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Nostalgia

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CUNY City College

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Nostalgia

for string quartet

Marcus Potts

(2012)

Nostalgia

for string quartet

Composed: November 2012, NY, NY
Duration: 5'

Contact:
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Program Note:

"Nostalgia" is a mixture of different musical styles, incorporating influences from musical theatre, classical, R&B and Carnatic music. The various musical styles correlate to the variety of theories of monism, dualism, duality and pluralism that interpret the relationship between mind and body or good and evil. By contrasting different styles of music, I try to convey that amid the differences there is harmony. The fusion of different musical styles stems from personal beliefs that music represents a culture. The mixture of different musical styles into a unified composition depicts the ideal notion that even though differences dwell in society, harmony is possible because ultimately we as a society are undeniably the same. All the musical styles share the same umbrella of being music and all cultures share the characteristic of being human. I am nostalgic for society to come-back to this realization.

"Nostalgia" opens with a moderate tempo similar to the musical theatre piece entitled "One Night Only". "One Night Only" also begins in Bb and has a similar harmonic progression in the opening six bars. Differences in harmonic content occur in bars 2, 4, and 6. The melodic content also varies. The opening begins with a simple thematic motive of a step-wise descent from Db to A. This thematic motive is reconstructed and returns in various ways throughout the piece.

After the sixth bar, I transition the piece to a faster tempo, also derived from "One Night Only". The new section at rehearsal mark 'A' is classically derived by the use of a three-note motive descent in the viola and violin II. This passage is also rhythmically influenced by R&B, where I accentuated beats 1, the 'and'of 2 and the downbeat of 4. Also the moderate tempo is a reflection of the R&B style. The entrance of the first violin at bar 14 is a brief delay before the beginning of the sequence at bar 16 which is a diminution of the opening - which escalates to the fast Carnatic-influenced theme at bar 23.

