Set No. 1

Saad Haddad

String Quartet No. 1

for two violins, viola, and violoncello

(2017)

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

Los Angeles | New York

www.saadnhaddad.com

STRING QUARTET

I. Daf
II. Fugha
III. Nashwa

INSTRUMENTATION

two violins, viola, and violoncello

DURATION

ca. 25 minutes

PERFORMANCE NOTES

p.v.	*poco vibrato*	***sp***	accent in the realm of *piano*
s.v.	*senza vibrato*	***smf***	accent in the realm of *mezzo-forte*
ord.	*ordinario* [cancels technique]		
	crescendo dal niente	***sf***	accent in the realm of *forte*
	diminuendo al niente		

Accidentals: Maintaining with common practice, all accidentals, including microtones, carry through their respective measure, and do not carry through different octaves unless otherwise notated.

Microtones: An accidental with a black arrow indicates to alter the indicated pitch by approximately one sixth tone; in a similar fashion, an accidental with a white arrow indicates to alter the pitch by approximately one twelfth tone. Be careful to maintain the tuning of the microtones between voices.

Phrasing: With the exception of very long held notes, please observe indicated bow markings, including slurs, as exactly as possible.

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

I. Daf

Strike IV string with left hand fingertips 1, 2 and 3 simultaneously.

Strike IV string with indicated left hand fingertips.

Slap fingerboard with flat left hand fingers.

Strings must be dampened in order to eliminate as much of the pitch as possible. Furthermore, all strikes and slaps should be performed ***sf*** while striving for unified dynamics and timbres throughout the ensemble; i.e. the viola and violoncello should not overpower the violins.

Strikes and slaps must be as rhythmically precise as possible to maintain clarity of the rhythmic interplay. Tempo changes at measures 104 and 249 must be executed as *subito* as possible, and can be physically exerted in a semi-theatrical way if desired. The *accelerando* from measure 385 to the end of the movement should be heavily exaggerated, signaling the last percussive moments before the first bowed notes of the entire work.

During the long, sparse passages that encompass measures 169 244 and 314 370, every player must be as still as possible as if ready to enter at any moment. Whenever one does enter, it is recommended that they physically exert themself in a subtle, yet semi-theatrical way in order to make a clear distinction with the motionless players. These subtle, physical acts need not be uniform.

II. Fugha

This movement is divided into alternating sections of **Quasi Cadenzas** and **Episodes**:

The **Quasi Cadenza** tempo markings instruct the ensemble to fluctuate within the agogic range, giving the music a feeling of spontaneity and improvisation. However, a certain sense of pulse must still be maintained. Most importantly, the vertical harmonies that line up in the score should be heard as such. One possible method for this to work is to assign one "tempo leader" at a time for any given phrase, or sub-phrase. This way, each ensemble member will have the opportunity to be responsible for how they would like to fluctuate the tempo within the framework of the quasi cadenzas. This is intentionally left up to the ensemble, rather than the composer (there are no examples of how one would do this in the score). Given this set of parameters, it is encouraged that performances of this movement experiment with various ways of fluctuating the tempo within the quasi cadenzas.. These 'quasi cadenzas' should be played *poco vibrato*.

In contrast, the **Episode**s must be performed strictly in time according to their tempo markings. Note that the episodes gradually increase in tempo throughout the movement: Episodes I, II, III, IV, and V are marked half note = 76, 80, 84, 88, and 92 respectively). These sections are characterized by gradual, though often rapid, changes in dynamics. Just as the tempos should be as strictly adhered to as possible, so too should the dynamics throughout these episodes. These 'episodes' should be played *senza vibrato.*

III. Nashwa

Perform *crescendo* exponentially to make it possible to perceive the melody in between the instruments (i.e., *Klangfarbenmelodie*).

Very fast, wide vibrato t hat spans one sixth tone above and below the indicated pitch. Play with two fingers à la baroque trill.

Left hand *pizzicato.*

This notation appears exclusively during long *diminuendi* passages. Where indicated, immediately maintain a *sforzando* in the realm of *forte* for the duration of the dashed line. At the vertical line, revert back to the appropriate dynamic level that would have been executed had there not been this indication.

This type of beaming shows a gradual change in the speed of the notes. It is shown with a primary straight beam and other diagonal secondary beams (that together resemble a feather). These secondary beams suggest a gradual acceleration or deceleration from the first note value within the feathered beam to the last. When similar gestures are doubled throughout the quartet, they are not meant to line up perfectly and should produce a smearing, almost kaleidoscopic, effect.

Play an unmeasured *tremolo* with as many bow strokes as possible within the indicated note value. Do not alter speed of *tremolo* based on tempo indications.

Play a measured *tremolo* following standard notation rules.

Play the indicated pitch with one *pizzicato* stroke, then immediately slide the finger approximately one semitone higher or lower in respect to the direction of the following line.

This movement should be played *senza vibrato* unless otherwise noted.

The length of rests immediately preceding the beginning of Rehearsals **F** through **I** must be strictly adhered to for dramatic effect.

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

PROGRAM NOTE

This work is my first major string quartet which deals with a large architectural structure divided into three movements entitled Daf, Fugha, and Nashwa. The work traverses many areas of traditional Middle Eastern music as they relate to pitch, ornamentation, meter, and timbre, and seeks to amalgamate those characteristics with traits typically found in Western classical music, like development, modulation, and harmony.

I. Daf is named after the frame drum commonly used in traditional Middle Eastern ensembles. In a typical setting, this drum provides the meter for the rest of the ensemble to improvise within. However, in this movement, the quartet develops the rather straightforward meter that is presented in the first few moments, performing the rhythmic pulses themselves in a seemingly improvised, though thoroughly composed, manner. The subtle nuances of *daf* technique are showcased by means of using the players' left hands to strike their fingerboards as a pseudo-outer 'skin' of the *daf.*

II. Fugha, or 'fugue' in Arabic, borrows its structure from the harmonic motion of Johann Sebastian Bach's Fugue in F-sharp minor, BWV 859, from Book 1 of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*. I have always wondered what it might have been like if Bach was born in Alexandria, rather than Eisenach, and what harmonic discoveries of sorts he might have made in pursuit of his perfect counterpoint. The movement is organized into several contrasting sections of "quasi-cadenzas" and "episodes" that directly correspond to the original fugue's material, however told in my own personal way.

III. Nashwa, or 'trance' in Arabic, is a fantasy on the *maqamat*, or Arab modes, through an aural meditation that begins with swells inspired by the resonance heard inside the oud, an Arab lute. As the movement continues, the sound profile makes its way out of the oud and into the external sounds of the qanun, an Arab zither comprised of over seventy strings and played with long plectrums. Its surface level sounds are abstractly depicted through *sforzando* and *tremolo* techniques from the quartet. The last section brings the ensemble back into the oud, eventually ending with one final swell.

note by the composer

String Quartet was commissioned for the Lydian String Quartet at Brandeis University by the Lydian String Quartet Commission Prize 2017 generously funded by a gift from anonymous donors.

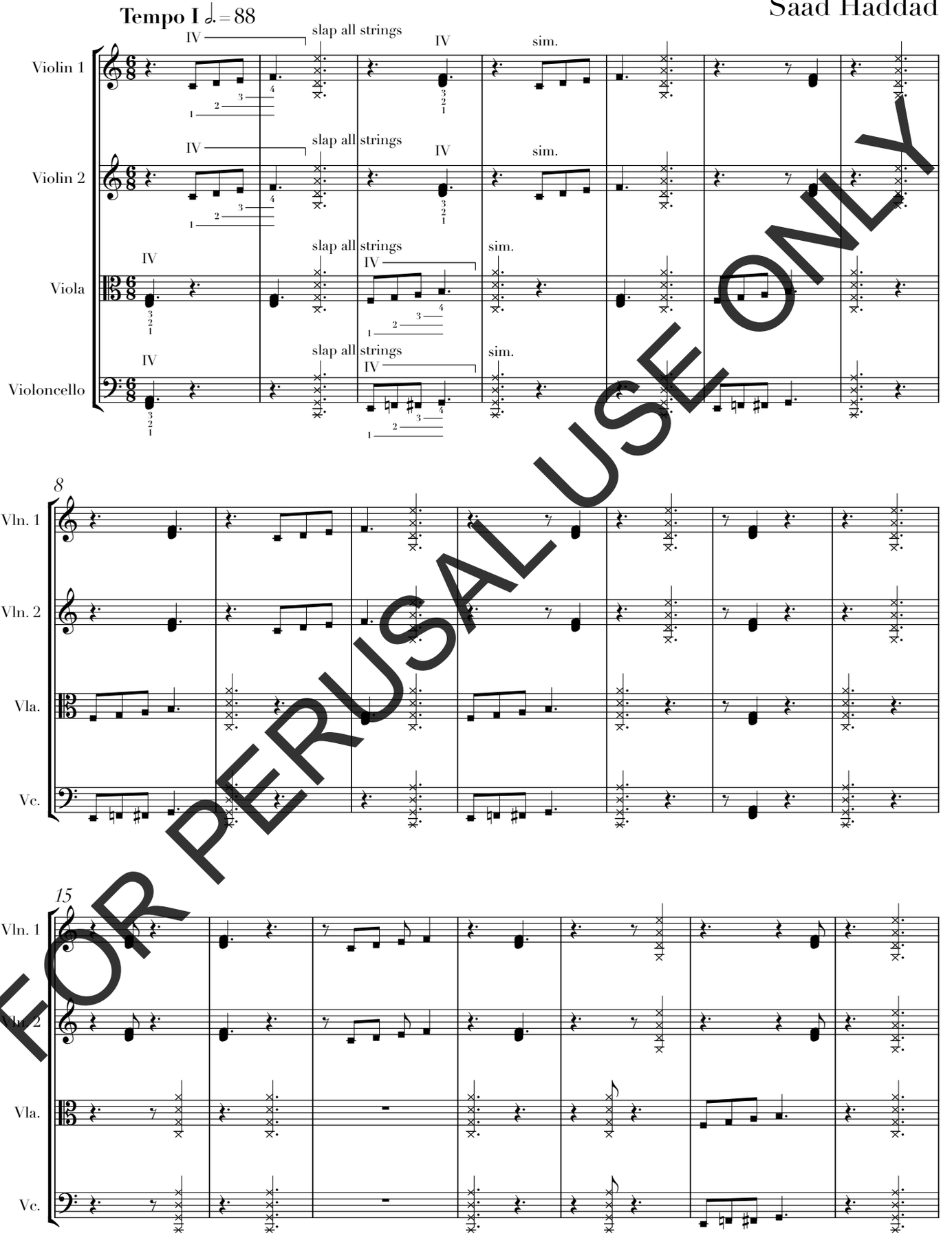
First performance on April 21, 2018 at Brandeis University by the Lydian String Quartet.

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

STRING QUARTET

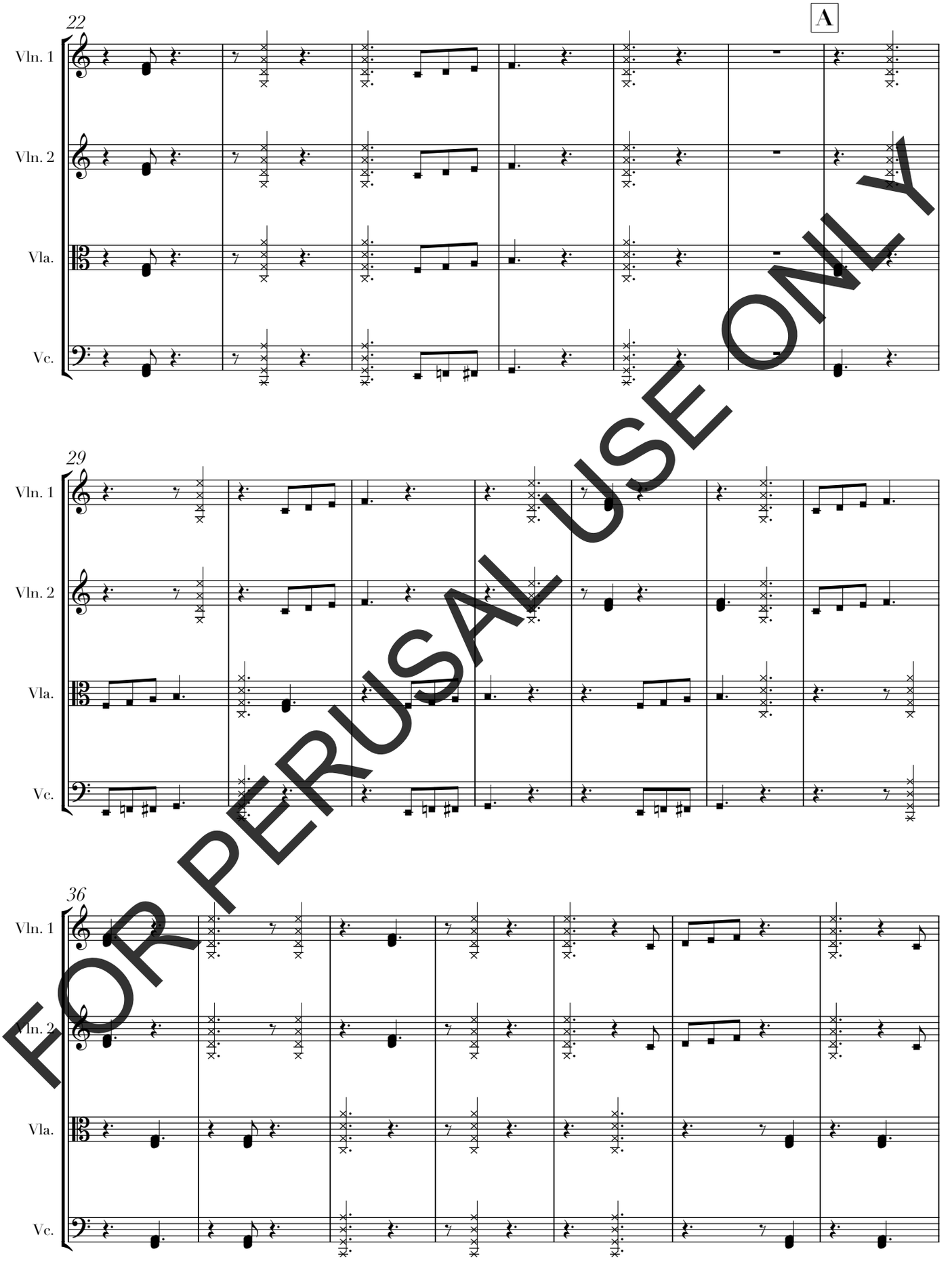
I. Daf

Saad Haddad



FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

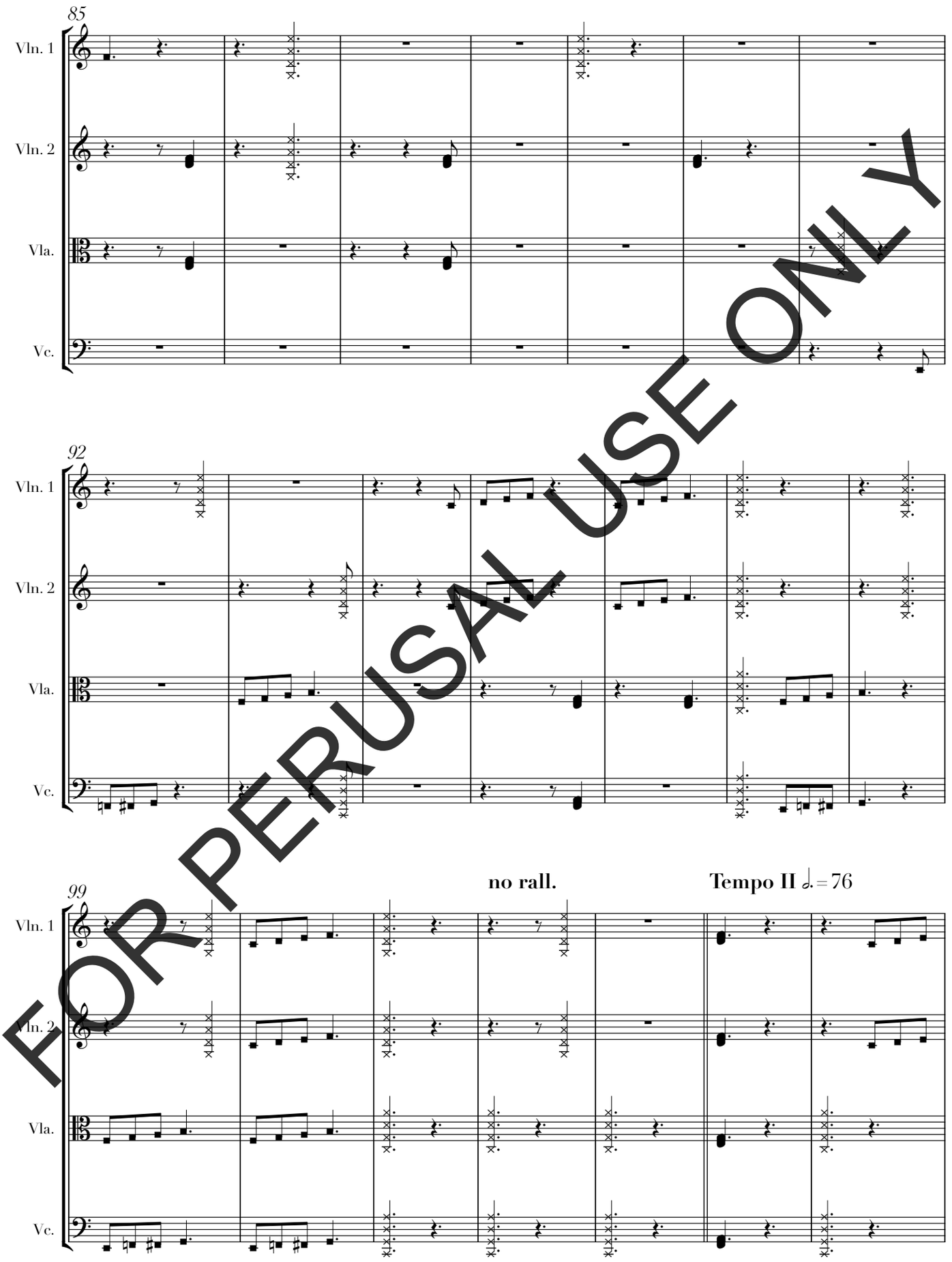
Copyright © 2017 — Dib Press (ASCAP)
www.saadnhaddad.com
All Rights Reserved.



FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

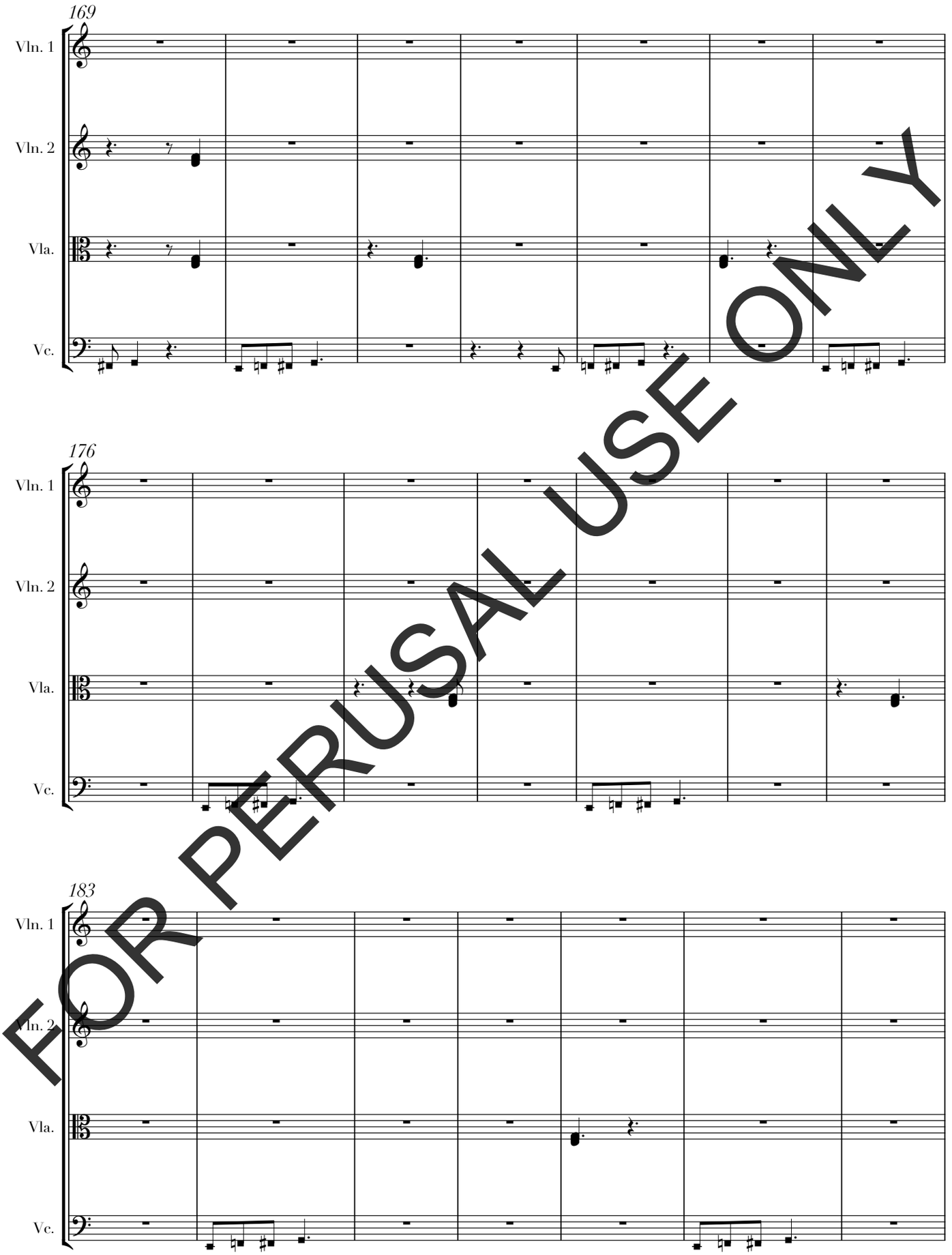


FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

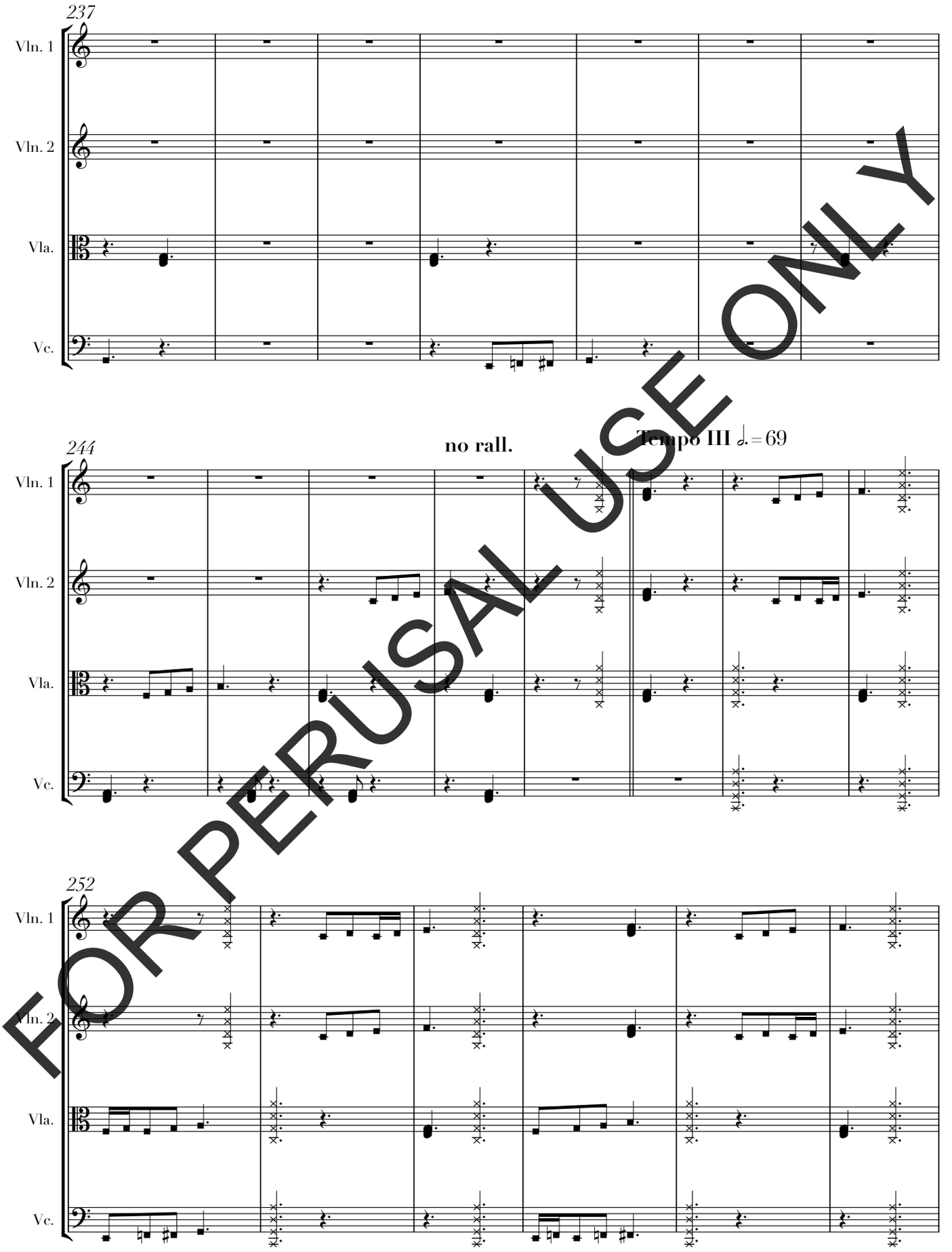
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

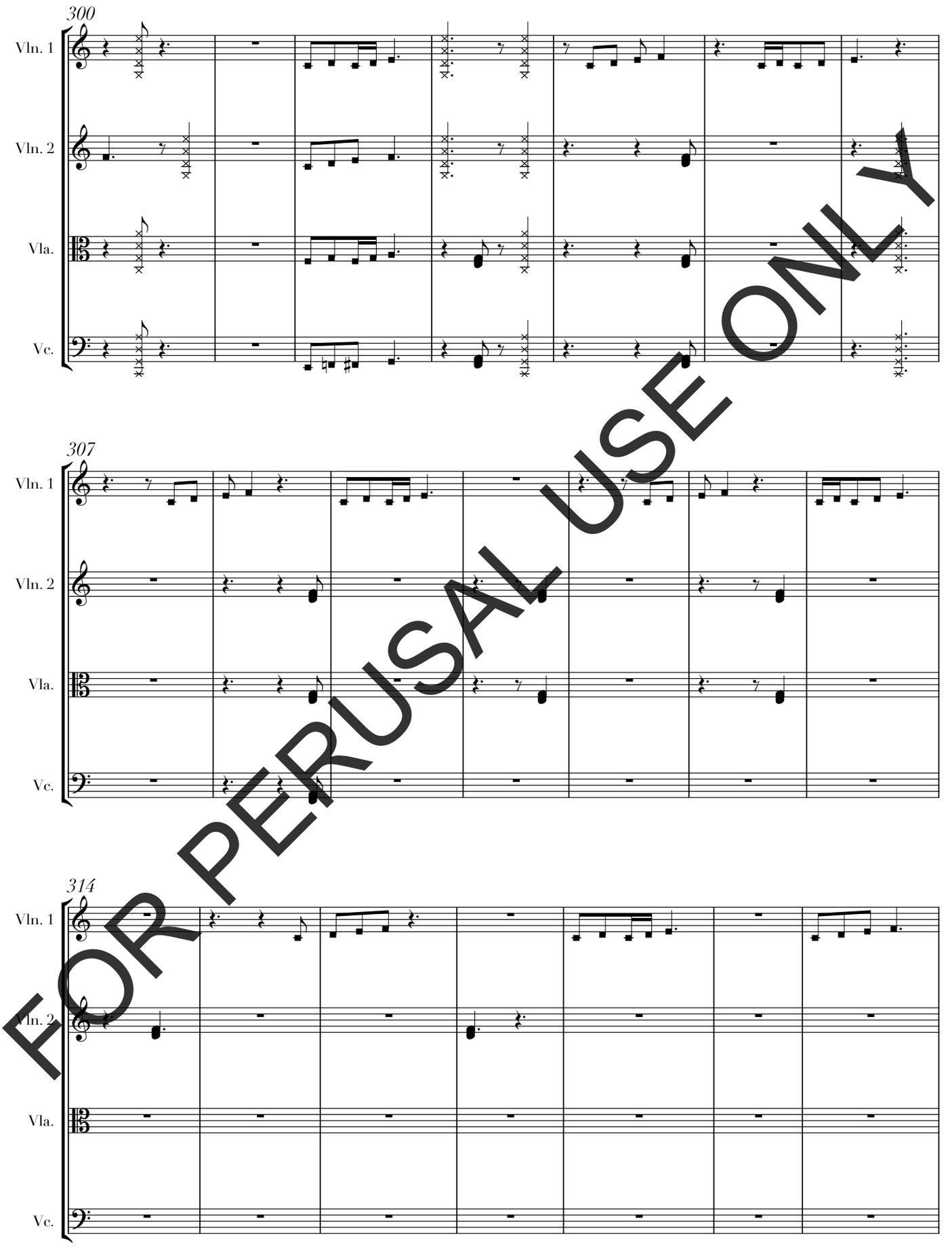
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



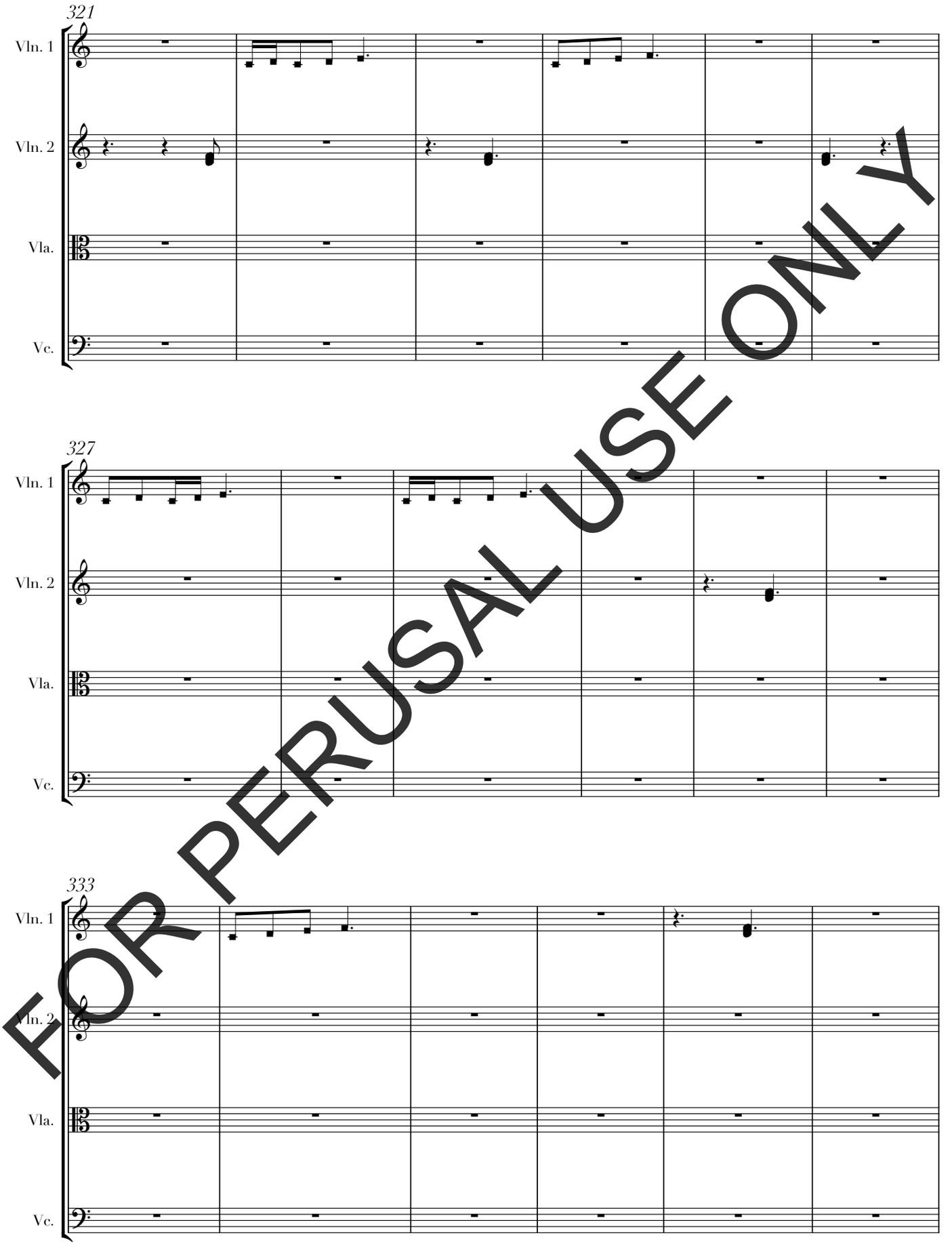
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

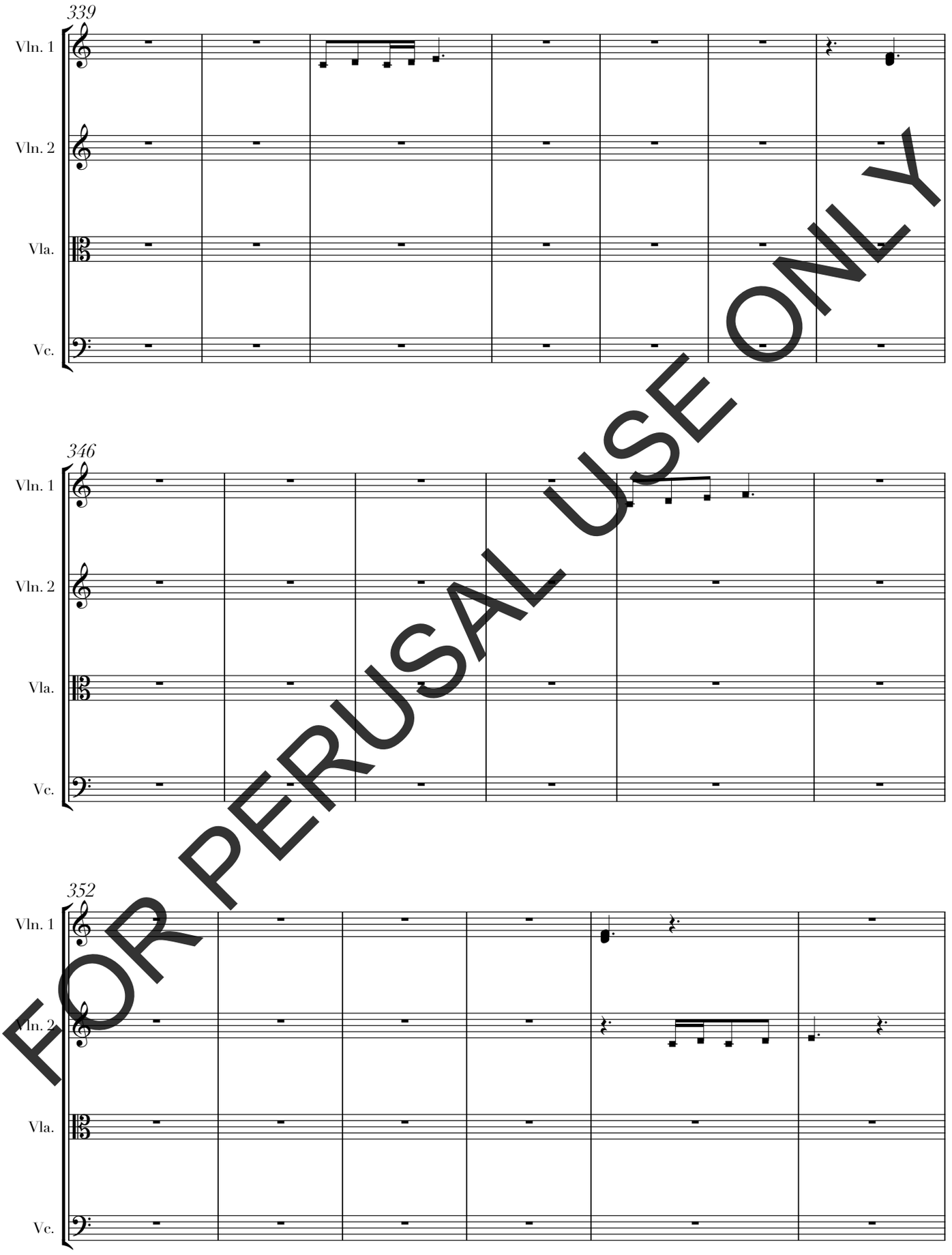
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

