Alexander Wu

July 2025

Concert Score

disturbingly lively, frighteningly inert

for flute, bass clarinet, violin, cello, percussion, piano, and electronics

duration: 8m30s

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Instrumentation

flute (piccolo, C flute, alto flute)
bass clarinet (with preparations)
violin
cello
percussion
- snare drum
- medium tom
- bass drum
- vibraphone
- footswitch to trigger electronics

piano (with preparations)
electronics (see tech rider on next page)

Program Note

"Our machines are disturbingly lively, and we ourselves frighteningly inert."
—Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto" (1985)

Notation and Preparations

General

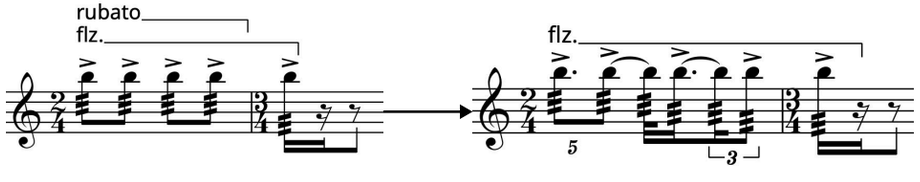
Extended techniques are explained inline or in the footnotes.

Fingering diagrams for microtones or multiphonics are included in the transposed score.

Always play grace notes on the beat.

Three tremolo lines indicate unmeasured tremolo.

Play rubato passages with a drunken rhythm uncoordinated with other players. The following example shows one possible interpretation of alto flute in m. 98:

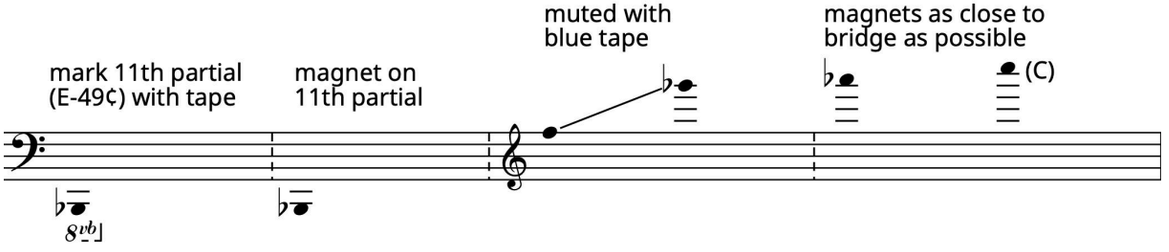


Bass Clarinet

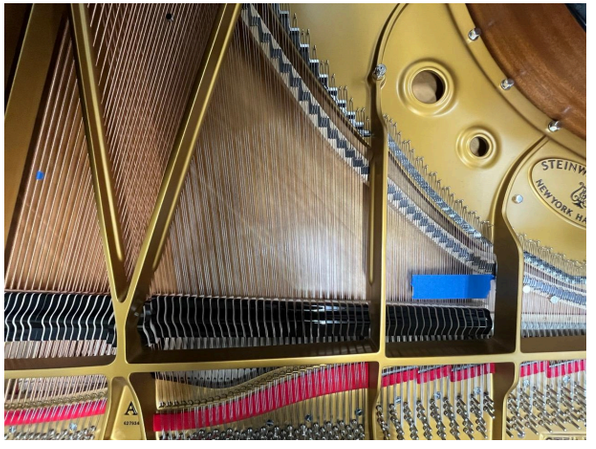
Place a marble inside an aluminum can, and place the can in the bell. Keep it in the bell throughout the performance; it should only affect the lowest note.

Notation and Preparations (continued)

Piano



See tech rider below for more details.



Tech Rider

(Similar products may be used.)

2 x Dayton Audio 25mm Exciters 24W 4Ohm (DAEX25FHE-4)

1 x Fosi Audio Class D Amplifier 50W (TPA3116) (with power supply)

2 x 16AWG Speaker Wires

Optionally, use banana plugs to connect wires to the amplifier and female disconnect tabs to connect wires to the exciters (Gardner Bender Female Disconnects 15-153F). Crimp the disconnect tabs.

1 x 3.5mm Aux Cable

1 x Computer With Max/MSP Installed (with power supply)

1 x USB MIDI Footswitch

A nonzero-to-zero transition (lifting the footswitch) sent through any MIDI control will trigger the next event.

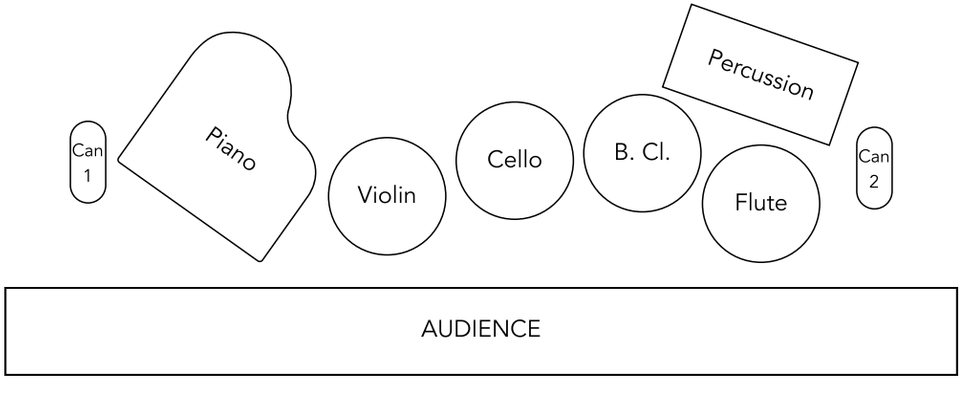
3 x Aluminum Cans (1 for bass clarinet, 2 for playback of electronics)

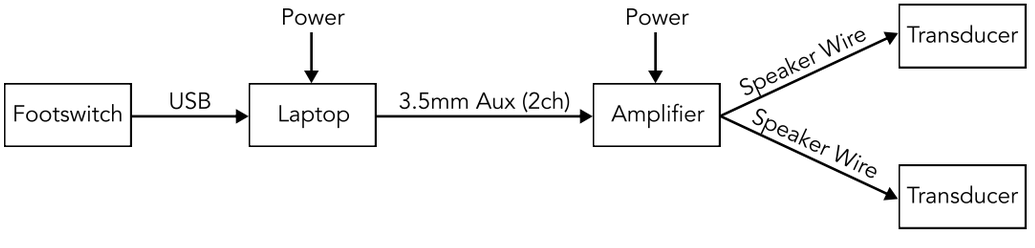
Hang cans on opposite sides of the stage, not too far from the players.

1 x Blue Painter's Tape (for piano)

15 x Round Neodymium Magnets (diameter = 0.39in, thickness = 0.08in) (for piano)

Three notes need to be prepared with magnets. Use 3 to 5 magnets for each note to ensure a loud attack would not move the magnets.





