Dave Soldier

Concerto Grosso for prepared string quartet and string orchestra

Bambaataa Variations

1. His Legs Wobble
2. Mud from Planet XYY
3. Nine Hundred Grandmothers
4. X-Linked Planet
5. Afrika Variations

for the PubliQuartet and Thomas Carlo Bo

December 7, 2013

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Inspired by how Afrika Bambaataa and his collaborators in the SoulSonic Force and Zulu Nation transformed themes from multiple recordings into extended musical tapestries and helped invent hip-hop, I wrote *Bambaataa Variations* to be performed on classical string instruments, using bobby pins, hair and paper clips, combs and brushes, tablespoons, and electric toothbrushes or vibrators. Several themes in the first movement are from Bambaataa's records, some that in turn came from Kraftwerk or John Robie, or from raps by the SoulSonic Force. The second movement adapts a theme from Muddy Waters. I wrote the other themes, but the structure of the Afrika Variations takes a classical Theme and Variations development.

The premiere concert on December 7, 2013 at West Presbyterian Church in New York City was attended by founders of the Zulu Nation and SoulSonic Force, who addressed the audience on how their approach is being adopted and transformed in this piece.

"Bambaataa Variations" Performance Notes

Extended Techniques for all instruments

Special techniques without preparation

A "scratch" is moving the bow in the direction of the strings, *i.e.*, up and down the strings rather than perpendicular across. Imitate the sound of a DJ scratching a record.

A "bow whip" snaps the bow in the air to move the air and make a whipping sound.

"Stop strings" means dampen the strings with the left hand after the note is played to suddenly stop the sound.

Gizmos for quartet soloists

4-8 bobby pins

4 electric toothbrushes or vibrators

1 small hair clip: for 1st violin

1 metal tablespoon for 2nd violin

2 small barber's combs for 2nd violin and viola

1 soft hair brush or soft hair curler for cello,

1 guitar pick for viola

Optional for all: *1st movement:* This following section can be played or omitted, depending on the context of the concert: at the end of the first movement, use the back of an electric toothbrush – or a vibrator – and move it up and down the strings like the spoon before. This should produce a sound like a noisy like a police siren for a 30 second improvisation.

Violin 1

1st movement: two bobby pins are placed around the strings behind the bridge. Pluck them with both index fingers to get a metallic buzz. Set this up before the piece begins, and you can remove it after the 1st movement.

2nd movement: remove the paper clips / bobby pins and clip the strings with a hair clip just above the bridge to help achieve a metallic pizzicato sound: this pizz can use a straight thumb or a guitar pick if helpful. Remove it before the 3rd movement.

Violin 2

1st movement: the second violin doesn't make any conventional sounds. For most of it, it may be easier to hold the instrument on the knees like a viol or Indian or Mideastern violin. Before the piece begins, set up the instrument with two bobby pin or paper clips, one just above and one just below the bridge, holding the strings. When the clips are plucked, they should make a metallic rattling sound like a gamelan. In *arco* sections of the 1st movement, the clips are still there, so produce a rhythmic, aggressive sound on purpose.

1st movement: "back of spoon" refers to using the curved back of a tablespoon in the right hand, and sliding over mostly G & D strings over the neck. The low notes are

short slides, the high notes are stronger and gliss upward in pitch: they should sound like a tuned electronic drum

1st movement: use a small barber's comb as a bow: hold it a steep angle so that the bristles move easily across the string near the bridge, which sounds like a saw.

5th movement: there is a point to insert bobby pins or paper clips at measure 479: if this is too short, there can be a pause before the 5th movement.

Viola

1st movement: two bobby pins are placed around the strings behind the bridge. Pluck them with both index fingers to get a metallic buzz. Set this up before the piece begins, and you can remove it after the 1st movement.

1st and 2nd movements: use a small barber's comb as a bow: hold it a steep angle so that the bristles move easily across the string near the bridge, which sounds like a saw.

2nd movement: uses a guitar pick, use it over the neck to get a plucky sound.

Cello

1st movement: two bobby pins are placed around the strings behind the bridge. Pluck them with both index fingers to get a metallic buzz. Set this up before the piece begins, and you can remove it after the 1st movement.

1st and 2nd movements: use a small barber's comb as a bow: hold it a steep angle so that the bristles move easily across the string near the bridge, which sounds like a saw.

1st and 2nd movements: use a soft hairbrush or hair curler to bow strings.

5th movement: indicates foot tapping.

Gizmos for orchestra

First violins: Bobby pins

Second violins: Comb, bobby pins

Violas: Bobby pins, tablespoon, comb

Celli: Bobby pins, comb

Bass: Bobby pins, hairbrush or hair curler

Optional for all: *1st movement:* This following section can be played or omitted, depending on the context of the concert: at the end of the first movement, use the back of an electric toothbrush – or a vibrator – and move it up and down the strings like the spoon before. This should produce a sound like a noisy like a police siren for a 30 second improvisation.

Violin 1

1st movement: two bobby pins are placed around the strings behind the bridge. Pluck them with both index fingers to get a metallic buzz. Set this up before the piece begins, and you can remove it after the 1st movement.

Violin 2

1st movement: use a small barber's comb as a bow: hold it a steep angle so that the bristles move easily across the string near the bridge, which sounds like a saw.

5th movement: two bobby pins are placed around the strings behind the bridge. Pluck them with both index fingers to get a metallic buzz. Set this up where indicated in the 5th movement and leave them in until after the piece is done.

Viola

1st movement: two bobby pins are placed around the strings behind the bridge. Pluck them with both index fingers to get a metallic buzz. Set this up before the piece begins, and you can remove it after the 1st movement.

1st movement: "back of spoon" refers to using the curved back of a tablespoon in the right hand, and sliding over mostly C & G strings over the neck. The low notes are short slides, the high notes are stronger and gliss upward in pitch: they should sound like a tuned electronic drum

3rd movement: use a small barber's comb as a bow: hold it a steep angle so that the bristles move easily across the string near the bridge, which sounds like a saw.

Cello

1st movement: two bobby pins are placed around the strings behind the bridge. Pluck them with both index fingers to get a metallic buzz. Set this up before the piece begins, and you can remove it after the 1st movement.

5th movement: indicates foot tapping.

Double Bass

1st movement: two bobby pins are placed around the strings behind the bridge. Pluck them with both index fingers to get a metallic buzz. Set this up before the piece begins, and you can remove it after the 1st movement.

1st and 3rd movements: use a soft hairbrush or hair curler to bow strings.

5th movement: indicates foot tapping.

Score

December, 2013

Bambaataa Variations

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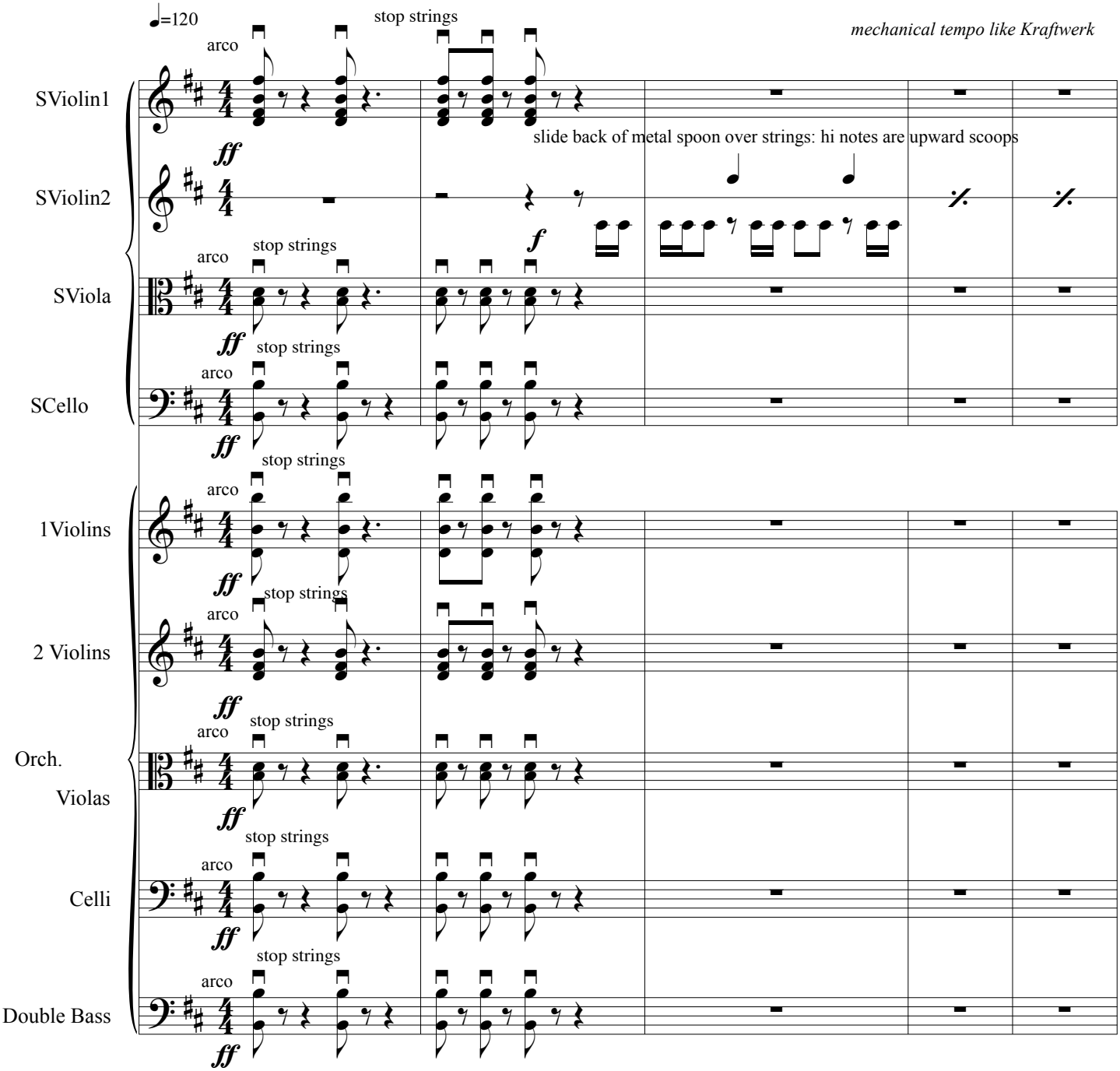
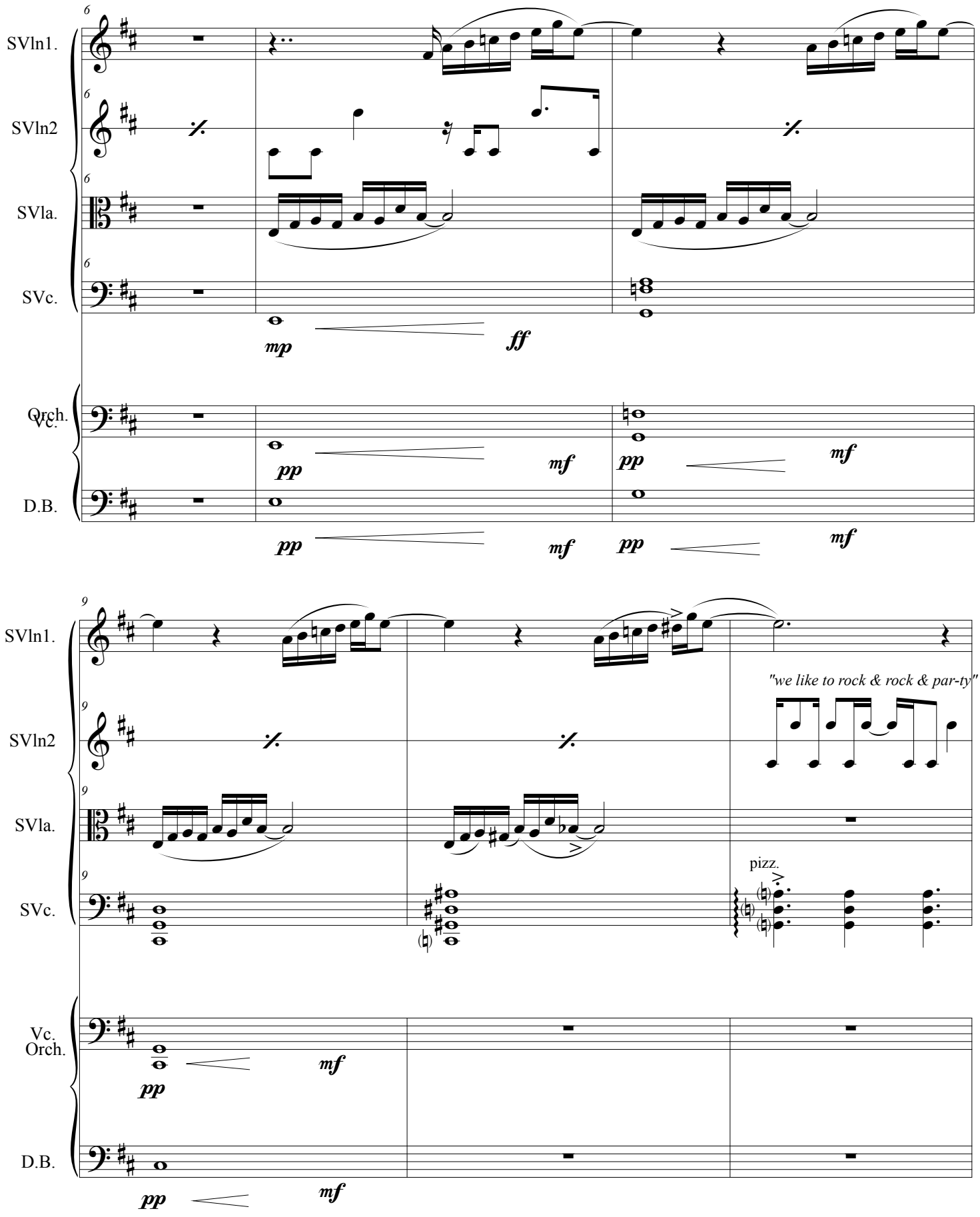
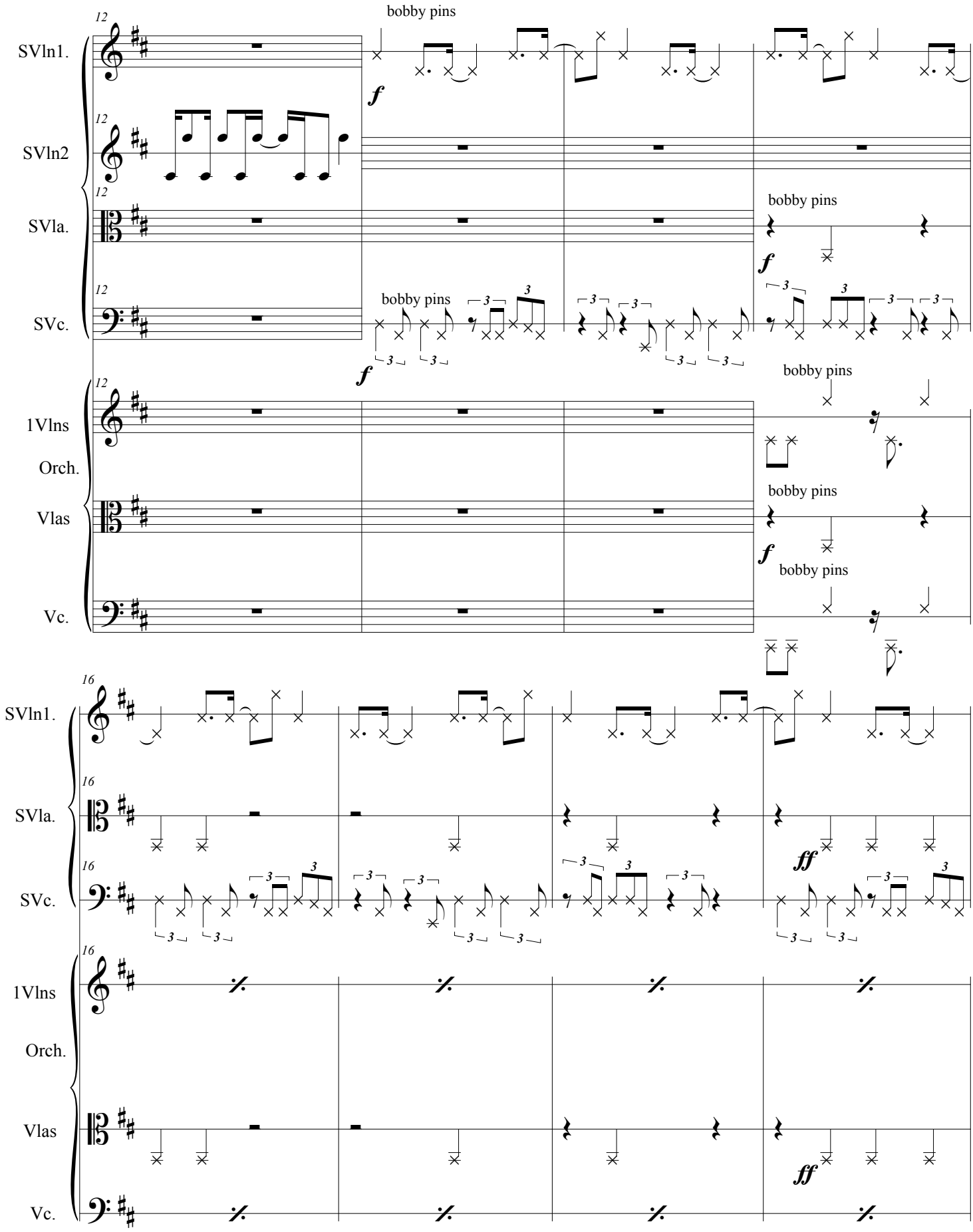
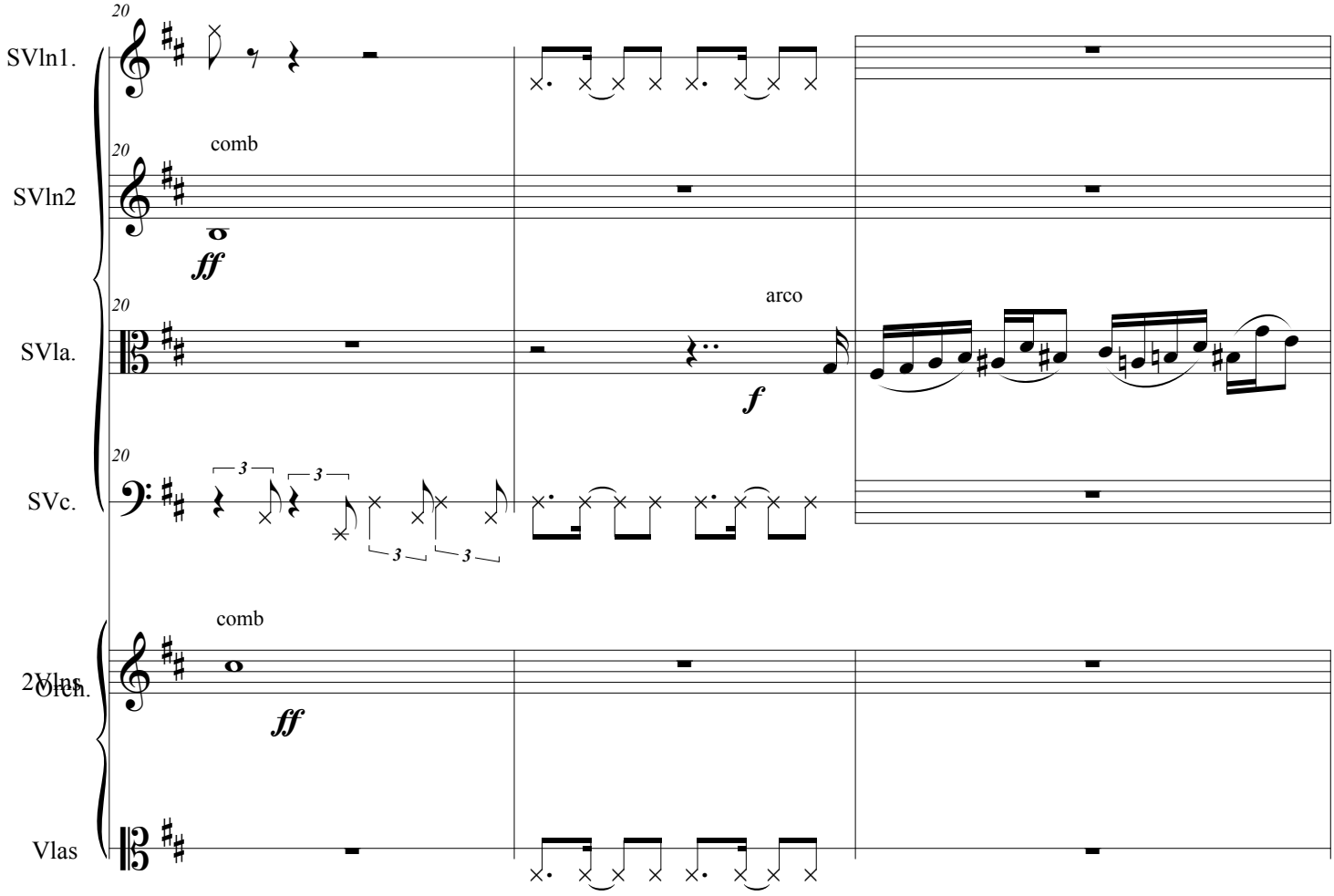
Concerto Grosso for prepared string quartet
& string orchestra

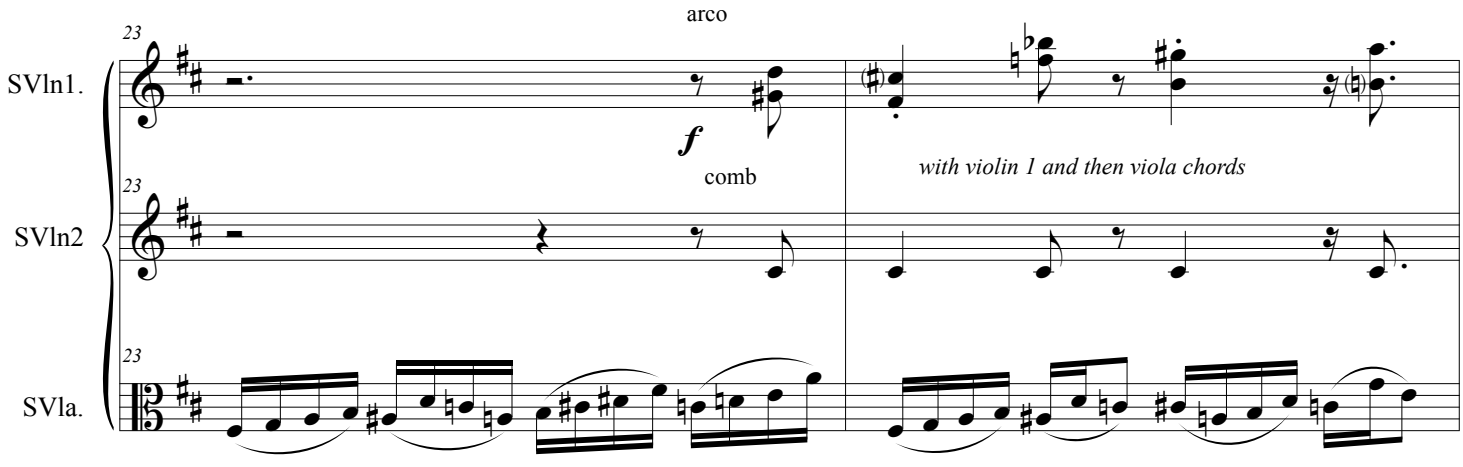
1. His Legs Wobble

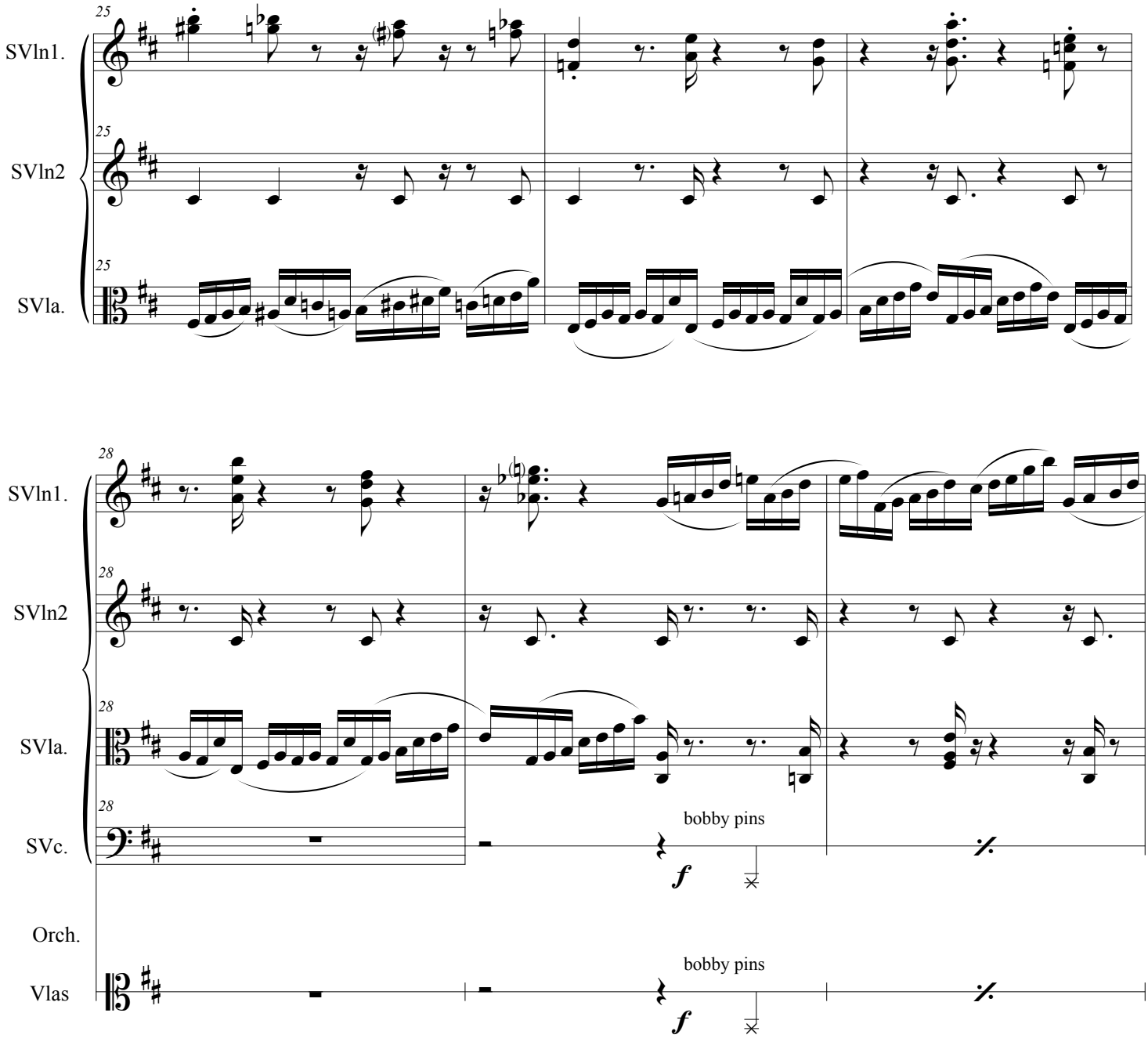


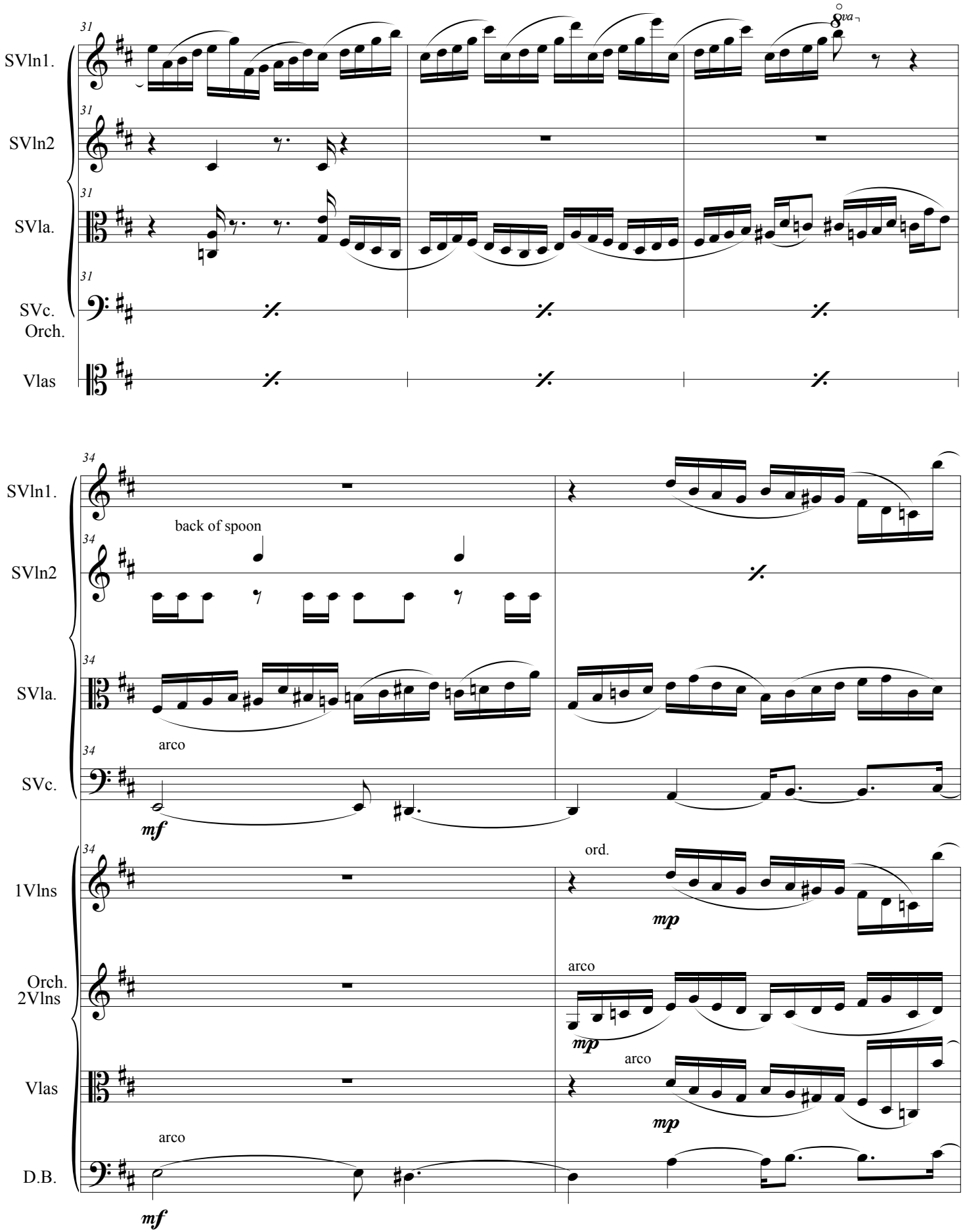

SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
Orch.
Vc.
D.B.
mp
ff
pp
mf
"we like to rock & rock & par-ty"
pizz.

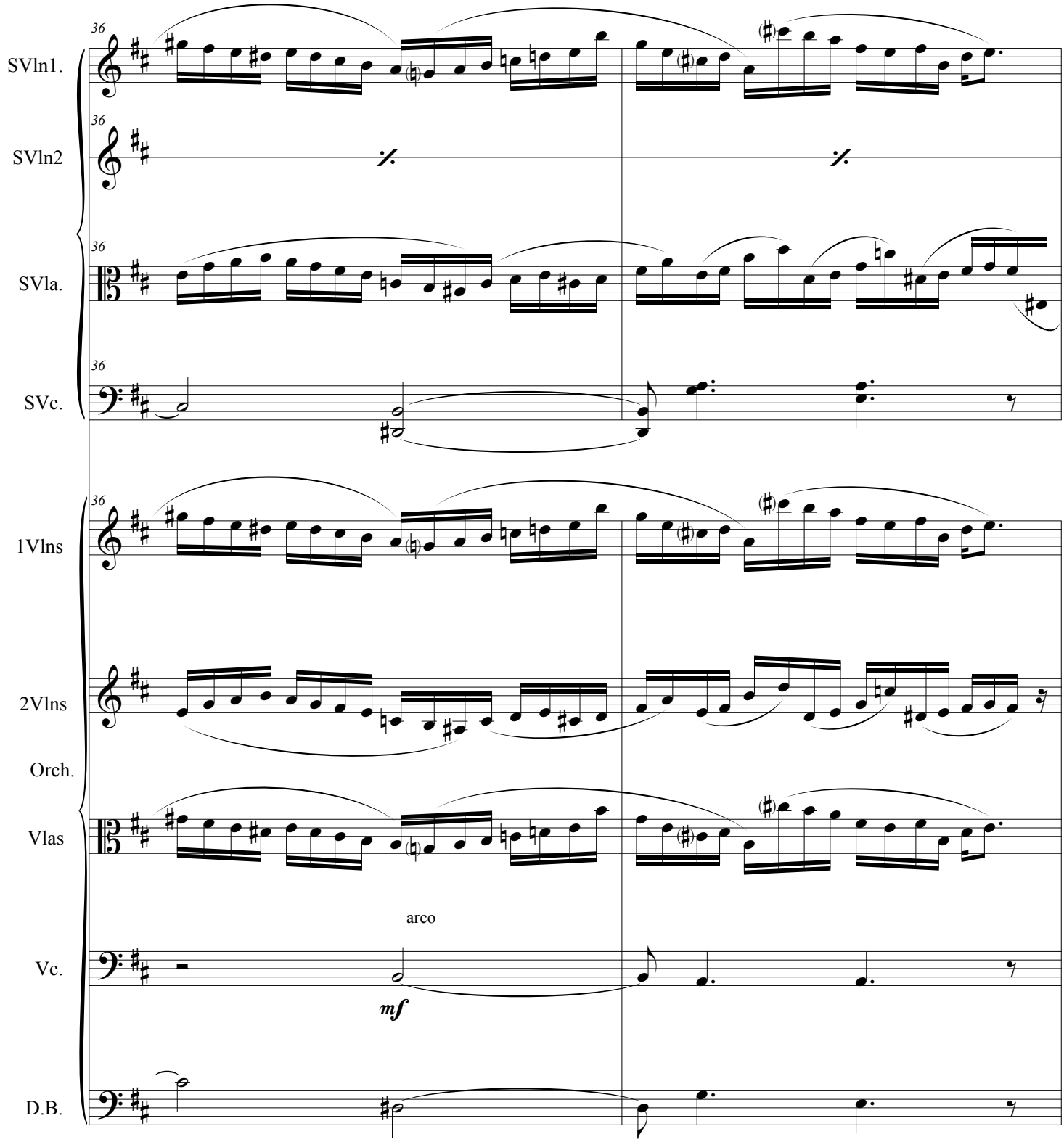

12
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
bobby pins
f
1Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
16
ff

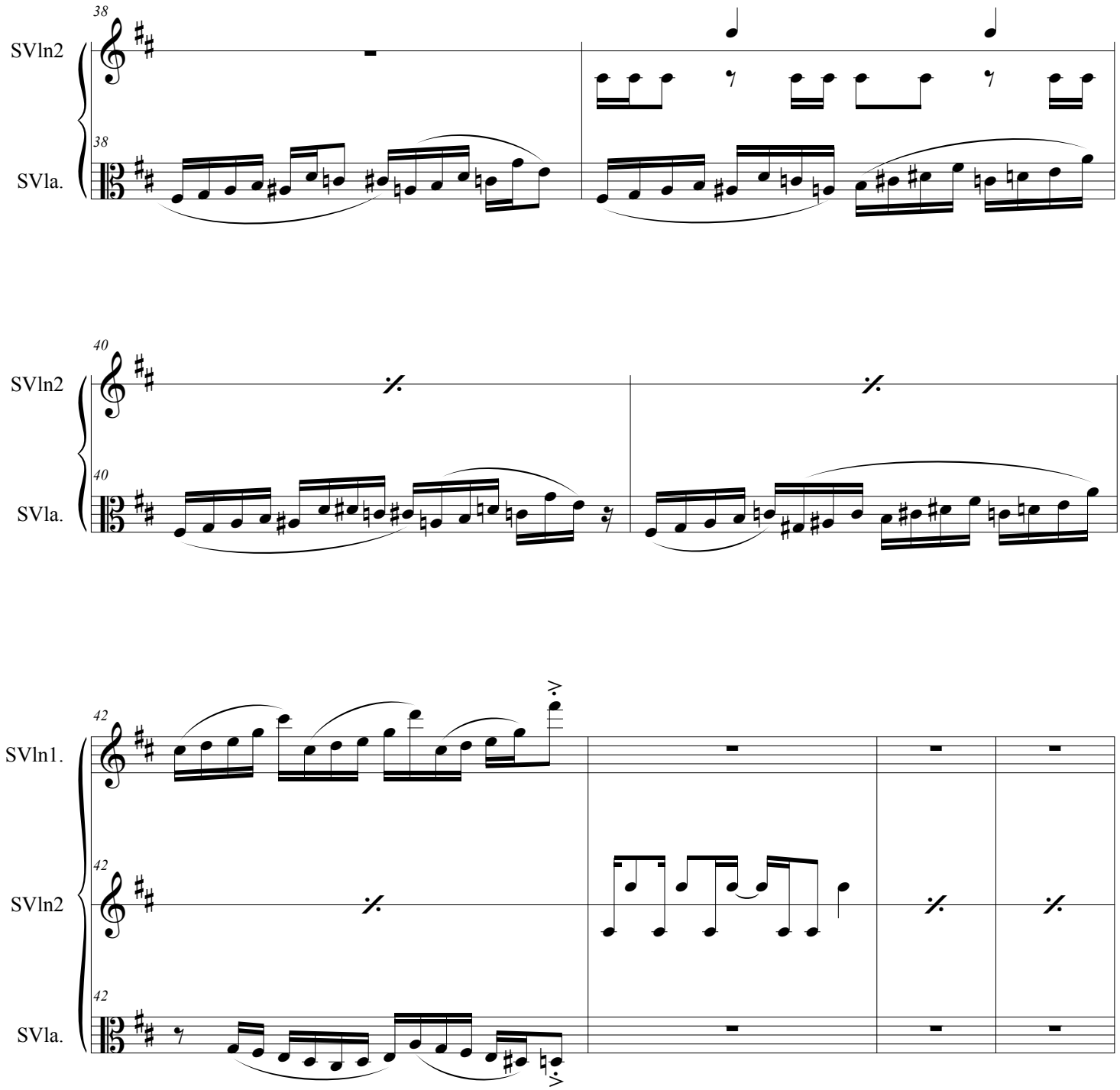

20
SVln1.
20
comb
SVln2
ff
20
arco
SVla.
f
20
SVc.
3
3
3
3
comb
2Vlas
Olcn.
ff
Vlas

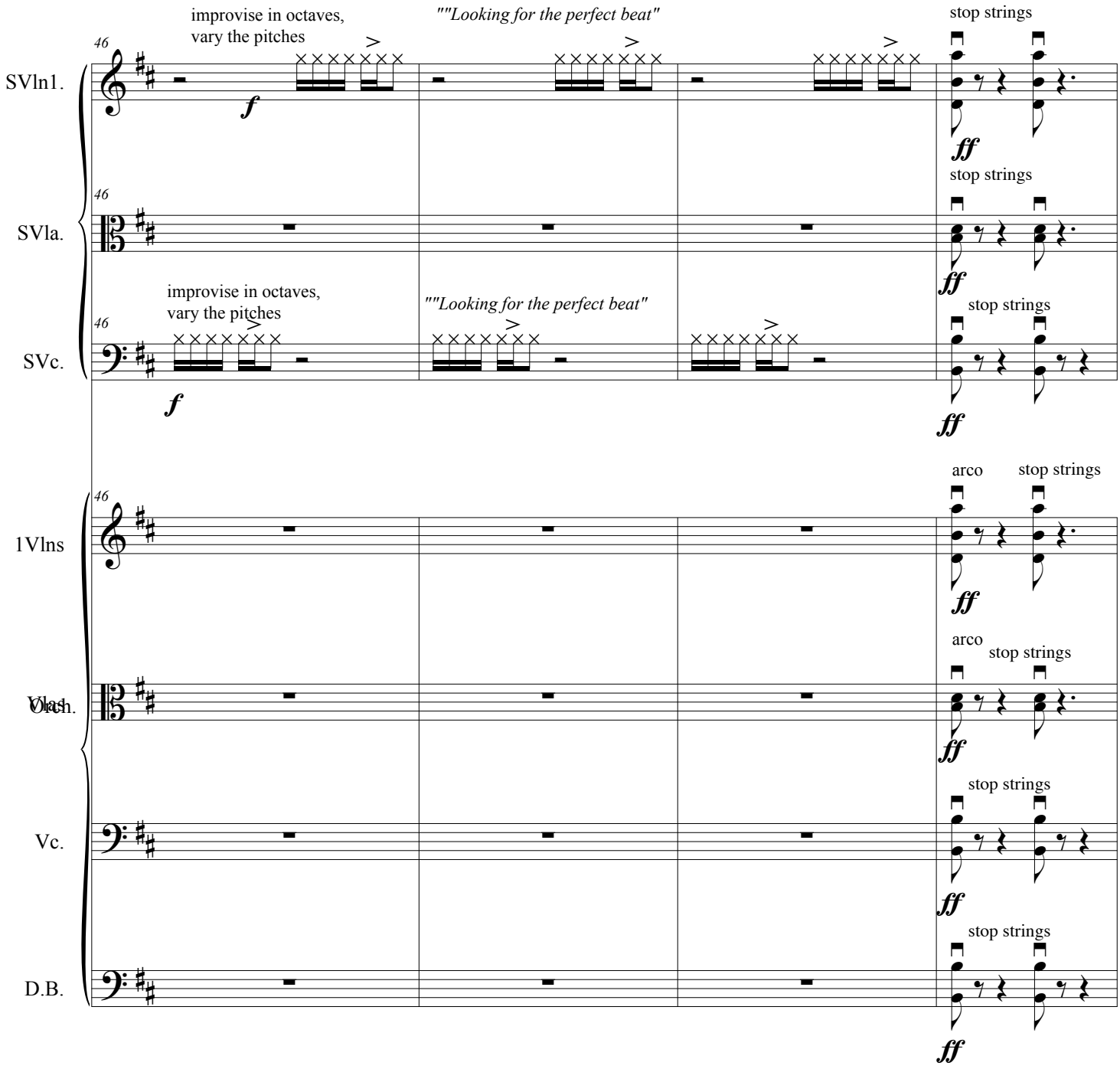

arco
23
SVln1.
f
comb
with violin 1 and then viola chords
23
SVln2
23
SVla.

