st9.1.14

sumtone

:

michael edwards

“_____”

for amplified cello

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this is a sumtone work
st9.1.14

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programme note:

Traditionally, string players coordinate the fingers of the left hand with the movement of the bow by the right arm. My idea for this piece was to disassociate the two hands/arms of the cellist and give each its own structure, reserving the confluence of the two for a structurally significant point, something the cellist has to work towards rather than take for granted as the performance norm. Naturally then, some of the sounds produced are a little out of the ordinary, as well as not especially sonorous, particularly the sounds produced by the left hand, which at the beginning of the piece is limited to tapping the finger board, pulling at the strings and executing quiet pizzicati. Hence the need for amplification: to give life to these small sounds and expose the listener to the tiny resonances and percussive noises that arise from such a performance practice.

Throughout the piece, one simple fingering pattern continuously dominates, though it is only heard as a series of definite pitches some time after the point at which bow and fingers are brought together onto the same string. At this juncture, the piece takes a different direction as the fingering pattern gradually works its way from one string onto all four, i.e. it becomes a four-note chord instead of a fingering pattern. Throughout this process, the method of bowing the string is continuously changing, from bowed in the normal fashion, to bowed with the wood of bow, from bouncing the bow, to a smooth legato, to an aggressive staccato etc. etc. This makes for an altogether rather ferocious, agitated performance which is intended to be both stimulating to the eye as well as to the ear and which, enhanced and exaggerated again by amplification, should present the listener with a more physical and intimate engagement with the performer.

Notes:

1. When there are two staves per system, the upper stave indicates the fingering and the lower (four-line) stave indicates which string is bowed. The four-line stave indicates strings I, II, III and IV from the top line down to the bottom respectively.

2. Cross noteheads indicate "silent fingering". However, the player is to make as much noise as possible by tapping and pulling at the strings as the fingers move.

3. Notes with a $\frown$ through the stem (see bar 1) are to be played behind the bridge.

4. Grace note groups that have noteless stems, an extended beam and four stemless notes underneath (see bar 1) indicate a fast repetition of the fingering pattern 1,2,1,2,3,2,3,4,3,4,3,4,3,2,3,2 on the given notes (i.e. finger 1 will stop the first note, 2 the second etc.). The repetition of the pattern lasts for as long as the beam extends (and for the duration of the parenthesised rests) but need not finish with a completion of the full fingering pattern.

5. "CLT" = Col Legno Tratto.

6. "CLB" = Col Legno Battuto. $\frac{1}{2}$CLB means with both the hair and the wood of the bow. Sim. for $\frac{1}{2}$CLT.

7. "SPE" = Sul Ponticello Estremo (as close to the bridge as possible without actually touching it).

8. "Tip" = with the tip of the bow, i.e. just the hard tip, no hair at all.

9. $\downarrow$ above a note means push the bow down the string instead of drawing it across in the normal manner. The sound produced is intended to be noisy and unpredictable.

10. A horizontal arrow indicates a transition from one performance state to another (e.g. from sul pont. to ord.).

11. A group of grace note stems attached to a note to be played "CLB" (see bar 32) indicates an undefined number of repeated battuto attacks (caused by bouncing the wood of the bow on the string).

12. Grace note groups with harmonic signs above the notes (see bar 88) indicate random fingered harmonics on the string indicated (i.e. not produced by a light glissando).

13. Accidentals carry throughout the bar but are repeated in parentheses as necessary.

14. Two microphones should be used for amplification. One should be placed as close to the bridge as possible and another next to the fingerboard, again, as close as is practicable. The amplification is intended to be extreme—as loud as possible.

Duration c. 8 mins.

" "

(♩ = 80)

Michael Edwards 1995

Effortlessly

IV 1 2 1 2 3 2 3 4 3 4 3 4 3 2 3 2

III + 1 2 1 2 3 ... **

IV +

ppp *ppp* (𝄾)

Very precise; brooding but intimate

CLB

p

sim.*

* Continue to play exclusively behind the bridge until directed otherwise.

