Commissioned by ~nois Saxophone Quartet with support from the Serge Koussevitzky Music Foundation in the Library of Congress

HANS THOMALLA

Saxophone Quartet

(2024)

Transposed Score

Edition Juliane Klein

Saxophone Quartet

My saxophone quartet explores harmony as a tenuous process. It oscillates between the instruments' objets trouvés on the one hand – the multiphonics coaxed out of the horns through odd fingerings and gentle embouchure adjustments – and remnants of tonal chord progressions on the other. During its course it becomes increasingly assertive and self-assured before drifting again into a landscape of ambiguity, while at the same time never entirely losing its playfulness. The first movement is in this sense a true Choralvorspiel, a choral prelude, hovering softly between structural exploration and improvisatory play, to which the choral of the second movement seems almost like an afterthought.

The quartet could not have been written without the support of the incredibly skillful and open-minded musicians of ~nois, who in many workshops explored with me the fragile nuances of the work's harmonic and sonorous journey.

Saxophonquartett

Mein Saxophonquartett erforscht Harmonie als instabilen Prozess. Es oszilliert zwischen den Objets Trouvés der Instrumente einerseits – den Mehrklänge, die dem Saxophon durch eigensinnige Fingersätze und behutsame Artikulation entlockt werden – und Überresten tonaler Akkordfolgen andererseits. In Verlauf des Stückes gewinnt diese Harmonik immer konturierter, bevor sie wieder in einer Szenerie der Unschärfe verschwindet, ohne dabei jedoch seine Verspieltheit ganz zu verlieren. Der erste Satz ist in diesem Sinne ein echtes Choralvorspiel, das sich leicht zwischen struktureller Erkundung und improvisatorischem Spiel bewegt, zu dem der Choral des zweiten Satzes fast wie ein Nachtrag erscheint.

Das Quartett wäre nicht ohne die Unterstützung der unglaublich talentierten und aufgeschlossenen Musiker von ~nois entstanden, die in vielen Workshops die fragilen Nuancen der harmonischen und klanglichen Reise des Werks mit mir erkundet haben.

All techniques (fingerings, multiphonic order numbers etc.) refer to:
Marcus Weiss and Giorgio Netti, "The Techniques of Saxophone Playing"; Kassel 2010

Small losses jammed together so as to gather mass.
Stored generations of filtered quietude.
And some stubbornness. Tangles along the way
The comb-teeth of the mind had to bite through, but for what.

Jenny Xie, Ongoing
(from Eye Level)

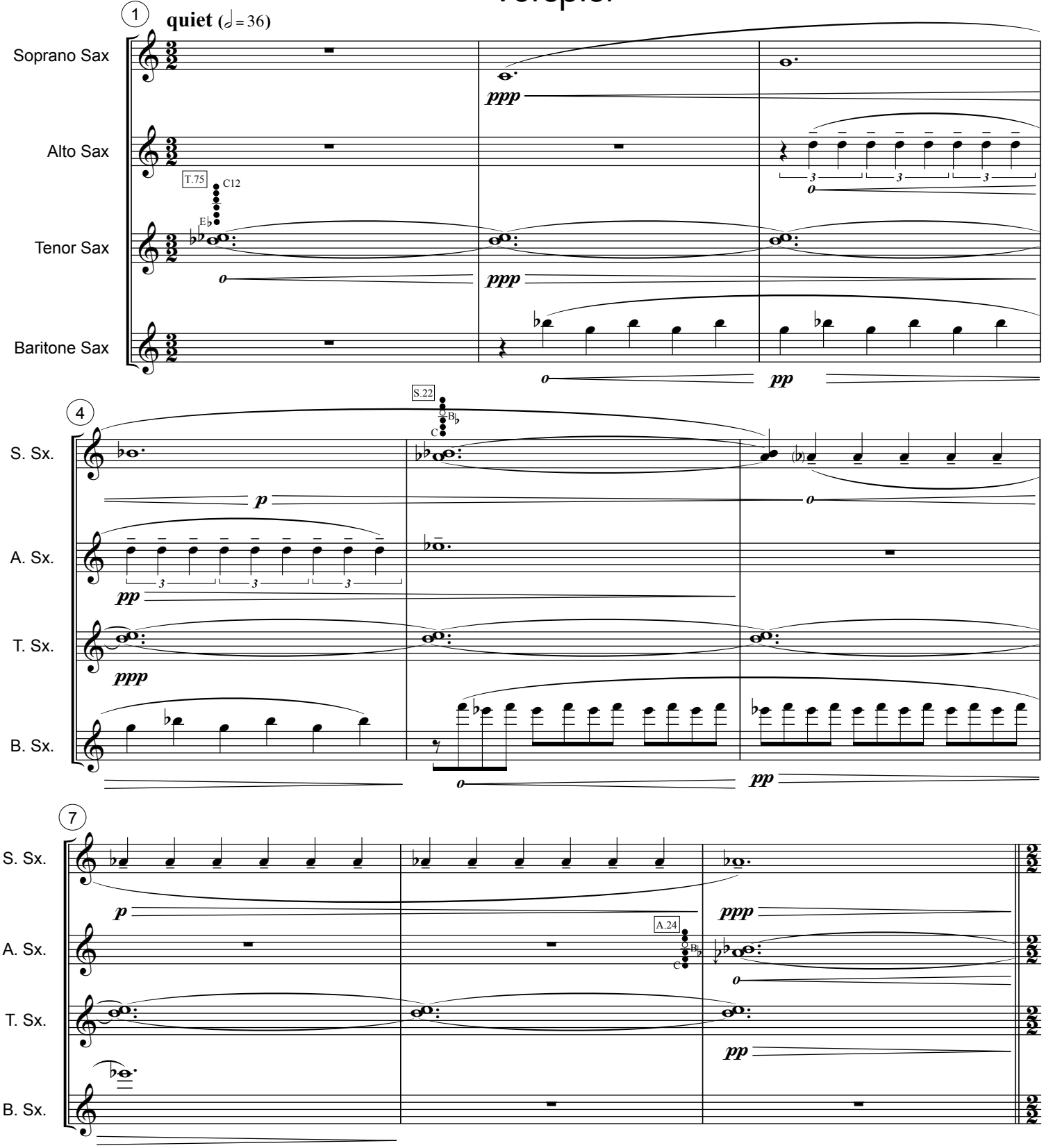
Transposed Score

Saxophone Quartet

Hans Thomalla

I.

Vorspiel



"For The Serge Koussevitzky Music Foundation in the Library of Congress,
and dedicated to the memory of Serge and Natalie Koussevitzky"

EJK 1134

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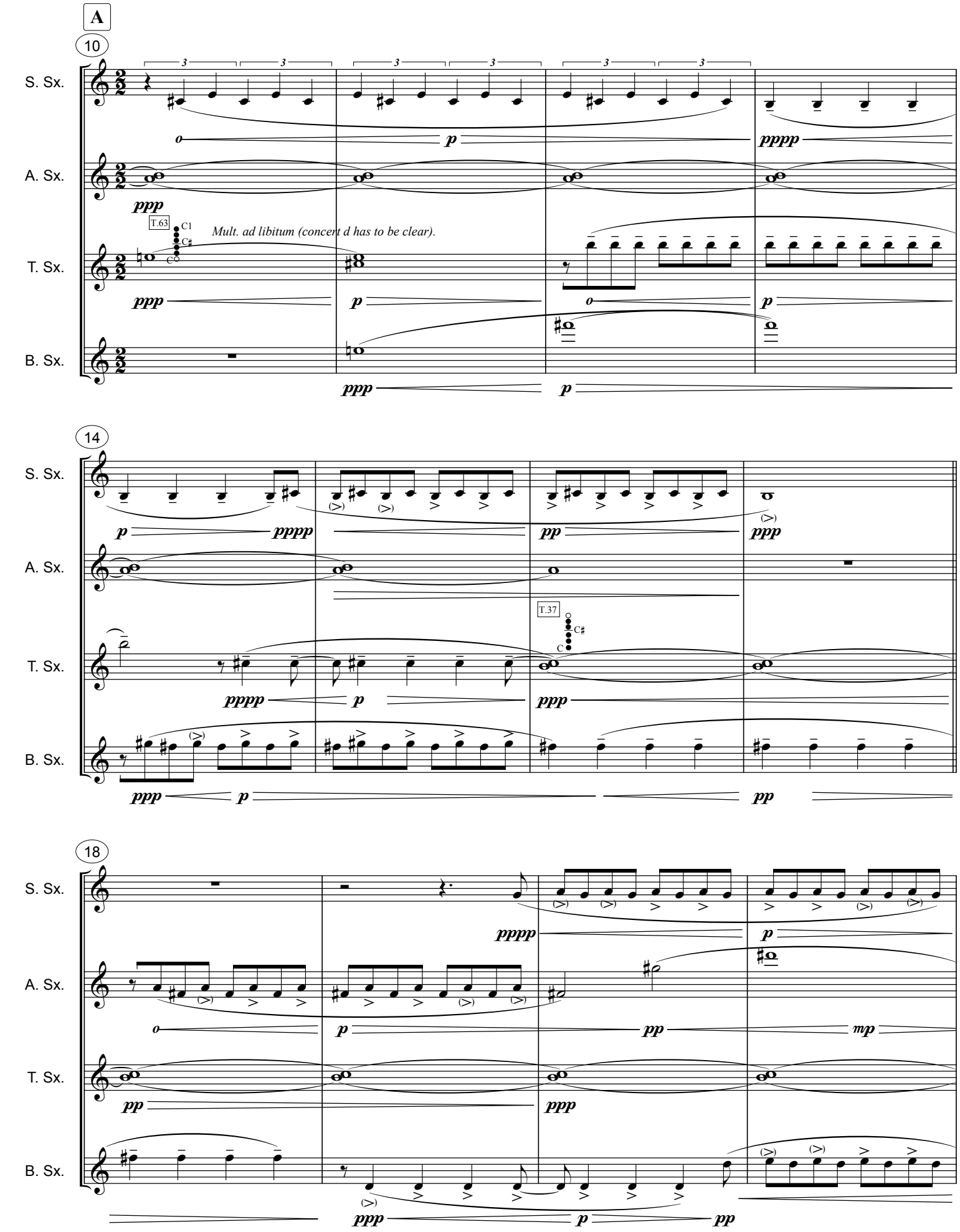
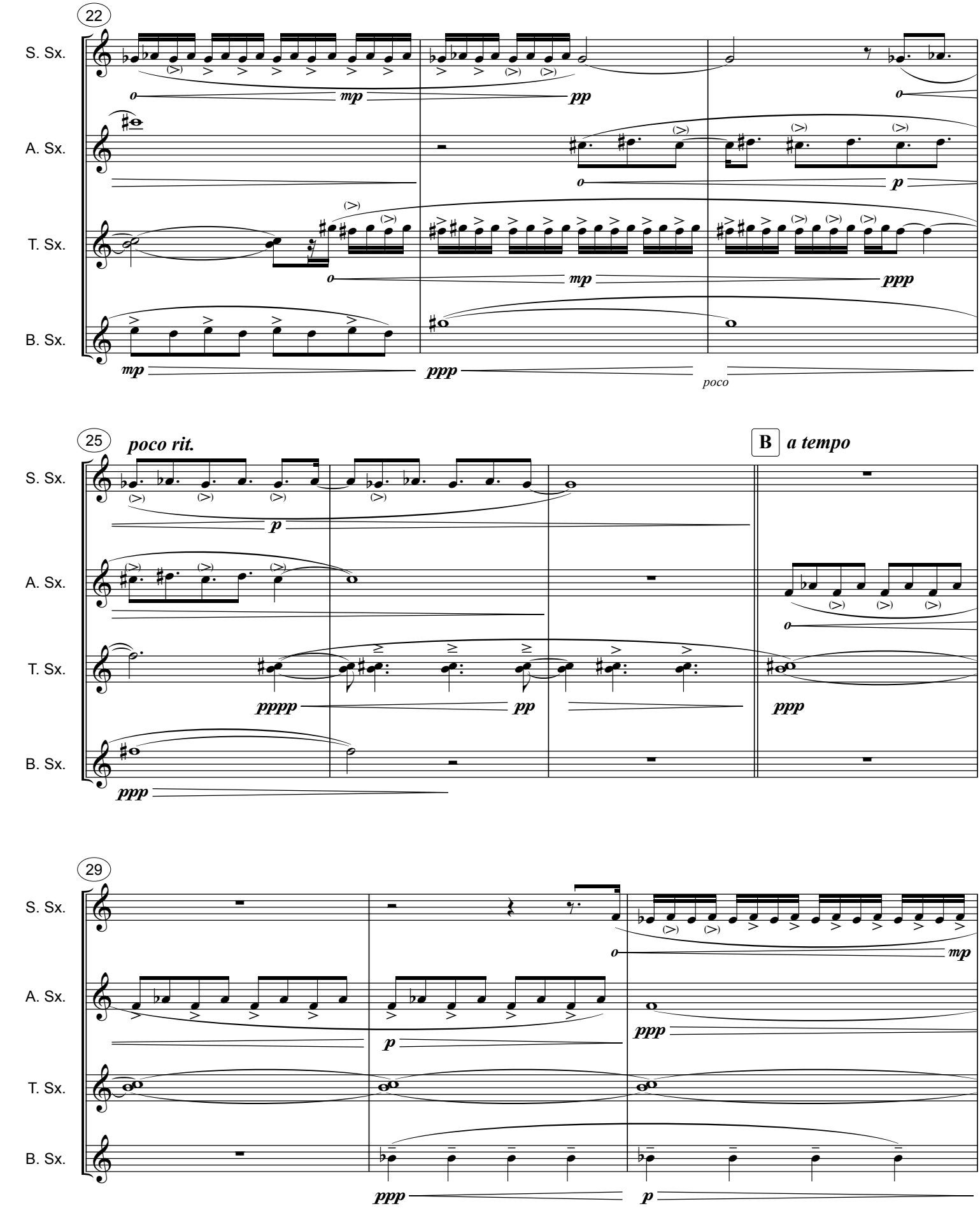
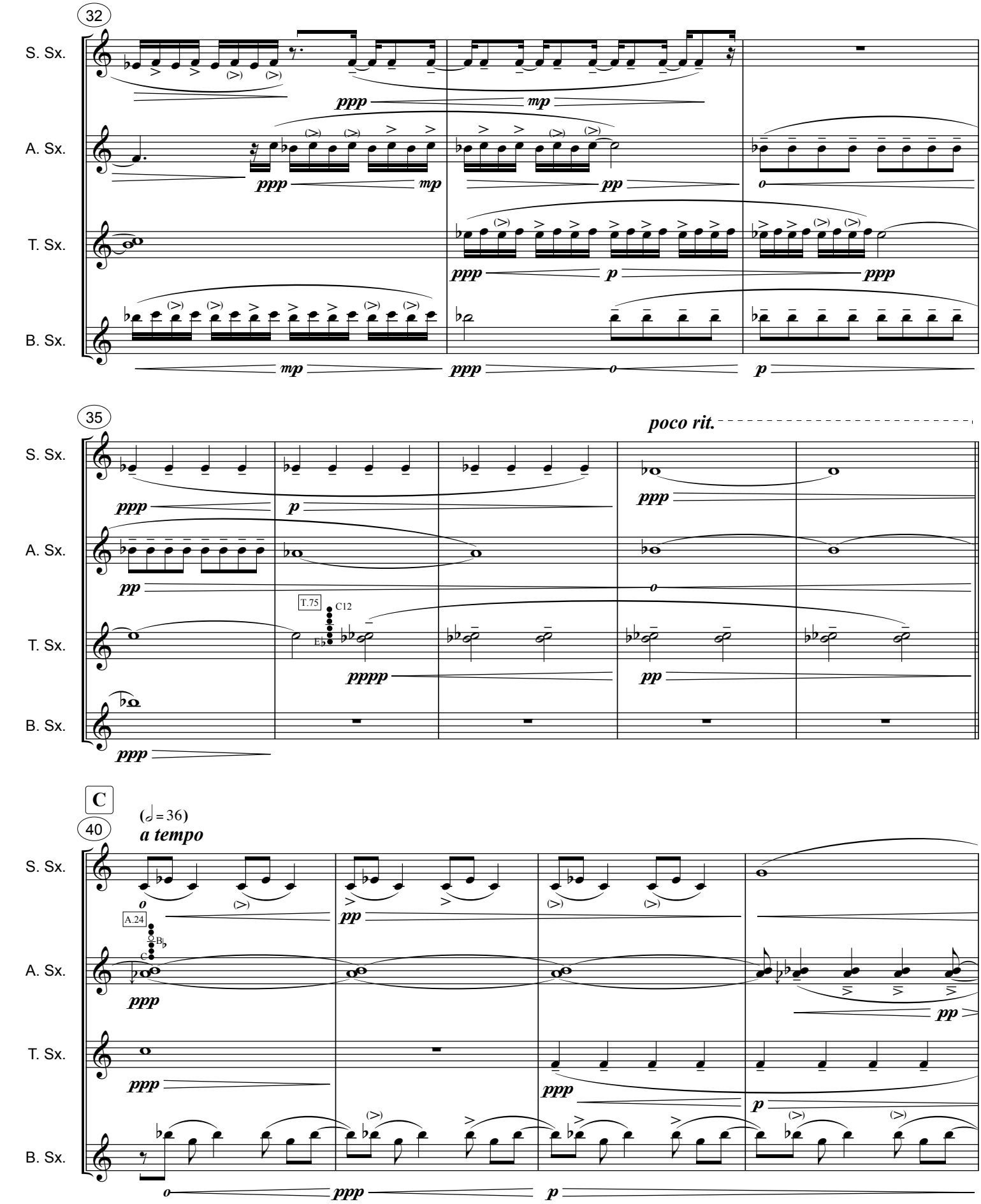
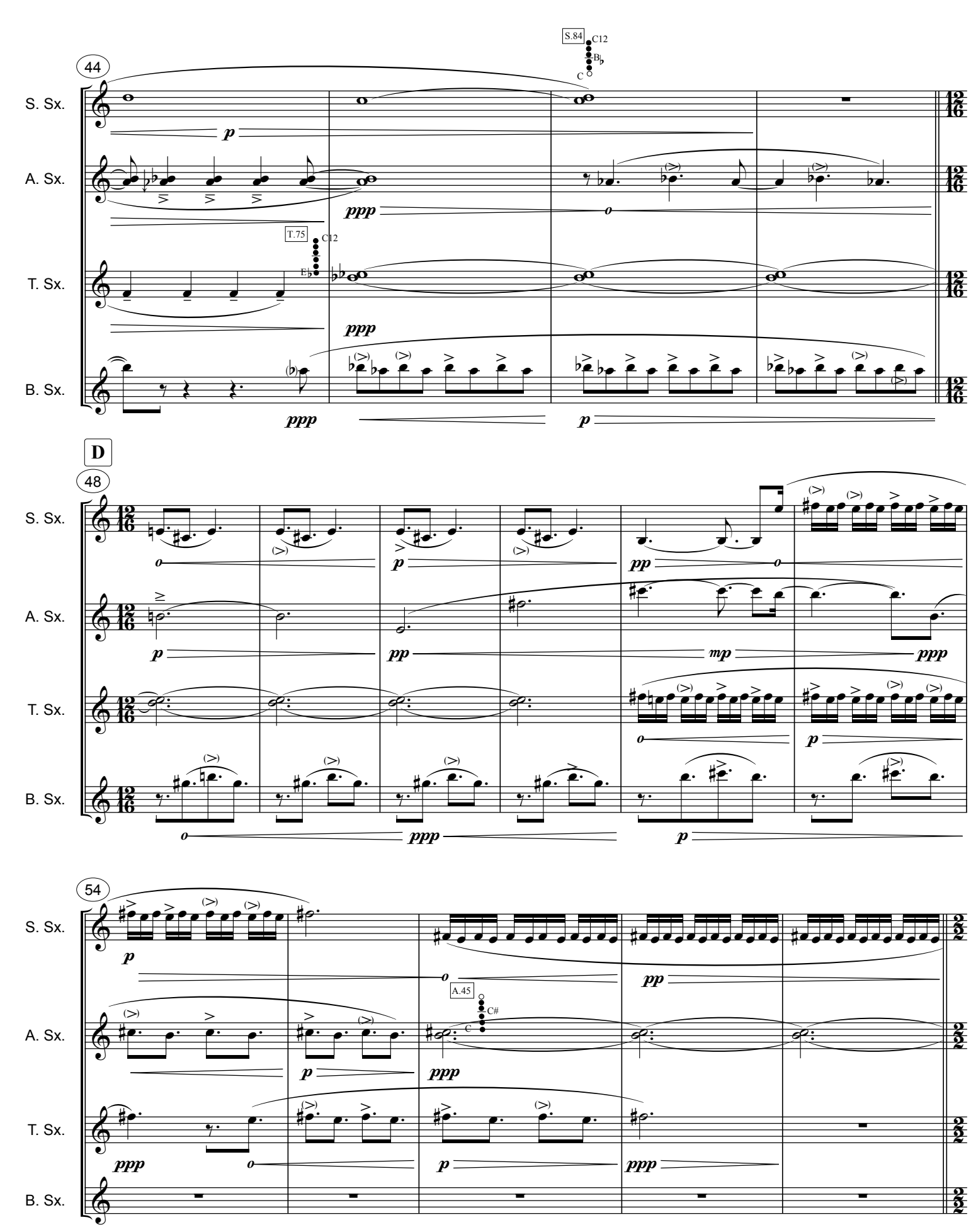
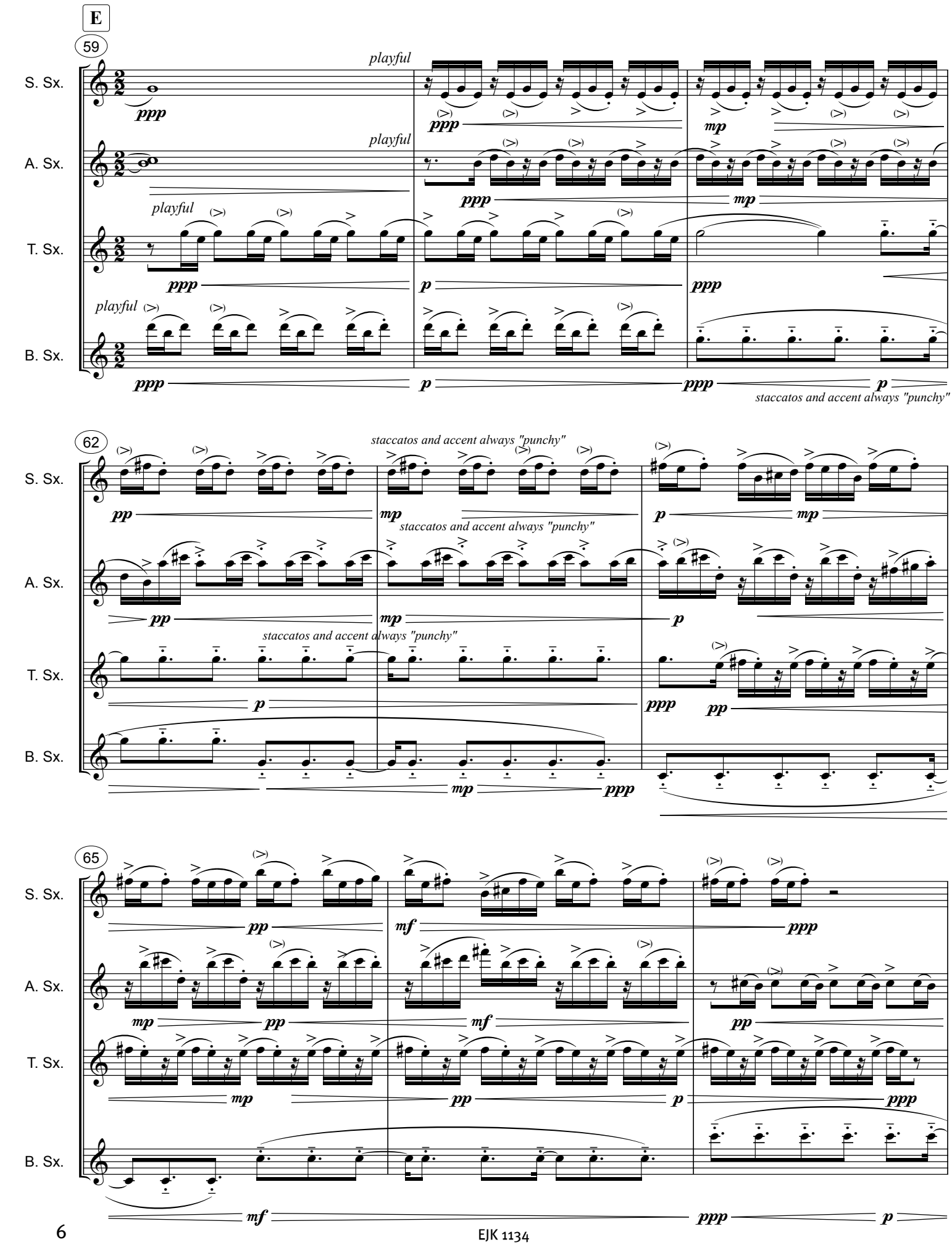
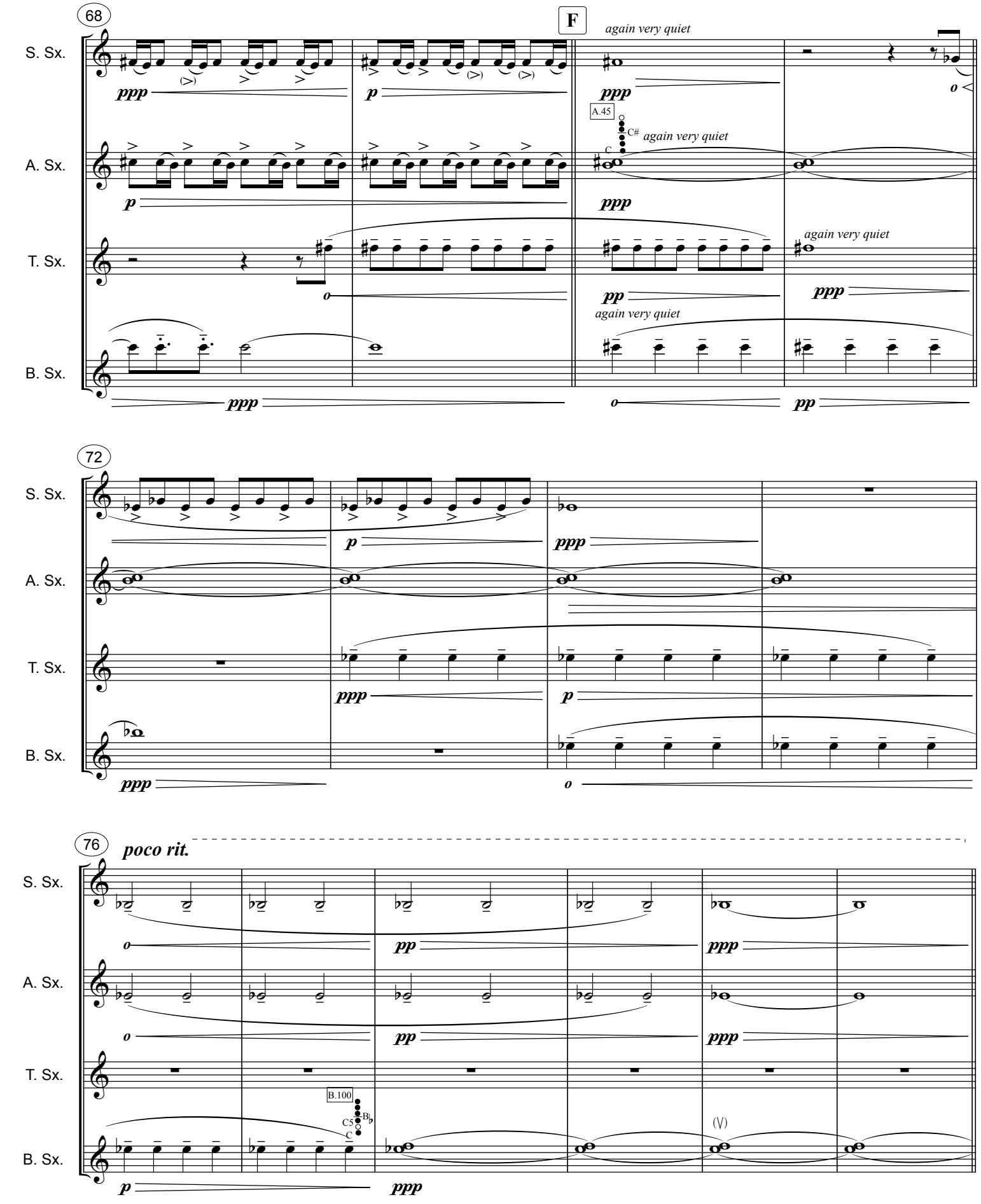