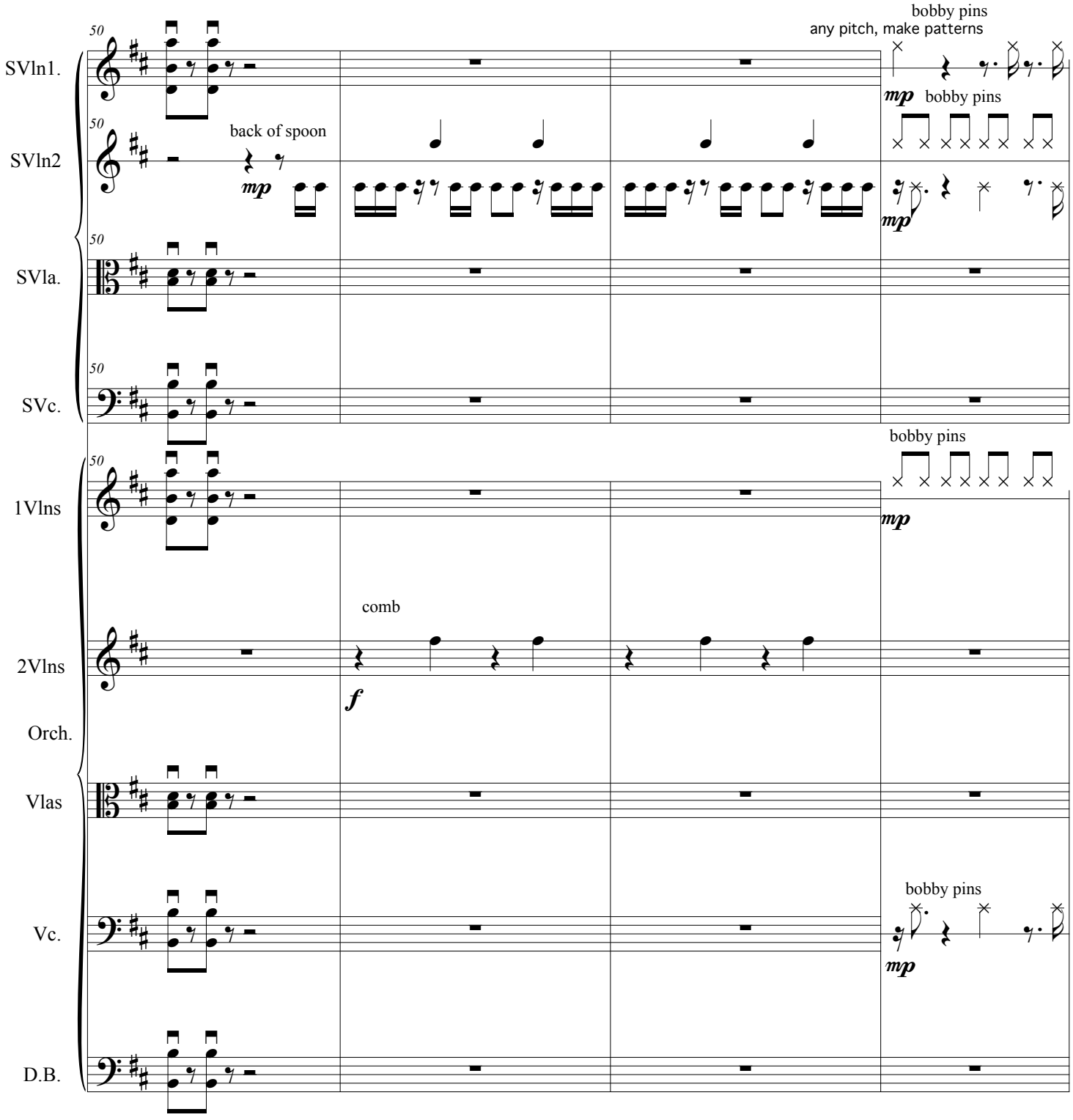

25
SVln1.
25
SVln2
25
SVla.
28
SVln1.
28
SVln2
28
SVla.
28
SVc.
bobby pins
f
Orch.
Vlas
bobby pins
f

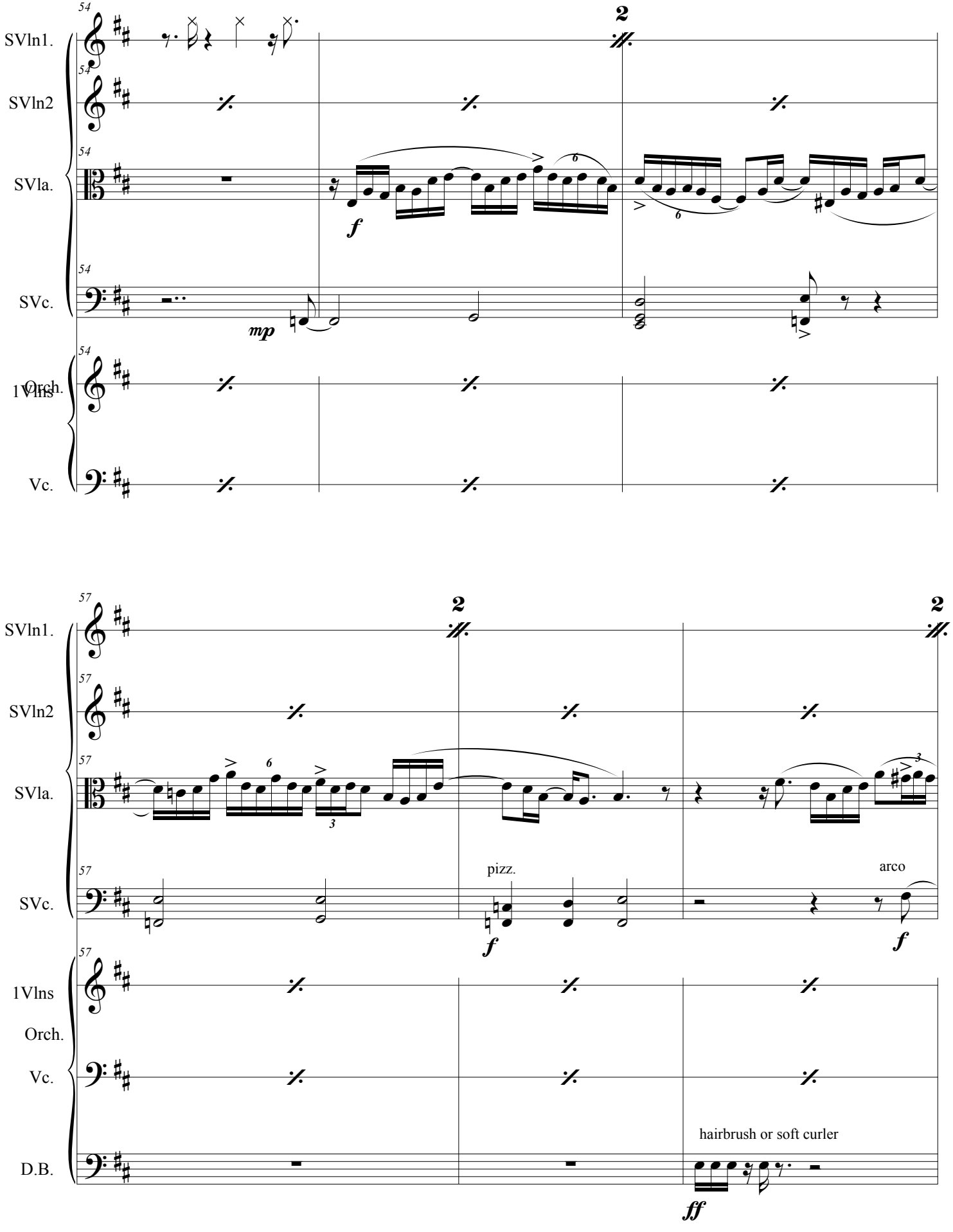

31
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
Orch.
Vlas
8va
34
back of spoon
arco
mf
1Vlns
ord.
mp
Orch.
2Vlns
arco
mp
Vlas
arco
mp
D.B.
arco
mf

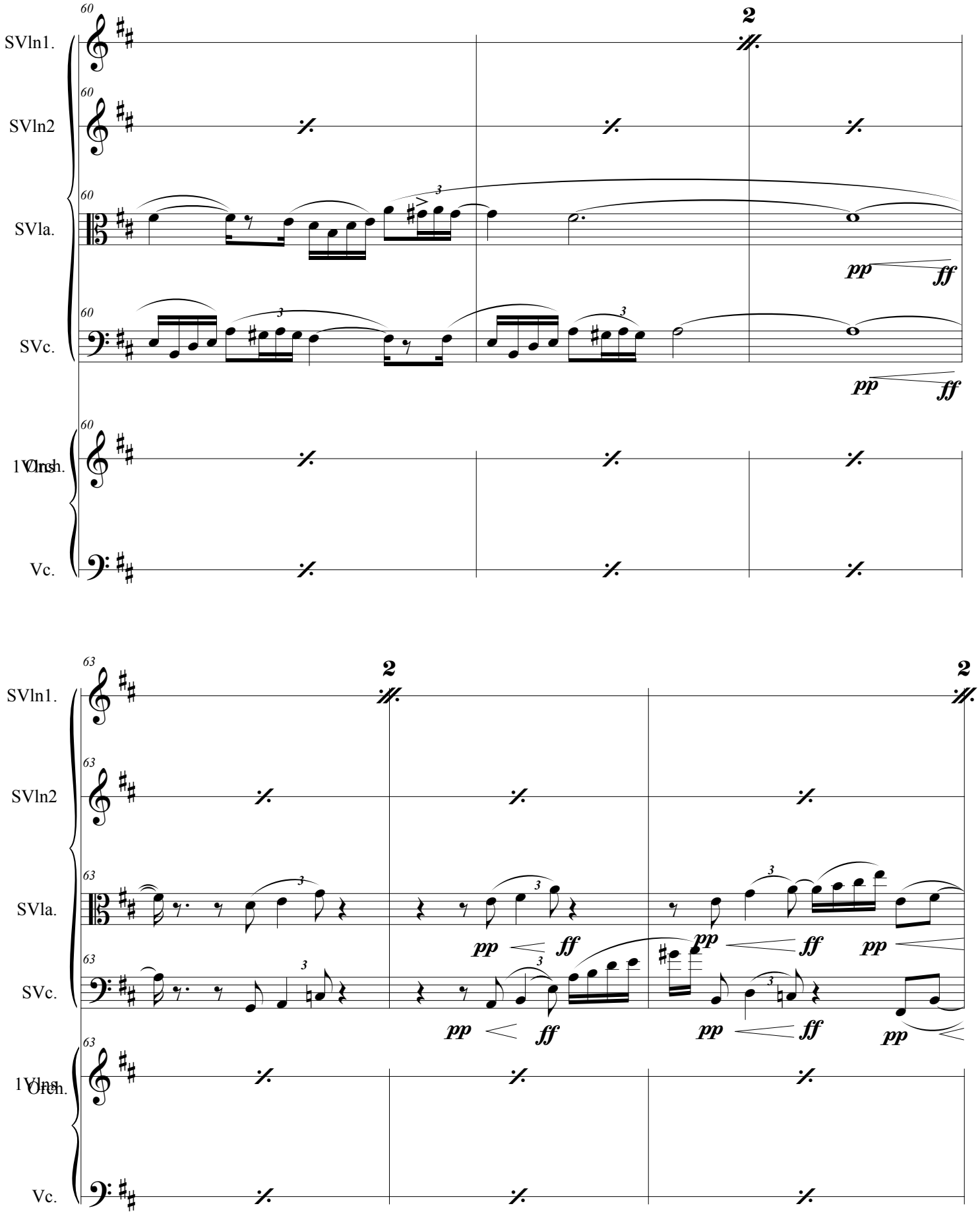

36
SVln1.
36
SVln2
36
SVla.
36
SVc.
36
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
arco
Vc.
mf
D.B.

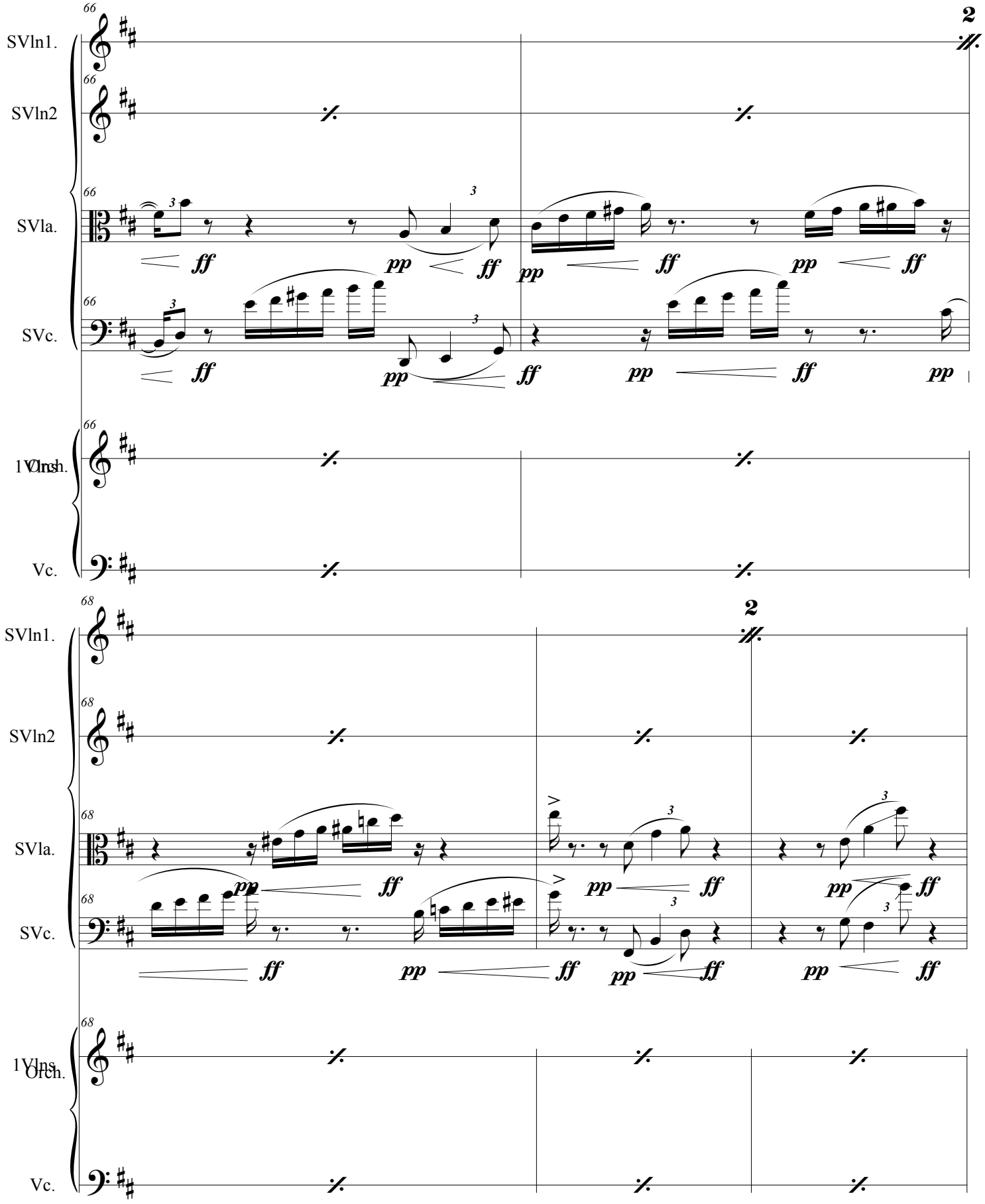

38
SVln2
38
SVla.
40
SVln2
40
SVla.
42
SVln1.
42
SVln2
42
SVla.

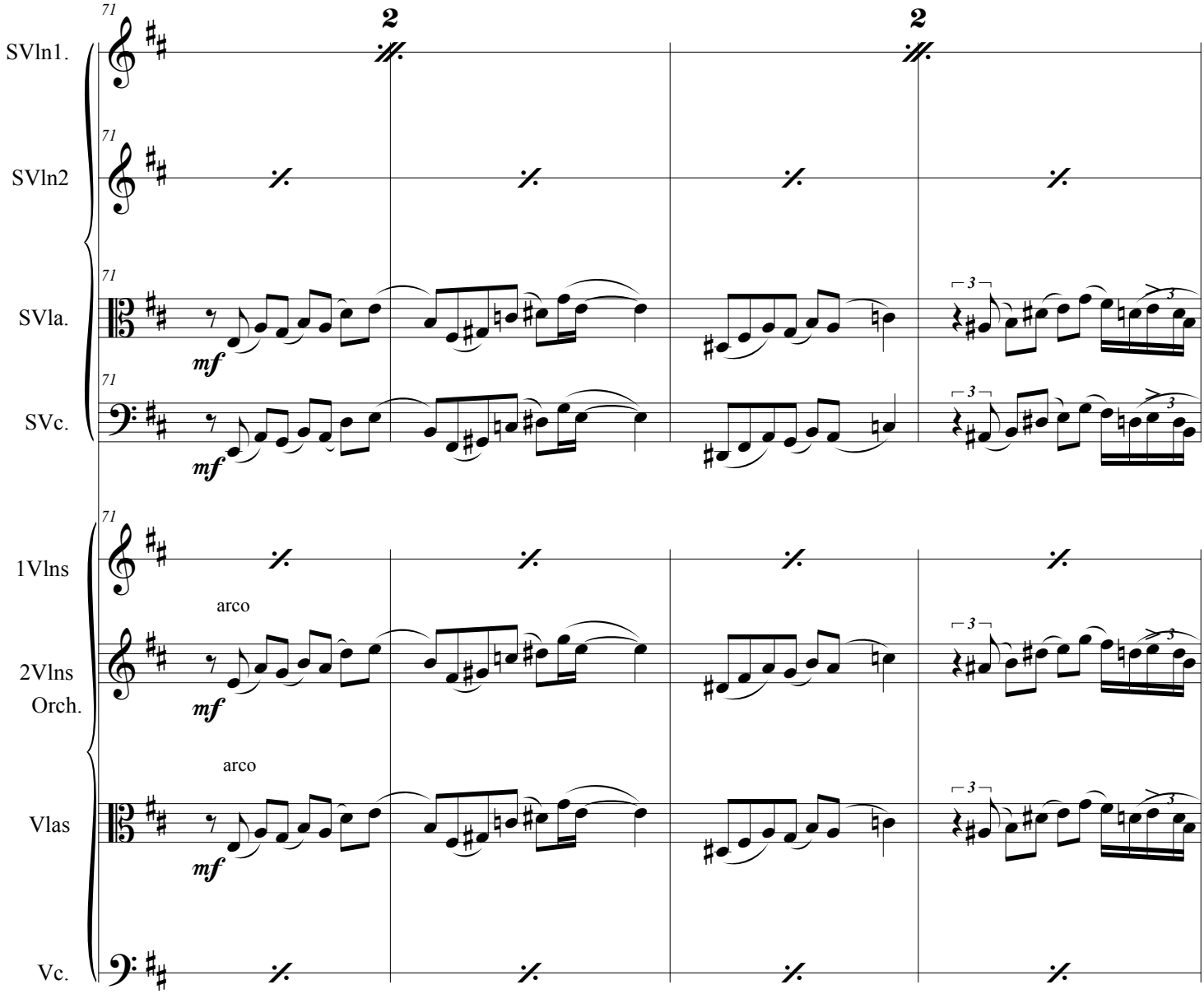

SVln1.
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
Vlas.
Orch.
Vc.
D.B.
46
improvise in octaves,
vary the pitches
""Looking for the perfect beat"
stop strings
arco
f
ff

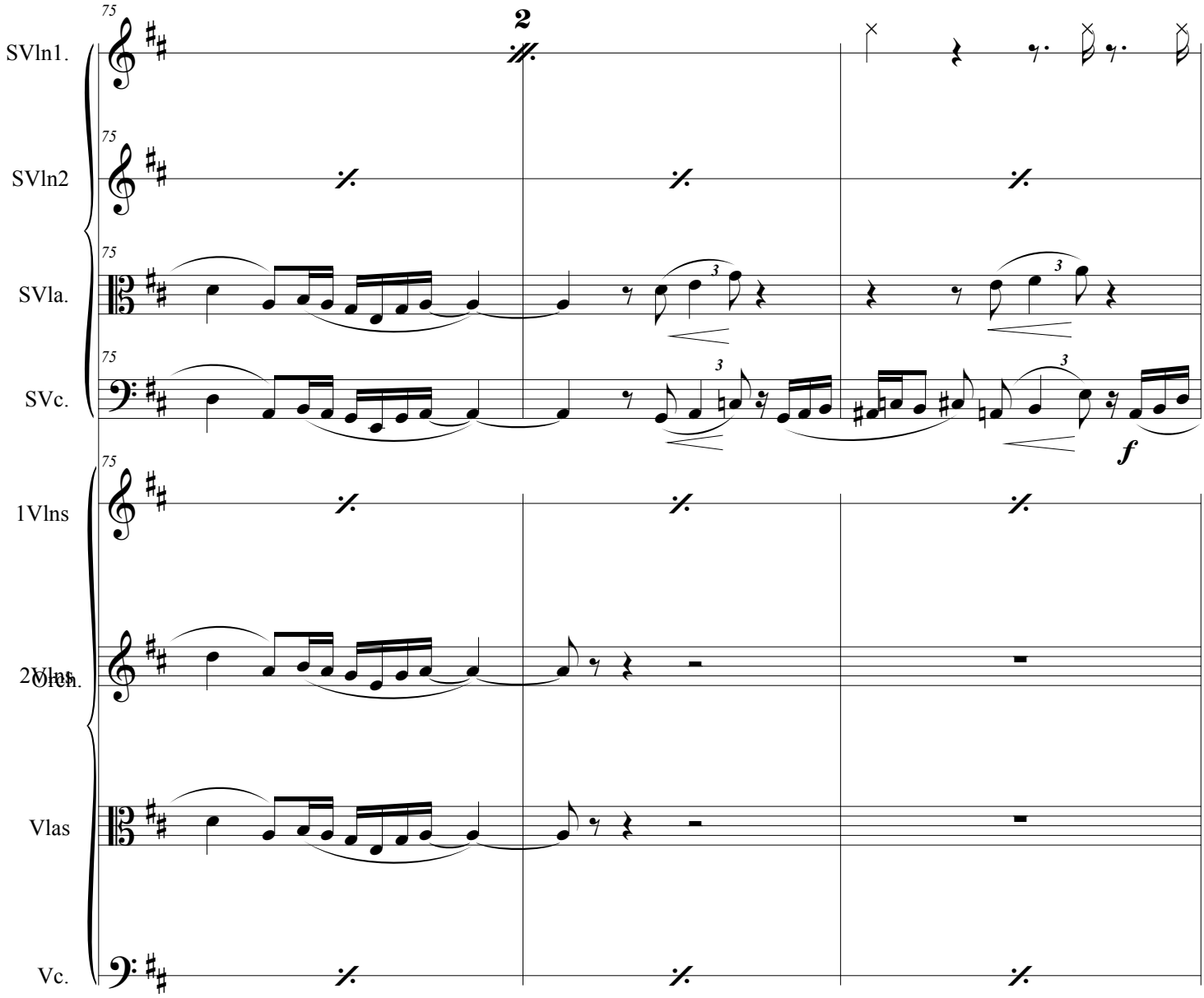

SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
50
back of spoon
mp
comb
f
bobby pins
any pitch, make patterns
bobby pins
mp
bobby pins
mp
bobby pins
mp

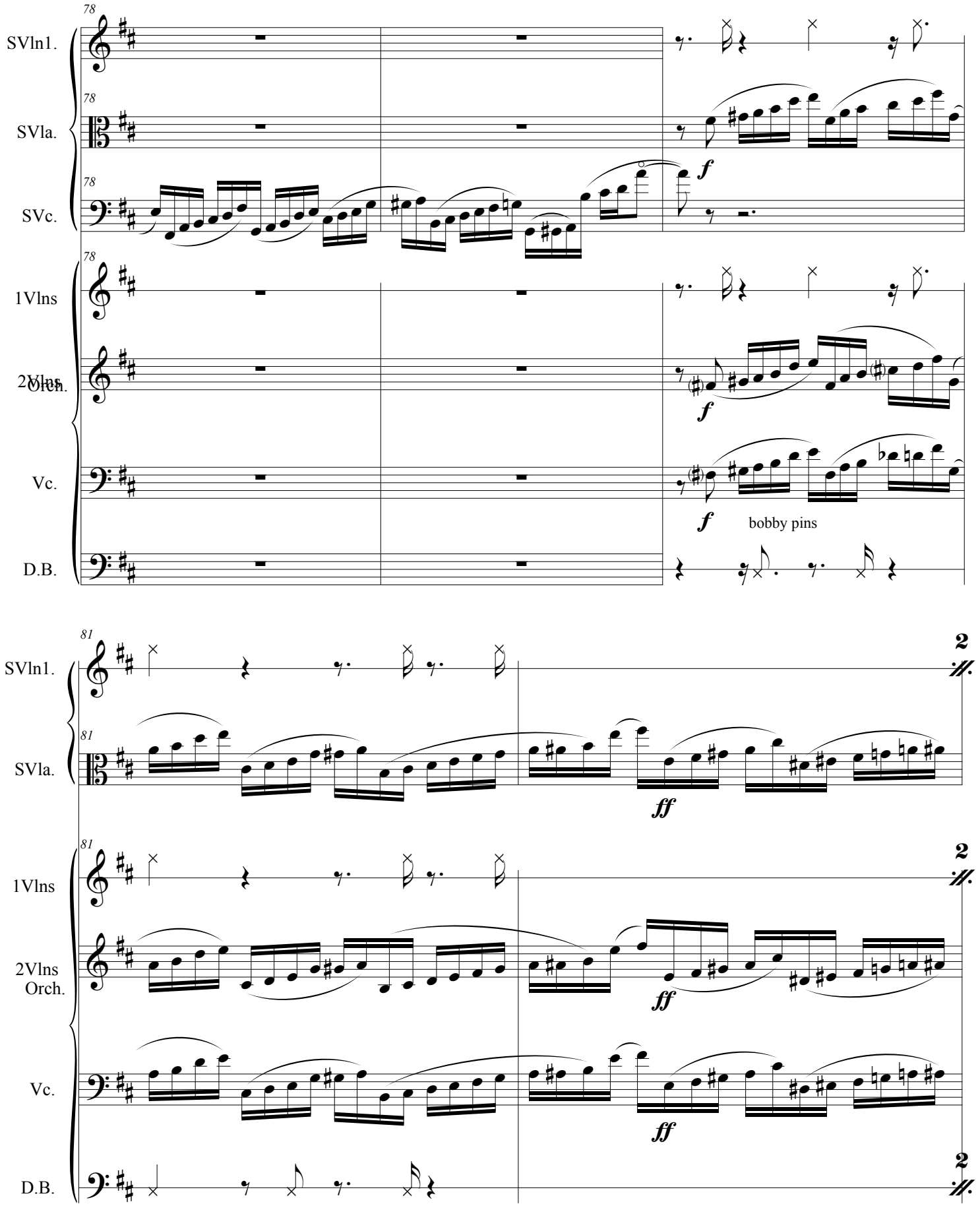

54
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
Orch.
Vc.
2
f
mp
57
pizz.
arco
hairbrush or soft curler
D.B.
ff

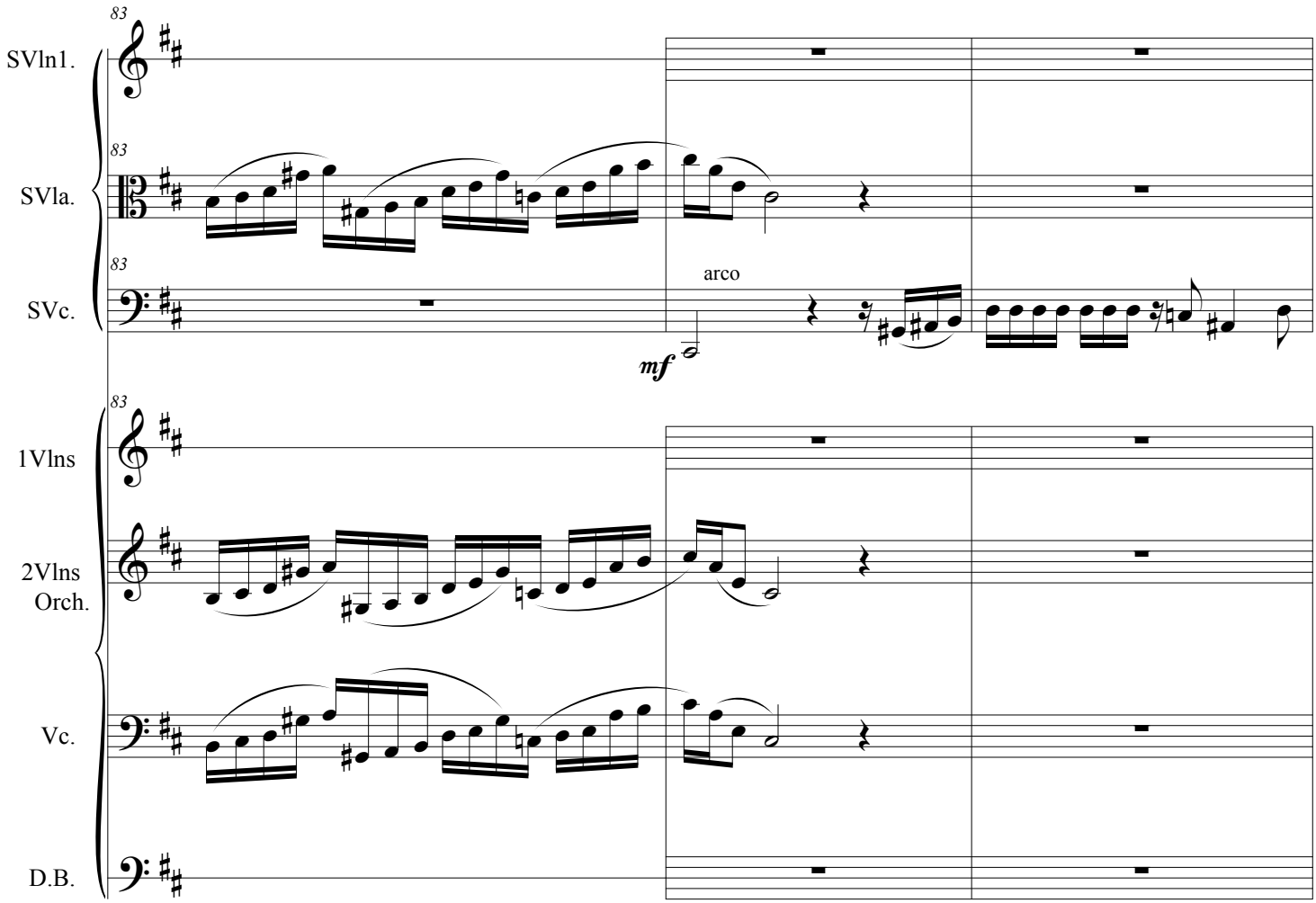

60
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
Orch.
Vc.
2
pp
ff
63
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
Orch.
Vc.
2
2
pp
ff

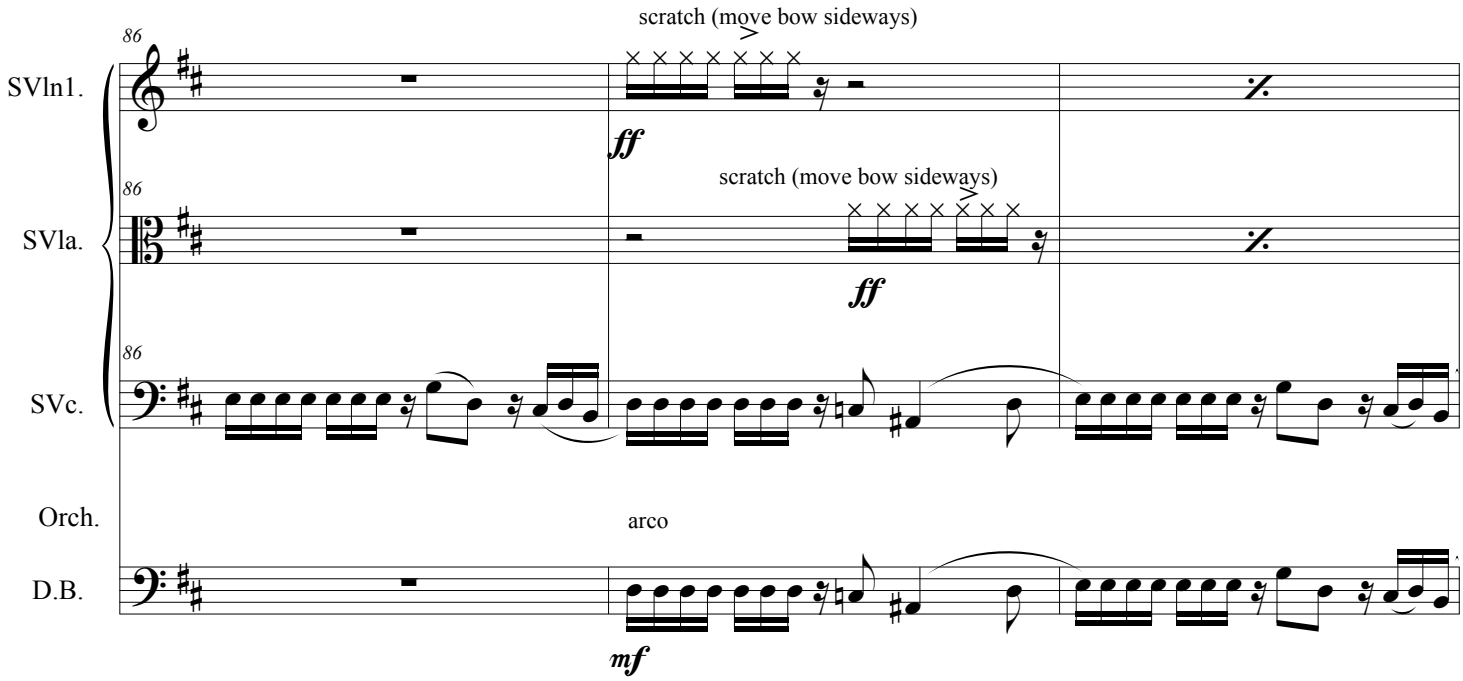

66
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns.
Orch.
Vc.
2
ff
pp
68

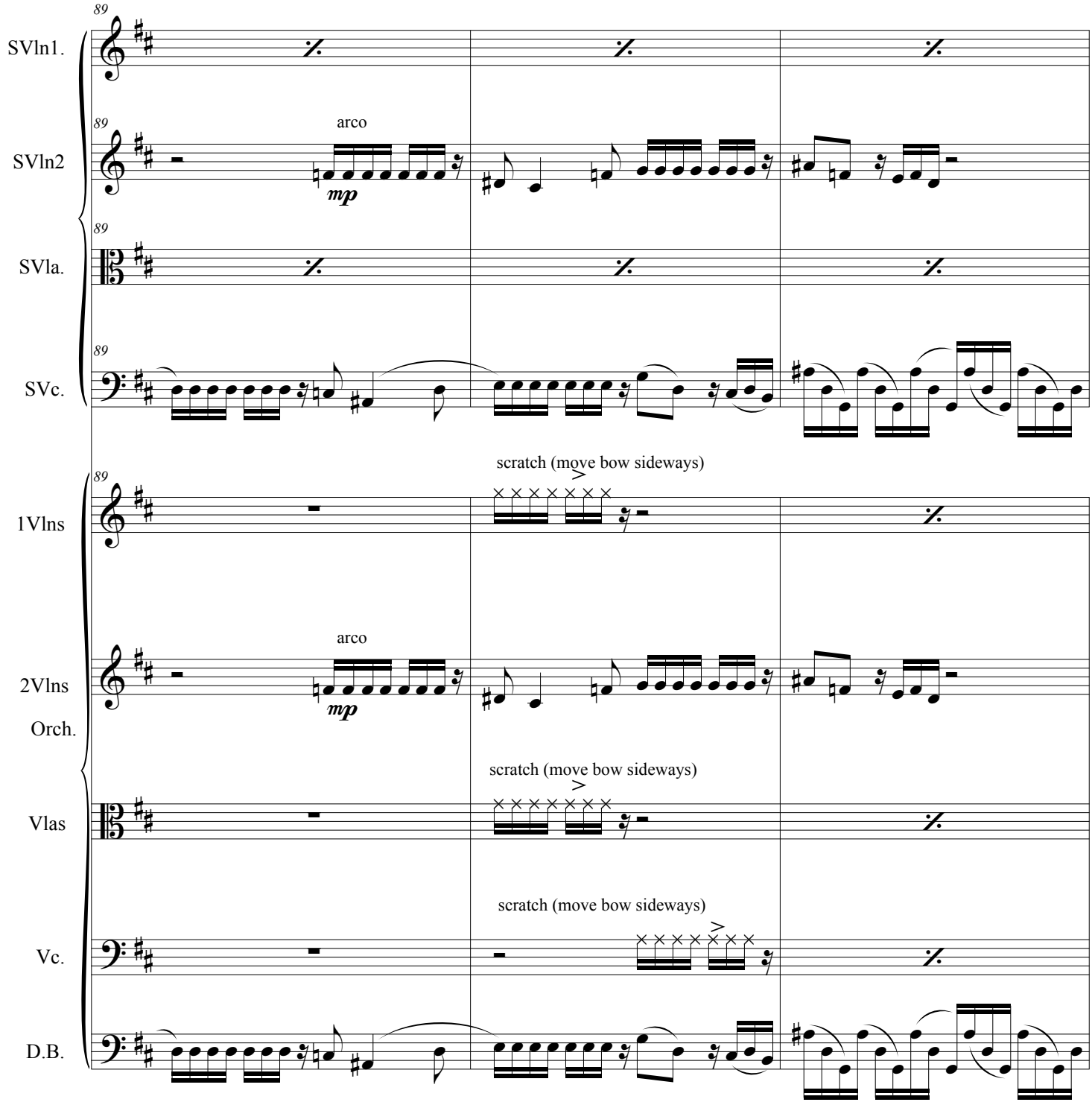

71
2
2
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
mf
arco
arco
3

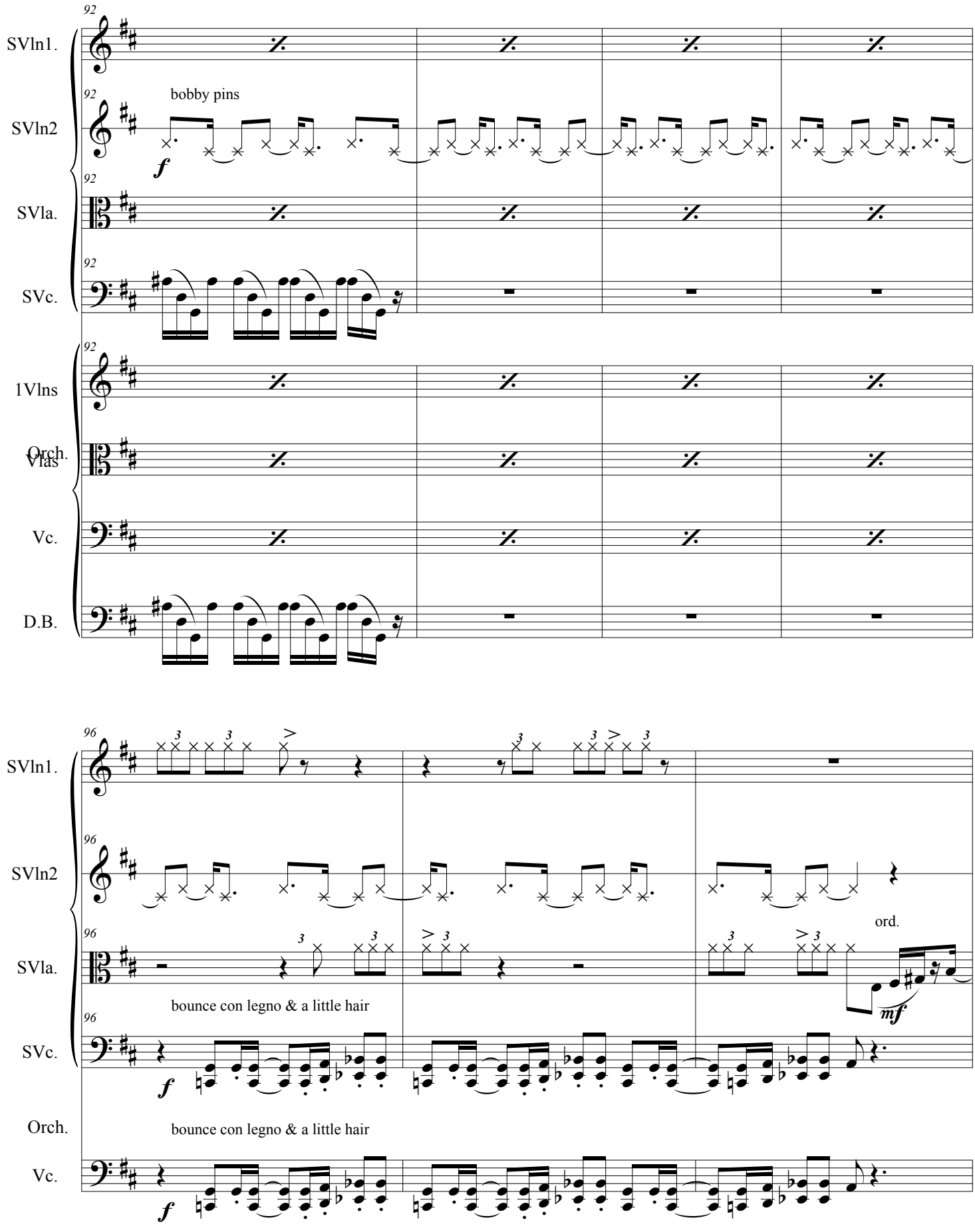

SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Vlas
Vc.
Orch.
75
2
3
f

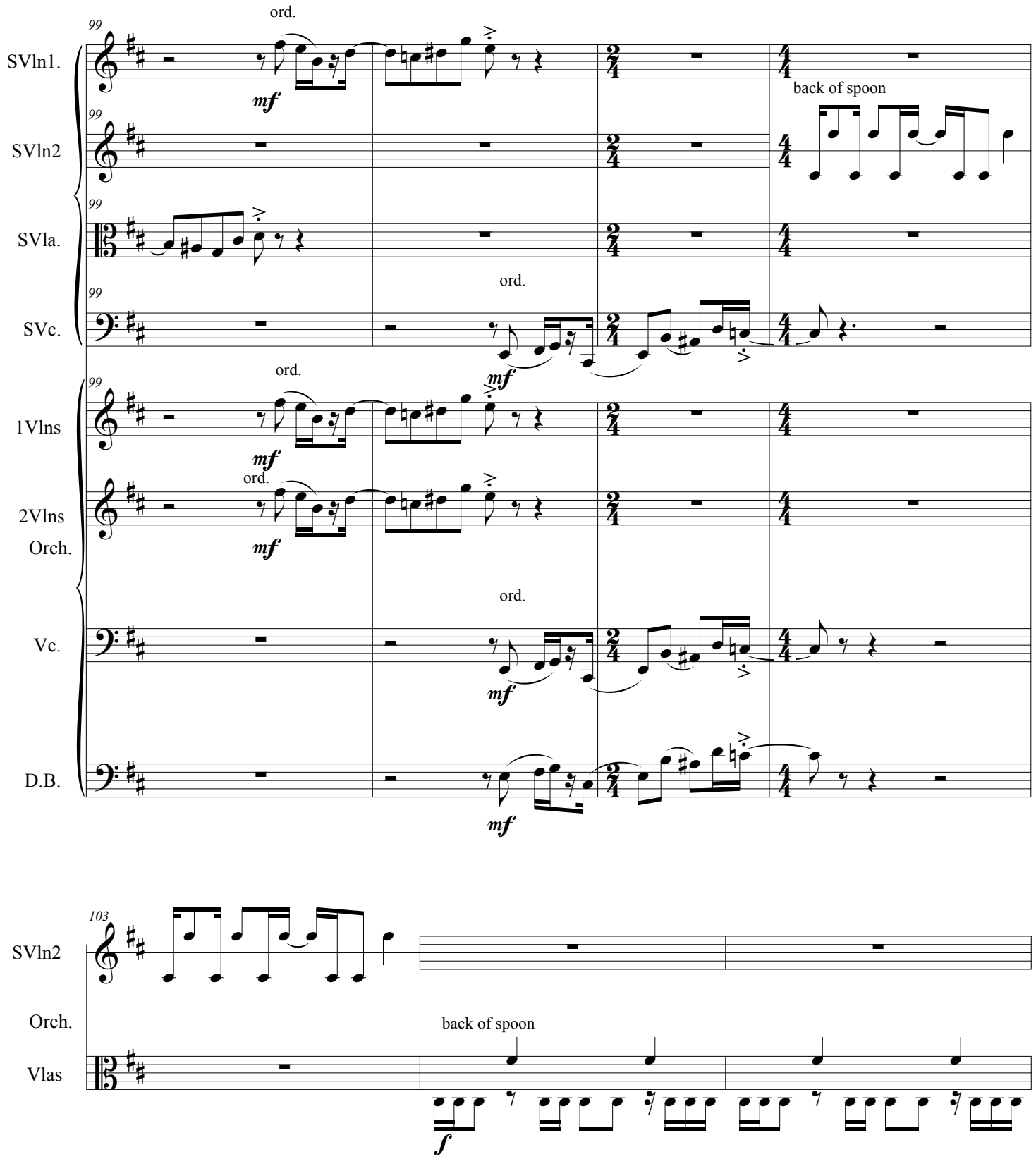

78
SVln1.
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vc.
D.B.
f
bobby pins
81
ff
2

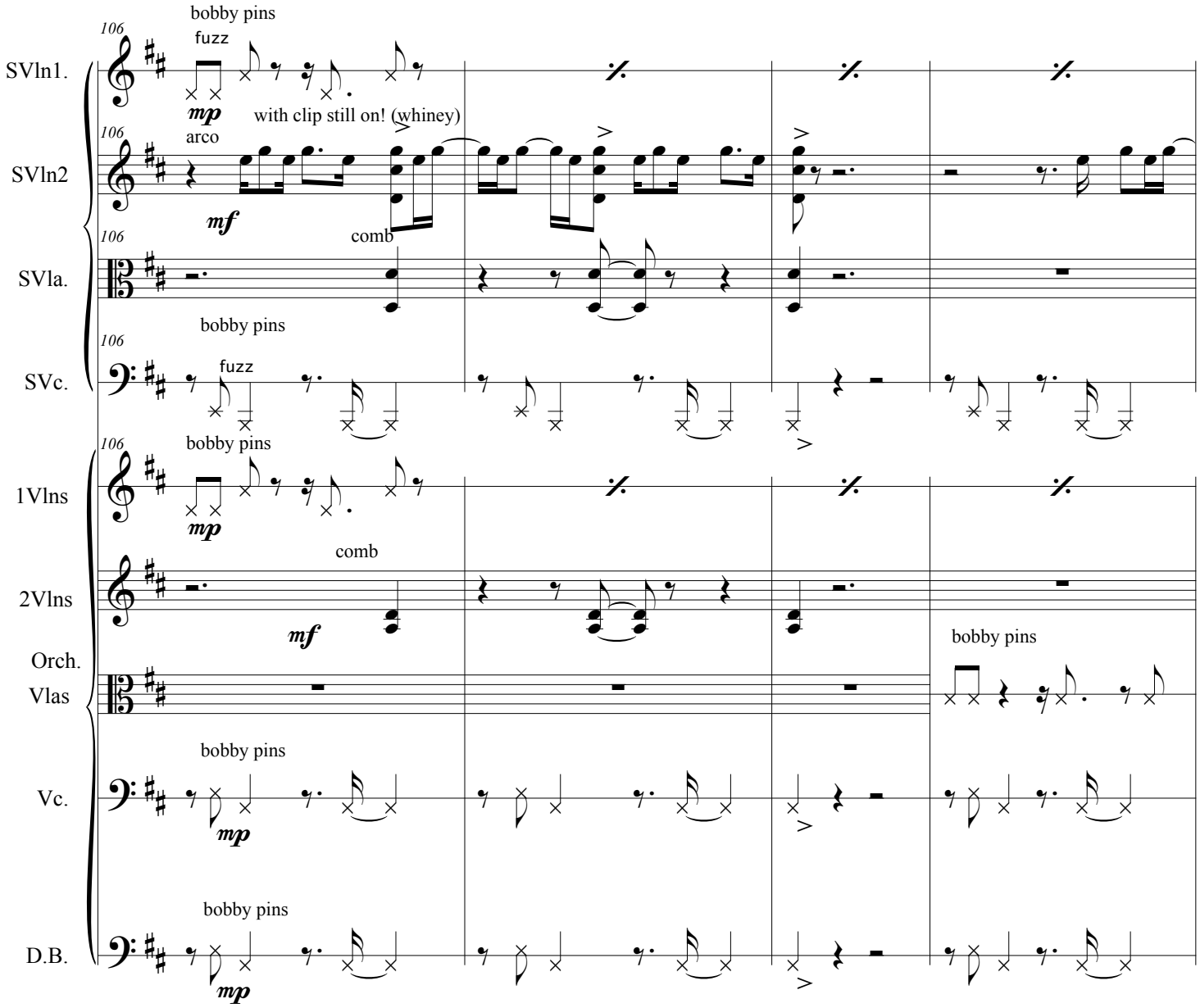

83
SVln1.
83
SVla.
83
SVc.
arco
mf
83
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vc.
D.B.

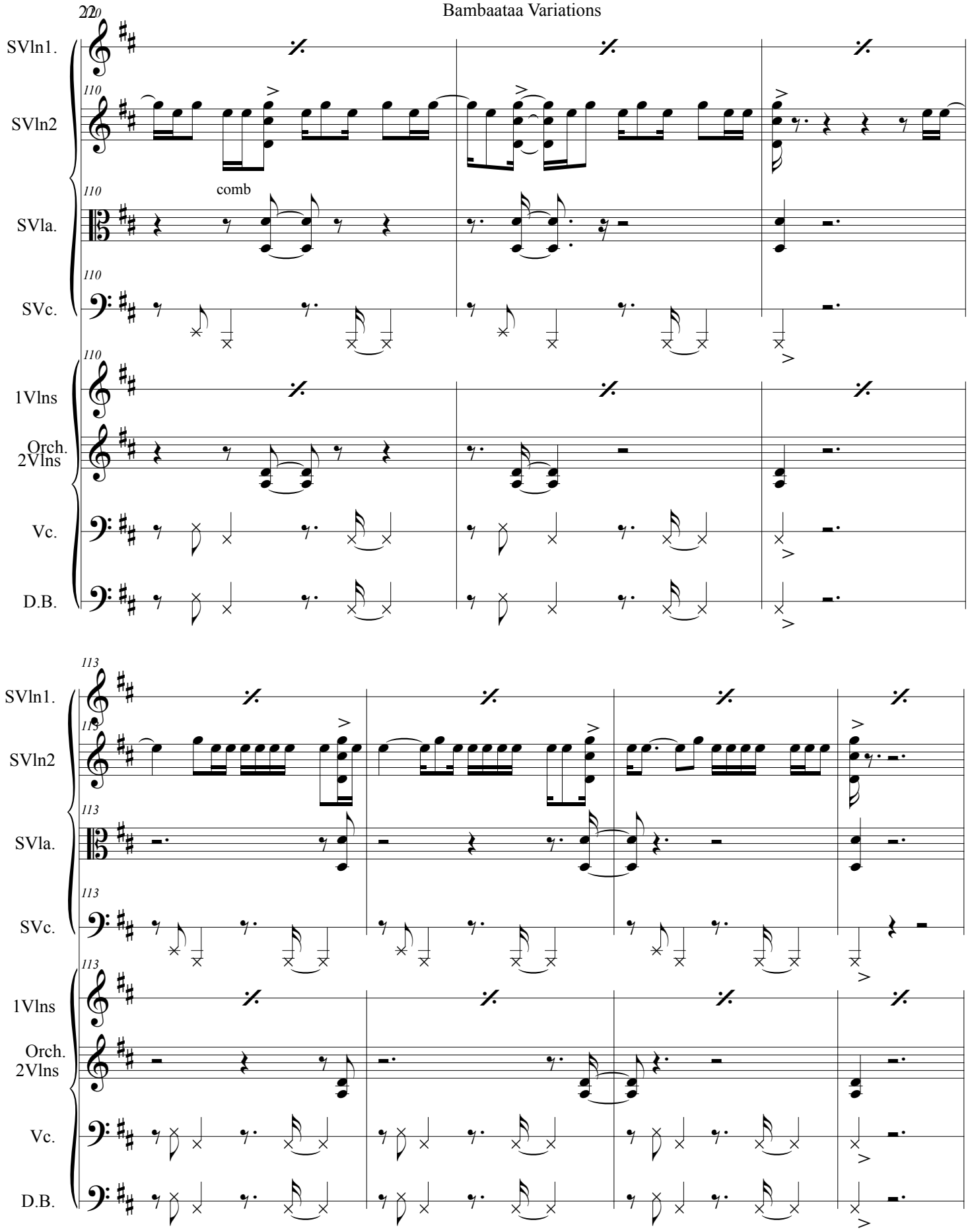

scratch (move bow sideways)
86
SVln1.
ff
scratch (move bow sideways)
86
SVla.
ff
86
SVc.
Orch.
arco
D.B.
mf

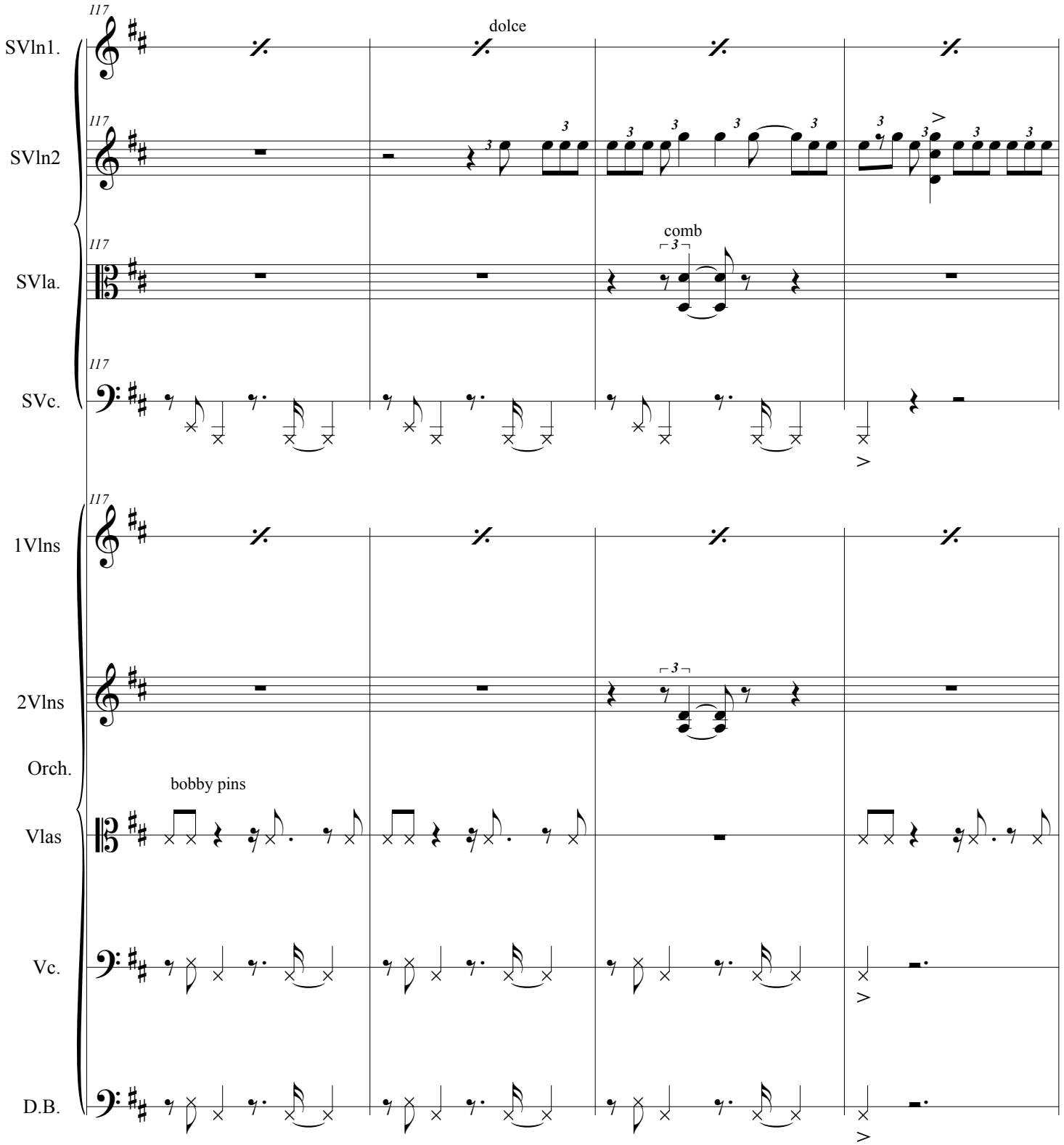

89
SVln1.
89
arco
SVln2
mp
89
SVla.
89
SVc.
scratch (move bow sideways)
89
1Vlns
arco
2Vlns
mp
Orch.
scratch (move bow sideways)
Vlas
scratch (move bow sideways)
Vc.
D.B.

