Steven Snowden

Take This Hammer

Tuba-Euphonium Quartet

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While contemplating the prospect of writing for tuba-euphonium quartet, I knew that I wanted to focus on two concepts. First, I wanted to explore the vast, but frequently overlooked, technical and musical capabilities of these instruments. Secondly, I wanted to address the working-class roles that these instruments often occupy and how this character trait could be brought to life in such an ensemble.

The "work song" has been a vital part of African culture for centuries. In many societies, these songs encouraged efficiency and quality of work, however, in the harsh conditions of American plantations these songs took on a different kind of importance. The steady unison rhythms kept any one person from being singled out and severely punished for working slower than the rest. This practice continued on into the middle of the 20th Century in the slave labor conditions of southern U.S. prisons. While many of these songs were used all throughout the workday, the traditional work song *Take This Hammer* was most often reserved for driving iron spikes during railroad construction.

The lyrics below come from a version of the song by Huddie "Leadbelly" Ledbetter, a prisoner at the Louisiana State Penitentiary in the 1930's.

Take this hammer and carry it to the captain
Take this hammer and carry it to the captain
Take this hammer and carry it to the captain
Tell him I'm gone.
Tell him I'm gone.

If he asks you "was I running"
If he asks you "was I running"
If he asks you "was I running"
Tell him I was flying.
Tell him I was flying.

If he asks you "was I laughing"
If he asks you "was I laughing"
If he asks you "was I laughing"
Tell him I was crying.
Tell him I was crying.

Approximate Duration: 6:30

www.stevensnowden.com

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for Tuba-Euphonium Quartet

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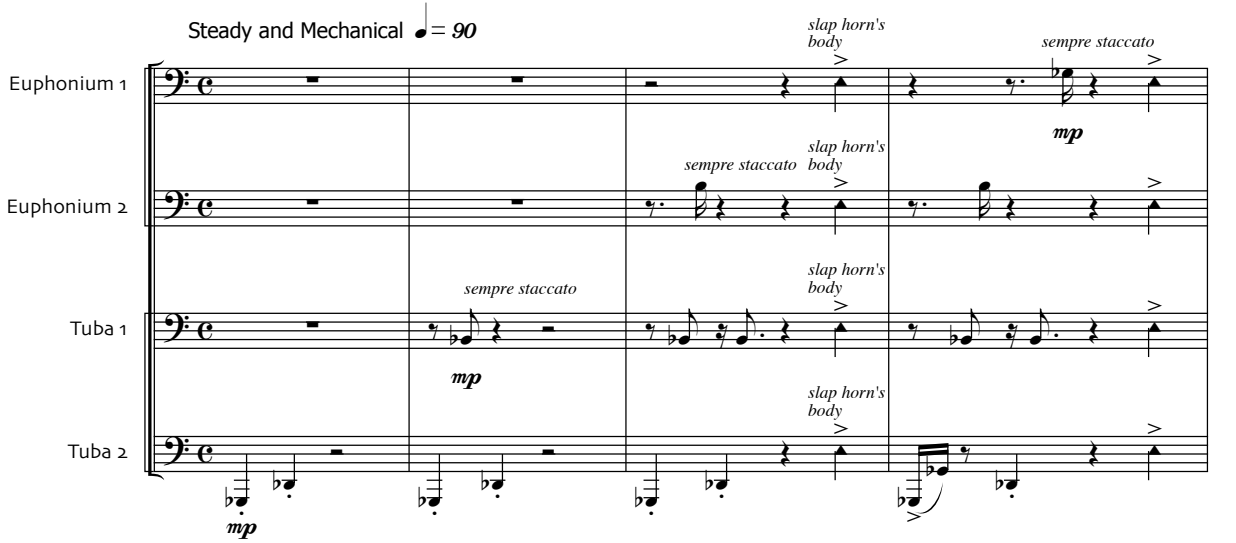

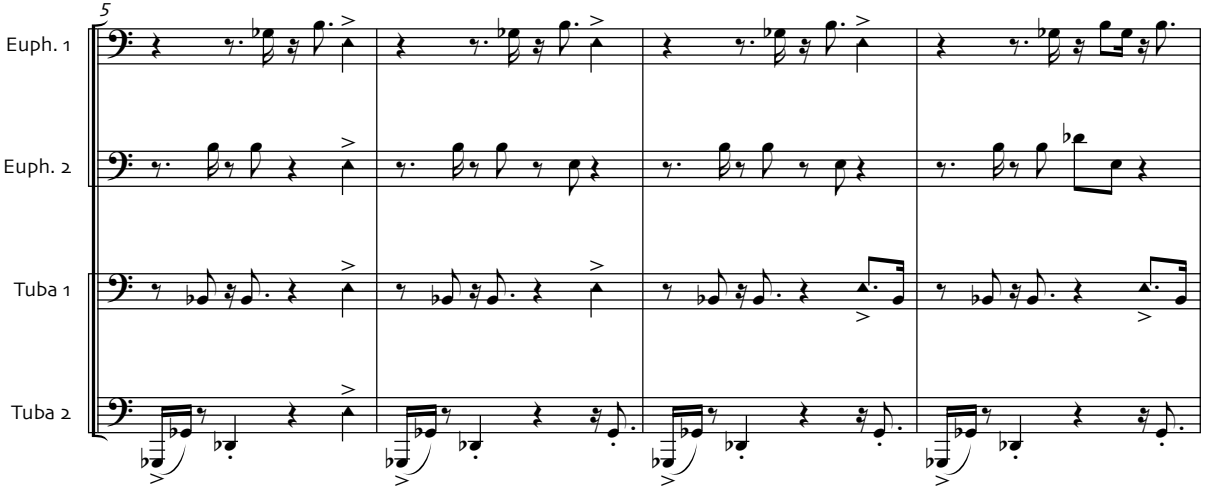

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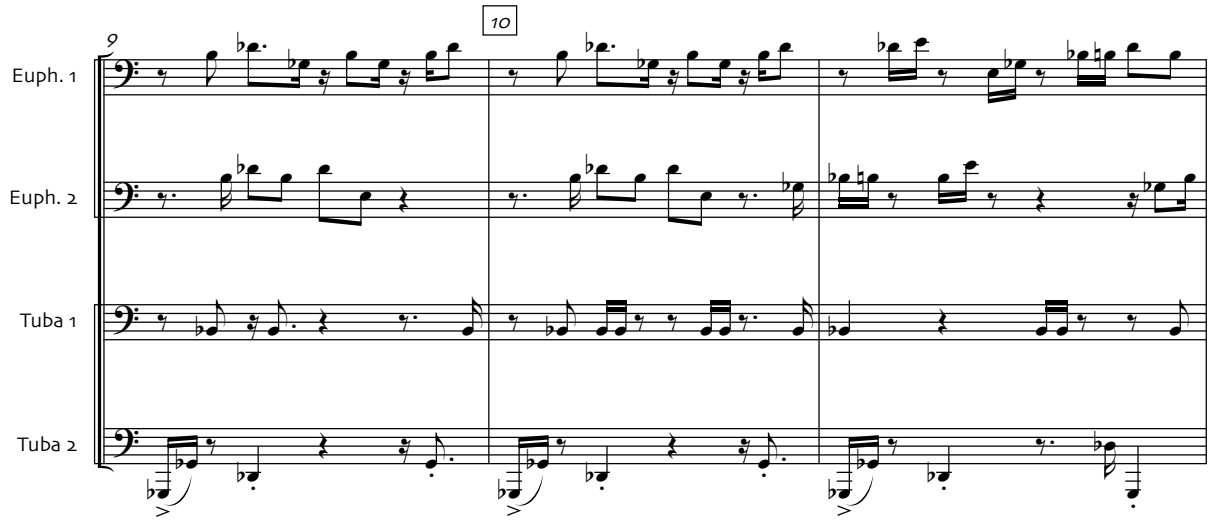
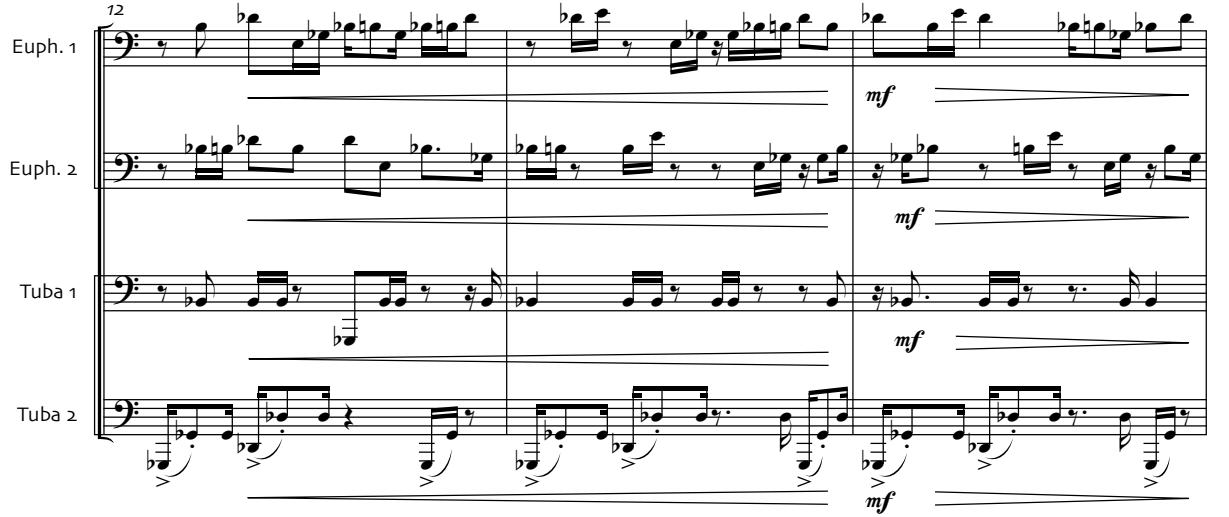
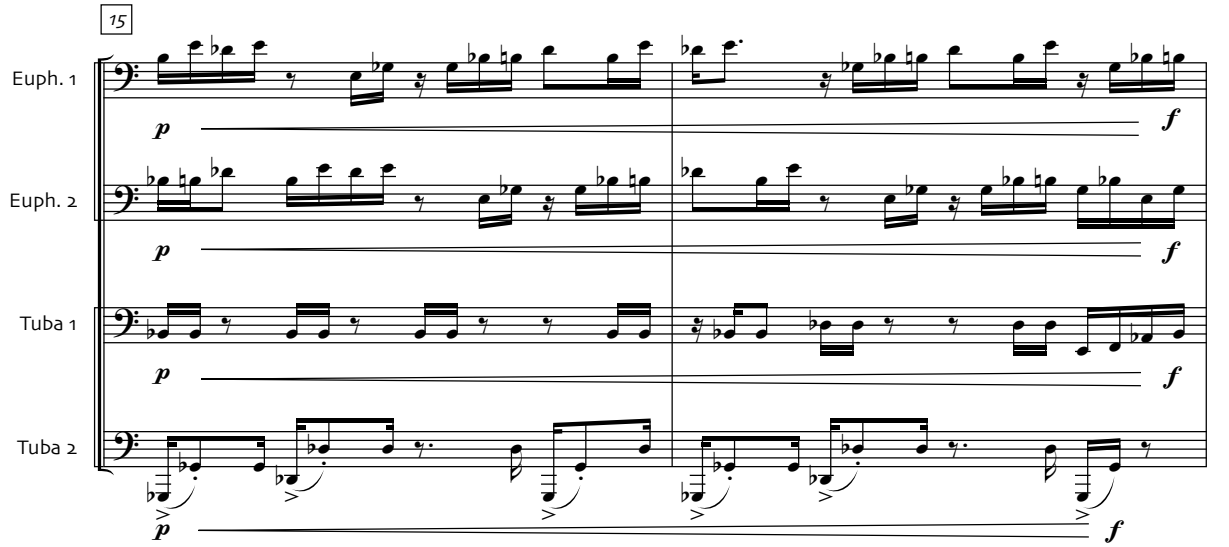
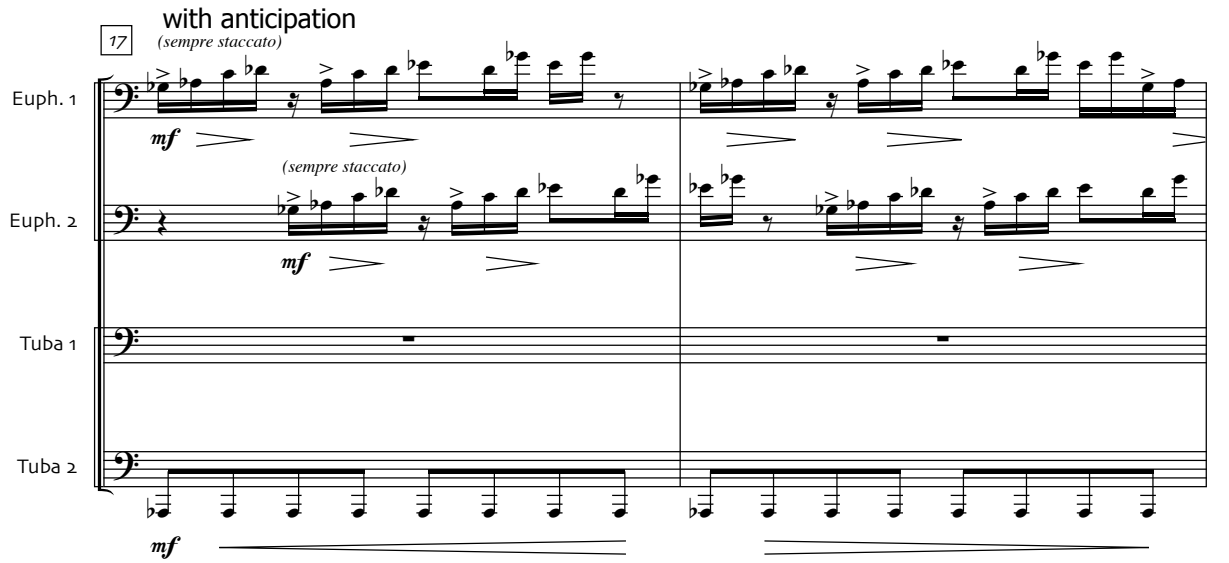
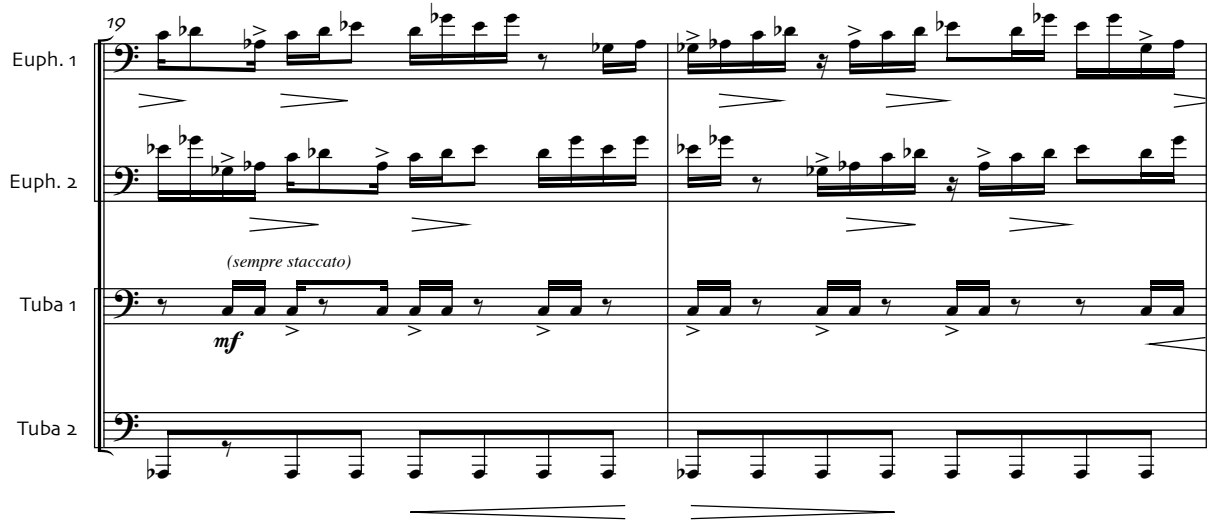
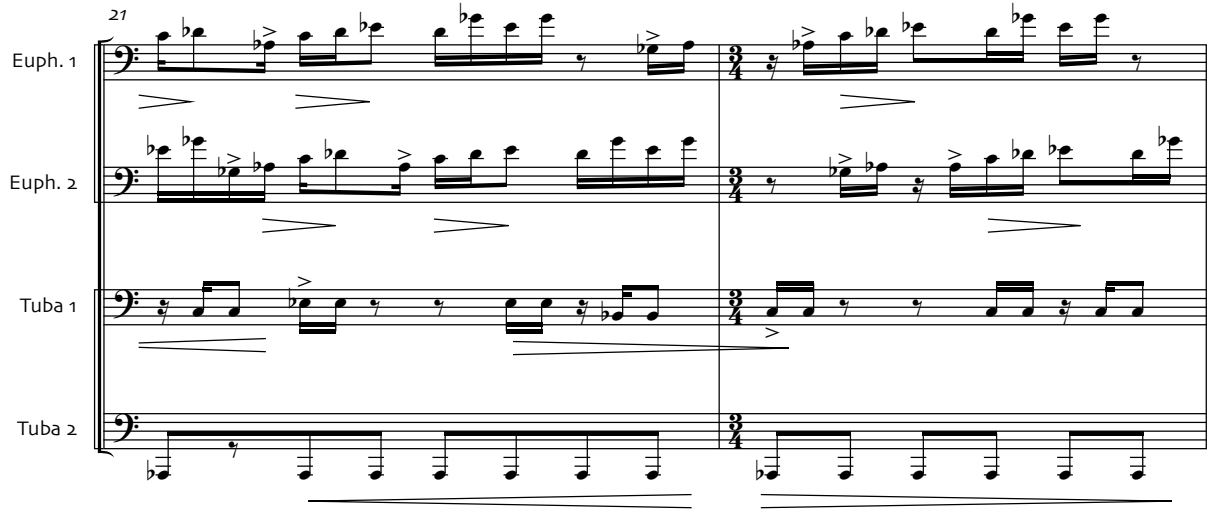

