MERTON MUSIC

B E N G T S S O N

STRING QUINTET
in A minor
for

2 Violins, 2 Violas and Violoncello

SCORE

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5046

Gustaf Bengtsson, String Quintet A minor

Gustaf Adolf Tiburtius Bengtsson (1886-1965)

Gustaf Bengtsson was born in Vadstena, where his father and grandfather played the organ in the Monastery Church. In the family chamber music was important and the members were even able to form a string quartet among themselves. Tradition tells that all the Haydn quartets were highly appreciated and some were learned by heart.

Studies in Stockholm and abroad
In 1904 Bengtsson moved to the capital of Sweden and began studies at the Royal Academy of Music. He graduated with degrees in organ playing 1906, church singer 1909 and music teaching 1916. Parallel to these studies at the academy, he also started private studies with Johan Lindegren, and it is probably from his teaching Bengtsson found inspiration to write the string quintet. The years 1910-12 were spent abroad. Bengtsson went to Berlin (studies with Paul Juon), Paris and Leipzig (studies with Hugo Riemann).

The friends in the royal opera orchestra
After doing his military service in the years 1906-07, Bengtsson entered a temporary position as violinist in the Royal Opera Orchestra. Together with friends in this orchestra the quintet was tried out for the first time. On the first page of the score there is written:

Quintetto
for
2 violins, 2 violas and cello
by
Gustaf Bengtsson, 1907
played for the first time 1907 by an ensemble from The Royal Opera Orchestra.
(Carlborg, Enstedt, Larsén, the Composer and Lindgren).

At least the slow movement has been performed in recent times, but there are no notes of any modern performance of the whole work.

In a comment the composer's daughter says: My father revised the score in his last years. The fact that the work never was published indicates that he didn't find the music good enough for publishing. However, he decided to give the work a thorough revision, and that must have meant that he found certain qualities in this quintet. (The third symphony was also revised at the same time.)

Three young composers
After the studies abroad Bengtsson was allowed with his fellow composers to conduct his own music in an extra concert with the Opera Orchestra. The two young colleagues were Kurt Atterberg and Oskar Lindberg. At this occasion the second symphony was performed.

Teaching
In 1910 Bengtsson took the post of organist in Motala church. These were good times and the Motala Quartet Singers under Bengtsson's baton became famous. After that he turned his attention to music teaching, first in Linköping, later in Karlstad and finally back in Linköping again where he 1949 became the first head of the new municipal school of music.

Composing
All his life Bengtsson kept contact with his native Vadstena and he bought a "composers lodge" across the bay of Vadstena. He stated: "I have always been interested in nature itself, and here around Nässja ... I have composed most of my music. To compose at the piano is nothing for me. The music must be ready inside your head; the theme, the exposition, development etc. and should only be written down. Here at the wonderful lake Vättern I have got all my inspiration and I have even tried to describe the lake and its atmosphere in my tone poem "[Lake] Vättern".

General comments to this edition

This is the first publication of Bengtsson's string quintet. It is a work of a talented young student composer in his early twenties.

Source
The score and parts have been made available by kind permission of the composer's family, namely his daughter Gunhild and his grandson Fredrik. The text of this commentary is based on a printout of an interview given shortly before the composer's 75th birthday and on the recollections of Magnus Tiburtius

Bengtsson, the composer's son, who recalled some conversations with his father regarding composition in general and the quintet in particular.

The composer's revisions

The score (S in comments below) was revised by the composer as late as 1964-65. This revised score was taken to represent the composer's considered intentions and was used as the basis of this edition. The parts (P in the comments below) are of an earlier date and are copies, presumably of the original parts. They are richer in comments and may include extra articulations added by the musicians while studying the piece. So far as the actual notes are concerned there are few differences between the sources

Articulations

The articulation differs extensively between score and parts, and between parts. There is even inconsistency between the exposition and the recapitulation in the first movement, which is written in sonata form. The same problem occurs in the ternary second movement, as well as the scherzo. In the last movement, a rondo, there are many places where semiquavers are sometimes slurred, sometimes dotted or sometimes both. Staccato and marcato markings may occur at the same time in different parts.

Dynamics

The composer appears often to have put dynamic markings in only one part when he intended them to apply to all parts.

Editing practice

A rather thorough editing has been done in order to make the material playable. That is, when playing homophonic passages, the same articulation has been adopted in all parts involved. A first play-through of this edition was undertaken at Sunds Folkhögskole, Inderöy, Norway, on July 2, 2003. The participants where Mats Bengtsson, Ulrika Lundgren, Göran Swedin, Sara Åsbrink and Krister Persson. A second play-through was undertaken in Vancouver, Canada by Peter Lang and his friends, later the same year.

Different revisions of this material

Score and parts
1st revision: Feb 2003. 2nd rev: July 2003. 3rd rev: March 2004. 4th rev: May 2004.
Detta förord / This preface
1st revision: Feb 2003. 2nd rev: Nov 2003. 3rd rev: Oct 2004.

Teckenförklaring / Legend

v = violins	S= score	Crotchet = quarter note
v1/2 = violin 1/2	P = part/parts	Semiquaver = 16th note
va1/2 = viola 1/2	B = bar	
vc = cello	Quaver = eighth note	

Editionskommentarer / Editorial notes

Movement I, Allegro moderato con spirito

	P	bar	Part of bar	comment
1.	all	5	3rd –4th beat	va2 and vc: legato (cf b113) chosen. va1: no legato (cf v1) chosen.
		5, 113	3rd –4th beat	va2 differs: b5 dotted crotchet+quaver, b113: two crotchets.
	va1	10	3rd beat	changed to G from F♯.
2.	all	11	1st beat	articulation changed in all P to ">" (In S only in v1)
3.	all	11	1st beat	S: "ff". P: v1 "f", v2/va2/vc "ffz", va1 "fz" altered in all parts to "ffz"
4.	all	11	1st 16th/2nd beat	S: v1/va2/vc: "f", added f in v2/va1
5.	all	11-13		P: crescendo hairpins replaced with "cresc".
6.	vc	13		espressivo in P not in S
7.	v/va	13-14		v1: "< >" added. v2/va: cresc hairpins moved to the end of b14
8.	vc	14		"< >" added
9.	va2, vc	15	1st beat	suggestion: ">" added (cf v1, v2 and va1)
10.	v	16-17		suggestion: v: "<>" added.
11.	v2	17	1st beat	suggestion: v2: added tenuto (cf v1)
12.	v2/vc		last 3 notes	suggestion: v2: added marcato (cf v1)
			3rd beat	va2: added "f"
13.	vc	17		suggestion: "< f >" added
14.	all	25		diminuendo extends over last two crotchets.
15.	v1/va2	38, 136		See b136.
16.	v2/va1	40, 138	3rd –4th beat	rhytm differs P: v2: D♭-E♭-D♭ (syncope) va1: dotted crotchet E♭ + quaverE♭. Cf b138 suggestion: might be better change va1: E♭-G♭-E♭ (as in b138).
17.	va1/vc	45	1st beat	va1 and vc playing 8va. vc: In S 1st note changed to E.
18.	v2/va1	47	last note	suggestion: va1 G♯ changed to G. Cf v2 already G

19.	all	47		suggestion: "a tempo" added, cf P
20.	all	48		suggestion: "cresc e poco string" added. (P are differing.)
21.	v2/vc	48		replaced "string e cresc" -> cresc and "poco rit" above syst.
22.	va1	51	3rd beat	added ">" (cf. b53).
23.	v/va1	56 II		second ending, suggestion: "fz" in all P.
24.	v1, va2	57I-58I		first ending, different notations in P. The composer has in ink put "poco largamente"and in lead pencil "A tempo" from last beat of b58I
25.	v2	57II	2nd beat	second ending, suggestion: changed A to A♭ (cf v1 3rd beat)
26.	va2/vc	62	3rd beat	suggestion: a second "f" omitted
27.	vc	64		added cresc hairpin
28.	v1	65-66		crescendo-diminuendo (other P no change of dynamics)
29.	vc	66	all bar	suggestion: crescendo-diminuendo (cf v1 b65-66)
30.	vc	67	all bar	suggestion: crescendo-diminuendo
31.	va2	76		suggestion: fugue entry marcato (as in v/va1 before)
32.	vc	77		suggestion: fugue entry marcato (as in v/va1 before)
33.	va1	82	1st two quavers	suggestion: added legato, cf v1
34.	v1	93	last beat	added # on thrill (G♯).
35.	v2	99	2nd note	">" deleted (already erased by composer in other parts).
36.	va1	98		suggestion: "p" added, spiccato dots added
37.	va1	100	3rd beat	suggestion: added ">", marcato on last four notes
38.	all	101		added "a tempo" - only mentioned in vc
39.	all	104		suggestion: added "mf crescendo" in all P
40.	all	105		suggestion: "f" in all P
41.	va2, vc	110		suggestion: "f" added
42.		113		See b5.
43.	all	114		suggestion: dim hairpin in all P (S: only dim in v1/2)
44.	va2/vc	117-118		suggestion: added cresc hairpin (cf v/va1)
45.	va1	118	3rd beat	different versions: here: G, in b10: F♯.
46.	v2/va2	120	last beat	suggestion: staccato dots (as v1/vc)
47.	va1	127	2nd but last 8th	changed to D♯ (from D as it says in P)
48.	va1	128	1st quaver	Should it be D♯? (following harmony in b127).
49.	va1	129		all other parts "p", va1: "pp" explicitly written in S
50.	va1	129, 130	last notes	changed to E (from E♯ as it says in P)
51.	v2	132		suggestion: "p" (cf b129 and v1 b130).
52.	v1/va2	136		portamento added as indicated in va2 (P & S differs). Cf b38: legato
53.	v2	147-148	crotchets	suggestion: same articulation as v1 (staccato on crotchets)

Movement II, Andante sostenuto

	P	bar	Part of bar	comment
54.	va2	9	1st beat	mf added (as already in all the other P)
55.	va2	18	3rd beat	suggestion: tenuto-signs on last three notes in bar (v2 b17)
56.	vc	19	3rd beat	suggestion: tenuto-signs on last three notes in bar (v2 b17)
57.	all	23		Added "p" in all P. (S: va1/2, vc: "p", P: va1 "p".)
58.	vc	23-24		added same articulation as in vc b18-19
59.	va1	26	last beat	Suggestion: articulation changed from staccato to tenuto. (cf va2 b18)
60.	v1, va2	27		"molto dim" added
61.	v1/2,va1	28		S: violins "mf", va1 "pp". P: "mf" (the latter chosen)
62.	va2, vc	29		"mf" added.
63.	v2	32	last beat	legato added.
64.	all	34-37		suggestion: crescendo-"sf" in each bar suggested.
65.	all	45-47		b46: "molto cresc" added in all P. cresc hairpin in all P: (v1: b-45-47, the other parts: v46-47.)
66.	v1	57		cresc hairpin added
67.	va1/vc	59	last beat	va2: written "3" as triplet, but notation is 2 quavers. Changed to triplet: crotchet+quaver
68.	va2	81	1-2 beat	diminuendo hairpin added.
69.	va2	90	first beat	suggestion: ">" omitted
70.	vc	97		crescendo hairpin added
71.	vc	107		"p" added
72.	v/va	115-116		v2, va1/2: dim hairpin added

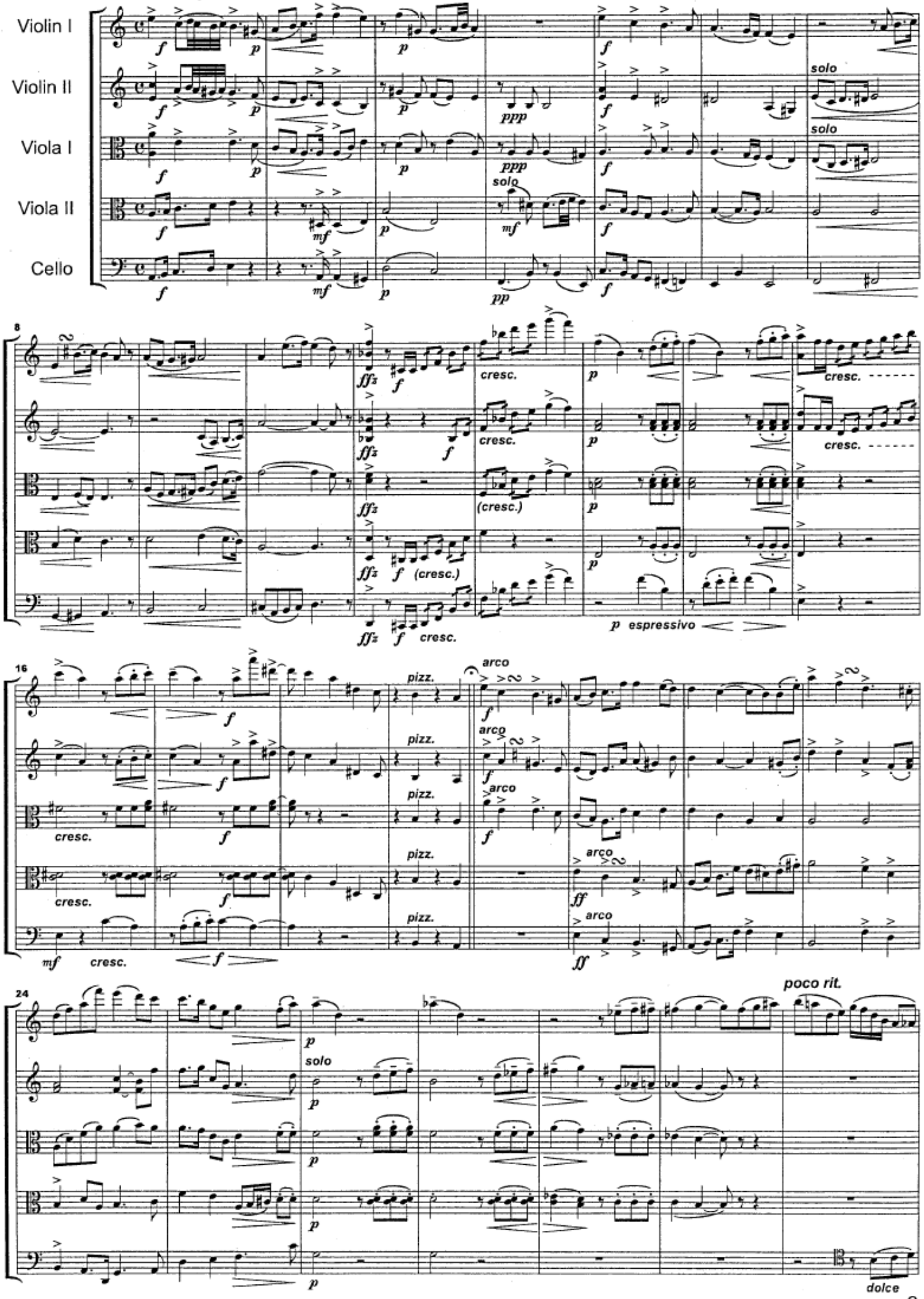
Movement III, Allegro energico

	P	bar	Part of bar	comment
73.	v2-vc	11-12		suggestion: cresc + dim hairpin as in v1 (there are indications of that in v2 and va1)
74.	v2	13		">" added
75.	all	17		crescendo hairpin adjusted to last through all bar in all parts.
76.	all	19		suggestion (P and S somewhat unclear) v1/vc: "f", the others: "fz"
77.	va2	21		suggestion: added ">" (cf v1 and va1 in their entries b19 and 20).
78.	all	24		suggestion: "p" in all P. The sources P and S differ.
79.	vc	38, 40		added staccato dot on 2nd note in each bar. Cf b34.
80.	va2	43		changed "f" to "ff"

