Ideal:Reality
for Drumset Quartet

Ethan Isaac
2022

Program Note:

Ideal:Reality is a part of a series of pieces based in restriction. Prompted by the lack of distinct tone in percussion, I strove to reach beyond that; To bring out the tonal reality locked within our preconceived notions of the drum as the antithesis of pitched sounds. To achieve this, I utilized techniques derived from tuning systems, and the research of composer Ben Johnston. Some of the basic building blocks of rhythm are repeated in the physics of pitches, in polyrhythms. With a focus on the relationship between the fifth (represented by the glockenspiel bars) and the resulting polyrhythms, Ideal:Reality displays the interference one can have when one's ideals face reality. The mathematic “Ideal” represented by the polyrhythms and the “Reality” being the linear, driving rhythms.

Isaac, Ethan. Ideal : Reality
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ethanisaac.org

Ideal : Reality (2022)

Composed by Ethan Isaac (b.1996)

Written for the 2022 So Percussion Summer Institute Final Concert

Instrumentation:

4 Drum sets
Including 4 Kick Drums,
4 Toms (Large, L-Medium, Medium, Small)
2 Hi-Hats
2 Snare Drums
2 Cymbals (Size variable to desired loudness)
2 Conga heads (or full size)
4 Glass Beer Bottles (preferably in pairs of different tones)
2 Loose Glock Bars (Notes C and G)

Technical Requirements:

Computer with DAW
Two microphones, preferably condensers. Placed near any of the kits.
PA system

Technical Notes:

This work includes an **optional** electronic element, included in the purchase of this score is a Reaper session (a free audio program) that will have the proper settings for a performance of this work. If you wish to create a session within a DAW of your choice feel free to copy over the settings from the included session file as they can be replicated with an EQ, gate, and reverb of your choice. You do not need to be picky with microphone placement as it is more so a source of noise to open the gate and be processed by the EQ than for any sound reinforcement.

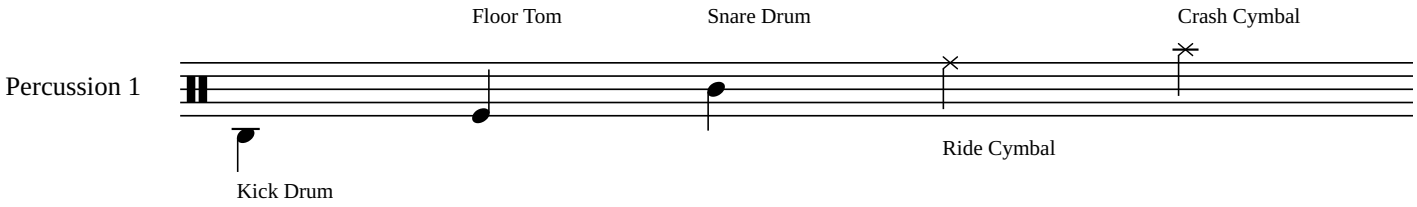
Performance Notes:

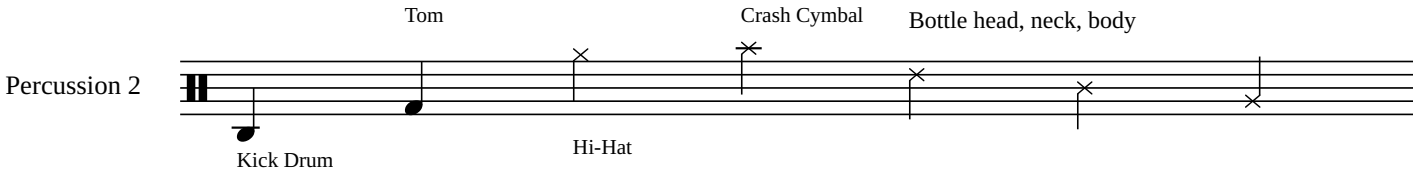
As this work can be quite loud, feel free to dampen the drums by any means necessary for the performance space. The cymbals can be especially loud, so feel free to experiment with sizes starting on the smaller side. Small foam tubing is best for setting up the loose Glock bars. Refer to the video on So Percussion's YouTube channel for an idea of what the set up looks like. There are other possibilities, such as standing with kick drums behind you. Feel free to explore what works best for your group!

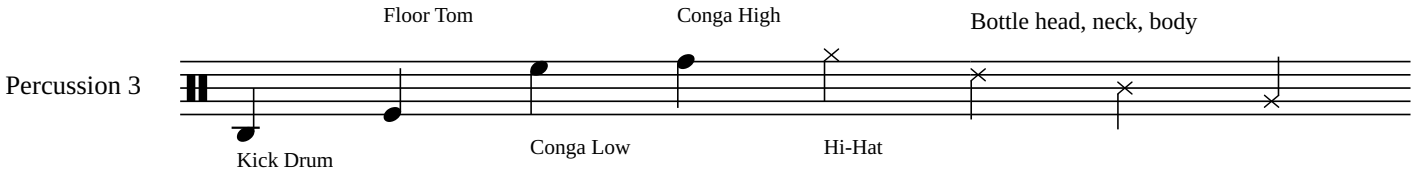
The breakdown section near the end of the piece can be extended by feel. Don't feel limited by the bars written, try and find interesting ways to disrupt the feel and breakdown. Approximately 30 seconds of breakdown would be the lower limit.

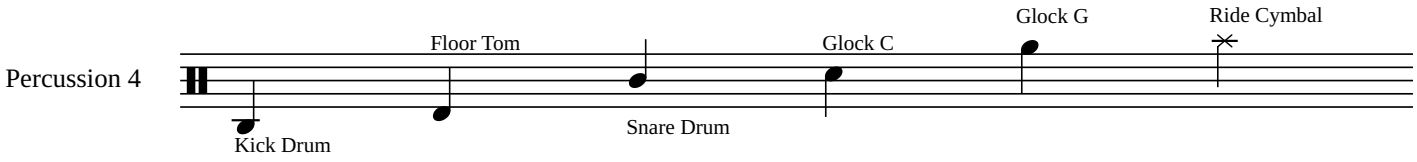
Link to previous performance - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baGvdE7Fw3k

