Vocalise for Soprano - with Piano, Cello, Clarinet, Flute

Robert John Magnuson 2007

Likely duration: 2 to 2 1/2 minutes

I wish attribution to include my name, date, and title of composition, as are listed in each score. I request that any public performance of any work I have released be recorded to video with sound, and that recording be forwarded to me (as video file or website URL of video). Please use the 'Contact' form on my website listed below if you have a video of a performance, to arrange how I might receive such.

This score is driven by the "Aegean Symphonic Orchestra" sound font, which can be downloaded, then installed and configured, from: https://sites.google.com/view/hed-sounds/aegean-symphonic-orchestra One advantage to this .SF2 file is selectable solo or ensemble strings.

VOCALISE ('vocal-eez') Definition:

"A musical composition consisting of the singing of melody with vowel sounds or nonsense syllables rather than text, as for special effect in classical compositions, in polyphonic jazz singing by special groups, or in virtuoso vocal exercises."

This Vocalise was conceived to be a recital performed in one of two ways: with theatrics, or without theatrics. 'Theatrics' here means specific, staged extra-musical interaction between the performers.

Concepts about both approaches for performance are included.

It's my hope all musicians involved will agree to perform "with theatrics". The instruments were ***written specifically*** with this in mind.

All my free compositions (and further info) are found at:
https://www.gandsnut.net

All Musicians: The vocalist is the final arbiter of performance nuance for the entire piece. If there are to be NO THEATRICS, then silent measures 50 and 51 should be deleted, with measure 52 then occuring where measure 50 was.

Soprano: measures 7, 11, 66, 70 - the last sixteenth note of the measure with a specified 'La' should be kept as is, effectively making it a grace note to the next measure. Dynamics for the voice should not exceed 'forte' throughout the Vocalise.

Piano: leggiero throughout, with strict observance to be on the beat during the 16th note flourishes. The piano (if grand) should NOT have it's top on long OR short stick. Top should be closed.

'Cello: 'sing' when the musical phrase suggests, but NEVER overpower. The placed accents are critical and have been designated to emphasize what might otherwise get lost in the shuffle.

Flute, Clarinet: Defer to the vocalist for dynamic adjustment based on phrase and register, so a balance in volume is reached but does not over-power the singer.

No Theatrics
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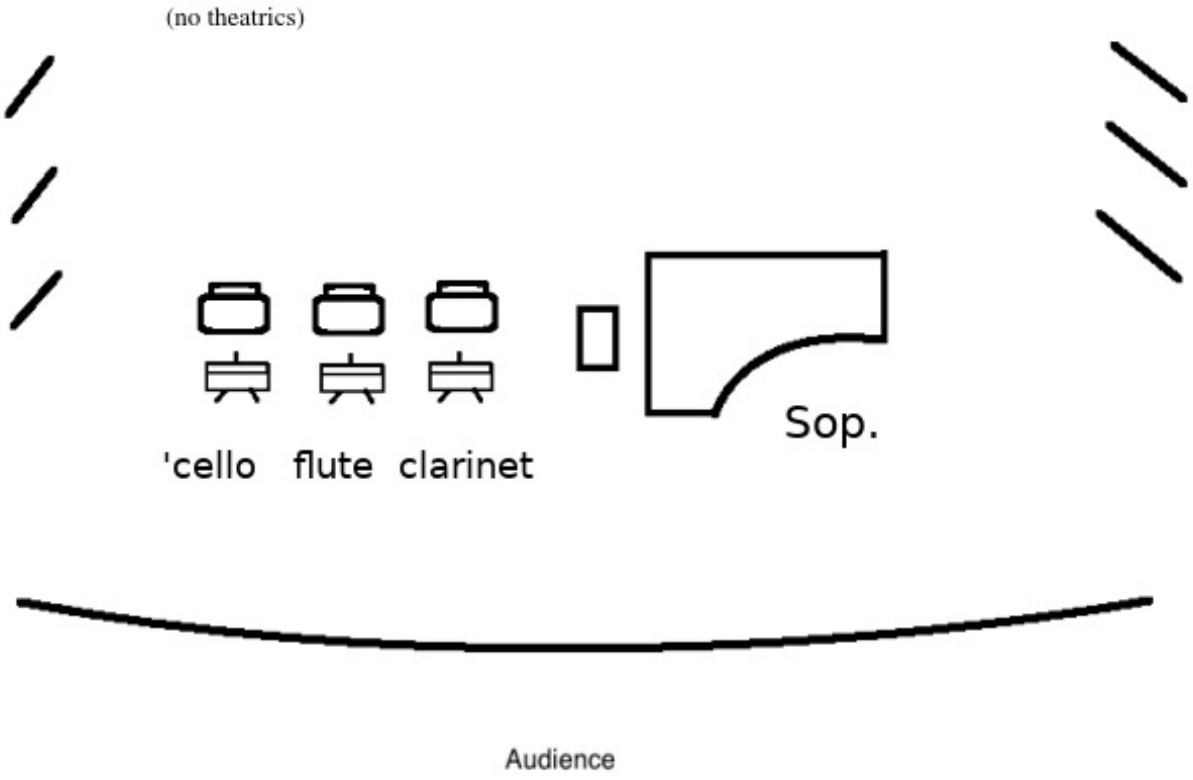
We all know the way a recital happens... All musicians enter the 'stage', take positions & prepare. The performance begins. Nobody moves from where they are at (not that the instrumentalists CAN do much moving). Most specifically, the Soprano really doesn't look anywhere else but towards the audience. The stage arrangement shown might work fine. Shown are matching chairs for 3 instrumentalists, where the Soprano might stand. Matching music stands are shown for the instrumentalists. Here, the order of seating the instrumentalists is arbitrary and can be altered.



The players (except Soprano) can enter from stage-right and take their places, Soprano can enter stage-left. When ready, the beformance can begin. Note: The Soprano - in this case - will not take much notice of her colleagues, and direct her view straight out to the audience.

With Theatrics (preferred)
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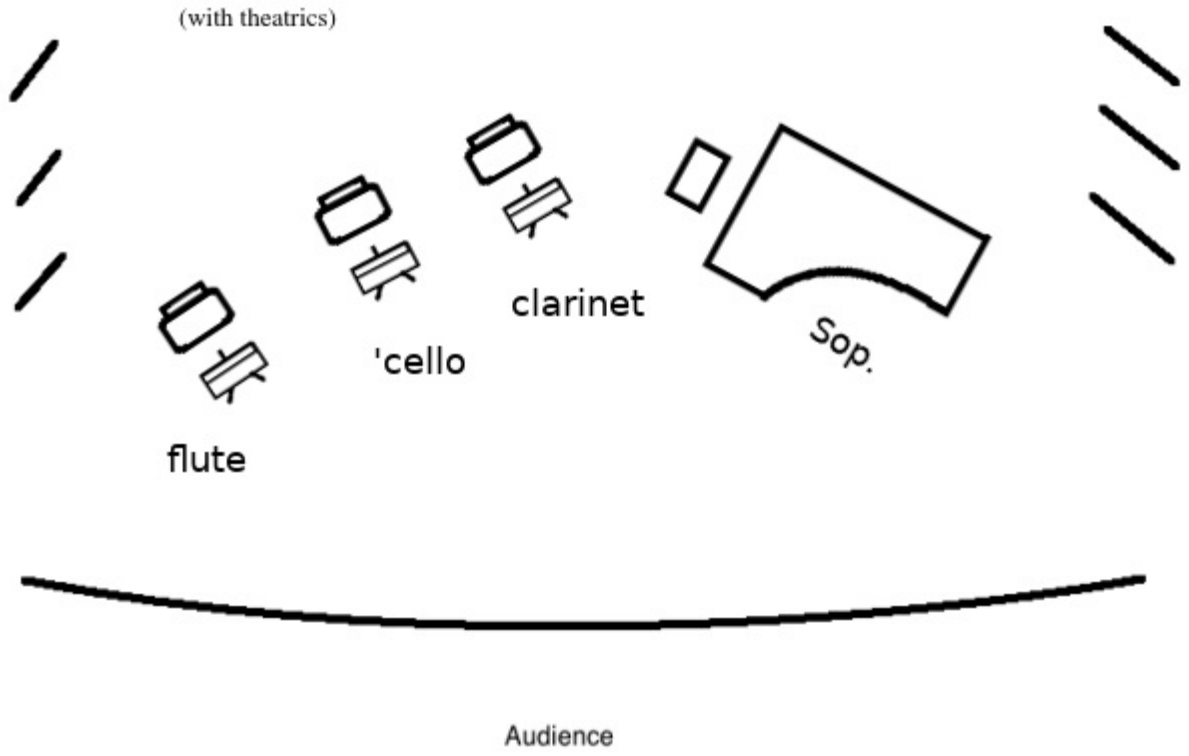
Consider this stage arrangement, where more space is provided between flute, 'cello, clarinet, and said players are turned and placed at an angle towards center-stage. Matching chairs for 3 instrumentalists, the Soprano now can easily see the other musicians, but is still able to view towards the audience. The Soprano WILL BE MOVING from where she intially stands, so the chair spacing MUST be sufficient to easly walk between all 3 instrumentalists and between the clarinet & piano bench.



The players (except Soprano) can enter from stage-right and take their places, Soprano can enter stage-left. Up to measure 34, the Soprano is encouraged to comfortably change where she 'looks' between audience AND THE INSTRUMENTALISTS. From the start to measure 34, she shouldn't move from the location.

At some point in measure 37 - WITHOUT STOPPING singing - the Soprano should walk WITHOUT HURRY, around the front of the piano, between the pianist & clarinet, walk behind the 3 players to a point between the flute & 'cello. She needs to that point by measure 42. Note: logistics require the order of the seated players.

Note: when the Soprano is amongst the instrumentalists, it will likely be helpful for her to stand not side-by-side, but 1/2 step behind them. The appearance of this can be adjusted during rehearsal.

From measure 43 until measure 49, any instrumentalist NOT PLAYING is welcome to watch interactions between the Soprano and each other, without staring blankly at their music. This includes the pianist.

While the flute plays, the Soprano watches. When the 'cello is playing, the Soprano need only turn a bit to watch. Perhaps during the 'cello playing, the Soprano should walk casually behind the 'cello to stand between 'cello and clarinet. It's IMPERATIVE the Soprano be at that point by measure 49. This sets up a "comedic moment".

Measures 50 & 51 are the unexpected absence of the piano played, what we're all expecting. But nothing happens. Important: the tempo in these measures can be (should be) halted, to give a healty "pregnant pause", where Soprano and the 3 seated instrumentalists all turn heads to look INTENTLY at the pianist. 3-4 seconds can elapse where 1) the pianist doesn't understand why everybody is looking at he/she, and 2) should then understand, "OH, I need to play on!!".

The pianist resumes "a tempo" playing the furious passage starting at measure 52, and at that moment the Soprano walks around behind the clarinet, and makes her way back to the INITIAL standing location. This must be accomplished by measure 59, when the tutti happens.

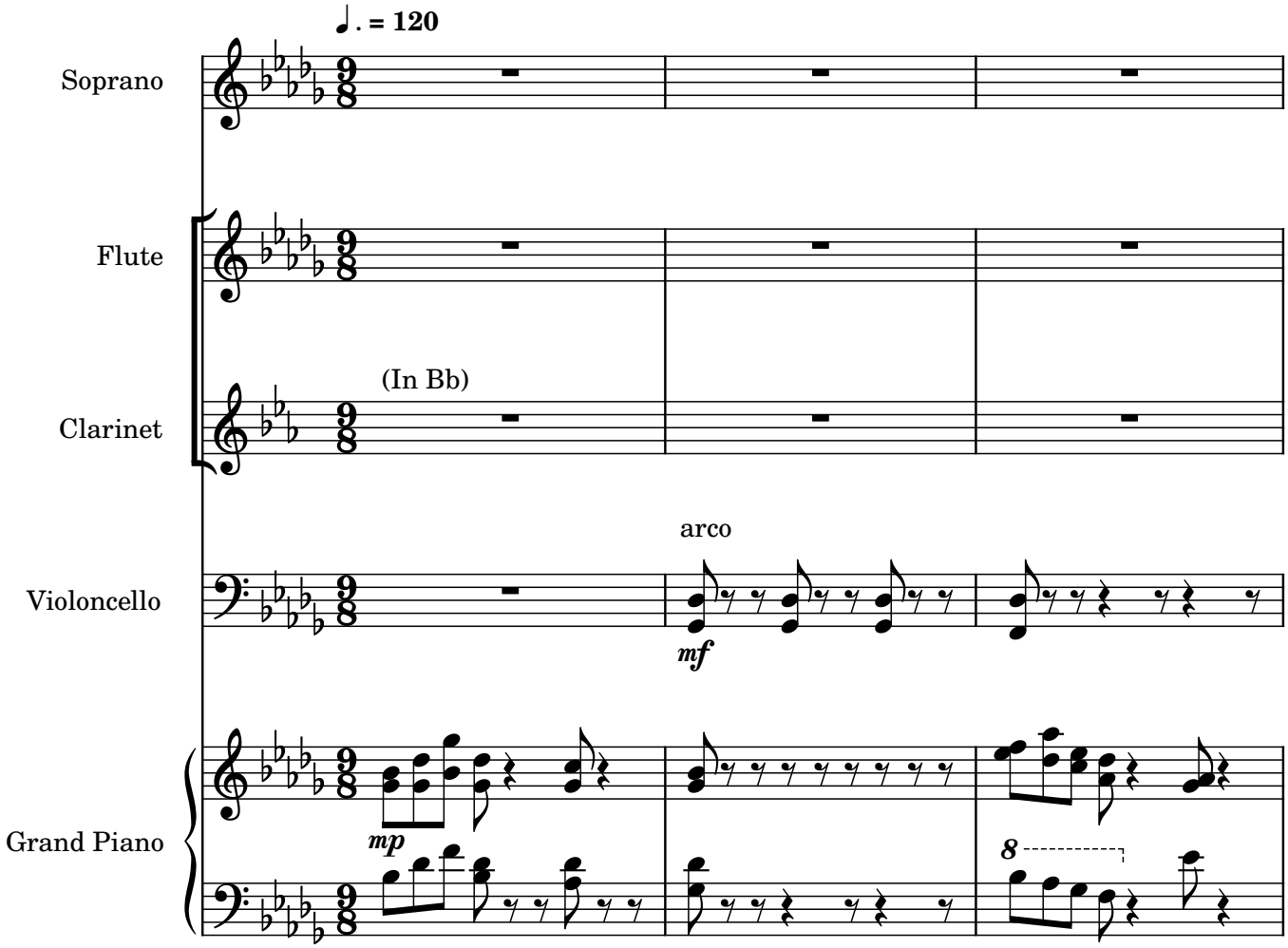
I see it fine, and natural during all of the above stage-business, for the Soprano to lightly, kindly put a hand on any instrumentalist's shoulder or back (except pianist) as each plays. Or not... The point is, all are collaborating, and pleased with each other's part in the performance.

