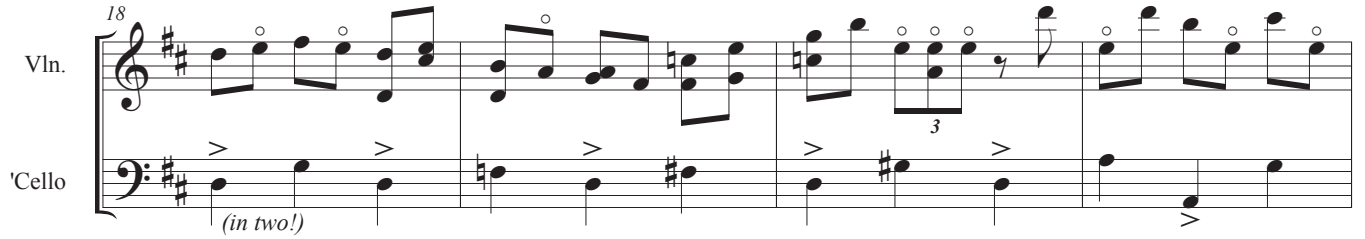
jig

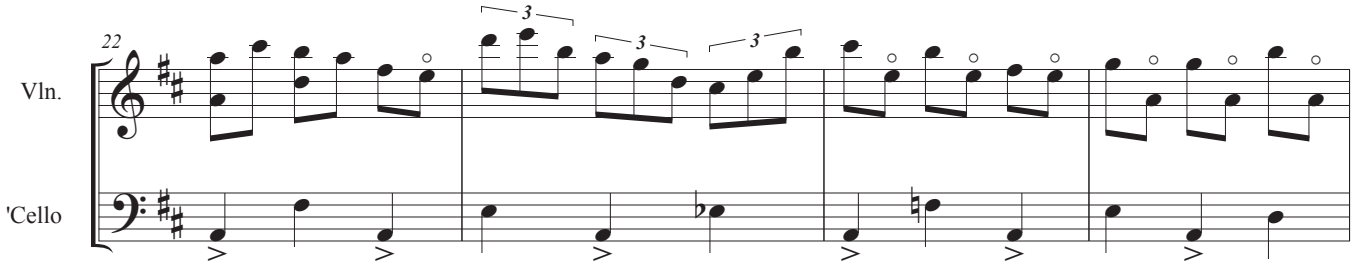


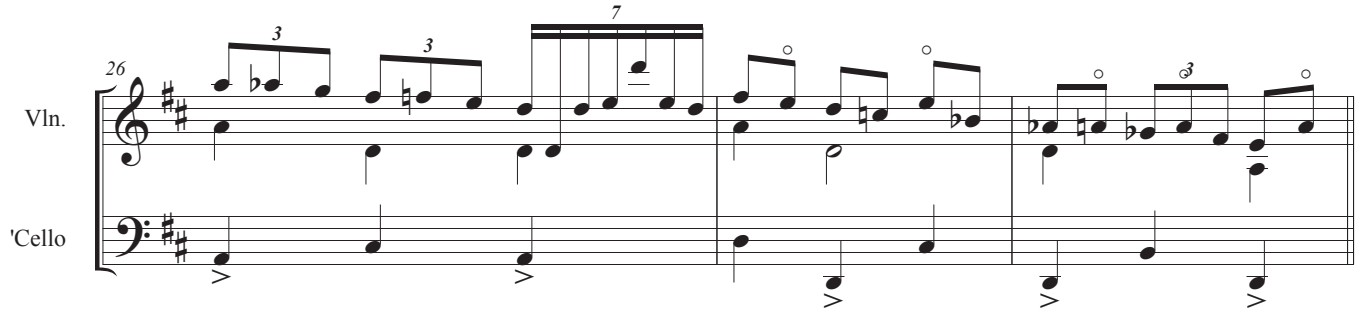

**B**

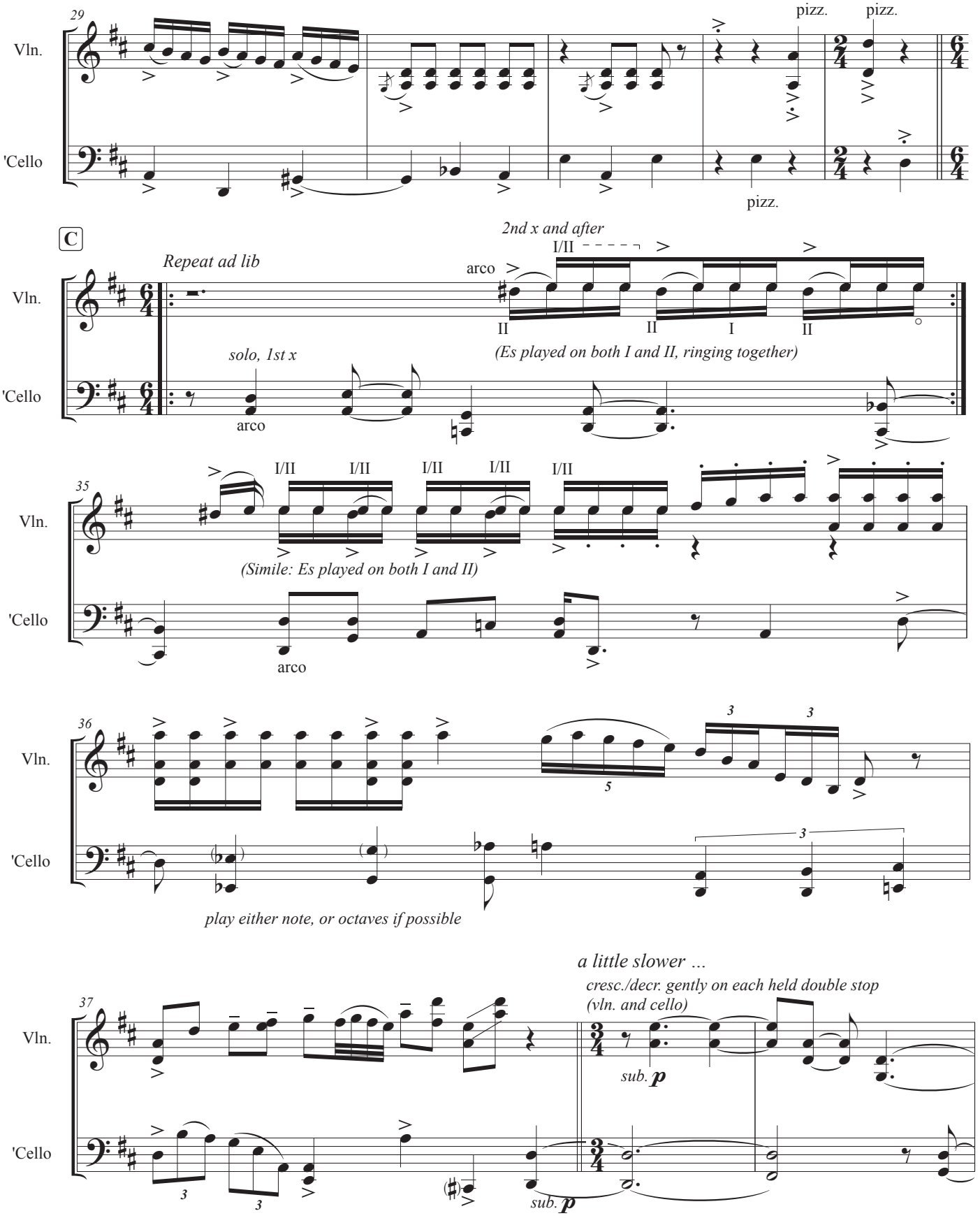
***Variation, violin***

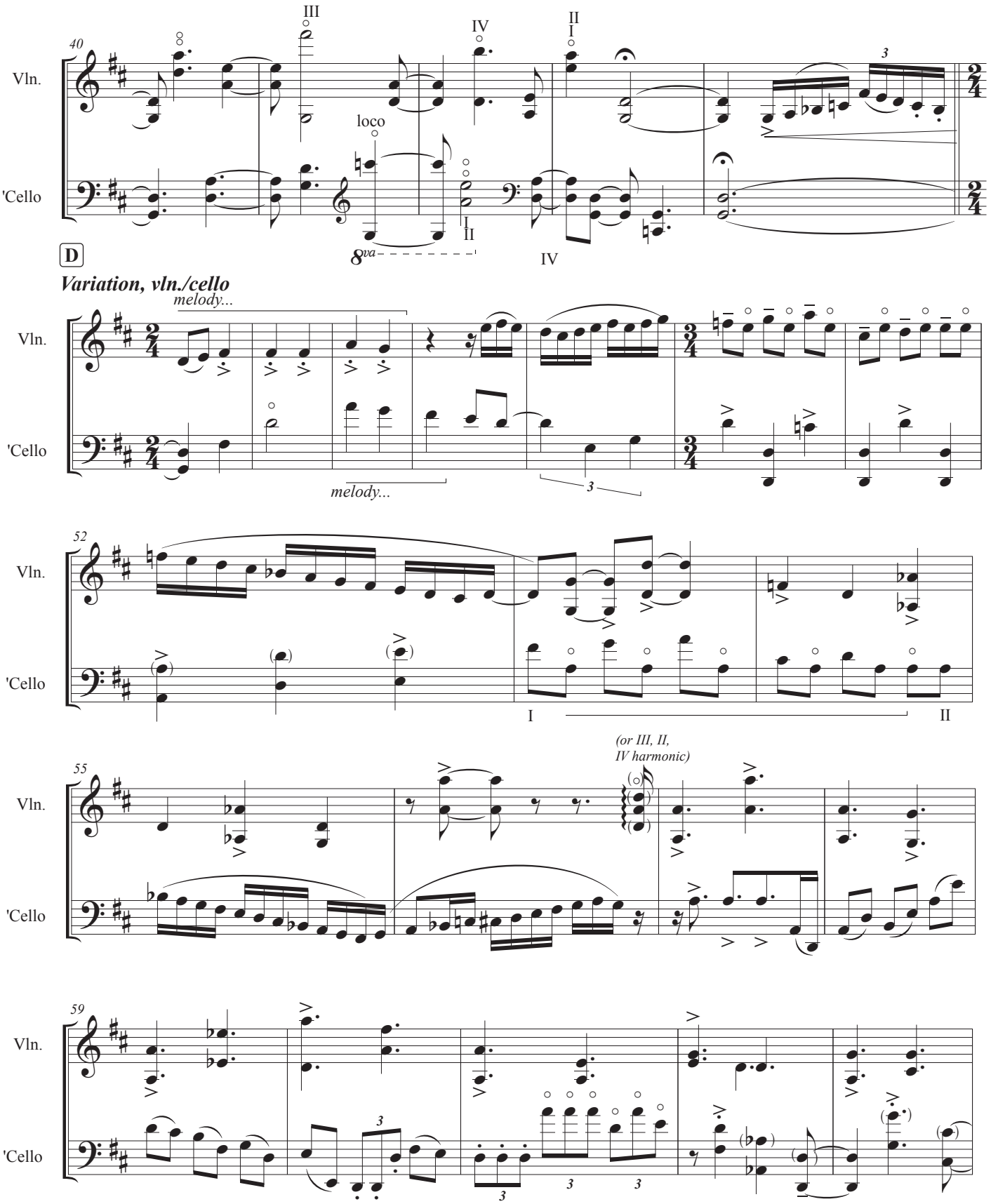


