On the wind

A late music commission for the Ligeti String Quartet

James Else

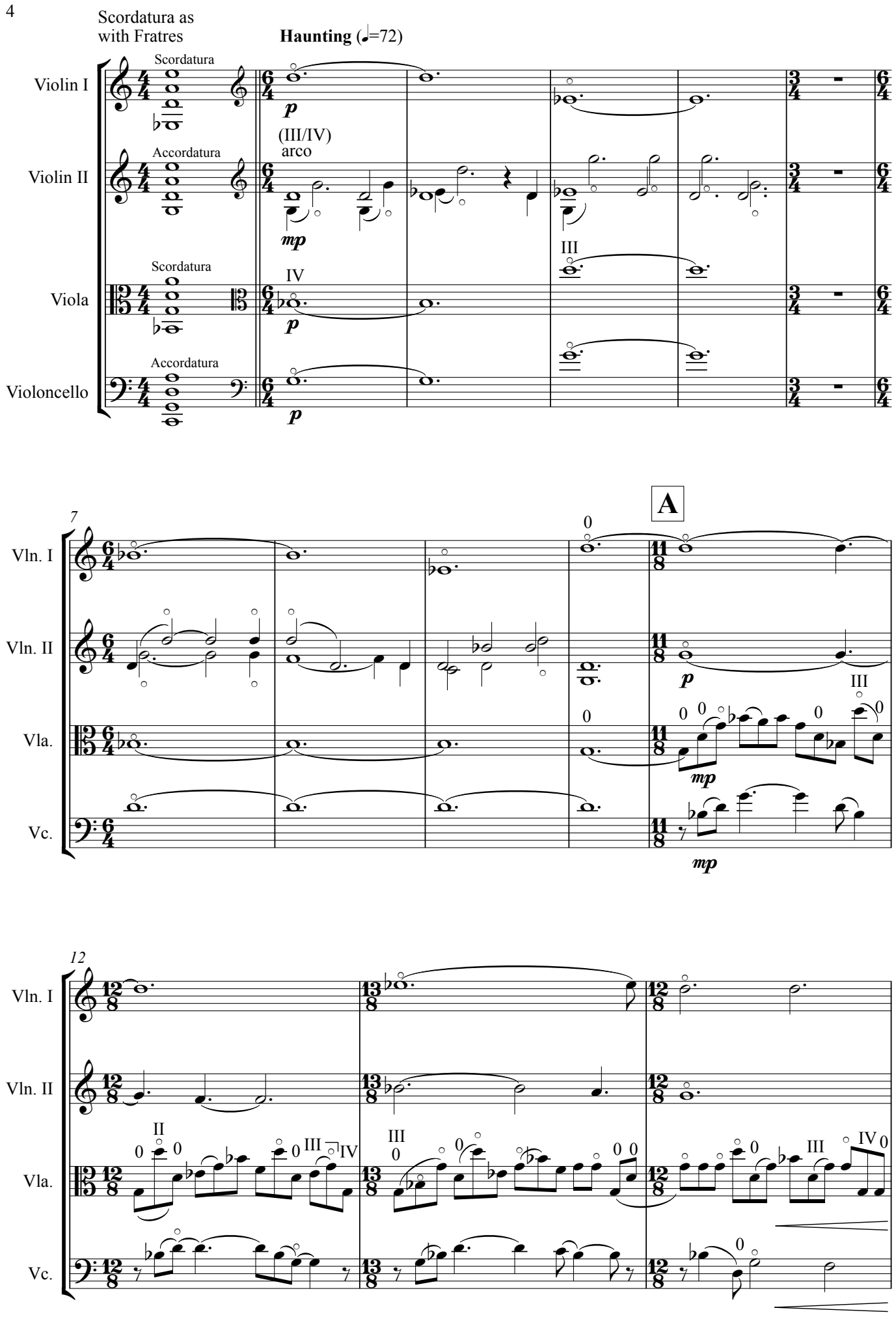
PROGRAMME NOTES

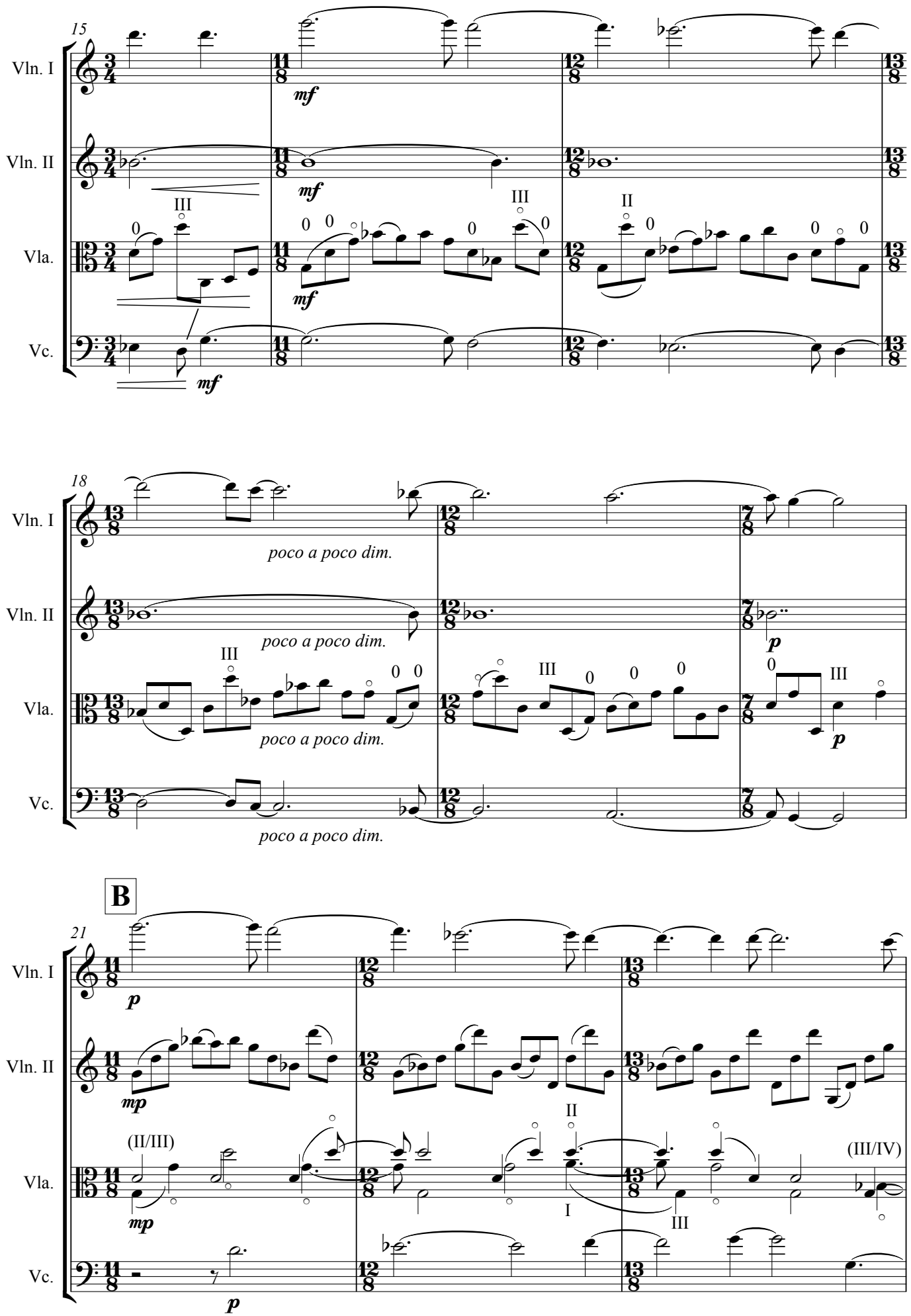
On the Wind is a companion piece for the string quartet version of Arvo Pärt's *Fratres*. Exploring similar sonorities, it also uses Pärt's Scordatura (a process of retuning strings). However, while Pärt uses this for largely practical reasons, in *On the Wind* this becomes a gateway into a different string quartet sound world. In particular, the different tuning of the first and second violins lead to a very different relationship between these instruments.

