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Foreward: This piece combines on-stage choreography with the performed music. Here are instructions how to present the work. I consider this performance to begin when the first individual walks out on the stage.

Participants: Piano (P), Flute (F), Horn (H) and Cello (V). Recommend sedate, all-black casual "pit orchestra" clothing. Sex of participants irrelevent. "He/him" used to indicate either sex purely for convenience here.

Equipment: Music stands, standard black 3-legged base, metal, adjustable tilt and height (3 each). Standard non-folding utility chair (3 each). The chairs are positioned 5-7 feet to stage-right of piano, which is a bit stage-left of center-stage. The 3 chairs are no more than 2 feet apart, with stands already positioned. Stool - not bench - for pianist. One copy of score for P; 3 copies of score for each of F, H & C (2 copies of F, H & C's scores will be destroyed during performance.) 3 pair of "toy fake-nose, fake-glasses, fake-moustache", which F, H & C will use as noted. 4 sheets of plain copy paper already folded into a "paper airplane" shape (one of the groups of 4 pre-made paper airplanes should be of horrible, un-flying design). 3-4 feet of rope (1/2 - 5/8" diameter). One bottle of "bubbles with dipping/blowing wand". All items so-far listed are initially placed inside a "business attache" with handle, of sufficient size to hold everything. Fake "thick wad of cash", which will be in P's (hidden) possession before taking the stage. (Real thick wad of cash OK, but security will be needed.)

Interactions between P, F, H & C should be done with minimal facial emotion or body language, except where specified in the choreography step at hand.

Choreography is indexed as follows, and the indicies are placed in the score when something should happen. NOTE: measures which contain only fermatas are NOT to be interpreted as musical; they are "time-spaces" for something to happen.

C0: P enters stage (from STAGE-LEFT) carrying all music (1 score for self, 9 scores for others), goes to piano and sits. P busies himself getting his own music ready, as well as organizing 3 stacks of music for F, H & V. As P is doing this, F, H & V enter (from STAGE-RIGHT), already 'pretend' whispering between each other, shaking hands, pat-on-back, friendly and familiar. They have their instruments. V is carring attache case with pre-made paper airplanes, rope, bubble liquid & wand, fake nose-glasses-moustaches (F-N-G-M), and should sit in the furthest STAGE-RIGHT chair. The attache case is put on floor to the left of V's chair. They take their seats, assure music stands are at lowest position and not blocking the audience's view of them. F, H & V wait for whatever comes next.

C1: When P senses F, H & V are seated, P stands, takes one copy of a score for each, walks to in-front of the middle music stand with back to audience, and distributes the score sheets to F, H & V, who take such in hand but do not yet examine the music. P returns to piano and sits, and begins playing measures 2 through 11. At that point, F, H & V quickly page through their scores, leaning over to each other and comparing scores (no speaking), and even trade score packets between themselves. They do nothing with their instruments. When done examining the scores, they put them on the music stands and wait.

C2: P stops at measure 11 before the repeat, turns to see F, H & V have not been playing. P then stands, walks to in front of the center music stand with back to audience, picks up that musician's score packet, and points to it to show, "you're supposed to play this" to all 3 musicians. P puts the music back on the music stand and returns to piano, and sits. P begins the 2nd repeat of measures 2 through 11, louder. As soon as P has started the 2nd repeat, F, H & V look at each other, nod together in agreement, take their scores, and rip them in half, then the halves in half, and so on till ripped to bits. Before measure 11, F, H & V take the ripped-up scores and throw them into the air above themselves, and with minimal facial expression return to waiting for whatever comes next. (During the 2 repeats of measures 2 through 11, P does not notice nobody else is playing.)

C3: P stands, looks at F, H & V and sees the shredded scores strewn about, grabs 3 new scores, walks to in front of the middle music stand (with back to audience), and places the scores on the music stands. P stands for a moment in front of them, puts hands on hips with an air of displeasure, takes out the "fake wad of cash", holds it up to his head-height, and shakes it a bit as if "do you want to get paid?", DOES NOT put cash away but carries it back to the piano. P puts the wad of cash on the downstage end of the piano's music stand in clear view of audience. F, H & V ready their scores and their instruments.

C4: F, H and V play with the least possible facial OR musical expression, EXCEPT the two staccato/accented quarter notes in measure 22, which are played angrily (some facial stress OK here) to express "here's what we think of this music".

C5: V somehow manages to take the attache case, open it, removes the F-N-G-Ms, places them on his music stand (for the moment). He also removes the paper airplanes and bubble liquid & wand, places such on his music stand. V closes the attache case and returns it to the floor. He takes one pair of the F-N-G-M and places it on F's face. He hands H (behind F's back if possible) the other pair of F-N-G-M and one bundle of paper airplanes. V & H now put on the F-N-G-M, and wait for their turn to play.

C6: F is now available to get a paper airplane bundle from V, which V provides. F takes his score on music stand, and rips it up as was done earlier, and throws the shreds towards the audience over his music stand. F takes his paper airplanes, and throws such in varying directions. (These actions need to be completed by measure 49.)

C7: H is now free to take his score from music stand, rips it to shreds as done before, and throws it backwards over his head. H takes his paper airplanes, and throws them over his music stand in various directions towards the audience. During H's mischief, F has unscrewed the cap of the bubble liquid, and - using the wand - has been blowing bubbles up in the air above himself. H and F's actions should conclude by measure 65 or so (F has put the cap back on the bubble liquid bottle, and puts bottle and wand under his chair).

C8: V is now free to take his score from the music stand, rips it up as before, and throws it over H & F's heads, as high as possible to make the shreds 'rain' better. As P continues to play (and EVEN if P stops playing), V has taken his paper airplanes and is throwing them to fly in various directions. During the repeats for P at measure 73, P has taken a quick glance at F, H & V, then looks back to his music, then glances back, then to music. 5 repeats of this measure should be sufficient. When the repeats are done, P repositions himself to be facing the audience, with left arm leaning on piano's music stand area, staring at F, H & V - who take no notice of this and mostly are looking out over the audience.

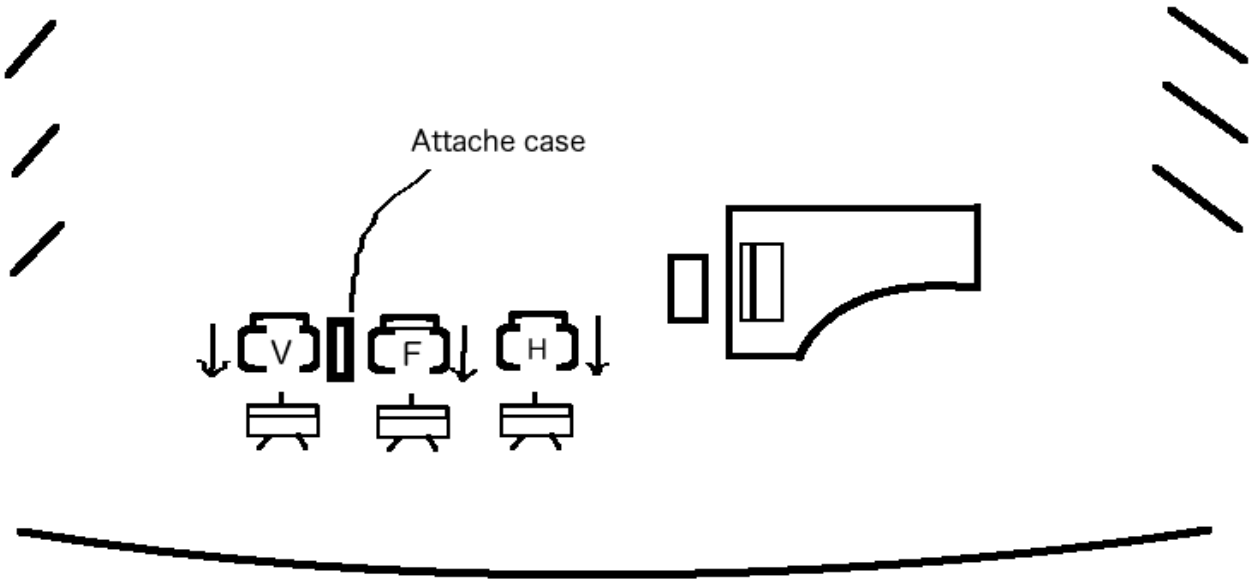
C9: P for a moment bows his chin to his chest in great frustration, stands, takes the 3 remaining score bundles to in front of the center music stand, and places one bundle on each stand. While this occurs, H, F & V have taken off their F-N-G-M and deposited such under their chairs. P turns to face the audience, for a moment looks the ceiling, takes a great breath, and releases it slowly, walks back to the piano. As P is returning to the piano, H, F & V have a brief mini-conference (no talking). They ready their music and instruments. P has sat at the piano, turns to see that H, F & V are ready (they take no notice of him, and are just ready), and begins to play.

C10: P sits staring at his music for a moment, then repositions himself to be facing the audience. He stares blankly out to the audience, whereupon V opens attache case, takes out rope, closes case. H & F stand, H takes the rope from V, and they walk to P - H in front of P with his back slightly to the audience but to P's right side, and F behind P. H brings P's hands together, out in front of him, and ties up his hands with the rope. During the restraint, F is patting P on the shoulder, as if meaning "there, there, it's OK". When done, P lowers his bound hands to his lap, and blankly stares out to the audience. H & F return to their seats. H, F & V take a moment to give each other a "high-5" hand-touching at head-level, to signal their success. They ready their music, take their instruments. F uses his foot to provide a count-in for them to begin playing - not a subtle tap, but obvious "thump-thump" of his foot. The three play the next music.

C11: H, F & V stand with their instruments, then congratulating & shaking each other's hands (no speaking). At the same time, P turns towards the keyboard, puts his bound hands on the keyboard cover, and closes it. He then leans his bound hands above the keyboard cover in front of the piano music stand, and places his head face-down on his hands. H and V are the first to depart stage-right, but F lingers for a bit, then walks (with instrument in hand) to the piano. He is upstage of seated P. He lays his flute on the piano top, takes the fake wad of money (put into a pocket), and taps P softly on the shoulder. P lifts his head. F then unties P's bound hands, folds the rope a few times, takes his flute, and walks off stage-right. As F is walking off, P raises the keyboard cover, and when F is off stage, P plays the remaining music.

C12: At the end of playing, P very slowly closes the keyboard cover, stands as if greatly exhausted. He pauses, looking over the litter on the stage caused by H, F & V. He ploddingly walks downstage of the piano, towards stage-left, and exits.

Applause: All 4 performers enter from the stage direction they exited, and join each other center-stage, down-stage. Individual bows, then a group bow. Repeat as appropriate. Graciously accept any flowers or similar accolades.



(Arrow indicates direction faced.)

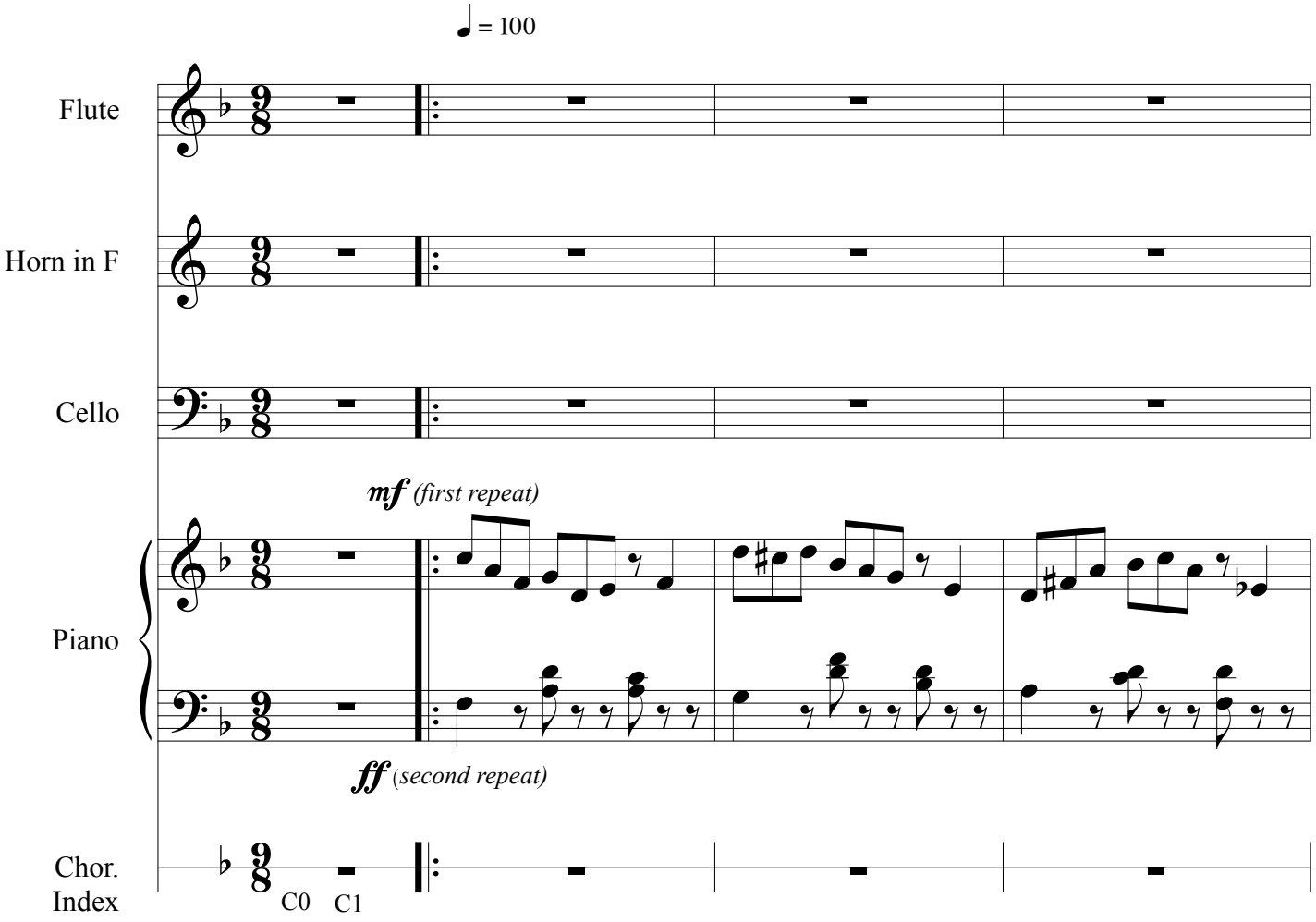
Audience

Chorégraphié l'épisode pour quatre interprètes

(Choreographed Episodes for Four Performers)