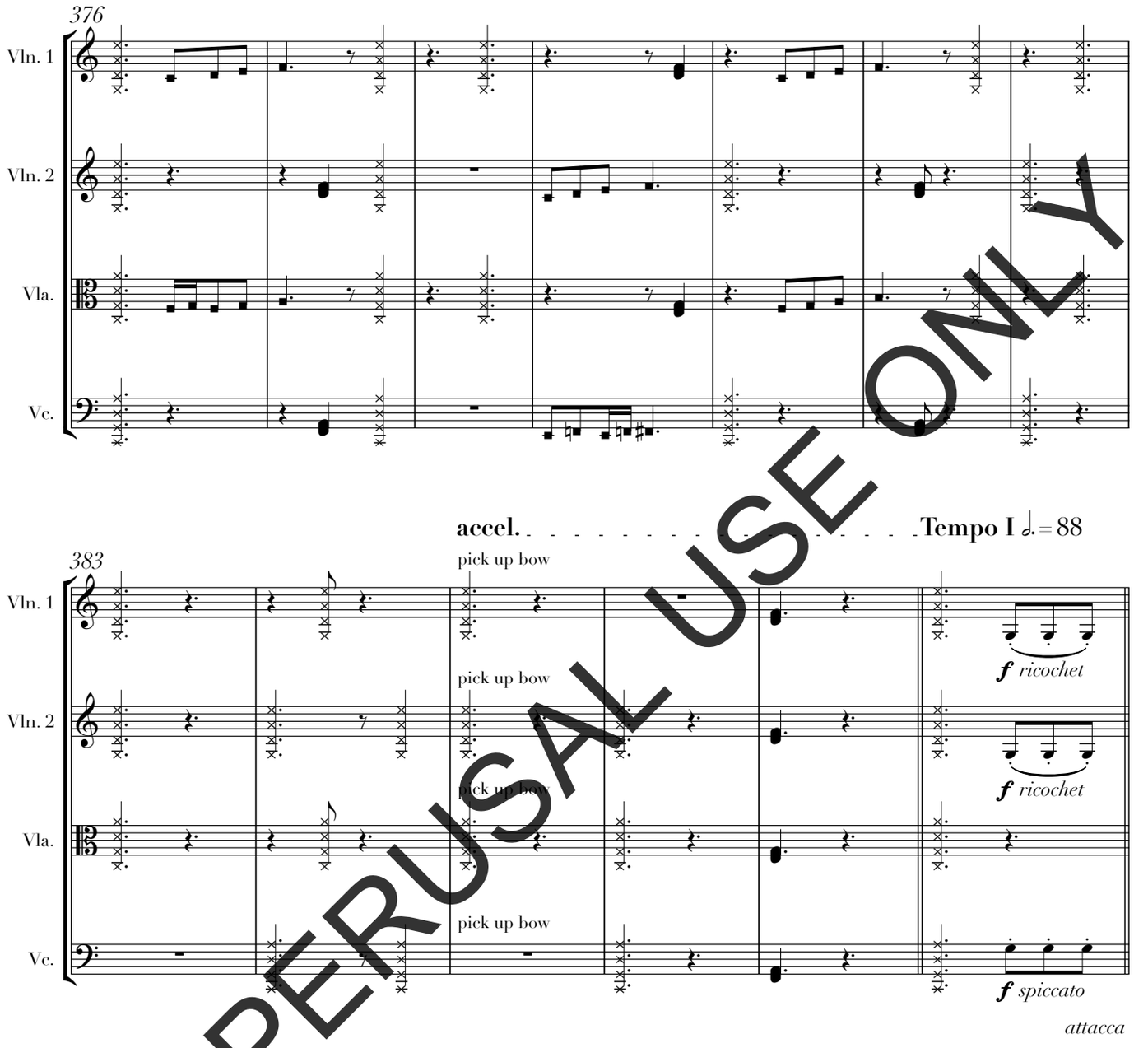


FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



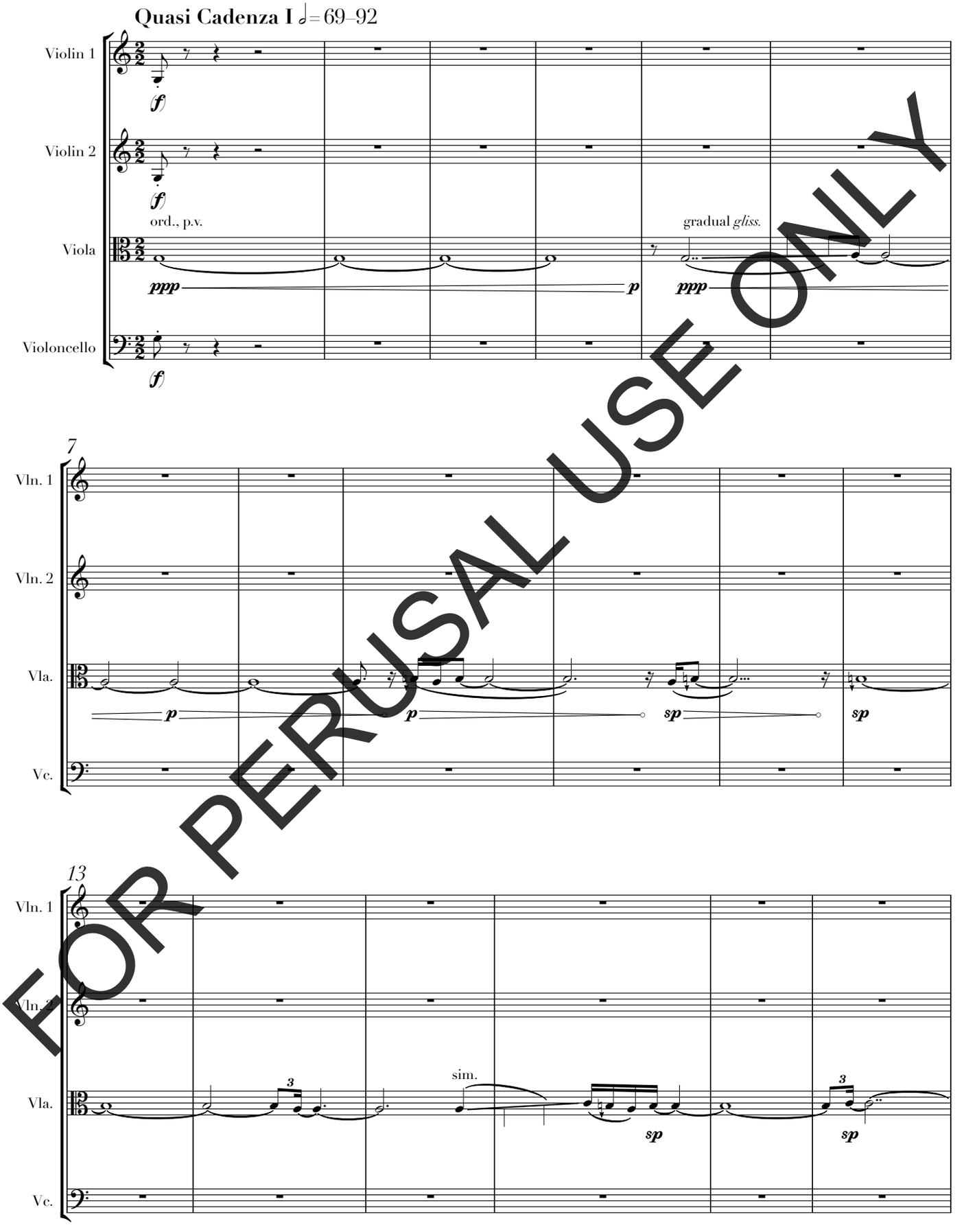
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

