An inquiry into improvisation

reconciling the differences between
performance and composition

Guy Strazzullo (aka Guy Strazz)

BMus M.A. (Hons)

Faculty of Arts, Department of Media, Music, Communication
and Cultural Studies, Macquarie University

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Abstract

Improvisation and composition share a range of intertwining processes, rather than representing either end of a clear dichotomy. This becomes especially apparent through the exploration of the experiences, composition and improvisation processes in the realisation of the creative practice of this thesis, which consists of a double concerto for guitar/piano/chamber orchestra, and pieces for jazz quartet.

This study explores improvisation within the framework of composition through creative practice and analytical exegesis, and addresses 1) A paradigm that accentuates differences between performance and composition based on spatiotemporal perspectives, and 2) Challenges in extending the potential and possibilities of improvisation/composition through an intercultural approach.

The theoretical framework consists of analysis and discussion of the creative practice, investigation of temporal theory, perceptions of spontaneity/premeditation, and intercultural elements in improvisation/composition. The central argument of the exegesis claims that improvisation, beyond performance, is not only engaged in composition through multiple levels of improvisation activity, but its process closely resembles that of performance. I add a view to the dialogue arguing that distinctions such as real-time/non-real time improvisation, and rapid/slow composition are unstable in the improvisation/composition paradigm. I argue this is because although much research has been invested in improvisation in performance and allied cultural and political concerns there are two main reasons improvisation in composition remains an obscure topic. First, is the general absence of improvisation consciousness in the last century and a half of Western art music. Second, is the lack of historical record by past renowned composers that were known for their remarkable improvisation ability, but left virtually no reflections on the creative mechanisms of their compositions.

The findings in this study illuminate the dialogue with a view that apparent differences in the improvisation/composition paradigm are not only reconcilable, but also negligible.

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I certify that the work in this exegesis entitled “**An Inquiry into improvisation**” has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree to any other university or institution other than Macquarie University.

I also certify that the thesis is an original piece of research and it has been written by me. Any help and assistance that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself have been appropriately acknowledged.

In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis as per standard referencing protocol.

[Total word count; 35.720 excluding footnotes, references and appendices]

Guy Strazzullo (41864832)

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1. Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

The pioneering work of Ernst Ferand (1961) is widely acknowledged as the genesis of an ongoing intellectual enquiry into music improvisation; a topic that, nonetheless, remained largely ignored in scholarship until the 1960s and 70s. This era heralds the arrival of improvisation as an integral study in ethnomusicology (see Nettl, 1998, p. 3) that has developed into an engaging cross-disciplinary discourse. However, within the merits of such progress, the dialogue also indicates a call for a critical reassessment of methodological perspective:

> The challenge of reinvigorating the international discussion on improvisation is to keep the full range of multiplicity: neither losing ourselves in musical description for its own sake, nor in ideologies and politics to the point of excluding what musicians actually do. (Monson, 1998, p. 164)

Hollerbach (2004, p. 155) makes a similar point by suggesting that the existing paradigm in ethnomusicology, with the exception of jazz, has adopted the study of music improvisation as culture; an approach that exposes neglect in the lives of musicians, their perspectives, and commitment to improvisation. This view is also reverberated by Ajay Heble in *Landing on the Wrong Note*, where he sketches a reality that reflects the lives of jazz musicians, the performance spaces and local community in which they operate that: "*…counter the misrepresentations fostered by institutionalized histories of the music*" (Heble, 2000, p. 4).

The aim and focus of this chapter is to consider literature that may inform and broaden our understanding of improvisation in music scholarship. It also takes into account the views of field practitioners, as these are the main protagonists that shape the course of improvisation. An exploration of a broad spectrum of music cultures that employ improvisation (or its equivalent in other languages/cultures) is beyond the scope of this study, and as such, I focus on three key-areas of inquiry: (1) Defining improvisation, (2) Improvisation/composition: reconciling differences in the dichotomy. This investigates two topics directly linked to my creative practice: one - *improvisation and the score* - explores the extent to which sustained spontaneous creativity, improvisation practice, and notation intertwine in composition process. The other - *Improvisation/composition*: *spatiotemporal perspectives* - investigates temporal theories such as real-time/slow-time improvisation, and rapid/slow composition, and perceptions of spontaneity/premeditation within the context of revision. (3) Intercultural aesthetics: extending the potential and possibilities of improvisation and composition. This is concerned with improvisation/composition within the context of my creative practice where traditional and contemporary practices intertwine.[1] In this thesis, the term *intercultural* relates to exchange between two or more cultures. This is in contrast to the term *cross-cultural*, which is normally employed in comparative musicology. Nevertheless, cross-cultural awareness, especially the empirical kind, adds depth to intercultural practice both at a personal level and in collaborative exchange amongst musicians.

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[1] My music influences are discussed on the following pages: 22-24, 30, 34-36, 38, 40, and 59 in reference to *Eastern Blues*, and 87-89, 91, 96, and 100 in reference to the *Silk Road Concerto*.

1.2 Defining Improvisation

To posit a single definition of the term improvisation is problematic. This is because: (*a*) it does not have an equivalent literal translation in several non-Western music traditions such as Hindustani classical and Arabic *taquasim*, and (*b*) cultural symbolism is intrinsic to its significance which, by this measure, makes the Western use of the term inadequate and vulnerable to implications of cultural homogeneity. John Napier argues that the term improvisation, employed within any cross-cultural context, requires a narrative that embodies the essential elements of the genres involved in such process:

> Any cross-cultural use of the idea, indeed any use of the word itself in a musical discourse to which it is alien, needs to account for a range of interpretations and validations of practice, both within and without the tradition to which the word is being imported. Aside from arousing concerns about the persistence of negative tropes on improvisation, the word may afford an inadequate or even incorrect focus in the perception of performance—a focus on what is novel and different. (Napier, 2006, p. 1)

Negative tropes abound when employing improvisation as a term. Derek Bailey, for instance, notes that jazz musicians are reluctant to use it because it carries negative connotations, which are fabricated by something widely seen as being inferior to notated composition: "*…lacking in design and method*" (Bailey, 1993, p. 12). However, Napier also says that: "*Modern scholarship has long attenuated, if not eliminated many of the negative connotations that were once associated with the word "improvisation" or of the many approaches to music-making so characterised*" (Napier, 2006, p. 1).

Musician and scholar of Arabic music, Ali Jihad Racy, exemplifies the importance of Napier's argument in a treatise on improvisation as a symbol when he says that:

> Music is deemed symbolic because it exhibits inherent compatibilities with the object it signifies… As such, improvisation constitutes a metaphor or a microcosm of something else. In other words, it embraces elements of iconicity because its internal content resonates with broader conceptual, societal, and cosmic structures. (Racy, 2000, pp. 302-303)

Nevertheless, Racy believes that even if improvisation has multi-layered significance that is underlined by a diversity of cultural models there is some type of nexus between them that although may appear contrasting, they are to some extent also complementary:

> From a cross-cultural perspective, the improvisatory endeavour appears to both comply and challenge, conform and confront, reflect inwardly and appeal collectively, emerge like an evanescent mist and manifest itself like a brightly demarcated landscape. (*Ibid*, pp. 308-309)

Racy's lyrical description is evident when looking at Arabic classical music tradition in a broader geographical context across North Africa, where the intercultural history of Tunisian classical music (*maluf*) is a vivid example. Rachel Colwell observes that:

> Contemporary Tunisian musicians have engaged with and adopted various "foreign" or "external" musics by melded (sic) them in myriad intricate and often controversial ways with the tunes, rhythms, and symbolic meanings of their own historically local musics. (Colwell, 2009, p. 3)

In some respects, Racy echoes an earlier proposition by Bruno Nettl about improvisation as a universal idea. In the early 1970s, inspired by his teacher, George Herzog, Bruno Nettl developed an idea for comparative musicology: '*If the concept of improvisation can be said to be at all viable, it should be considered one of the few universals of music in which all cultures share in one way or another'* (Nettl, 1974, p. 4). However, more recently he suggests caution in becoming too carried away with this idea:

> We might consider music as a single vast body of sound and thought, a kind of universal language of humankind, and accepting this would lead us to a particular way of constructing universals… A more typically ethnomusicological view would provide for a world music that consists of a large group of discreet musics, somewhat analogous to languages, with stylistic, geographical, and social boundaries. (Nettl, 2000, p. 464)

In *The Many Faces of Improvisation*, Jihad Racy presents twelve selected definitions of improvisation by authors such as Ghiselin, Bailey (quoted 9 times out of 12), Nettl, and Edward Hall et al. Such definitions range from abstract conceptual ideas that may or may not apply across cultures:

> Improvisation is considered an intuitive art. Improvising is thought to transcend the realm of explicit rationalization and to occur on a mental or psychological plateau that is difficult to fathom or explain in plain musicological terms. Like other creative musical pursuits, it appears to entail spontaneity rather than purely conscious calculation. (Ghiselin,1952 cited in Racy, 2000, p. 305)

Bailey is more pragmatic when he states: ' *Improvisation is always changing and adjusting, never fixed, too elusive for analysis and precise description; essentially non-academic*' (Bailey, 1993, p. 48). He then adds, in referring to Ella Zonis' investigation of improvisation in her book *Classical Persian Music*, that the mystique of spontaneity, so fundamental to performance, is embedded within the theoretical practice of improvisation, which is elevated to: '…*the practice of practice'* (*Ibid*, p. ix).

The practice of improvisation can mean different things, depending on interpretation. Bailey interviewed flamenco guitarist Paco Peña, who defined improvisation as an *idiom* that is passed from one generation to the next. Bailey (1993, p. 18) explains that improvisation represents the musical idiom in various cultures, where the art of improvising constitutes the most eloquent *voice* of the established musical system; viewed as such, it is cherished and transmitted from one generation to another. In the context of flamenco music, improvisers regard their art as a prime expression of the musical tradition and a vehicle for keeping the idiom, authentic, alive, and progressional, as long as it is kept clear of academic authority. Indeed, keeping the idiom alive does entail experimentation, an approach that may be easily accepted in some cultures or scrutinised in others, as Cadiz-born experimental flamenco guitarist, Paco de Lucia explains in reference as to whether dogmatism hinders the evolution of flamenco:

> In general, flamenco people are dogmatic, it may be a good thing, even though the evolution may be slower. I don't agree with purists: they don't allow people to sing or to play as they wish. They do a screening in which if what you play or the evolution you develop is within the context, the essence of flamenco, they admit it sooner or later. Anyway, without them, each one would do as he wished, and even more so in the present times. I think everything is valid if you know how to balance things. (de Lucia in Espinola, 1992, p. 1)

Although de Lucia is an experimental musician, he is strongly committed to tradition, so his reference to the validity of balancing things hinges on it. Mogene Horsley echoes this thought when he says that: '*Improvisation is associated with freedom. Accordingly, it means license to transcend musical boundaries, to defy, or at least "play around" certain norms and expectations*' (Horsley 1980 cited in Racy 2000, p. 306).

In summing up, Racy suggests that the diversity of interpretations about improvisation:

> …Point clearly to the multi-layered significance of musical improvisation. More precisely, they enable us to reconstruct aspects of musical significance along individual thematic poles that on various conceptual levels seem quite distinct, but in some ways also interrelated and complementary. (*Ibid*, pp. 307-308)

1.3 Improvisation/Composition

1.3.1 *Reconciling differences in the dichotomy*

This second key-area of the literature review focuses on two interrelated elements that underline differences in the improvisation/composition dichotomy. The first explores the tensions between improvisation and the score whilst the second investigates spontaneous creativity and improvisation in composition process. The differences reflect the constraints by which improvisation is perceived to function, as Jihad Racy suggests: '*In effect, the symbolic meaning attached to improvised music may be indicative of how the process of improvising is generally interpreted'* (*Ibid*).

1.3.2 *Improvisation and the score*

Whilst critical studies of scores in scholarship are presented in technical and historical contexts, ontology about composition processes is scarce. Therefore, when Nettl (1998 p. 16) asks: "*What is that actually happens in the mind of the improviser in the course of performance?*" adding that:

"*This may be the most significant question for scholars investigating the process*" (*Ibid*) it invites the same question in reference to the composer improvising in the course of composition.

Tracy McMullen explores the division between improvisation and composition, suggesting that Western musicology, steeped in the principles of the Enlightenment, views composition as a product associated with the mind, logic, premeditation, and craft. As such, the thought of improvisation as a corporeal, spontaneous practice is culled: "*Music poses a problem for a Western intellectual tradition that privileges reason and the mind over the body*" (McMullen, 2010, *n.p.*). Thus, the positioning of the object as in the '*Opus*', or the 'Work' over the corporeal as a symbol of improvisation underlines the paradigm:

> …In the modern period, the increased emphasis on the textual analysis of the "work" establishes the composer's score as the site of music, marginalizing music's corporeal aspects, including its embodied and contingent performers (*Ibid*).

McMullen suggests that the *work* as *entity* discriminates against the improviser:

> Improvisation underscores impermanence, intersubjectivity, and corporeality, and therefore is a radical departure from Enlightenment thought that favors permanence, the self-contained individual, and "objective truth" In such a context, improvisers are marginalized in a history of Western music preoccupied with "the work" and the composer as solitary genius (*Ibid*).

By extension, this can suggest that *Western classical music preoccupations* have also marginalised (or erased) improvisation from the perception that it is interconnected to composition, and that composers may actually engage in discrete levels of improvisation activity in the process of composing. Indeed, McMullen's paper is a comparative essay juxtaposing Pauline Oliveros' corporeality with John Cage's lack of it, which by extension raises the question whether practitioners of improvisation/composition such as J.S. Bach, Paganini, Brahms, and Liszt felt incorporeal and non-improvisational during the process of composition. To what extent is this plausible?

Pianist/composer Eric Barnhill (2006) discusses an inter-relationship between improvisation and composition existing openly in the lives of musicians and community when improvisation was still widely practiced up to the1840s, and later in the Romantic period. He mentions a number of prominent composers such as Bach, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Chopin, Liszt, and Debussy who were also renowned improvisers, and in most cases, more recognised for their outstanding improvisation skills than compositions. Barnhill also points to the fact that Bach had laid important foundations on the art of improvisation through his teaching methods and publications of diverse versions of the same work. Handel also published on how to improvise dances and fugues (Barnhill, 2006, pp. 1-2). Robin Moore, in echoing Ferand (1961), emphasises the centrality of improvisation in Western classical tradition up to the late 1800s; an artistic environment that, a century later, underlines the history and significance of jazz:

> Written documentation supports Ferand's position on the importance of improvisation in every musical era of the Western classical tradition excepting the present. Even well into the 19th century it is clear that improvisation remained an indispensable ability for most professional musicians. (Moore, 1992, p. 62)

On these accounts, it is more than feasible to suggest that the inner workings of the composition process might indeed be the product of improvising minds. However, the gradual emergence of the score from early Baroque to the Classical era and beyond gradually becomes a product of mass communication and economic venture. Its faithful interpretation becomes a widespread trademark of socio-economic and political dogma that through wilful intent, or *"objective truth"*, as McMullen puts it in reference to the Enlightenment, ironically denies the *corporeal* significance of improvisation in Western-art music.

A brief background is necessary to explain that the idea of *objective truth* is rooted in the high Renaissance. The Council of Trent (1545) represents its symbolic starting point where political interpretations of Aristotle's Poetics (c. 335 BC) drive its intellectual climate (Pietropaolo, 2003, p. 8). Its principle subject, vague and distant now on the worth of improvisation, is that it is a rustic exercise that, although it led to the development of drama as an art form, it is fundamentally *pre-artistic* in status. Pietropaolo (2003, pp. 1-28) describes how the philosophical/political tensions provoked such reaction towards improvisation during this time. He sees the rigid theoretical interpretation of Aristotle's ideas as a central problem in raising the most ardent opposition to improvisation in the late Renaissance, and beyond that, in Western art in general. However, if Aristotle's idea of improvisation is stripped of political maneuvering, it shows a subjective truth in his comments on the origins of Greek theatre. It signals (*Poetics*, 1448b7 and 1449a14) that improvisation *is* fundamental to composition: "*It was originally those with a special natural capacity who, through a slow and gradual process brought poetry into being by their improvisations*" (Blum, 1998, p. 35). Aristotle's view that art is governed by rules and structures that should, in ensuring longevity, be preserved in text (or notation in the case of music) bears significantly on the emergence and eventual dominance of the score over improvisation. Ferand documents this transition as taking place during the middle period of Baroque, from around 1640 to 1690 - a period marked by an event that underlines a fundamental shift:

> It was reserved to the Baroque era to define composition clearly as music set down in notation. When Wolfgang Schonsleder, who pompously calls himself Volupitius Decorus, in his Architectonice Musices Universalis of 1631 (p. 3 f-), enumerates three *modi componendi,* namely the grand staff of ten lines, used by the organists, the score of five-line staves, and the tablatures [and the development of notation representing accurate time duration], a clear identification was finally made of "composition" as opposed to improvised "counterpoint" (and improvised music quite generally); thus the concept of composition in the modern sense is established. (Ferand, 1951, p. 16)

Reflecting on the consequences of this development Bailey states that:

> At this point in history, it does not seem as if the contemporaries of that time fully realised the consequences of their discovery. For in actual fact, from that moment on, a musical work was no longer strictly musical; it existed outside itself, so to speak, in the form of an object to which a name was given: the score. (Bailey, 1993, p. 59)

A compounding factor in the propagation and proliferation of the score was its production and distribution through the technological advances of printing machines, which signalled the development of a fundamental shift in how music was communicated and performed. Today, with the score having resided at the centre of Western art music for the last hundred and fifty years, the knowledge of this music as an oral tradition is remote, if not altogether forgotten. Moore describes that:

> Art music of the 18th century was a ubiquitous element of court life, transmitted orally, most likely to a greater extent than notationally, from one generation of servant-performers to the next, and functionally integrated to an extent that is now difficult to appreciate. (Moore, 1992, p. 68)

Indeed, by the mid 19th century the score is firmly established at the centre of Western art music. The significance of the creative process and the experience of improvisation as an artistic/social/historical continuum of ‘making music on the spot’ are replaced by the score as a product towards: “*…formal and explicative construction which finds in itself alone its substance and justification*” (Bailey, 1993, p. 19). Bailey identifies another catalyst for the decline of improvisation with the rise in prominence of the conductor:

> The gradual restriction and eventual elimination of improvisation in this music also seems to have taken place over the same period that saw the increasing ascendancy of the orchestral conductor, the composer’s proxy. (*Ibid*, p. 20)

Bailey digs deep in his contempt towards the score and composition, declaring that: “*In any but the most blinkered views of the world’s music, composition looks to be a very rare strain, heretical in both practice and theory*” (*Ibid*, p. 140).

However, van der Meer, in *Hindustani music in the 20th century*, contradicts this view, suggesting that in Hindustani classical music composition is practiced and firmly held in memory:

> A composition really means a *bmidisa*, which is a definite arrangement of words into notes and rhythm. On the other hand the other parts of a *raga* performance, such as *alapa*, tana etc., are also composed, during practice. The difference is one of degree. Whereas a composition is kept almost identical from one concert to another, and from one practice session to another, the other parts of a performance may vary a little. (Meer, 1980, p. 142)

van der Meer goes on to suggest that the improvisational aspect of raga is also subject to compositional retention from improvisation practice:

> This variation has been called improvisation sometimes, suggesting wrongly that everything other than the composition is invented on the spot, within the limits of the raga. The truth is that most

> aspects have been precomposed (though unwritten), often handed down by the teacher. (*Ibid*, pp. 142-143)

Several voices in scholarship have focused on the fixed interpretation of the score as lacking (or benefiting from) the vitality of improvisation. Racy states that:

> Improvisation can be viewed as a desirable departure or even relief from the established artistic canon as a form of interpretive flexibility, it may even enhance the aesthetic appeal of otherwise rigidly fixed musical compositions. (Racy, 2000, pp. 302-303)

He gives an example of this *desirable departure* as an established practice: "*Throughout European history, the phenomenon of playing in tempo rubato (literally "robbed" or "stolen time") which implies a certain measure of temporal freedom, has both fascinated and alarmed music critics*" (*Ibid,* 307). At any rate, a discussion on improvisation in a European art music context needs to include the role of cadenza in the Romantic period, and especially the French school of organ improvisers, which is the only uninterrupted example of improvisation in Western art music history (see Bailey, 1992, 29-38). Racy's view is useful in reminding us of past practices in Western art music as he suggests way forward in handling *fixed* notation, but what should be considered is that the application of improvisation over a fixed work may not, per se, produce *relief* nor *enhance the aesthetic appeal* of such work. This is because much would depend on the skill-level of the improviser; given that in the last one hundred plus years Western classical musicians have trained to become skilled artisans rather than improvisers, the results may well be less aesthetically pleasing than interpreting the score with a feeling of improvisation - this is a key point also emphasised by Benson (2003). Furthermore, Racy's remark is somewhat one sided because it suggests that a *fixed* work may not per se be aesthetically appealing, and that improvisation would increase its appeal. However, Anthony Braxton, in an interview with journalist Ted Panken (2011) proposed that perceptions of aestheticism, composition, and improvisation are influenced by fragmentations of political argument:

> In the '60s, one of the conversations in the air was the conversation that improvisation is somehow more relevant than composition. I came to see that these were political perspectives, not aesthetic perspectives. If I'm a young person whose vibration is fulfilled by playing Beethoven, why should I go to something other than Beethoven if Beethoven is what fulfills my dynamic? So I've tried with this system that I'm building to have a mutable logic of explorative dynamics that says mutable logics—real-time encounters, the phenomena of the improvisation, language music. Mutable logics, something comes up. That would be number one. (Panken, 2011, *n.p.*)

At the same time, Braxton's all-embracing logic still accentuates a division by separating Beethoven (and the idea of notated composition) from any prospect of improvisation. The frequency of this philosophical dislodgement in music scholarship since the early 20th century is due to its focus on textual analysis of the score, rather than its creative process. Furthermore, it is puzzling why pro-improvisation scholars in ethnomusicology continue to engage in comparisons between improvisation-based traditions that have uninterrupted histories such as *Taquasim* or jazz to the politically driven perspectives of Western art music in the 20th century. The paradox of this perspective lies in the fact that their continuous histories of improvisation are out of sync with the regression of improvisation in Western art, a regression that Ferand (1961) Moore (1992), Blum (1998), and Pietropaolo (2003) have strongly emphasised. Perhaps, a comparison to improvisation practices in Western art music before its demise would be more relevant. Hence, in returning to Braxton's quote, Beethoven's improvisational aspect would step right into the foreground of comparative analysis. In addition, jazz, as the most pronounced symbol of improvisation in the West, could prove more relevant to a comparative debate, especially since its history underwent a transformation from an oral tradition to one that also incorporated the score without abolishing improvisation as Western art had done during the Baroque period (see Bailey, 1993, pp. 19-23). Indeed, Bailey affirms that: '*There is no doubt that the single most important contribution to the revitalization of improvisation in Western music is jazz*' (*Ibid*, p. 48). Thus, notwithstanding the discrete use of improvisation by 20th century *serious music* composers such as Schönberg, Webern, Berio, Varese, Stockhausen, Messiaen, Reich, and Terry Riley the idea of improvising on a fixed theme to increase its aesthetic appeal, as Racy suggests, is not in the general consciousness of Western classical musicians. In, *Improvisation and the Orchestra*, George E. Lewis highlights the fact that some post-Romantic classical composers tried to change this perception:

> In 1911, however, composer Ferruccio Busoni was still holding fast these [Romantic] ideals in his "Sketch of a New Aesthetic of Music", declaring that "notation is to improvisation as the portrait to the living model". (Lewis, 2006, p. 430)

At the same time, Lewis chooses two examples to reverberate the tensions in the improvisation/composition dichotomy. The first echoes Aristotelian principles: "*In 1962, composer Lukas Foss could precisely reverse Busoni's terms, asserting that improvisation 'relates to composition much in the way that the sketch relates to the finished work of art'*" (*Ibid*). The second example by Lewis is analogous to Bailey's depiction of the orchestral conductor (1993, p. 20) as the authoritarian, the law enforcer upon the orchestra and the music, the symbol of anti-freedom and anti-improvisation: "*…no less a personage than Pierre Boulez dismissed the practice* [of improvisation] *as "personal psychodrama"* (Lewis, 2006, p. 430). Lewis's brief is symptomatic of the tensions and threat that improvisation still poses on Western art principles in the 21st century. Although he refers specifically to orchestral music when he expresses the need to move ahead of this philosophical stalemate, it is easy to see how his conclusion can reach broadly across the general panorama of music making when he says that:

> In this light, the moral imperatives and double-star binary oppositions that have 'informed' so many discussions of improvisation and composition become something of an intellectual way station in classical music's mid-century confrontation with the post-colonial condition. In the interest of new music that incorporates both disciplines, the binary will undoubtedly need to be jettisoned-not just for performers, but for the entire network that nurtures the culture of orchestral performance, composers, theorists, scholars, academicians, and the economic and technical support infrastructure that is so crucial to the performance of orchestral music. (*Ibid*, pp. 430-431)

In the same year as Lewis's publication David Borgo (2002, p. 170) suggests that these binary tensions are already being addressed at least in some creative quarters where the score, composition, and improvisation intertwine indiscriminately and more seamlessly than traditional approaches that fragment them. He points to a less accentuated dichotomy between notated and improvised music amongst black composers that have combined score and improvisation in their work. He mentions Olly Wilson, T. J. Anderson, Hale Smith, William Banfield, and Alvin Singleton, and refers to George Lewis's suggestion (2002, p. 113) suggestion that African-American creative composers have assimilated pan-European models in a dialogue with African, Asian and Pacific traditions where the relationship between score and improvisation is a fluid one. These composers dismiss the hierarchical conventions that position the score and the heroic view of the composer at the centre of jazz historiography[2].

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[2] George E. Lewis, 2002, *Experimental music in black and white: The AACM in New York, 1970-1985*, Current Musicology 71-73: 100-157.

1.3.3 *Spatiotemporal perspectives*

In *The improvisation of musical dialogue: a phenomenology of music* (2003), Ellis Benson challenges the stereotype of composers/performers/improvisers as autonomous entities that perform specific tasks virtually independent of each other. He unpacks a theory based on the idea that: "*…the lines between composition and performance are hardly neat*" (Benson, 2003, p. 11), and dismisses the negative trope of improvisation saying that: "…'*messiness*' *simply reflects actual musical practice*" (*Ibid*, p. *xi*). He also affirms that:

> The binary schema of "composing" and "performing," which goes along with the construal of music making as being primarily about the production and reproduction of musical works, doesn't describe very well what musicians actually do. (*Ibid*, p. *x*)

In echoing Benson's all encompassing perception of improvisation Derek Bailey is clear when affirming that creating music goes beyond method, theory, and approaches and as such, suggests that: "*The creation of music transcends methods and, essentially, the composition/improvisation dichotomy doesn't exis*t" (Bailey, 1992, p. 140). This is a sentiment also resonant in Ferand's words:

> For there is scarcely a single field in music that has remained unaffected by improvisation, scarcely a single musical technique or form of composition that did not originate in improvisatory practice or was not essentially influenced by it. The whole history of the development of [Western art] mu-sic is accompanied by manifestations of the drive to improvise. (Ferand 1961 cited in More 1992, p. 62)

These perspectives imply that music making is about the continual creation and recreation of music through improvisation, or as Bailey puts it: "*...the sap through which music renews and reinvigorates itself* " (Bailey, 1993, p. 28). Benson broadens the boundaries of the improvisation paradigm by suggesting that improvisation, or at least the feeling of it, permeates all music processes, including composition. He suggests that the interpretation of a *fixed* work did vary dramatically, depending on the context. He builds his perspective on Hans-Georg Gadamer's (1900-2002) "*logical structure of openness*" (Benson, 2003, p. 15) as having multiple aspects. He explains that the idea of improvisation is tied to a concept of relativity that is influenced by a chain of variable actions and reactions, from the conception (the pre-composition stage) to the performance of a work. The rate of variation and intensity of such actions and reactions is influenced by multiple factors such as individual activity or group interaction. He upholds Husserl's philosophy that describes musical works as belonging to the *realm of ideal objects* that:

> …Have a timeless existence (i.e., once they are created) that can be characterized as "omnitemporal", because they are "everywhere and nowhere" and so can appear simultaneously in many spatiotemporal positions and yet be numerically identical as the same. (Hussler in Benson, 2003, p. 6)

Benson digs deeper into the psyche of the composer by contrasting the monologue that Beethoven or Stravinsky establish with their orchestras - expecting total adherence to the score - with Rossini's *open* approach to conducting, which manifests in a relationship with his orchestra as one that allows the feeling of improvisation. With Rossini, sometimes improvisation is engaged in the treatment of text in his operas: "*Rossini considered his pieces of music to have a changing identity that was closely connected to their incarnations in performance*" (*Ibid*, p. 190); a mutable identity rather than a fixed work that: "*…came into existence only in the moment of performance*" (*Ibid*, p. 16). Rossini's improvisational nature/approach may give us a hint of what happens in the lead up to the performance of the piece; a lacuna in scholarship that could shed much light about the role and significance of improvisation in composition process. As such, the idea of a piece *coming to life only in moment of performance* may be analogous to an expecting mother who perceives her unborn offspring as coming into existence only in the moment of birth, rather than from gestation. Indeed, delving into the creative mechanisms of composers who were skilled improvisers may fascinate us on the relationship between their creative stimuli and notation process. In *Gioachino Rossini and the Conventions of Composition*, Philipp Gossett expresses concern at the lacuna of ontology about the creativity process and its transits to notation:

> Studying the creative process must always remain a frustrating endeavour. No matter how many documents survive pertaining to a musical composition or its composer, they reveal an infinitesimal fraction of the thought, feeling, and instinct, which generated the work of art. (Gossett, 1970, p. 48)

Even Beethoven's famous compositional sketches, or Karl Geiringer's biography of Brahms (1947) do not shed insight on how the composers practiced improvisation in the creative process of their compositions. More recently, great effort has been invested in ontological research about the score and its interpretation that expands on the phenomenology of Husserl and Gandamer Adorno et al. (2006). However, these do not delve into the composition process.

Bruno Nettl (1974, p. 10) narrows Gadamer, Benson, and Bailey's inferences on the ubiquitousness of improvisation with a theory that frames composition as being '*rapid and slow'*. He refers to Schubert's quickness in notating his ideas (with little revision) as an approach reflecting '*rapid*' composition. It is an improvisatory approach that he likens to that of Indian and Middle Eastern musicians; although, van der Meer puts a different slant on this argument, saying that: '*Some people have committed the grave error of saying that there is much improvisation in Indian music*' (van der Meer, 1980, p. 42). In contrast to rapid composition, Nettl refers to Beethoven's drawn-out approach as '*slow*' composition. On the one hand, he narrows the division between improvisation and composition through a hypothesis that: '*…the two are instead part of the same idea*' (Nettl, 1974, p. 6) whilst on the other hand, even though his intention is to reconcile the two, he accentuates the differences by suggesting that they are at '*opposite ends of a continuum*'. The 2005 New Oxford American Dictionary (2013 online edition) describes *continuum* as: "*a continuous sequence in which adjacent elements are not perceptibly different from each other, although the extremes are quite* distinct: *at the fast end of the fast-slow continuum*". What if the reverse were also true - can composition actually be at the fast end of the continuum? Although Edward Hall agrees with Nettl's perception of composition and improvisation: "*differing only in the rate at which they occur*" (Hall, 1992, p. 230), he puts forward a theory that assesses events according to contextual forms of communication: "*Context is the information that surrounds an event; it is inextricably bound up with the meaning of that event*" (*Ibid*, p. 229). As such, he differentiates communication as being high or low context:

> A high context (HC) communication or message is one in which most of the information is already known to the recipient, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message or the music. A low context (LC) communication is just the opposite: the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code. (*Ibid*)

Hall argues that the shared message in improvisation holds deeper ramifications than the real-time perception associated with performance. He suggests that composition, in a temporal sense, is in fact faster because the message is concerned with documenting original ideas, and not their mastery through extensive improvisation practice:

> Nettl's point that composition is slow, while improvisation is fast, is open to question. For the opposite conclusion is reached if improvisation is viewed as a HC proposition and composition as LC. In all HC communication, it is true that the transmission is fast, but one needs to take into account the months and years involved in the programming, the "contexting", that produces this fast response. (*Ibid*)

Hall's pragmatism brings a depth to the paradigm that rationalizes the *mystique* of improvisation in performance as hinging on improvisation practice, and lots of it, if the aim is to be very good at it:

> Unlike the dictionary descriptions of the term, I hold that improvising is the domain of the expert, rooted as it is in knowledge and experience. It is far removed from the "spur-of-the-moment" implications associated with the word. (*Ibid*, p. 233)

In an interview with French organist Langlais, Derek Bailey invites him to respond to: "…*a popular misconception about improvisation: that it is a totally instantaneous event completely lacking in forethought or preparation*" (Bailey, 1993, 37). Langley's response is self-explanatory:

> Earlier I mentioned that Messiaen studied Marcel Dupré's in class at the same time as I did. Well, the day he won the first prize in the competition he improvised a splendid fugue. But he practiced two years for that. And he was Messiaen. And we have only one Messiaen. (*Ibid*, pp. 37-38)

Berliner also sustains this argument suggesting that what is accumulated in practice becomes a fundamental frame of reference in performance:

> The improviser's evolving storehouse of knowledge includes musical elements and forms varied in detail and design: jazz tunes, progressions, vocabulary patterns, and myriad features of style. Performers can draw faithfully on their assorted materials, as when they treat a formerly mastered phrase as a discrete idea and play it intact. Soon they realise the infinite implications of their knowledge, for virtually all aspects can serve as compositional models. (Berliner, 1994, p. 146)

Beyond that, knowledge of improvisation can, and does foster a desire for intuitive exploration, and occasionally the abandonment reaches the creative subconscious. In fact, Hall softens his pragmatic perspective of improvisation with the physiological nature of *play*, one that may apply broadly to diverse processes of music making. He echoes findings by the (somewhat dismissed) neuroscientist P. D. MacLean (1984), stating that: "*Both improvisation and play are integral components of life, rooted in the limbic system*" (Hall, 1992, p. 232). This idea forms the basis of research in generative processes of music (see Pressing (1987), (Jan (1988), and (Levitin (2007). Indeed, trombonist and renowned scholar, George Lewis, in his address at the Columbia University lecture (2011), suggested the idea that improvisation is a generative creative tool at work in many (if not all) fields of life. This may suggest that Hall's reference to *play* is at work whenever creative thinking is involved such as an improvised solo in performance, or a composition resulting from the creative stimulus of improvisation. At any rate, aside from neuropsychological perspectives, Bailey, Nettl, Hall, and especially Roger Dean (1989), have tabled that improvisation practice involves the practicing of models and patterns, absorbing of philosophies of improvisation with specific and/or abstract frameworks of reference, and performance experience; these form some of the building blocks of improvisation in performance, and composition.

1.3.4 Thoughts on revision

Bailey states that: "… *only an academic would have the temerity to mount a theory of improvisation. And even they can run into serious difficulties*" (Bailey, 1993, *x*). In this instance, he is referring to the problems Ella Zonis faced by actually writing about improvisation in her book *Classical Persian Music* only to learn in the latter stages of writing that Persian theorists do not write about improvisation because they see it as being intuitive.

A similar argument can apply to the use and understanding of the term 'revision' if perceived as an intuitive process. Revision is a problematic term when attempting to reconcile differences between improvisation and composition because it implies premeditation. Chris Dobrian (1991, *n.p.*) suggests that revision is a process that belongs to a temporal space of *non-real time* compared to *real-time* performance improvisation, which implies varying degrees of premeditation in the composition process. He accentuates a dichotomy by differentiating improvisation as a group activity as opposed to composition, and, in line with the paradigmatic stereotyping of the Western art composer, he isolates her/him as the lone worker detached from the community. The effect of employing the terms *real time/non-real time* is one that accentuates a marked difference between improvisation/composition and, furthermore, locks-in the thought of revision as a non-real time, and perhaps a non-improvisational activity. His position is clearly different from both Benson and Hall's, and surprisingly, shares similarities to Bruno Nettl's *rapid/slow* idea of composition:

> Most all composers use this non-real time advantage in more traditional ways, refining their spontaneous decisions with more considered revisions. Although there are certainly composers who have needed less revision of their original "inspirations" than others (Mozart and Schubert are obvious examples), and composers who seem to be most comfortable writing down their own instrumental improvisations (Chopin, for example), the majority of composers perform considerable revision of their original ideas before considering a piece finished. These revisions may be in the form of numerous sketches, as with Beethoven, or geometrical formal structuring, as with Reynolds, or simply extensive mental reworking, as with Shostakovich, who claimed to write his music down once only, in ink. (*Ibid*)

In effect, spontaneous decisions cannot be spontaneous if they are decisions because they would have been considered before they were made. There may be a Freudian slip when Dobrian says that *composers perform considerable revision*. In this sense, it is worth investigating if revising can be considered in the realm of improvisation, and indeed, a spontaneous form of creativity. Philosopher Ryle Gilbert provides a crisp view that may fertilize reconciliation in an improvisation/composition dichotomy. His central argument proposes that thinking beyond repetitive instinctive patterns is a creative process that involves: "*…imagination, invention, adventure, improvisation*" (Gilbert, 1976, p. 71). He suggests that our capacity to perform a series of steps to solve a relatively complex problem or formulate an idea is simply put to perform: "*…a sequence of 'mental' leap froggings* " (*Ibid*). Gilbert unlocks this assumed *step-after-step picture of cogitation* by suggesting that what is actually happening hinges on invention/creativity/improvisation. At the root of his supposition, he asks how the sequence of (creative) thought evolved from start to finish, and suggests that when asked to unravel the steps the thinker is often stumped for an answer. He adds that: "*We can nominate no interim considerations at all…as if some thinking, including some adequate or even bright thinking, is, after all, not a stage-after-stage progression* " (*Ibid*).

Gilbert directs his argument towards a temporal perspective where creative thought occurs in real-time, or as he puts it: "*…some exercises of our wits, whether unsuccessful or successful, dull or bright, have got to be immediate and not mediated* " (*Ibid*, p. 72).

By this measure, Dobrian's premeditative implications of *revision* stand in sharp contrast to Gilbert's proposition, which in the context of the improvising composer, suggests that revising, or creative thinking, is a product of mind improvisation. In effect, thoughts and/or musical phrases are a sequence of creative steps progressing towards notation as a resting place.

Earlier in this chapter, Busoni suggests that the score is to improvisation as the portrait to the living model. This idea is an opportunity to make an important distinction between the musical score as process of creativity and as finished product. The backdrop of Western art music's consciousness that holds the score as its centrepiece and the composer as some kind of hero obfuscates what in reality is a creative experience that involves the creation of music. The ideas investigated in this literature review help create an undeniable argument that broadens the parameters and our understanding of what improvisation can be, and how it can function. Ellis Benson's attempt to rejuvenate the composer as the music maker who is part of the community is very significant. He dispels the old romantic and dogmatic ideal of the composer as a heroic figure, and with that he liberates improvisational type composers of such perception, allowing them to be part of a more social process in music making where composer, performer, and audience interact. It is not surprising that past composers left no record of the creative process of composing, why should they? Improvisation was a natural part of being a musician integral to various processes, not threatened by the political/philosophical manoeuvrings that caused its demise in Western art music.

In addressing these concerns, Eric Barnhill's (2002) appraisal of the intellectual traumas in scholarship associated with improvisation/composition is useful as it underlines the differences between two undeniably interrelated processes of music making:

> Music was once thought of differently. Improvisation lay at the center of the conception of what it meant to be a musician. Improvisation, however, doesn't leave the strong archaeological records that composition does, so to the modern mind the vitality of improvisation has been drained out of our historical conception of what music has been. Our conception of how composers thought and worked has been flipped on its head. Our understanding of the evolution of western music is terminally distorted. I hope attention will be paid by future music scholars to the possibility of a functional improvisation-centered musical culture. It could result in a revolution in terms of how we see our musical past and future. (Barnhill, 2002, *n. p.*)

1.4 Intercultural aesthetics: extending the potential and possibilities of improvisation/composition

"*Everything is valid if you know how to balance things*"
(*Paco de Lucia* interviewed by Espinola 1992, p. 1).

In this final section of the literature review, I investigate improvisation/composition within an intercultural context that directly informs and relates to the pieces in the creative practice. Whilst the study of improvisation in jazz has been extensively explored in scholarship, the inquiry into experimental intercultural jazz influenced by Eastern elements remains scarce. Perhaps one reason for this lacuna is that the concept 'intercultural' can imply a number of idioms fractured under umbrella terms such as 'experimental' or 'World jazz', and therefore difficult to analyze. Borgo states that:

> During the last half century, an eclectic group of artists with diverse backgrounds in avant-garde jazz, avant-garde classical, electronic, popular, and world music traditions have pioneered an approach to improvisation that borrows freely from a panoply of musical styles and traditions and at times seems unencumbered by any overt idiomatic constraints. Although a definitive history of this often irreverent and iconoclastic group would be impossible-or at least potentially misleading to compile (Borgo, 2002, 165).

Indeed, this challenge would be quite a task within the context of World music for example, where all too often diverse genres transform idioms into a cosmetic pastiche that defies classification. Furthermore, these practices point to indifference to ethical practices because what is been borrowed from cultures other than one's own can become a) altered or often distorted, and b) an object of economic exploitation, as Feld (2000), and Stokes (2004) have argued. Conversely, intercultural experiments between Eastern music and jazz have been engaged since the late 1950s. In the 1960s, these explorations retained Afro-American spiritual traditions of jazz/blues, but also embraced new sacred aesthetics. Franya Berkman, in *Appropriating Universality: The Coltranes and 1960s Spirituality*, explains that by the mid to late 1960s: "*…jazz musicians drew not only from African American spiritual traditions, but also from non-Christian, non-Western, even idiosyncratic, spiritual concepts*" (Berkman, 2007, p. 43). The transcendentalist philosophy in the life and music of John and Alice Coltrane (nee McCloud) from 1960 onwards is testament to this:

> Included in his spirituality was an array of world traditions: Zen, Zoroastrianism, the writings of Yogananda and Krishnamurti, and a commitment to daily meditation all of which he explored with his second wife, Alice Coltrane, who became his partner in 1963 and his pianist in 1965. (*Ibid*, p. 44)

Later, Alice Coltrane becomes a devotional musician, in an Indian sense: "*…her compositions lack the oppositional irony that one typically associates with post-modern aesthetics* " (*Ibid*, p. 54).

Pertinent to this inquiry is a premise on the state of jazz made three years before John Coltrane's death:

> By the 1960's it had moved into a series of changes which led Rex Stewart in 1965 to prophesise that: 'In the foreseeable future, most of the vitality and beauty of this U.S. art form will be found only in other countries in an adulterated form. (Bailey, 1993, p. 48)

Thirty years later, Bailey suggests that the phenomenon of innovation in jazz is over and that "*…of young players seeking adventure, there's little sign*" (*Ibid*, p. 57). Yet, he dismisses his own philosophy about the pervasive nature of improvisation and the need to reinvent itself outside worn paths by suggesting that the lack of experimentation in jazz from the 1980s onwards is:

> Perhaps a recognition that the various developments of the 60s and 70s were 'adulterated forms' which, in jazz terms, led nowhere and left no alternative but to go back to the last period which manifested 'vitality and beauty' and to stick with that. (*Ibid*, p. 48)

Bailey explains that his assertions are exclusive to American jazz. However, experimental jazz guitarist/composer John McLaughlin ponders at the consequences of such a trend:

> Over the last 10 years however, I have been sometimes disappointed by the general lack of imagination and innovation in jazz music. There has been a very powerful wave of retrospection on the part of the main record companies, with the result that groups emulating the 'sound' and playing techniques of the 1960s have to some degree, dominated the CD Jazz shelves in stores. Furthermore, this phenomenon has exerted an enormous influence on the younger players to remain based in the music of the 1960s, with the result that a stultifying effect has been created, inhibiting more daring and innovative music in Jazz. (McLaughlin, 2010, p. 4)

These regressions resonate deeply with those who see a political analogy in jazz and classical music operating alongside each other in music conservatoriums around the world:

> Is jazz being transformed beyond redemption into another version of classical music: an accepted culture treasure, consisting of a repertoire of mostly dead styles, performed by live artists – some of them young – for a financially comfortable middle-class public, black and white, and the Japanese tourist? (Hobsbawm in Nicholson, 2005, p. 23)

Bailey makes the point that there are only two kinds of music: 1) idiomatic - belonging to music with tradition, and 2) non-idiomatic - where idioms intertwine. He says that non-idiomatic music "*...while it can be highly stylized, is not usually tied to representing an idiomatic identity*" (Bailey, 1993, p. *xii*). This premise positions his book, *Improvisation: it's Nature and Practice in Music*, within the ambit of established traditions where, in reference to jazz, he affirms that:

> The easiest way to distinguish between conventional jazz and its offshoots is to describe the improvisation in conventional jazz as being based on tunes in time. The simple mechanics are that improvisation is derived from the melody, scales and arpeggios, associated with a harmonic sequence of a set length played in regular time. (*Ibid*, p. 48)

Central to this perspective is his inference to *swing* as the central element that defines jazz and therefore musical activity without this *swing* belongs to the realm of non-idiomatic music, and as consequence, outside the idiom of the American jazz tradition. Non-idiomatic offshoots of jazz from the 1970s onwards are examples, even though jazz musicians were involved in the experiments. Bailey's point about swing does validate a fundamental aesthetic in jazz because the propulsion and feel of the music is based on the jazz triplet, which swings the way that it does because of the shuffle feel rooted in the blues. This defines jazz phrasing, and in a cultural sense, its collective consciousness. However, by 1947 jazz had etched new intercultural aesthetics into its lexicon when Afro-Cuban music and Be Bop accelerated an interaction that gave birth to Latin jazz, which, at any rate, is rooted in the history and emergence of jazz, as David Garcia explains:

> Indeed, the intersection of Caribbean and Mexican music and musicians with those of New Orleans has been traced back to jazz's emergence during the late nineteenth century. It is this long history of artistic exchange among American, Caribbean, and Latin American musicians that Jelly Roll Morton alluded to in identifying the "Latin tinge" in jazz. (Garcia, 2007, p. 1)

Bailey argues that: '*It was probably during the 1950s that jazz first gave signs of running out of steam*' (Bailey, 1993, 48). This period is testimony to the advent of free jazz, a state of consciousness that amongst the many positive things it represents, it is a symbolic reaction to a philosophical crisis in American jazz (see Baraka (1968), Kofsky (1970), and Spellman (1985). Is there a connection between free jazz and the advent of Easter-inspired intercultural approaches? Bailey's description on the nature of improvisation being: " *…irrepressible as ever*" (*ibid*, p. *xiii*) provides a context where free jazz becomes incisive in shaking the predictability and stagnation set in jazz at this point. As such, the ideal of improvisation as being an alive and pulsating phenomenon forms the basis of what was an underground collective shout of rebellion, one that resonates in Steve Lacy's criterion: "*Is this stuff alive or is it dead?*" (*Ibid*, p. 56) - the saxophonist highlights this point:

> Why should I learn all those trite patterns? You know, when [pianist] Bud Powell made them fifteen years earlier, they weren't patterns. But when somebody analyzed them and put them into a system it became a school and many players joined in. By the time I came to it, I saw through it - the thrill was gone. Jazz got so that it wasn't improvised anymore. It got so that everybody knew what was going to happen and, sure enough, that's what happened. Maybe the order of the phrases and tunes was a little different every night, but for me that wasn't enough. It reached a point where I and many other people, got sick and tired of the beat and the '4 bars' – everybody got tired of the systematic playing, and we just said 'Fuck it. (*Ibid*, pp. 54-55)

By the late 1950s jazz experimentalists began to look to the East for new aesthetic directions, a catalyst accelerated by two pivotal figures in Ravi Shankar and later, John Coltrane. Carl Clemens cites that: "*Coltrane and Ravi Shankar were likely two of the most prominent catalysts for this movement*" (Clemens, 2007, p. 4). Shankar opened a pathway for Hindustani classical music to interact with Western classical and jazz musicians. Gerry Farrell said that: "*Ravi Shankar finally achieved his goal of bringing Indian music to the West, he worked with jazz musicians, and praised their understanding of certain aspects of Indian music*" (Farrell, 1999, p. 149). But he adds that in reflecting on the affinity between jazz and Indian music Shankar described it as being: "*…very superficial*" and that: "*…it is only the improvisational aspect that might be similar*" (*Ibid*, p. 177). Despite this, John Coltrane's personal journey into Indian classical musical and mysticism created a catalyst for change in jazz that influenced the course of music in general [3]. Farrell suggests that Coltrane incorporated Indian elements into his music in a complex, but subtle manner. As such, he distinguishes two diverse approaches in the use of Indian elements in the scores of followers that embraced this new aesthetic in jazz:

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[3] See for example, *Oh Freedom*, I. Monson in Nettl (1998); *Indian Concepts in the Music of John Coltrane*, Carl Clemens (2007); and *Jazz in India: Perspectives on Historical Development and Musical Acculturation*, W. Pinckney (1989).

> There seems to be a definite split in the way jazz musicians approached Indian music: either they worked the elements of the music into their own like Coltrane or [Miles] Davis and in the process re-defined it stylistically, or [they] tried to graft jazz onto the already existing forms and grammar of Indian music with all the materials of the compositions being firmly rooted in Indian rags and *tals.* (Farrell, 1988, p. 190)

In this respect, two compositions in the creative component (*Eastern Blues*, and *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*) reflect some similarity to the Coltrane/Miles approach. Although the harmonic foundations of these pieces are based on the blues, the use of drones, ornaments and modal improvisations exemplify the similarity. Conversely, *Tina the Healer* is somewhat closer to a South Indian structural organisation such as *kriti* found in several of Shakti's works, even though the work of this group in not an example that fits either of Farrell's descriptions since the music is arguably South Indian classical with shades of jazz harmonic colourings.

In closing this section of the investigation, I will provide information about landmark recordings that directly inform or relate to the creative practice in the exegesis, and acknowledge these works as pioneering intercultural approaches in jazz, and improvisation in general.

Artist: John Coltrane

"*Naima*" (1959) includes two pedal drones Eb and Bb. A more nuanced reference to the Indian drone is in "*India*" (1963) where Coltrane uses a G tonic pedal point throughout. He also uses a pedal point drone in "*After the Rain*" (1963), "*Psalm*" (1965), and "*Chim Chim Cheree*" (1965).

Artist: Miles Davis

"*In A Silent Way*/It's About That Time" (1969) is an electric-type modal jazz mantra in binary form, which I subdivide as 1) slow and meditative for 4.5 minutes, 2) groove based for 10 minutes, and 3) slow and meditative for 4.5 minutes. The first and third sections alternate an E major and B suspended 7 chords with regular, but long intervals between the changes, and textural chromatic accidentals from the keyboard of Joe Zawinul. After 4.20 minutes, it shifts into a moderate jazz funk grove with the electric piano superimposing F minor pentatonic quartal harmony over an F pedal drone where the melody is based on an F minor blues scale employed as in a manner reminiscent of raga: F Ab A Bb C Eb F.

Artist: John McLaughlin and Shakti

For guitarist McLaughlin, the numerous recordings with Davis, including *In a Silent Way* and the inspiration of Coltrane come into a new light in the mid 1970s after the success of the Mahavishnu Orchestra. In addition, the important transitional album *My Goals Beyond* (1972) opened the path for the group *Shakti*, which included guitarist McLaughlin, Zakir Hussain on *tabla*, violinist L. Shankar, and *ghatam* player T.S. Vinayakaram. The albums *Shakti Live* (Columbia, 1976) *Natural Elements* (CBS, 1976) and *A Handful of Beauty* (Columbia, 1977), explore North/South Indian fusion, but it is South Indian *kriti* type of rhythmic compositions that dominate the approach - In this sense, the mono chordal drone in *Tina the Healer* in the creative component of the exegesis is closer to this rhythmic approach. From 1999, the reforming of the group under the name *Remember Shakti* sees a transition where McLaughlin incorporates more blues nuanced lines in his improvisation work. I remember witnessing this approach in 2001 at a live concert in New York's Central Park. For interesting insights into this extraordinary group I suggest: "*Innerviews - music without boarders*" (Prasad, 2010) and "*See clearly … feel deeply*"*: Improvisation and Transformation* (Fischlin, 2010).

Artist: Ravi Shankar

The subsequent discovery of the LP *Ravi Shankar* - *Improvisations* (World Pacific -1416, 1962), which I acquired in the 1980s, provides an important prelude and contrast to Coltrane's approach as it is from an Indian perspective that, in contrast to Coltrane's work in this area, involves a collaborative process between Indian and American jazz musicians. Following his visits to the US in 1957, Shankar opened a musical dialogue involving Kanai Dutta *(tabla*), Nodu Mulli (*tampura*), and Harihar Raq (*dholak*), with jazz musicians Bud Shank (flute), Dennis Budmir, (guitar), Gary Peacock (bass), and Louis Hayes (drums) in what is now considered a pioneering recording in intercultural improvisation (World) music. In analysing the work, the composition *Fire Night*, which is penned (aurally directed) by the Indian *pandit*, reveals the melodic framework for the improvisations is the Indian pentatonic raga, *Dhani.* [4] When playing along with the recording I identified the minor pentatonic scale: C# E F# G# B, which is widely employed in jazz and Blues in a variety of keys. The open approach of this piece resembles that of *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*.

A point of reference to the aesthetics employed in *Silk Road Revisited* is the John McLaughlin composition *Guardian Angels* where Indian rhythmic components of the melody are grouped to reflect a similarity to rhythmic lexicon of *Konnakol*. At least that is how it was originally recorded - no improvisation - by McLaughlin and violinist L. Shankar on the album *Electric Dreams* (1979). Interestingly, it undergoes a transformation in the same year with the trio *Meeting of the Spirits*, which included McLaughlin, flamenco master guitarist Paco de Lucia and jazz guitarist/journeyman Larry Coryell - a flamenco section is added to the original Indian-nuanced version. This approach is revisited, and widely published through the culmination of McLaughlin, de Lucia, and Al Di Meola as the Passion Grace and Fire trio (*Friday Night in San Francisco*) in1981.

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[4] Raga Dhani is considered as a "sweet and romantic version of Raga Malkauns." Raga Malkauns is very devotional in nature, while Raga Dhani is very romantic in nature. One can study the notes and see the transposition of Malkauns' Sa to Dhani's Pa. To add some difference, some musicians sparingly include shuddha Re. This has some hidden moments where it can confuse the listener to think it is Raga Malkauns or even Raga Bhimpalasi.

Flamenco, jazz harmony, and Indian classical music constitute the main aesthetics nuances in the *Silk Road Concerto*. As such, guitar concertos that employ direct reference to their respective cultural tradition, or that incorporate experimental intercultural approaches provide reference to this creative component. Focussing on the concertos of the 20th century, these include: Joaquin Rodrigo's Aranjuez (1939), and Heitor Villa Lobos (1915). In addition, composers that have written orchestral music for the guitar that includes improvisation as well as intercultural elements are: Egberto Gismonti (1995), John McLaughlin (1986, and 2003), and Al Di Meola's (2000). McLaughlin and Gismonti are strong exponents of this practice within the ambit of classical orchestras. This is significant for two reasons. First, because it encourages a practice ostracized by the institutionalization of classical music, and secondly because the intercultural nature of these concertos bring diverse improvisational languages together with classical forms, which provides a platform for the exploration of improvisation outside its mainstream domains.

1.5 Methodology

The methodological approach in this thesis is driven by a combination of practice-led research and research-led practice. Smith and Dean (2009) make a distinction between the two in reference to methodological processes that, for the sake of this brief, can be simplified to the difference between data creation and data collection. This is evident in the multilayered scope and influence of traditional research on this creative practice and vice versa. Indeed, from the outset of this PhD in mid 2009 to early 2010, I developed musical sketches and loose ideas about the creative works, but the emphasis was more on researching literature. However, there was a point when creative practice was the only focus of research due to the creative experience and organizational demands of the projects. Hence, as far as performative research is concerned, the central topic of the dissertation - improvisation - becomes largely a retrospective observation of methods where the discoveries, realisations, failures, and functionalities of various elements in the production of the works shape its procedure. Although certain elements can be planned (instrumentation, draft ideas of artistic direction, and personnel for example), they can change radically from an original plan. For these reasons I have included a discussion at the end of chapters 2 and 3 that constitutes an ethnographical investigation derived from direct observation of the methods employed in the realisation of these works. I stress that these methods are influenced, and shaped by professional/social/cultural relationships, as well as the dynamic complexity of abstract ideas and improvisation practice manifesting through a progressive and multifaceted evolution of the works.

An important example of the reciprocal influence between research/practice and practice/research in my thesis is in reference to the works on tradition by Hobsbawm (1883), and Giddens (1999).

Their ideas clarified the artistic pathway for the Eastern Blues Project, positioning it within the context of an established tradition, rather than a hybrid. Conversely, the observations and realisations about the multilayered effect of improvisation in the creative process provide a counterpoint to the dialogue on spatiotemporal theory on improvisation/composition. As such, the basis of the methodology is concerned with problems that I have outlined in the key-areas in the introduction, exegesis, creative practice, and discussion.

Given that there are diverse models of practice-led/creative-led research, I wish to position my approach as encompassing three characteristics. Firstly, quantitative research - this includes a comprehensive number of notated examples containing extracts from the compositions, improvisation transcriptions, and melodic ornamentation where phrasing, rhythm, harmonic structures, and symbols are examined. In addition, I devised a graph-based model in chapter 3 - Silk Road concerto - to explain a relationship between the stimulus of improvisation and notating the score. Secondly, qualitative research - this encompasses a discussion that frames theoretical writings on improvisation/composition, practitioners' views, and observation of concrete and abstract ideas during the creative process. Thirdly, performative research - this comprises a compact disc that contains audio extracts of the notated examples, as well as the Eastern Blues Project and the concerto recordings.

Before engaging into a discussion on the specific findings of this dissertation, I wish to comment that producing what would be an exhaustive list of practice-led research in the arts - music, film, drama, dance, multimedia, and so on, is beyond the limits of this inquiry. However, the following examples provide a micro glimpse at this type of research in improvisation/composition and creativity in PhD theses, media and books. Kleidonas' (2010) tables a schema that suggests an interactive relationship between composition-improvisation, and Panikker (2010), suggests a nexus between Carnatic and jazz improvisation. Melvin (2010) proposes a symbiotic idea of the composer/performer through an examination of improvisation-nuanced compositions, while Davidson (2010), explores broad musical forms that depart from traditional composition/improvisation models. Mitchell (2011) engages guest speakers Aaron Berkowitz, Tony Gould, and Ros Bandt in a radio broadcast to discuss improvisation/spontaneity in performance. Similarly, Mannes (2008) presents an interesting TV production into generative and cognitive processes of creativity in music that extends into topics such as neuronic behaviour, which seems to point to memetic theory - the findings are stimulating yet, inconclusive. Instead, Mazzola, Park, and Thalmann (2011) assert a philosophical model of pedagogy and cognition based on an argument that creativity is neither divine inspiration nor random spontaneity. Finally, O'Dwyer's thesis (2012) investigates a process of composing notated scores using improvised solos. He grounds his dissertation on improvisation/composition as being reciprocally influenced by practice-led research and research-led practice.

Finally, I think that a clarification on the function of performative research is required, given that the term is also employed in theoretical scholarship. Performative research in this context refers to 'practice' as the primary method of research. Haseman (2006, p. 7) suggests that this type of research practice stands in contrast to personal narrative as the articulation and location of performance (see Langellier in Lincoln & Denzin, 2003, pp. 447). He also points to scholars that utilize the performance paradigm (see Bauman in Lincoln & Denzin 2003: 451) into combined descriptions of social and cultural theories of performance where personal narrative becomes the site of practice. Thus, despite the methodological schema that I have outlined, performative research where systematic procedures can be worked out a priori of the creative process does not fit easily within the ambit of this experimental practice. This is especially so because the premise of this thesis is that improvisation *is* the creative experience that drives composition process. In this sense, the greater the emphasis on devising or drawing from research models the lesser the experience of spontaneity/improvisation in the exploration process. Indeed, Haseman suggests that:

> Practice-led researchers construct experiential starting points from which practice follows. They tend to 'dive in', to commence practising to see what emerges. They acknowledge that what emerges is individualistic and idiosyncratic. This is not to say these researchers work without larger agendas or emancipatory aspirations, but they eschew the constraints of narrow problem setting and rigid methodological requirements at the outset of a project. (Haseman, 2006, p. 4)

2. Eastern Blues Project (EBP)

Introduction

This chapter investigates four pieces from the album "*Eastern Blues"* (2012), which was recorded as part of the creative component of this thesis, the pieces are: *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*, *Eastern Blues*, *Tina the Healer,* and *Silk Road (Revisited)*. The objective is to investigate how improvisation and composition relate to each other within the context of a creative process involving multiple stages, and challenges towards the realisation of the aforementioned works. The analysis unfolds a relationship between improvisation and composition that exists on more than one level - intercultural/artistic/fully formed/loose ideas.

The analytical framework consists of four parts; discussion here is organised accordingly:

1 Introduction to the creative pieces
1 Analysis
1 Discussion
1 Conclusion

2.1 Background to this creative project

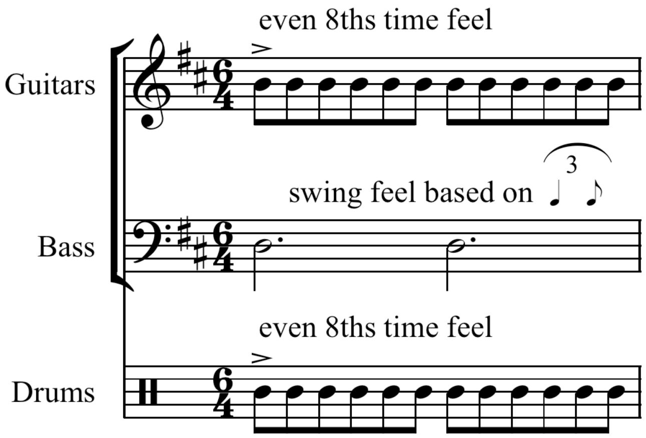
In mid 2010, I began to consider the combination of musicians/instrumentation to assemble a group for the project. The choice of guitarist Aaron Flower was influenced by two factors; one is that his improvisational approach provides juxtaposition to my style, and the other is that his electric guitar sound provides contrasting textures to that of my double-neck acoustic guitar. I decided to contrast the guitar sounds and melodic approaches with the textures and swing time feel of a traditional jazz rhythm section consisting of double bass and drum-kit. The aesthetic directions in the initial composition sketches influenced this idea, and later manifest in the pieces *Eastern Blues* and *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*. Hugh Fraser was the natural choice bassist because our collaborative history stretches fifteen years, and drummer Toby Hall, whose work I was familiar with through a previous collaboration, completes the quartet. In addition, the piece *Tina the Healer* was performed as a guitar/bass/percussion trio, which brought Brazilian percussionist Rodrigo Galvão into the mix - our musical association is extensive, having performed and toured numerous times together.

The first challenge as a composer was in how to convey the intercultural perspectives of a work to the group when, up to the point of engagement (the 1st rehearsal), the musicians had not experienced the creation of such work. There was some uncertainty in my mind, since the three have little or no direct knowledge/experience of Indian music. At any rate, *Eastern Blues* and *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges* are largely about jazz, which is the main language in their playing, so the uncertainty was short-lived. Besides, Hugh and Toby had occasionally played with Indian musicians within a ‘jazz’ context. Moreover, all three musicians were familiar with John Coltrane’s Indian-influenced work from the early 60s, as well as jazz musicians known for incorporating Indian classical music elements in their work such as Shakti, Charlie Mariano, and Amancio D’Silva.

2.1.1 *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*

I introduced this piece at the group’s first rehearsal by playing the chords and humming the melody. I generally find this approach to yield an instantaneous understanding, one that dispenses with theoretical formalities and allows the musicians to grasp the nature of the composition intuitively. In addition, I provided a background to confirm the main elements and establish the history of the piece. As such, I explained that the cultural iconicity of the words Mingus and Ganges express a duality of jazz/blues and Indian music that inspired the title of the work - one that is framed in the composition. This context provided the basis for the improvisation approach where I employed ornaments that nuance elements of the two idioms.

The next step deals with the group’s perception/application/challenges of polyrhythmic groove. Although the time signature is in 6/4, the bass’ spatial approach of playing two dotted minims per measure, which in jazz jargon is referred to as ‘playing in two’, is effectively a compound 12/8 shuffle-swing because the pulse is based on swing quaver triplets; the drums also follow this principle. In polyrhythmic contrast, the guitars play the 6/4-time melody as even quavers (not swung). This equates to 12 quavers per bar, subdivided into two groups of 6 with a strong accent on the first beat. Hence, the players had to sense the polyrhythmic pulse of both swung and even quavers, but sustaining this rhythmic duality proved challenging. I was surprised at this outcome because it should not be a difficult task for experienced musicians. In the end, the groove continues to shift to the even eights feel of the guitars - I had doubts as to whether I had chosen the ‘right’ combination of musicians, but I liked their playing and felt that it would be best to let things evolve naturally. Without the luxury of frequent rehearsals, drummer’s Toby Hall practical solution of playing an even-eight groove whilst the bass retains the swing feel influenced the course of the composition/recording as demonstrated in the following example:



In reflection, I am somewhat disappointed that we have altered the polyrhythm plan in favour of practicality because the underlying notion of experimental music is to position experimentation at its centre. However, I realize that although rehearsals are a platform for work-shopping ideas, their primary purpose is to map the course of the music ready for performance. Therefore, outcomes are also influenced by availability and economic factors - i.e. that exploration of ideas can be limited by whether a rehearsal is remunerated or not, which is a factor that also determines both length and frequency of rehearsals. In addition, the musicians live considerable distances from each other, which makes getting together more difficult to organize, especially because there are families with children and work to be considered. Hence, the drummer's problem-solving strategy was useful for two reasons: one is that the swing triplet feel of the bass provides sufficient rhythmic contrast without the aid of drums. The other is that the drum's even 8th feel is supplemented by a hint of swing in the cymbal work that, although ambiguous, provides rhythmic cohesion between the guitars and the bass. Although this is a departure from the original idea, it underlines my creative approach and philosophy; one open to the musicians' input in shaping the composition.

2.1.2 *Eastern Blues*

The quartet rehearsal of *Eastern Blues* presented a problem that I had sensed whilst composing the piece. It reveals how my objective to incorporate intercultural nuances in the piece is affected by aesthetic and cultural context. The combination of swing groove and jazz phrasing in the melody is intensified by my colleagues' strong jazz identity, which imprints a jazz stamp on the piece that impinges on how I can incorporate intercultural nuances instinctively. I don't presume that they were unaware of this, but I suspected their perception might have been subliminal rather than explicit because their relationship with the composition was new. I think that this challenge was augmented by the fact that I chose not to play the Indian-nuanced introduction as originally planned. Thus, what might have originated in the pre-rehearsal period of the composition didn't necessarily emerge the same way in the group's interpretation of the work. This scenario became problematic for my own performance as it affected my approach to improvisation because my intention was not to create an explicitly contrasting Indian-nuanced improvisation within a jazz context where swing and bop-influenced approaches would dominate. Thus, my original aesthetic perception of the composition was challenged at this point. With this dilemma, I decided to leave things as they were until the recording stage.

2.1.3 *Silk Road (Revisited)*

The decision to include this piece in the EBP is to provide a nexus to the second creative component of the exegesis, which is a double concerto version of the same piece. Both versions represent developments of the original work (2008). This is significant to the objectives of the thesis because it disarms postulations in the improvisation/composition dialogue that composition, because is notated, is a fixed work. Instead, different models of the same composition are often developed according to particular purposes; the *Revisited* version that I investigate in this chapter is a melodic reworking of the original edition while the concerto is its macro expansion. My intention is to demonstrate that although the two pieces are quite different, they are nevertheless bound by a common creative direction that encompasses an intercultural approach to ornamentation in improvisation and composition.

After a few attempts at playing this work in quartet format I decided to record it as a solo effort because it became clear that the underlying flamenco rhythm, which is based on a *fandango* in three beats, was problematic for the group. In hindsight, knowing that my colleagues were not familiar with this genre, I should have made this decision earlier to avoid any sense of inadequacy in the group that could potentially inhibit synergy. At any rate, the focus shifted into developing a strategy for recording this piece as an overdubbed guitar duet.

2.1.4 *Tina the Healer*

This track was recorded with Hugh Fraser on double bass, Brazilian percussionist Rodrigo Galvão on *muringa* (Brazilian clay pot), and me on a hybrid 7-string acoustic guitar (see Appendix 10, pp. 320). The recording took place at Sax-proof Studio, which is in the Blue Mountains, outside the village of Leura in New South Wales. The engineer, Greg Gibson, had worked on three of my previous albums: *Colours* (2006), *Calcutta Express* (2006), and *2@1* (2008).

In compositional terms, the scoring of this piece is back to front because I notated it specifically for the purpose of this enquiry after the recording. It is an exercise in rhythmic/melodic contraction from the original 5/4-time to 4/4-time - a retrospective reworking of an original version that I had previously recorded on the albums *Passion Fruit* (Tall Poppies TP106, 1997) and *Calcutta Express* (Underscore, 06EM011ACD, 2006). As such, in contrast to the other pieces examined in this study, *Tina the Healer* relies on information held in memory and transmitted aurally. This cognitive approach, which occurred during one rehearsal with the bass player, stimulated immediacy in the transmission of music and a sense of heightened experience, as opposed to the intermediacy of the score. This was accomplished quite quickly because there were only two of us and the composition is relatively short. The process involved learning the passages one phrase at a time. I found this approach to increase synergy and yield positive outcomes not only in the improvisation dialogue, but also in the melody. Indeed, the bass player increased the aesthetic spectrum of the composition by doubling the guitar melody on a small body, custom-made double bass, which produced a distinctive lyrical voice in the mid and high frequency ranges, not unlike that of a cello. In addition, its tone and sustain, which are defined by the fretless fingerboard and the bow, heighten the Indian nuance of the piece that, although quite different, evokes a likeness to the Carnatic violin and Hinustani *sarangi*[5].

After the recording, I pondered on the pros and cons of communicating/learning music through a score, and performing it whilst reading it. On the one hand, the message is deciphered quickly, allowing momentum in getting the music together, but on the other, I think the players never really internalize the music because it is not absorbed through aural communication. I am puzzled by how frequently some musicians rely on the score instead of memorizing the music, especially when the pieces are quite short in length. In this sense, it is not the score that is fixed, but the reliance that even jazz musicians have on it. Despite the improvisational sensibilities in its interpretation, I wonder to what extent the aesthetics of the music remain bound to the page.

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[5] Sarangi: a bowed instrument with four main gut-strings and several sympathetic strings (Ranade, 2006, p. 305).

2.2 Analysis

This investigation unpacks the workings of discreet intercultural elements/nuances employed in extending the potential and possibilities of melodic ornamentation in blues and jazz improvisation. The fluidity and outcome of this approach is challenged by the synthesis of technical and aesthetic elements filtering across the composition, rehearsal/recording, and production processes both by individual and collective perceptions. I have chosen to set up the inquiry in a comparative format for the analysis of drones/intonation and ornaments since these focus entirely on my guitar work. This is designed to illustrate a stylistic imprint that encompasses all the compositions, rather than unnecessarily box them into separate compartments for the sake of neatness. I have provided notated examples from the original score and improvisation transcriptions from the recording that I have produced using Sibelius notation software to aid this study. In addition, I have included a number of MP3 audio excerpts to accompany the notated examples in order to facilitate the listening process.

The inquiry focuses on the following topics:

2.2 Ornaments
- *Drones and intonation*
- *Bends, hammers and pull-offs, slides and tremolo*

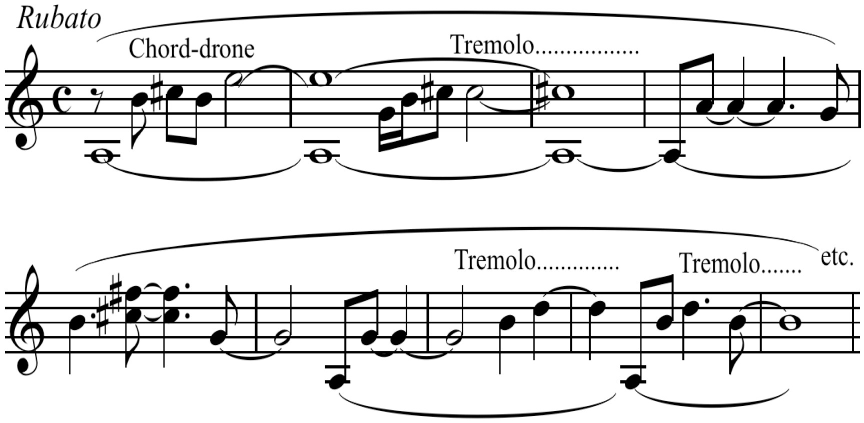
2.2 Improvisation/composition

2.2.1 Ornaments: Drones and Intonation

Notwithstanding the complexity and breadth of the cultural significance of drones, I have chosen to include these under the heading ‘ornaments’ because their function is expressively employed as an aesthetic element in the pieces examined here. As such, any ethnomusicological implication as to their cultural significance is steered towards references within the spectrum of the modal jazz lexicon, especially experiments where jazz and Indian classical music trade ideas. The work of the fusion group, *Shakti*, is considered a prime example (Farrell, 1988, pp. 190, 201) even though there is some argument over the application of the term ‘jazz’ within this context since the bulk of the music is Carnatic. At any rate, drones are also employed in modal/experimental jazz that nuances Indian elements such as *In a Silent Way*, a composition by pianist Joe Zawinul containing a chord progression that Miles Davis dispensed with in favour of a drone. Drones in the form of pedal bass also provide modal superimpositions over less traditional jazz standards that employ chord progressions; *Naima*, by John Coltrane is one such example. In this sense, *Eastern Blues*, *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*, and *Silk Road*, which employ drones over chord progressions, suggest at a Coltrane-like approach whilst *Tina the Healer*, strictly a one-chord modal composition, reflects a closer resemblance to an Indian model. The application of the term *Eastern* is narrowed to the Hindustani and Carnatic aesthetic implications contained within these works. These approaches represent a continuum in the influence of Eastern elements on jazz improvisation dating back to the late 1950s, as discussed in the literature review.

The *alap*-inspired introduction to *Eastern Blues* provides the first example of an aesthetic direction that draws from Indian classical music. It is clearly not an *alap*, as it occurs in Hindustani classical music. However, it does shed light on the complex relationship between improvisation and composition, which is a theme central to this analysis. Whilst the sustaining effect of the drone in the form of an A9 $^{add\ 6}$ jazz chord, with the 6th, 7th, and 9th intervals overlaps mostly all the notes, the atmosphere is intensified by a second element that infuses microtonal pitch bending into the sustaining effect. The pitch variants are generated by the guitar's tremolo-arm, which is an implement used to manipulate pitch through an action of pressure and release; this is iconic to Western electric guitar styles such as blues and rock. The application of pitch bending is intended to expand and unlock the tonal range of the Western tempered scale. In this sense, although this differs from the complex way in which *sruti* [6] is understood and practiced in Hindustani and Carnatic music, it does nevertheless share something of the general effect of intensifying the emotional/aesthetic expression of the melody. The following example employs the tremolo arm to achieve a microtonal effect both vertically and horizontally through subtle oscillation:

Example (*a*): *Eastern Blues* drone - improvisation is included in the sound file, but not scored in the example below (track 1)



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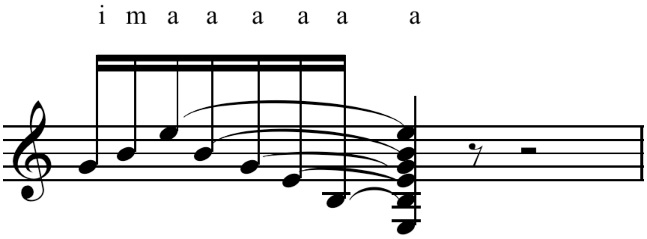
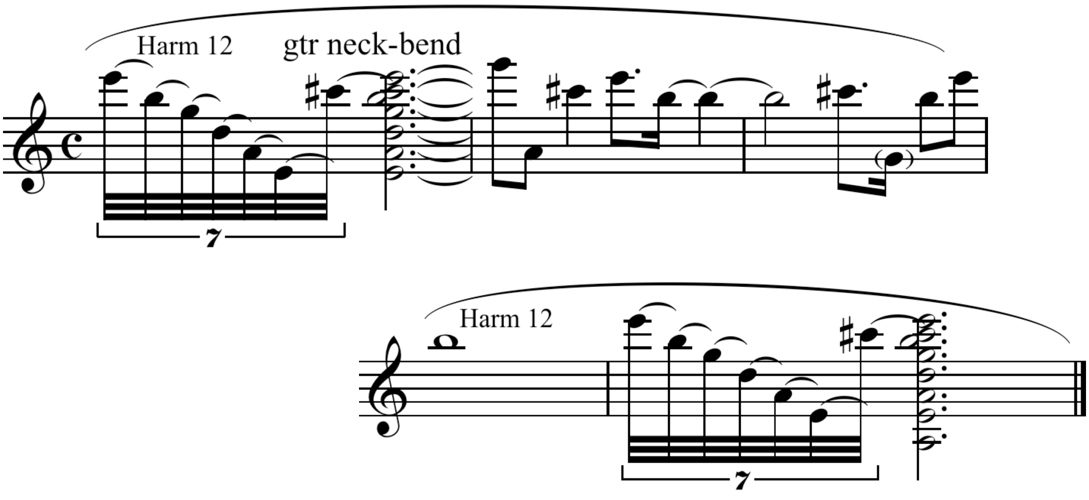
[6] *Sruti* "*one which is heard*", (Ranade, 2006), is a fundamental concept of intonation in Hindustani, and Carnatic classical music that refers to the execution, and personal interpretation of microtonal interval increments of notes within a rising scale, and, as direct consequence, implicit in the performance of raga.

In contrast, the introduction to *Silk Road* (example *b*) employs an arpeggio-style chord similar to that produced by the stroke applied to the sympathetic strings of the *sitar*. Relevant to the intercultural nuances of this project, this is comparable to the right-hand *flamenco* guitar technique (*raseguado*) of the *spread chord* employed in *tarantas*[7]. The following example by Paco Peña demonstrates the fingering and execution of *spread chord* in *taranta* (Pena, 1991, p.7).



The drone nuance in *Silk Road* employs a similar technique to Peña's example. It is performed on a purpose-built hybrid 8-string acoustic guitar that includes two mid pitch drone strings:

Example (*b*): *Silk Road* drone (track 2).



In contrast, the drone in *Tina the Healer* reflects minimalist approach designed to provide a hypnotic background for the melodic and improvisation dialogue between the guitar and double bass. It consists of a chord and a tonic drone performed on a 7-string guitar with drop D tuning and a single medium-pitched drone string. The complexity of the G13 ^{sus} 4 is defused by the open voicing of the chord and the engaging rhythmic repetitiveness. This approach draws on three influences:

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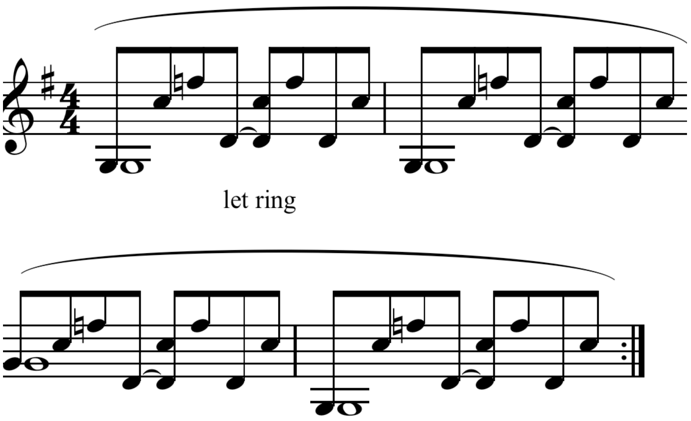
[7] Tarantas - a style originated in the province of Almeria in the eastern part of Andalusia. Tarantas is rhythmically very free, with no consistent beats or bars; it is sung and played - but not danced. It is based on the Phrygian mode transposed to F-sharp... a typical chord sequence is Bm, A7, G, F-sharp. The characteristic sound of tarantas is due, at least in part, to the interesting use of open strings. PENA, P. (1991) Technique and Notation. *Toques Flamenco.* London, Musical New services.

1) Indian drone, as in employing tonic (*sa*), and 5th (*pa*) only - again, I stress that this is a nuance that bears no comparison to the significance of drones in Indian classical music.

2) Minimalism through the application of repetitive rhythmic pattern

3) *Baião* rhythm of Brazil, which I will discuss later.

Example (*c*): *Tina the Healer* drone (track 3).



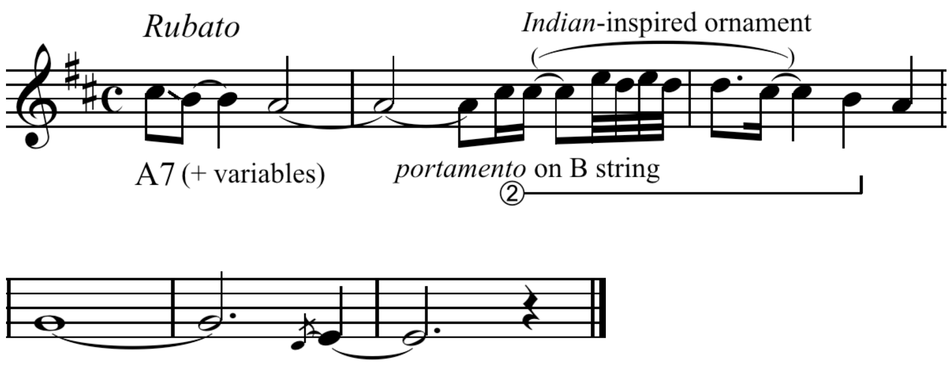
Drones in the recording of *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges* are performed on the 7th and 8th strings of the double neck guitar designed for this purpose. The notes E and B are employed scarcely, and are generally confined to a subliminal role that operates at infrequent time intervals to provide single-note rhythmic counterpoint to the guitar melodies/improvisations, as well as for aesthetic effect.

2.2.2 Ornaments: bends, hammers, pull-offs, slides and tremolo

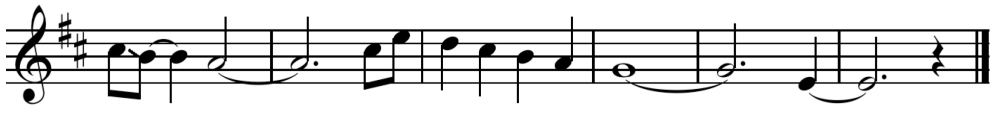
Notwithstanding the cultural significance/terminology of the diverse range of ornaments embedded in different musics, the melody in the introduction to *Eastern Blues* employs slides and glissandos that produce pitch alterations inspired by melodic idioms of Hindustani and Carnatic instrumental string music. Technically comparable ornaments in jazz guitar, such as bends, hammers and pull-offs, slides and vibrato can aid the study and execution of this idiomatic approach; in fact, South Indian guitarist, Prasanna, has produced useful methodology in this area in his instructional DVD "*Ragaphormism*" (2003).

The following examples are phrases that employ such ornaments in *Eastern Blues*, *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*, *Silk Road*, and *Tina the Healer*.

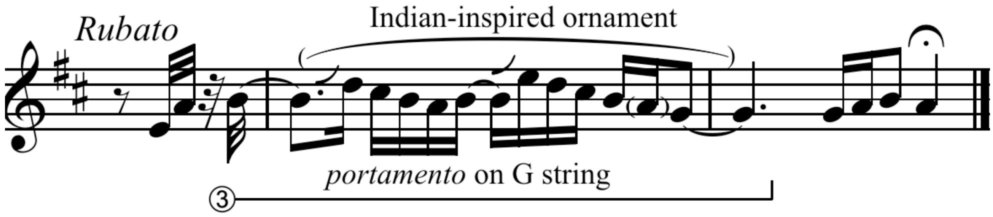
Example (*d*) - *Eastern Blues*: introduction (track 4). The first semi-phrase in bar one is followed by the second semi-phrase in bar two, where the melodic deflection starts with the note C#, to rise up to E via the note D:



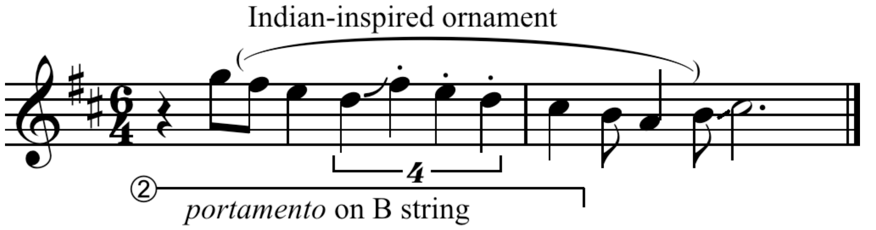
Example (*d*) without ornament:



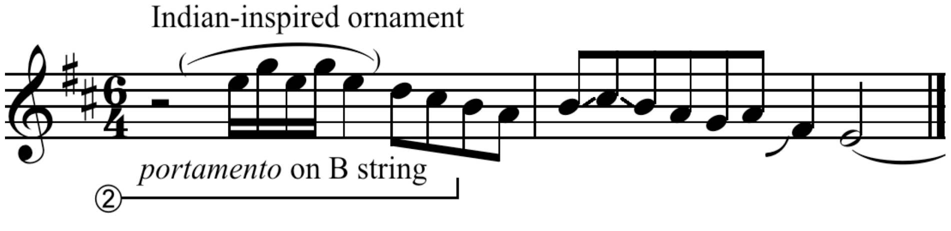
Example (*e*) - *Eastern Blues*: introduction (track 5). The primary notes in this ornament in bar two are: B, C#, and G:


Rubato
Indian-inspired ornament
portamento on G string
③

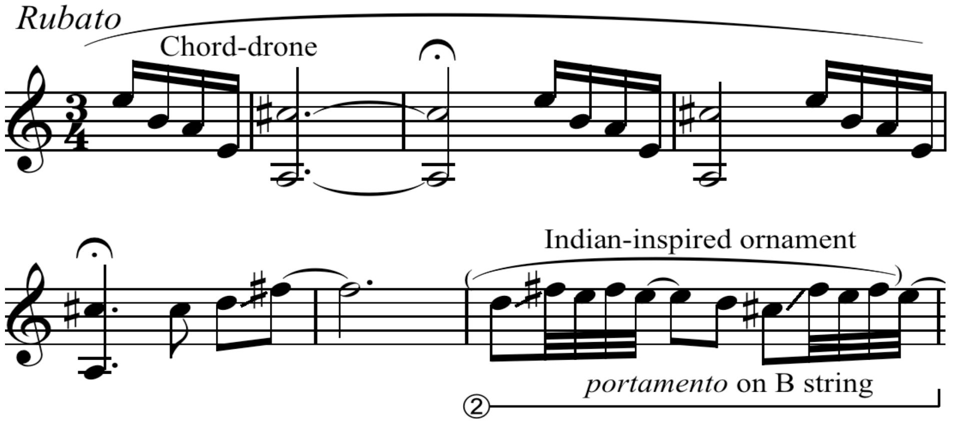
Example (*f*) - *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*: introduction (track 6). The primary notes are D in bar one, and C# in bar two:

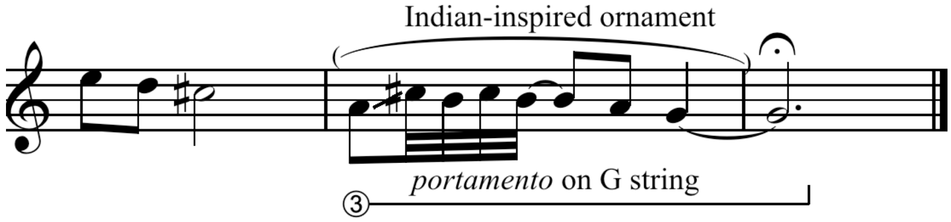

Indian-inspired ornament
4
②
portamento on B string

Example (*g*) - *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*: introduction (track 7)

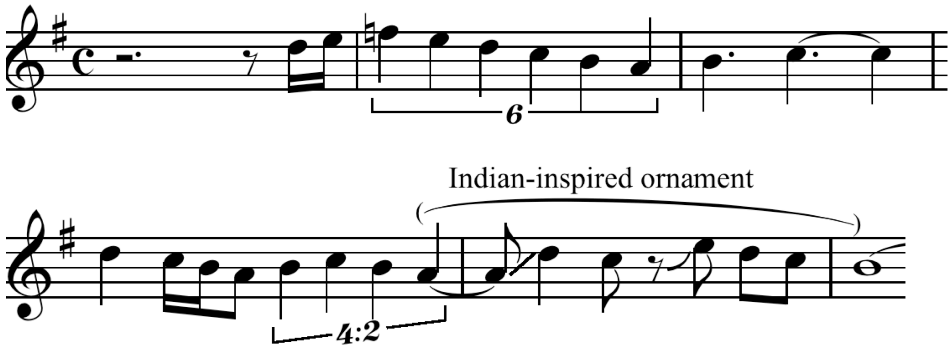

Indian-inspired ornament
portamento on B string
②

Example (*h*) - *Silk Road*: introduction (track 8)


Rubato
Chord-drone
Indian-inspired ornament
portamento on B string
②

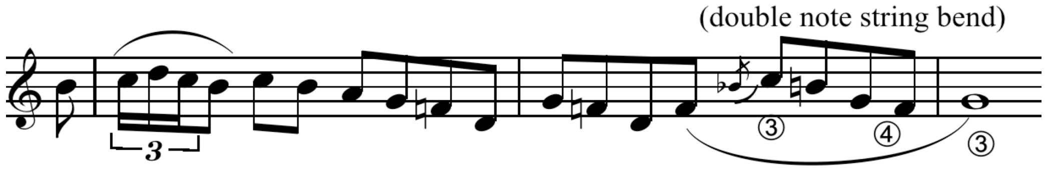


Example (*i*) *Tina the Healer* (track 9)



The melodic figure in the example that follows departs from the note F in the second last measure to resolve on the final G. The notes C and B are produced by a vigorous bend of the third string on the 3rd-fret of the guitar, where the note Bb resides (shown in the example as an acciaccatura). Departing from this location, the upward string-bend reaches the note C, followed by a quick ½ tone release to the note B. String bending is idiomatic to *sitar*, and *vina*, where the convex/concave ratio between frets and fingerboard allows the execution of wide interval bends with greater ease than on a guitar. In the early 1970s, John McLaughlin and luthier Abe Schecter developed a hybrid guitar (a one-off, released by the American Gibson Company) that incorporates scalloped-neck sitar/vina-neck principles, which allowed McLaughlin to execute wide bends that would otherwise have been arduous, if not impossible, on a standard guitar neck. The fretboard on the Williams acoustic guitar is not scalloped, but its low fret profile, low action, and light gauge nylon-core steel strings increases the flexibility required to produce bends up to a tone and a half in 1/8 tonal increments; I obtain higher increments by rapid slide action up to a desired pitch, which is a technique resembling that of the South Indian *vina*.

Example (j) *Tina the Healer* (track 10)



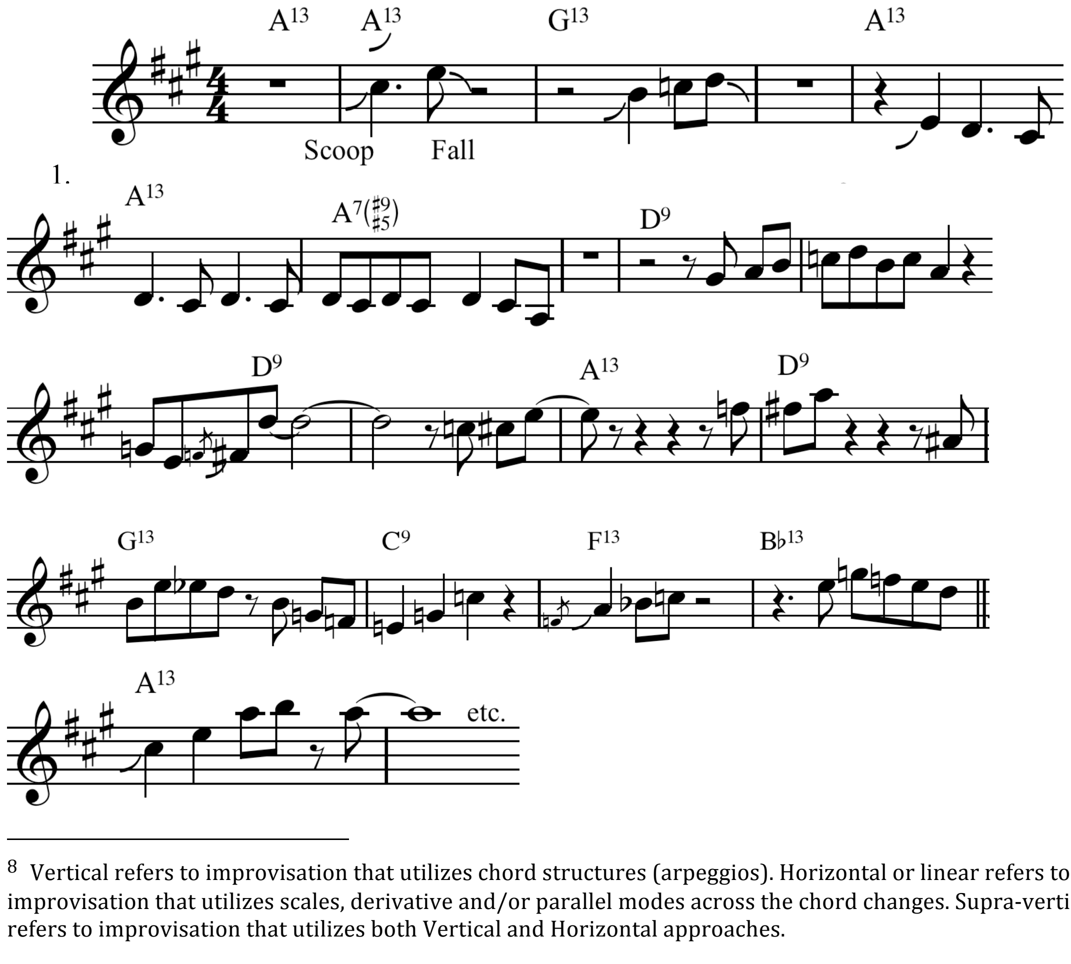
2.3 Improvisations and recording process

In contrast to the comparative approach employed in the analysis of drones the objective of this section of the investigation is to find out what problems/challenges arise from diverse approaches to improvising - i.e. horizontal, vertical, supravertical, diatonic, chromatic and intercultural approaches within the framework of each piece, and how can such variables be negotiated. [8]As such, I have added observations about the dynamics in the recording that provide a background to the technical analysis, and problem solving strategies to sustain and validate the application of intercultural elements in the works. As in section one, I have provided notated examples of transcriptions accompanied by MP3 audio excerpts.

2.3.1 *Eastern Blues*: Improvisations - (see master score: Appendix 1, pp. 129-140)

The following solo excerpt demonstrates guitarist Aaron Flower's late bop implicitness in his approach to *Eastern Blues*. I devised an 18-bar solo section as a numerical variation between the standard 12, and 24-bar blues - its I-IV-V harmonic basis is typical of the blues, but also includes a descending sequence of dominant chords moving in perfect 4ths that reflect a bop approach:

Example (*k*) - (track 11)



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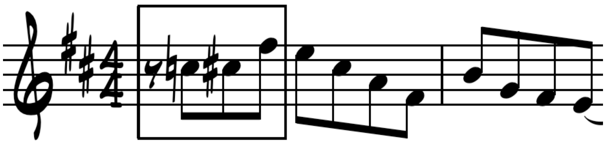
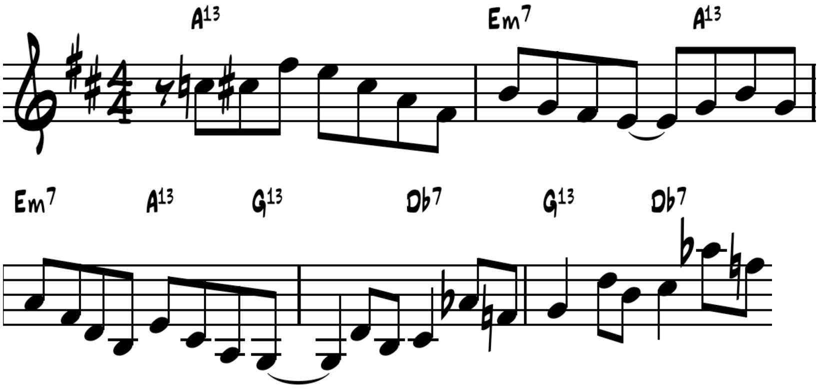
[8] Vertical refers to improvisation that utilizes chord structures (arpeggios). Horizontal or linear refers to improvisation that utilizes scales, derivative and/or parallel modes across the chord changes. Supra-vertical refers to improvisation that utilizes both Vertical and Horizontal approaches.

The scoop and fall techniques in bars 1-5 establish the blues flavour of this solo. The bop direction is established by a series of rhythmic paraphrases in bars 11-14 that strongly resemble the shape of the first phrase in bars 1-2 of the composition as marked by the square in this example:

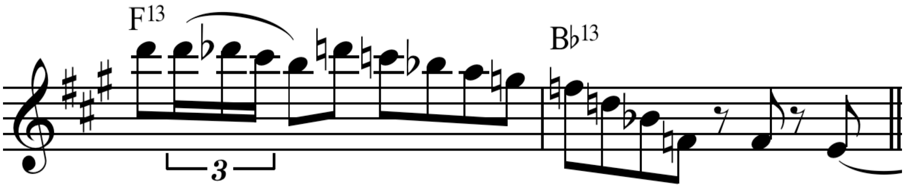


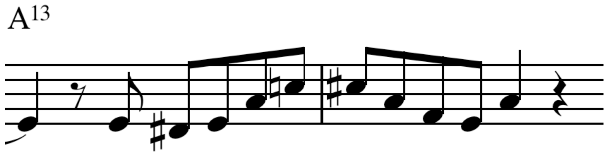
Bearing in mind that the quartet had been formalised prior to the creation of the composition, Flower's natural post-bop style becomes an influential factor in the aesthetic directions of the piece. An example of this can be seen in bars 1- 3 below, where the vertical, arpeggio-style lines of the melody are built over chord structures A13, and E min7. The sequential tri-tone melodic movement over G13 and Db 7 in bars 4-5 further enhances the bop flavour:



Bop style is again evident in the following example, which employs both horizontal, and vertical approaches; the linear chromatic line in bars 1starts on the 13th of the chord with a Parker type triplet, and a vertical approach in bar 2 spells a descending 2nd inversion of Bb major. The almost identical quote of Charlie Parker' Billy's Bounce (also attributed to Miles Davis) in bars 3-4 etches bop flavour on the overall aesthetics:

Example (*l*) - *Eastern Blues* solo excerpt (track 12)

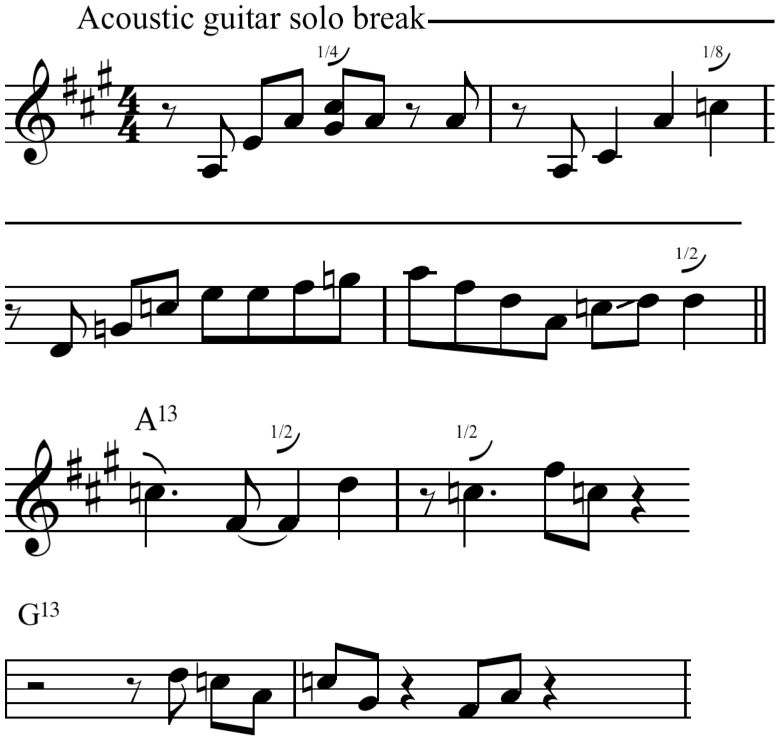




The 2nd guitar solo contains blues nuances; its strong bop identity produces aesthetic resistance to the incorporation of Eastern element implied in the title of the composition. How can an aesthetic transition from bebop to Eastern blues be achieved with any degree of seamlessness? In this respect, the second solo becomes tactically challenging, a problem that will be addressed in the discussion later in the chapter.

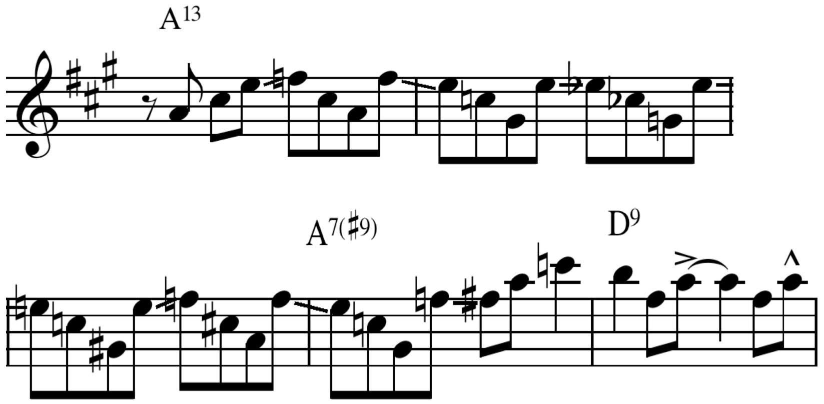
The opening bars show a transition to a more angular melodic approach, containing blues/funk flavours produced by ornaments such as slides, bends, and slapped notes; this suggests an attempt at subduing the bebop aesthetics:

Example (*m*) - *Eastern Blues* solo excerpt (track 13)



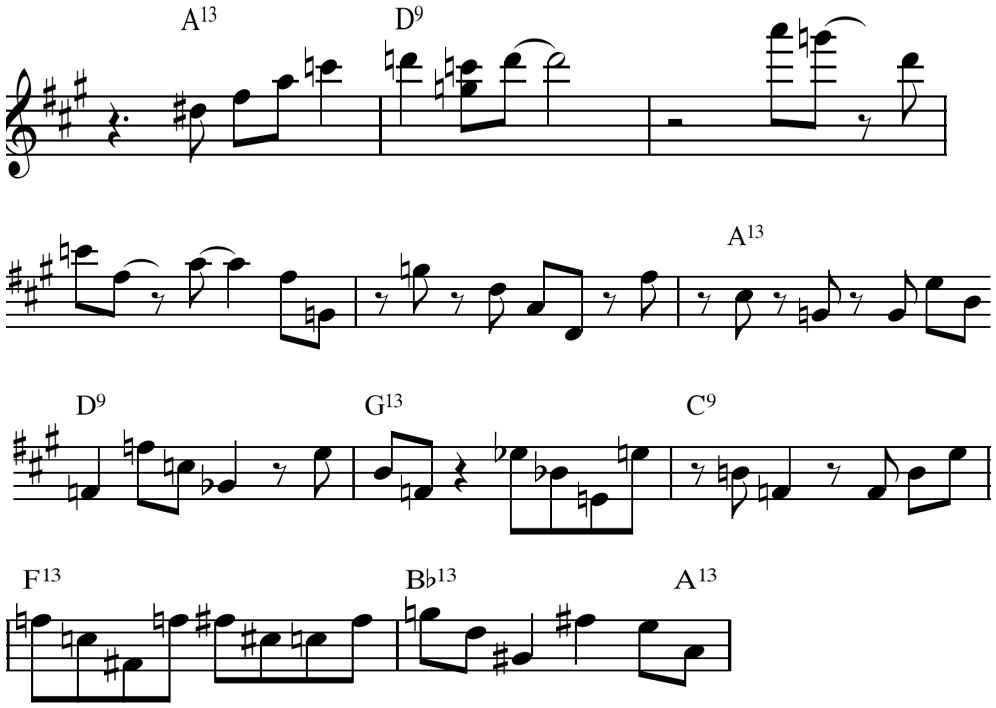
However, in order to achieve a sense of cohesiveness to the previous solo, a supra-vertical approach is employed by way of post bop lines, chromatic broken vertical chord clusters over the A13 chord, eventually releasing it with a blues shout over D9:

Example (*n*) - *Eastern Blues* solo excerpt (track 14)



The closing eleven bars of this solo recapitulate the angularity, and chromatic motion presented in its exposition; the rhythmic fragmentation, and wide interval leaps strongly suggests free jazz/post bop type phrasing:

Example (*o*) - *Eastern Blues* solo excerpt (track 15)

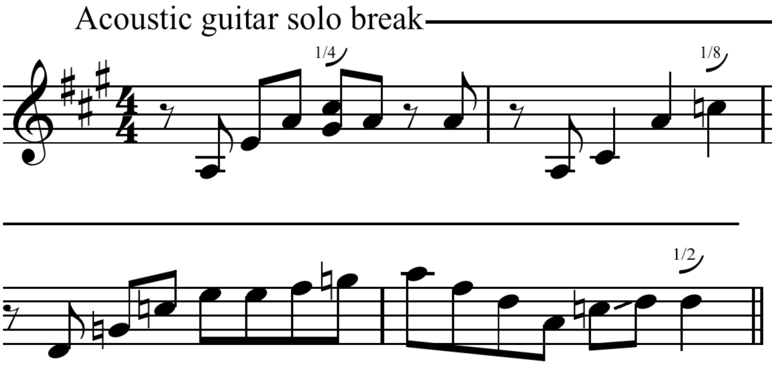


2.3.2 *Eastern Blues*: Recording process

On recording day, I didn't feel comfortable with playing the Indian-nuanced introduction because I was surrounded by Western icons, and my colleagues were ready to play and waiting for a 'quick intro'. This is contrary to my experiences and connotations of this process, which in

Indian culture is nurtured by addressing the aesthetic surroundings congenial to the performer for example. Although I was not playing raga, and I am not Indian, my aim was to nuance the atmosphere of *alap*. Moreover, wearing headphones was not ideal either as it made me aware of having a head, when what was essential to me was to transcend the body into the realm of the subconscious. In addition, I was aware that the exposition of *alap* in Hindustani classical music determines the pathway and overall discourse of the ensuing raga movements. Thus, in order to maximize the validity and benefit of this approach I opted to do an over dubbing recording session later. In this respect, I had reversed the process, and in many ways annulled the significance of *alap,* or any type of introduction for that matter. At any rate, I ended up overdubbing an introduction based on the existing narrative in the recording. The main reason for this decision was that since the group's approach to the composition had reached cohesiveness I didn't feel inclined at that point to add aesthetics that may hinder it.

The structural framework of the piece is virtually unchanged in the recording from the original score, except for the addition of a four-bar solo break to introduce my acoustic guitar solo, which is an idea devised in the studio as a way of defining a transition between the two guitar solos:



The electric guitar solo reflects a strong bop influence articulated through lines from the jazz vernacular that resound with tradition. This is an important detail, because I was challenged by how to complement this approach. As such, I quickly devised a strategy that holds back on the intercultural emphasis of my natural approach, opting instead to create an atmosphere that portrays a contemporary jazz approach defined and influenced by the textures of the acoustic guitar. As such, I focused on an approach that draws from blues, modal jazz, and some post-bop where my solo displays wide intervallic leaps inspired by the melody. The lines incorporate blues ornaments as well as moderate use of chromatics, this is despite the fact that I would normally avoid using bop-type chromatics lines with the modal spatiality of Indian music. In an analogy, this is synonymous to relocating New York City 1952 (or later), with its Western chromatic tensions, next to Varanasi and ignoring the profound cultural contrast between the two.

The overdubbing session took place in my music studio with a recording engineer. Using the tremolo arm of my guitar, I managed to lower the pitch of notes or entire chords by fractional tonal decrements. The action of pressing down the tremolo arm was deliberately slow because I wanted to project subtle vocal-like fluctuations of intonation reminiscent of blues, and Indian singers. I began by recording the introduction with the tune's melody as a reference point. The motif is carried on into the four-measure rhythm section introduction in order to attempt seamlessness between this *alap*-inspired nuance and what had previously transpired in the recording. During this process, I hoped that the overdubs would reflect the overall aesthetic that I had originally envisaged, but could not engage with for reasons that I have already outlined. I also recorded the background to the melodic introduction with subtle shifts between chords: A major and A7 $^{\#11}$ over an A drone. This process, which was complemented by the congenial surroundings of my home studio, was achieved in one recording take. Just before recording the backgrounds, I asked the engineer to keep recording throughout the track so that I could incorporate the Eastern nuances that I was now hearing. The subtle new voice, generated by the manipulation of the tremolo arm, became central to this process of improvisation. I applied sounds sparingly, because this approach was primarily about adding a pale wash to the overall image; the intention was to add breath to the recording with atmospheric textures resembling a subtle Eastern quality that mitigates the muscular aesthetics of bebop. However, this was contrasted by the forceful action I applied to the tremolo arm at the start of my solo when I stubbed the low pitch A note three times to create dive bombs - a technique that pushes down the lever acutely in order to create dramatic pitch bends. The sudden switch from atmospheric backgrounds was an intuition that aggressive, raw blues bends would complement the angularity at the start of my solo. Although this reaction happened in 'real time' as I was recording, its spontaneity was relative to the fact that I knew what was about to happen in the solo, nevertheless, it was a sudden visceral reaction to a situation, or as Spolin puts it:

> It creates an explosion that for the moment frees us from handed-down frames of reference, memory choked with old facts and information and undigested theories and techniques of other people's findings. Spontaneity is the moment of personal freedom when we are faced with a reality and see it, explore it and act accordingly. In this reality the bits and pieces of ourselves function as an organic whole. It is the time of discovery, of experiencing, of creative expression. (Spolin 1964 cited in Creech, 2007)

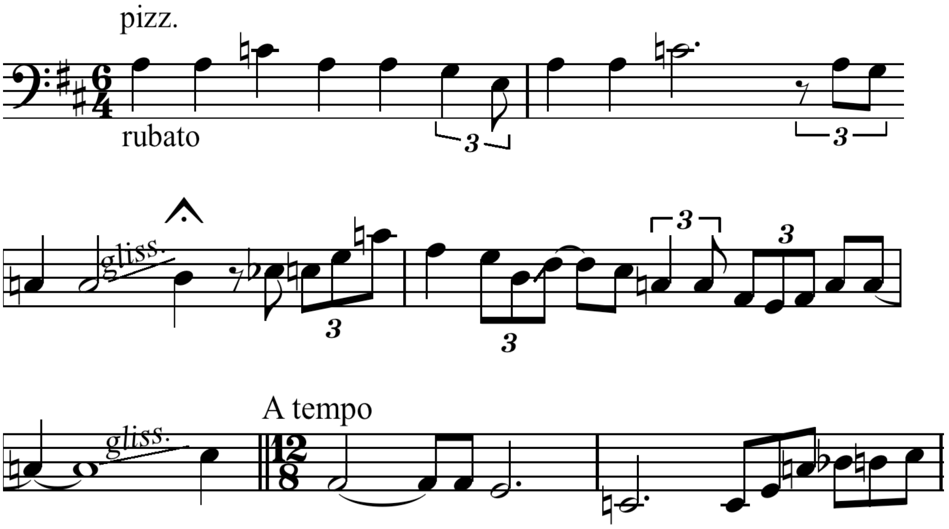
However, on the basis that a spontaneous explosion is free from *handed-down frames of reference* what emerges is that frames of reference become embedded in *our organic whole*. On a personal level, such frame of references connote with hearing Don Cherry free jazzing with Indian musicians at Jazz Yatra Festival in 1984. It is about experiencing John McLaughlin's early 1970s seminal recording, *Extrapolation*, and so on.

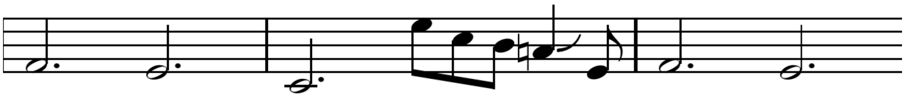
During Aaron Flower's robust and bop oriented electric guitar solo the quasi-ethereal single lines from my overdubbed tremolo nuances serve a dual purpose: the first is a free-contrapuntal approach similar to how a horn player would employ in jazz. The second purpose is to sustain the aesthetic atmosphere of Eastern sounds. The only time that the overdubbed guitar steps out of this role is at the end of the recording when I decide to double the melody one octave higher. I had allowed for this arrangement in the second guitar score, but it never eventuated; sometimes players do something in a particular way that is not in the script, so to speak. This is perfectly acceptable to me; in fact, I encourage it, as my artistic tendencies prefer the players to be themselves. Nevertheless, the decision to overdub the melody an octave higher has to do with aesthetic climax, when the natural tenor range of one guitar shifts to mezzo-soprano in order to exalt the emotions of the composition towards its finale.

2.3.3 *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*: Improvisations (see master score: Appendix 2, pp. 141-149)

In contrast to the previous track where the individual soloist is supported by the rhythm section *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges* employs group improvisation. This is directly influenced by the approach used by Mingus, which incorporated, and revived collective dialogical improvisation typical of Dixieland jazz; a legacy upheld, for example, by groups such as Henry Threadgill Septet, and Mingus Dynasty. This collective approach in *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges* is evident in the dialogue between the guitars, the interactivity of the drum solo with the rest of the band, and the bass/drums interplay towards the end of the piece. The strong blues aesthetic of the piece is established at the outset by the bass introduction, which characterises the title of the composition through its blues ornaments, phrasing, and double bass sound and style evocative of Charlie Mingus:

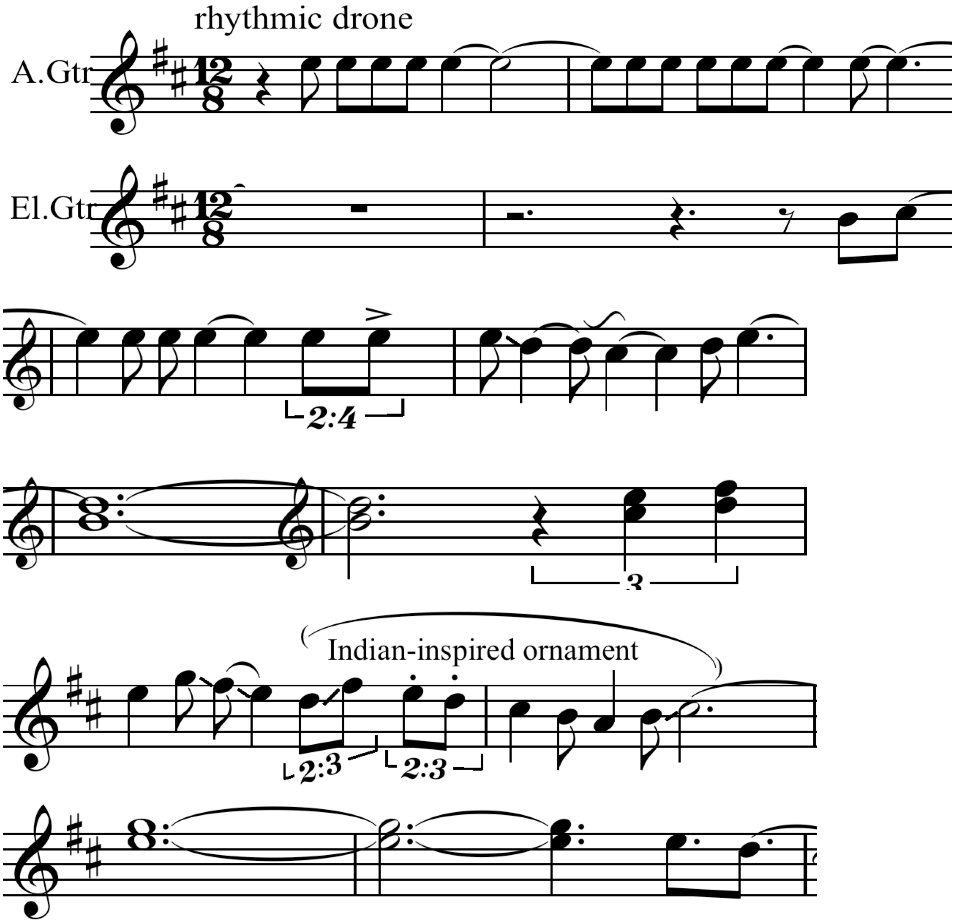
Example (*p*) - *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges* bass solo intro (track 16)

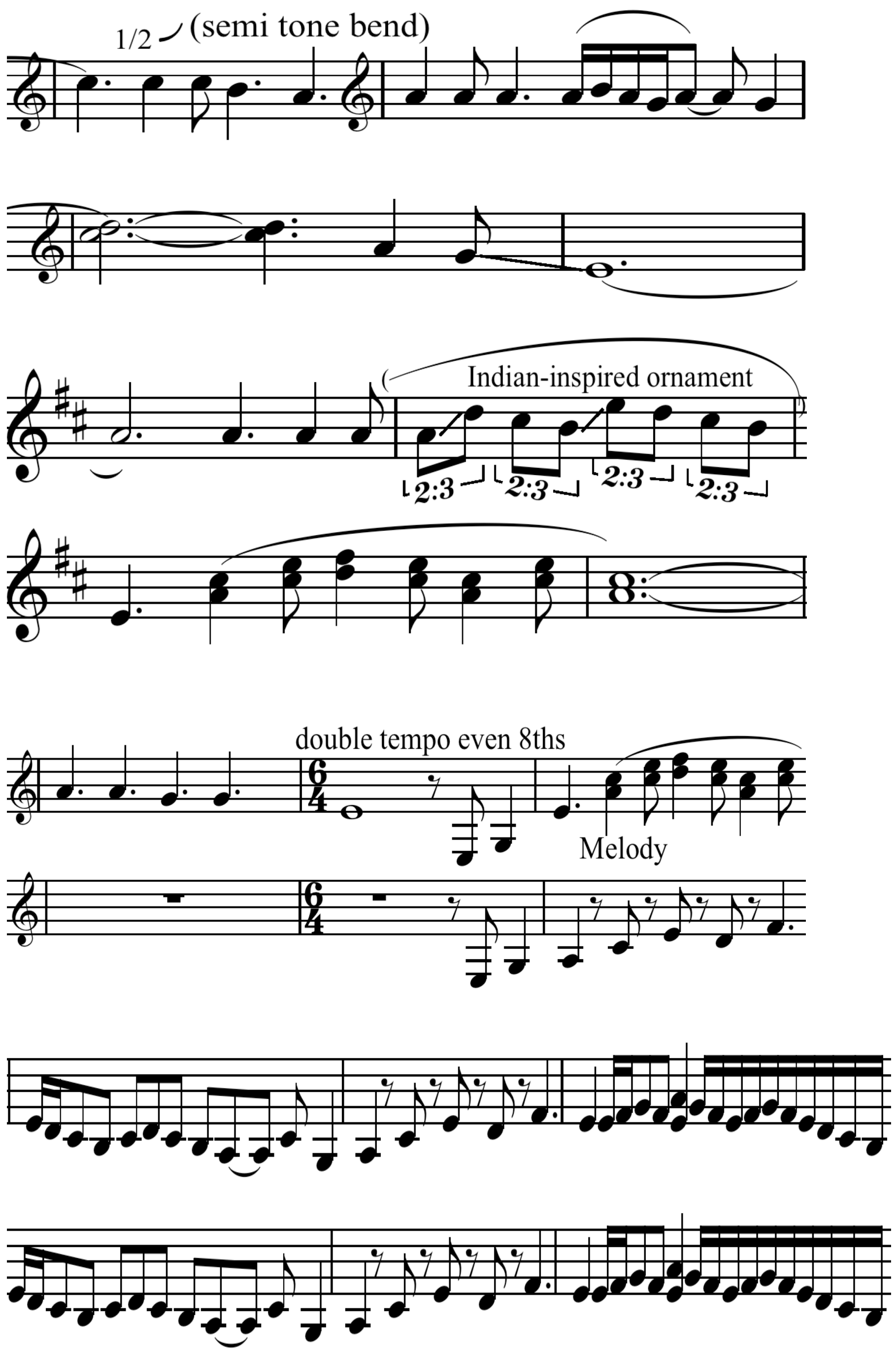




This mood continues for the rest of the introduction, sparking the improvised dialogue between the acoustic and electric guitars. At this point, I begin to emphasise the Indian-nuanced allegory to the river Ganges by employing drones, blues slides, note bends, and microtonal inflections that may suggest a meeting point between blues and Indian classical music. In bars 1-4, I begin with a rhythmic drone on the note E, the 5th of the A Mixolydian key, and continue with Indian-nuanced lines in bars 5, 6, and 10. Bar 10 shows a floor in the set up of the melodic cadence where G below the tonic, instead of the last B dropping to the tonic (A in bar 11), would have been more typical of how *gamaka* resolves. In this section, the accompanying electric guitar marks a jazz element through a sequence of double-stop intervals in contrapuntal style to the acoustic guitar work - i.e. 9th/11th in bar three, 5th/7th in bar five, and 3rd/4th in bar 7:

Example (*q*) - *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*: acoustic and electric guitars intro (track 17)




1/2
(semi tone bend)
Indian-inspired ornament
2:3
2:3
2:3
2:3
double tempo even 8ths
Melody

2.3.4 *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*: Recording process

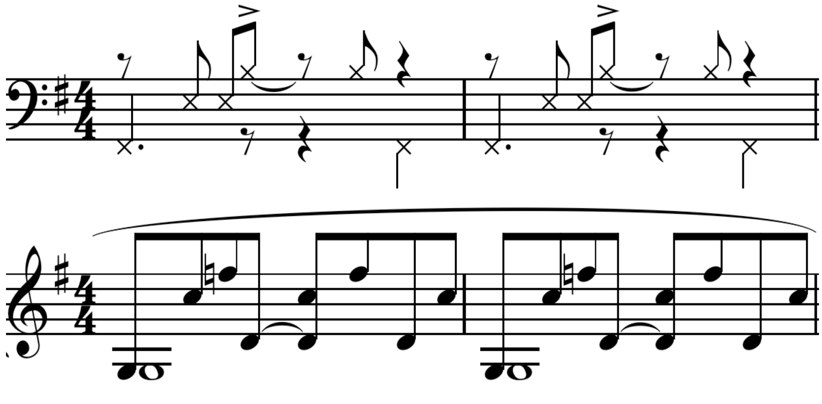
There was a last minute pre-recording plan in the studio where we decided the bass should play a brief introduction as a tribute to Mingus. After that, all four players were involved in a process of group improvisation as previously discussed. I am not sure if our synergy stemmed from collective *improvisioning* - the track title being the inspirational factor - or whether it is the result of rehearsals, but the pathway is clearer than in Eastern Blues. The drums come to the fore prior to restating the bridge section, which eventually leads into the ending as the closing bass lines ‘drift along’ the flow of the Ganges.

The key elements in this performance are the improvised double bass introduction and ending, the improvised dialogue between the guitars that winds into the unison melody, collective group improvisation, inclusion of Eastern elements in the composition and in my guitar improvisations. Although my intention was to explore the polyrhythmic idea at a deeper level than we did, on a personal level I am pleased with the fact that I exercised flexibility in embracing the views of my colleagues because I think that the ability to collaborate is paramount to the project and its outcome. This raises an indirect reference to the tradition of the collective as in Rossini's open approach to his work versus the lone hero image of the creative genius as in Stravinsky's rigorous demands from the orchestra (Benson, 2003, pp. 190, and 201). It highlights a juxtaposition that questions the extent to which improvisation activity influences the process and realization of a composition.

2.3.5 *Tina the Healer*: Improvisations (see master score: Appendix 3, pp. 150-160)

To a similar extent, collective improvisation is also employed in *Tina the Healer*. The distinction being that while the guitar and bass function interactively in improvisation spaces, the rhythm section, comprising of *muringa* (Brazilian clay pot percussion) and hybrid east-west guitar, play a minimalist *ostinato*-type role with occasional rhythmic fills from the percussion. The underlying groove is *Baião* style form North Eastern Brazil. This style generally employs the Mixolydian (or Lydian dominant) mode for the melodies:

Top stave: percussion rhythm
Bottom stave: guitar pattern



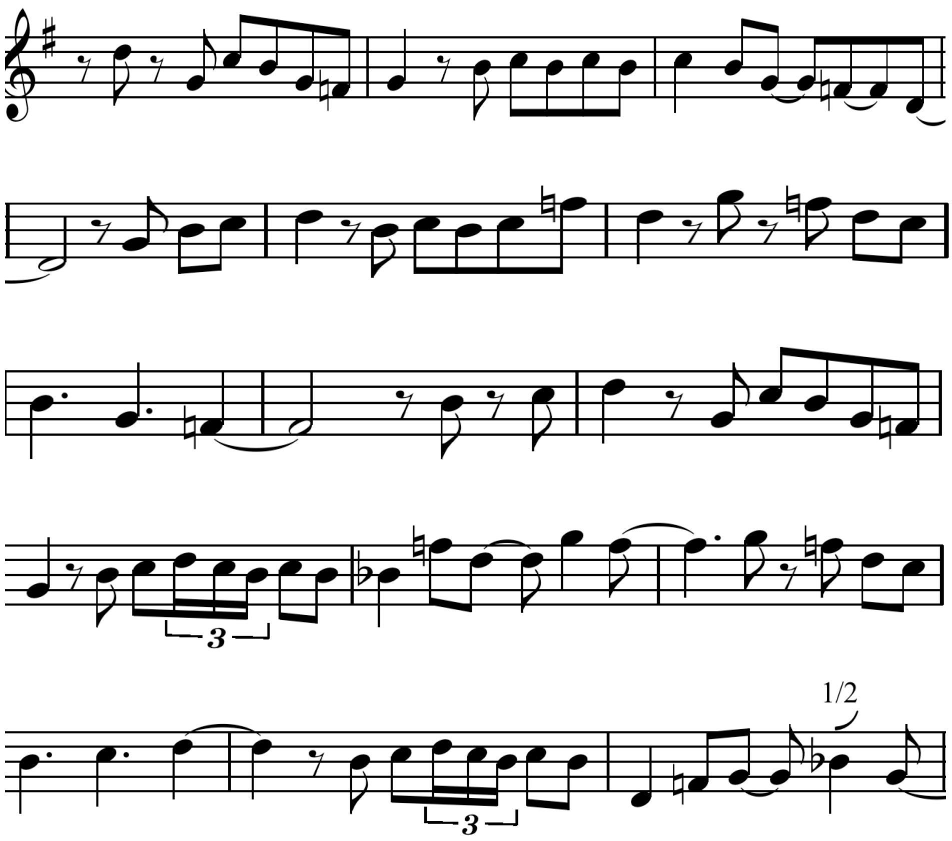
The melodic framework is defined by the G Mixolydian mode; its rhythmic construction has regular metric shapes reminiscent of pre-composed melodies in the *nibaddh* section of Indian classical music such as *gats* and/or *kriti* in Carnatic classical music. In the field of intercultural music a contrasting example to *Tina the Healer* could be *Kriti*, which is a traditional South Indian melody arranged and performed by the group Shakti on the album: "*A Handful of Beauty*" (Shakti - Columbia, 1975). However, the sparseness and mood of *Tina the Healer* evokes the simplicity and lyricism of a South Indian folk song rather than the extended metric patterns typical of *kriti*s.