Numéro trois

Robert John Magnuson
2017



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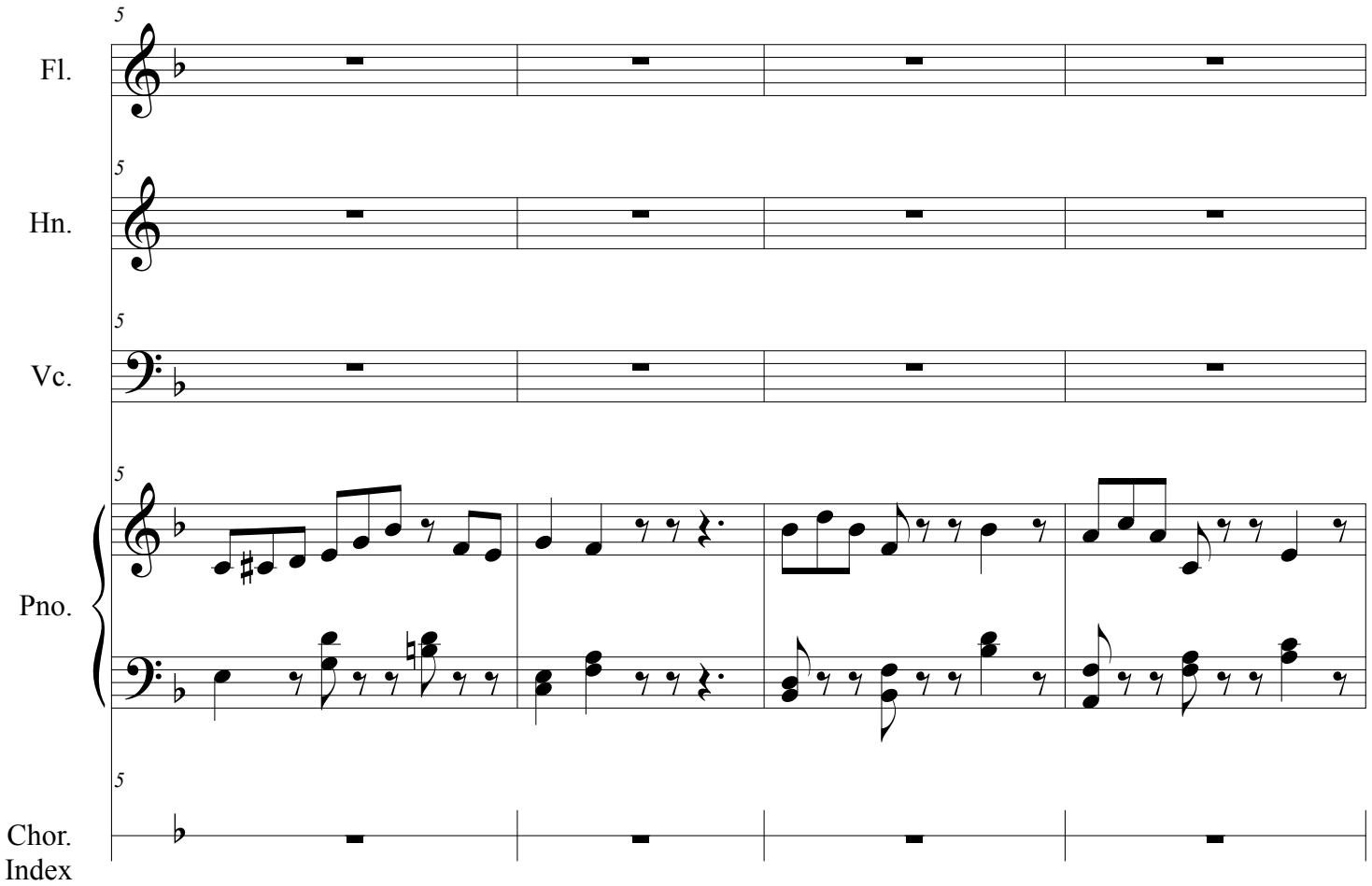
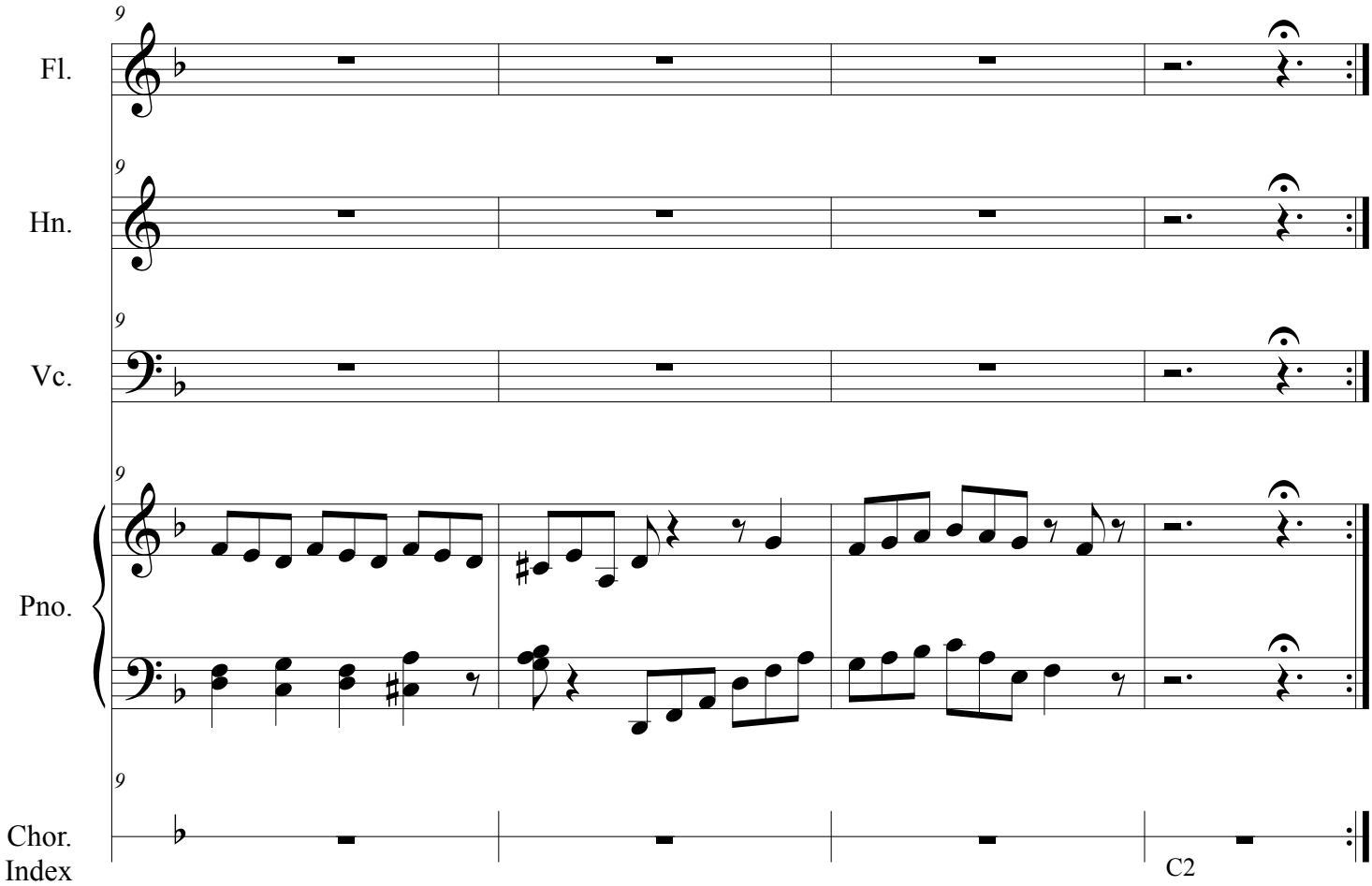
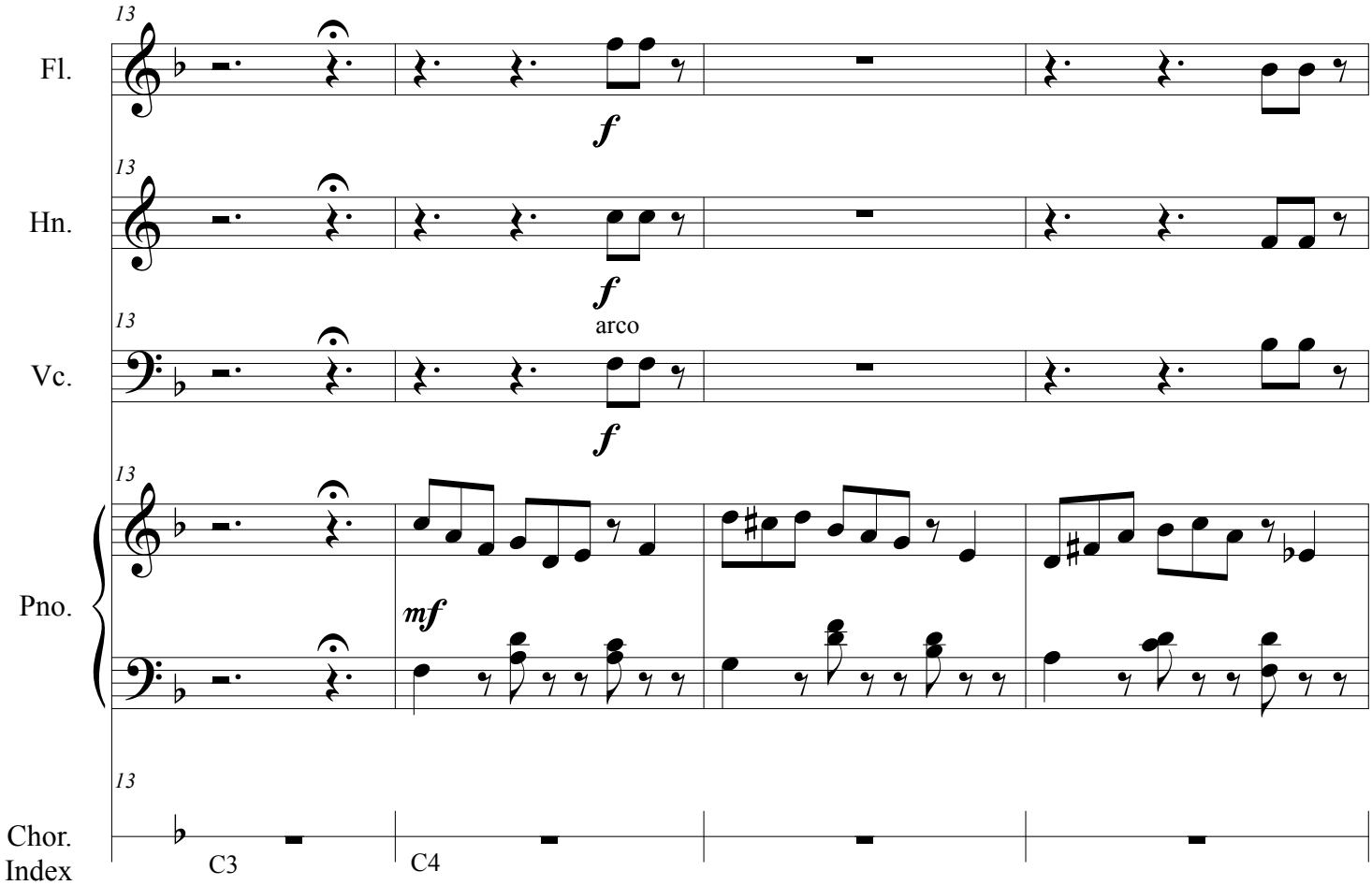
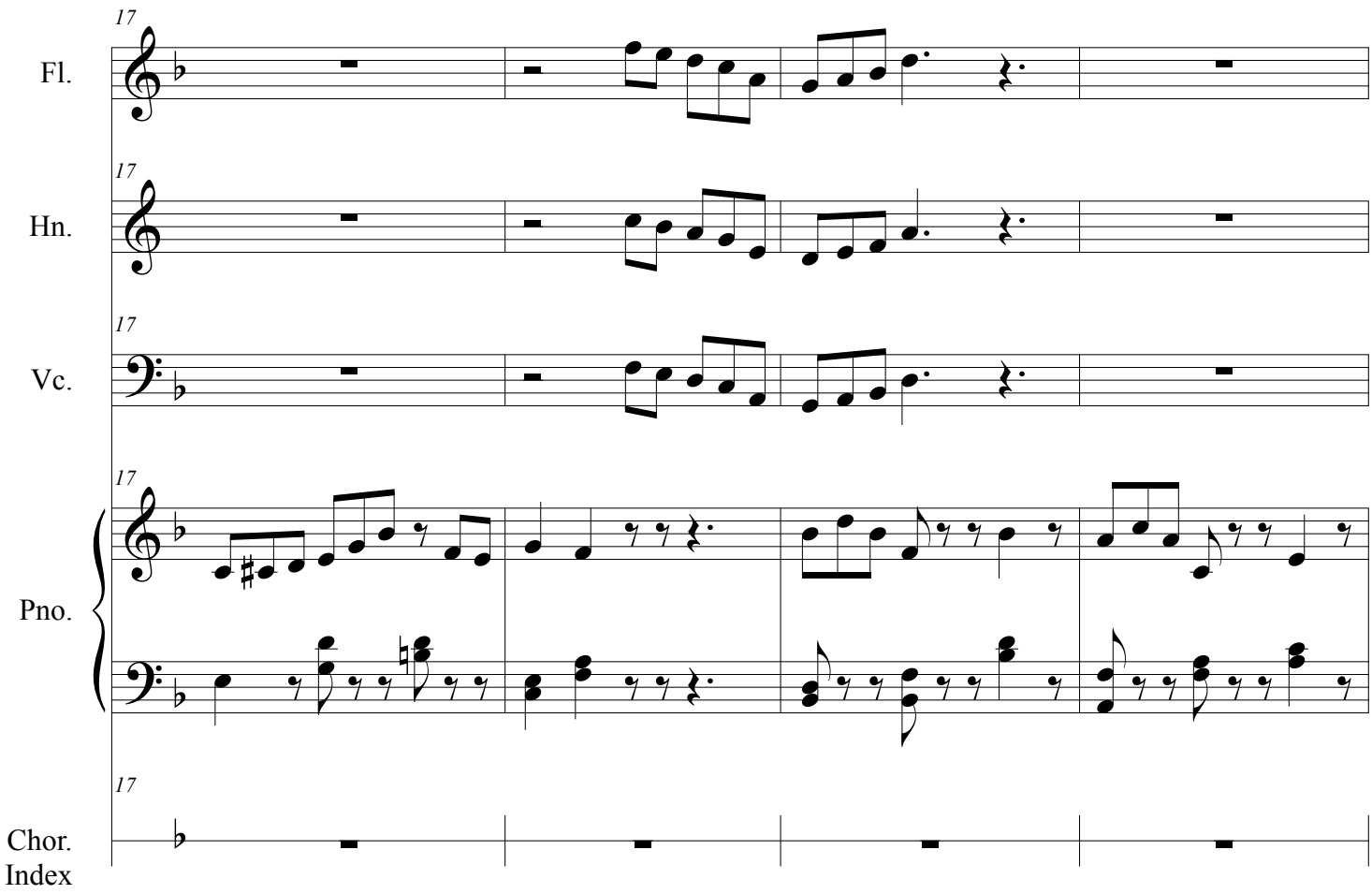