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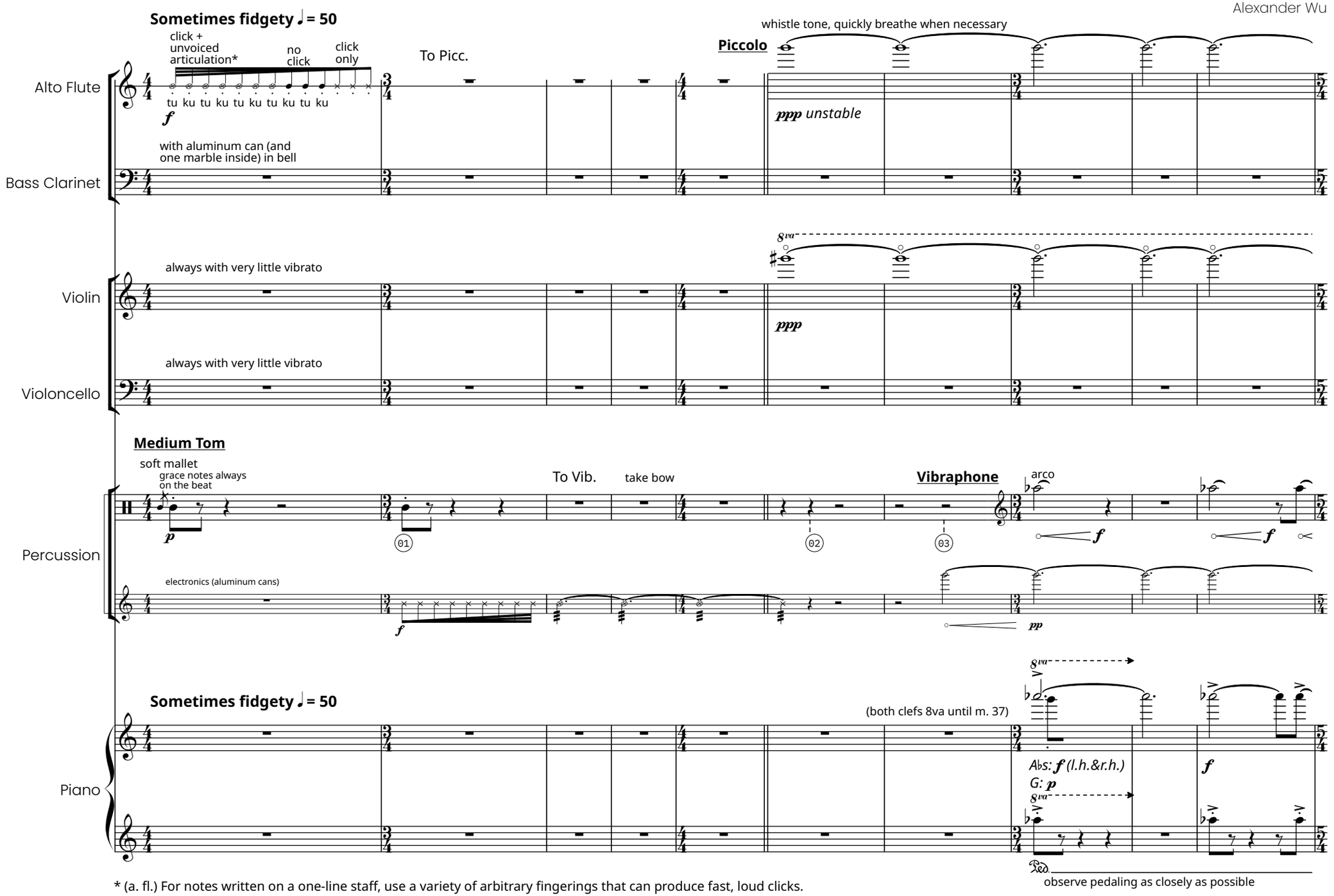
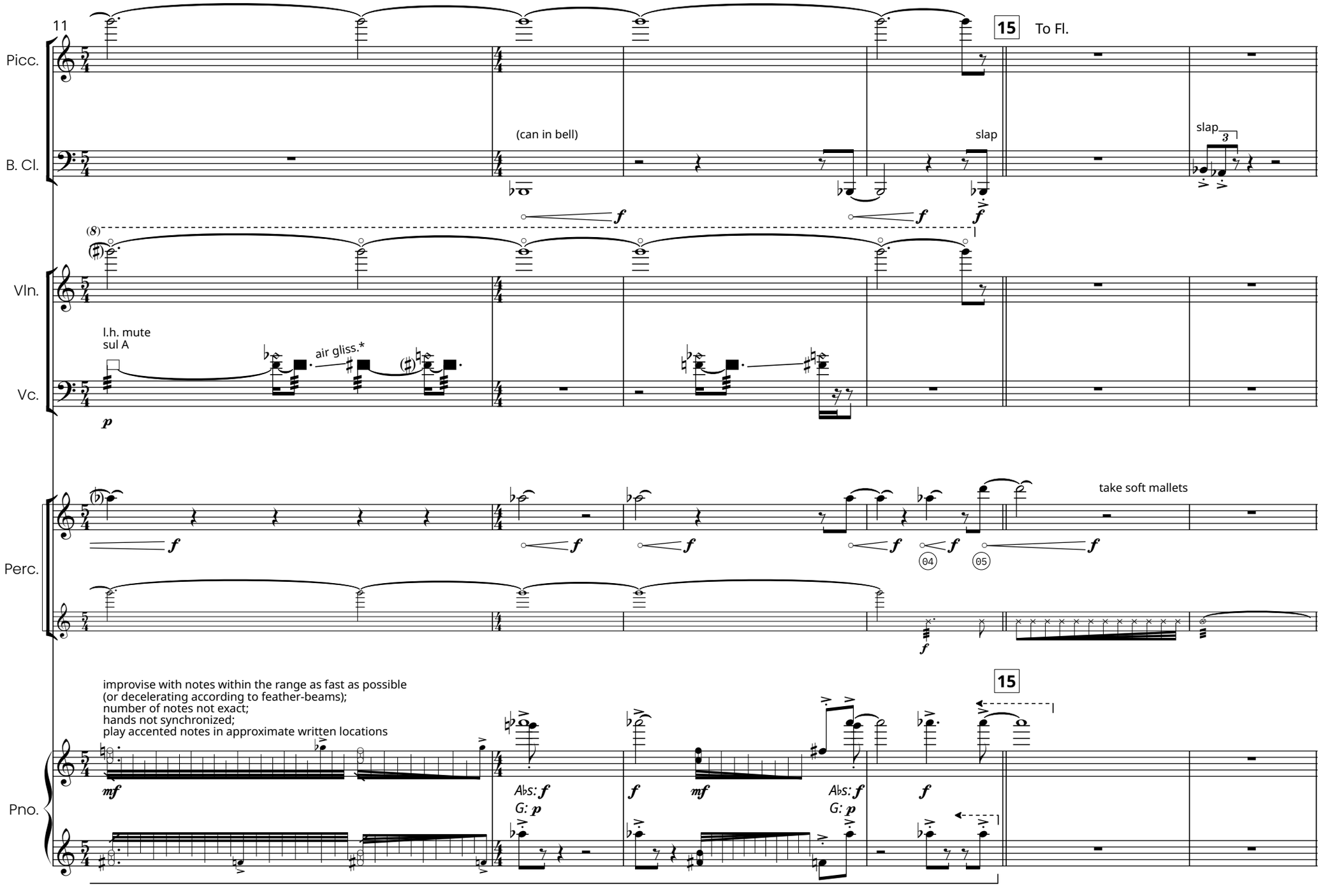
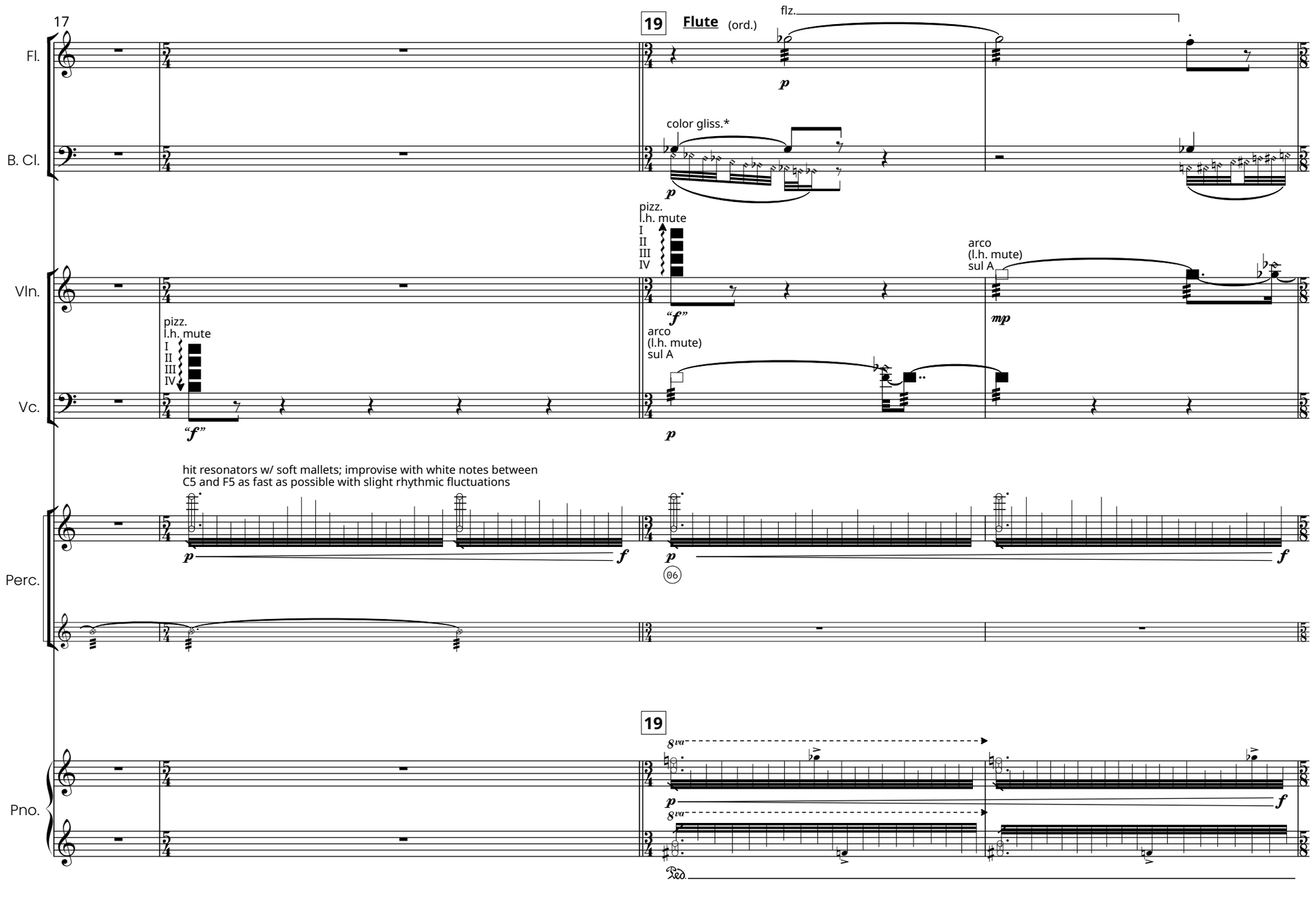


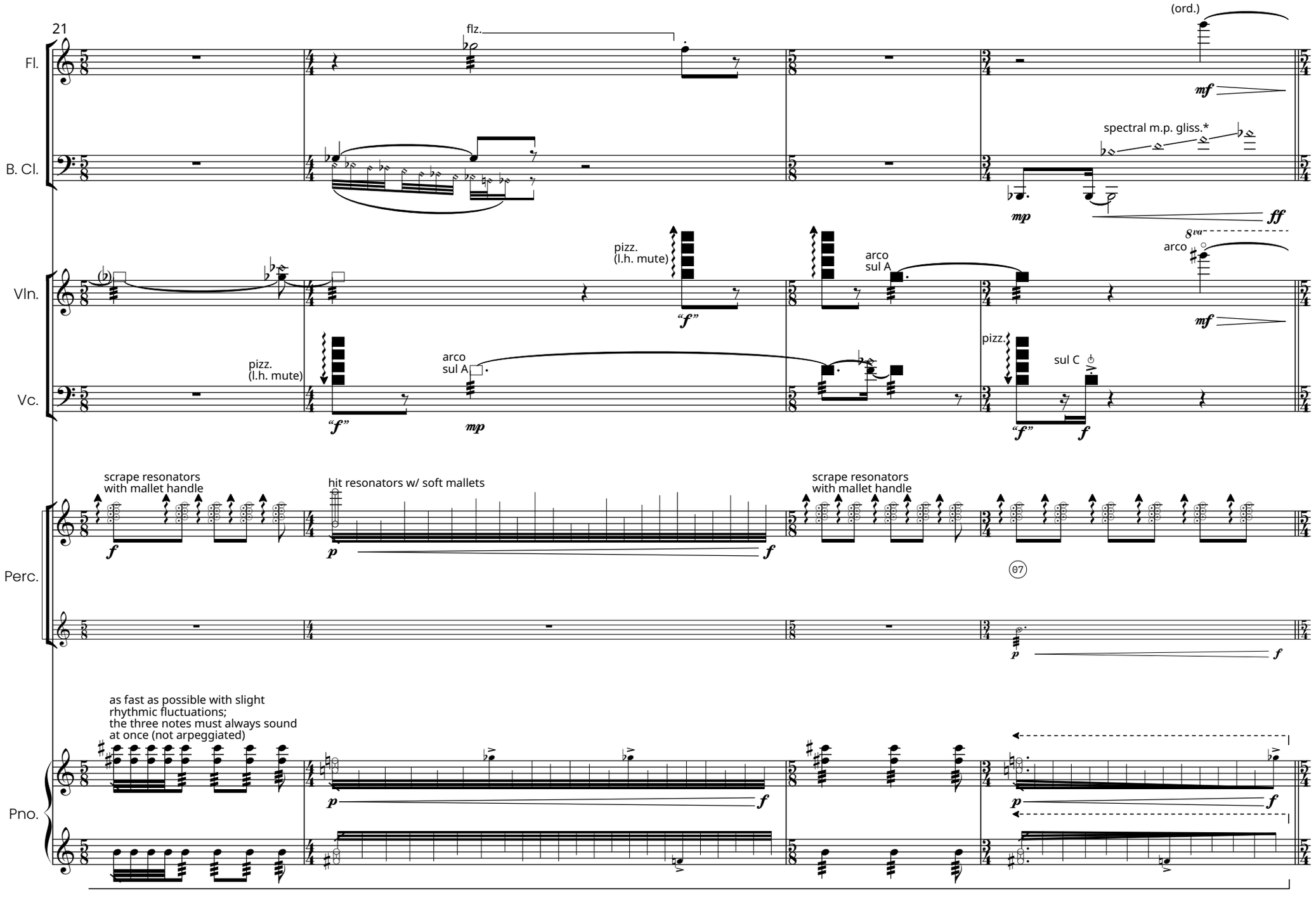
* (a. fl.) For notes written on a one-line staff, use a variety of arbitrary fingerings that can produce fast, loud clicks.