9
10
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2

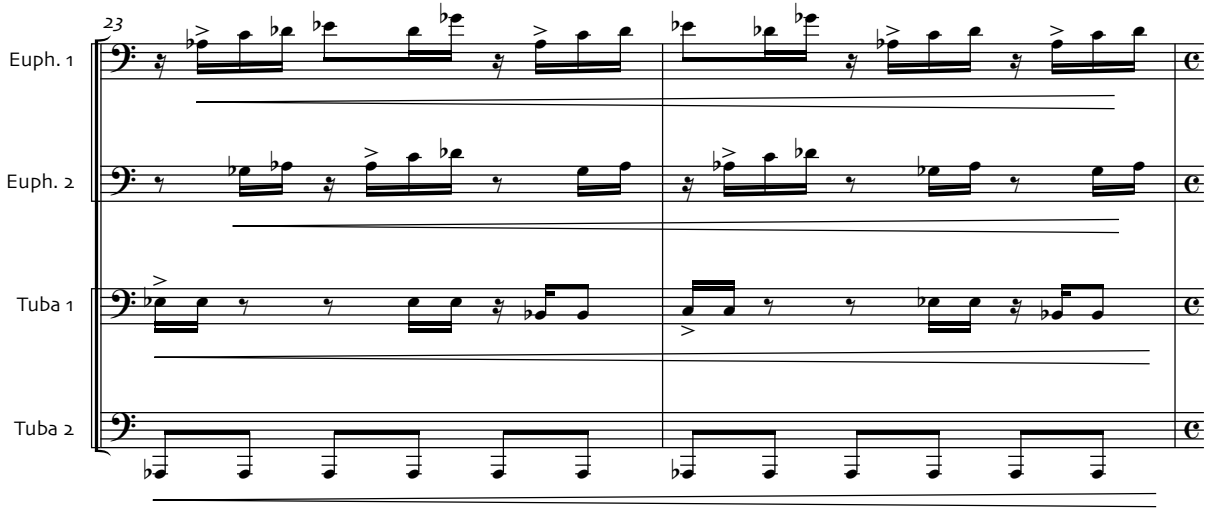

12
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
mf
mf
mf
mf

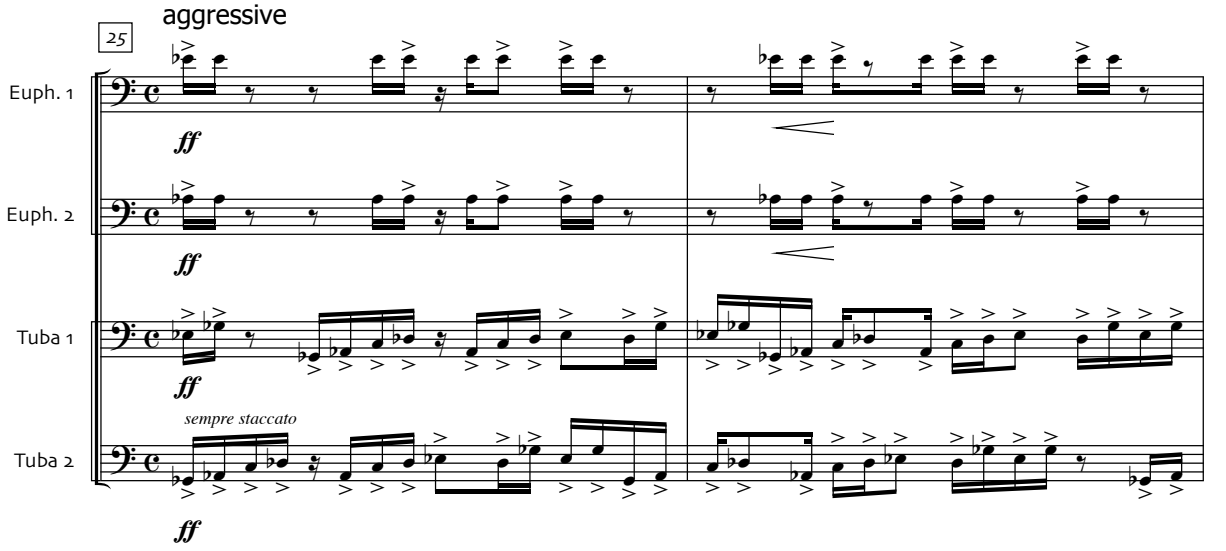

15
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
p
f

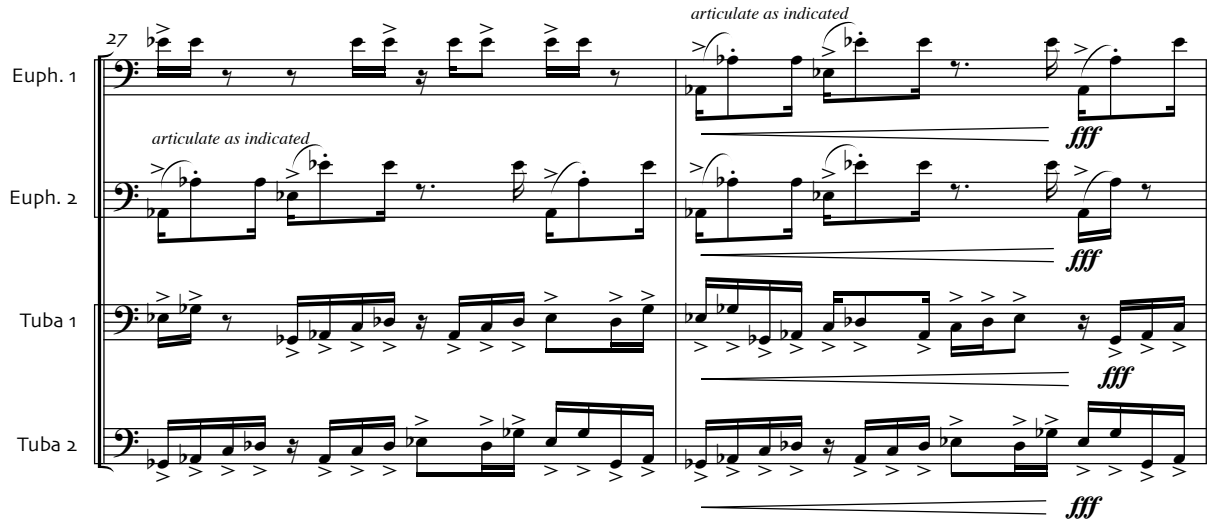

17
with anticipation
(sempre staccato)
Euph. 1
(sempre staccato)
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
mf

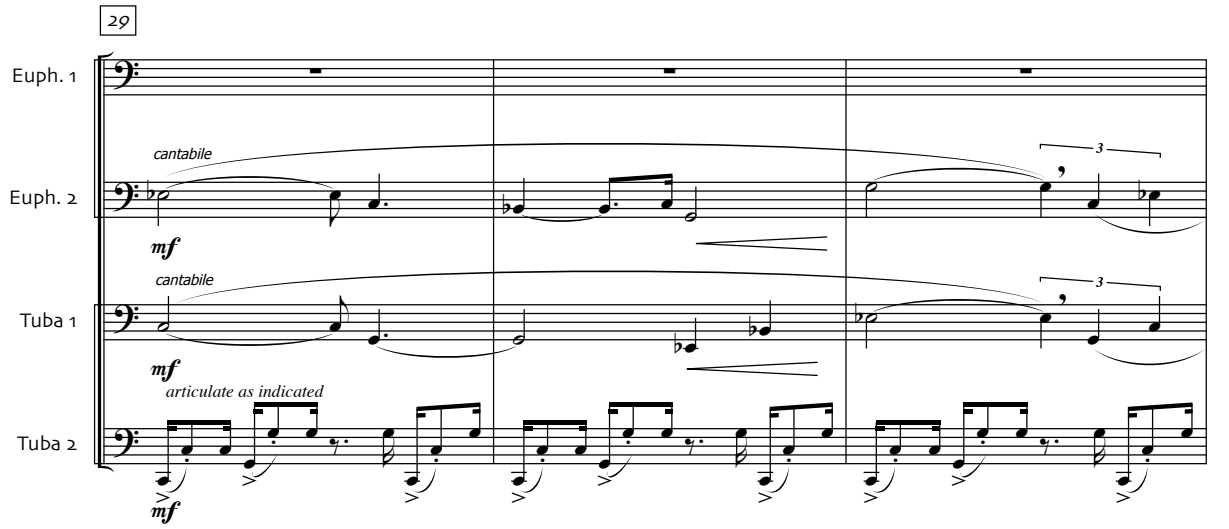

19
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
(sempre staccato)
Tuba 1
mf
Tuba 2