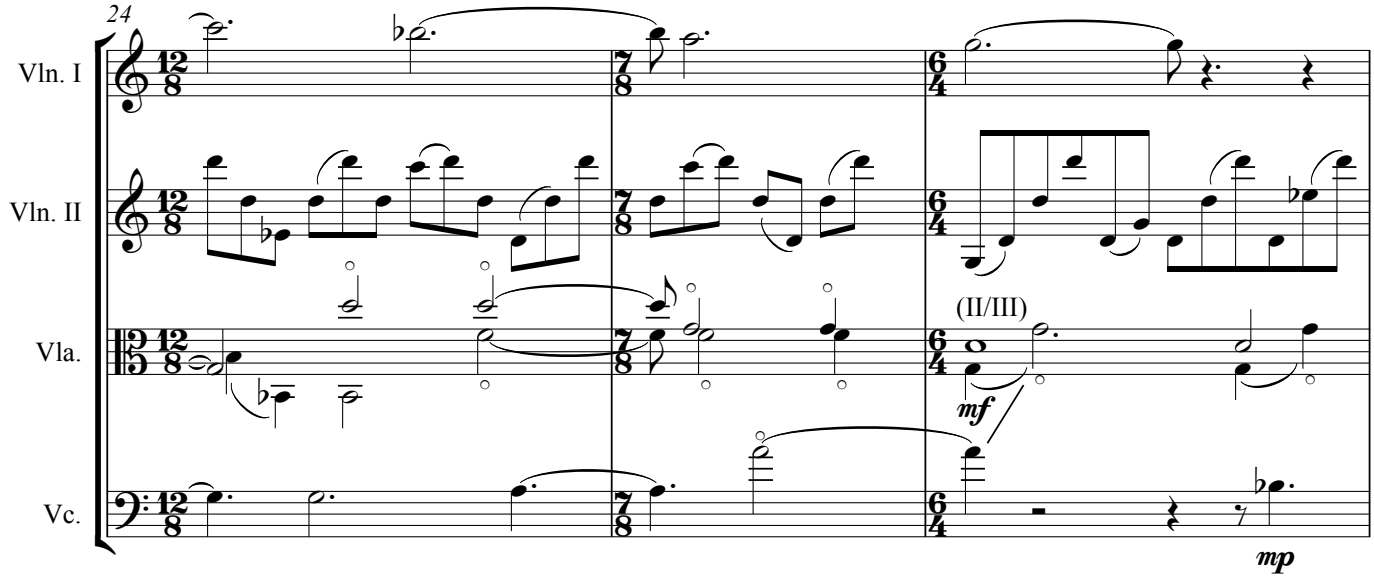
In some ways *On the Wind* can be seen as an 'antidote' for *Fratres*. The 2nd violin is freed from the long held double stopped chord and the harmony is is allowed more forward momementum. Perhaps it is what *Fratres* might sound like heard on the wind after a thousand games of Chinese whispers?