Percussion Key



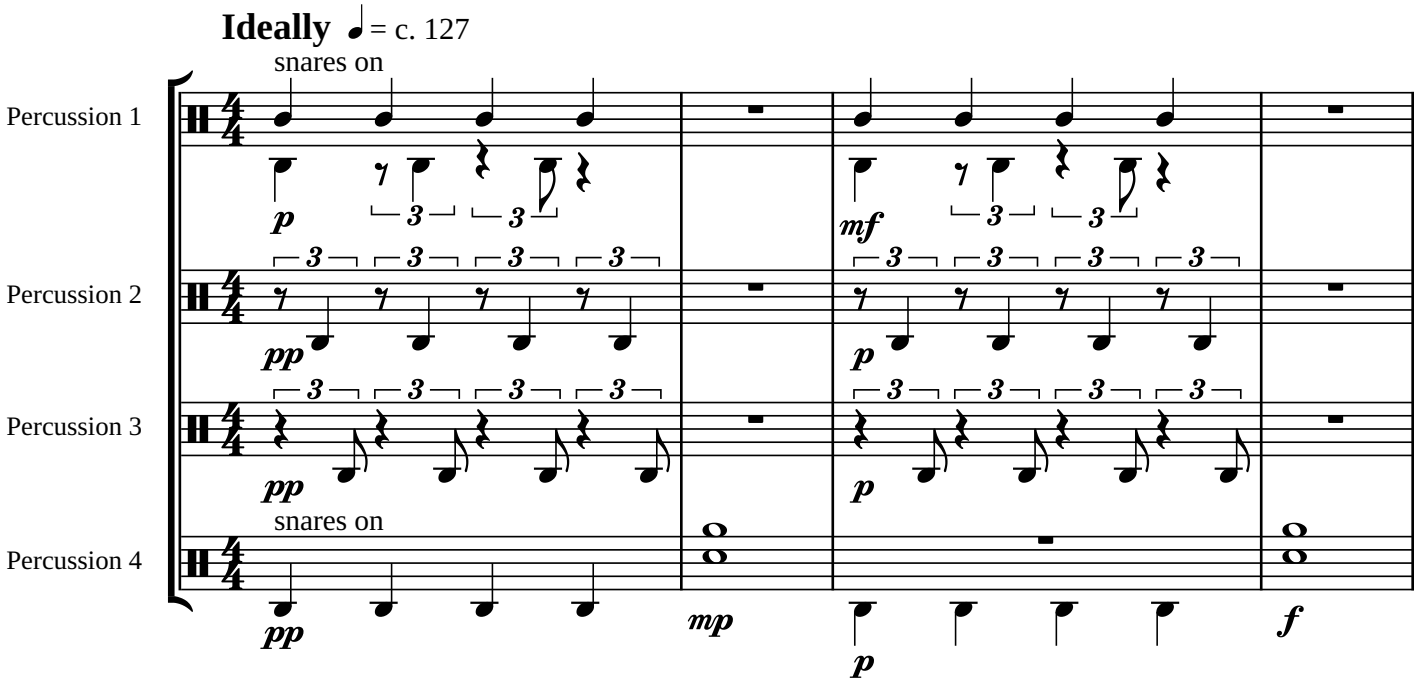


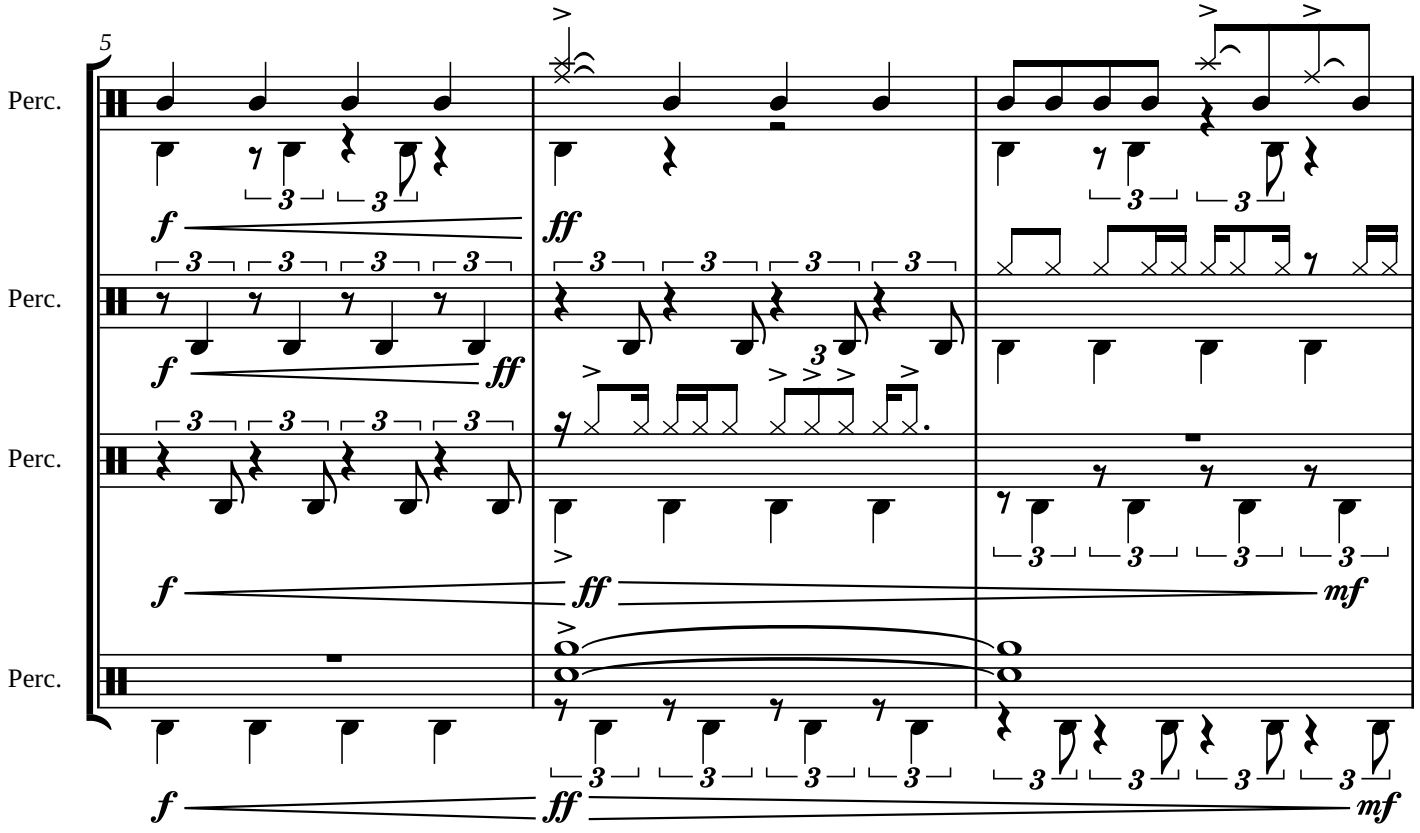


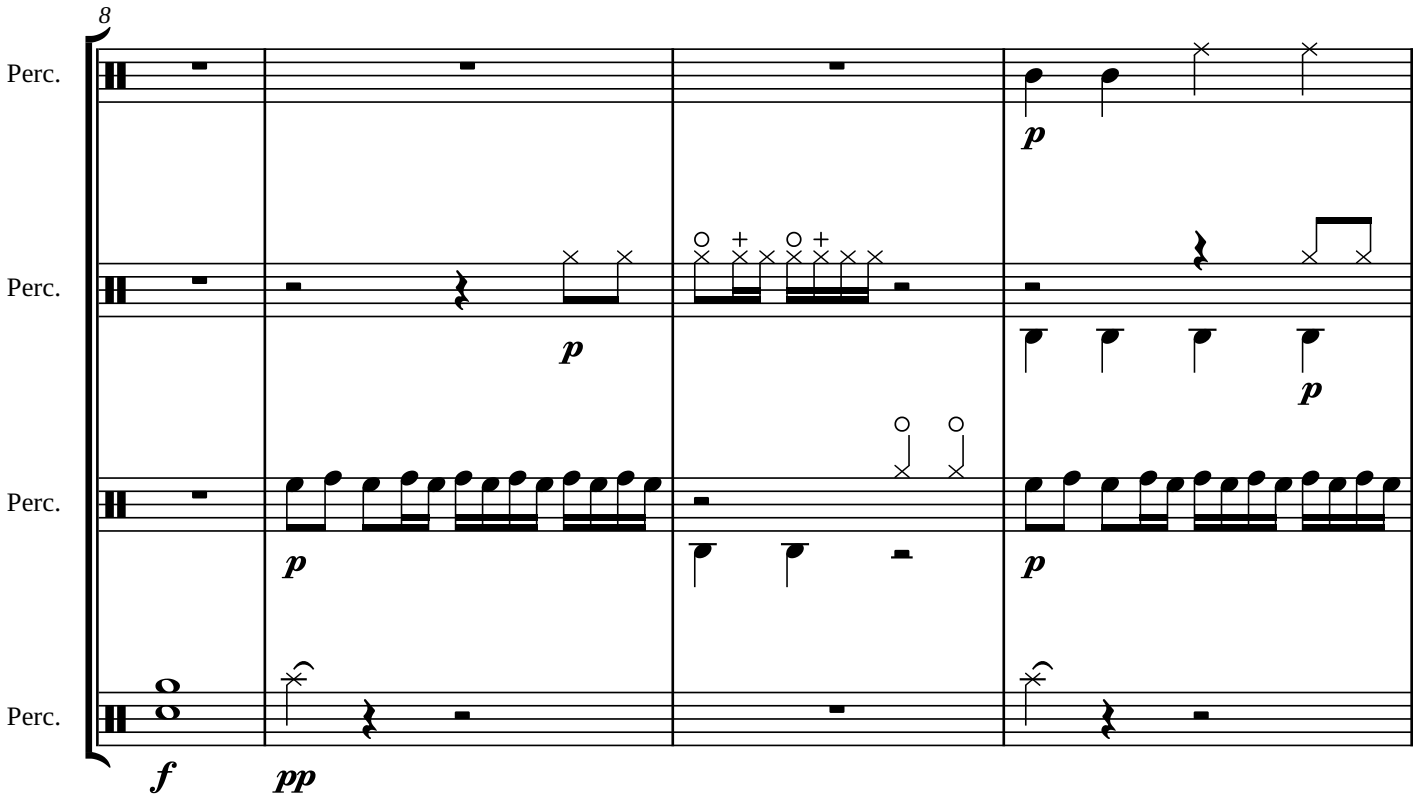


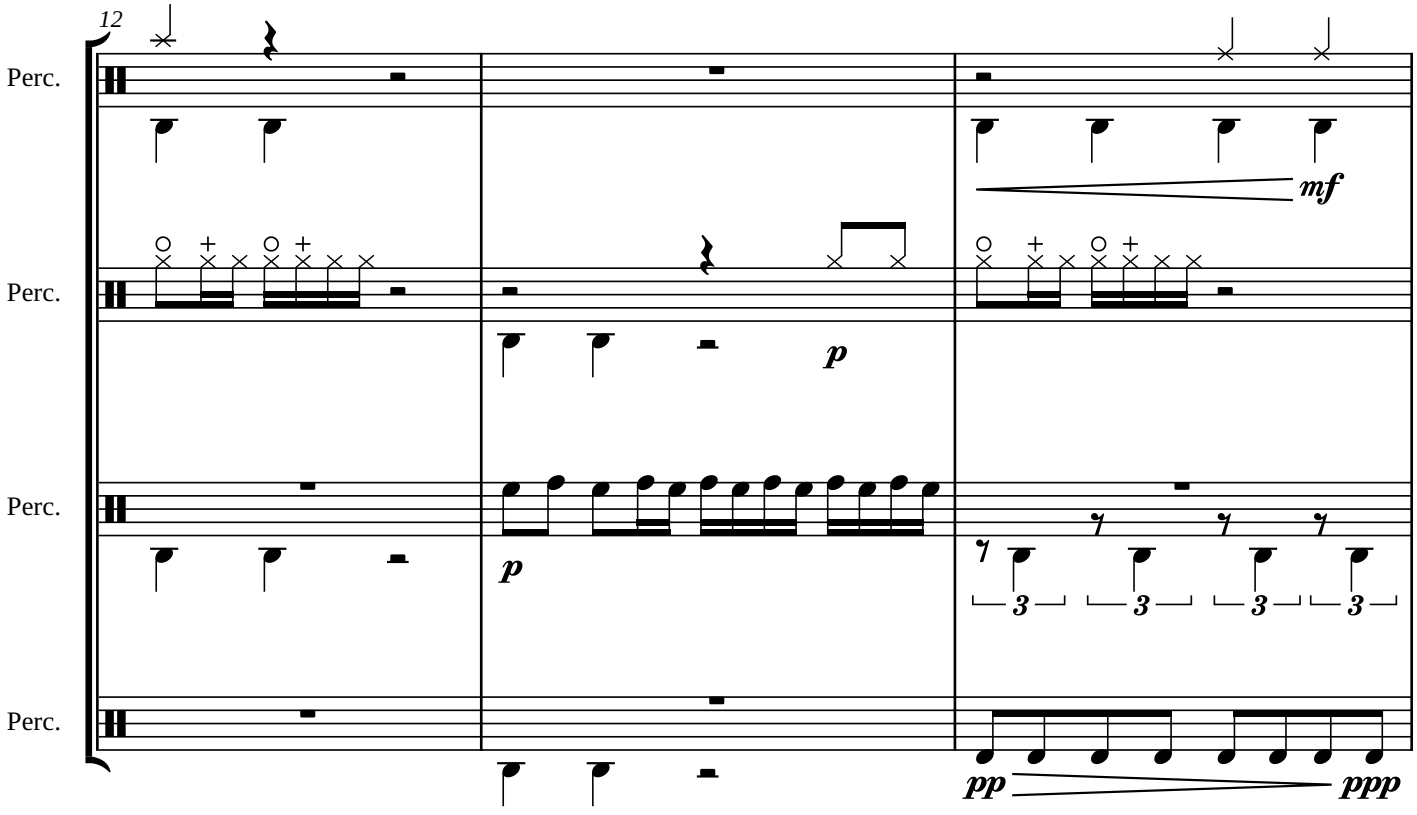
Ideal:Reality

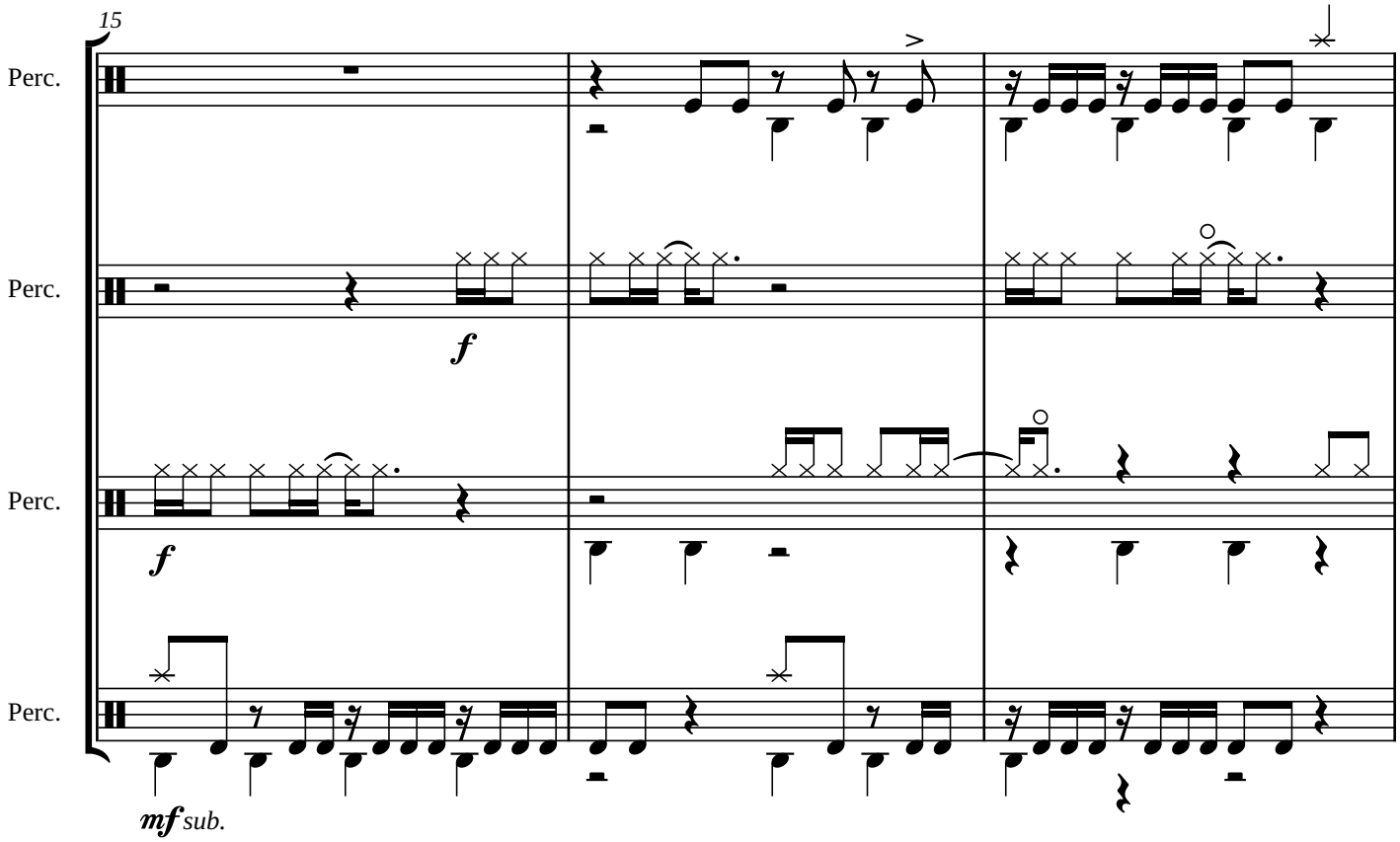
Ethan Isaac

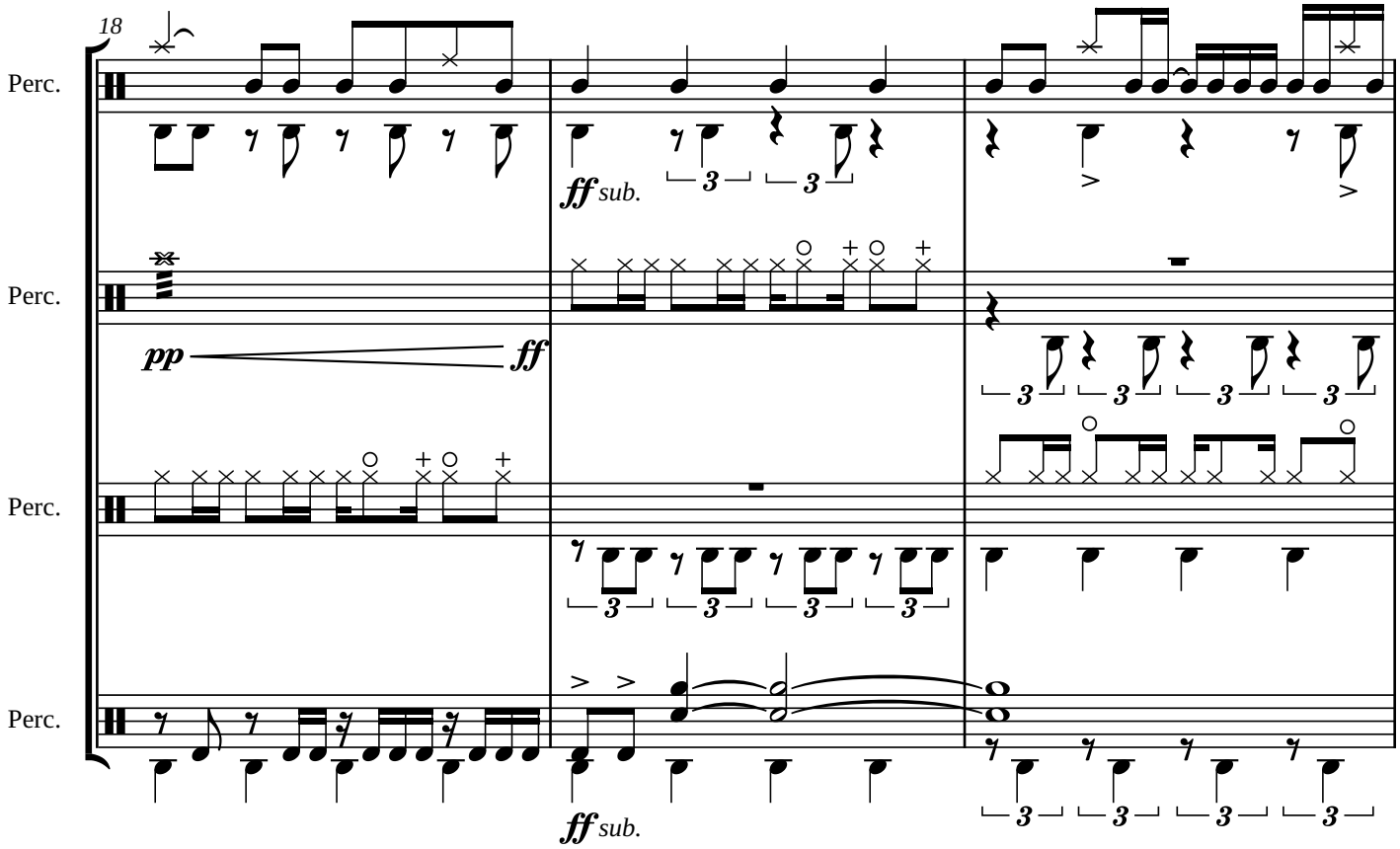


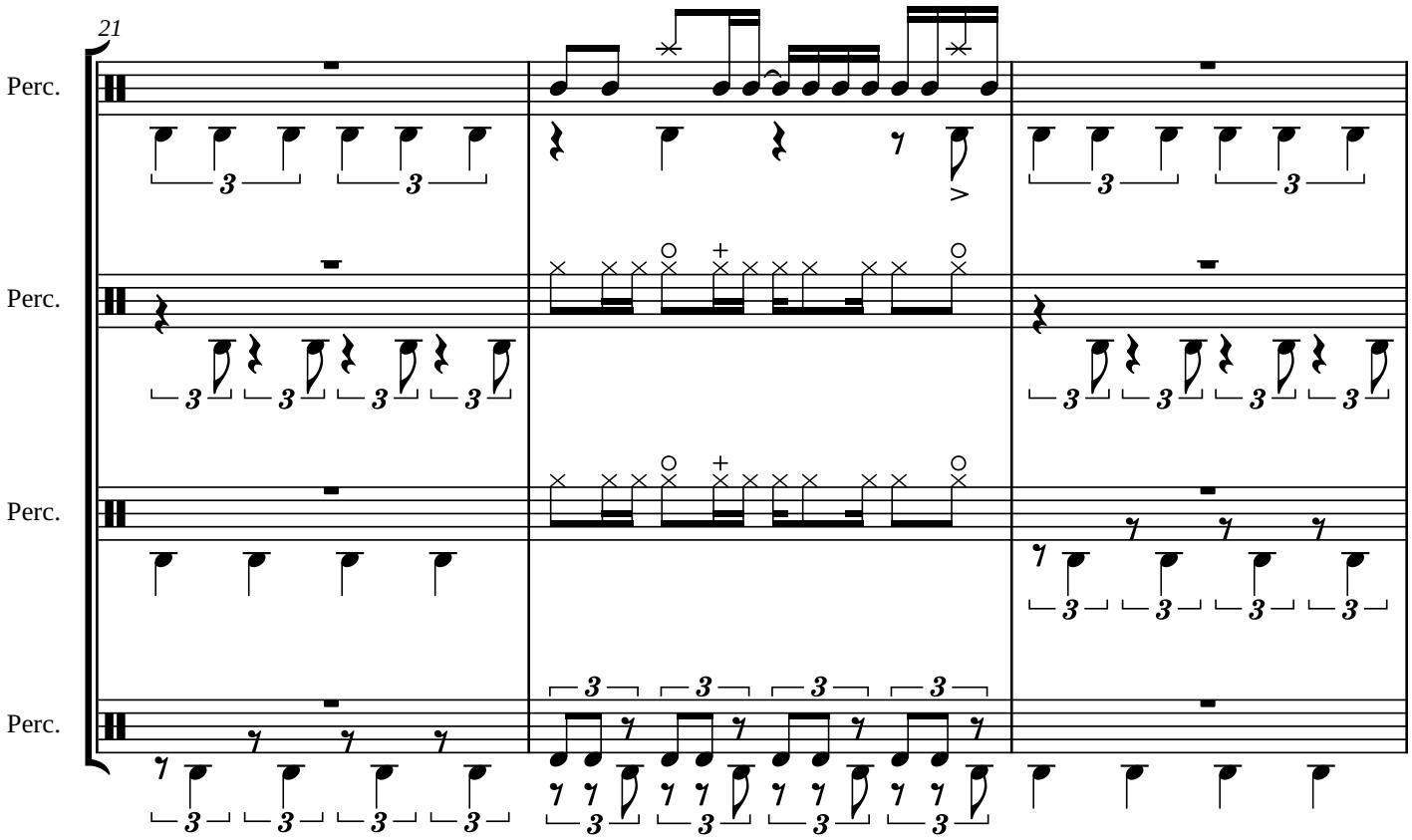


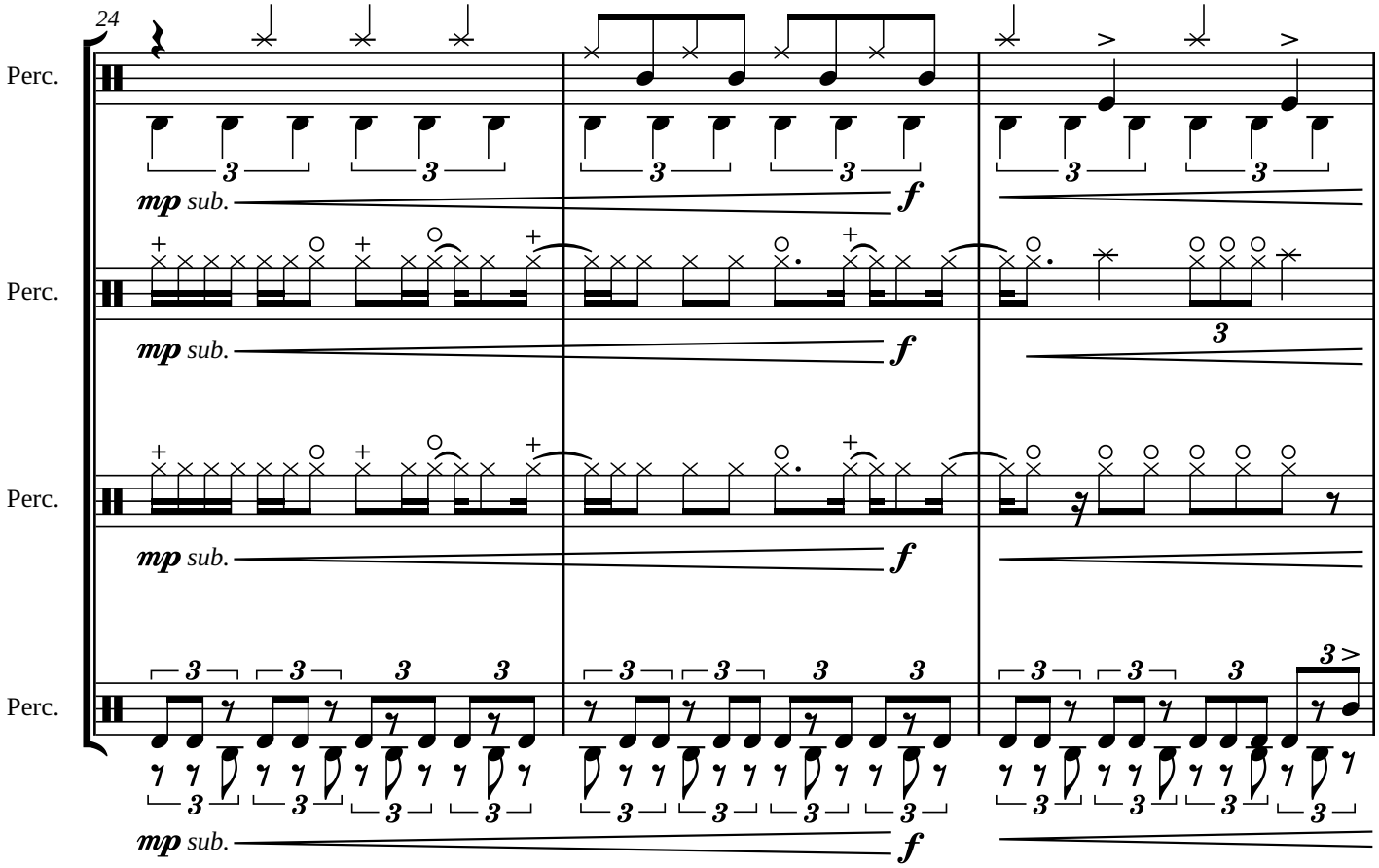

8
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
p
p
p
p
p
f
pp

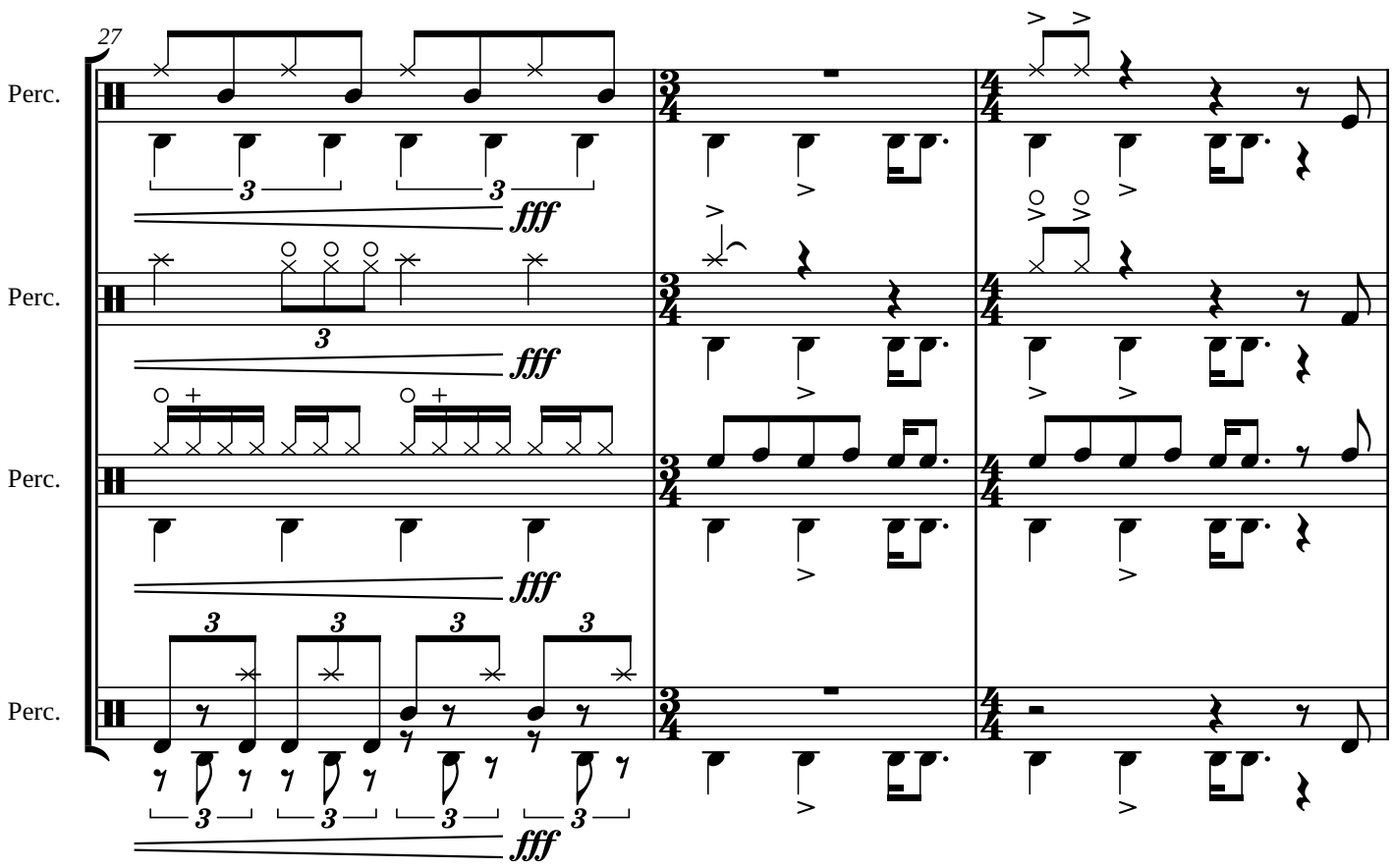

12
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
mf
p
p
3
3
3
3
pp
ppp

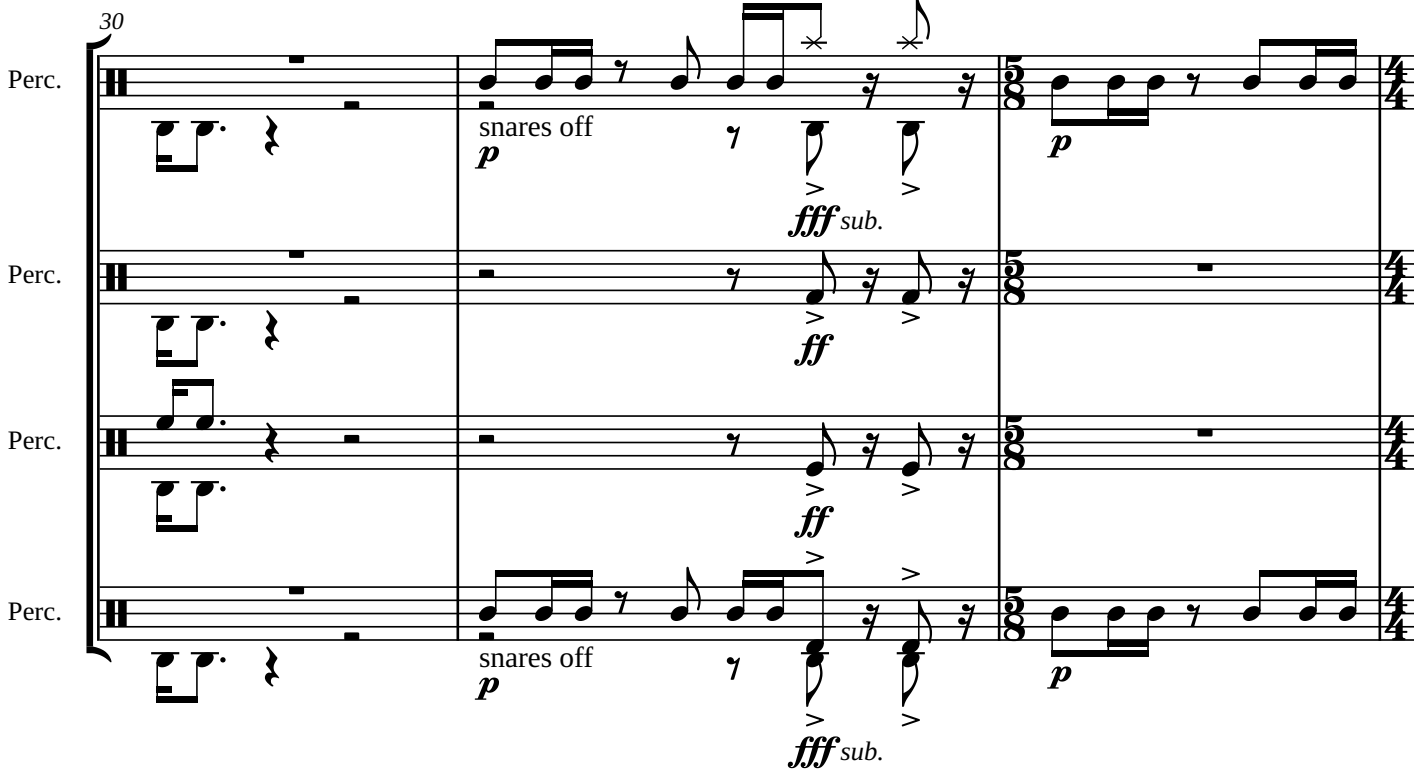

15
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
f
f
mf sub.

