Parts and Poems of the Body

Peter Nagle

(2019)

Parts and Poems of the Body

for cor anglais and bass clarinet

Duration ca. 5'+ (variable)

Parts and Poems of the Body is an array of small modules or fragments of sound. These are intended to be selected and combined in any order that the players feel best articulates the space and context in which they are presented. The title is taken from Walt Whitman's poem "I sing the body electric."

Parts and Poems of the Body was commissioned by and is dedicated to Catherine Underhill and Hannah Shilvock. They gave the first performance in the Old Royal Naval College Chapel, Greenwich, on 30 April 2019.

SCORE

The score is presented as a series of modular elements. These are grouped into three parts (1, 2, 3). This implies the possibility of a three-movement structure, and it may certainly be realised this way, but the intention is that for any particular performance the performers may select any modules and present them in any order or combination. They may be performed as a single piece or spread through a programme as punctuations or interludes. The decision as to exactly how to present them should be decided according to circumstance – the performance space, the rest of the programme, etc. Performers are encouraged to consider these in terms of space – the space in which they are performed, possible spatial distribution of the players (which may involve moving to different places for different modules), but not simply geographical space: the psychological space of the concert environment and the context of the performance should also be taken into account.

All repeats may be taken as many times as the players deem necessary/ desirable. The intention of these repeats (as well as the modular construction) is to move away from a progressive/ temporal focus to a perception of the music as a physical presence. The music is intended to articulate this sense of space rather than a sense of time passing. Modules 3.1-3.4 give a general indication of relative durations of individual notes (in a generally slow context) but all precise rhythms and speeds are free and to be executed in whatever manner suits the players' own lung capacity and breath control.

Stemless notes: Where notes are written without stems, the rhythm is entirely free, with noteheads indicating only an approximate relative duration (black shorter than white which in turn is shorter than "semibreve" head).

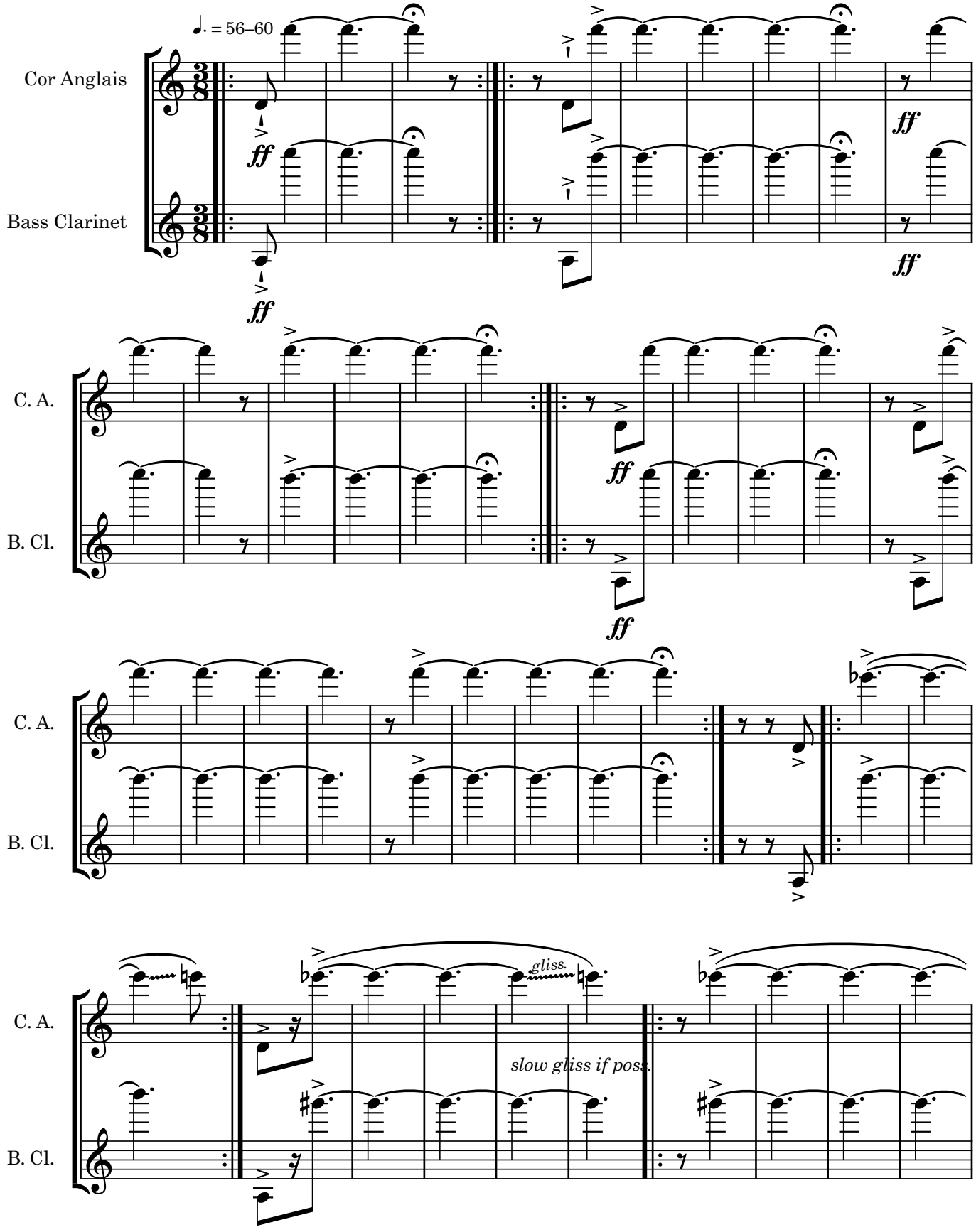
The current score (April 2019) is the first realisation of this concept. It is intended that more modules will be added over time to produce a continually evolving, expanding and adaptable work.