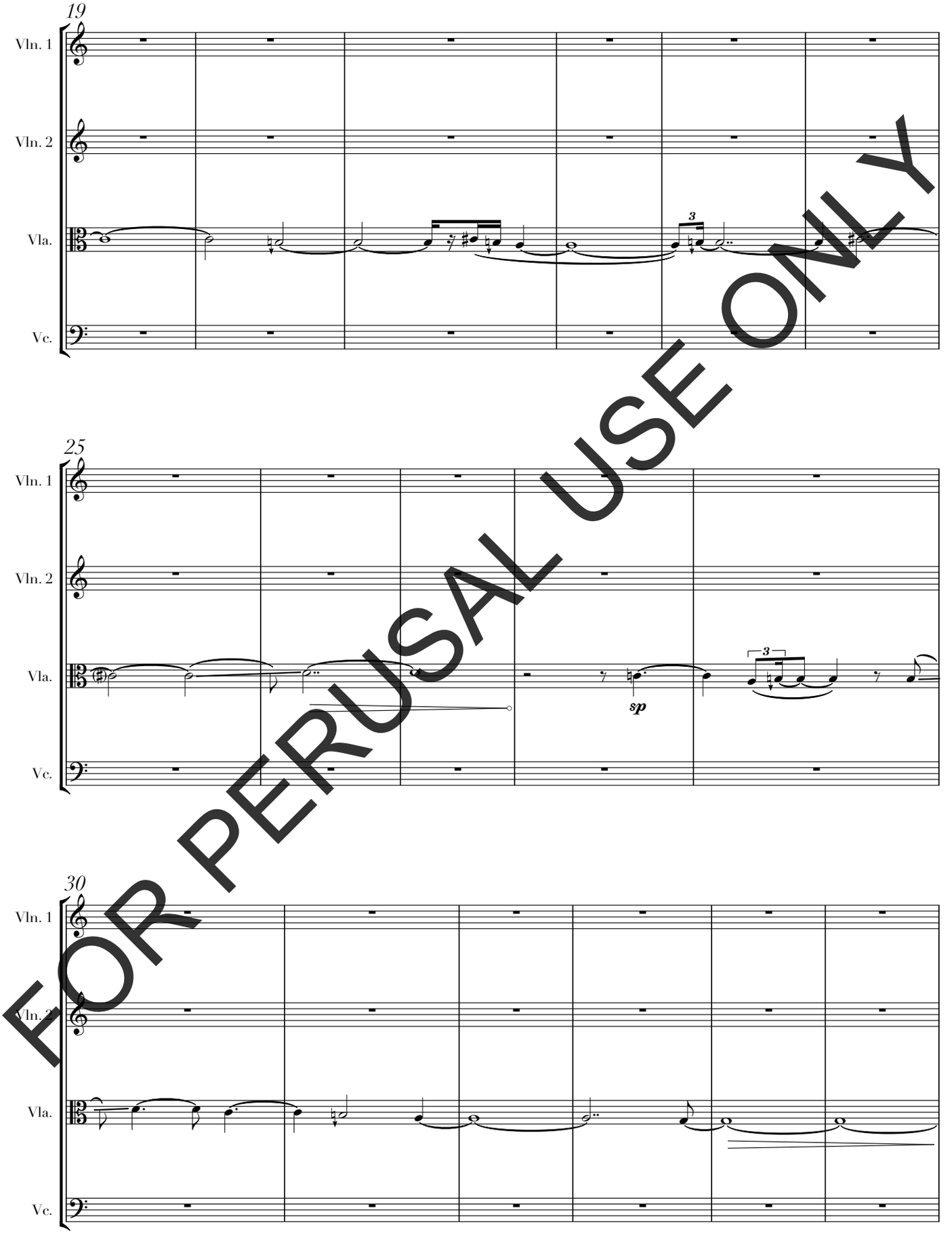


FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

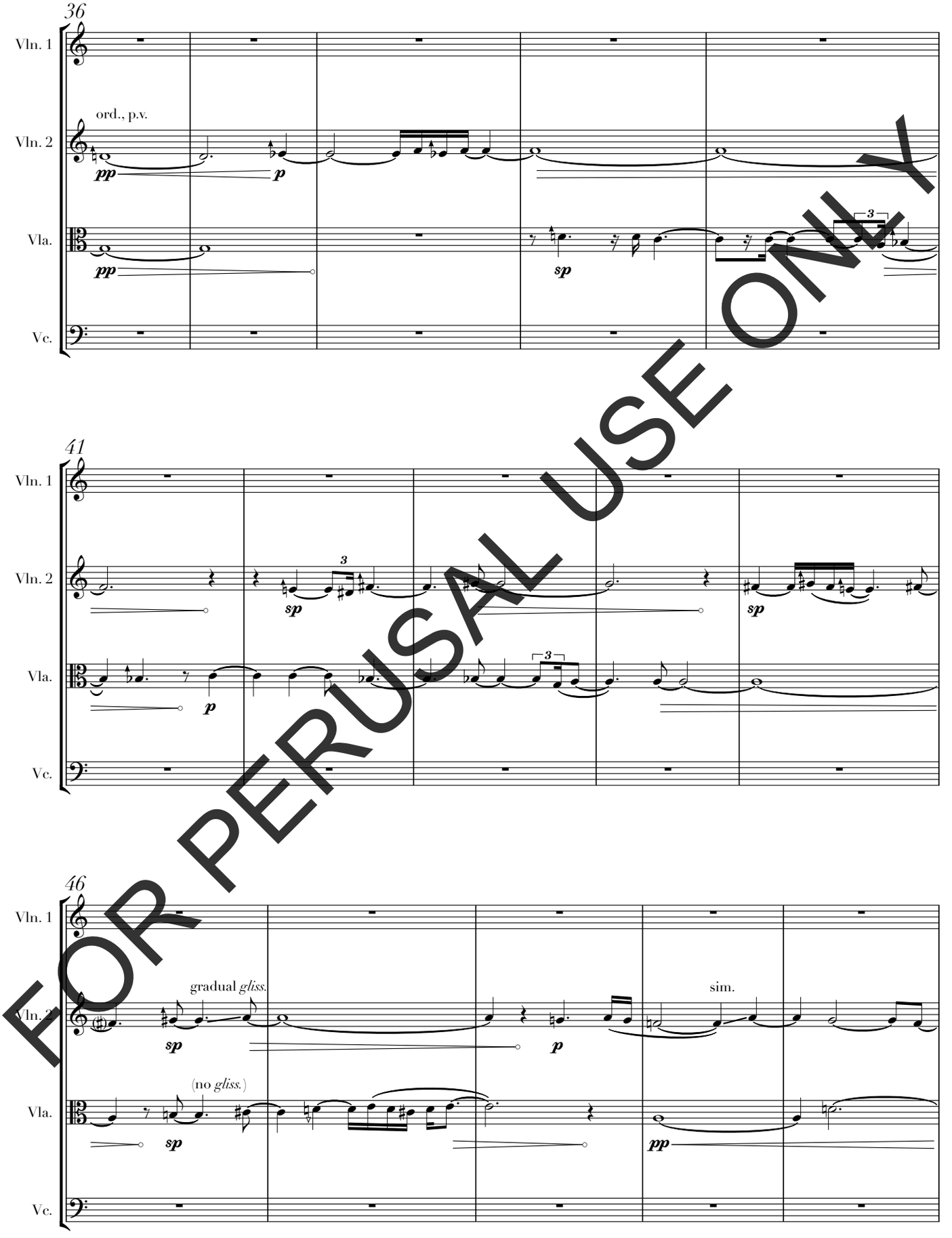
II. Fugha



FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

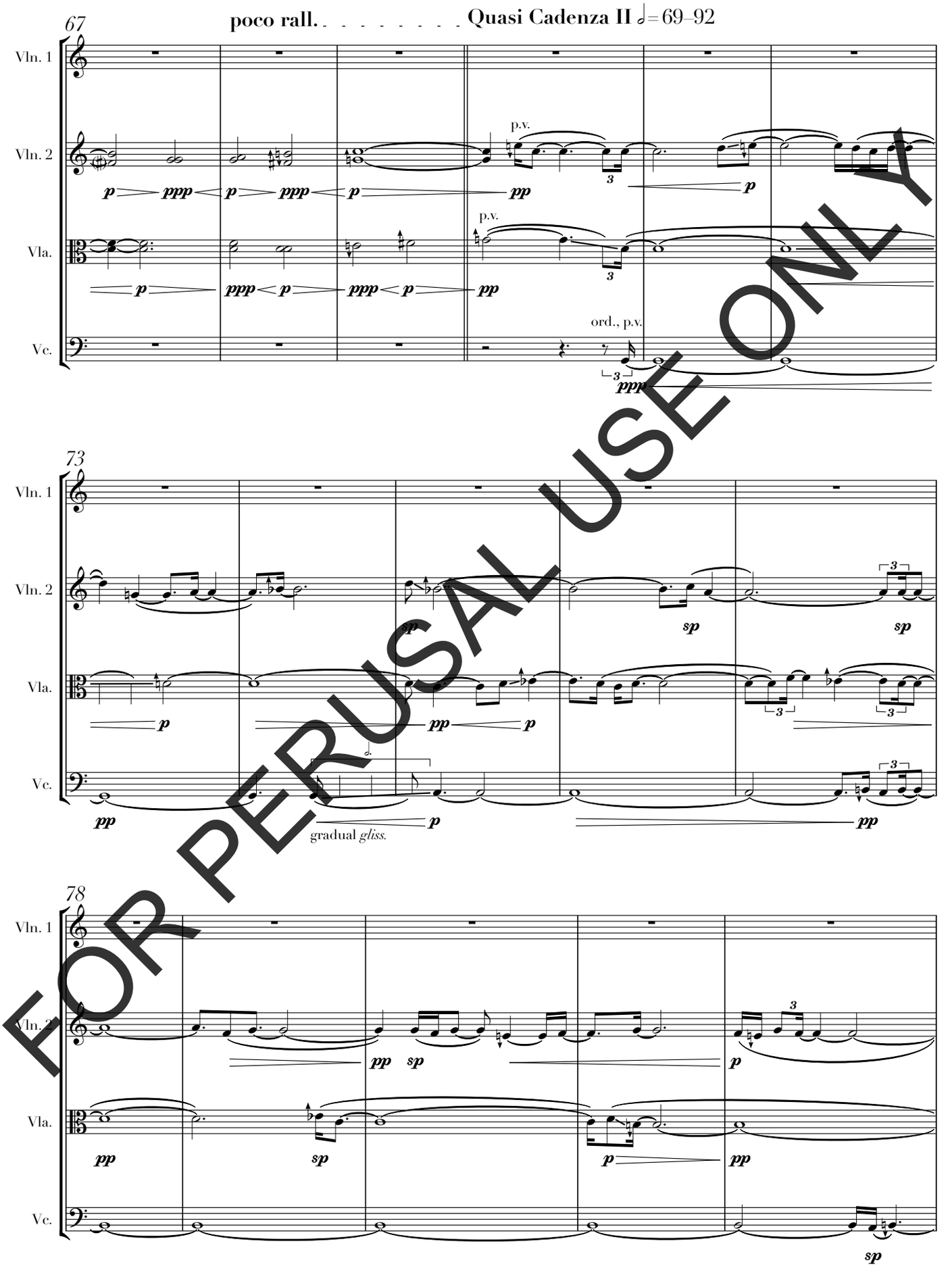


FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

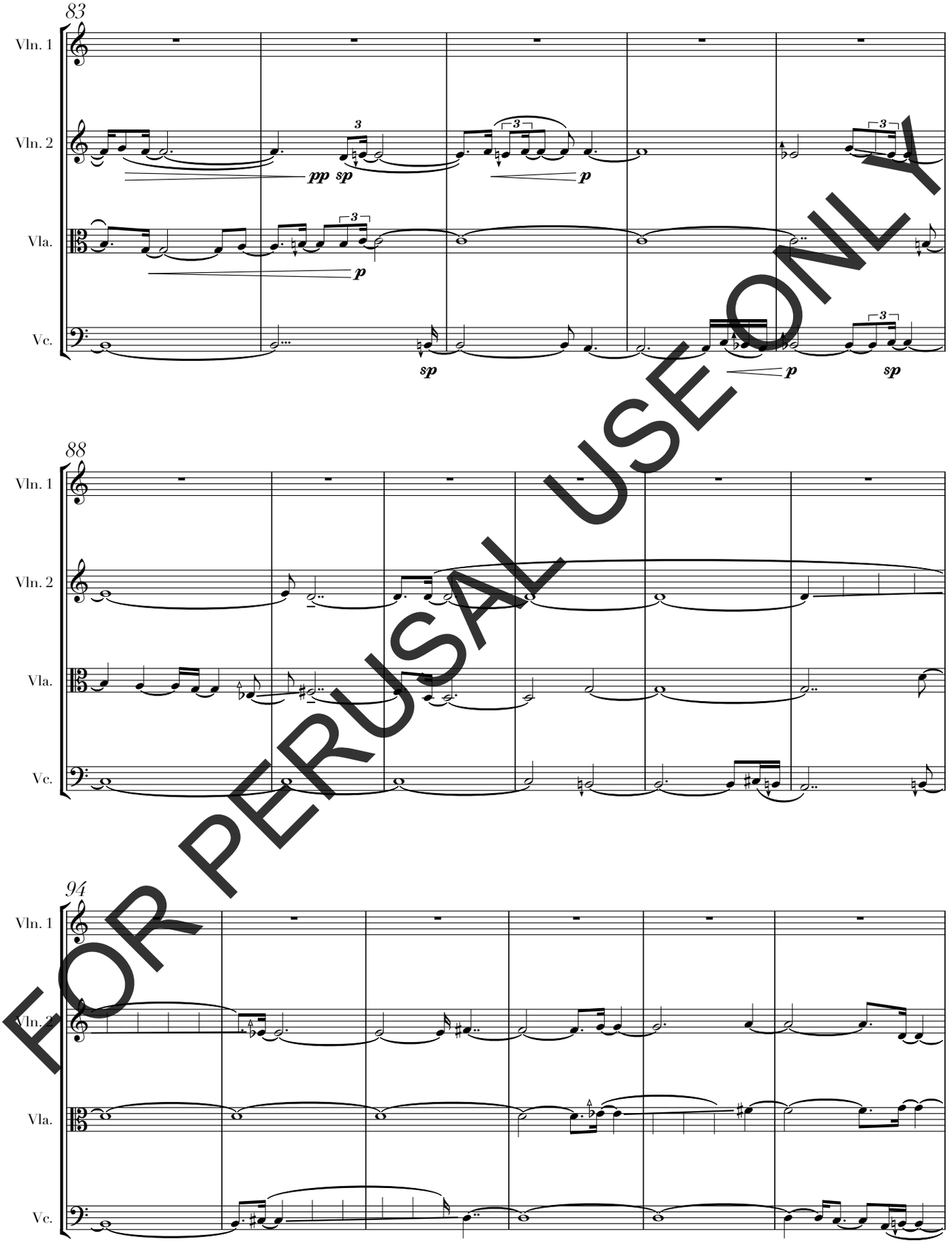


FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

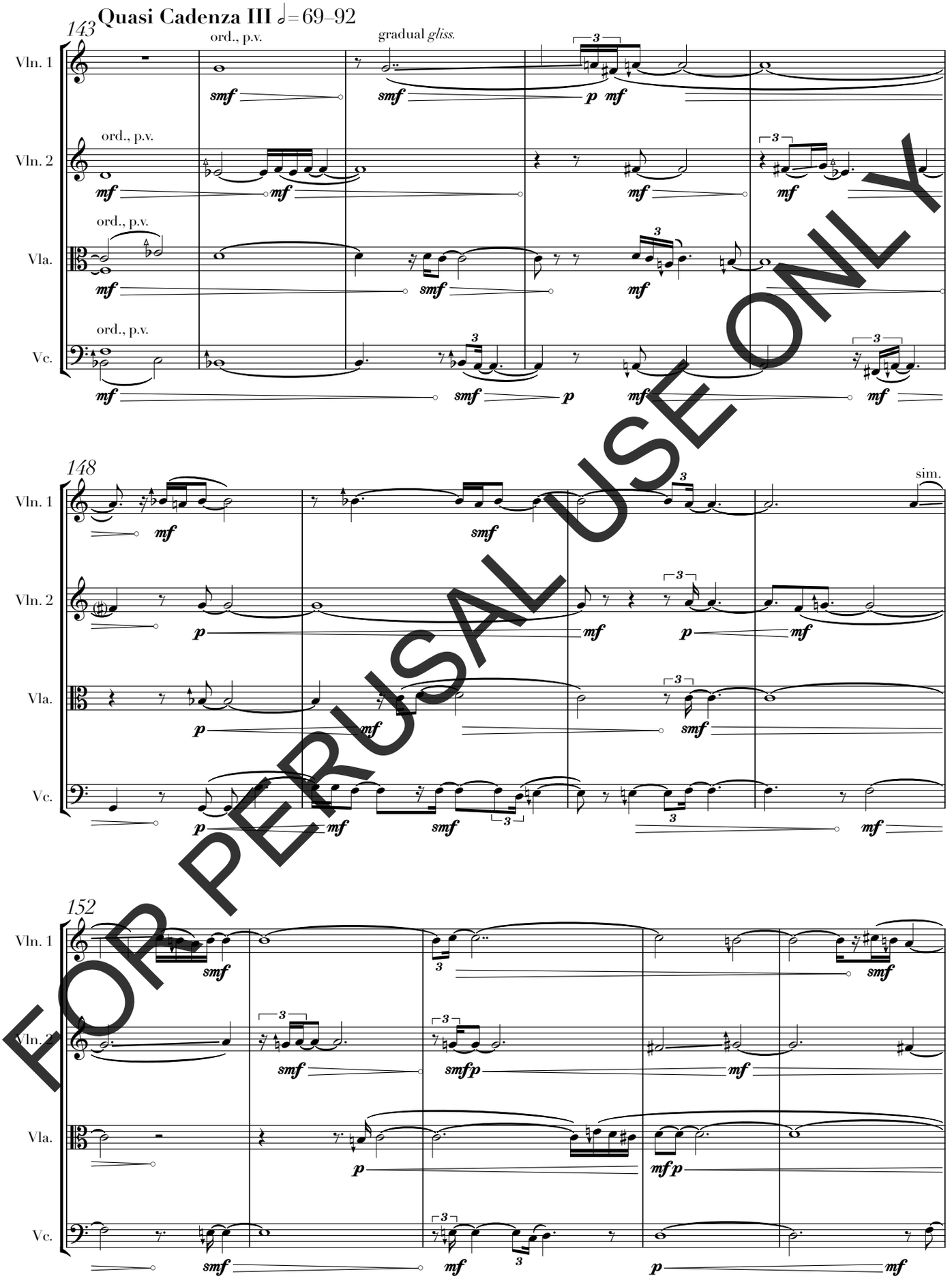


FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

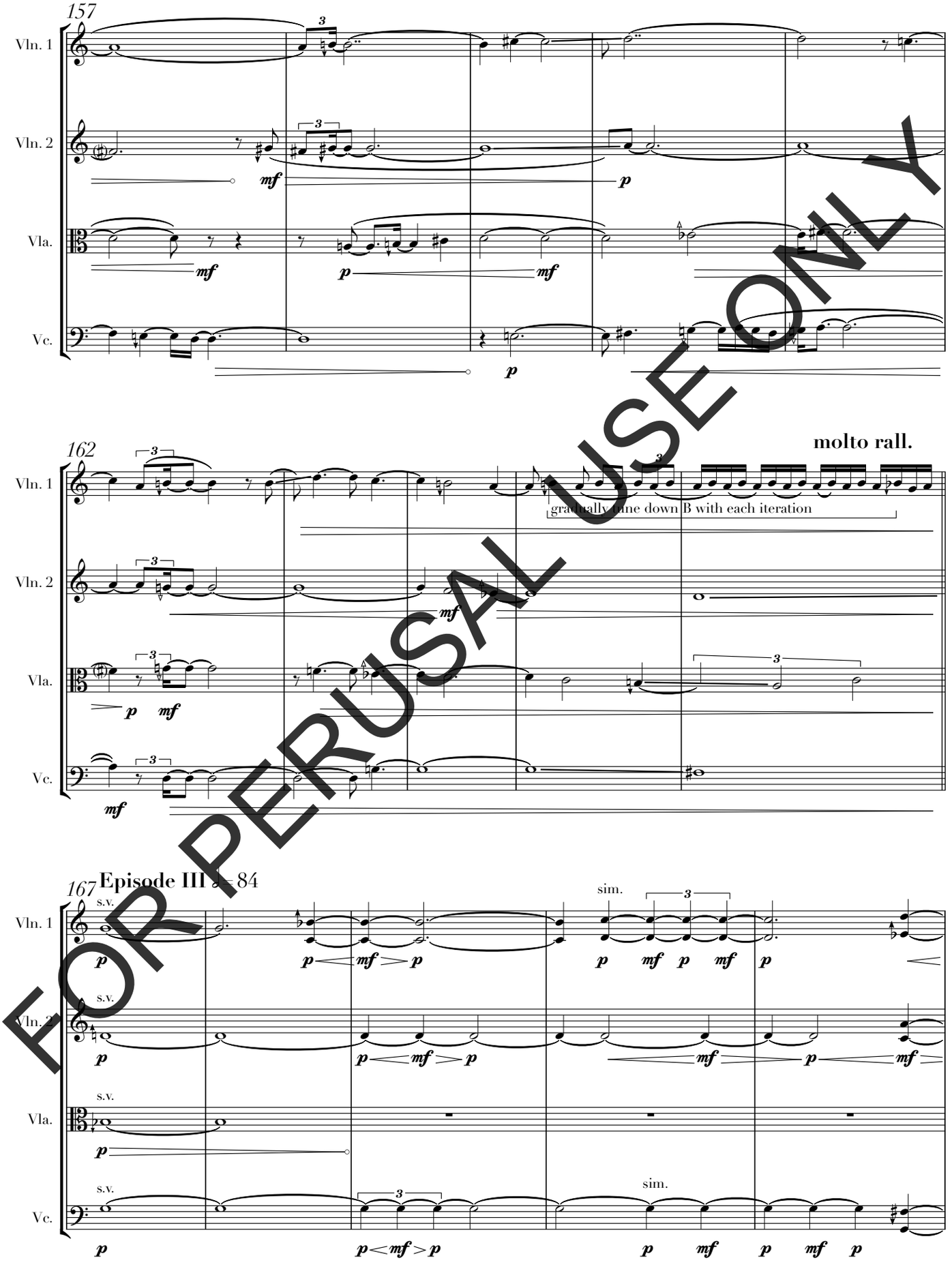
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

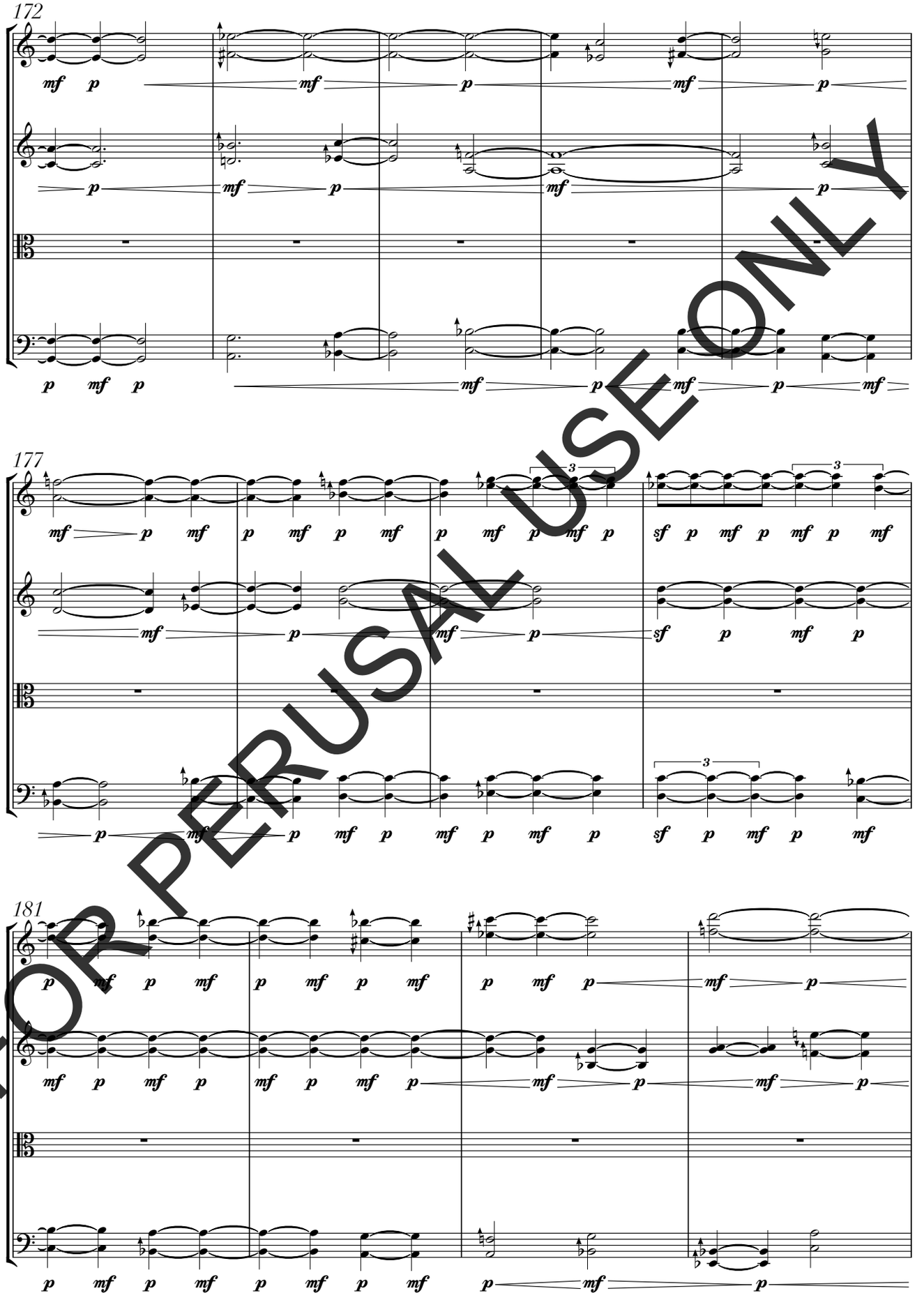
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



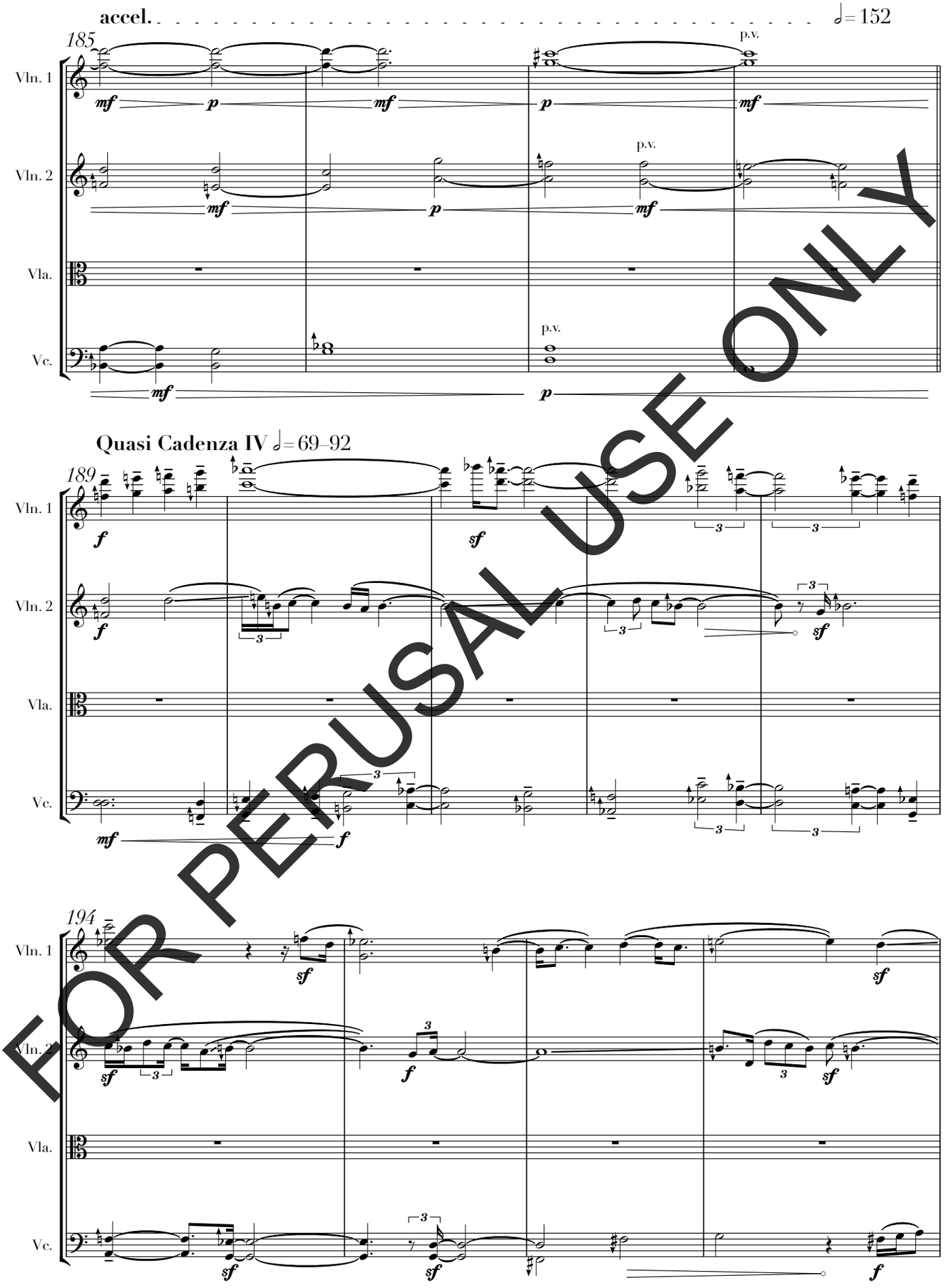
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



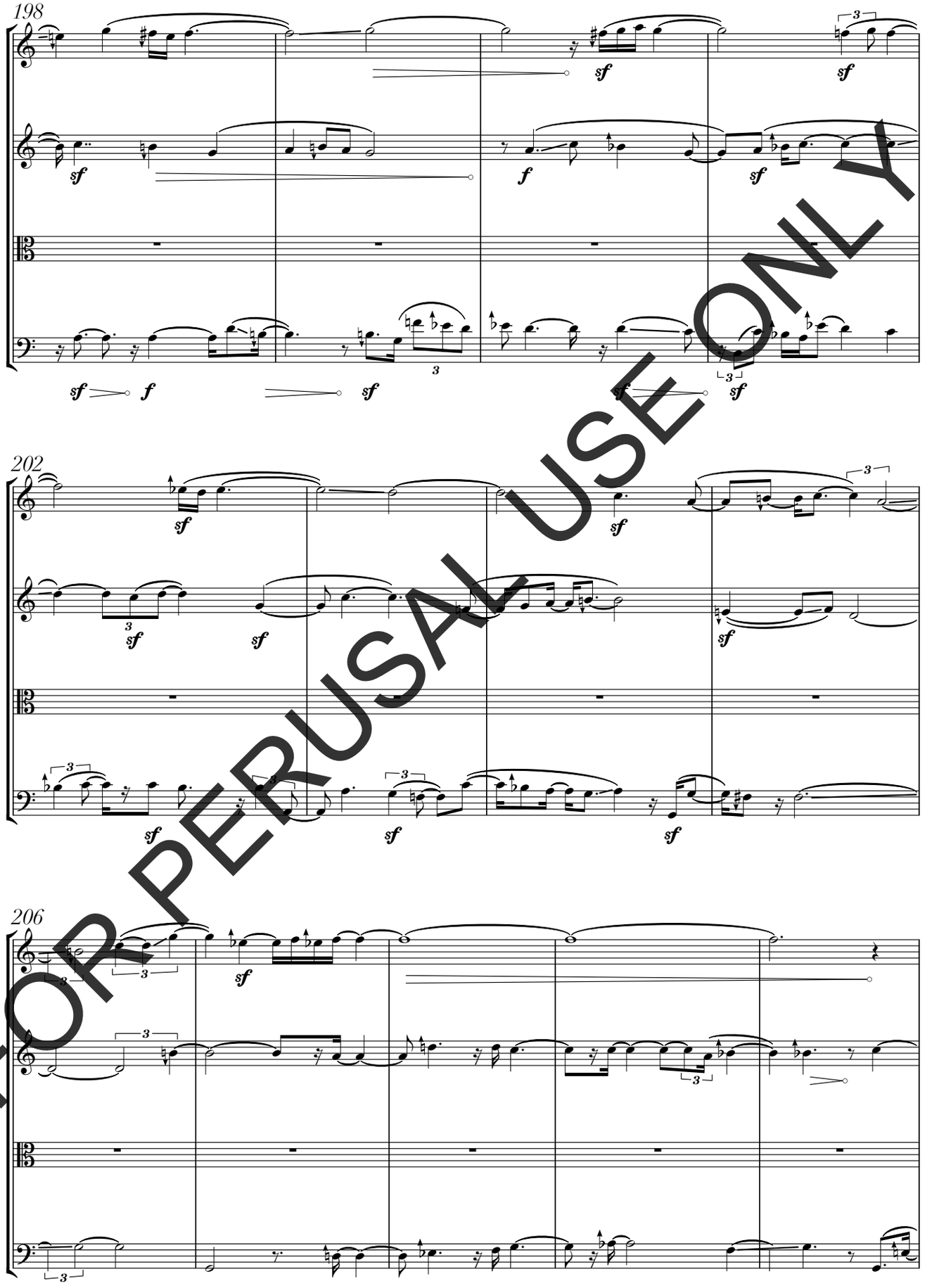
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