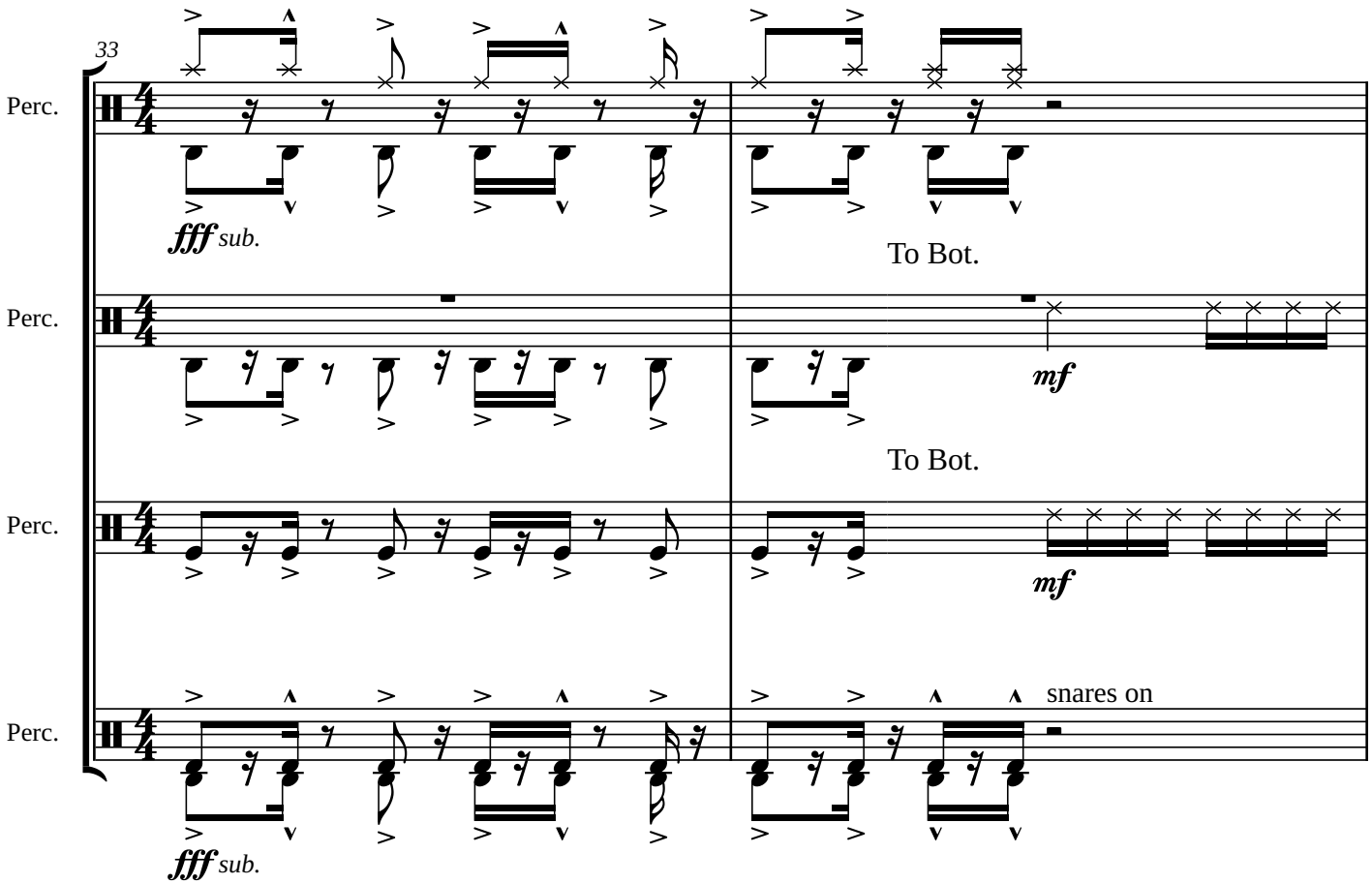

18
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
ff sub.
pp
ff
ff sub.

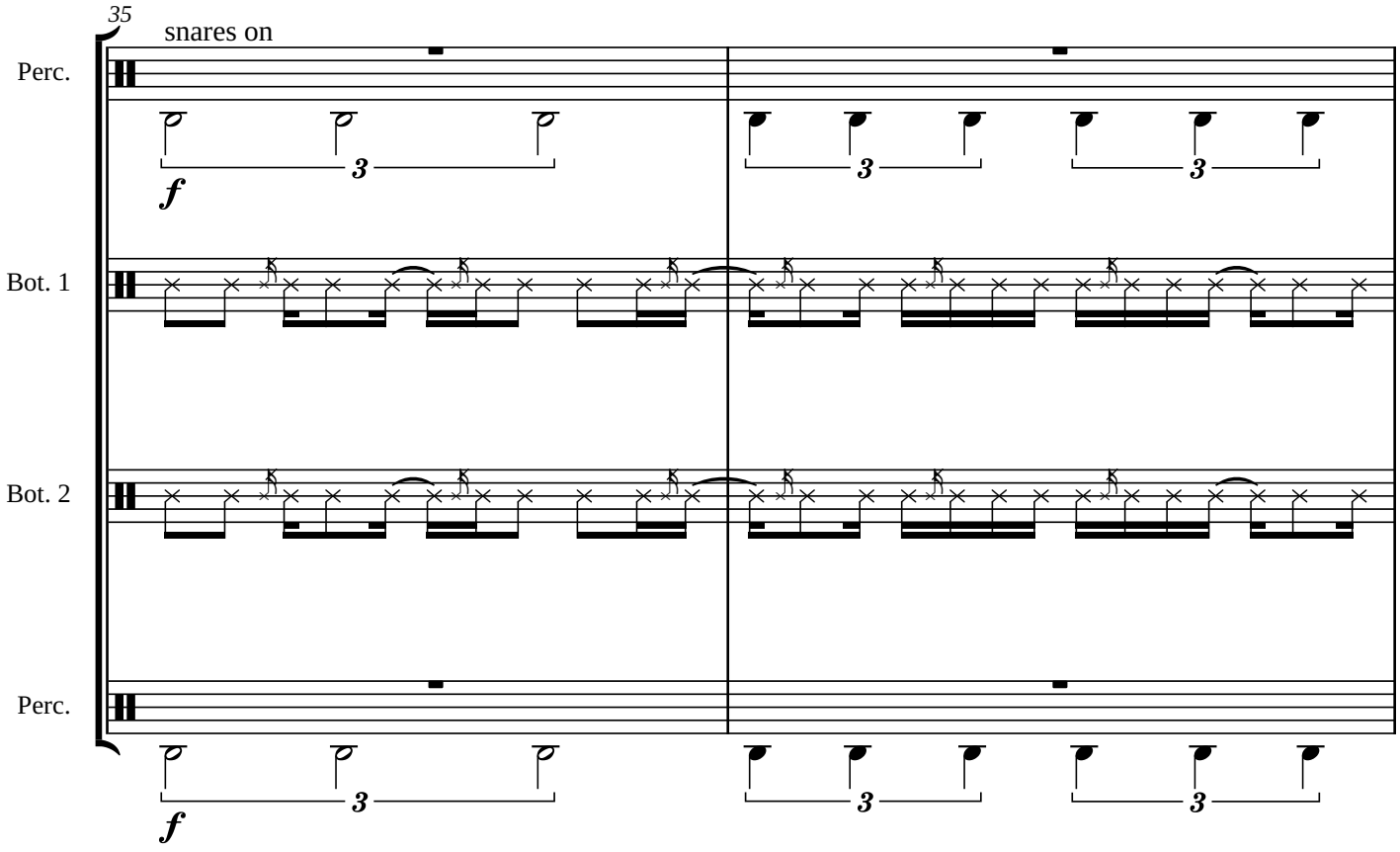

21
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.

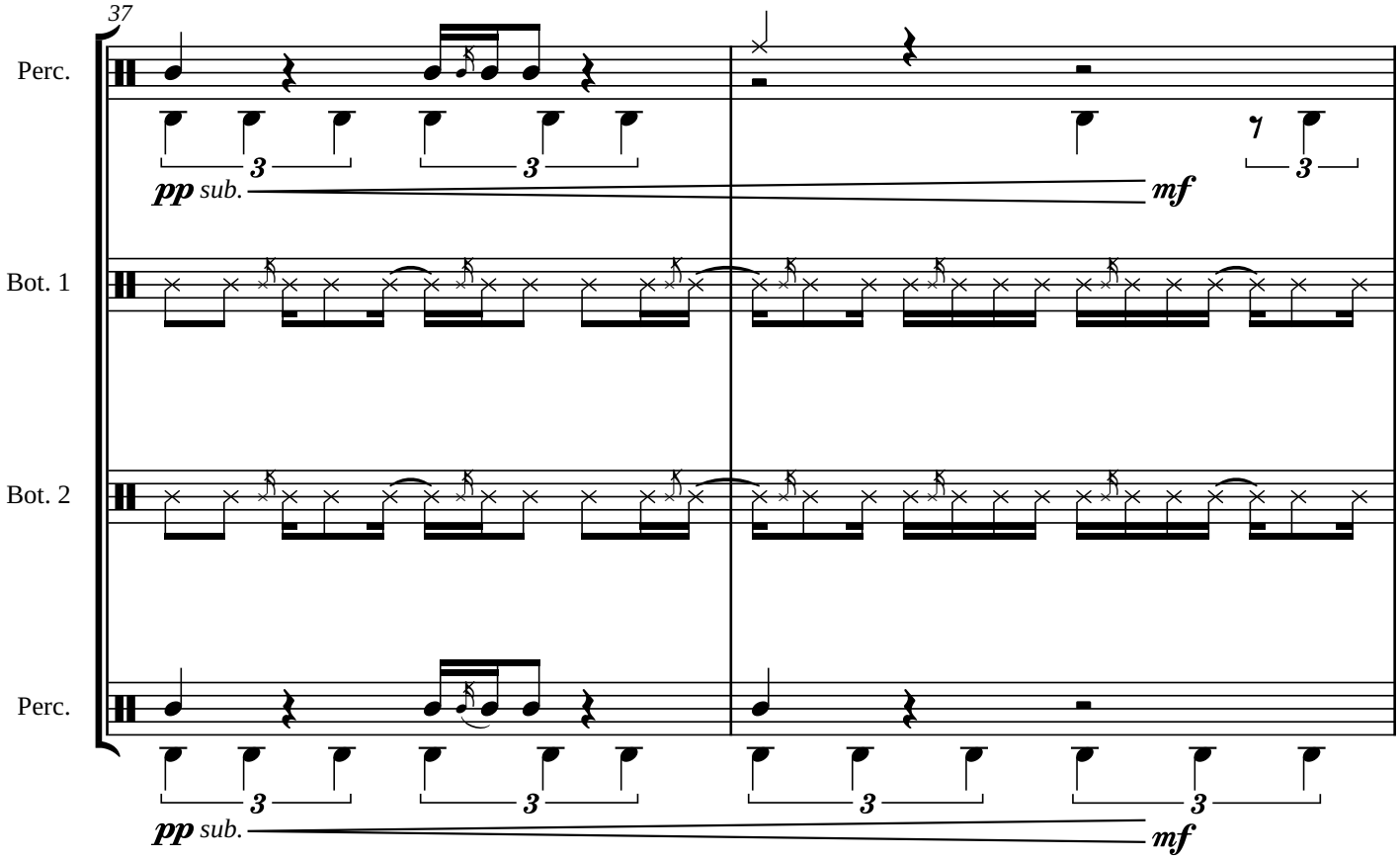

24
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
mp sub.
f

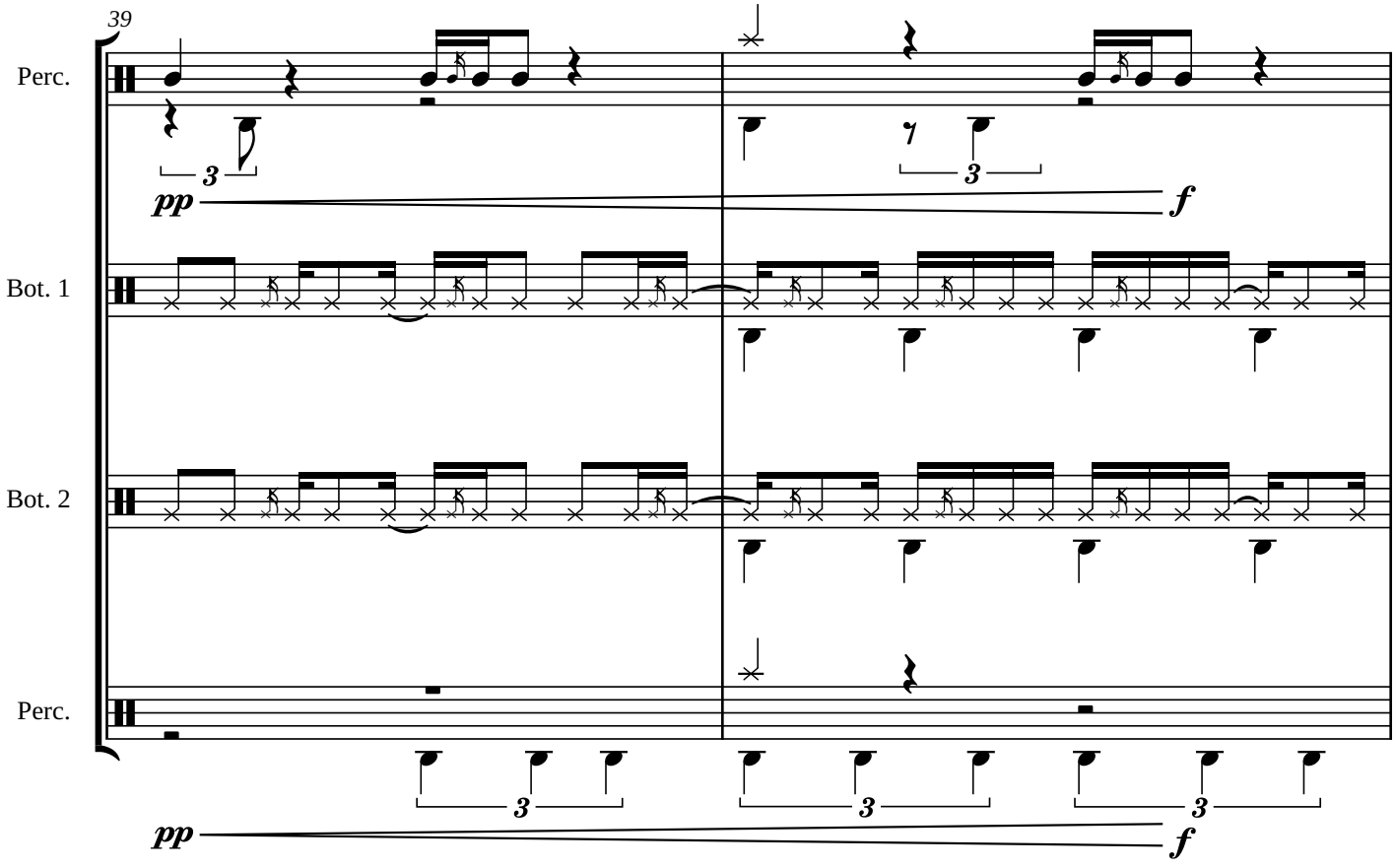

27
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
fff

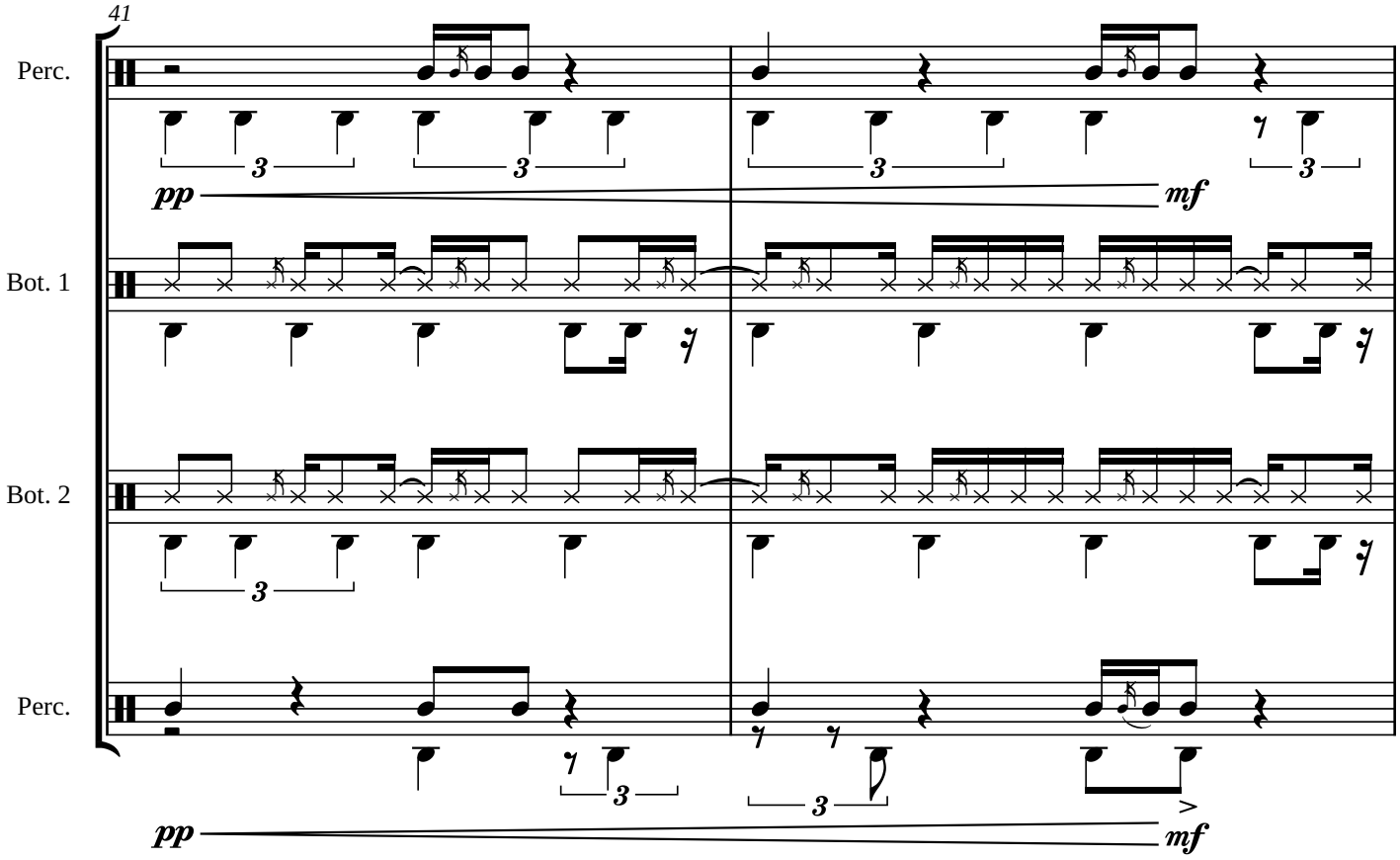

30
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
snares off
p
fff sub.
ff
snares off
p
fff sub.

