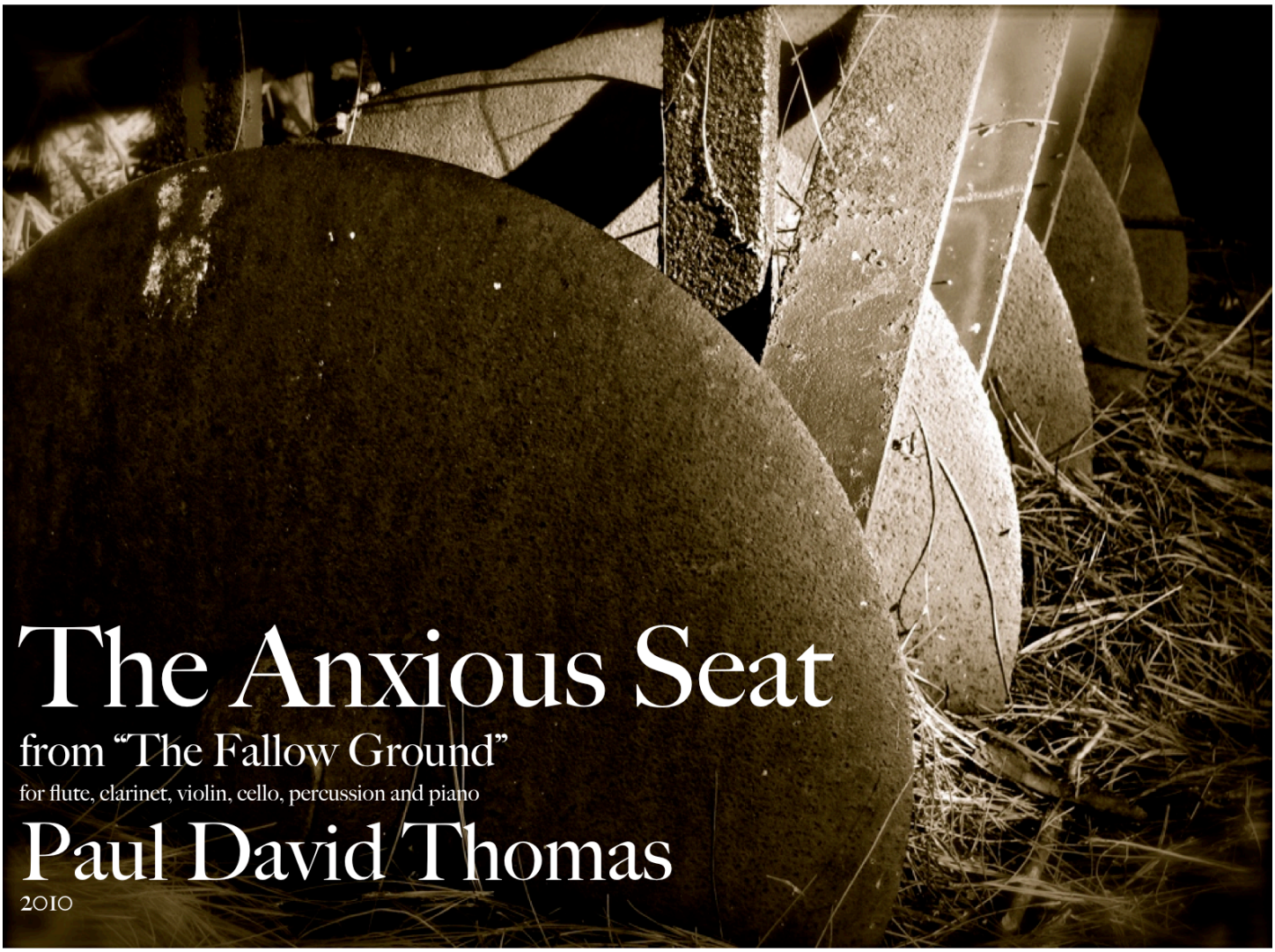

The Anxious Seat

from "The Fallow Ground"

for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, percussion and piano

Paul David Thomas

2010

Progam Notes

Developed in the early 19th-century by the evangelist Charles Grandison Finney, the anxious seat was a bench near the church's pulpit placed purposely for congregants contemplating their eternal destiny. As Finney preached, the person sitting in the seat would become more and more “anxious” until the person, so overcome by emotion, experienced some type of cathartic release attributed to the Holy Spirit. This was a particularly effective evangelistic tool since the entire congregation could see and be influenced by the emotional reaction of the person sitting in the anxious seat. In this piece the clarinet occupies the anxious seat; yet as the piece progresses, the anxiety and energy is gradually transmitted to the other instruments until the entire ensemble breaks out into a frenzy.

This piece can be performed as a stand-alone work or as the fourth movement of a larger five-movement work entitled "The Fallow Ground."

Instrumentation

Flute
B-flat Clarinet
Violin
Cello
Percussion
- Woodblock (W.B)
- Three Toms (High, Medium, Low)
- Vibraphone

Piano

The Anxious Seat

from "The Fallow Ground"

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duration 4 min.

Freely

A ♩ = 117-140

Flute

Clarinet in B♭

agitated and feverish

f

anxiously

p

Violin

Violoncello

Percussion

Vib. w/ pedal

pp

Piano

6

Cl.

Perc.

13

Cl.

Perc.

(p)

20

Cl.

