A RIVER OF TIME

for Brass Quintet

for
the Oklahoma City University
Faculty Brass Quintet

Commissioned by
The Oklahoma Music Teachers Association

by
KRISTOPHER MALOY

March 2013

Duration: 16:00

A River of Time

Prologue (Organum)

I. Perception (flowing through a curved lens)

II. Memory (a broken glass shatters back together)

III. Convergence (from the synthesis of past and future, the present emerges)

Epilogue: The Persistent Illusion of Time

I have become fascinated in recent years by the idea of time and the scientific studies that continue to unravel only deeper levels of mystery about the nature of time. Once thought to be an unyielding and constant measure, time was displaced by relativity theory as being bendable and subject to gravity. Contemporary studies in physics seem to indicate that at the smallest and most fundamental levels of the universe, paths that will be taken in the future effect the paths of the past, rendering any perception of causality empty. Most recent thinking on the nature of time suggests that the very concept of time may arise with our consciousness, proposing the (somewhat unsettling!) idea that a key component on which we base our experience of the world is simply an apparition. This gives aphorisms about watched pots never boiling, watched clocks never ticking, and time flying when you're having fun a whole new meaning! It also leads to the further unsettling idea that anything and everything we perceive may have no basis in any objective "reality" and that there is only our perception.

This piece is a reflection and meditation on these thoughts. This work is constructed on a set of interval cycles that is established in the Prologue through an imitative melody on a constant rhythm. Here, an homage to organum reflects the idea of humans—through all but our most recent history—of time as the constant of the universe. ("Organum" is a centuries-old musical genre that focused on a consistent mode of rhythm and the "perfect" intervals of 4ths, 5ths, and octaves—the intervals on which the cycle used for this piece begins and ends.)

Movement I focuses on time as linear, but warped and inconstant—flowing forward, but faster, slower, and blurred. Movement II allows the musical materials on which the piece is built to flow backwards just as, at a level we can not perceive in the universe, the future seems equally likely to flow toward the past. Movement III is constructed from the fundamental musical material overlapped onto itself, rendering the passage of time a vacant concept.

Finally, in the Epilogue, the original opening melody recurs again, but accompanied now by the overlapped beginning and ending of the cyclical musical materials, signifying the idea that though our perception goes on as it ever has, it goes on with the knowledge that the progressive passage of time may be nothing but illusion.

A RIVER OF TIME

for Brass Quintet

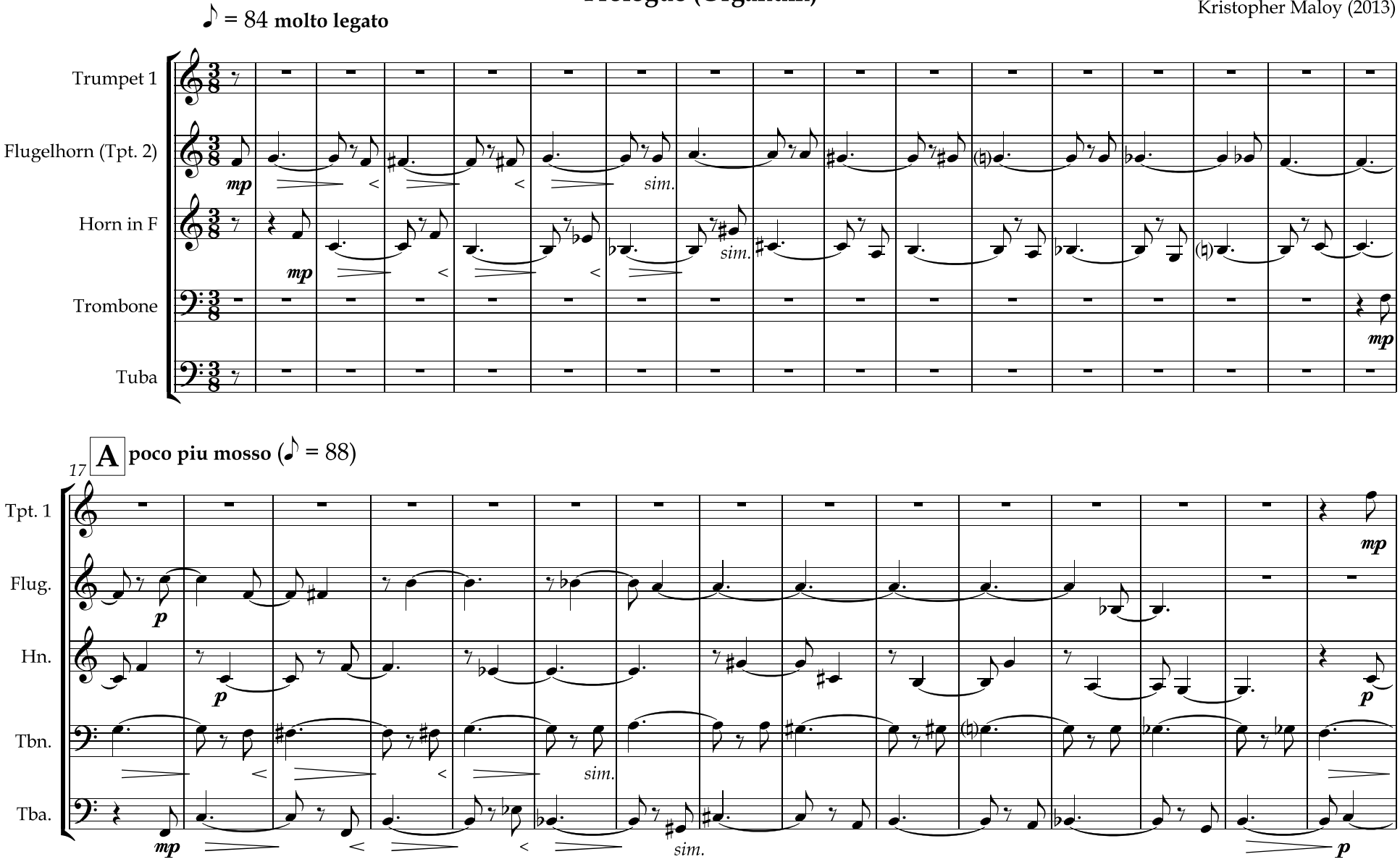
for the Oklahoma City University Faculty Brass Quintet

Commissioned by the Oklahoma Music Teachers Association

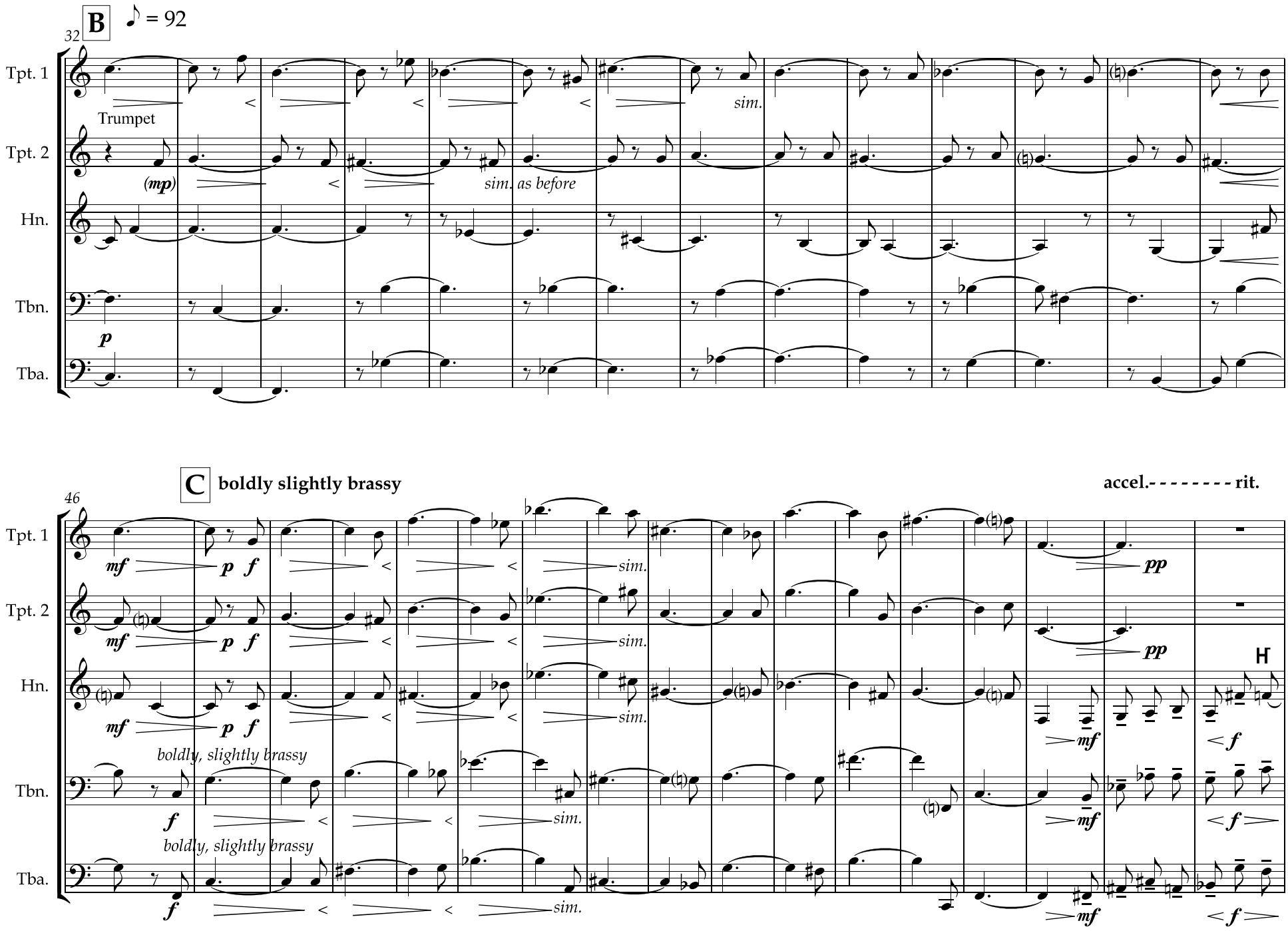
C SCORE

Prologue (Organum)