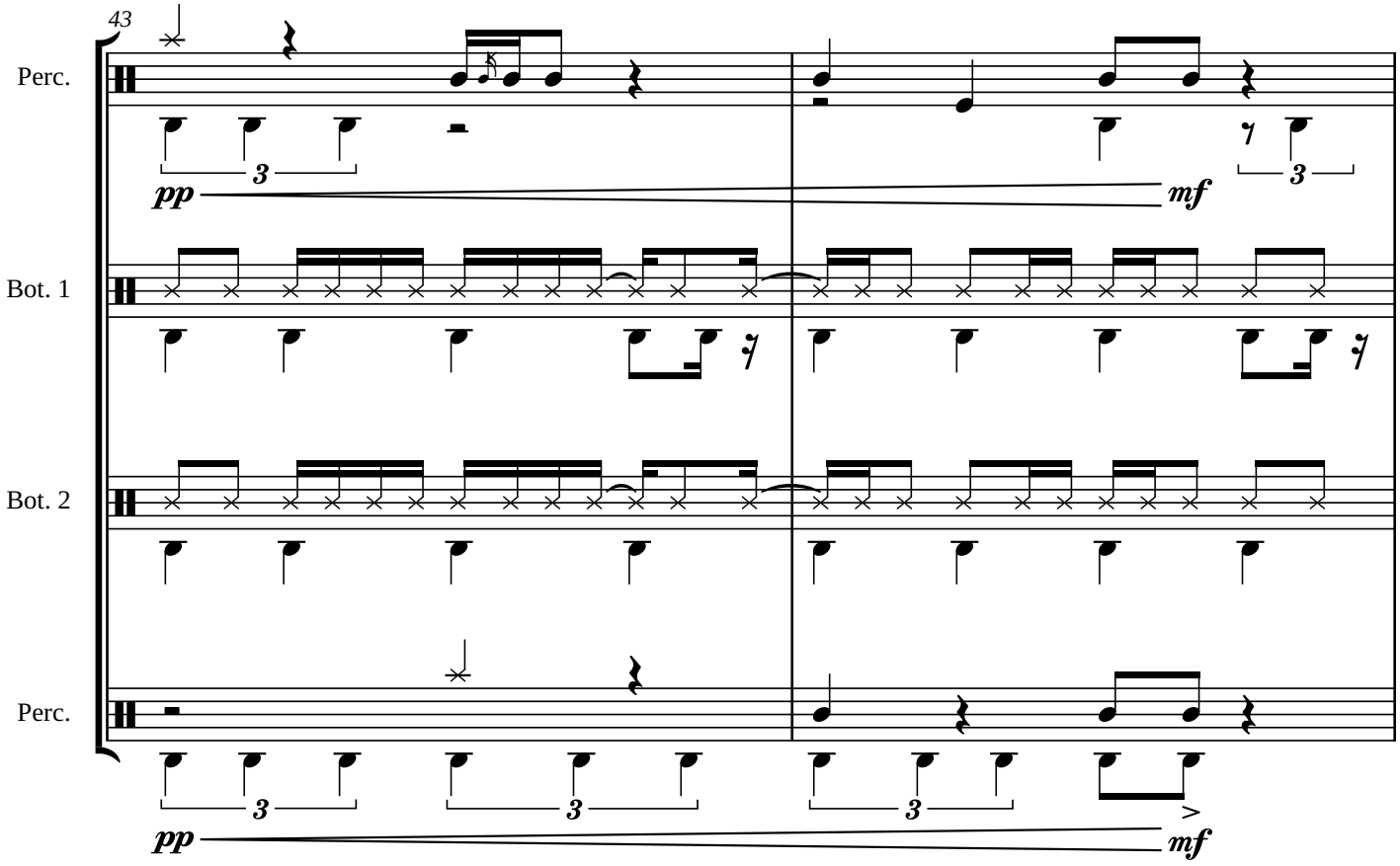

33
Perc.
fff sub.
To Bot.
Perc.
mf
To Bot.
Perc.
mf
Perc.
snares on
fff sub.

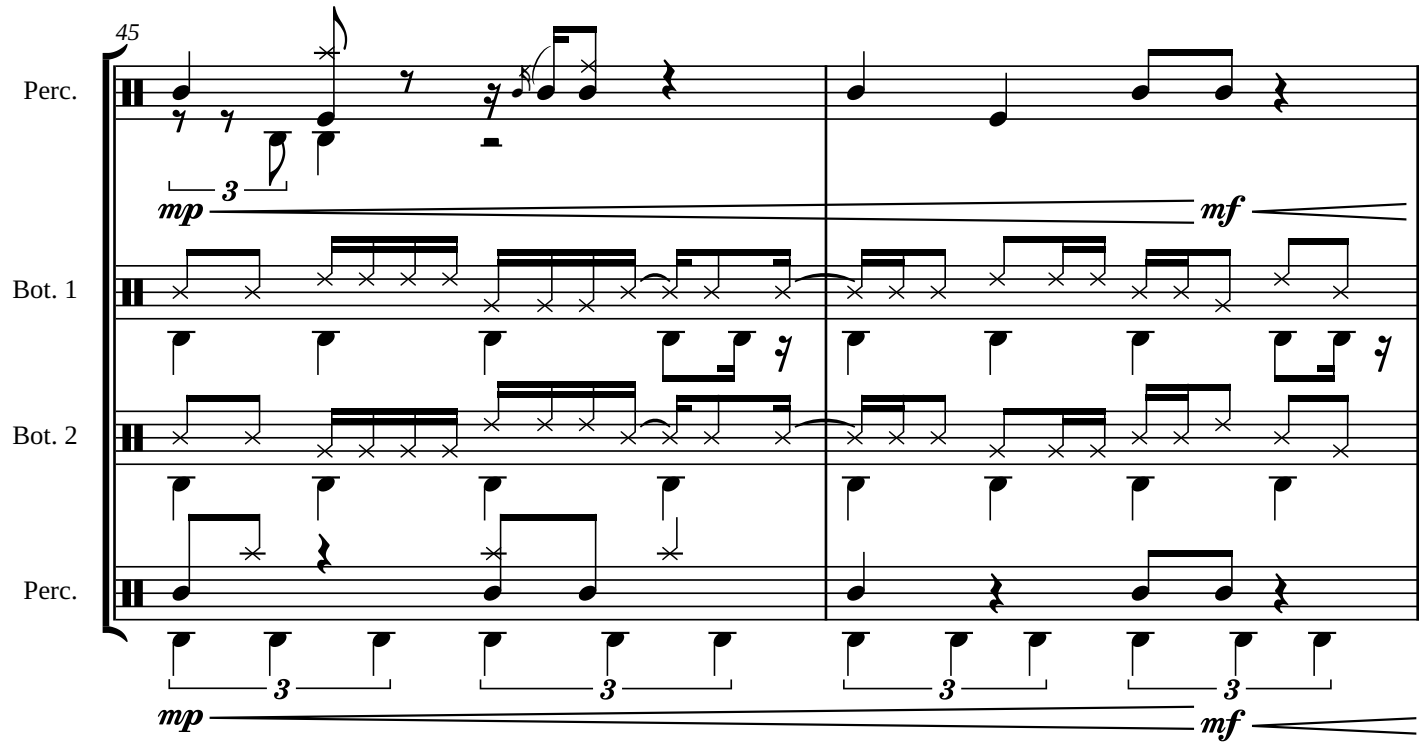

35
snares on
Perc.
f
3
Bot. 1
Bot. 2
Perc.
f
3

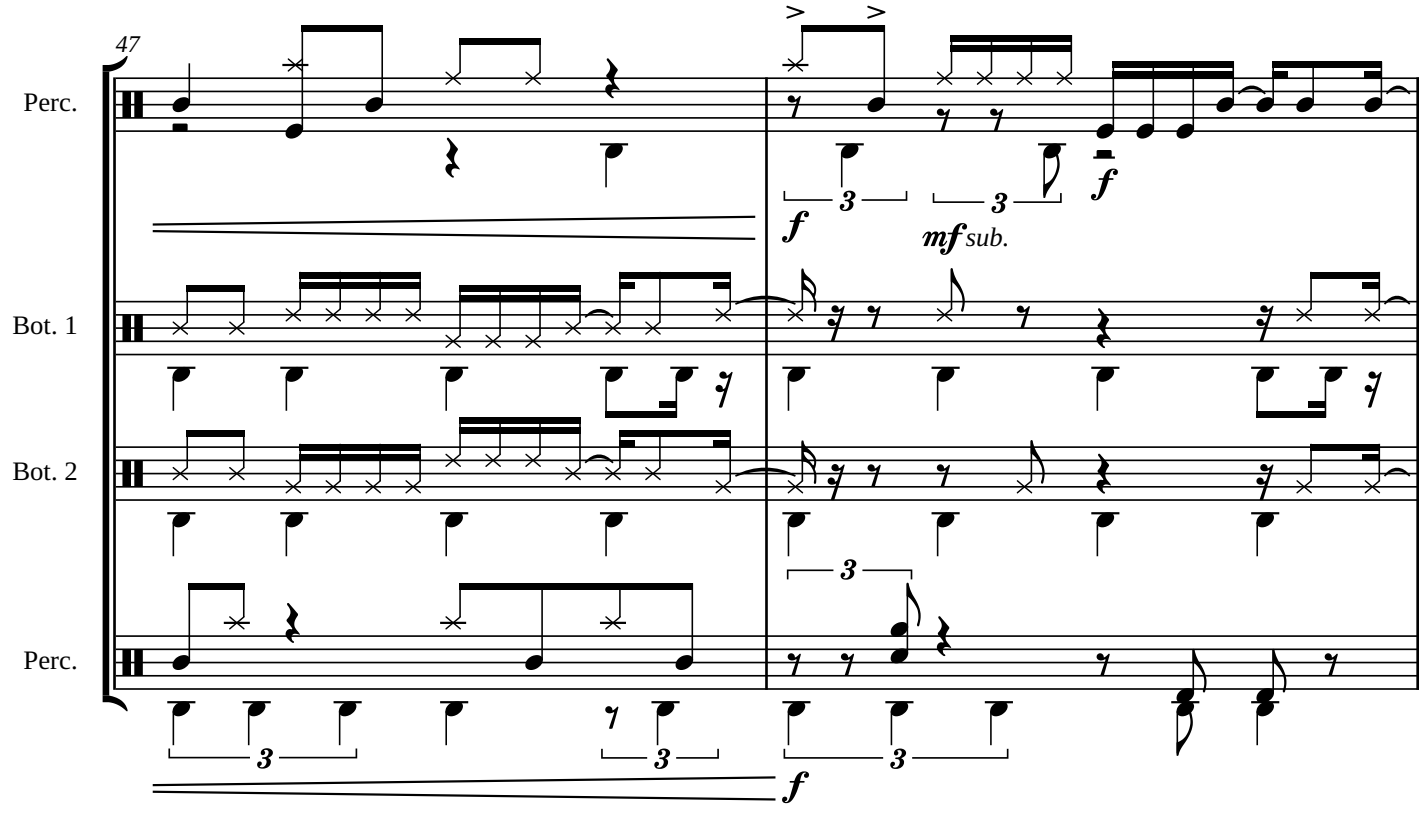

37
Perc.
Bot. 1
Bot. 2
Perc.
pp sub.
mf

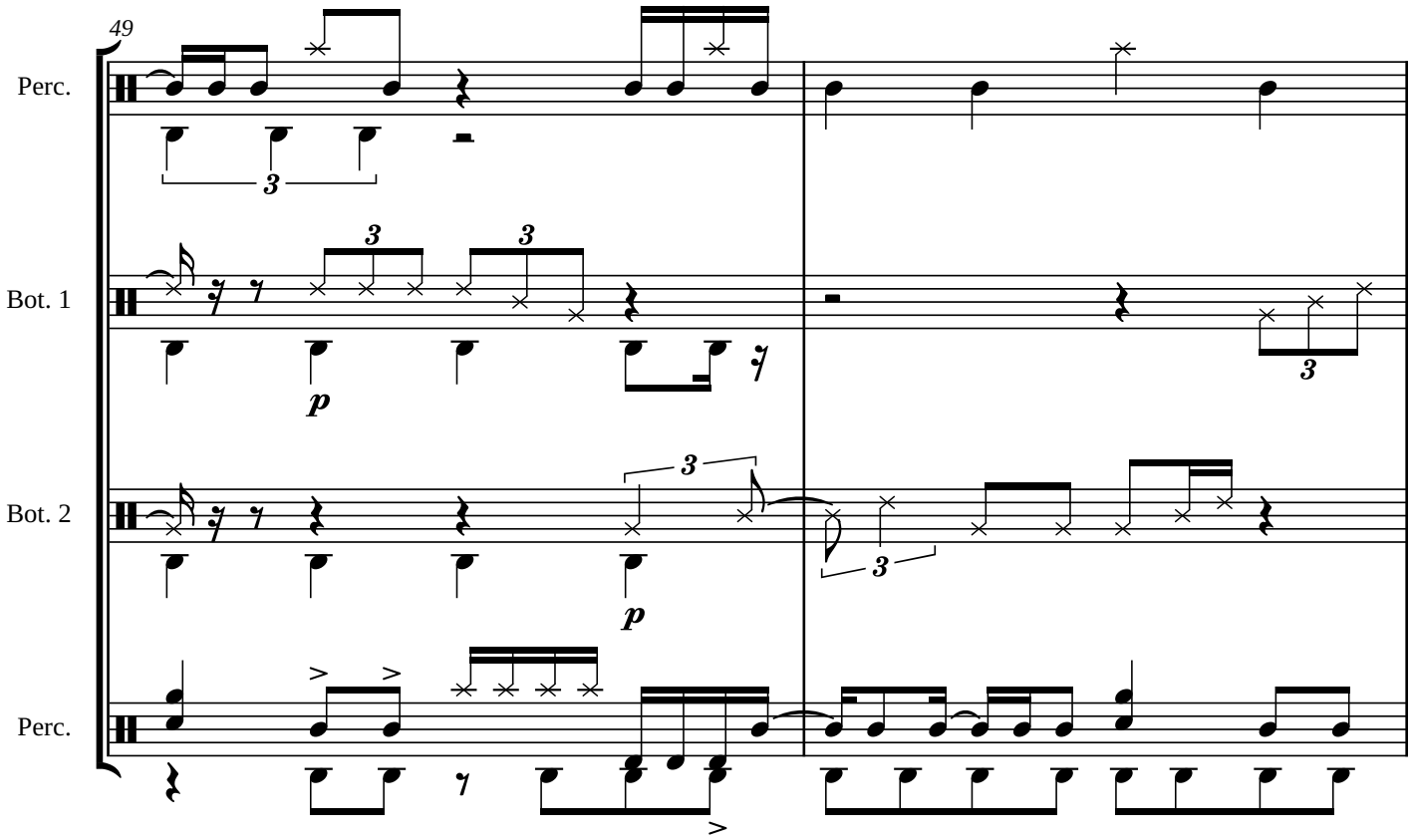

39
Perc.
Bot. 1
Bot. 2
Perc.
pp
f

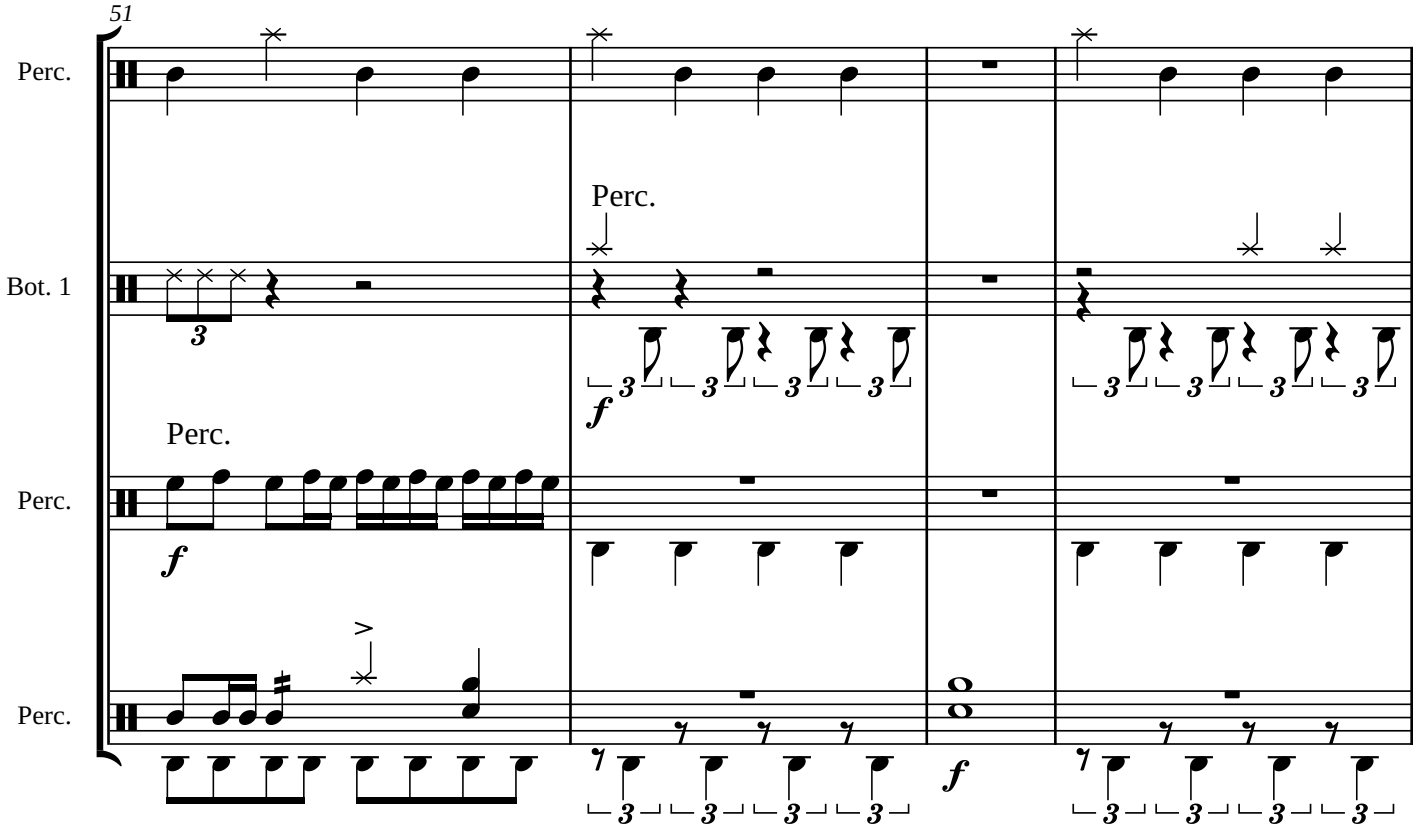

41
Perc.
Bot. 1
Bot. 2
Perc.
pp
mf

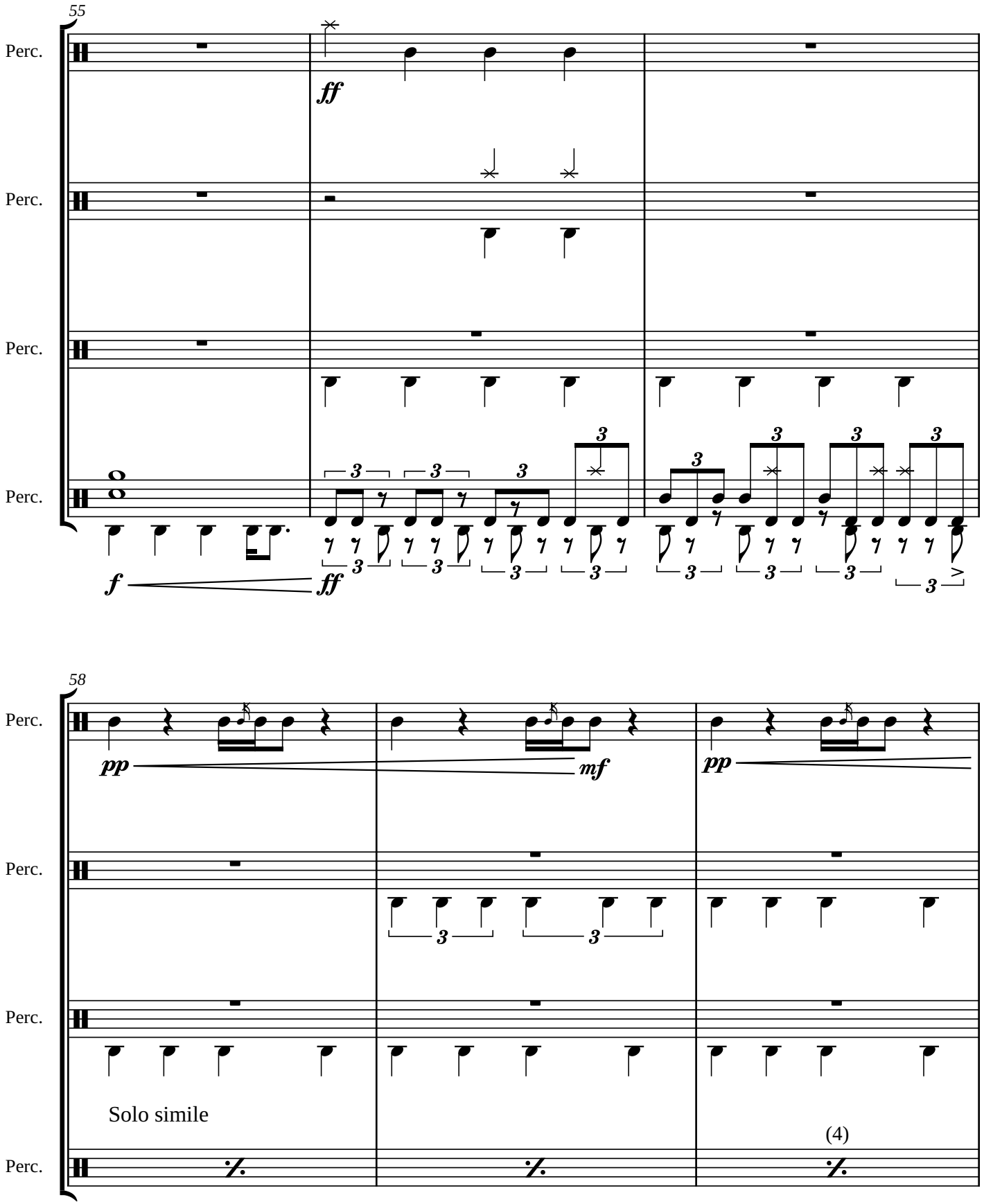

43
Perc.
Bot. 1
Bot. 2
Perc.
pp
mf