A
10
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
T.63
C1
C♯
Mult. ad libitum (concert d has to be clear).
14
T.37
18

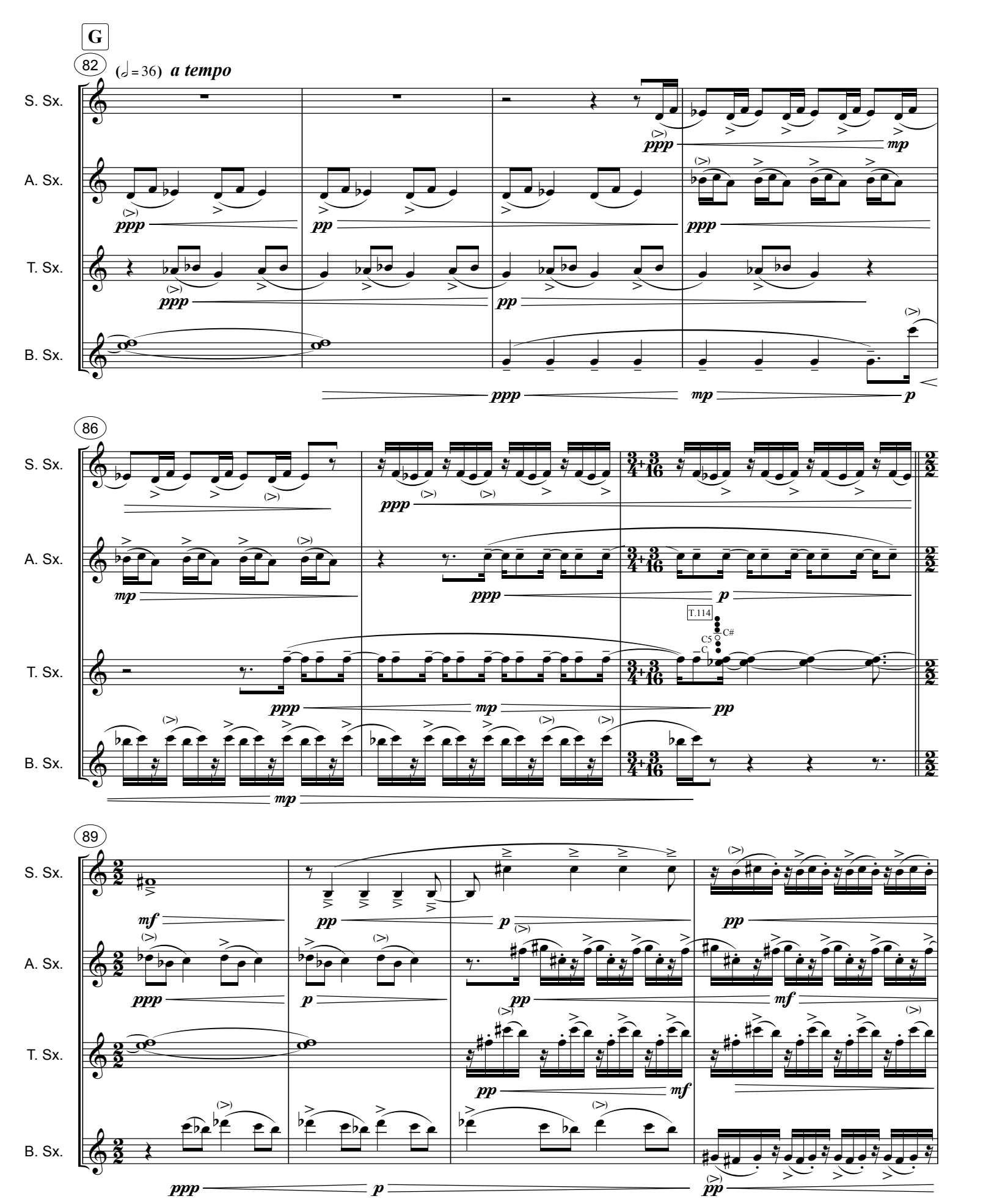

22
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
mp
pp
p
mp
ppp
mp
ppp
poco
25
poco rit.
B
a tempo
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
p
pppp
pp
ppp
ppp
29
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
mp
p
ppp
ppp
p

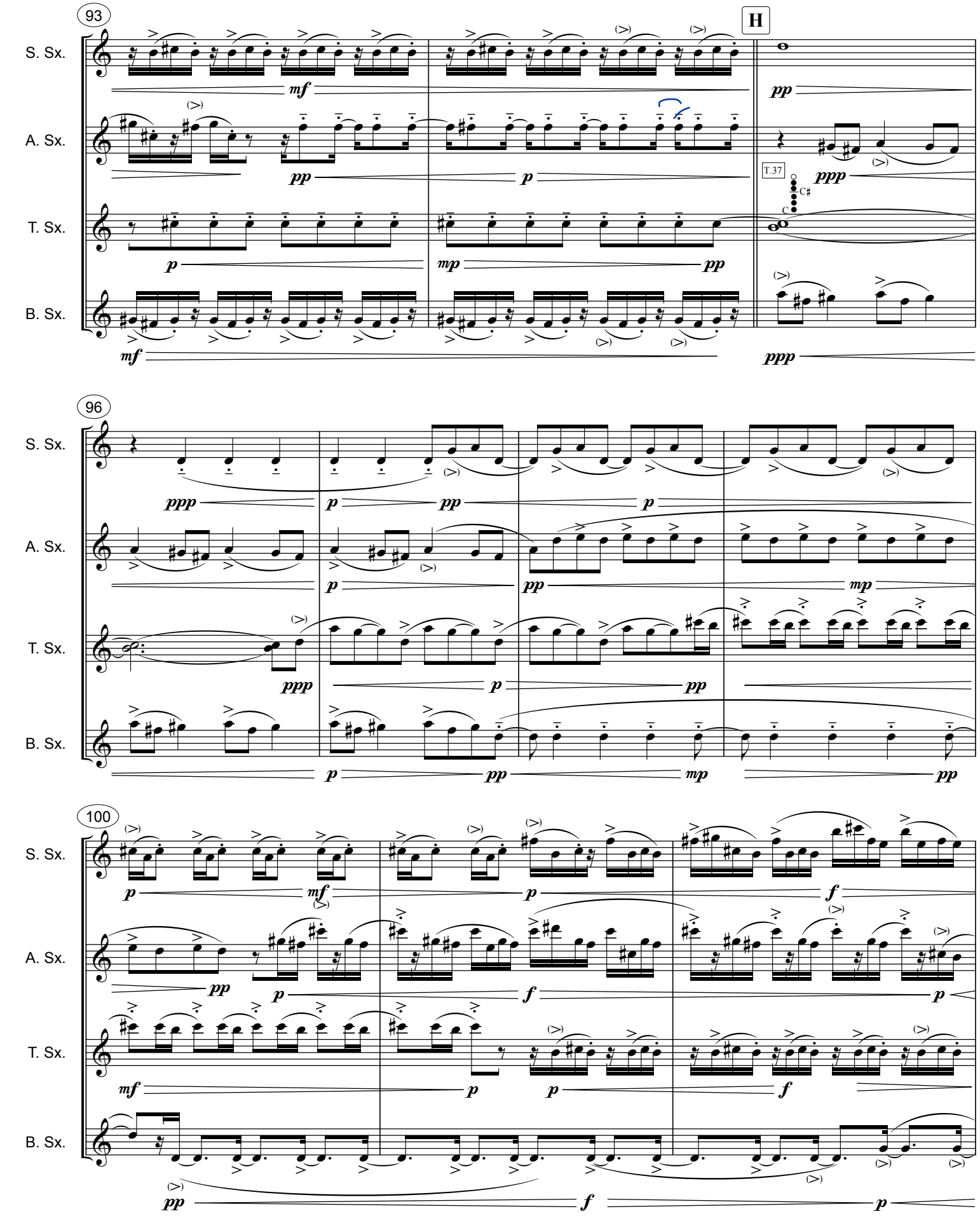

32
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
ppp
mp
pp
p
35
poco rit.
T.75
C12
pppp
C
(𝅗𝅥 = 36)
a tempo
40
A.24

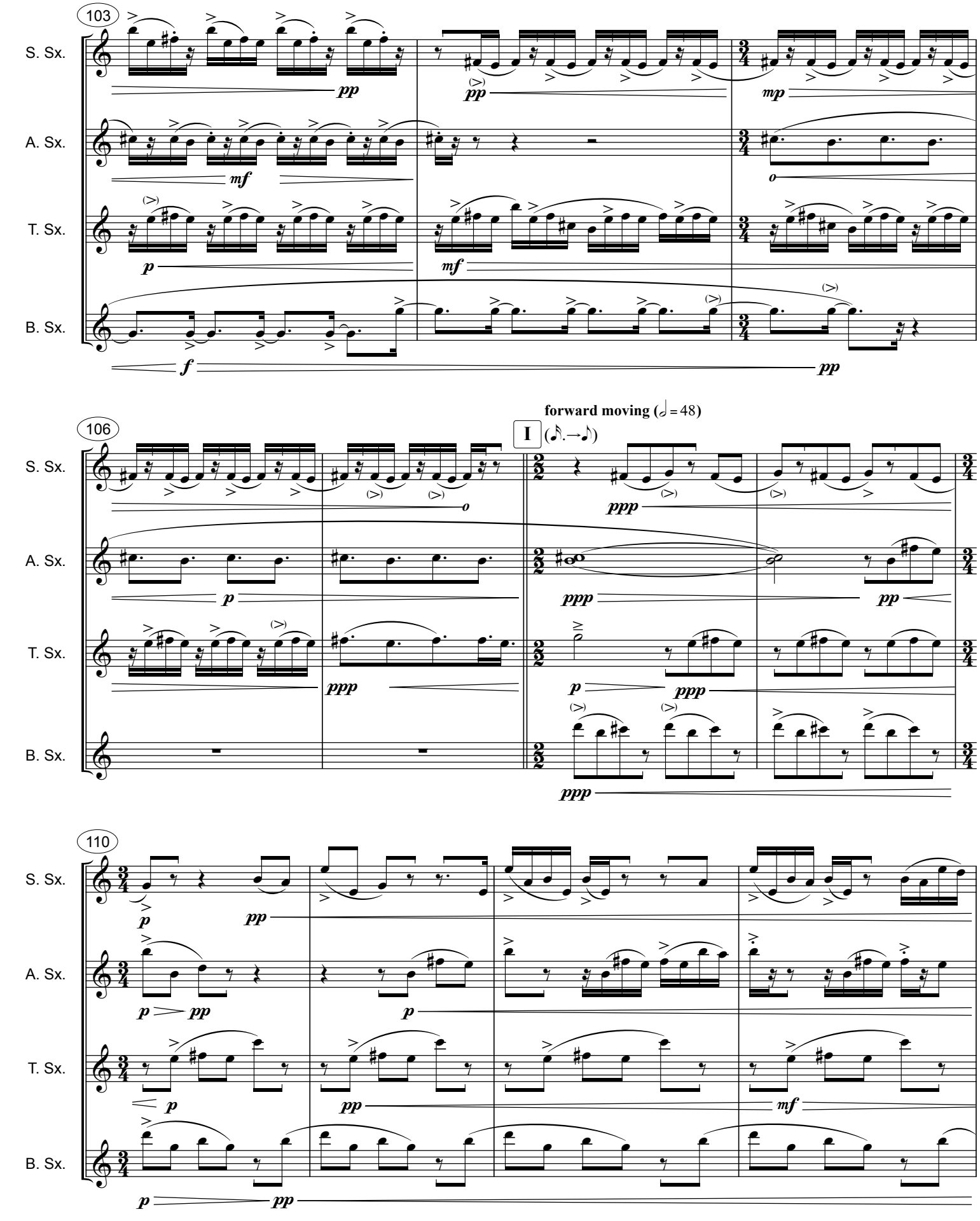

44
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
S.84
C12
T.75
C12
D
48
54
A.45
C#