** Repeat fingering pattern using given notes.

6

III + II + III +

ppp *ppp*

CLT CLB CLT

ppp *p* *ppp*

(non cresc.) *(non cresc.)*

10

II + I + II +

ppp *p*

CLB

Wildly; with extremes of dynamic

CLT → ½ CLT

CLB

p *ff* *ppp* *p* *ff* *p*

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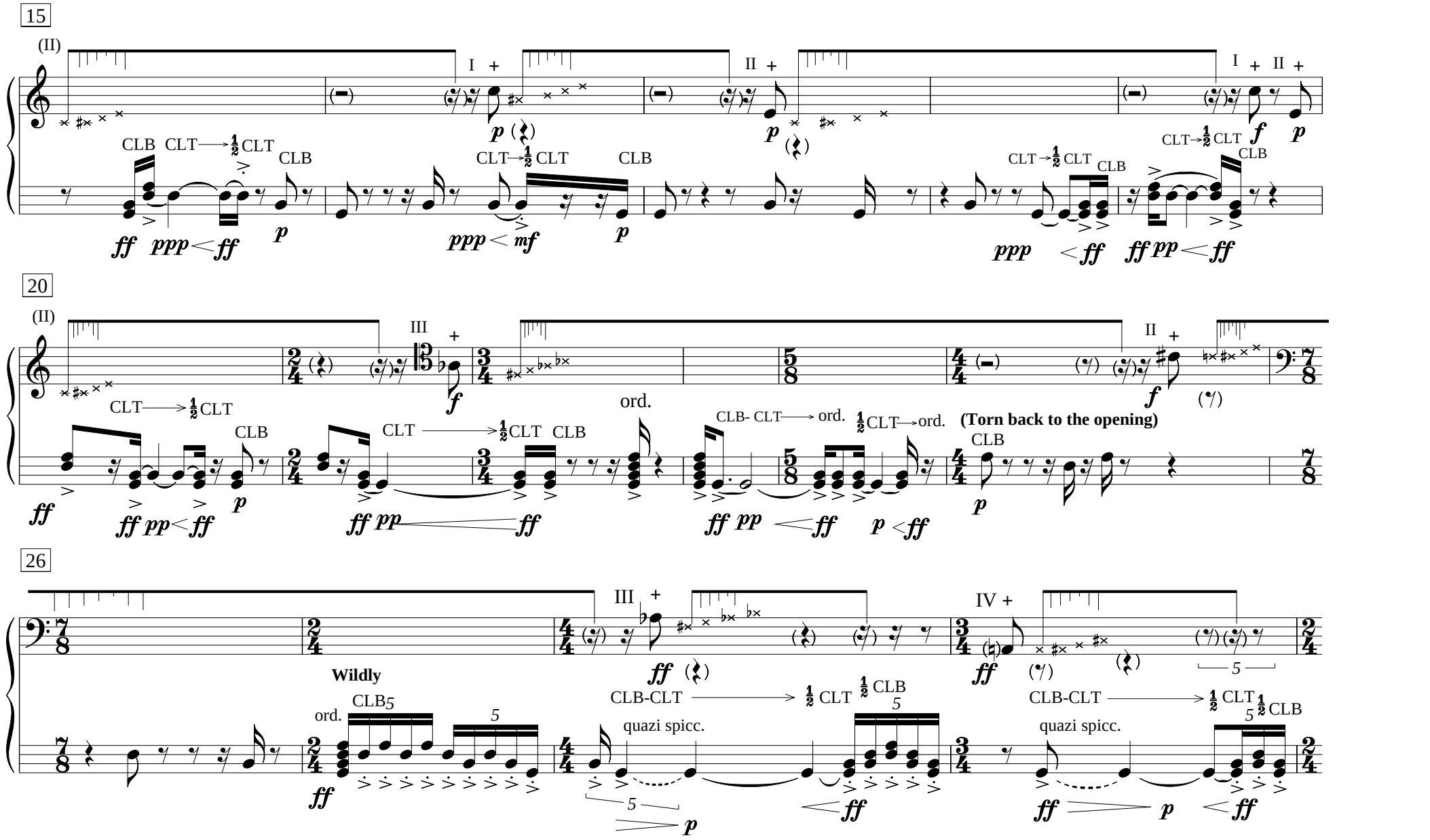
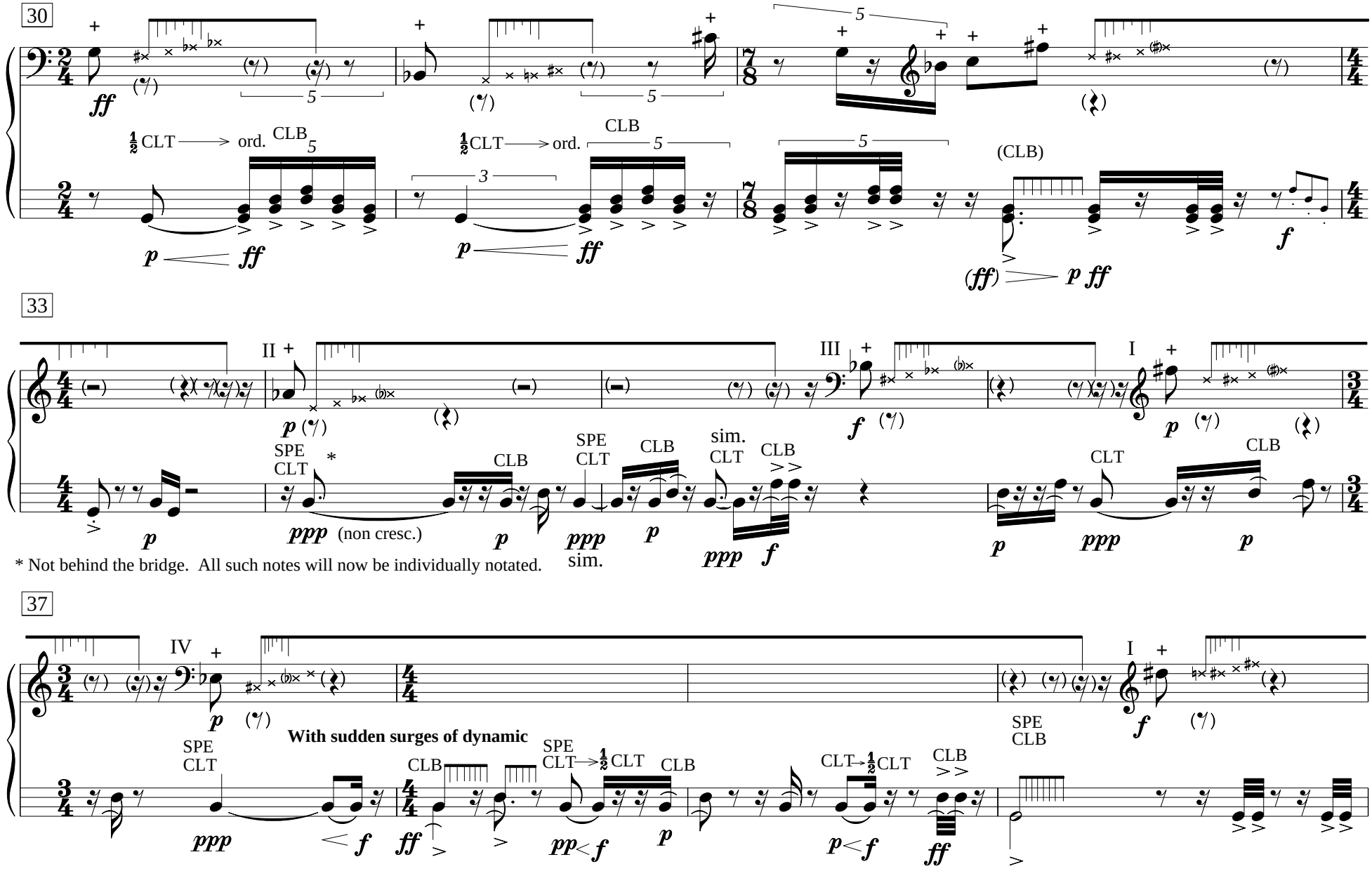
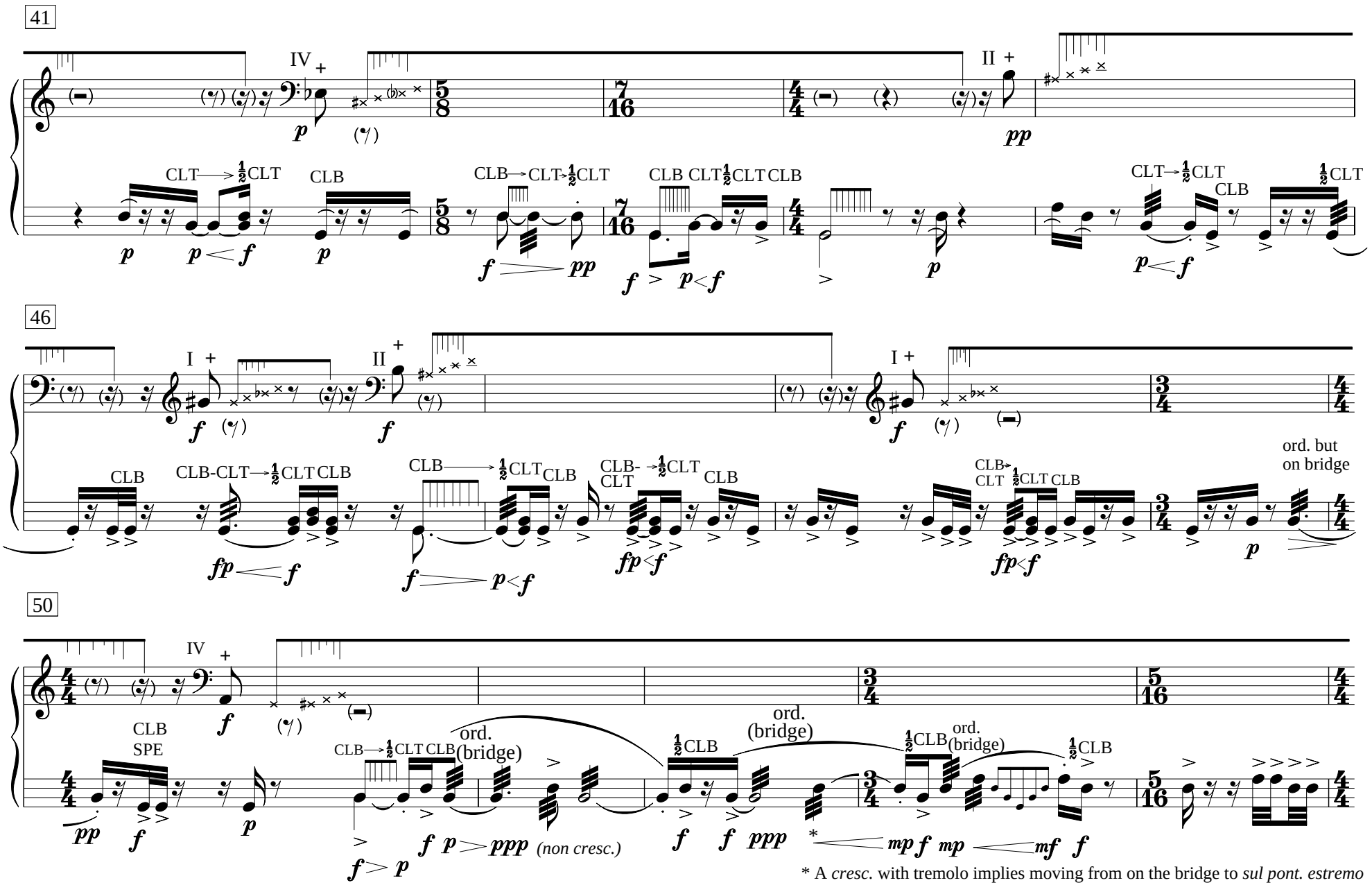