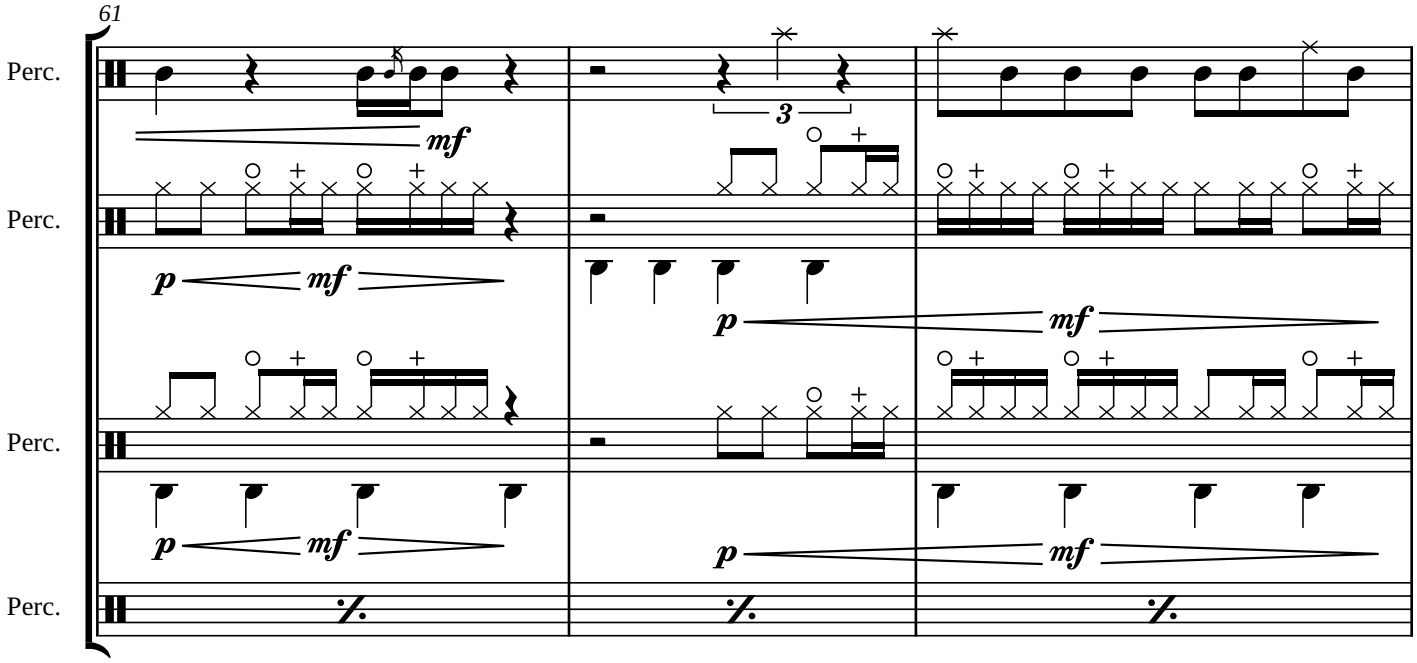

45
Perc.
Bot. 1
Bot. 2
Perc.
mp
mf

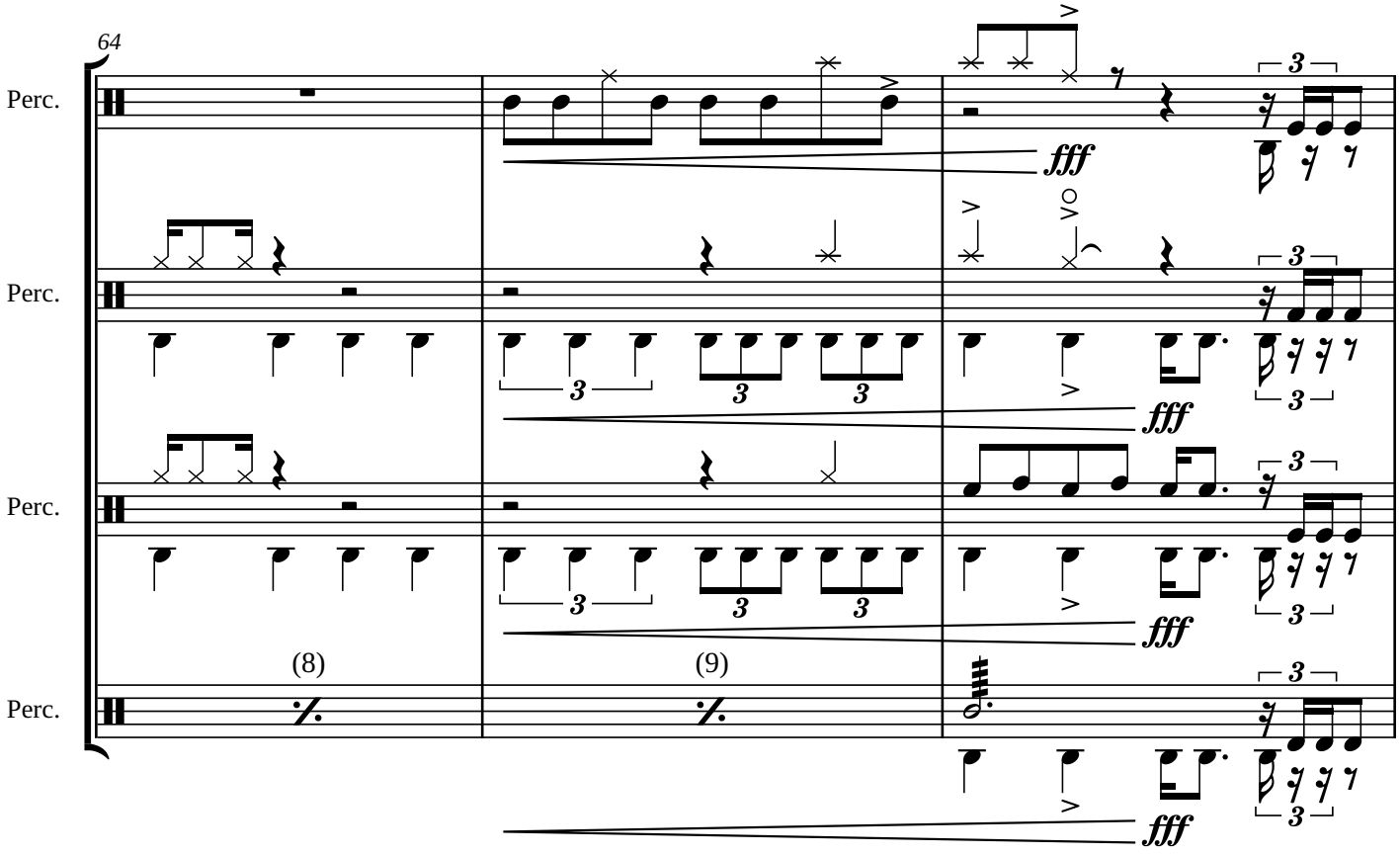

47
Perc.
Bot. 1
Bot. 2
Perc.
f
mf sub.

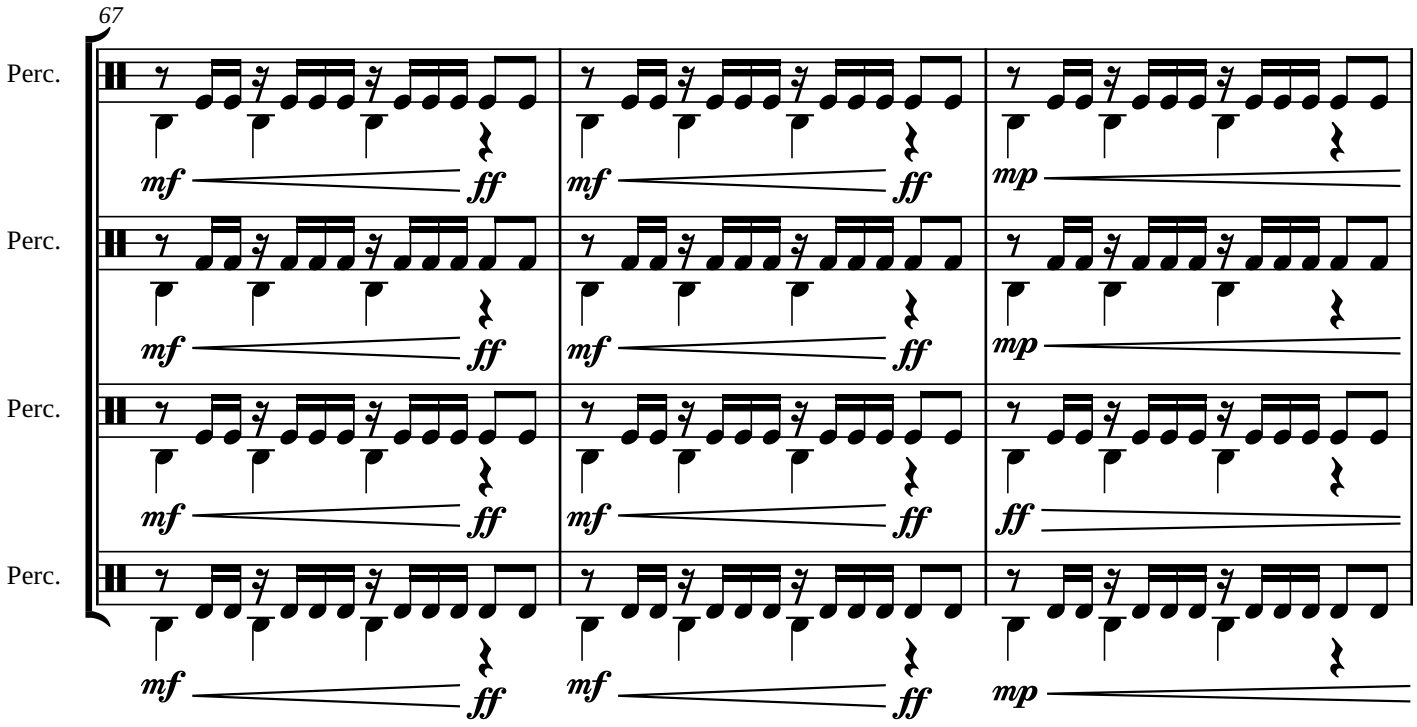

49
Perc.
Bot. 1
Bot. 2
Perc.
p
p

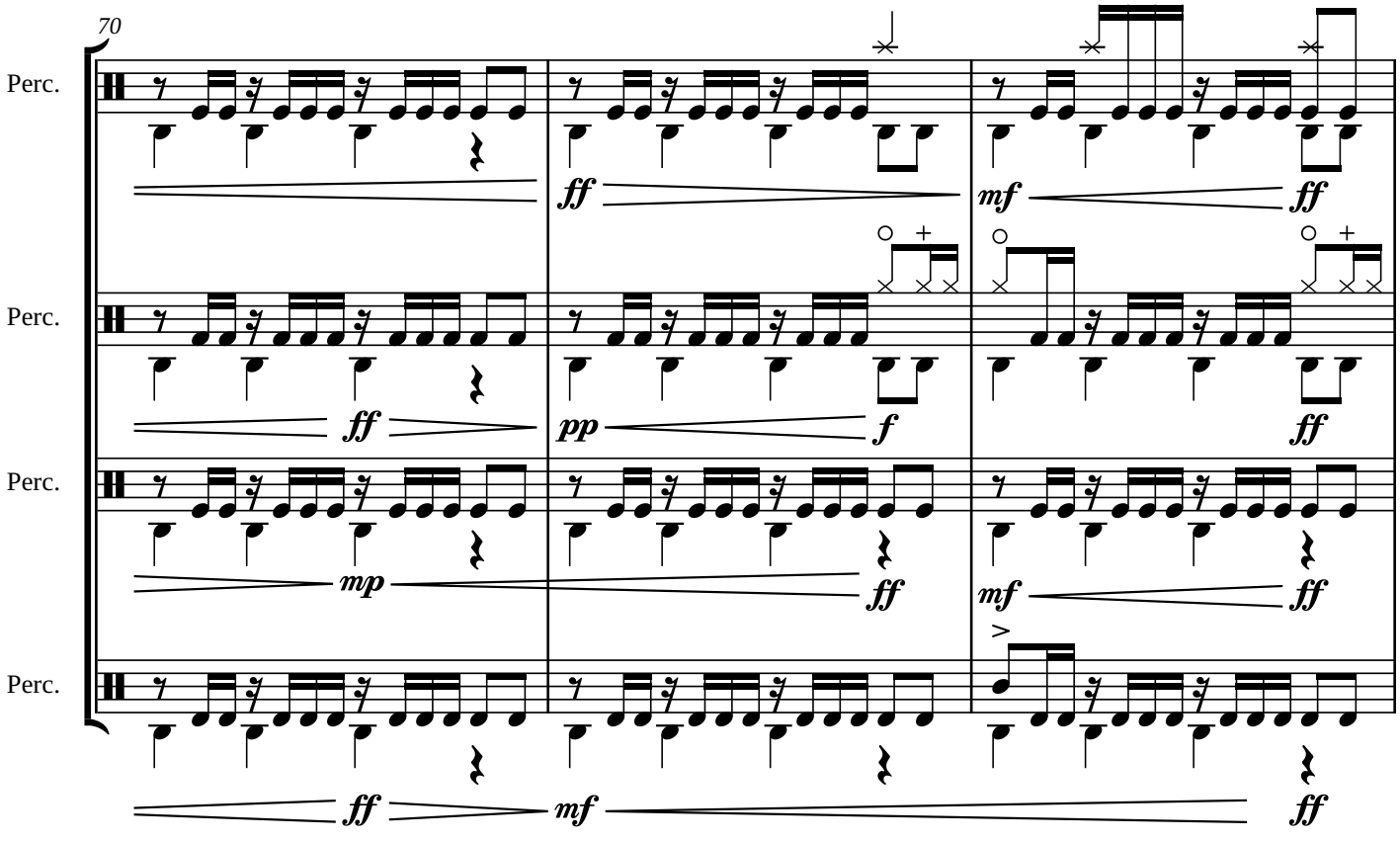

51
Perc.
Bot. 1
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
f
f
f

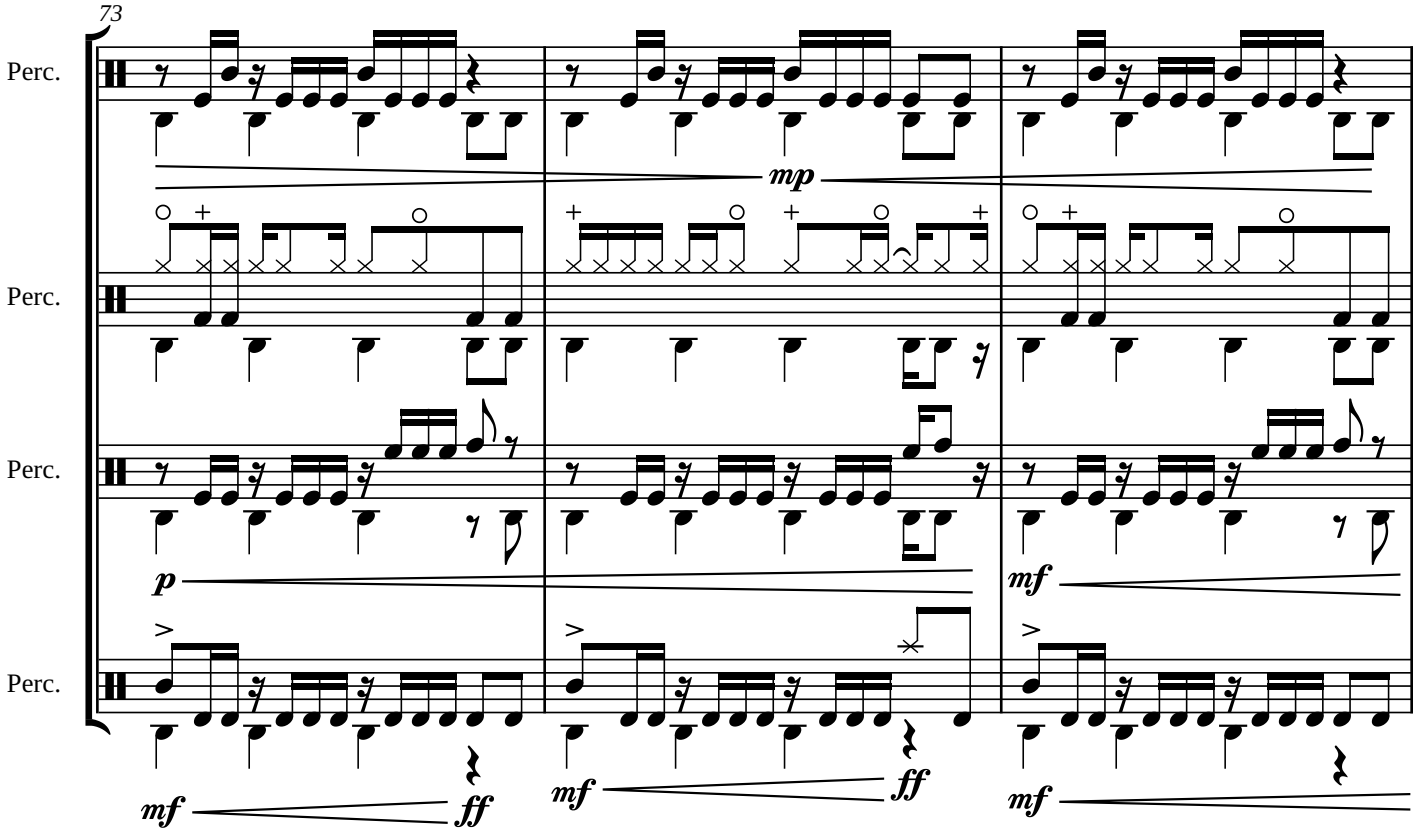

55
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
ff
f
ff
58
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
pp
mf
pp
Solo simile
(4)

