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Those Great Inspirers: The Tactile Compositional World of Igor Stravinsky

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Those Great Inspirers:

The Tactile Compositional World Of Igor Stravinsky

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in Music

by

Kenneth Glendon Brown

2022

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Those Great Inspirers:

The Tactile Compositional World of Igor Stravinsky

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Kenneth Glendon Brown

Doctor of Philosophy in Music

University of California, Los Angeles, 2022

Professor Richard Danielpour, Chair

All of Stravinsky's music is piano music. Despite Stravinsky's stunning innovations in instrumentation, orchestration, and timbre, the composer conceived his music *on* the keyboard and *through* the piano. Stravinsky did not simply compose at the piano; he left indelible *imprints* of the piano keyboard on all he composed. These imprints are of Stravinsky's unique physicality, his unusually large hands that "shaped" his sense of harmony at the keyboard. It is no exaggeration to say that Stravinsky left his fingerprints on every bar; as Charles Joseph writes, "Literally, Stravinsky's 'hand' is present as a distinguishing stylistic trait" throughout all his music.[1] This is one way to explain how Stravinsky's music, despite its breathtaking range,

[1] Charles M. Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 281.

always sounds so clearly like *Stravinsky*: the piano is behind it all, and behind the piano, the composer's unique body. This corporeal duo forms the thread that runs through the composer's entire output. My dissertation will investigate this thread, examining its origins in Stravinsky's childhood and subsequent manifestations in Stravinsky's tactilely-guided innovations in harmony, timbre and musical texture. While Stravinsky presented himself as enigmatic, when it came to the piano he was clear: "I compose at the piano, and I do not regret it."[2] He described his compositional process as inextricable from his physical relationship with the piano keyboard: "Fingers are not to be despised: they are the great inspirers, and, in contact with a musical instrument, often give birth to subconscious ideas which might otherwise never come to life."[3] Existing scholarship on Stravinsky has, if not despised, at least neglected to consider the fingers that created it. My dissertation aims to rectify this historical oversight; I will re-examine some of Stravinsky's music from the viewpoint of the composer's physicality at the piano keyboard as its primary generative force. I hope to show that much of what makes Stravinsky's music unique and memorable is its origin as physical impulses in the composer's body, and to continue to chart a fresh path of exploration into the composer's work.

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[2] Igor Stravinsky, *An Autobiography* (New York: Norton, 1962), 5.

[3] Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 82.

The dissertation of Kenneth Glendon Brown is approved.

Ian Krouse

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Kay Rhie

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University of California, Los Angeles

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VITA

Born on Valentine's Day in 1992, Kenneth Glendon Brown is a composer, pianist and multi-instrumentalist, conductor and teacher of music.

Kenneth's musical compositions, described by Alex Ross in the New Yorker as "strongly imagined… rich with dreamy textures," are marked by their clear, melodic lyricism and a rich, sonorous tonal idiom; his music has been performed by such ensembles as the Russian String Orchestra, the Moscow Contemporary Music Ensemble, the Momenta Quartet, Yarn/Wire, and many more.

In addition to composing, Kenneth is an accomplished pianist, having served as the pianist and organist at Panorama Presbyterian Church since 2019, the pianist for UCLA's ballet program, and regularly performs his own compositions in concert, as well as works from the classical repertoire. He also plays organ, violin, viola, and classical guitar, and has conducted chamber orchestras in performances of his own compositions.

A dedicated educator to students of all ages, Kenneth teaches both classroom classes and private lessons in piano, composition, and music theory. He holds a B.M. from Temple University and an M.A. from UCLA.

Kenneth's music can be heard on his website, kennethglendonbrown.com.

CHAPTER 1: OUTLINE AND FOUNDATIONS

OUTLINE

"It's frustrating to discover that [Stravinsky] has said it all," complains Roger Shattuck, writing as the fictional Patrick Cartnell in *The Devil's Dance: Stravinsky's Corporal Imagination*: "He talked too much and too well for our own good. There's nothing left to do but collate."[4] Indeed, I have found that Stravinsky has already written my outline, in his 1936 *An Autobiography*:

> I asked [Rimsky-Korsakov] whether I was right in always composing at the piano. "Some compose at the piano," he replied, "and some without a piano. As for you, you will compose at the piano." As a matter of fact, I do compose of the piano, and I do not regret it. I go further; I think it is a thousand times better to compose in direct contact with the physical medium of sound and work in the abstract medium produced by one's imagination.[5]

In brief, this dissertation explores Stravinsky's process of composing at the piano: the why, how, and what. The *why* begins with what Stravinsky has already told us here: the significance of Stravinsky being "in direct contact with the physical medium of sound." The *how*, a slightly more challenging task, relies not simply on Stravinsky's own words but creative reconstruction of how the composer's piano playing mechanism (hands, arms, feet, and in Stravinsky's case, his entire body) combined with his particular impulses and performative habits to create his unique approach to composition. Finally, *what* was the effect of Stravinsky's having always worked at the piano upon the music that he composed? Did this fact have an appreciable effect on his

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[4] Roger Shattuck, "The Devil's Dance: Stravinsky's Corporal Imagination," in *Confronting Stravinsky* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), 85.

[5] Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 5.

music, and it is one that we can discover? When he spoke of how "a composer improvises aimlessly the way an animal grubs about… in expectation of our pleasure, guided by our scent,"[6] we can infer that he was extrapolating from his own experience, and, of course, his experience improvising at the keyboard. Is it possible to get a whiff of the "scent" that might have guided Stravinsky's compositional improvisation, as it were, before that scent was recorded on the score? The first step will be to introduce the salient works of scholarship upon which this thesis is built, a task which commences at the end of this chapter.

Chapter 2, "Stravinsky the Pianist," takes after Charles Joseph's and Graham Griffiths's studies by collating the available relevant information about Stravinsky's childhood musical exposures and training, and forensically re-creating the pedagogical environment in which Stravinsky, the young pianist, would have been brought up.

In Chapter 3, "Hand-Memories," I introduce the concept, which was suggested to me by Roger Shattuck's phrase "the thinking body," of unconscious muscle-memory patterns "programmed" into the composer's hands by repeated practice. This chapter weaves together findings from existing neurological research on the effects of instrumental practice on motor-neural pathways, with superimpositions of several composers' piano works to demonstrate how some piano-based composers may, in the act of composition, unintentionally re-play fragments of existing music and write down some version of that muscle memory, or "hand memory," in their own music. I will use this thought experiment to suggest how some of Stravinsky's innovations in harmony may have arisen from his own possible "hand-memories."

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[6] Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music: In the Form of Six Lessons* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 55.

Chapter 4, "Unlikely Bedfellows? Stravinsky, Czerny, and Philipp" bridges a little-acknowledged but close gap between Stravinsky's neo-classical style—especially the works for solo piano and for piano and orchestra—and the "finger exercise" composers with which the composer was well acquainted.

In reading Stravinsky's own words, as well as his printed dialogues with Robert Craft, one repeatedly identifies Stravinsky's conviction that a composer's music ought to be appreciated on its own terms, without having "interpretation" foisting upon it and without speculation as to the composer's "intentions," a typical statement being as follows:

> All these misunderstandings arise from the fact that people will always insist upon looking in music for something that is not there. The main thing for them is to know what the piece expresses, and what the author had in mind when he composed it. They never seem to understand that music has an entity of its own apart from anything that it may suggest to them.[7]

Thus it appears that any scholarly investigation into Stravinsky's music is rife with peril, doomed from the start to proceed in spite of the composer's ire. As Richard Taruskin points out in the opening of his monumental study on Stravinsky's Russian musical heritage: "It is evident that investigations such as that undertaken here will lead in directions of which the older Stravinsky would have strongly disapproved, both as to tendency and as to method."[8] Yet he concludes that a fuller understanding of the composer's music must encompass various contexts in which the music came into being: "One must cast a wide net, heeding seriously Robert Craft's call for investigations into 'the genesis of Stravinsky's subject matter.'"[9] For my own part, I will banish

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[7] Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 162–163.

[8] Taruskin, Richard. *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.

[9] Ibid.

the composer's reproachful ghost with the caution that some of the following side-by-side musical comparisons should not be construed as inviting accusations of uncreative borrowing, but rather proceed in the spirit of inquiring as to what the composer had in his mind—or better, in his hands—when he composed his music. My hope is to demonstrate how Stravinsky's latent musical motor-neural pathways—the muscle-memories of previously learned music—may have participated in the creation of such original and daring music. Demonstrating such links may not only further the possibilities for exploration into the composer's music, but also encourage composers to place even deeper trust and faith in their own ability to generate fresh material through their own latent instincts and intuitions. Louis Andriessen claimed that, for twenty-first-century composers, the true influence of Stravinsky was just beginning.[10] I agree this claim, but while Andriessen's premise was centered on Stravinsky's musical material, I would add to it the influence of Stravinsky's compositional *process*. That is, Stravinsky's influence on contemporary composers may be felt not just in the notes he put on the page, but the manner in which they got there. Based on my education and experience, it seems that more and more young composers feel disenchanted and disillusioned by compositional processes which are primarily "page-oriented," and that young composers increasingly prefer to put their trust in their own intuition and instincts, guided, as Stravinsky put it, by their "scent." As they should: in the pages that follow I will demonstrate how, for Stravinsky, this impulse-guided, piano-centered compositional process resulted in some of his most original ideas.

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[10] Louis Andriessen and Jonathan Cross, "Composing with Stravinsky," in *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

FOUNDATIONS

Stravinsky's unique musical language arose from his relationship to the piano to a degree which has rarely been acknowledged in existing scholarship. While Stravinsky the composer can often be understood as a result of Stravinsky the pianist, Stravinsky scholarship largely privileges concepts and analysis suited to examination of the finished score or the composer's extant sketches. Indeed, Stravinsky's scores and manuscripts do present a dazzling cornucopia of what I call "page-oriented" scholarly material, and while many illuminating studies have examined these issues—such as his music's roots in Russian folk traditions, his various approaches to pitch organization, his innovations in rhythmic and metric practices, and so on—the role of the composer's fingers on the keyboard in generating, or at least guiding, all these issues has generally been ignored or relegated to footnotes. This dissertation traces Stravinsky's musical language back to its origin, the body and the keyboard, and, in doing so, will draw heavily upon the two landmark works of scholarship on this topic.

The first (though still recent) work to thoroughly investigate Stravinsky's relationship with the piano is Charles M. Joseph's 1983 book, *Stravinsky and the Piano*. In this truly unprecedented survey of the role the piano played in the composer's life, both as performer and as composer, Joseph makes the startling assertation that

> the piano may be seen as the cornerstone of Stravinsky's formidable career. No other aspect of his life, perhaps not even ballet, so permeates the totality of his creative efforts and thus qualifies as a reliable barometer in considering his long and diversified life. Yet Stravinsky's association with the piano is one that has never been systematically explored.[11]

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[11] Charles M. Joseph, *Stravinsky and the Piano*, Russian Music Studies 8 (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983), xvii.

Throughout the book, Joseph does a yeomen's job in analyzing various works from throughout the composer's career, and while he touches on works not involving the piano, Joseph maintains focus upon the composer's solo piano works and works that explicitly include the piano. Joseph's analysis of Stravinsky's piano works and unique preferences regarding performance of these works will prove invaluable to my arguments, as I will draw upon Joseph's analyses of Stravinsky's "keyboard language" in examining Stravinsky's works which, while not explicitly involving the piano, nevertheless exhibit similar characteristic traits. In particular, the concluding chapter of Joseph's study—*The Piano as Stravinsky's Compositional "Fulcrum"*—points to potential further areas of exploration, and, as such, forms a starting point for many of my own concepts. I sometime quote Joseph at length, as his depth of insight and daringly original thinking in these pages is a foundation upon which this dissertation is built. Joseph has also written extensively on Stravinsky in other books which, due to their holistic examinations of the composer's life and work, and their unique insights into the composer's creative process, will also factor into this dissertation.

Writing a full three decades later, Graham Griffiths, in his 2013 book, *Stravinsky's Piano: Genesis of a Musical Language*, essentially echoes Joseph's statement above when Griffiths states that "[Scholarly] interest in pianistic issues… has been scarce."[12] Acknowledging Joseph's foundational work, Griffiths then extends further in exploring these "pianistic issues" by examining not only Stravinsky's piano works, but much of the composer's mature output,

[12] Graham Griffiths, *Stravinsky's Piano: Genesis of a Musical Language*, Music Since 1900 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 190.

particularly his major stylistic pivot to neo-classicism, from the perspective of its composer's seemingly intentional interaction with pianistic traditions:

> In grounding his compositional process upon a pedagogic rhetoric, i.e., by reformulating techniques attributable to the workshop of piano study, Stravinsky would build several neoclassical works upon familiar (to him) 'codes of (piano) practice.' Initially he would construct pianistic and instrumental genres. In due course, elements of pedagogical re-construction would be utilized in choral, operatic and symphonic contexts: for example in *Oedipus rex*, in *Mavra* and *The Rake's Progress*, and in the *Symphony of Psalms* and *Symphony in Three Movements*. In this way, the neoclassical canon reflects those disciplines and materials of piano study which Stravinsky first experienced in St Petersburg. In middle age, at the time of his pianistic career, he was to draw upon this early experience and use it as a point of reference—as a template from which to fashion a new idiom characterized by down-to-earth attitudes of work, craft and construction.[13]

Griffiths, like Joseph, begins with forensic examination of Stravinsky's early childhood musical training; he reconstructs the cultural and musical context of Stravinsky's upbringing in urban St Petersburg, his early exposure and love of the music of the Russian symphonic and operatic composers, and, most importantly, his relatively unguided first attempts at improvisation and subsequent first piano lessons. The scholarly rigor which Griffiths brings to bear, especially his detailed exegesis of Stravinsky's earliest musical exposures, his childhood piano training, and first compositional fragments, will prove tremendously valuable to my arguments in which I will attempt to bridge close readings of Stravinsky's music with hitherto un-considered potential sources of inspiration which the composer likely would have discovered at the piano.

Moving slightly away from considerations of Stravinsky and the piano, another crucial pillar of scholarship for my dissertation is Roger Shattuck's article *The Devil's Dance:*

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[13] Griffiths, *Stravinsky's Piano*, 8.

Stravinsky's Corporal Imagination, published in Jann Pasler's 1986 collection from the International Stravinsky Symposium, *Confronting Stravinsky.* Shattuck suggests that Stravinsky's music acts as a kind of surrogate for his imaginative world of the visual and the bodily, specifically, that he "composed to reveal the expressive resources of the body"[14] and that he "was a dance musician with a choreographic imagination."[15] Shattuck is careful to avoid characterizing this world as primary or above any other: "Stravinsky had no one overriding preoccupation."[16] He maintains, however, the importance of "the physicality, the corporal side" of Stravinsky's preserial music: "his preserial compositions accomplish a reassociation of sensibility, favor the thinking body, the choreographic imagination, have the order and sense of limits that allow reason and feeling to fuse."[17] This phrase, "the thinking body," has become a resonant mental bell for me, its reverberations leading me to my own construction: "hand-memories," a concept that I believe is essential to tracing a composer's musical lineage and will be an essential thought experiment in my examination of Stravinsky's innovations in harmony and chord construction.

One perhaps slightly unusual but core source of my premise lies not in Stravinsky scholarship but in the work of French music scholar Roy Howat, specifically his dazzling 2009 book, *The Art of French Piano Music*. I met Roy Howat and heard him deliver a lecture in 2009, and his comments on the role that a composer's hands play in shaping their musical sound shook me deeply—indeed, more than a decade later I realize that I have not stopped thinking about

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[14] Shattuck, "The Devil's Dance", 86.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Shattuck, "The Devil's Dance", 87.

[17] Shattuck, "The Devil's Dance", 88.

them. To some extent, this entire dissertation grows from the seed of this seemingly innocuous statement:

> Even if no two pianists ever fit themselves identically to the same piece, an enjoyable secret of pianism lies in sensing and flexibly adjusting to the composer's own natural ways of moving. At best this helps the music play us as much as vice versa.[18]

Could Stravinsky, as a pianist, have adjusted to another composer's way of moving, in a way that manifested in his own compositions? Can we find these hidden "movements?" Questions such as these, and much of the imaginative thinking that I endeavor in this dissertation, are indebted to the spirit of "tactile" inquiry, which I first discovered in Howat's scholarship. Much of this dissertation will reference, in a roundabout way, Howat's *The Art of French Piano Music,* particularly the chapters *Body Language and the Piano* and *The Composer as Pianist*, both of which provide illuminating discussions of certain composers' particular preferences in pianos and piano playing, which can be abstracted and creatively re-applied to Stravinsky.

Finally, I am indebted to my mentor of the past five years at UCLA, Dr. Richard Danielpour, whose patient guidance has helped me immeasurably in my own growth as a composer, and whose imaginative, illuminating, and sometimes refreshingly "offbeat" lectures on Stravinsky's music ultimately formed the catalyst for my choosing to undertake this topic for my dissertation.

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[18] Roy Howat, *The Art of French Piano Music* (London: Yale University Press, 2009), 294.

CHAPTER 2: STRAVINSKY THE PIANIST

EARLY TRAINING

Stravinsky's childhood training in the Russian school of piano playing, at the hands of his teachers Aleksandra Petrovna Snyetkova and Leokadiya Aleksandrovna Kashperova, was to become, like everything else which fell into the composer's life, a fecund storehouse of potential musical inspiration. These early years as a child at the piano furnished him with a lifetime of resources. Yet from a piano teacher's standpoint, the success of his training would have been mixed, at best. In fact, if his teachers had any ambitions to create from the young Igor another star piano prodigy, possessing virtuoso technique and capable of making a living concertizing, they must have been disappointed. Stravinsky was too interested in improvisation:

> When I was nine my parents gave me a piano mistress. I very quickly learned to read music, and, as a result of the reading, soon had a longing to improvise, a pursuit to which I devoted myself, and which for a long time was my favorite occupation. There cannot have been anything very interesting in these improvisations, because I was frequently reproached for wasting my time in that way instead of practicing properly, but I was definitely of a different opinion, and their approaches vexed me considerably. Although today I understand and admit the need of this discipline for a child of nine or ten, I must say that my constant work at improvisation was not absolutely fruitless; for, on the other hand, it contributed to my better knowledge of the piano, and, on the other, it sowed the seed of musical ideas.[19]

While one can easily imagine how, in line with this recollection, Stravinsky's improvisations provided him the first point of access to his nascent inner composer, there is, on the other hand, a little puzzle hidden in his seemingly guileless assertion that his childhood improvisation would

[19] Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 5.

have "contributed to better knowledge of the piano." From a piano teacher's perspective, such an attitude is, at best, somewhat naïve, and even potentially quite harmful.[20] Nowhere, in my research of piano pedagogy as Stravinsky would have known it, have I found any reference to improvisation or student-guided keyboard exploration; unlike some modern pedagogical methods with which I have first-hand familiarity as a working piano teacher, there does not seem to have been any room or even tolerance for student-guided, improvisatory, playful, or "original" approaches to the keyboard. Instead, the picture that emerges from Stravinsky's recollections of his training—a picture which is consistent with accounts of 19th-century piano pedagogy as a whole—is one dominated by an emphasis on complete technical mastery through perfect mechanical control, all toward the end of memorizing and flawlessly executing repertoire. Key to this goal was the student's commitment to rote technical exercises:

> As was customary for the time, Hummel prescribed a full hour of instruction every day for at least six months to a year so as to prevent the ingraining of bad habits. Carl Czerny… recommended that beginning students have one one-hour lesson daily in addition to one hour of practice for which the constant repetition of exercises was recommended.[21]

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[20] Here we get a glimpse of why Stravinsky's own words can present such enigmas: it is not just that at times we may feel compelled to question his sincerity, or speculate as to ulterior motives behind certain iconoclastic assertions, but also that his statements sometimes seem to assume a potentially misguided perspective, or at least a perspective which does not fully account for all relevant factors. I feel that he is especially prone to mis-attributing others' actions to incompetence or even malice, when they may in fact have acted out of a good faith effort for reasons which Stravinsky is not willing or capable of recognizing. This seems especially pertinent in dealing with Stravinsky's accounts of his early piano teachers.

[21] Lora Deahl, "Robert Schumann's 'Album for the Young' and the Coming of Age of Nineteenth-Century Piano Pedagogy," *College Music Symposium* 41 (2001): 25–42.

In this light, Stravinsky's memory of having been "reproached for wasting my time in that way instead of practicing properly" may speak to those teachers' desires, not to quell a budding composer as it may have appeared to him (and us), but rather to "prevent the ingraining of bad habits," and to build a sure technical foundation in the critical stages of early instrumental learning.

Contrasting with these acrimonious (if perhaps misguidedly so) recollections of his piano teachers, Stravinsky recalls, with a considerably more nostalgic bent, playing through scores at the piano from his father's library:

> Apart from my improvisation and piano-practice, I found immense pleasure in reading the opera scores of which my father's library consisted—all the more so because I was able to read with great facility. My mother also had that gift, and I must have inherited it from her.[22]

One operatic score in particular must have stuck in Stravinsky's fingers for decades to come: we will see the hand-memories of Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila* in the next chapter.

Every composer's music bears a unique stamp of their various early childhood imprints. For composers who grew up at the keyboard, that imprint comprises much of their earliest physical experiences of the instrument, and for Stravinsky, this would have been a combination of his piano teachers' pedagogical methods, his own improvisations, and the scores from his father's library. Together, the first and last of these would probably become engrained in Stravinsky through repeated practice: the musical scores which one learns in childhood become not only forever familiar to his fingers, but might even take a role in shaping one's very mind. In the field of neuroscience, it is "now widely accepted that experience can modify many aspects of brain function and structure," and one model for researching this concept of cortical plasticity

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[22] Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 5–6.

"that has gained increasing interest in the past decades is musical training."[23] Various studies have found that musical training effects the very structure of the brain: "Piano training, in a short timeframe, may reshape local and inter-hemispheric motor cortical circuits."[24] This effect can be observed throughout the human lifespan: "intensive and specific musical training seems to have an impact on brain structure, not only during the sensitive period of childhood but throughout life."[25] Most studies converge, however, on the finding that the effects of musical training on brain structure are probably most acute in childhood: "There is also evidence of structural changes in the motor network due to musical training… The development of some motor skills might be particularly sensitive to early training."[26] One neurological study undertaken for the purpose of determining the likelihood of the existence of a "sensitive period" of greater brain plasticity determined that music training "during a sensitive period in development [i.e., childhood] may have greater effects on brain structure and behavior than training later in life."[27] It is safe, then, to say the training which Stravinsky received as a child, and particularly the

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[23] H Gärtner et al., "Brain Morphometry Shows Effects of Long-Term Musical Practice in Middle-Aged Keyboard Players," *Frontiers in Psychology* 4 (September 23, 2013): 636–636, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00636.

[24] Elise Houdayer et al., "Cortical Motor Circuits after Piano Training in Adulthood: Neurophysiologic Evidence," PloS One 11, no. 6 (June 16, 2016): e0157526–e0157526, https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0157526.

[25] Gärtner et al., "Brain Morphometry Shows Effects of Long-Term Musical Practice in Middle-Aged Keyboard Players."

[26] Sibylle C. Herholz and Robert J. Zatorre, "Musical Training as a Framework for Brain Plasticity: Behavior, Function, and Structure," *Neuron* 76, no. 3 (2012): 486–502, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuron.2012.10.011.

[27] Christopher J Steele et al., "Early Musical Training and White-Matter Plasticity in the Corpus Callosum: Evidence for a Sensitive Period," *The Journal of Neuroscience : The Official Journal of the Society for Neuroscience* 33, no. 3 (January 16, 2013): 1282–90, https://doi.org/10.1523/JNEUROSCI.3578-12.2013.

scores which he would have played as a child, may have shaped his fingers and mind with the result that his unerringly piano-guided composing would forever contain echoes of these scores. These echoes, or hand-memories, will be the topic of the following chapter.

First, we should briefly examine Stravinsky's adult career as a pianist, as it would appear, from Stravinsky's accounts, that he never quite "finished" his training early in life. In spite of his fairly impressive childhood piano repertoire encompassing standard works of the classical and romantic composers, Stravinsky's comments about his adult playing reveal a deep insecurity about his technique, even a sense of technical inadequacy, which betrays his early training. This insecurity, however, must be weighed against the repertoire which Stravinsky endeavored to play as an adult: in general, not the standard common-practice repertoire of his childhood, but rather, his own mature compositions for piano and orchestra.

ADULT CAREER

Stravinsky's remarks concerning his preparation to perform the piano part of his *Concerto for Piano and Winds* reveal both his attitude toward pianism and the influence of pianism on his composition, and as such need to be quoted in full:

> I ought to say that the idea of playing my *Concerto* myself was suggested by Koussevitzky, who happened to be at Biarritz when I was finishing its composition. I hesitated at first, fearing that I should not have time to perfect my technique as a pianist, to practice enough, and to acquire the endurance necessary to execute a work demanding sustained effort. But as I am by nature always tempted by anything needed prolonged effort, and prone to persist in overcoming difficulties, and as, also, the prospect of creating my work for myself, and thus establishing the manner in which I wished it to be played, greatly attracted me, these influences combined to induce me to undertake it.

> I began, therefore, the loosening of my fingers by playing a lot of Czerny exercises, which was not only very useful but gave me keen musical pleasure. I have always admired Czerny, not only as a remarkable teacher but also as a thoroughbred musician.
>
> While learning by heart the piano part of my *Concerto*, I had simultaneously to accustom myself to keep in mind and hear the various parts of the orchestra, so that my attention should not be distracted while I was playing. For a novice like myself this was hard work, to which I had to devote many hours every day.[28]

While acknowledging his indebtedness to Czerny for technique and mechanistic purposes, Stravinsky does not, of course, go so far as to admit that Czerny's music might have proved influential to his own pianistic conceptions, nor does he acknowledge, here or elsewhere in my findings, that his admiration for Czerny may have passed onto him by his early piano teachers. The pedagogical methods of his second teacher, Kashperova, were "based upon the revered methods of Theodor Leshetizky."[29] If, as Griffiths claims, that "Kashperova may have been the 'spokesperson,' but it was Leschetizky's message that echoed—albeit unacknowledged—through Stravinsky's mature neoclassical idiom and ideological stance,"[30] then in Stravinsky's professed admiration for Czerny we find an echo of Leschetizky's commitment to his teacher's principles: "I teach exactly as Czerny taught me; I have added nothing, changed nothing."[31]

Whether or not this pedagogical lineage, extending from Czerny to Leschetizky to Kaspherova, exerted any great influence on Stravinsky's early childhood training, it certainly manifests in Stravinsky's adult commitment to Czerny's exercises. In his description of

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[28] Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 113.

[29] Griffiths, *Stravinsky's Piano: Genesis of a Musical Language*, 18.

[30] Griffiths, *Stravinsky's Piano: Genesis of a Musical Language*, 18.

[31] George Woodhouse, "How Leschetizky Taught," *Music & Letters* 35, no. 3 (1954): 220–26.

"loosening" his fingers through exercises which gave "keen musical pleasure" we find again the implicit connection between the tactile and the musical. Perhaps Stravinsky's "musical pleasure" was *innately* tactile; we can certainly wonder if he would express the same enjoyment of the music of Czerny were he to experience only as a listener. It strikes one as unlikely: Czerny's music is probably best described as utterly *competent*, and while it may be technically unimpeachable as to its craft, but from a creative and imaginative standpoint it never rises above dreadful banality. Its dull, predictable, totally conventional nature makes Czerny's music the exact opposite of his teacher, Beethoven, for whom Stravinsky's admiration would be expressed in much more complicated terms (as we will see later). What made Stravinsky perceive in Czerny a "thoroughbred musician" to be admired? It is possible that Czerny's music, totally lacking in imagination or spontaneity, provided for Stravinsky a model of musical craft and the classical style unencumbered by the rhetorical and cultural baggage with which the canonical composers are helplessly saddled—baggage which Stravinsky frequently took pains to disparage, baggage which he found an enormous obstacle in appreciation of those composers' music, and which, above all, he wished to avoid allowing onto his own music. But the issue may be simpler. Stravinsky may have simply enjoyed playing Czerny for the simple pleasure of practice. Instrumentalists enjoy, in the act of practicing their instrument, an activity which, apart from its vast artistic and cultural meanings, provides enjoyable physical actions which can be sustained for long durations of time. Musicians who practice for hours at a time may experience sensations similar to long-distance runners, swimmers, or other endurance-based physical endeavors, wherein after some time the mind blissfully switches to a relaxed state and the body takes over. While composers also, of course, experience the flow state, theirs generally must take a more cognitively dynamic, thinking-feeling form, quite different from the mechanical repetition-

induced state which arises from long practice sessions at an instrument. Stravinsky, as a composer-pianist, would have had access to varied modes of musical flow states. As a composer, he surely was a master of the "sometimes thinking, sometimes feeling, sometimes deliberate, sometimes spontaneous, always trusting" flow of composing music. But he also seemed to enjoy, at times, the performer's flow of settling into a comfortable, body-led "groove" of letting the fingers take the reins and run across the keys, relatively unimpeded by the mind. This may have been some of the "keen musical pleasure" that Stravinsky described in his practice of Czerny. But this practice, for a composer, is never "just" practice: it also plants seeds. In the next chapter we will see how Stravinsky's piano practicing built him a storehouse of latent musical material, which manifested itself in the composer's music in some surprising ways.

CHAPTER 3: HAND-MEMORIES

Nadia Boulanger, who knew the composer well, observed: "Stravinsky's personality is so peremptory that when he picks up something, you don't see the object so much as the hand holding it."[32]

He was a tactile man whose sense guided him as he went, literally "feeling" his way, especially at the keyboard, for new ideas.[33]

The danger lies not in the borrowing of clichés.[34]

A PRECEDENT EXAMPLE

In the spirit of Harold Bloom's theory that poets make poetic history "by misreading one another, so as to clear imaginative space for themselves,"[35] consider this rather strange chord, which will be "misread" by a later composer, originally occurring in the first measure of Chopin's *Etude* in a minor, Op. 10 No. 2:

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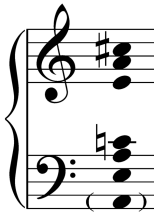
[32] Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out*, 2.

[33] Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out*, 22.

[34] Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 79. In a similar vein, Stravinsky is also sometimes credited with the maxim, "Good composers borrow; great composers steal." Fittingly, he may have "borrowed" this phrase from any number of previous artists to whom it can also be attributed.

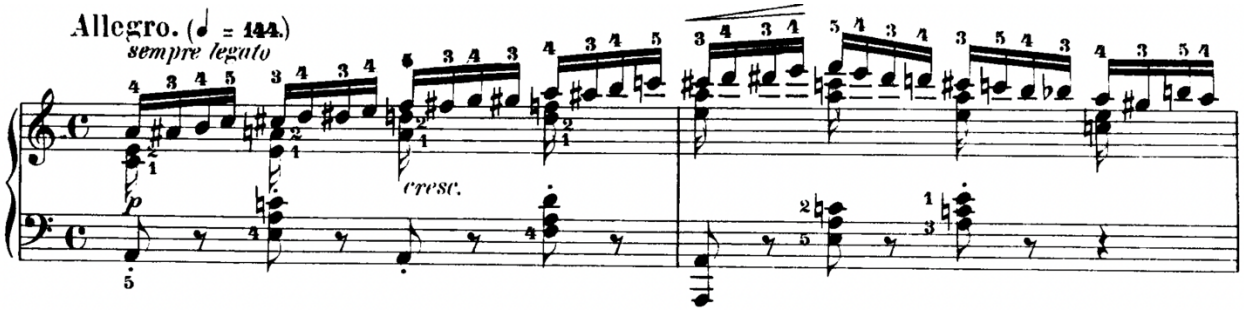
[35] Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

FIGURE 1.



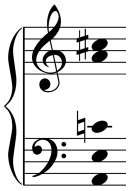
Taken as an isolated, discrete sonority, as shown here, it would make little sense in Chopin's harmonic language. Yet, put in context, the chord becomes the perfectly logical result of chromatic voice-leading; in fact, it is barely a "chord" at all in the sense that the "wrong-note" c-sharp would not really be heard as a full-fledged member of the coincidental vertical sonority, but rather as a blur in the swift chromatic scale then occurring:

FIGURE 2.



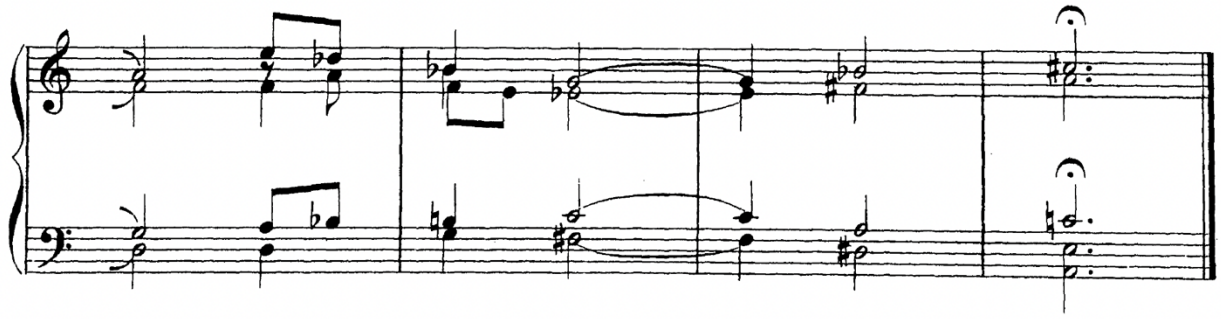
Now consider another sonority, written by a composer who greatly admired Chopin, and whose style evolved from a carbon-copy imitation of the former to one of stunning innovation and originality; this sonority was one of the last things Scriabin ever put to paper:

FIGURE 3.



While this sonority, too, emerges from chromatic voice-leading, unlike in Chopin, where it exists only as a transitory object in motion, in Scriabin there follows nothing but silence, no further voice-leading to "redeem" the "wrong" notes; it stands emancipated as an independent verticality—indeed, the final one of the piece:

FIGURE 4.



As a paradigm for the composer's unique and unprecedented break from late common-practice tonality and creation of a fully individual atonal system, much analysis has been lavished on Scriabin's Five Preludes Op. 74 from which this sonority emerges. These analyses examine the sonority's possible derivation from various scales, its various permutations throughout the prelude, its relationship to similar sonorities in Scriabin's late works and to his late harmonic language in general, and other factors readily available for demonstration via charts, tables, diagrams, and so on. But, to my knowledge, there is no analysis which acknowledges the simple fact that Scriabin had likely spent much time playing Chopin's *Etudes*, and, as such, continued to emulate the older master—even unintentionally—to the end of his life. The imitation went underground, or, better, under the skin. While in his early career, Scriabin manufactured carbon copies of Chopin's forms (as in his 24 Preludes Op. 11 and the early Mazurkas), his late works become increasingly independent of conventional narratives—and yet he never shakes the muscle-memory "programmed" into his hands.

Like Scriabin, Stravinsky would have retained many hand-memories through his life: cortical motor circuits permanently engrained in childhood which would remain latent and able to be reactivated at any moment of improvisation or composition at the keyboard. The following

analytical episodes are but a smattering of the instances of these hand-memories, and they represent some of the more obvious cases of Stravinsky's music originating in his hands from previously played repertoire. I have no doubt there are many more examples to be found, and only a thorough perusal of *all* the repertoire which literally "shaped" Stravinsky's hands, combined with a cross-reference to the composer's entire output, would reveal the full extent to which the composer allowed his hands, more than his mind, to compose. As it stands here, I hope that the following examples will provide a reasonable scope of sources across the composer's output, and as such are organized by chronology of composition.

Addressing the Potential of Mere Chance

For some readers, skeptical questions may hover over the following examples: How many of these connections are truly meaningful, and how much do they owe to mere chance? After all, there are so many chords in so many compositions, and surely it must be possible to find some of Stravinsky's unique harmony elsewhere, if one looks hard enough?

Disregarding doubling and voicing, there are 4,017 possible combinations of the 12 pitches into chords between 3 and 12 number of pitches.[36] This number increases enormously when taking doubling and voicing into account. Consider, for example, how many distinct ways there might be to combine just *two* pitches on the piano keyboard, if any number of those two pitches in any register are permitted. Now consider that this must be done for *every* group of two pitches, and three, and four, and so on. When accounting for voicing and spacing, the number of

[36] Arthur Fox, "How Many Possible Chords Are There In Music?," *Arthur Fox Music* (blog), accessed September 15, 2021, https://arthurfoxmusic.com/how-many-possible-chords/.

possible combinations of pitches on the keyboard becomes many orders of magnitude greater than 4,017—probably equivalent to the factorial of the number of keys on the keyboard: 88!, or the number 185 with 132 digits following. In short, the number of unique possible combinations of pitches at the keyboard is, for practical purposes, all but uncountable.[37] But how does a composer choose from amongst the seemingly endless possibilities available, especially when accounting for the relative limitations imposed by the composer's ten fingers and their relationship to the "geography" of the piano keyboard?

Not all of the possible combinations of pitches will be equally "valid" to a composer. Out of the almost innumerable number of options, there exist a much smaller number which a pianist is likely to have already played. Some of these may have only been played once, and some, such as a common close-position triad, would have been played many times. Those which have been played many times will have begun to assume an independent identity in the pianist's hands as "muscle memory," and those that, like the Chopin-Scriabin example above, also signify a moment of intense musical interest, will be especially memorable because of their uniqueness. In short, chords become "programmed" into the pianist's hands—some more strongly than others—and what seems, on paper, like an "improbable" combination of pitches, such as the Augurs chord, may have found their way into the composer's hands first as a memory.

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[37] Voicing and spacing, more than abstracted pitch-content, frequently are the factors which matter most in discussing a composer's harmony, and why analyses which fail to take these into account miss a crucial ingredient. The *Psalms* chord, for example, when reduced to merely its constituent pitches, irrespective of register and doubling, becomes not the *Psalms* chord, but simply a commonplace triad. It is the spacing and doubling which gives the *Psalms* chord its unique identity. In the case of unique sonorities, it is the voicing and spacing which matter.

Briefly consider this analogy to chess, keeping in mind the astronomical number of potential chord combinations at the piano mentioned above. In his 1950 paper, "Programming a Computer for Playing Chess," mathematician Claude Shannon estimated that, for a chess game within 40 moves, "there will be 10^20 variation to be calculated from the initial position."[38] This gives rise to the famous factoid that there are more possible games of chess than atoms in the observable universe. But most of these games would be "nonsense," meaning that while technically comprising legal play, they would not consist of meaningful strategy aimed toward creating favorable positions for either player. When eliminating the nonsensical moves, the number of possible games, that is, games which might actually be played in practice, is vastly reduced. One of Shannon's deductions is that it would be impossible for a computer to use mere brute force calculation, disregarding knowledge of tactics and strategy, in order to play chess effectively; a computer would need to be programmed to calculate positional analysis the way a skilled human does, by only considering the most attractive options; in other words, the computer would need to learn to seek *meaningful* positions.

Just as a computer cannot play chess by merely considering *all* possible moves, but rather must choose to consider only the most *meaningful* moves, so too does a composer improvise and compose using what are to them the most *meaningful* musical options. The options are different for every composer and will derive from their individual relationship with the instrument, their training, their anatomy, and so on. So, what options would have been meaningful to Stravinsky?

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[38] Claude E. Shannon, "Programming a Computer for Playing Chess," *Philosophical Magazine*, 7, 41, no. 314 (1950), 4.

Here we can return to his childhood training, to see how Beethoven might have crept through Stravinsky's hands into *Rite of Spring*.

1913: THE "AUGURS CHORD" AND THE *PATHÉTIQUE* SONATA

In keeping with Stravinsky's desire to understand "those incidents which make a deep impression" early in one's development,[39] this analysis hinges on the presupposition that Stravinsky learned to play Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 13, the "*Pathétique*" as a young piano student, and that he expressed hand-memories of that work in *Rite of Spring*. While I have yet to find direct, explicit proof that Stravinsky learned the Op. 13 Sonata, there does exist enough circumstantial data to suggest that it is very likely Stravinsky's pianistic repertoire included the *Pathétique* at a young age.

Stravinsky would certainly have been quite familiar with the standard piano repertoire as a child; his mother was apparently quite a skilled pianist:

> In one of the few kind remarks he ever made about her, Stravinsky suggested that it was his mother's sight-reading ability that he inherited. Moreover, Nicolas Nabokov suggests that Anna's regular playing of standard piano repertoire while Igor was a child must surely have influenced him, although he would never admit it.[40]

She probably would have played the *Pathétique*, young Stravinsky hearing it even before he could play it:

> [Anna's] repertoire encompassed a liberal variety of periods and composers… the easier sonatas of both Mozart and Beethoven… were all included… [Stravinsky's] musical sensitivity, even subliminally, must

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[39] Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 3.

[40] Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out*, 72.

> have been at least partially sharpened by rehearing this repertoire over the period of several impressionable years.[41]

Stravinsky would then learn the standard repertoire under his second piano teacher, Kashperova, including numerous piano sonatas of Beethoven:

> By age thirteen Stravinsky's piano repertoire included… various sonatas of Haydn, Mozart, Clementi, and especially the music of Beethoven… Beethoven seems to have been a central hero as evinced by the frequency of concert programs on which his music was performed.[42]

Indeed, then as today, the *Pathétique* Sonata, especially among Beethoven's sonatas, appears to have occurred all too frequently on recital programs by young and amateur pianists; in his companion to the Beethoven sonatas, Charles Rosen quotes a remark from a much earlier companion, written in 1855, about the *Pathétique*:

> We should not like to have to speak about this work after the suffering it has gone through for fifty years in boarding schools and other institutions where one learns to play the piano. …the *Pathétique*, the feared score, becomes inevitable… Let us hasten to say that it is simply magnificent, that the crowds of crickets who have devastated the adagio until the present day were not able to destroy its calm grandeur.[43]

Apparently the *Pathétique* was overplayed enough (and played badly enough) to warrant such an invective; Rosen concludes that it "was already evident by 1855 that the popularity of the "*Pathétique*" was a threat to its appreciation."[44]

Even if he didn't memorize the work for performance, Stravinsky would most likely have studied it intently. Discussing how he learned to orchestrate in his early lessons with his

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[41] Joseph, *Stravinsky and the Piano*, 4.

[42] Joseph, *Stravinsky and the Piano*, 8.

[43] Charles Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas: A Short Companion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 141.

[44] Ibid.

composition teacher Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky recalls that he was made to orchestrate passages from Beethoven's piano sonatas as often as every week;[45] he also described how, when composing his 1924 *Sonate pour piano*, he *replayed* "a great many of Beethoven's sonatas," and that,

> In our early youth we were surfeited by [Beethoven's] works, his famous *Weltschmerz* being forced upon us at the same time, together with his "tragedy" and all the commonplace utterances voiced for more than a century about this composer who must be recognized as one of the world's greatest musical geniuses.
>
> Like many other musicians, I was disgusted by this intellectual and sentimental attitude, which had little to do with serious musical appreciation. This deplorable pedagogy did not fail in its result. It alienated me from Beethoven for many years.[46]

The choice of the word "alienated" here is intriguing: there is an echo of Emerson's famous statement from *Self-Reliance*, that "In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts: they come back to use with a certain alienated majesty."[47] Indeed, we will see that Stravinsky's professed "alienation" from the Beethoven sonatas seems to have certainly brought them back to him, if not with "majesty," then at least with force. In any case, Stravinsky wrote later of his "addiction" to the Beethoven sonatas,[48] and, tellingly, describes how "Beethoven

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[45] "My work with Rimsky-Korsakov consisted of his giving me pieces of classical music to orchestrate. I remember that they were chiefly parts of Beethoven's sonatas, and of Schubert's quartet and marches. Once a week I took my work to him and he criticized and corrected it, giving me all the necessary explanations, and at the same time he made me analyze the form and structure of classical works." (Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 21.)

[46] Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 115.

[47] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Self-Reliance and Other Essays* (New York: Dover Publications, 1993), 19.

[48] Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Themes and Conclusions* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), 269.

discovers and sometimes maps out the different territories of several future composers."[49] Ironically, in Stravinsky's telling these "several" composers do not include Stravinsky himself, but as we will see he was quite correct in his own case as well.

Is this enough to link, if not conclusively, then at least with overwhelming probability, Stravinsky with the *Pathétique* Sonata? At the very least, this historical evidence provides enough probability of Stravinsky's first-hand knowledge of the *Pathétique* to establish the musical connections shown below as more than mere coincidence.

Recall that in the Chopin-Scriabin example used as precedent, Chopin's *Etude* "happened" upon a certain combination of pitches through chromatic passing tones, which the latter "fossilized," so to speak, into an independent vertical sonority. Going further back into musical history, the simple dominant-seventh chord can be seen as a similar development, as at least one theorist, Narcis Bonet, asserts that it first "came into being through a melodic gesture of a *passing tone* before being affirmed as a true chord in and of itself."[50] Musical dissonance, then, seen in this historical light as passing tones becoming "verticalized," accords with Stravinsky's definition given in the *Poetics of Music*:

> Let us light our lantern: in textbook language, dissonance is an element of transition, a complex or interval of tones which is not complete in itself and which must be resolved to the ear's satisfaction into a perfect consonance.[51]

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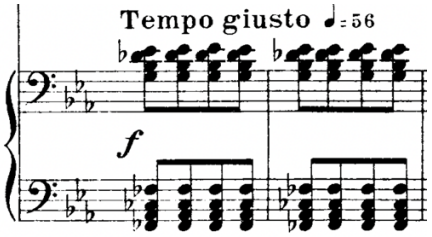
[49] Stravinsky and Craft, *Themes and Conclusions*.

[50] Narcis Bonet, *The Fundamental Principles of Harmony* (Barcelona: Dinsic, 2010), 9.

[51] Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music: In the Form of Six Lessons*, 34.

In the sense that dissonance, at least in common practice tonal music and in Stravinsky's own conception, occurs because of harmonic function (whether that function be actualized or evaded), let us finally examine the *Augurs* chord with a new appreciation for its potential functional implications.

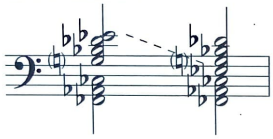
FIGURE 5.



Besides its shockingly brutal sonic effect, this chord is remarkable for its spelling. Stravinsky, in the midst of this most ferociously arch-modernist work, elects to mount a key signature of three flats to the movement *Augurs of Spring*. Not only that, but he foregoes the seemingly obvious spelling of the lower four pitches as E major triad in favor of the decidedly obscure F-flat major triad. This again recalls Scriabin, who sometimes in later works would write the very first pitch of the piece as a *double* sharp or flat, seemingly alluding to that pitch's having developed from some distant key area, as if the composition were picking up *in media res* from some existing harmonic travail. Here in *Augurs* that seems to be exactly the case, as Stravinsky clearly did not want this sonority to be seen as two simple chords, a major triad and a dominant seventh, superimposed upon one another; nor did he want it to be perceived as a bitonal "clash" between two chords from different keys (E and E-flat). Rather, the chord, together with the ersatz key signature, demands to be considered as one continuous entity. Here I must quote again from Narcis Bonet's *The Fundamental Principles of Harmony*, for his analysis of this chord points precisely in the direction I am heading, without going all the way there:

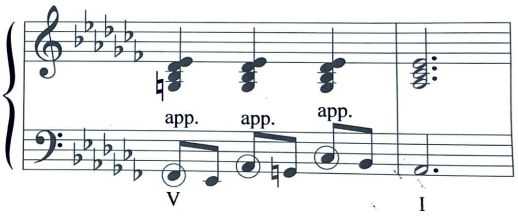
FIGURE 6.

If we continue developing the notion of chords simply by the superposition of thirds up to the *Thirteenth-chord*, it becomes obvious that harmony has totally invaded the realm of melody: the seven notes of a key being thus absorbed into Harmony through a vertical tertian chord structure! The famous chord of the "Dance of the Adolescents" from Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* shows us a *Thirteenth-Chord* on the VI degree of A♭ minor:



Should one analyze this chord as a superposition of several triads, or as a *Dominant Seventh chord* (of A♭ minor) with *three appoggiaturas*?

For me, the tonal gravitational pull of the *Dominant-Seventh chord*, even in inversion, carries the day over the root position chord built on F♭ major (VI degree of A♭ minor) with its root in the Bass. In the Romantic period one would have written and analyzed the following without hesitation:



As in the Chopin-Scriabin example, we now find precedent for Stravinsky's dissonance emerging from the "fossilization" of passing chromatic tones. Despite Stravinsky's key signature of three flats—which will prove significant when we return to Beethoven—Bonet gives the very unusual key signature of A-flat minor, in keeping with his reading of the sonority's "home" being in that key, perhaps to better demonstrate the essentially diatonic character of the appoggiaturas. Here, Bonet seems to be literally enacting what Stravinsky meant by one's ear being "called upon to complete a chord and cooperate in its resolution, which has not actually been realized in the work."[52] This accords again with Stravinsky's historical narrative about the evolution of dissonance, as given in the *Poetics*:

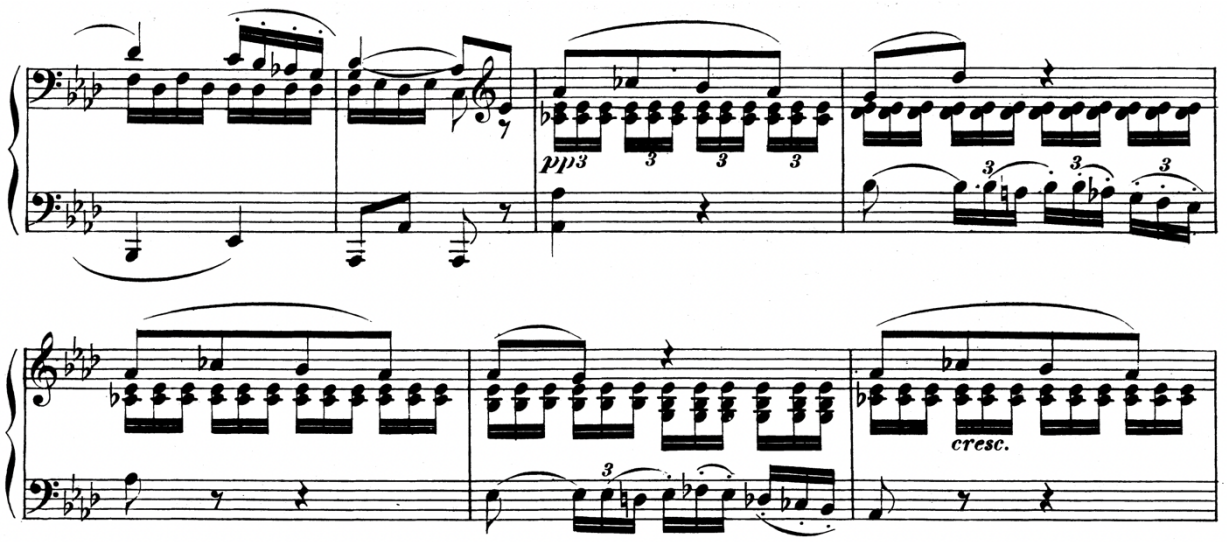
> But nothing forces us to be looking constantly for satisfaction that resides only in repose. And for over a century music has provided repeated examples of a style in which dissonance has emancipated itself. It is no longer tied down to its former function. Having become an entity in itself, it frequently happens that dissonance neither prepares nor anticipates anything. Dissonance is thus no more an agent of disorder than consonance is a guarantee of security. The music of yesterday and of today unhesitatingly unites parallel

[52] Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music: In the Form of Six Lessons*, 34.