5
Fl.
5
Hn.
5
Vc.
5
Pno.
5
Chor.
Index


9
Fl.
9
Hn.
9
Vc.
9
Pno.
9
Chor.
Index
C2


13
Fl.
f
13
Hn.
f
13
Vc.
arco
f
13
Pno.
mf
13
Chor.
Index
C3
C4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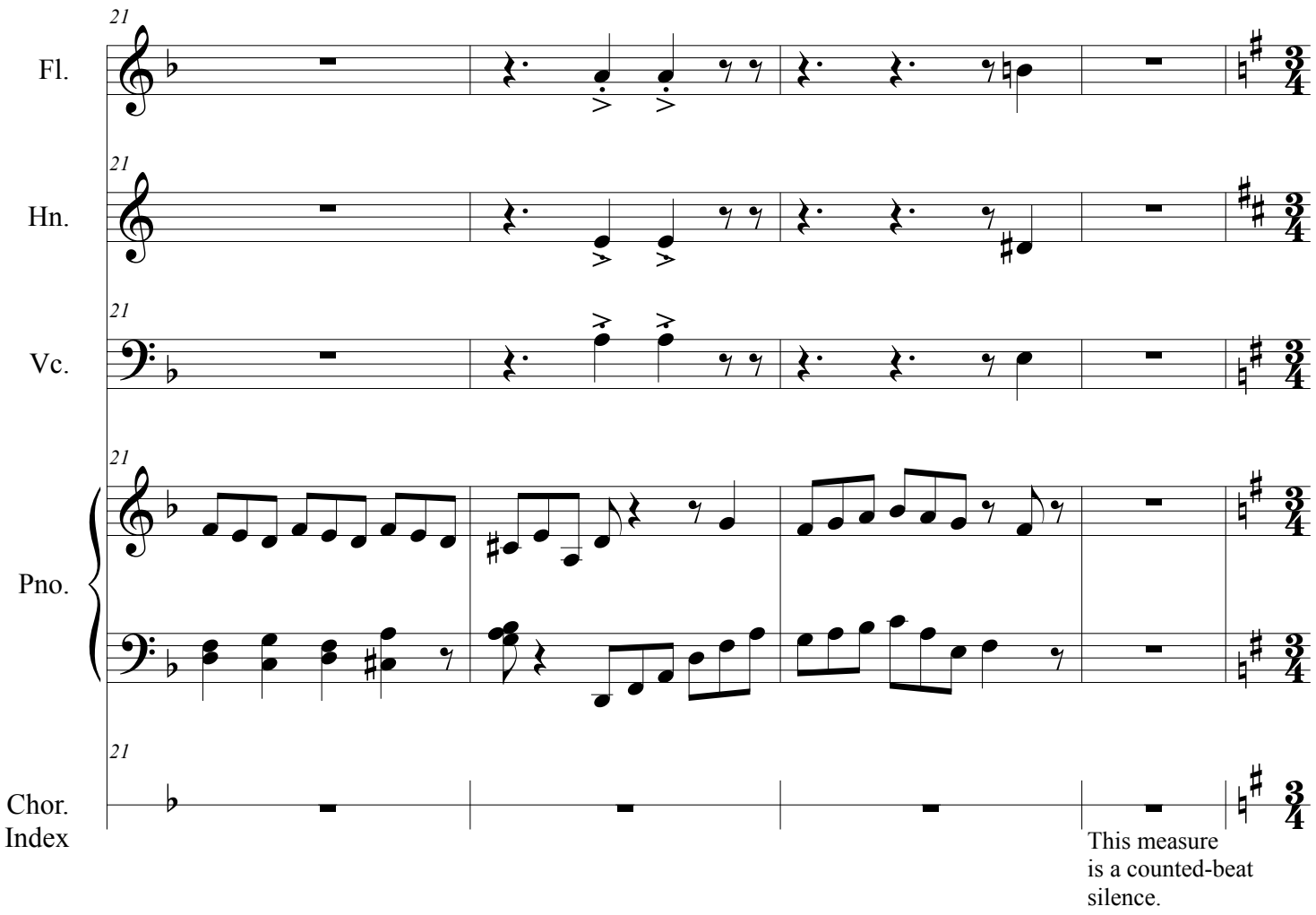
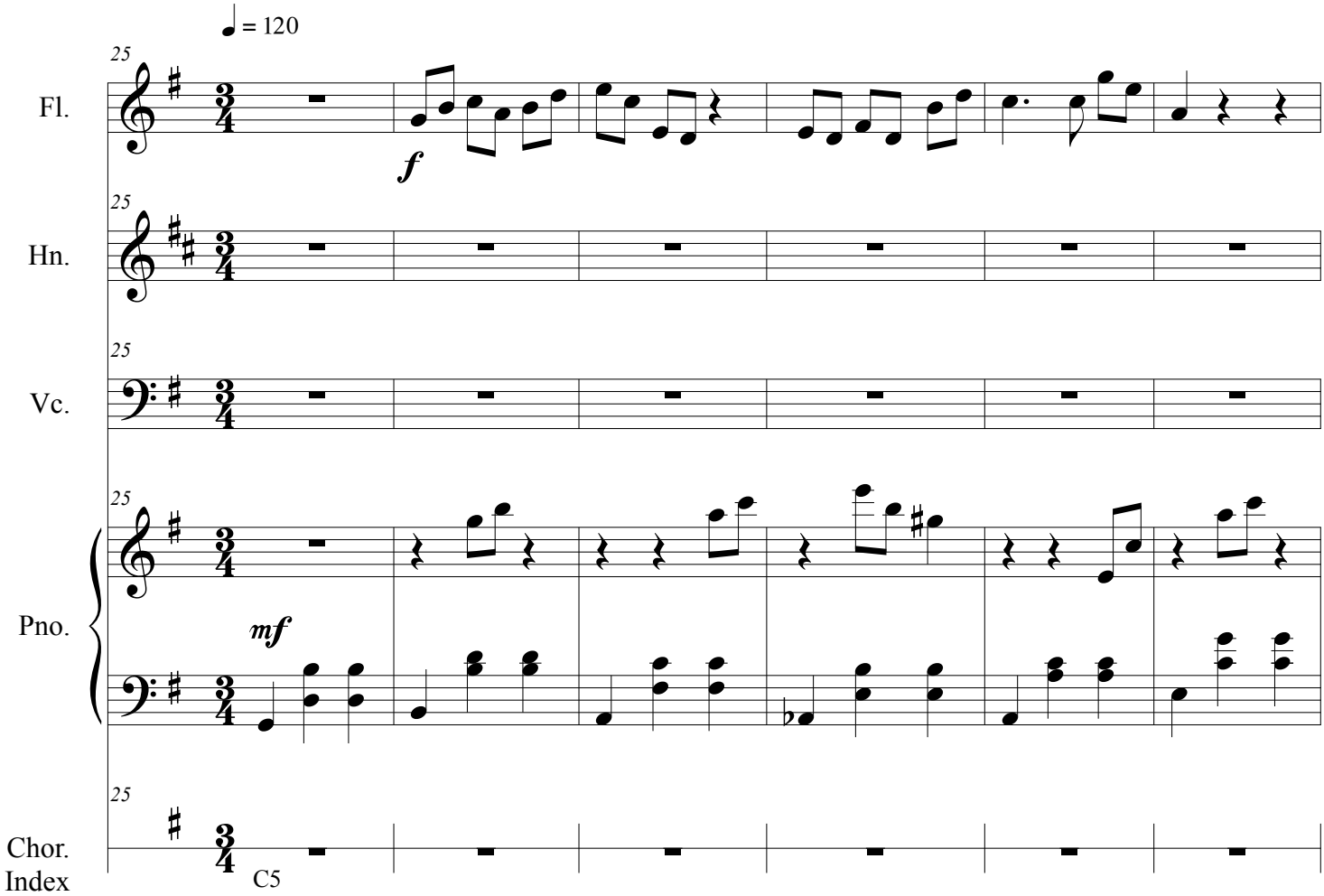
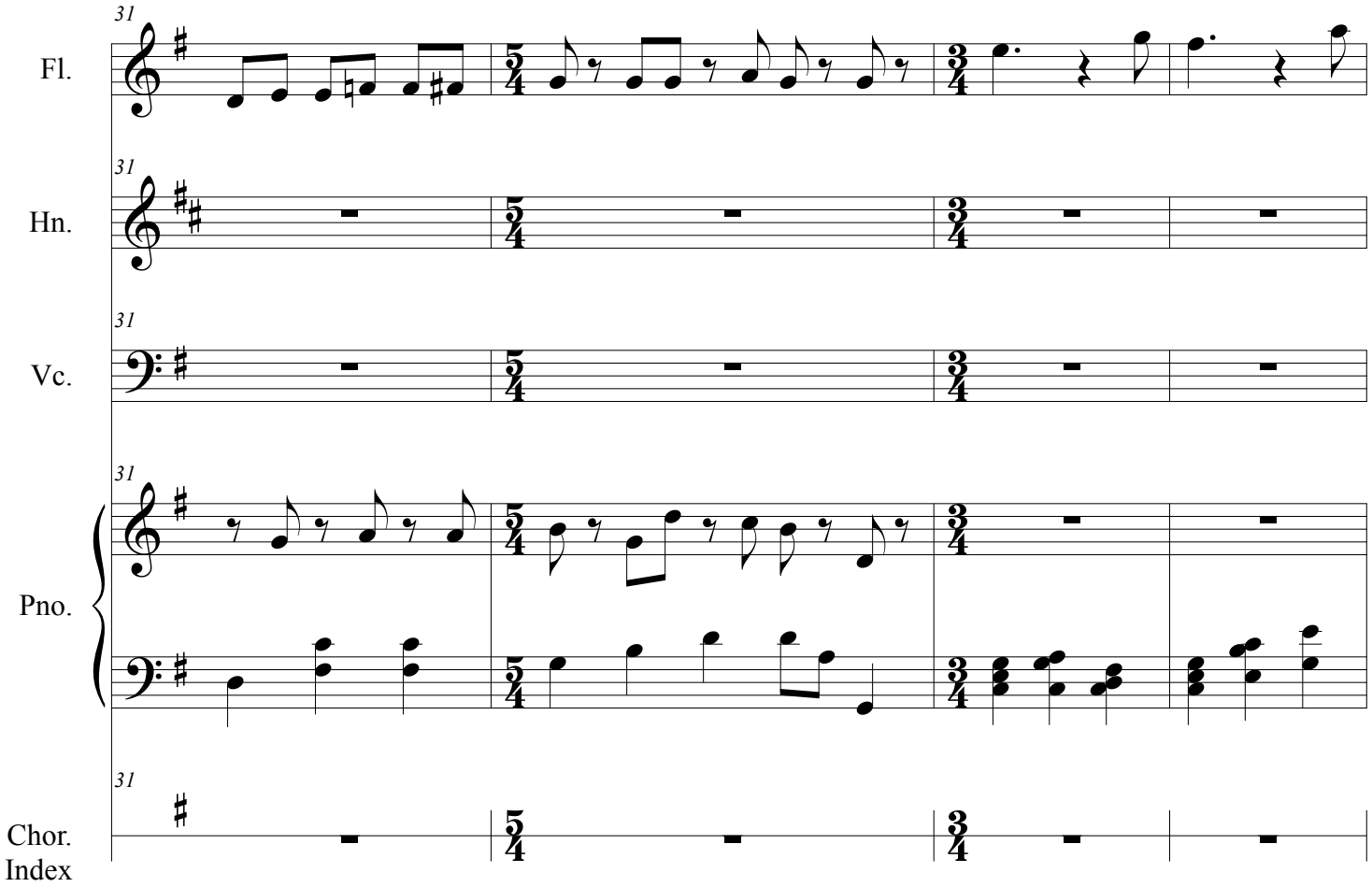
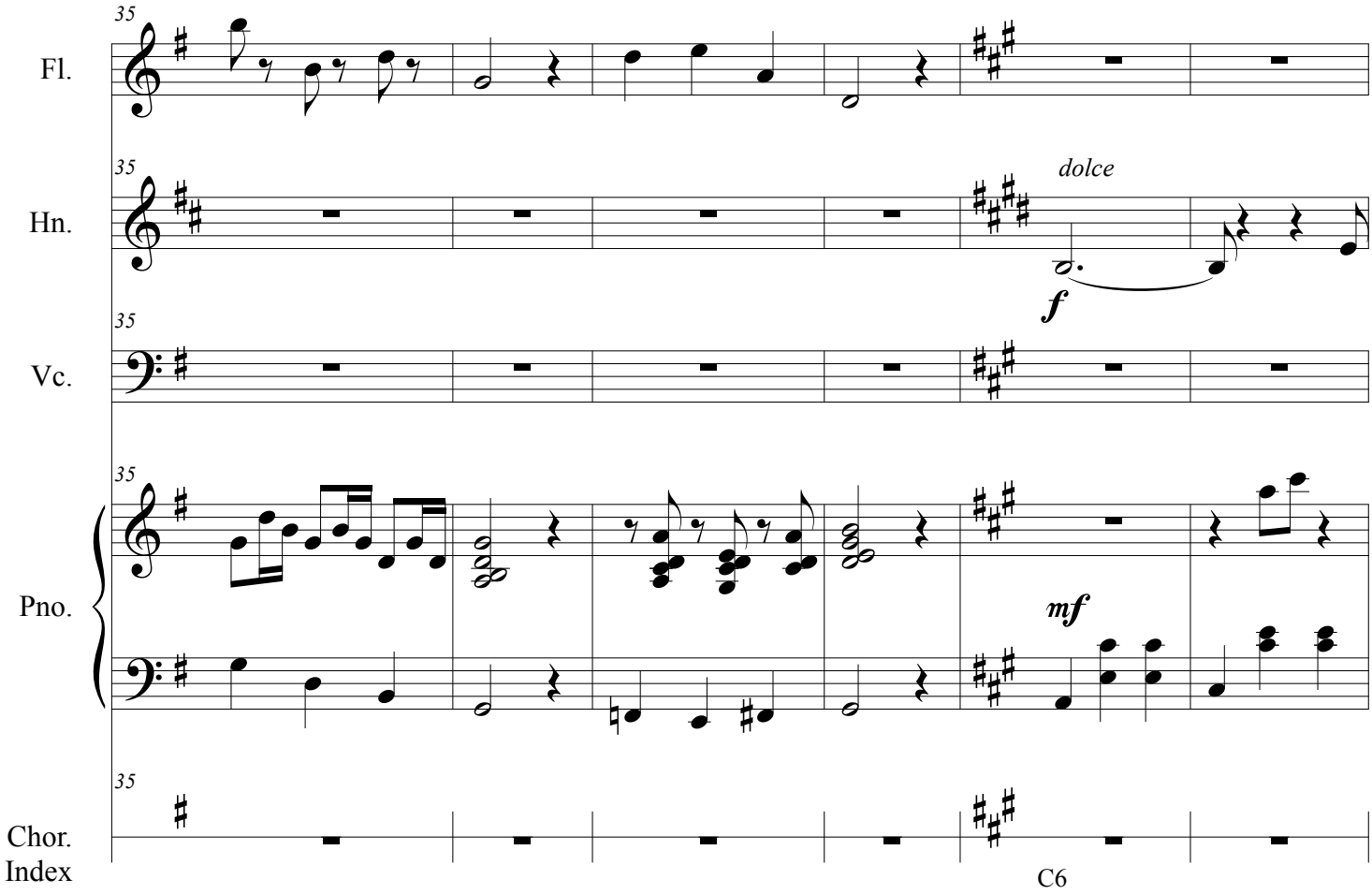
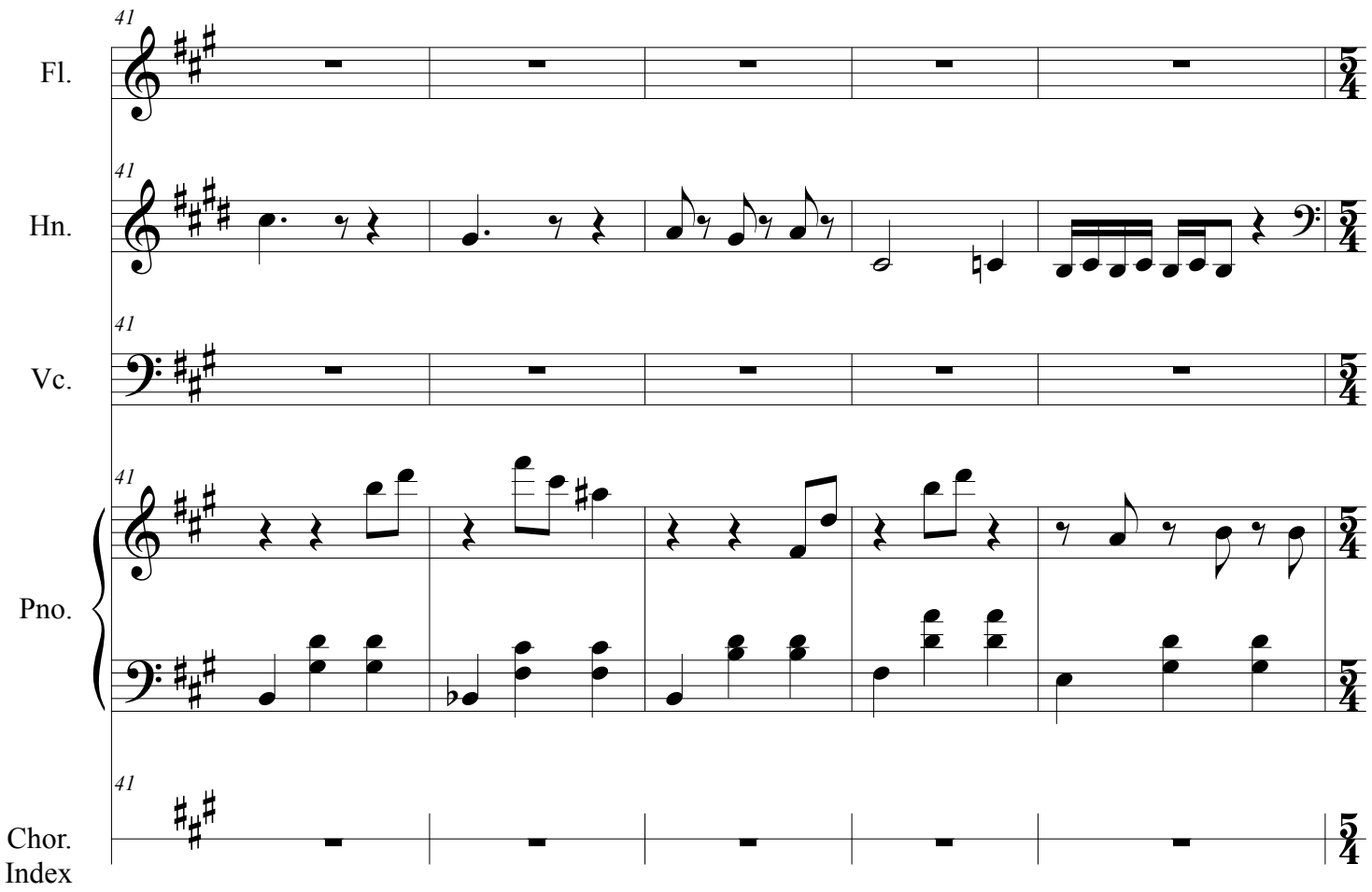
Fl.
17
Hn.
17
Vc.
17
Pno.
17
Chor.
Index