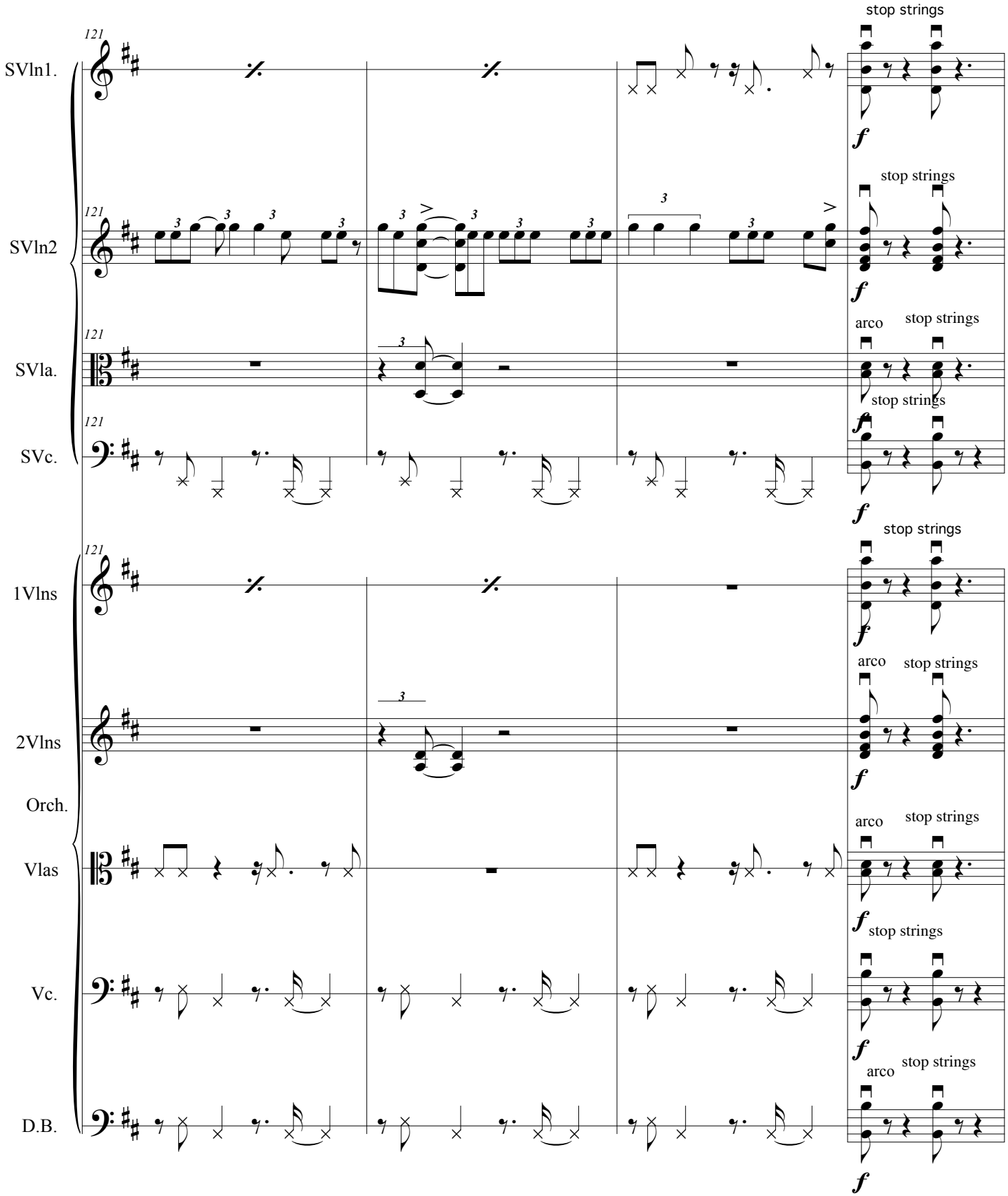

92
SVln1.
92
SVln2
bobby pins
f
92
SVla.
92
SVc.
92
1Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
96
SVln1.
96
SVln2
96
SVla.
bounce con legno & a little hair
ord.
mf
96
SVc.
f
Orch.
bounce con legno & a little hair
Vc.
f

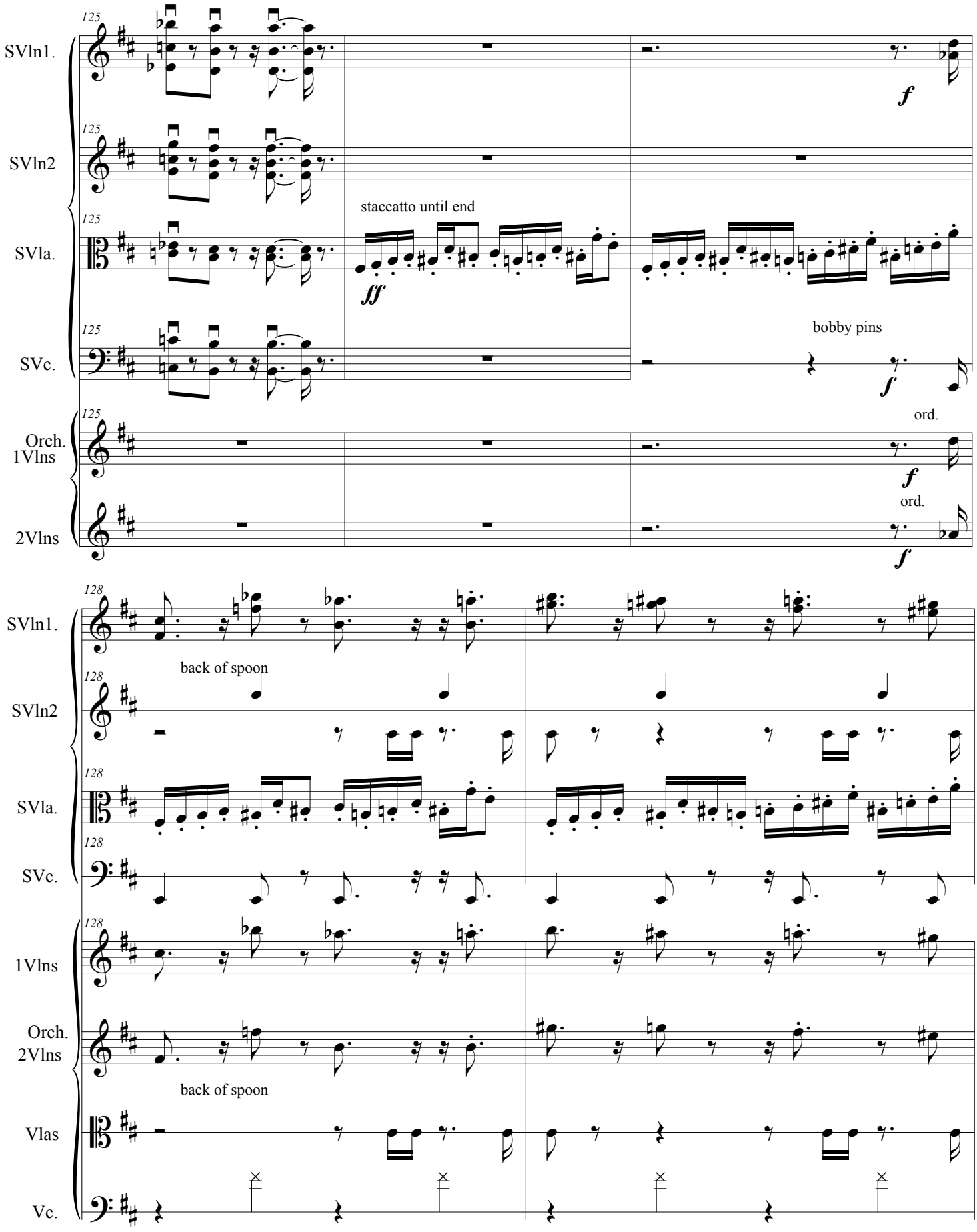

99
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vc.
D.B.
ord.
mf
back of spoon
103
Orch.
Vlas
f

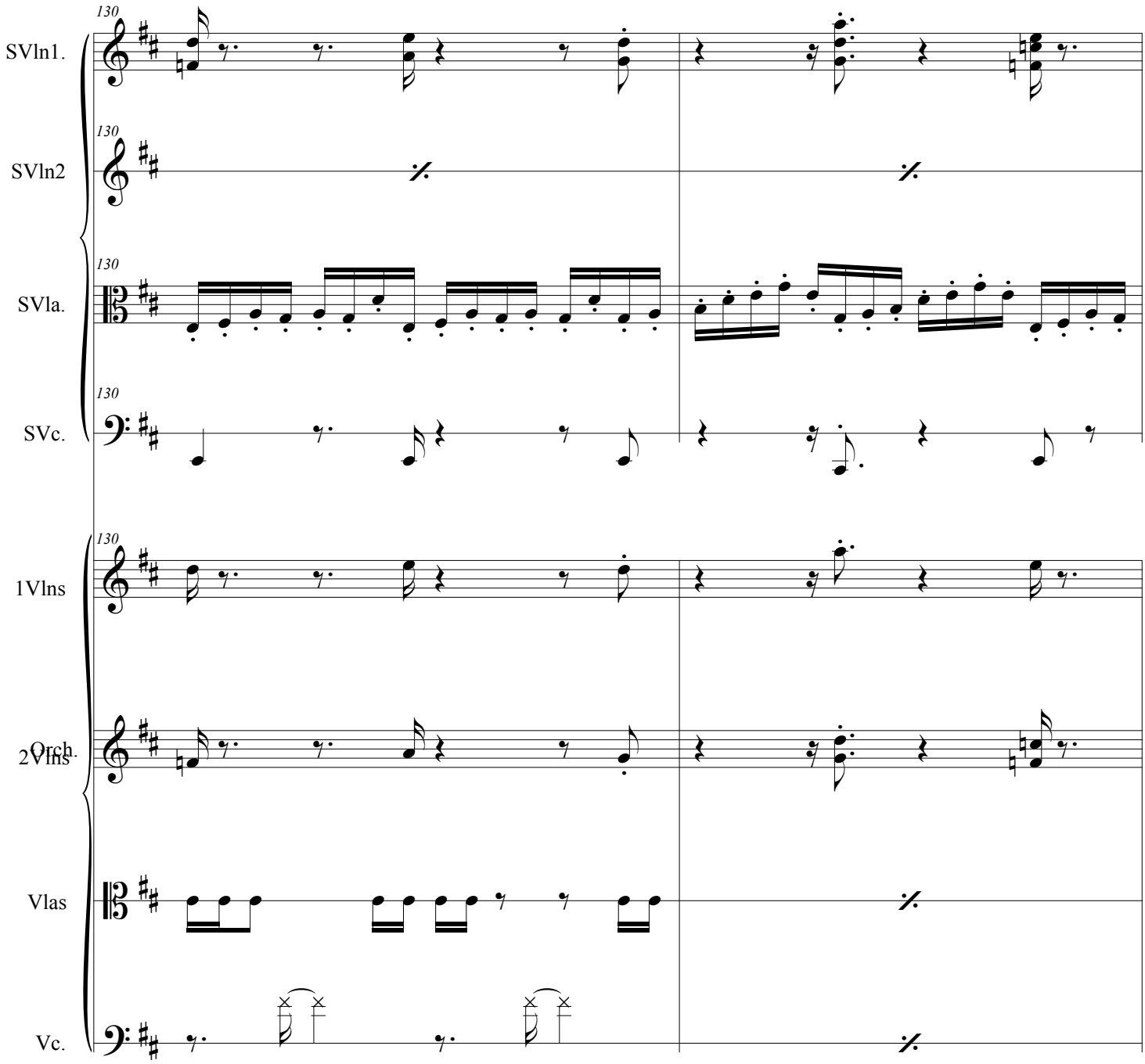

SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
106
bobby pins
fuzz
mp
with clip still on! (whiney)
arco
mf
comb
bobby pins
fuzz
bobby pins
mp
comb
mf
bobby pins
bobby pins
mp
bobby pins
mp

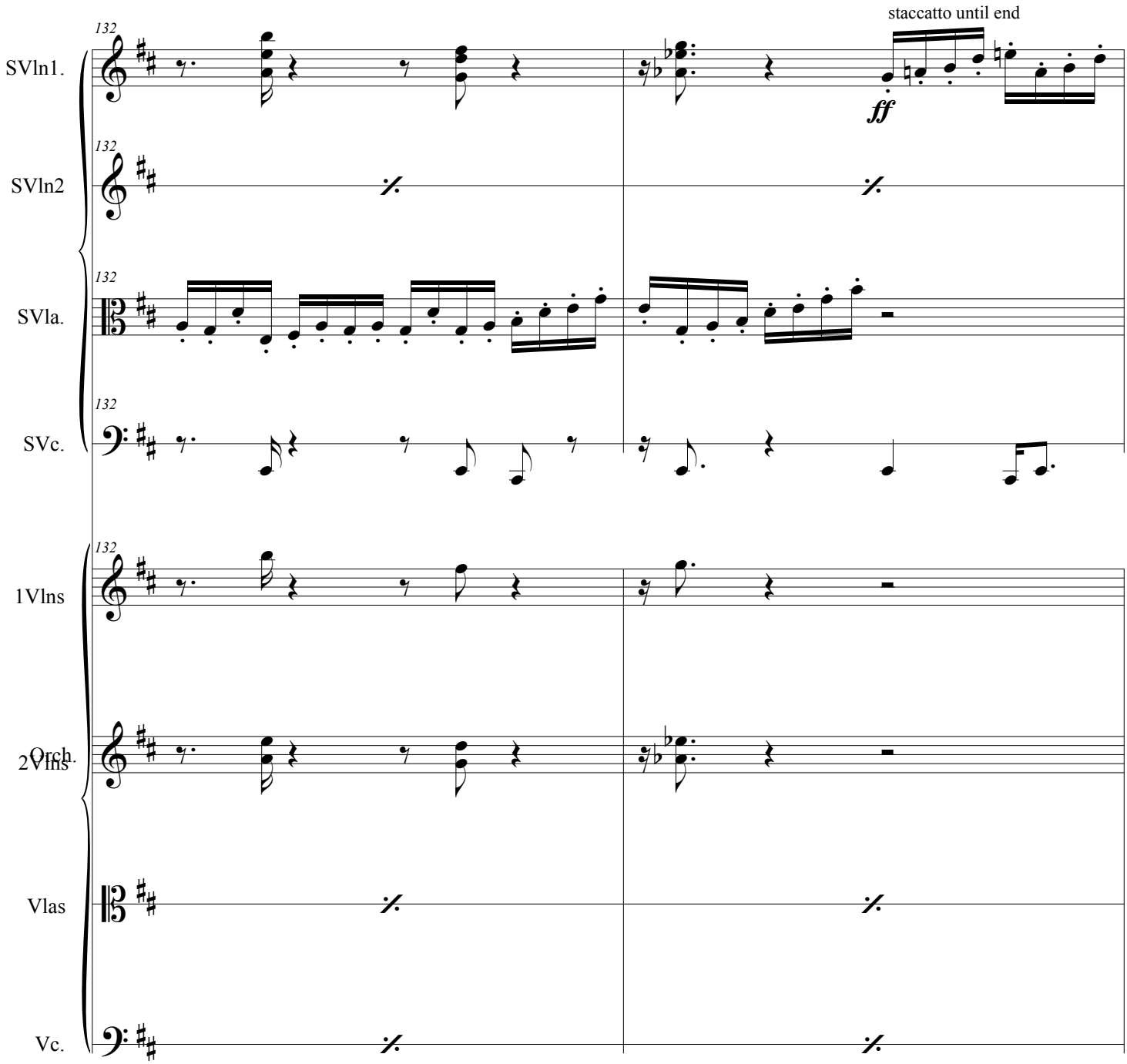

22
110
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
comb
1Vlns
Orch.
2Vlns
Vc.
D.B.
113

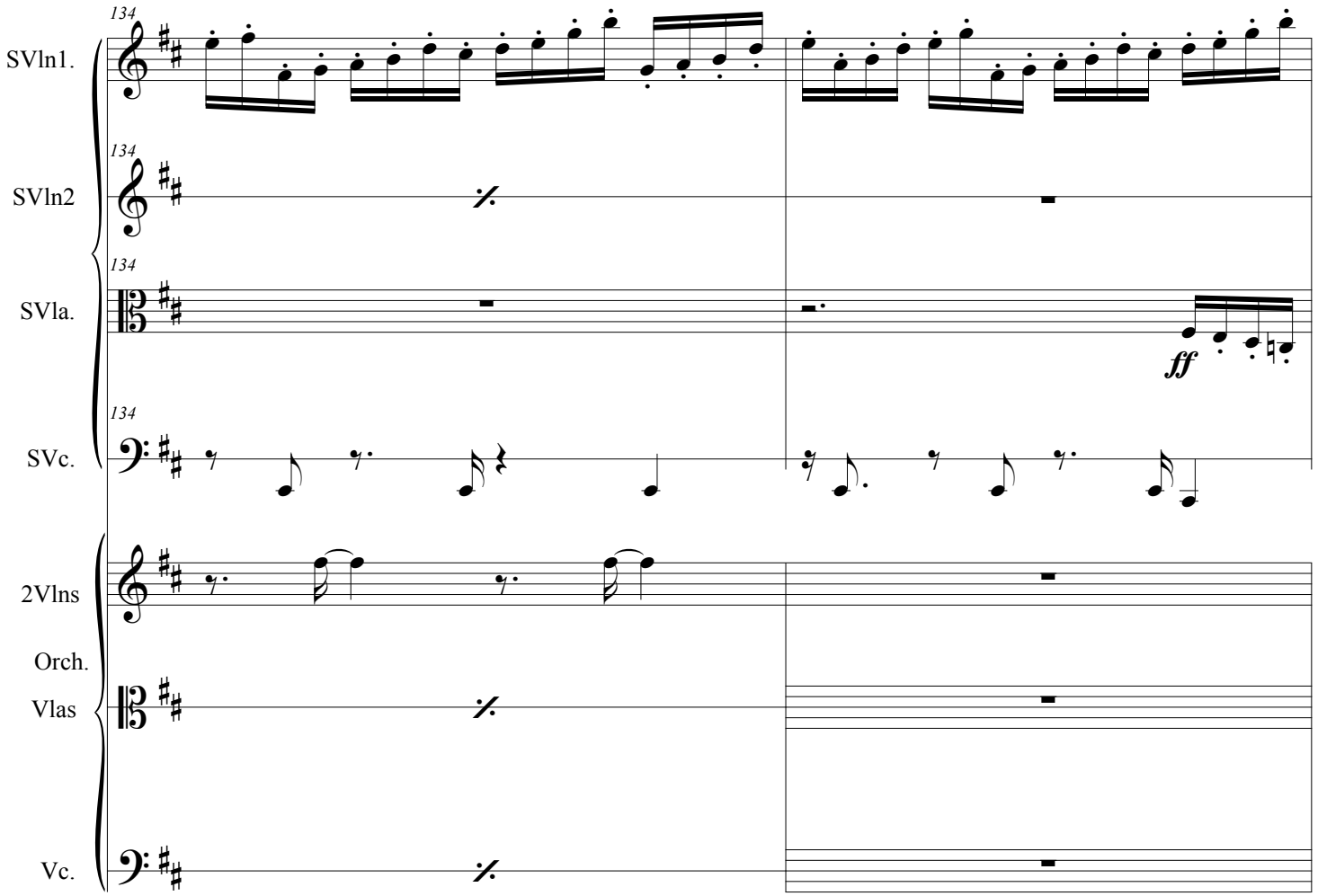

117
SVln1.
dolce
SVln2
comb
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
bobby pins
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.

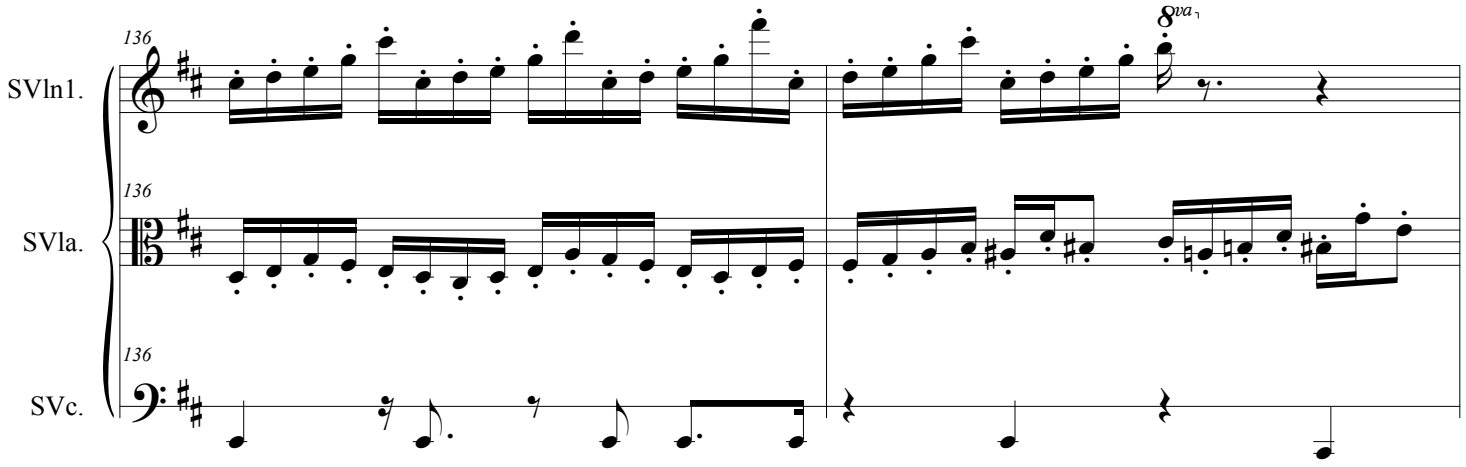

SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
121
stop strings
arco
f

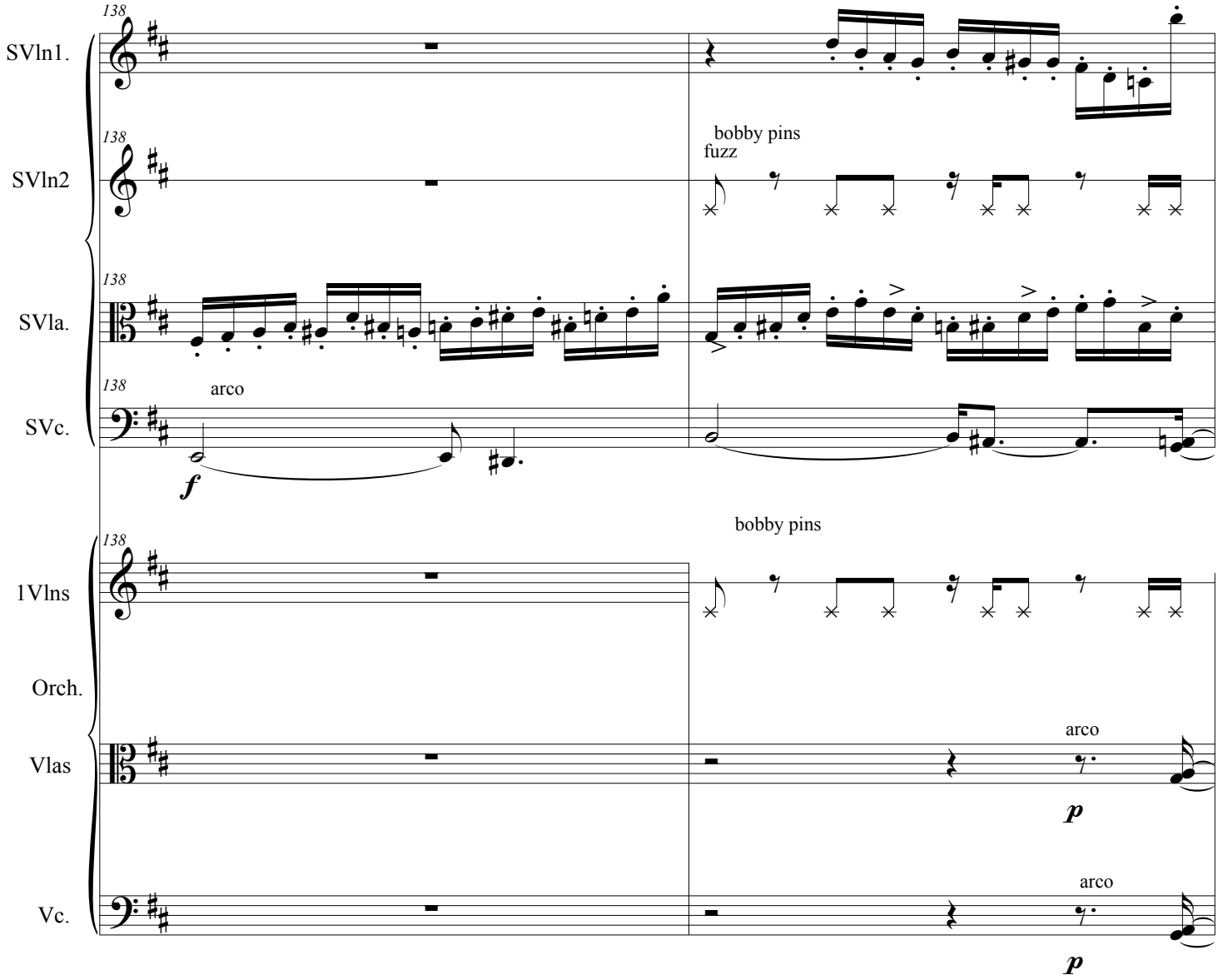

125
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
Orch. 1Vlns
2Vlns
staccato until end
ff
f
bobby pins
ord.
128
back of spoon
1Vlns
Orch. 2Vlns
Vlas
Vc.

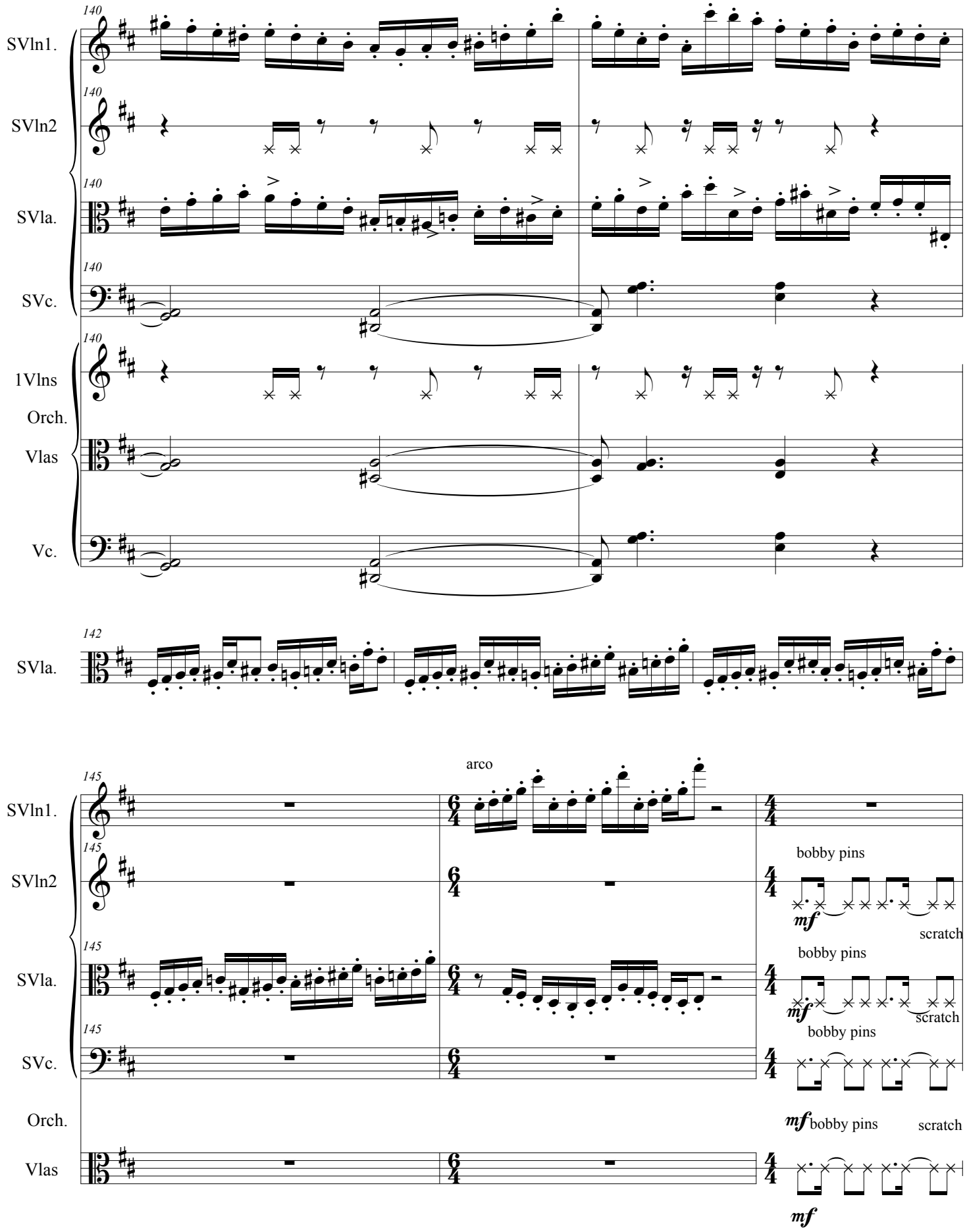

130
SVln1.
130
SVln2
130
SVla.
130
SVc.
130
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.

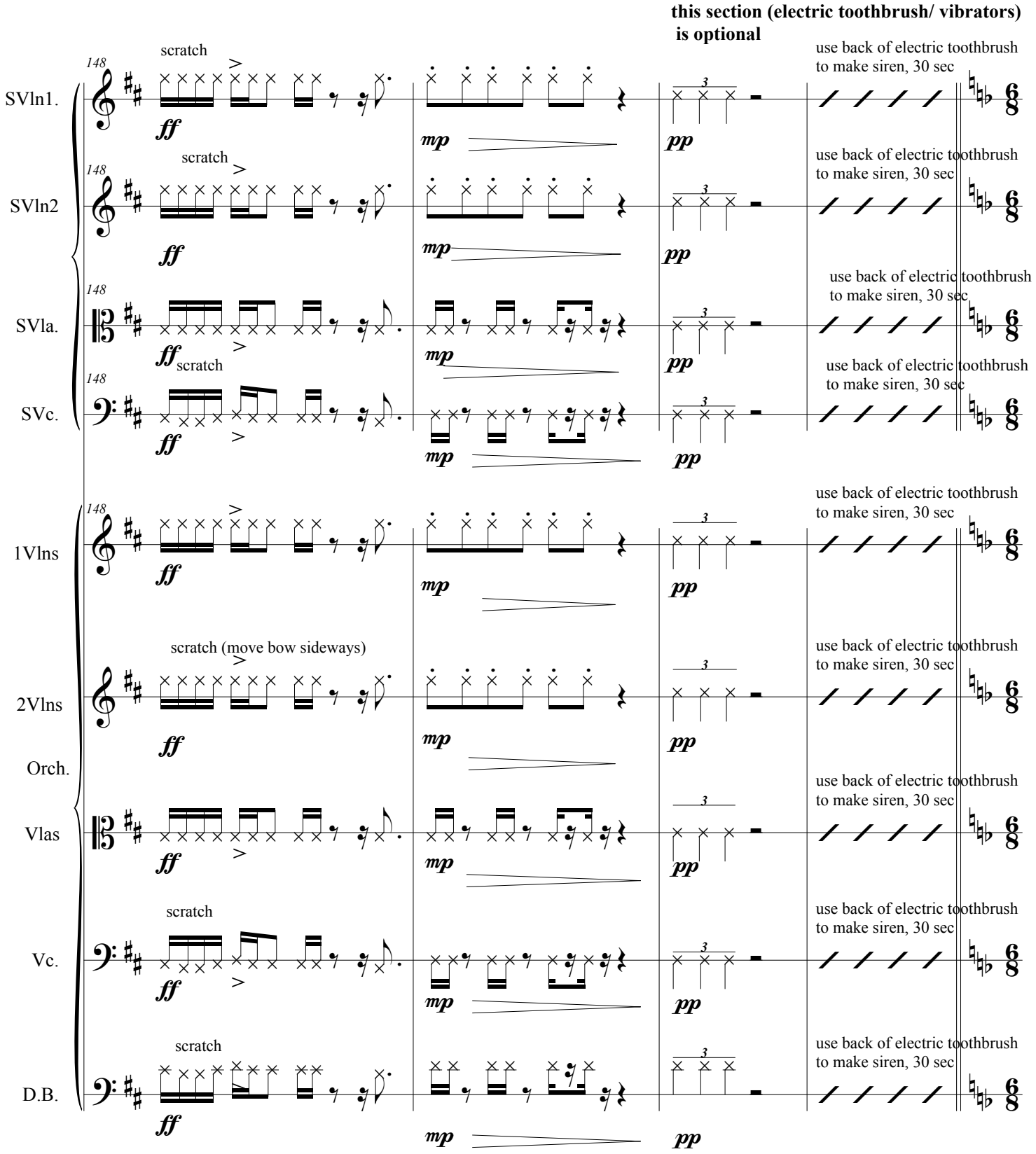

staccatto until end
132
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Vlas
Vc.
Orch.
ff


134
SVln1.
134
SVln2
134
SVla.
ff
134
SVc.
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.


136
SVln1.
8va
136
SVla.
136
SVc.

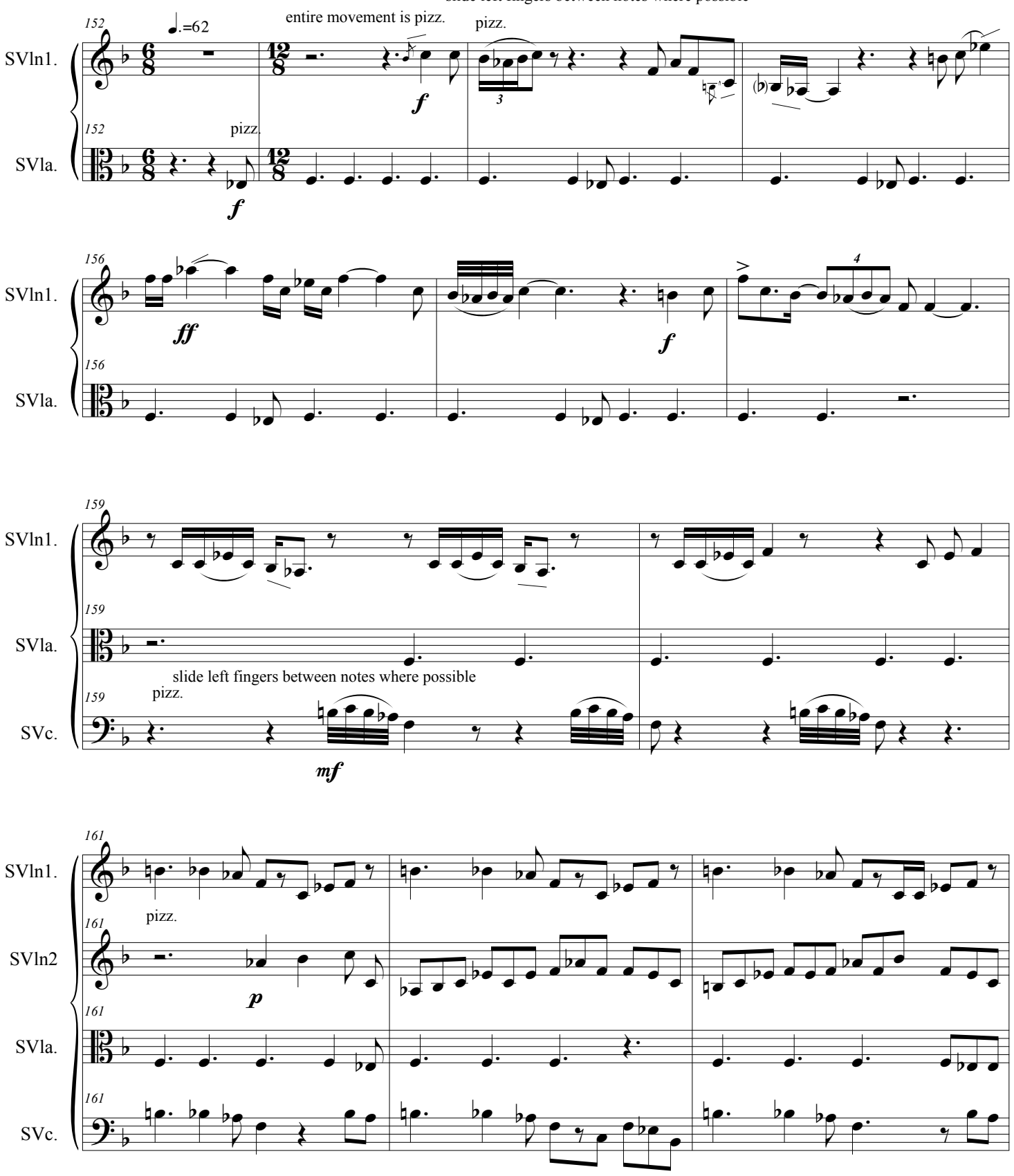

138
SVln1.
138
SVln2
bobby pins
fuzz
138
SVla.
138
SVc.
arco
f
138
1Vlns
bobby pins
Orch.
Vlas
arco
p
Vc.
arco
p

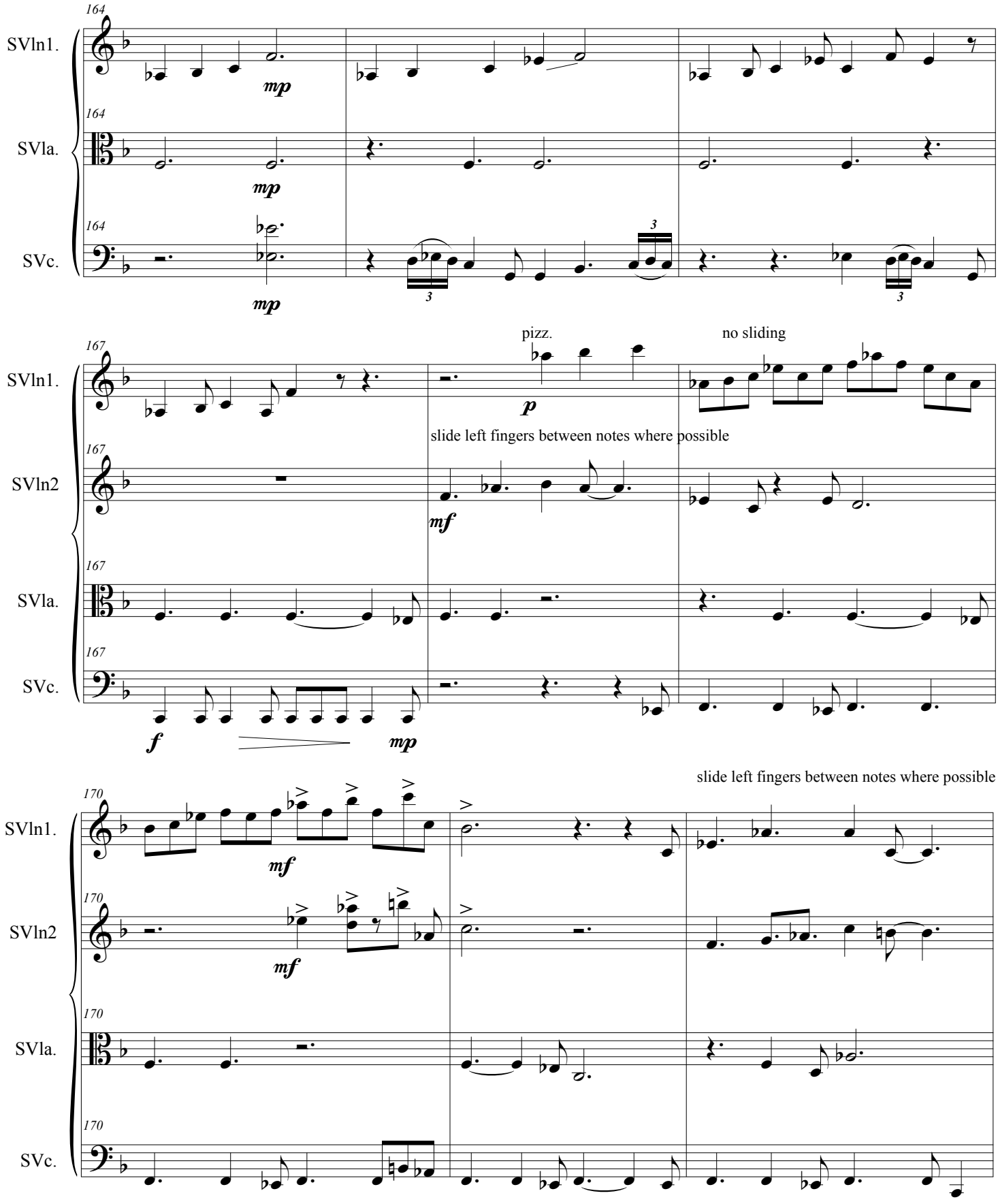

140
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
142
SVla.
145
arco
bobby pins
mf
scratch

