

# *Conversation Piece*



*for Violin  
and  
Violoncello*

*by Matt Browne*



Just a Theory  
Press

## **Program Note**

The term “conversation piece” refers to a genre of painting in England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The works were simple depictions of upper class people engaged in genteel conversation. Much in the art of conversation has changed since then, and I had the thought to in a way update the genre to be relevant in our modern times, through depicting my own personal observation and participation of four engaging conversations.

### **I. Buzzed**

A slightly intoxicated, or “buzzed”, man is at a party schmoozing. He talks to several people, all for only a short while, and everything he says is a quip. Every once in a while he slurs and/or stumbles over his words. He is not fazed by this, and continues on schmoozing.

### **II. Chinwag**

Two obviously good friends at a coffee shop are talking very quickly and excitedly (having a “chinwag”). Every once in a while they show something on their phone to the other, and they laugh.

### **III. Plea**

Two people are quietly talking in a corner. One of them, who is doing most of the talking, looks concerned and uneasy, with their hands clasped tightly, staring intently at the other’s vacant face. They are desperate to resolve something. The other awkwardly looks straight ahead, wishing they were somewhere else.

### **IV. Squabble**

Two friends are angrily arguing over something semantic and irrelevant to their daily lives. They yell, shout, and are overly-aggressive with these comically pointless opinions. They are always smiling.

*Commissioned by the Music Teachers National Association  
and the Michigan Music Teachers Association (2016)*

Duration: c. 9 minutes

**[www.mattbrownecomposer.com](http://www.mattbrownecomposer.com)**

Full Score

# Conversation Piece

*for Violin and Violoncello*

## I. Buzzed

Matt Browne

**A**

**Violin**: *pizz.* **Violoncello**: **p** gently swinging

**Violin**: arco *v with a drunken lure* **Violoncello**: *n f pp f*

**Violin**: *pizz.* **Violoncello**: *pizz.*

**B**

**Vln.**: *mf* **Vc.**: **fp f**

**Vln.**: *sf* **Vc.**: *pizz.*

**Vln.**: *ff* **Vc.**: *ff*

**Vln.**: *pizz.* **Vc.**: *mp*

**C**

**Vln.**: *fp* **Vc.**: *f*

Conversation Piece - I - Full Score

2

Vln. 

Vc.

17

**D**

rit.

**E** **A tempo**

pizz. + 3+ + + + arco  
p sf mp

Vln. 

Vc. 20

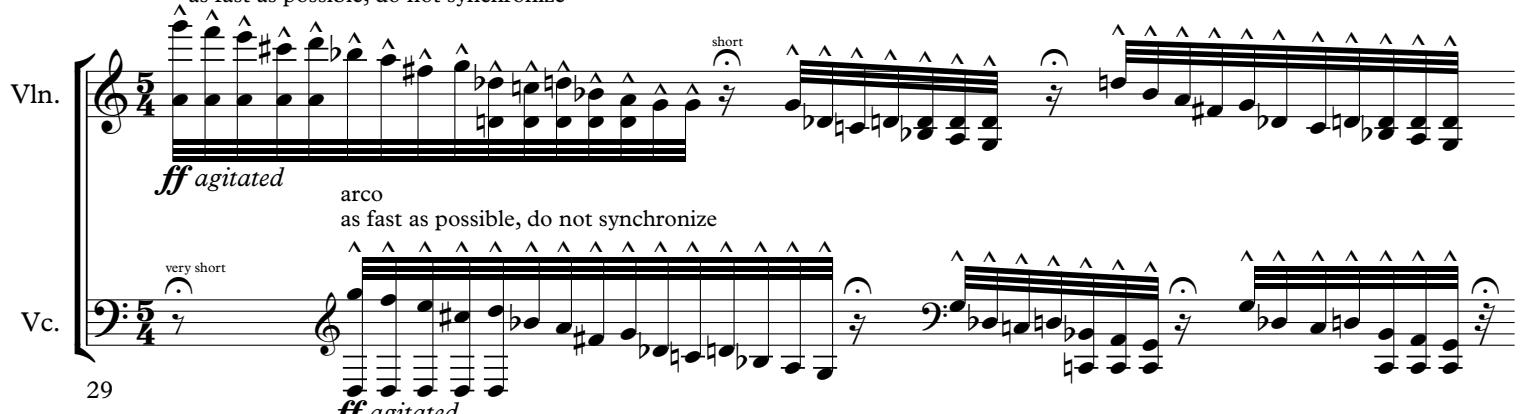
at the frog

Vln. 

