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String quartet

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS

Thesis

STRING QUARTET

by

ALEXANDER J. PETSHAFT

B.A., Western Connecticut State University, 2020

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Master of Music

2022

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STRING QUARTET

ALEXANDER J. PETSHAFT

ABSTRACT

The aesthetic of this composition begins with a flurry of notes creating a wall of sound and slowly disintegrates into becoming something light and airy. Beginning is dense and hurried with overlapping entrances, in the beginning I aim to achieve an overall effect of very smooth and natural slowing down. It feels rhythmic but the pulse is somewhat ambiguous. There are chains of flurried notes followed by rests in the individual parts but the rests are hidden by the overlapping entrances so it feels continuous. As holes open in the texture and the slowing down process takes effect, fragments of a melody begin to peak out of the texture and melt back in. Eventually the piece has completely slowed down and the full melody is revealed. This then builds into a climactic high point of the melody played in the cello. Throughout the ending, fragments of the beginning texture fade in and out until one final build up resembling the beginning texture. There is then a flurry of notes that then proceed to do the slowing down process of the beginning but within a much quicker timespan and then the piece closes out on the final chord of that process.

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String Quartet

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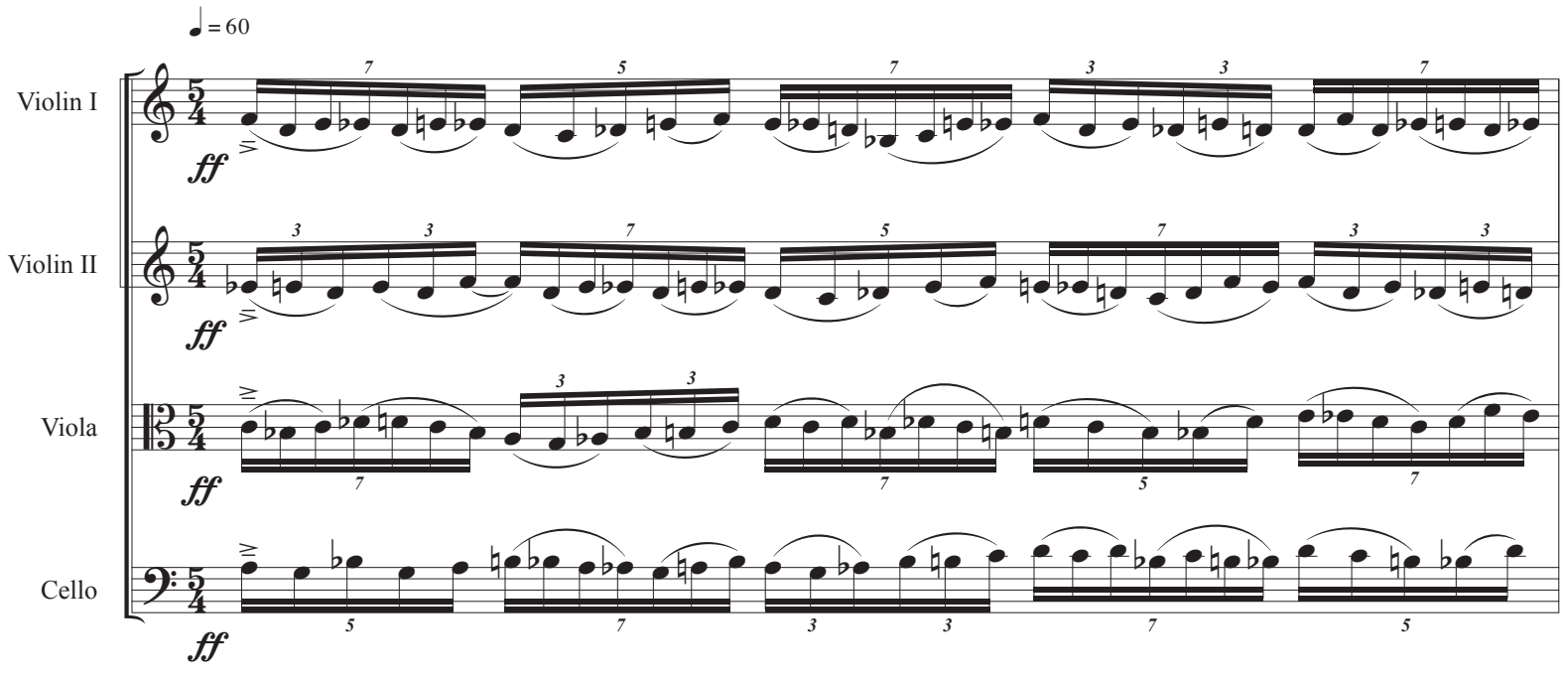

