Triple Choir Motet

JESAIA, DEM PROPHETEN

XXIV from *Urania*, 1603

by

Michael Praetorius

(1571-1621)

for 3 antiphonal groups of winds

transcribed by Jeff Held, 2016

Group 1: 2 trumpets, horn, trombone
Group 2: flugelhorn, 2 horns, 2 clarinets, bassoon
Group 3: 2 trumpets, 2 trombones

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Historical Context:

It was the Venetian cathedrals in the 1540s that first rang out with music for *cori spezzati* (separated choirs). Adrian Willaert pioneered the technique, a grand style that place choirs on different balconies to create a surround sound effect. Giovanni Gabrieli brought it to its height in the 1590s by addingng instruments, notably including wind instruments which previously had little, if any, role in the church. Many composers traveled to Venice to hear this festive church music. Michael Praetorius (1571-1621) was not one of those, but he zestfully absorbed the style from those that did.

Michael Praetorius was one of the leading musicians in Germany in the early 1600s. He was a prolific composer, pubishing over 2000 works - a remarkable feat for a period when the printing process was so laborious. Many of his published works were in the polychoral style (*cori spezzati*) and were used in Lutheran worship practice. The predominance of the chorale in Lutheran worship led to his usage of them as the underlying musical material for his polychoral works. This is a different contribution to church music than found in Venice,where the Italian style would utilize its ancient plainchant melodies or original melodies. Praetorius's compositional technique allowed the chorale texts to remain unobscured by musical complexities, an ideal that was also prominent in Catholic church music at the time (the Counter-Reformation). Not surprisingly, these compositions were influenced by the music of his contemporary, Palestrina, who was the musical champion of the Counter-Reformation. Praetorius, though, was a dedicated Lutheran - he regretted never becoming ordained - who, like Luther, saw a close connection between preaching and singing the Gospel.

Praetorius's place in music history lies in a direct line from Martin Luther and his musical collaborator, Johann Walter (his father was a colleague of Walter and Michael studied in the pedagogical system created by Walter at the Latin School in Torgau). His prolific exposition of Lutheran chorales solidified their artistic and spiritual value for use in worship, which set the table for future generations of Lutheran cantors such as Buxtehude and J.S. Bach. He also was know as a music theorist who published writings on the theory and practice of music, particularly in church settings.

About this setting:

Conductors may wish to adapt these parts to fit a particular instrumentation for their ensembles. This is perfectly acceptable. This setting has been generated out of a sense of particular adaptation (using the winds at hand during a Germany tour of the Concordia Sinfonietta). Please note that some additional alternate/ doubled wind parts have been generated and included in the part set already, although they are not included in the score.

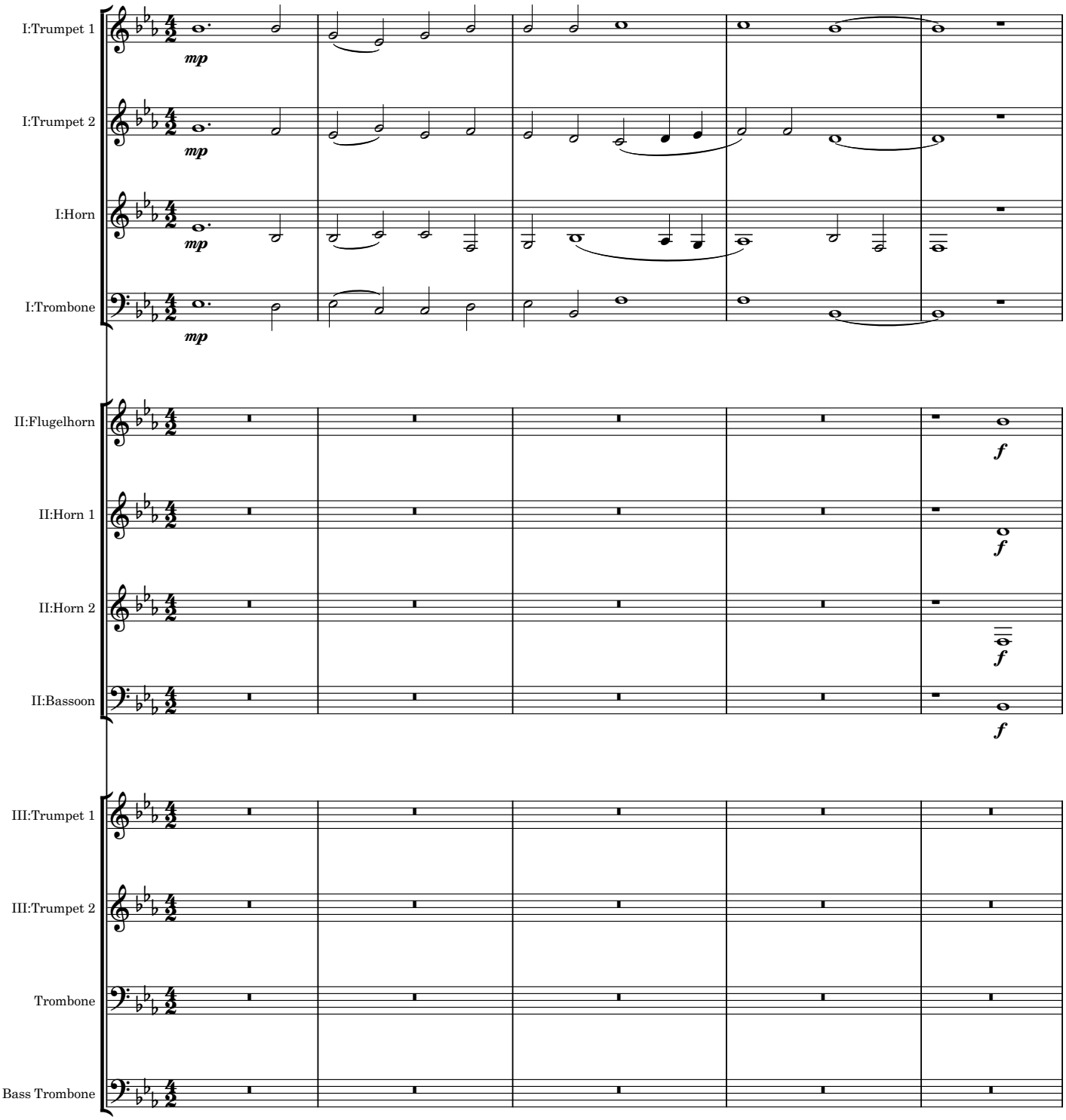
Dynamics have been inserted by the editor. This music was not published originally with dynamics, so conductors should feel free to alter them. Also, some accents have been added. These typically denote where instrumentalists should particularly come to the fore when the full ensemble is playing. Usually, they are added where an instrument has a lone moving part that needs to cut through a comparatively static ensemble. These accents should be distinguished from the ensemble. Their length should be moderated as indicated with tenuto or staccato marks: all accents with staccato should be separated, not necessarily short, and all accents with tenuto should be longer, but not connected. Often, Praetorius assigned one or two parts of rhythmic interest at any given moment, even amidst tutti sections. They must be heard!

