Twenty-Two Pages
for String Quartet

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May 2015

Notation

This work employs a musical notation inspired by the visual language of written poetry. Performance of the work may be considered largely analogous to the reading of poetry. Just as a written poem only implies the speed and tone it might be read in, this score invites significant interpretive involvement from the players. Decisions might be made by the ensemble as a group regarding time and shaping which have been deliberately left open in the score.

- Pages read from top to bottom and left to right. All timing is very loosely proportional.
- Systems played by multiple instruments are indicated by vertical lines connecting staves, as in traditional notation.
- The presence of a staff indicates that a sound is being produced or sustained while the absence of a staff indicates silence. Similarly the amount of vertical and horizontal blank space between two events on a page implies a pause of related length.
- Because the piece asks for page shuffling, the pages must be printed single-sided.
- All pitches are written as fingered.

Chance Operations

With each performance of this work the quartet is asked to perform a set of chance operations to determine certain realization parameters:

Tuning

Tune each instrument flat by a random value between 21 and 111 cents chosen for each instrument.

Page Selection and Order

Randomly select a number between 5 and 10, remove that many randomly selected pages (except Page E), and shuffle the score.

This can be done automatically with this python script, also available at
https://gist.github.com/ajyoon/8c3ba295abb98fc853c084c40a472263

```
import random, string

for i in range(4):
    print("* Player {}: -{} cents".format(i, random.randint(21, 111)))

pages = (random.sample([p for p in string.ascii_uppercase[:22] if p != 'E'],
                       22 - random.randint(5, 10)) + ['E'])

print("Pages: " + ', '.join(random.sample(pages, len(pages))))
```

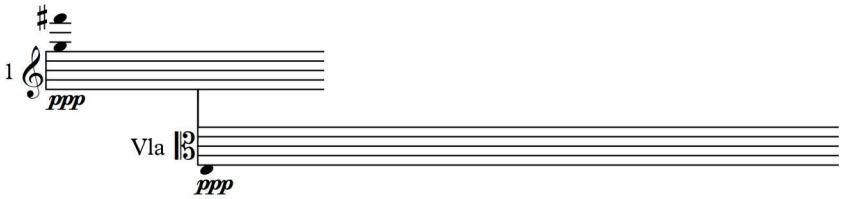
Intonation

Members of the quartet are advised to actively avoid adjusting their intonation to one another. Because each instrument will most likely be tuned differently and all pitches are written as fingered, extremely close microtonal sonorities will often result.

Page E

This page consists of sustained tutti playing throughout with the players staggering their bow changes. The violins and viola begin by playing their open A strings while the cello plays a fingered concert A (one octave higher than the open string). The sounding result here will be four close but distinct pitches as a result of the chance determined tuning of the piece (with the rare exception that the chance-determined tuning results in two or more instruments being in tune with one another). The quartet sustains this for a time and then as a group slides up into unison at A-440Hz. This is sustained for a time before the group together gradually slides up to C#-550Hz, a justly-tuned major third above A-440Hz, sustaining on the C# for some time before cutting off.