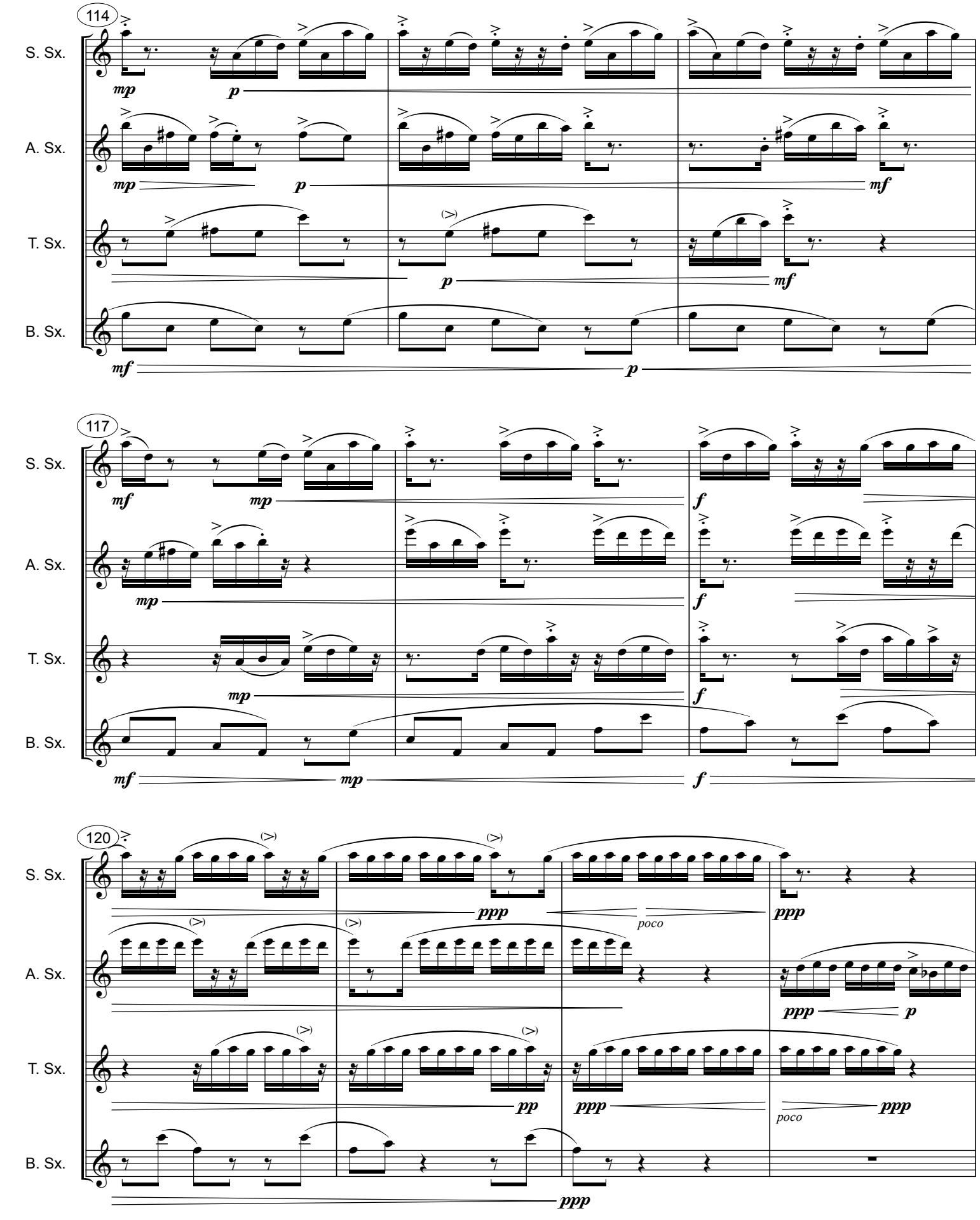

E
59
playful
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
ppp
mp
p
staccatos and accent always "punchy"
62
pp
mf
65
mf

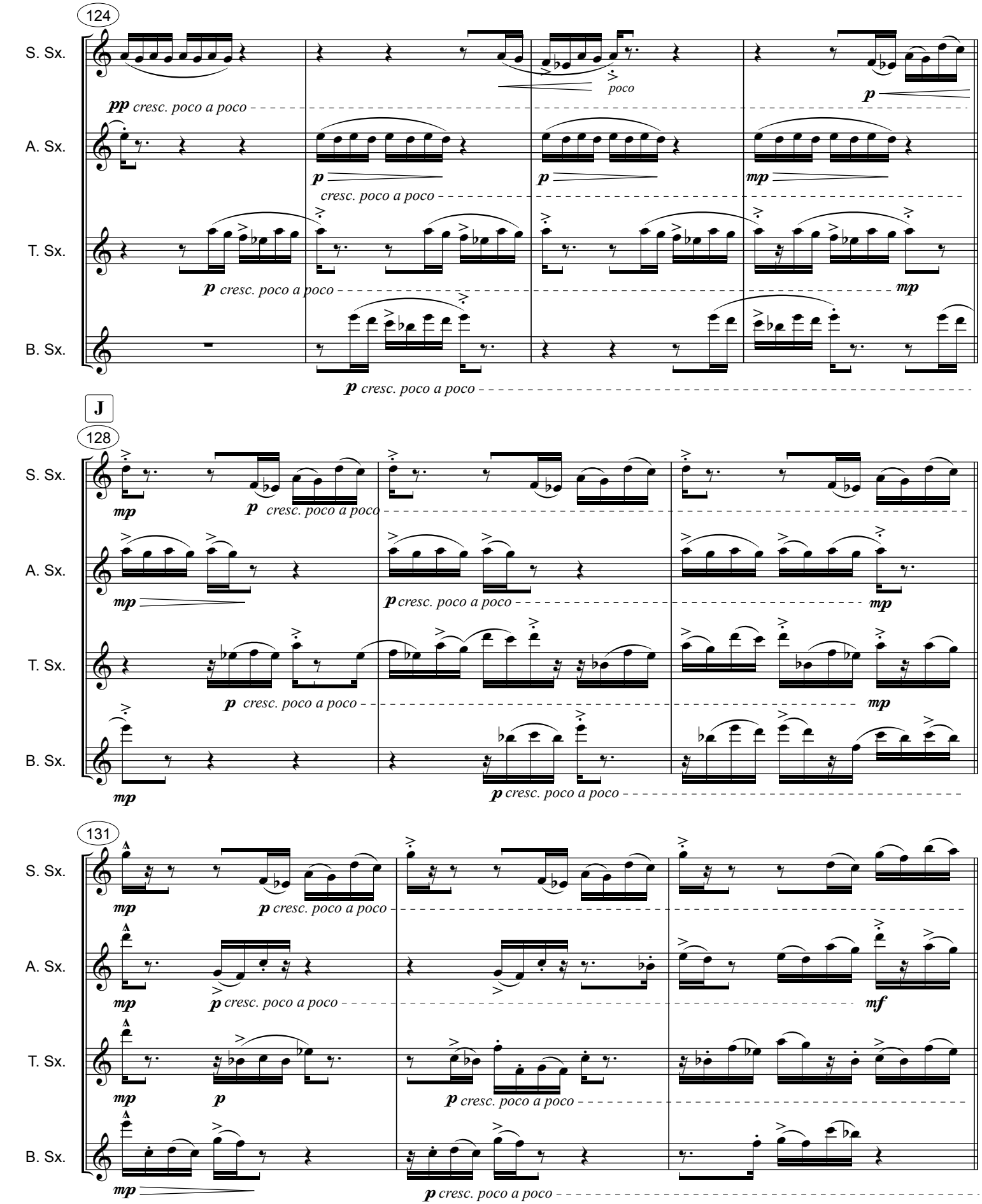

68
F
again very quiet
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
ppp
p
pp
o
A.45
C#
C
again very quiet
72
76
poco rit.
B.100
C5
B♭
(V)

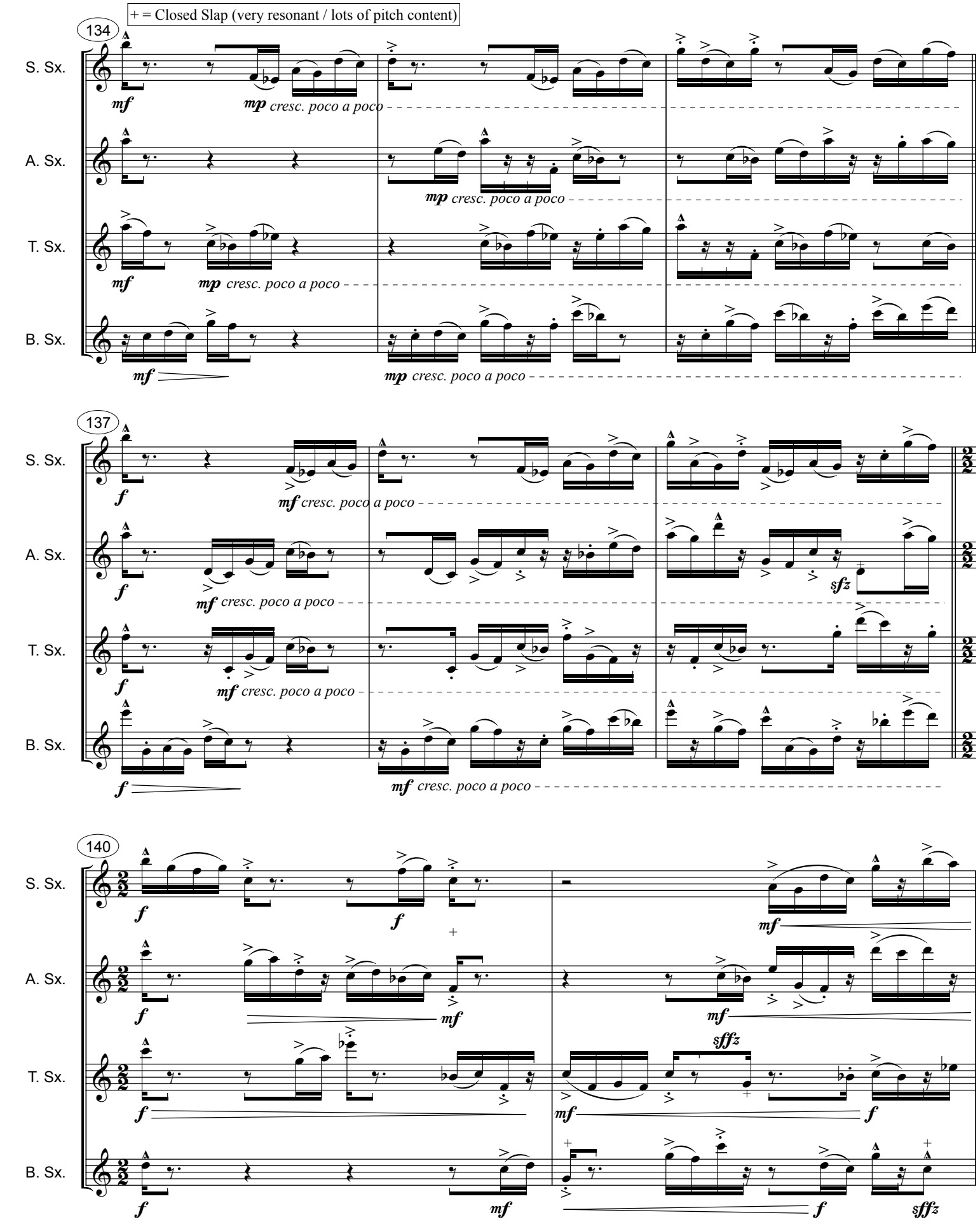

G
82
(𝅗𝅥 = 36) a tempo
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
ppp
mp
pp
ppp
mp
p
86
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
mp
ppp
p
T.114
C5
C#
C
pp
mp
89
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
mf
pp
p
ppp
mf

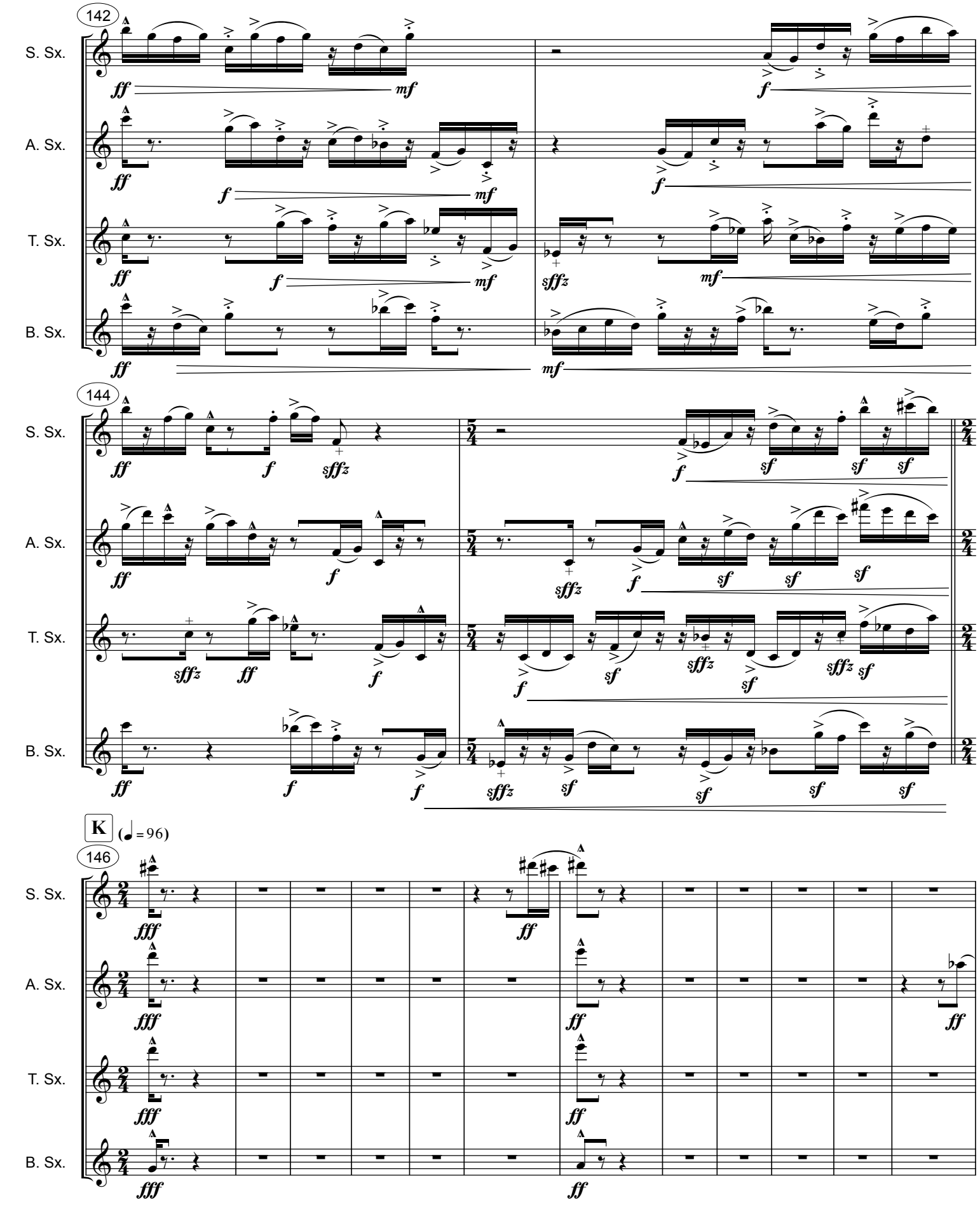

93
H
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
T.37
96
100

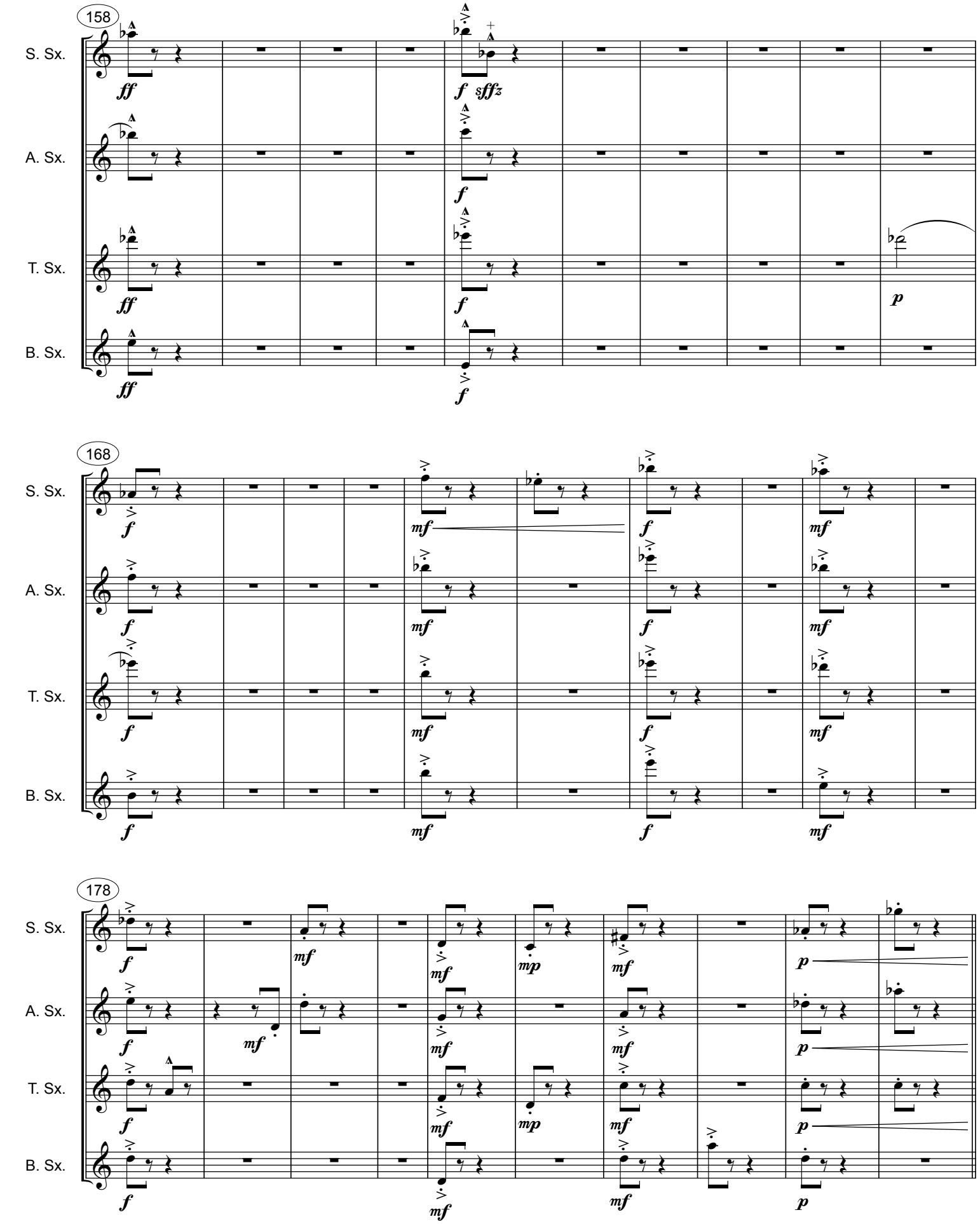

103
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
106
forward moving (𝅗𝅥 = 48)
I
110