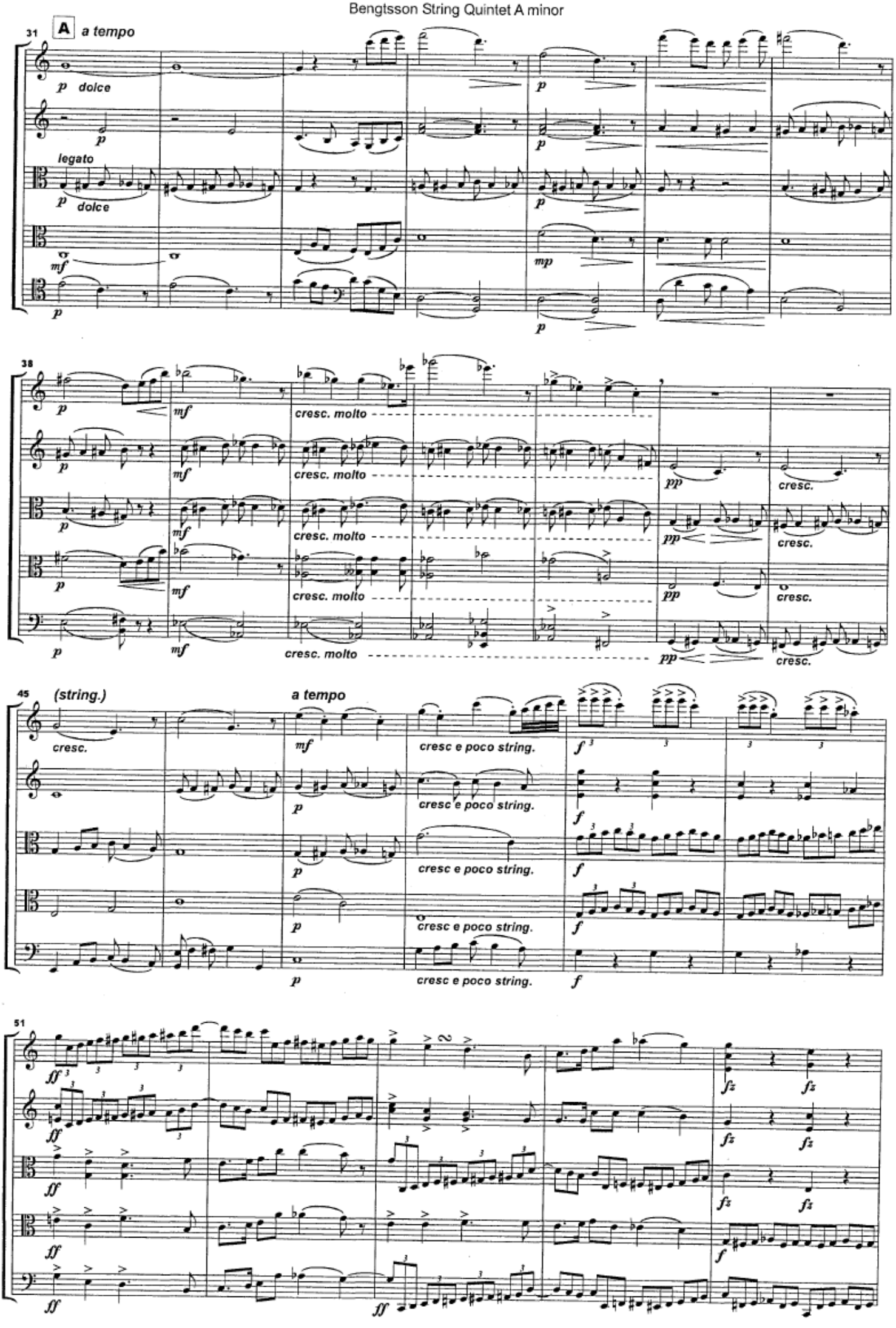
String Quintet / Stråkkvintett

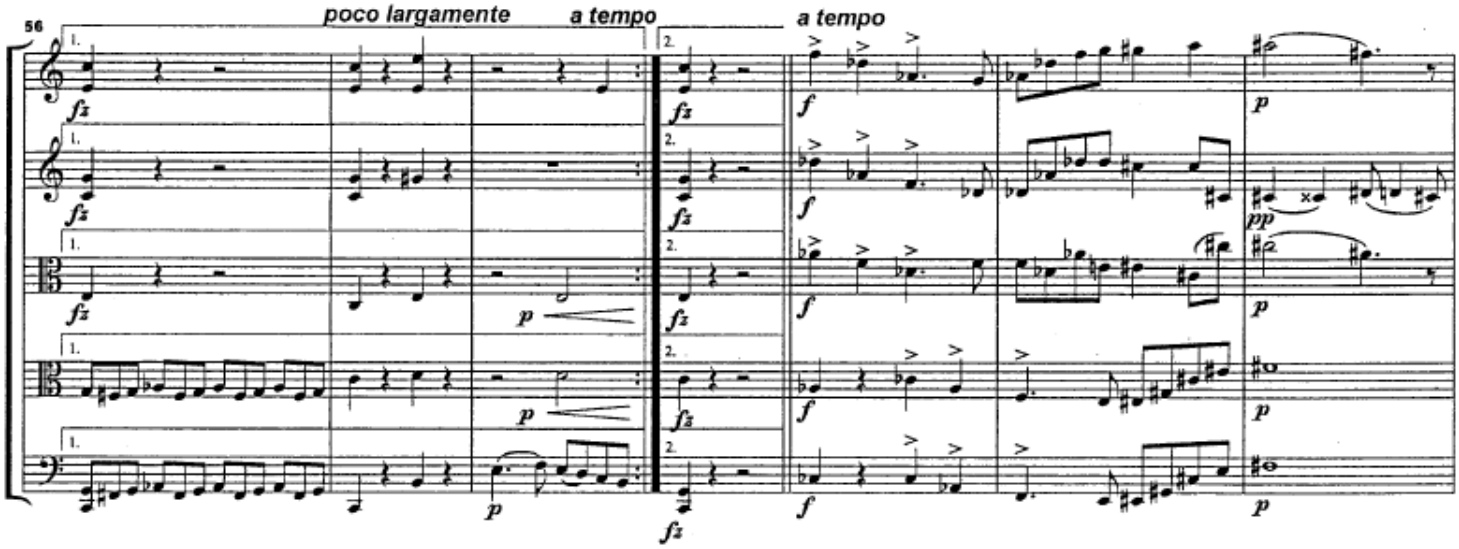
Gustaf Bengtsson
(1886-1965)

