JOHN MacCALLUM

aberration

FOR PERCUSSION TRIO

Instrumentation

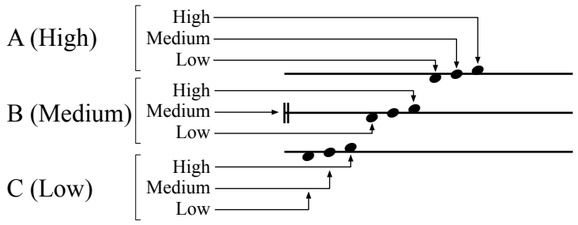
Each musician plays a total of nine instruments arranged in three groups of three.
Group A should be the highest and group C the lowest with group B between the two.
Groups A and B should be timbrally similar while group C can be slightly different.
Within each group, each of the three instruments should be arranged from high to low.

Example (woods and skins):

A: Piccolo woodblocks
B: Hardwood planks
C: Toms

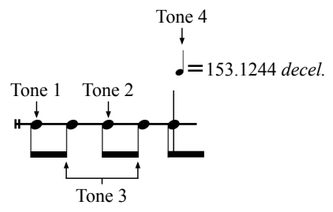
Example (metals):

A: Brake drums
B: Thick metal plates
C: Pairs of stacked Beijing opera gongs



Click tracks

The click tracks for each musician begin two bars before the beginning of the piece.
Beats one and two along with eighth notes are all heard as different tones in the click tracks.
A fourth tone is heard whenever a tempo destination is reached.



The tones for used in the click tracks can be changed by altering the Max patch (see documentation).
Different subdivisions (other than eighth notes) can also be heard in the click track by altering the Max patch.

Notation

The score is prepared such that the horizontal position of the notes on the page represents their actual placement in time. The placement of the first beat of a bar directly on the barline, while not conforming to standard typesetting practice, is necessary for the alignment with the other parts. This convention is only used in the score---the parts that the musicians read from are notated conventionally.

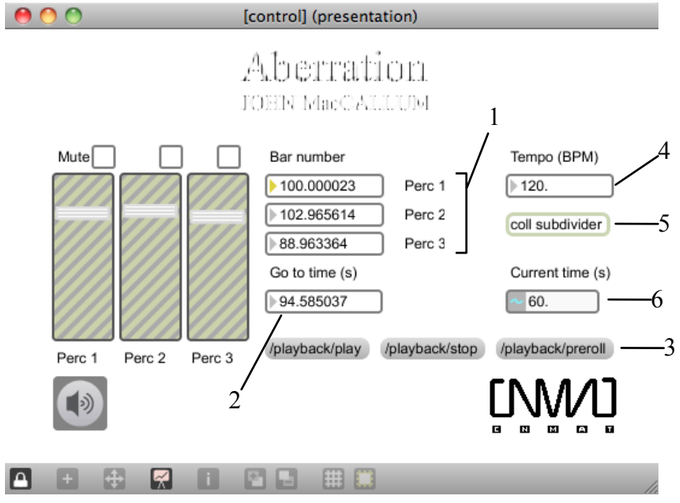
Tempos are printed with three or more decimals of precision in the score so that they correspond with those as seen in the Max patch. They are rounded to the nearest integer in the performers' parts.

Program Notes

In the opening bars of Aberration the three percussionists, governed, as one would expect, by a common tempo, present a simple rhythmic pattern. Soon though, the tempos of each of the three musicians begin to fluctuate slowly and independently of one another—the performers begin to wander from the path of the single tempo established at the beginning of the composition. At times the three performers violently assert their individual tempos by playing simple rhythmic figures reminiscent of the material in the opening of the work albeit in their own independent tempos, while at other times they attempt to reconstruct the music from the beginning of the work by playing carefully chosen rhythms that, when combined, form a composite semblance of that original material. The tempo of the material being reconstructed then speeds up slightly before beginning a long slow deceleration. As we approach the trough, we hear all four tempos at once—each of the performers playing in their own tempo and also each playing elements of the slowly decelerating fourth.

Aberration makes use of new software developed by John MacCallum at the Center for New Music and Audio Technologies (CNMAT). This software builds on previous work by Matthew Wright and has been used extensively in works by Edmund Campion including *ADKOM* and *Auditory Fiction*.

Aberration was commissioned by and written for the Rootstock Percussion Trio (Chris Froh, Dan Kennedy, and Loren Mach) and is dedicated to Edmund Campion.



1. Enter a bar number for a given performer and the number boxes for the other performers will update with their corresponding bar numbers for that point in the composition. For example, if performer number 1 wants to start at bar 100, performer number 2 will start just before bar 103 and number 3 will start just before 89.

2. Enter the time at which you would like to start. Entering a time in this box will cause the bar numbers for each performer to update.

3. The playback commands. /playback/play means play from the time indicated in the box above. /playback/preroll is to start from the beginning of the piece with two bars for free.

4. The global tempo for the composition. The click track at the beginning of the piece will be set to this tempo and the rest of the tempos will be scaled accordingly.

5. Double-clicking this box will cause a text window to open. Commands to control the subdivider can be entered in the following format:

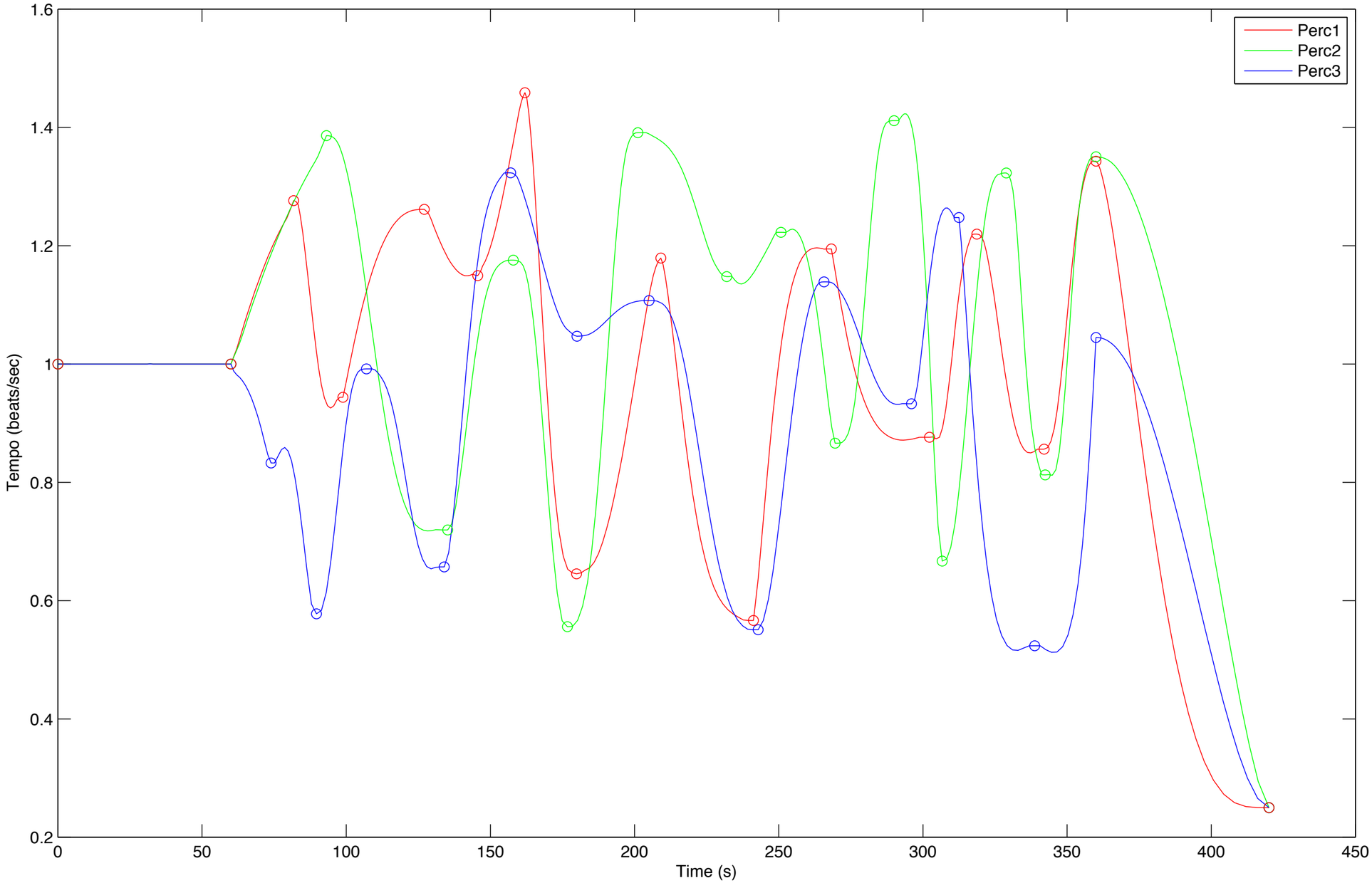
360, perc1 time 360 4 perc2 time 360 4 perc3 time 360 4;

- The new subdivision (number of events per beat)
- The time or bar at which the change will occur
- Keyword "time" or "bar"
- Performer affected
- Arbitrary index number (unique)

The comma and semicolon must be present and commands need not be given for every performer, e.g., if performer number 1 wants quintuplets from bars 100-120 and eighth notes after that, the commands would be

1000, perc1 bar 100 5;
1001, perc1 bar 121 2;

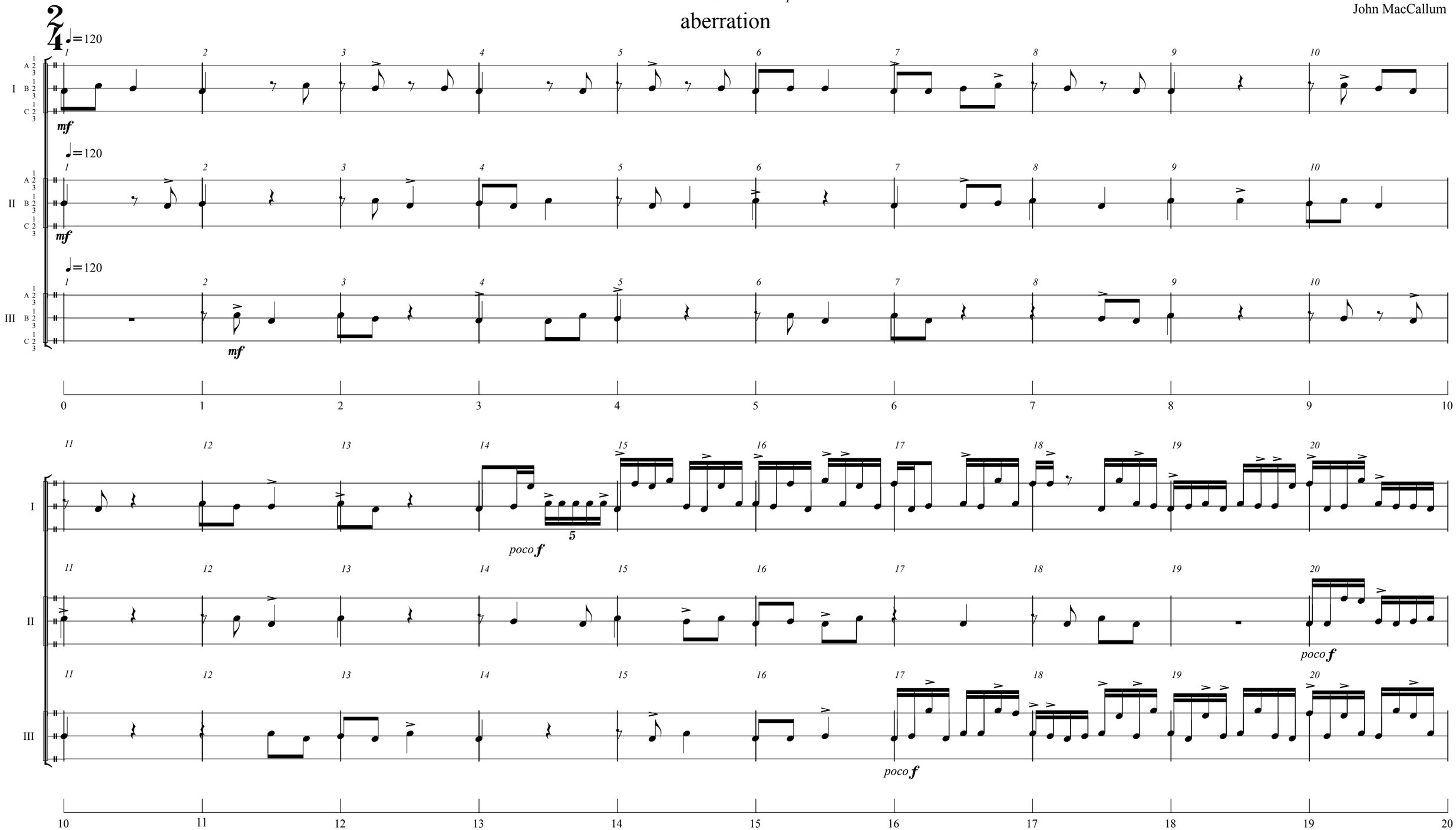
6. This box displays the current time when the piece is playing.


