the forest for the trees

by Marina Kifferstein

Dedicated to Meaghan, Leah, and Carrie,
for their unyielding artistry, inspiration, and encouragement

Performance notes

Breathing

Before beginning the piece, performers should take a moment to synchronize deep and slow breathing.

All unison entries should be coordinated with breath whenever possible without labor, beginning sound on an up bow/inhale from niente unless otherwise indicated.
The breath can then become out of sync with the individual's natural breathing rhythm, staggering swells over longer durations.

All bowings should follow the breath (inhale = up bow, exhale = down bow), with natural and gentle dynamic swells corresponding to the breathing/bowing unless otherwise indicated. This way, the balance of each chord will slightly but continuously shift.

Symbols and abbreviations

Harmonic scatter over the indicated fundamental pitch.

Courtesy reminder of sustained pitch after a line break or ambiguous decrescendo

✻ This could be a good place to improvise a melodic ornamental line (optional)

Pitch and rhythm

Durations are variable and only loosely graphical.

All accidentals follow the Helmholtz-Ellis JI Pitch Notation guide designed by Marc Sabat and Wolfgang von Schweinitz, copied on the next page.

Misc

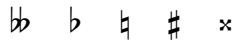
Improvisation, interjections and ending section: this material should still feel connected to the breath, but more melodic and active than what came before. If you find a powerful sonority, feel free to sit on it or return to it. Explore the space and search for shapes in the resonance.

ACCIDENTALS

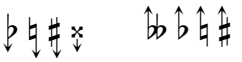
EXTENDED HELMHOLTZ-ELLIS JI PITCH NOTATION

for Just Intonation
designed by Marc Sabat and Wolfgang von Schweinitz

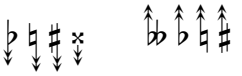
The exact intonation of each pitch may be written out by means of the following harmonically-defined signs:



Pythagorean series of fifths – the open strings
(… c g d a e …)



lowers / raises by a syntonic comma
81 : 80 = ***circa 21.5 cents***



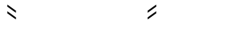
lowers / raises by two syntonic commas
circa 43 cents

lowers / raises by a septimal comma
64 : 63 = ***circa 27.3 cents***

lowers / raises by two septimal commas
circa 54.5 cents

raises / lowers by an 11-limit undecimal quarter-tone
33 : 32 = ***circa 53.3 cents***

lowers / raises by a 13-limit tridecimal third-tone
27 : 26 = ***circa 65.3 cents***



lowers / raises by a 17-limit schisma
256 : 255 = ***circa 6.8 cents***

raises / lowerss by a 19-limit schisma
513 : 512 = ***circa 3.4 cents***

raises / lowers by a 23-limit comma
736 : 729 = ***circa 16.5 cents***

In addition to the harmonic definition of a pitch by means of its accidentals, it is also possible to indicate its absolute pitch-height as a cents-deviation from the respectively indicated chromatic pitch in the 12-tone system of Equal Temperament.