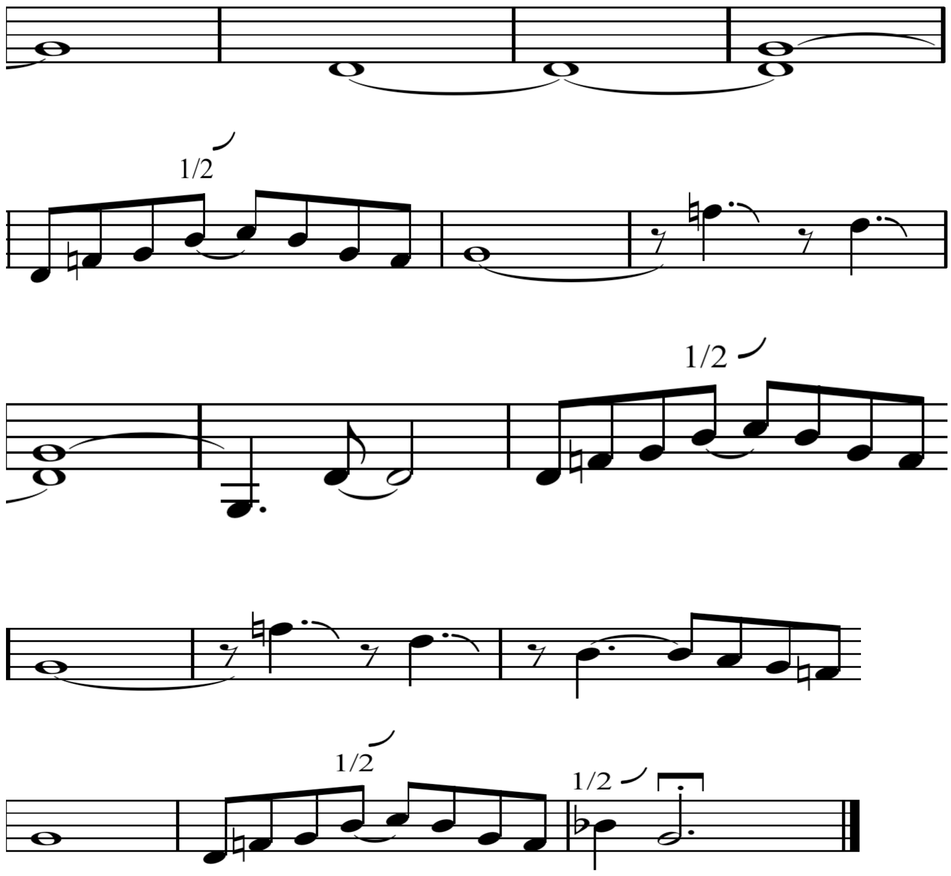
This piece can be subdivided in three sections:

1. Guitar/bass unison melody (see Appendix 3, pp. 150-152)
2. Interactive improvisation between guitar and bass (see Appendix 3, pp. 153-157)
3. Guitar/bass subsidiary unison melody, including a *tihai*-inspired ending (see Appendix 3, pp. 158-160)

The following example demonstrates sections 2 and 3. The structure abandons the binary trademark ABA form of bebop and jazz standards in favour of a non-repetitive form. This approach is influenced by the forward non-repetitive form structure inherent in Hindustani *raga* (see van der Meer, 1980, pp. 30-71). Hence, a subsidiary unison melody is employed at the end of the improvisation to achieve this end, rather than restate the original melody. The process brings the guitar and bass improvised dialogue back on a single thematic pathway signalling that the improvisation is complete. As in Indian classical tradition, this section comes to a climatic finale through the repetition of the last phrase in a manner reminiscent of Indian *tihai*:

Example (*r*) - (track 18)





2.3.6 *Tina the Healer* Recording process

At the beginning of the recording process I played eight bars of drone, which were looped using Pro-Tool software to create the background to the track. Next, we worked on the groove since this was the first time Rodrigo had heard the piece; his innate knowledge of Brazilian rhythms and intuitive musical sensibilities provided a smooth process. He suggested incorporating the *muringa* because its sound is similar to that of the South Indian *ghatam*, which is also a percussion made from clay. The idea was to create an aesthetic bridge that connects Indian and Brazilian elements through this clay texture whilst applying a simple, congenial groove to the piece that is fundamentally *Baião* style form North Eastern Brazil.[9] Example 1 is an extract that I have transcribed from the Latin Real Book (Sher, 1997, p. 558) that demonstrates the fundamental rhythmic structure of *Baião*. Example 2 is Rodrigo's version of *Baião* in *Tina the Healer*, which incorporates the Basic pulse and Accent pattern of example 1.

Example 1

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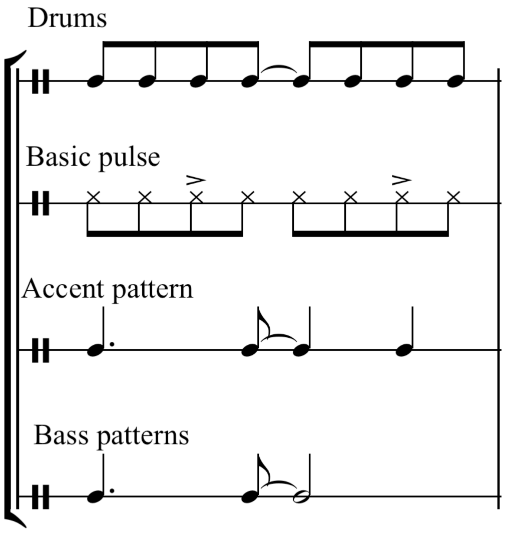
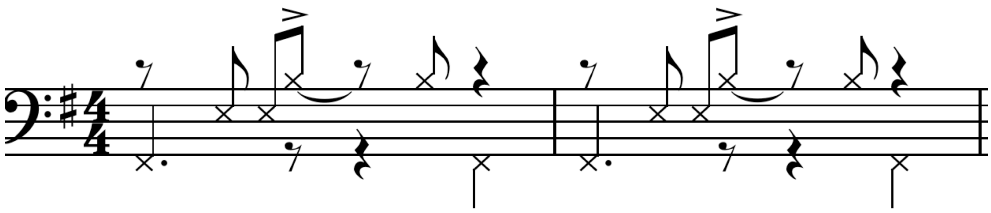
[9] *Baião* is a music genre from the North East of Brazil, more specifically from Ceará, Maranhão, and Bahia. Baião is derived from a folk dance (*bumba-meu-boi*) and emerged as a musical style in the 1940's. FARIA, N. (1995) *The Brazilian Guitar Book,* Petaluma, Ca 94953, USA, Sher Music.



Example 2



Beyond this initial process, there was no further discussion as to how Rodrigo might approach the performance. The post-recording outcome indicates that he adheres to the basic pulse in parallel motion/approach with the *Baião* rhythm of the guitar drone as described earlier in the analysis.

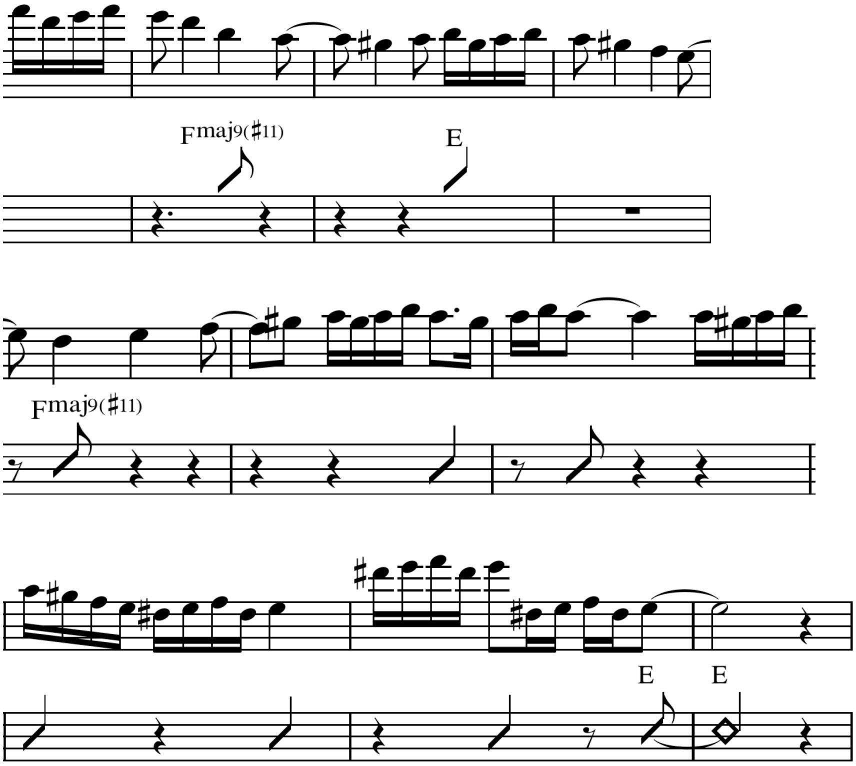
There are further connections between Indian and Brazilian elements in this piece:

- The fact that *Baião* melodies usually employ the Mixolydian mode, which is employed in *Tina the Healer*.
- The 4/4 time signature, which is less common than the typical 2/2 time signature in Brazilian music, fits well with the 16-beats Hindustani *teental* rhythmic cycle.
- Single-chord harmony with extended use of pedal tones suggests an Indian drone, though not a direct influence representing the complex elements produced by a *tampura*.

2.3.7 *Silk Road Revisited*: Improvisations (see scores: Appendices 4-6, pp.161-173)

This is an overdubbed guitar duet performed on an experimental instrument purposely built for this project by Australian luthier Jim Williams. It features a double neck consisting of an acoustic steel-string neck, and a nylon-string flamenco neck on a single acoustic body chamber (see Appendix 10, pp. 320). The original plan for a quartet recording includes a melodic counterpoint for the electric guitar that employs the A Arabic/Gypsy minor scale. The solo section employs jazz chords such as Major 7 $^{\#11}$, Minor 7 ^{b5}, Altered dominant 7, and Minor 7. The melodic material includes *falseta*-type lines from the flamenco idiom:

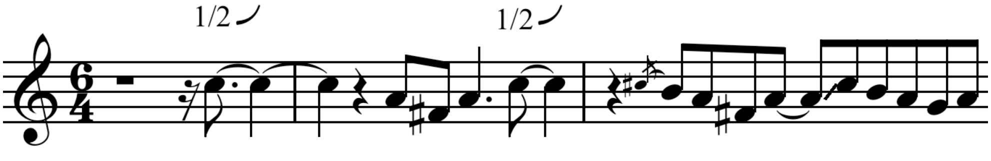
Example (*s*) *Silk Road (Revisited)* *falsetas*-style[10] lines with chord punctuations (track 19)



The first solo is performed on the steel-string neck; it employs bends, slides, and jazz-blues/rock style phrasing:

Example (*t*) - Silk Road: extract from acoustic guitar solo (track 20)

G major 7$^{\#11}$/A



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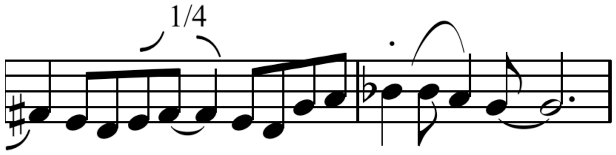
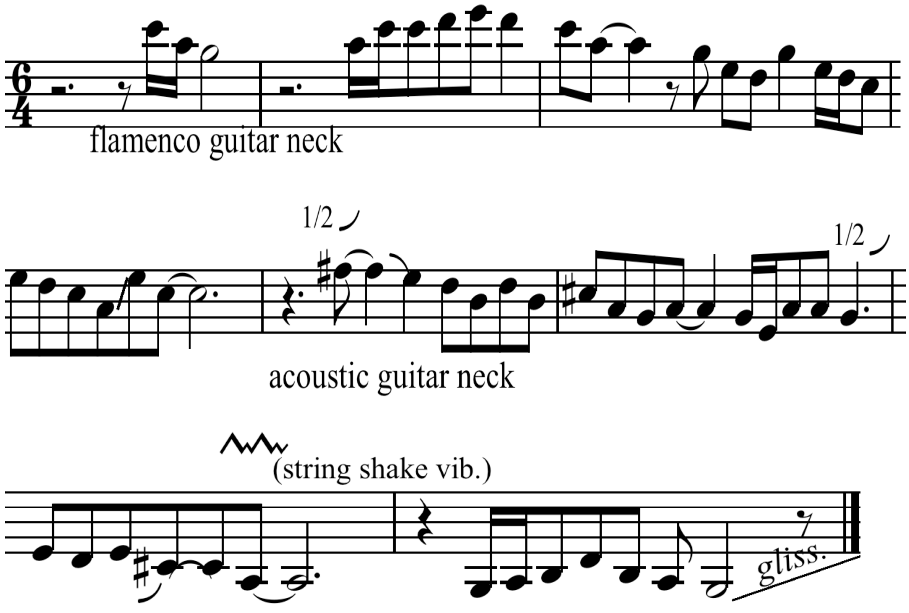
[10] In Flamenco culture, *falsetas* are short compositions/improvisations performed in an instrumental piece, and/or as improvised fills when accompanying a singer/dancer. Many *falsetas* by distinguished players become stock reference for improvisation practice. These f*alseta* represent an organic expression of tradition that can be emulated faithfully, or remodelled to suit the imagination and techniques of new generations of performers in pace with the ongoing evolution of modern flamenco. In this sense, a nexus connects flamenco to jazz, where the mastery of stock phrases is both tradition forming and a platform for new developments in improvisation.



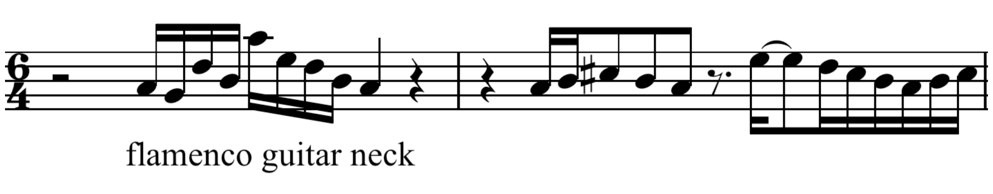
Although I had planned to play the entire second chorus on the flamenco guitar neck, I spontaneously switched to the acoustic guitar neck half way through it. This is probably due to the disorienting aspect of switching guitar necks back and forth several times during the performance. Nonetheless, the unexpected is what can, and often does happen in the moment of performance when the unpredictable/intuitive nature of improvisation takes hold:

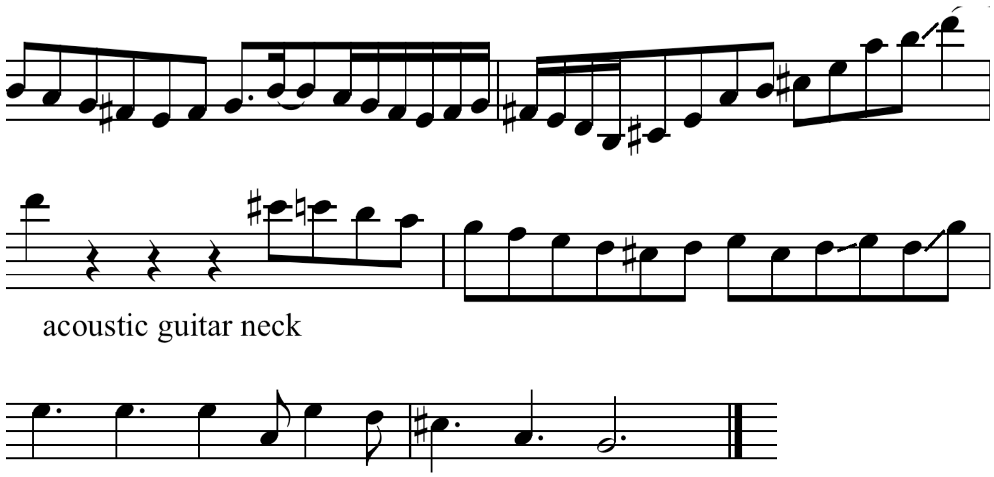
Example (*u*) - *Silk Road*: extract from flamenco/acoustic guitar solo trades (track 21)



The third and final improvisation chorus is a sequence of four-bar solo trades between the flamenco, and acoustic guitars. The dialogue between the two explores an aesthetic juxtaposition of *falsetas*-inspired lines on the flamenco guitar, and the blues-tinged jazz/rock on the acoustic guitar neck. The improvisation approach is horizontal, as shown in Example (*v*).

Example (*v*) - *Silk Road*: extract from flamenco/acoustic guitar solo trades (track 22)





2.3.8 *Silk Road (Revisited)*: Recording process

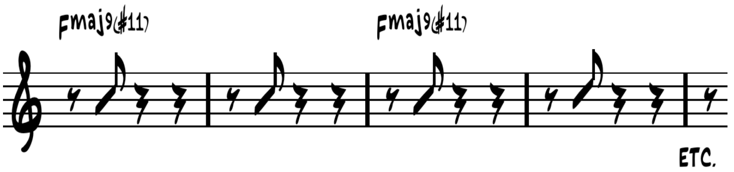
The recording engineer suggested dispensing with the click-track as it might have impeded a sense of openness to the performance. However, I knew from experience how difficult it would be to second-guess various entry points without it. After a couple of false starts I committed the structure to memory; whatever decisions I made from there on became spur of the moment stuff occurring whilst recording. I was aware that keeping everything as spontaneous as possible would invite greater margin for error, but that is the exciting part of improvisation, not really knowing what's going to happen next.

In order to set up an open space feeling in the introduction I began by playing some flamenco guitar *raseguado*-type strokes on the 12th-fret harmonics on the steel-string neck, and added a series of harmonics to create a drone consisting of overlapping sounds. At this point, the focus shifted to improvising a melody around the note C#, which is also the starting note of the composition and the governing pitch upon which I would improvise the brief introduction that bears some resemblance to *alap*. The techniques that I employed are pitch bending achieved by string pulling, and chord bending by controlled physical pressure exerted of the guitar-neck to lightly oscillate the overall sound being produced, as opposed to the tremolo arm in *Eastern Blues* for example. The shimmering orchestral strings-like effect was overdubbed later with a brushing technique with the index finger of the right-hand executing swift, light up-down vertical strokes.

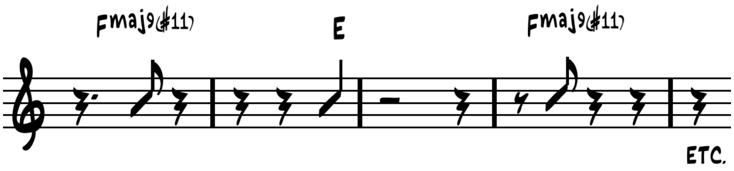
The written melody was performed on the flamenco guitar neck up to the improvisation section. There was no rhythm guitar at this stage, just single line melody with occasional chord strokes and click track. I continued recording, but switched to rhythm guitar mode, still employing the flamenco neck. This was effective in laying the rhythmic foundations for the three improvisation choruses that would come in the overdub. I completed this first take by restating the melody still on the flamenco guitar.

Recording the second track became a matter of listening carefully and anticipating the music. The most vivid example is from bar 32, when I have to hit the flamenco-type right-hand strokes to highlight the lively melodic line. Although I had the manuscript on the music stand, I forgot to refer to the written rhythms because I was immersed in listening to the music as I played. As a result, I second-guessed the chord punctuations by following the rhythmic cadences in the melodic phrasing; the strokes ended up in different places from what I had written.

Example showing *raseguado* strokes in the original score:



Example showing improvised *raseguado* strokes:



The overall dialogue has blues/jazz/rock nuances, but mostly flamenco inspired lines. At the end of the solo section I instinctively add four-bars of the A major sound to pre-empt too sudden a re-entry from the last solo into the melody. The theme is restated on the flamenco guitar neck, with occasional unisons executed on the steel-string guitar neck during the second take, intended to fire-up a climatic ending. There was a brief moment in the course of this process when structural considerations of the overall composition steered me to mix Indian-nuanced ornaments with the *falsetas* lines to reconnect with the Indian nuances in the introduction. This micro interlude in my brain was quickly dismissed in favour of being in the moment. Later, in post recording production, I considered whether the Indian-nuanced introduction should be edited from the track because it may seem an isolated element bearing little relationship to the rest of the piece. However, I opted to retain it because a) it is supported by the overdubbed backgrounds, and b) its mood, fundamental to the overall aesthetic effect, outweighed structural considerations.

The analysis of these pieces suggests that the ornaments I have employed encompass a blues-tinged jazz approach nuanced by flamenco and Brazilian elements. In addition, classical Indian elements are performed through instrumental techniques of contemporary guitar techniques that I have devised to interpreting classical styles - Carnatic primarily, but to some extent Hindustani. The investigation of rehearsal and recording processes have informed and confirmed that improvisation activity extends beyond the scoring of the compositions. As such, in the next section of this chapter I ask: to what extent does improvisation function before these processes are engaged, and, can a relationship between improvisation and composition be assessed on the basis that diverse levels of improvisation activity drive it?

2.4 Discussion

A framework that distinguishes musical process according to perceptions of spontaneity/premeditation accentuates a dichotomy in the improvisation/composition dialogue. Yet, improvisation is acknowledged as a generative stimulus of the composition process, and in turn, compositional techniques are tools in improvisation practice to assist with the auditory error-correction of improvisation in performance. This suggests that improvisation isn't clinically separate from composition and that it can be discerned as operating on multiple levels of activity such as pre-notation, performance, and production. This questions to what extent improvisation is active in the creation of the compositions presented in this chapter - what actually happens in the making of a musical work, what are the challenges/problems, and how can the differences be reconciled?

The systematic development of experimental pieces that incorporate intercultural elements in their framework encounters aesthetic and technical challenges through the implication of diverse cultural influences. A first step in understanding the decision-making that ultimately shapes the composer's direction in this context employs a chronological process of observation that identifies three phases of practice in the pre-notation stage:

Phase 1. Genesis - an abstract state
Phase 2. Transition - laying the groundwork
Phase 3. Improvisation and notation

Mingus Ashes in the Ganges

This phase delves into the genesis of the compositions, which is a process that reveals the generative stimuli of nascent ideas and how imagination and creative thinking set motion to their evolution. I refer to Ryle Gilbert's description that creative thinking is *mind improvisation* (see Literature Review, pp. 17), and Edward Hall's suggestion that improvisation and play are integral components of life, rooted in the limbic system (see Literature Review, pp. 16). The genesis of *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges* provides an insight into this process.

2.4.1 *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*: Phase 1. Genesis - an abstract state

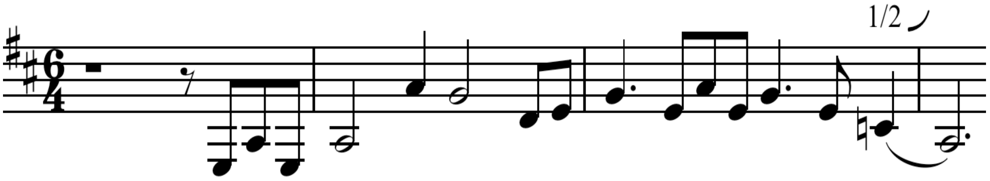
During a train trip, when thinking about directions for the recording project, I was unexpectedly taken by a reflective mood about bassist/composer Charlie Mingus (1922-1979); his music and stories of his life have influenced me. In 1984, I witnessed a direct example of Mingus's music dynasty in a performance by Henry Threadgill's group at Jazz Yatra Festival, in the Bombay (Mumbai) Cricket Stadium where I also performed with the Australian jazz group "Intersection" led by pianist Roger Frampton. Another related experience is in 1999, when I was support artist for George Adams, the tenor saxophonist from the seminal Mingus albums *Changes One*, and *Changes Two*. Reflecting on Mingus's image and the meaning of his music, I remembered that his ashes had been scattered in the Ganges at the foothills of the Himalayas at Rishikesh; a rite of passage that underlines his embrace of Indian mysticism. This event set me thinking about my mystical sensations on the banks of the Ganges near Calcutta during a one-month sojourn recording an album with *santoor* player Sandip Chatterjee. I also thought how blues connotations are an aesthetic trademark of Mingus's work - his album *Blues and Roots* is but one example of this. It is clear that the unexpected conjuring of Charlie Mingus represents the generative idea of the composition - an example of what Daniel Fischlin describes as *improvisioning*: "*…the calling forth of the unexpected, the making present of a response that could not have been predicted except in that moment, there in that specific context*" (Fischlin, 2010, p.1). As such, the unfolding of the subsequent thoughts/images demonstrates a creative process of evolution that inspires the narrative in the title of the composition.

2.4.2 *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*: Phase 2. Transition - laying the groundwork

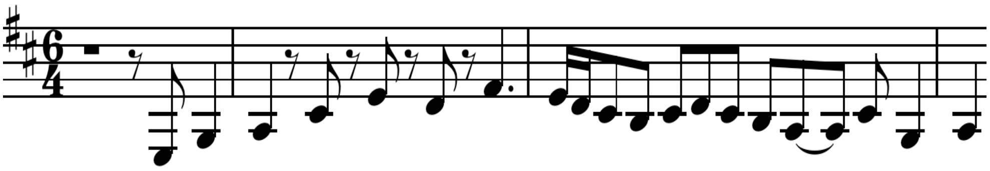
The title triggers an improvisatory process that begins with vocalising bass lines and drum groove that emulate Mingus's bass style over a swing in 6/4 **(track 23).** The instinctive choice of 6/4 time signature might have been subconsciously stimulated by the lulling rhythm of the train tracks, but in aesthetic terms it is intended as a spatial aspect intended to connote the rhythmic flow of the river Ganges, which I intended as contrasting complement to the bass lines emulating Mingus's jazz/blues imprint. In this sense, this level of improvisation explores the potential for an aesthetic cohesion where the Ganges accommodates/welcomes the jazz journeyman's ultimate devotion to it. From this point on, the challenge is in translating these intercultural junctions into the foundational elements for the composition. Reflecting on this process, the age-old practice of employing voice and tapping rhythm is a simple, but effective method of trying out ideas. It means that the improvisation/composition process can be transported anywhere, anytime, as opposed to being limited to a dedicated space, and/or needing a musical instrument. This flexibility allows tremendous focus and continuity to the pre-notation phase of the work.

2.4.3 *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*: Phase 3 - Improvisation practice and notation

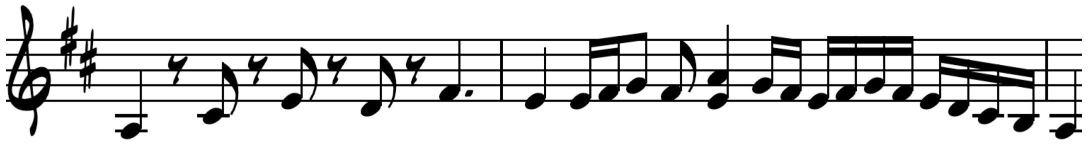
Striking the tonic A-pitched drone on the steel-string guitar, and the rattling of the bottom E string against the fret bars creates a vibration somewhat similar to that of the Indian *tampura*. These sounds, which also connote blues, stimulate an improvisation that creates an initial motif for the composition (track 24).



Jeff Pressing (1987) has demonstrated a theory that improvisation is a process resulting from streams of musical developments consisting of clusters of reference for the improviser to exercise creativity. This idea equally applies to composition, even if contrasting perceptions of spontaneity between improvisation and composition may hinge on how these clusters of reference are expresses in a temporal sense - an argument that I will unfold in my concluding argument in chapter four. In any case, I sustain that spontaneous creativity is central to the process, which usually results in choosing the first, or rarely, the second motif. In this case, the first motif of *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges* is an evolution of the initial motif above:

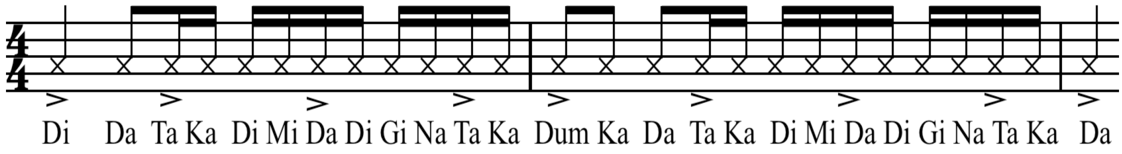


The construction of the response-phrase is a critical moment in the improvisation practice and consequent development of the composition because the aim is in discerning a complementing aesthetic balance between the intercultural elements. As such, the intuitive aspect of improvisation practice focuses on such sensibilities. However, group performance also influences aesthetic discernment and outcome where although the intention of the performers is to aim for fluid expression, the synthesising nature of the four works is problematic because the overall improvisational narrative, as discussed earlier, combines diverse models of improvisation. In this sense, each player’s interpretative/improvisational skills are challenged in varying degrees to balance artistic expression/experience/aesthetics with group empathy, and within an experimental zone. Despite the problems, these contrasting approaches open the door to expanding the possibilities of jazz improvisation, and improvisation in general. The first measure of the second semi-phrase in the composition is unchanged whilst the second shows rhythmic development inspired from Indian *konnakol* [11].

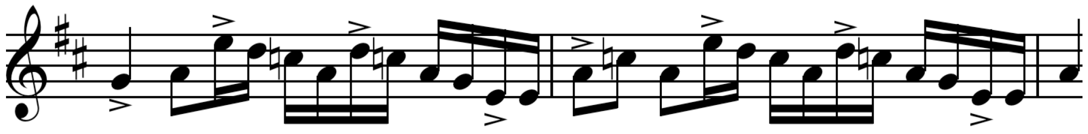


A practice that forms the basis of my approach to improvising within this context involves transcriptions of *konnakol* phrases, and their adaptation to building guitar lines. The following example is derived from the DVD *Gateway to Rhythm*, which is a compendium of *konnakol* rhythms (J. McLaughlin/S. Ganesh, 2008). The top line demonstrates the rhythmic transcription with syllables and accent markings whilst the bottom line demonstrates my melodic adaptation for guitar (or any other instrument),

(Track 25 contains both notated examples)

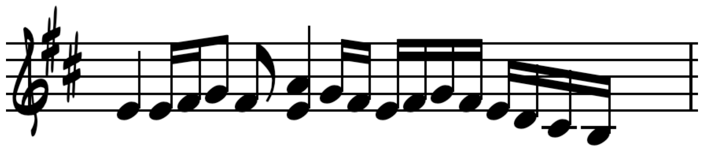

4/4
Di Da Ta Ka Di Mi Da Di Gi Na Ta Ka Dum Ka Da Ta Ka Di Mi Da Di Gi Na Ta Ka Da

Rhythmic transcription - (Strazz, 2010, Unpublished)
Konnakol syllables (Jayasinha, 2008)



(Strazz, 2010, unpublished)

Although the time signature is 4/4, the rhythm of the first measure in the example above shows a close relationship to the closing measure of the second semi-phrase in *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*:



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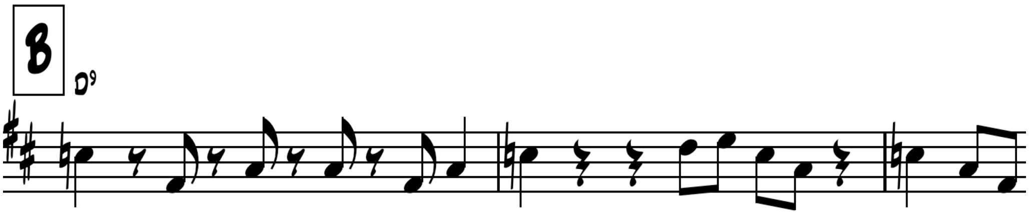
[11] **Konnakol**: The art of reciting rhythmic syllables in South India/Carnatic classical music.

In letter B (bar 17), the first measure retains the rhythmic shape of the initial motif, but in contrast, the second measure is sparse and bluesy in character. This approach is intuitive expression to affirm the blues idiom as the principal aesthetic of the work whilst the *konnakol*-derived rhythmic element provides the Indian nuance:



Eastern Blues

This is the second composition conceived in the project that, similarly to *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*, is based on a variation of the blues. Having defined the term ‘Eastern’ earlier in this chapter, the general concept in the making of this composition is to produce a jazz work with aesthetic nuances suggestive of Indian classical music. Therefore, the significance of the ‘*Eastern*’ in the blues becomes central to the development of an experimental model. Since I have already established an artistic direction through the first composition, the process in *Eastern Blues* begins directly with Phase 2 level of improvisation activity.

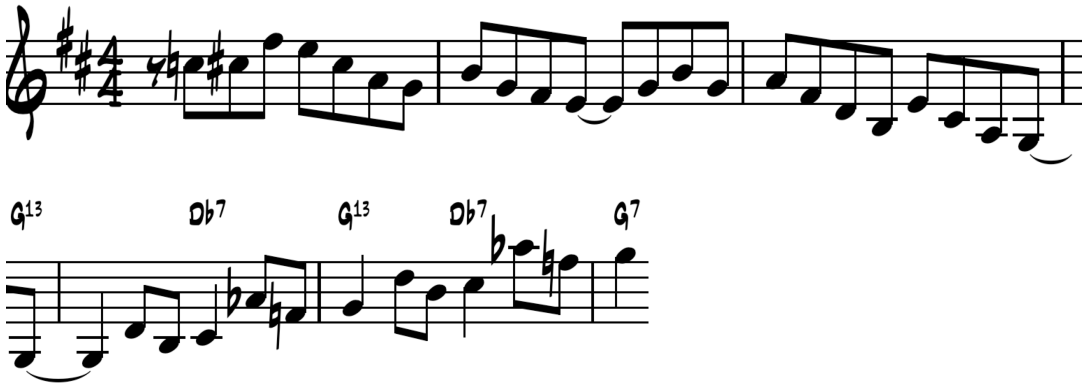
2.4.4 *Eastern Blues*: Phase 2. Laying the groundwork

This approach positions an atmosphere of improvisation at the centre of this discussion where a general plan, rather than a specific system, drives improvisation practice: “…*creativity is found to involve trial-and-error, but with some regularities in the method*” (Lehmann et al., 2007, cited in Creech, 2008). As such, I opt to explore the possibilities of form/structure for *Eastern Blues* outside the traditional 12-bar blues form.

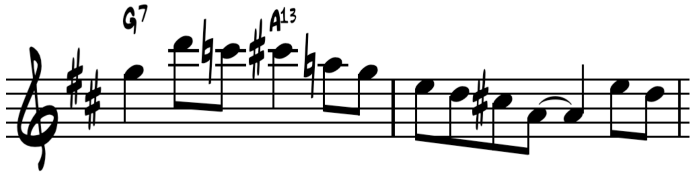
The twenty-nine-bar composition, consisting of twenty-one-bar theme + eight-bar refrain, employs a combination of vertical and linear melodic shapes. The irregular number of measures are subject to the intuitive process of what ‘feels right’ in shaping the phases, regardless of symmetrical conventions; the evenness of the seven-bar melody in the verse of the evergreen *Yesterday* by the Lennon/McCartney, for example, defies the ‘symmetry’ of the eight-bar rule in composition. With the melodic framework completed, my intuitive process of improvisation shifts to systematising an improvisation section by adopting an even number of bars to facilitate performance, as will be discussed later. The pre-notation process involves some recording of the improvisation practice sessions. Listening back gives additional perspective on the longer, complex phrases, and faster tempos than in the previous composition. It also allows testing the phrases against a rhythmic groove/accompaniment/ played on guitar while listening to the phrases. At any rate, it is a method solely employed as a useful auditory reference tool. Ultimately, notation germinates from a direct process of improvisation through singing and/or guitar practice.

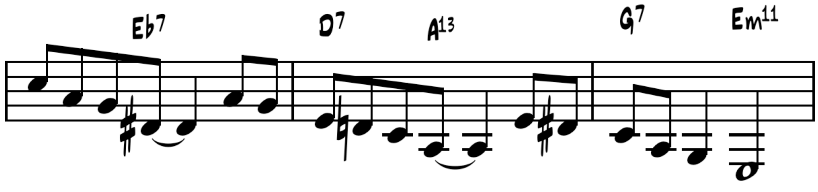
2.4.5 *Eastern Blues*: Phase 3 - Improvisation practice and notation

The vertical shape of the melody is evident in bars 1-3 as the phrases are arpeggio-type structures built on the A dominant 7, E minor/A13 chords respectively. Bars 4 and 5 continue this approach through an ascending tri-tonal movement from employing G13/Db7. These melodic structures imply a jazz-bop inflected blues, and are an inherent part of the composer's palette of improvisation practice/performance in this style:



In the responding descending phrase, I employ a 'call and response' technique through a tri-tonal symmetrical linear phrase that combines jazz and Indian nuances in the treatment of the melody. The scale employed is a reduction of a G Mixolydian mode. The omission of the 2nd and 6th degrees draws a similar interval content to the Ionian Pentatonic Raga *Gambhiranata* (A C# D E G#) – the note G substitutes G# because it concords with the minor 7th degree of the A dominant chord. As such, it suggests an Indian nuance in the call section of the phrase while in the response phrase the D# replaces D natural to recreate the tritonal jazz aesthetic of this passage:





The harmonic aspect of the composition reveals a method that employs two chord progressions. The first was devised to fit the melody, resulting in a 29-bar sequence. The second was developed to allow for an even number of bars for the blowing section, an 18-bar progression is employed instead of the uneven 29-bar melody. Its length is devised as a departure from the customary 12 or 24-bar blues (Appendix 1, pp.132-134). The *alap*-nuanced introduction, the drone backgrounds, and acoustic guitar solo prove to be a greater challenge than anticipated due to the variable aesthetics in the band's improvisational approaches as discussed in the analysis.

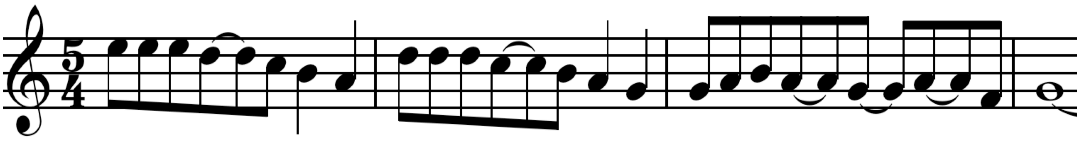
Tina the Healer

The shape of the remaining pieces, *Tina the Healer*, and *Silk Road* (*Revisited*), is underlined by the fact that they are evolutions of previously composed material. This is significant because, contrary to the view that notated compositions are *fixed works*, they are works in progress that can provide a lifelong frame of reference. In a sense, this is similar for a jazz musician's repertoire, as Bailey explains: " *The repertoire of a jazzman such as Dexter Gordon or Lee Konits, for instance, contains probably a fairly small number of different 'songs'. But they will provide an adequate working context, perhaps for a lifetime*" (Bailey, 1993, 48). Thus, the idea of composition as a fixed work, as Racy has suggested, may be interpreted differently. Busoni's ideal that *'notation is to improvisation as the portrait to the living model'* (see Literature Review, pp. 18), can be extended to viewing composition from the composer's perspective that that a score is a flexible model that contains a body of information providing almost limitless basis for development/improvisation. Aside from Husserl's Omni temporal theory on this point, and its developments as suggested by Benson's phenomenological perspectives (see Literature Review, pp. 13-14), composition can be viewed as containing malleable elements that can invariably be a catalyst for new compositional models through improvisations practice. Branhill writes that J.S. Bach: *"…often wrote out several different versions of his most popular pieces, such as the inventions, to show how a student might improvise on the structure*" (Barnhill, 2006, p. 1).

2.4.6 *Tina the Healer* - reworking

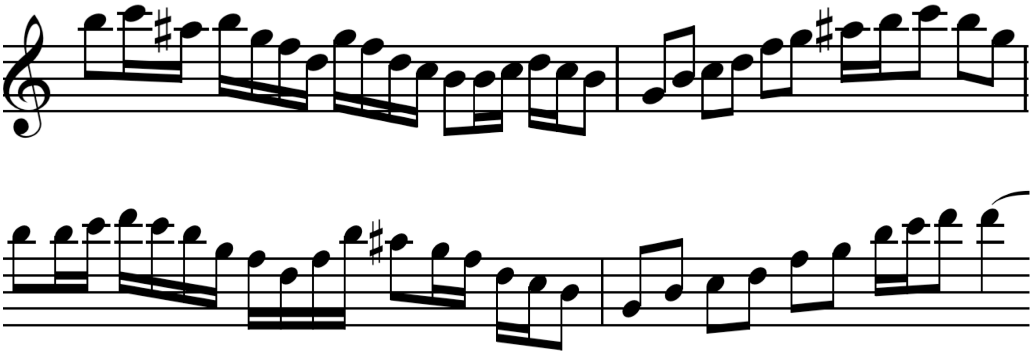
This piece has undergone several transformations since it was first recorded on the album

Passion Fruit (Tall Poppies, 106, 1997). The original version employs a 5/4 rhythm where a ten-beat rhythmic-cycle in Hindustani classical music known as *jhaptal*, which consists of beat division of 2 + 3 + 2 + 3, is reversed to 3 + 2 + 3 + 3 to fit the rhythmic shape of the melody:



In addition to the original melody, the manuscript contains one example of several *tihai*s[12] developed for live performance/recording to create a climatic ending through ensemble unison passages; in this case the phrase is repeated three times as in Indian classical music performance; it is repeated three times, but only played once in the recorded example below. Please note that the recorded example begins with five quarter-note beats to establish the tempo:

Teena de Healer tihai (track 26)



In contrast, the current version of the piece relies on information held in memory, and transmitted aurally - a process that I will unfold in the discussion. A full score was developed after the recording for the purpose of this enquiry only - the transcription includes the improvisation dialogue between guitar and double bass (see Appendix 3, pp.153-157). In this new version, a 4/4-time signature replaces the original 5/4, which by extension invites a rethink of the melody. The main challenge is in retaining the shape of the original melody to fit the 4/4-time - the following phrase shows example of this:

Teena de Healer - original version:

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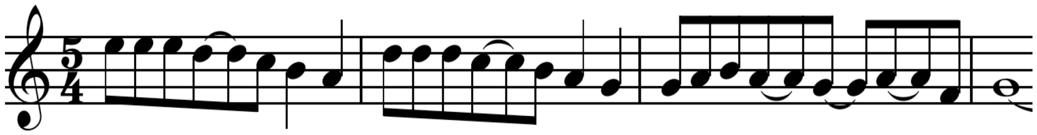
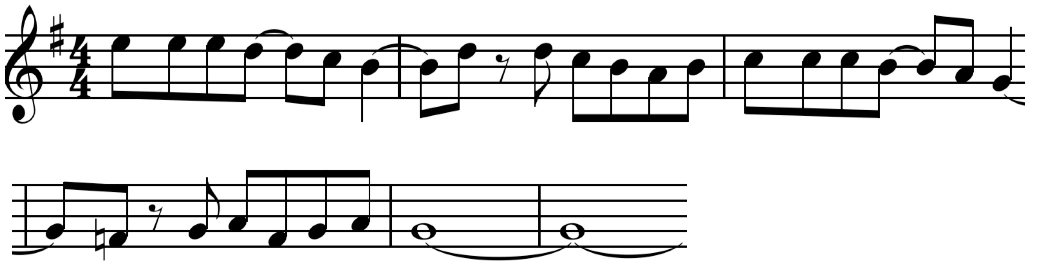
[12] In Hindustani classic music, any three-time repetition of a pattern of rhythmic sound-syllables is known as *tihai*. Hence, often the term employed is '*teen-tihai*' - as three equal sections make a complete design. RANADE, A. D. (2006) *Music contexts: a concise dictionary of Hindustani Music*, Promilla & Co. Publishers in association with Bibliophile South Asia.



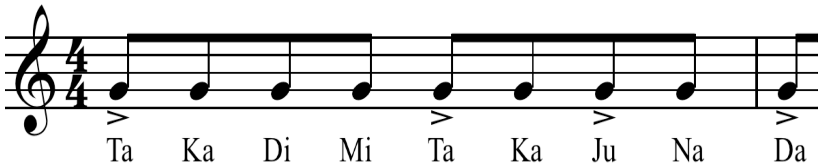
Tina the Healer - re-adaptation:



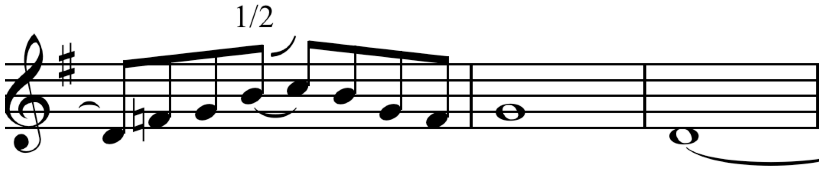
Although this approach may be seen more as arranging rather than composition, several new phrases in this 4/4 version of the piece resulted from improvisation practice.

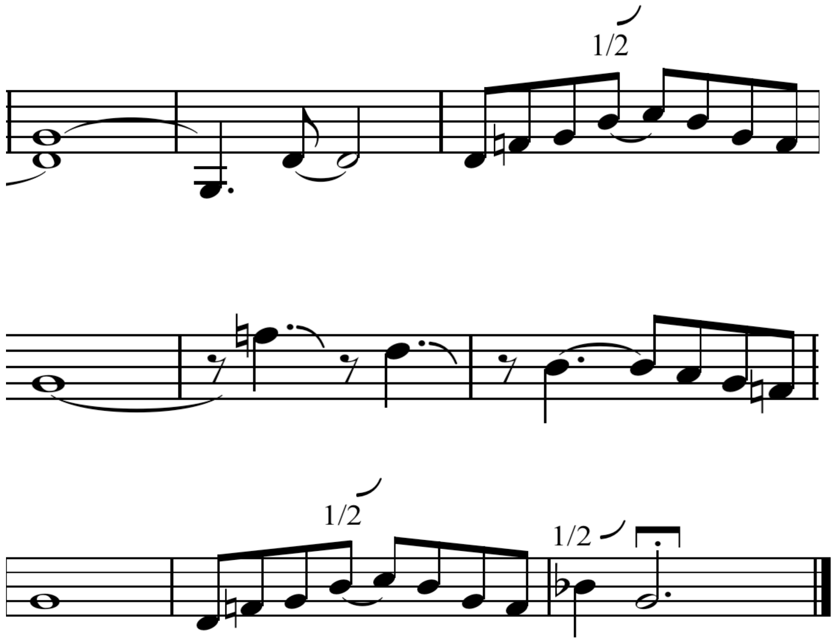
Example 1 below shows a simple *konnakol* pattern by Selva Ganesh with accents on beats 1, 3, and 4. It is an example to show the rhythmic foundations for the concluding *tihai* in 4/4, which is demonstrated in example 2. The repeated motif is distributed over *teental*, which is a 16-beats rhythmic cycle in Hindustani classical music:

Example 1. *Konnakol* transcription (Strazz, 2010), *konnakol* syllables (Jayasinha, 2008, p. 1).



Example 2. *Tina the Healer tihai* based on example 1(track 27 contains examples 1 and 2)

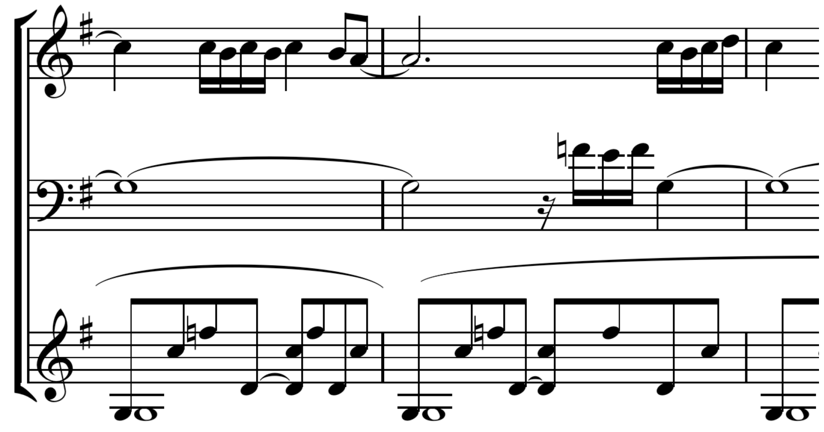




The improvisation that follows the melody is performed over open-score (no set number of bars). The approach employs a dialogic linear discourse between guitar and bass where techniques such as paraphrasing, call and response, and counterpoint are employed. The guitar work provides ornamental nuances with techniques such as slides, hammers, and pull offs in a manner suggestive of Indian-string instruments such as the *sitar* and *sarod*. In addition, the guitar employs highly rhythm-driven melodic passages that draw from Indian rhythm as previously discussed.

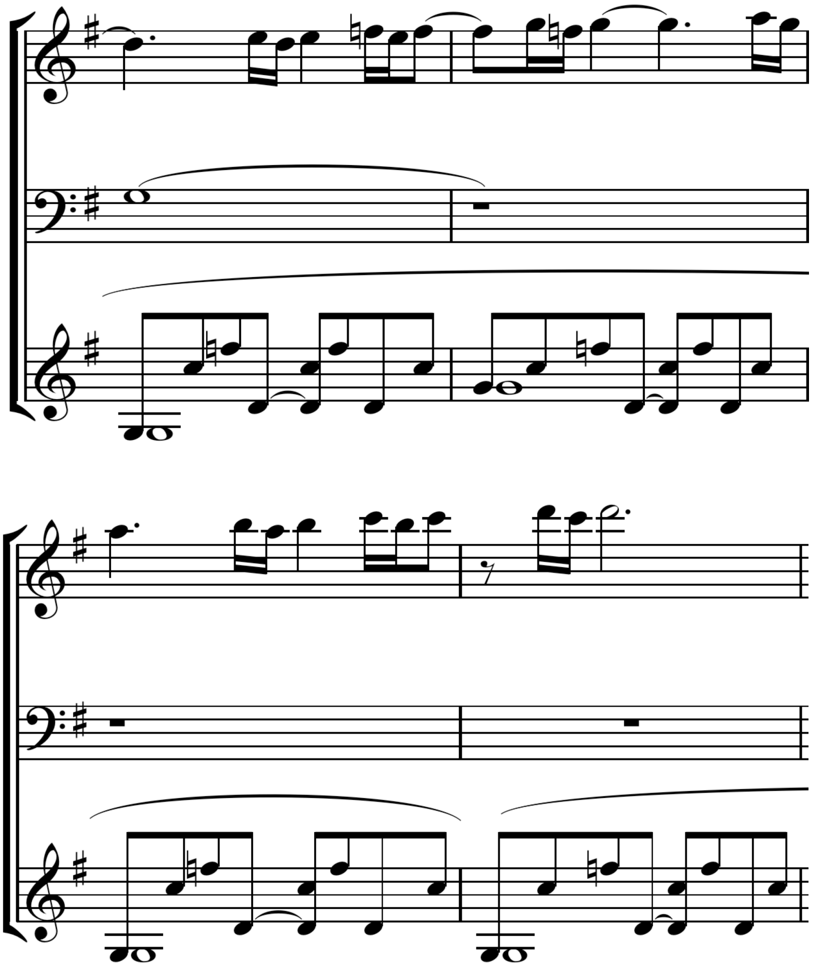
Example 3. Top line = guitar/ middle line = bass/ bottom line = drone:

(Track 28)



Example 4. Top line = guitar/ middle line = bass/ bottom line = drone:

(Track 29)



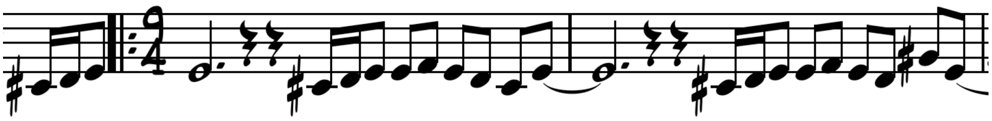
Silk Road (*Revisited*)

The concluding piece in this study is also a variation on a previously published edition (2008). The first draft shows a plan to record the piece for quartet. The score contains a contrapuntal second guitar part that employs the Arabic/Gypsy minor scale - A, Bb, C#, D, E, F, G#, A - as well as bass and drums (see scores in Appendices 4-6, pp. 161-173). Unfortunately, this idea is abandoned because the interpretation of the flamenco-nuanced rhythmic proves problematic during rehearsals. Nevertheless, this outcome evolves into a solo recording effort that explores the potential of the double-neck guitar - the objective is to simulate a duet performance outlining a dialogue between the flamenco and the steel string sounds and techniques. In this sense, it is a portrayal of two guitar necks in a symbiotic interaction between two organisms living in close physical association; in this case within one guitar body-chamber. The recording includes a short *rubato* introduction that explores cohesion between flamenco and Carnatic classical nuances. These include: drone, sympathetic strings, *raseguado* technique, and string-slides type of ornamentation as outlined earlier in this chapter.

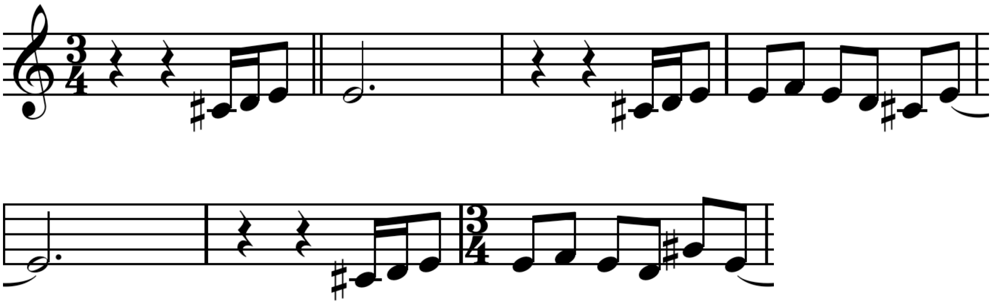
2.4.7 *Silk Road Revisited - reworking*

This version employs some rhythmic and melodic changes from the original 2008 edition. The theme at the beginning is unchanged, except that is written in 9/4-time for outlining the rhythmic aspect of the phrases that alternate between five and four beats groupings:

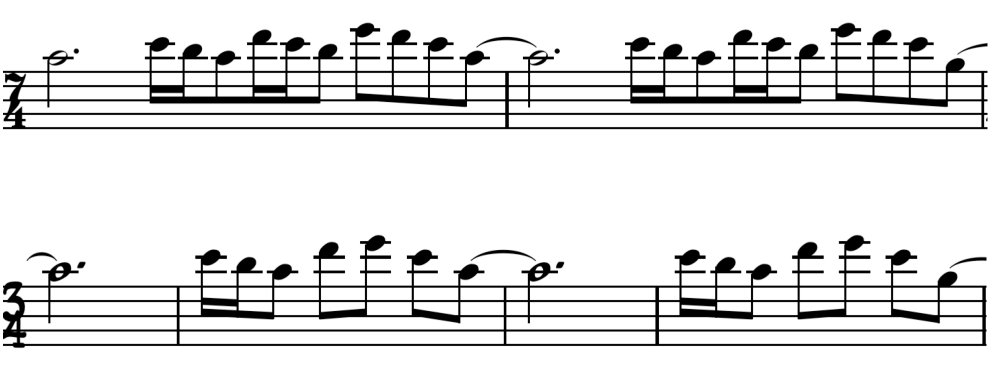
Duet and Quartet versions:



Original version:



Further changes are also applied to this original 7/4 section modified to fit 3/4 time:



This adjustment is intended to facilitate rehearsal and live performance because it easier to sight-read and retain to memory in 3/4 rather than in 7/4, especially when the frequency of performances is irregular or when stand-in musicians substitute members of the group; though, this doesn’t usually happen with this music because it is technically and conceptually involved.

The decision to employ a 6/4-time signature for the solo section is to create a spatial aesthetic of rhythm where the strong beat occurs every six beats instead of three. Bars 49 to 60 reflect a modal jazz approach, where only two chords provide the harmonic backdrop for the soloist. This is in contrast to the frequency rate of chord-changes employed in the concluding four bars of this section (Bars 61 to 64), where the II V I progression in D harmonic minor key points to jazz and/or Latin jazz idiom.

2.5 Conclusion

The key areas that I have investigated suggest that improvisation and composition intertwine across the full spectrum of this creative process. This is evident through multiple levels of improvisation activity, from abstract to fully formed ideas, to rehearsal/performance and production. In addition, examination of artistic objectives and outcomes has uncovered a process challenged by experimental/tradition elements, intercultural aesthetics, cultural considerations, stylistic genre-tensions, and creative instinct versus rational problem-solving strategies.

3. Silk Road Concerto

Introduction

This chapter investigates the workings of a concerto for guitar, piano, and modern chamber orchestra where parameters and possibilities of concerto are extended through an experimental approach. As in chapter two, the objective is to examine improvisation activity within the composition process and in particular how, and to what extent notation is intertwined with spontaneous creativity and improvisation practice. Hence, the objective is to find out about expected/unexpected incidents and outcomes - what worked and why, what didn't and why, and what could work. Thus, the analytical framework consists of four parts; discussion here is organised accordingly:

1 Background to this creative work
1 Analysis
1 Discussion
1 Conclusion

3.1 Background to this creative work

The inspiration for this piece stemmed from a work that I composed for *2@1*, a duo project with pianist Matt McMahon in 2008. In a technical sense, this version provides the basis for the *Silk Road* concerto as sonata does to symphony. Beyond that, dialogical improvisation, synergism, and musical lineage from the collaboration became key elements that I intended to incorporate into the concerto. These would influence choice of musicians, orchestration, and general approach to composition/recording processes.

Symphonic trial

In 2010, the Central Coast Symphony Orchestra, which is a respected regional group in New South Wales, performed the first version of the concerto as part of a Christmas concert. This draft included a large string section and five horns - flute, oboe, clarinet, flugelhorn, and euphonium. From the outset, I did feel somewhat uneasy about engaging with classically trained musicians in an improvisation-free zone. In fact, this collaboration turned out to be a mismatch. The orchestra's rigid rhythmic interpretation of the flamenco/Latin grooves hindered the essential character of the piece. This was compounded by the fact that several of the elements, especially the rhythms, and improvisations, proved somewhat out of reach for a conductor steeped in mainstream Western classical repertoire, despite his enthusiasm. Furthermore, aside from one string-section rehearsal, the only full orchestra rehearsal occurred the day of the performance, sandwiched between symphonies by Bernstein and Rachmaninov. Moreover, aside from the dedicated improvisation sections in the piece, the idea of imbuing the overall performance with a feeling of improvisation presented challenges that can be narrowed to the fact that improvisation is extraneous to this environment, as George Lewis explains:

> Orchestra performers operate as part of a network comprised not only of musicians, conductors and composers, but also of administrators, foundations, critics and the media, historians, educational institutions, and much more. Each of the nodes within this network, not just those directly making music, would need to become 'improvisation-aware', as part of a process of re-socialization and economic restructuring that could help bring about the transformation of the orchestra that so many have envisioned. (Lewis, 2006, 432)

At any rate, the failures and realisations resulting from this experience became useful in developing the work in its current form, reducing the size of the orchestra to a chamber group made up of musicians able to handle the essential elements of the work. As such, I selected only performers that have improvising skills and knowledge of the intercultural elements contained in the work - i.e. flamenco, Latin jazz, Impressionism, and at least some feeling for Indian classical music. The musical challenge for both composer and performers is in the ability to fluidly synthesize structural and aesthetic elements. Aside from the music, other challenges included coordination of rehearsals, recording, and various production processes. The next step was to consider the 'right' players that have the potential to synergise as a group and perform the music accordingly.

The presence of pianist Matt McMahon was intrinsic to the project, so the assembling of the group began with the string section. I engaged a string quartet and woodwind players whose combined experience includes Eastern European gypsy music, jazz, Latin and Western classical music. For the percussion I decided to incorporate the North Indian *tabla* and *pakhawaj*, drum-kit, and *palmas*[13] to represent the aesthetic nuances of the work. The plan was to employ the double-headed *pakhawaj* in Movement 3 to provide a blending texture to synthesise Latin jazz/Indian classical elements as opposed to using either congas or *tabla*, either of which would impose a distinct idiomatic voice on the music. Unfortunately, I had to settle with *table* because the percussionist had an old injury from playing *pakhawaj* that tends to flare up. In addition, the plan to engage *palmas* to intensify the flamenco rhythmic nature of the work was forfeited due to unavailability of performers.

In retrospect, the decision not to engage a conductor had a twofold effect: on the one hand, it allowed greater interaction amongst the players; in this sense, the performers became empowered at a deeper level than just interpreting the music because their imagination, experience, and decision making became influential in shaping the work. On the other hand, the presence of a conductor, as well as record producer would have made the production aspect more fluid, allowing me to focus on my guitar part exclusively instead of the multiple roles I ended up fulfilling.

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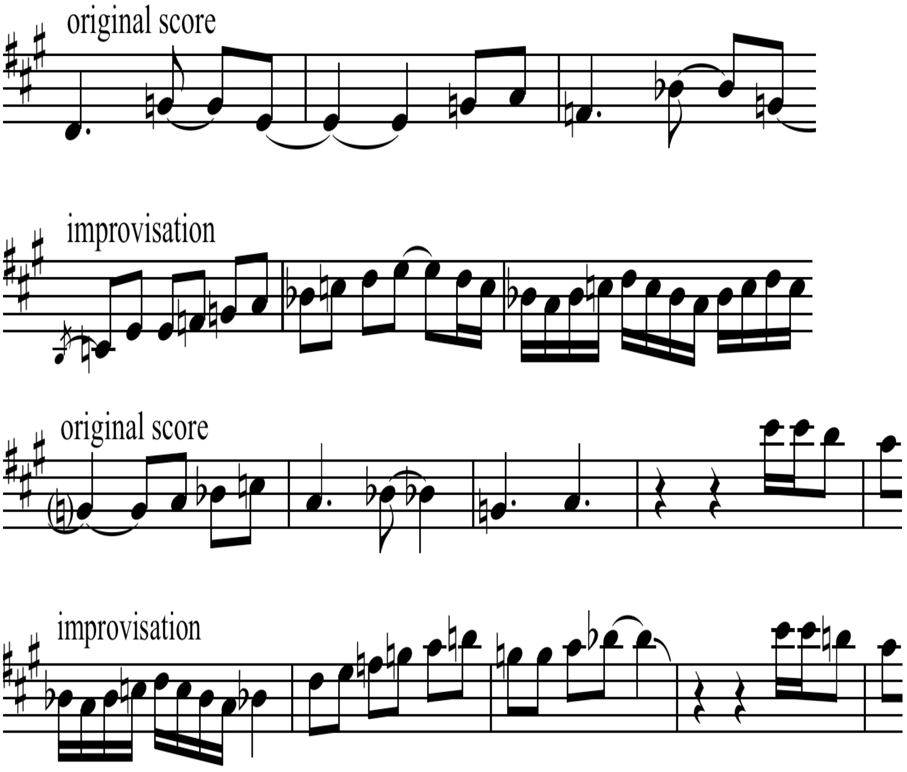
[13] Palmas: Rhythmic hand claps that accompany flamenco dancers, singers and guitarists. In general, *palmas* accompany in regular rhythm or counter time (*contra tiempo*). They are performed *sorda* (dry and muffled/cupped) or *secas/claras* (striking, strong, and dry).

3.1.1 Pre-recording process and improvisation

One of the challenges in devising a recording plan is determined by collective availability of the orchestra for both rehearsals and performance; it is no surprise that professionally established players run busy schedules, which makes it difficult to synchronise dates. This is compounded by other factors, such as ensuring university funding support, application/approval, pre-recording production plan, organisation of technical crew, recording studio, piano tuning, organisation of orchestral parts, printing, and so on. I would have been pleased if at least the string players had been able to rehearse on an agreed day, but even this, was unrealisable within the set timeframe of the plan. As a result, I devised a strategy to counter this problem by providing MP3s of rough recordings, and scores to all the players four weeks before the recording. Furthermore, I set up separate meetings/rehearsals with the pianist, the percussionist, and the drummer. I also had preliminary telephone conversations with the remaining members of the group.

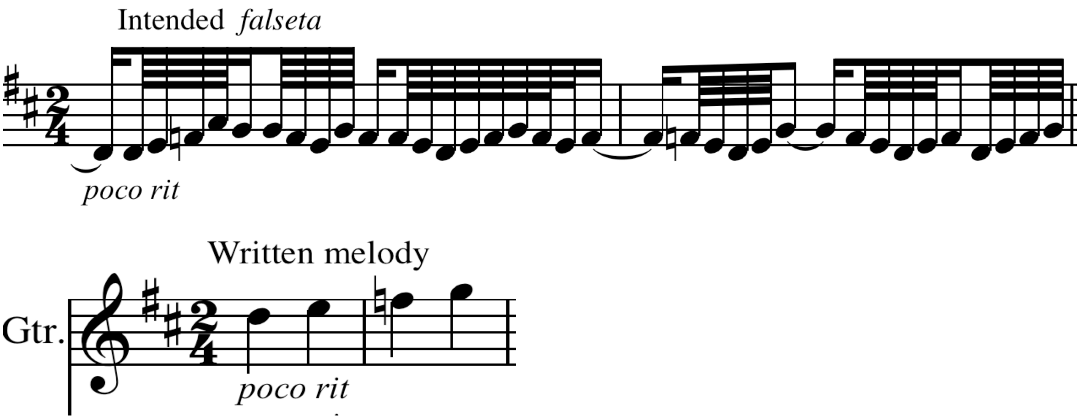
The realisation of these multiple tasks and possible unforseen circumstances influenced how I approached my performance. As such, I decided to commit the guitar part to memory in order to deal with production demands. During this process, I began to find areas where I could use improvisation to replace the guitar score; I found vitality in this approach and discovered new ways to express the music by keeping notation and improvisation in close communion. This realisation was important because it spurred me to fold this idea at discrete points into the score - guitar and piano primarily, but also whenever any other instrument may have been involved in a solo passage. The drawback of this approach was in not having the backup of a few rehearsals to familiarise the music before the recording session where *all* the musicians could play with confidence beyond the score, and take improvisation opportunities. Nonetheless, the intimate knowledge of the music allowed me to employ improvisation *on the spot* within these limitations. Following are some examples over the three movements that reflect this approach:

Example (*a*) Movement 1, bars 175-178: shifts from the written unison part to an improvisation shown here in ¾ time signature (track 30)


original score
improvisation
original score
improvisation

The next example demonstrates a reductionist approach where a highly melismatic *falseta* which I had devised to replace the score draws me back to play the four notes of the melody as the pianist's emotive playing drove the aesthetics (his father had died the previous day, and I knew it). Even though what I played is the written score, it was an improvised decision at that moment in the recording, thus the melody becomes an improvisation.

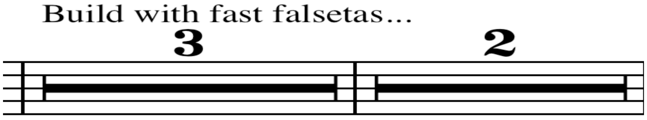
Example (*b*) Movement 2, bars 114-115 (track 31)


Intended *falseta*
poco rit
Written melody
Gtr.
poco rit

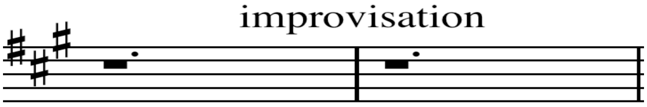
In Movement 3, bars 108-111, the guitar switches from a f*alseta*-inspired improvisation to a spontaneous improvised silence. This passage is identical to Movement 1, bars 174-178, but the treatment from the guitar is different.

Example (*c*) - (track 32)

Top stave = Original score



Bottom stave = spontaneous silence



This improvised approach occurs throughout the work at the following points:

Movement 1
Bars 54-56: guitar chord punctuations. Bars 105-108: guitar chord accompaniment behind the piano phrase. Bar 112: improvised Indian-nuanced guitar line. Bars 154-169: improvised solo. Bar 241: short improvised cadenza.

Movement 2
Bars 50-55: guitar improvises in this section filled with rests. Bars 103-110: improvised solo. Bars 124-127: guitar improvisation over flute melody.

Movement 3
Bars 88-99: improvised solo. Bars 124-125: guitar switches back to the written score instead of improvising. Bars 130-137: improvised *falsetas* over string drones. Bar 145: short improvised guitar cadenza.

Other improvisation sections include: the saxophone introduction in Movement 3 and a solo in bars 88-99; piano introduction in Movement 2, bars 82-86 where the pianist can perform written notation or improvise; and the piano solos in Movement 1, bars 154-169, and Movement 3, bars 100-103.

3.1.2 Rehearsal/recording process

In effect, the logistics/limitations of the project resulted in a recording that captured the vitality and creative energy of a workshop/rehearsal/recording process occurring as one event, rather than a polished performance by a well-rehearsed group. As such, the many unknown factors, uncertainties, remedies, strategies and so on are positioned alongside the genesis and improvisation/notation stages of the work as a continuous flow of improvisation activity, one that underlines its process.

Aside from the technical crew, the only performers available for the pre-recording production session were the pianist, the cellist, and I. The hope for a full band rehearsal had faded since it had been impossible to coordinate an agreeable time. Nevertheless, pre-production went ahead within a large recording space on university campus. This provided an opportunity for the pianist and I to test the acoustics and get used to performing with a large physical space between us. No overdubs were considered for this session except for the second violin part, which was performed by the 1st violinist because the 2nd violinist had to withdraw due to a lucrative touring offer. I also discussed a recording plan with the engineer; the impossibility of getting everyone together impinged on the ideal of recording as a unit. Thus, I begin to develop a strategy to record the concerto over three sessions on separate days.

The first day involved recording guitar, piano and strings; this was a major task since it was the first time we would perform as a group. There was vitality in the studio, and the feeling was akin to a research laboratory rather than a well-rehearsed, confident orchestra ready to record. Although I had a planned a course of action for the day, managing the unfolding challenges without a conductor and producer became a tall order that in effect, fostered group synergy. The first task was to achieve a sense of cohesiveness within an extremely limited period. Thus, we began to rehearse the first Movement whilst the engineer sound checked the instruments. Critical decisions were made about tempos, as for example, when the pianist requested a slower tempo that I had indicated on the score, suggesting that it would minimise mistakes. To an extent, I thought it was a good idea, but needed to consider its effect on the outcome, and indeed the second and third Movements. Besides, as I mentioned, I was aware that the pianist's father had died the previous day, and that his mood was sorrowful, which I think made him want to play things slower.

In a different area of the recording studio the string players were busy devising bowing strategies to various passages. This required me to engage with them about the kind of textures I wanted to achieve. Dispensing with theoretical formalities, I opted to sing the passages because I knew from experience that it would yield immediate and effective results. During this process, the bass player informed me that he was not comfortable with using the bow. In my mind, I was surprised because I was under the impression that all double bass players can bow to varying degrees; I would be losing an important texture in the low orchestral register, but my instinct told me to adapt to the situation and make best of what was available. Thus, we agreed to use *pizzicato* with little attack on the note by brushing it with the flashier side of the plucking fingers; it was an improvised compromise to allow the process to continue harmoniously. The multitasking shifted towards the pianist as I joined him to practice our unison lines. Backtracking to the issue on tempos, we agreed to a compromise because we found that the busy unison passages seemed harder to perform at slow tempo. I think that there is rhythmic logic and an inherent feeling in a phrase that was originally devised at a particular tempo that is difficult to capture when the tempo changes, especially when it is quite slower.

As the challenges mounted, creative engagement intensified. Ideas and problem solving such as reassigning new pitch registers to different instruments were frequent; it was quite clear that the work was undergoing a collective composition process. Unexpectedly, the cellist asserted that the work was a flamenco concerto; I opted not to theorise over the aesthetic and textural elements of the piece other than stating that later, the *tabla* and drones would be added to the recording. Afterwards, as the cellist imitated some of my Indian-nuanced lines, I noted how the fretless sound was closer to the sound of Indian fretless instruments than the guitar. In hindsight, given that I had already explored this with the bass melody of *Tina the Healer* (Chapter 2) I could have assigned some primary melodies, or unisons to the cello in the concerto. At any rate, after three intense hours of this collective process of composition the recording got underway.

The physical distance between the players proved problematic in terms of being able to see signals and hear each other properly despite the use of headphones. Given that this session did not include drums or percussion, the absence of a conductor became even more significant; hence, the decision to use a click track to keep everyone on an equal pulse was unanimous. This condition required an additional rehearsal for signalling the recording engineer on when to stop the click track in the *rallentando* sections; the violinist took production charge in cueing the engineer at various points since I was involved in the performance of these passages - Movement 1, bars 237-241; Movement 2, bars 146-150; and Movement 3, bars 7-9. Notwithstanding the benefit of the workshop/rehearsal we had just had, I still had to cue discrete entry points for the string section during my performance. Another problem due to lack of rehearsal and/or conductor was the application of musical dynamics, a problem that I would eventually deal with in a post-recording mixing session, which was a less than enticing prospect. Less predictable incidents included intonation problems with the flute in part of Movement 3. I think this resulted because the flautist had become impatient due to the extensive waiting periods for the engineer to cue the overdubbing points. Despite my friendly inquiring whether he thought that the intonation was matching that of the saxophone, and suggesting that we should perhaps rest before a retry, his reply was that there was absolutely nothing wrong with it. I was speechless as I pondered on his reaction. In hindsight, I should have given greater thought to the fact that this player is primarily a jazz saxophonist that doubles on flute, and that the orchestral parts are a) extensive in length, and b) technically demanding for any classically trained flautist.

At an informal jamming session, the *tabla* player suggested that a simple folkloric dance groove would work well as opposed to the implication of a classical approach, to which I agreed. Nevertheless, on recording day, I realised that this session demanded my full attention as director/producer. I wondered how I could accommodate the length and complexity of the score with a musician that, although experienced in intercultural collaboration, had not performed extended orchestral works before, nor was familiar with Western reading. After several stops and starts, I decide to employ a cultural approach. Thus, I decided to sit on the floor opposite him where I could signal entry/cut-off points. Complementing the support of the click track background in the headphones, the kinetic motion of my head and hands helped him to follow and predict the music (there was no score) in a more relaxed and intuitive manner. I find this approach to be an effective way of communication because it is based on the informality and communication through body language, which in this case was probably synergised by the cultural similarities between his Indian identity and my Mediterranean background, as well as my experiences with Indian culture.

3.1.3 Post-recording production

These sessions included guitar overdubs to fix a few glitches, and recording of drones on an 8-string guitar in Movements 1 and 3. The pitches for the drone were generated instinctively while listening to the playback; I am not quite sure of the exact order of intervals assigned to the various strings, but other than the tonic and 5th this was an intuitive process, rather than planned. In post analysis, the overall sound of the drone captures the A-key tonality without the major 3rd interval, and includes the minor 9th (Bb) to highlight the modal Phrygian harmonic foundations of A major and Bb Major/A. The only other post-production process involves editing and mixing, including the volume-control-knob generated dynamics to compensate somewhat for the lack of conductor where dynamic markings would have been employed live. Although the sound of the recording is of considerable quality, it is not a finished product ready for professional publication; it does however present a satisfactory reference to support the objectives of this dissertation.

3.2 Analysis

This study consists of two parts; the first investigates an orchestral approach that synthesises discrete elements of diverse musical genres, and the second is an ancillary study of ornaments employed in the guitar work that continues its engagement in extending the potential and possibilities of improvisation. As such, this framework presents structural and aesthetic challenges in its objective to balance and validate multiple elements in the realisation of this concerto. What are the challenges in a process that strives to thread these elements into a coherent musical discourse?

Although the inclusion of an analysis of improvised solos in the recording would be consistent with the model set out in Chapter 2, it is reserved instead to the discussion section later in this chapter. This is because the role of improvisation in the evolution of the score is central to the investigation of the concerto. Nonetheless, I have included references to the improvised treatment of the melody in the ornamentation examples that I have transcribed from the recording and presented here as notation excerpts along with audio excerpts to aid this study.

The observation focuses on the following topics:

1. Movement 1
2. Movement 2
3. Movement 3
4. Ornamentation

3.2.1 Movement 1 (see master score in Appendix 7, pp. 174-234)

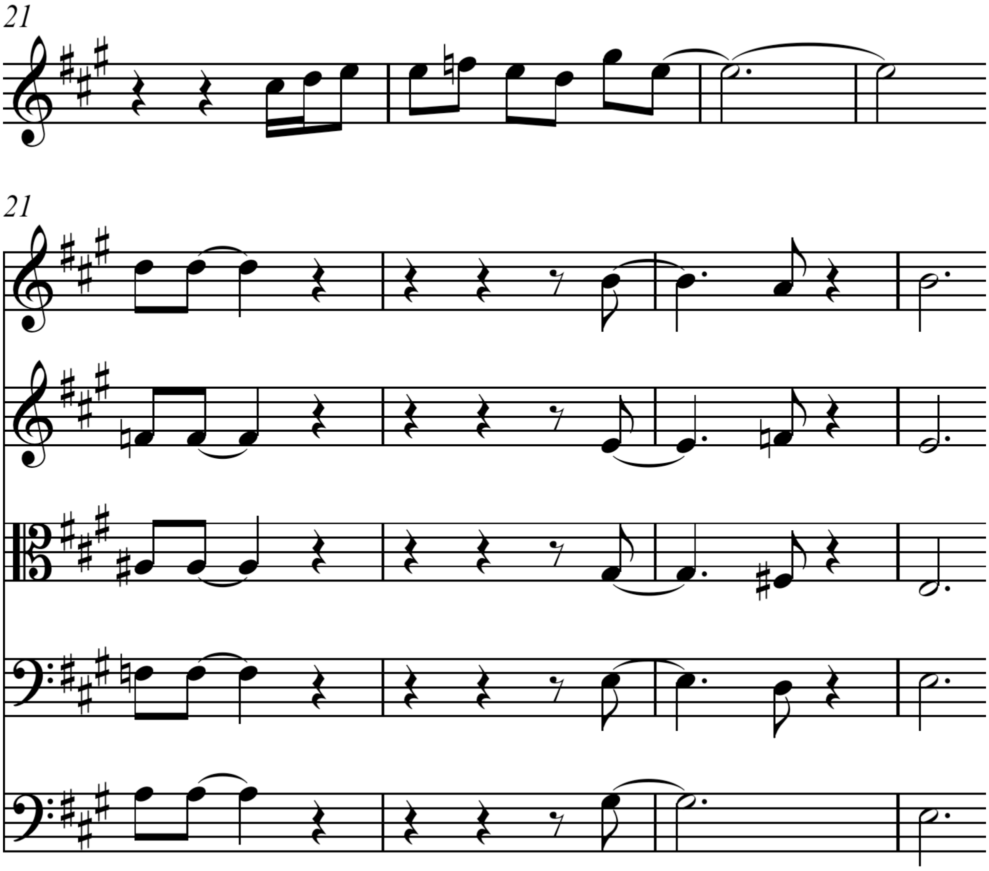
Instrumentation: guitar, piano, flute, oboe, string quartet, double bass, *tabla*, and guitar drones.

Foundational elements:

- Flamenco-nuanced work.
- Orchestral - Iberian-influenced Impressionism, Latin jazz, and Indian classical nuances.
- Ornamentation/improvisation - instrumental techniques of contemporary guitar approaches to interpreting these styles.

The opening theme (bars 1-30) incorporates flamenco, and Indian classical music nuances. The flamenco footprint is established through the application of Phrygian modal harmony expressed by the chords A to Bb/A, which is customary in flamenco. In contrast, the opening motif - C#, D, E, and F - is derived from the Double Harmonic major scale: A, Bb, C#, D, E, F, G# A. This scale is identical in content to the Hindustani *thaat* (scale) named *Bhairav*, and the Carnatic *Melakarta* (scale) named *Mayamalavagowla* - notwithstanding their cultural significance, microtones and so on, they provide an Indian nuance to the melodic material. The following example demonstrates the A Double Harmonic motif played by the guitar and the Phrygian harmony in the strings:

Example (*d*): Movement 1, guitar/strings, bars 21-24 (track 33)



The second theme in Movement 1 employs F Lydian modal harmony, which is established from the A Phrygian modulating to the relative minor F; the choice of Lydian offsets the effect of F Ionian becoming the key centre (see Appendix 7 bars 31-52, pp.181-186). At any rate, modulation to the relative minor is common practice in *fandango* style of flamenco, where the instrumental *falseta* section/key modulates to chord VI in the *copla*[14], and employs I VI I VI IV - F, D minor, F, C, F, and Bb (Manuel, 1989, pp. 70-94). In contrast to this harmonic tradition, this section of the concerto employs I VII III, and ^{b}II progression, and the use of suspended chords -

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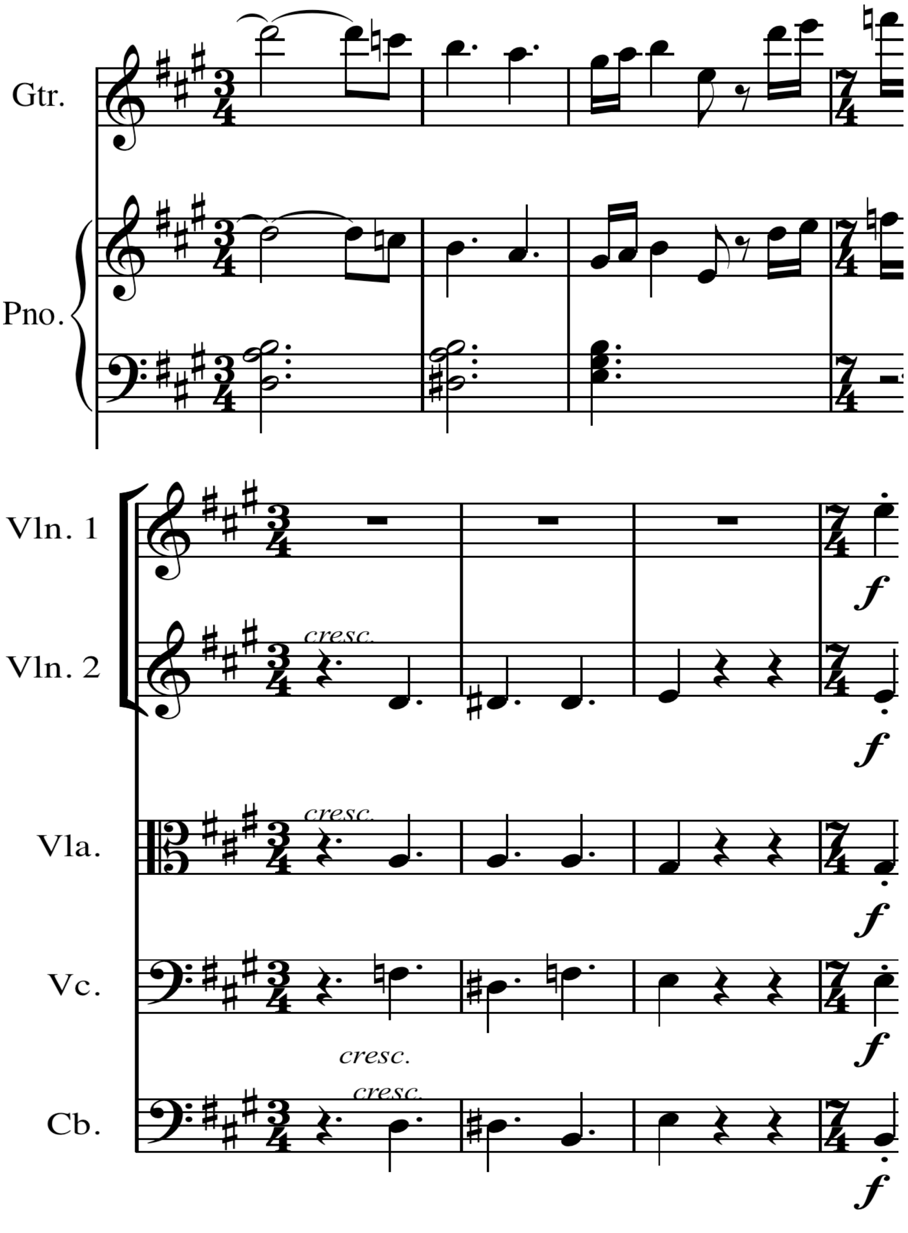
[14] Most fandangos alternate sung verses (coplas) accompanied by I-IV-V harmonies, with instrumental (especially guitar) ostinati (falsetas) consisting primarily of reiterated and/or ornamented IV-III-II-I progressions. Thus, simple common-practice harmony is employed in the verses, and Phrygian tonality in the falsetas. MANUEL, P. (1989) Modal Harmony in Andalusian, Eastern European, and Turkish Syncretic Musics. *Yearbook for Traditional Music,* Vol. 21.

i.e. F Lydian (no 3rd), E sus 4, A sus 4, and G sus 4. This adds an Impressionist, and jazz element to the harmony, an approach that I will discuss later.

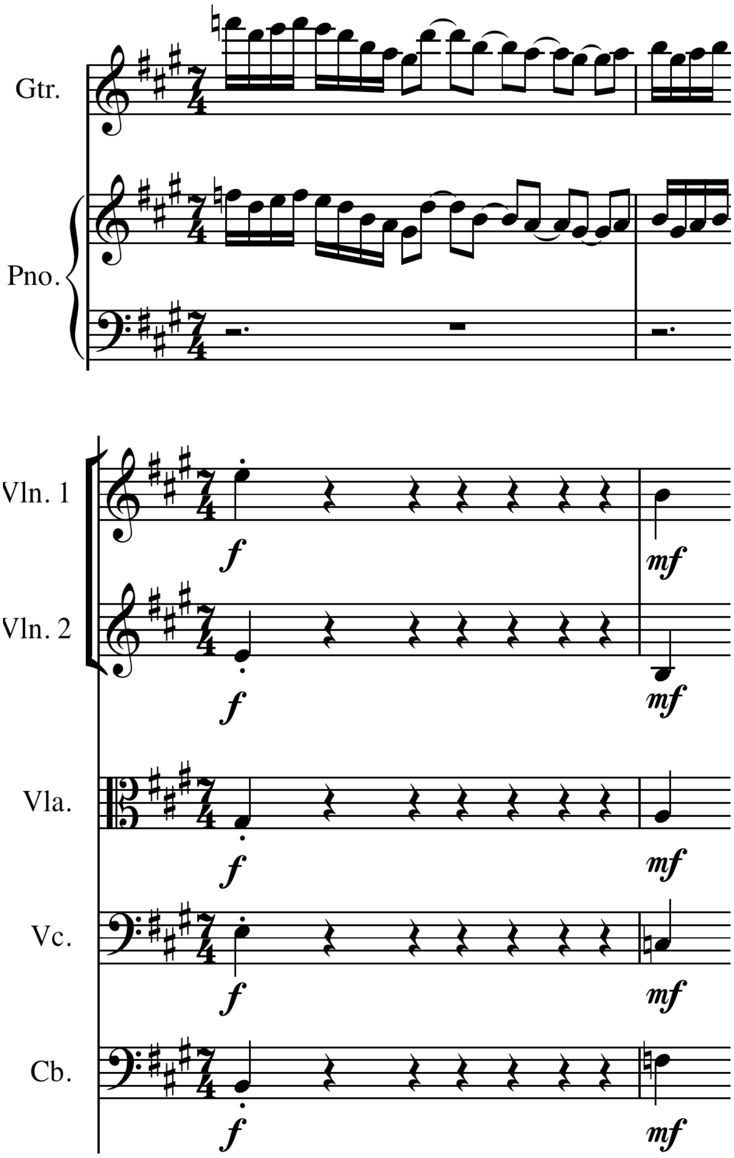
At bar 53 the harmony transits to E Phrygian as the new key centre via D minor (VI of F Lydian), and B dominant 7:

Example (*e*): bars 53-55 M1 (track 34: comprises bars 31-55)



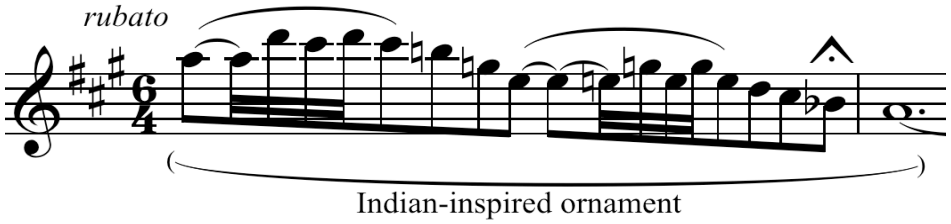
At this point, the strings punctuate the extended 7/4-time guitar/piano unison *falseta* with the chords E to F (I ^{b}II). This choice has a dual function - it mirrors the Phrygian harmonic model in the exposition (A to Bb/A), and E Phrygian Major becomes the modulating dominant V chord to return to the key of A Phrygian, where the main theme of the exposition is reiterated from bar 61, but not included in the example below:

Example (*f*)

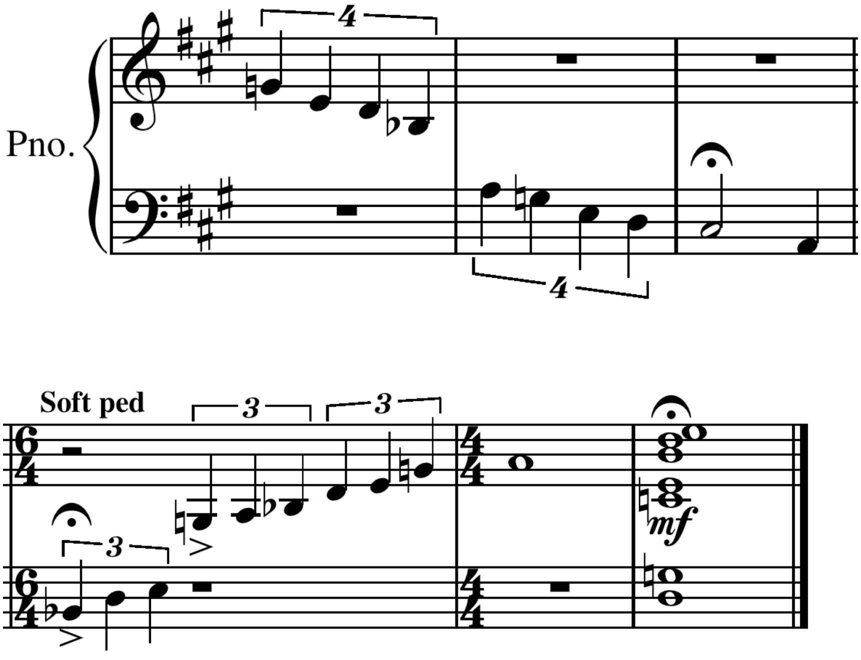


The flamenco approach continues in bars 105-142 with A Phrygian - the progression reads: Gm Gm6 Bb A7 Gm Gm6 Bb A7 (bars 117-123: D G C F Bb A7 Gm Gm/A A7). From bars: 129-140 there is a shift to modal G Dorian that employs the chords Gm Am C Bb C/D, which signal a reference to the F Lydian (jazz harmony) section earlier in bars 31-53.

The concluding passage in bars 237-241 employs the ^{b}II-I progression of A Phrygian through a short unison guitar/piano cadence that includes this improvised *Indian*-nuanced line by the guitar in the penultimate bar:



Example (*g*) - includes guitar Indian-nuanced line, which is scored in see example (track 35)



The decision to end this Movement on a D suspended 9th chord, rather than the tonic A, is influenced by the opening motif in the Movement 2. The improvisation section at bars154-169 changes to 6/4-time signature to add spatiality to the modal chord progression, which consists of alternating four bars between A13 and Bb Maj 7 $^{\#}$11/A, with the final four bars employing E $^{1/2}$ Dim, A7 to resolve into Dm9 to Dm6/9. This chord choice, coupled with the even eights rhythmic groove gives the progression a Latin jazz flavour, albeit the role and influence of the *tabla* in this section adds an Indian texture to the overall aesthetic (**track 36**: score is not included).

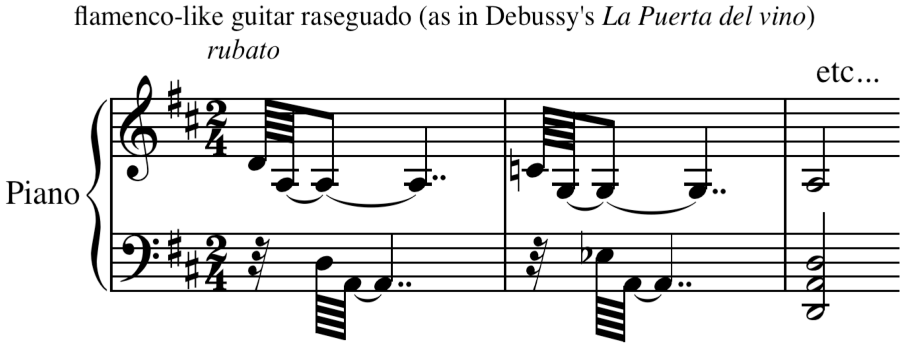
3.2.2 Movement 2 (see master score: Appendix 8, pp. 235-272)

Instrumentation: guitar, piano, flute, oboe, string quartet, and double bass.

Iberian-influenced Impressionism

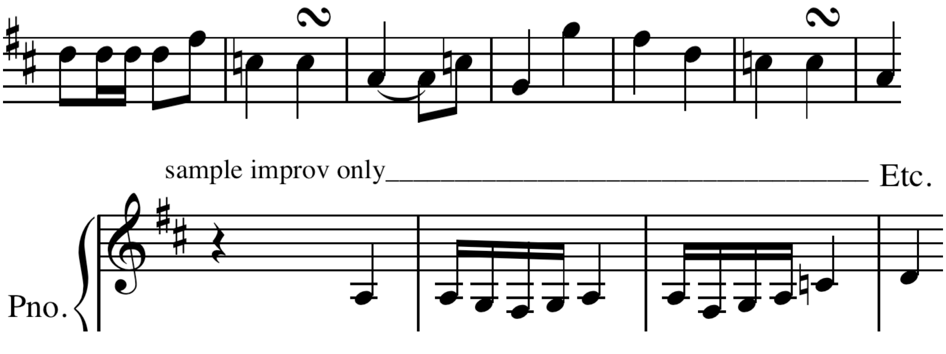
The piano introduction in Movement 2 draws from Debussy's piano piece *La Puerta del Vino*, which is a way of saying that I essentially stole the idea. John McLaughlin amplifies this process in reference to what inspired the title of his CD *Thieves and Poets*: " *I realised that throughout my life, I 'borrow' from everyone who inspires me in some way, and not just musical: to the point that I wonder what an 'original thought' really is*" (McLaughlin, 2003). The descending arpeggio splashes are symbolic of a junction between the flamenco narrative of Movement 1, and the footprint for the Movement 2. As in the Debussy piano piece, they are intended to imitate the flamenco *raseguados* strumming of the guitar, which in this case occur between D (Phrygian modal key) and Eb/D, which is the same harmonic approach at the start of Movement 1 (see Appendix 8, bars 1-17, pp. 235-239).

Example (*h*) - (track 37)


flamenco-like guitar raseguado (as in Debussy's *La Puerta del vino*)
rubato
etc...
Piano

Bars 81-87 juxtapose the modal D Phrygian harmony Eb to D (^{b}II I) and flamenco-nuanced piano improvisation in a dialogue with the Eastern-nuanced melody assigned to the oboe:

Example (*i*)



The sound of the oboe for this melody further adds to the Indian nuance because the instrument bears a certain resemblance to the *shehnai*, which is a double reed aerophone from North India. Moreover, the scale employed is a reduction of a D Mixolydian mode that omits of the 2nd and 6th degrees. This resembles the interval content to the Ionian pentatonic raga *Gambhiranata* (D F# G A C#) – the note C substitutes C# because it concords with the harmonic movement as the 6th of Eb, and the minor 7th degree of the D 7.

Jazz and Impressionism

The use of suspended chords in Movement 1, bars: 31-52 - i.e. F Lydian (no 3rd), E sus 4, A sus 4, and G sus 4, is maintained in Movement 2, bars 95-110 where the improvisation progression consists of jazz type chords. These are suspended dominants C sus 9 to D sus 9, a sound commonly employed in modal jazz, and a texture widely employed by pianist McCoy Tyner. These sounds came to jazz from the harmonic explorations in the works of Debussy, such as *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* and *Feullies Mortes*, and Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin* and *Daphnis and Chloë Suite* No. 2. In addition, Gmaj/A (or A9 sus4), and C13/A (or A sus4 b9) also provide a suspended dominant texture to the rest of the section (see Appendix 8, bars: 95-110, pp. 258-262).

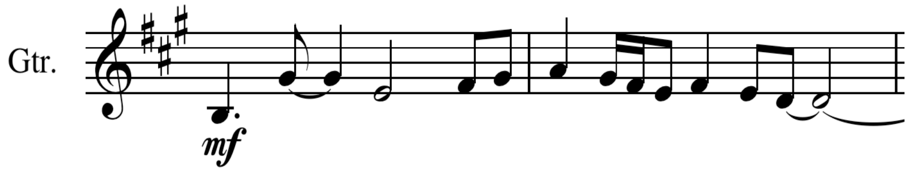
3.2.3 Movement 3 (see master score: Appendix 9, pp. 273-319)

Instrumentation: guitar, piano, flute, soprano sax, string quartet, double bass, *tabla*, and guitar drones.

The composition of the final Movement is more challenging than the previous two because, in keeping with the convention of concerto where discrete thematic material from the previous two Movements merge, the juxtaposition of aesthetic intercultural elements becomes quite a complex task. Thus, the underlying flamenco footprint is retained, and, building on its Phrygian modal approach, its vertical structures shift into a linear orchestral dialogue over a single chord. This modal shift allows the possibility of merging flamenco, Latin jazz and Indian elements. This is evident at the start (bars 1-25); with the combination of the E drone in the strings with subtly shifting harmonic texture between E5, and E11, as well as E suspended 4, and Asus/major modal centers (bars 26-37).

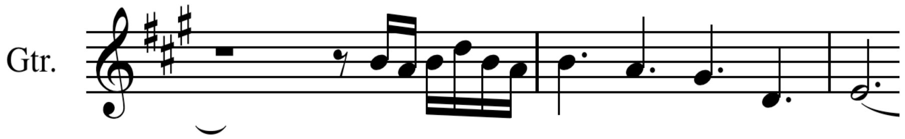
The exposition of the melody employs B Dorian over an E sus chord in the initial phrase in bars 17-18:

Example (*j*)



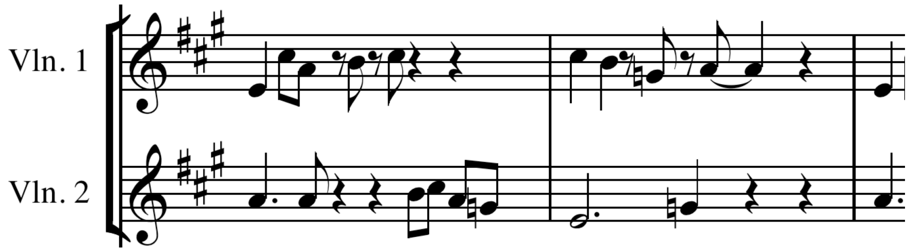
The concluding descending phrase - B A G# D E - is devised as a hyper-pentatonic mode of E Mixolydian - i.e. 1 3 4 5 ^{b}7. Its configuration nuances the foundation scale employed in *raga Jog* (Raja', 2011), and alludes to an earlier collaboration in India with *santoor* player, Sandip Chatterjee, when we recorded improvisations on *raga jog* on the CD *Calcutta Express*:

Example (*k*) - bars 24-26.



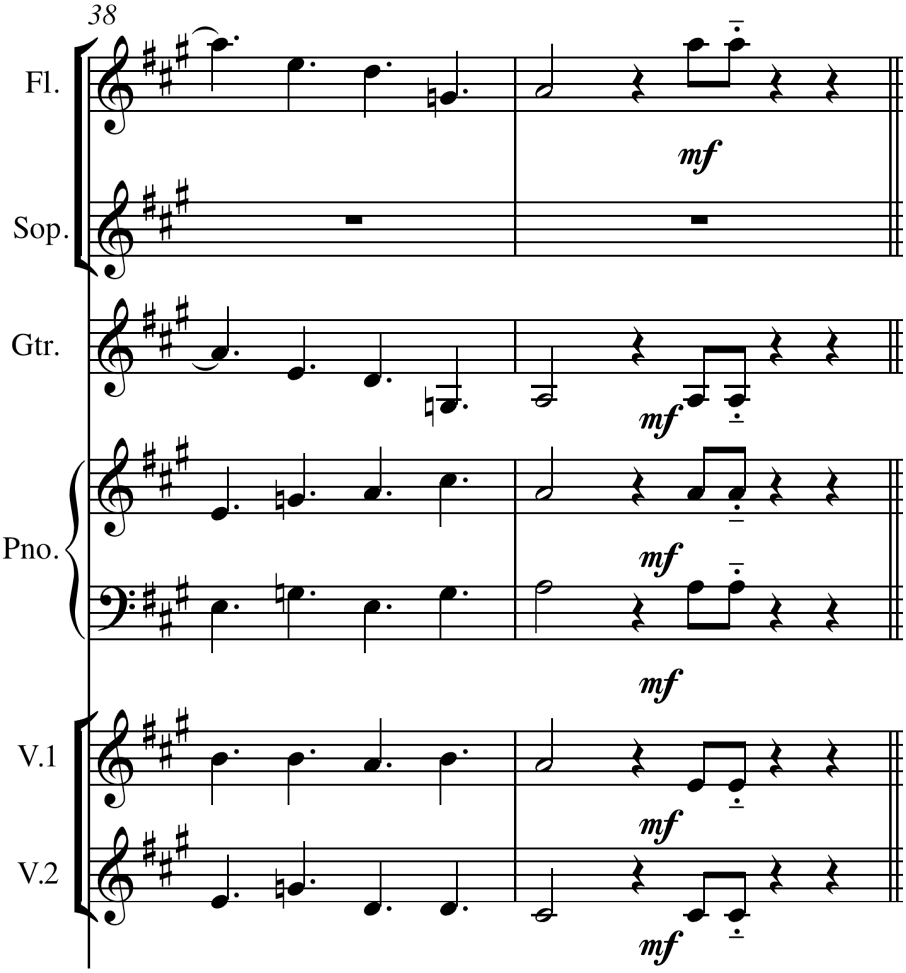
In keeping with the thematic material of bars 1-25, the exposition shifts up a 5th establishing A7 as the new modal key center (bar 26). It employs a fragmented version of the initial theme through a syncopated approach in the violins; the foundation mode/scale is E Dorian.

Example (*l*)



This passage concludes with the descending phrase: A E D G A in the flute and guitar parts in bars 38-39. It employs the hyper-pentatonic mode of A Mixolydian; its contour and notation mirror that of bars 24- 26.

Example (*m*)



Afro-Cuban Jazz

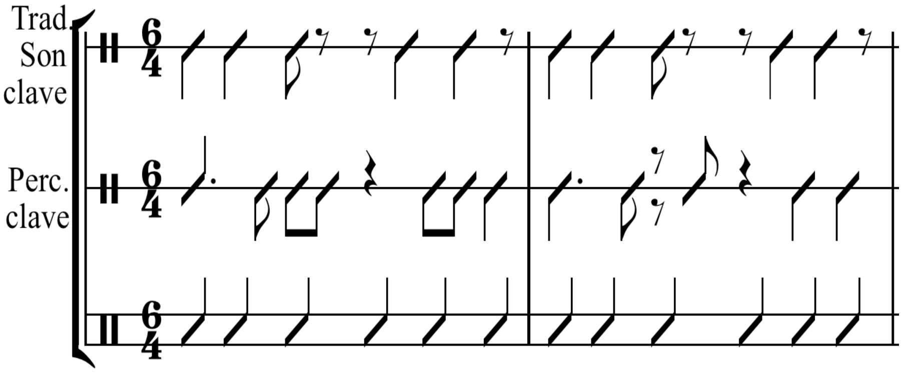
The A hyper-pentatonic scale constitutes the embedded Indian-nuance in the melodic framework assigned to a syncopated Afro-Cuban passage in bars 40-48, and later for bars 68-75. The sporadic use of the 2nd and 6th intervals could suggest an A Natural minor scale, but these intervals are incidental notes to the hyper-pentatonic mood. The rhythmical orchestral passages are built on the Cuban *clave* [15]. The example below (Movement 3, bar 40-41) contains comparative rhythmic elements of *clave*, which is the essential element that propels all salsa rhythms in Cuban music:

1. Top line - Afro-Cuban *son clave* adapted from the original 6/8-time signature.
2. Middle line - *Clave* variation employed in the concerto.
3. Bottom line - Downbeats

---

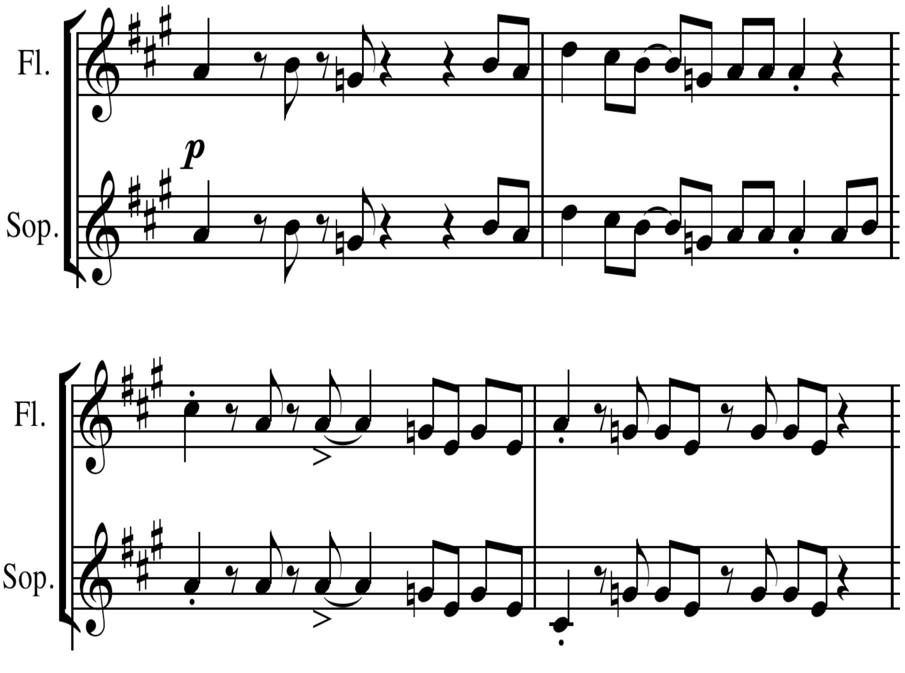
[15] *Clave* translates as 'key' in Spanish, but its idiomatic meaning refers to 'code' as in the key element to its various Afro-Cuban styles. In this sense, author/musician David Peñalosa's analogy is fitting when he likens *clave* to the '*keystone' - the wedge-shaped stone in the center of an arch that ties the other stones together PEÑALOSA, D. (2009) The Clave Matrix; Afro-Cuban Rhythm: Its Principles and African Origins., Redway California, Bambe Inc.*

Example (*n*) bars 40-41



The traditional *son clave* is made up of two rhythmically opposed cells within each bar, one antecedent, and the other consequent. In contrast, the percussion *clave* is spread over two bars instead of one, and is not based on rhythmically opposed cells. This is because its conception results in response to the rhythmic shape of the orchestral motifs. Below is an example of rhythmic activity in the flute and soprano saxophone parts; the full score (see Appendix 9, bars: 40-48, pp. 283-286) shows an interlocking relationship of syncopated rhythm between all the instruments

Movement 3, Example (*o*), bars 40-41 (track 38)

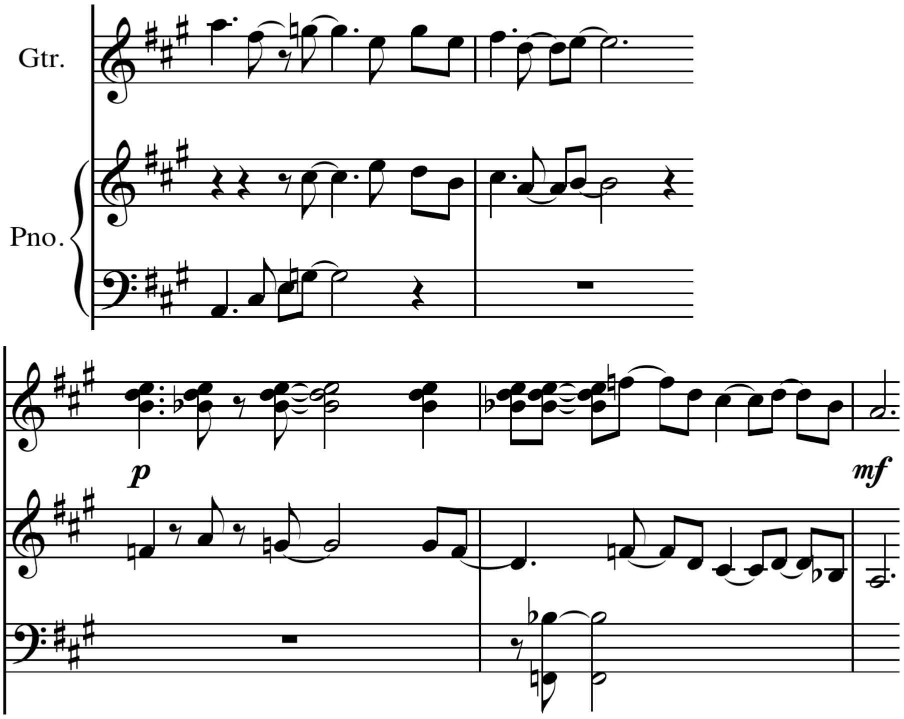


Although this approach departs somewhat from Afro-Cuban tradition, the relationship between the melody and rhythm hinges on the *clave* shown in example (*n*). At any rate, the relationship between clave and melody is a grey area because the rules are variable (Peñalosa, 2009, p. 214).

The use of *clave*, in Latin jazz (especially the North American type), and more so in experimental jazz, is subject to diverse inflections and interpretations to the point that the Afro-Cuban idiom from a traditional perspective can be tenuous.

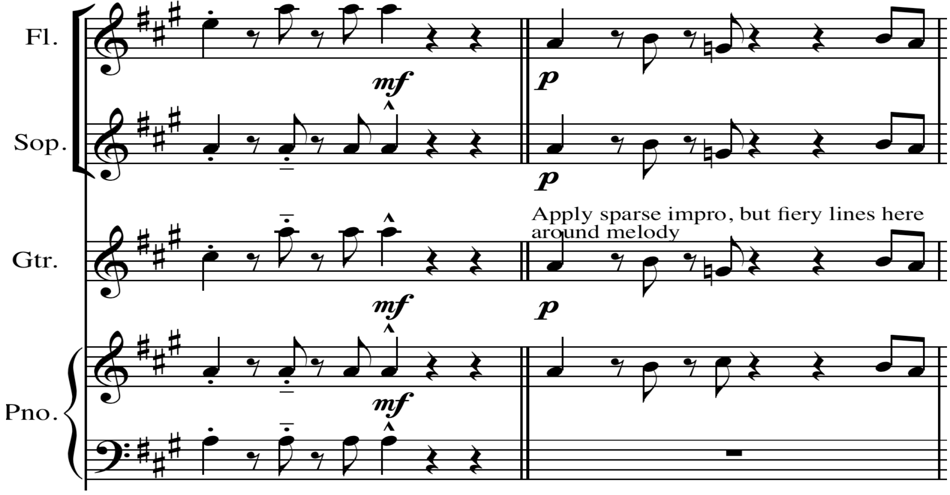
The flamenco harmonic footprint returns at bars 52-53 through A7, Asus 4, Asus 2, then bars 54-55 with Gm, Bb, and bar 56, re-establishing A Phrygian as the modal key centre:

Example (*p*)



From bar 56, A7 and Bb dominate the harmonic spectrum until bar 67, which punctuates the Afro-Cuban rhythm to re-introduce the previous Latin jazz section:

Example (*q*)



The original score allowed bars for a *tabla* solo, despite the good performance the outcome was somewhat disjointed from the aesthetic objectives of the composition, so I decided not to retain it. The solo section that follows involves a combined performance improvisation between soprano saxophone and guitar, with the piano tapering off in the last for bars (bars 88-103); this section reiterates and reconnects the solo chord progression from the first Movement. In the closing stages, flamenco and Indian nuances are negotiated. Once again, A7 to Bb provide the Phrygian modal harmonic structure. The opening drone in this final Movement re-enters in the strings whilst the guitar plays *falsetas*-nuanced lines that occasionally incorporate Indian-nuanced slides. This is meant to create a suggestive transit into the closing of the work, which closes with an orchestral *tihai* unison ending.

3.3 ORNAMENTS

Similarly to improvisation, ornaments are subject to a multiplicity of meanings; what is considered an ornament in one culture/music may not be so in another even when they may exhibit similarities. Therefore, while ornaments exist in many cultures, their significance in terms of music and as symbols differs. At any rate, given that this creative practice is experimental in nature, the ornamental techniques that I have employed, especially in the guitar work, are critical to its aesthetic character. As such, this investigation is confined to ornamentation idiomatic to the flamenco guitar where slides, glissandos, trills, hammer-on and pull-offs are employed in experimental manner that depicts both, traits of flamenco, and Indian classical instrumental techniques inspired by the *sarod* and the *sitar*.

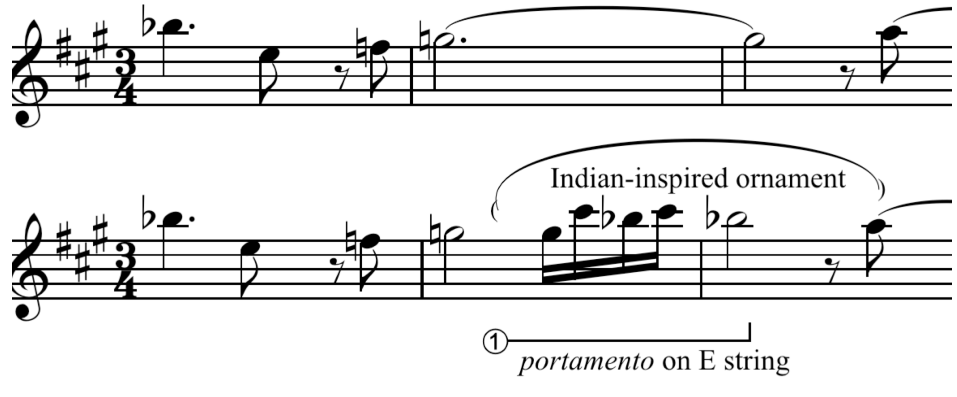
Omissions

An analysis of ornaments employed in the orchestral part is beyond the scope/limits of this study. Furthermore, the execution of discrete guitar drones are employed as decorative elements, and do not involve the production of notes on the guitar fret-board. As such, in contrast to Chapter 2, they are limited to generic reference, rather than specific examples.

Ornamentation examples - *coloraturas*/improvised fills.

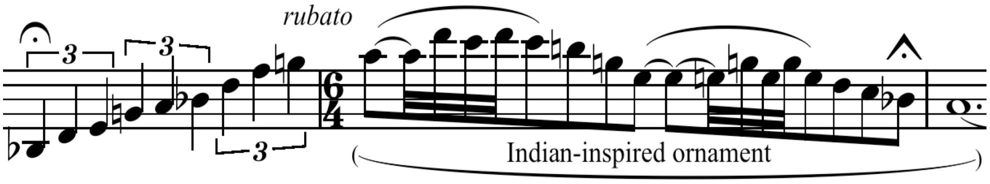
Movement 1, example (*r*) bars 110-112 (track 39)

The top stave in of the next example is the original score while the bottom stave is the improvised variation:



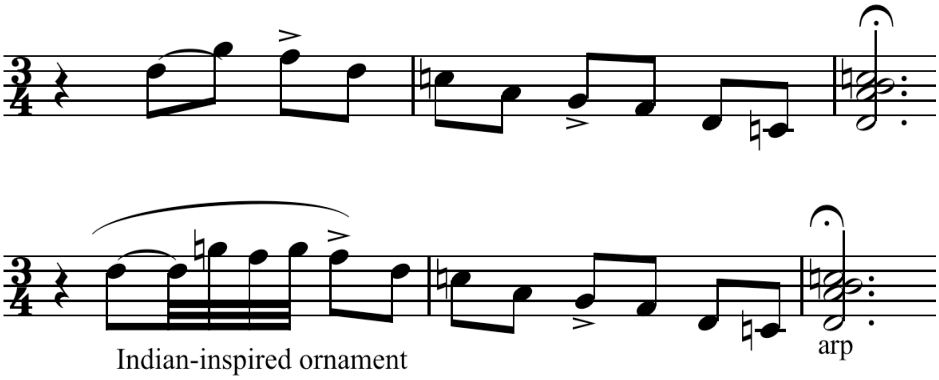
In the next example the Indian-nuanced slide starts on the note A - the keynotes are A to C, and E to E, finishing with a descending Double Harmonic to etch a flamenco nuance as a hyphen between the end of the Movement 1 and the start of Movement 2:

Example (*s*) - Movement 1, bars 240-242 (track 40)



A similar ornamental improvisation can be seen when comparing the written part (top stave), and the improvisation (bottom stave):

Example (*t*)



Flamenco-nuanced lines

There are several passages in the concerto that incorporate *falseta*-nuanced phrases. While these are generally improvisations requiring strong technique, their significance is both structural and dialogical because they are concerned with transiting between *falseta* and the vocal lyricism of *copla* as in flamenco music. However, *Copla*, within the context of this work, refers to the lyrical approach to performing instrumental melodic passages, whilst the *falsetas*, whether pre-composed or improvised in performance, usually provide ornamental melodic support and virtuosic passages. Notwithstanding the cultural significance, and structural models of Andalusian fandango and *falsestas*, this approach gives the concerto its dialogical basis. Thus, each of the three Movements contains such transitions:

Movement 1

Falseta: bars 1-30, *copla*: bars 31-55, extended *falseta*: bars 56-72, *copla*: bars 73-77 (flute), *falseta*: bars 78-80 (guitar and flute) and so on.

Movement 2

Falseta: bars 1-17 (piano), *copla*: bars 19-50, *falseta* over *copla* in the piano: bars 51-57 (extends through to bar 82), *falseta*: bars 78-80 (guitar and flute) and so on.

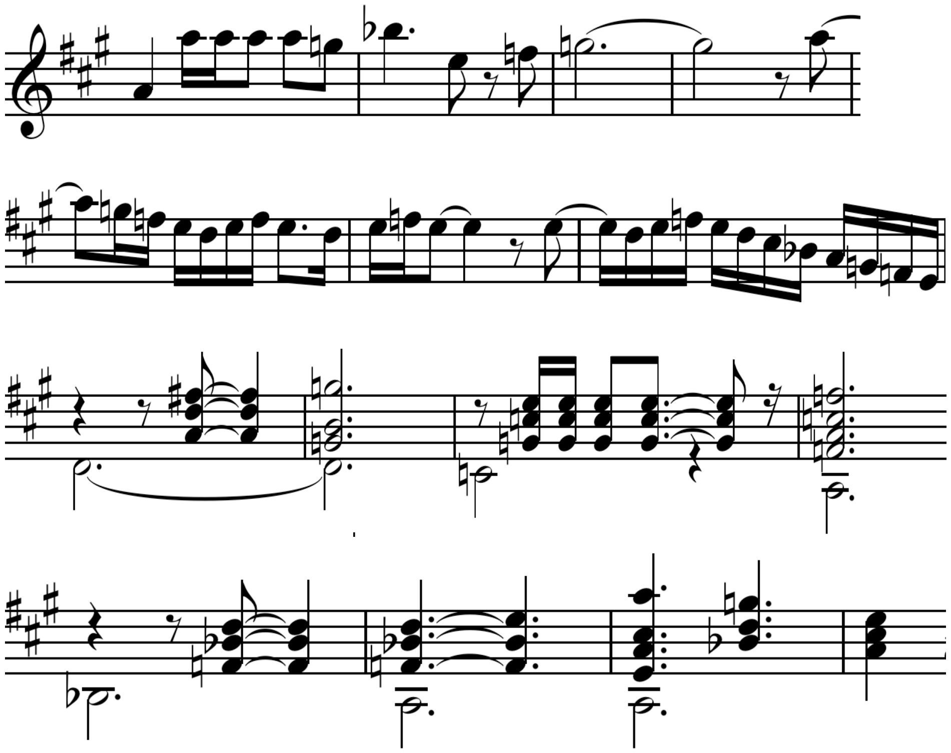
Movement 3

This structural duality is broadened in Movement 3, as *falseta*-nuanced lines (bars 9-39) between guitar, piano and strings alternate with equally rhythmical sections of the Latin jazz phrasing and the longer solo section (bars 39-73). After the solo section the closing stages of this Movement bring together the three intercultural elements that characterize the concerto. Thus, the Latin jazz motif is employed (bars 103-119) and extended through the recall of the main theme (bars 119-130). This section is peppered with semiquaver *falseta*-type bursts (bars 122,123, and 126) that, through the harmonic Bb to A7 Phrygian resolution set up the final *copla* by the guitar with flamenco nuanced improvisation (bars 131-137). The *tabla,* and the drone in the strings add Indian nuances, before the final fusion of *falseta* and *tihai* (bars 138-145) that concludes the concerto. The following examples demonstrate some of these transitions.

Movement 1

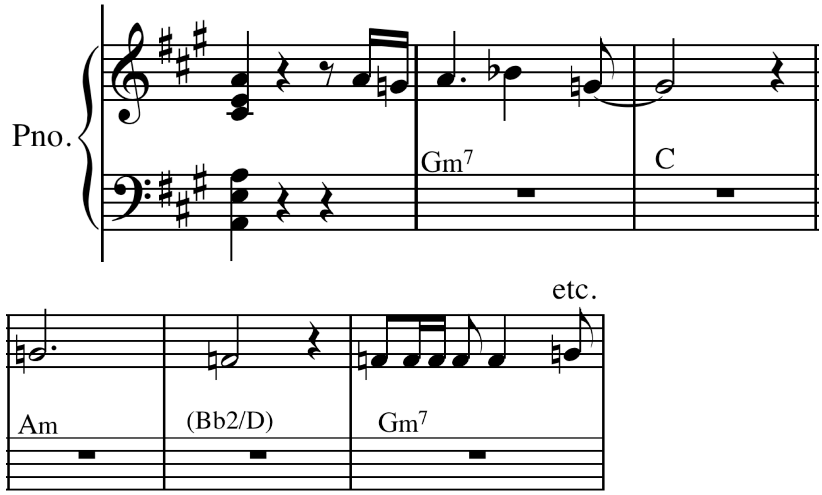
The *falseta*-inspired line incorporates an Indian nuance in bar 3 when it continues with A Phrygian rapid melodic lines over Bb major (bars 5 and 6), and A major ^{b9} (bar 7). The second component in the *falseta* are the *raseguado* strokes (bars 8-14), which employs D, G, C, F, Bb, A, Bb, and A7:

Example (*u*) - bars 110-124 (track 41). The improvised Indian nuance in bar three is not scored.



This *falseta* transits to the lyric *copla* in the piano:

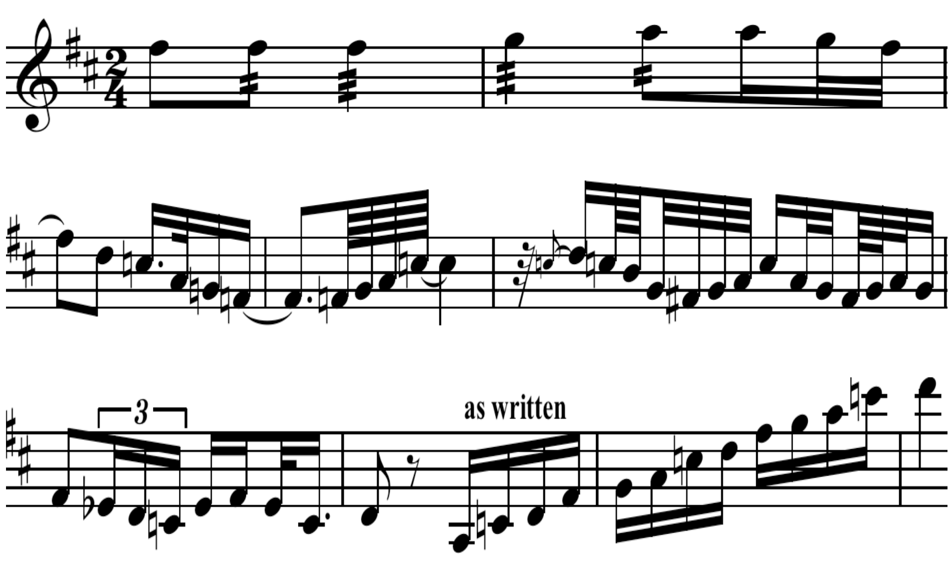
Example (*v*) (bars 124-129)


Pno.
Gm7
C
etc.
Am
(Bb2/D)
Gm7

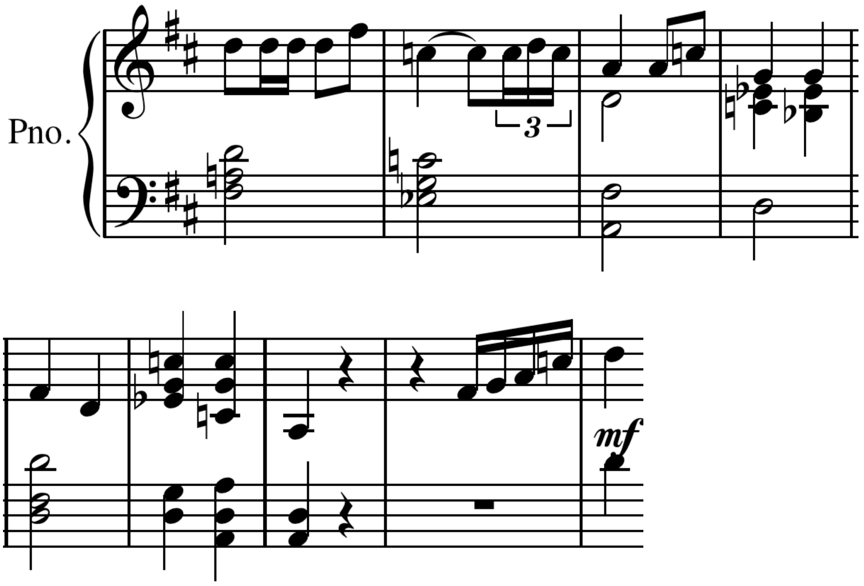
Movement 2

The following two written examples show the *falseta*-nuanced guitar improvisation (bars 51-58) juxtaposed to the *copla* performed by the piano (shown below in example *x*):

Example (*w*) - bars 50-58 (track 42)


3
as written

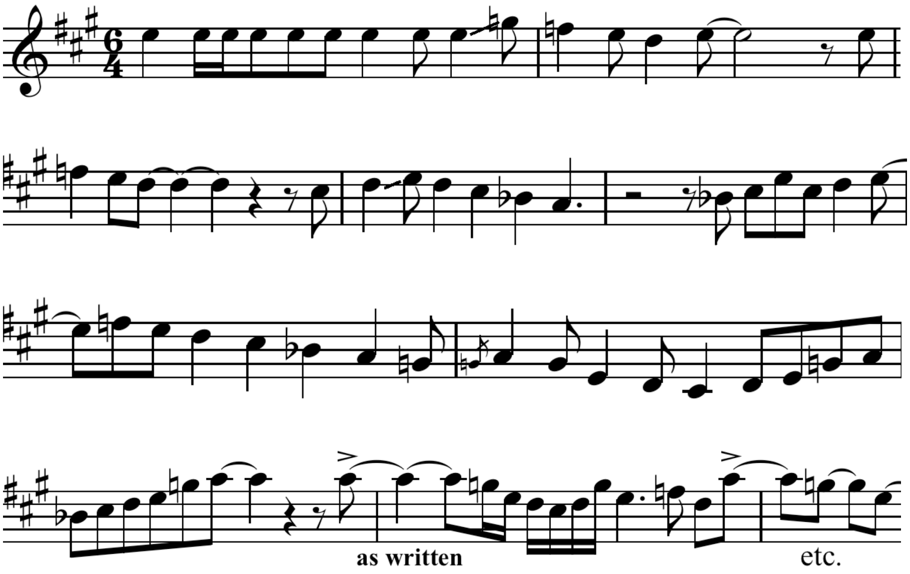
Example (*x*) *copla*, bars 50-5. This section extends through to bar 82 in the master score:



Movement 3

The guitar plays a final improvised *copla* that employs the Phrygian Major mode: A Bb C# D E F G. The approach melds Indian nuances in the flamenco *copla* with a slide between E and F (bar 1-2), and between D and E (bar 4). In addition, I apply a slow and subtle vibrato to create slight pitch oscillations. This aesthetic is facilitated by a similarity in content, rather than treatment, between the Phrygian Major and the Hindustani scale *Bhairav*: A, Bb, C#, D, E, F, G# A. This improvisation leads into the orchestral *tihai* that closes the concerto:

Example (*y*) - final *copla* bars: 130-137 re-enters written part at 138 (track 43)



The findings in the study strongly emphasize that the aesthetic content of the concerto is characterised by ornamental elements inspired by flamenco, Indian classical music, Latin jazz, and Iberian Impressionism. Precedents that directly relate to this creative practice are in the works of guitarists such as Paco de Lucia, Al Di Meola, Tomatito, John McLaughlin, and Chema Vilchez. Some of the orchestral ideas are somewhat inspired by composers Debussy, Albeniz, Rodrigo, and Ravel. Artists such as Chick Corea, Irakere, Gonzalo Rubalcalca form a nucleus of Afro-Cuban/Latin jazz references. Indian classical music nuances draw from ornamental techniques of Indian string instruments, particularly the *sarod*. These are performed on the guitar with techniques such as hammers and pull-offs, slides, trills and vibrato, which are common to its lexicon of ornaments, but in no way represent, nor claim to have reference to, traditional practices in Indian classical idioms. In terms of the orchestral aspect of the work, influences originate in guitar concertos and orchestral works that incorporate intercultural elements and/or improvisation from guitarists/composers such as John McLaughlin, Egberto Gismonti, Al Di Meola, Astor Piazzola, and Leo Brower. Even concertos that do not directly espouse improvisation can invite a strong feeling of improvisation. Paco de Lucia's rhythmic rendition of the *Aranjuez Concierto* (1991) is a vibrant example that imbues the work with powerful *duende* or as William Yeoman (2010) puts it: '*Paco de Lucía may be a little fast and loose with the letter of Rodrigo's masterpiece but captures its spirit like no other. The playing is passionate, fresh and, from a certain point of view, utterly authentic*'.