Jeff Held

Urania, XXIV (1613)
JESAIA, DEM PROPHETEN

Original chorale by Martin Luther, 1526

Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)
tr. Jeff Held



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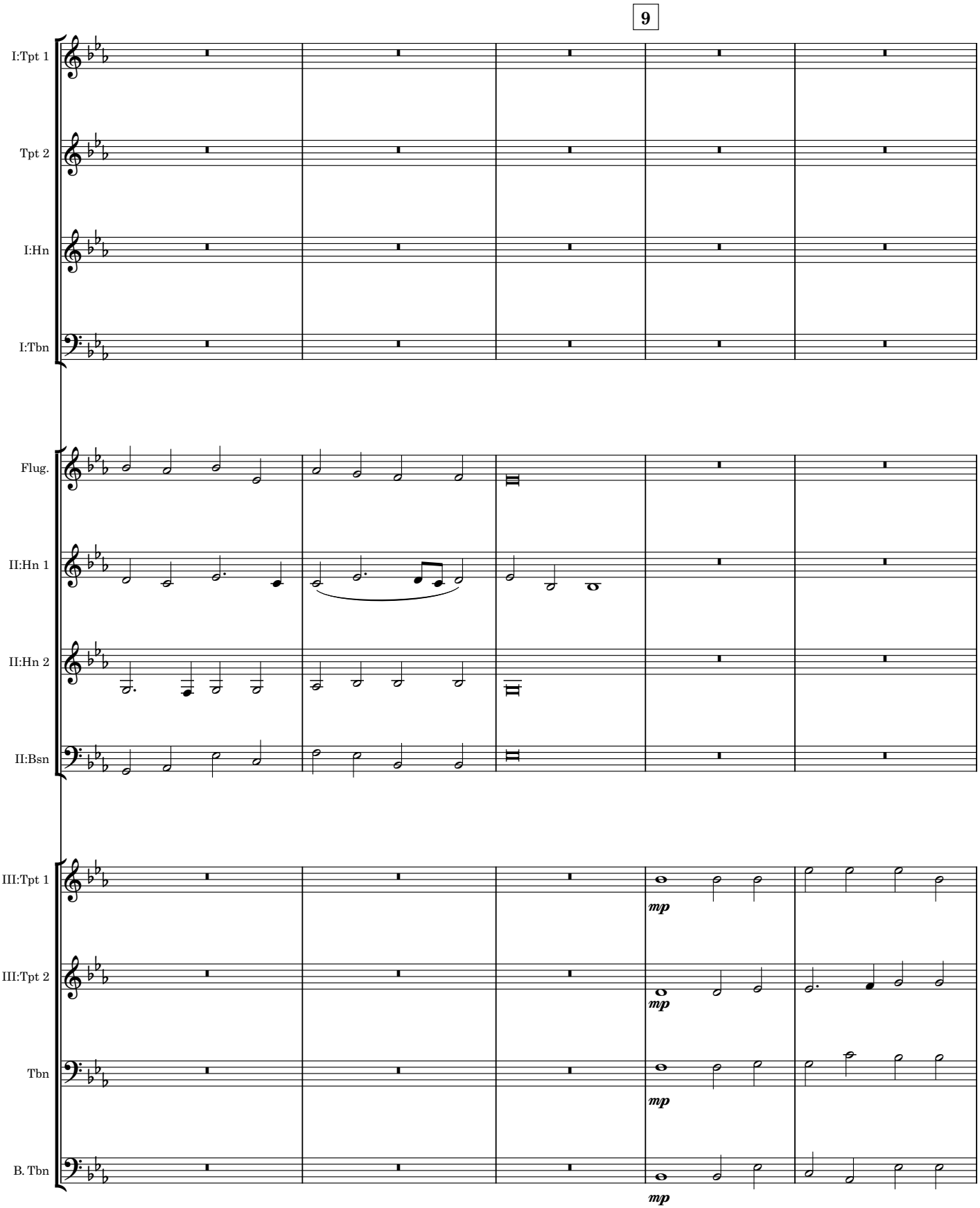