Parts and Poems of the Body

for Catherine Underhill and Hannah Shilvock

Peter Nagle

1.1



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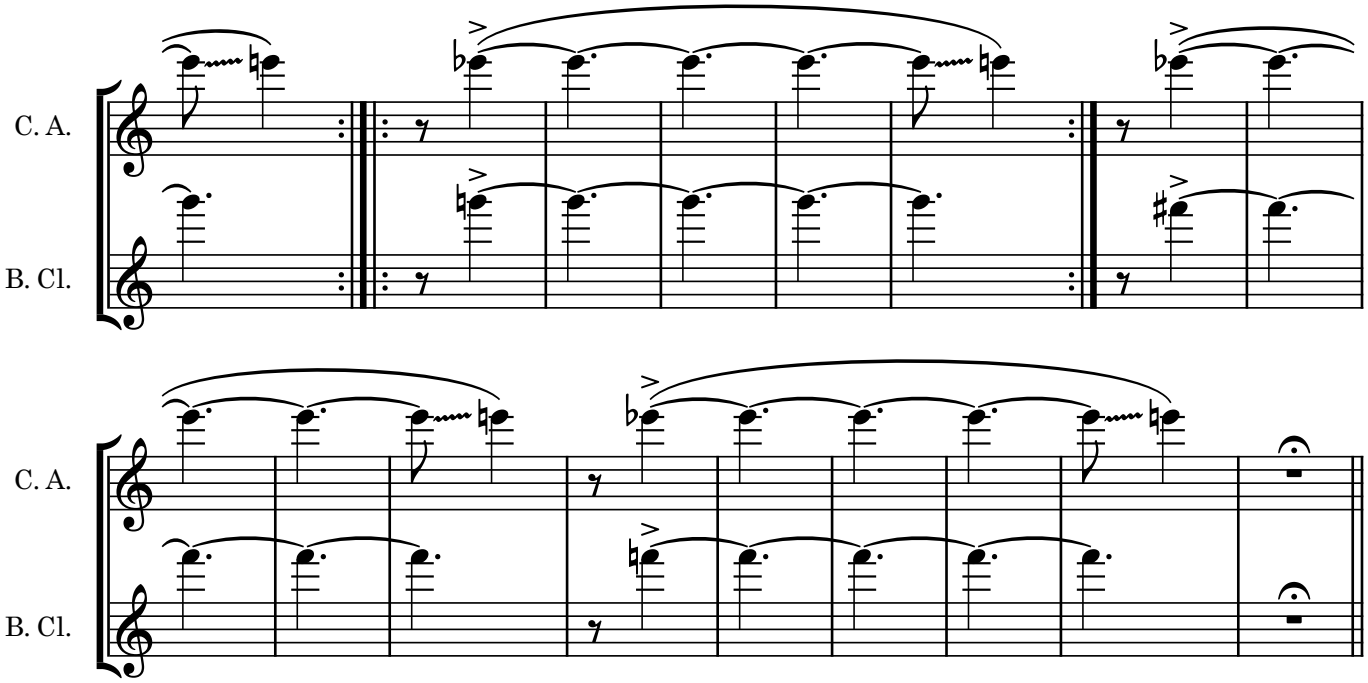
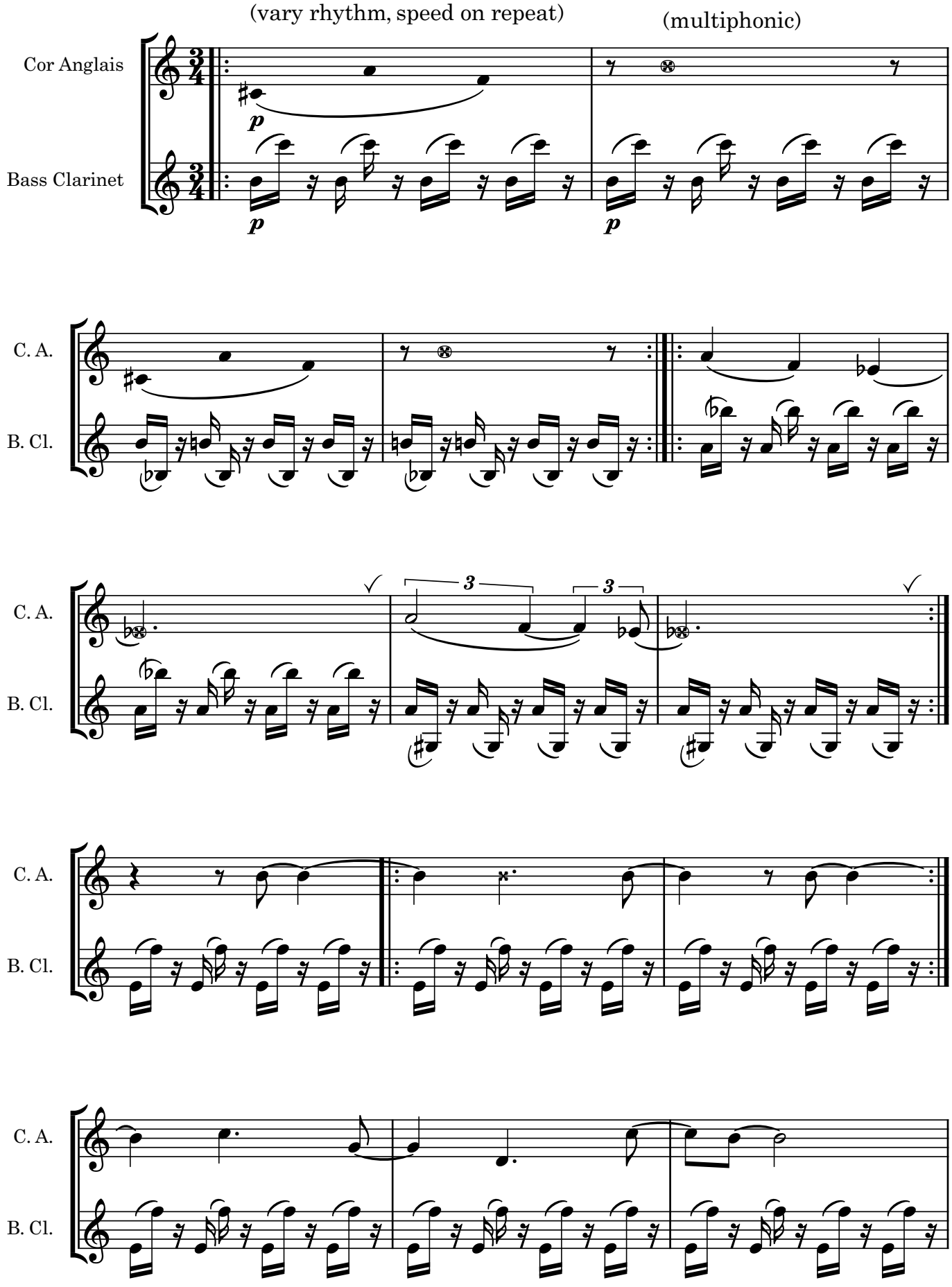
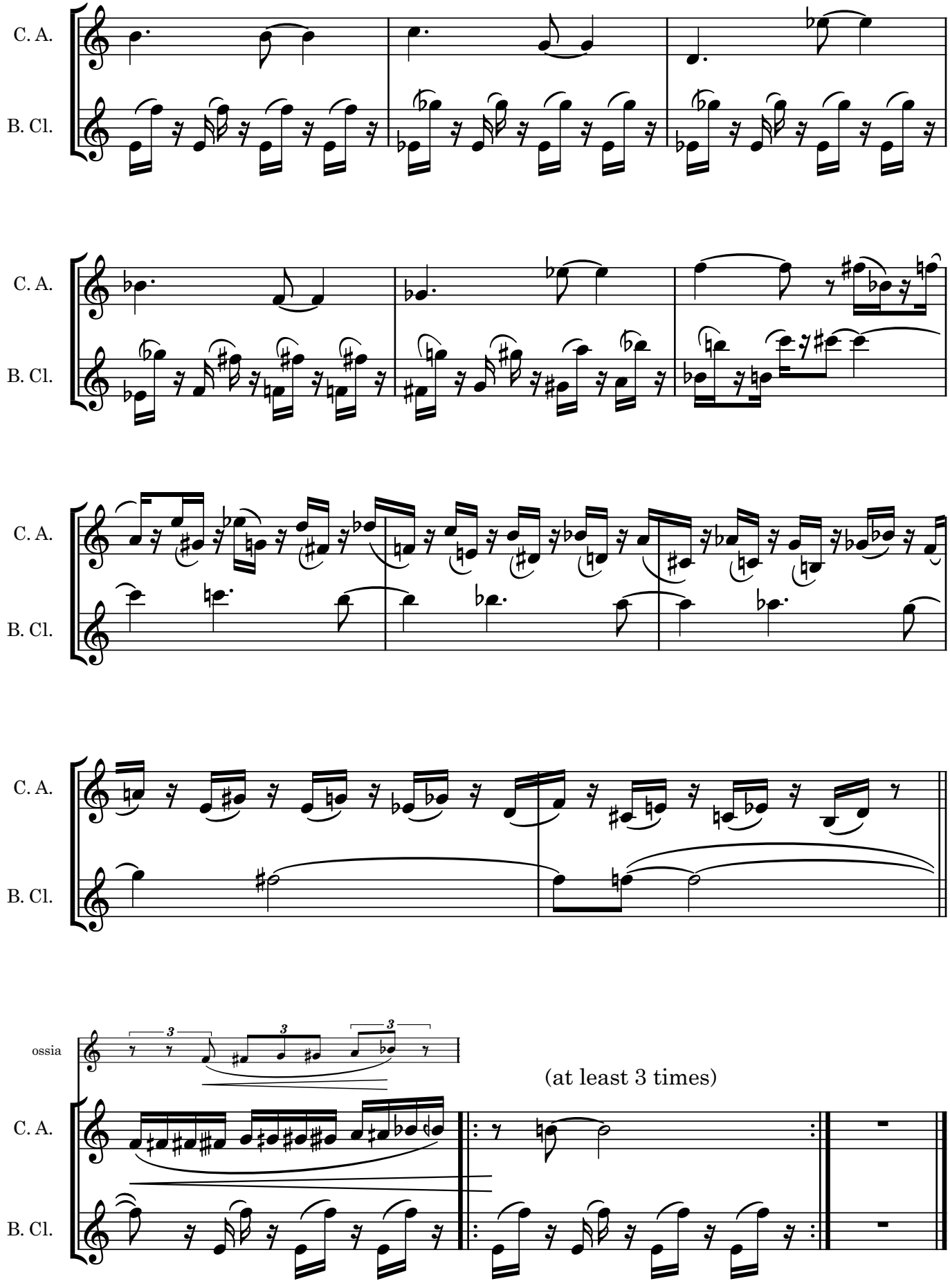

