There Will Come Soft Rains

for horn octet

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Program Note

There Will Come Soft Rains for horn octet is based on a poem by Sara Teasdale. The poem juxtaposes the soft and idyllic sounds of nature with the underlying implication of humankind's disappearance from earth. Nature reclaims the ruined battlefields of war, while the footprint of man slowly begins to disappear to the unrelenting forces of time. The shimmering of the rains and the sound of a natural world in this piece is replicated by an effect in the horn, where two players place their bells against each other, and sound a standing wave when both players play simultaneously. The juxtaposition of the poem is also reflected in the front quartet playing mostly melodic material on top of the back quartet's textural material, giving a sense of divided worlds.

There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground,
And swallows calling with their shimmering sound;

And frogs in the pools singing at night,
And wild plum-trees in tremulous white;

Robins will wear their feathery fire
Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire;

And not one will know of the war, not one
Will care at last when it is done.

Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree
If mankind perished utterly;

And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn,
Would scarcely know that we were gone.

-Sara Teasdale

c. 7 minutes

Performance Note

1. The main extended technique in this piece is played exclusively by the back quartet (Horn IV – VIII). This effect is achieved by placing the bells of a pair of horns together, which creates a standing wave when both players play. The distance between bells is very close, and the bells may almost touch given the circumstances involved, including dynamics and range. Experimentation between the pairs of horns may be required to achieve the effect in full. The hand cannot be placed in the bell for intonation purposes during these passages, as it detracts from the effect of the standing wave.

2. The setup of the octet or choir may need to change based on the number of players required. For the bell-to-bell effect, the setup of a horn choir should look something similar to the diagram below:

I I II II III III IV IV

V VI V VI VII VIII VII VIII

3. The back row is paired with their counterparts in the row, creating the pairs for the bell-to-bell effect. For additional players without counterparts in the back row, during bell-to-bell passages, they should not play as to not detract from the effect of the standing wave.

4. Microtones occur throughout the piece in various degrees. The microtones can be achieved by playing either the seventh or eleventh partial on different valve combinations, or by combining different fingerings with embouchure changes. Most microtones cannot be adjusted with the hand, as the bell is already against another bell, requiring the player to remove their hand.

   one quarter-tone flat (eleventh partial)

   one quarter-tone sharp (eleventh partial)

   roughly 30 cents lowered (seventh partial)

   roughly 30 cents lowered (seventh partial)

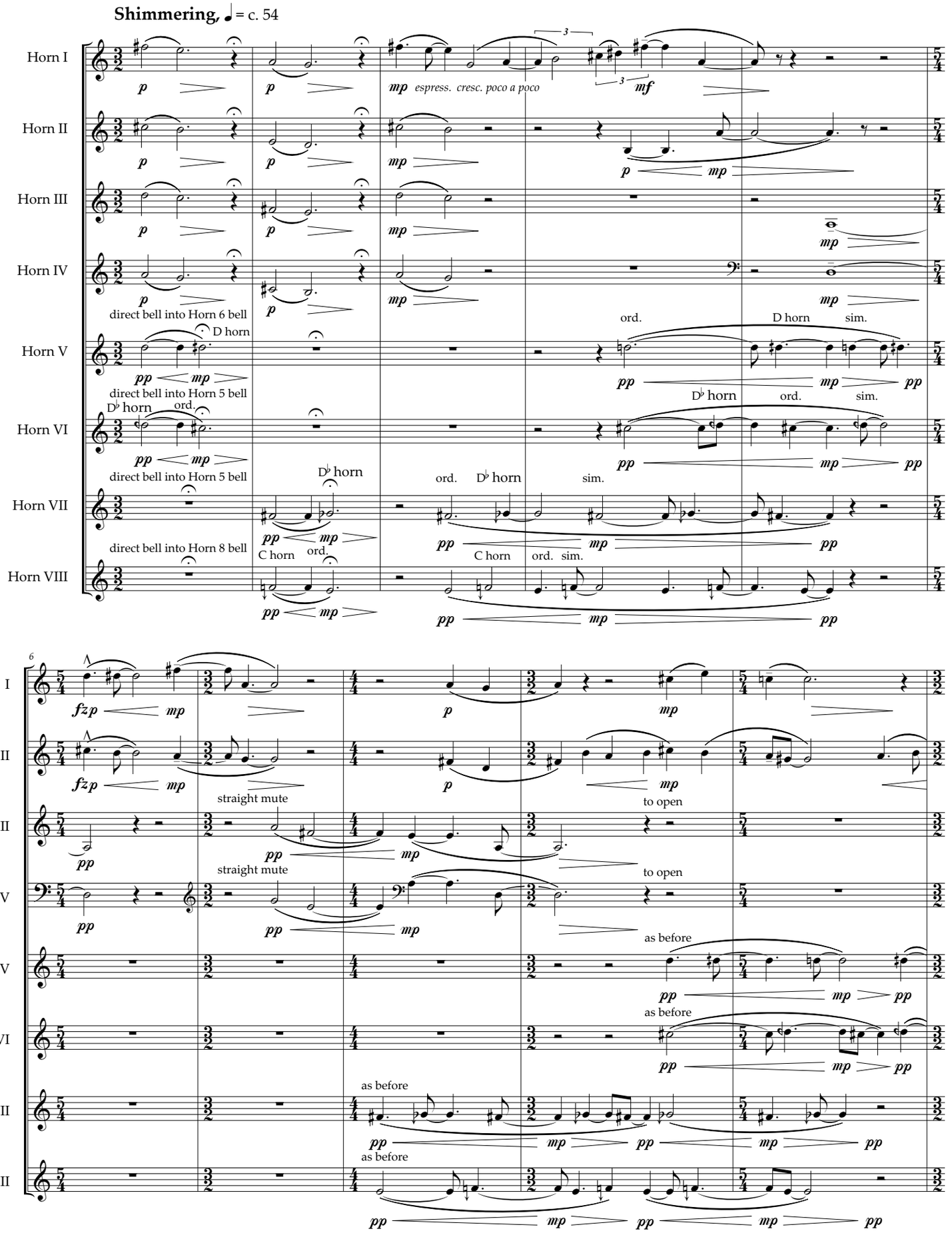
5. In Horn I after rehearsal A and Horn III and IV at rehearsal F, the type of horn used may not produce an octave harmonic with the depressed valve. The effect of the "choked" sound is more important, and therefore the valve depressed should be the first valve that the leadpipe connects to. If the octave harmonic can be produced, the player should still strive to play it.

6. A glass mute is utilized in Horn II. This mute may vary in size depending on the player and horn involved, but the mute should be firmly set in the bell, as to drastically alter the timbre.