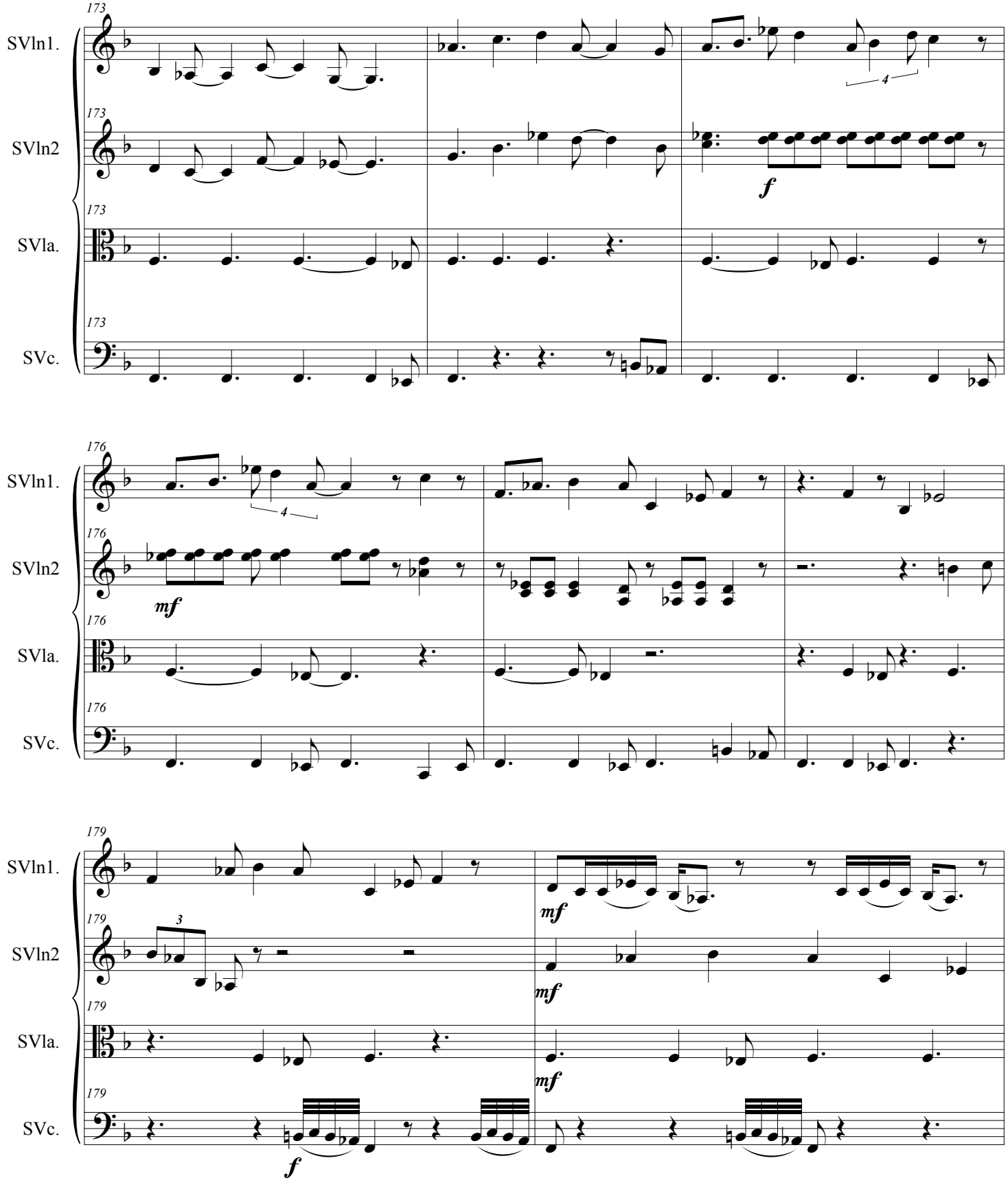

this section (electric toothbrush/ vibrators) is optional
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
148
scratch
scratch (move bow sideways)
use back of electric toothbrush to make siren, 30 sec
ff
mp
pp

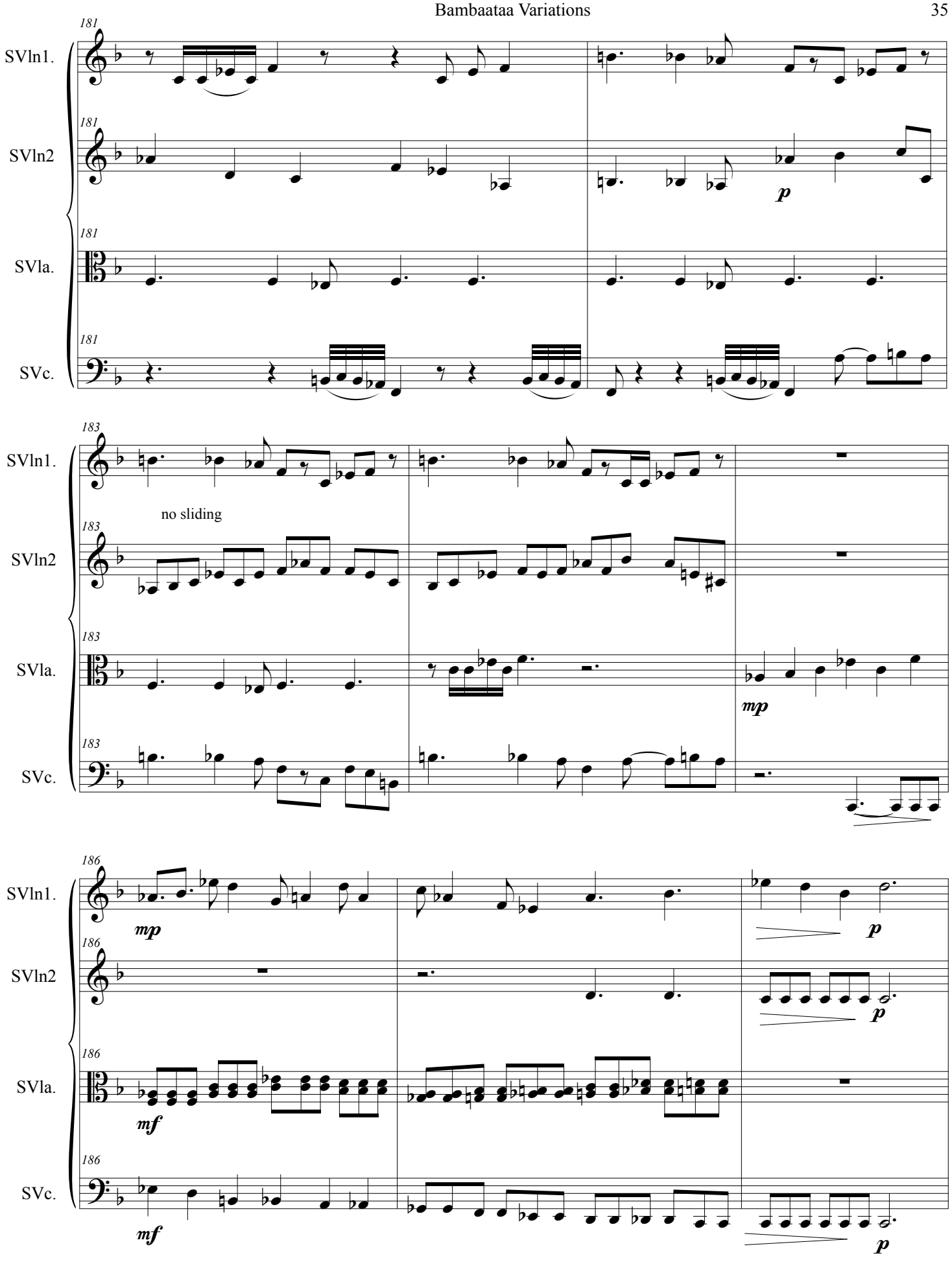
2. Mudhead from Planet XYY

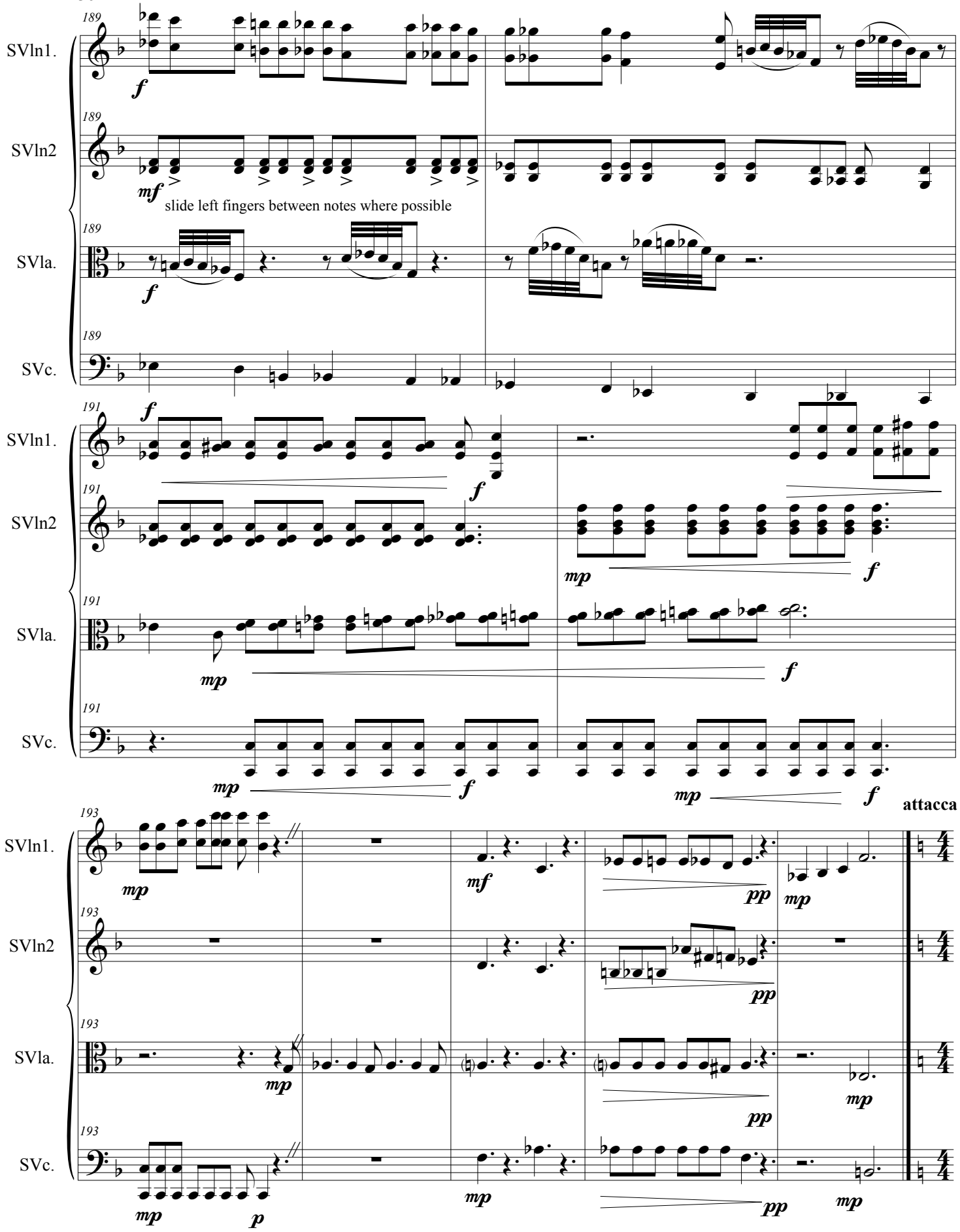
like " a Rolling Stone"



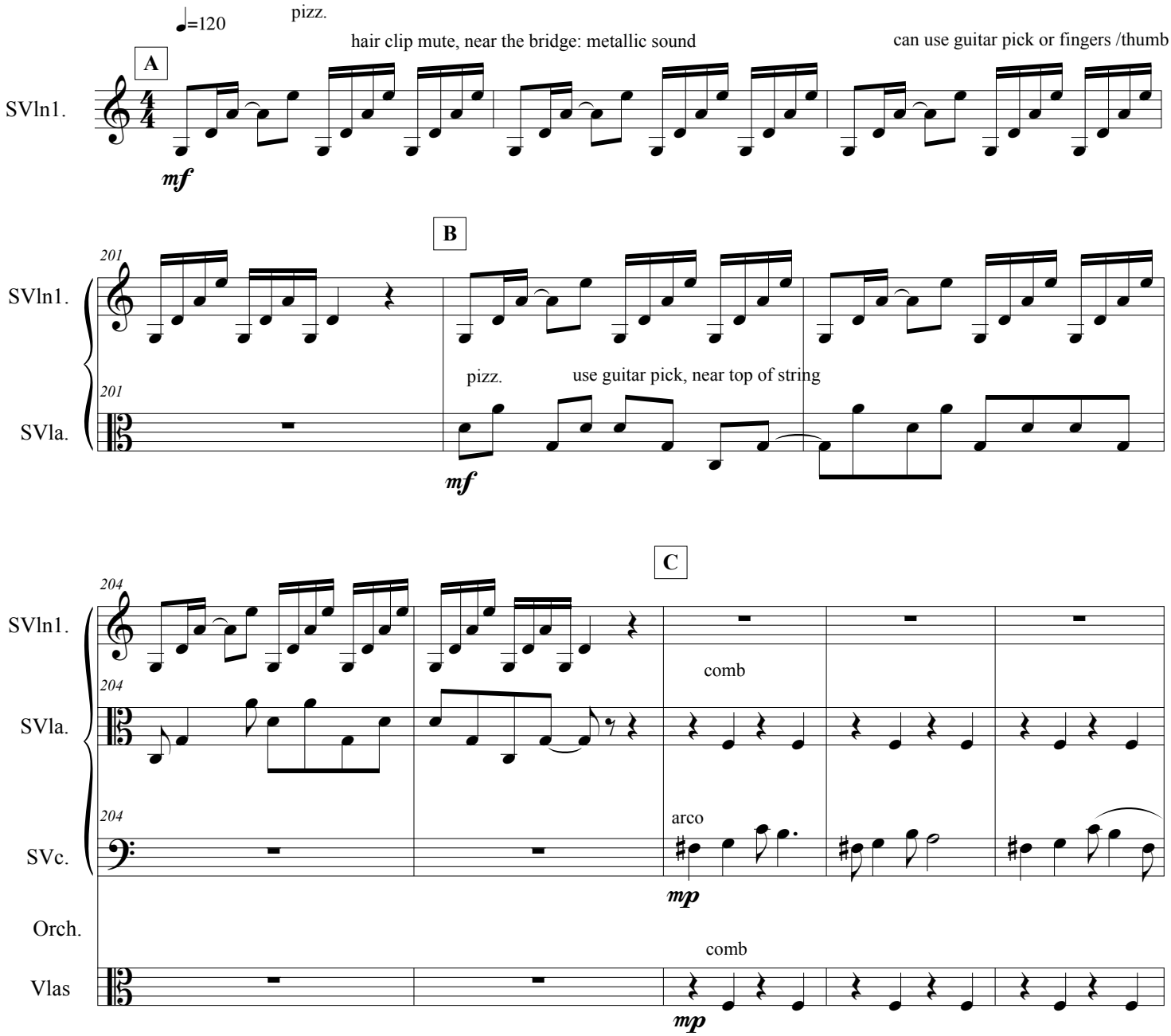

164
SVln1.
mp
164
SVla.
mp
164
SVc.
mp
3
3
3
167
SVln1.
pizz.
p
no sliding
slide left fingers between notes where possible
167
SVln2
mf
167
SVla.
167
SVc.
f
mp
slide left fingers between notes where possible
170
SVln1.
mf
170
SVln2
mf
170
SVla.
170
SVc.

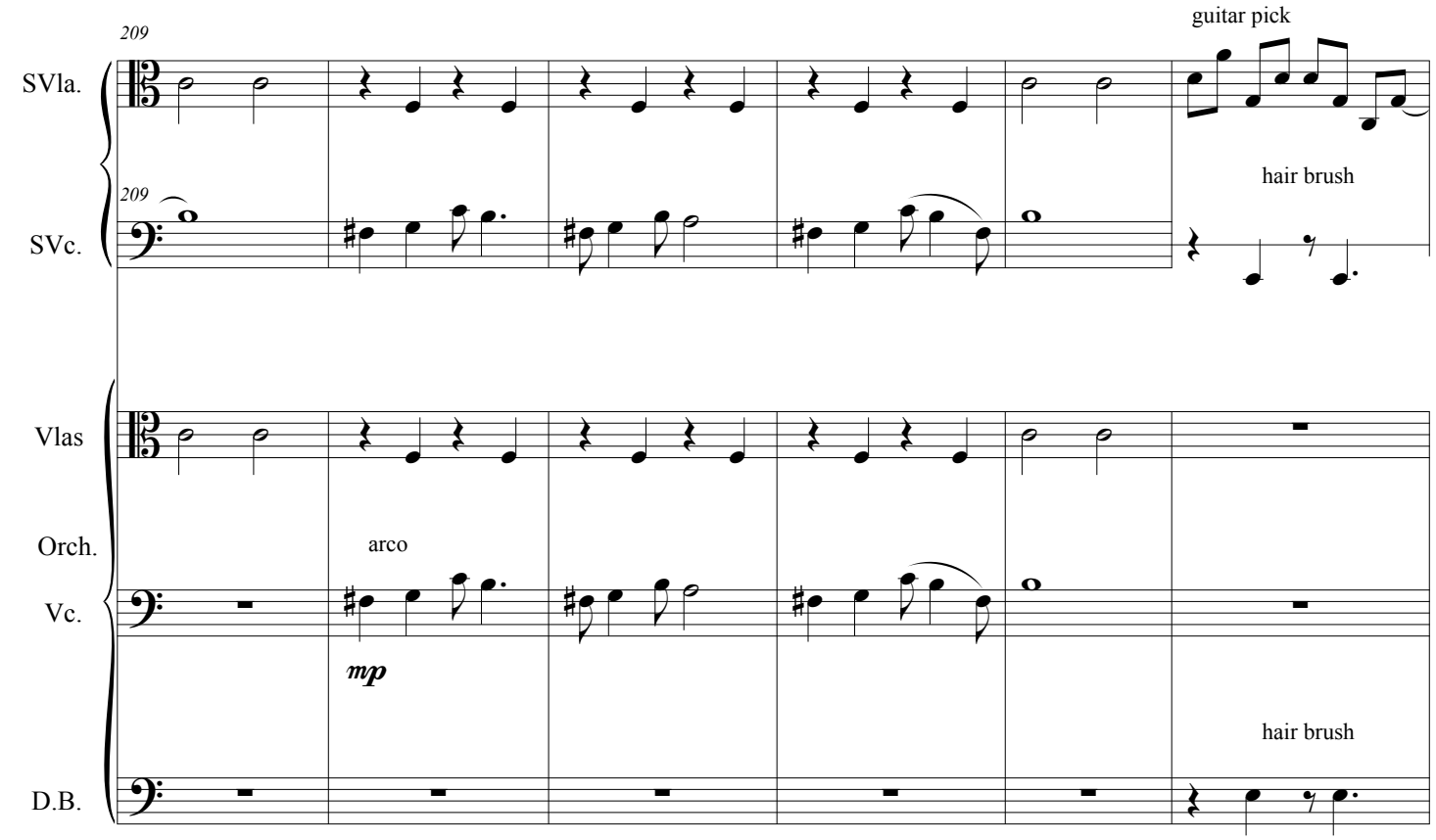

173
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
4
f
176
mf
179
3

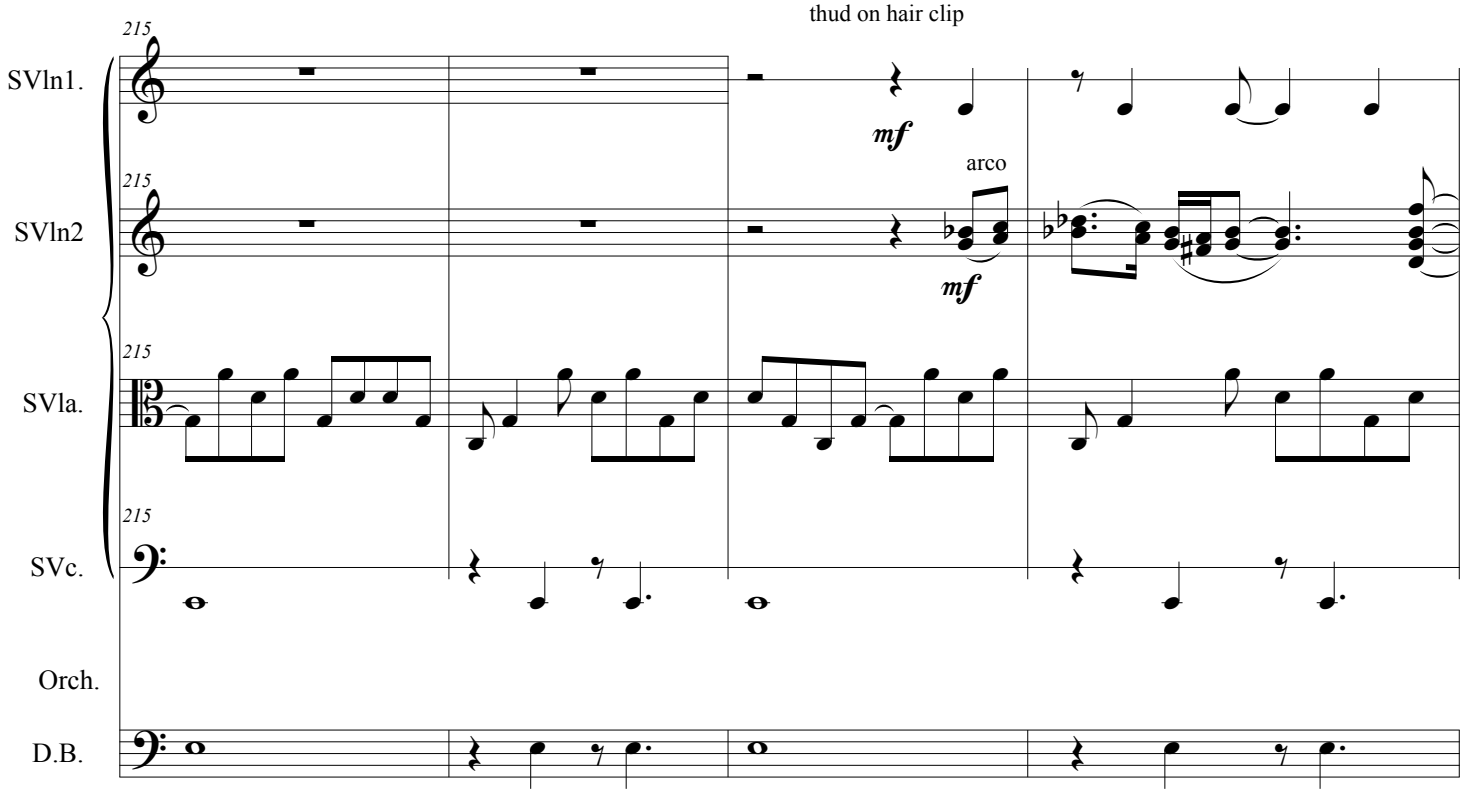

181
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
p
183
no sliding
mp
186
mf
p

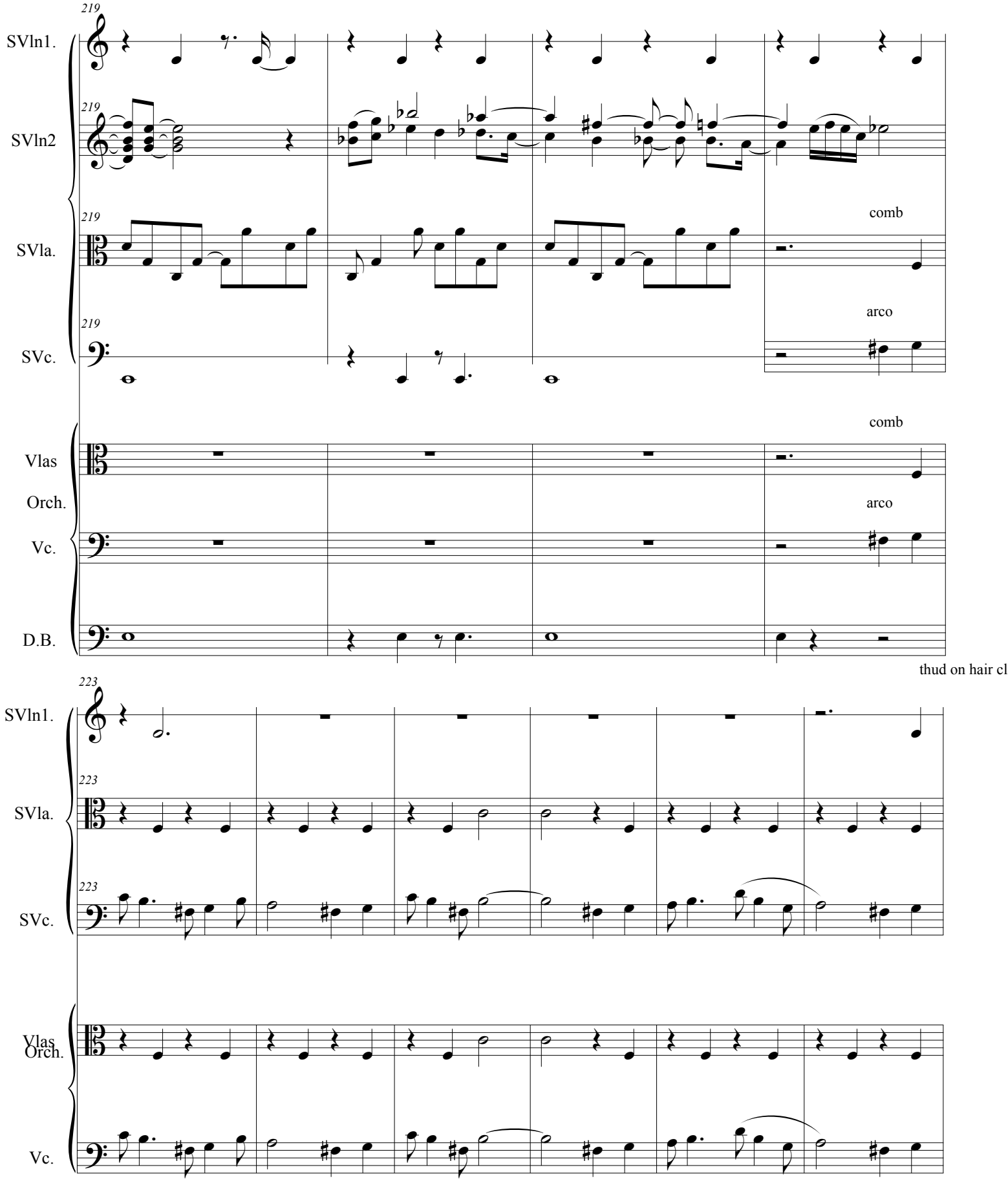

189
SVln1.
f
189
SVln2
mf
slide left fingers between notes where possible
189
SVla.
f
189
SVc.
191
f
SVln1.
f
191
SVln2
mp
f
191
SVla.
mp
f
191
SVc.
mp
f
mp
f
193
SVln1.
mp
mf
pp
mp
193
SVln2
pp
193
SVla.
mp
pp
mp
193
SVc.
mp
p
mp
pp
mp
attacca

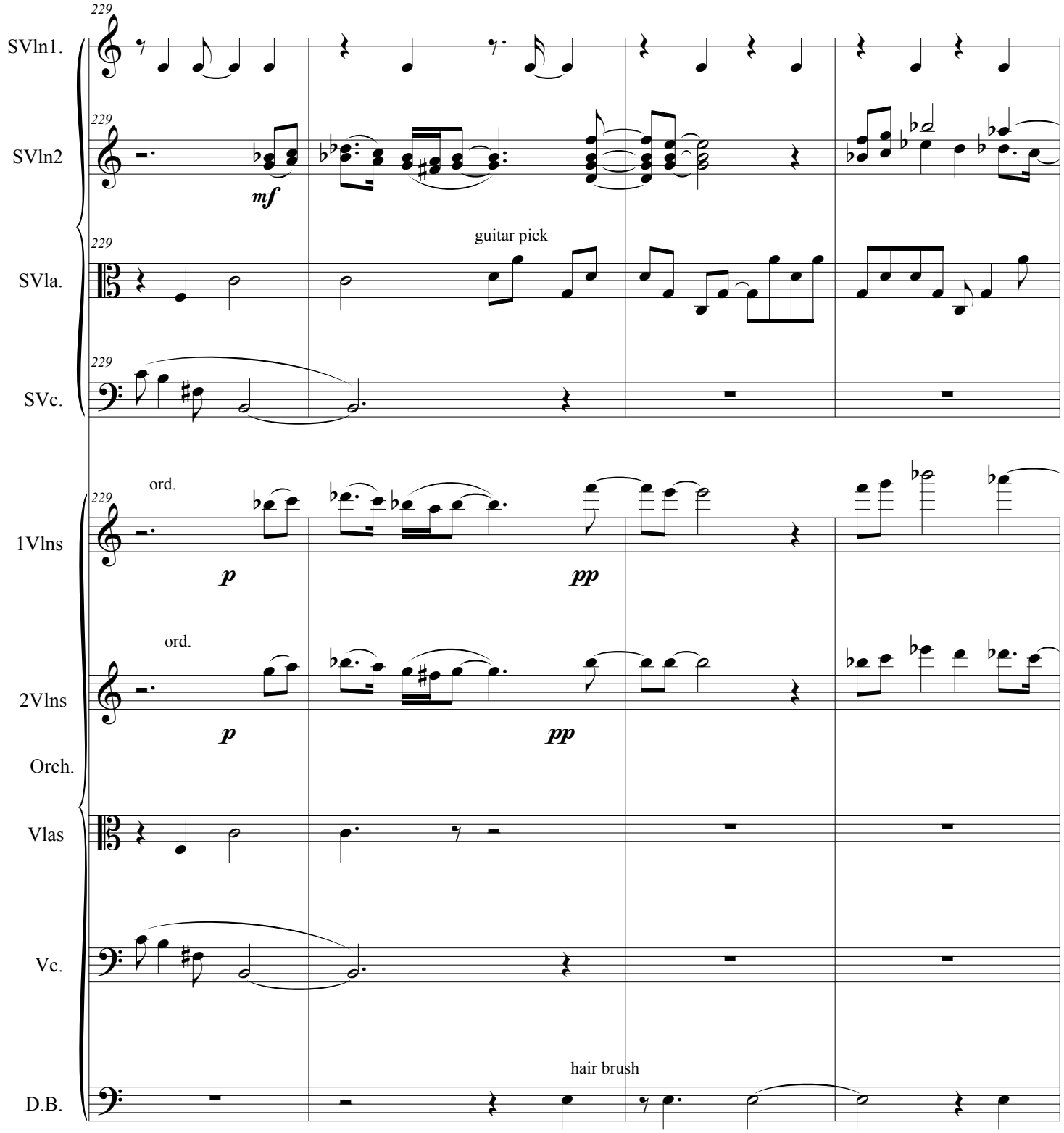
3. Nine Hundred Grandmothers

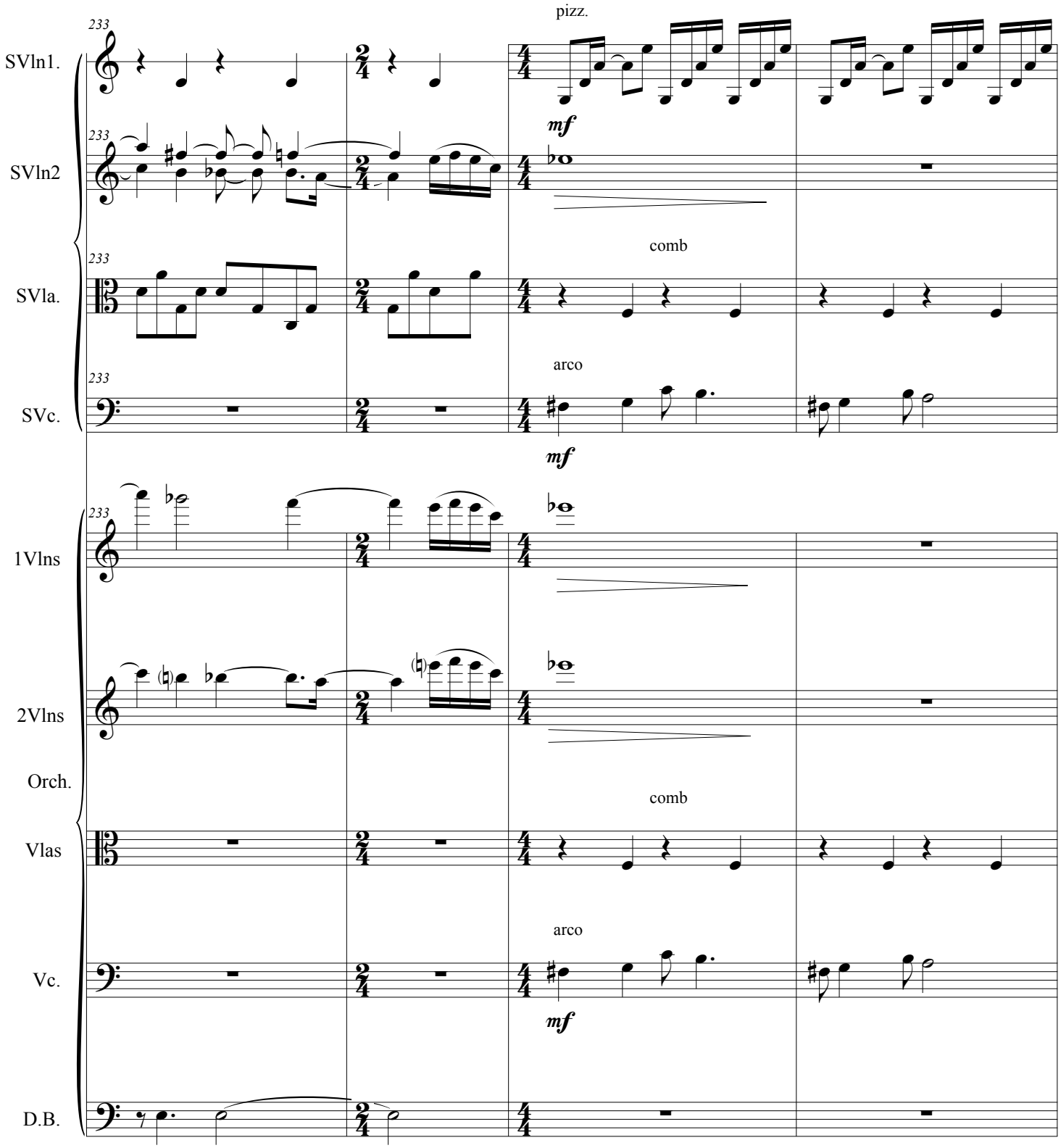


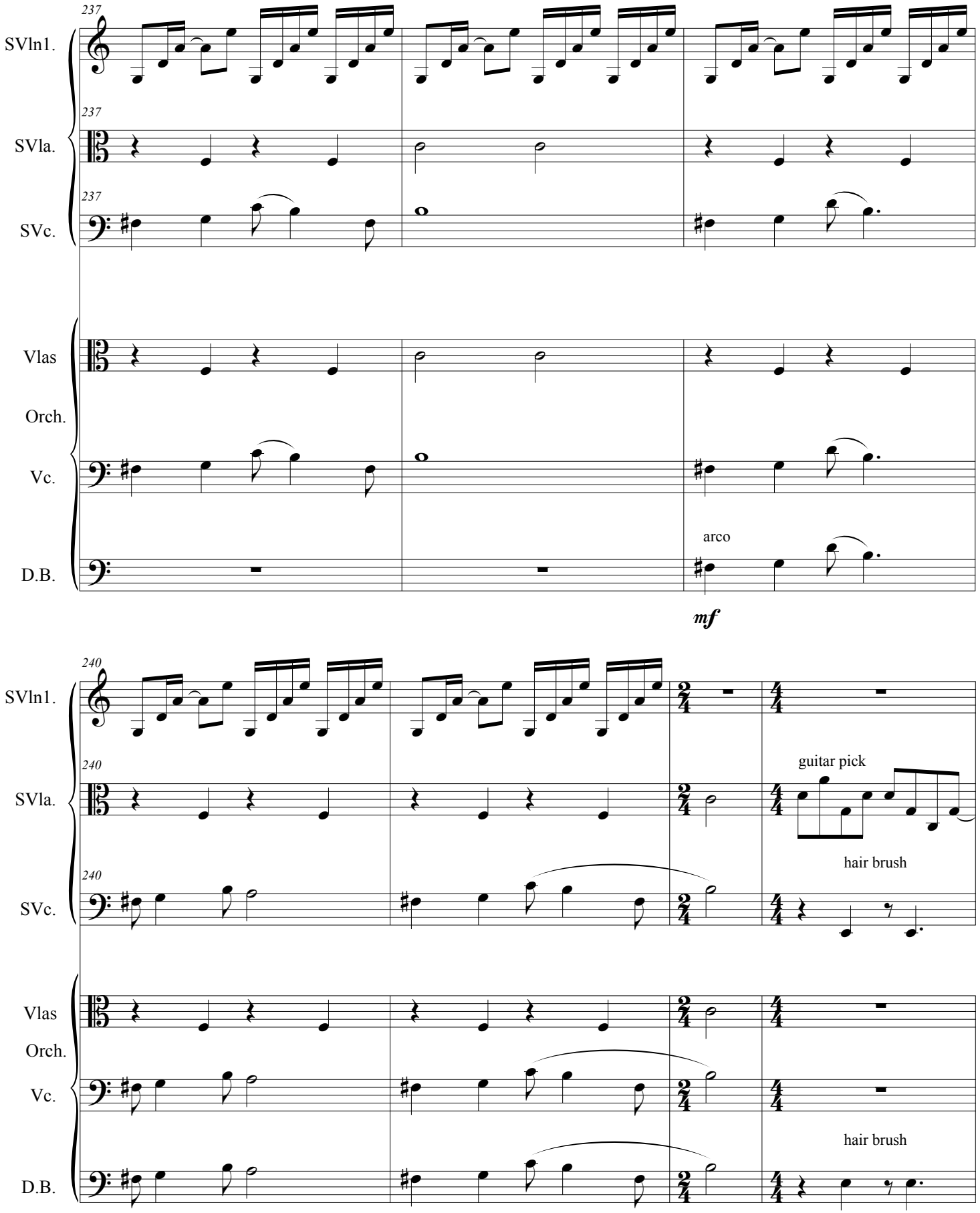

209
SVla.
209
SVc.
guitar pick
hair brush
Vlas
Orch.
Vc.
arco
mp
hair brush
D.B.

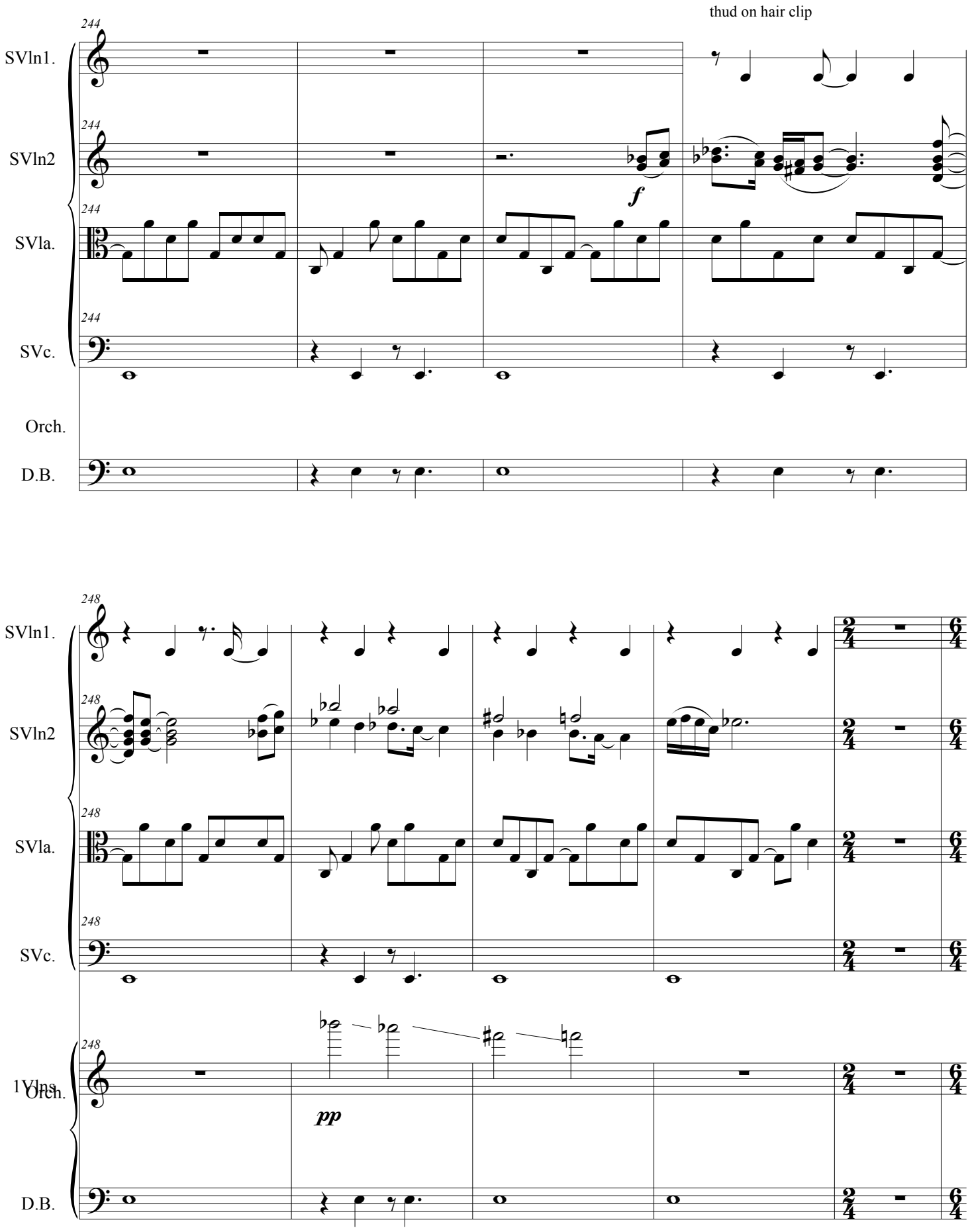

215
SVln1.
215
SVln2
215
SVla.
215
SVc.
Orch.
D.B.
thud on hair clip
mf
arco
mf

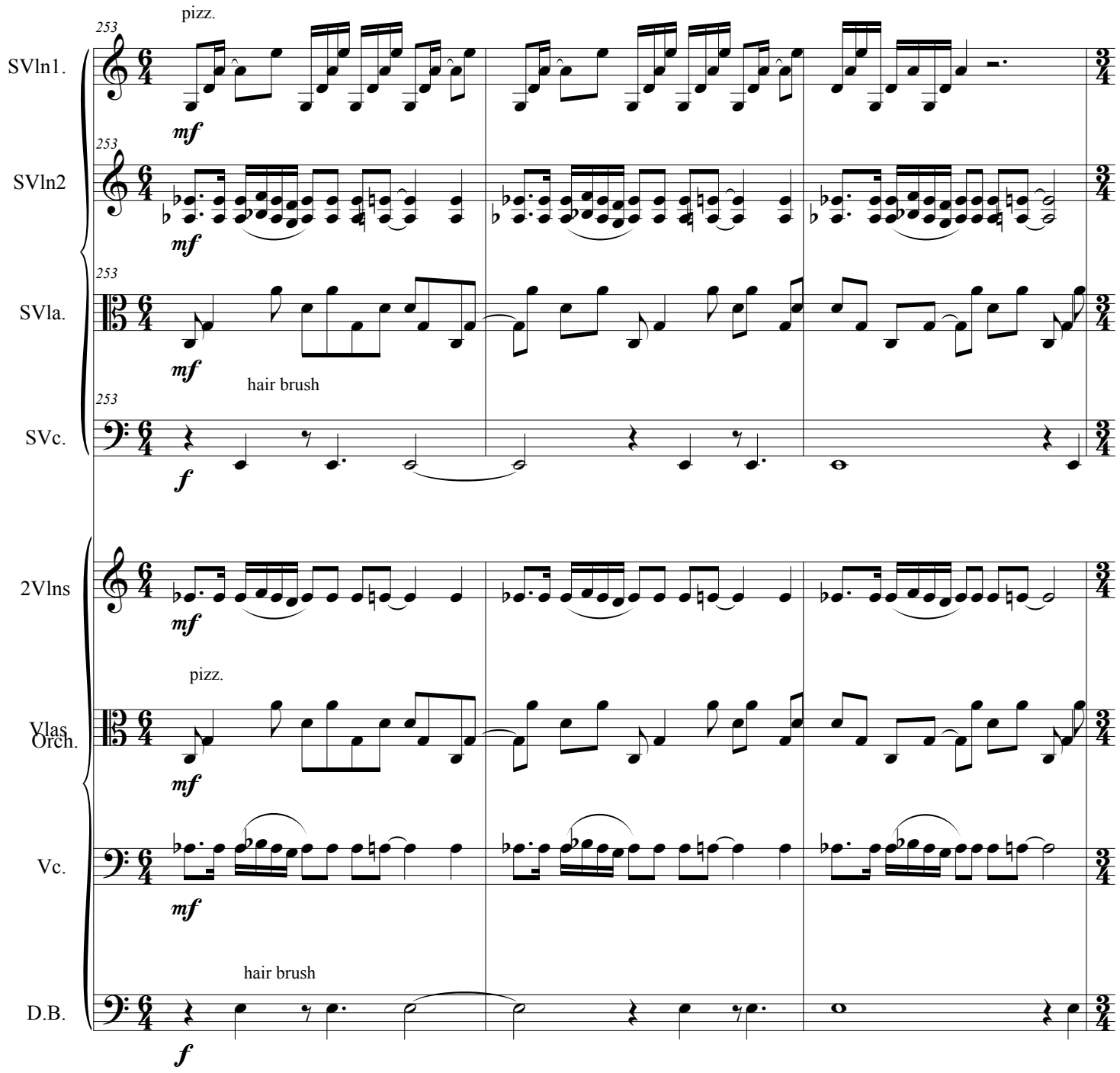

219
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
comb
arco
Vlas
Orch.
Vc.
D.B.
thud on hair cl
223
SVln1.
SVla.
SVc.
Vlas
Orch.
Vc.