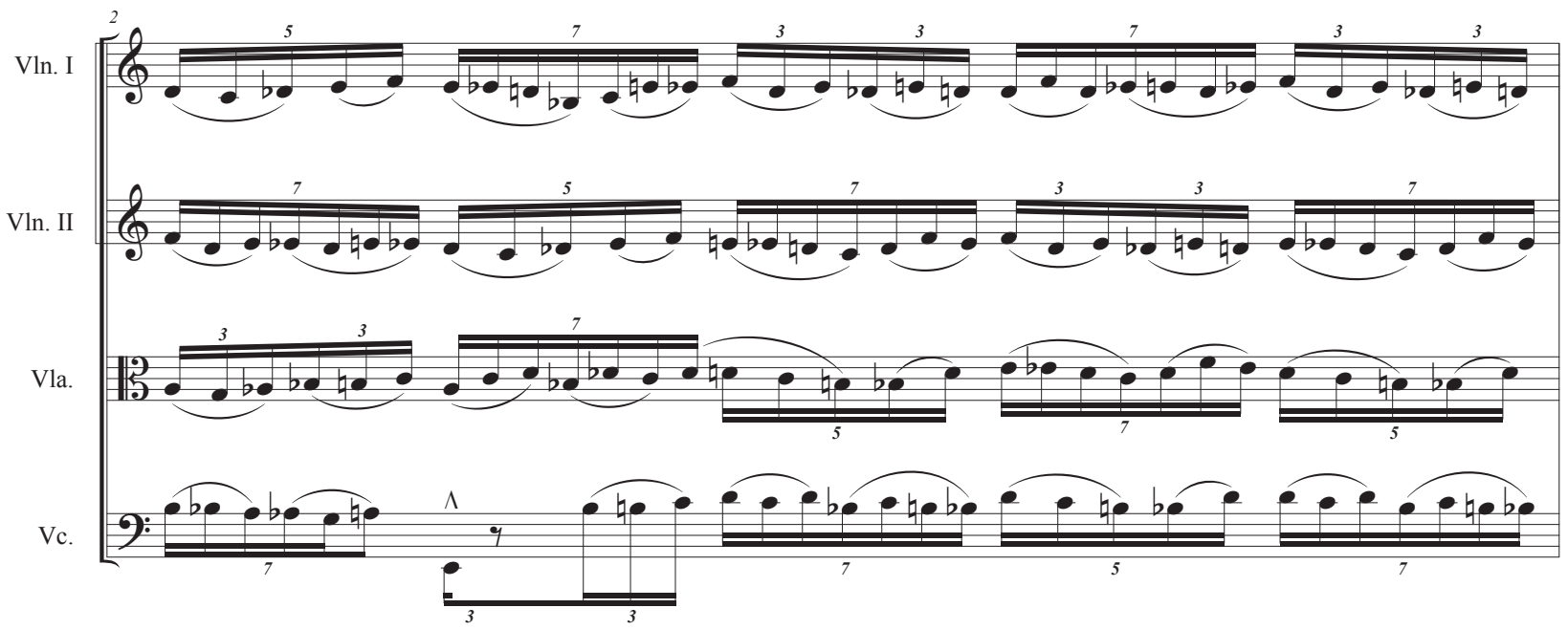

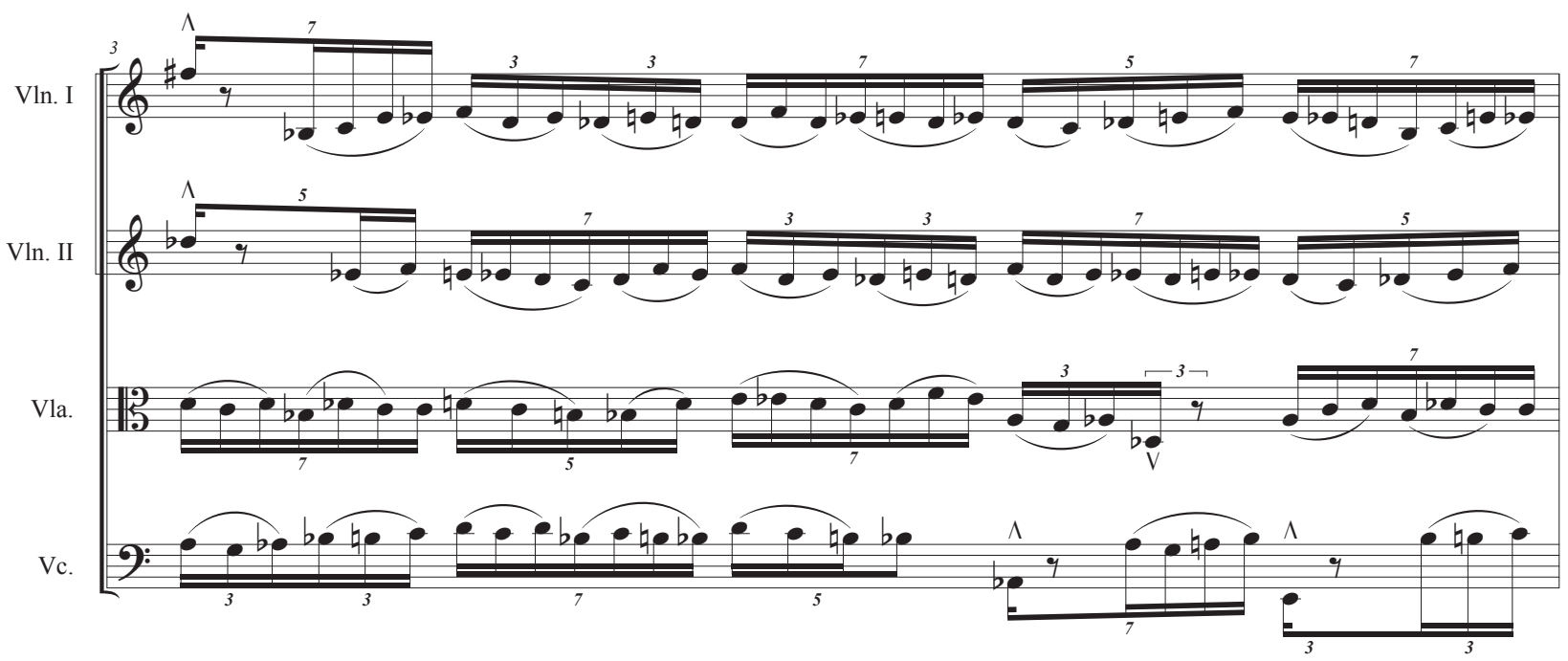

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4

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

5

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

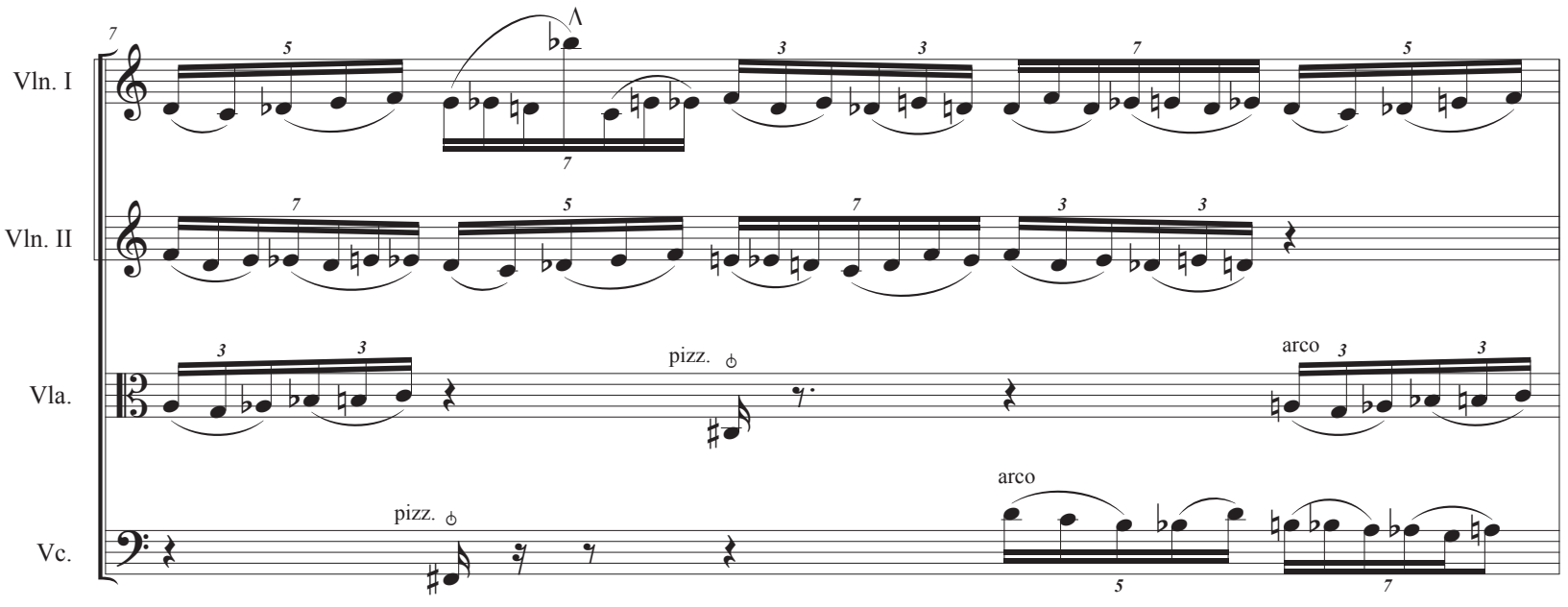
6

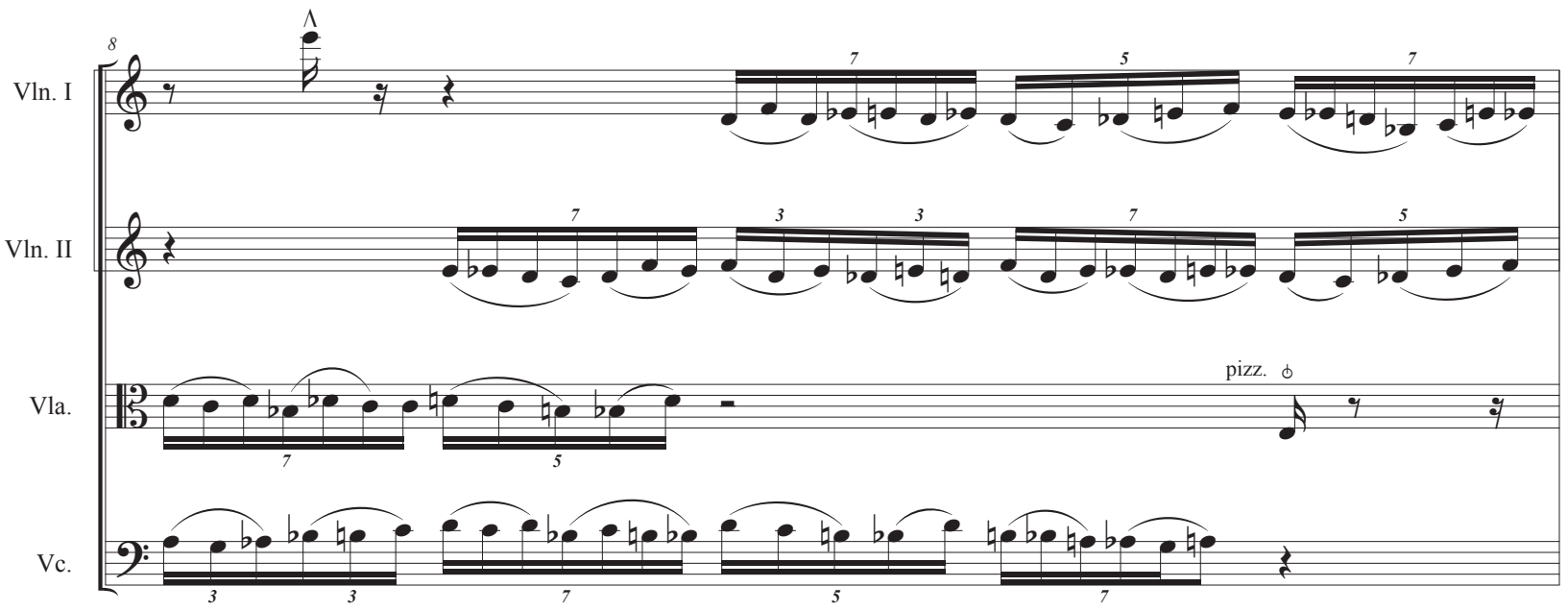
Vln. I

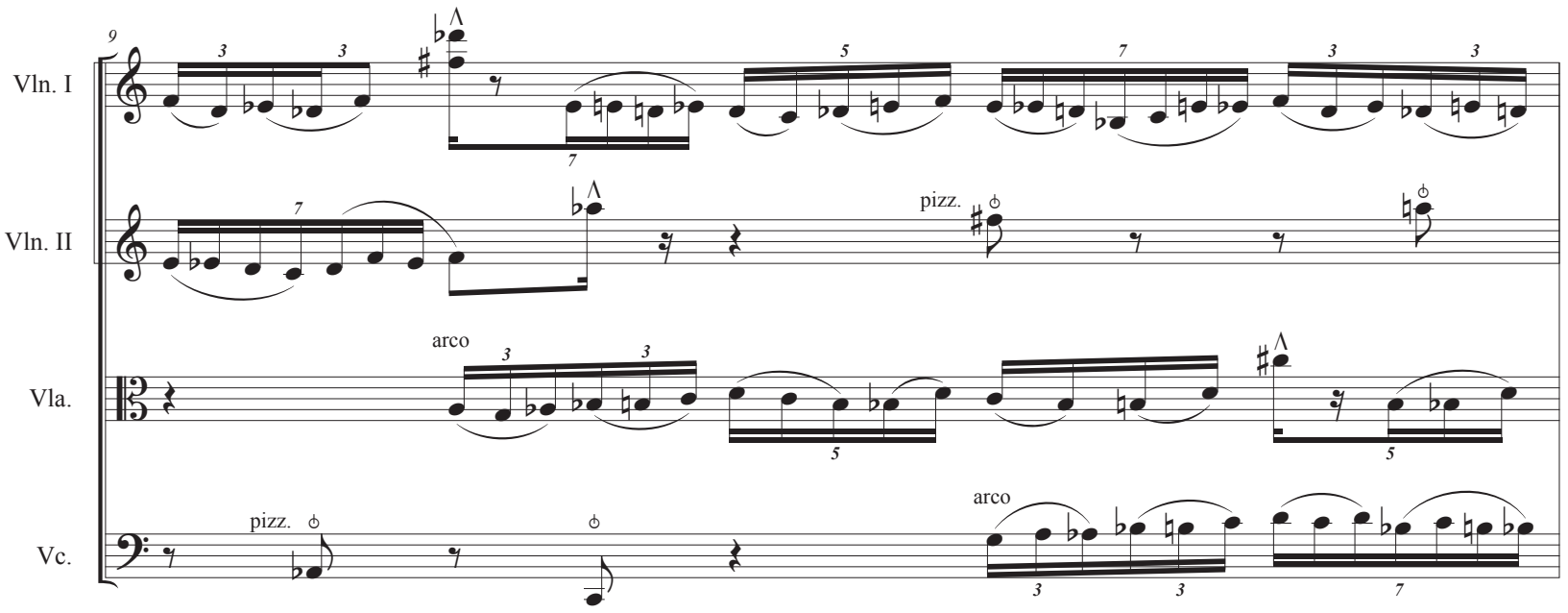
Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.


Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
pizz.
arco


Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
pizz.


Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
pizz.
arco

10

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

pizz.

arco

11

arco

pizz.

12

pizz.

arco

13

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

pizz.

arco

arco

pizz.

14

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

arco

pizz.

15

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

pizz.

A

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

f

arco

mp

f

17

pizz.

arco

18

mf

f

19

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

arco

20

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

arco

21

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

pizz.

arco

23

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

pizz.

arco

25

mp mf mp f

27

mp f

mp mf mp

29

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

arco

f

mp

mf

mp

B

pizz.

mp

mf

mp

mf

arco

mf

33

arco

mf

mp

mf

mp

mf

35

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

37

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

39

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

41

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

43

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

rit.