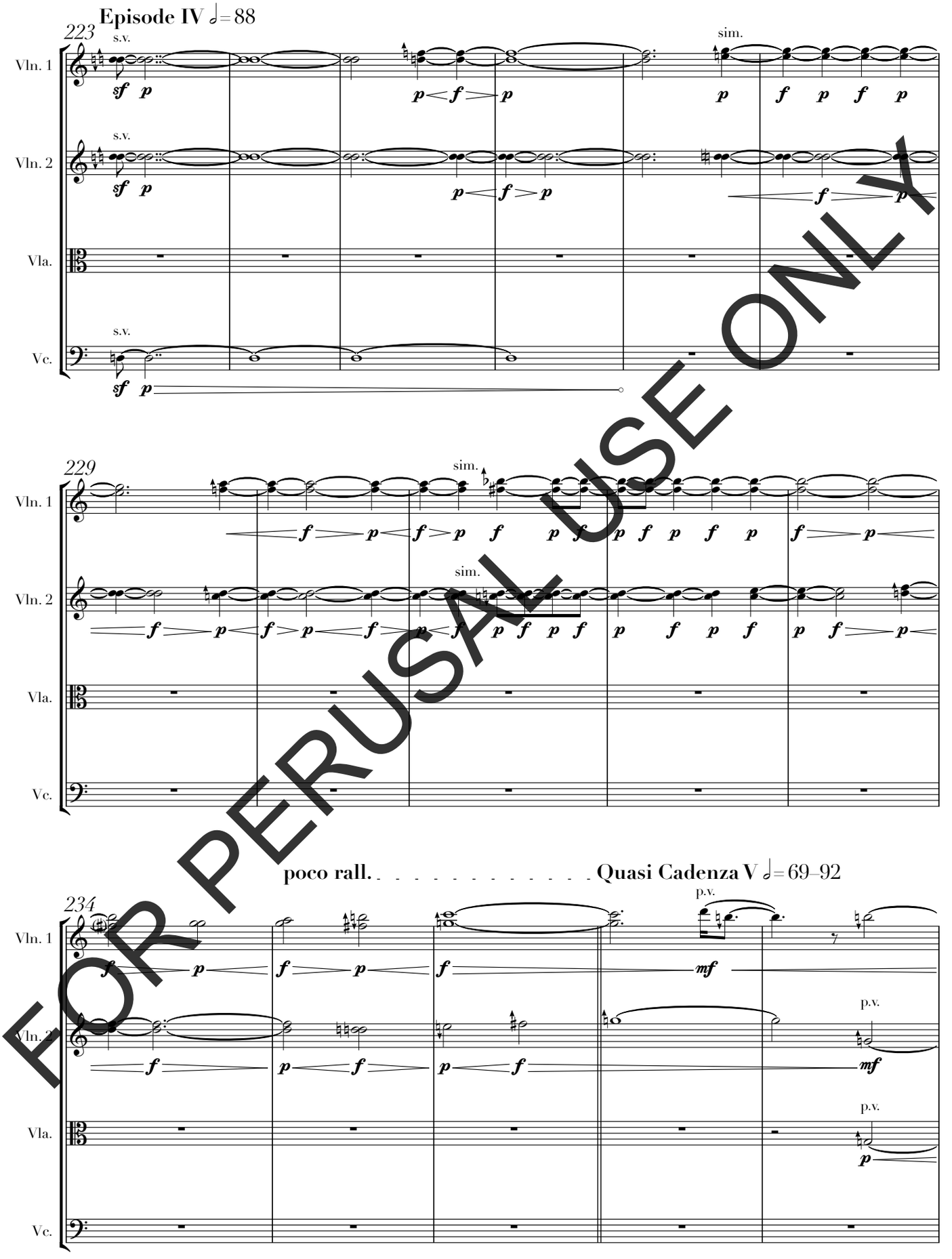


FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

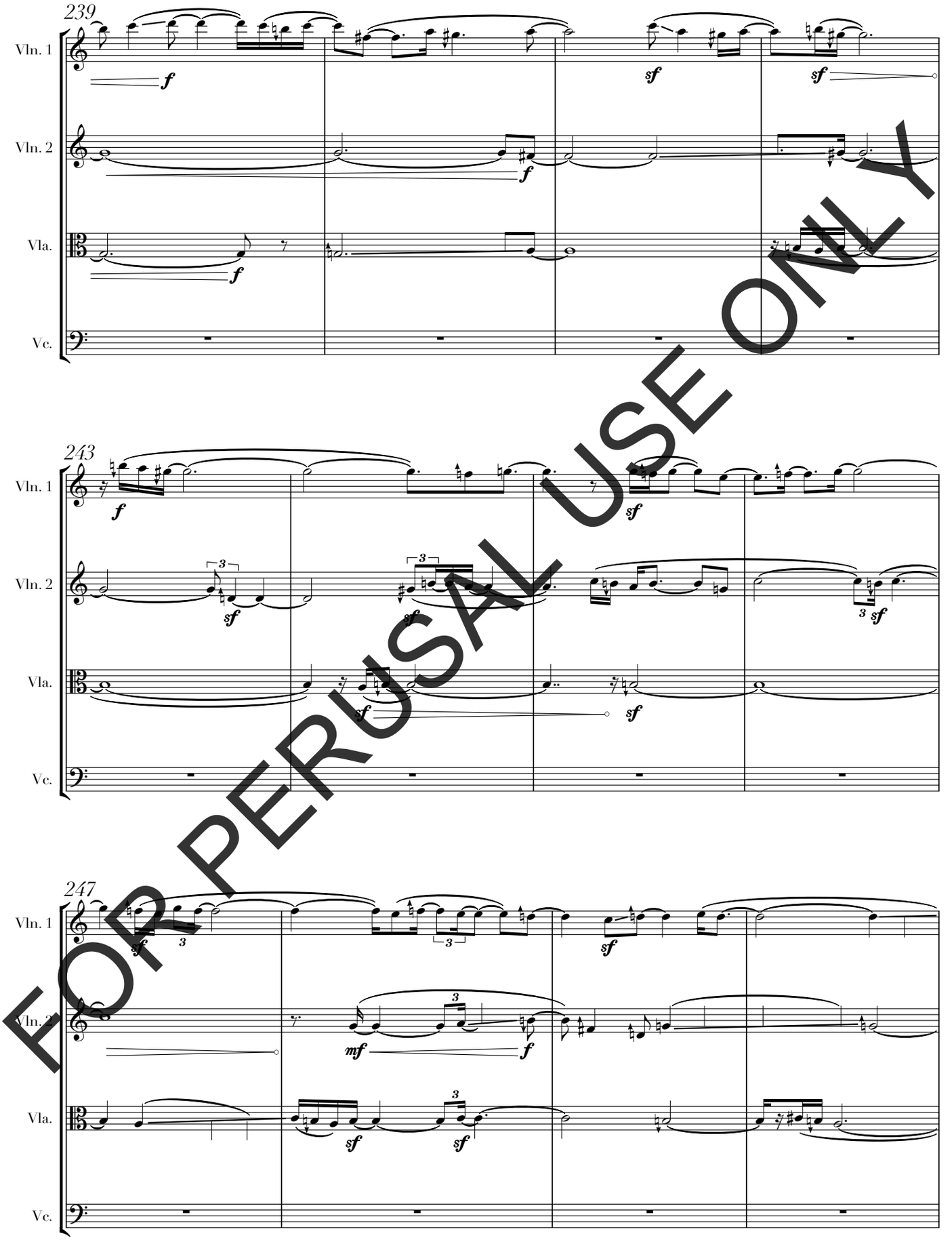


FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

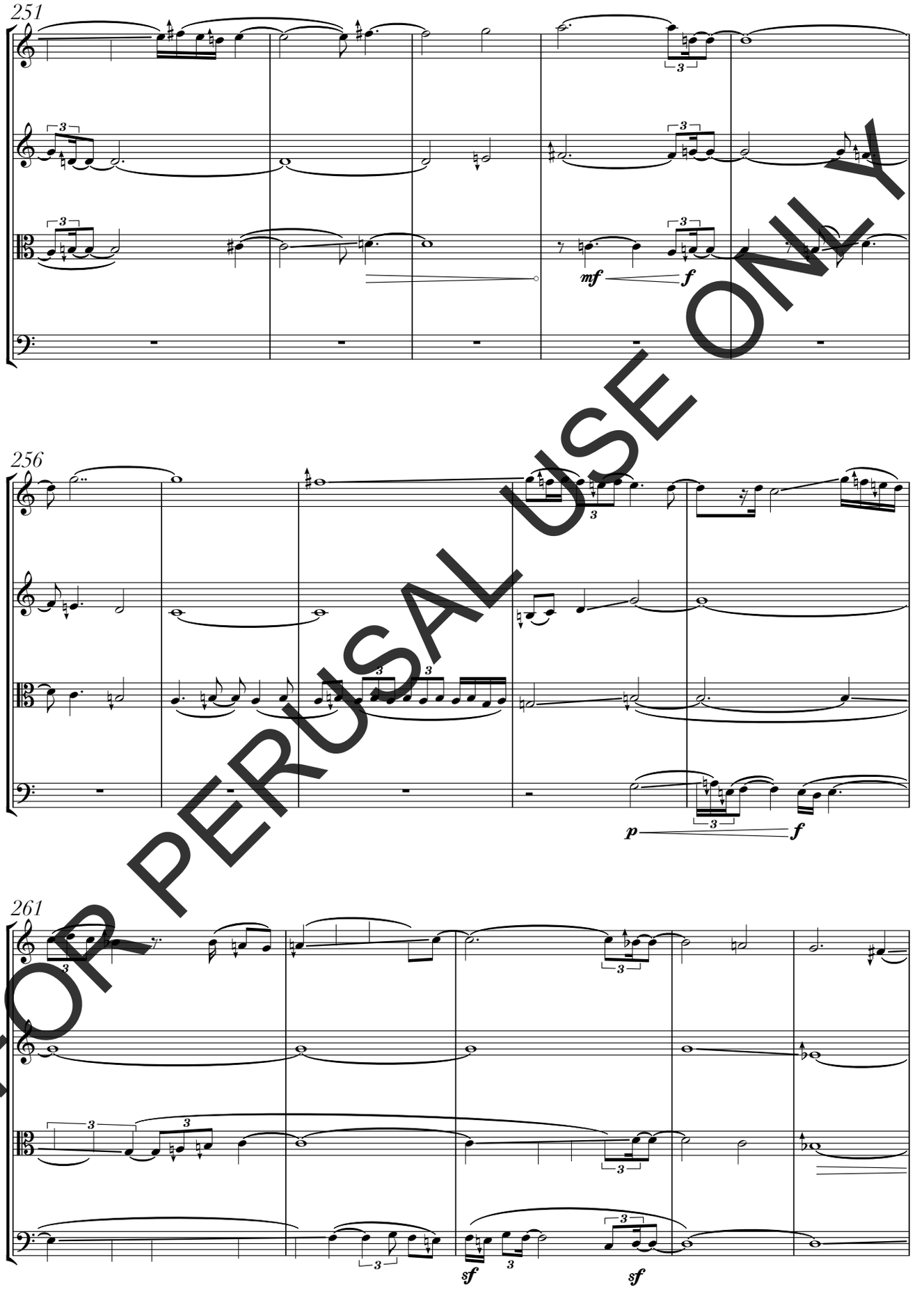
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



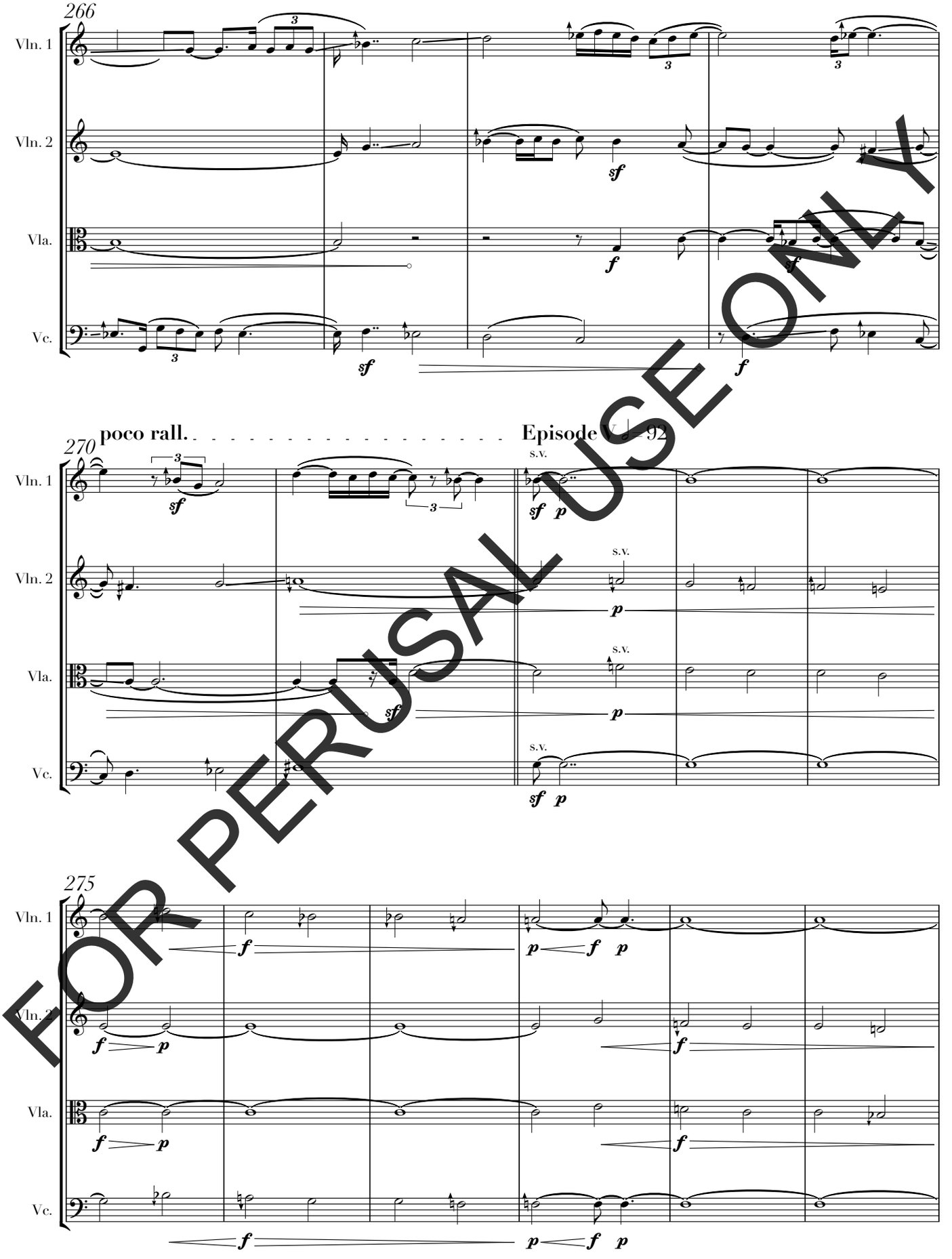
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



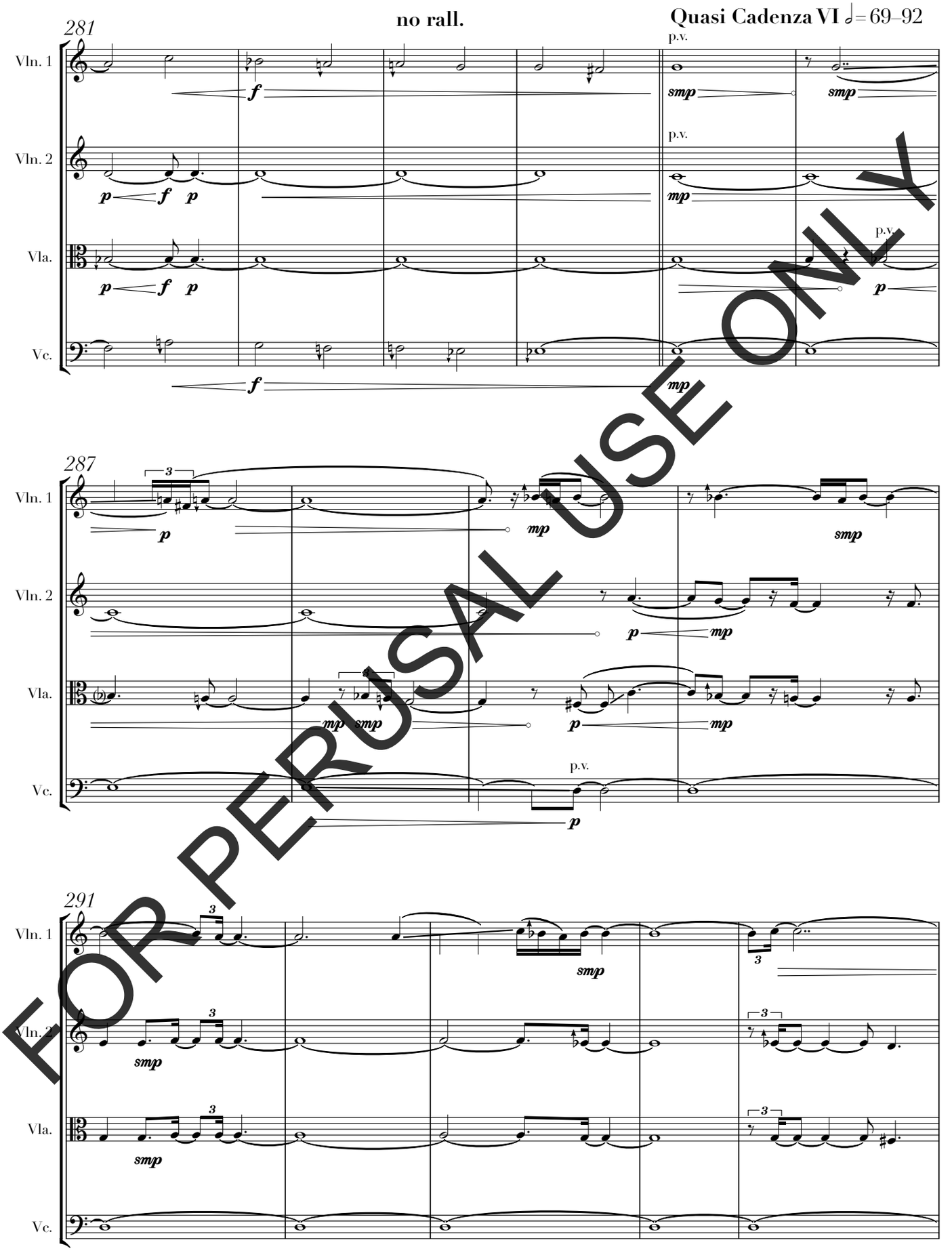
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



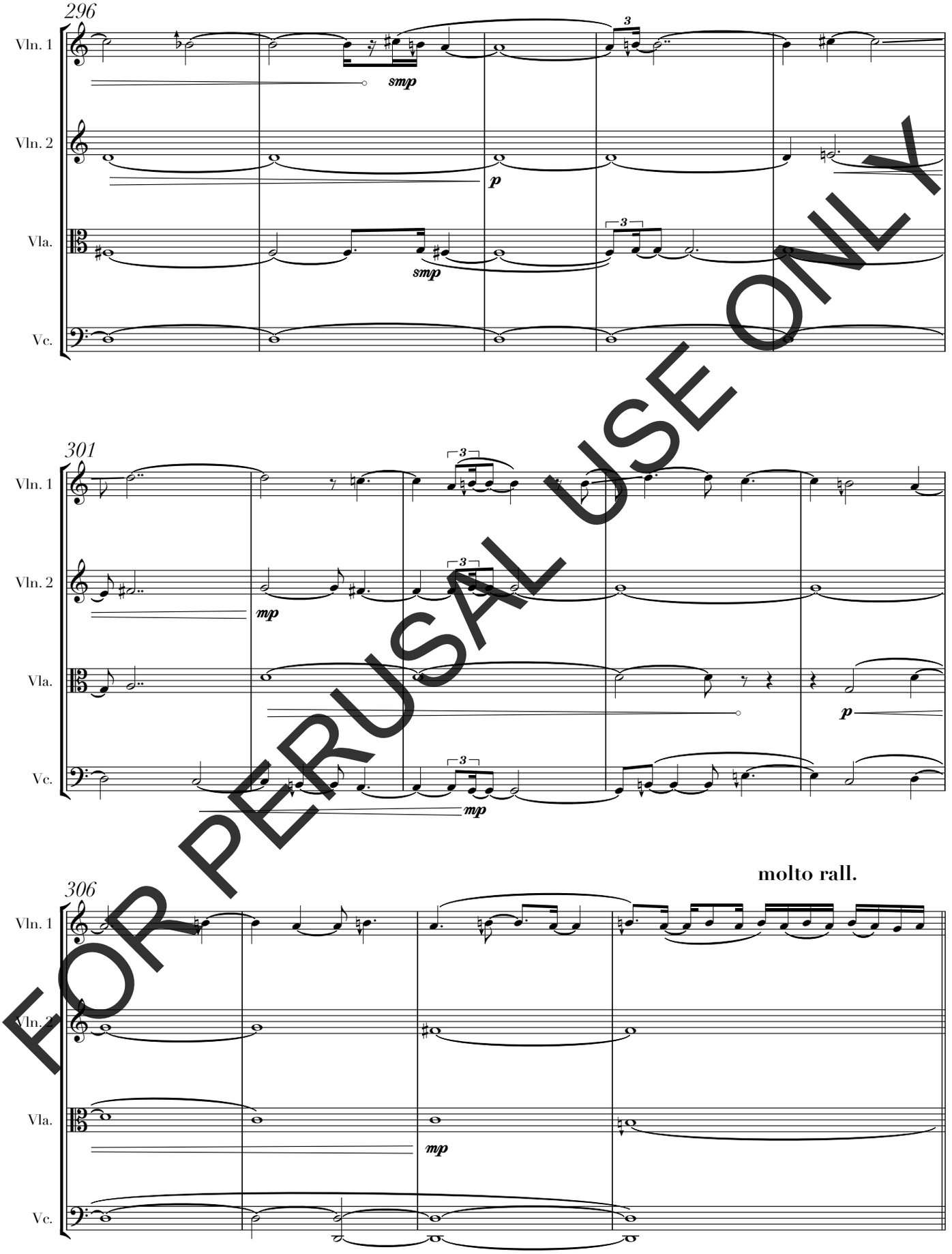
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