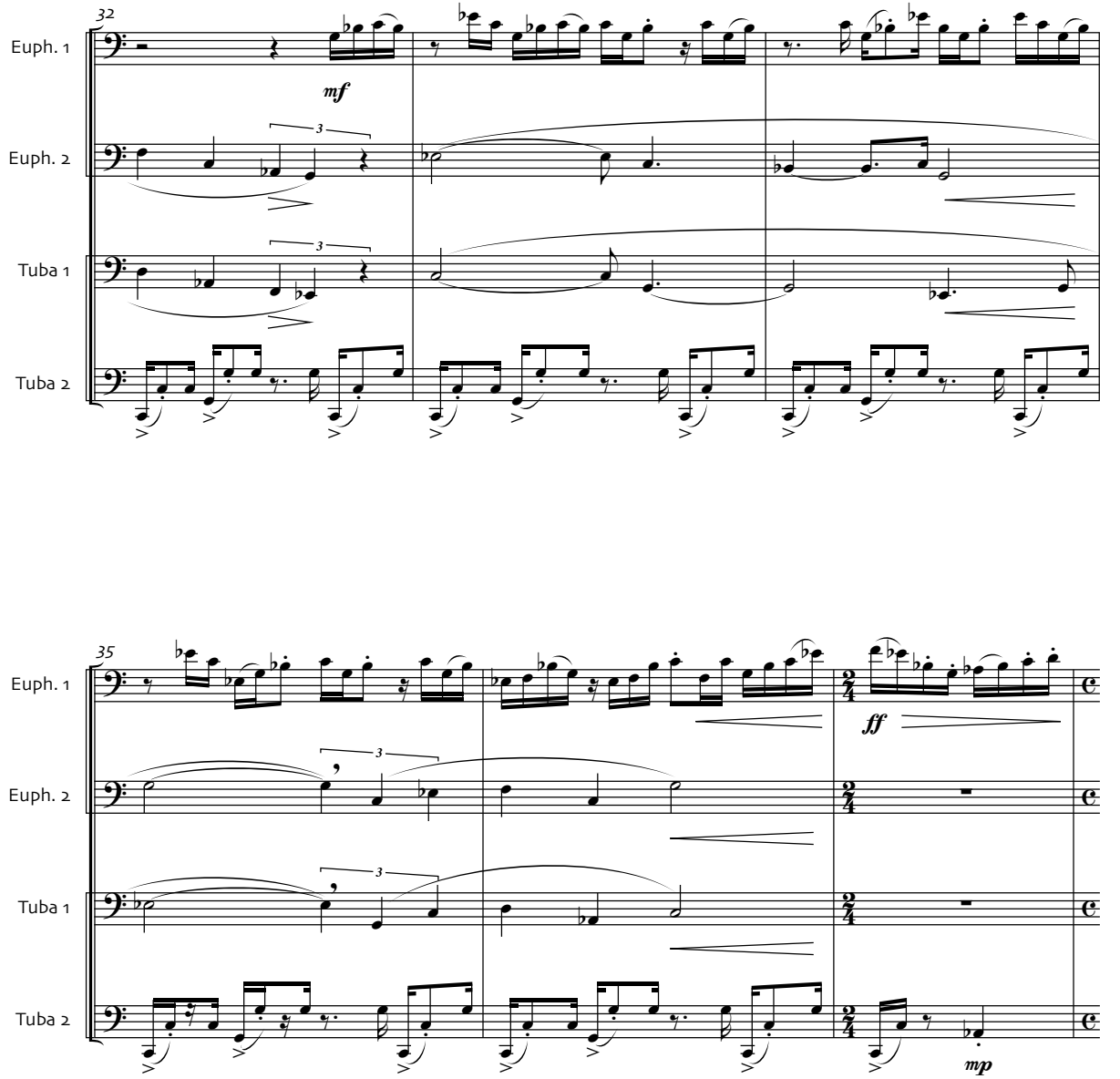

21
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2

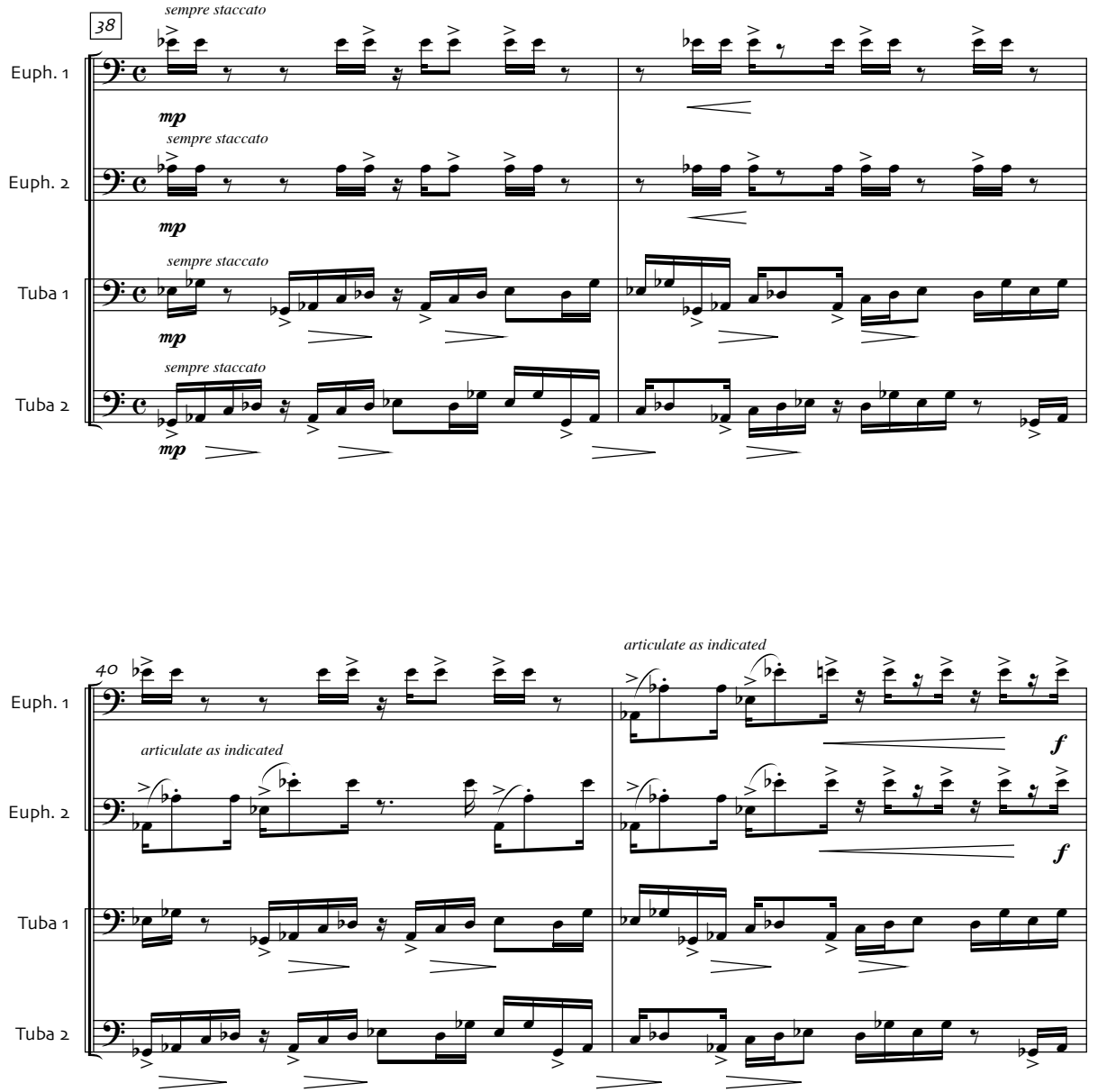

23
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2

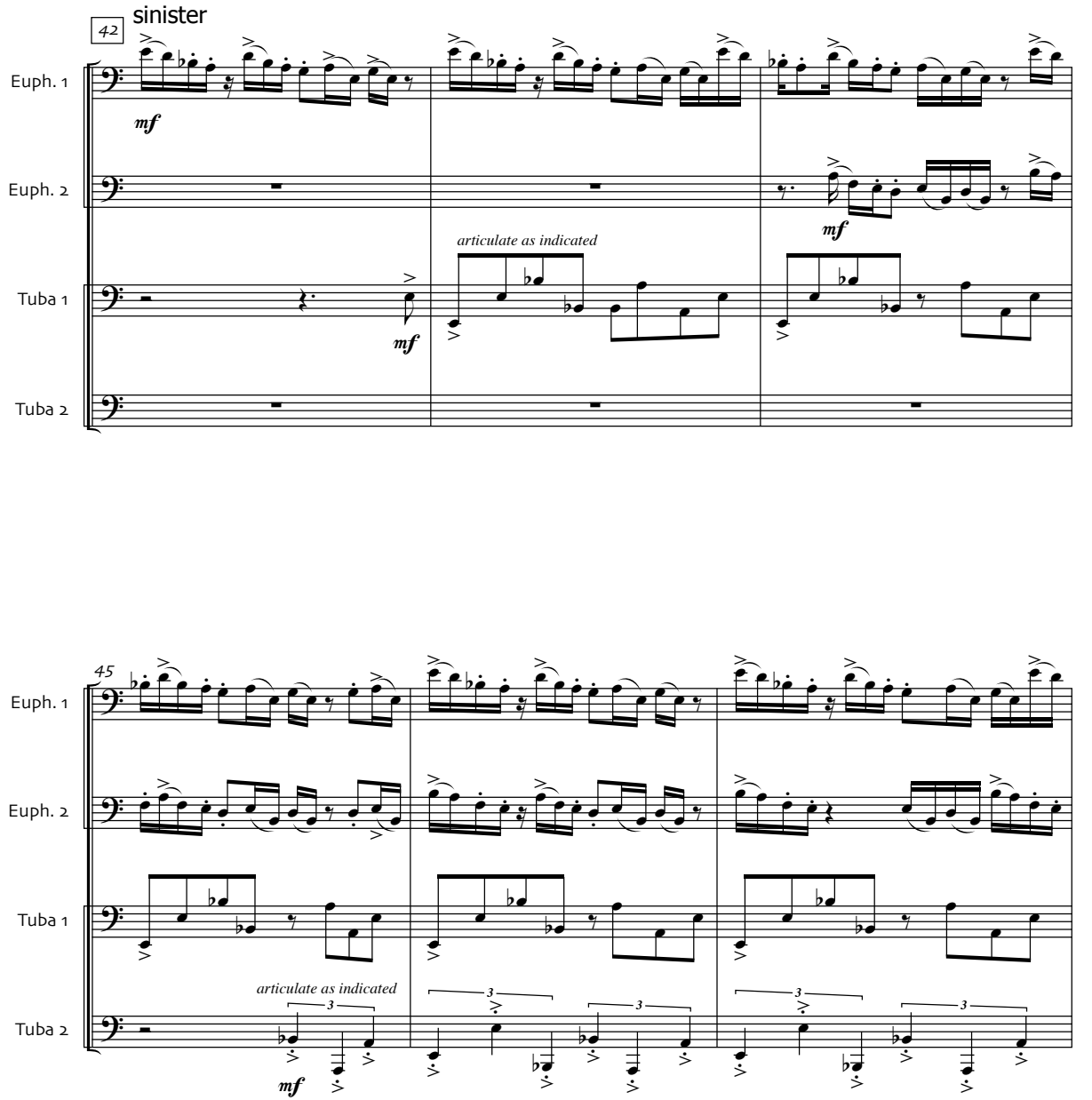

aggressive
25
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
ff
ff
ff
sempre staccato
ff

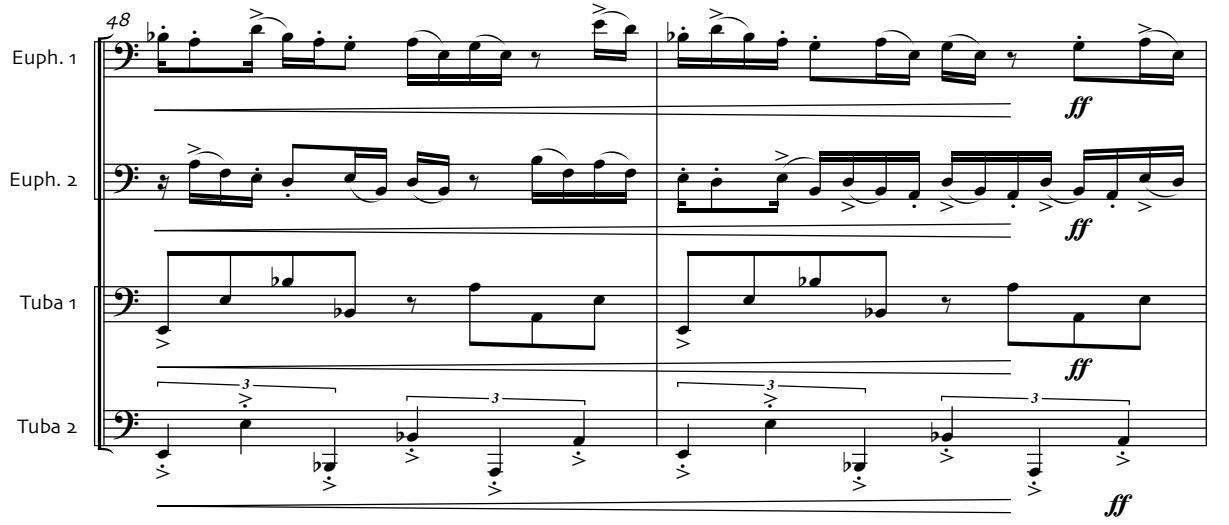

27
articulate as indicated
articulate as indicated
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
fff
fff
fff
fff

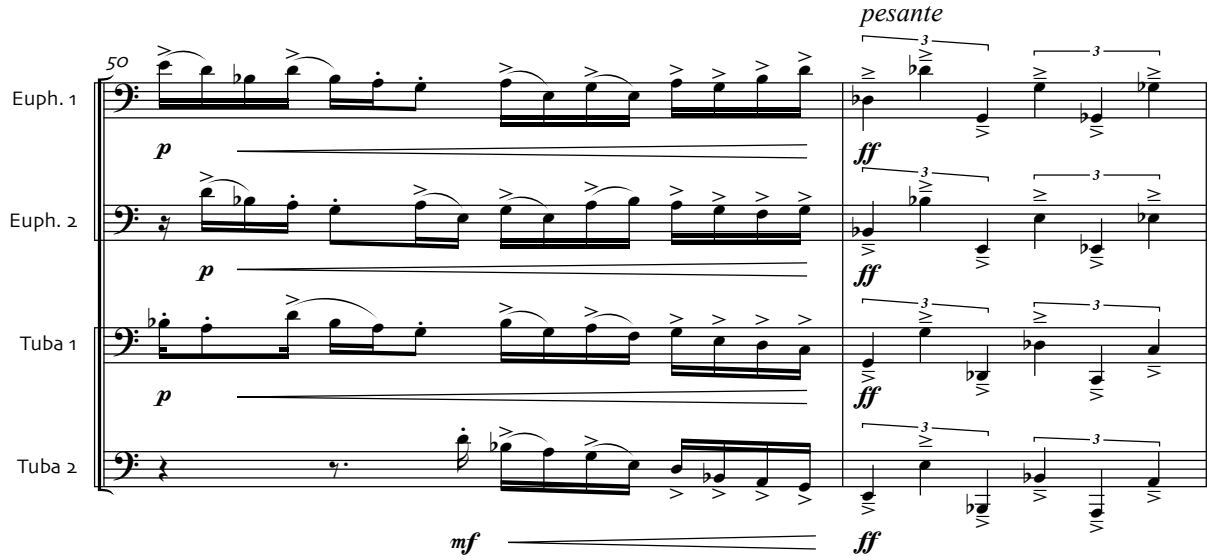

29
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
cantabile
cantabile
articulate as indicated
mf
mf
mf
3
3