Perc1
Perc2
Perc3
Tempo (beats/sec)
Time (s)
1.6
1.4
1.2
1
0.8
0.6
0.4
0.2
0
50
100
150
200
250
300
350
400
450

Written for the Rootstock Percussion Trio: Chris Froh, Dan Kennedy, and Loren Mach
Dedicated to Edmund Campion

John MacCallum

aberration



© John MacCallum, 2010

I

II

III

mf

mf

mf

poco ***f***

poco ***f***

I

II

III

41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50

mf

mf

poco ***f***

mf

40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50

I

II

III

51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60

50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60

1 (♩=120) *accel.*

I

II

III

f *mf*

61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71

60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70

72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83

♩=99.92208 *decel.*

71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79

70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80

♩=153.1244 *decel.*

84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95

I

84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96

II

♩=69.32436

80 81 82 83 84 85 86 *accel.*

III

80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90

2

♩=113.2404 *accel.*

96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105

I

f *mp*

2 ♩=166.3228 *decel.*

97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110

II

f *mp*

2

87 88 89 90 91 92 93

III

f *mp*

90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

I

II

III

♩=119.011 *decel.*

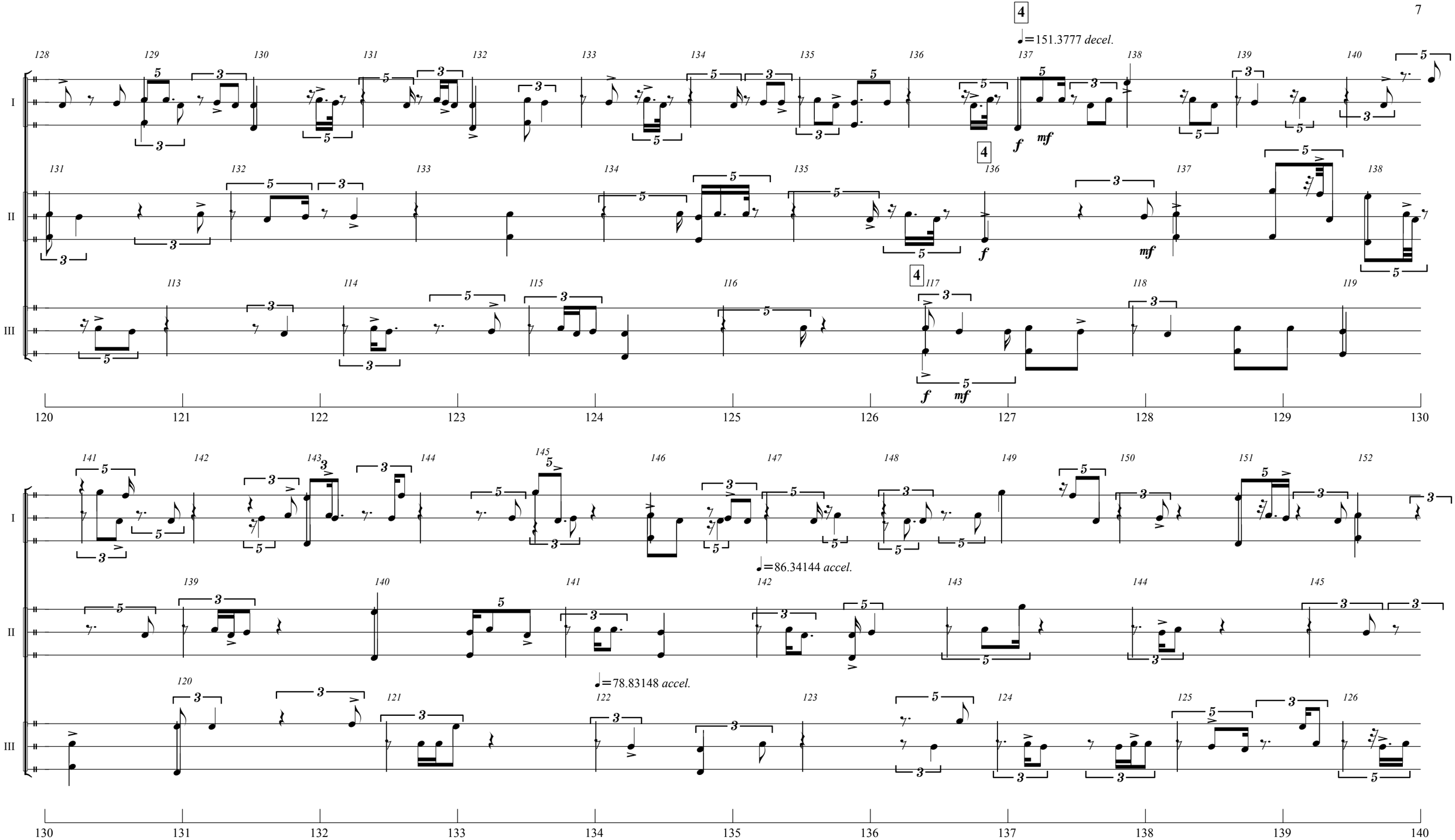
100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110