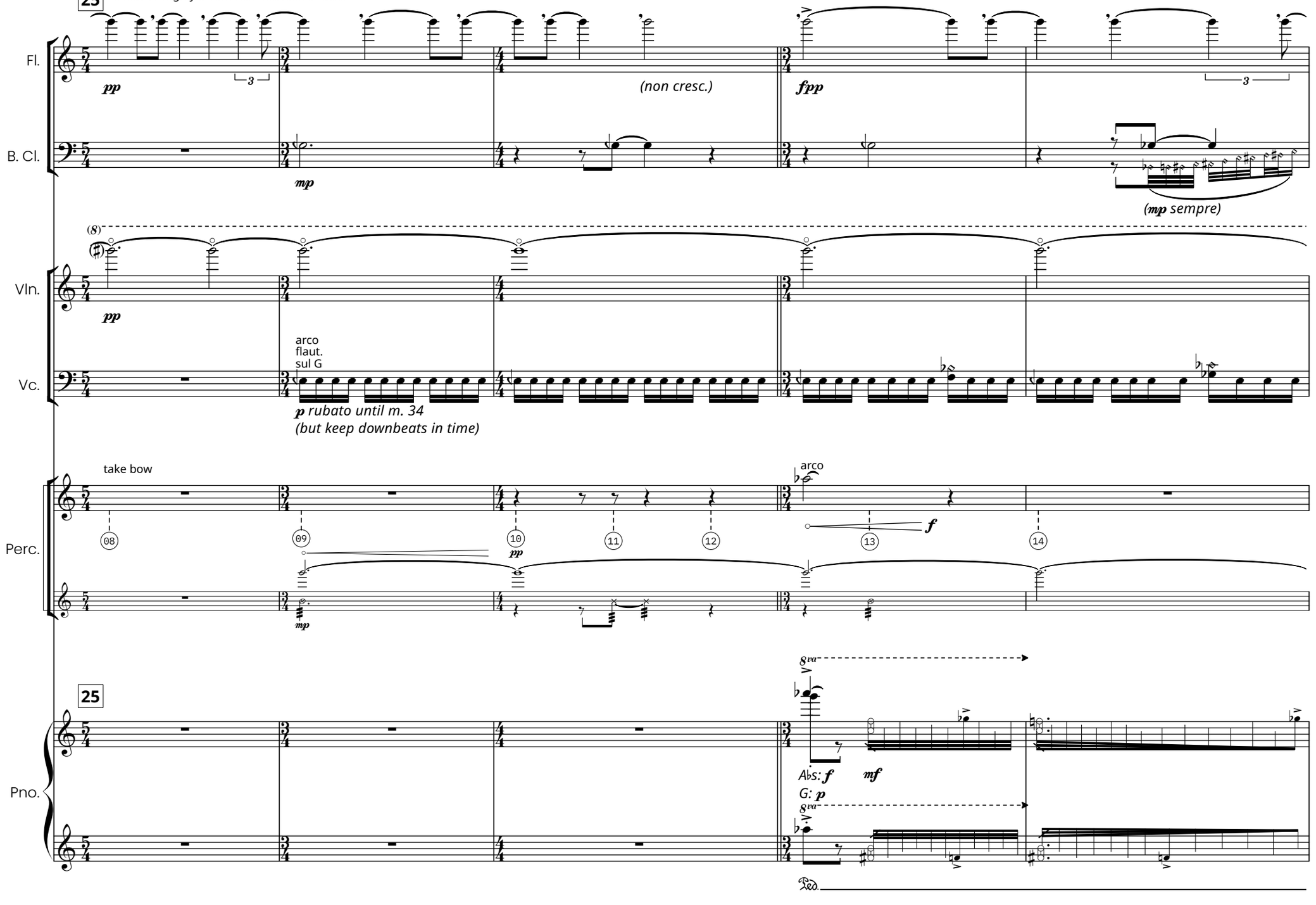
* (vc.) air gliss: Produce a slightly pitched glissando by gliding up or down the string with multiple fingers lightly touching the string.