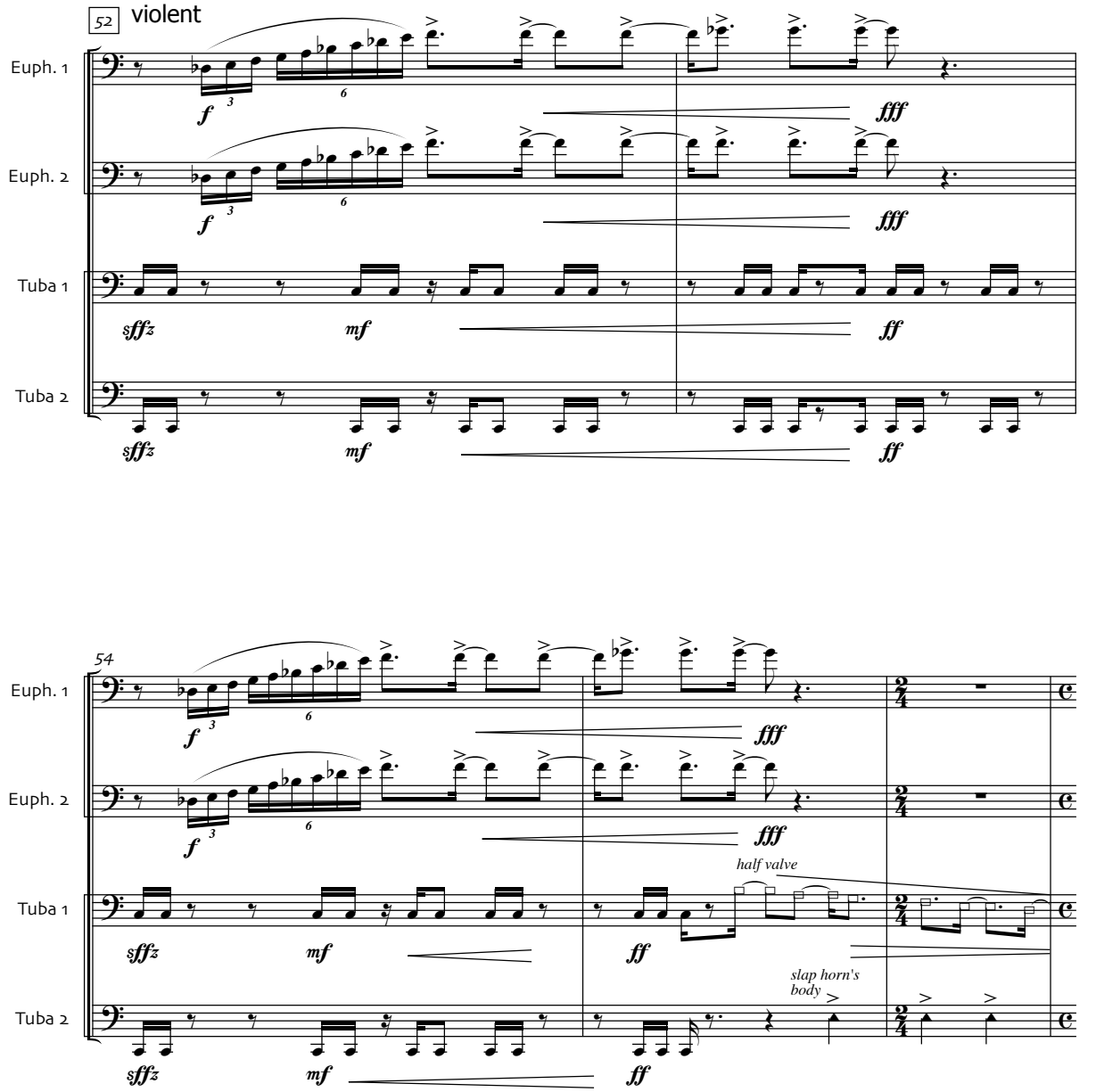

32
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
mf
3
35
ff
mp

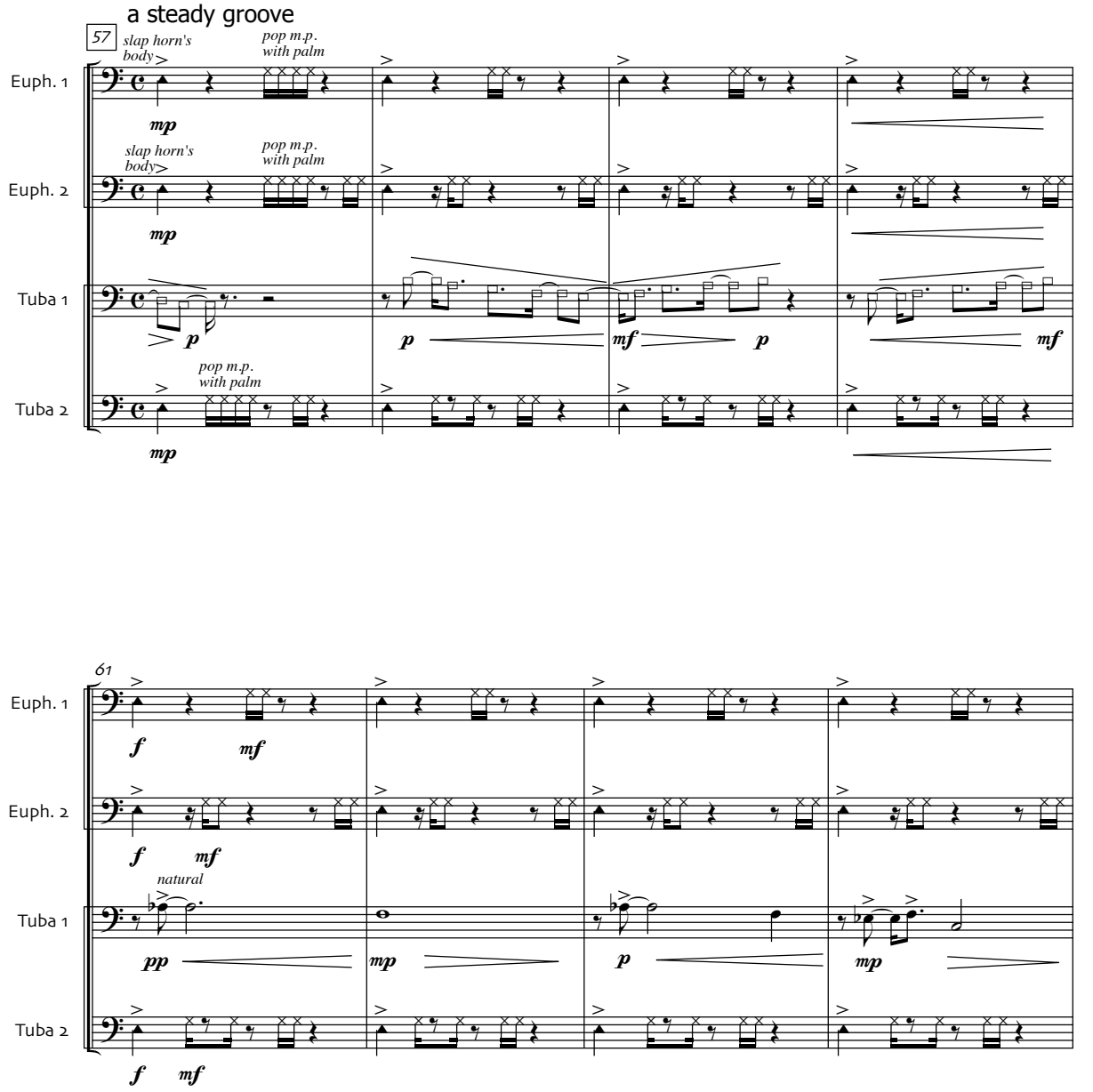

38
sempre staccato
Euph. 1
mp
sempre staccato
Euph. 2
mp
sempre staccato
Tuba 1
mp
sempre staccato
Tuba 2
mp
40
articulate as indicated
articulate as indicated
Euph. 1
f
Euph. 2
f
Tuba 1
Tuba 2

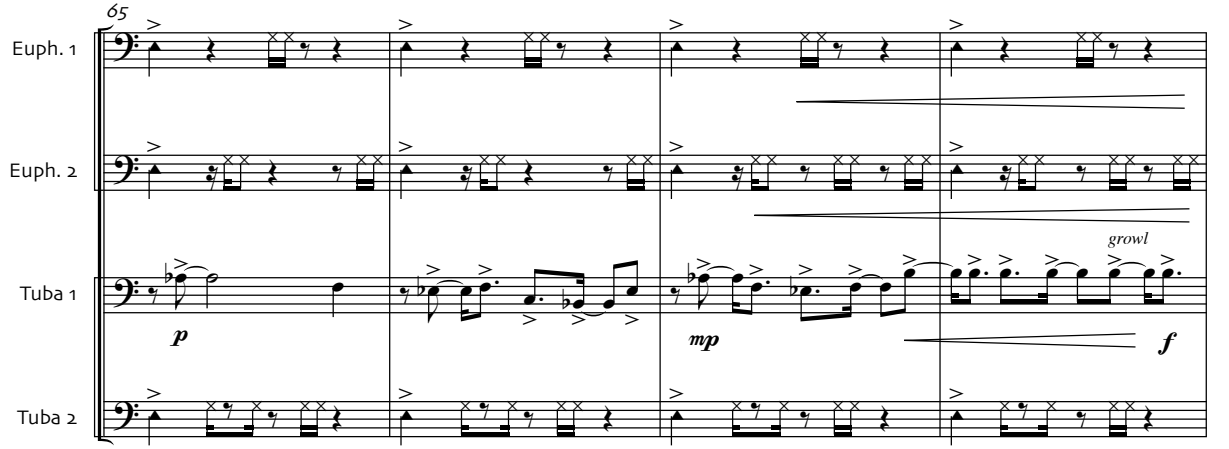

42
sinister
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
mf
articulate as indicated
45
articulate as indicated

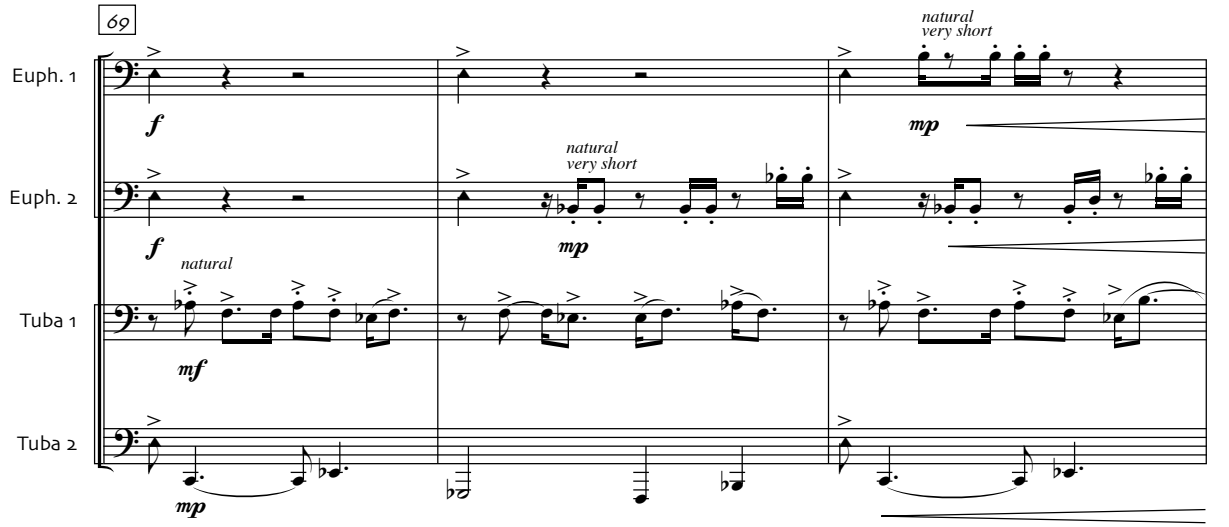

48
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
ff
ff
ff
ff

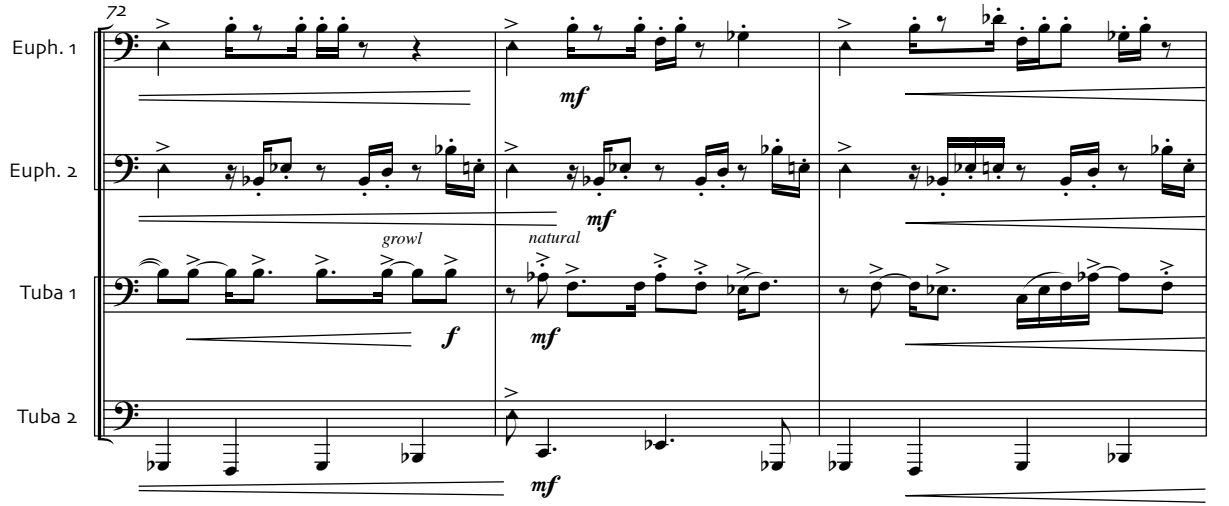

50
pesante
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
p
p
p
mf
ff
ff
ff
ff