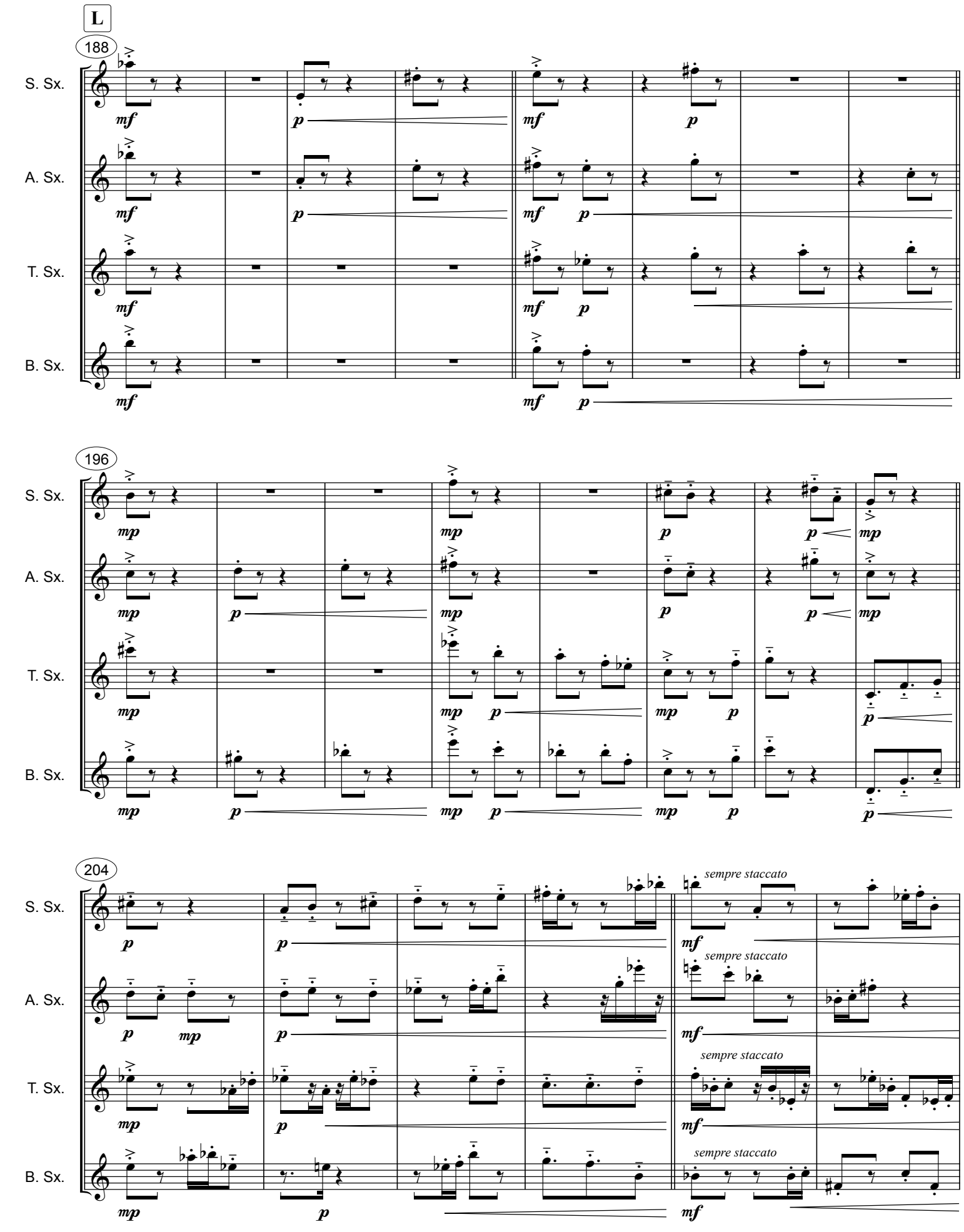

114
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
mp
p
mf
117
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
mf
mp
f
120
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
ppp
poco
p
pp

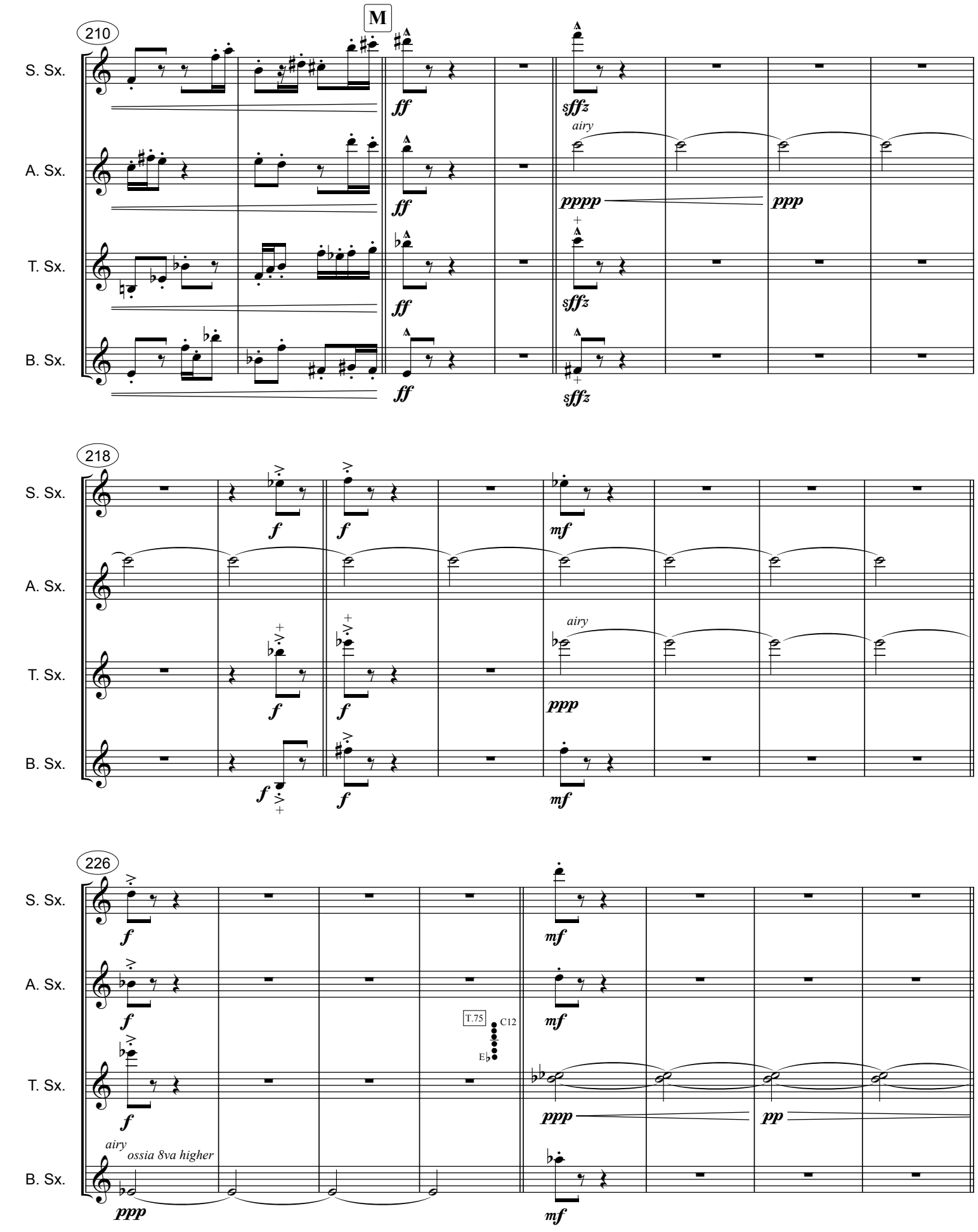

124
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
pp cresc. poco a poco
poco
p
p
cresc. poco a poco
mp
p cresc. poco a poco
mp
p cresc. poco a poco
J
128
mp
p cresc. poco a poco
p cresc. poco a poco
mp
p cresc. poco a poco
mp
mp
p cresc. poco a poco
131
mp
p cresc. poco a poco
mf
mp
p
p cresc. poco a poco
mp
p cresc. poco a poco

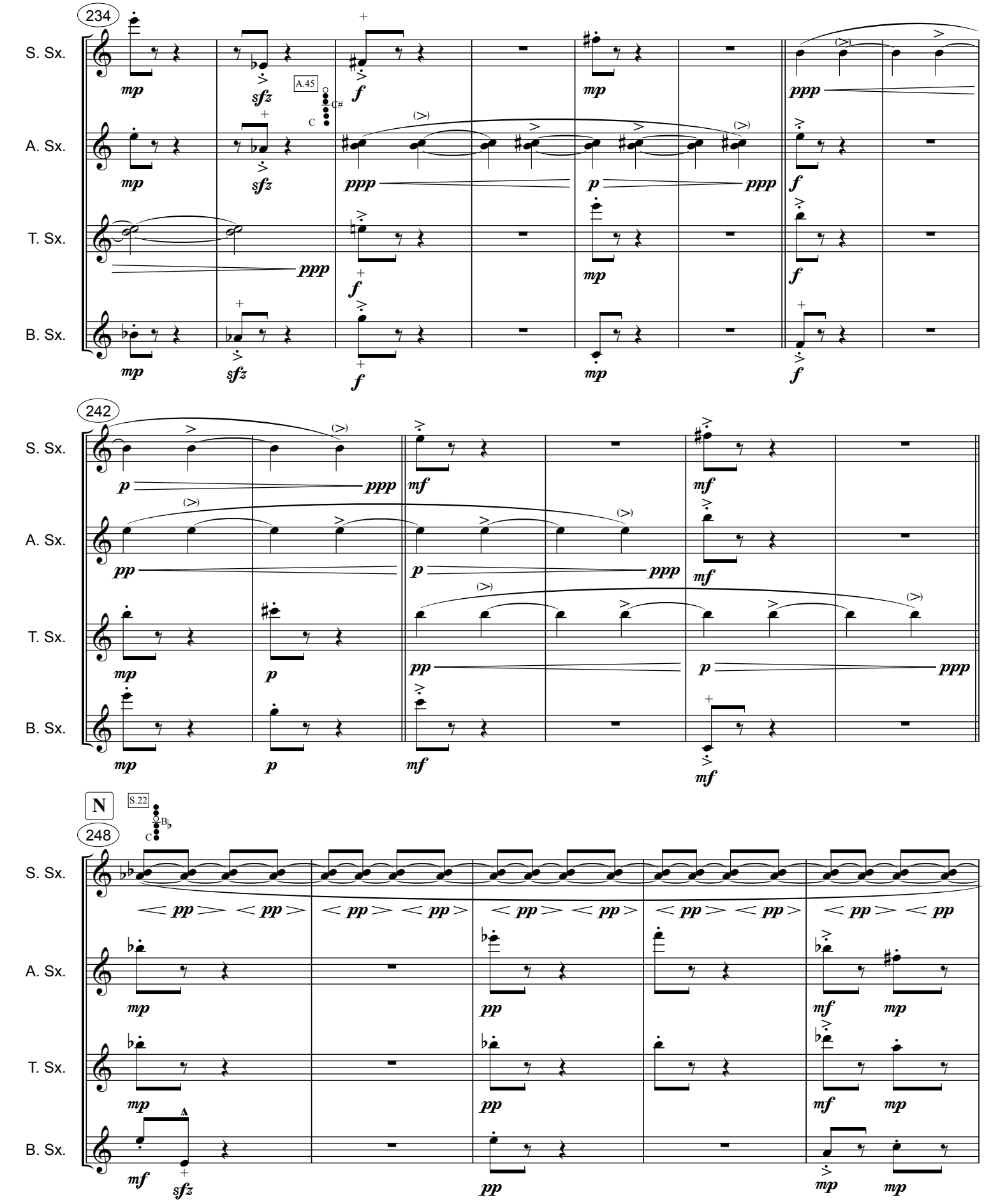

+ = Closed Slap (very resonant / lots of pitch content)
134
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
mf
mp cresc. poco a poco
137
f
mf cresc. poco a poco
sfz
140
sffz

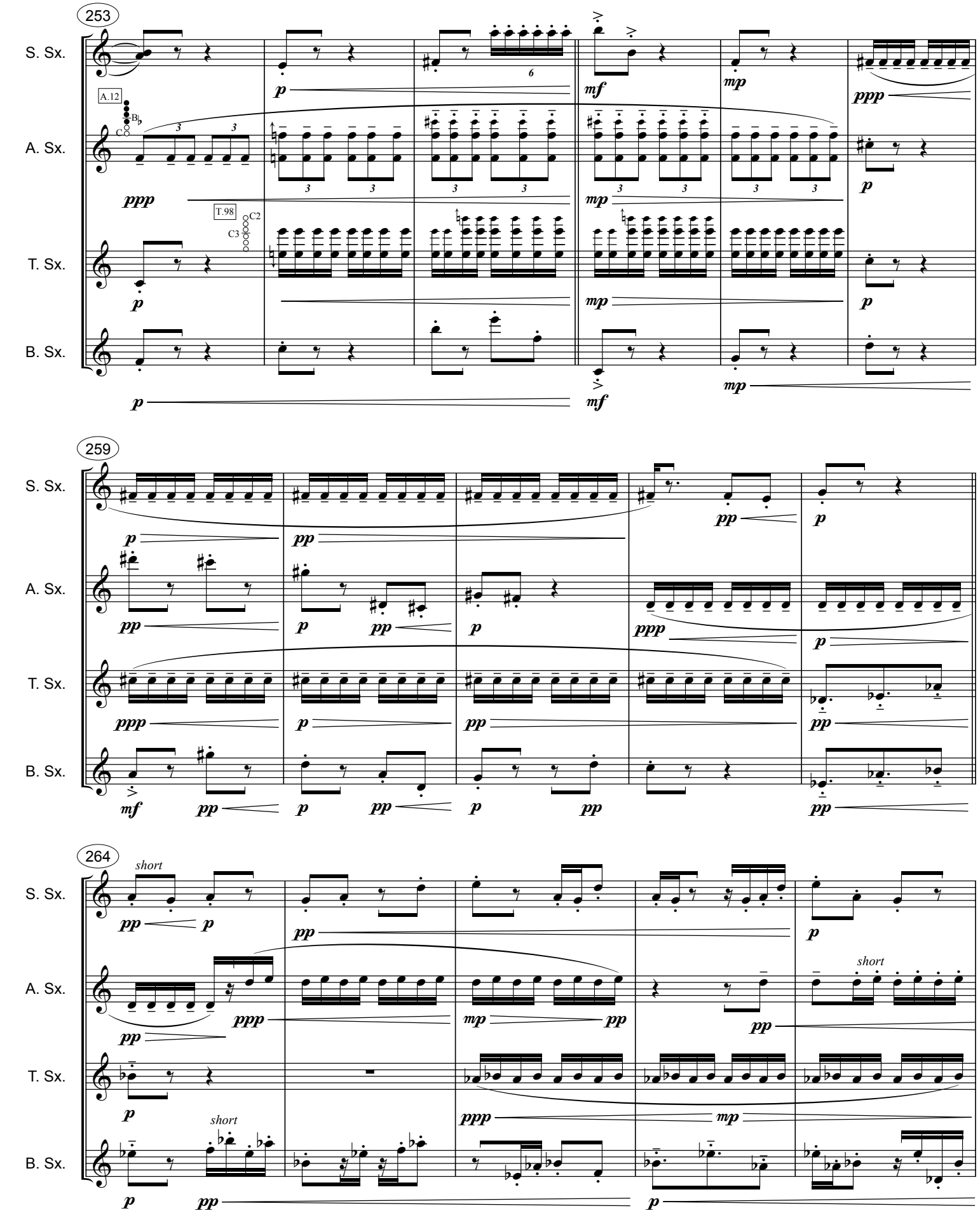

142
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
144
K
(♩ = 96)
146

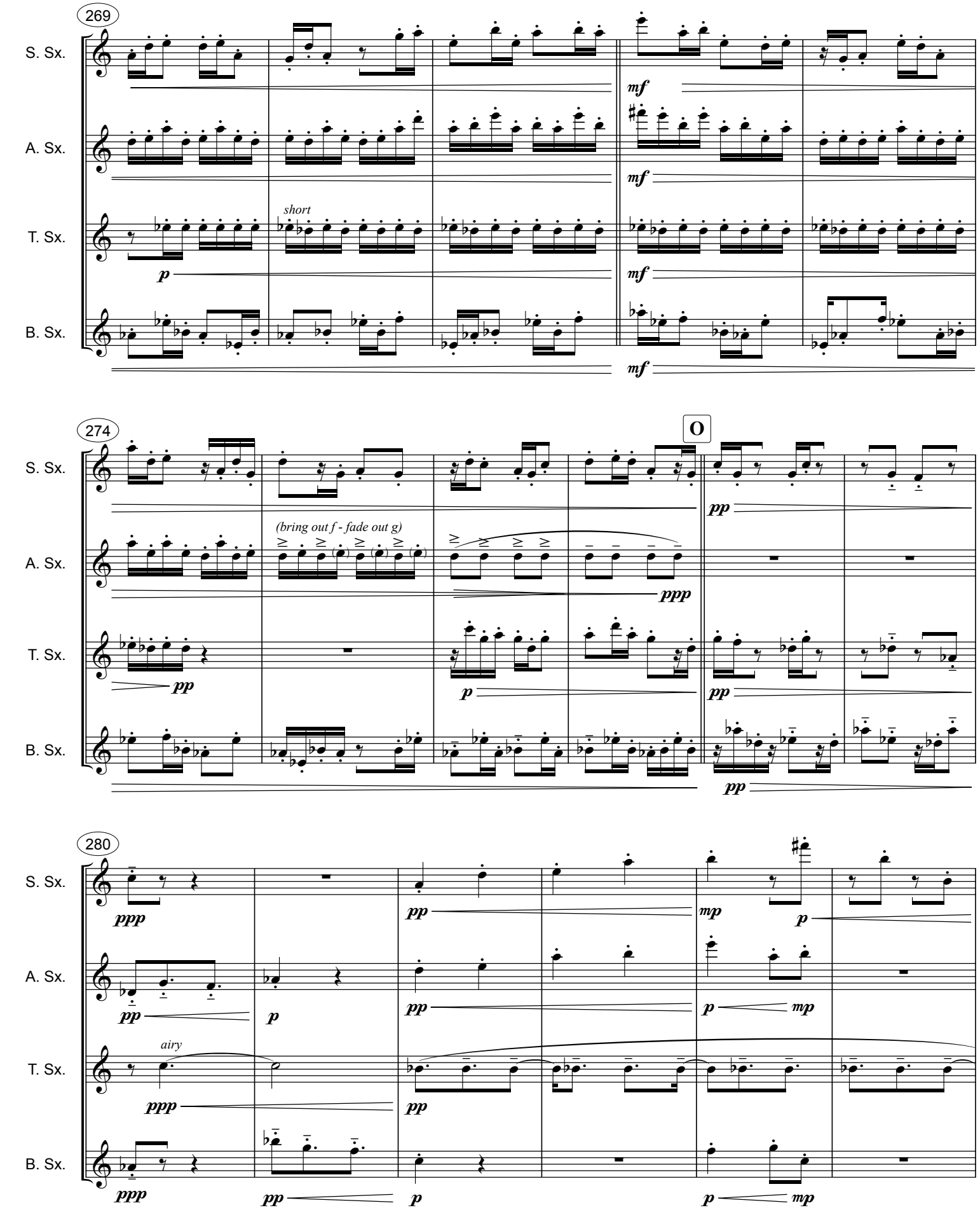

158
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
ff
f
sffz
p
168
mf
178
mp