Vc. 24

**F Senza tempo**

as fast as possible, do not synchronize

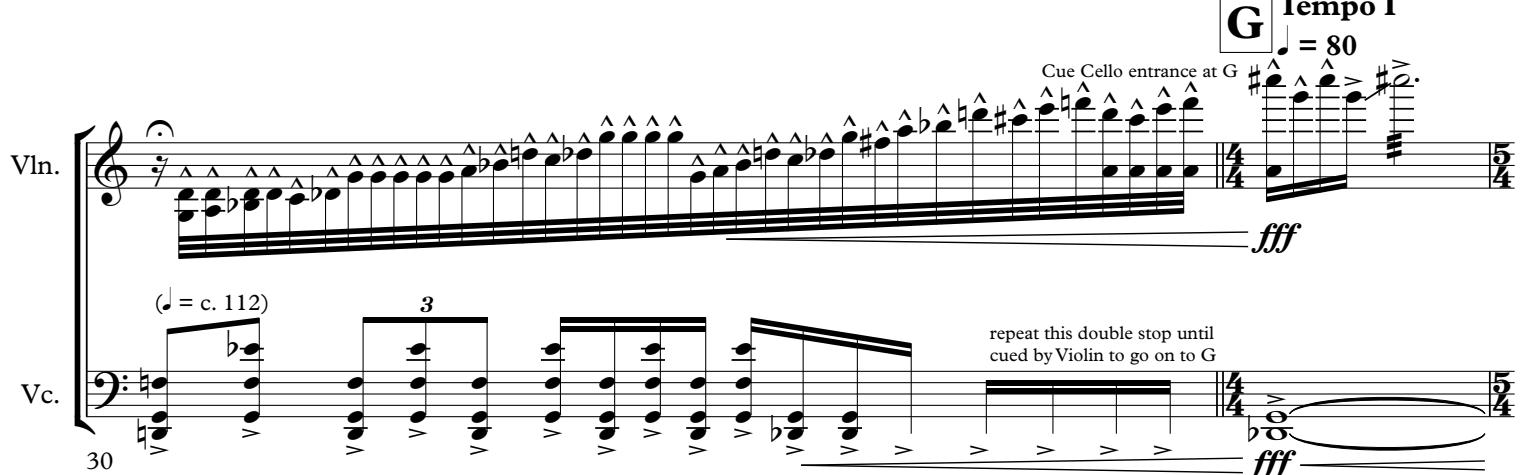
Vln. 

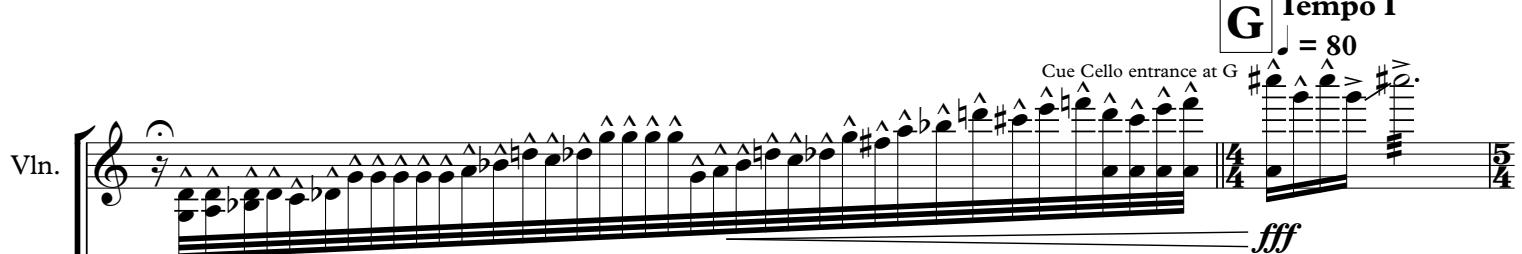
Vc. 29

very short  
ff agitated

**G** **Tempo I**

$\text{♩} = 80$

Cue Cello entrance at G 

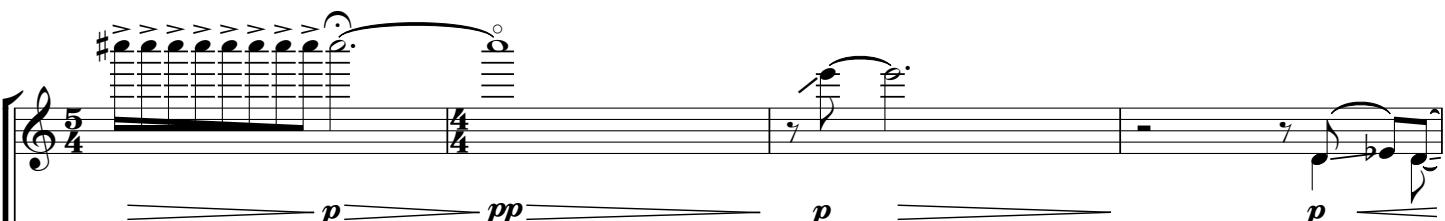
Vln. 