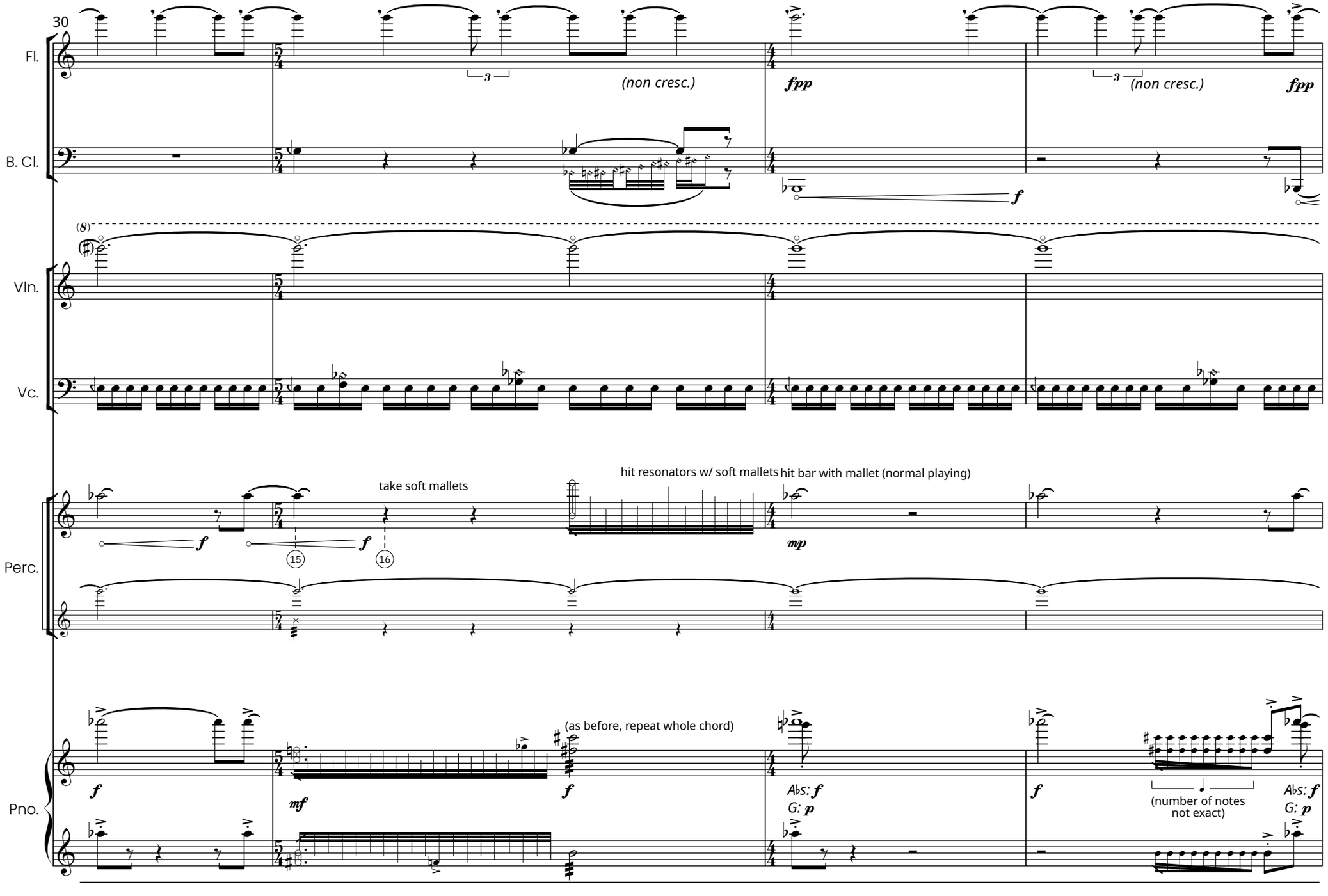


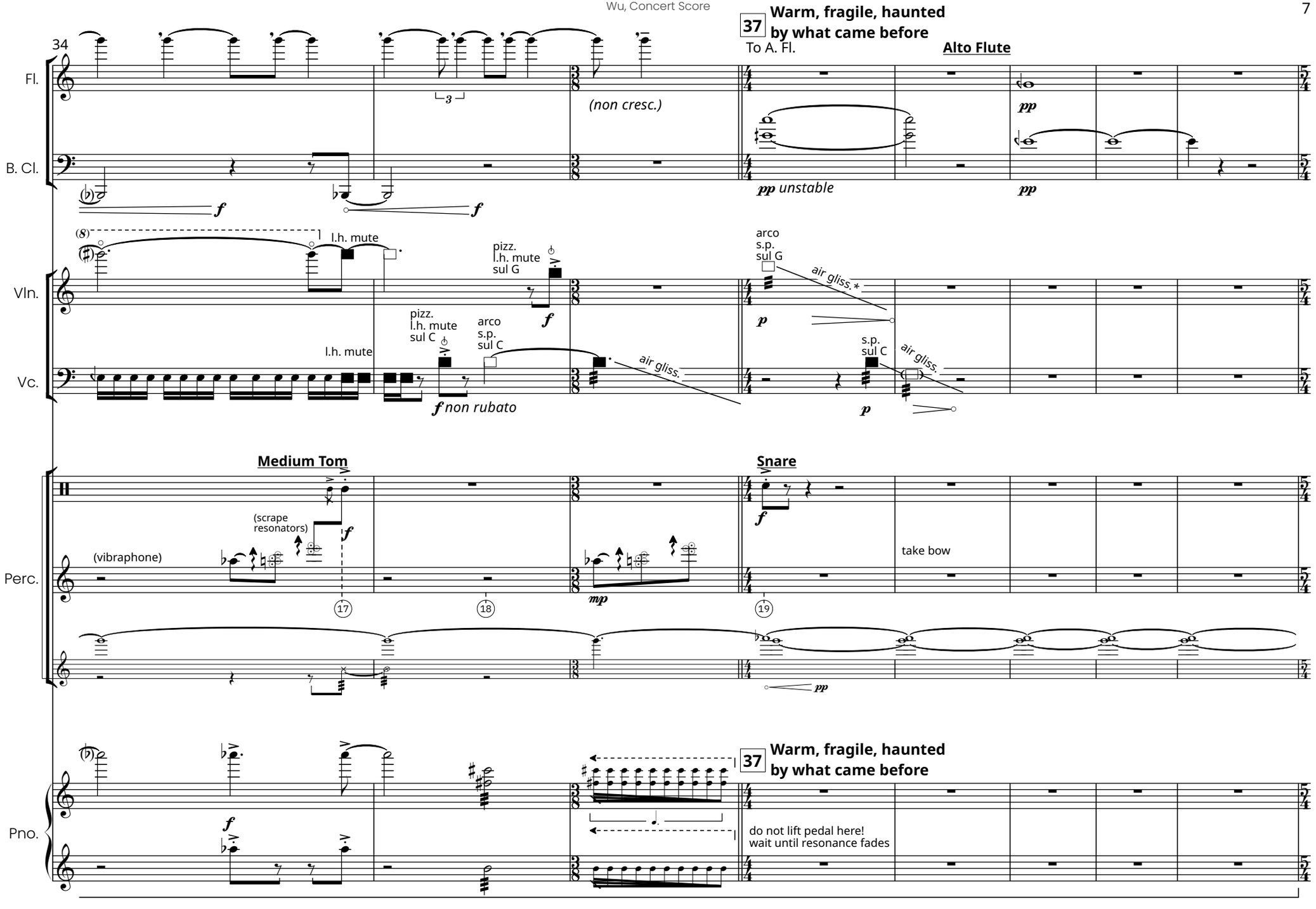
* (b. cl.) color gliss: With the A-flat hole covered, finger the diamond notes to produce a glissando spanning a semitone or less.



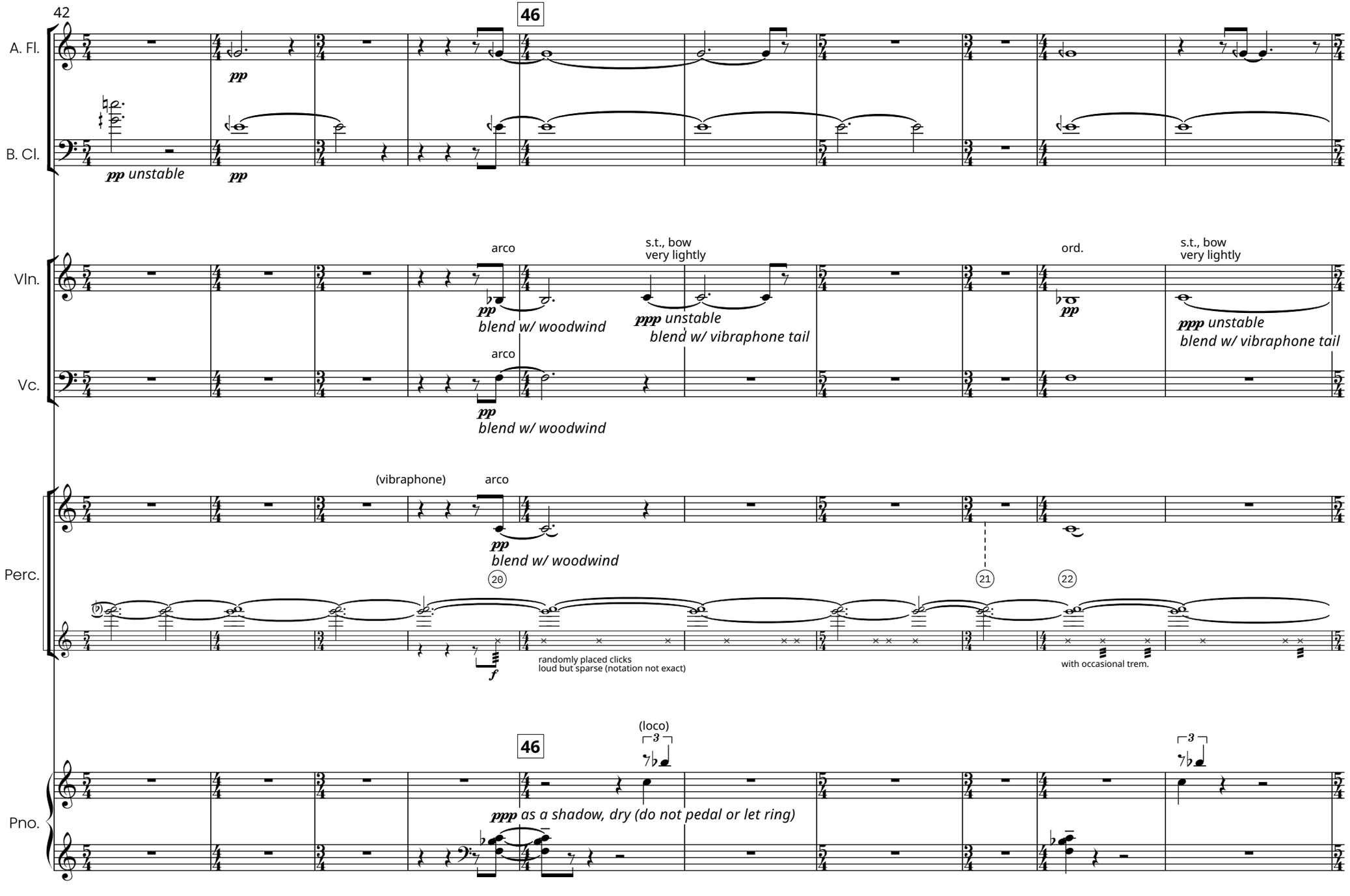
* (b. cl.) Diamond notes indicate the highest sounding notes in the spectral multiphonics (they are technically another octave higher but written lower for legibility).
The timing for overblowing to the next multiphonic is always flexible, but make sure to start and end with the written multiphonics in time.

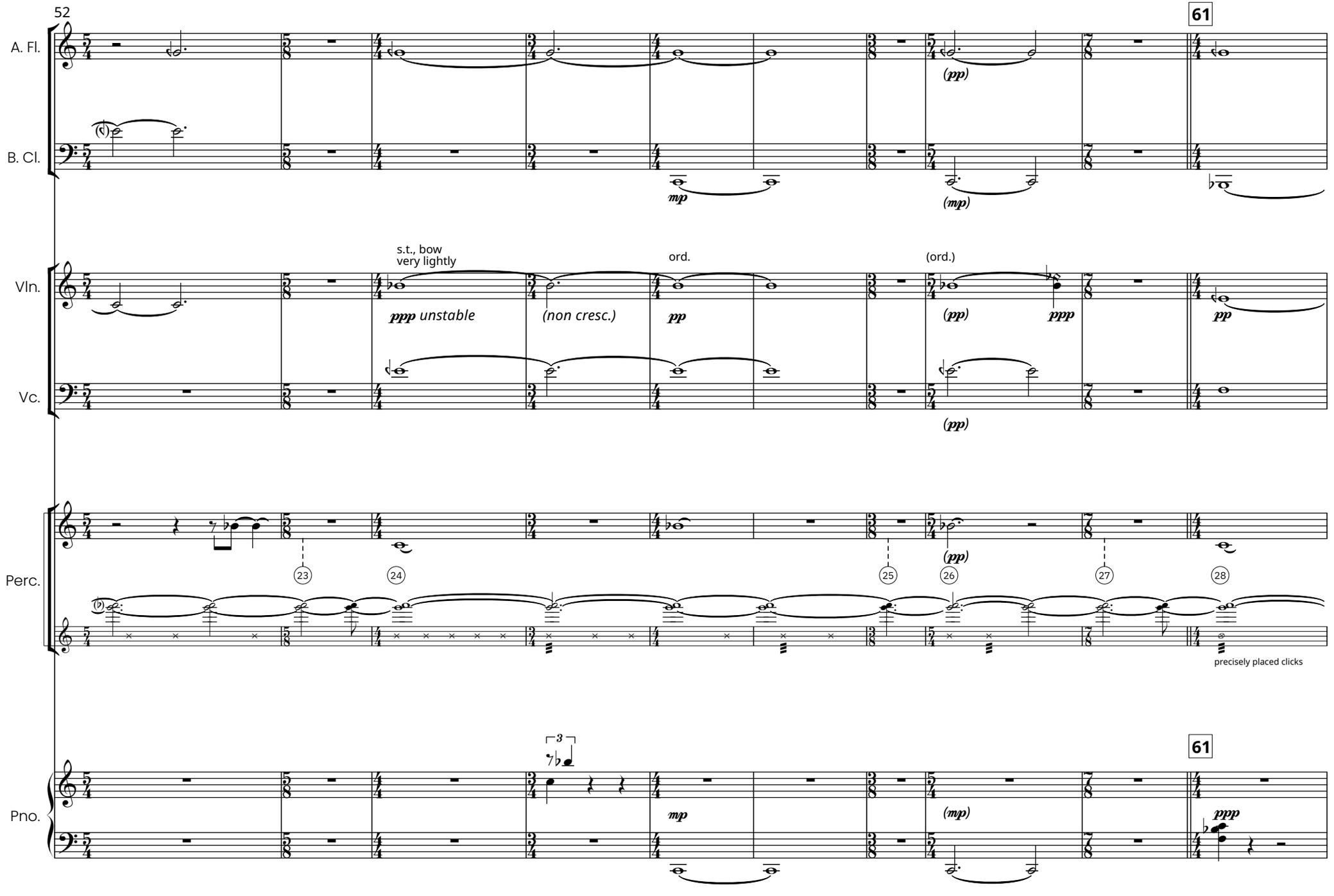

25
flute mm. 25-37: always end a little early
to leave roughly a 16th rest between attacks
Fl.
B. Cl.
pp
3
mp
(non cresc.)
fpp
3
(mp sempre)
(8)
Vln.
Vc.
pp
arco
flaut.
sul G
p rubato until m. 34
(but keep downbeats in time)
take bow
arco
Perc.
08
09
10
11
12
13
14
pp
mp
f
25
Pno.
8va
Ab: f
mf
G: p
Ped.