Score

There Will Come Soft Rains

Cory Brodack



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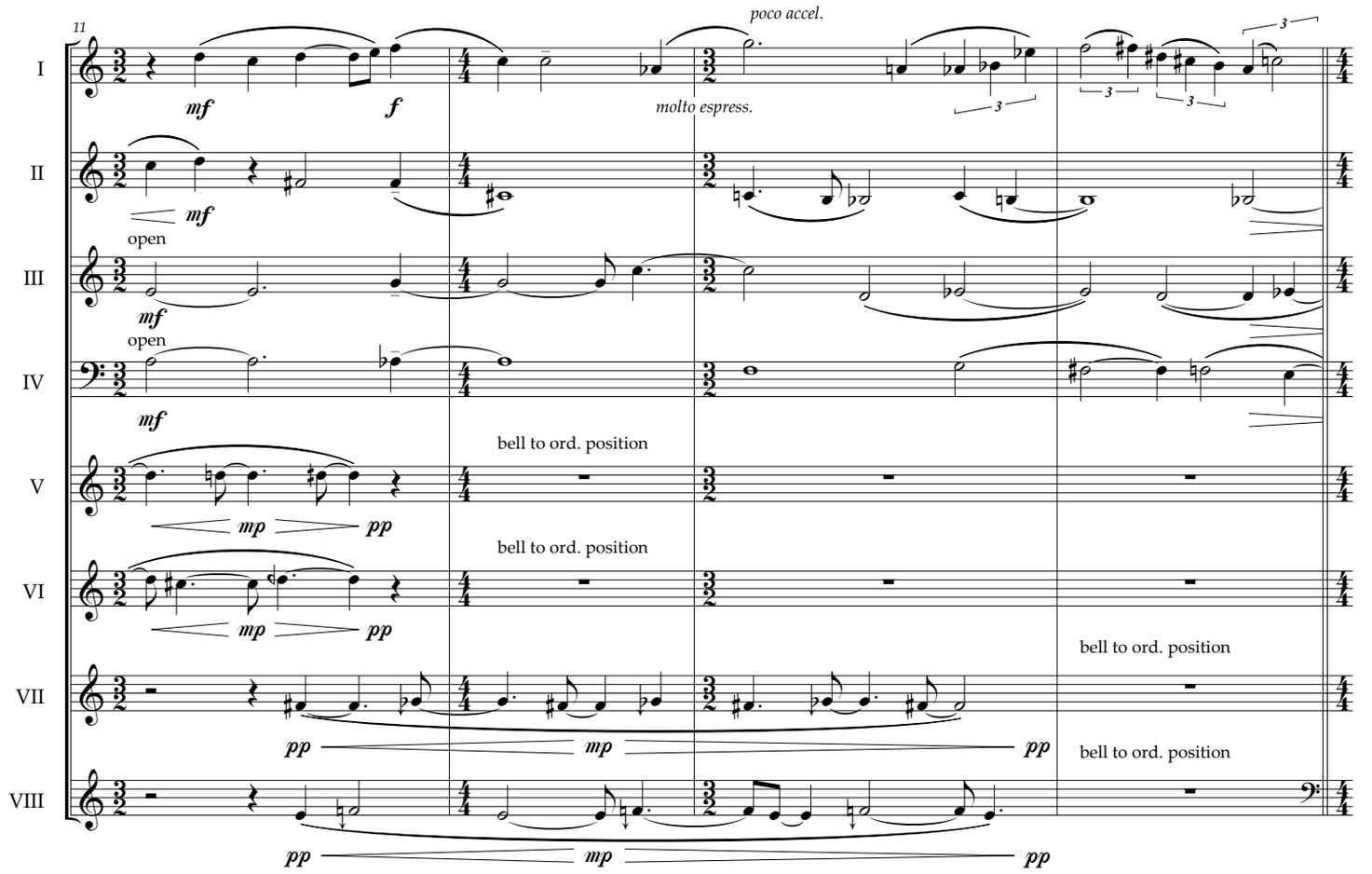
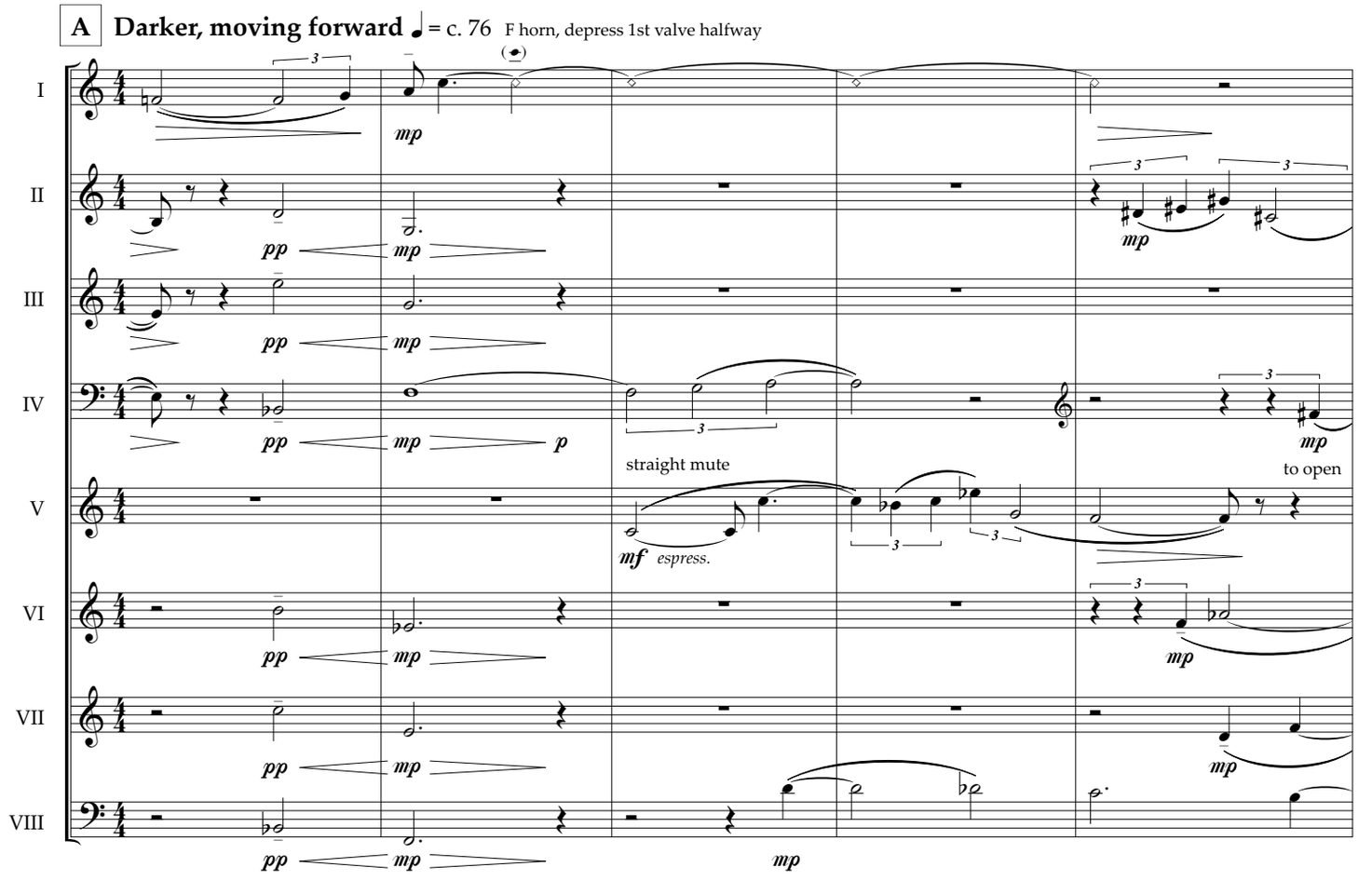