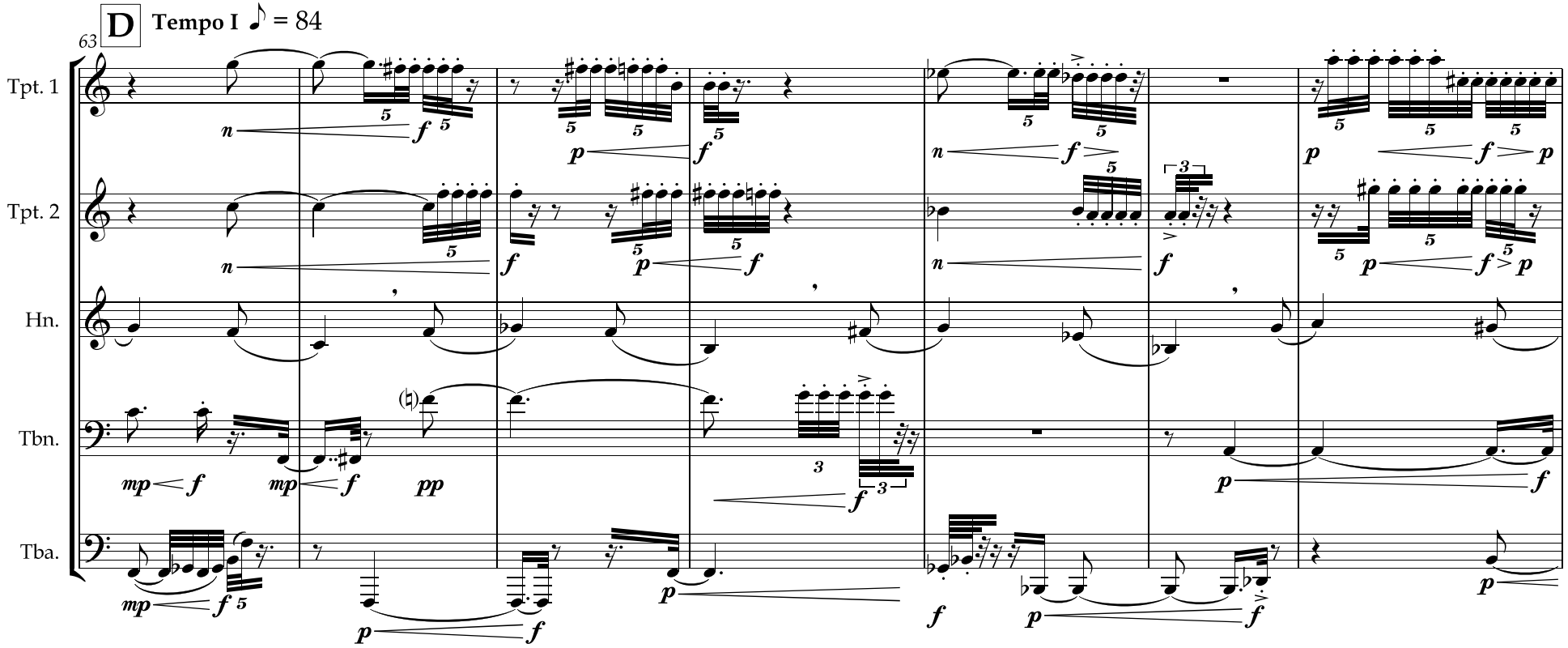
Kristopher Maloy (2013)

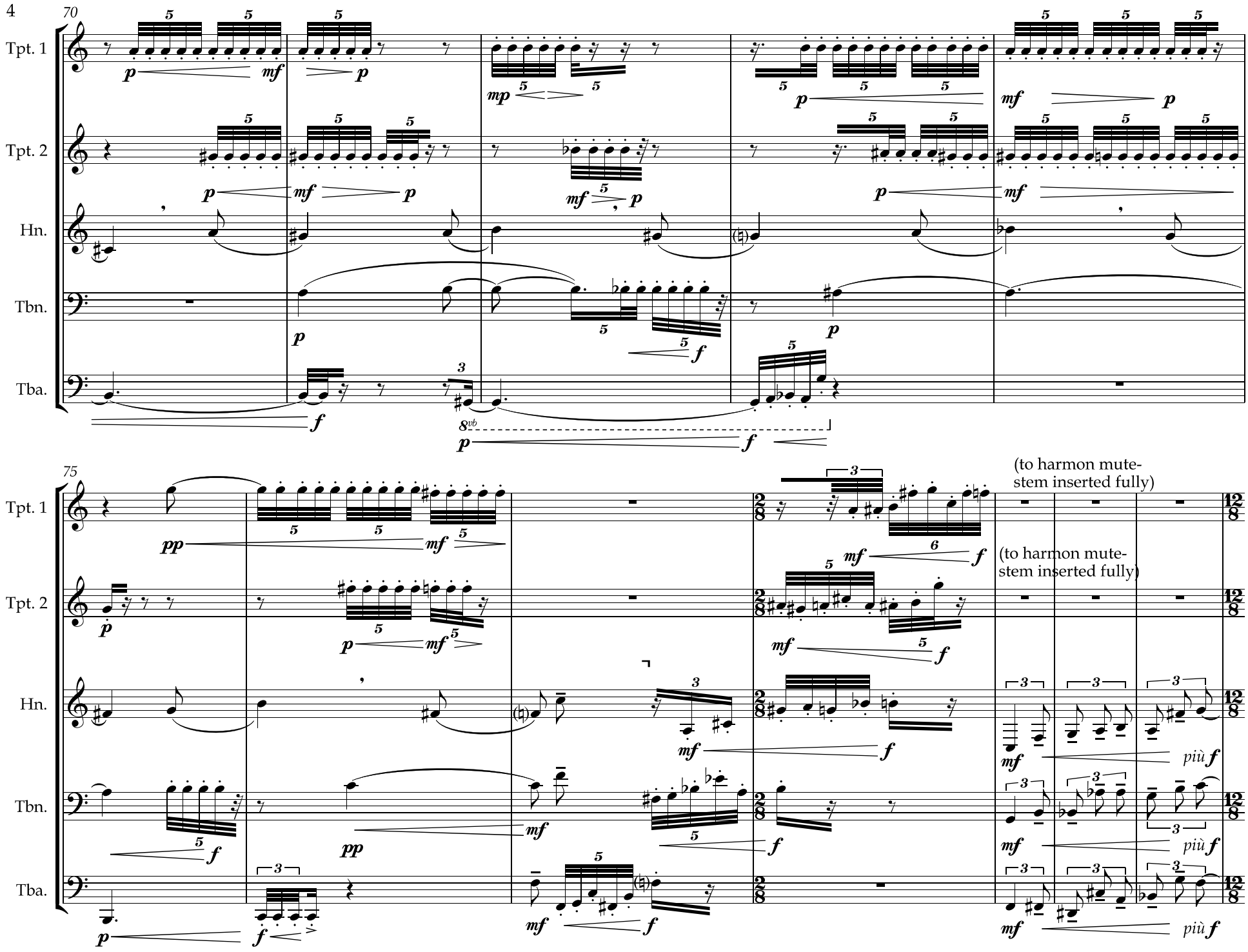


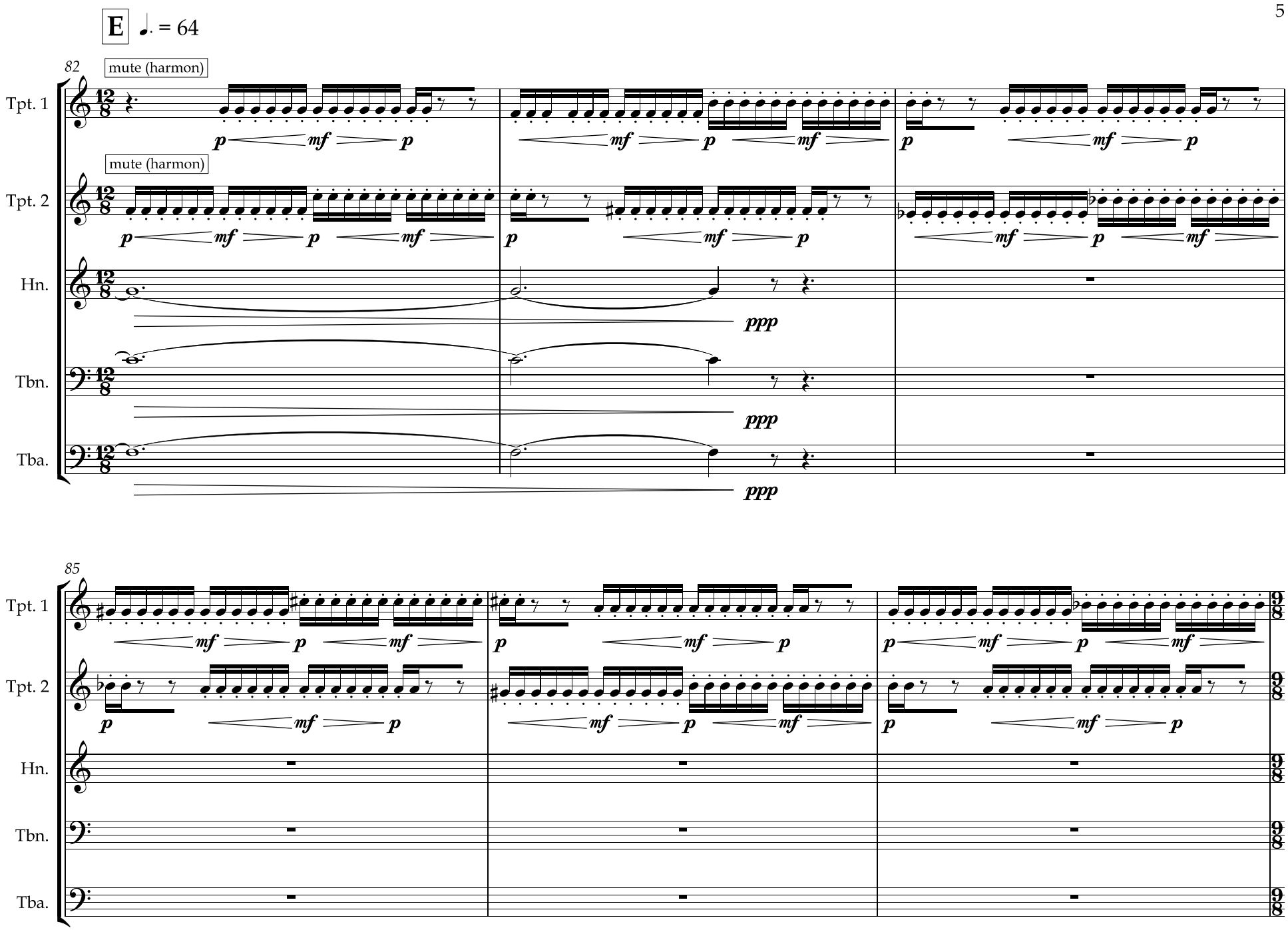
© 2013 Sciopticon Music (ASCAP)