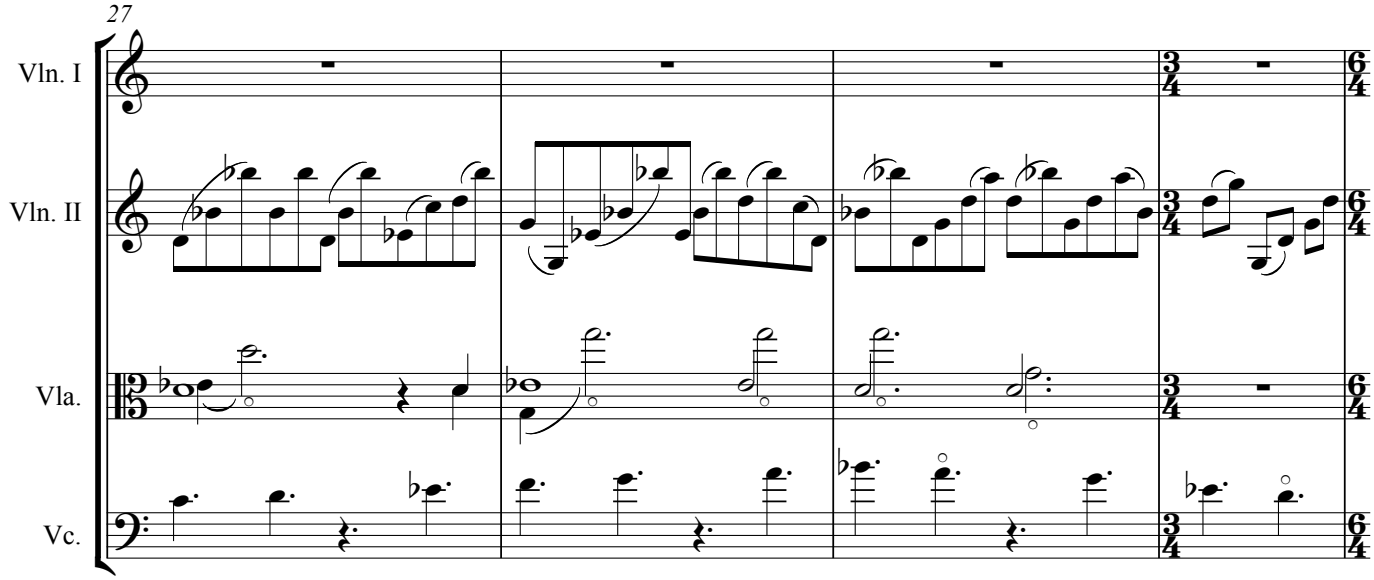
PERFORMANCE NOTE

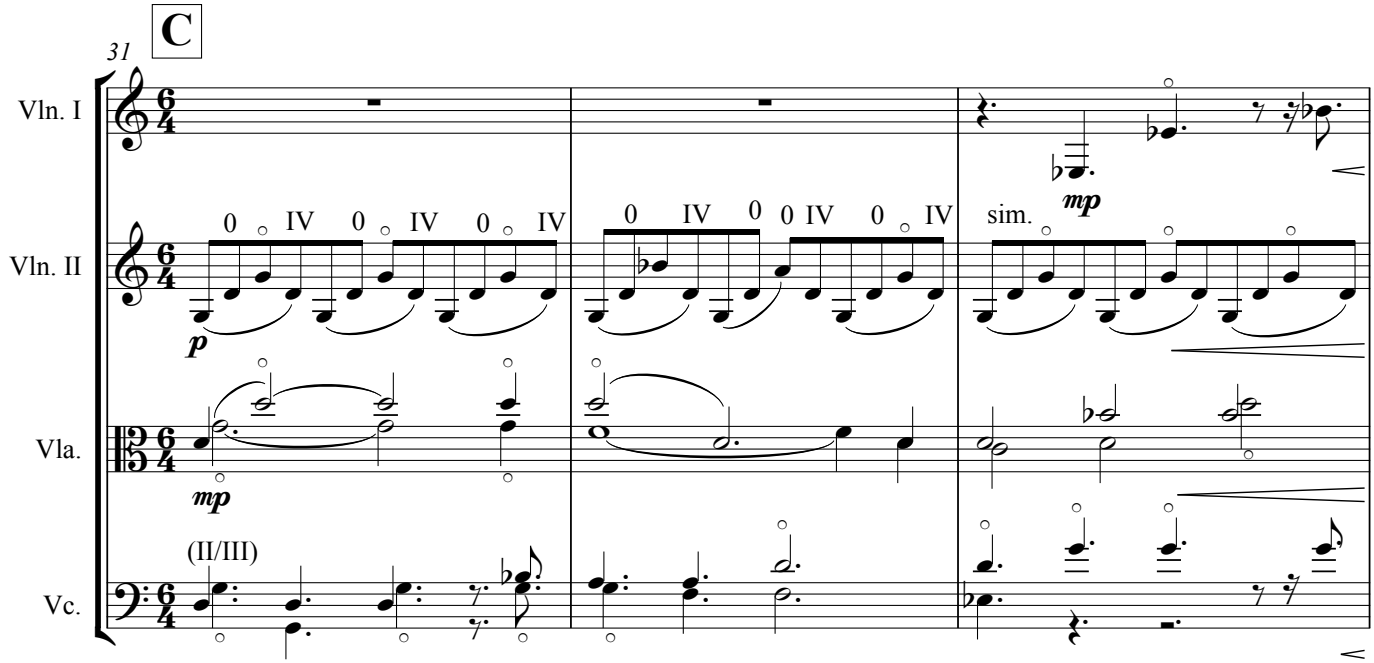
The string harmonics are notated at the sounding pitch. They are all 1st, 2nd or 3rd natural harmonics (apart from two 4th harmonics in the Cello). Where there is a choice of harmonics the suggestion of a string is made. Equally where the difference between an open string or a stopped string is important this is also indicated. These only apply for one note unless otherwise indicated. Bow changes are left to the discretion of the player on the long held notes.