21
Fl.
21
Hn.
21
Vc.
21
Pno.
21
Chor.
Index
This measure
is a counted-beat
silence.


♩ = 120
25
Fl.
f
Hn.
Vc.
Pno.
mf
Chor. Index
C5


31
Fl.
31
Hn.
31
Vc.
31
Pno.
31
Chor.
Index


35
Fl.
35
Hn.
dolce
f
35
Vc.
35
Pno.
mf
35
Chor.
Index
C6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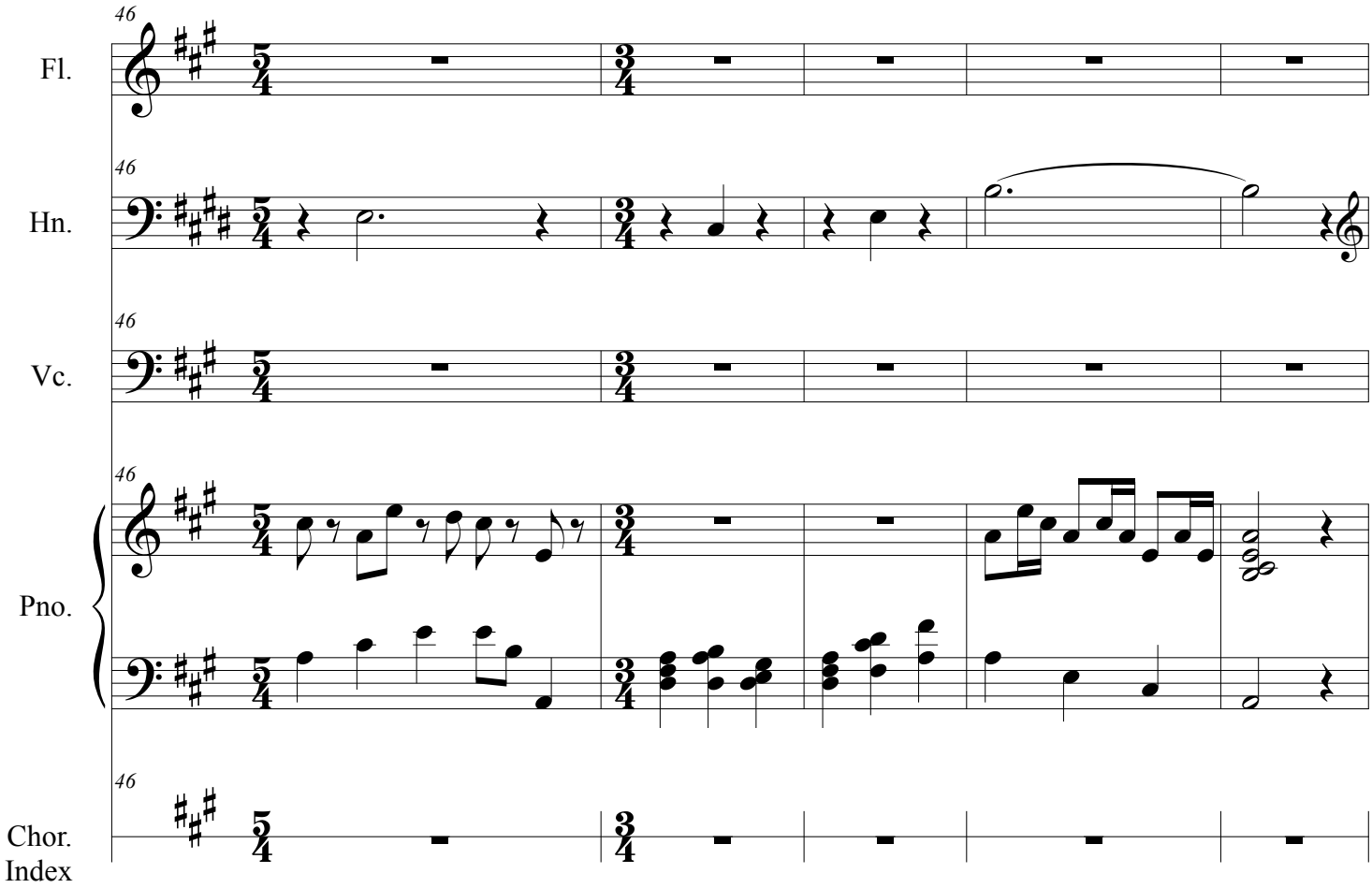
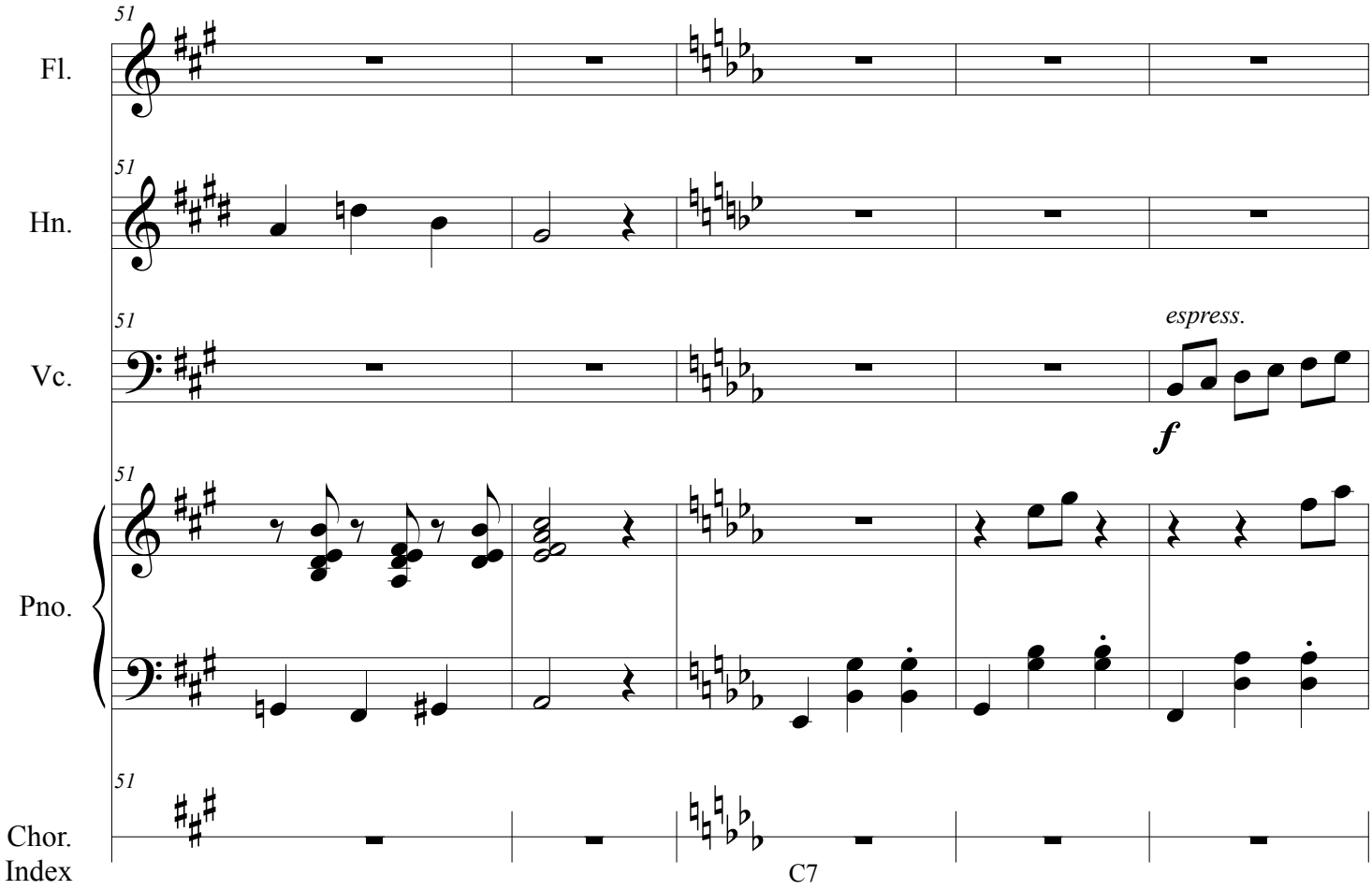
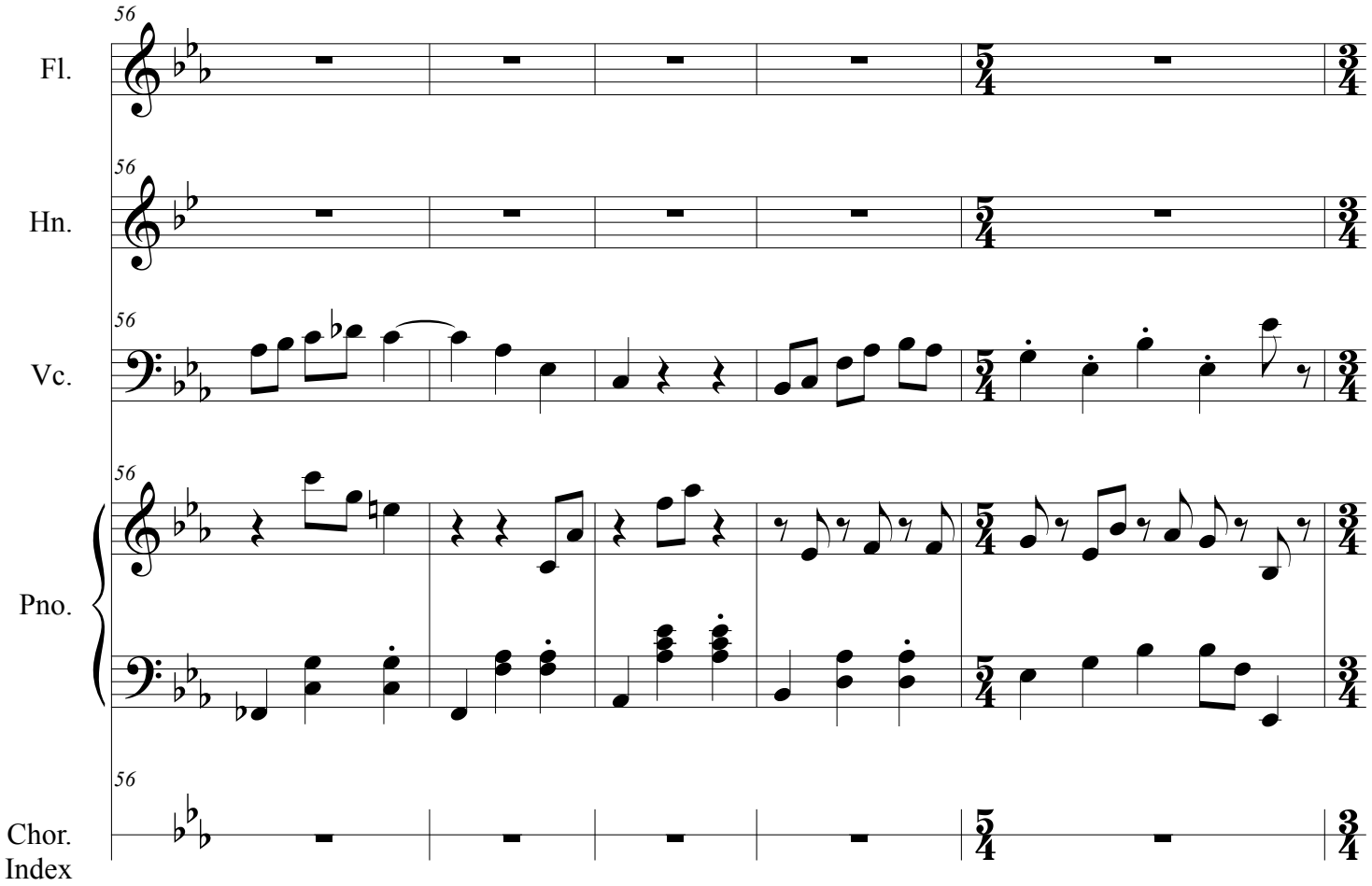
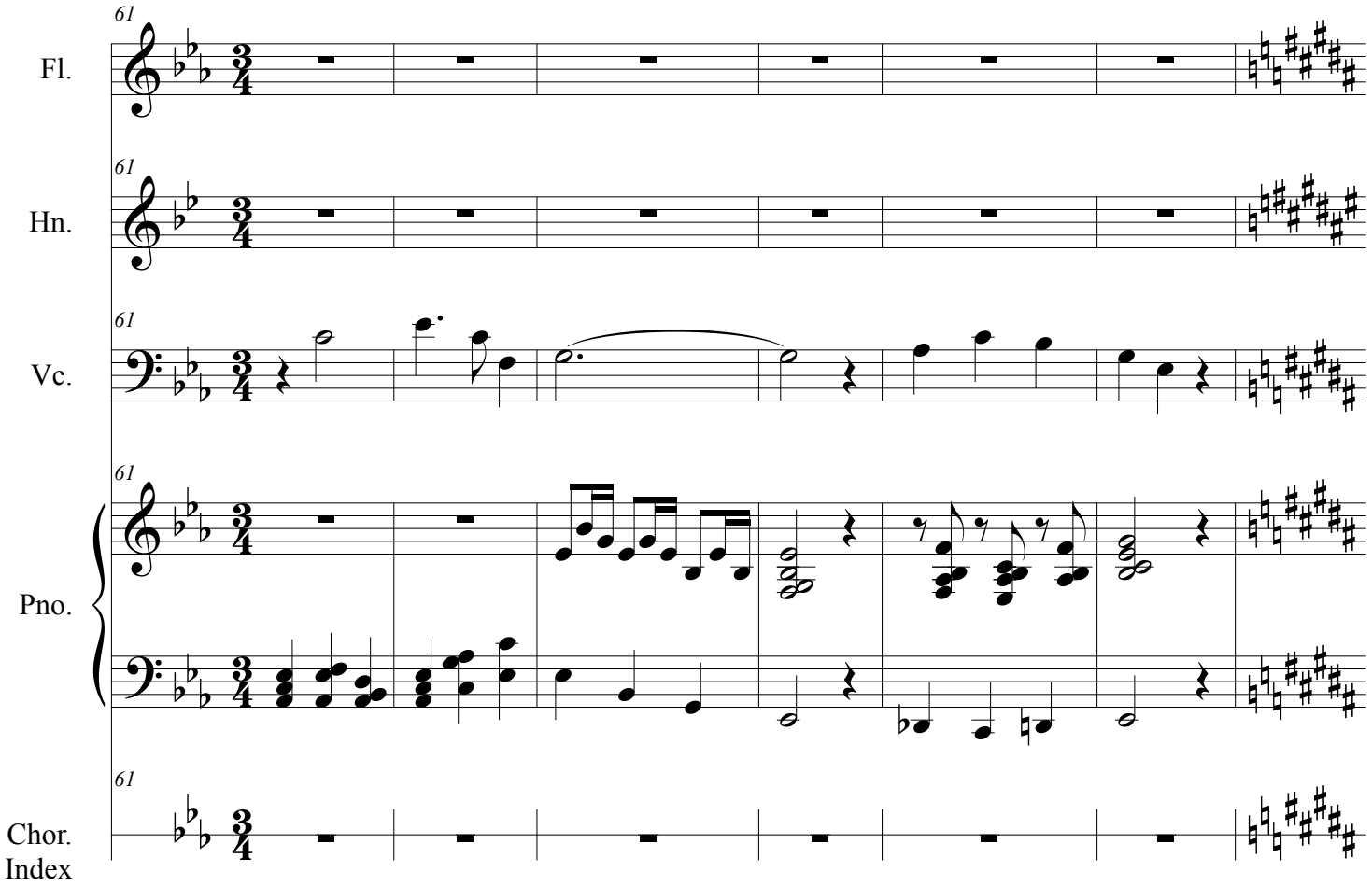
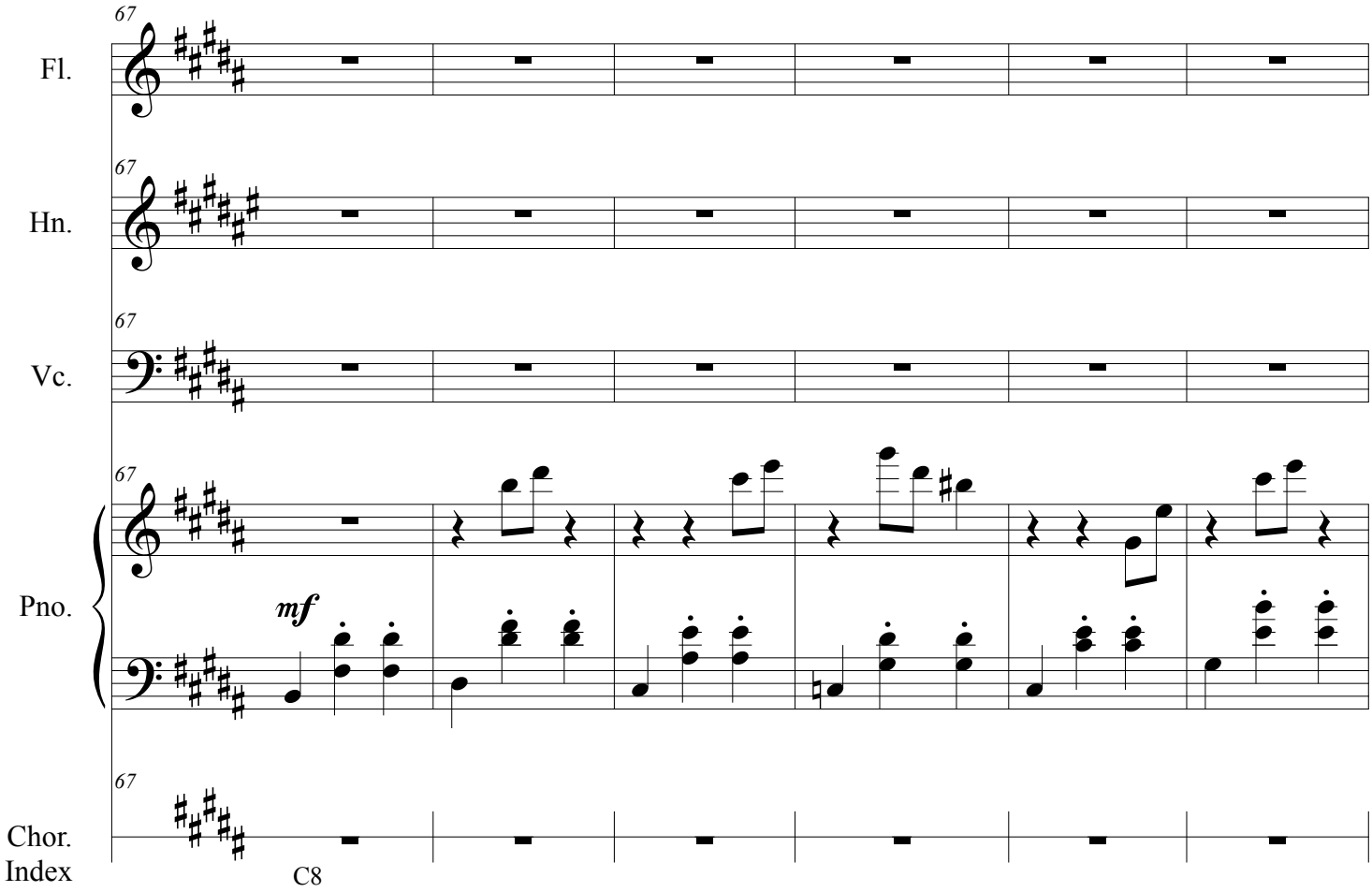
Fl.
41
Hn.
41
Vc.
41
Pno.
41
Chor.
Index
5
4