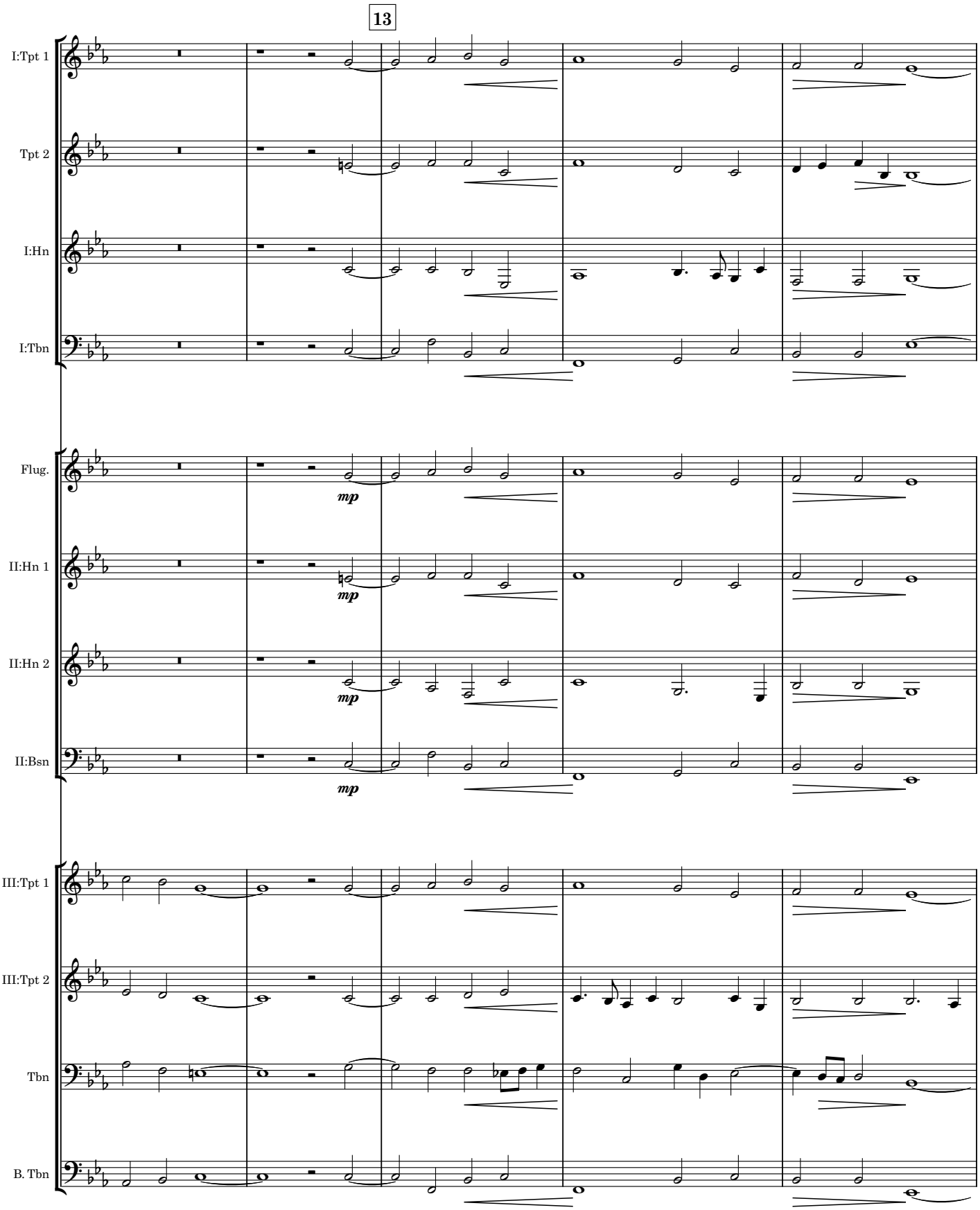
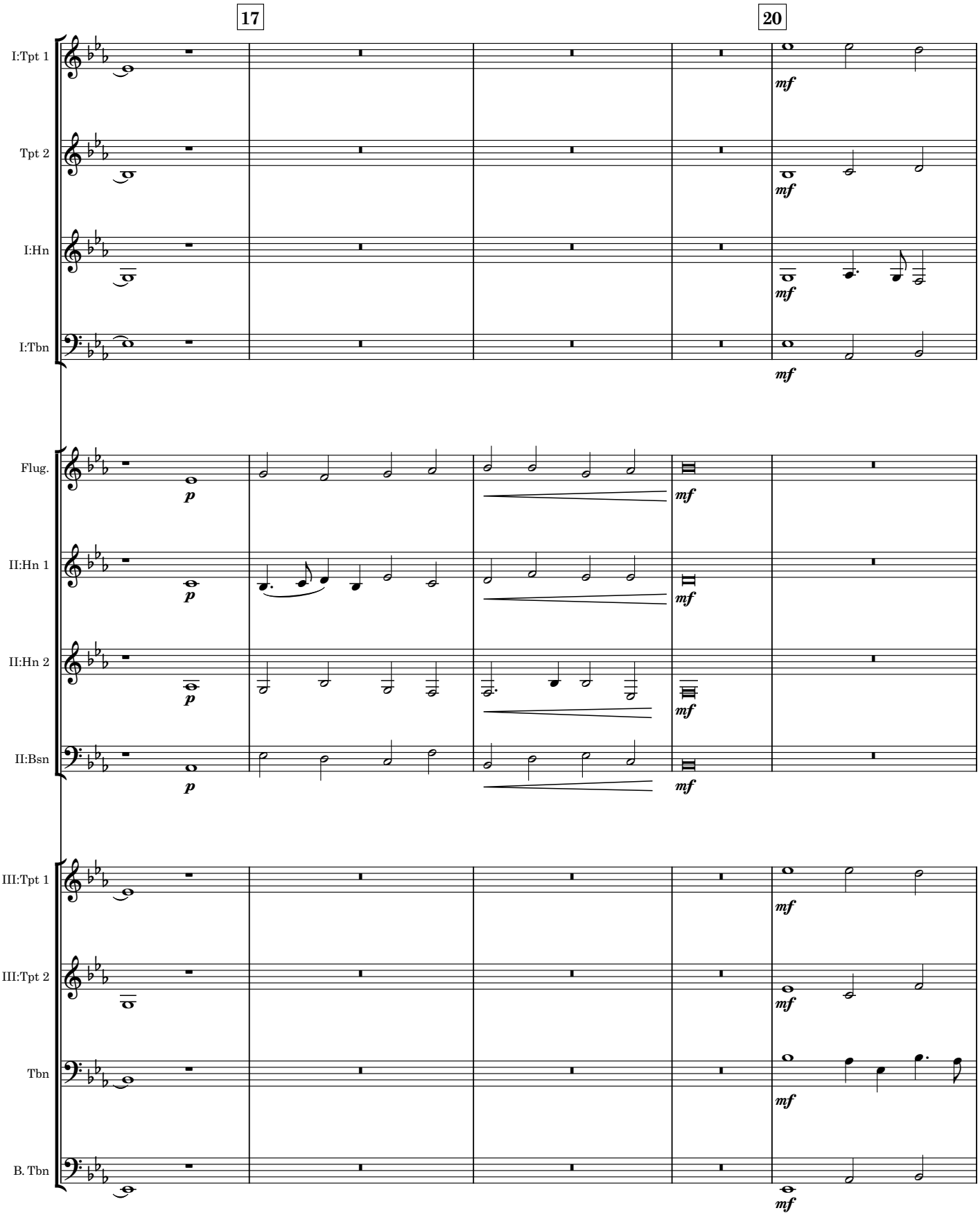
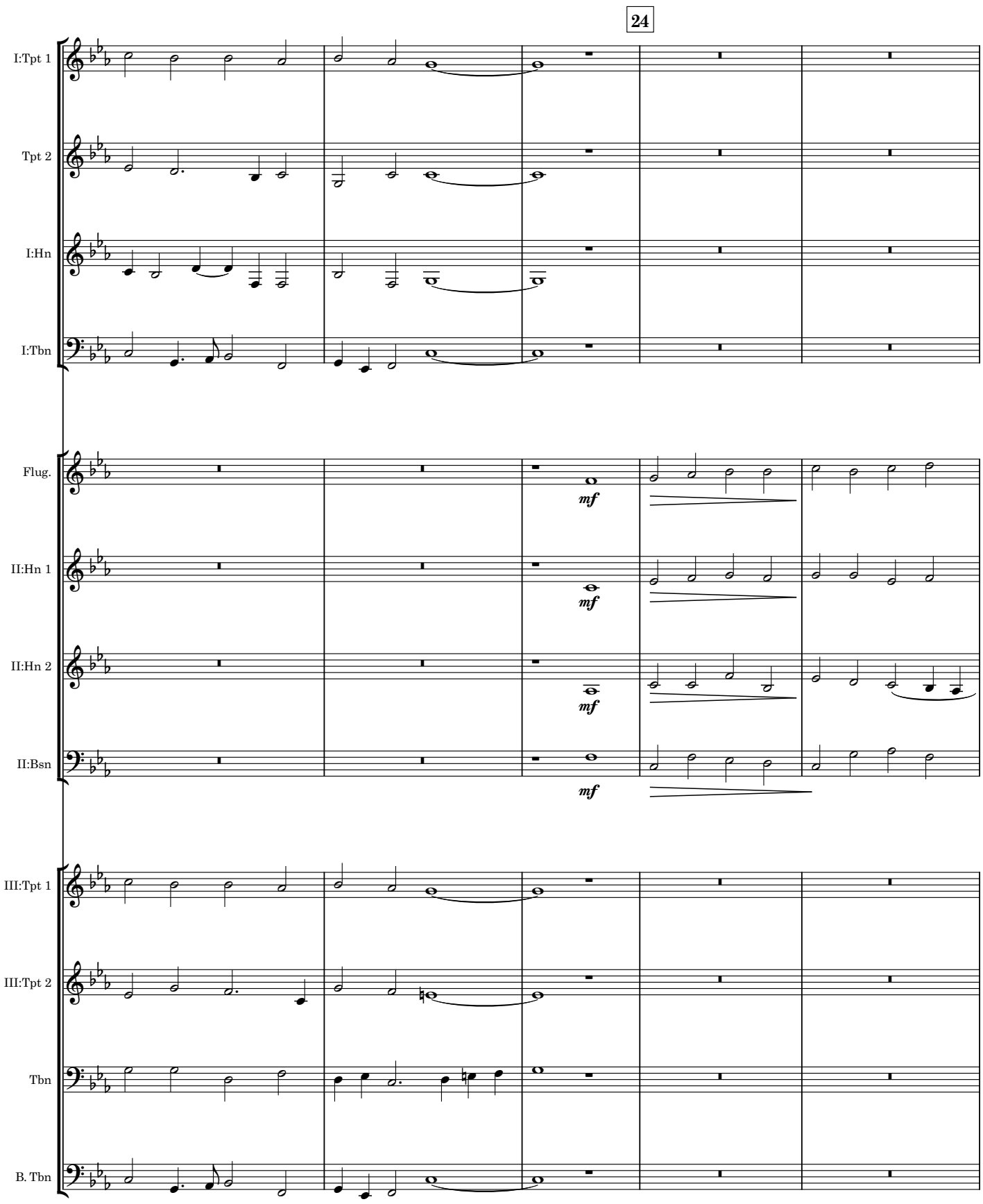
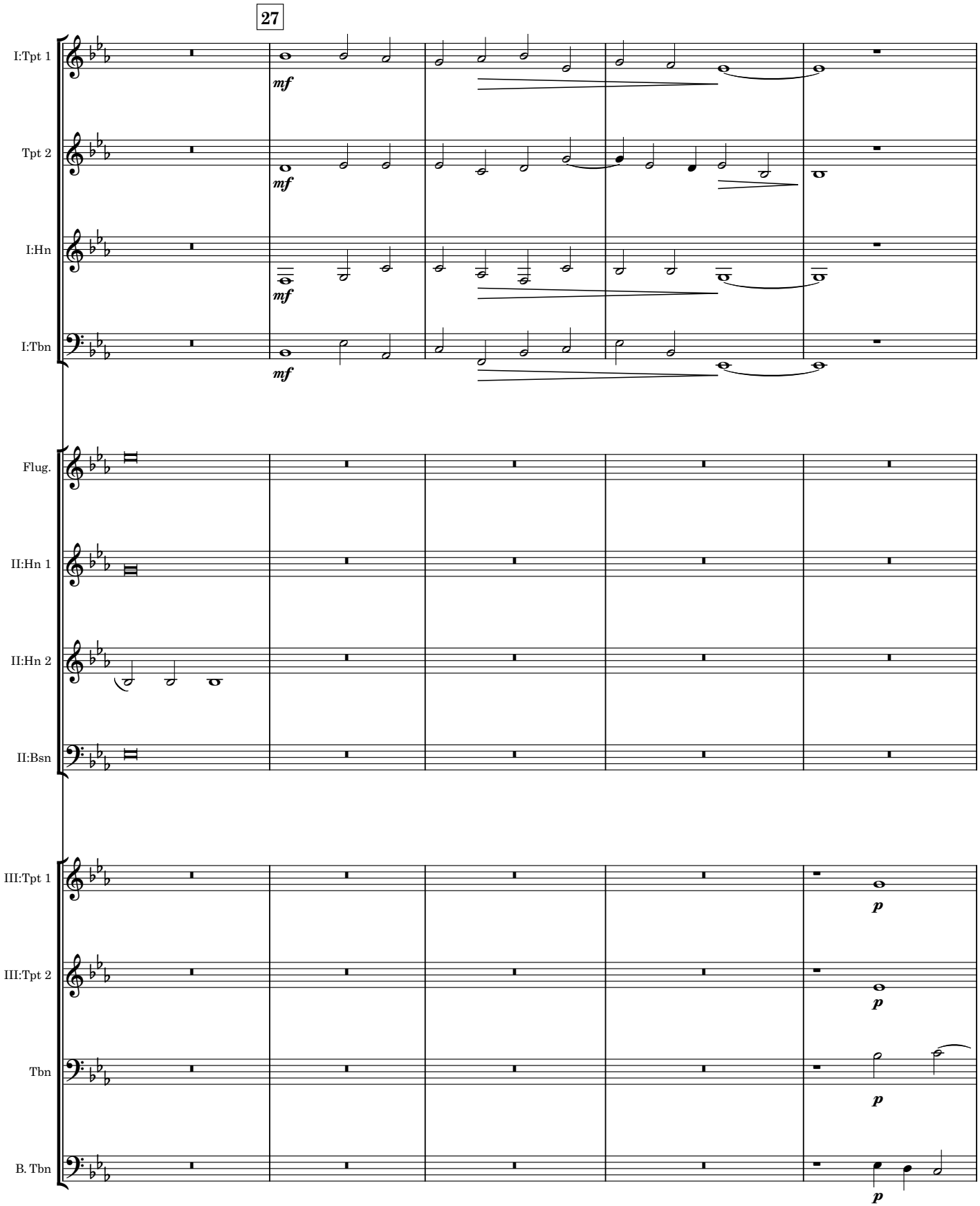
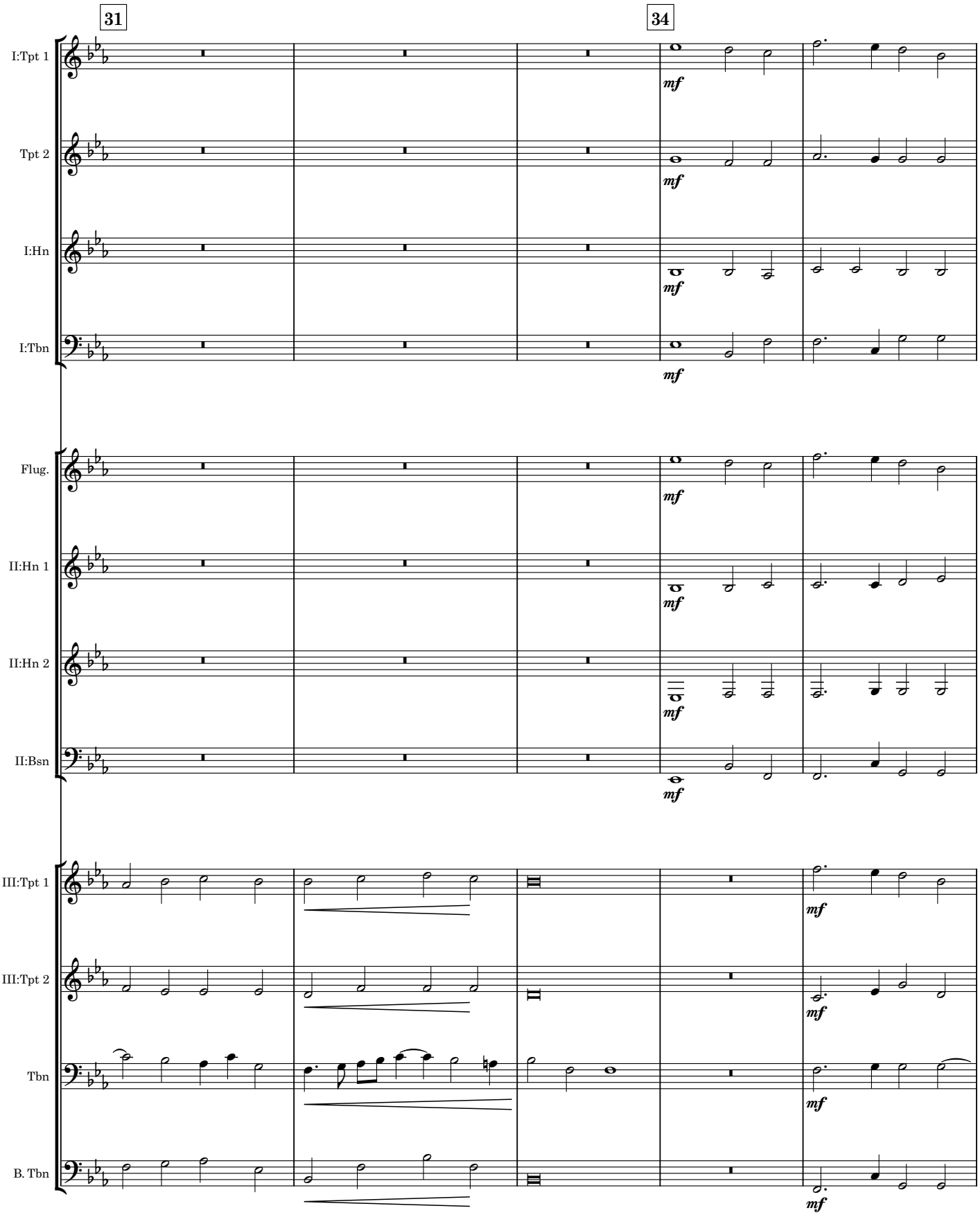