C. A.
B. Cl.

C. A.
B. Cl.

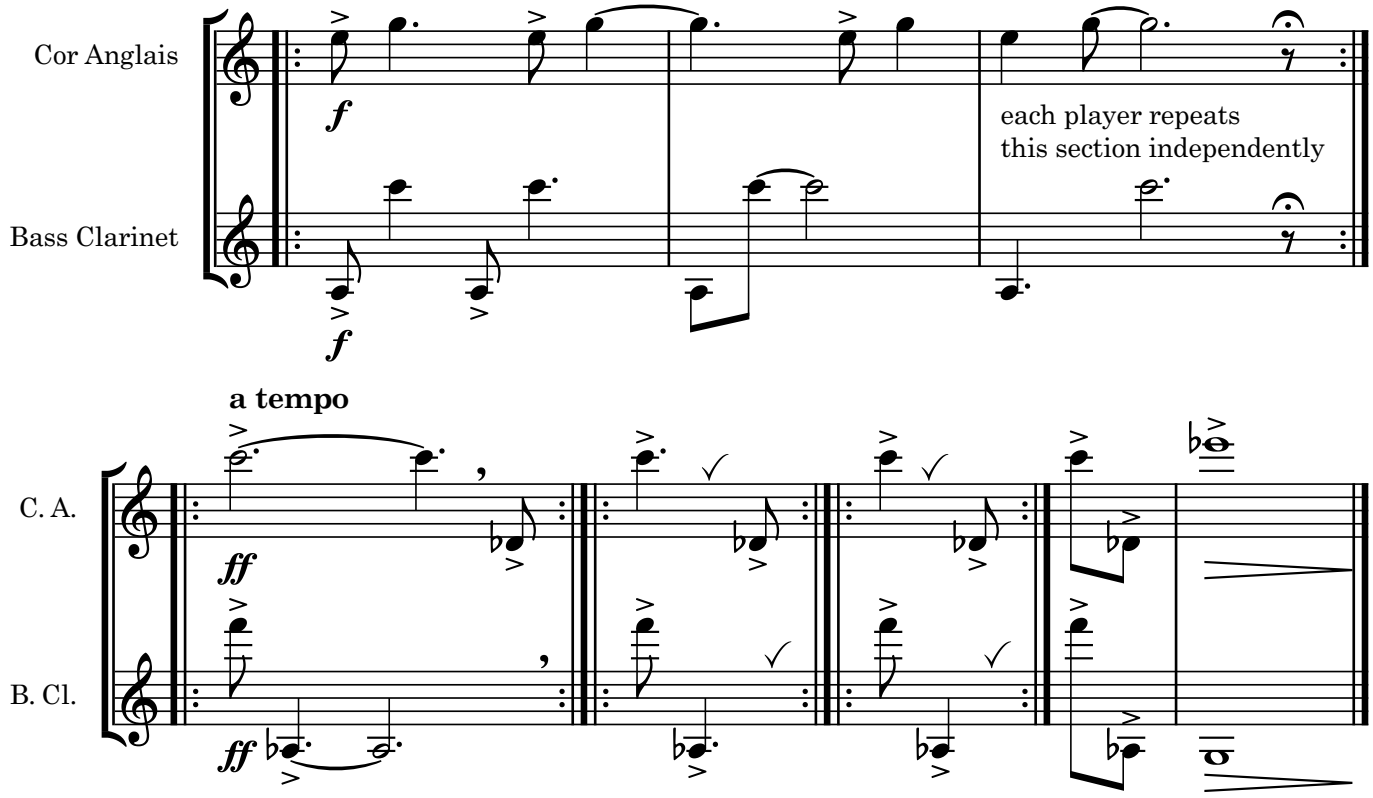
1.2


(vary rhythm, speed on repeat)
(multiphonic)
Cor Anglais
Bass Clarinet
C. A.
B. Cl.
C. A.
B. Cl.
C. A.
B. Cl.
C. A.
B. Cl.