Vc. 30

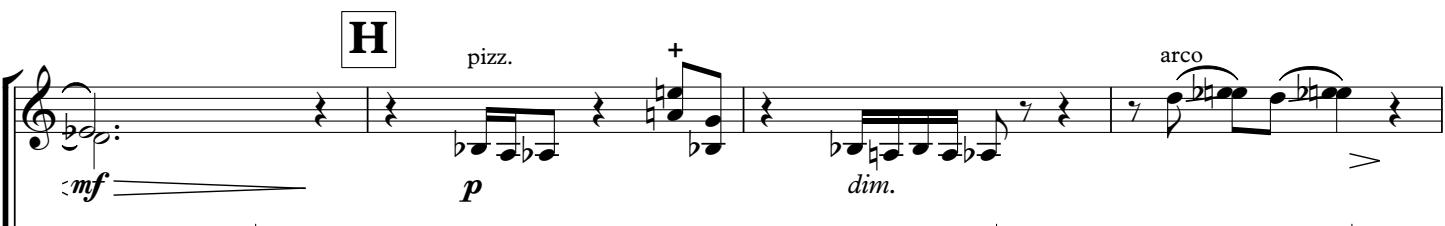
( $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 112$ ) 3 repeat this double stop until cued by Violin to go on to G

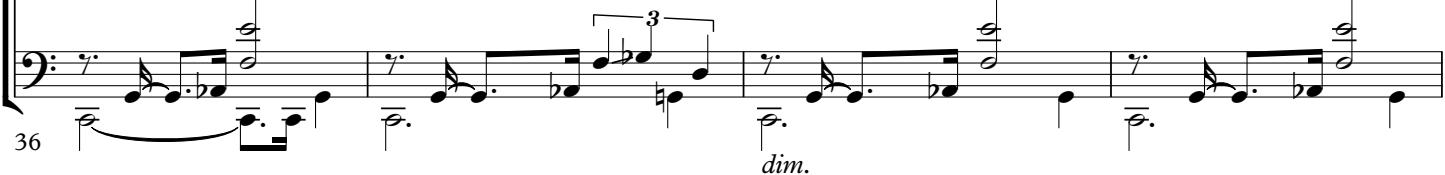
## Conversation Piece - I - Full Score

3

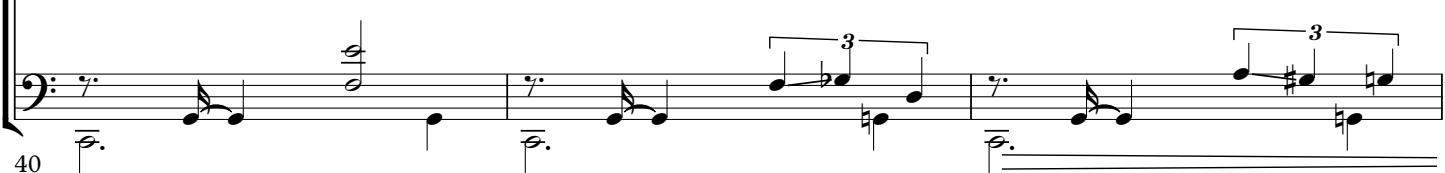
Vln. 

Vc. 32 

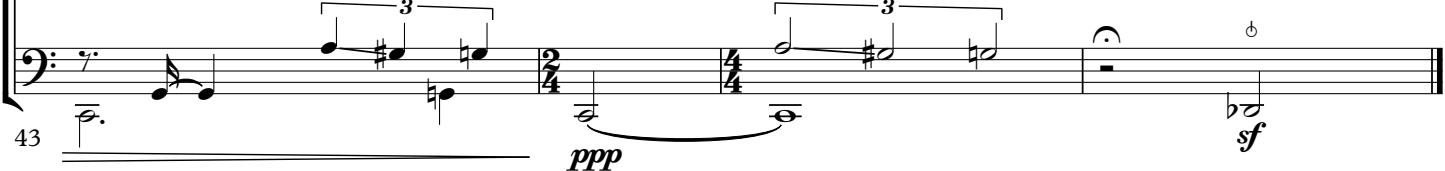
Vln. 