9
I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
Flug.
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
III:Tpt 2
Tbn
B. Tbn
mp
mp
mp
mp

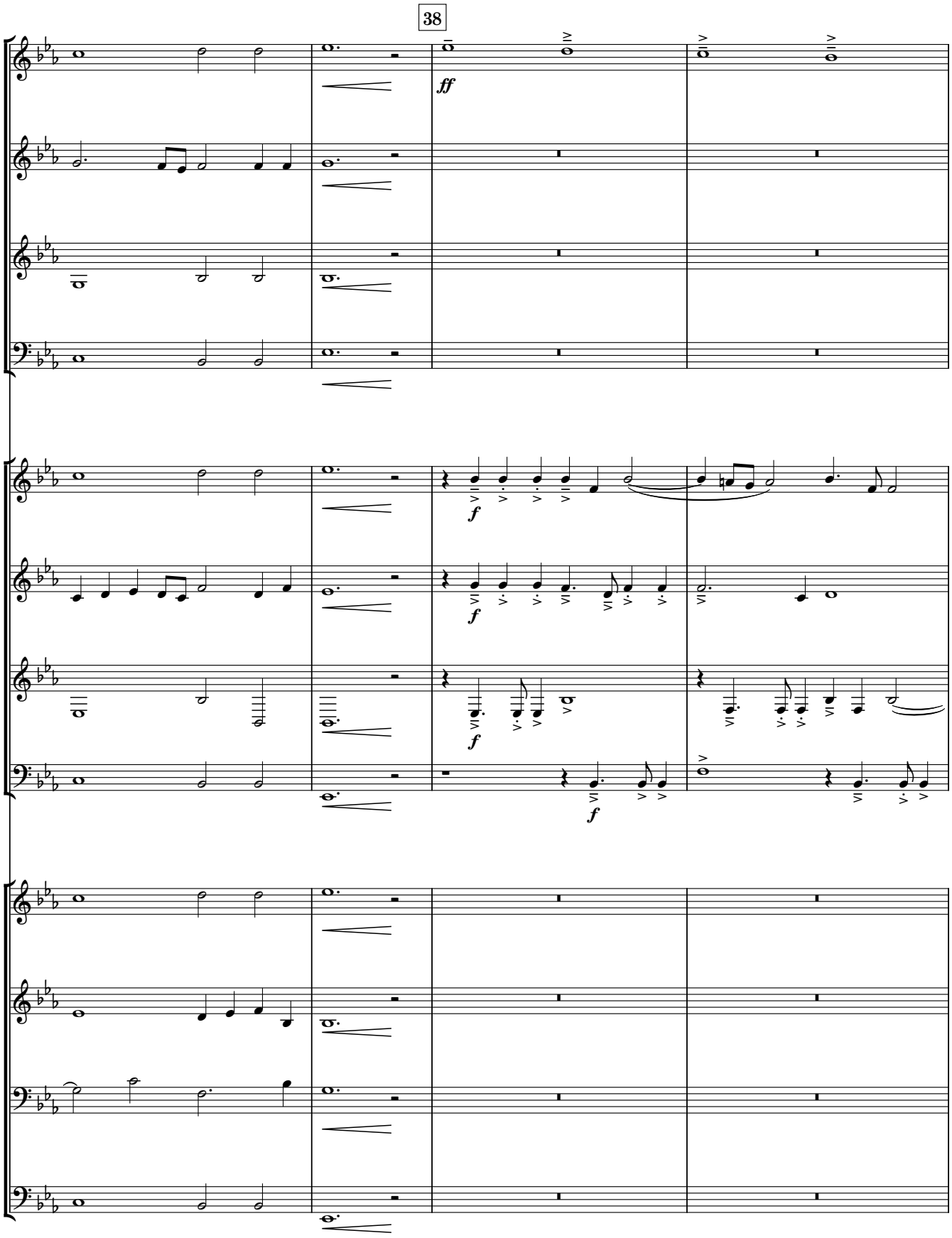

13
I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
Flug.
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
III:Tpt 2
Tbn
B. Tbn
mp