A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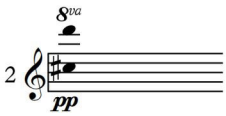
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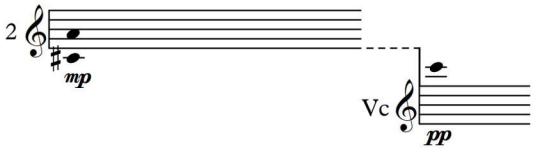
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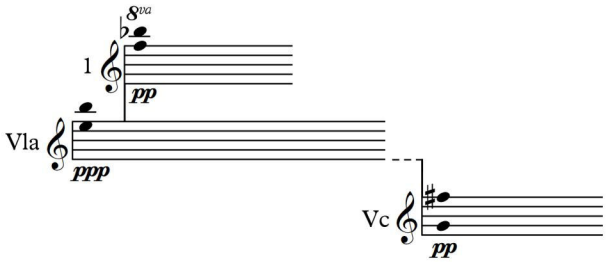
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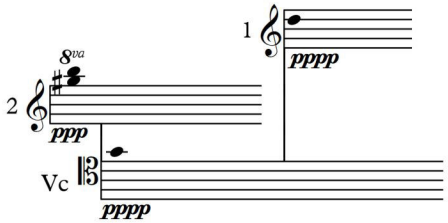
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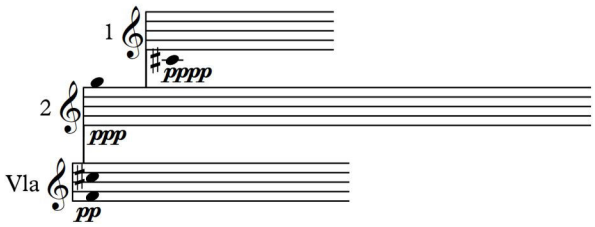
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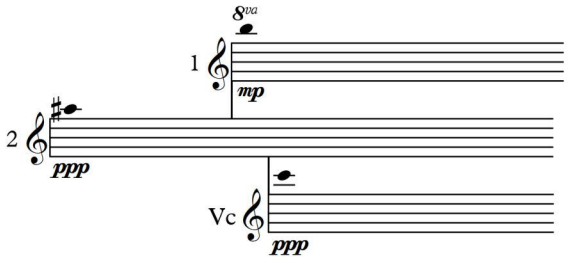
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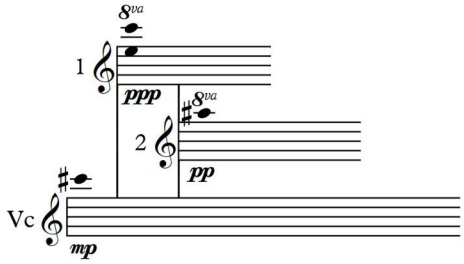
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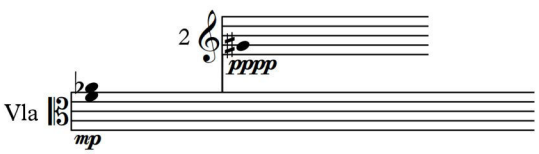
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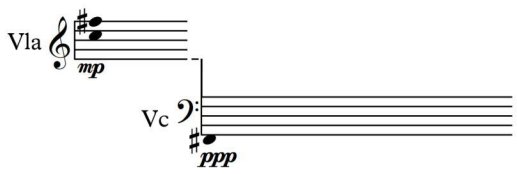
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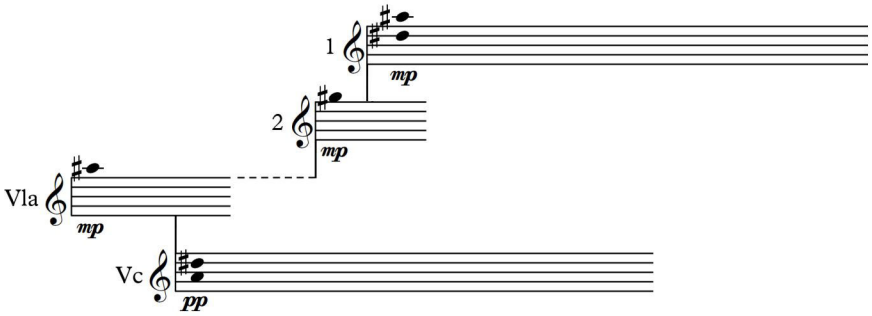
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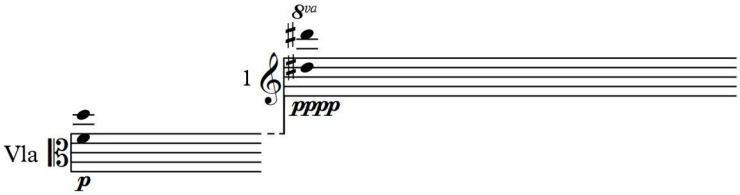
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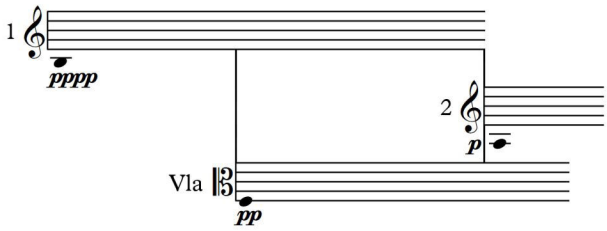
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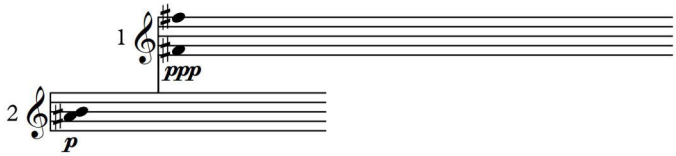
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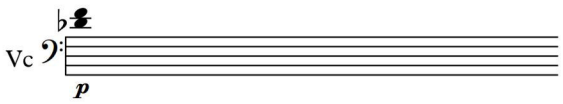