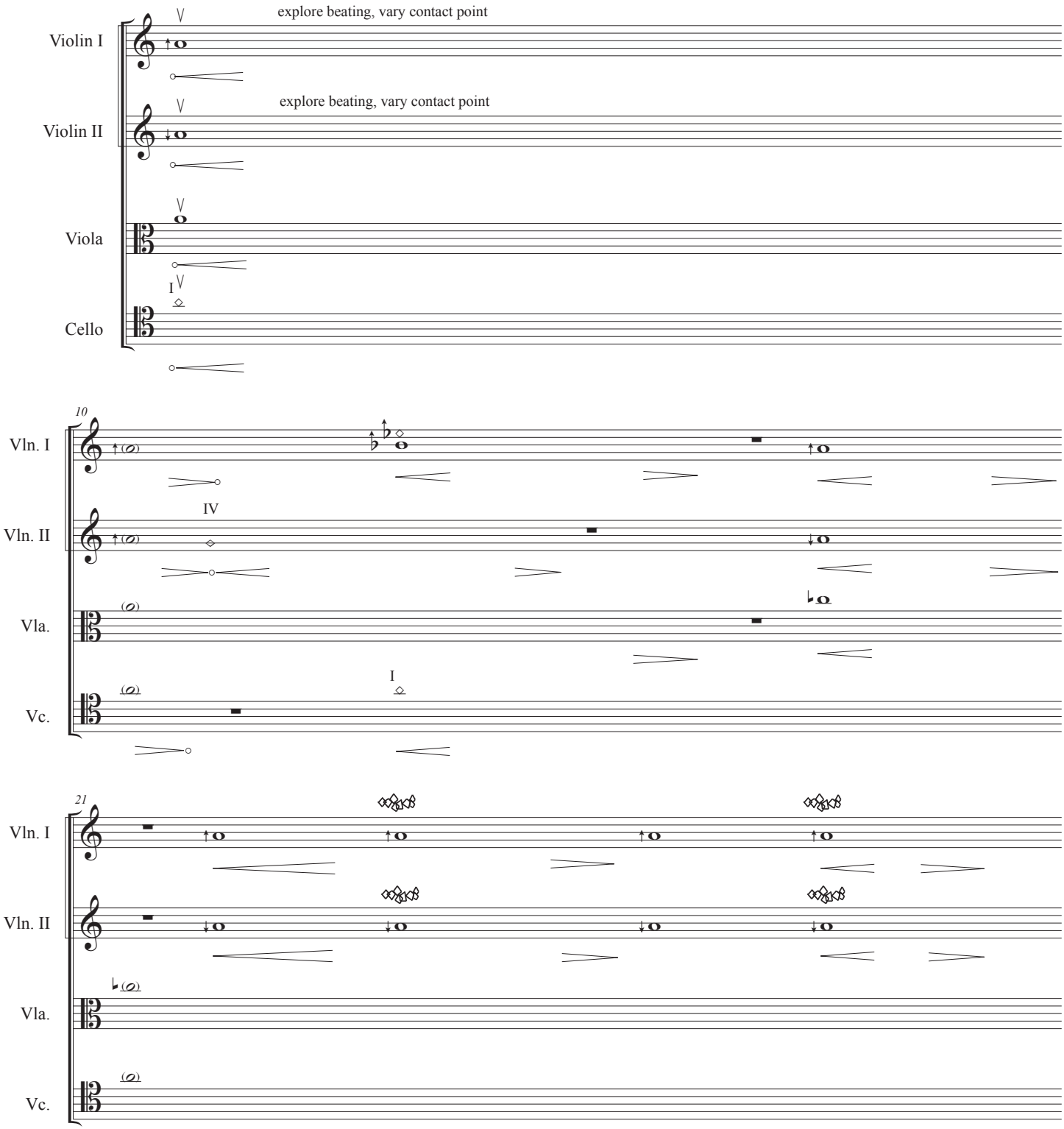
The attached arrows for alteration by a syntonic comma are transcriptions of the notation that Hermann von Helmholtz used in his book "Die Lehre von den Tonempfindungen als physiologische Grundlage für die Theorie der Musik" (1863). The annotated English translation "On the Sensations of Tone as a Physiological Basis for the Theory of Music" (1875/1885) is by Alexander J. Ellis, who refined the definition of pitch within the 12-tone system of Equal Temperament by introducing a division of the octave into 1200 cents. The sign for a septimal comma was devised by Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770) – the composer, violinist and researcher who first studied the production of difference tones by means of double stops.