3.4 Discussion

> *"I was guided by no system whatever in Le Sacre du Prinetemps, very little tradition lays behind Le Sacre du Prinetemps, and, no theory. I had only my ear to help me, I heard, and I wrote what I heard; I am the vessel through which Le Sacre passed.* (Stravinsky in Darvas, 2005)

Aside from the ontological nuances, this statement suggests that varying degrees of spontaneity and improvisation may in fact have been the *vessel* through which Stravinsky *passed* in the process of composing *The Rite of Spring*. In fact, according to pianist/composer Dave Brubeck, Stravinsky, who was also a skilful pianist/improviser, upholds that "*Composition is selective improvisation*" (Brubeck in Storb, 2000, p. 204). This implies that amongst the bulk of ideas generated from improvised practice in composition a selection ends up on the score. Reflecting on Stravinsky's statement Brubeck states:

> I think that was one of the greatest sentences that I have ever heard in my life. Because it states that when you are composing, you are an improviser. It says that although you write things down, your mind works very much as a jazz musician's mind. (*Ibid*)

The analysis section in this chapter has unpacked multiple levels of improvisation within the rehearsal/recording/production process of the piece. Now the ensuing discussion shifts to a retrospective investigation of the composition process from its beginning to the pre-performance stage. As in chapter two, I observe this process through three phases of development:

Phase 1. Genesis - an abstract state
Phase 2. Transition - laying the groundwork
Phase 3. Improvisation and notation

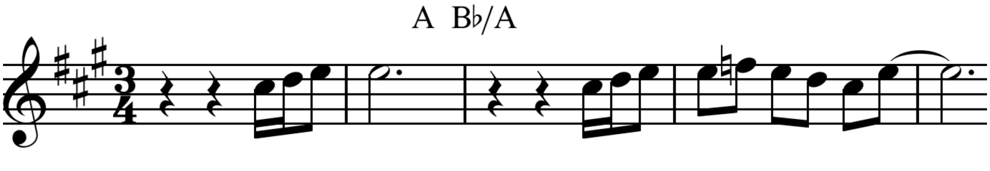
3.4.1 Phase 1. Genesis - an abstract state

The desire to create an experimental large-scale work for guitar and orchestra containing intercultural elements and improvisation hinged on three factors: (1) my experiences as artist, (2) an inner need to experiment in order to satisfy a creative impulse, and (3) extending tradition, or as Steve Lacy puts it: "*…beat down the walls to find some new territory*" (Lacy, cited in Bailey, 1993, p. 55).

The idea of a double concerto began to take shape in my mind where the pivotal dialogue between guitar/piano and melody/improvisation could provide a model for developing an approach to orchestration where all the instruments are concurrently interactive in vertical/ horizontal movement. This, points to a kinetic process involving spontaneous creativity, improvisation practice, and notation of the score where the motion of its constituent particles -

musical notes expressed through their discrete instrumental voices - resemble an interactive dialogical improvisation encompassing a supravertical approach. In this sense, the traditional practice of concerto where the orchestra provides a supporting role to the soloist/s deviates to the extent that the orchestra as a whole becomes an interactive platform. Although this approach bears some similarity to the baroque *concerto grosso* (*da chiesa*), or classical *sinfonia concertante*, the genres and techniques employed fast-forward the tradition into an experimental zone more akin to a jazz approach.

As I mentioned earlier in the chapter, the title of the composition is inspired from a spontaneously created motif.



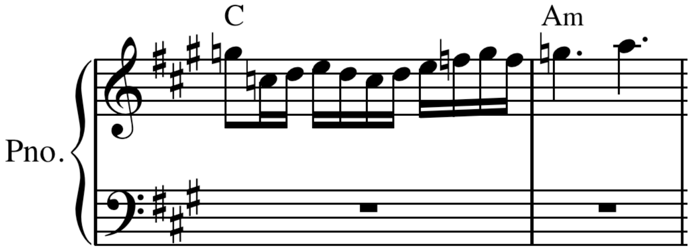
It is likely that the double harmonic sound of C# D E F and the Phrygian harmony conjured images of the old trade route in my mind. It is an experience that Daniel Fischlin, in coining the term *improvisioning*, explained as: '*…the calling forth of the unexpected, the making present of a response that could not have been predicted except in that moment, there in that specific context*' (Fischlin, 2010, p. 1). Two years later, in 2010, this becomes a symbolic reference to create a large-scale work expressing an abstract reference to the Silk Road. Part of the inspiration is in the knowledge that the ancient trade route fostered the meeting of diverse cultures, sharing and trading in commodities, ideas, arts, sciences, and innovations on a scale not seen before in human history. In this sense, this *envisioning* provides a context for a synthesis where traditional and experimental elements work alongside each other. But rather than this being an intellectual experiment toying with intercultural possibilities where there is little or no cultural connection to the music, my experiences with the genres and cultures employed in the work are deep and long standing. Through these, as well as my upbringing and cultural background, I understand and respect cultural tradition. However, because the intrinsic nature of intercultural music is experimental it can be vulnerable to criticism such as cultural appropriation. Nonetheless, I am not 'messing' with traditional forms of music in this creative practice, nor have I exploited cultural terminology of the genres. Although cultural exploitation from the World music recording industry since the 1990s has justifiably fuelled much needed critical argument about cultural appropriation (see Feld (2000), and Stokes (2004), these divides in music are often driven by theoretical/cultural/political concerns (see Monson, Literature Review, p.3). These don't necessarily account for the fact that musicians have been borrowing from each other since time immemorial. Hence, I relate to cellist Yo-Yo Ma when he says that: "*My musical journeys have reminded me that the interactions brought about by globalization don't just destroy culture; they can create new culture and invigorate and spread traditions that have existed for ages*" (Ma, 2013). The propagation of Indian classical music through Ravi Shankar, the Beatles, and John Coltrane is an example. At any rate, converting the envisioning into a musical abstract presents a number of challenges, especially when employing traditional/experimental elements of improvisation and orchestration that incorporate intercultural elements. Hence, the choice of instruments, scales, phrasing, expression tools, structural form, improvisation approaches, rhythms, and so on, becomes critical to both process, and aesthetic outcomes. Aside from the improvisation/composition process that I discuss in Phase 3, perhaps the most critical part of the composition process was in translating whatever subliminal perceptions I had into a framework where the diverse idioms would be recognisable within the music.

3.4.2 Phase 2. Transition - laying the groundwork

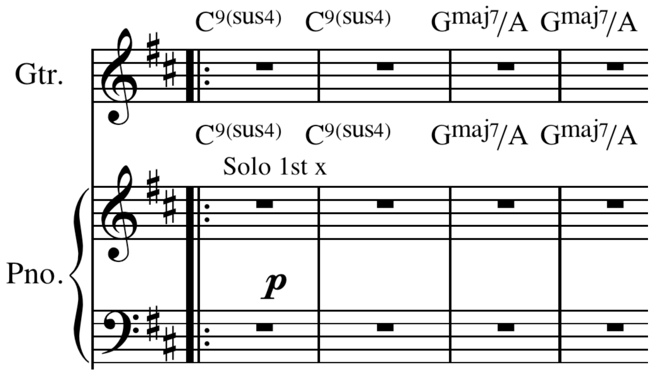
The next stage was in the choice of instrumentation, and a chamber-type group with experience in intercultural collaboration. Aside from guitar and piano, the instruments include string quartet, double bass, flute, oboe, soprano saxophone, drums, and Indian percussion.

One of the challenging aspects of this transitional phase was in the management of the relationship between guitar and piano within the ambit of an orchestra. This combination is generally considered an unlikely pairing due to harmonic congestion that can result when both instruments concurrently employ chords and rhythms. I dealt with this potential problem by employing an approach that avoids harmonic density by assigning very little harmonic activity to the guitar, preferring instead to leave harmonic options to improvisatory responses during the recording. In addition, my relative knowledge of the piano was useful in avoiding harmonic clutter in the writing. The following examples demonstrate that the left-hand harmonic work in the piano is left to the player's own devices by the undescriptive inclusion of symbols only - i.e. C and Am:

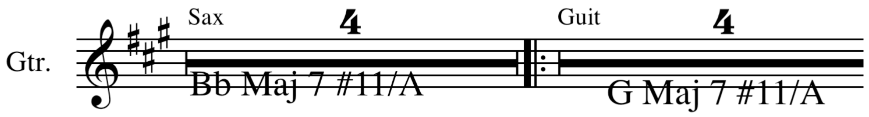
From Movement 1 - bars 221-222



The solo section in Movement 2 shows chord symbols, which allows the freedom to improvise the accompaniment:

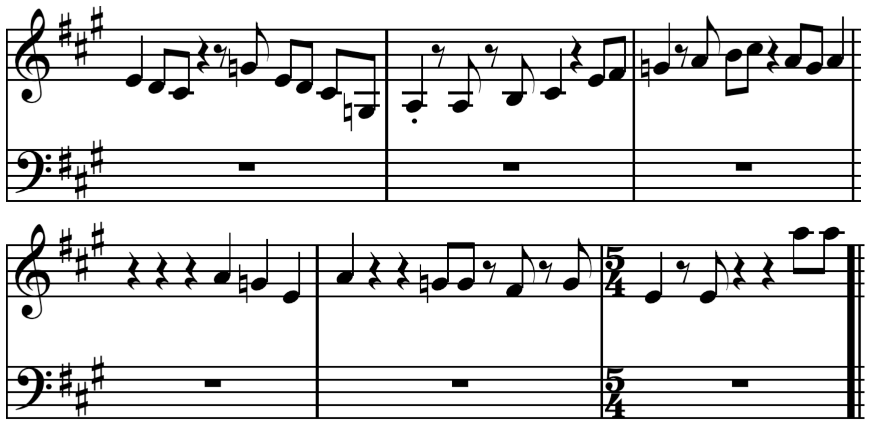

C9(sus4) C9(sus4) Gmaj7/A Gmaj7/A
Gtr.
C9(sus4) C9(sus4) Gmaj7/A Gmaj7/A
Solo 1st x
Pno.
p

This also applies during the sax solo (Movement 3):


Sax
4
Guit
4
Gtr.
Bb Maj 7 #11/A
G Maj 7 #11/A

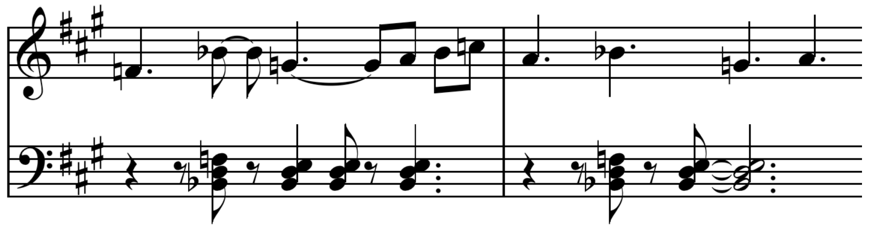
The minor harmonic activity of the guitar contrasts its melodic profusion; an approach also employed by the piano, as the next example demonstrates:

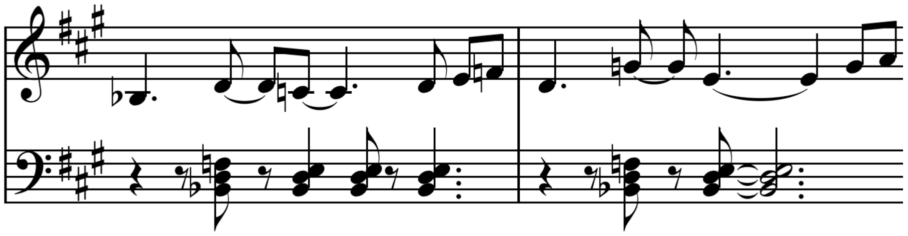
From Movement 3, piano, bars 70-75



At other times, the left hand comes back into the interplay where the pianist is free to play the rhythm as he wishes at the time of performance.

From Movement 3, piano, bars 110-113





Overall, there are very few points across the three Movements where the guitar employs harmony. As such, it positions the piano in a role that provides both harmonic canvas, and melodic interplay with the rest of the orchestra. At any rate, even on those rare occasions when both instruments are harmonically active, the synergy echoes the interplay in the original duet collaboration; a point encapsulated in a CD review of *2@1*: *'It is easy for piano and guitar to trip over each other harmonically, but these two sing from the same hymn book*' (Shand, 2008, p. 14).

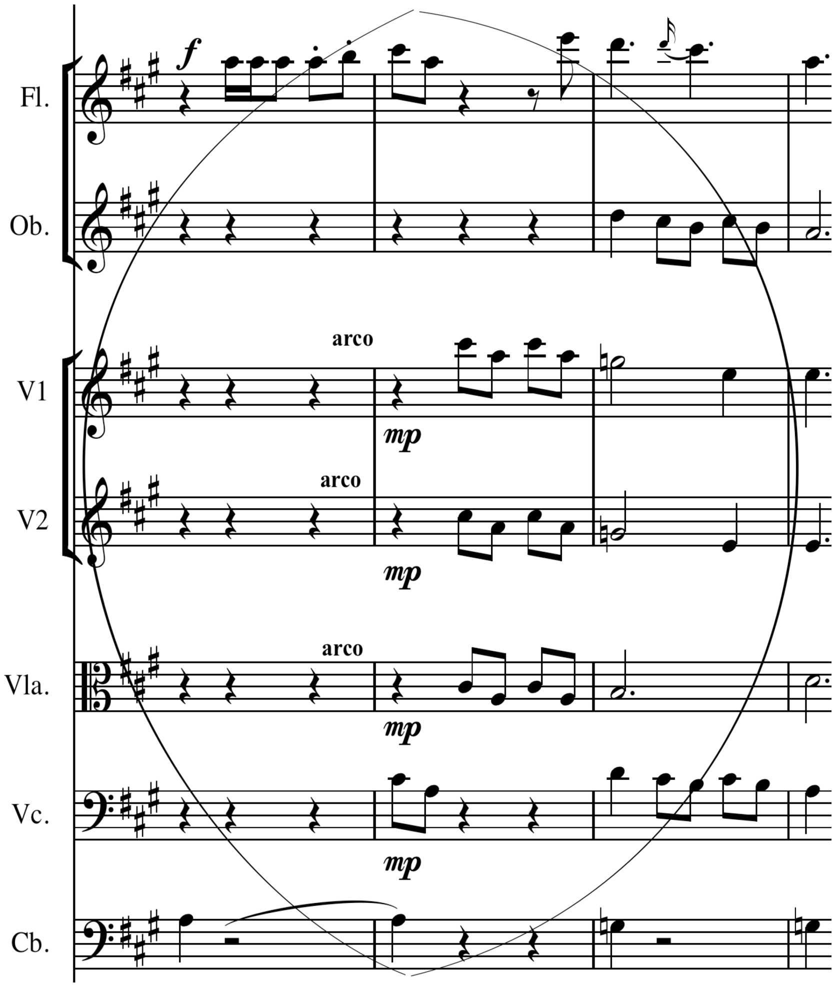
3.4.3 Phase 3. Improvisation practice and notation

Jeff Pressing (1987) proposes a scientific model suggesting that event clusters of information hold together diverse stages of improvisation triggered by neuronic activity that influence or spark a process of decision-making. I find this interesting because what happens in my head is that I can hear, in varying degrees, different orchestral voices interacting in the form of an improvisational dialogue; how is this reflected within the context of orchestrating this concerto? In the introduction I explained that one of the fundamental elements derived from the duet collaboration with pianist McMahon was to transfer its dialogical improvisation approach to operate similarly between the orchestral instruments, as if actual musicians were playing these in a collective dialogue. I was at a loss in trying to devise a model that could explain this creative process until I came across an interview with José Miguel Wisnik about improvisation in Brazilian soccer in a web journal called *Critical Studies in Improvisation*:

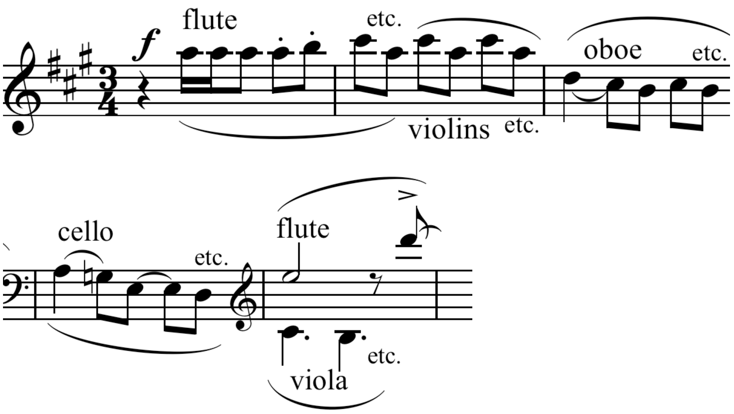
> Soccer is a sport that both allows and asks for a much larger margin of improvisation on the part of its players. One might say that the Brazilian appropriation of the "Breton sport" reinforced this aspect, creating a famous style for what Pasolini defined as a more poetic than a *prosaic* discourse: the unexpected occupation of spaces, the emphasis on dribbling, on the *jogo de cintura*; as well as on physical readiness and on elliptical, curvilinear moves, rather than linear ones. (Wisnik in Kramer, 2011, *n.p.)*

This insight provides a reference to how I heard and scored the orchestral voices. The process reflects a quasi-simultaneous experience where the music develops in a manner reminiscent of how Brazilian soccer players improvise their movements. As such, the manuscript becomes analogous to a soccer pitch, and the improvisation/notation process analogous to the elliptical, curvilinear moves employed in Brazilian style soccer. Thus, the improvisation/composition dialogue between the instruments occurred through a supravertical approach where melodies interlocked within an elliptical space across a vertical and horizontal perspective on the manuscript. In effect, this means that what I could hear was a series of interconnected lines (including silences) dependant on each other to form a whole. Thus, the moment of melodic conception that leads to notation can manifest multi-directionally within the ellipsis across the orchestra. In addition, the size of the elliptical shape can vary depending on where the focus is at the time. For example: an extended melodic line, typically stemming from focusing on a solo passage, or a dialogue between two instrument, shifts the improvisation/composition activity towards a horizontal direction on the score, so that the position of the elliptical shape replicates this shape, and as such, becomes image reflective of what I am improvising at any particular moment. In this sense, this can be compared to an improvised solo (or duo) effort in soccer that, by effect, renders other team players to momentary reduced activity (including stillness), which is nonetheless, critical to what can happen next.

Example of elliptical shape: bars 73-75, Movement 1:



The example below shows an extension of the same passage (bars 75-79) and an approximation of how I heard the improvisation in my head:



The Brazilian *jogo de cintura* provides a metaphorical reference to the process of improvisation in composing the concerto. In a paradox, I imagine a team of instrumentalists interacting in my mind that resembles: ‘*The Brazilian manner of informal absorption of knowledge, usually determined in the act, and which depends on the momentary variables of the situation*’ (*Ibid*). Given that one mind cannot replicate what eleven players might conjure up spontaneously, and that a football field is rather more representative of a performance stage than a score, the analogy is but an abstract idea. It explains some of the workings of what is a complex creative process where the score becomes somewhat of a mirror of this improvisation activity. Far from being contemplative, this approach, as in the Brazilian method, is subject to a number of unexpected outcomes because: “… *what counts is precisely improvisation*” (*ibid*).

3.5 Conclusion

In closing this chapter, I have unfolded the many problems, challenges, and strategies employed in the realisation of this work. Perhaps the biggest challenge is in rationalising the process of an instinctive creative experience into an intellectual discourse on improvisation where there is virtually no direct frame of reference, largely because the inquiry in scholarship has been driven by theoretical/ cultural/political concerns. Nevertheless, what is relevant in this experience is that I have demonstrated that improvisation and notation align as an interactive process, and that improvisation is not only central to composition, but can operate effectively within the ambit of traditional structures. Whether this micro example of creative practice may suggest that Western art practices and improvisation can interact to reinvigorate a long-lost relationship, and give rise to new ideas may hinge on a gradual shift in consciousness, as George Lewis hypothesizes:

> Indeed, what might a new classical music sound like in a post-colonial world?
> Certainly, such a new music would need to draw upon the widest range of traditions, while not being tied to any one. Rather than quixotically asserting a ‘new common practice’, perhaps such a music would exist, as theorist Jacques Attali put it, ‘in a multifaceted time in which rhythms, styles, and codes diverge, interdependencies become more burdensome, and rules dissolve’- in short, a ‘new noise’ (Attali, [1977] 1989, pp. 138 – 140). Improvisation would play an important, perhaps even a defining role, in fostering that new noise. (Lewis, 2006, pp. 429-434)

4. Conclusion

What has emerged in previous chapters is the idea that improvisation can be discerned on at least three levels of activity - pre and post-notation, performance, and production processes -and that improvisation and composition can intertwine and demonstrate varied relationships rather than being dichotomous. This becomes especially so when elements such as dynamics, spontaneous creativity, and temporal spaces are considered. These observations are juxtaposed by a second element in an inquiry that takes into account the challenges/problems of an intercultural approach to extending the potential and possibilities of improvisation. Notwithstanding that what has been examined here represents a micro example in the broad field of improvisation, this work illuminates the dialogue on the issue of temporality, and intercultural aesthetics. As such, this study has been concerned with a number of questions that form the general frame of the inquiry. In the literature review, I asked if improvisation as *a single term could* reflect the multiplicity of approaches, and diversity of cultural perspectives. This opened the door to an investigation about musical process in improvisation/composition, one that continues to generate diverse, and often, polarised views in the dialogue. Yet, improvisation is a generative source in composition, and in turn, composition techniques are employed in improvisation practice, and performance. As such, my concerns have questioned these tensions through the observations of process in my creative practice. Hence, the investigation of works in the second section of the literature review targeted issues that directly related to my creative practice; these are: perception of the *score*, and spatiotemporal theory within the context of improvisation/composition. The first addresses a critical junction between improvisation and notation, a process that I argue positions the creation of the score as an experience intertwined with improvisation practice. The second looks at the temporal space in which this relationship functions as it questions theoretical frameworks defined by terms such as *real-time/non real time* improvisation, and *rapid/slow* composition.

Lastly, The final section of the review investigates a pivotal period in the 20th century that propels jazz experimentalists into an area where intercultural aesthetics are central to it. This investigation directly relates to the ornamental approaches that I have employed in these works. The process provides a point of engagement for an aesthetic discourse that can inform discussion on improvisation.

The literature review unfolded a general theme that improvisation as a single term is not plausible because meaning, and cultural implications are far reaching. In addition, the inquiry into improvisation, with the exception of jazz, has been driven by allied cultural and political concerns that have shaped the paradigm up to the end of the 20th century and into the 21st century. In response to this, voices such as Ingrid Monson (1998), Ajay Heble (2000), and Peter Hollerbach (2004) have advocated a critical need to shift the improvisation inquiry towards process. These overarching perspectives, which are juxtaposed by critical theory and empirical observations from practitioners, and my creative experience, have been the basis upon which I have drawn my conclusions.

4.1 Conclusions - Improvisation/composition process

Beyond the social and artistic benefits from the engagement of improvisation in performance, I argue that an improviser/composer can still experience the fulfilment of creative spontaneity as a continuous flow of improvisation. This was explored in the pre-notation process of composition, suggesting that this experience is not diminished, nor annulled by the action of notating a musical idea. This conclusion hinges on a parallel where improvisation practice with a view to performance reflects similar processes with a view to composition. In this regard, I refer to the philosophy of improvisation practice in Persian classical music where intuition, as Bailey (see Literature review, p. 5) informs in reference to Zonis, is intrinsic to it. Indeed, this point underlines my own approach to improvisation practice, which by extension acknowledges an abstract quality in the composition process. Contrary to the idea of improvisation practice being driven by rational reasoning, I argue that it would be short sighted to suggest that the right side of the brain - the intuitive, the spiritual, the subconscious, and so on - shuts down during practice; it is anti-improvisational in itself. Hence, without these elements, a claim that improvisation activity in composition is indeed active would be but a theoretical proposition difficult to substantiate. In reference to spontaneity, which is central to improvisation, I have opted to use the binary term *spontaneous-creativity* instead of spontaneity alone because although spontaneity plays a significant role in the creative process, it's still not very clear how it translates into creative mechanisms in music. Increasingly, these are becoming issues of concern to other disciplinary fields; neuropsychology and memetics are examples. Although I am aware of this information, its relevance to the issue of generative source within the context outlined here remains to be seen because there is no clear consensus on generative processes in music. Indeed, these would make compelling issues for further research.

My observations in unfolding the three phases of improvisation activity, especially the improvisation/notation process, have opened a pathway to suggest that the improvisation/performance binary relies on a paradigm that contextualises temporal perceptions of improvisation based on a hierarchical idea that performance - the live on stage type - is the zenith of improvisation because it occurs faster, and therefore more spontaneously that in any other situation. However, this idea is vulnerable to broader perceptions of temporality. This can be seen within the context of an improvised solo in performance, which can vary markedly between original/imaginative ideas and trite repetitions; the latter implying that the solo is a live regurgitation of overly familiarised idiomatic patterns expertly honed in improvisation practice over years and therefore, not as fast or spontaneous as they might appear. This idea underlines a dialogical engagement between Nettl's (Literature Review, pp. 14) fast/slow theory and Edward T Hall's (see Literature Review, pp. 15) inspired high/low context communication theory that I think reflects the deepest theoretical contribution to understanding the fluid elusiveness of improvisation across the breath of performance and composition processes. Despite this, I find that their contrasting arguments converge because on the one hand, they attenuate the differences between improvisation/composition, while on the other, as they pivot on a *real-time* paradigm of *performance*, they continue to accentuate them. As such, I argue that by removing the paradigmatic element, what emerges is that improvisation, as a wide concept of practice, does not necessarily need to rely on performance to be validated as a *real-time* event. Therefore, I argue that similarly to composition, improvisation practice is an insular creative practice exercised and enjoyed daily by its practitioners irrespective of its social/professional extensions. At this point, I wish to add to Edward Hall's (1992) theory that claims improvisation practice hinges on the *real-time* perception of improvisation in performance, by suggesting that a great number of original ideas that occur in improvisation practice are the same ideas that end up in a composition. This indicates a point where improvisation and composition converge into a process nurtured by improvisation practice that can either fuel the creation of a composition, or provide the building blocks for a performance. In this respect, performance can be viewed as a by-product of improvisation practice, one that can vary from a genuine explorative performance to a *circus show* of trite old patterns. Furthermore, taking into account its various meanings, if the idea of improvisation is somewhat narrowed to its essence - for example to create spontaneously and ingeniously - improvisation practice, in a temporal sense, is a *real-time* process because the creation of new ideas are in fact faster in a generative sense, than trite old phrases in performance. Thus, composition becomes a space of creative activity where stops and starts only exist in a comparative sense to the rules of performance; otherwise, they are not there. As such, my experience in each phase of improvisation activity in the creative practice is a series of *real-time* clusters of improvised events that can move sequentially forward and/or skip backward if revisiting an idea.

The practice of revisiting material in composition impinges on its perception as *slow/non-real time* process; this is despite the fact that in improvisation practice *with a view to performance* revision is cultivated as a distinct skill. In view of this, what comparative musicology has been able to offer thus far is that some composers are faster at composing than others, deeming them more spontaneous, and more improvisational than the methodical/slower types, but still nowhere near the (seemingly) instantaneous act of performance. Thus, I argue that in much the same way that improvisation has a multiplicity of definitions, *revision* can also hold broader significance. Indeed, all three phases in the realisation of my compositions underwent discrete levels of revision, but throughout these, I experienced a sense of forward propulsion rather than regression towards contemplation or overcooking of musical ideas. Ryle Gilbert's (1976) temporal perspective on the instinctive and the *now* nature of creative thinking suggests that it is driven by *mind improvisation* as clusters or successive steps of real time events. If the idea of revision as an intuitive improvisational model of creative thinking is aligned to improvisation activity in the composition process, it becomes a real-time phenomenon, rather than the implications of premeditation that accentuate a dichotomy as Dobrian (1991) indicates. Furthermore, this concept is easily transferable to the process of musical revision where the intuitive effect of improvisation can reshape an idea. As such, revision becomes part of the creative process since quickness of mind is required to develop the ability to deal with compositional techniques in performance. Paraphrasing, for example, relies on the ability to recall and revise motifs instantly at any point during a solo. Less experienced improvisers aim to employ fewer and less fragmented ideas in their solos to cohere with the main motifs established at the outset of each chorus for example, much like a composer or skilled improviser does intuitively. Without this intuitive architectural skill, it is arguable that composition and especially performance improvisation would not have evolved as they have.

Both chapters two and three unfolded three phases where improvisation is engaged with abstract ideas, pre-notation, and its interplay with notation. In summarising this part of the conclusion, I have chosen the composition *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges* as an example that encapsulates the main elements in the three phases across the spectrum of the creative component.

Phase 1 is an experimental zone where improvisation is active in the form of abstract ideas, intuitive thoughts, singing, singing, body drumming, and so on. This process is probably the most powerful because it embodies the intellectual and corporeal aspects of improvisation in the conception period of composition. It is a prime engagement with a source of creativity that also characterises the core aesthetic of the piece. In chapter two, I described this experience through a sequence of events that inspired the title of the composition, commencing with the unexpected presence of the name Mingus in my psyche. The subsequent unfolding images positioned the experience into a *real-time* event because it happened suddenly, and as such, could not have been predicted.

Phase 2 represents a transit into improvisation activity where the elements of Phase 1 are put into draft framework. Aspects such as style, rhythm, structural ideas, intercultural elements, choice of musicians/instruments and so on are considered. During this phase, the guitar becomes central to the creative process as a tool of expression for improvisation/composition. As such, what happened in the abstractness of Phase 1 becomes a catalyst to striking a note on the steel-string guitar, which, through the unexpected rattling of another string against the frets, produced an aesthetic synthesis reminiscent of an Indian drone and blues. Briefly, on a retrospective thought on spatiotemporal perceptions I would argue that, had this happened during a performance, it would have been difficult for an audience to say with any degree of certainty whether I was improvising or playing something that I had composed previously.

Phase 3 represents the improvisation/notation process. At this point, I wish to address the idea of pre-composition, a term that I find increasingly problematic because improvisation activity doesn't stop as notation begins; on the contrary, I have argued that notation intertwines with improvisation practice. Moreover, pre-composition does not hold as a tangible concept because composition, amongst the many things it can be, holds its own history of creative process, which includes how notation of a particular piece occurs. Therefore, *pre-composition* is a concept that accentuates a division between what happens before and after the score is created, whereas the analysis of the creative practice demonstrates that composition is subject to discrete levels of improvisation activity throughout its process, from the abstract stages in its genesis to its performance. As such, I argue that composition begins with a creative idea independently of when it is transferred to notation, or for that matter, committed to memory, which is another way of composing. In this sense, notation, though not an ideal translator of abstract perceptions because its frame of reference is limited by symbols that are inadequate, is still an employable useful reference tool of communication between composer and performer/s. What happens after that depends on the composer's philosophical influence on the creative process, which I have addressed both in chapter two, in reference to the rehearsal stages of the Eastern Blues Project, and in chapter three, where I discussed the rehearsal/recording process of the concerto.

During Phase 3, the focus remains on capturing the first phrase that I hear, or working with one that I had generated in Phase 2. Usually, I notate the phrase straight away and continue composing, while at other times, it becomes the subject of improvisation practice where I explore its potential - a process that generates developmental ideas. There are times when I do not notate the motif straight away, nor improvise on it because I want to test its strength to see if I can easily recall it later. This reminds me of when my improvisation teacher would ask me to replay the initial motif at the completion of the solo to see if I could remember it. There is no specific plan on how I develop a motif since ultimately what I hear becomes notation. In this sense, theory is low on the scale of my creative process compared to hearing and improvising. Thus, the first motif of *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges* with all its features becomes both its aesthetic icon and the basis for compositional development. In an analogy to horticulture, it is a matter of nurturing the seed until it grows spontaneously into an aesthetic manifestation of itself. Unfortunately, the manuscript does not reveal such a process, nor what might have triggered the spontaneous series of events in the realization of the composition. Stripped of these elements the score remains an obscure reference of the composer's creative experience. As such, the inner workings of *Mingus Ashes in the Ganges*, or any composition for that matter, will never be known unless documented by its creator. This problem is very significant in being able to reconcile the differences between improvisation/composition. Although Gossett (1970) and Barnhill (2006) are peripheral voices in the dialogue, their message is central in alerting us that the lack of historical records from past improvising composers obscures the likelihood that improvisation influenced composition processes. Indeed, I would be encouraging further research in this area, perhaps fostering collaborative efforts between academics and extant practitioners.

To sum up, these findings suggest that spatiotemporal theory can exhibit sharply contrasting perceptions between improvisation/composition, and that *performance*, which I have argued is 1) a pivotal context for such theories, and 2) not a reliable indicator of improvisation occurring in real-time. In this sense, the hierarchical status of performance over composition within the context of understanding improvisation must be questioned because it is a fundamental idea in the paradigm. Instead, I advocate that *improvisation practice* is a real time activity where performance and composition processes intertwine indiscriminately, and where foundational ideas, generated by spontaneous creativity and intuitive improvisation through the practice of practice combine as generative processes that feed selectively into composition and/or performance. As such, the improvisation/composition dialogue would need to consider that it is the breadth and reach of the process, rather than its fragmentation into temporal spaces, that becomes central to the paradigm.

Finally, I encourage the dialogue to lean on Bruno Nettl's point (1974, p. 4) that a number of non-western cultures consider improvisation as part of a unified idea of music making. Bailey has also indicated that musicians connected to an idiom (East or West) don't talk about improvisation, nor in many cases have a word for it, rather, they focus on the idiom itself.

4.2 Conclusions - Intercultural aesthetics

Intercultural aesthetics play a key-role in defining the experimental nature of this creative practice, one that I see as extending tradition rather than inventing hybrids. This idea is based on viewing improvisation as custom rather than tradition; the difference being that although customs are part of tradition they change over time (though not without resistance) - thus, experimentation is generally accepted. This is in contrast to the rigid formalities of tradition that are underlined by invariability (see Hobsbawm, (1983), and Giddens (1999), which view experimentation with suspicion. In reference to my creative practice, this idea is underlined by a personal need to engage more directly with my formative tradition of jazz. As such, the main musical elements of the exploration provide a canvas where tradition is distinctly recognisable - for example swing groove, post bop phrasing, syncopation, and blues while in the concerto the three-movement form, which resembles symphonic concerto, is juxtaposed by harmonic approaches based on flamenco, Impressionism, and Latin jazz. In framing my intercultural approach to ornamentation when referring to specific genres and techniques, I have used the term *nuance*. This is because the basis of the experiment is concerned with an *intercultural* approach to jazz where non-jazz aesthetics are implied rather than replicated idiomatically. Of course, there is an argument that even if these ornaments were performed authentically, according to their respective idioms; could they still be considered so outside the parameters of their traditions? At any rate, the decision to use the term *nuance* is influenced by my principles about cultural misrepresentation. In reference to ornaments, I am aware that what is considered an ornament in one culture may not be so in another, thus, the credibility of the work and indeed my ethical approach are imperative to validating the experiment. *Gamaka* for example, connotes a complex system of vocal and instrumental melodic embellishments intrinsic to the aesthetic significance of Indian classical music, and art in general. One of the ornamental techniques that I employ in the pieces I learned from Indian musicians in India, who described it as *gamaka*. Although I learned it by imitation, I have not made a critical study of it, thus, even if it could be identified as belonging to a specific type of *gamaka*, the context in which I employ it is outside the boundaries of Indian classical tradition. Nevertheless, it does provide a texture reminiscent of Indian classical music, and as such, I refer to these as Indian-nuanced lines or passages, rather than *gamaka*. A similar argument holds in reference to *falsetas* in the concerto, and *Silk Road* (*Revisited*). Albeit, in contrast to Indian elements where I draw from techniques deriving from string instruments such as *sitar*, *vina* and *sarod*, *falsetas* are idiomatic to the guitar. This is a significant because as a guitarist I have studied several *falsetas*, and have performed numerous Spanish and Latin American classical guitar pieces. As such, I refer to the improvisations employed here as *falseta*-inspired, or sometimes flamenco-nuanced improvisations. In view of this, since this kind of exploration draws aesthetic elements from cultural traditions into a platform where they are foreign to it yet are employed to expand it, I hold that ethical description of terms, which are all too often homogenised in music, are critical to this process. With reference to jazz, I have emphasised that its relationship to Eastern influences points to a shift in the course of improvisation that, like free jazz, emphasises not only a crisis, but also a turning point that has continued into the 21st century.

In concluding, I take this opportunity to open wide Derek Bailey’s idea that, although he defined experimental jazz as *offshoots* of the American jazz tradition that were aesthetically of little or no significance to it, improvisation, if it is to stay true to its nature, needs the vitality of experimentation. As such, the findings in this investigation clearly point to intercultural engagement as a significant practice for such renewal.

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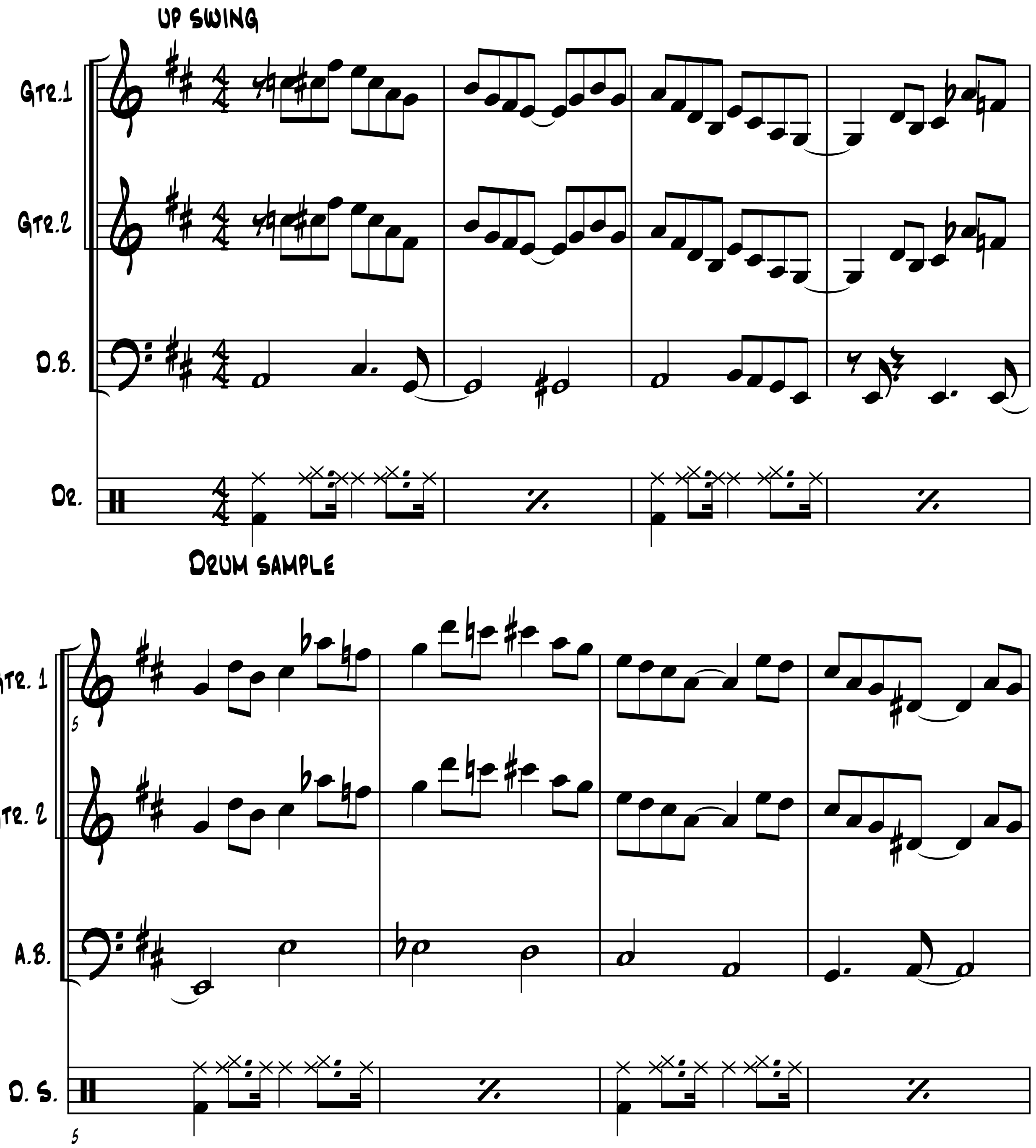
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Eastern Blues

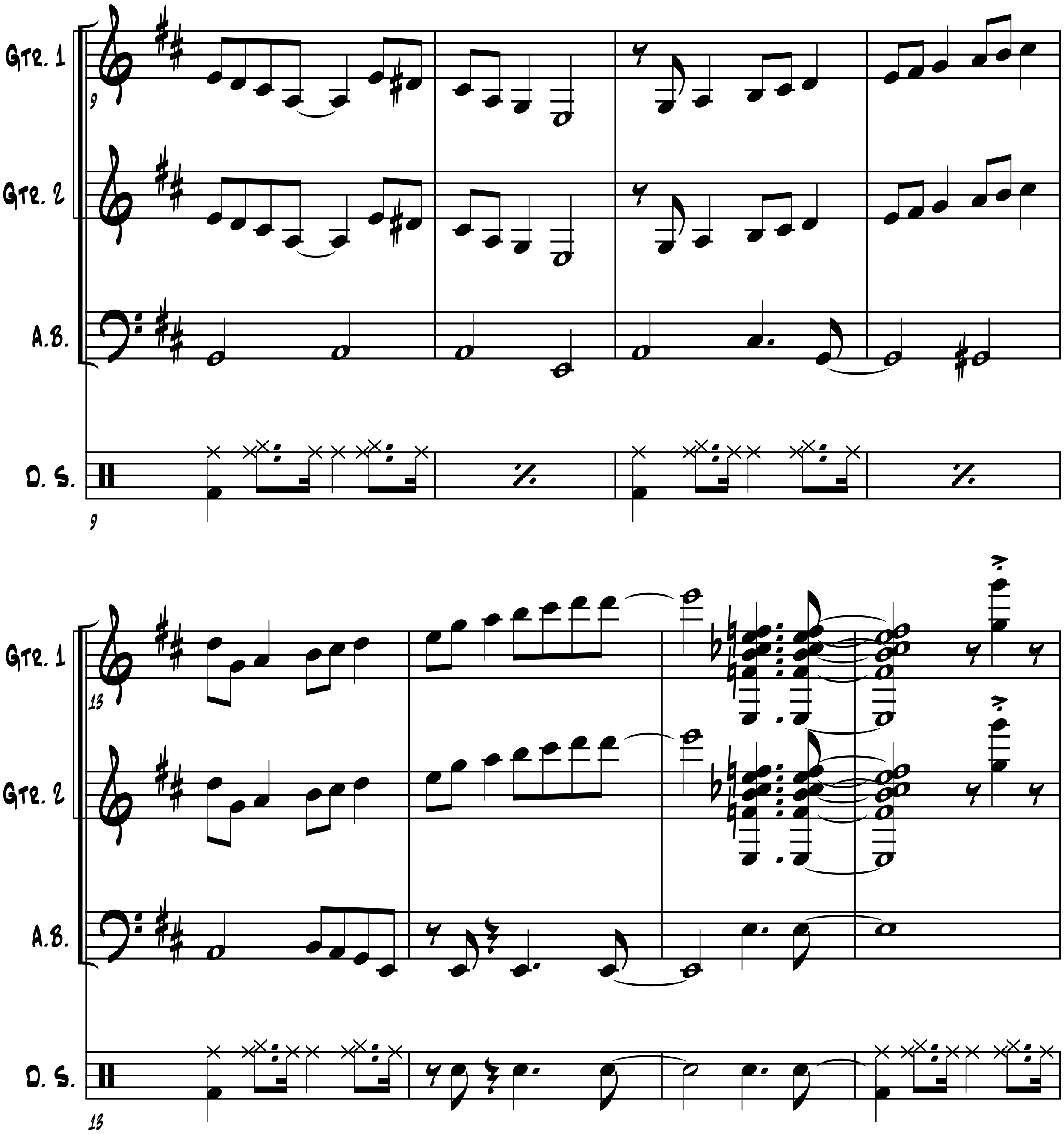
Guy Strazz Qurtet

Guy Strazz
11/2010

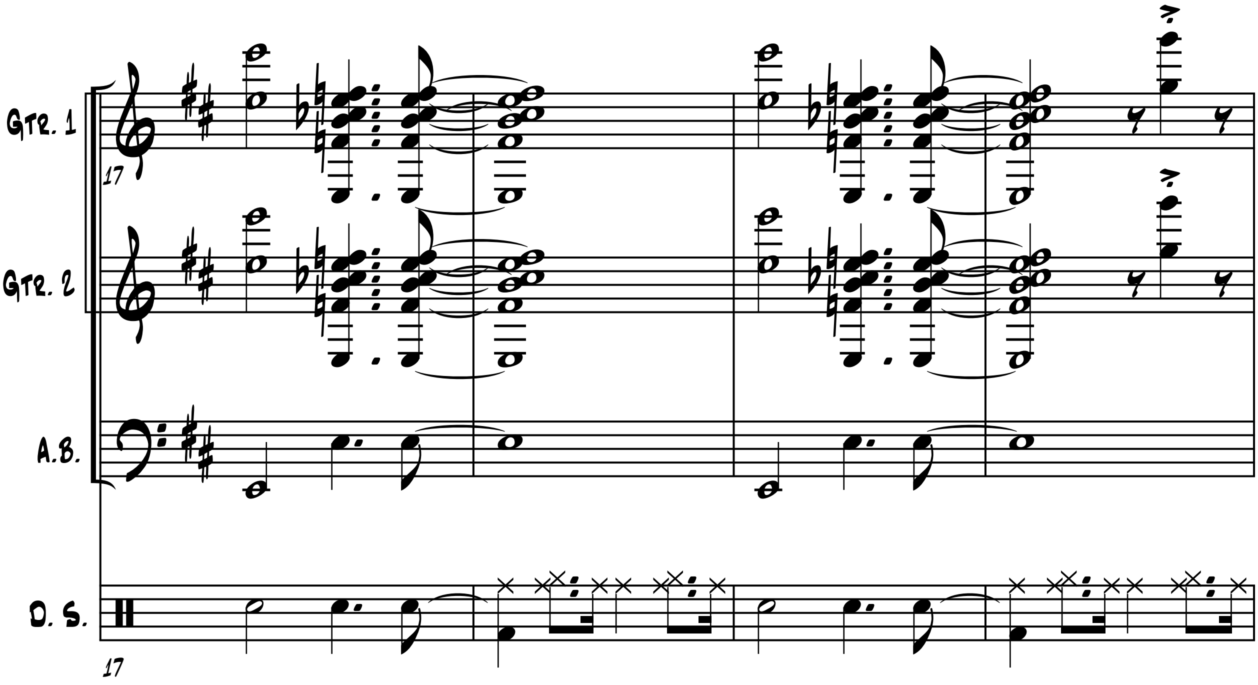

UP SWING
Gtr.1
Gtr.2
D.B.
Dr.
Drum sample
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
5
5

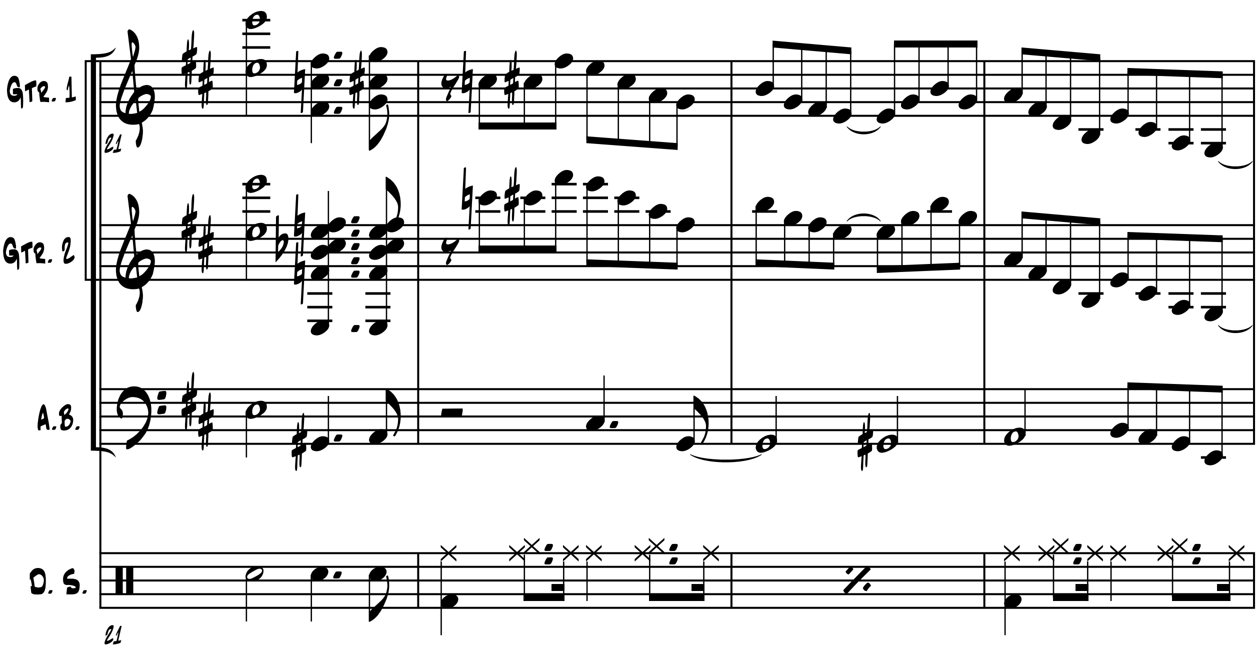
©APRA Control 2010

Eastern Blues

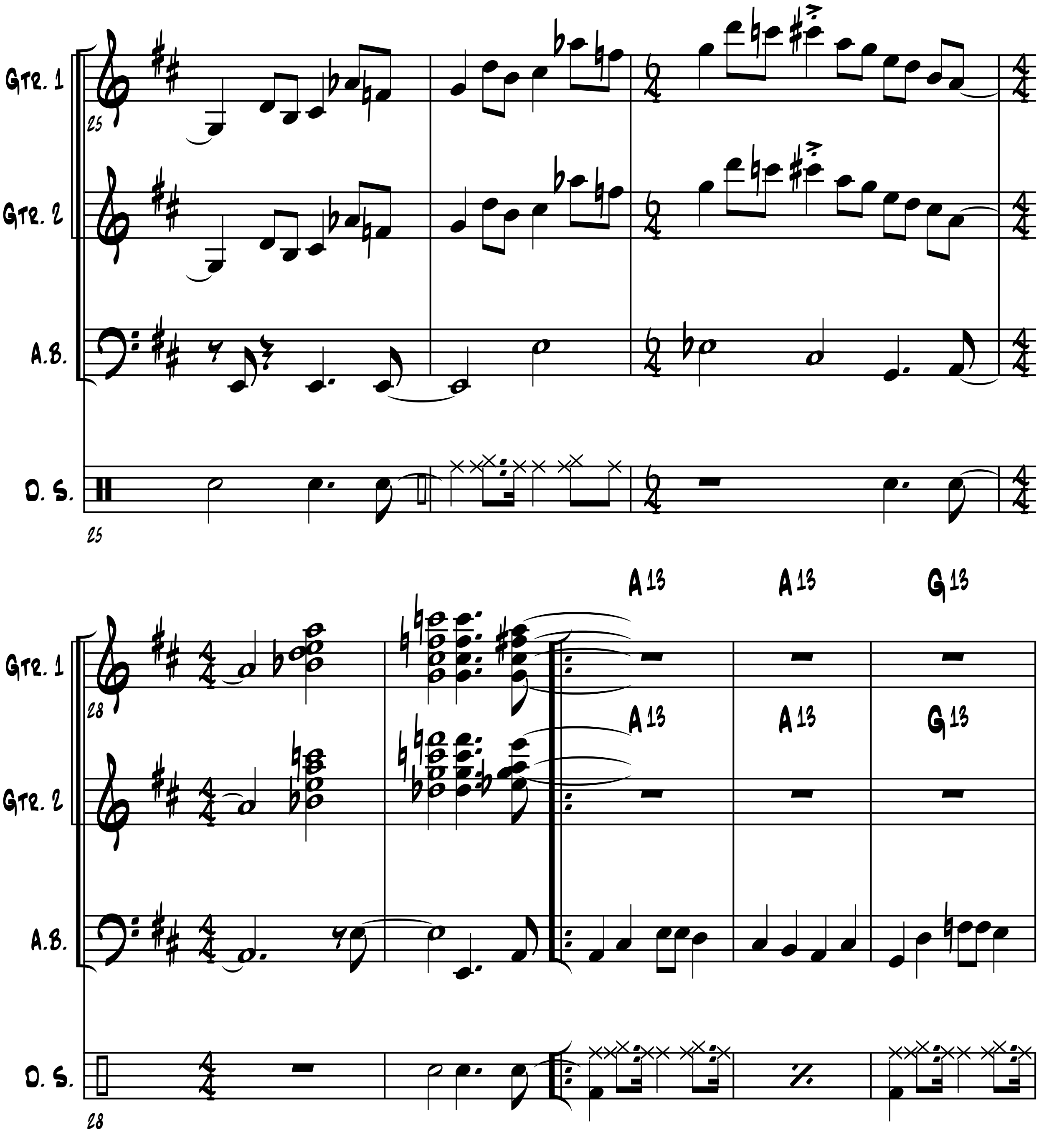

Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
9
13

Eastern Blues

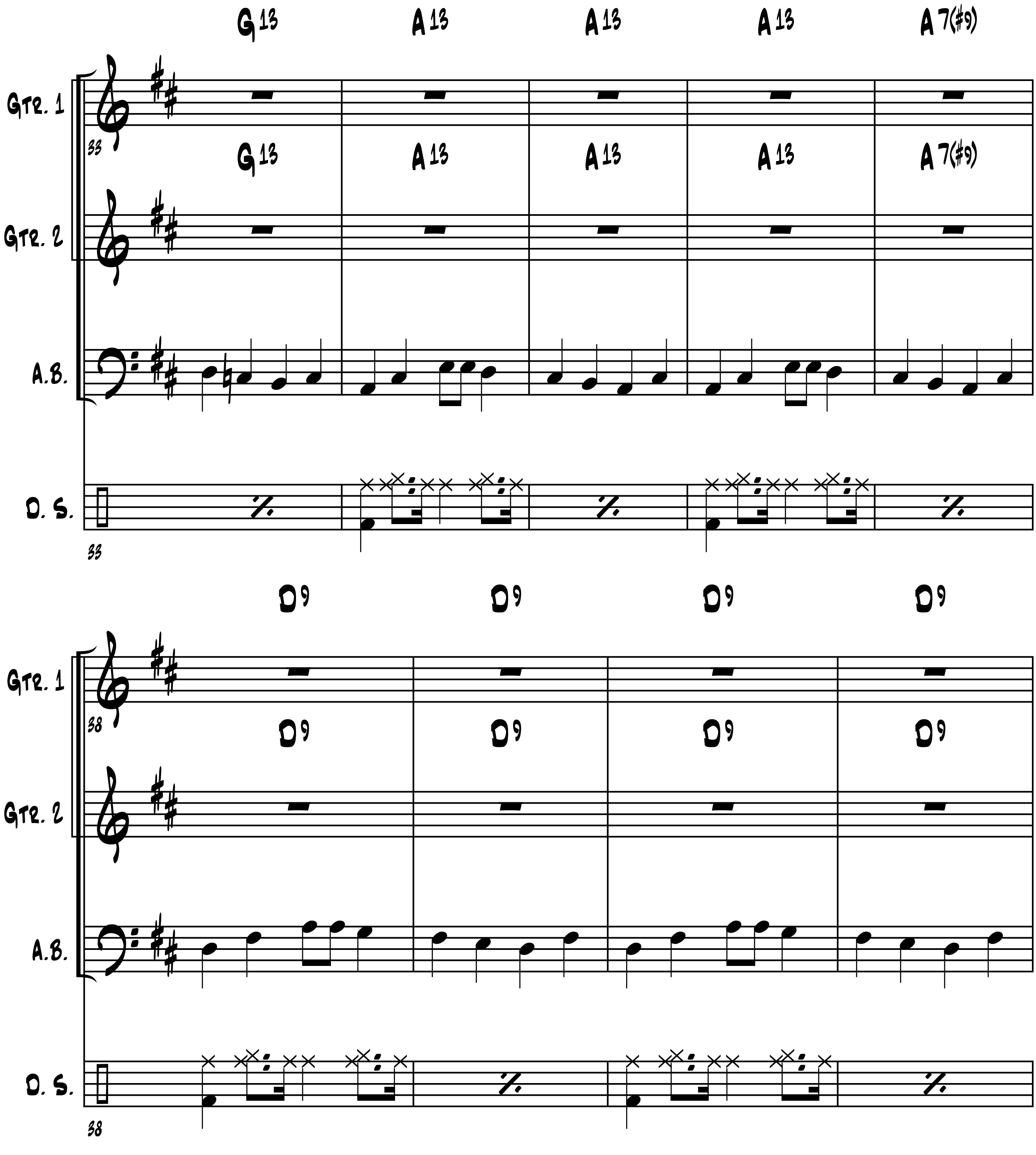

Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
17
17


Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
21
21

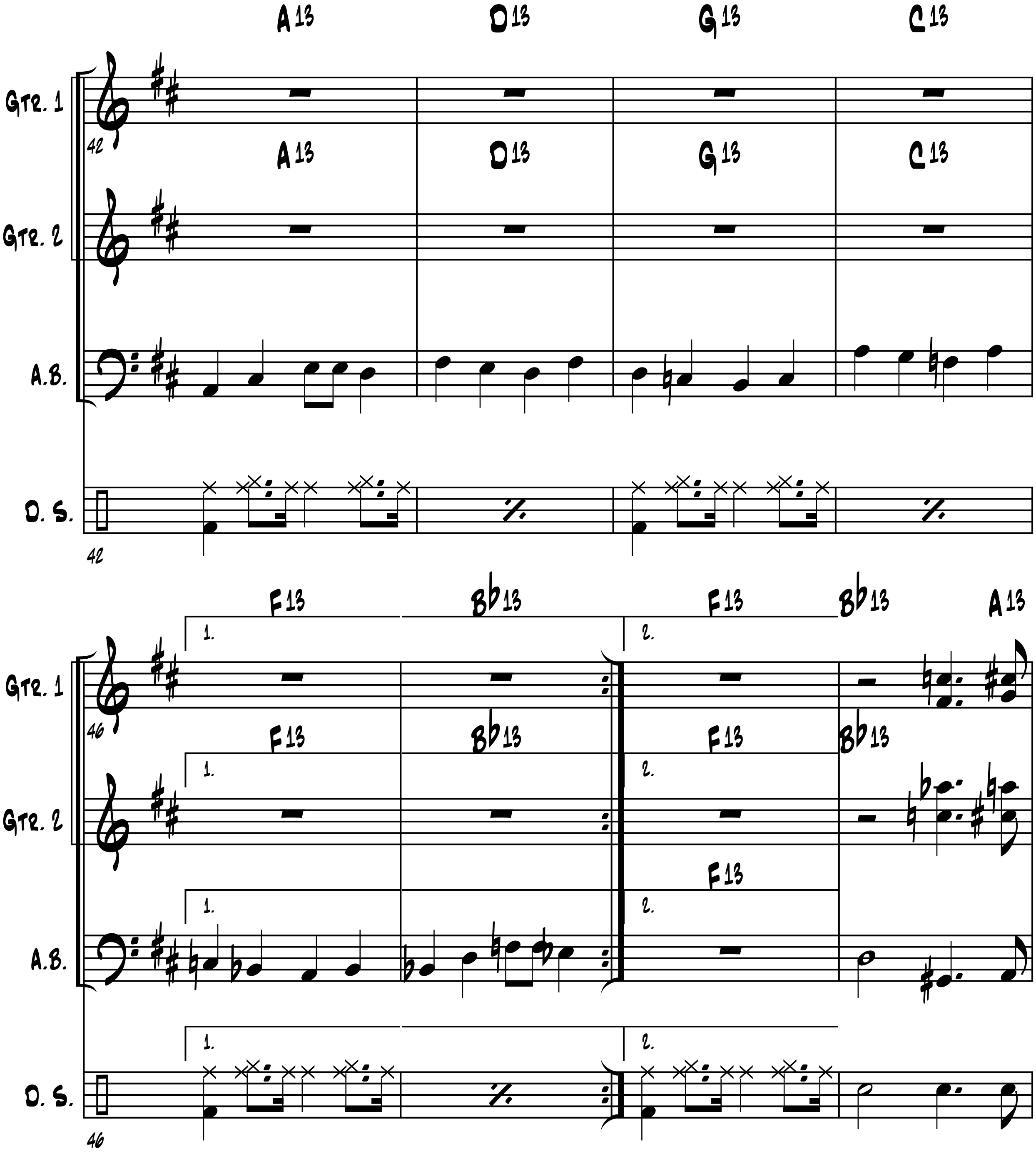
Eastern Blues

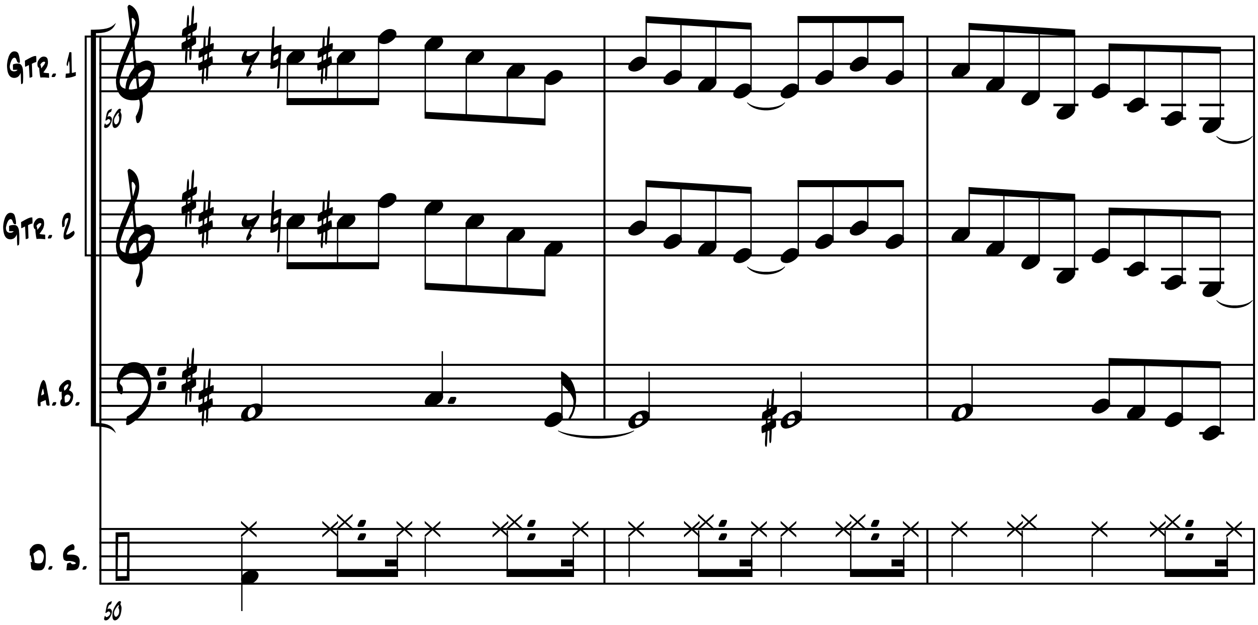

Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
25
25
A13
A13
G13
A13
A13
G13
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
28
28

Eastern Blues


G13
A13
A13
A13
A7(#9)
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
33
D9
D9
D9
D9
38

Eastern Blues


A13
D13
G13
C13
Gtr. 1
42
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
F13
Bb13
A13
1.
2.
46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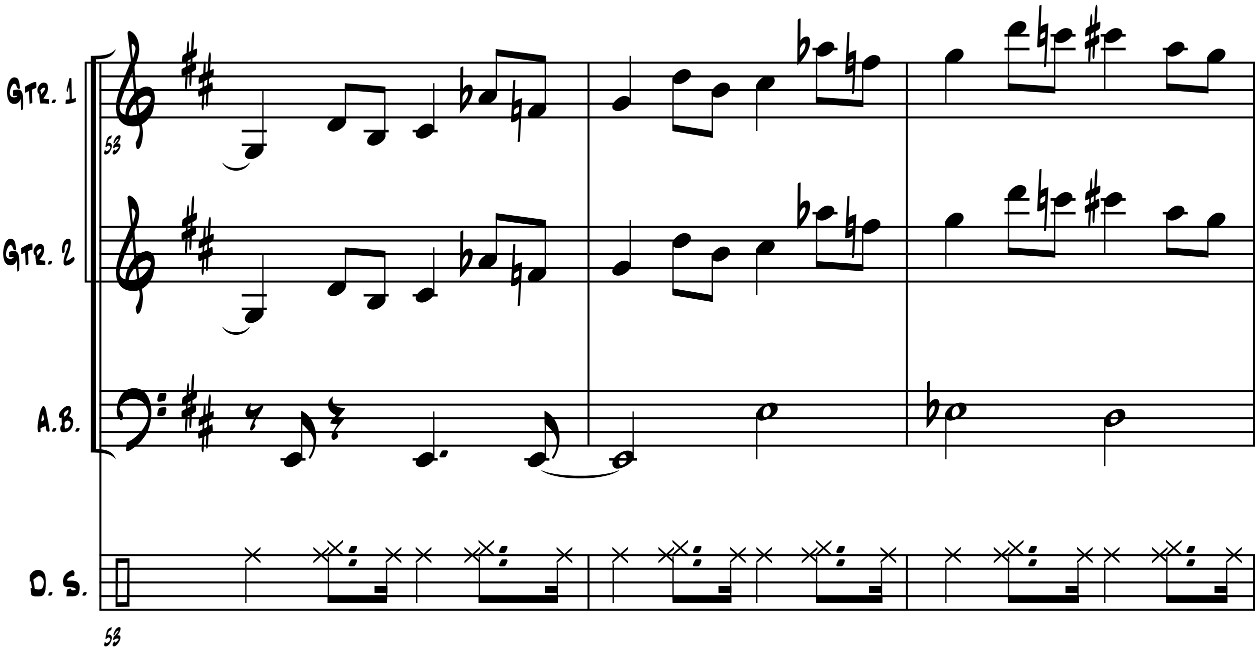
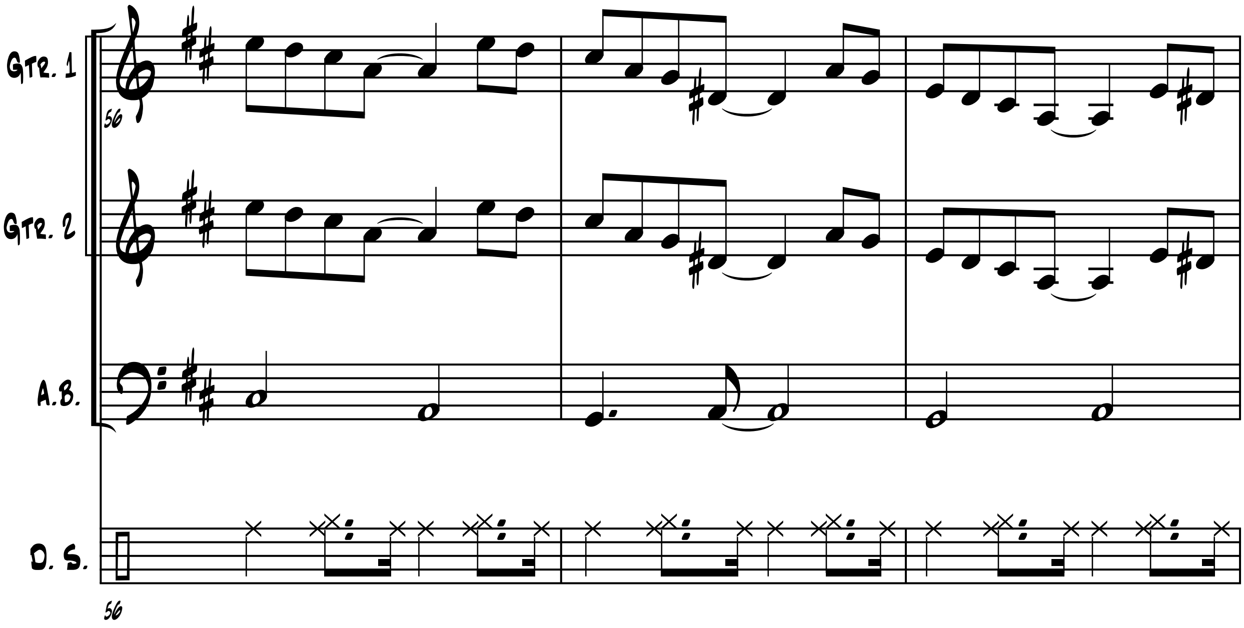
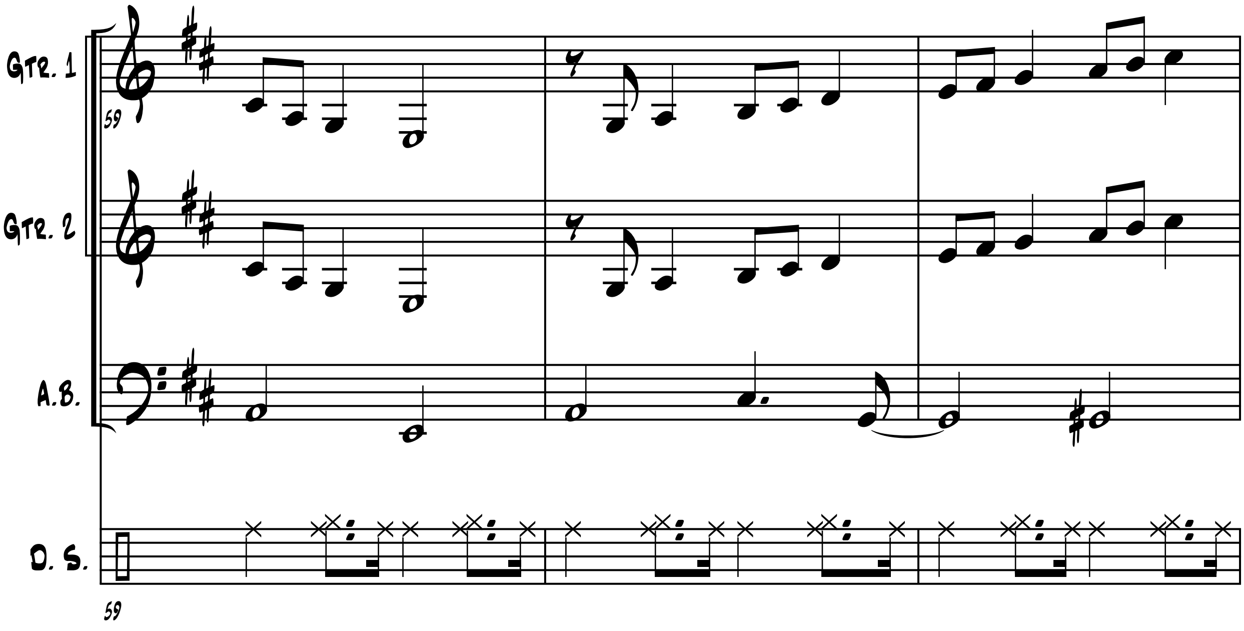
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
50
50


Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
53
53

Eastern Blues


Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
56
56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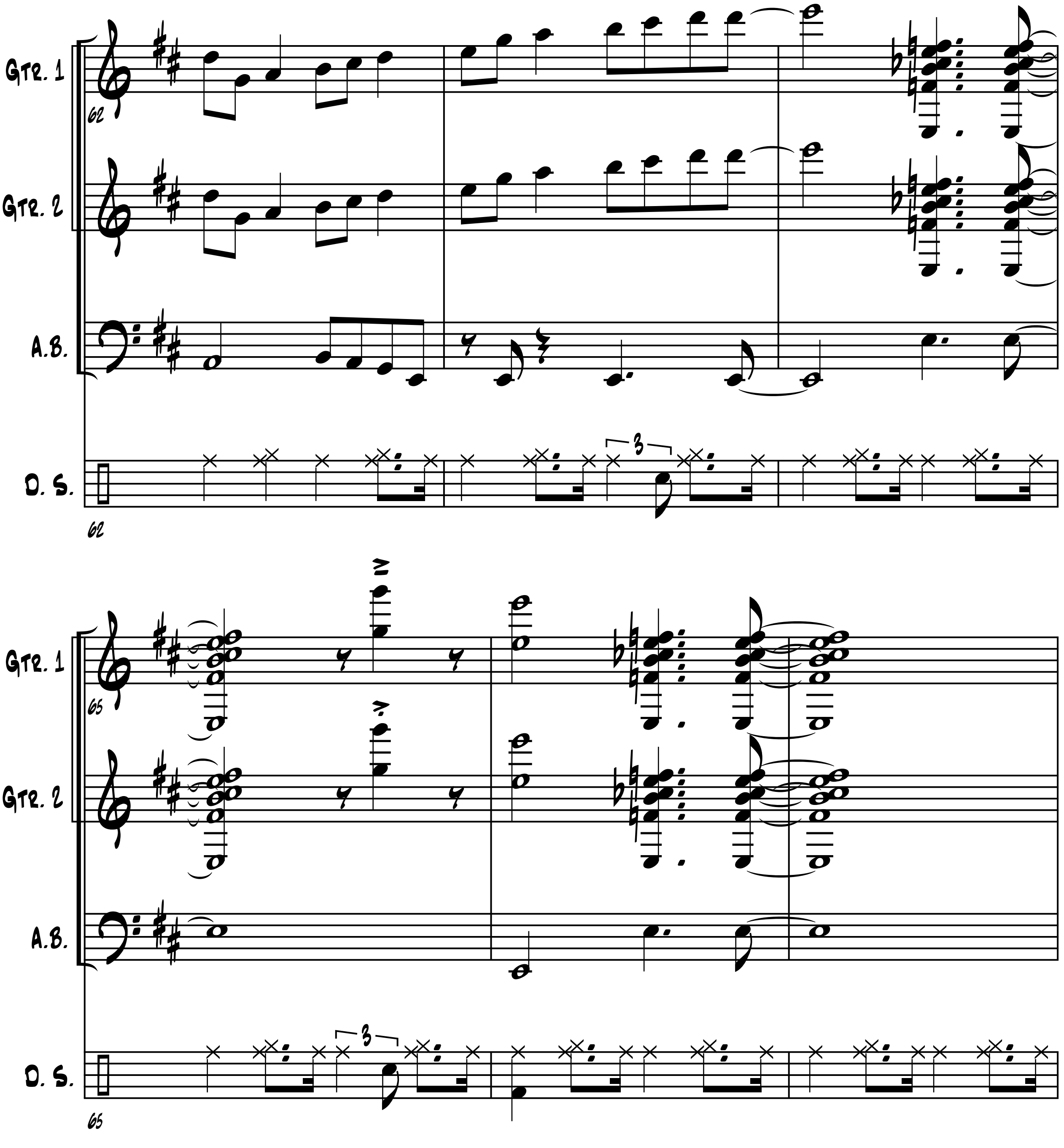
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
59
59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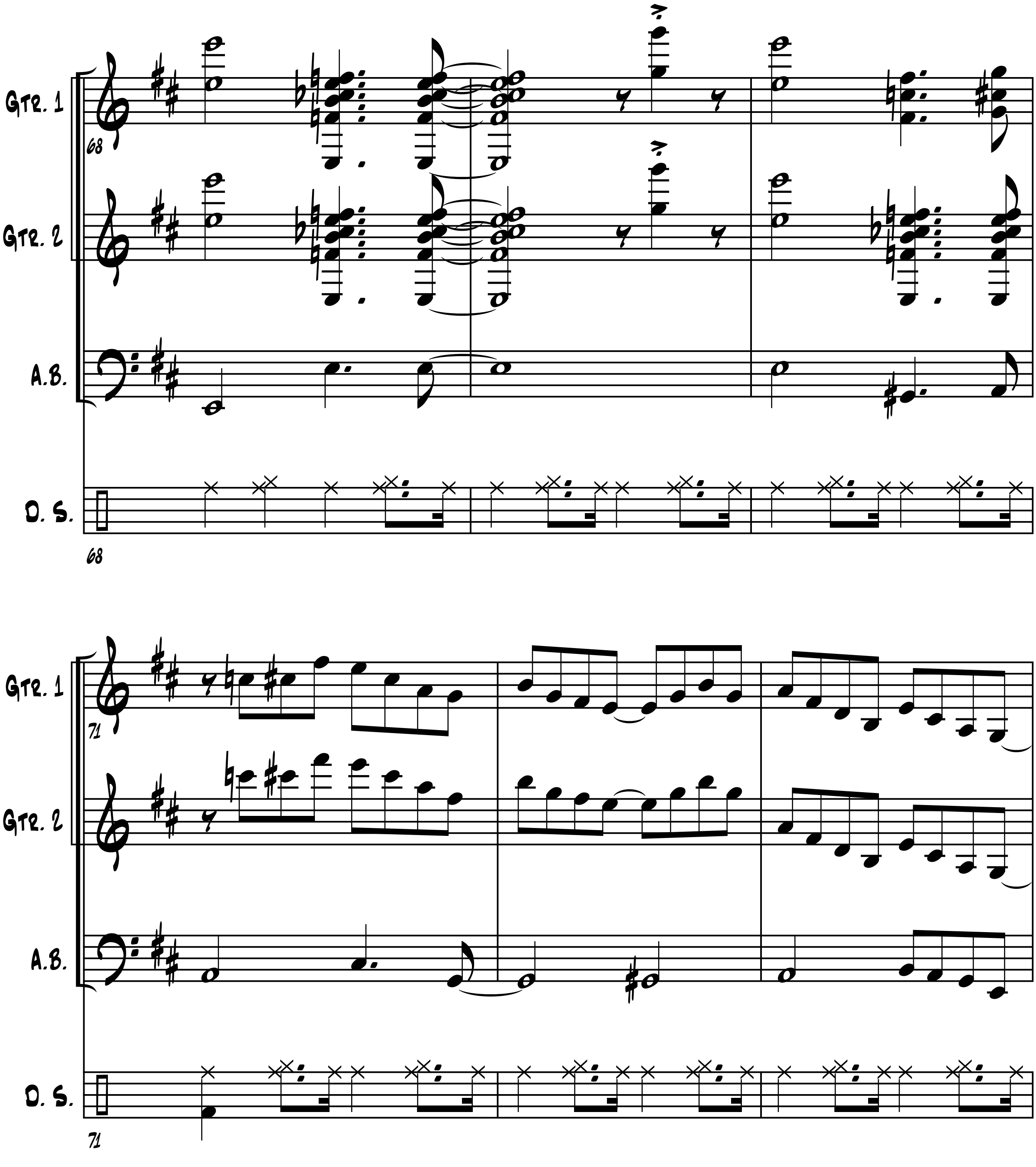
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.

Eastern Blues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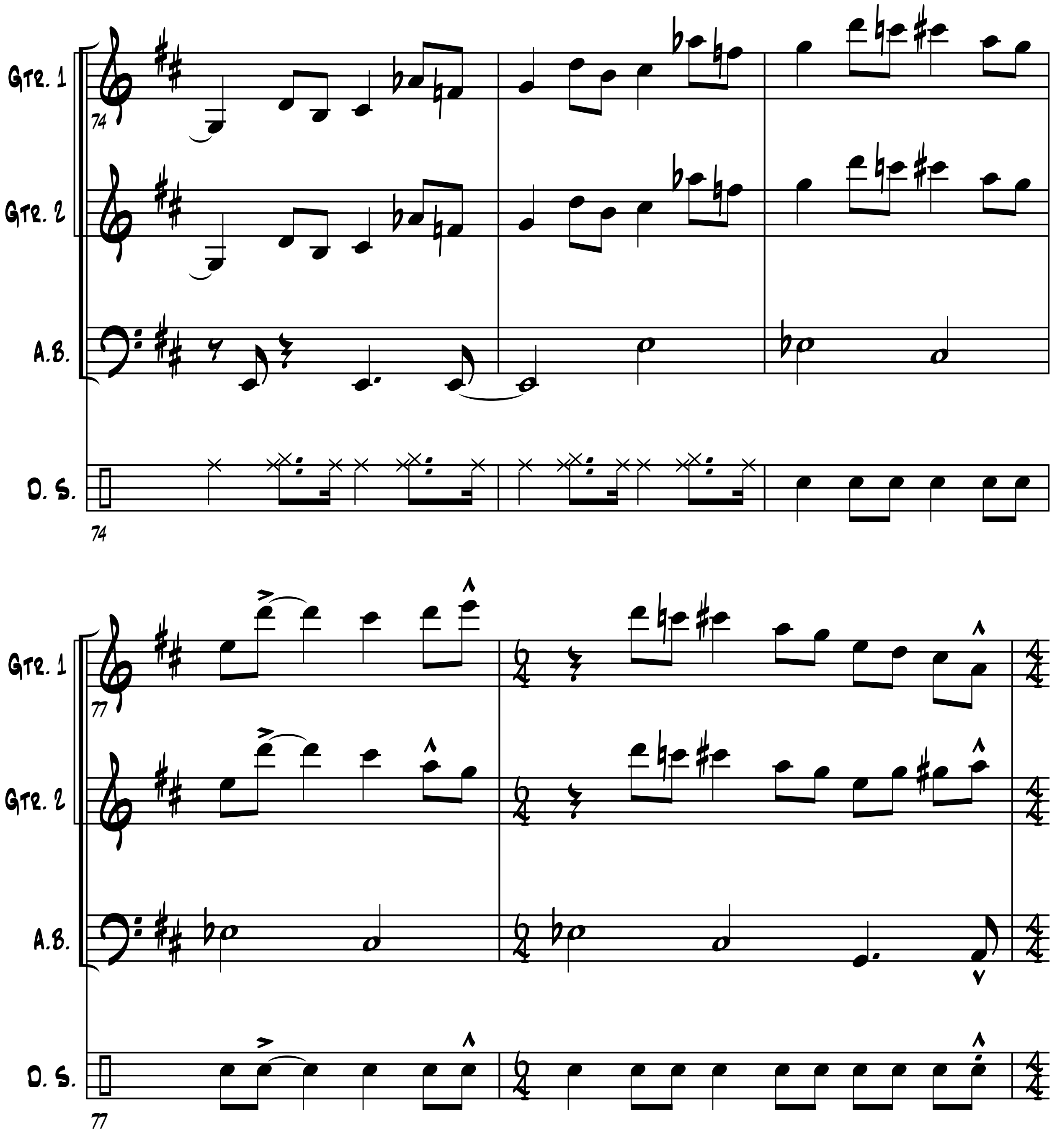
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
68
68
71
71

Eastern Blues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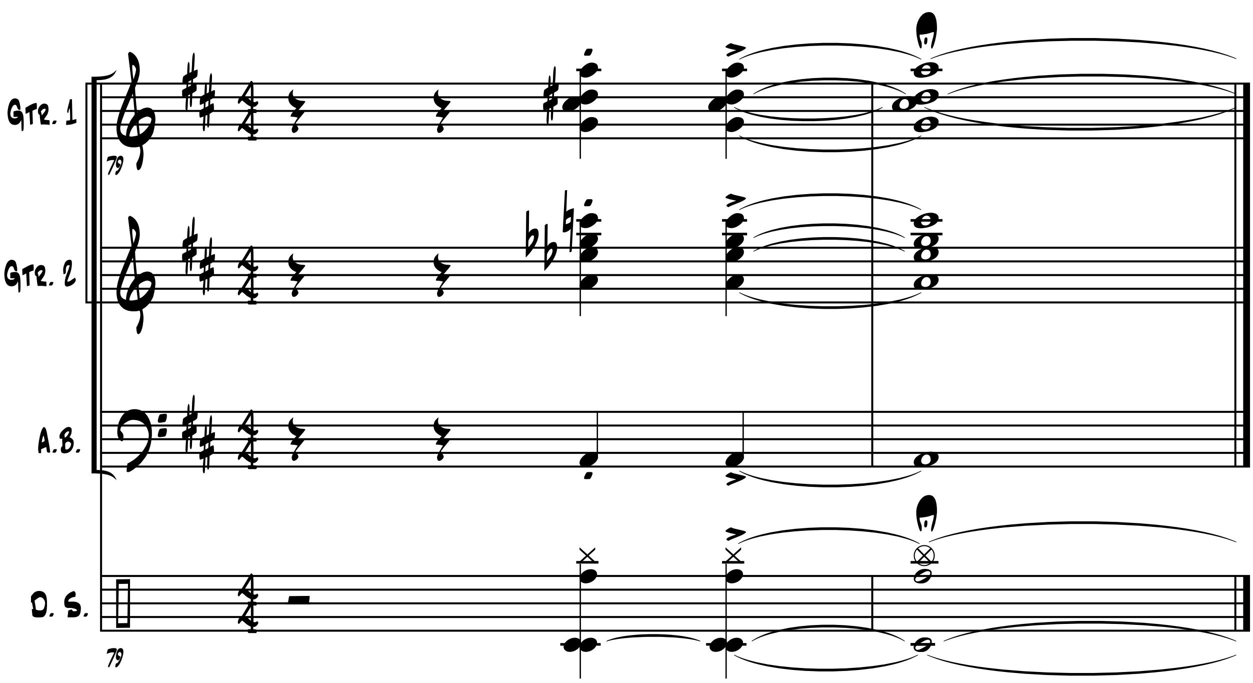
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
74
74
77
77

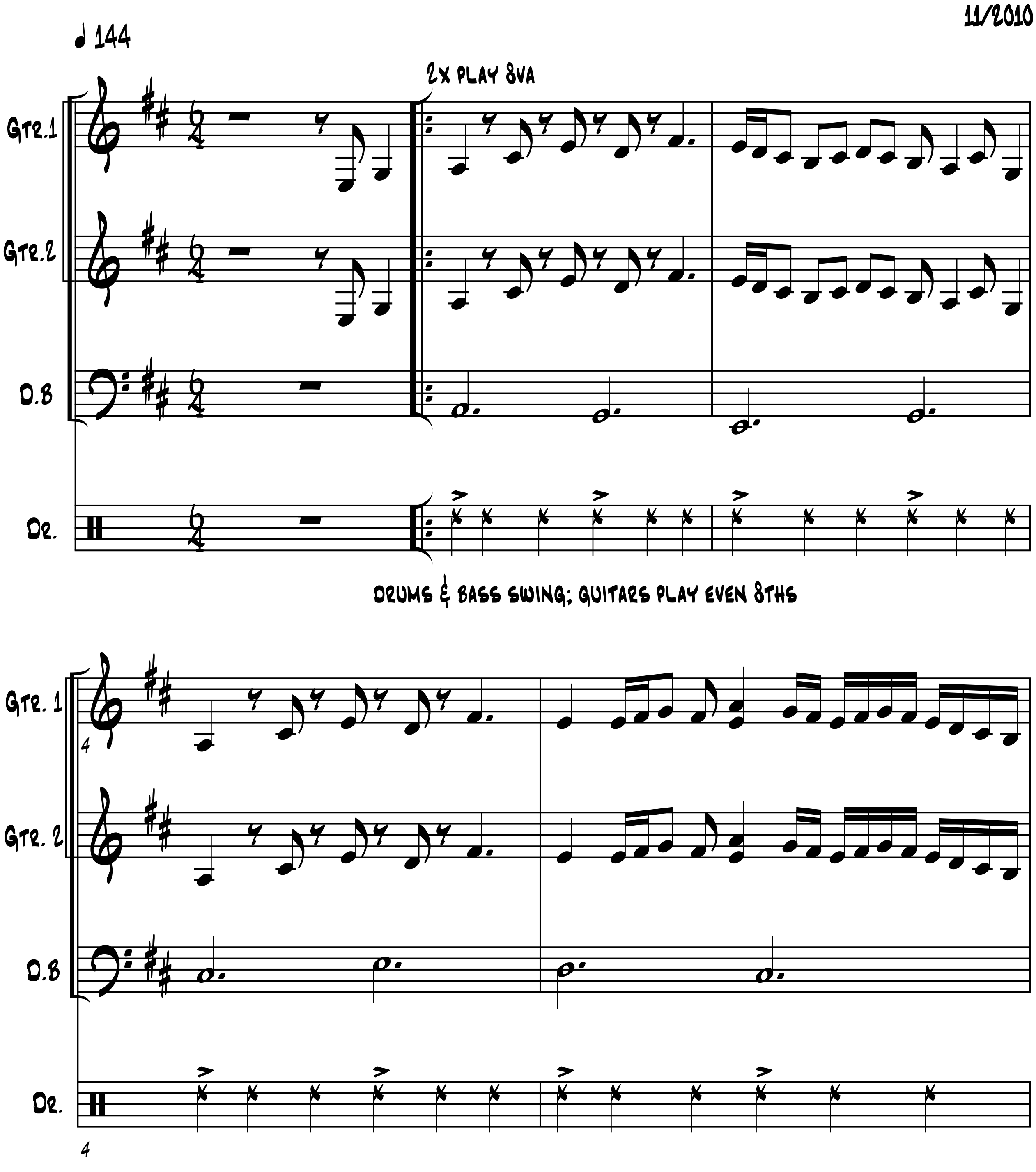

Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
A.B.
D. S.
79
79

APPENDIX 2

Mingus Ashes in the Ganges

Guy Strazz Qurtet

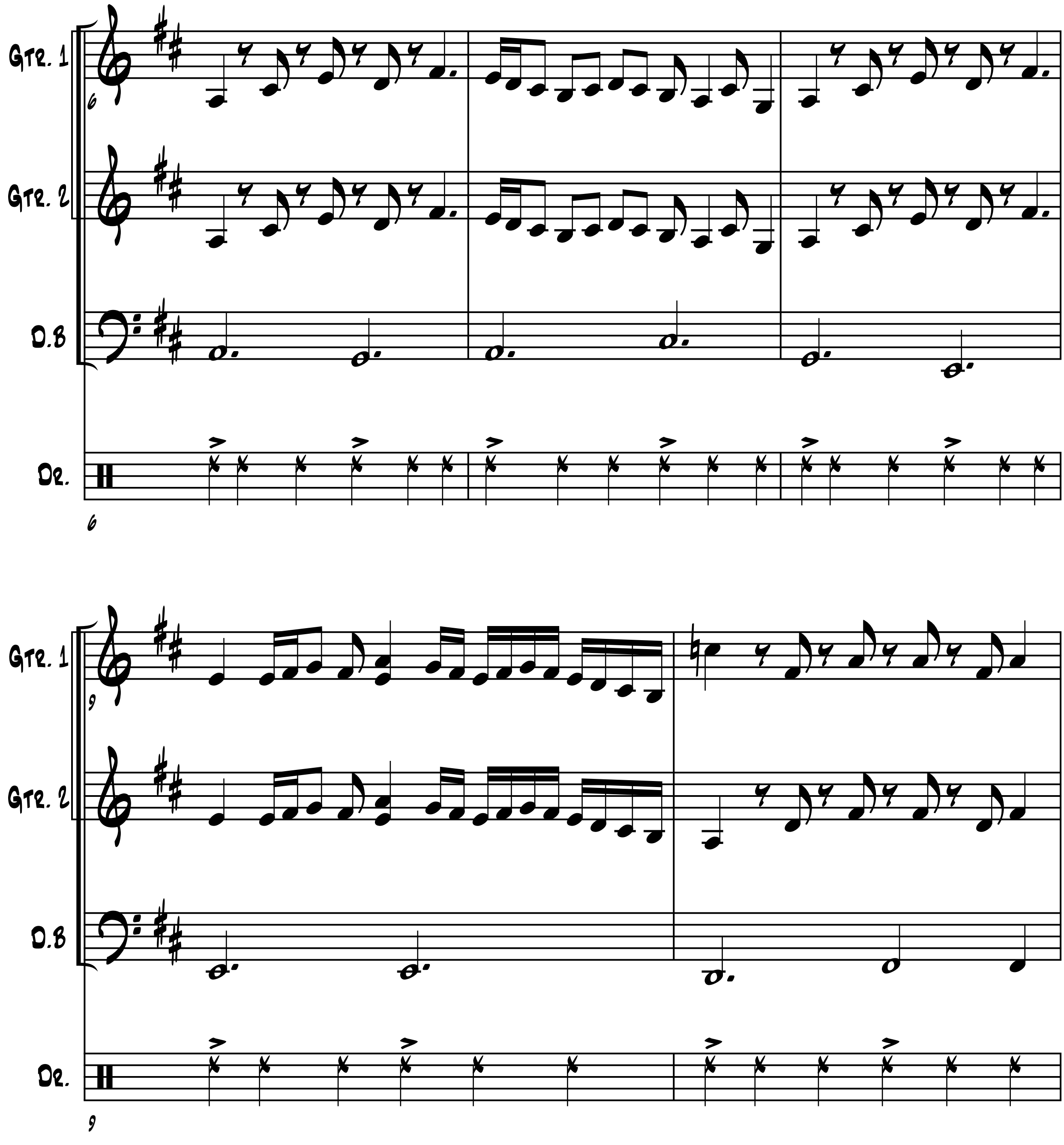
Guy Strazz
11/2010


♩ 144
2x play 8va
Gtr.1
Gtr.2
D.B
Dr.
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
Dr.
4
4

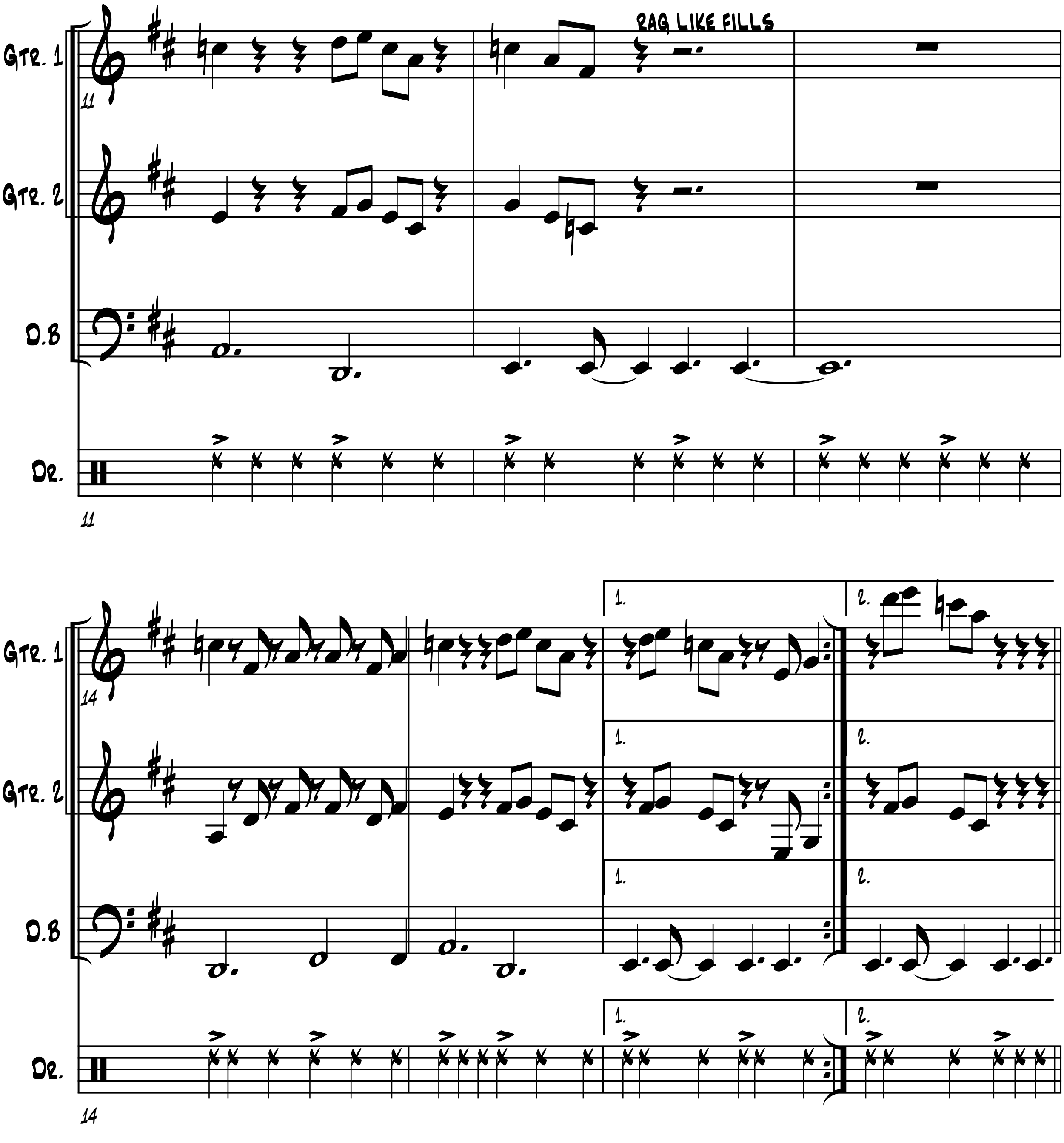
drums & bass swing; guitars play even 8ths

©APRA Control

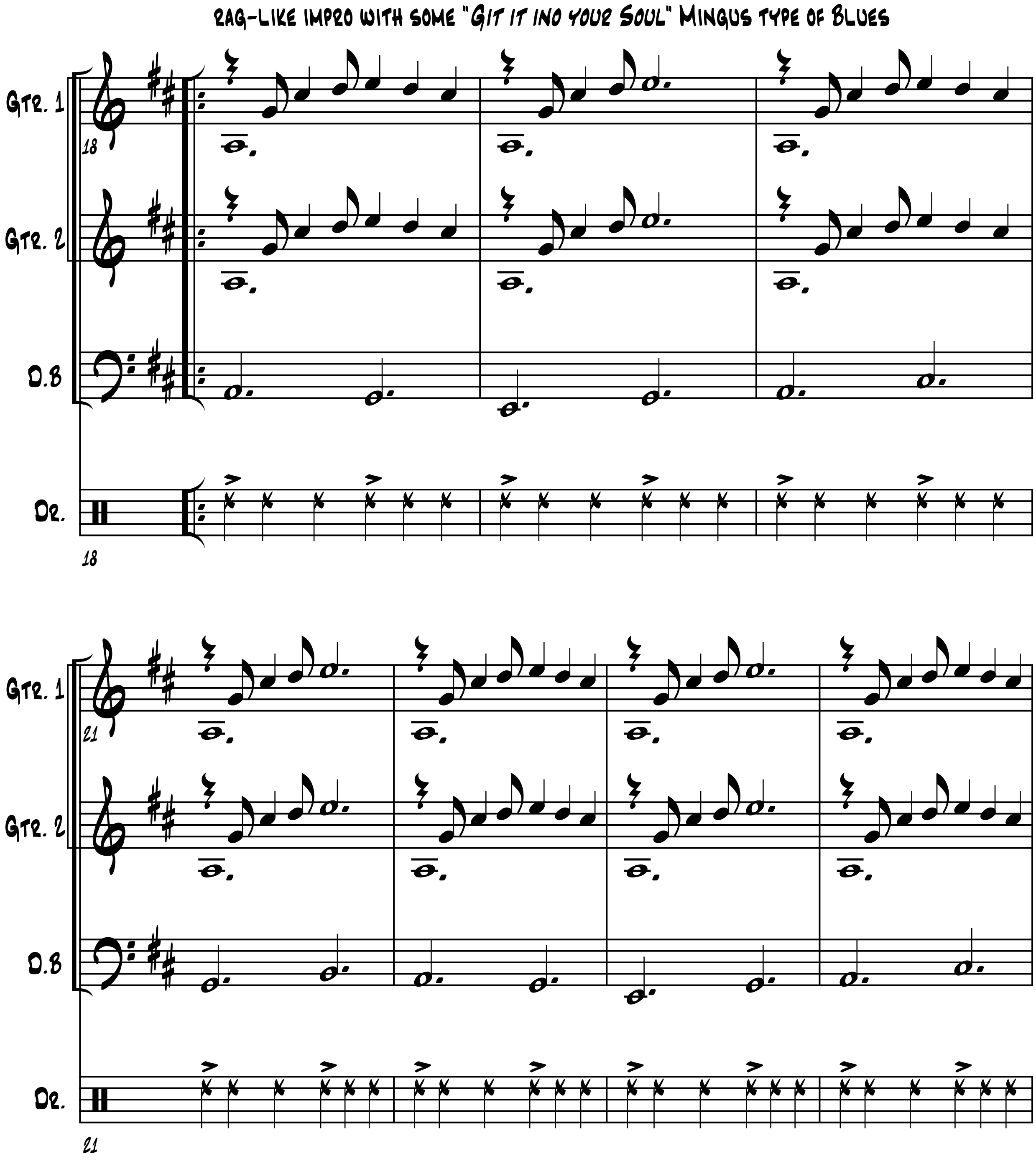
Mingus Ashes in the Ganges


Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
Dr.
6
9

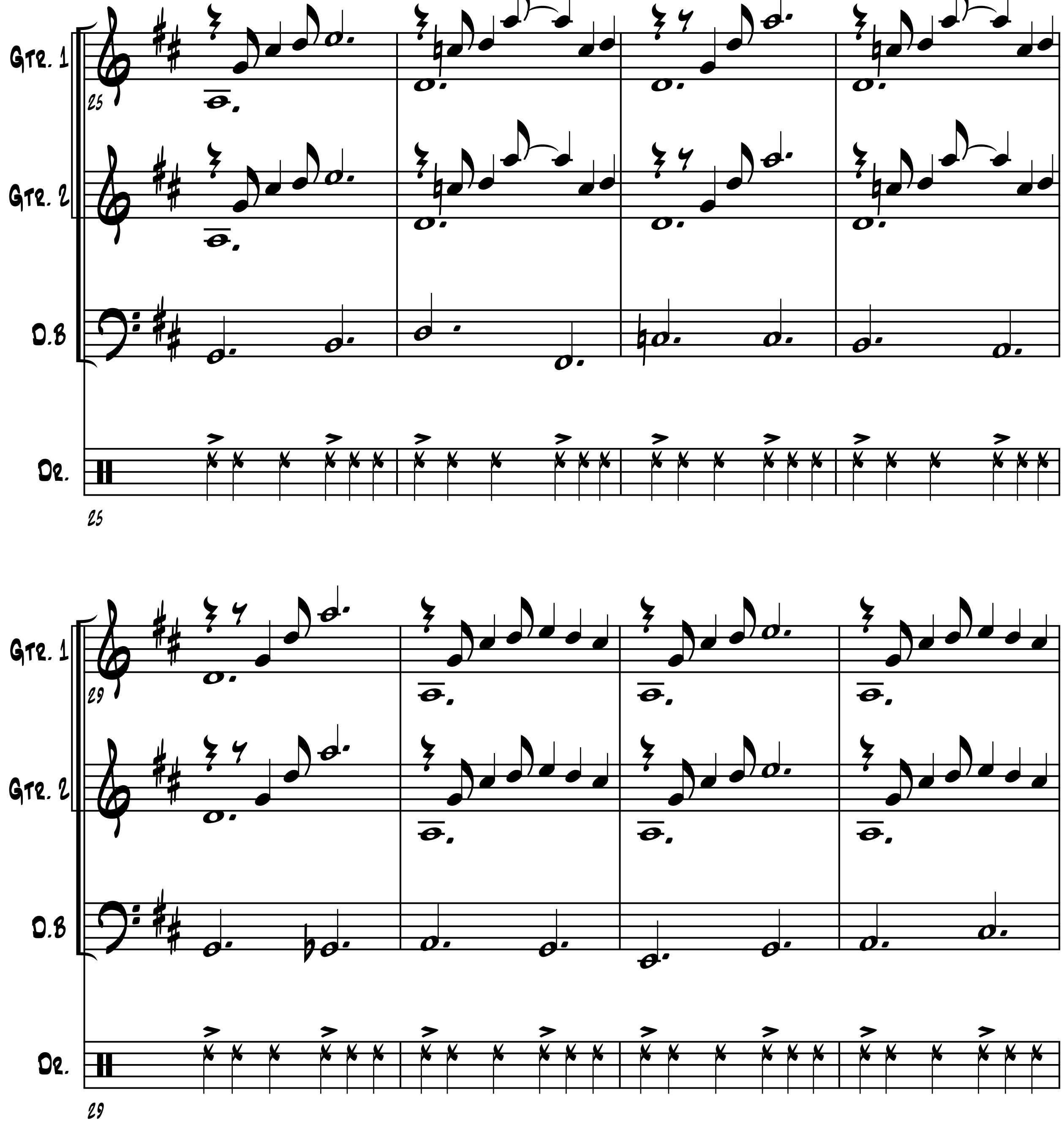
Mingus Ashes in the Ganges


Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
Dr.
rag like fills
11
11
14
14
1.
2.

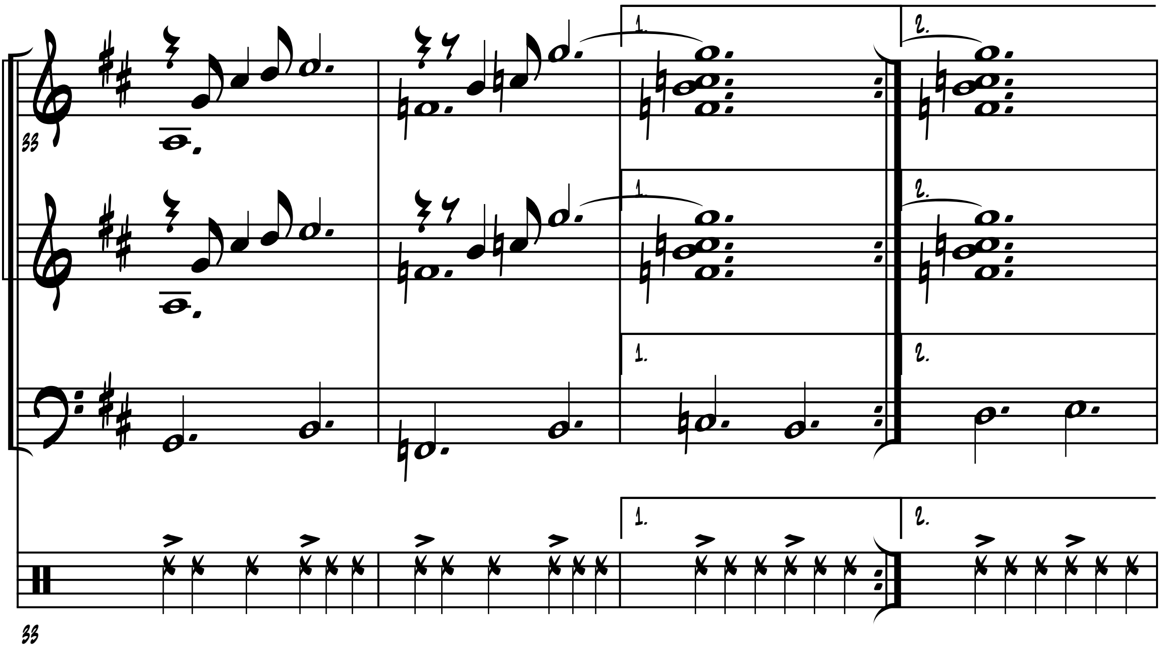
Mingus Ashes in the Ganges

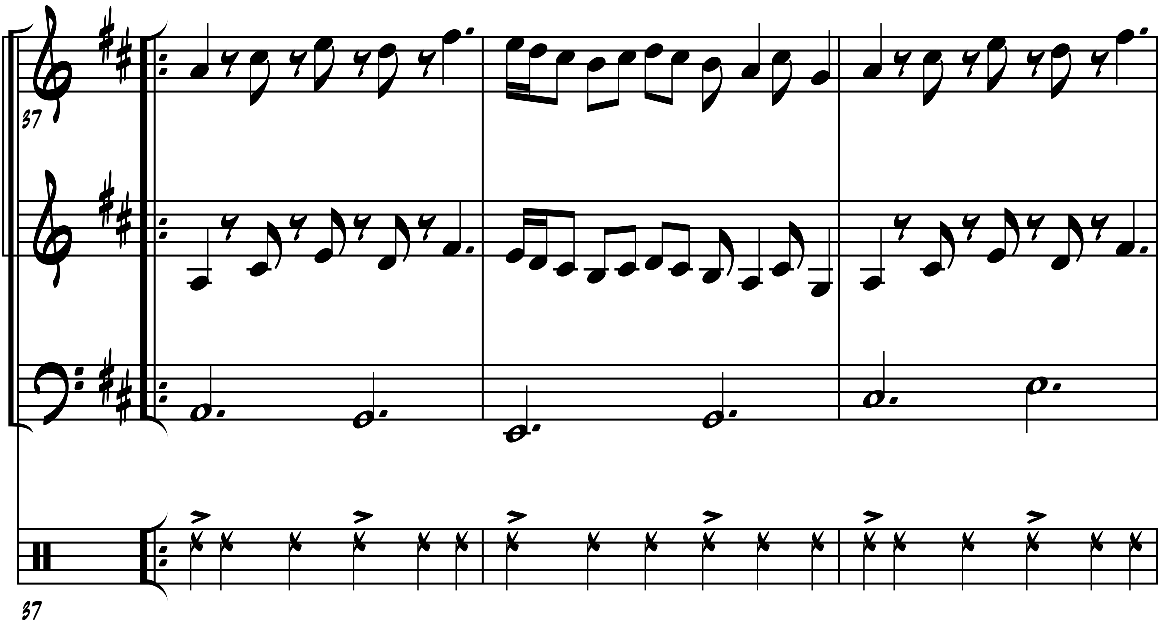

rag-like impro with some "Git it ino your Soul" Mingus type of Blues
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
Dr.
18
18
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
Dr.
21
21

Mingus Ashes in the Ganges

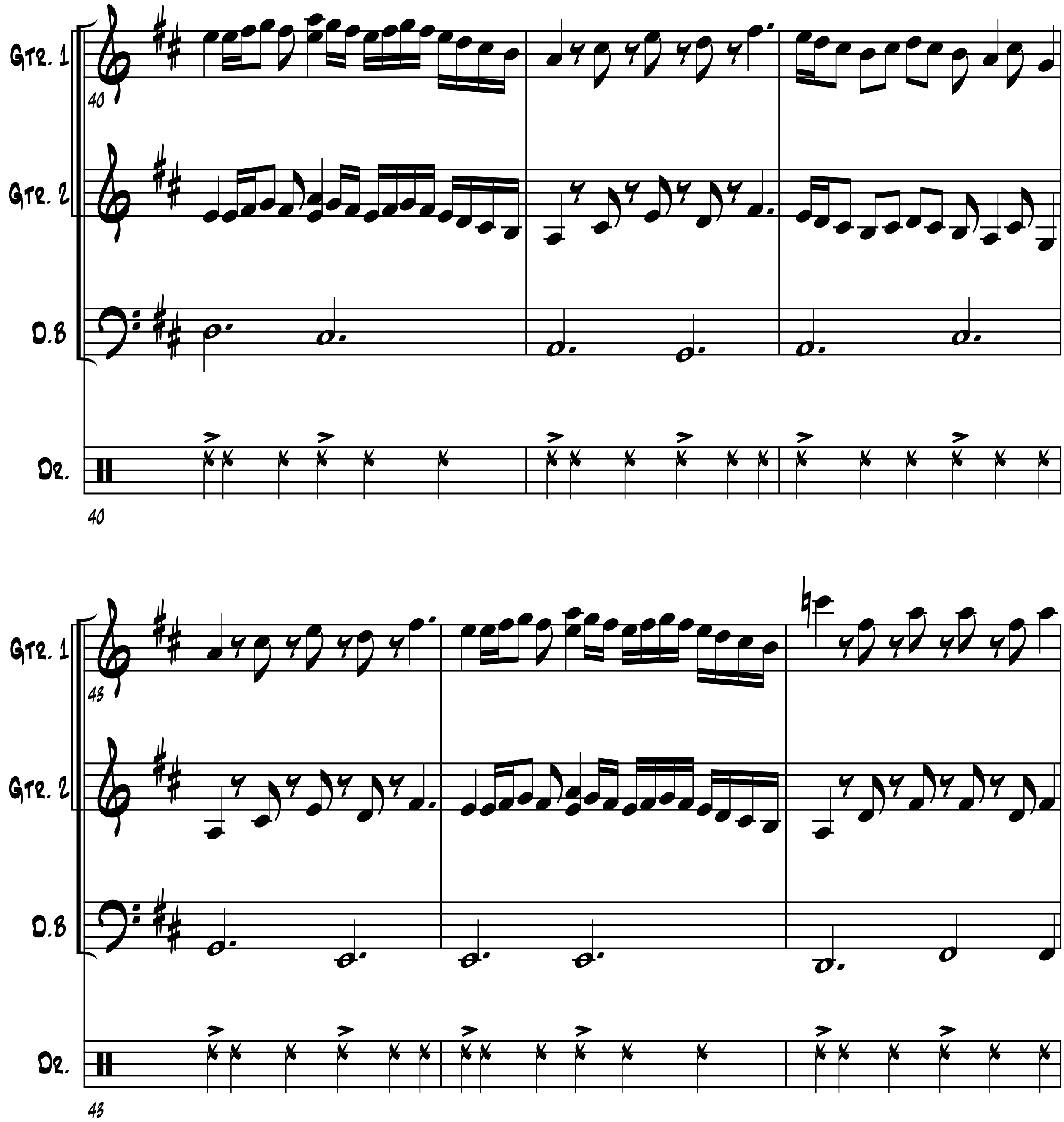

Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
Dr.
25
25
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
Dr.
29
29

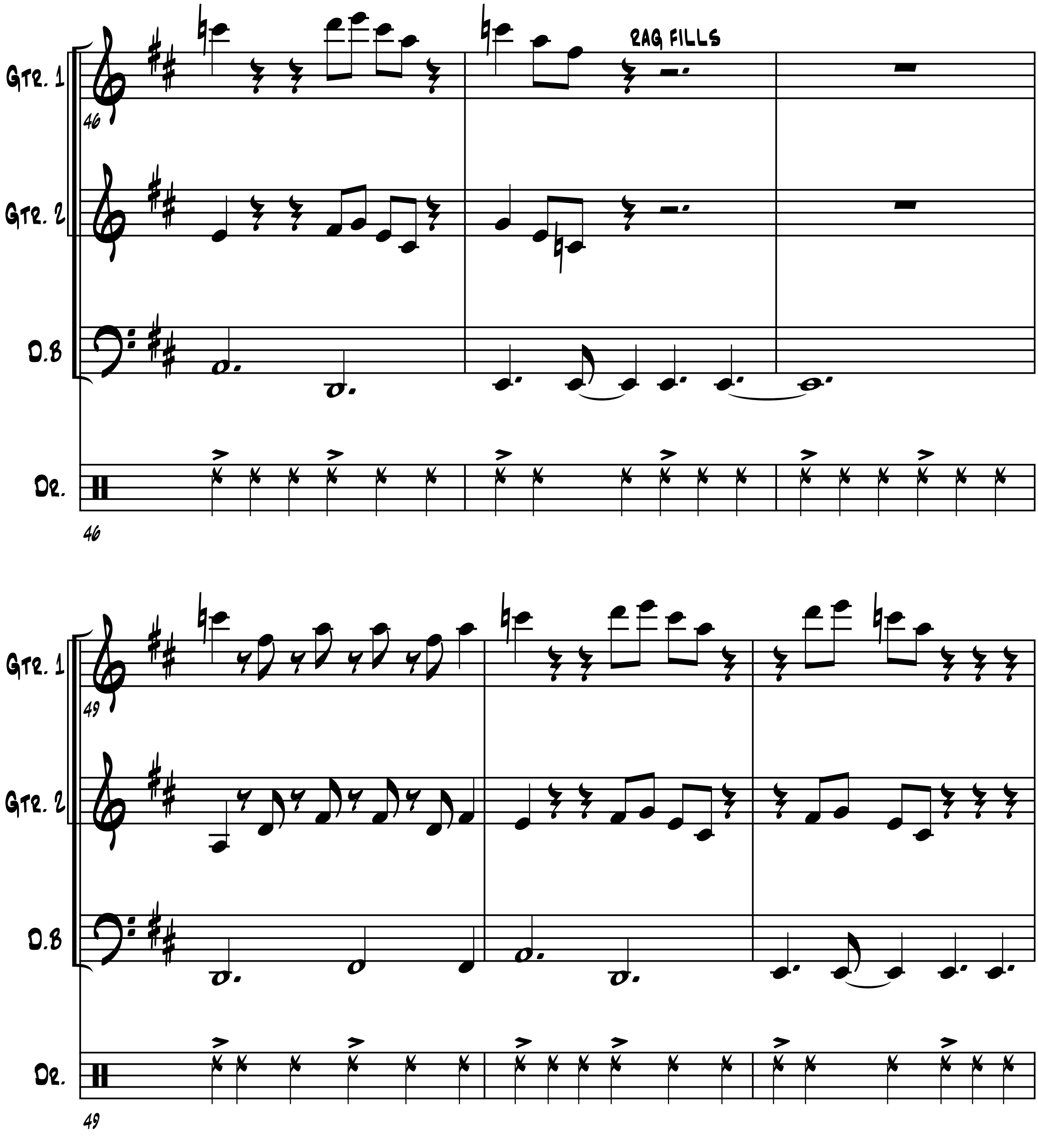
Mingus Ashes in the Ganges


Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
Dr.
33
1.
2.