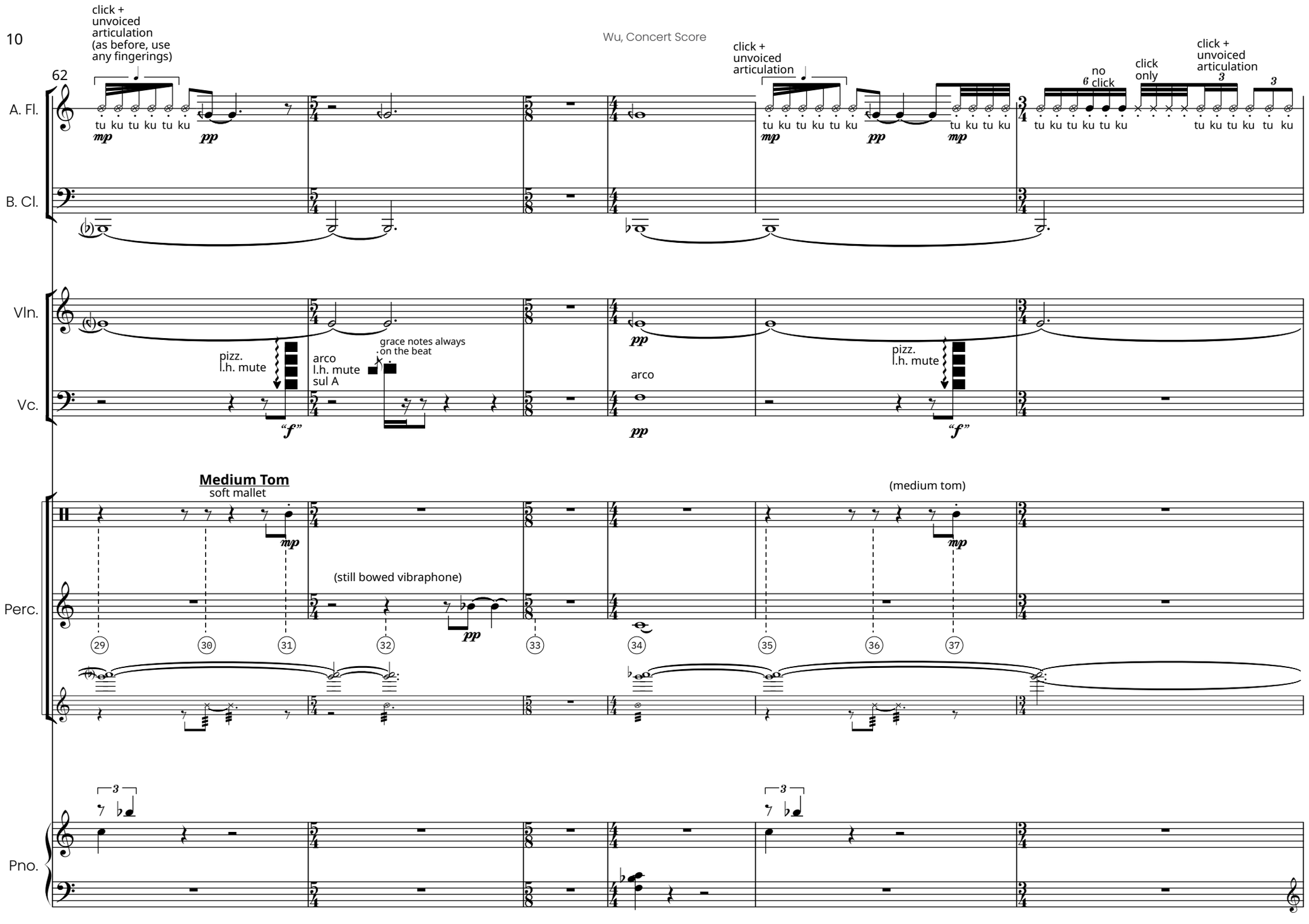

30
Fl.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.
(non cresc.)
fpp
(non cresc.)
fpp
f
take soft mallets
hit resonators w/ soft mallets
hit bar with mallet (normal playing)
mp
(as before, repeat whole chord)
mf
Abs: f
G: p
(number of notes not exact)

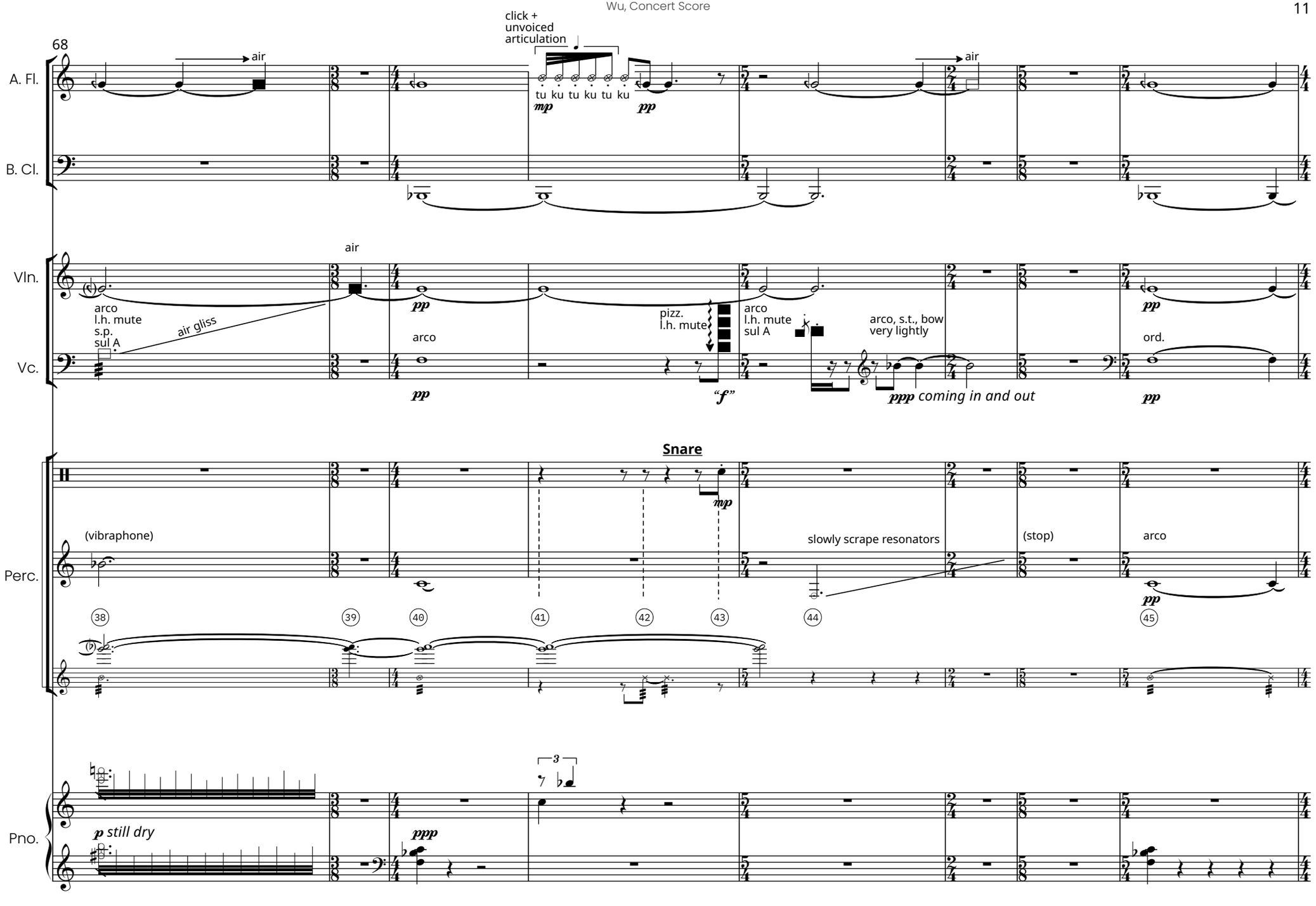


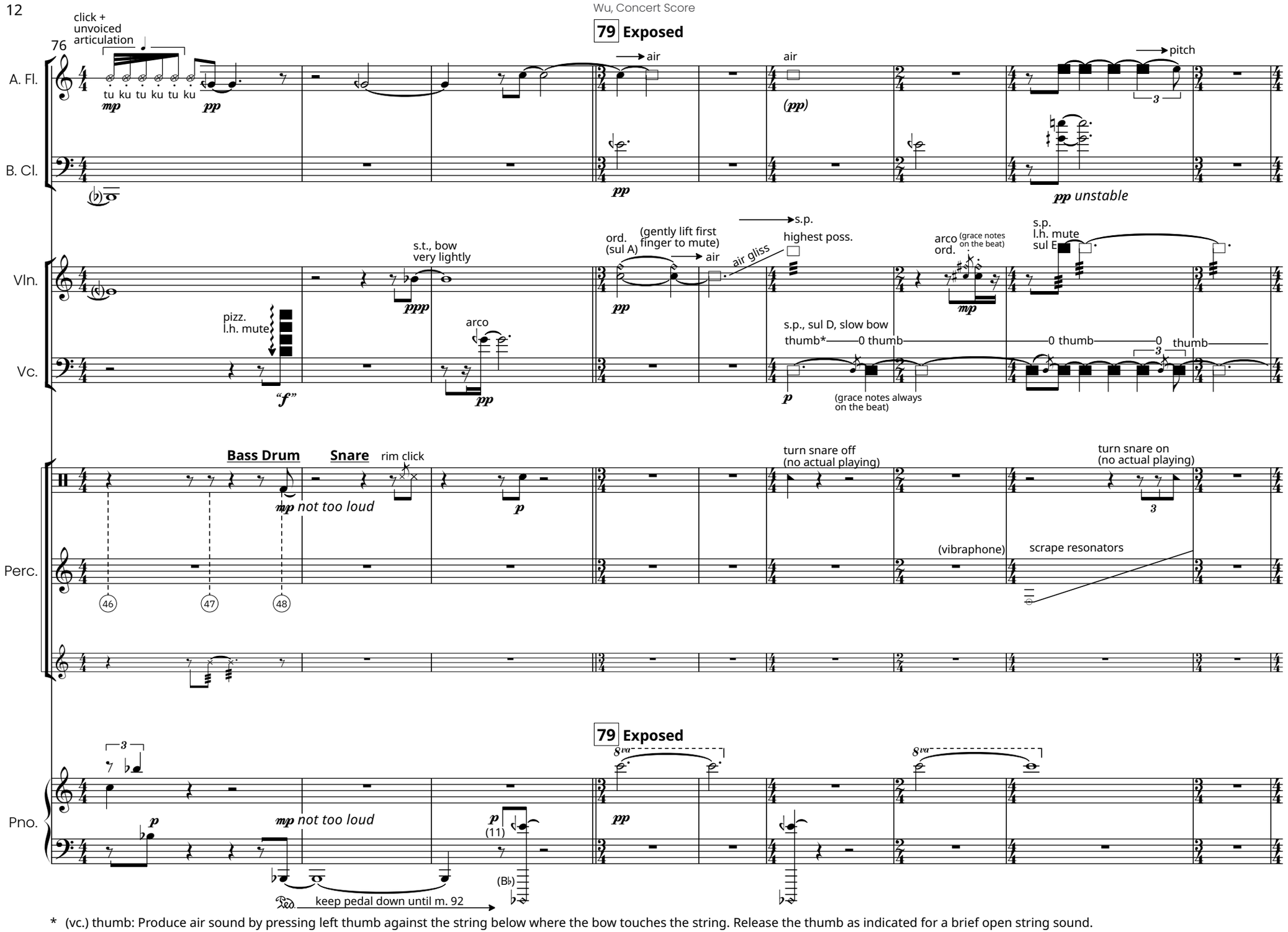
* (vln.) air gliss: Produce a slightly pitched glissando by gliding up or down the string with multiple fingers lightly touching the string.