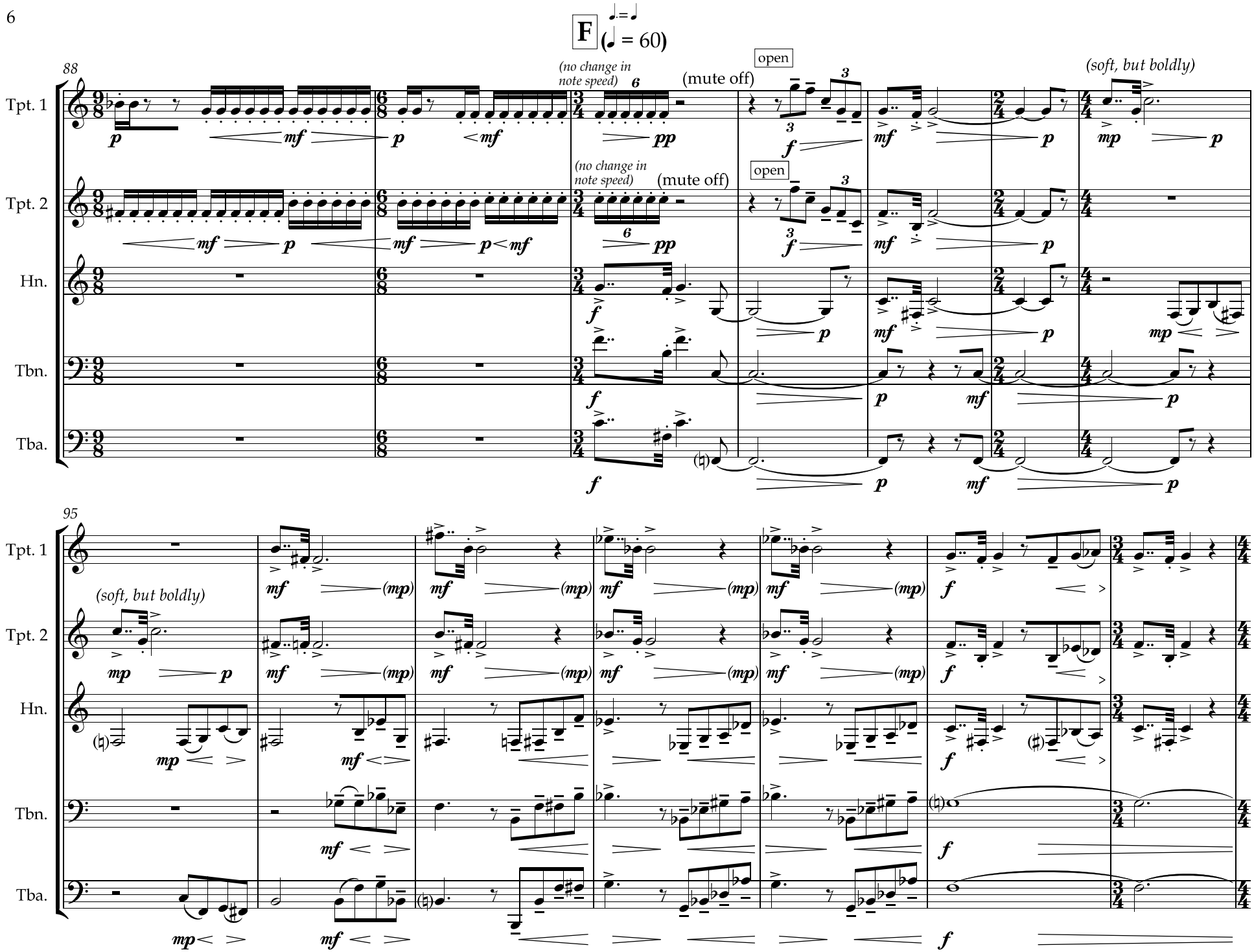

32
B
♪ = 92
Tpt. 1
Trumpet
sim.
Tpt. 2
(mp)
sim. as before
Hn.
Tbn.
p
Tba.
46
C
boldly slightly brassy
accel.- - - - - - - - rit.
mf
p f
sim.
pp
boldly, slightly brassy
f
mf
H

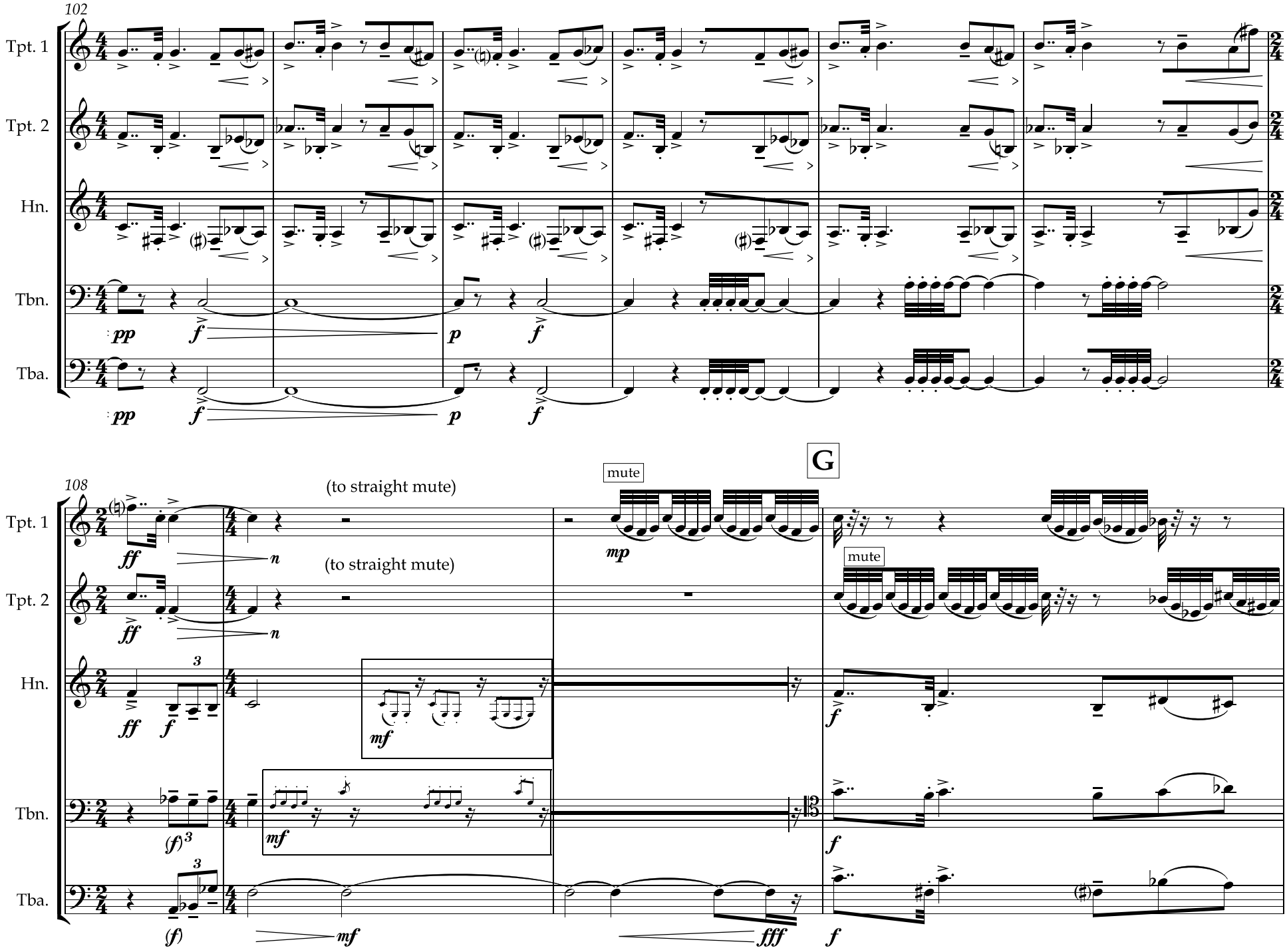
I. Perception (flowing through a curved lens)