> dissonant chords that thereby lose their functional value, and our ear quite naturally accepts their juxtaposition.[53]

The music of yesterday: that beloved treasure to which Stravinsky would continuously return throughout his life. Yet often he returned to it seemingly by accident: and now, like Stravinsky's admonishment to the reporter who called him a turning-point in music history ("I am but a turning-*around* point"), we can turn back to Beethoven.

FIGURE 7.

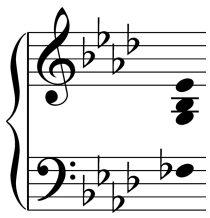


In the slow movement of Beethoven's Op. 13 Piano Sonata, we find many instances wherein the highly active *bel canto* melody creates momentary dissonances against the relatively static accompaniment; while this in itself is fairly commonplace throughout music of this era, Beethoven intensifies the dissonances and their expressive effect by maintaining a "pulsating" accompaniment, so that the dissonant notes in the melody must be heard one-to-one with the accompanying pitches against which they create dissonance. This effect becomes particularly noticeable in the movement's second section, the modulation to the parallel minor, in which the

[53] Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music: In the Form of Six Lessons*, 34.

soprano melody, for the first time in the movement, finds itself answered: a quasi-*parlando* tenor line interjects itself between phrases, and so the pulsating accompaniment chords become entrapped by potential dissonances from both above and below. Out of such a fertile field springs, for just a moment, this remarkable little flower of a sonority:

FIGURE 8.



This moment invites an obvious connection to Stravinsky's *Augurs* chord: this chord constitutes exactly half of Stravinsky's (Beethoven's contains 4 out of the 8 pitches of the *Augurs*, occurring in exactly the same register and placement). As with the Chopin-Scriabin, we can readily intuit that what would have emerged in passing to the earlier composer, as a moment of heightened chromatic-voice leading, may have then become "stuck," through practice, in the fingers of the later composer, only to re-emerge later as a fully independent sonority. (I cannot help but think of the mosquito in *Jurassic Park*, alighting on a branch and getting trapped in amber, its belly full of precious dinosaur DNA available for later exploitation.)

A more subtle connection arises when we consider Stravinsky's key signature. As noted, Stravinsky had no interest in allowing this chord to be perceived as bitonal; rather, it draws into itself a verticalized compression of the *tonal* idiom. Stravinsky achieves this not only through the spelling of the pitches within the chord itself, but also by placing it within a key signature: he centers the chord within a universe of three flats. While I would never suggest that *Augurs of Spring*, as a movement, can be read or heard as meaningfully related to the keys of E-flat major or c minor, I do believe that this sonority finds a distant but deep echo of resonance to the tonal

realm from which its shocking power partially derives. It is not merely that the *Augurs* chord is "very dissonant," in itself, as surely there are many chords penned by other composers, or Stravinsky himself, capable of "shocking" the ears with their "harshness"—but surely very few chords are as memorable as this one. Why is that? The effect of repetition should not be discounted: perhaps any sonority will create a powerful effect if simply repeated enough times. Stockhausen certainly exploited this possibility in his *Klavierstück IX*:

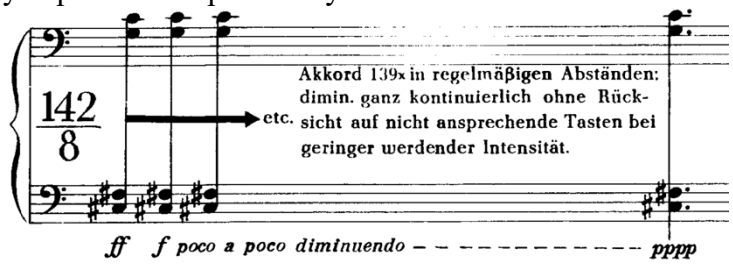


FIGURE 9.

And yet the chord of *Klavierstück IX*, even with its 139 repetitions, fails to stick in my mind the way the *Augurs* chord does. While the piece itself creates a striking effect in performance, the actual sonority is, to my ears, not very interesting. I believe it has something to do with "tonal resonance." Notice how Stockhausen seems to carefully spell his chord to *avoid* any potential tonal readings, such as those to which the *Augurs* chord can be readily subjected; if anything, Stockhausen's pitches and their spelling are more reminiscent of a juxtaposition of two pitch fields, such as the C-C-sharp "juxtaposition" of the *Petrouchka* chord. And yet without a full triad on either side to complete the sense of juxtaposition, Stockhausen's chord might as well be four independent pitches belonging to no *a priori* system of organization, or at least one that is readily discernible to the ear with such limited information. The *Augurs* chord, in contrast, somehow gives the effect of being the peak of a progressively *intensified* dissonance, such as would arise organically from the conditions provided in the *Pathétique*, and yet a dissonance which has been isolated from its original, generating context. And while Stravinsky might have taken umbrage at the suggestion that he outright "borrowed" the *Augurs* chord from Beethoven,

he probably would not have objected to the interpretation that some fundamental aspect of its power arises out of tonal principles:

> If it were said that my music is atonal, that would be tantamount to saying that I had become deaf to tonality. Now it well may be that I remain for a considerable time within the bounds of the strict order of tonality, even though I may quite consciously break up this order for the purposes of establishing a new one. In that case I am not *a*tonal, but *anti*tonal.[54]

His "*anti*tonal" nature manifests in how the constituent pitches of the *Augurs* chord may logically arise in a tonal idiom, as they do in the *Pathétique*, but the rules which govern them are inverted. That is, within a tonal context this sonority's emergence indicates a moment of extreme tonal instability. In the context of Beethoven, the *Augurs* chord is like an unstable chemical element with a short half-life: it decays extremely rapidly, or, in musical terms, must quickly give way to further musical development with a tendency toward tonal stability. Yet within the context of Stravinsky, the *Augurs* chord is free to repeat, without change in pitch, until superseded by development from another parameter, as is what happens when the repeating chord gives way to a new contrapuntal texture. In this sense Stravinsky's "*anti*tonal" nature arises from his creating a musical atmosphere in which these unstable elements, these highly dissonant sonorities, become stable, or fixed, objects in themselves.

The connection from Beethoven to Stravinsky goes deeper than the pitches themselves, or the harmonic implications discussed above. We must also consider this bridge, Beethoven-Stravinsky, from the standpoint of the composers' *pianism*, an essential component of which is their implicit, abiding faith in the keyboard's latent authority as a musical collaborator, its ability to suggest (if not generate) authentic, personal, and original musical material. Musical material

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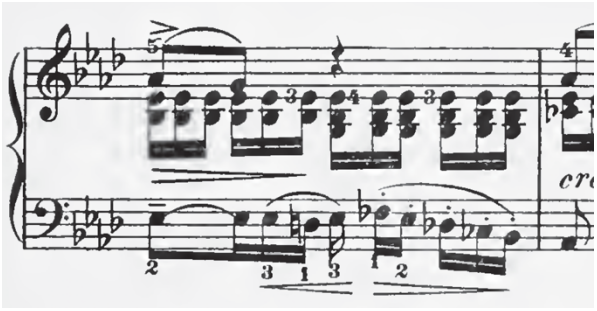
[54] Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music: In the Form of Six Lessons*, 38.

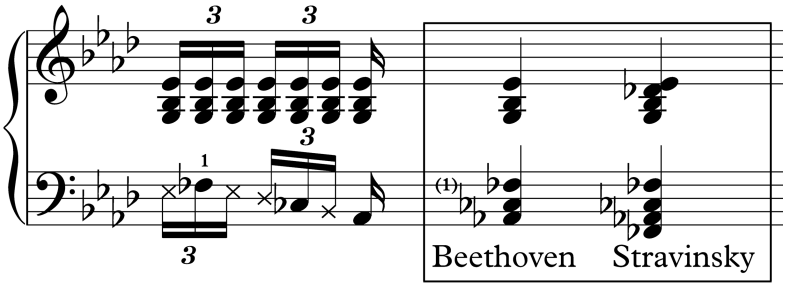
generated in this manner—through the piano keyboard—inevitably leaves some trace of its identity behind on the keys in a way that eludes the printed score. Consider the *Pathétique* passage again, with an eye toward the fingering a pianist would employ in the left hand—the Hans von Bülow edition with its editorial fingerings is a standard example:

FIGURE 10.



The thumb plays the F-flat, just as it would in *Augurs*. Not only that, but the thumb's position on the F-flat, coupled with the subsequent descent through the A-flat minor scale, positions the left hand over most of the remaining lower members of the complete *Augurs* chord. Simply by playing the passage as written and using a logical fingering, a pianist's hand assumes the position and shape of the *Augurs* chord:

FIGURE 11.



We can see clearly that while a glance at each respective score, and only the score, reveals only 4 of the 8 pitches in common, an informed *performance* of both passages, with basic tenets of pianism in mind, reveals the *Augurs* chord to have a tangible, kinesthetic connection to the *Pathétique*.

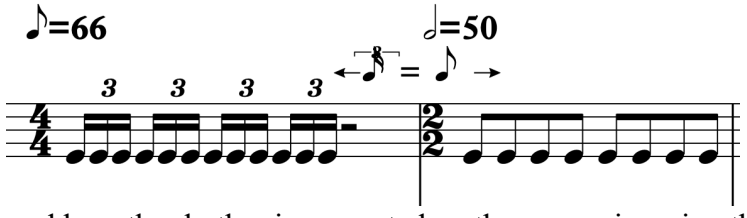
But there exists an even more subtle connection between these two passages that, once again, the printed scores obscure and which physical performance makes apparent: the *Augurs* chord and the Beethoven accompaniment triplet chords are struck at an identical rate. This is not to be confused with *tempo*, for the tempo in these two passages are slightly different, and yet the respective subdivisions of meter within each tempo yields a nearly identical velocity of repetition.

The slow movement of the *Pathétique* is marked *Adagio*, and most editors agree on a metronome marking of quarter note = 60–66 beats per minute. *Augurs of Spring* is marked half note = 50 beats per minute, in the orchestral score, and half note = 56 beats per minute, in the piano four-hands score. In *Pathétique*, the relevant passage consists of sixteenth-note triplets; in *Augurs*, it consists of eighth notes. If we express the tempo as a unit of the individual subdivisions, we can compare the velocity of attack between the chords of the two passages. The simple arithmetic to find the beats per minute of each individual note, using the upper end of the tempo for Beethoven and the lower end for Stravinsky, is as follows:

Beethoven	**Stravinsky**
66 * 3 = 198 b.p.m	50 * 4 = 200 b.p.m.
(b.p.m. in eighth notes) * (3 notes per beat)	(b.pm. in half notes) * (4 notes per beat)

This can be shown visually as a (slightly imprecise) metric modulation:

FIGURE 12.



In short, if we disregard how the rhythm is presented on the page—ignoring the meter, beat, and subdivisions—and instead consider only the physical *speed* at which the chords are to be *played*,

then the chords in both *Pathétique* and *Augurs* become nearly identical. Of course, the foregoing proof proceeds, by necessity, through the printed page, and as such may strike one as fairly clumsy. But if one sits at the keyboard and attempts to play Beethoven's pulsating accompaniment chords exactly in tempo without accents, and then, without pause, play the *Augurs* chords exactly in tempo without accents, one will discover the immediate corporeal kinship between the two.

The *Augurs* chord has been analyzed from the standpoints of its potential tonal derivation,[55] its relationship to the octatonic scale,[56] and its pitch-class structure,[57] and while all these readings and more may be correct "post-mortem" dissections, none of them adequately account for the chord's most likely source, an immediate physical impulse in the composer's hands. Stravinsky claimed to be "the vessel through which the Rite passed," and if we take him at his word, then the "vessel" cannot merely be his mind, but the body, too, and the site of that mind-body vessel not merely the score, but the keyboard, too. Most observers have noted the pianistic influence, in a general sense; as Peter Hill notes:

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[55] "Most of the harmony in *The Rite* radiates from an aggregation of notes formed by the superimposition of two chords with their roots a semitone apart. …But [the Augurs chord] can also be explained as an inversion of the chord of the 13th." Eric Walter White, *Stravinsky: The Composer and His Works* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 210-211.

[56] Extensively elaborated upon by Pieter C. van den Toorn, *Stravinsky and The Rite of Spring: The Beginnings of a Musical Language* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

[57] See Allen Forte, *The Harmonic Organization of the Rite of Spring* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978).

> The piano seems to have exerted an unseen influence on the *Rite*, far more than just a useful composing tool. The music has strong pianistic qualities: the snug "fit" under the pianist's hands of its harmonies suggests that many were discovered while improvising.[58]

Pieter C. van den Toorn also makes note of the pianistic qualities of Stravinsky's harmony,[59] and Eric Walter White goes further as to suggests the Augurs chord's origin as an immediate physical impulse: "In view of Stravinsky's well known habit of composing at the piano, it seems likely that [the *Augurs* chord] came into existence as a bitonal aggregation of two separate chords that conveniently fitted his two hands."[60] Most authors, then, regardless of their preferred "reading" as to the harmony's most compelling explanation, agree that Stravinsky may have simply plunked his hands down upon these notes and then written the result in his sketches. But none have yet accounted for the overwhelmingly strong possibility, demonstrated above, of the chord's having been *already present* in Stravinsky as a hand-memory of the *Pathétique.*

If we accept the *Pathétique-Augurs* connection as discussed above, a new question floats to the surface: what makes a sonority unique? If the two chords are so close in pitch identity, why do I call the *Augurs* chord by that name, and not the *Pathétique* chord—what causes a

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[58] Peter Hill, *Stravinsky: The Rite of Spring* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 13.

[59] "And the role of the piano in Stravinsky's inventive processes, early on as an aid an improvisation and then in a constant "testing" of the ear, cannot sufficiently be stressed. Notice, for example, the easy right-hand-left-hand "lie" of the motto chord itself, which underscores the chord's compound nature, its triadically sealed top and bottom "halves." Here, too, then, the pianistic element is most conspicuous in those entries which are at the outset highly developed, suggesting the early, improvisational origin of this material." van den Toorn, *Stravinsky and The Rite of Spring: The Beginnings of a Musical Language*.

[60] Eric Walter White, *Stravinsky: The Composer and His Works* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 211.

particular combination of pitches to find itself inextricably tied to a particular composer? An implicit conclusion of the foregoing analysis is that the *Augurs* chord is not entirely "new," in that at least half of its constituent members—indeed, the essential ingredients of the chord—already existed in printed music at least once before *Rite of Spring*. Yet despite its precedence in Beethoven, the *Augurs* chord is so entirely Stravinsky. The immediate musical context surrounding the chord accounts for much of its unique personality: forceful articulation, brutal or *sans nuance* repetitions, and unpredictable offbeat accents—all features which contradict the musical context in which it finds precedent. Yet these features which combine to make the *Augurs* chord so unmistakably Stravinskian are also distinguishing traits, in general, of that earlier composer's music, which embedded itself into Stravinsky's hands: in its own way, Beethoven's music also contains many moments of "forceful articulation, brutal or *sans nuance* repetitions, and unpredictable offbeat accents." And so in precisely what combination of musical qualities is that ephemeral "personality" to be found? We know it when we hear it, but what exactly are we hearing?

Let us return to Harold Bloom for a moment: if we consider Stravinsky's hand-memory of Beethoven analogous to Bloom's concept of poetic "misreading"—a deviant interpretation of the model that forms a new utterance—then we can apply to Stravinsky one of Bloom's terms categorizing the manner in which poets deviate from their predecessors, what he calls *Tessera*,

> which is completion and antithesis; I take the word not from mosaic-making, where it is still used, but from the ancient mystery cults, where it meant a token of recognition, the fragment say of a small pot which with the other fragments would re-constitute the vessel. A poet antithetically "completes" his precursor, by so

> reading the parent-poem as to retain its terms but to mean them in another sense, as though the precursor had failed to go far enough.[61]

For myself, and other mere mortals, it would be hubris to suggest that Beethoven, of all composers, had ever "failed to go far enough"—and yet Stravinsky may be making just this suggestion. As we will see in further examples of Stravinsky's Beethovenian hand-memories, Stravinsky did not shy away from engaging with Beethoven's work in often highly critical terms. Stravinsky's written commentaries on the works of Beethoven strike me as comfortably settled into the tone of one colleague writing about another; in the same manner that I might confidently, respectfully, and sometimes forcefully engage with the work of one of my fellow graduate composers with whom I feel a parity of artistry and craft, so does Stravinsky speak of Beethoven. Thus, it is entirely possible that Stravinsky intuited that "the precursor had failed to go far enough" in work such as the *Pathétique*, where, for an instant, a shocking sonority flew into being, only to be immediately snuffed out by the combined pressures of counterpoint, phrasing, and the tonal idiom. This "fragment," to borrow again Bloom's terminology, could then indeed become an ingredient with which Stravinsky could "re-constitute the vessel" of his own assemblage.

Note how, in Stravinsky's sketches, shown below, the chords first appears fully "dressed," so to speak: all constituent pitches present in their proper register, and in the curious, but logical, spelling as discussed above. There is little evidence that Stravinsky deliberated over the "construction" of this chord: surely it occurred, fully formed, to his hands.

FIGURE 13.

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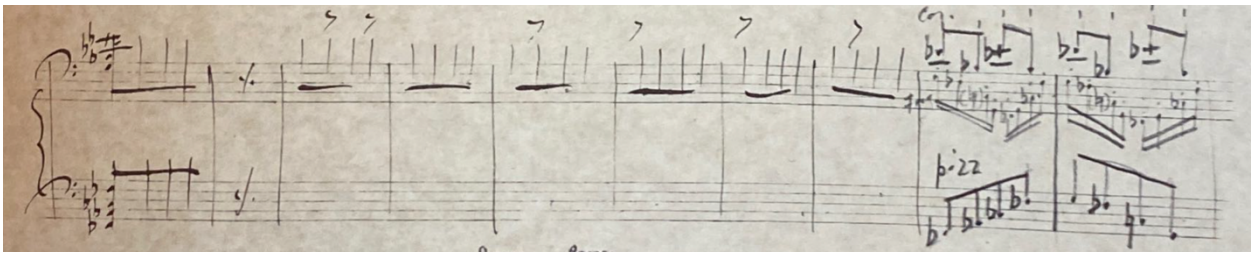
[61] Bloom, Harold. *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

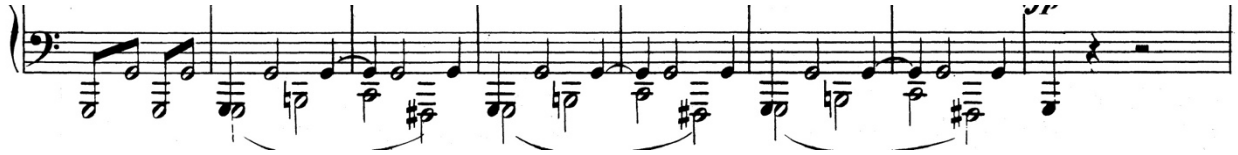


A FEW MORE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE *RITE* AND THE *PATHÉTIQUE*

Without providing as thorough an exegesis as above, I offer several more examples that suggest a keyboard kinship between the *Rite* and the *Pathétique*.

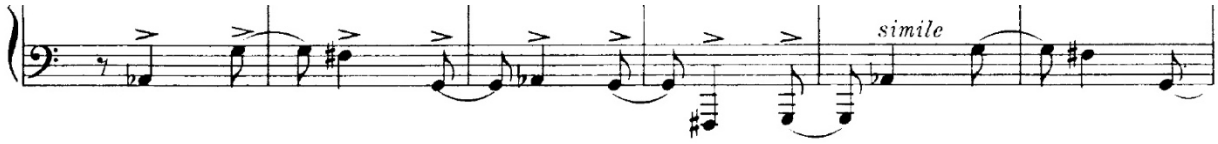
Beethoven's agitated dominant pedal, at the end of the development of the first movement, allows the lower voice to break free and "wander" into occasional minor ninths:

FIGURE 14.



Compare this to Stravinsky's wandering bass, also in *Augurs*, which briefly enunciates the same interval of a minor ninth between an upper G and a lower F-sharp:

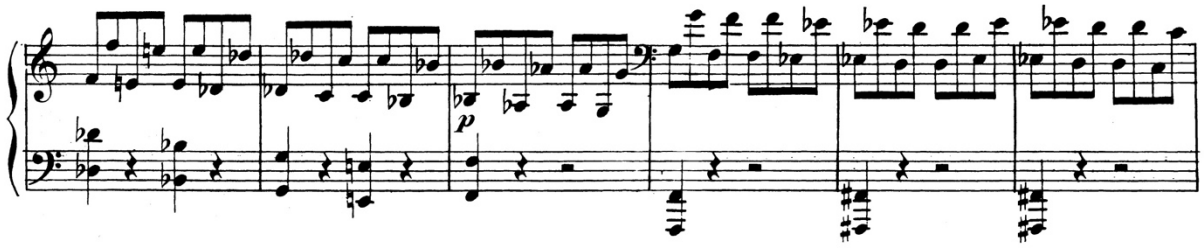
FIGURE 15.



As with the *Augurs* chord, however, Stravinsky's pushes the effect far beyond what would have been possible in the common-practice period, although its precedent in that realm is clear.

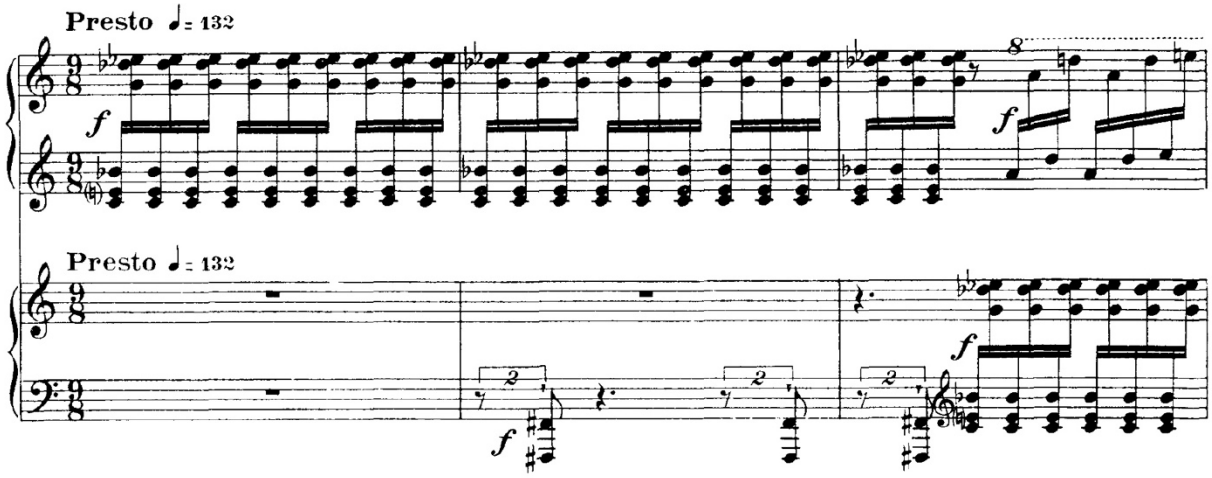
Another moment from the first movement of the *Pathétique*, which finds an evocative echo in the *Rite*, is the appearance of low F-sharps under an undulating E-flat / D tremolo:

FIGURE 16.



The low F-sharps have a very marked effect due to the full-measure space between each, which within the context of this movement creates a dramatic textural contrast. Compare this to the opening of the *Rite*'s *The Ritual of the Abduction*, which also directly follows a comparatively much denser texture, and which announces a new idea through a tremolo under which low, bare F-sharps ring out:

FIGURE 17.



As with the *Augurs* chord, these low F-sharps suggest a "tonal resonance," in that a moment of intense harmonic instability has been captured and extended beyond what would be possible within the tonal idiom.

I am sure there are many more connections to be found between the *Rite* and the *Pathétique*. For now, we will move on to consider other works which may have crept through Stravinsky's fingers and into his scores.

1913: "STRAVINSKY'S ELEVEN" AND BEETHOVEN'S OP. 110 PIANO SONATA

Stravinsky's preoccupation with the relationship between rhythm and meter recurs with some frequency in his writing and speaking; in his 1939–1940 lectures at Harvard, for example, he

asserted that meter "offers in itself only elements of symmetry and is necessarily utilized by rhythm,"[62] which he clarified by way of the following example:

> Who of us, on hearing jazz music, has not felt an amusing sensation approaching giddiness when a dancer or solo musician, trying persistently to stress irregular accents, cannot succeed in turning our ear away from the regular pulsation of the meter drummed out by the percussion?[63]

This amusement at "unsuccessful off-beats" must have extended, for Stravinsky, into the music of Beethoven as well, as he described some years later in his 1971 *Themes and Conclusions:*

> But the truly baffling event in the [Op. 110] Sonata is that of the ten repeated G chords leading from the second *Arioso*… to the inverted form of the fugue. They occur on the last third of each beat following two thirds' rest, but whereas the first two or three chords succeed in sustaining an off-the-beat-feeling… after that they become progressively, rapidly, and intolerably dull.[64]

Stravinsky specifically notes that there occur *ten* chords, and that, since they fail in their (presumably) intended "off-the-beat feeling" and become "dull," they all feel essentially equal, at least after a certain number of repetitions.

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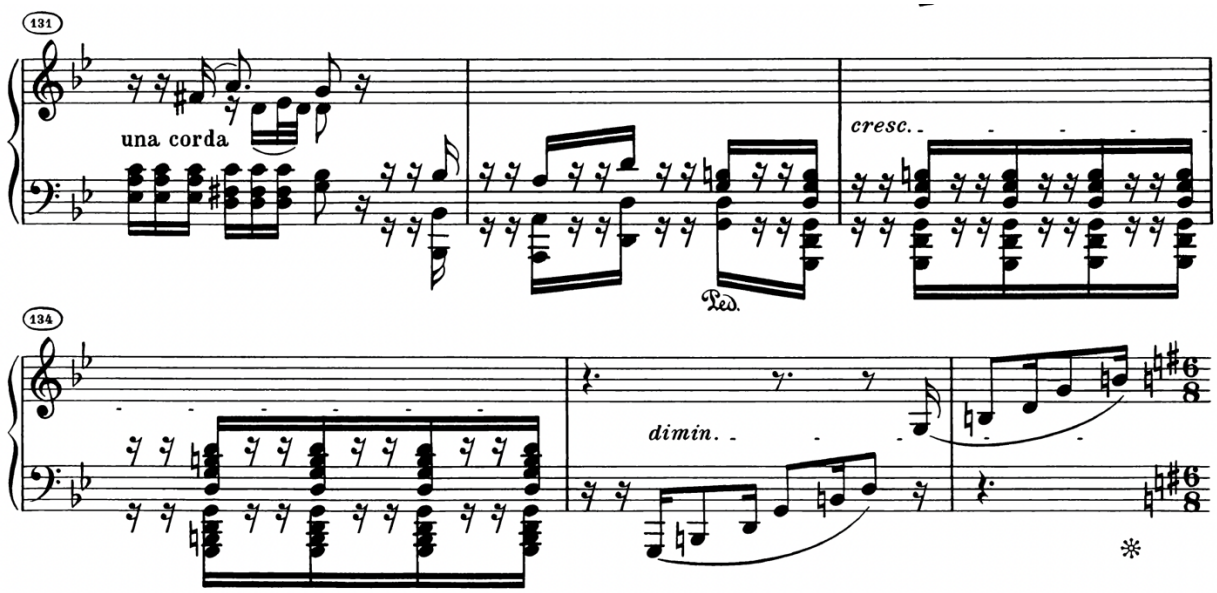
[62] Igor Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music: In the Form of Six Lessons* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 28.

[63] Ibid.

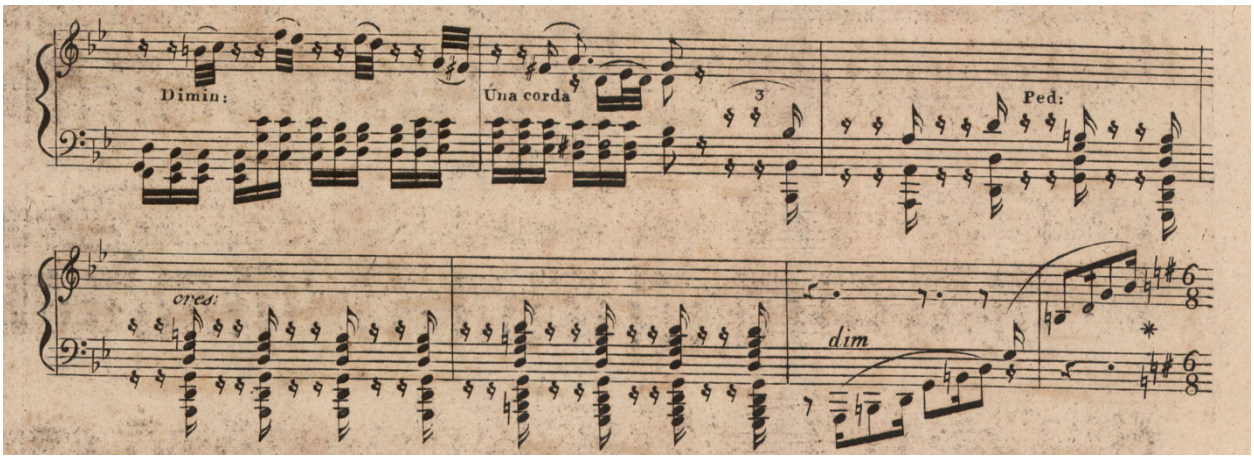
[64] Stravinsky and Craft, *Themes and Conclusions*, 274.

FIGURE 18.



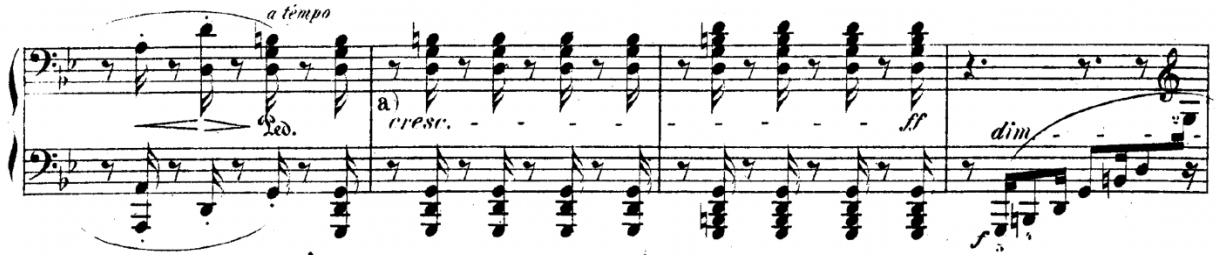
The above edition unfortunately adds beams to the off-beat chords, both obscuring their rhythmic placement and obfuscating the "static" or "floating" quality that Beethoven surely meant to convey. This quality is better demonstrated in the 1822 first edition of the score:

FIGURE 19.



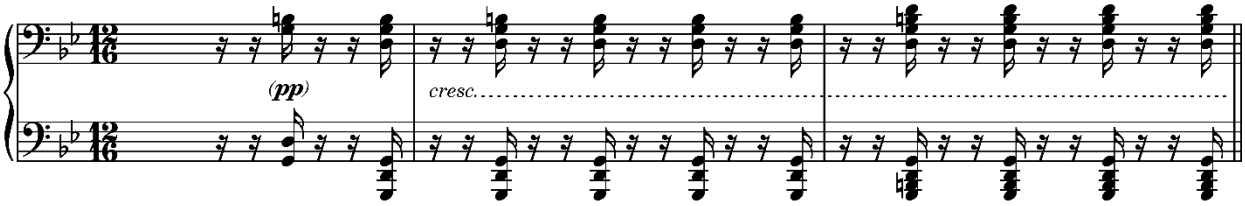
Luckily, this visual fidelity was retained in scores published during Stravinsky's lifetime, of which the following is offered as a representative example:

FIGURE 20.



Extracted from their musical context, the ten chords can be seen in isolation as follows:

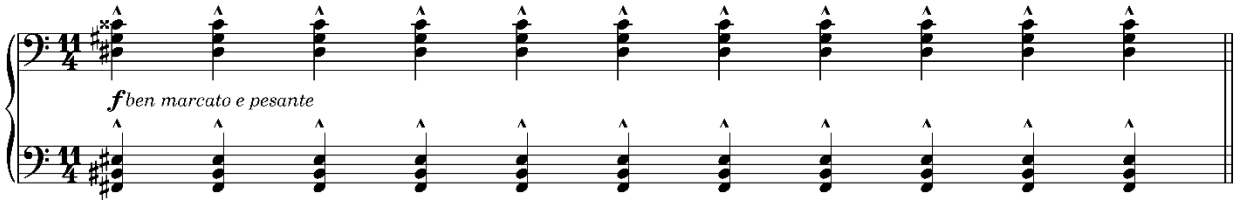
FIGURE 21.



Compare this with a moment from *Rite of Spring*. Stravinsky (pulling a Nigel Tufnel[65]) goes to eleven—the time signature calling conspicuous attention to the number of repetitions. Of course, Stravinsky could have written two bars of 4/4 and one of 3/4, or any other combination that adds to eleven beats, but it must have been essential to him that the gesture be not only heard but *seen* as one unbroken impetus. (This is the rhythmic equivalent of the consistent pitch-spelling of the *Augurs* chord: Stravinsky's notation insists that the idea be presented as one whole, continuous unit, not a combination of smaller, contrasting units.) While this moment sometimes is referred to by a rude mnemonic, I will call it simply "Stravinsky's Eleven":

[65] From the film *This is Spıñal Tap*, wherein Nigel he explains how his amp is unique in that its highest knob setting is the number eleven, and is thus "one louder" than other amps which only go to ten.

FIGURE 22.



Is it possible to identify a bit of Bloomian *kenosis* in Stravinsky's Eleven?

> *Kenosis*… is a breaking-device similar to the defense mechanisms our pysches employ against repetition compulsions; *kenosis* is then a movement towards discontinuity with the precursor.[66]
>
> *Kenosis*… appears to be an act of self-abnegation, yet tends to make the fathers pay for their own sins.[67]

It is not difficult to imagine Stravinsky—releasing a long-held frustration at the perceived tedium of Beethoven's *un*-offbeat chords—sitting at the piano and playing a grotesque parody of Beethoven's chords, which could transform into this moment from the *Rite*. Notice how, in the Beethoven excerpt, there appears a new pitch on the seventh repetition of the chord, the D4, well into the number repetitions which Stravinsky considered "intolerably dull." Stravinsky's own eleven chords contain (the enharmonic equivalent of) this D4. In fact, if we adjust the rhythmic notation of the Beethoven example to match Stravinsky's subjective impression, rendering his chords as "on the beat," and if we respell Stravinsky's chords to their enharmonic equivalents (the spellings also differ here in the *Rite*'s orchestral score), we can see the following somewhat startling superimposition:

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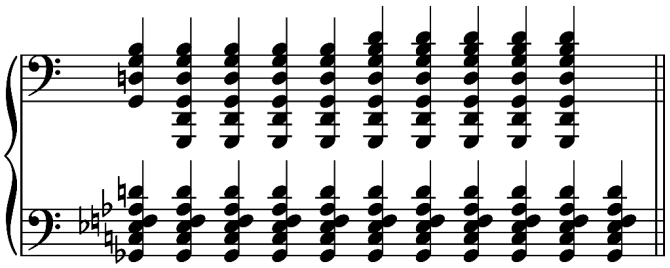
[66] Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, 14.

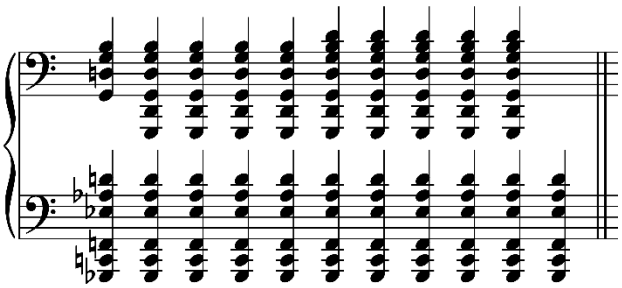
[67] Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, 91.

FIGURE 23.



Visualized in this manner, we can see how close Stravinsky's voicing is to Beethoven's; in fact, if we make one slightly imaginative adjustment by transposing Stravinsky's original left-hand staff down one octave (not inconceivable considering that, in orchestration, Stravinsky would end up doubling these chords with timpani and bass drum, creating a similar sonic effect), the similarity in voicing and construction becomes even more apparent:

FIGURE 24.



So it appears as though Stravinsky's Eleven bears a more than passing resemblance to a moment from Beethoven that Stravinsky called "truly baffling"—sharing a single pitch and similar hand placement on the keyboard. Just as the *Augurs* chord transformed a fleeting moment into stasis, so does the Eleven transform suspension into certainty. Stravinsky's Eleven collapses the "uncertain uncertainty" of Beethoven's lingering off-beat suspension into a gesture of brutal determination; to borrow again from Bloom, Stravinsky truly "makes the father pay for his sins."

1924: CONCERTO FOR PIANO AND WINDS AND GERSHWIN'S RHAPSODY IN BLUE

If Stravinsky's hands were infused with Beethoven through childhood practice, could they also have been guided by the work of his living colleagues? Joseph tantalizingly suggests, but does not elaborate on, the possibility of Stravinsky borrowing from Gershwin, remarking that Stravinsky's Piano Concerto contains "Gershwin-like piano figurations (*Rhapsody in Blue* was written the same year and premiered with the Paul Whiteman band just a just a few months before Stravinsky first played his new concerto)."[68] As with the Beethoven connections, I have not yet found a document which conclusively demonstrates Stravinsky's first-hand knowledge of Gershwin's score, and yet the circumstantial evidence is substantial:

> Stravinsky also heard the music of George Gershwin during those first months in America and, shortly after arriving in New York, met him on 7 January at a party given in Stravinsky's honor. The next evening, the two composers met again at a reception following Stravinsky's Carnegie Hall concert… By the time he completed his tour in March and returned to Europe, Stravinsky grandly declared that a knowledge of American jazz was absolutely essential to any serious composer.[69]

That grand declaration was certainly to find realization in such explicitly "jazz-oriented" works as *Piano Rag Music* or the *Ebony Concerto*, but as with many of Stravinsky's riddles, answers can also to be found in unexpected places. The *Piano Concerto* does not immediately come to mind when one considers Stravinsky's "jazz-oriented" works. Indeed, at first reading, Joseph's implication that Gershwin's *Rhapsody* may have influenced Stravinsky's piano writing in his *Concerto* seemed incredulous to me, given the brilliant, flashy, flexible and highly idiomatic

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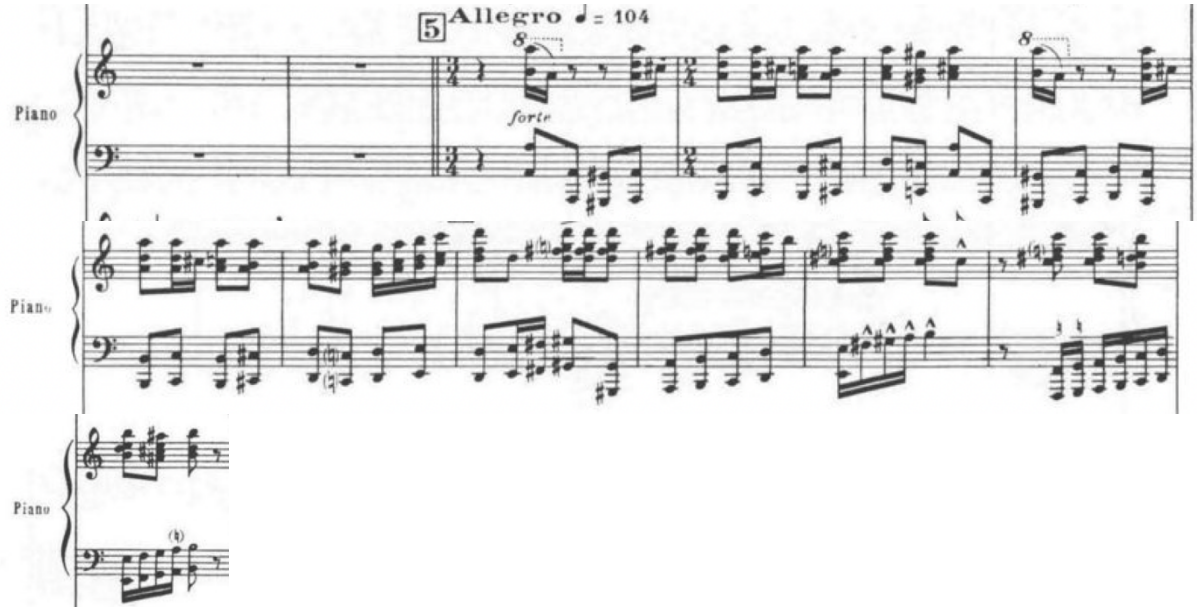
[68] Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out*, 37.

[69] Ibid.

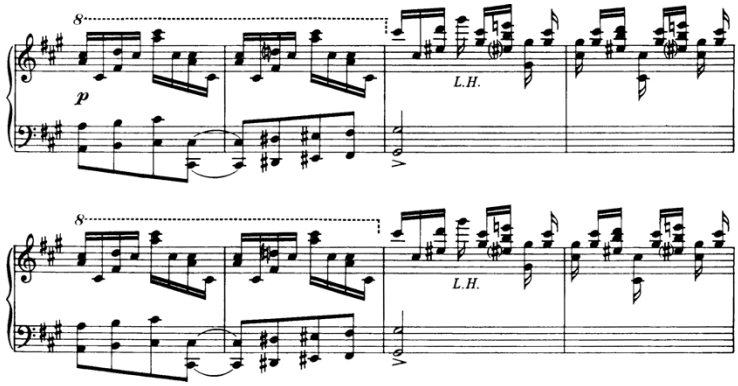
piano writing in the former as opposed to the latter's comparatively dry and somewhat rigid approach to the solo part, yet I ultimately discovered numerous passages which share more than a passing resemblance. A recurring device in Stravinsky's *Concerto*, for example, is the piano's left hand scalar passages in octaves, which recursively loop back to a common starting area:

FIGURE 25.



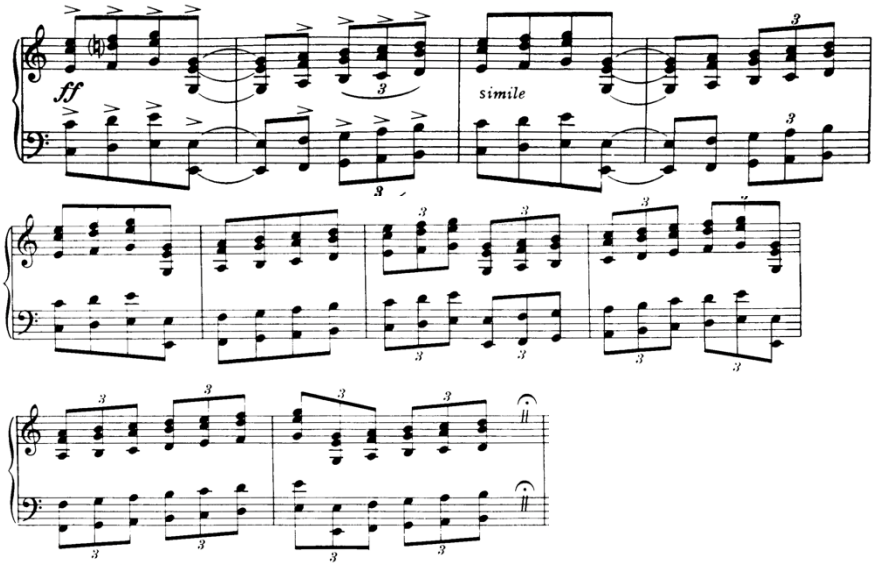
Gershwin employs a similar device in the *Rhapsody*:

FIGURE 26.



Both examples above reach toward and revolve around the pitch G-sharp; Stravinsky's alternates modes while Gershwin's remains fixed in the F-sharp melodic minor scale. In a harmonically simpler vein, there are similar passages in both works occurring entirely on white keys:

FIGURE 27.



Notice also, in the above example, the right hand's voicing of an octave with an additional third at the top, a voicing which Stravinsky also found useful in the *Concerto* (always on white keys):

FIGURE 28.

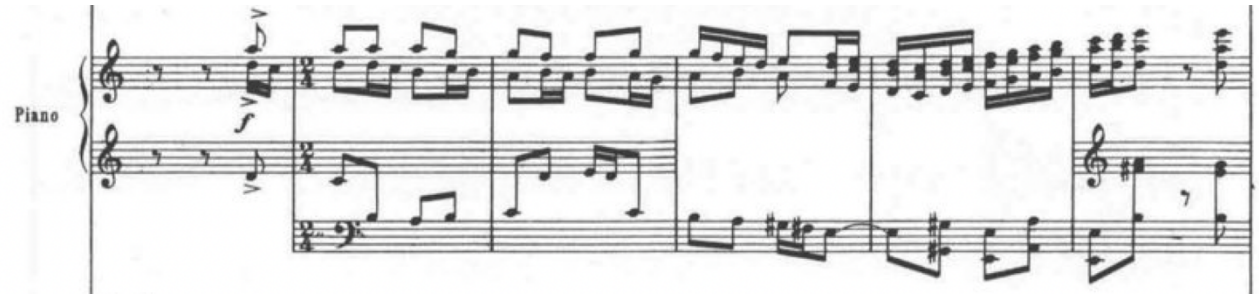
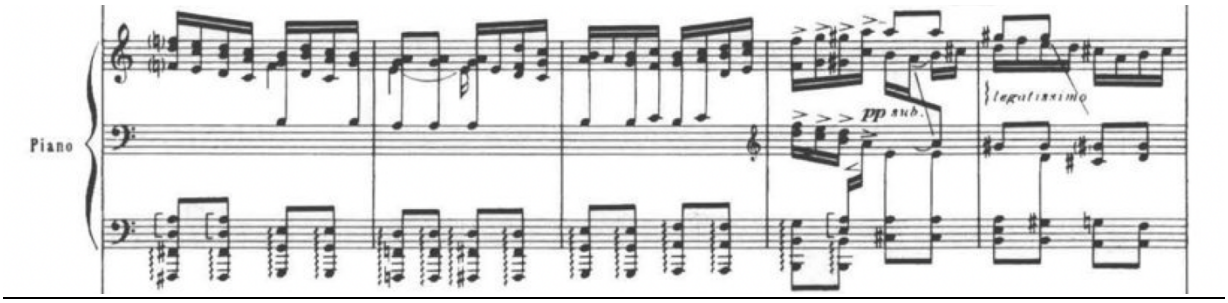


FIGURE 29.



Another strikingly similar voicing configuration, coupled with a specific melodic tendency, is the left-hand "fifth + tenth" sound, so beloved by Gershwin along with most early jazz and jazz-influenced composers. This sonorous voicing, under the hand of a skilled pianist, lends itself readily to a stepwise "walking" line, an effect which recurs several times, in various permutations, in both Stravinsky's *Concerto* and Gershwin's *Rhapsody* (with representative examples from each given below):

FIGURE 30.

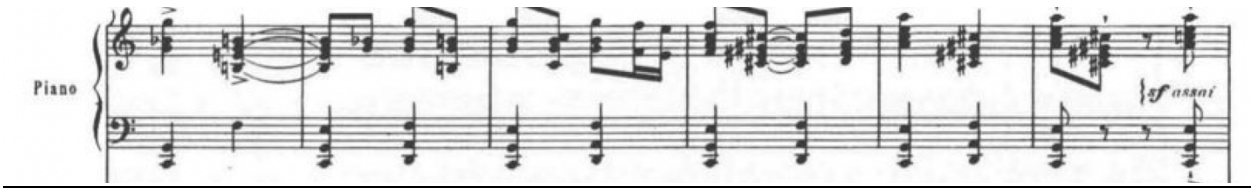
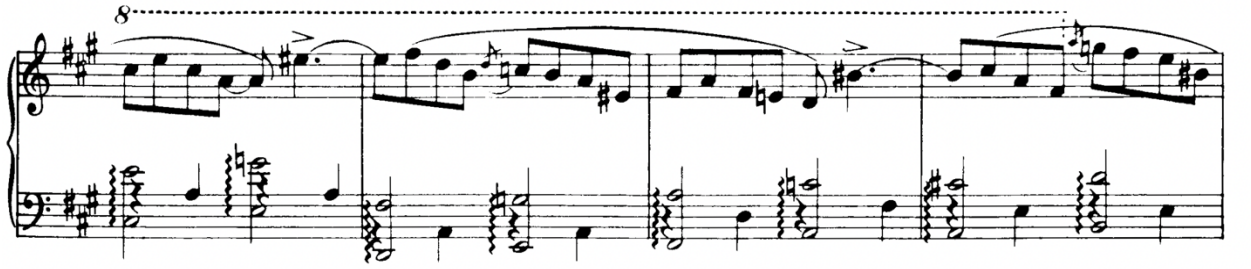


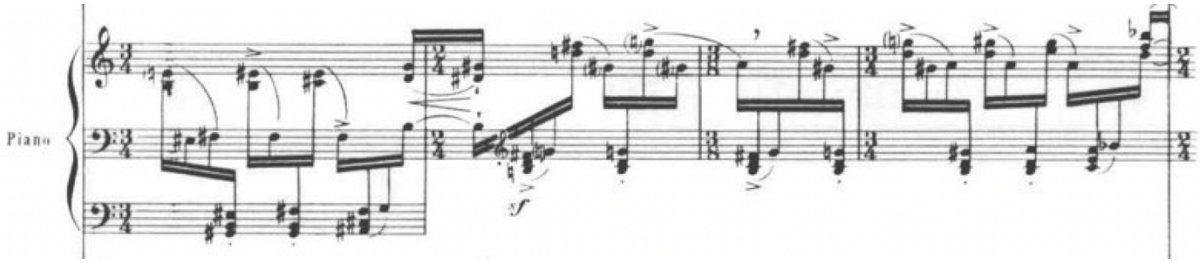
FIGURE 31.