Vc. 36 

Vln. 

Vc. 40 

Vln. 

Vc. 43 

## II. Chinwag

J = 152, Flippant

arco  
sul tasto

Musical score for Violin (Vln.) and Cello (Vc.) showing measures 11-12. The Violin part starts at dynamic ***pp***, has a crescendo, and ends at ***mp***. The Cello part starts at ***pp***, has a crescendo, and ends at ***mp***. Both parts include performance instructions **arco** and **sul tasto**.

Musical score for Violin (Vln.) and Cello (Vc.) showing measures 7-11. The Violin part starts with a dynamic **p**, followed by measures IV, III, II, and I. The Cello part starts with a dynamic **p**, followed by measures III, II, I, and III.

Musical score for Violin (Vln.) and Cello (Vc.) showing measures 13-14. The score is divided into two systems by a dashed line.

**Violin (Vln.)**

- Measure 13 (III): Dynamics *mf p*. The first measure consists of eighth-note pairs (one note up, one note down) followed by six eighth-note pairs.
- Measure 14 (IV): Dynamics *mf p*. The second measure consists of eighth-note pairs followed by six eighth-note pairs.

**Cello (Vc.)**

- Measure 13 (IV): Dynamics *mf*. The first measure consists of eighth-note pairs followed by six eighth-note pairs.
- Measure 14 (III): Dynamics *sub. p*. The second measure consists of eighth-note pairs followed by six eighth-note pairs.

Musical score for Violin (Vln.) and Cello (Vc.) showing measures 19-20. The Violin part consists of sixteenth-note patterns with dynamic markings *mf*, *p*, and *mf*. The Cello part consists of eighth-note patterns with dynamic marking *p*. Measure 20 concludes with a repeat sign.

## Conversation Piece - II - Full Score

5

Vln. *f* II III *f* III IV *ff* III IV II III *ff*

Vc. *f* II III *f* III IV II III

25

Vln. III IV II III *v v v v* III IV II III *v v v v*

Vc. III IV II III *v v v v* III IV II III *v v v v*

31

Vln. II *8va* harmonic gliss. *tr* timbral trill between harmonic and ord.

Vc. *p* pizz. non harmonic *p*

37

Vln. (8) arco *tr* timbral trill between harmonic and ord. *p* pizz. non harmonic

Vc. *p*

43

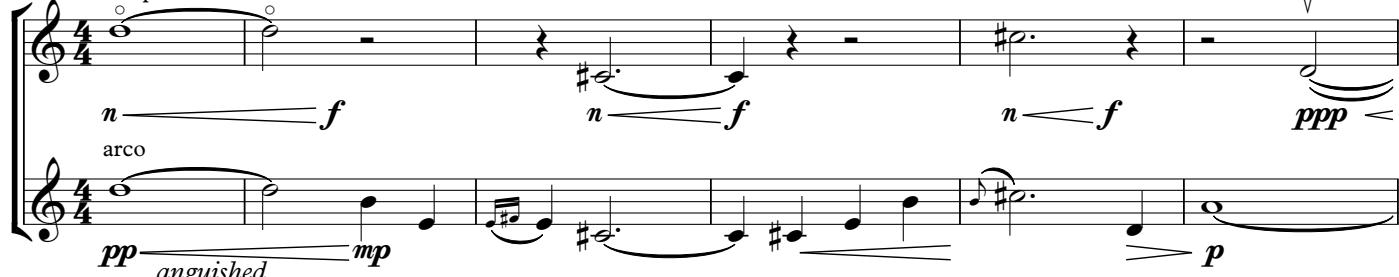
Vln. IV arco harmonic gliss. *tr* *pp* pizz. non harmonic *ppp*