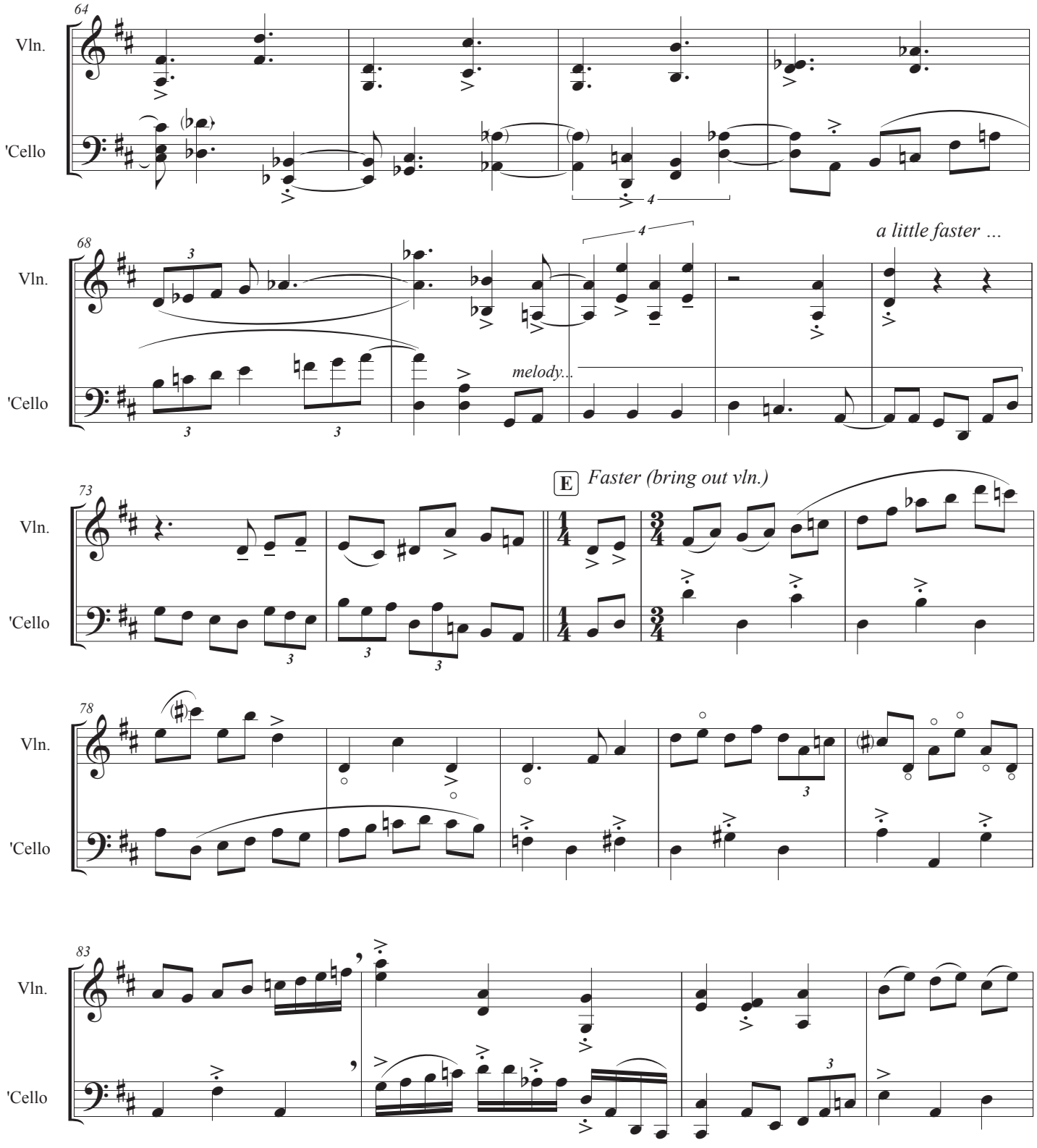



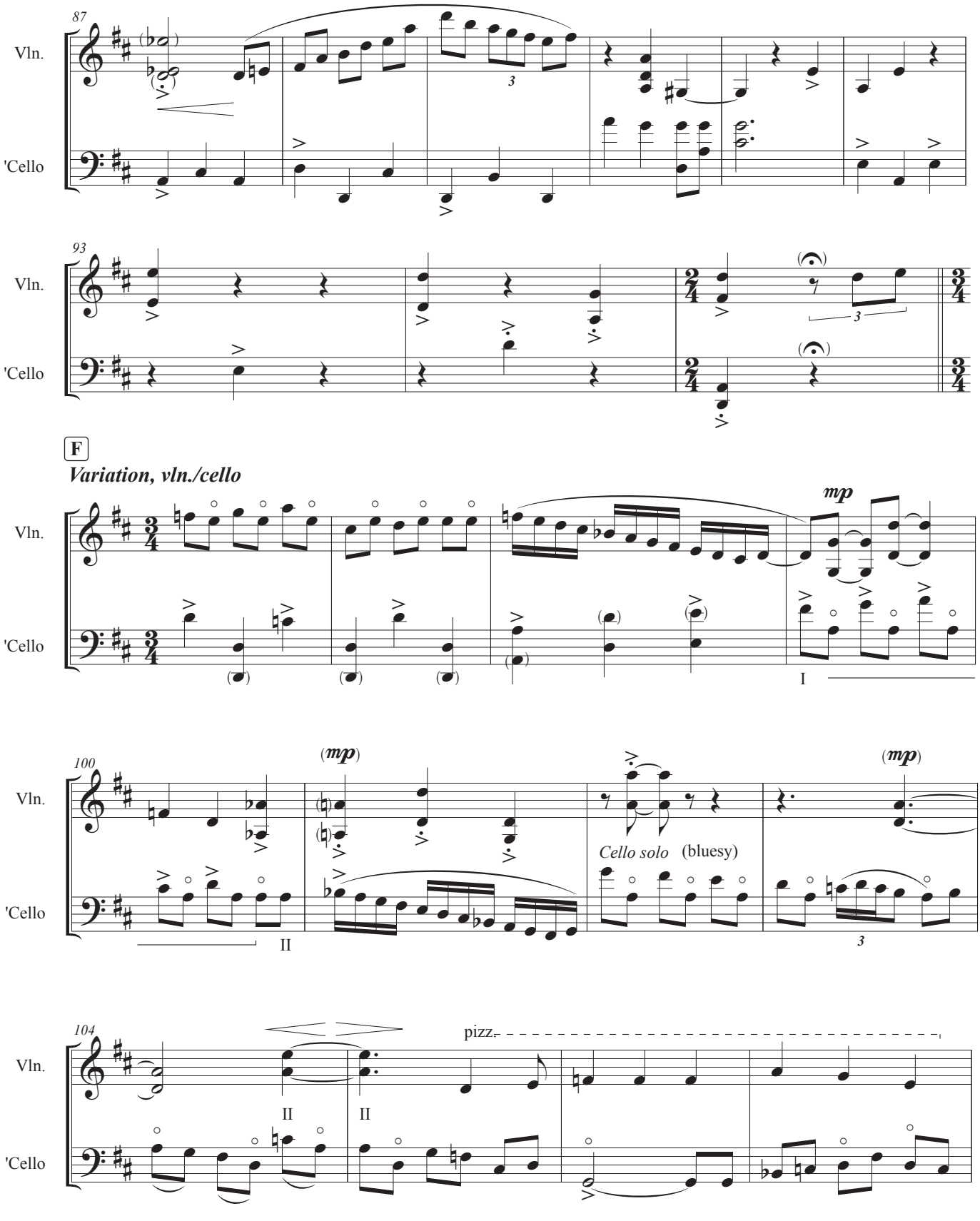




29
Vln.
'Cello
pizz.
pizz.
pizz.
C
Repeat ad lib
2nd x and after
I/II
arco
II
II
I
II
solo, 1st x
arco
(Es played on both I and II, ringing together)
35
I/II
I/II
I/II
I/II
I/II
(Simile: Es played on both I and II)
arco
36
3
3
5
3
play either note, or octaves if possible
a little slower ...
cresc./decr. gently on each held double stop
(vln. and cello)
37
sub. p
sub. p


40
Vln.
'Cello
III
IV
II
I
loco
I
II
8va
IV
3
D
Variation, vln./cello
melody...
melody...
3
52
I
II
55
(or III, II,
IV harmonic)
59
3
3
3
3


64
Vln.
'Cello
68
a little faster ...
melody...
73
E
Faster (bring out vln.)
78
83


87
Vln.
'Cello
93
Vln.
'Cello
F
Variation, vln./cello
mp
Vln.
'Cello
I
100
(mp)
Vln.
'Cello
II
Cello solo (bluesy)
(mp)
3
104
pizz.
Vln.
'Cello
II
II

108

Vln.