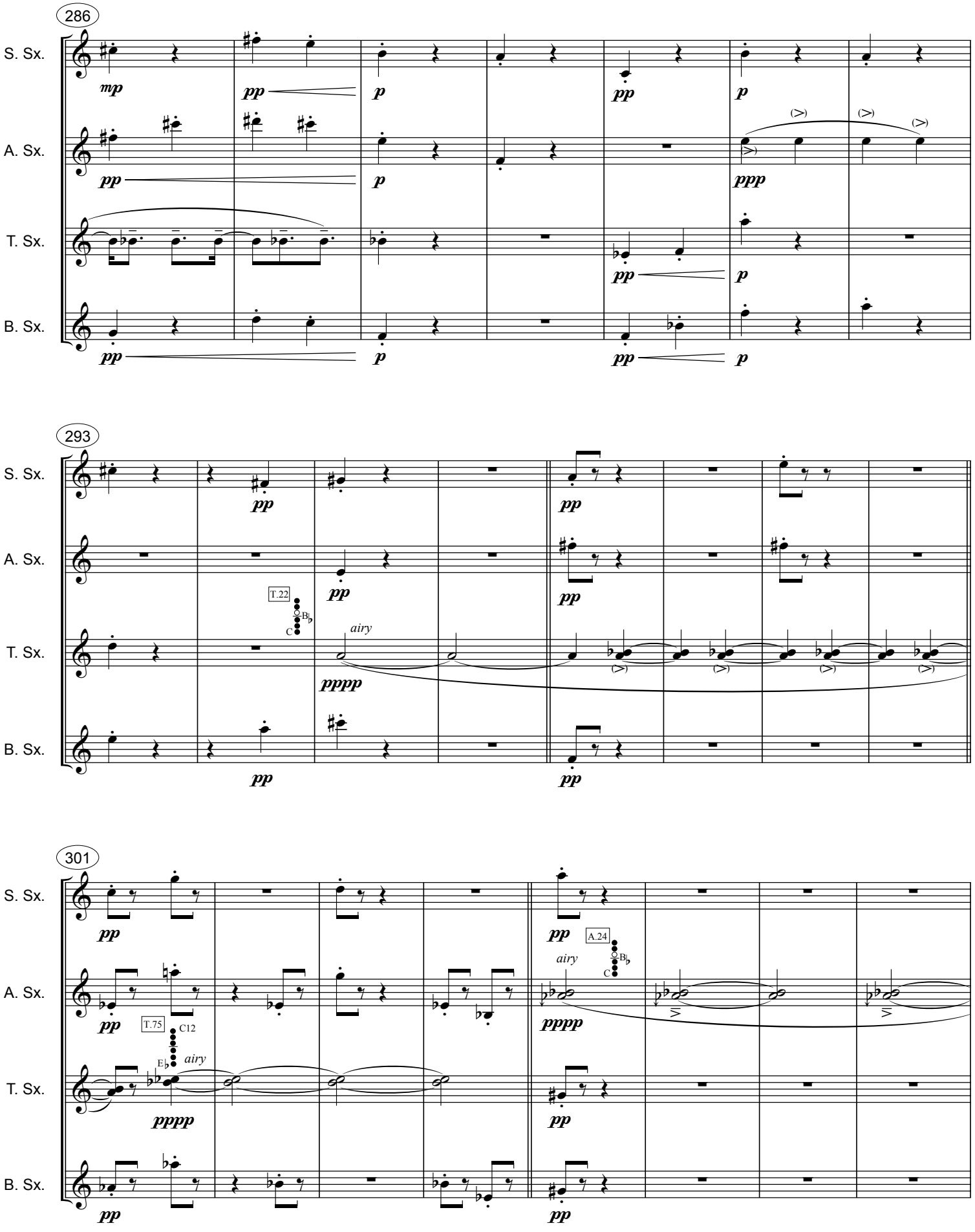

L
188
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
196
204
sempre staccato

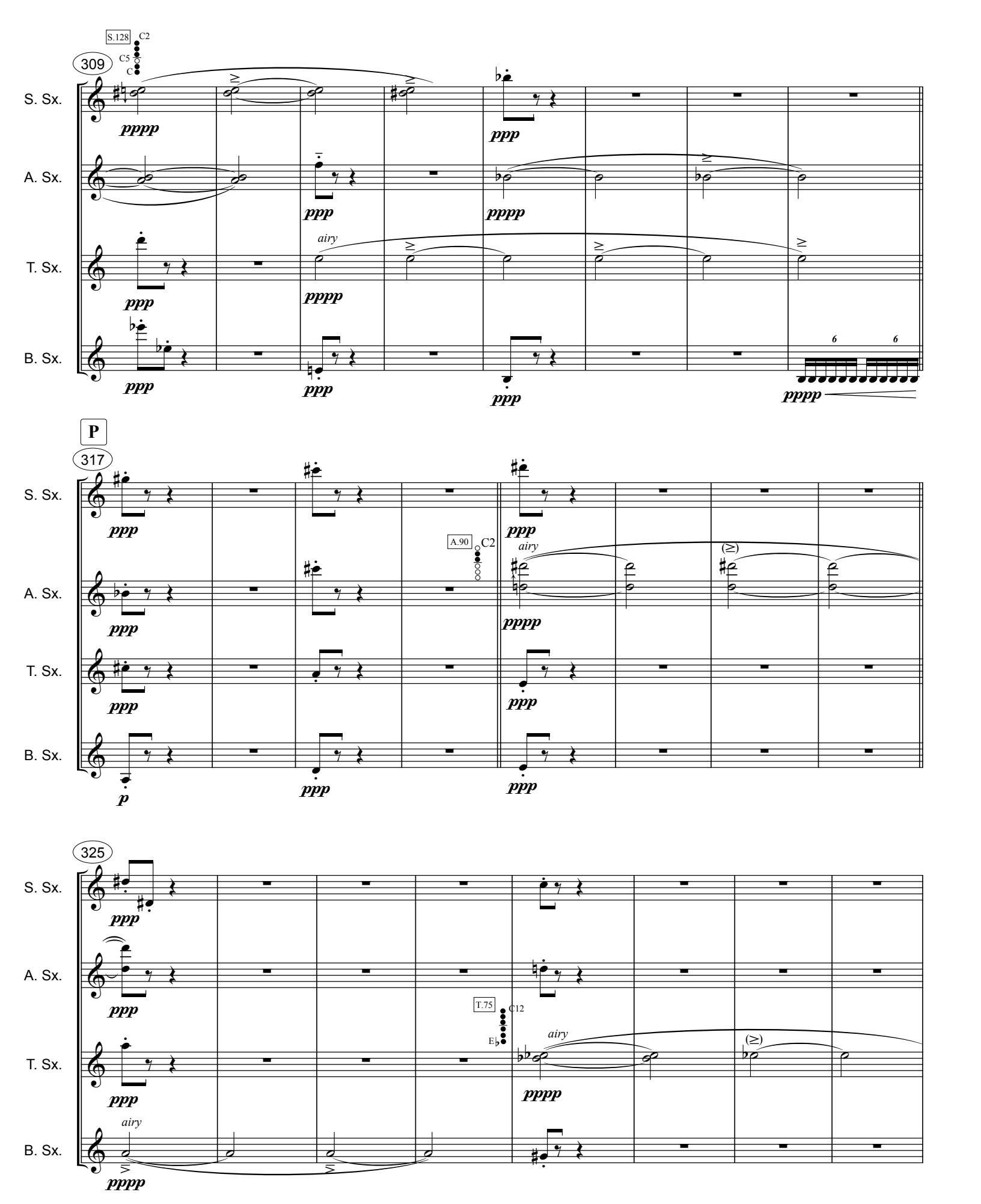

210
M
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
ff
sfffz
airy
pppp
ppp
218
f
mf
ppp
226
ossia 8va higher
T.75
C12
pp

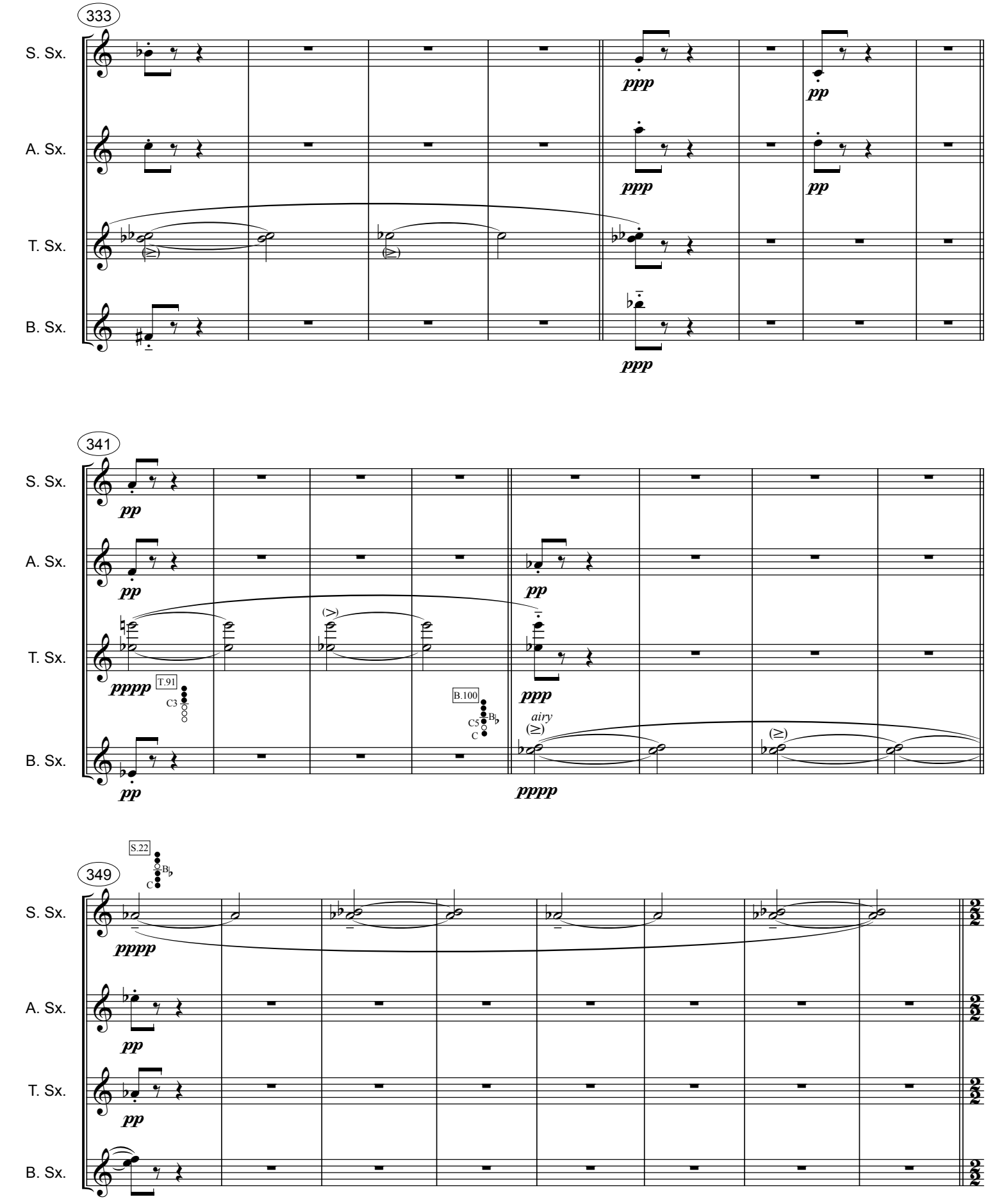

234
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
A.45
C
C#
242
N
S.22
C
B♭
248

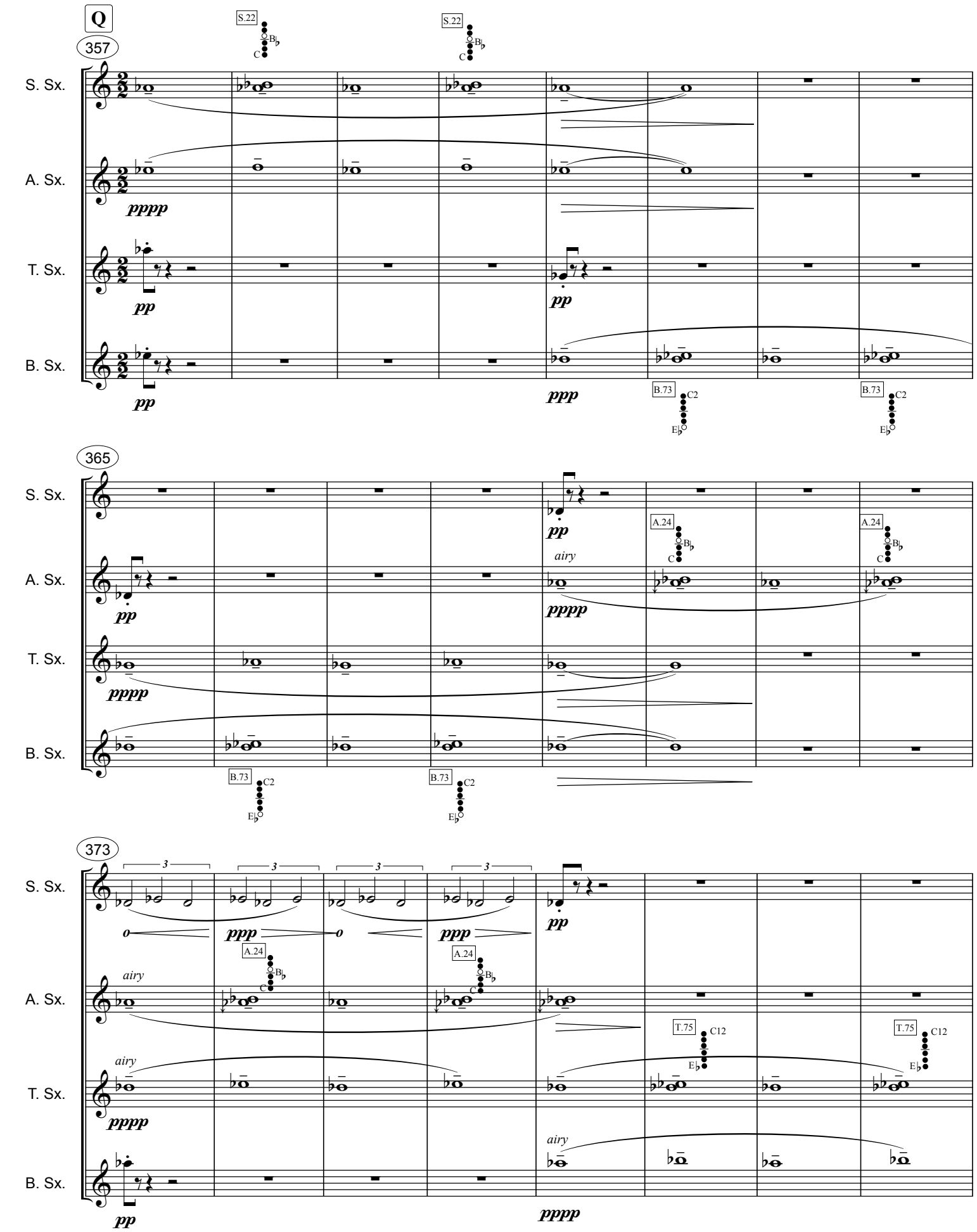

253
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
A.12
T.98
259
264
short

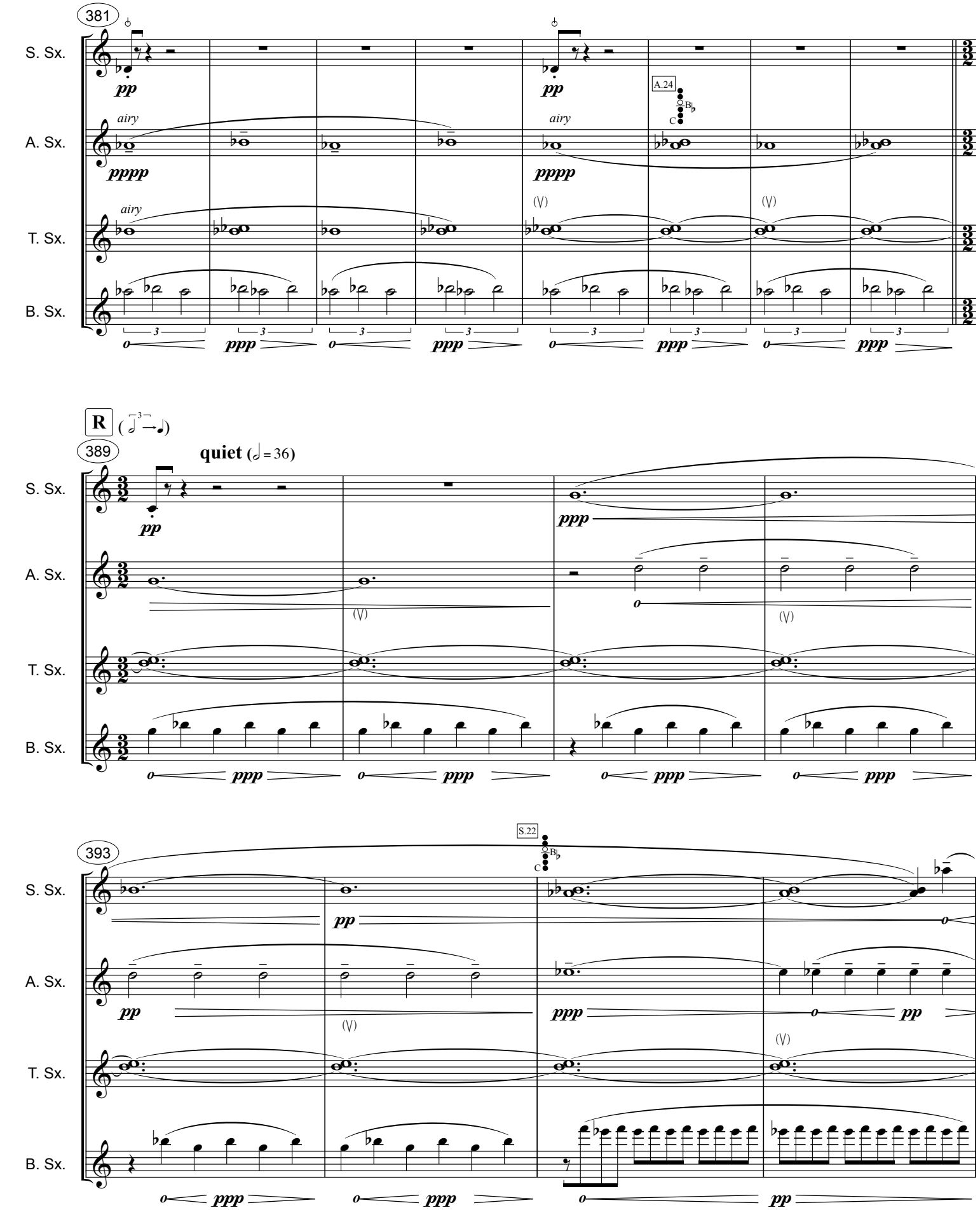

269
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
short
mf
p
274
O
(bring out f - fade out g)
ppp
pp
280
airy
mp