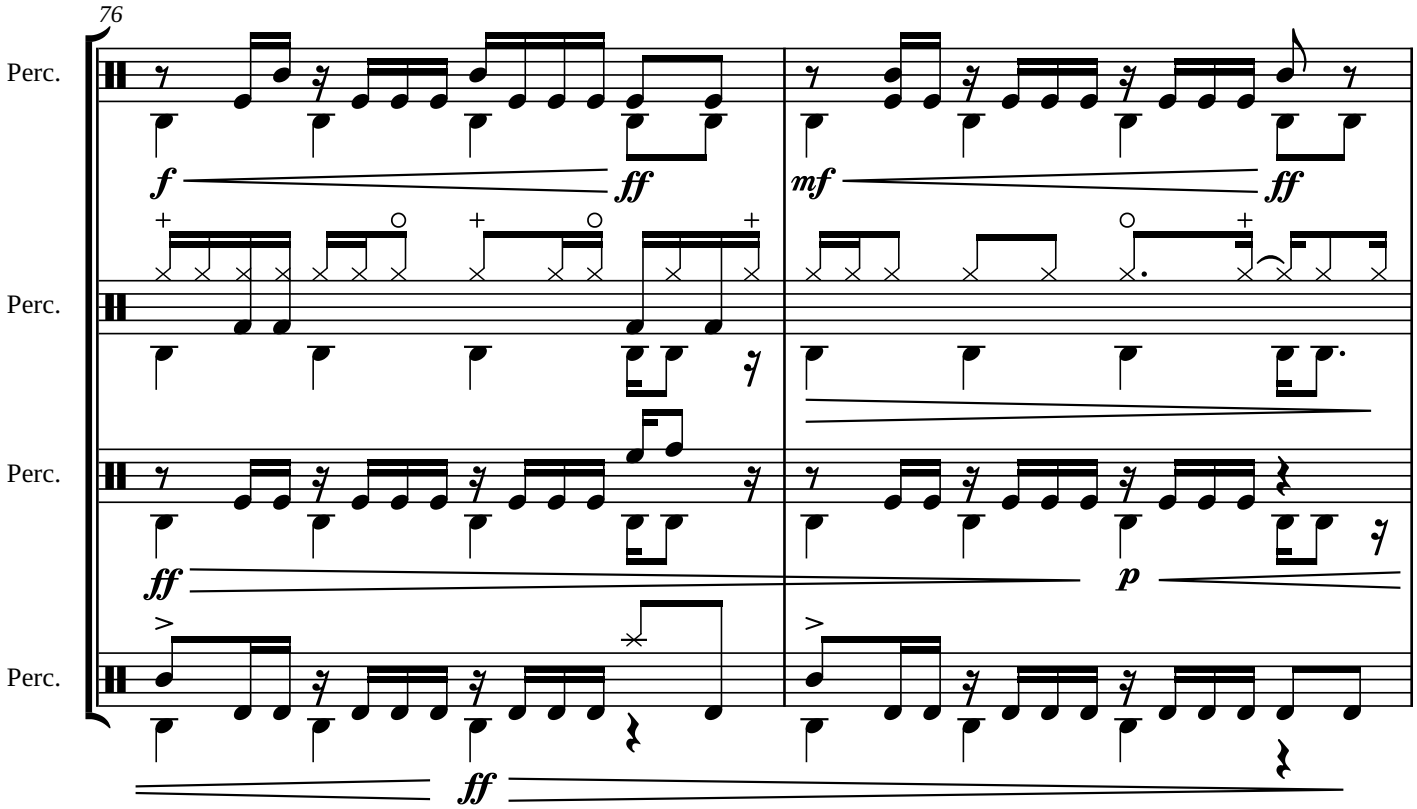

61
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
mf
p
mf
3

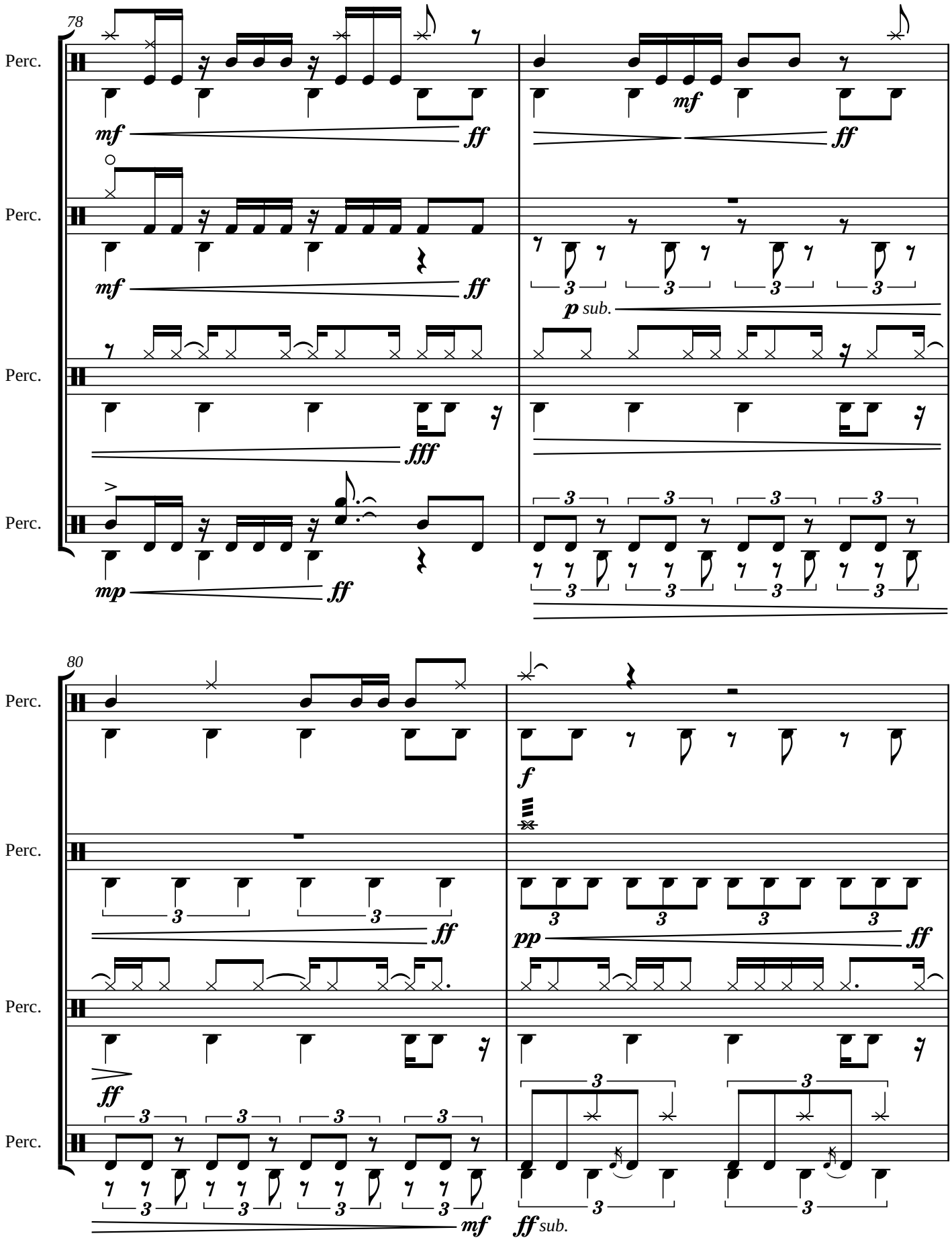

64
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
fff
3
(8)
(9)

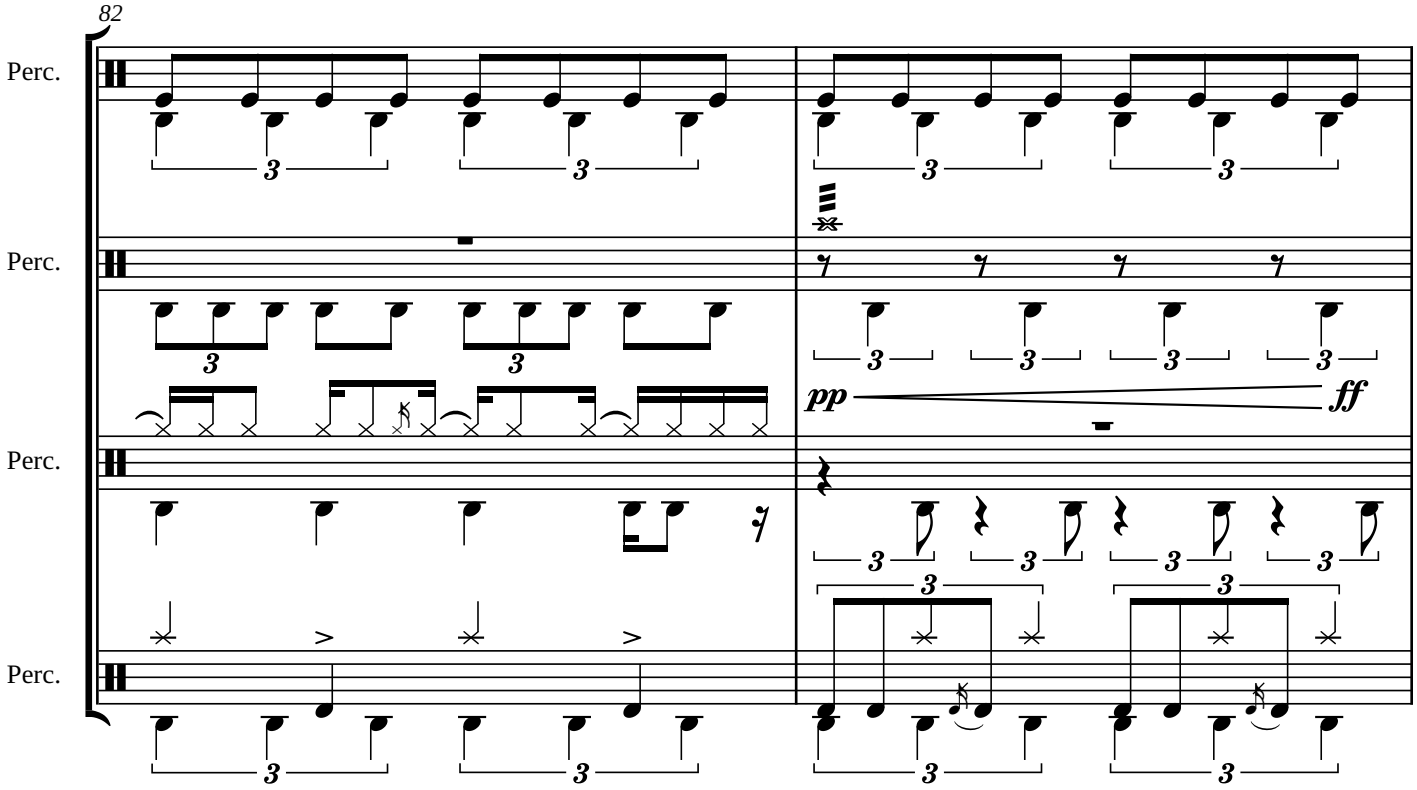

67
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
mf
ff
mp

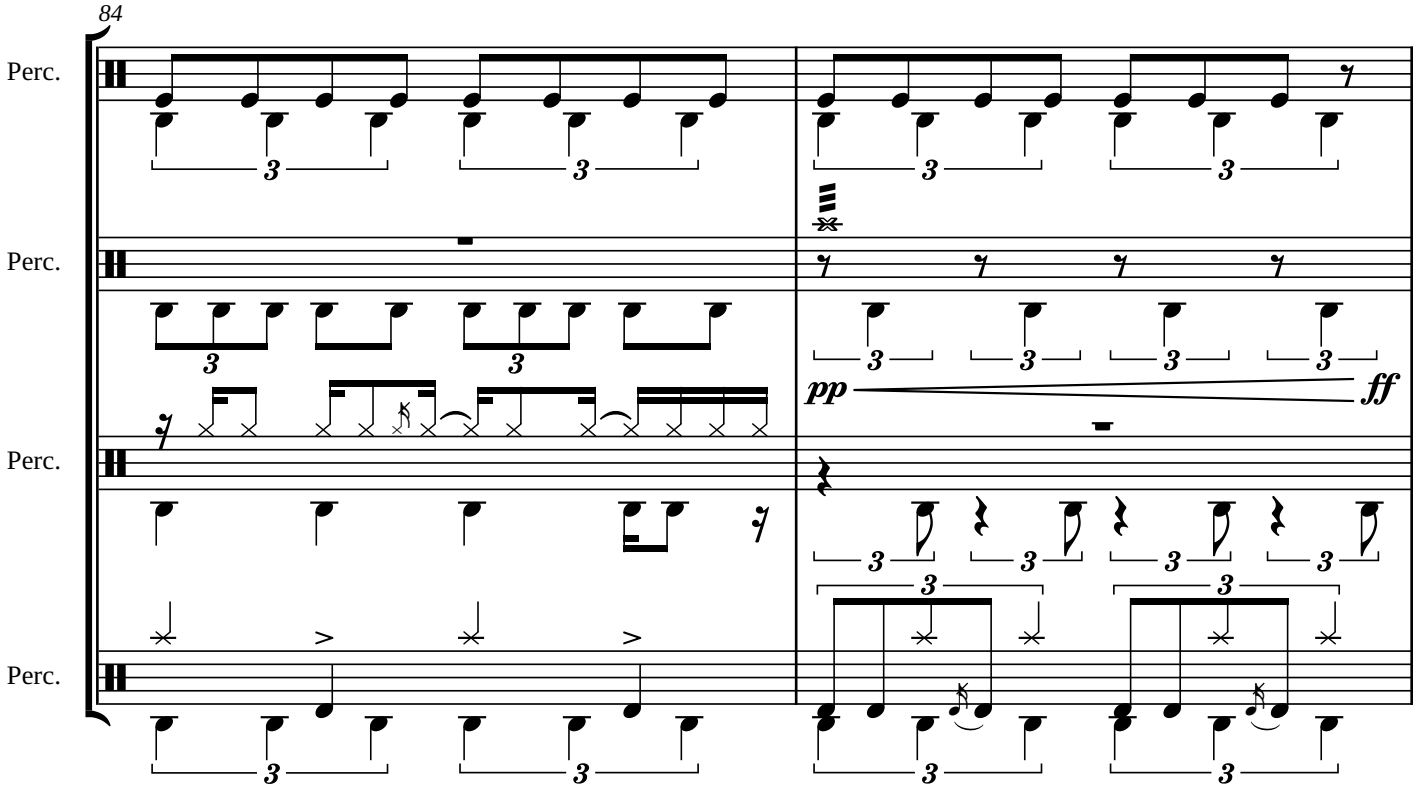

70
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
ff
mf
pp
f
mp

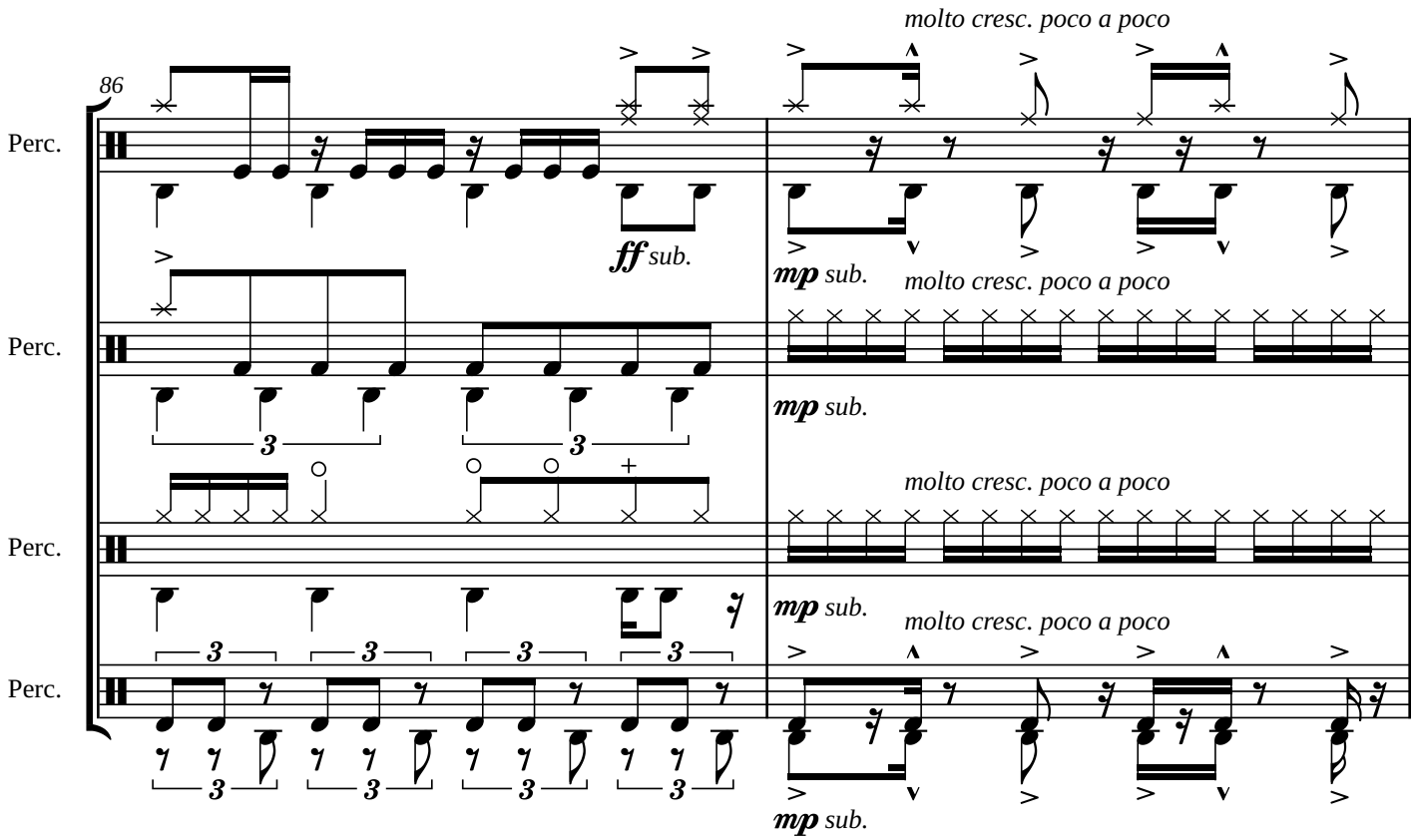

73
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
mp
p
mf
mf
ff
mf
ff
mf

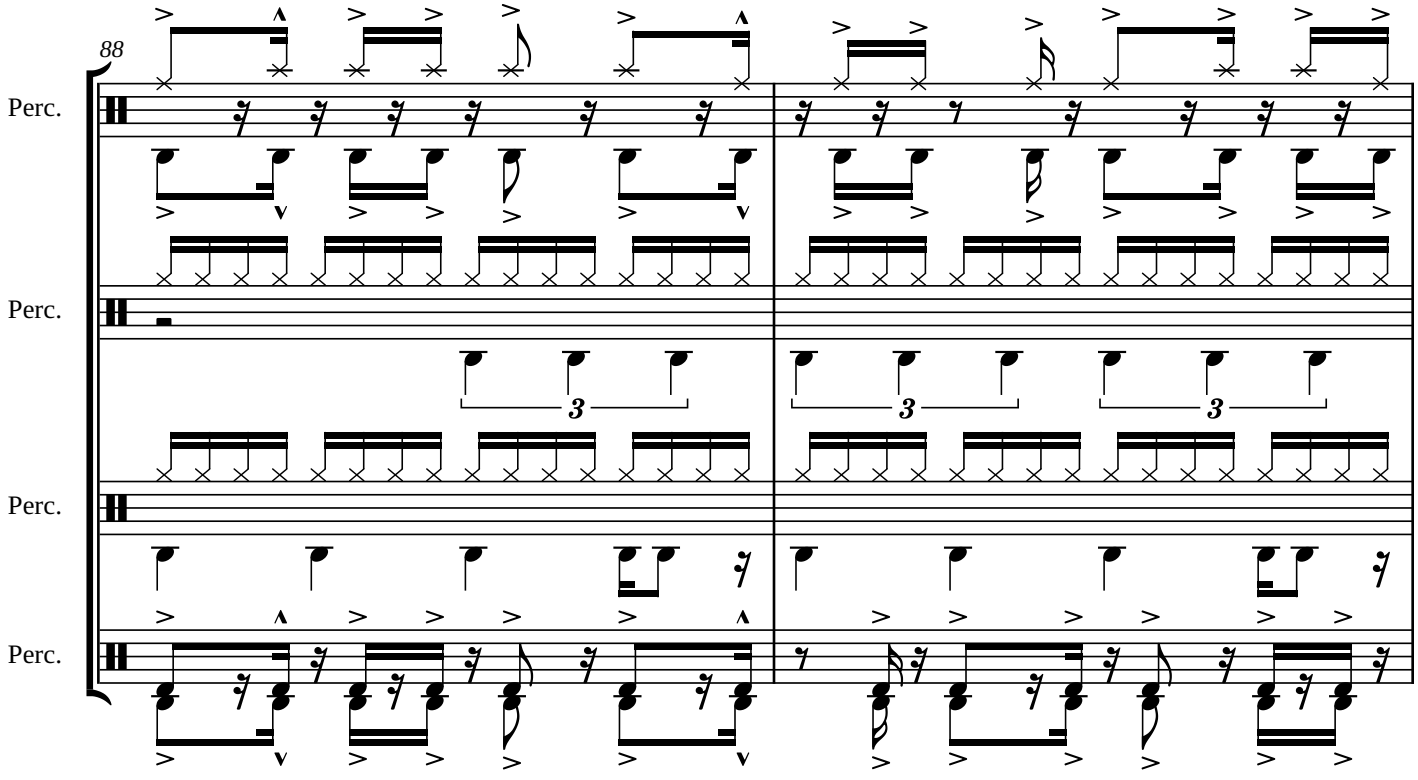

76
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
f
ff
mf
ff
ff
p
ff

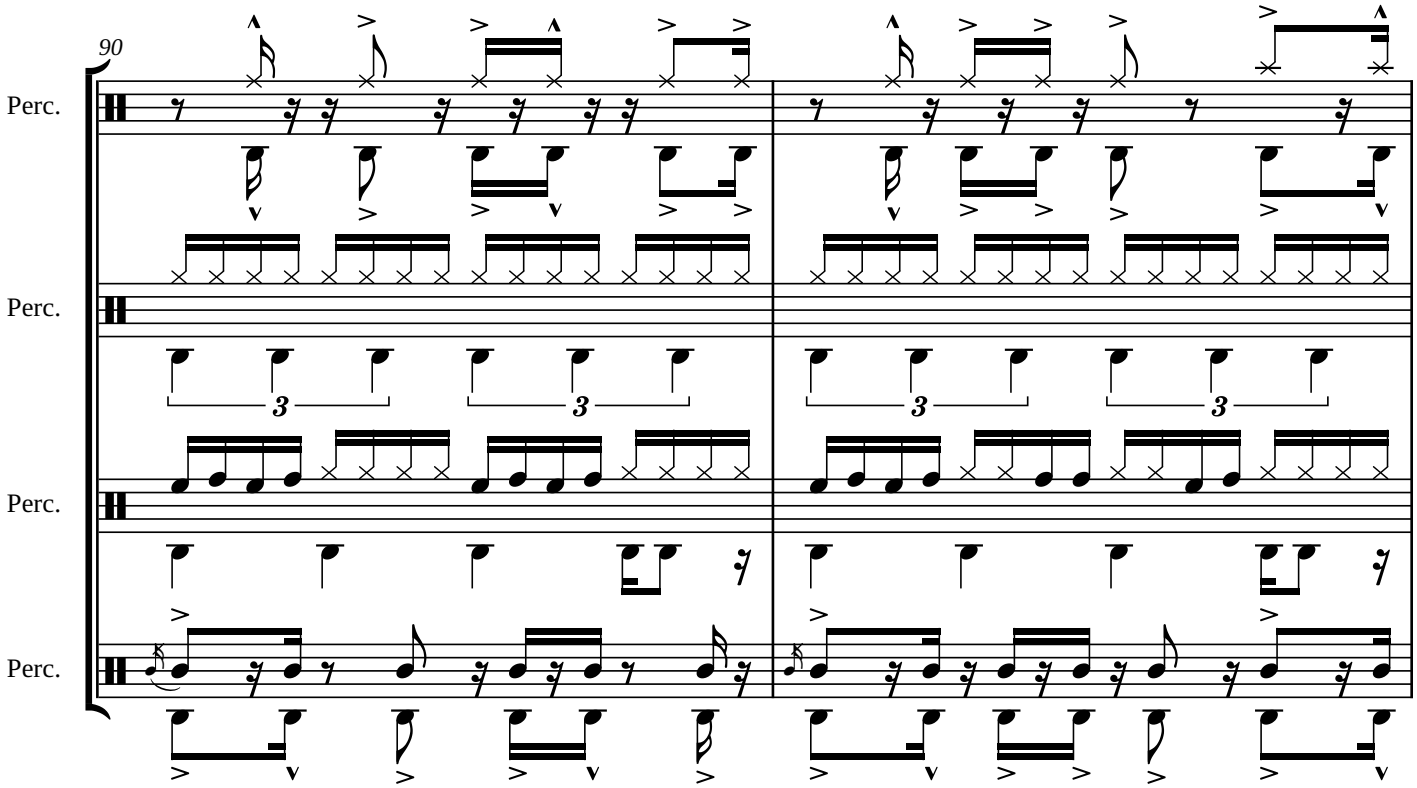

78
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
mf
ff
mf
ff
mf
ff
p sub.
fff
mp
ff
80
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
f
ff
pp
ff
ff
mf
ff sub.