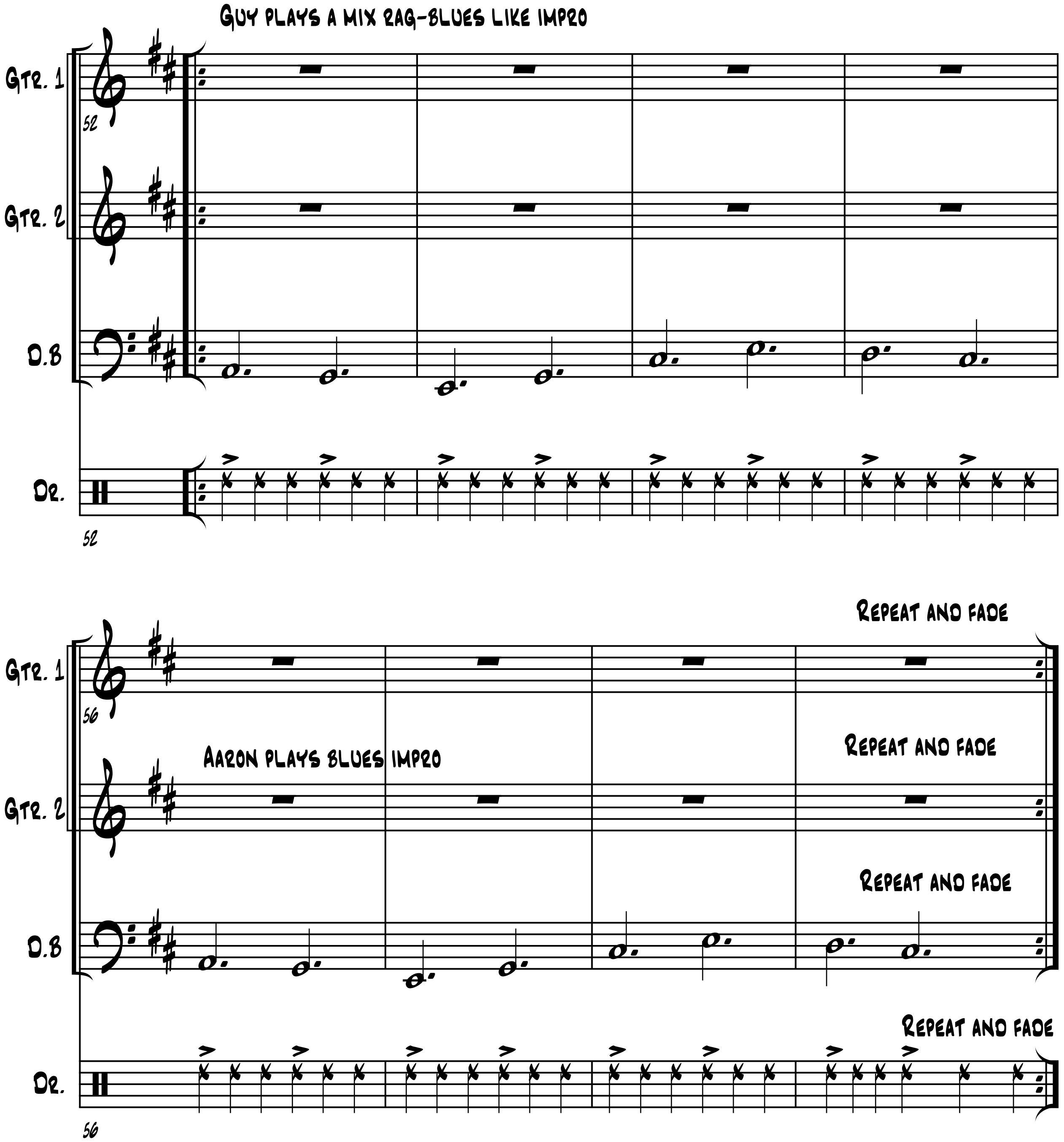

Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
Dr.
37

Mingus Ashes in the Ganges


Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
Dr.
40
40
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
Dr.
43
43


Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
Dr.
46
rag fills
49

Mingus Ashes in the Ganges


Guy plays a mix rag-blues like impro
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
Dr.
52
Repeat and fade
Aaron plays blues impro
Repeat and fade
Repeat and fade
Repeat and fade
56

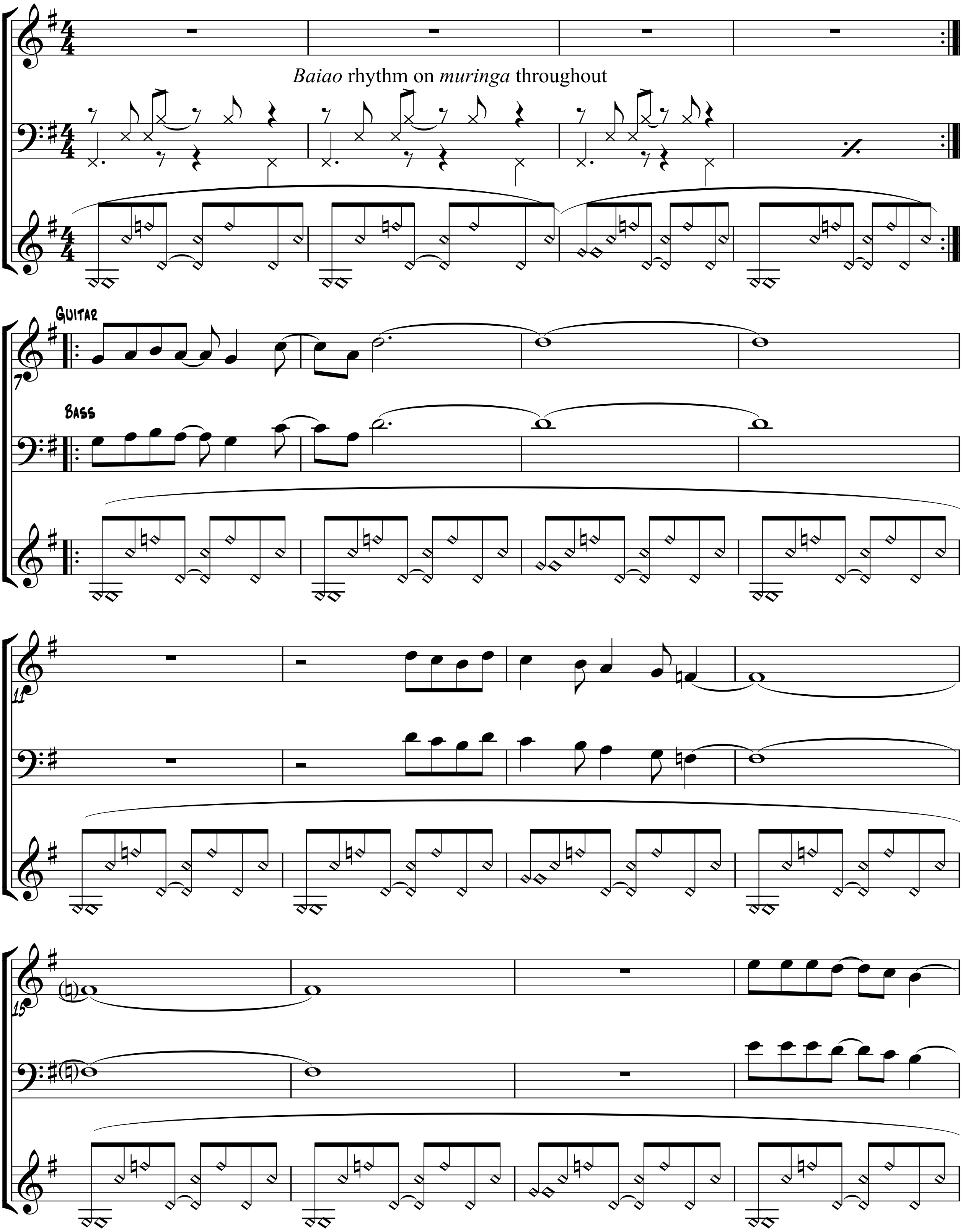
APPENDIX 3

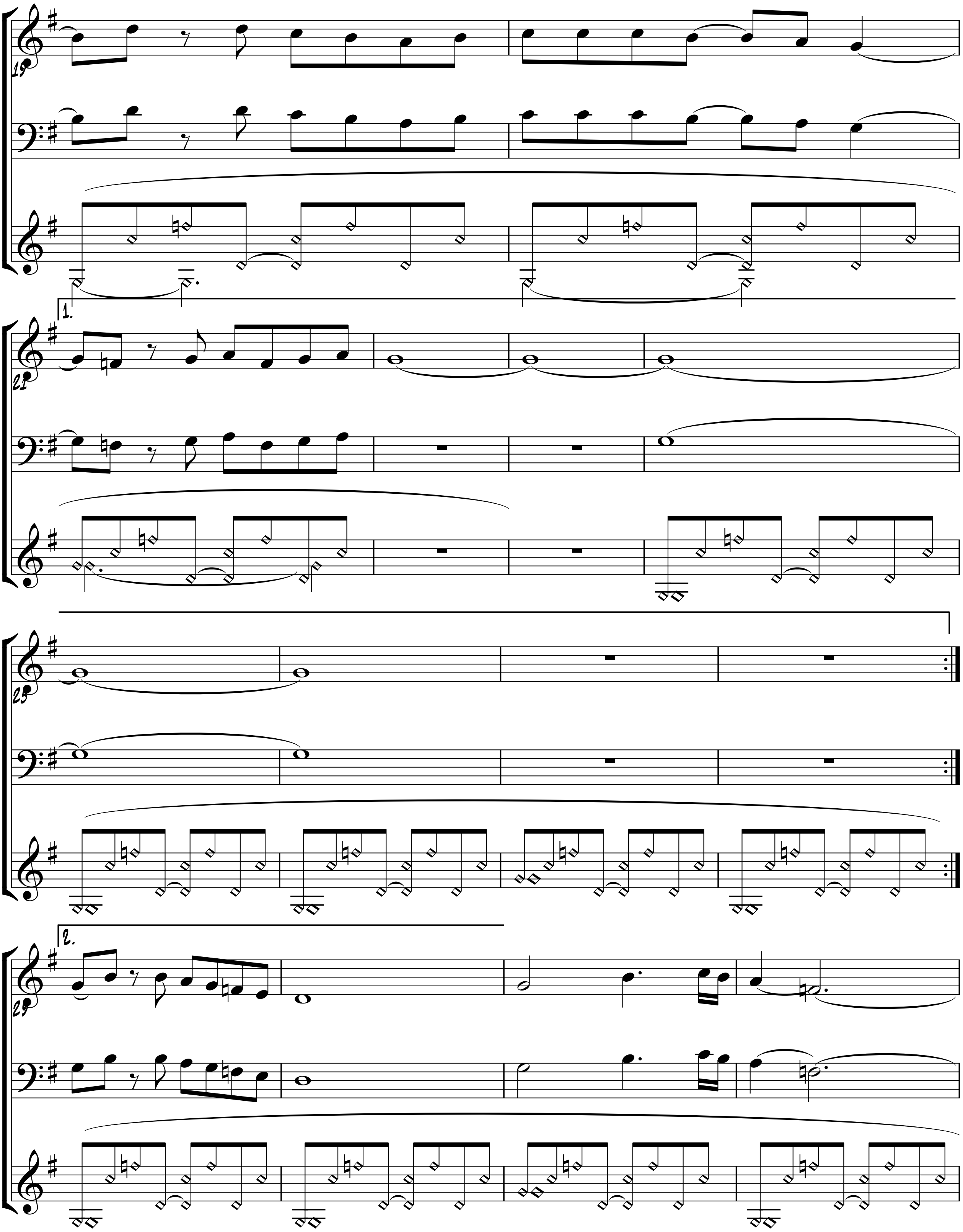
Tina the Healer

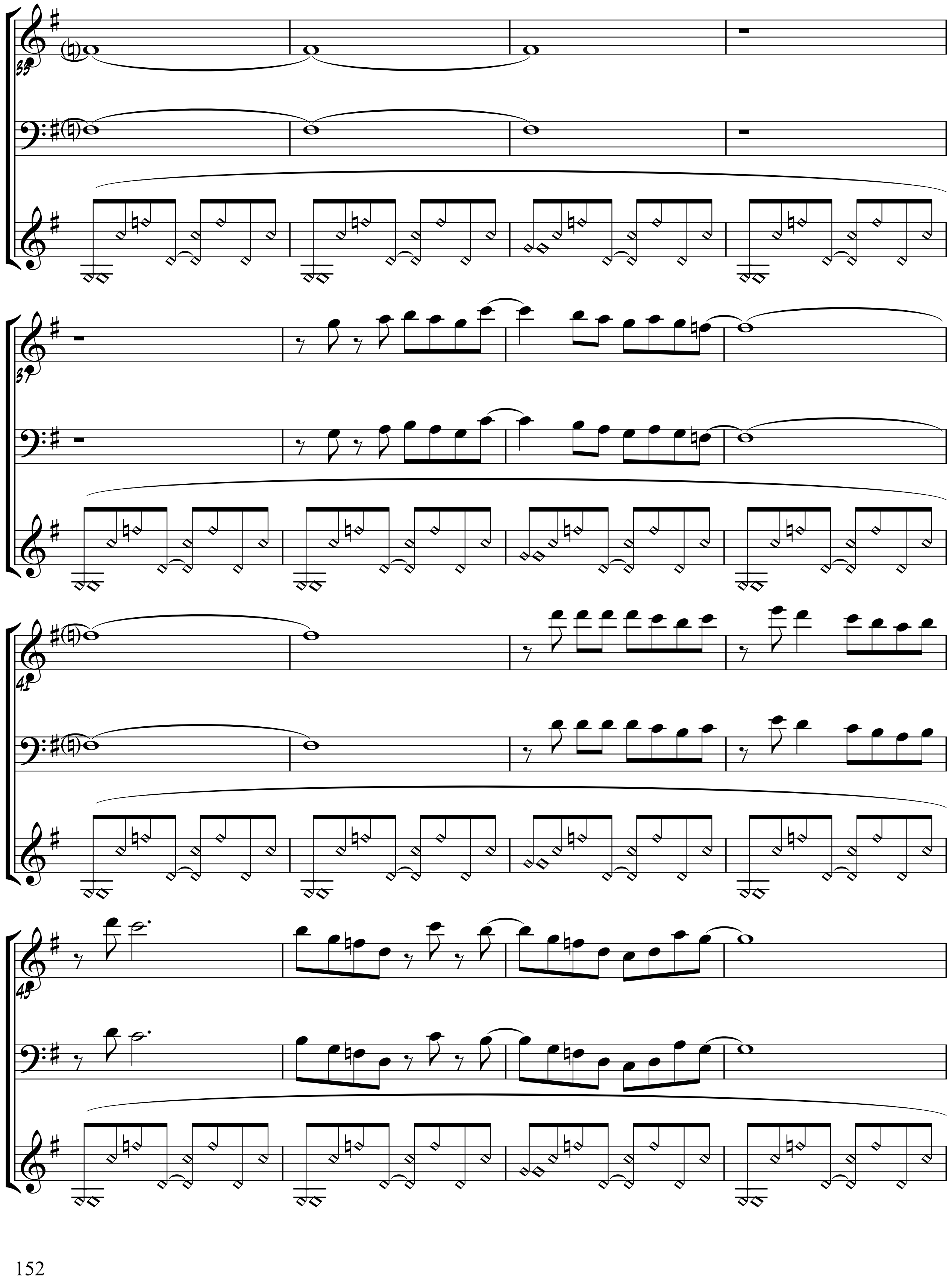
© APRA 2012

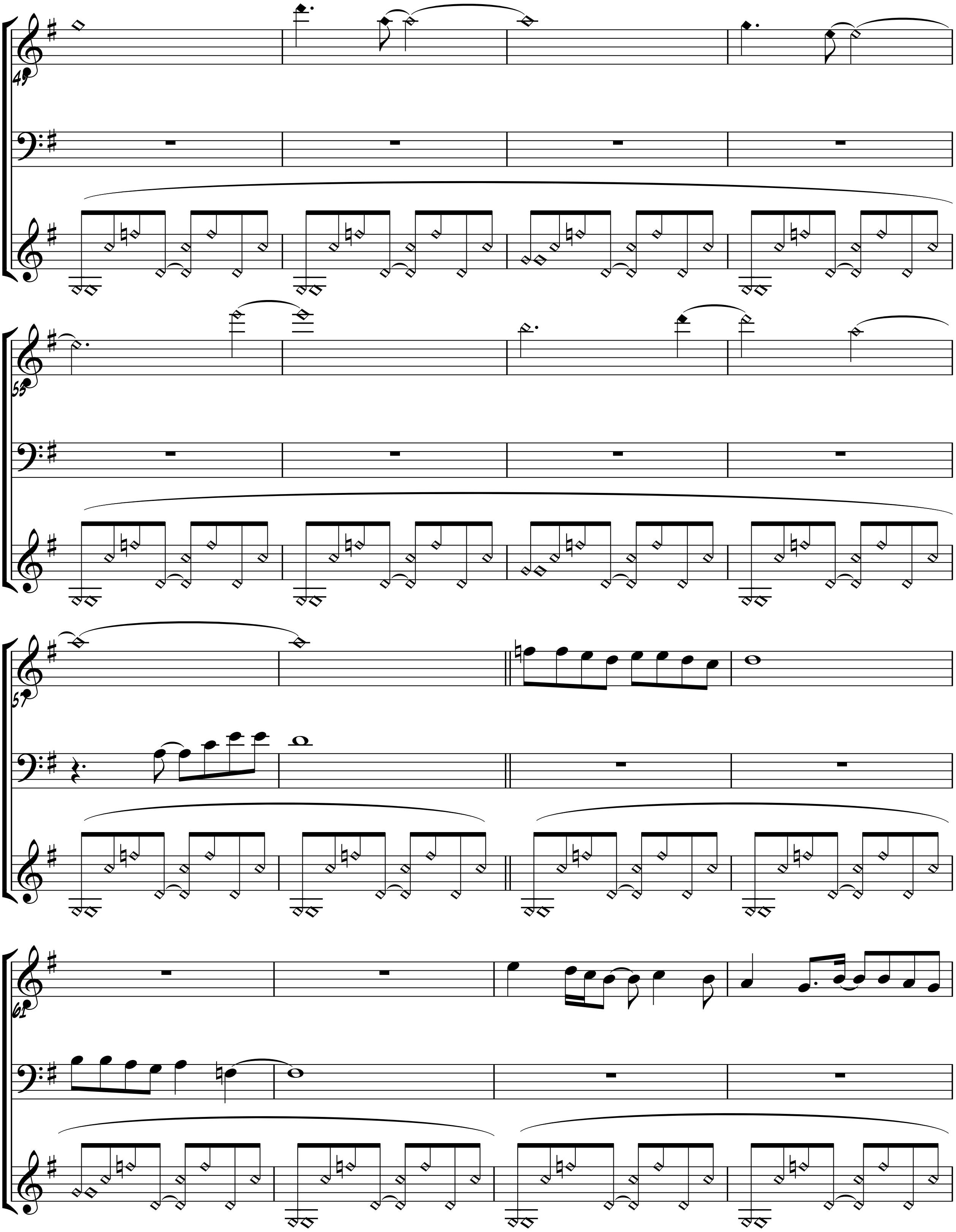
Guy Strazz

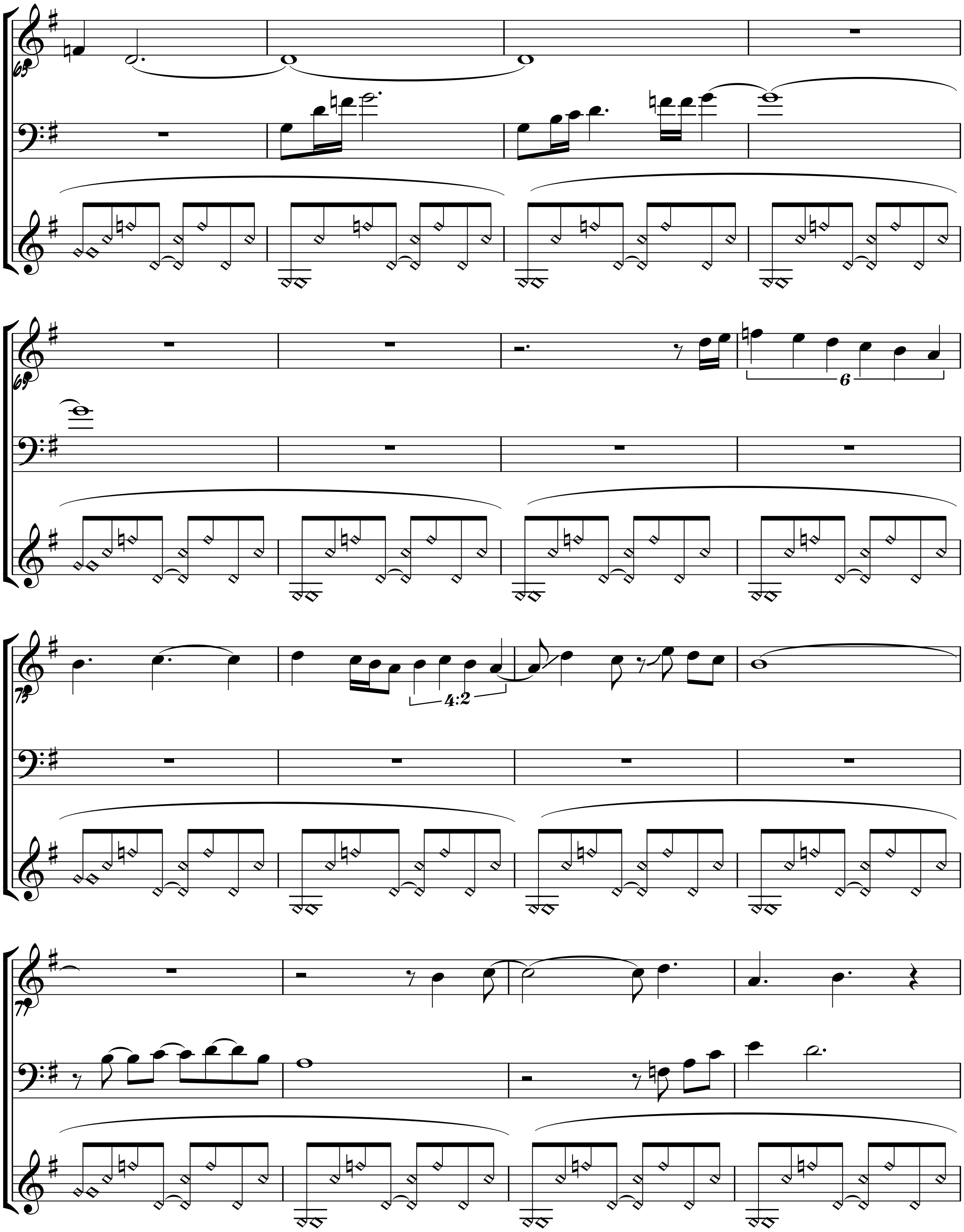
2012

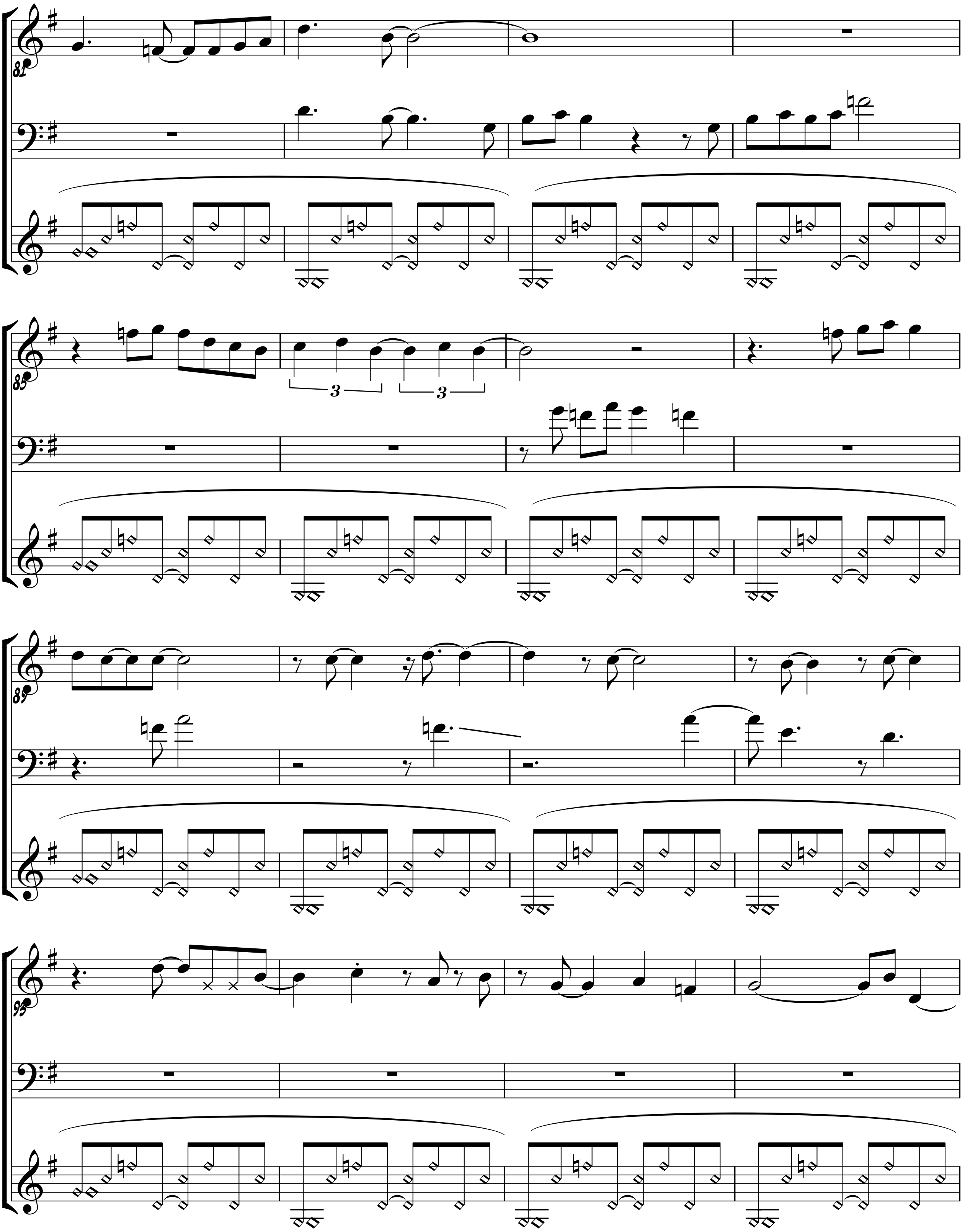

Baiao rhythm on *muringa* throughout
Guitar
Bass
7
11
15

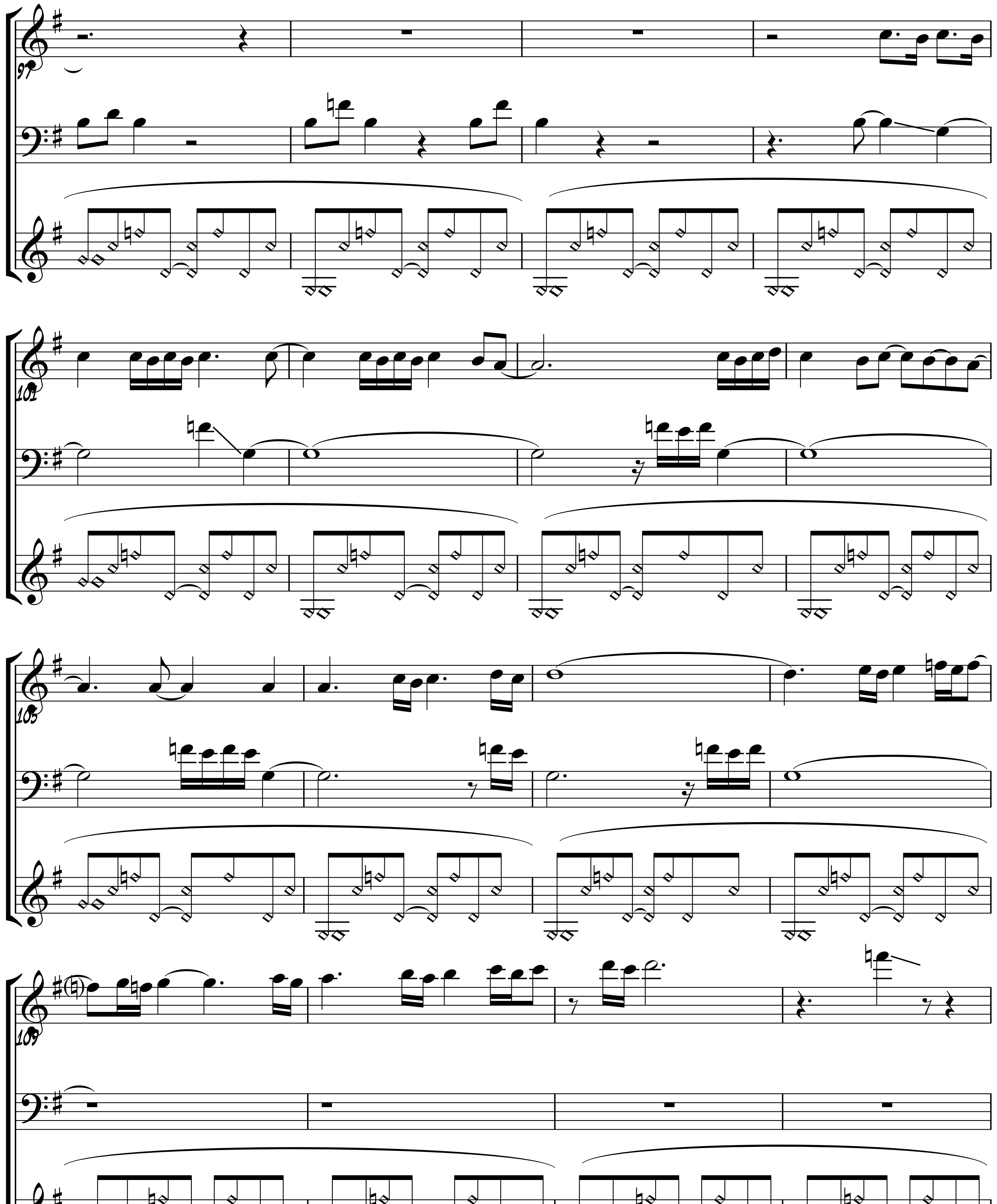

19
21
1.
25
29
2.

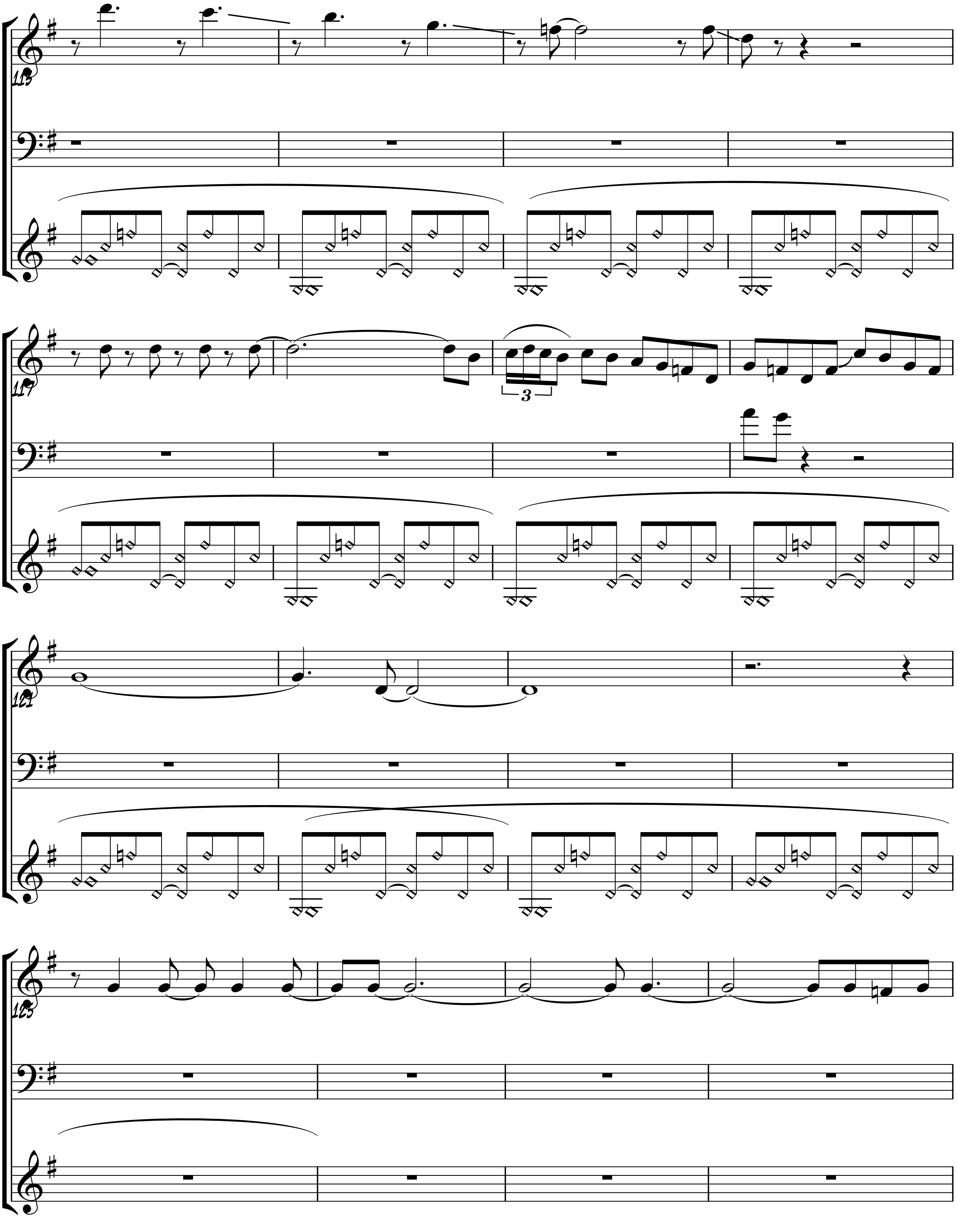




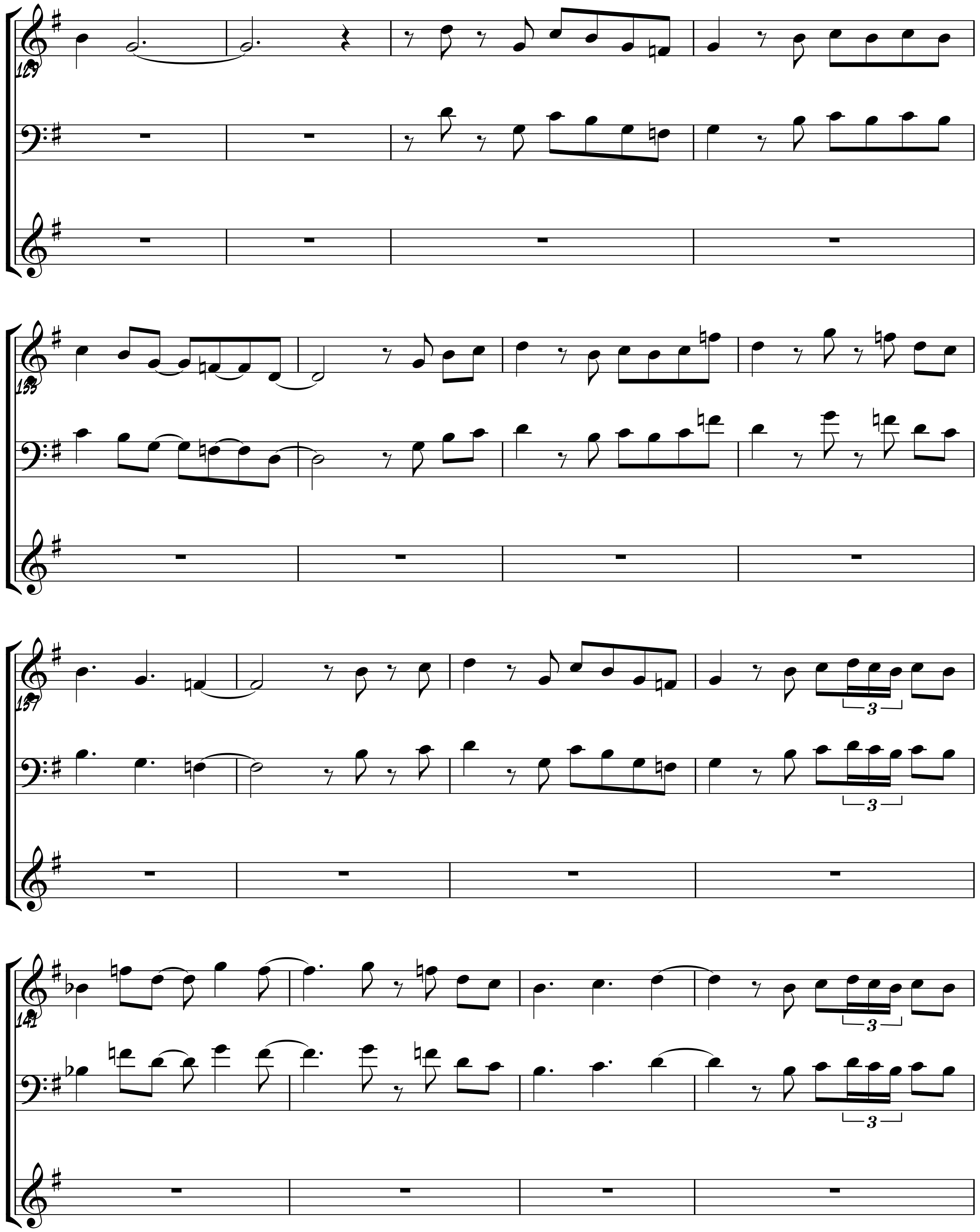

4:2



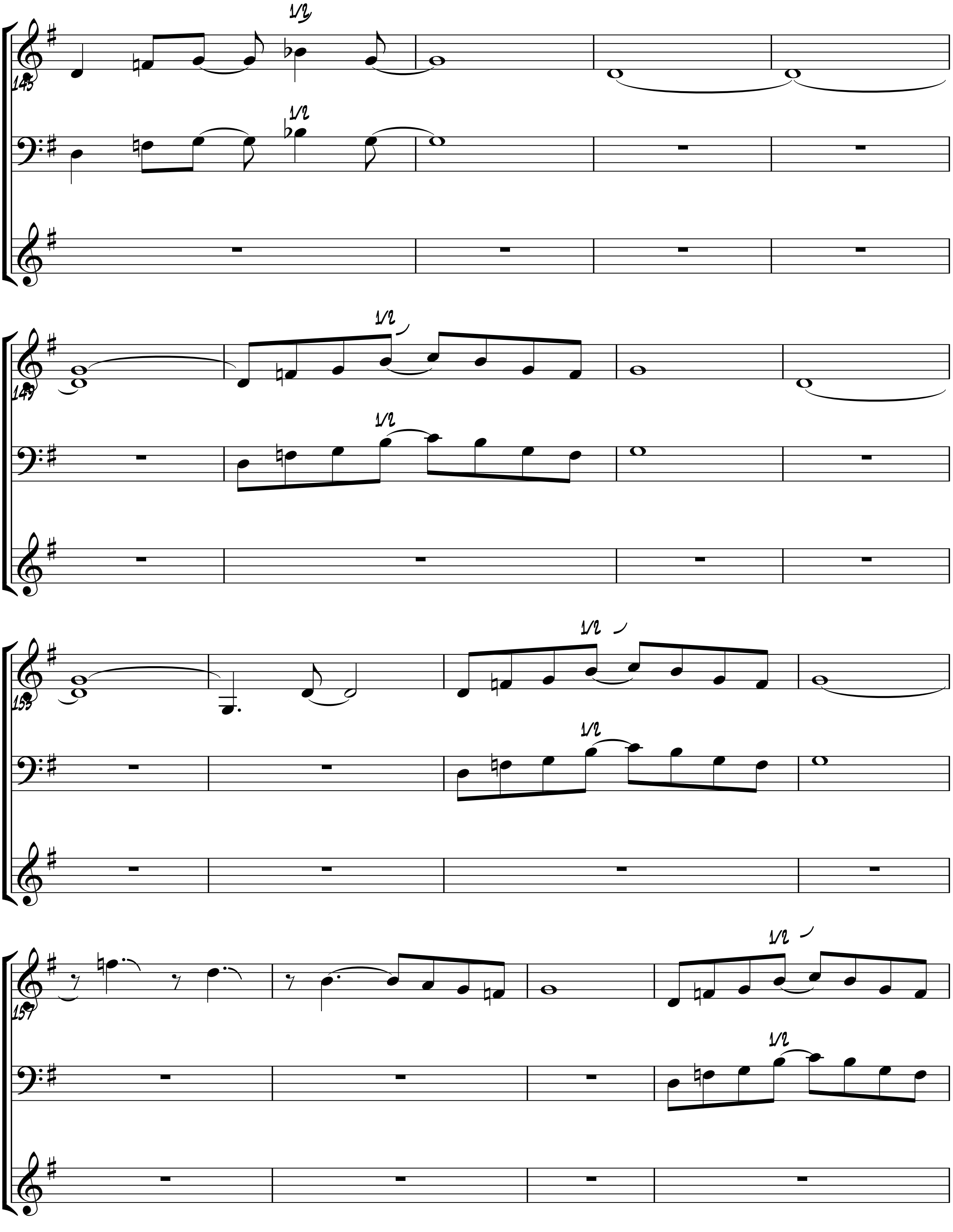


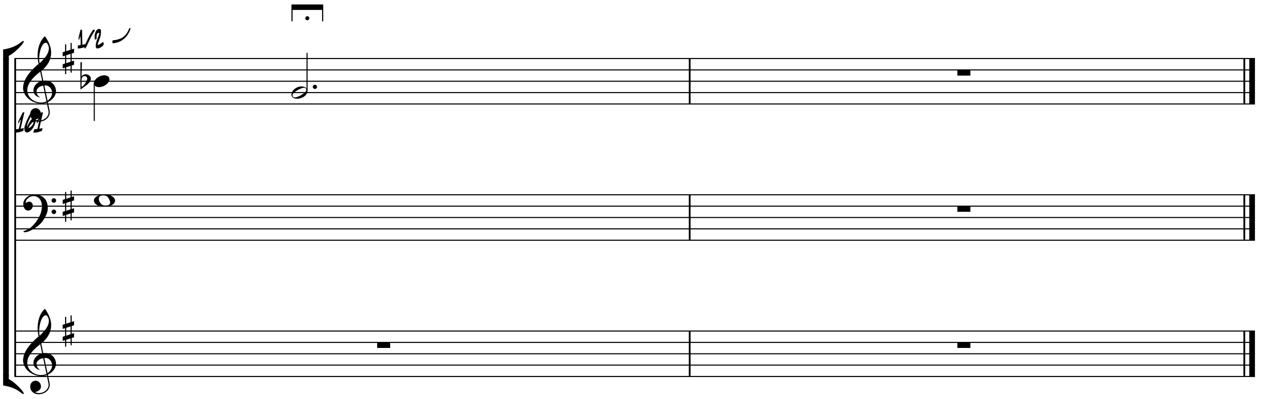


Tina the Healer


129
133
137
141
3

Tina the Healer

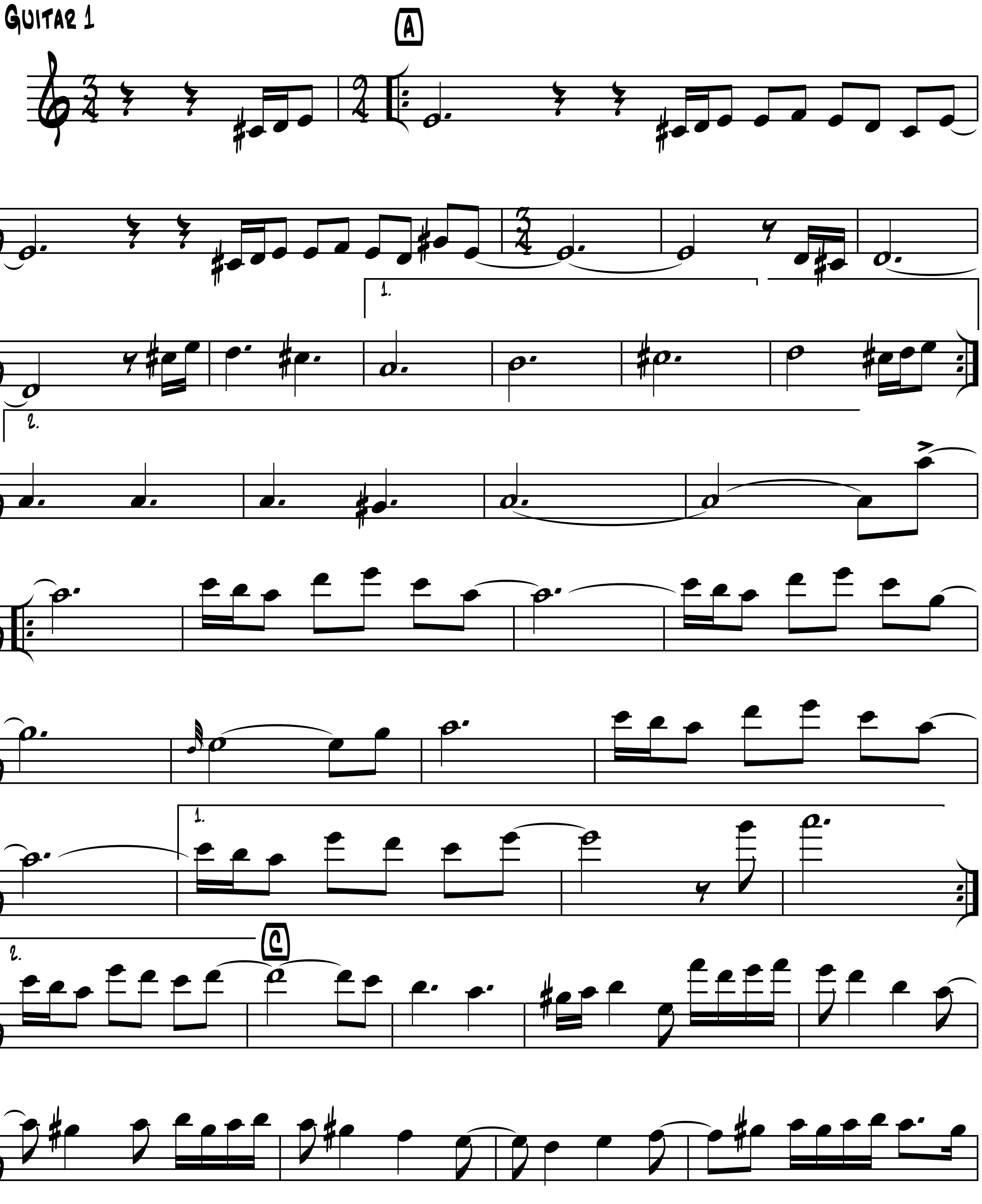

145
1/2
1/2
149
1/2
1/2
153
1/2
1/2
157
1/2
1/2


1/2
161

APPENDIX 4

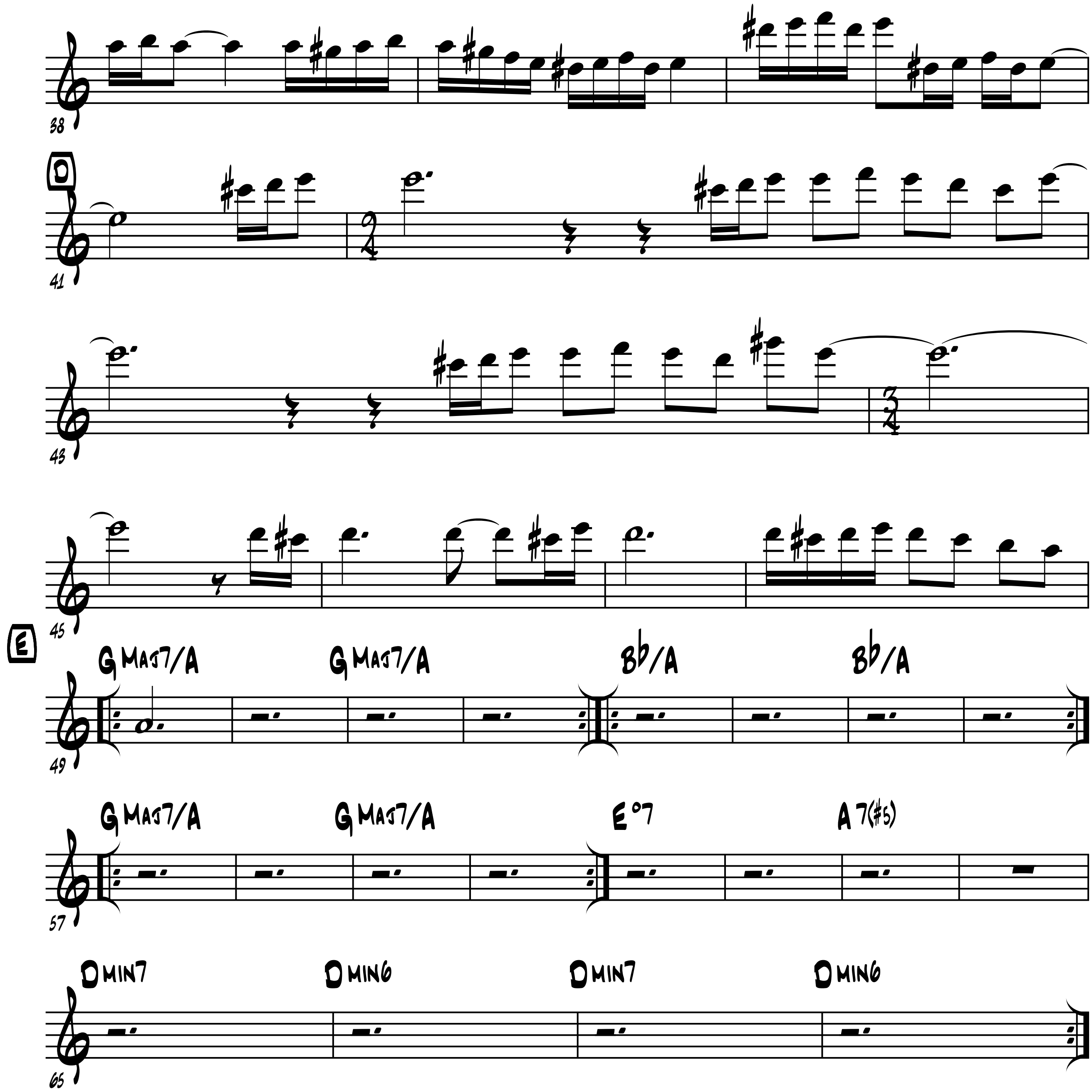
SILK ROAD (RIVISITED)

GUY STRAZZ
2011


GUITAR 1
A
B
C
1.
2.
3
7
13
17
21
25
29
34

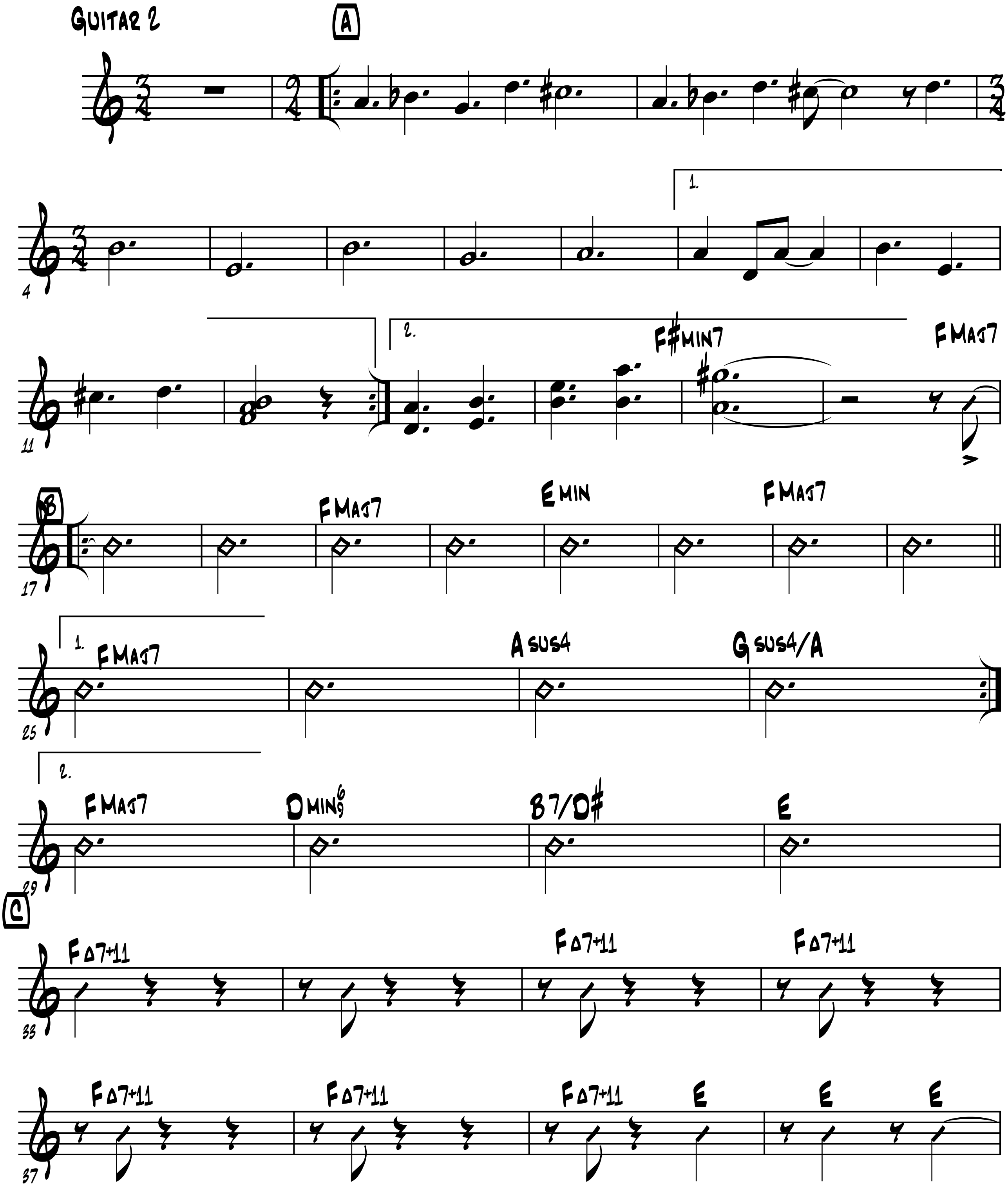
© APRA CONTROL 2011

Silk Road


38
D
41
43
45
E
GMaj7/A
GMaj7/A
Bb/A
Bb/A
49
GMaj7/A
GMaj7/A
E°7
A7(#5)
57
Dmin7
Dmin6
Dmin7
Dmin6
65

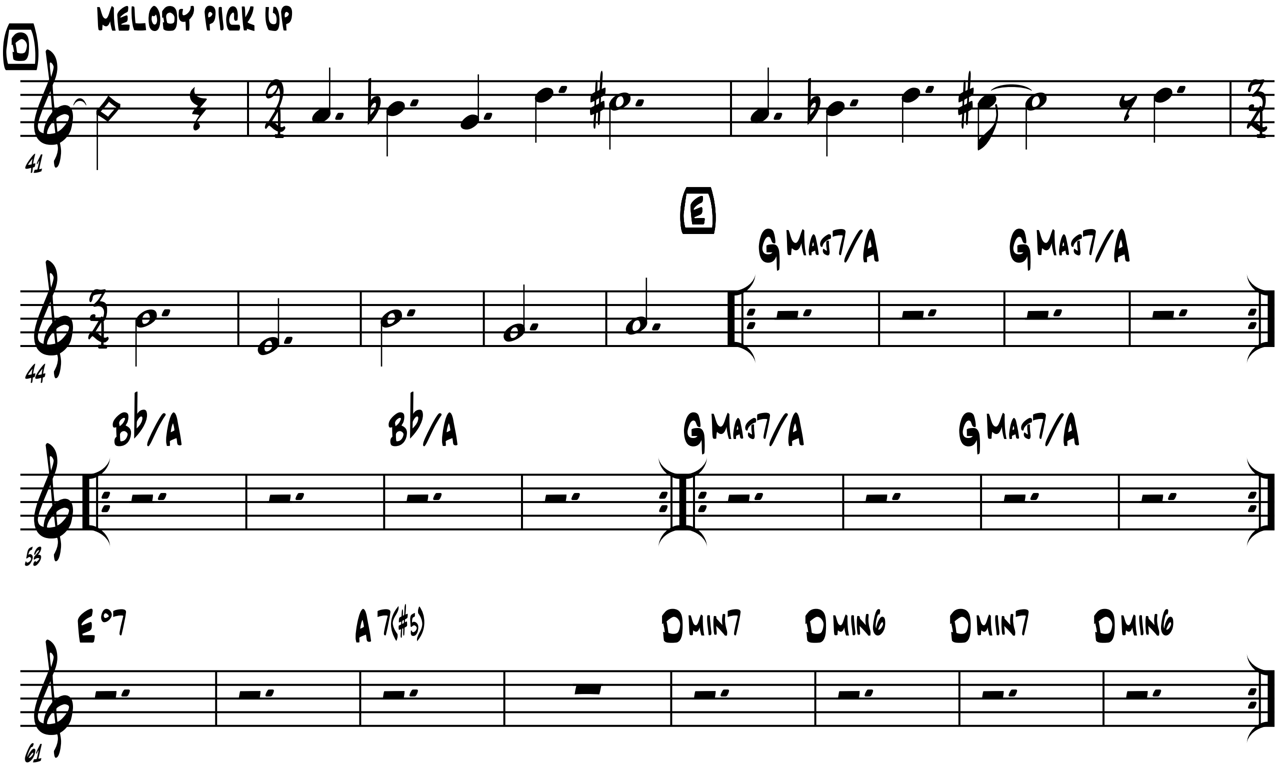
APPENDIX 5 SILK ROAD (RIVISITED)

GUY STRAZZ
2011


GUITAR 2
A
1.
2.
F#MIN7
FMAJ7
B
FMAJ7
E MIN
FMAJ7
1.
FMAJ7
A SUS4
G SUS4/A
2.
FMAJ7
D MIN 6/9
B7/D#
E
C
FΔ7+11
FΔ7+11
FΔ7+11
FΔ7+11
FΔ7+11
FΔ7+11
E
E
E
4
11
17
25
29
33
37

© APRA CONTROL 2011

Silk Road

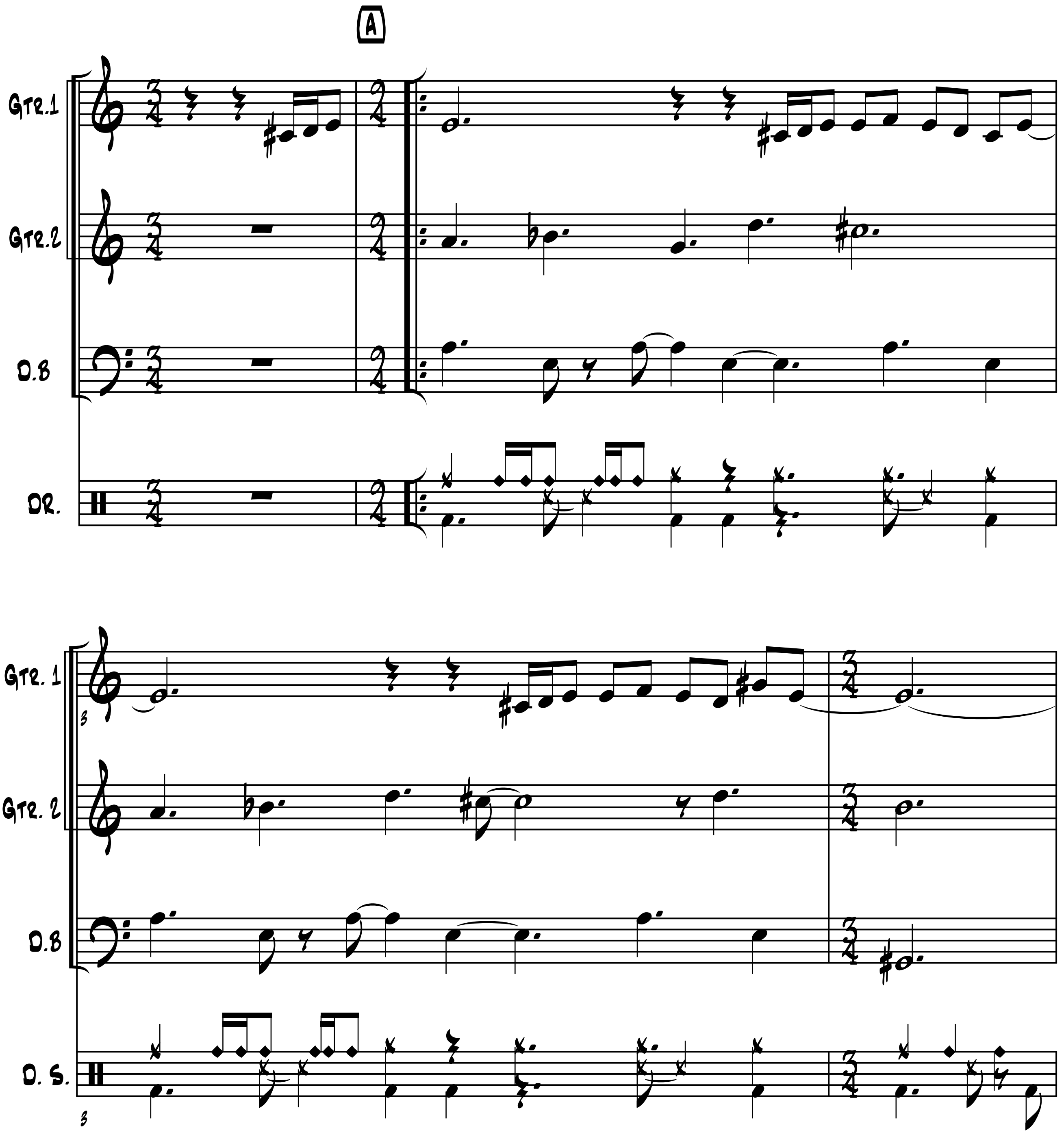

Melody pick up
D
41
44
E
G Maj7/A
G Maj7/A
53
Bb/A
Bb/A
G Maj7/A
G Maj7/A
61
E°7
A 7(#5)
D min7
D min6
D min7
D min6

APPENDIX 6

SILK ROAD (RIVISITED)

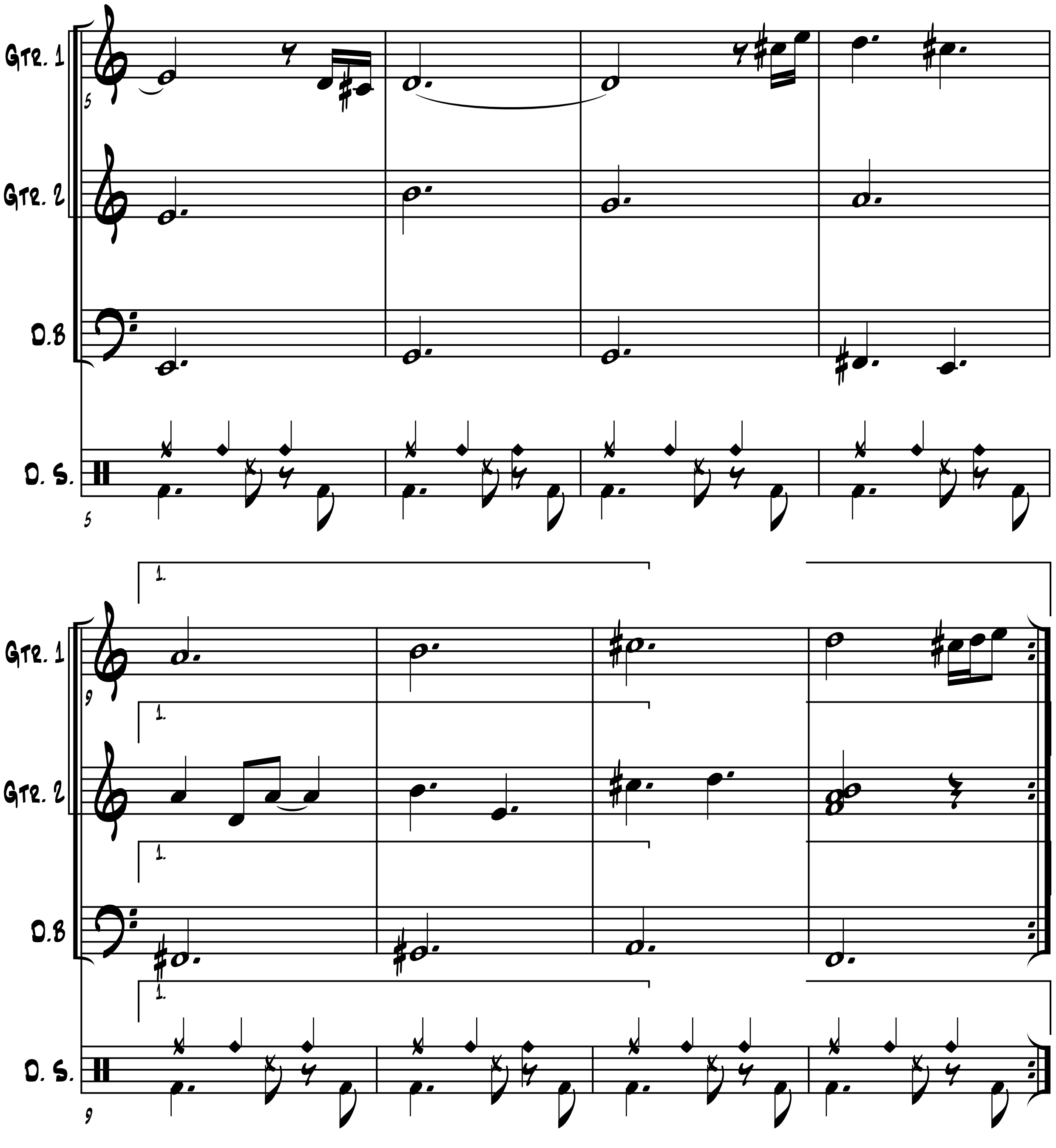
GUY STRAZZ QURTET

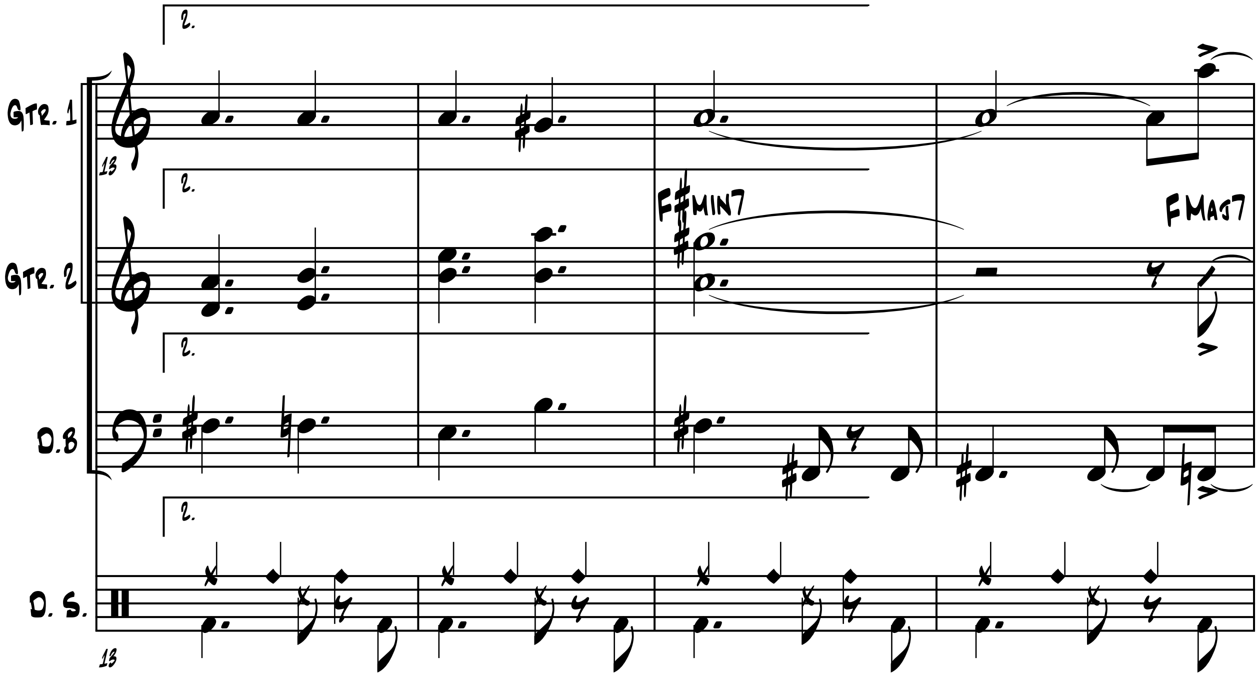
GUY STRAZZ
2011

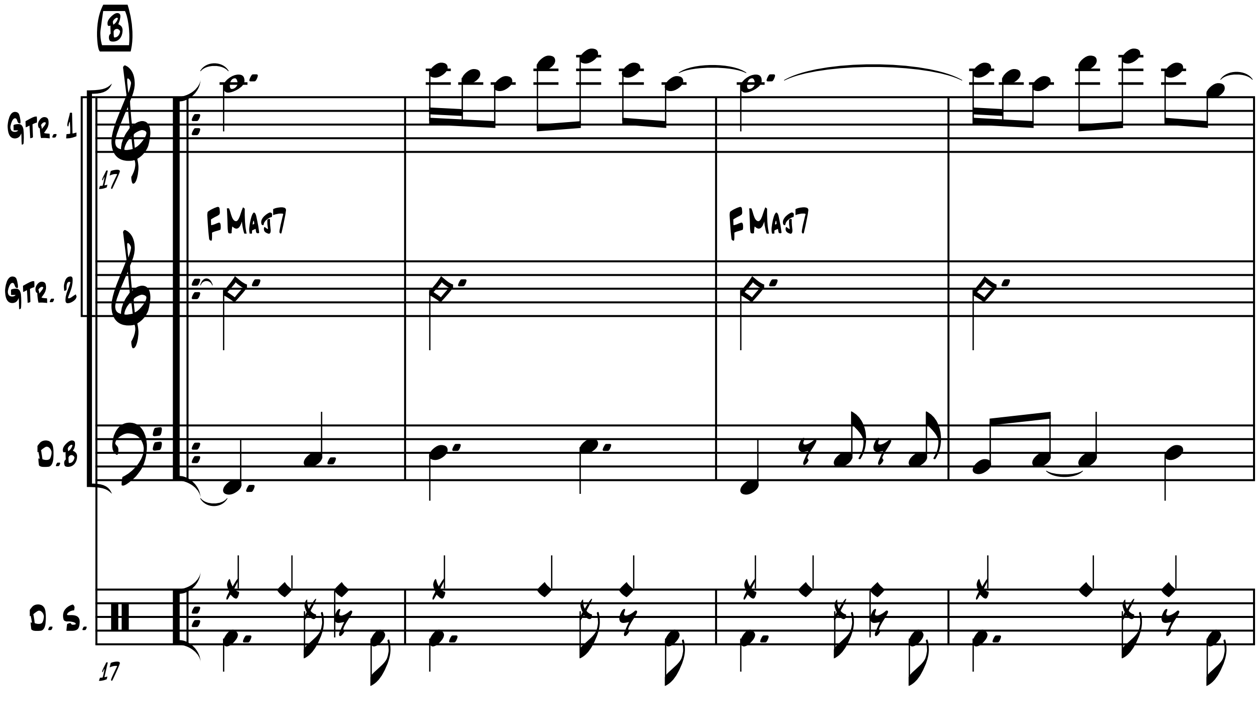

A
Gtr.1
Gtr.2
D.B
DR.
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
D. S.
3

© APRA CONTROL 2011

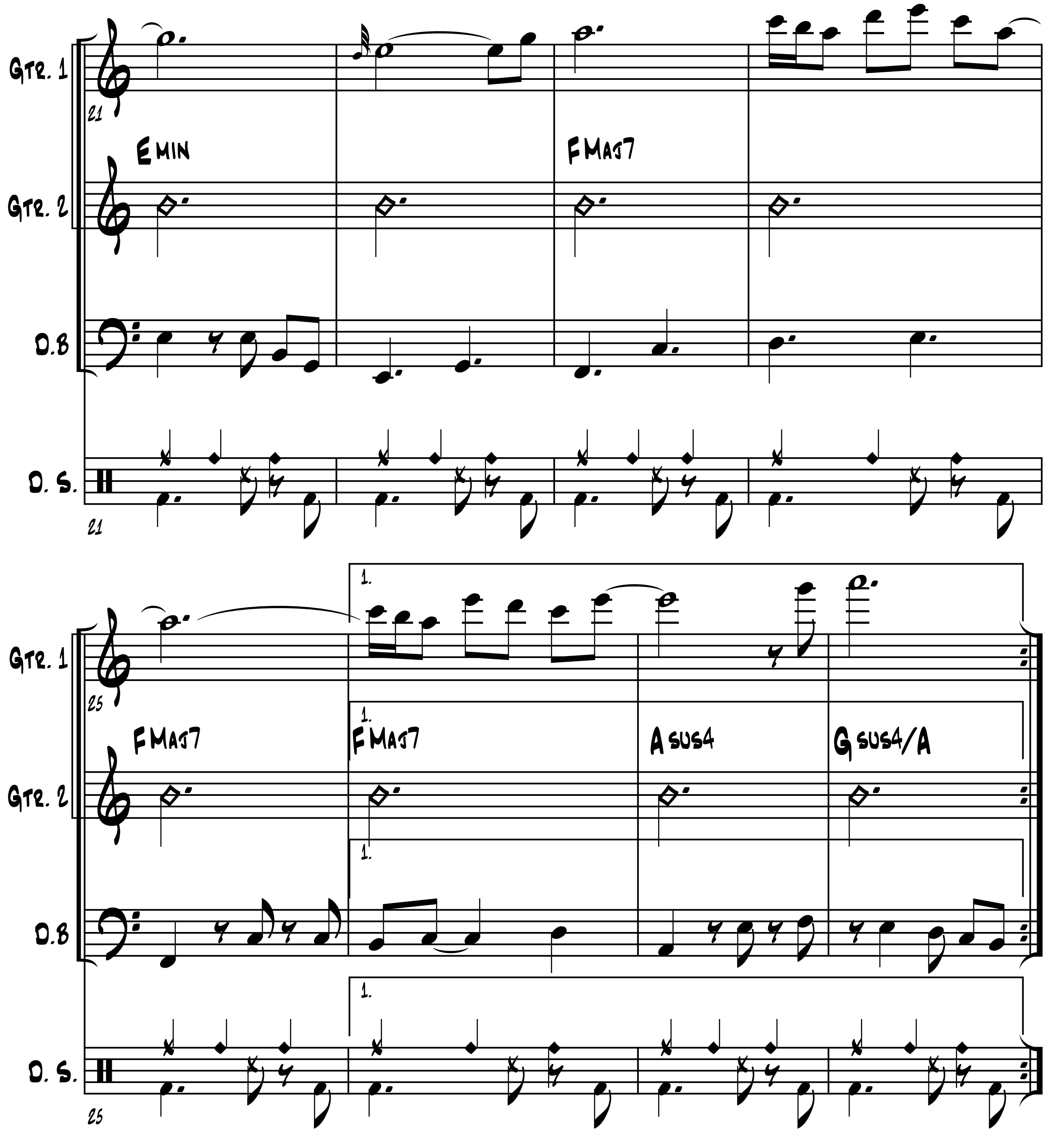
Silk Road

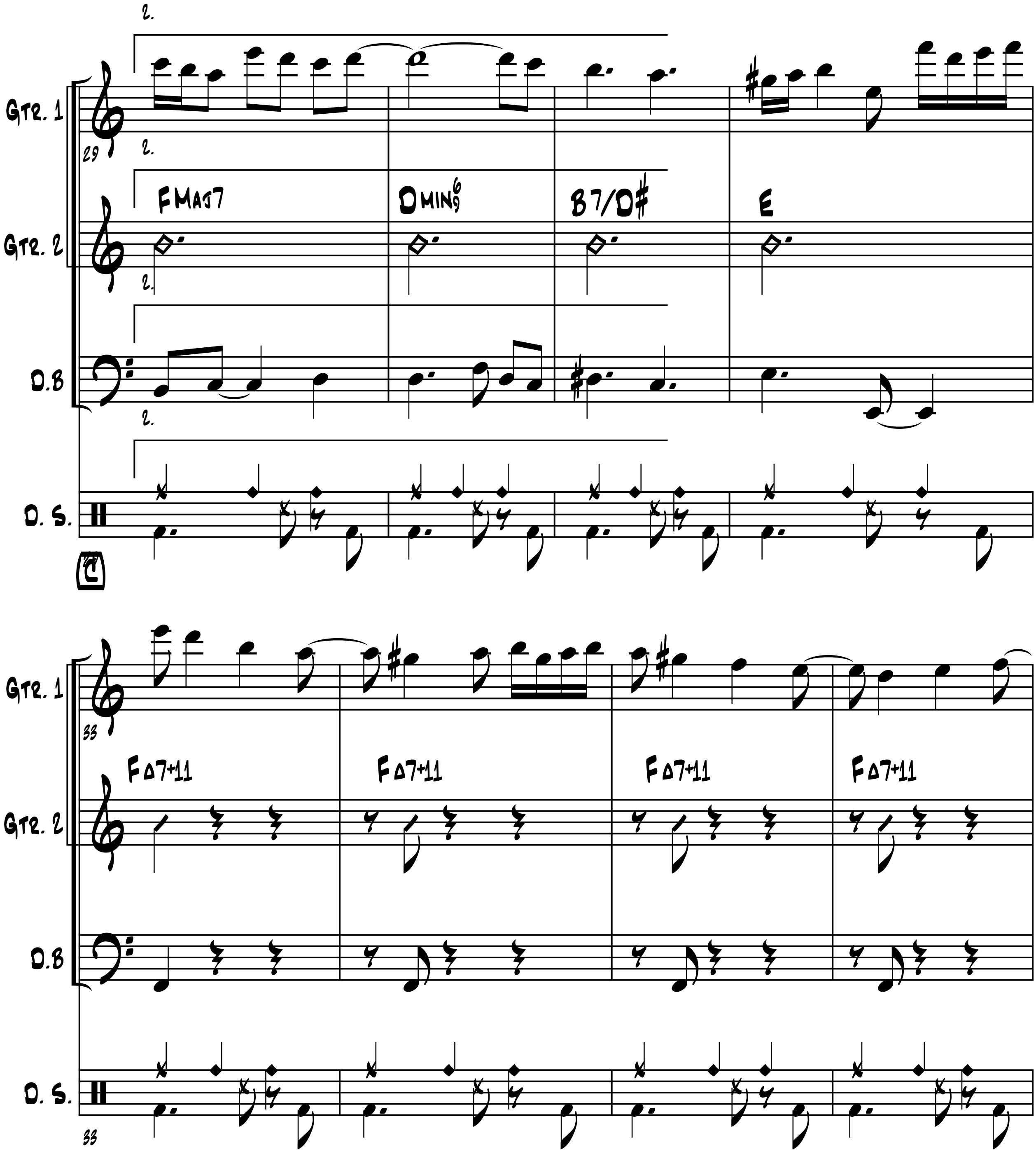

Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
D. S.
5
9
1.

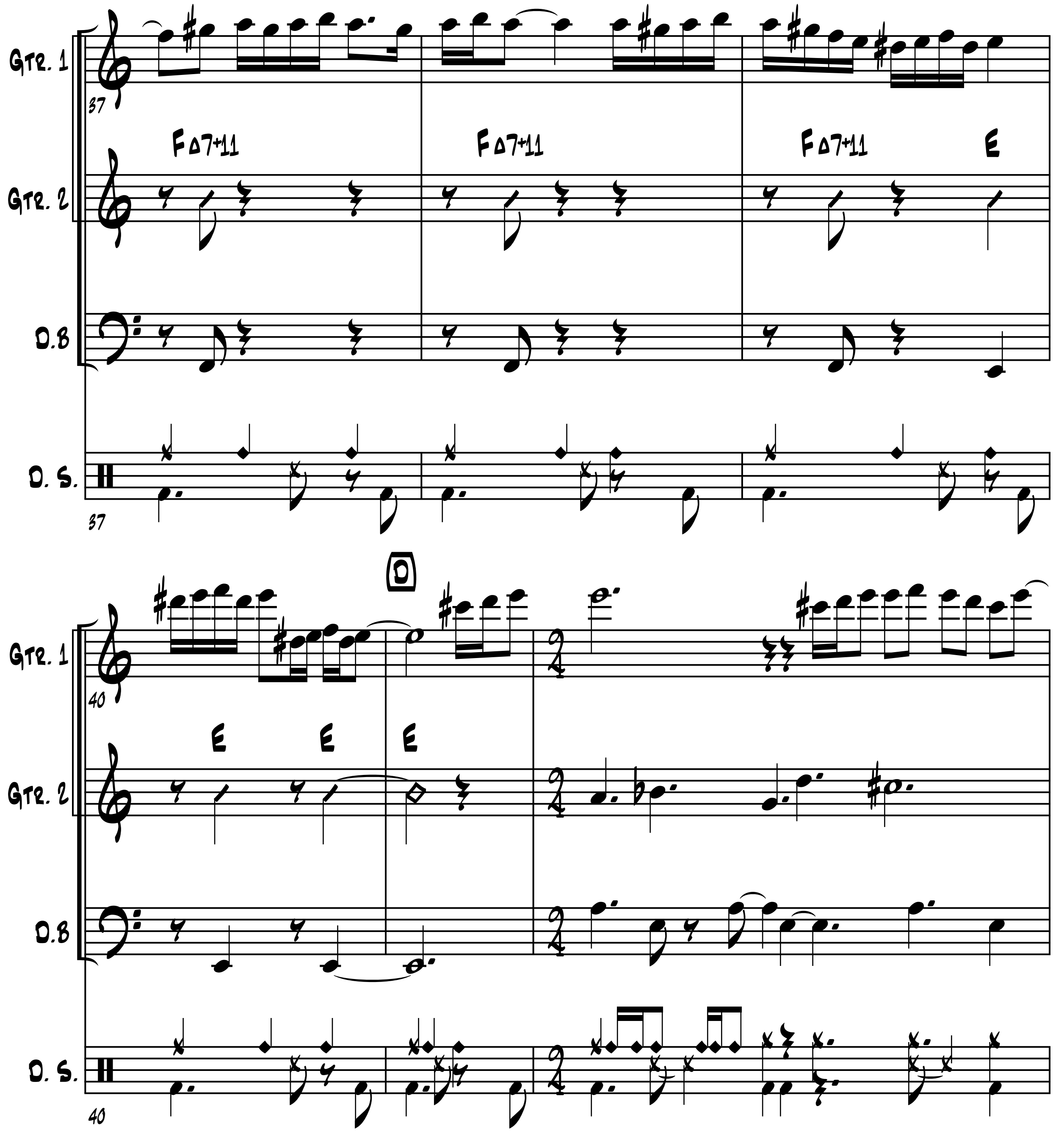

2.
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
D. S.
13
F#min7
FMaj7


B
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
D. S.
17
FMaj7
FMaj7

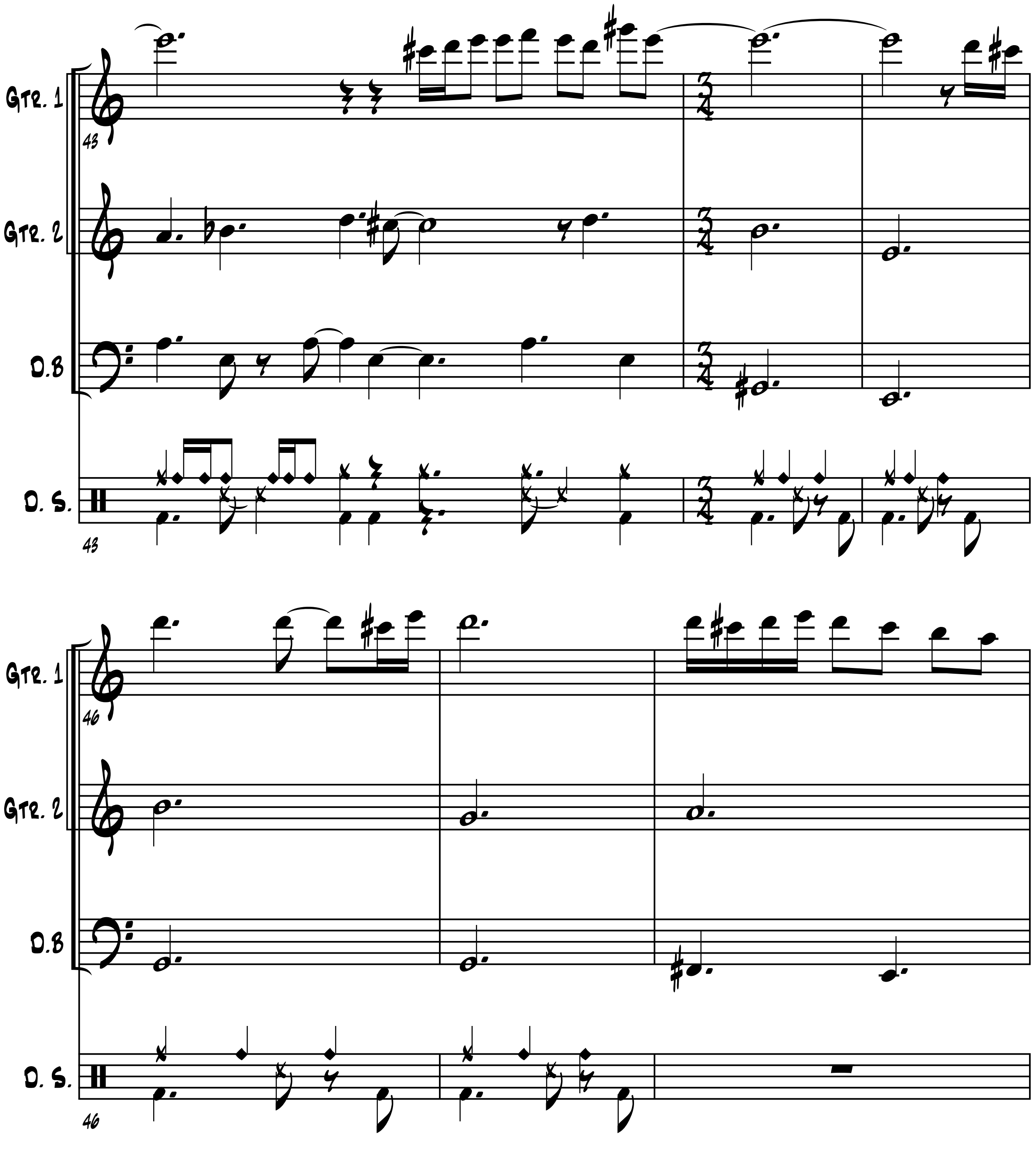
Silk Road

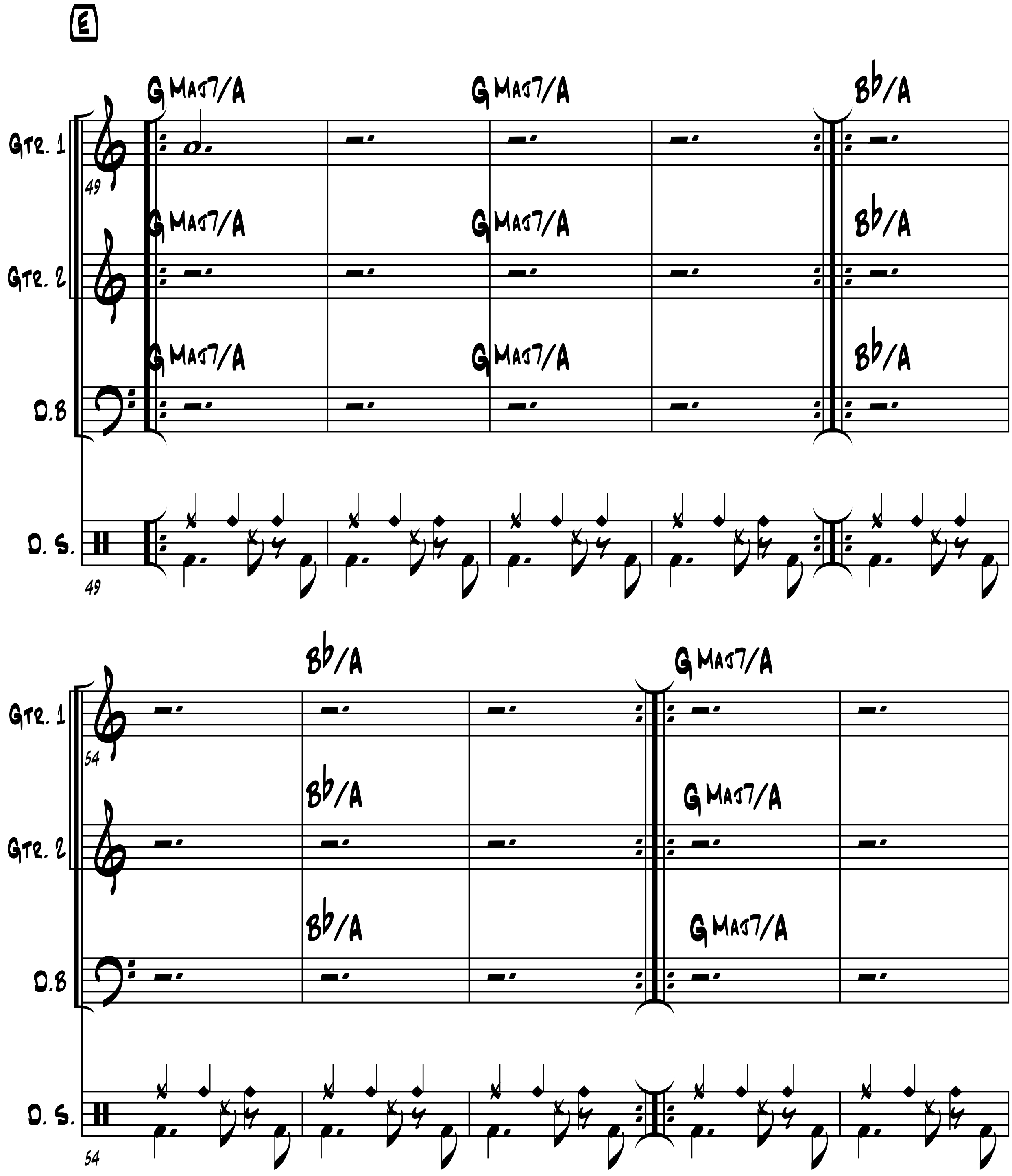

Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
D. S.
21
Emin
FMaj7
25
1.
FMaj7
Asus4
Gsus4/A


2.
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
D. S.
29
FMaj7
Dmin6/9
B7/D#
E
C
33
F∆7+11


Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
D. S.
37
FΔ7+11
FΔ7+11
FΔ7+11
E
40
D
E
E
E

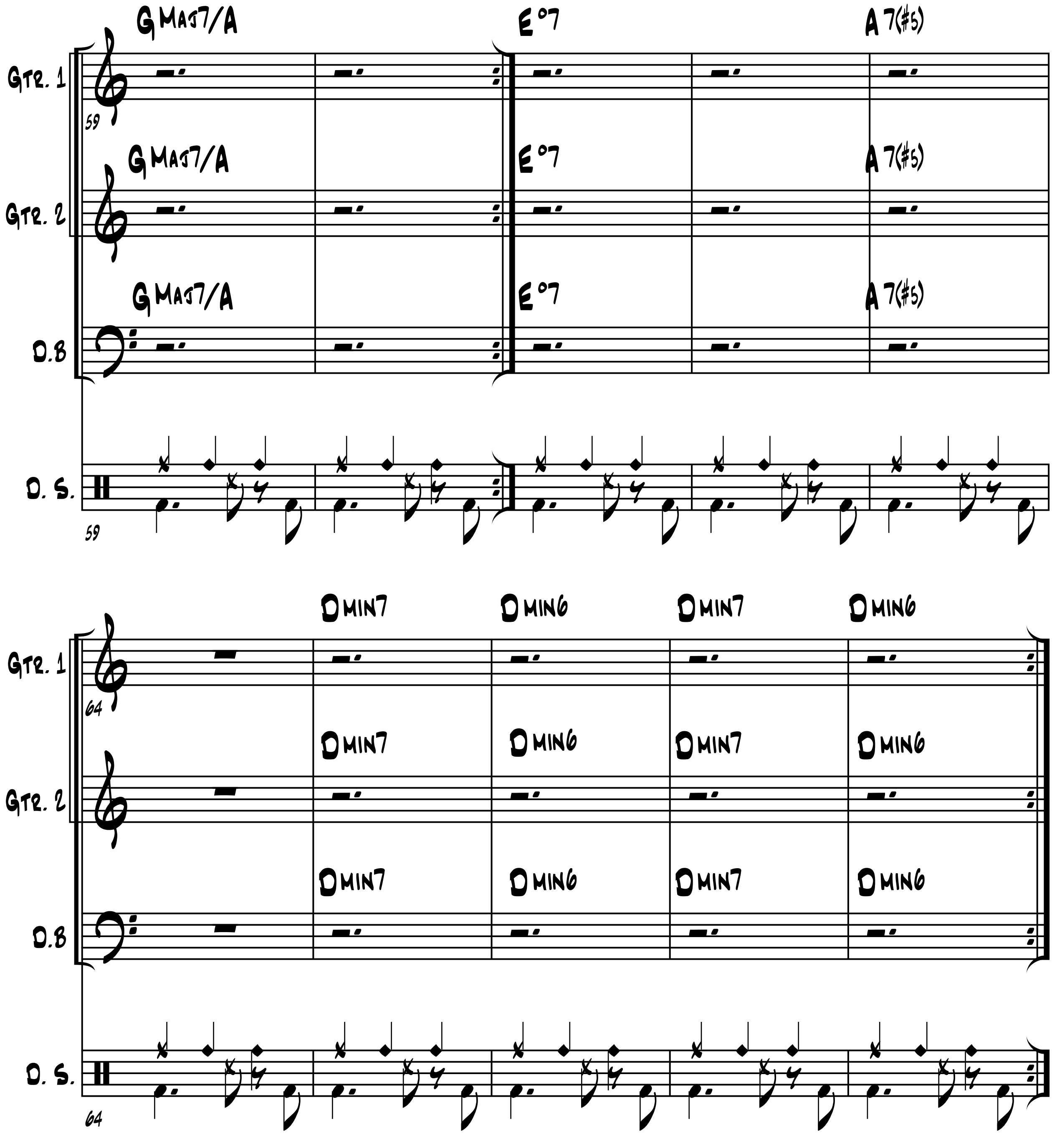
Silk Road


Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
D. S.
43
43
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
D. S.
46
46


E
G Maj7/A
G Maj7/A
Bb/A
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
D. S.
49
Bb/A
G Maj7/A
54

Silk Road

D.C no repeats


GMaj7/A
E°7
A7(#5)
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
D.B
D. S.
59
64
Dmin7
Dmin6
Dmin7
Dmin6

APPENDIX 7

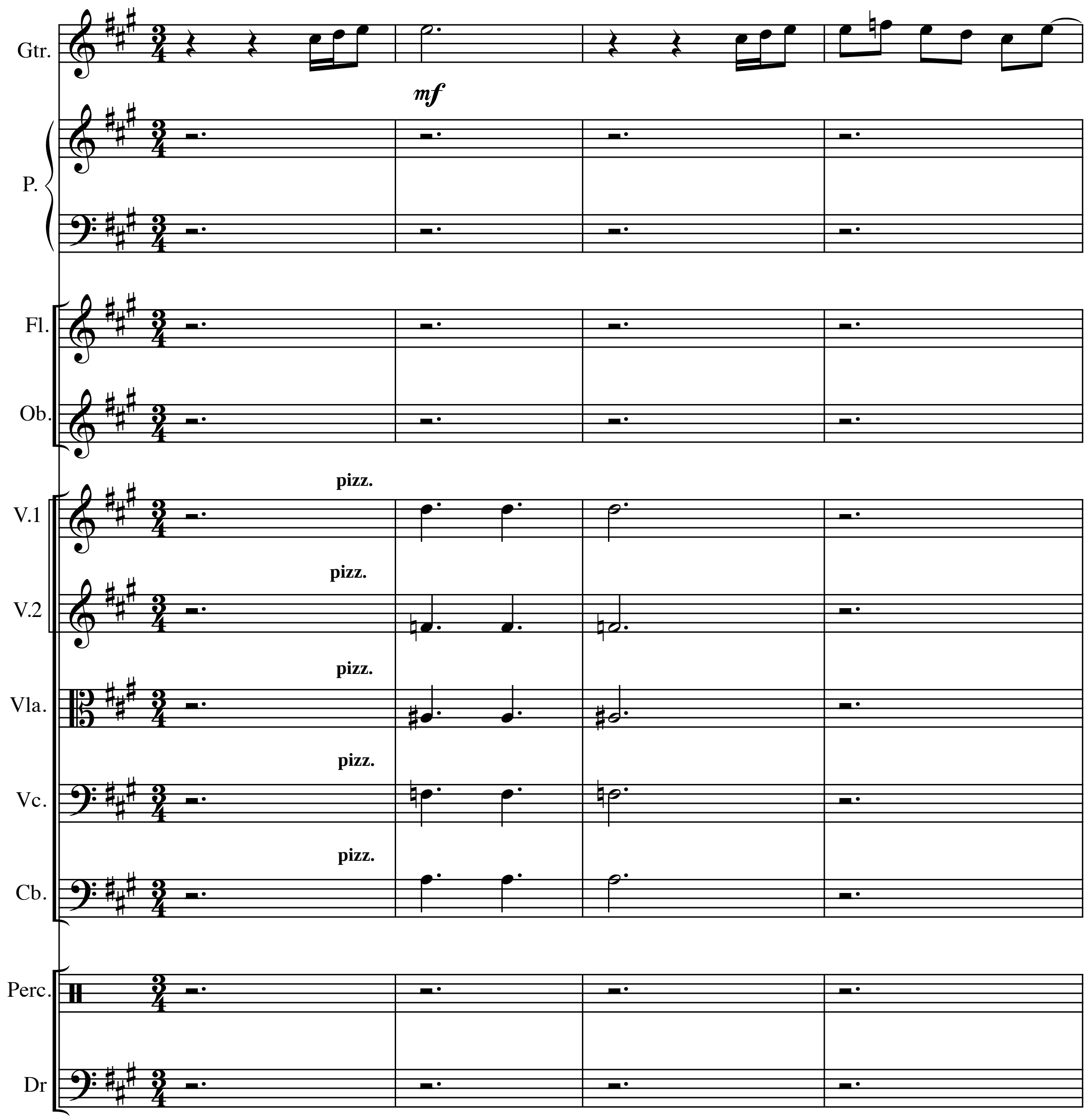
SILK ROAD

Double Concerto for Guitar/Piano & Chamber Orchestra

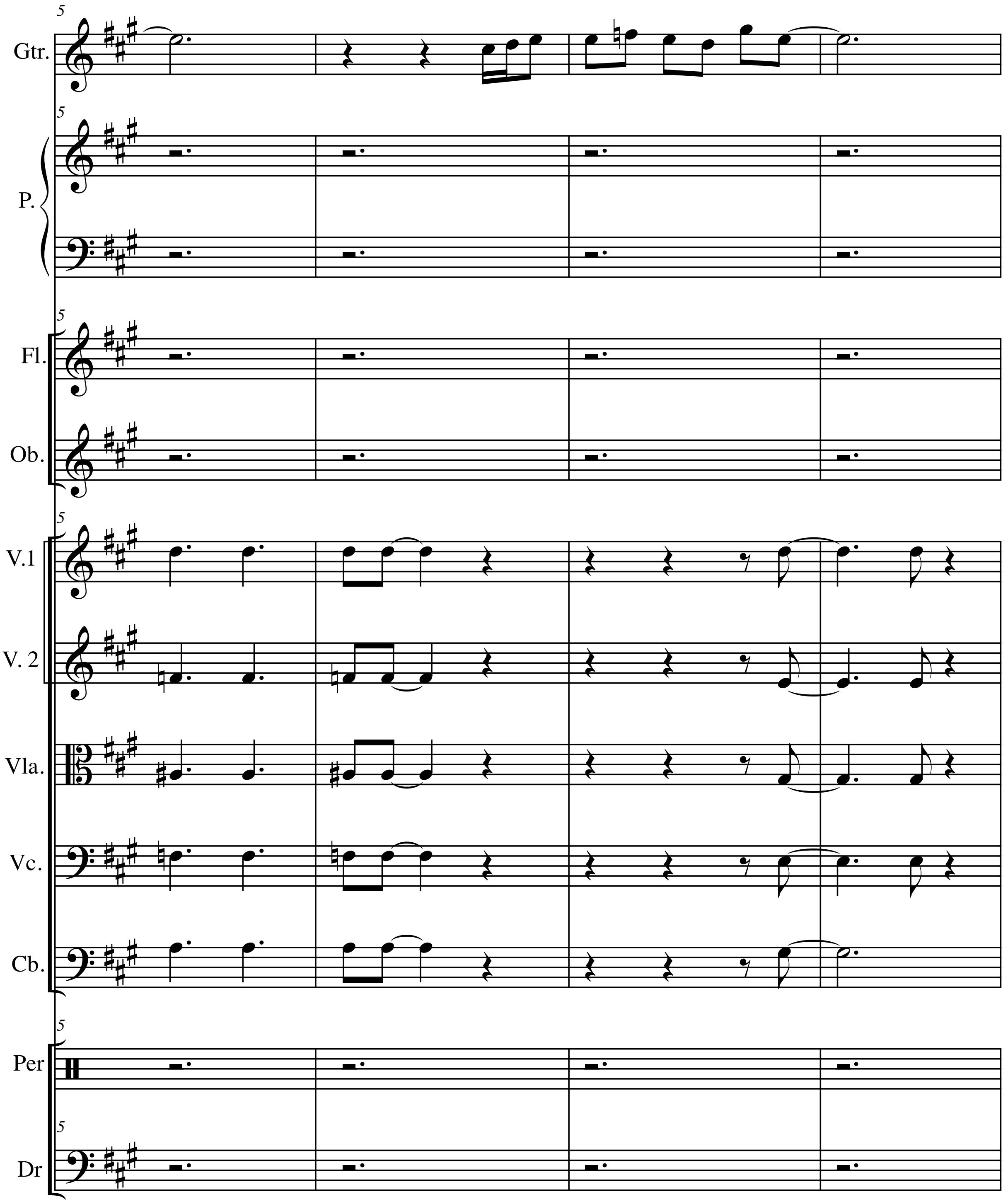
MOVEMENT 1

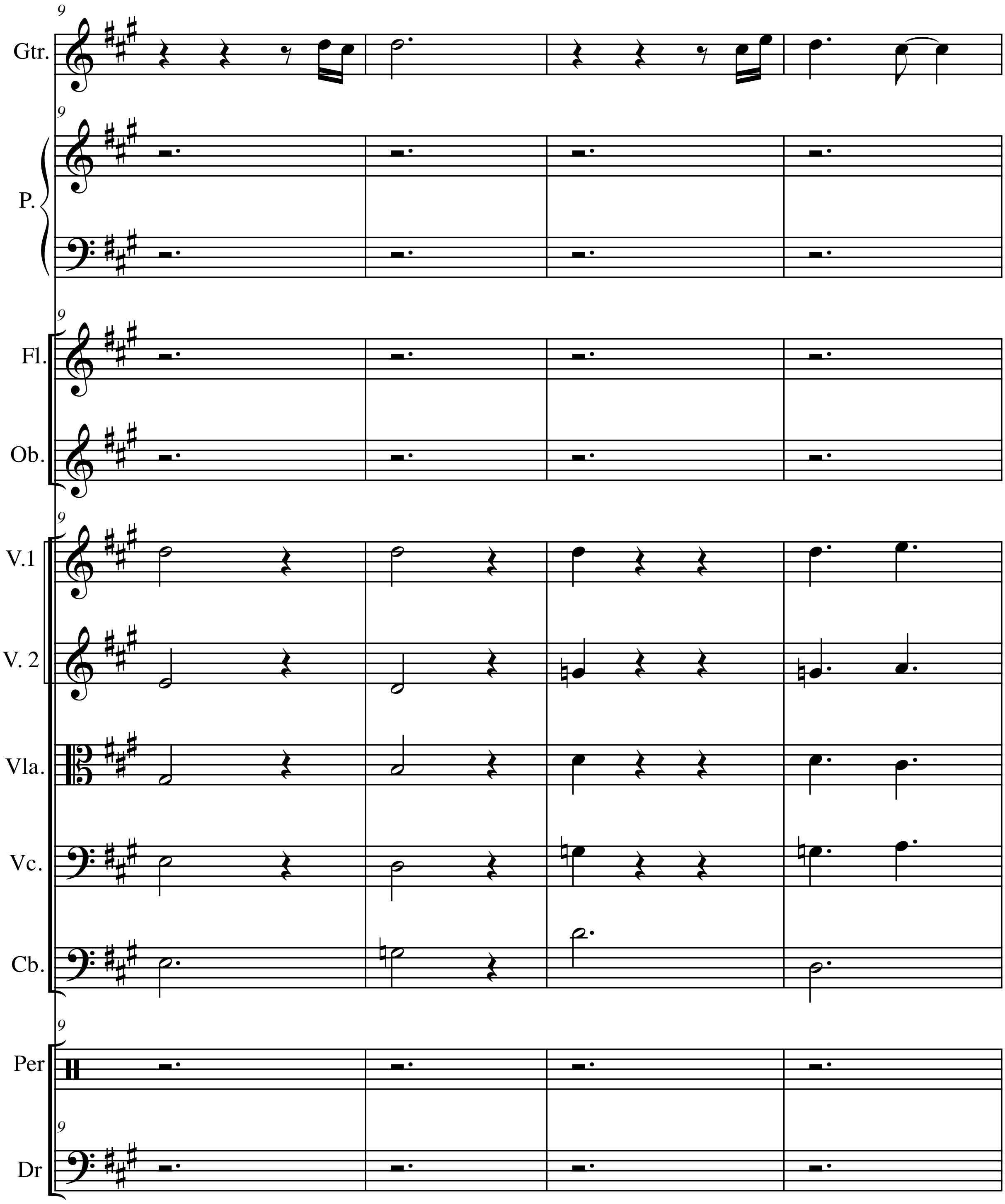
Guy Strazzullo
(aka Guy Strazz)

Allegro/144
(with a fandango flamenco feeling)

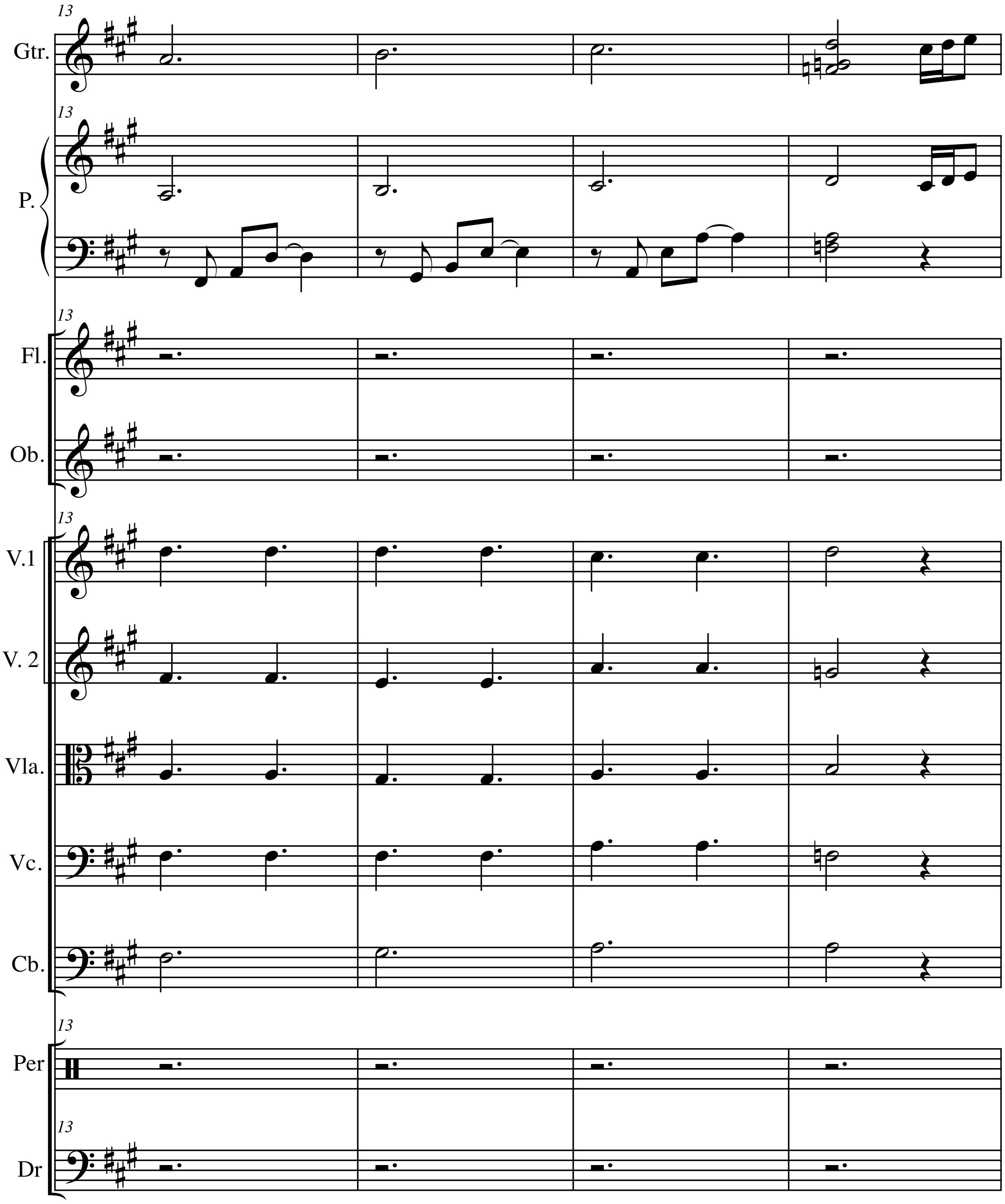

Gtr.
mf
P.
Fl.
Ob.
pizz.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.
Dr