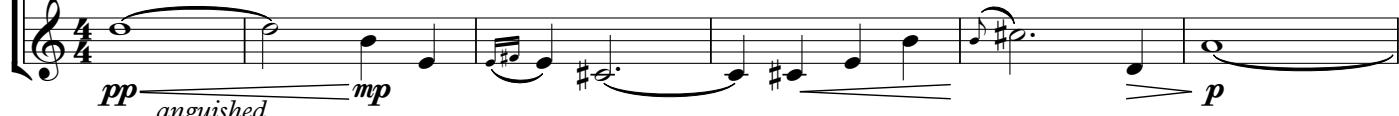
Vc. *v v v v*

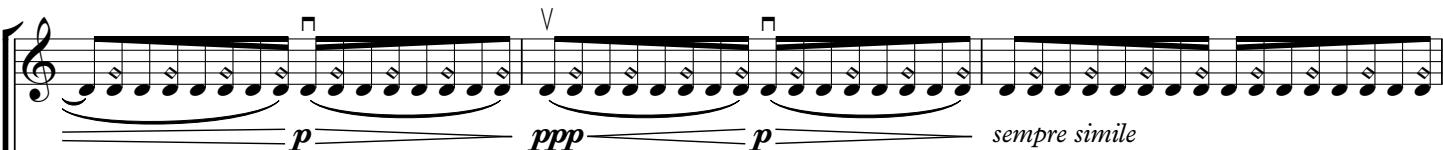
49

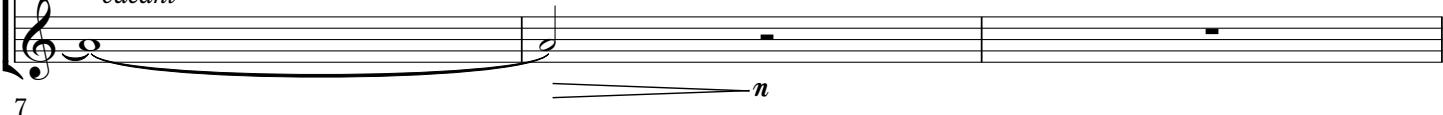
## III. Plea

 $\text{♩} = 48$ , Desirouscon sord.  
sempre sul tastosenza sord.  
sul tasto

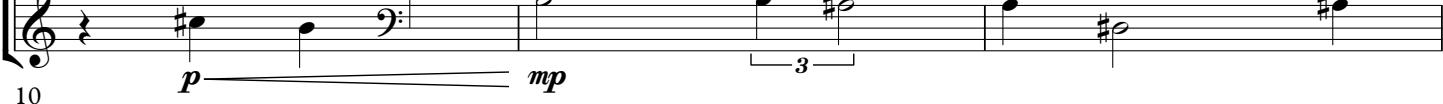
Vln.  con sord.  
sempre sul tasto  
arco  
*anguished*  
*f*  
*n*  
*f*  
*n*  
*f*  
*ppp*

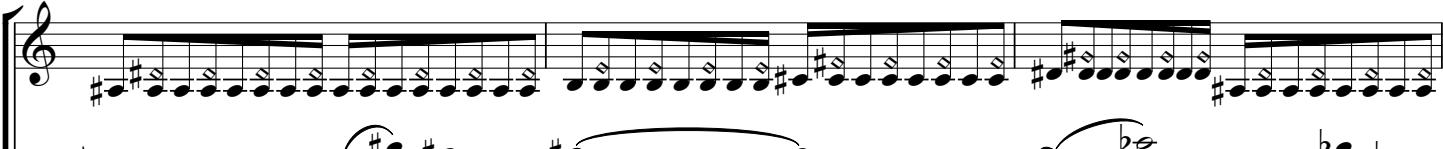
Vc.   
*pp* *anguished*  
*mp*  
*f*  
*n*  
*f*  
*n*  
*f*  
*p*

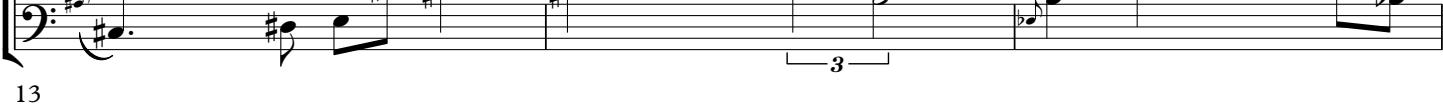
Vln.   
*vacant*  
*p*  
*ppp*  
*p*  
*semper simile*

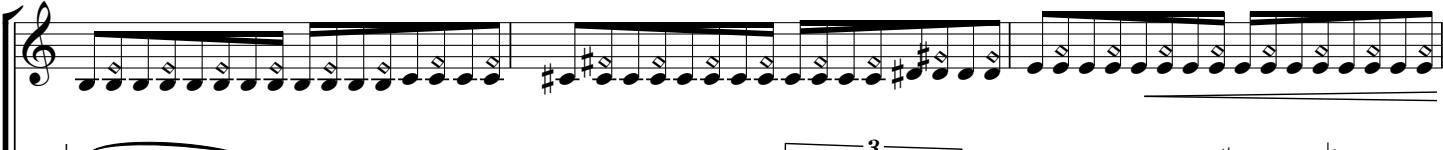
Vc.   
*n*

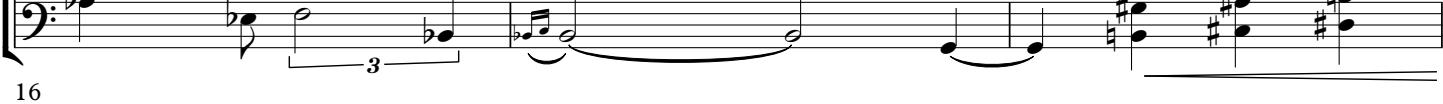
Vln. 