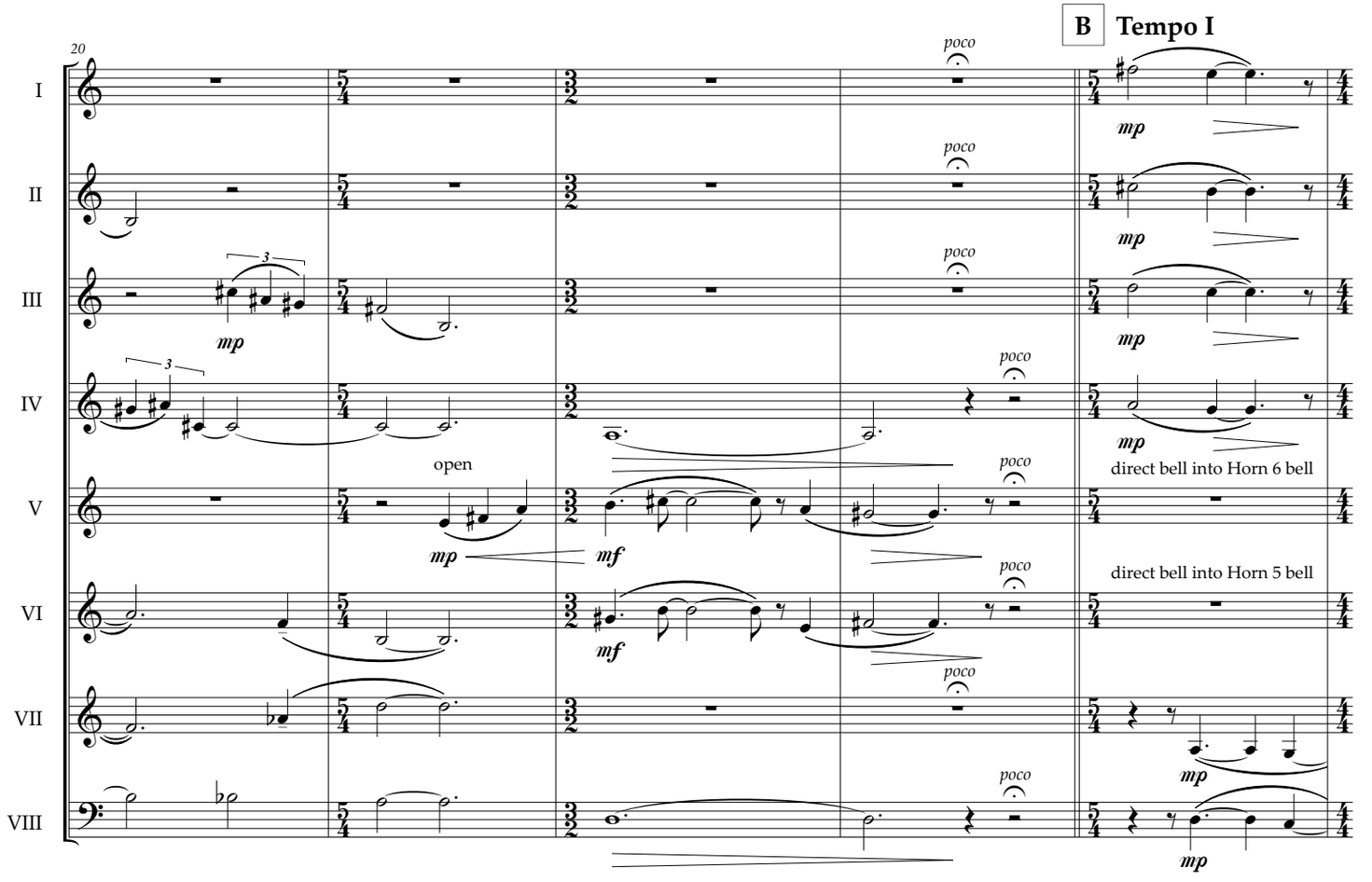
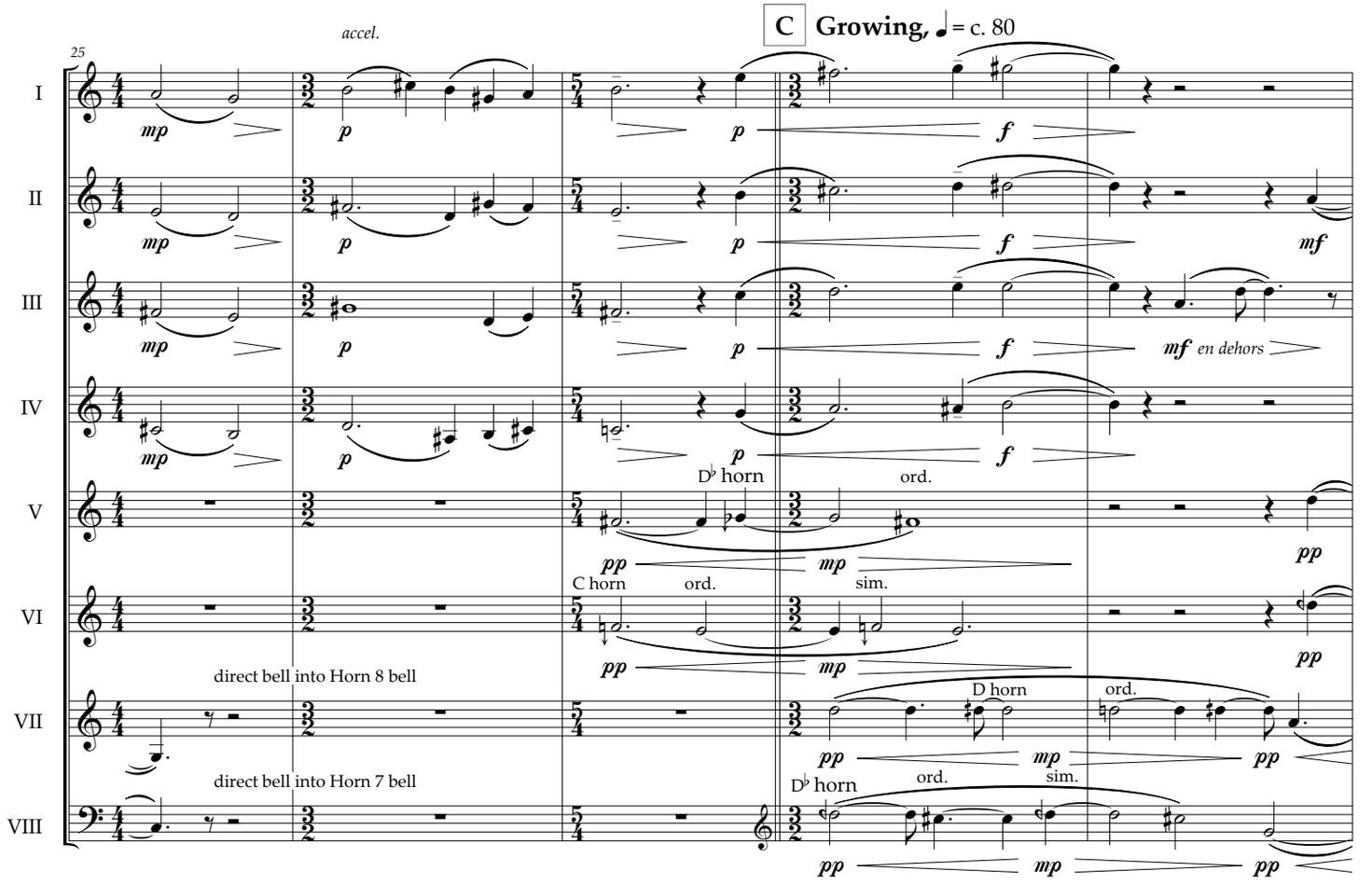
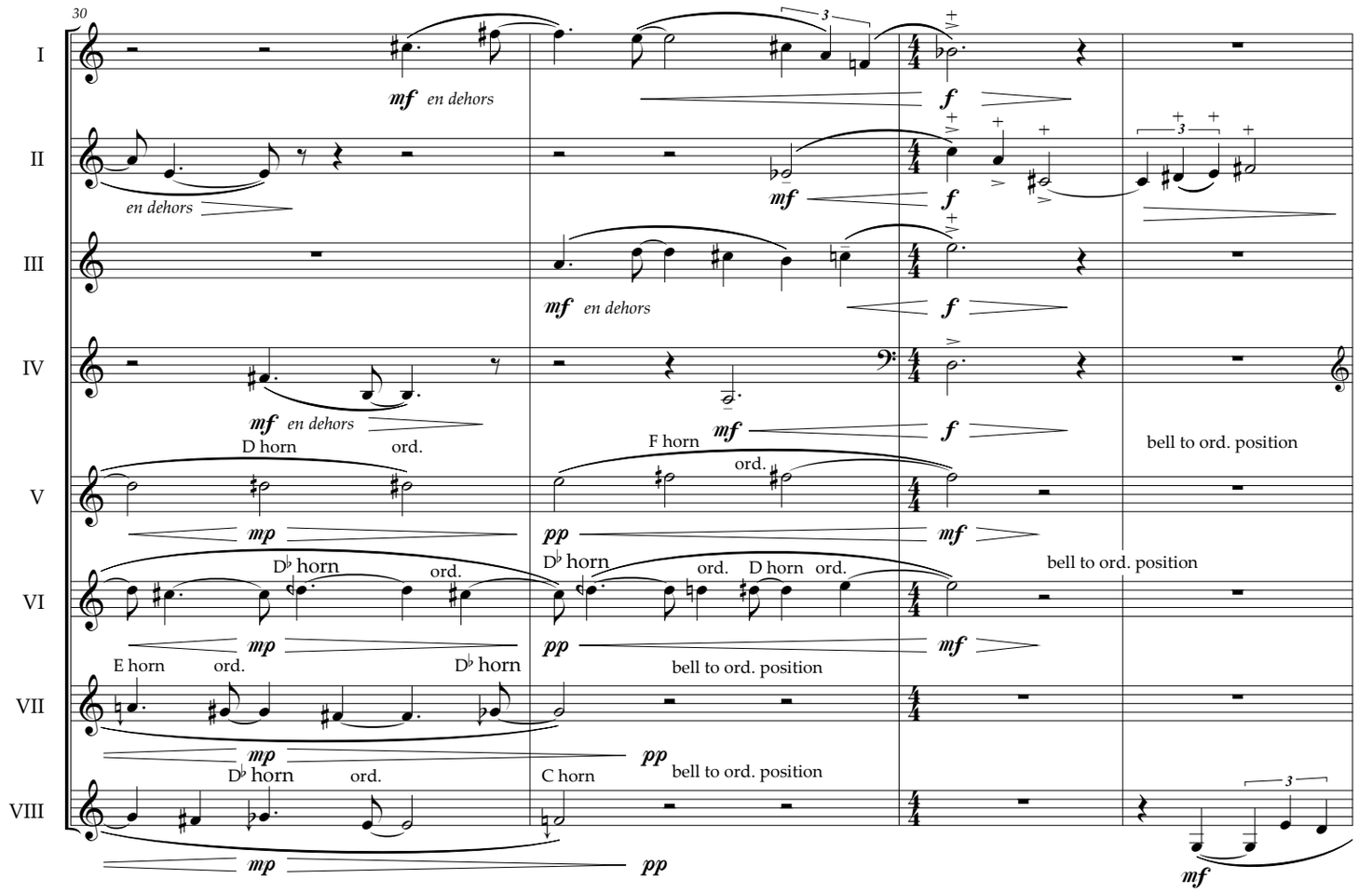
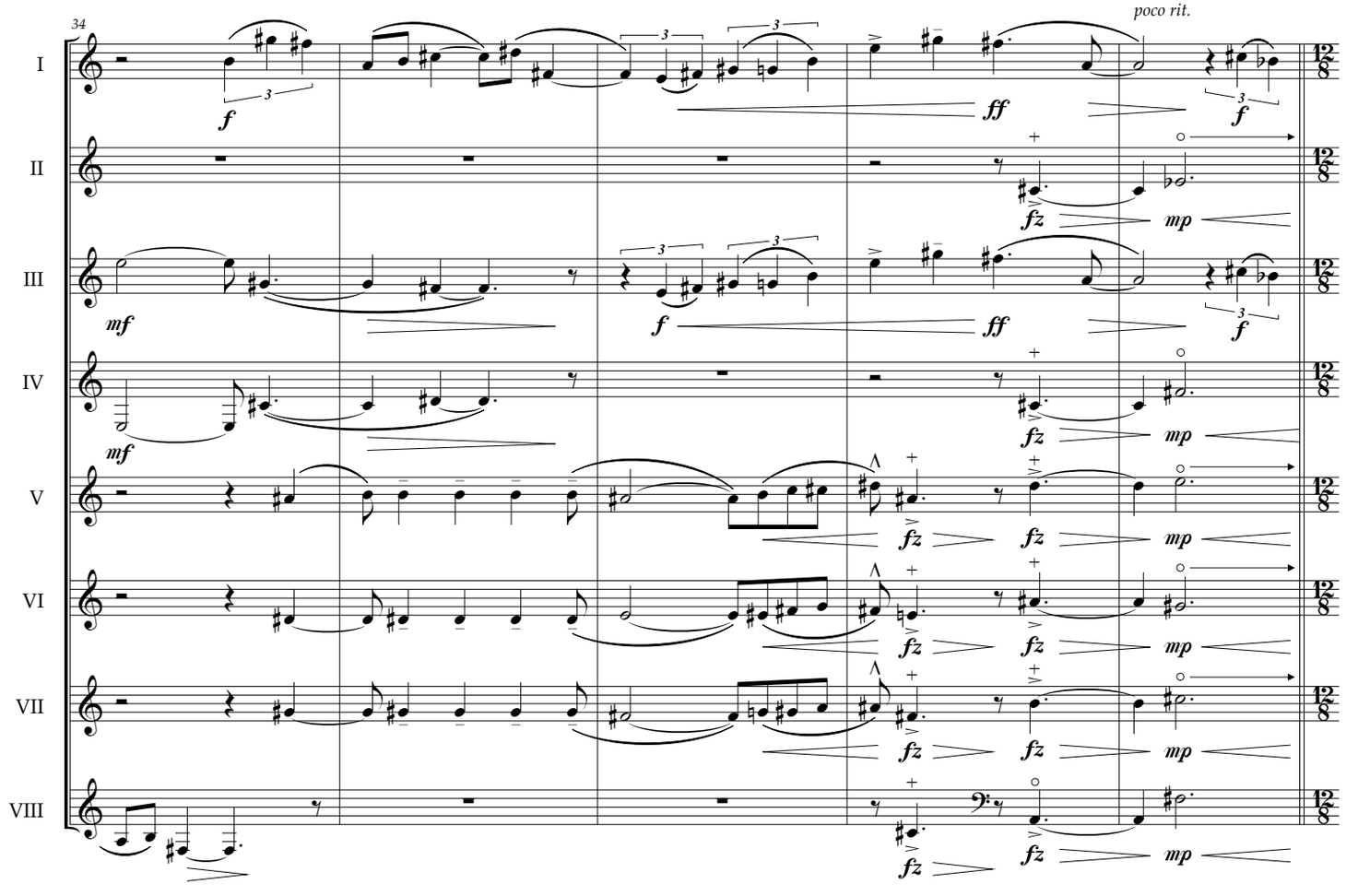