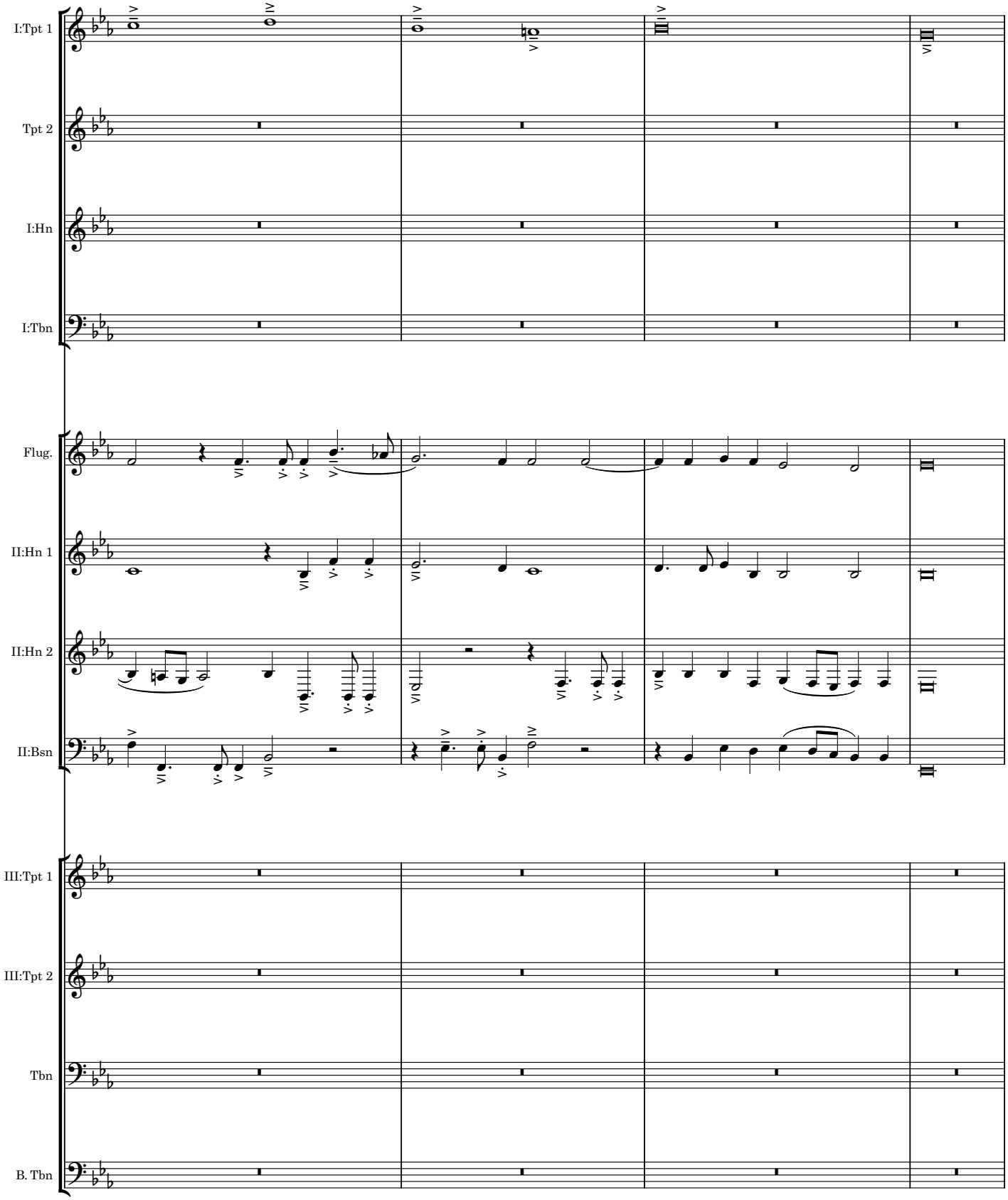

17
20
I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
Flug.
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
III:Tpt 2
Tbn
B. Tbn
p
mf

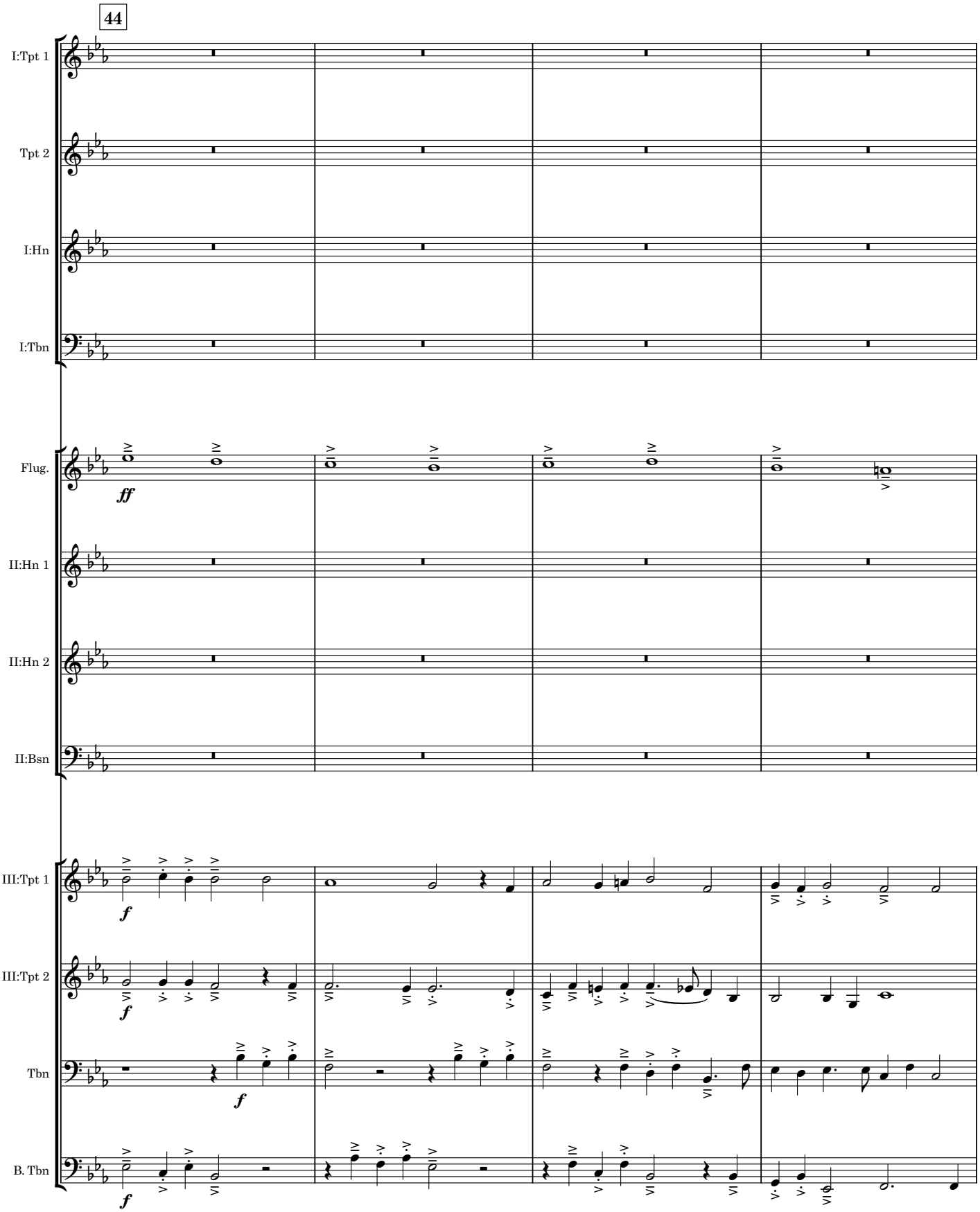

24
I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
Flug.
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
III:Tpt 2
Tbn
B. Tbn
mf
mf
mf