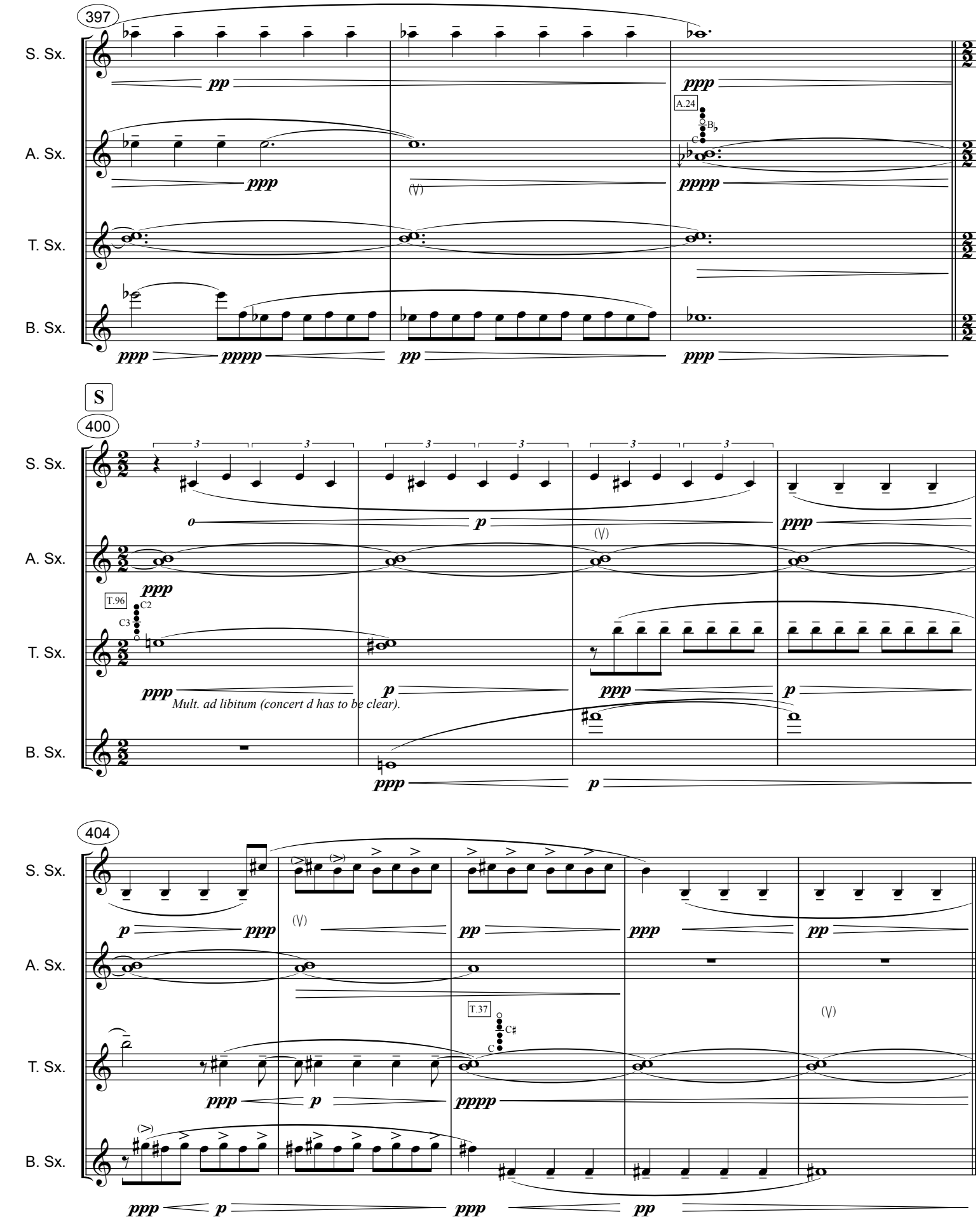

286
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
mp
pp
p
ppp
293
T.22
C
B♭
airy
pppp
301
T.75
C12
E♭
A.24

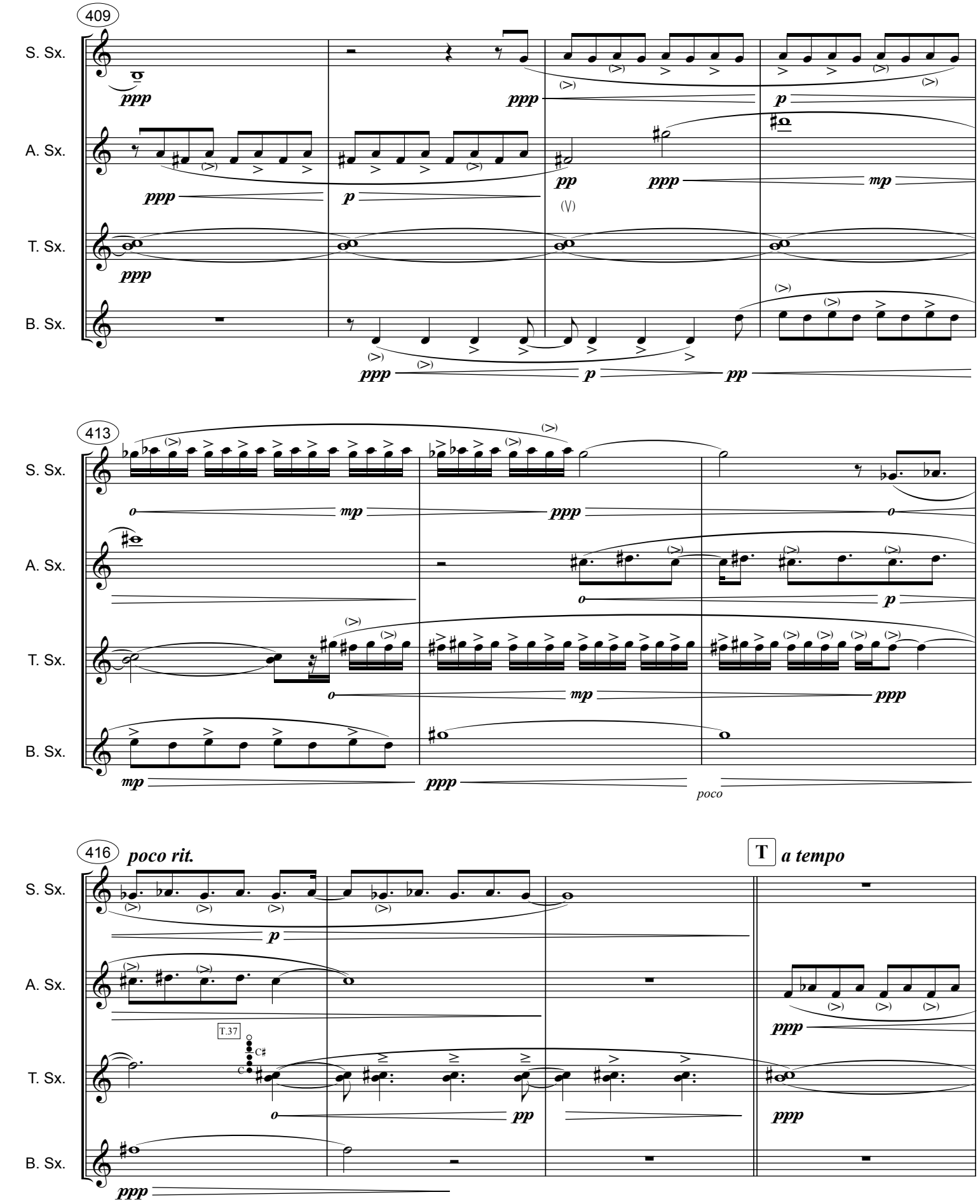

S.128
C2
C5
C
309
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
pppp
ppp
airy
P
317
A.90
C2
p
325
T.75
C12
Eb
(≥)
6

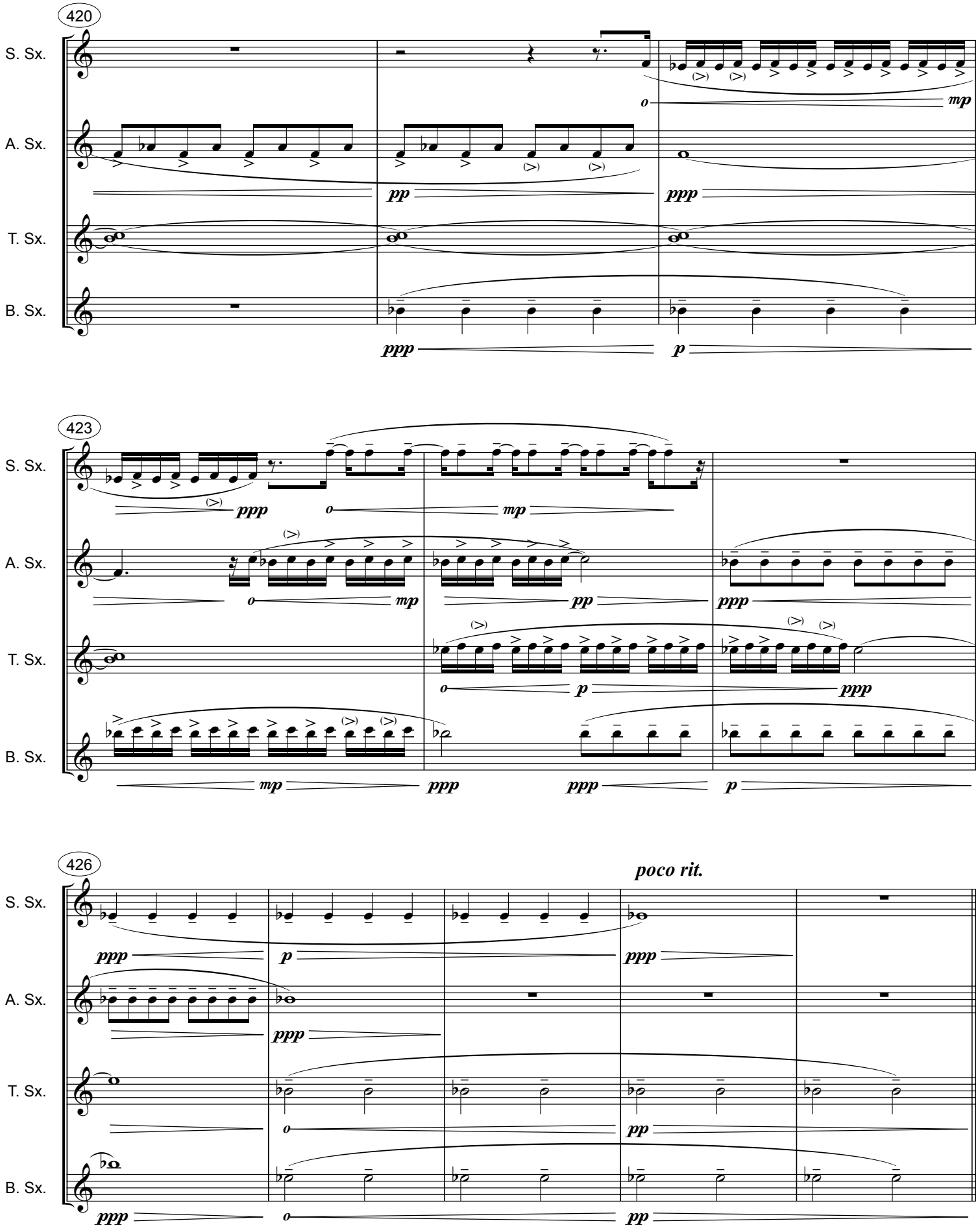

333
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
ppp
pp
341
pppp
T.91
C3
B.100
C5
C
airy
349
S.22

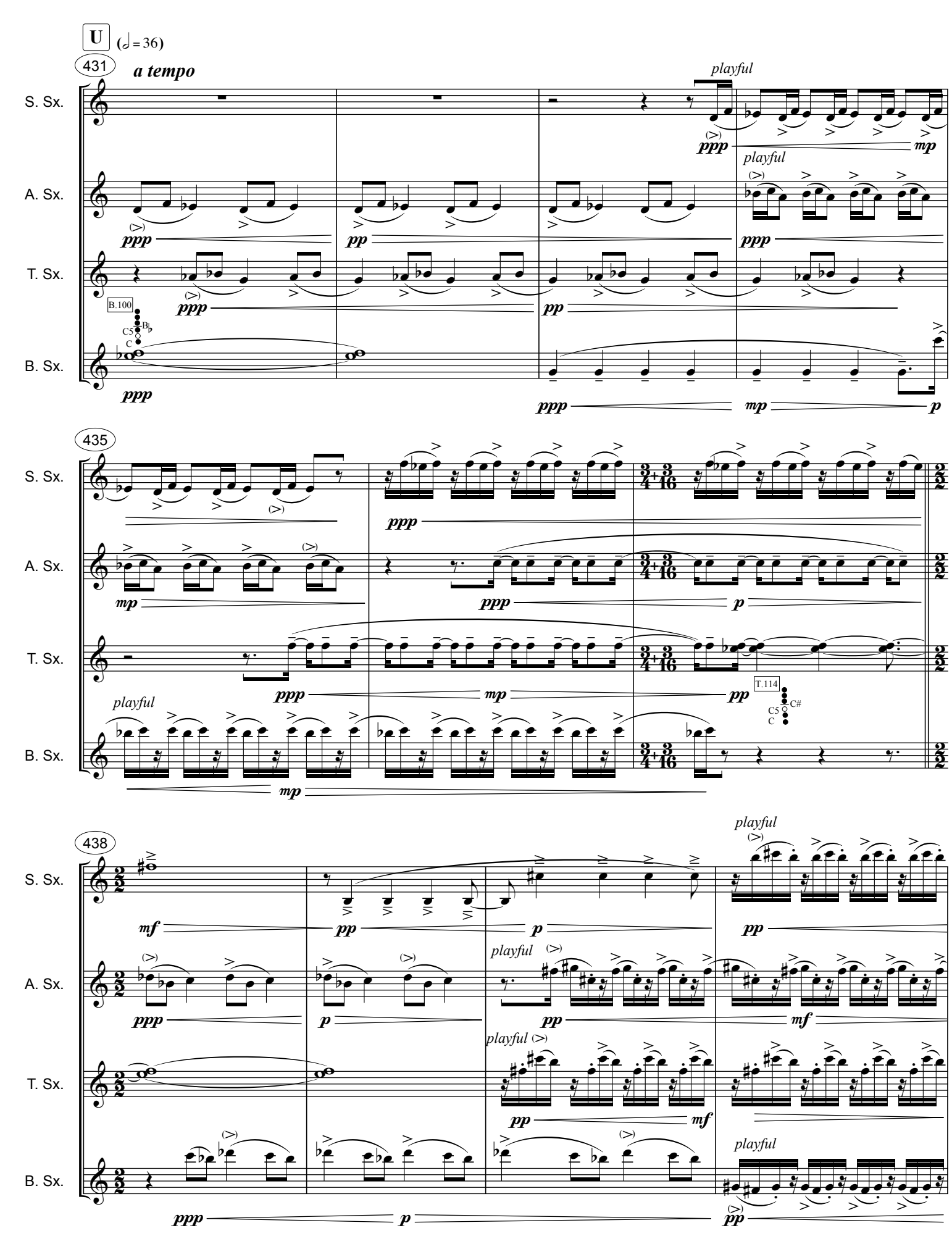

Q
357
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
S.22
pppp
pp
ppp
B.73
C2
365
airy
A.24
373
3
o
T.75
C12

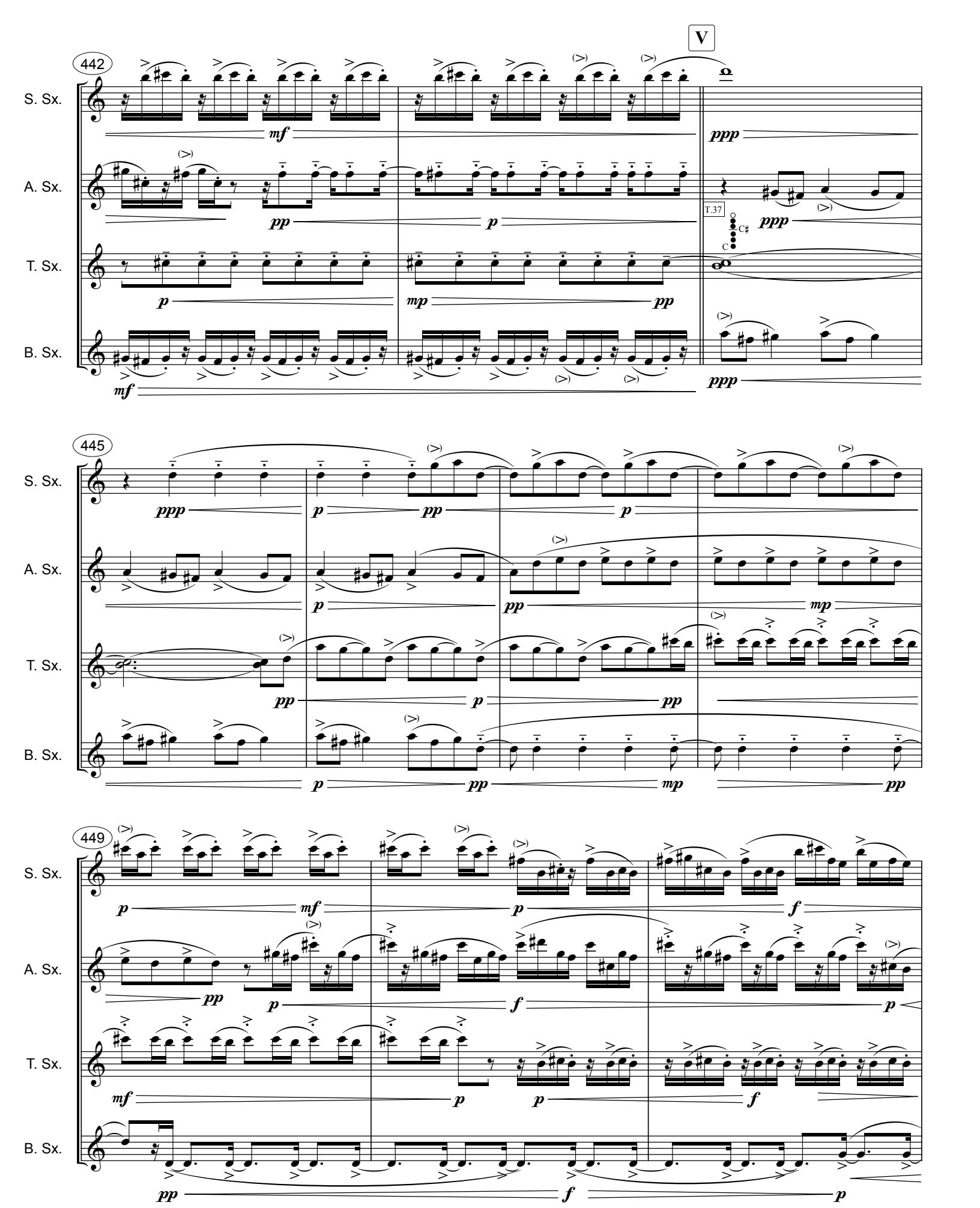

381
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
pp
airy
pppp
A.24
B♭
C
(V)
ppp
R
389
quiet (𝅗𝅥 = 36)
393
S.22