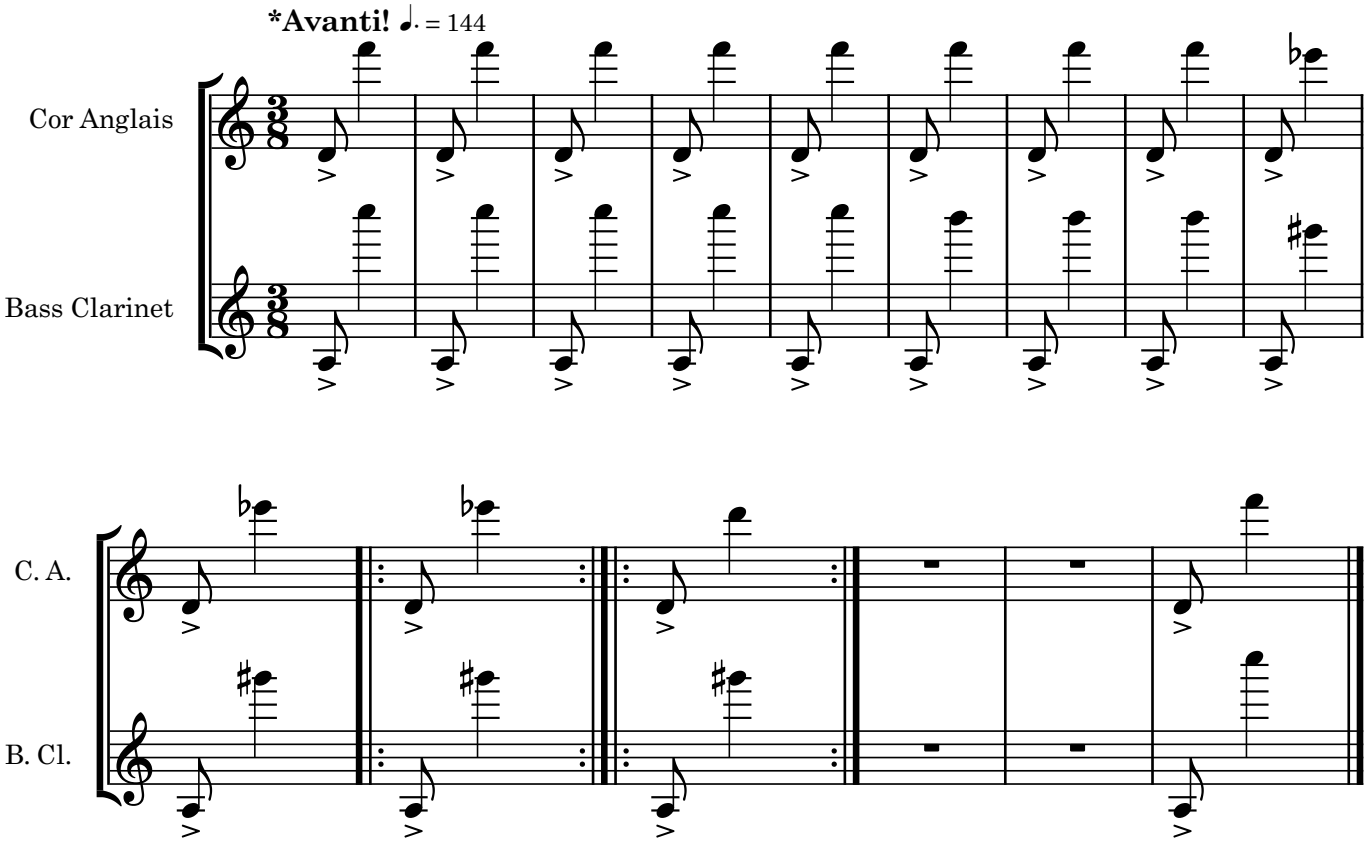

C. A.
B. Cl.
C. A.
B. Cl.
C. A.
B. Cl.
C. A.
B. Cl.
ossia
(at least 3 times)
C. A.
B. Cl.

1.3

Each repeat slower and quiter than the last,
Until *lentissimo/ pianissimo*



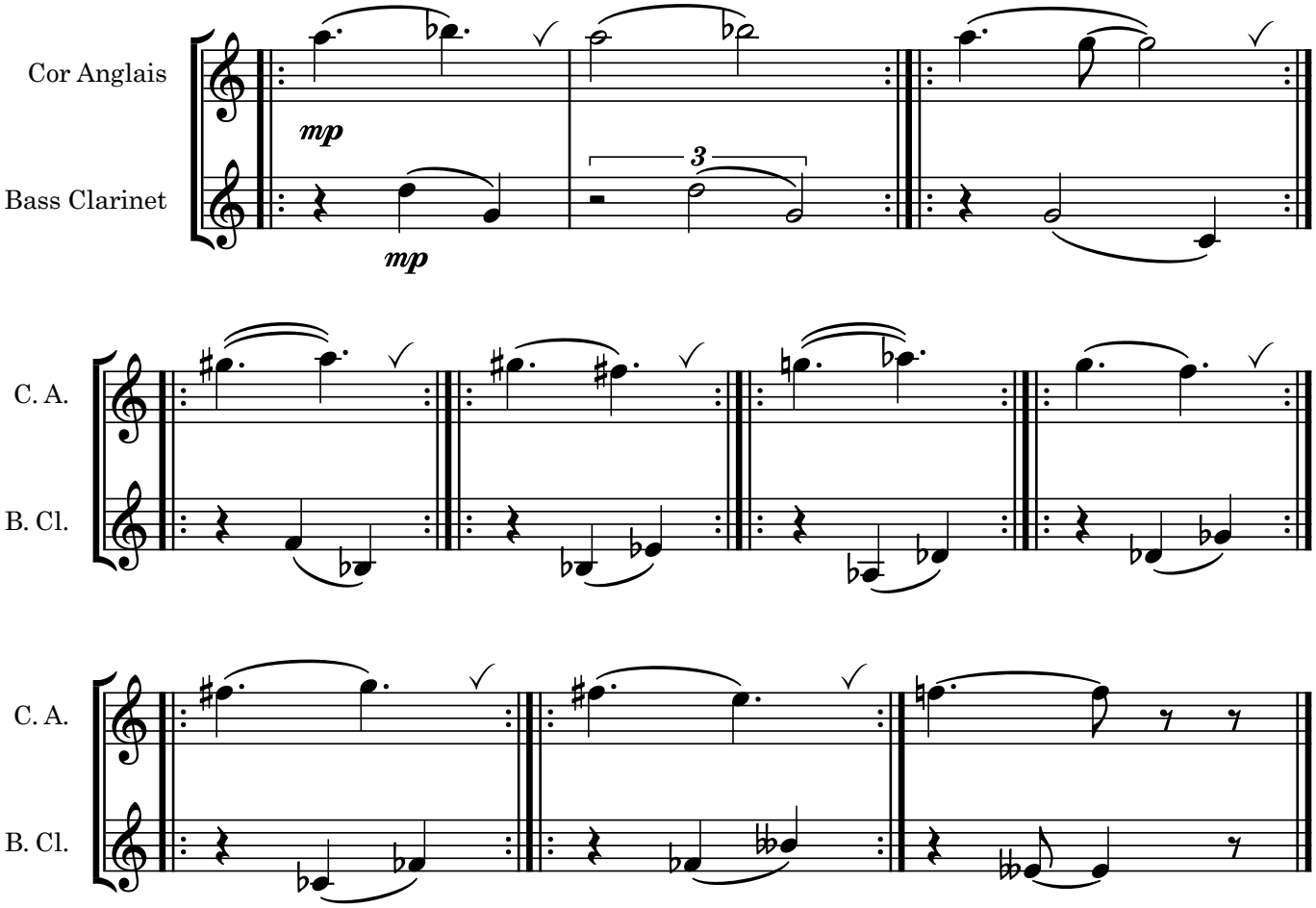
1.4



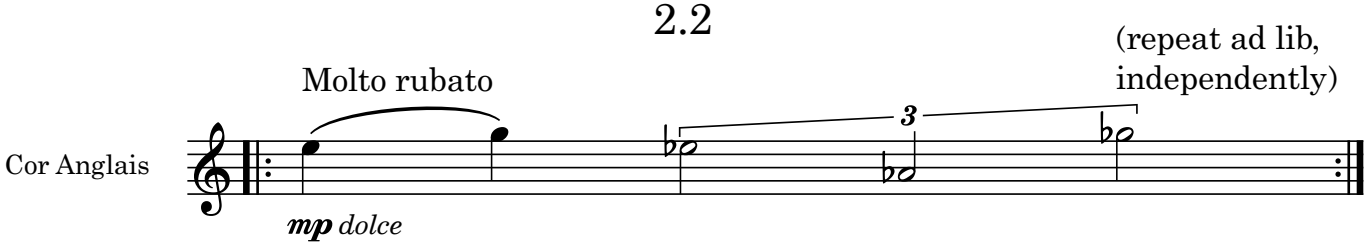
This module only to be played as a finale,
following a repeat of module 1.1

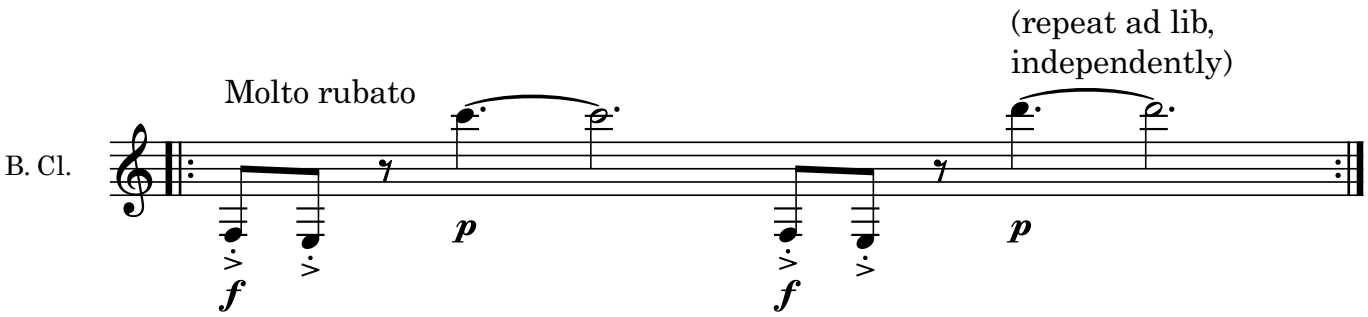
2.1

(breaths ad lib - when moving from one bar to the next do so without breath.)