One more example will suffice for now, though one interested in further investigation will certainly find more connections between these two works. As seen above, a specific voicing that flourishes throughout Gershwin's music is the major seventh (usually spelled as a diminished octave) with a single inner pitch, usually forming a tritone from the bottom pitch, although other combinations occur frequently. This is yet another example of a voicing that relates as much to a hand fitting comfortably on the keyboard as to a particular harmonic conception; in this case, the thumb and fifth finger remain at a comfortable slight extension, and the second or third finger

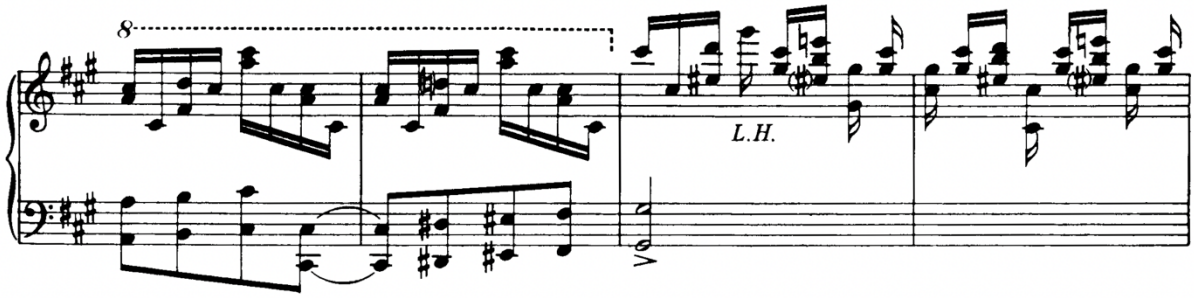
simply falls onto some pitch roughly equidistant between them. Stravinsky found frequent use of this voicing in the *Concerto*:

FIGURE 32.



Likewise, it occurs countless times throughout the *Rhapsody*, and in much of Gershwin's music in general—in fact, it is probably one of Gershwin's own musical "handprints":

FIGURE 33.



These similarities give evidence to what Joseph calls the Concerto's "Gershwin-like figurations," and suggest that Stravinsky not only possessed familiarity with Gershwin's extremely popular new work, but also considered it worthy of appropriation. The larger question, then, is whether Stravinsky considered *Rhapsody in Blue* to be representative of the "jazz" which he proclaimed "essential" for "serious" composers to know. It is likely that he did, considering that the *Rhapsody* was, at the time of its premiere, billed as a jazz composition:

> In the 1920s the genre [of concert jazz] became known as symphonic jazz, a term often credited to Paul Whiteman. The bandleader commissioned a large number of such works for his own ensemble, including George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* (1924), often identified as the quintessential example of the genre.[70]

Rhapsody in Blue was surely bound to catch Stravinsky's notice if only for the fact that it marked a watershed in the concert-going public's relationship with jazz; one appreciation from 1947 somewhat condescendingly notes:

> The printed program of the concert bore the legend "An experiment in modern music," and it was aptly named. Although the occasion was not the first time that jazz music had been heard in the sacred precincts of polite concert halls, it was quite unprecedented with regard to scope, careful planning, and seriousness of purpose. The success of the venture was sensational; its effect was permanent. And much of the influence of jazz music on "art" music dates back to that concert of twenty-three years ago.[71]

One has to wonder, then, to what extent Stravinsky's publicly declared embrace of "jazz" is really the embrace of the success of *Rhapsody*, a fully notated composition for the concert hall whose identity as representative of the "jazz" tradition is debatable. One of the ideas which "dominated the debate about the relationship of jazz to art music in the twenties" was that "jazz is best in its natural state, and that forcing it to conform to the demands of art music through development, expansion into long, organic forms, and so forth, robs it of its essential charm and force… Proponents of jazz in its natural state even found Gershwin guilty of what they saw as an emasculation of jazz… Those few writers who held the view that true jazz was the earlier, black, improvisational style considered Paul Whiteman the prime culprit behind the 'vanilla epoch of

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[70] Ryan Raul Bañagale, "Concert Jazz" (Oxford University Press, October 2012), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.A2228141.

[71] Edward N. Waters, "Gershwin's 'Rhapsody in Blue,'" *Quarterly Journal of Current Acquisitions* 4, no. 3 (1947): 65–66.

jazz.'"[72] Clearly, Gershwin and *Rhapsody in Blue* present thorny dilemmas to those concerned with defining and mapping the historical development of jazz and American music, but just as Stravinsky was, at times, capable of flattening the issues of even his own Russian musical heritage, as Taruskin so thoroughly explores in *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions*, so too may he have simplified this field. He was probably willing to accept the billing of Gershwin as "jazz," to find the music fresh and original, and to then borrow what elements he intuitively sensed would constitute viable ingredients for his own art.

[72] Mary Herron Dupree, "'Jazz,' the Critics, and American Art Music in the 1920s," *American Music* 4, no. 3 (1986): 287–301, https://doi.org/10.2307/3051611.

1946: Symphony in Three Movements and Glinka's Ruslan

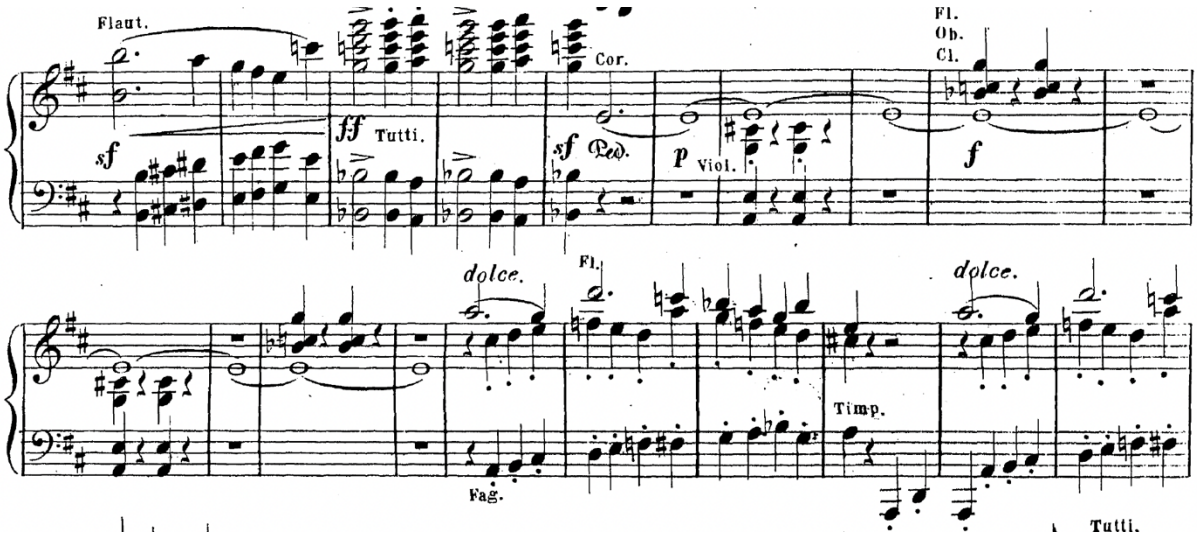
We have already seen how Stravinsky's childhood piano repertoire included the opera scores contained in his father's library (Chapter 2). This interest must have extended into his adult life as well: Stravinsky's third child, Sviatoslav Soulima, recalled that Stravinsky once "called me in his room one day, and he had written for me a transcription of a Glinka aria, and even then I knew how important it was. Imagine Stravinsky writing especially for his son a transcription of a very beautiful *cavatina* from *Ruslan*, twelve pages in a little clothbound book, and it wasn't for my birthday or anything—just like that."[73] Even later in life, Stravinsky included *Ruslan*'s Overture as part of his conducting repertoire.[74]

A striking moment occurs in the Overture, wherein a pedal E hangs in suspension while two dominant seventh chords, an A and C dominant seventh, echo above and below:

Figure 34.

[73] Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out*, 72.

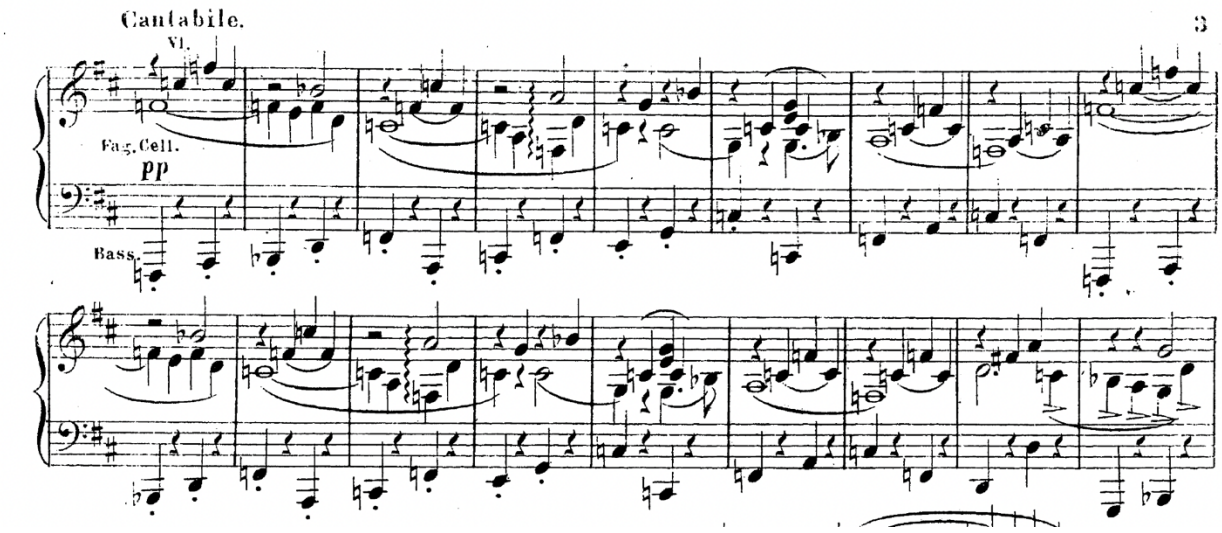
[74] In 1948, Stravinsky "conducted an all-Russian concert beginning with the overture to *Ruslan*, as well as Tchaikovsky's Second Symphony, a word the composer often programmed. (Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out*, 86.)



These chords are unified by the hanging pitch E, which is a chord tone belonging to both. Yet their distance of a minor third creates maximal contrast between key areas, and for this brief moment the tonality of the piece is totally ambiguous; either dominant could assert its control. This sense of temporary harmonic "stasis" is similar to other moments from other repertoire, already mentioned above, which seemed to stick in Stravinsky's ear; we will see an echo of it in just a moment.

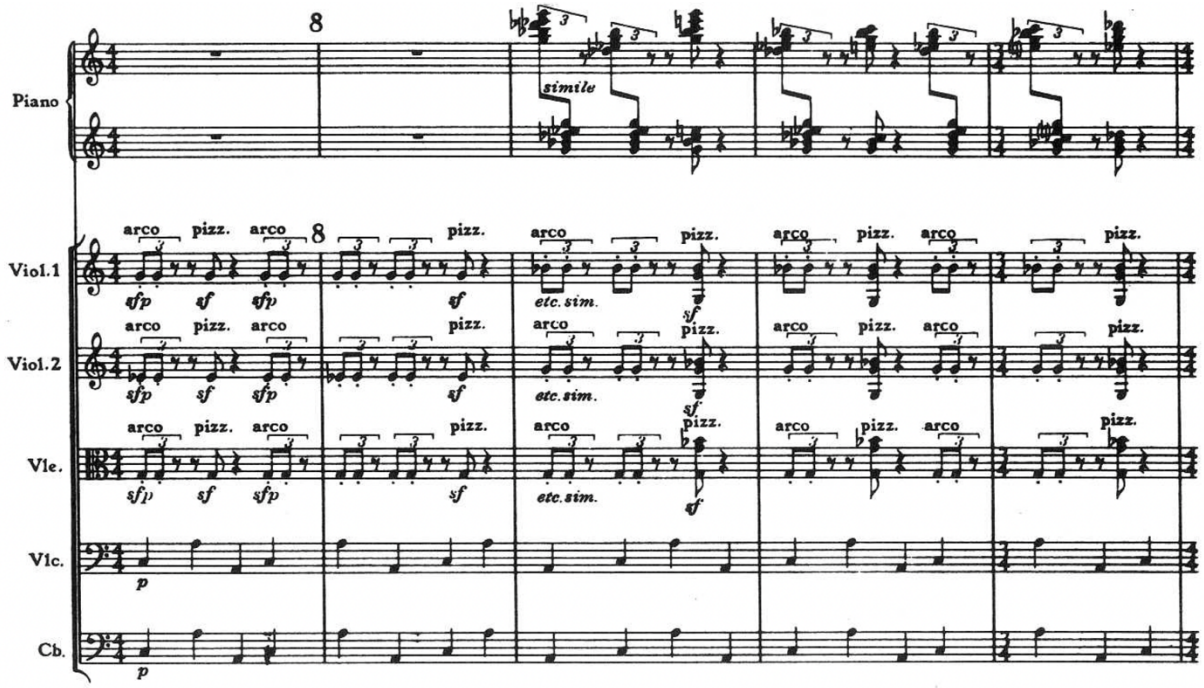
Consider another moment from the *Ruslan* Overture, wherein a contrapuntal legato texture is underpinned by a highly disjunct, leaping staccato bass line:

FIGURE 35.



Notice that this bassline sometimes suggests a subtle hemiola of a recurring three-note upward leap. Now if we combine this disjunct, leaping staccato bass line, emphasizing its hemiola, and the aforementioned harmonic "stasis" of competing dominant seventh chords a minor third apart and the disjunct, leaping staccato bass line, we can arrive at this moment from the first movement of Stravinsky's *Symphony in Three Movements*:

FIGURE 36.



While the similarity to the elements described in the *Ruslan* Overture is striking, it is also clear that this hand-memory involves quite a bit more metamorphosis than most of the foregoing examples. Here we arrive at the fuzzy boundary between what can truly be considered a repeated muscle-memory finding its way onto the page, as is so compellingly the case in the Beethoven excerpts, and the more amorphous area of "influence." The differences between the moments in *Ruslan* and the *Symphony in Three Movements* are too great for the overall similarity to be tidily packaged as a hand-memory: the pitches and voicing, especially, are too different to say that Glinka's striking dominant chords were "in" Stravinsky's hands when he wrote his dominant chords in the *Symphony in Three Movements*. More likely is that Stravinsky had played the *Ruslan* Overture at the piano enough that the sonic effect—the two dominant chords a minor third apart, sharing one pitch, suspended against a static texture—entered his imagination where it could be subjected to the various metamorphoses necessary to produce the highly original result we see in the *Symphony in Three Movements*. Here we are beginning to depart from the

more clear-cut examples of true hand-memories and sail into the relatively un-chartable territory of the composer's inner imagination, and as such, will now recommence with examination of unambiguously physically-influenced material from later in the composer's life: pedagogical material for the keyboard.

CHAPTER 4: UNLIKELY BEDFELLOWS? STRAVINSKY, CZERNY, AND PHILIPP

"STRONG, AGILE, CLEVER FINGERS"

While young pianists today are likely to point to Charles-Louise Hanon's *The Virtuoso Pianist* as the go-to compendium of mechanical technique exercises, Stravinsky's preference in this regard was for the work of composer Isidor Philipp:

> [Stravinsky] had studied with Philipp a few years earlier in preparing to play his new and pianistically awkward Concerto for Piano and Winds, the work with which Stravinsky had introduced himself to the public as a pianist. As a teacher of both father and son, Philipp's pedagogy should not be undervalued, for in very direct ways it shaped their pianism. His important *Complete School of Piano Technique for the Pianoforte*, for example, was a guiding influence for Igor's piano writing, although these etudes have now fallen out of favor and are hardly known.[75]

Beyond the immediate utility with which Phillip's exercises served Stravinsky's preparation to perform works for piano and orchestra, Stravinsky evidently remained attached to them for much of the rest of his life, as Griffiths notes:

> Vera Stravinsky and Robert Craft, who cite Klemperer in 1978, confirm the profound impact of the composer's association with Philipp stating that Stravinsky based his whole piano-training ritual upon a key Philipp text for more than two decades subsequent to this initial and possibly sole course of lessons… here is clear evidence of Stravinsky's adoption of Philipp's didactic literature as the basis for his piano technique throughout his fifteen-year concert career and beyond.[76]

Both Joseph and Griffiths enticingly suggest possible connections between Stravinsky's piano writing and the pedagogic compositions of Isidor Phillip, but neither undertakes a close, side-by-

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[75] Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out*, 77.

[76] Griffiths, *Stravinsky's Piano: Genesis of a Musical Language*, 175.

side reading which might conclusively demonstrate such connections. Joseph goes so far as to illuminate the specific types of exercises that Stravinsky is likely to have practiced most:

> Igor's copy of Philipp's exercises… is abundantly marked. Exercises built on the chromatic scale, as well as those employing short arpeggios, octaves, and double sixths, were particularly helpful, and he carefully dated them to track his progress. While this valuable primary source demonstrates how seriously Stravinsky took his piano practice, it also helps explain the composer's unique compositional approach to the keyboard. Those familiar with the Piano Concerto, and the slightly later *Sonata* and *Serenade en la*, will immediately understand; it is impossible to miss their reliance on Philipp's exercises as useful models. Many of the compositional sketches for these works reveal that Stravinsky experimented with various fingerings for certain sections that are similar to those found in his copy of Philipp's manual. Much of the idiosyncratic passage work of Stravinsky's piano writing in the 1920s owes greatly to Philipp's influence.[77]

Far from threatening the quality and originality of Stravinsky's piano music, Joseph's claim that humble finger exercises could provide Stravinsky a kind of "model" serves to bring his music back to the realm of the immediately tangible and—that overriding concern of the great composer—the bodily and the kinesthetic. We can locate this thread in Stravinsky's own words, as he describes his decidedly finger-oriented experience composing his 1919 work *Piano Rag Music*:

> I returned to Morges, and finished a piano piece I had begun some time before with Artur Rubinstein and his strong, agile, clever fingers in mind. I dedicated this *Piano Rag Music* to him. I was inspired by the same ideas, and my aim was the same, as in *Ragtime*, but in this case I stressed the percussion possibilities of the piano. What fascinated me most of all in the work was that the different rhythmic episodes were dictated by the fingers themselves. My own fingers seemed to enjoy it so much that I began to practice the piece; not that I wanted to play it in public—my pianistic repertoire even today is too limited to fill a recital program—but simply for my personal satisfaction. Fingers are not to be despised: they are the great

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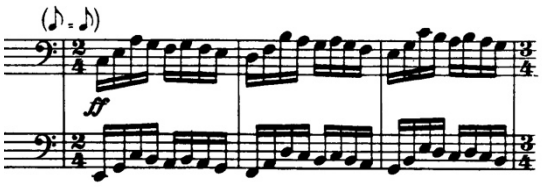
[77] Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out*, 79–80.

> inspirers, and, in contact with a musical instrument, often given birth to subconscious ideas which might otherwise never come to life.[78]

In the "strong, agile, clever fingers" that Stravinsky celebrates we find again an unconscious echo of his pianistic-pedagogical grandfather Leschetizky, who boldly claimed, "If you have anything to say at the piano, say it with your fingers!"[79] It seems that Stravinsky, whether or not he actually heard this exhortation, enacted Leschetizky's sentiment not as a performer but as a composer, in that he willingly imbued the fingers themselves with a level of creative agency few other composers would dare to attempt. Yet underpinning closer examinations of Stravinsky's piano music, and discussions of possible links to pedagogical models, should be an awareness of the composer's abiding trust in the quality and durability of his spontaneously generated material, whatever its latent source may be, and a faith of the composer's sincerity in employing those materials without recourse to parody or pastiche. Consider, by way of counterexample, the delightfully tongue-in-cheek passagework with which Shostakovich crowns his Second Piano Concerto:

FIGURE 37.

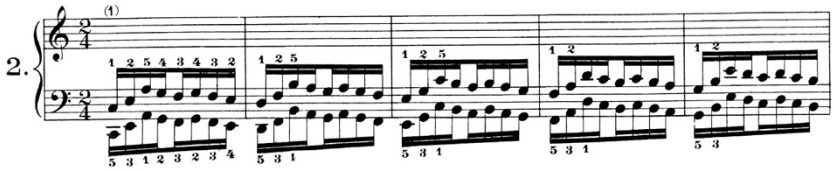


A more deliberate reference to Hanon's *The Virtuoso Pianist* could hardly be possible:

FIGURE 38.

[78] Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 82.

[79] Woodhouse, "How Leschetizky Taught," 221.

The spirit  in which Shostakovich makes this reference, unlike many instances of reference within his music, is not bitter or mocking, but lighthearted, almost frolicking. And yet the fact remains that in this instance, Hanon still serves as a source of humor. In a work lovingly dedicated to his son to perform at his graduation from conservatory, Shostakovich clearly wants to give the pianist a good-natured tousle, as if to say, "See, you *do* need to practice those exercises!" And while many more instances of pedagogic "ribbing" can be found in piano literature,[80] I propose that this is emphatically *not* the spirit in which pedagogical influences manifest within Stravinsky's music. Stravinsky professed much admiration for the utility and improvement which technical exercises could offer him; he found the Phillip exercises to be of great value, and it seems doubtful that he would subject them to intentional pastiche. Unlike his somewhat mixed feelings about the perhaps over-played repertoire to which he was continually subjected as a youth, Stravinsky seems to have encountered Phillip on his own terms and thus to have engendered a less complicated sense of respect for that pedagogue. Likewise, he expressed remarkable admiration for the now generally neglected composer and pedagogue Carl Czerny, as quoted in Chapter 2. Apparently, this approval was won through many hours of diligent practice, as Joseph notes:

> I found in Stravinsky's library in Basel his greatly worn copy of Czerny's [Forty Daily Exercises] Op. 337. It was bountifully marked with his fingerings, along with his own metronomic calibrations, methodically

[80] See, for example, the first of Debussy's *Études*, in which an unbearably dry five-finger pattern finds itself irresistibly enchanted into a colorful gigue, as if Debussy cast the musical equivalent of the spell that transforms a lumpy pumpkin into a magnificent royal carriage.

> charting his daily progress toward attaining the optimum speed Czerny designates. Even more relevant, several of Czerny's figurations provide a clear pianistic model for Stravinsky's *Capriccio*. Indeed, the 1929 opus virtually lifts passages from Czerny that the composer obviously studied and marked. And like the Philipp exercises, several of Czerny's etudes (all bearing the composer's notations) had provided Stravinsky with an important compositional prototype for the earlier Concerto for Piano and Winds in 1923.[81]

Taken together as a significant source of technical exercises for the composer's mature years, it seems reasonable to conclude that Czerny and Phillip exercised some amount of influence on Stravinsky's pianistic writing in his mature works. This influence would have, at the very least, been manifested through hand-memories of material so diligently practiced; however, unlike the repertoire imprints of childhood, which seem to stick indelibly regardless of the composer's opinions about the music at hand, the Czerny and Phillip technical exercises possess a genuine kinship with the music bearing their stamp. Whereas in the previous chapter, we saw instances in which Stravinsky's echoes of Beethoven could be construed as vengefully taking the older composer to task, the pedagogical material addressed here appears to have offered to Stravinsky the simple utility of pianistic models well-suited to his mode of music expression.

Griffiths writes of how Phillip's piano pedagogy was an almost ideal counterpart to Stravinsky's views on musical execution: his emphasis on "clear articulation, sparing use of the pedal, the *jeu perle*—and total respect for the composer's score."[82] As such, it seems likely that if Stravinsky borrowed from Czerny or Phillip, the act sprung not only from his hand-memories of engrained practice material, but also from a sincere respect for, and desire to emulate, the

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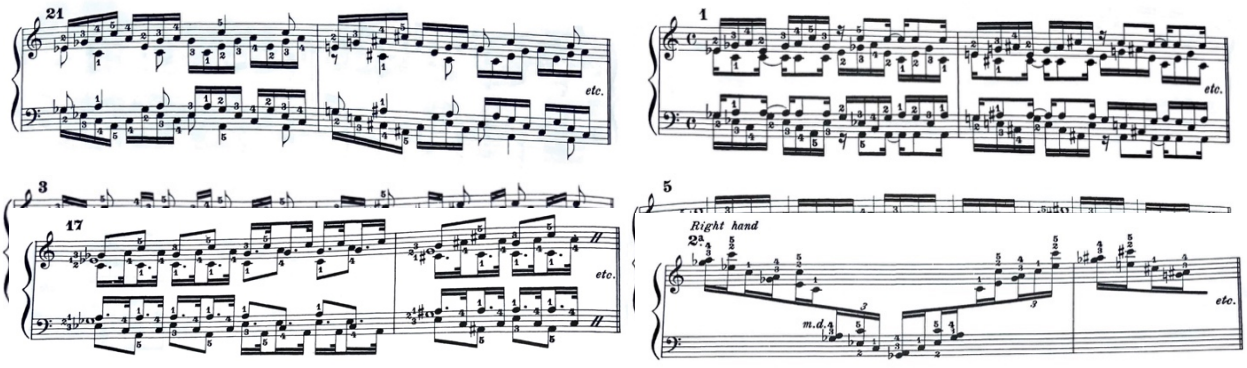
[81] Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out*, 91.

[82] Griffiths, *Stravinsky's Piano: Genesis of a Musical Language*, 179.

clear, dry, "objective" keyboard style manifested by these two pedagogically-oriented composers.

The exercises in Phillip's *Exercises for the Independence of the Fingers* merit special consideration for the fact that they utilize, almost exclusively, fully diminished seventh chords; in this sense, they contrast radically with many other exercise books. Hanon's *Virtuoso Pianist*, for example, utilizes only white-key patterns for more than two-thirds its length, and while these exercises can be easily transposed into other keys, the printed score presents, for the most part, a stream of pitches unencumbered by accidentals or key signatures. And while other pedagogical exercise collections, such as Brahms's, Liszt's, Dohnányi's, and, indeed, Czerny's, do contain varying levels of chromatic activity, none approach the density of mixed accidentals that Phillip's provides. Beyond the continual stream of mixed accidentals, however, the Phillip *Exercises* also make use of continuous re-texturing; far from merely changing the order of fingers or the contour of line, Phillip's *Exercises* displays a marked awareness of various textural possibilities available within a mechanistic framework by making use of multi-voice patterns enacting imitative counterpoint, the sense foreground and background, the use of shifting accent patterns, and other musical techniques generally much more sophisticated than many other pedagogical keyboard manuals. Several representative examples of Phillip's *Exercises* are given below.

FIGURE 39.



In this sense, the Phillip *Exercises* appear—visually—similar to much of the keyboard writing of Stravinsky. In fact, the subtlety and variety of Phillip's approach to the keyboard sometimes elevates his exercises tantalizingly close to becoming proper musical compositions in their own right; even the small handful of examples above would easily furnish enough textural interest to carry a substantial amount of musical material. It is not difficult to imagine how, provided with compelling original musical material, Phillip's *Exercises* could readily serve as the keyboard-idiomatic framework for a solo piano work or a piano concerto. Indeed, this seems to have been exactly what transpired in Stravinsky's sublimation of this practice material; like so many other sources of inspiration, it had to enter through that most porous of surfaces, the tips of his fingers. This is not to say that Stravinsky "needed" Phillip's exercises in order to compose his Piano Concerto, but rather that a composer brimming with raw material may have benefitted greatly from tapping into a source of "ready-made" molds into which to pour his original ideas.

Whereas in the previous chapter, we saw examples of Stravinsky's hand-memories as unintentional artifacts of concert repertoire, here we have seen some evidence that Stravinsky's composition embraced pedagogical repertoire as well. Rarely do composers cite pedagogical works except, as noted, for the purpose of humor or parody. Stravinsky's idiom, however, found more subtle adaptations of pedagogical keyboard material. Thanks to Stravinsky's musical priorities of precision, clarity, and unaffected directness of execution, he was able to freely lift pianistic textural frameworks from Czerny and Phillip, whose pedagogical works, by their very nature, abide by the same priorities. For other composers, reference to established teaching materials usually takes the form of pastiche and thus constitutes a stepping *outside* their normal idiom. Stravinsky, however, absorbs this material seamlessly into his general style, and in doing so accomplishes what the other composers do not: an elevation of that material. It seems fitting

that a composer whose intellectual appetite was so wide and voracious would find, in music that most others write off as merely training exercises, the inspiration for a unique keyboard language.

CHAPTER 5: "WE HAVE TO TOUCH THE MUSIC"

In a 1957 interview for NBC's *The Wisdom Series*, Stravinsky is filmed in his Hollywood home "working" on *Agon* (the score had already been completed and was being premiered in two days) and fielding questions from Robert Craft. As the scene fades in, Stravinsky is seated at the piano, testing ideas at the keyboard and then drawing staves onto blank pages with his staff-drawing pen. He calls on Craft to help in trying out an idea that requires more than his two hands, and then delivers what might be considered a credo:

> We have to *touch* the music, not only to hear it. Because touching it, we feel the vibration of the music. It's a very important thing when you think about Beethoven's case. You remember when Beethoven was absolutely deaf, he took his stick in his mouth, like this pencil, and he played the music—*touching* the stand: to have the vibrations. Because he needed to enjoy the vibrations, otherwise the music was an abstract matter for him. And this is what he didn't want.[83]

Craft cuts in: "Do your ideas always occur to you at the piano?," to which Stravinsky responds, "Mostly at the piano, mostly when I touch the instrument… When I am looking for some distance of my fingers, which correspond to intervals, and these intervals are really musical ideas." Stravinsky's near obsession with experiencing his music as a tangible—literally *touchable*—object forms a thread that runs through his entire life. The above statements echo very closely one made in his *Autobiography* two decades earlier, when he recalls encountering a string orchestra containing the instrument he calls the "cymbalon" (today usually spelled

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[83] *A Conversation with Igor Stravinsky, 1957*, YouTube video, NBC's Wisdom Series, accessed September 6, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJIXobO94Jo.

"cimbalon"), a type of hammered dulcimer upon which the performer strikes the exposed strings with wooden sticks:

> I was captivated by [the cymbalon] which delighted me by its rich, full tone and by the player's direct contact with the strings through the little sticks held between his fingers, and even by its trapezoid shape.[84]

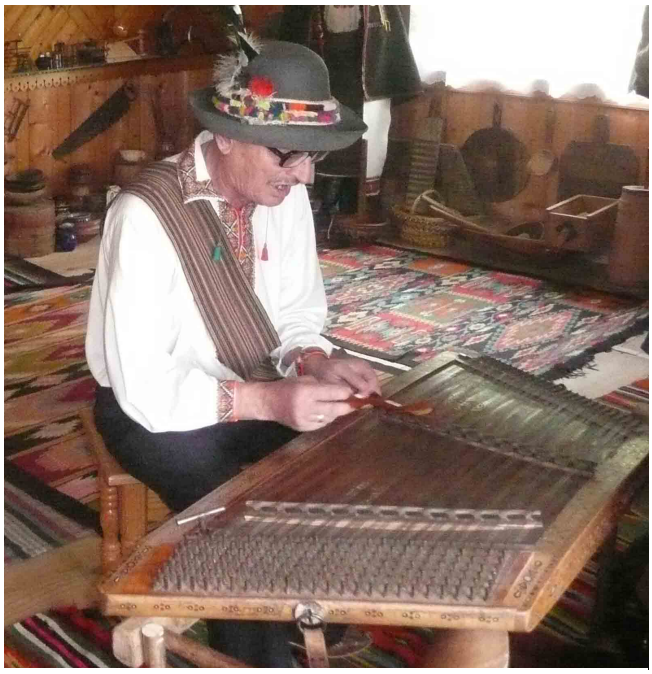

FIGURE 40.

The delight with which Stravinsky describes the cimbalon surely finds analogy with his delight in the act of musical composition as a tactile process. In this sense, we can almost imagine that, at the deepest level of Stravinsky's compositional intuition, the piano becomes inconsequential. This may seem a shocking statement at the close of this monograph, when, indeed, all the evidence from Stravinsky's compositional world leads back to the piano as, in Joseph's words, his "compositional fulcrum." But perhaps it is not so much the *piano*, per se, that forms Stravinsky's composition fulcrum, as it is his very *physical nature*, a nature in which the piano happens to be, by overwhelming cultural pressure, the central nexus at which most composers must discover and hone the very essence of their musical identity. It is true that Stravinsky's music is, through and through, undeniably and intrinsically "pianistic"; the shape of the keyboard, as well as the shape of the composer's hands, find expression in everything the composer wrote. And surely there exist other composers whose

[84] Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 61.

inner musical experiences were also innately tactile but expressed via a different instrument. Perhaps similar arguments can be made for Paganini and the neck of the violin, or Tárrega and the fretboard of the guitar, and similar searches undertaken of how they subsumed their own hand-memories of learned repertoire to re-compose those memories later in transcendent forms. The point is not necessarily a desire to move Stravinsky scholarship closer to the *keyboard*—although that does seem to remain extremely under-tilled soil—but to seek more Roger Shattuck's vision of the composer's "corporeal imagination," and how that imagination might have manifested itself in contributing to the composer's music. Indeed, for Shattuck, the piano was *not* the central issue, coming as it does *between* the composer's body and the composer's music; rather, for Shattuck the composer's body *itself* was the issue:

> [Stravinsky] composed with his whole body, not just with his enormous ears and sharp eyes… This son of a famous opera singer loved amateur theatrical before he loved the piano… I think it's essential to understand that S.'s music emanates from a whole dancing body, his own.[85]

Shattuck's image of the great composer is that of an irrepressibly active physical presence, one which could not help but move and gesticulate and vibrate in all manners and with the greatest energy. To Shattuck, the man's music emanates not from the keyboard, but from this body: regarding a photograph of Stravinsky doing gymnastics, Shattuck claims "a musical psychoarcheologist could reconstruct all his music from that one image."[86] This is not too bold a claim for a composer who once stated:

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[85] Shattuck, "The Devil's Dance: Stravinsky's Corporal Imagination," 84.

[86] Shattuck, "The Devil's Dance: Stravinsky's Corporal Imagination," 83.

> I have always had a horror of listening to music with my eyes shut, with nothing for them to do. The sight of the gestures and movements of the various parts of the body producing the music is fundamentally necessary if it is to be grasped in all its fullness.[87]

The human body, then, takes a central place in Stravinsky's experience of music—perhaps even of life itself, as Joseph notes, "He regularly recounted his life in terms of memorable visual images… These snapshots exhibit an abiding interest in the human body's physical energy."[88] This seems, at first, to contradict the central claim of this monograph, that the *keyboard* is central to the composer's output. Yet a bridge can, and should, be made between the bodily-holistic "corporeal imagination" of Shattuck and the "keyboard as compositional fulcrum" of Joseph and Griffiths. That bridge is the undeniable fact that Stravinsky ultimately chose, always, to channel this tremendous bodily physical imagination through the keyboard. Even before it would be a "fulcrum," the keyboard would have to be Stravinsky's "clearinghouse," the place where his physical impulses could be converted into musical currency. Perhaps other composers—such as Paganini and Tárrega—built similar tendencies and capabilities into other instruments, and Stravinsky's fascination with the cimbalon does suggest that he was aware of the possibilities of "making contact" with music through instruments other than the piano. In fact, just as Stravinsky worried over the composition of his works for piano and orchestra, wishing to provide a suitable vessel for virtuosic technique without sacrificing musical integrity, so too did he fret over his *Violin Concerto*; in the latter case, tellingly, his concern was magnified by the fact that he did not play violin:

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[87] Stravinsky, An Autobiography, 72.

[88] Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out*, 112–113.

> I hesitated [in writing a violin concerto] at first, because I am not a violinist, and I was afraid that my slight knowledge of that instrument would not be sufficient to enable me to solve the many problems which would necessarily arise in the course of a major work specially composed for it.[89]

This concern, of course, is not precipitated in general matters of orchestration: Stravinsky draws the reasonable conclusion that his concerning lack of firsthand knowledge of the instrument is engendered only in the special circumstance of composing a concerto for it. (Mendelssohn was delayed in the composition of his own Violin Concerto for the same reason, and surely many more composers have experienced the same need for careful research and consultation with performers when composing a concerto for an instrument that they themselves do not play.) And yet when Stravinsky goes on to describe the nature of his concern, he again delivers a kind of personal compositional credo, that the music should quite literally be "in one's finger tips":

> I was not a complete novice in handling the violin… But a concerto certainly offered a far vaster field of experience. To know the technical possibilities of an instrument without being able to play it is one thing; to have that technique in one's finger tips is quite another. I realized the difference, and before beginning the work I consulted Hindemith, who is a perfect violinist. I asked him whether the fact that I did not play the violin would make itself felt in my composition. Not only did he allay my doubts, but he went further and told me that it would be a very good thing, as it would make me avoid a routine technique, and would give rise to ideas which would not be suggested by the familiar movement of the fingers.[90]

Here we find the closest thing to a confession Stravinsky might have made on the topic: that of musical content being "suggested by the familiar movement of the fingers." In accepting Hindemith's advice that his Violin Concerto serendipitously avoids such a "problem," as it were,

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[89] Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 165.

[90] Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 168.

Stravinsky tacitly confesses that other works, especially those involving the piano, would be susceptible to such a "finger influence."

Of course, as we have seen, this is not really a problem at all. As shown above, those seemingly "familiar" patterns of movement to which Stravinsky was certainly prone become anything but "familiar" when transformed through the composer's imagination and ingenuity. What might be, to the composer, merely another repetition of an all-too-familiar sequence of fingers-upon-keys, must, before making its way to paper, first pass through the composer's mind and body, where it finds itself subjected to a kind of alchemy that renders it into a startingly fresh, new creation. That creation is what we see on the page. Hence, we should find no discomfort in Stravinsky's acceptance of "familiar movement of the fingers," as *his* sense of "familiarity" becomes, to the rest of us, the stunningly original.

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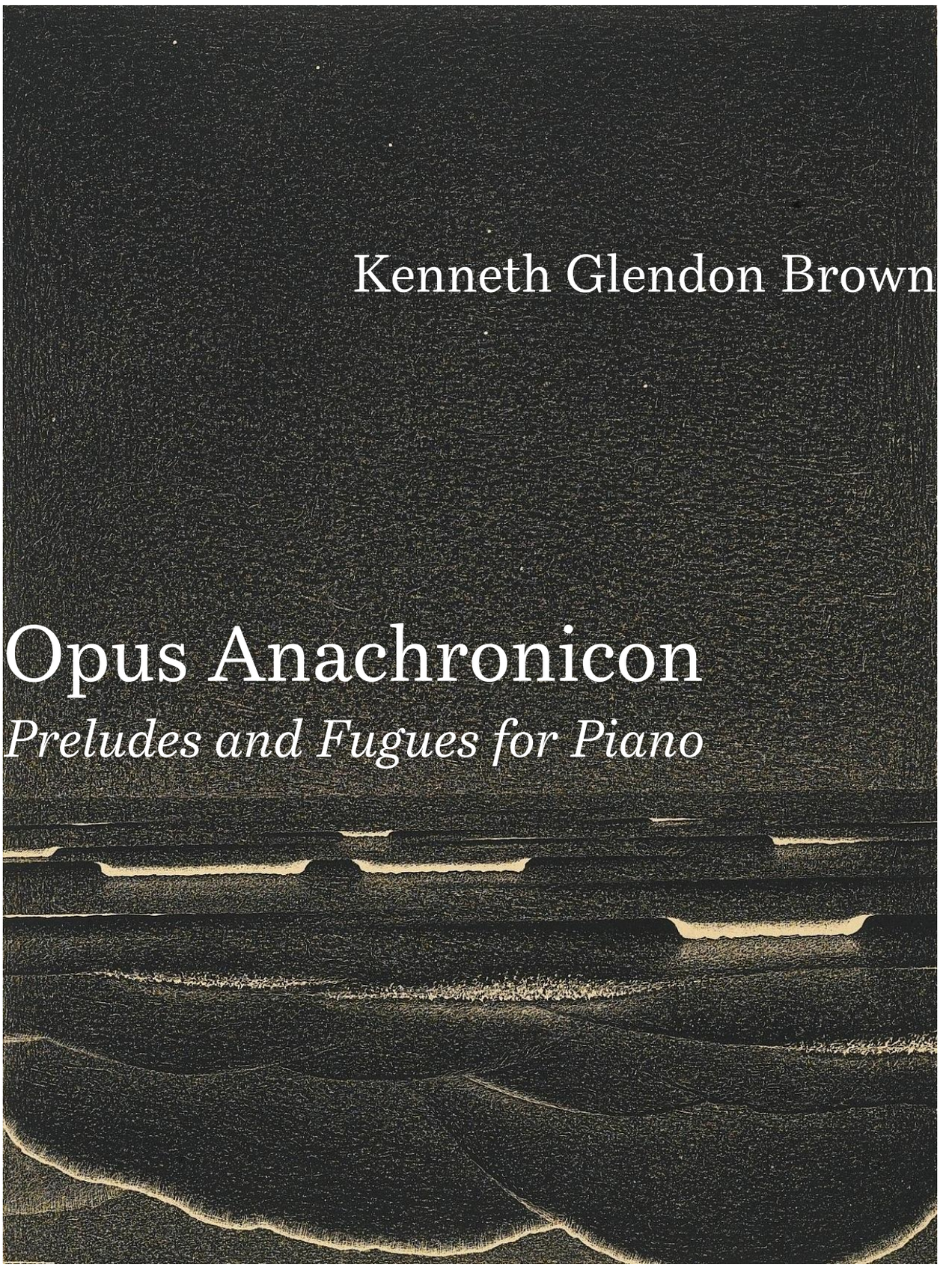
Kenneth Glendon Brown
Opus Anachronicon
Preludes and Fugues for Piano

Kenneth Glendon Brown (b. 1992)

Opus Anachronicon

Preludes and Fugues for Piano

Composed 2020 - 2022 as part of the composer's doctoral dissertation in music at UCLA.

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kennethglendonbrown.com
or
kennethglendonbrown@gmail.com

Performance Practices

The metronome marks may always be treated as approximate, and the performer should feel free to deviate a few "clicks" in either direction of the stated metronome marking. In general, organic and natural phrasing is of high importance; thus judicious *rubato* and a flexible sense of tempo are encouraged.

Pedalling is generally entrusted to the performer's taste and discretion. Except where otherwise noted, the pedal should be used liberally, in accordance with the harmony. To this end, I trust that the performer's ears, their musical sensibility, as well as the infinite nuances of their individual instrument and their sonic environment, will all lead them to far more sensitive, subtle and intelligent pedalling decisions than I could hope to exhaustively prescribe in the score. Thus, only when a counter-intuitive pedalling or a particular effect is needed, is the pedal explicitly indicated.

Performers are welcome to perform movements individually. While performers may, if they wish, perform the preludes individually as short concert pieces, it is ideal that the preludes and fugues always be performed together in their respective pairs. When performed in this manner, each fugue should follow *attacca* from its preceding prelude.

The Conception of the Set

I conceived *Opus Anachronicon* as a set of 24 Preludes and Fugues in all the major and minor keys, a contemporary tribute to the *Well-Tempered Clavier* following the precedent set by Shostakovich and Hindemith.

I created an original manner of ordering the pieces: each major key is followed by its minor subdominant, and this pairing ascends chromatically. (Thus C Major, f minor, D-flat major, f# minor, etc.). When the set is heard in its entirety, this unique ordering of keys creates a progressive "shading" in which each piece may be heard as successively "flatter" than the next, with the effect that the set continually falls further and further into darkness and dreams.

Due to the time constraint of submitting this work as part of my doctoral dissertation, I completed all 24 Preludes but only 12 of the Fugues. After much deliberation and re-shuffling of the set, I decided that, rather than excise some combination of movements and present the set as, say, 24 Preludes, or as 12 Preludes and Fugues, I would retain all of the complete movements in their original ordering and pairings, which, despite the somewhat haphazard result, is as close as possible to my original vision. Thus the set as it stands here is somewhat incomplete. Eventually I will compose the 12 remaining fugues and publish the set as originally envisioned.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my composition teacher, Dr. Richard Danielpour, for years of continual support and guidance in my studies at UCLA. This composition also owes much to my good friend and colleague, Brandon Zhou, for his patient listening and insightful criticism.