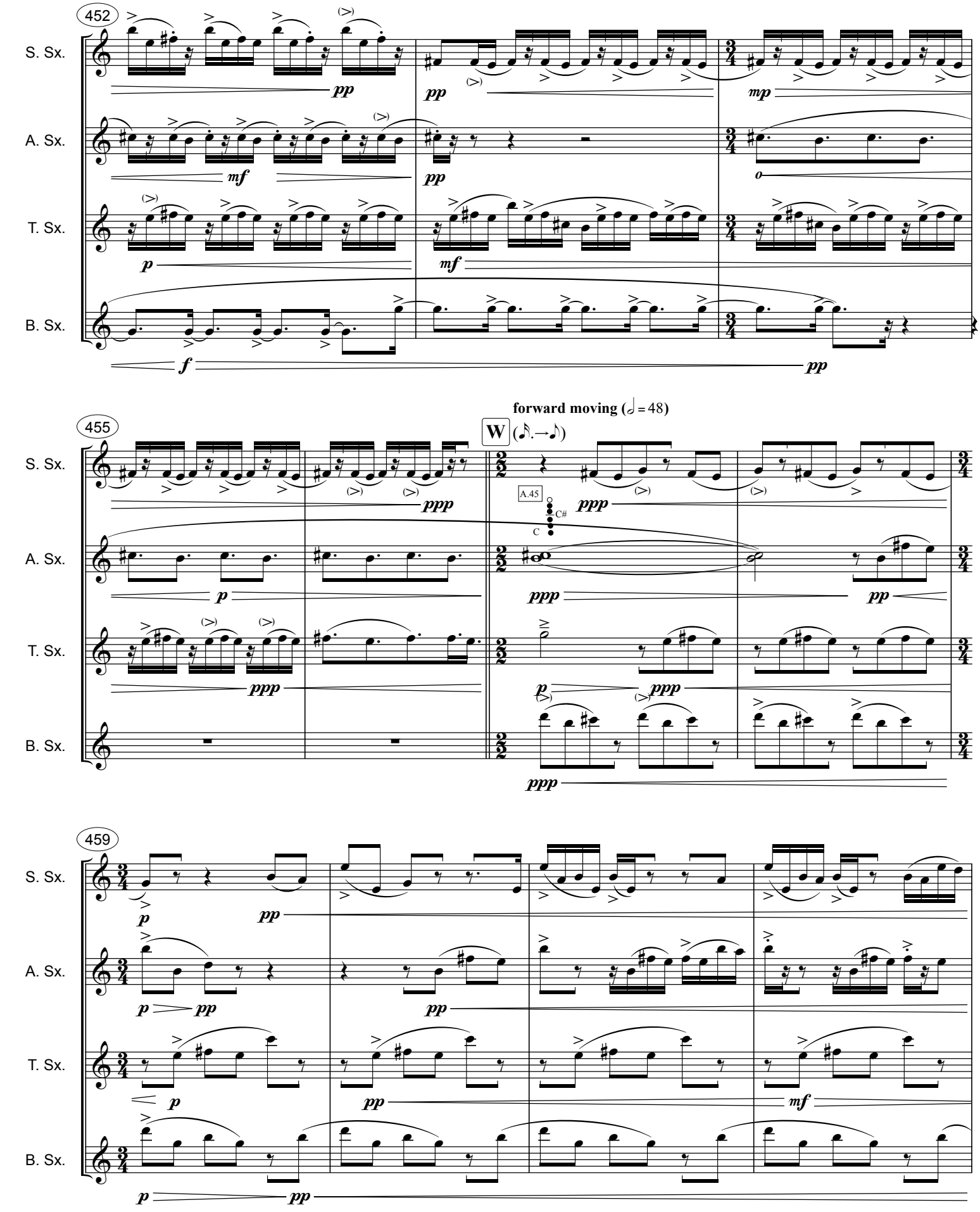

397
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
A.24
S
400
T.96
Mult. ad libitum (concert d has to be clear).
404
T.37

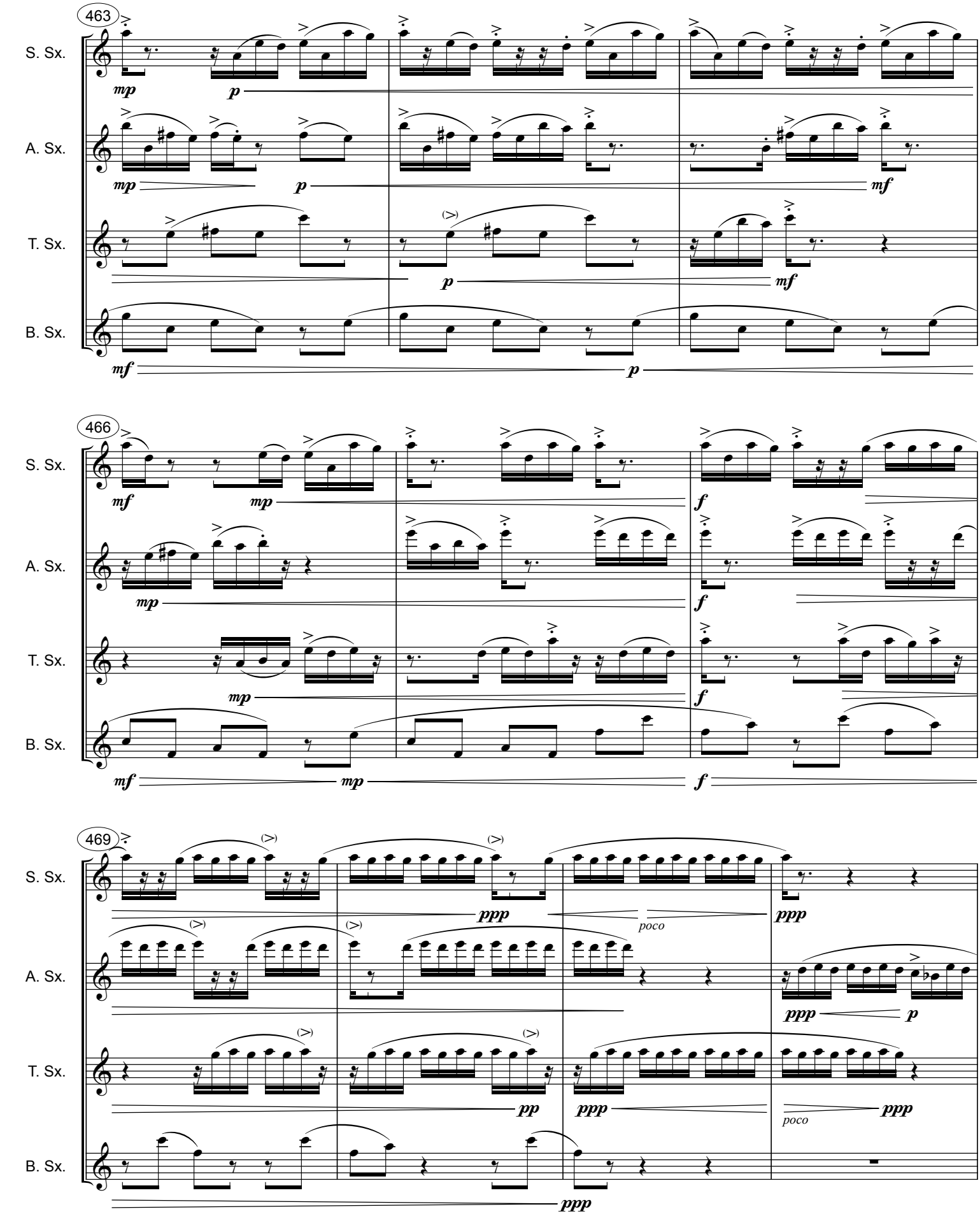

409
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
413
poco
416
poco rit.
T
a tempo
T.37

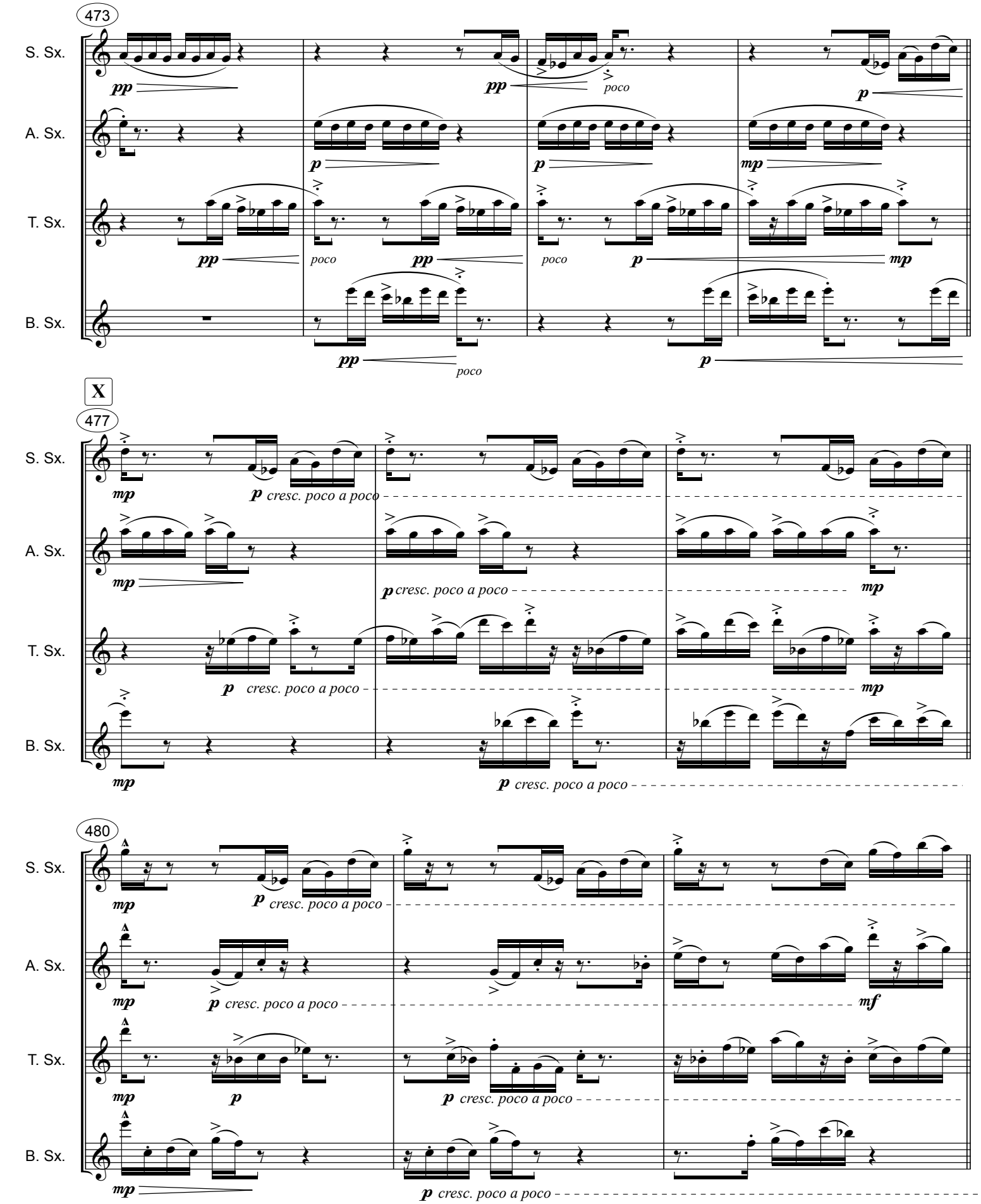

420
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
423
426
poco rit.

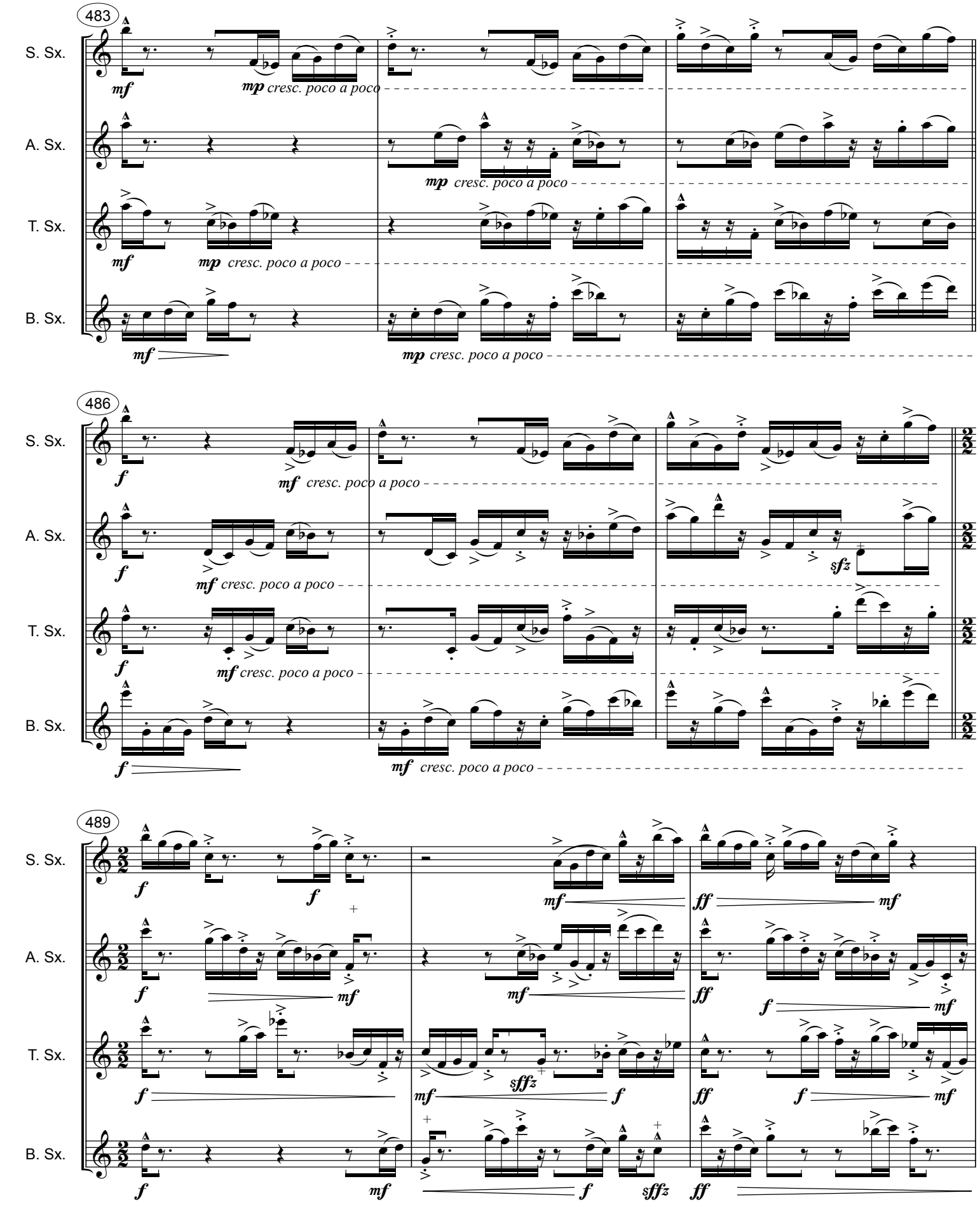

U
(𝅗𝅥 = 36)
431
a tempo
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
playful
B.100
C5
C
B♭
435
T.114
C#
438

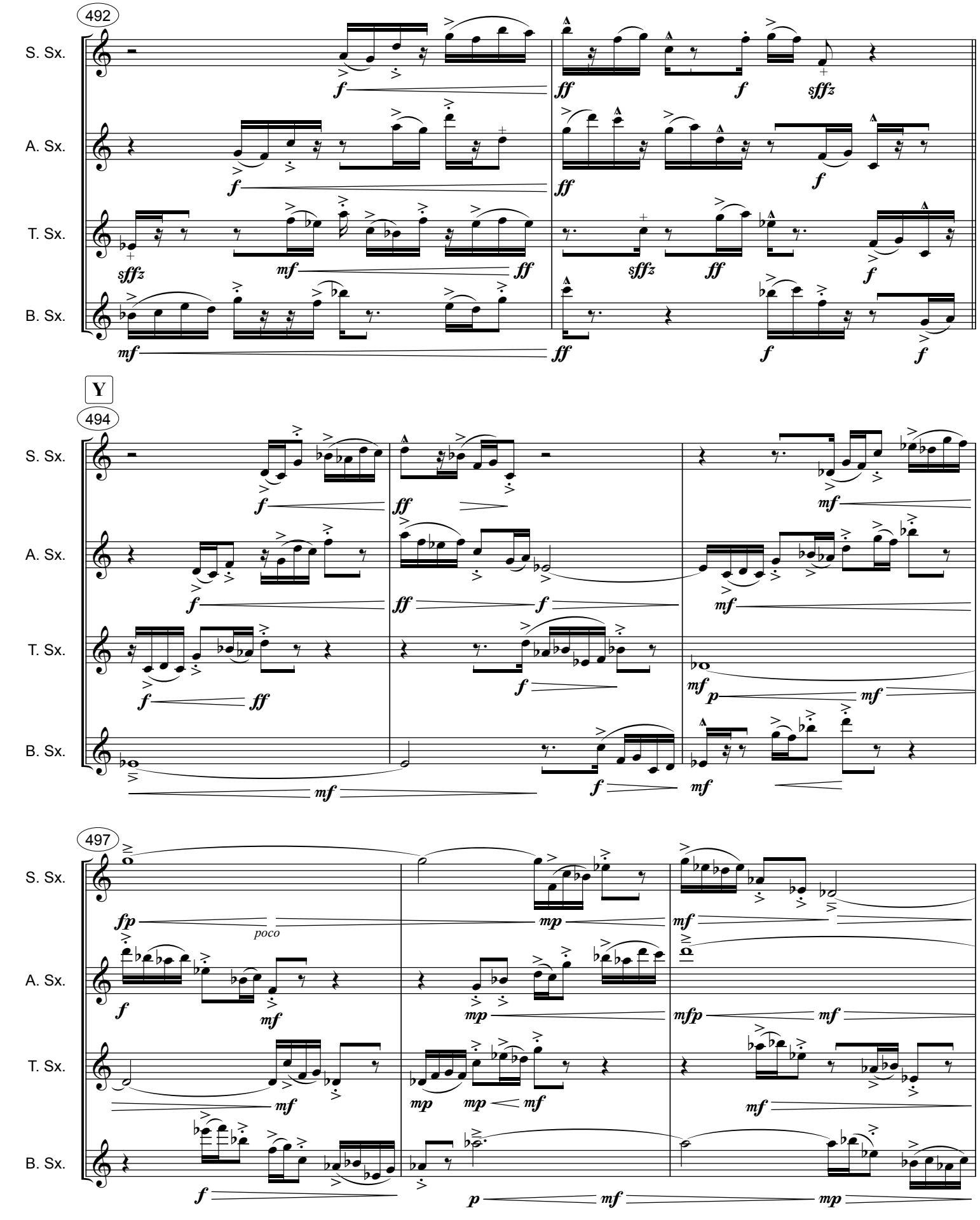

V
442
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
mf
pp
p
mp
ppp
T.37
C♯
C
445
449