15
(II)
I +
II +
I + II +
CLB
CLT → ½ CLT
ff ppp < ff
p
ppp < mf
ppp < ff
ff pp < ff
20
(II)
III +
II +
ord.
CLT → ½ CLT
CLB
CLB- CLT → ord.
½ CLT → ord.
(Torn back to the opening)
ff pp < ff
ff pp
p < ff
26
III +
IV +
Wildly
ord.
CLB5
CLB-CLT → ½ CLT ½ CLB
quazi spicc.
ff
p
5

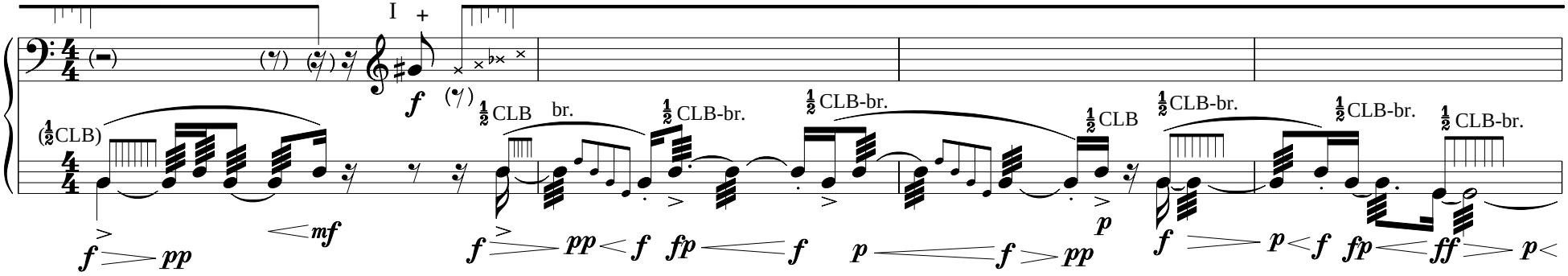


* Not behind the bridge. All such notes will now be individually notated.



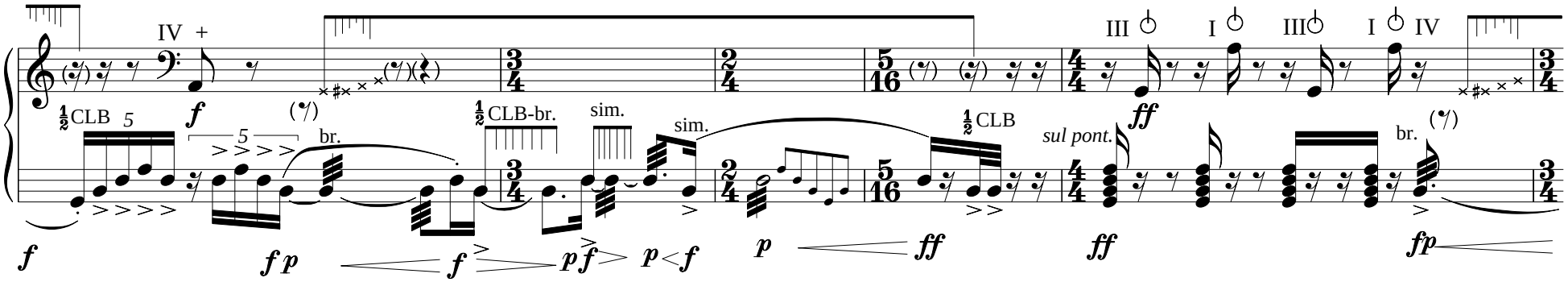
* A *cresc.* with tremolo implies moving from on the bridge to *sul pont. estremo*

55

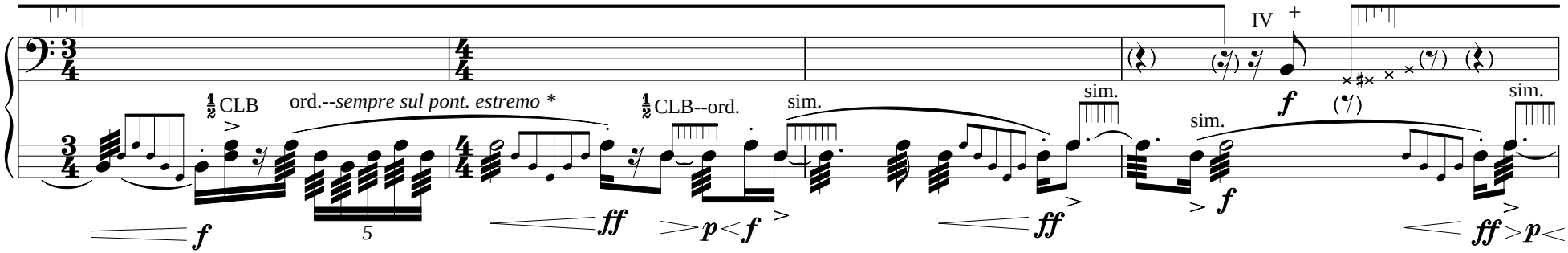


In this passage, ½CLB means ½CLB *sul pont.* and br. means with the hair of the bow on the bridge.