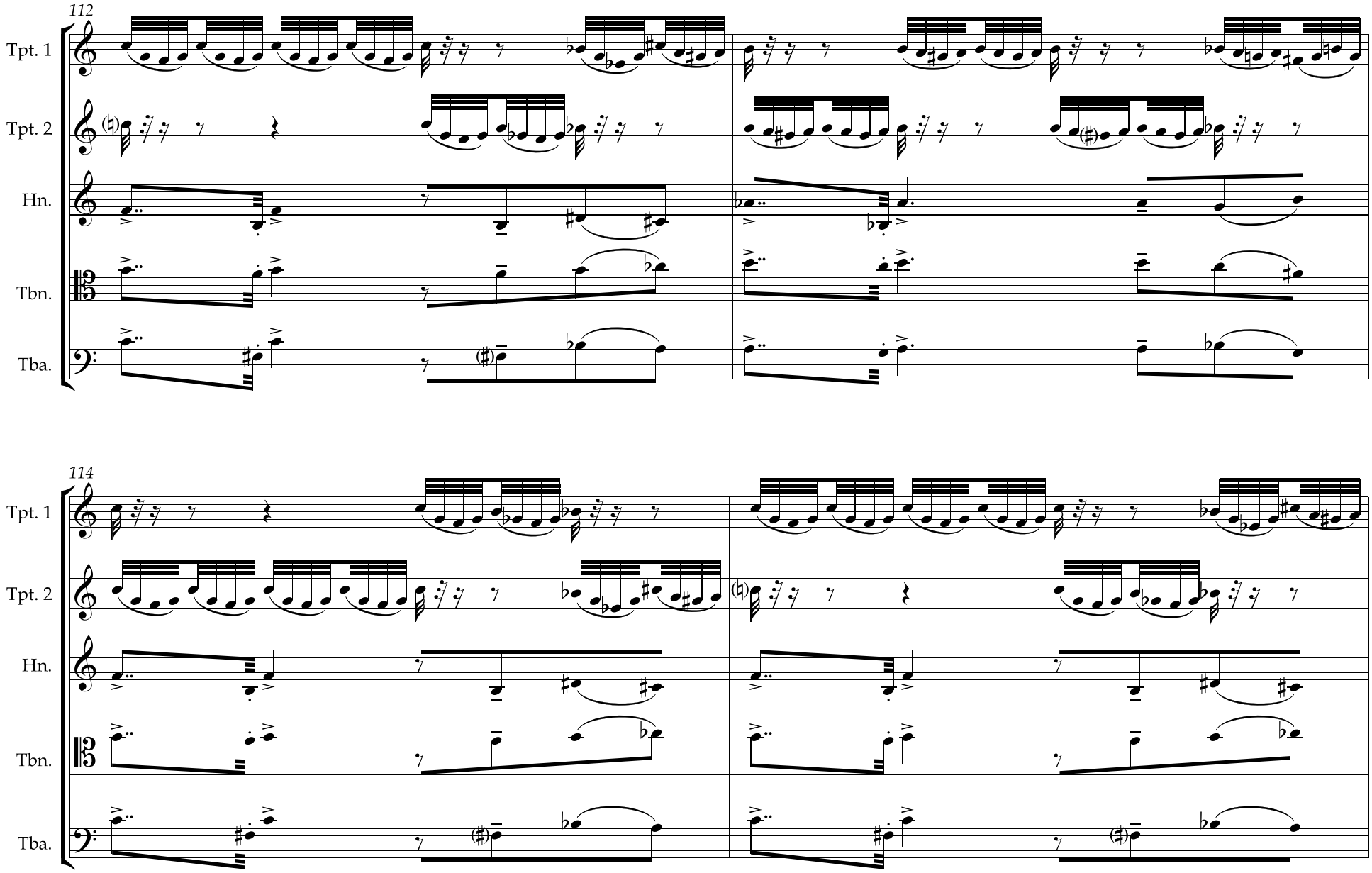


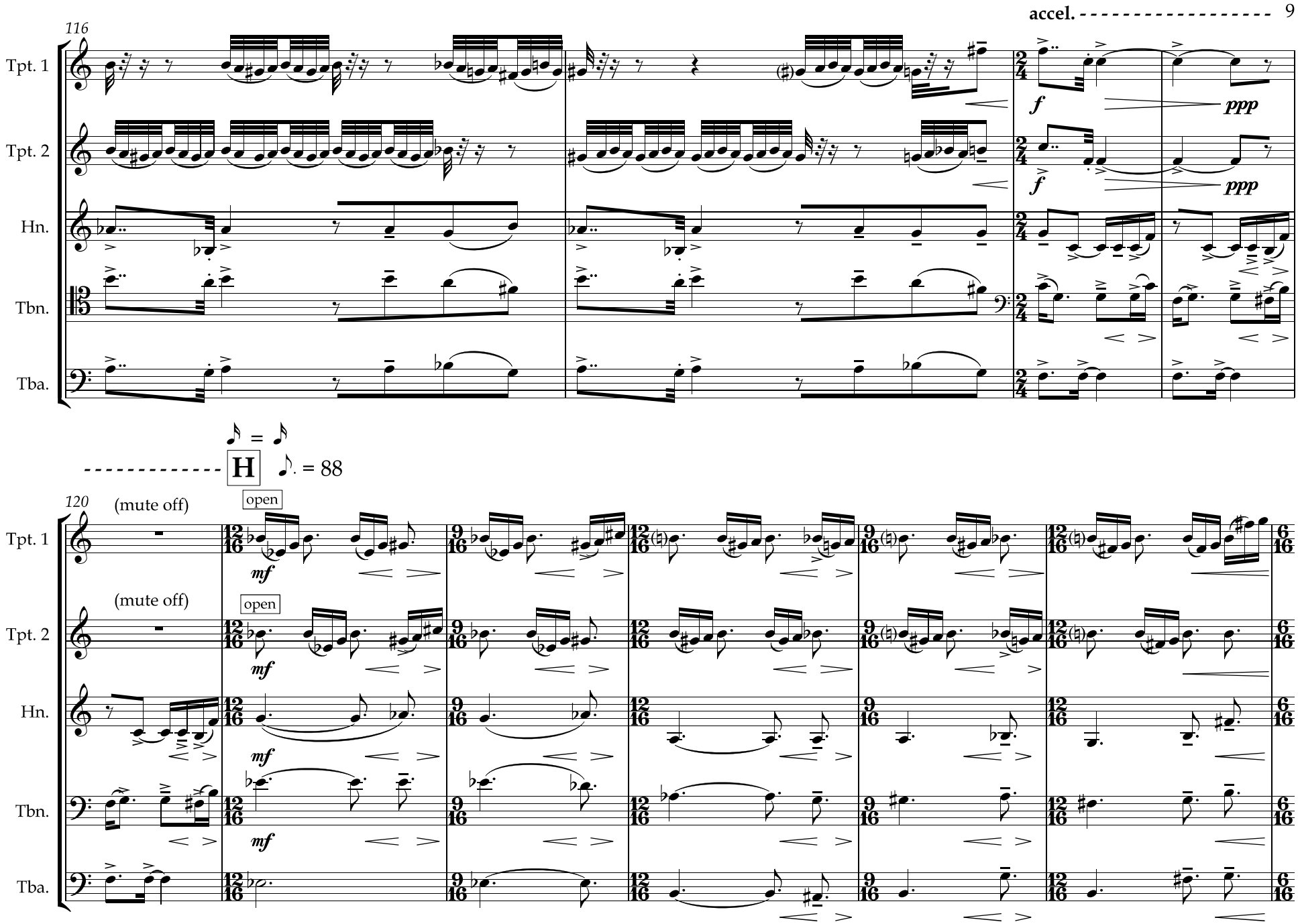

70
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
75
(to harmon mute-
stem inserted fully)
(to harmon mute-
stem inserted fully)
più f
più f
più f


E
♩. = 64
82
mute (harmon)
Tpt. 1
mute (harmon)
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
85
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.


F
(♩ = 60)
88
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
(no change in note speed)
(mute off)
open
(soft, but boldly)
95


102
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
pp
f
p
f
G
108
(to straight mute)
(to straight mute)
mute
mute
ff
n
mp
mf
fff


112
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
114
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.


accel.
116
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
f
ppp
H
= 88
120
(mute off)
open
mf

accel. ♪. = 96

126

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tba.

mp

accel. ♪. = 100

132

Tpt. 1

Tpt. 2

Hn.

Tbn.

Tba.

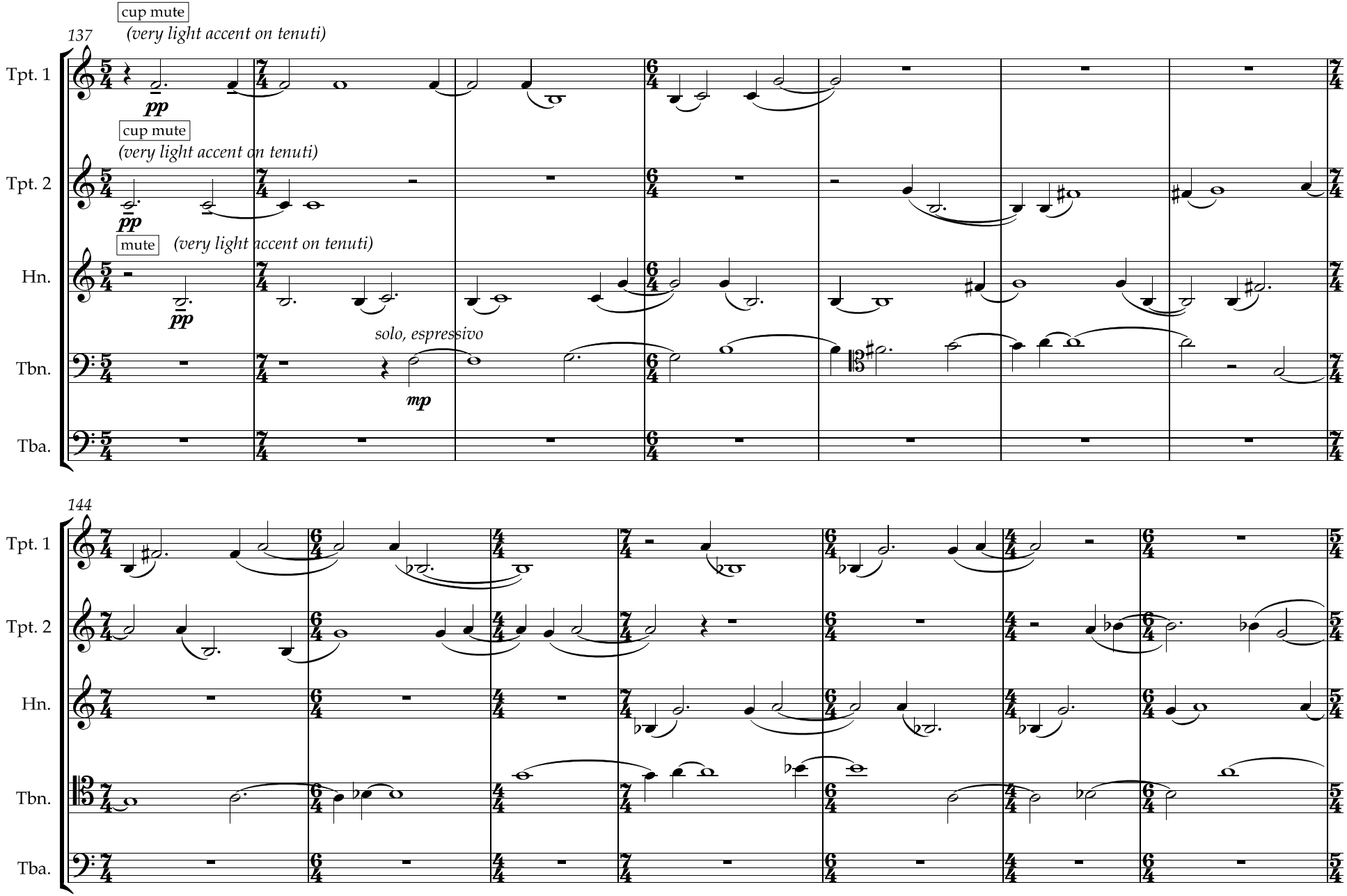
mf

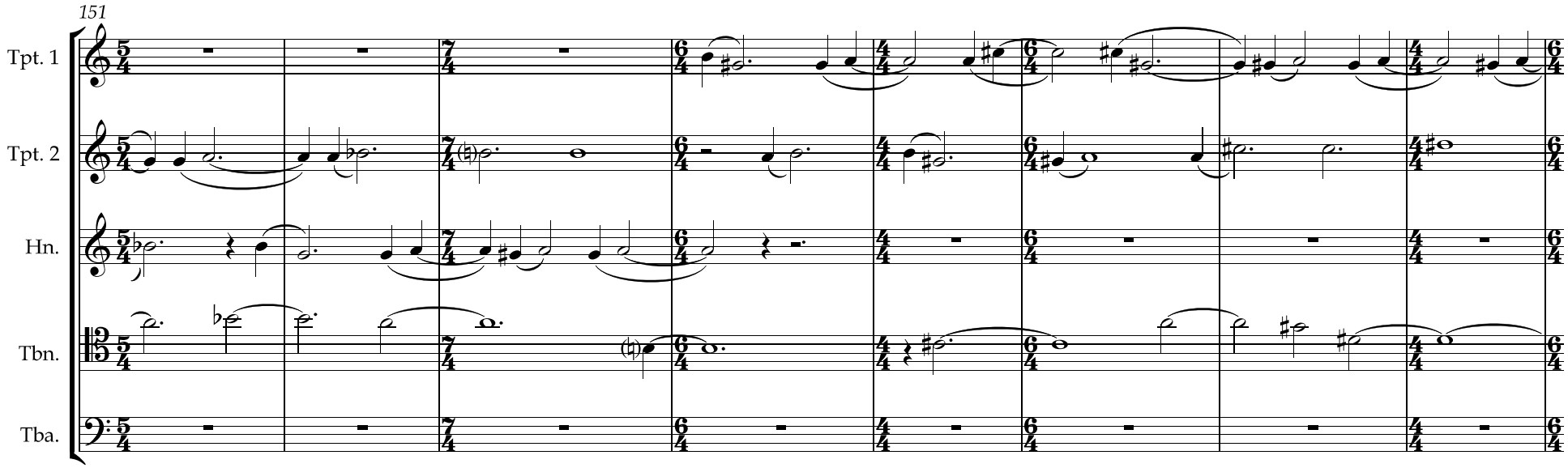
ff

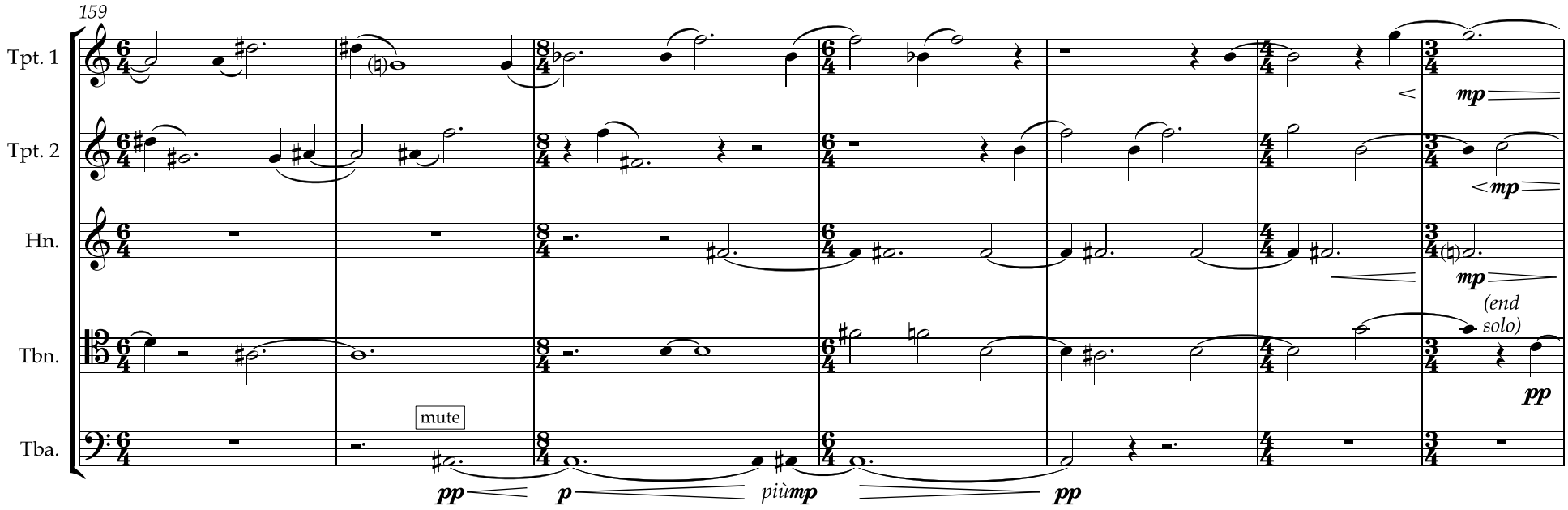
II. Memory (a broken glass shatters back together)