42
46
A. Fl.
pp
B. Cl.
pp unstable
pp
Vln.
arco
pp
blend w/ woodwind
s.t., bow
very lightly
ppp unstable
blend w/ vibraphone tail
ord.
pp
s.t., bow
very lightly
ppp unstable
blend w/ vibraphone tail
Vc.
arco
pp
blend w/ woodwind
Perc.
(vibraphone)
arco
pp
blend w/ woodwind
20
21
22
f
randomly placed clicks
loud but sparse (notation not exact)
with occasional trem.
Pno.
46
(loco)
3
3
ppp as a shadow, dry (do not pedal or let ring)

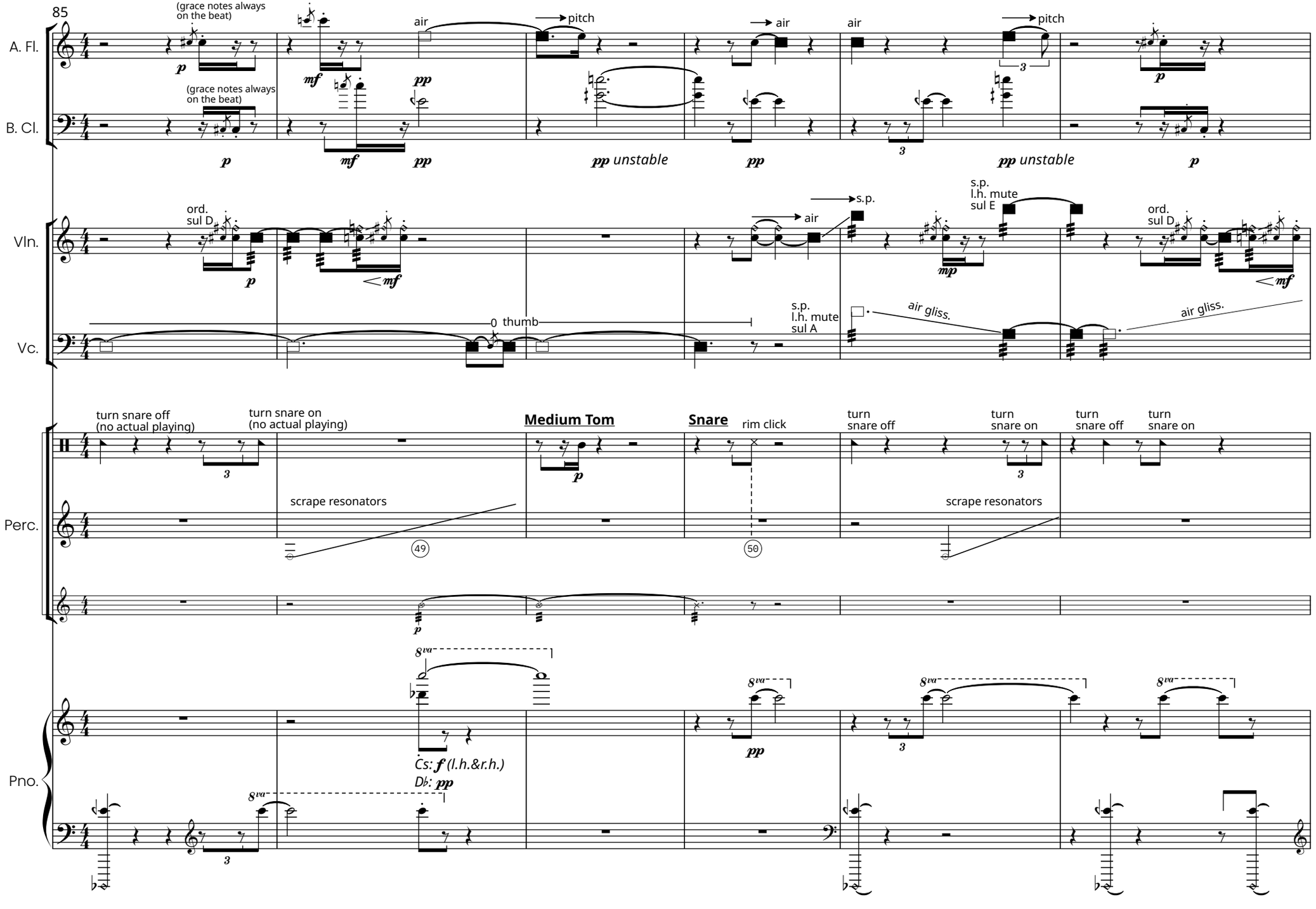

52
61
A. Fl.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.
s.t., bow
very lightly
ord.
(ord.)
ppp unstable
(non cresc.)
pp
(pp)
ppp
(mp)
precisely placed clicks
23
24
25
26
27
28
3

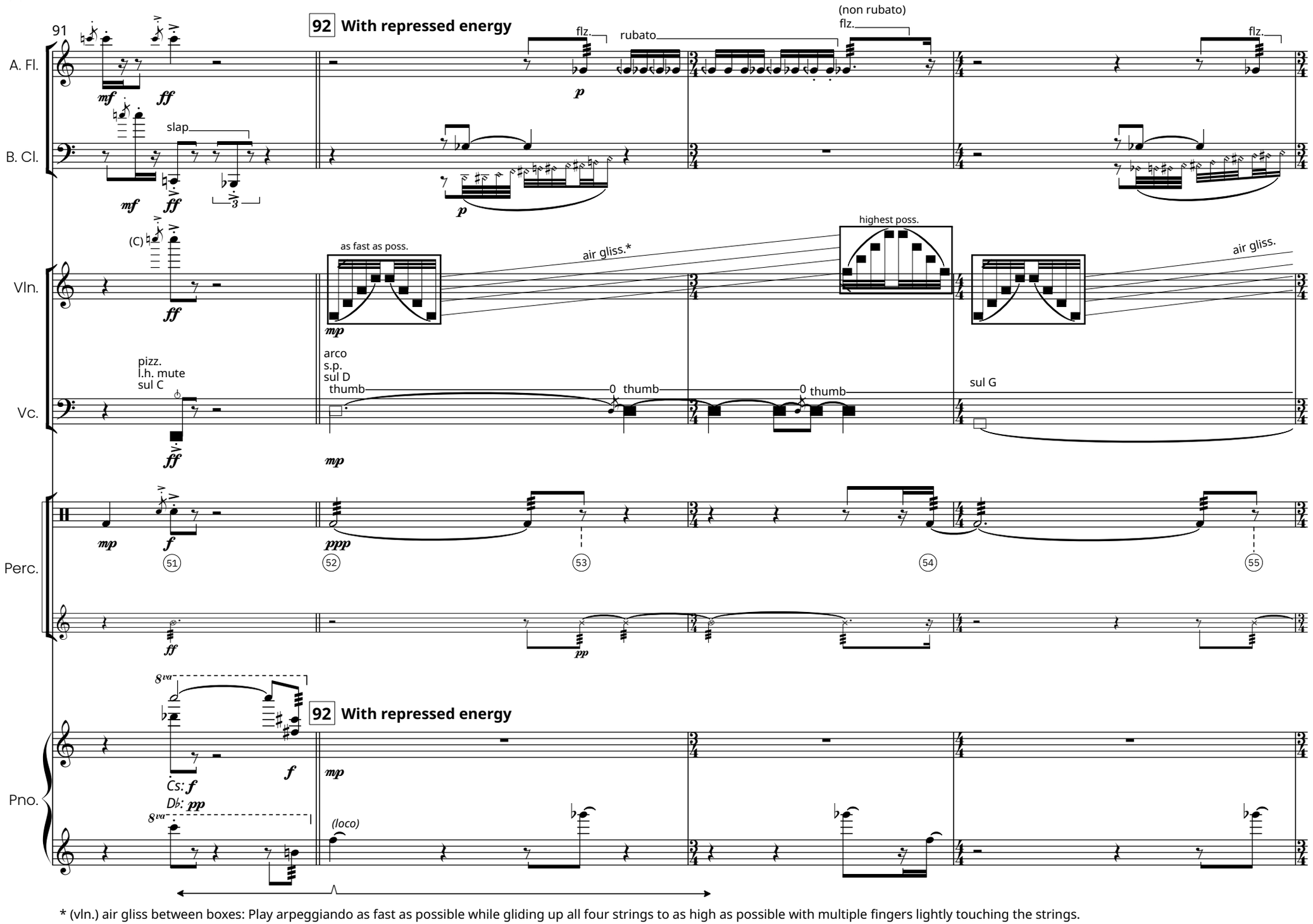

62
click + unvoiced articulation (as before, use any fingerings)
A. Fl.
B. Cl.
tu ku tu ku tu ku
mp
pp
click + unvoiced articulation
no click
click only
Vln.
Vc.
pizz. l.h. mute
"f"
arco l.h. mute sul A
grace notes always on the beat
arco
Medium Tom
soft mallet
(still bowed vibraphone)
(medium tom)
Perc.
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
Pno.