11
poco accel.
molto espress.
open
open
bell to ord. position
bell to ord. position
bell to ord. position
bell to ord. position

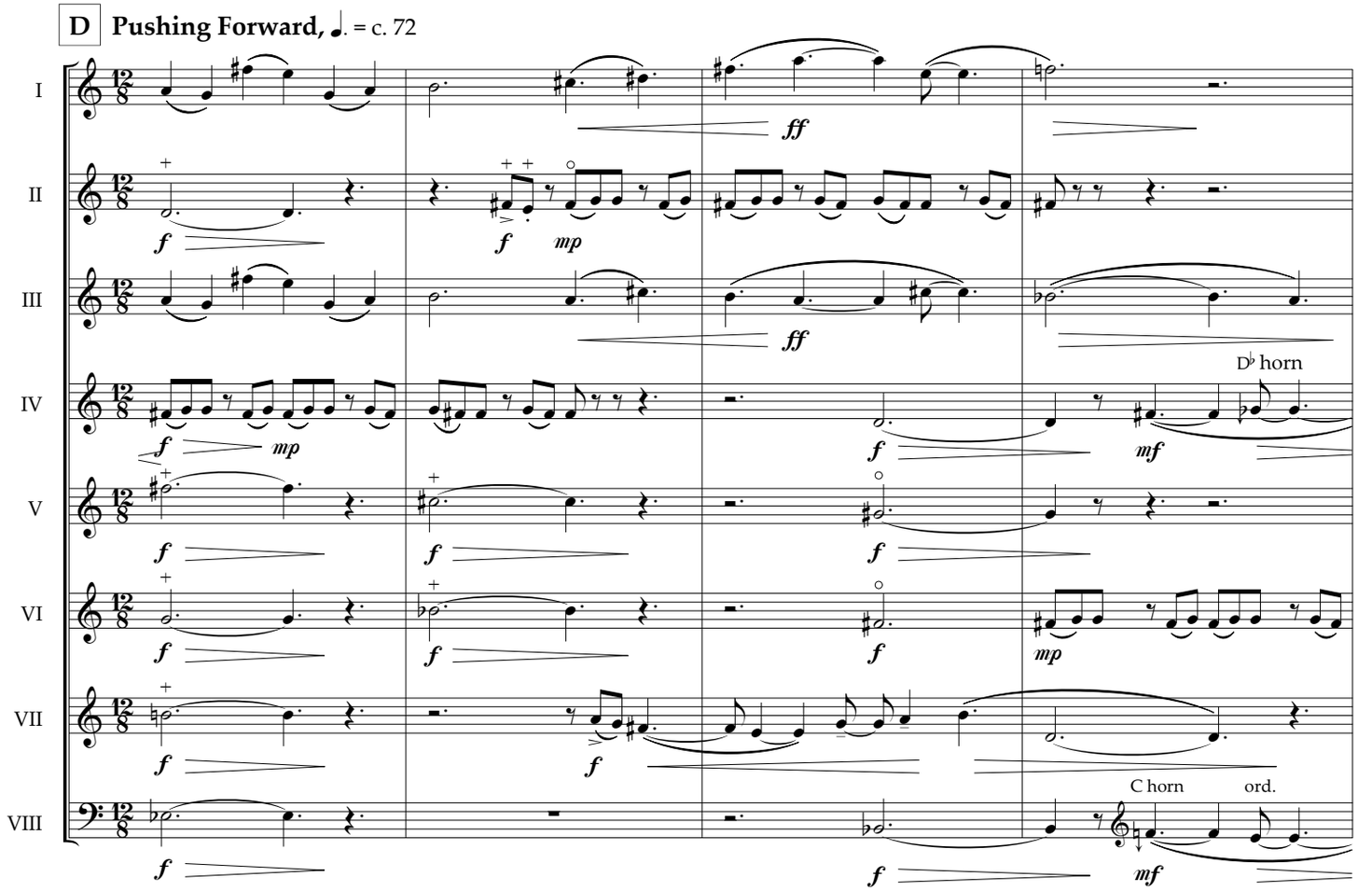

A
Darker, moving forward ♩ = c. 76
F horn, depress 1st valve halfway
straight mute
to open
espress.

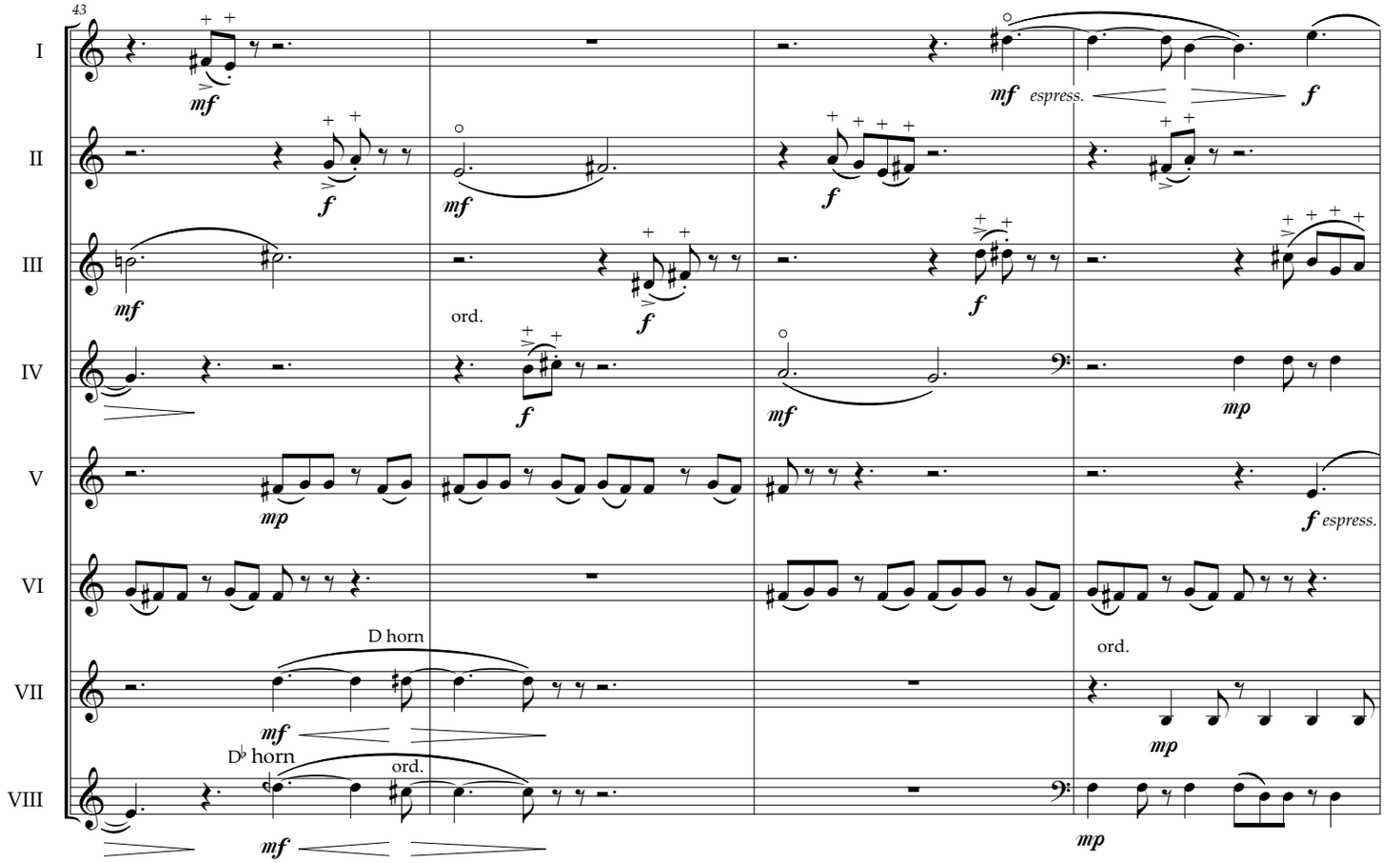

B Tempo I
20
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
poco
mp
mf
open
direct bell into Horn 6 bell
direct bell into Horn 5 bell

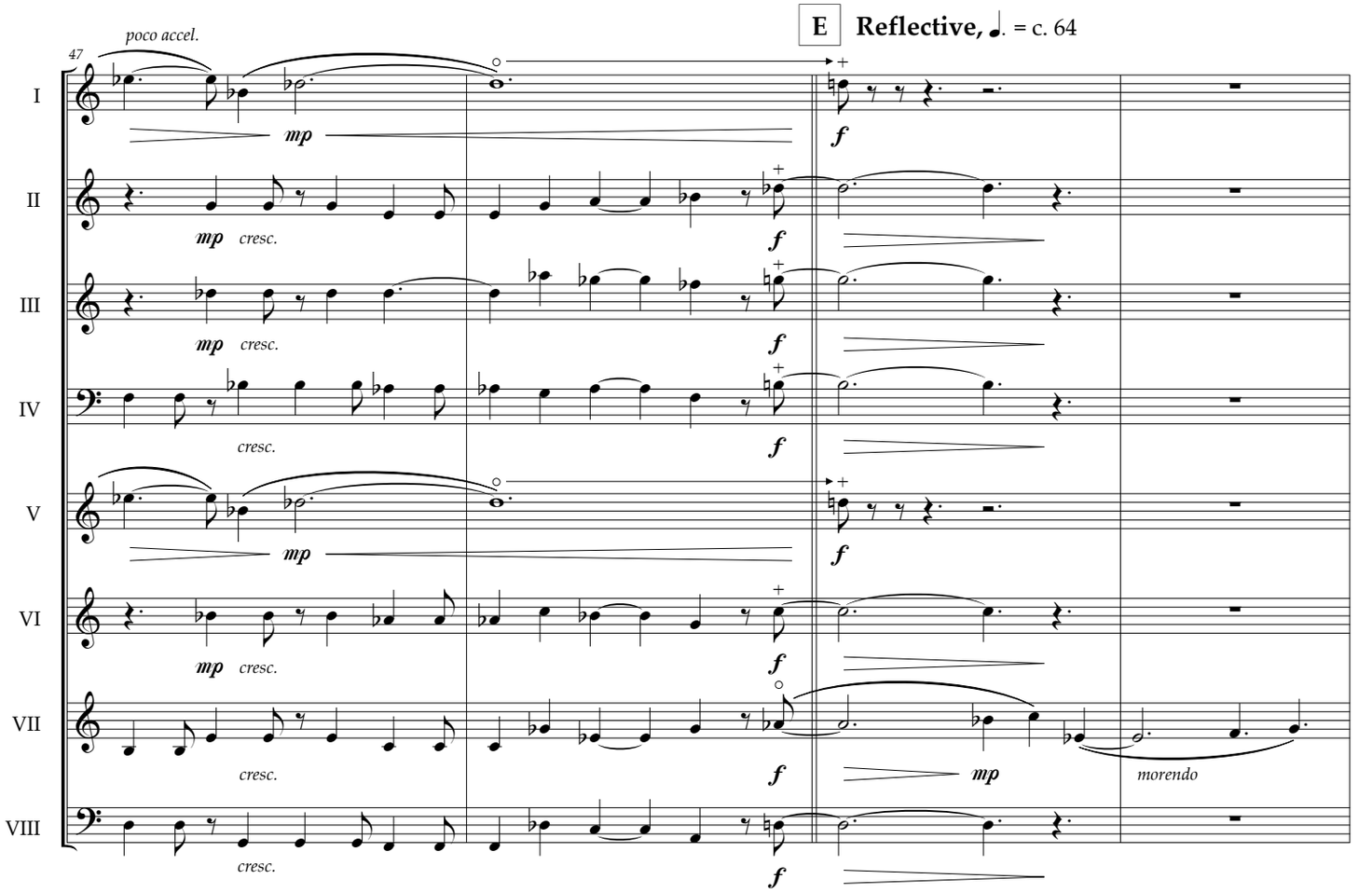

C Growing, ♩ = c. 80
25
accel.
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
p
f
mf
mp
pp
en dehors
D♭ horn
ord.
C horn
sim.
D horn
direct bell into Horn 8 bell
direct bell into Horn 7 bell