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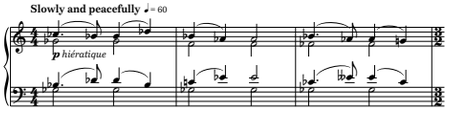
Prelude XIII



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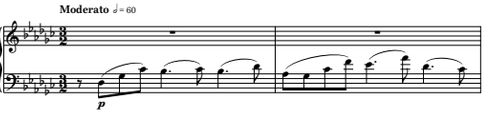

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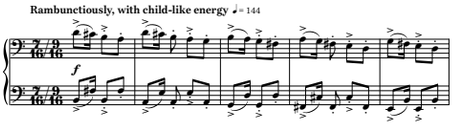
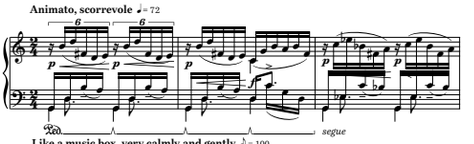


[Fugue XIV]

Prelude XV



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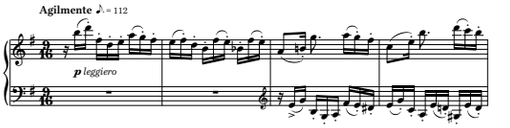

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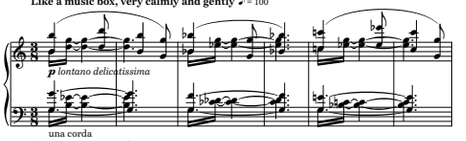
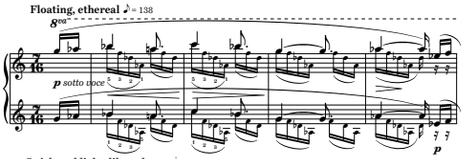


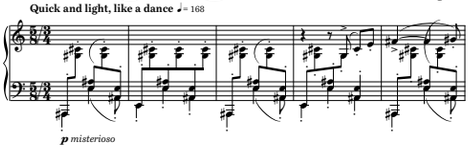
[Fugue XVI]

Prelude XVII



[Fugue XVII]

Prelude XVIII



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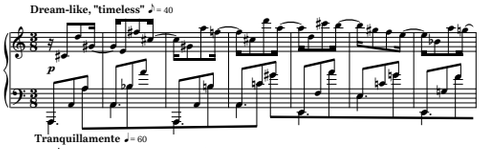

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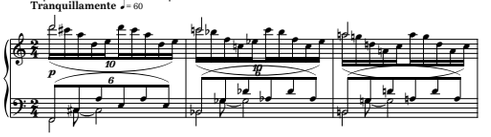
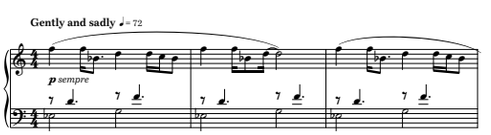


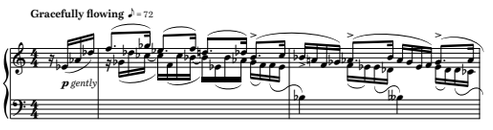
[Fugue XX]

Prelude XXI



[Fugue XXI]

Prelude XXII



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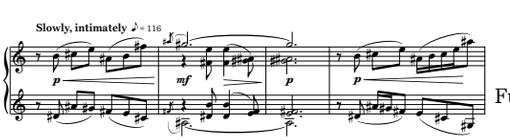

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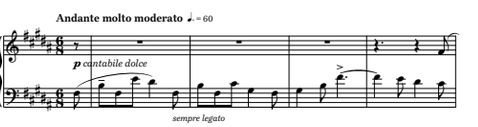

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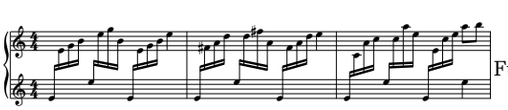

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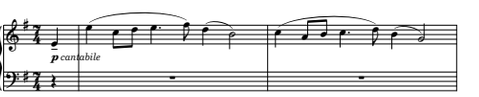
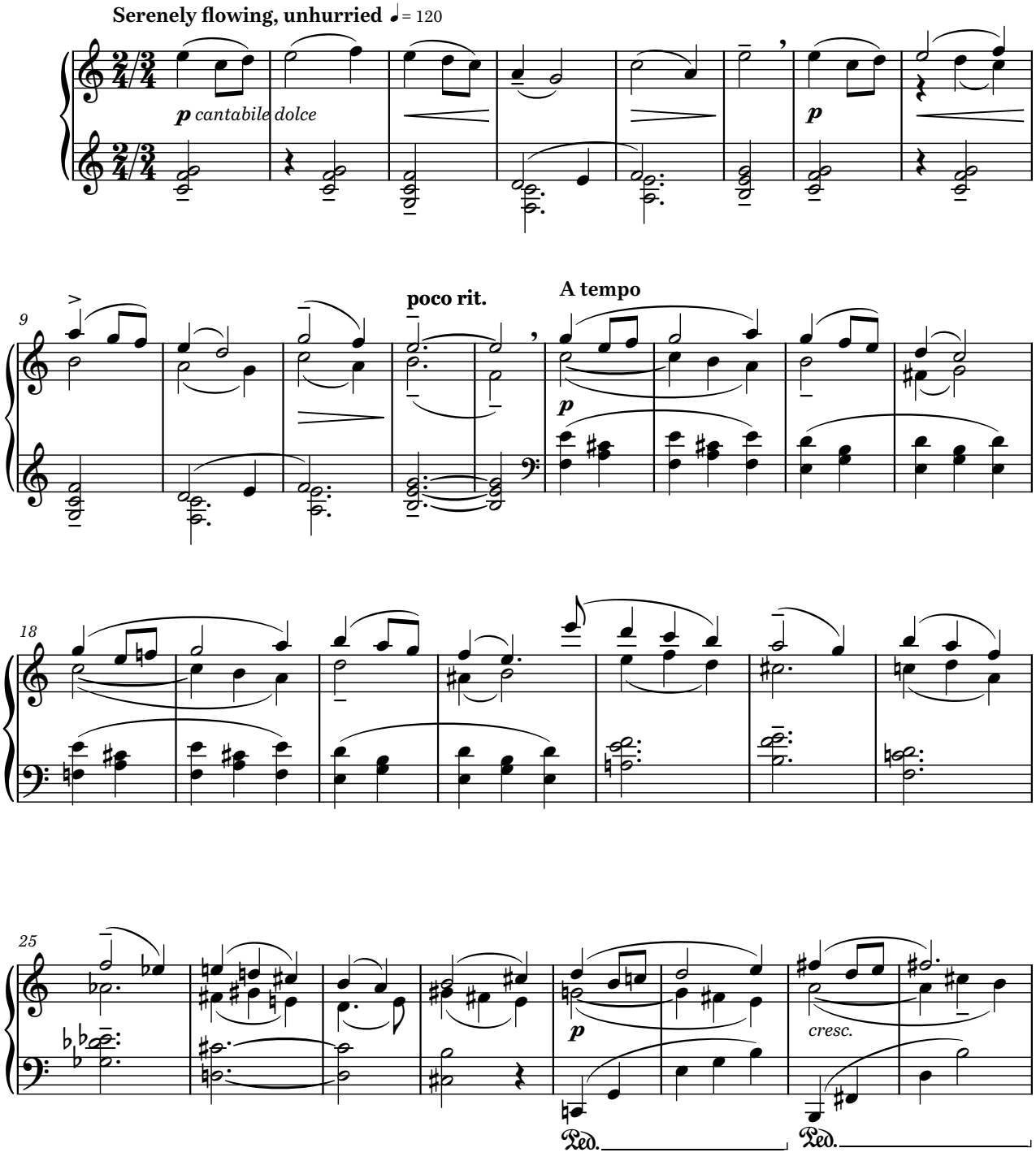
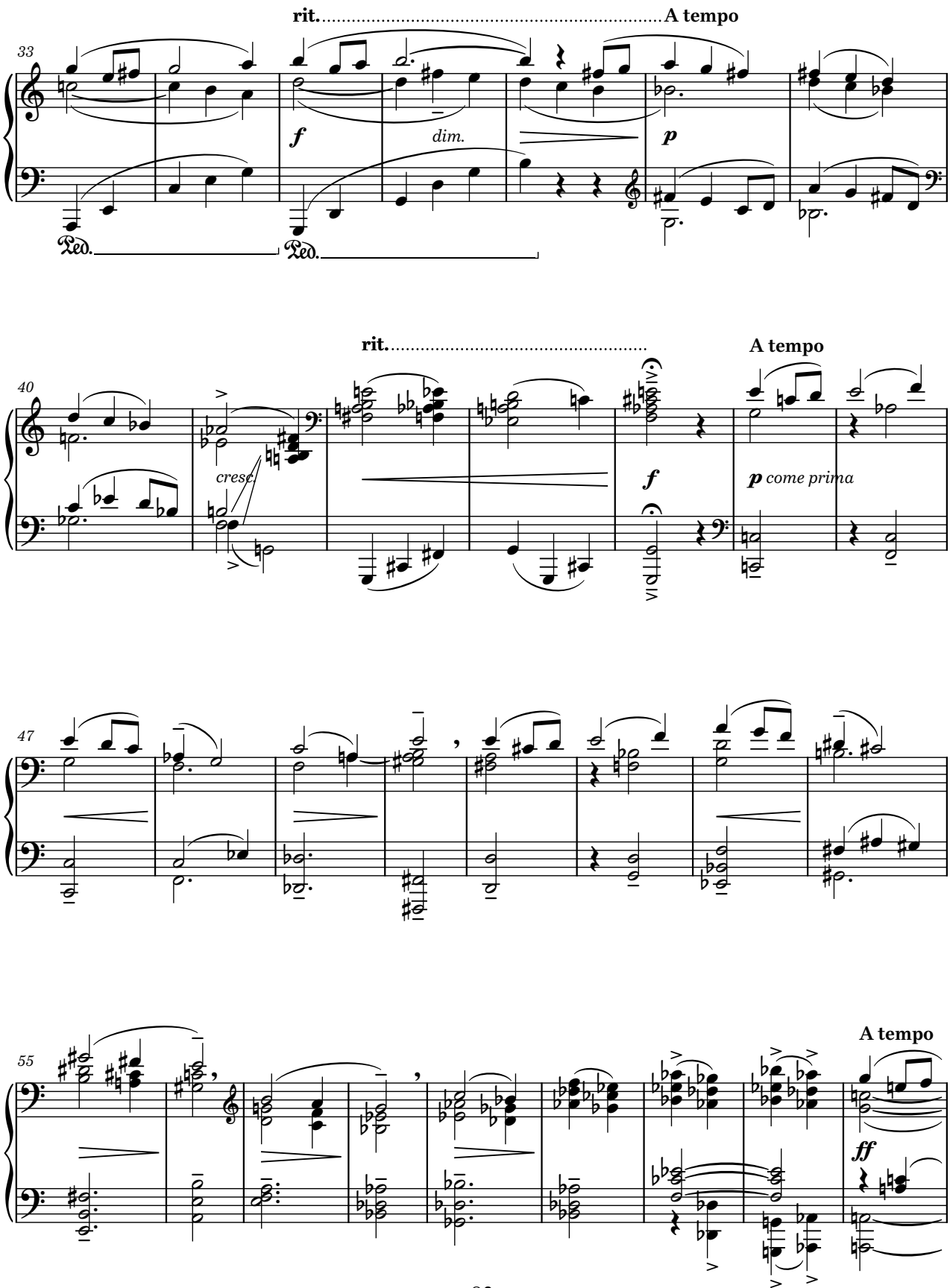


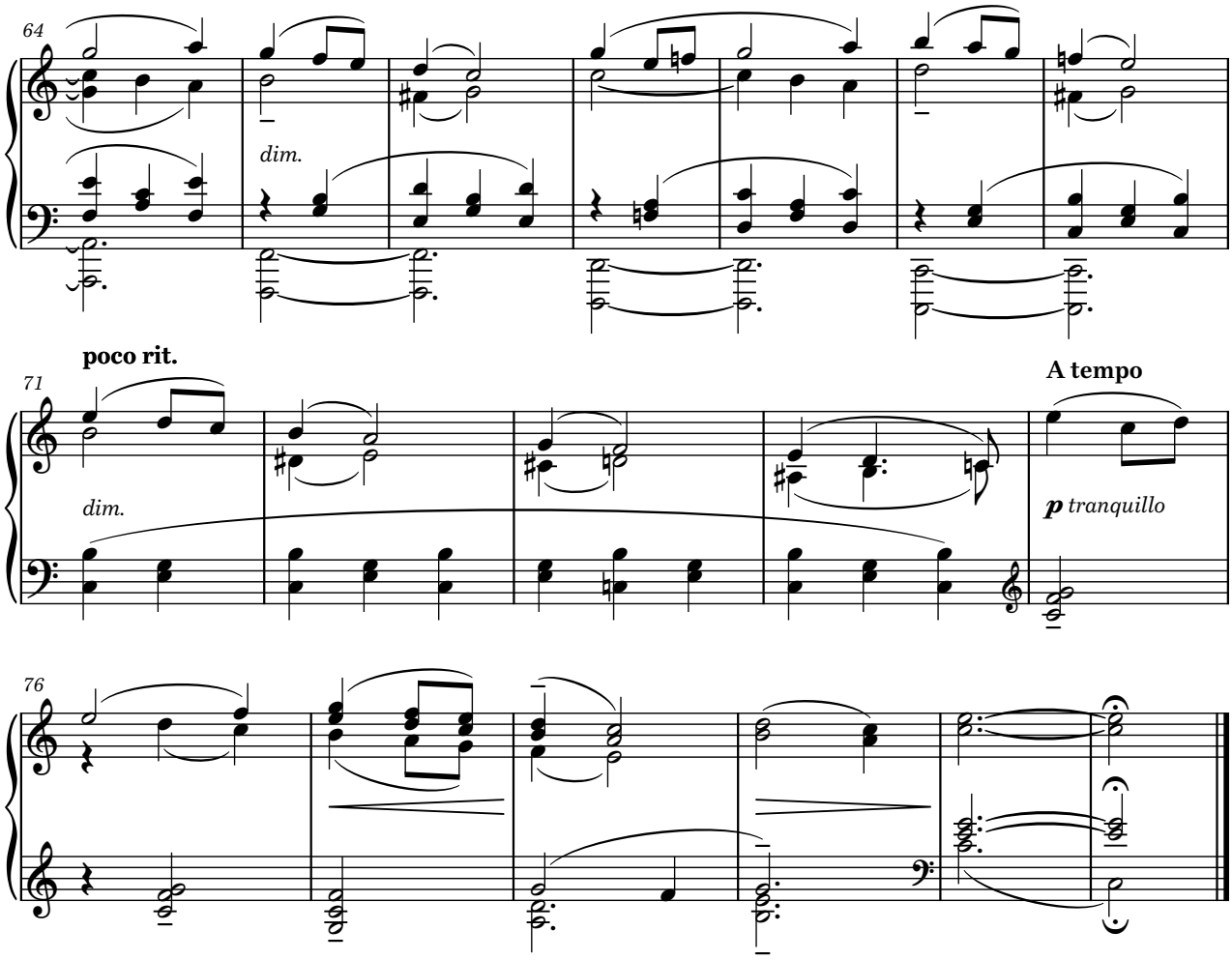
Opus Anachronicon

Kenneth Glendon Brown (b. 1992)

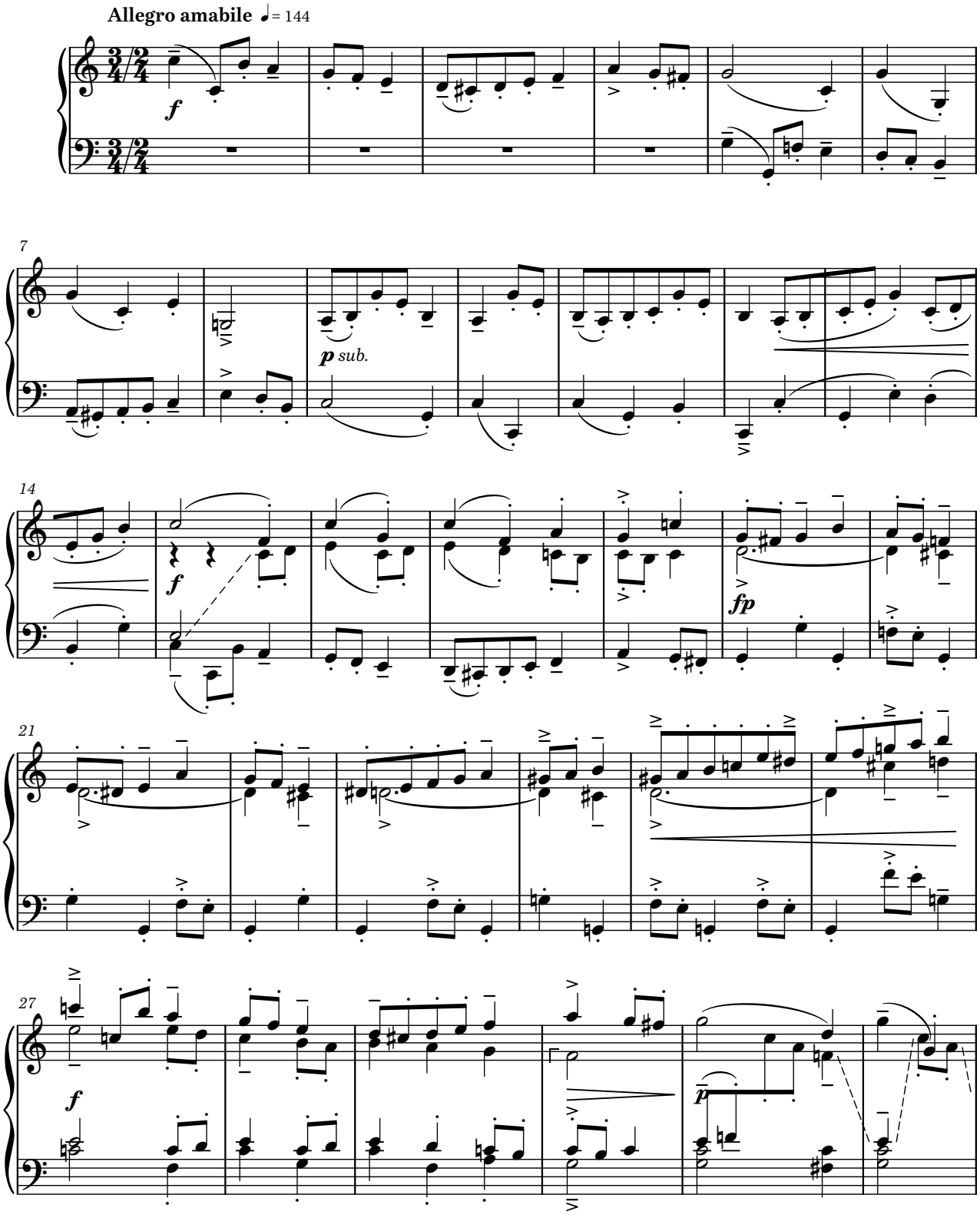
Prelude I

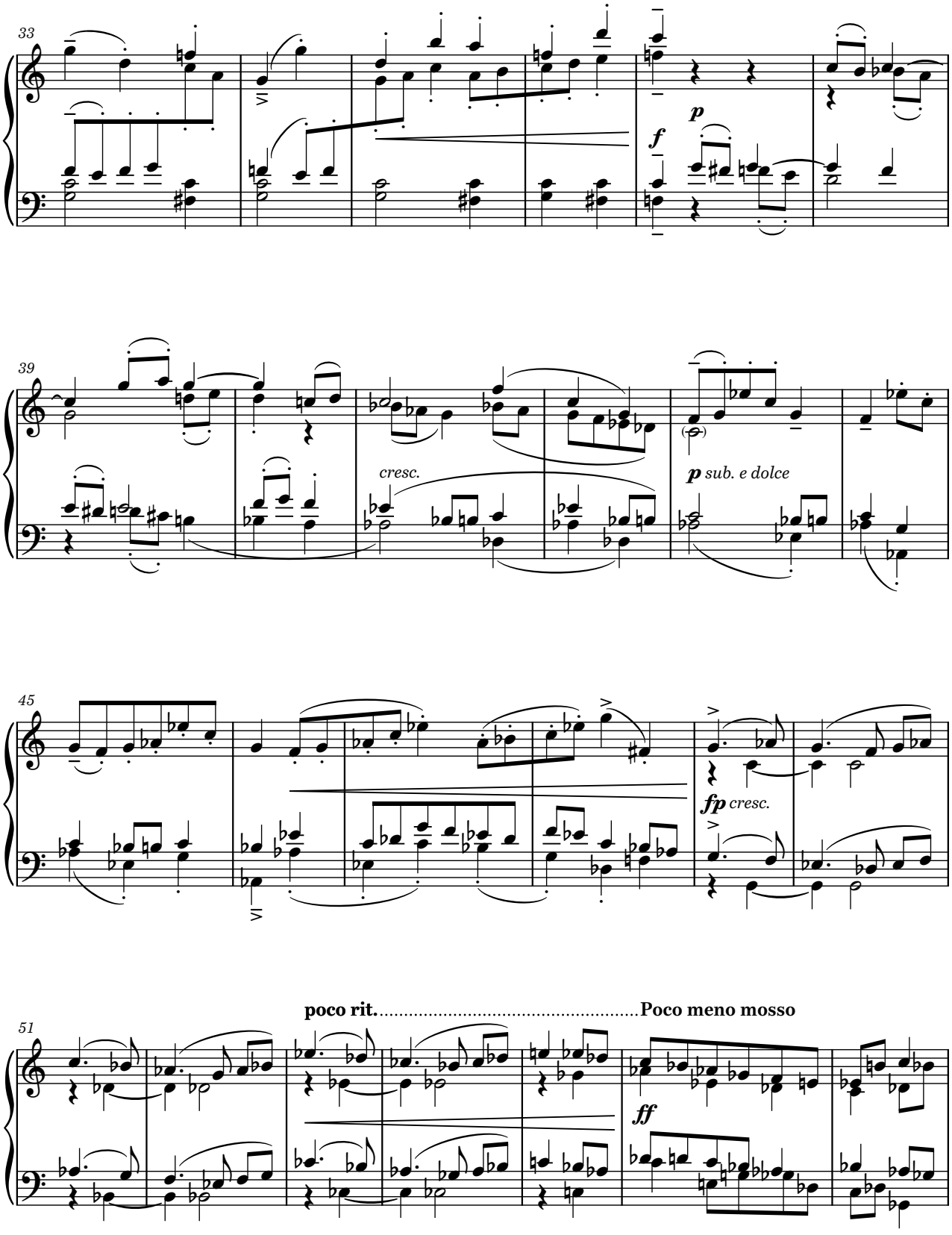


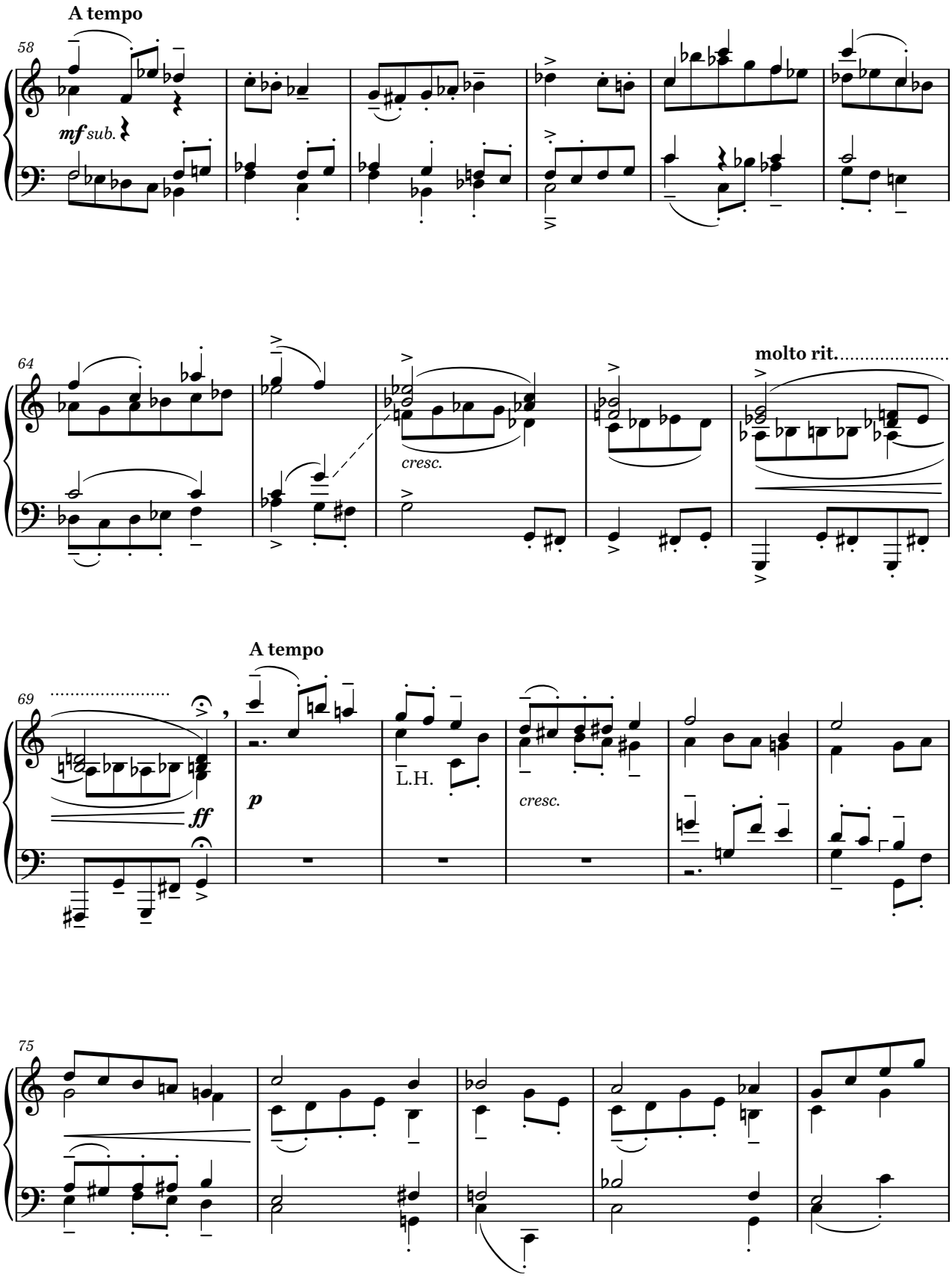

rit.
A tempo
33
f
dim.
p
Ped.
Ped.
rit.
A tempo
40
cresc.
f
p come prima
47
55
A tempo
ff

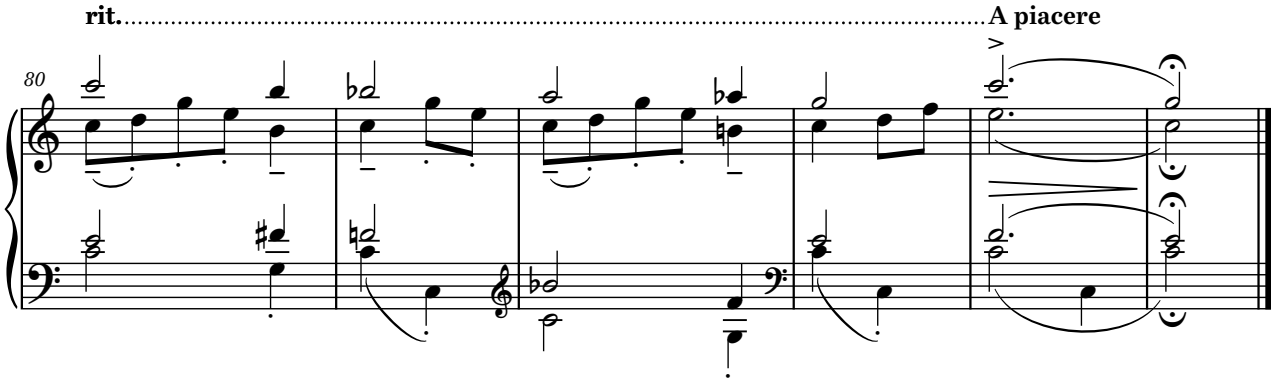

64
dim.
poco rit.
71
dim.
A tempo
p tranquillo
76

Fugue I



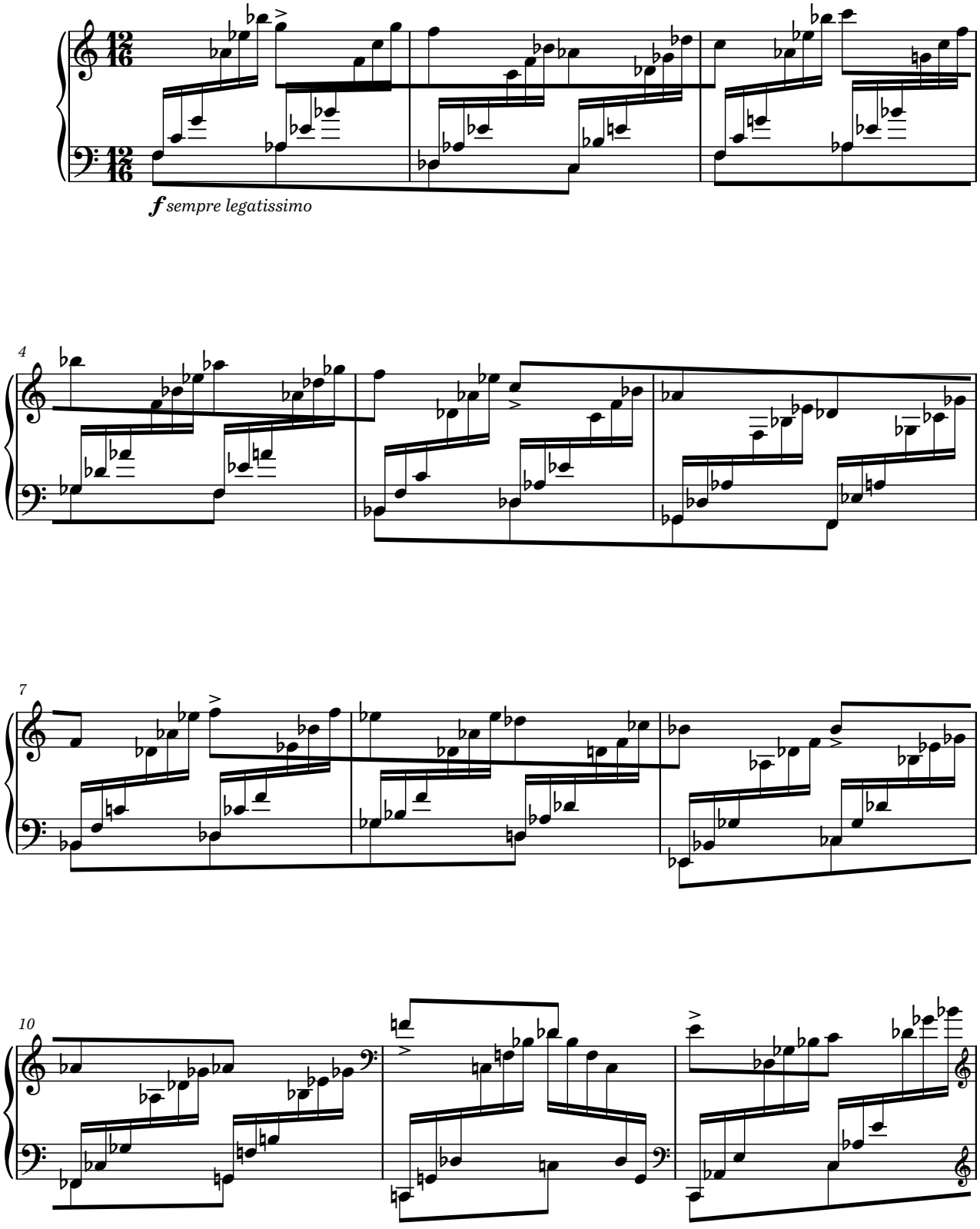

33
p
f
39
cresc.
p sub. e dolce
45
fp cresc.
poco rit.
Poco meno mosso
51
ff

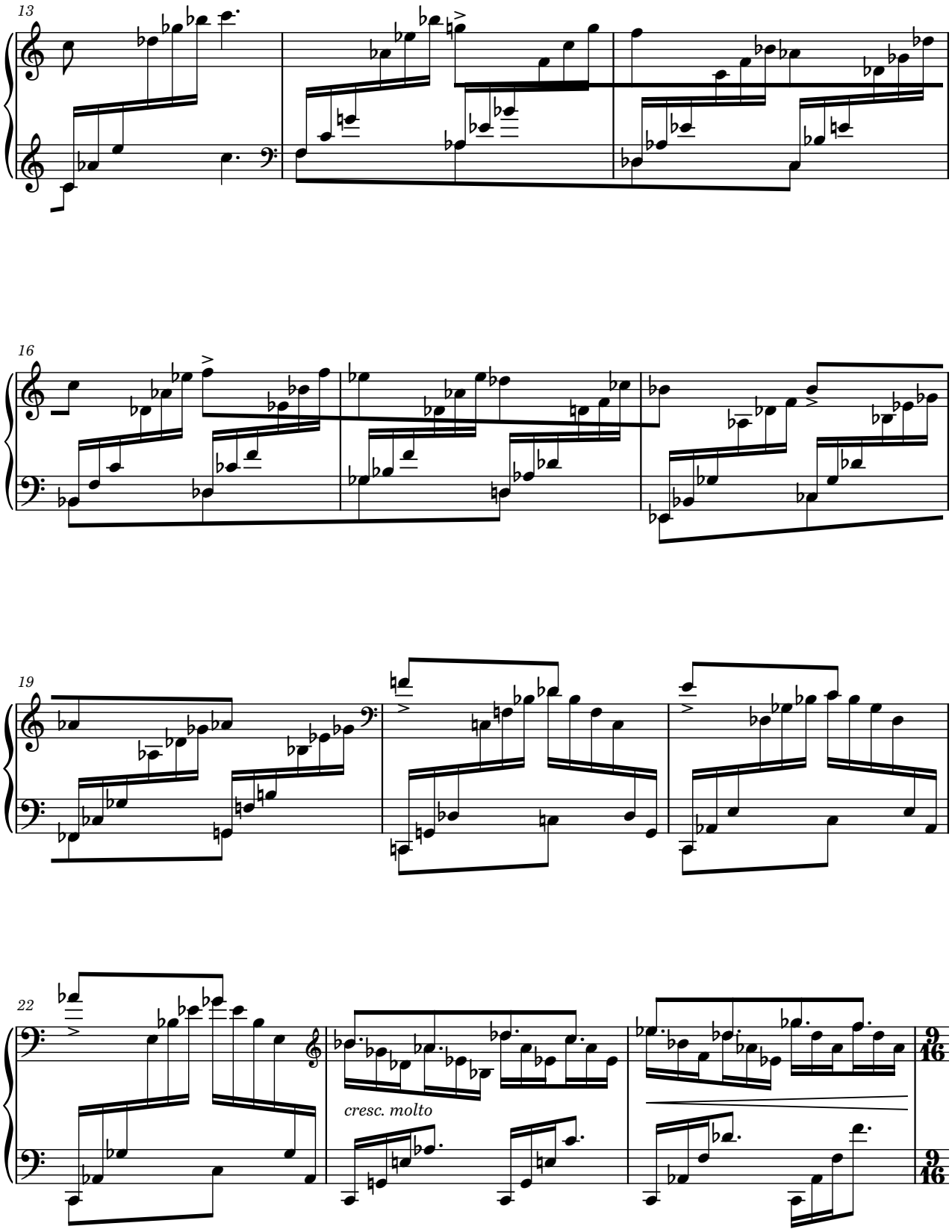

A tempo
58
mf sub.
64
cresc.
molto rit.
A tempo
69
ff
p
L.H.
cresc.
75

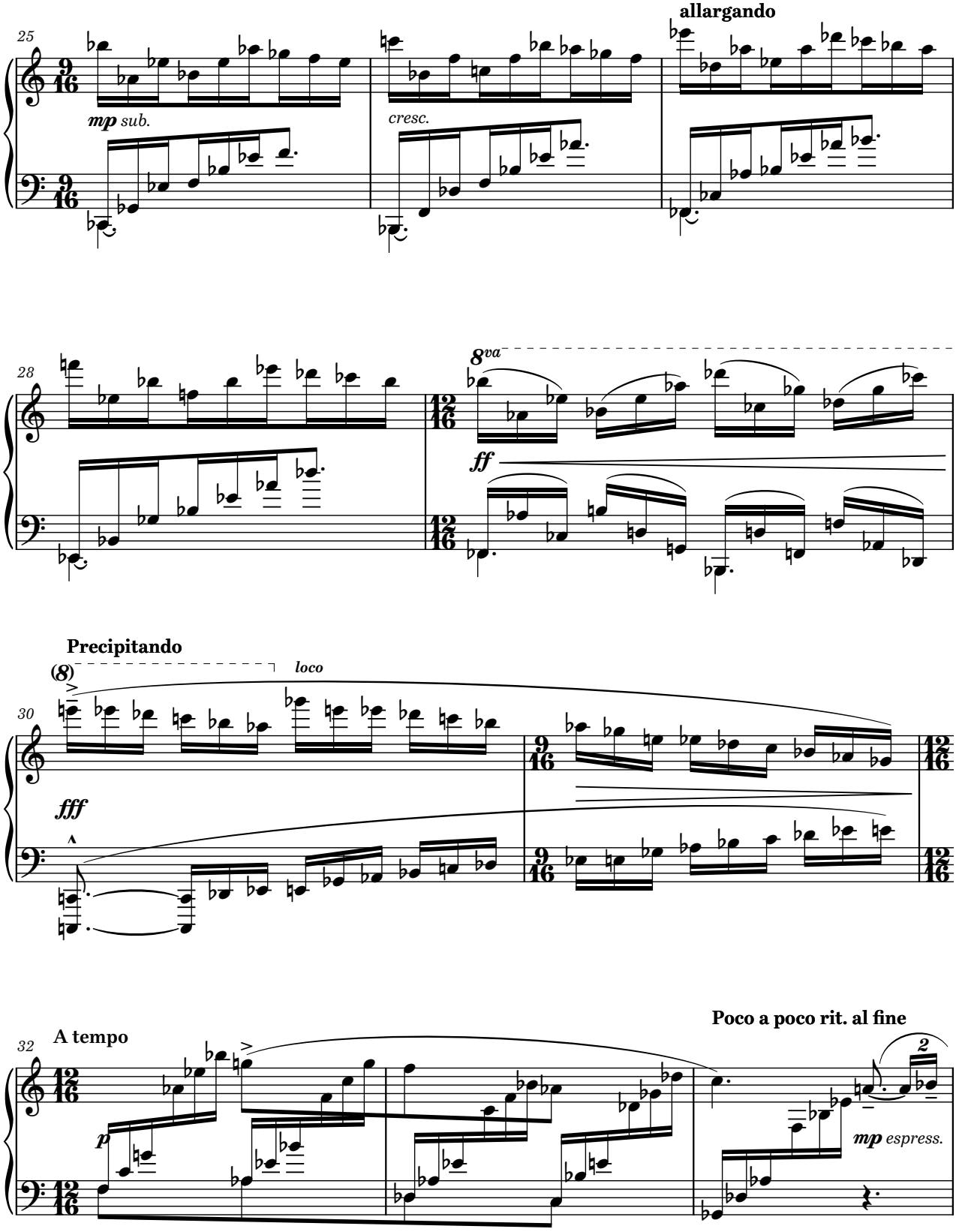

rit.
A piacere
80

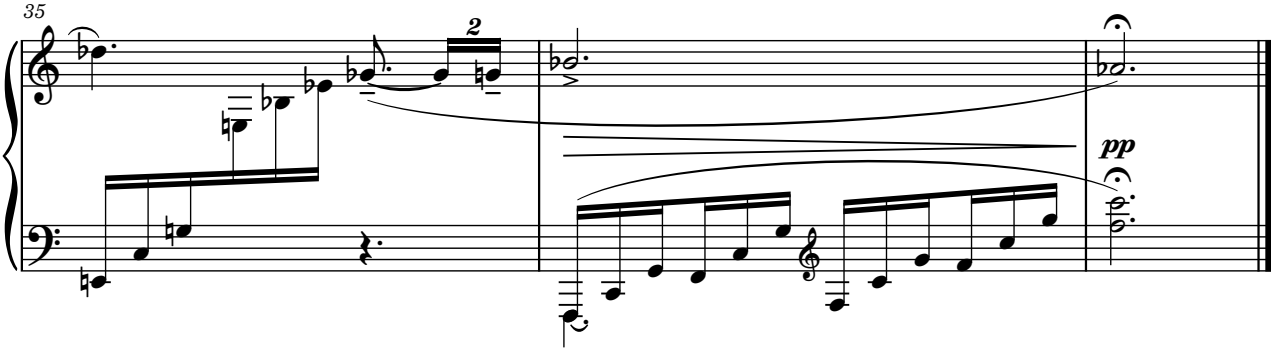
Prelude II

With motion, gracefully ♩. = 72

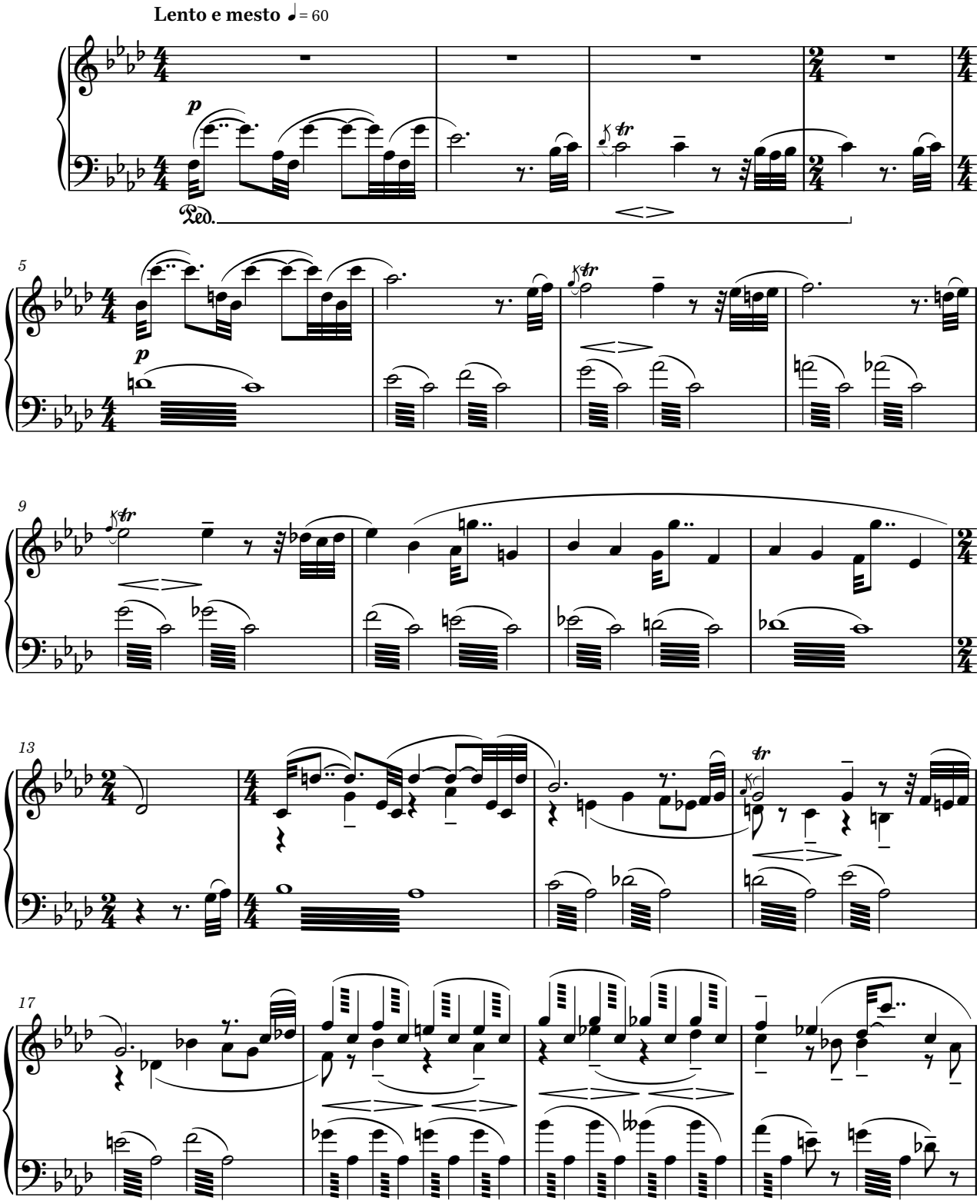


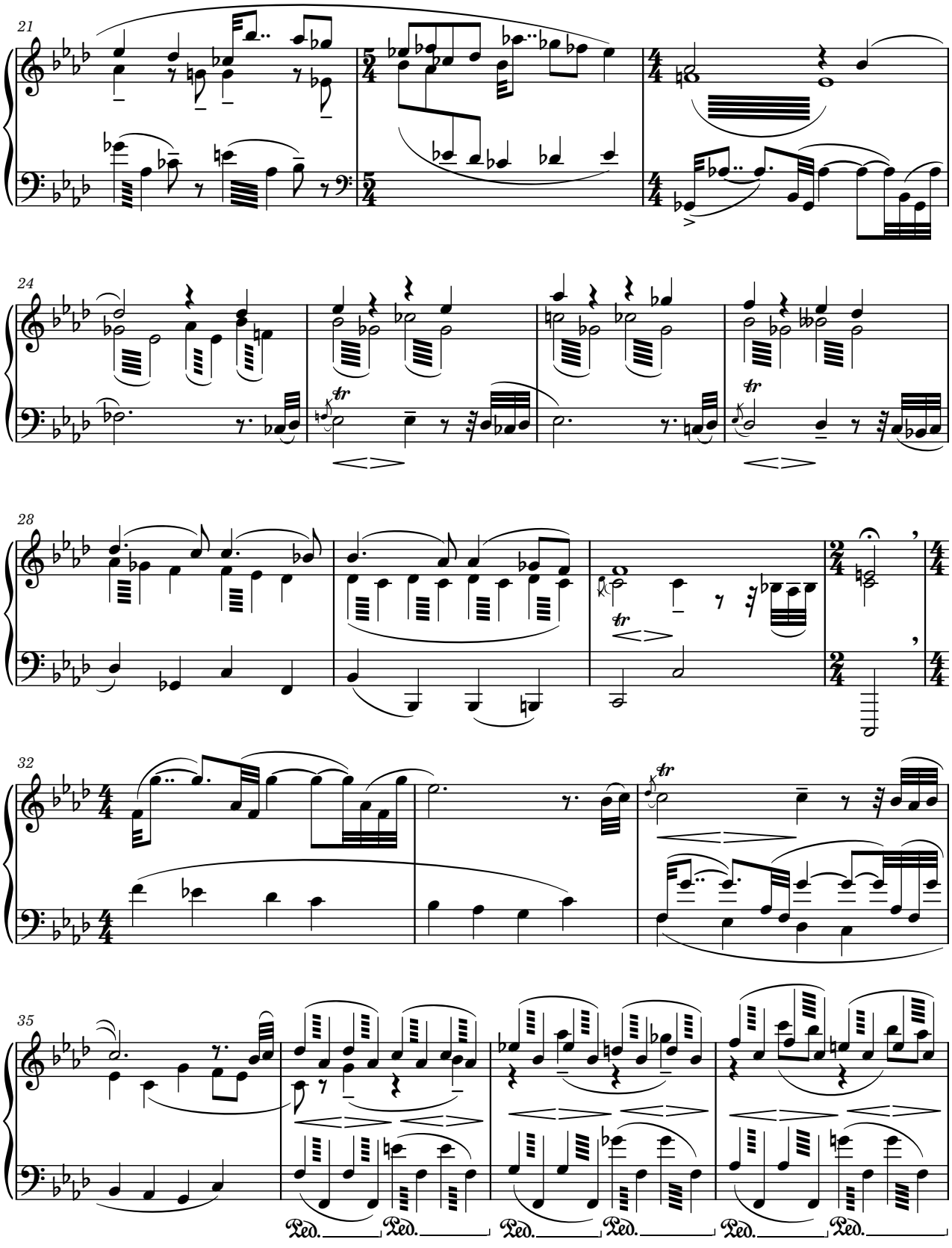

13
16
19
22
cresc. molto
9
16

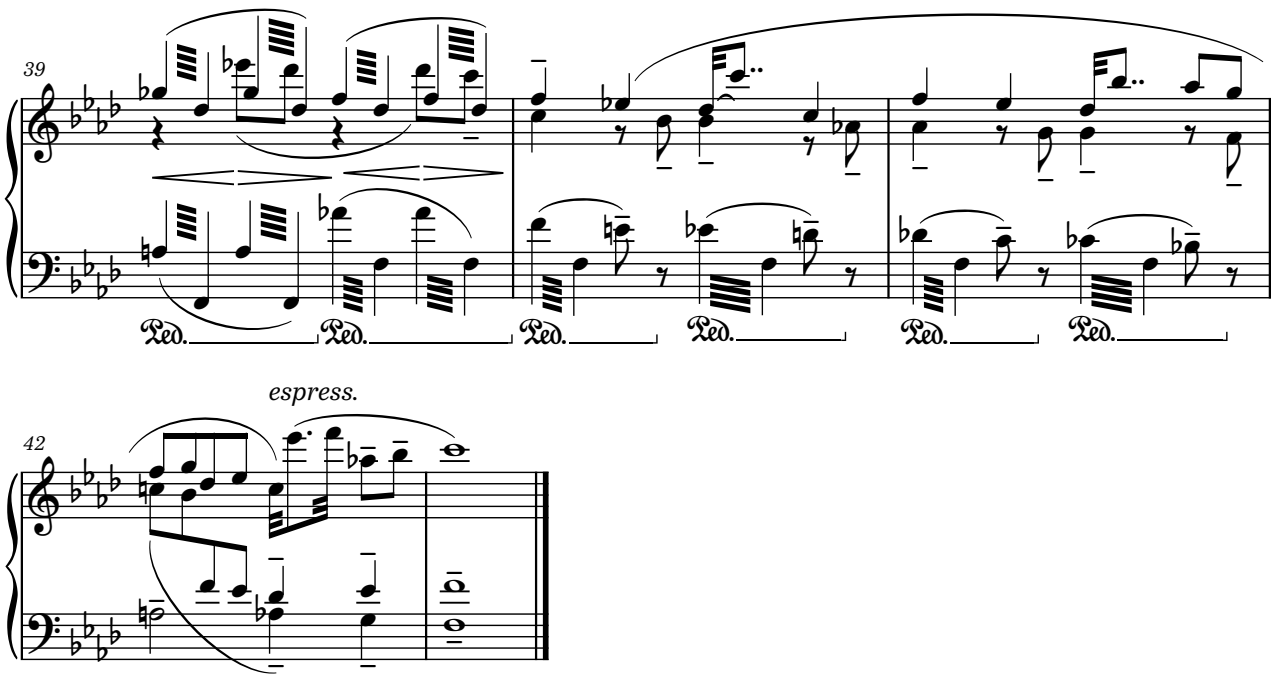

25
mp sub.
cresc.
allargando
28
8va
ff
Precipitando
(8)
loco
30
fff
32
A tempo
Poco a poco rit. al fine
p
mp espress.


35
2
pp

Fugue II

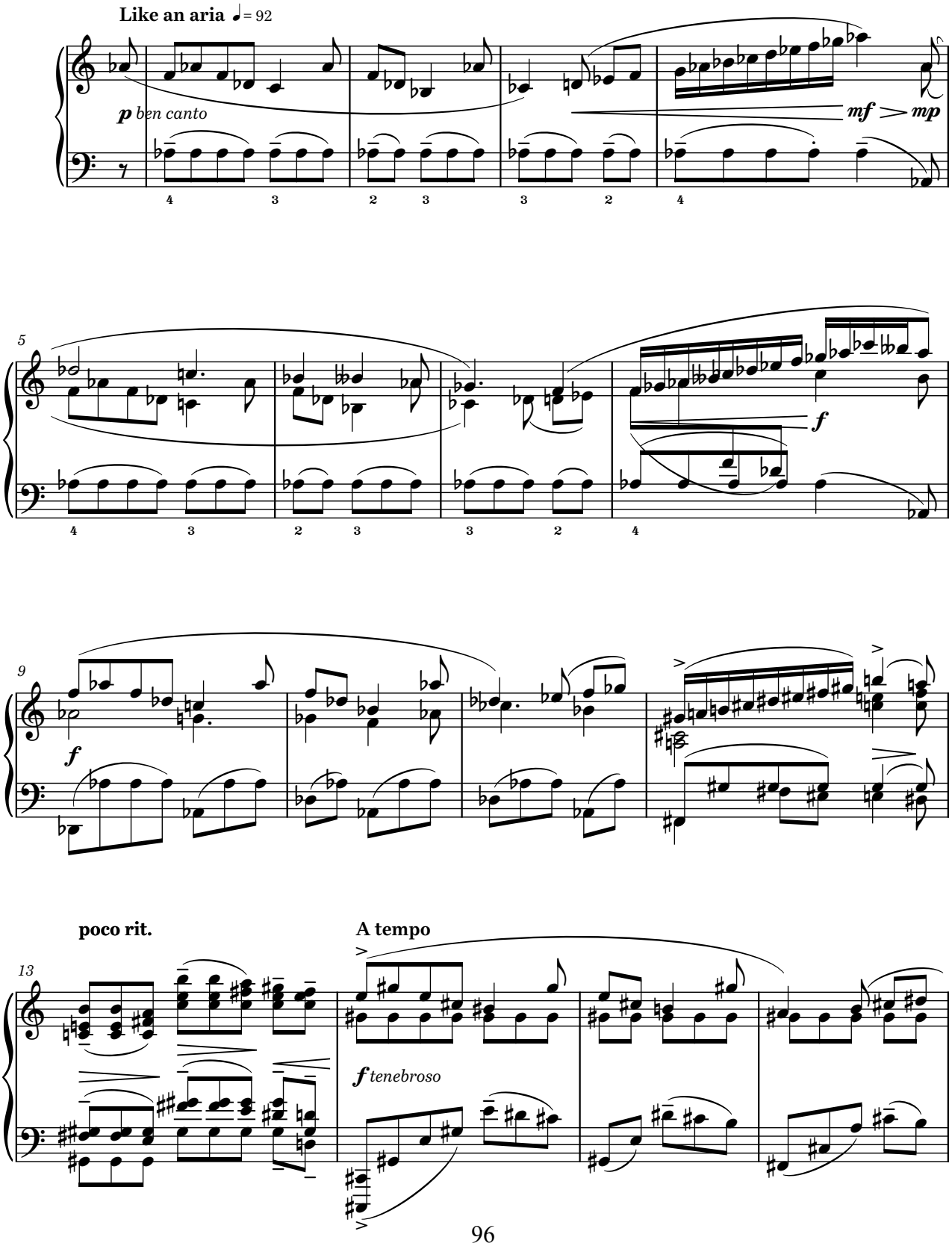


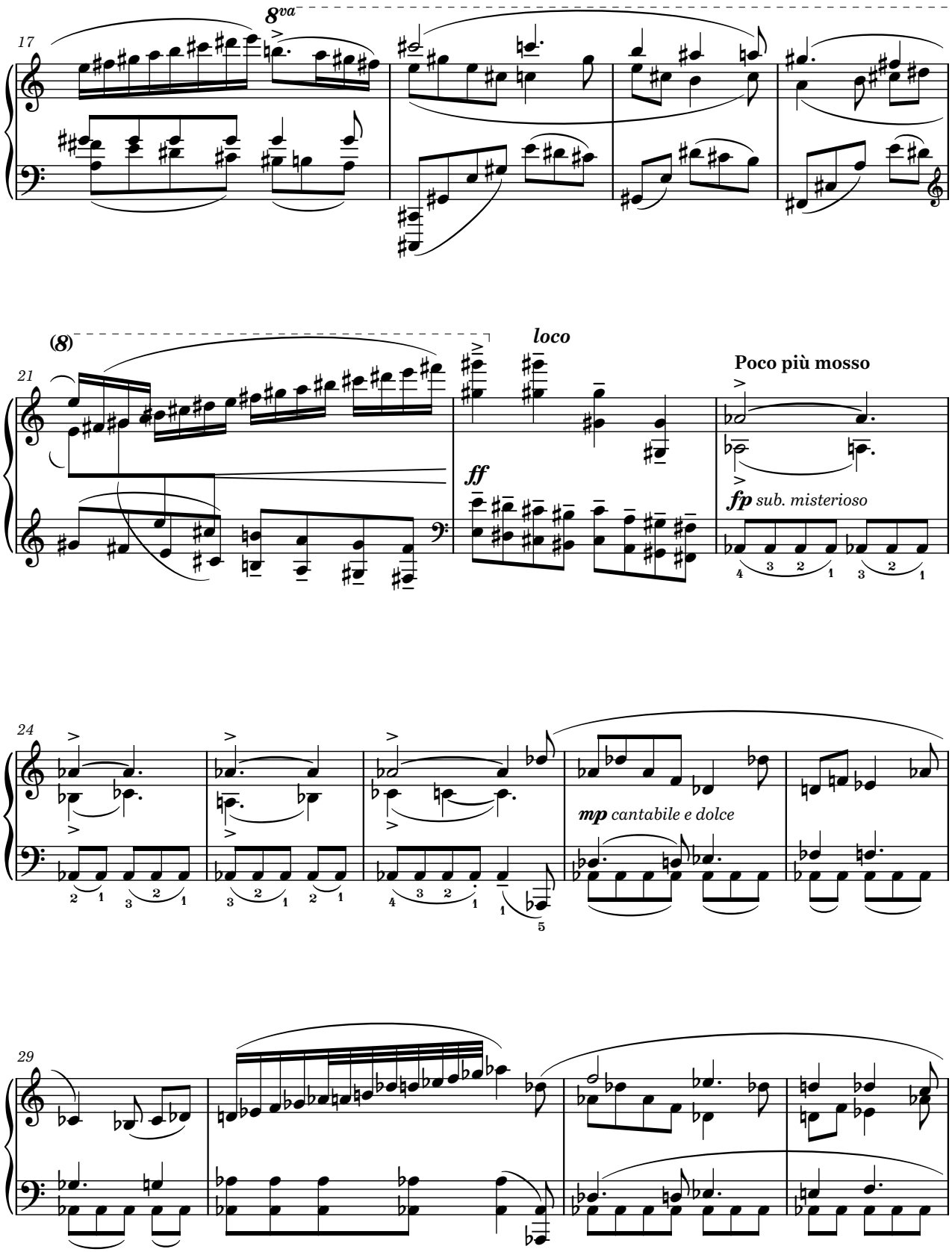

21
24
28
32
35
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.