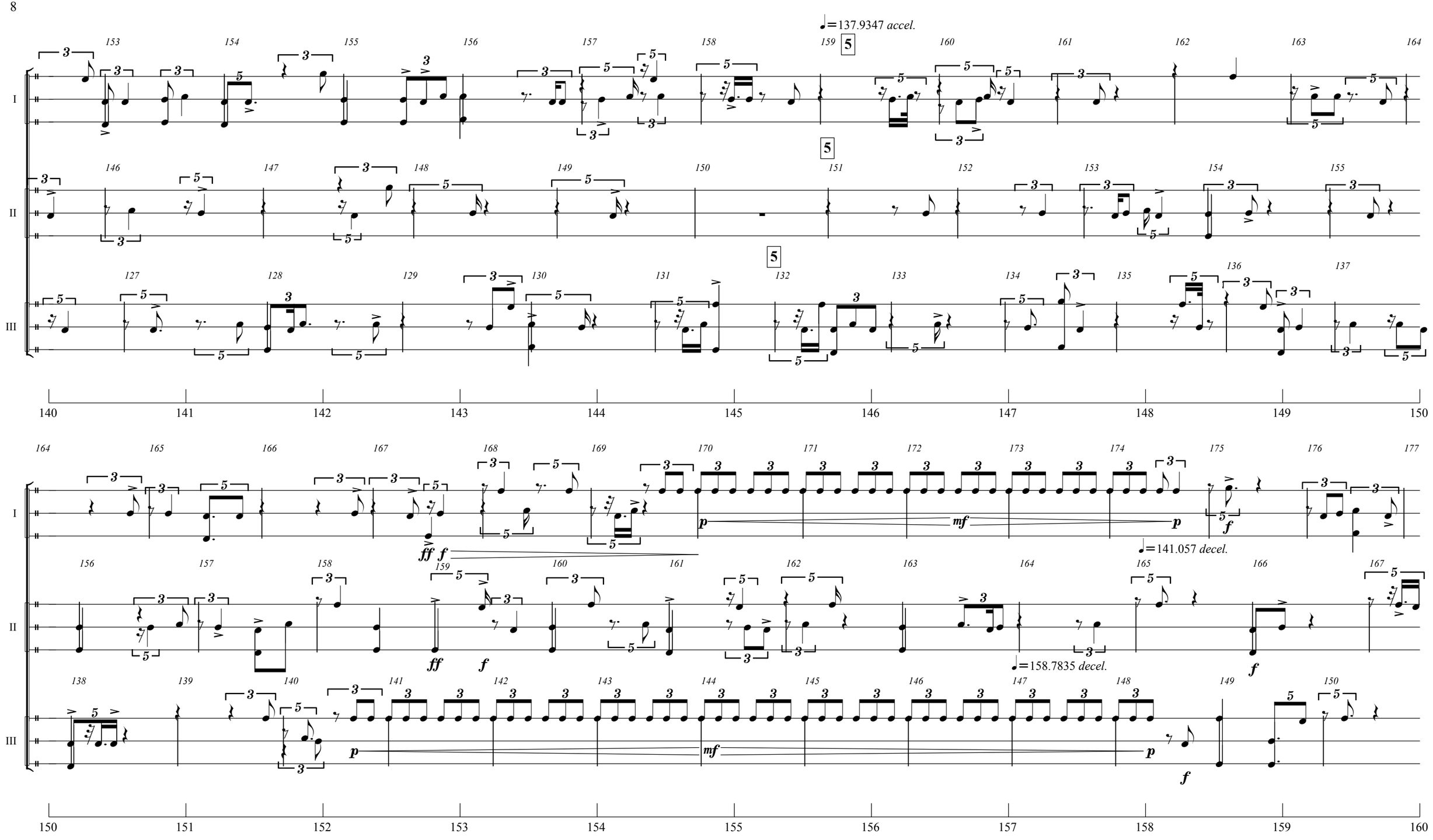
I

II

III

110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120


4
♩=151.3777 decel.
I
II
III
♩=86.34144 accel.
♩=78.83148 accel.


♩=137.9347 accel.
I
II
III
♩=141.057 decel.
♩=158.7835 decel.