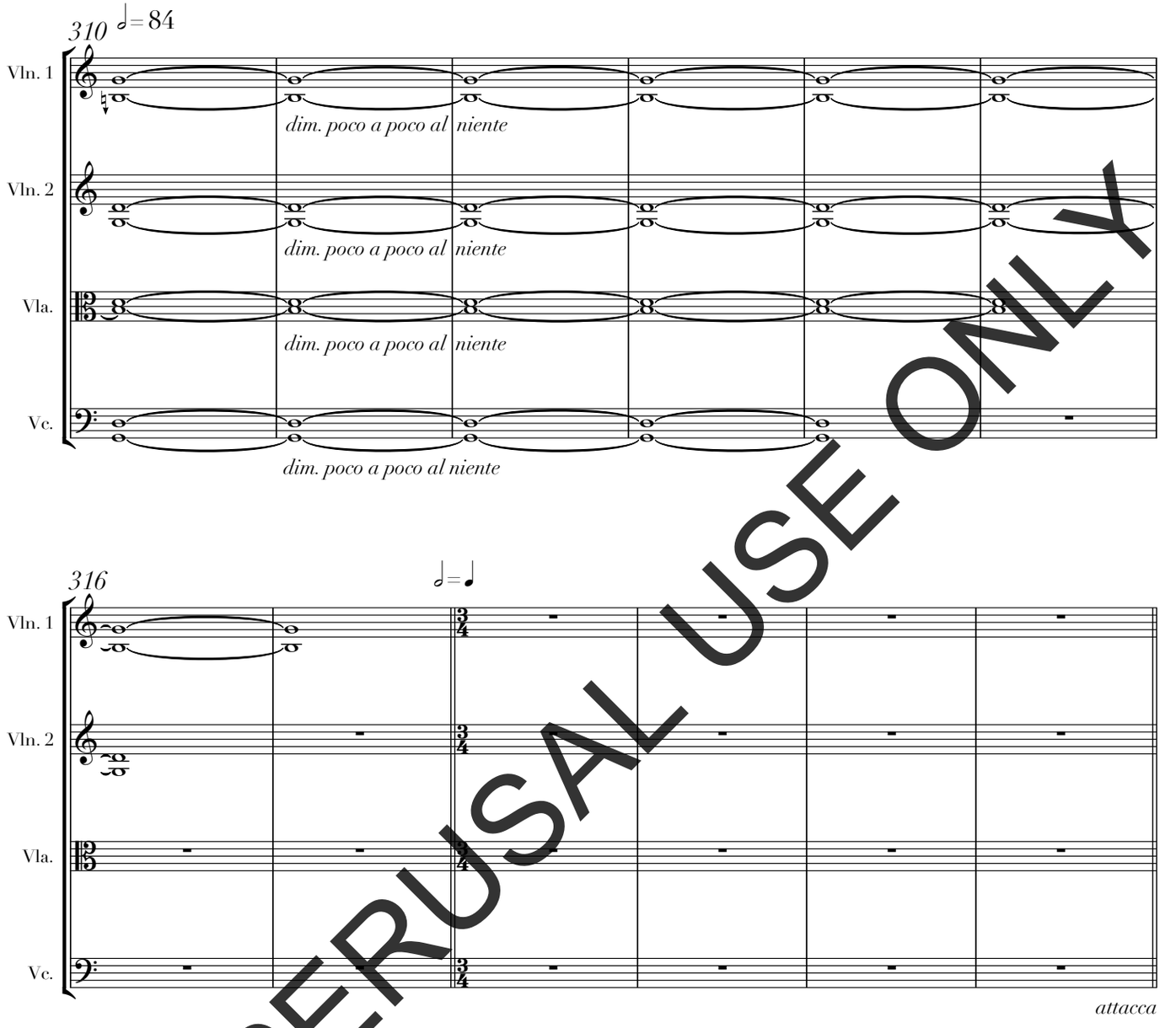
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