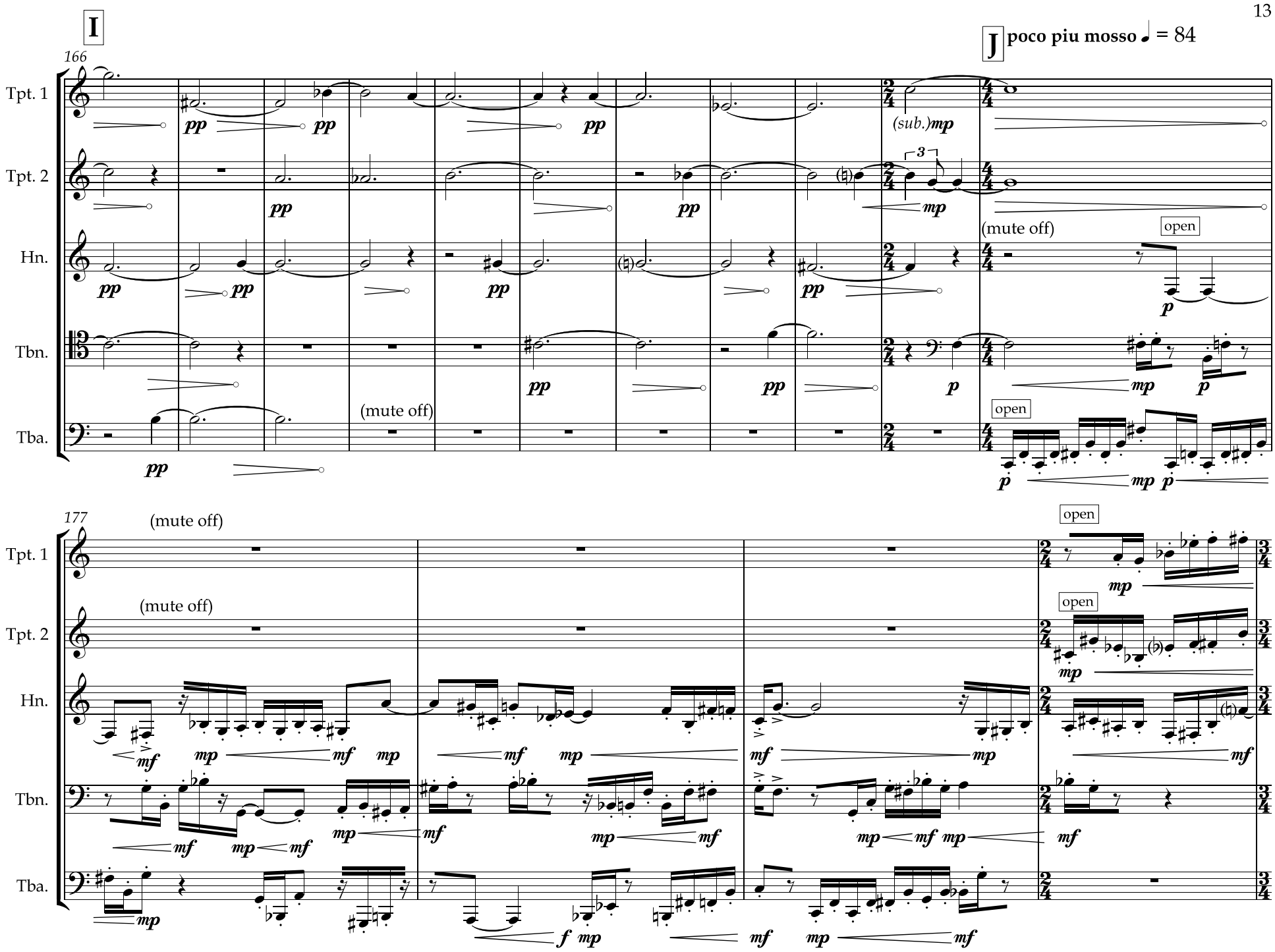
♩ = 76 **haunting, quasi-lontano**

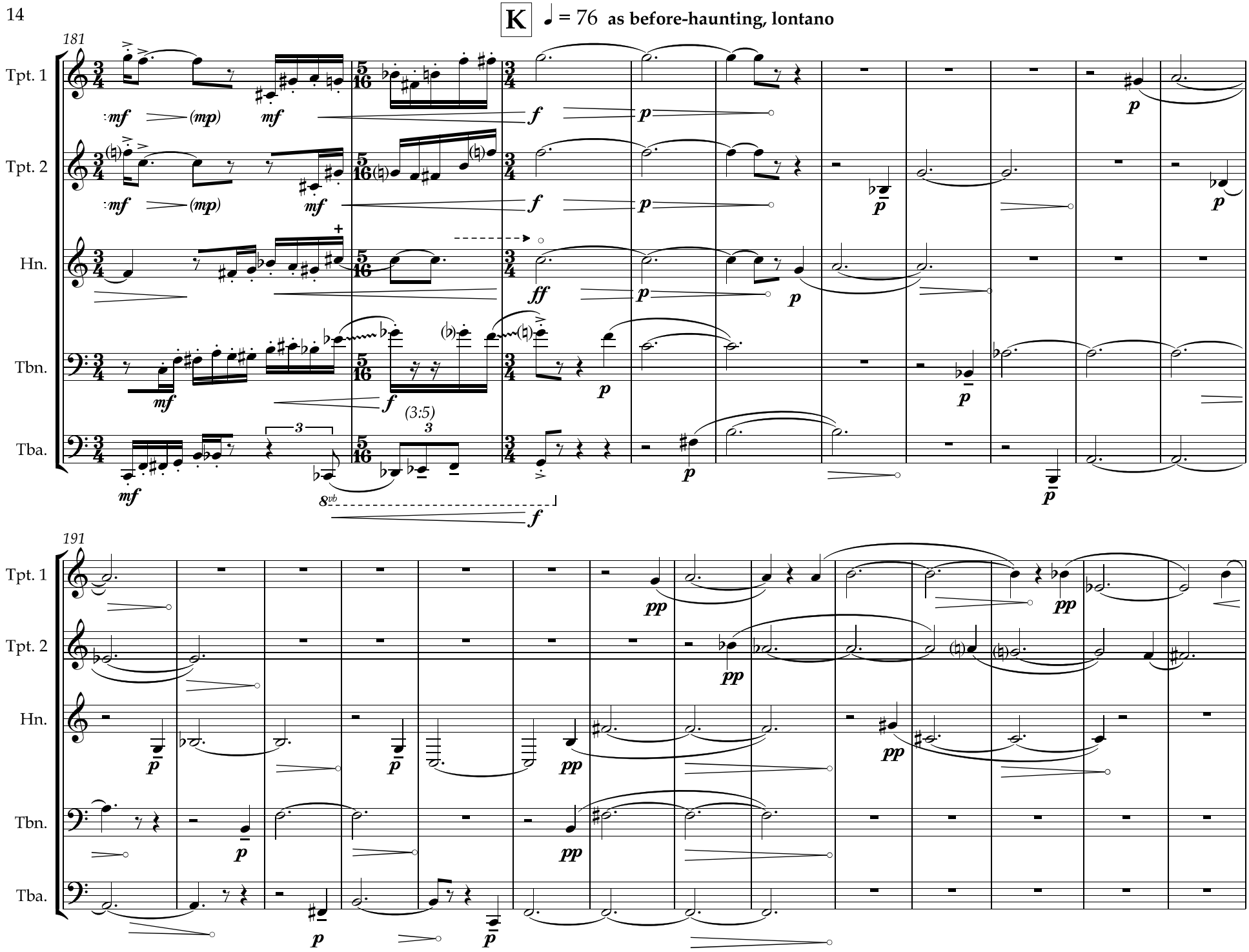
(all beats equal with no pulses stronger than others)

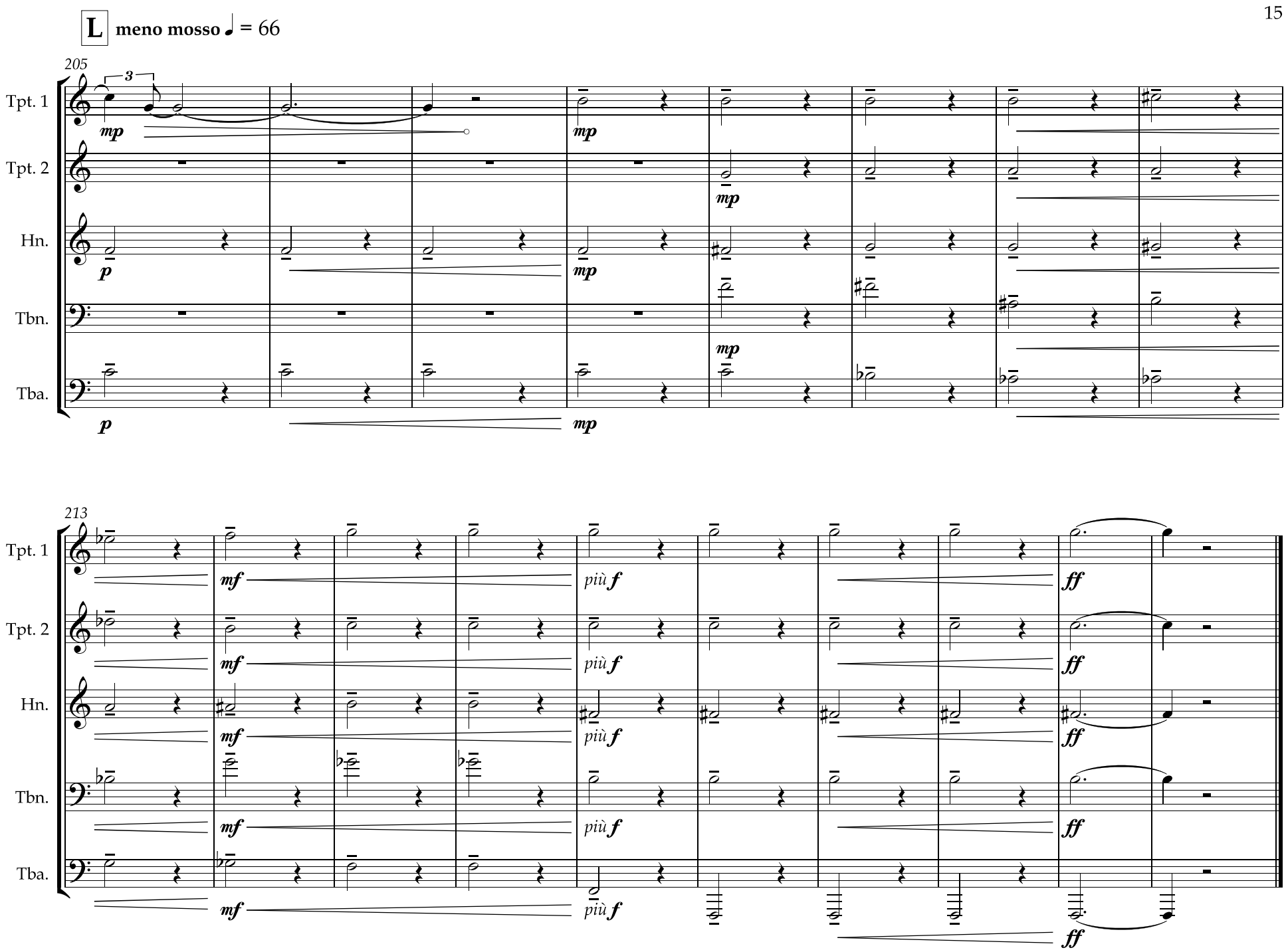



151
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.