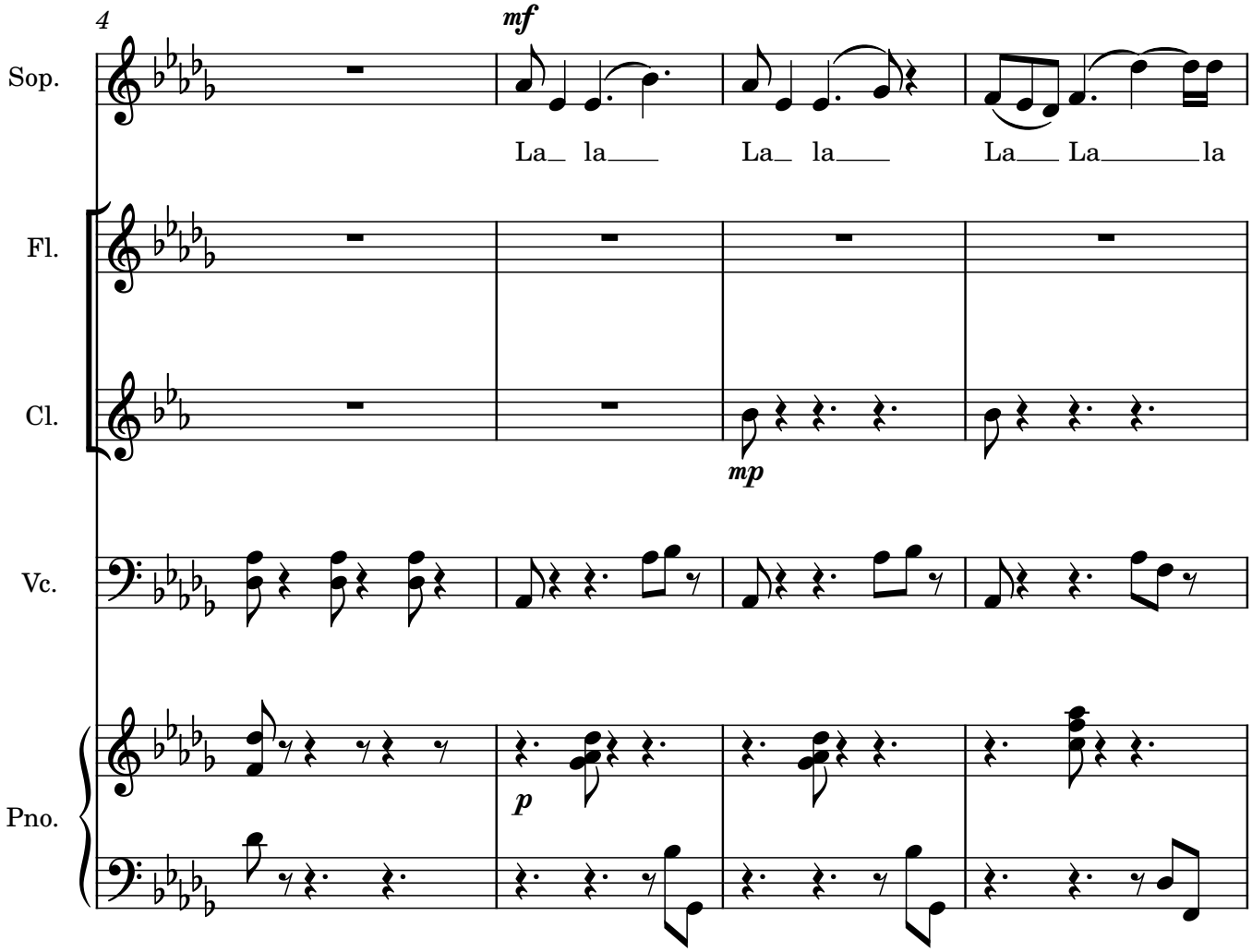
At End of the Performance

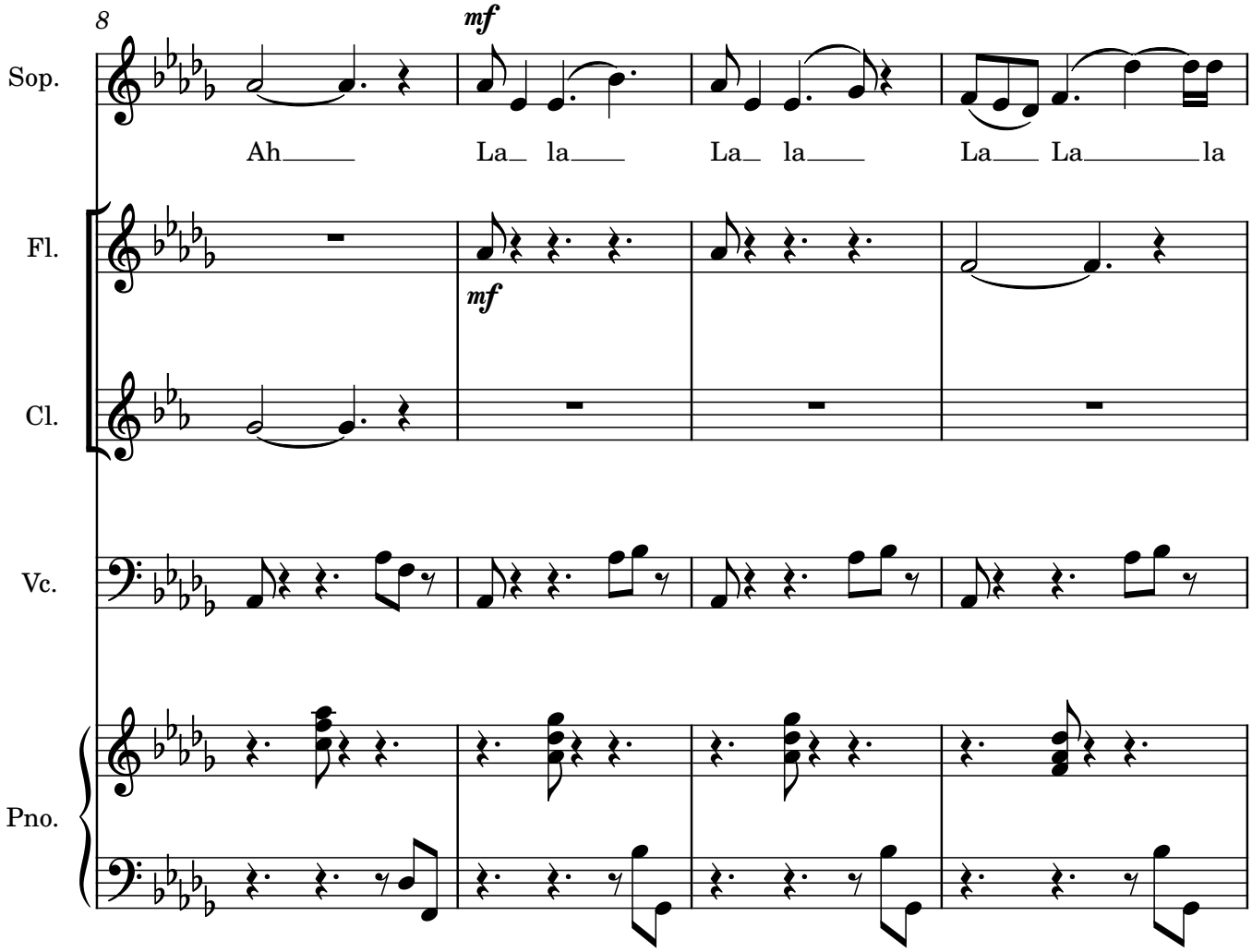
The Soprano can first take her bow, then IN WHATEVER ORDER she chooses, recognize/acknowledge each co-performer, who at that time will stand and take a bow.

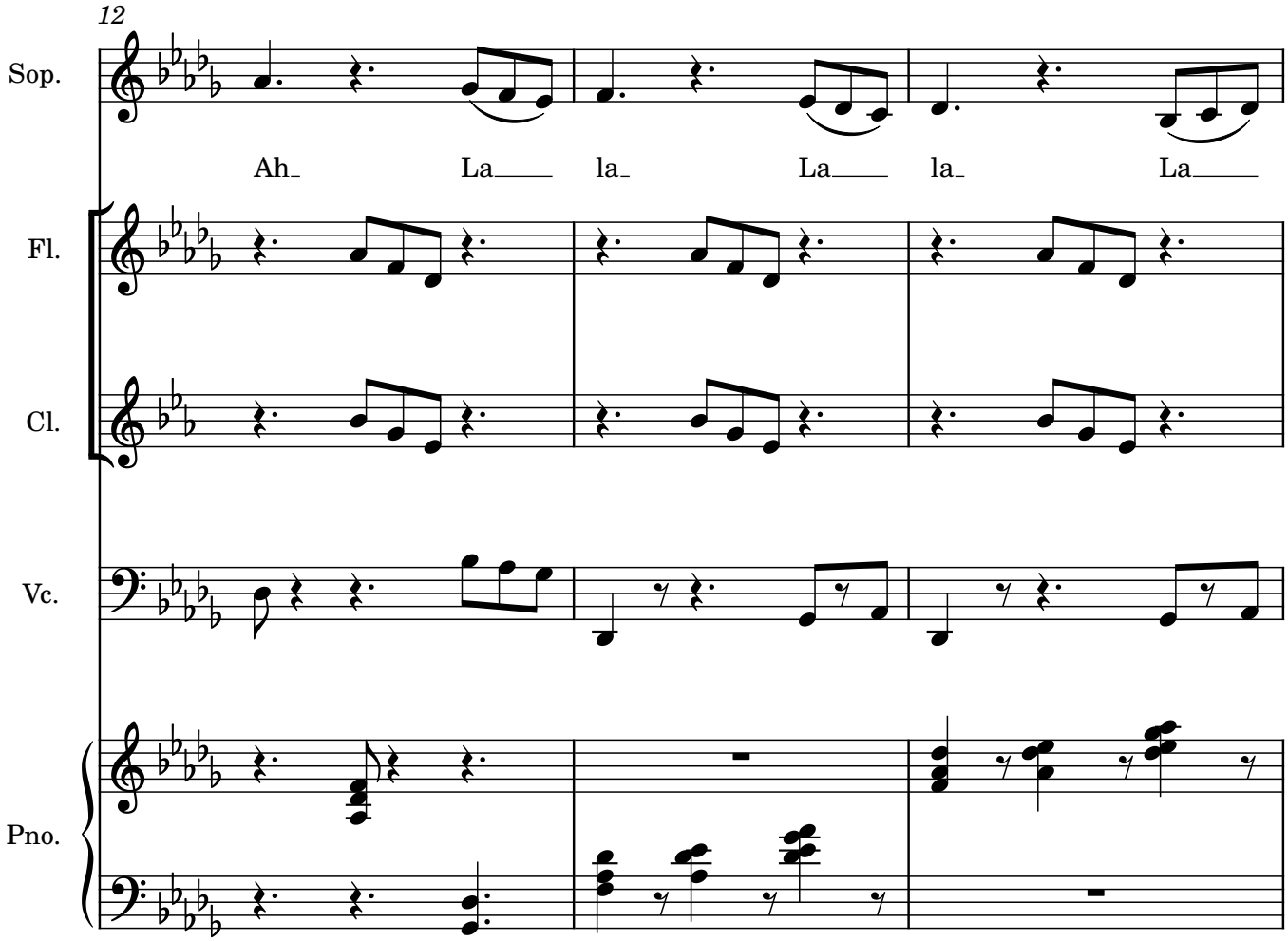
All on stage can then take a group bow. And then exit the stage at a time that feels appropriate. Order, direction of exit is unimportant.