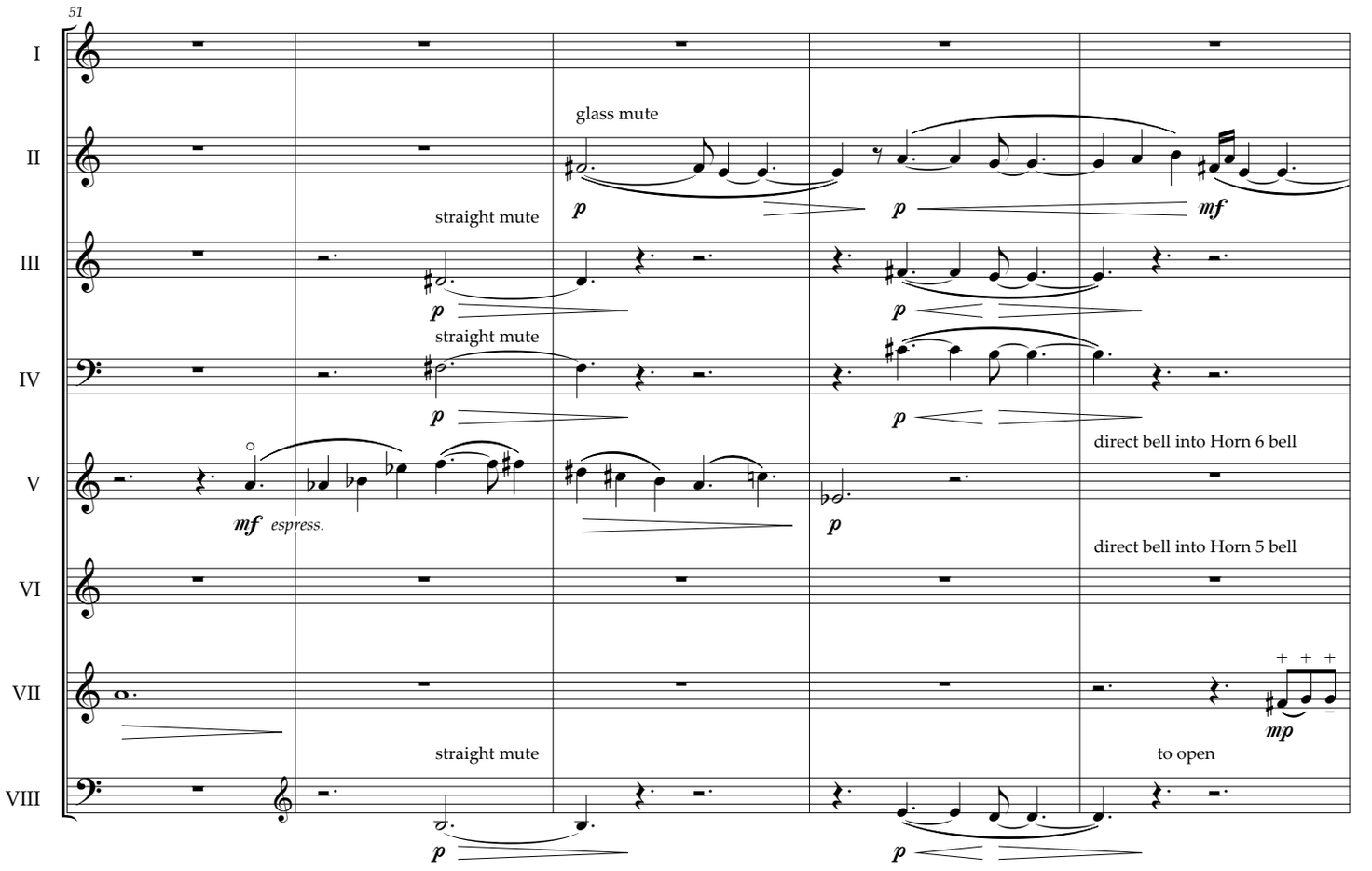

30
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
mf en dehors
en dehors
f
mf en dehors
D horn
ord.
F horn
bell to ord. position
D♭ horn
E horn
C horn
mp
pp
mf