68
A. Fl.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.
air
click + unvoiced articulation
tu ku tu ku tu ku
mp
pp
arco
l.h. mute
s.p.
sul A
air gliss
pizz.
l.h. mute
"f"
ppp coming in and out
arco, s.t., bow very lightly
ord.
Snare
(vibraphone)
slowly scrape resonators
(stop)
arco
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
p still dry
ppp

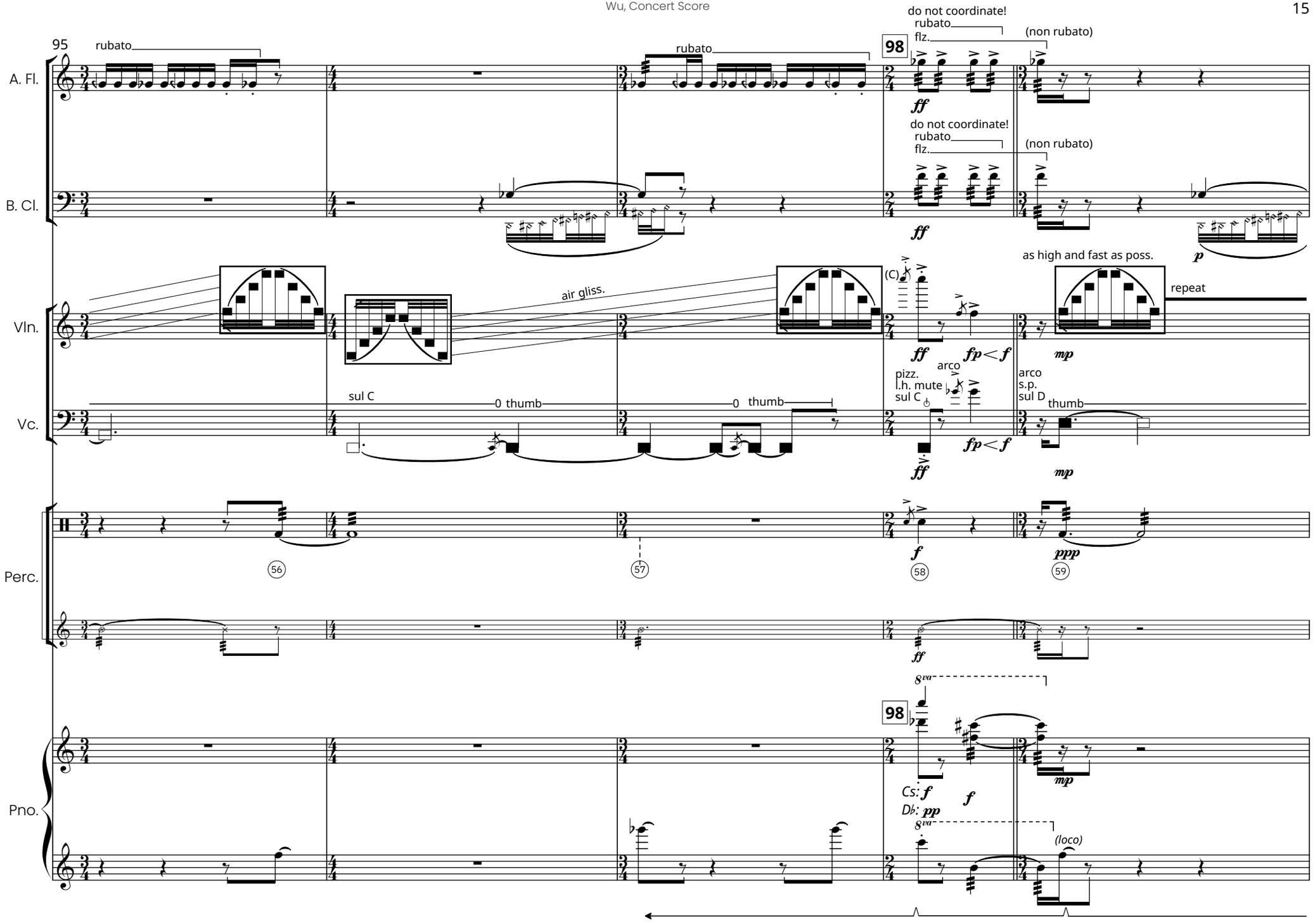


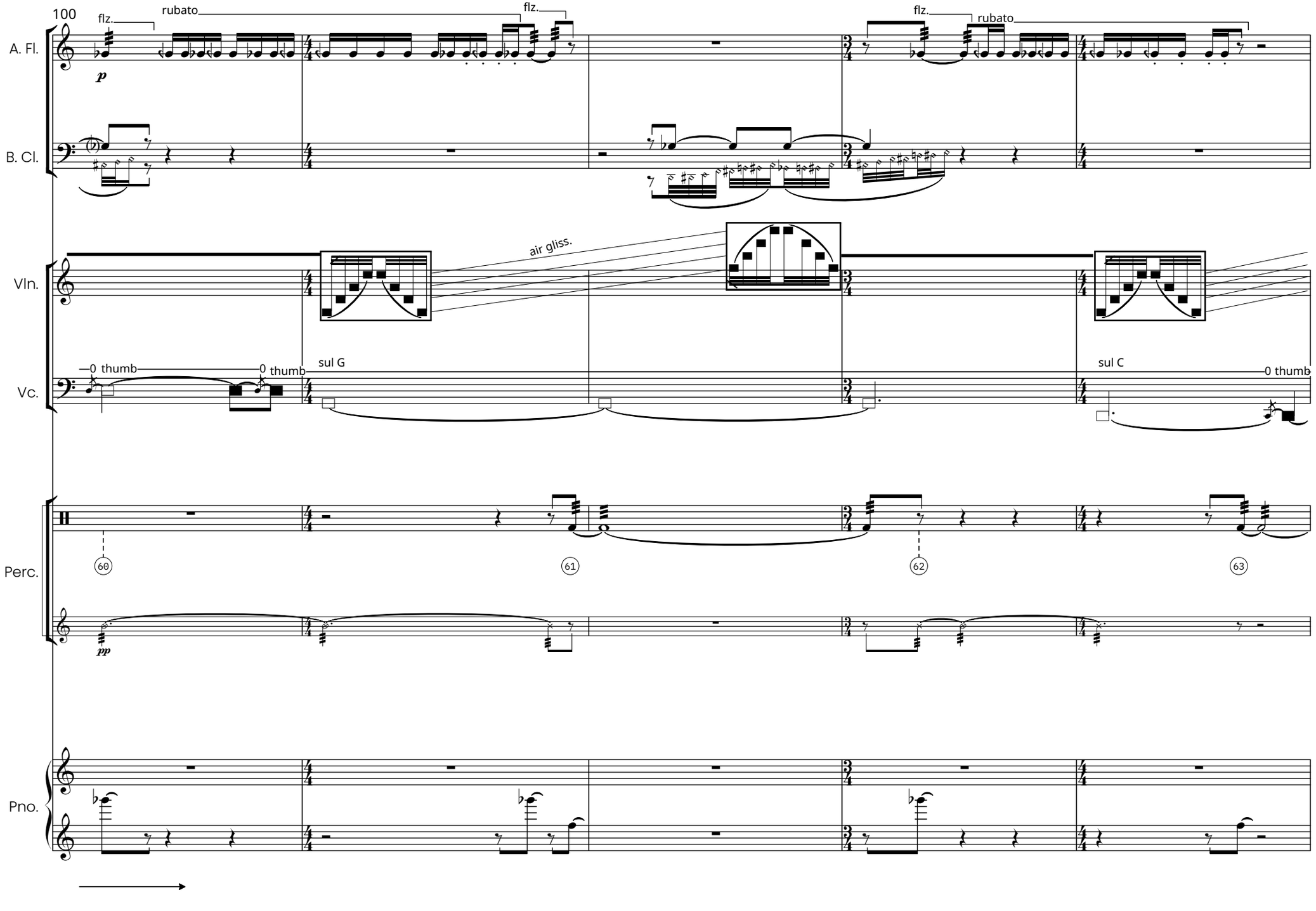
* (vc.) thumb: Produce air sound by pressing left thumb against the string below where the bow touches the string. Release the thumb as indicated for a brief open string sound. Do not coordinate bow changes with timbral changes (i.e., do not force a bow change when you press/release the thumb; treat it as one long note).

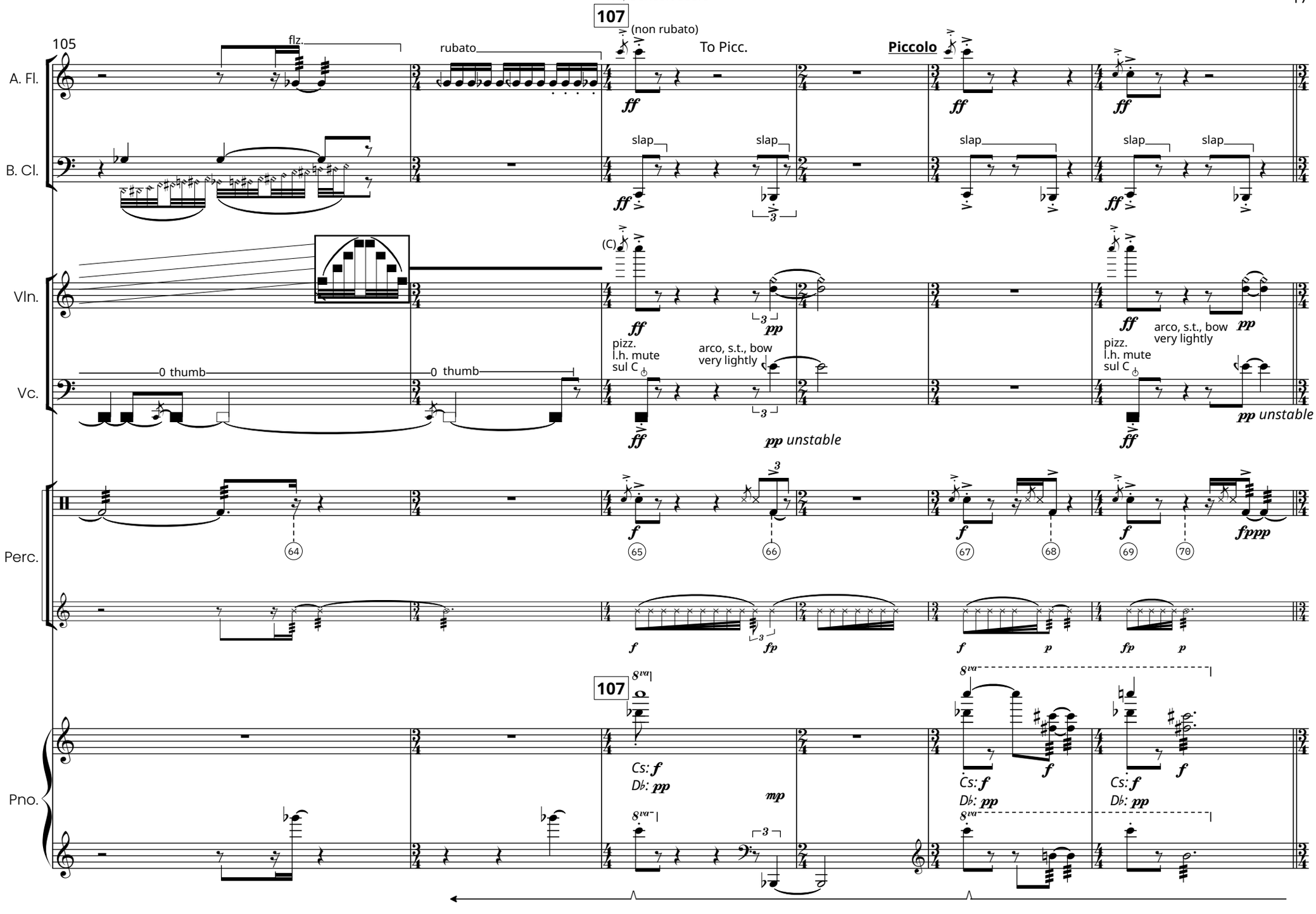

85
A. Fl.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.
(grace notes always on the beat)
air
pitch
ord. sul D
s.p.
l.h. mute sul E
0 thumb
s.p. l.h. mute sul A
air gliss.
turn snare off (no actual playing)
turn snare on (no actual playing)
Medium Tom
Snare
rim click
turn snare off
turn snare on
scrape resonators
49
50
8va
Cs: f (l.h.&r.h.)
Db: pp
pp unstable