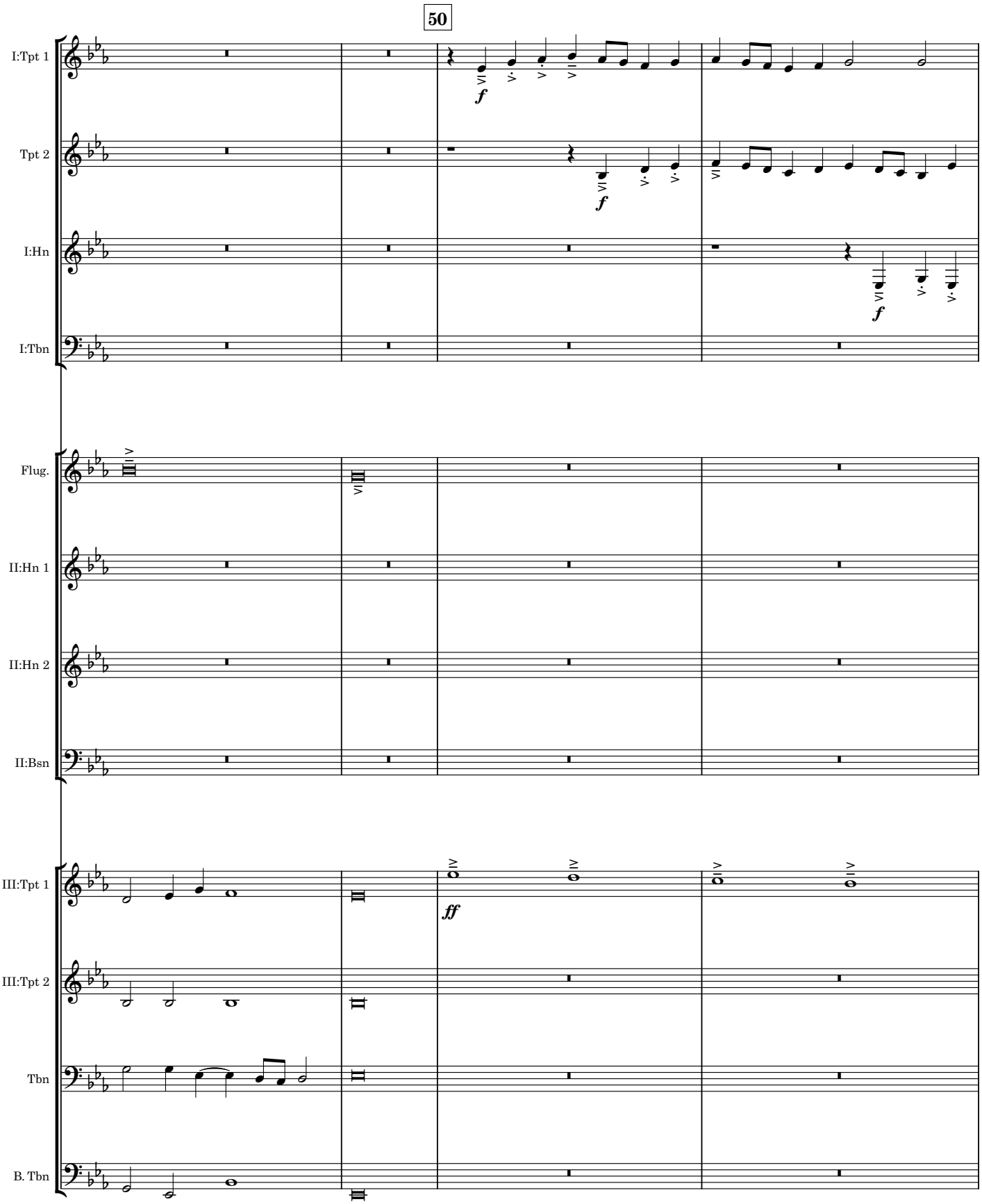

27
I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
Flug.
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
III:Tpt 2
Tbn
B. Tbn
mf
p

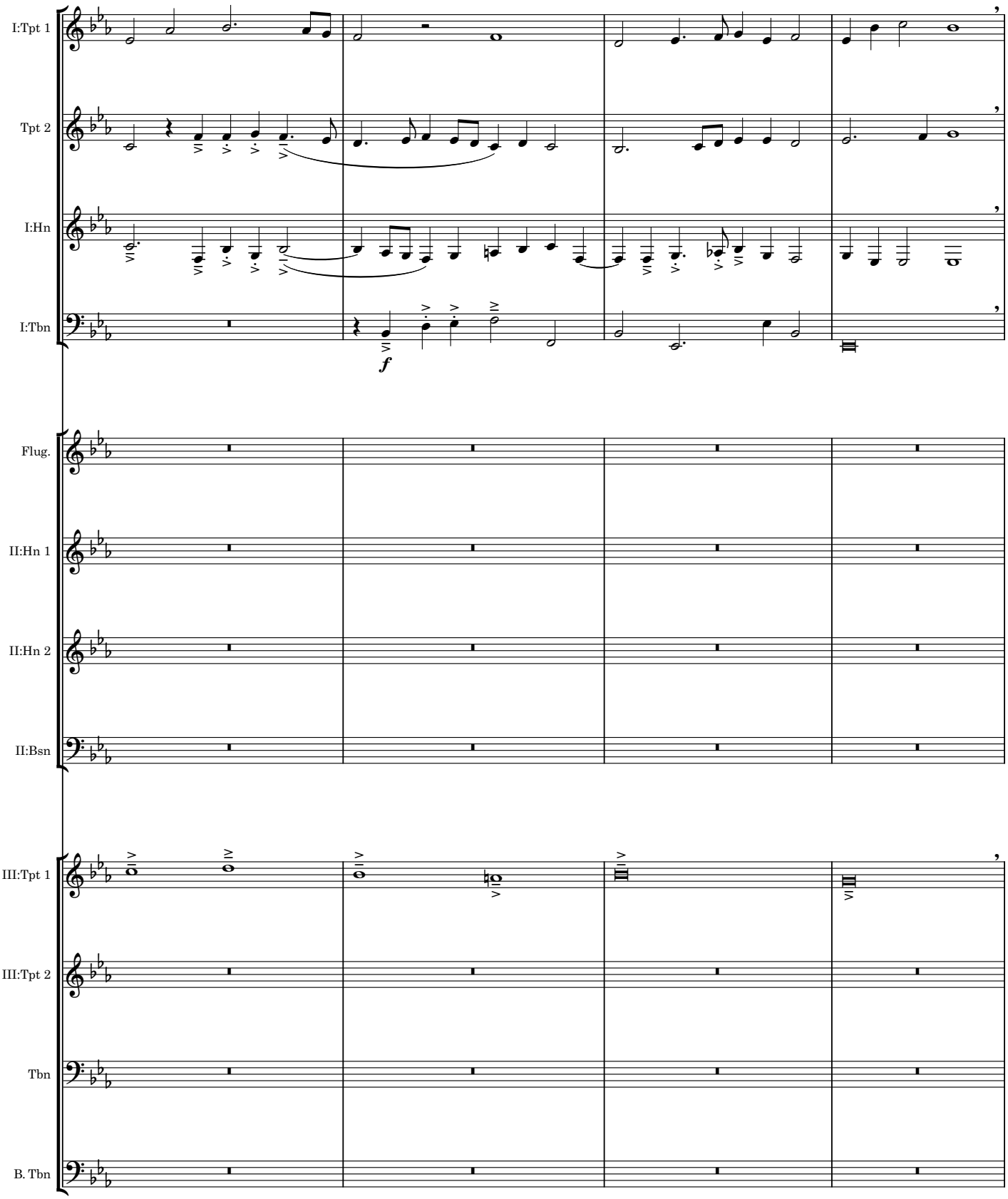

31
34
I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
Flug.
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
III:Tpt 2
Tbn
B. Tbn
mf