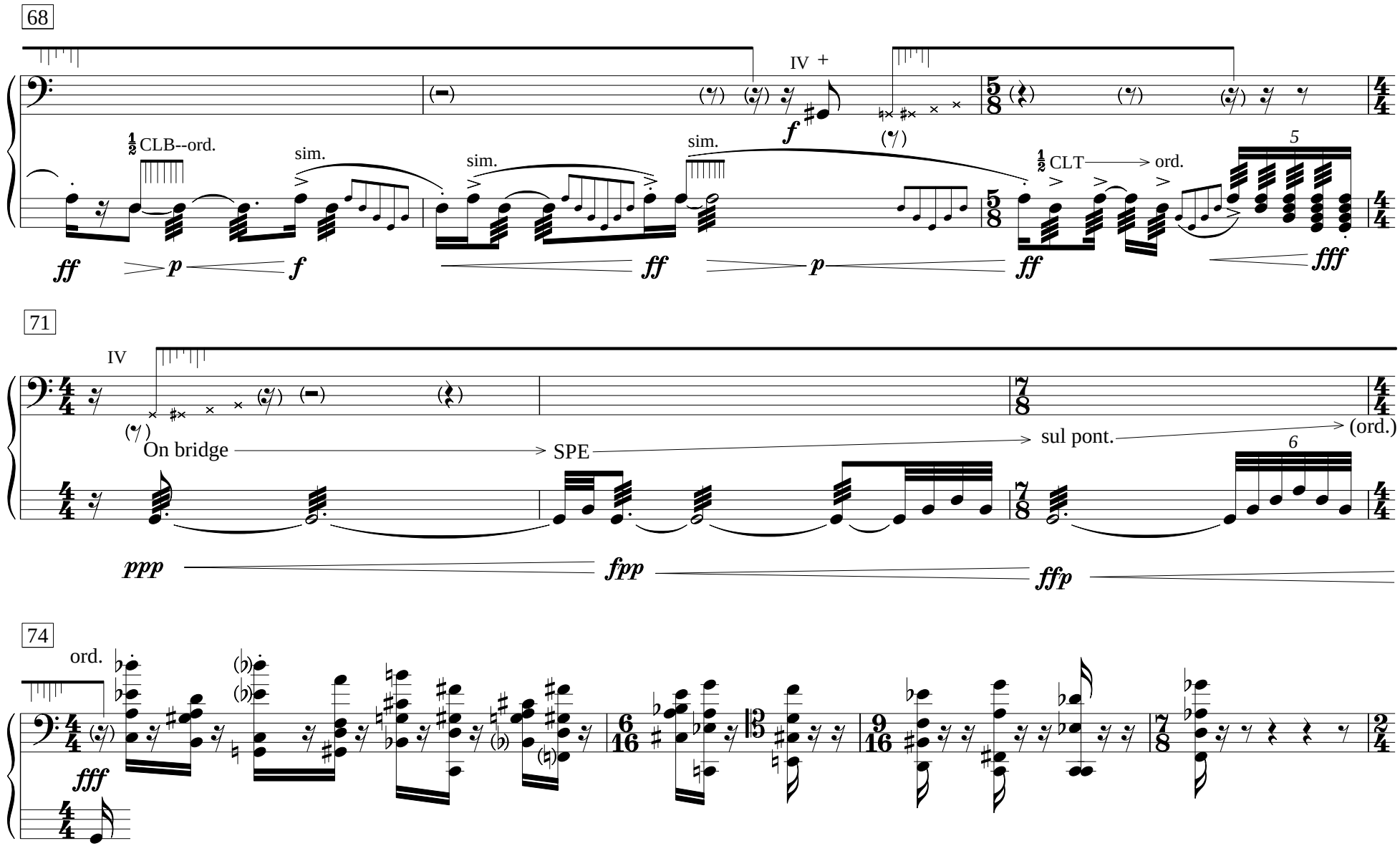
59

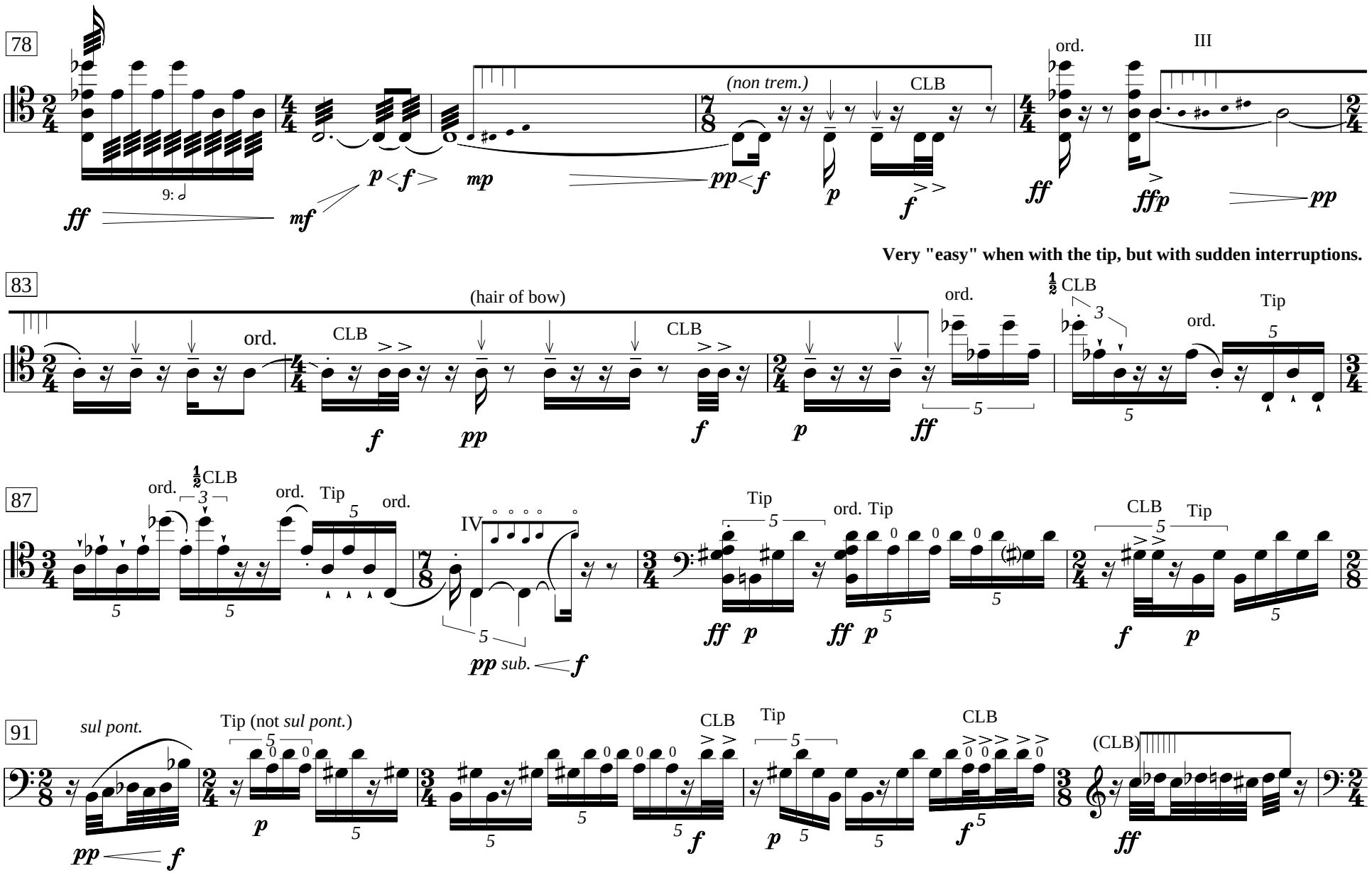


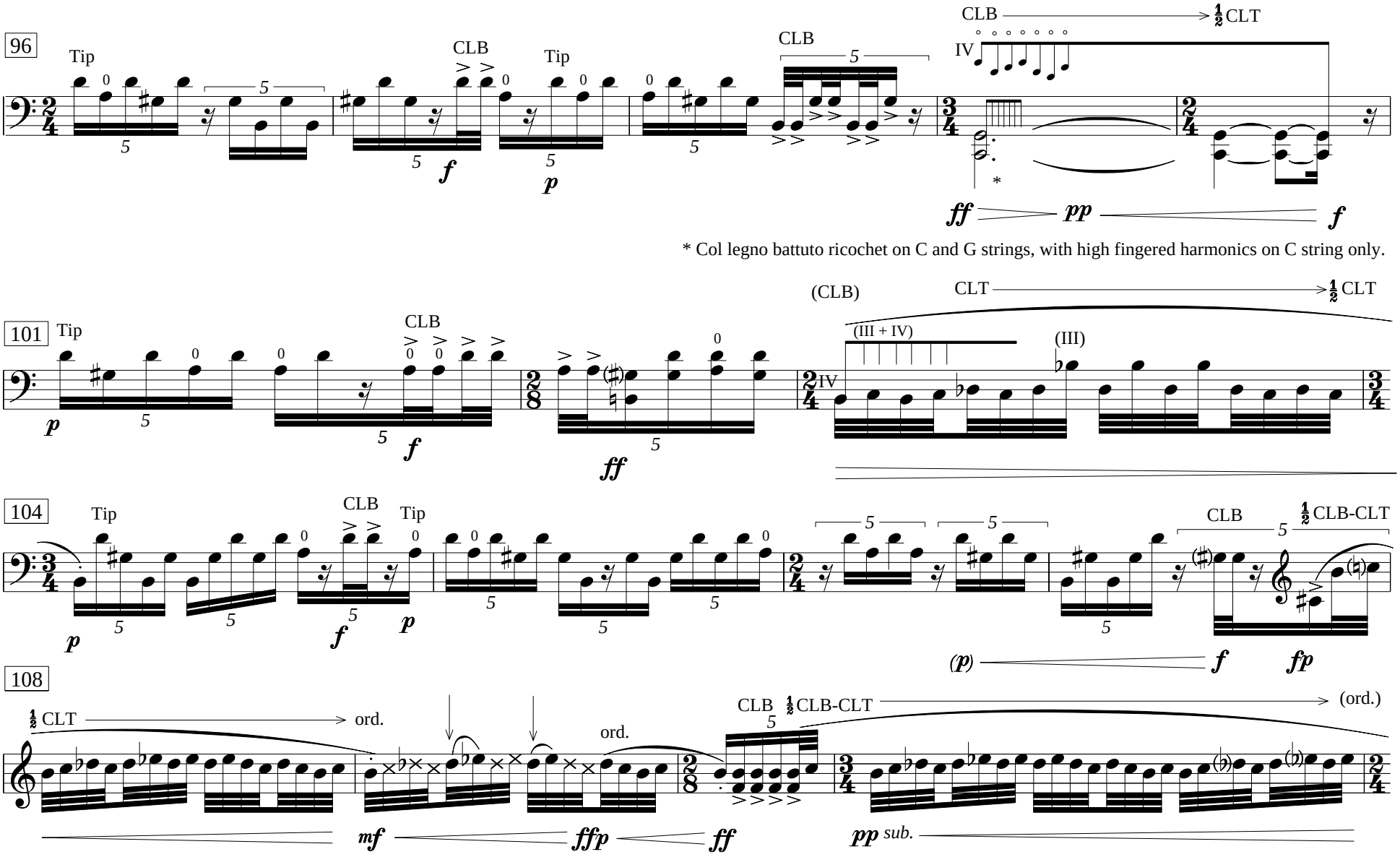
64