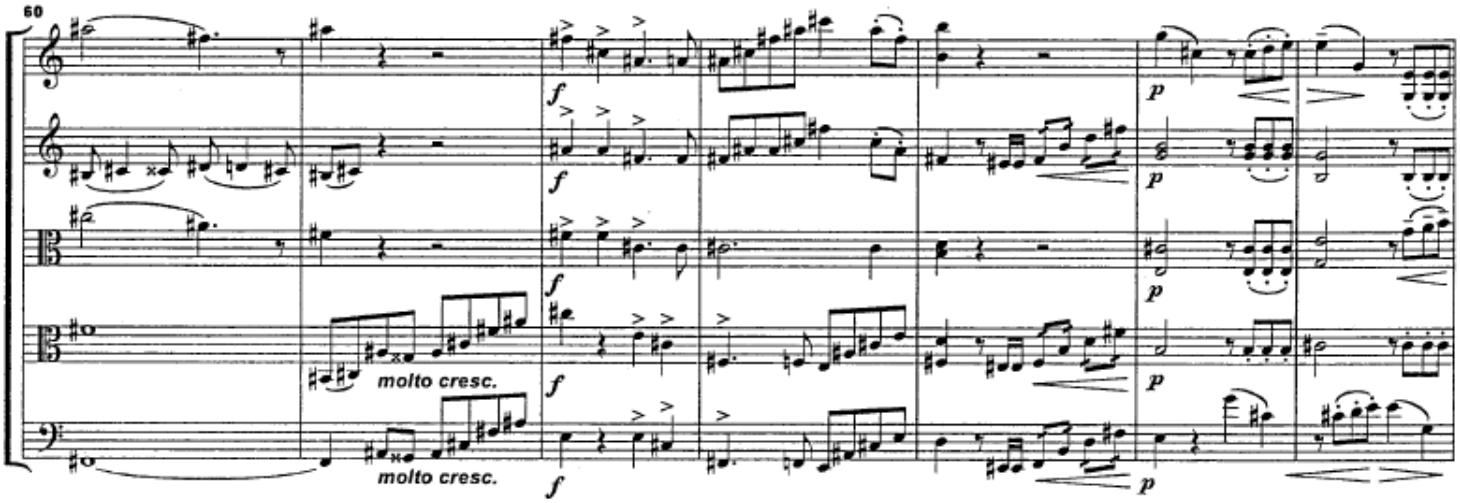
I. Allegro moderato con spirito

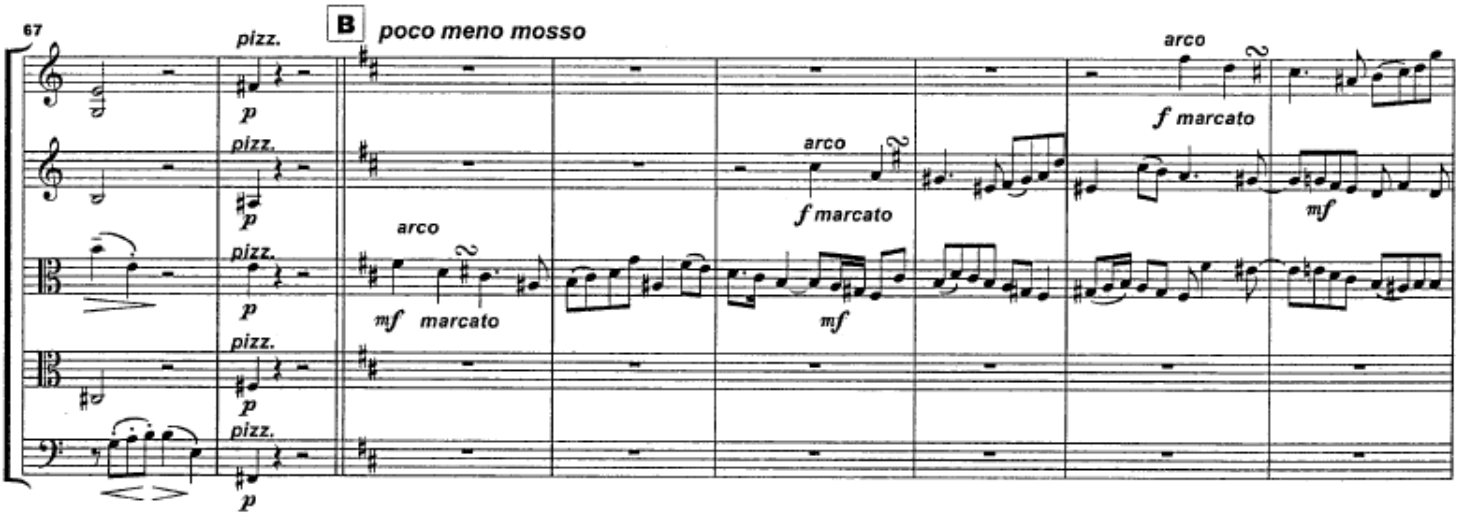


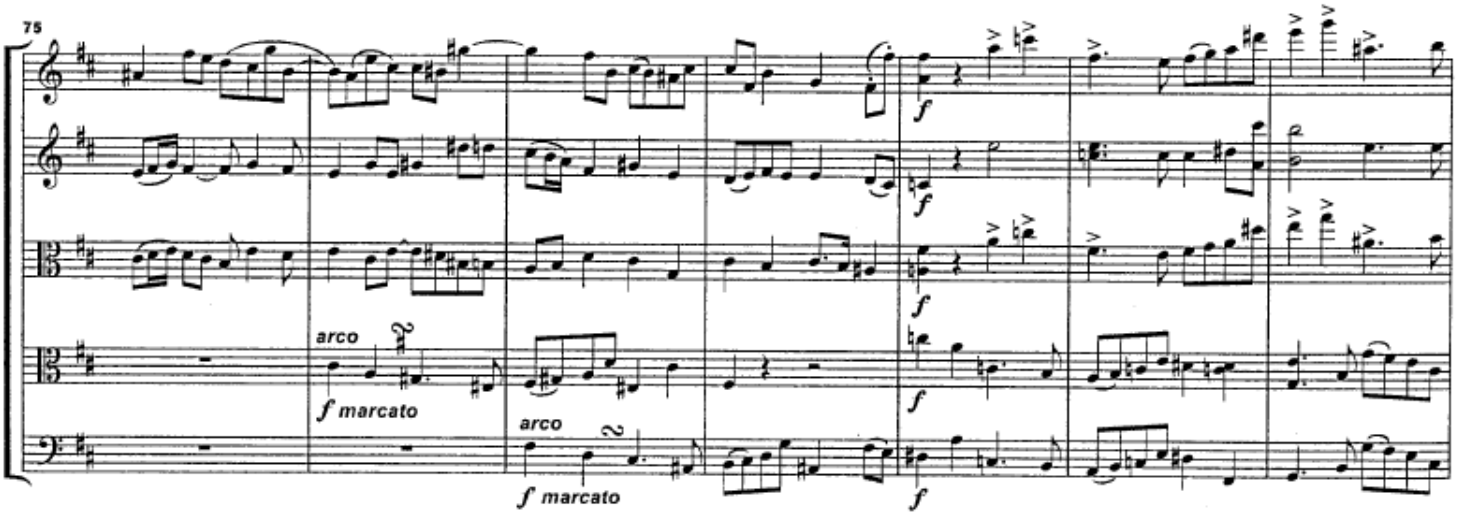
(c) Krister Persson 2003

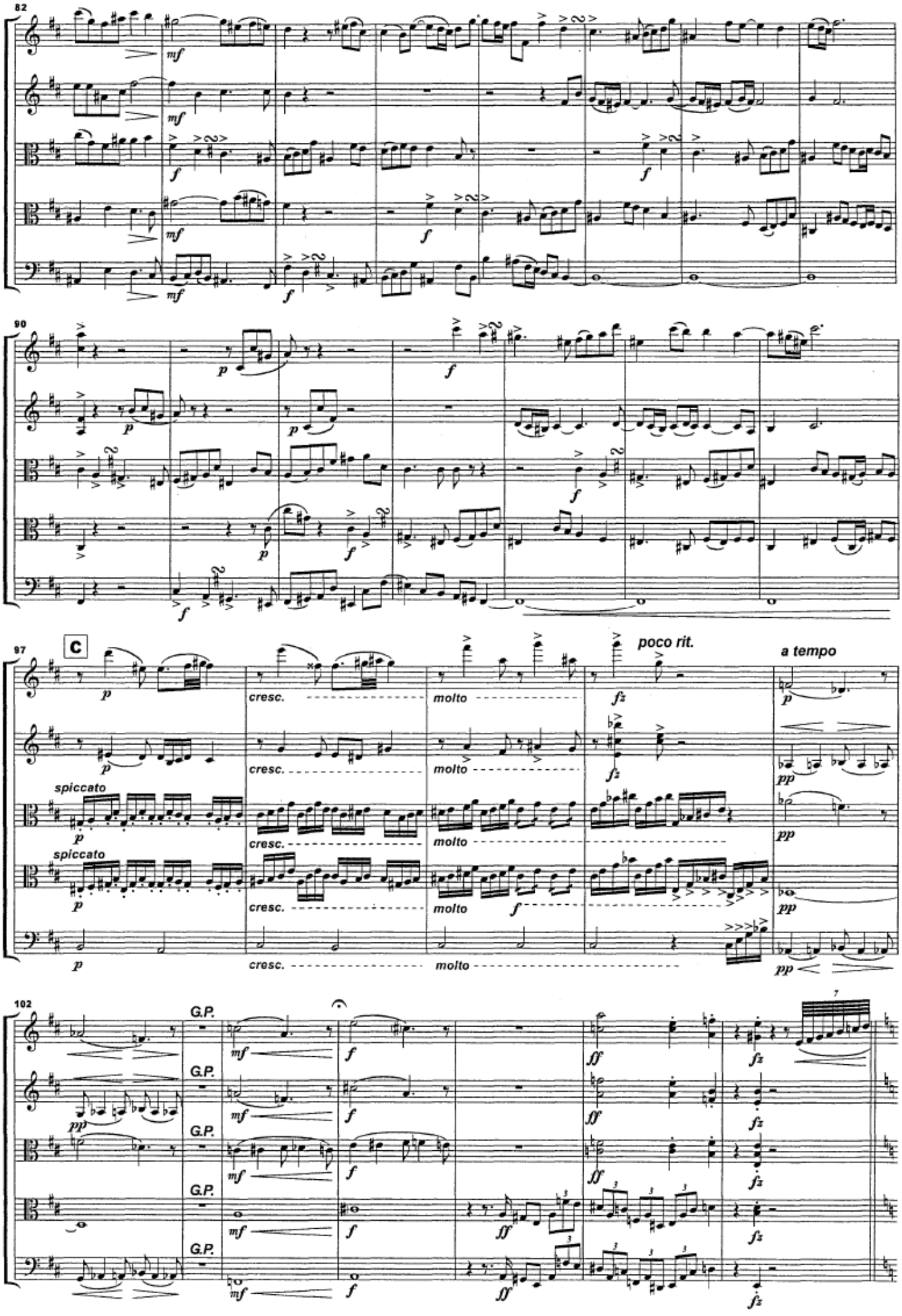

31
A
a tempo
p dolce
legato
mf
mp
38
cresc. molto
pp
cresc.
45
(string.)
cresc.
a tempo
mf
cresc e poco string.
f
51
ff
fz

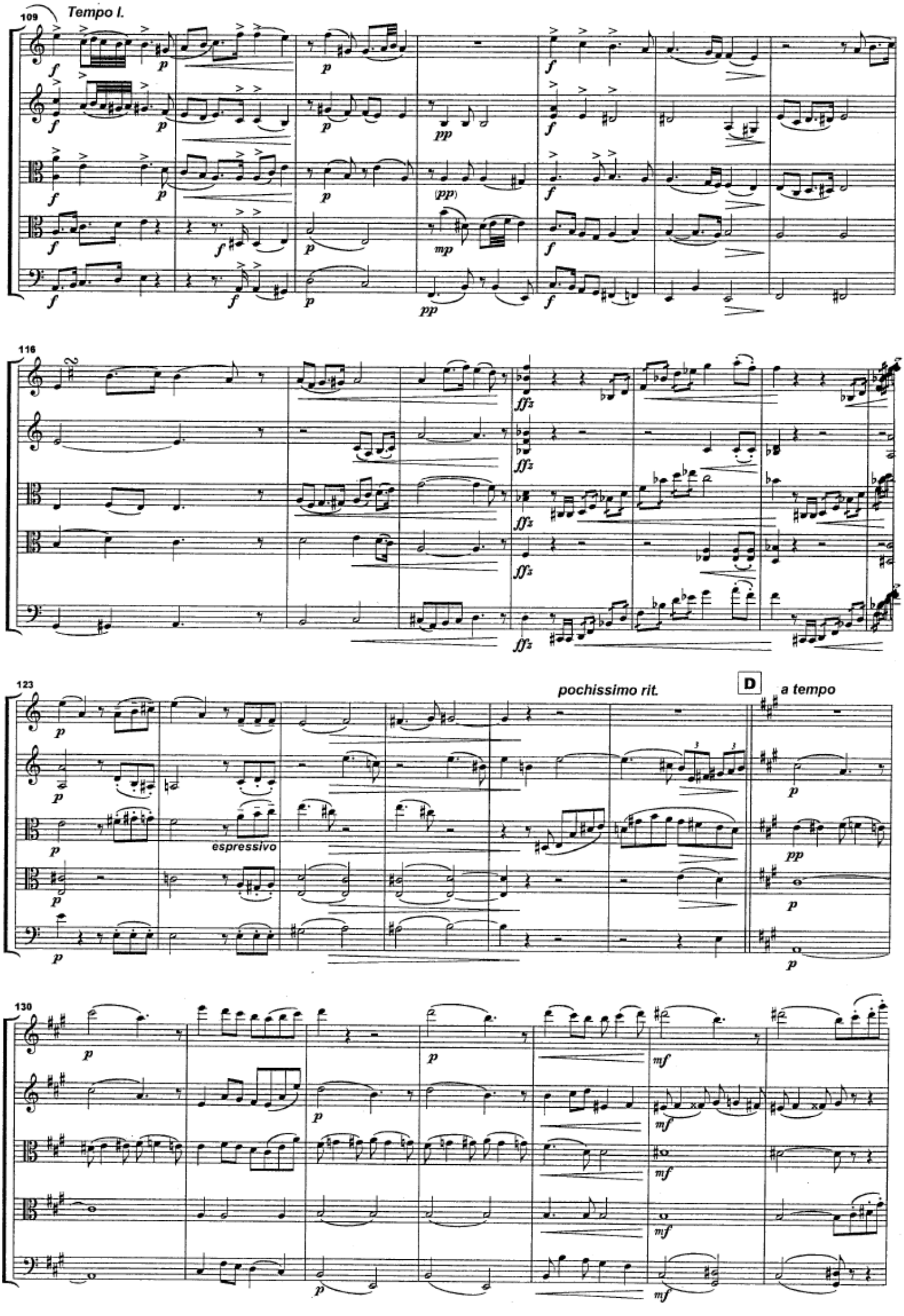

56
poco largamente
a tempo
a tempo

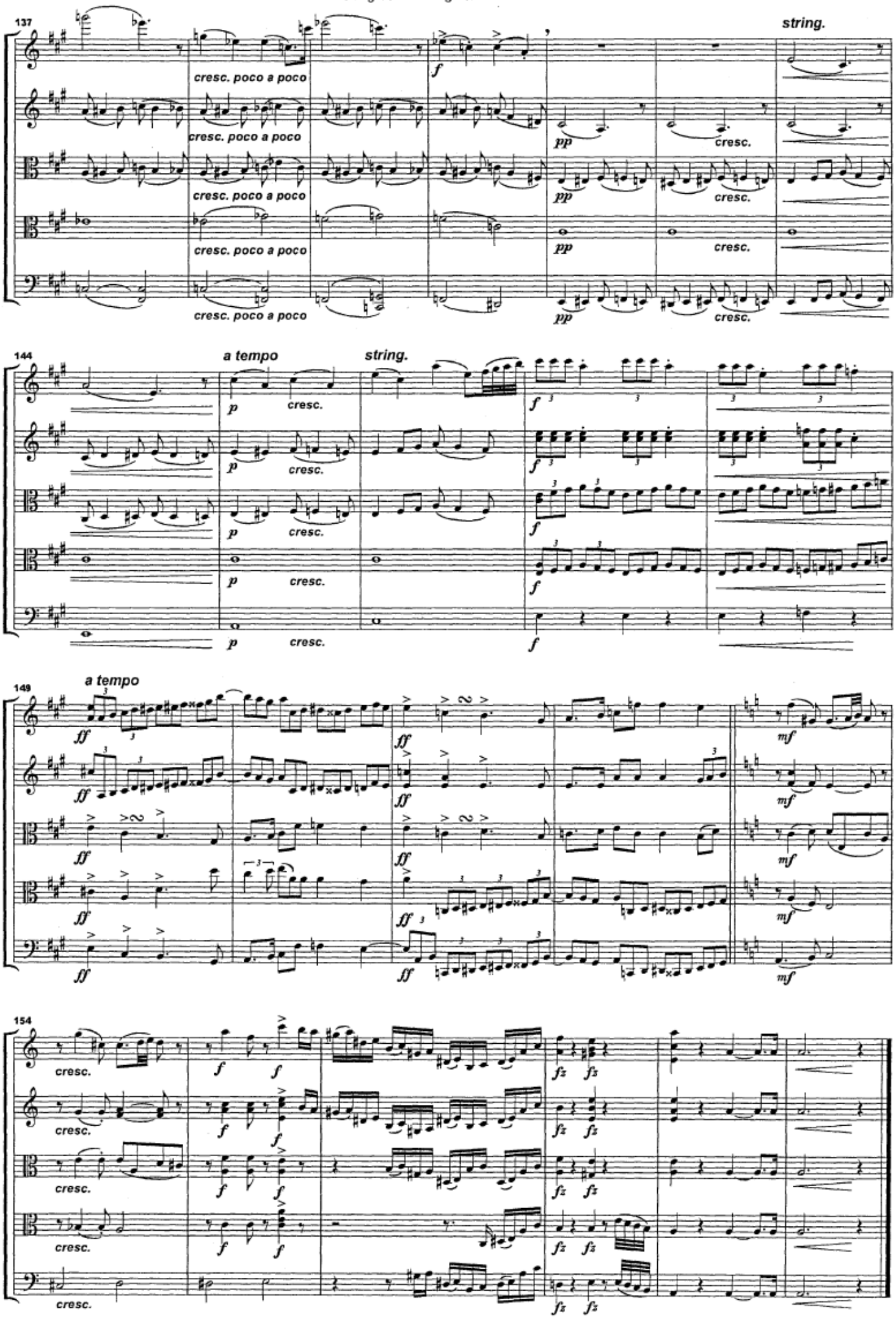

60
molto cresc.
molto cresc.