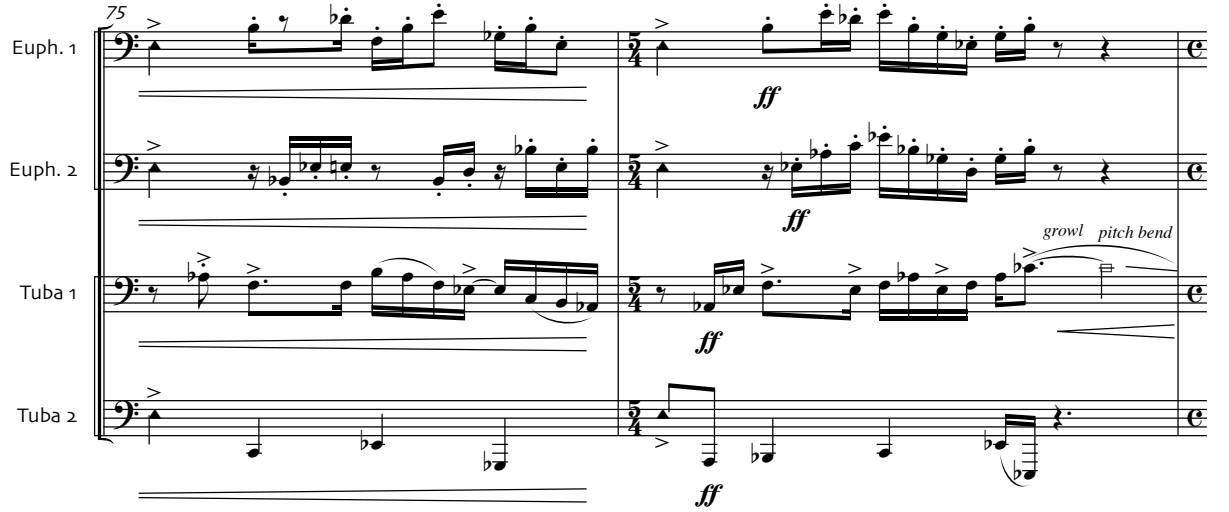

52
violent
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
f
fff
sffz
mf
ff
54
half valve
slap horn's
body

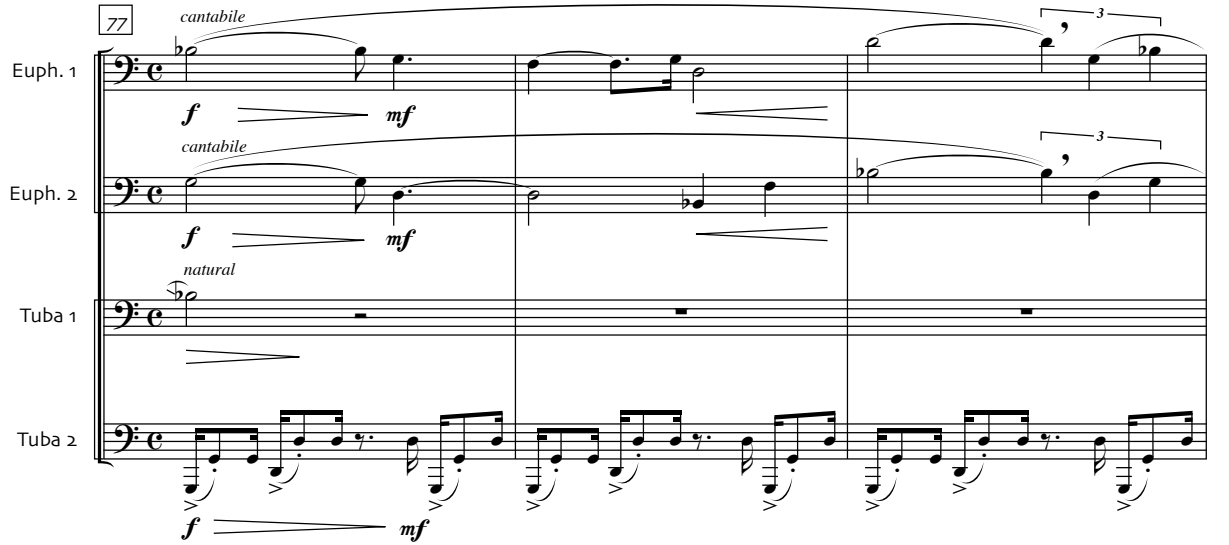

a steady groove
57
slap horn's body
pop m.p. with palm
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
mp
p
mf
61
natural
pp

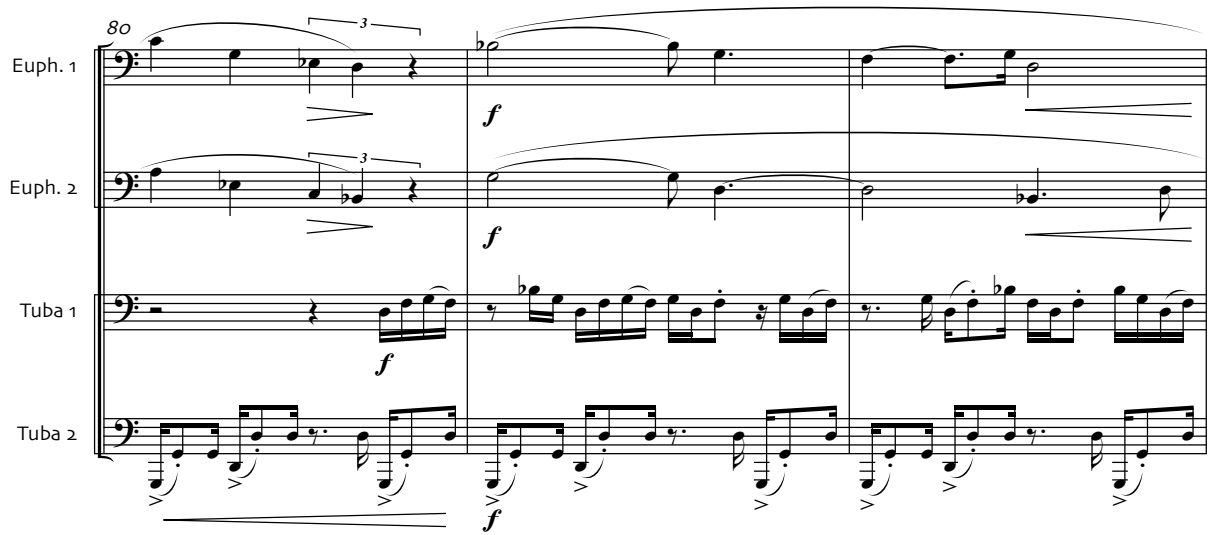

65
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
p
mp
growl
f

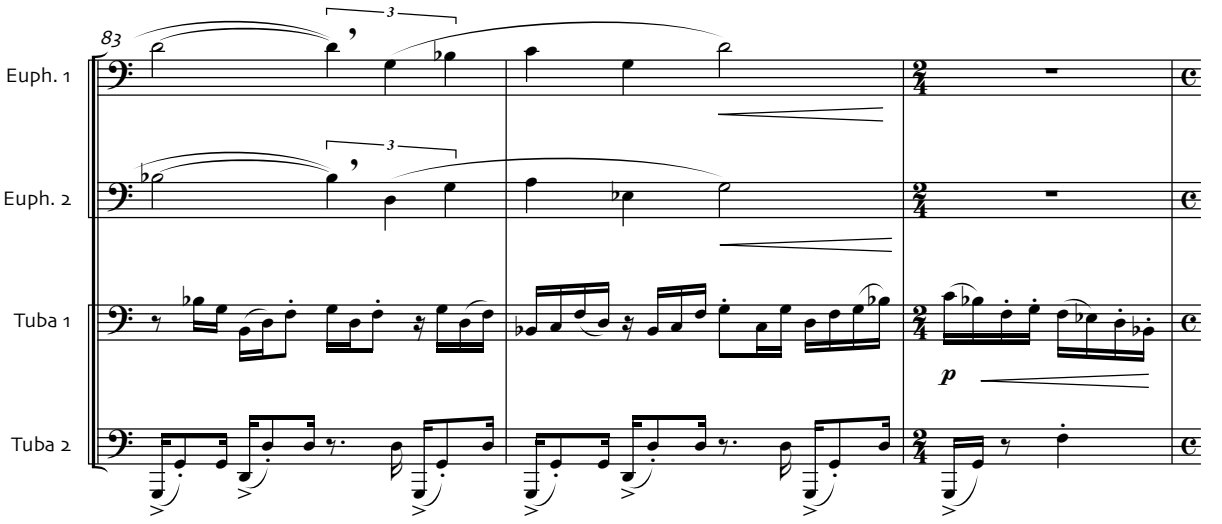

69
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
f
natural
very short
mp
natural
mf
mp

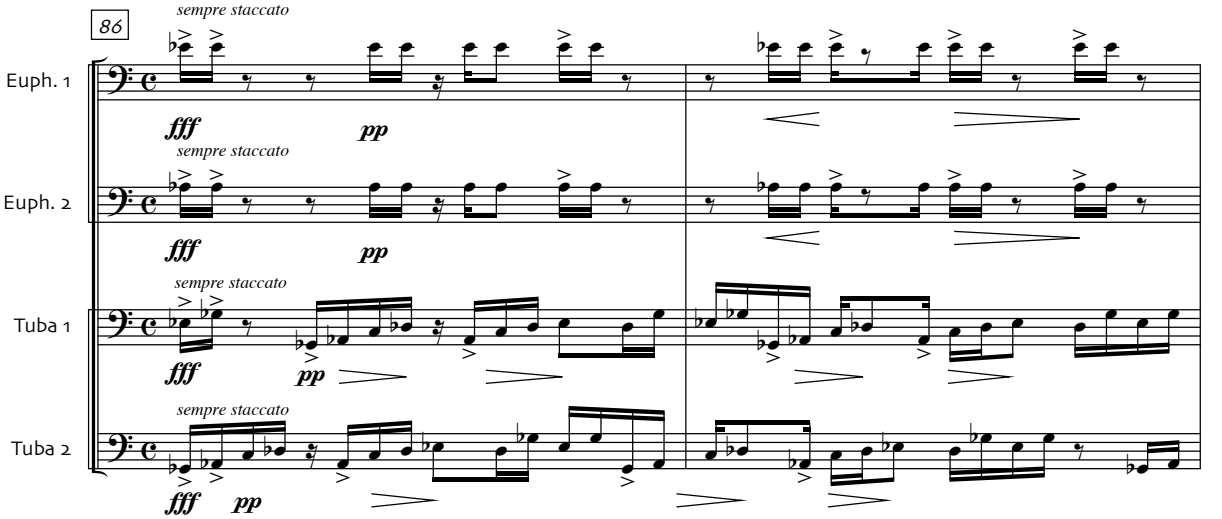

72
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
mf
mf
growl
f
natural
mf
mf

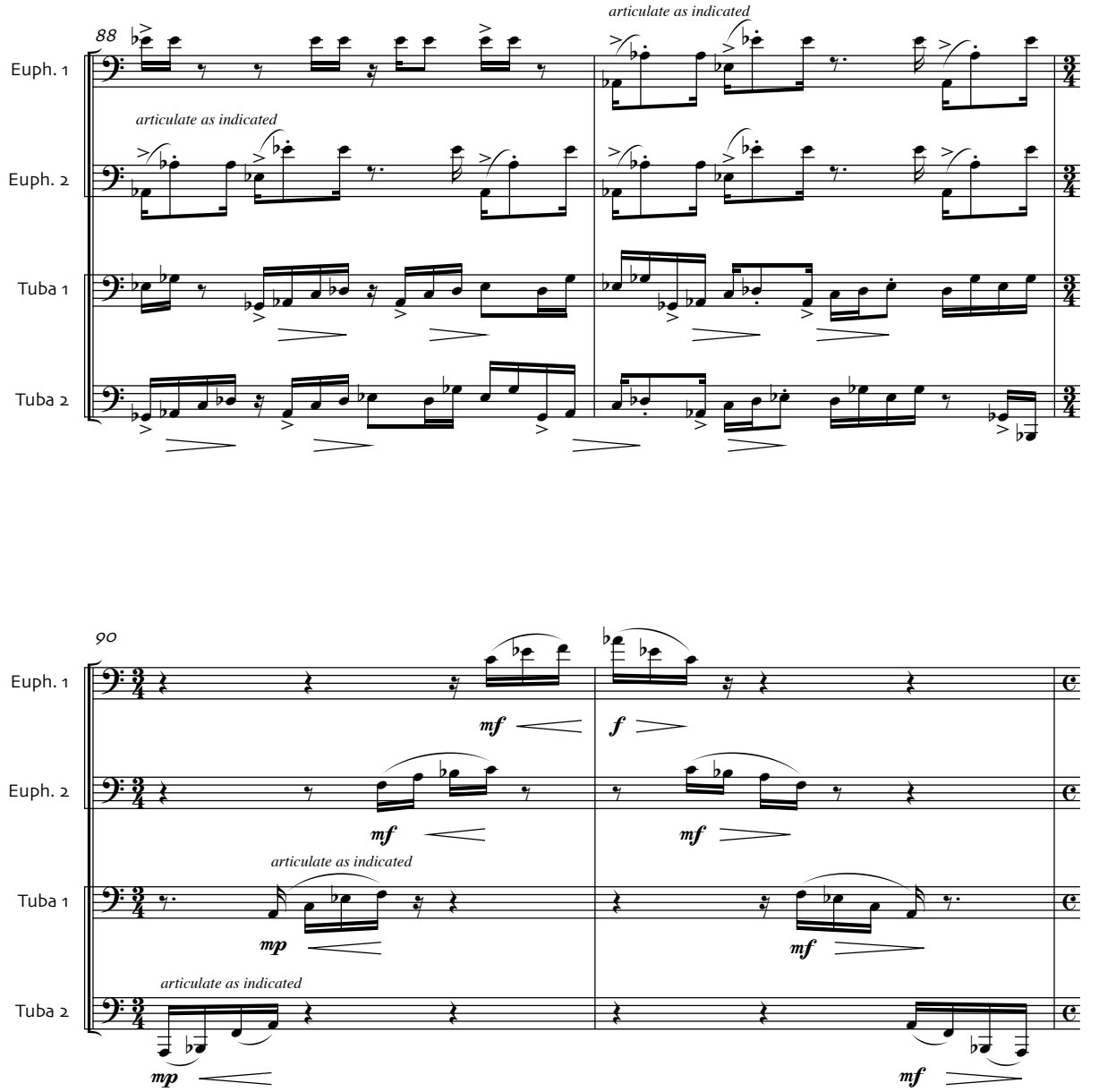

75
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
ff
ff
growl
pitch bend
ff
ff