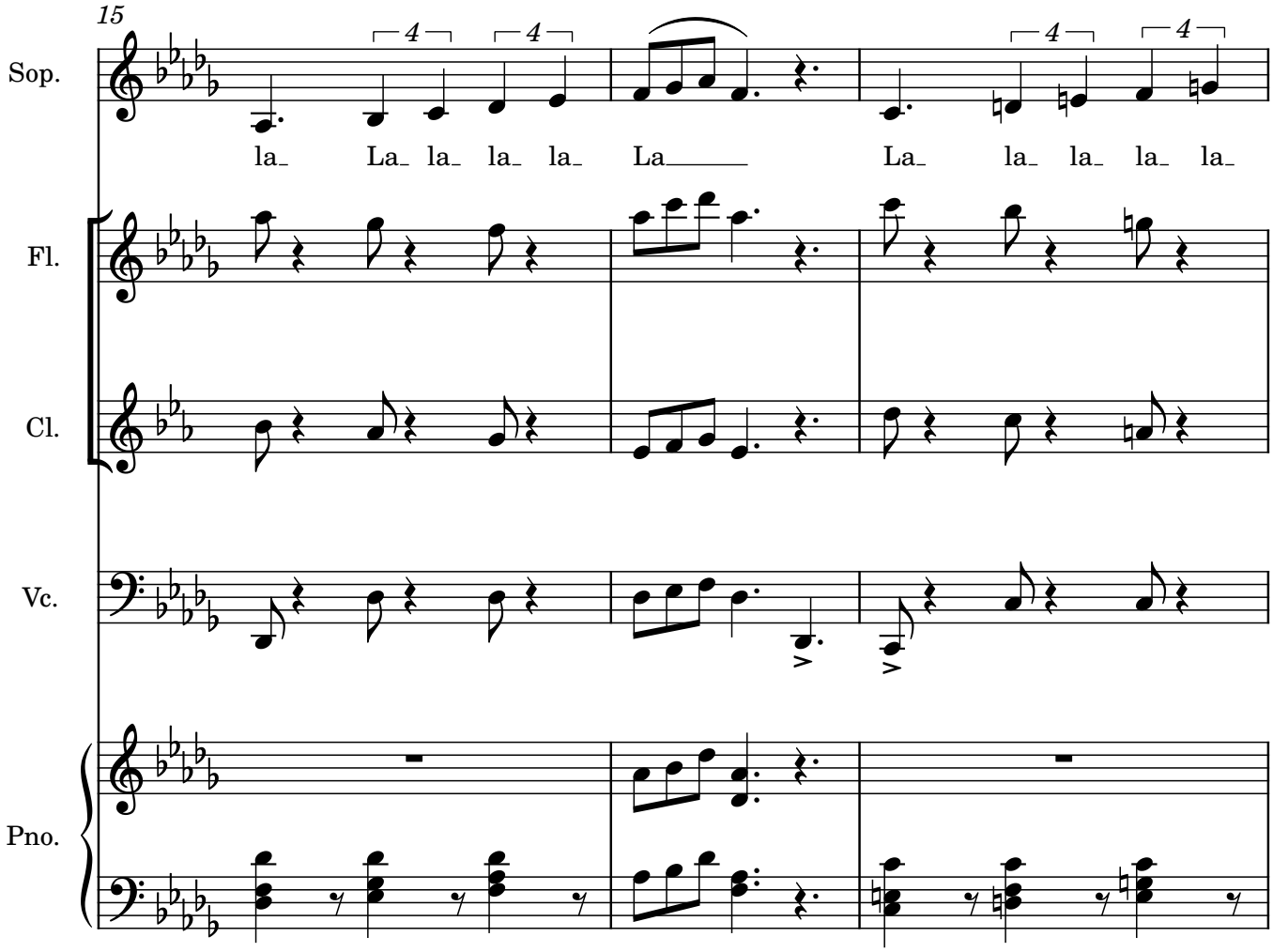
I am more than happy to answer questions or comments about this piece and its performance as I have laid out. Contact me via my web page 'Contact' form, or through MuseScore website.

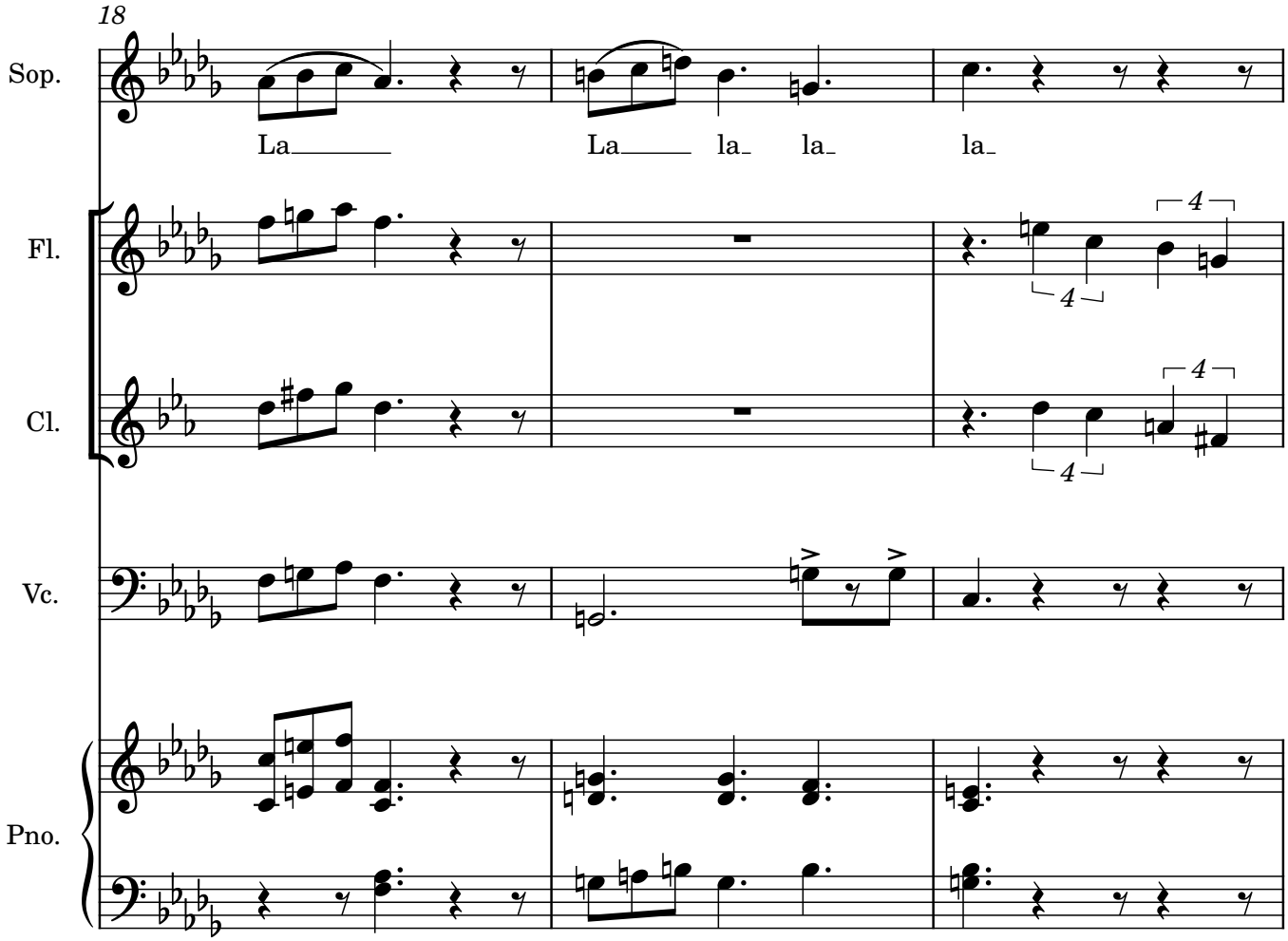

♩. = 120
Soprano
Flute
(In Bb)
Clarinet
arco
Violoncello
mf
mp
Grand Piano
8

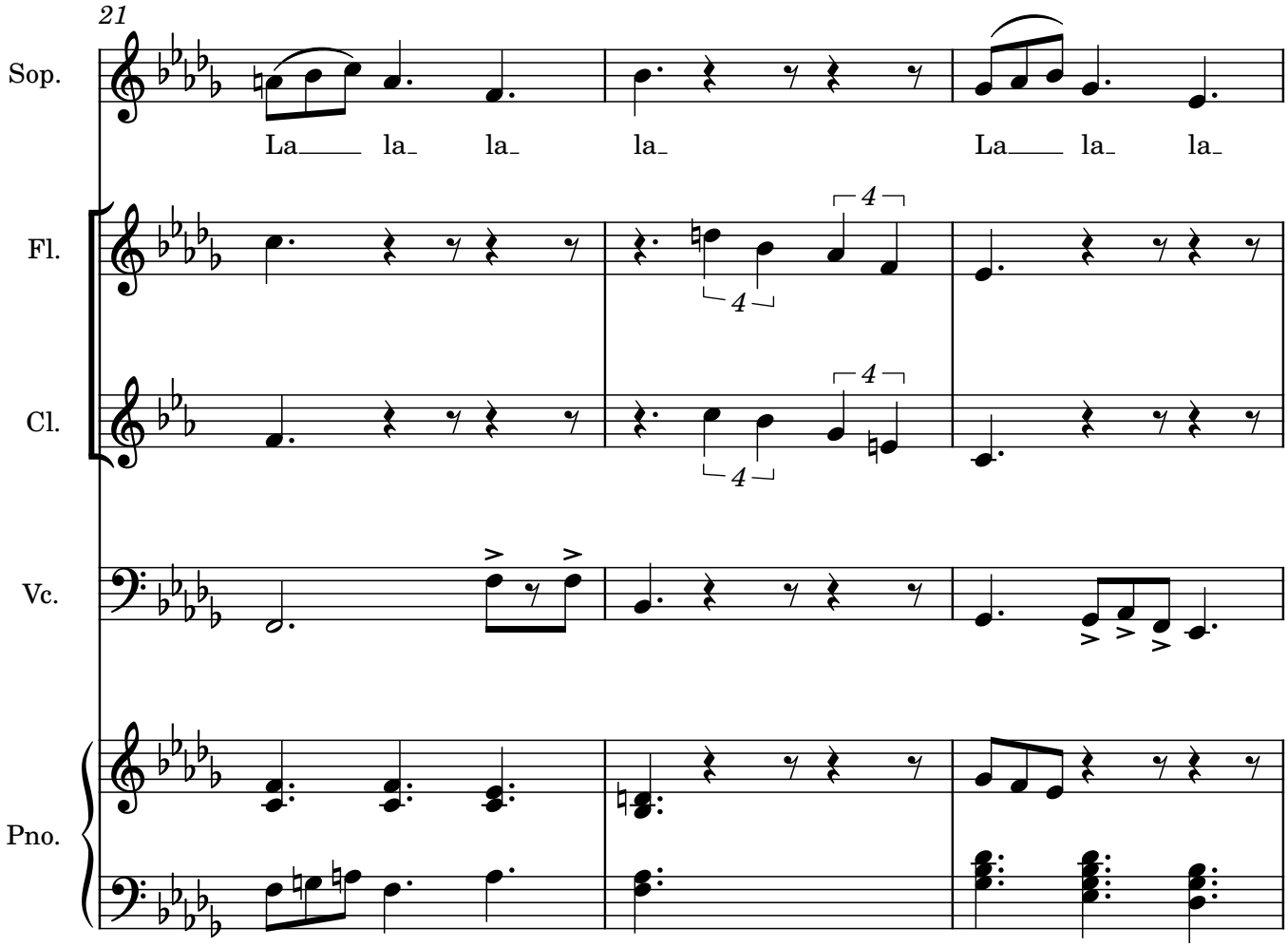

4
mf
Sop.
La la La la La La la
Fl.
Cl.
mp
Vc.
Pno.
p

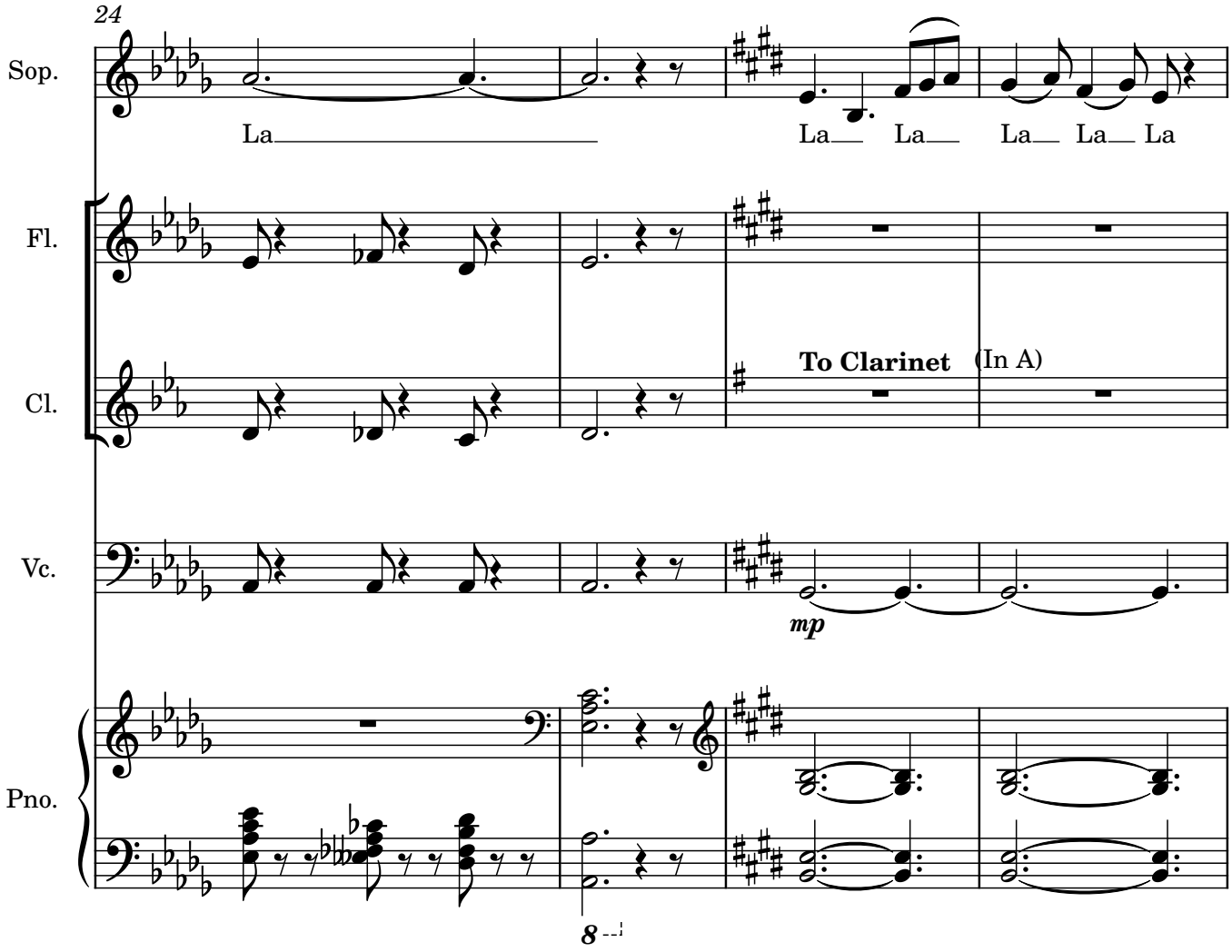

8
mf
Sop.
Ah La la La la La La la
Fl.
mf
Cl.
Vc.
Pno.