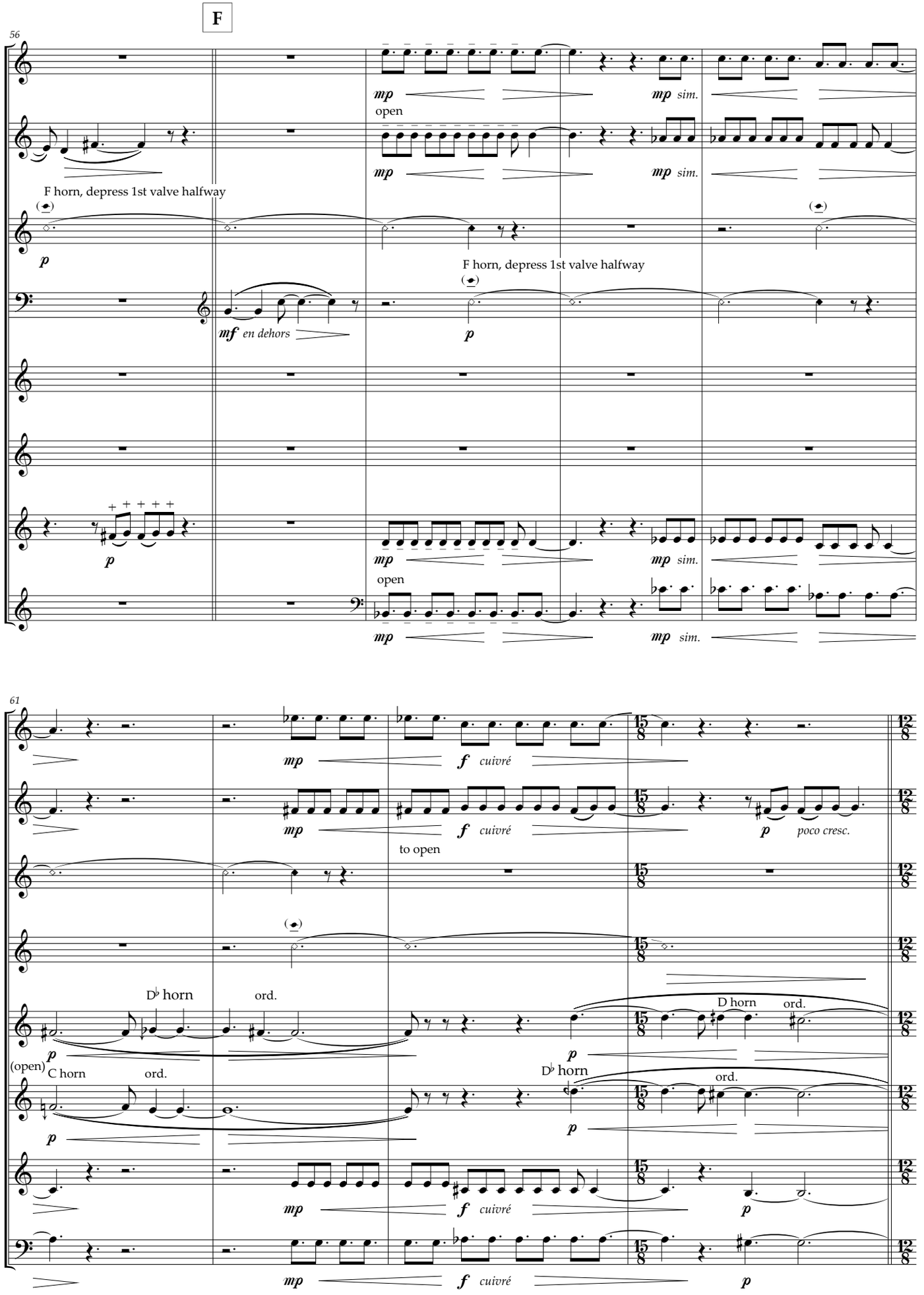

34
poco rit.
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
f
ff
mf
fz
mp

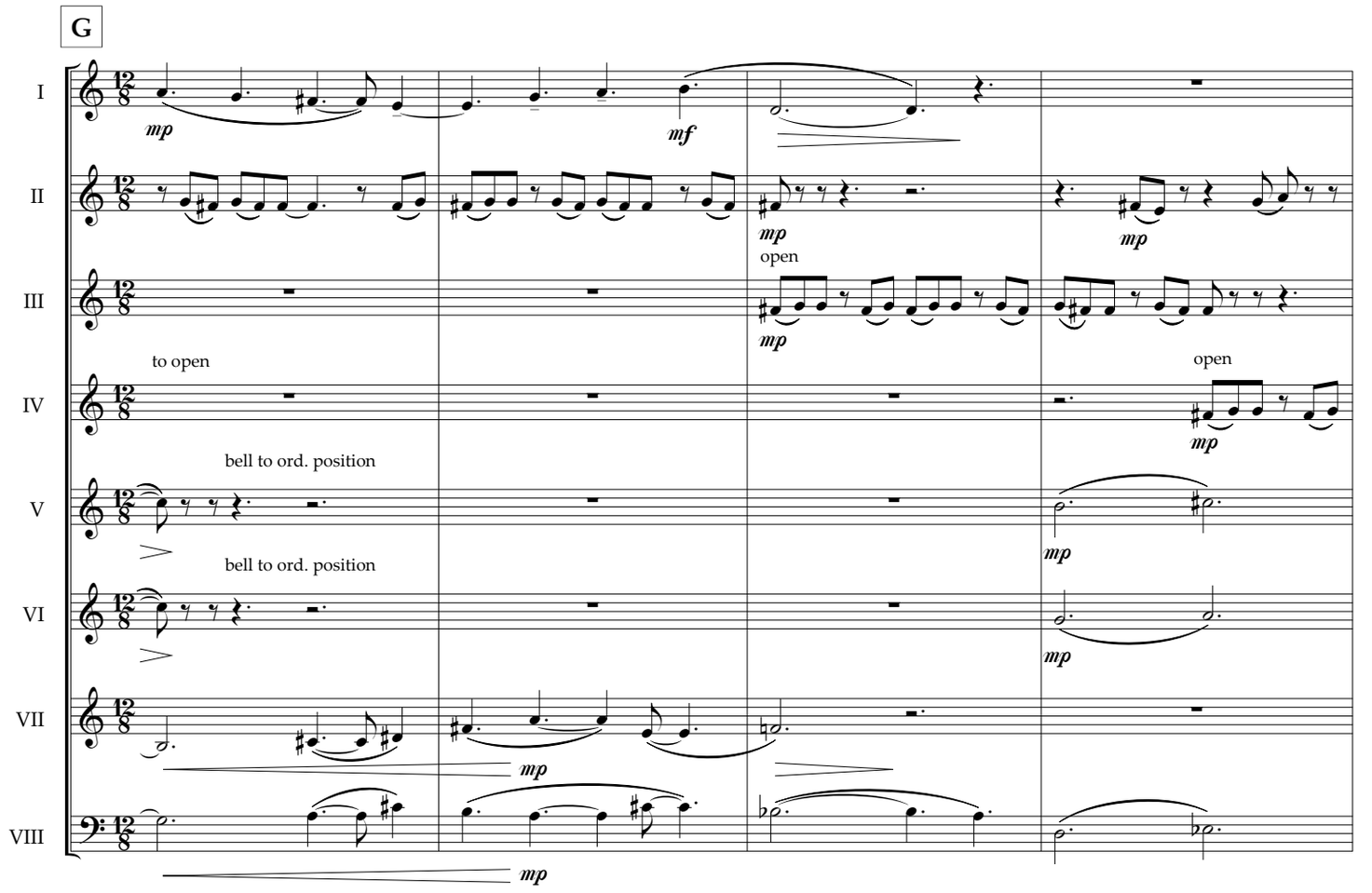

D Pushing Forward, ♩. = c. 72
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
D♭ horn
C horn
ord.

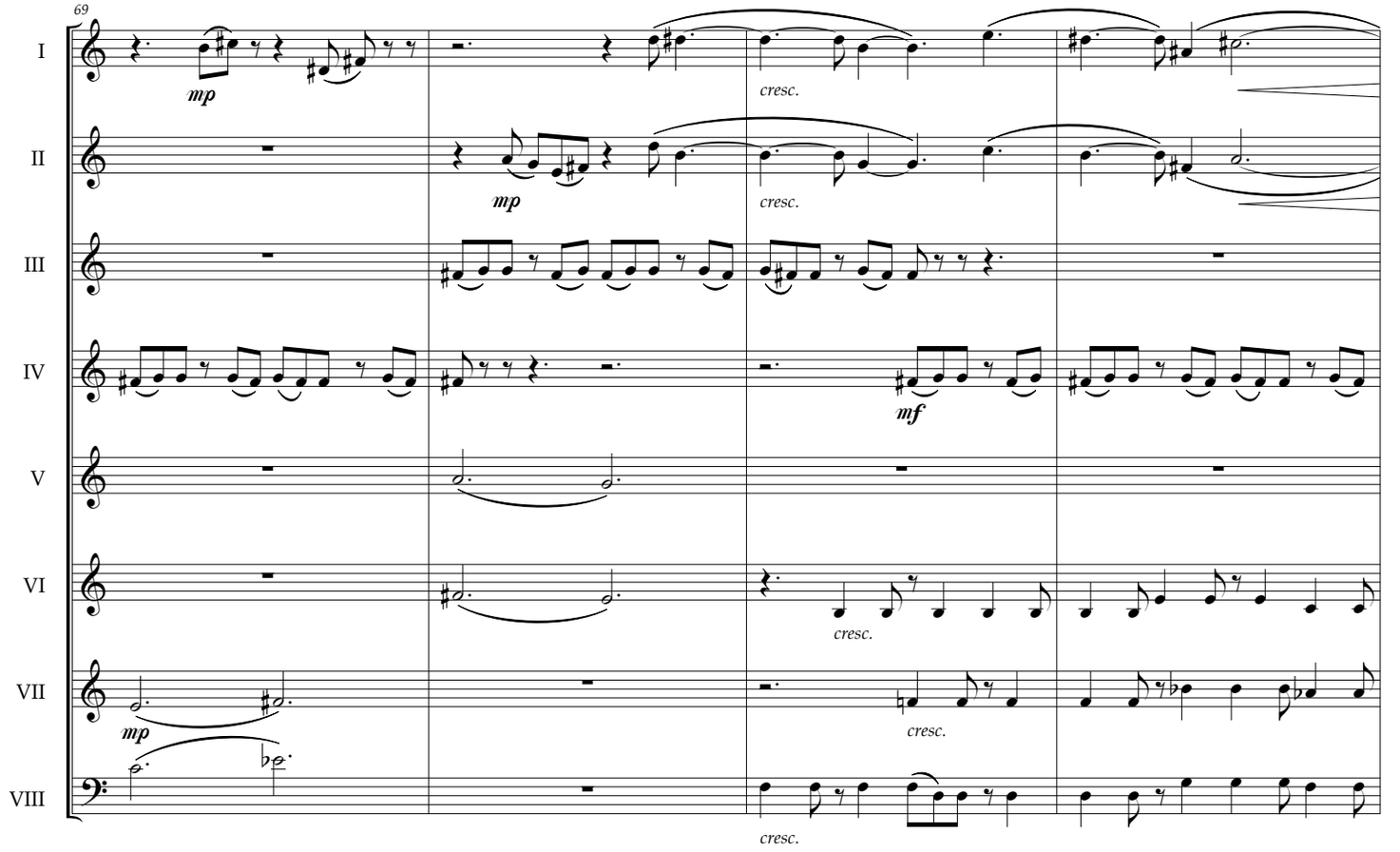

43
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
espress.
ord.
D horn
D♭ horn

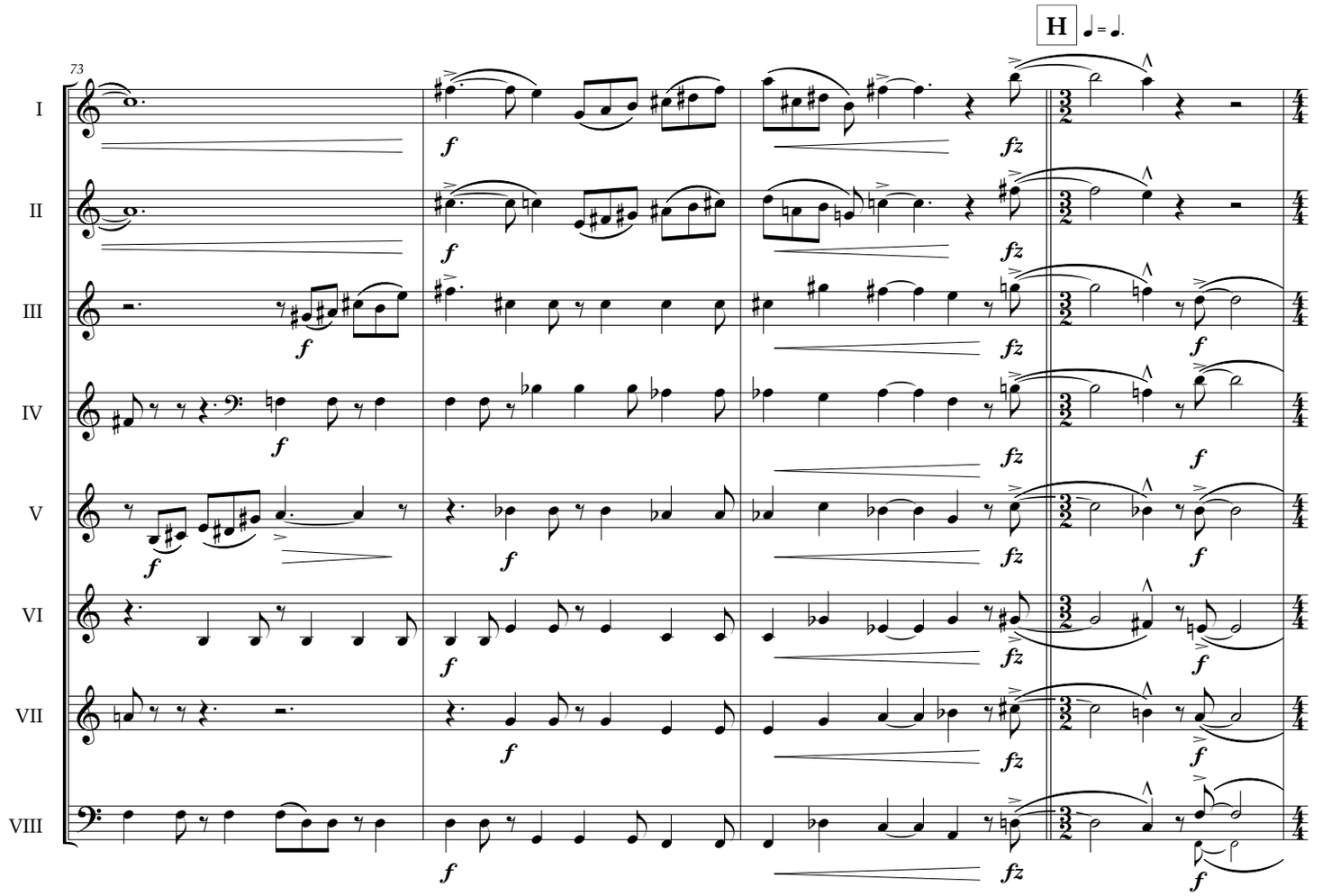

E
Reflective, ♩. = c. 64
poco accel.
47
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
mp
f
cresc.
mp
morendo