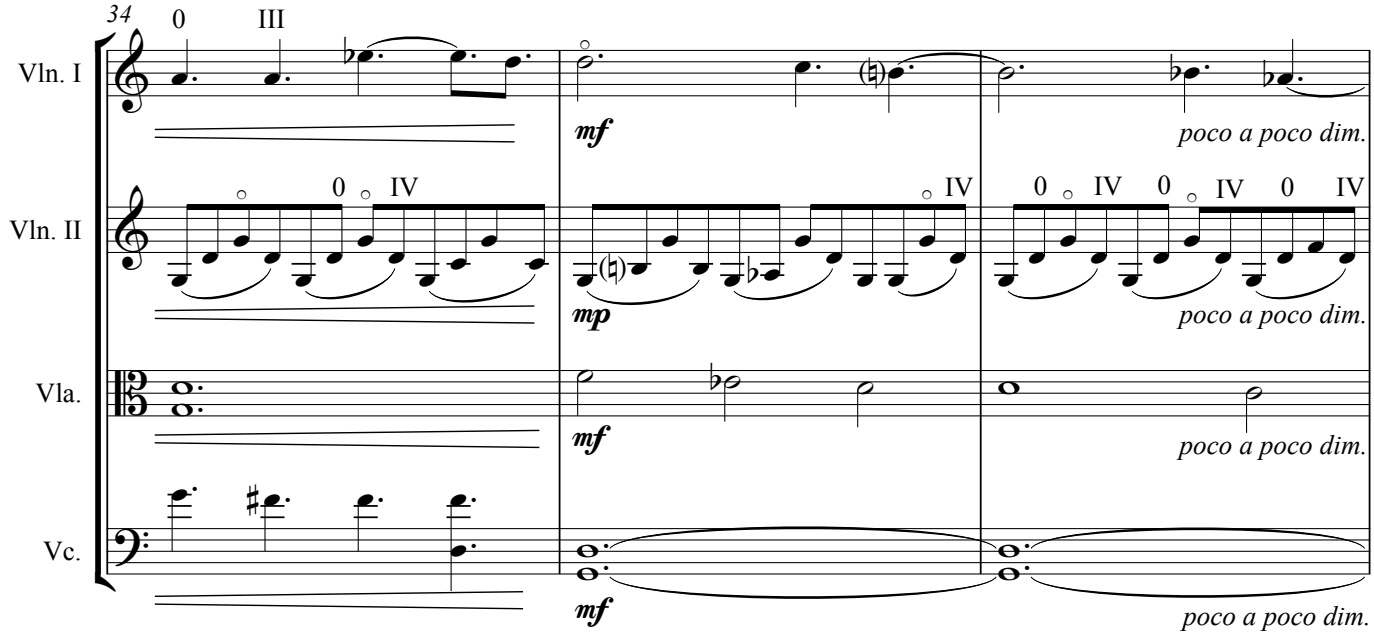

Scordatura as
with Fratres
Haunting (♩=72)
Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
Scordatura
Accordatura
Scordatura
Accordatura
(III/IV)
arco
III
IV
p
mp
A
7
12
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.

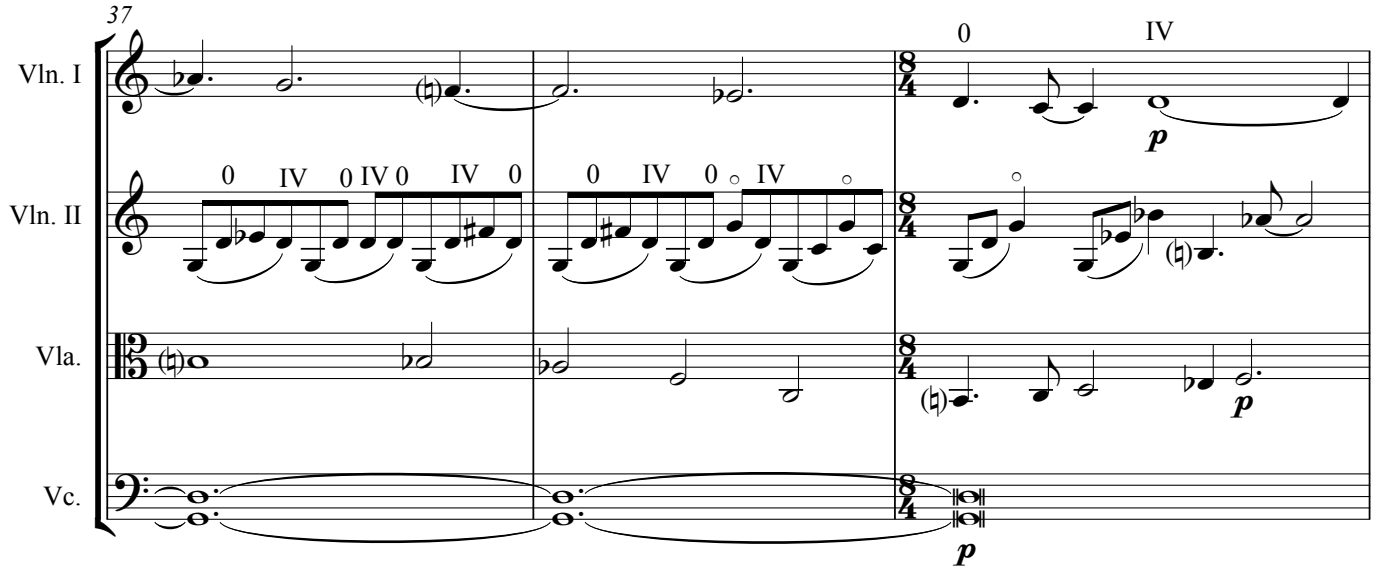

15
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
mf
III
II
18
poco a poco dim.
p
B
21
mp
(II/III)
(III/IV)