'Cello

112

arco

G

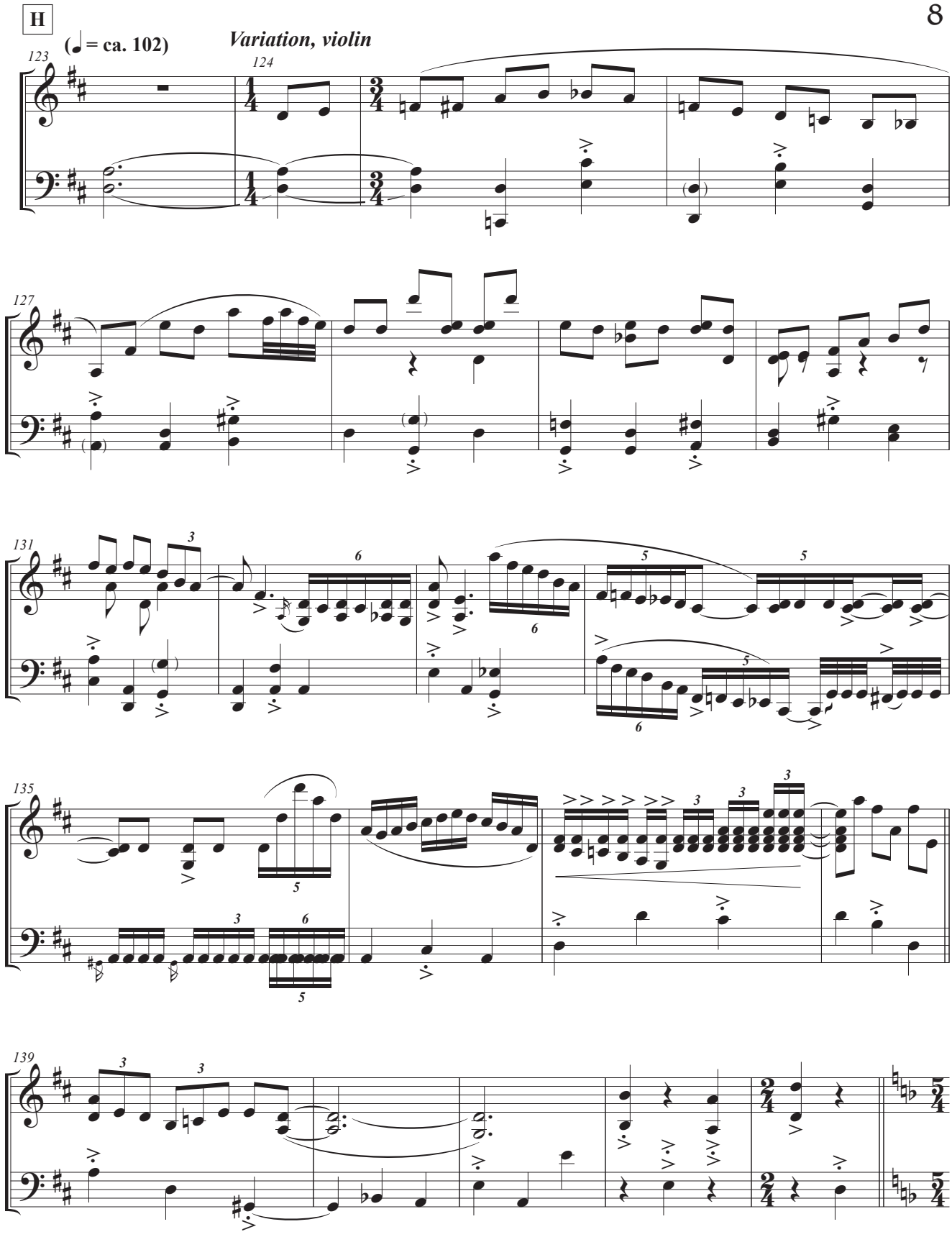
Vln.