6

♩=175.0451 *decel.*

I

II

III

177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189

168 169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177

151 152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160 161 162 163

ff

160 161 162 163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170

♩=77.44368 *accel.*

190 191 192 193 194 195 196 197

♩=66.70752 *accel.*

178 179 180 181 182 183

164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171 172 173

6

ff

170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180

10

7

♩=77.44368 *accel.*

I

II

III

mf

p sub. *mf* *p*

7

♩=125.6376 *accel.*

mf

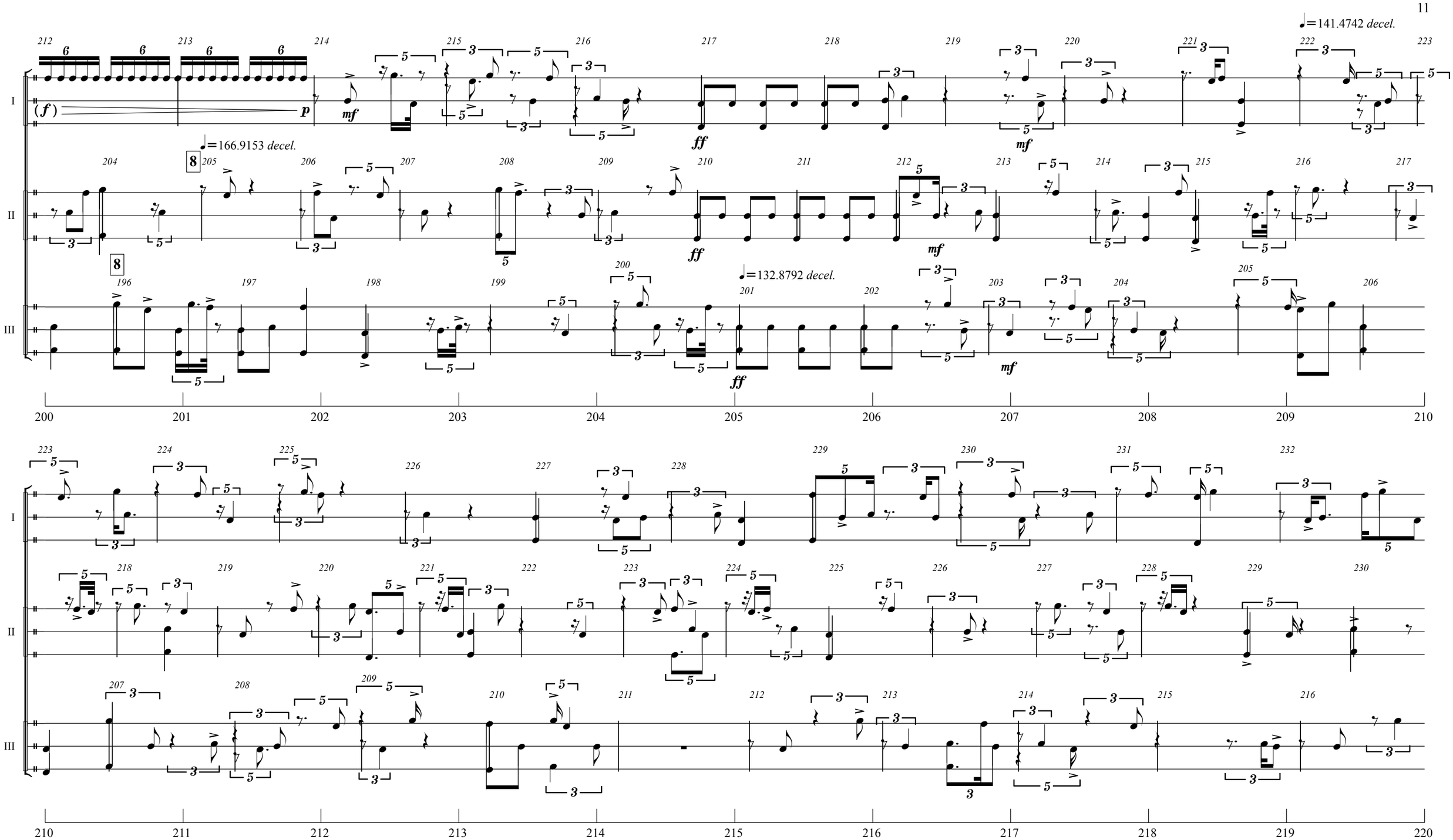
mf

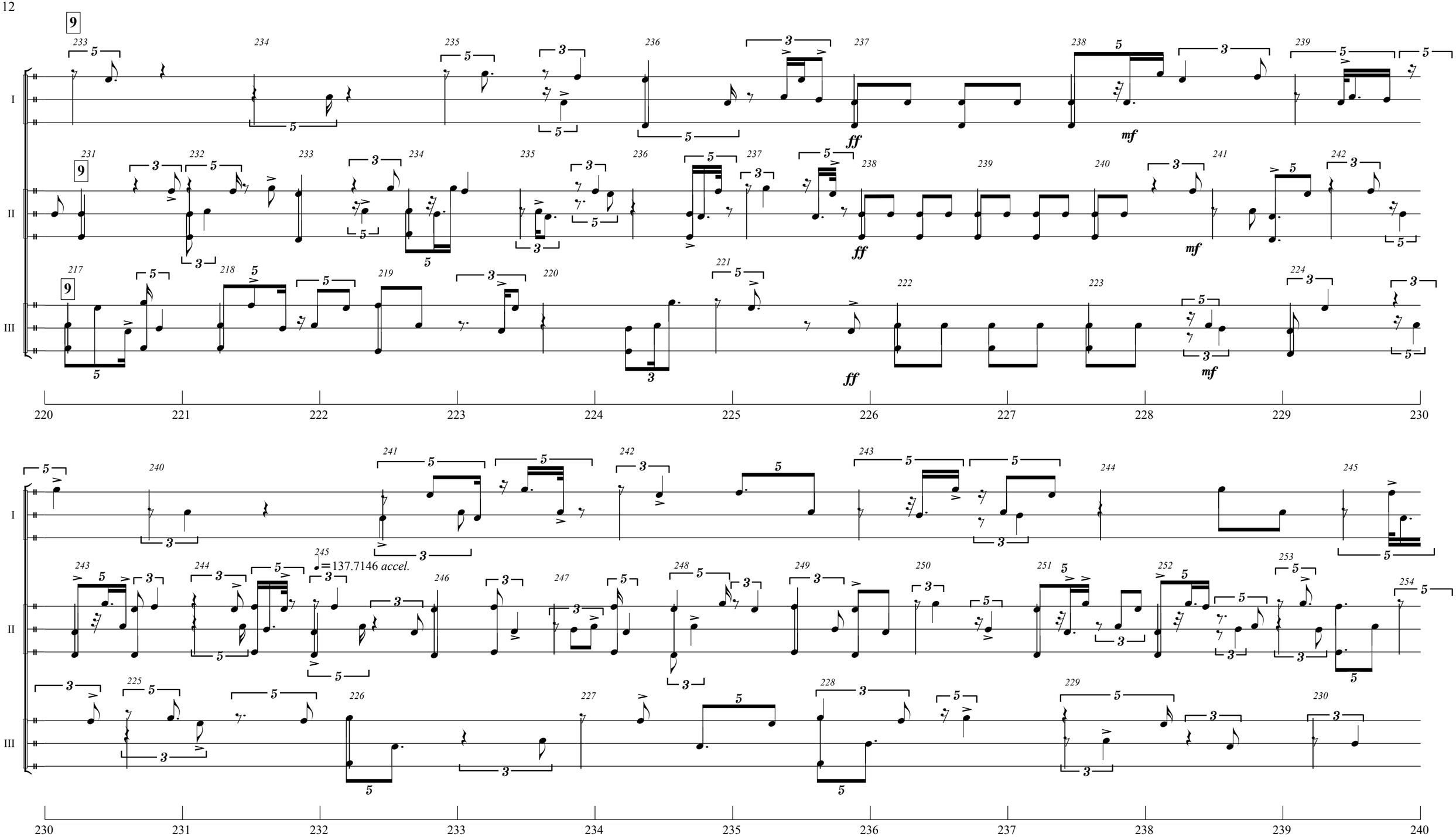
180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189 190