67
pizz.
B
poco meno mosso
arco
f marcato
mf
mf marcato

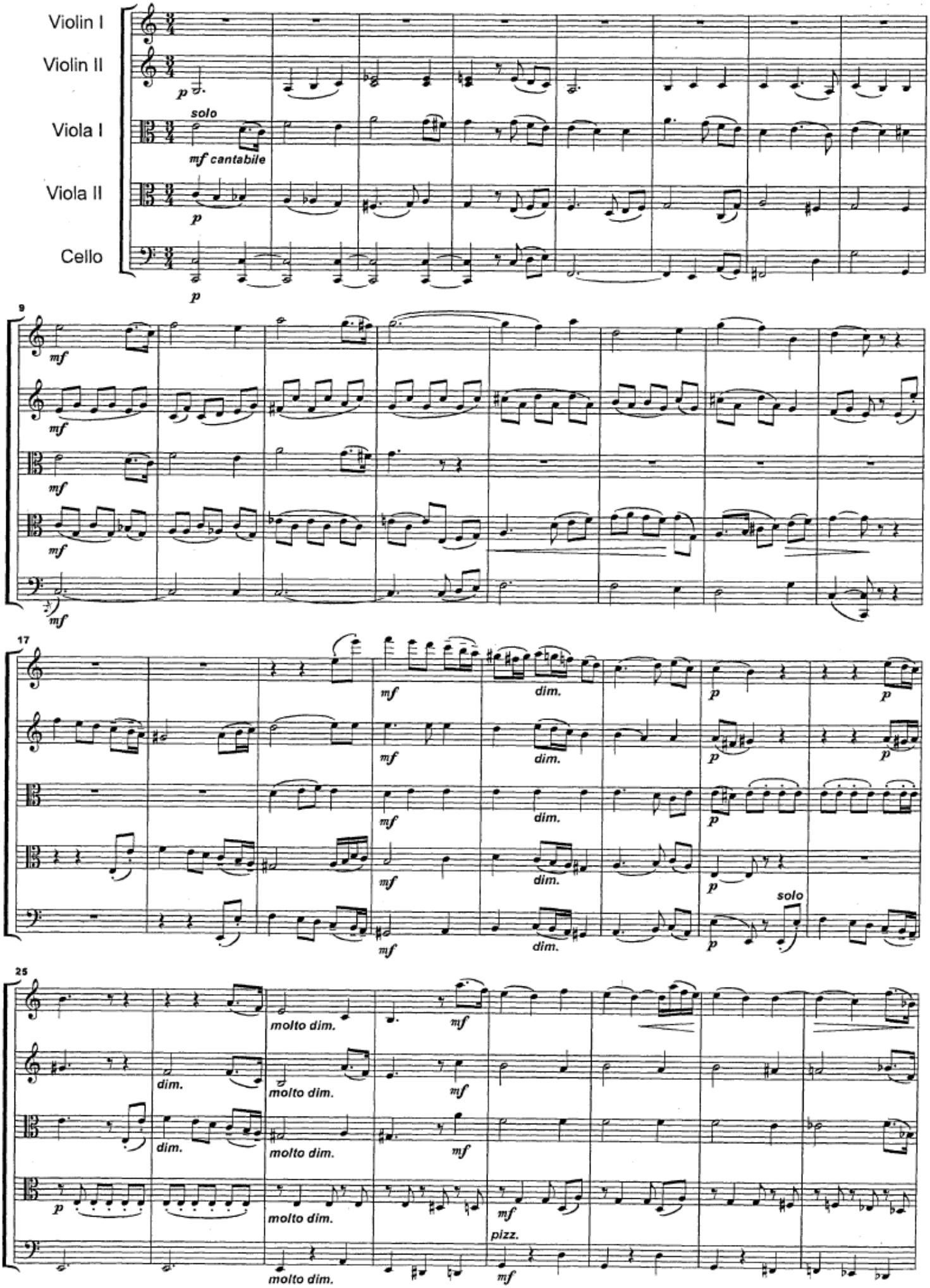

75
arco
f marcato
arco
f marcato

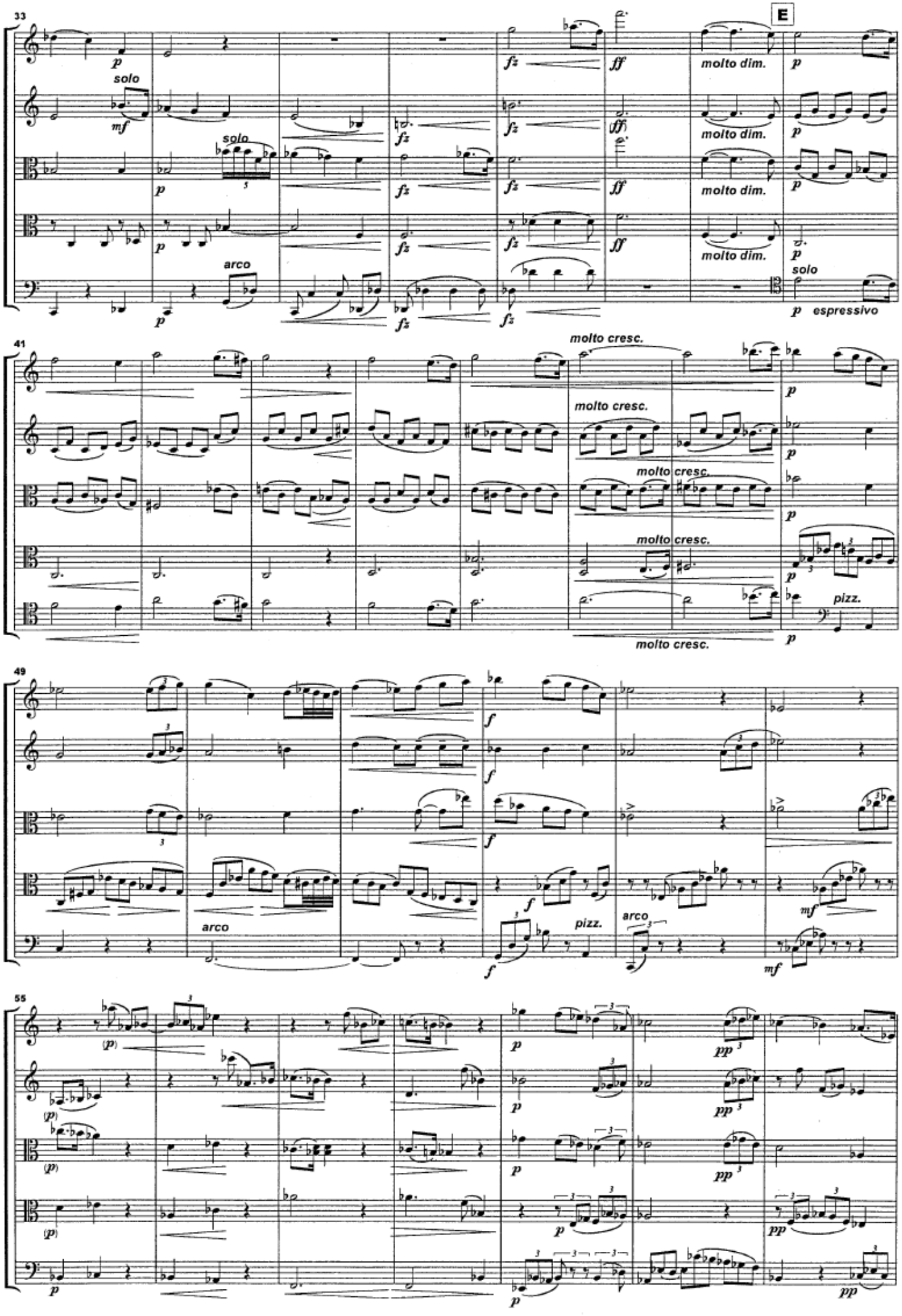

82
mf
f
90
p
f
97
C
poco rit.
a tempo
cresc.
molto
fz
spiccato
pp
102
G.P.
ff

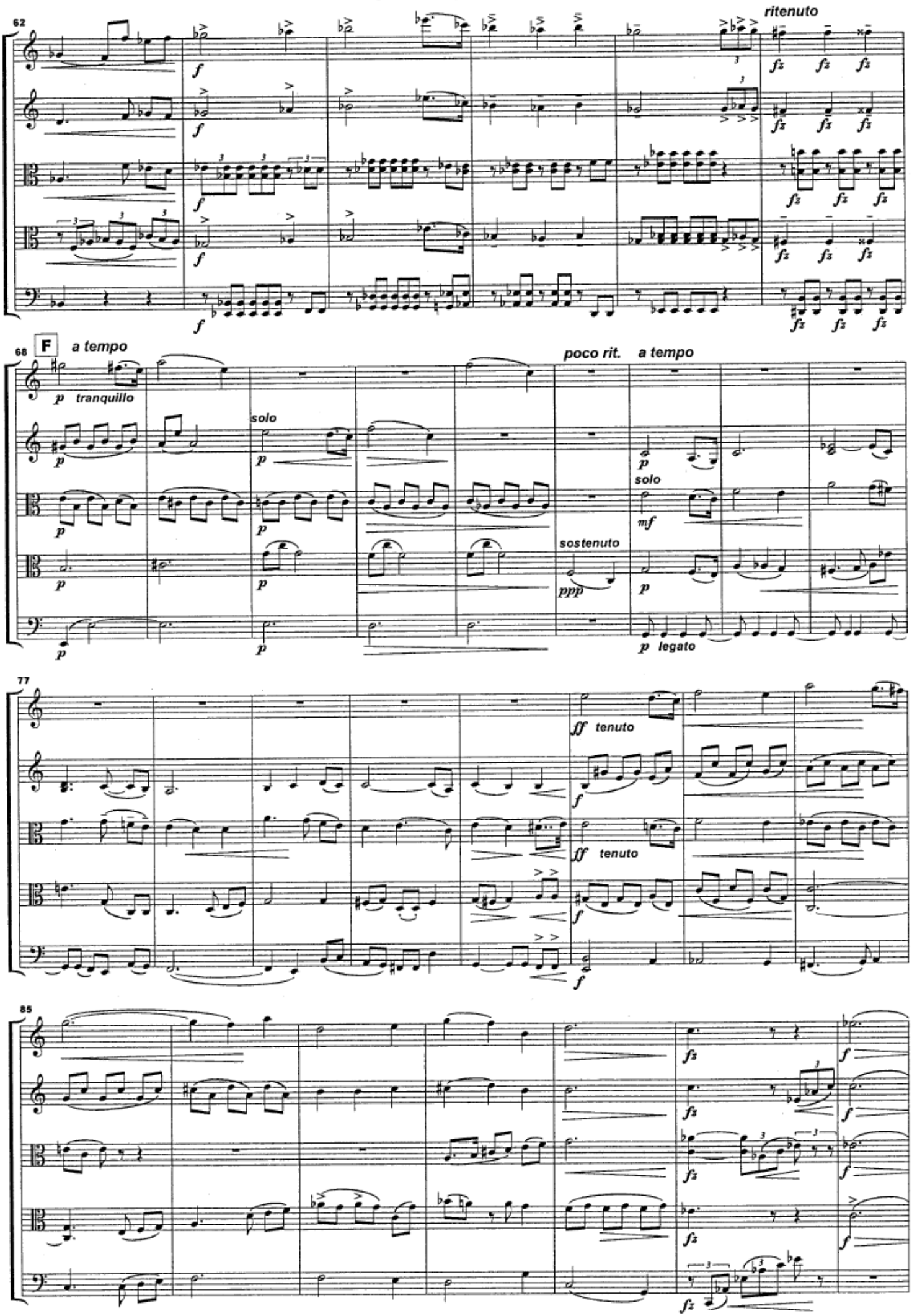

109
Tempo I.
116
123
pochissimo rit.
D
a tempo
espressivo
130

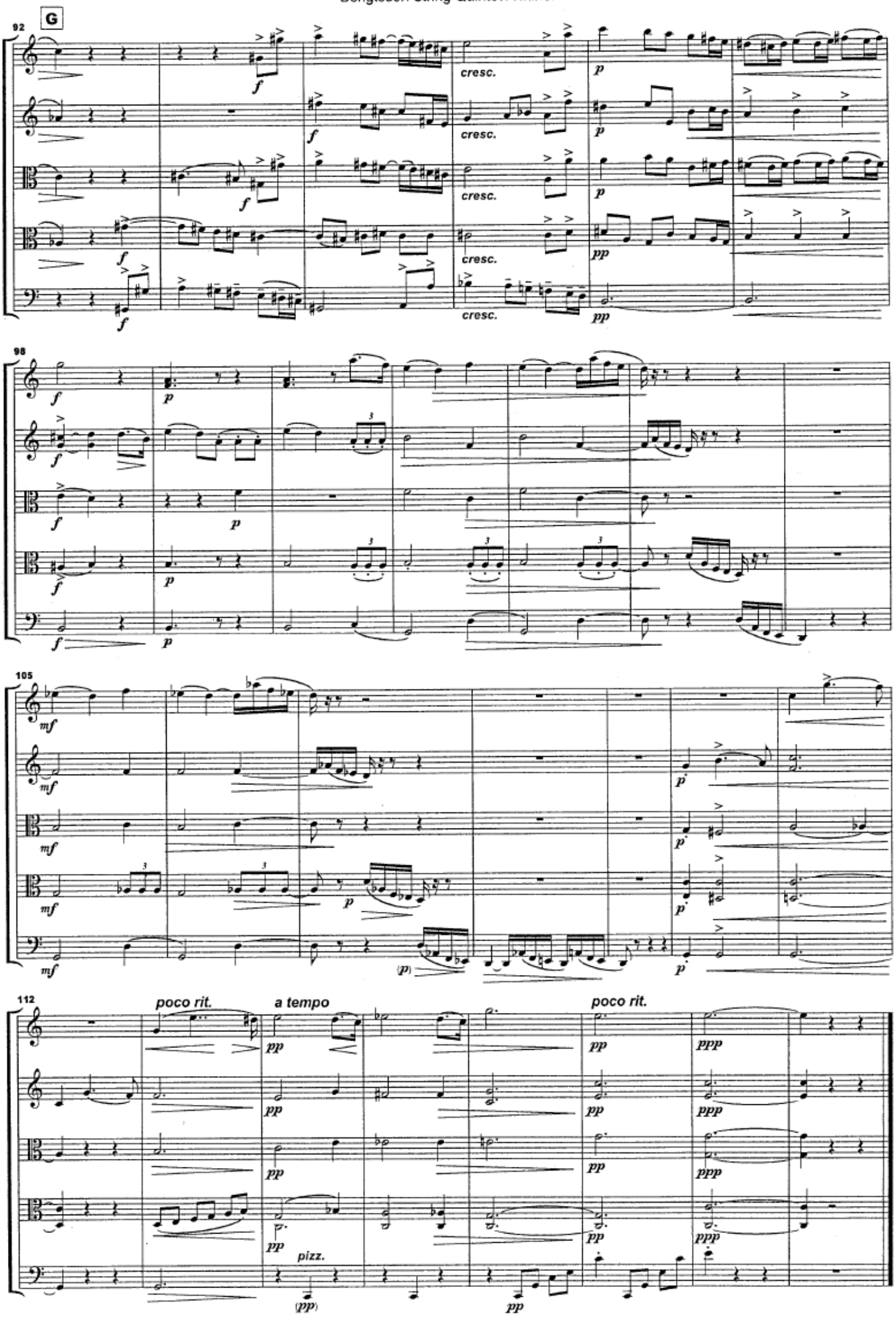

137
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
cresc. poco a poco
f
pp
pp
pp
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
string.
144
a tempo
string.
p
cresc.
f
149
a tempo
ff
mf
154
cresc.
f
fz