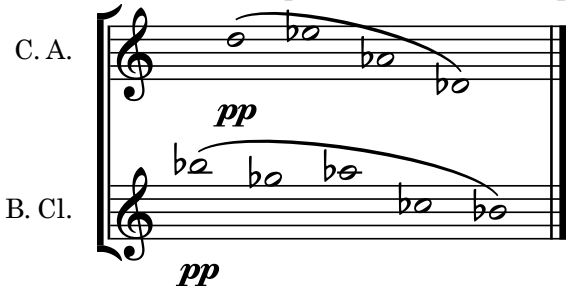
2.2



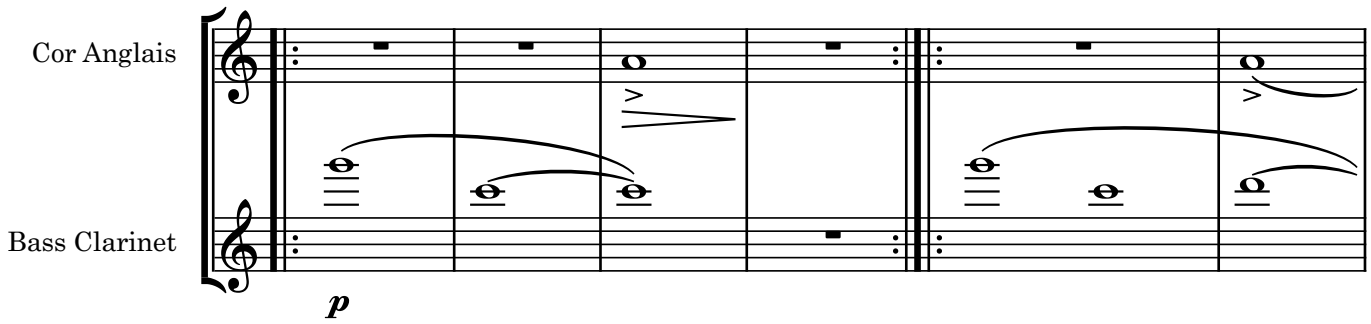


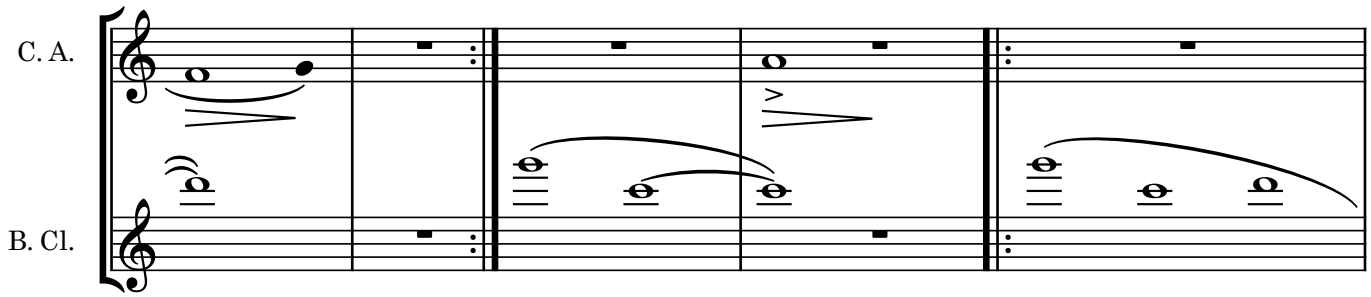
𝄋 Coda

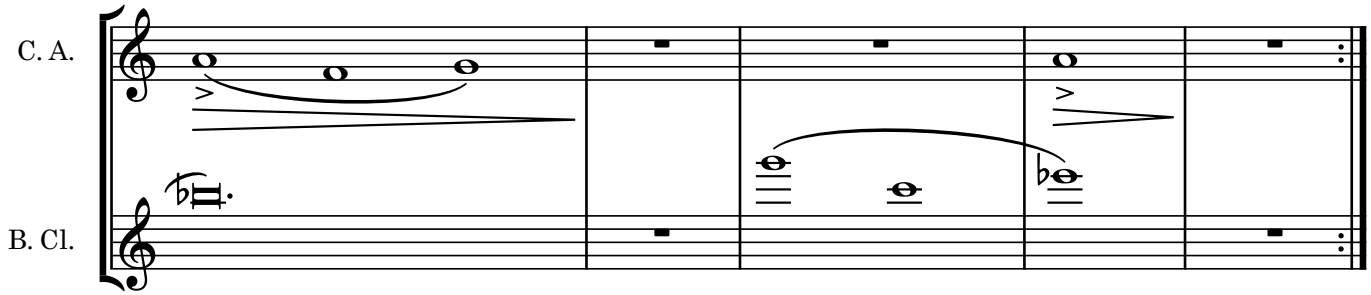
Very slowly: at an agreed signal proceed from the above to the coda, having finished your own final repetition of the first part.
Approximately follow the coordination notated but not too much.
Keep a sense of two separate, individual parts