Perc.

mp

pp

p

mp

p

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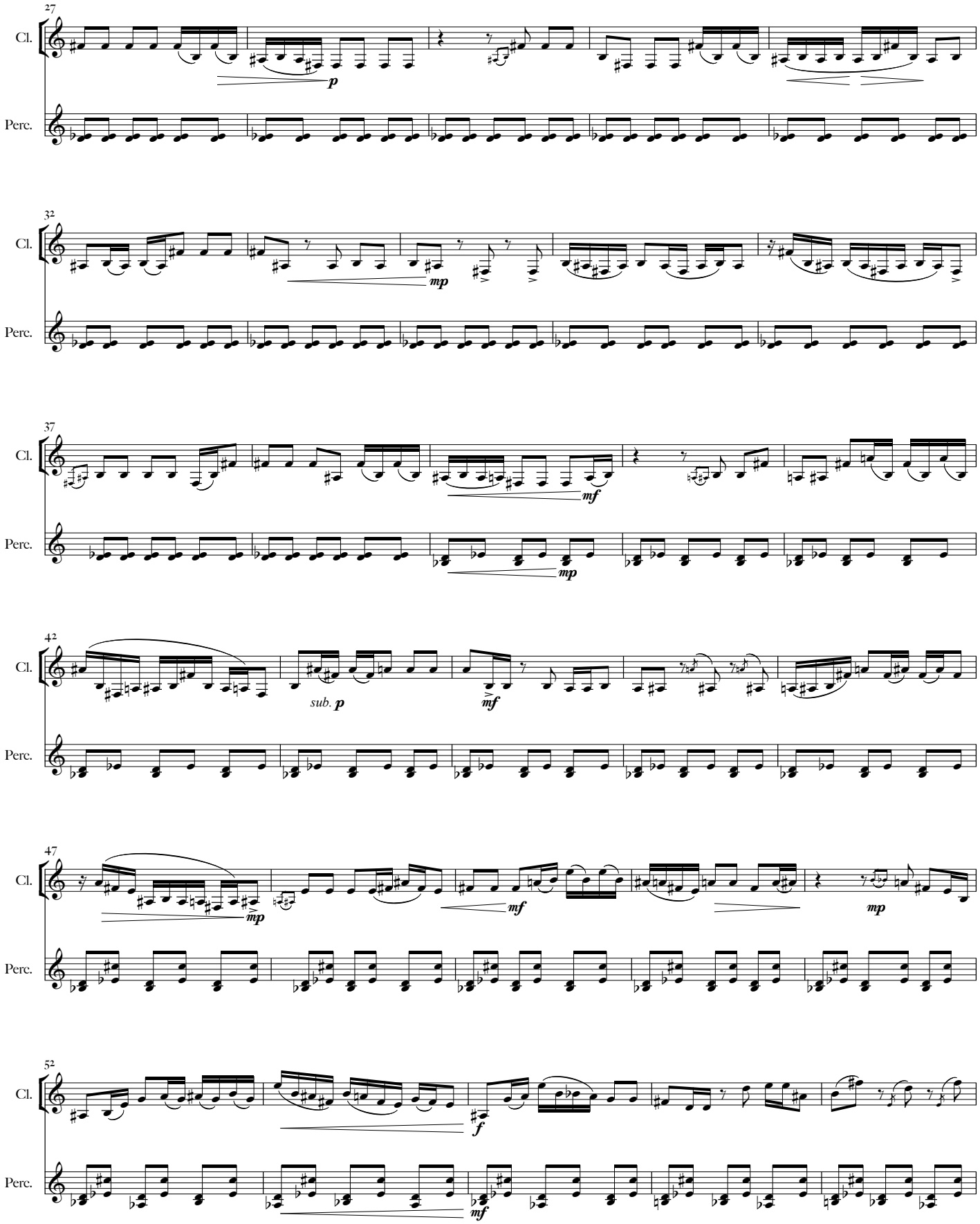