II. Andante sostenuto

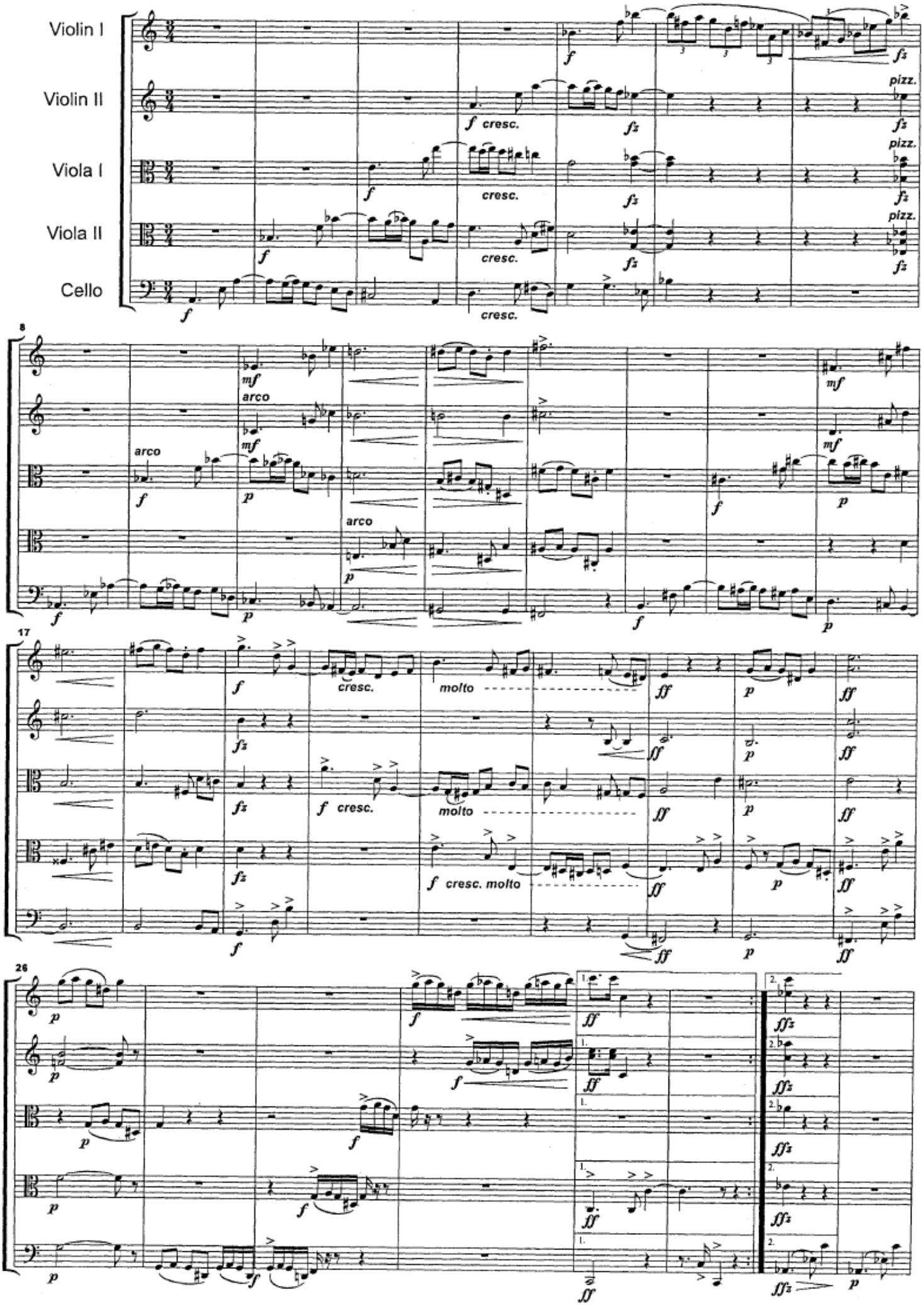


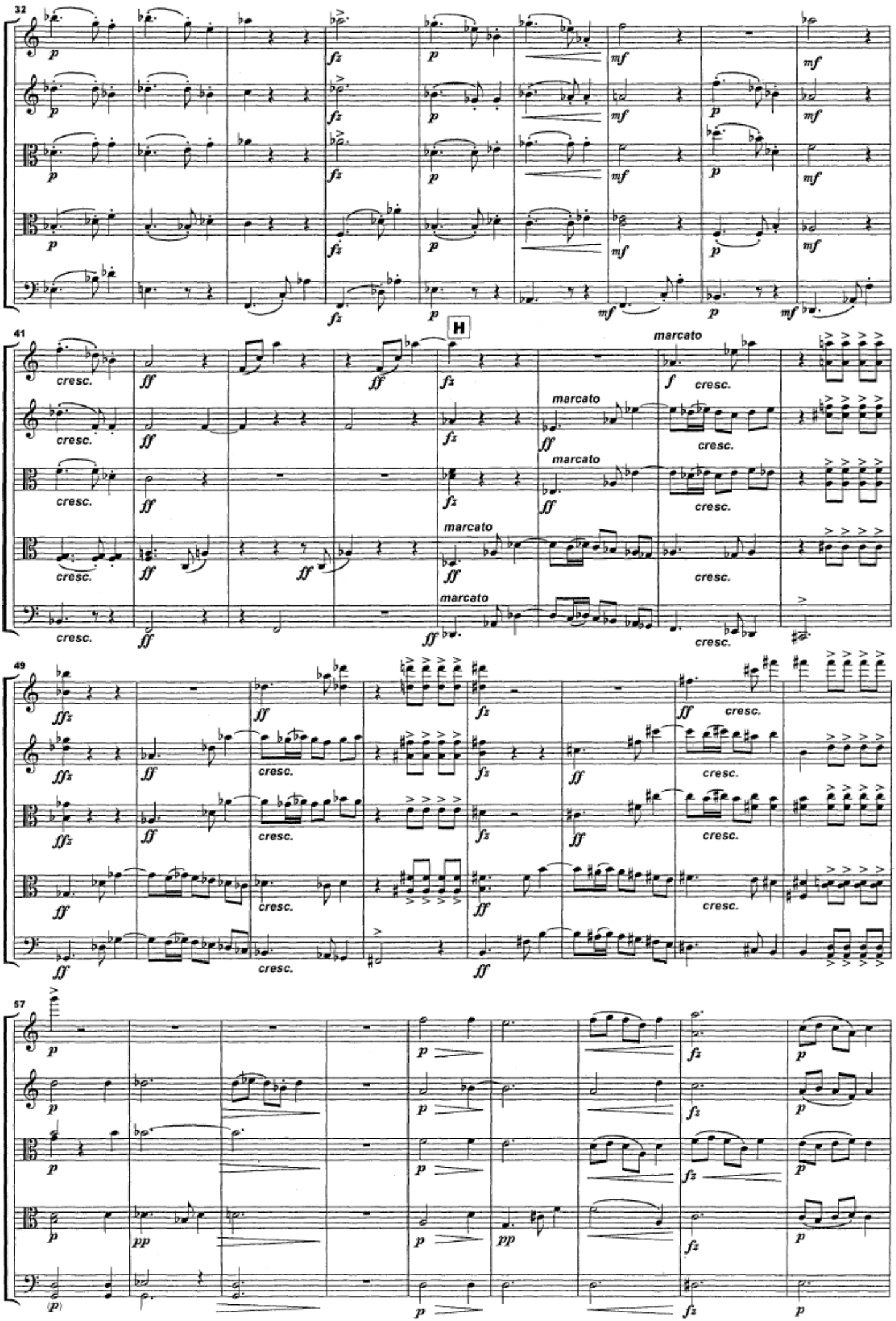

33
E
solo
arco
molto dim.
solo
espressivo
41
molto cresc.
pizz.
49
arco
pizz.
55

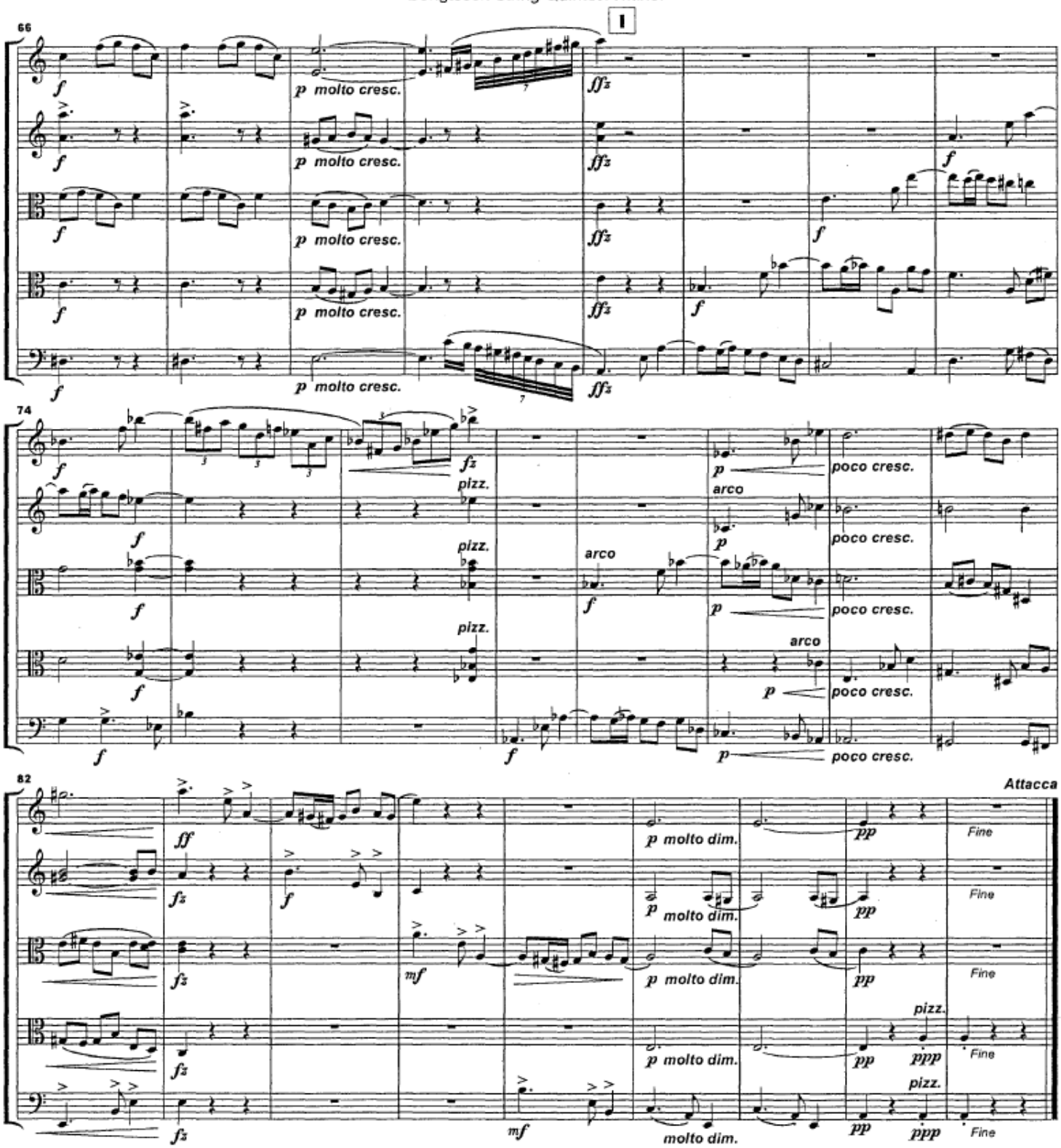

62
ritenuto
68
F
a tempo
poco rit.
a tempo
tranquillo
solo
sostenuto
legato
77
tenuto
85


G
92
cresc.
98
105
112
poco rit.
a tempo
poco rit.
pizz.