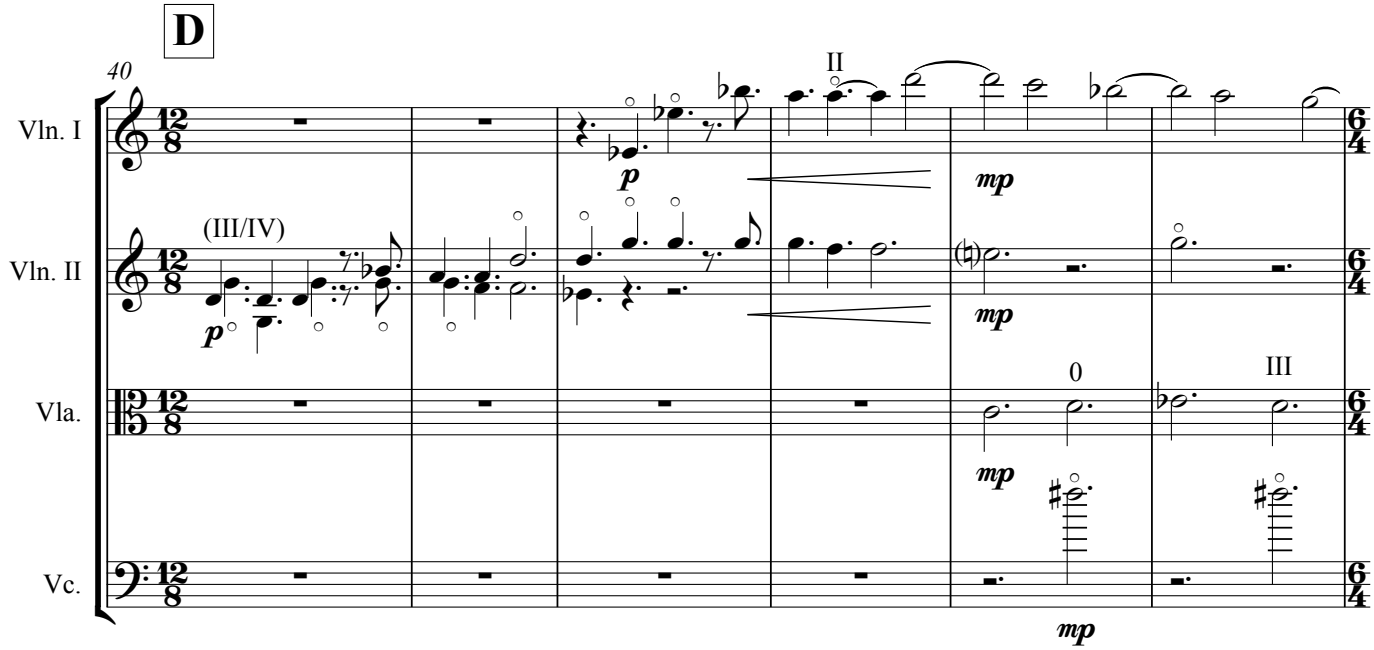

24
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
(II/III)
mf
mp

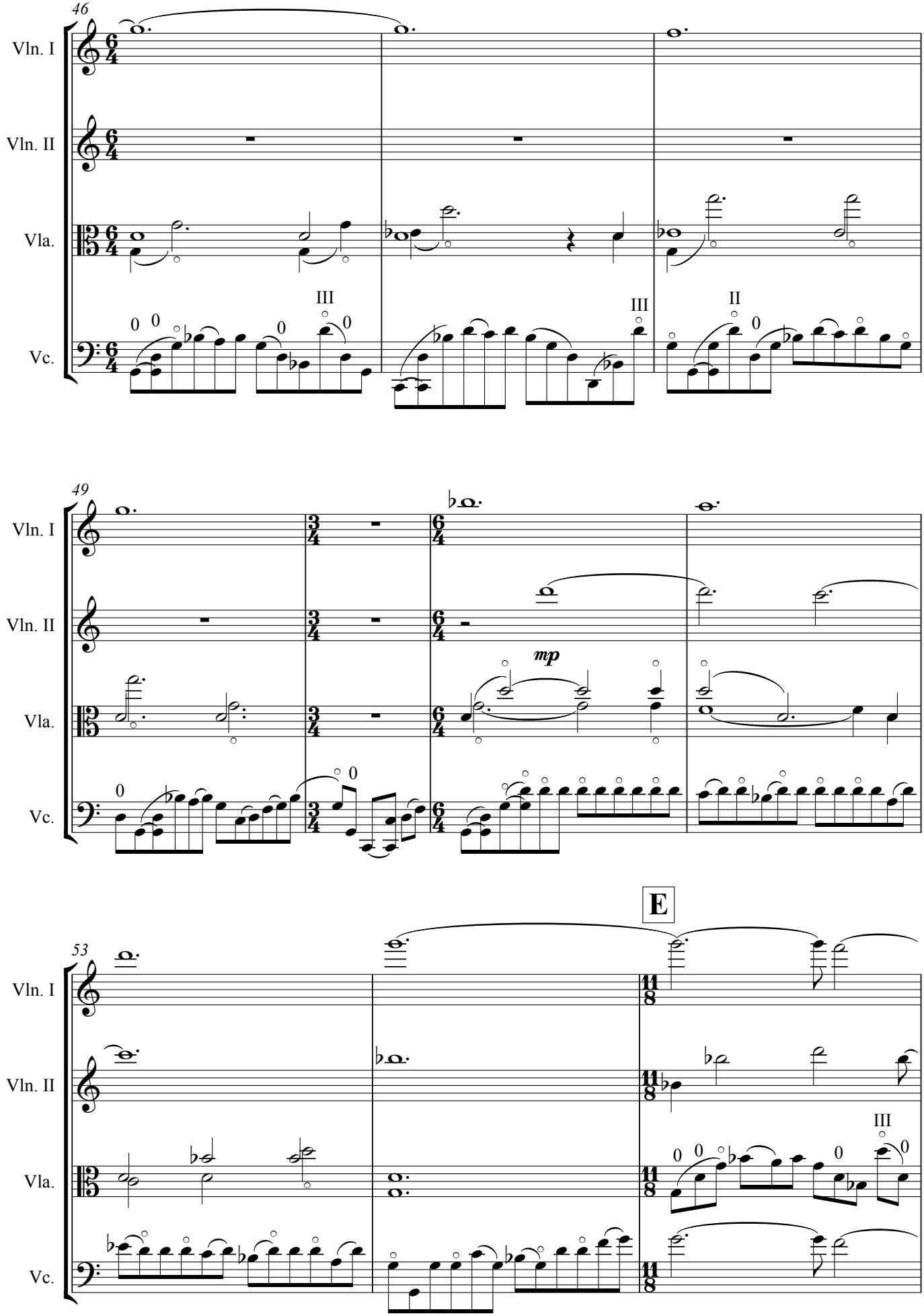

27