Vc.   
*p*  
*mp*  
*3*  
*#p*

Vln. 

Vc.   
*#p*  
*3*  
*3*  
*#p*

Vln. 

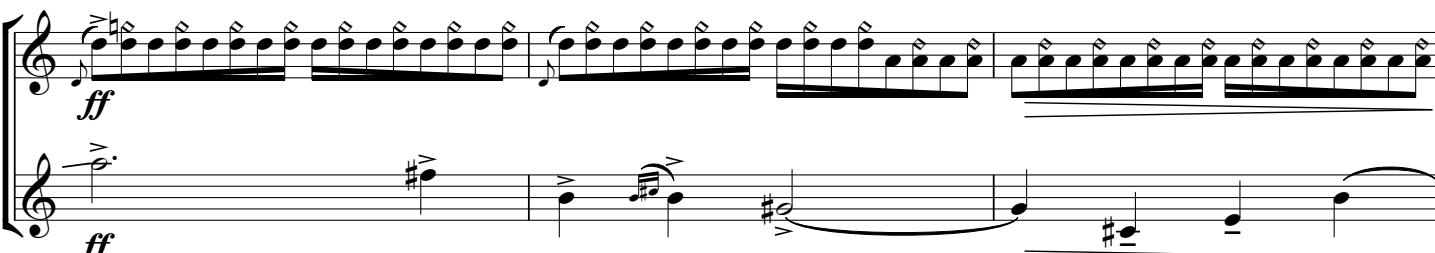
Vc.   
*3*  
*3*  
*3*  
*#p*

## Conversation Piece - III - Full Score

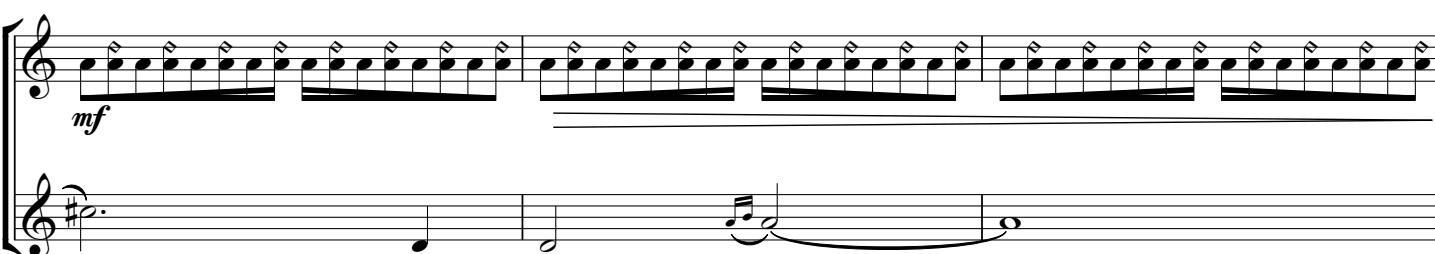
7

Vln. 