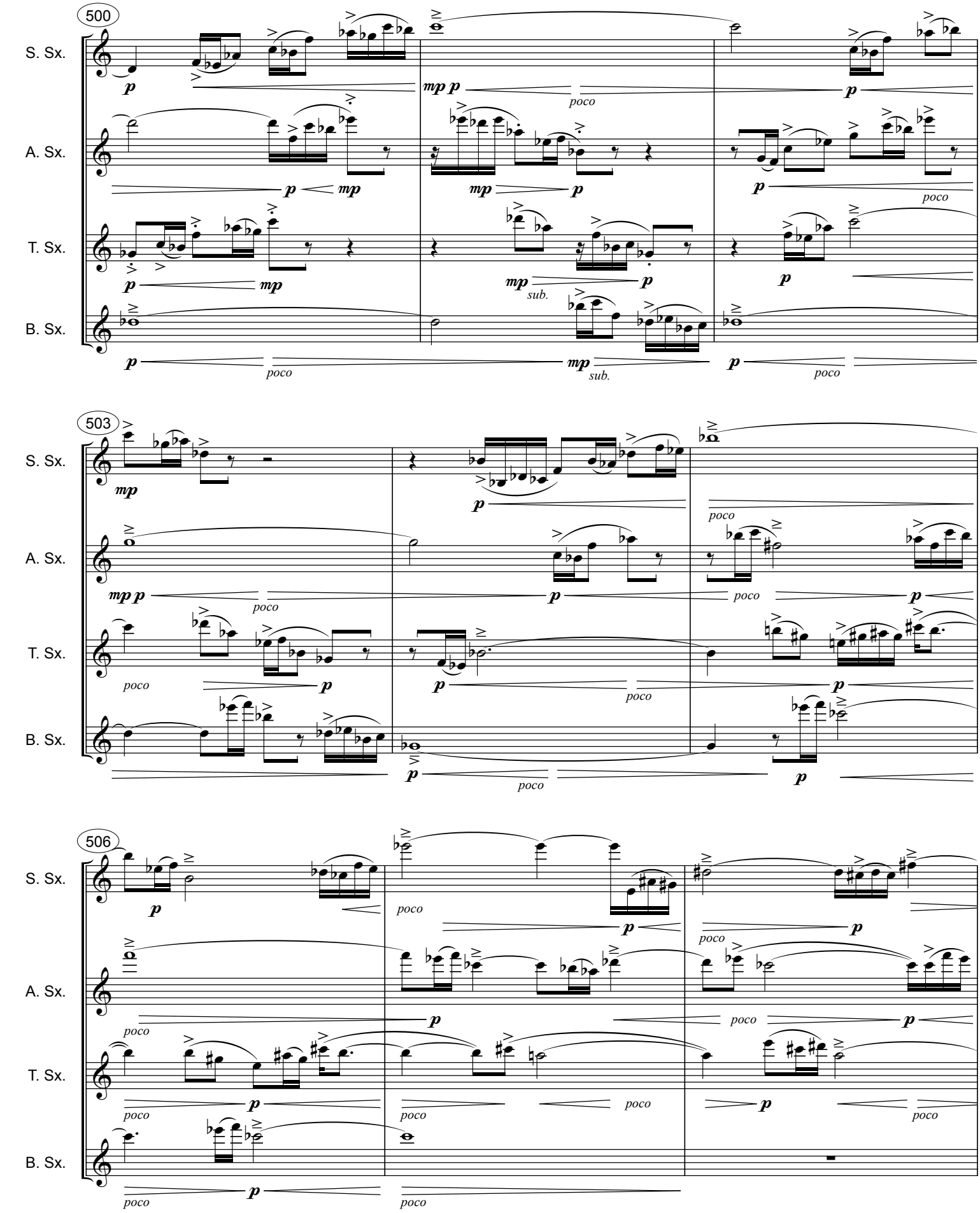

452
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
pp
mf
p
f
mp
o
455
forward moving (𝅗𝅥 = 48)
W
A.45
C#
C
ppp
459

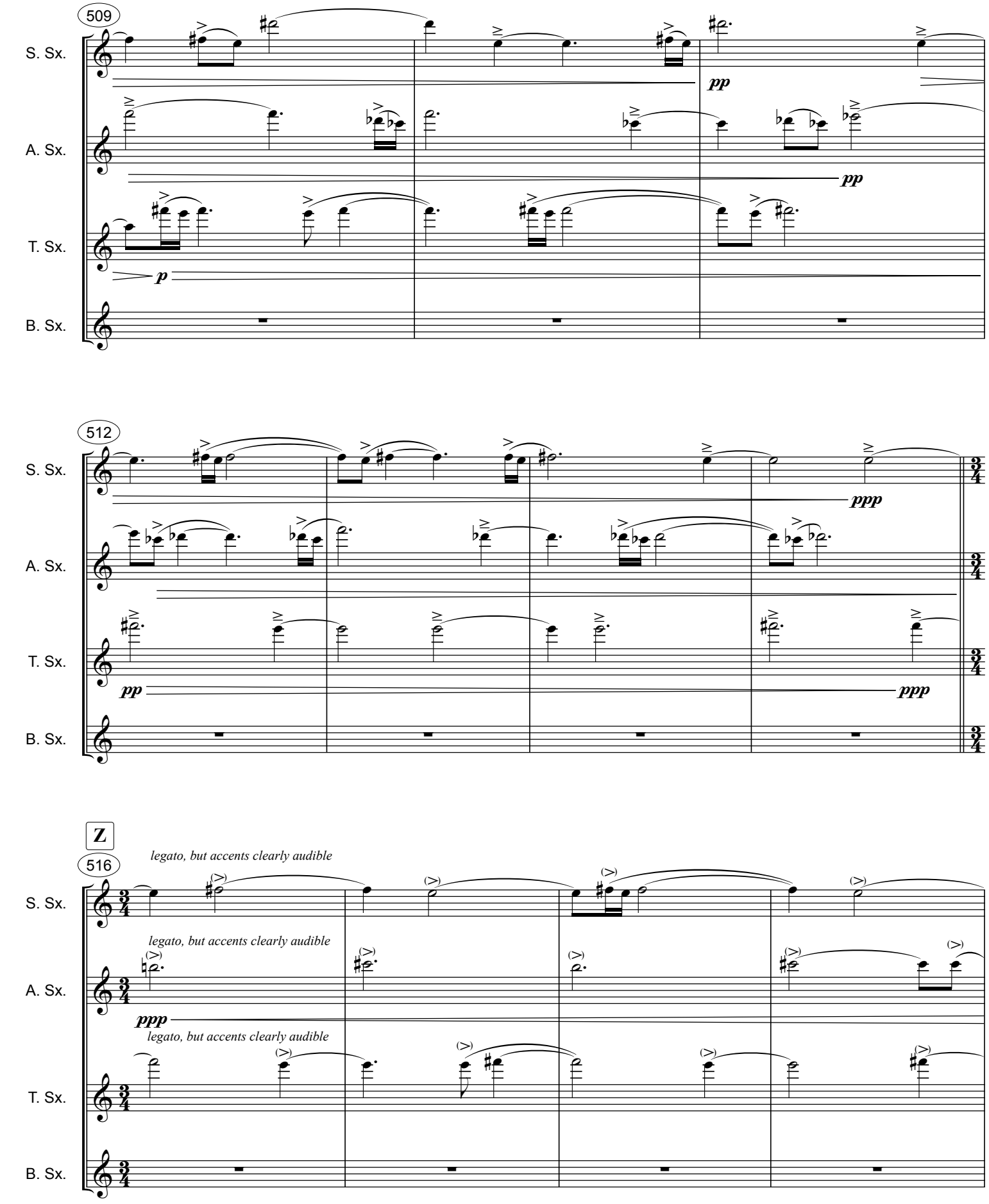

463
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
mp
p
mf
466
469
ppp
poco
pp

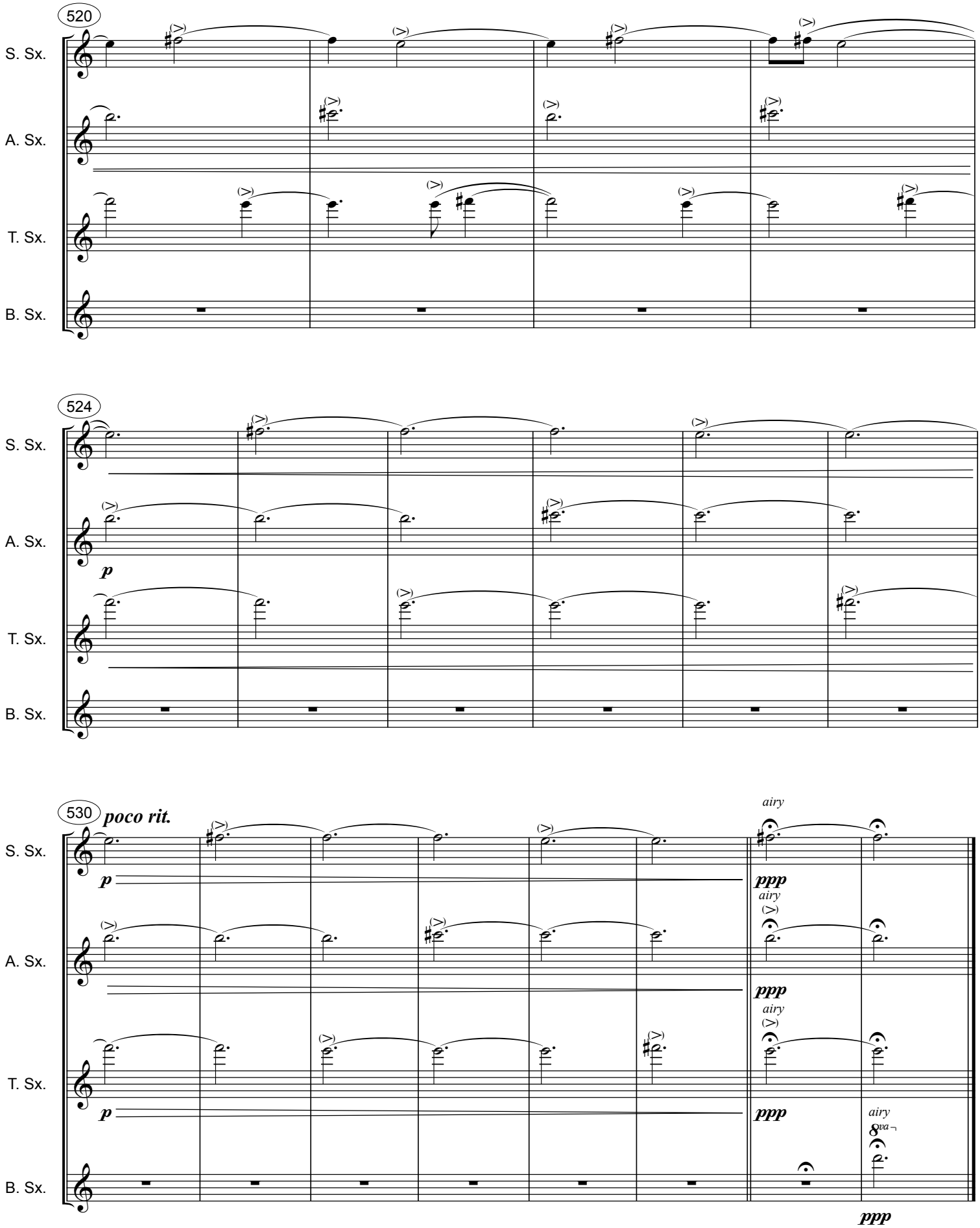

473
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
pp
poco
p
mp
X
477
cresc. poco a poco
480
mf


483
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
mf
mp cresc. poco a poco
486
f
mf cresc. poco a poco
sfz
489
sffz
ff

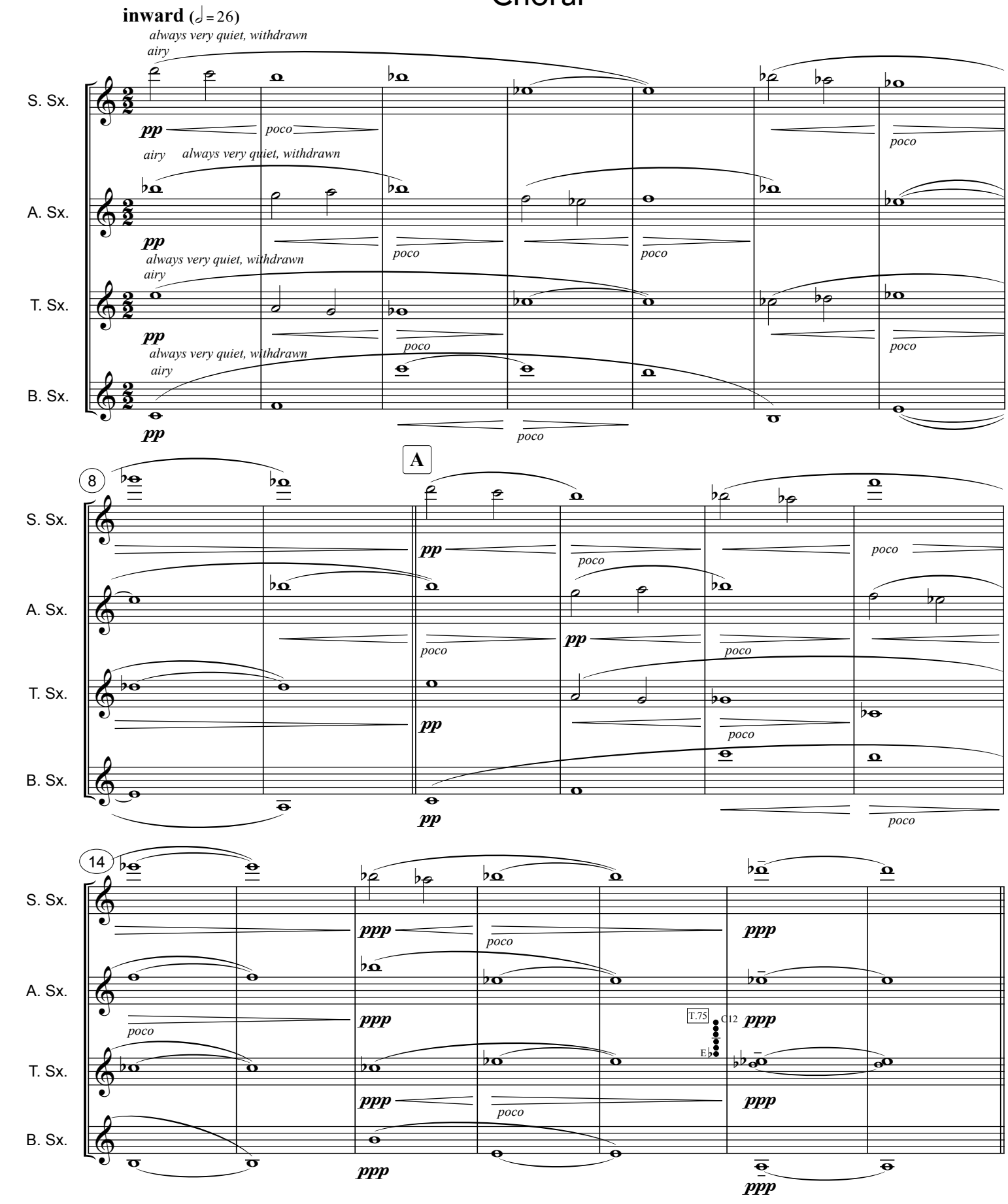

492
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
Y
494
497
poco

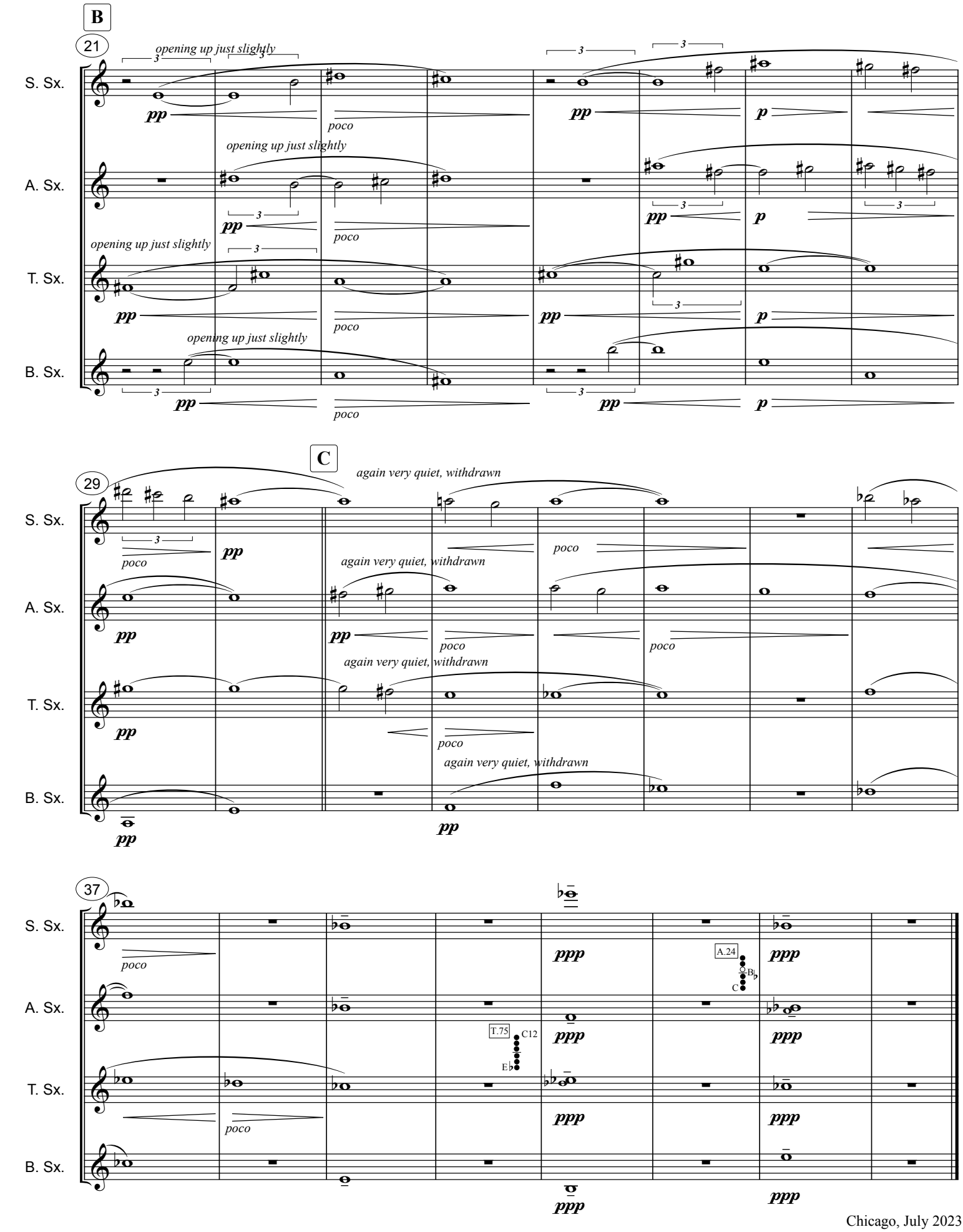

500
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
503
506


509
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
pp
pp
p
512
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
ppp
pp
ppp
Z
516
legato, but accents clearly audible
S. Sx.
legato, but accents clearly audible
A. Sx.
ppp
legato, but accents clearly audible
T. Sx.
B. Sx.


520
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
524
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
p
530
poco rit.
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
p
p
p
airy
ppp
airy
ppp
airy
ppp
airy
8va
ppp

II.
Choral


inward (𝅗𝅥 = 26)
always very quiet, withdrawn
airy
S. Sx.
A. Sx.
T. Sx.
B. Sx.
pp
poco
A
8
14
ppp
T.75
C12
Eb



Chicago, July 2023