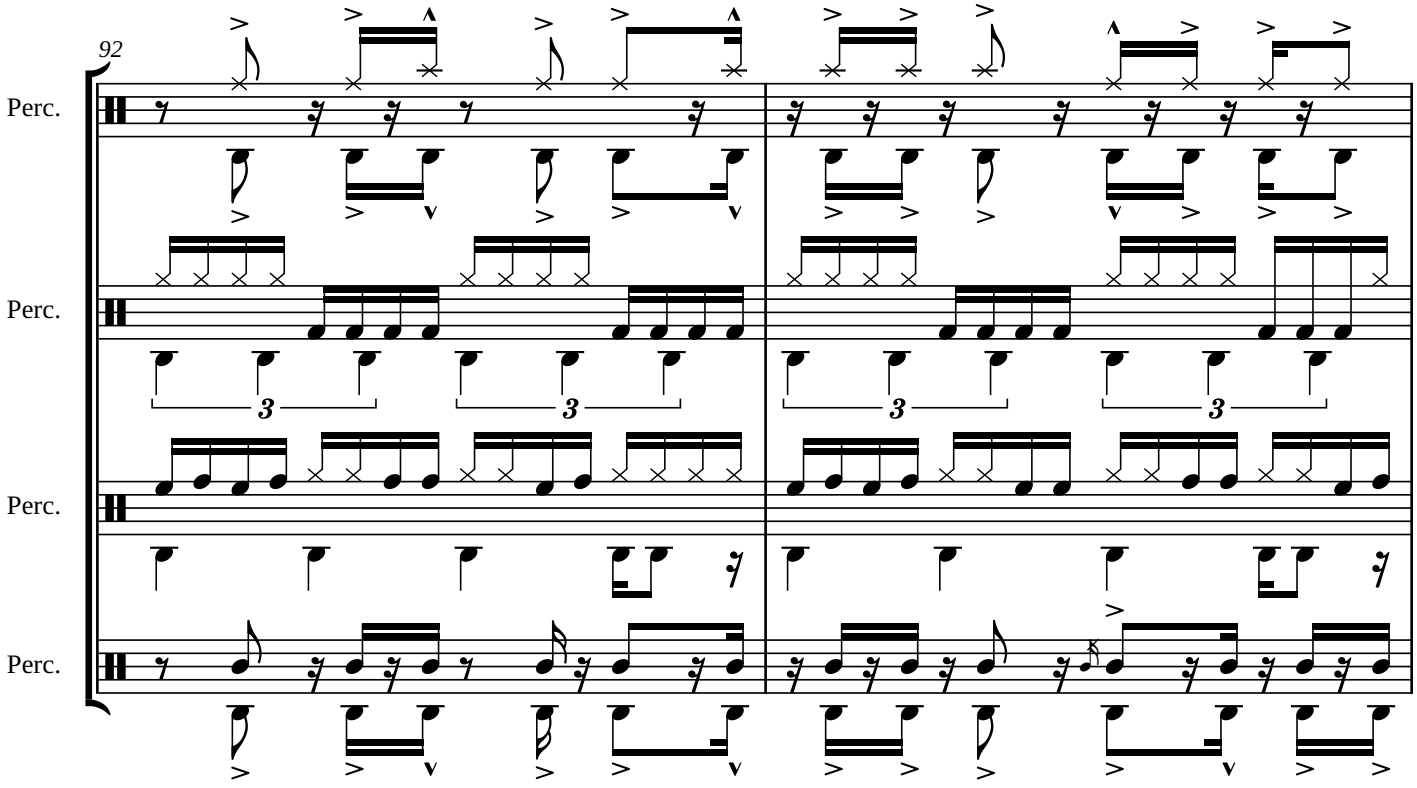

82
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
pp
ff

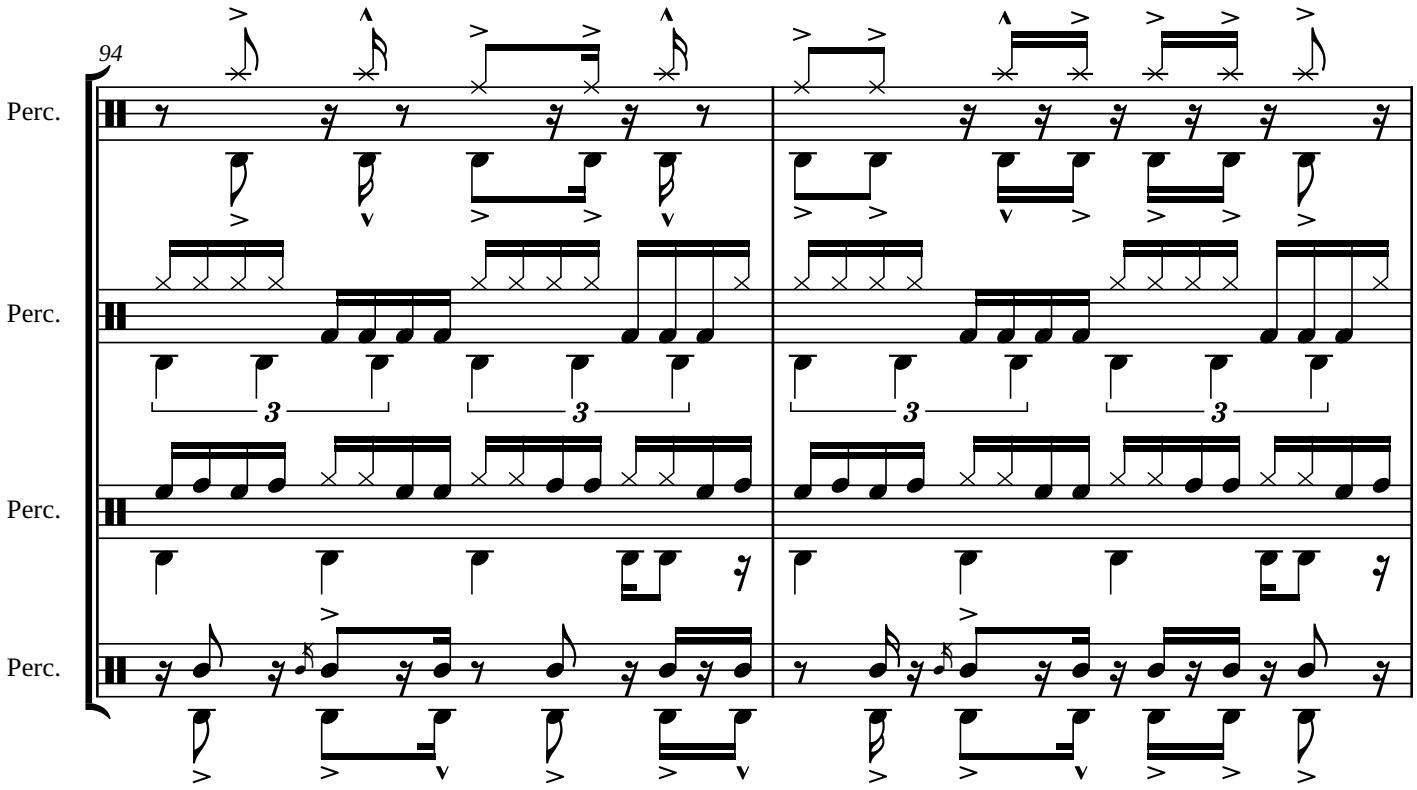

84
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
pp
ff


86
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
molto cresc. poco a poco
ff sub.
mp sub.
molto cresc. poco a poco
mp sub.
molto cresc. poco a poco
mp sub.
molto cresc. poco a poco
mp sub.
3

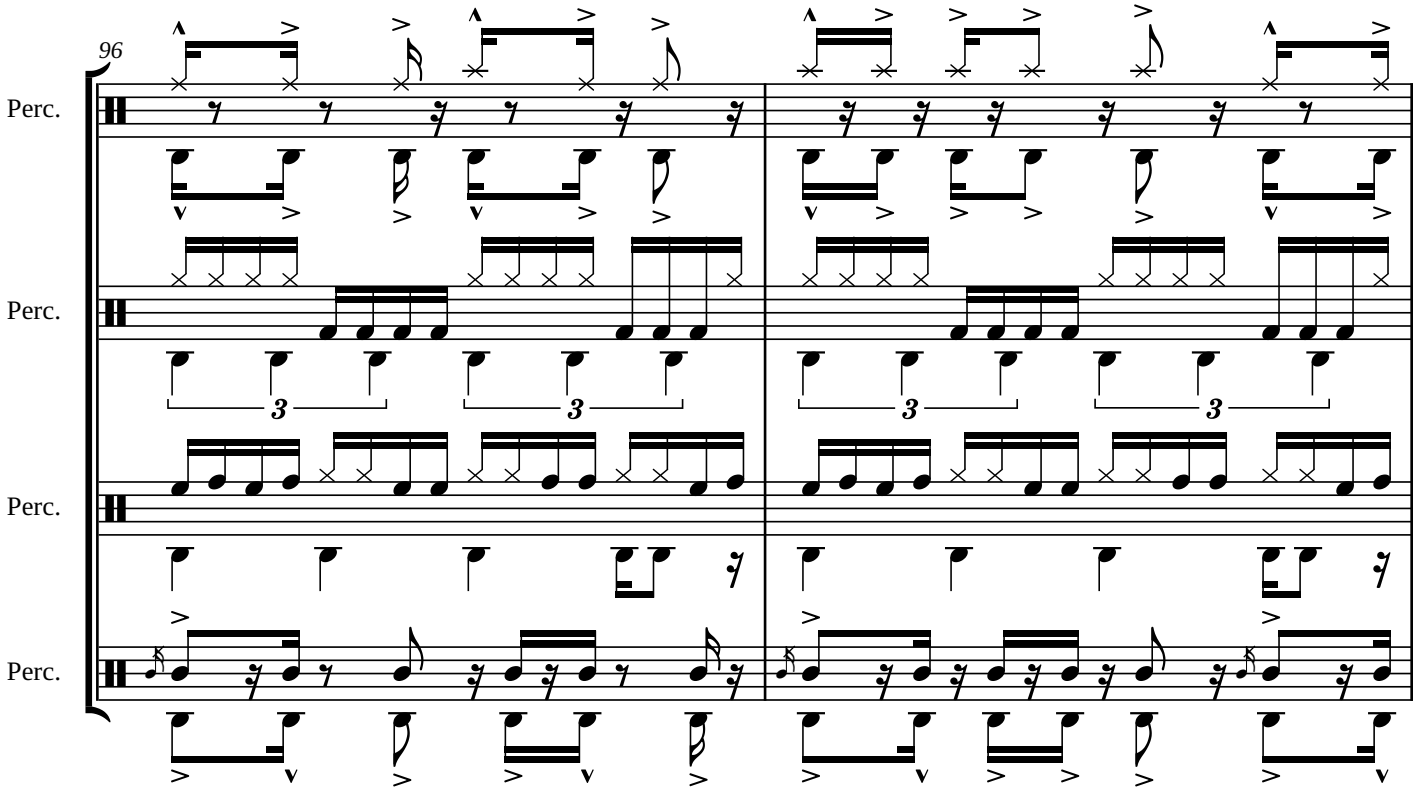

88
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
3

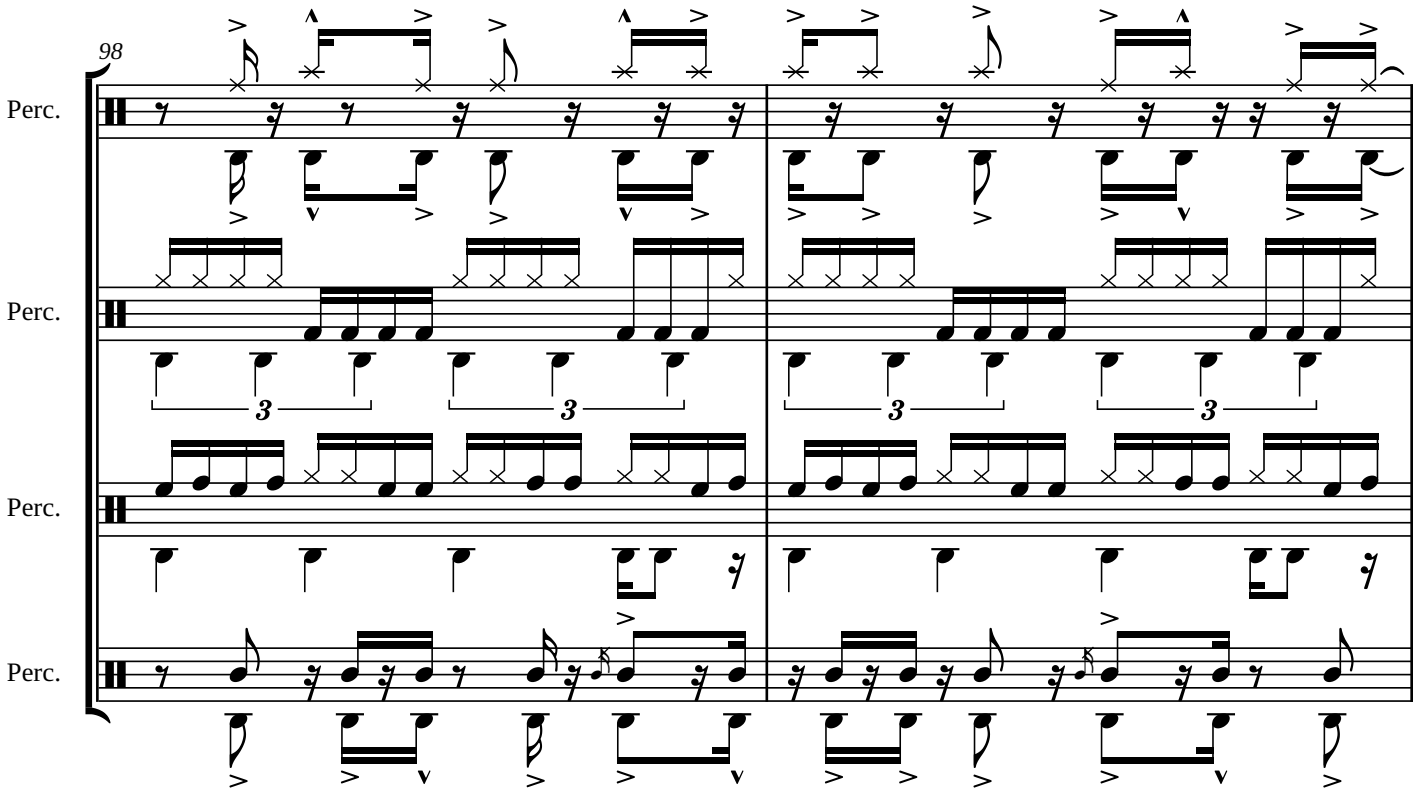

90
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.

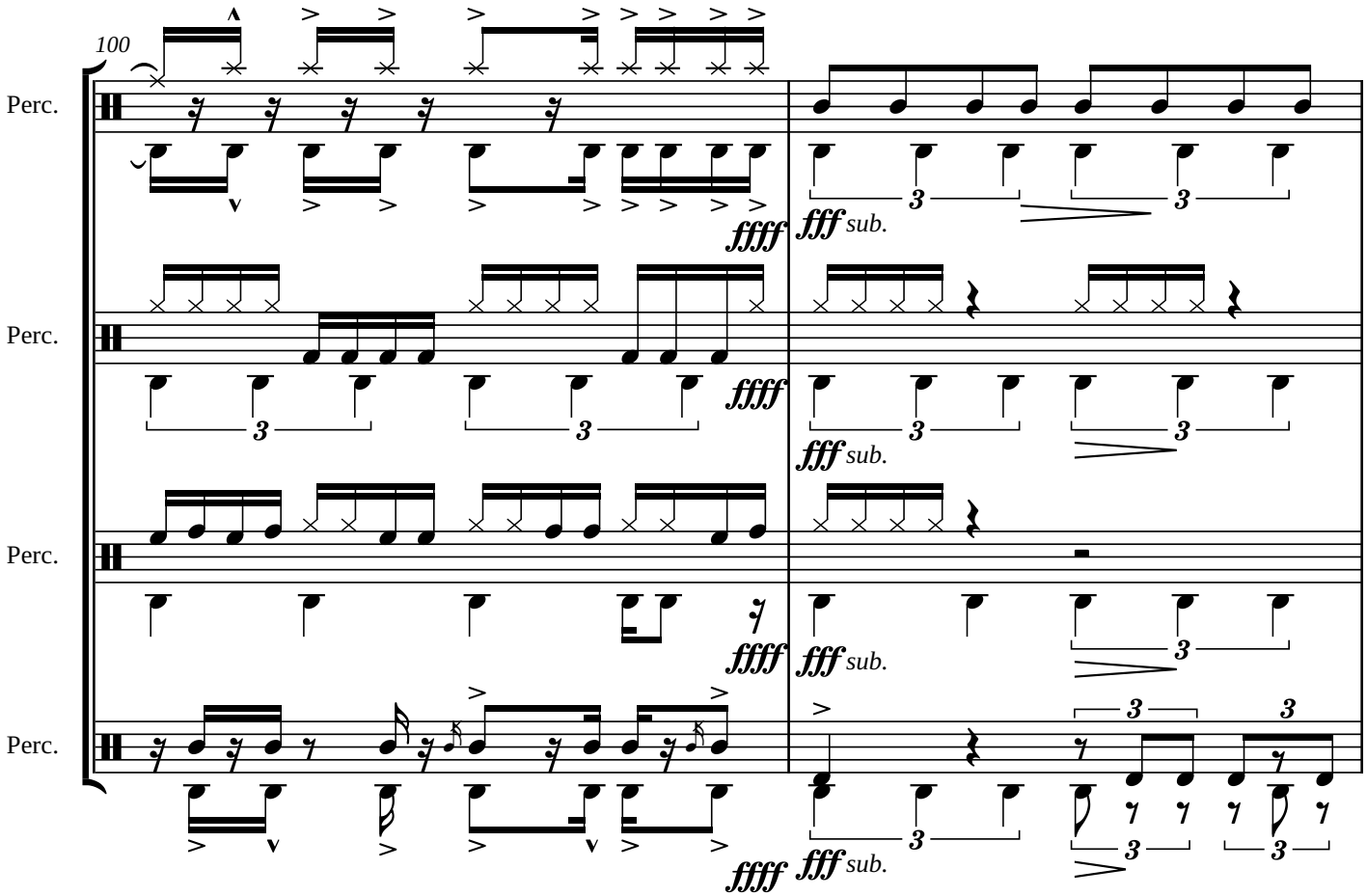

92
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.