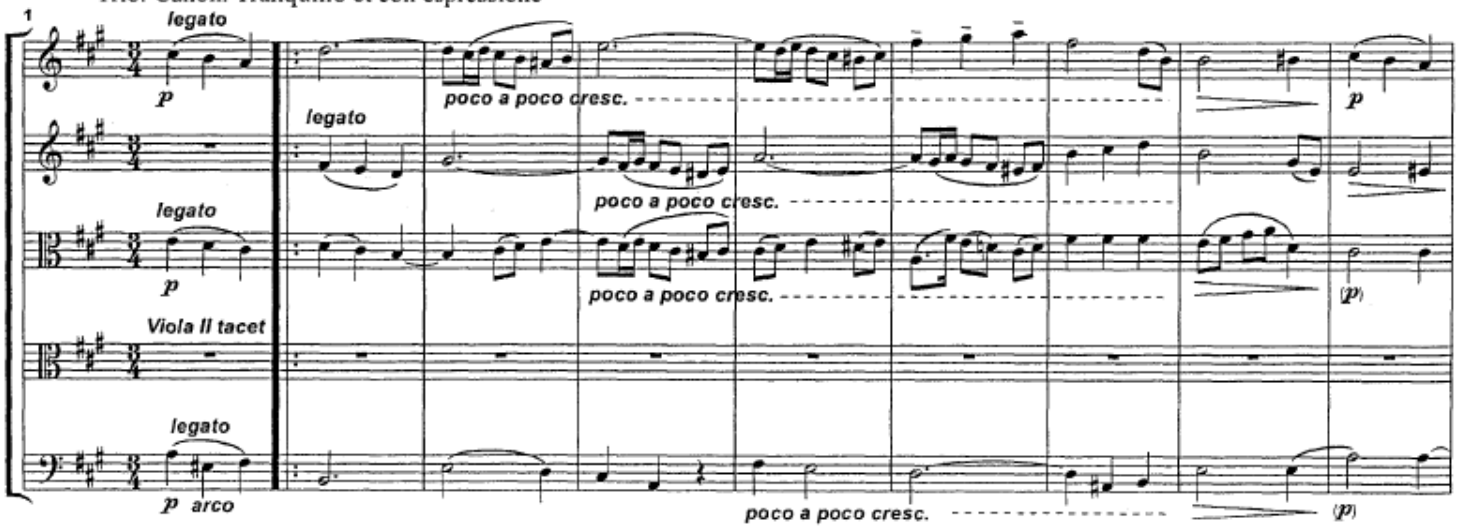
III. Allegro energico

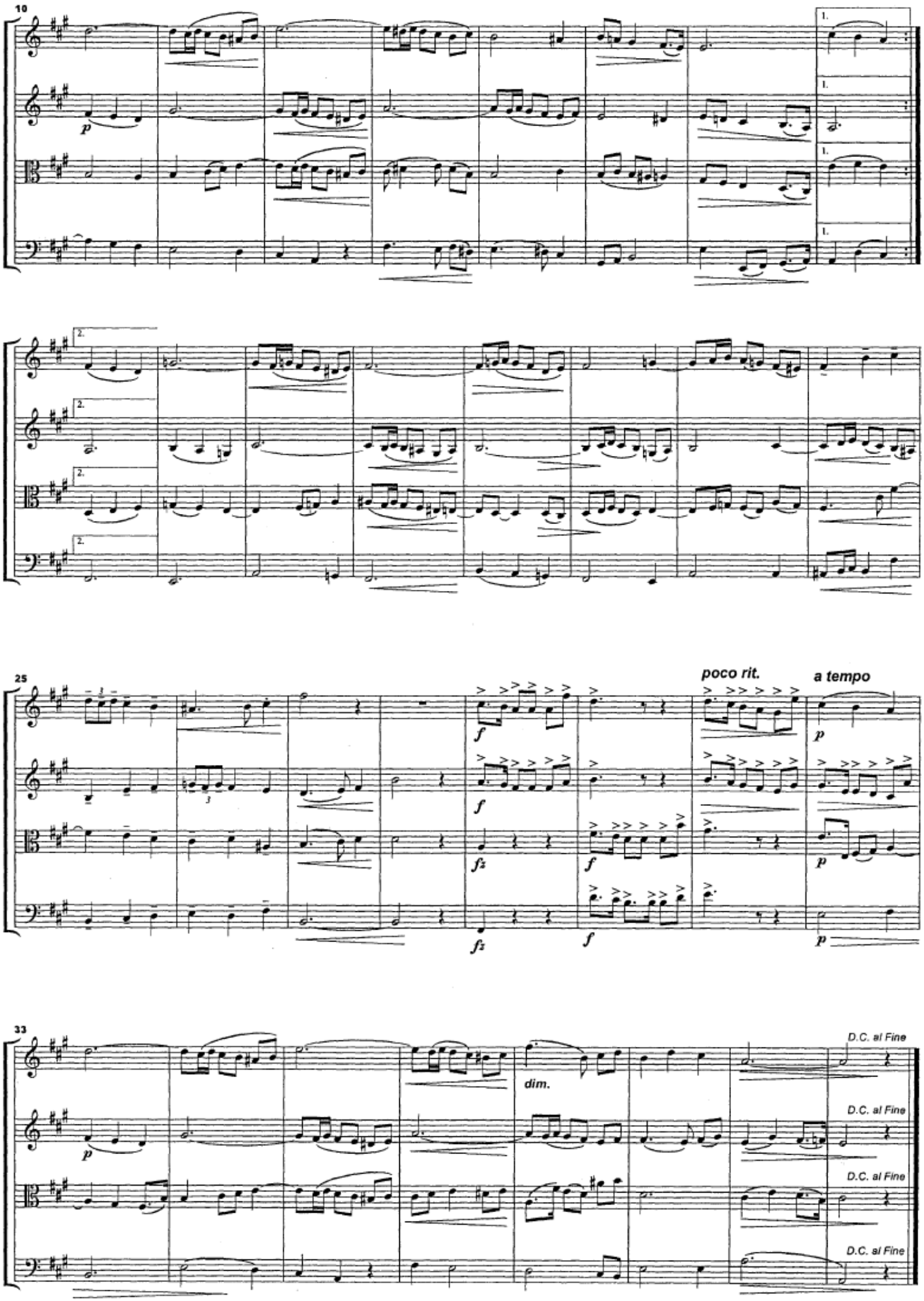



32
41
H
marcato
49
57

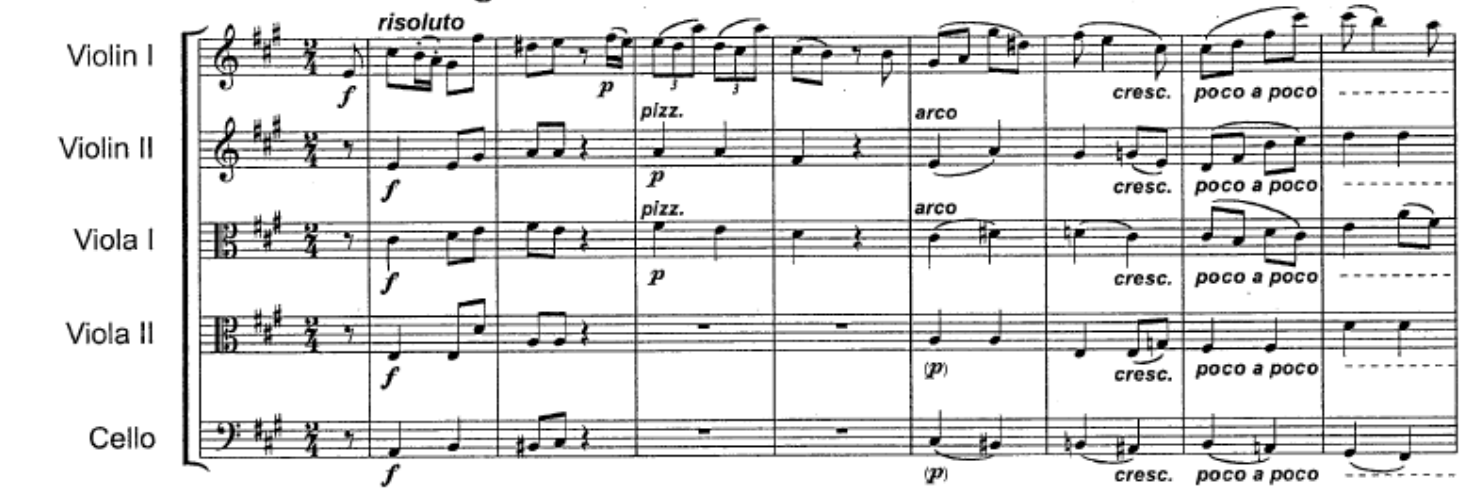


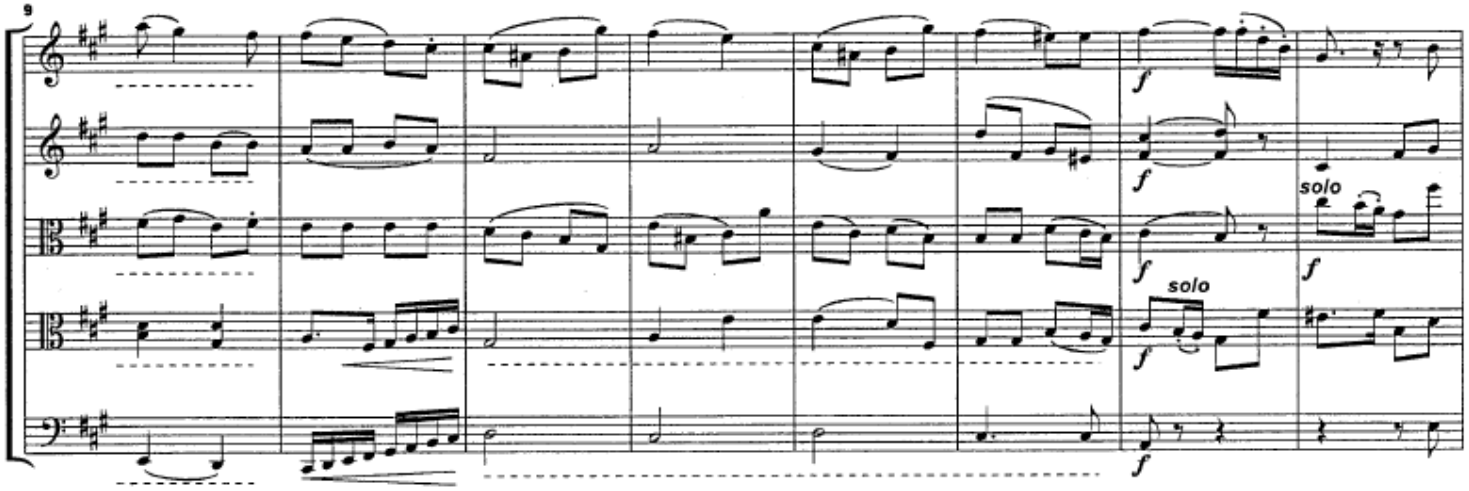
Trio: Canon. Tranquillo et con espressione