46
Fl.
Hn.
Vc.
Pno.
Chor.
Index


51
Fl.
51
Hn.
51
Vc.
espress.
f
51
Pno.
51
Chor.
Index
C7


56
Fl.
Hn.
Vc.
Pno.
Chor.
Index
5/4
3/4


61
Fl.
61
Hn.
61
Vc.
61
Pno.
61
Chor.
Index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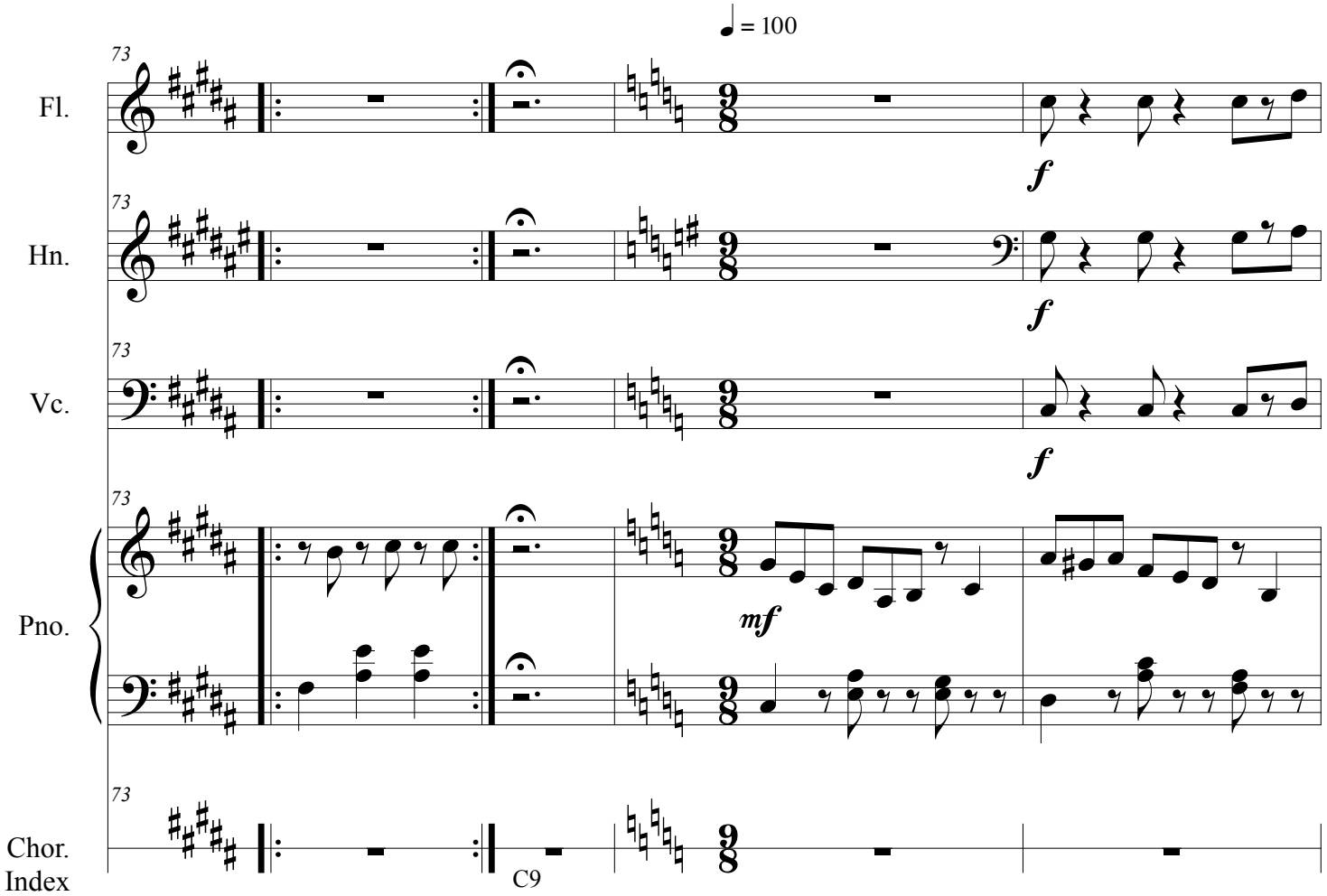
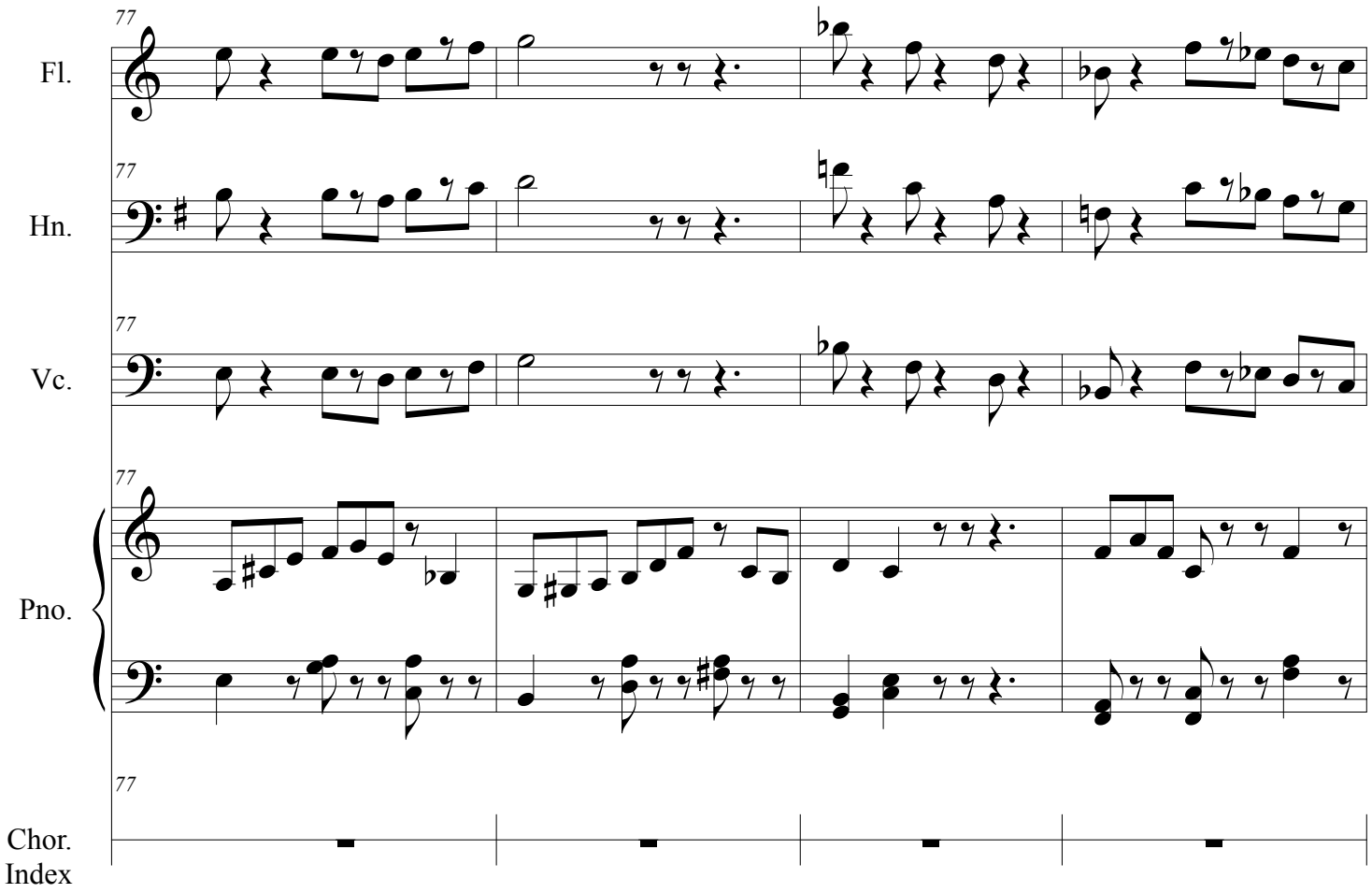
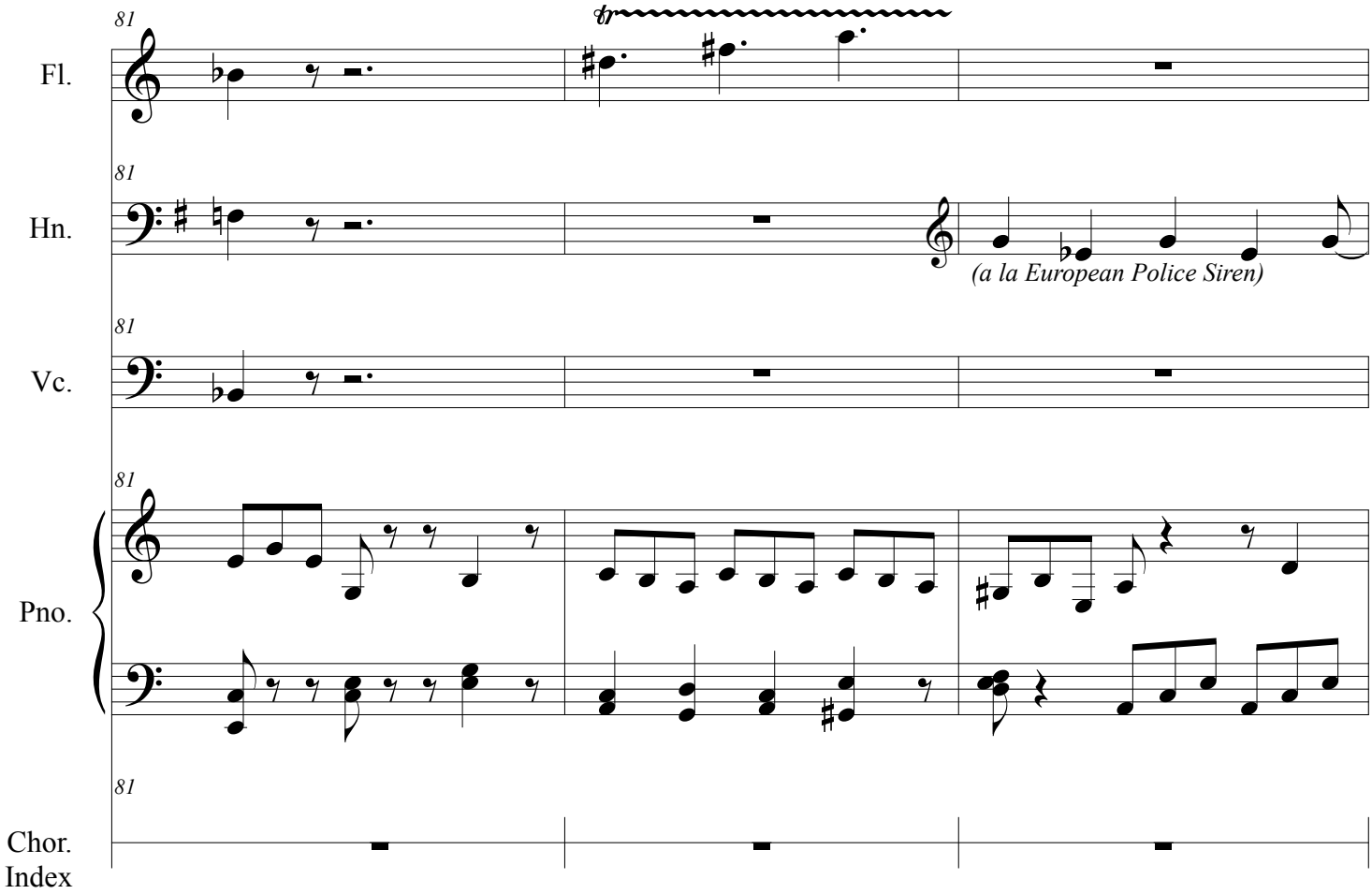
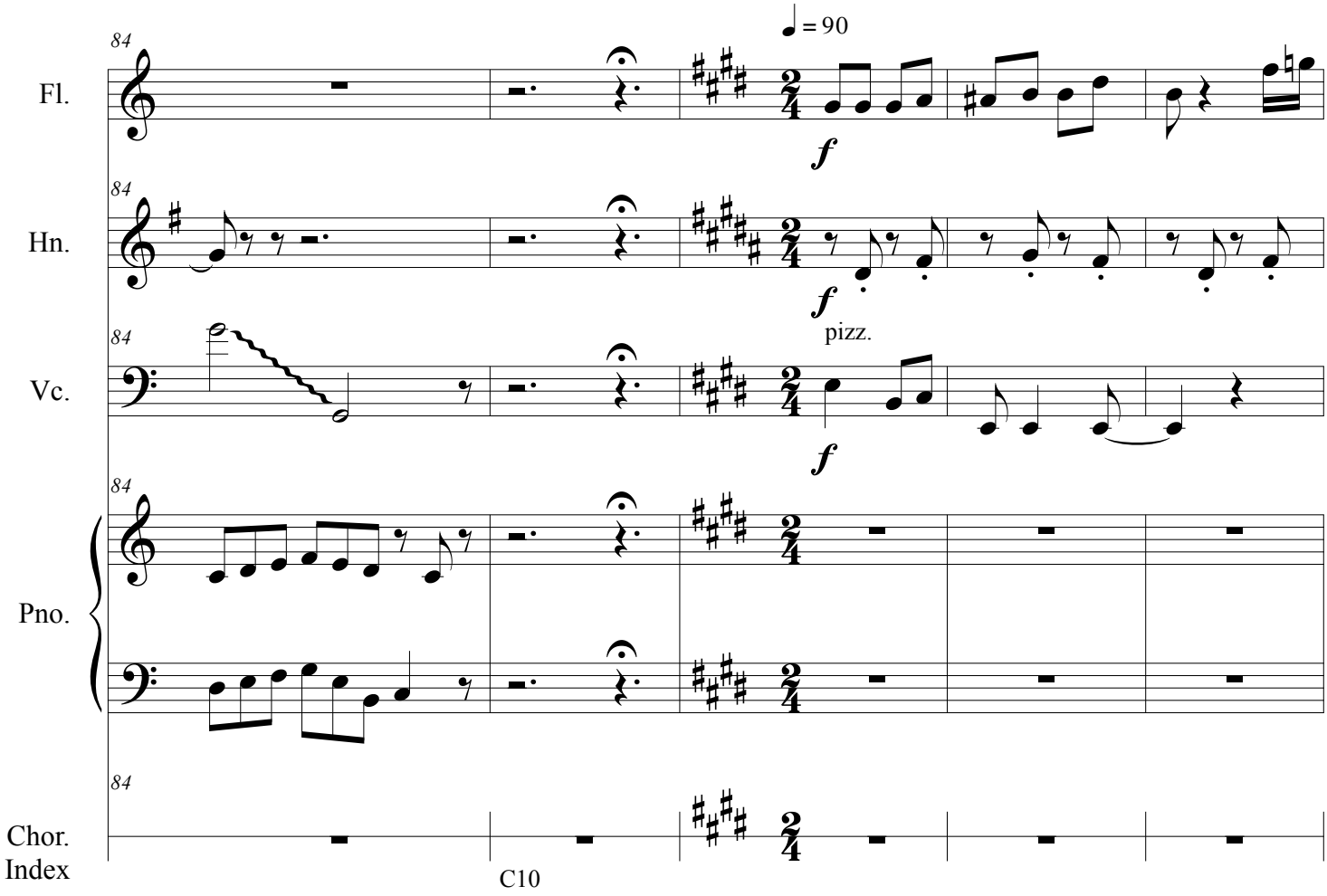
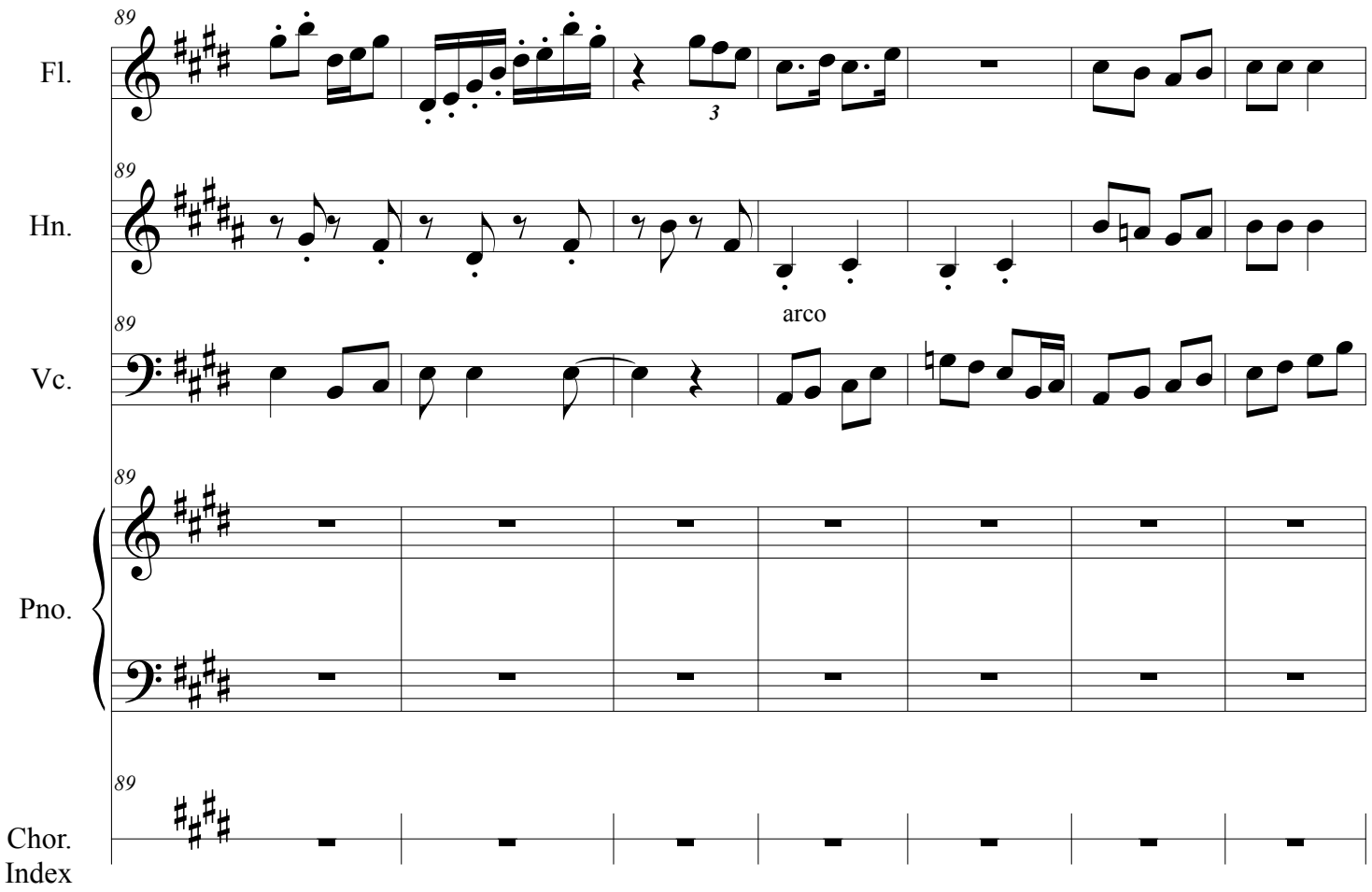
Fl.
67
Hn.
67
Vc.
67
Pno.
mf
67
Chor.
Index
C8