Score

the forest for the trees

for The Rhythm Method

Marina Kifferstein



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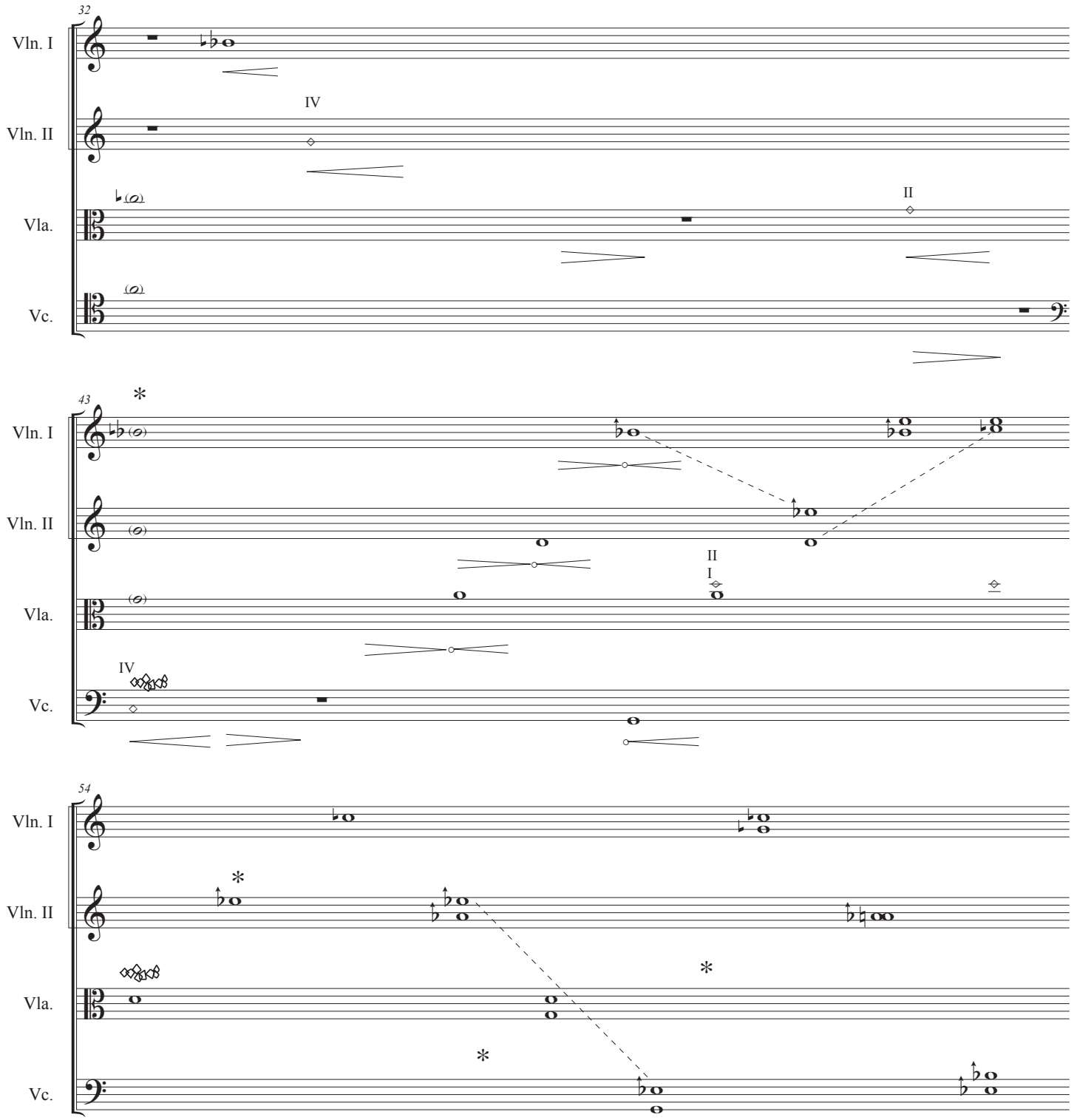
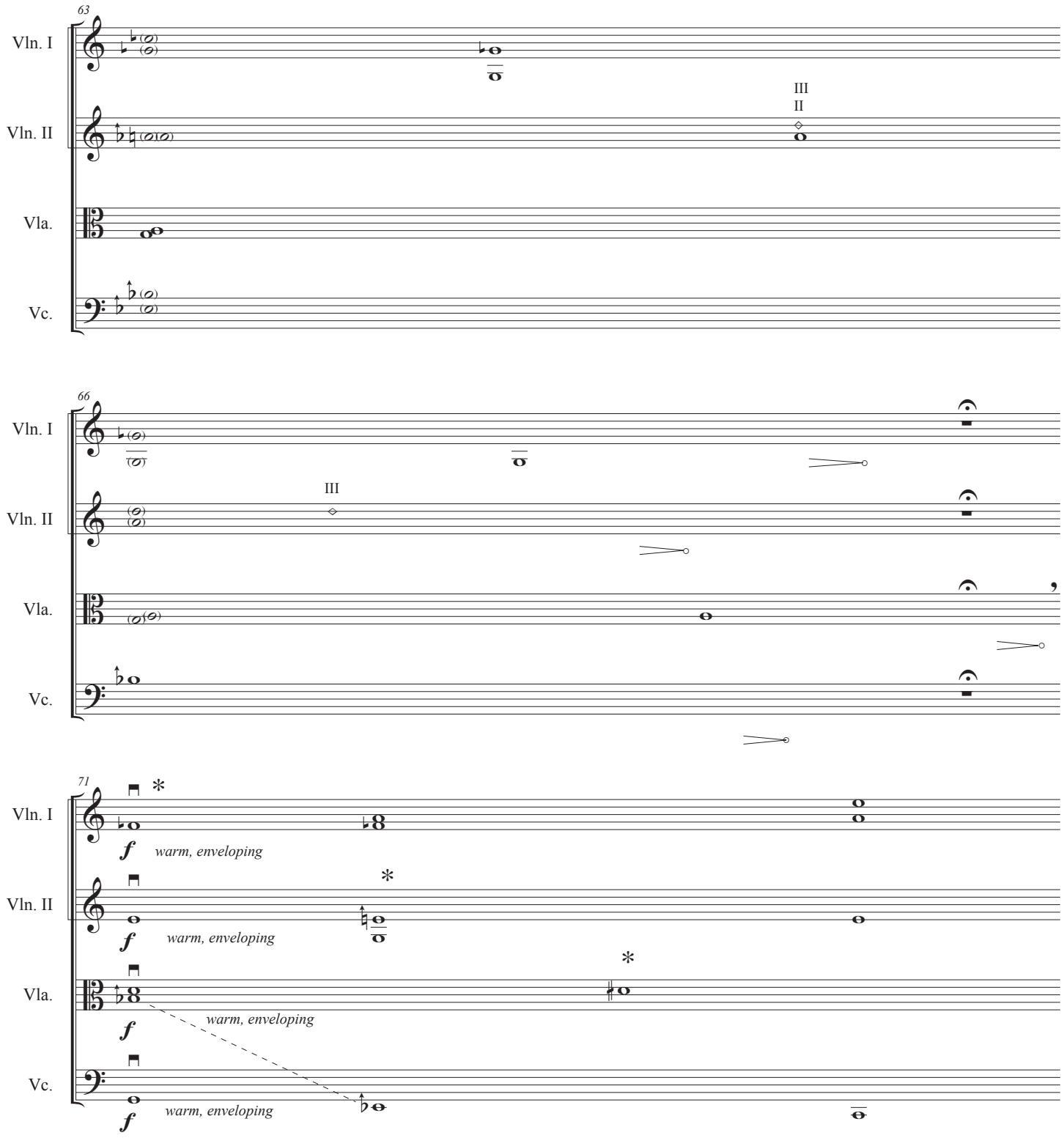