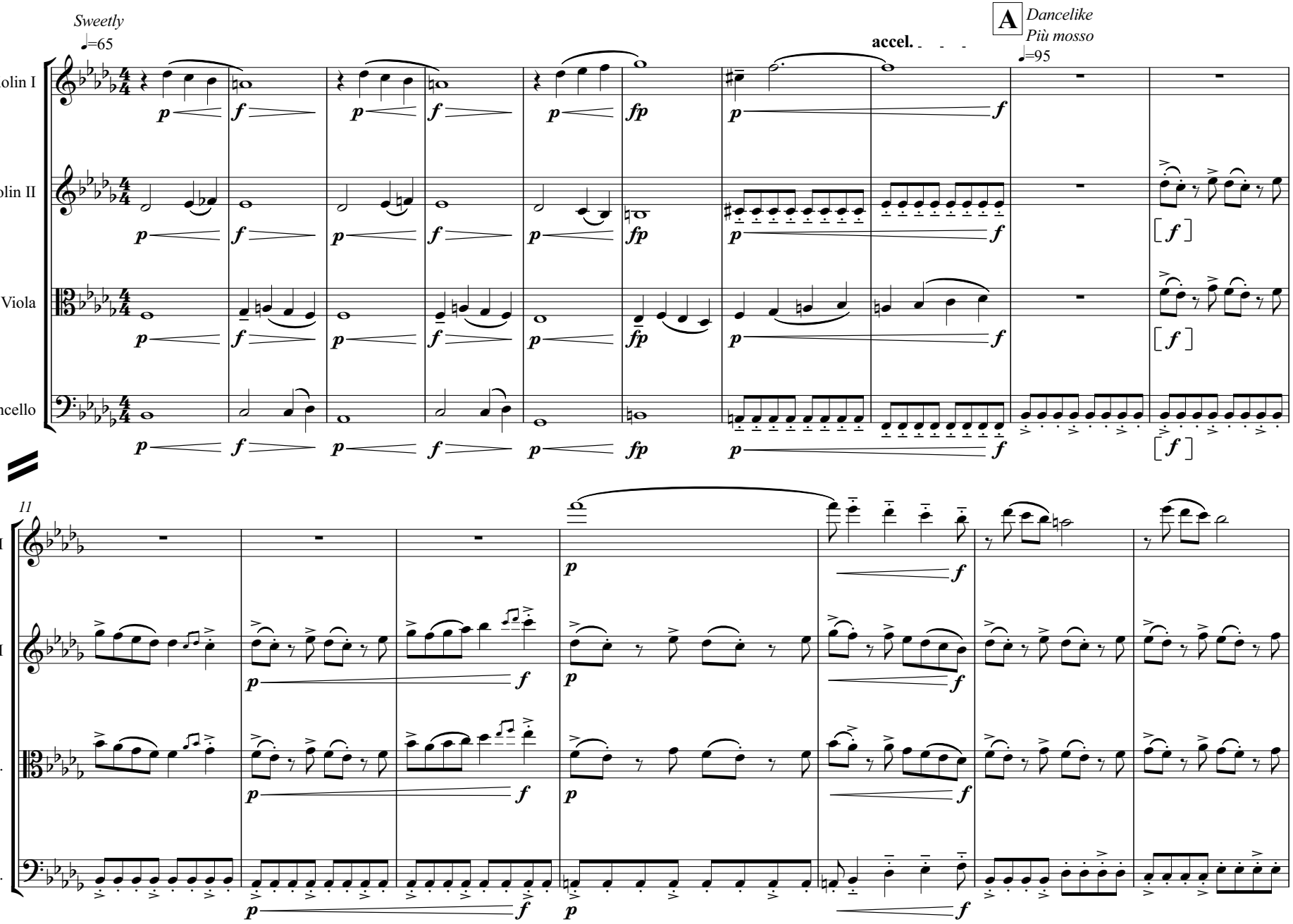
An antiphonal Carnatic theme section unfolds with new rhythmic material. The Carnatic influence is characterized by the semitone relationship found between the 3rd and 4th note in the four-note thematic motive. The viola and violin II sing a diminutive version of the four-note motive played in the beginning of the piece. The cello and first violin echo this motive in the next measure. This call and response occurs again in the next two measures and then another transitional sequence begins. This transitional sequence is a step-wise motion that leads to a slower development section in B minor. This section utilizes the four-note motive again as well escalating to a realm of bewilderment.