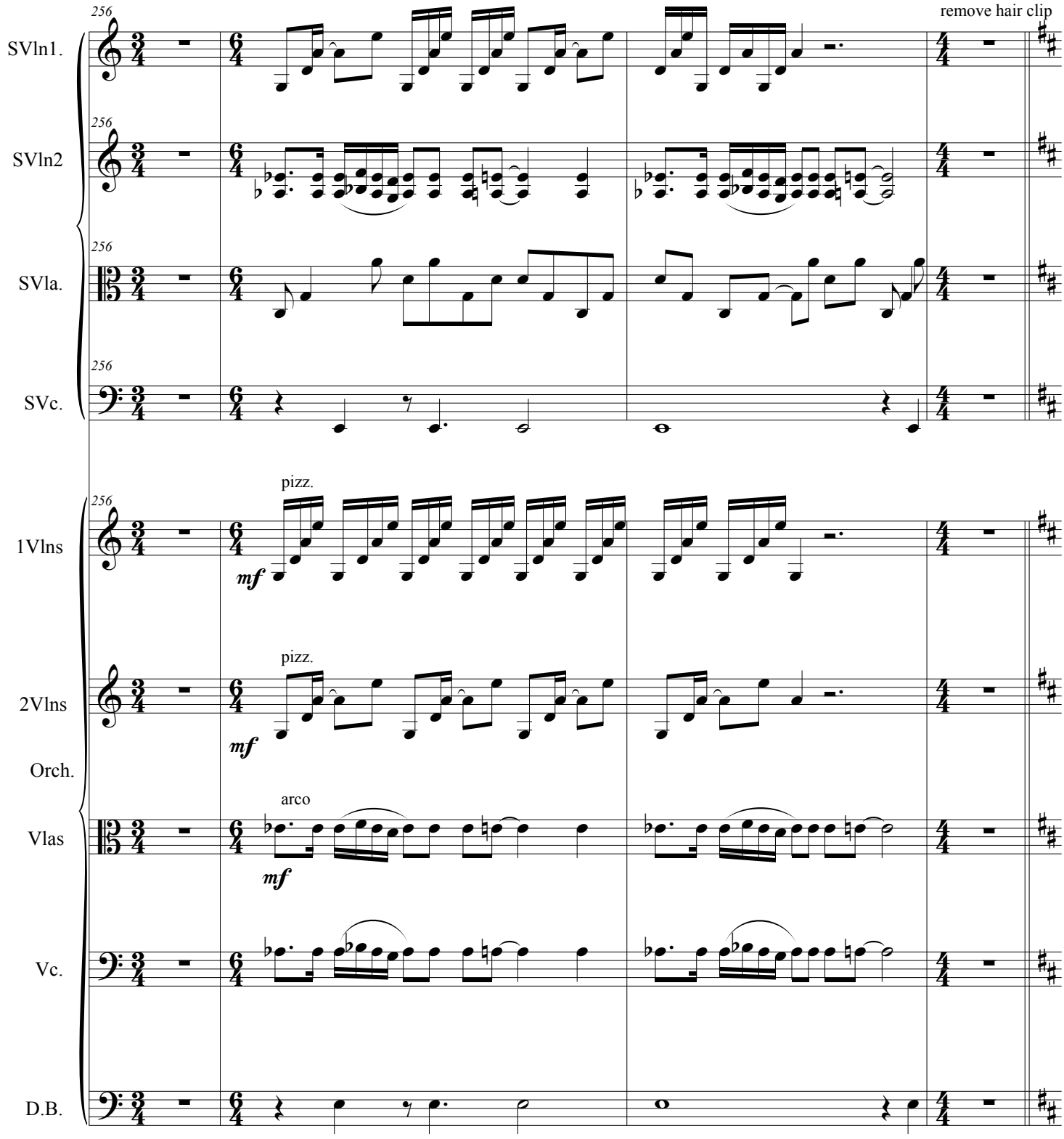

229
SVln1.
SVln2
mf
guitar pick
SVla.
SVc.
ord.
1Vlns
p
pp
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
hair brush
D.B.


233
SVln1.
pizz.
mf
SVln2
comb
SVla.
arco
SVc.
mf
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
comb
Vlas
arco
Vc.
mf
D.B.

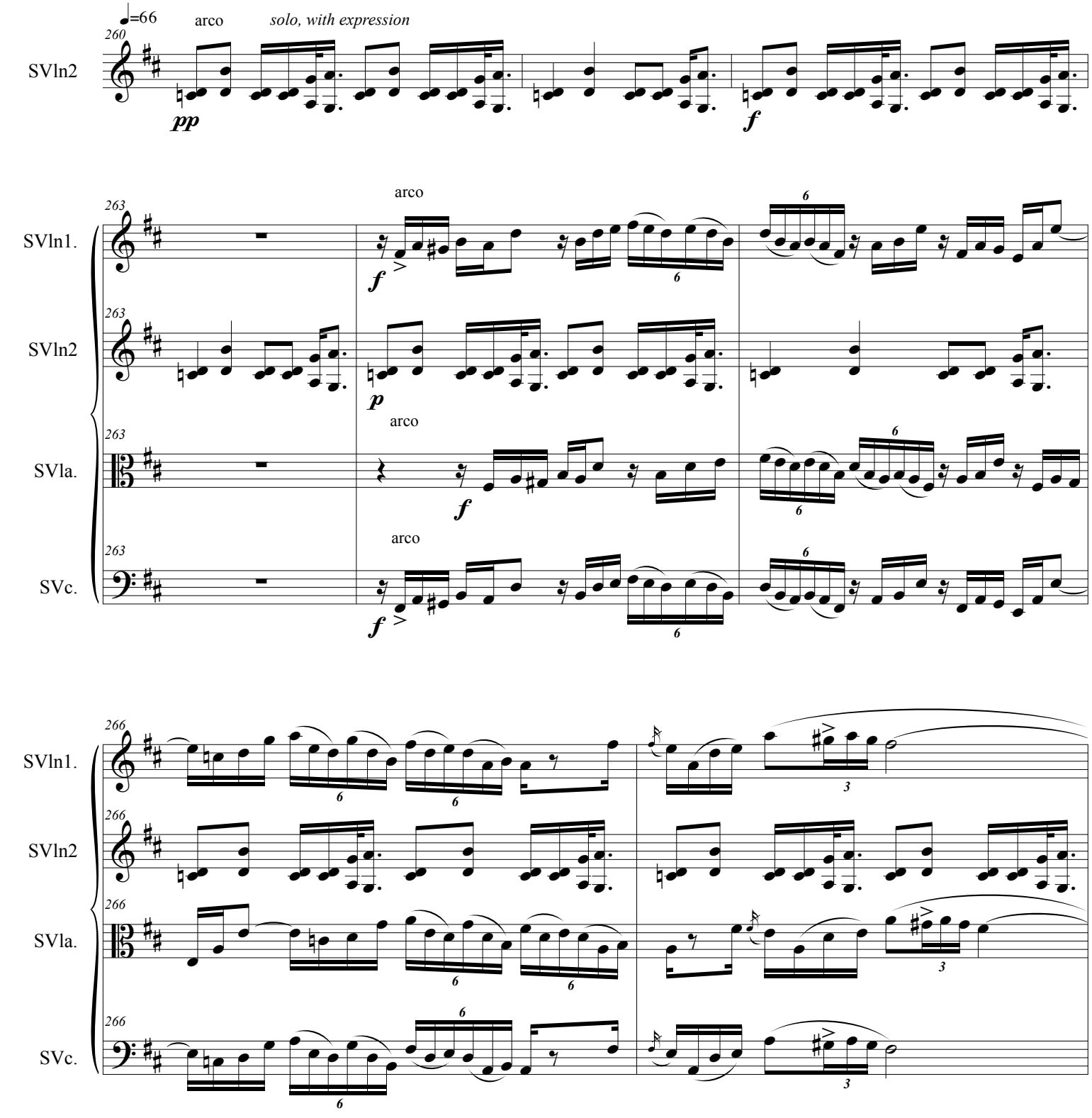

237
SVln1.
237
SVla.
237
SVc.
Vlas
Orch.
Vc.
D.B.
arco
mf
240
SVln1.
240
SVla.
240
SVc.
guitar pick
hair brush
Vlas
Orch.
Vc.
D.B.
hair brush

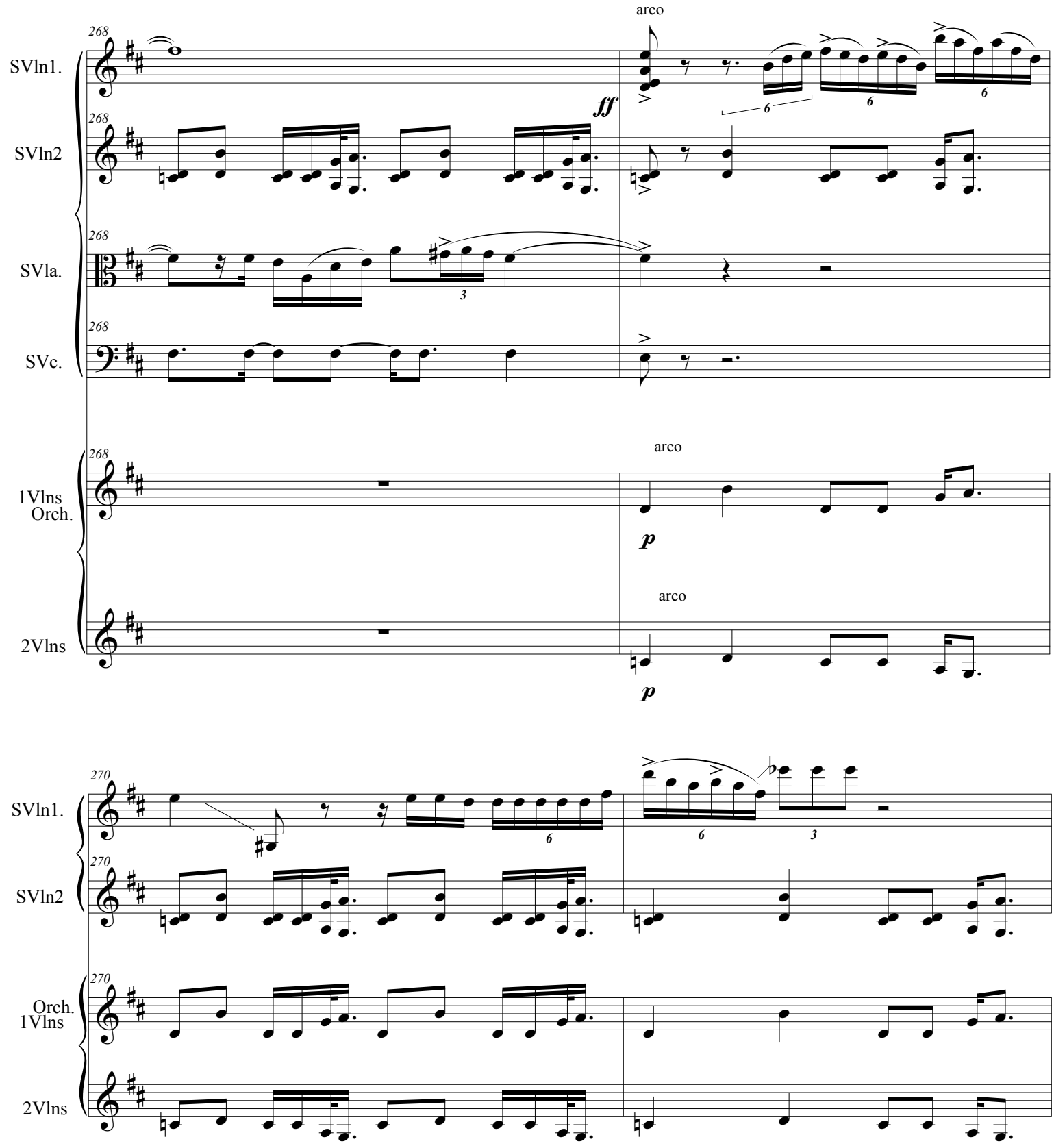

thud on hair clip
244
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
Orch.
D.B.
f
248
1Vlns
pp

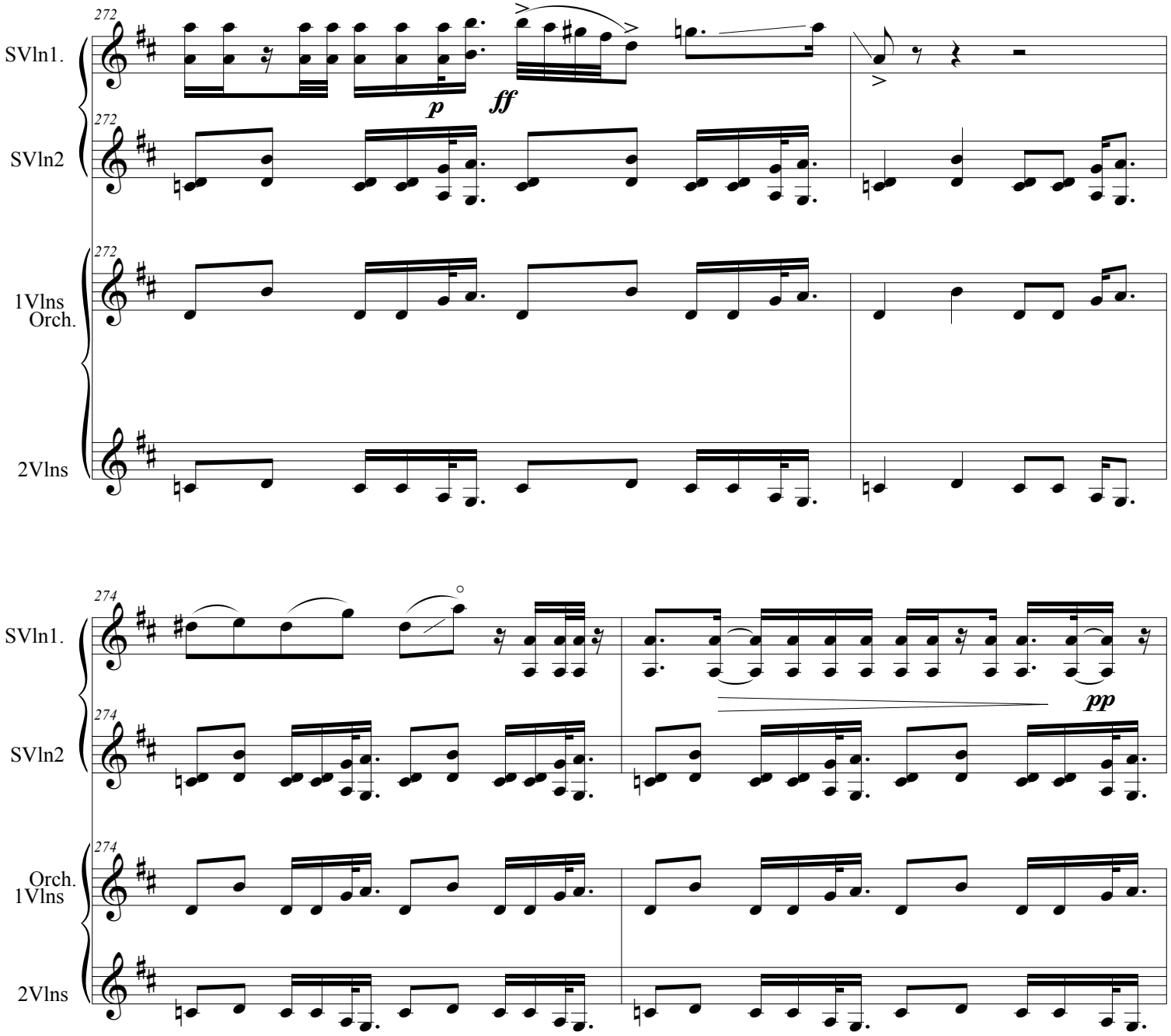

pizz.
253
SVln1.
mf
253
SVln2
mf
253
SVla.
mf
hair brush
253
SVc.
f
2Vlns
mf
pizz.
Vlas
Orch.
mf
Vc.
mf
hair brush
D.B.
f

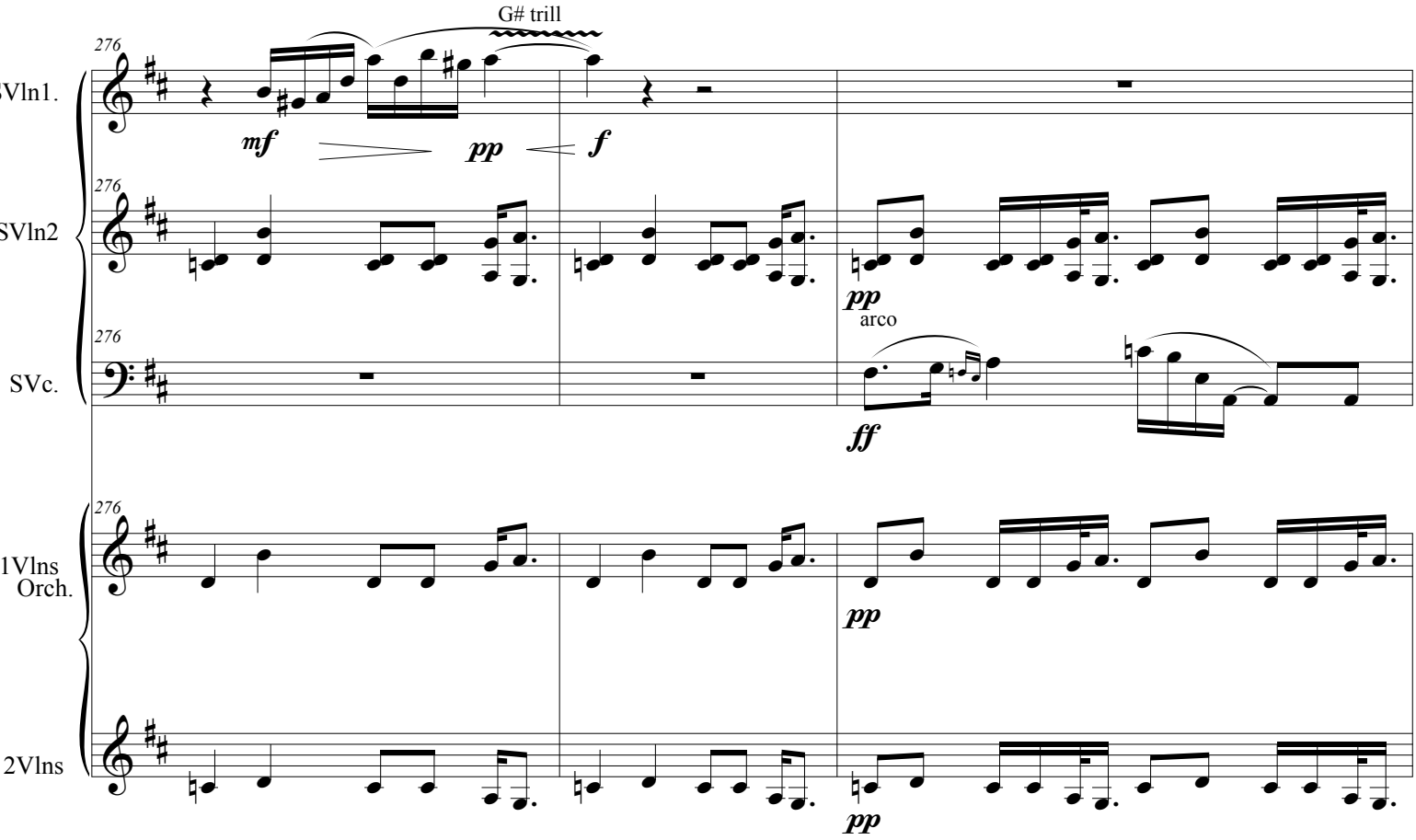

256
remove hair clip
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
pizz.
1Vlns
mf
pizz.
2Vlns
mf
Orch.
arco
Vlas
mf
Vc.
D.B.

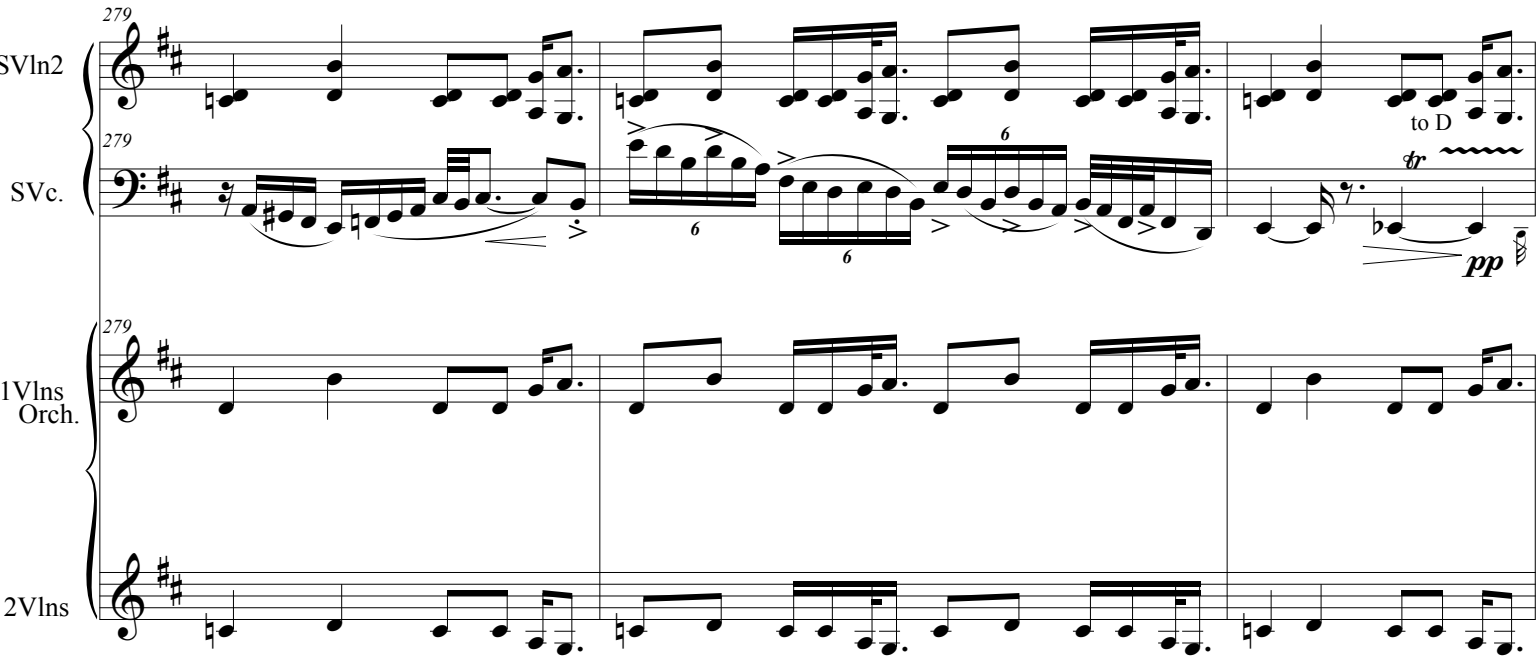
4. X-Linked Planet

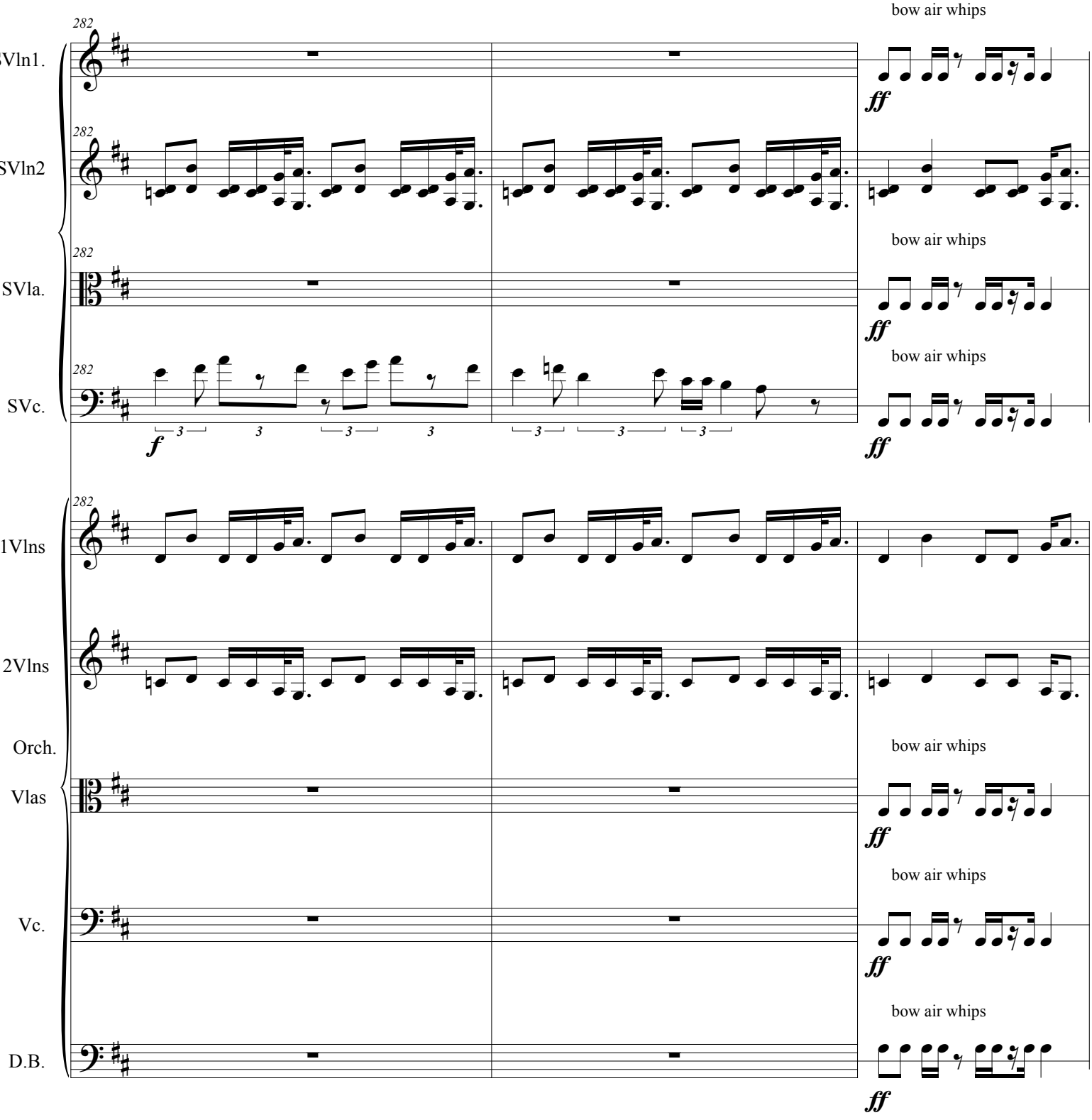


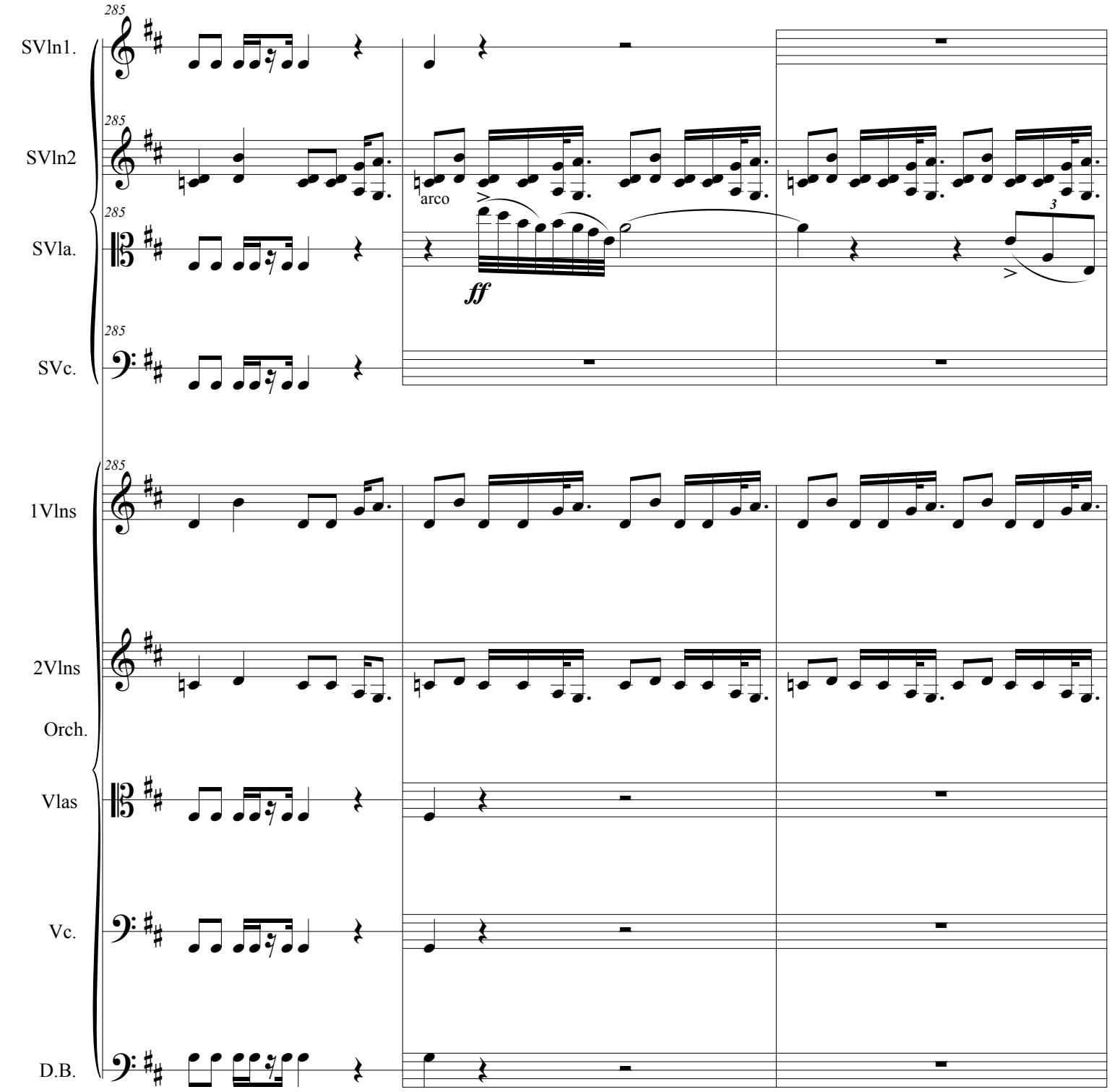

arco
268
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
ff
1Vlns
Orch.
2Vlns
p
arco
270
Orch.
1Vlns

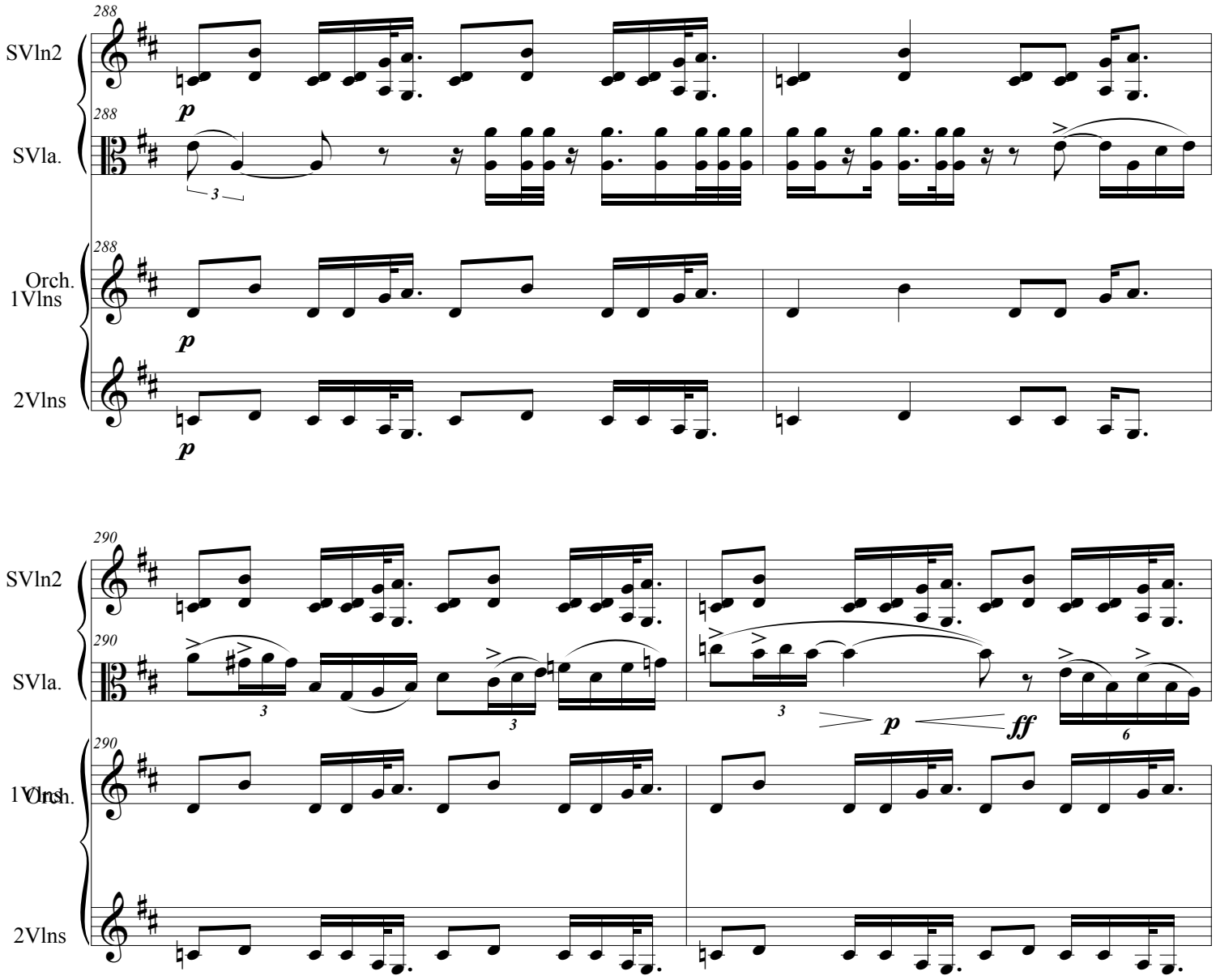

272
SVln1.
SVln2
1Vlns
Orch.
2Vlns
p
ff
274
pp
Orch.
1Vlns

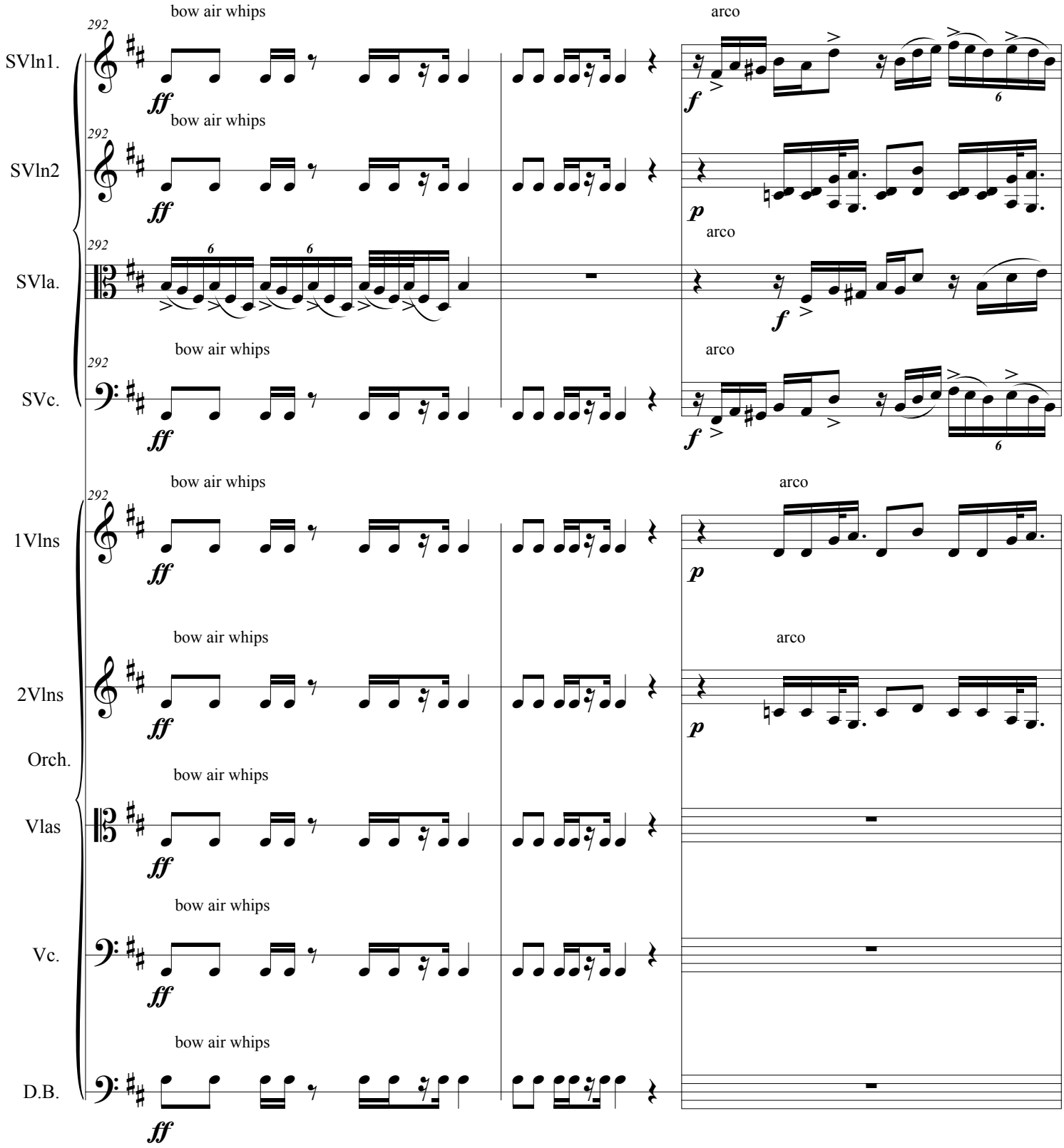

G# trill
276
SVln1.
SVln2
SVc.
1Vlns
Orch.
2Vlns
mf
pp
f
pp
arco
ff
pp
pp

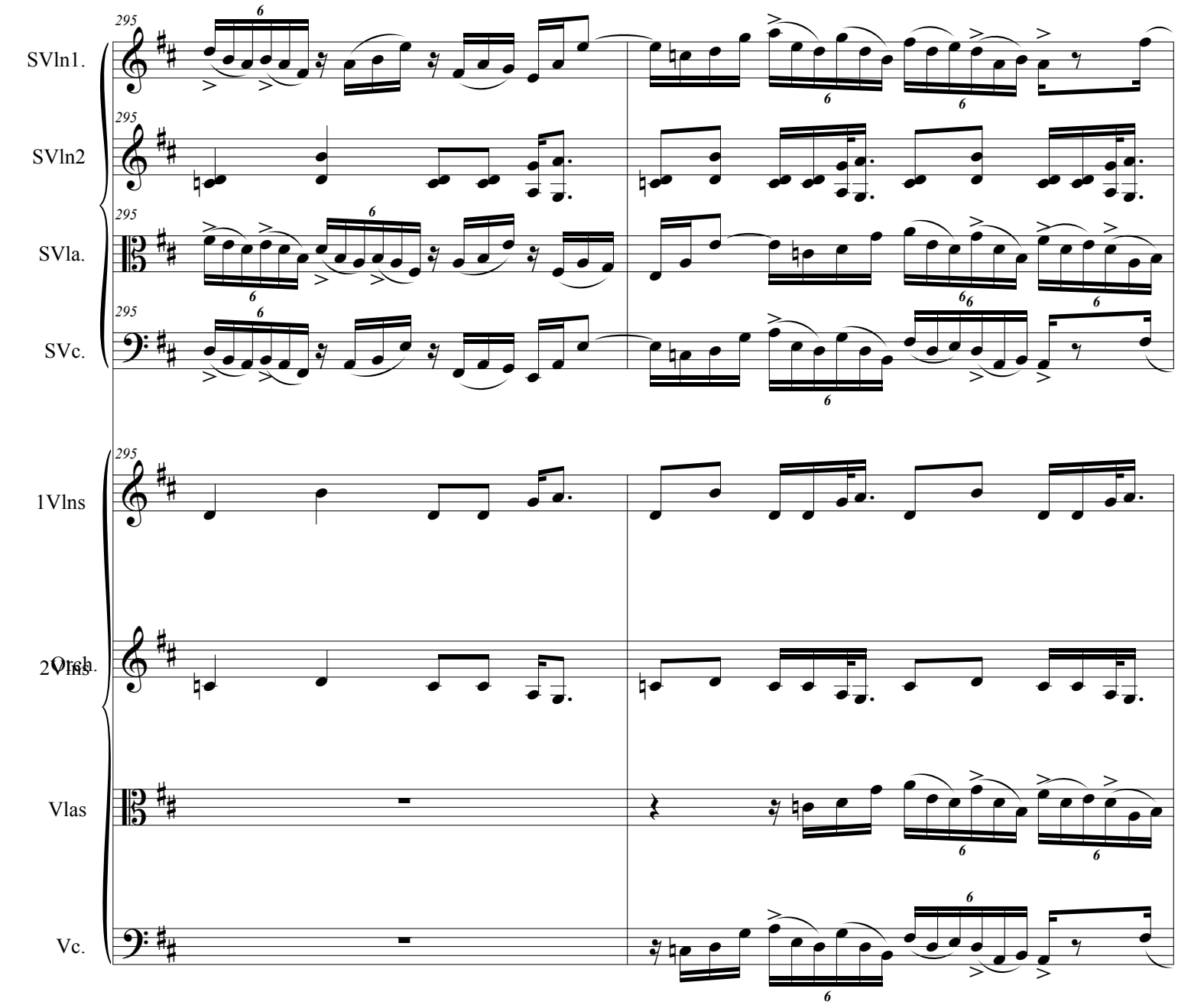

279
SVln2
SVc.
1Vlns
Orch.
2Vlns
6
6
6
to D
tr
pp

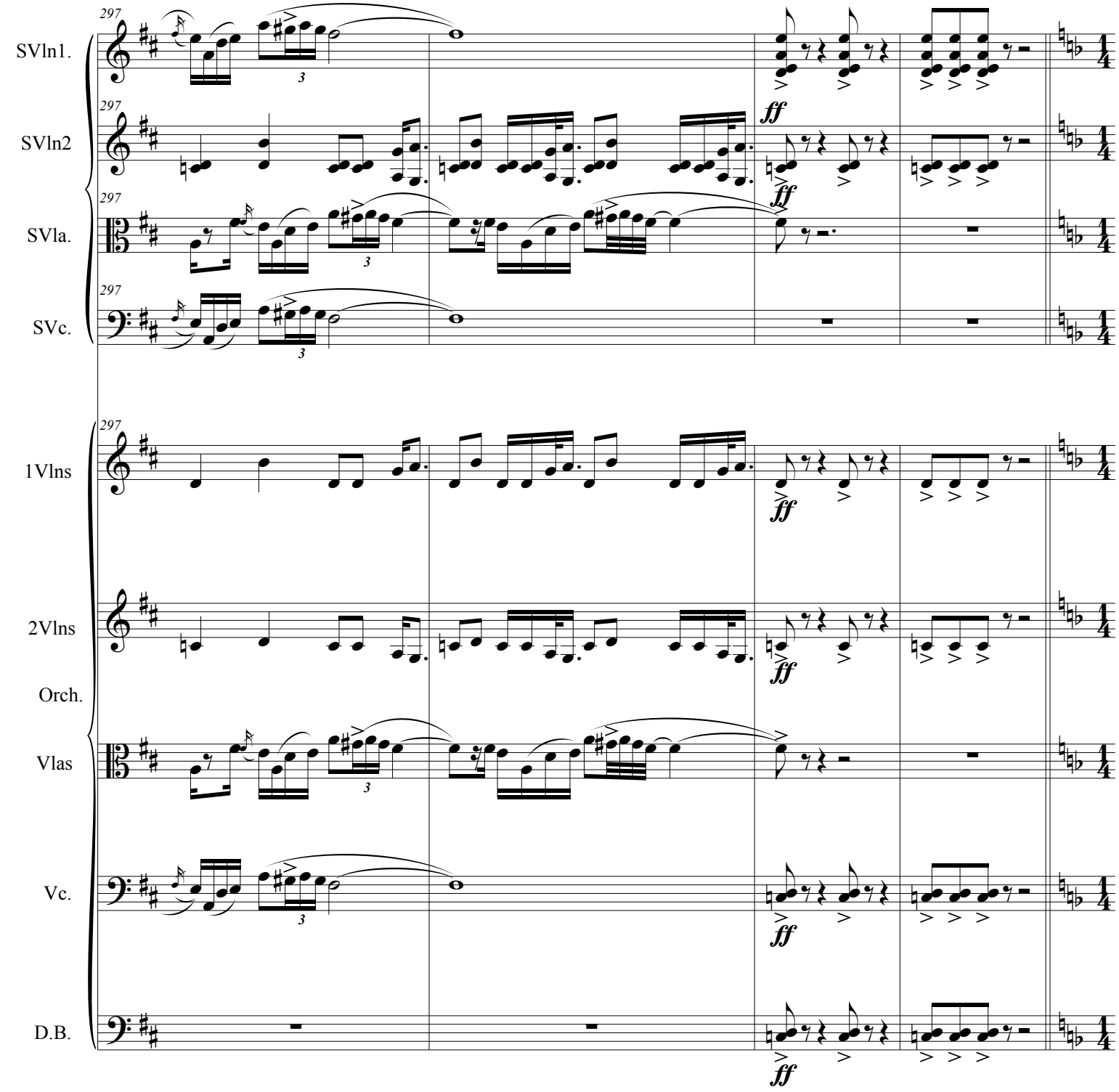

282
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
bow air whips
f
ff
3


285
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
arco
ff
3

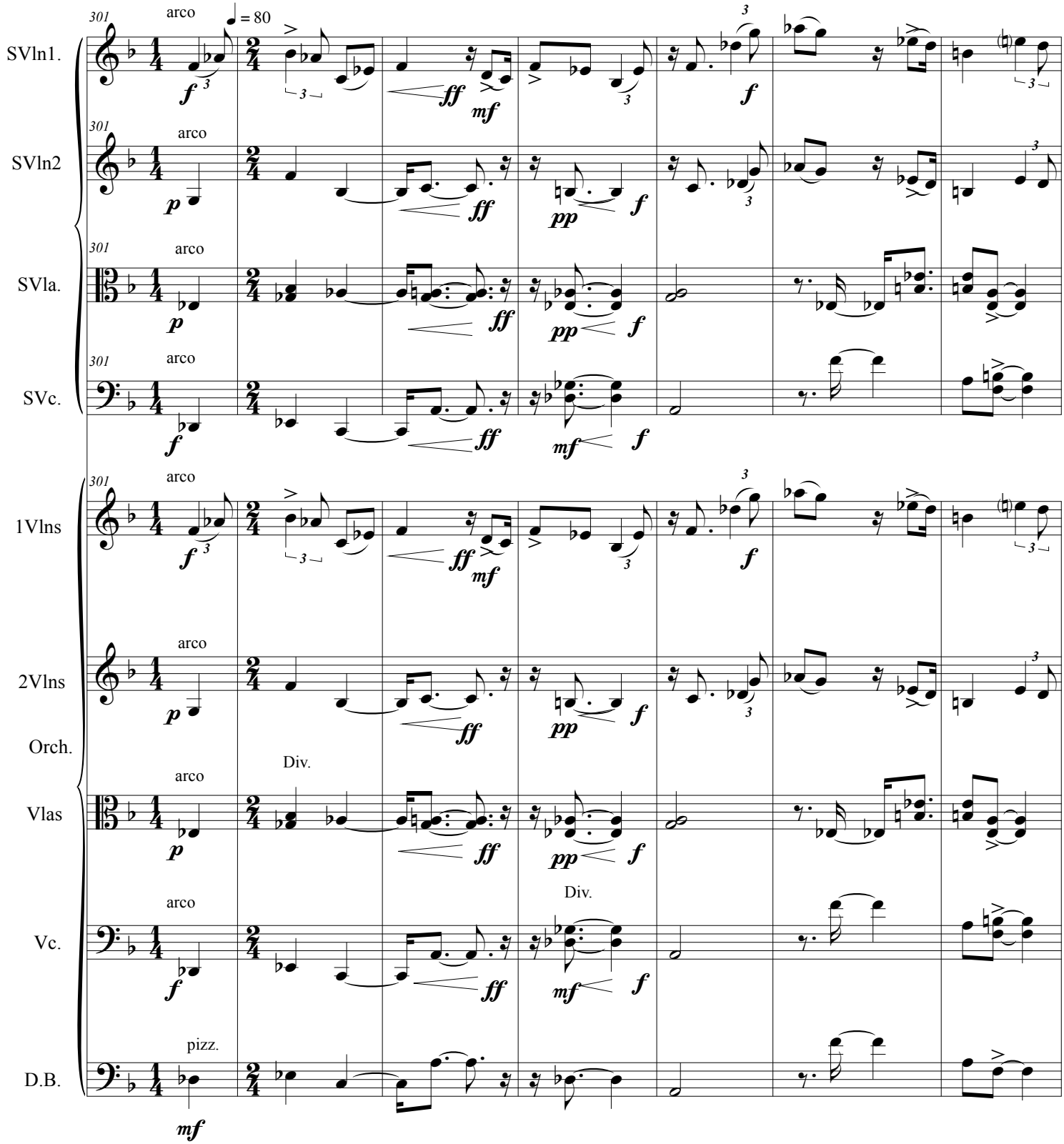

288
SVln2
SVla.
Orch.
1Vlns
2Vlns
p
3
290
ff
6

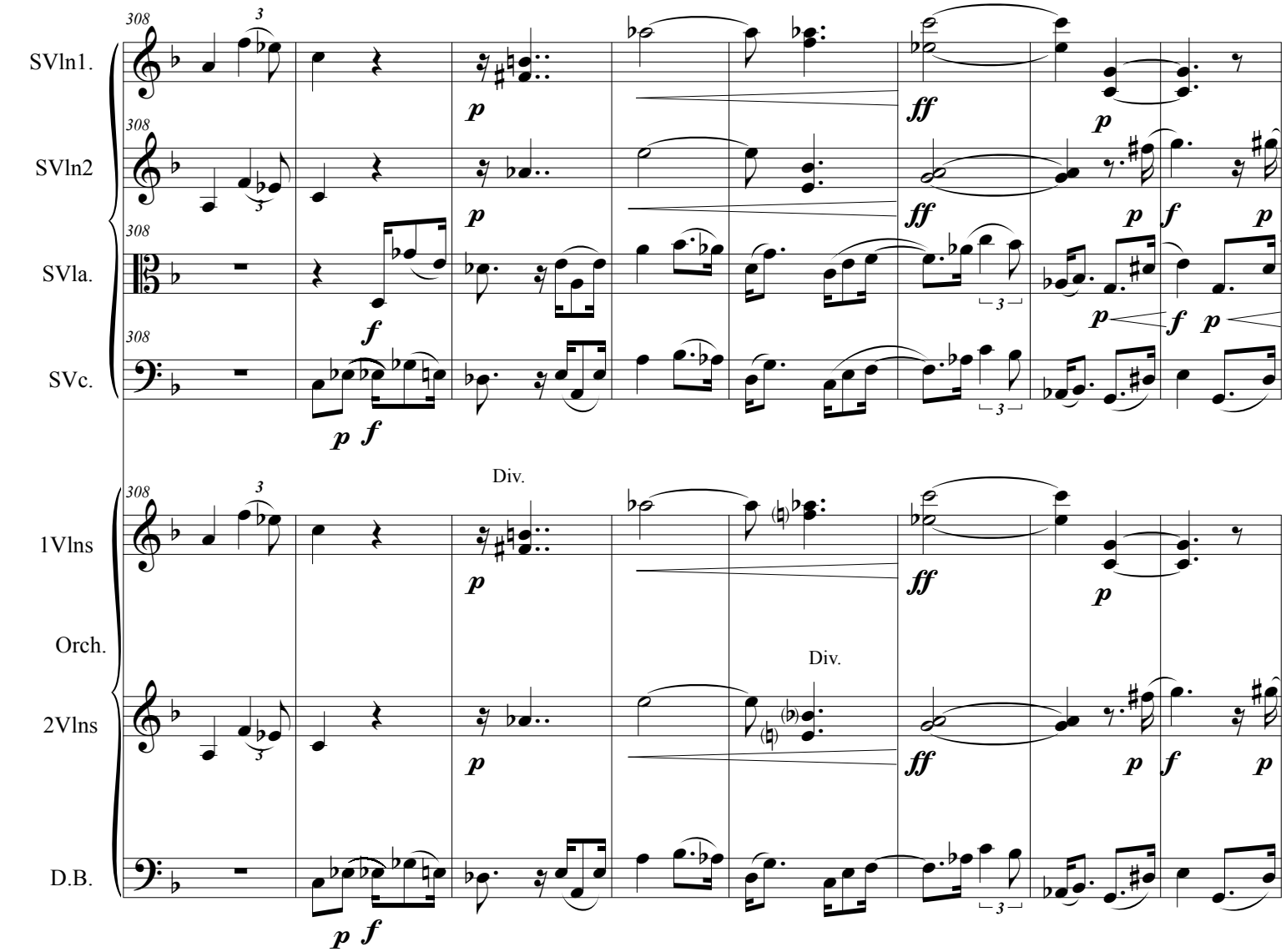

SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
292
bow air whips
arco
ff
f
p