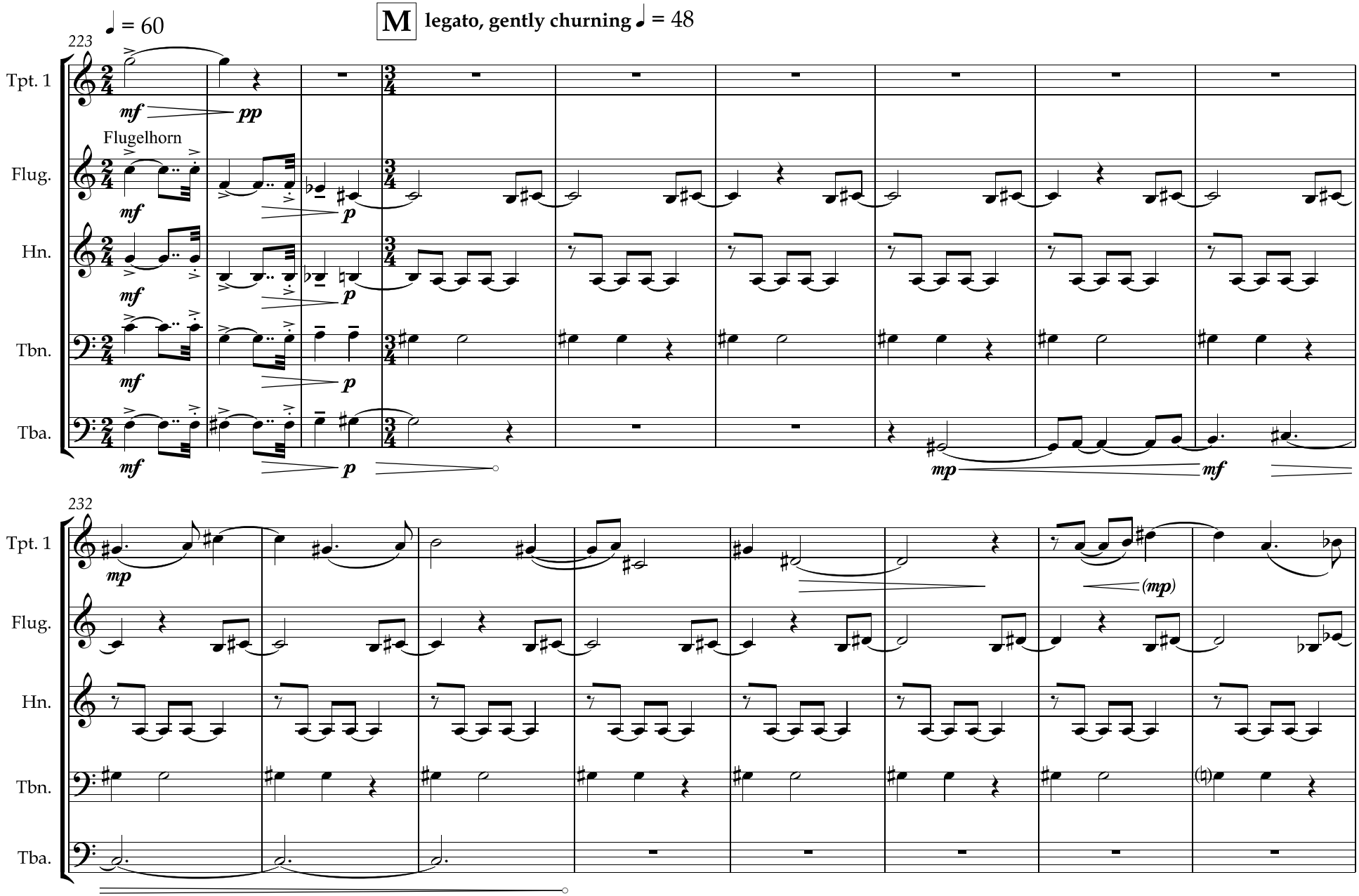

159
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
mp
mp
mp
(end solo)
pp
mute
pp
p
più mp
pp

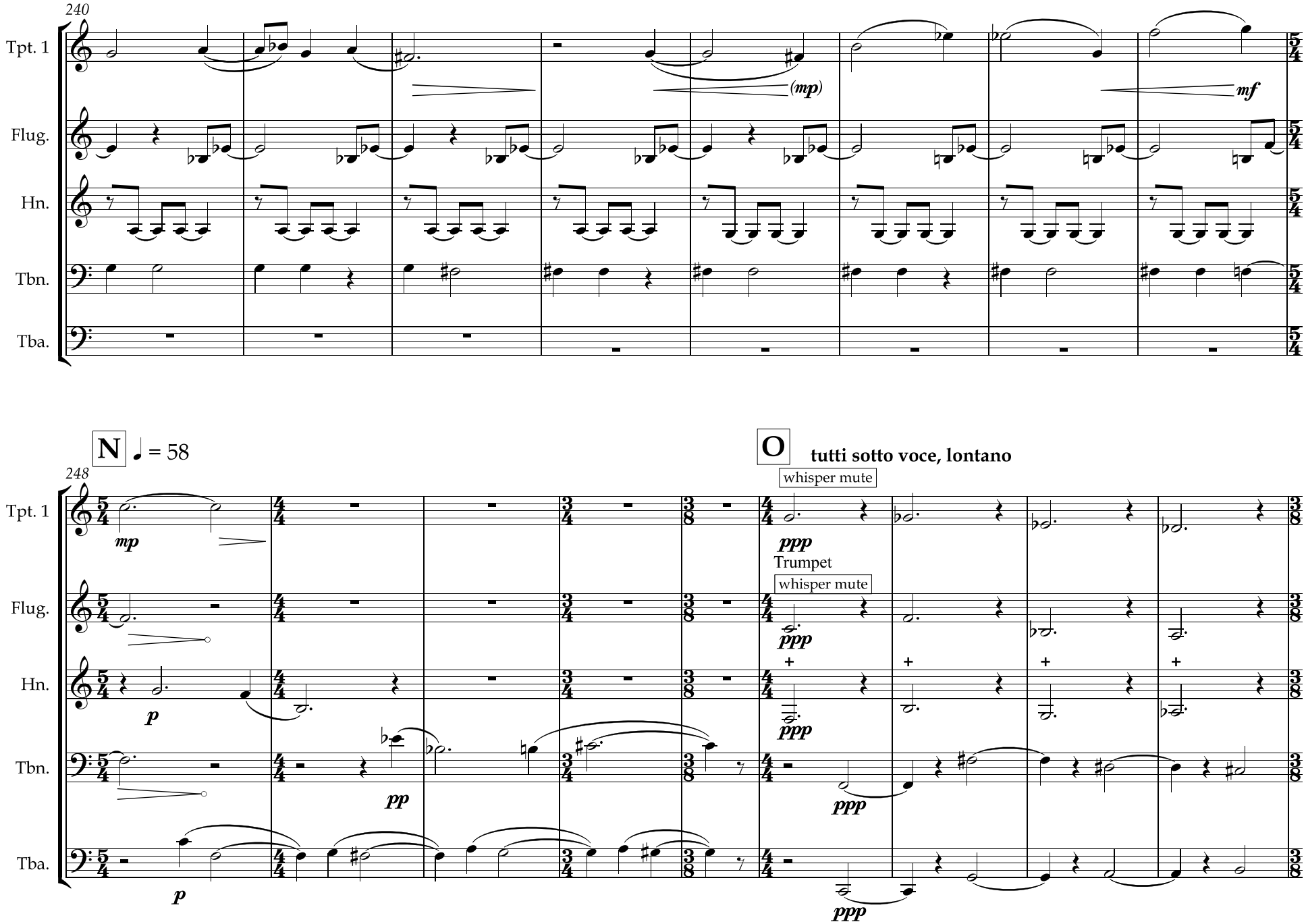

I
166
J
poco piu mosso ♩ = 84
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
(sub.)mp
(mute off)
open
177
(mute off)
open

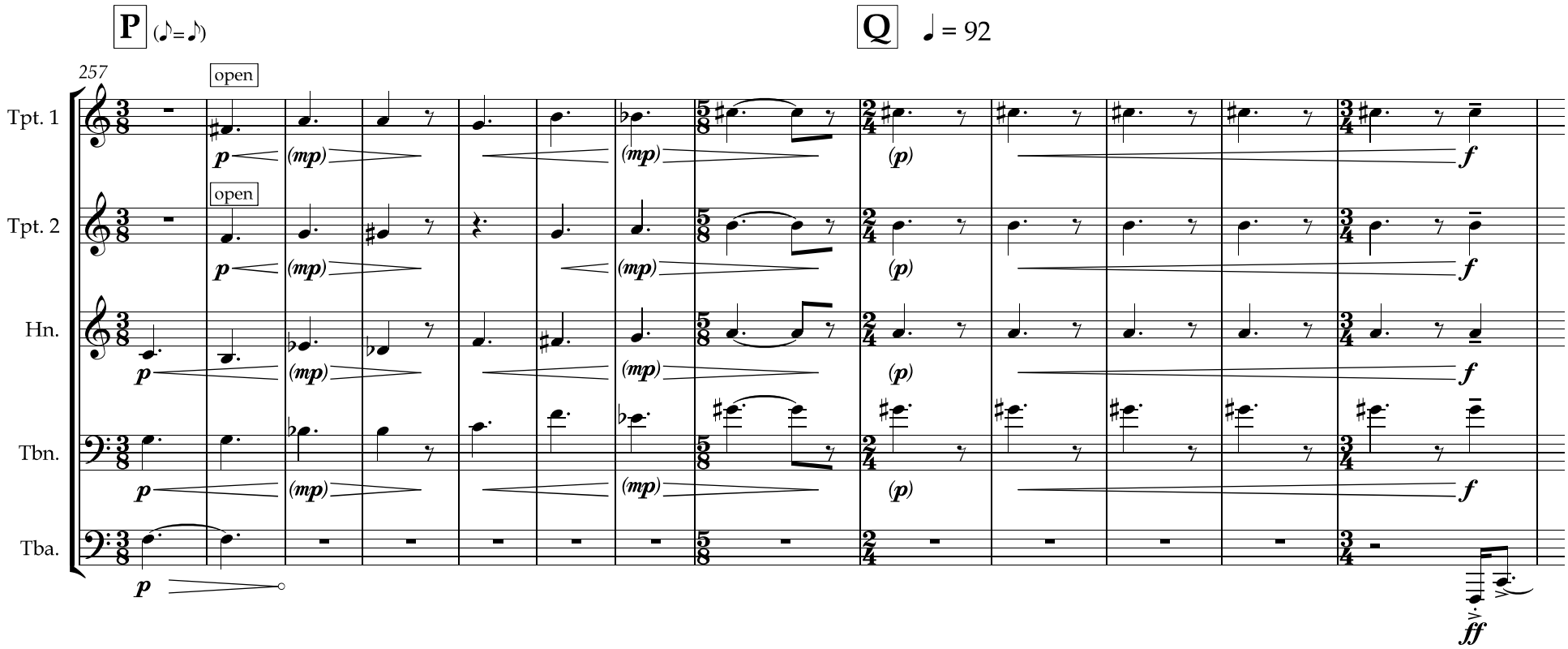

K
♩ = 76 as before-haunting, lontano
181
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
mf
(mp)
f
p
ff
(3:5)
8vb
191
pp