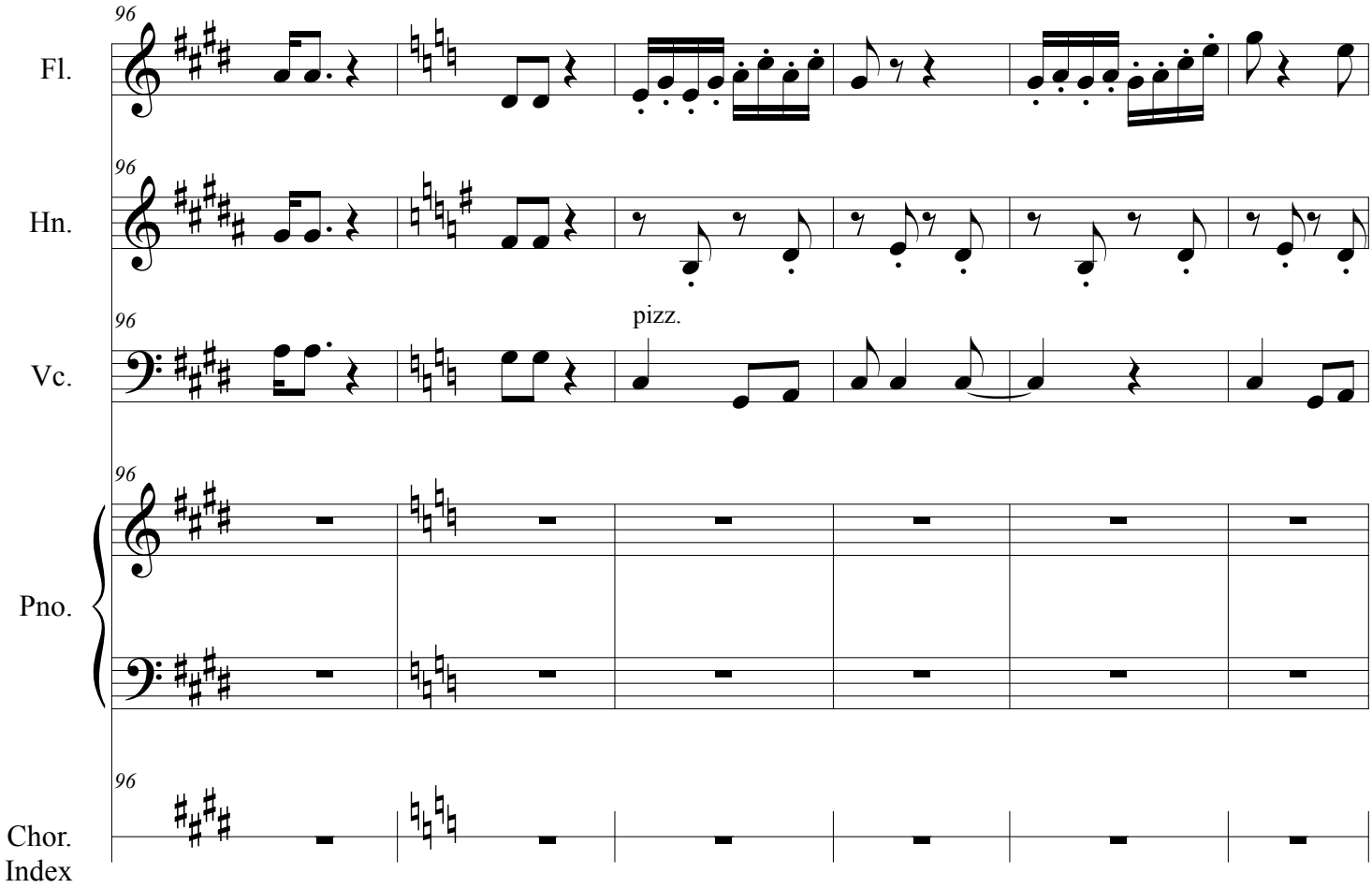

♩ = 100
73
Fl.
Hn.
Vc.
Pno.
Chor.
Index
f
mf
C9

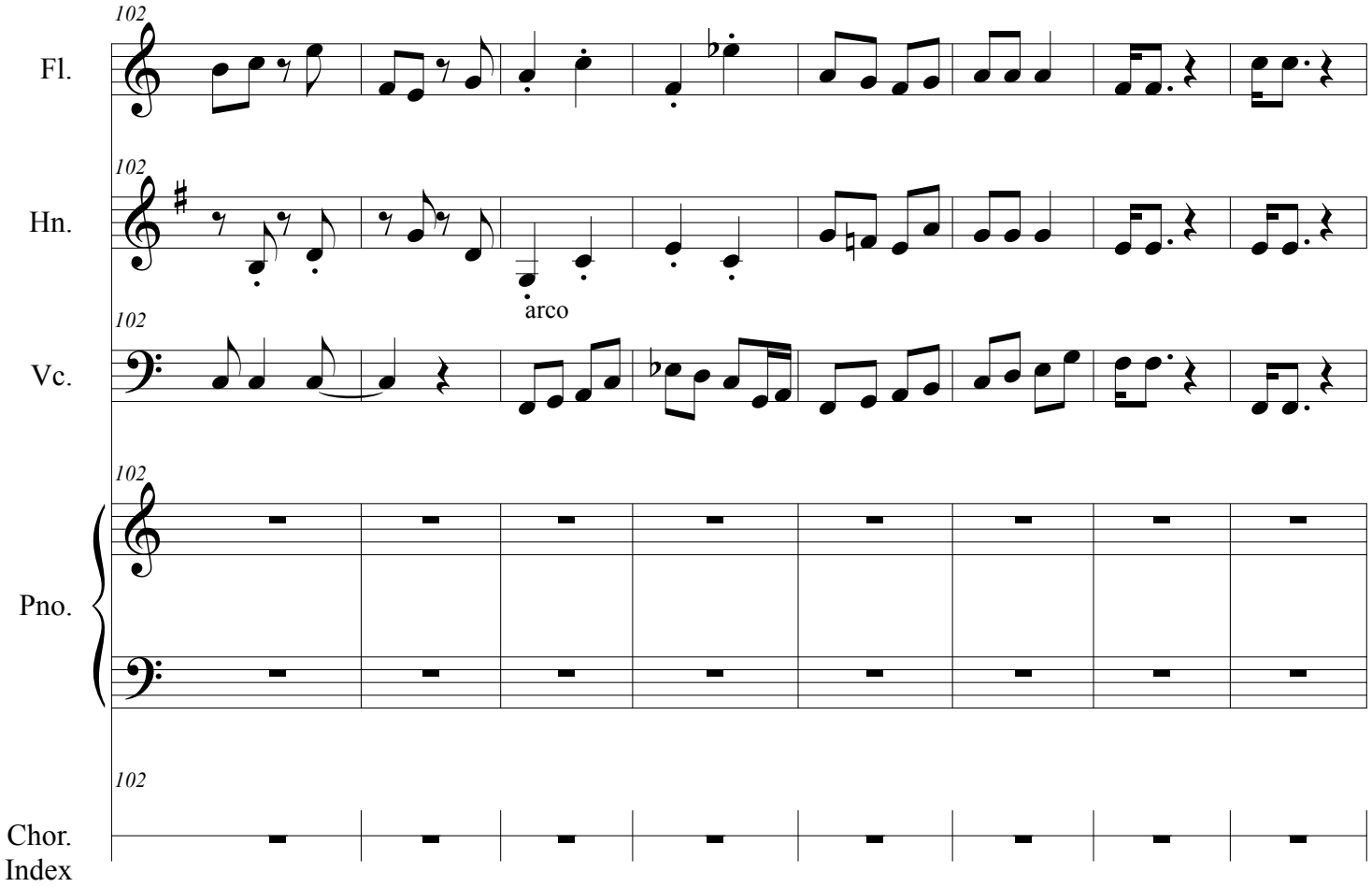

77
Fl.
77
Hn.
77
Vc.
77
Pno.
77
Chor.
Index

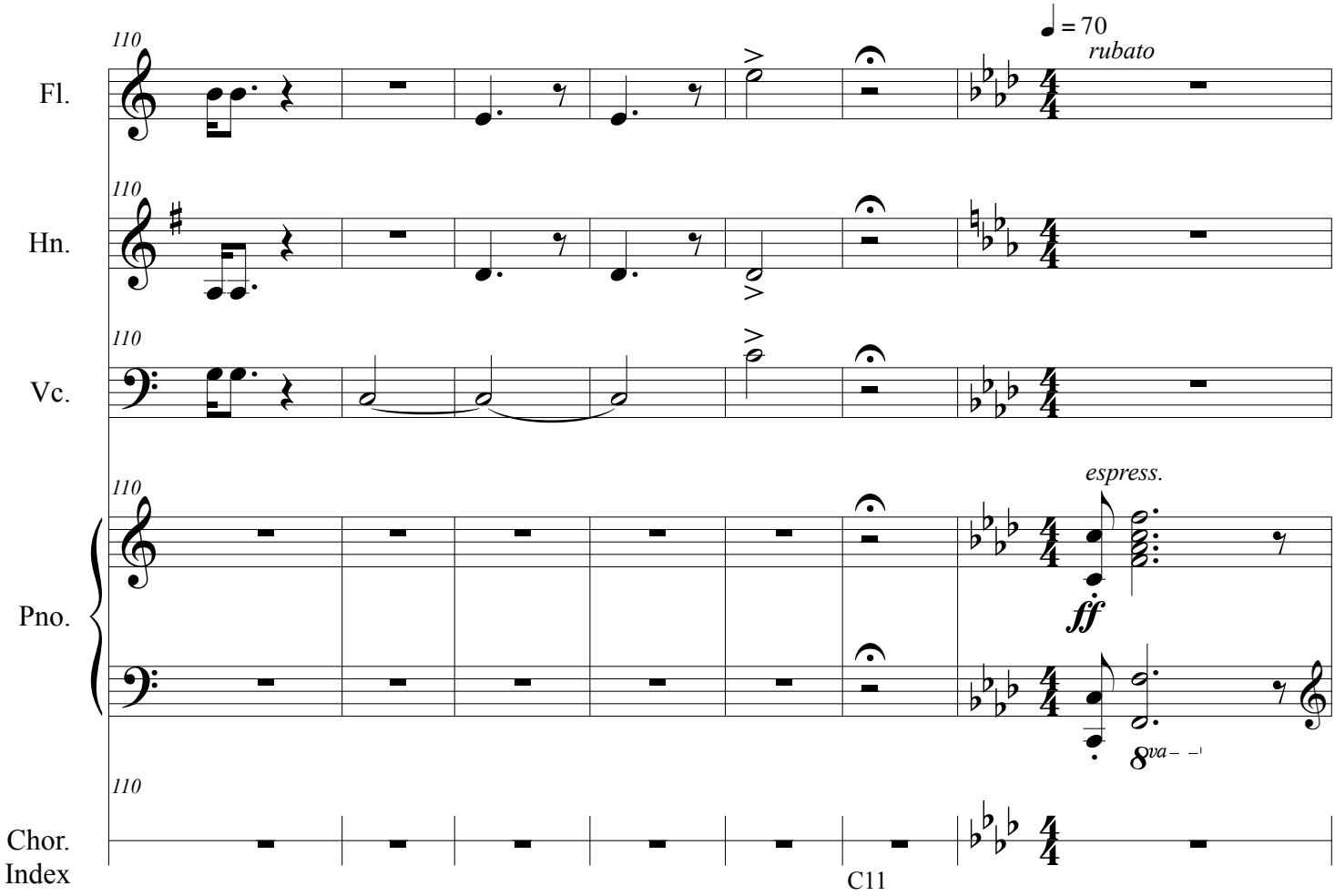

81
Fl.
81
Hn.
(a la European Police Siren)
81
Vc.
81
Pno.
81
Chor.
Index

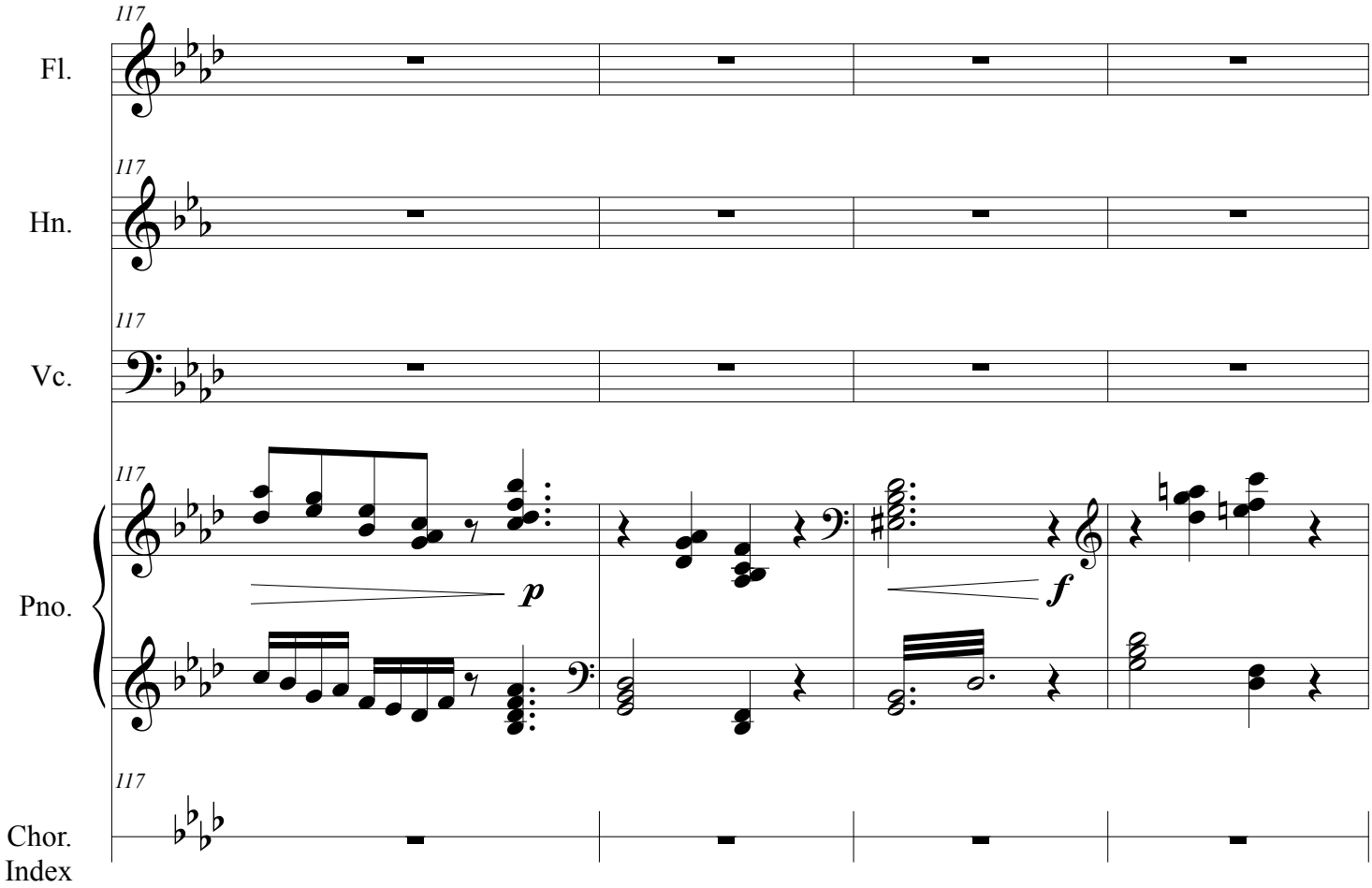

♩ = 90
84
Fl.
f
Hn.
f
pizz.
Vc.
f
Pno.
Chor.
Index
C10

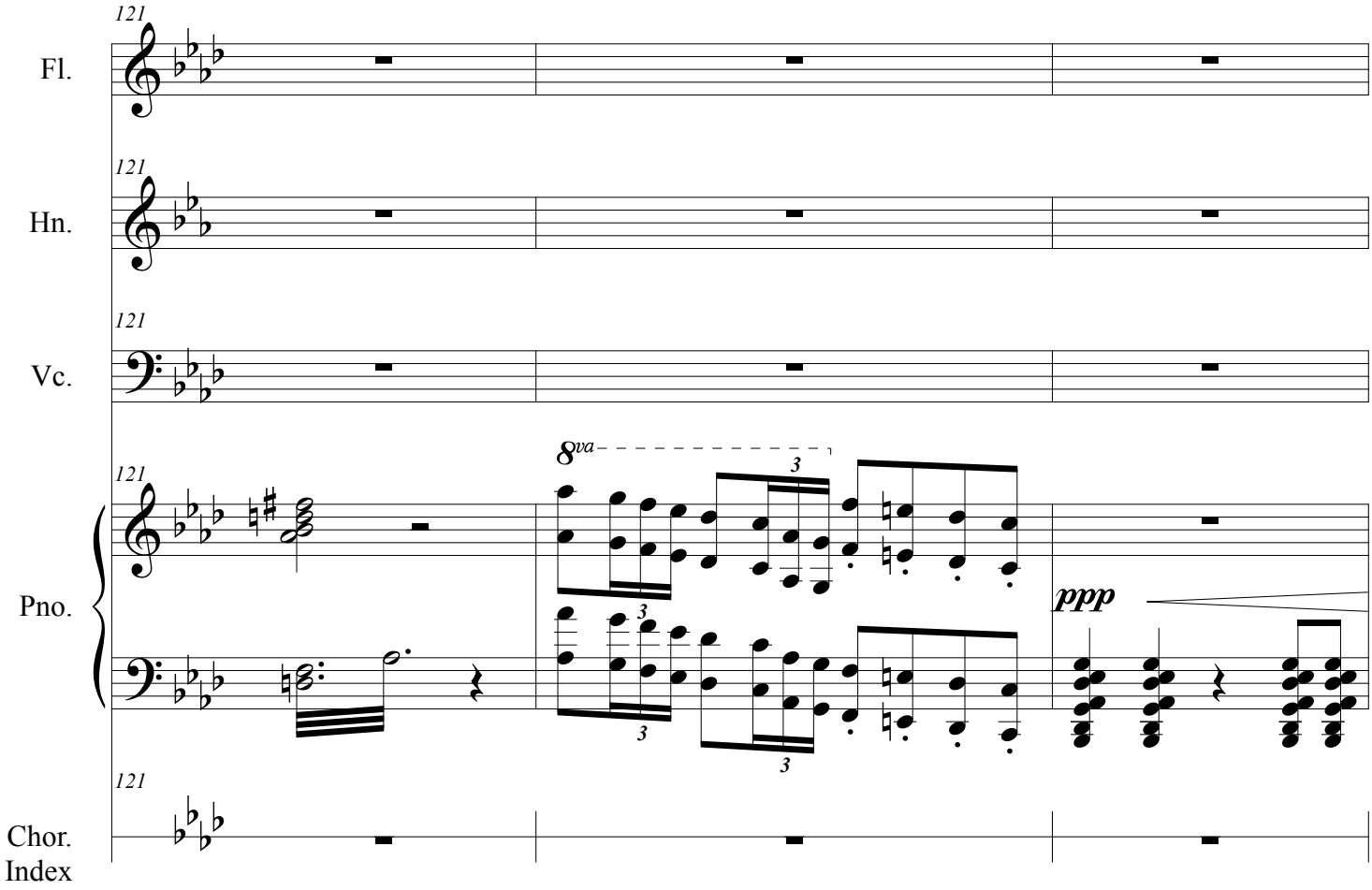

89
Fl.
3
89
Hn.