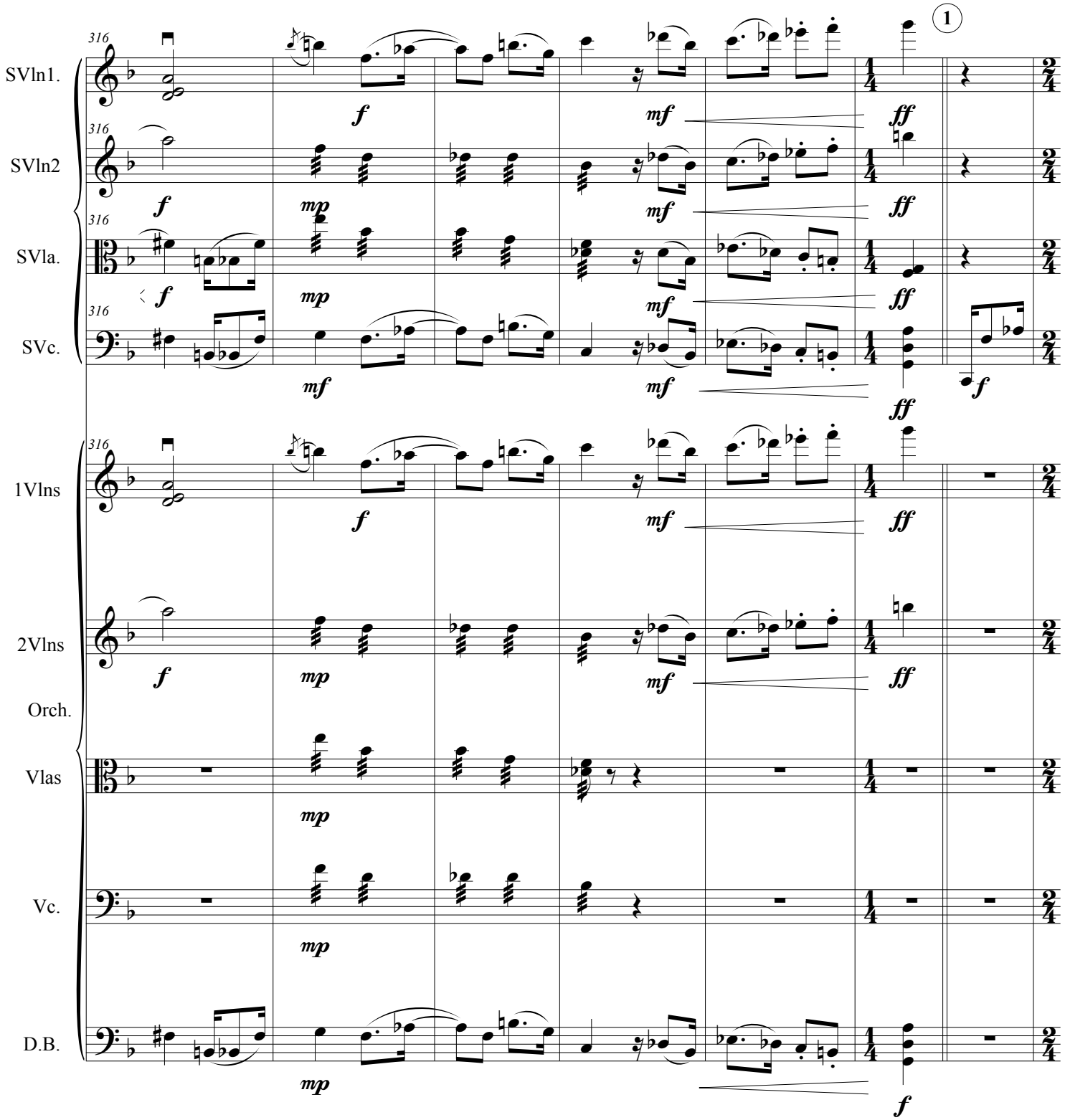

295
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.

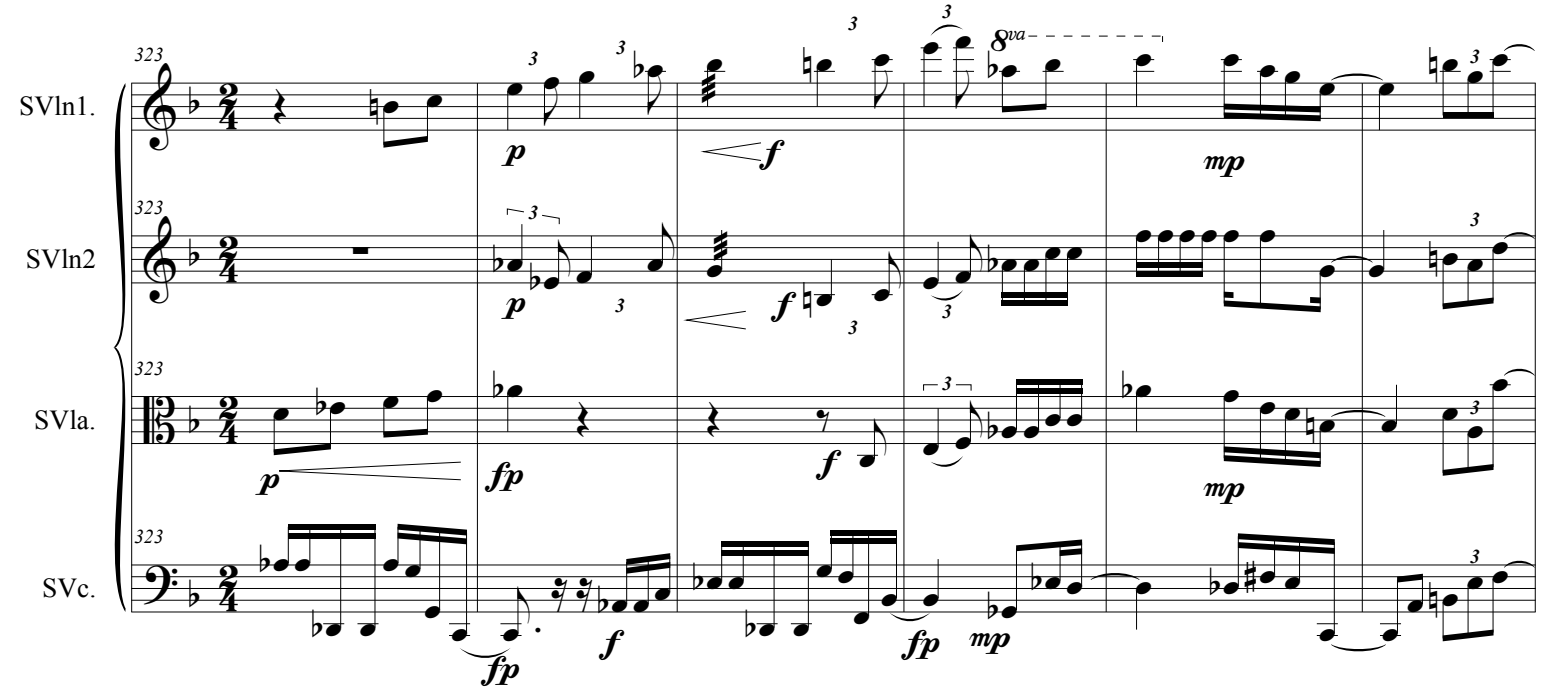

297
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
3
ff

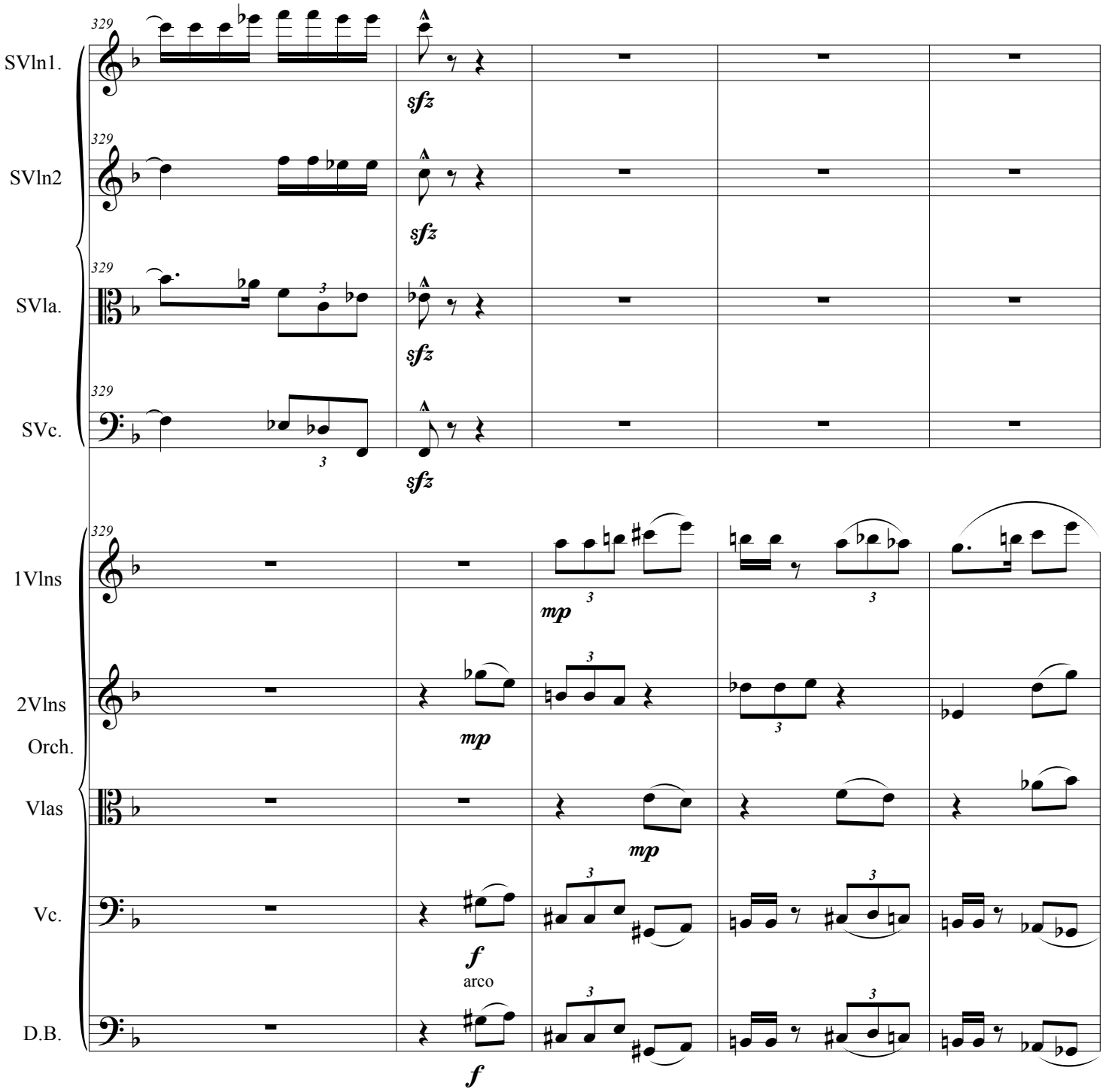
5. Afrika Variations

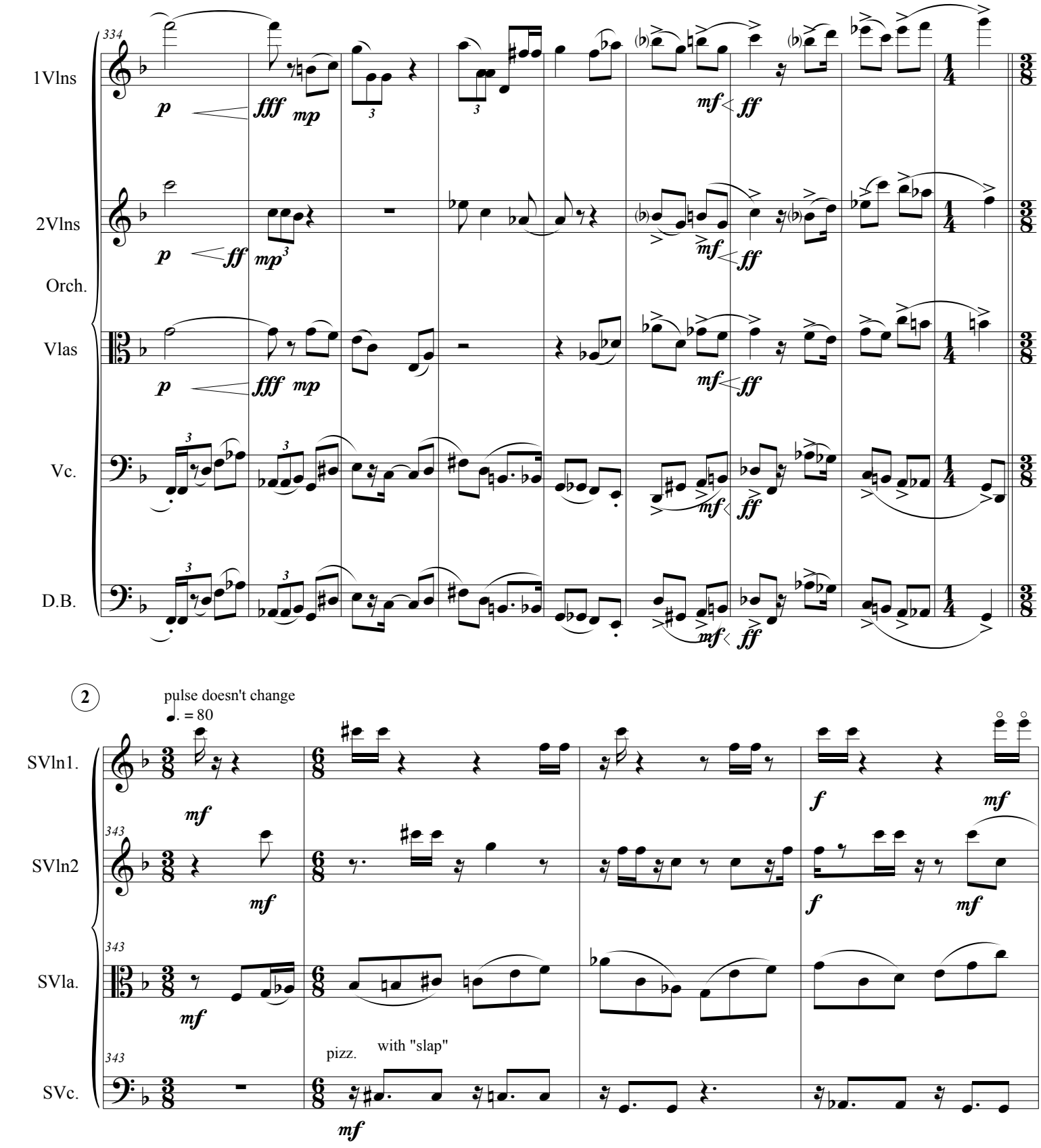


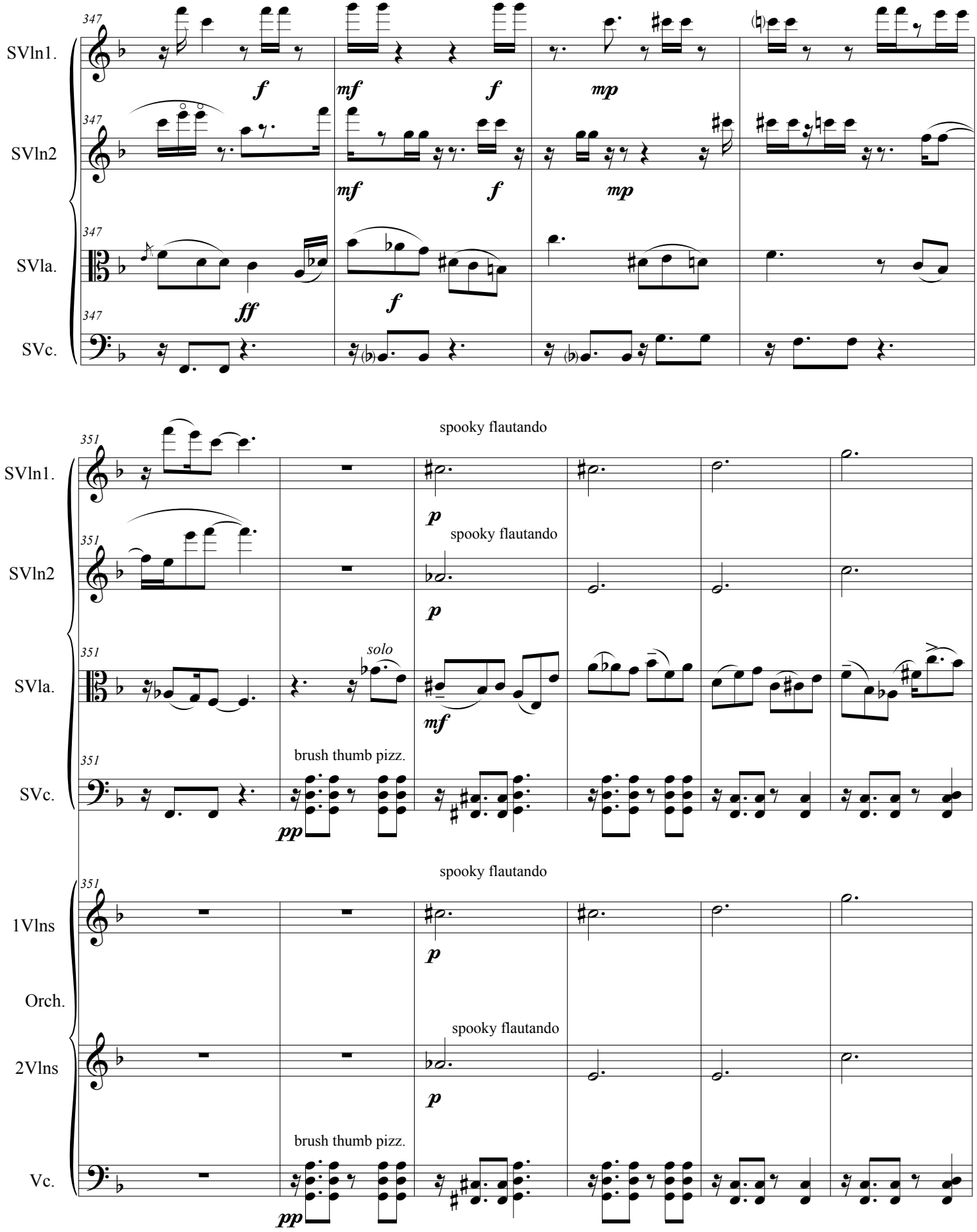

SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
Orch.
2Vlns
D.B.
308
Div.
Div.

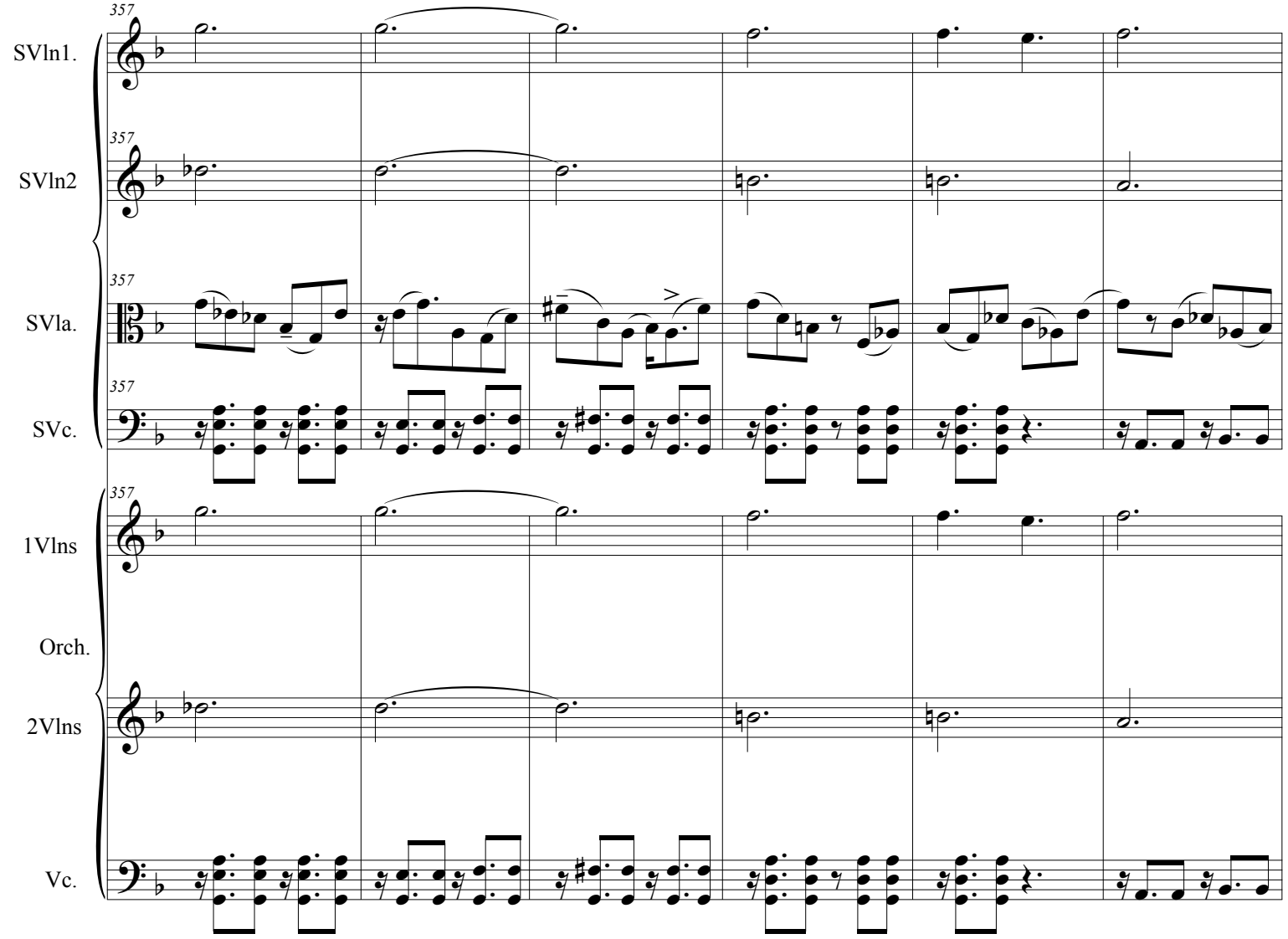

1
316
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
f
mf
ff
mp

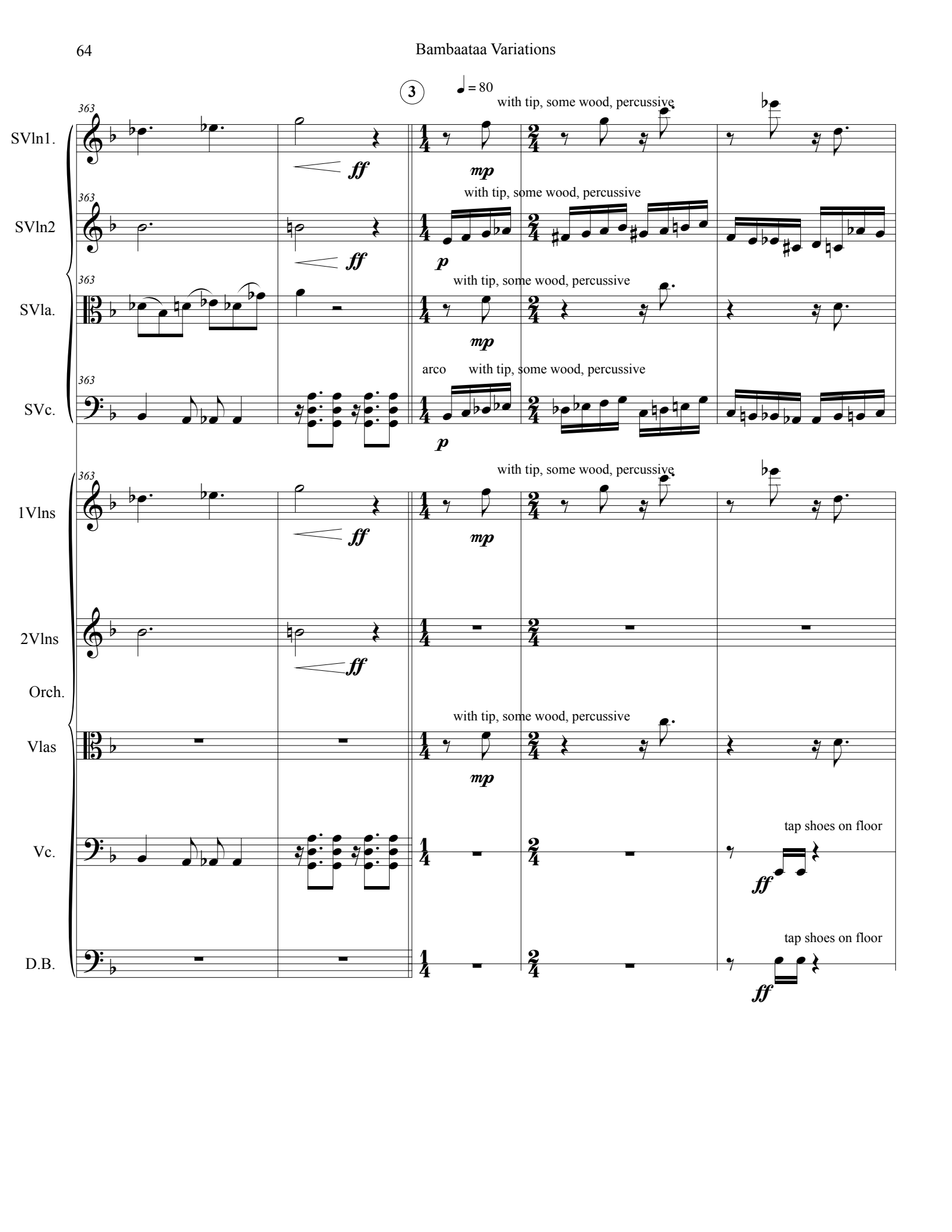

SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
323
8va
p
f
mp
fp

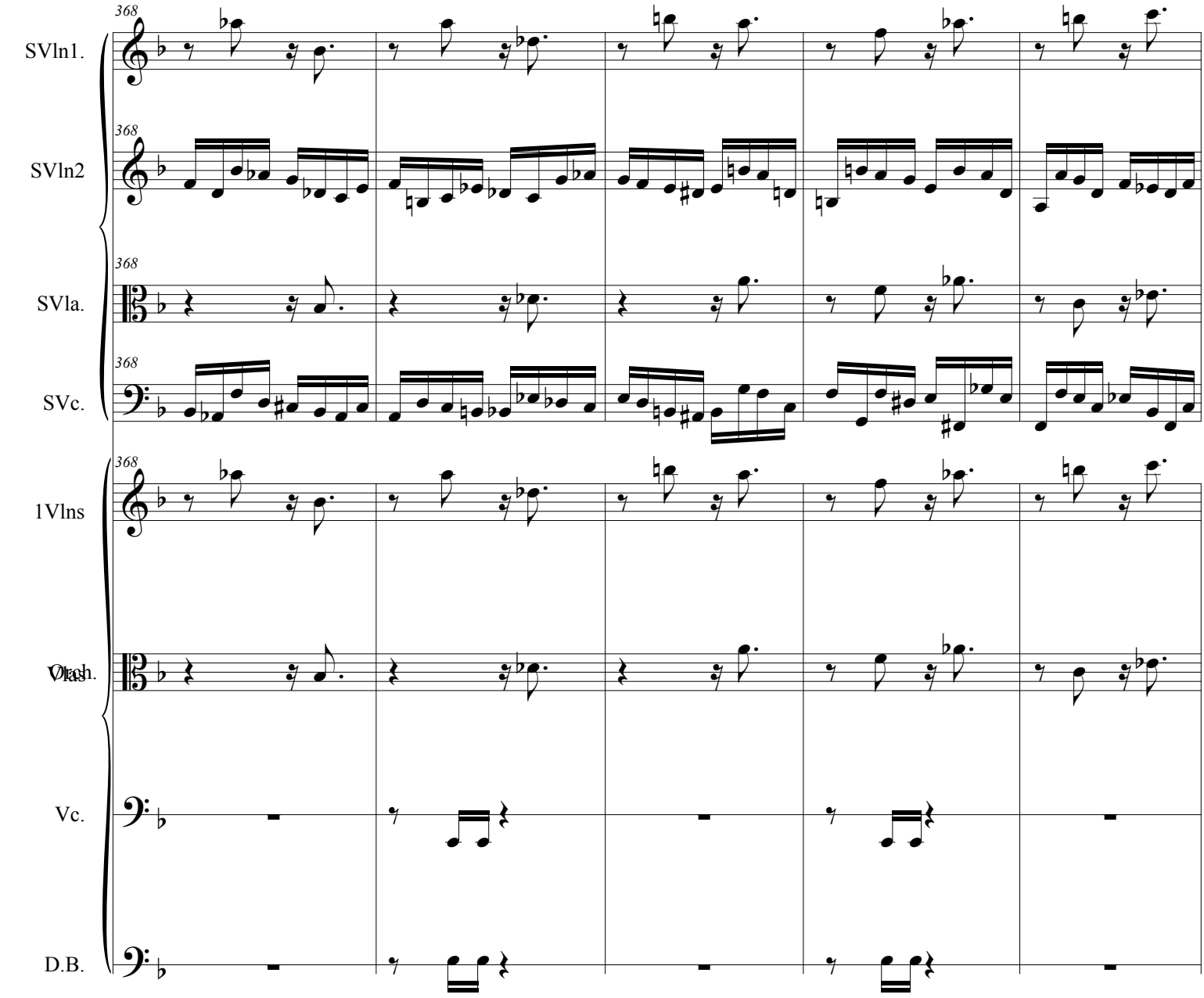

329
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
sfz
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
mp
f
arco

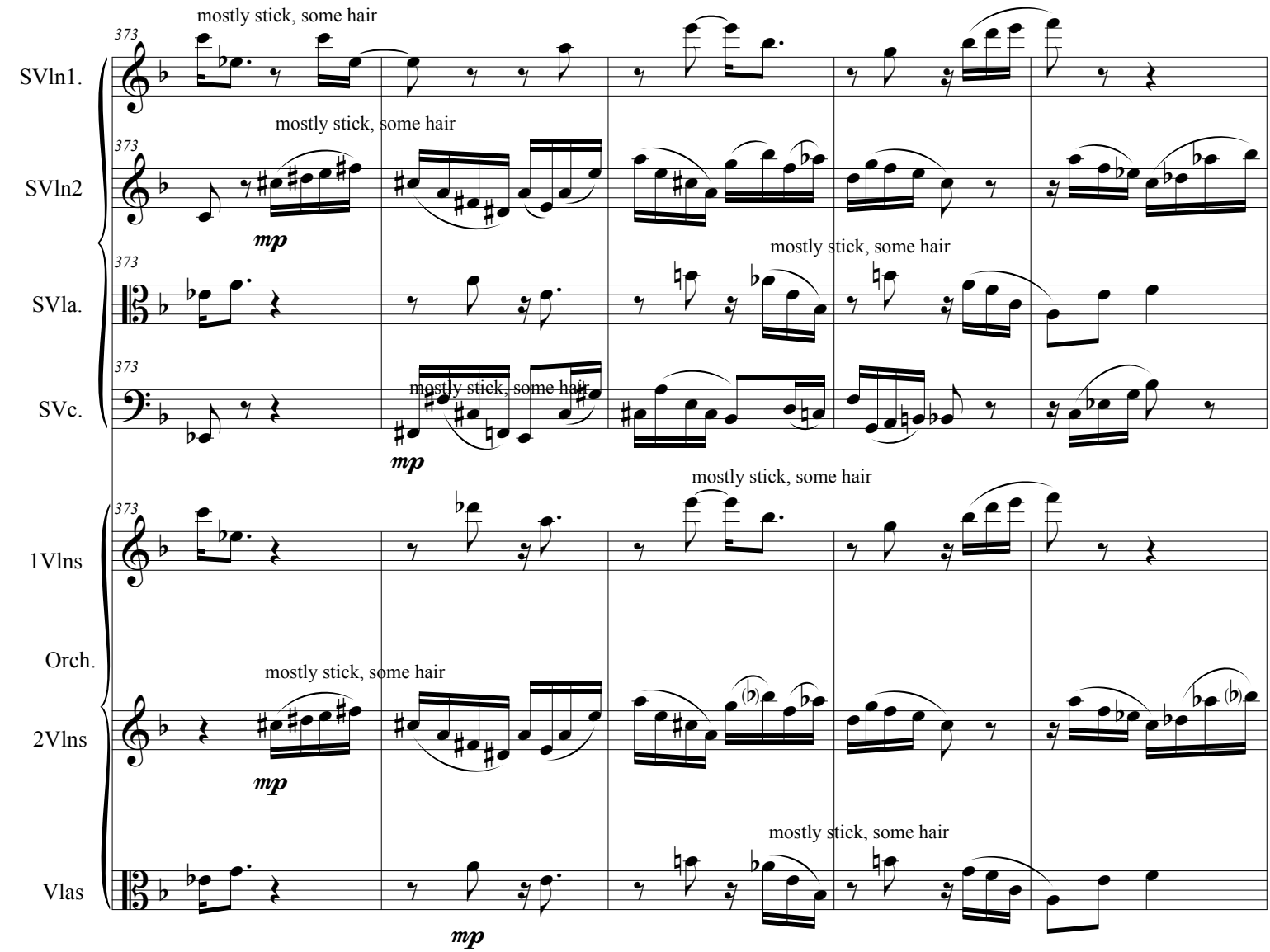

334
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
p
fff
mp
mf
ff
2
pulse doesn't change
♩. = 80
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
343
f
pizz.
with "slap"

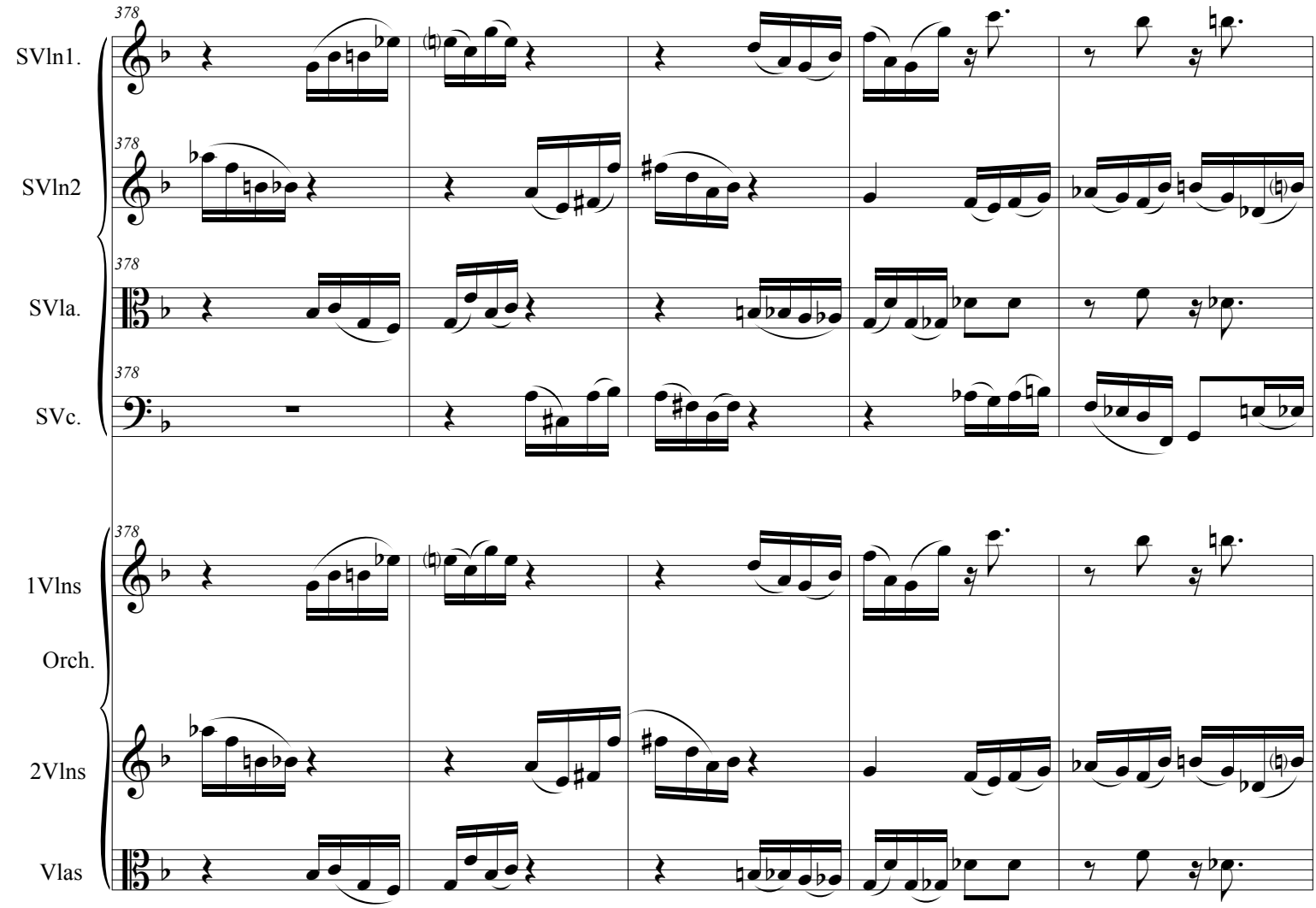

347
SVln1.
f
mf
f
mp
347
SVln2
mf
f
mp
347
SVla.
ff
f
347
SVc.
spooky flautando
351
SVln1.
p
spooky flautando
351
SVln2
p
351
SVla.
solo
mf
351
SVc.
brush thumb pizz.
pp
spooky flautando
351
1Vlns
p
Orch.
spooky flautando
2Vlns
p
brush thumb pizz.
Vc.
pp

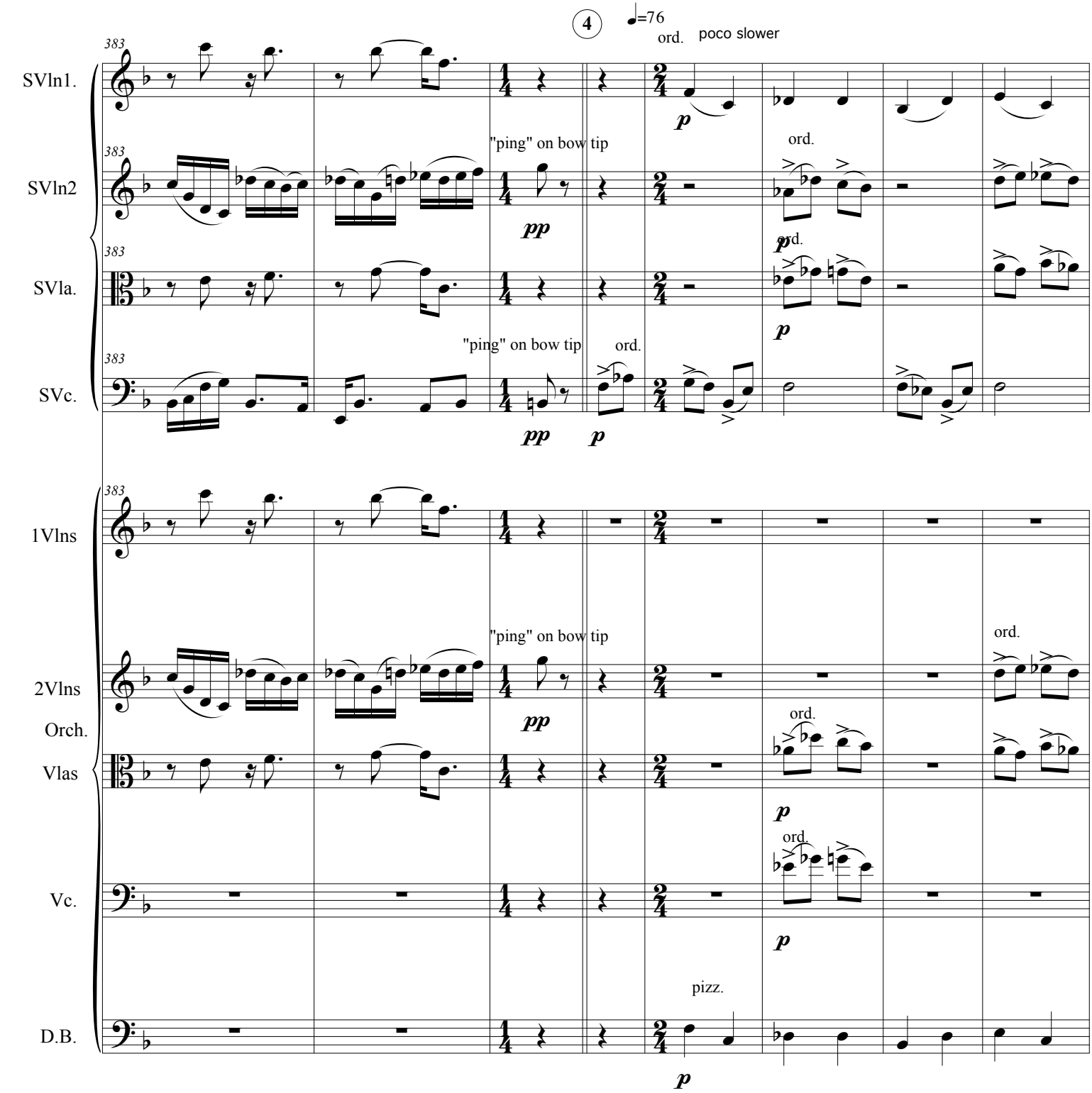

357
SVln1.
357
SVln2
357
SVla.
357
SVc.
357
1Vlns
Orch.
2Vlns
Vc.

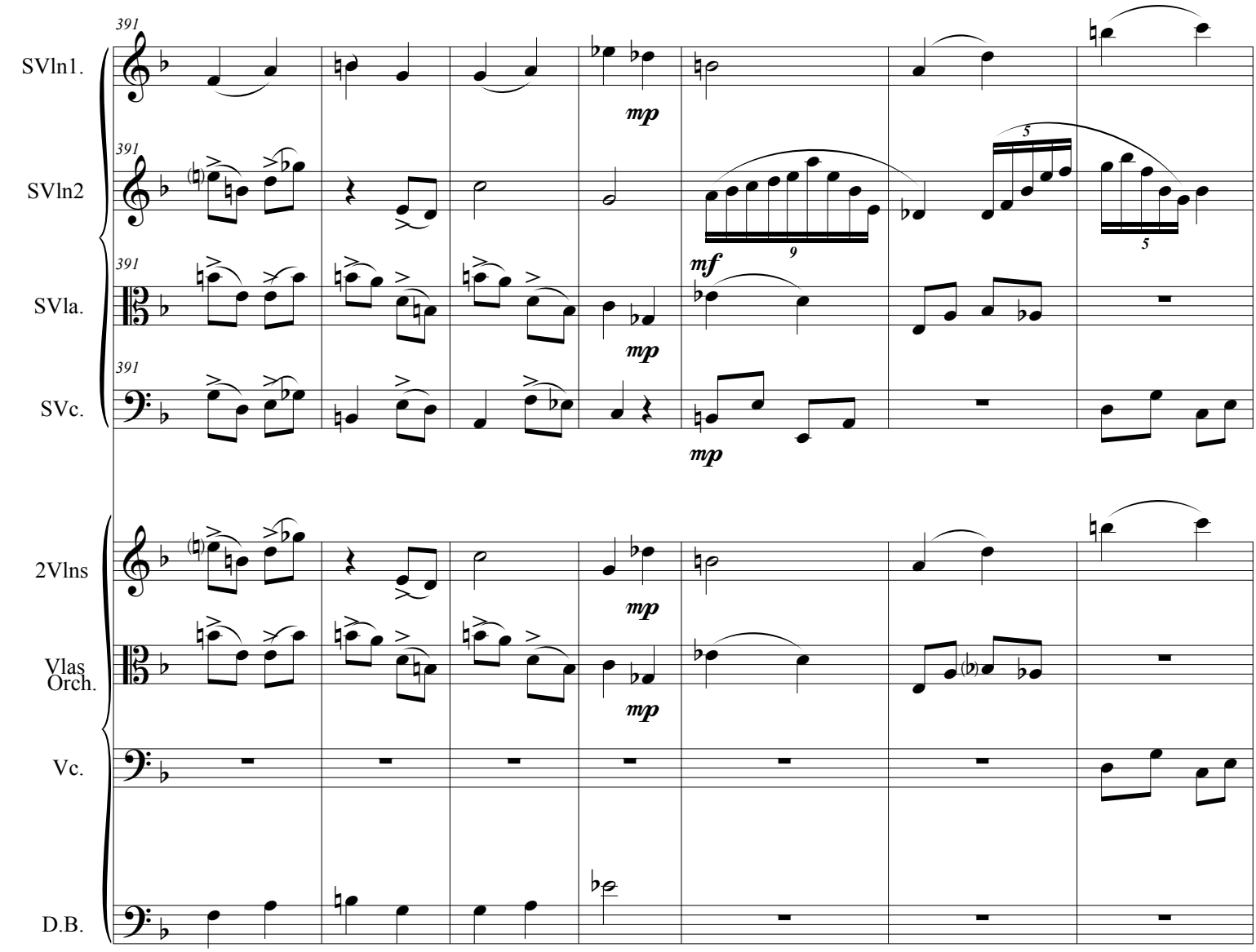

3
♩ = 80
363
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
with tip, some wood, percussive
arco
tap shoes on floor
ff
mp
p

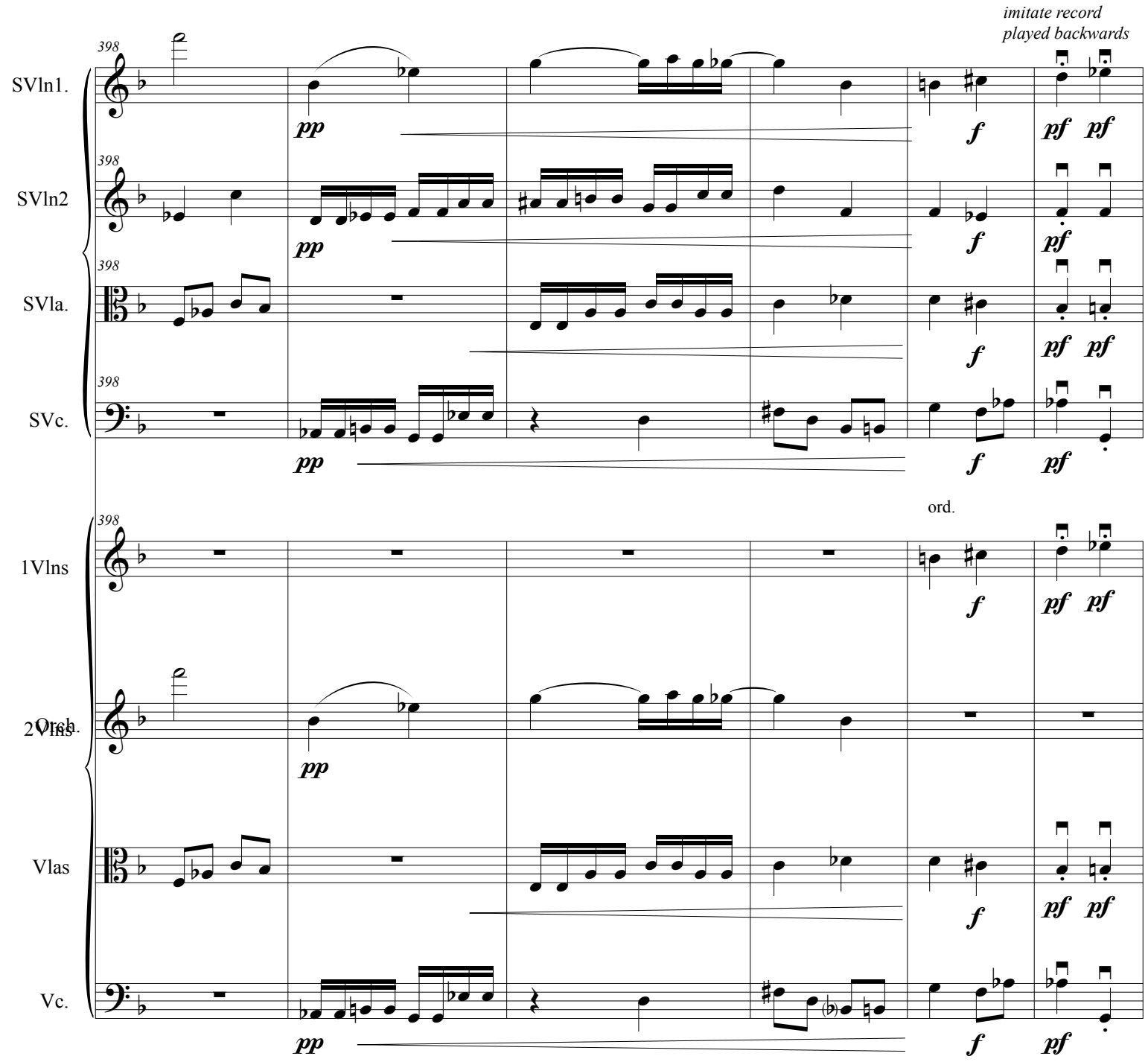

368
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.