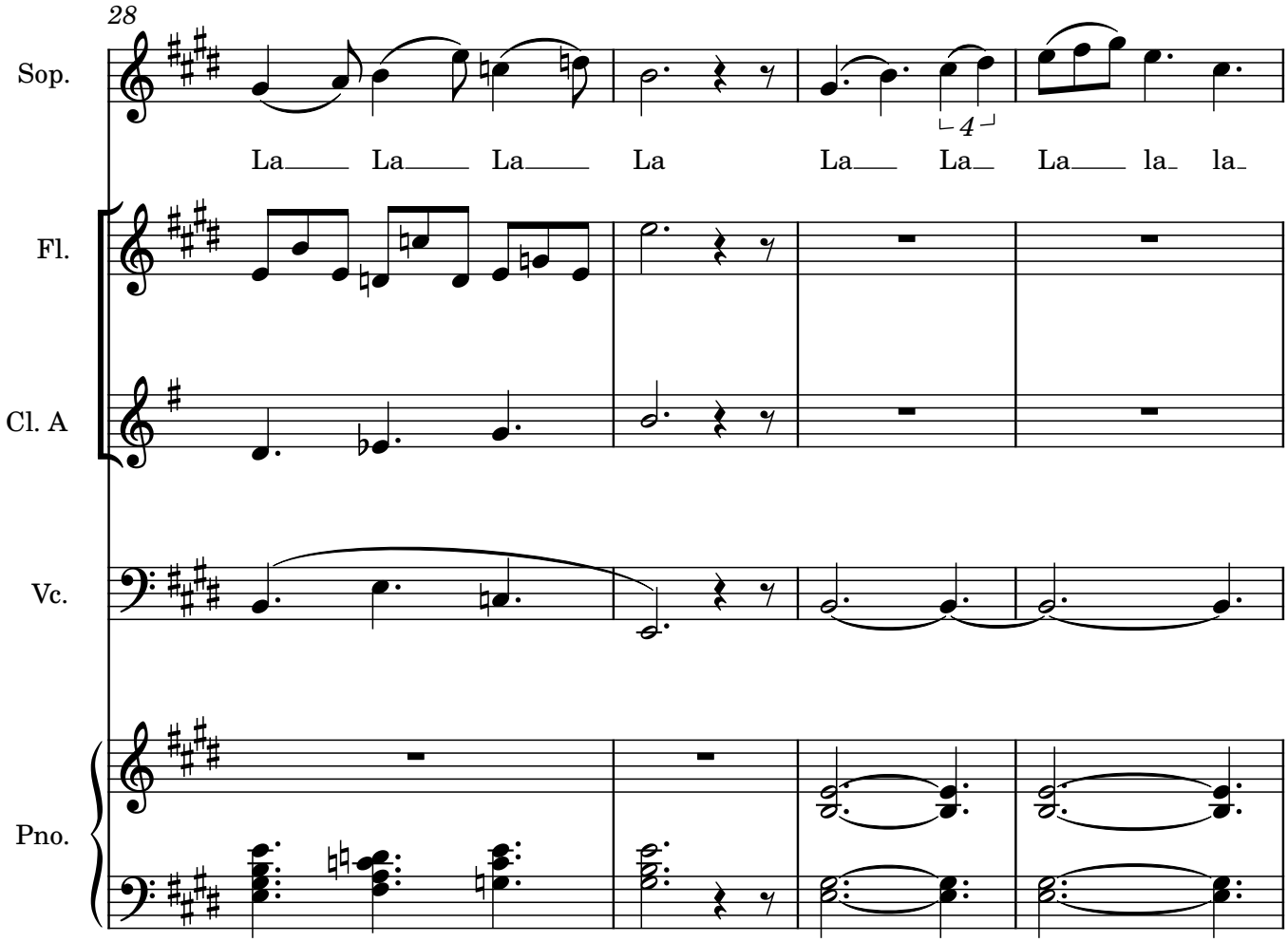

12
Sop.
Ah_ La___ la_ La___ la_ La___
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
Pno.

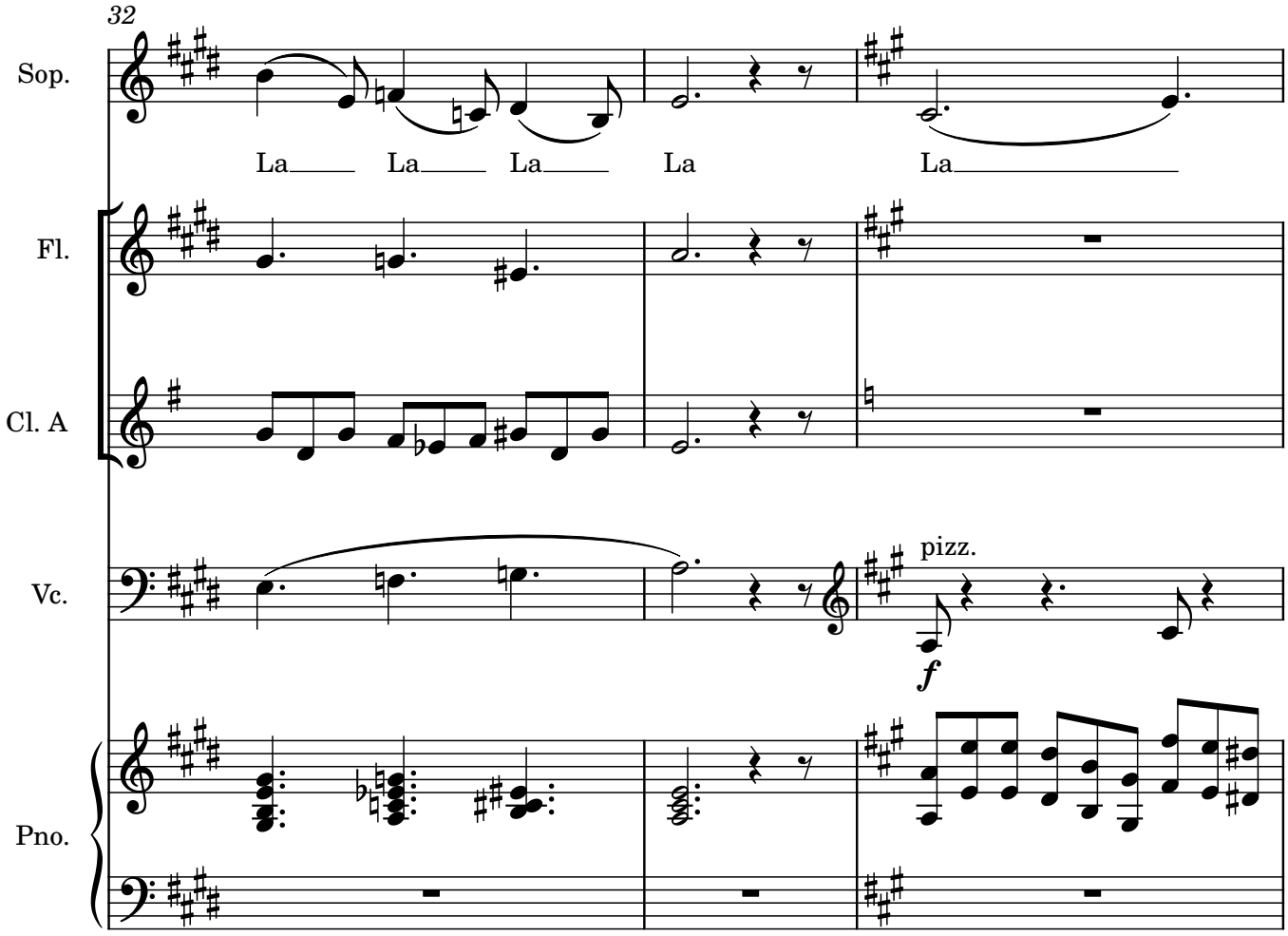

15
Sop.
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
Pno.
la_ La_ la_ la_ la_ La_____ La_ la_ la_ la_ la_
4
4
4
4