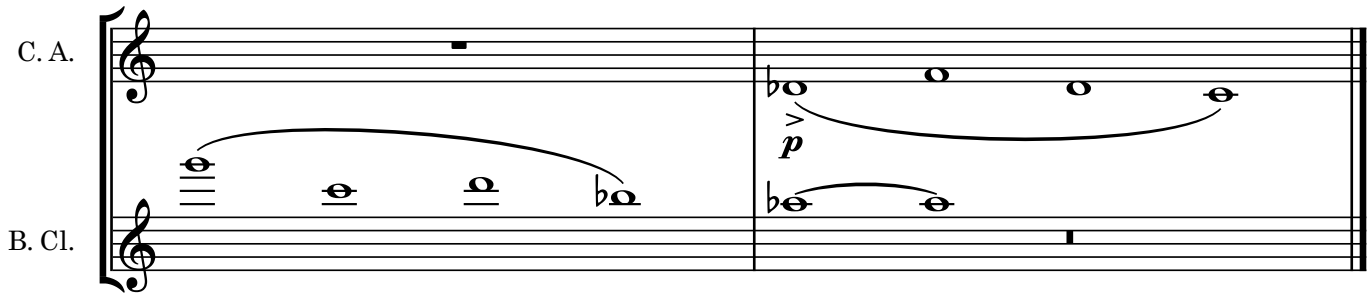


3.1



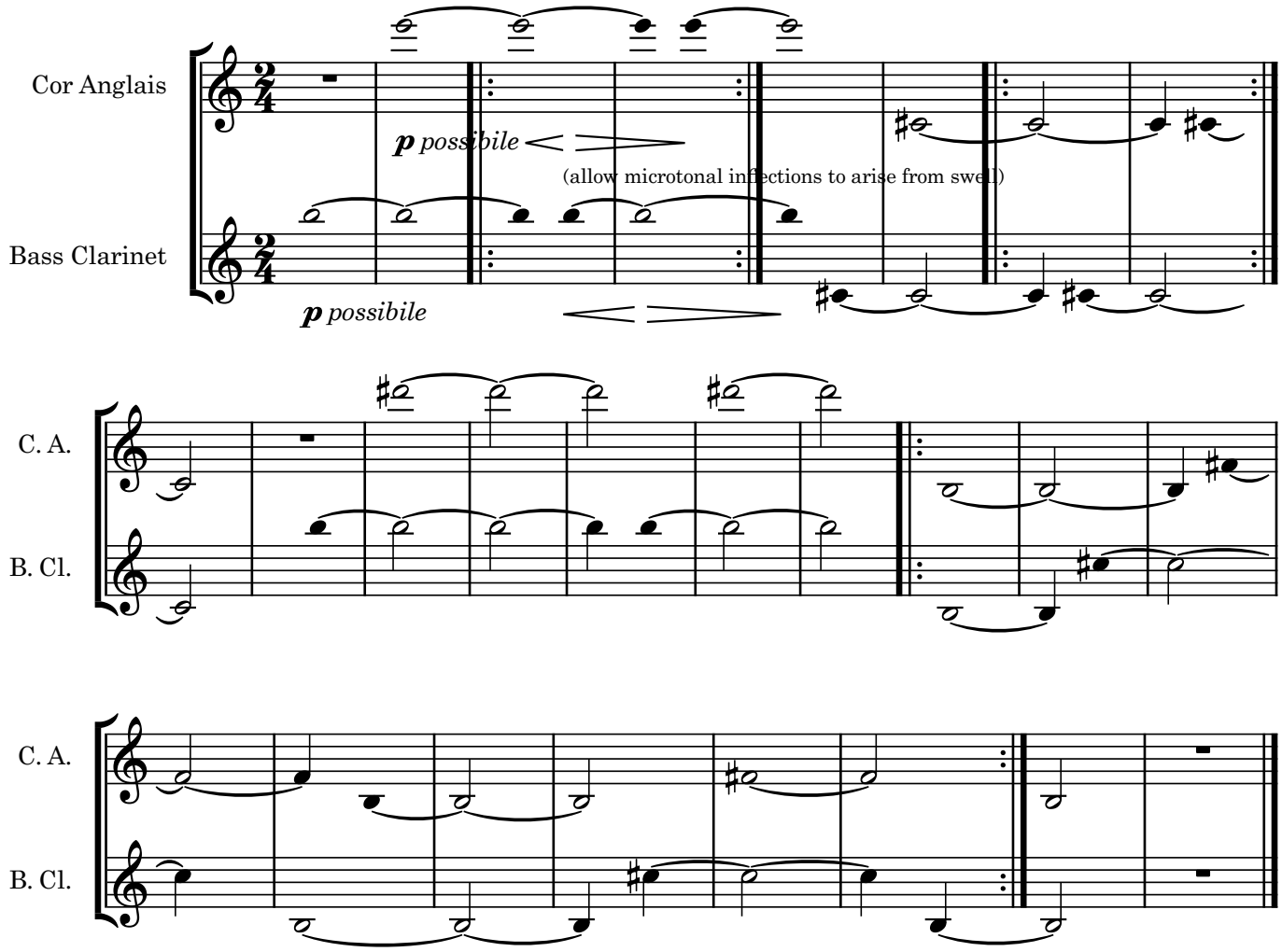




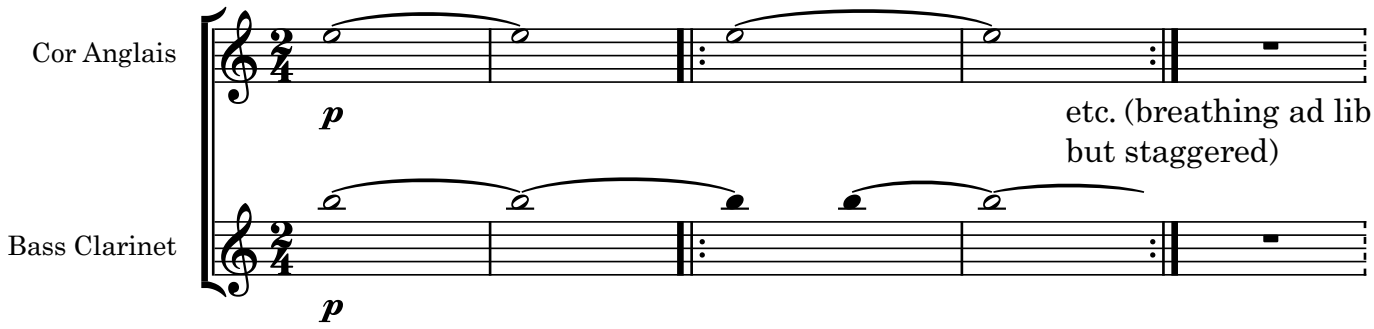


3.2

(allow microtonal inflections to arise from swell)



3.3



Bass cl: hold pitch.
CA: find several fingerings for the pitch -
some spot on, some up to 1/4-tone sharp/flat. Vary ad lib
to produce varying beats between the instruments.

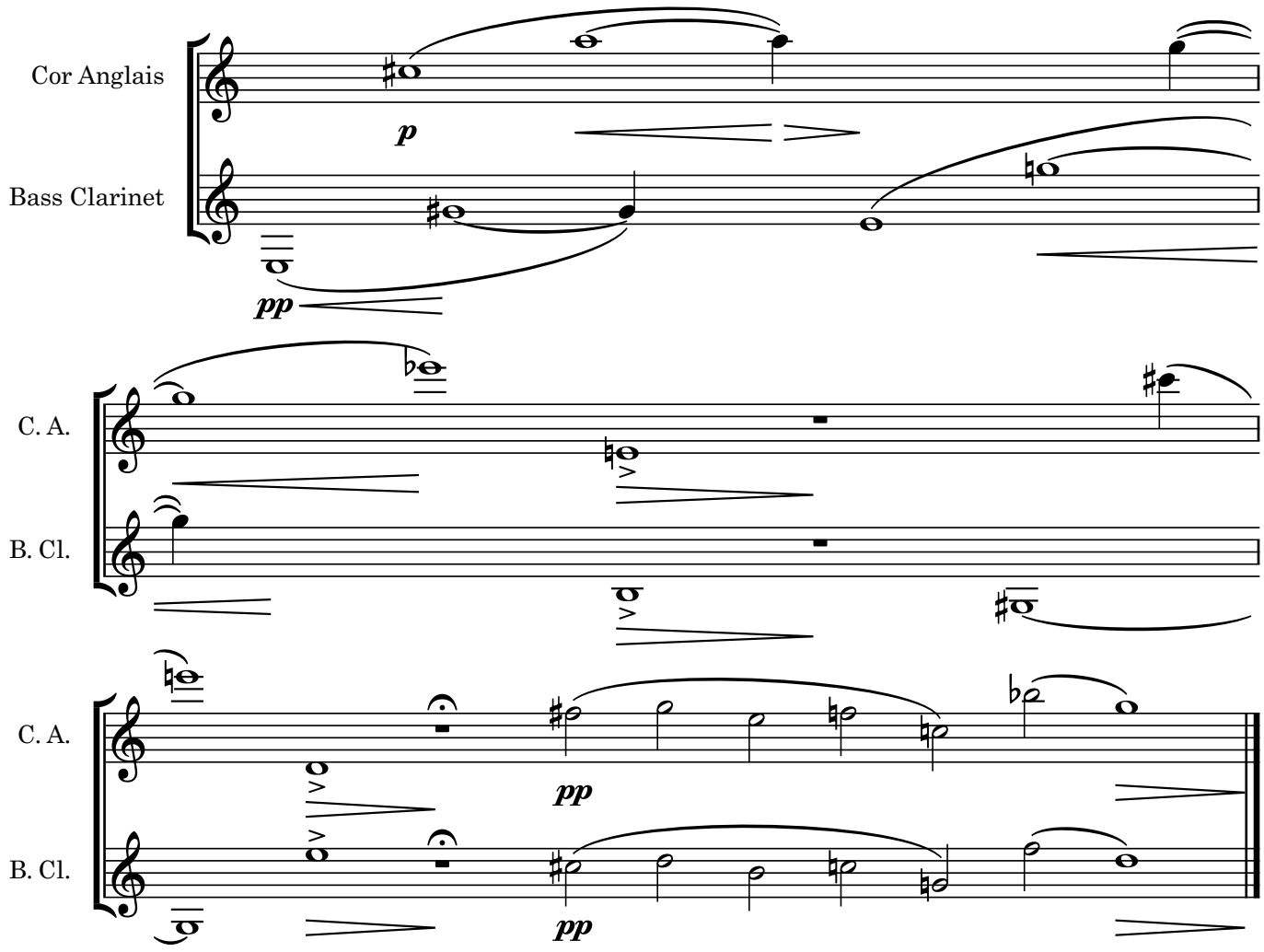
air pressure/ lip can also be used to vary pitch.
Experiment with step movement between pitch variants
and portamento between them.
Create a flow between smooth unison and strong beats.

Notation is for concert A, but any pitch that is
reasonably comfortable for both players is fine.
You can agree this between you to suit both
your own techniques and strongets registers,
and what pitch area produces the most effective/
interesting result in the space where you are
performing.

Play as long as feels right.
This can be a long time.
Try to exist within the sound.