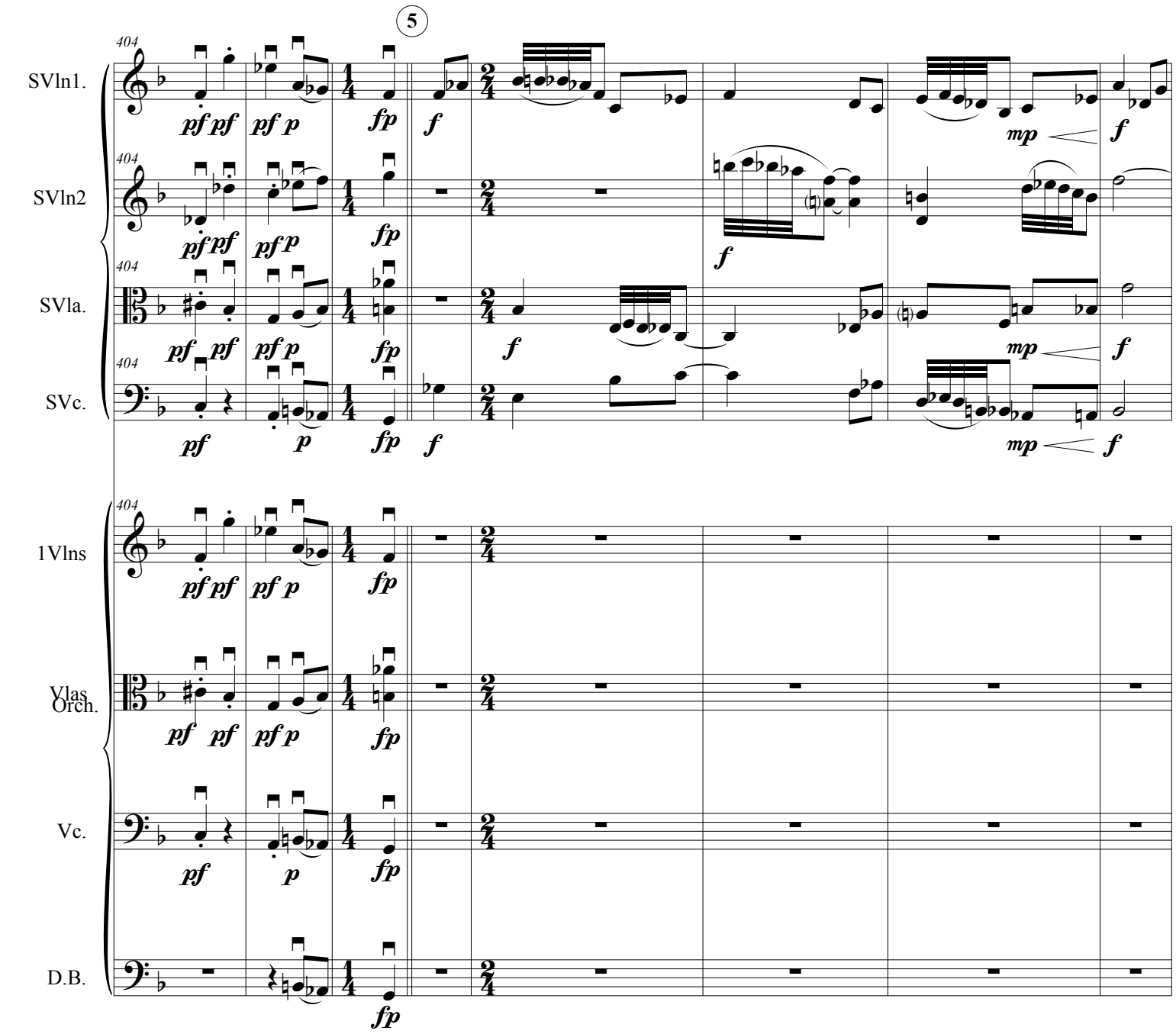

mostly stick, some hair
373
SVln1.
mostly stick, some hair
373
SVln2
mp
373
SVla.
mostly stick, some hair
373
SVc.
mostly stick, some hair
mp
mostly stick, some hair
373
1Vlns
Orch.
mostly stick, some hair
2Vlns
mp
mostly stick, some hair
Vlas
mp

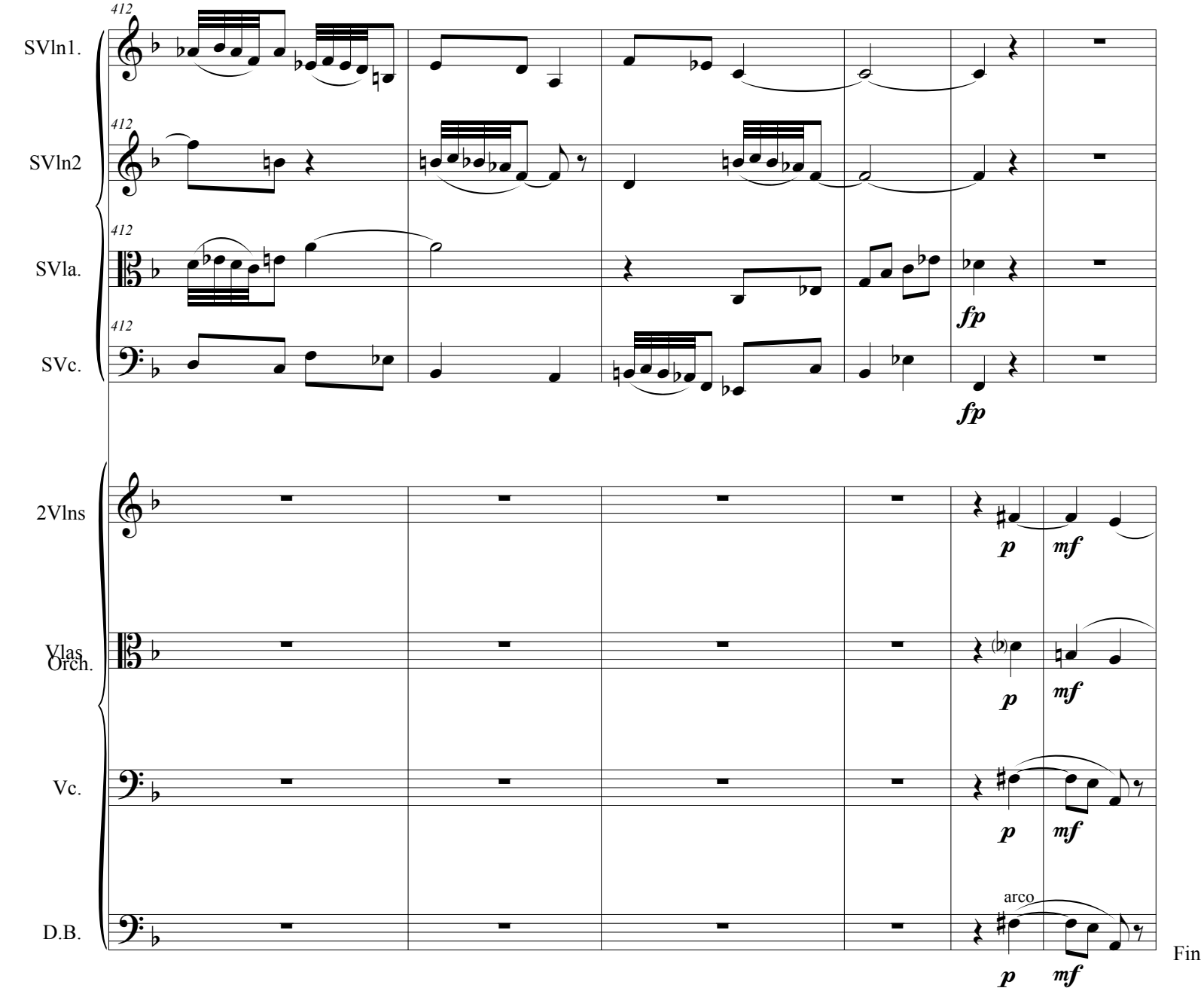

378
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
Orch.
2Vlns
Vlas

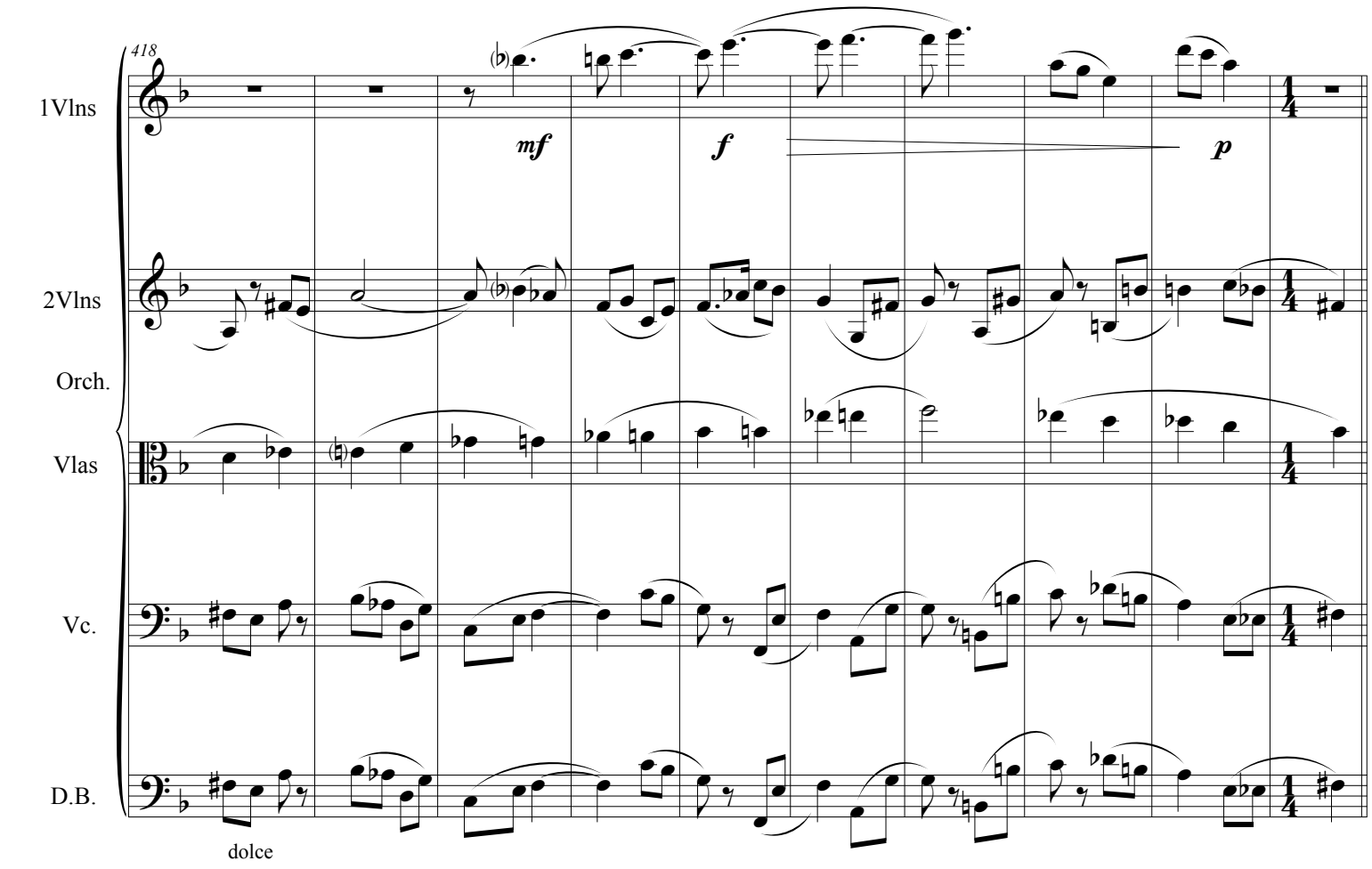

4
♩=76
poco slower
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
383
"ping" on bow tip
ord.
pizz.
pp
p

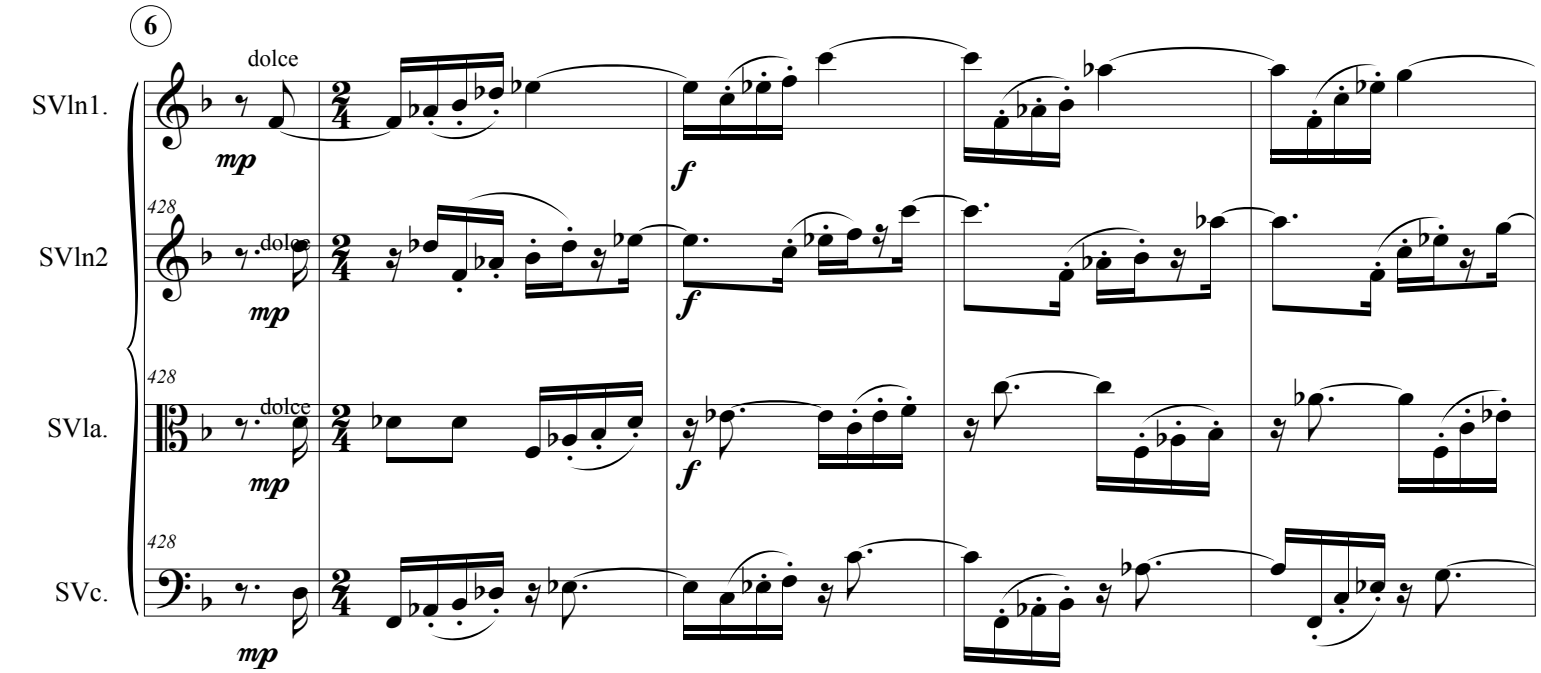

391
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
2Vlns
Vlas Orch.
Vc.
D.B.
mp
mf
9
5

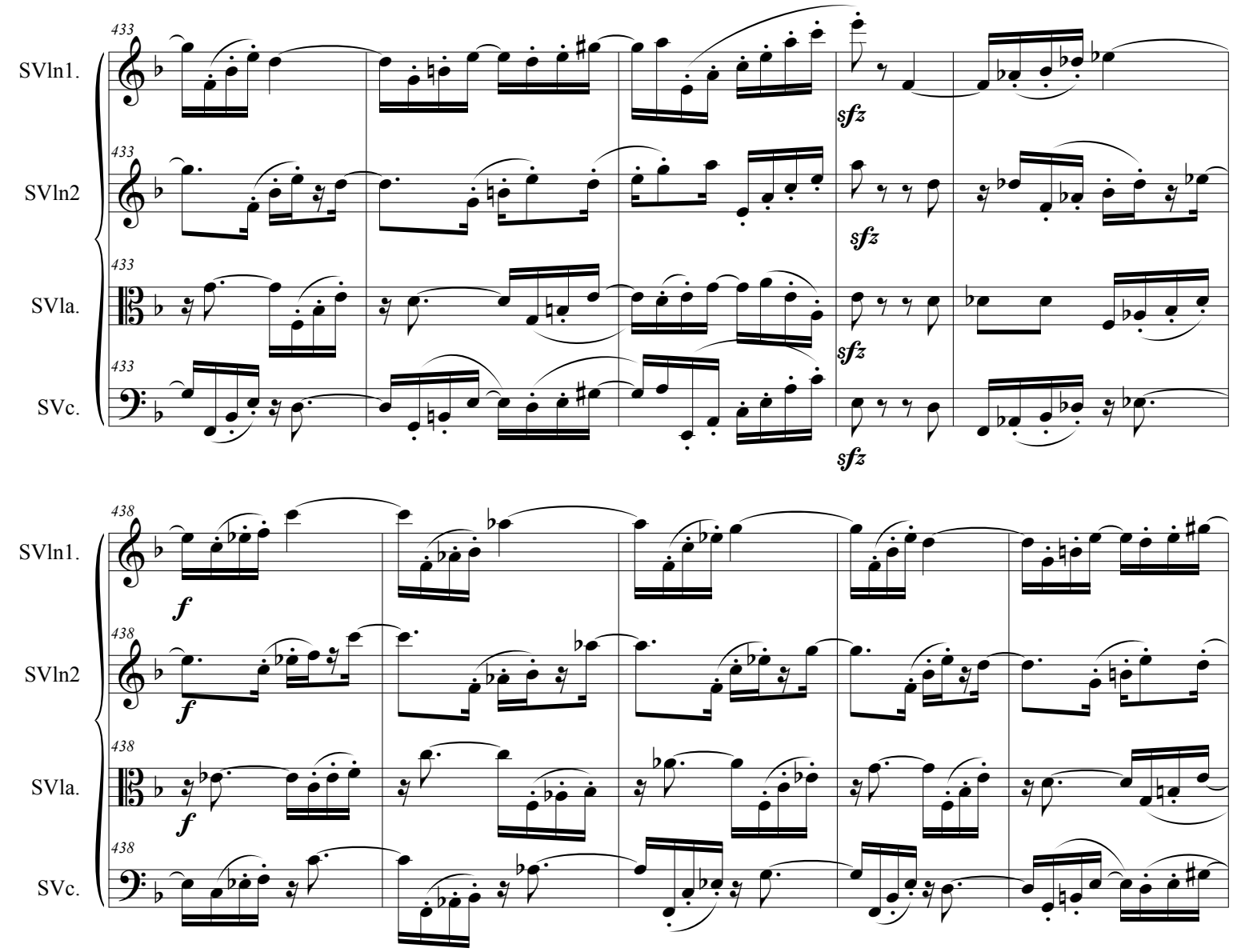

imitate record
played backwards
398
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
pp
f
pf
ord.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Vlas
Vc.

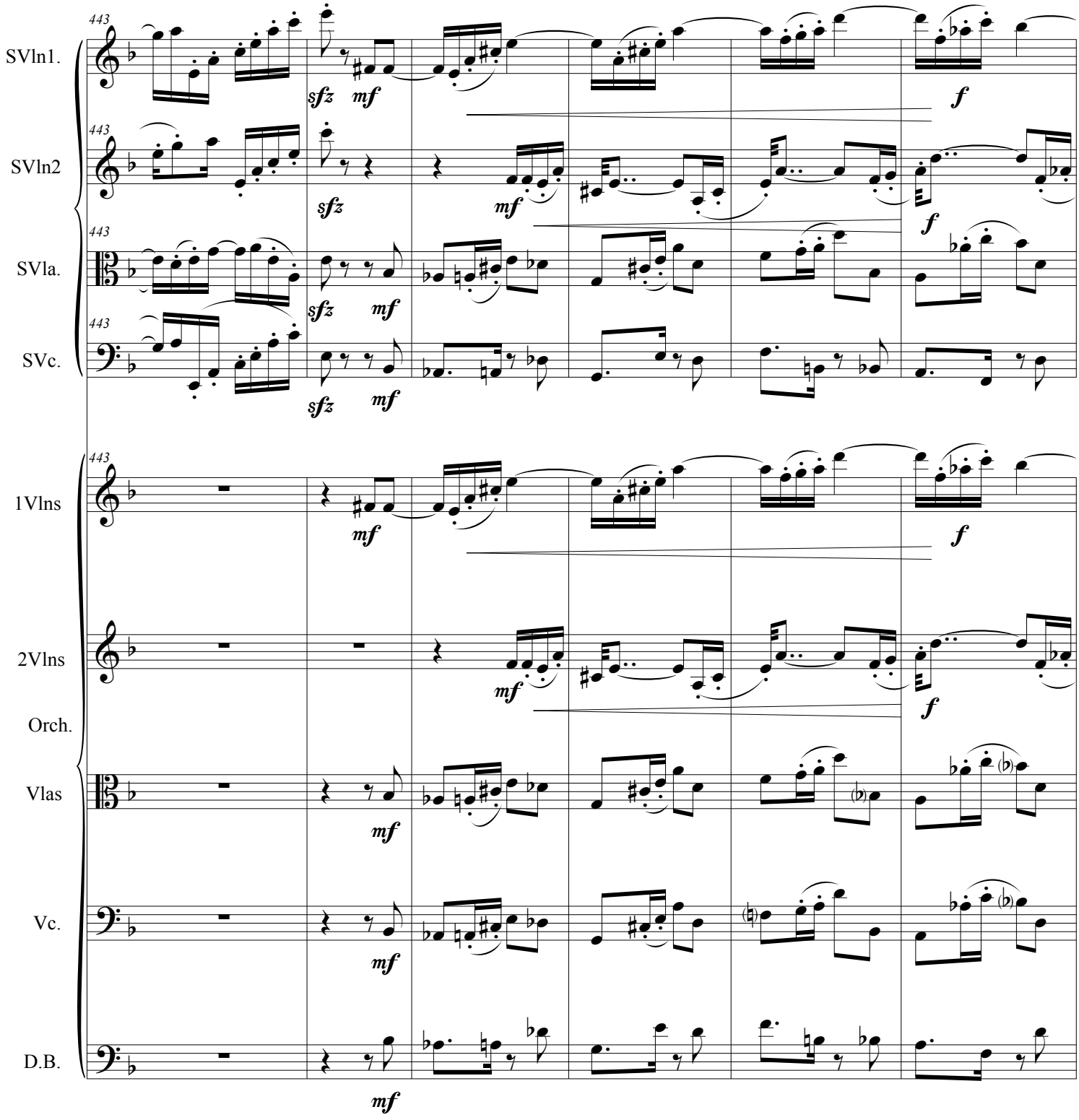

5
404
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
Vlas
Orch.
Vc.
D.B.
pf pf pf p fp f mp f

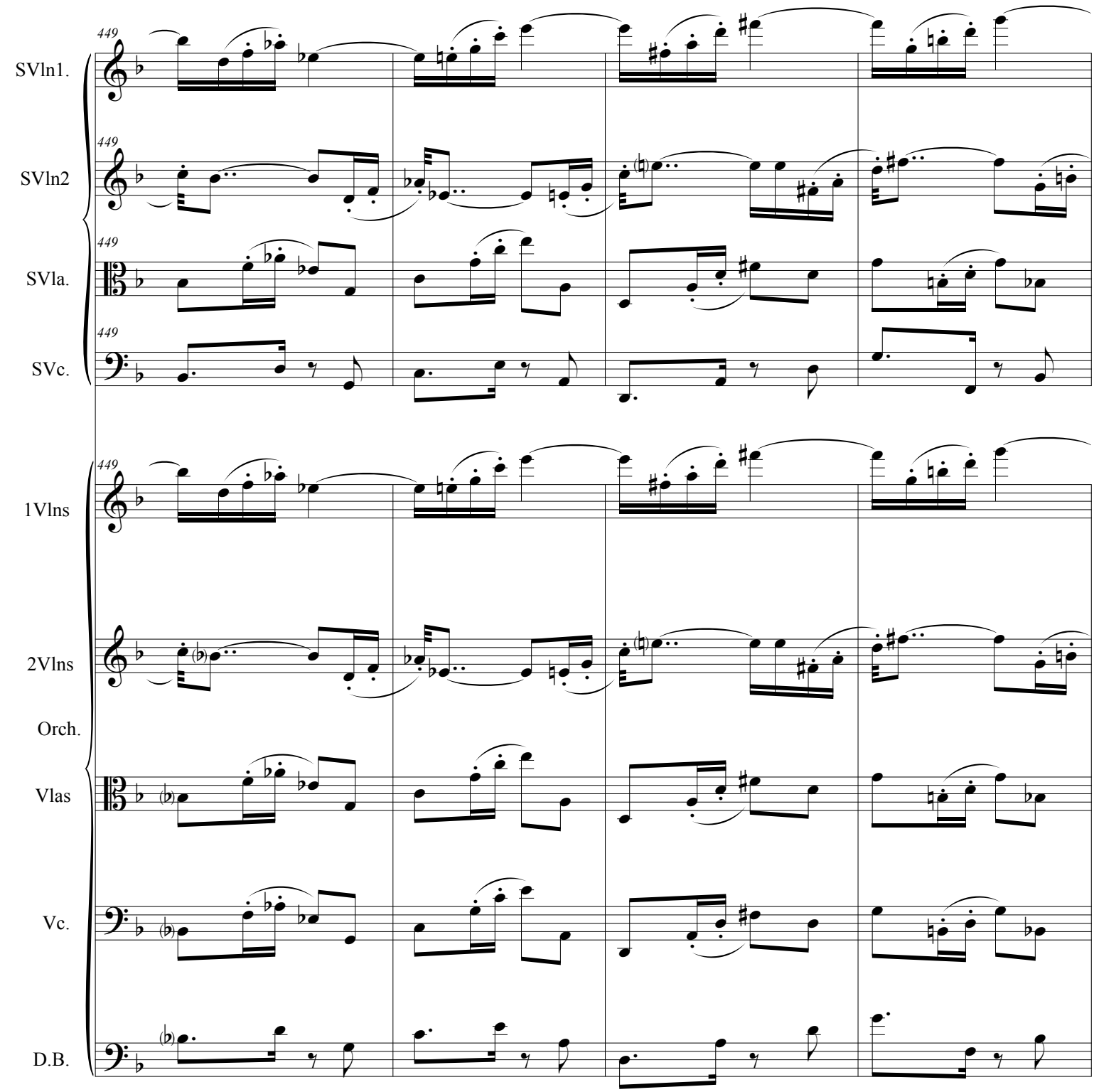

412
SVln1.
412
SVln2
412
SVla.
412
SVc.
fp
fp
2Vlns
p
mf
Vlas
Orch.
p
mf
Vc.
p
mf
arco
D.B.
p
mf
Fin

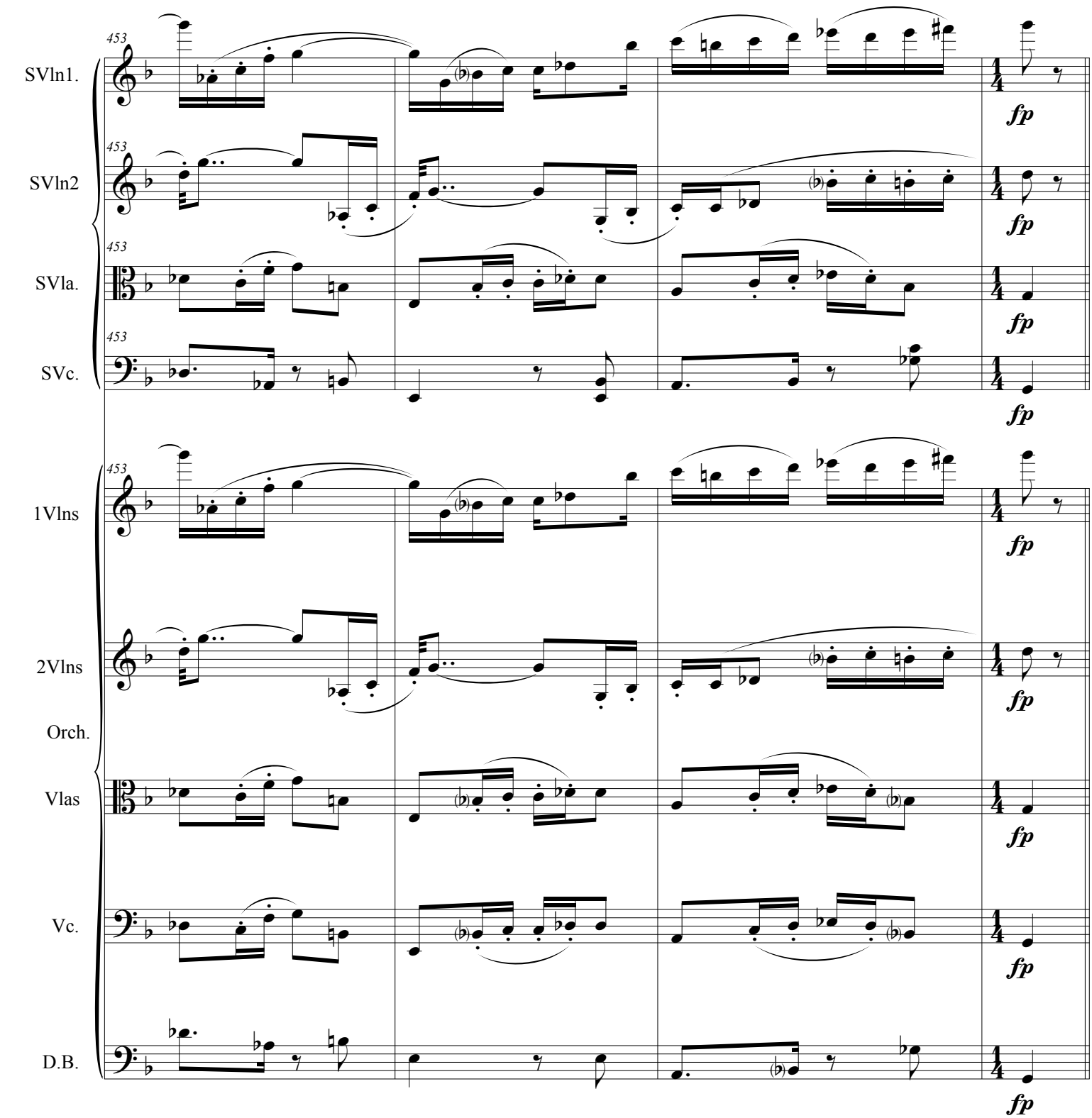

418
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
mf
f
p
dolce

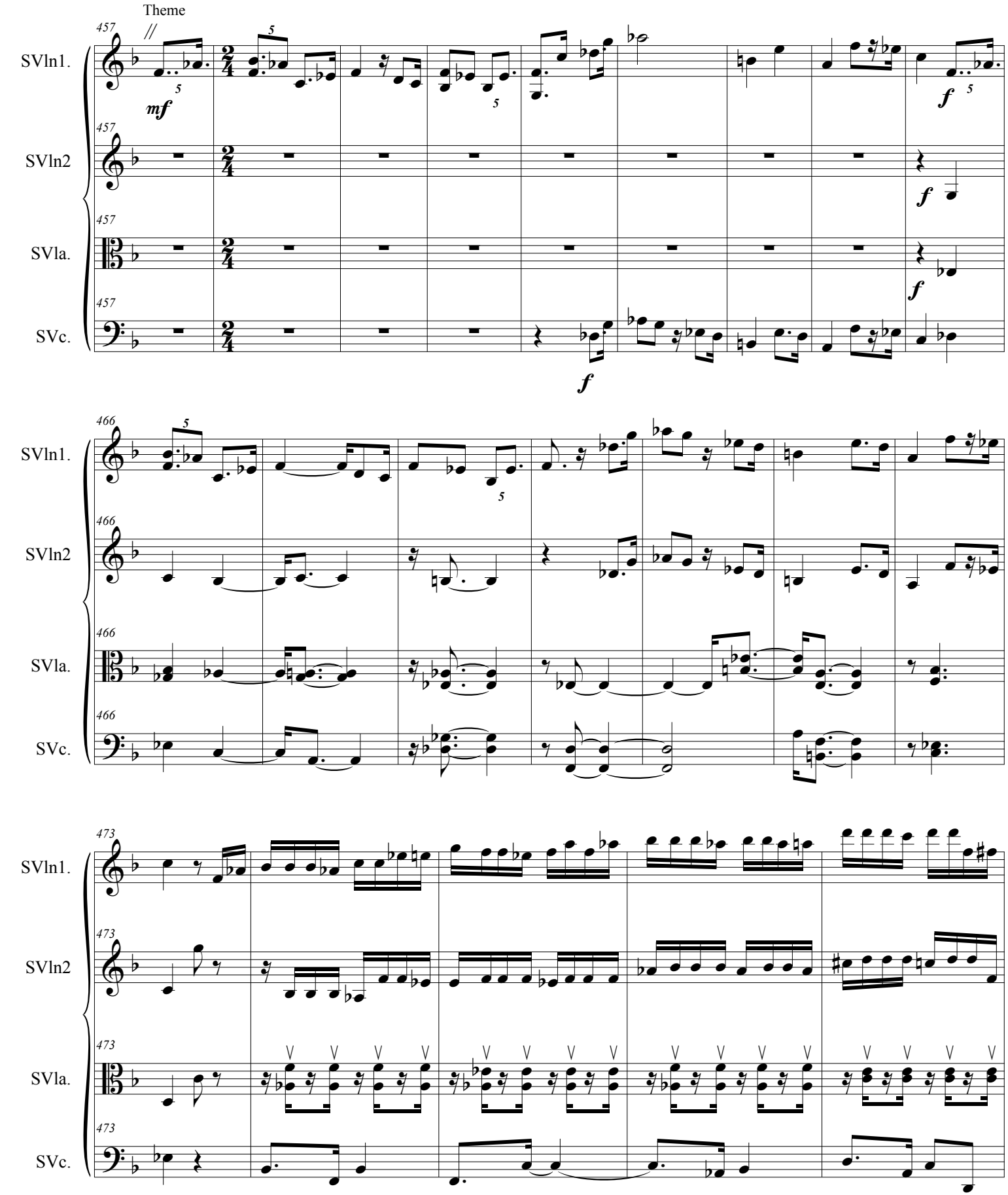

6
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
428
dolce
mp
f

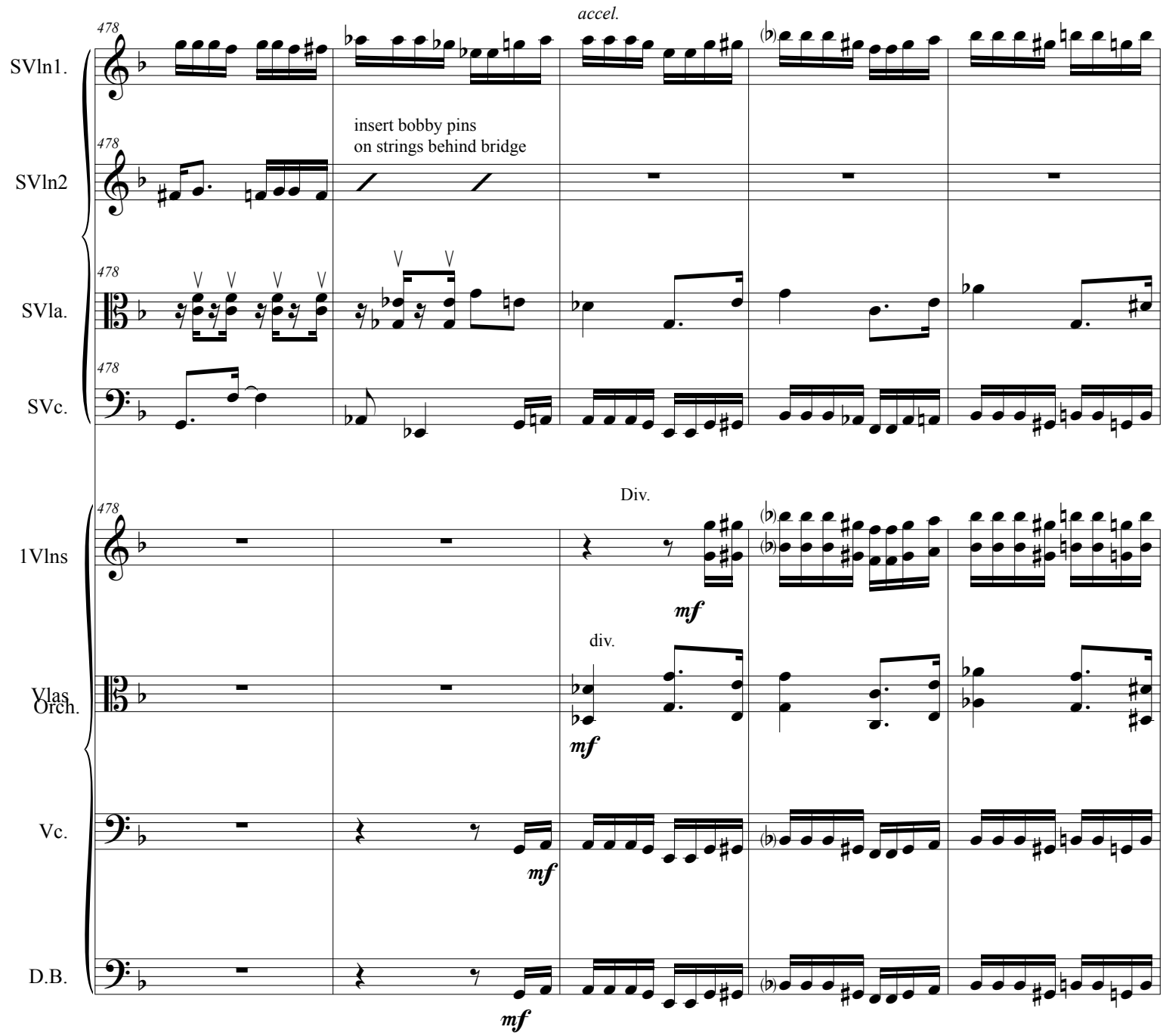

433
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
sfz
438
f

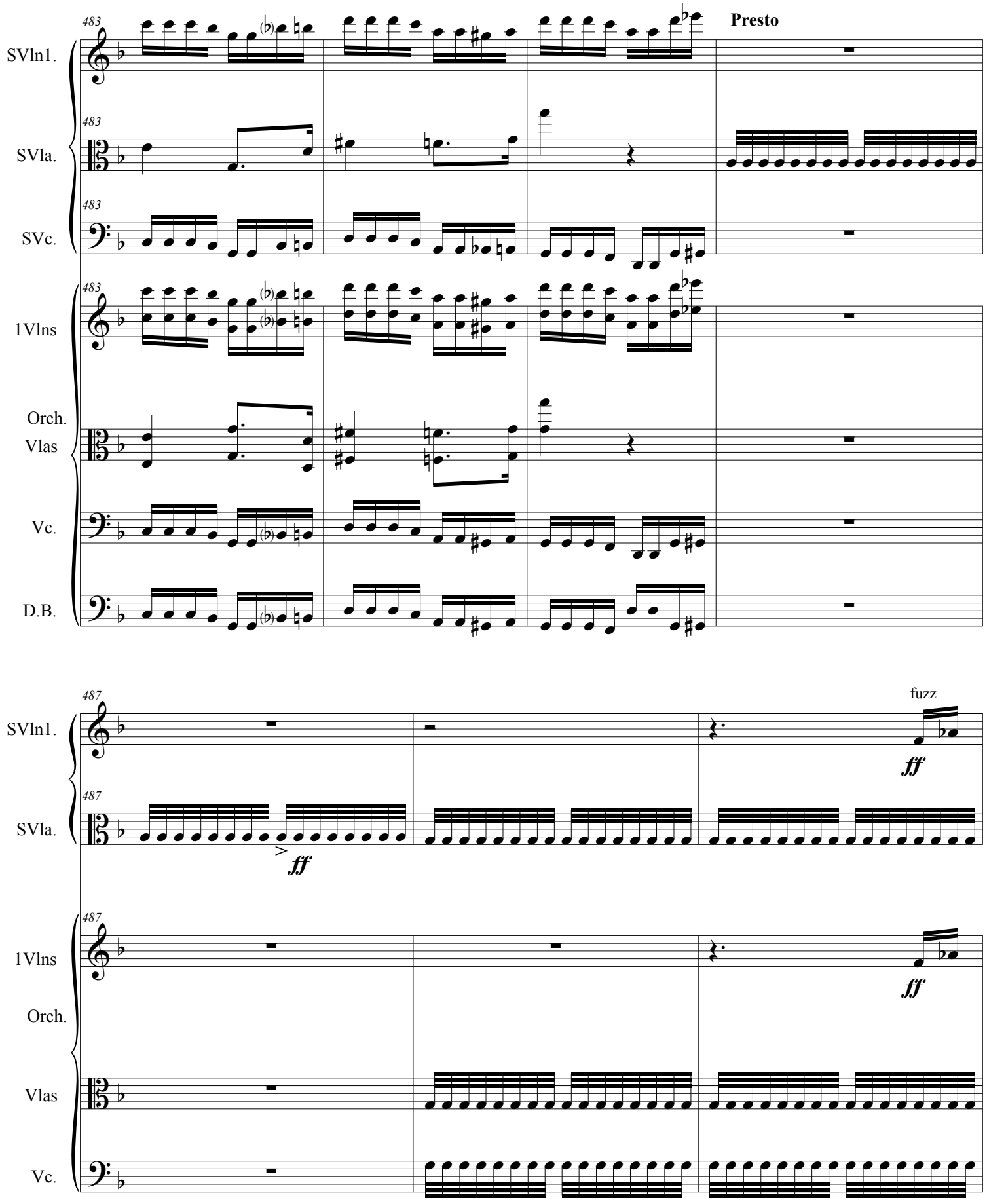

443
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
sfz
mf
f

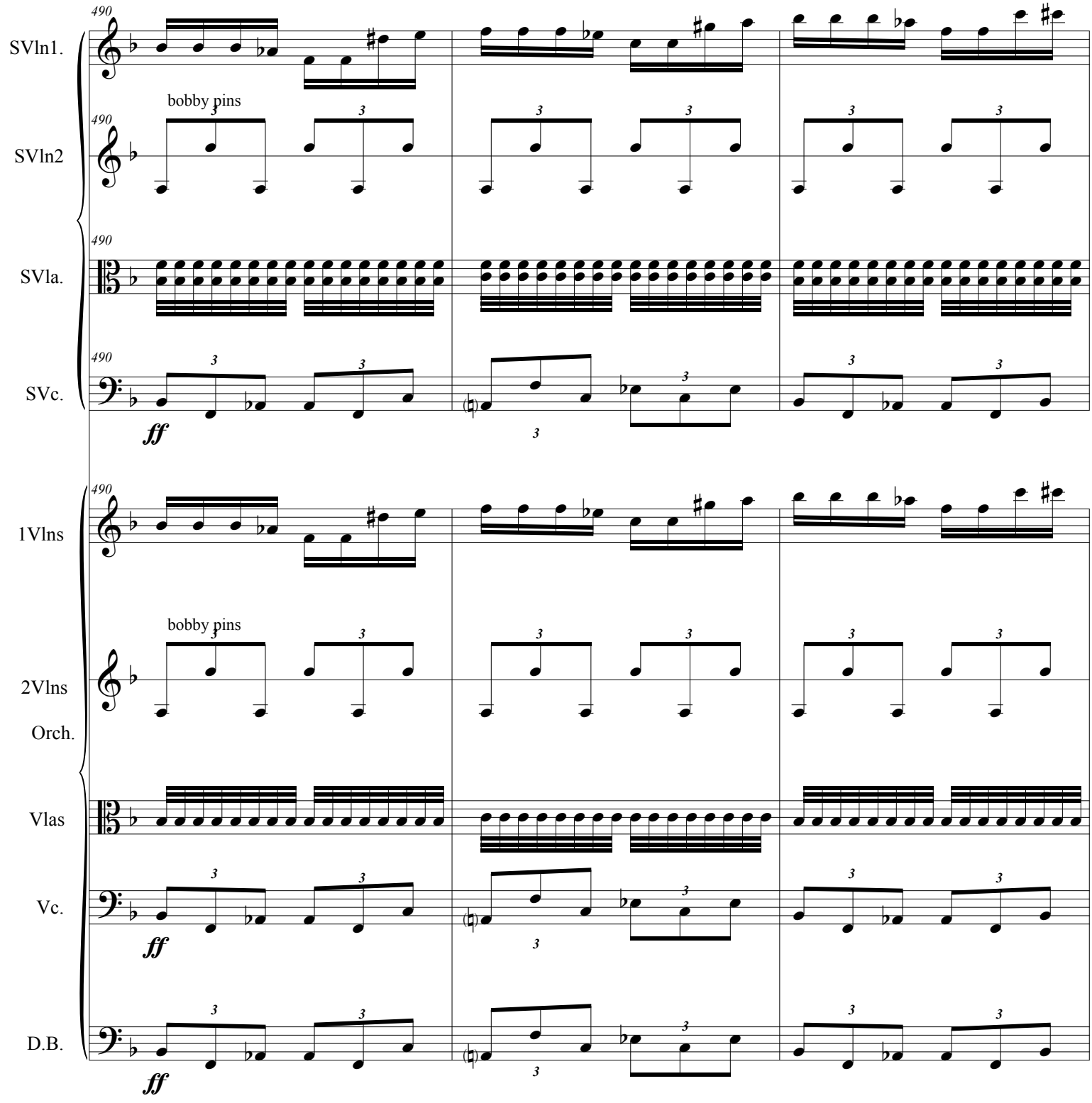

449
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.