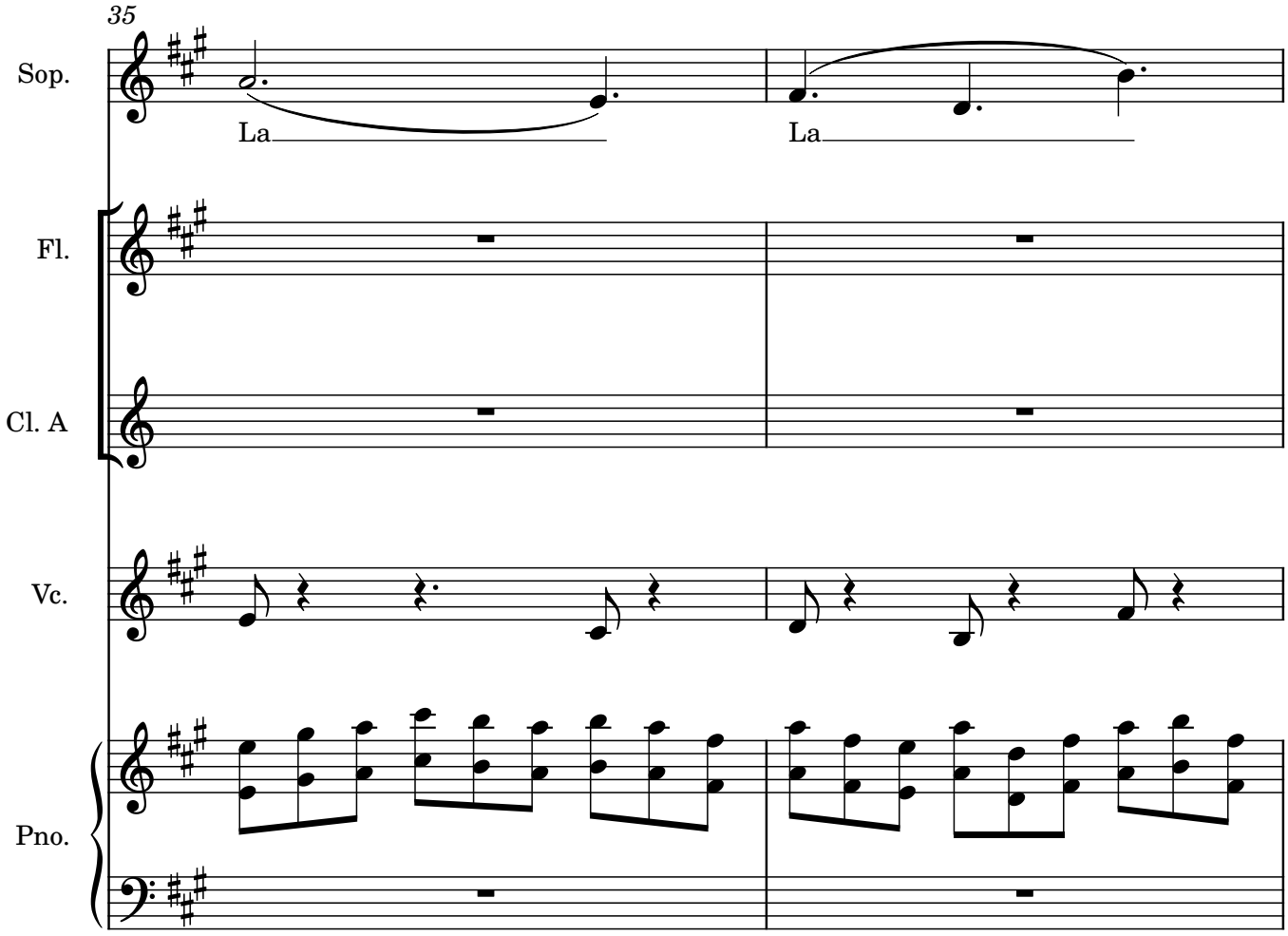

18
Sop.
La La la la la
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
Pno.

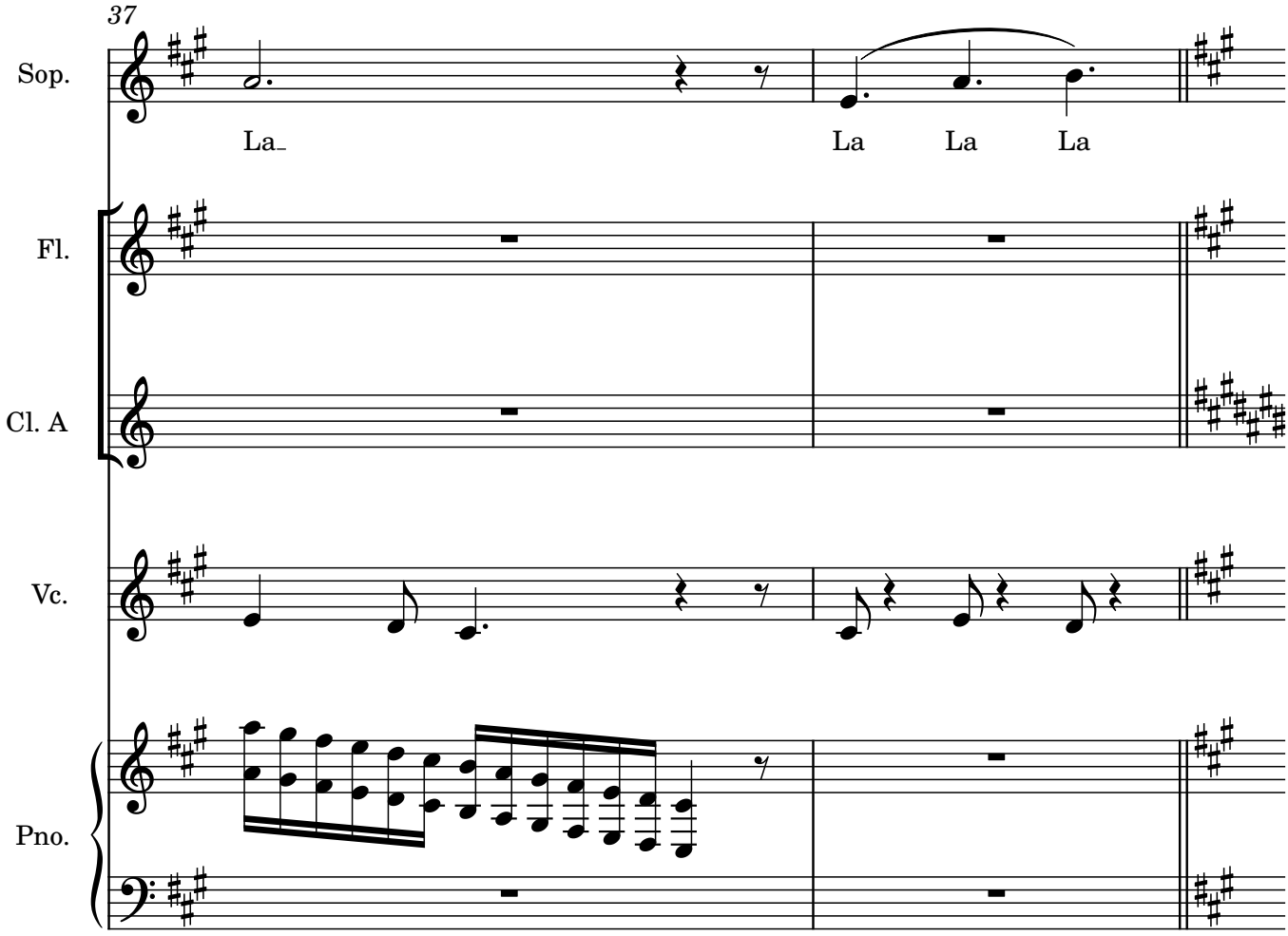

21
Sop.
La la la la La la la
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
Pno.

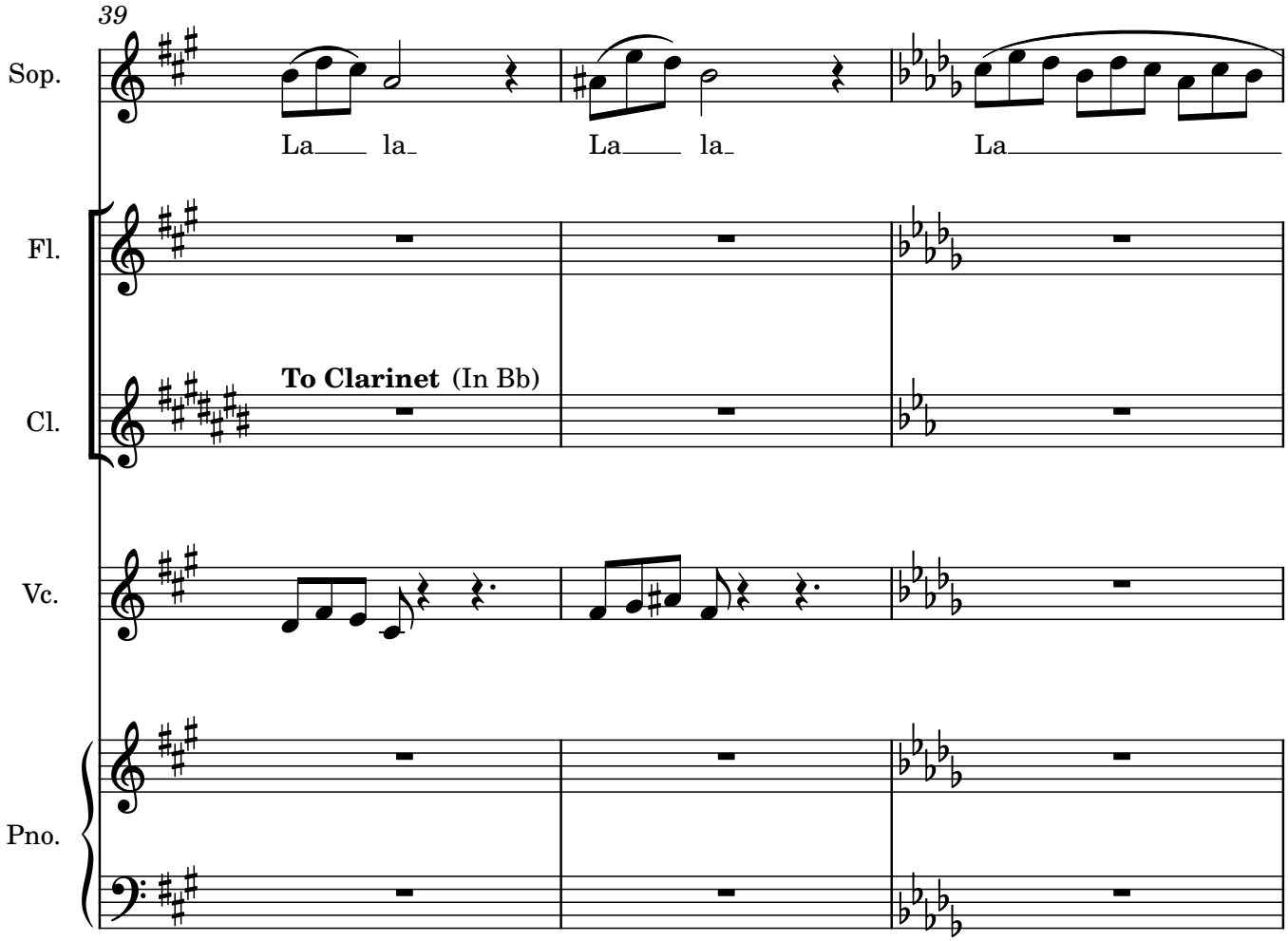

24
Sop.
La
La La La La La
Fl.
Cl.
To Clarinet
(In A)
Vc.
mp
Pno.
8

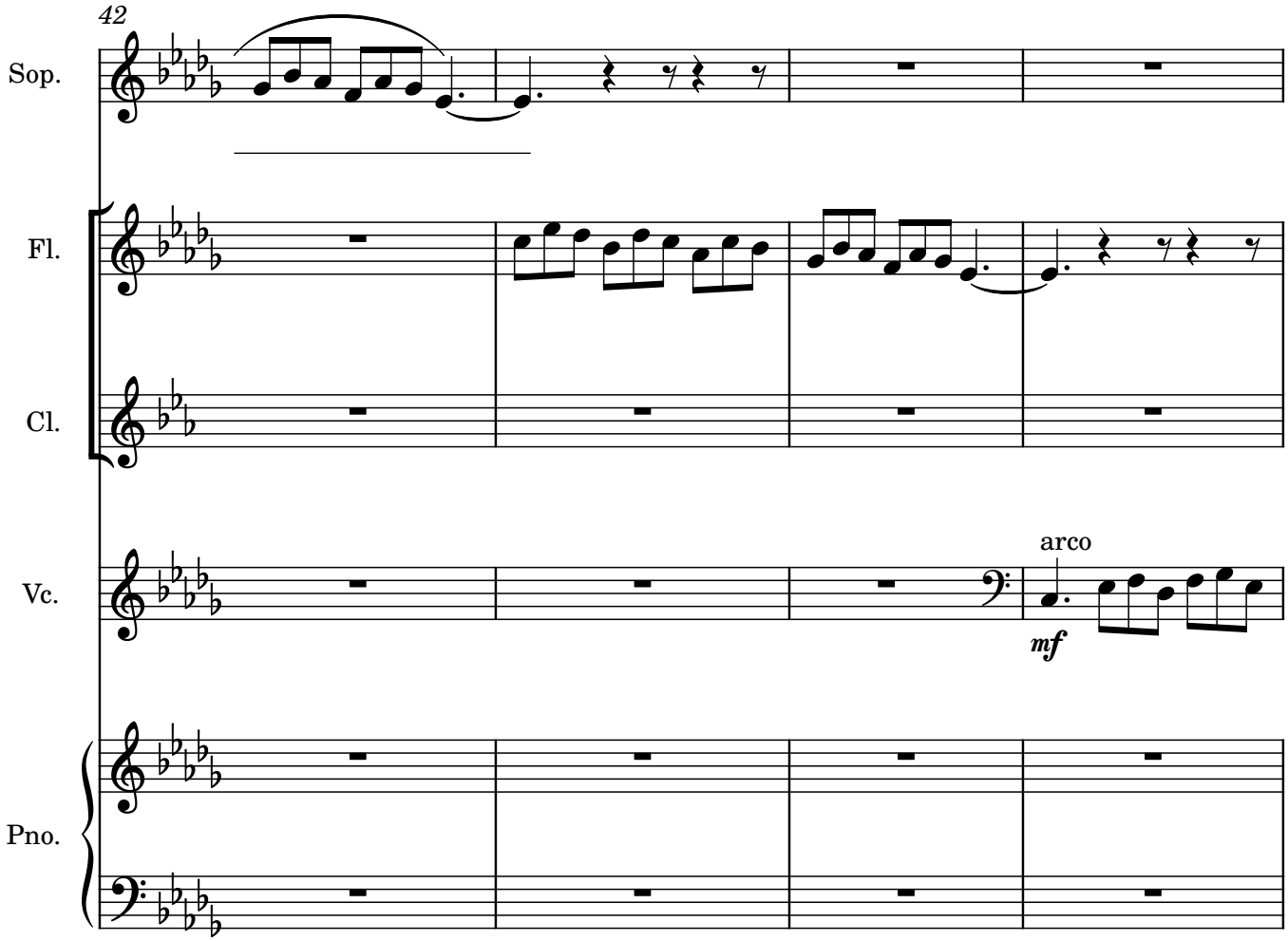

28
Sop.
La La La La La La La la la
4
Fl.
Cl. A
Vc.
Pno.

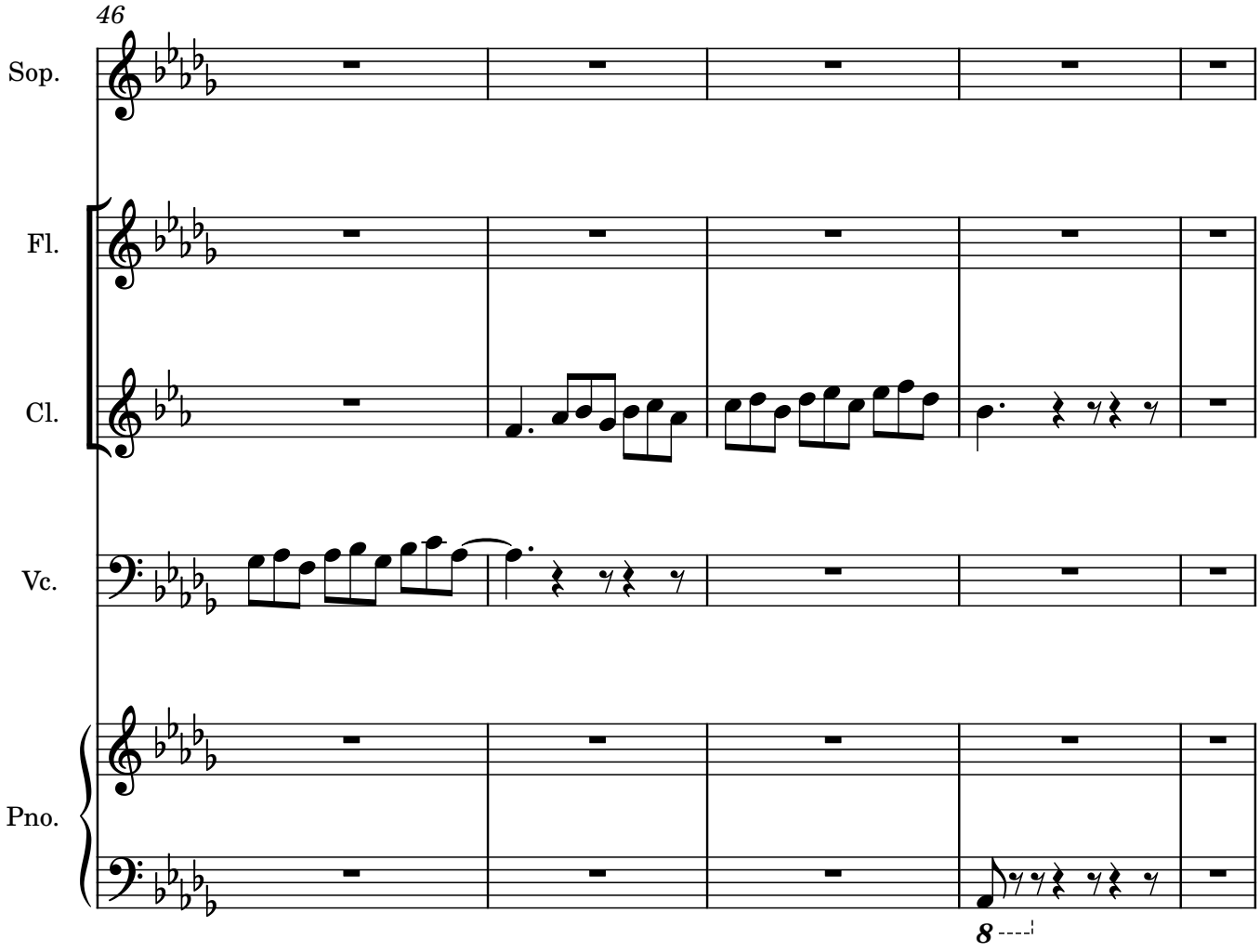

32
Sop.
La La La La La
Fl.
Cl. A
Vc.
pizz.
f