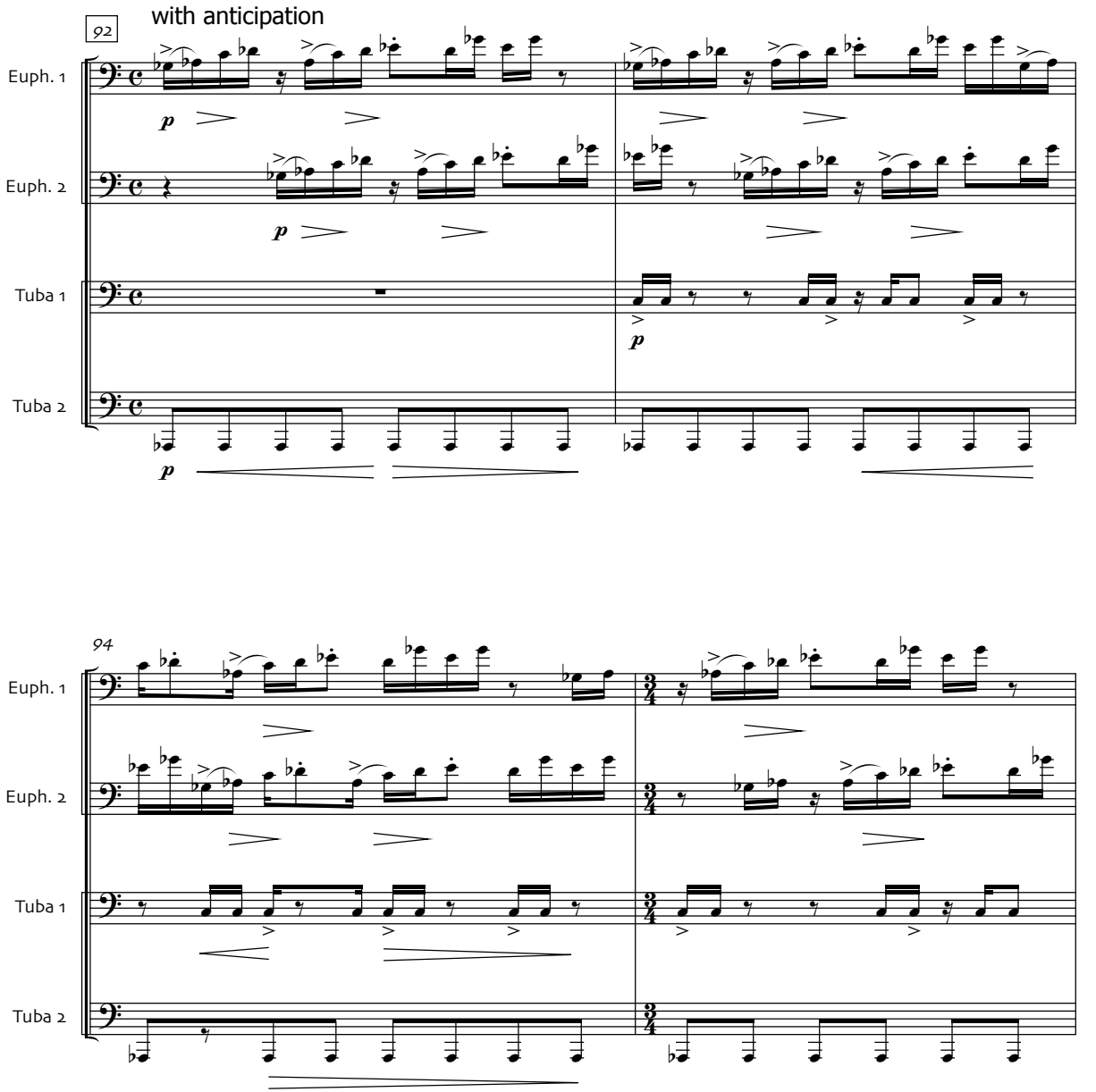

77
cantabile
Euph. 1
f
mf
cantabile
Euph. 2
f
mf
natural
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
f
mf
3
3
3

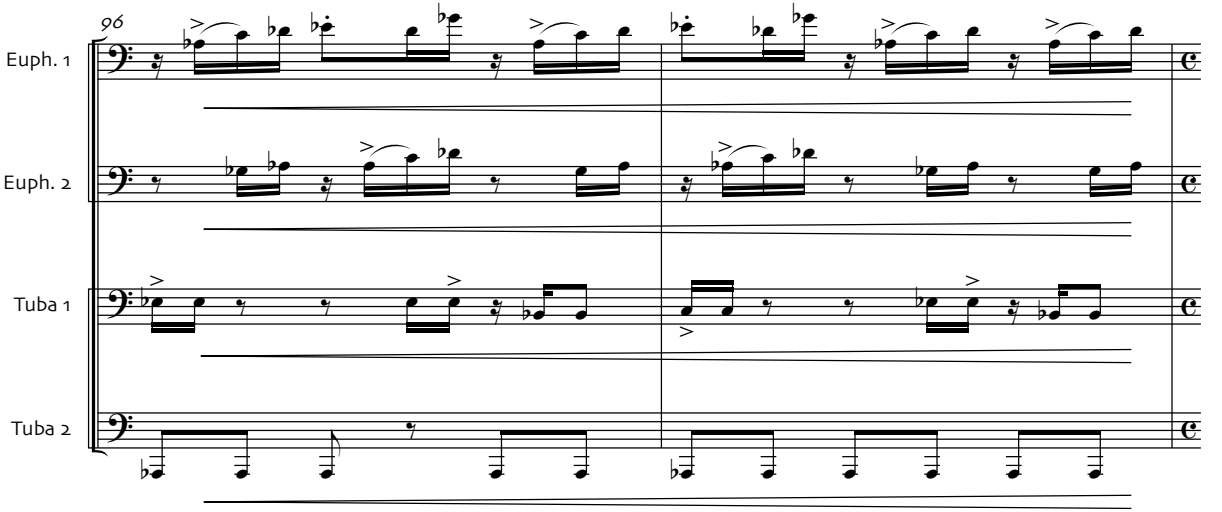

80
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
f
3
3

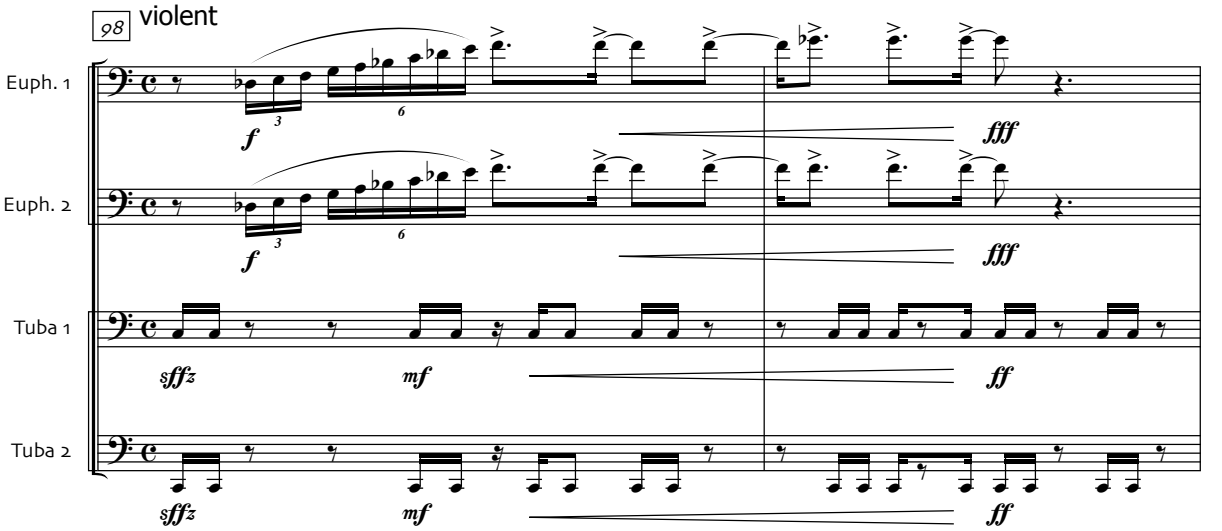

83
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
3
3
p

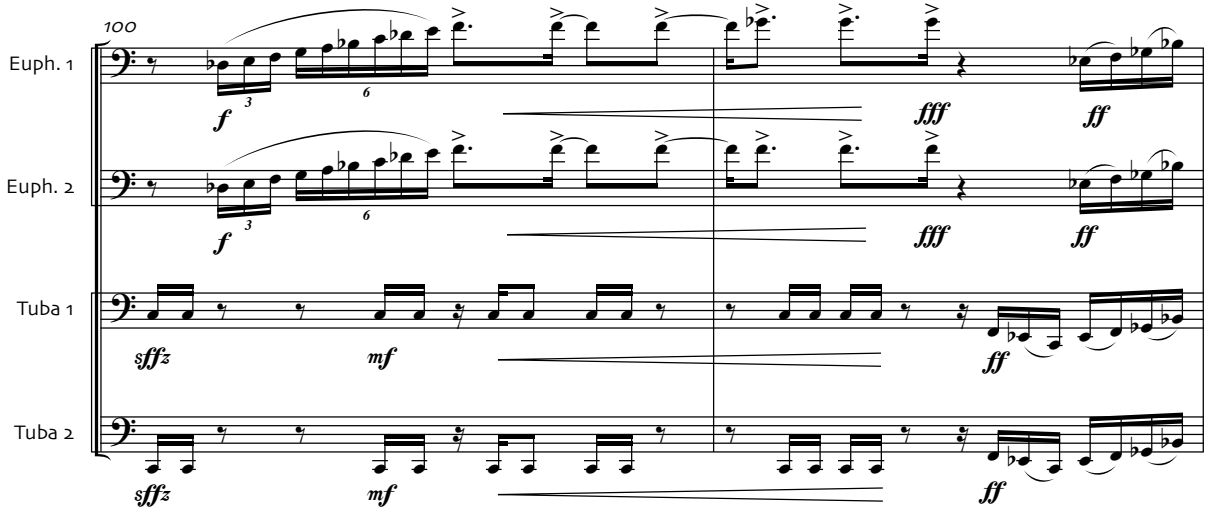

86
sempre staccato
Euph. 1
fff
pp
sempre staccato
Euph. 2
fff
pp
sempre staccato
Tuba 1
fff
pp
sempre staccato
Tuba 2
fff
pp

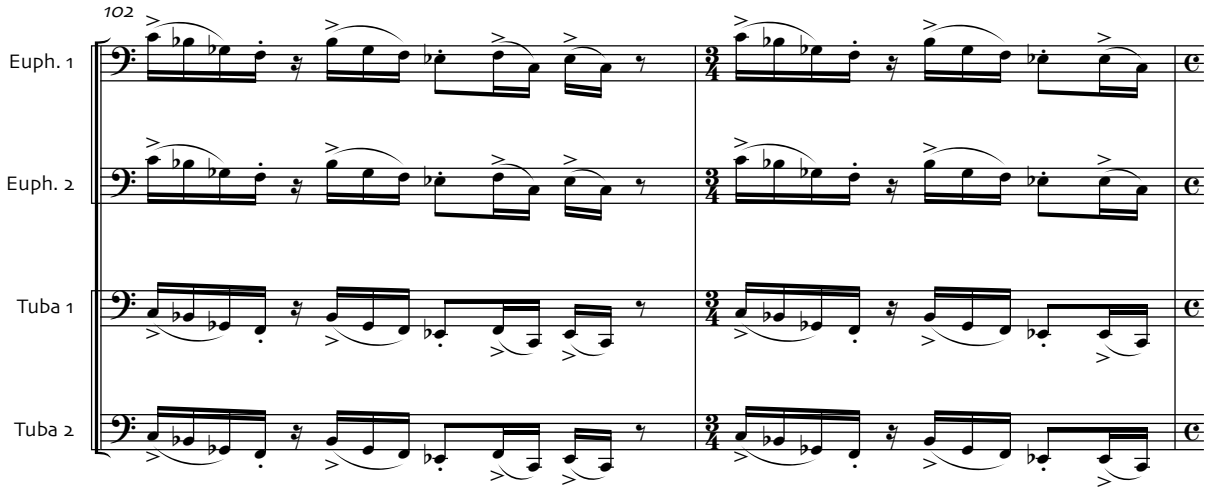

88
articulate as indicated
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
articulate as indicated
90
mf
f
mf
mf
articulate as indicated
mp
mf
articulate as indicated
mp
mf