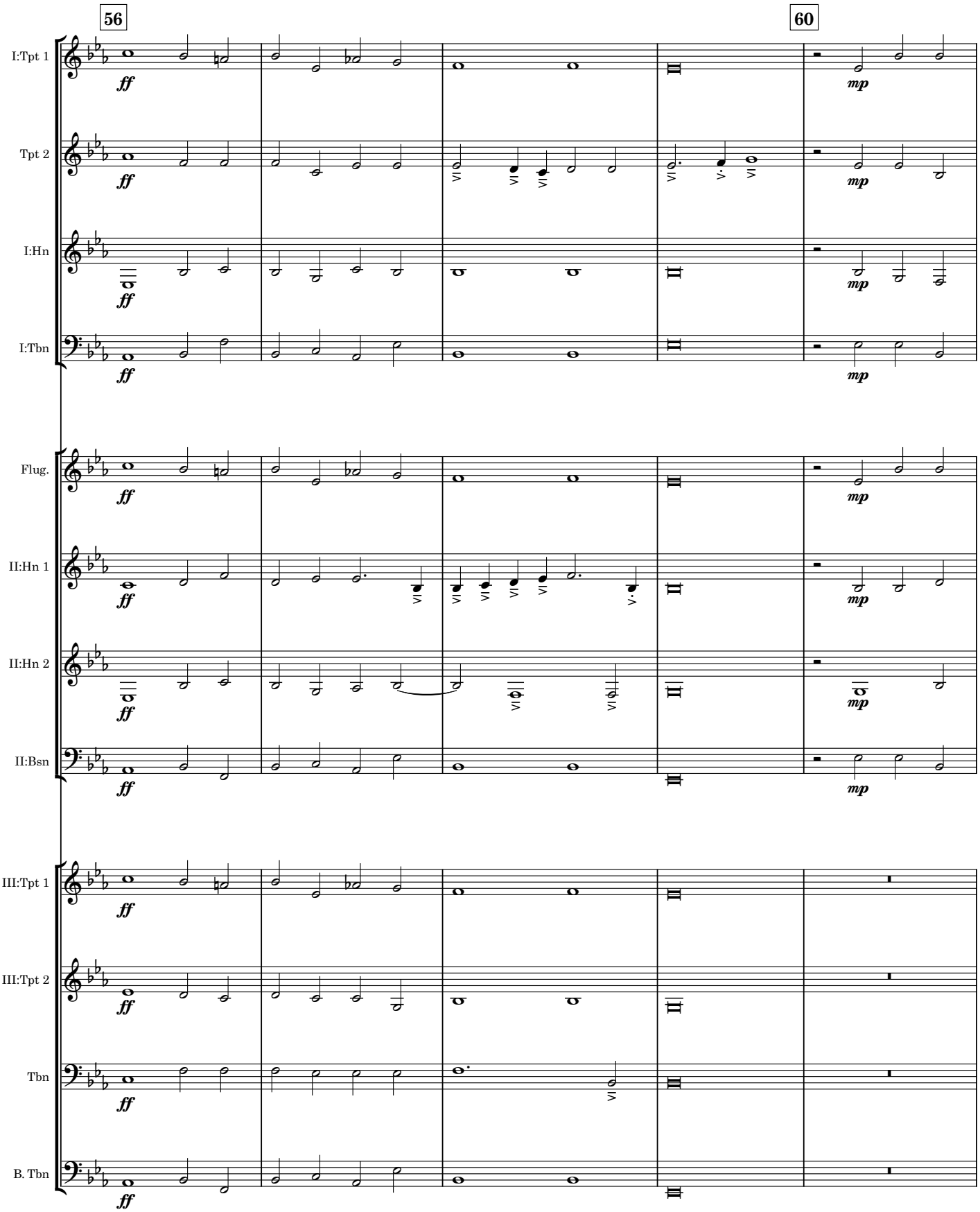

38
I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
Flug.
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
III:Tpt 2
Tbn
B. Tbn
ff
f
f
f

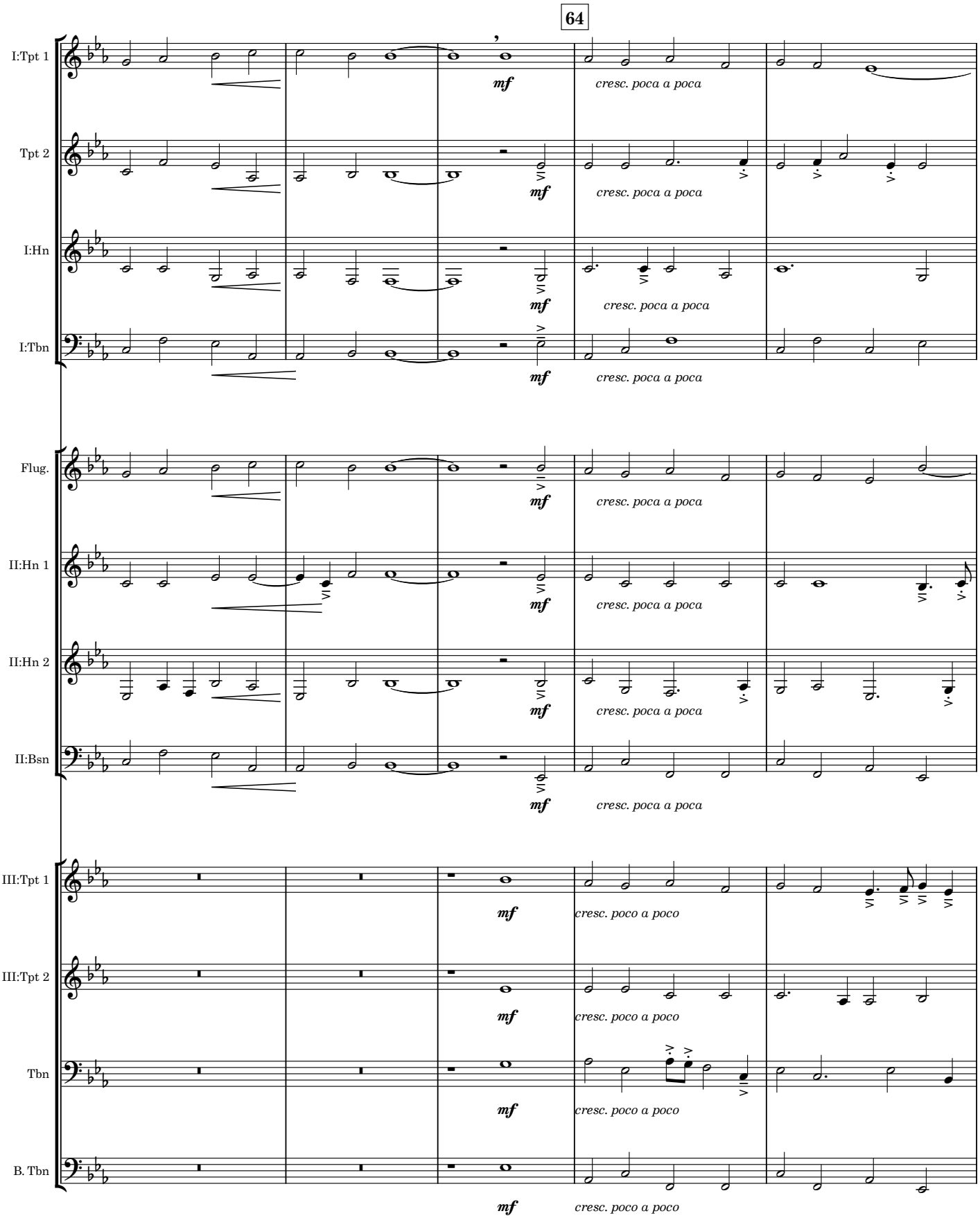

I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
Flug.
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
III:Tpt 2
Tbn
B. Tbn