Pno.

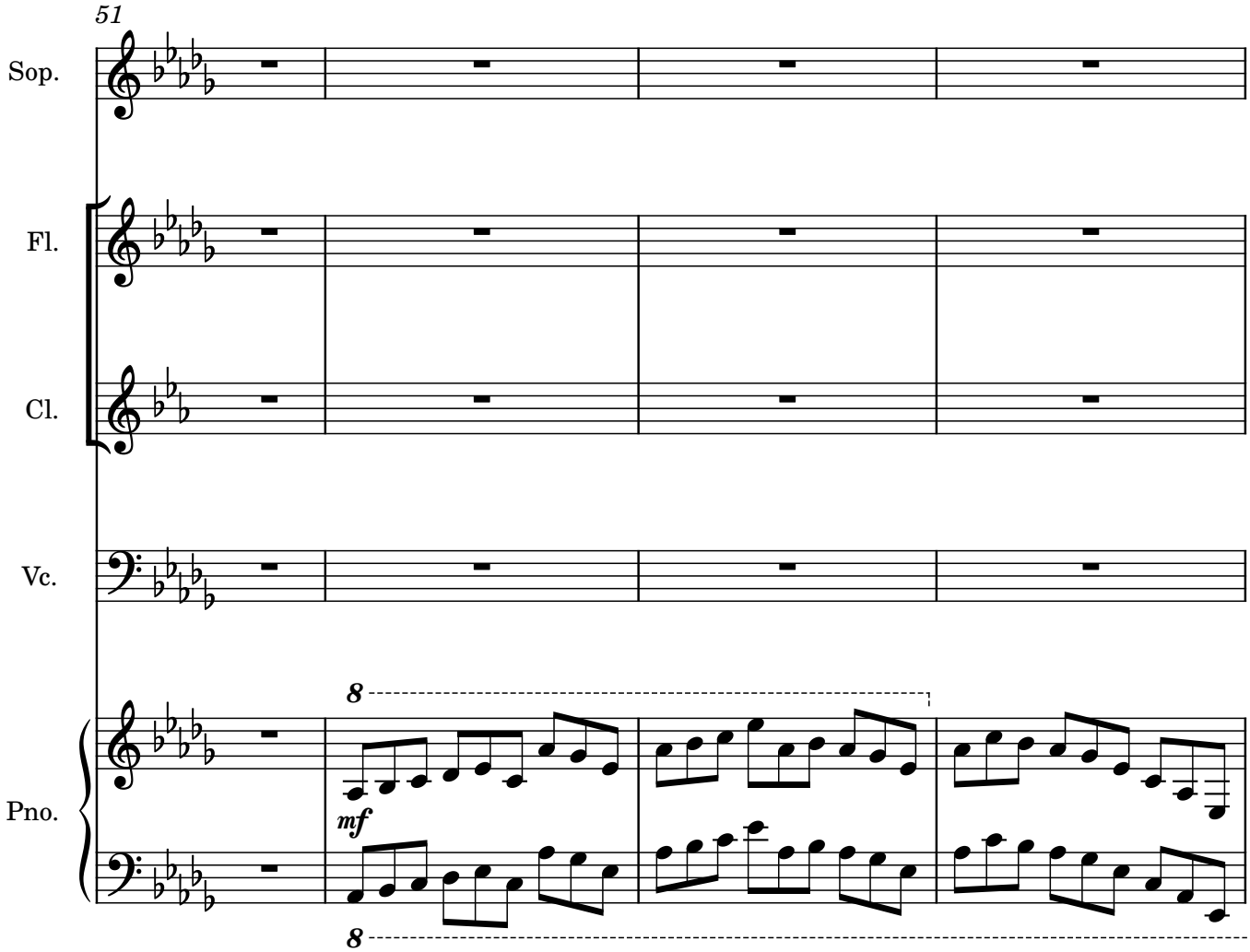

35
Sop.
La
La
Fl.
Cl. A
Vc.
Pno.

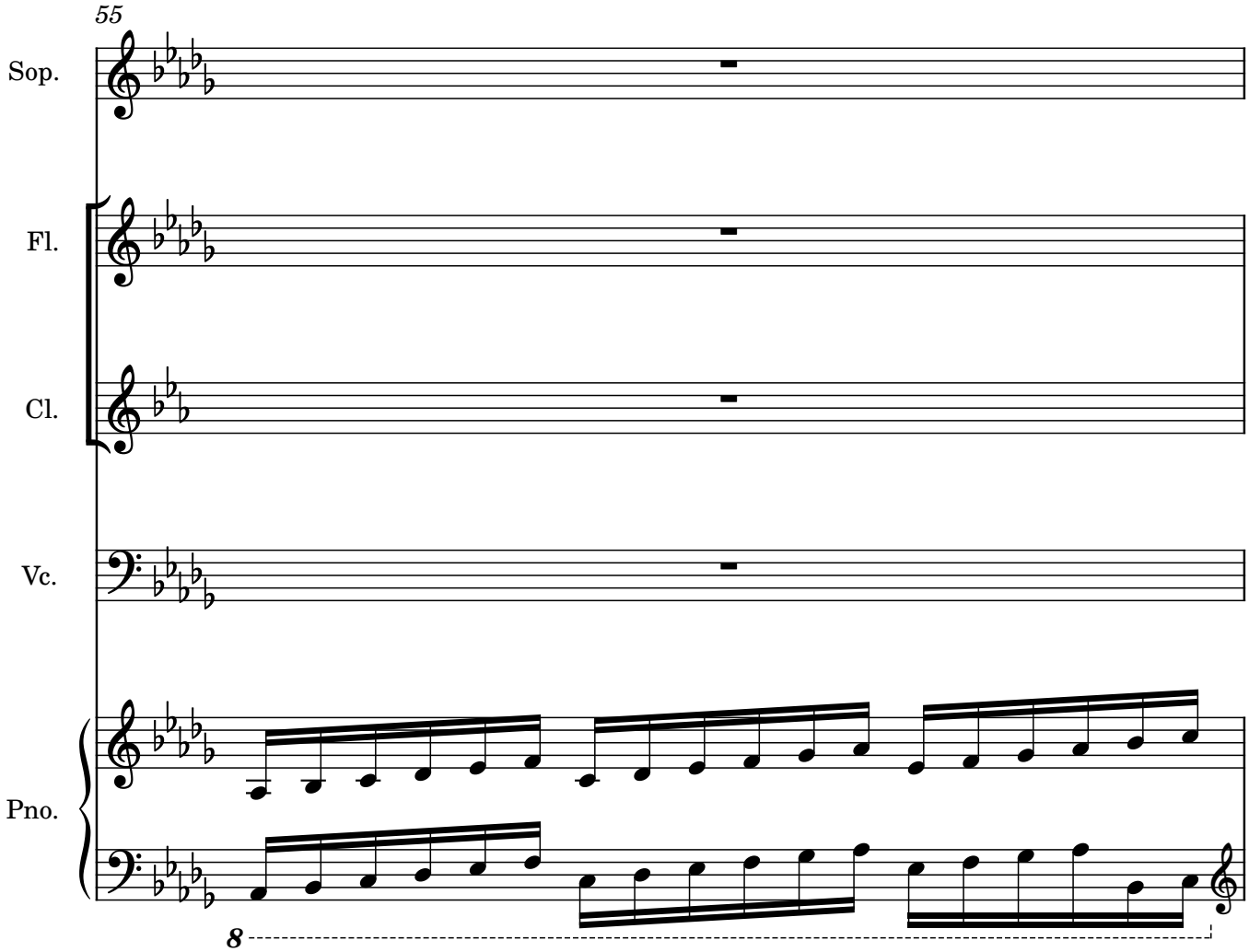

37
Sop.
La_
La La La
Fl.
Cl. A
Vc.
Pno.

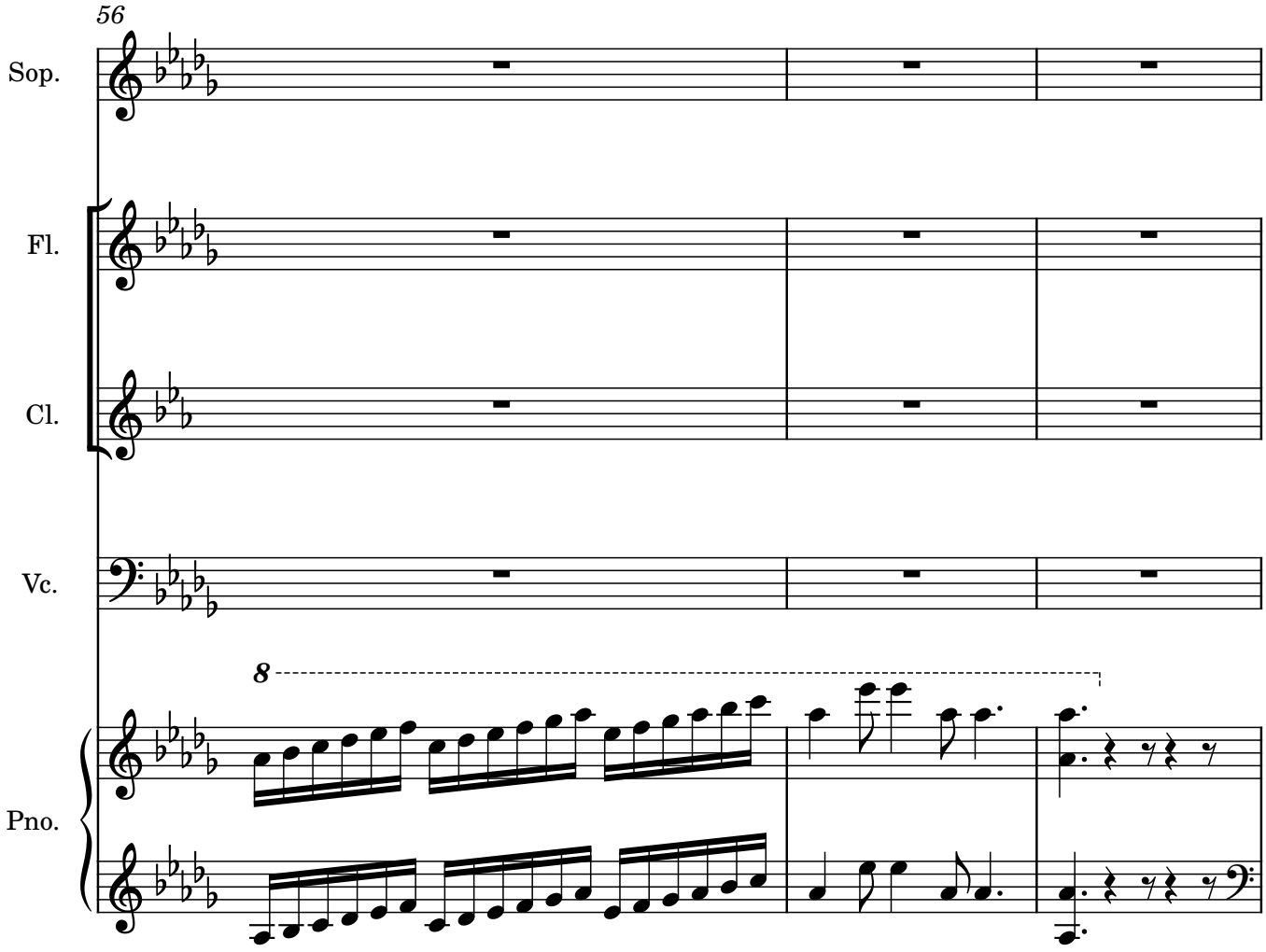

39
Sop.
La la La la La
Fl.
Cl.
To Clarinet (In Bb)
Vc.
Pno.

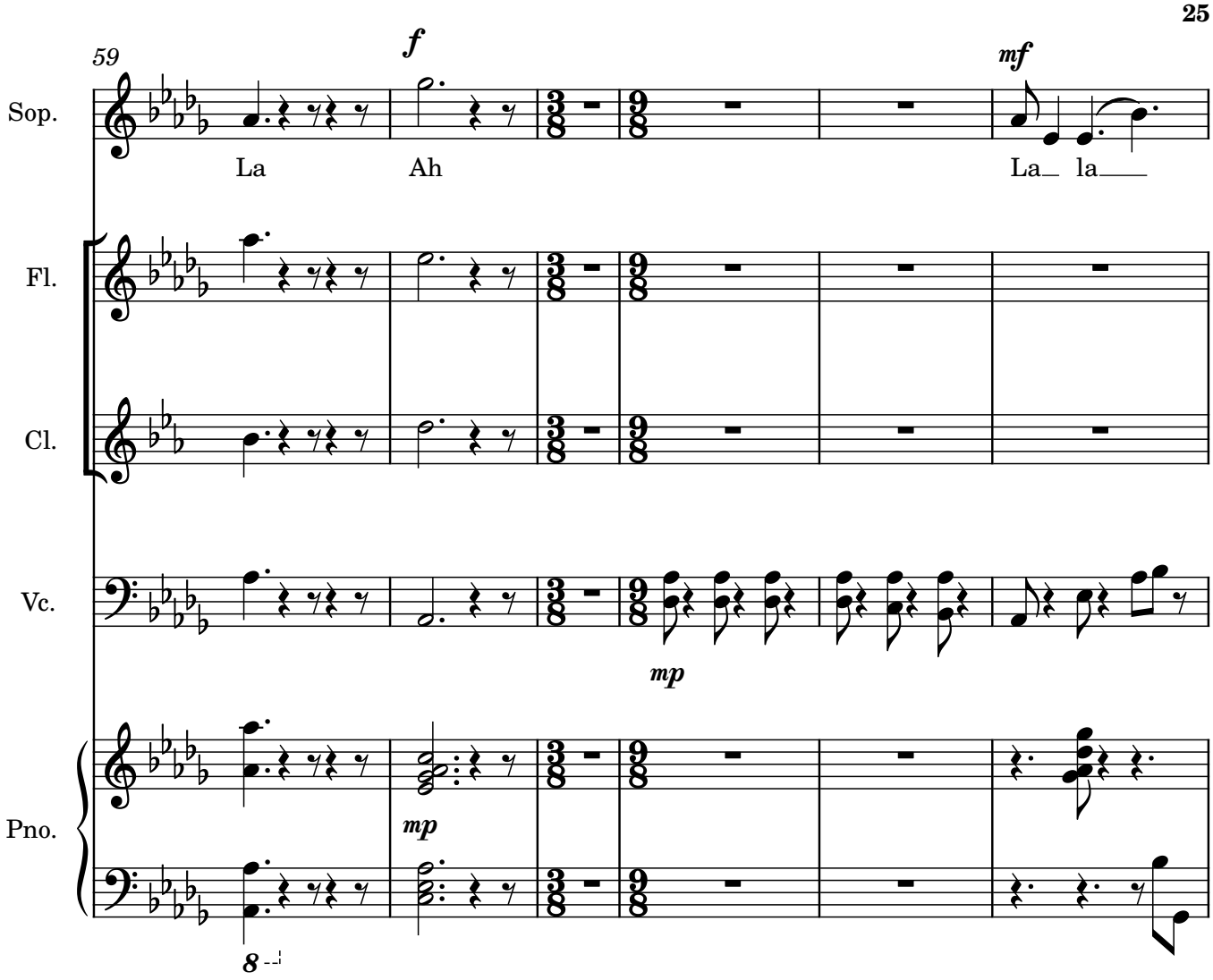

42
Sop.
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
arco
mf
Pno.

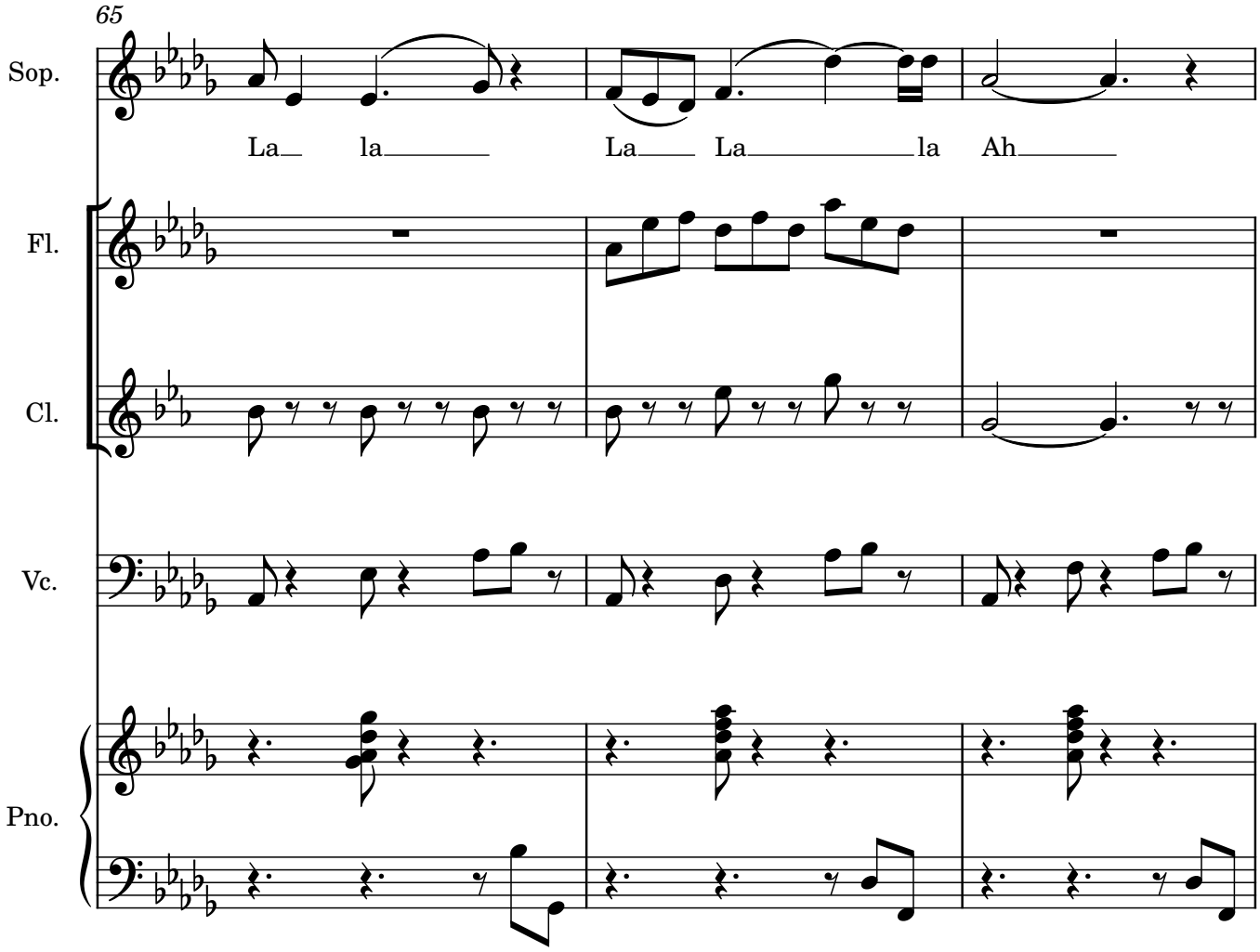

46
Sop.
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
Pno.
8

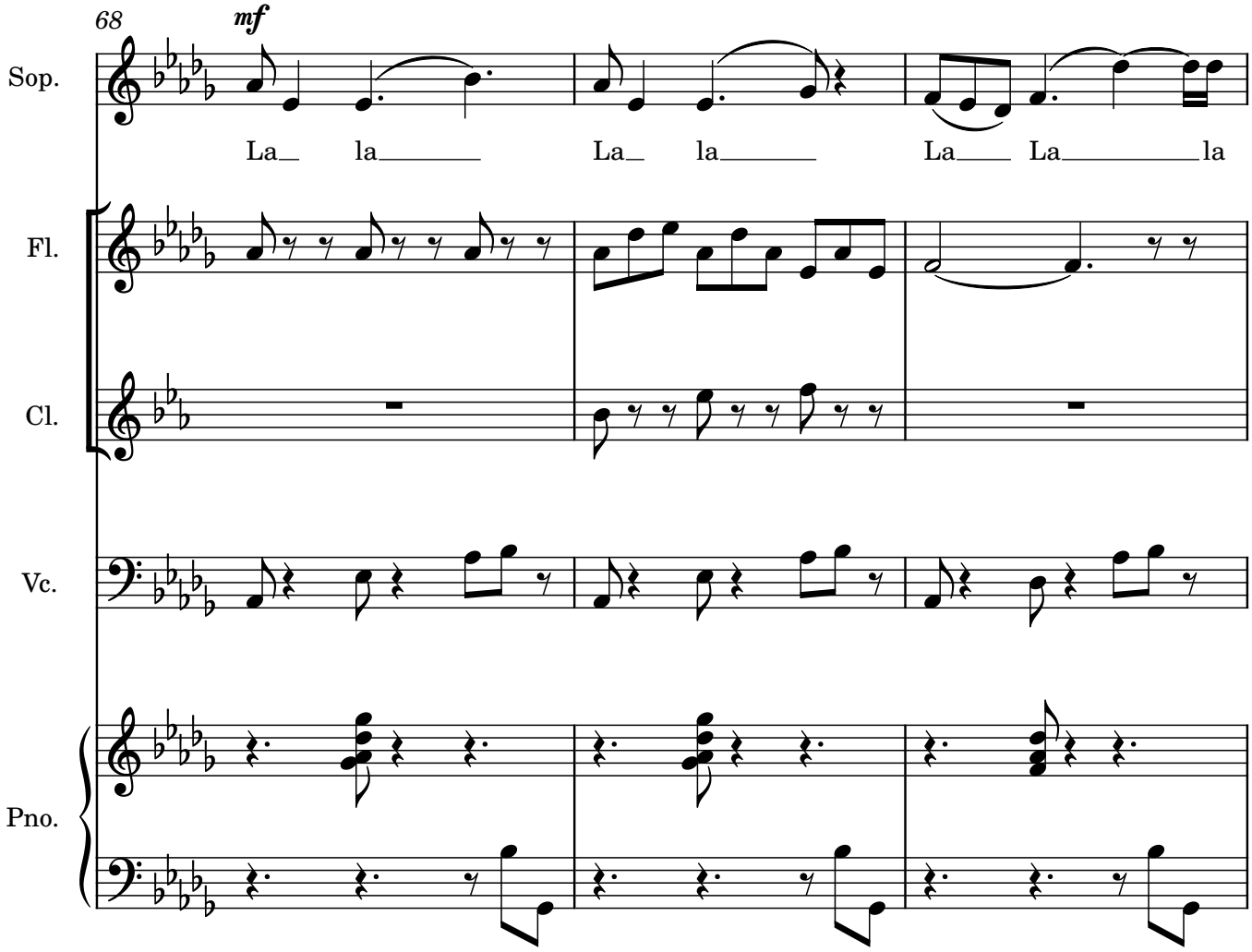

51
Sop.