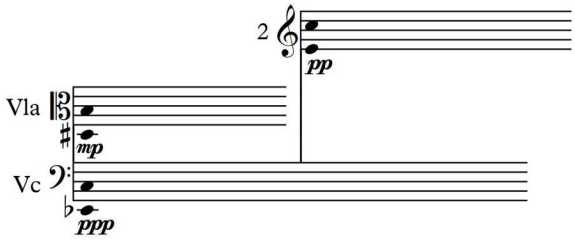

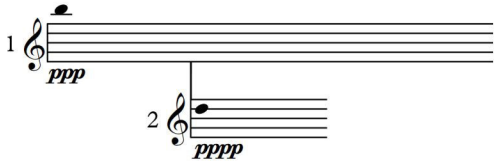

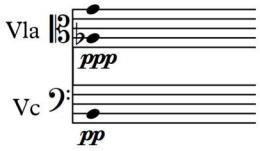

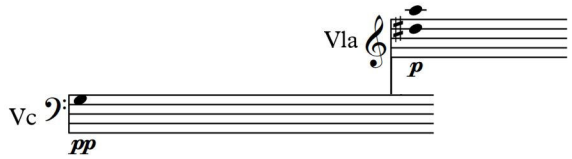

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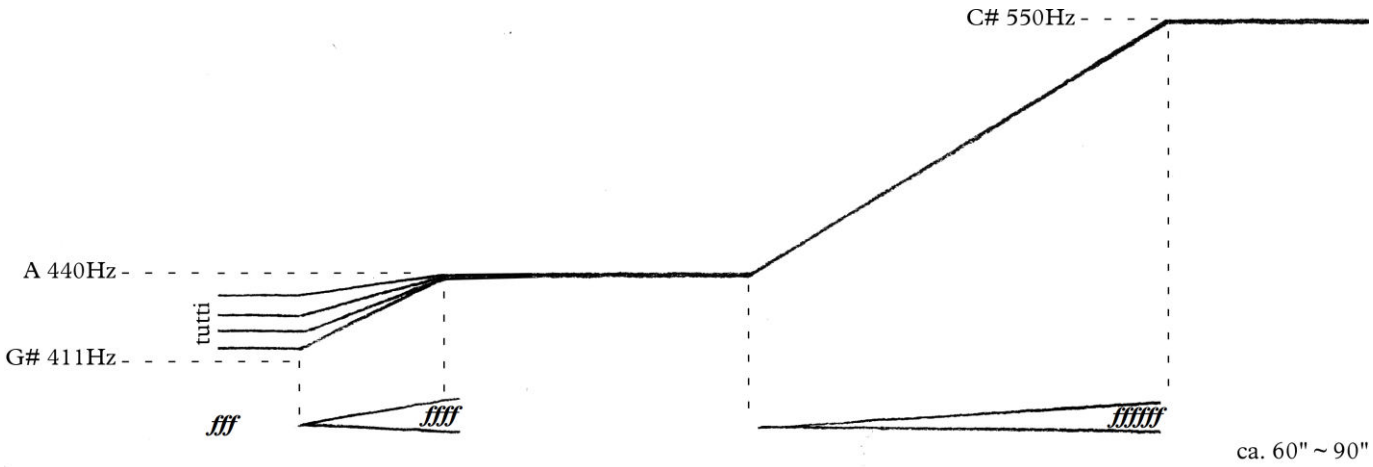

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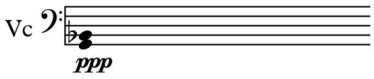

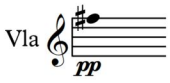

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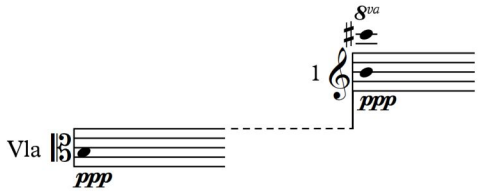
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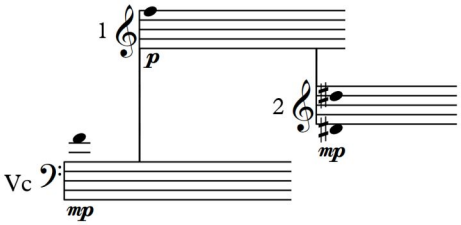
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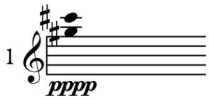
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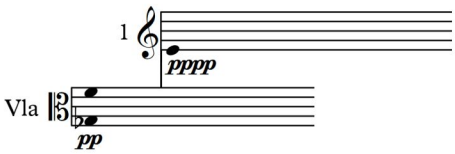
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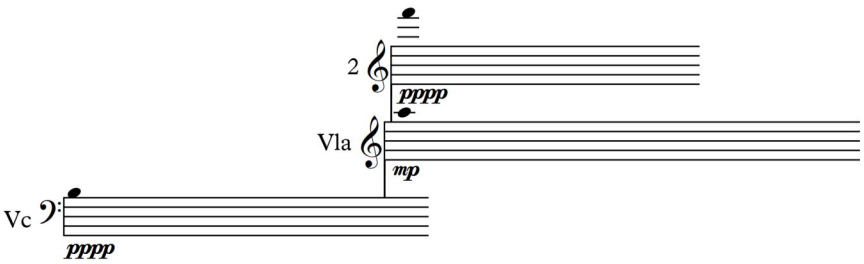