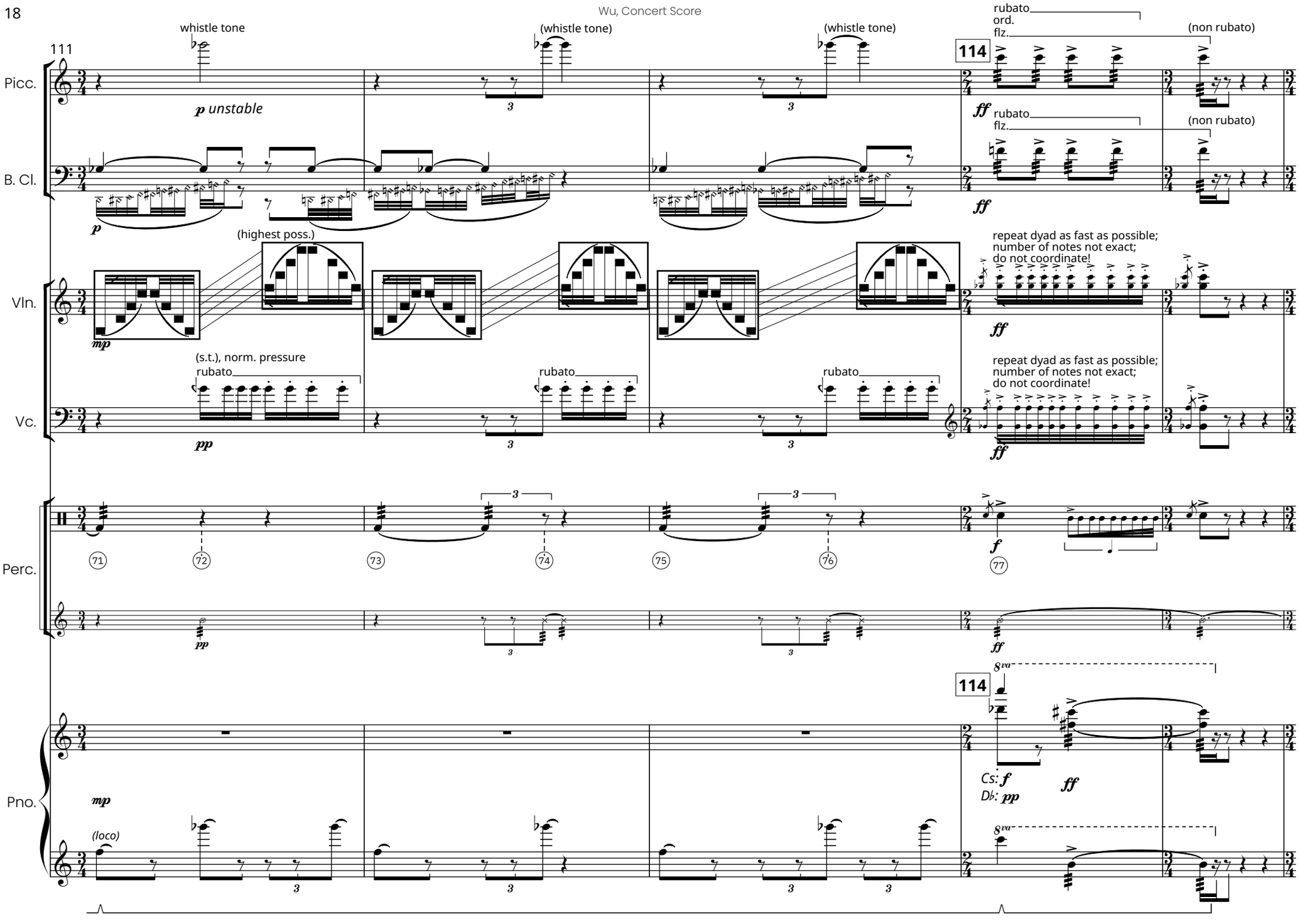


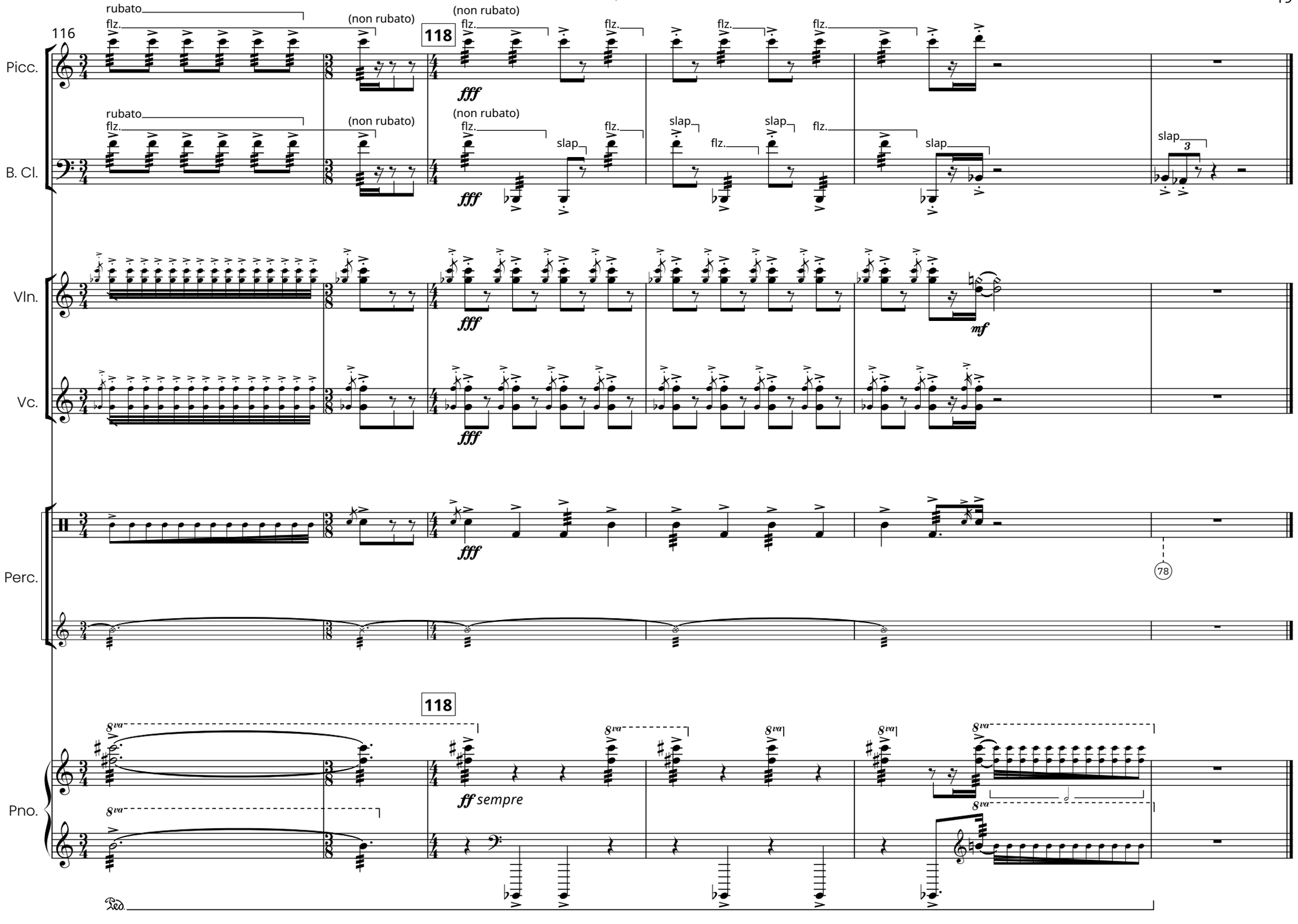
* (vln.) air gliss between boxes: Play arpeggiando as fast as possible while gliding up all four strings to as high as possible with multiple fingers lightly touching the strings.


95
A. Fl.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.
rubato
rubato
98
do not coordinate!
rubato
flz.
(non rubato)
ff
do not coordinate!
rubato
flz.
(non rubato)
ff
p
air gliss.
(C)
as high and fast as poss.
repeat
ff
fp < f
mp
sul C
0 thumb
0 thumb
pizz.
l.h. mute
sul C
arco
arco
s.p.
sul D
thumb
fp < f
mp
ff
56
57
f
58
ppp
59
ff
8va
98
Cs: f
Db: pp
f
mp
8va
(loco)


100
A. Fl.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.
flz.
rubato
flz.
flz.
rubato
p
air gliss.
0 thumb
0 thumb
sul G
sul C
0 thumb
60
61
62
63
pp


105
107
(non rubato)
To Picc.
Piccolo
A. Fl.
flz.
rubato
B. Cl.
slap
Vln.
(C)
pizz.
l.h. mute
sul C
arco, s.t., bow
very lightly
Vc.
0 thumb
pp unstable
Perc.
Pno.
Cs: f
Db: pp
mp
8va


111
Picc.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.
whistle tone
(whistle tone)
(whistle tone)
114
rubato
ord.
flz.
(non rubato)
p unstable
(highest poss.)
repeat dyad as fast as possible;
number of notes not exact;
do not coordinate!
(s.t.), norm. pressure
rubato
(loco)
8va
Cs: f
Db: pp


116
118
Picc.
B. Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.
rubato
(non rubato)
flz.
slap
fff
mf
ff sempre
8va
78