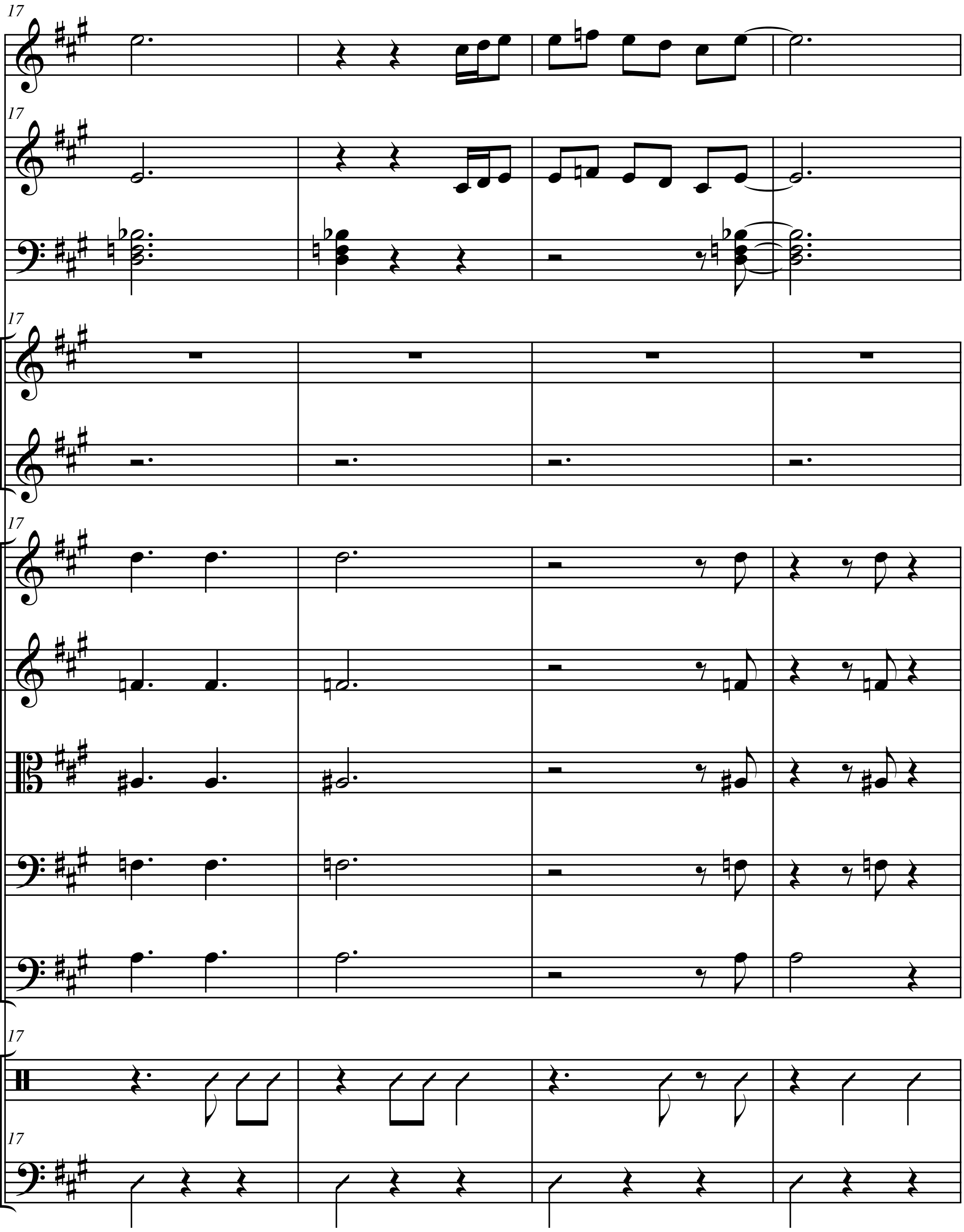
©APRA Control 2010/2012

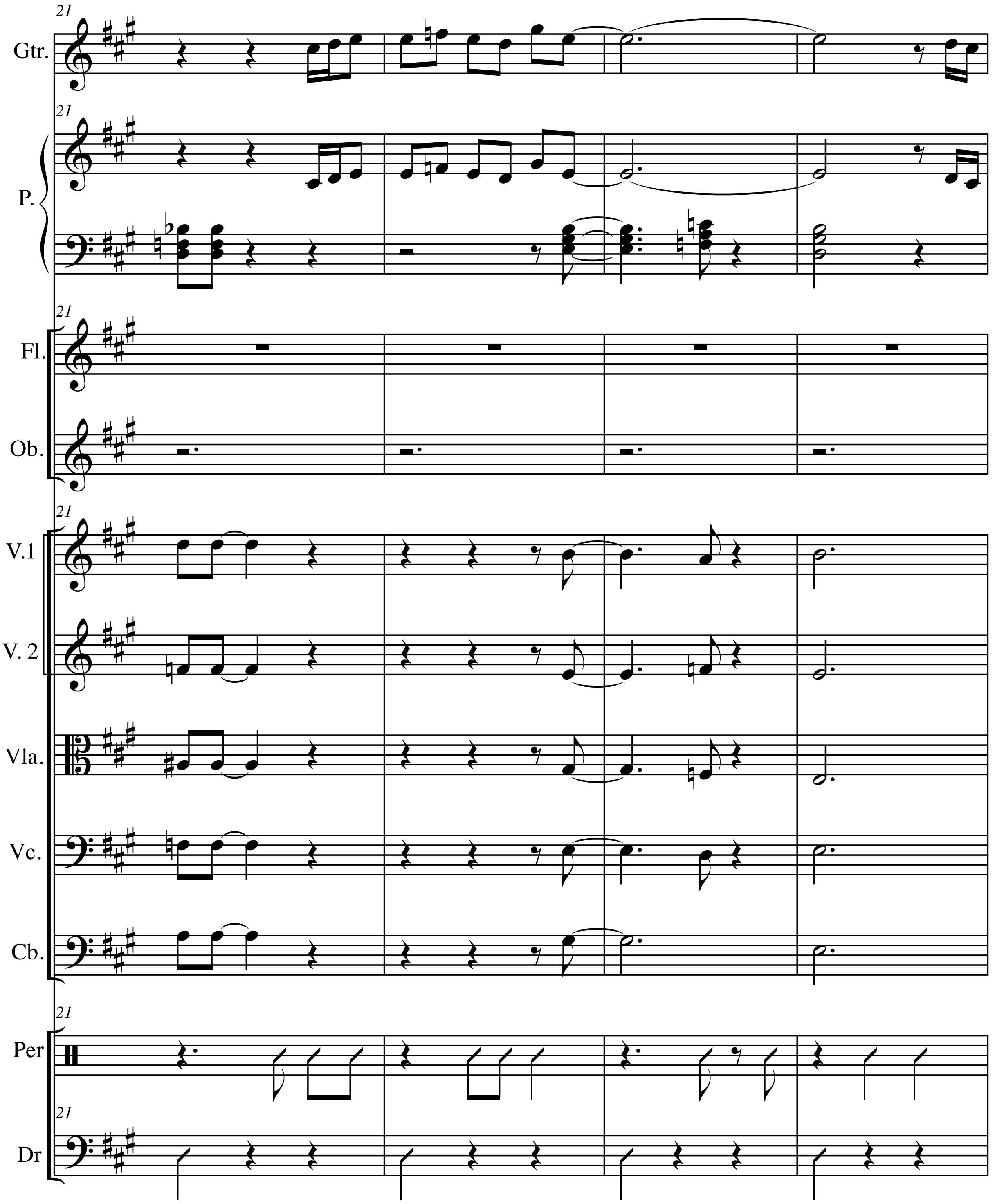

5
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr


9
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

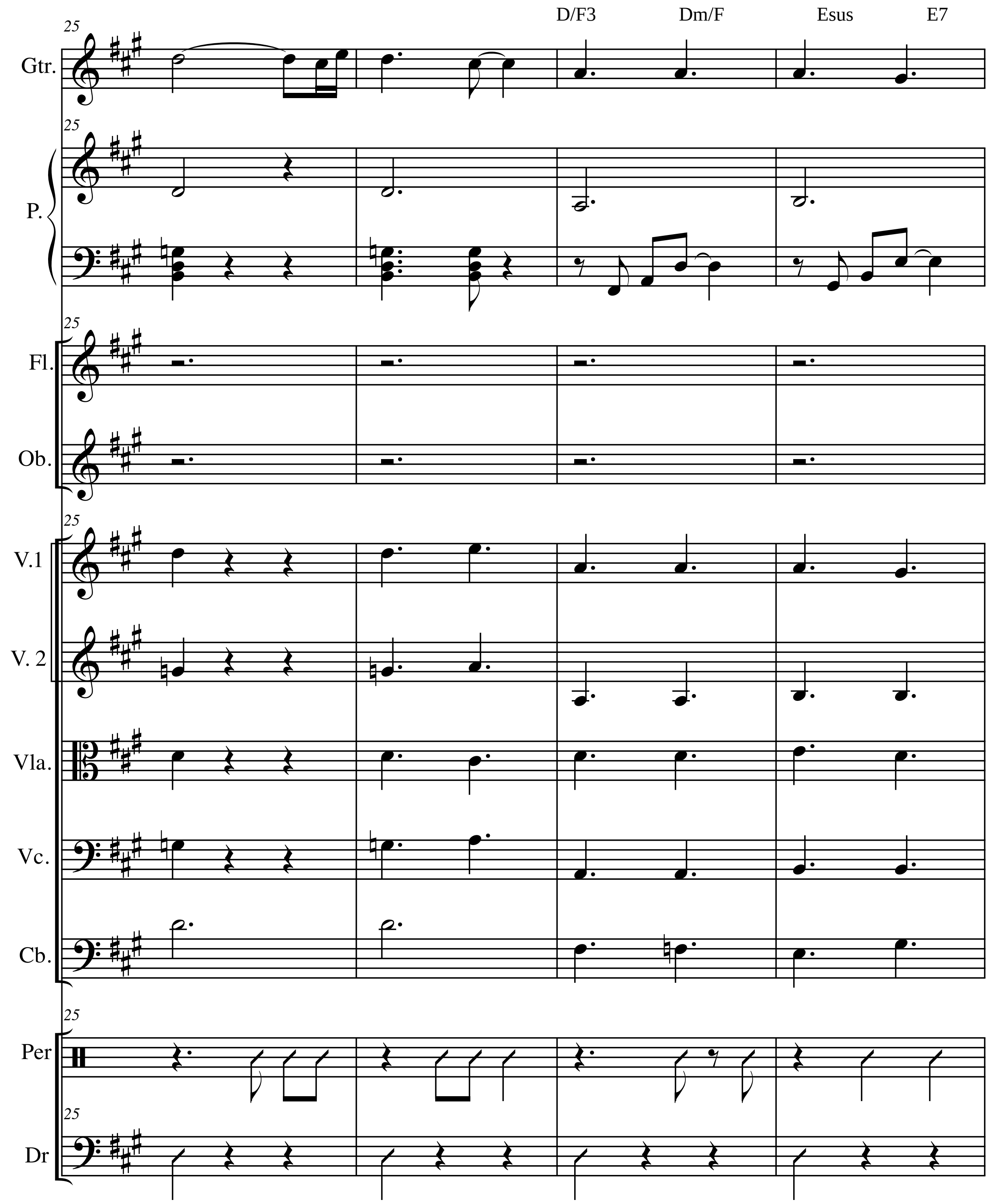
SILK ROAD M.1

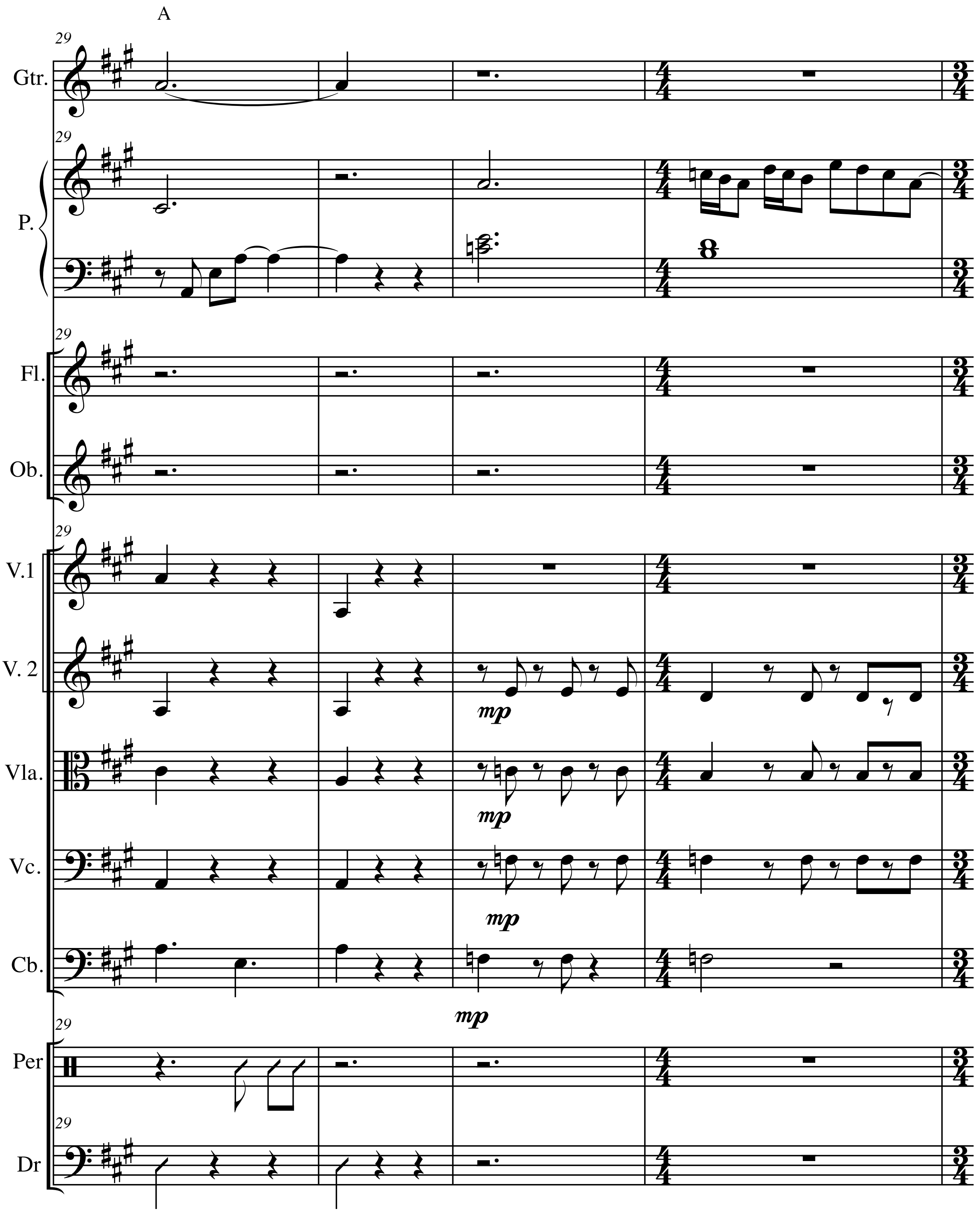

13
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

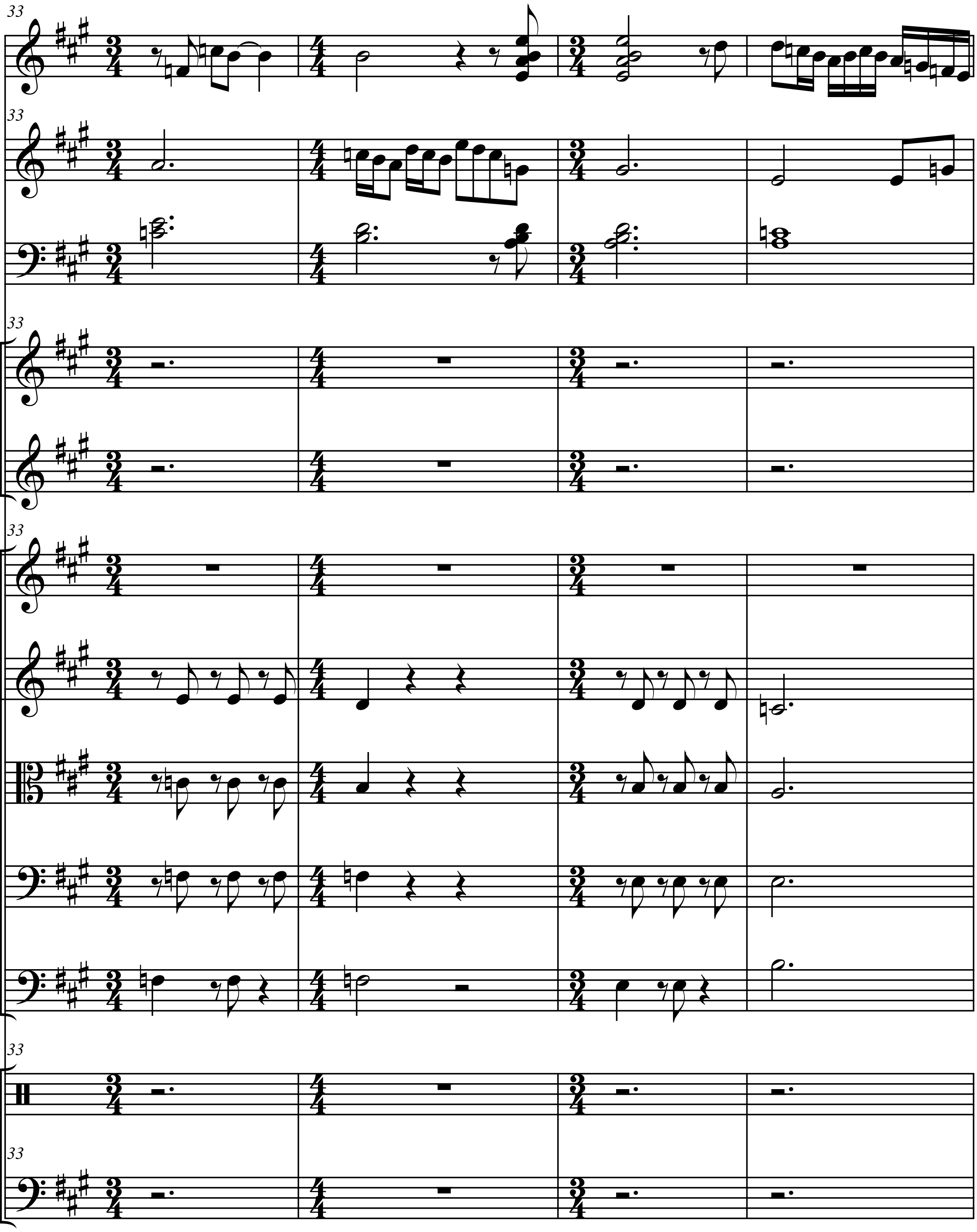

17
Gtr.
17
P.
17
Fl.
Ob.
17
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
17
Per
17
Dr

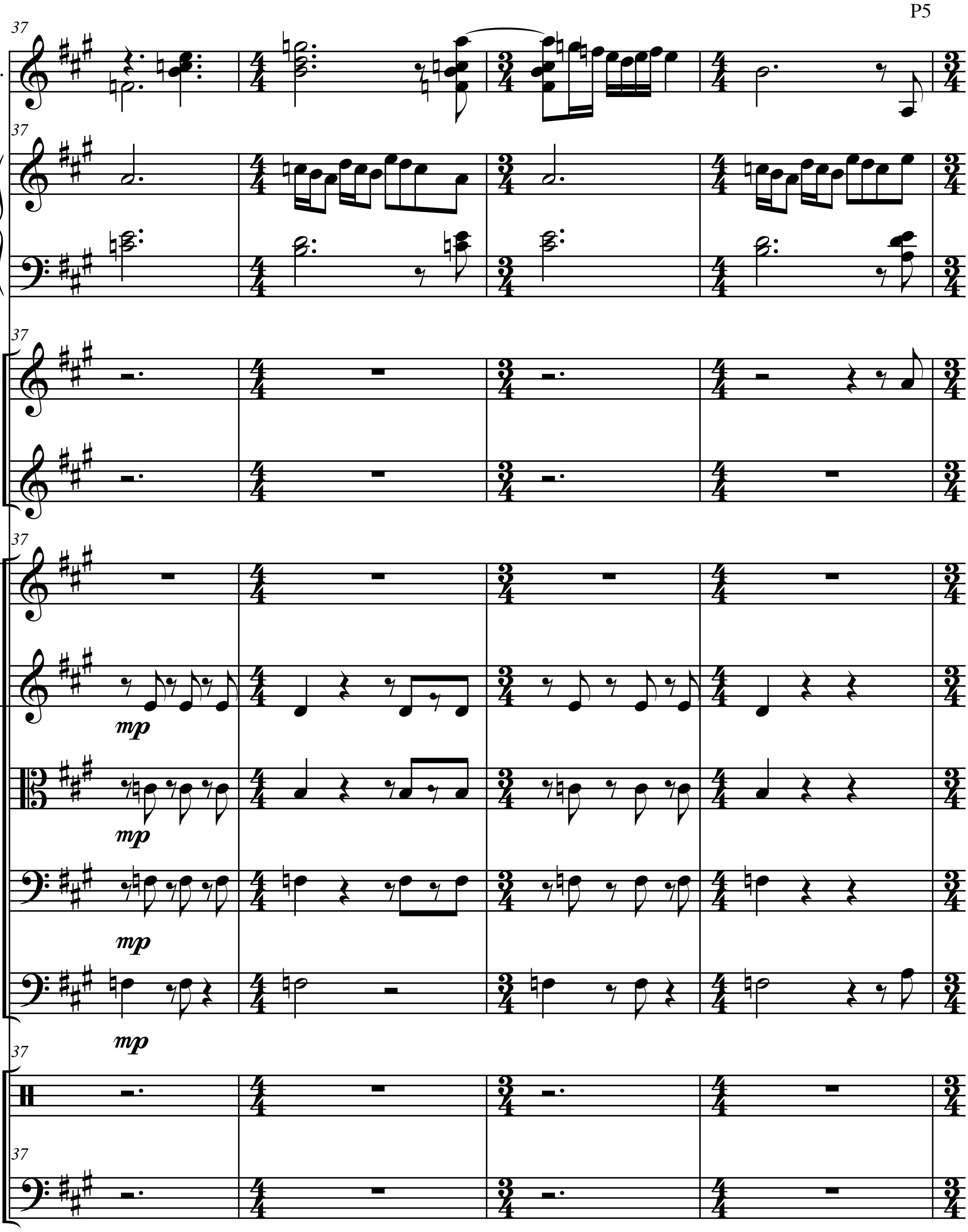

21
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

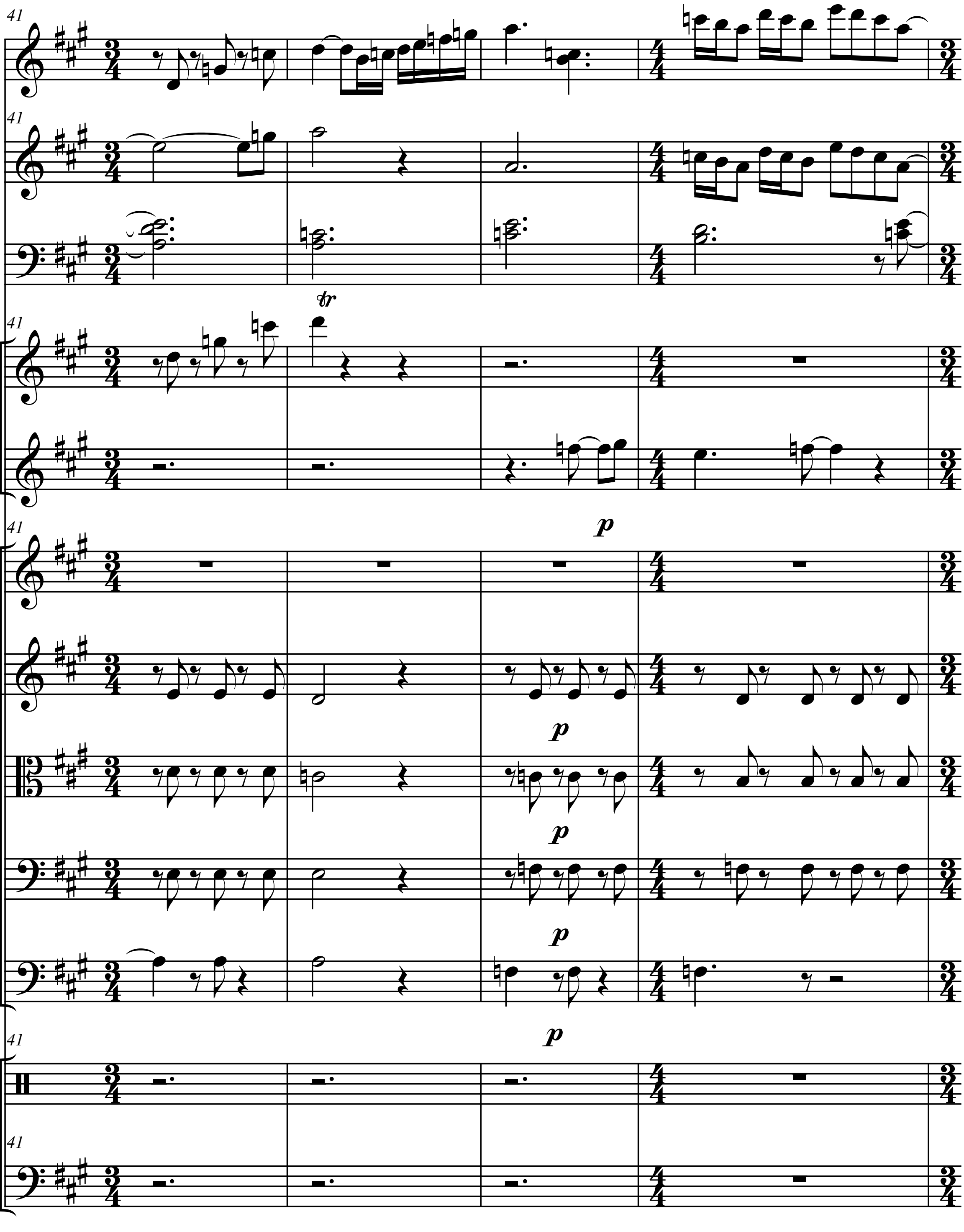
SILK ROAD M.1

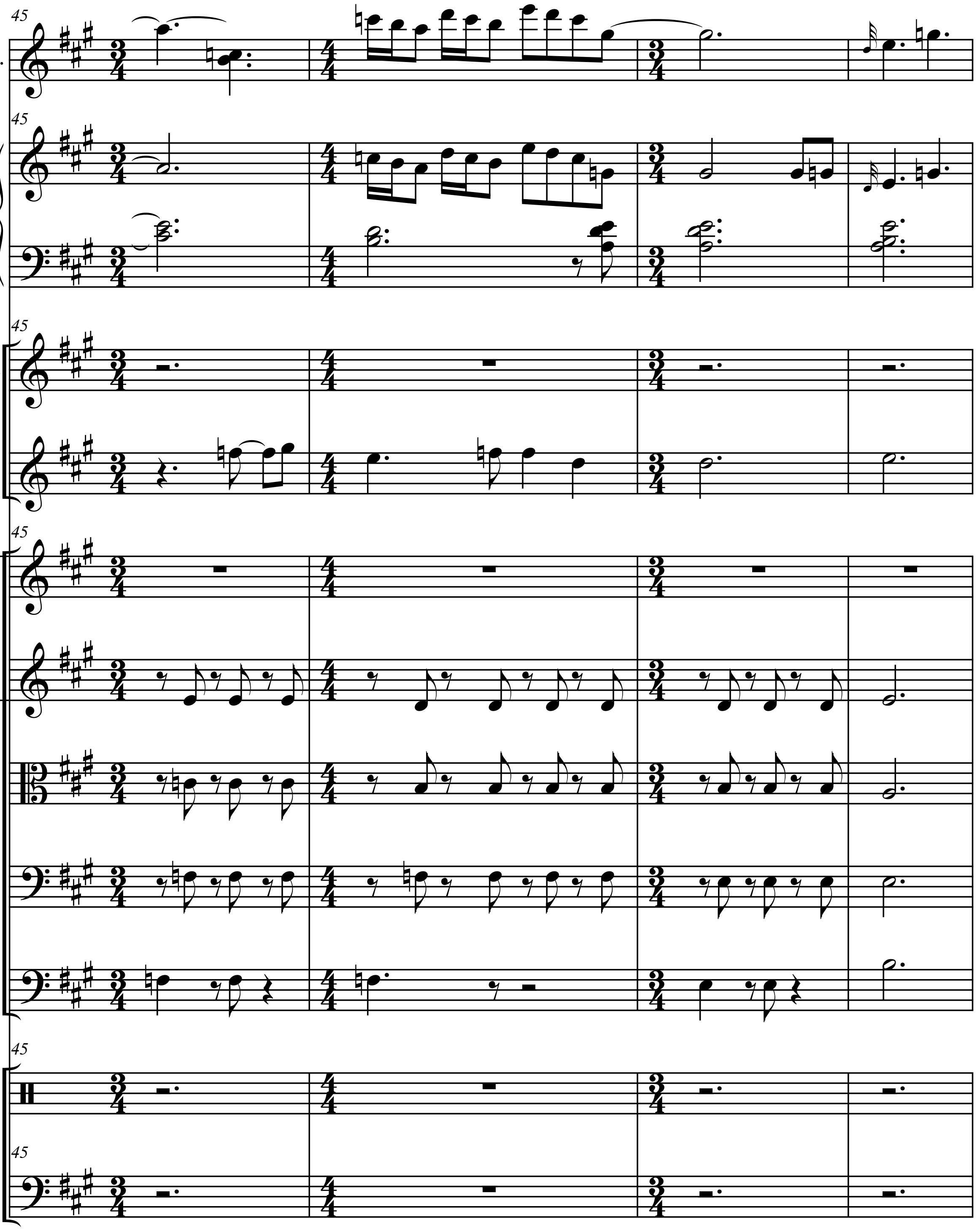

D/F3
Dm/F
Esus
E7
25
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

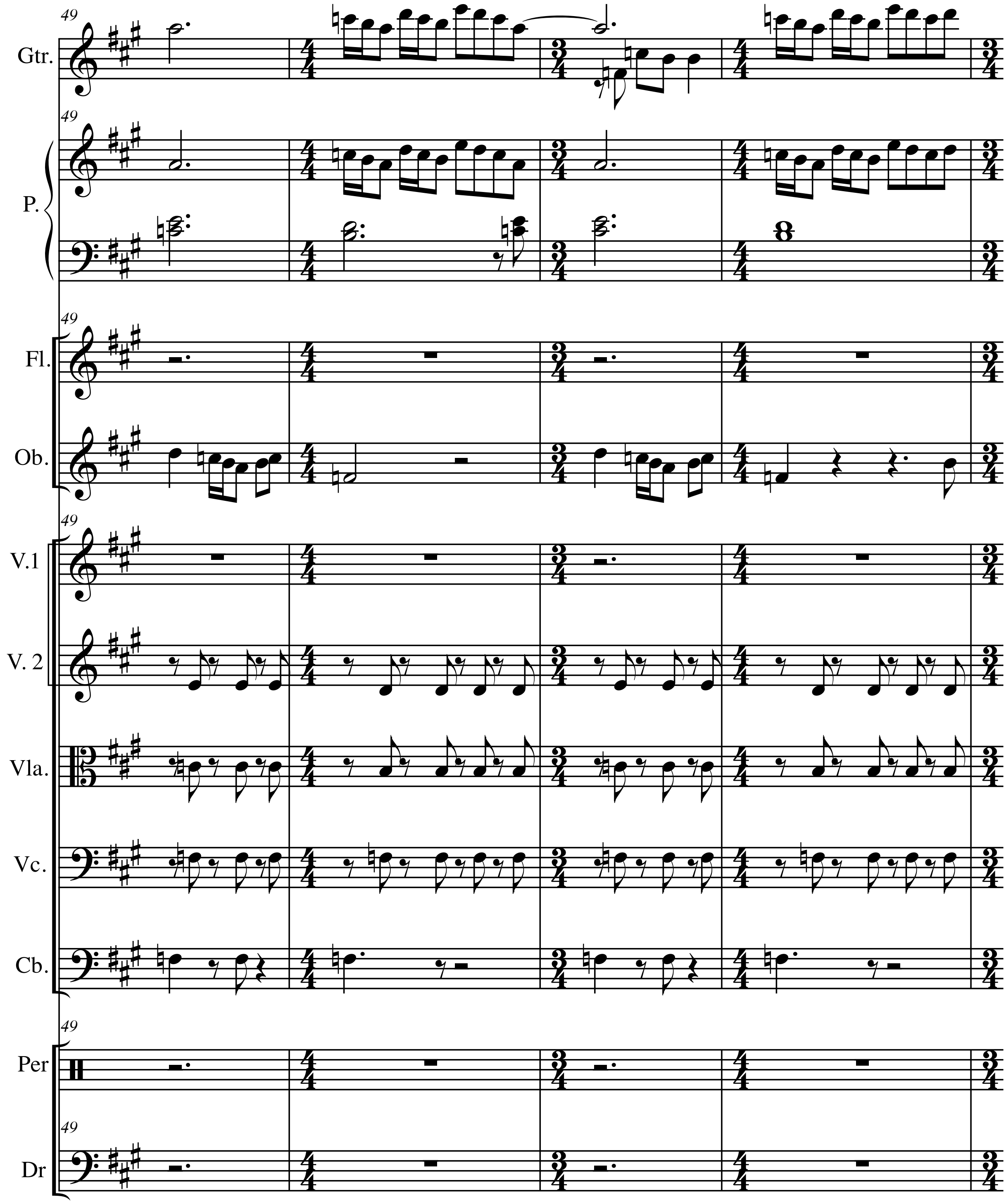

A
29
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
mp
mp
mp
mp

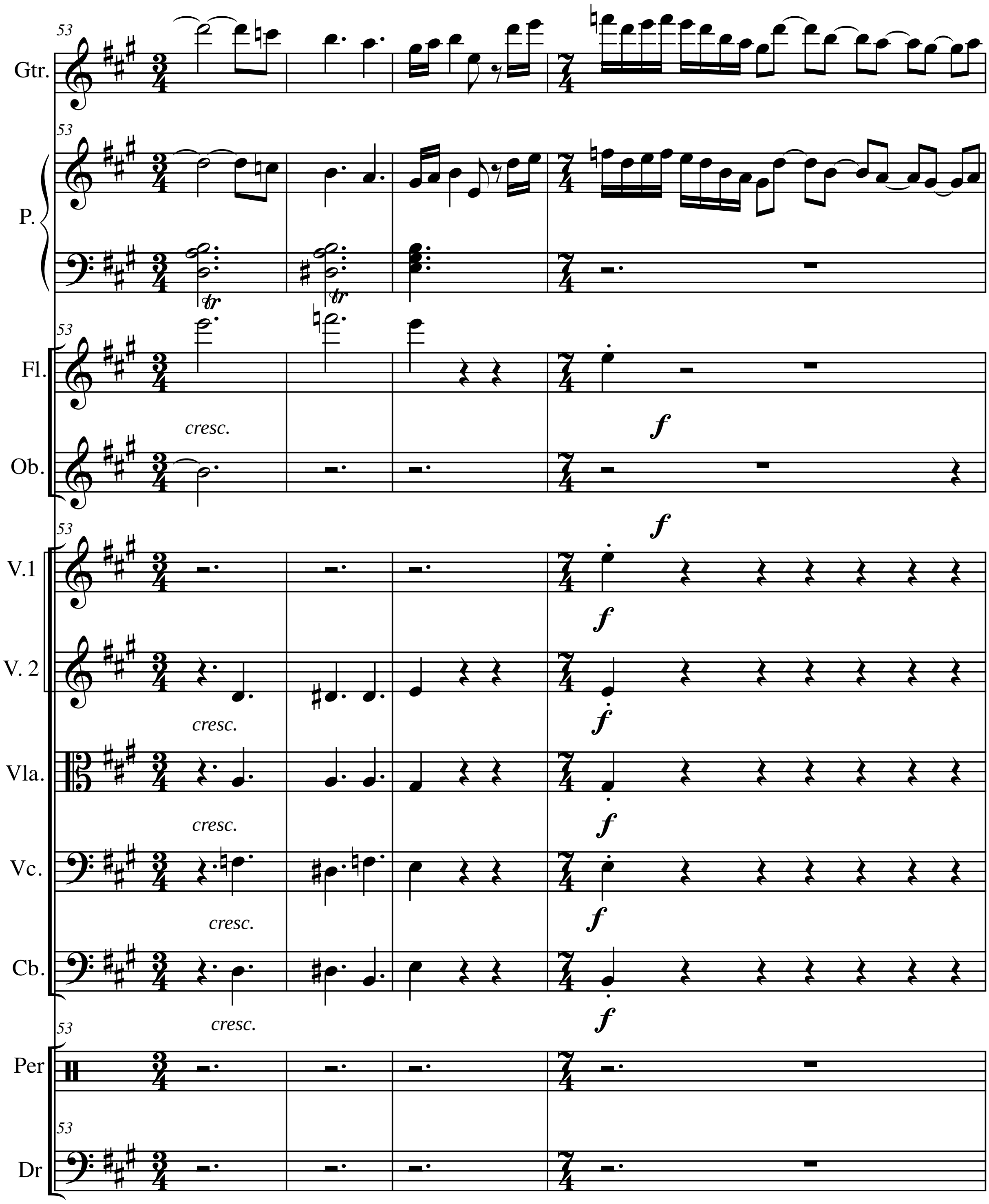

33
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

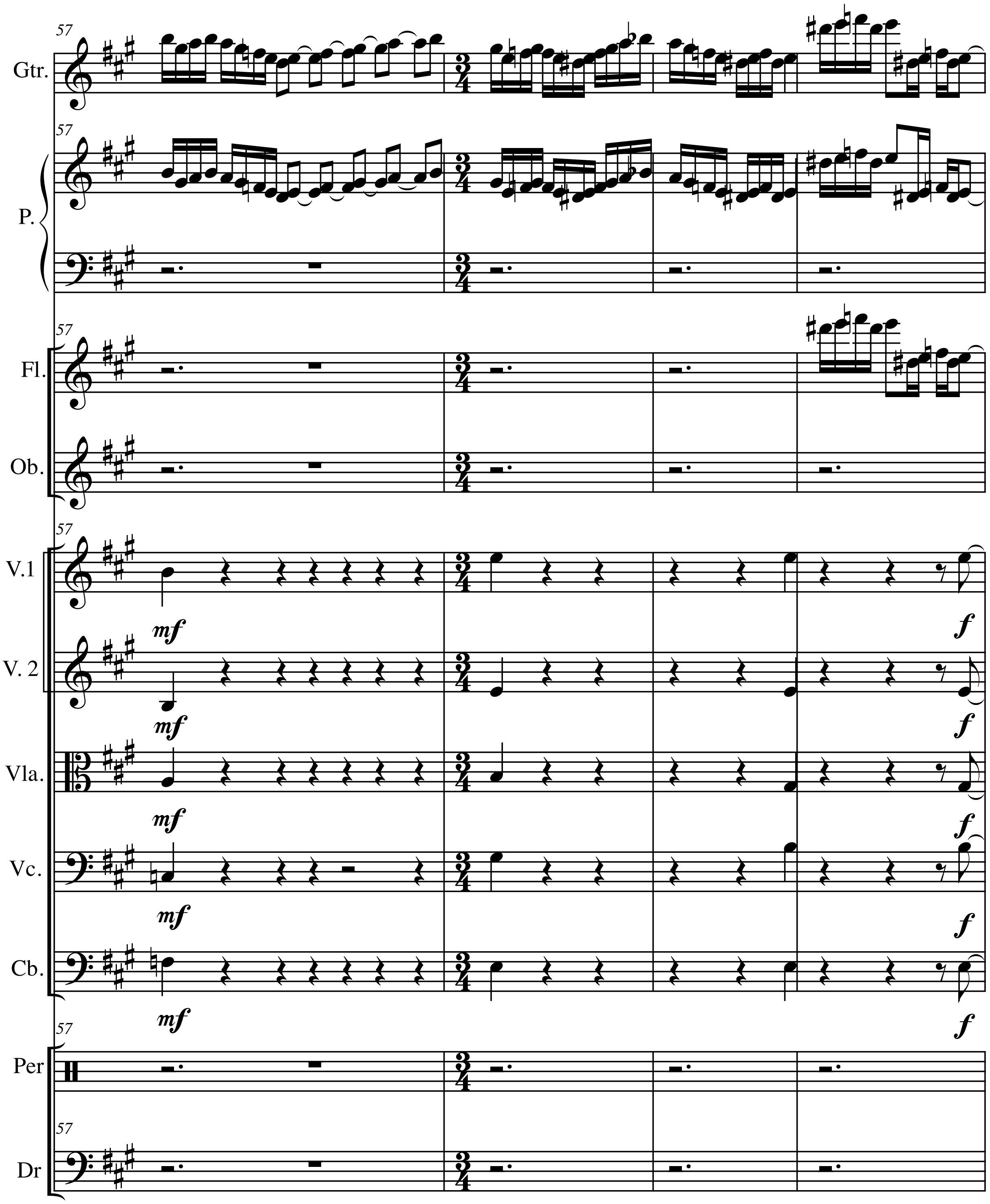

37
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
mp
mp
mp
mp

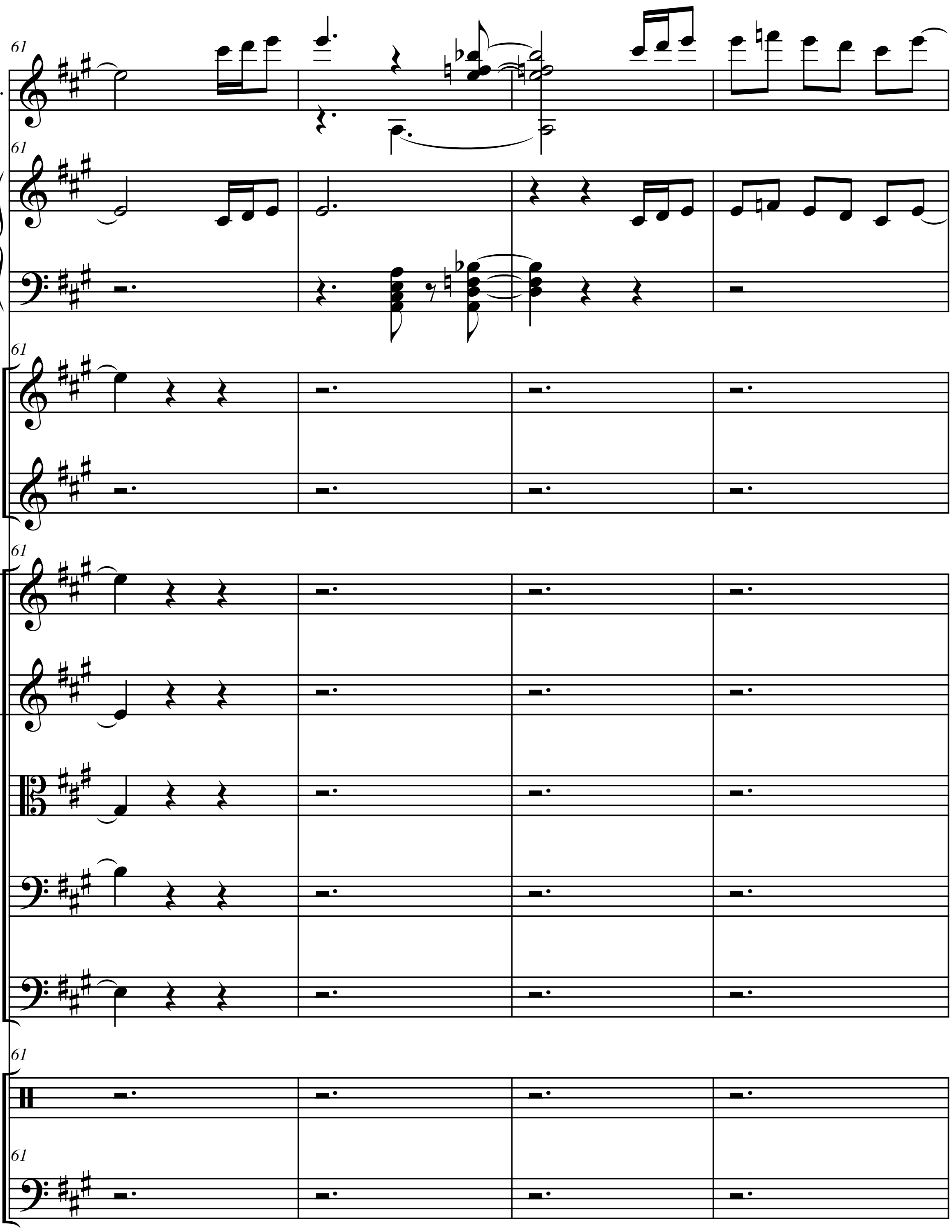

41
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
tr
p

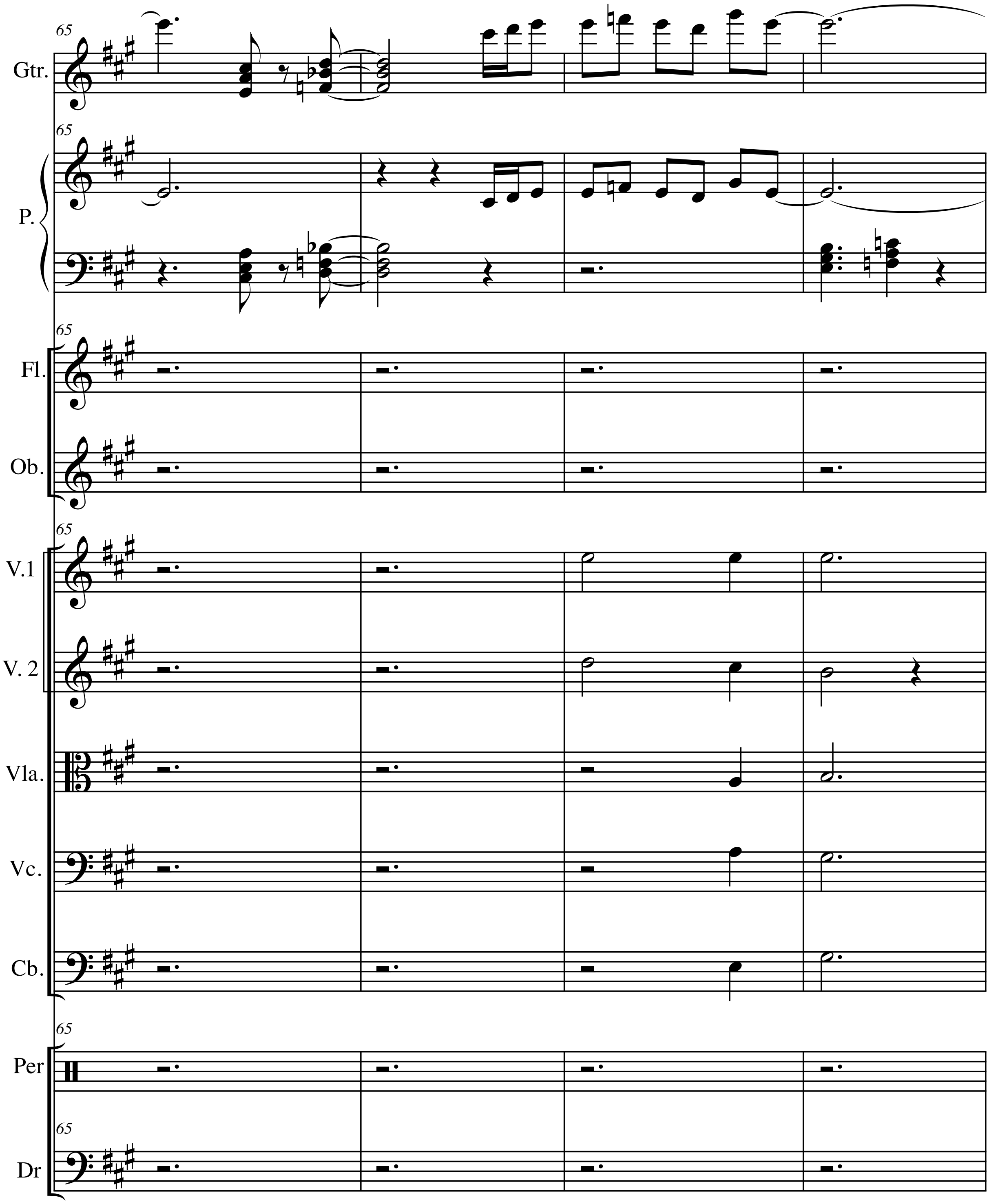

45
Gtr.
45
P.
45
Fl.
Ob.
45
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
45
Per
45
Dr

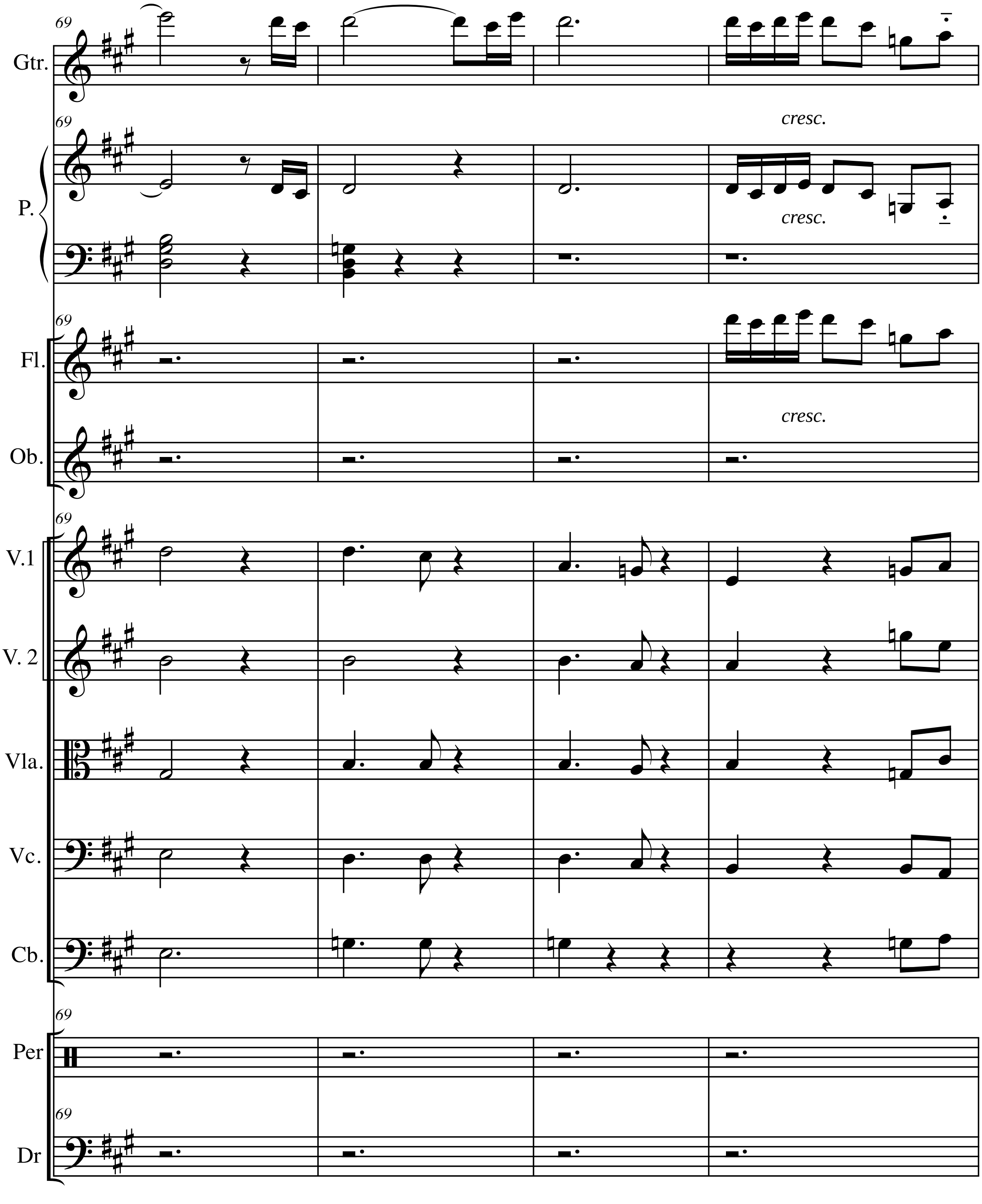

49
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

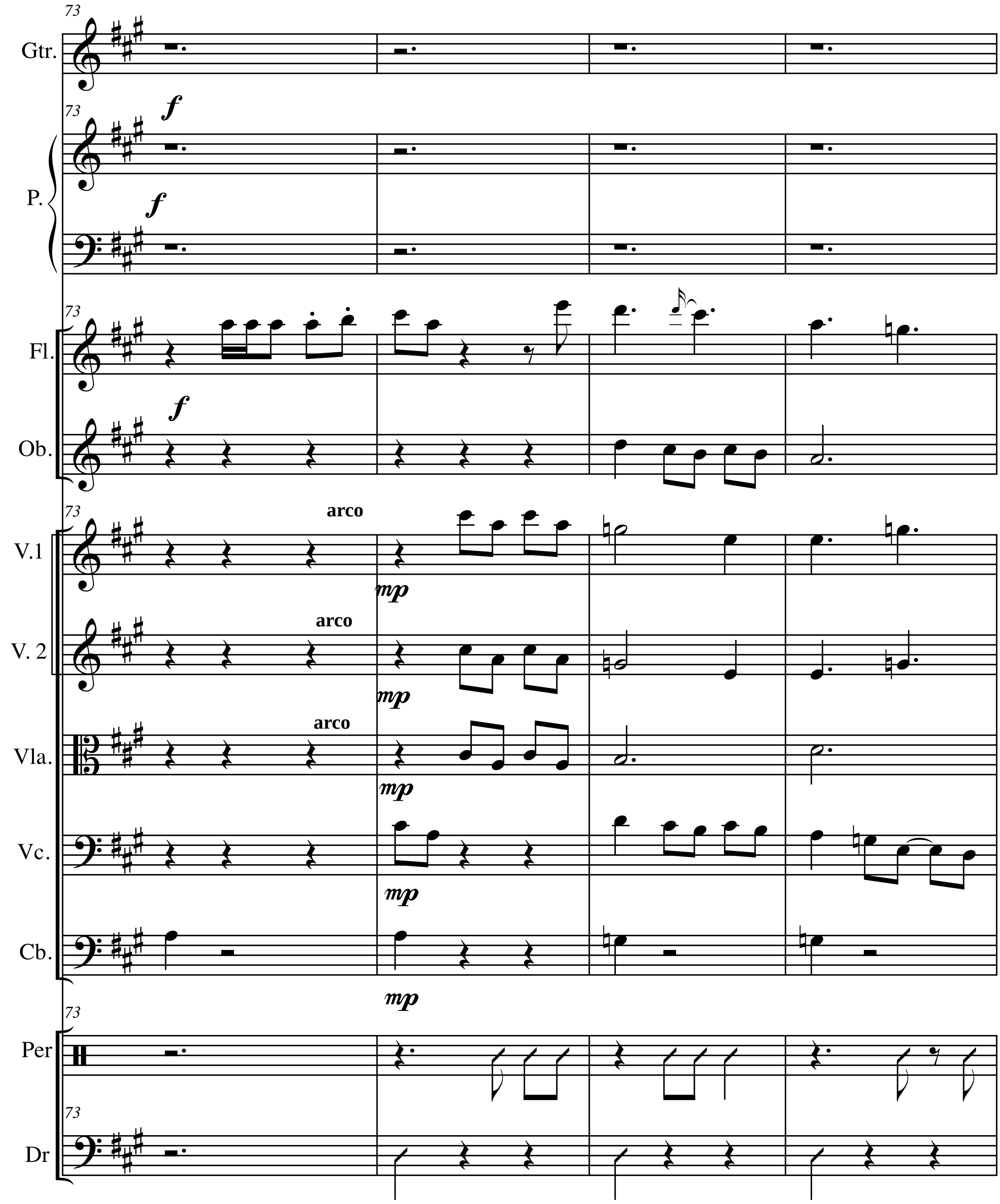

53
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
tr
cresc.
f

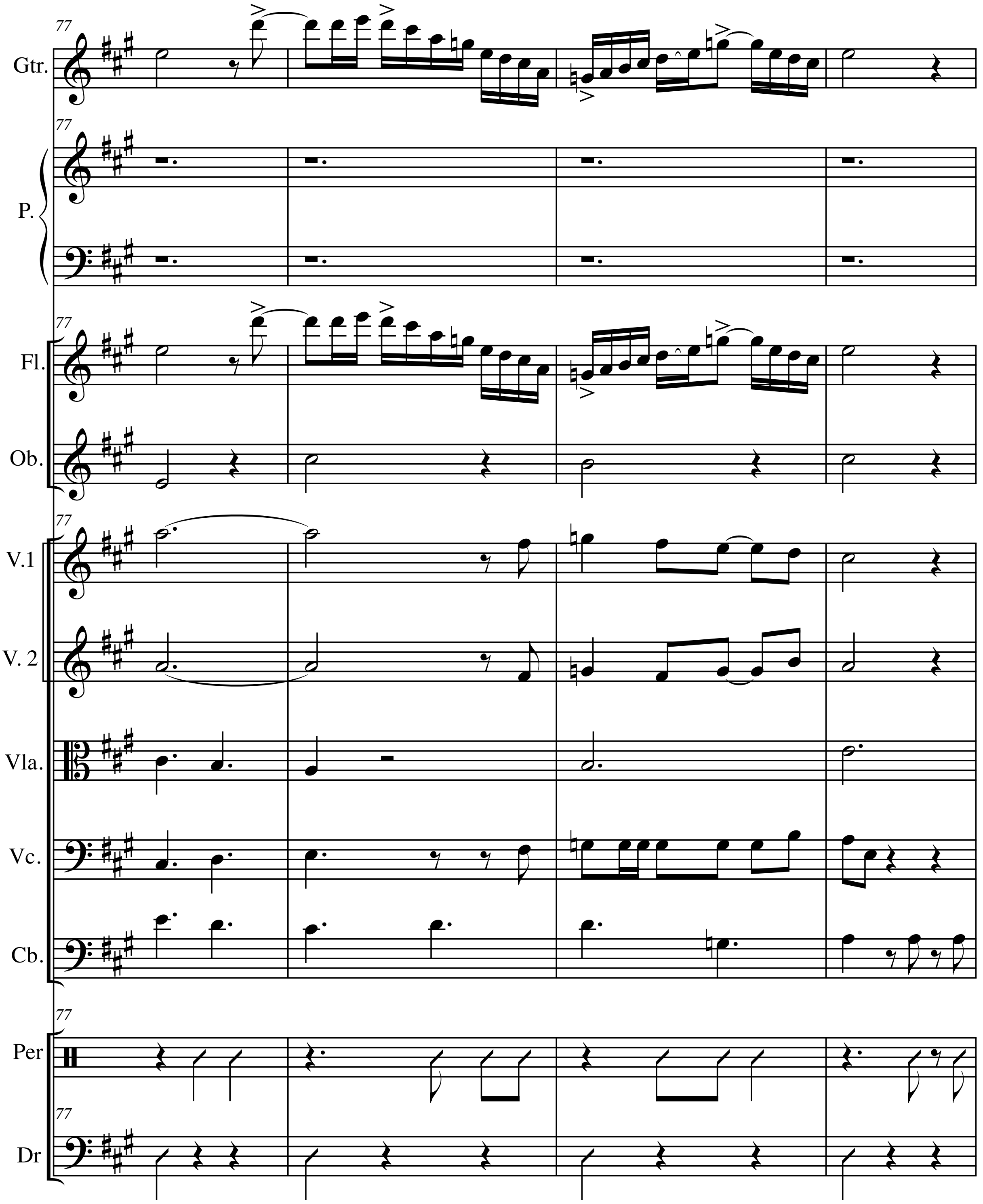

57
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
mf
f

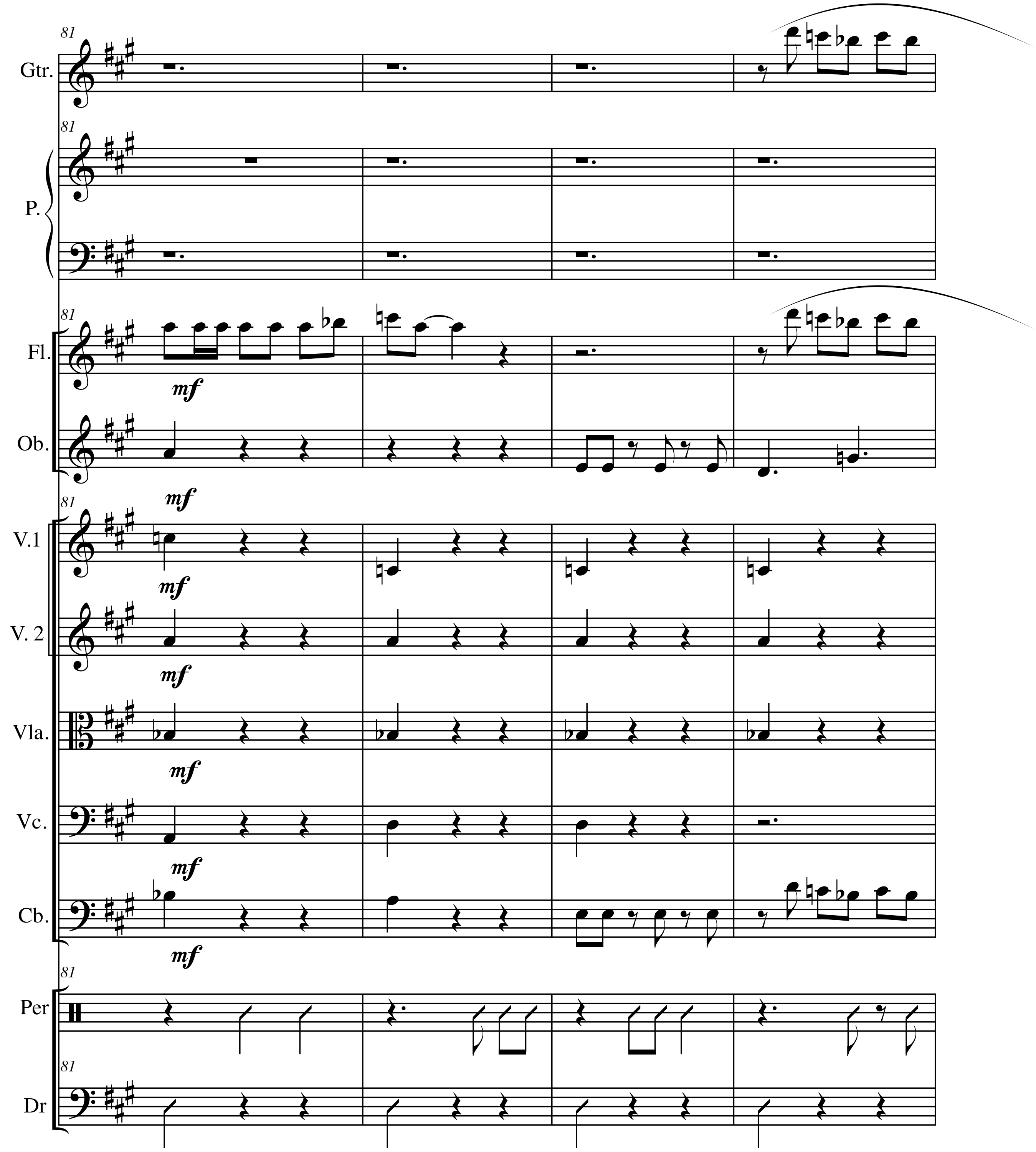

61
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

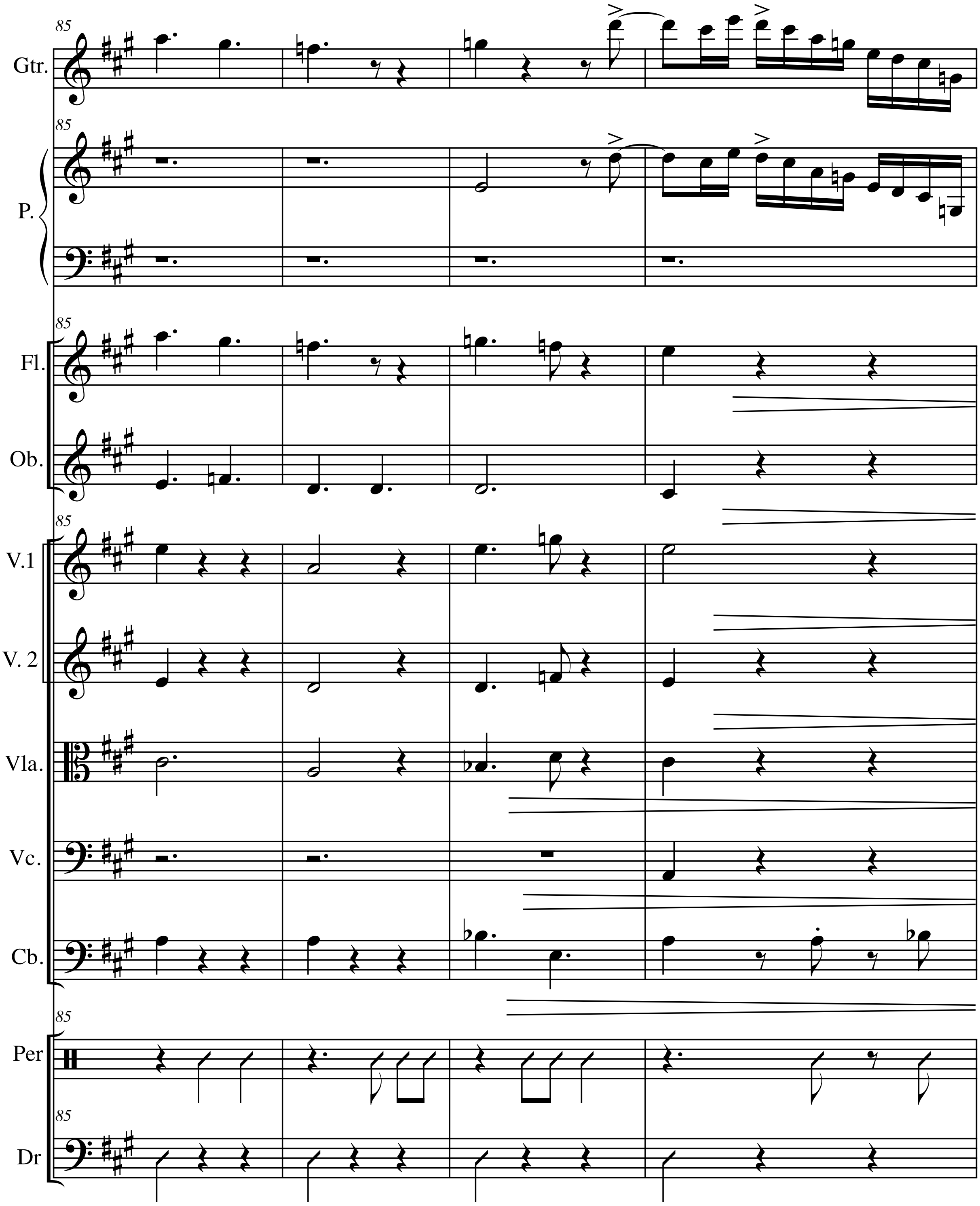

65
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

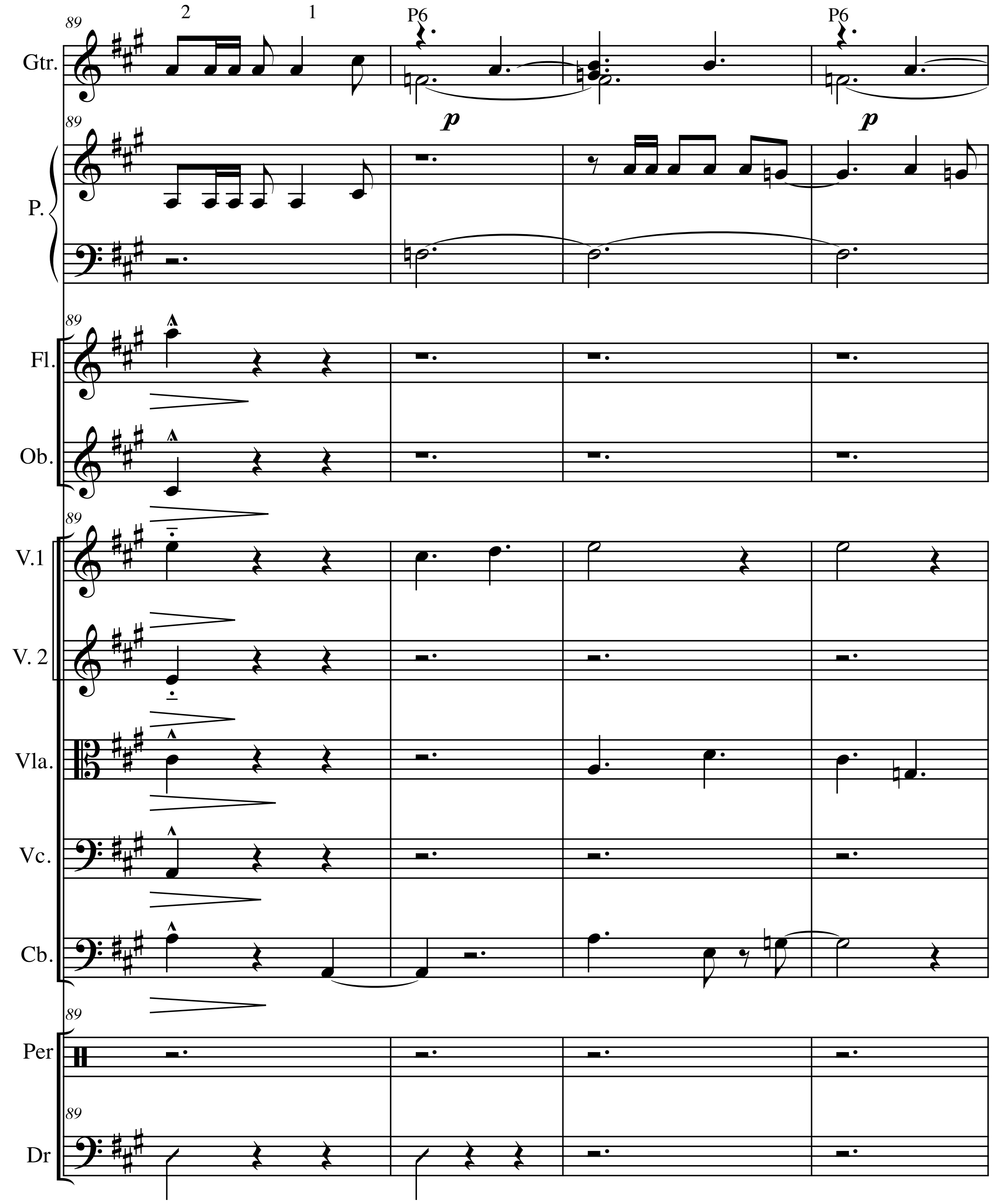

69
Gtr.
P.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

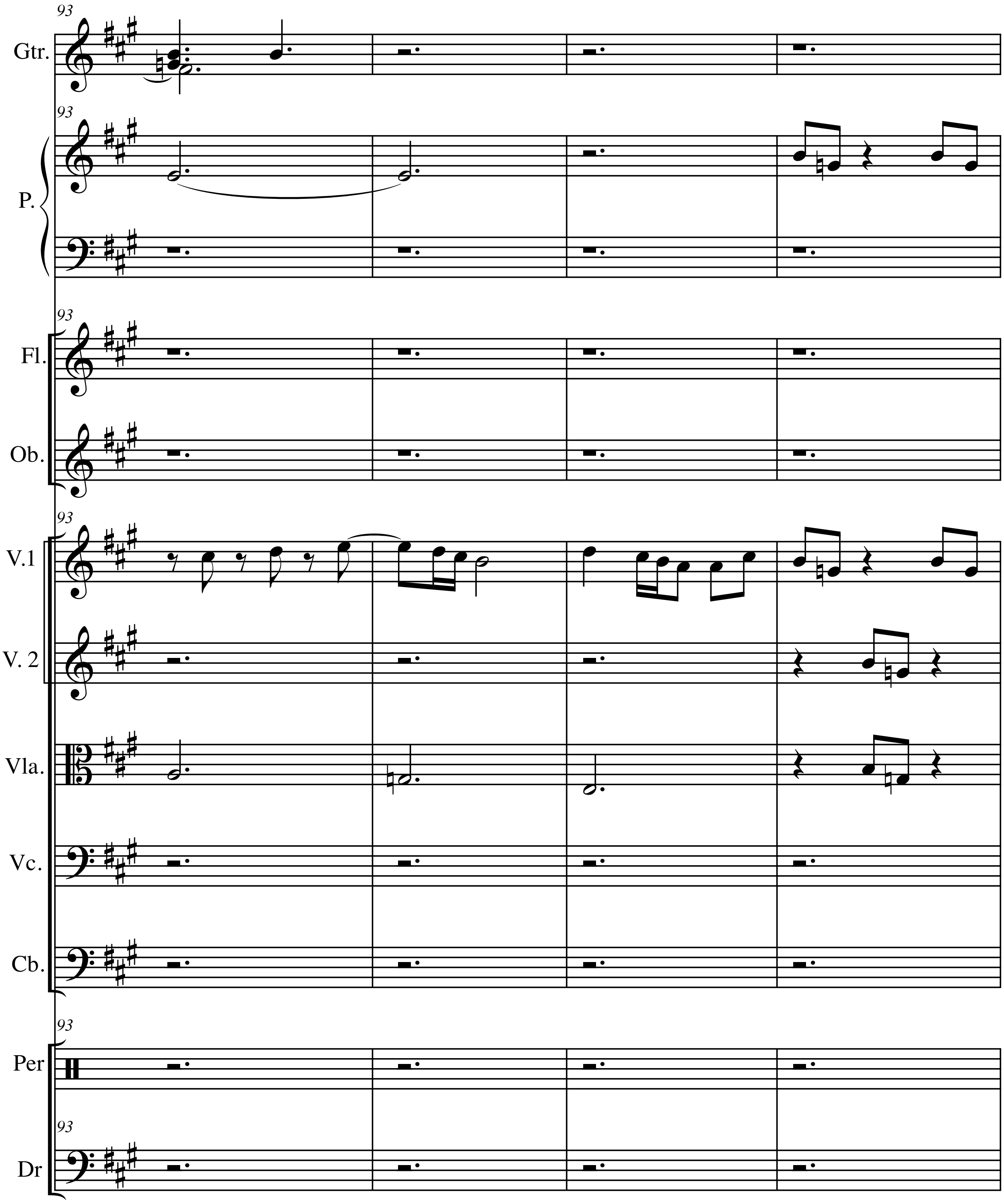

73
Gtr.
f
P.
Fl.
Ob.
arco
V.1
mp
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

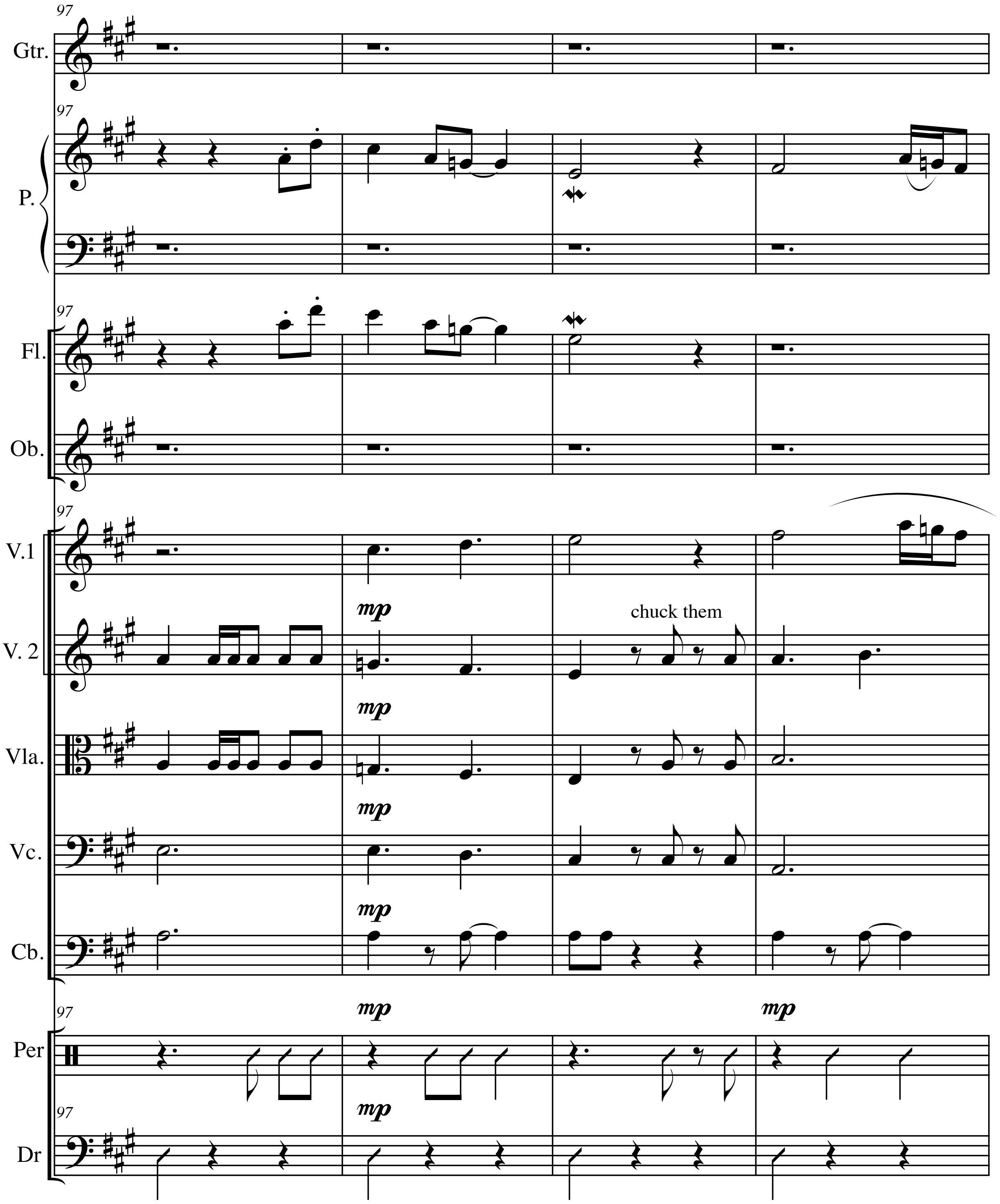

77
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

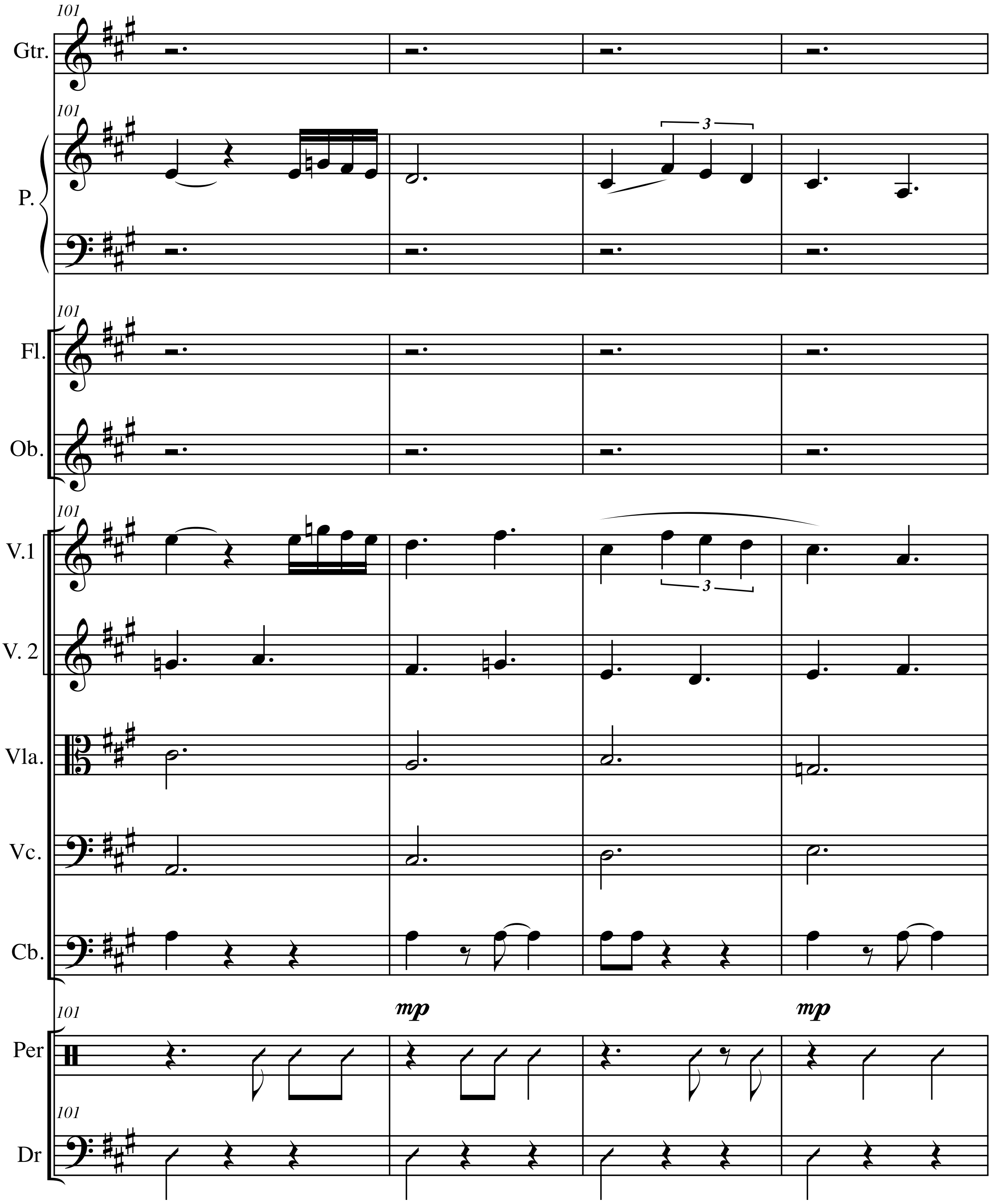

81
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
mf

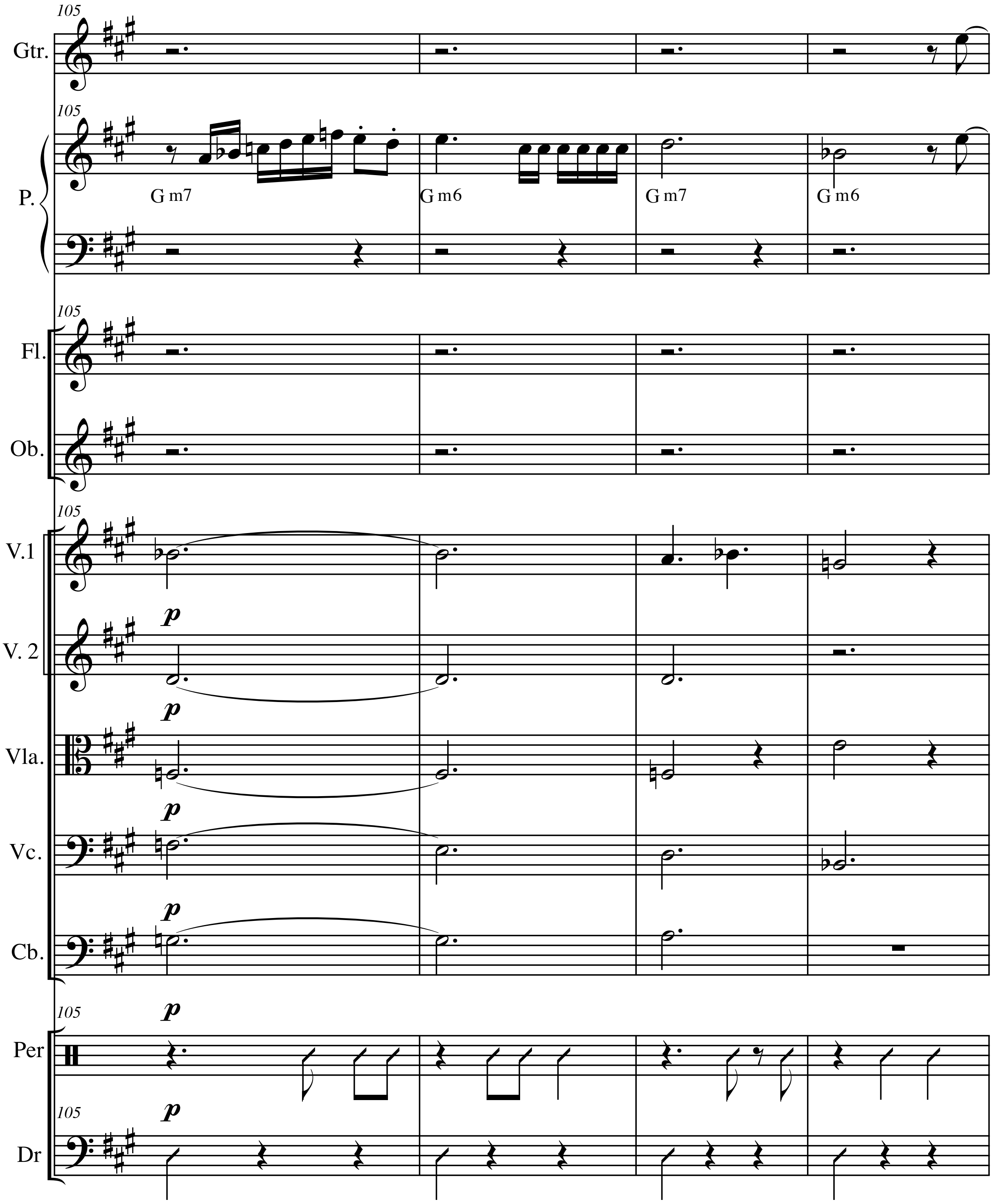

85
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

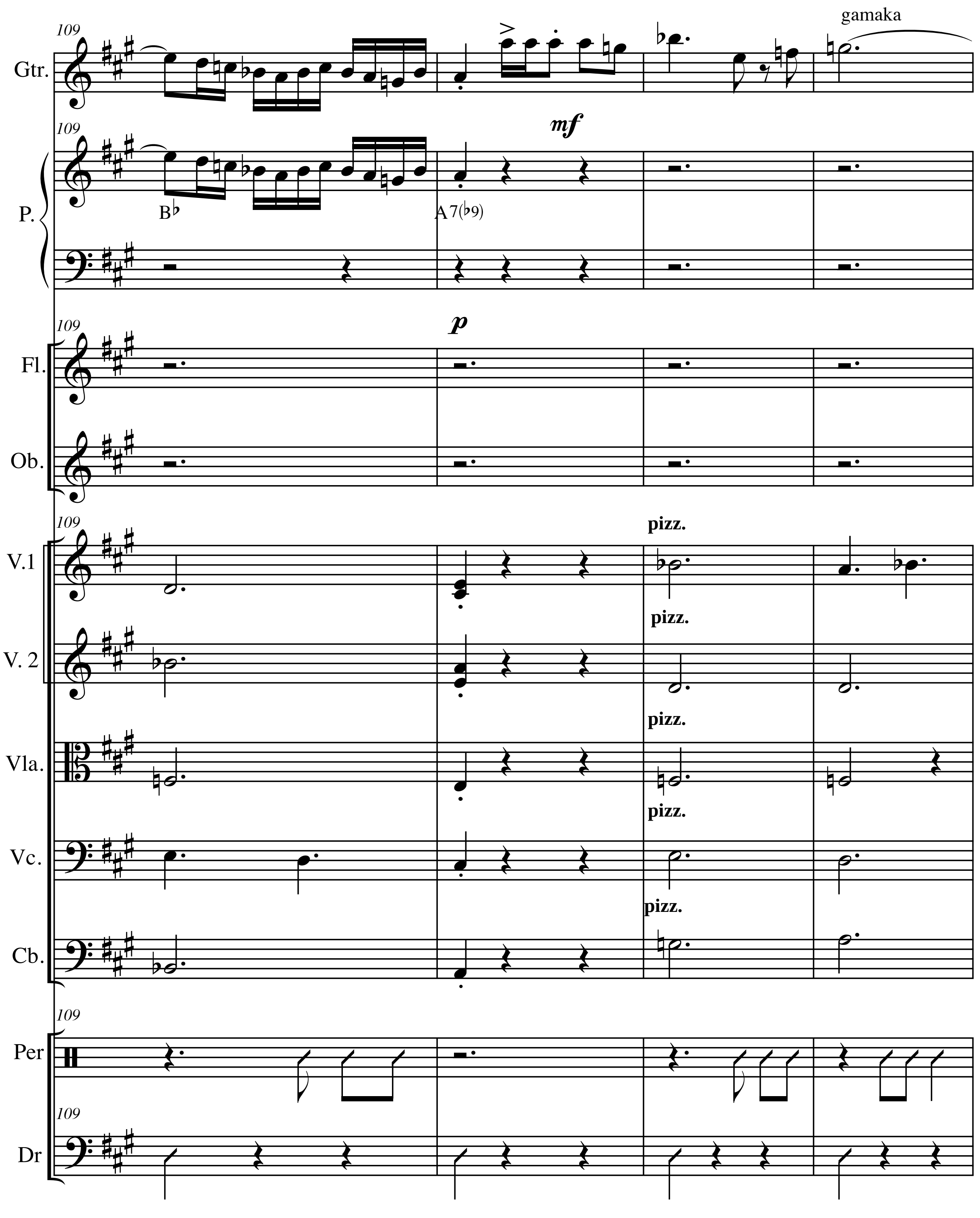

89
2
1
P6
P6
Gtr.
p
p
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

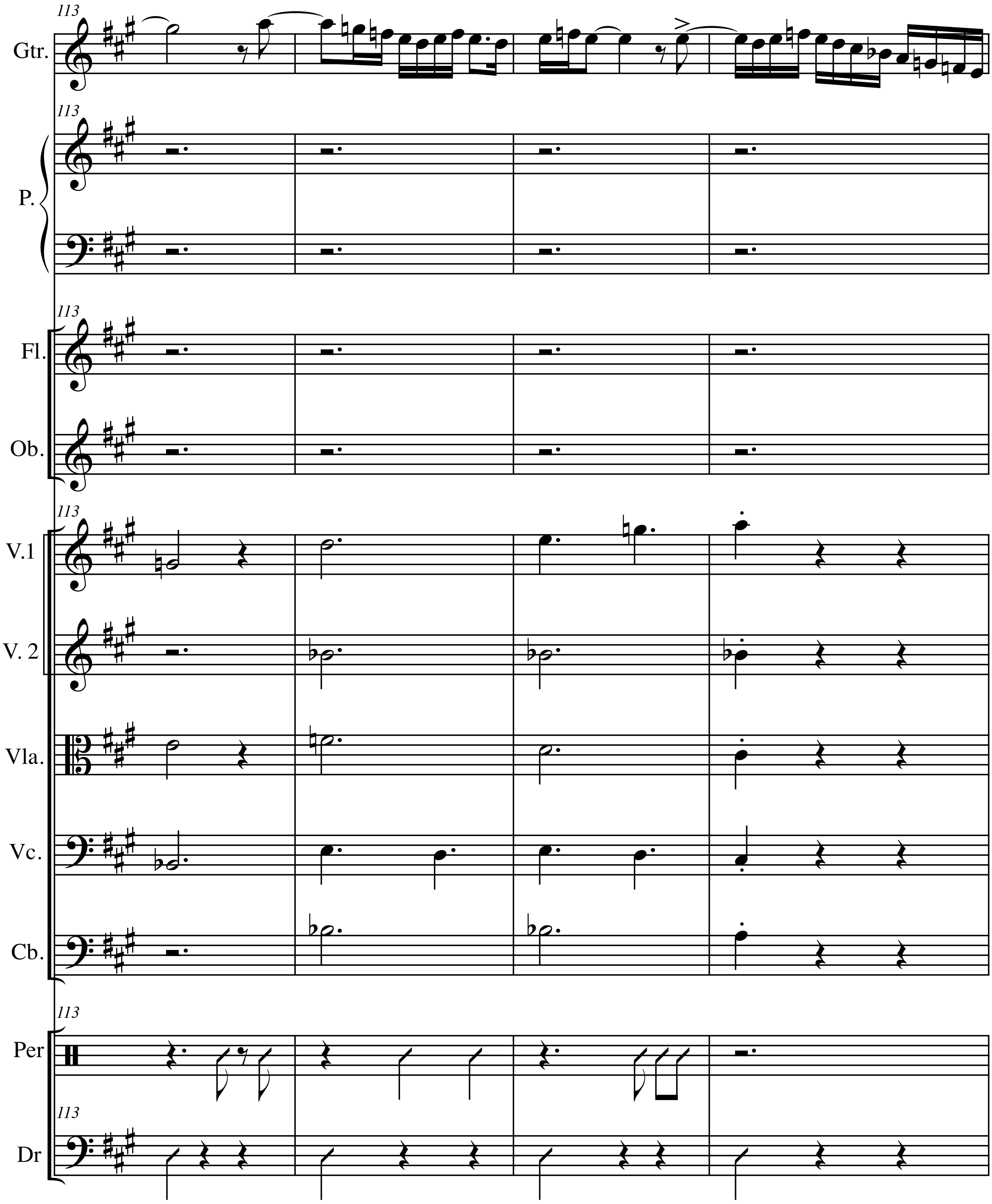

93
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

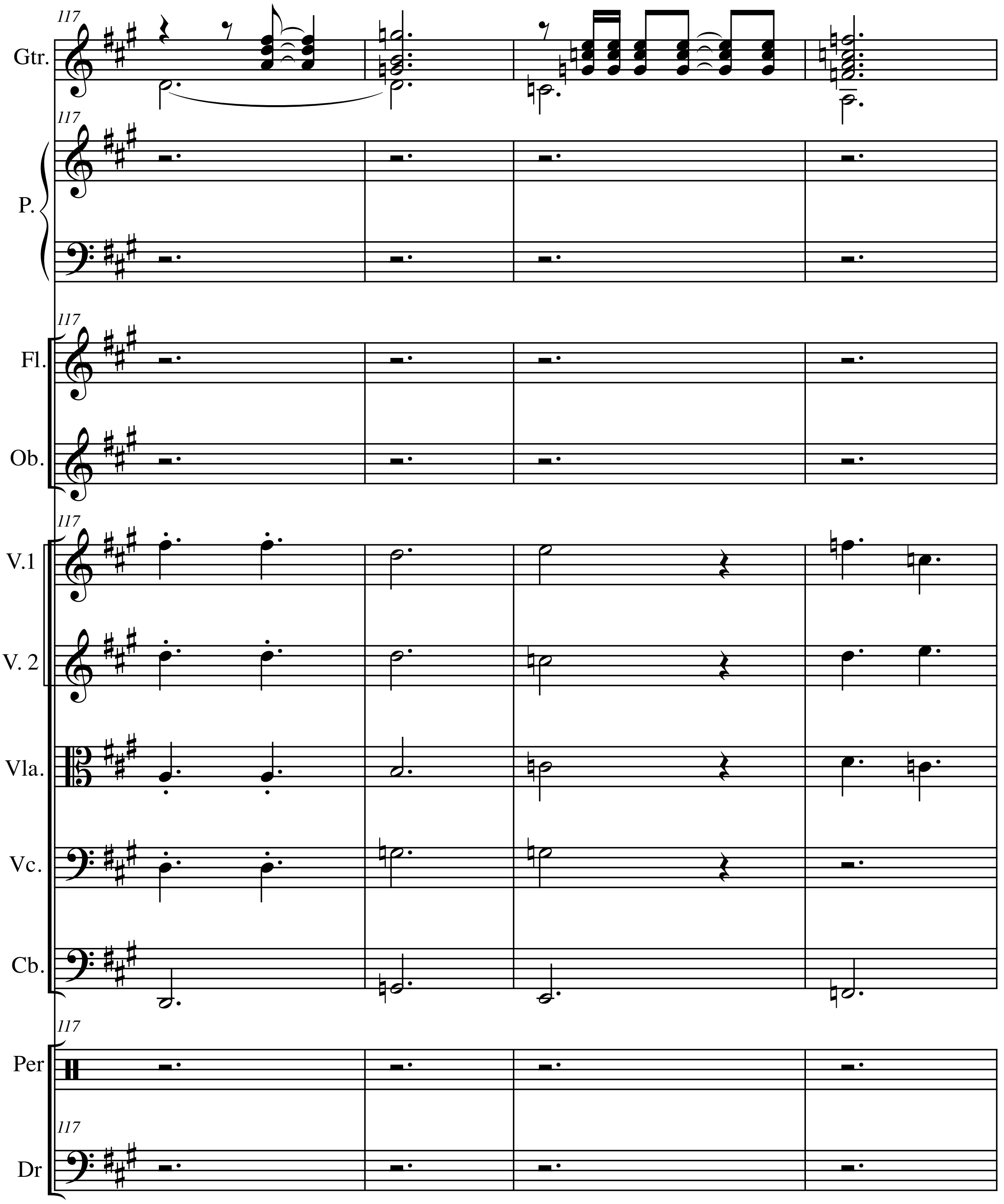

97
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
mp
chuck them

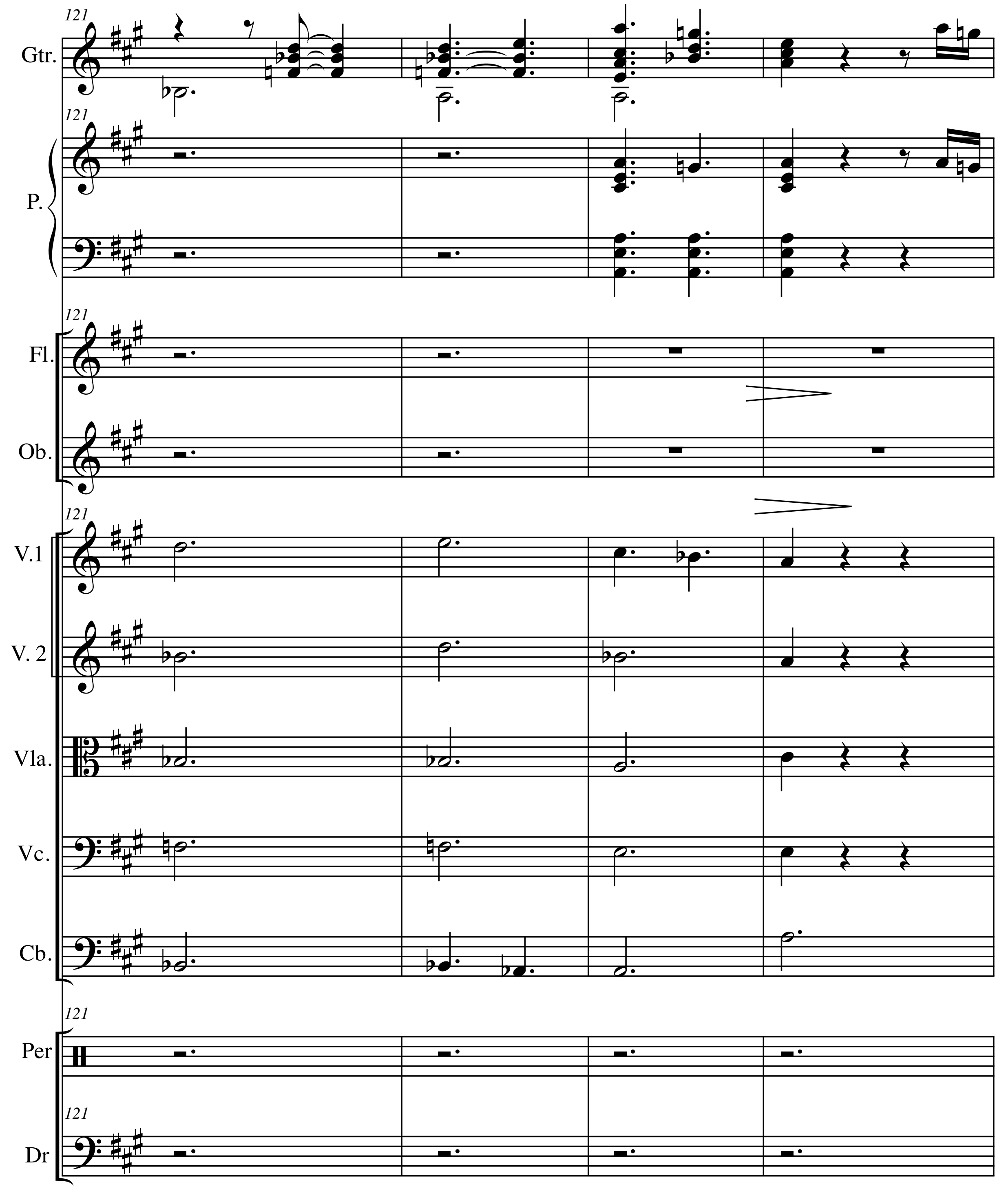

101
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
3
mp
mp

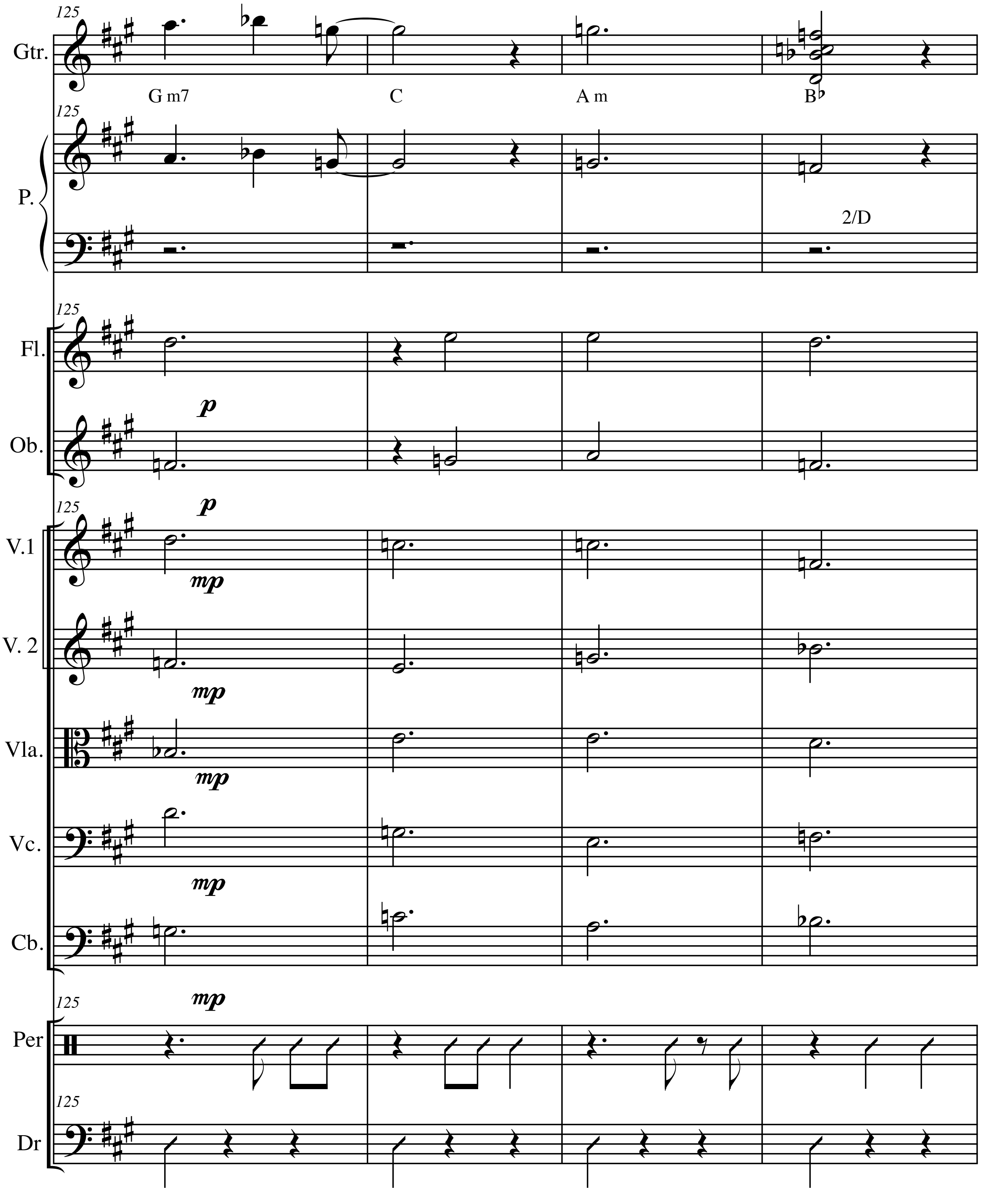

105
Gtr.
P.
G m7
G m6
G m7
G m6
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
p


109
gamaka
Gtr.
mf
P.
B♭
A7(♭9)
p
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
pizz.
Per
Dr

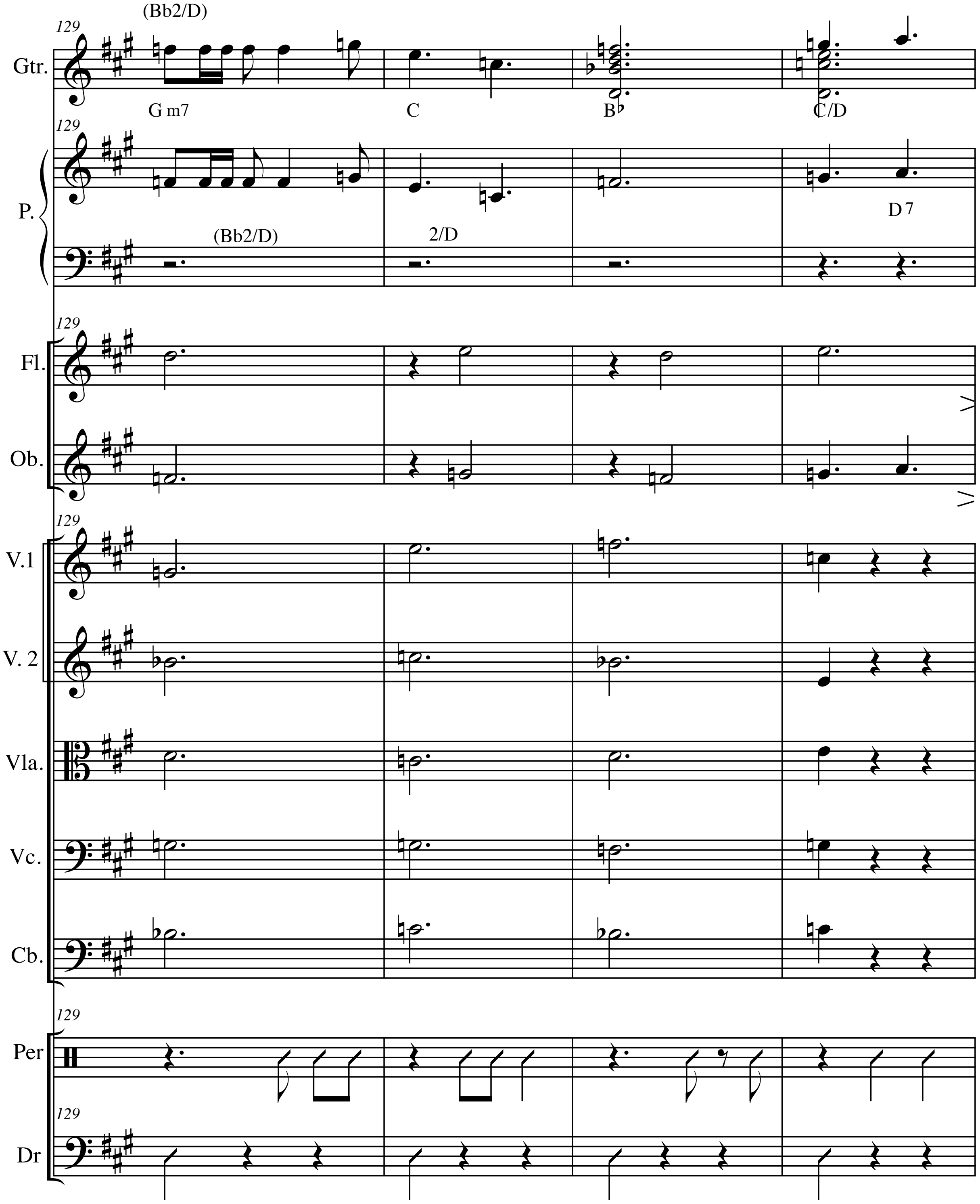

113
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr


117
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

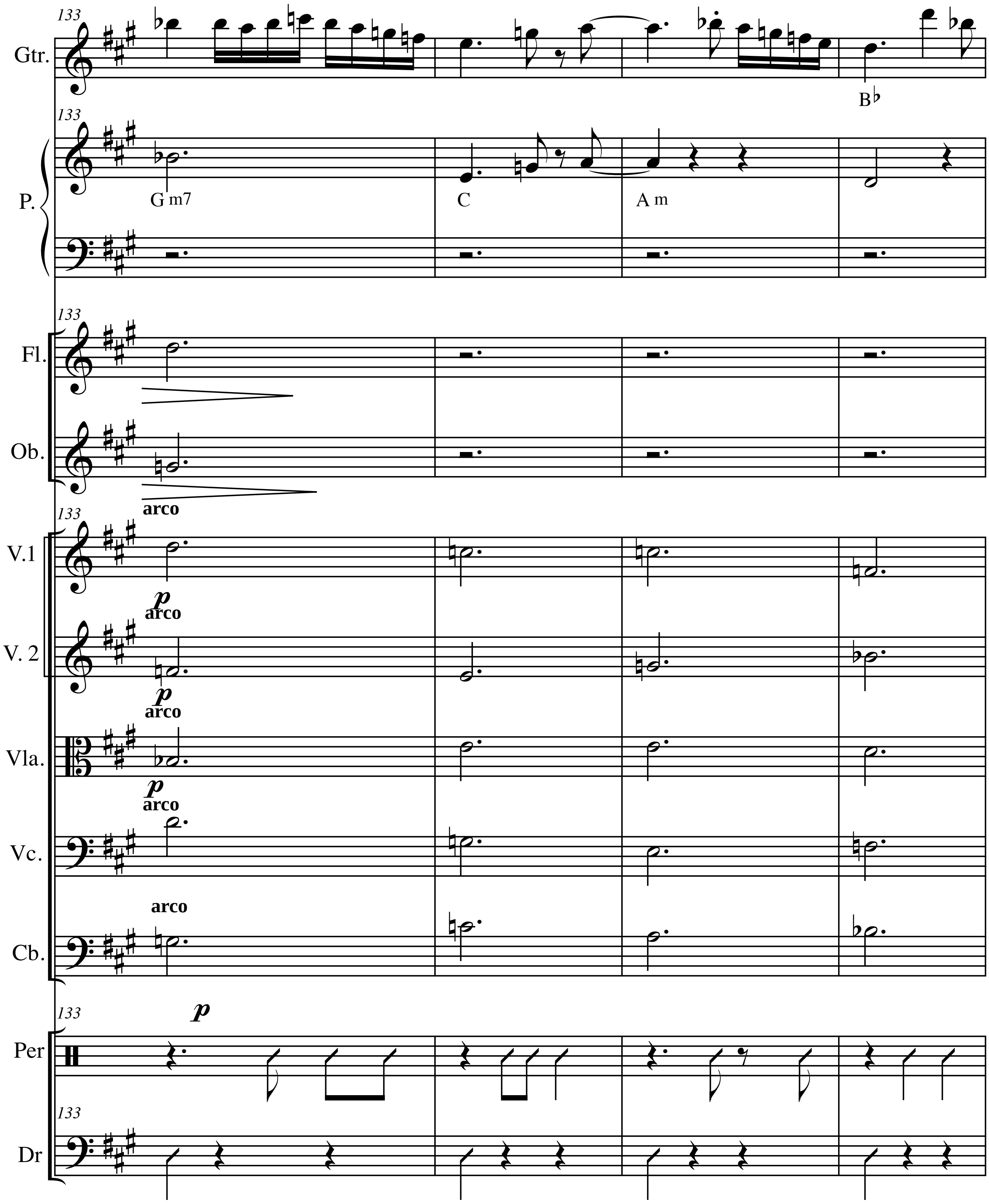

121
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr


125
Gtr.
G m7
C
A m
B♭
P.
2/D
Fl.
Ob.
p
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
mp
Per
Dr

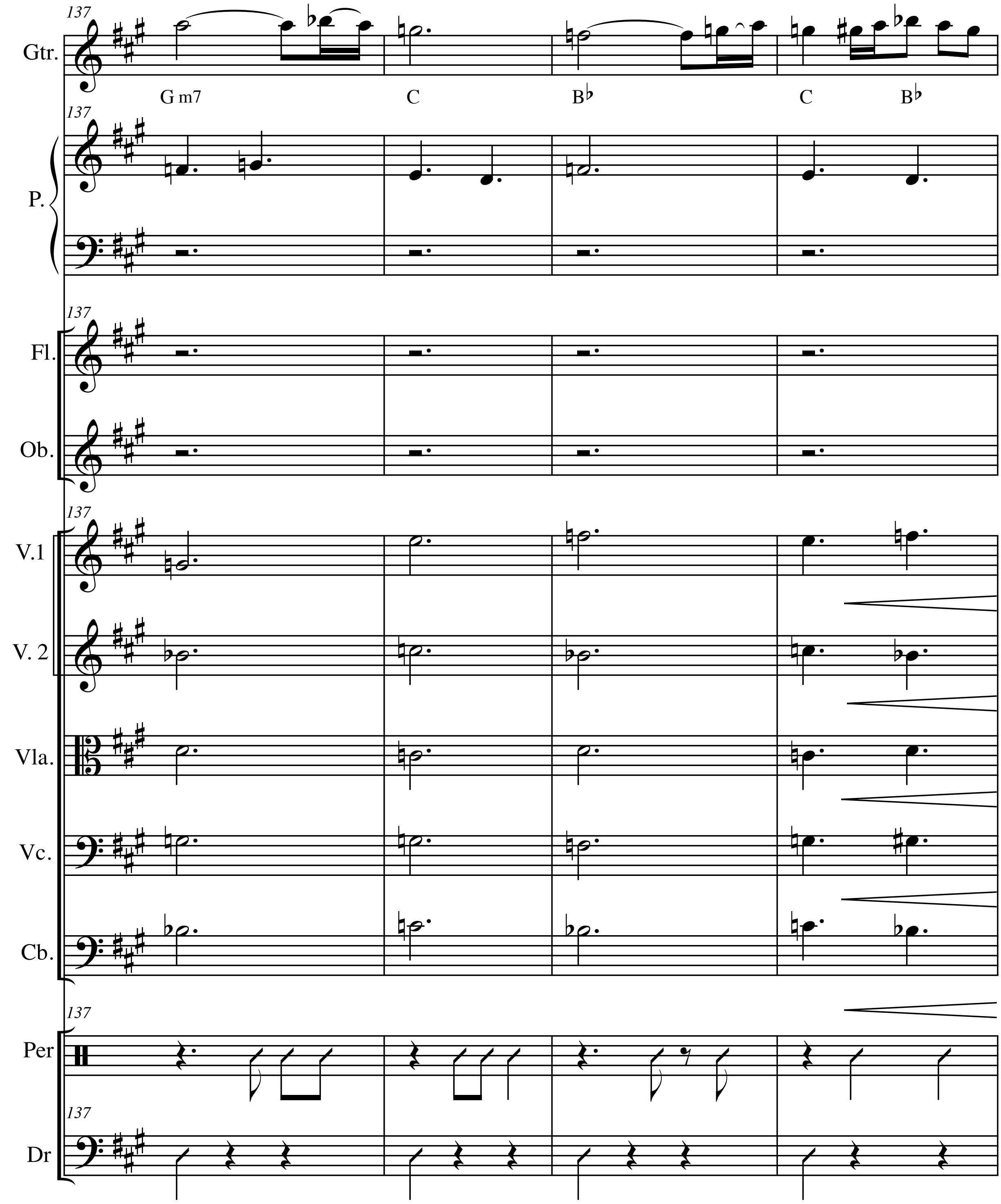
SILK ROAD M.1

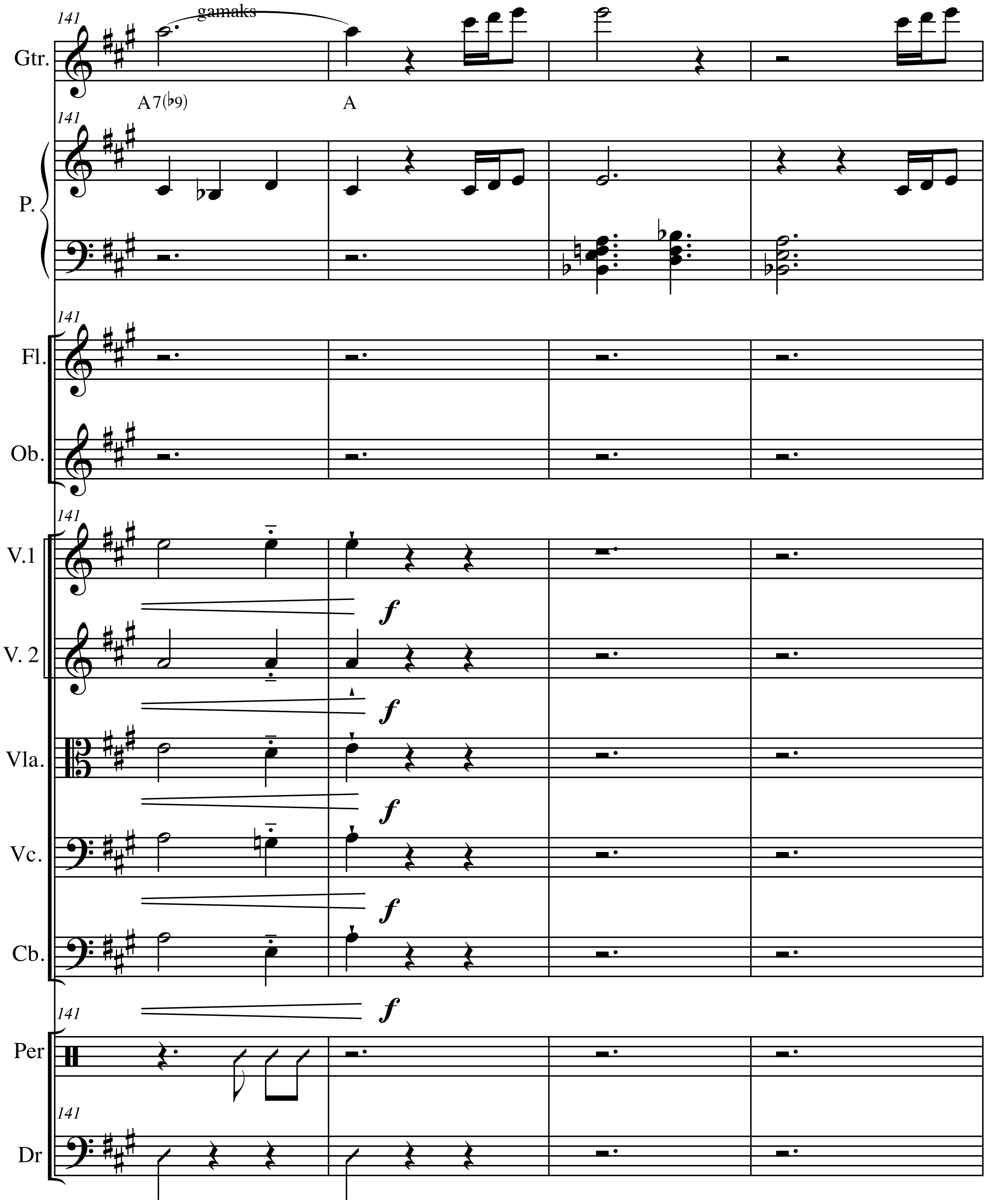

(Bb2/D)
129
Gtr.
G m7
C
B♭
C/D
129
P.
(Bb2/D)
2/D
D 7
129
Fl.
Ob.
129
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
129
Per
129
Dr

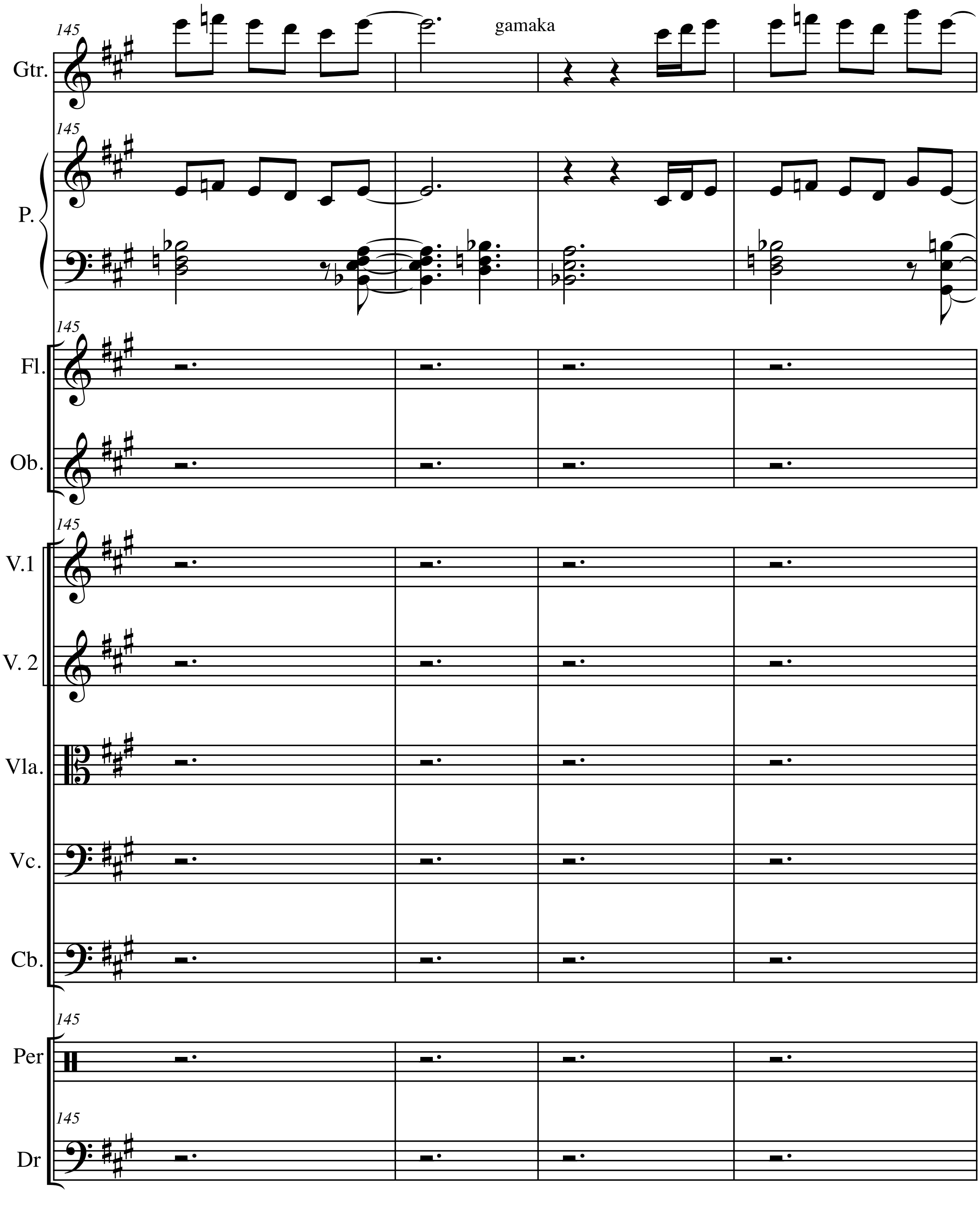
SILK ROAD M.1

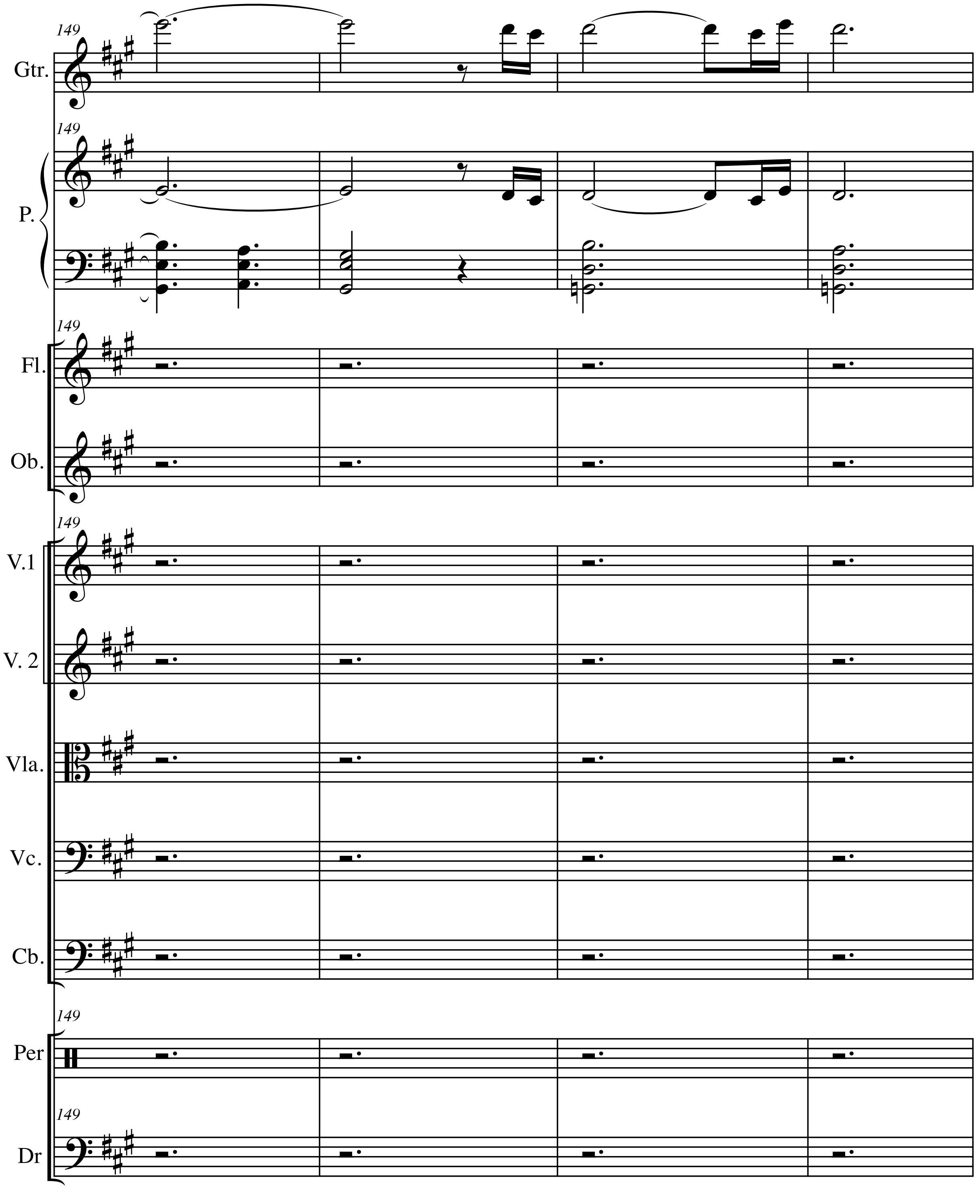

133
Gtr.
B♭
P.
G m7
C
A m
Fl.
Ob.
arco
V.1
p
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

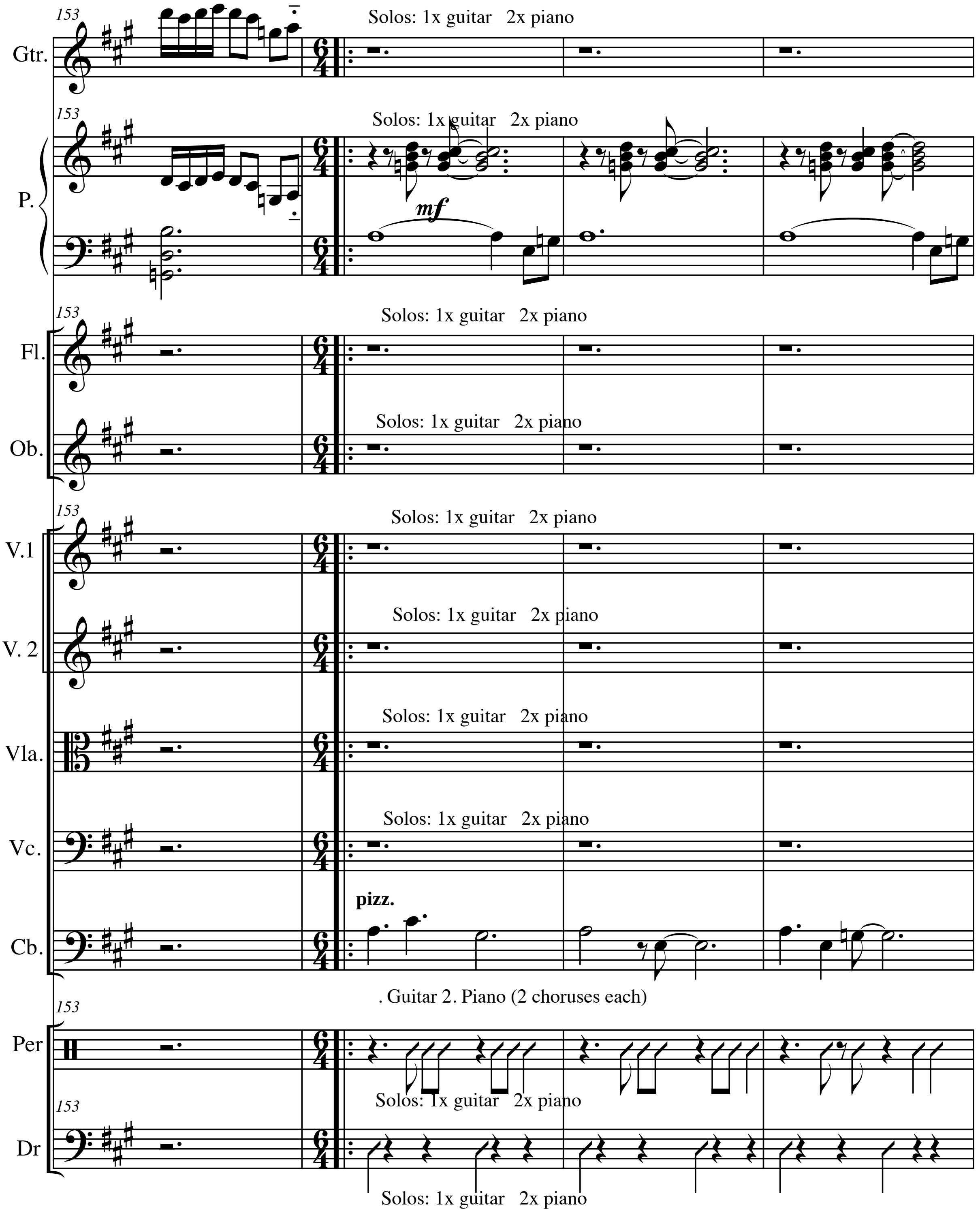
SILK ROAD M.1

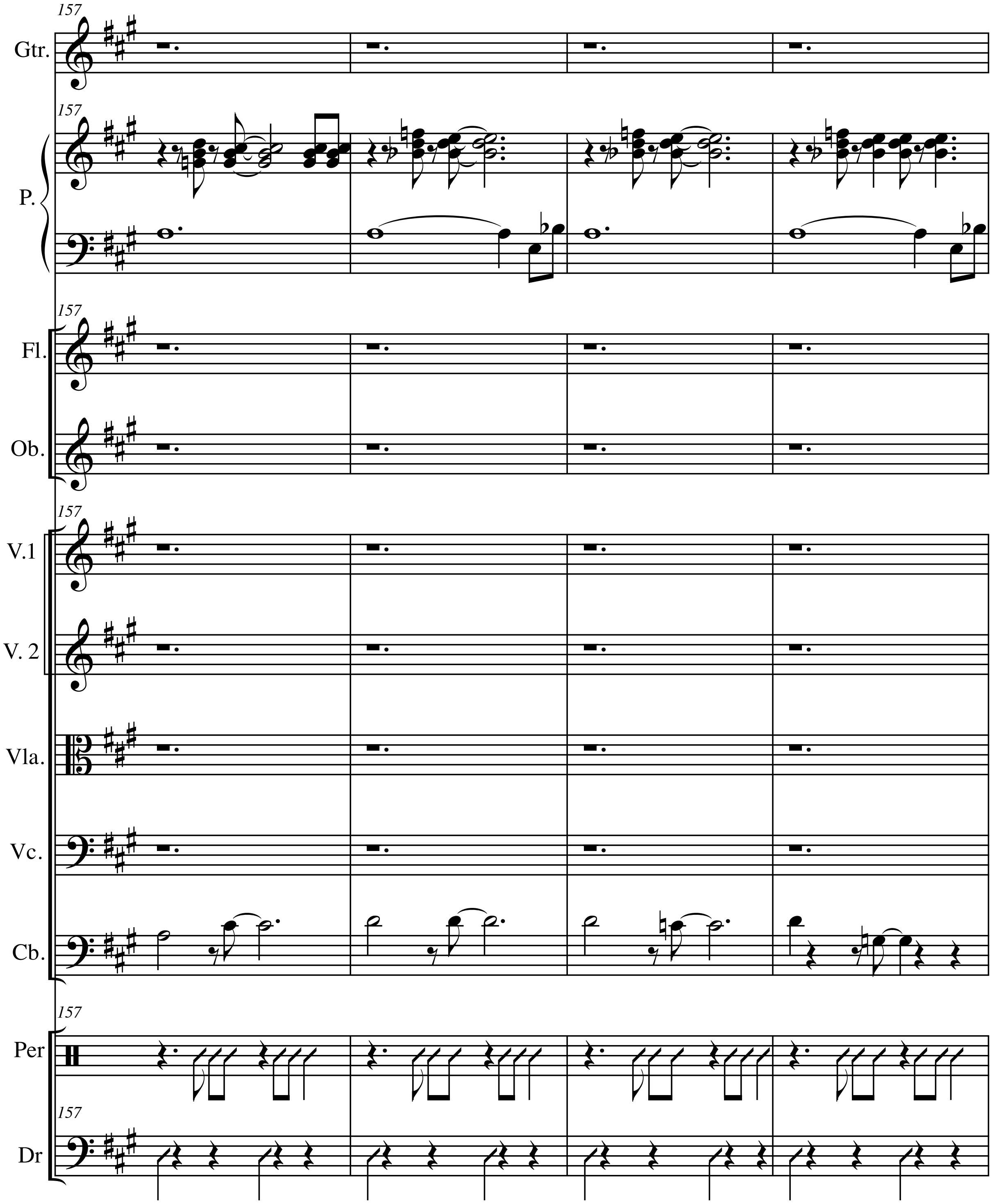

137
Gtr.
G m7
C
B♭
C
B♭
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr


141
gamaks
Gtr.
A7(♭9)
A
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
f

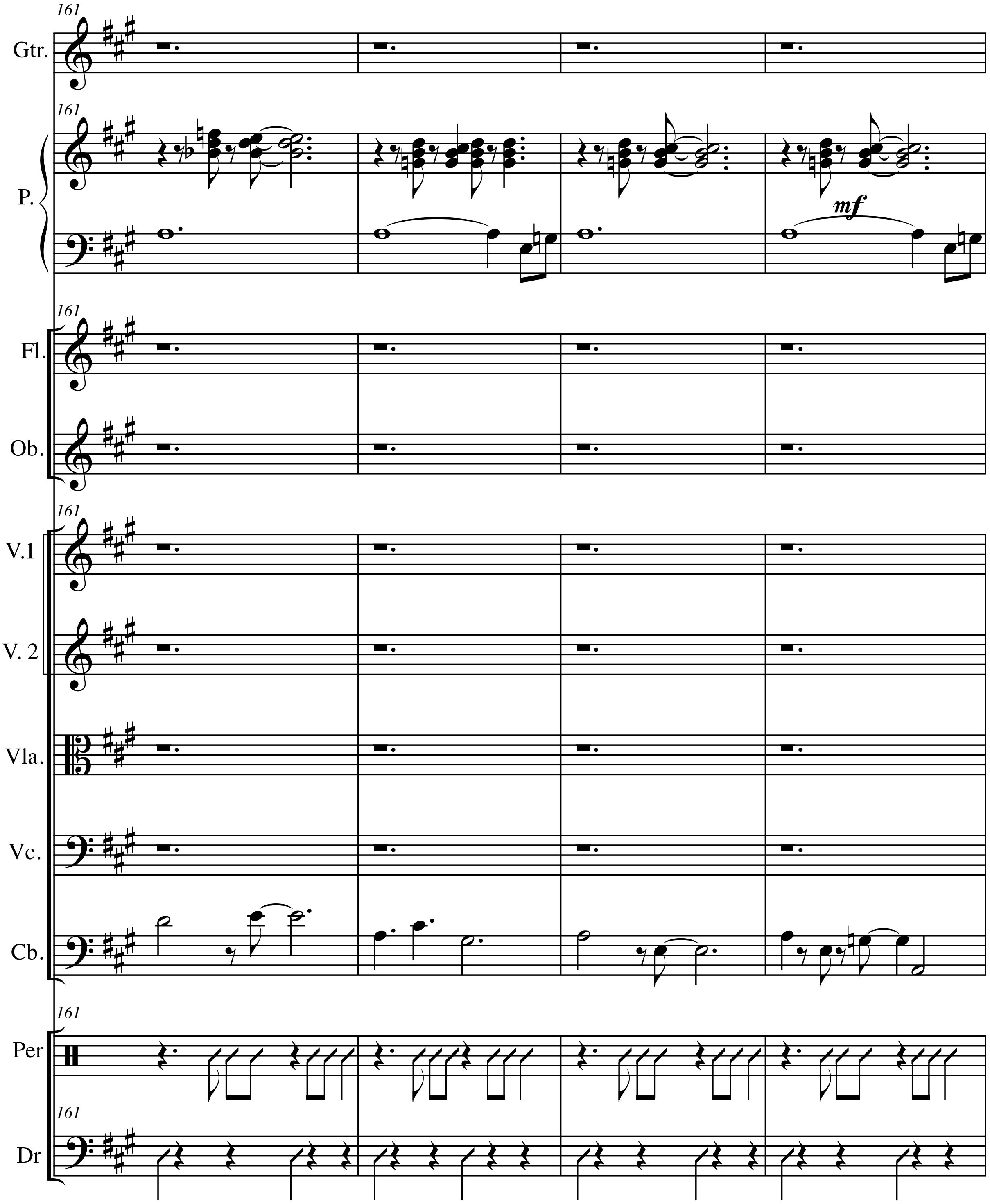

145
gamaka
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

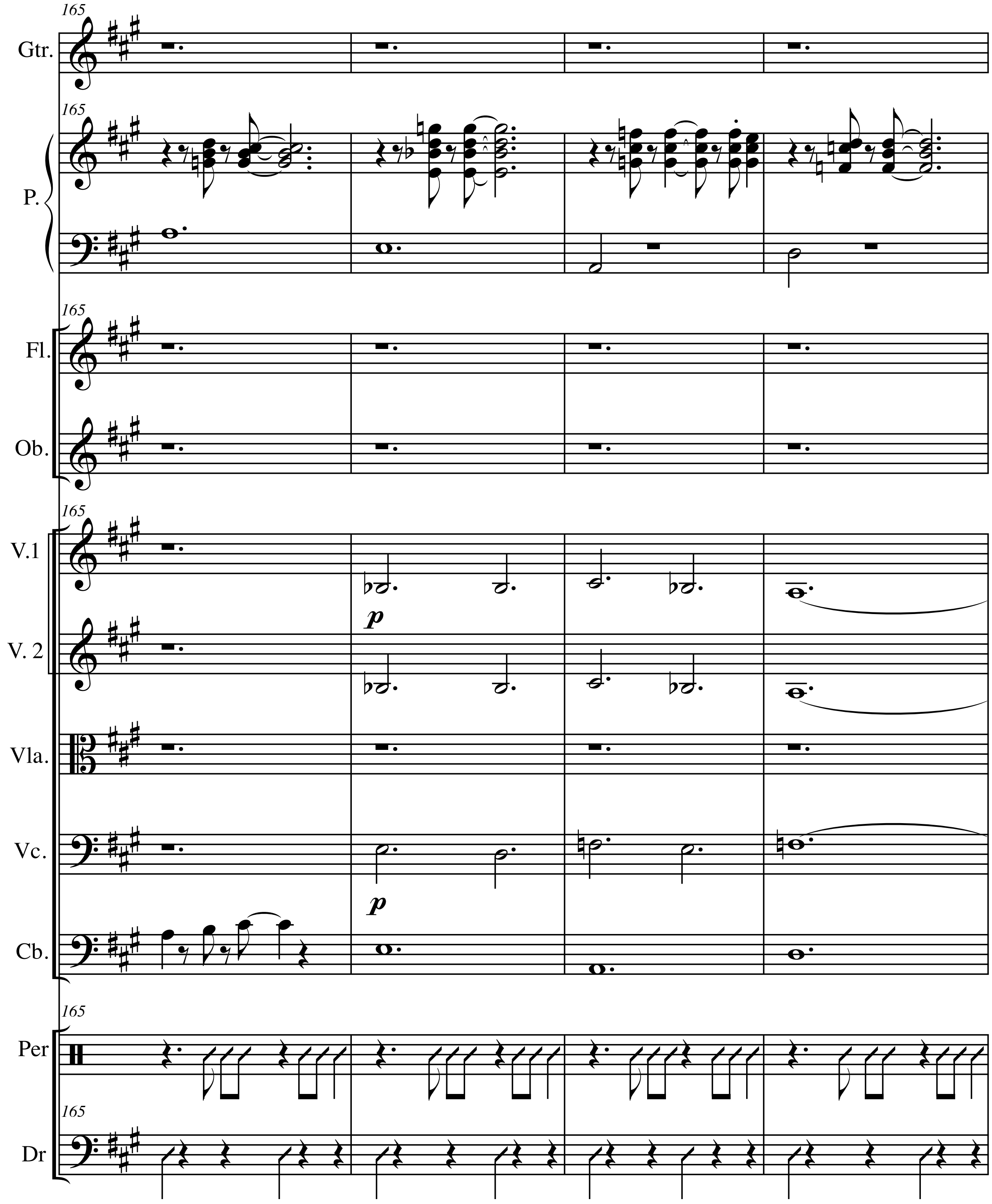

149
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr


153
Gtr.
Solos: 1x guitar 2x piano
P.
mf
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
pizz.
. Guitar 2. Piano (2 choruses each)
Per
Dr

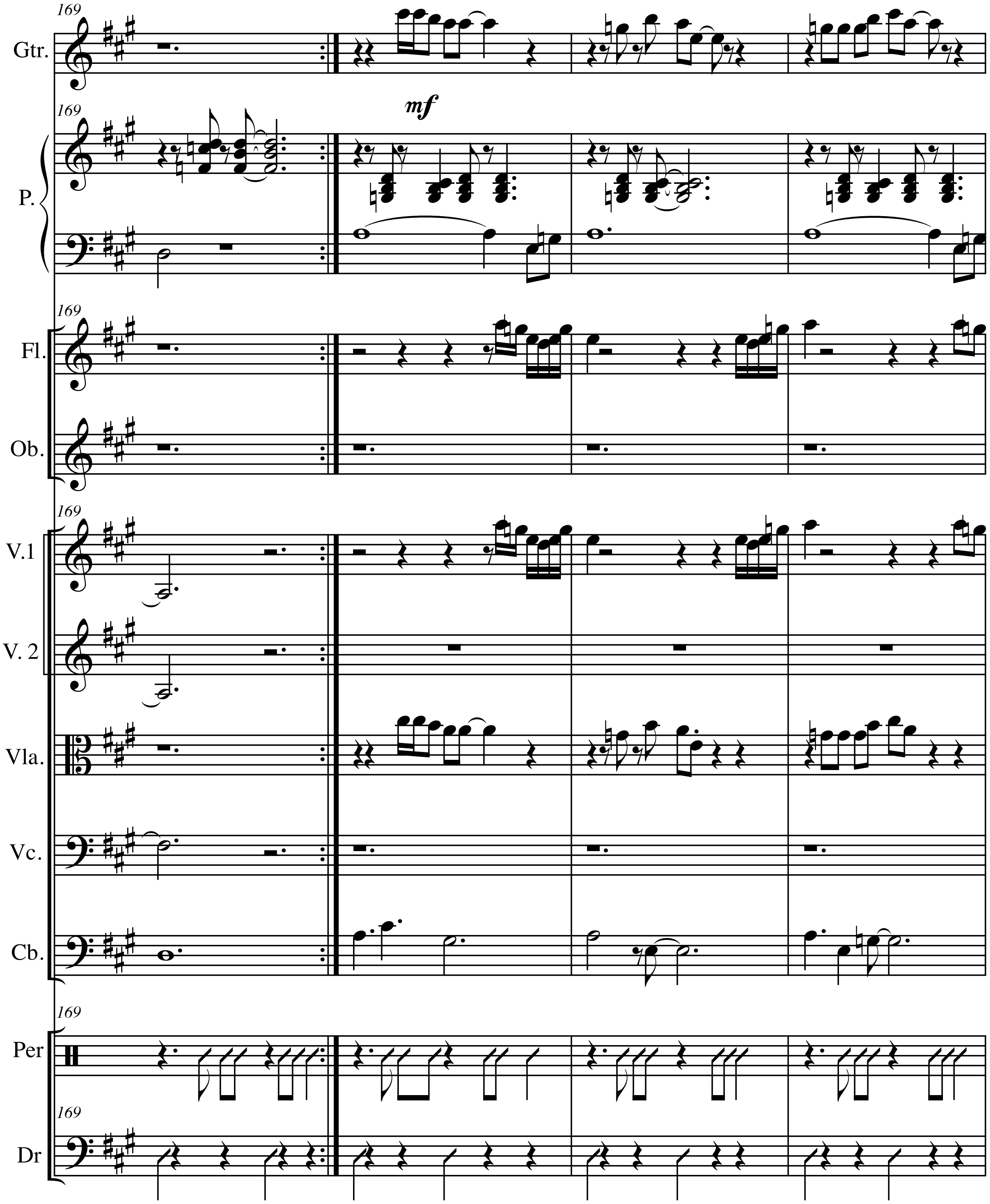

157
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

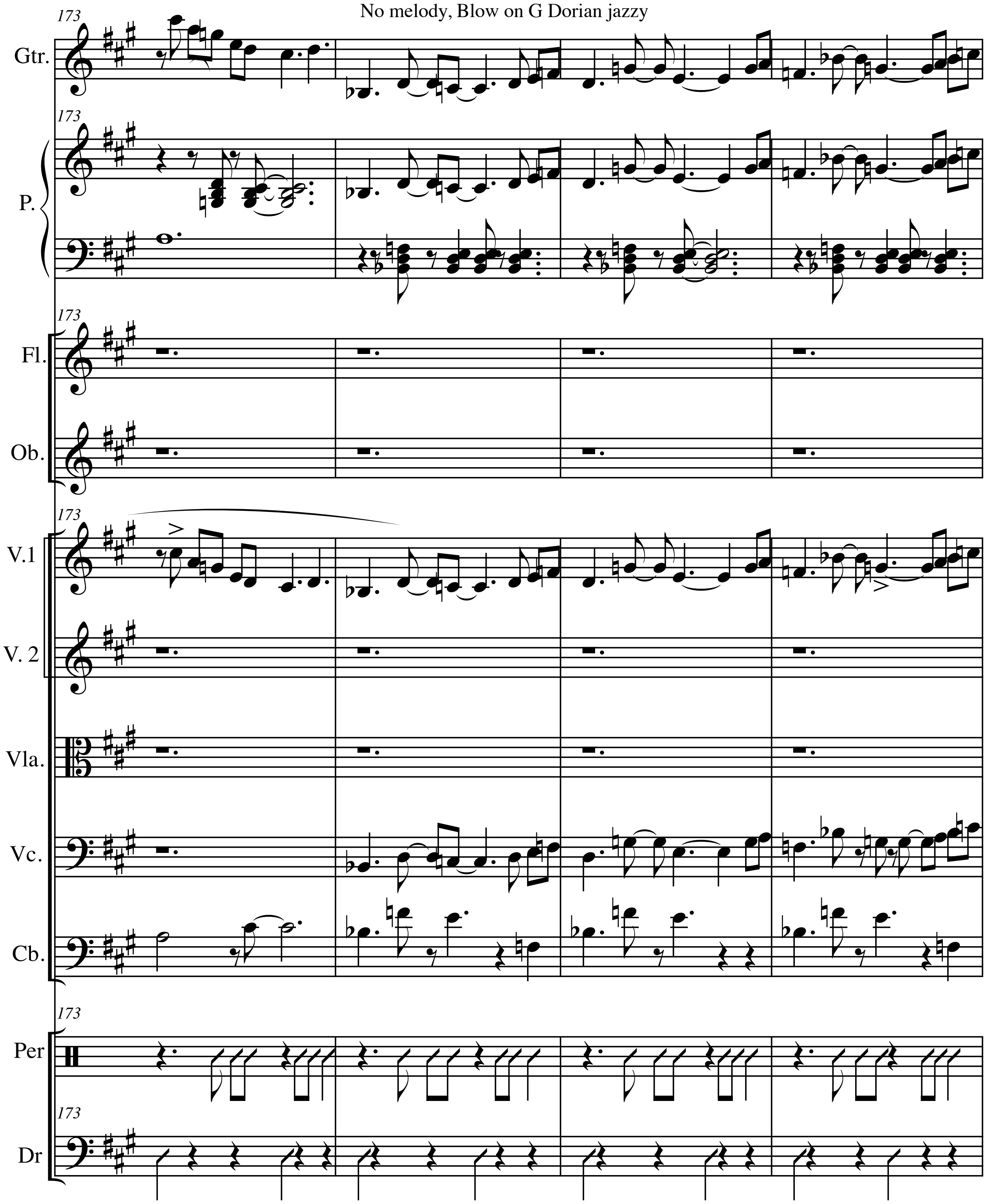
SILK ROAD M.1

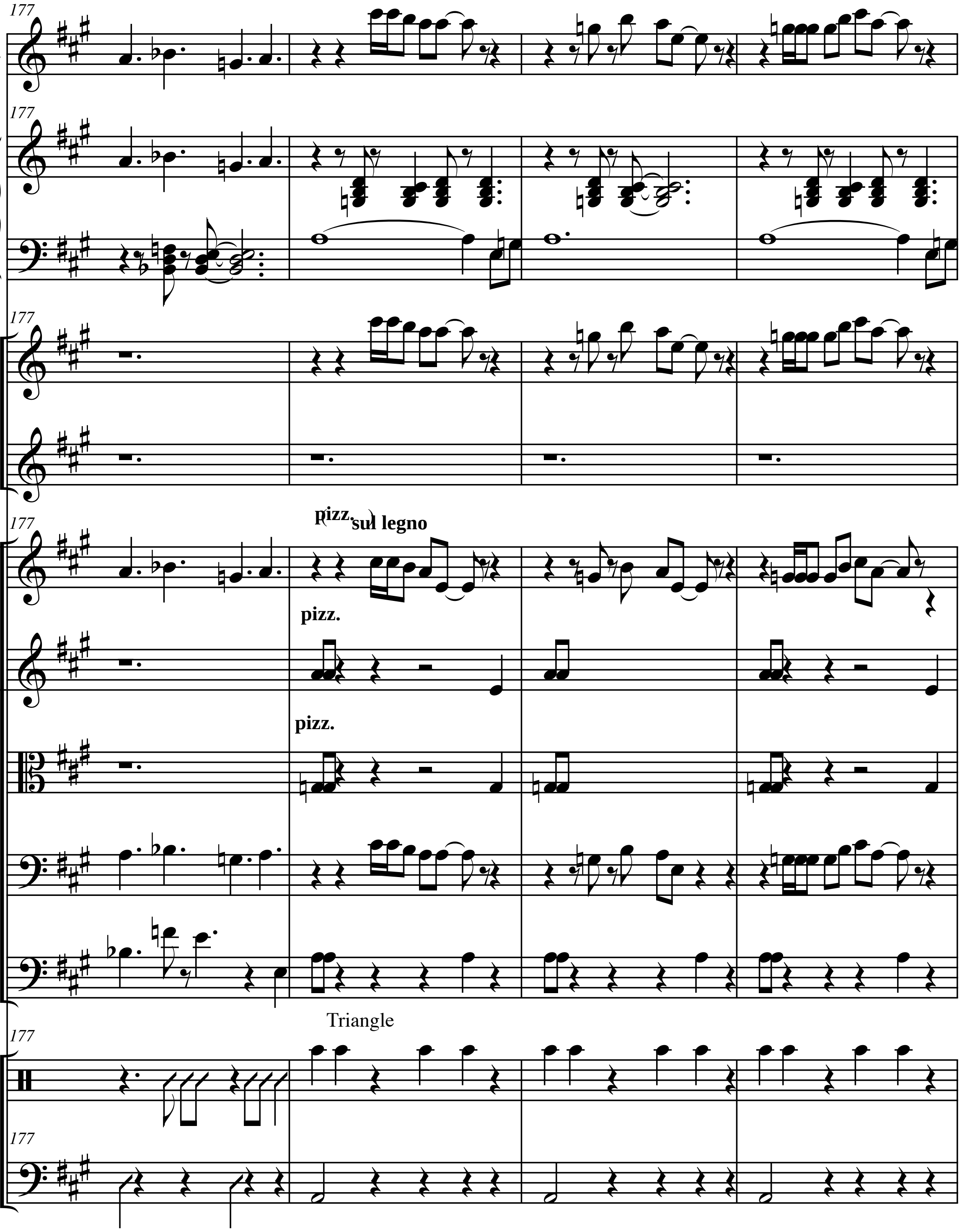

161
Gtr.
P.
mf
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

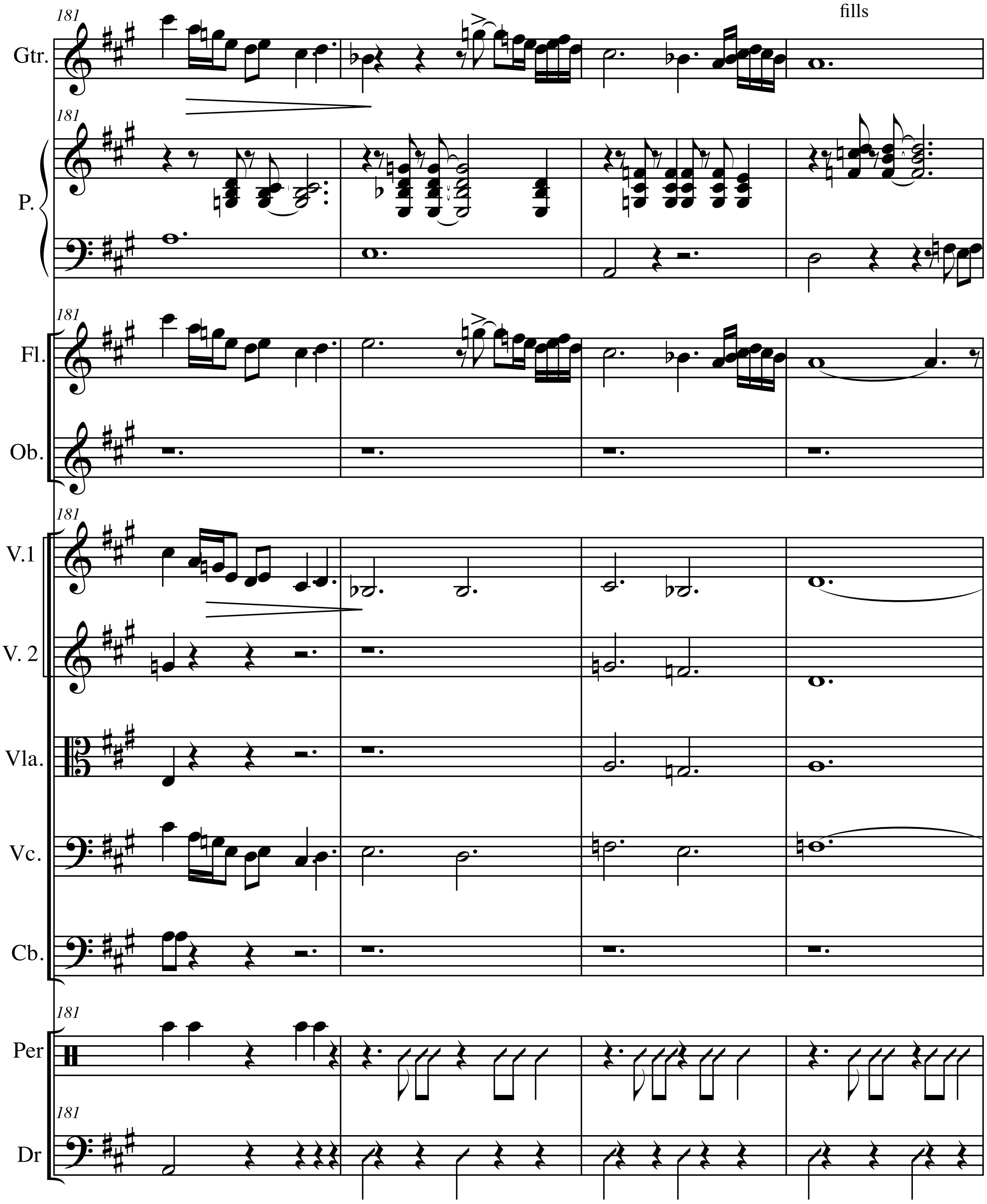

165
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
p
p

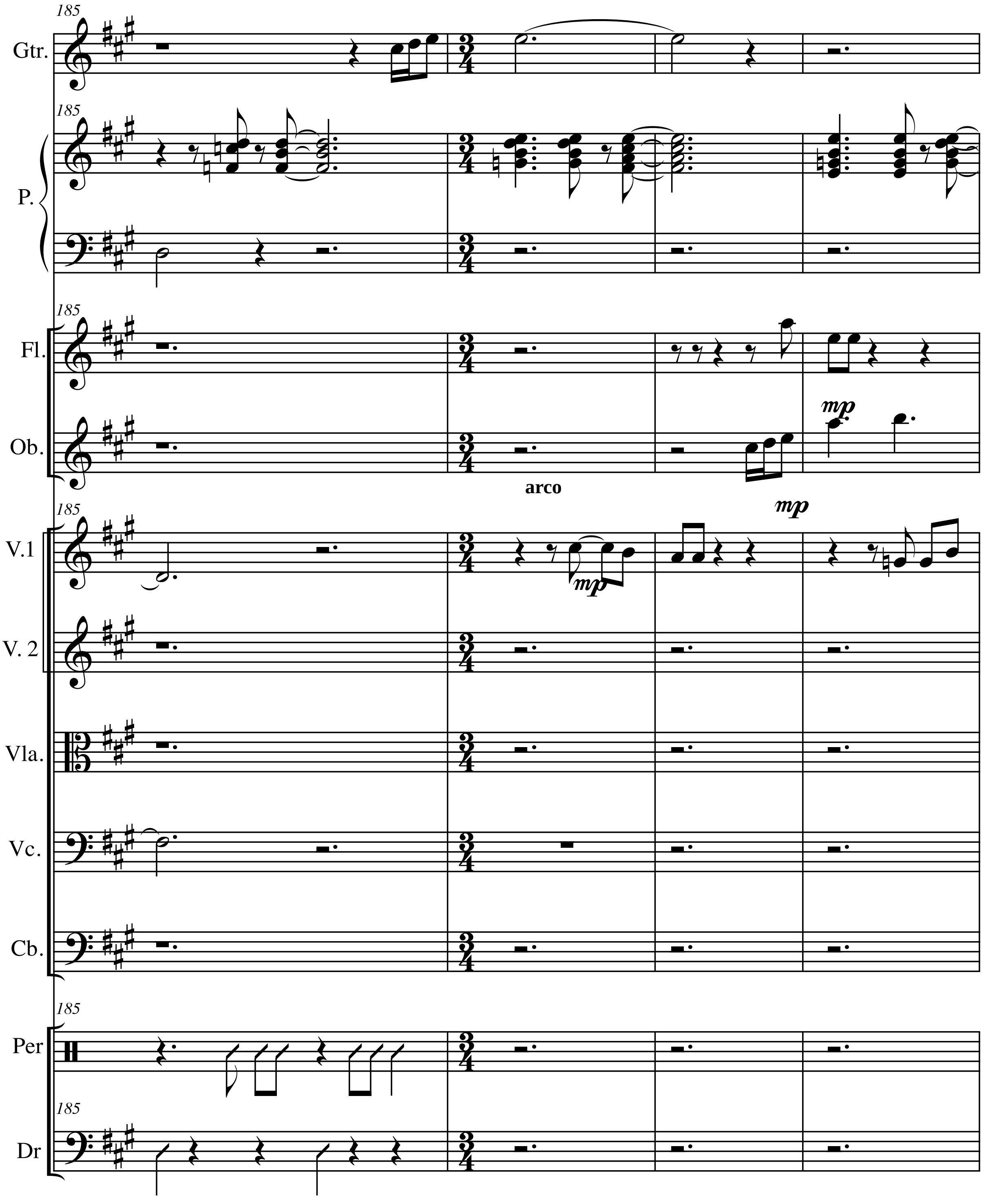
SILK ROAD M.1

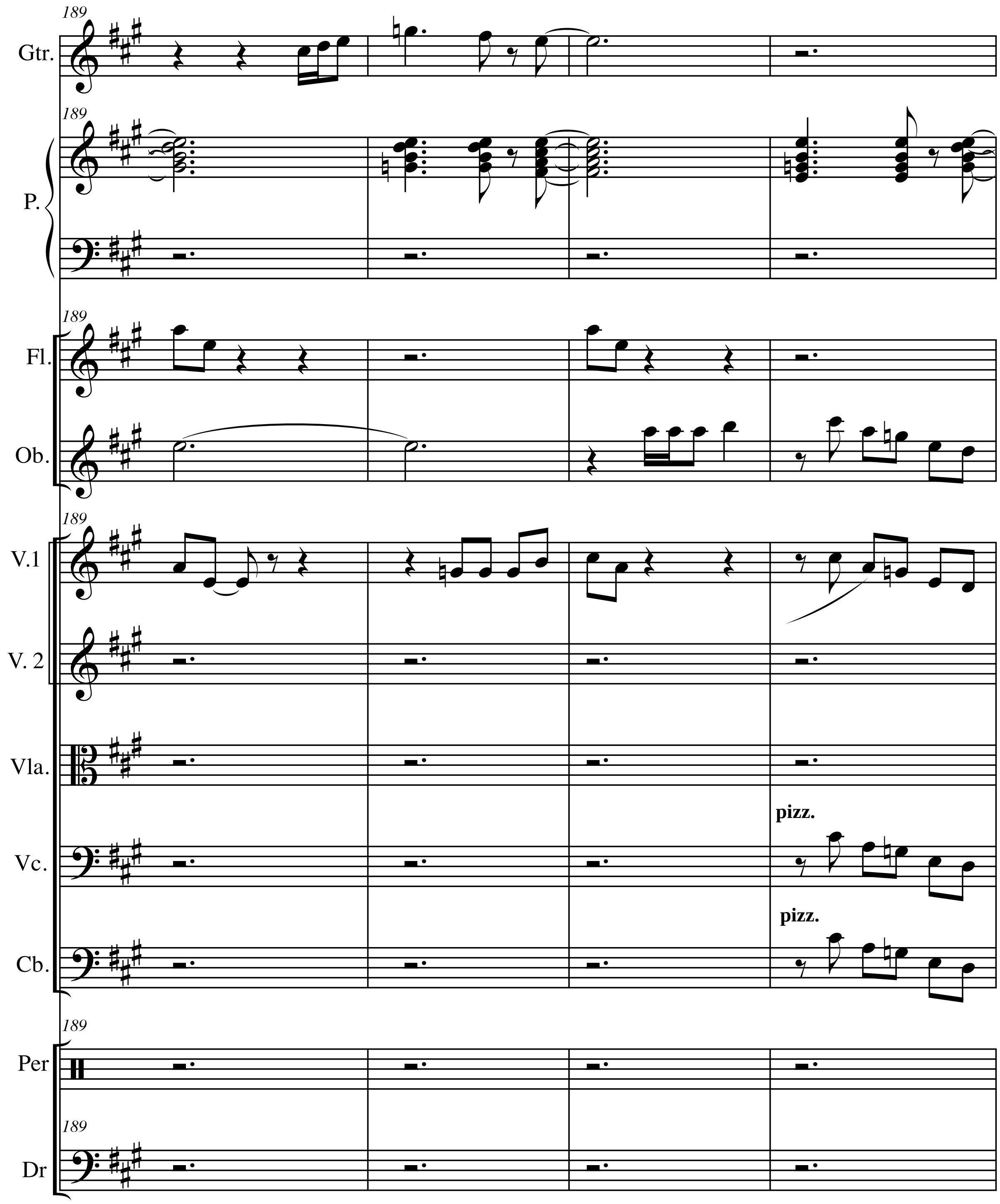

169
Gtr.
P.
mf
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

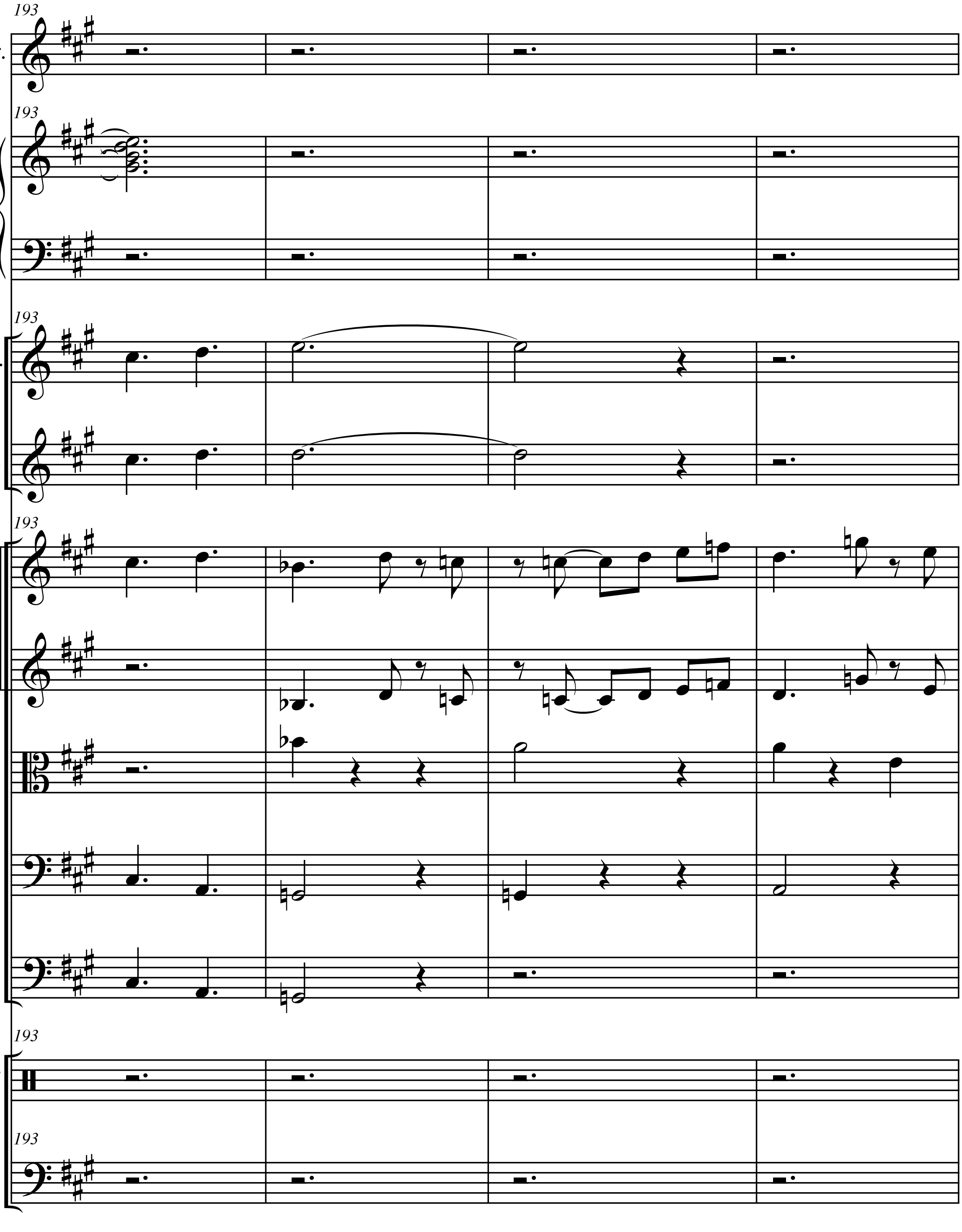

No melody, Blow on G Dorian jazzy
173
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