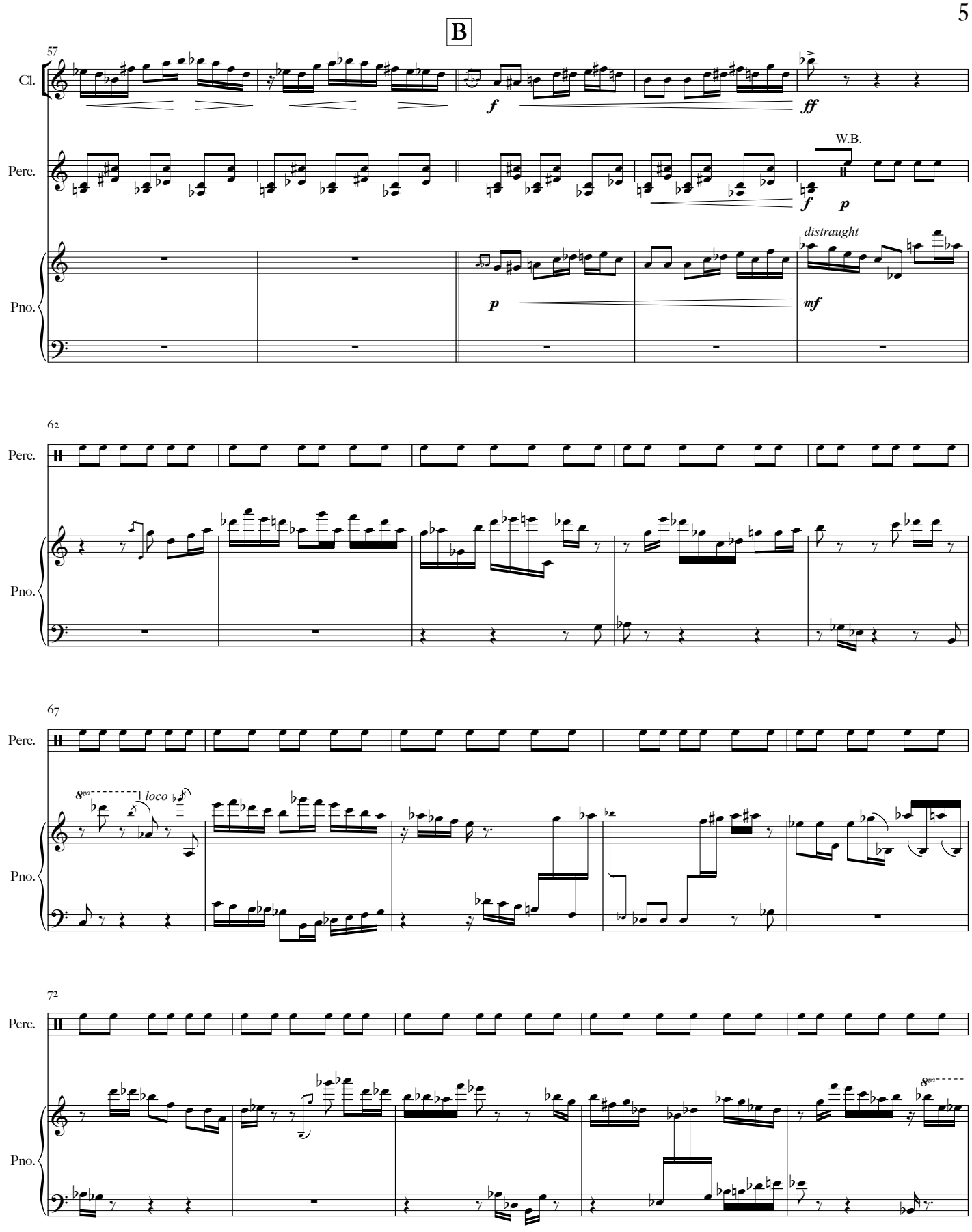
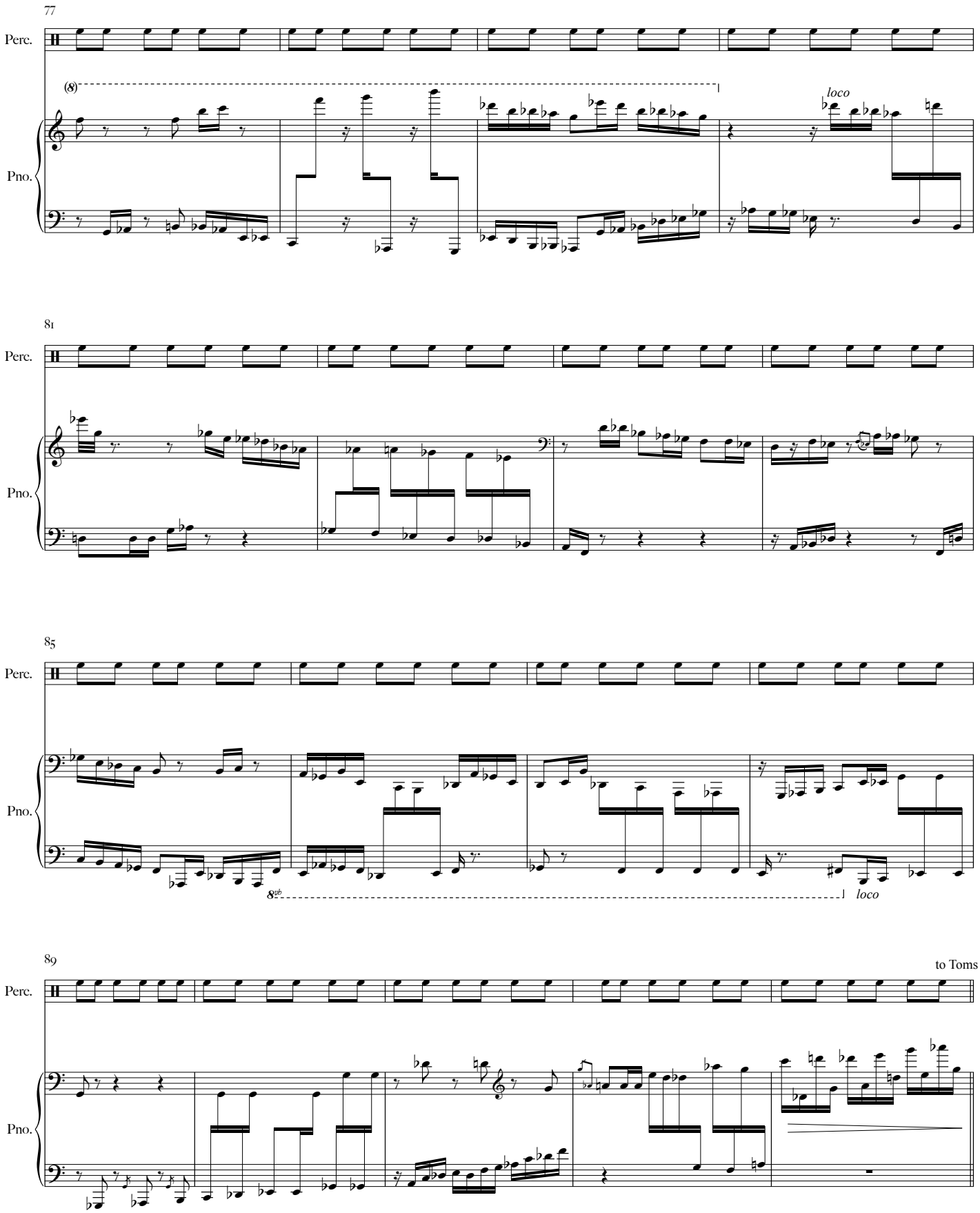