8

f

190 191 192 193 194 195 196 197 198 199 200


♩=141.4742 decel.
♩=166.9153 decel.
♩=132.8792 decel.
I
II
III
(f)
p
mf
ff
8


9
I
II
III
ff
mf
♩=137.7146 accel.

10

♩=67.97676 *accel.*

I

II

III

246 247 248 249 250 251 252

ff *mf*

255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263 264 265 266

ff *mf*

231 232 233 234 235 236

ff *mf*

♩=66.0816 *accel.*

240 241 242 243 244 245 246 247 248 249 250

253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263 264

♩=146.7205 *decel.*

ff *p* *ff* *p*

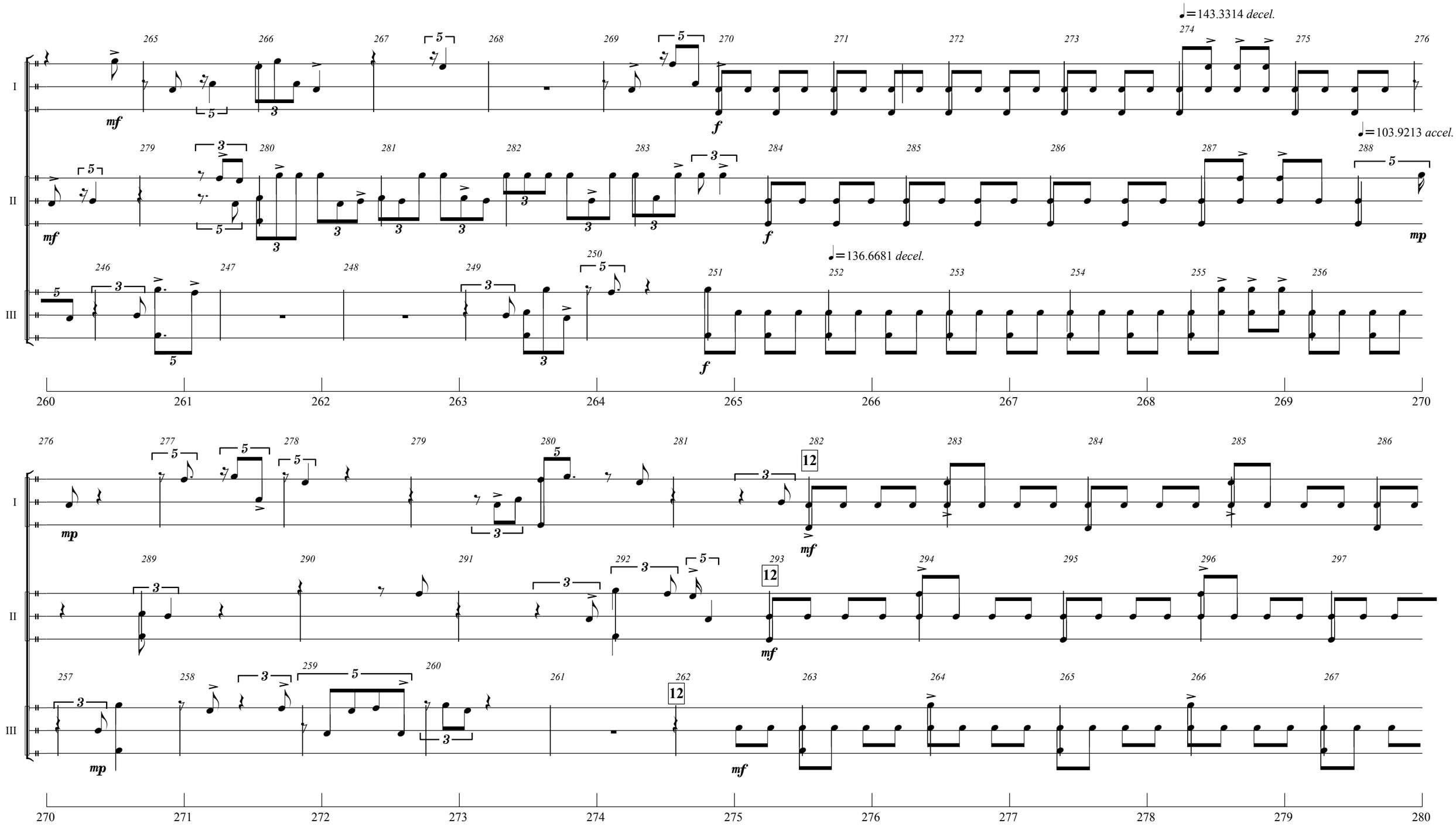
266 267 268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277 278

ff *p* *mf* *ff*

237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245

ff *p* *ff* *p* *ff* *mf*

250 251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260


I
II
III
♩=143.3314 decel.
♩=103.9213 accel.
♩=136.6681 decel.
mf
f
mp
12
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276
277
278
279
280