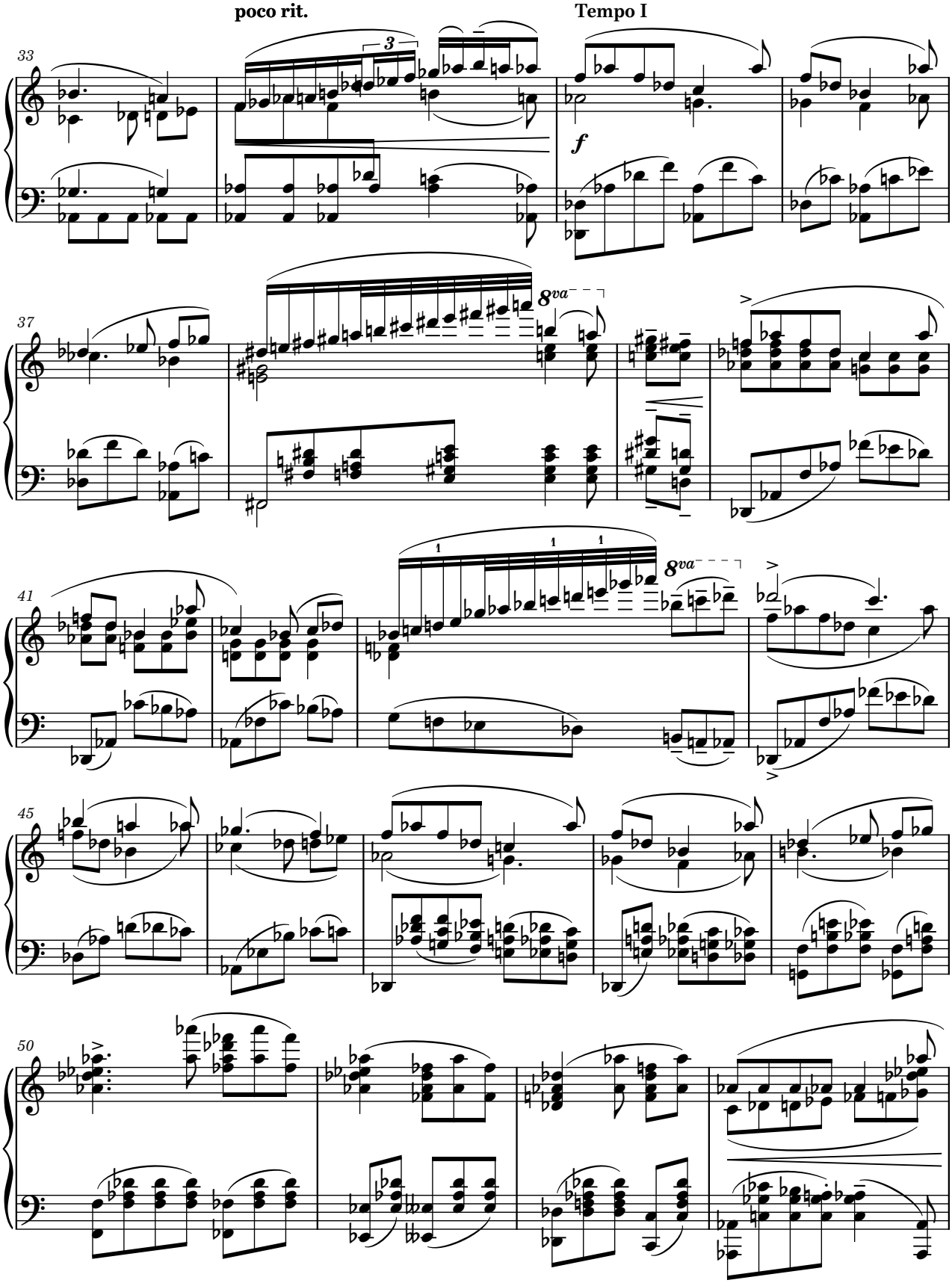

39
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.

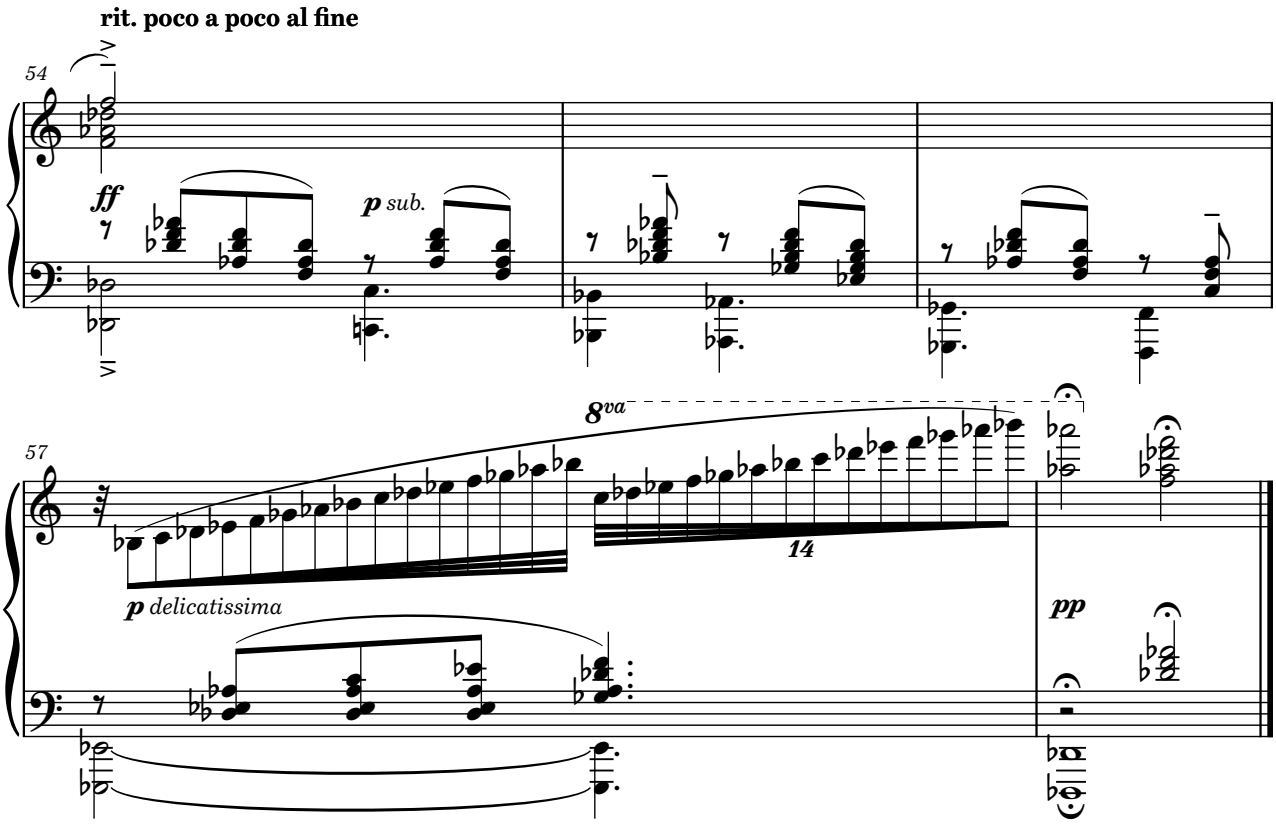
espress.
42

Prelude III

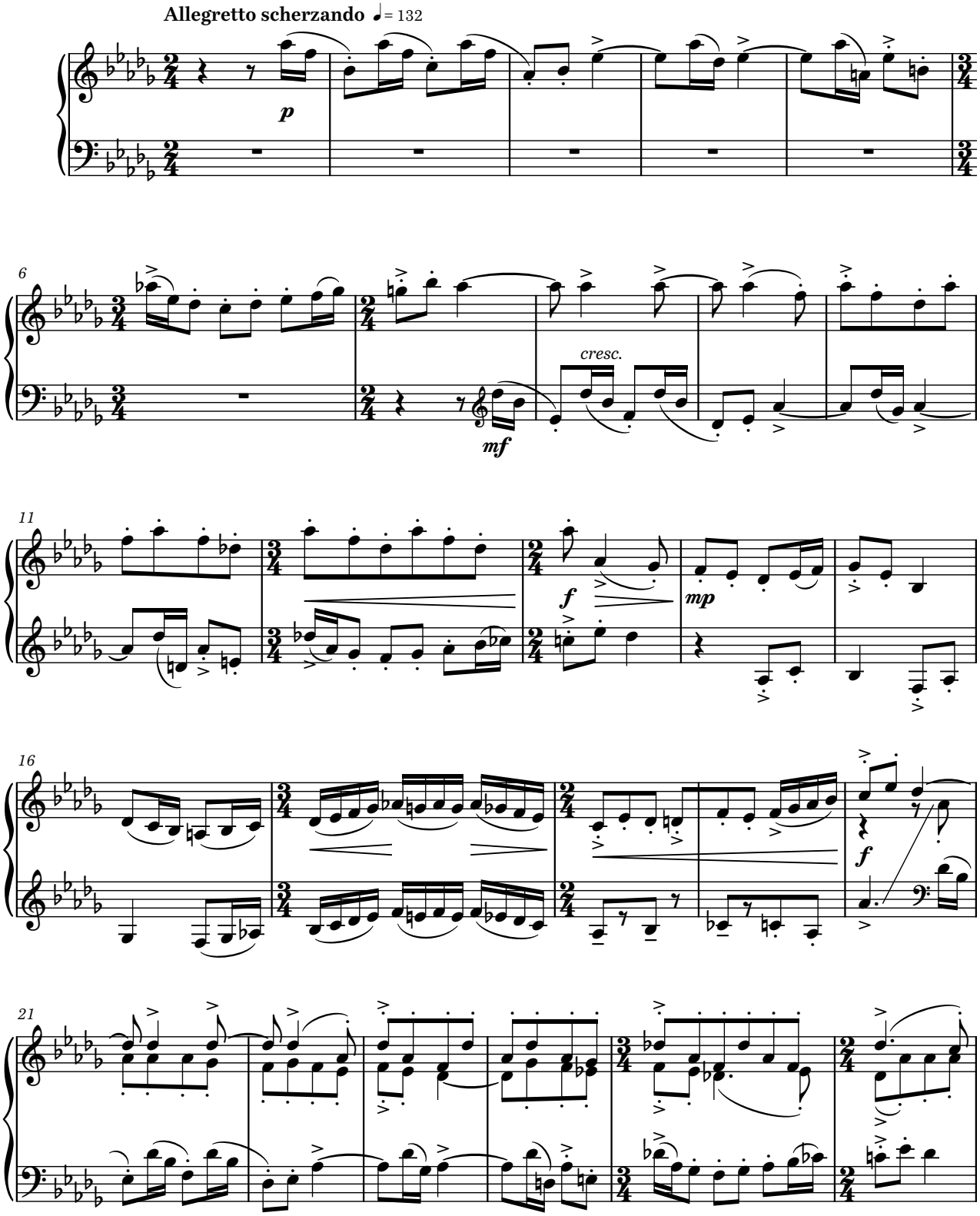

Like an aria ♩= 92
p ben canto
mf
mp
5
f
9
f
poco rit.
A tempo
13
f tenebroso

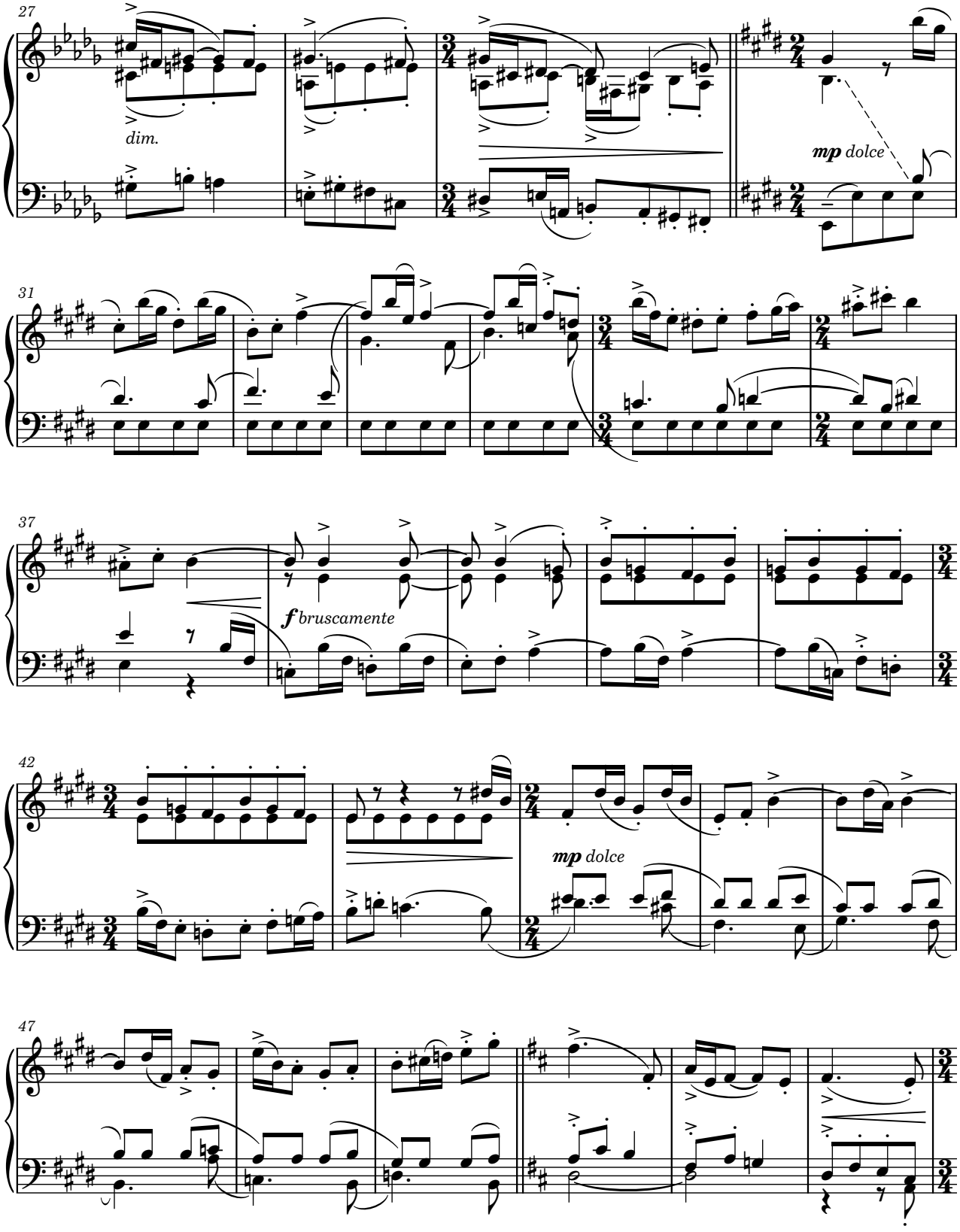

17
8va
(8)
21
loco
ff
Poco più mosso
fp sub. misterioso
24
mp cantabile e dolce
29

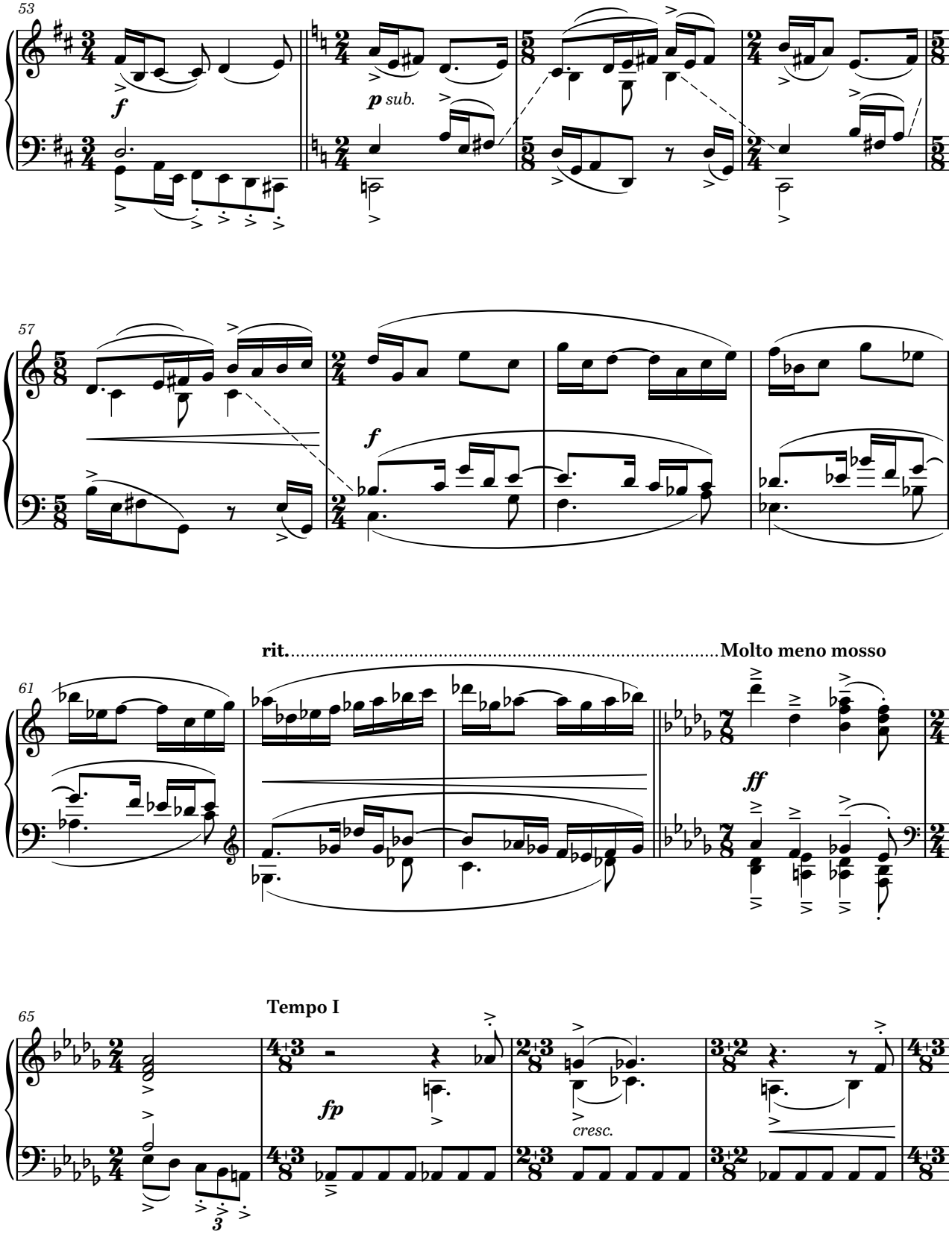

poco rit.
Tempo I
33
3
f
37
8va
41
1
8va
45
50

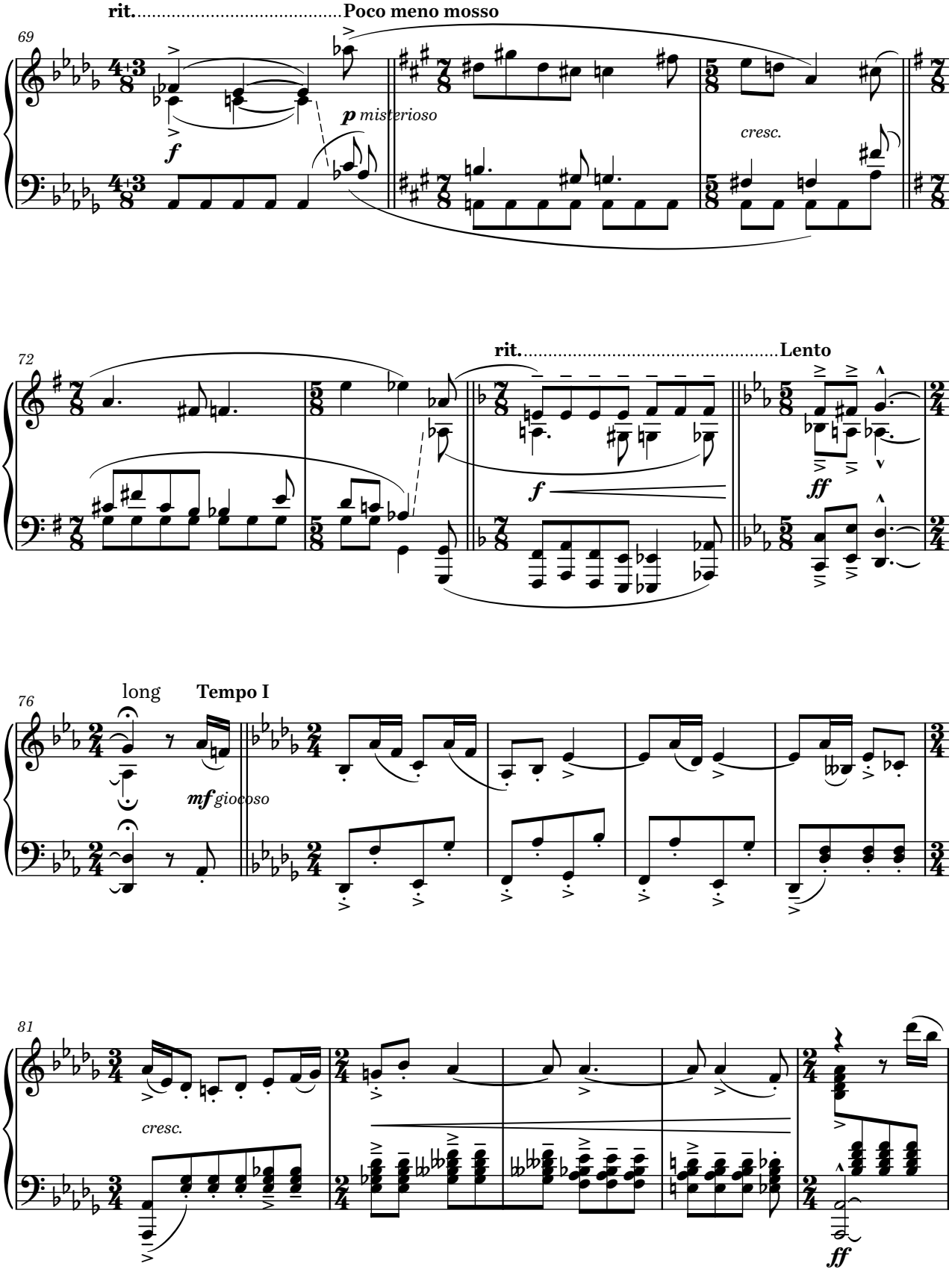

rit. poco a poco al fine
54
ff
p sub.
57
8va
14
p delicatissima
pp

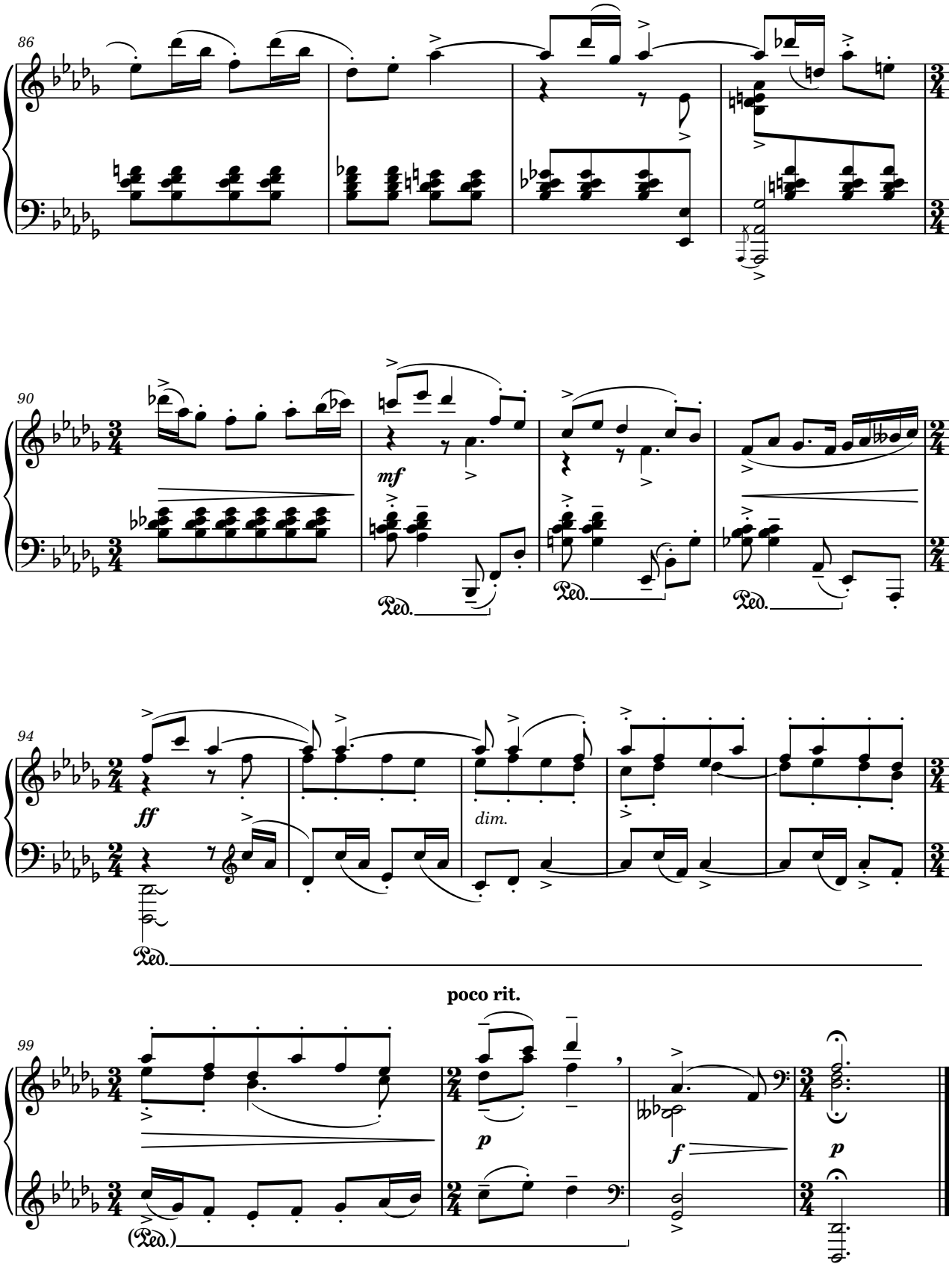
Fugue III




27
dim.
mp dolce
31
37
f bruscamente
42
mp dolce
47

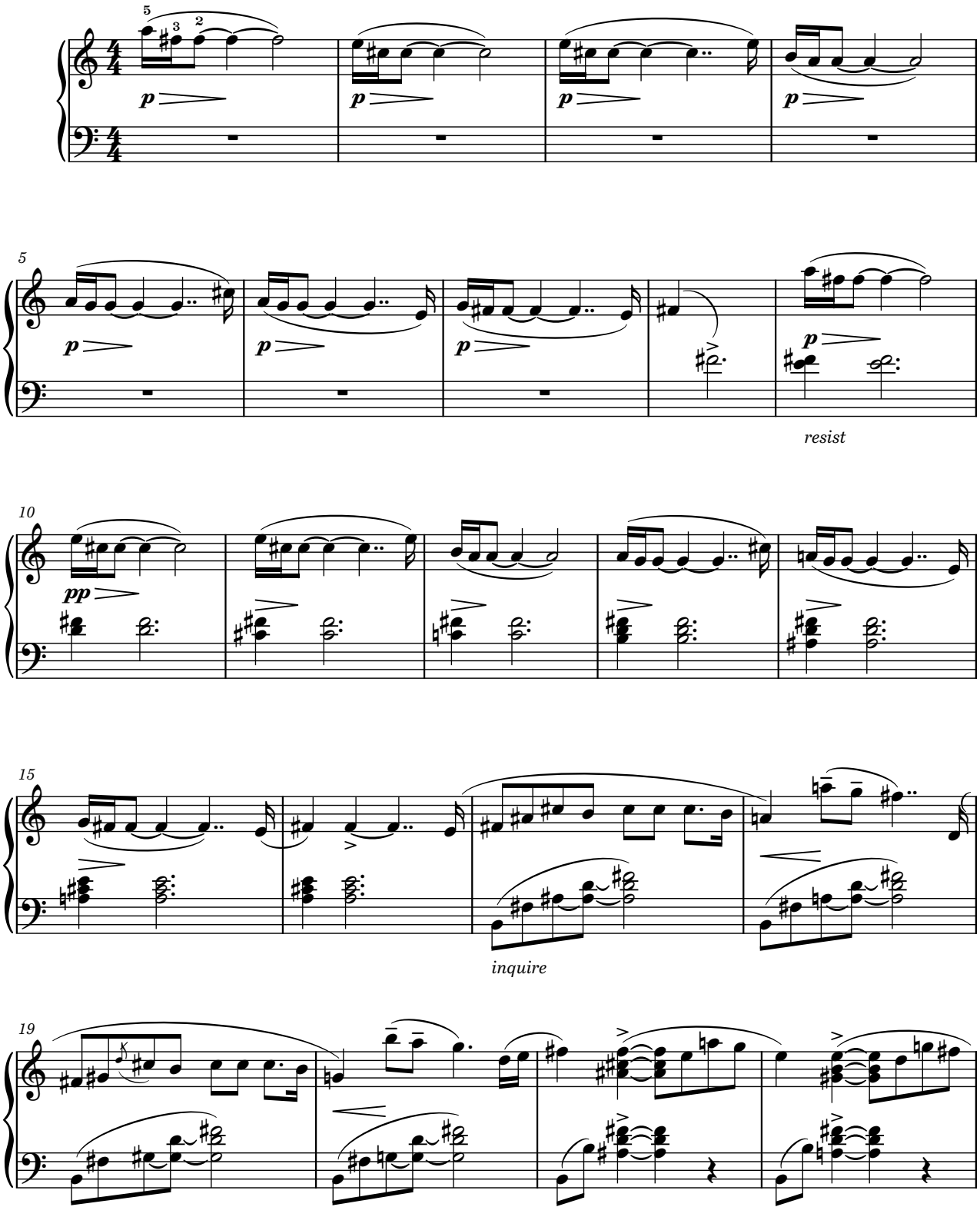

53
f
p sub.
57
f
rit.
Molto meno mosso
61
ff
Tempo I
65
fp
cresc.

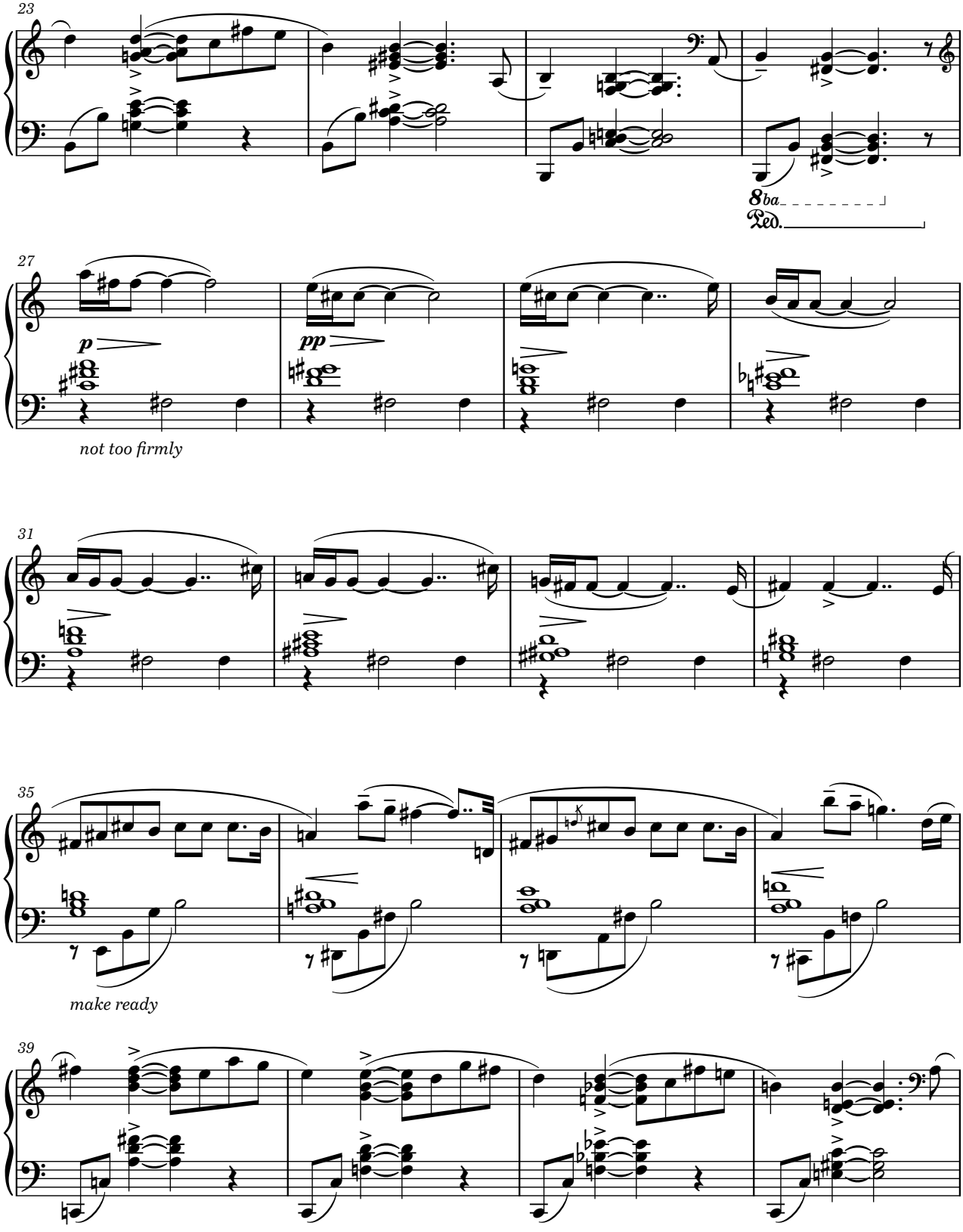

rit.....Poco meno mosso
69
f
p misterioso
cresc.
72
rit.....Lento
f
ff
76
long
Tempo I
mf giocoso
81
cresc.
ff

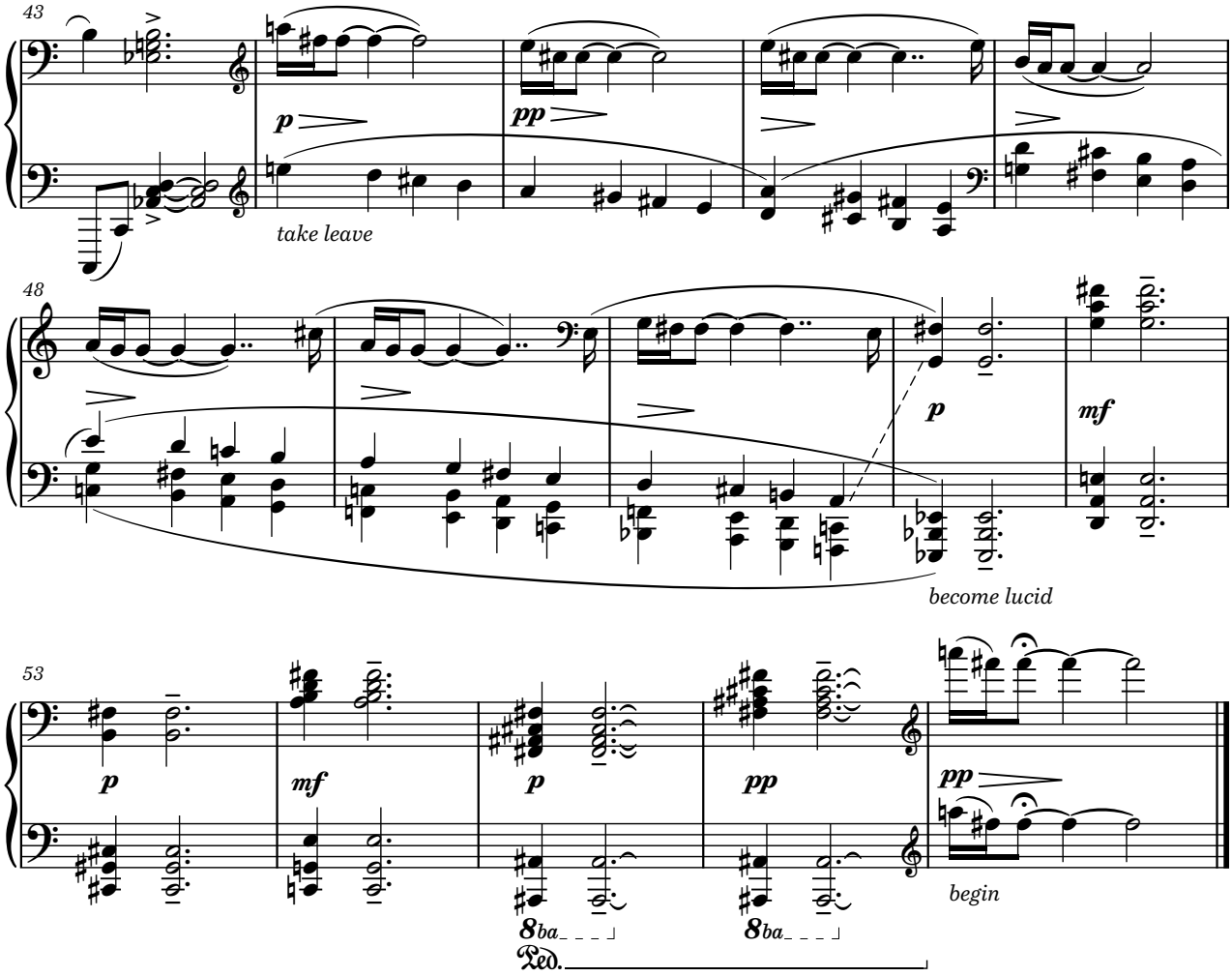

86
90
mf
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
94
ff
dim.
Ped.
poco rit.
99
p
f
p
(Ped.)

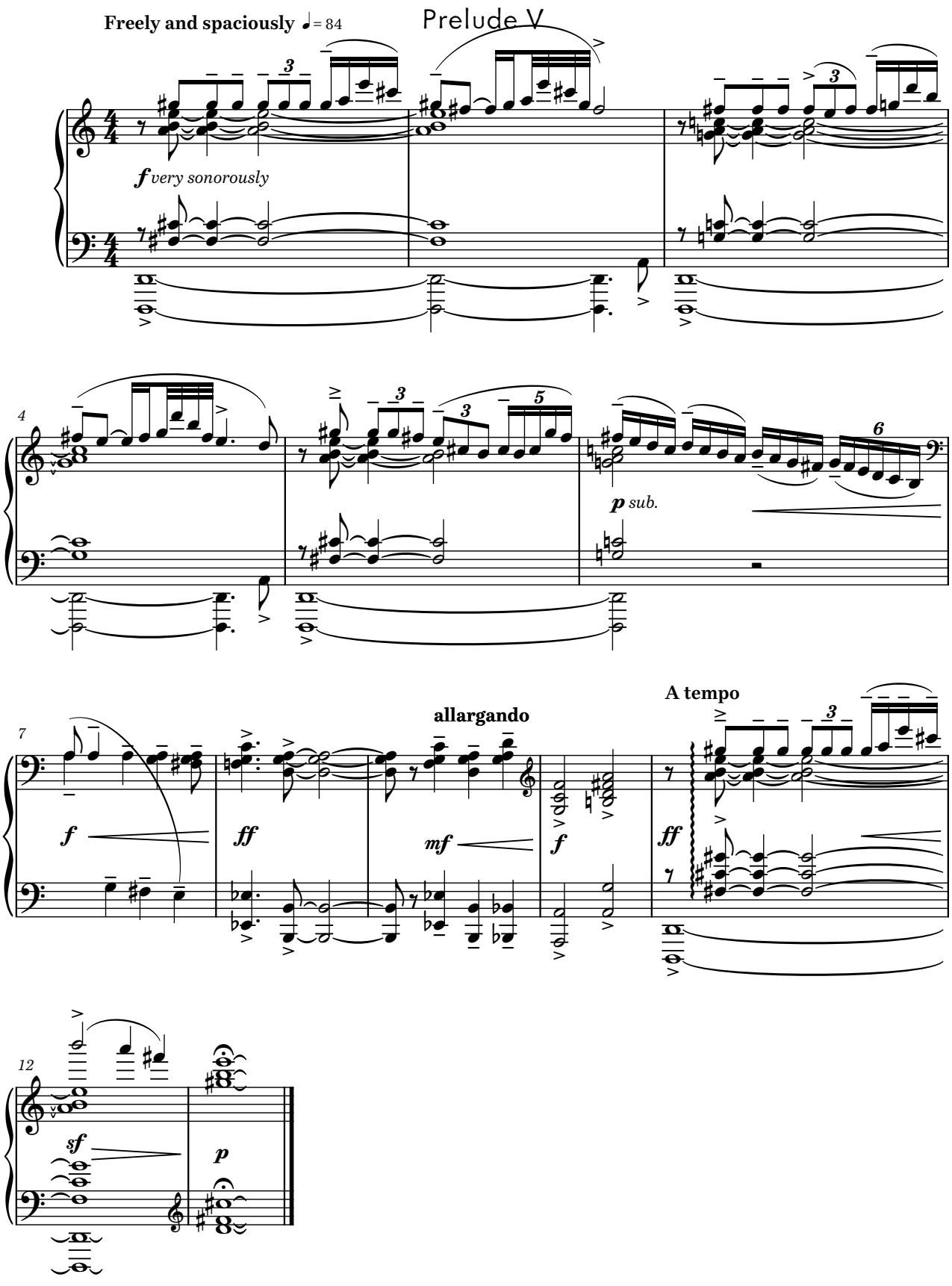
Prelude IV

Hesitantly, shyly ♩= 92



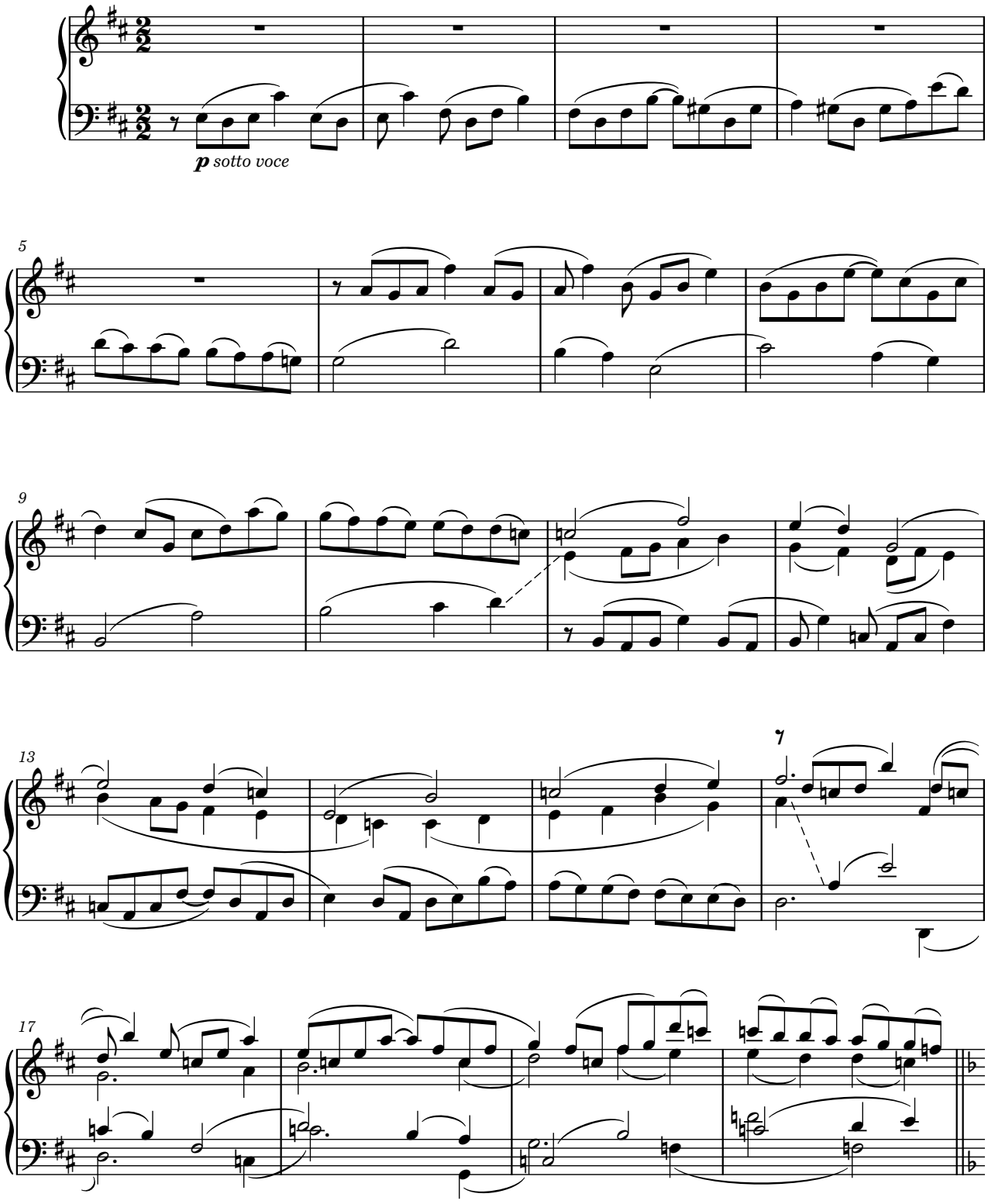

23
8ba
Ped.
27
p
pp
not too firmly
31
35
make ready
39

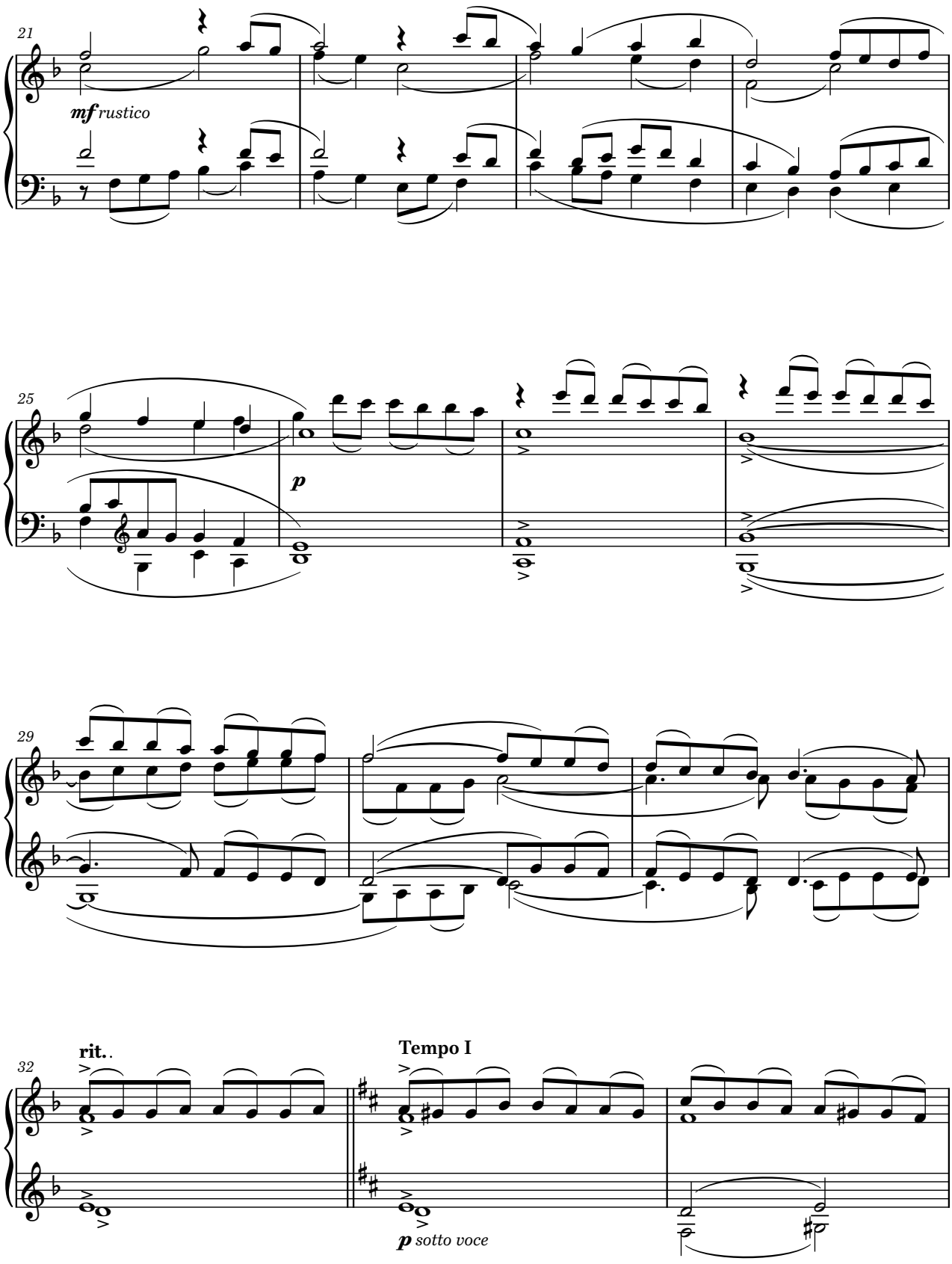

43
p
pp
take leave
48
p
mf
become lucid
53
p
mf
p
pp
pp
begin
8ba
8ba
Ped.