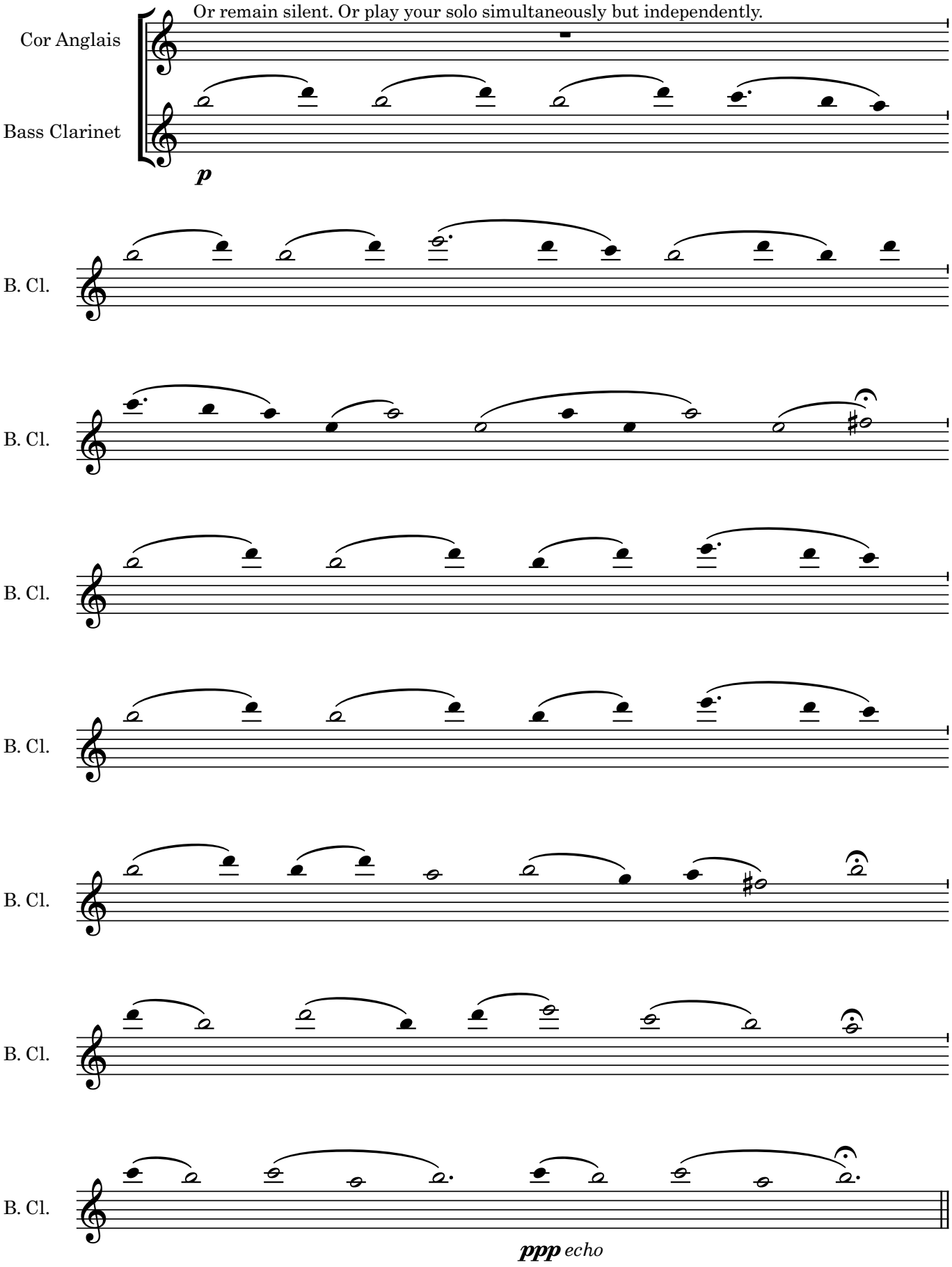
If you're feeling brave do this at as high a pitch
as you can both manage.