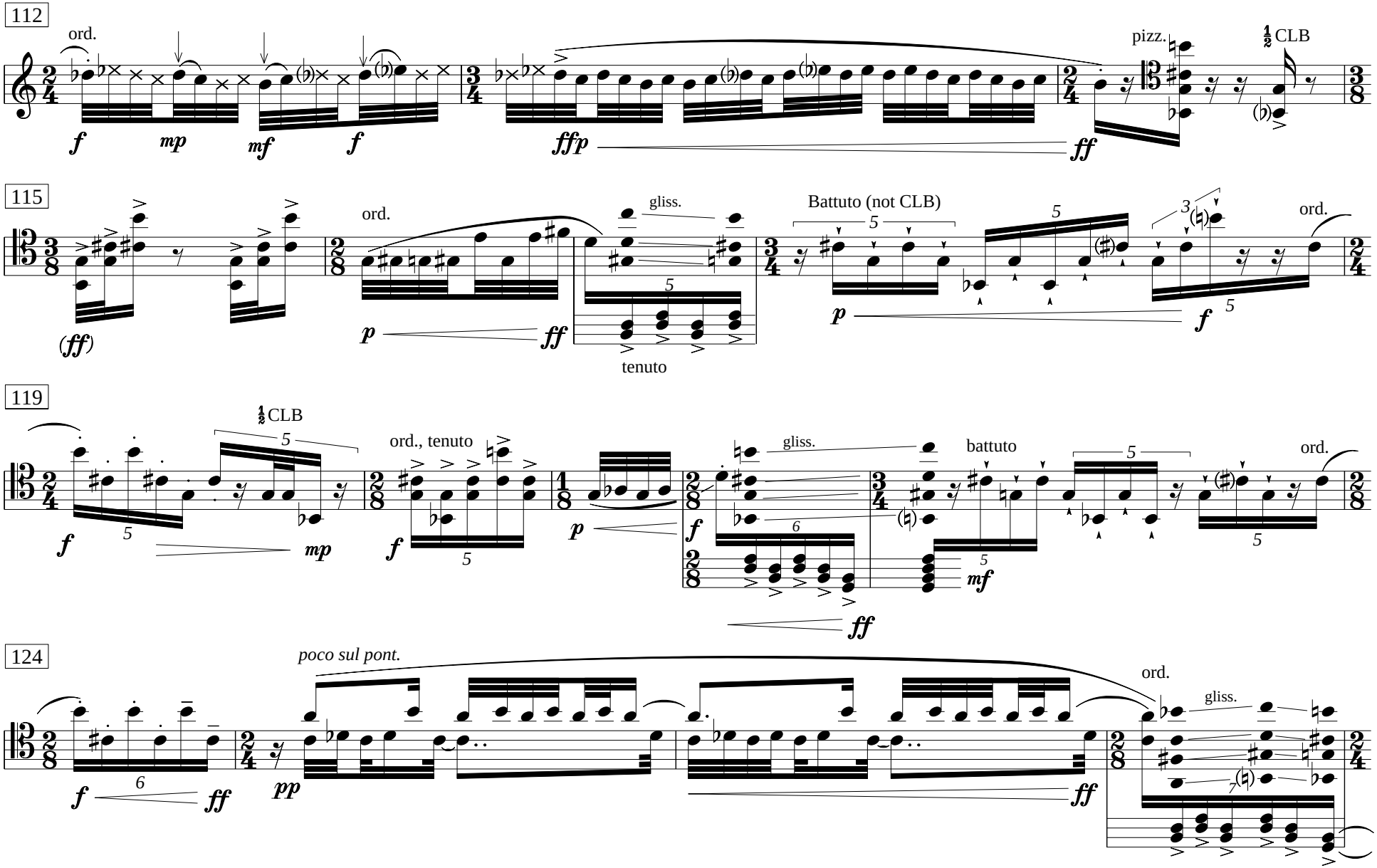


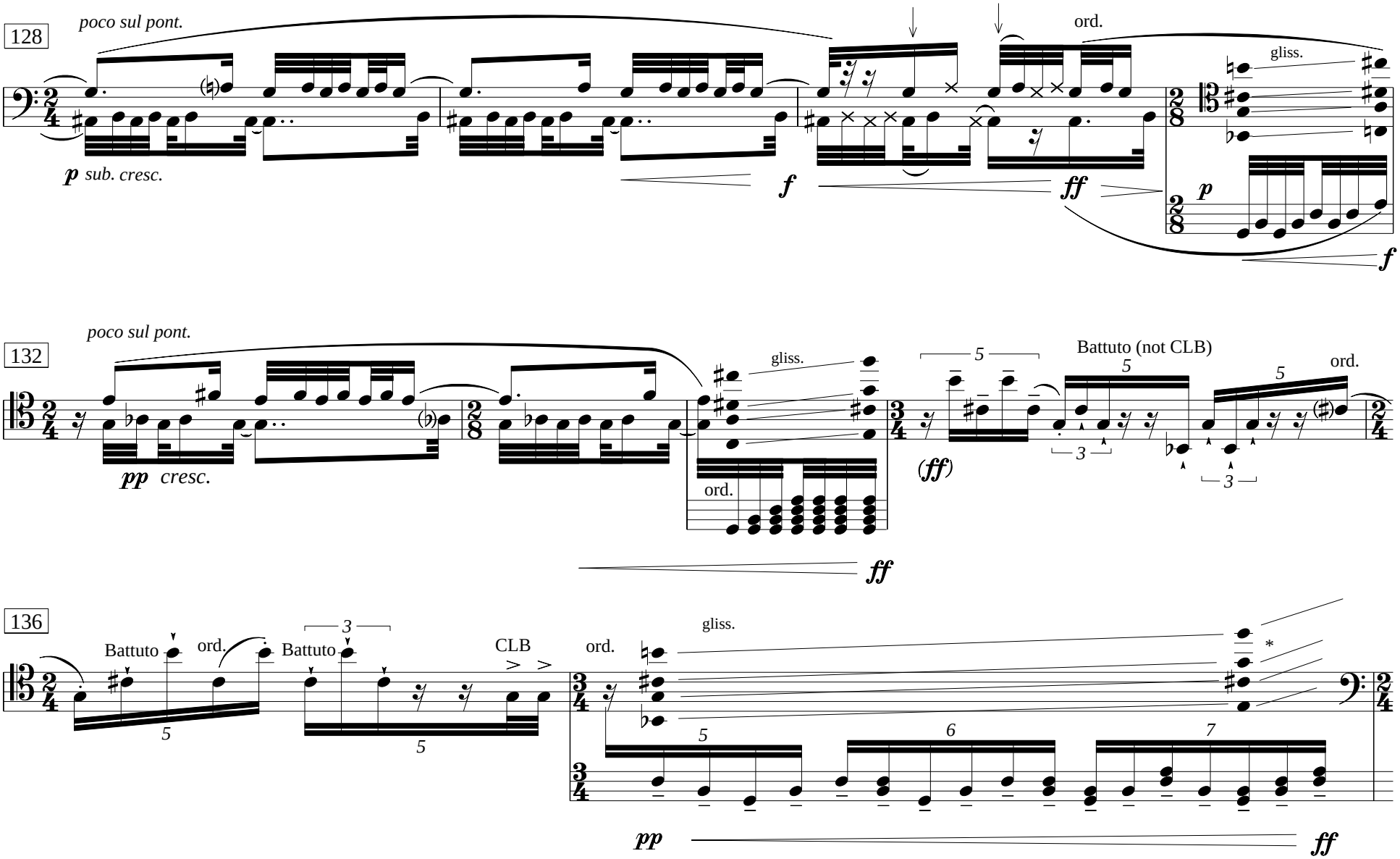
* Until bar 70, ord. means return to using the hair of the bow, but always *sul pont. estremo.*


68
IV +
½ CLB--ord.
sim.
sim.
sim.
½ CLT
ord.
5
ff
p
f
ff
p
ff
fff
71
IV
On bridge
SPE
sul pont.
(ord.)
6
ppp
fpp
ffp
74
ord.
fff