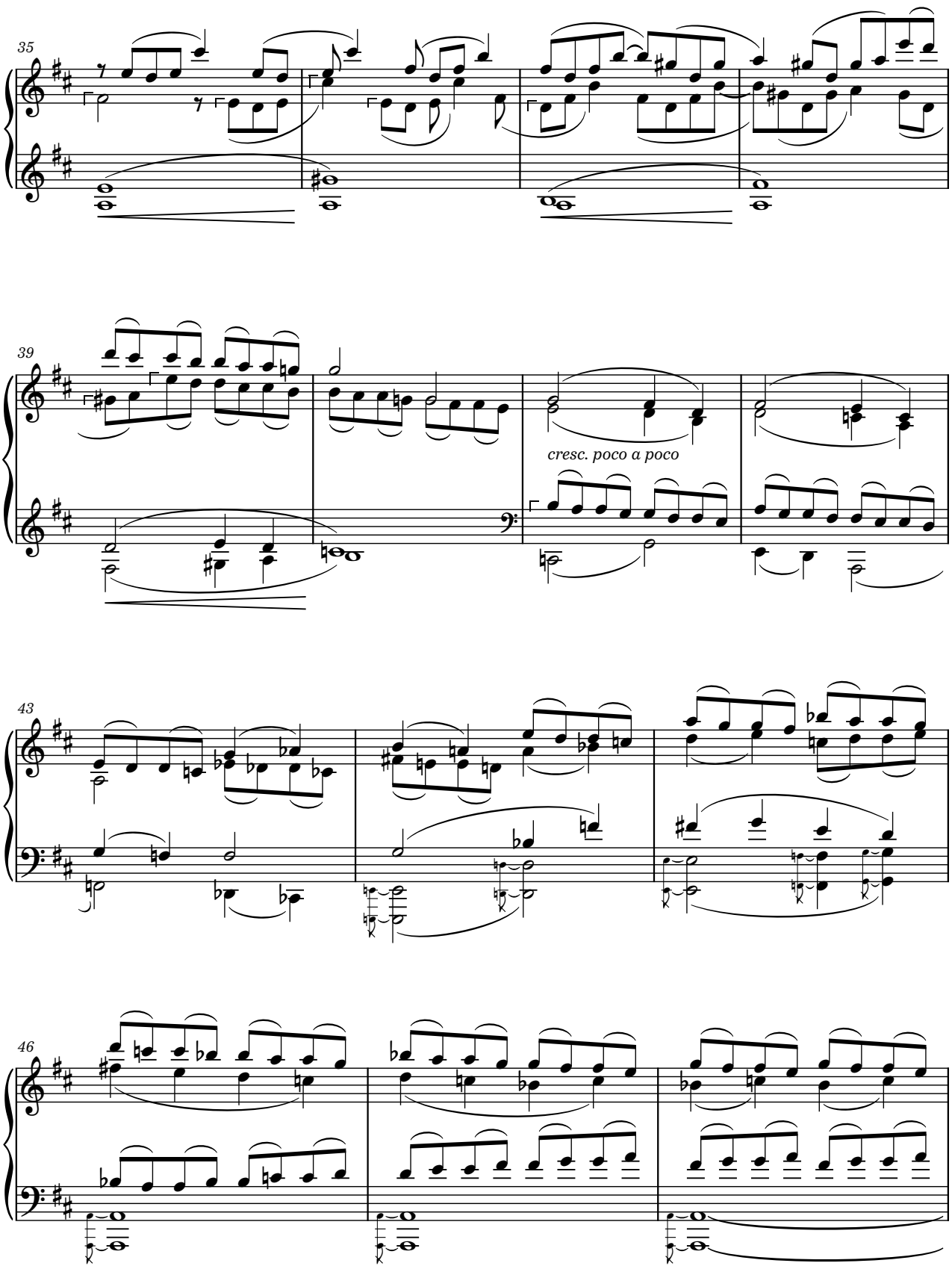

Prelude V
Freely and spaciously ♩= 84
f very sonorously
p sub.
allargando
A tempo
f
ff
mf
sf
p

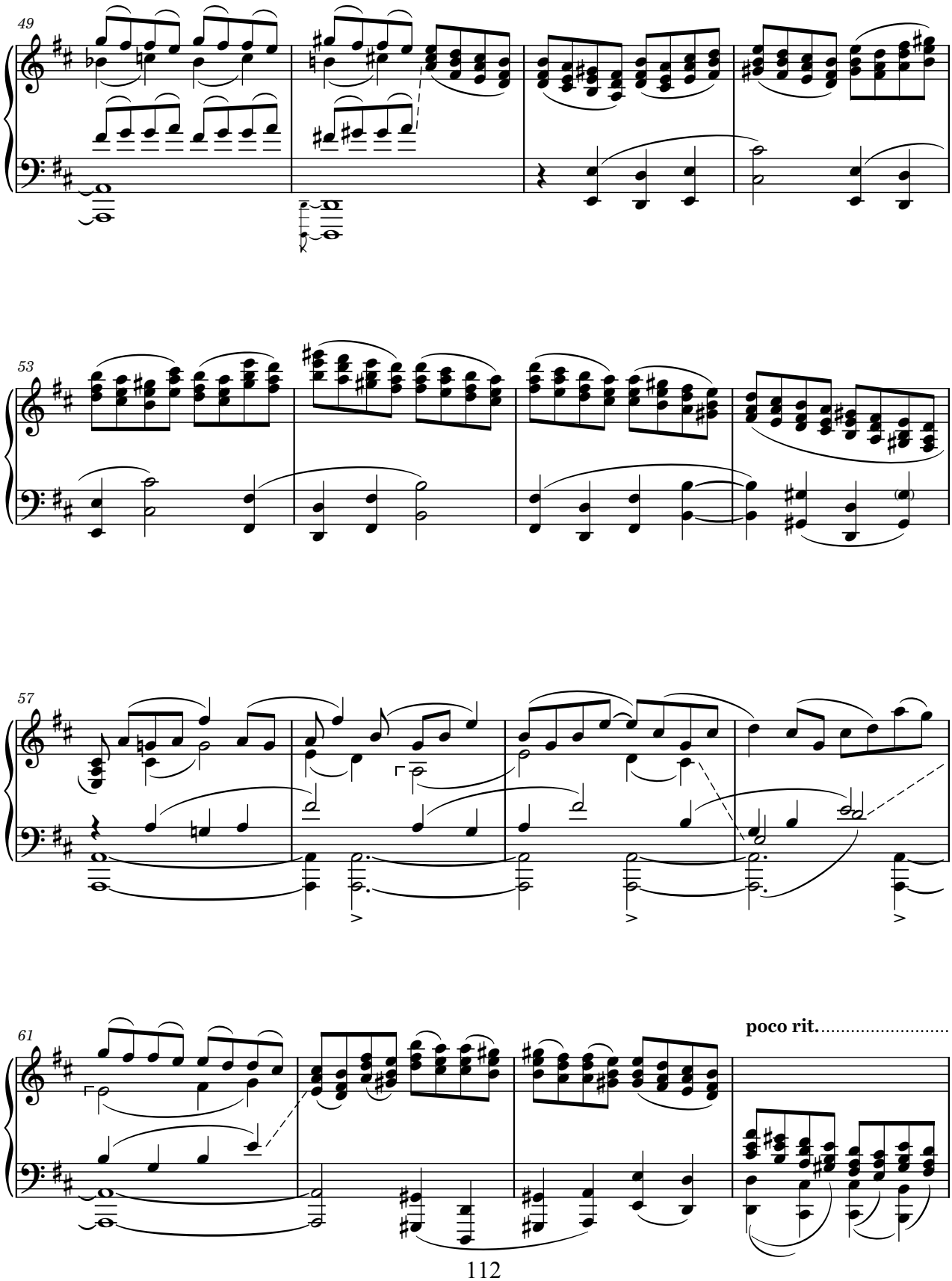
Fugue V

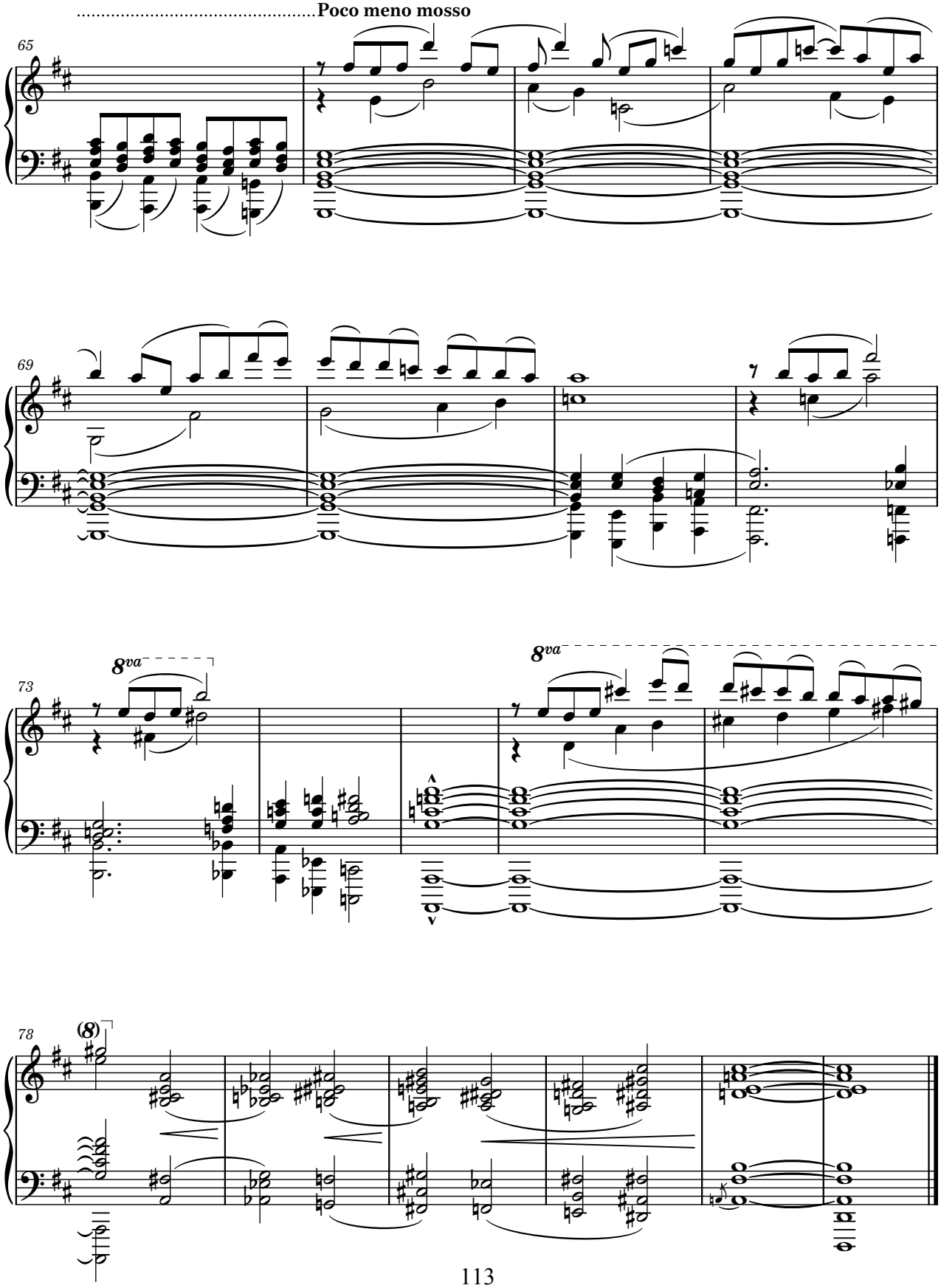
Gently and gracefully flowing ♩= 60




21
mf rustico
25
p
29
32
rit.
Tempo I
p sotto voce


35
39
cresc. poco a poco
43
46


49
53
57
61
poco rit.


Poco meno mosso
65
69
8va
73
8va
78
(8)

Prelude VI

Freely, quasi improvisando ♩ = ca. 72

mf

p

4

7

rit......**Quickly, mysteriously** 𝅗𝅥. = 72

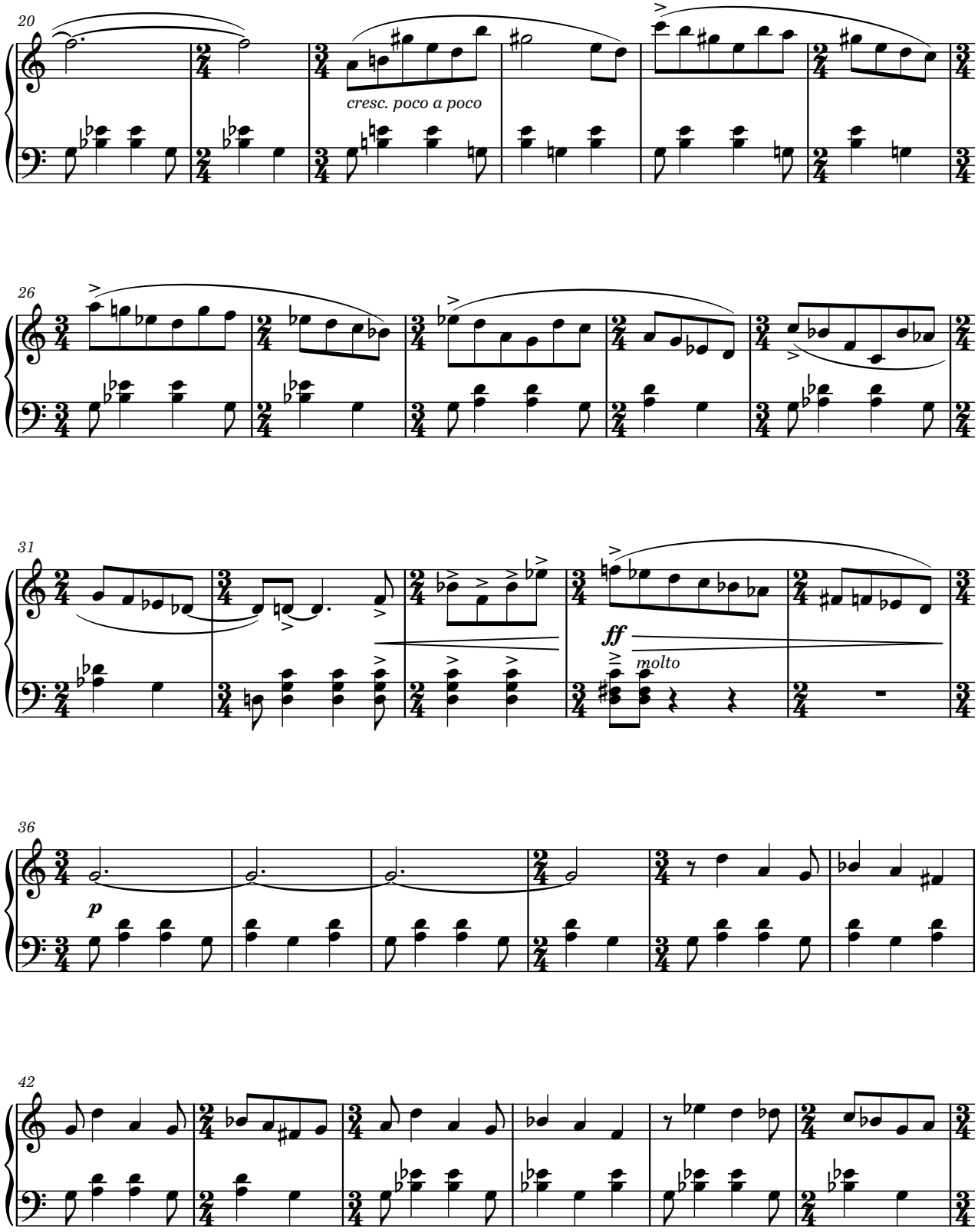
9

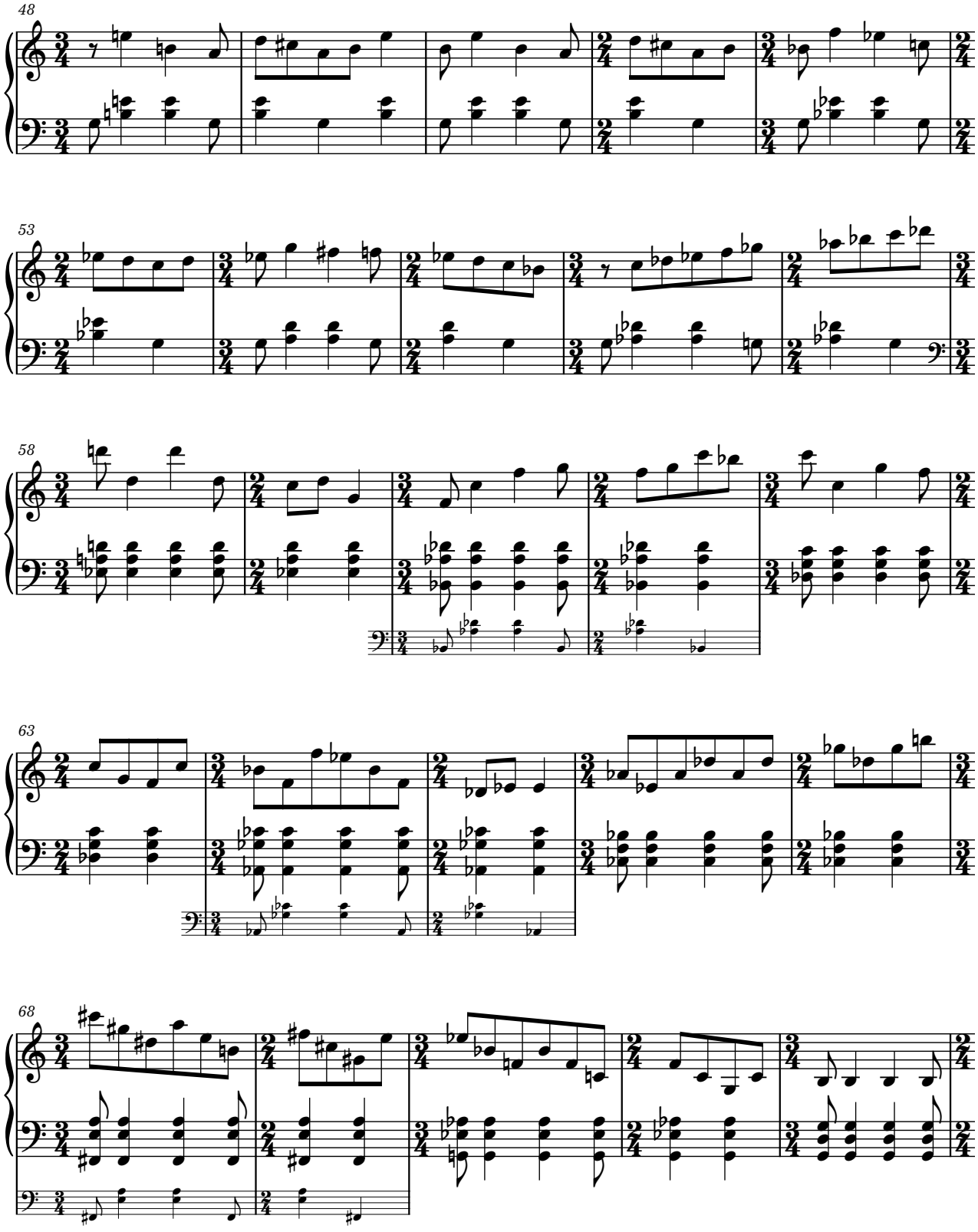
p

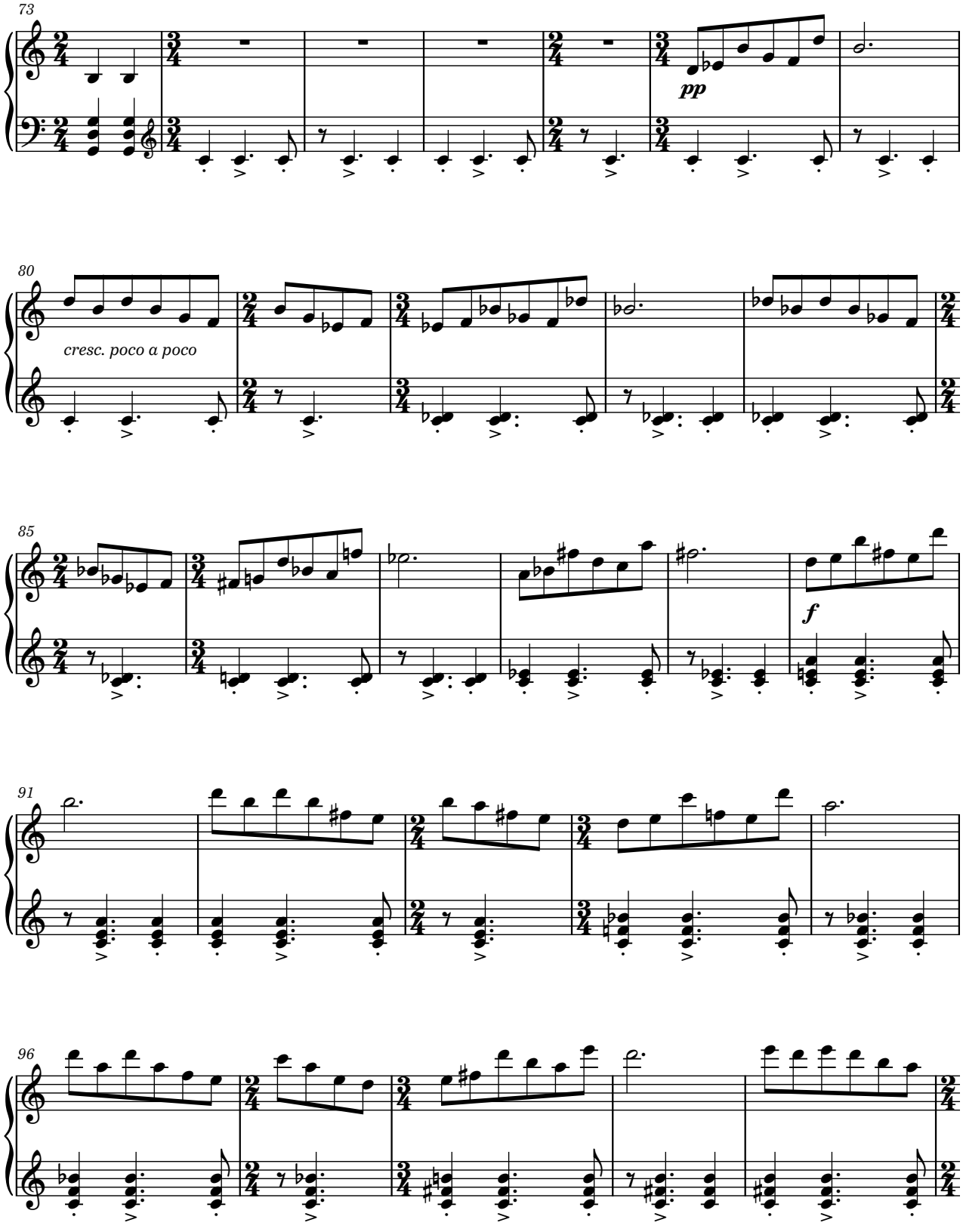
dry, minimal Ped.

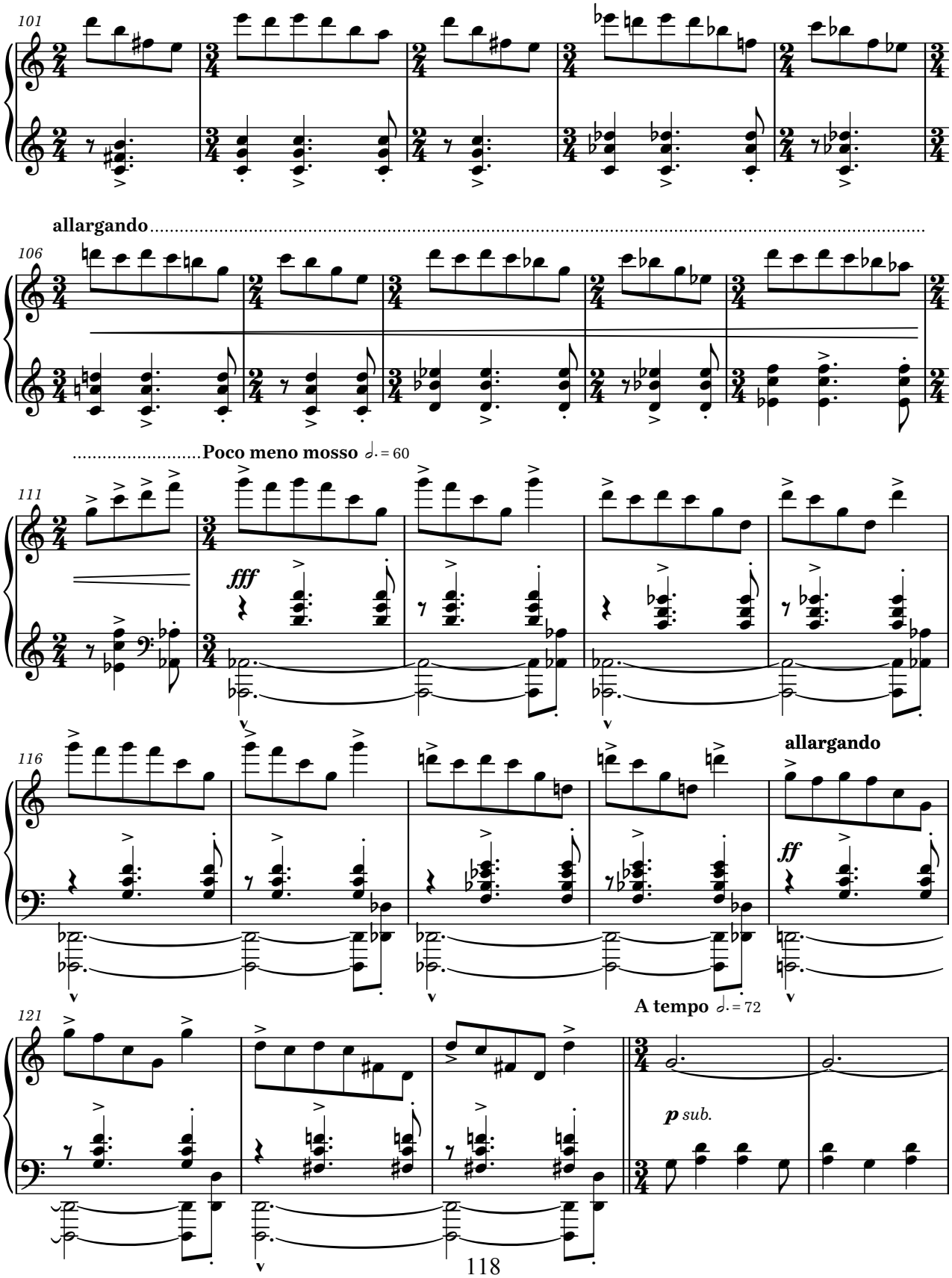
14

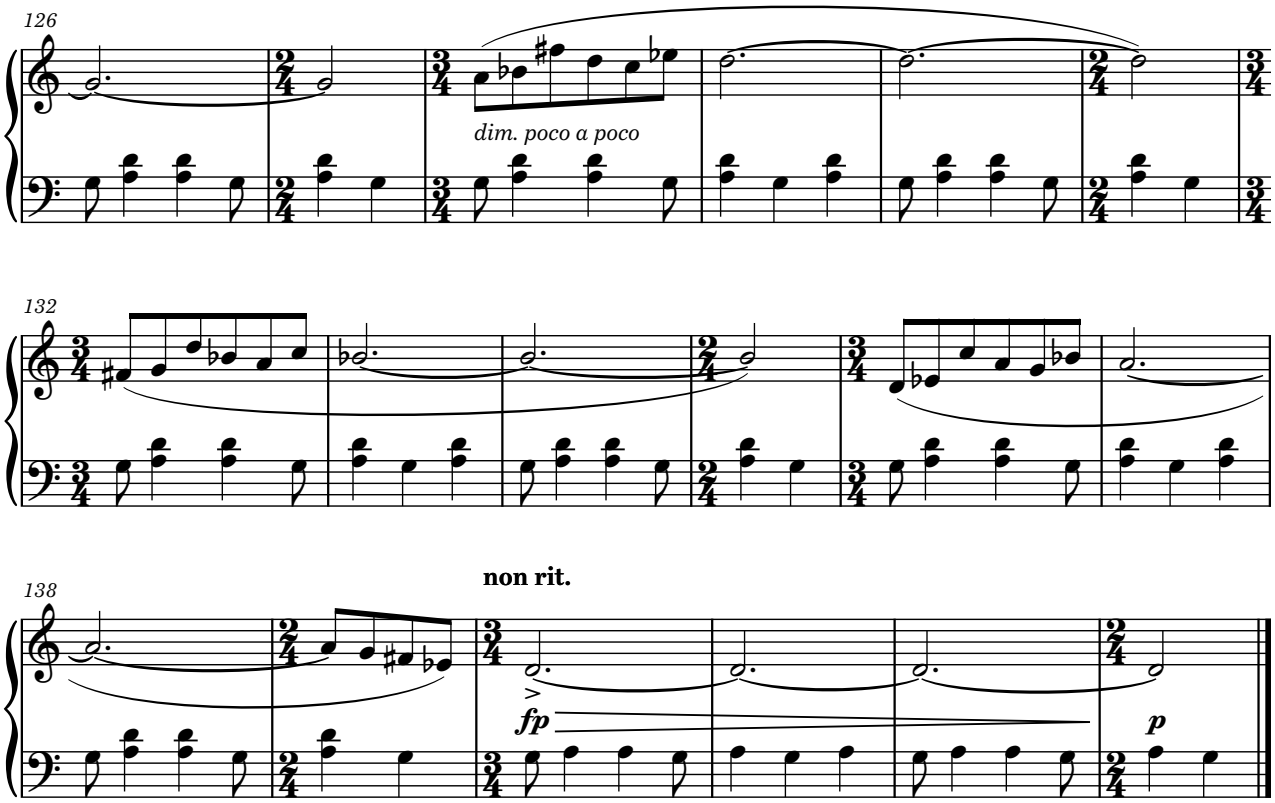
mp *hushed but very clear*


20
cresc. poco a poco
26
31
ff
molto
36
p
42

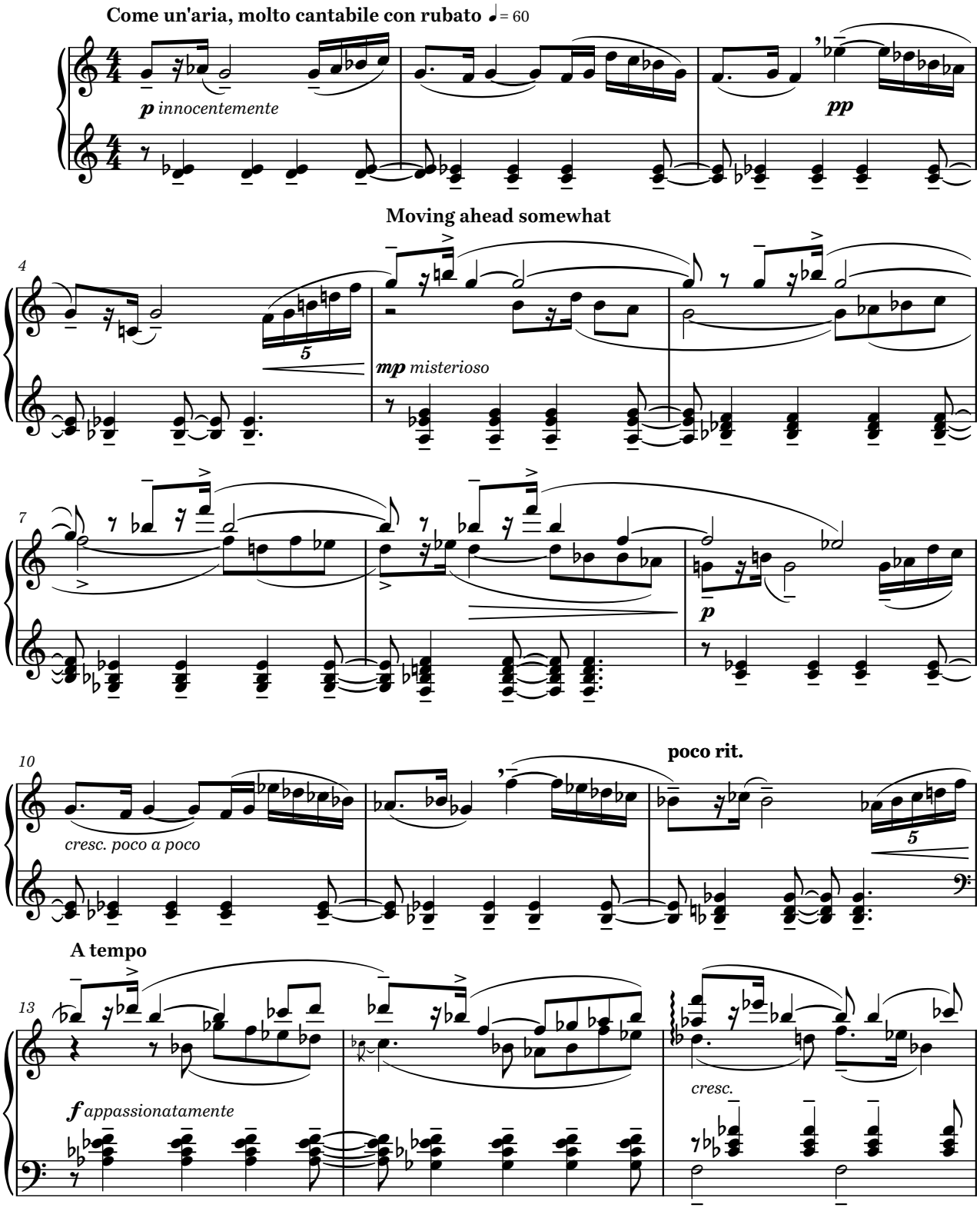

48
53
58
63
68

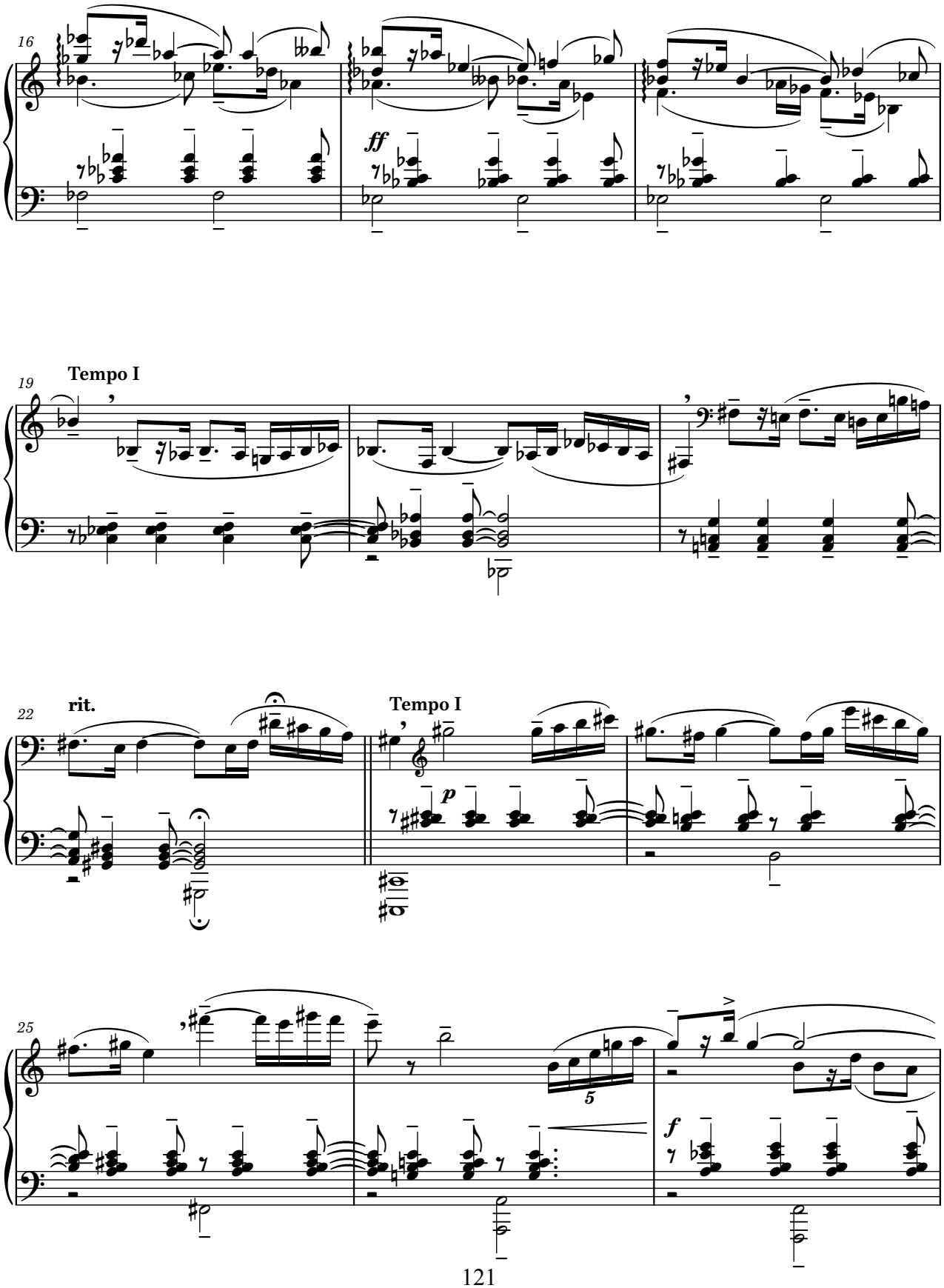

73
pp
80
cresc. poco a poco
85
f
91
96

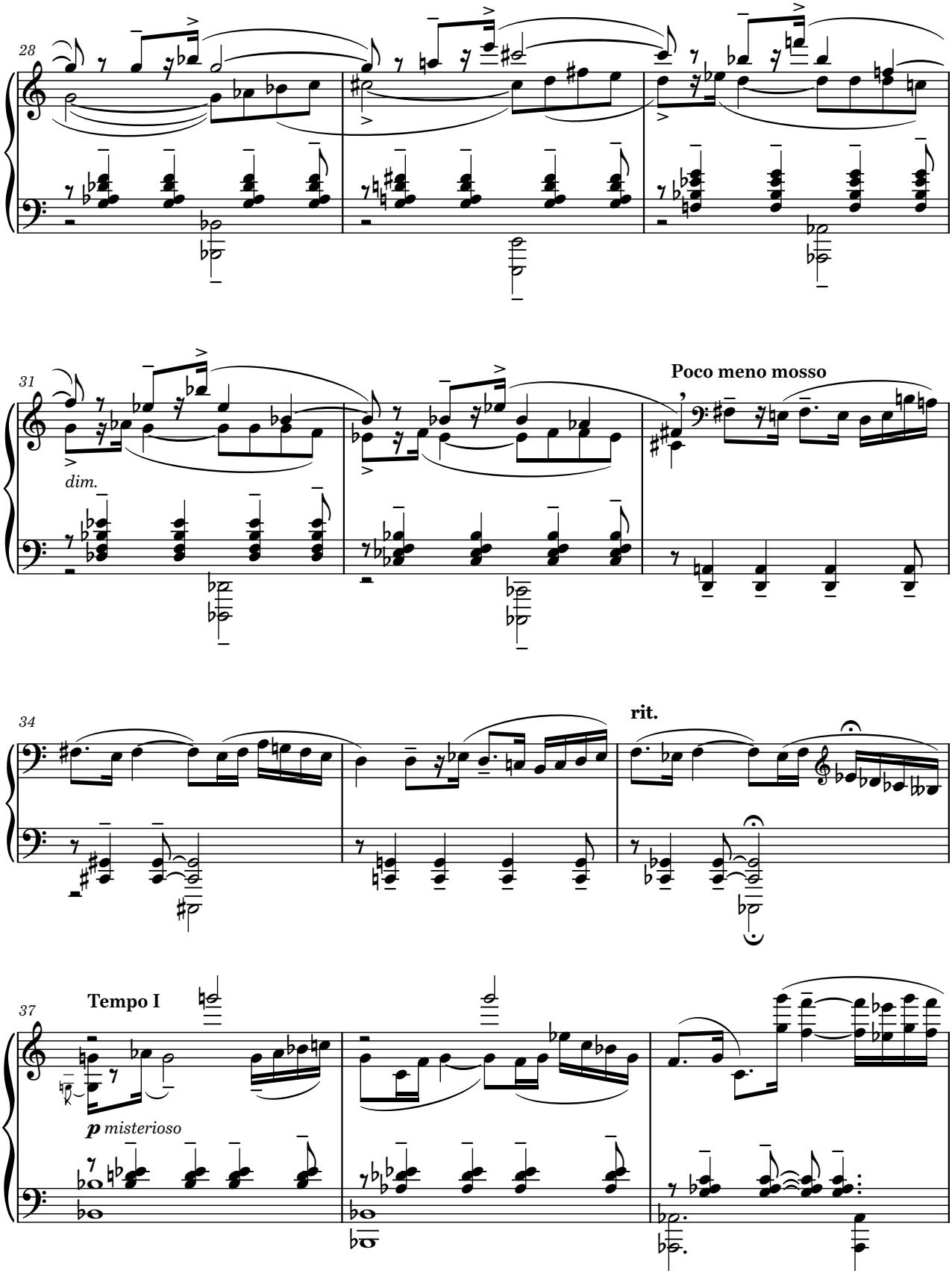

101
allargando
106
Poco meno mosso 𝅗𝅥. = 60
111
fff
116
allargando
ff
121
A tempo 𝅗𝅥. = 72
p sub.

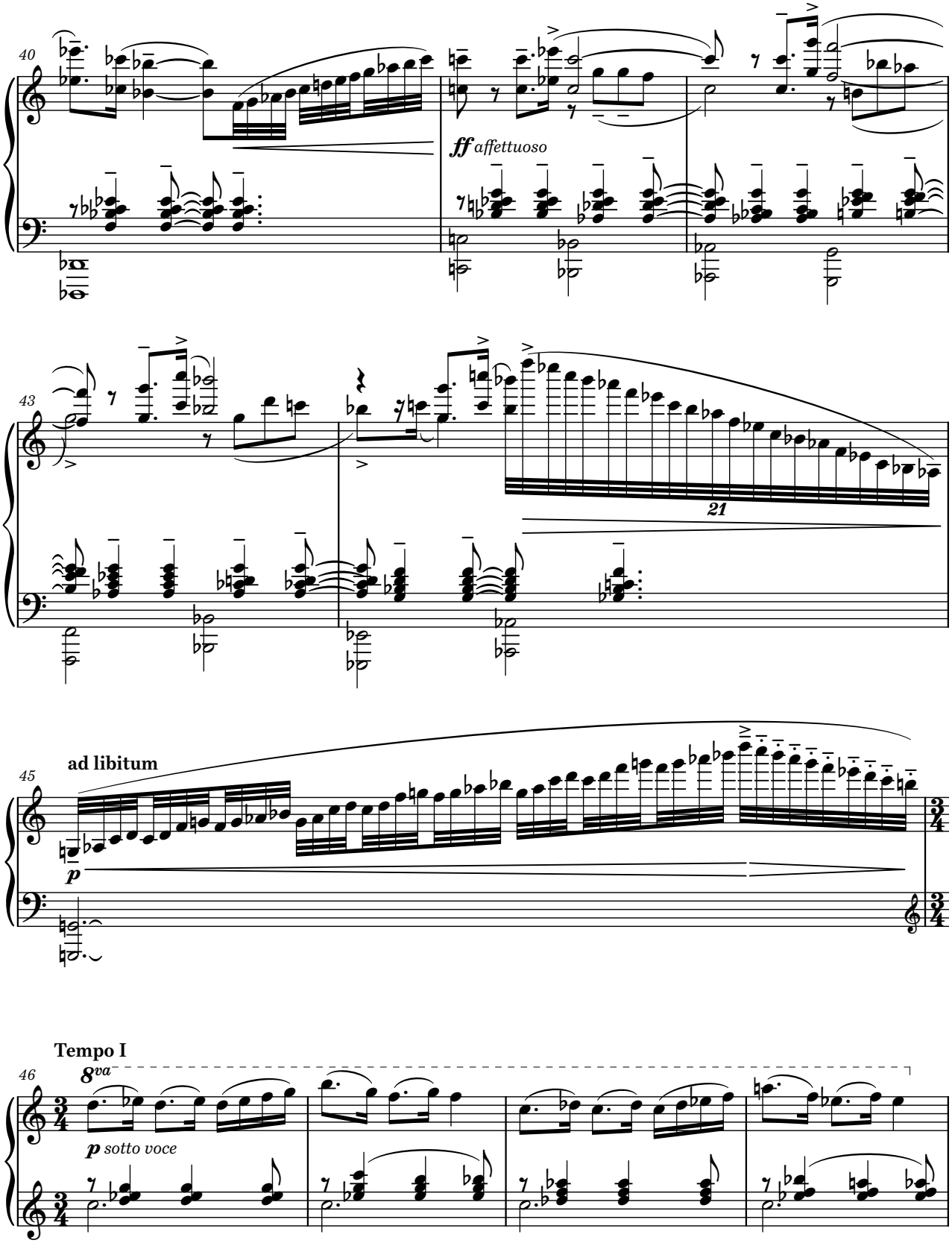

126
dim. poco a poco
132
non rit.
138
fp
p

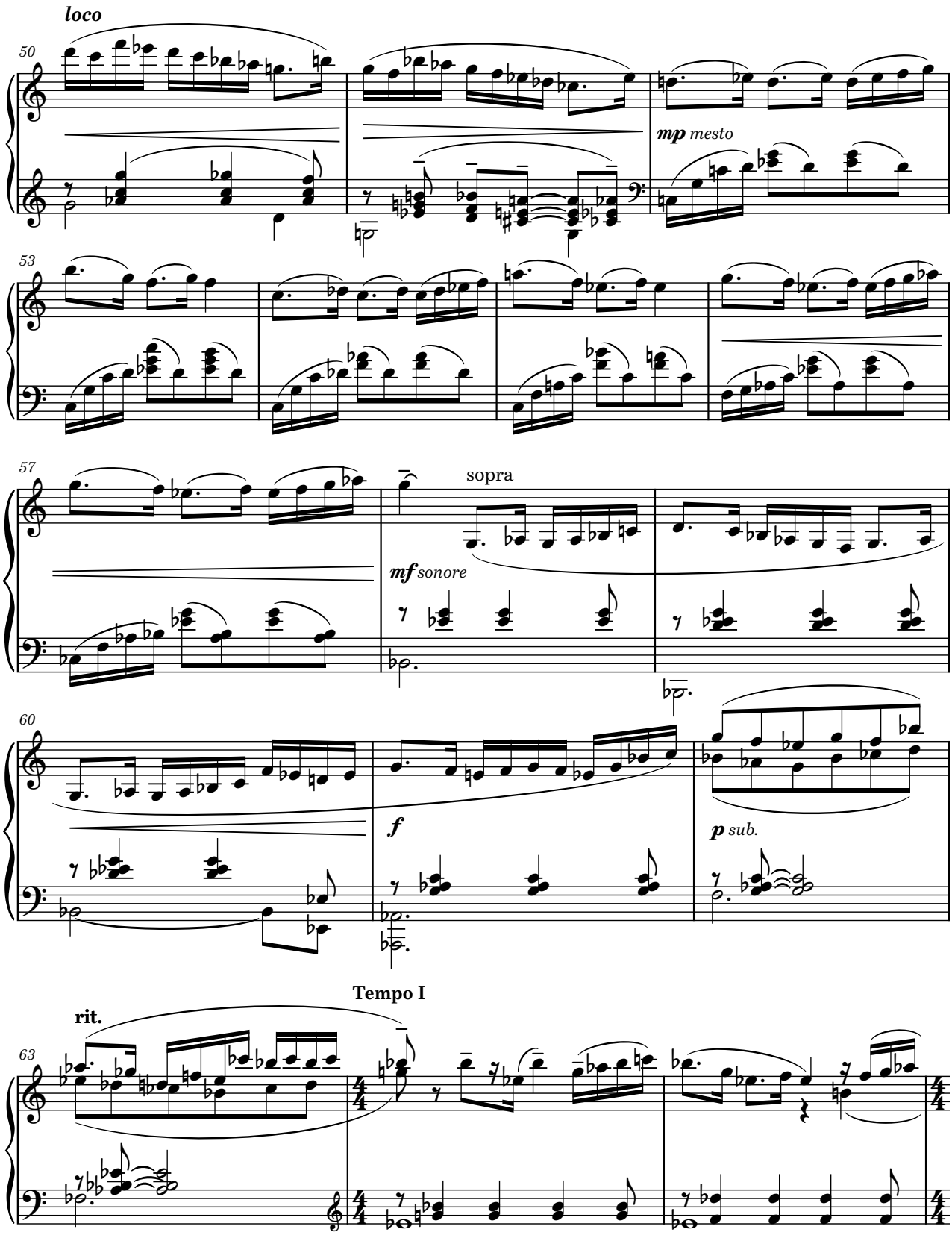
Prelude VII

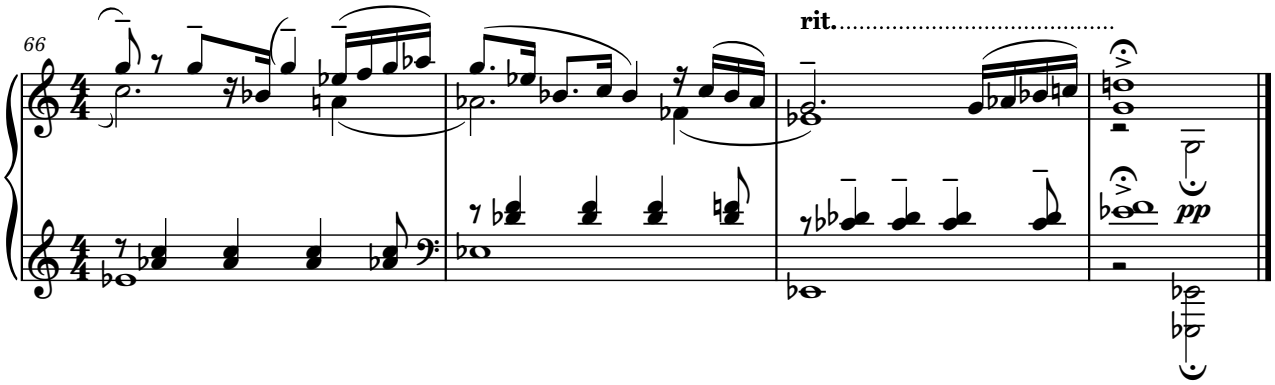

Come un'aria, molto cantabile con rubato ♩= 60
p innocentemente
pp
Moving ahead somewhat
4
mp misterioso
7
p
10
poco rit.
cresc. poco a poco
A tempo
13
f appassionatamente
cresc.