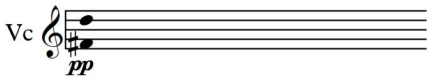

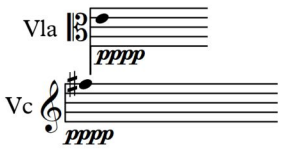

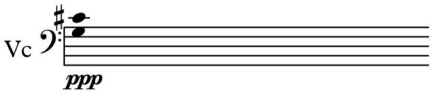

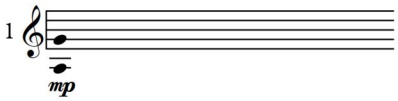

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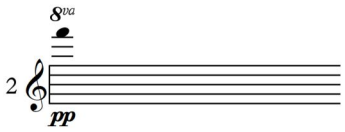

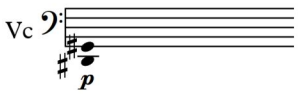

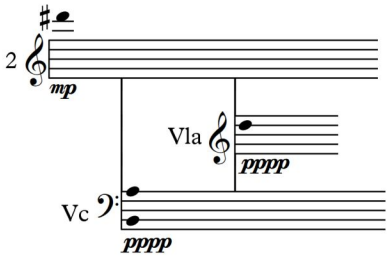

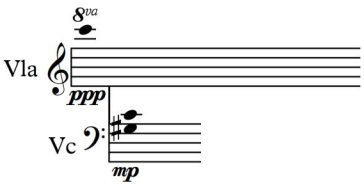

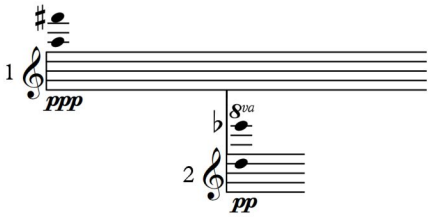

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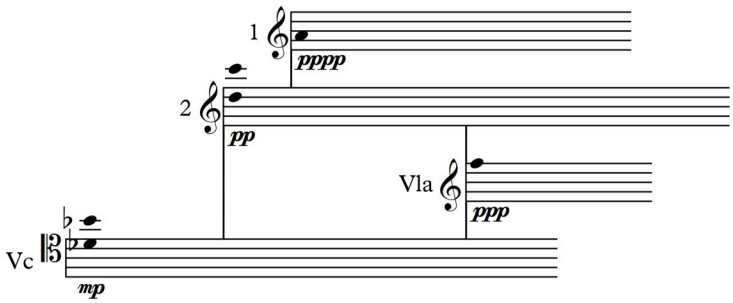

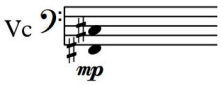

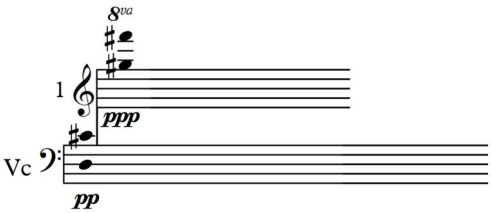

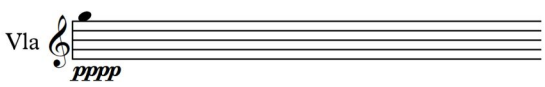

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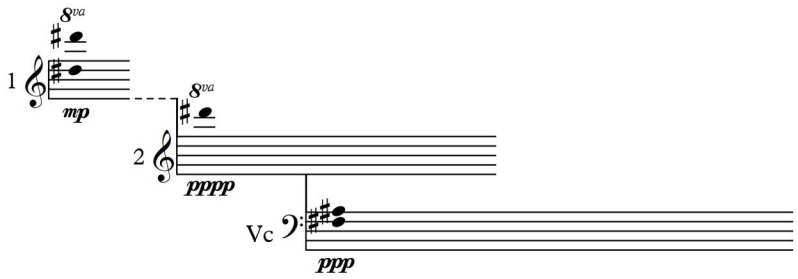