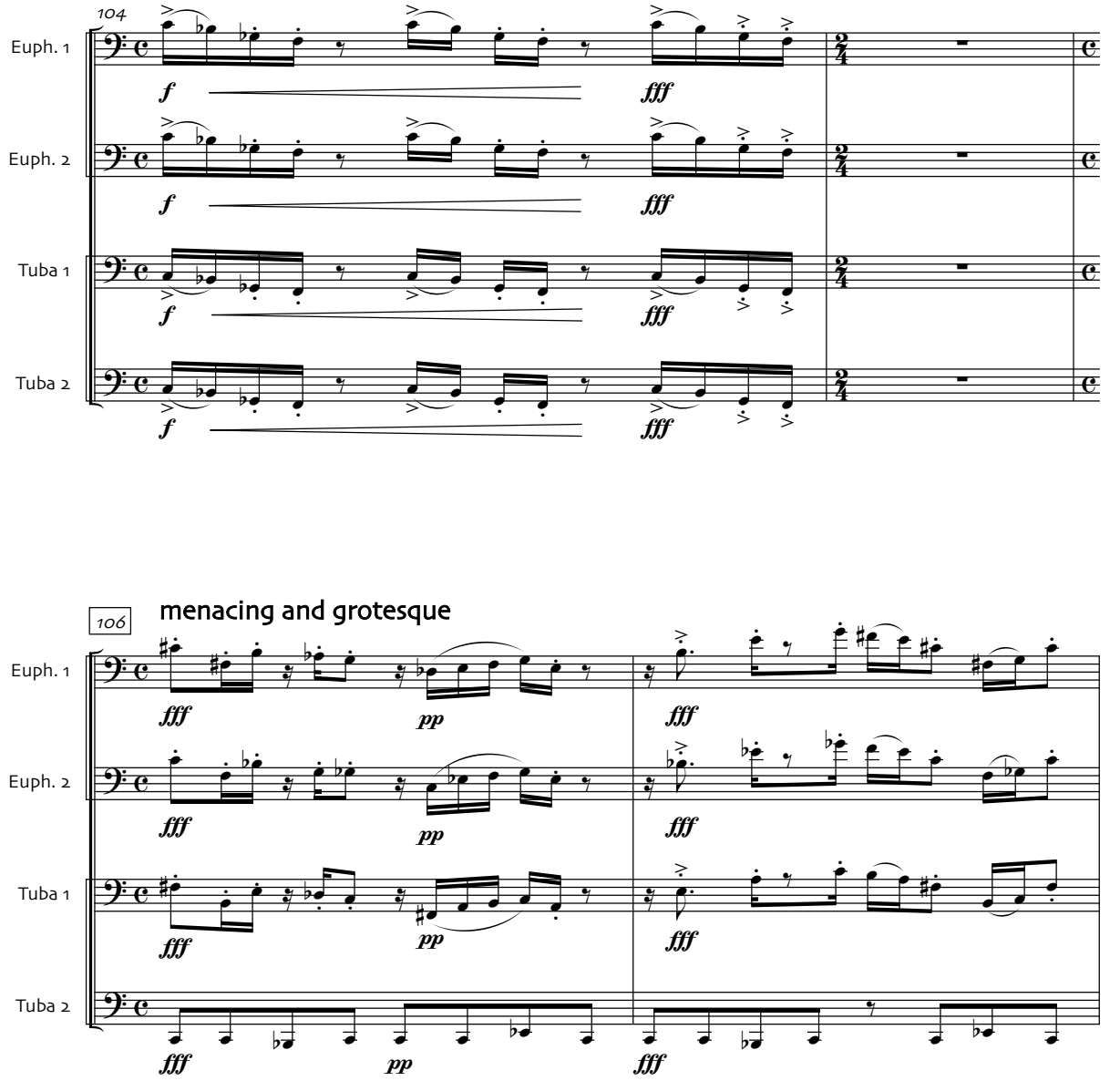

92
with anticipation
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
p
94
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2

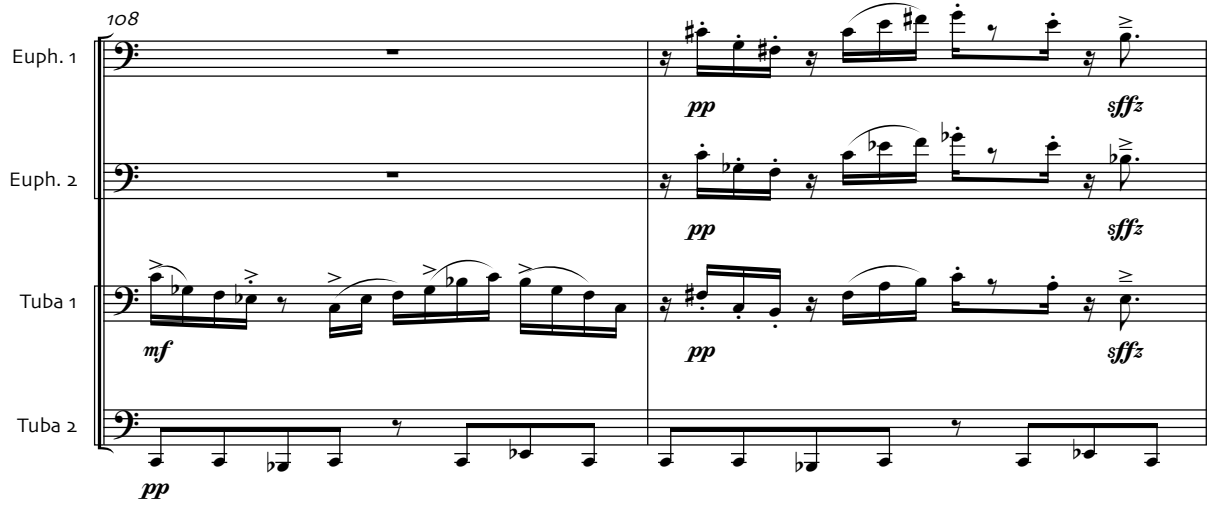

96
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2

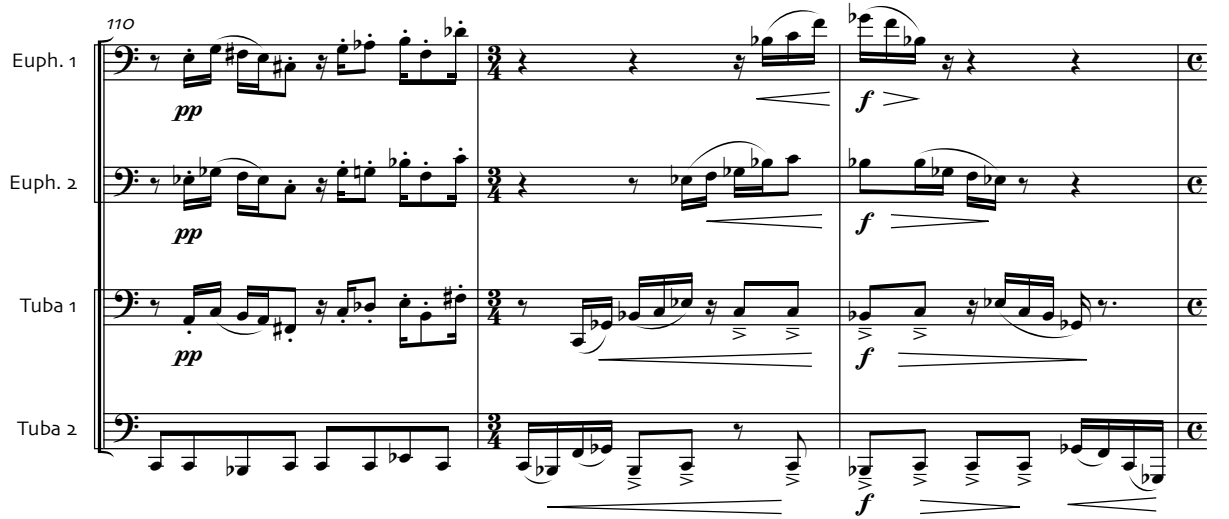

98
violent
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
f
fff
sfffz
mf
ff

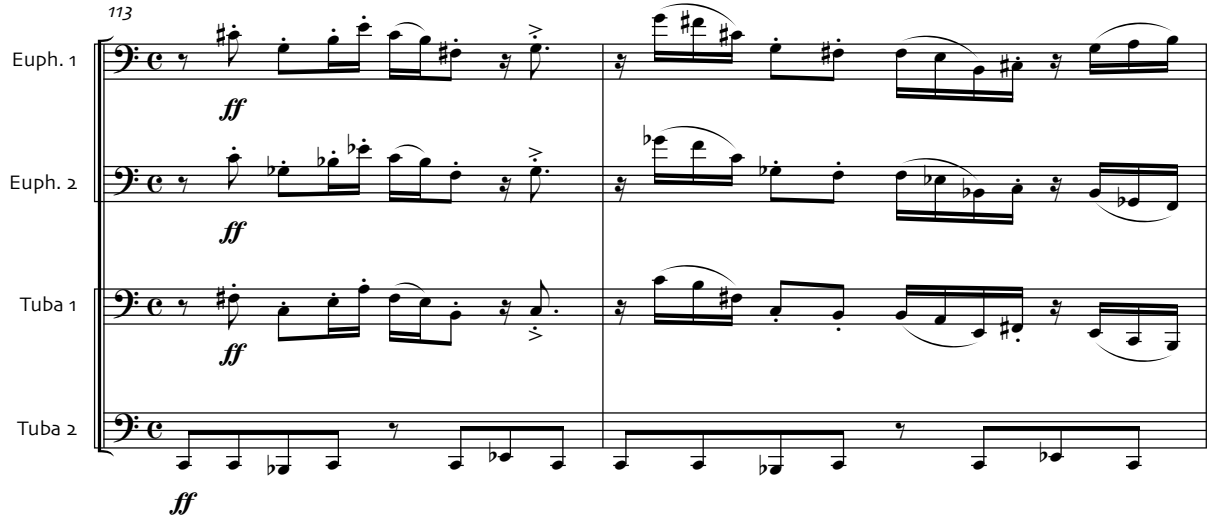

100
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
f
fff
ff
sffz
mf

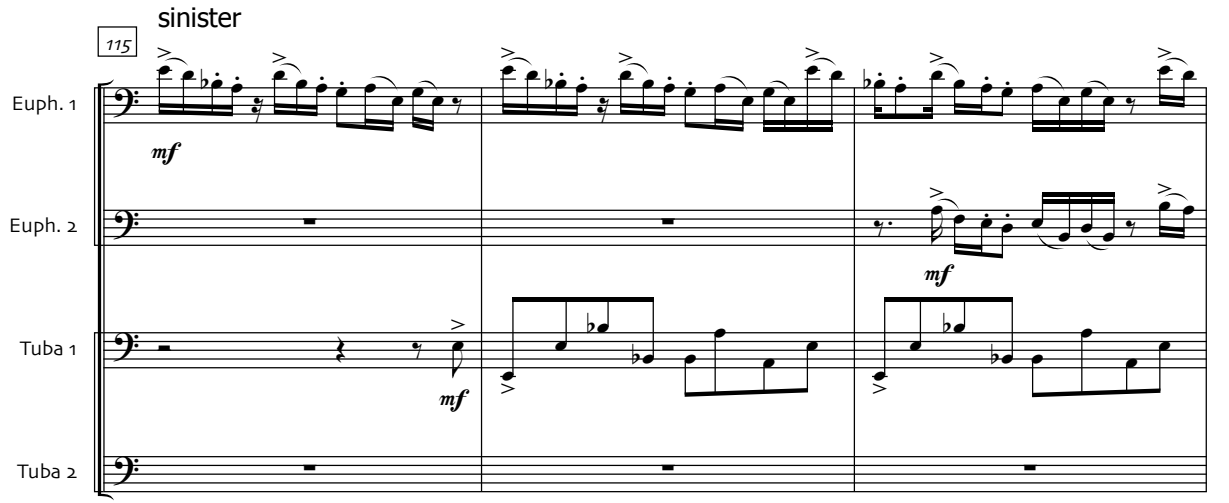

102
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2

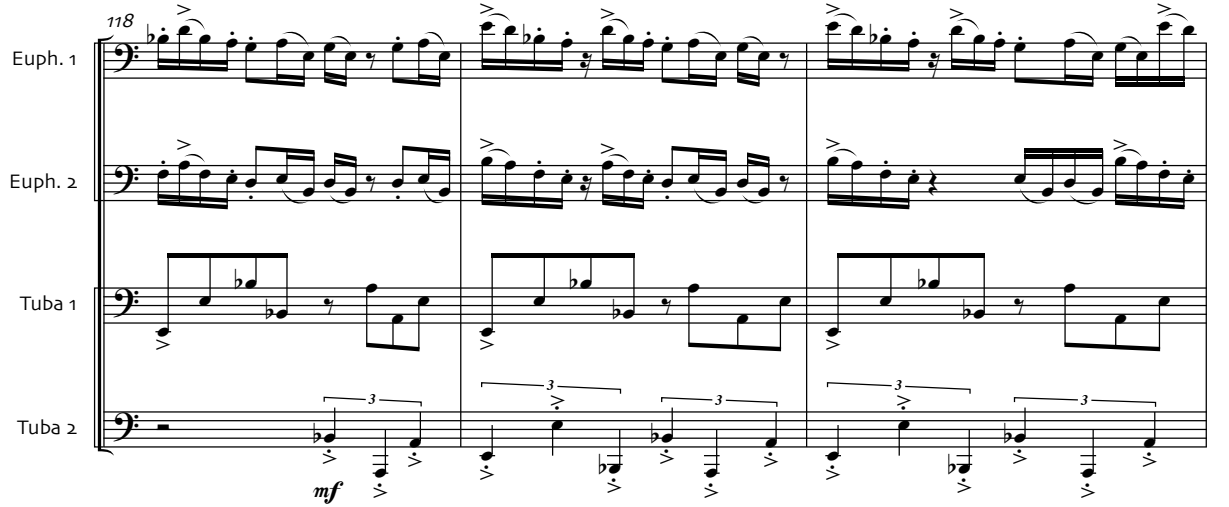

104
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
f
fff
106
menacing and grotesque
pp