I

II

III

287 288 289 290 291 292 293 294 295

298 299 300 301 302 303 304 305 306 307 308 309 310 311

268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277

280 281 282 283 284 285 286

296 297 298 299 300 301 302 303

311 312 313 314 315 316 317 318 319 320 321 322 323 324

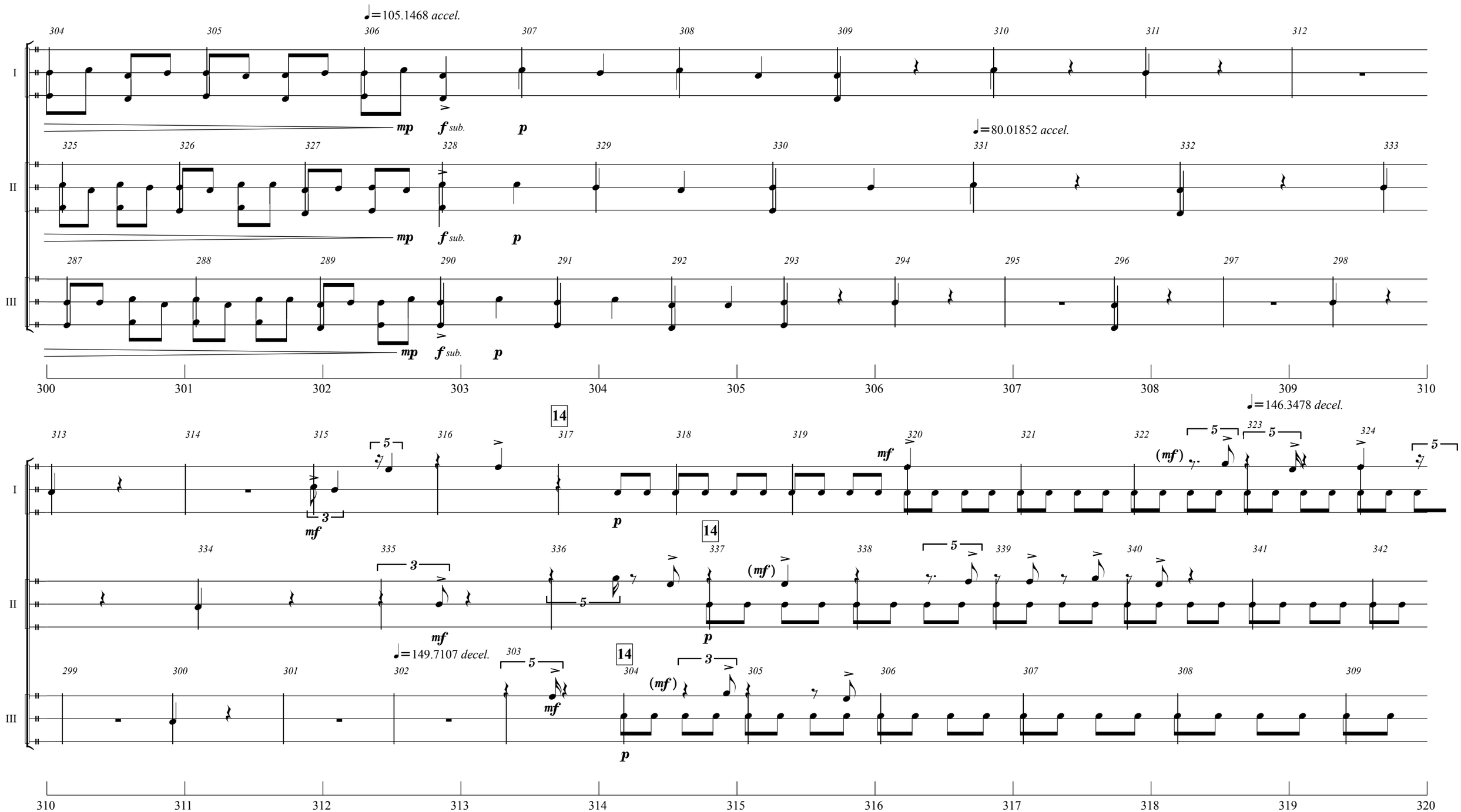
278 279

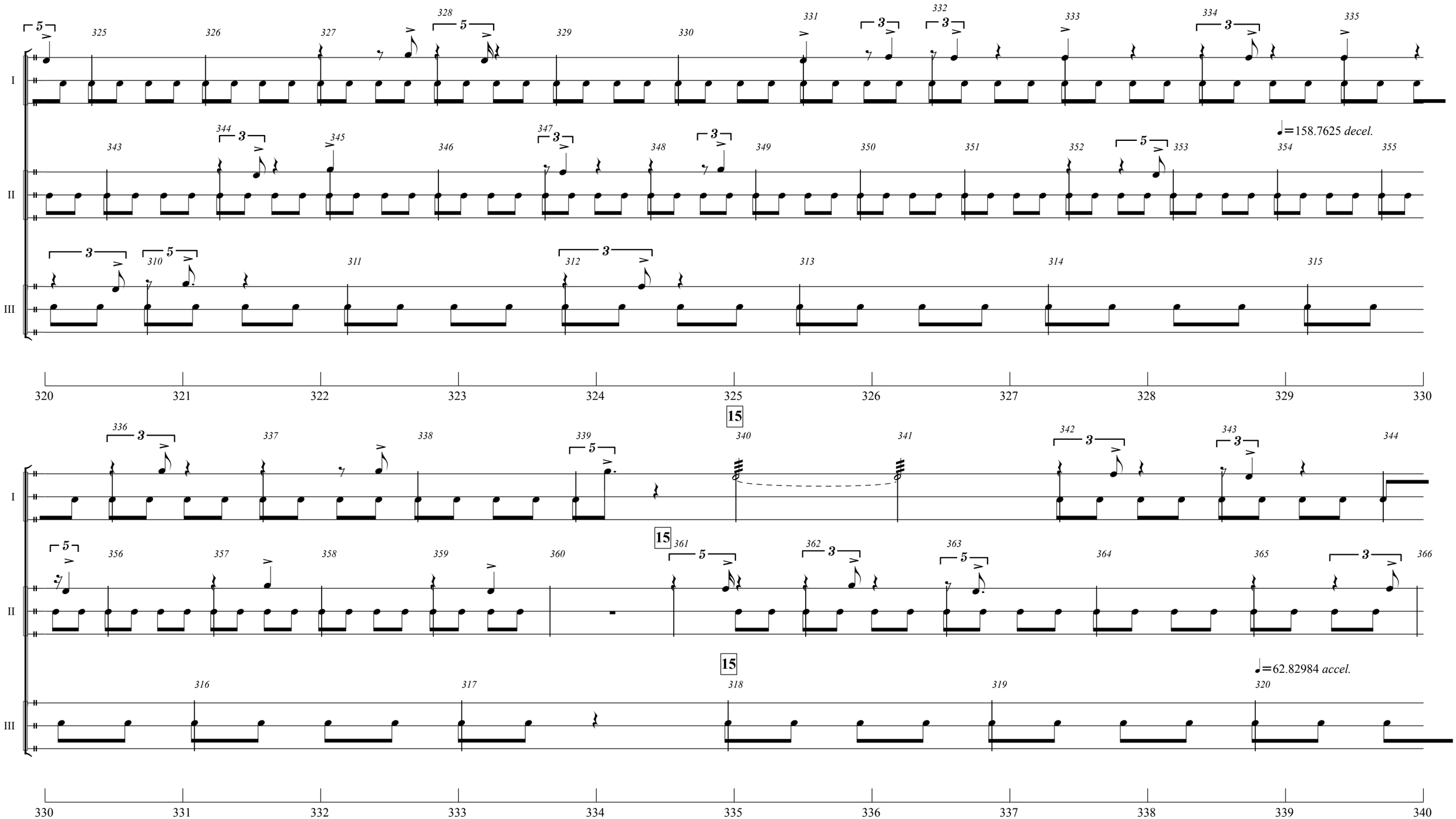
290 291 292 293 294 295 296 297 298 299 300

=169.3651 *decel.*

=111.9257 *accel.*

13


♩=105.1468 accel.
304 305 306 307 308 309 310 311 312
I
mp f sub. p
♩=80.01852 accel.
325 326 327 328 329 330 331 332 333
II
mp f sub. p
287 288 289 290 291 292 293 294 295 296 297 298
III
mp f sub. p
300 301 302 303 304 305 306 307 308 309 310
14
313 314 315 316 317 318 319 320 321 322 323 324
mf p mf
♩=146.3478 decel.
334 335 336 337 338 339 340 341 342
mf p
♩=149.7107 decel.
299 300 301 302 303 304 305 306 307 308 309
mf p
310 311 312 313 314 315 316 317 318 319 320


I
II
III
♩=158.7625 decel.
15
♩=62.82984 accel.