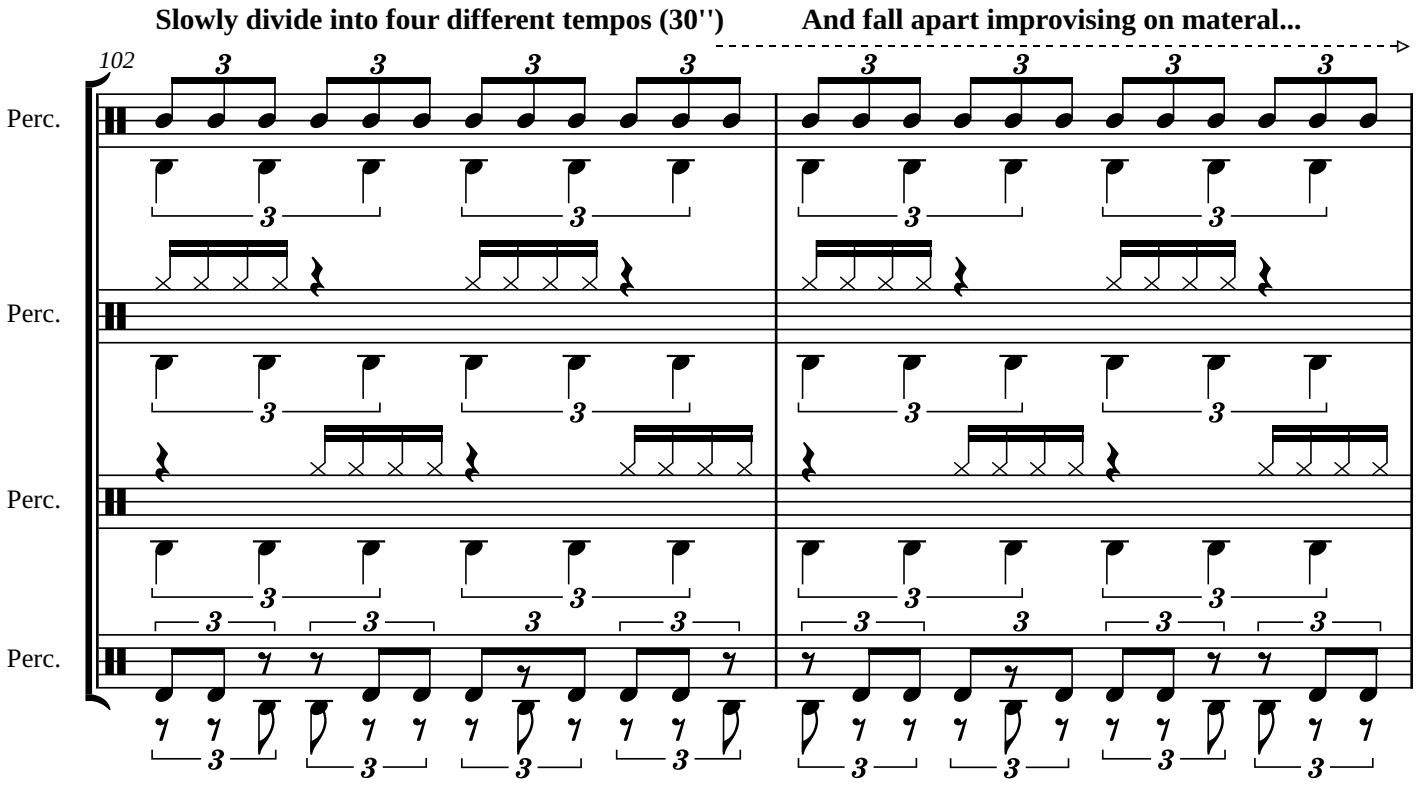


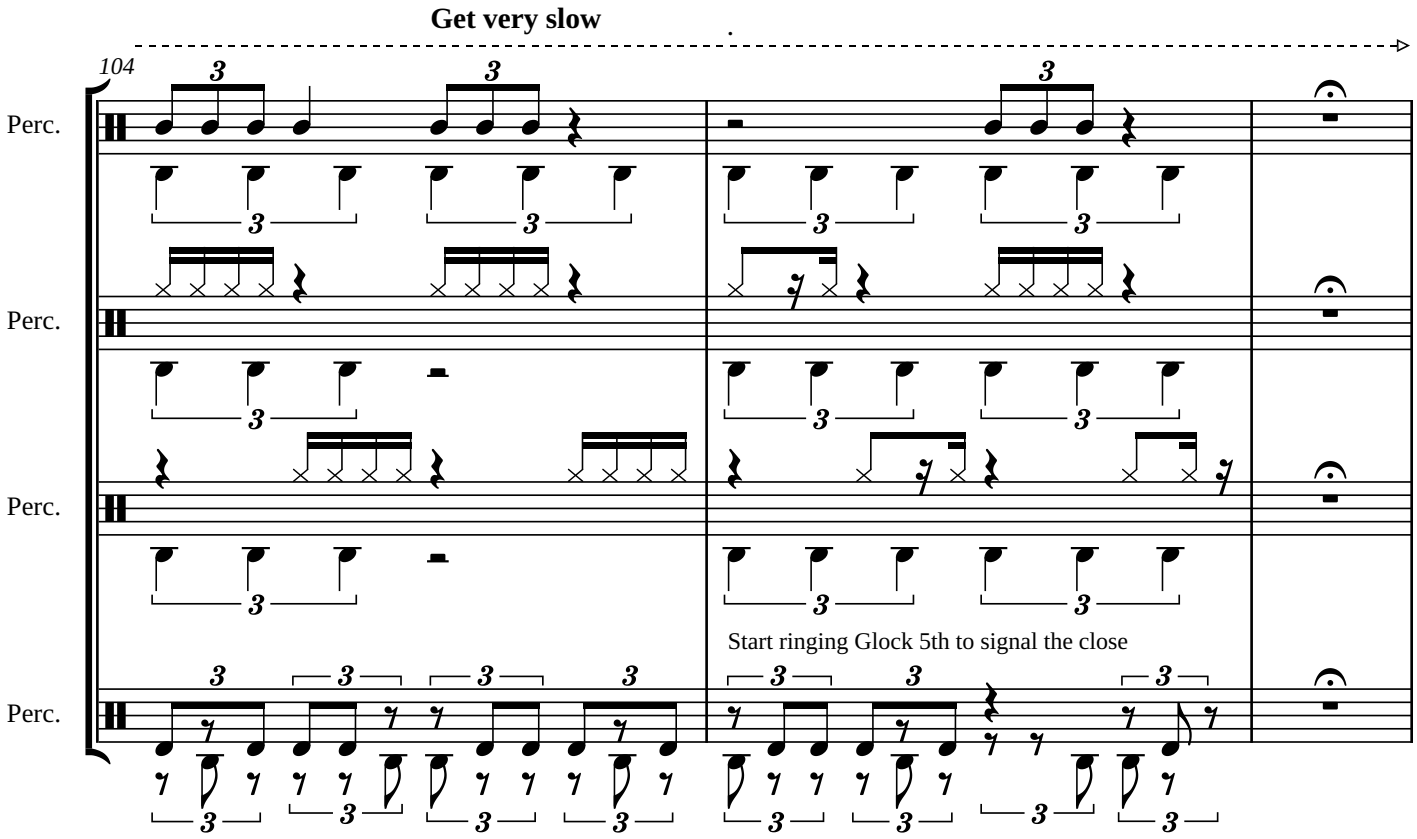
Continue cresc.

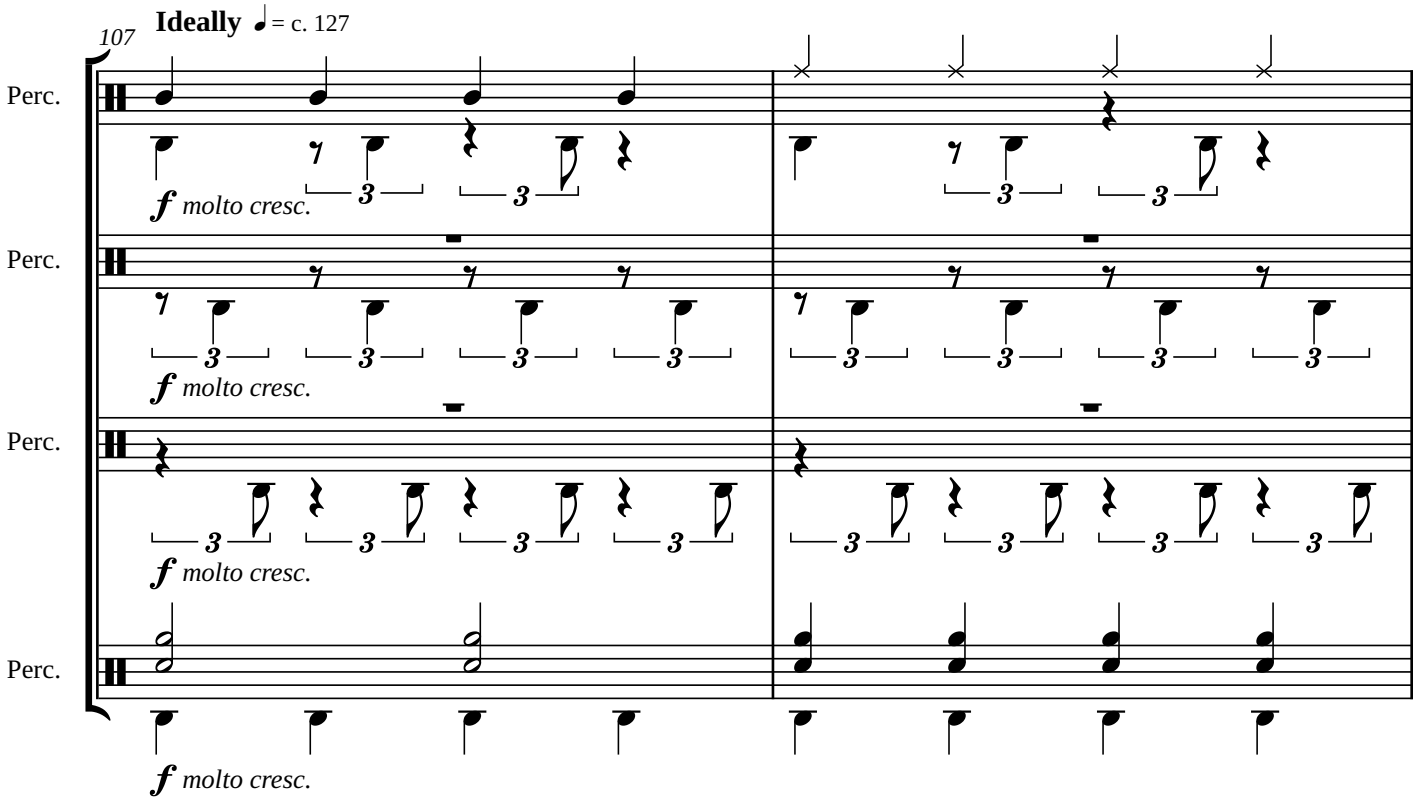


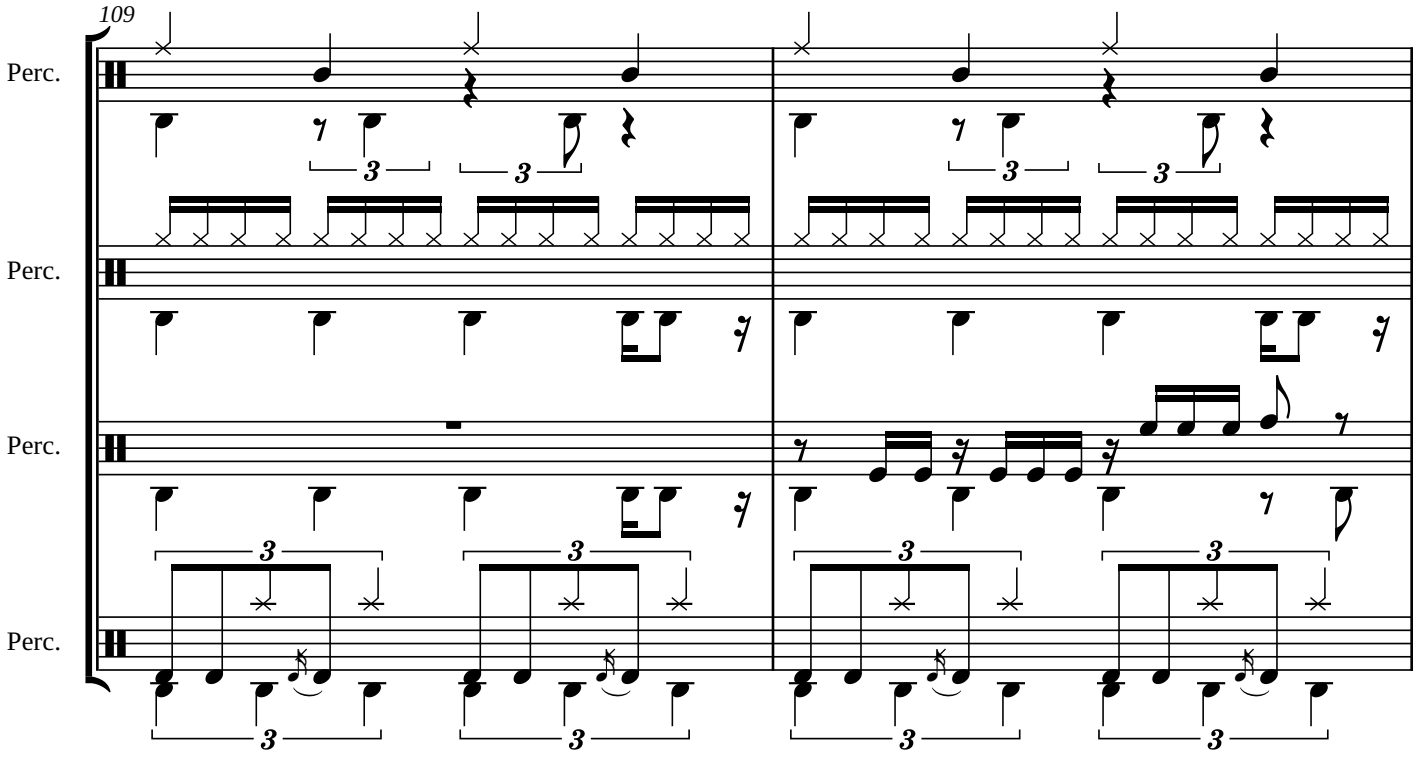

98
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.

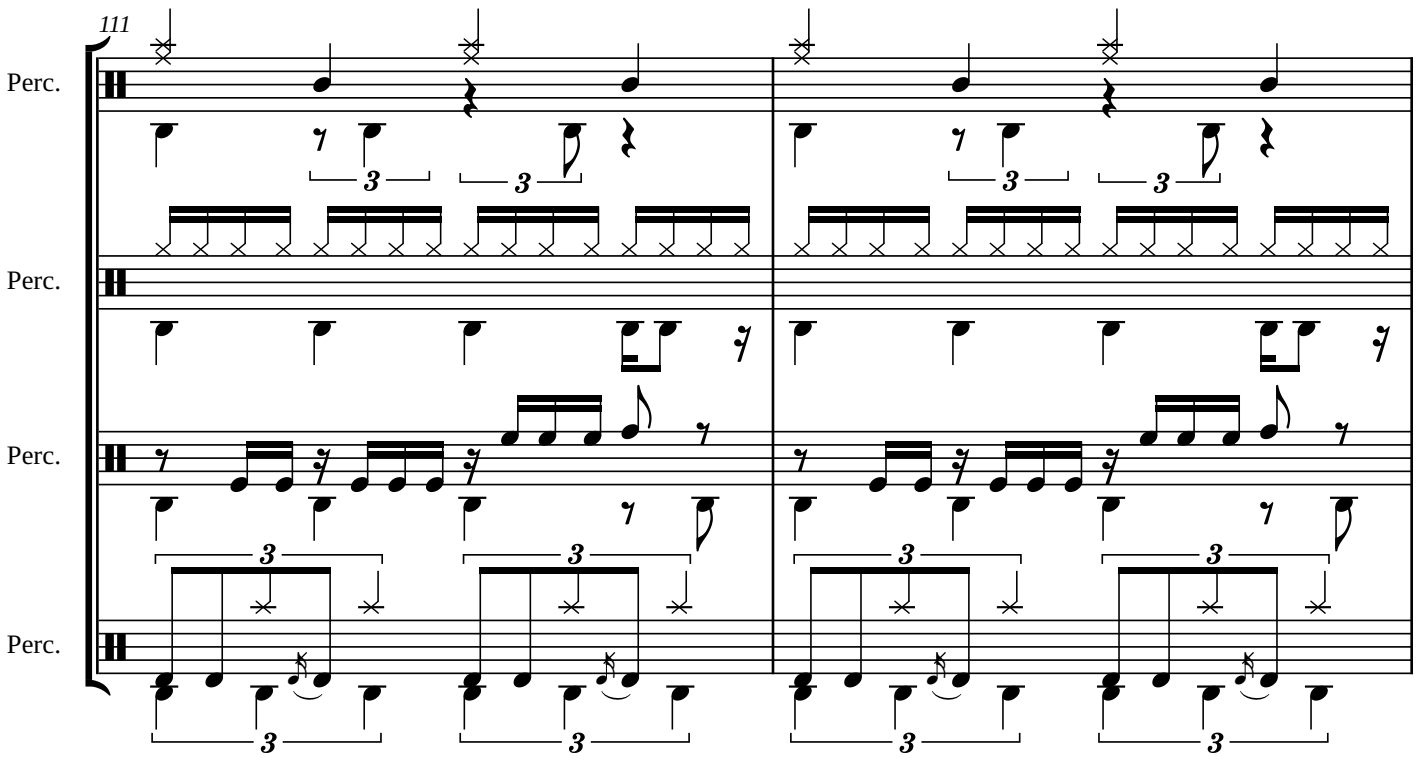

100
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
ffff
fff sub.

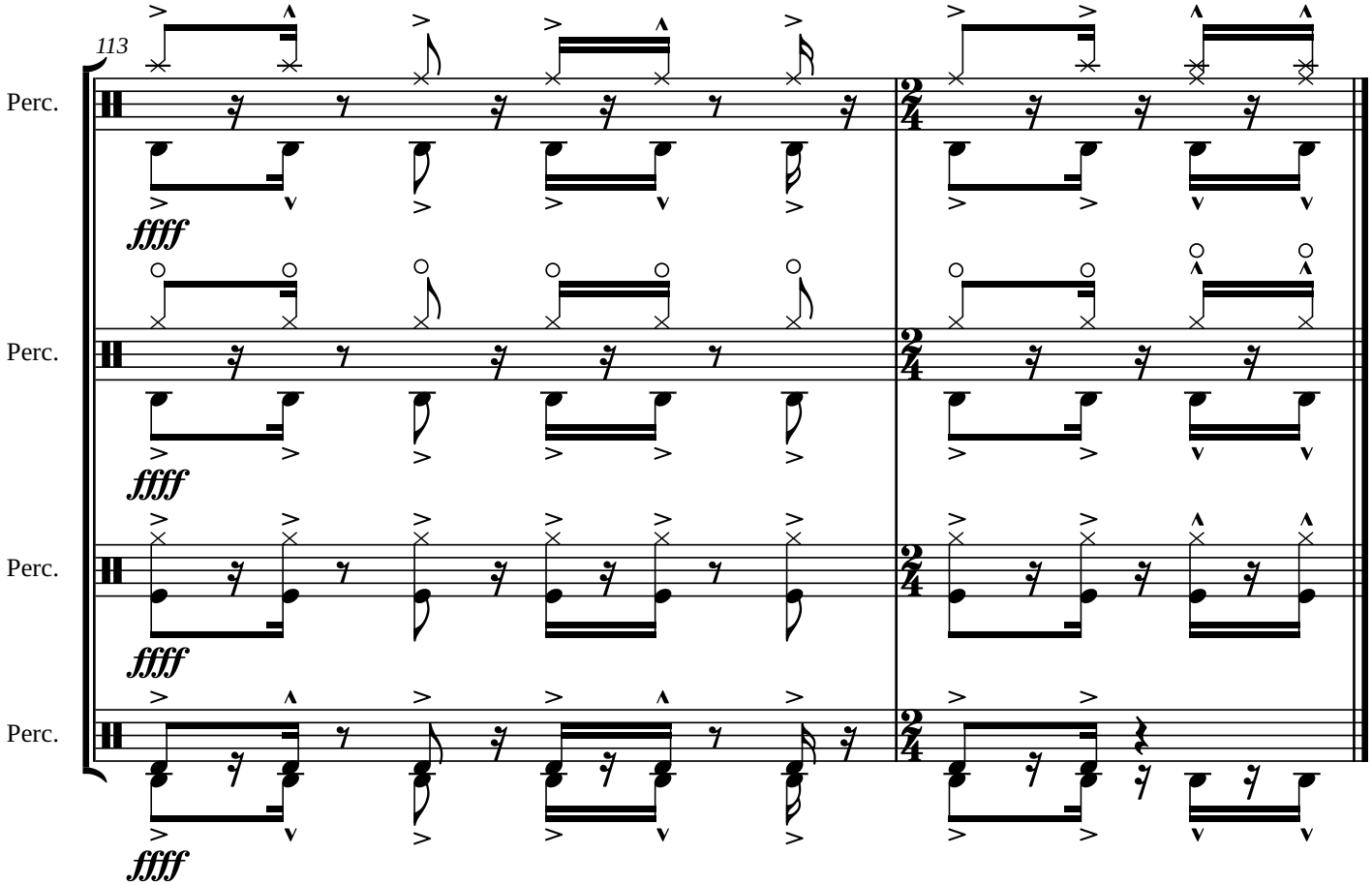

Slowly divide into four different tempos (30'')
And fall apart improvising on materal...
102
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.


Get very slow
104
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Start ringing Glock 5th to signal the close


107
Ideally ♩= c. 127
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
f molto cresc.
f molto cresc.
f molto cresc.
f molto cresc.


109
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.


111
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.
Perc.


113
Perc.
ffff
Perc.
ffff
Perc.
ffff
Perc.
ffff