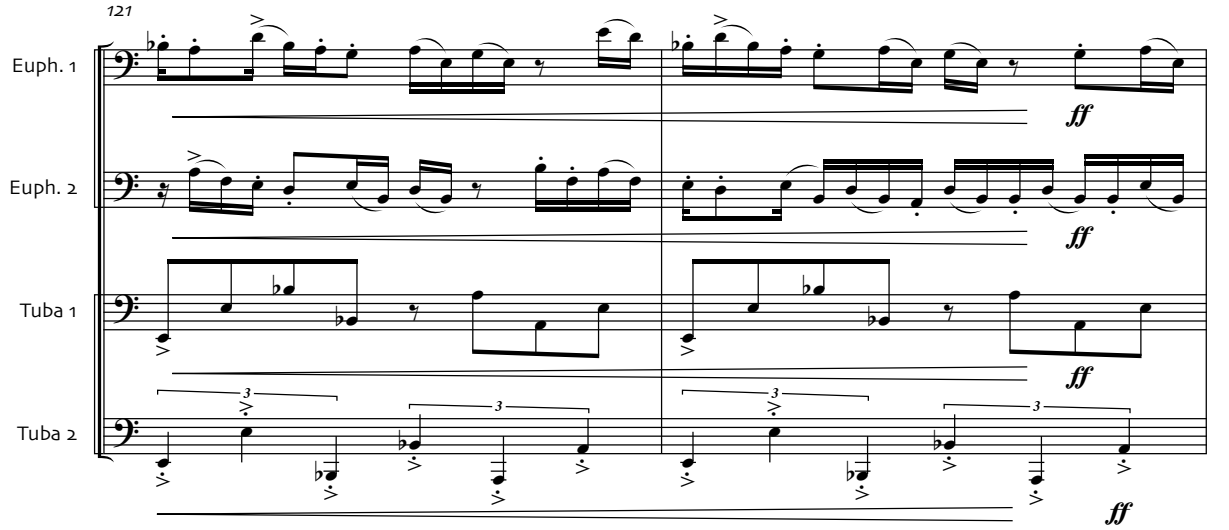

108
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
pp
sffz
mf

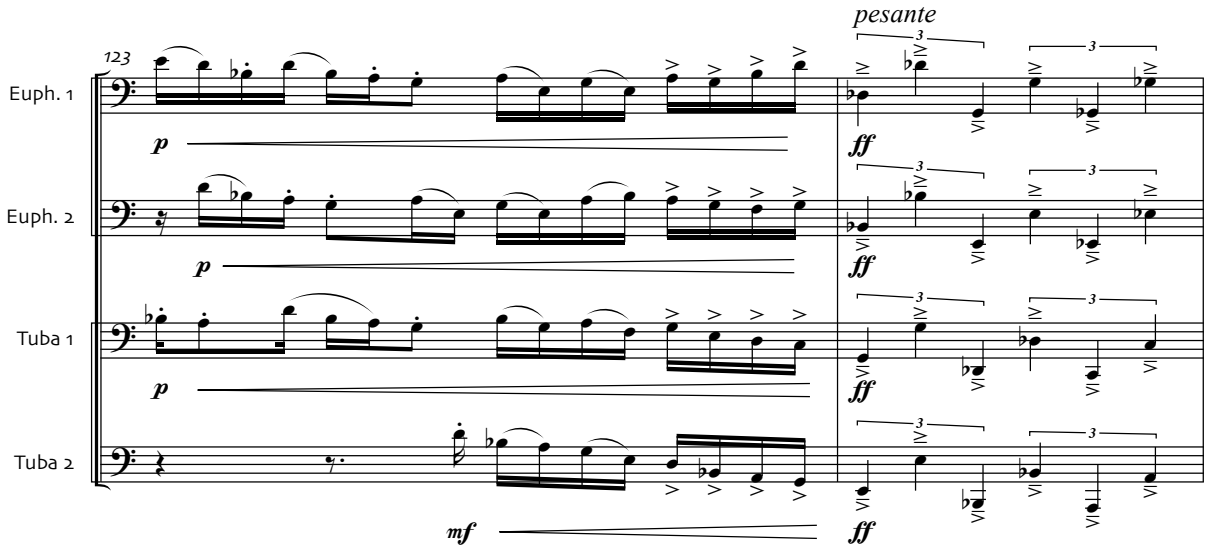

110
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
pp
f

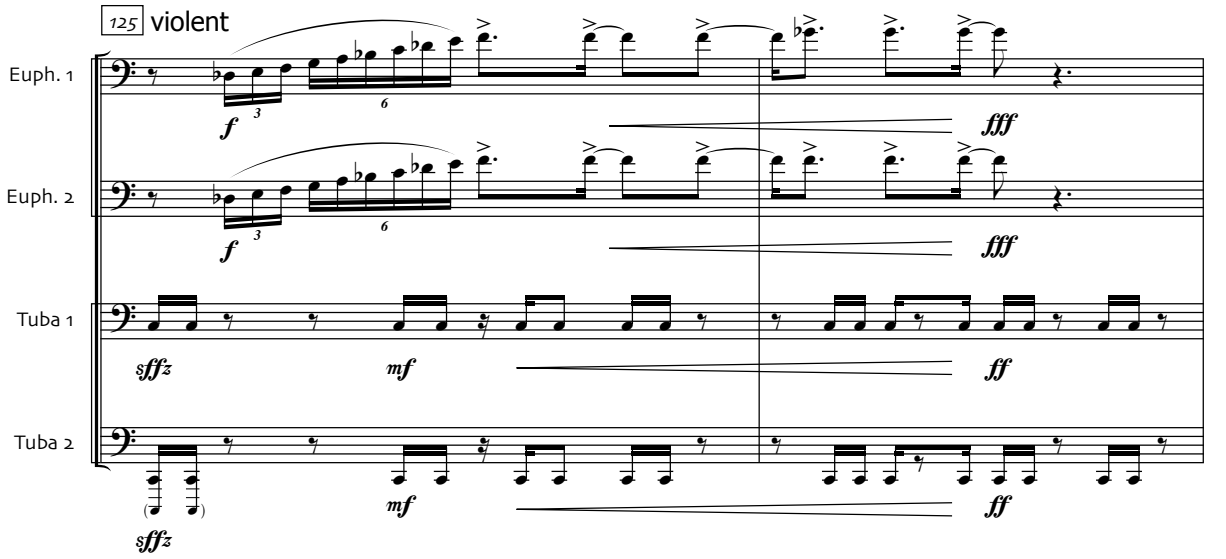

113
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
ff

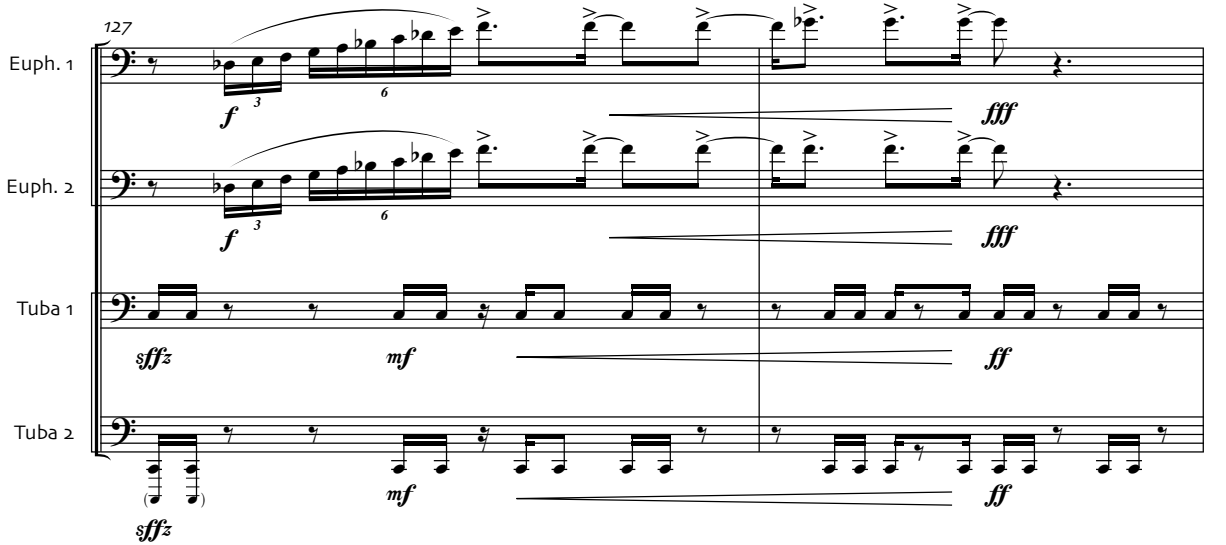

sinister
115
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
mf

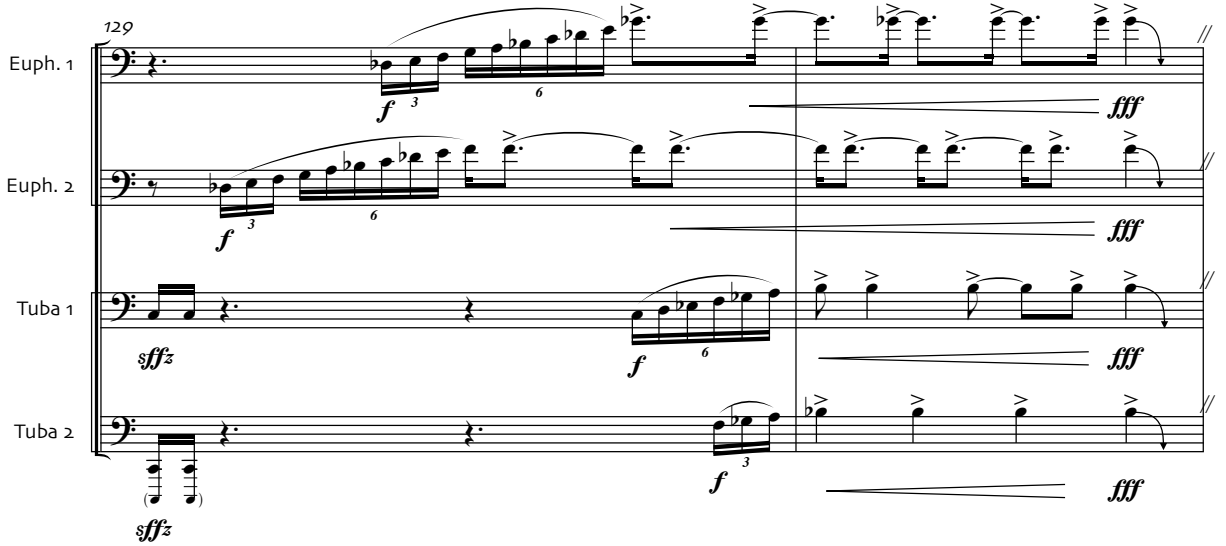

118
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
mf

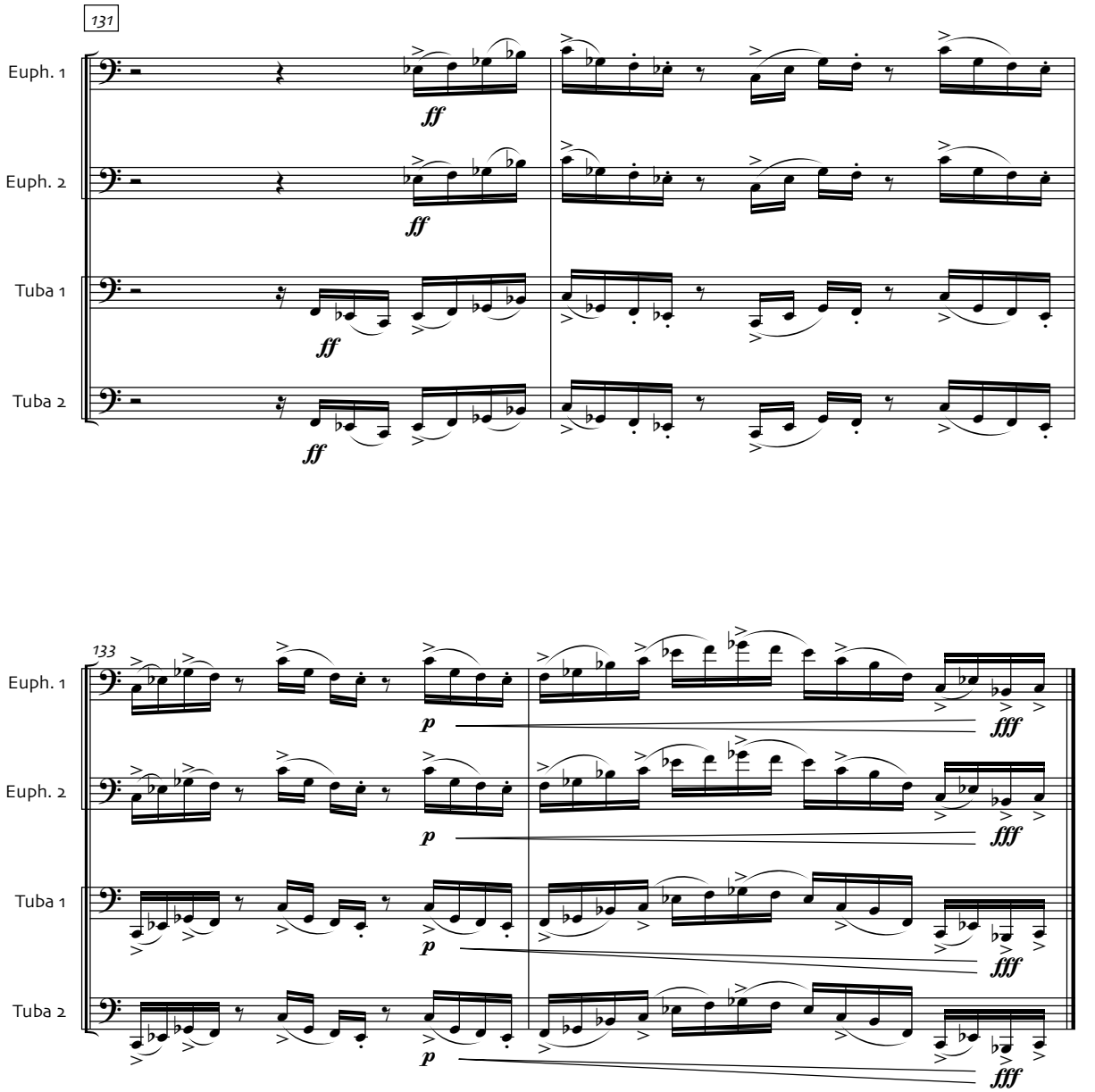

121
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
ff
ff
ff
ff


123
pesante
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
p
ff
mf


125
violent
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
f
fff
sfffz
mf
ff


127
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
f
fff
sfffz
mf
ff


129
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
f
fff
sfffz


131
Euph. 1
Euph. 2
Tuba 1
Tuba 2
ff
133
p
fff