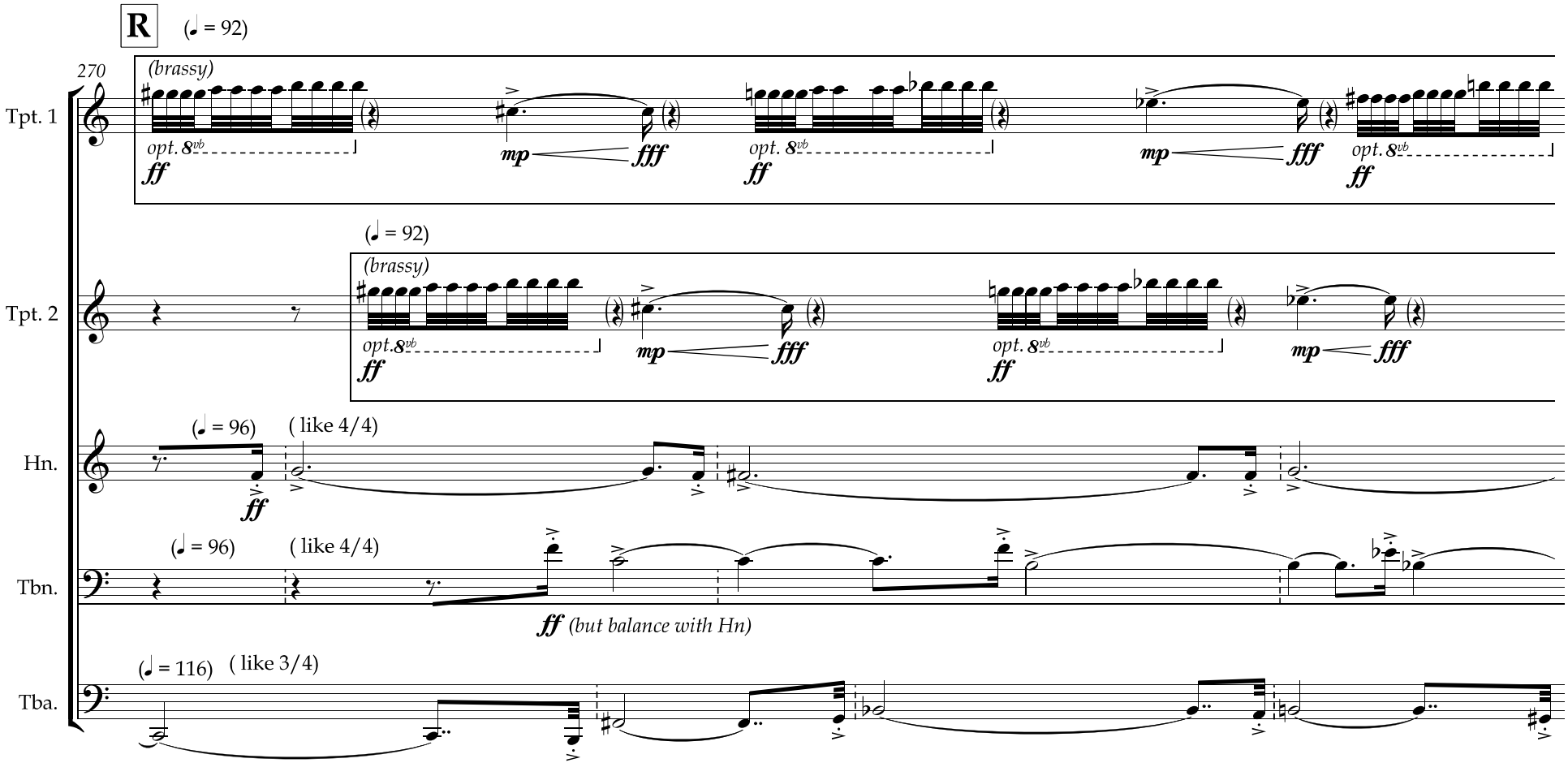

L
meno mosso ♩ = 66
205
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
mp
p
213
mf
più f
ff

III. Convergence (from the synthesis of past and future, the present emerges)

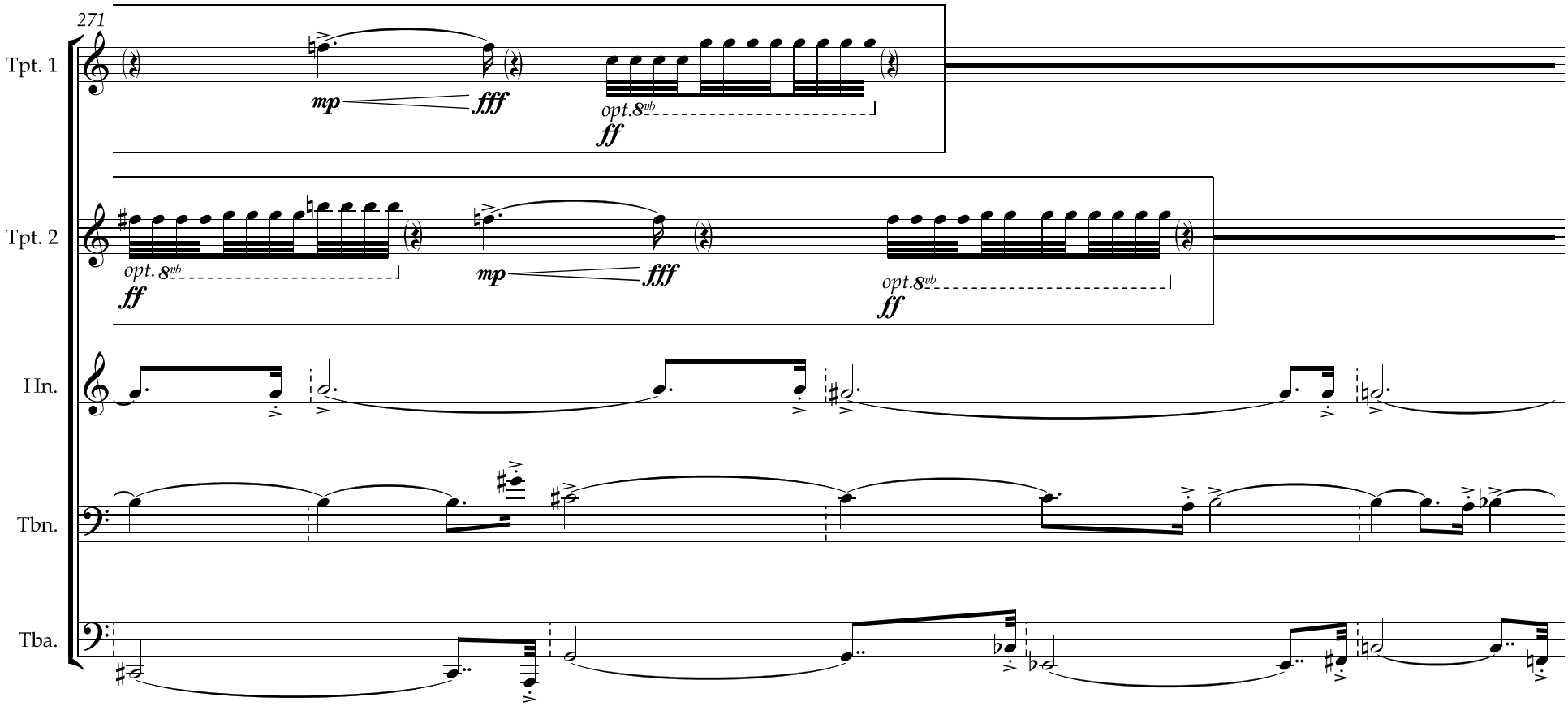


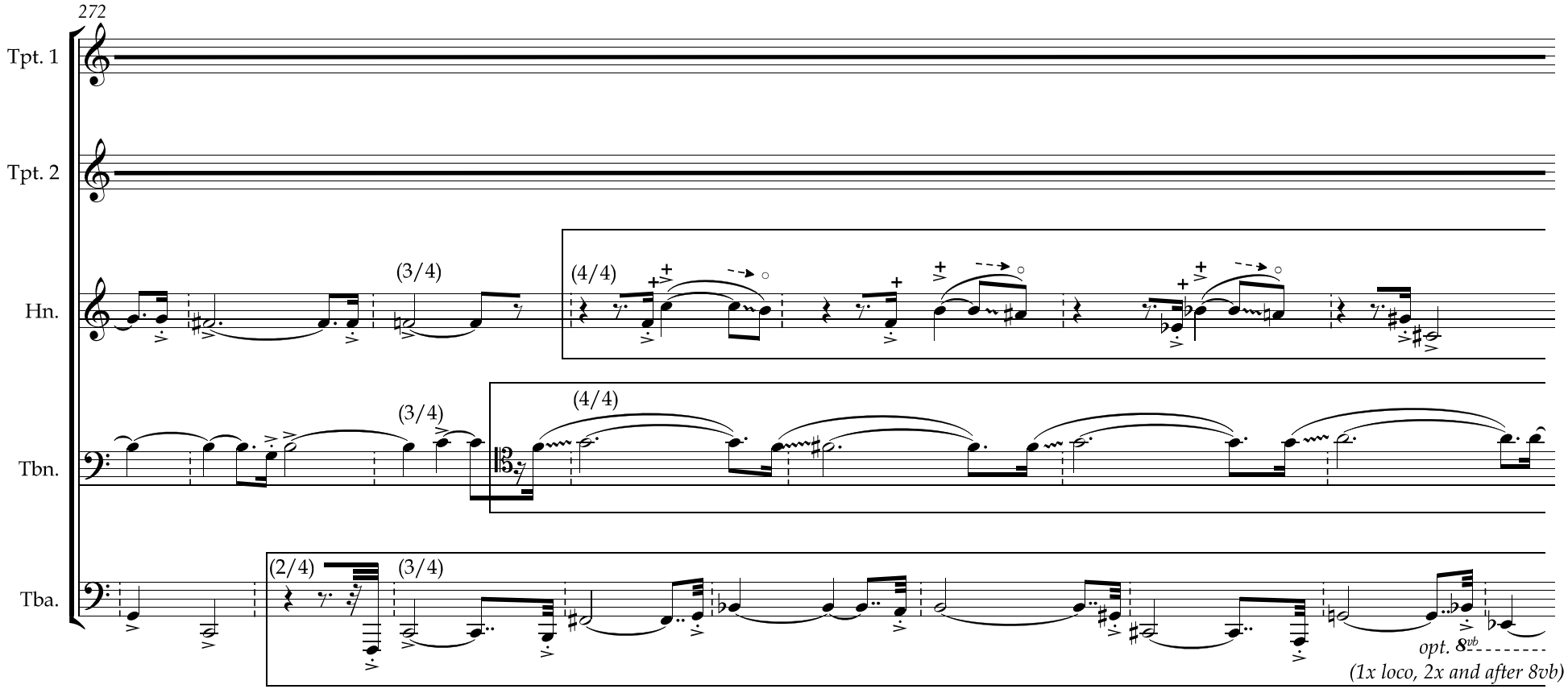

240
Tpt. 1
Flug.
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
(mp)
mf
N
= 58
248
mp
p
pp
p
O
tutti sotto voce, lontano
whisper mute
ppp
Trumpet
whisper mute
ppp
ppp
ppp
ppp