♩=102.709 *accel.*

345 346 347 348 349 350 351 352 353

I

5 *pp* *mf*

♩=97.50672 *accel.*

366 367 368 369 370 371 372 373 374

II

5 5 *pp* *p*

321 322 323 324 325

III

pp

340 341 342 343 344 345 346 347 348 349 350

354 355 356 357 358 359 360 361 362 363 364 365

I

3 *ff*

375 376 377 378 379 380 381 382 383 384 385 386

II

mp *mf* 3 *f*

326 327 328 329 330 331 332

III

3 *mf*

350 351 352 353 354 355 356 357 358 359 360

16 ♩=161.1444 *decel.*

I

366 367 368 369 370 371 372 373 374 375 376 377 378

fff ***f*** ***mf***

16 ♩=162.0336 *decel.*

II

387 388 389 390 391 392 393 394 395 396 397 398 399 400

fff ***f*** ***mf***

16 ♩=125.3731 *decel.*

III

333 334 335 336 337 338 339 340 341 342 343

fff ***f*** ***mf***

360 361 362 363 364 365 366 367 368 369 370

I

379 380 381 382 383 384 385 386 387

3

mp ***ff*** ***mf***

II

401 402 403 404 405 406 407 408 409 410 411 412

3

mp ***ff*** ***mf***

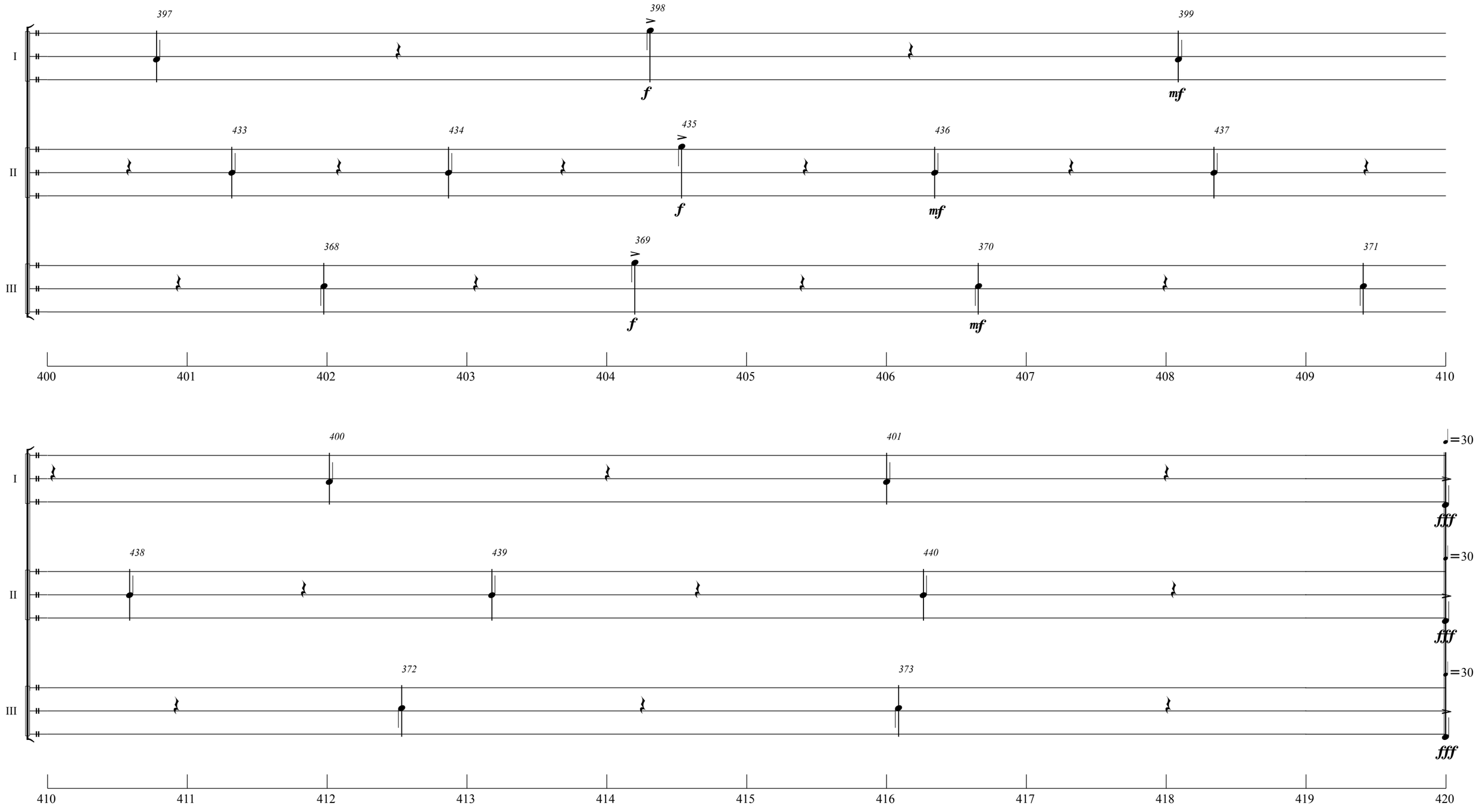
III

344 345 346 347 348 349 350 351 352

mp ***ff*** ***mf***

370 371 372 373 374 375 376 377 378 379 380

I
II
III
388 389 390 391 392 393
3
ff
413 414 415 416 417 418 419 420 421 422 423
3
353 354 355 356 357 358 359 360
380 381 382 383 384 385 386 387 388 389 390
394 395 396
3
mf
424 425 426 427 428 429 430 431 432
3
ff
mf
361 362 363 364 365 366 367
3
3
ff
mf
390 391 392 393 394 395 396 397 398 399 400


I
II
III
397
398
399
433
434
435
436
437
368
369
370
371
f
mf
f
mf
f
mf
400
401
438
439
440
372
373
=30
=30
=30
fff
fff
fff
400
401
402
403
404
405
406
407
408
409
410
410
411
412
413
414
415
416
417
418
419
420