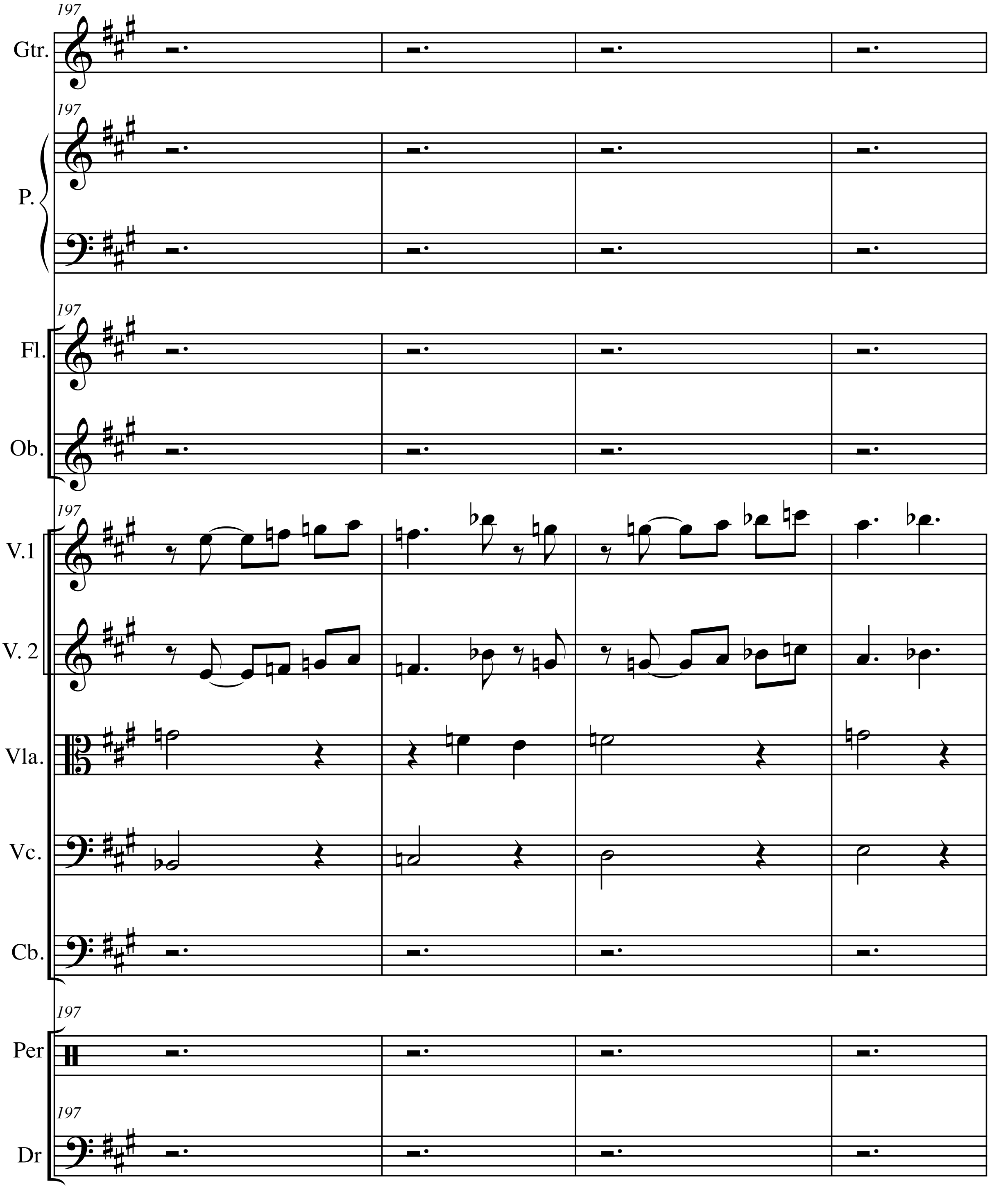

177
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
pizz.
(pizz.) sul legno
pizz.
pizz.
Triangle

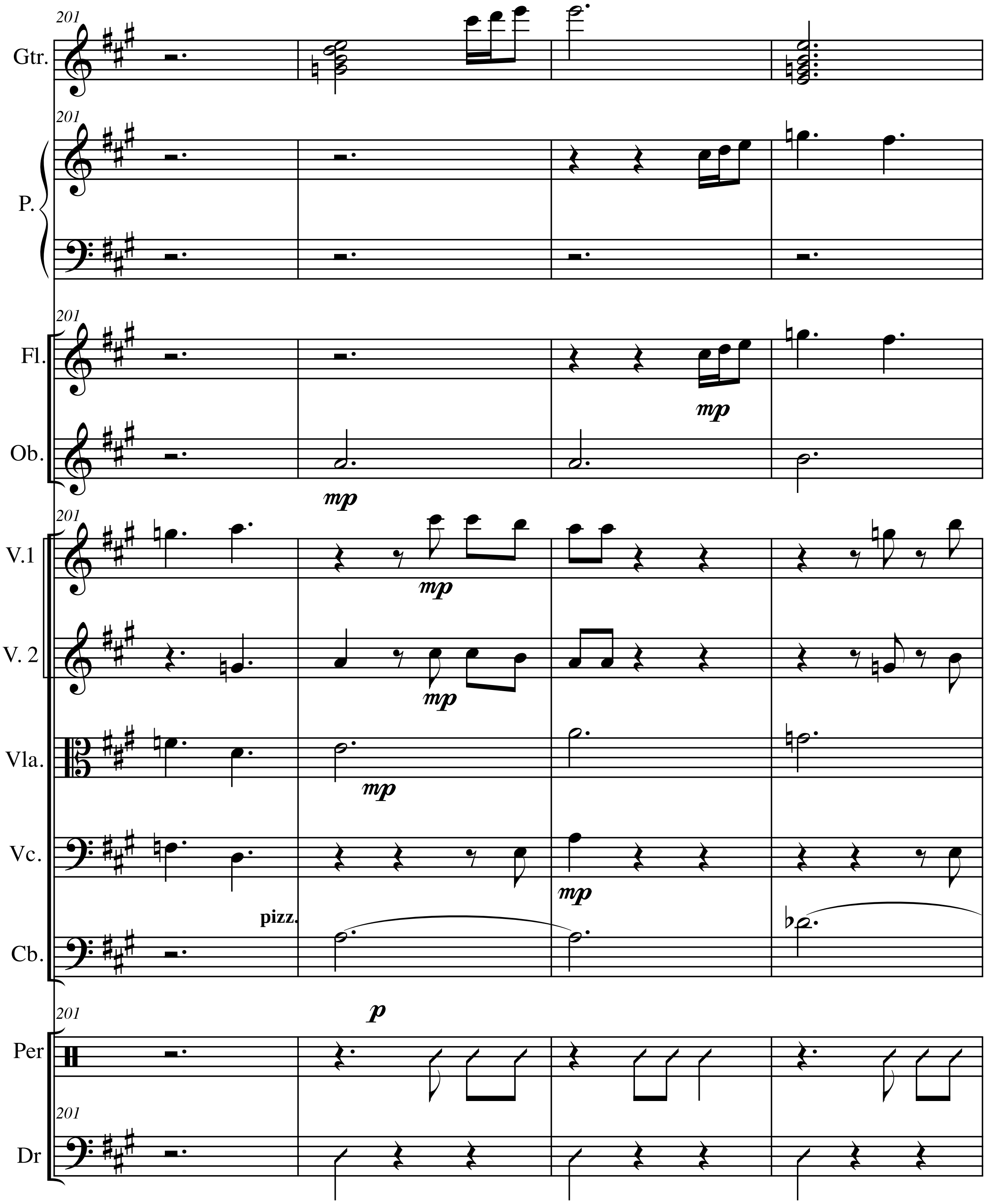

181
fills
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

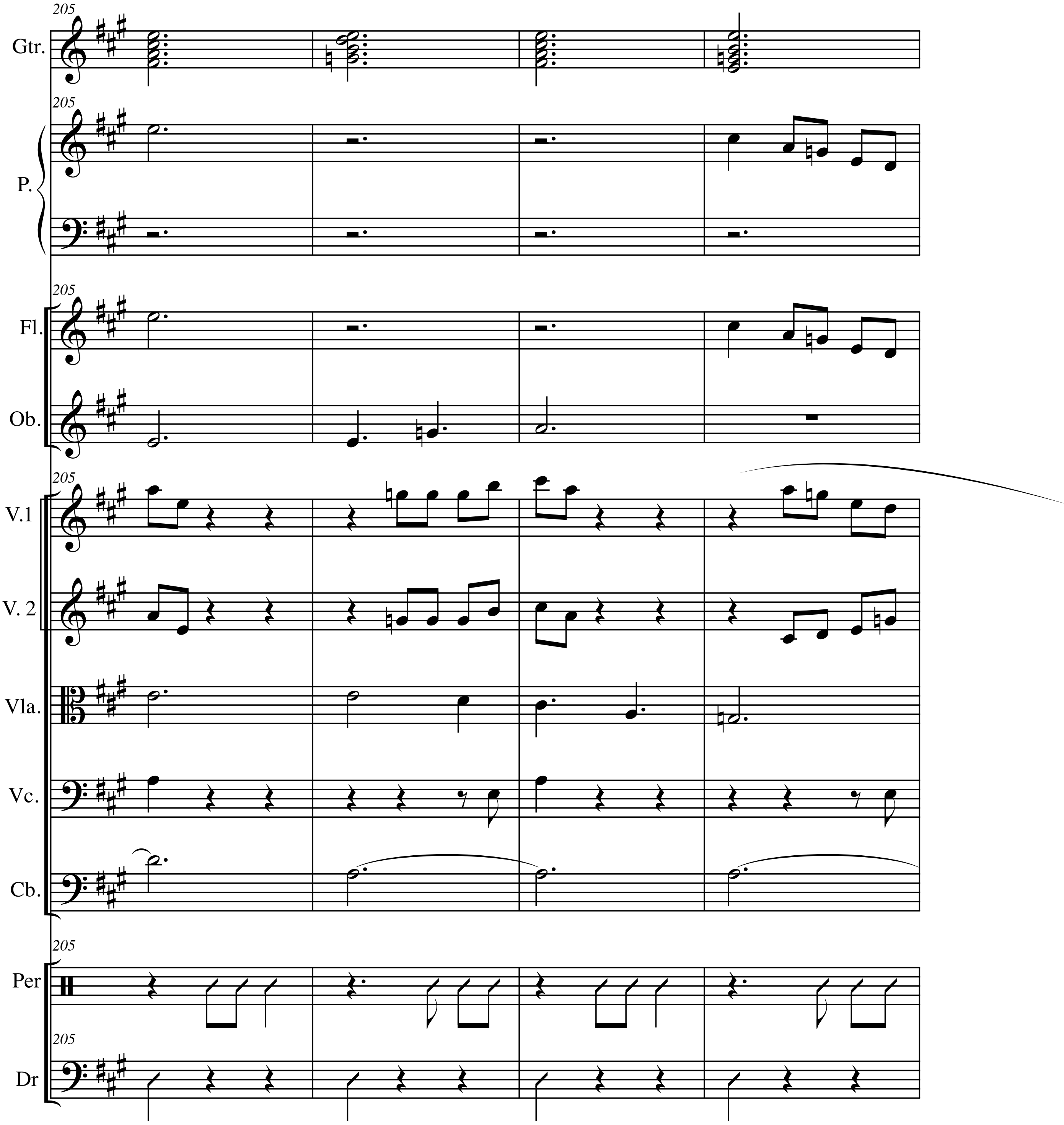

185
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
arco
mp
mp
mp
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

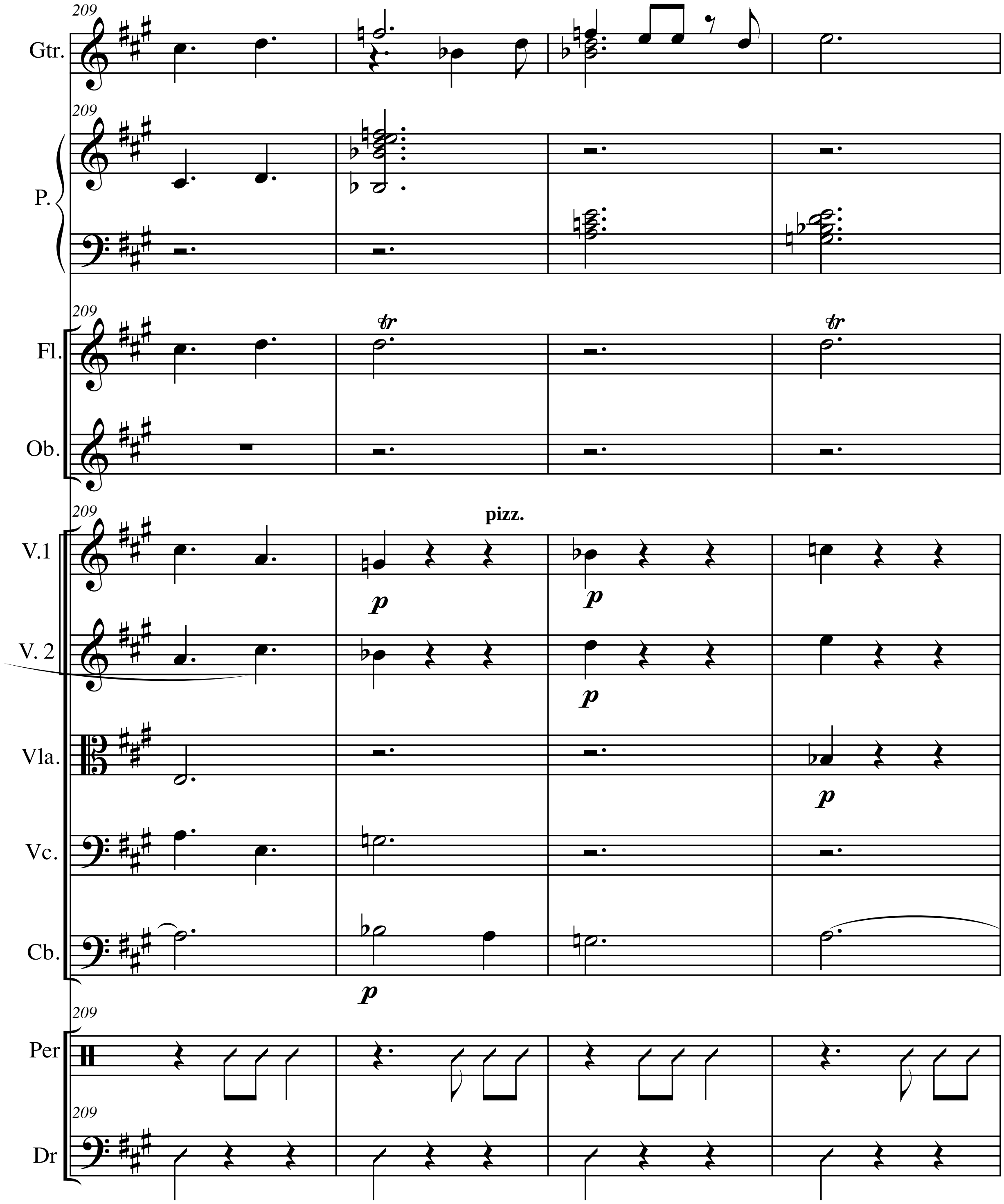

189
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
pizz.
pizz.

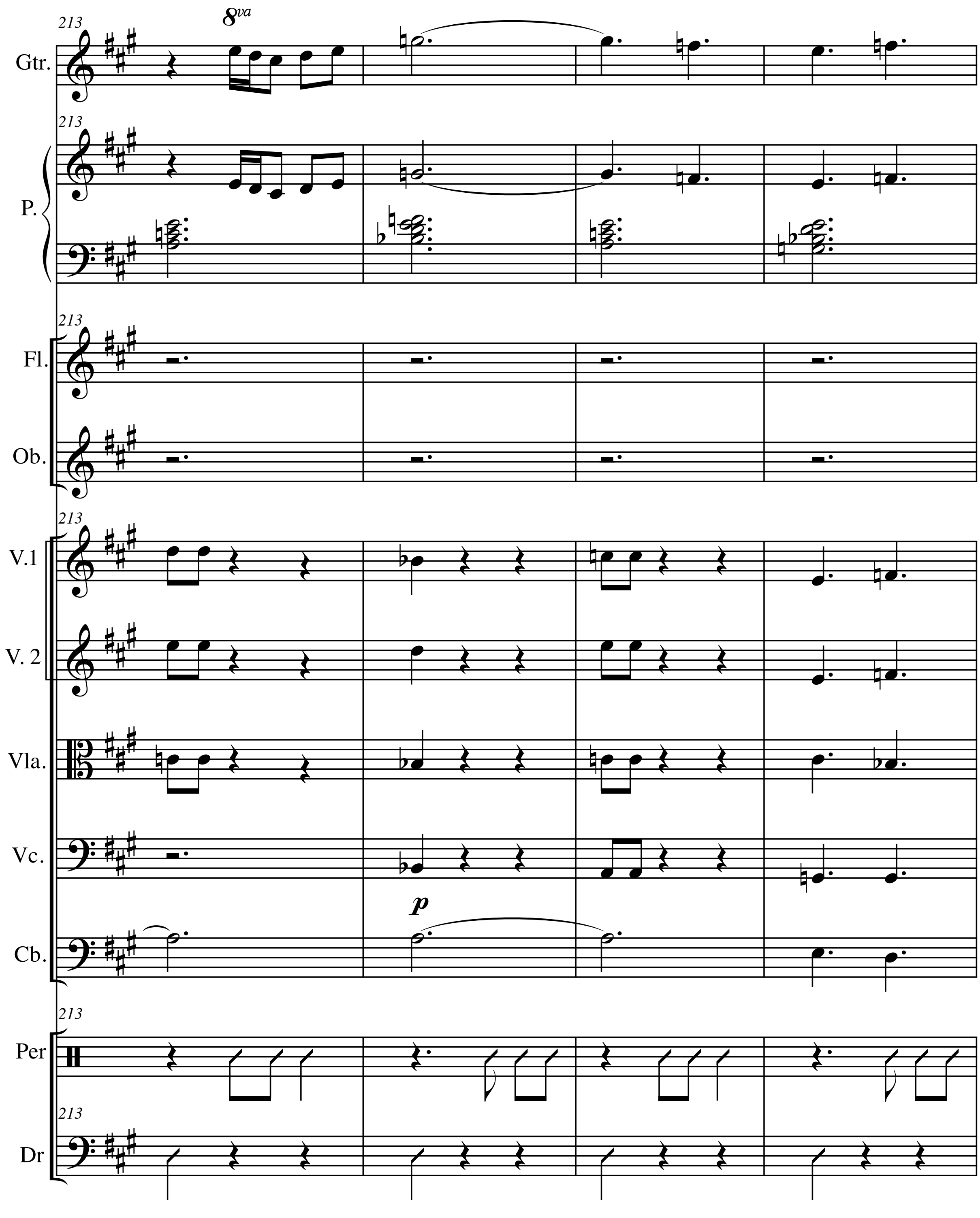

193
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

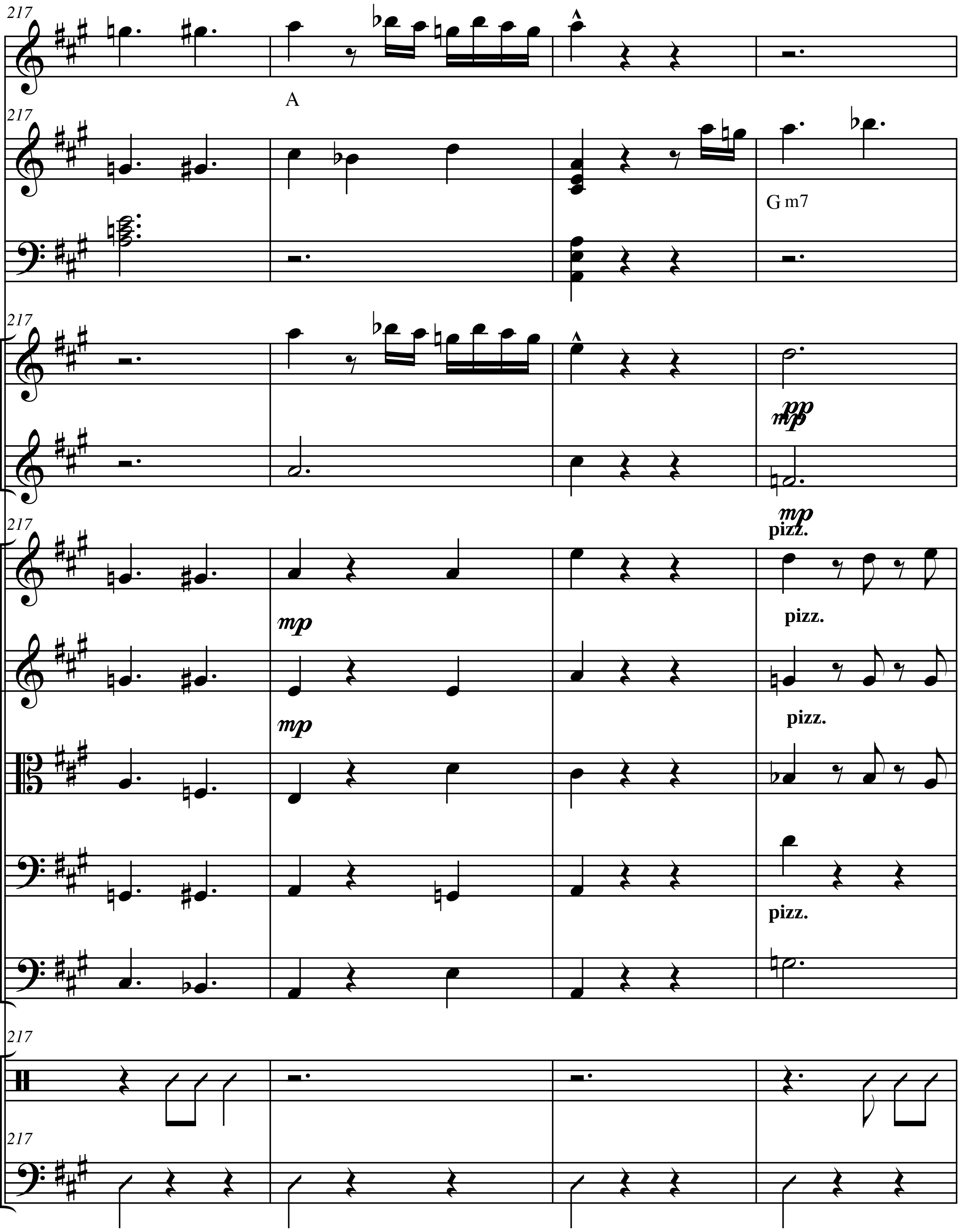

197
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

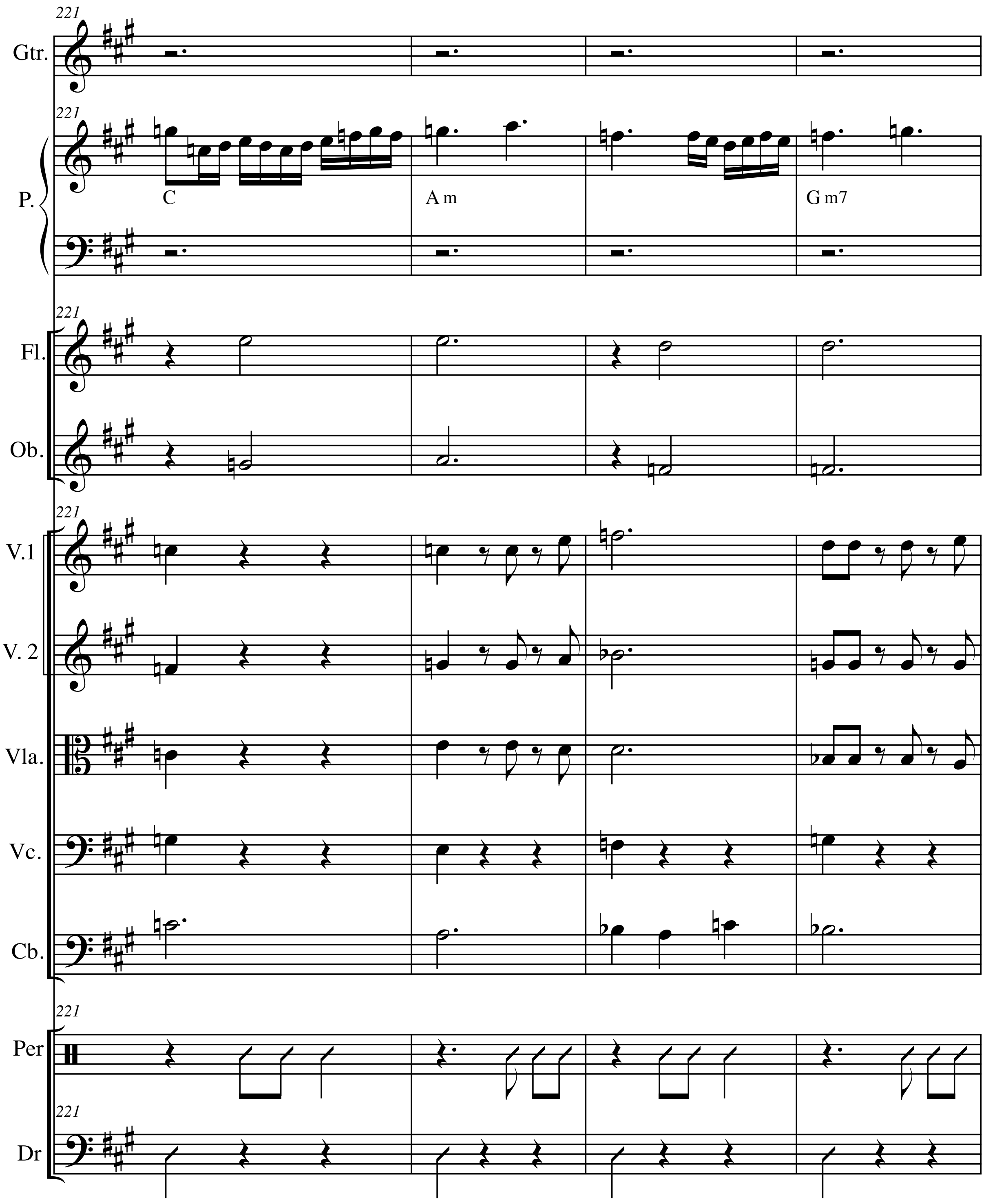

201
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
mp
pizz.
p

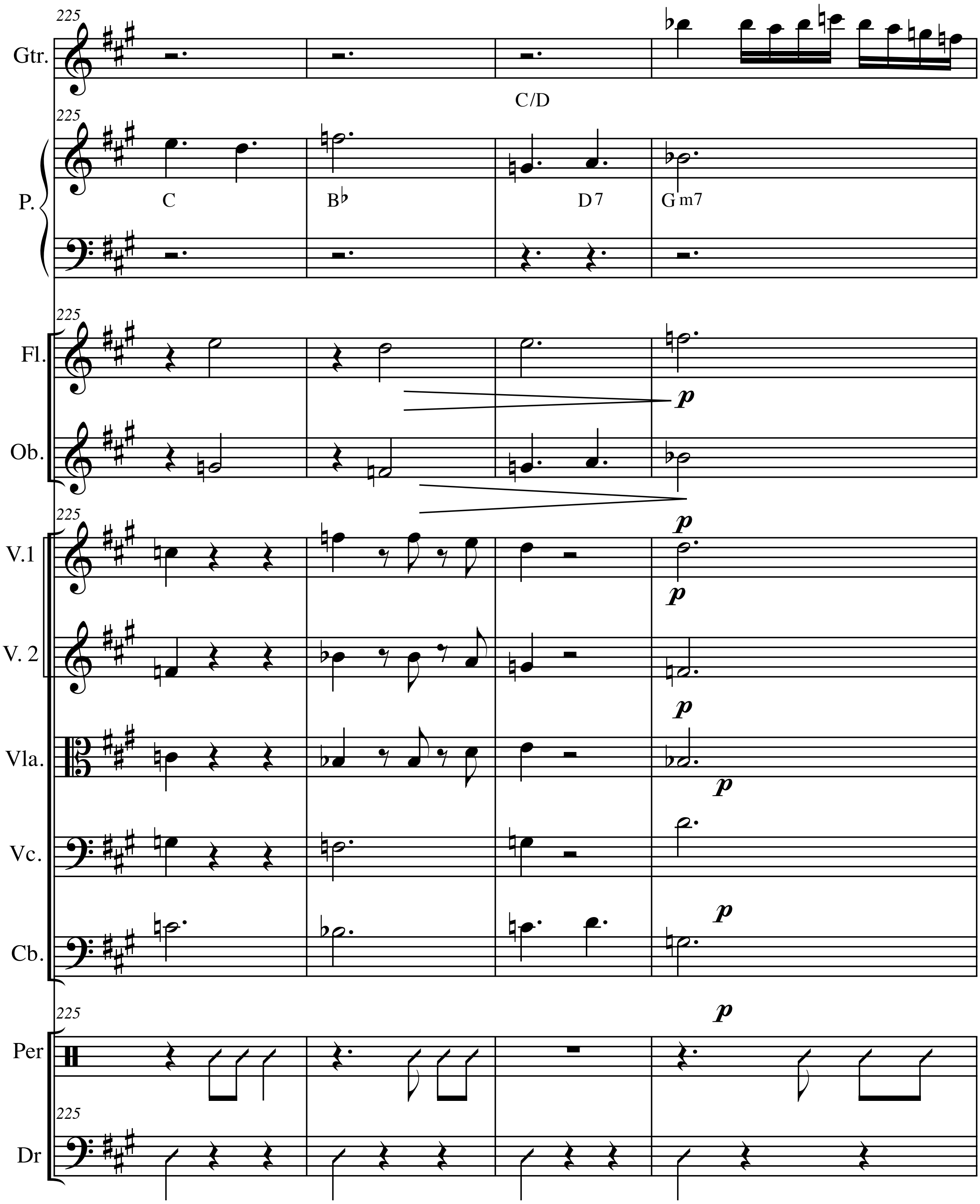

205
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

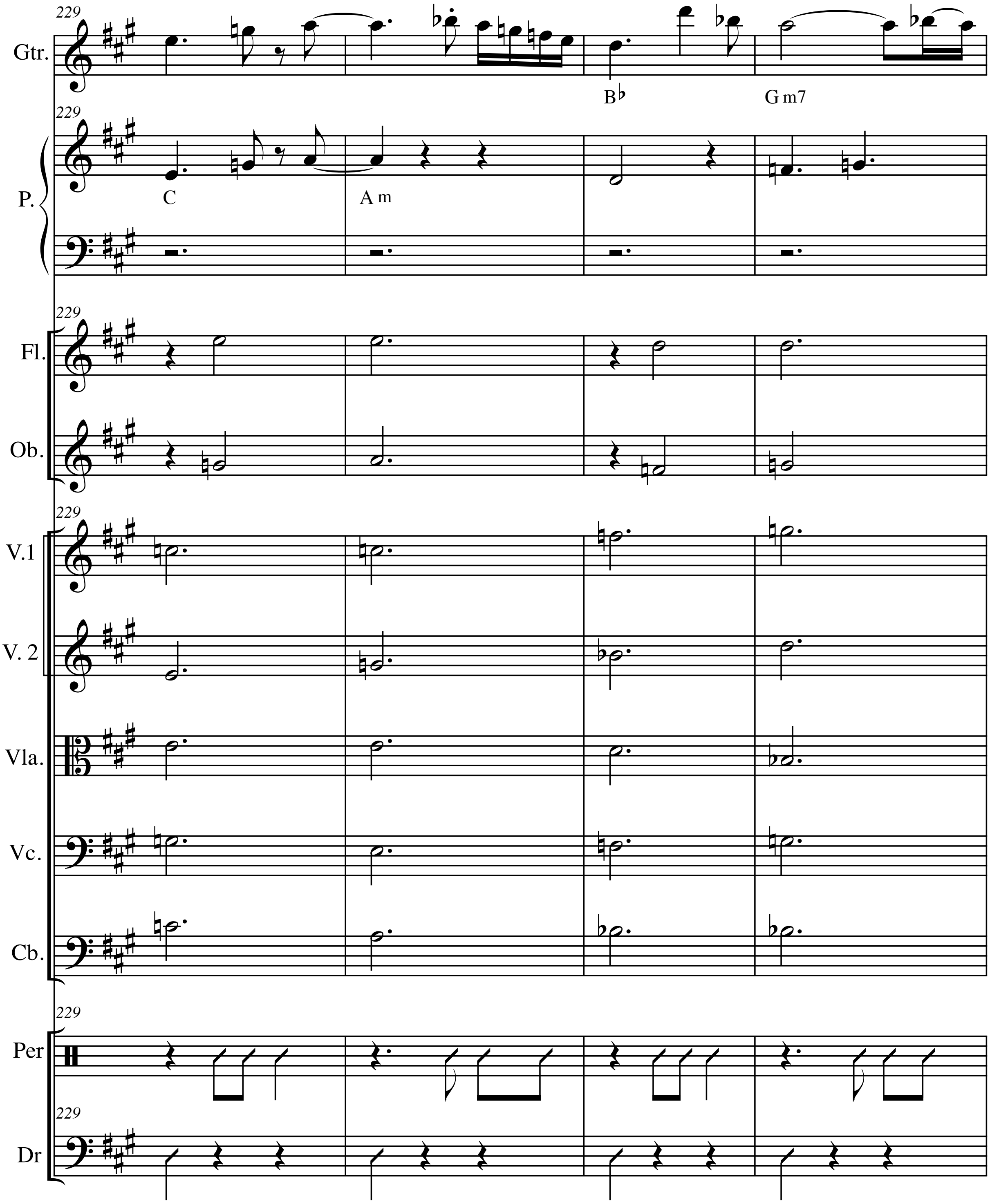

209
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
tr
pizz.
p

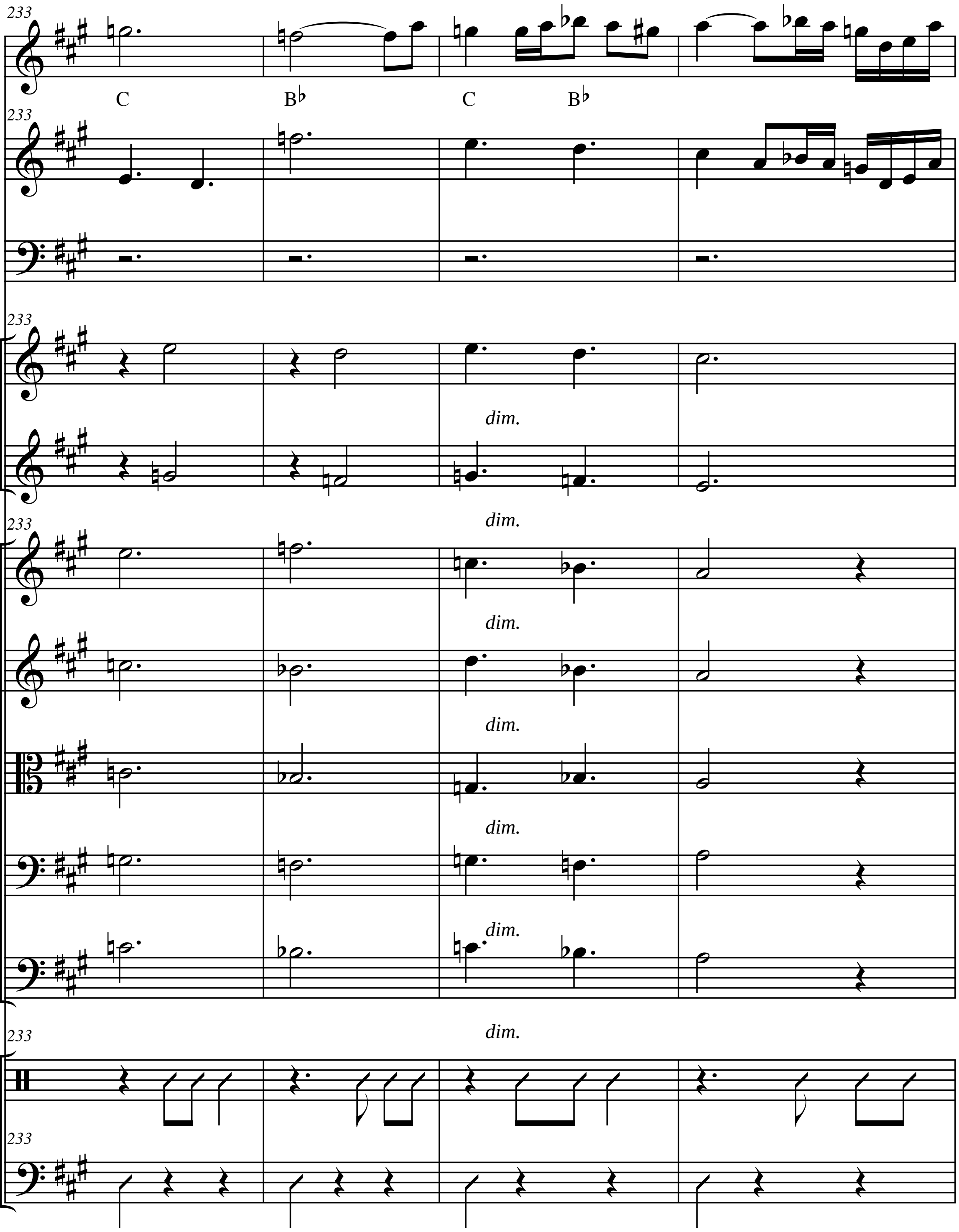

213
8va
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
p
Cb.
Per
Dr

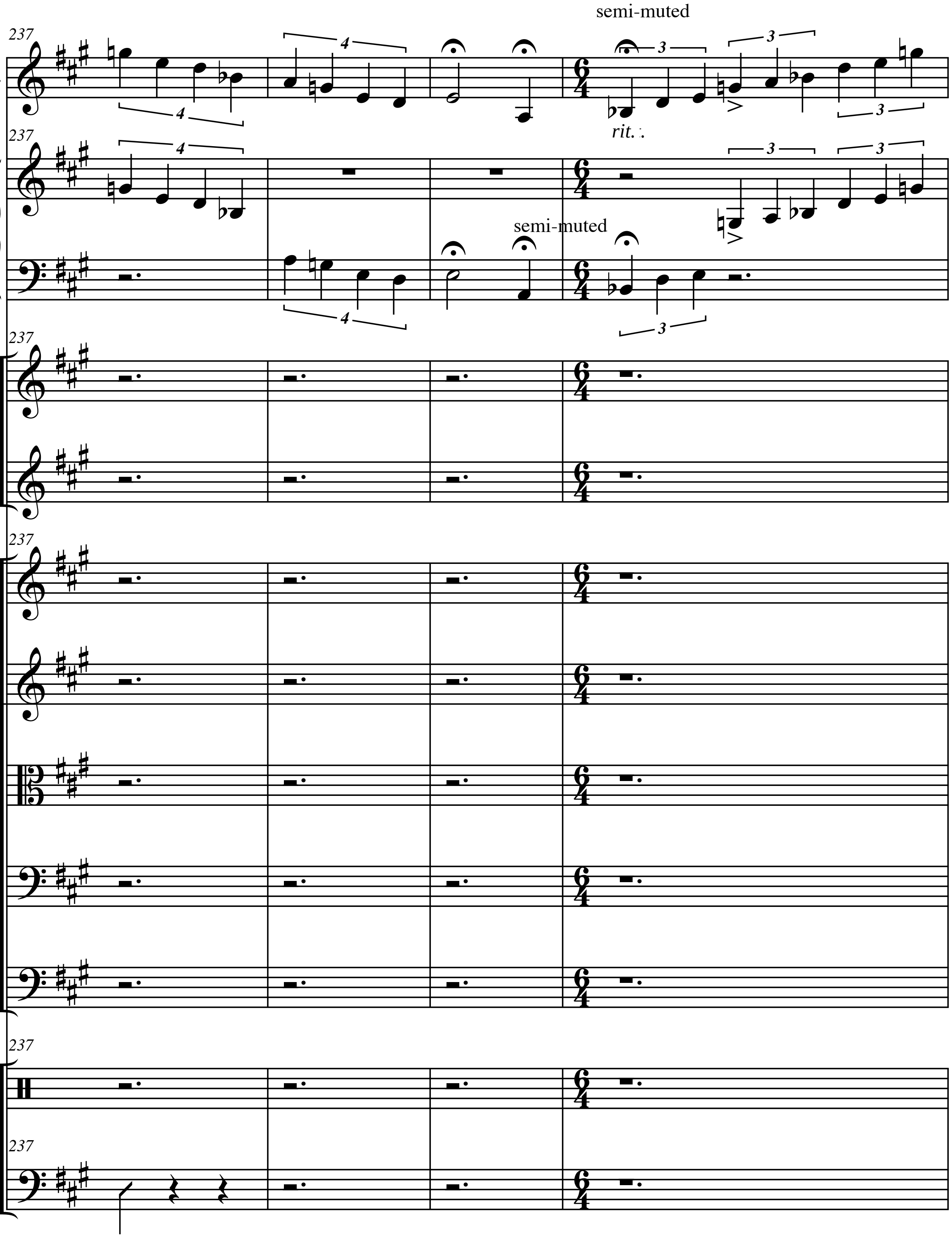

217
Gtr.
A
P.
G m7
Fl.
Ob.
mp
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
pizz.
Per
Dr


221
Gtr.
P.
C
A m
G m7
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr

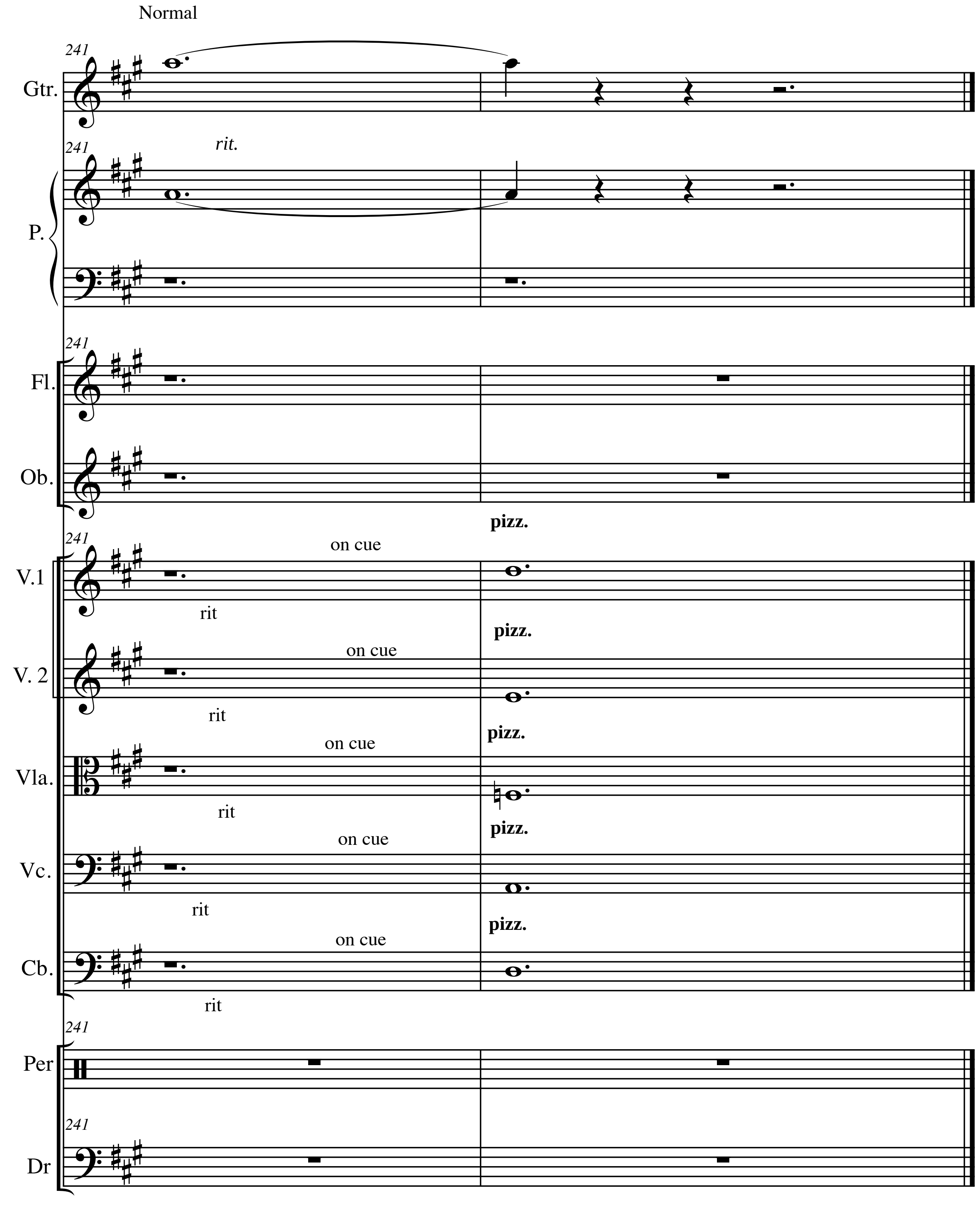

225
Gtr.
C/D
P.
C
B♭
D7
Gm7
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
p


229
Gtr.
B♭
G m7
P.
C
A m
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr


233
Gtr.
C
B♭
C
B♭
P.
Fl.
Ob.
dim.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr


semi-muted
237
Gtr.
4
4
3
3
3
rit.
P.
semi-muted
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V. 2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Per
Dr
6
4

SILK ROAD M.1


Normal
241
Gtr.
241
rit.
P.
241
Fl.
Ob.
pizz.
241
on cue
V.1
rit
pizz.
on cue
V. 2
rit
pizz.
on cue
Vla.
rit
pizz.
on cue
Vc.
rit
pizz.
on cue
Cb.
rit
241
Per
241
Dr

APPENDIX 8

SILK ROAD

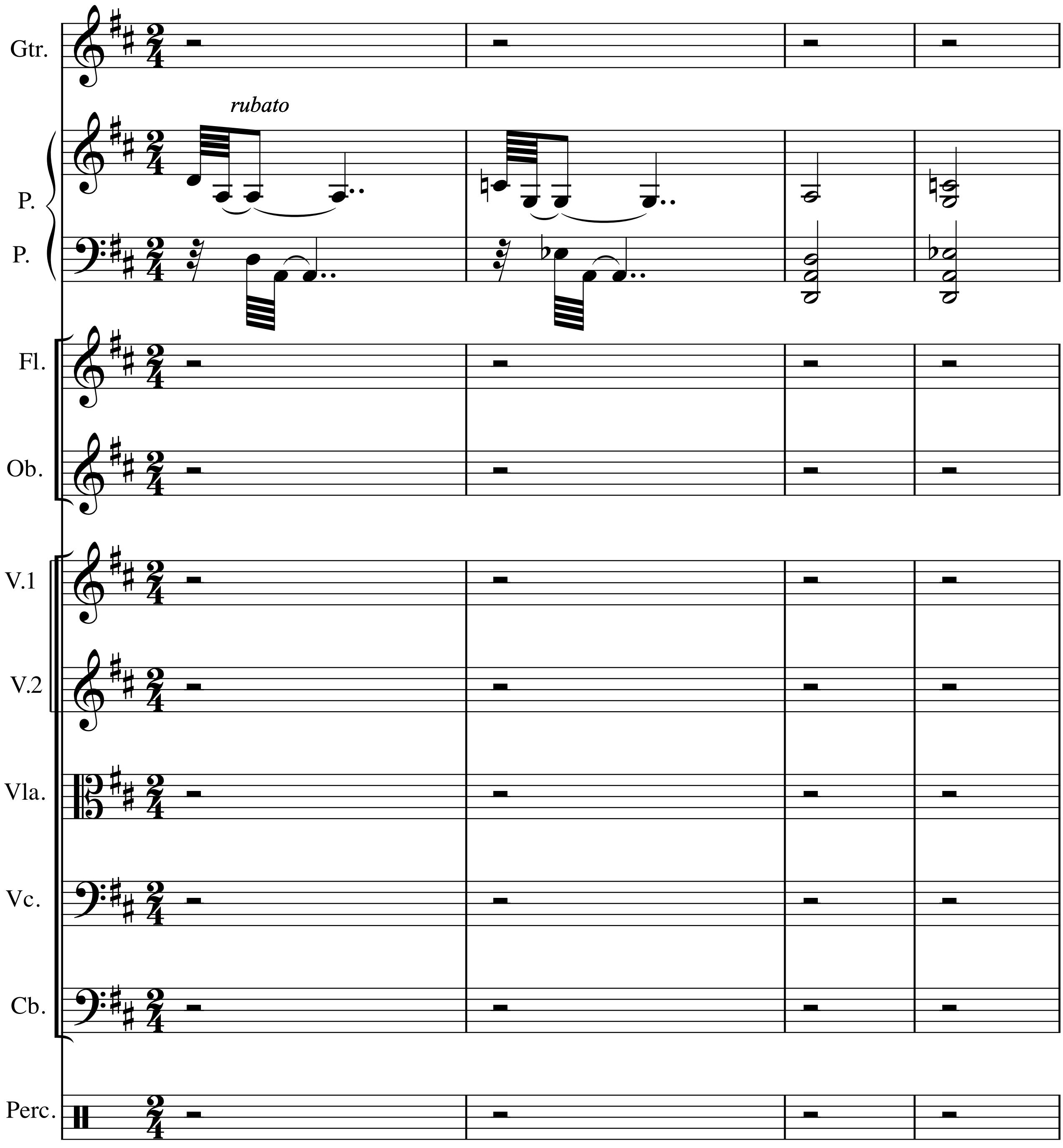
Double Concerto for Guitar/Piano & Chamber Orchestra

MOVEMENT 2

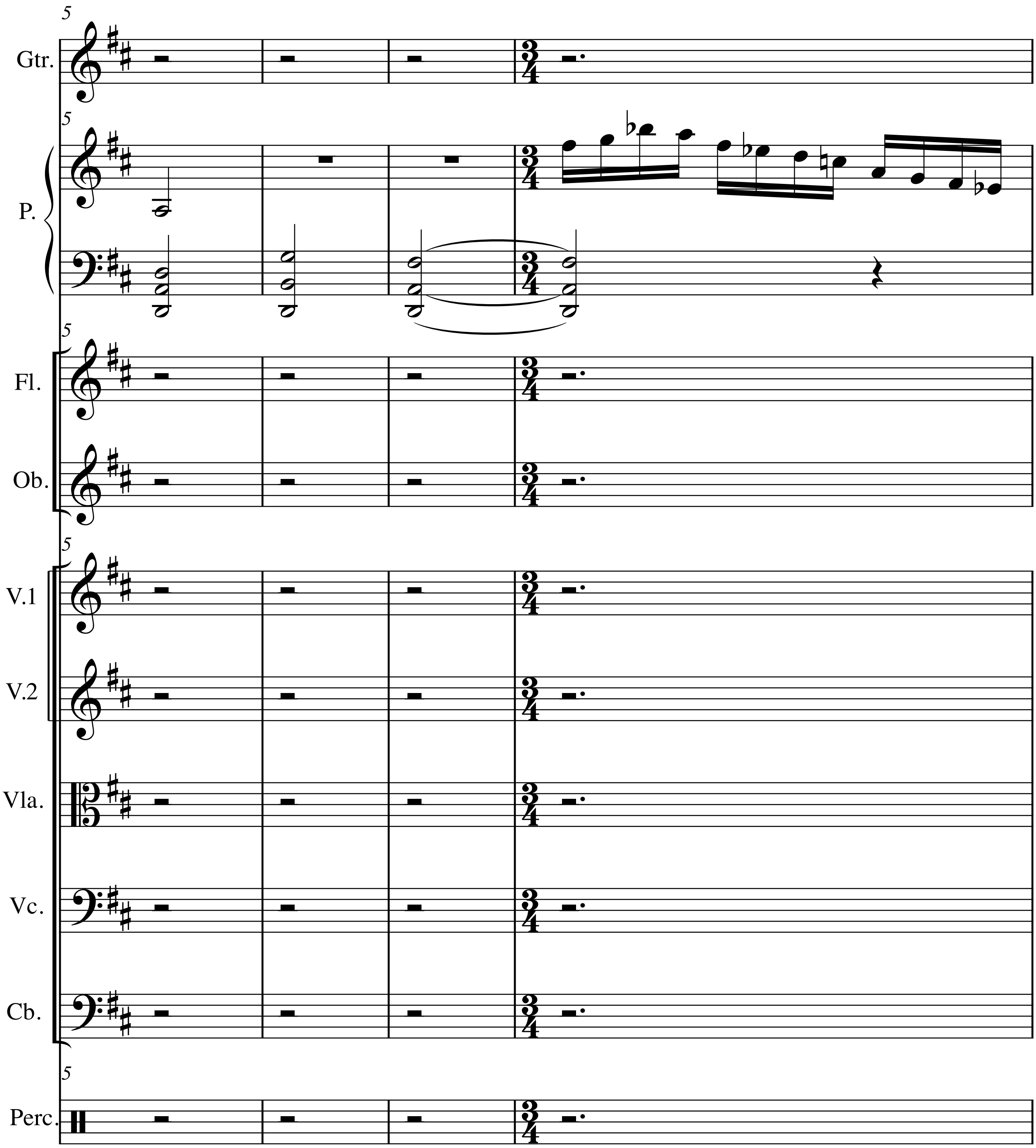
Guy Strazzullo
(aka Guy Strazz)

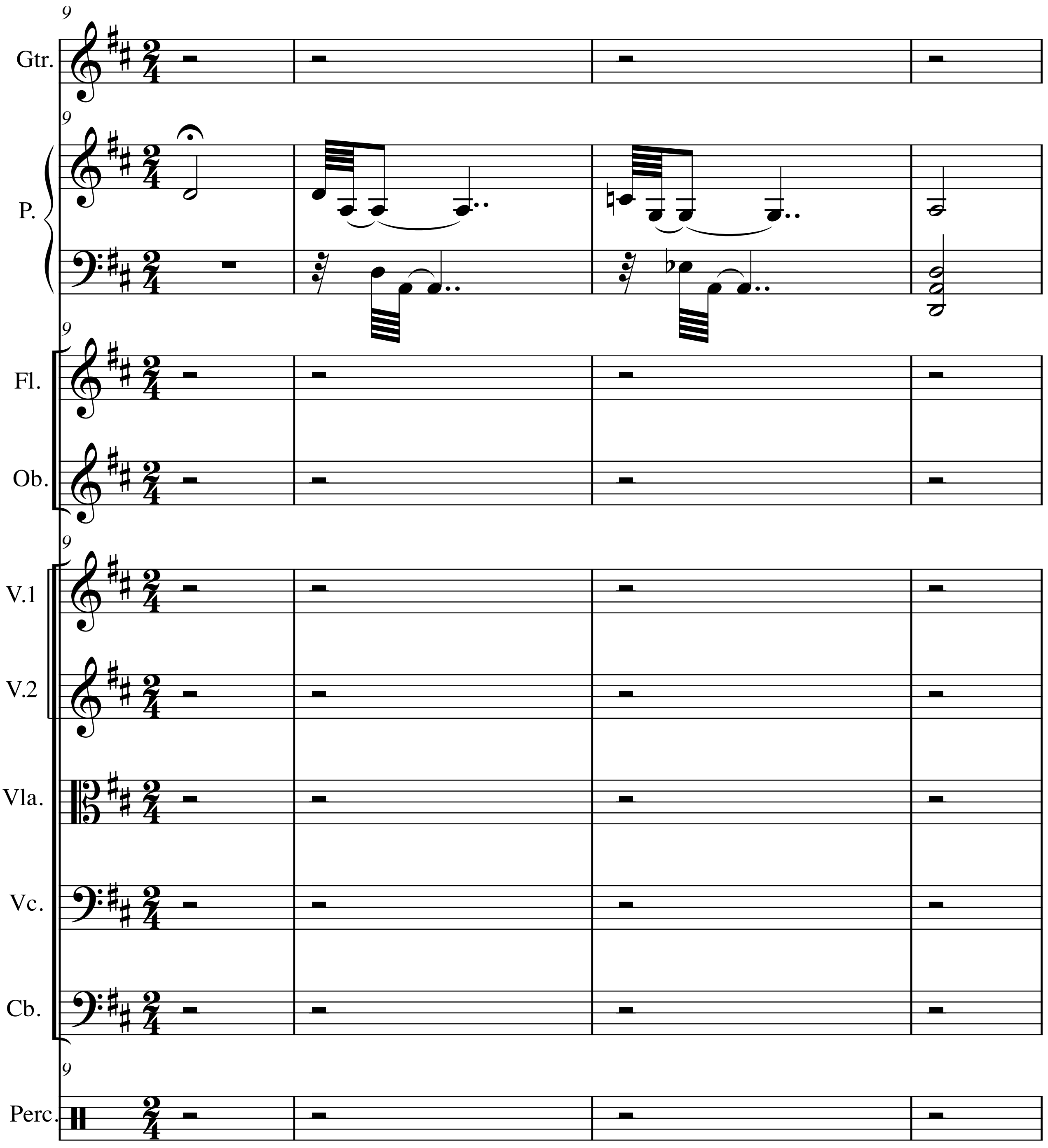
Largo/50

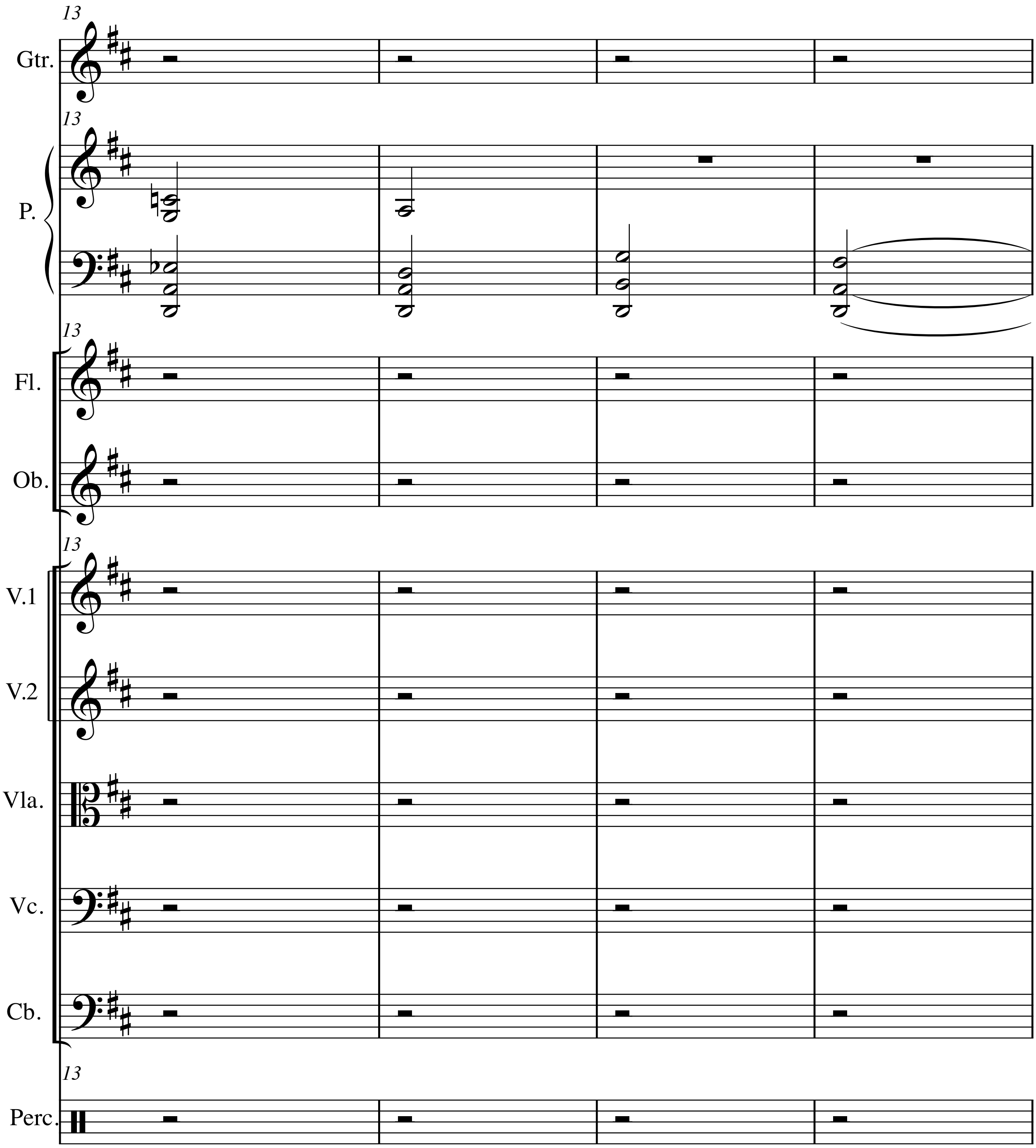
(with a reflective feeling, as in sunset)

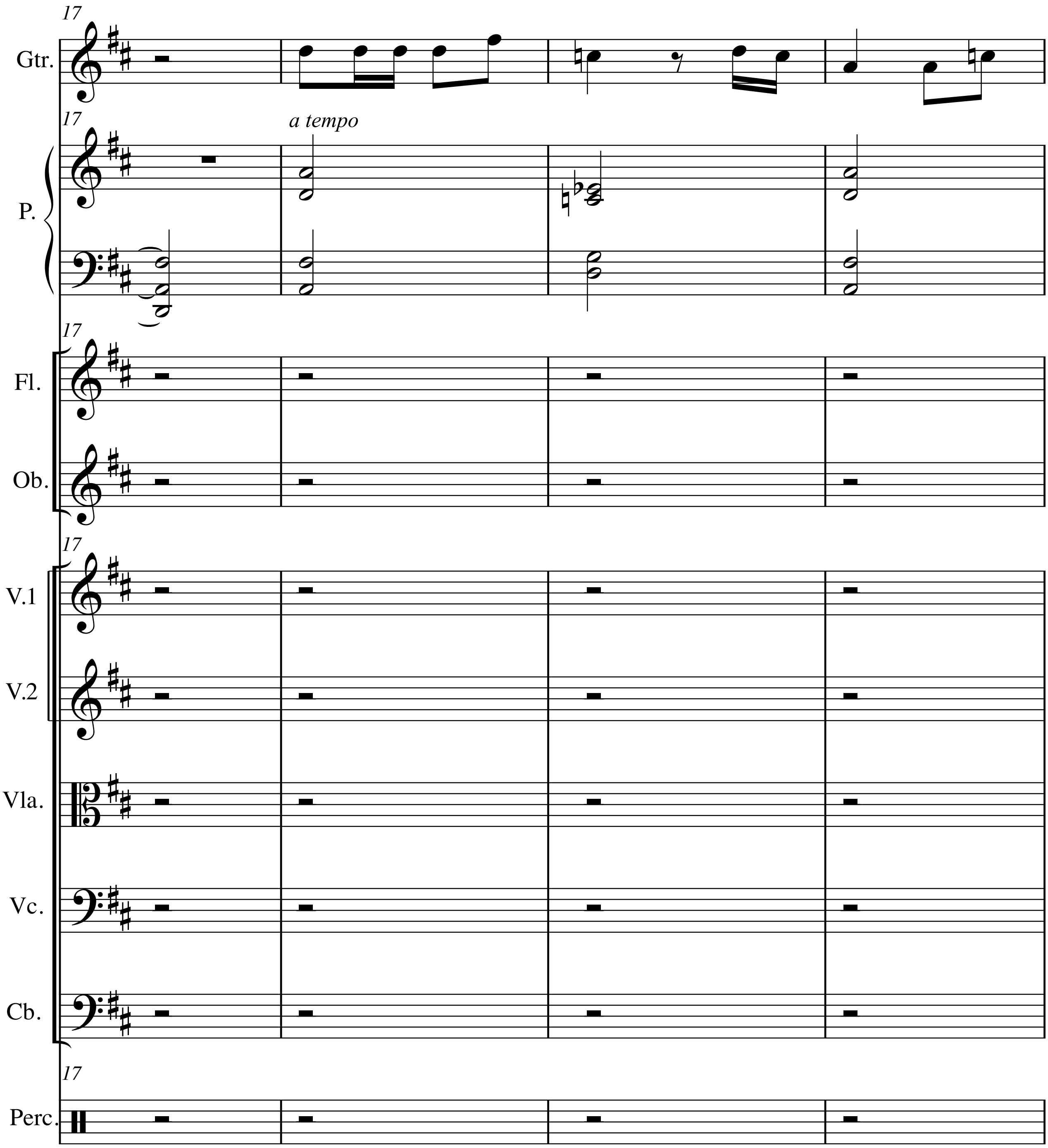

Gtr.
rubato
P.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

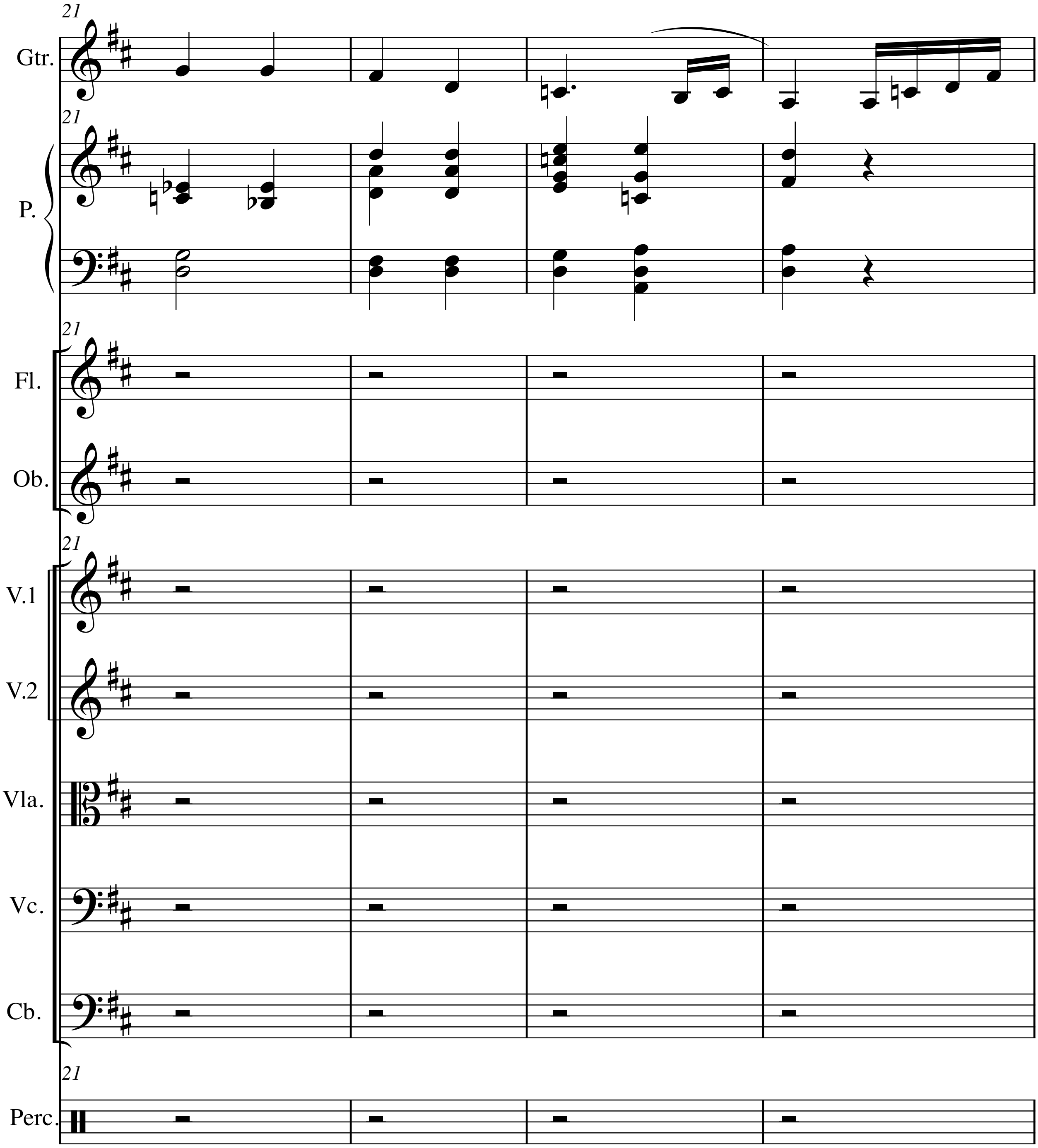
© APRA Control 2012

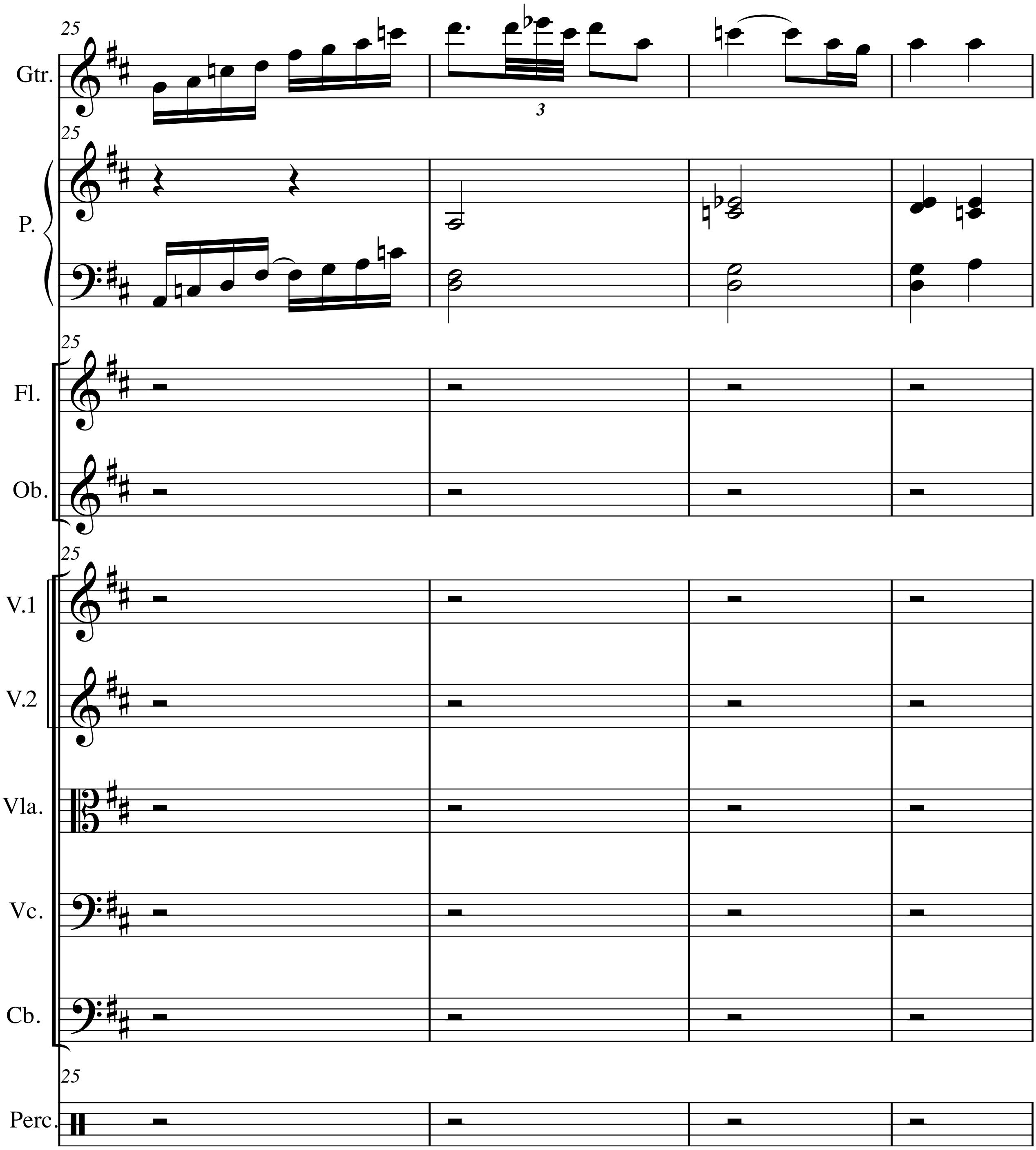

5
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.


9
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

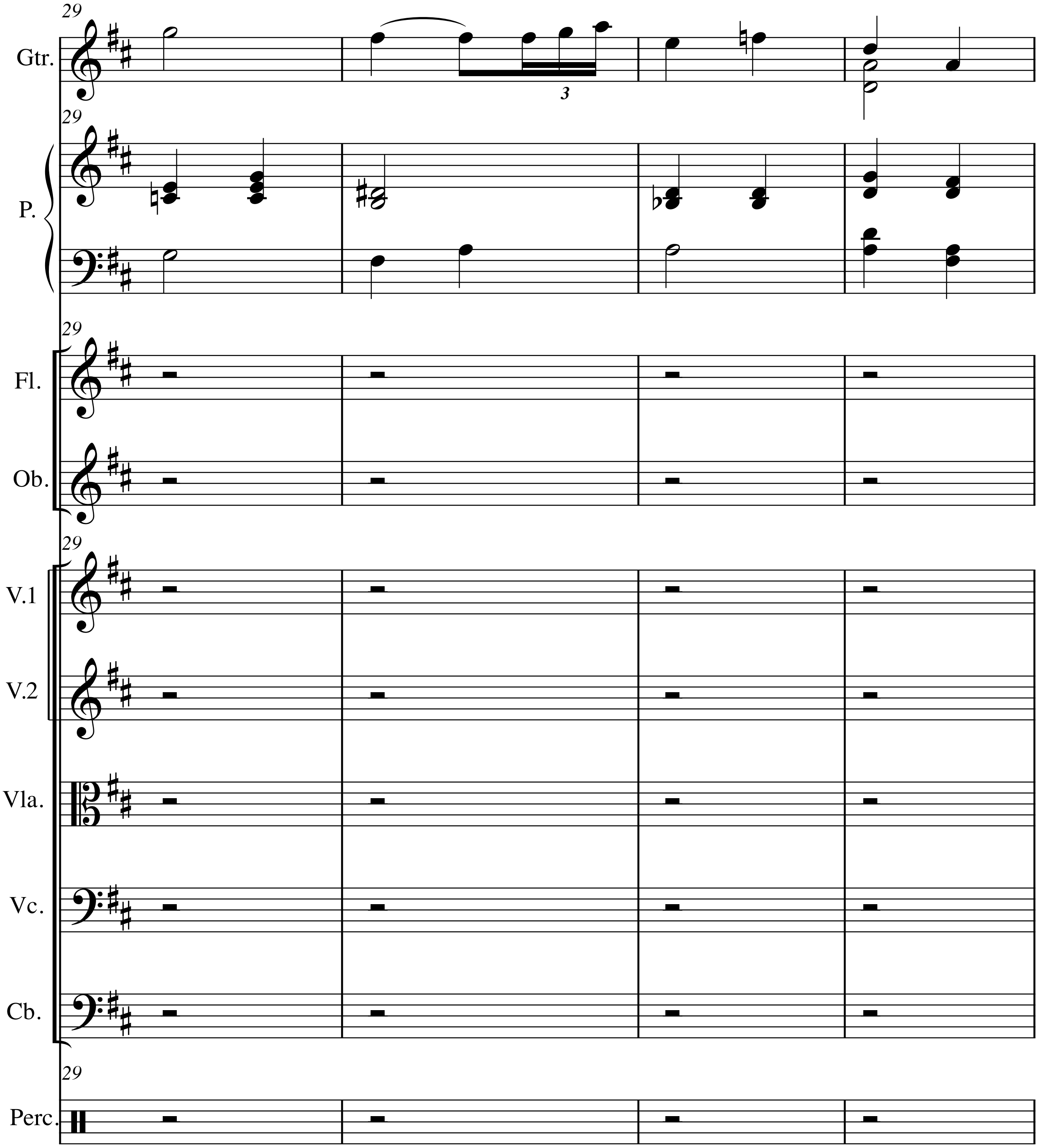

13
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

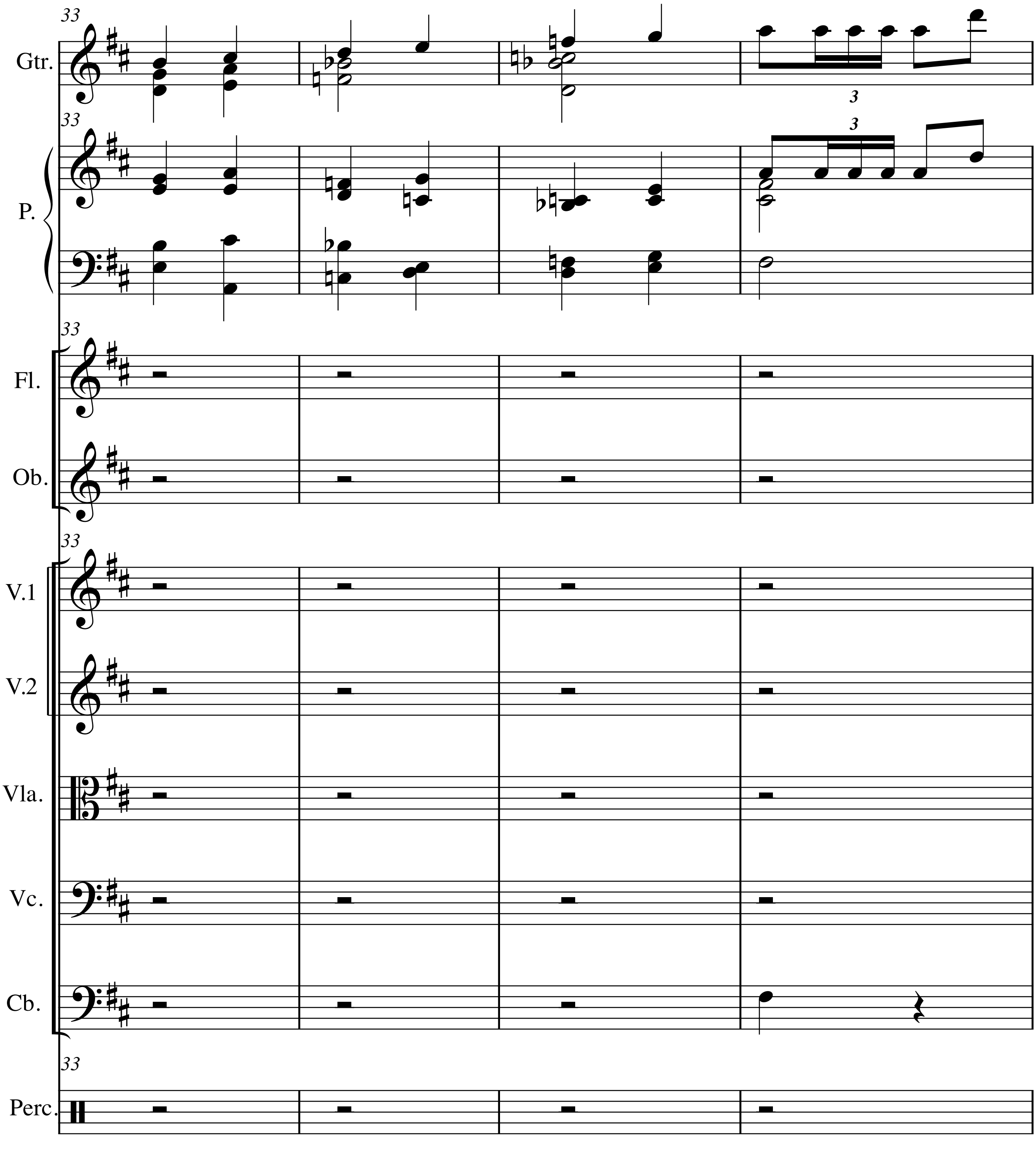

17
Gtr.
17
a tempo
P.
17
Fl.
Ob.
17
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
17
Perc.

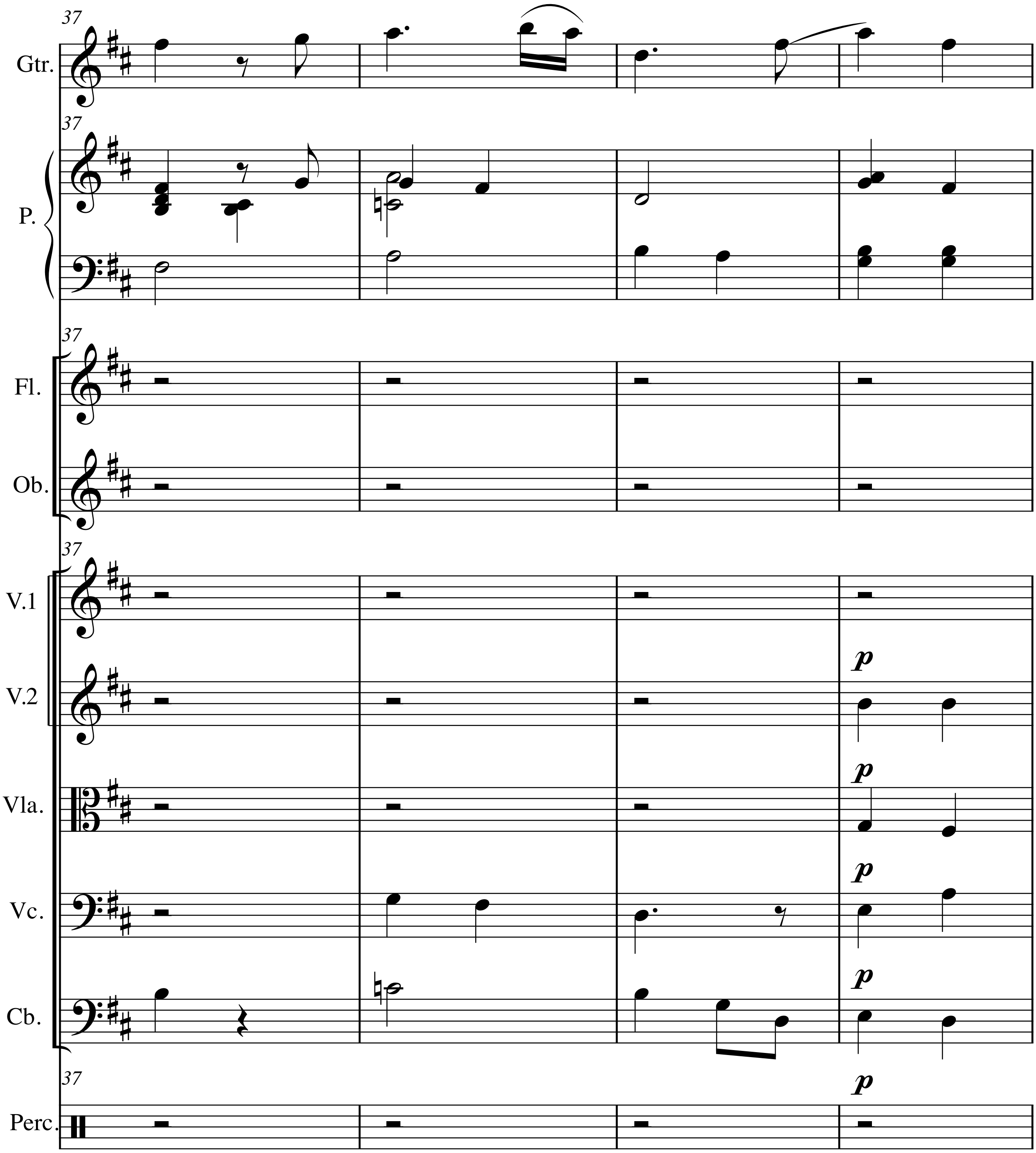

21
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

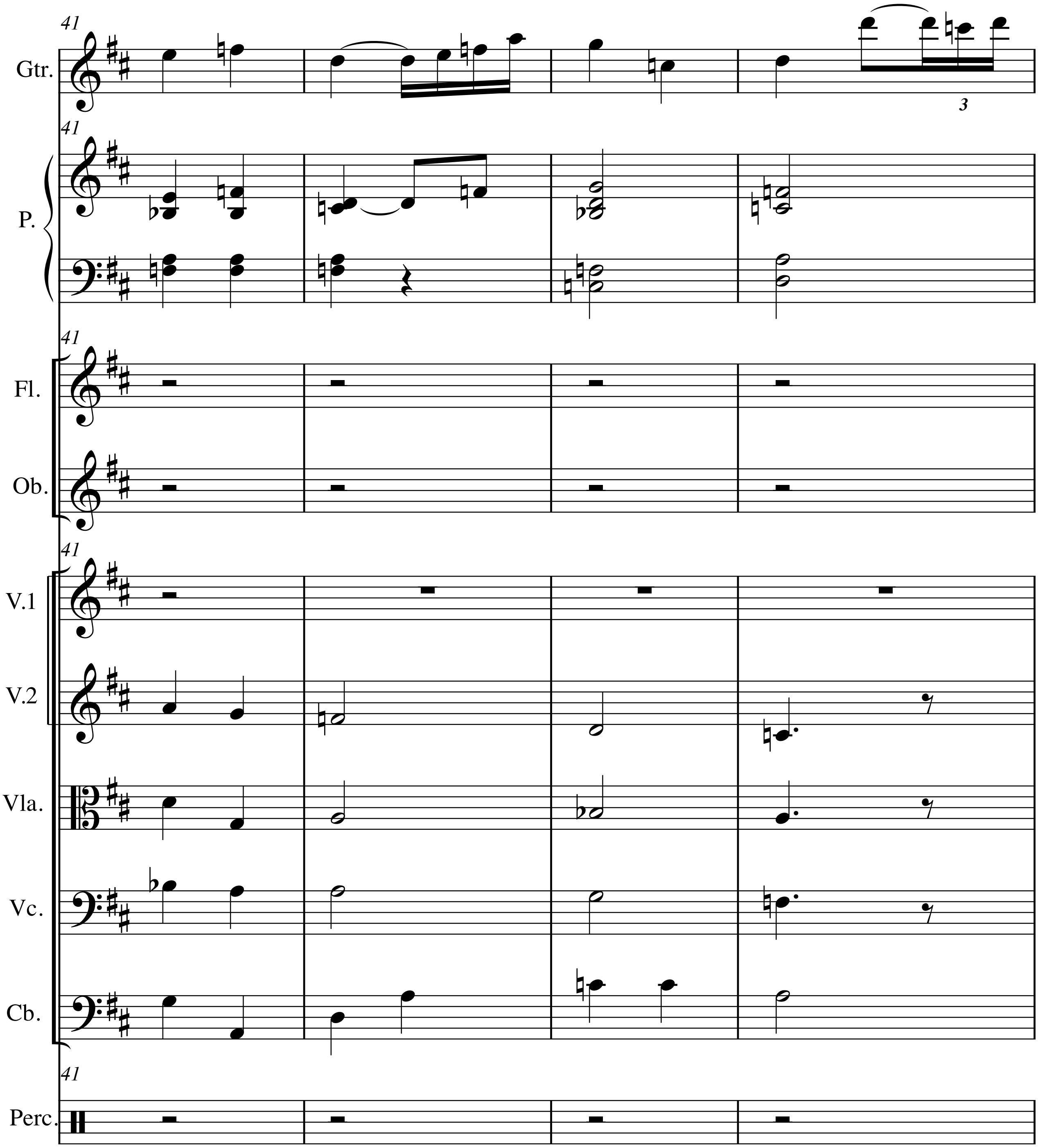

25
Gtr.
3
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

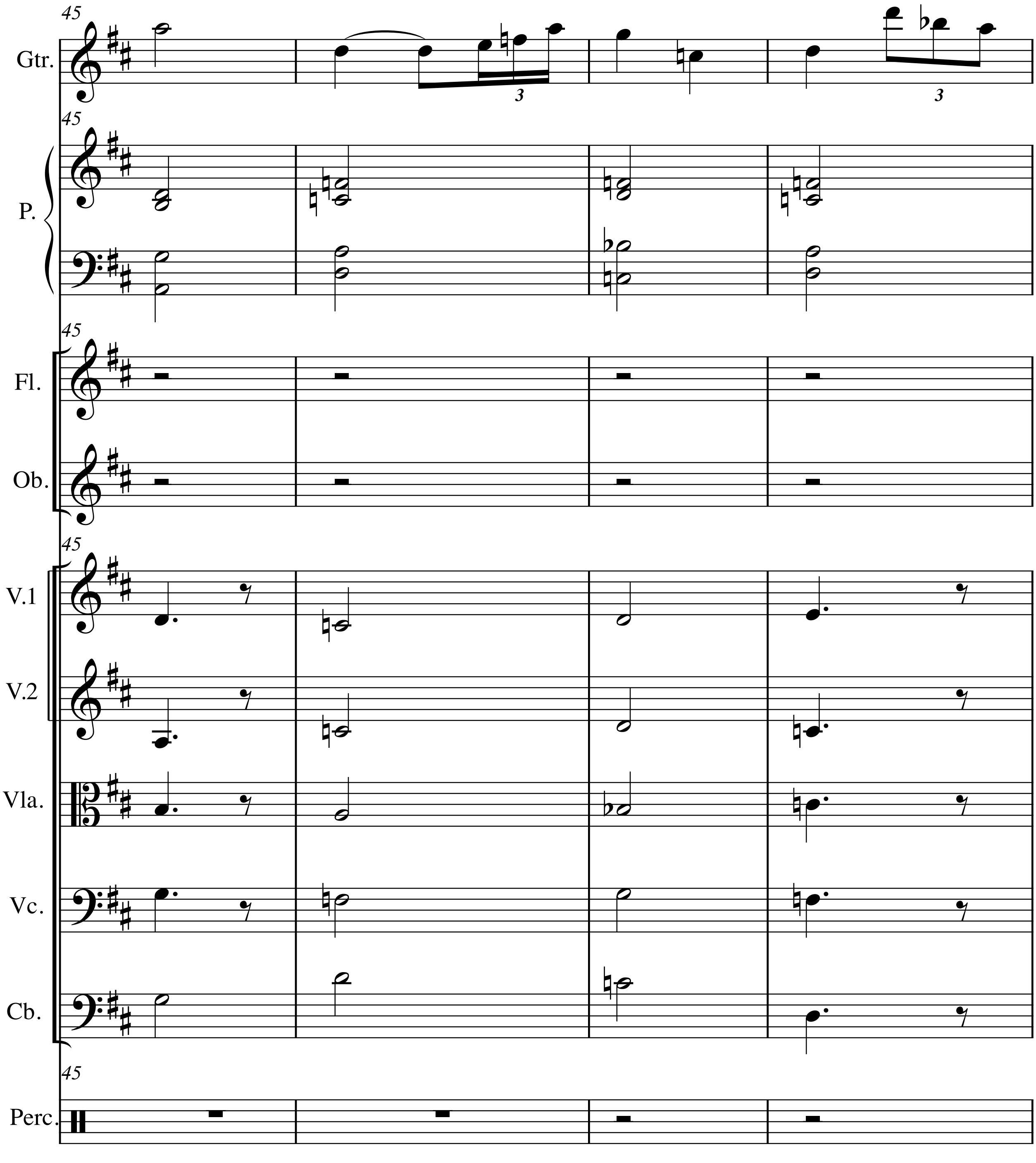
SILK ROAD M.2

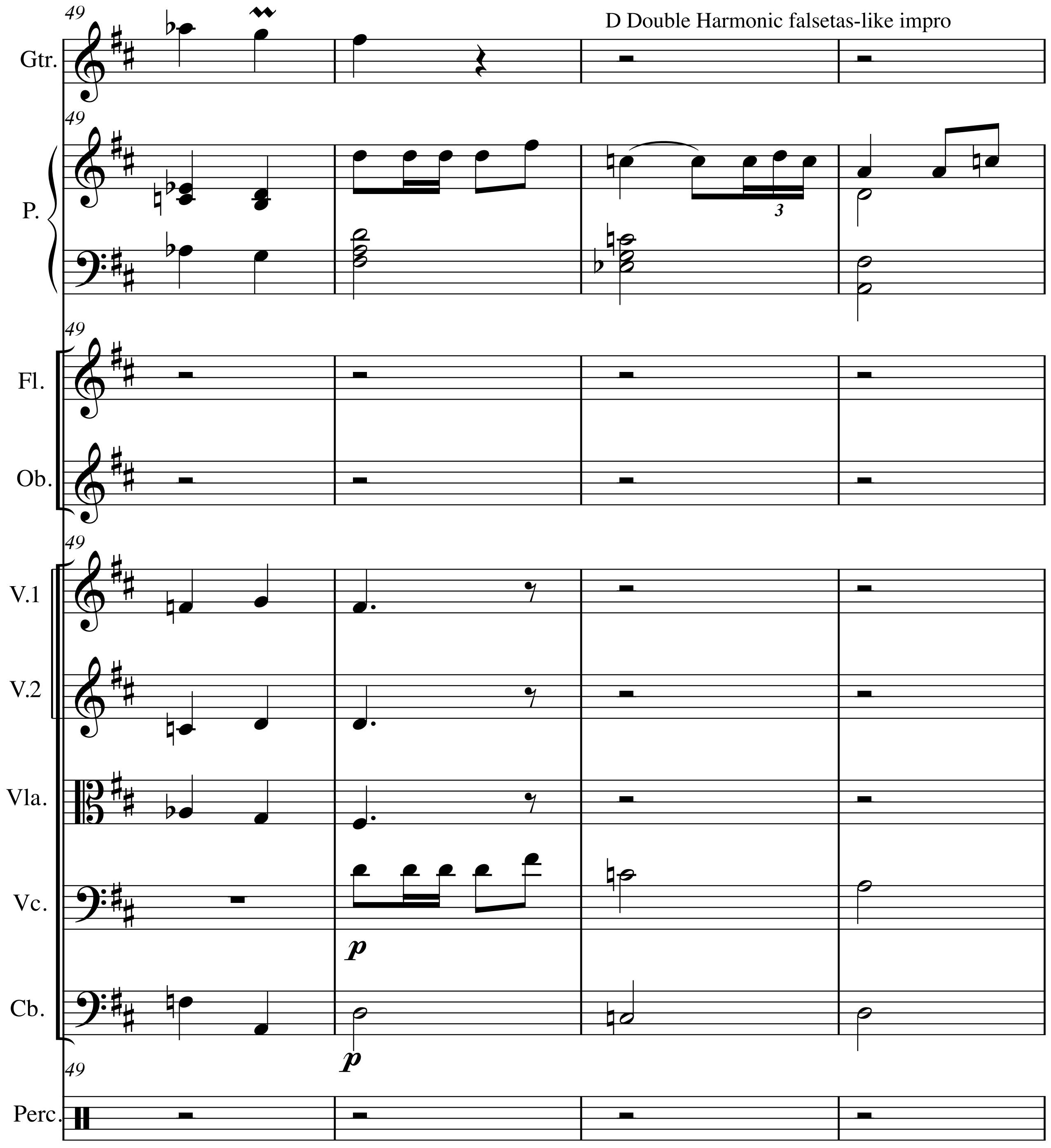

29
Gtr.
3
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

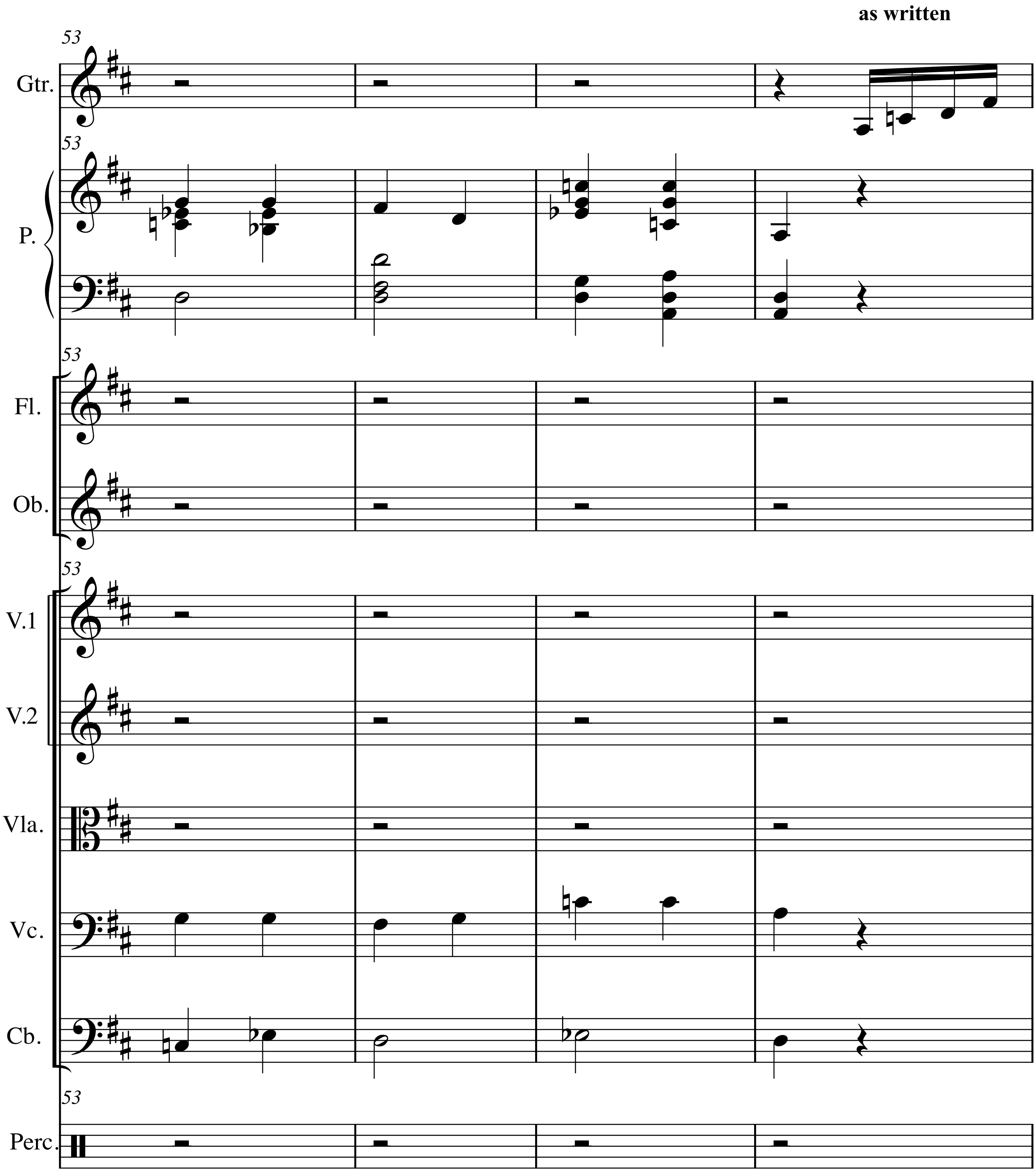

33
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.
3
3

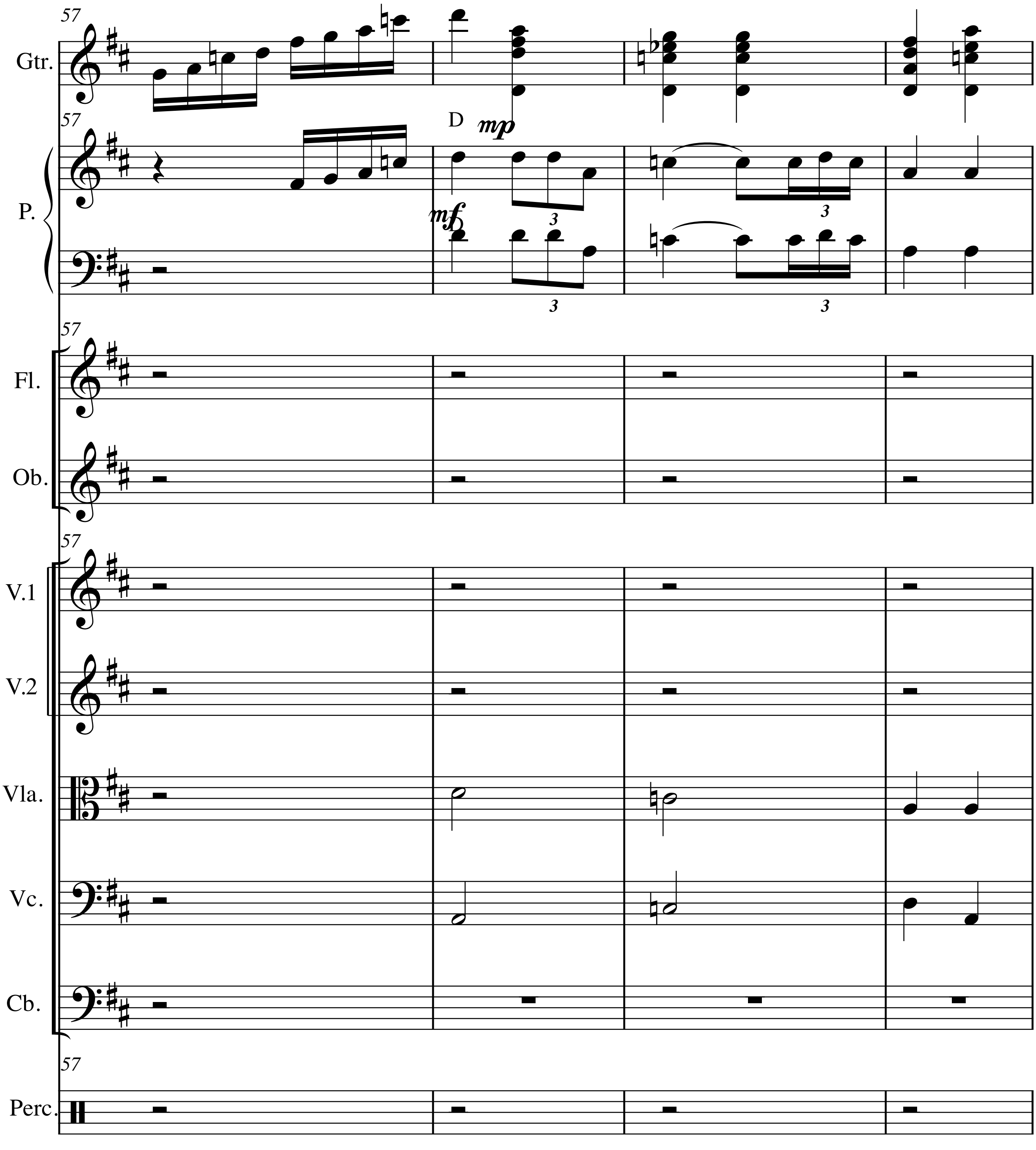

37
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.
p

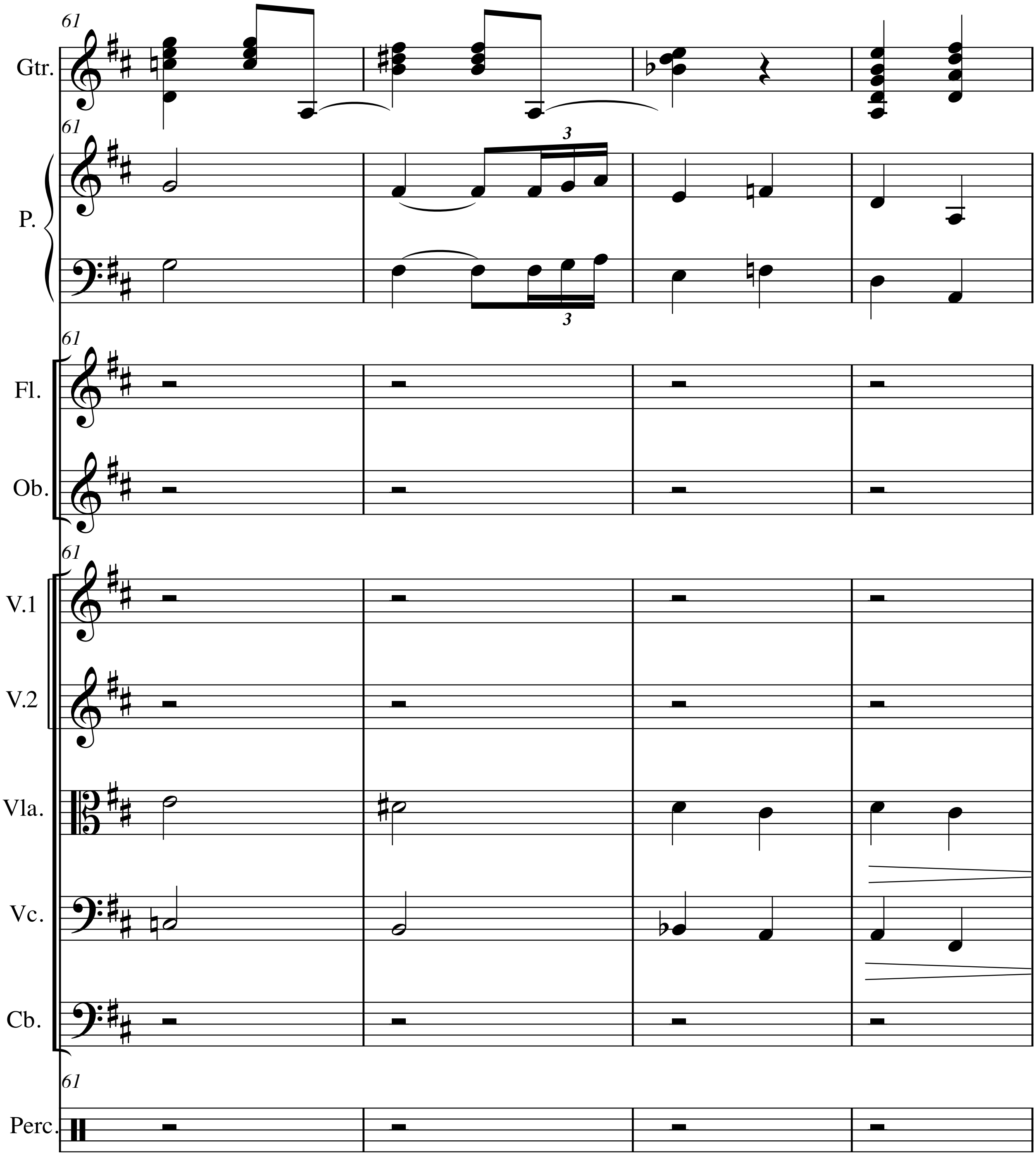

41
Gtr.
3
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

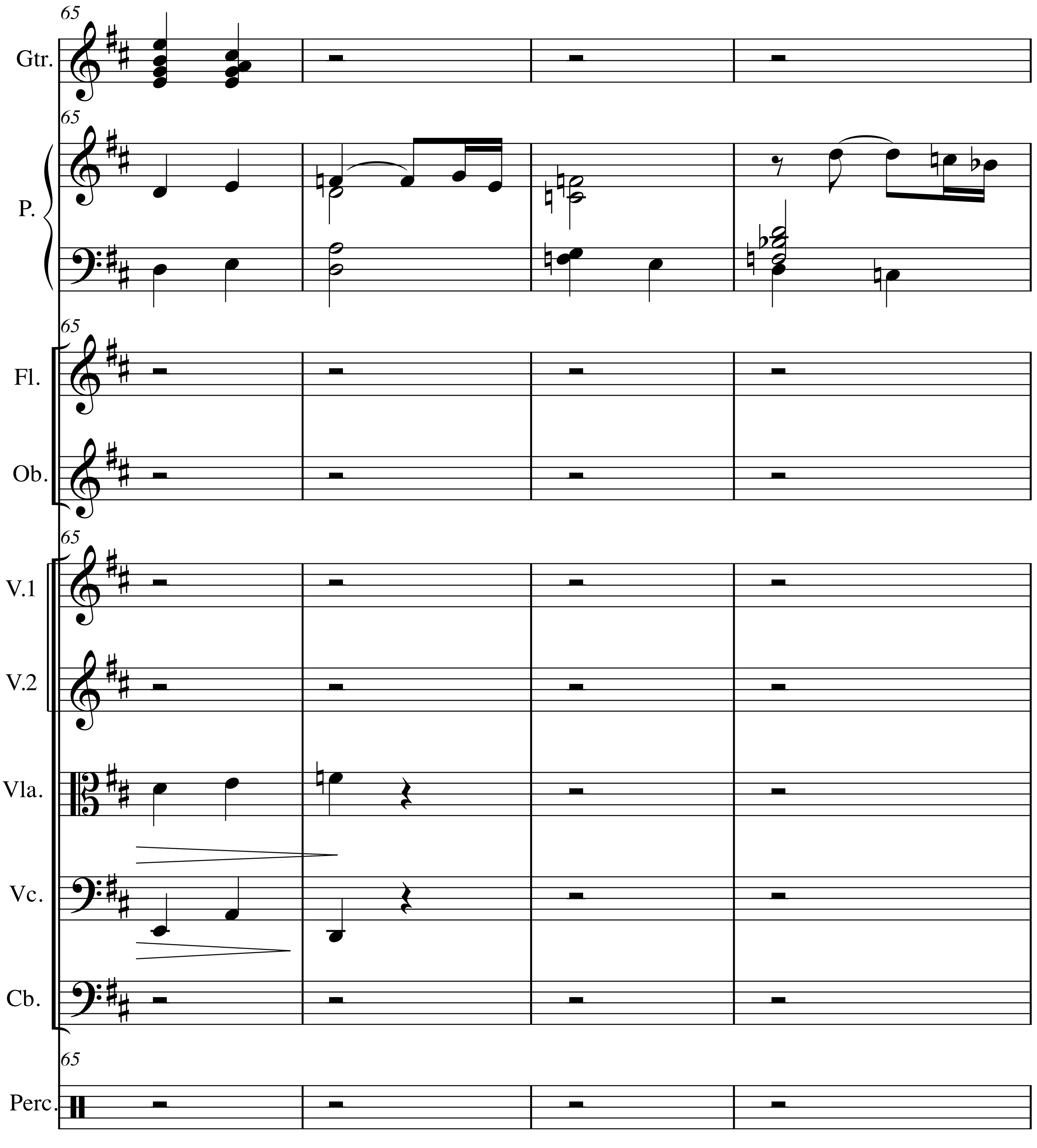

45
Gtr.
3
3
45
P.
45
Fl.
Ob.
45
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
45
Perc.

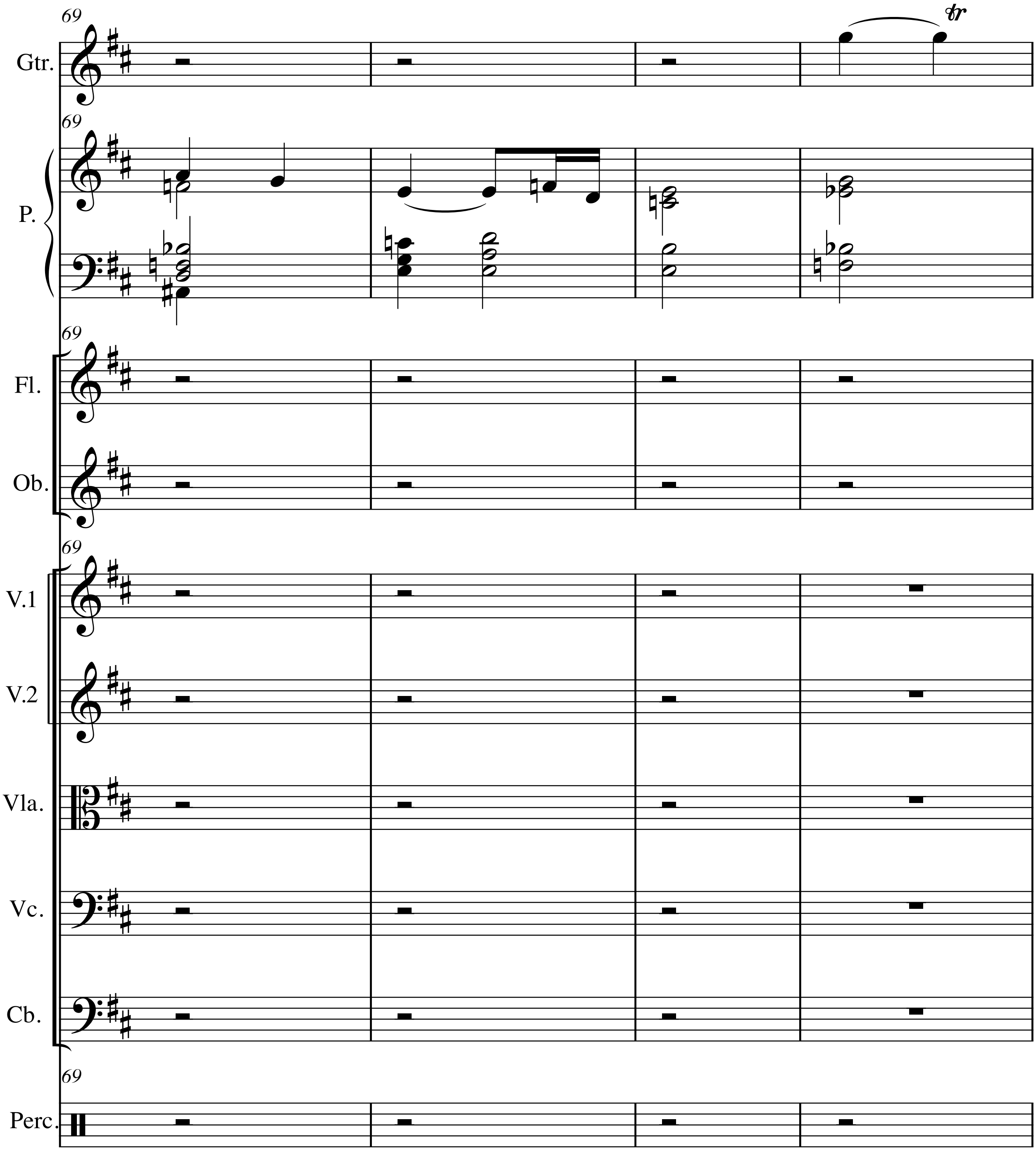

49
D Double Harmonic falsetas-like impro
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.
p
p
3

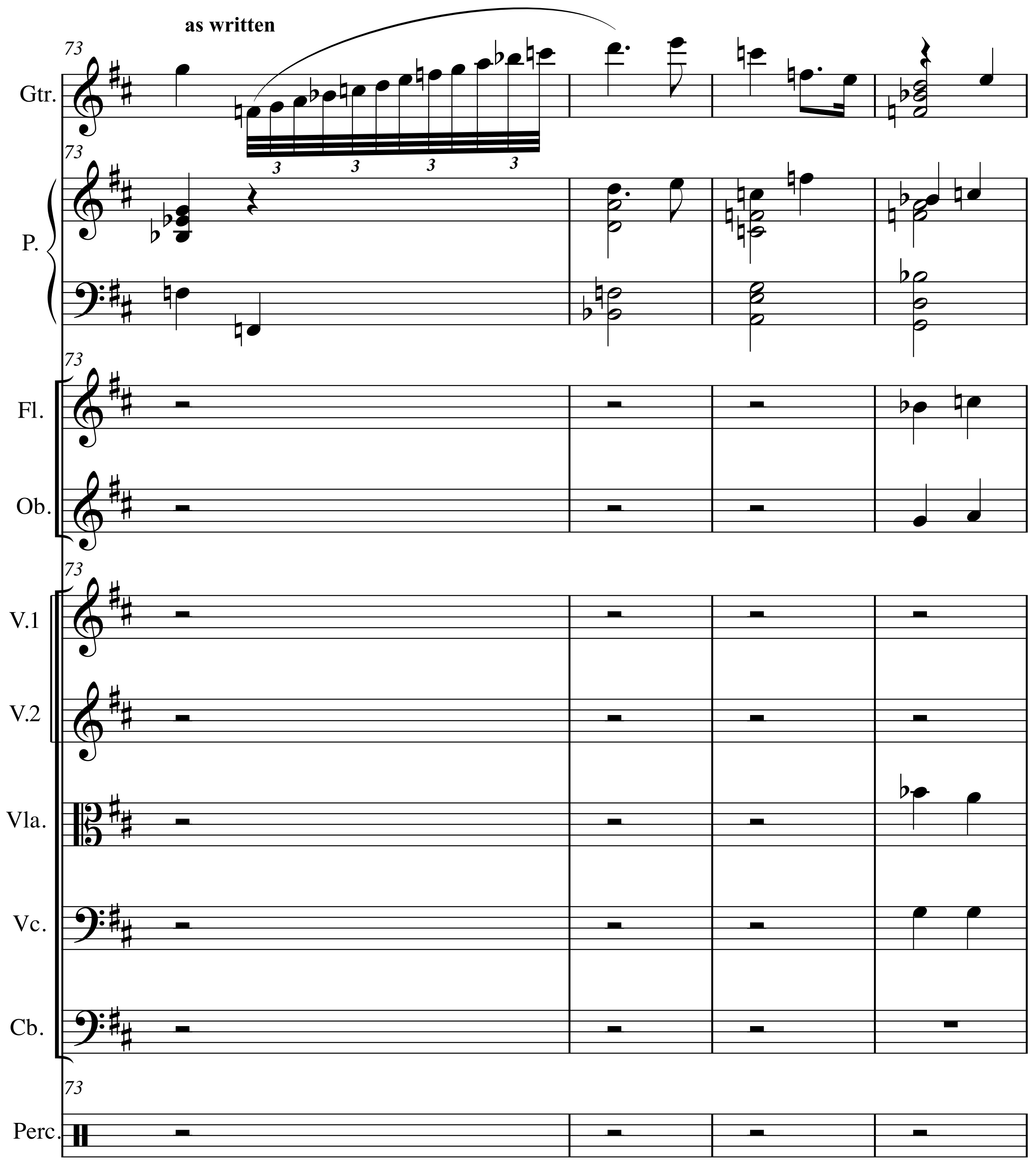

as written
53
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

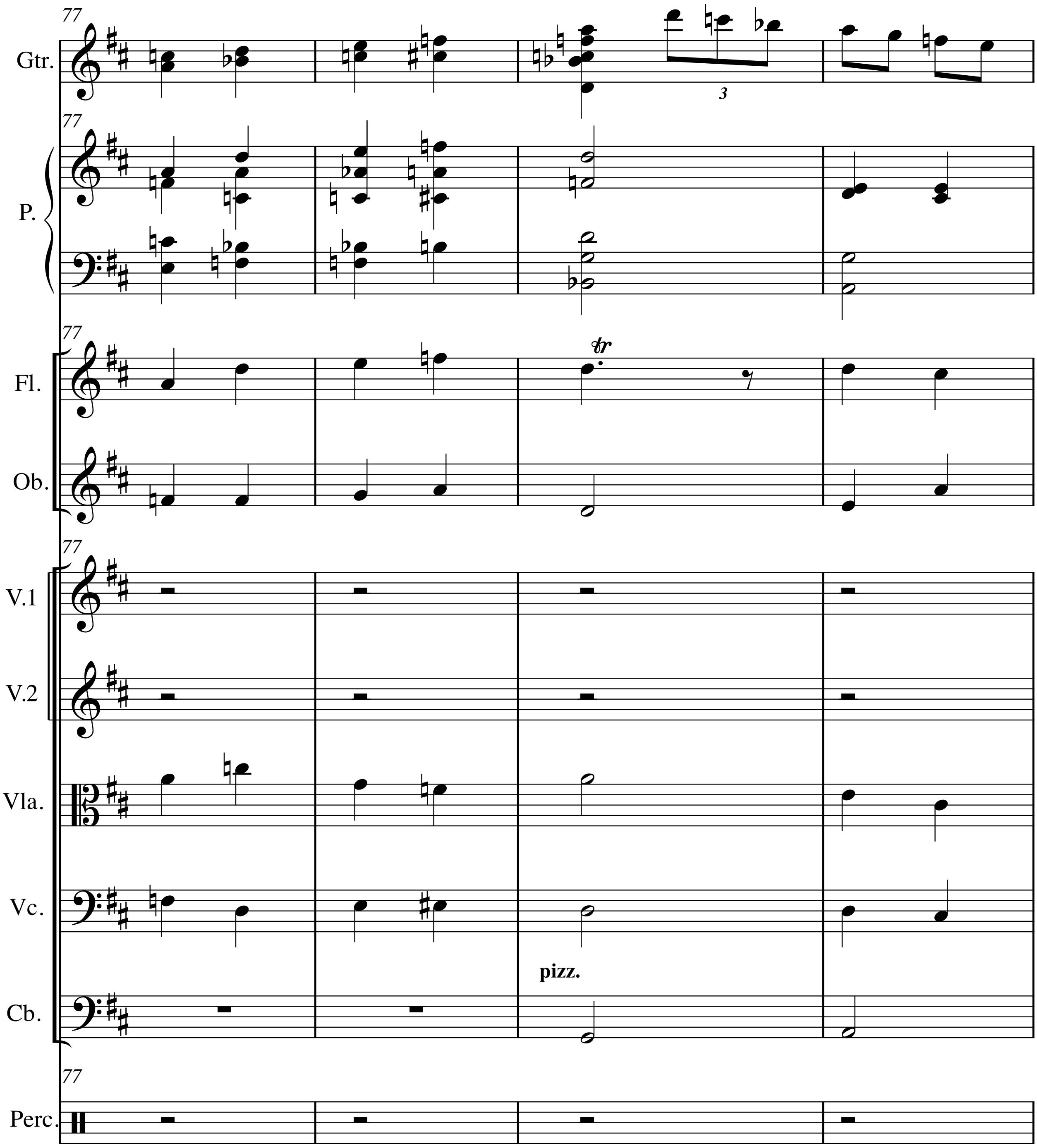

57
Gtr.
D
mp
P.
mf
3
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

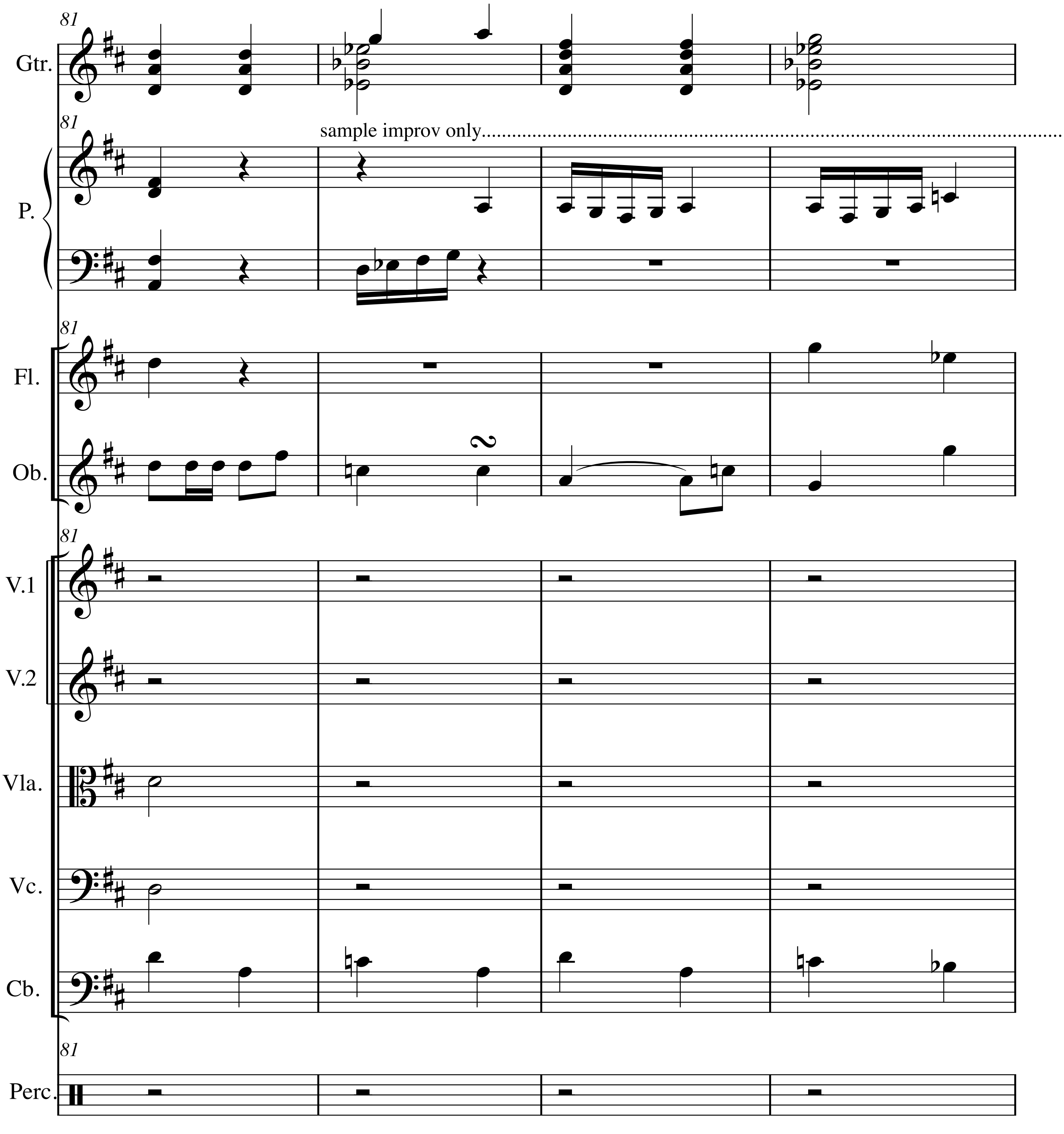

61
Gtr.
61
P.
3
3
61
Fl.
Ob.
61
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
61
Perc.

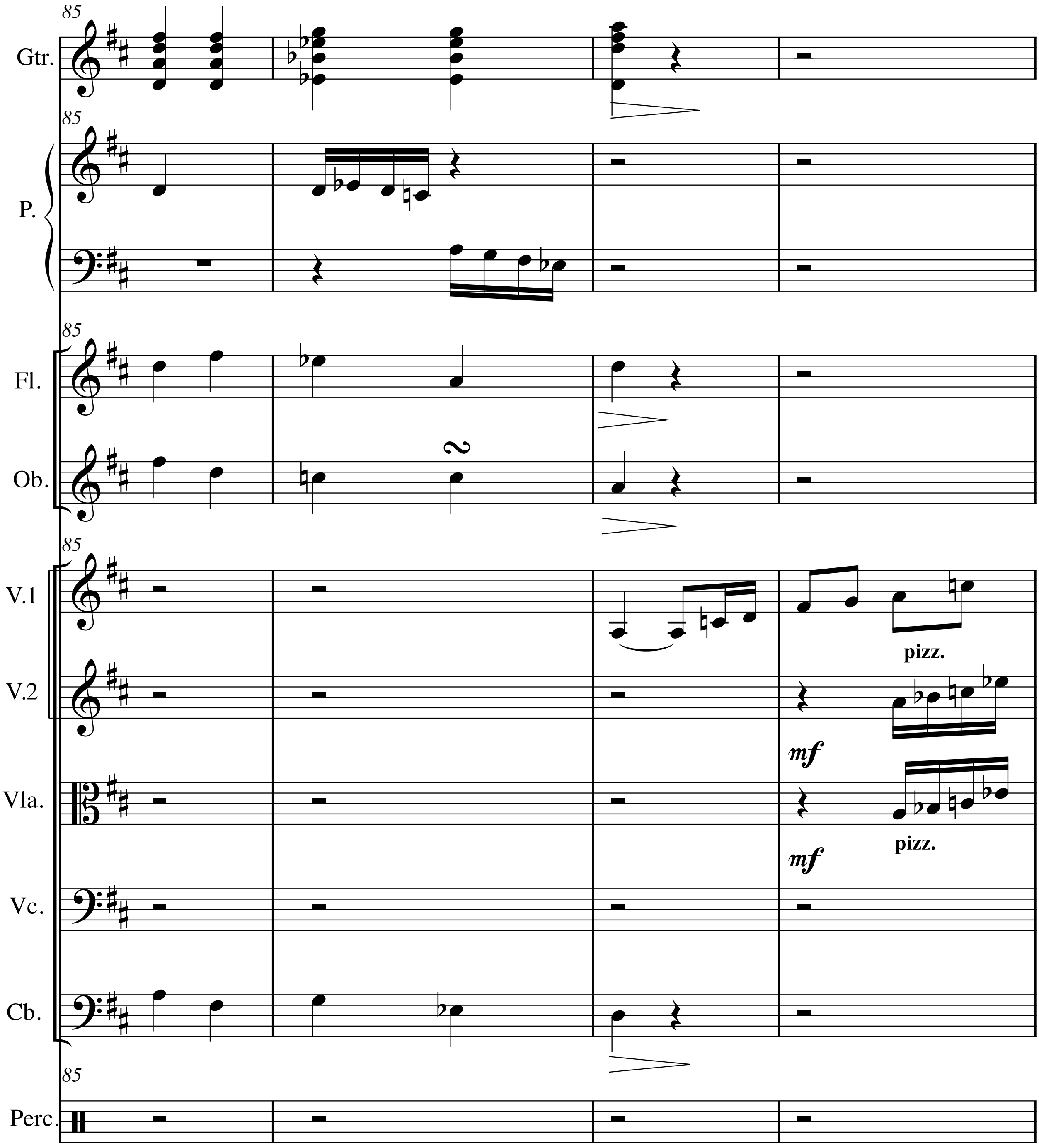

65
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

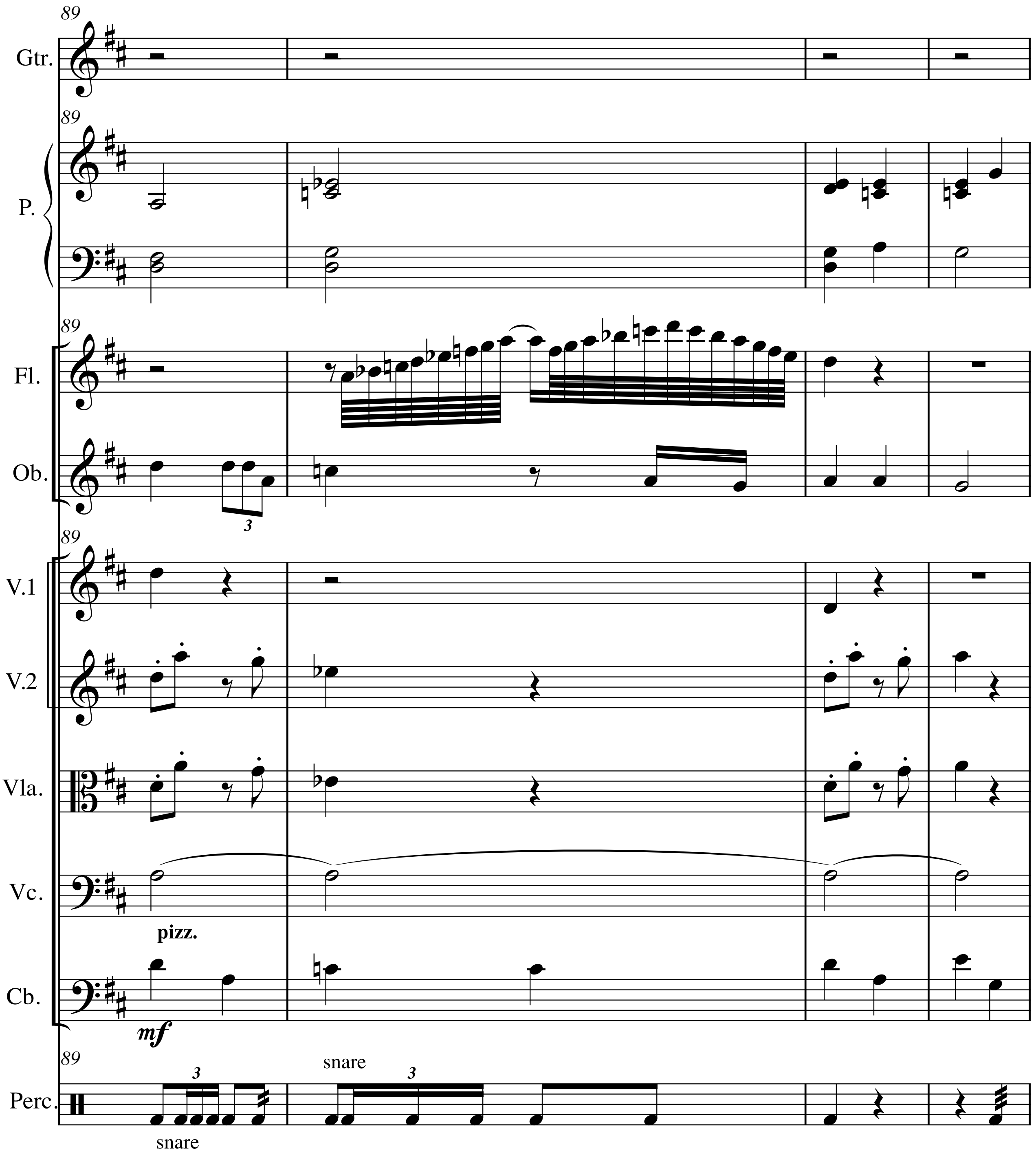

69
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.
tr

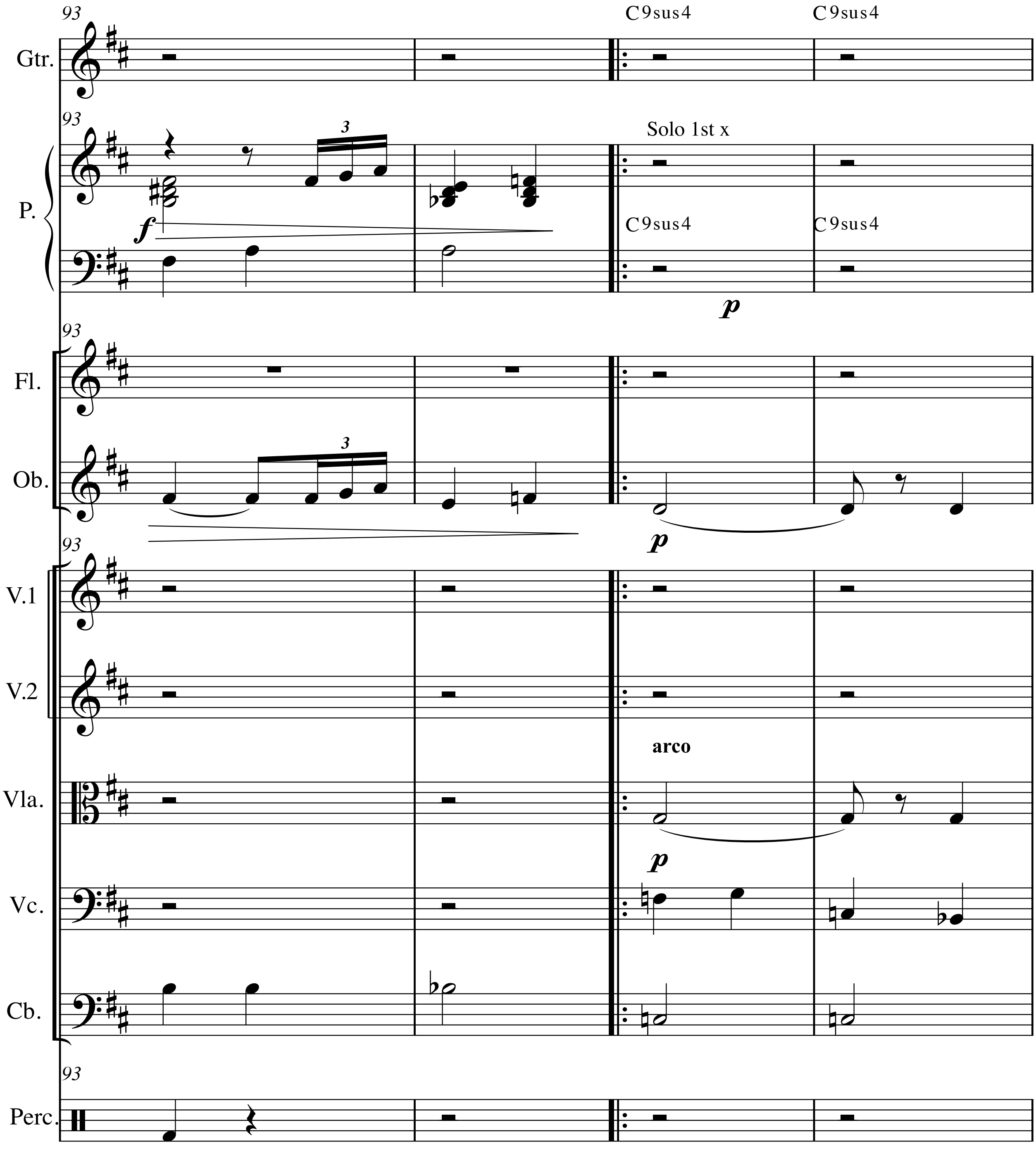

as written
73
Gtr.
3
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.