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.

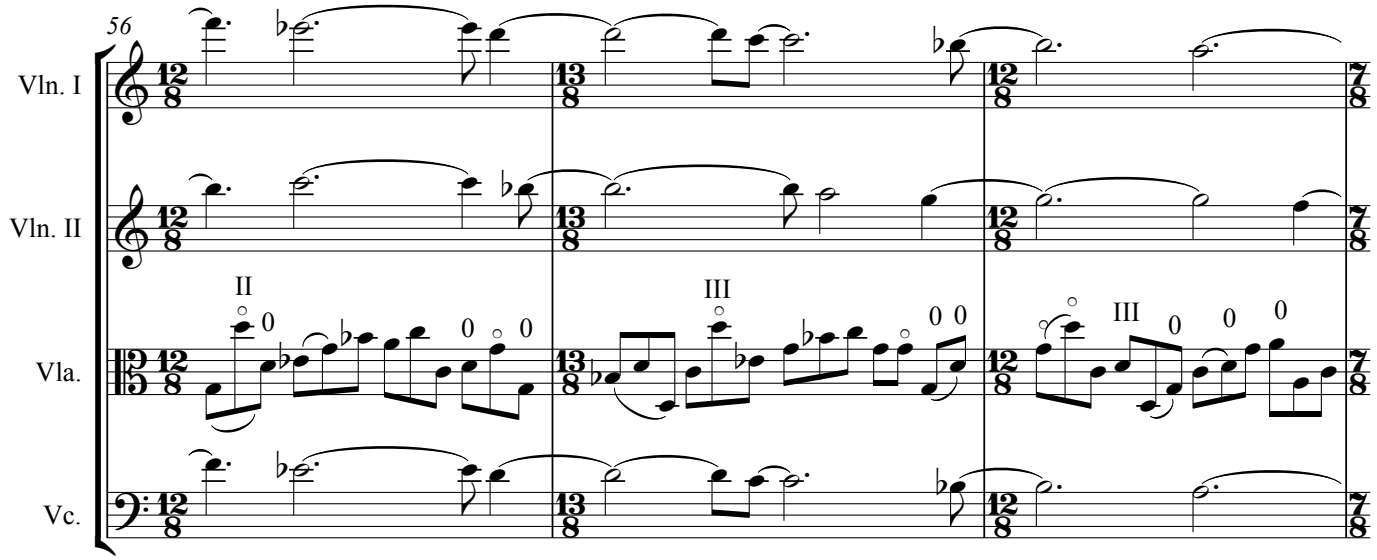

C
31
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
0 IV 0 IV 0 IV
p
mp
(II/III)
0 IV 0 0 IV 0 IV
sim.
mp