45

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

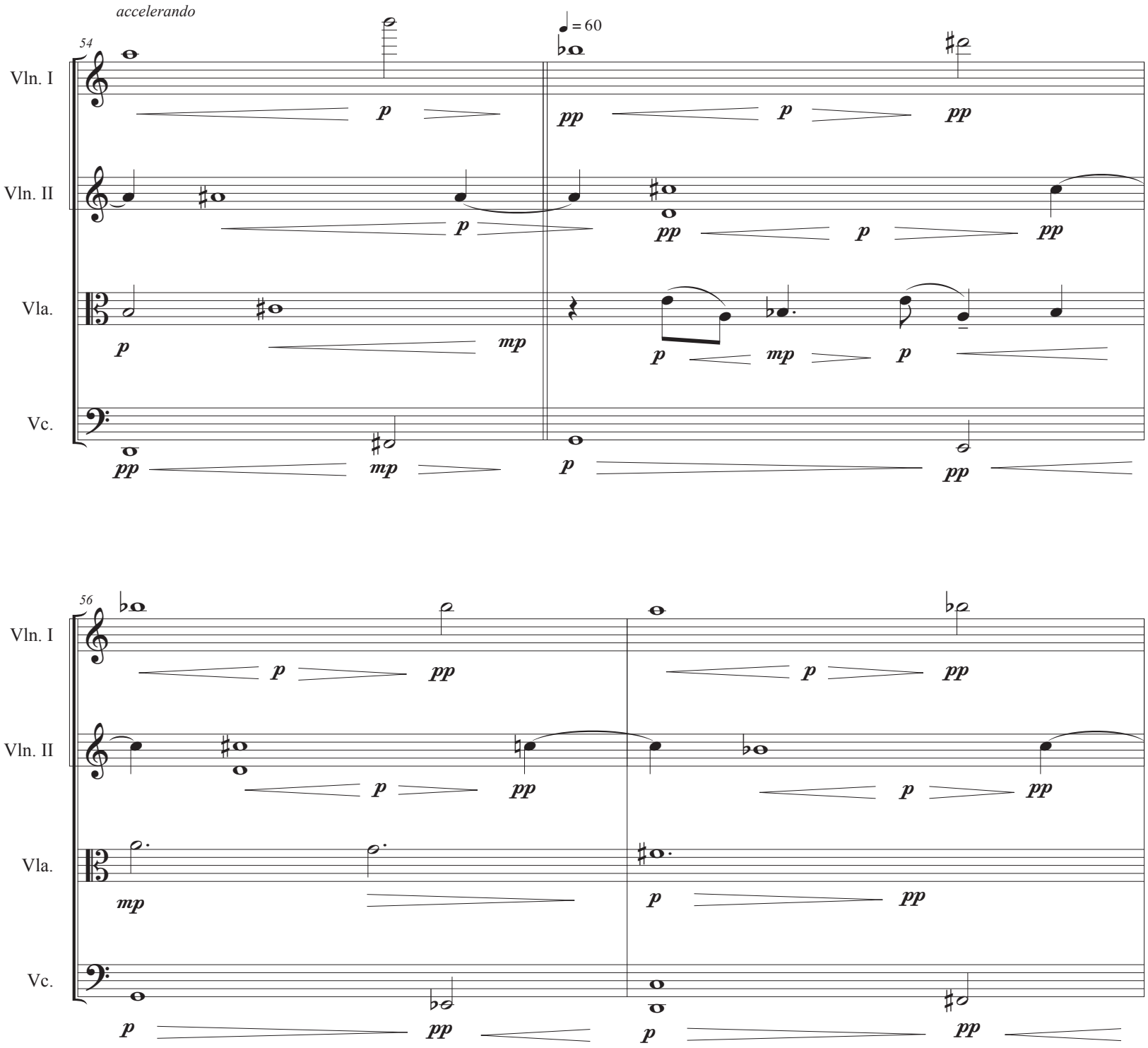
Vc.

C ♩ = 54

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.

50

52


accelerando
54
♩= 60
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
56
rit.
58
D
♩= 54

60

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

62

64

accel.

♩ = 60

66

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.

mp p mf mp pp p ppp
mp p mf mp pp p pp
mp pp p pp
pp mp pp p

68

rit.

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.

pp ppp pp ppp
pp ppp
p ppp pp ppp
ppp pp pppp

70

♩ = 54

Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.

pppp ppp pppp
pppp
ppp pppp ppp pppp
ppp pppp ppp pppp pp

E

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

ppp < pp > ppp

ppp > pppp

ppp < pp > ppp

ppp > pppp

ppp > pppp

p pp

p

mp pp

74

mp mf mp mf f p

3

76

mp p pp mp

78

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

mp

mf

f

ff

fff

accel.

F ♩ = 60

rit.