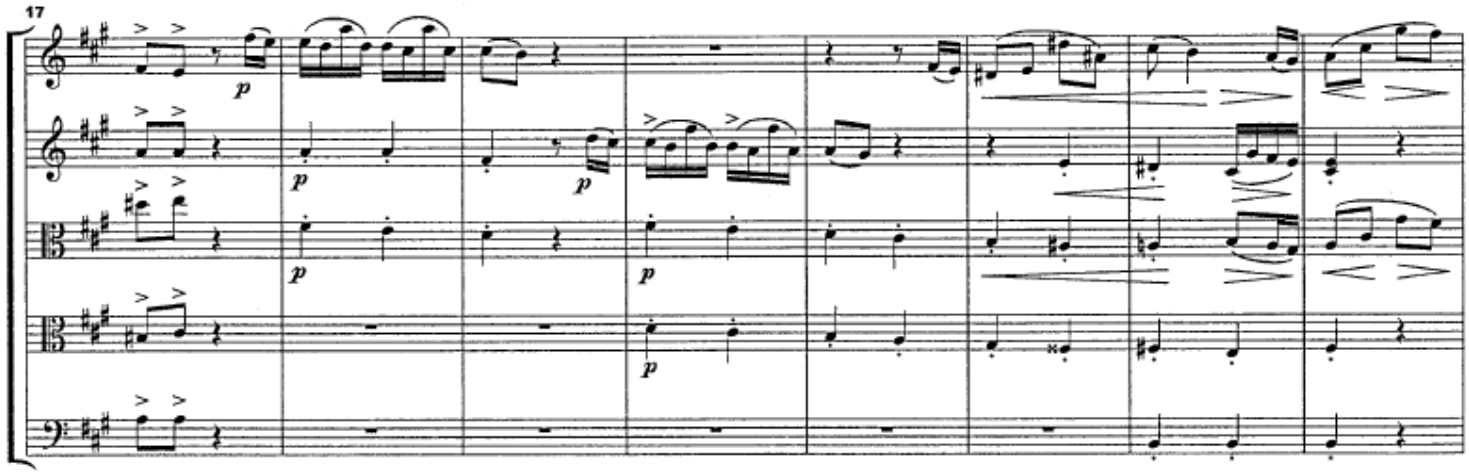


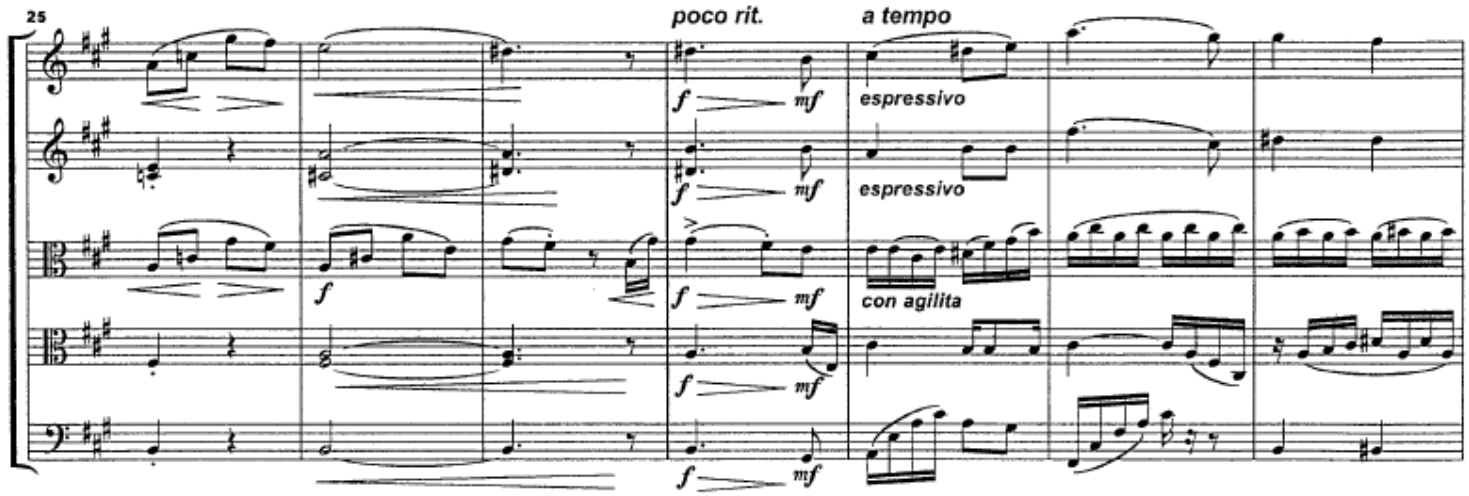

10
1.
p
2.
25
f
fz
poco rit.
a tempo
33
dim.
D.C. al Fine

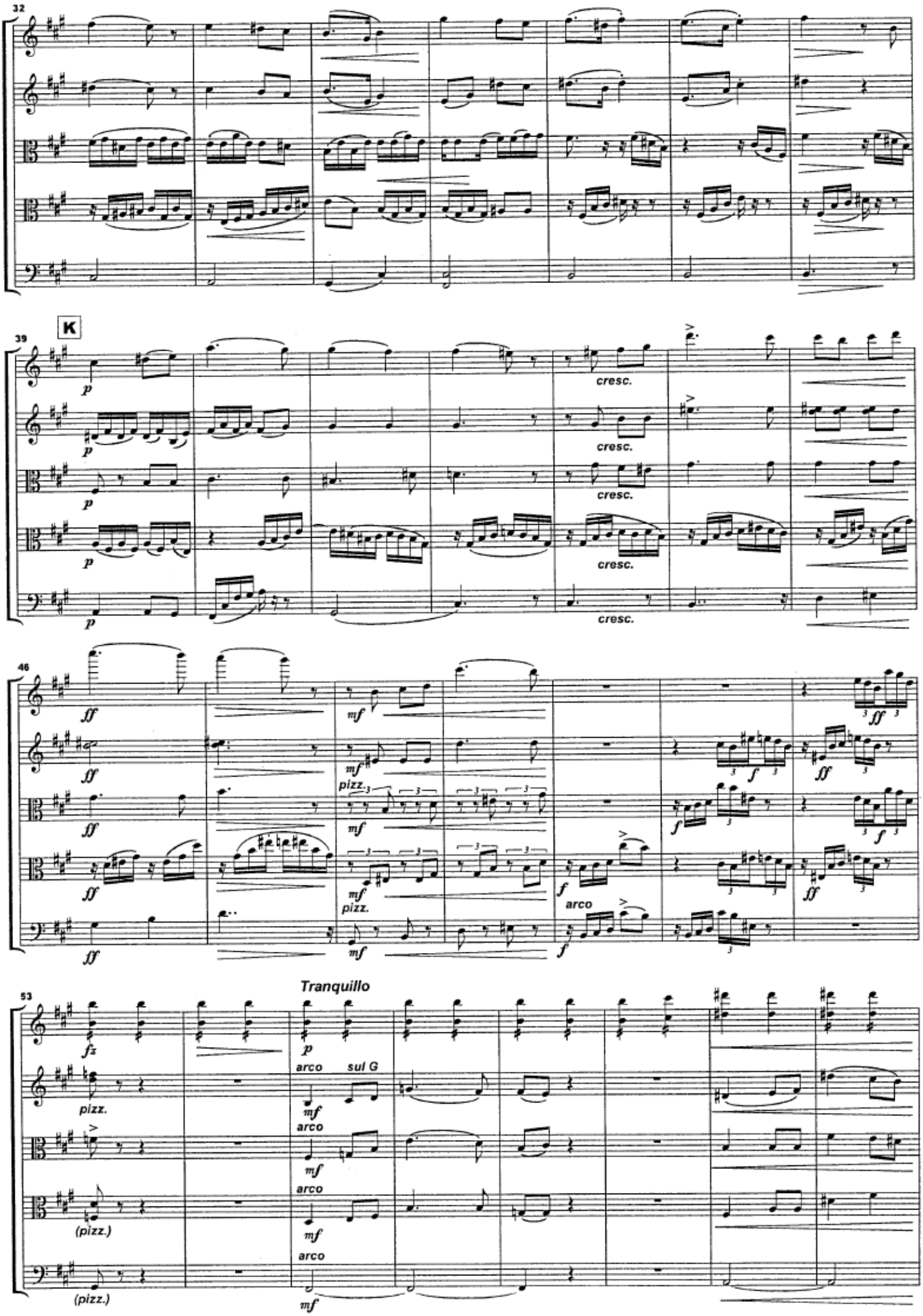
IV. Rondo: Allegro moderato

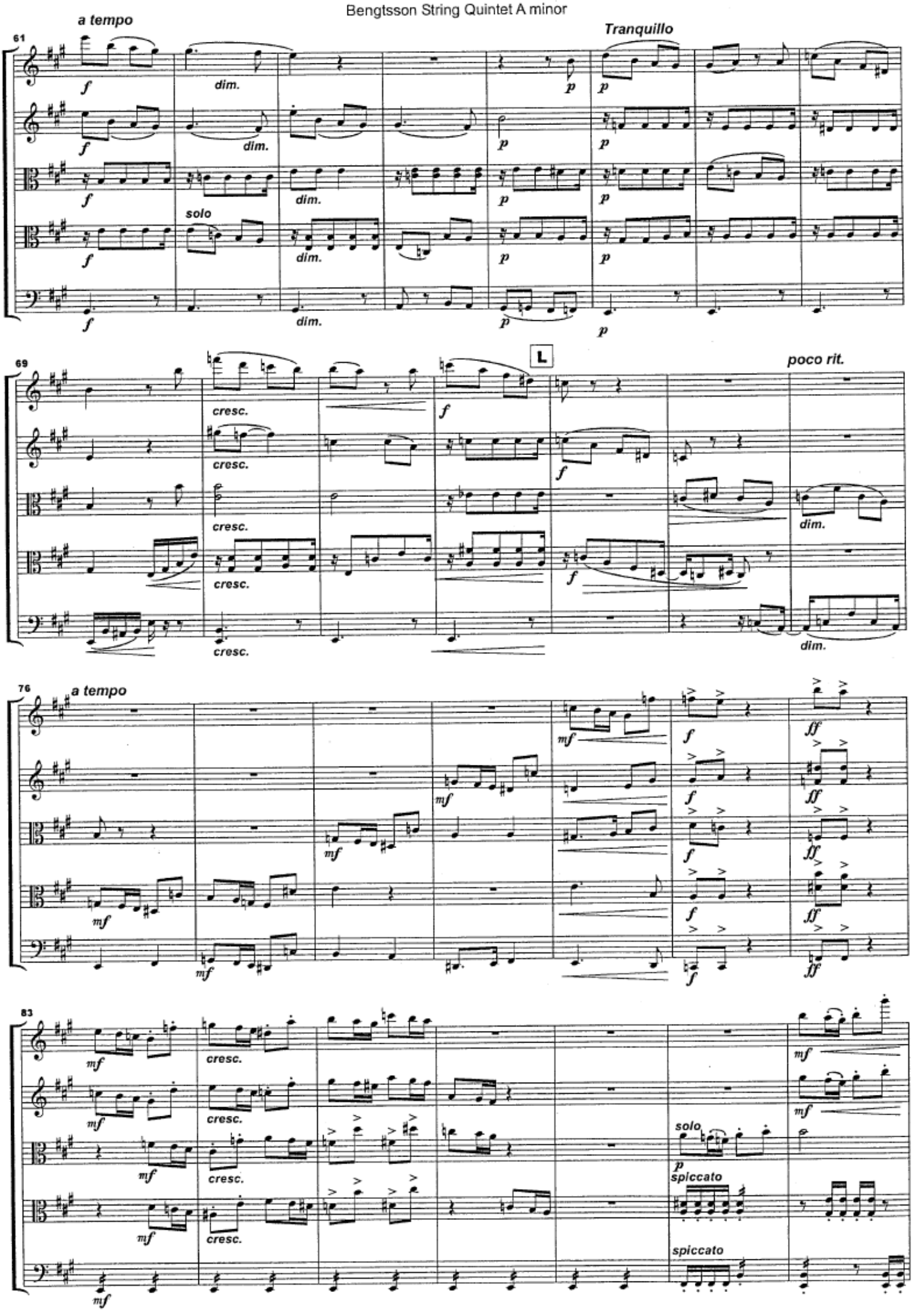


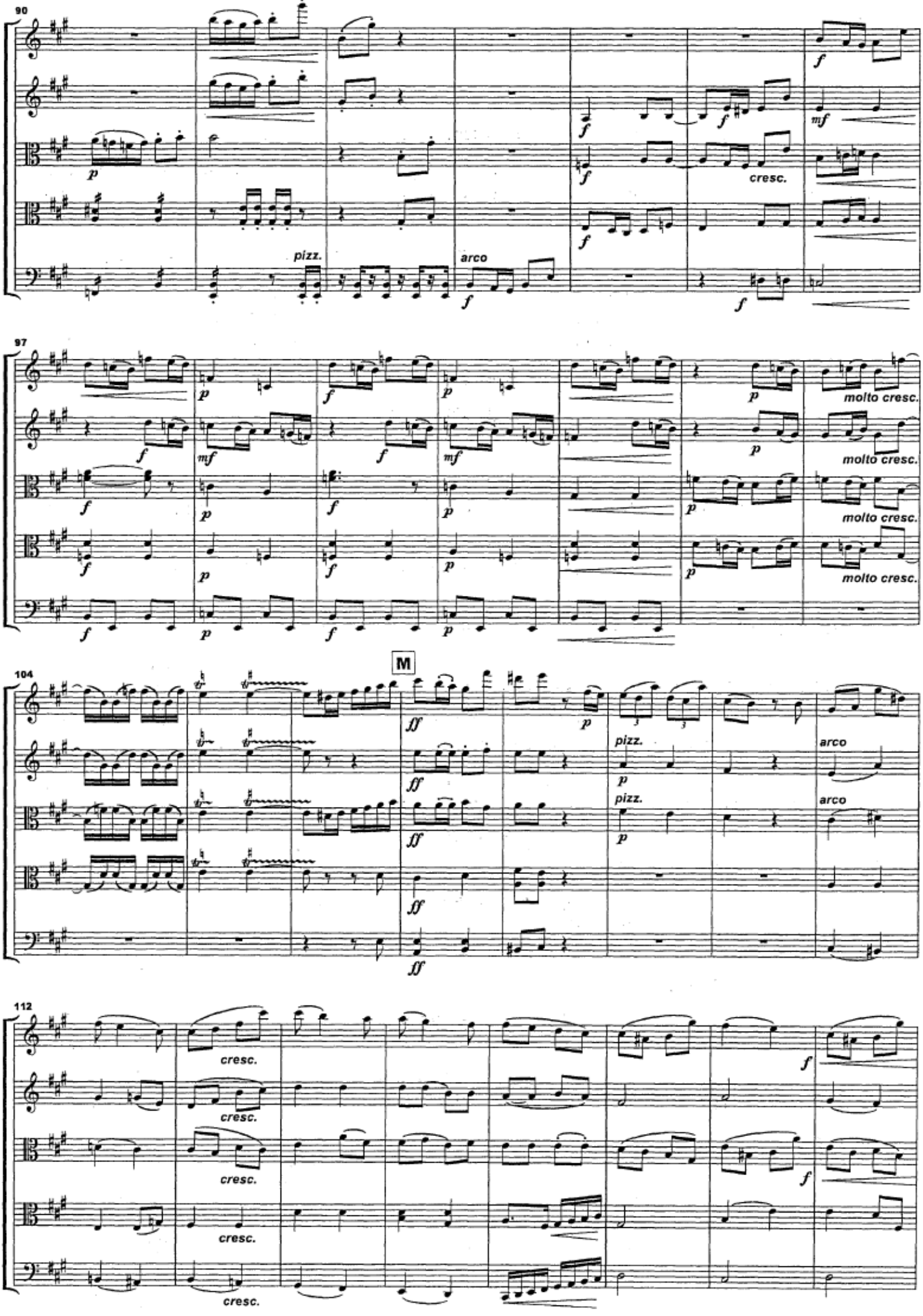


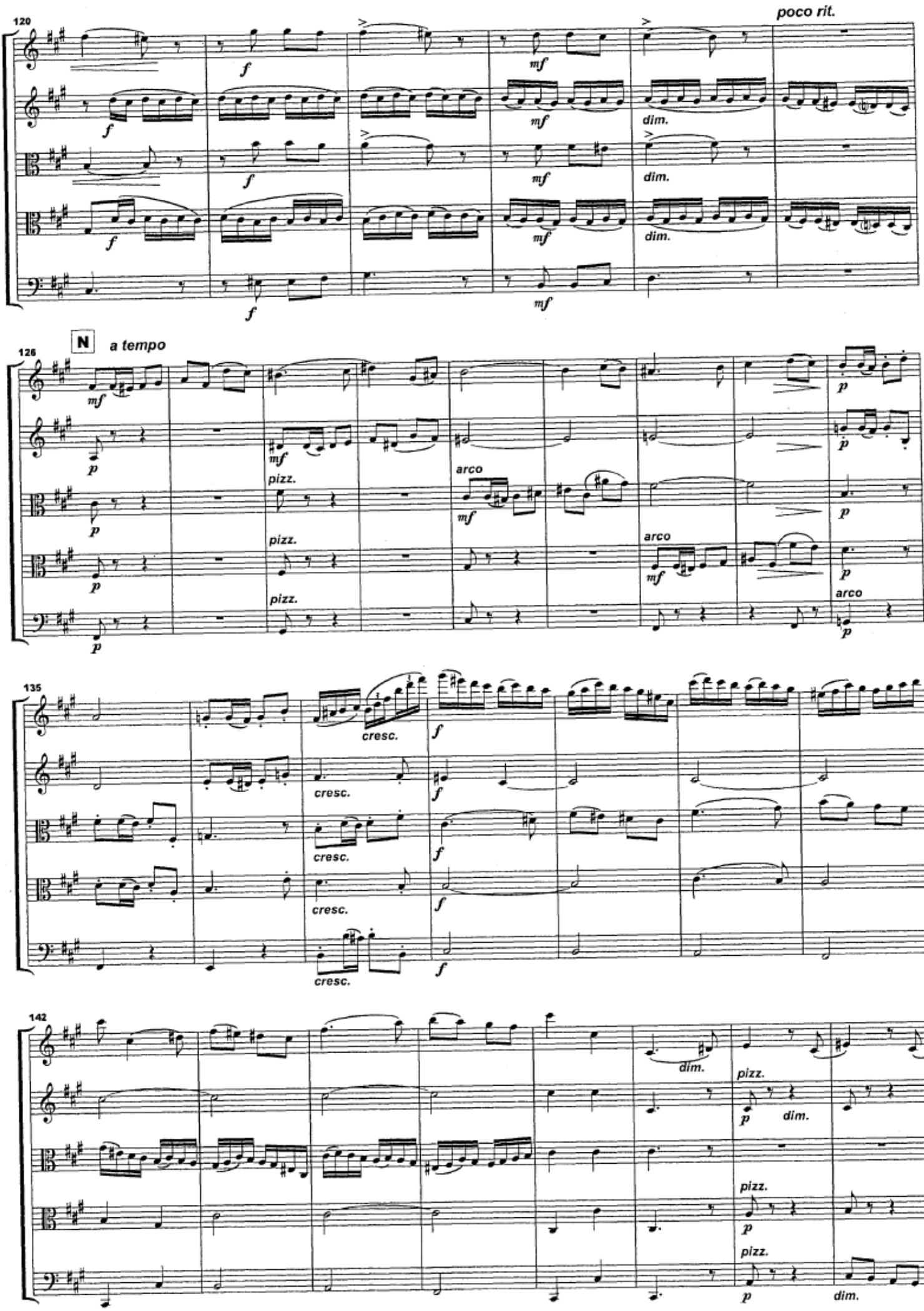


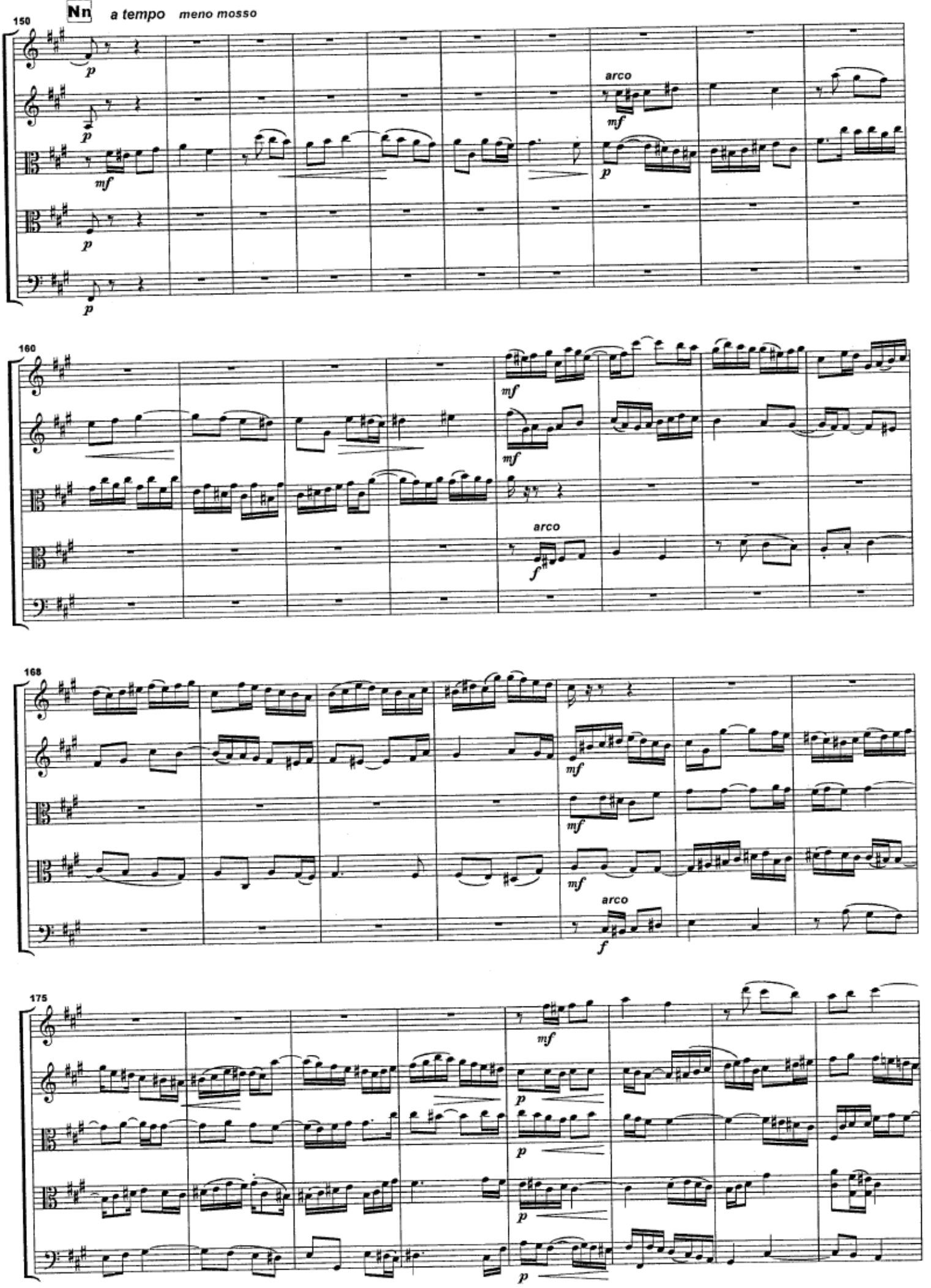


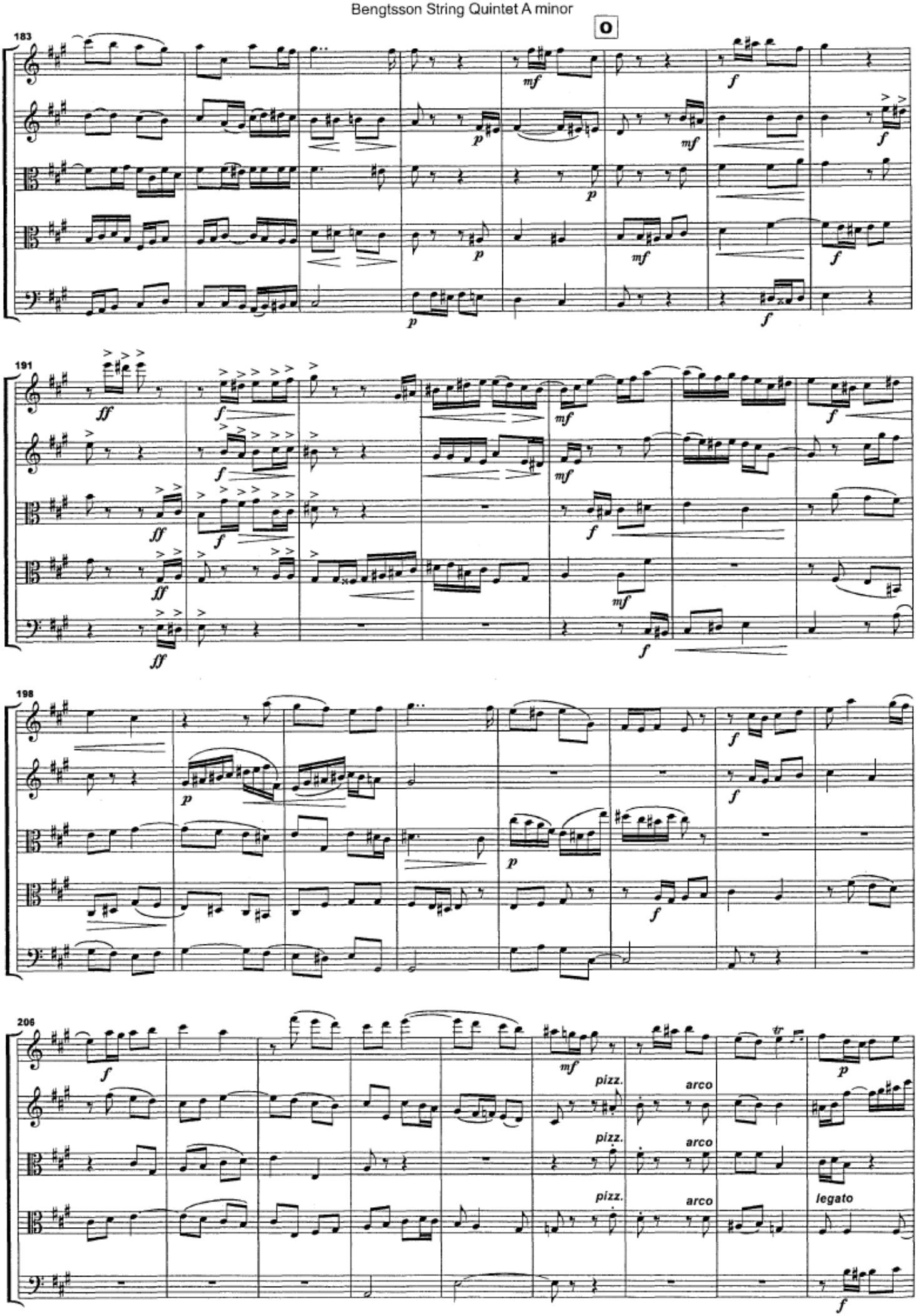

32
39
K
p
cresc.
46
ff
mf
pizz.
arco
53
Tranquillo
fz
arco
sul G
(pizz.)