16
ff
19
Tempo I
22
rit.
Tempo I
p
25
5
f

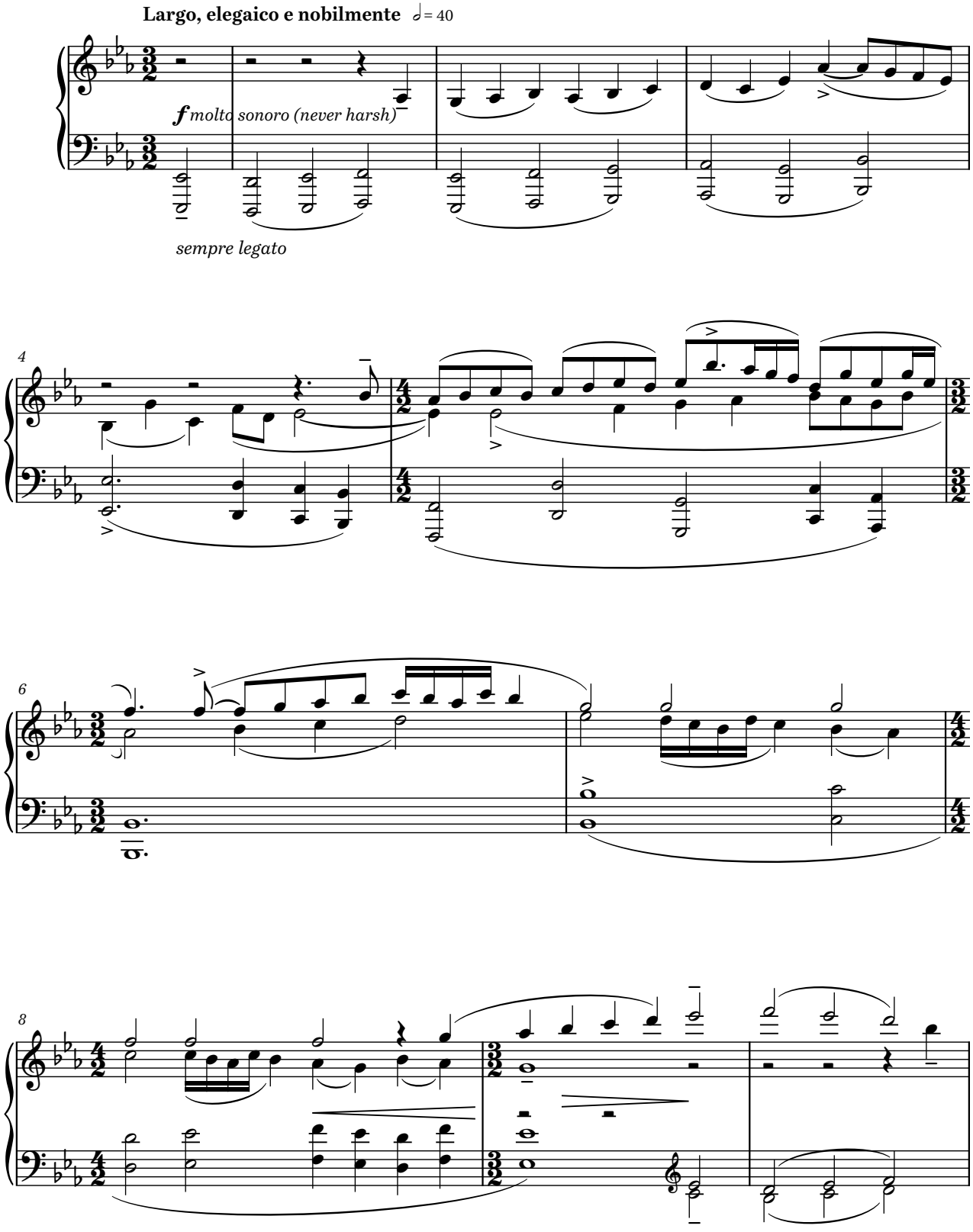

28
31
dim.
Poco meno mosso
34
rit.
37
Tempo I
p misterioso

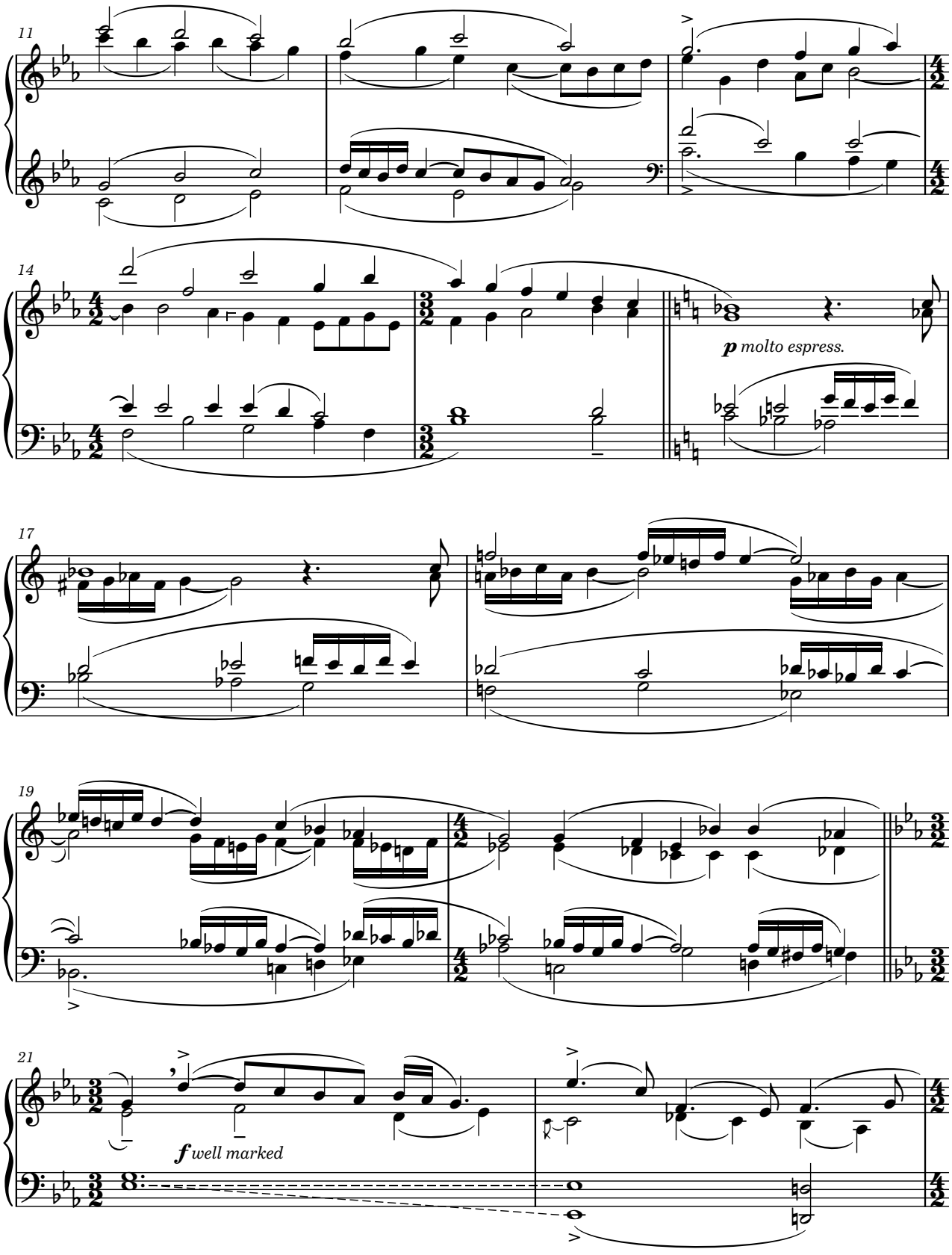

40
ff affettuoso
43
21
ad libitum
45
p
Tempo I
46
8va
p sotto voce

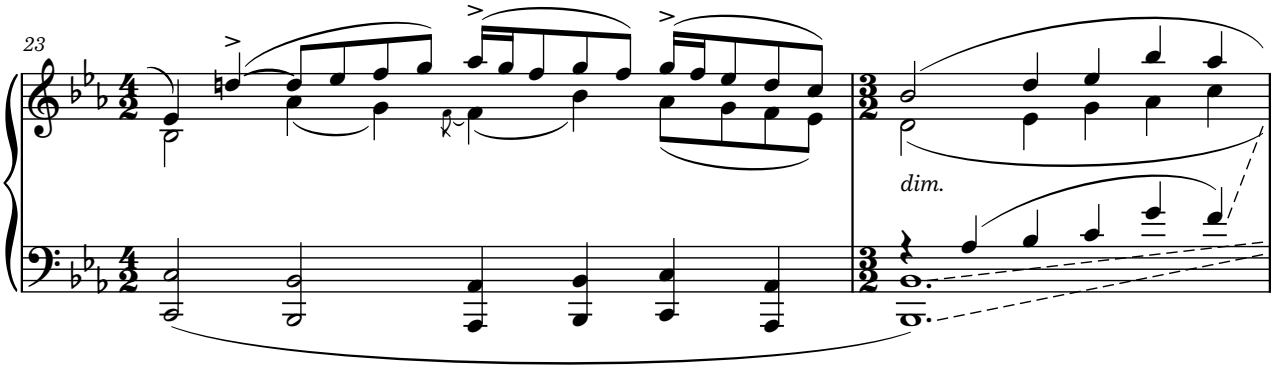

loco
50
mp mesto
53
57
sopra
mf sonore
60
f
p sub.
Tempo I
rit.
63

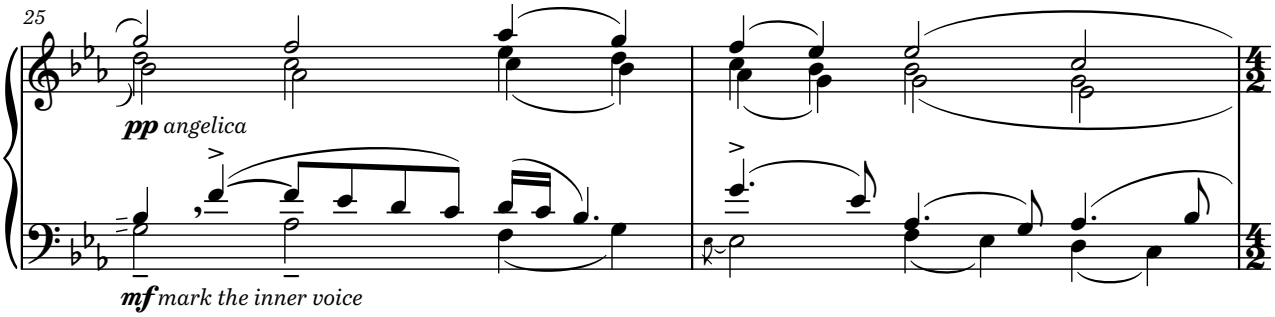

66
rit.
pp

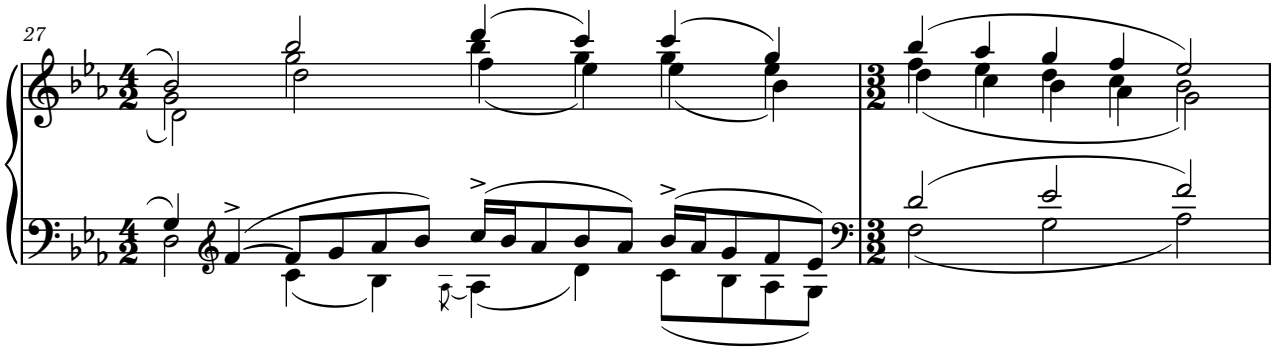
Fugue VII

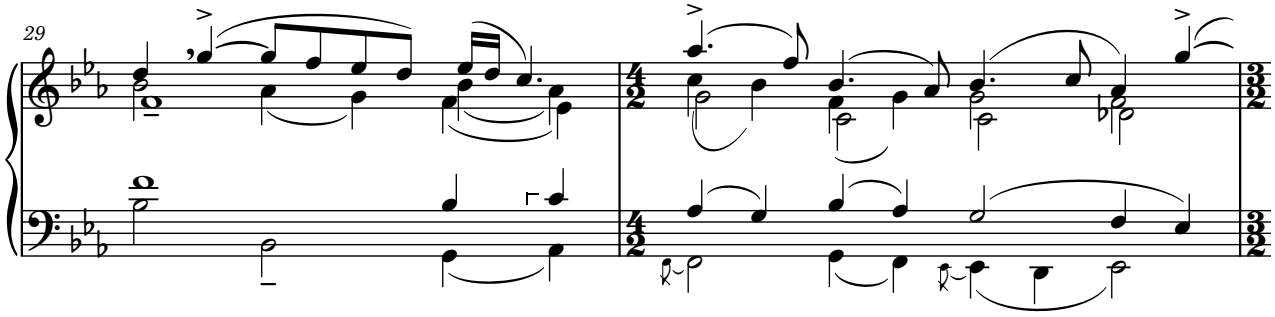

Largo, elegaico e nobilmente ♩= 40
f molto sonoro (never harsh)
sempre legato
4
6
8

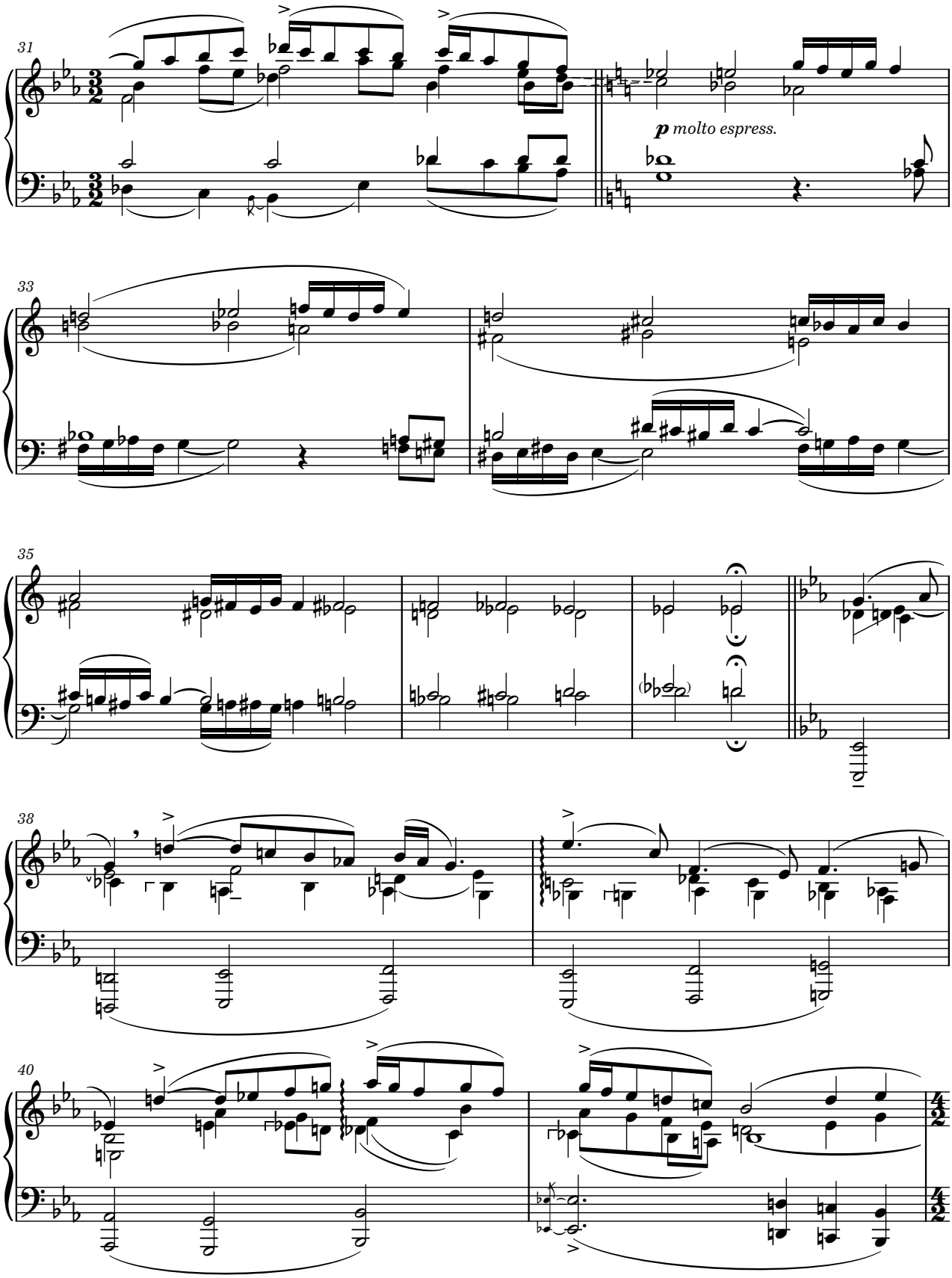

11
14
p molto espress.
17
19
21
f well marked

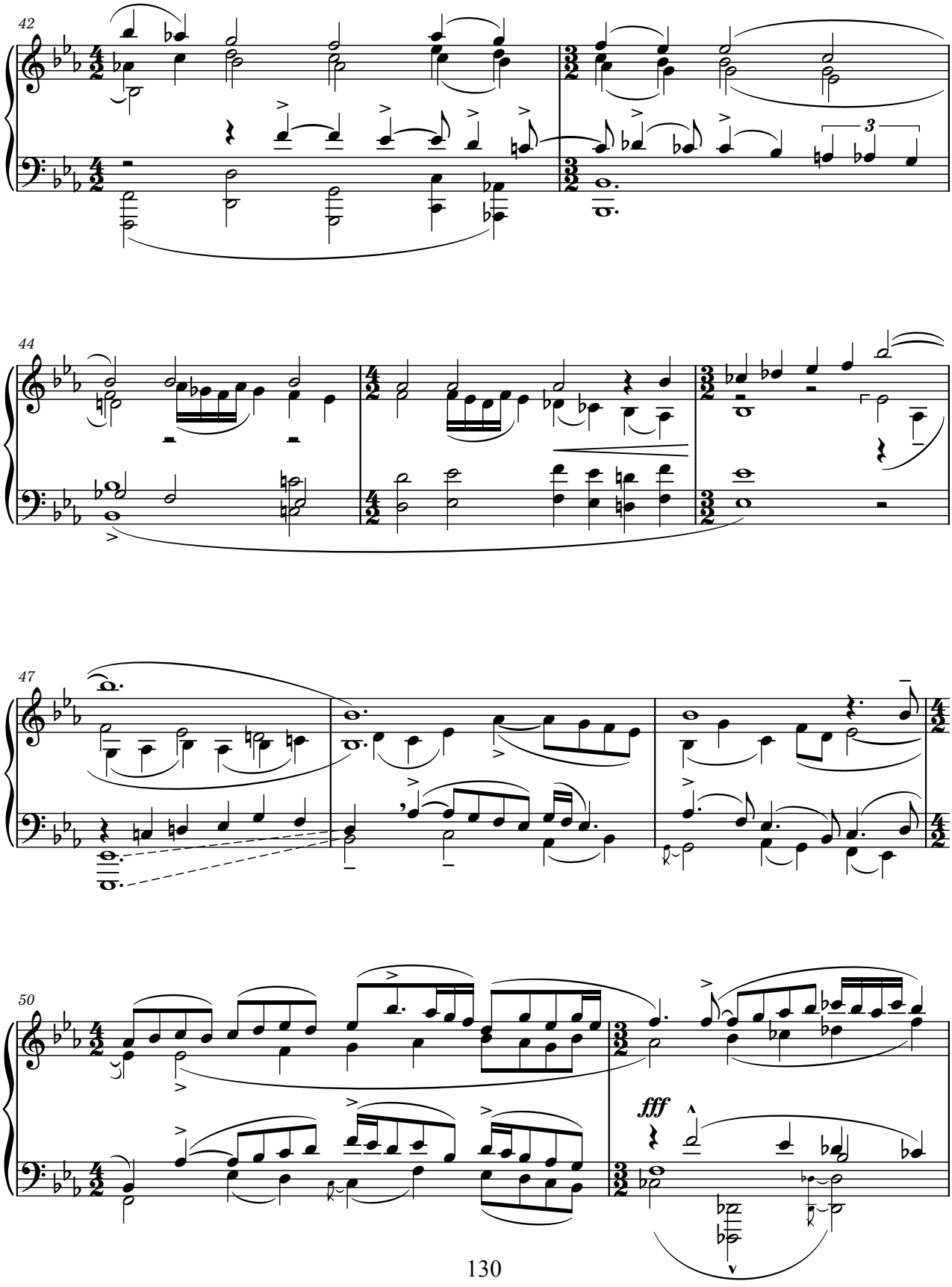

23
dim.

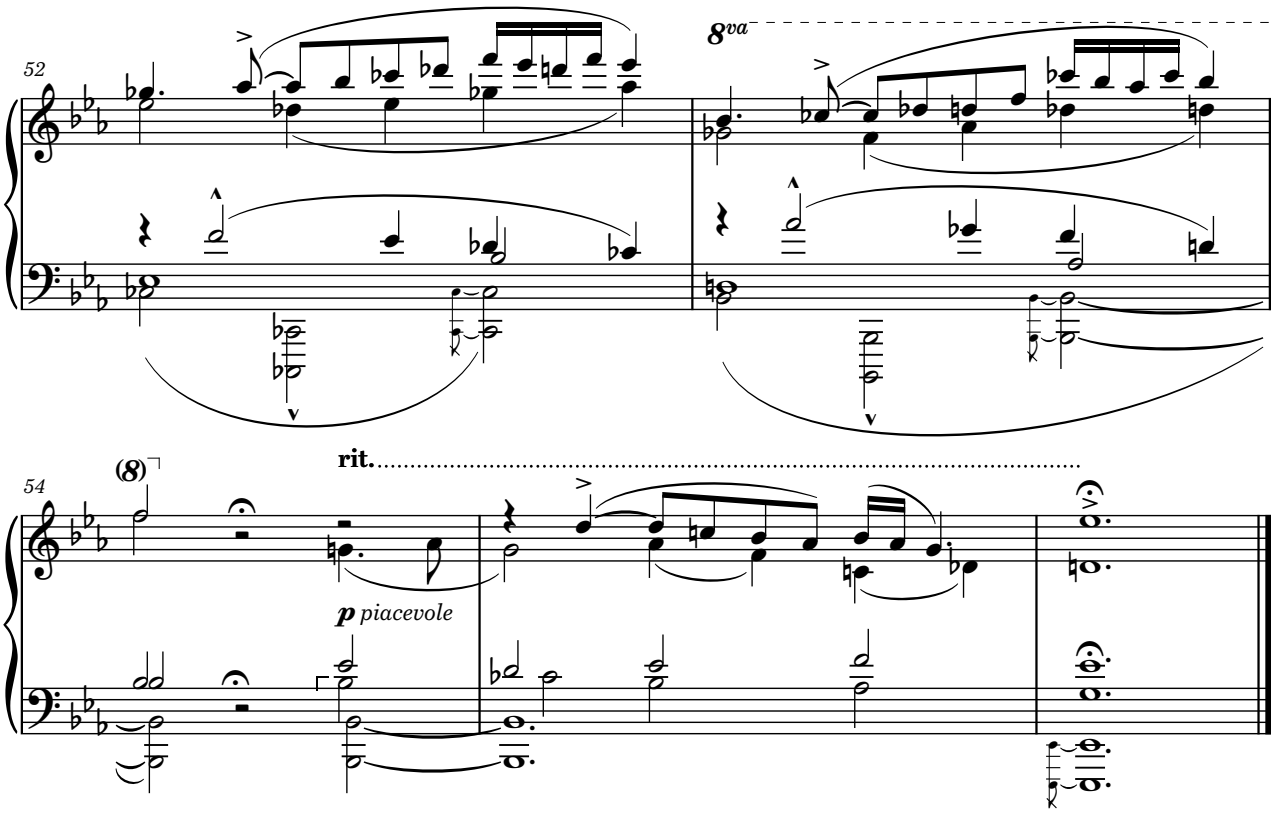

25
pp angelica
mf mark the inner voice


27

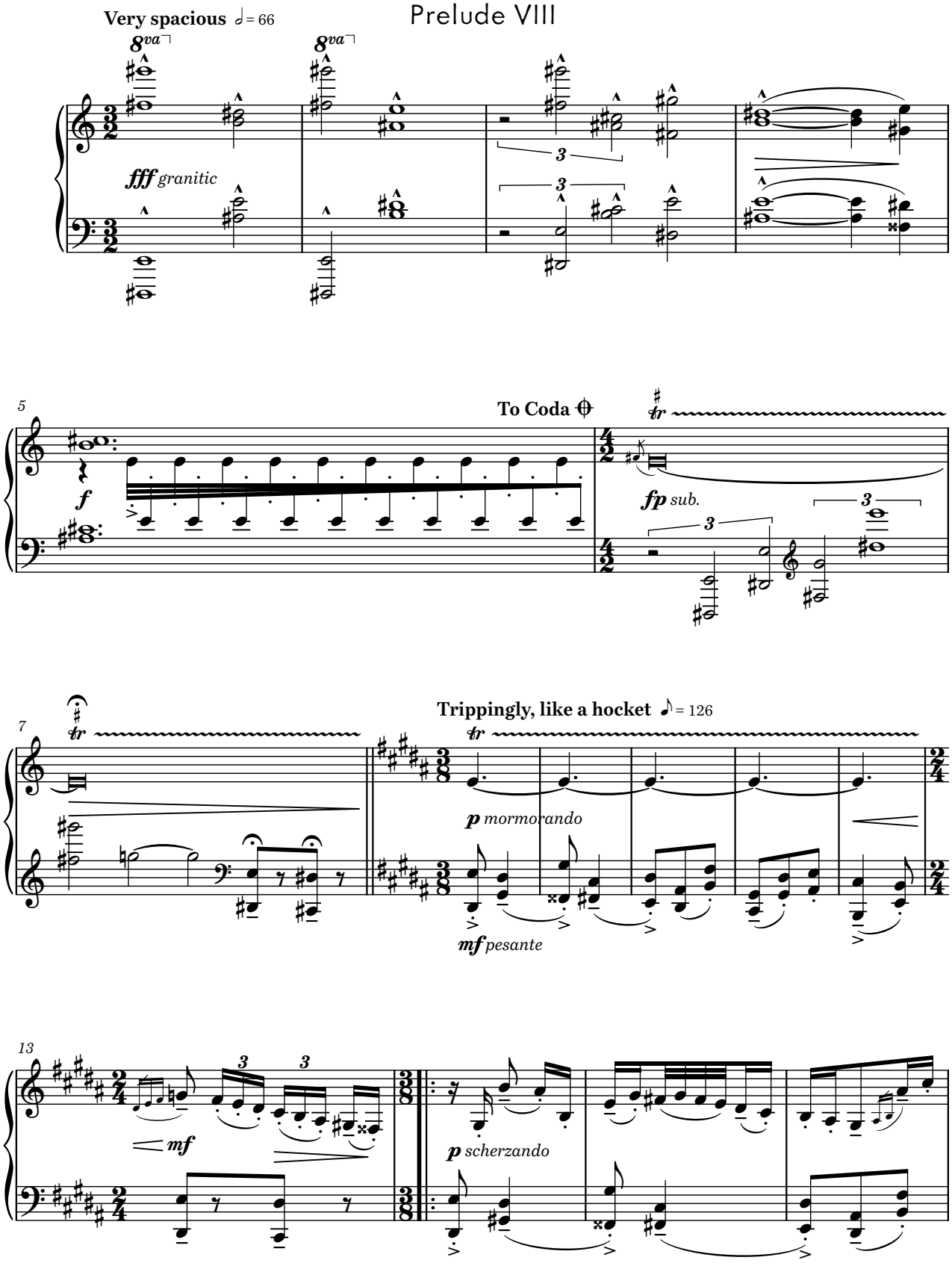

29

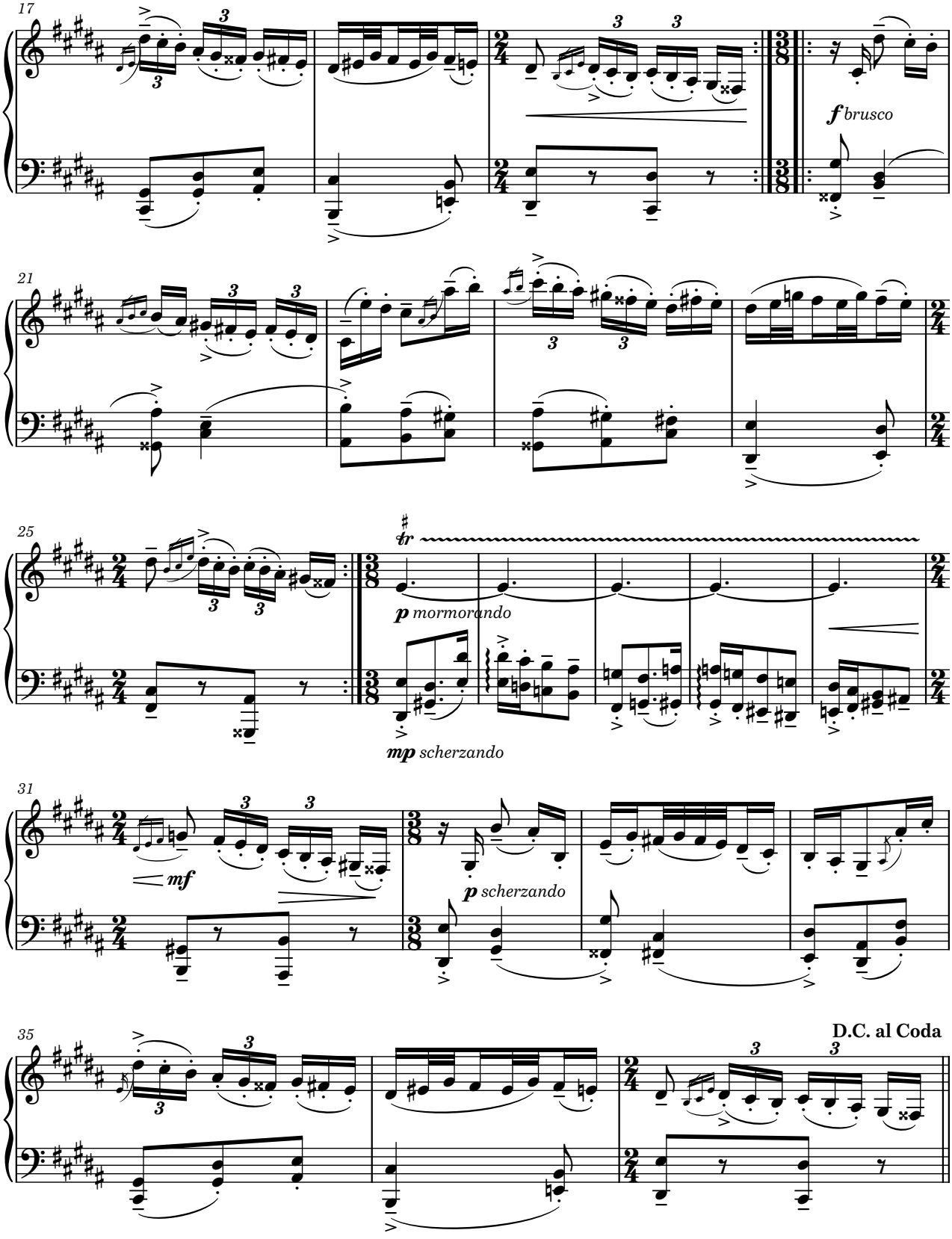

31
p molto espress.
33
35
38
40

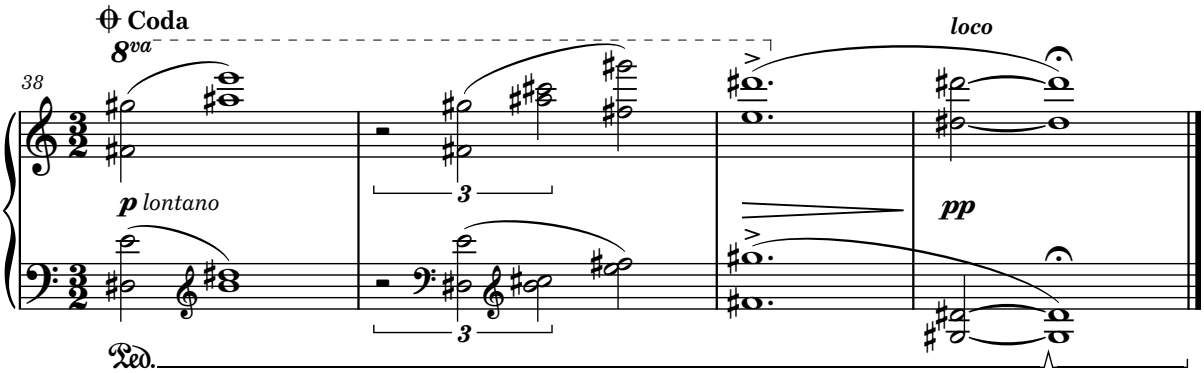

42
3
44
47
50
fff


52
8va
54
(8)
rit.
p piacevole

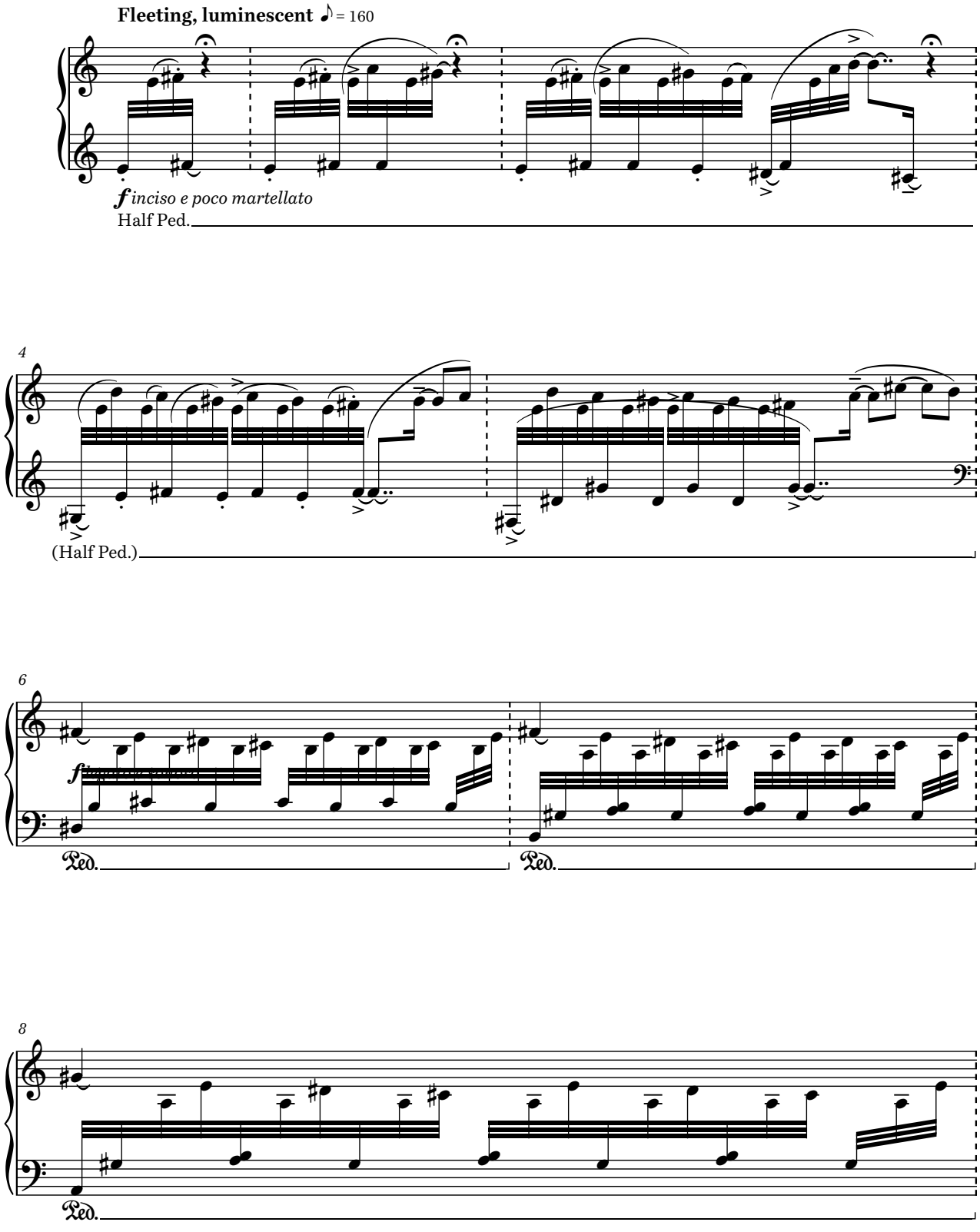
Prelude VIII

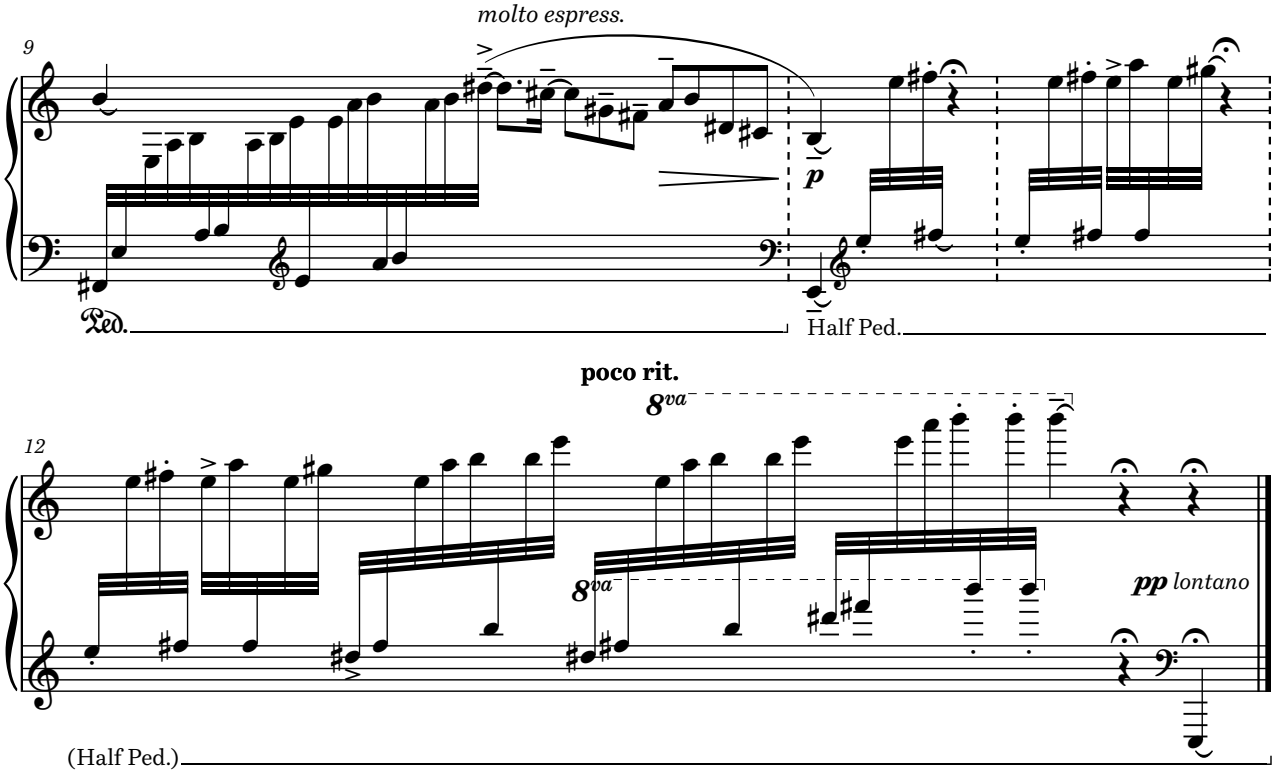



17
f brusco
21
25
tr
p mormorando
mp scherzando
31
mf
p scherzando
35
D.C. al Coda

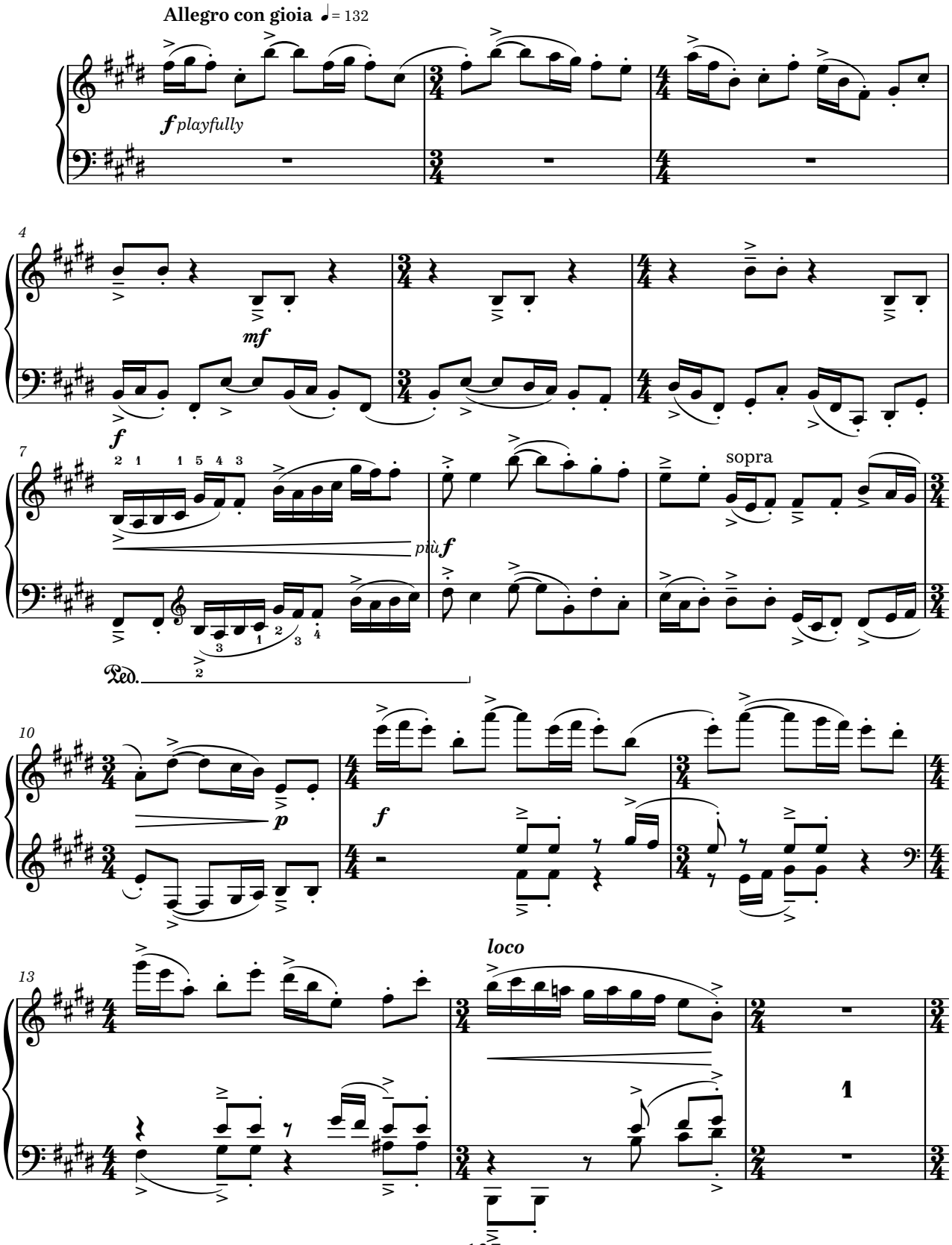

Coda
8va
38
p lontano
3
3
loco
pp
Ped.