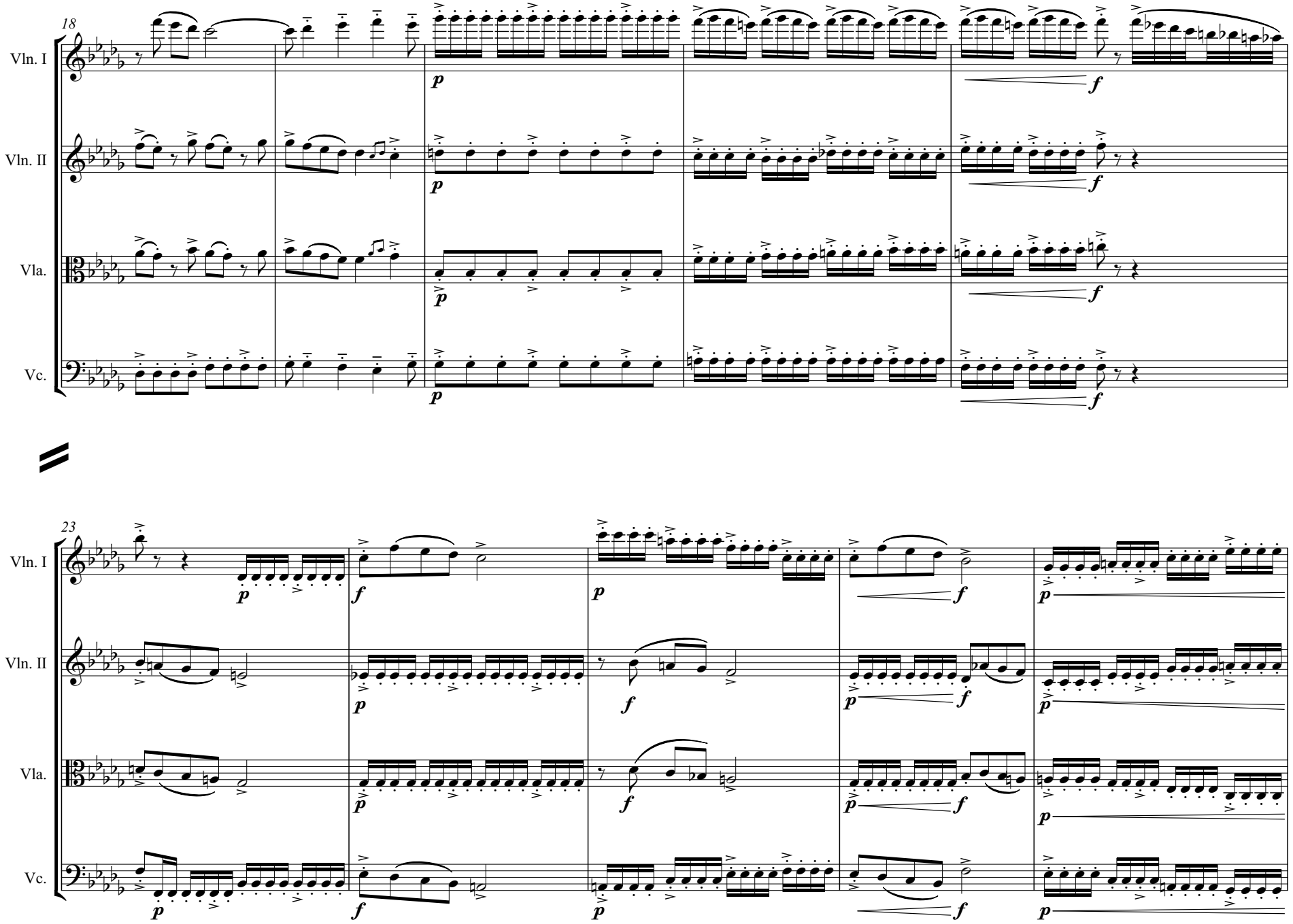
The entrance of the solo cello starts a choral in Bb major. I utilize a three-note motive that is a subset of the four-note thematic motive. At the end of the chorale section, I composed a chromatic wedge to return to the fast tempo theme, section A, at rehearsal mark D. When the music begins to climax again, the piece stops so that one final breathe could be inhaled. I restructure and disorient the four-note motive as it disperses the motive throughout the four voices before culminating to the classical harmonic progression: i64, V7 (vii07) and then I.