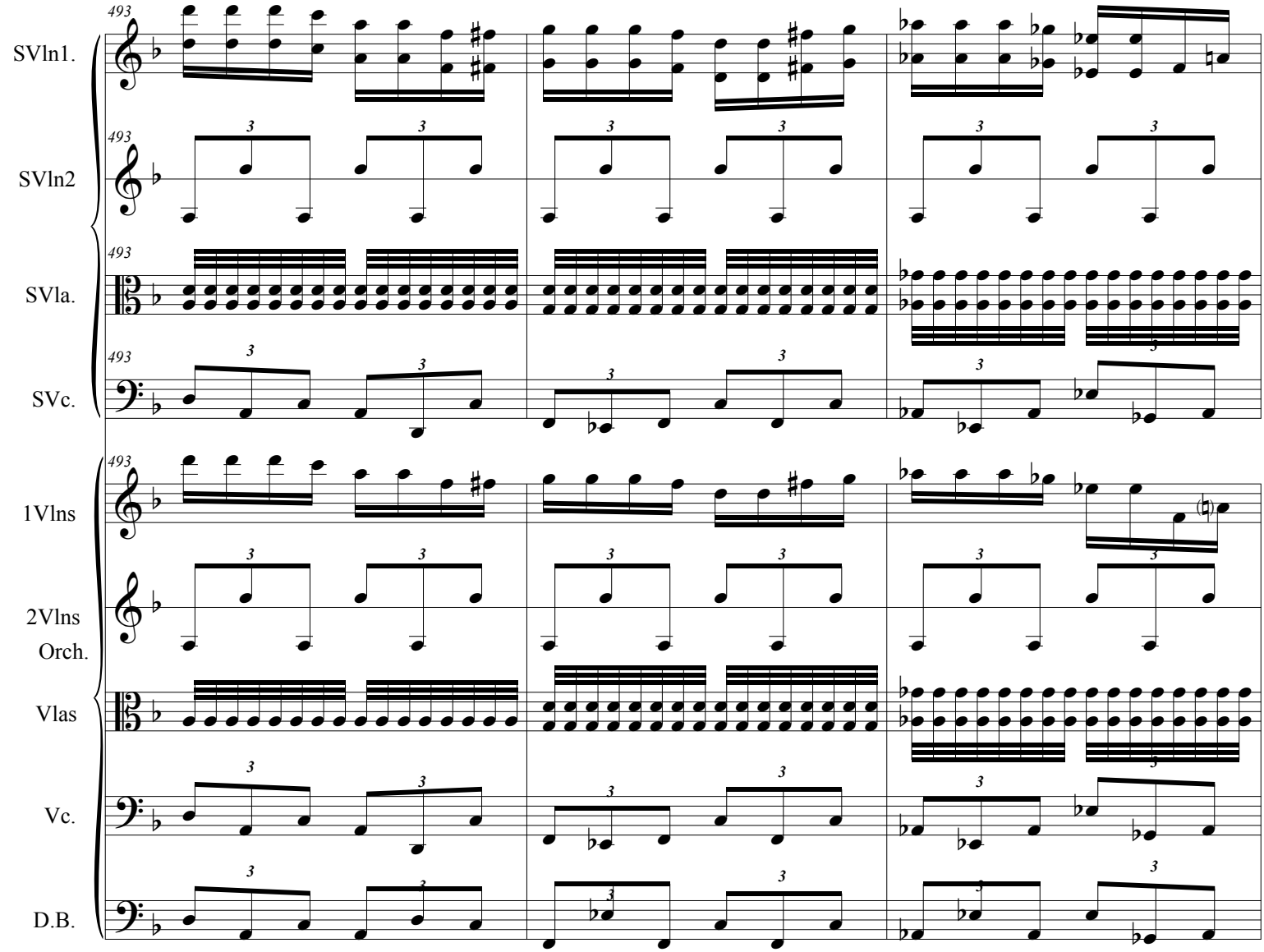

453
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
fp

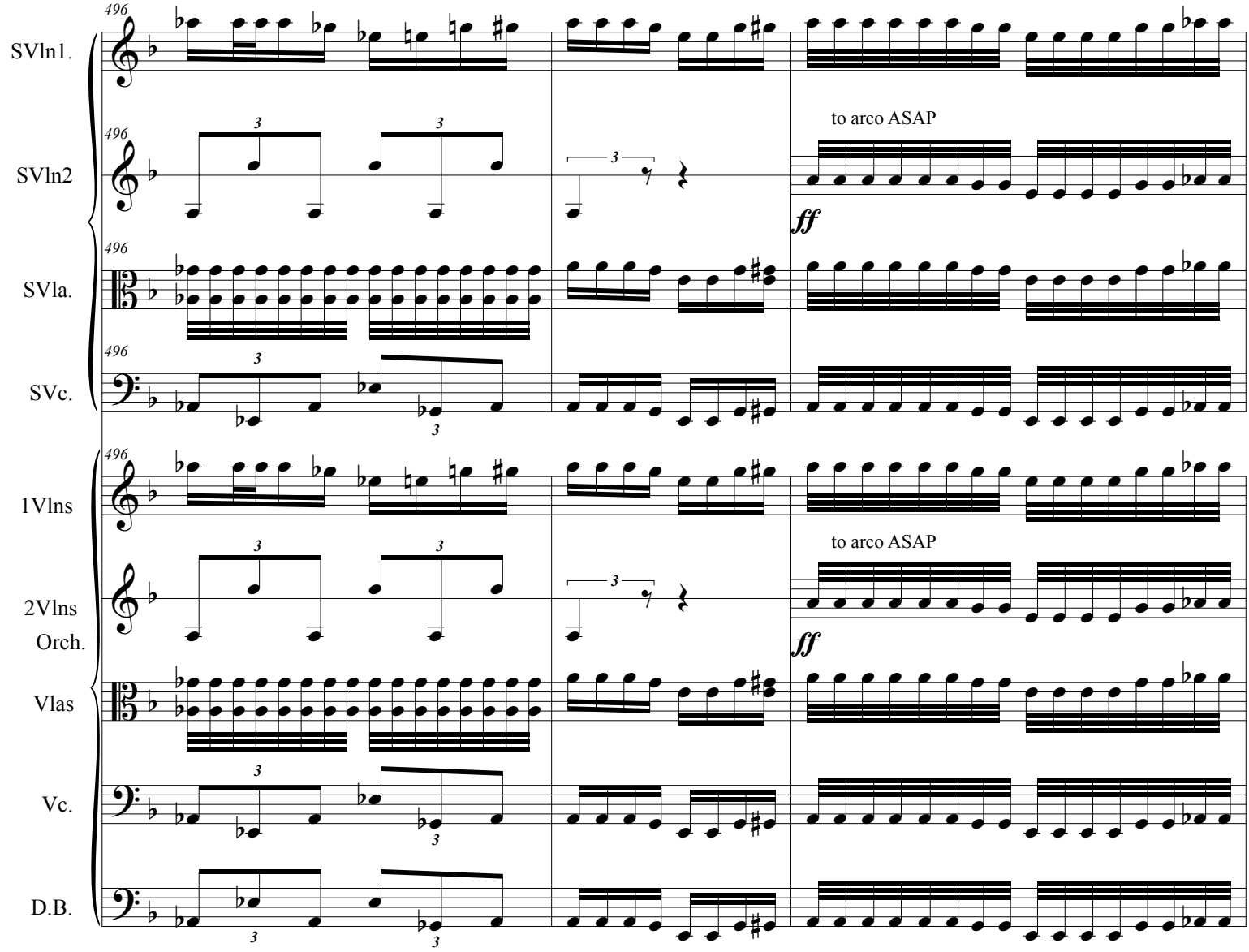

Theme
457
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
mf
f
466
473

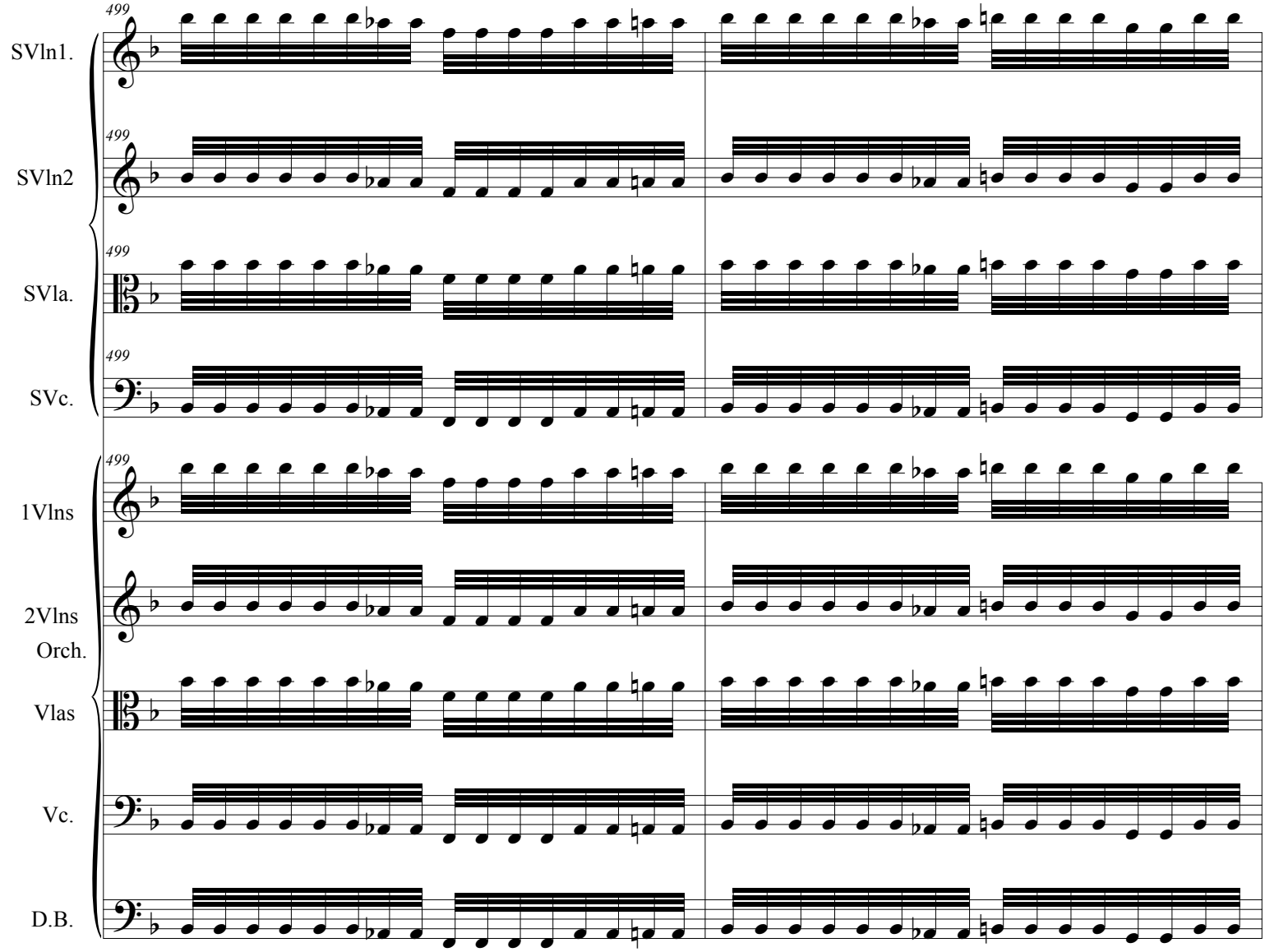

accel.
478
SVln1.
SVln2
insert bobby pins
on strings behind bridge
SVla.
SVc.
Div.
1Vlns
mf
div.
Vlas
Orch.
Vc.
D.B.

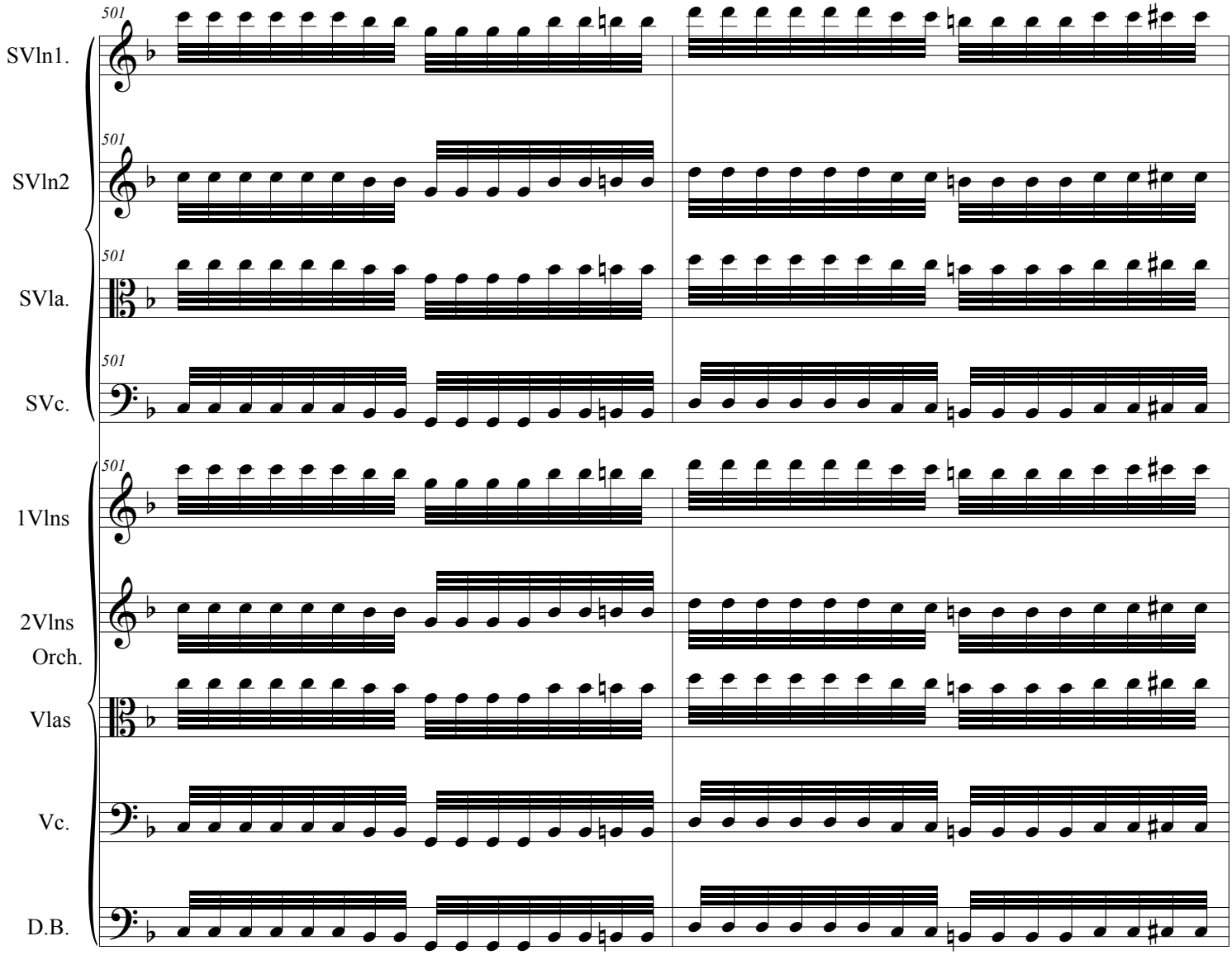

483
Presto
SVln1.
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
487
fuzz
ff
SVln1.
SVla.
1Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.

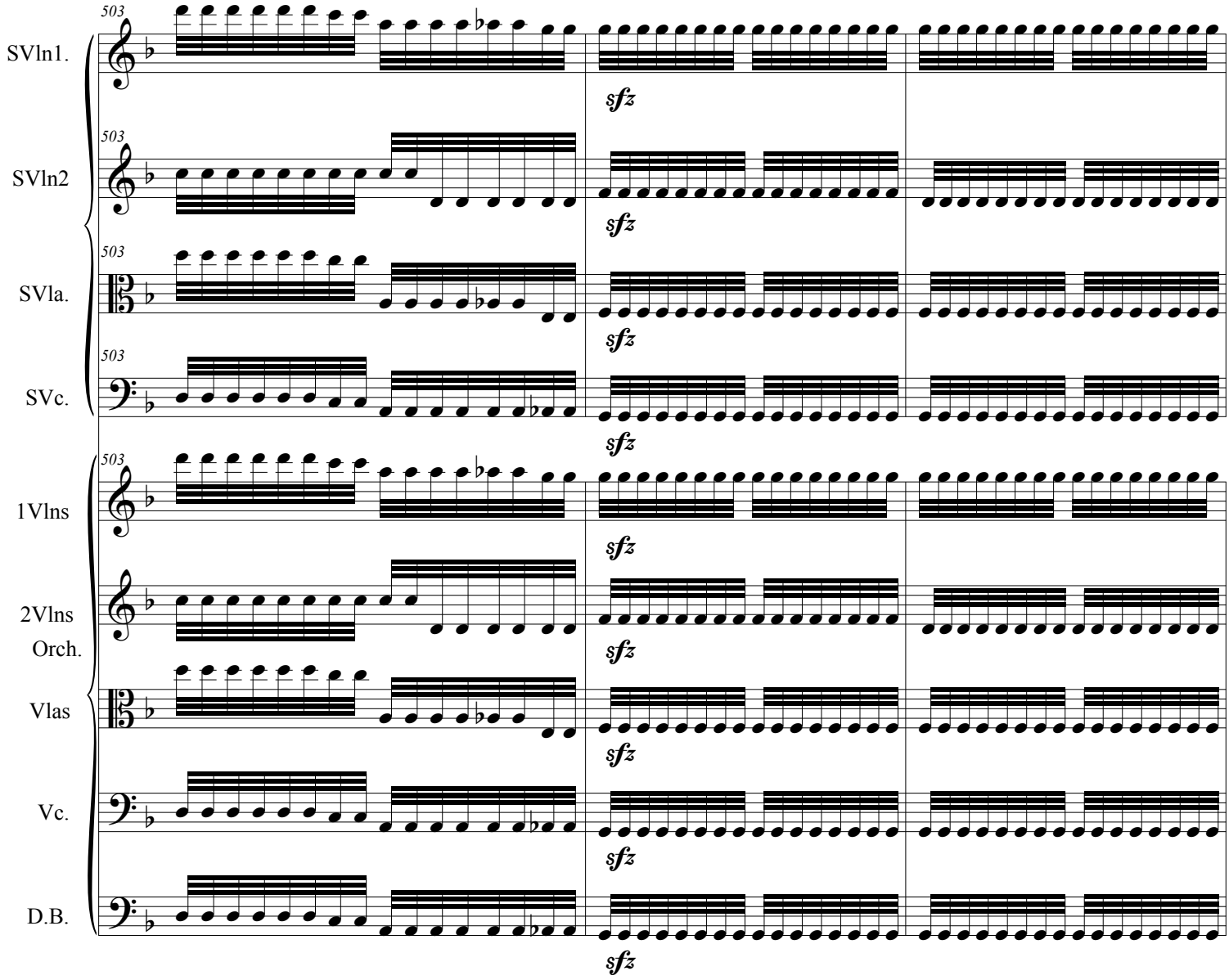

490
SVln1.
bobby pins
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
ff
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.

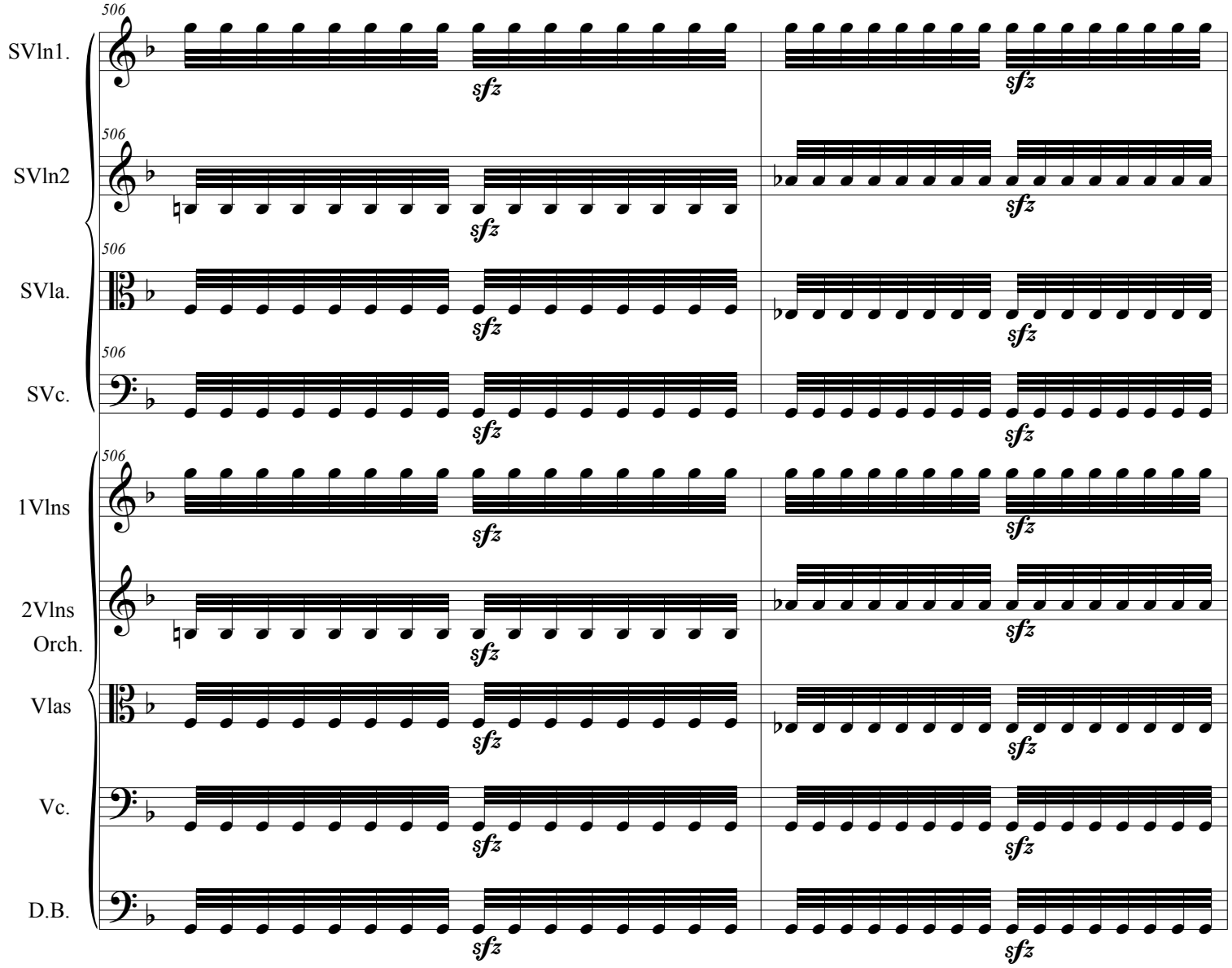

493
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.

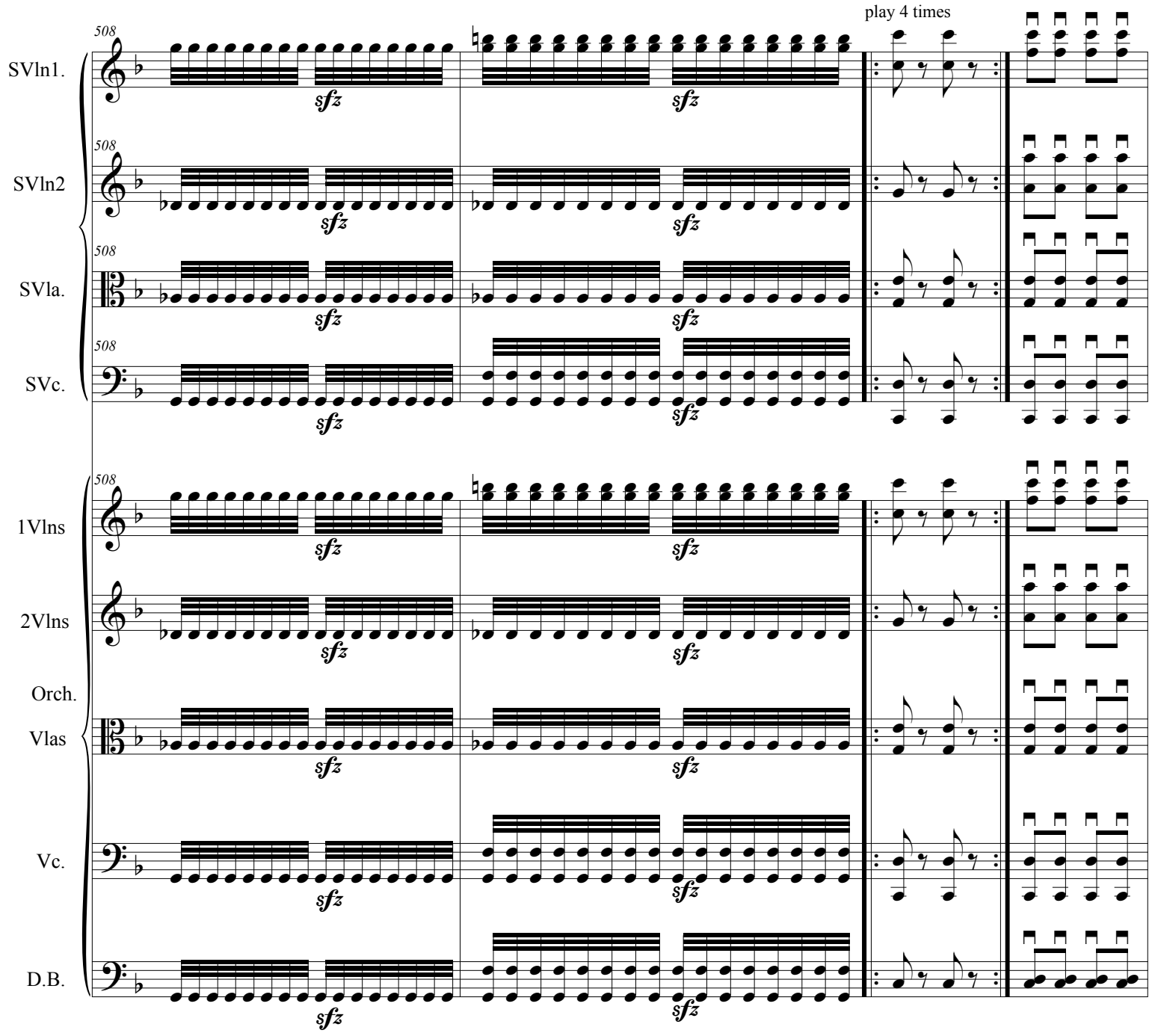

SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
496
to arco ASAP
ff

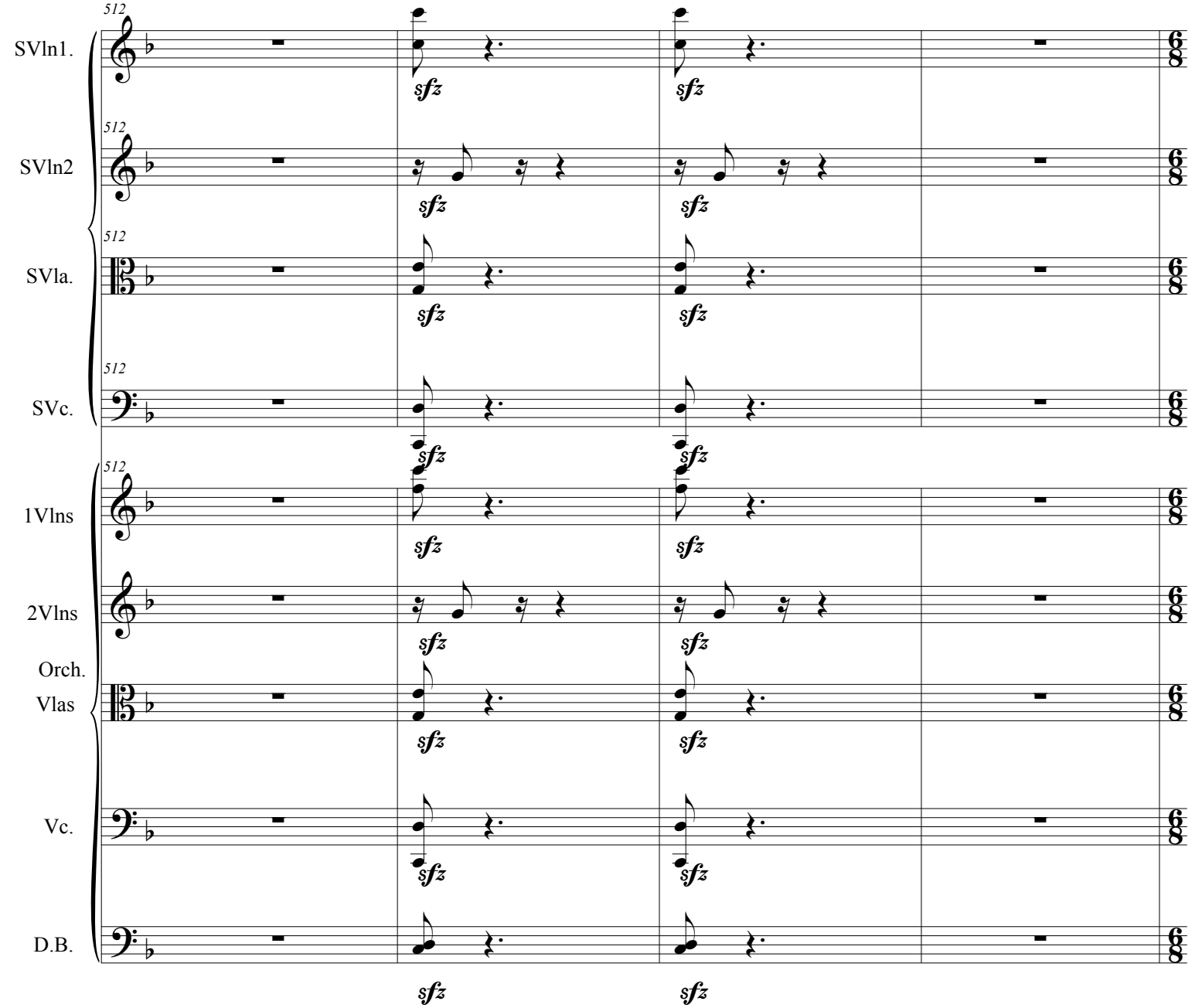

499
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.

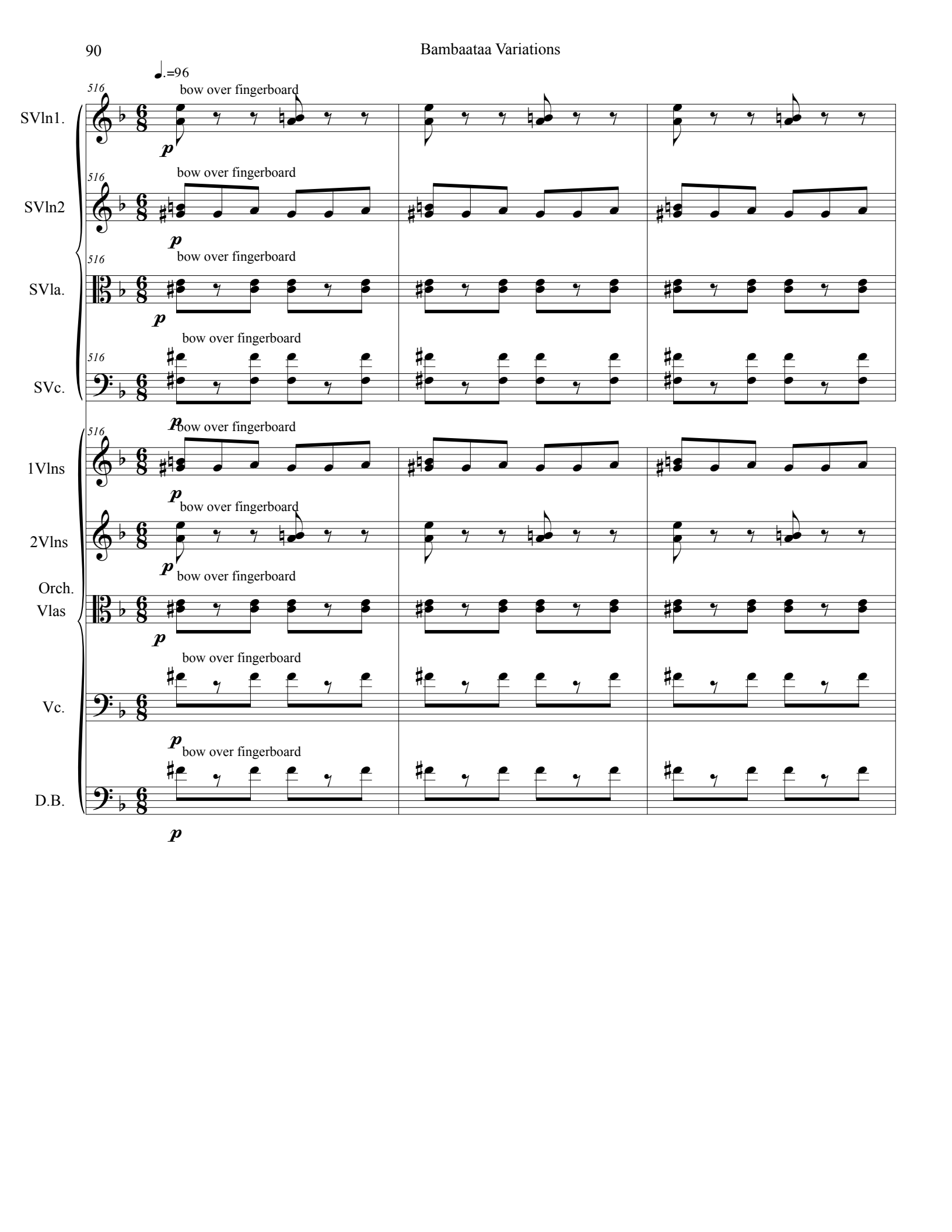

501
SVln1.
501
SVln2
501
SVla.
501
SVc.
501
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.

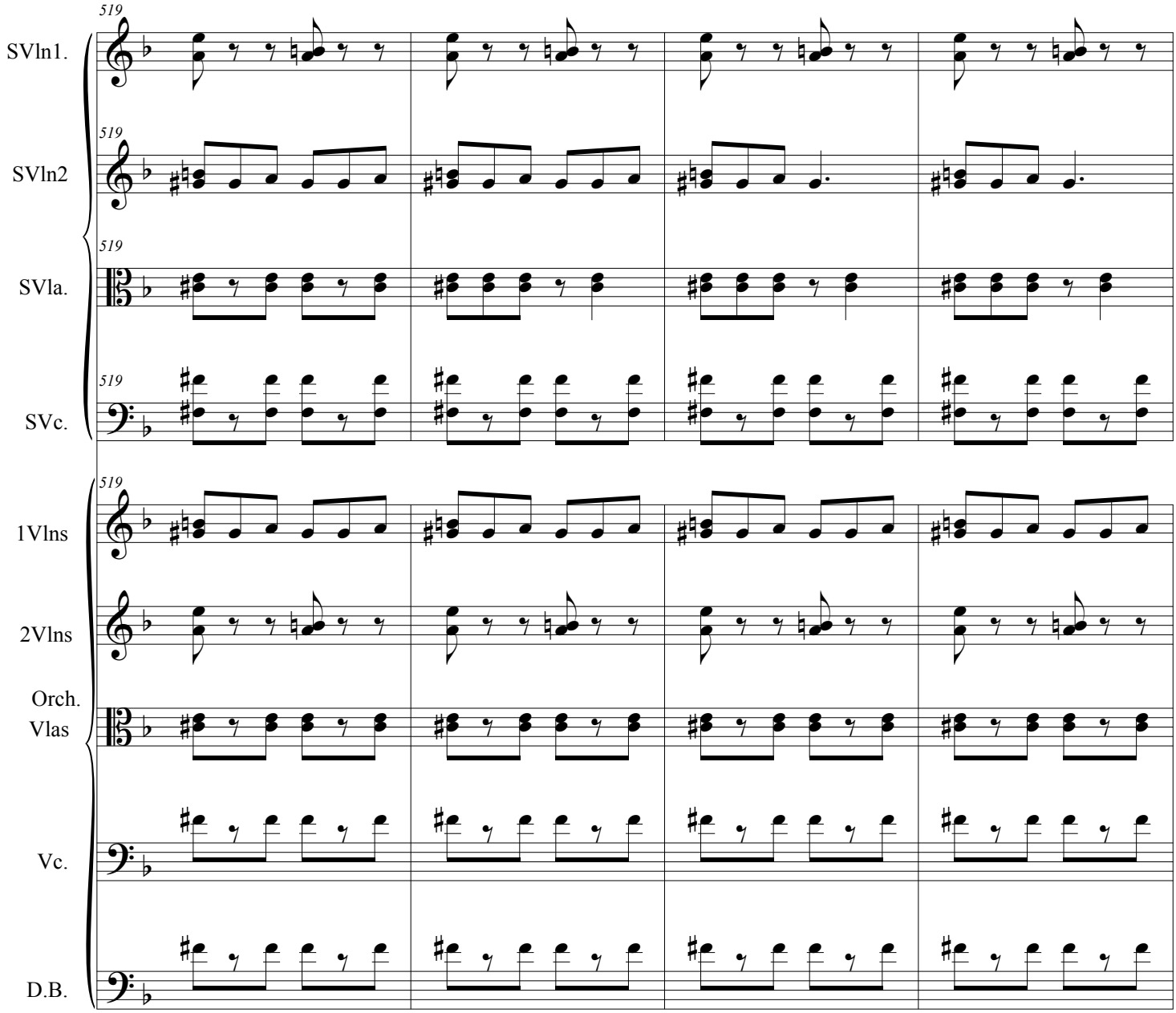

503
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
sfz


506
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
sfz

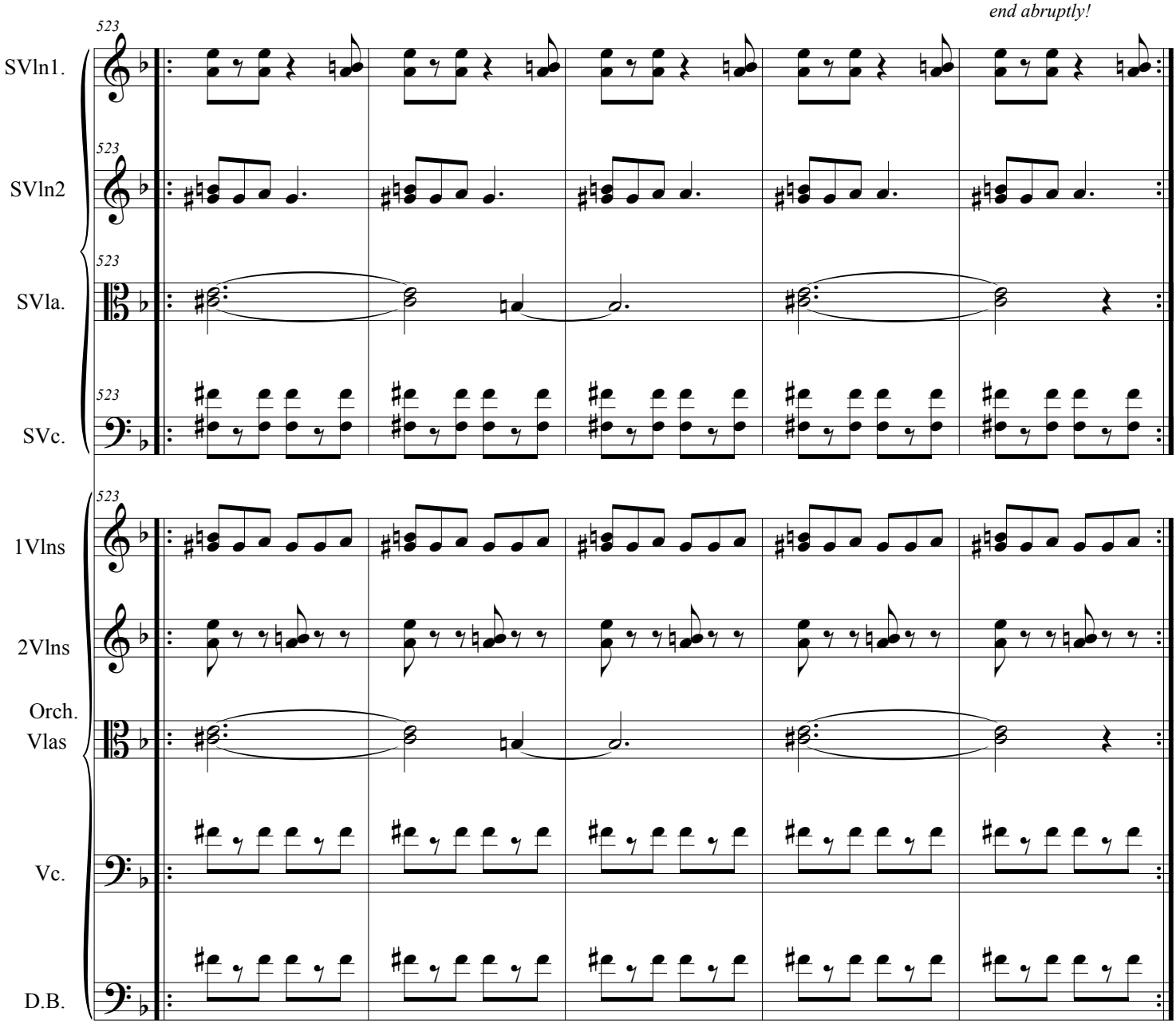

play 4 times
508
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
sfz


512
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
sfz
6/8


♩.=96
516
bow over fingerboard
SVln1.
SVln2
SVla.
SVc.
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.
p


519
SVln1.
519
SVln2
519
SVla.
519
SVc.
519
1Vlns
2Vlns
Orch.
Vlas
Vc.
D.B.

end abruptly!



Fin