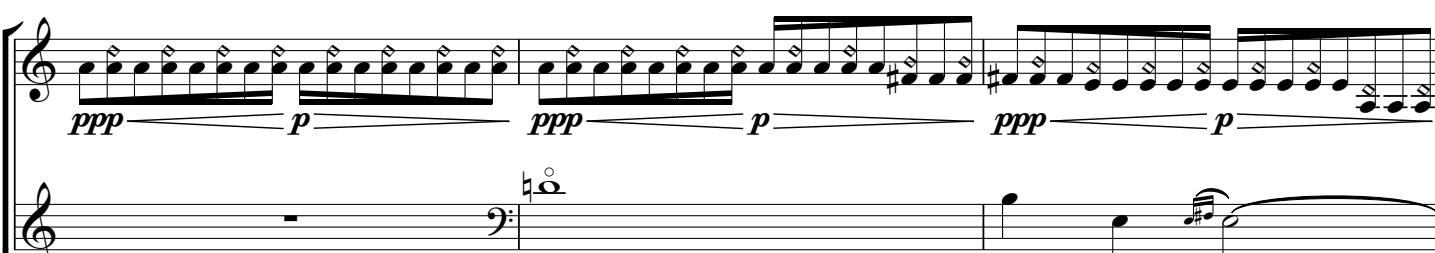
Vc. 19 

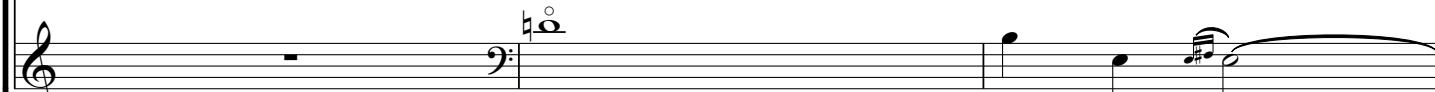
Vln. 

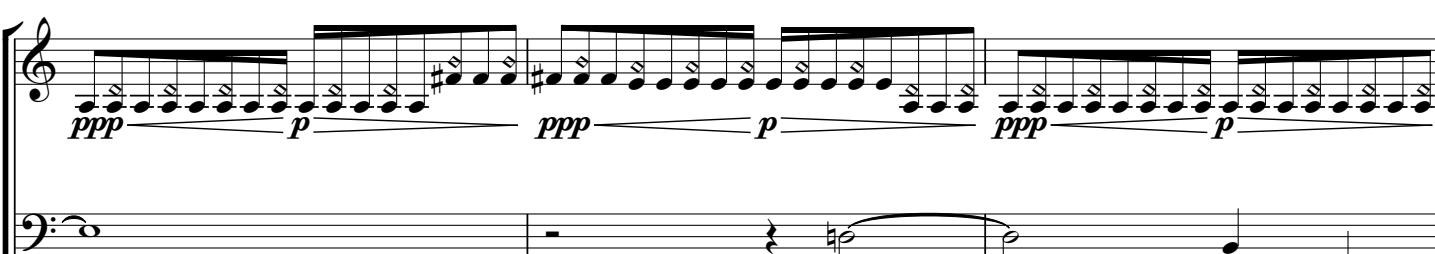
Vc. 22 

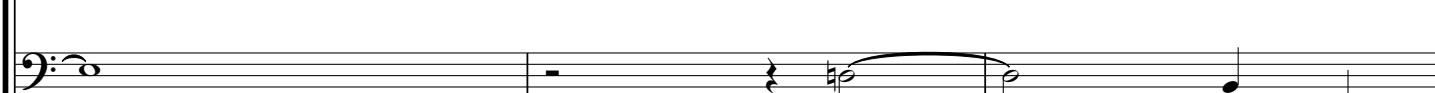
Vln. 

Vc. 25 

Vln. 

Vc. 28 

Vln. 

Vc. 31 

Conversation Piece - III - Full Score

8

Vln. *simile*

Vc.

34

**pp** **p**

This section shows two staves. The top staff is for the Violin (Vln.), which plays a steady eighth-note pattern throughout the measures. The bottom staff is for the Cello (Vc.), which starts with a grace note and a sustained note at measure 34. At measure 35, there is a dynamic change from **pp** to **p**, indicated by a bracket under the notes.

Vln.

Vc.

37

**n**

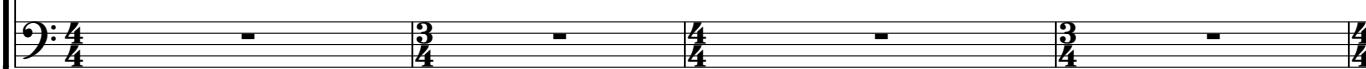
**n**

This section shows two staves. The top staff is for the Violin (Vln.), which continues its eighth-note pattern. The bottom staff is for the Cello (Vc.), which starts with a sustained note at measure 37. There is a dynamic change to **n** at measure 38, indicated by a bracket under the notes.

## IV. Squabble

 $\text{♩} = 152$ , Nasty

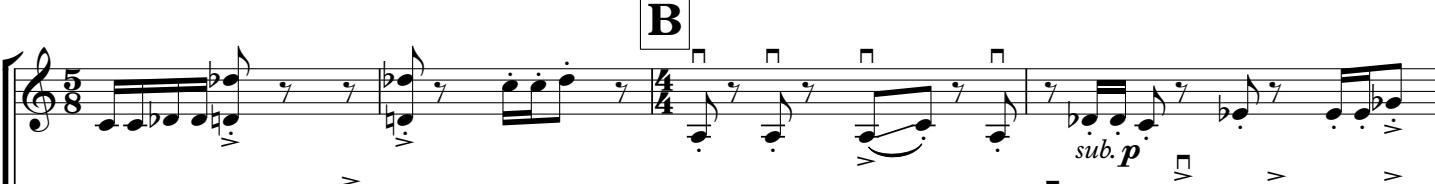
Vln.   
*f aggressive*

Vc. 

