John Cooney

Tendril

for solo cello

Tendril was commissioned by the Royal Academy of Music for the '200 Pieces' project

The first performance was given by Ellen Baumring-Gledhill, in the Angela Burgess Recital Hall at the Royal Academy of Music, on 22 November 2022

Duration - 4 minutes

Programme Note

Tendril explores the interplay of two sharply contrasting ideas, heard in the opening bars of the piece, both of which are about movement and growth, expressed in different ways. In the first idea the pitches are static but are enlivened from within by changes of timbre and dynamic, while in the second idea the pitches move quickly, in a fleeting and fragile rising figure that is the tendril of the title. As the piece progresses both ideas change and develop, releasing new material and transforming in character and identity, with the tendril idea acting as catalyst throughout. Natural harmonics, hinted at in the opening few bars, appear as a punctuating idea at several points, eventually transforming into the lilting, crystalline passage that closes the piece.

Performance note

All harmonics are natural. In most cases the string numbering is given, but where the duration of a harmonic note is ambiguous, the relevant open string is shown in brackets for clarity

Tendril

♩ = c.80

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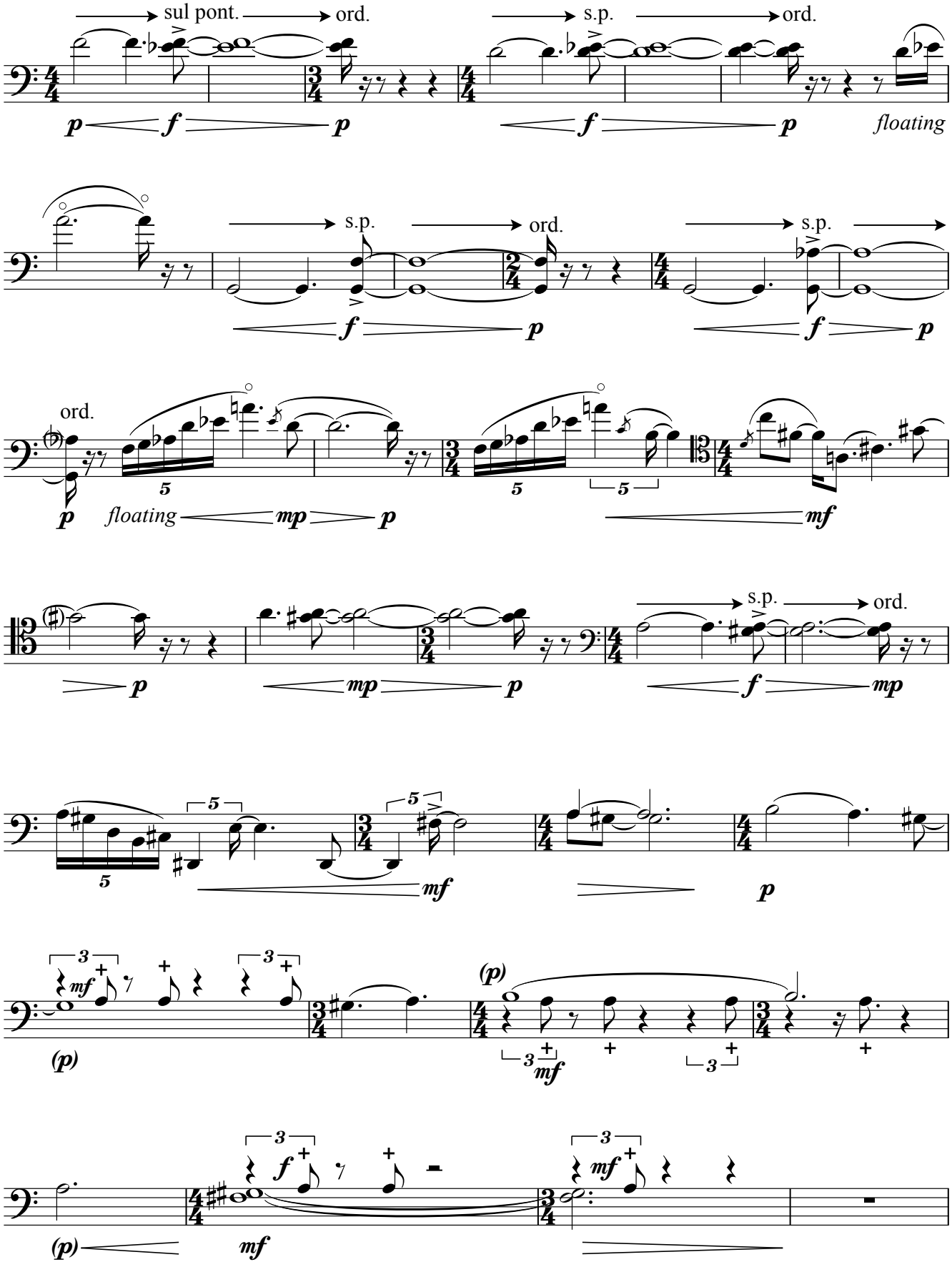
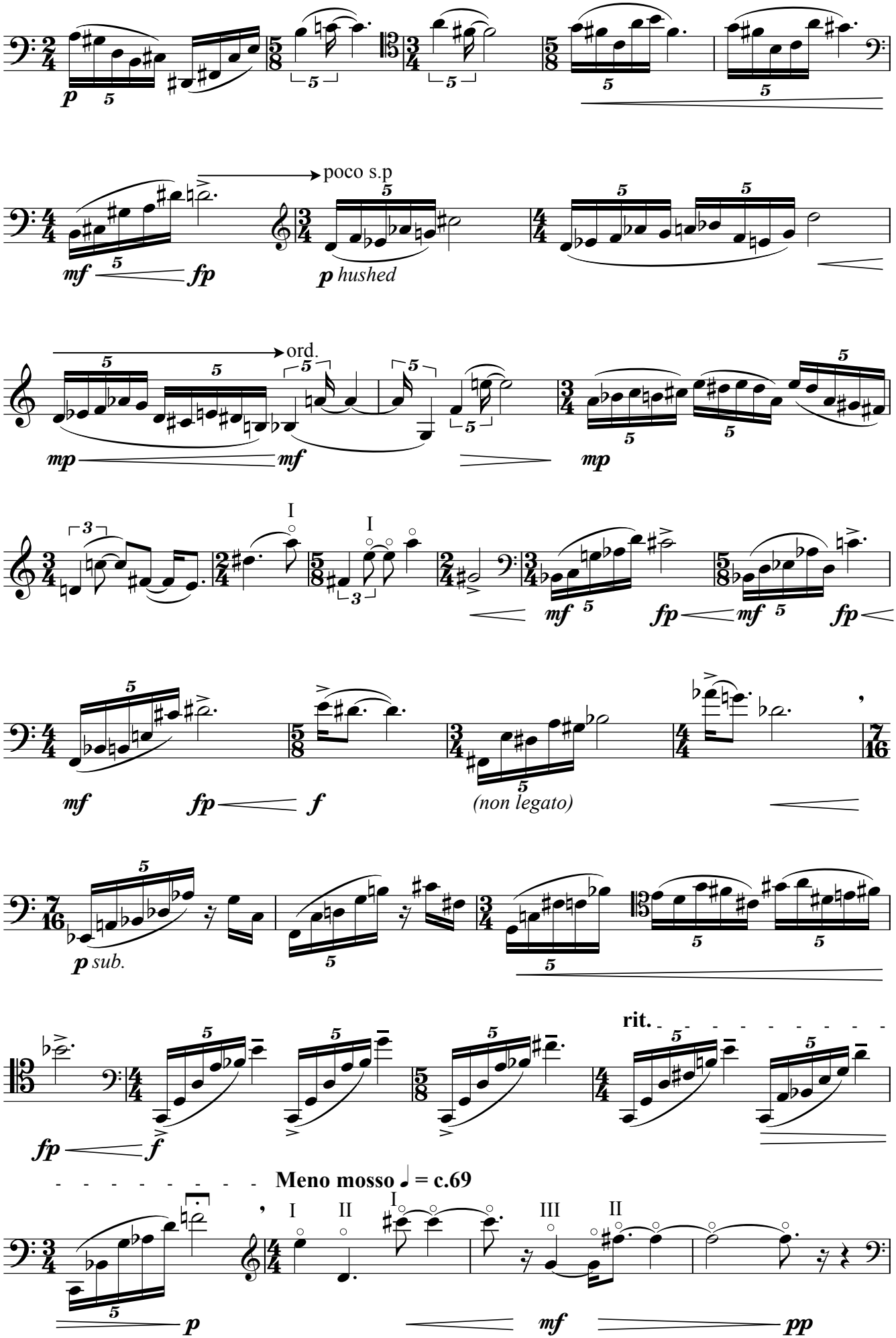
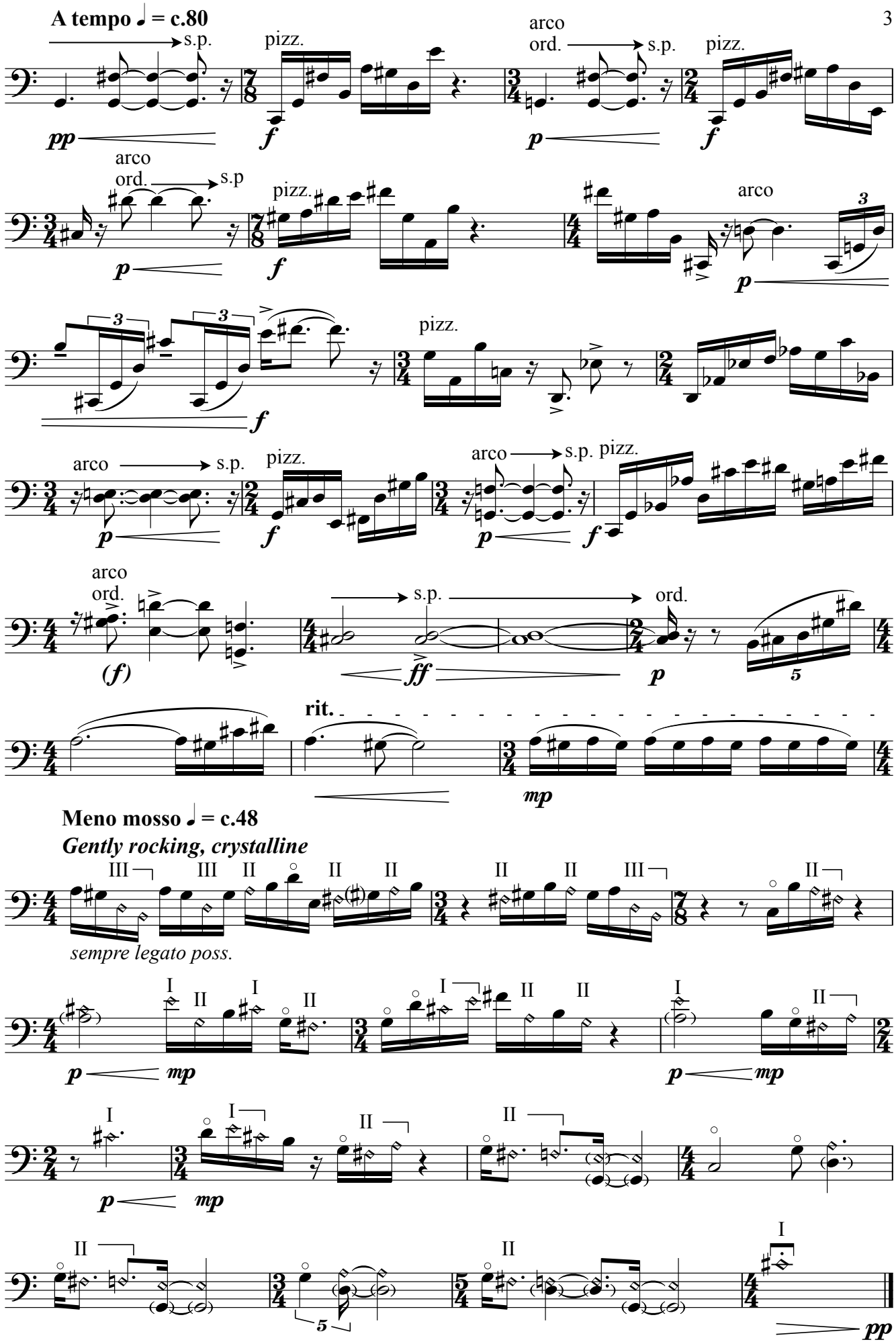



poco s.p
ord.
Meno mosso ♩ = c.69


A tempo ♩ = c.80
s.p.
pizz.
arco
ord.
s.p.
pizz.
arco
ord.
s.p
pizz.
arco
pizz.
arco
s.p.
pizz.
arco
s.p.
pizz.
arco
ord.
s.p.
ord.
rit.
Meno mosso ♩ = c.48
Gently rocking, crystalline
sempre legato poss.