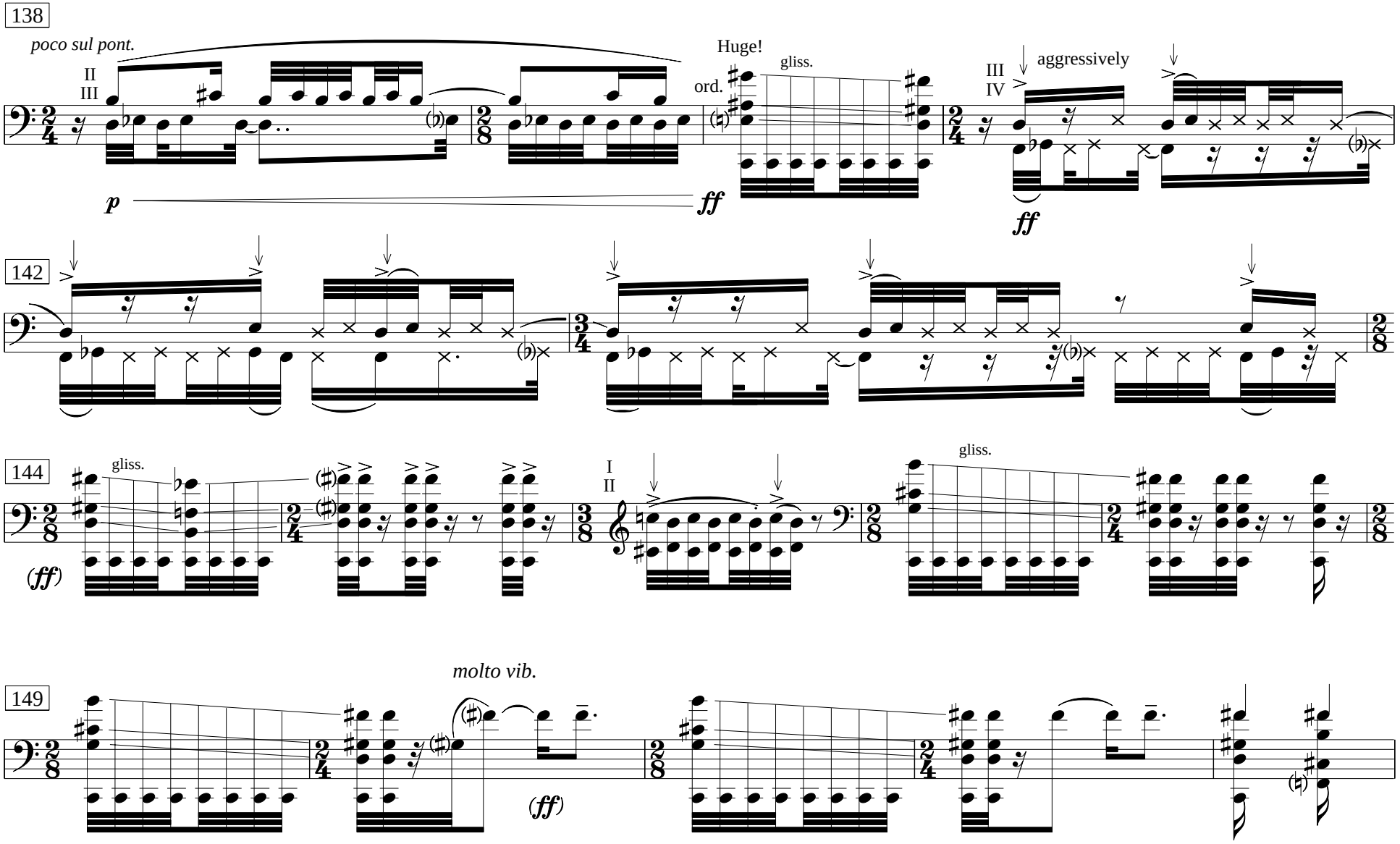

78
ff
mf
p f
mp
(non trem.)
CLB
pp f
p
f
ord.
ff
III
ffp
pp
Very "easy" when with the tip, but with sudden interruptions.
83
ord.
CLB
(hair of bow)
CLB
f
pp
f
p
ff
ord.
½ CLB
3
5
ord.
Tip
5
87
ord.
½CLB
3
ord.
Tip
5
ord.
IV
5
pp sub.
f
Tip
5
ord. Tip
ff p
ff p
CLB
5
Tip
f
p
91
sul pont.
pp
f
Tip (not sul pont.)
5
p
CLB
f
Tip
5
p
CLB
f
(CLB)
ff

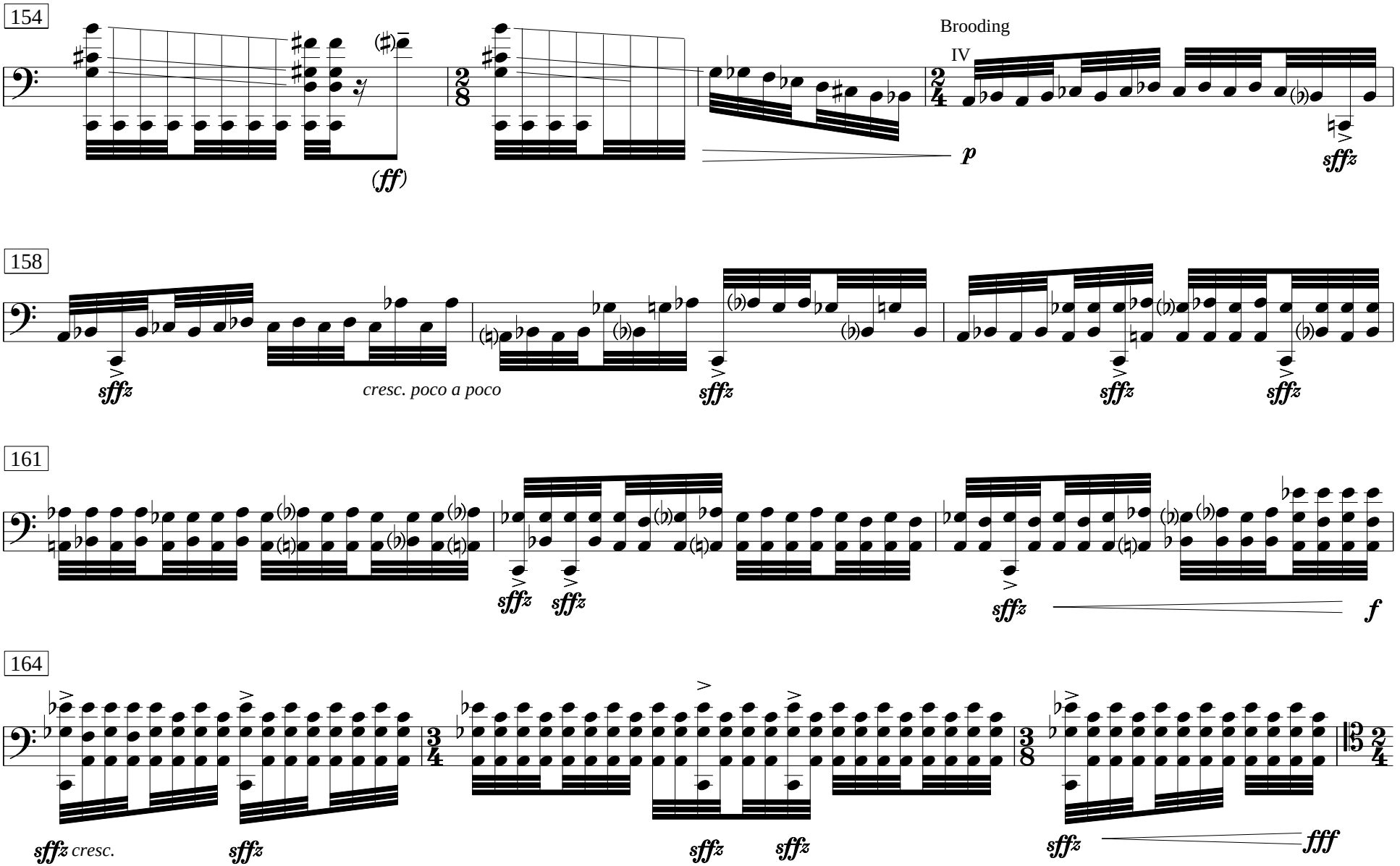

96
Tip
CLB
Tip
CLB
CLB
½CLT
IV
ff
pp
f
* Col legno battuto ricochet on C and G strings, with high fingered harmonics on C string only.
101
Tip
CLB
(CLB)
CLT
½CLT
(III + IV)
(III)
IV
p
f
ff
104
Tip
CLB
Tip
CLB
½CLB-CLT
(p)
f
fp
108
½CLT
ord.
ord.
CLB
½CLB-CLT
(ord.)
mf
fffp
ff
pp sub.