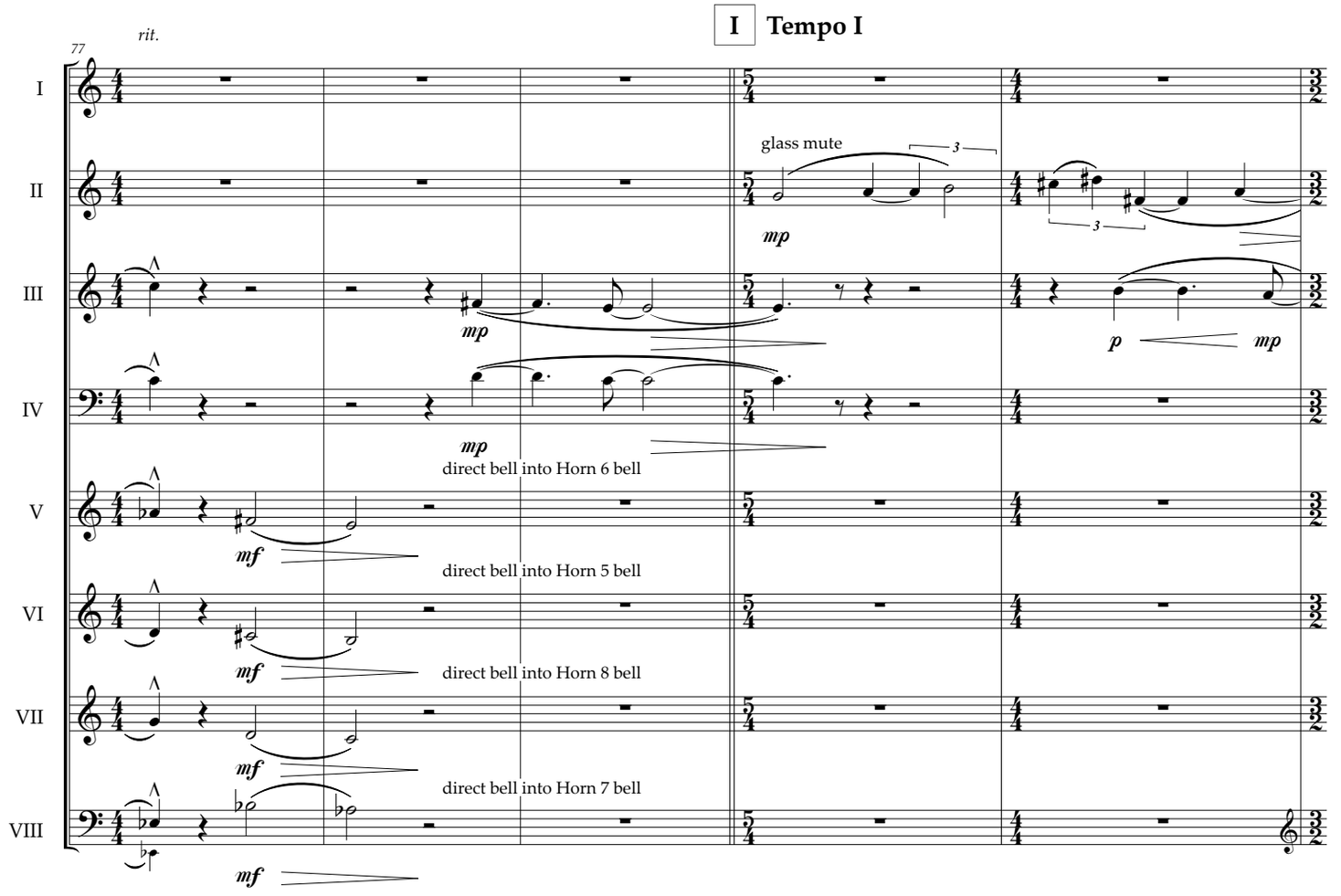

51
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
glass mute
straight mute
straight mute
straight mute
direct bell into Horn 6 bell
direct bell into Horn 5 bell
to open
p
mf
mp
espress.

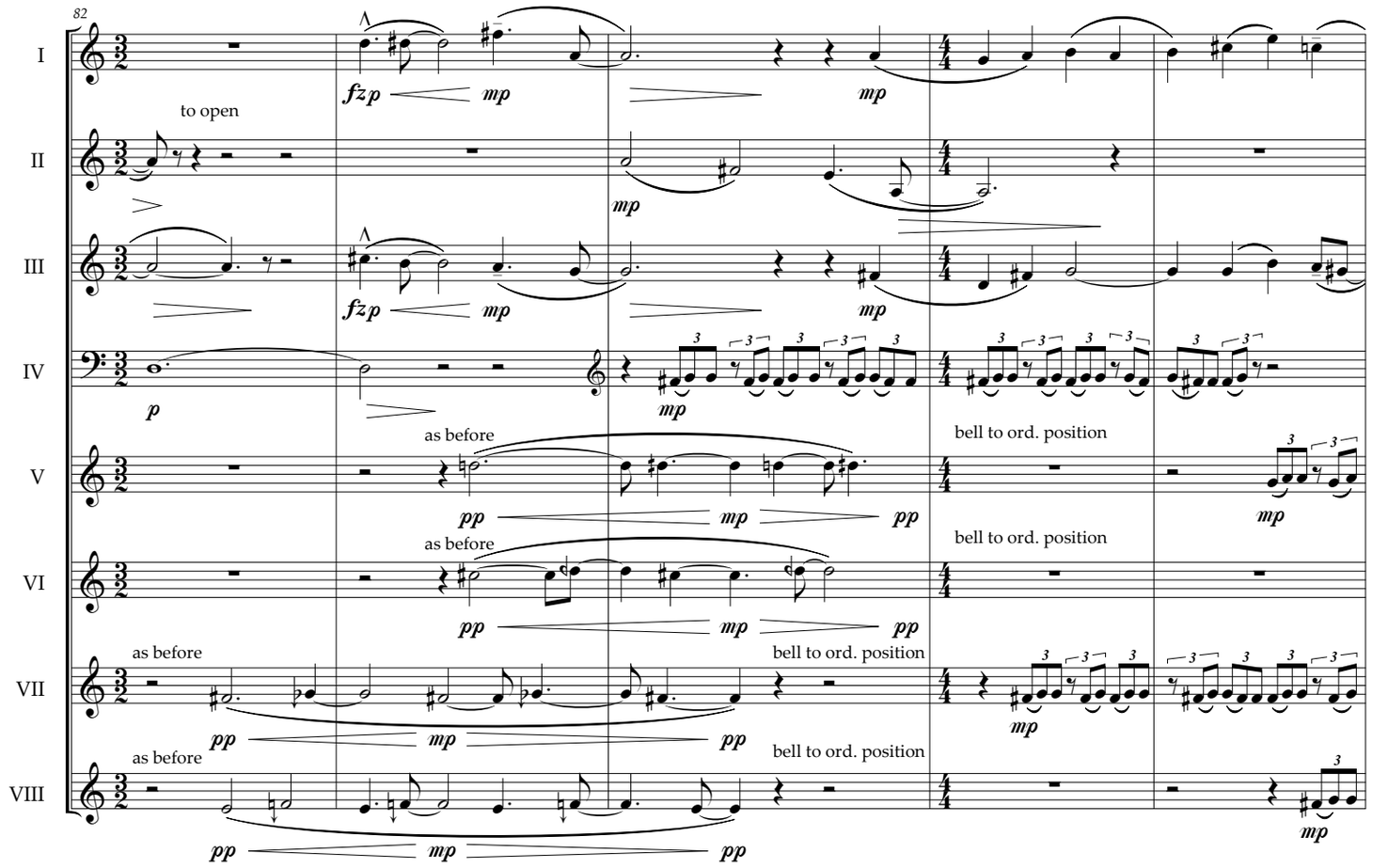

F
56
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
mp
sim.
open
F horn, depress 1st valve halfway
p
mf en dehors
61
f cuivré
poco cresc.
to open
D♭ horn
ord.
(open)
C horn
D horn