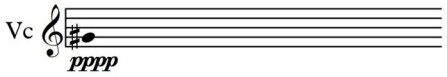

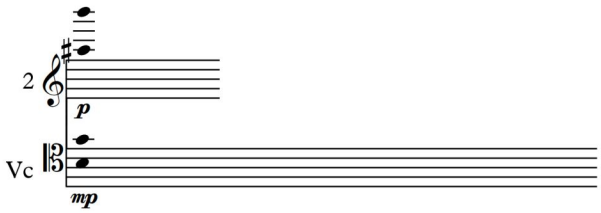

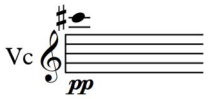

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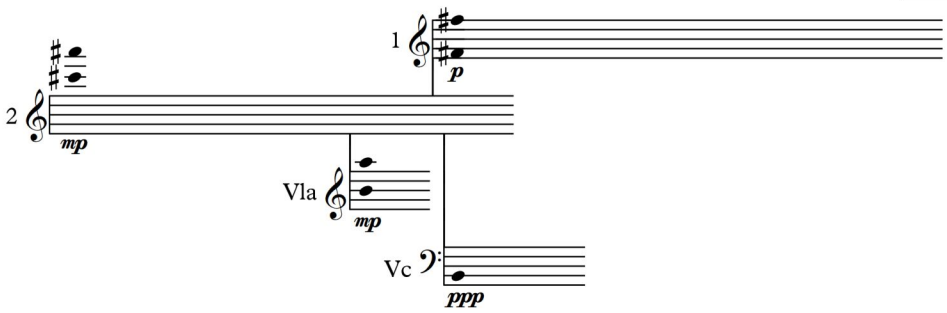

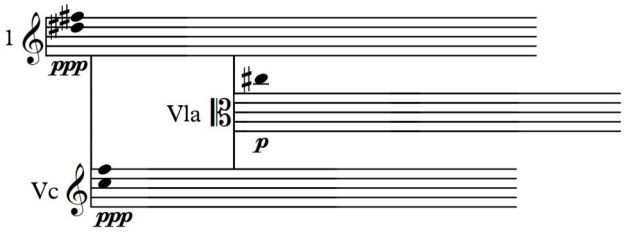

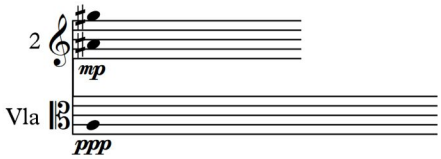

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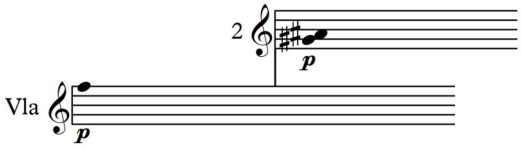

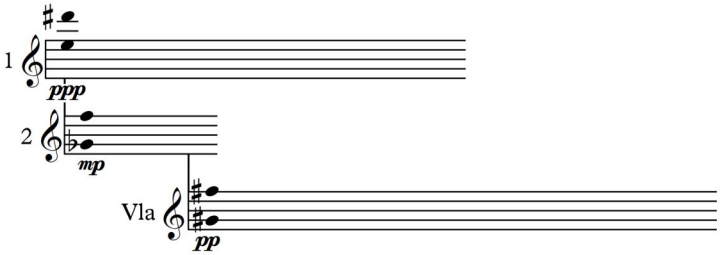

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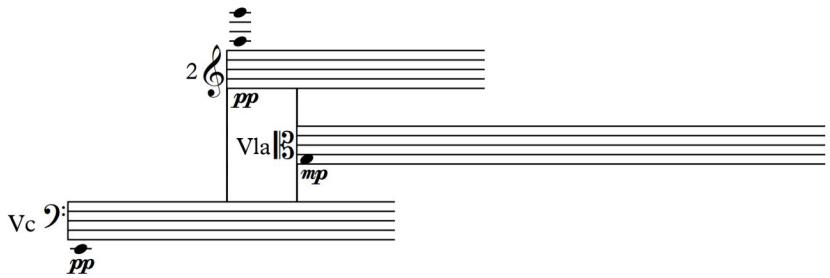