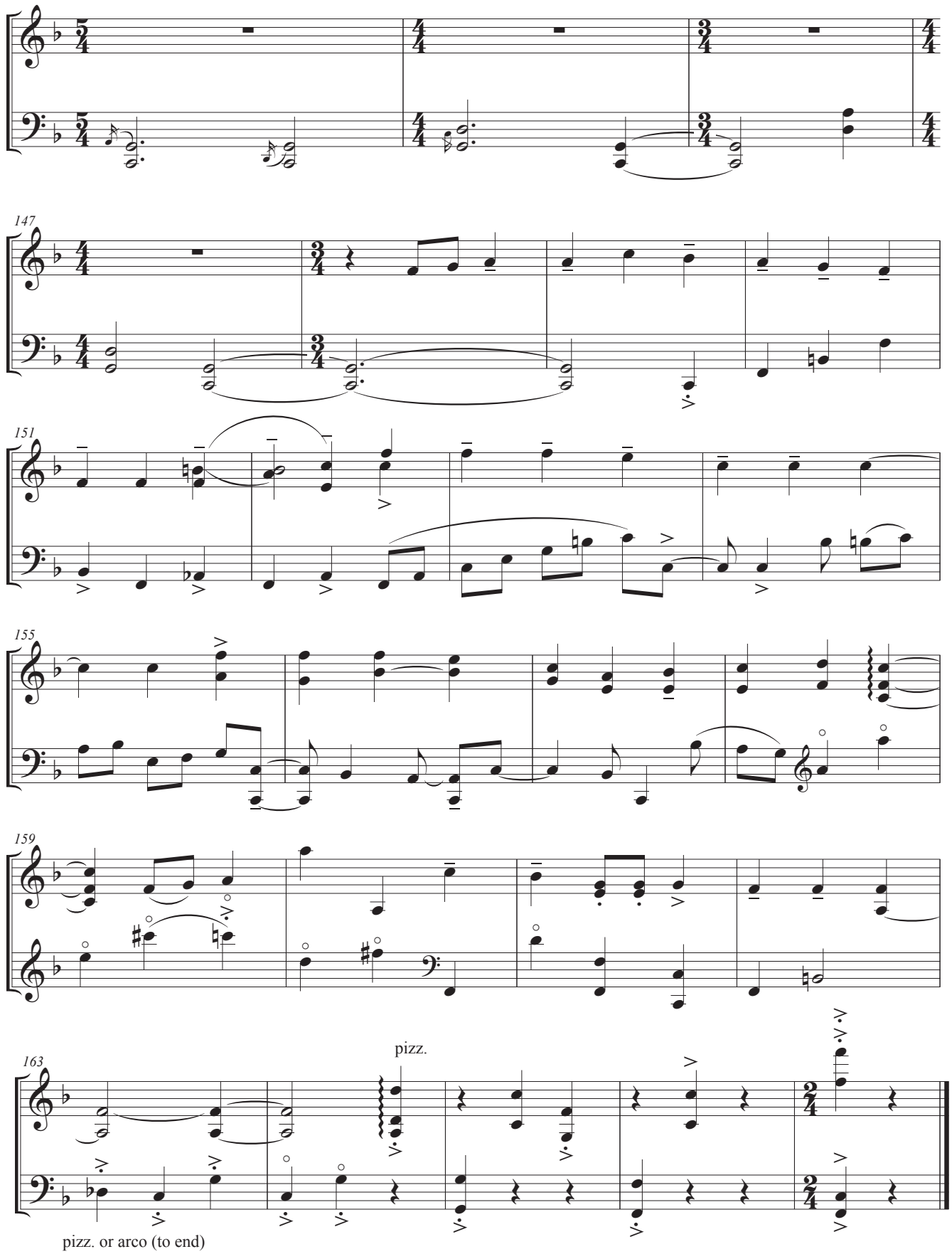
'Cello

117

Vln.

'Cello


H
(♩ = ca. 102)
Variation, violin
123
124
Vln.
'Cello
127
131
135
139


Vln.
'Cello
147
151
155
159
163
pizz.
pizz. or arco (to end)