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
Pno.
8
mf
8

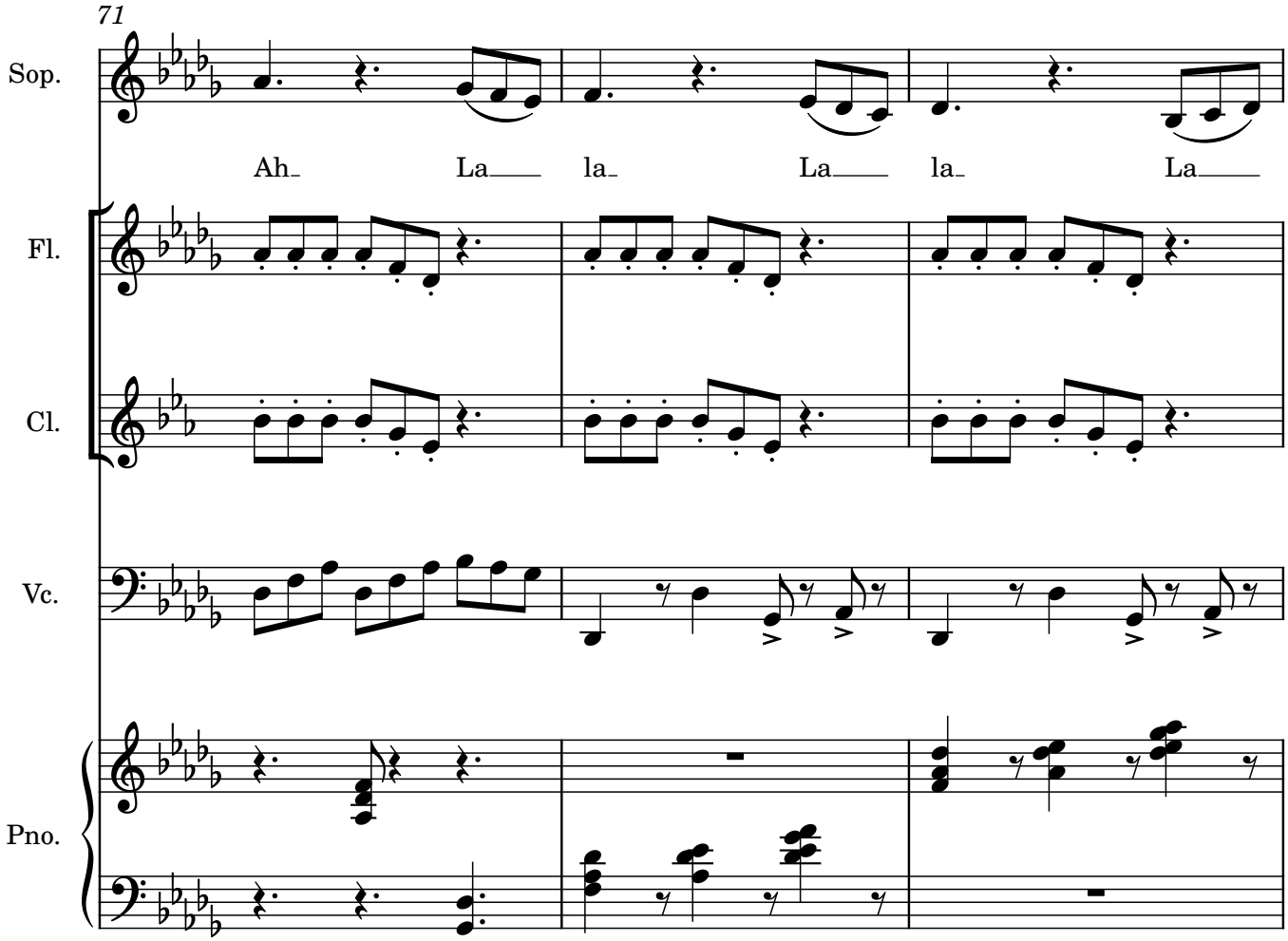

55
Sop.
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
Pno.
8

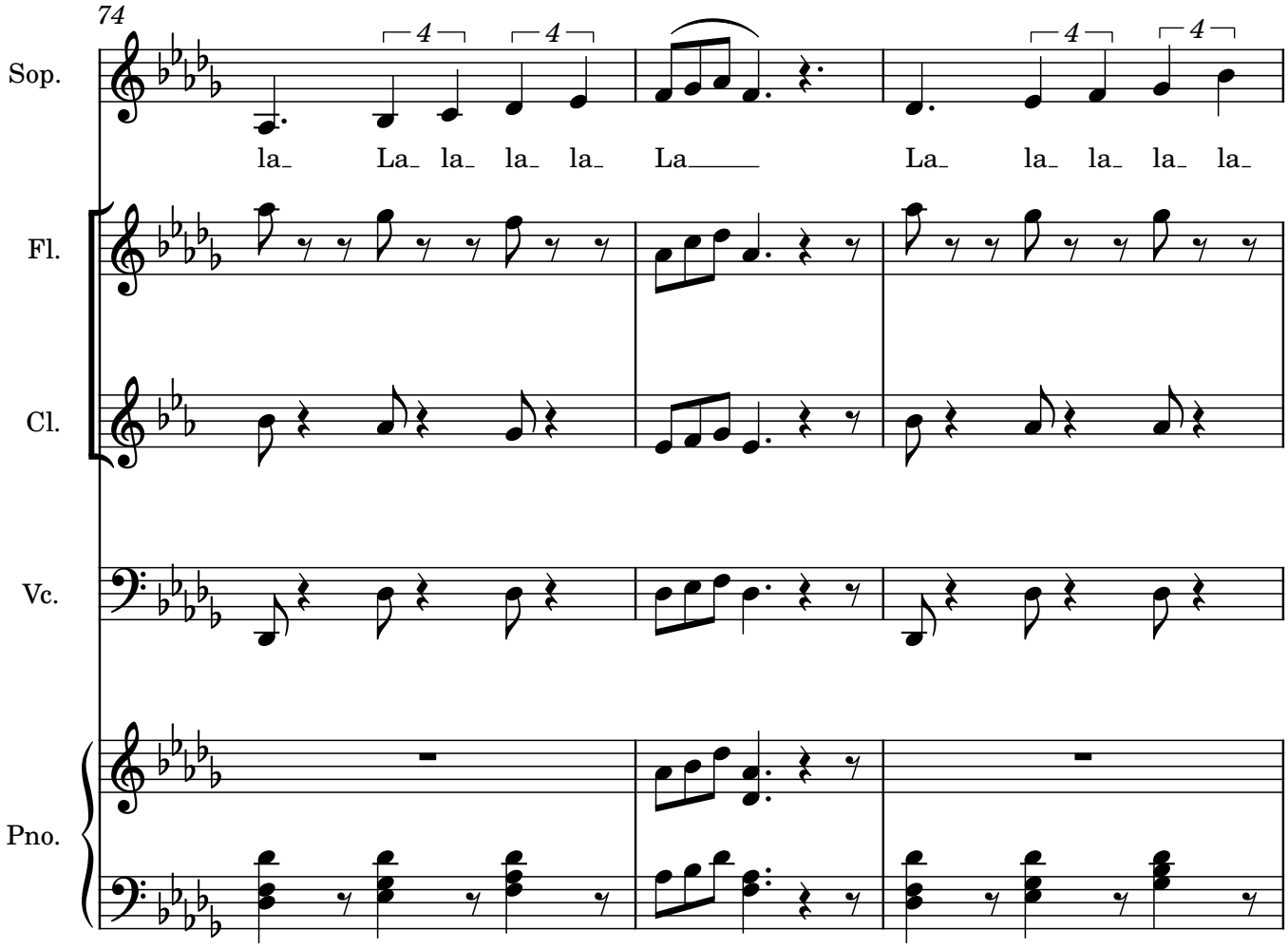

56
Sop.
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
8
Pno.

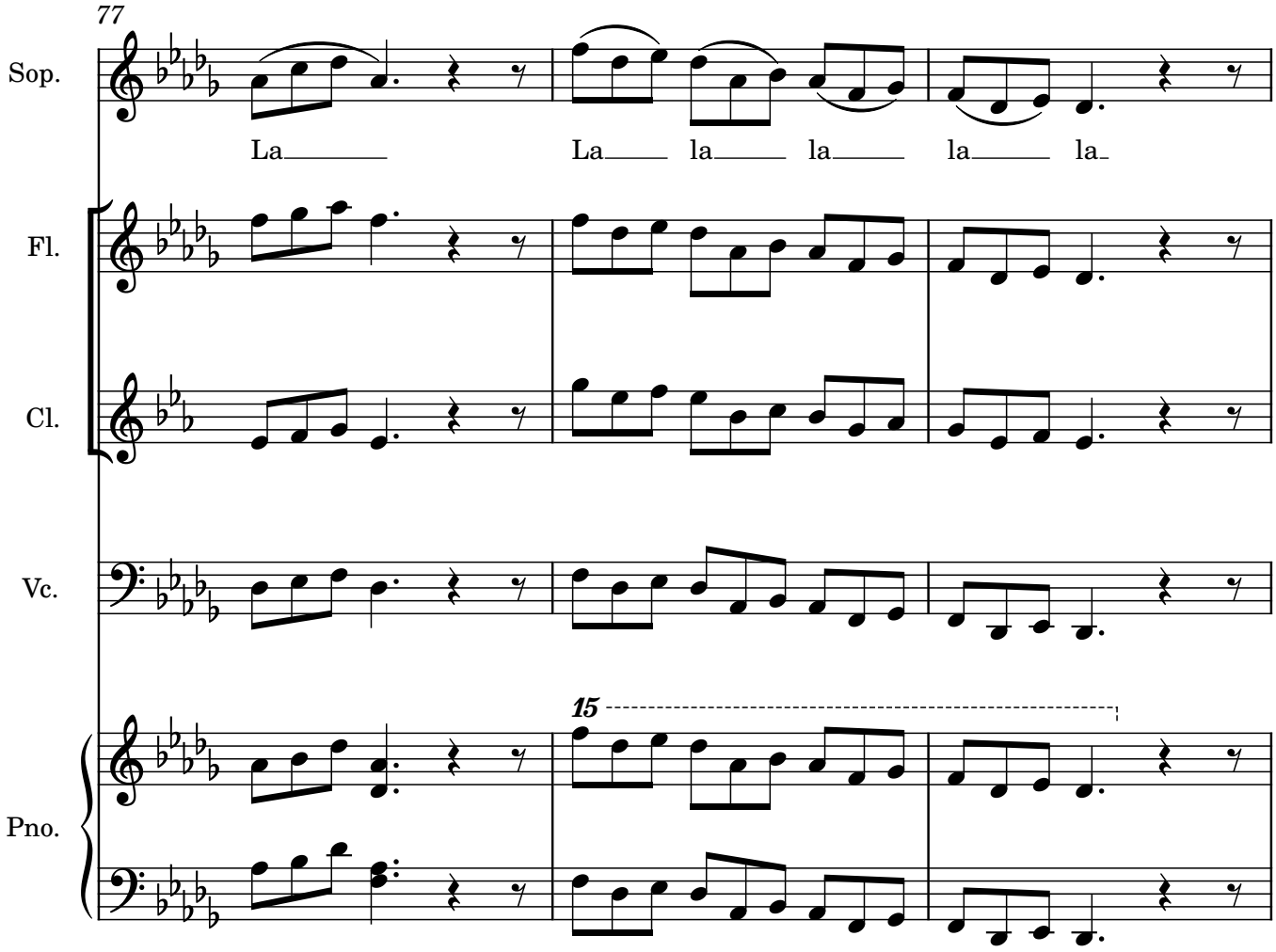

59
f
mf
Sop.
La
Ah
La_ la___
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
mp
Pno.
mp
8

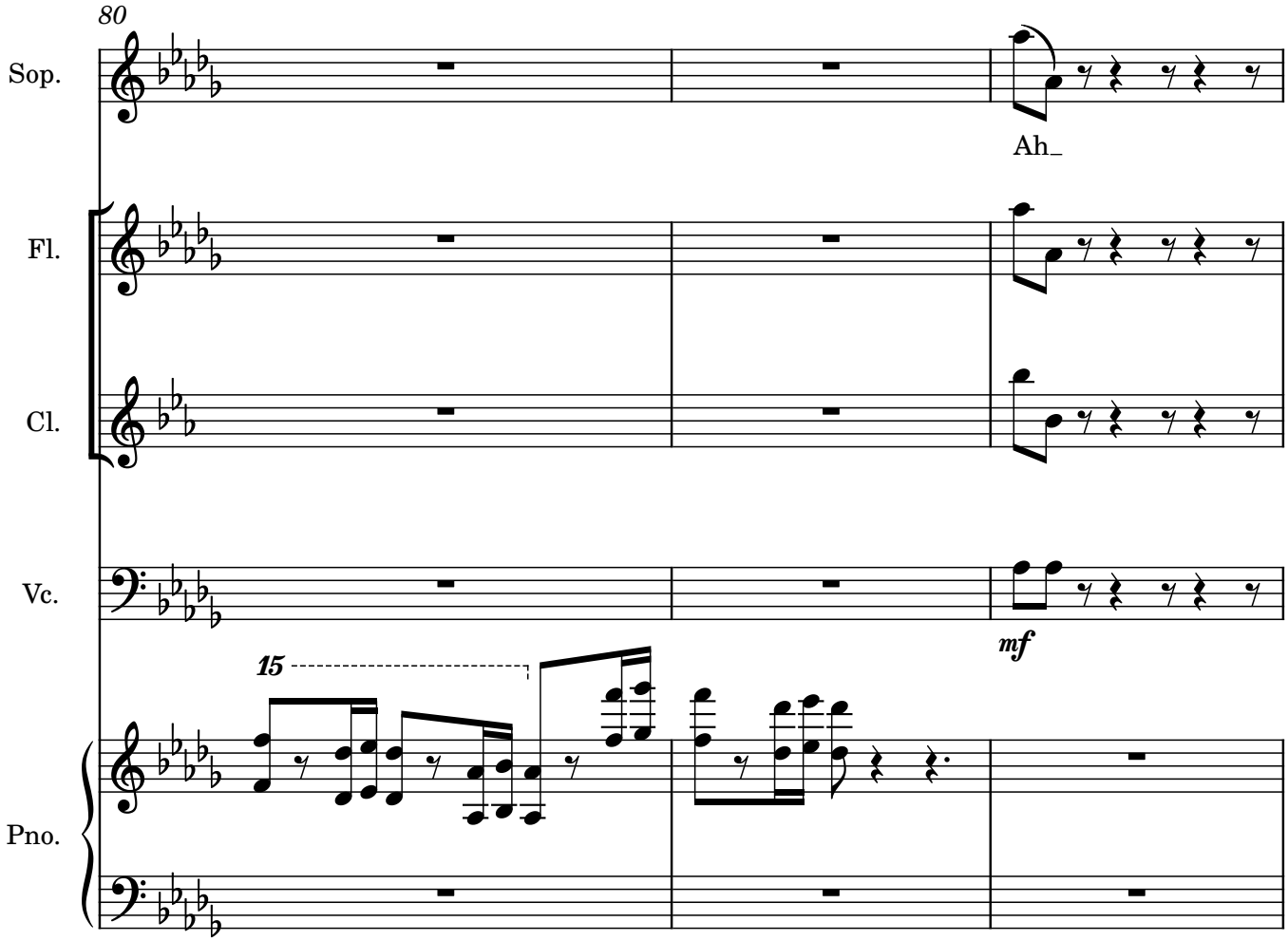

65
Sop.
La la La La la Ah
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
Pno.