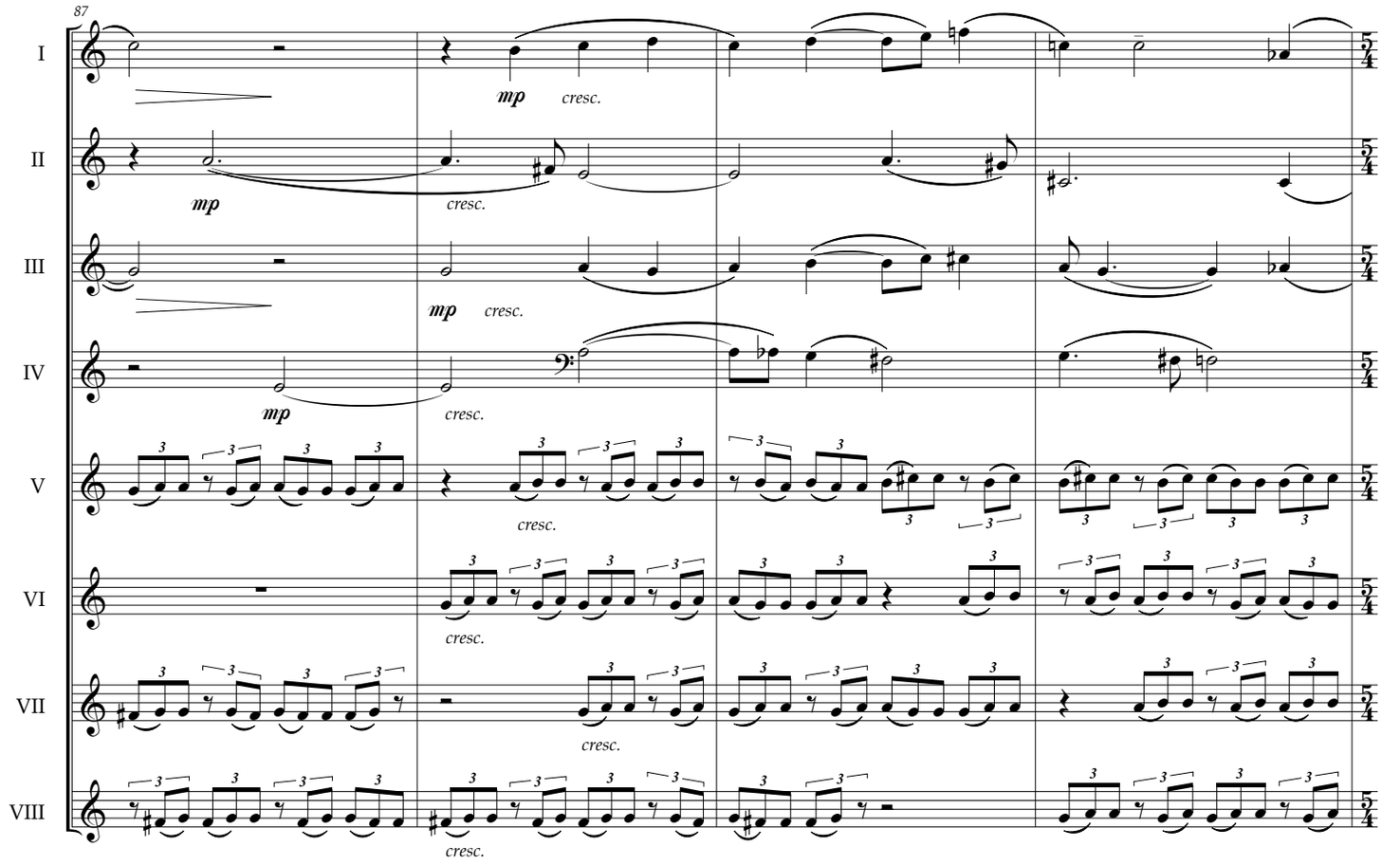

G
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
mp
mf
open
to open
bell to ord. position
bell to ord. position

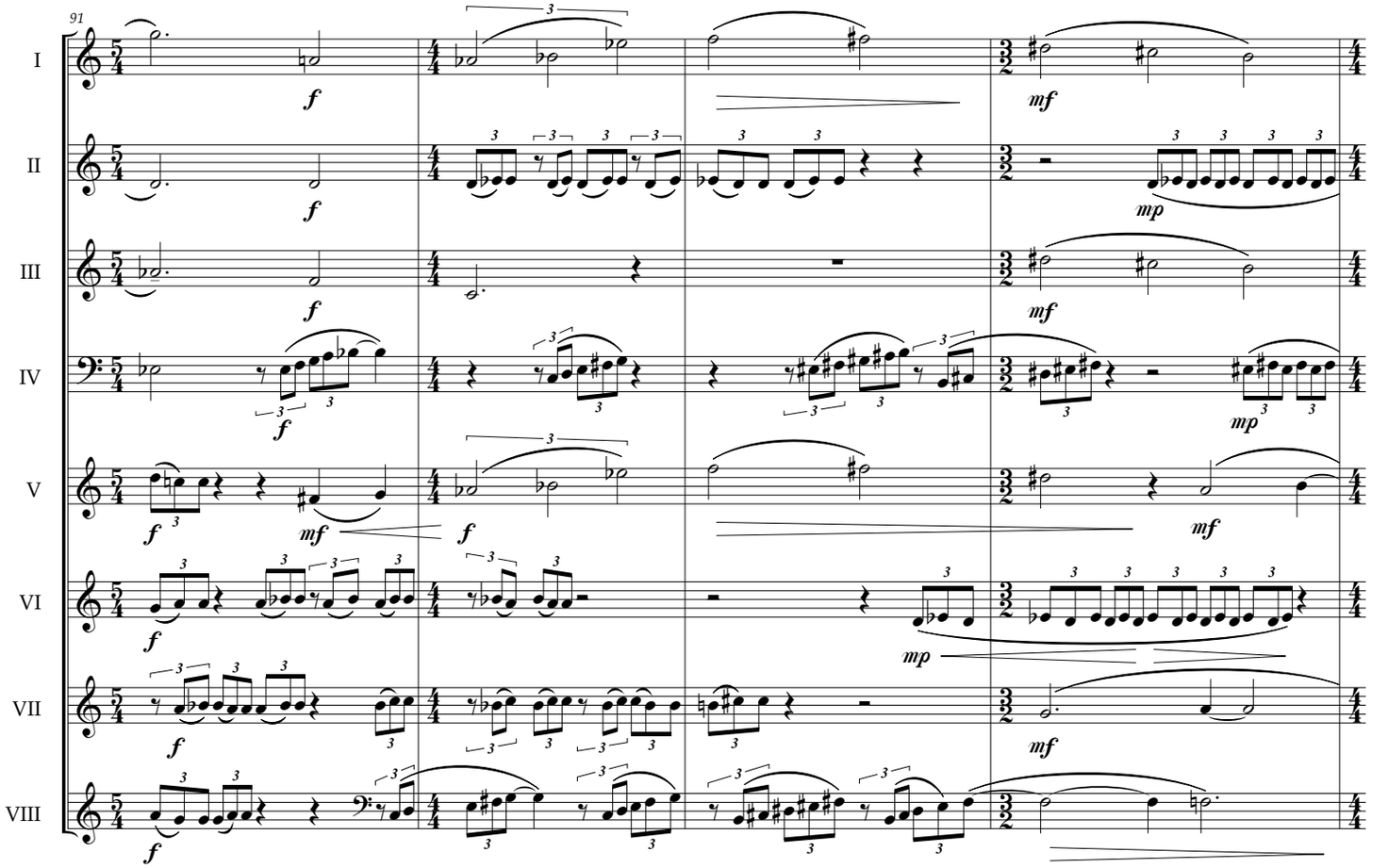

69
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
mp
mf
cresc.

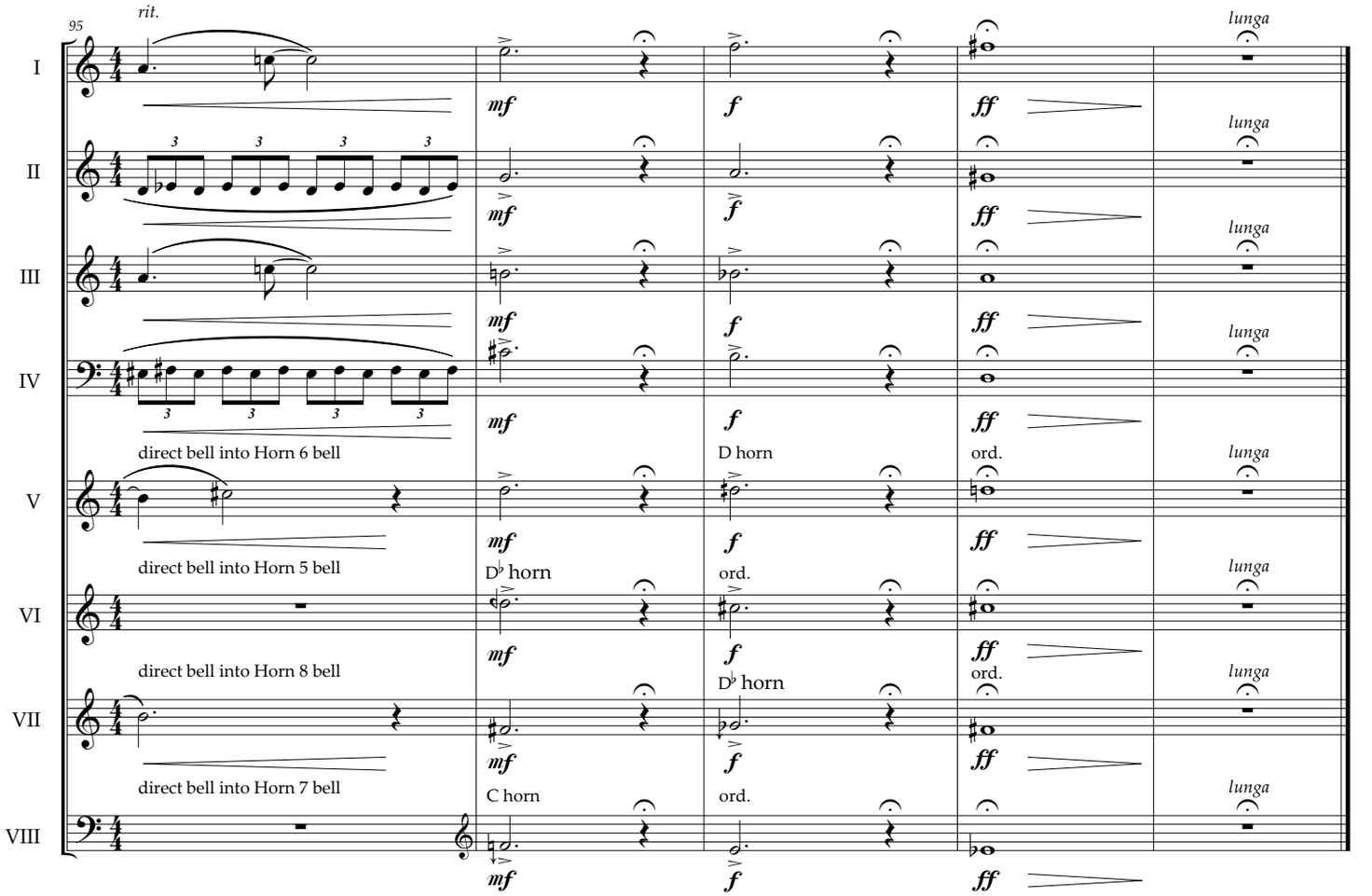

H
73
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
f
fz


I Tempo I
rit.
77
glass mute
3
mp
p
direct bell into Horn 6 bell
direct bell into Horn 5 bell
direct bell into Horn 8 bell
direct bell into Horn 7 bell
mf


82
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
to open
fzp
mp
p
pp
as before
bell to ord. position


87
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
mp
cresc.





Following the final chords, allow sufficient silence between each chord.