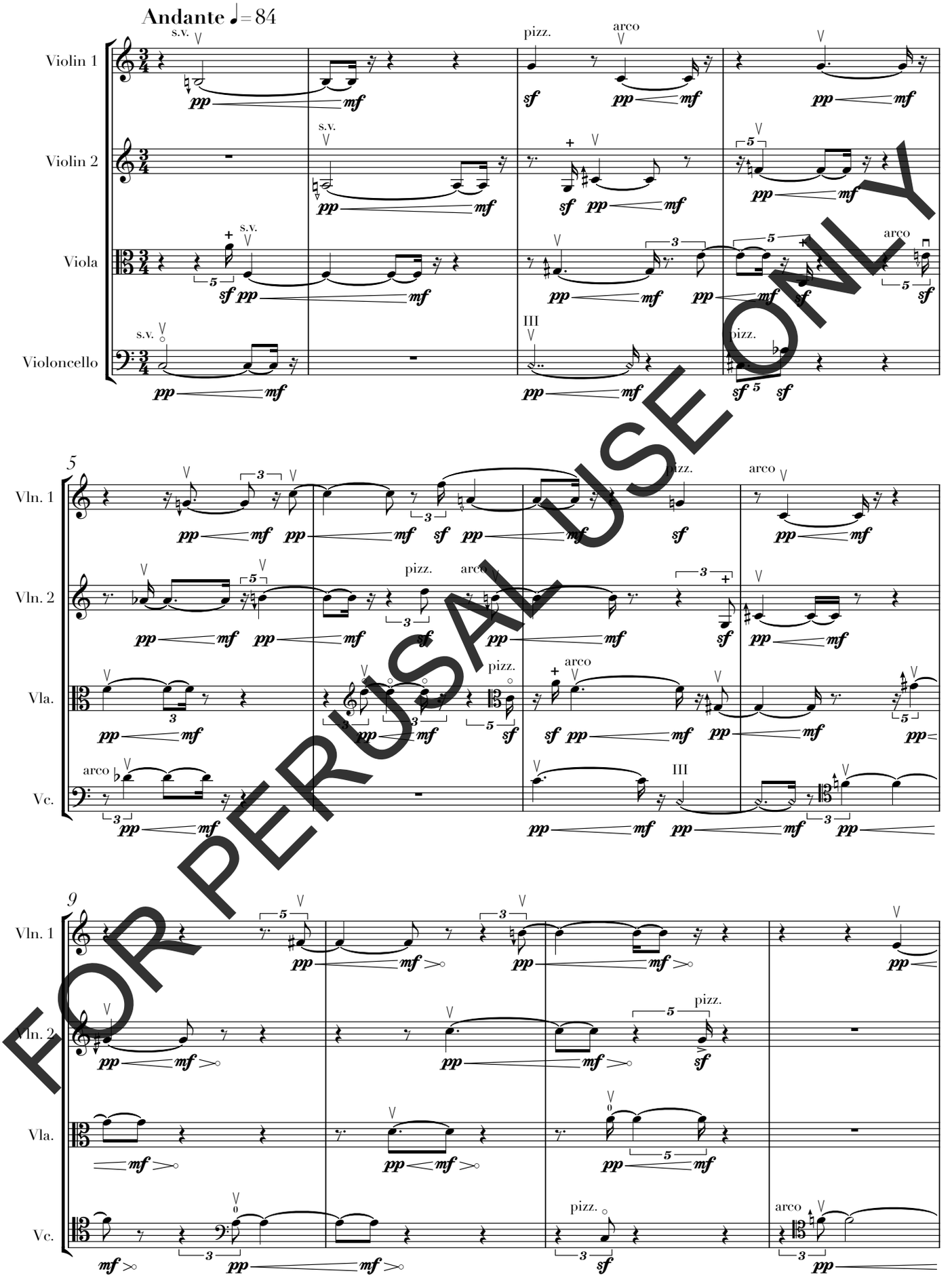


FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

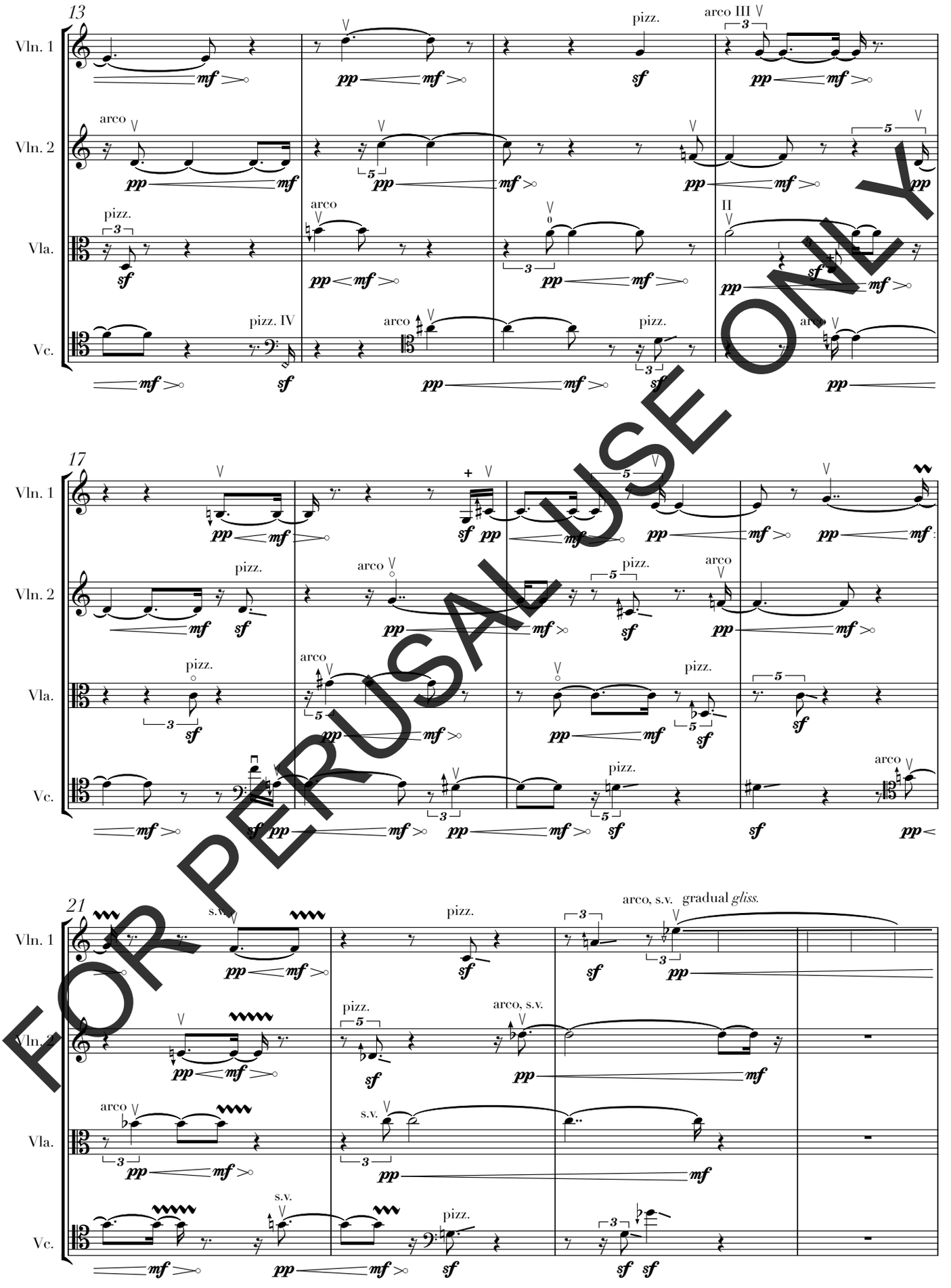


FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

III. Nashwa

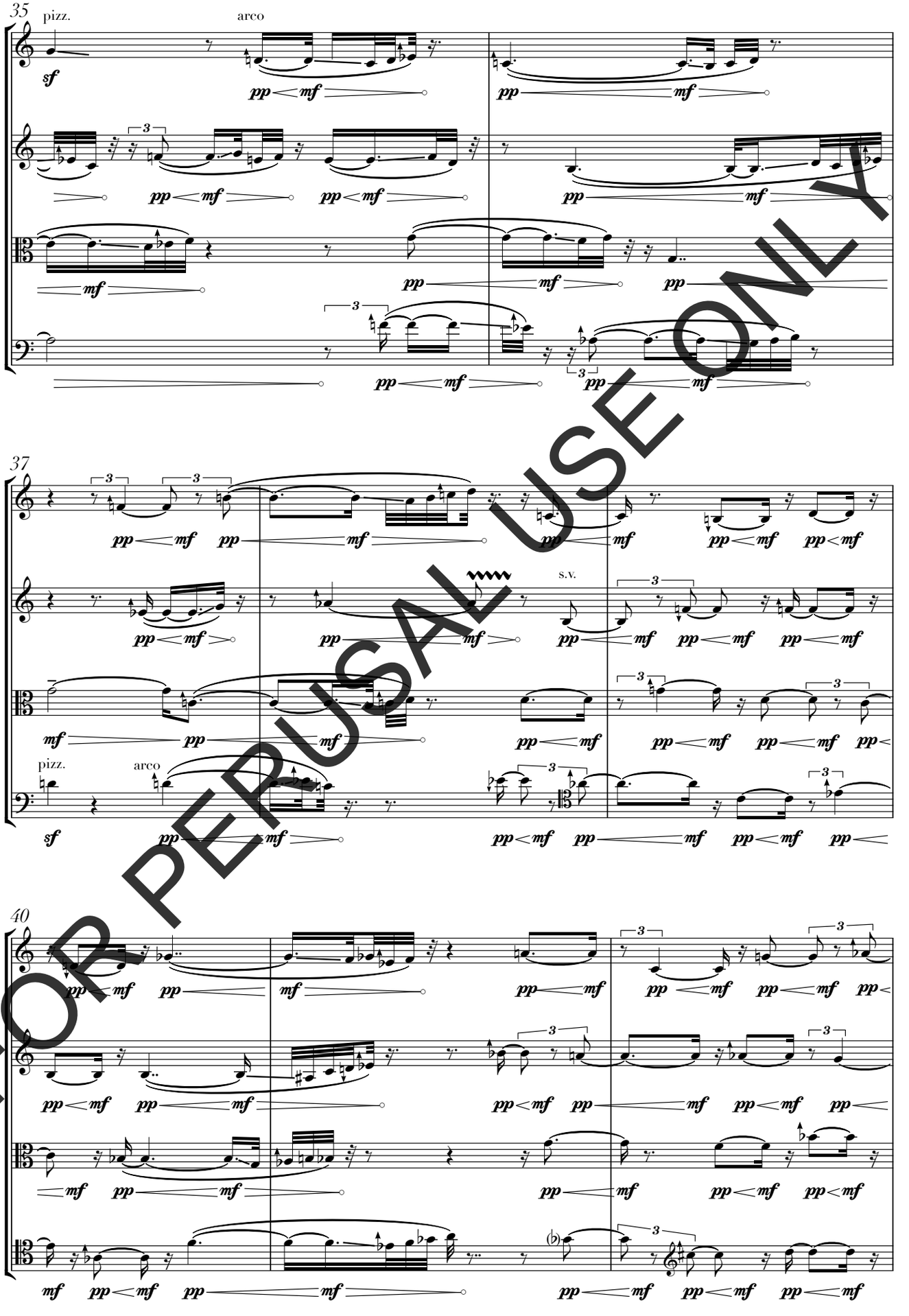


FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

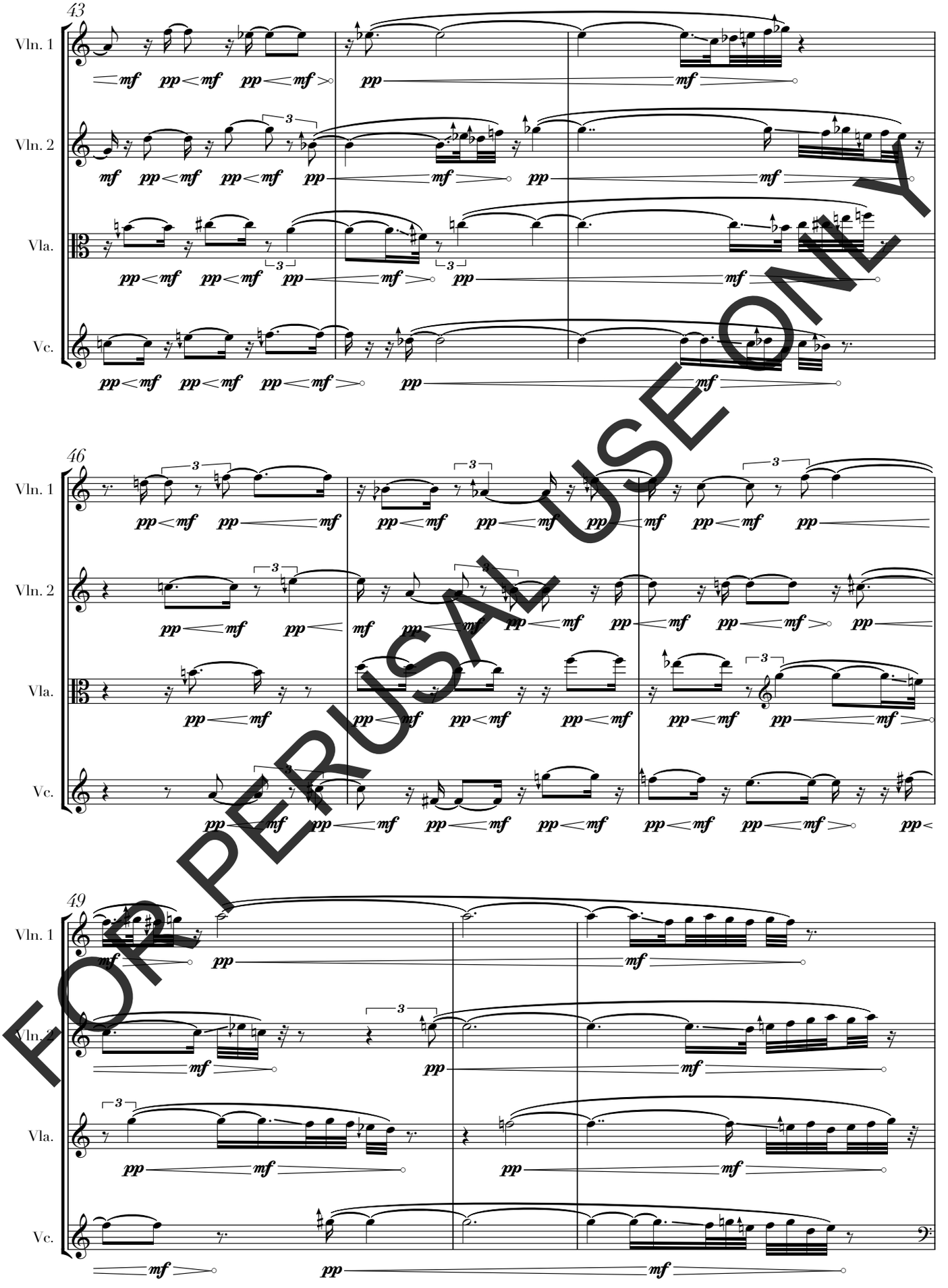


FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

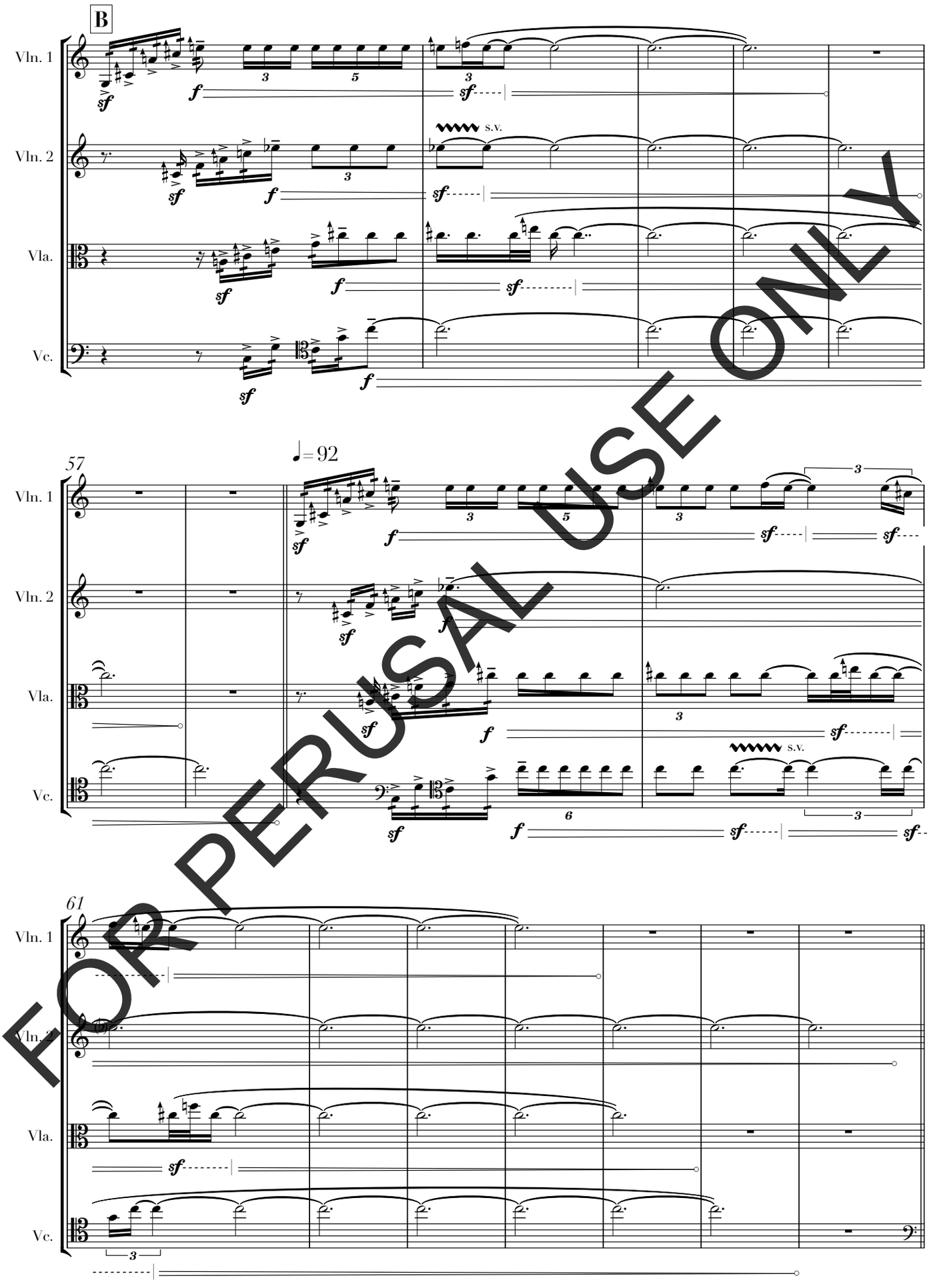
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



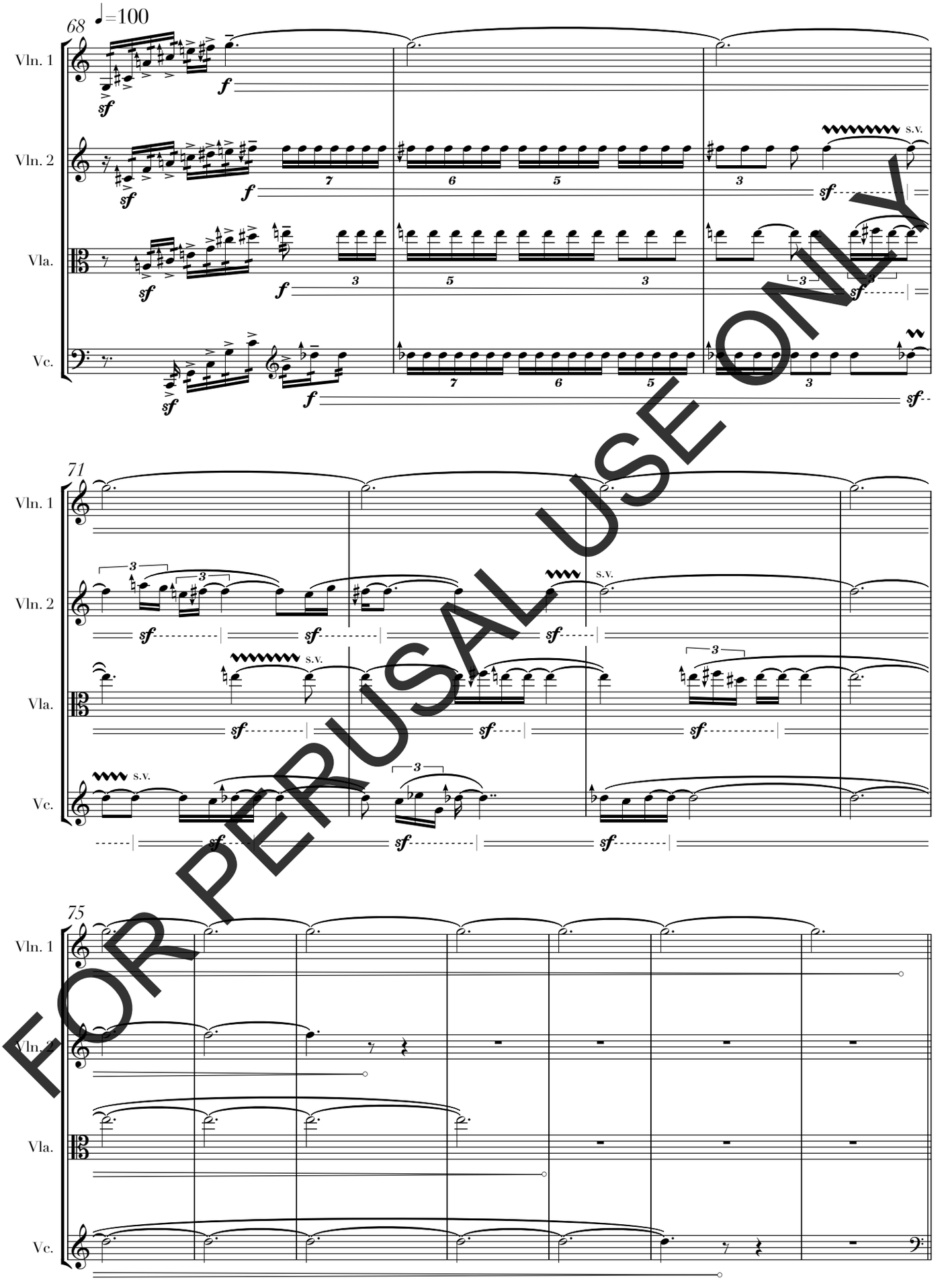
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

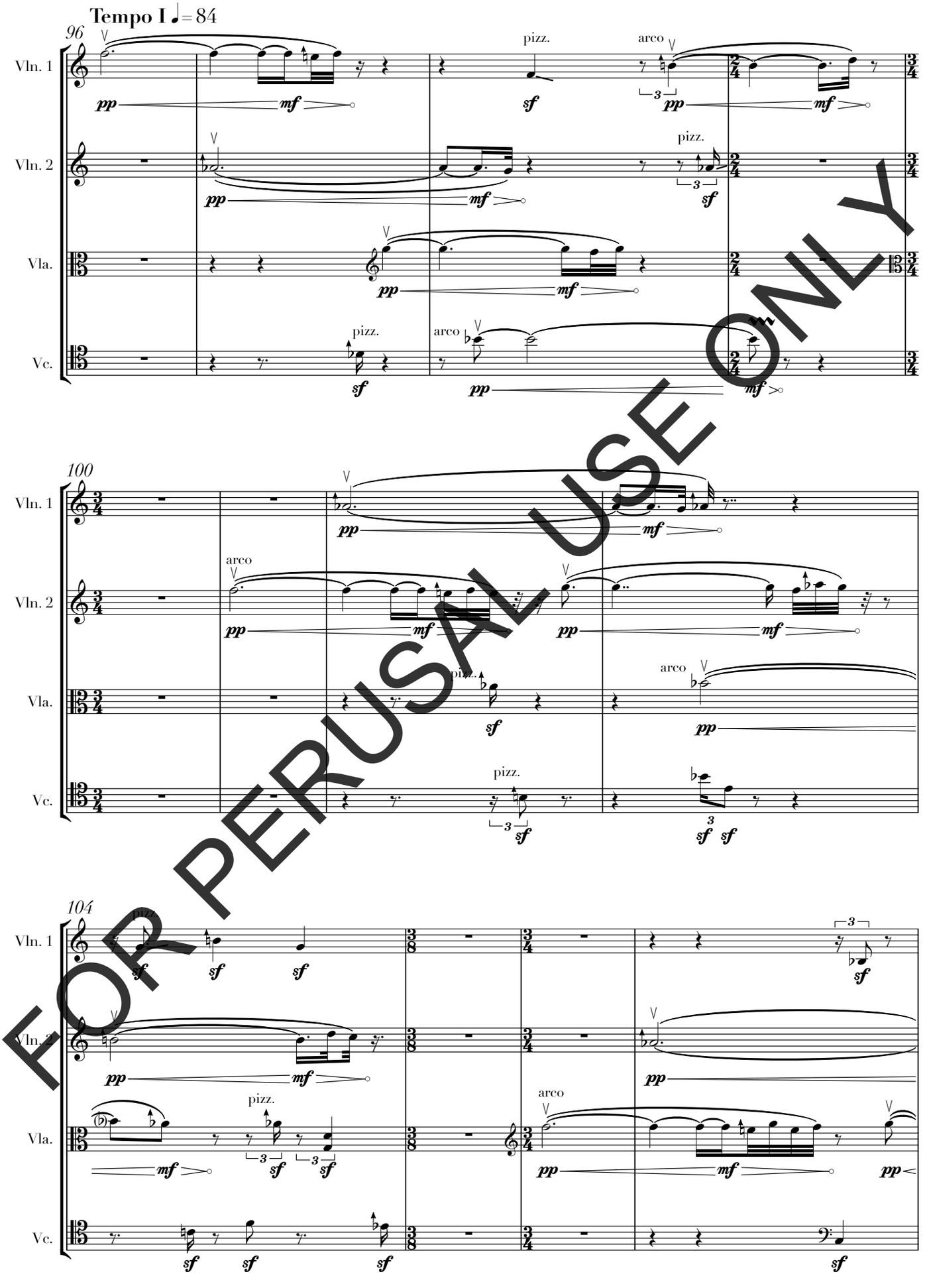


FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

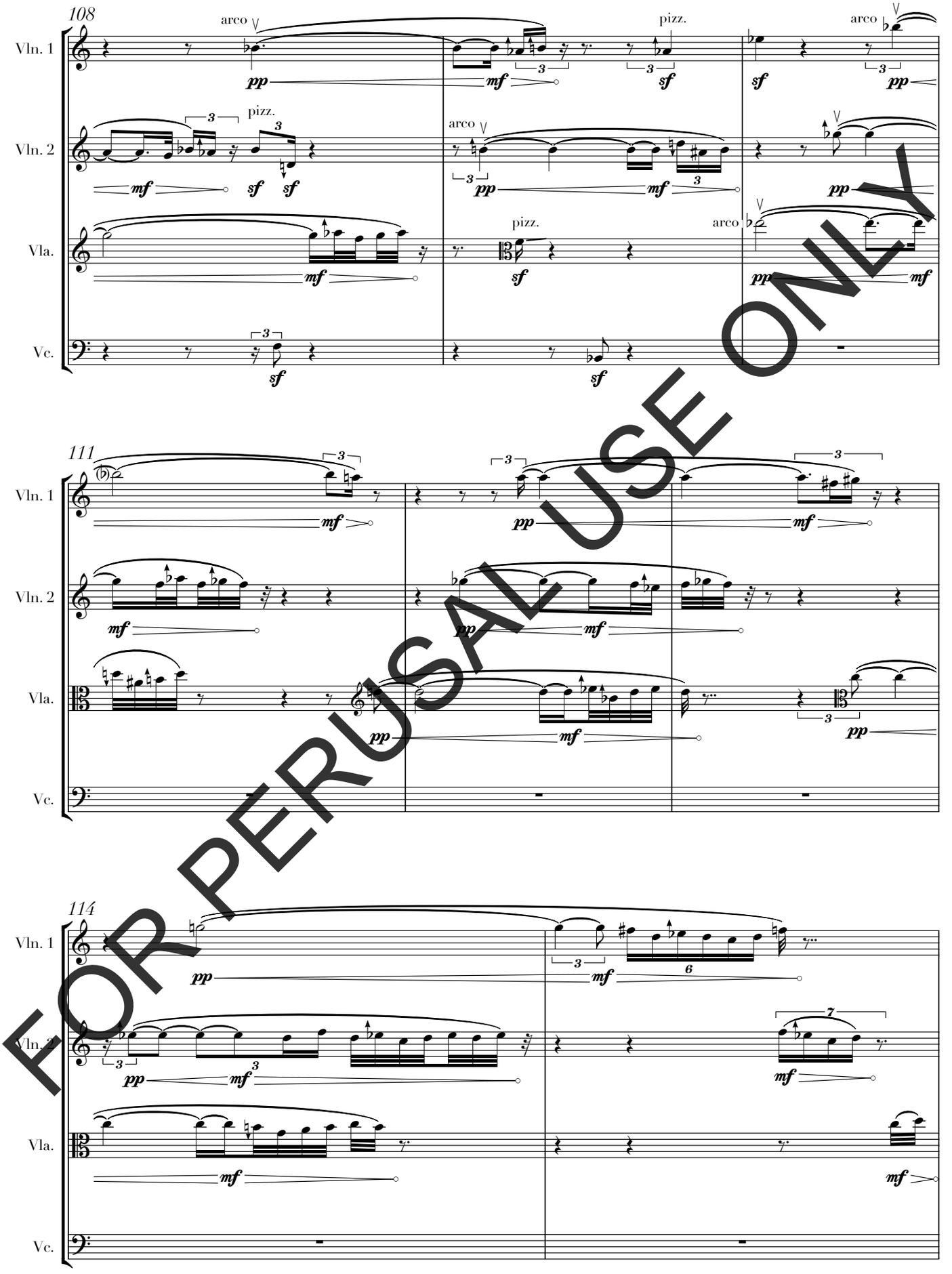


FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

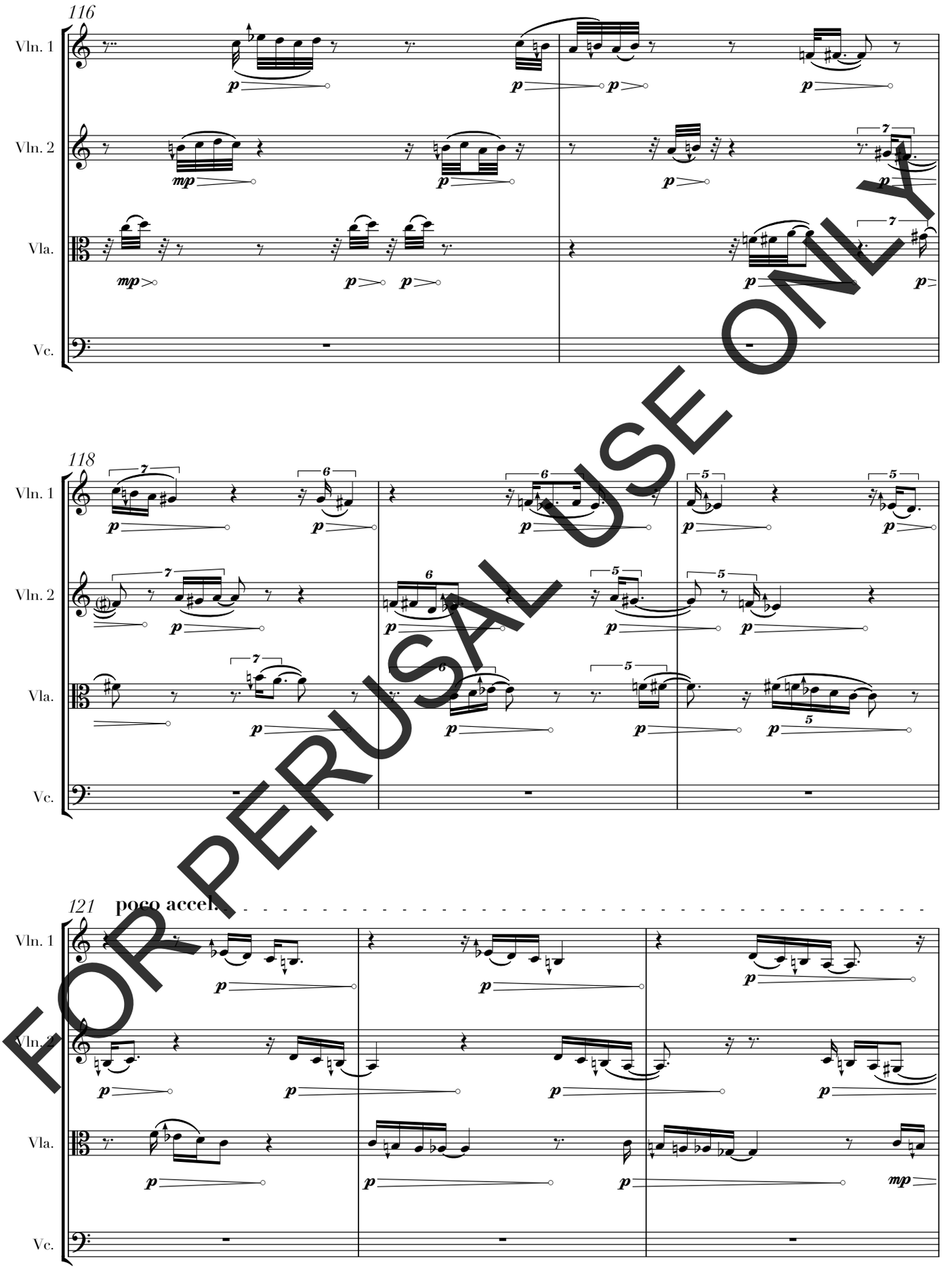
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