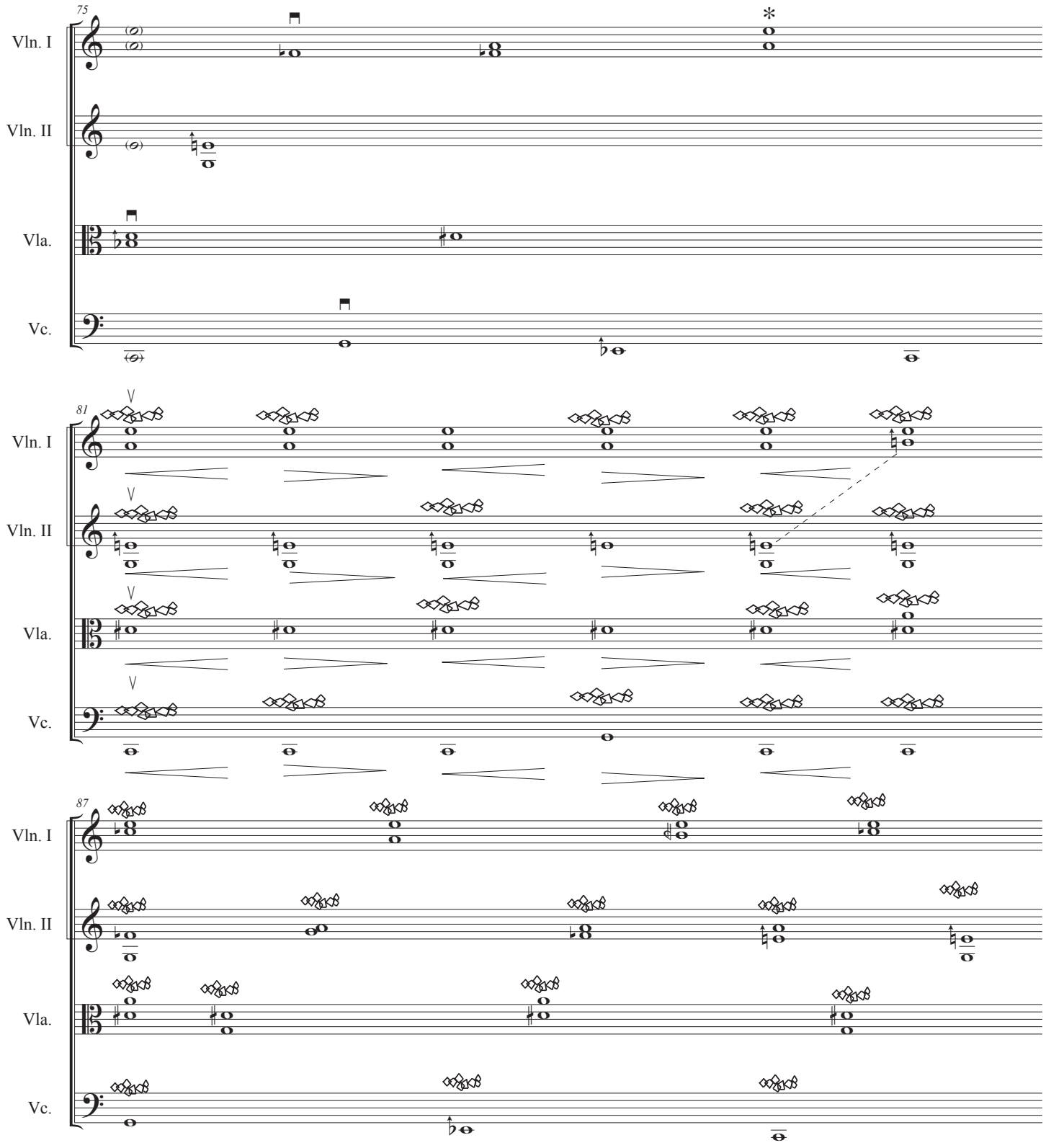
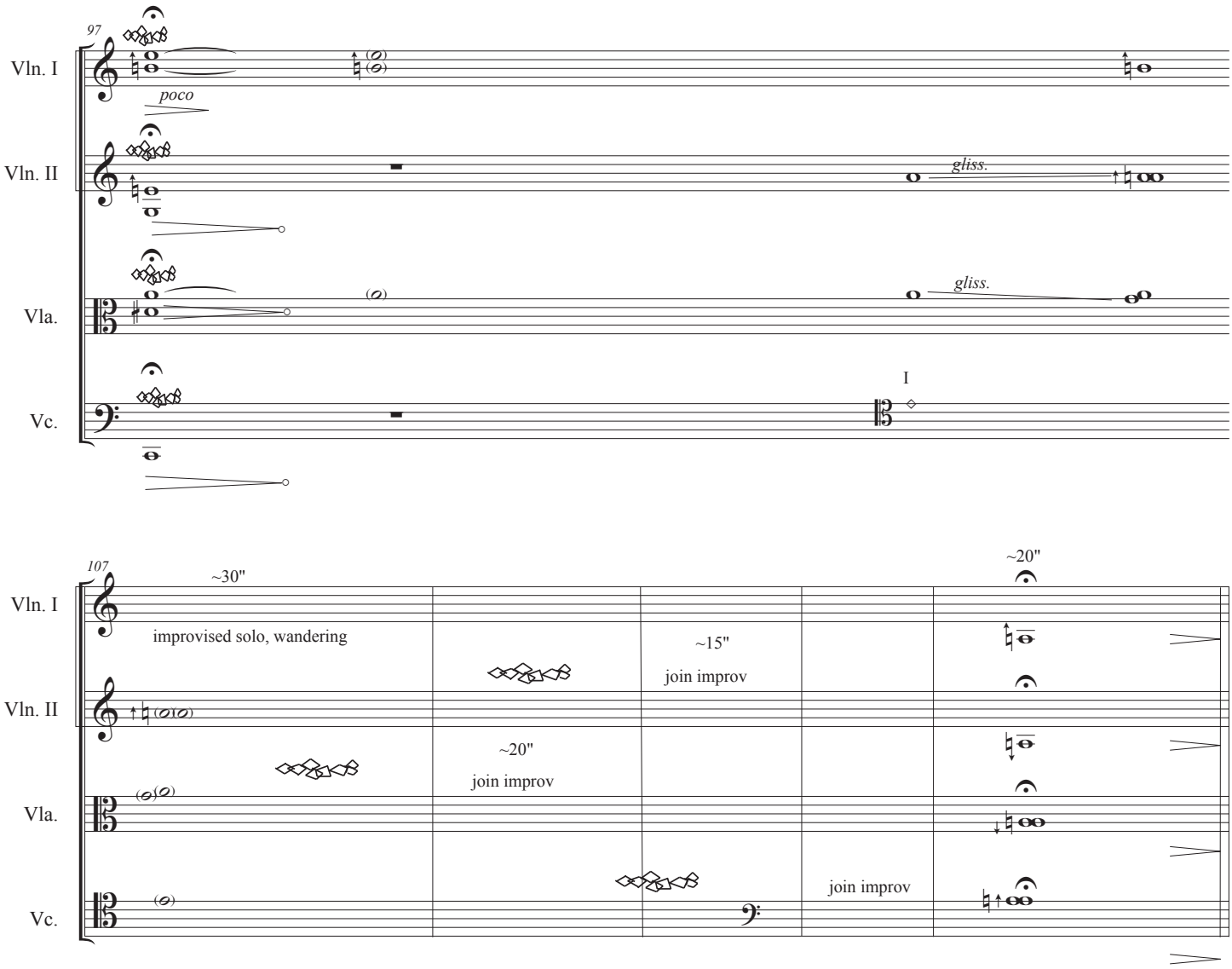

32
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
IV
II
43
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
IV
II
I
54
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.


63
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
III
II
66
III
71
f
warm, enveloping


75
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
81
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.
87
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.


97
Vln. I
poco
Vln. II
gliss.
Vla.
gliss.
Vc.
I
107
~30"
improvised solo, wandering
~15"
join improv
~20"
Vln. I
Vln. II
~20"
join improv
Vla.
Vc.
join improv