77
Gtr.
3
P.
Fl.
tr
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
pizz.
Cb.
Perc.

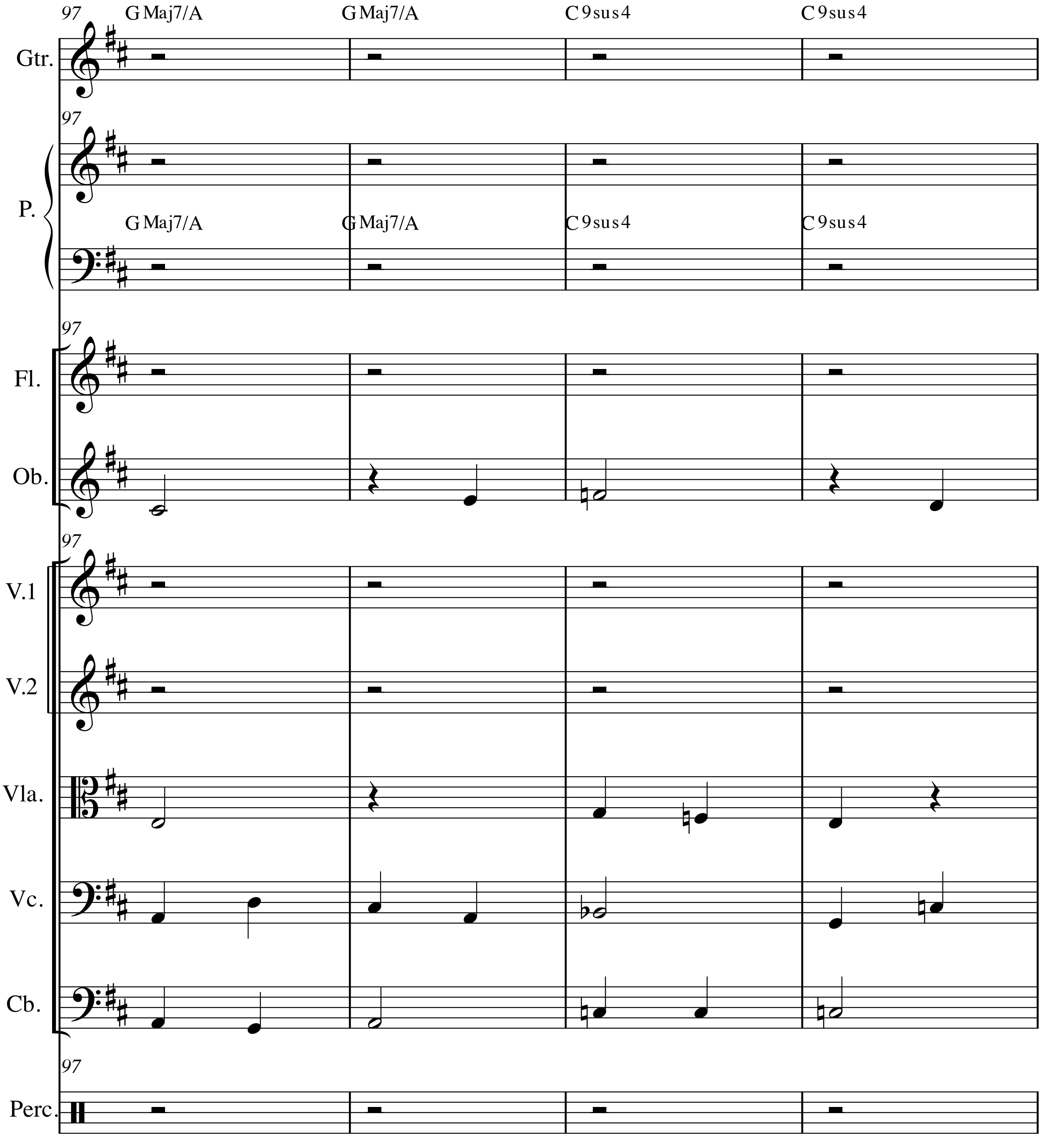

81
Gtr.
P.
sample improv only
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.


85
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.
pizz.
mf
mf
pizz.

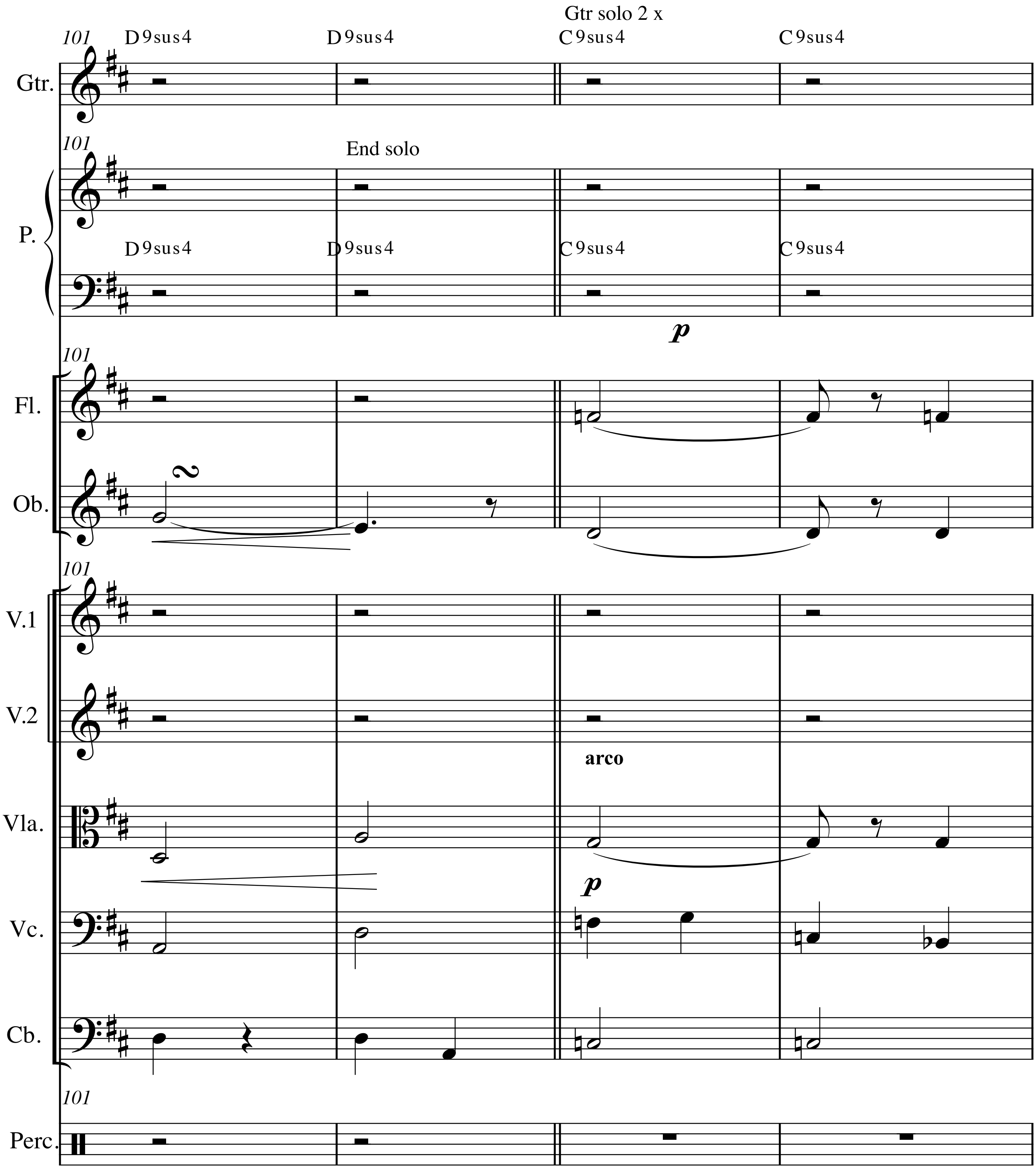

89
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.
3
pizz.
mf
snare
snare


93
Gtr.
C9sus4
C9sus4
P.
Solo 1st x
C9sus4
C9sus4
f
p
3
Fl.
Ob.
p
V.1
V.2
arco
Vla.
p
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

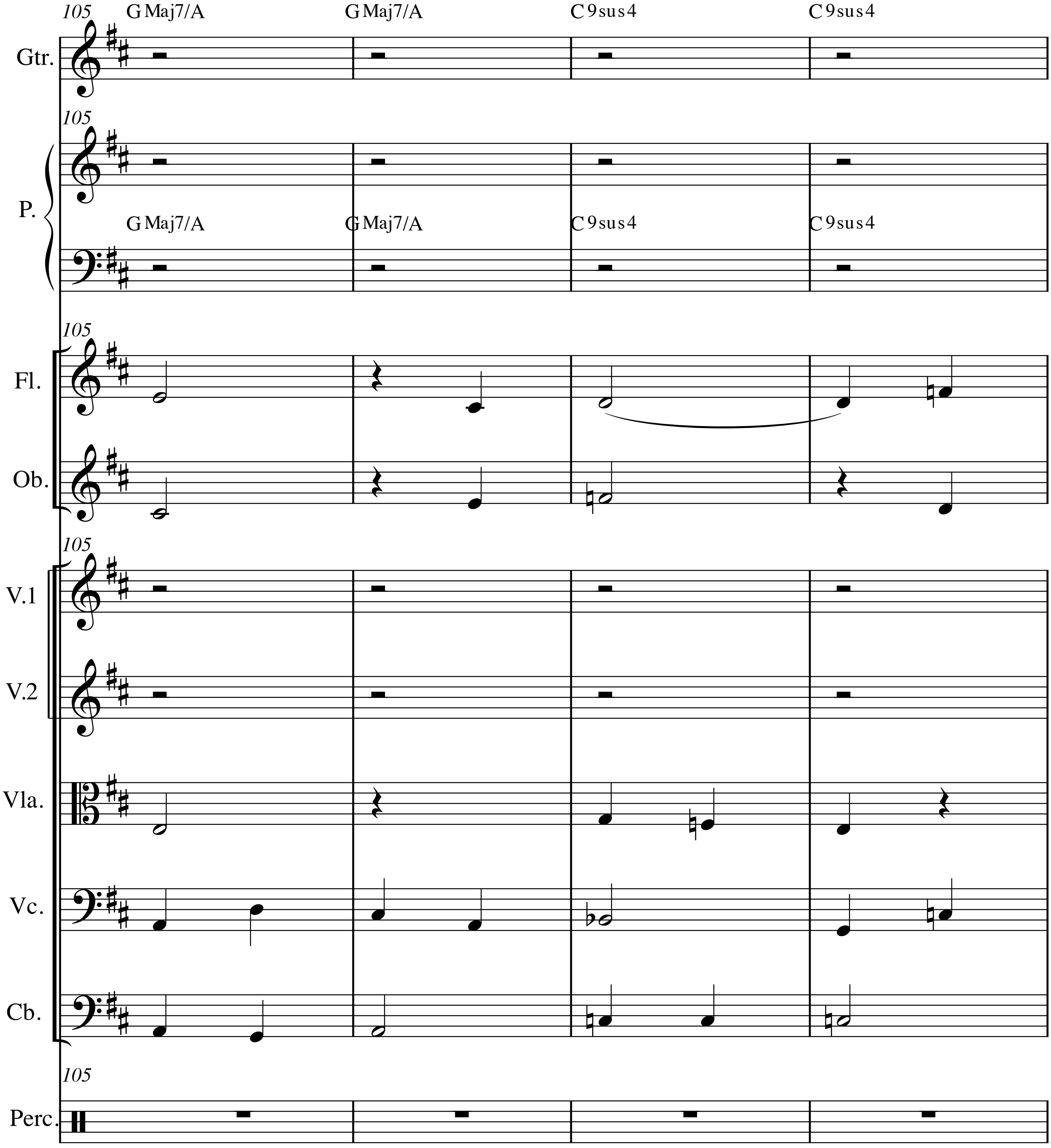
SILK ROAD M.2


97
GMaj7/A
GMaj7/A
C9sus4
C9sus4
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

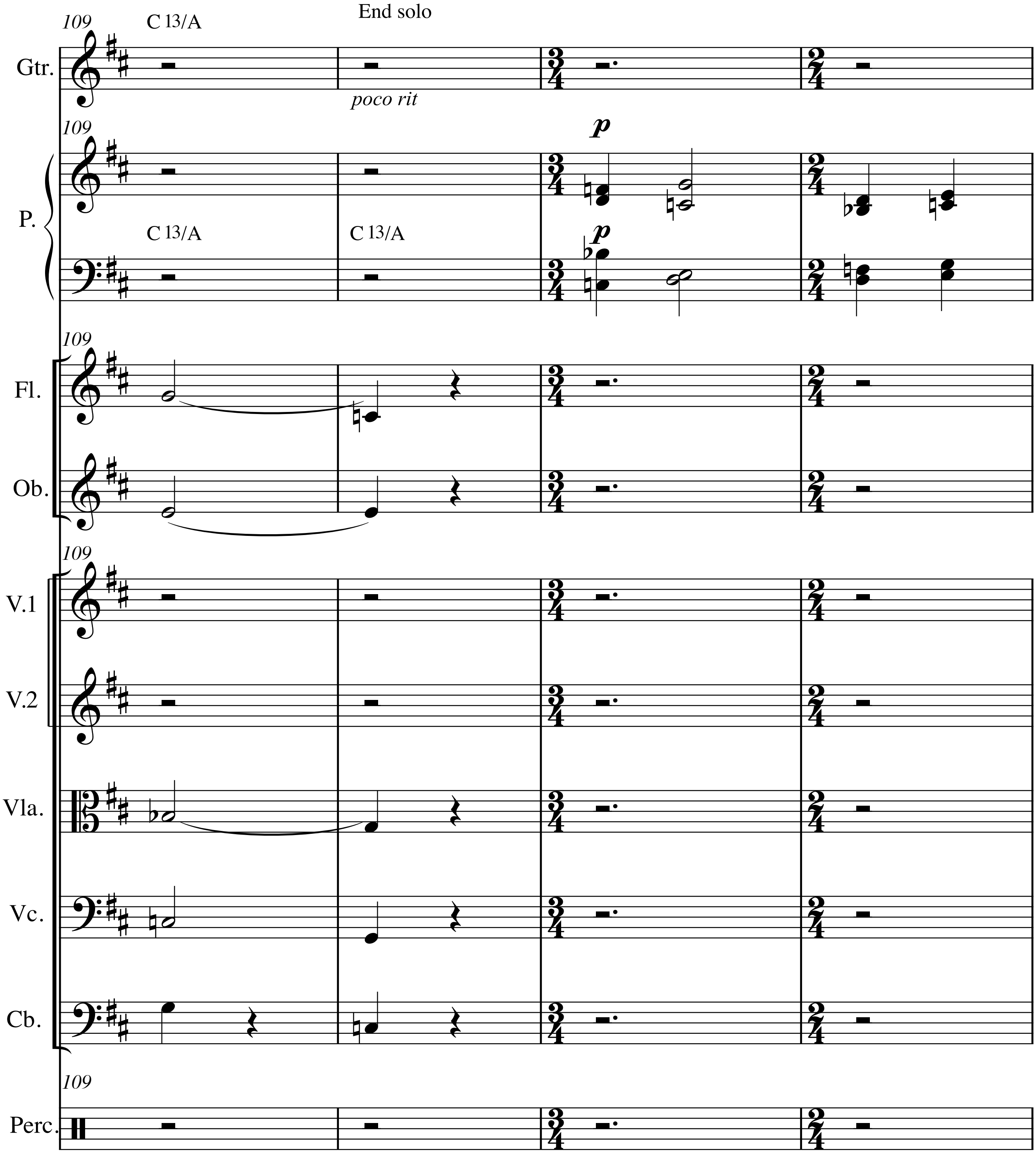
SILK ROAD M.2

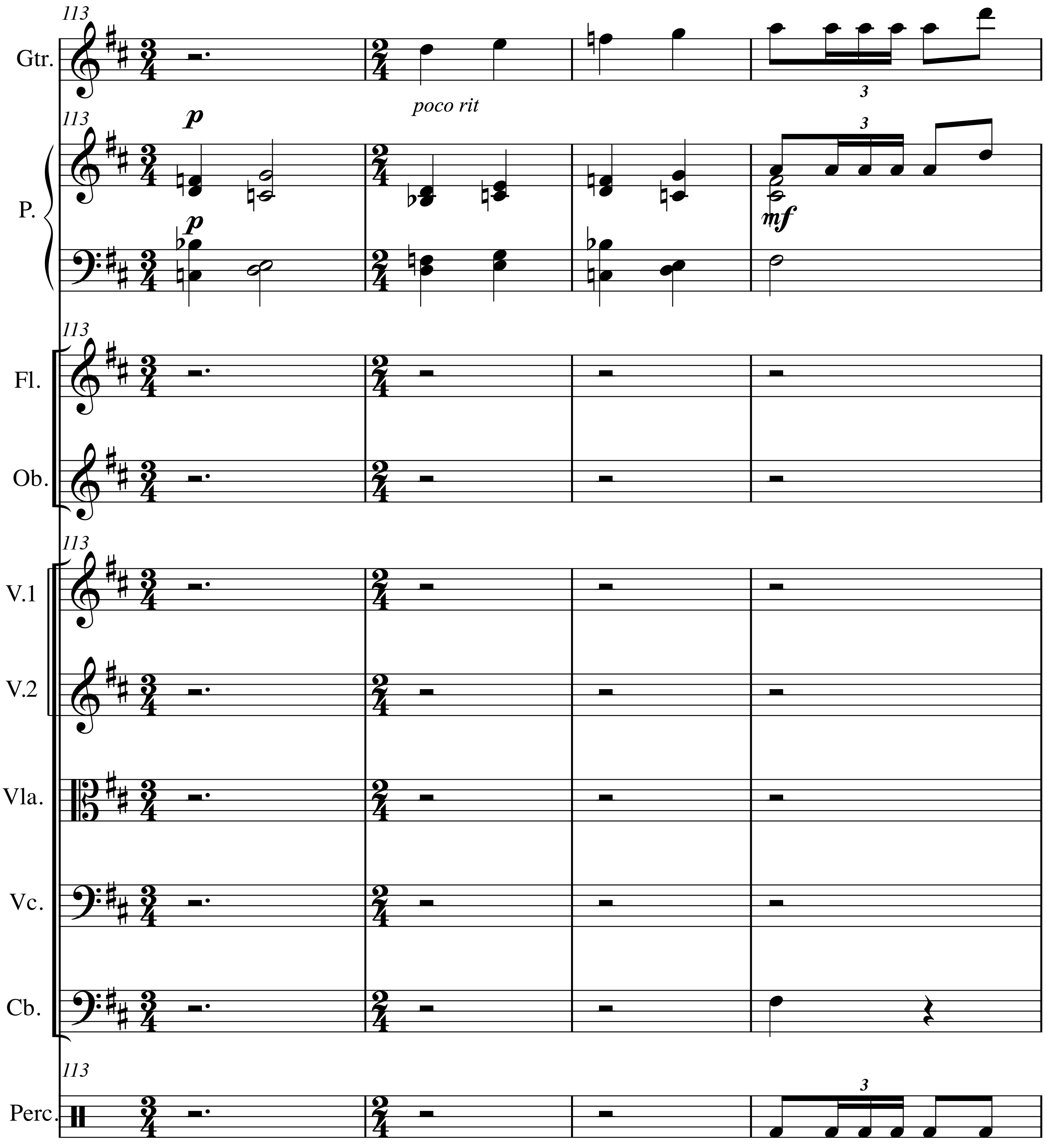

Gtr solo 2 x
101
D9sus4
D9sus4
C9sus4
C9sus4
Gtr.
End solo
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
arco
Vla.
p
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

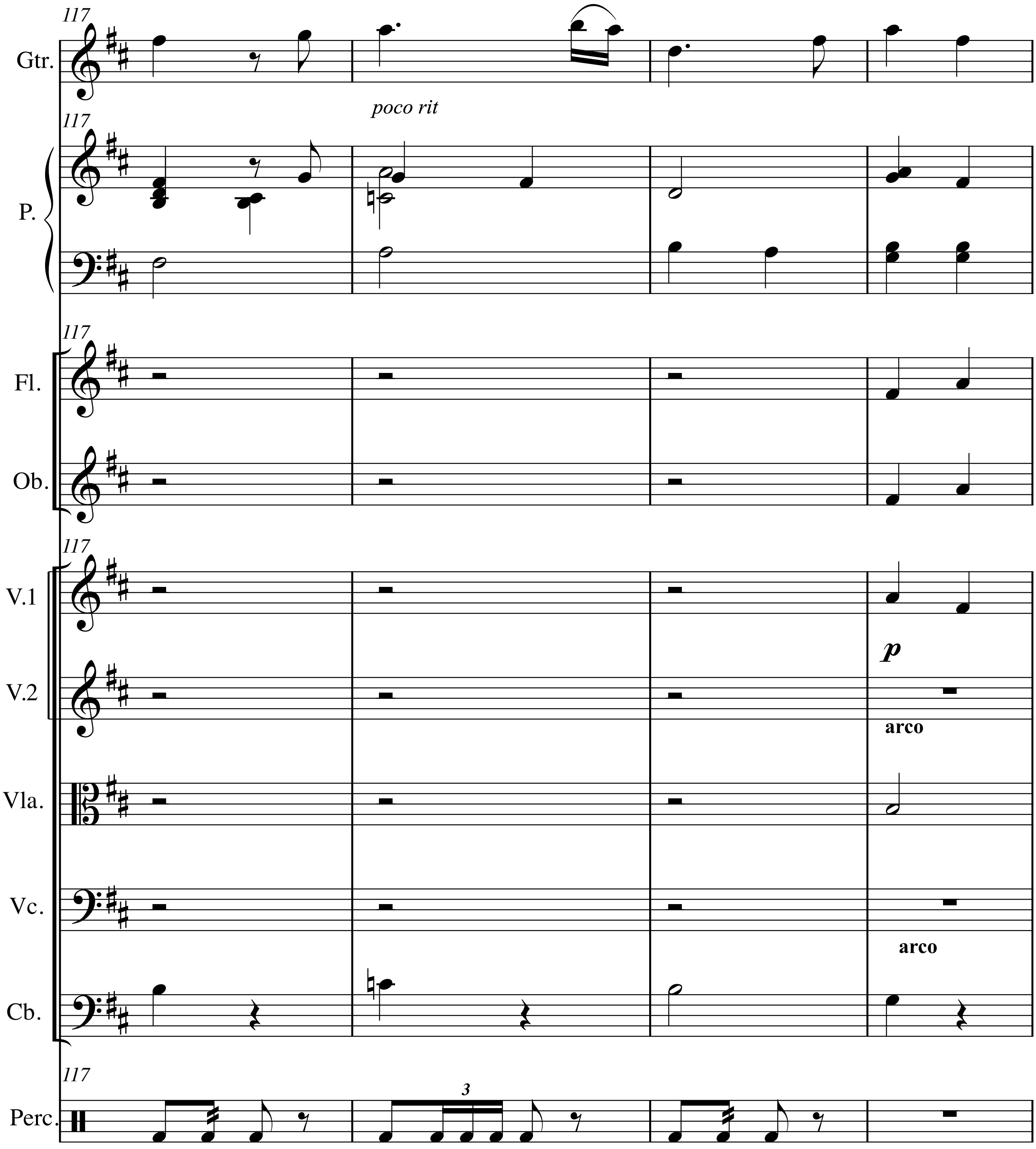
SILK ROAD M.2

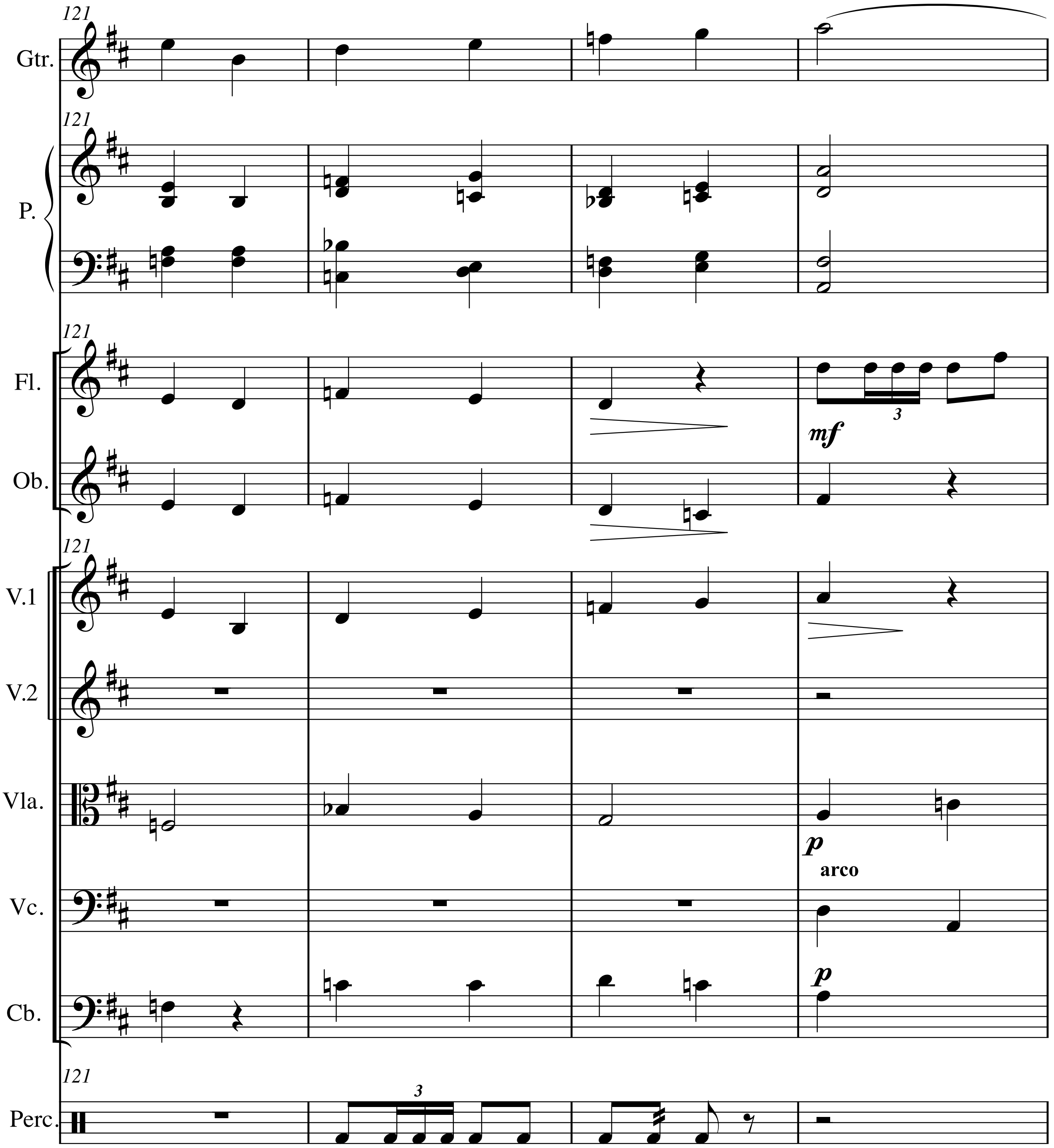

105
GMaj7/A
GMaj7/A
C9sus4
C9sus4
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

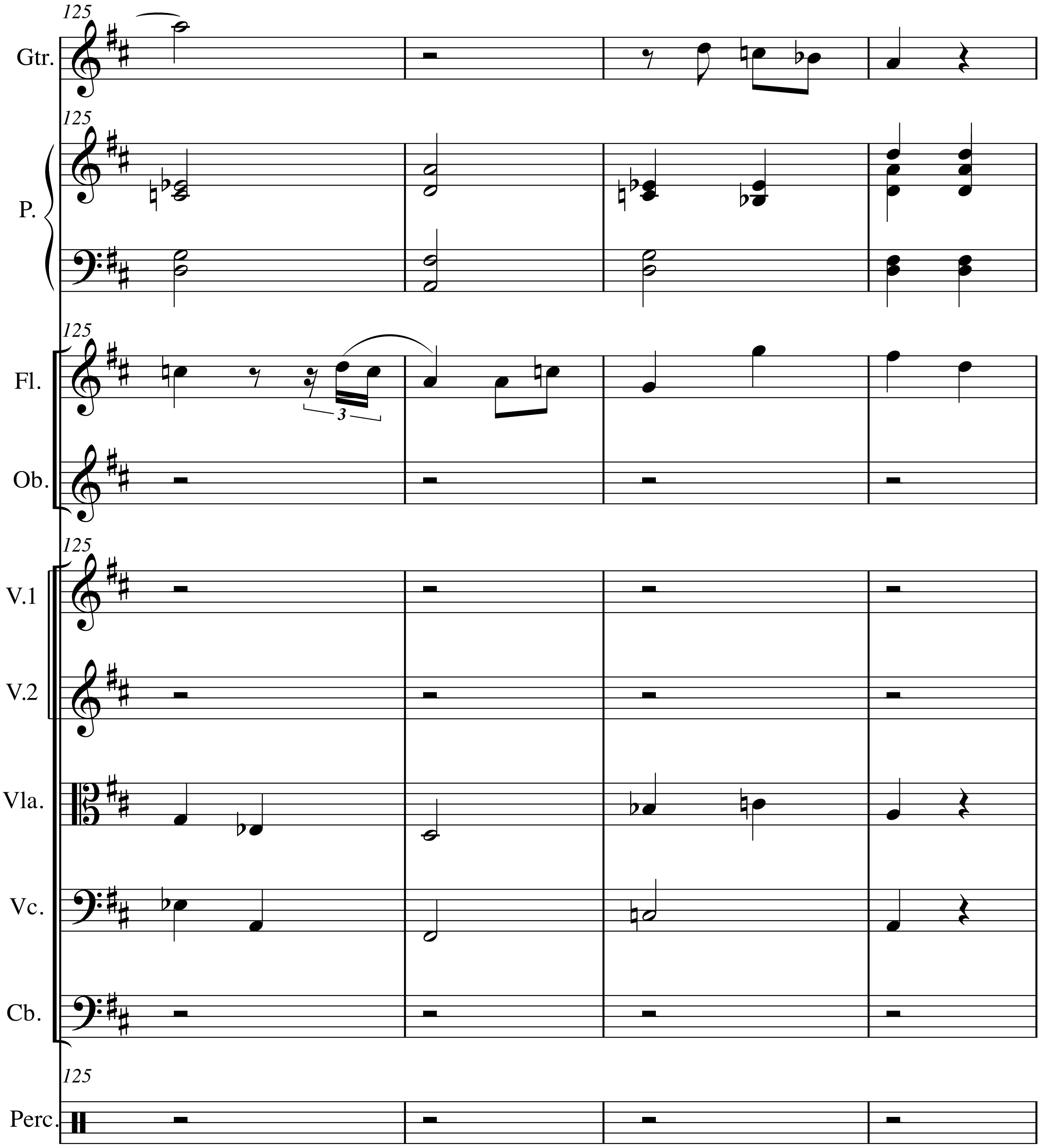
SILK ROAD M.2

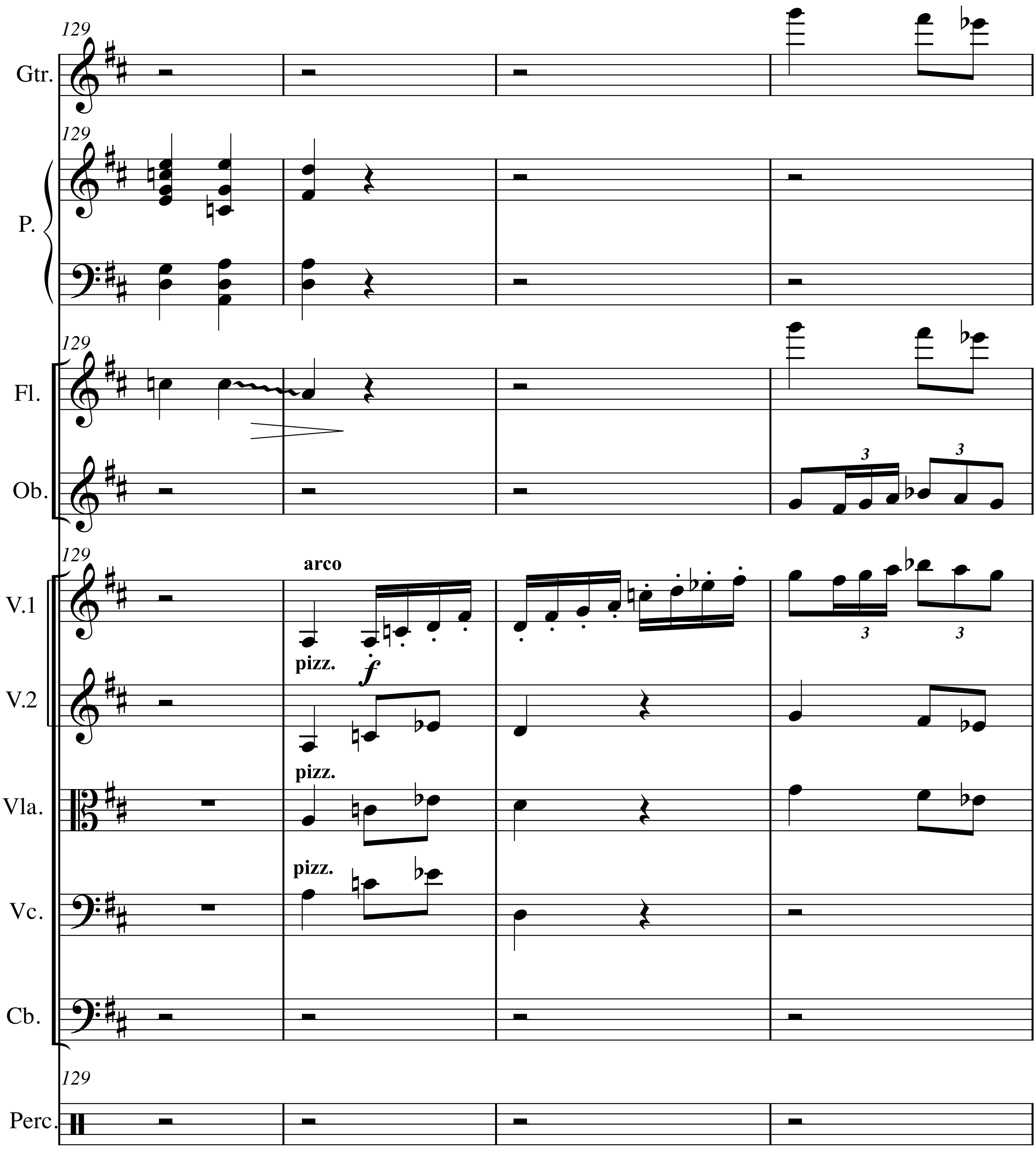

109
C 13/A
End solo
Gtr.
poco rit
p
P.
C 13/A
C 13/A
p
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

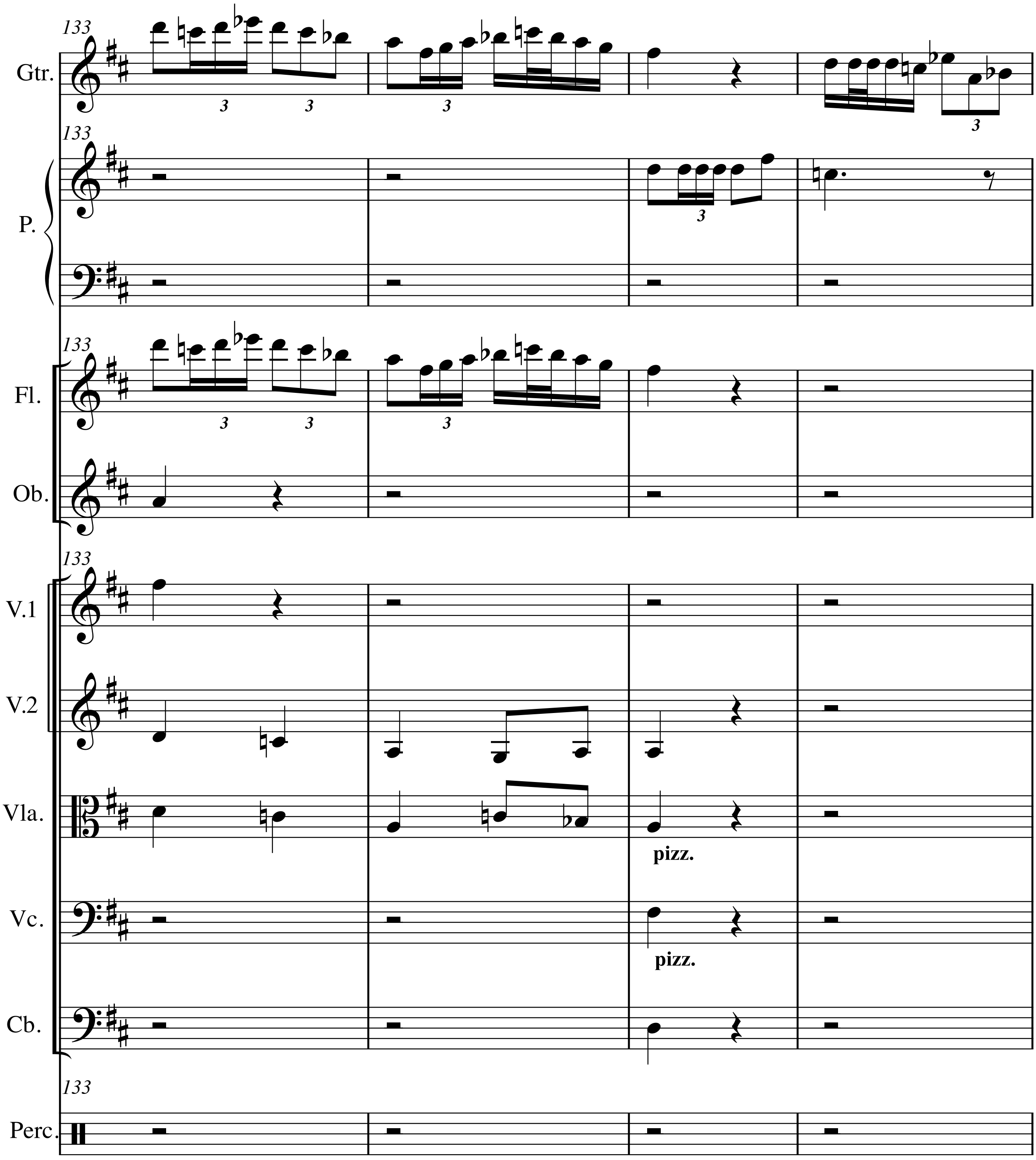

113
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.
p
poco rit
mf
3

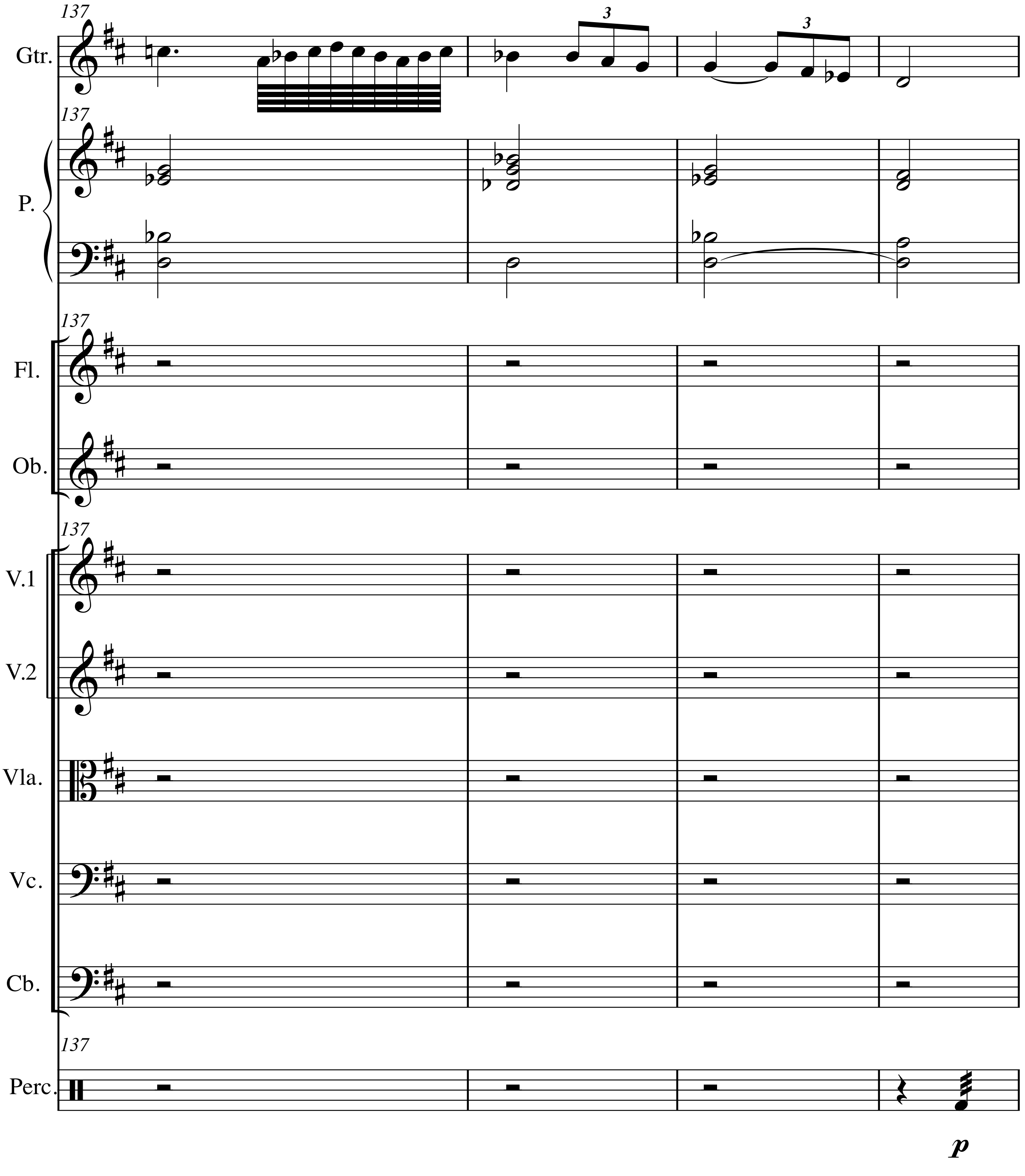

117
Gtr.
poco rit
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
p
V.2
arco
Vla.
Vc.
arco
Cb.
Perc.
3

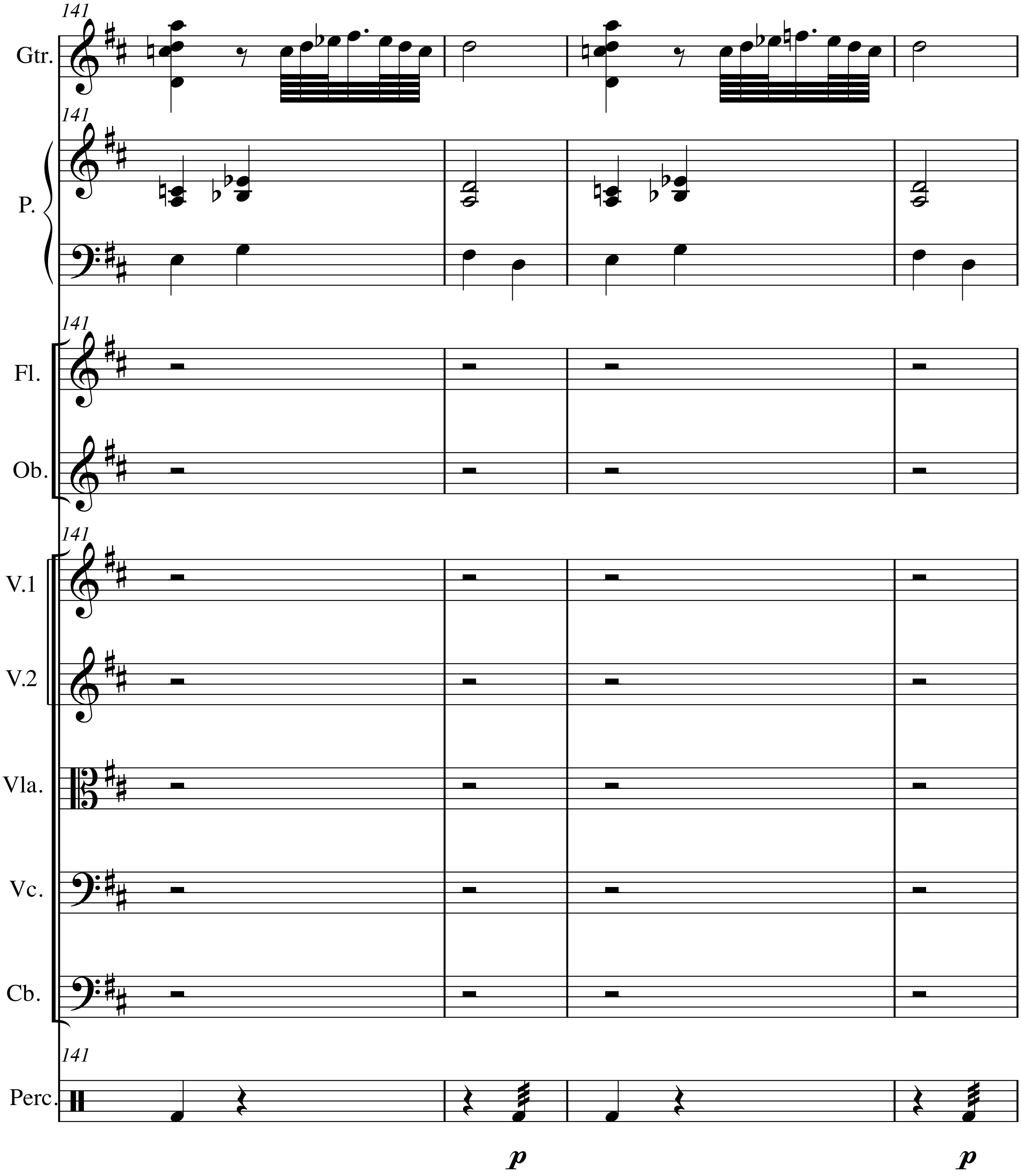

121
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.
mf
3
p
arco
p
3

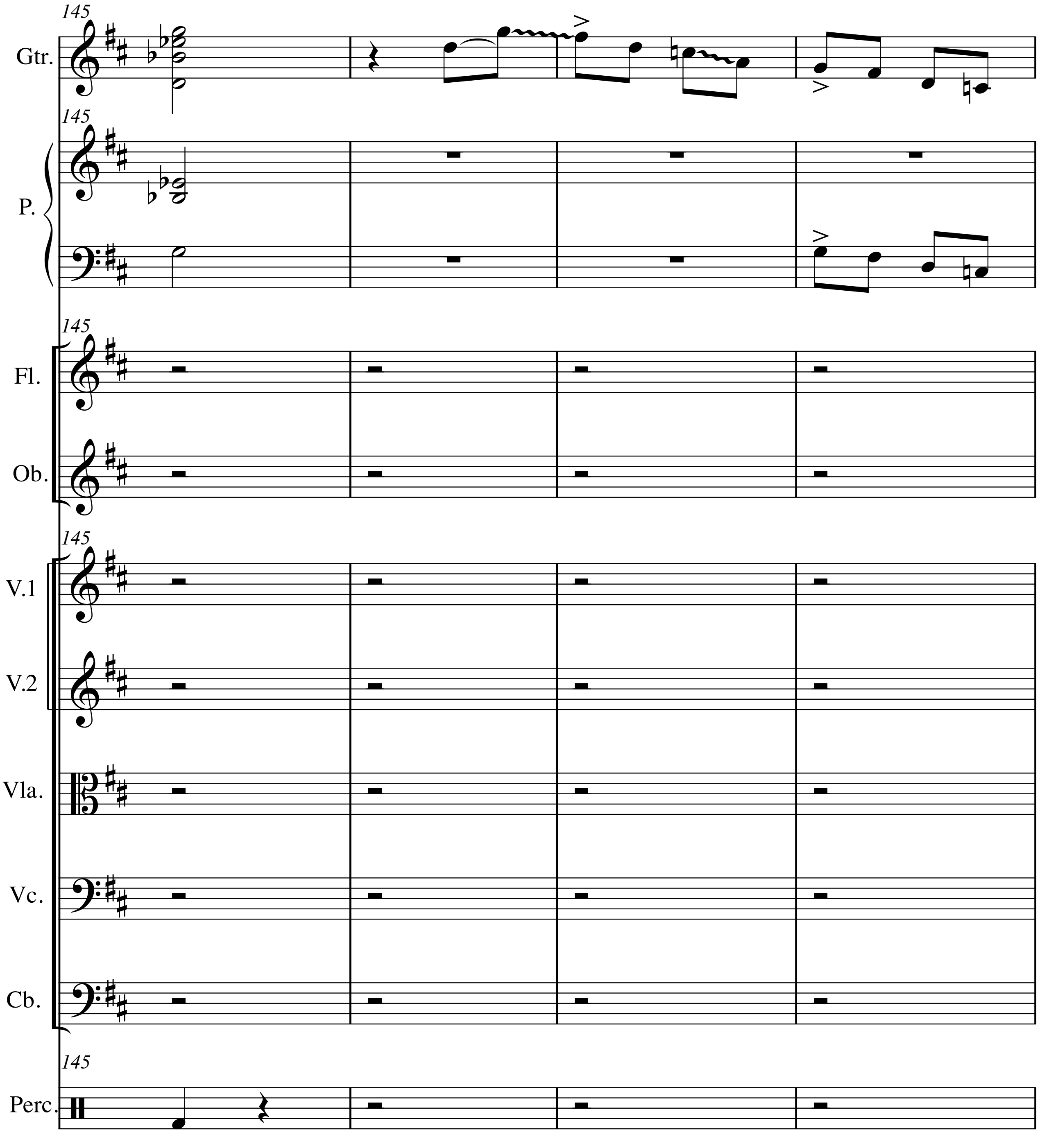

125
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
3
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.

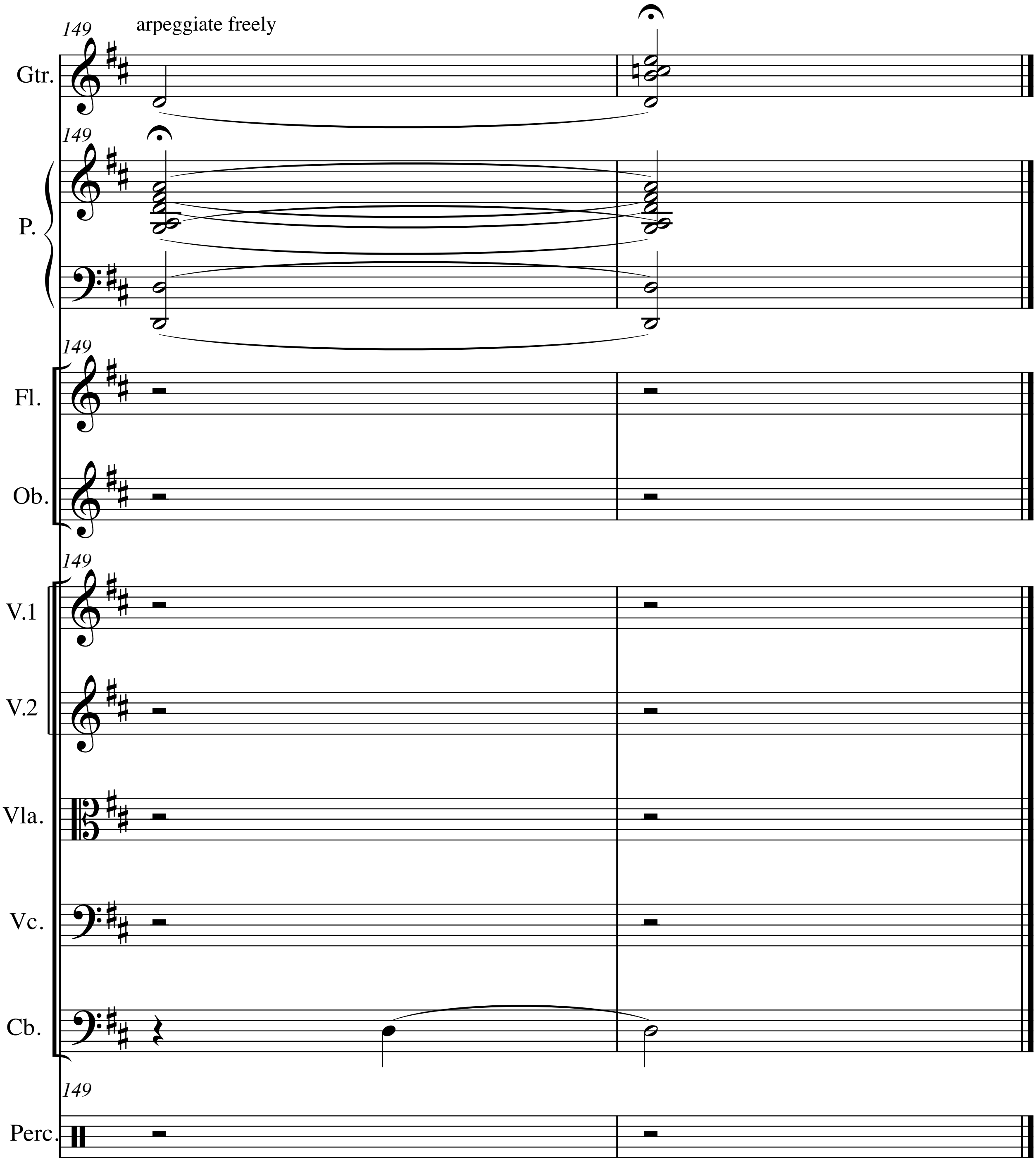

129
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
arco
pizz.
V.2
pizz.
Vla.
pizz.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.
3
3
f


133
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.
3
pizz.


137
Gtr.
3
3
137
P.
137
Fl.
Ob.
137
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
137
Perc.
p


141
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.
p
p


145
Gtr.
P.
Fl.
Ob.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Perc.


149
arpeggiate freely
Gtr.
149
P.
149
Fl.
Ob.
149
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
149
Perc.

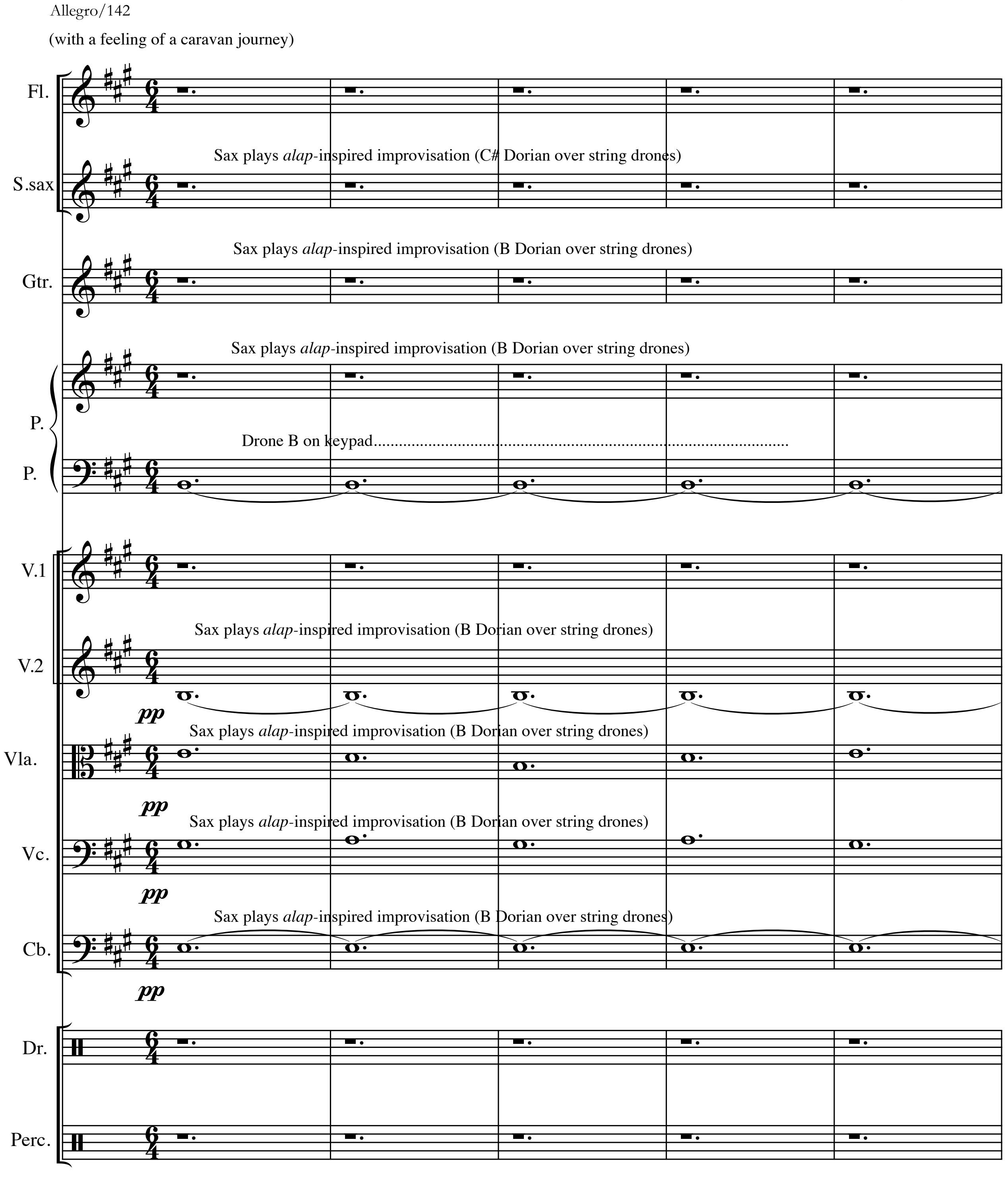
APPENDIX 9

SILK ROAD

Double Concerto for Guitar/Piano & Chamber Orchestra

MOVEMENT 3

Guy Strazzullo
(aka Guy Strazz)


Allegro/142
(with a feeling of a caravan journey)
Fl.
S.sax
Sax plays *alap*-inspired improvisation (C# Dorian over string drones)
Gtr.
Sax plays *alap*-inspired improvisation (B Dorian over string drones)
Sax plays *alap*-inspired improvisation (B Dorian over string drones)
P.
Drone B on keypad...
P.
V.1
Sax plays *alap*-inspired improvisation (B Dorian over string drones)
V.2
pp
Sax plays *alap*-inspired improvisation (B Dorian over string drones)
Vla.
pp
Sax plays *alap*-inspired improvisation (B Dorian over string drones)
Vc.
pp
Sax plays *alap*-inspired improvisation (B Dorian over string drones)
Cb.
pp
Dr.
Perc.

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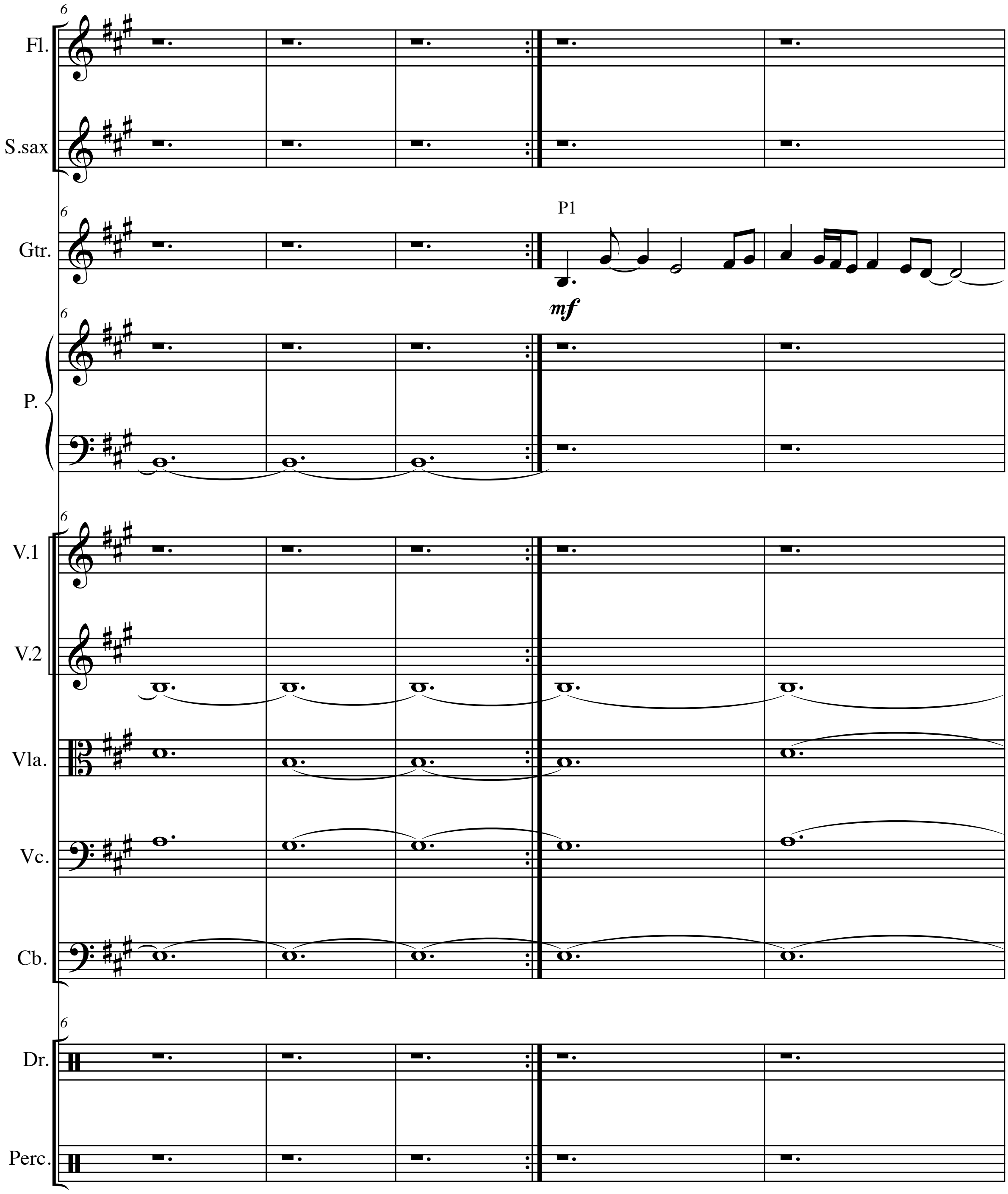
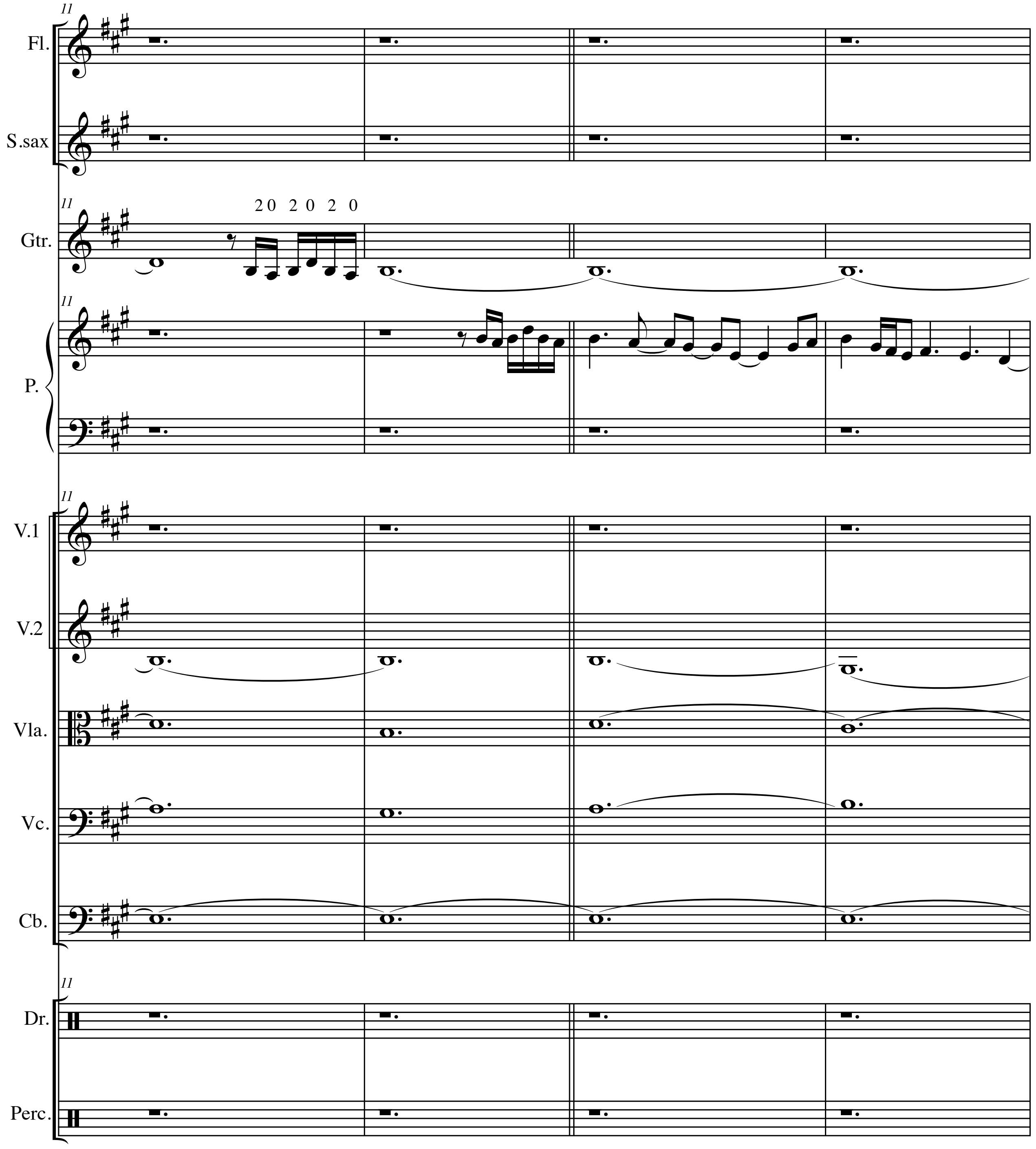
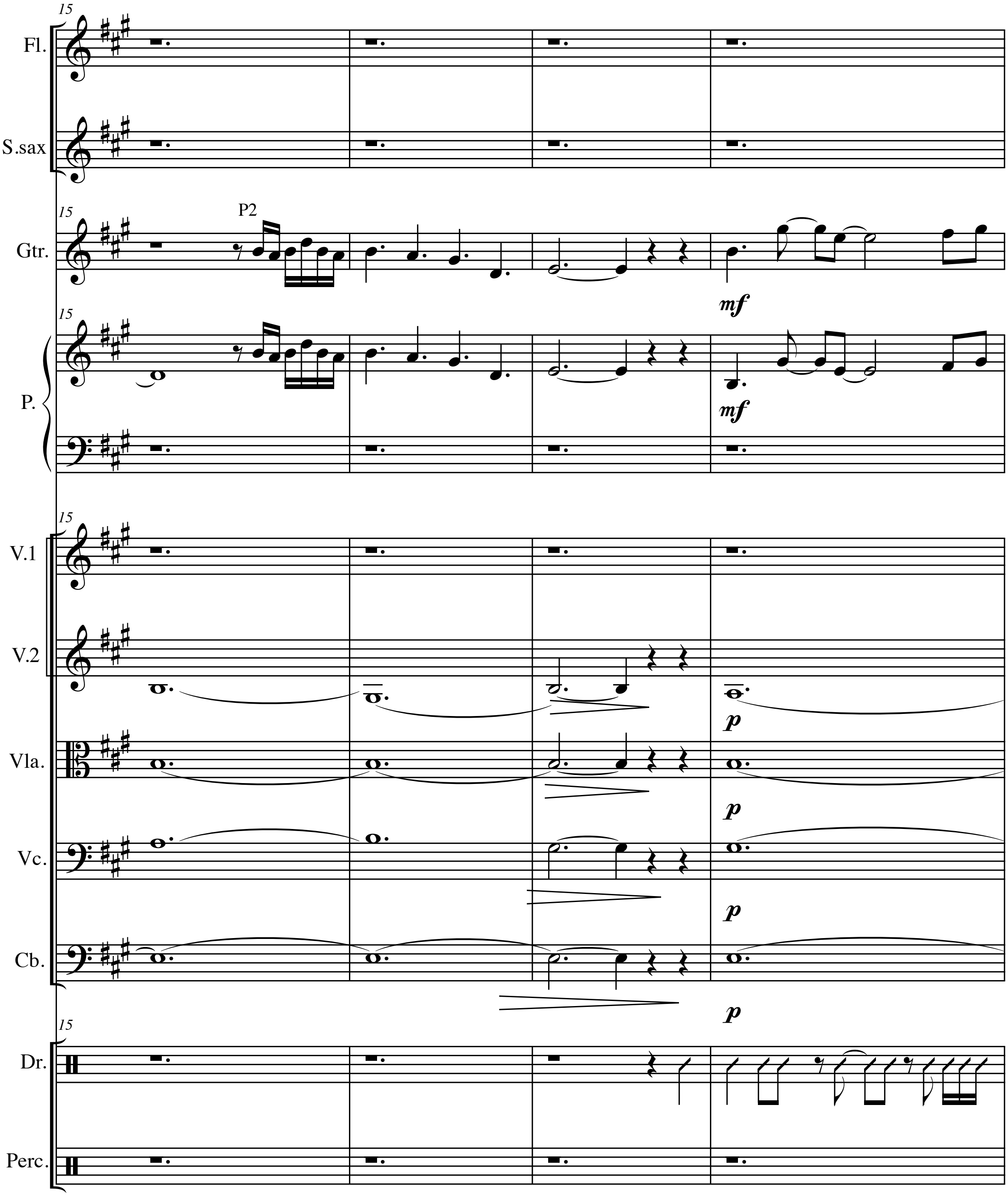
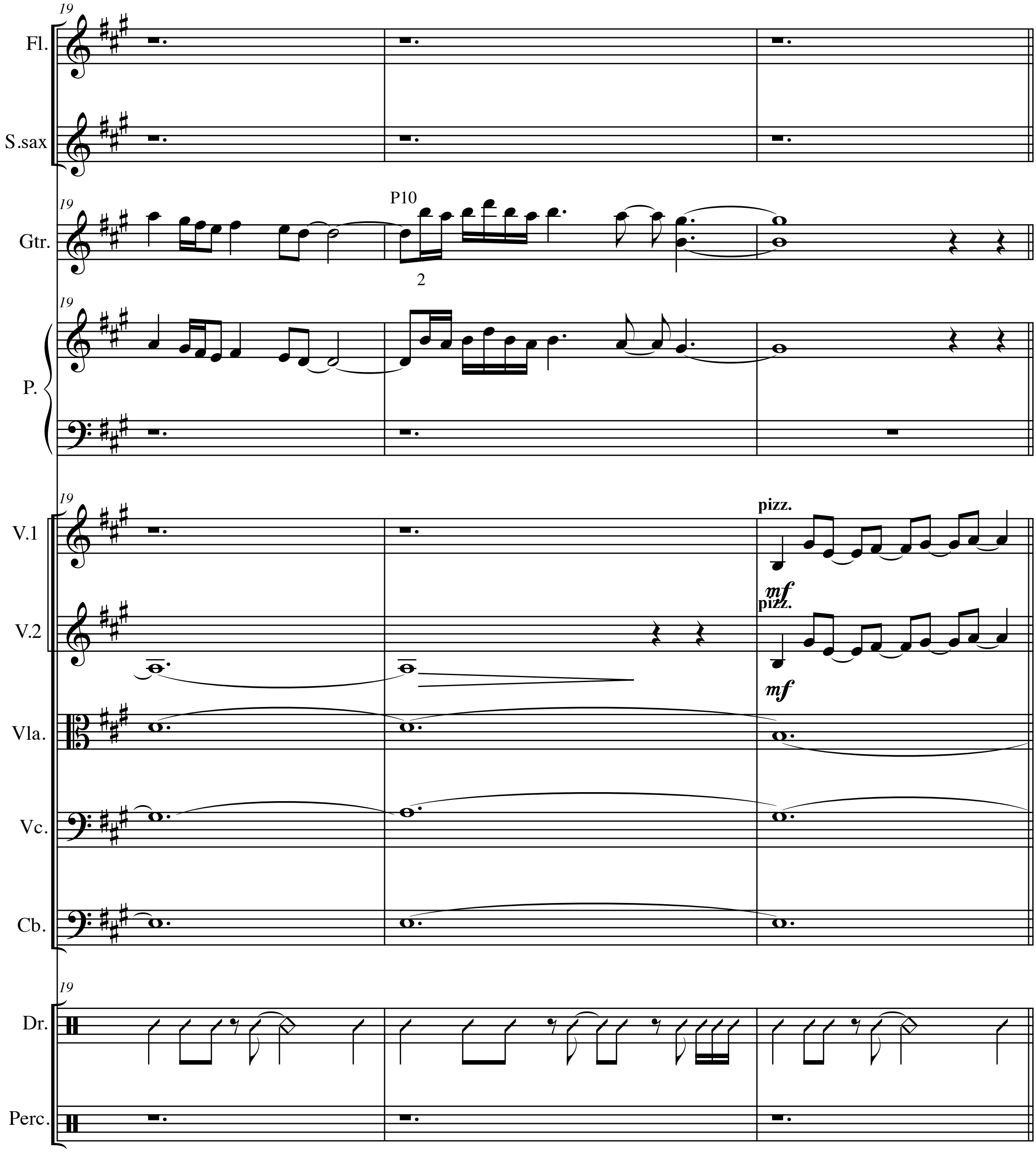

6
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P1
mf
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

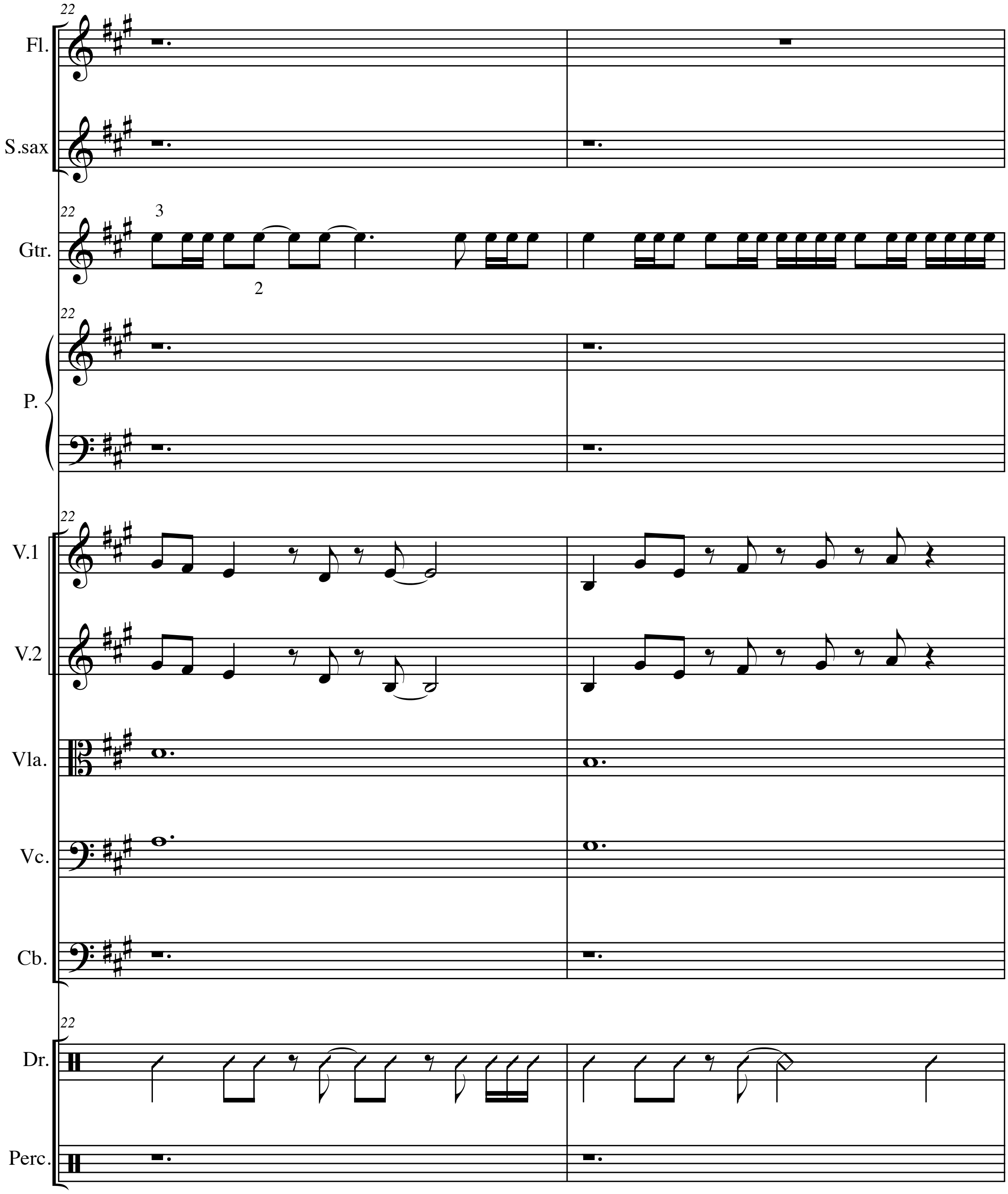
SILK ROAD M.3

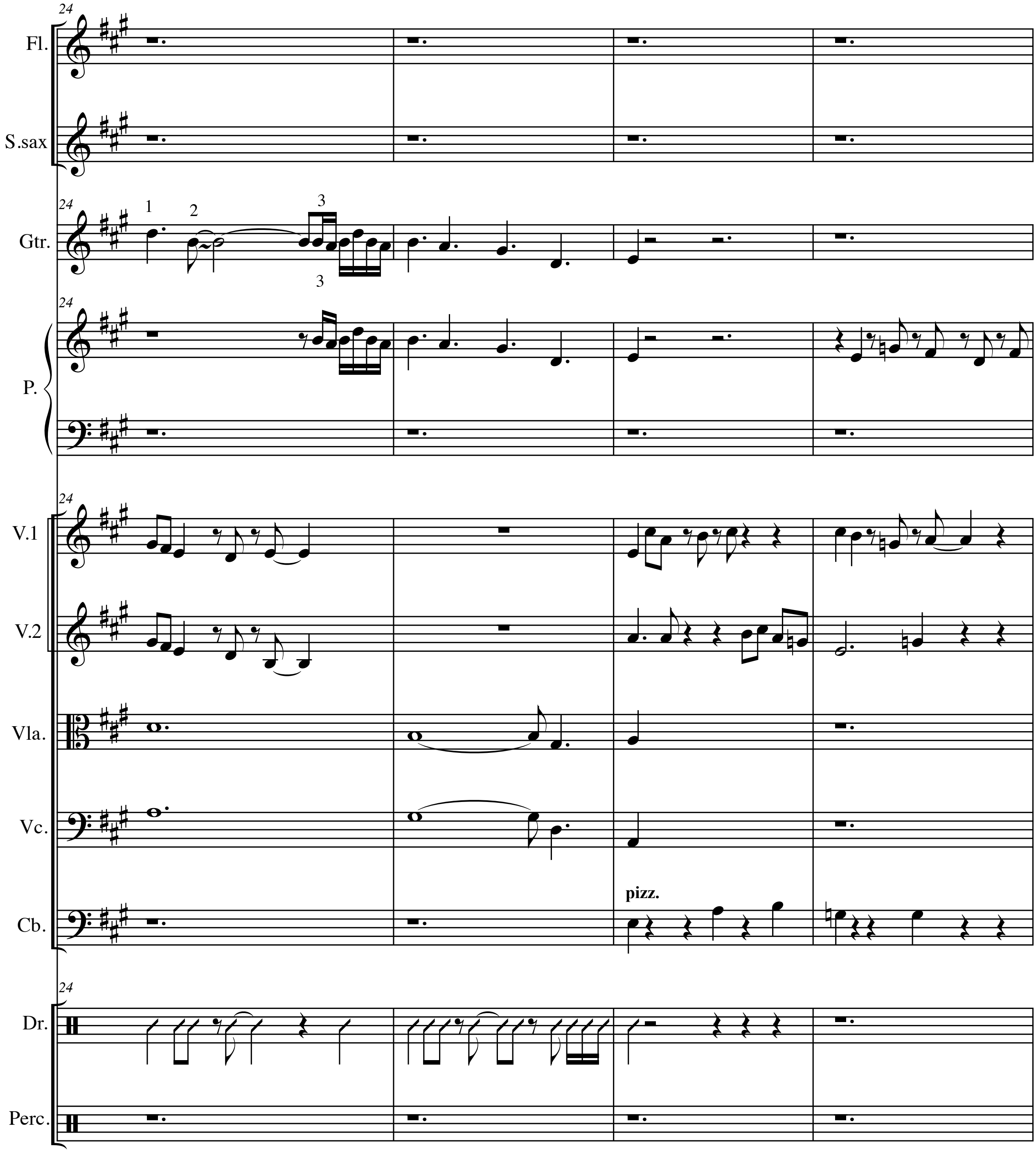

11
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
2 0 2 0 2 0
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

SILK ROAD M.3

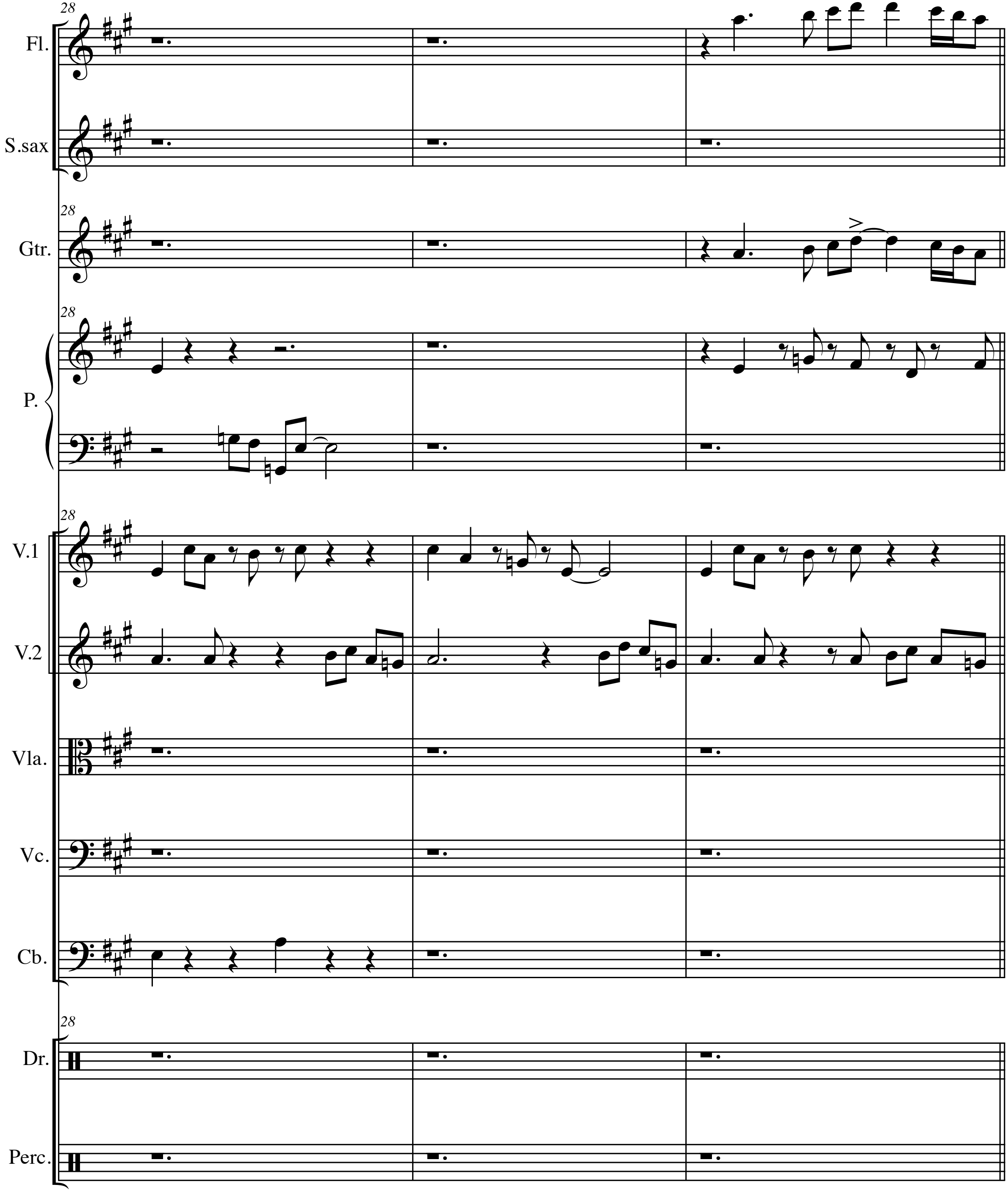

15
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P2
mf
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
p
Dr.
Perc.


19
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P10
2
P.
V.1
pizz.
mf
V.2
pizz.
mf
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

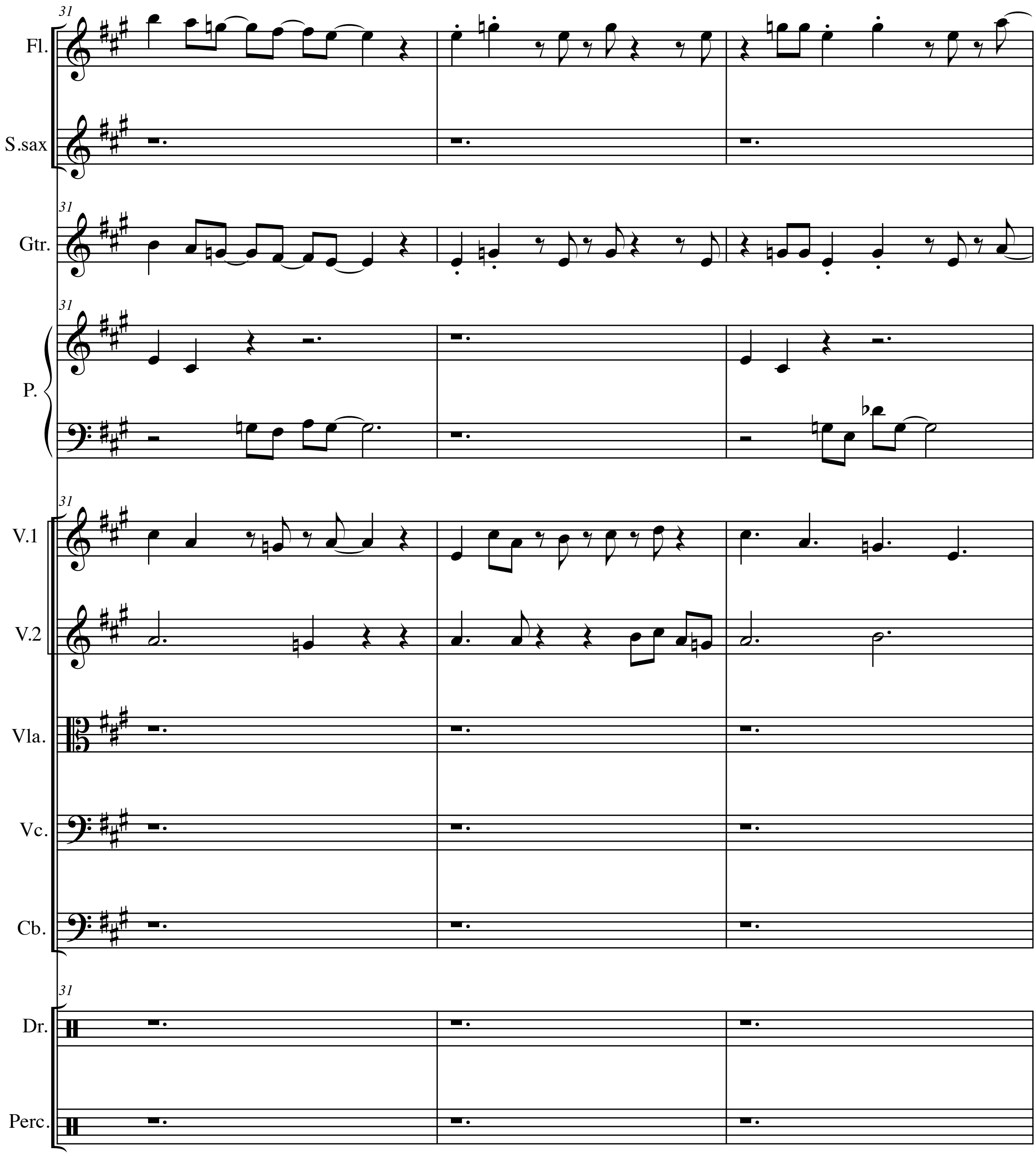

22
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
3
2
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

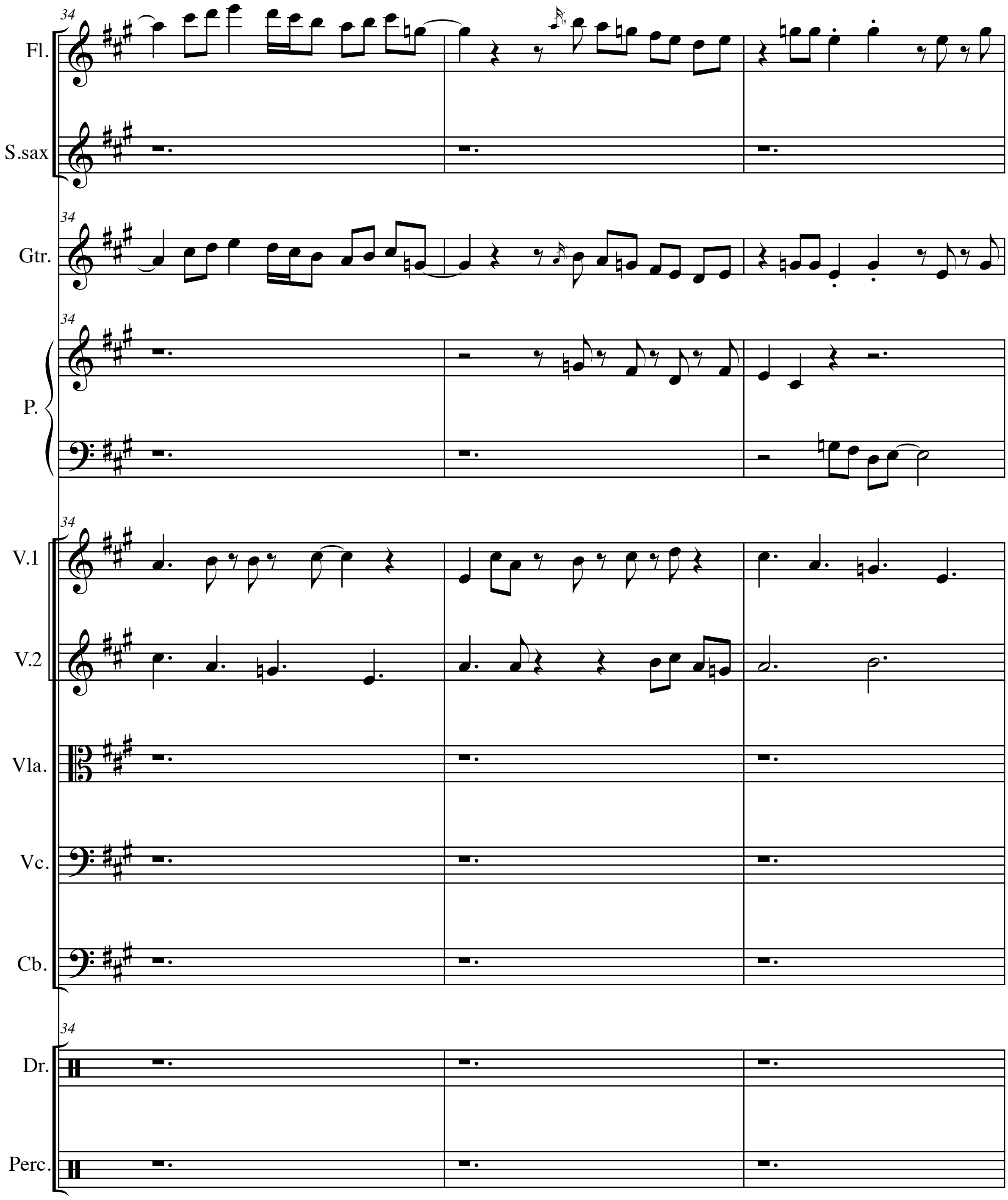

24
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
1
2
3
3
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
pizz.
Dr.
Perc.