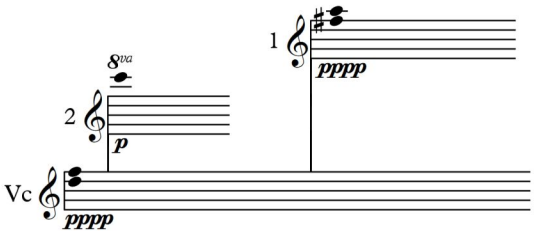

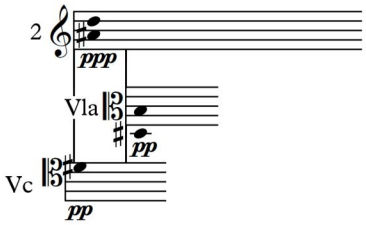

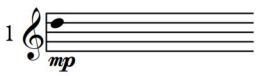

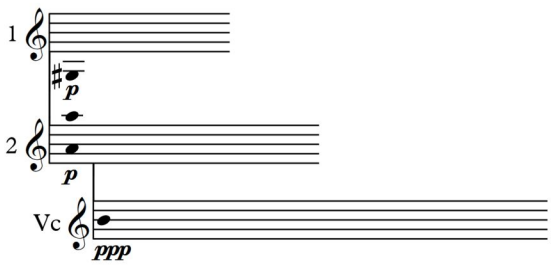

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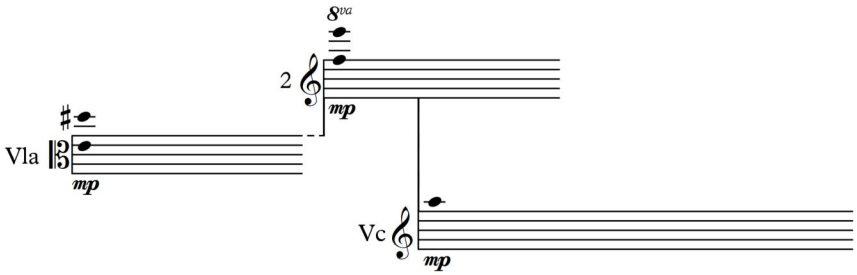

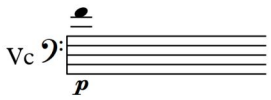

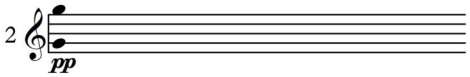

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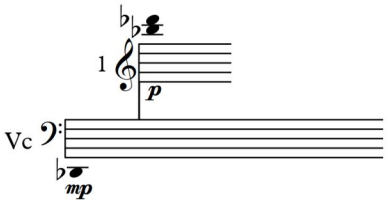

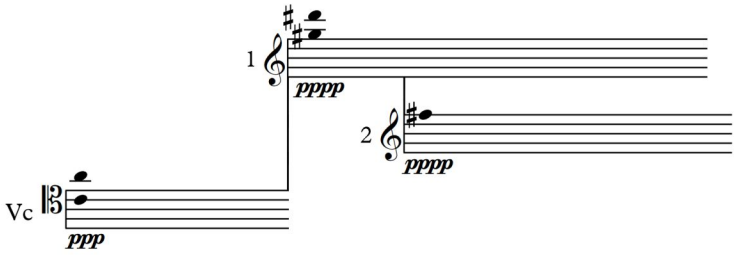

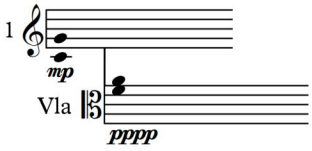

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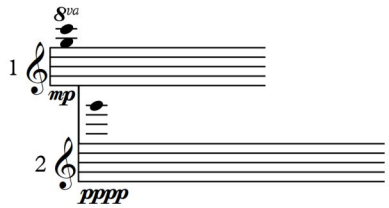