Vln.   
A

Vc.   
5

Vln.   
Vc.   
9

Vln.   
B

Vc.   
13

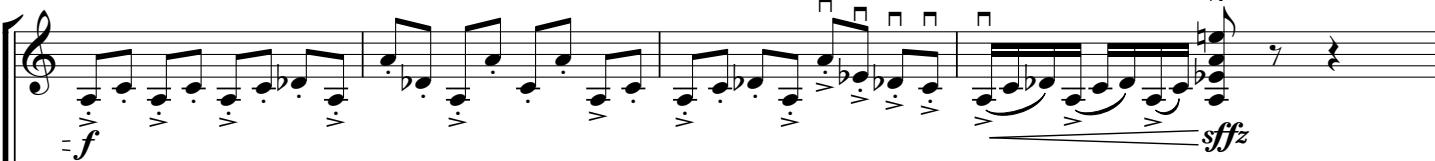
Vln.   
Vc.   
17

\* - These wedges indicate overpressure. As the wedge thickens throughout the duration of the note, the pressure should increase from ord. to pitchless scratch tone.

## Conversation Piece - IV - Full Score

10

**C**

Vln. 

Vc. 21 

Vln. 

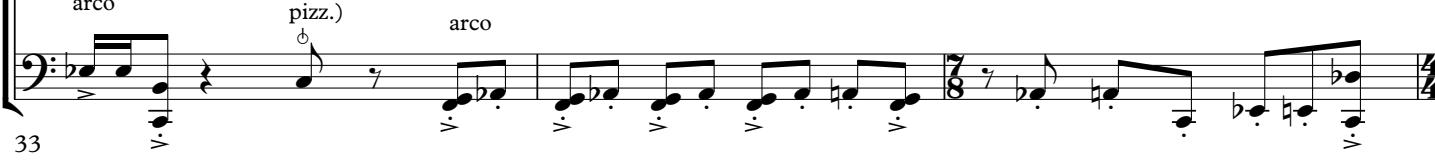
Vc. 25 

**D**

Vln. 

Vc. 29 

Vln. 

Vc. 33 

Vln. 

Vc. 36 

\*\* - X notes indicate scratch tone. These should be coarse and without pitch.

## Conversation Piece - IV - Full Score

11

**E**

Vln. (snap pizz.) *mf* *ff* Vc.

40 Vln. Vc.

(snap pizz.) arco (snap pizz.) arco (snap pizz.) arco

molto sul pont. ord. (sul pont.)

Vln. *sub. p* *sub. ff* *sub. p*

Vc. molto sul pont. ord. (sul pont.)

43 Vln. *sub. p* Vc. *sub. ff* *sub. p*

Vln. (sul pont.) *sub. ff* *sub. p*

Vc. ord. (sul pont.) *sub. ff* *sub. p*

46

Vln. ord. (sul pont.) *sub. ff* *sub. p*

Vc. ord. (sul pont.) *sub. ff* *sub. p*

Vln. *sub. ff* *sub. p* *sub. ff*

Vc. *sub. ff* *sub. p* *sub. ff*

49

Vln. ord. (sul pont.) *sub. ff* *sub. p* *sub. ff*

Vc. ord. (sul pont.) *sub. ff* *sub. p* *sub. ff*

Vln. ord. **F** I II *fff obnoxious*

Vc. ord. *sfffz* *p* *very wide vib.*

52

Conversation Piece - IV - Full Score

12

Vln. 

Vc. pizz. ♂ ♂ fast roll arco  
57 =fff ⌂ secco p

Vln. molto rit. II III  
running out of steam

Vc. pizz. ♂ fast roll slow roll  
60 fff secco f

Vln. gradually widen vib. very wide vib. lunga G = 76 (IV) col legno  
IV ham it up fpp p

Vc. slower roll col legno p  
63 mp p

Vln. cresc. poco a poco ord. col legno

Vc. cresc. poco a poco col legno  
68

Vln. ord. ff

Vc. ord. ff  
71

**H** = 160

## Conversation Piece - IV - Full Score

13

Vln. *ff*

Vc. *p* *ff*

pizz.      arco

76

Vln.

Vc. 80

Vln.

Vc. 84

*sub. p*

Vln. *ffffp*

Vc. 87 *ffffp*

*mf*      *p*

pizz.