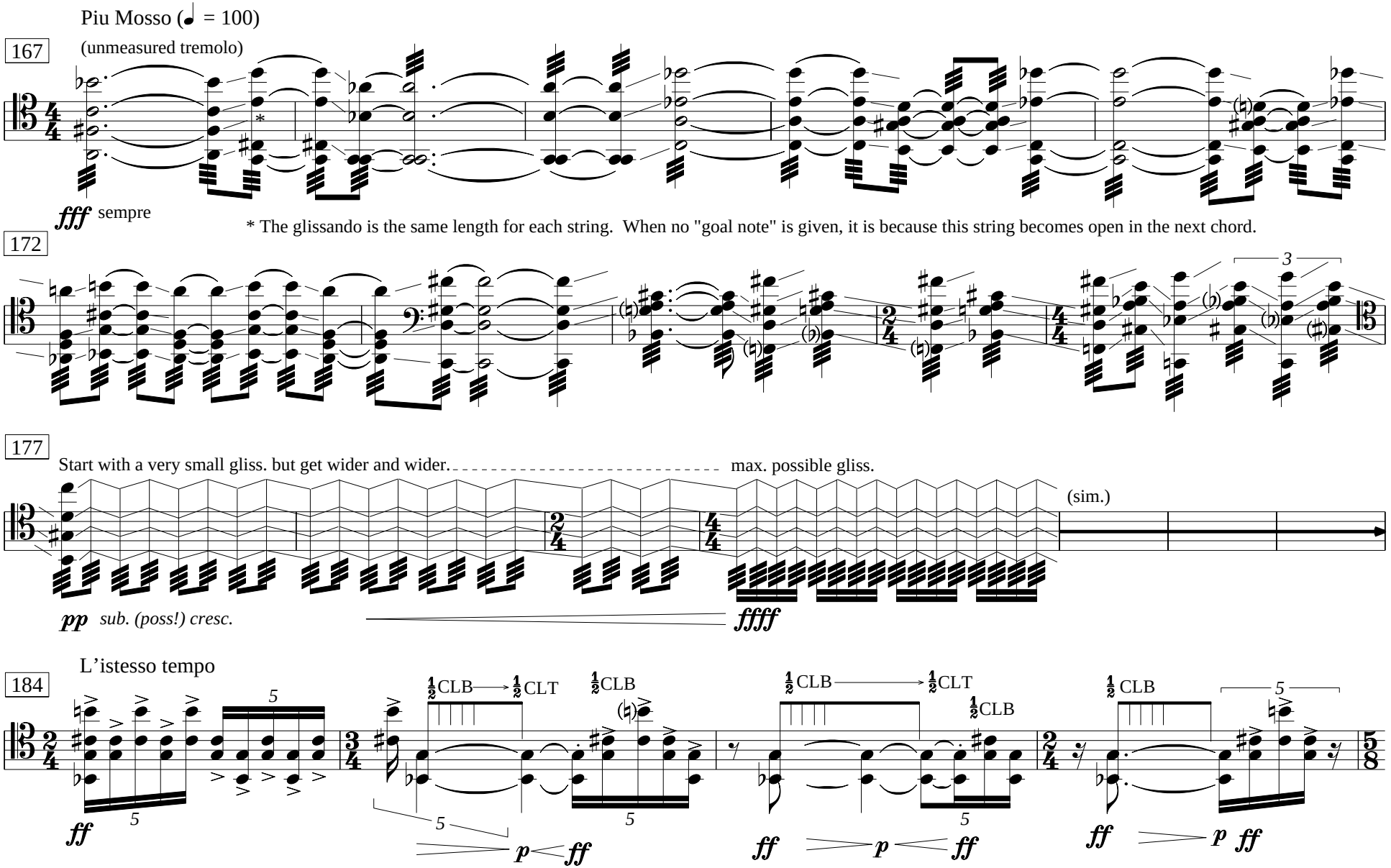

112
ord.
f
mp
mf
f
ffp
ff
pizz.
½ CLB
115
(ff)
ord.
p
ff
gliss.
tenuto
Battuto (not CLB)
p
f
ord.
119
½ CLB
f
mp
ord., tenuto
f
p
gliss.
f
ff
battuto
mf
ord.
124
poco sul pont.
f
ff
pp
ff
ord.
gliss.

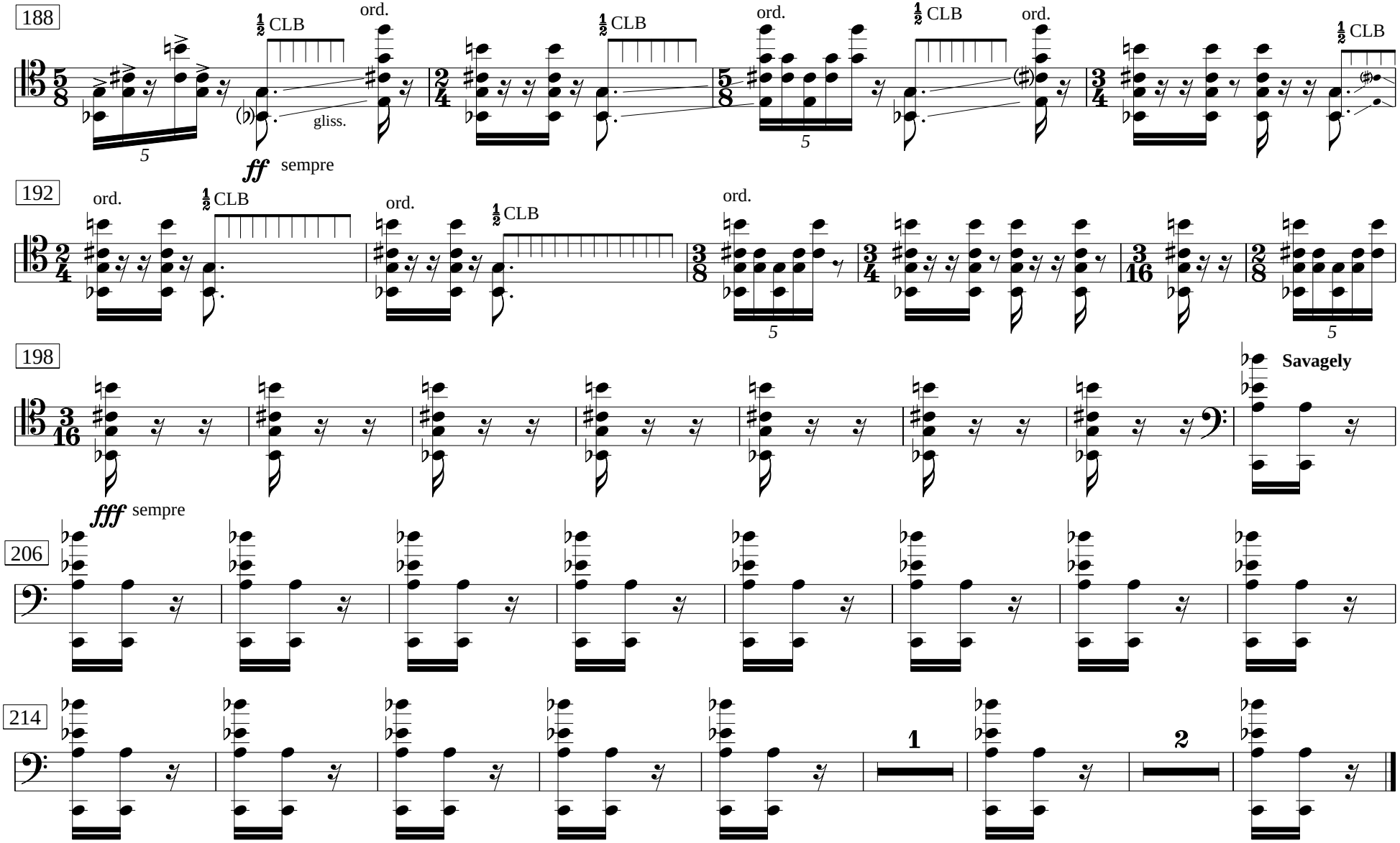


* Rapid glissando to highest position possible.


138
poco sul pont.
II
III
p
Huge!
ord.
gliss.
ff
III
IV
aggressively
ff
142
144
gliss.
(ff)
I
II
gliss.
molto vib.
149
(ff)


154
(ff)
Brooding
IV
p
sfffz
158
sfffz
cresc. poco a poco
sfffz
sfffz
sfffz
161
sfffz
sfffz
sfffz
f
164
sfffz cresc.
sfffz
sfffz
sfffz
sfffz
fff


Piu Mosso (♩ = 100)
167
(unmeasured tremolo)
fff sempre
* The glissando is the same length for each string. When no "goal note" is given, it is because this string becomes open in the next chord.
172
177
Start with a very small gliss. but get wider and wider.
max. possible gliss.
(sim.)
pp sub. (poss!) cresc.
ffff
L'istesso tempo
184
½CLB → ½CLT
½CLB
ff
p
ff


188
½ CLB
ord.
gliss.
ff sempre
192
ord.
198
Savagely
fff sempre
206
214
1
2