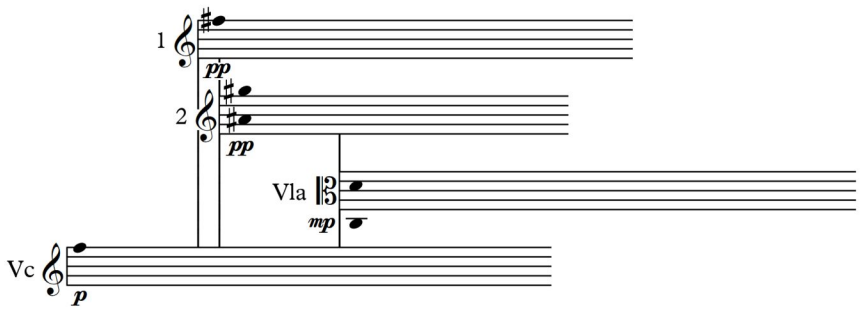

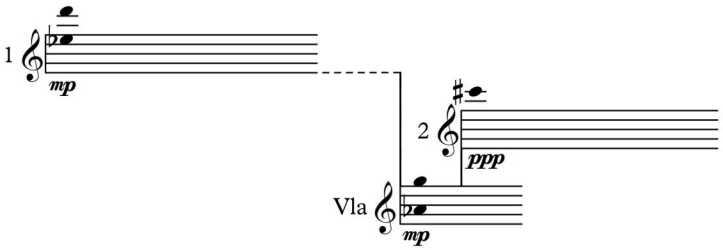

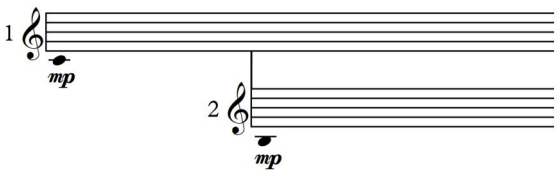

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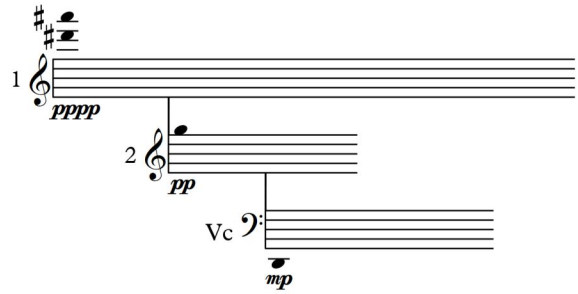
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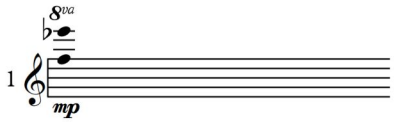
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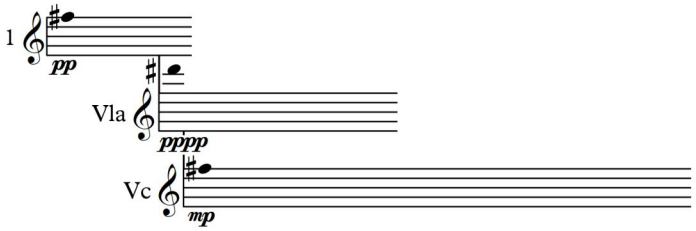
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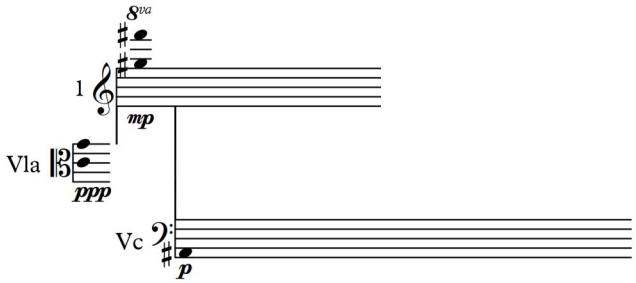
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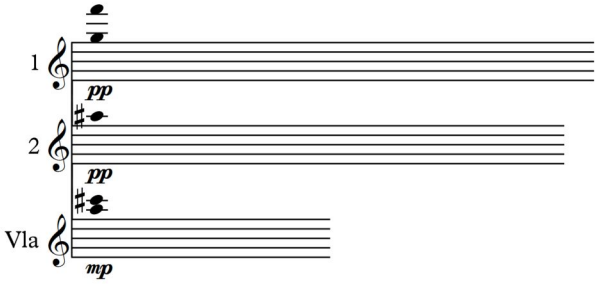
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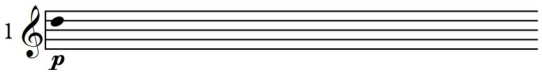
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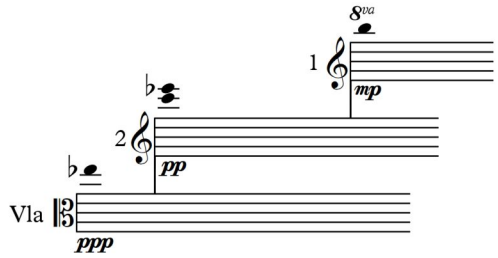
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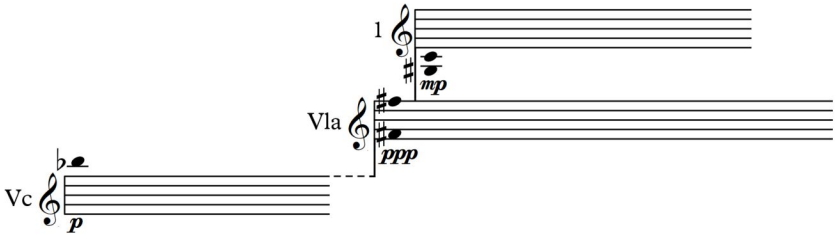
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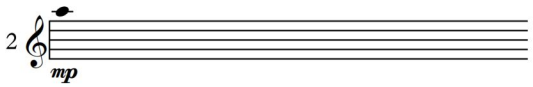
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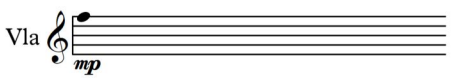
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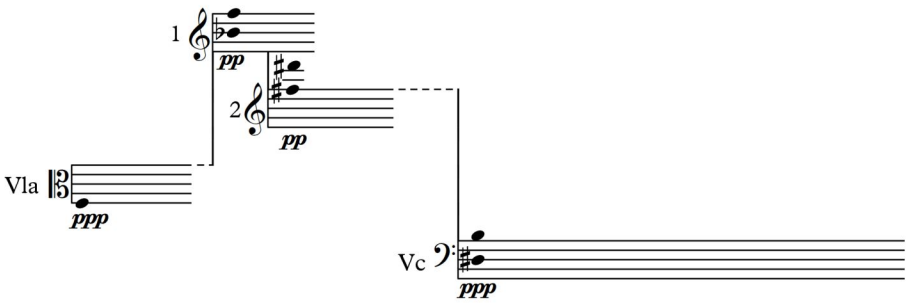
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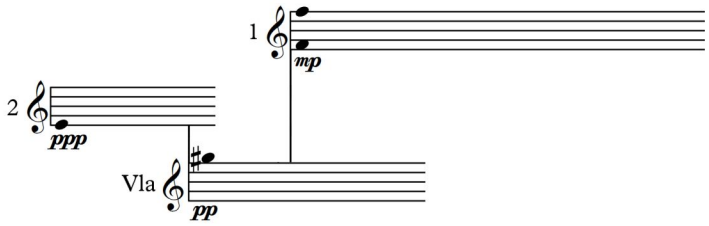