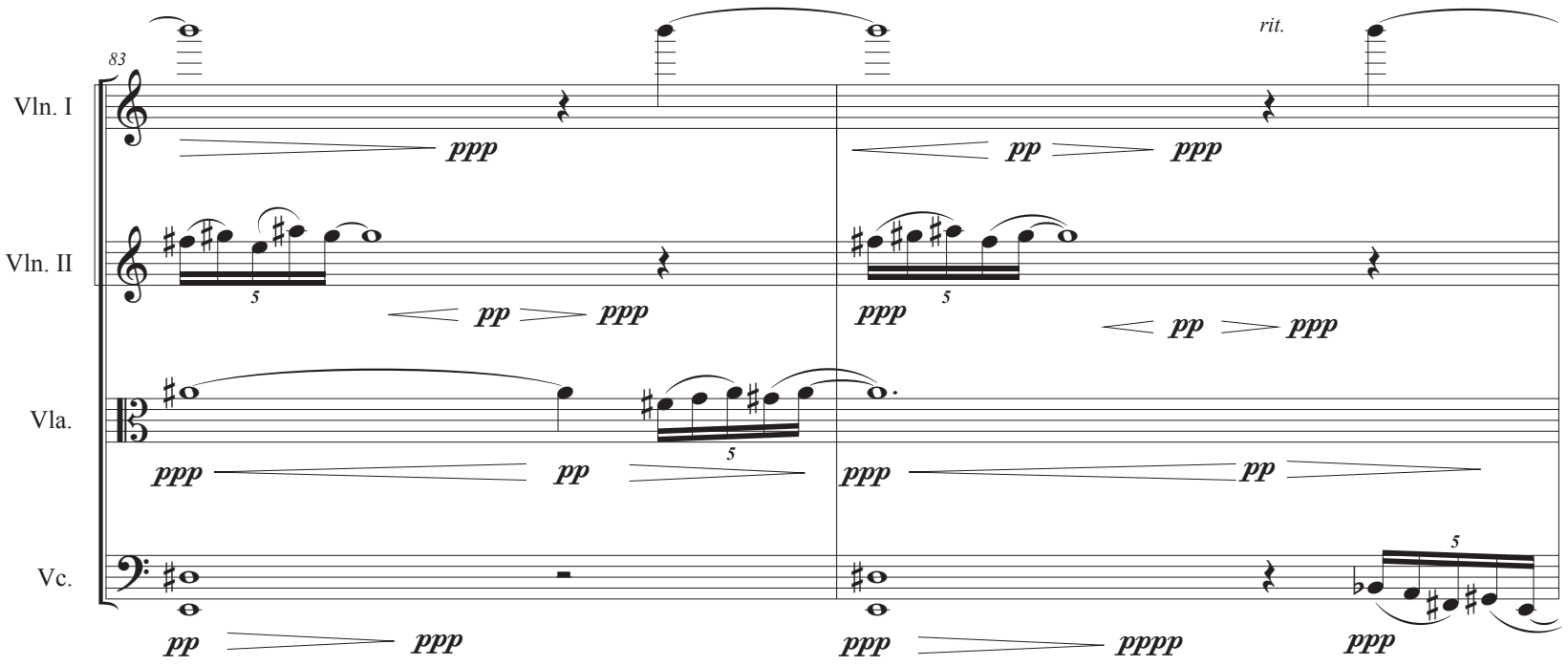
81

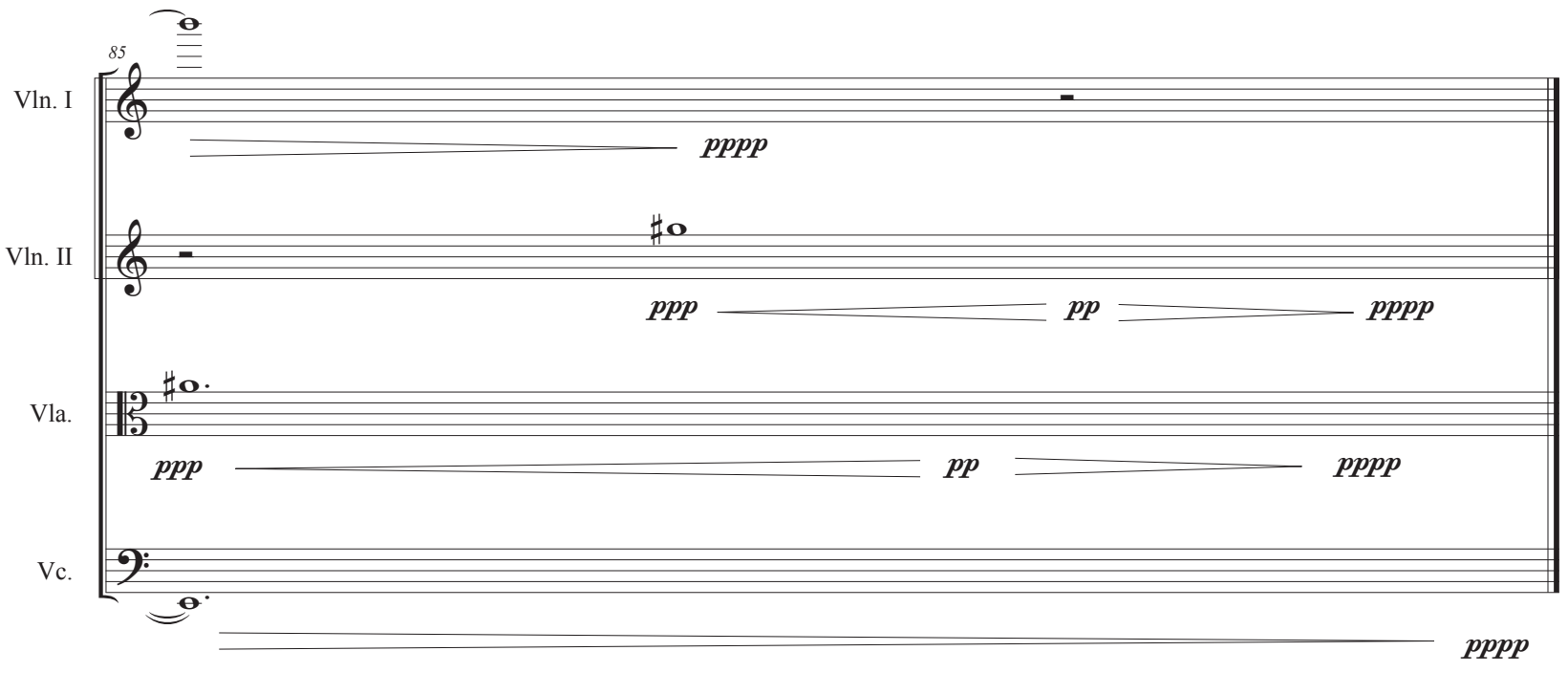
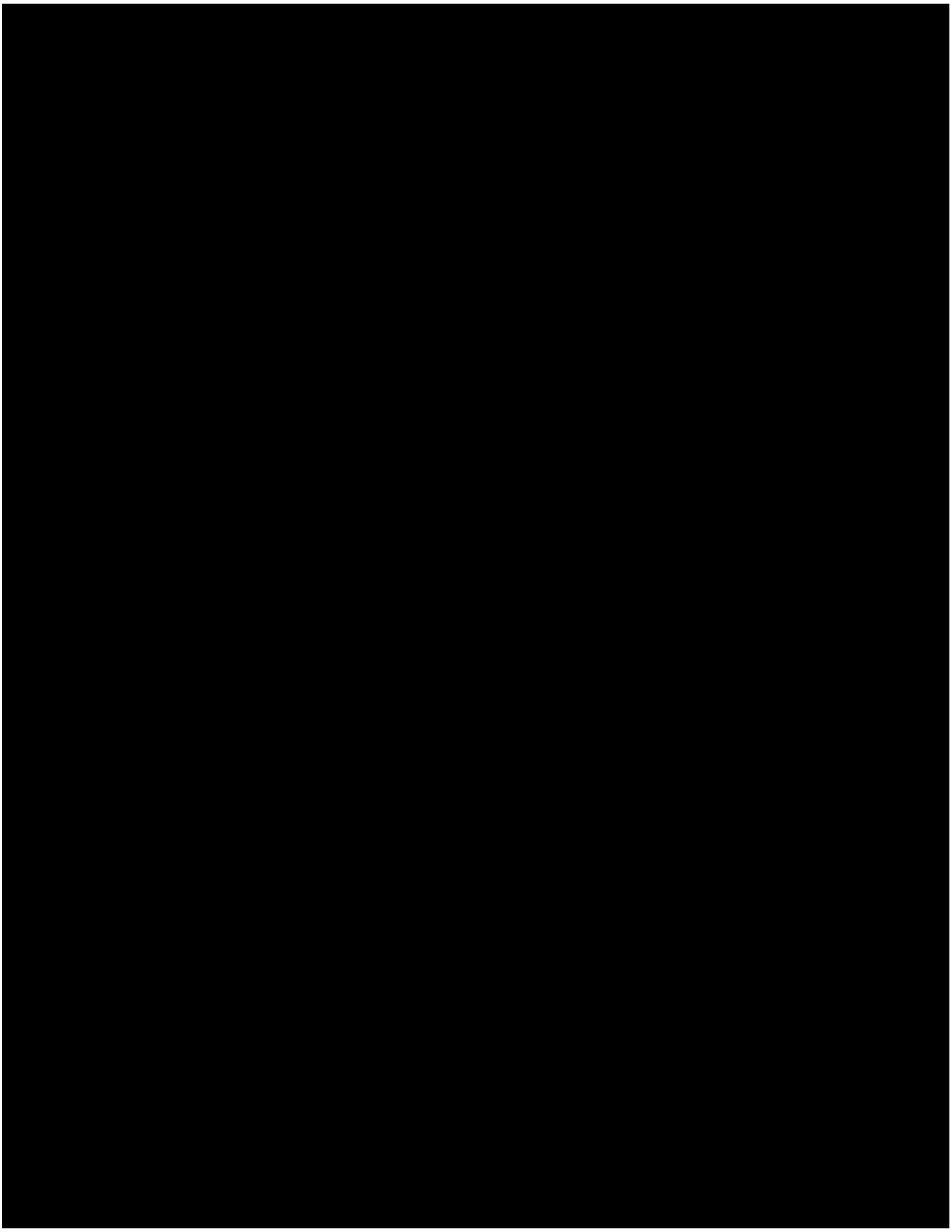
♩ = 54

p

ppp

pp


83
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
ppp
pp
ppp
5
pp
ppp
ppp
5
pp
ppp
ppp
5
pp
pp
ppp
ppp
pppp
ppp
rit.
5


85
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
pppp
ppp
pp
pppp
ppp
pp
pppp
pppp

CURRICULUM VITAE