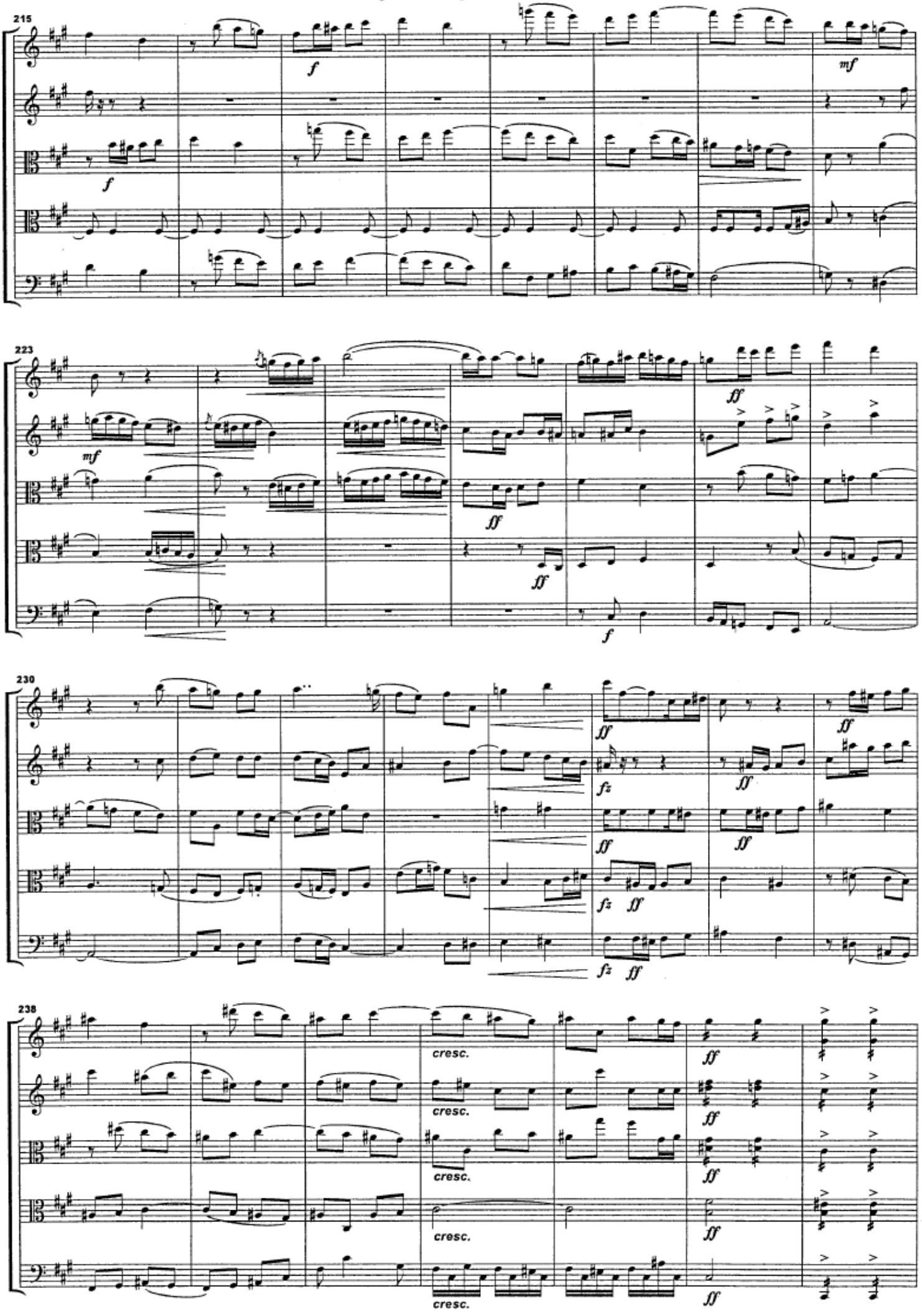

61
a tempo
Tranquillo
solo
69
L
poco rit.
76
a tempo
83
solo
spiccato
spiccato

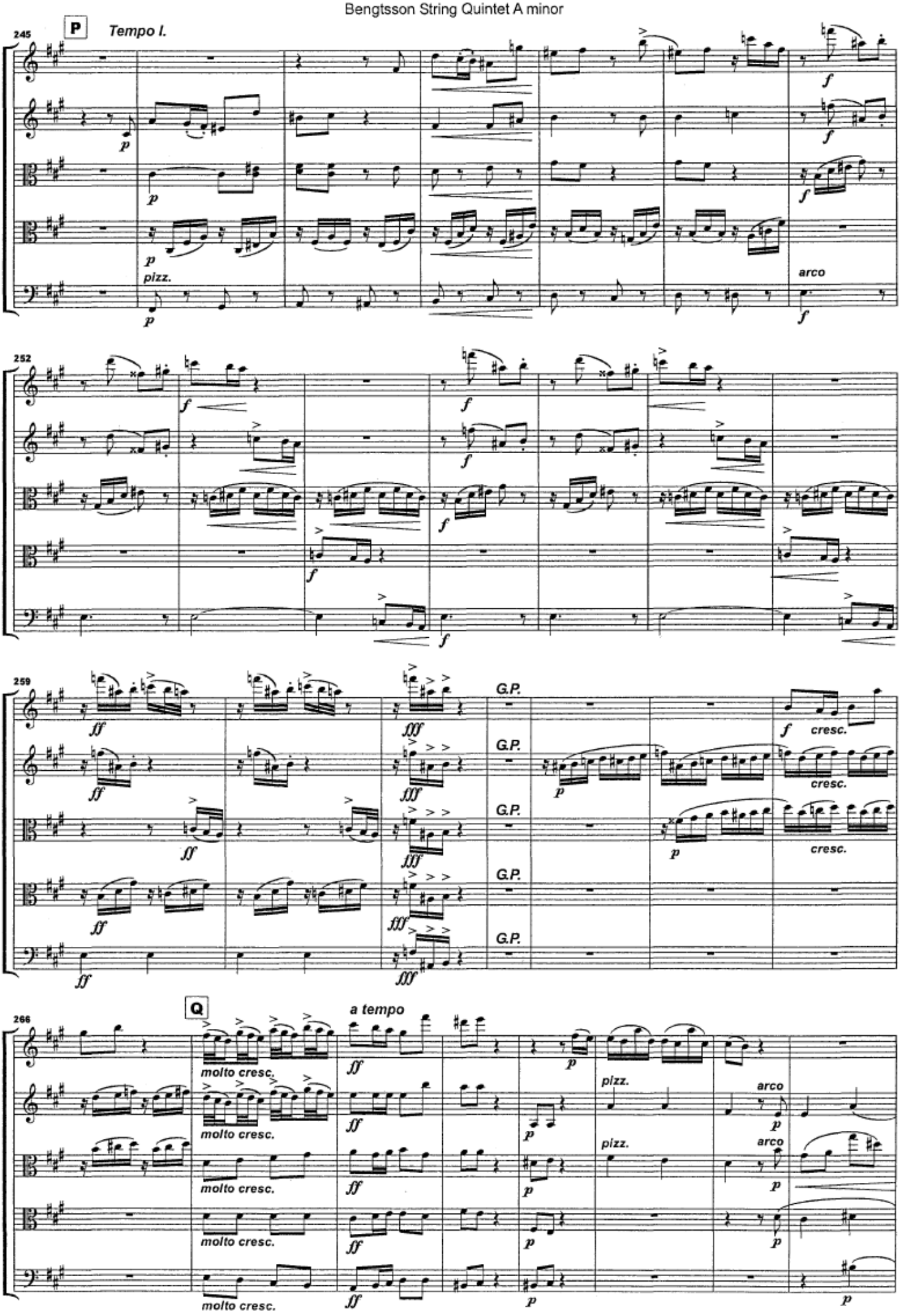

90
p
pizz.
arco
f
cresc.
mf
97
molto cresc.
104
M
ff
pizz.
arco
112
cresc.

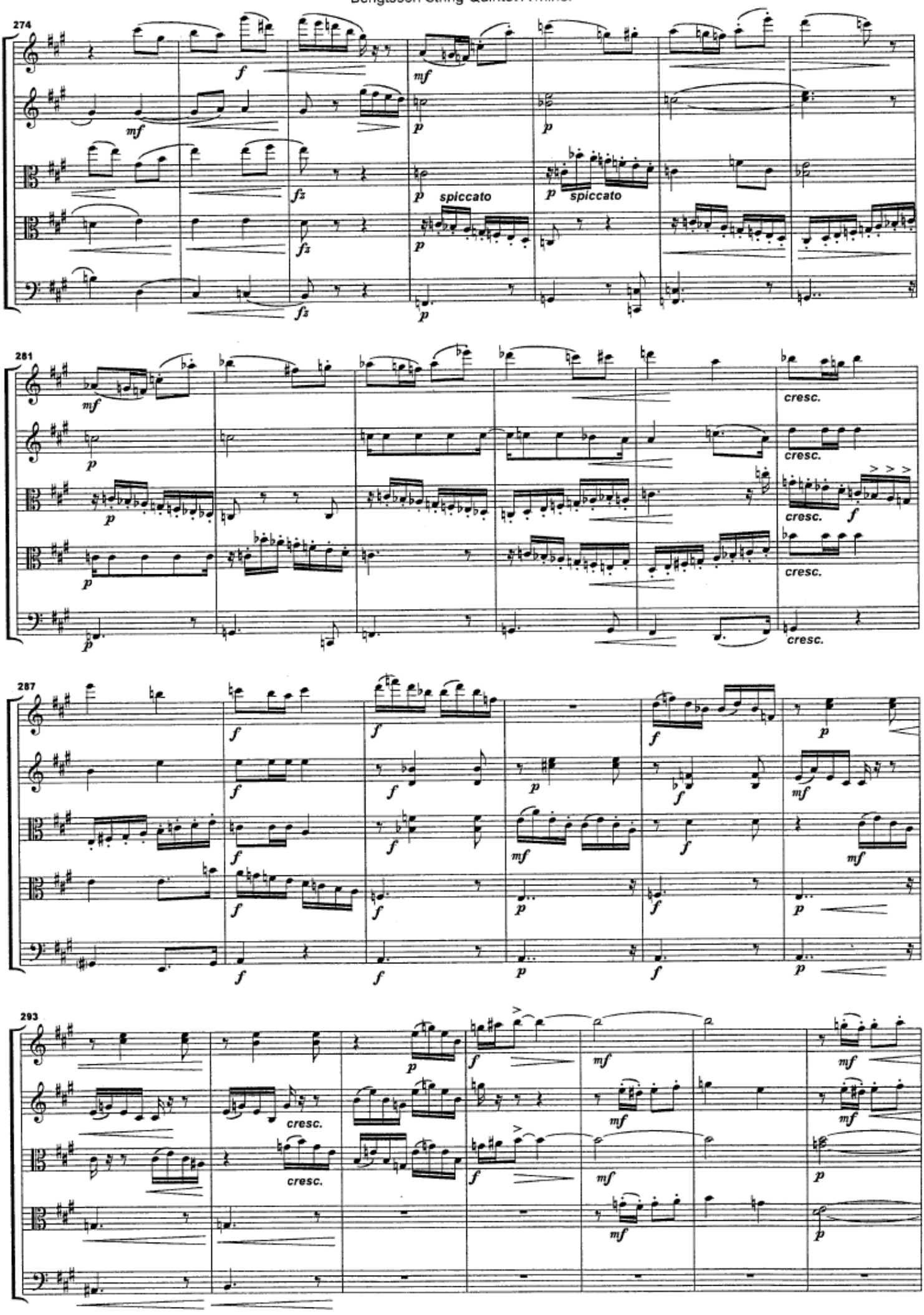

120
poco rit.
f
mf
dim.
126
N
a tempo
p
pizz.
arco
135
cresc.
142

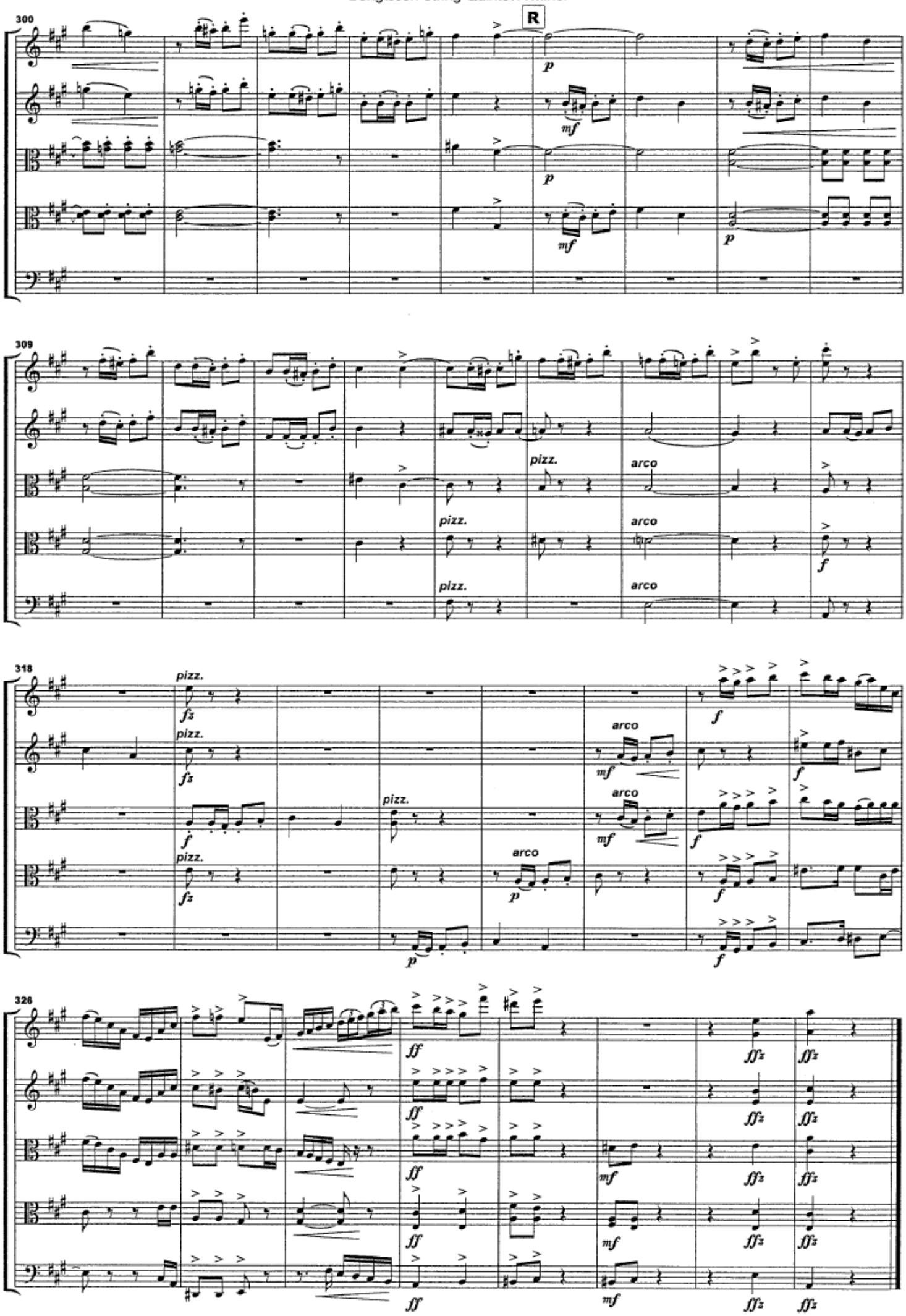

Nn
a tempo
meno mosso
150
arco
160
168
175


183
O
191
198
206
pizz.
arco
legato


215
f
f
mf
223
mf
ff
ff
ff
f
230
ff
ff
fz
ff
ff
fz
ff
fz
ff
238
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
ff
ff
ff
ff


245
P
Tempo I.
pizz.
arco
252
259
G.P.
cresc.
266
Q
a tempo
molto cresc.
pizz.
arco


274
spiccato
spiccato
281
cresc.
287
293
cresc.
cresc.


300
R
309
pizz.
arco
318
326