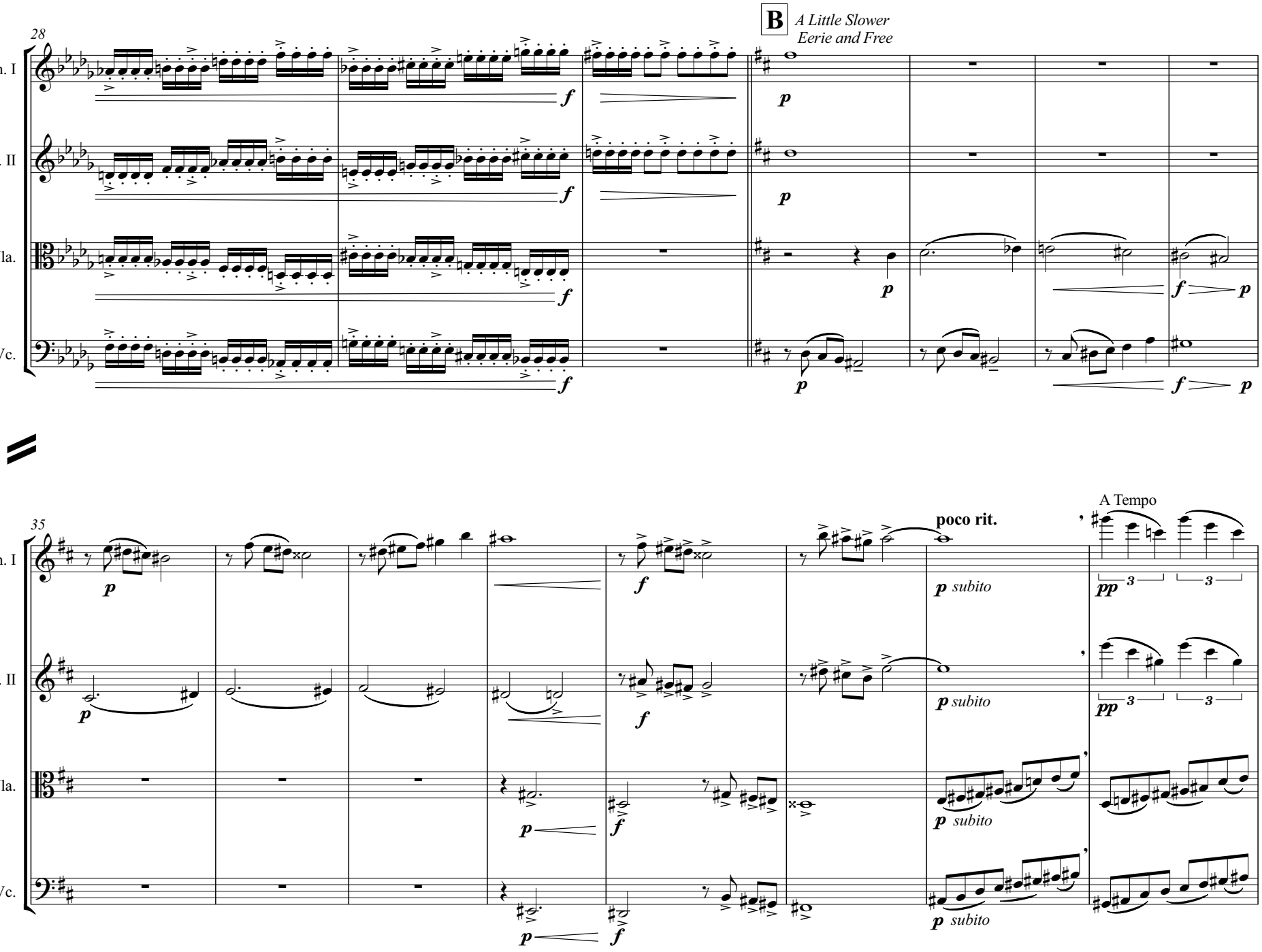
The over-arching creation of this piece is to harmonize various styles into a unified composition where I reuse a simple four-note thematic motive to bind the piece together into a fluid construction. Summarily, "Nostalgia" is intended to blend contrasting musical styles to reflect metaphorically that contrasting cultures can exist harmoniously.