89
Vc.
arco
89
Pno.
89
Chor.
Index

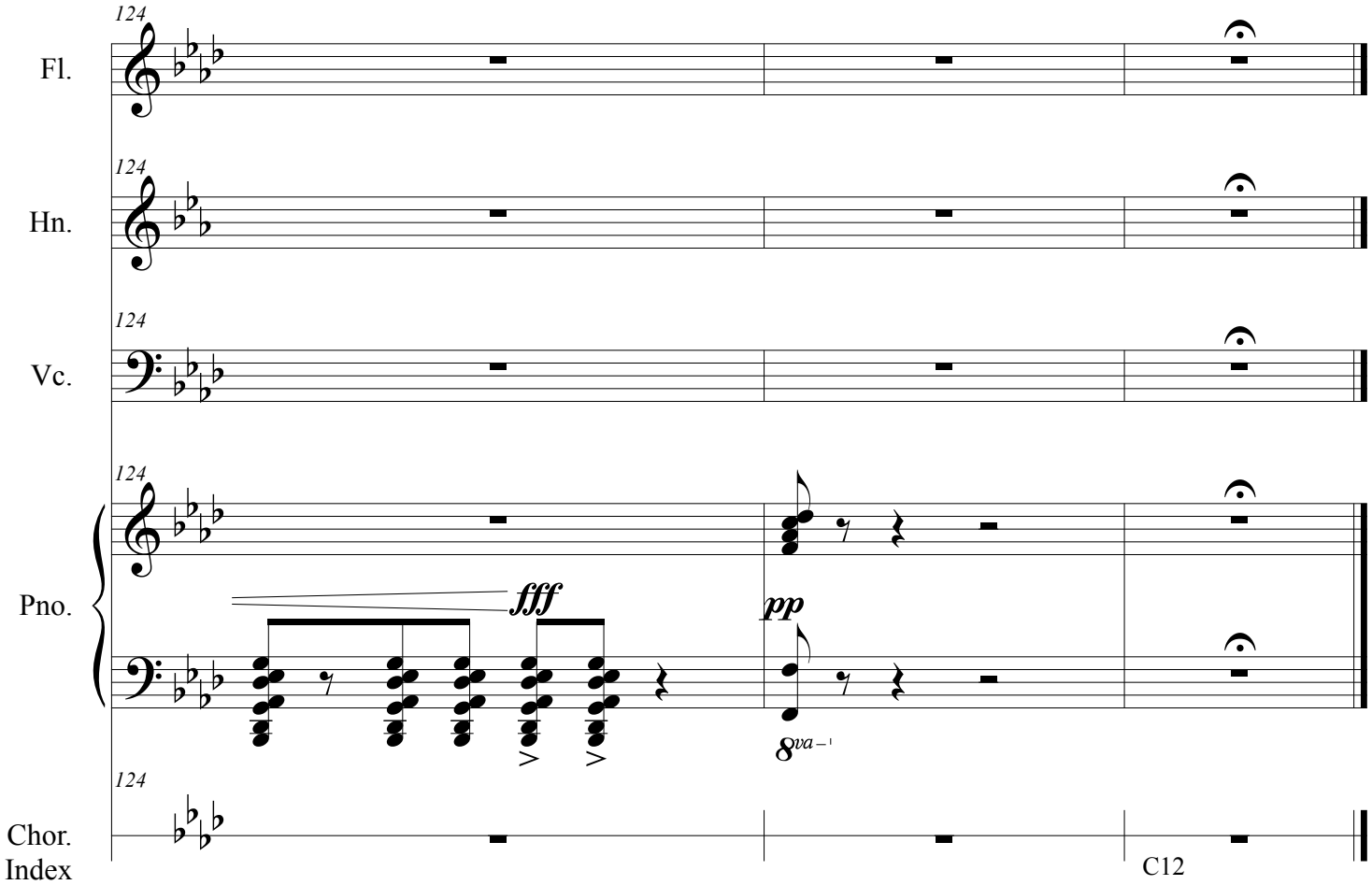

96
Fl.
96
Hn.
96
pizz.
Vc.
96
Pno.
96
Chor.
Index


102
Fl.
102
Hn.
arco
102
Vc.
102
Pno.
102
Chor.
Index


110
Fl.
♩ = 70
rubato
110
Hn.
110
Vc.
110
espress.
Pno.
ff
8va
110
Chor.
Index
C11


117
Fl.
117
Hn.
117
Vc.
117
Pno.
p
f
117
Chor.
Index


121
Fl.
121
Hn.
121
Vc.
121
8va
3
Pno.
ppp
121
Chor.
Index


124
Fl.
124
Hn.
124
Vc.
124
Pno.
fff
pp
8va
124
Chor.
Index
C12