SILK ROAD M.3

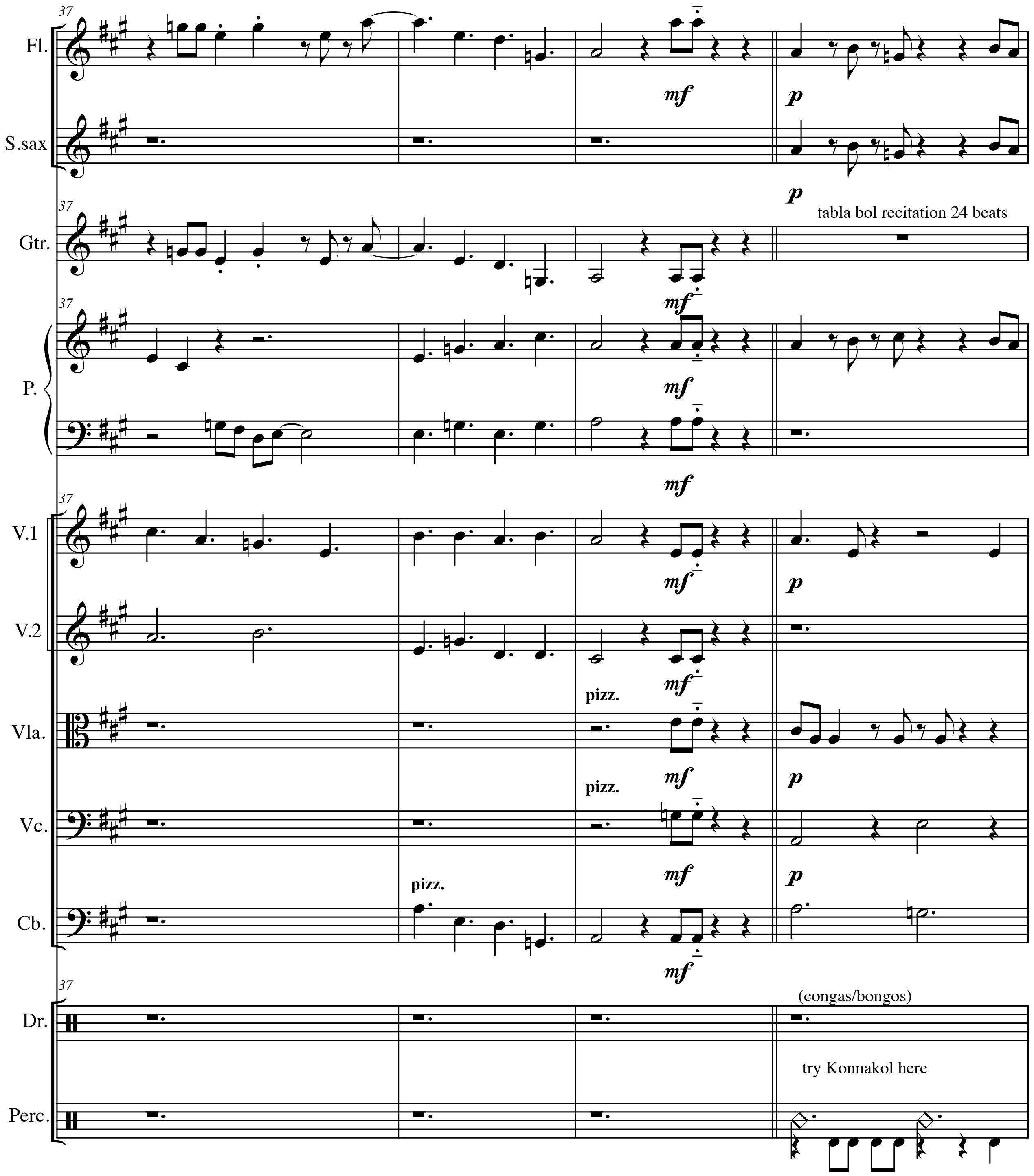

28
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

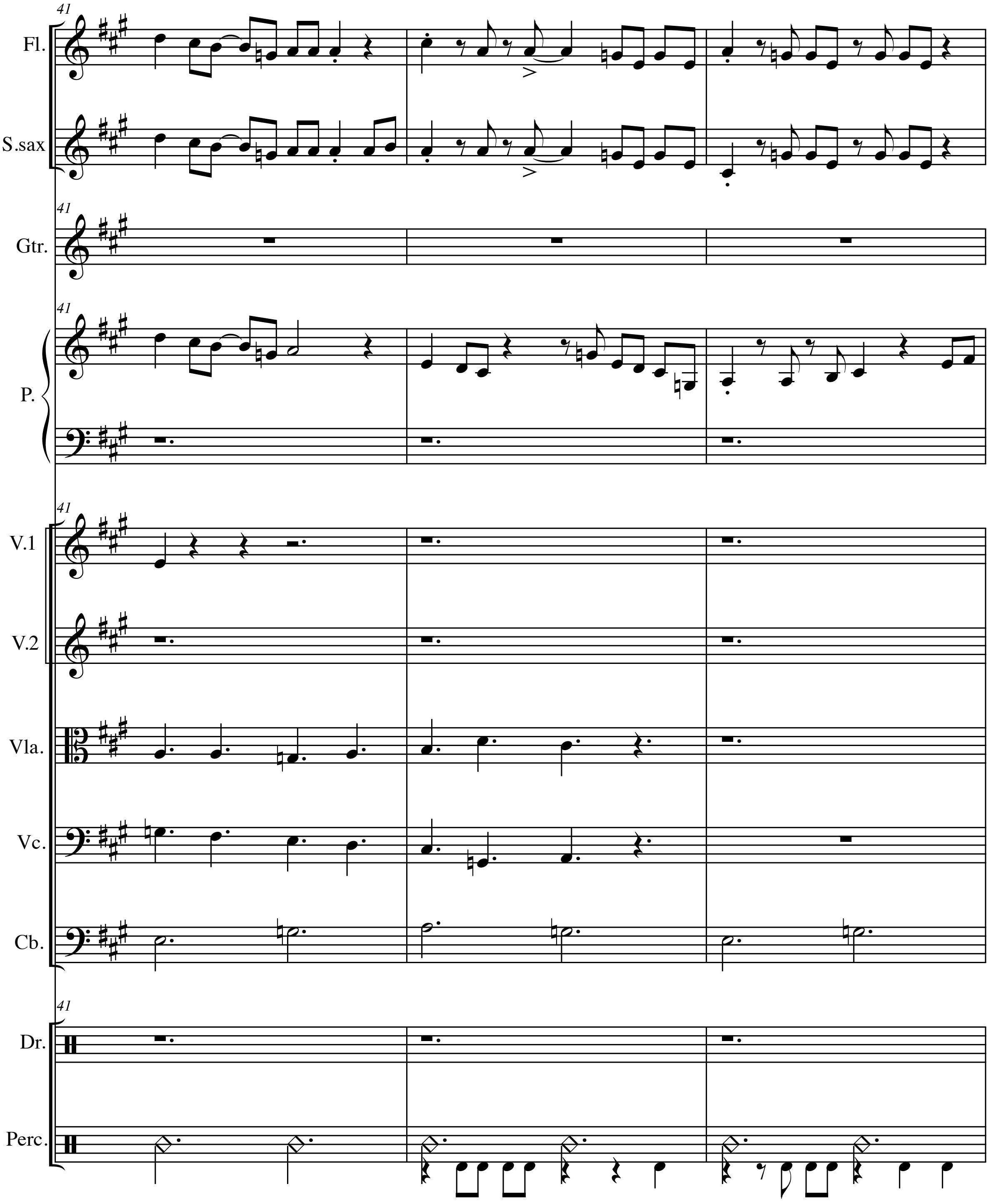
SILK ROAD M.3


31
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

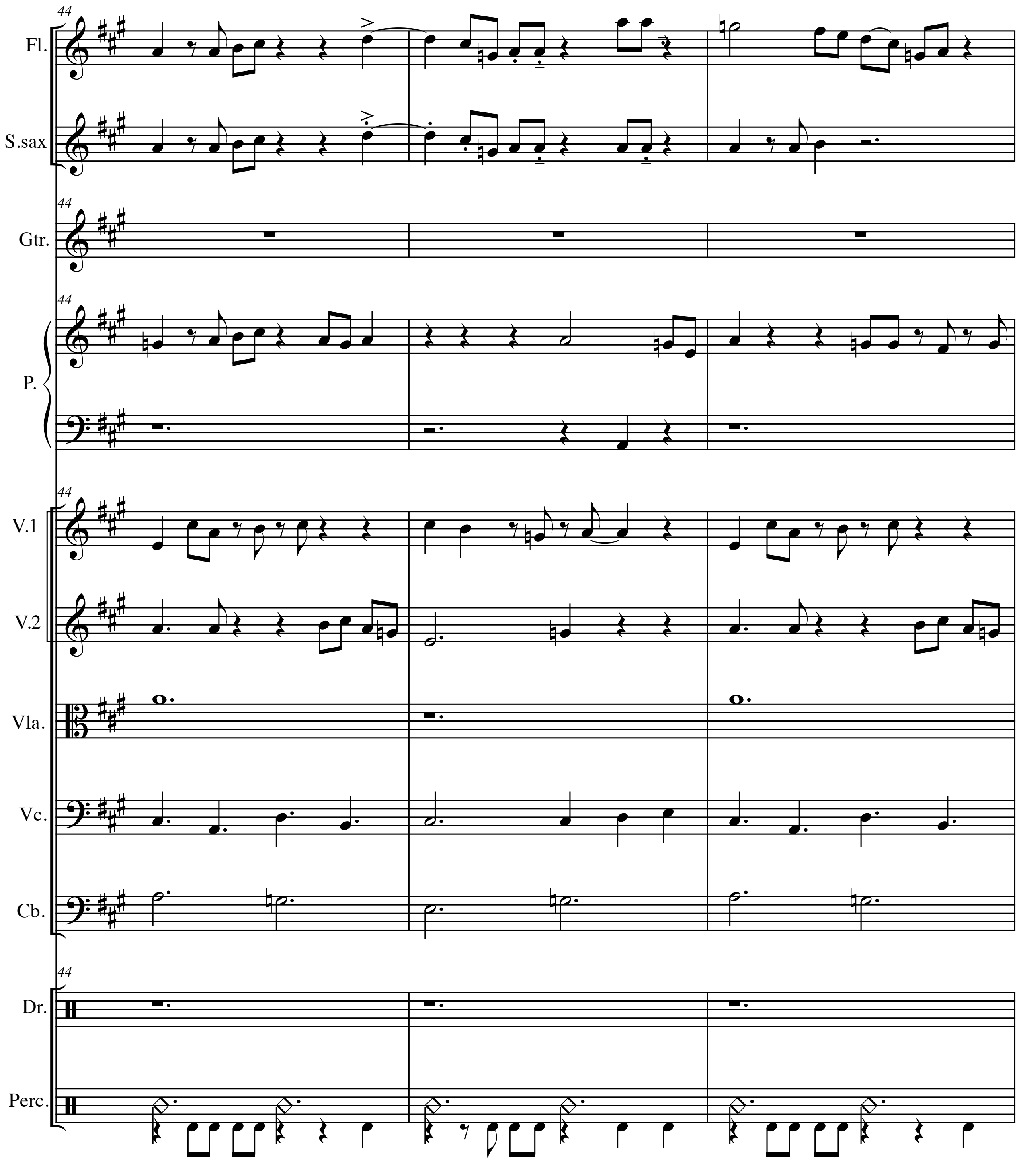

34
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

SILK ROAD M.3

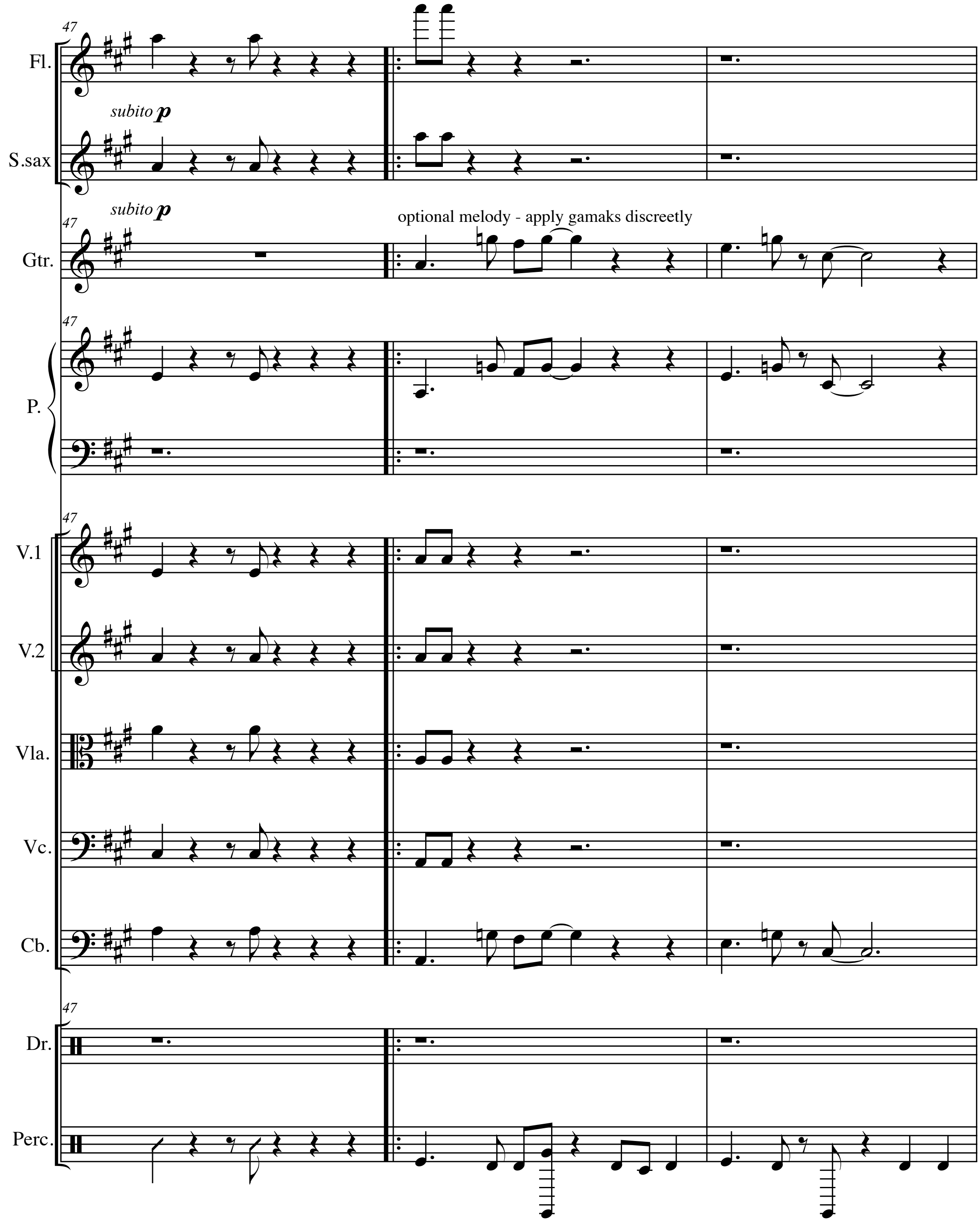

37
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.
mf
p
tabla bol recitation 24 beats
pizz.
(congas/bongos)
try Konnakol here

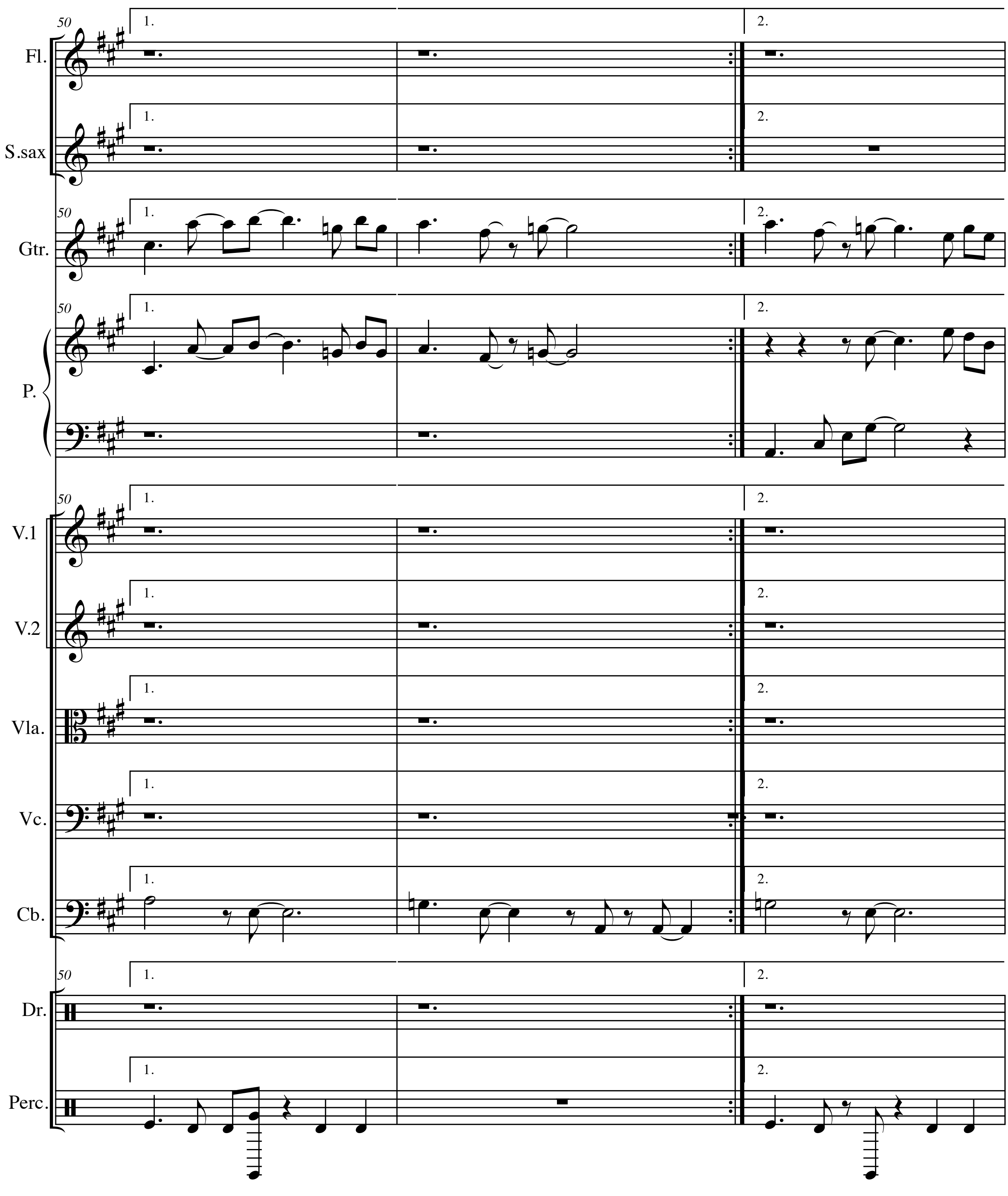

41
Fl.
S.sax
41
Gtr.
41
P.
41
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
41
Dr.
Perc.

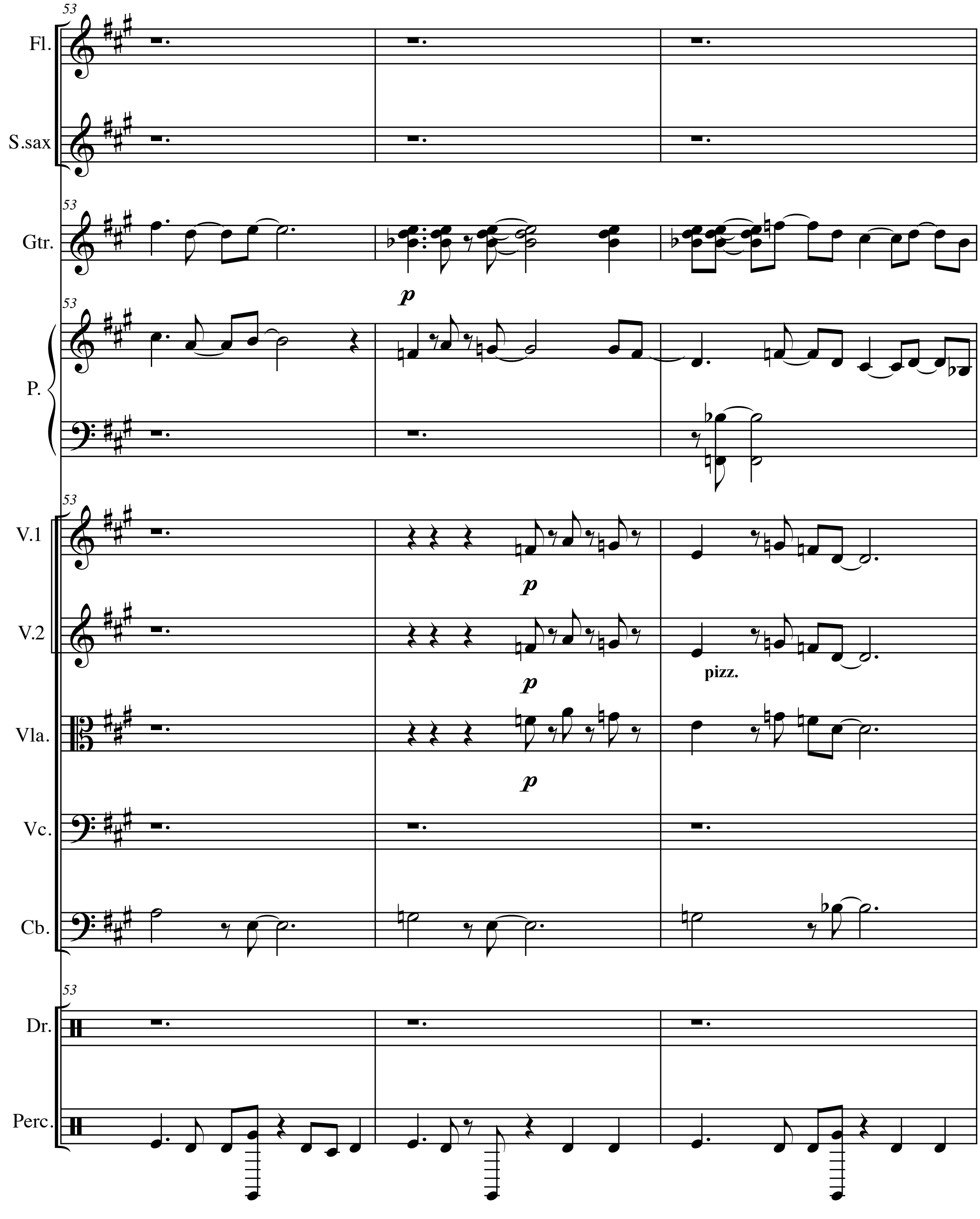
SILK ROAD M.3


44
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

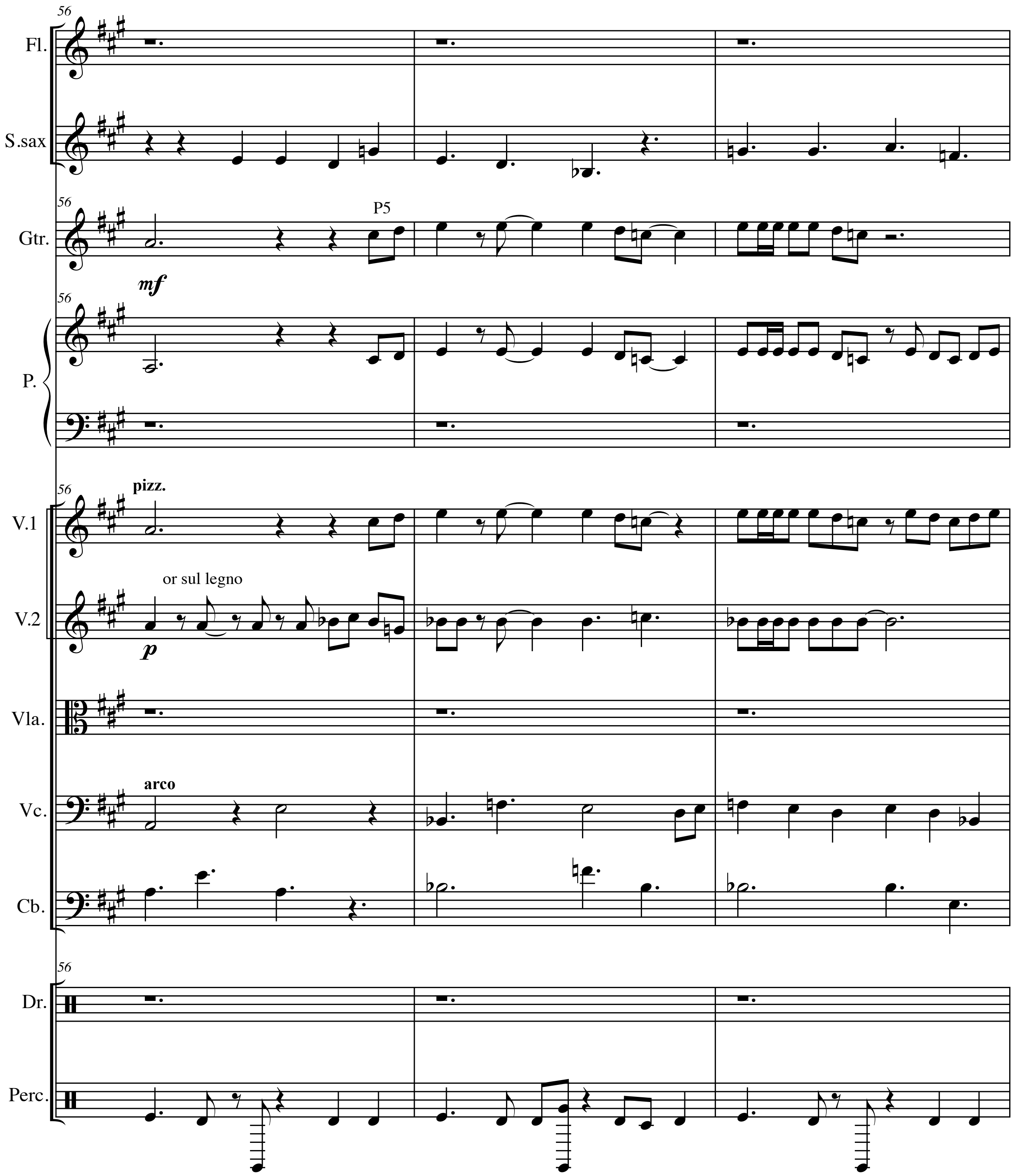
SILK ROAD M.3


47
Fl.
subito p
S.sax
subito p
Gtr.
optional melody - apply gamaks discreetly
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

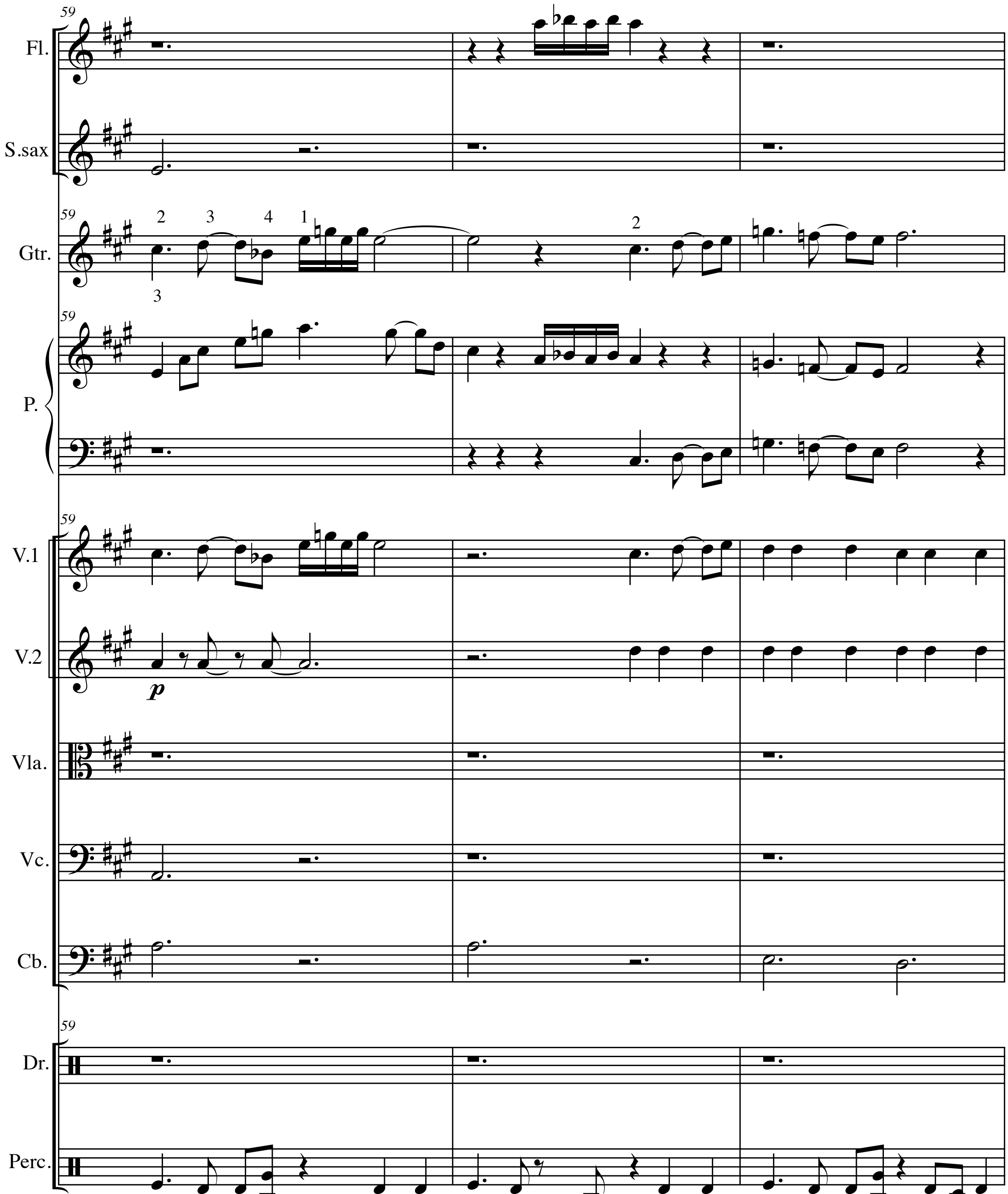

50
1.
2.
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

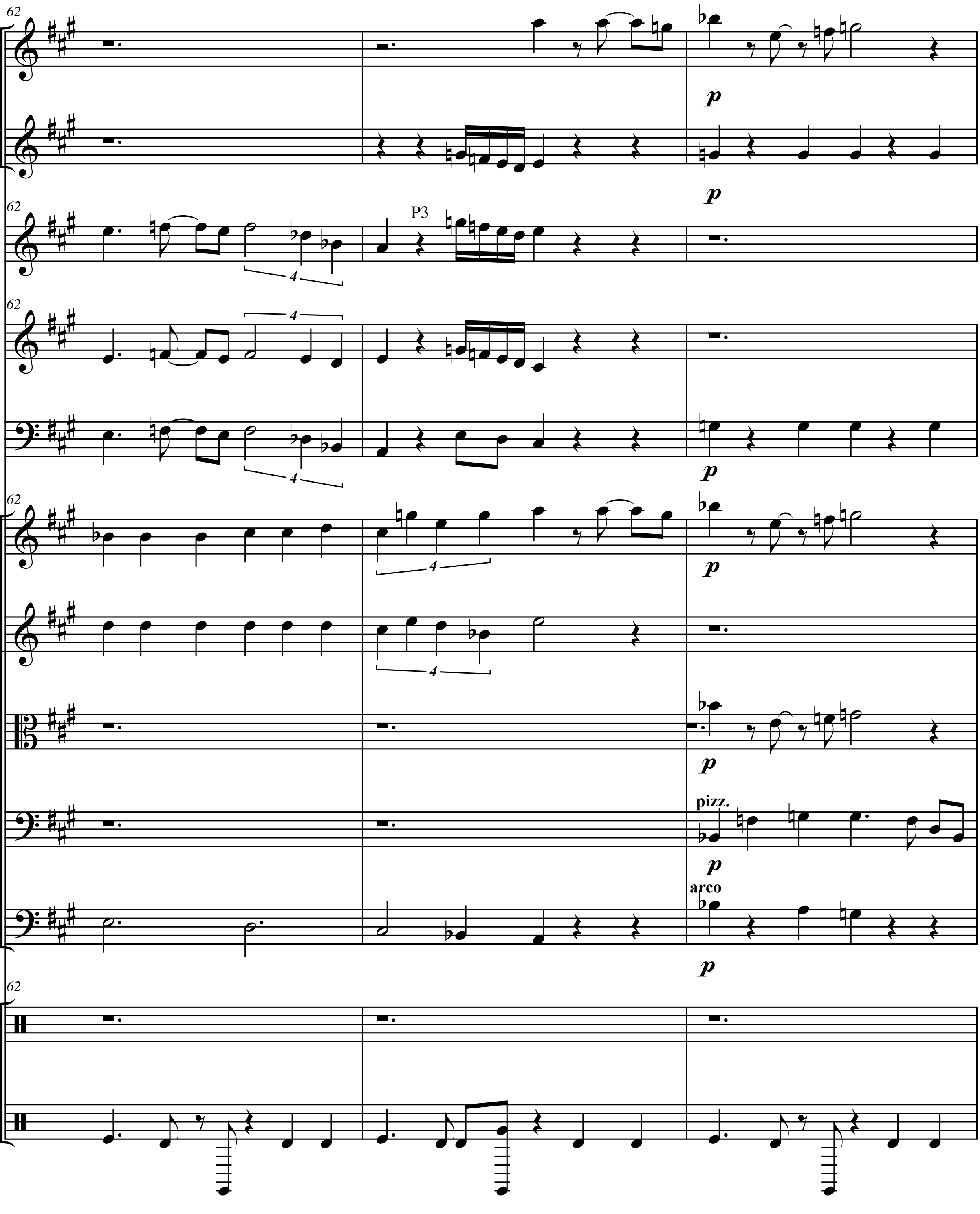

53
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.
p
p
p
pizz.
p

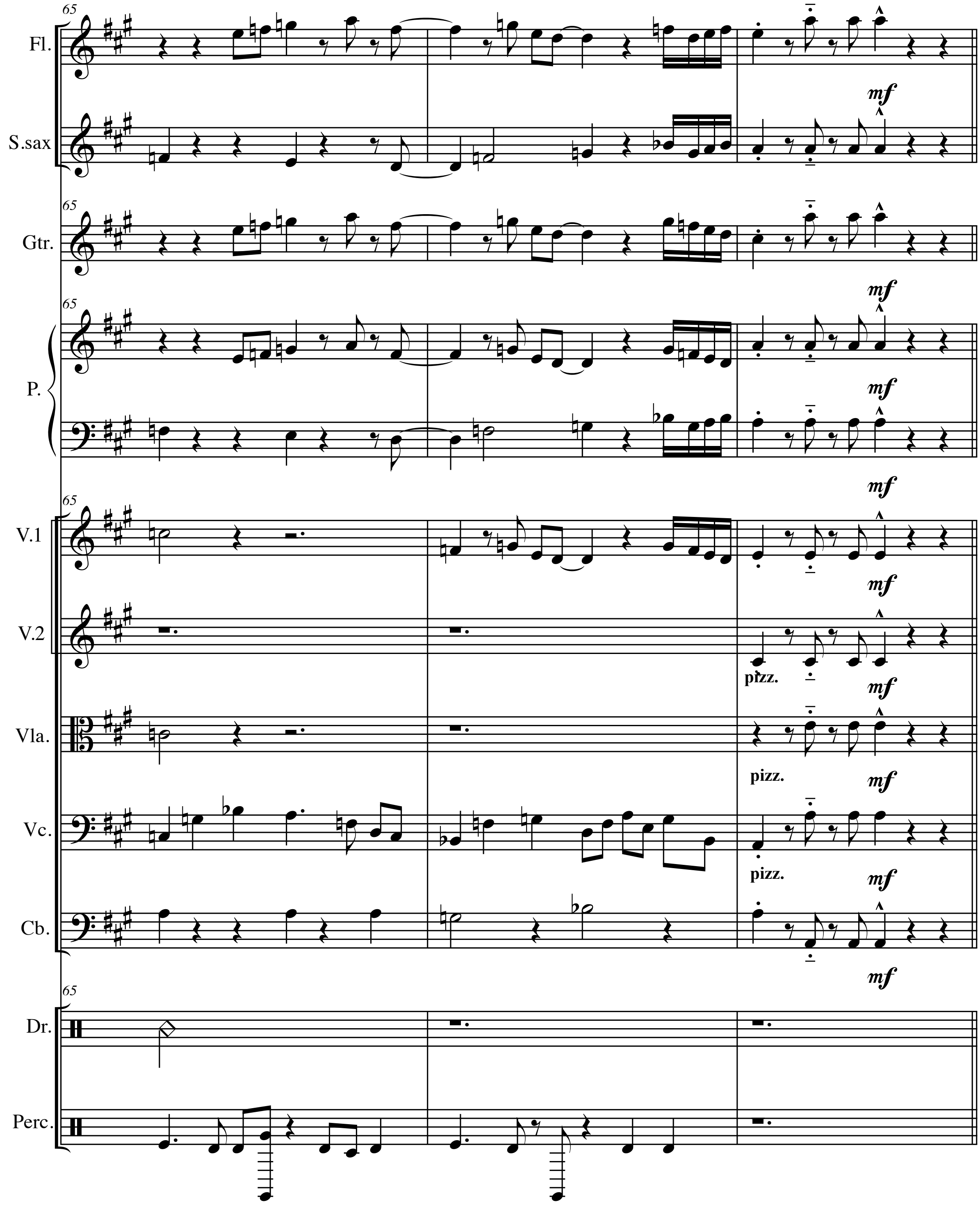
SILK ROAD M.3

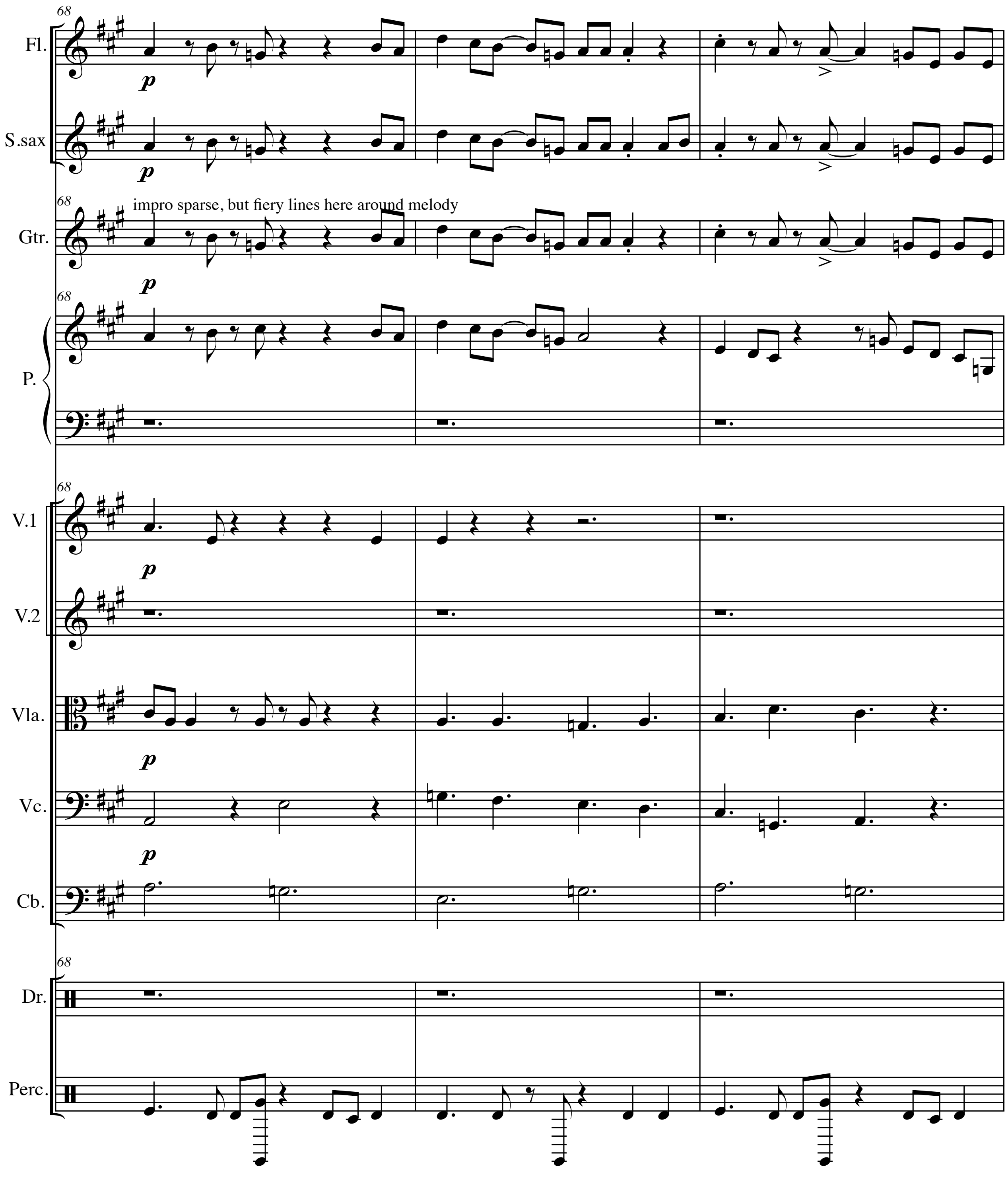

56
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P5
mf
P.
pizz.
V.1
or sul legno
p
V.2
Vla.
arco
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

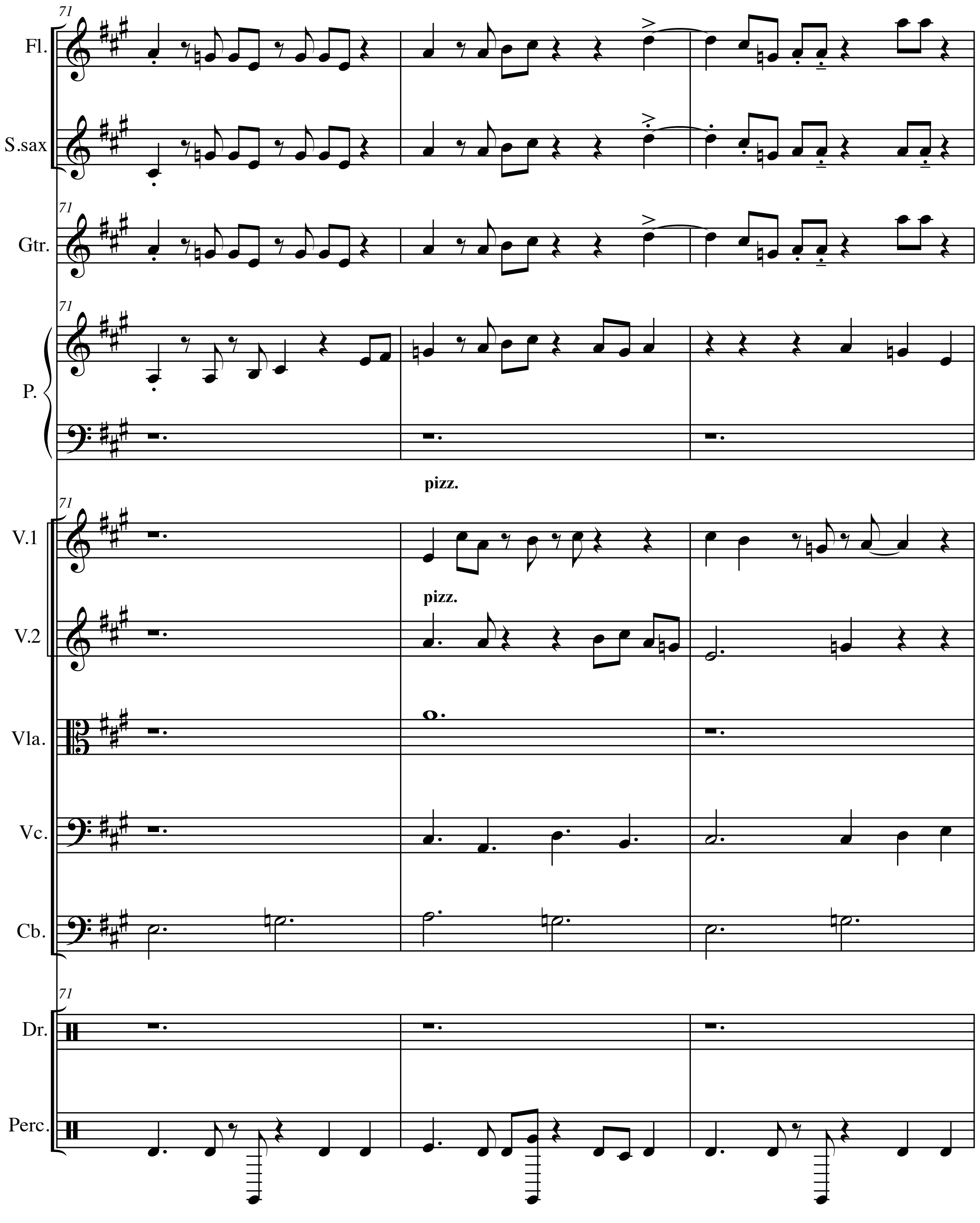
SILK ROAD M.3


59
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.
2
3
4
1
3
2
p


62
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.
P3
4
p
pizz.
arco


65
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.
mf
pizz.


68
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
impro sparse, but fiery lines here around melody
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.
p


71
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
pizz.
V.1
pizz.
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

SILK ROAD M.3

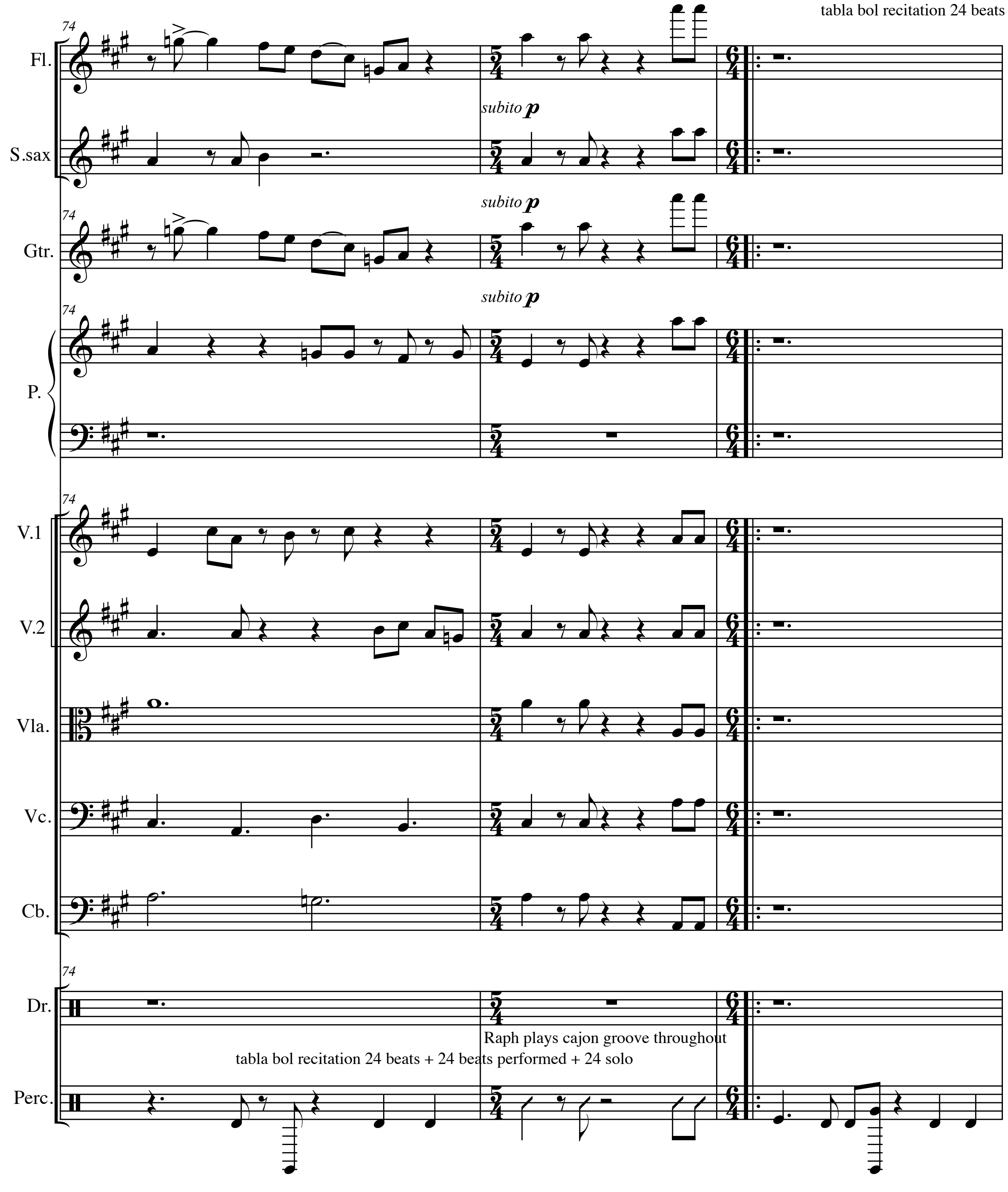
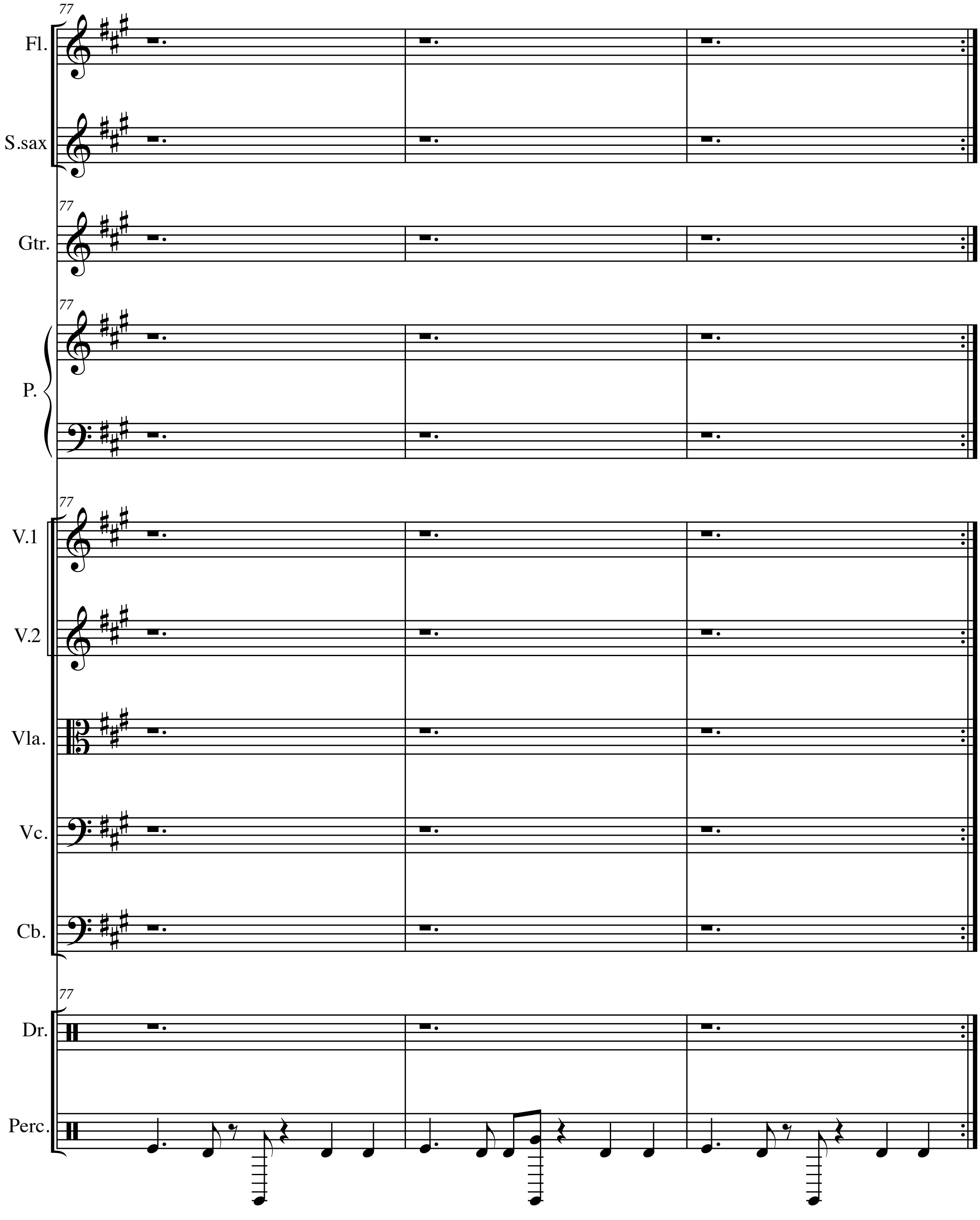
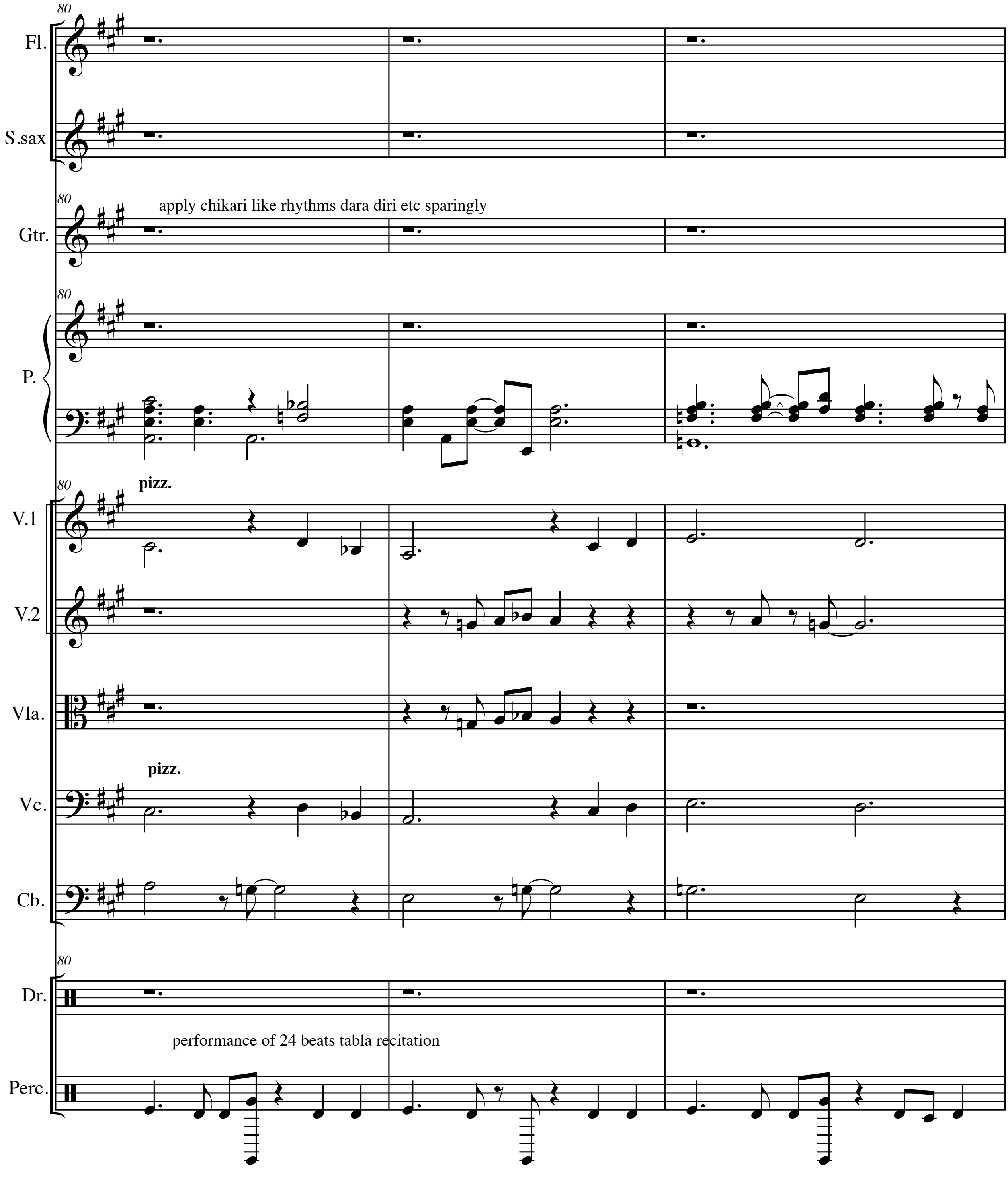
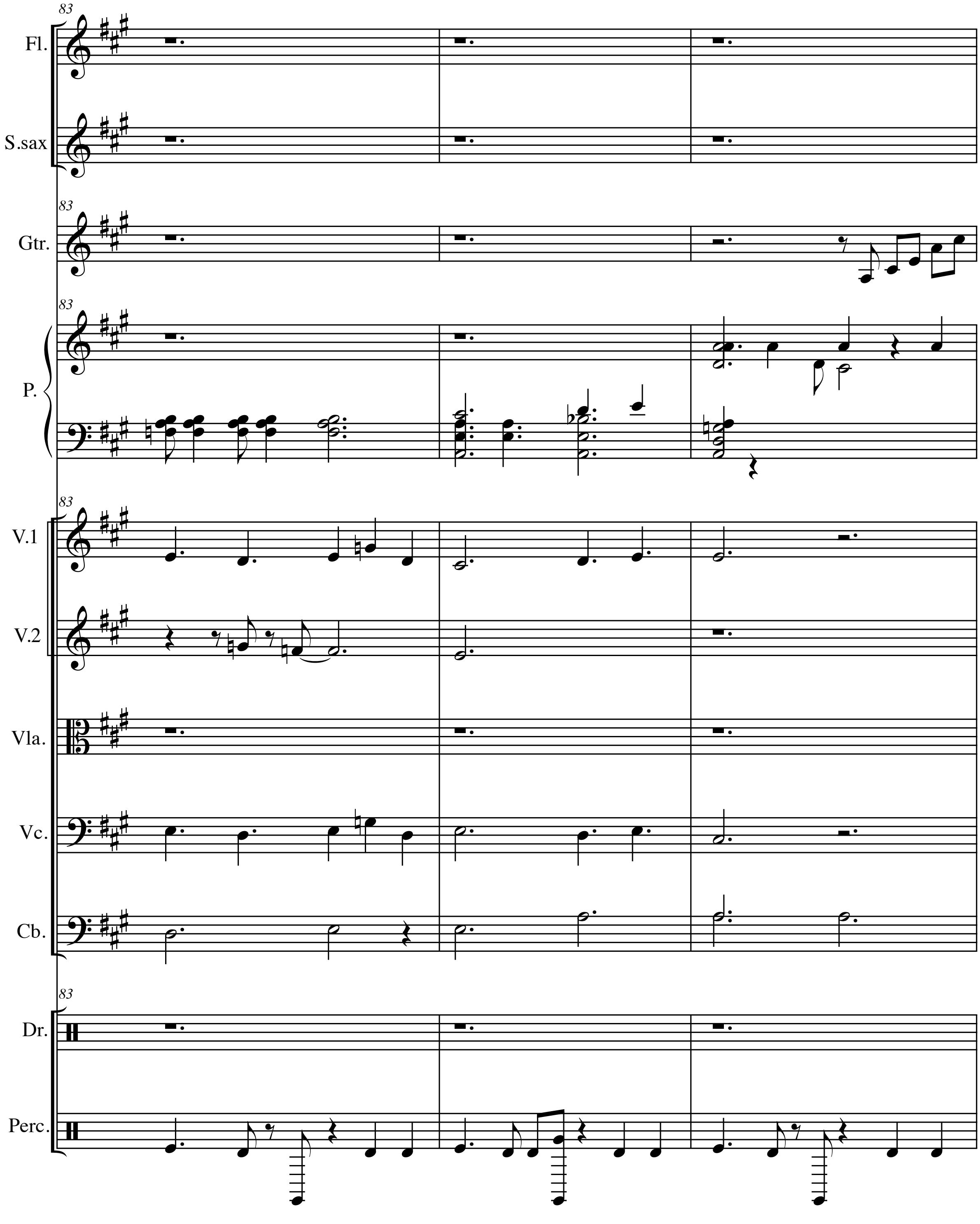


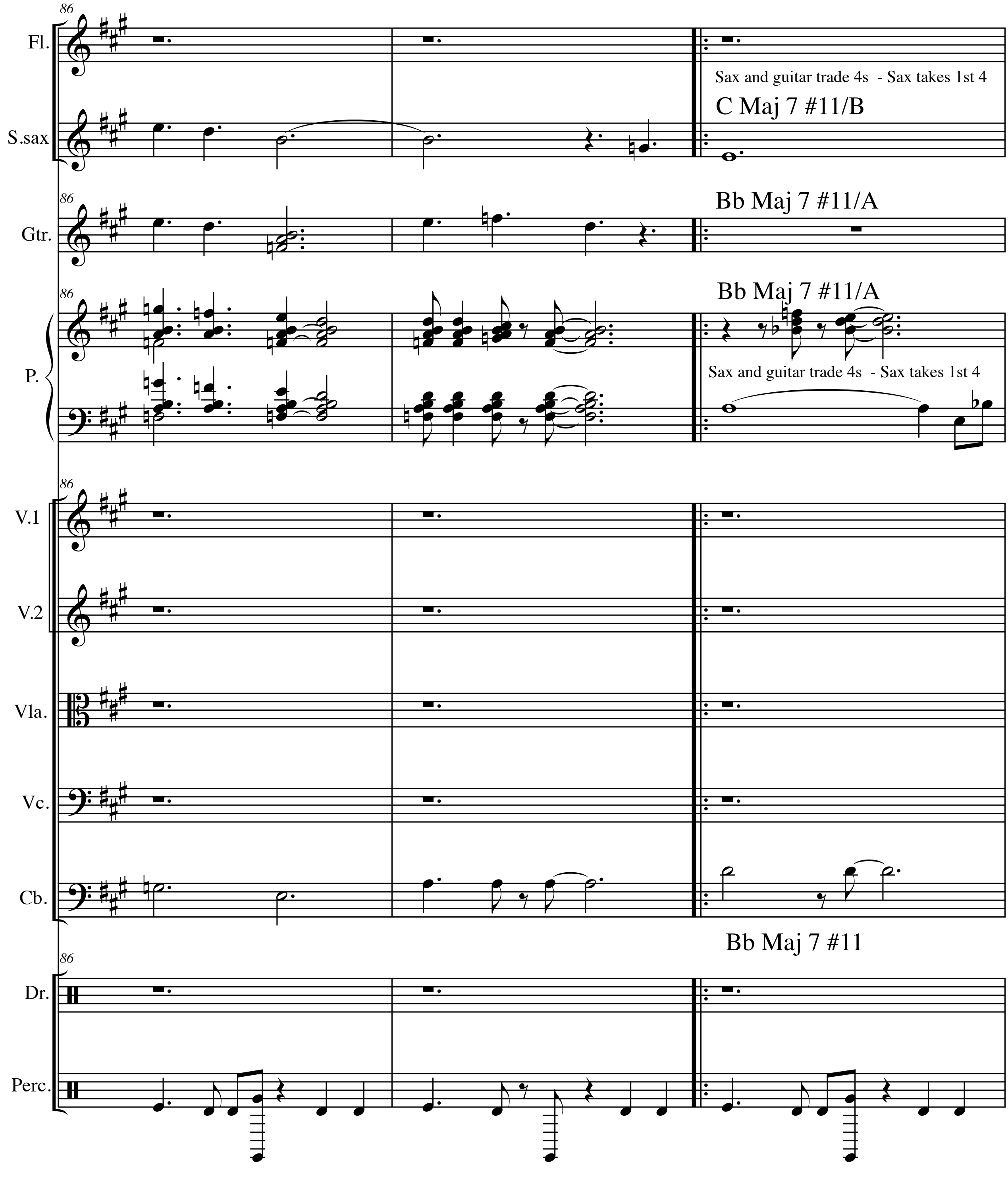
tabla bol recitation 24 beats
74
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.
subito p
subito p
subito p
Raph plays cajon groove throughout
tabla bol recitation 24 beats + 24 beats performed + 24 solo

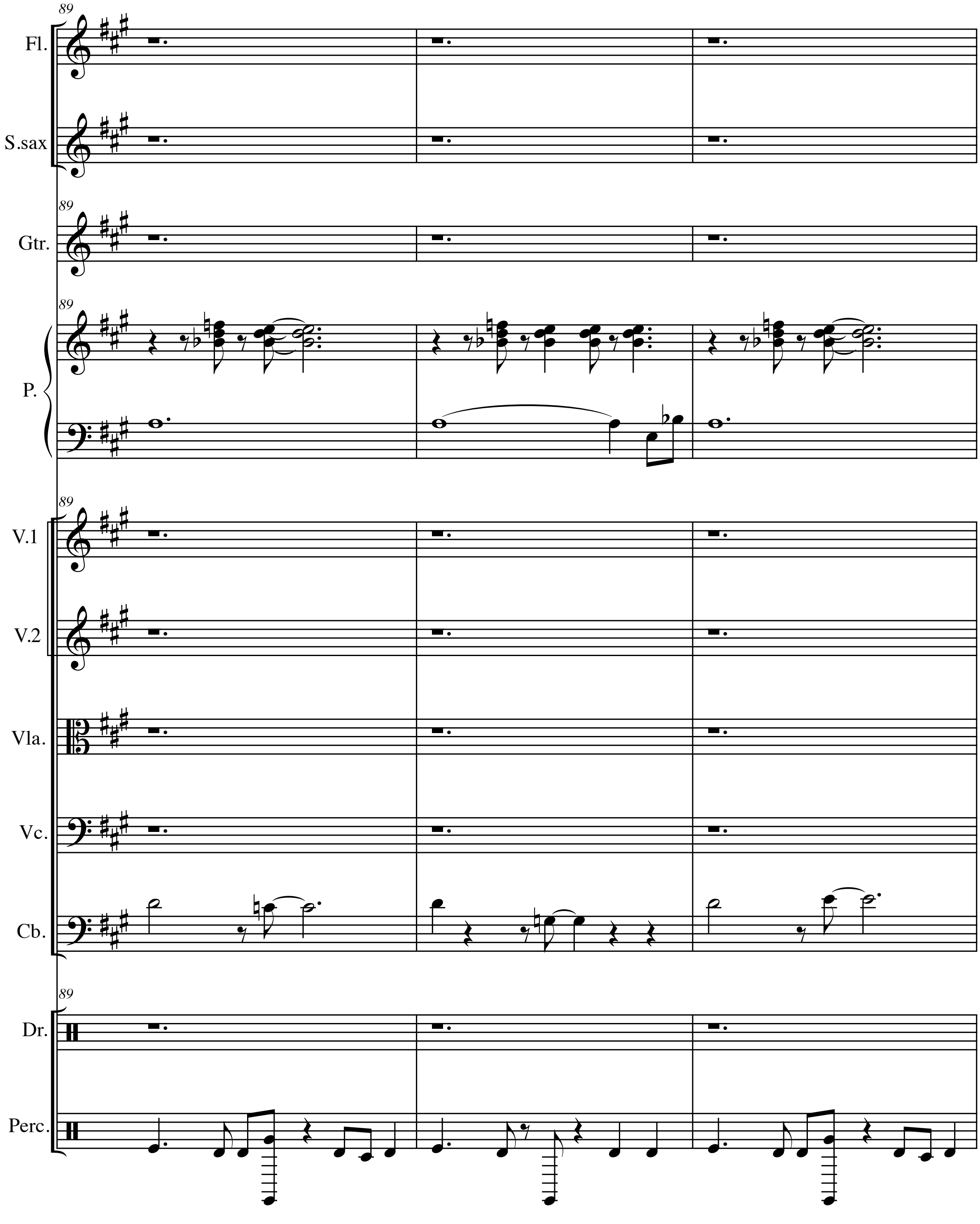

77
Fl.
S.sax
77
Gtr.
77
P.
77
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
77
Dr.
Perc.


80
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
apply chikari like rhythms dara diri etc sparingly
P.
pizz.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
pizz.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
performance of 24 beats tabla recitation
Perc.

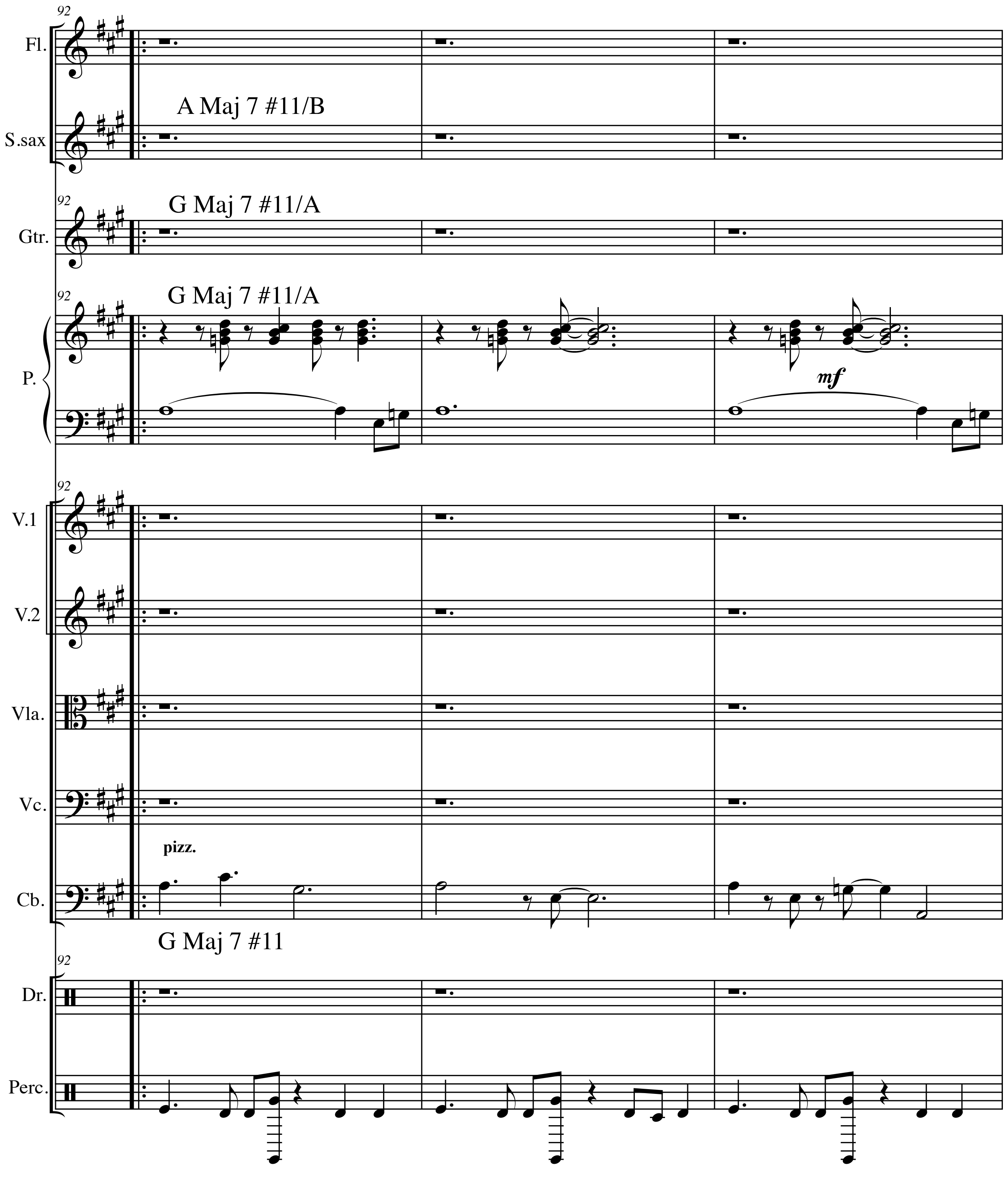
SILK ROAD M.3

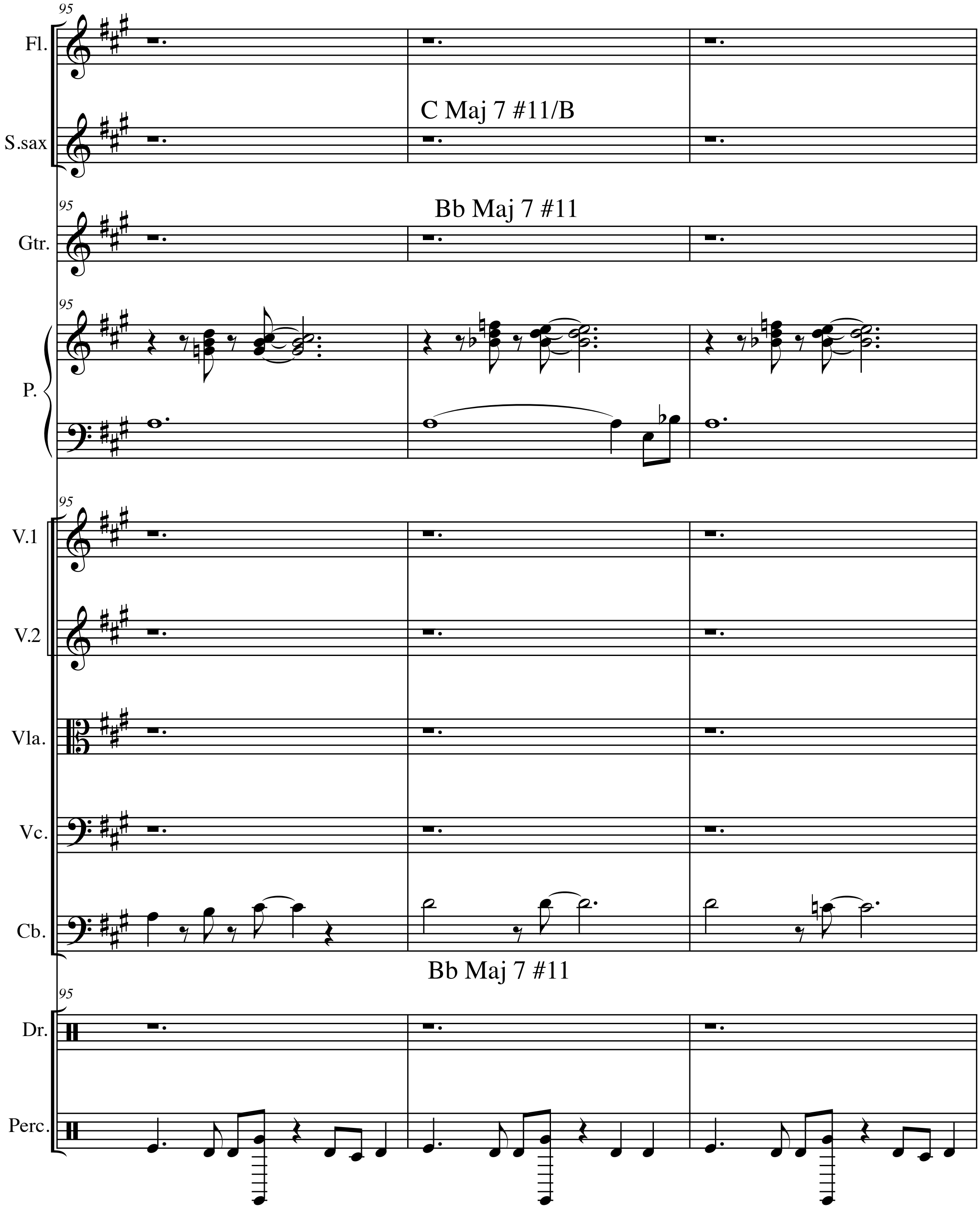

83
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.


86
Fl.
S.sax
Sax and guitar trade 4s - Sax takes 1st 4
C Maj 7 #11/B
Gtr.
Bb Maj 7 #11/A
P.
Bb Maj 7 #11/A
Sax and guitar trade 4s - Sax takes 1st 4
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Bb Maj 7 #11
Dr.
Perc.

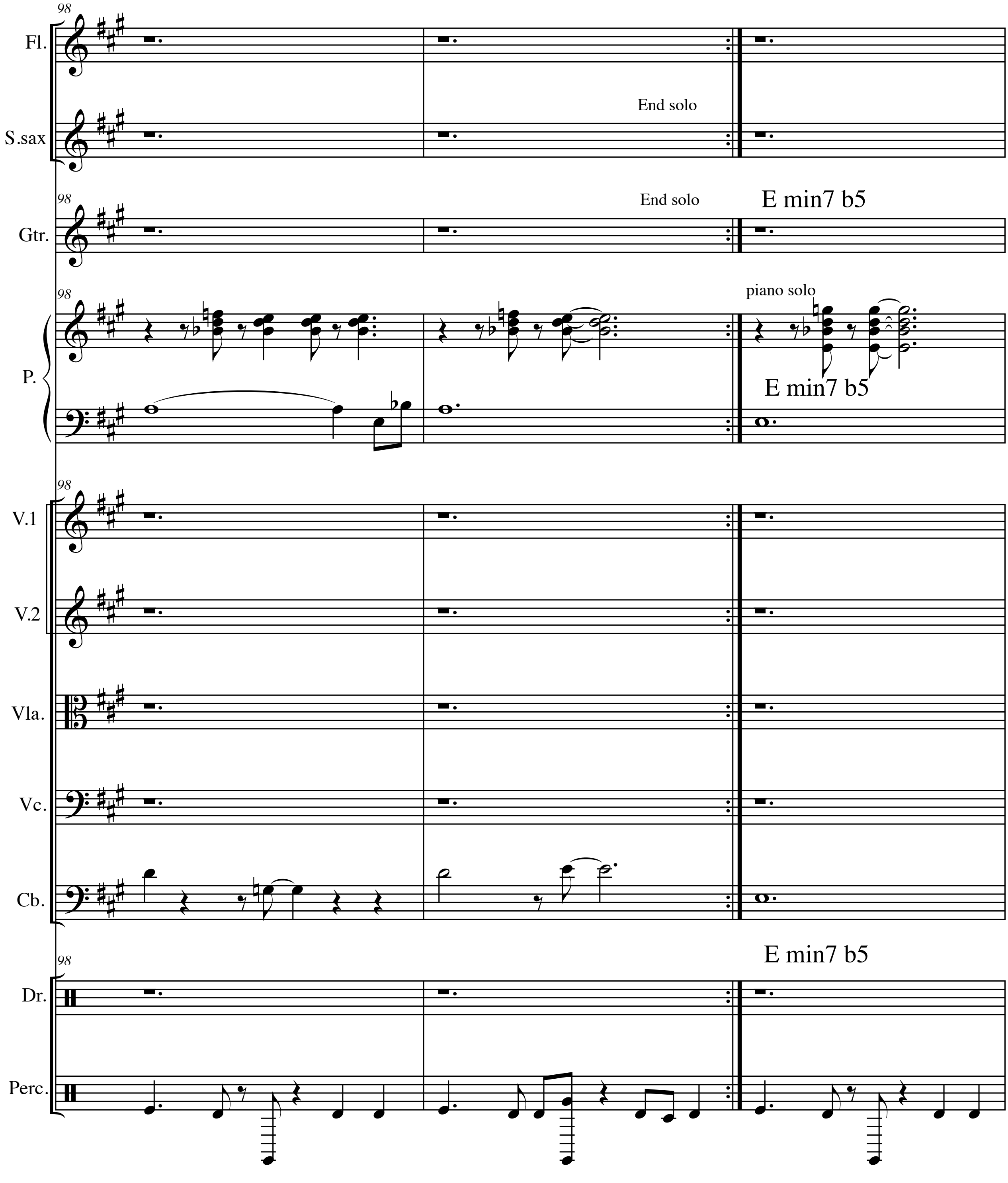

89
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

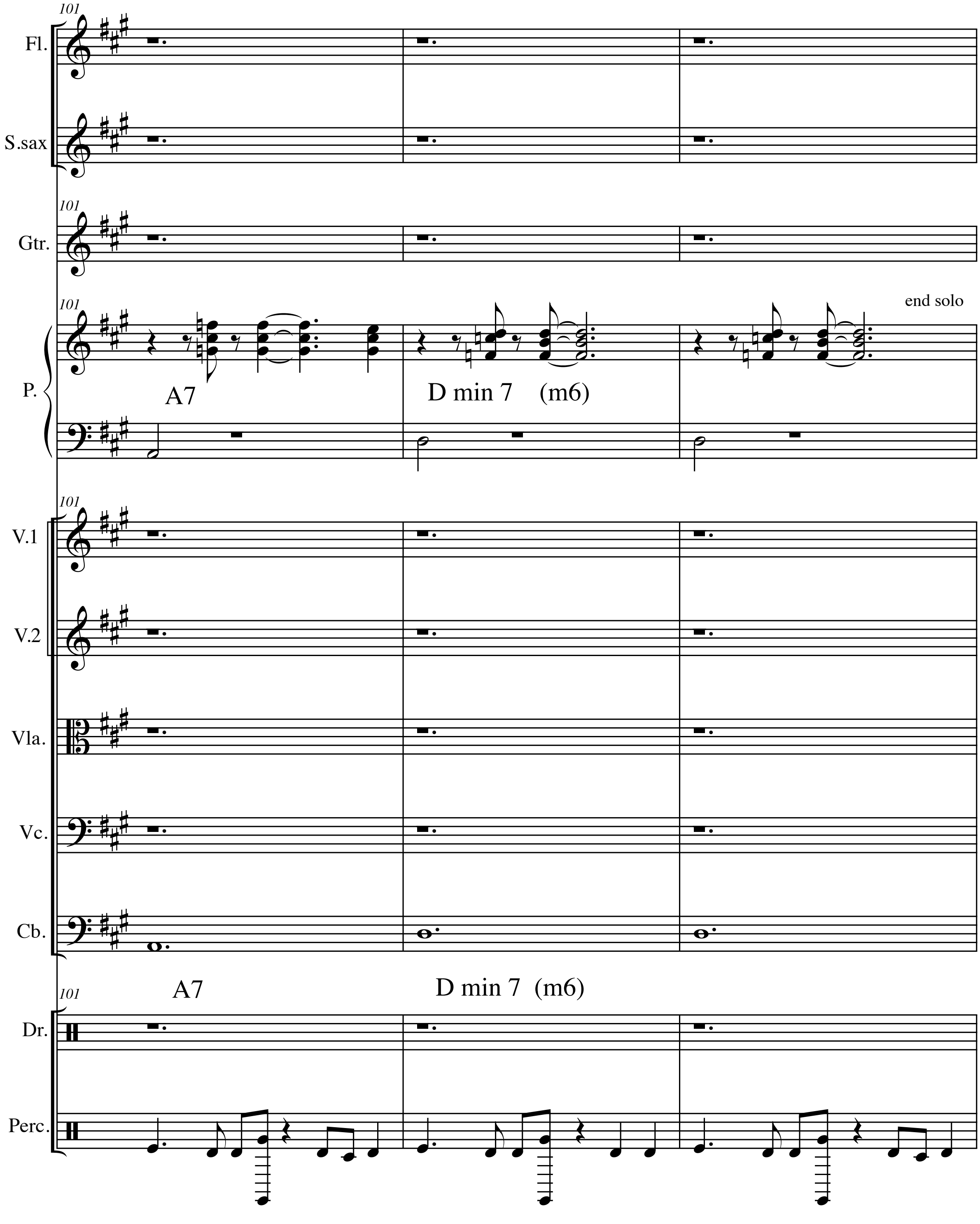
SILK ROAD M.3

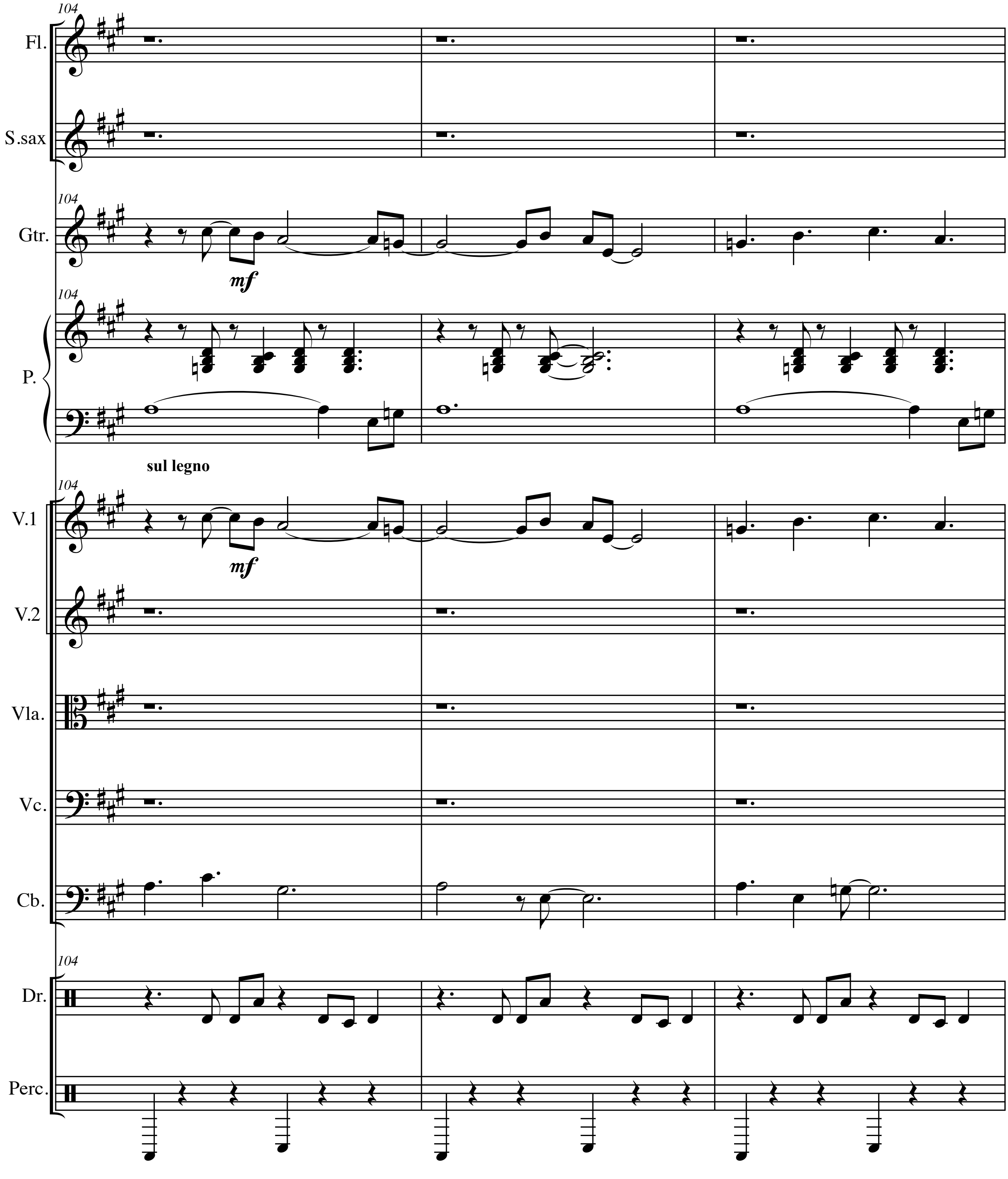

92
Fl.
S.sax
A Maj 7 #11/B
Gtr.
G Maj 7 #11/A
P.
G Maj 7 #11/A
mf
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
pizz.
Cb.
G Maj 7 #11
Dr.
Perc.

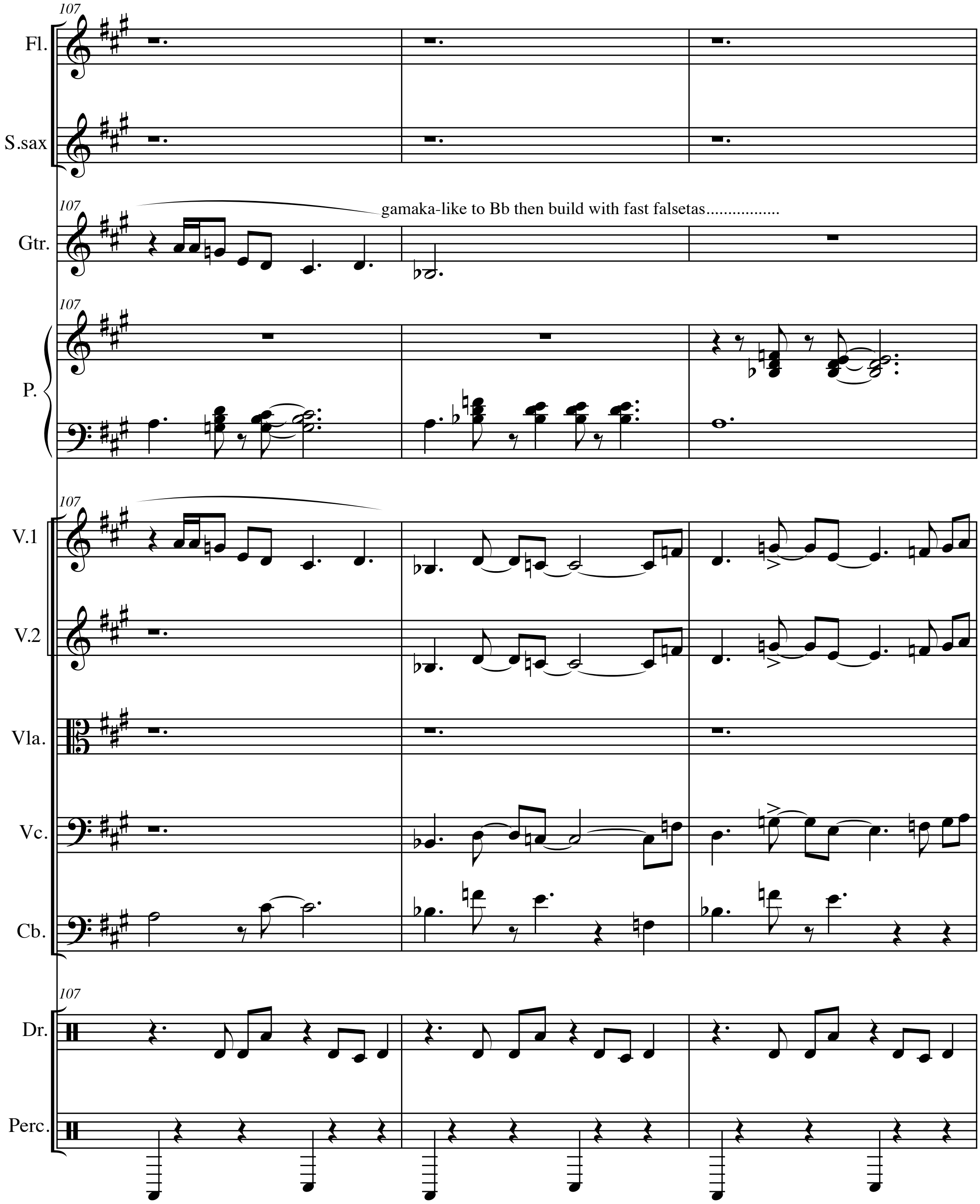

95
Fl.
S.sax
C Maj 7 #11/B
Gtr.
Bb Maj 7 #11
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Bb Maj 7 #11
Dr.
Perc.

SILK ROAD M.3

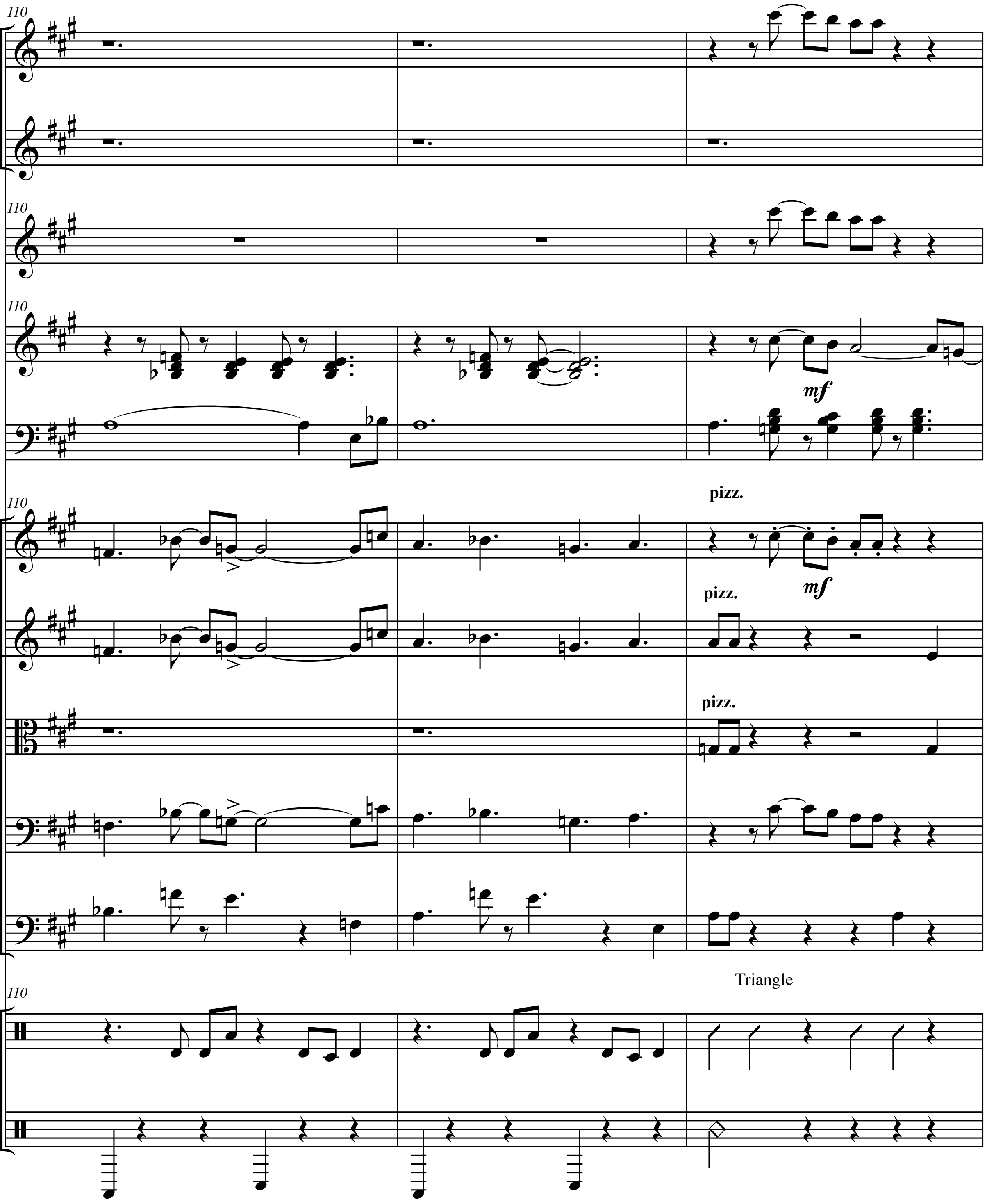

98
Fl.
S.sax
End solo
Gtr.
End solo
E min7 b5
P.
piano solo
E min7 b5
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
E min7 b5
Dr.
Perc.


101
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
end solo
A7
D min 7 (m6)
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
A7
D min 7 (m6)
Dr.
Perc.

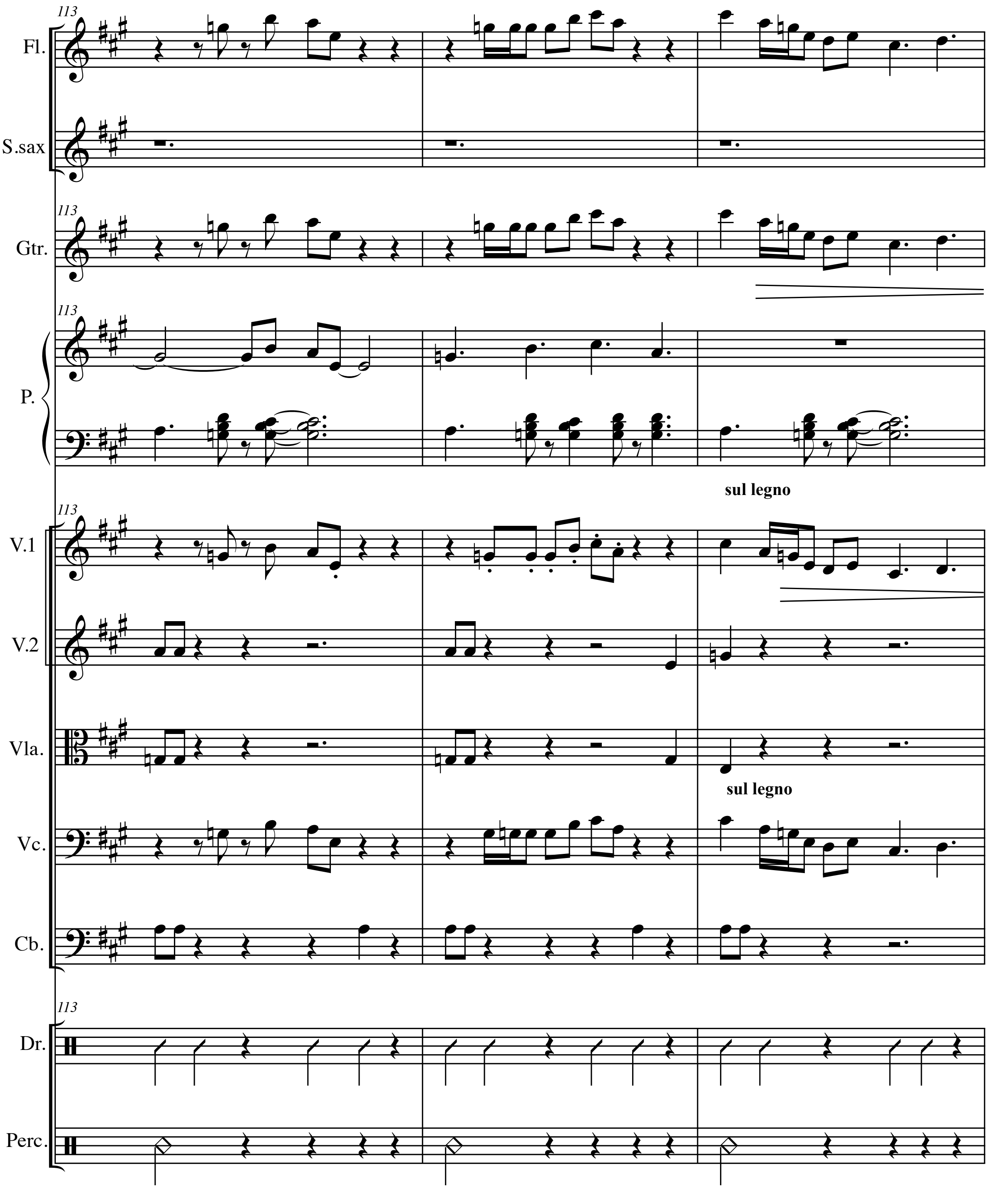

104
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
mf
P.
sul legno
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

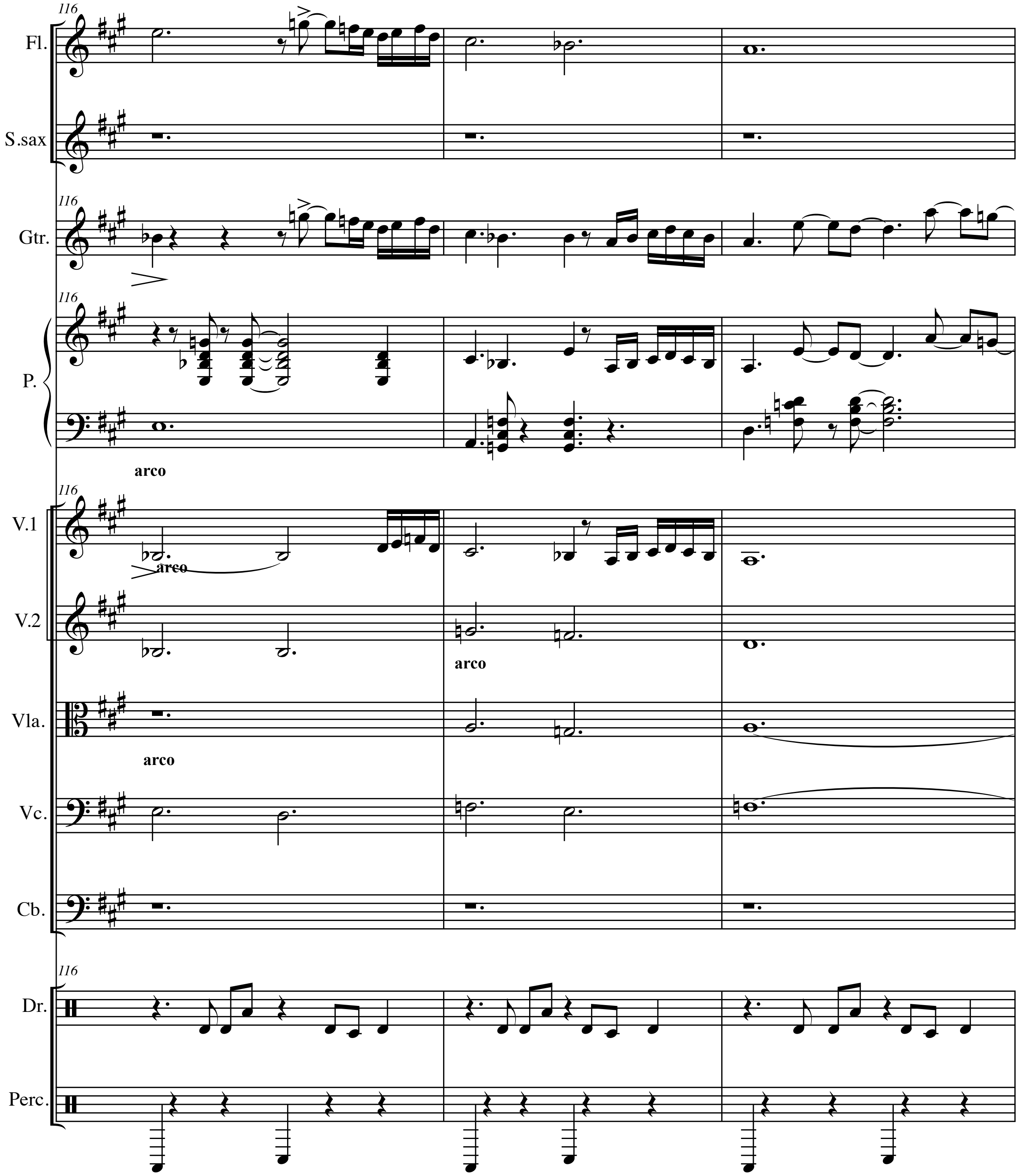

107
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
gamaka-like to Bb then build with fast falsetas.................
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

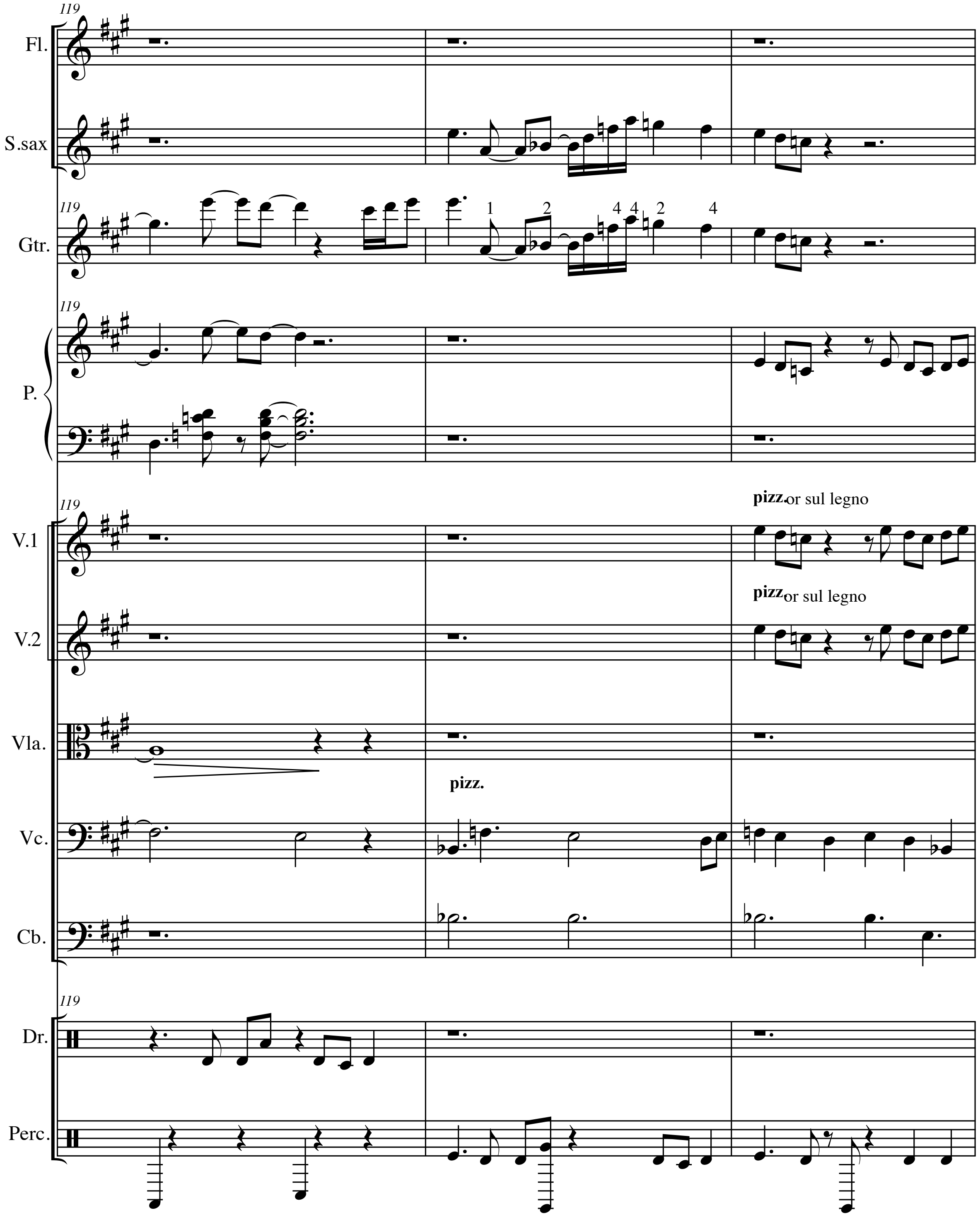
SILK ROAD M.3


110
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
mf
pizz.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Triangle
Dr.
Perc.

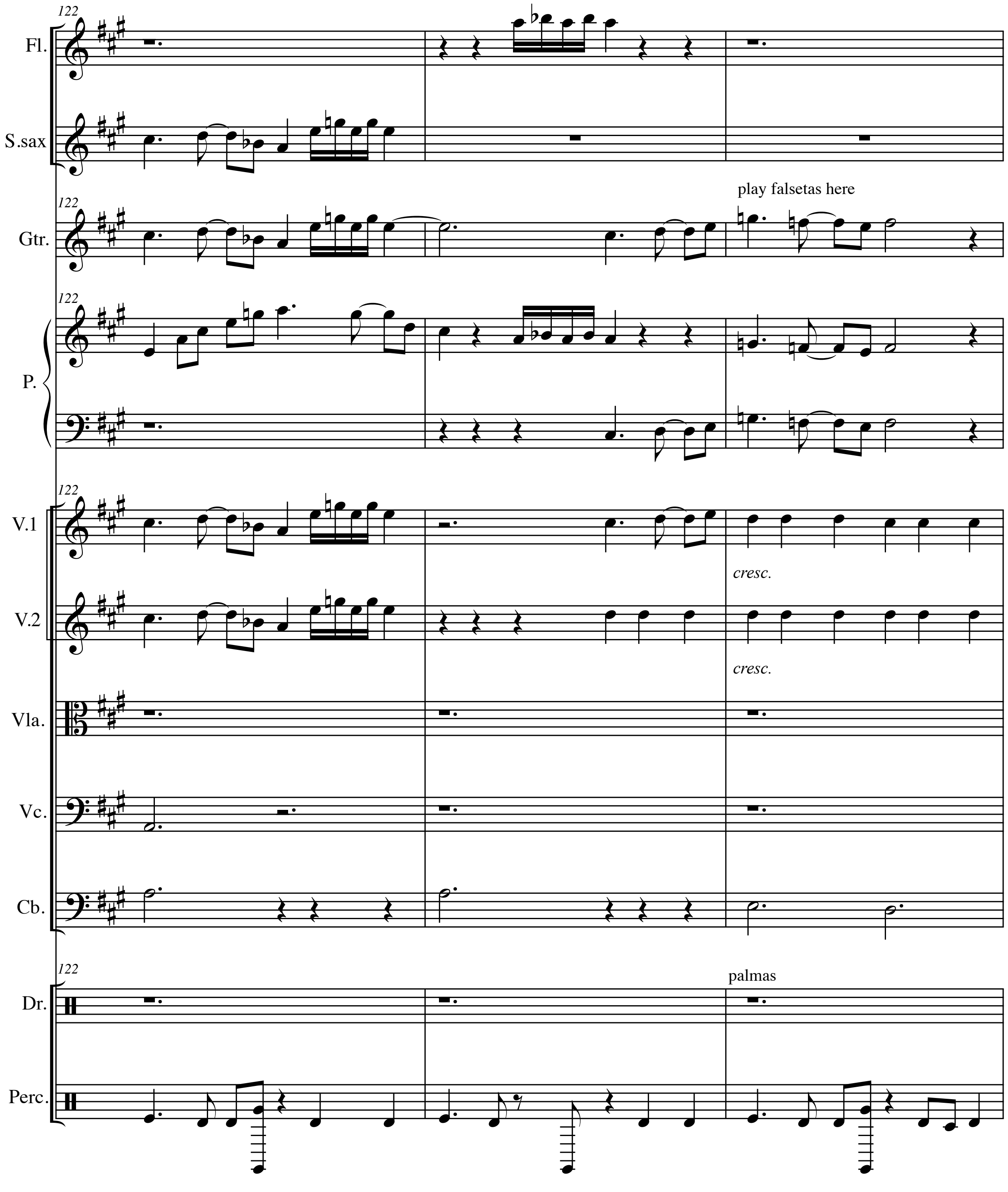
SILK ROAD M.3

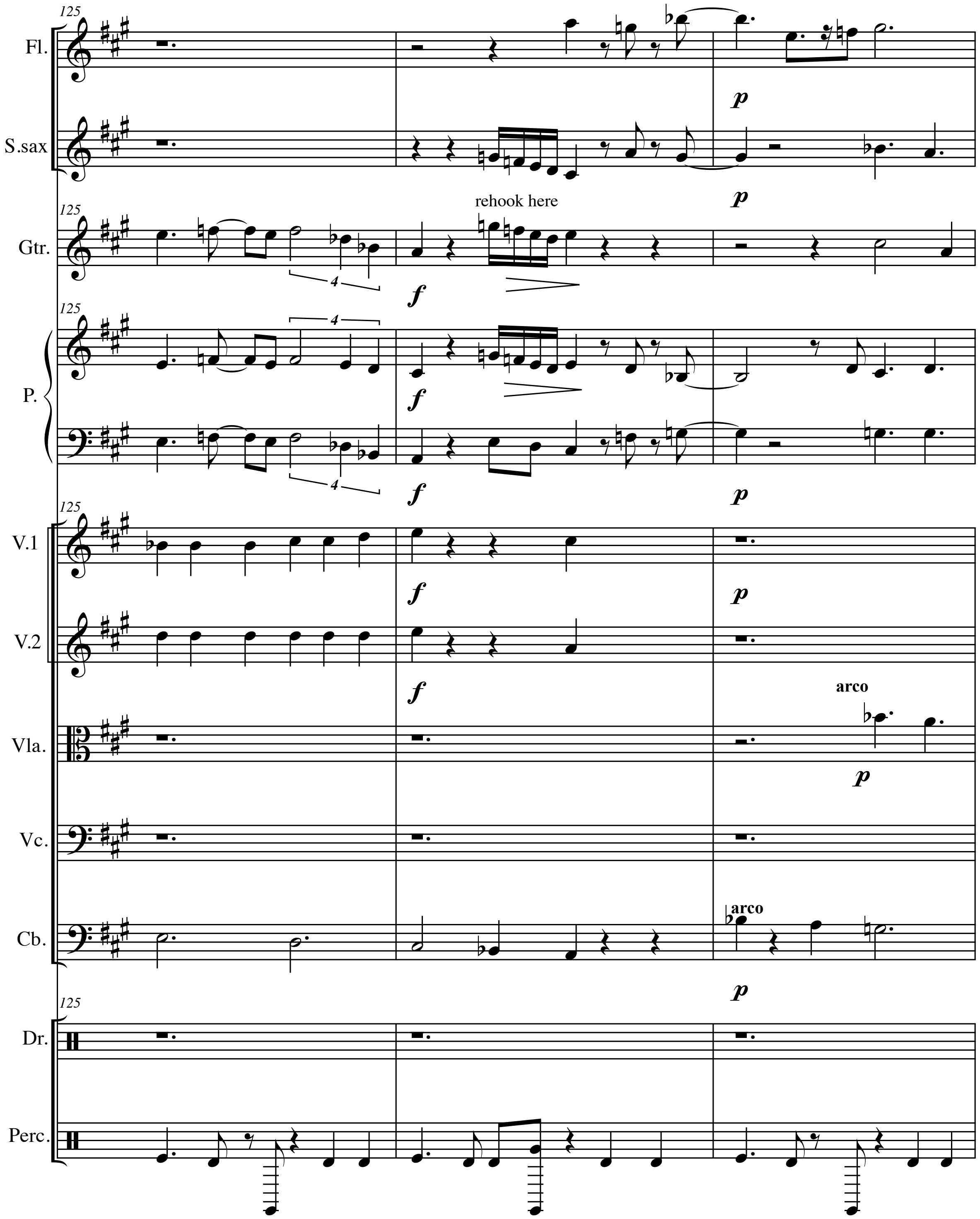

113
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
sul legno
V.1
V.2
Vla.
sul legno
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.


116
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
arco
V.1
arco
V.2
arco
Vla.
arco
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

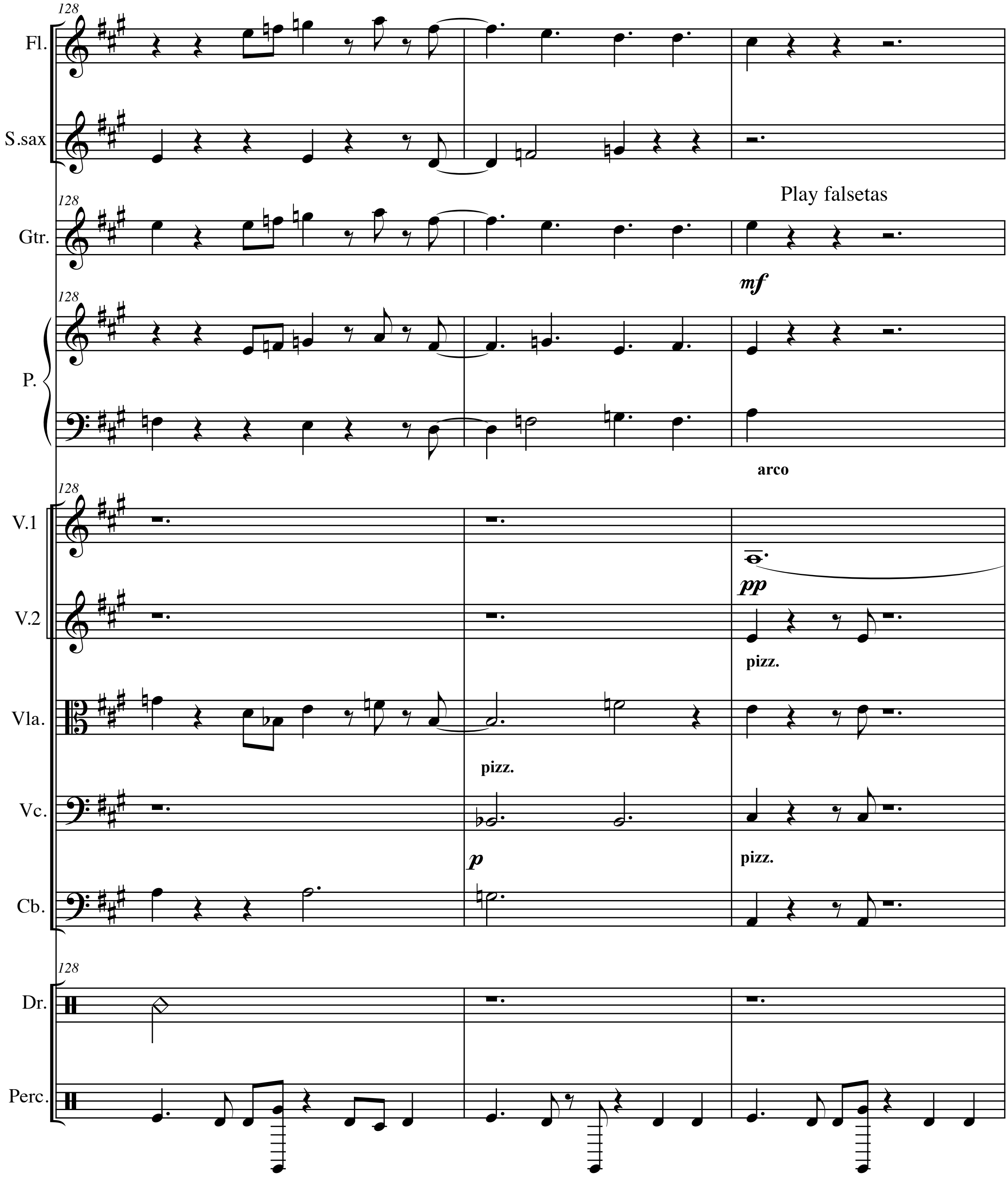

119
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
1
2
4
4
2
4
P.
V.1
pizz. or sul legno
V.2
pizz. or sul legno
Vla.
pizz.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

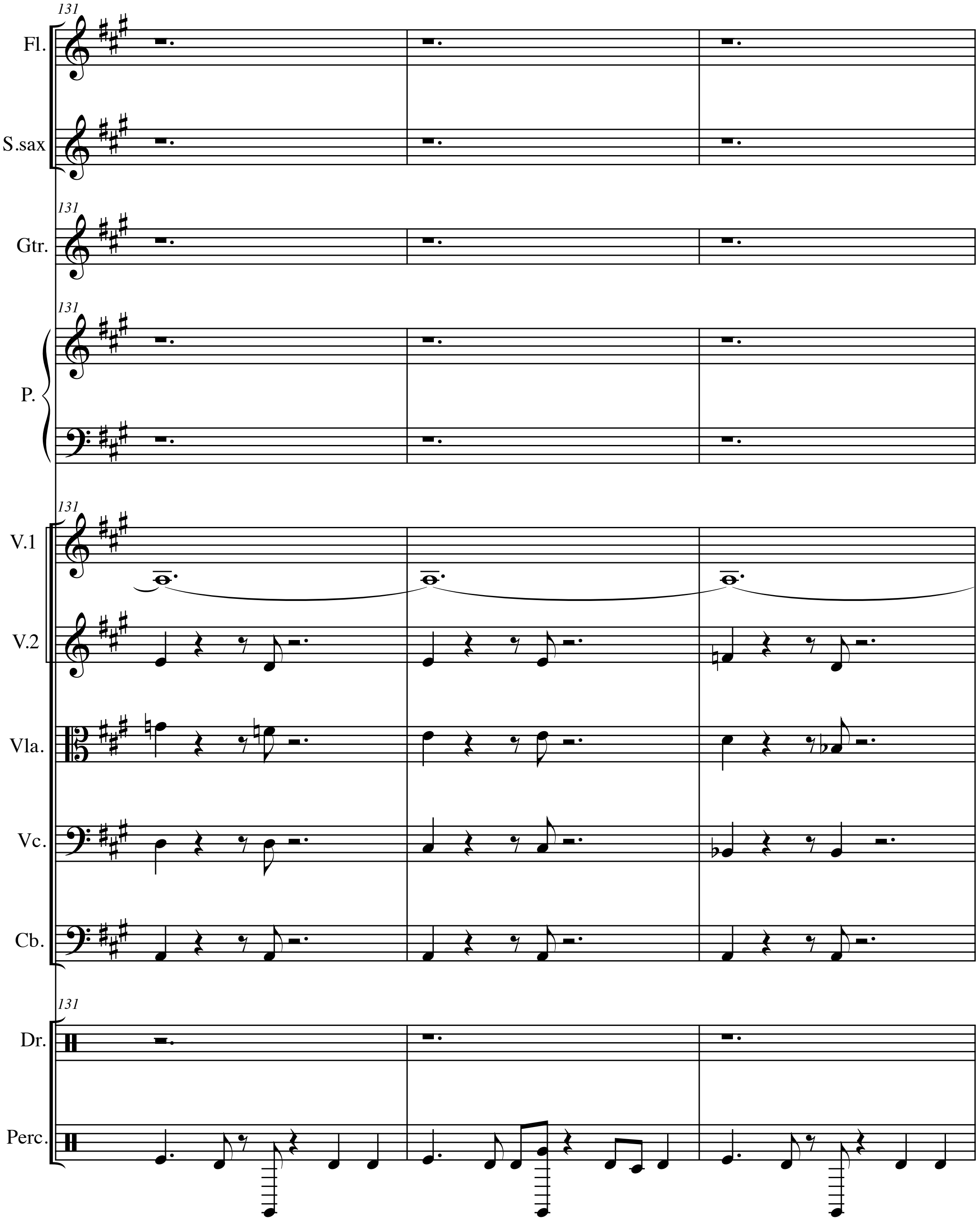
SILK ROAD M.3

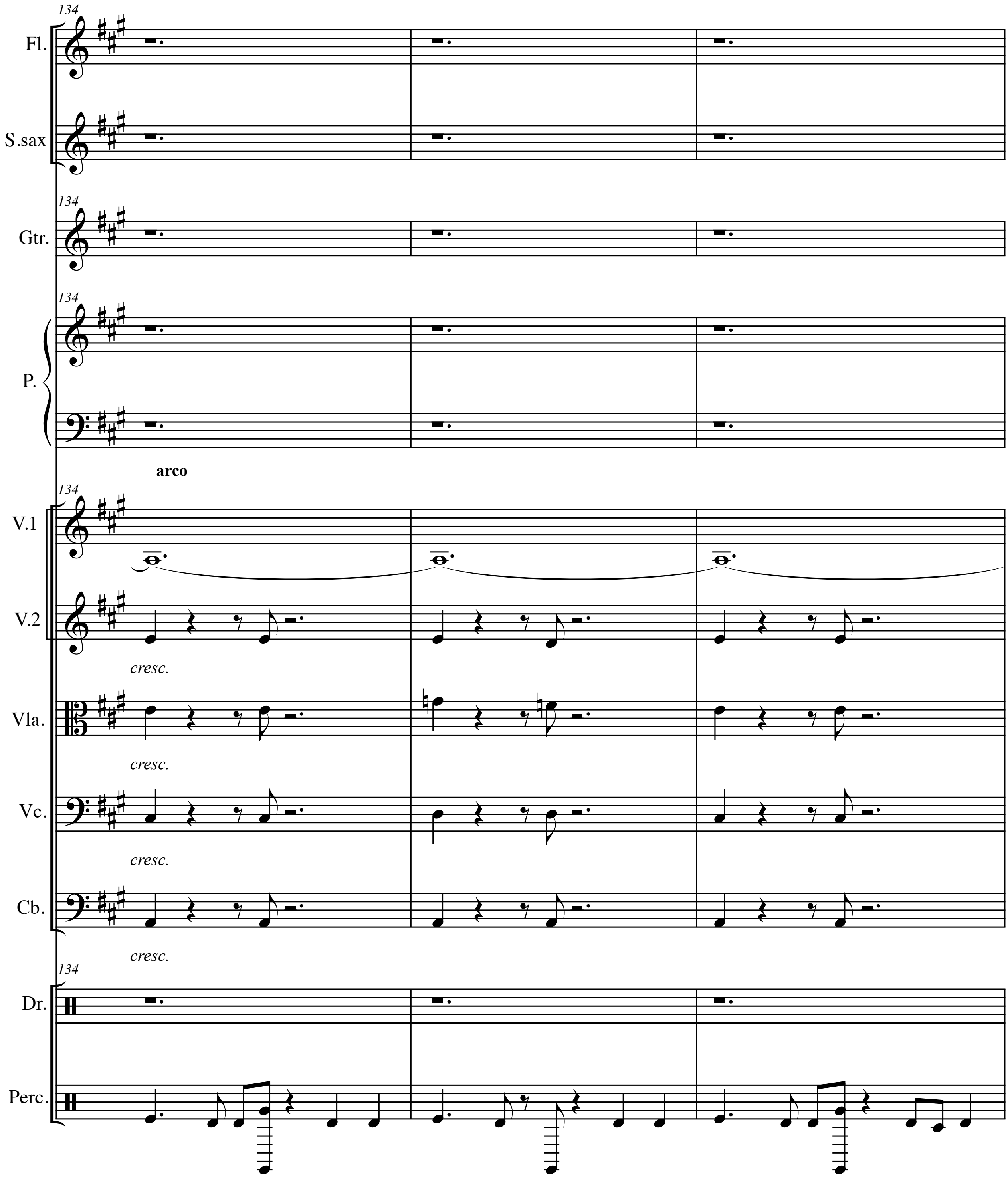

122
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
play falsetas here
P.
V.1
cresc.
V.2
cresc.
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
palmas
Perc.

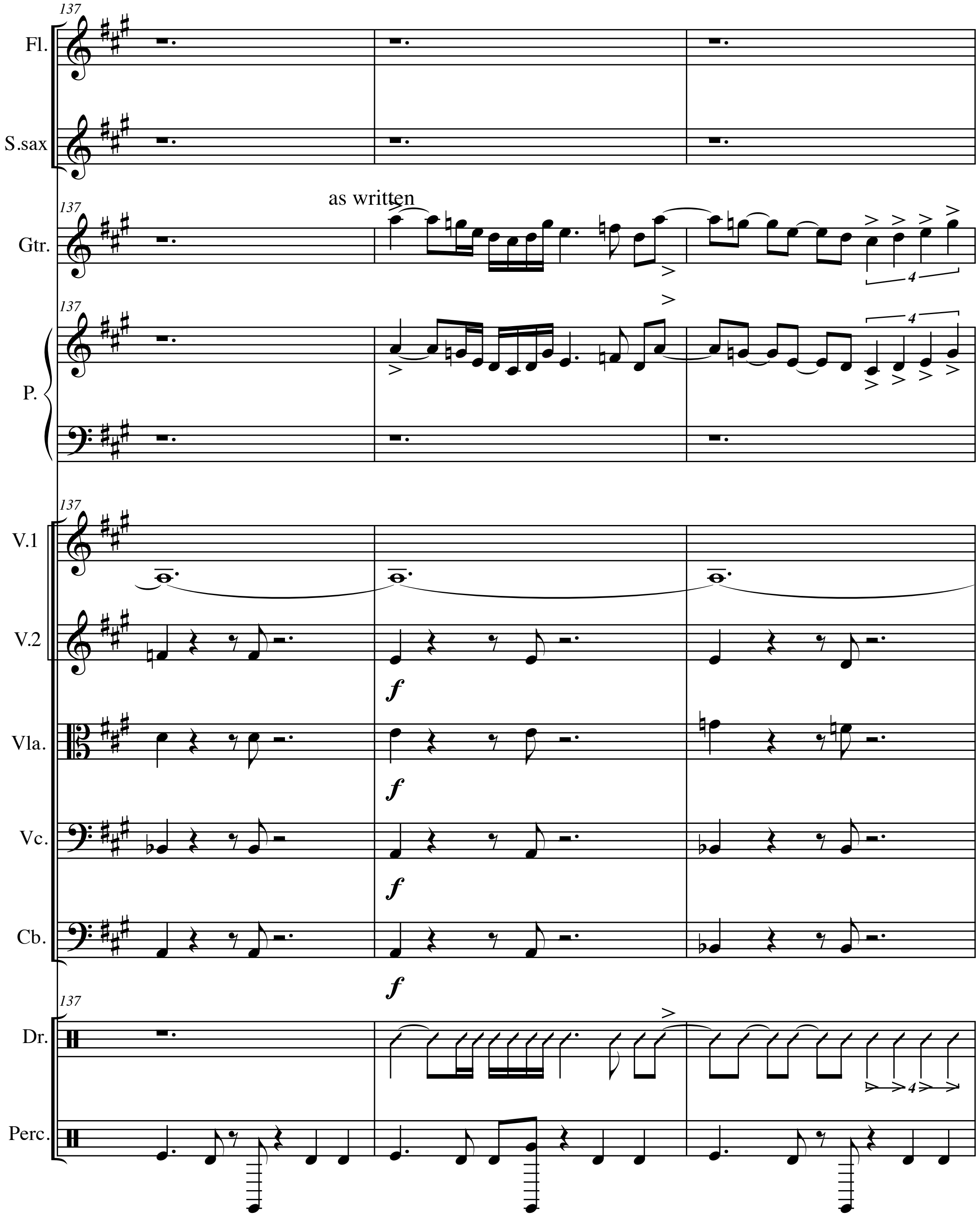

125
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.
rehook here
4
4
4
f
p
arco
arco

SILK ROAD M.3

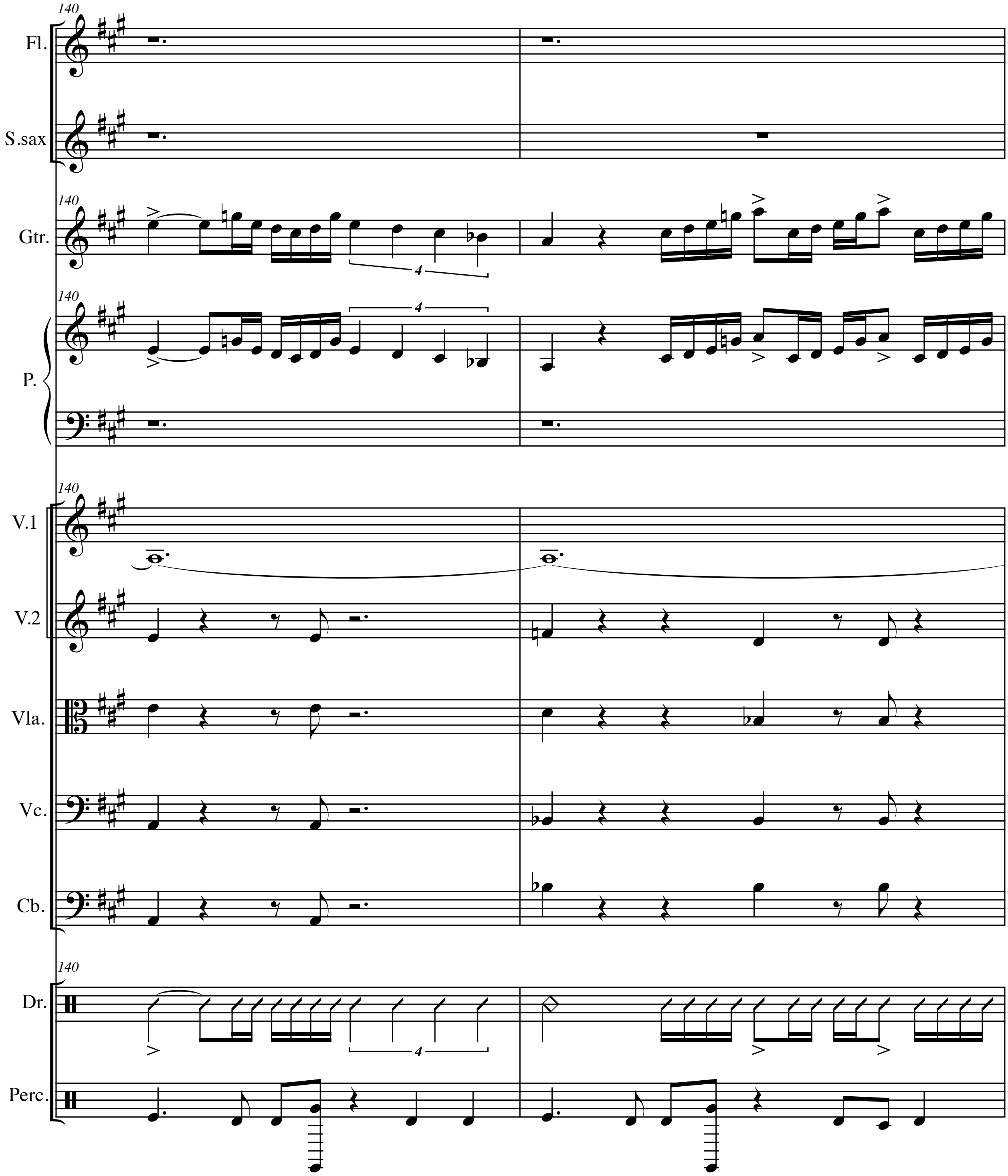

128
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
Play falsetas
mf
P.
arco
V.1
pp
V.2
pizz.
Vla.
pizz.
Vc.
p
pizz.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

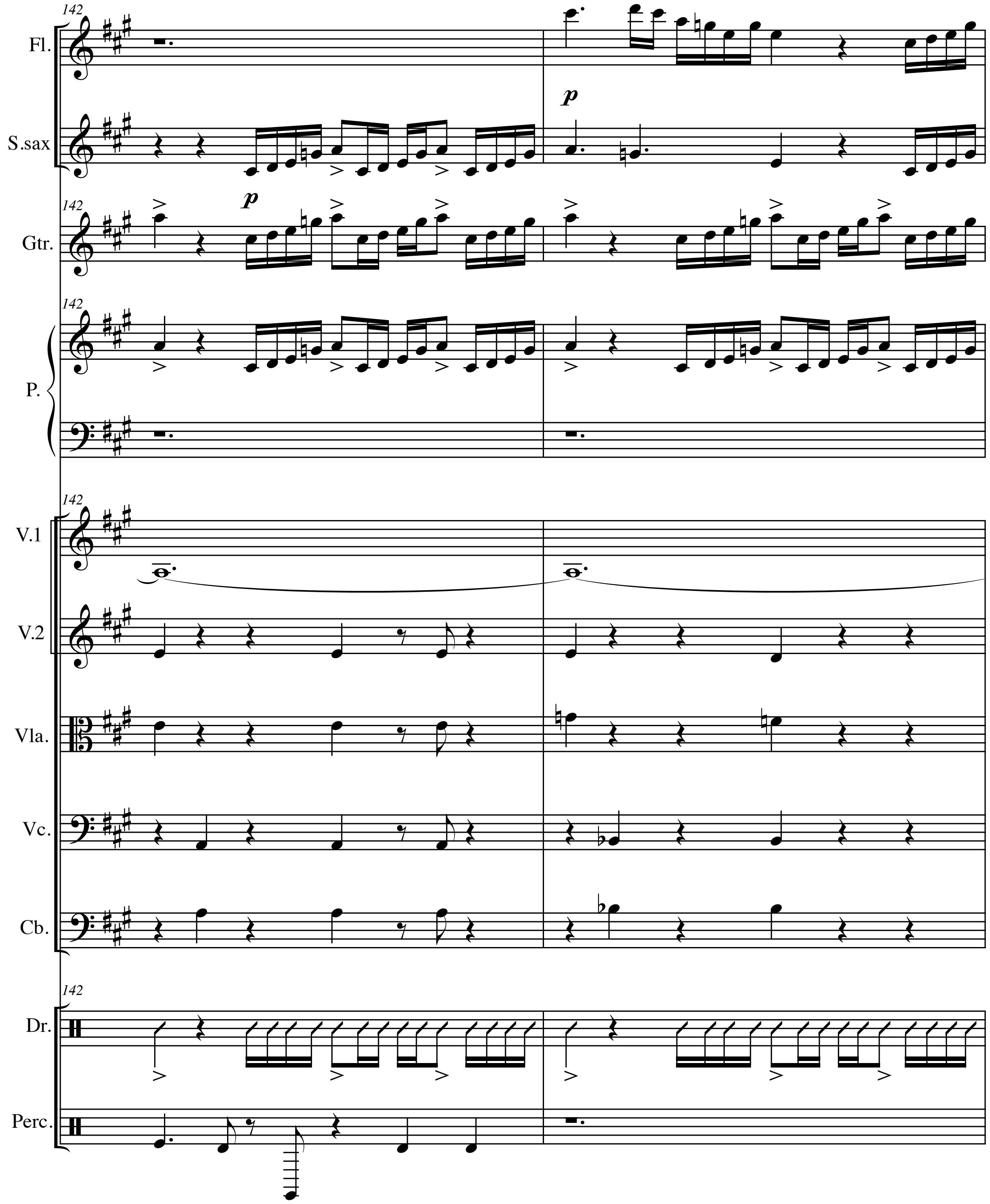

131
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.

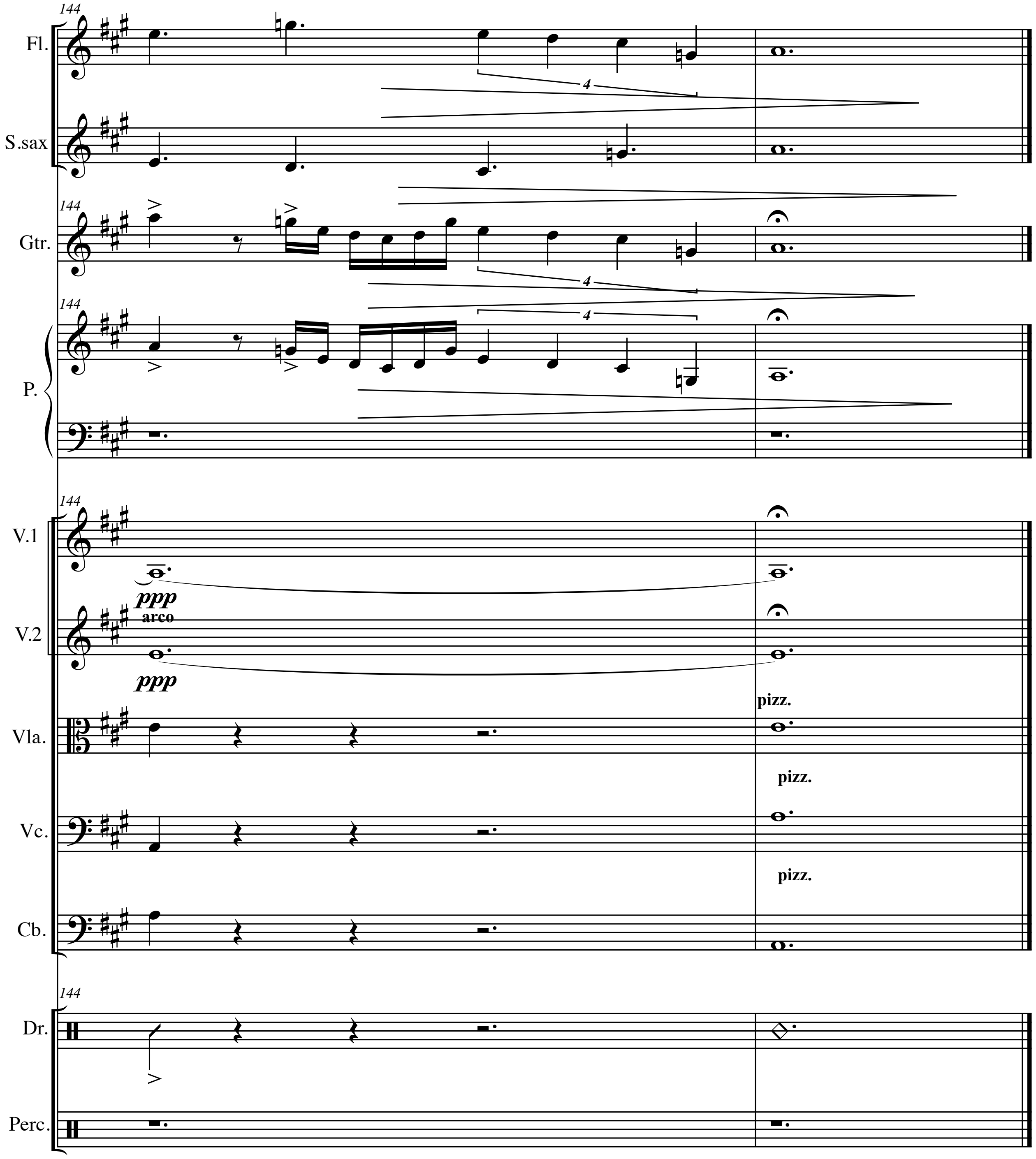

134
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
arco
V.1
V.2
cresc.
Vla.
cresc.
Vc.
cresc.
Cb.
cresc.
Dr.
Perc.


137
Fl.
S.sax
137
as written
Gtr.
4
137
4
P.
137
V.1
V.2
f
Vla.
f
Vc.
f
Cb.
f
137
Dr.
4
Perc.

SILK ROAD M.3


140
Fl.
S.sax
140
Gtr.
4
140
P.
4
140
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
140
Dr.
4
Perc.


142
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.
p


144
Fl.
S.sax
Gtr.
P.
V.1
V.2
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
Dr.
Perc.
4
ppp
arco
pizz.

APPENDIX 10

The double-neck electro acoustic guitar

In 2009 I collaborated with Australian luthier, Jim Williams, to develop a guitar for the Eastern Blues Project that would facilitate (1) the exploration of intercultural aesthetics and (2) incorporate the sounds of nylon-string flamenco and steel-string acoustic guitars. Thus, we begun to brainstorm on the design of a double neck electro-acoustic guitar based on a flamenco model that I own, and an experimental steel-string acoustic guitar that I had already used on a number of intercultural collaborations.

Jim identified a significant problem with building a guitar with a soundboard capable of accommodating the diverse string tension ratio of flamenco and a steel string acoustic guitar. The total string pulling tension on a flamenco guitar is between 38 and 42 kilograms, whilst the acoustic guitar is between 58 and 77 kilograms. This imbalance, coupled with the challenge of balancing the variable acoustic properties of two instruments on a single soundboard was a challenging prospect. We worked out that the problem may be resolved by using Dr. Thomastik acoustic flat wound, light gauge string set: .011 to .050, which are industry-measured in inches, rather than centimeters, and have an overall tension of 49 kilograms. These strings are very smooth and rich sounding because the core of the lower four strings (E, A, D and G) is made of nylon filaments; as such, it is somewhat similar to the smooth, rich sound of classical guitar strings, but with added 'zing' due to the bronze wire outer winding. Flamenco guitar strings are made of clear nylon and in the bass strings are wound with super fine silver-plated wire.

After an extensive period of experimentation, Jim built an excellent double-neck small-body electro-acoustic instrument with 6-string flamenco and 8-string acoustic necks. Ultimately, the success of this build would be gauged by its flexibility to play jazz, blues, and Latin music, as well as drones, and the rhythmic patterns on *chikari* strings, which determined that the steel-string neck should have a total of eight strings instead of the normal six[1].

In summary, this instrument is suited to produce discrete intercultural nuances whilst retaining essential characteristics of the guitar. As such, it is not an instrument trying not to be a guitar; the fact that it is fretted as opposed to fretless for example, prevents the execution of microtonal intonation (*sruti*) in Indian classical music. Nevertheless, the Jim Williams guitar was central to the creation of the Eastern Blues Project as it fuelled improvisations, composition and performance in ways that would not have been possible on conventional acoustic guitar.

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[1] *Chikari* strings are special drone strings in the *sitar* and *sarod*. They are never fretted, but are struck whenever the tonic needs to be emphasized (i.e., *Sa* and *Pa*). http://chandrakantha.com/articles/indian_music/jhala.html.

APPENDIX 11

CD track excerpts listing - Chapter 2

1. Eastern Blues - drone (Ex. *a*)
2. Silk Road - drone (Ex. *b*)
3. Tina the Healer - drone (Ex. *c*)
4. Eastern Blues - Indian nuanced line (Ex. *d*)
5. Eastern Blues - Indian-nuanced line (Ex. *e*)
6. Mingus Ashes in the Ganges - Indian-nuanced line (Ex. *f*)
7. Mingus Ashes in the Ganges - Indian-nuanced line (Ex. *g*)
8. Silk Road Revisited - Indian-nuanced line (Ex. *h*)
9. Tina the Healer - Indian-nuanced line (Ex. *i*)
10. Tina the Healer - Indian-nuanced line (Ex. *j*)
11. Eastern Blues - A. Flower guitar solo (Ex. *k*)
12. Eastern Blues - solo excerpt (Ex. *l*)
13. Eastern Blues - ac. guitar solo break (Ex. *m*)
14. Eastern Blues - ac. guitar solo excerpt (Ex. *n*)
15. Eastern Blues - ac. guitar solo ending (Ex. *o*)
16. Mingus Ashes in the Ganges - bass intro (Ex. *p*)
17. Mingus Ashes in the Ganges - guitars intro (Ex. *q*)
18. Tina the Healer - outro melody with *tihai* (Ex. *r*)
19. Silk Road Revisited - *falsetas* (Ex. *s*)
20. Silk Road ac. guitar solo (Ex. *t*)
21. Silk Road 2nd solo (Ex. *u*)
22. Silk Road 3rd solo: guitars trades (Ex. *v*)
23. Mingus Ashes in the Ganges - singing on a train
24. Mingus Ashes in the Ganges - improvisation practice
25. *Konnakol* lines
26. Tina the Healer - *tihai*
27. Tina the Healer - Ganesh/konnakol and final *tihai*
28. Tina the Healer - guitar improvisation
29. Tina the Healer - guitar/bass improvisations

APPENDIX 12

CD track excerpts listing - Chapter 3

30. Movement 1 (Ex. *a*)
31. Movement 1 (Ex. *b*)
32. Movement 1 (Ex. *c*)
33. Movement 1 (Ex. *d*)
34. Movement 1 (Ex. *e*)
35. Movement 1 (Ex. *g*)
36. Movement 1
37. Movement 2 (Ex. *h*)
38. Movement 3 (Ex. *o*)
39. Movement 1 (Ex. *r*)
40. Movement 1 (Ex. *s*)
41. Movement 1 (Ex. *u*)
42. Movement 2 (Ex. *w*)
43. Movement 3 (Ex. *y*)