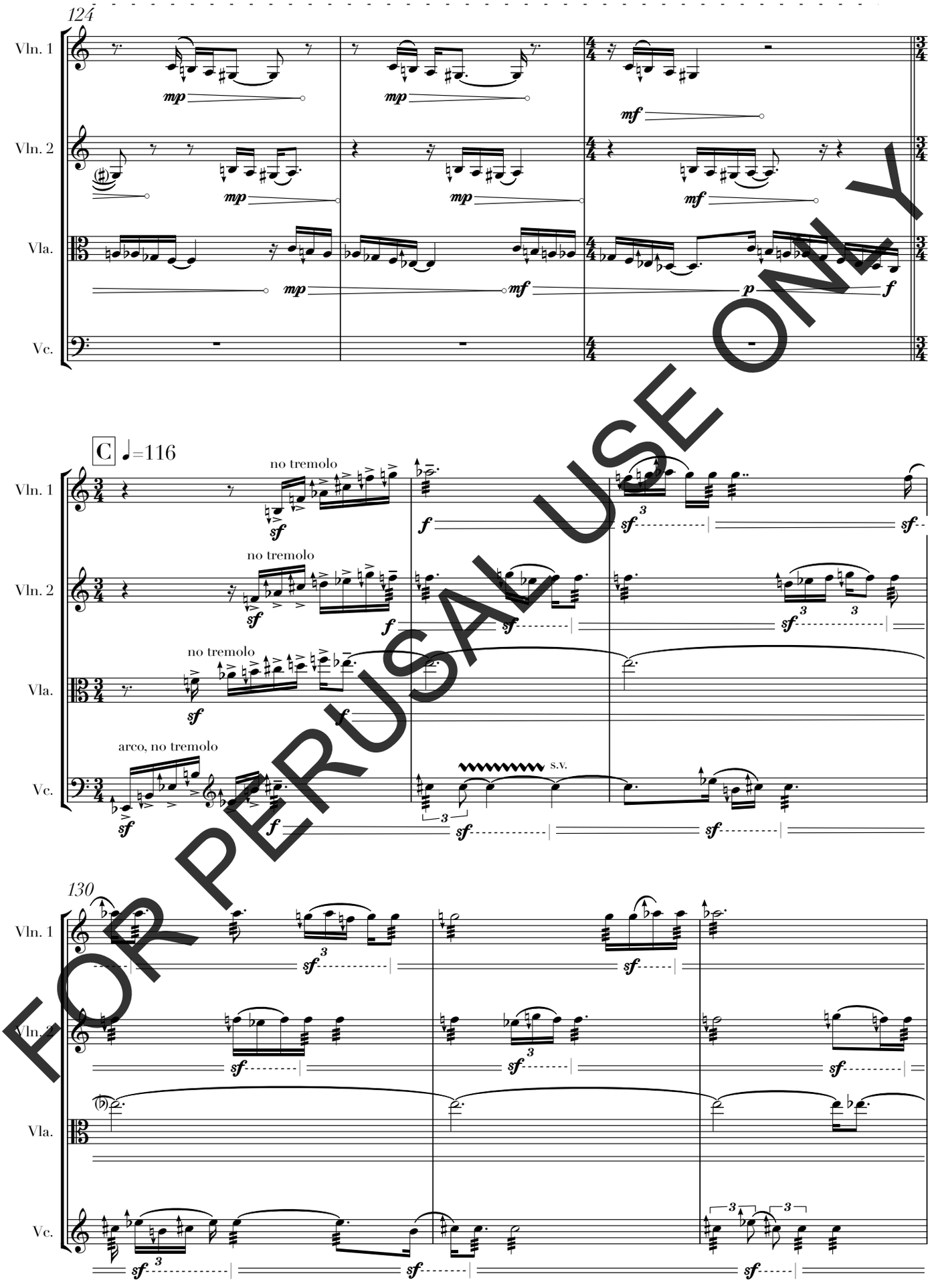
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



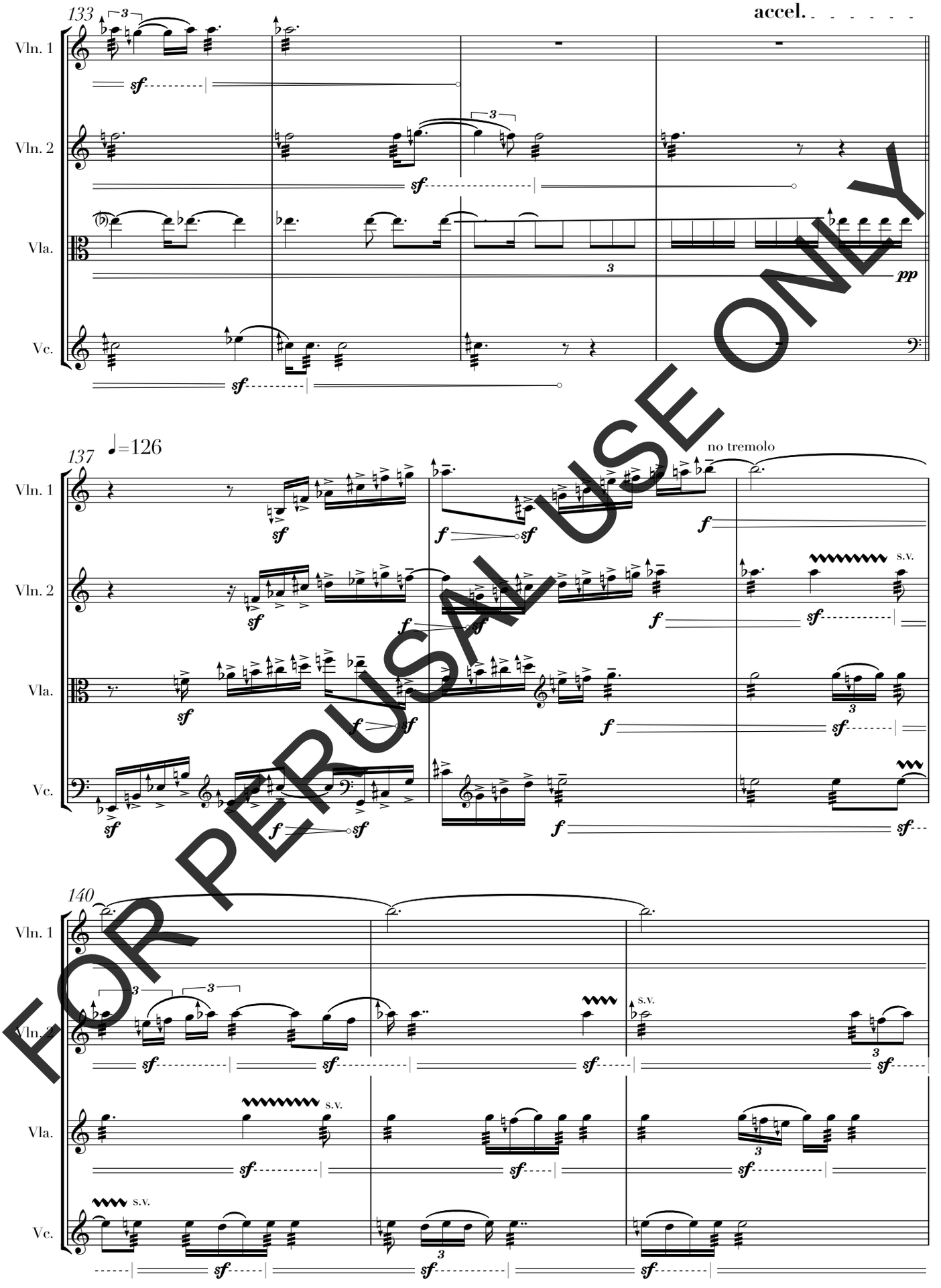
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



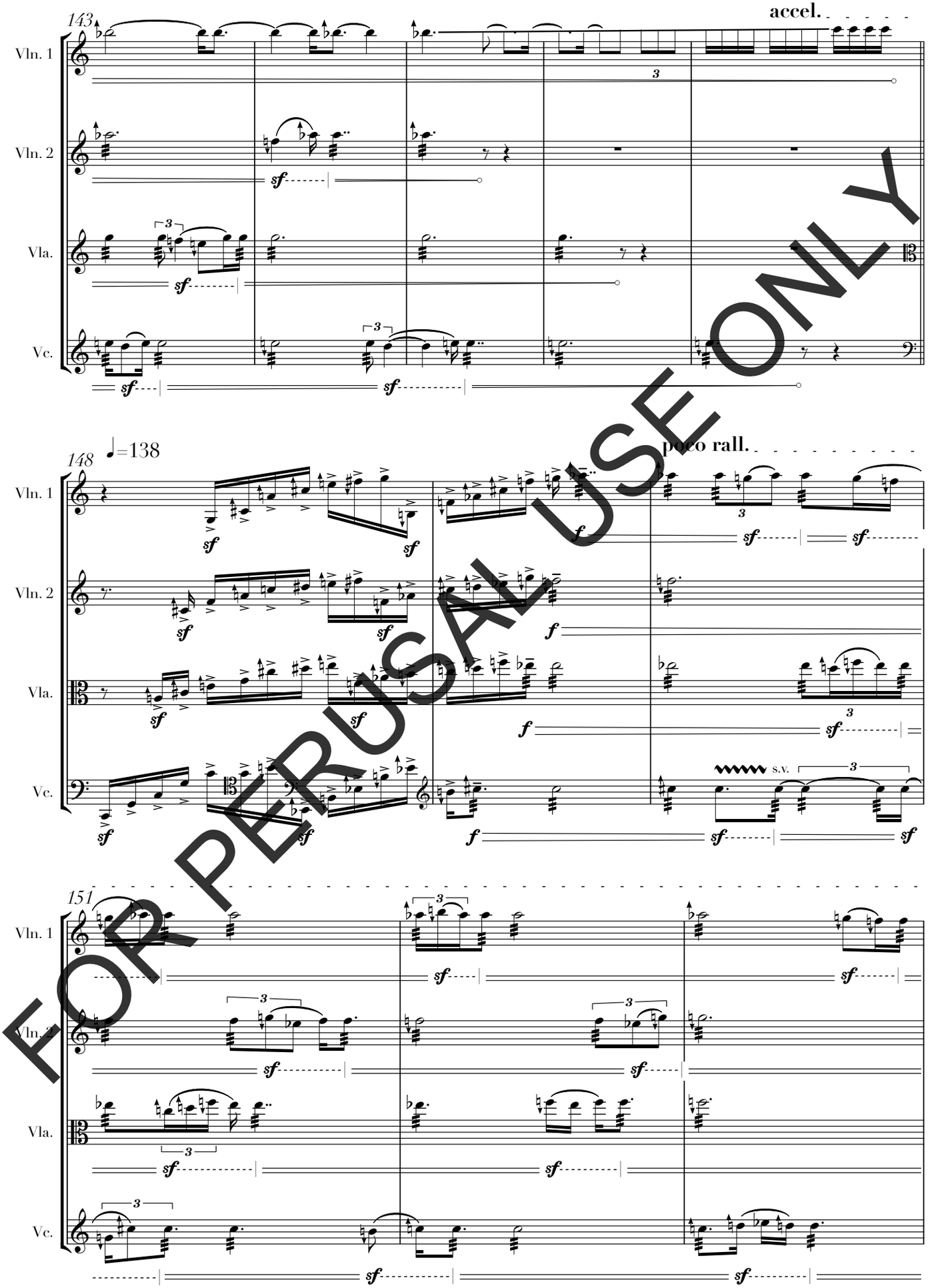
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



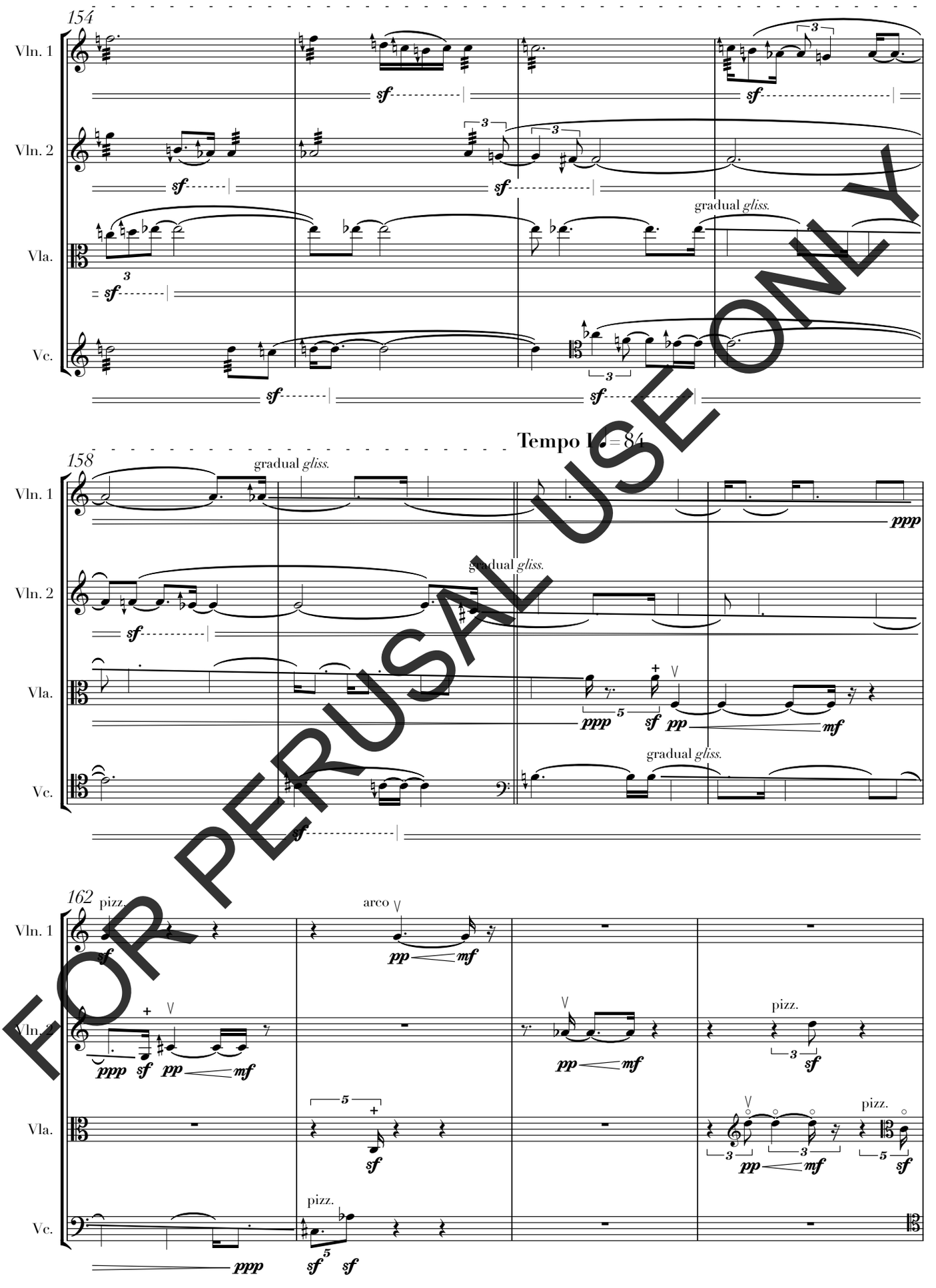
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

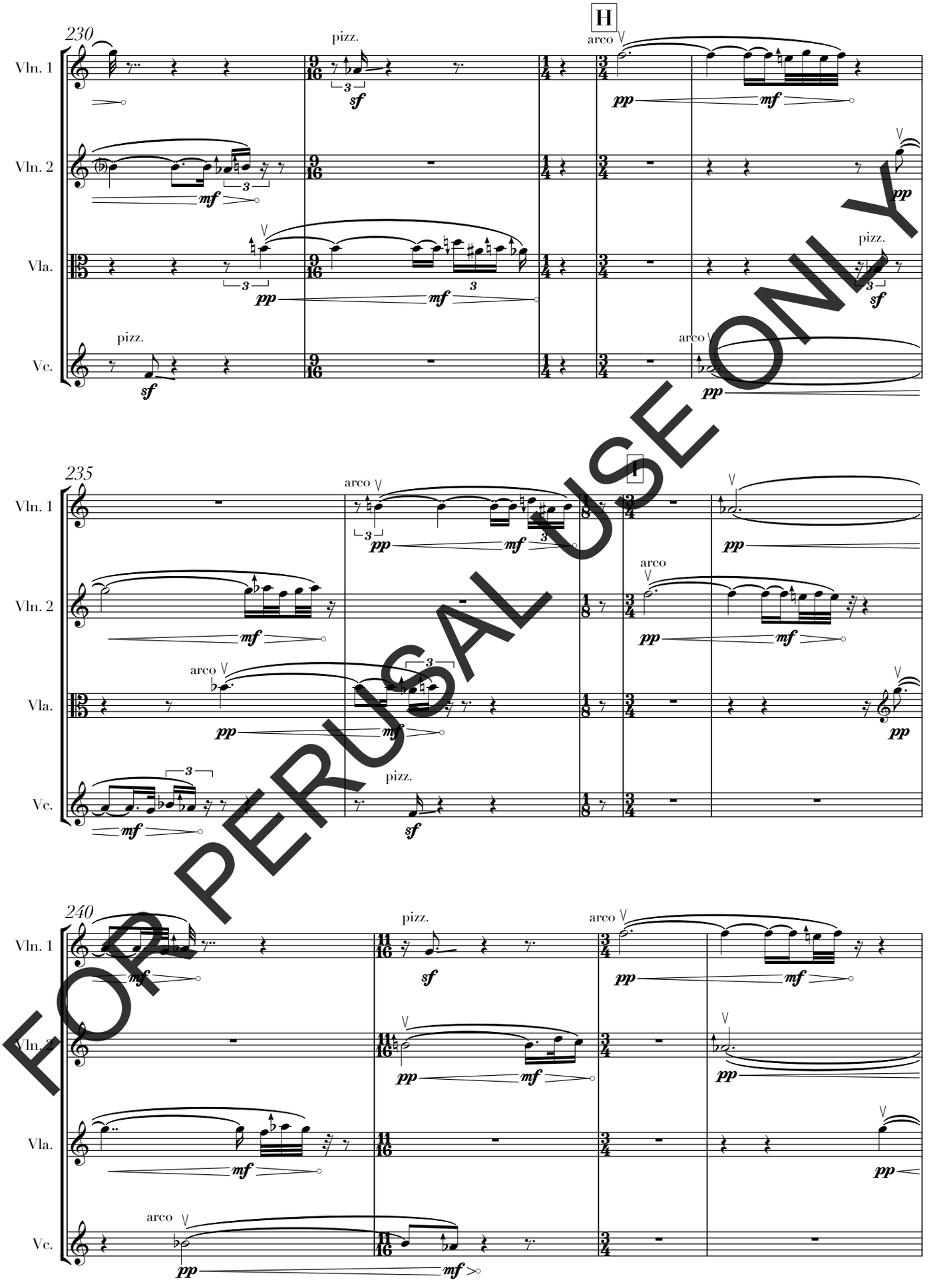
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

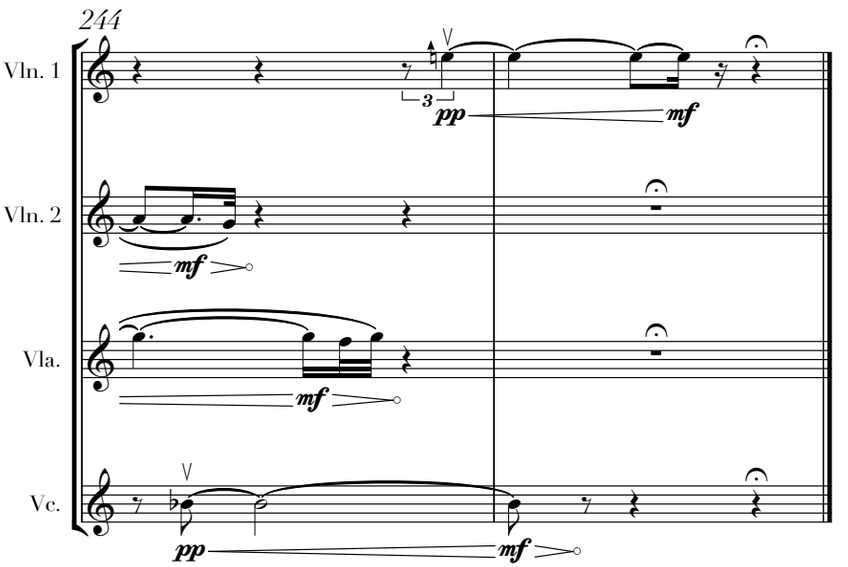
FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY



December 2017
New York, NY

FOR PERUSAL USE ONLY