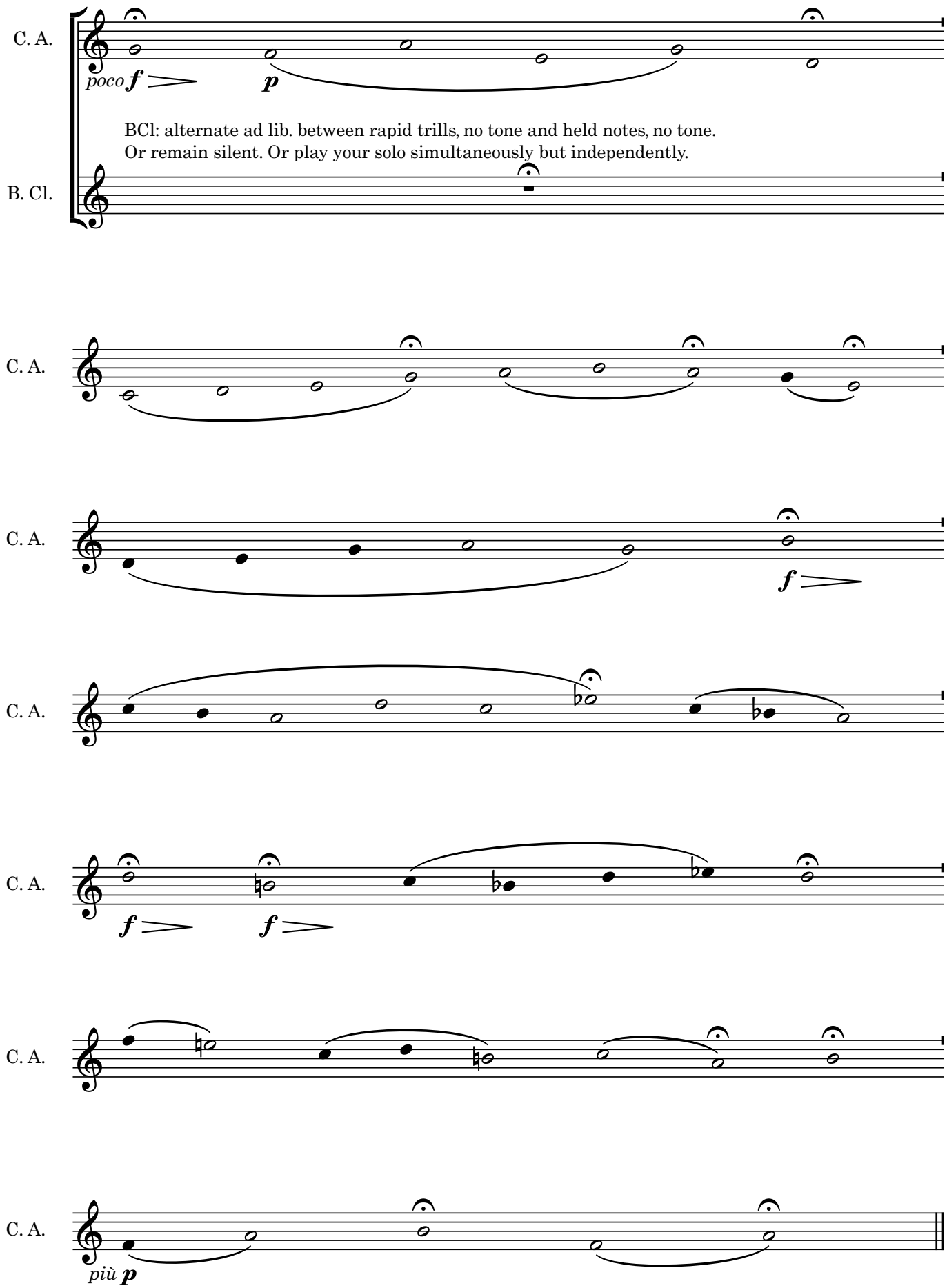
3.4

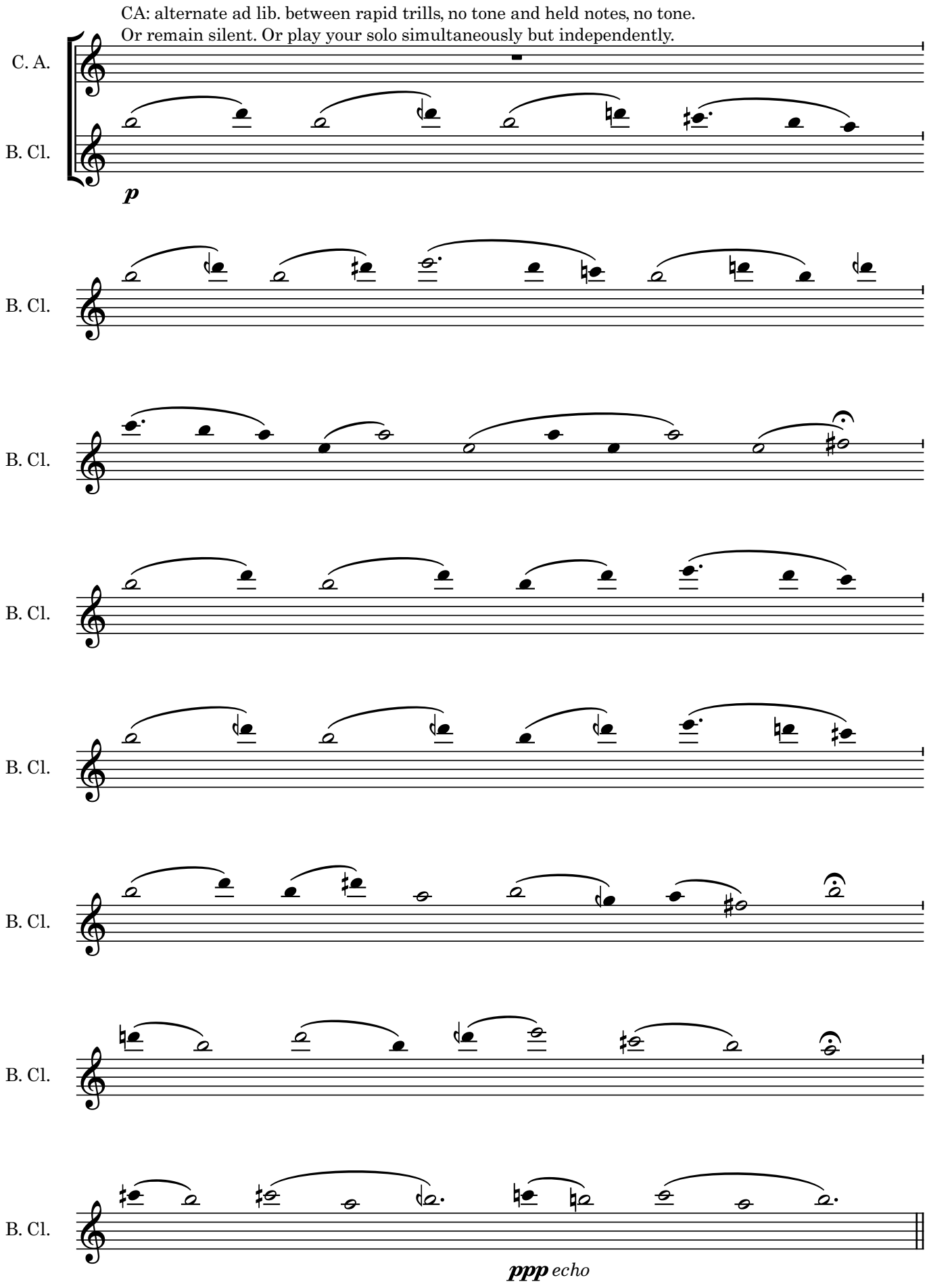


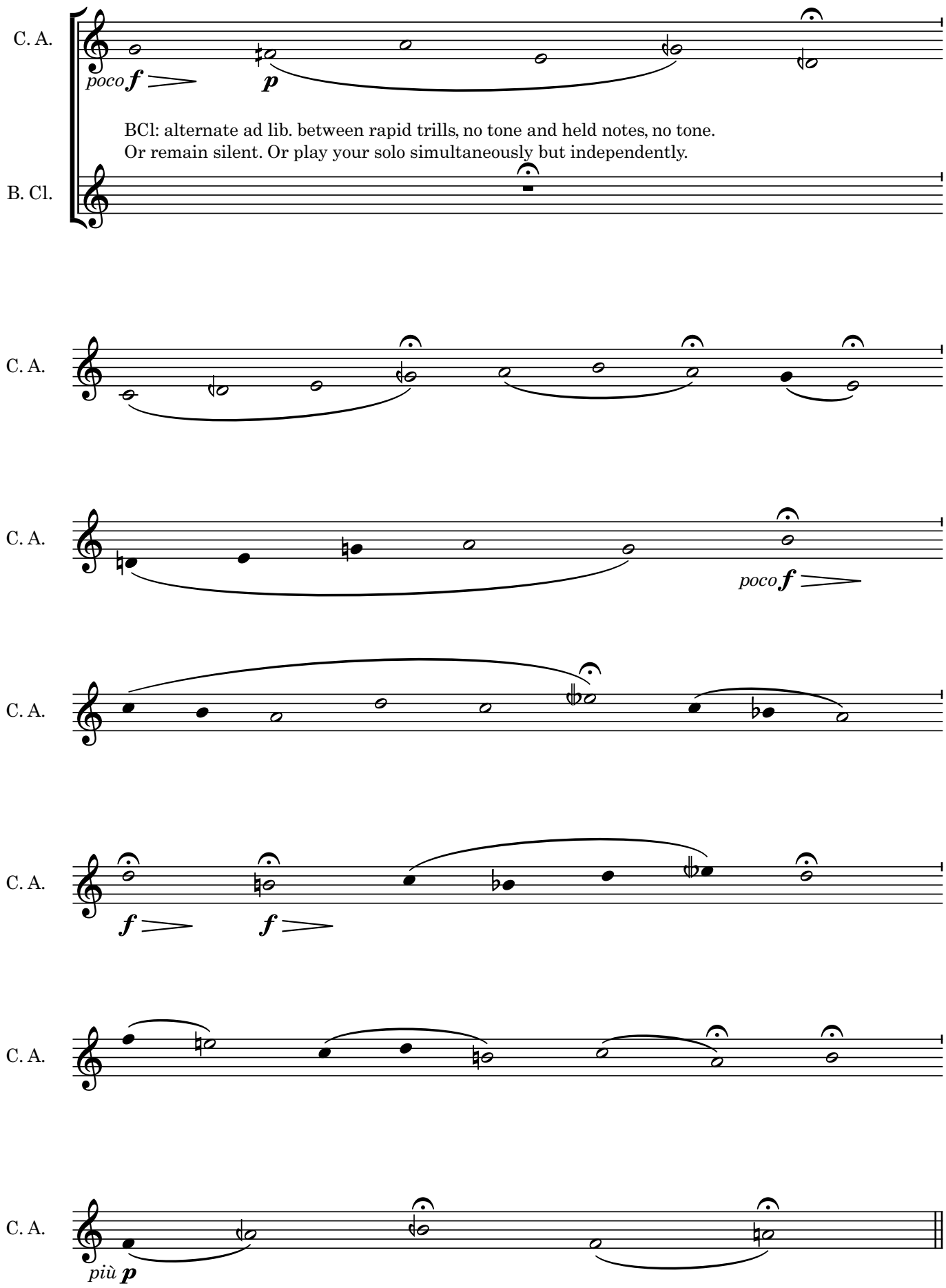
4.1-5

CA: alternate ad lib. between rapid trills, no tone and held notes, no tone.
Or remain silent. Or play your solo simultaneously but independently.




C. A.
poco f
p
BCl: alternate ad lib. between rapid trills, no tone and held notes, no tone.
Or remain silent. Or play your solo simultaneously but independently.
B. Cl.
C. A.
C. A.
f
C. A.
C. A.
f
f
C. A.
C. A.
più p


CA: alternate ad lib. between rapid trills, no tone and held notes, no tone.
Or remain silent. Or play your solo simultaneously but independently.
C. A.
B. Cl.
p
B. Cl.
B. Cl.
B. Cl.
B. Cl.
B. Cl.
B. Cl.
B. Cl.
ppp echo


C. A.
poco f
p
BCl: alternate ad lib. between rapid trills, no tone and held notes, no tone.
Or remain silent. Or play your solo simultaneously but independently.
B. Cl.
C. A.
C. A.
poco f
C. A.
C. A.
f
f
C. A.
C. A.
più p