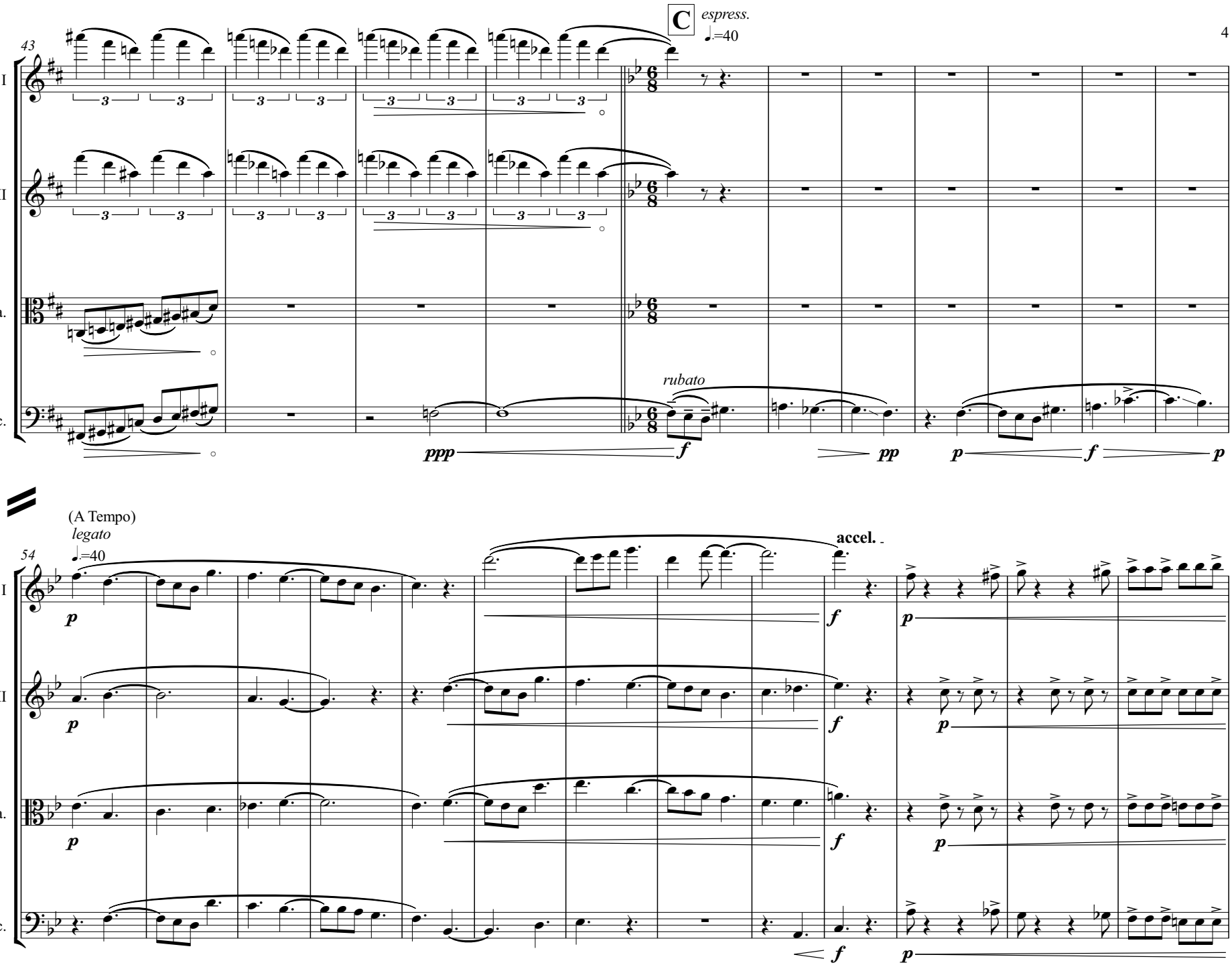
Nostalgia

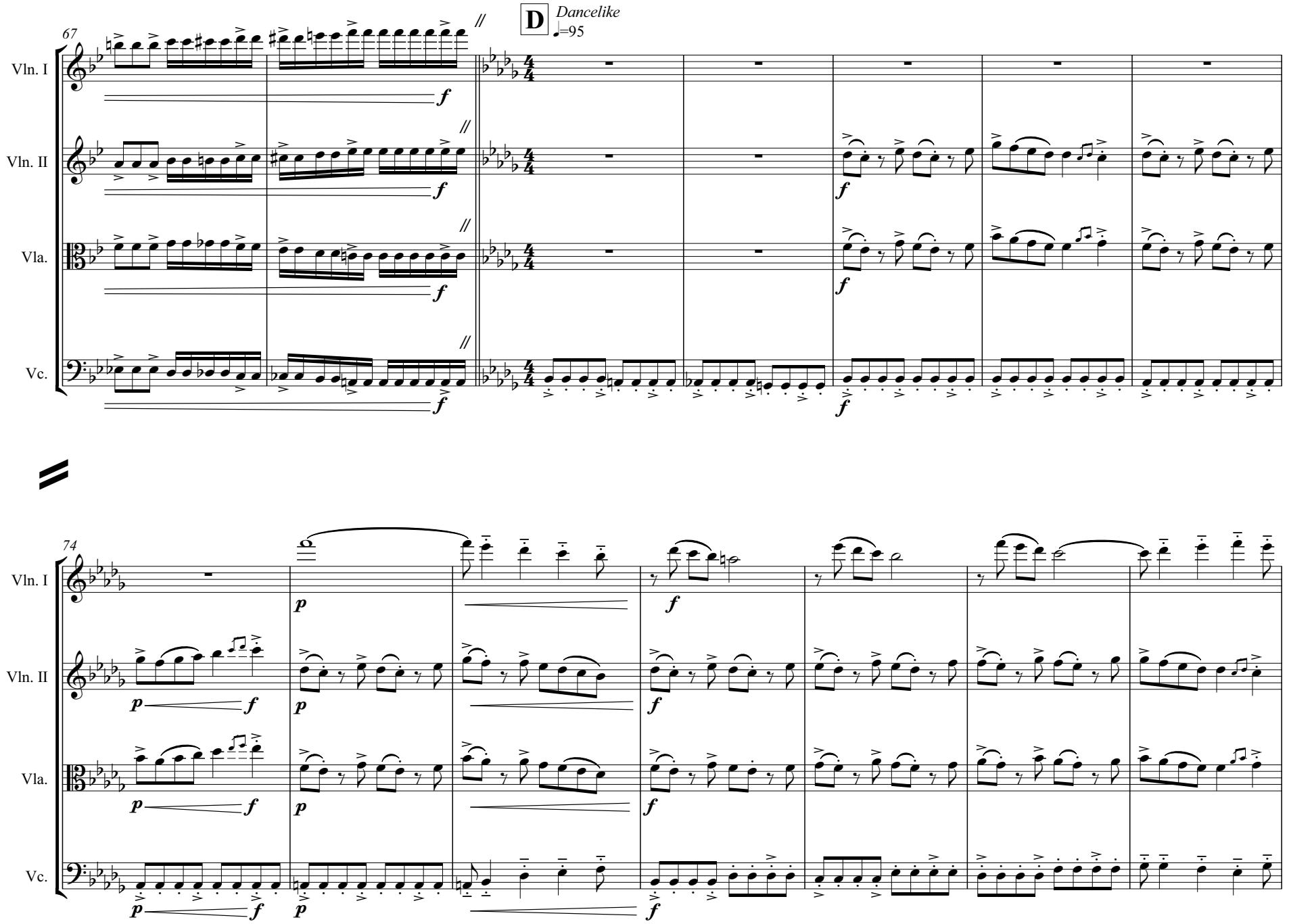
Marcus Potts
November 2012

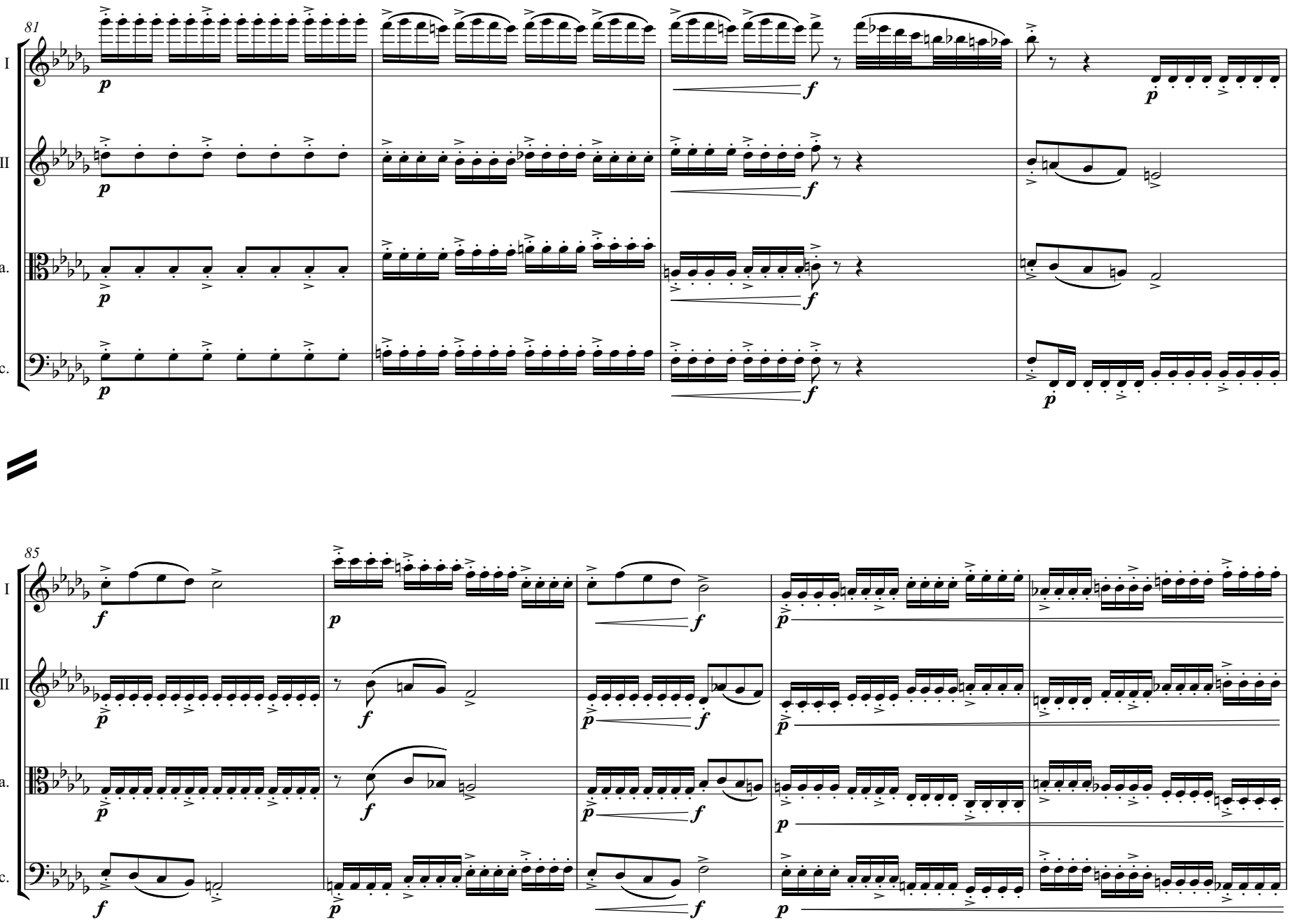


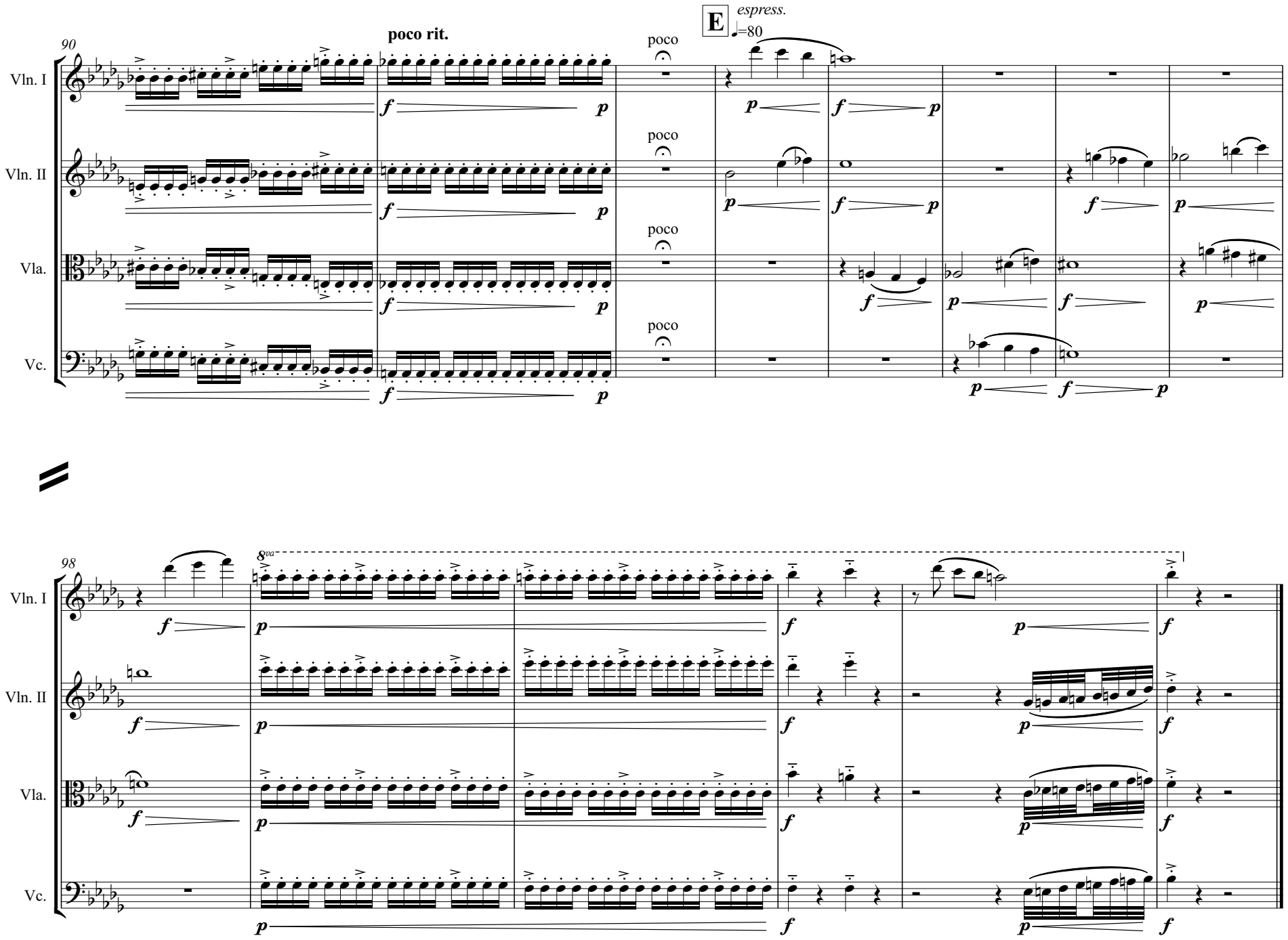

18
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
23
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.


28
B
A Little Slower
Eerie and Free
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
35
poco rit.
A Tempo
subito


C
espress.
♩.=40
43
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
rubato
ppp
f
pp
p
f
p
(A Tempo)
legato
♩.=40
54
accel.
p
f
p


67
D
Dancelike
♩=95
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
74
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.


81
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
85
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.


90
poco rit.
poco
poco
poco
poco
E
espress.
♩=80
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
98
8va
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.