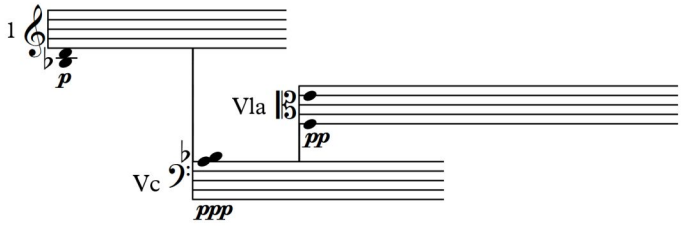

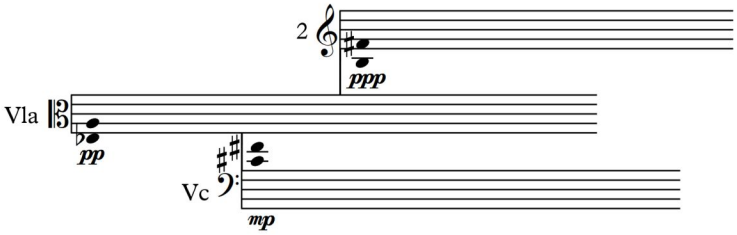

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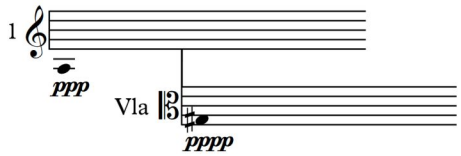
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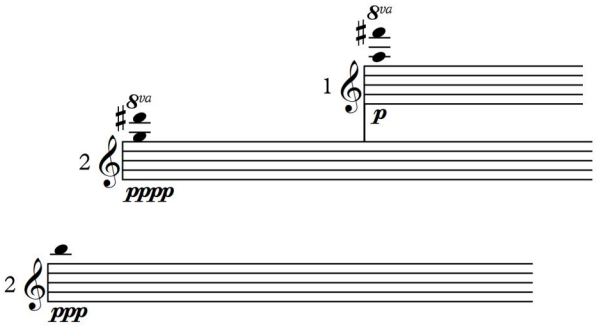
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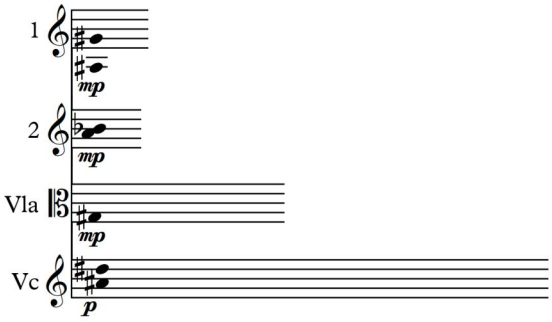
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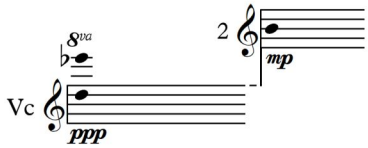
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