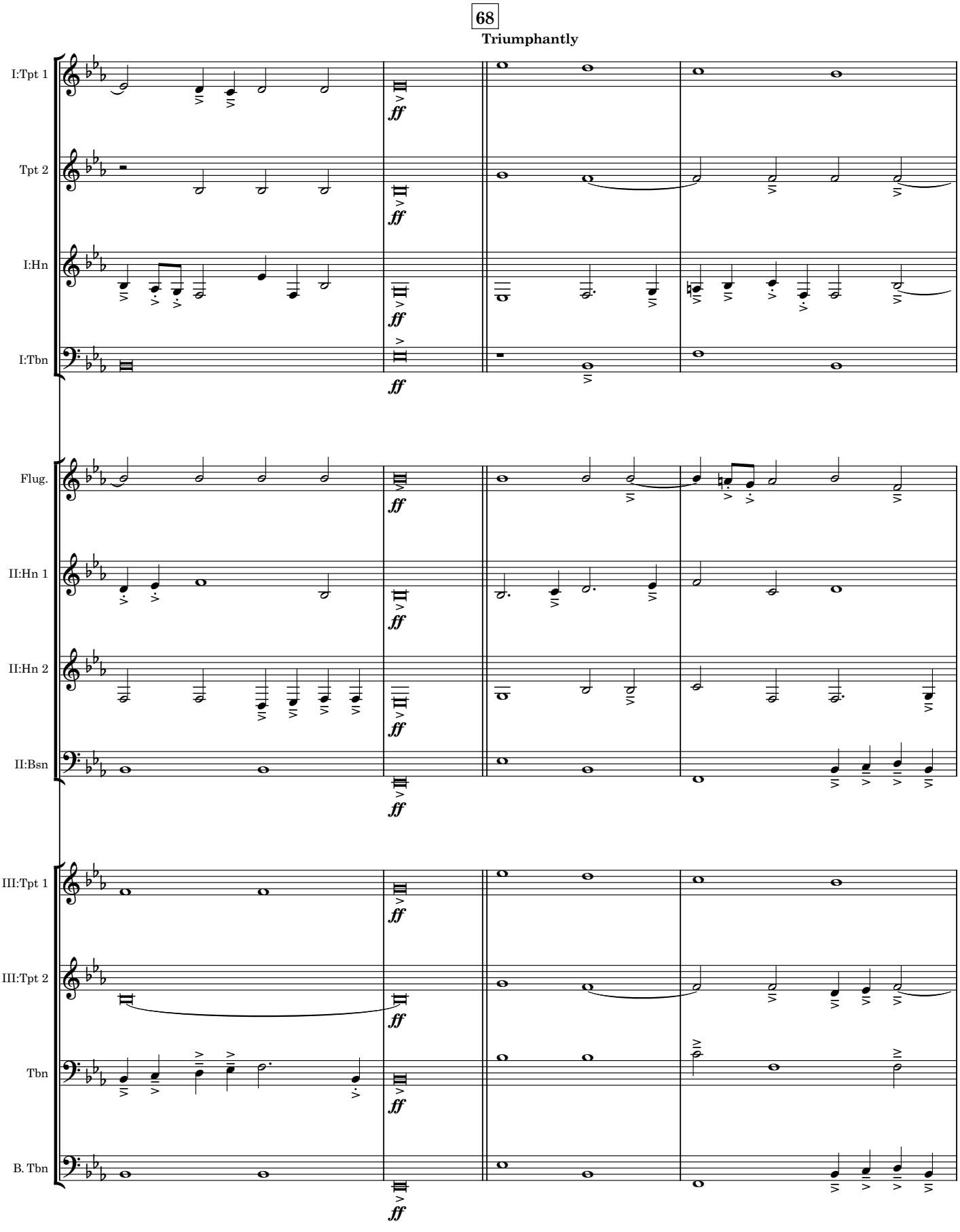

44
I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
Flug.
ff
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
f
III:Tpt 2
f
Tbn
f
B. Tbn
f

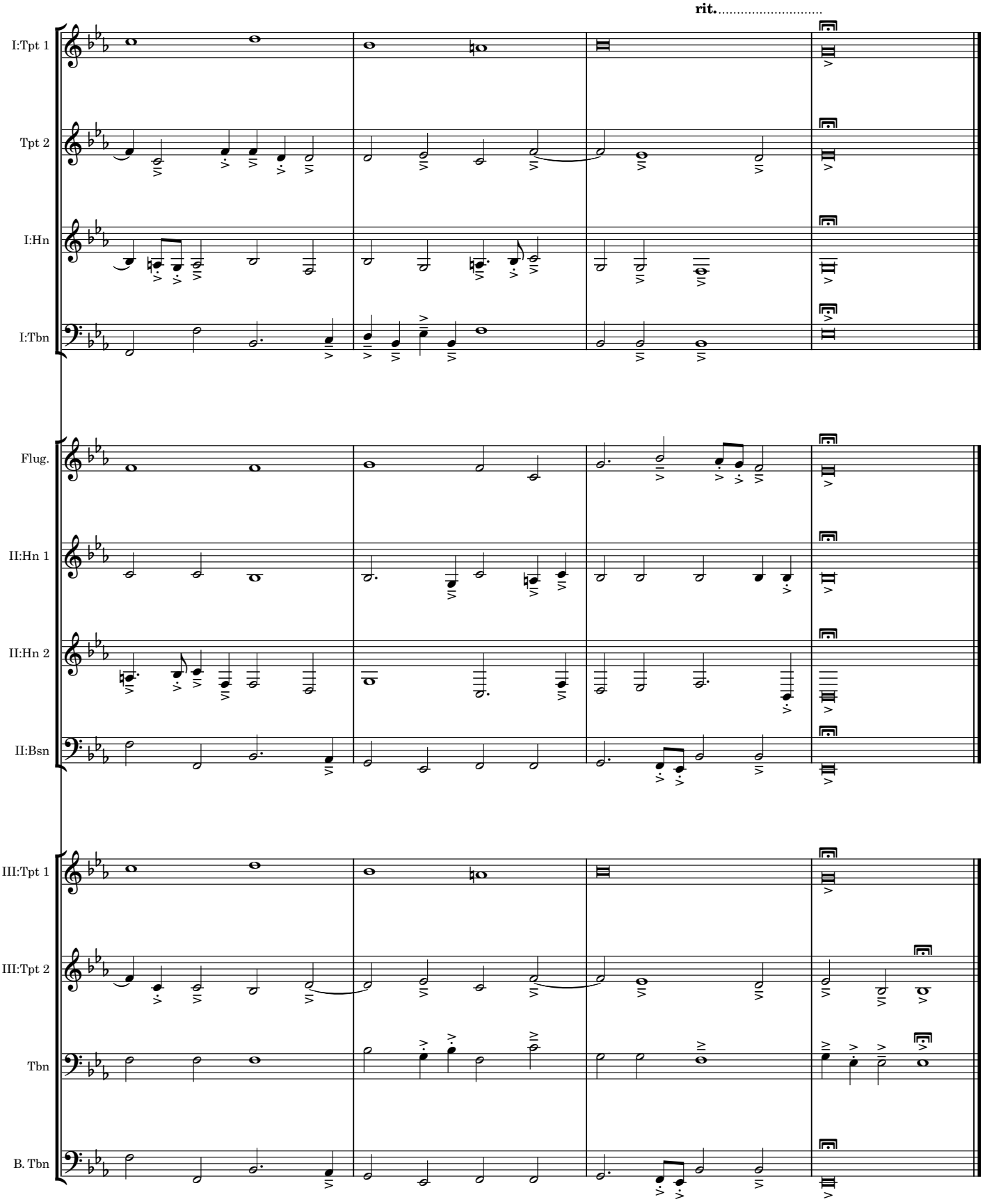

50
I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
Flug.
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
III:Tpt 2
Tbn
B. Tbn
f
ff


I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
f
Flug.
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
III:Tpt 2
Tbn
B. Tbn


56
60
I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
Flug.
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
III:Tpt 2
Tbn
B. Tbn
ff
mp


64
I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
Flug.
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
III:Tpt 2
Tbn
B. Tbn
mf
cresc. poca a poca
cresc. poco a poco


68
Triumphantly
I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
Flug.
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
III:Tpt 2
Tbn
B. Tbn
ff


rit.
I:Tpt 1
Tpt 2
I:Hn
I:Tbn
Flug.
II:Hn 1
II:Hn 2
II:Bsn
III:Tpt 1
III:Tpt 2
Tbn
B. Tbn