27
Cl.
Perc.
p
32
Cl.
Perc.
mp
37
Cl.
Perc.
mf
mp
42
Cl.
Perc.
sub. p
mf
47
Cl.
Perc.
mp
mf
mp
52
Cl.
Perc.
f
mf


B
57
Cl.
Perc.
Pno.
f
ff
W.B.
f
p
distraught
p
mf
62
Perc.
Pno.
67
Perc.
8va
loco
Pno.
72
Perc.
Pno.
8va


77
Perc.
Pno.
(8)
loco
81
Perc.
Pno.
85
Perc.
Pno.
8vb
loco
89
Perc.
Pno.
to Toms

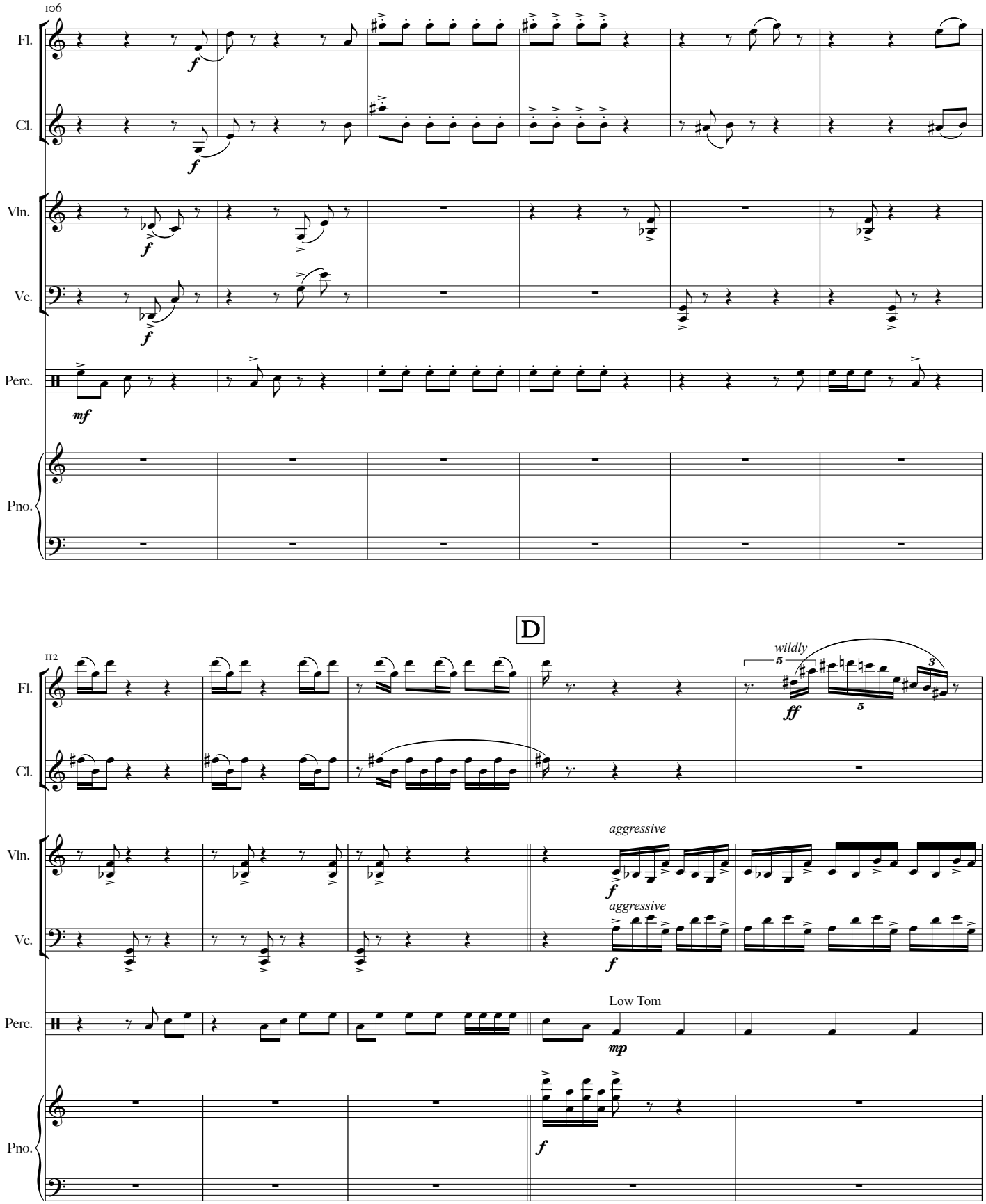
C ♩ = 132 (or continue at previous tempo if faster than ♩ = 132)