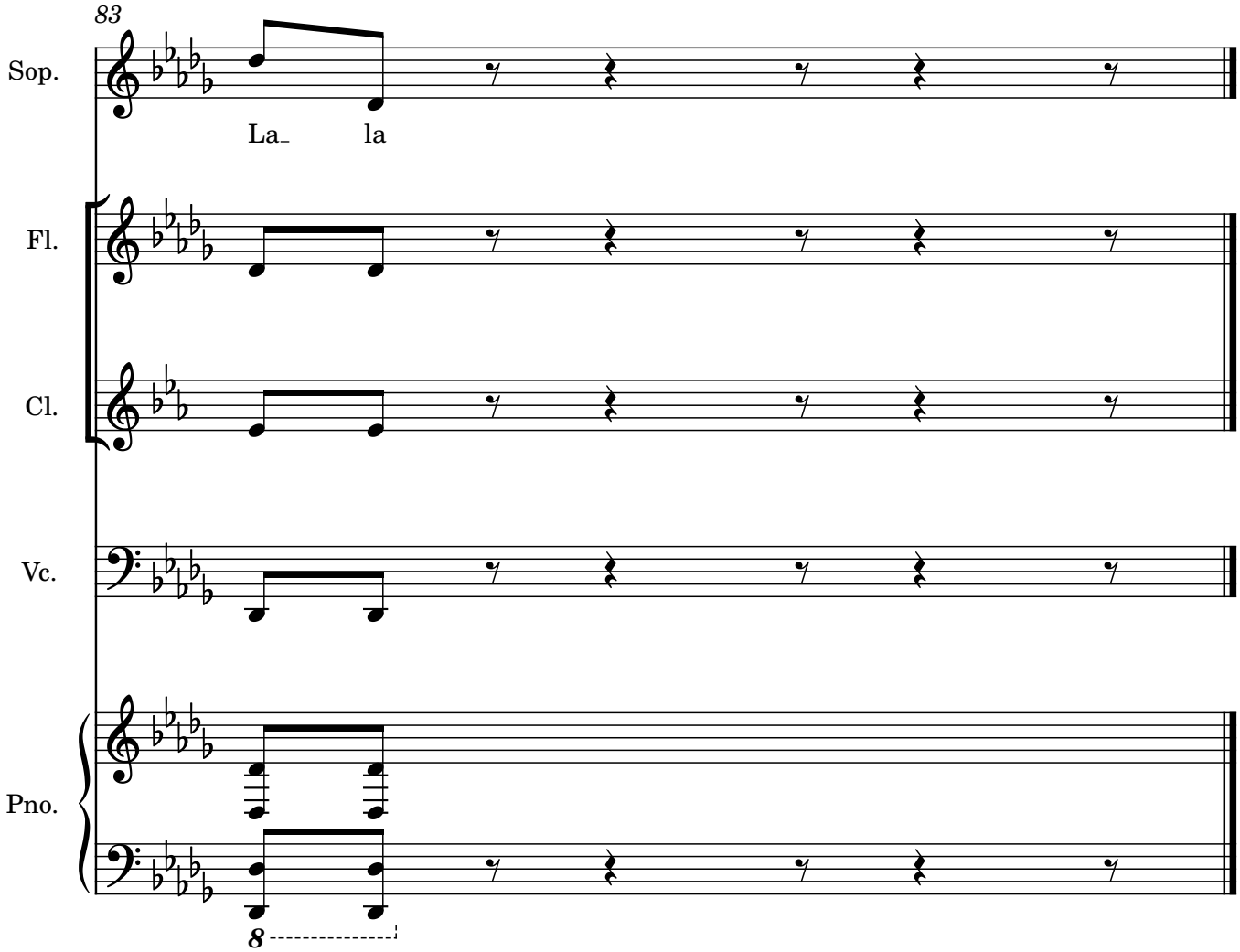

68
mf
Sop.
La la La la La La la
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
Pno.


71
Sop.
Ah_ La___ la_ La___ la_ La___
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
Pno.


74
Sop.
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
Pno.
la_ La_ la_ la_ la_ La___ La_ la_ la_ la_ la_


77
Sop.
La
La la la la la
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
15
Pno.


80
Sop.
Ah_
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
mf
15
Pno.


83
Sop.
La_ la
Fl.
Cl.
Vc.
Pno.
8