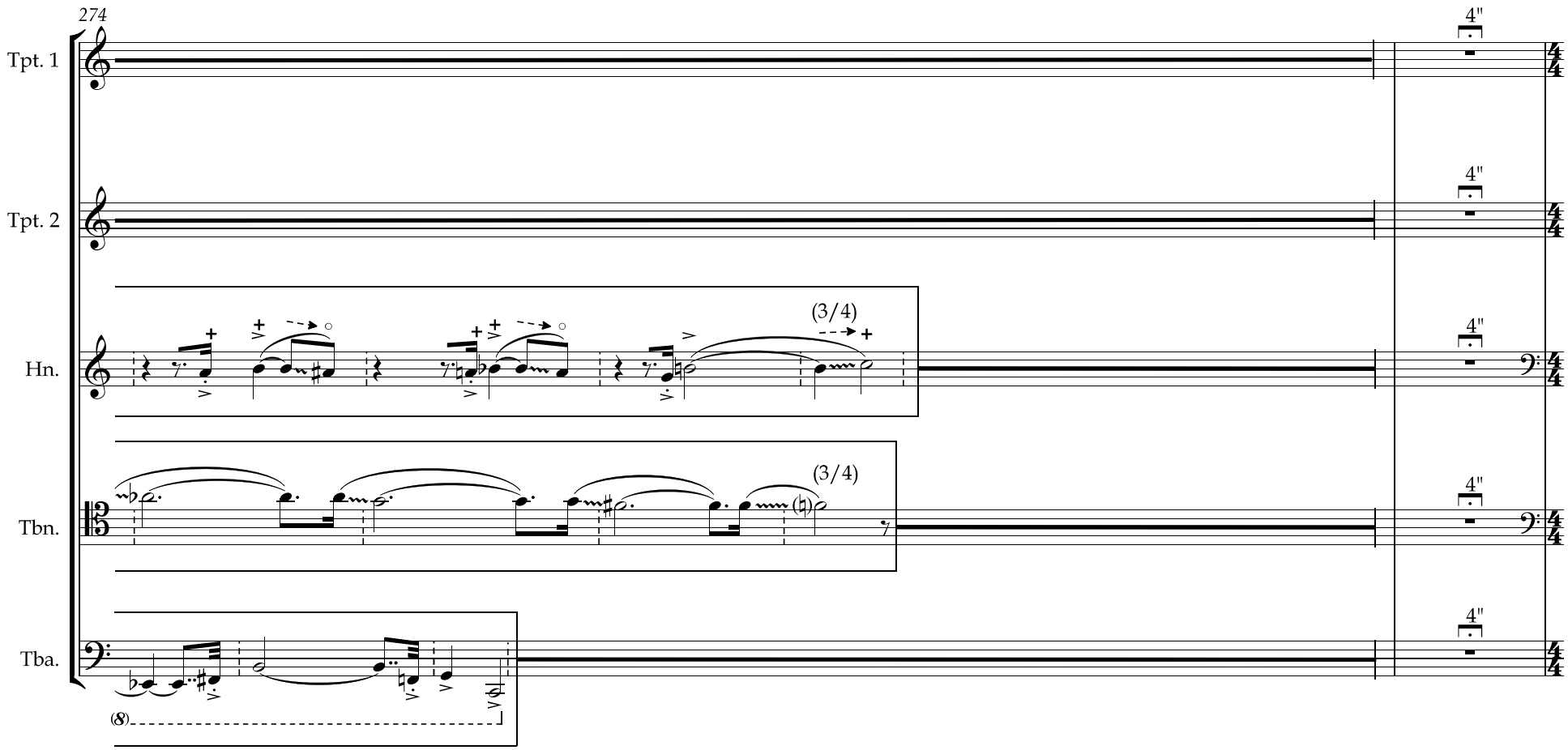

P
(♪=♪)
Q
♩ = 92
257
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
open
open
p
(mp)
(p)
f
ff



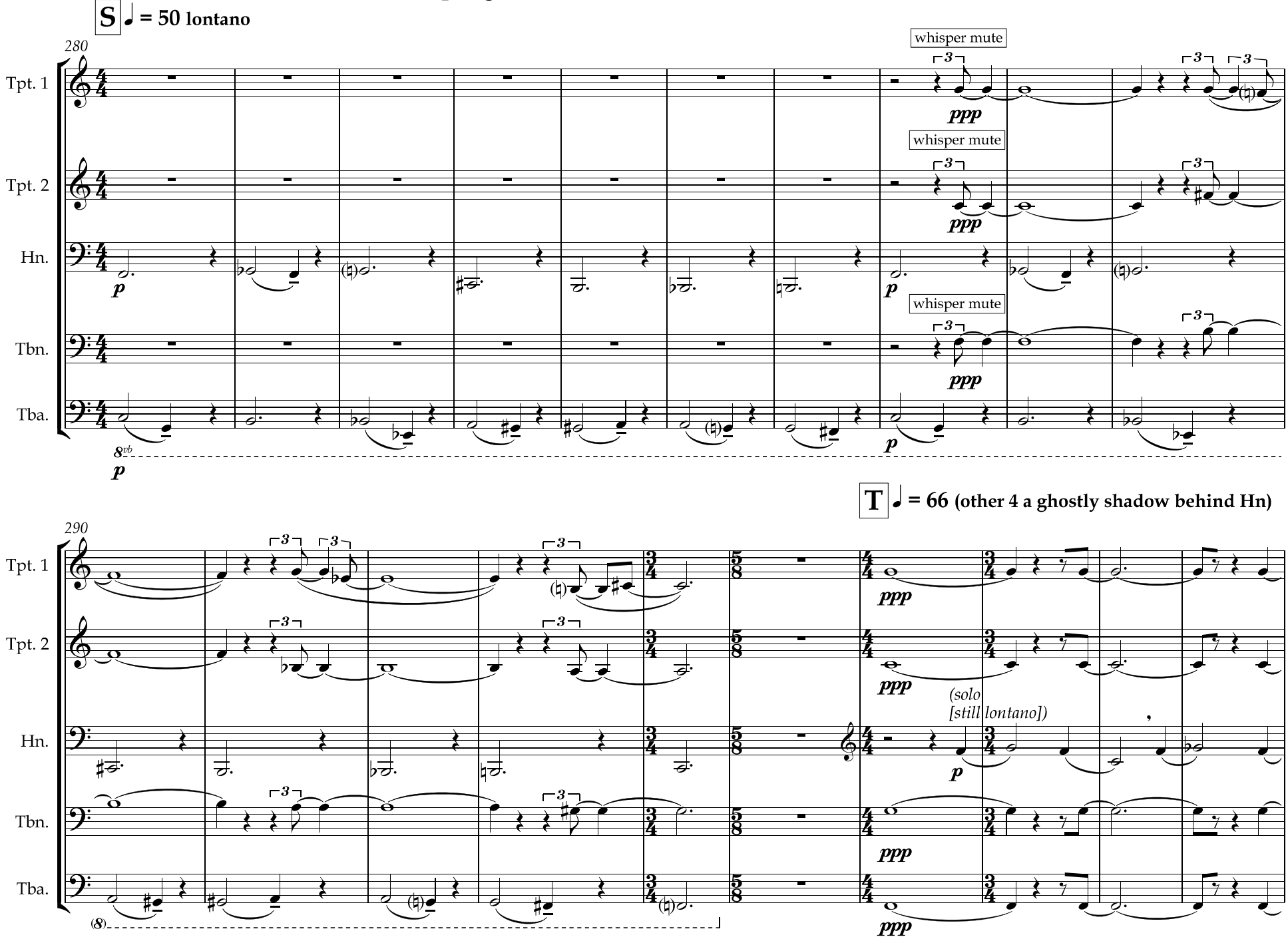
*Letter R: Trumpets remain steady at approx. ♩ = 92, playing identical lines out of phase with one another. (Rests in parentheses represent silence of relatively short but indeterminite length.) Hn & Tbn increase slightly to ♩ = 96 and stay together througout the section; Tuba increases to ♩ = 116 and plays independently. Trombone should play the boxed line 2 times, then cue the group to stop (a double cue with preperatory gesture and then cut-off is recommended). All players then stop wherever they are in their respective lines.
(This section lasts ca. 1:00.)

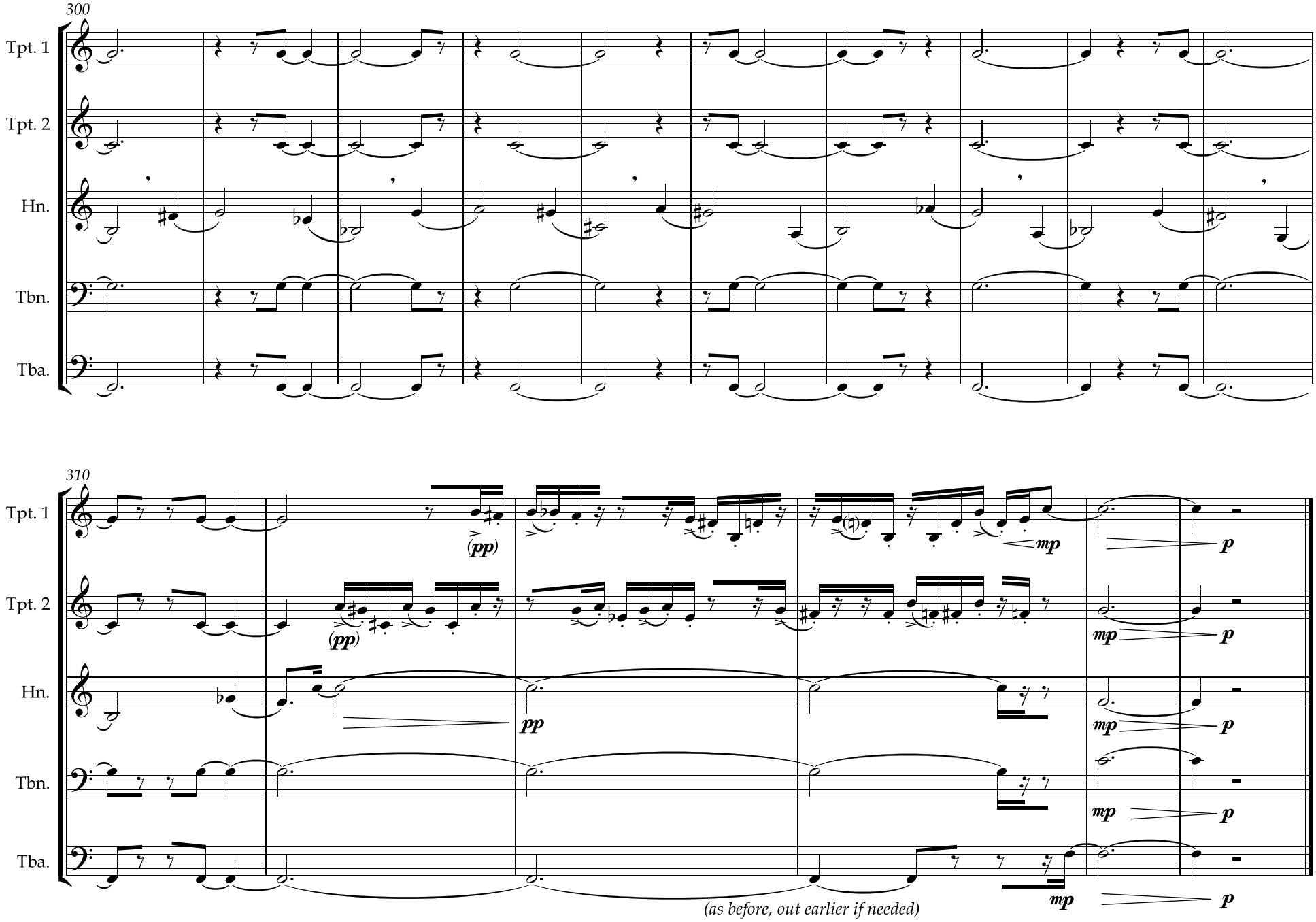

271
Tpt. 1
mp
fff
opt. 8vb
ff
Tpt. 2
opt. 8vb
ff
mp
fff
opt. 8vb
ff
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.


272
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
(3/4)
(4/4)
(3/4)
(4/4)
(2/4)
(3/4)
opt. 8vb
(1x loco, 2x and after 8vb)



(last time: recommended double-cue to group as final note is begun and ended)


S ♩ = 50 lontano
280
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
whisper mute
whisper mute
whisper mute
ppp
ppp
ppp
p
p
8vb
p
T ♩ = 66 (other 4 a ghostly shadow behind Hn)
290
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
ppp
ppp
(solo
[still lontano])
p
ppp
ppp
(8)


300
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
310
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Hn.
Tbn.
Tba.
(pp)
(pp)
pp
mp
p
mp
p
mp
p
mp
p
mp
p
(as before, out earlier if needed)