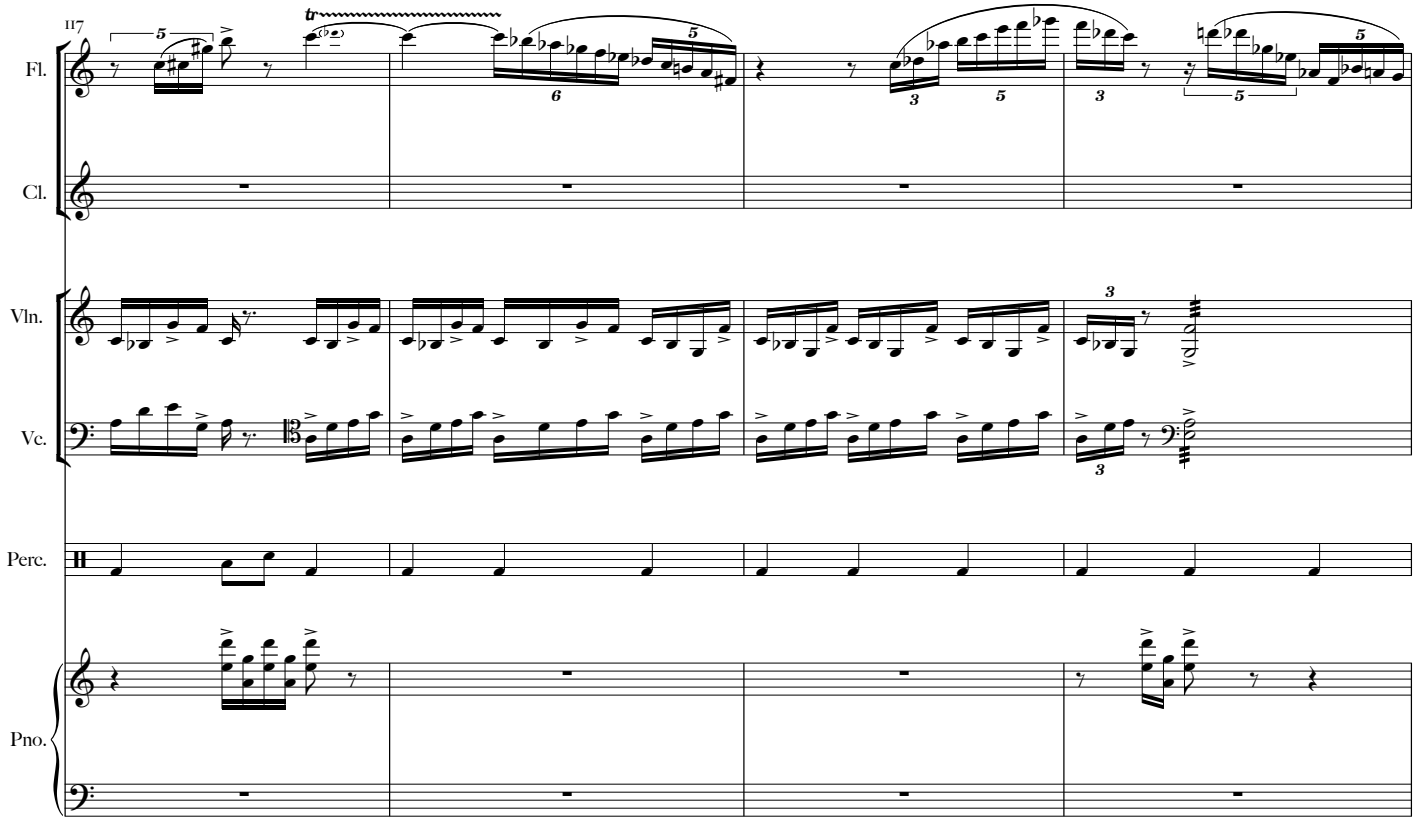
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.

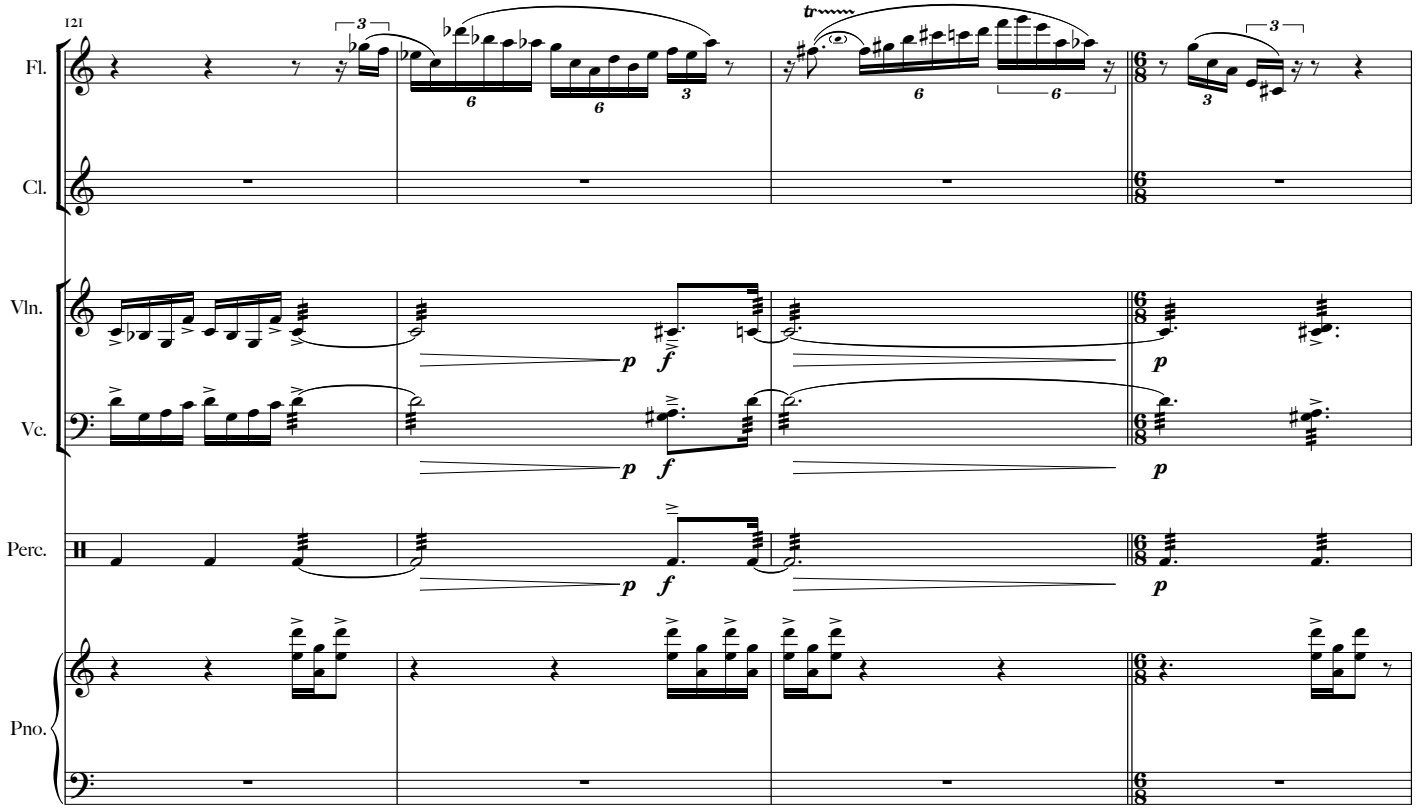
Toms W.B. to W.B.