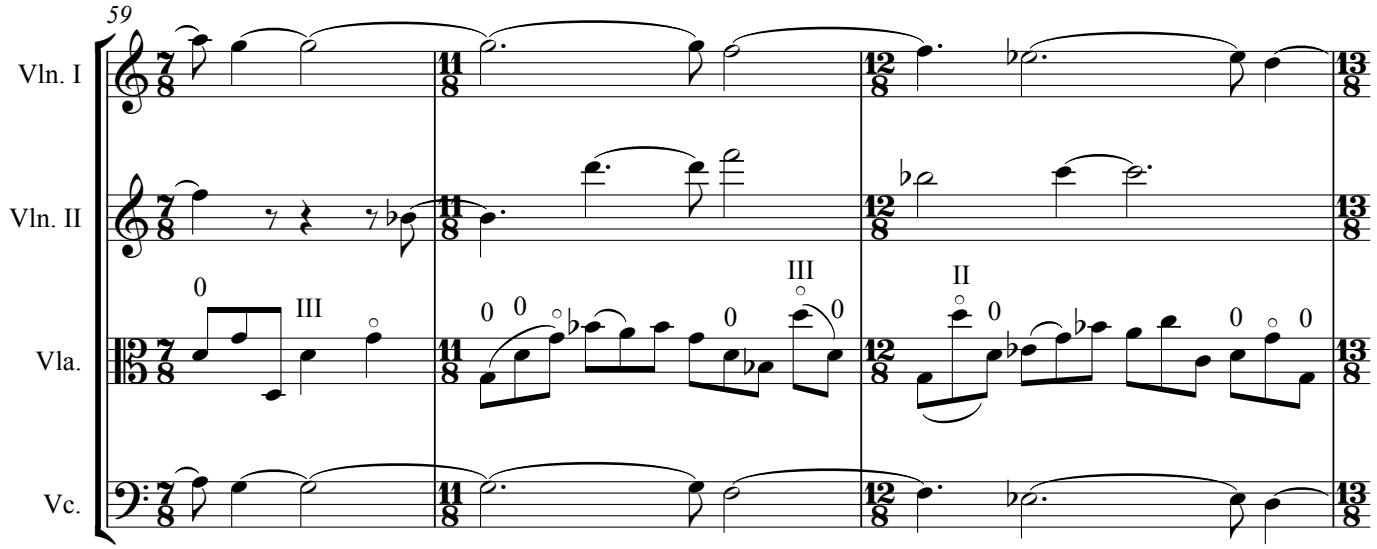

34
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
mf
mp
poco a poco dim.

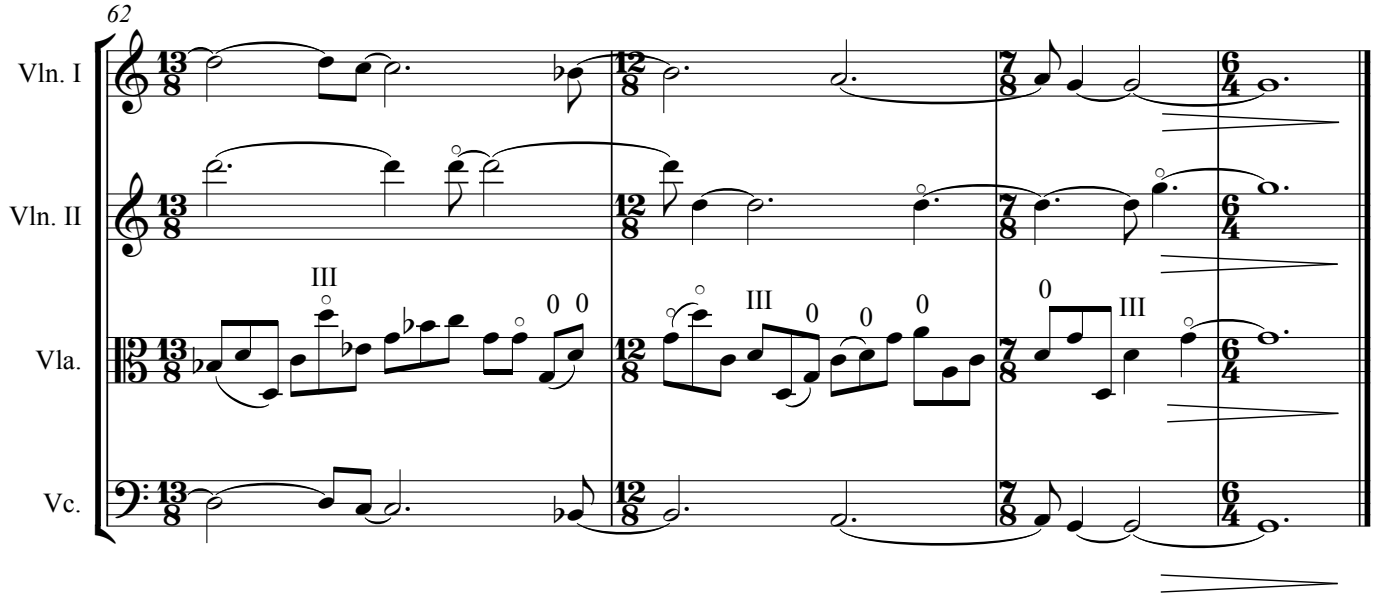

37
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
p


D
40
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
(III/IV)
p
mp


46
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
III
III
II
49
mp
53
E


56
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
II
III
III


59
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
III
III
II


62
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
III
III
III