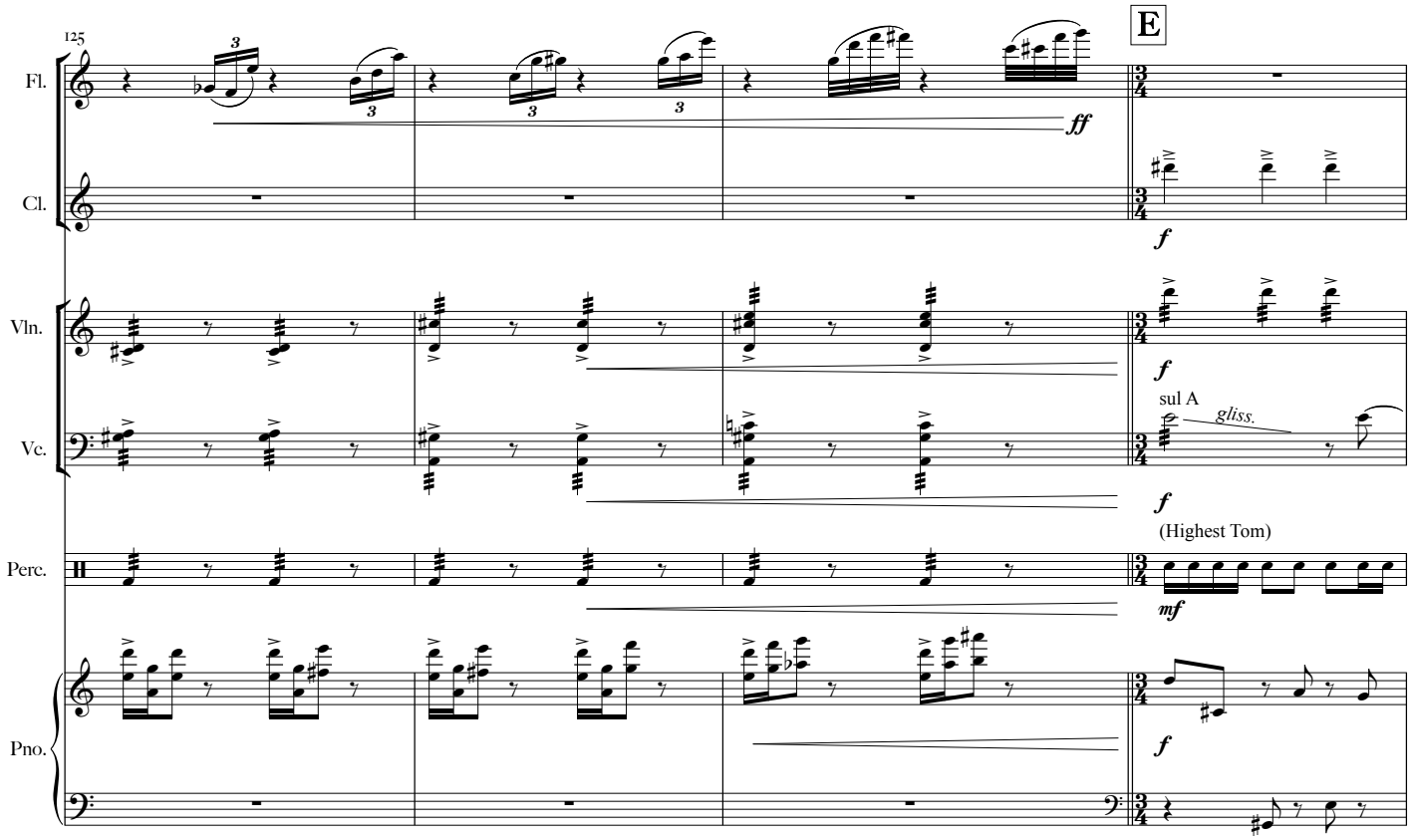
100

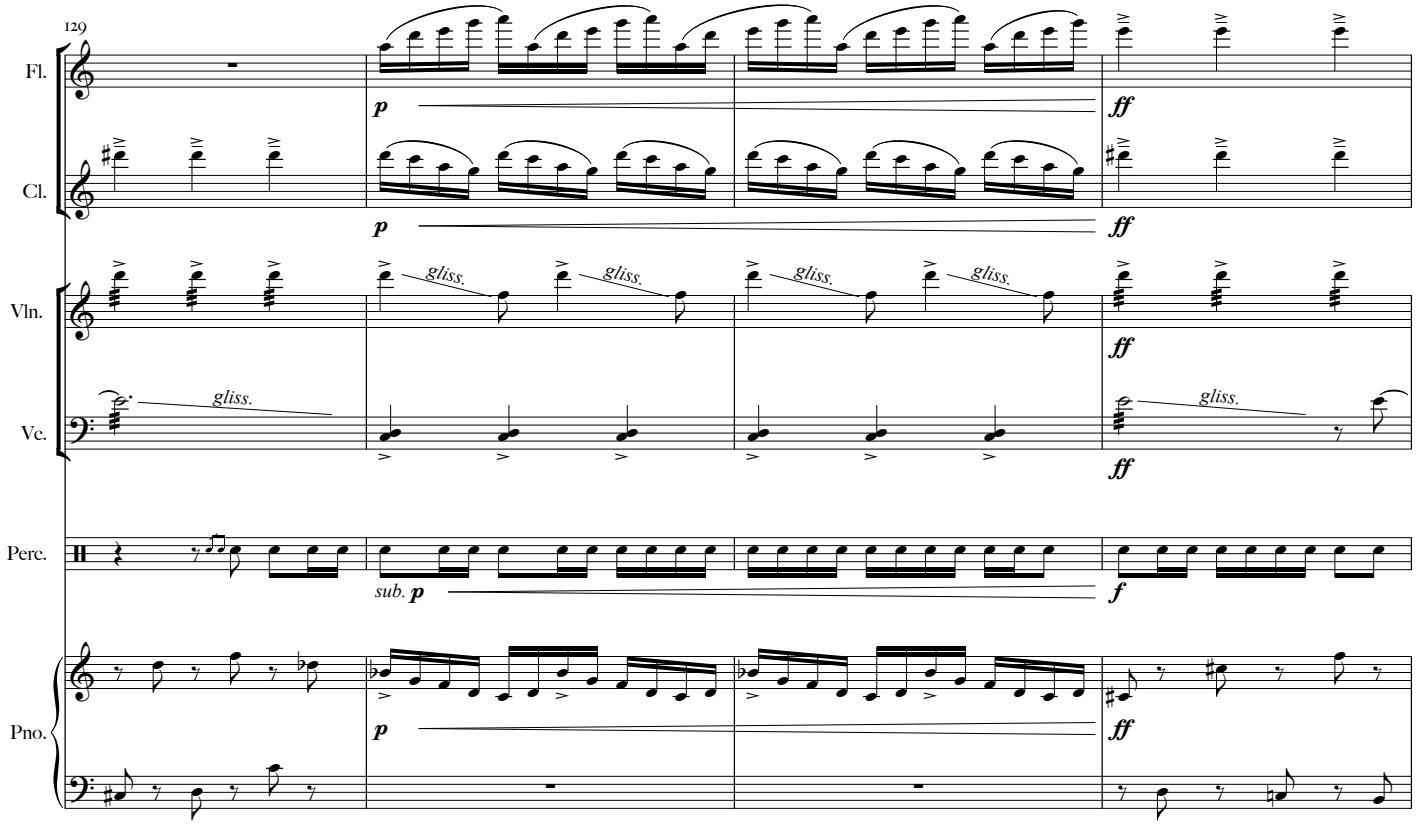
Toms

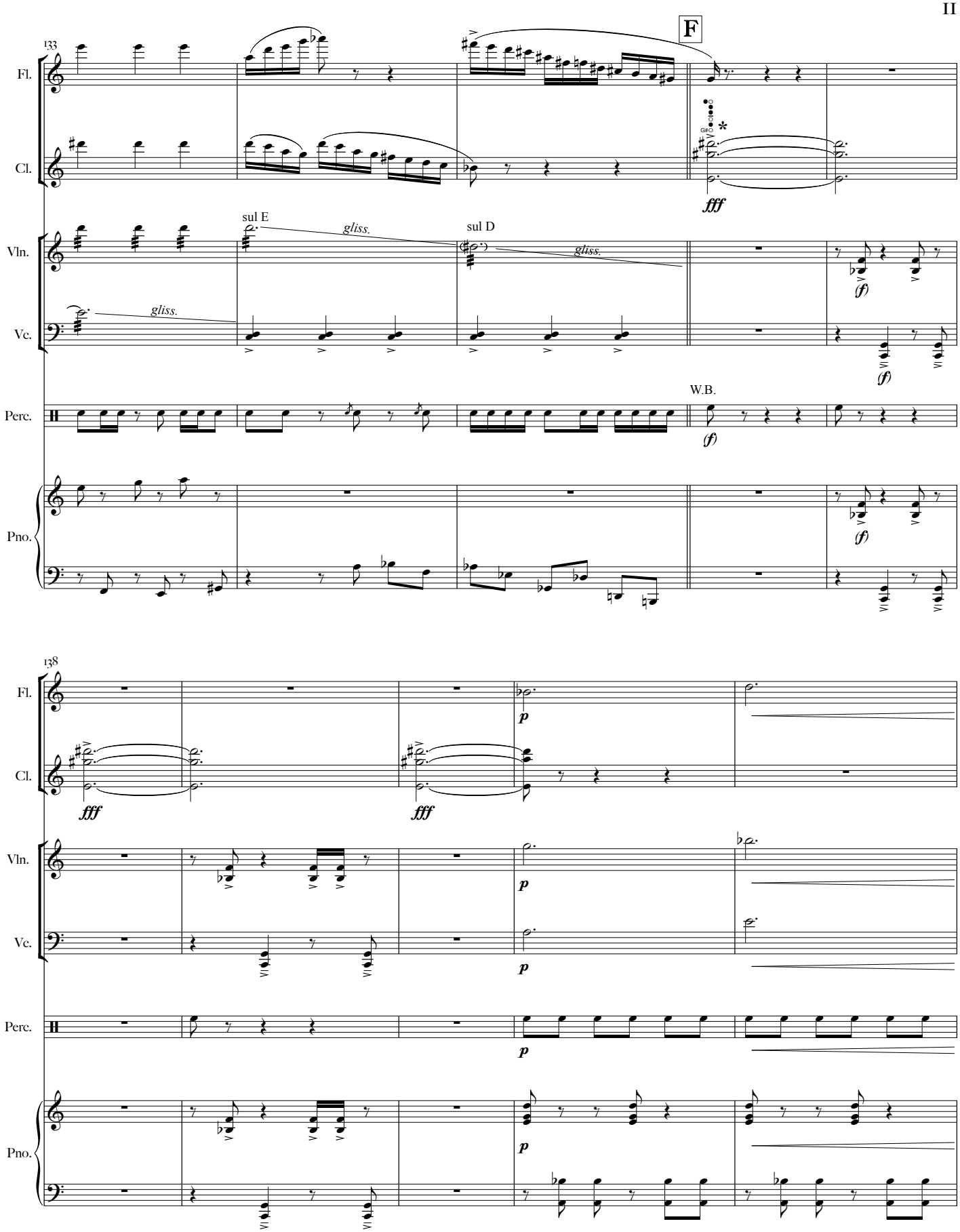

106
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.
f
mf
D
112
wildly
ff
aggressive
Low Tom
mp


117
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.

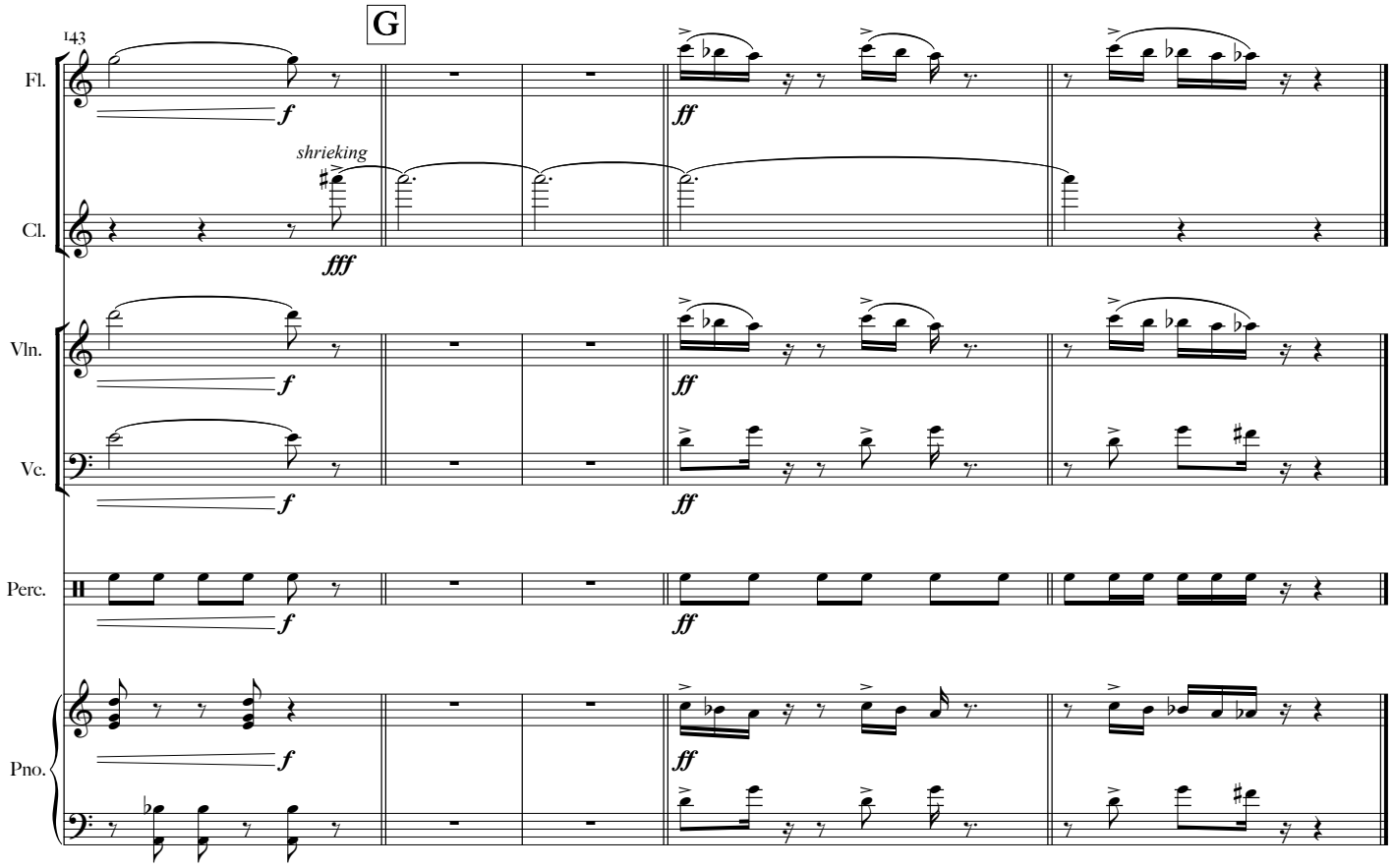

121
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.
p
f
p
f
p
f
p


125
E
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.
ff
f
sul A
gliss.
(Highest Tom)
mf


129
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.
p
ff
gliss.
sub. p
f



*This multiphonic creates a highly dissonant and strained tone. If the performer is unable to create the right tone with the notated multiphonic or a similar multiphonic, the performer may substitute a low, growling flutter-tongue for the three multiphonic attacks. This multiphonic and fingering, along with many others, can be found in *New Directions for Clarinet* by Phillip Rehfeldt.


143
G
Fl.
Cl.
Vln.
Vc.
Perc.
Pno.
shrieking
f
fff
ff