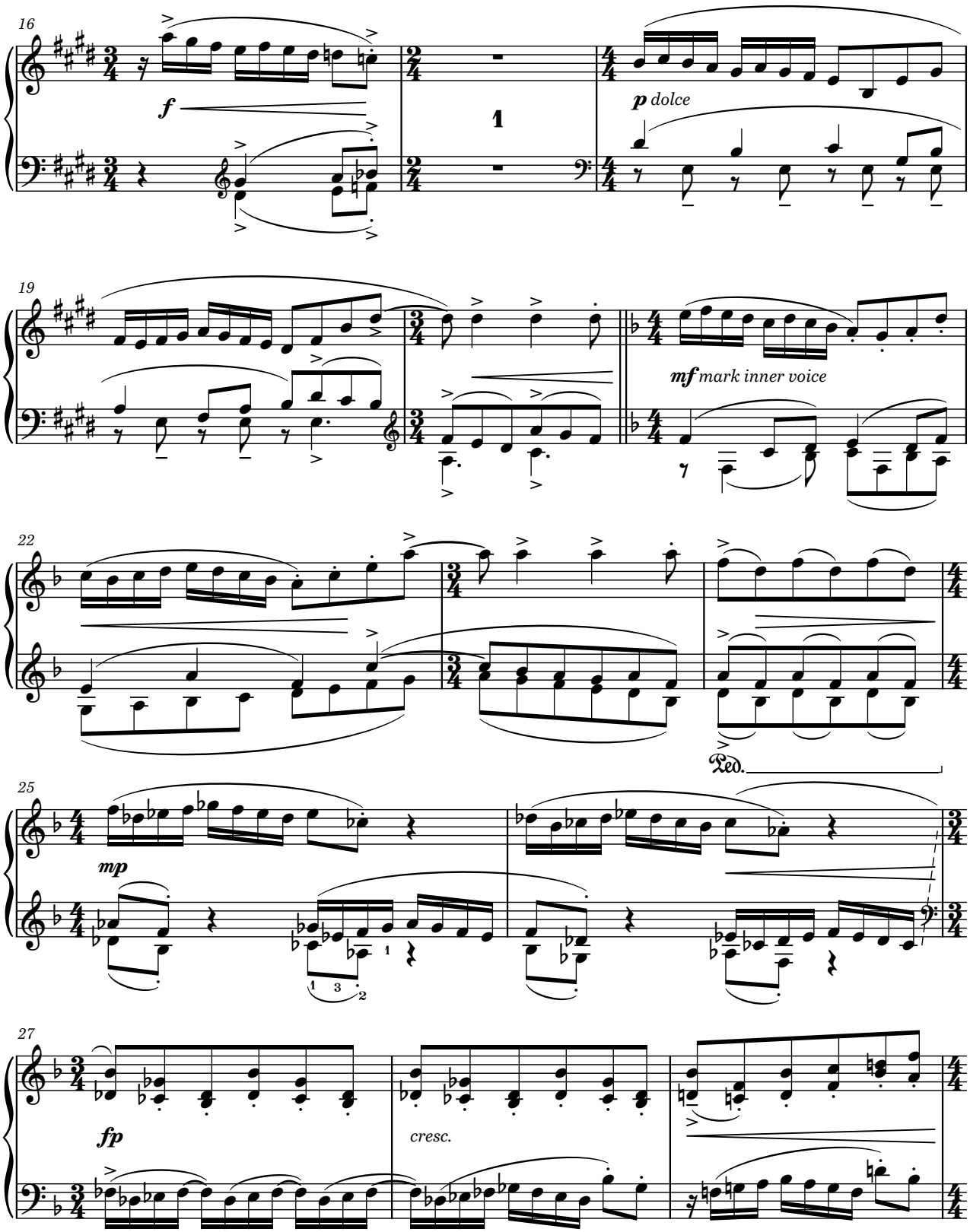
Prelude IX

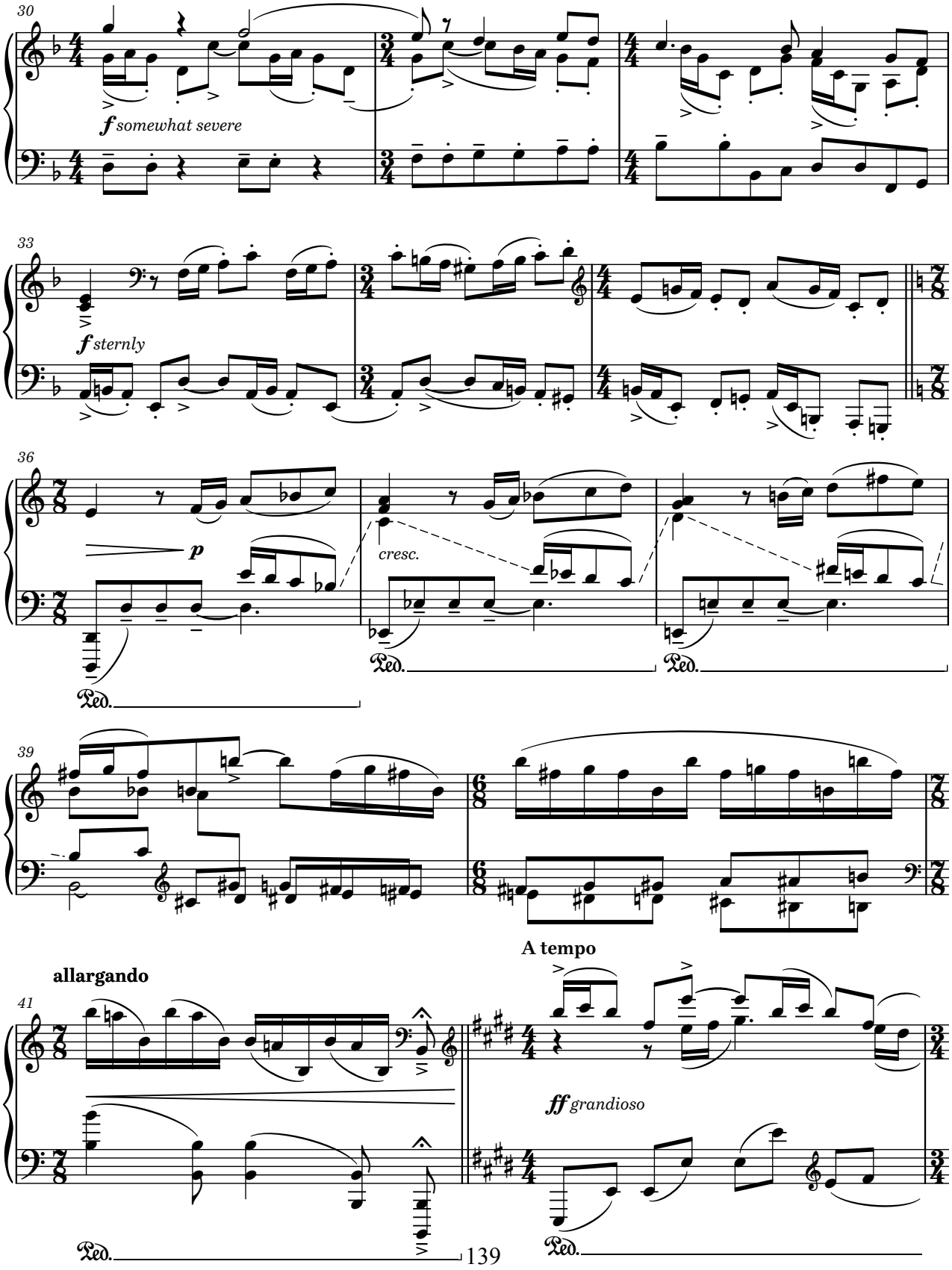

Fleeting, luminescent ♪ = 160
f inciso e poco martellato
Half Ped.
4
(Half Ped.)
6
f
Ped.
Ped.
8
Ped.

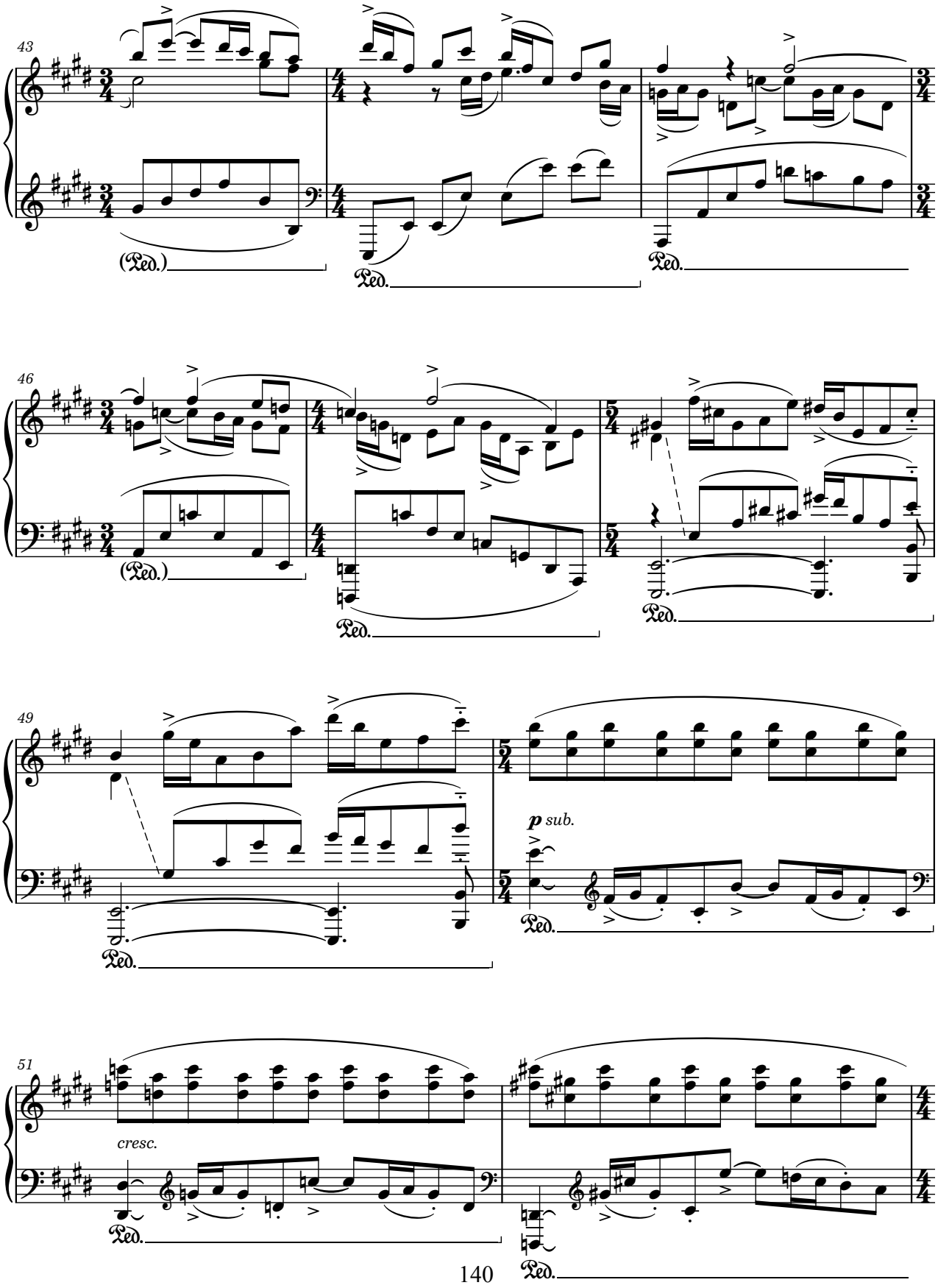

molto espress.
9
p
Ped.
Half Ped.
poco rit.
8va
12
8va
pp lontano
(Half Ped.)

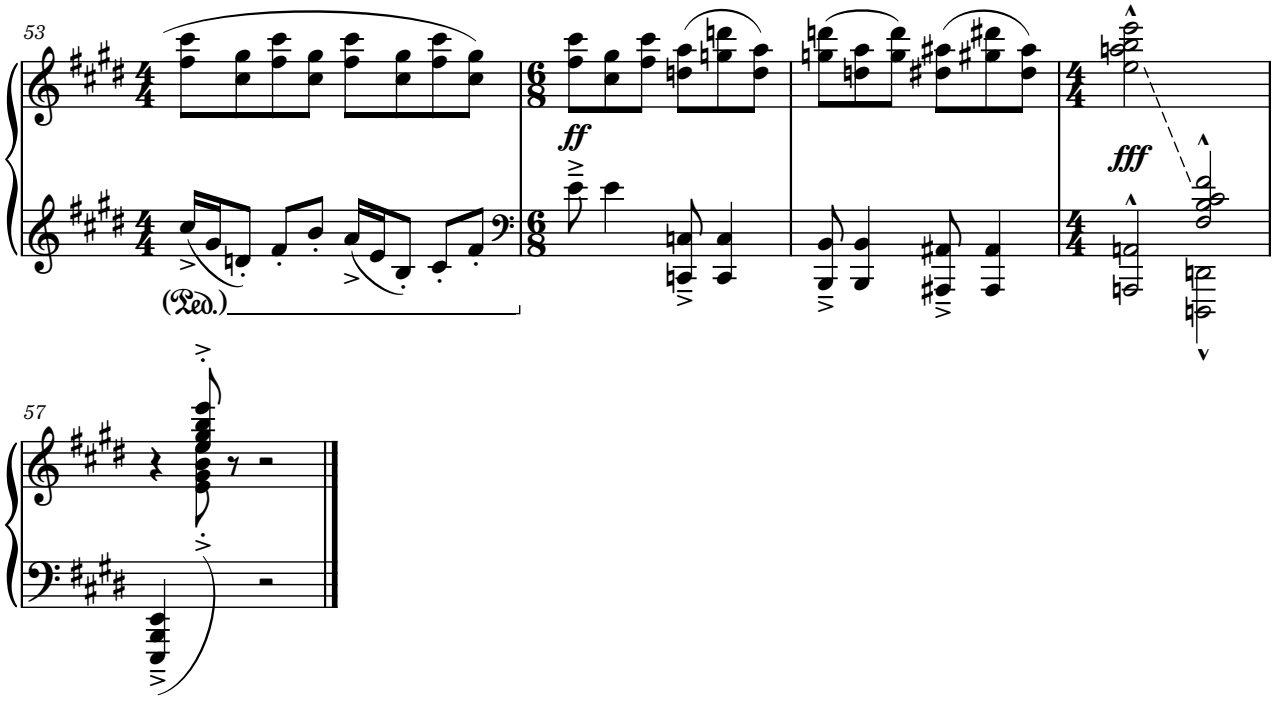
Fugue IX


Allegro con gioia ♩= 132
f playfully
mf
f
più f
sopra
Ped.
p
f
loco
1

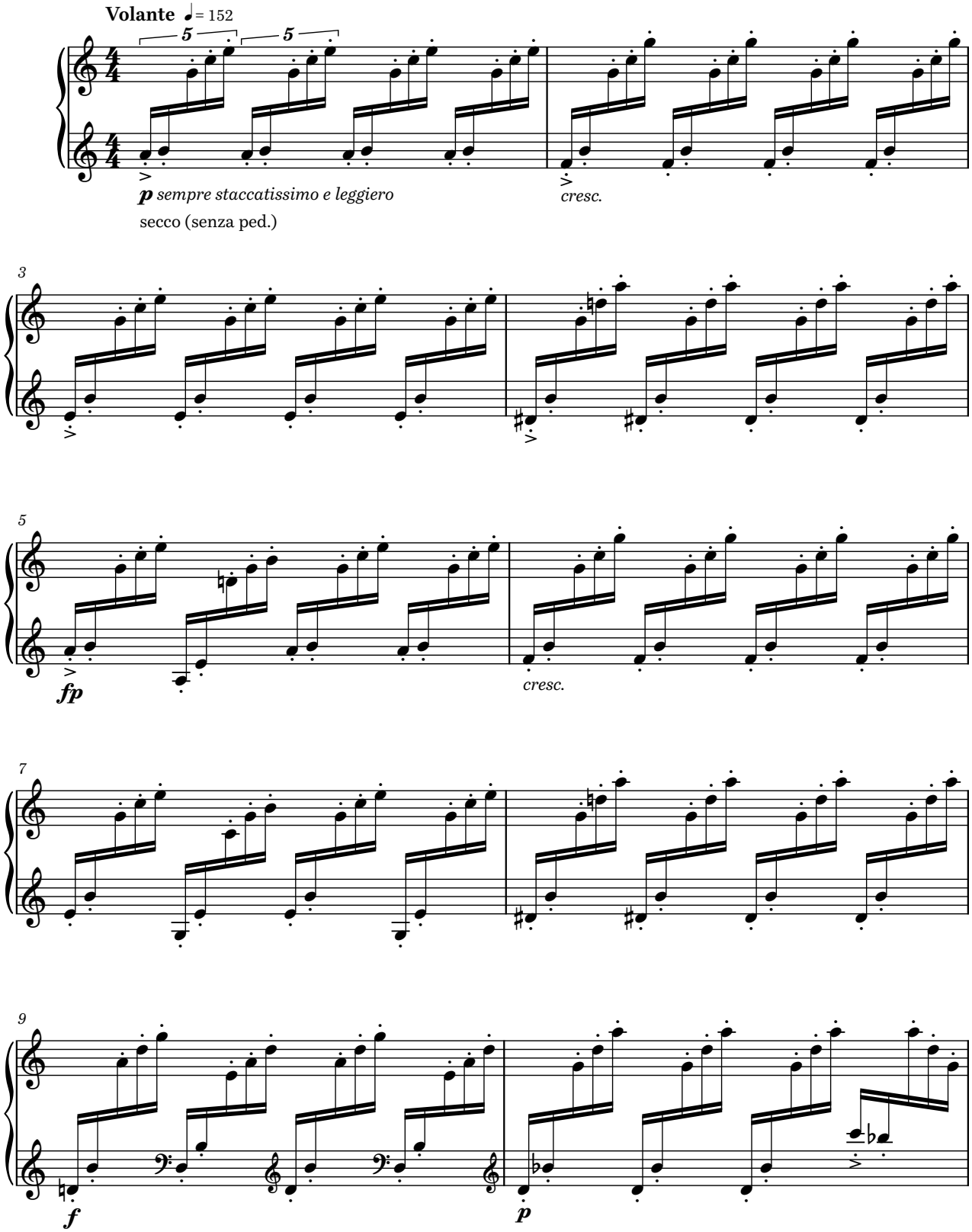

16
f
1
p dolce
19
mf mark inner voice
22
Ped.
25
mp
27
fp
cresc.

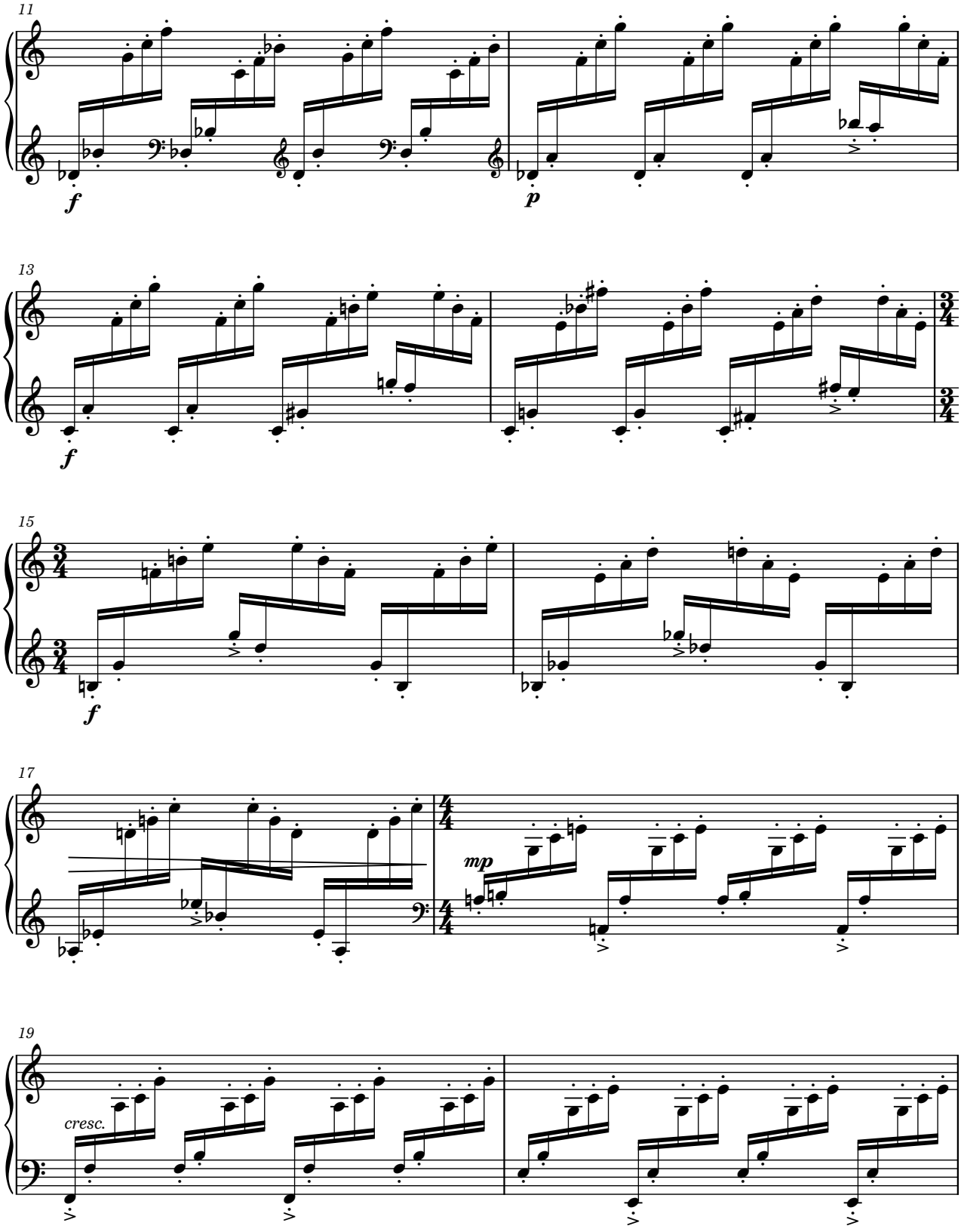

30
f somewhat severe
33
f sternly
36
p
cresc.
Ped.
39
A tempo
allargando
41
ff grandioso

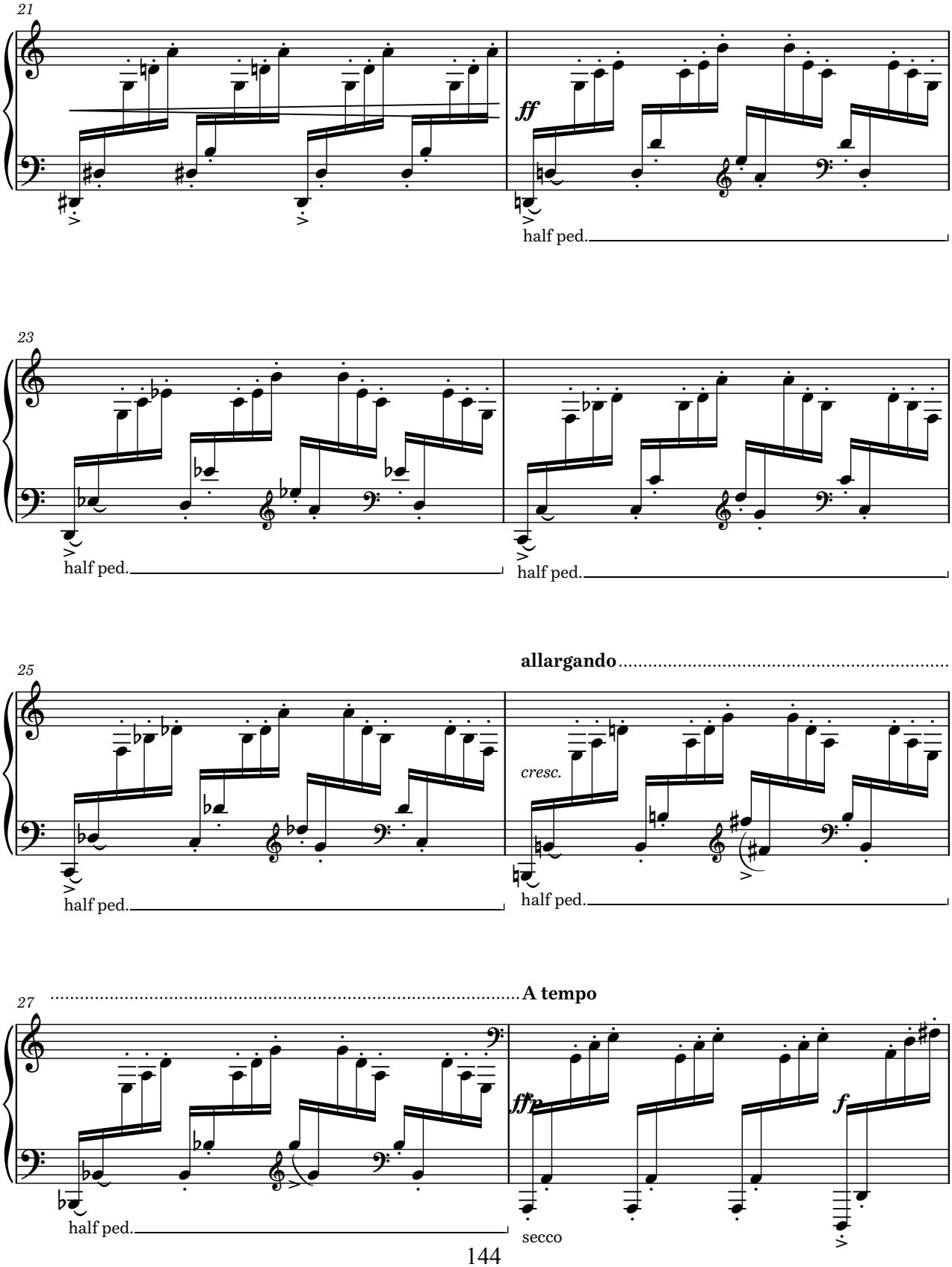

43
(Ped.)
Ped.
Ped.
46
(Ped.)
Ped.
Ped.
49
Ped.
p sub.
Ped.
51
cresc.
Ped.
Ped.

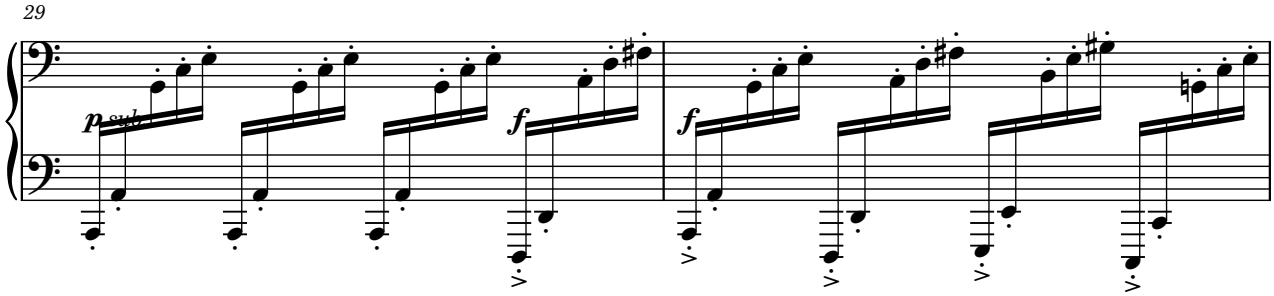

53
ff
fff
(Ped.)
57

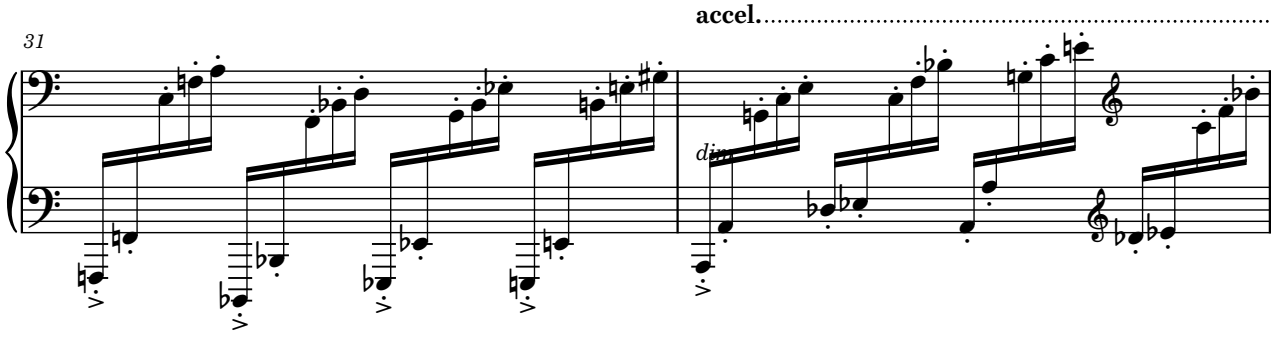
Prelude X

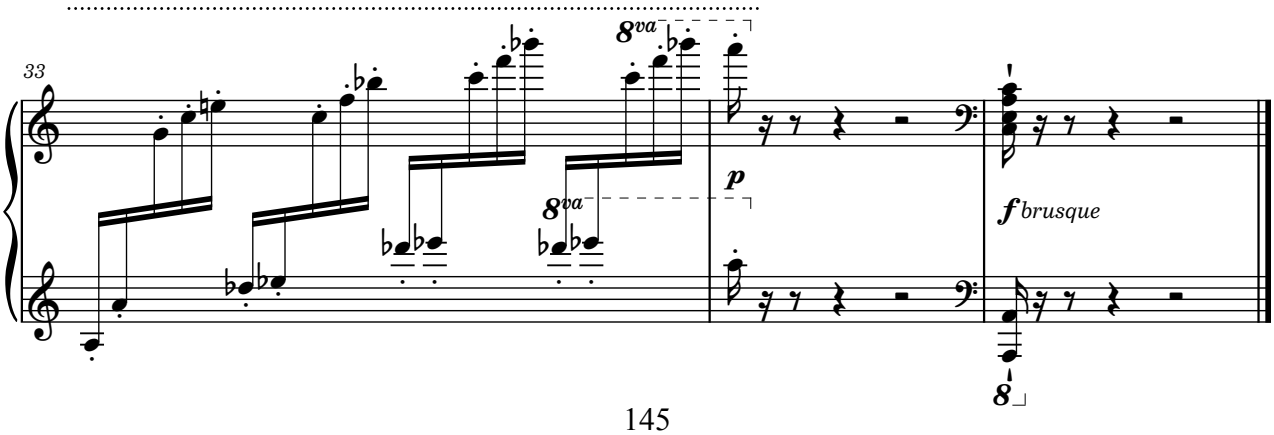

Volante ♩= 152
5
5
p sempre staccatissimo e leggiero
secco (senza ped.)
cresc.
3
5
fp
cresc.
7
9
f
p


11
f
p
13
f
15
f
17
mp
19
cresc.


21
ff
half ped.
23
half ped.
half ped.
allargando
25
cresc.
half ped.
half ped.
A tempo
27
fffp
f
half ped.
secco

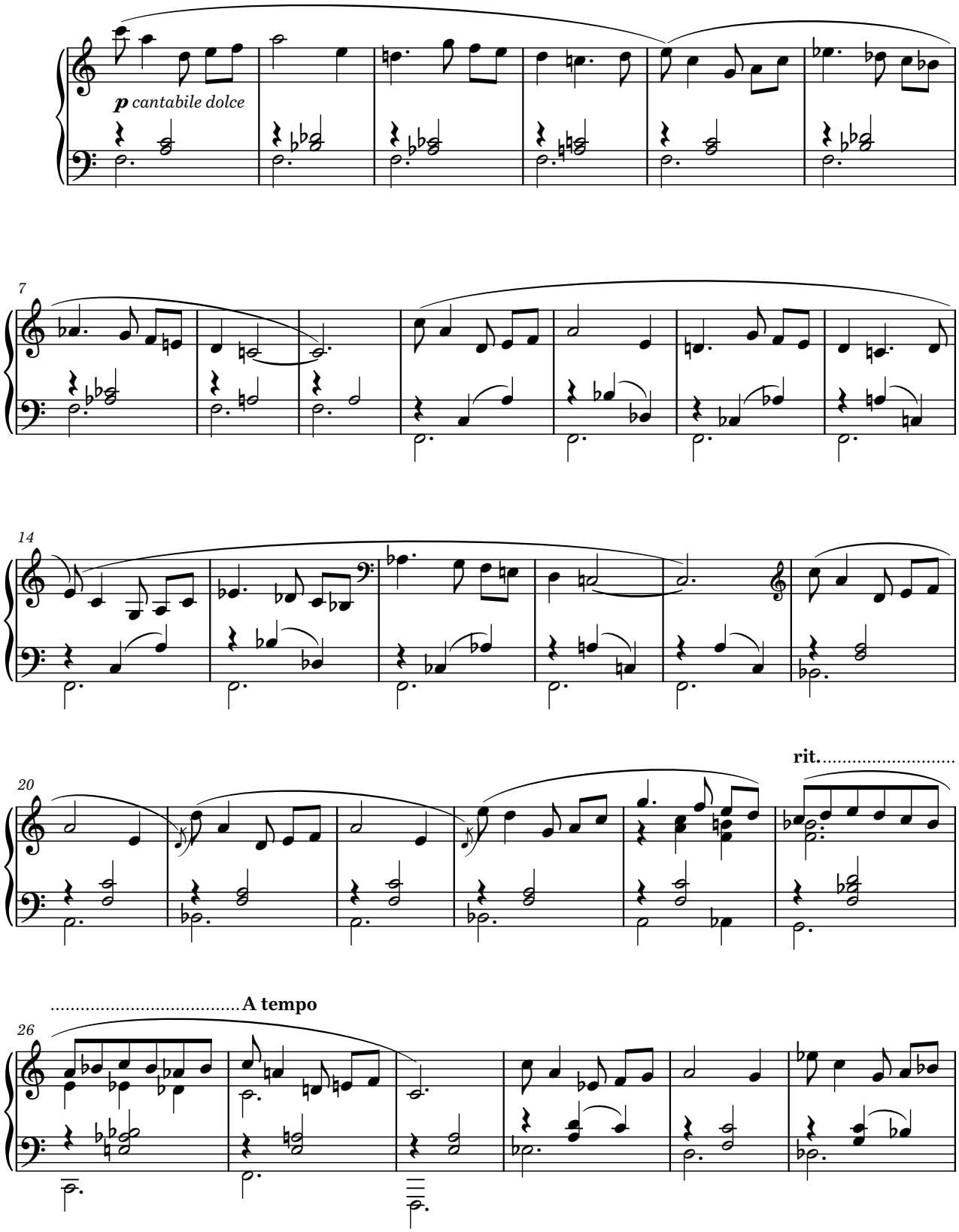

29
p cuh
f
f

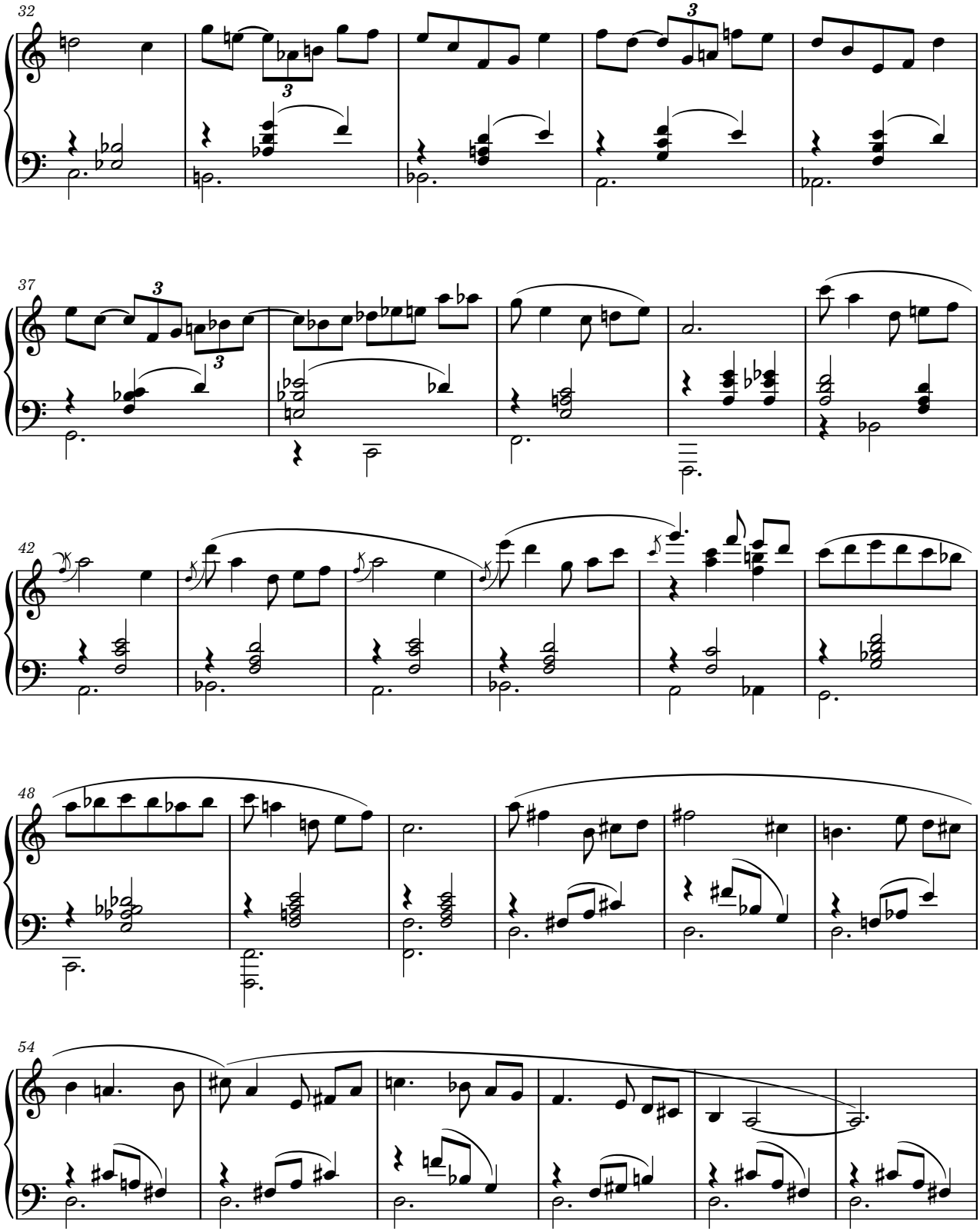

accel.
31
dim.

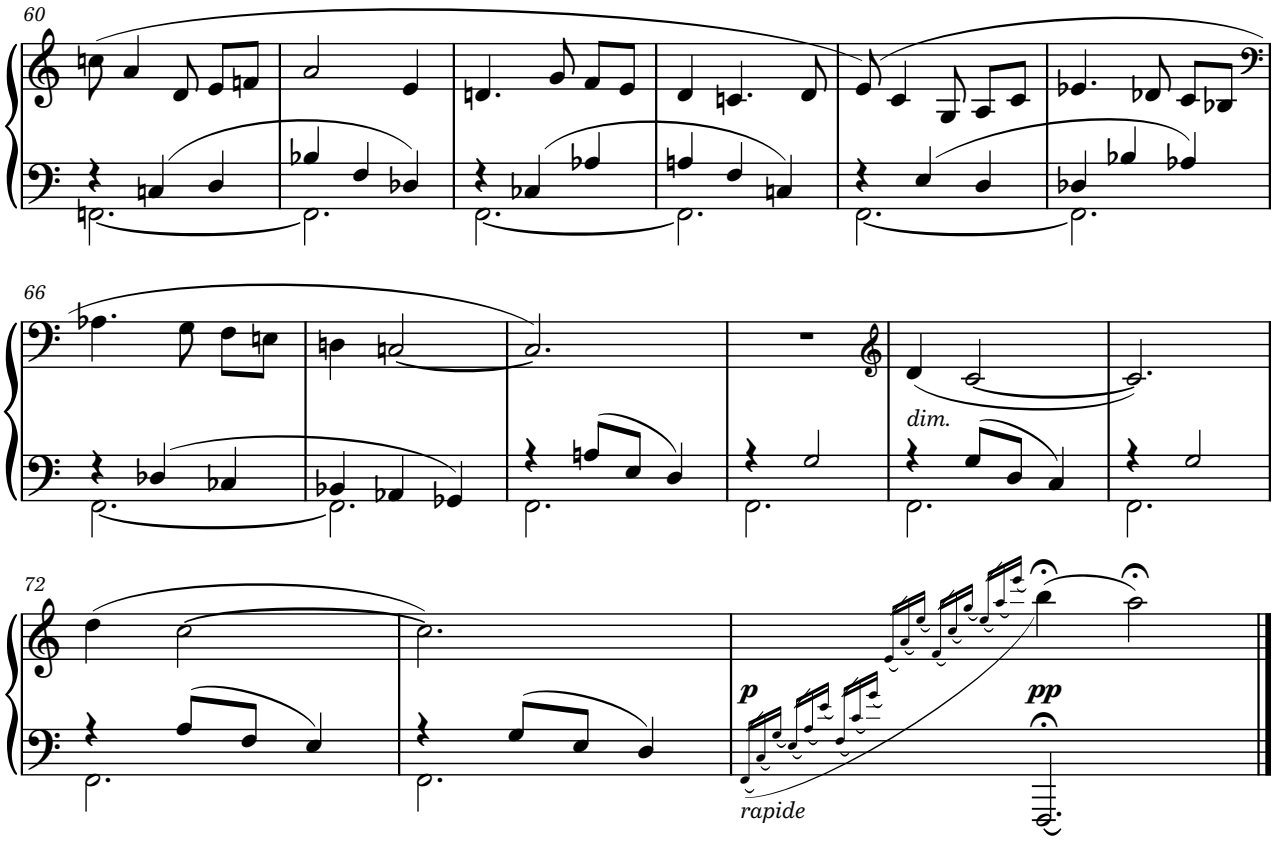

33
8va
8va
p
f brusque
8

Prelude XI

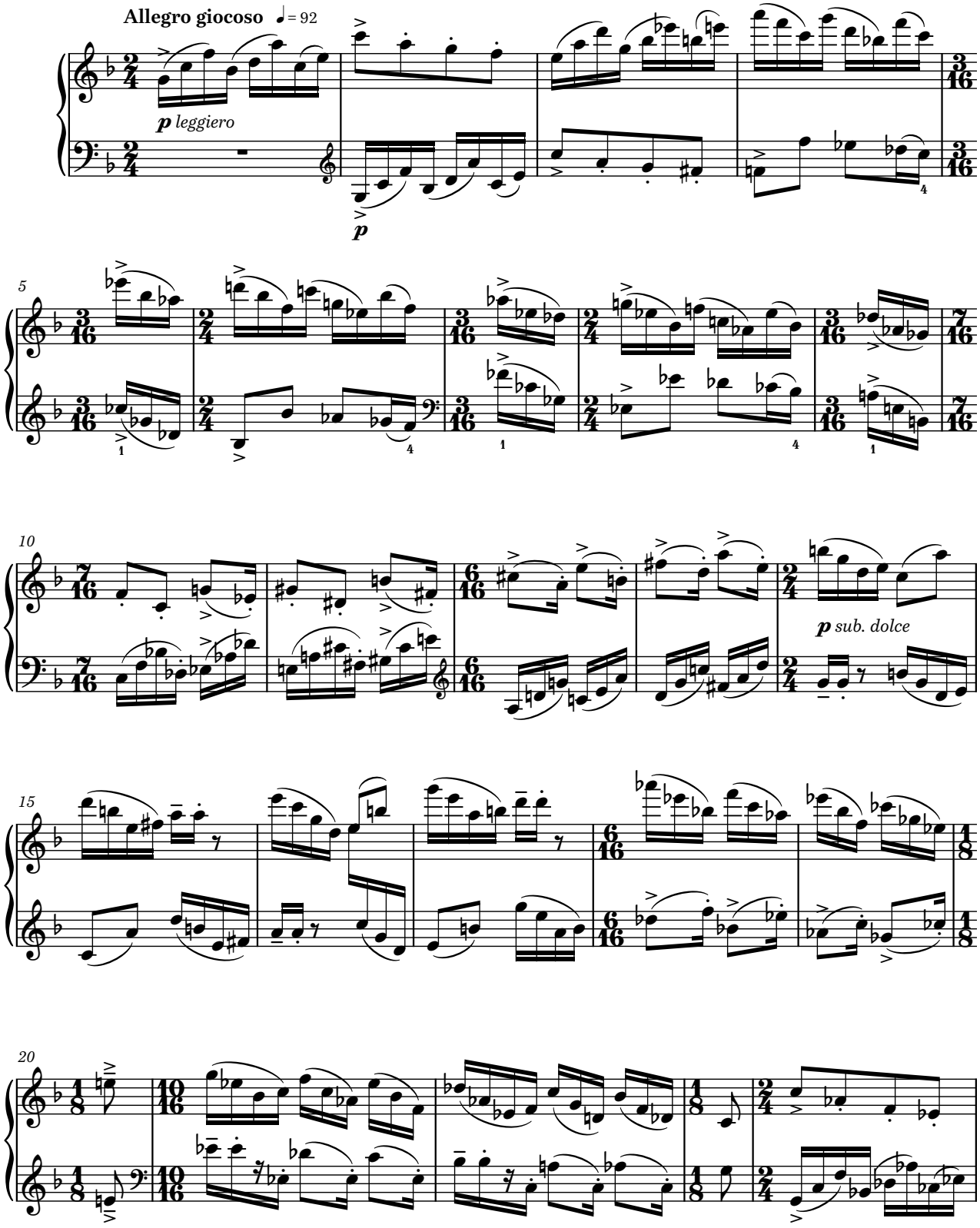
Unpretentiously, with tender sentiment ♩= 104

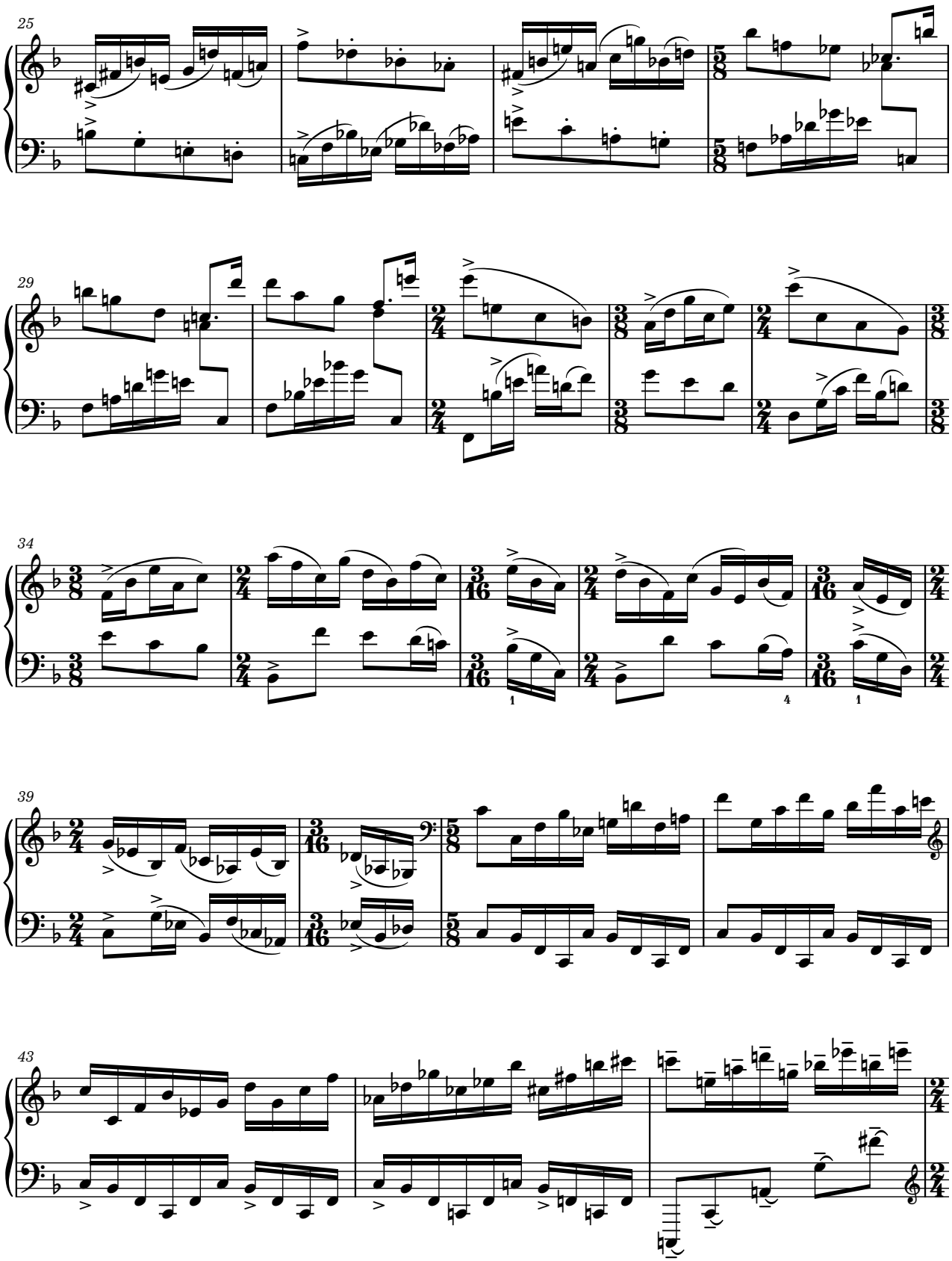


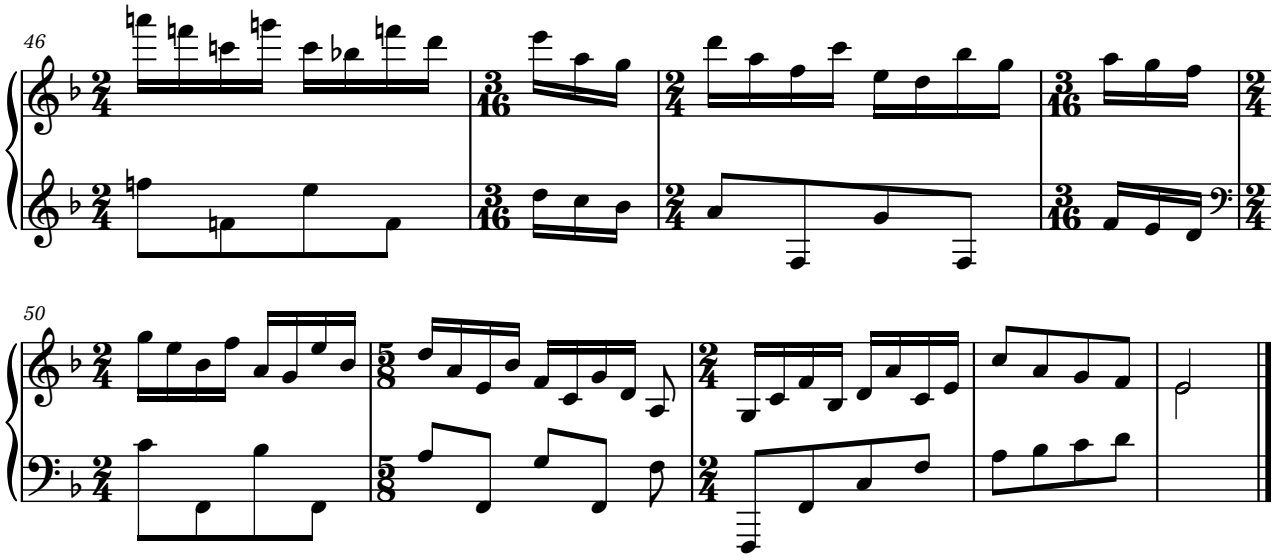

32
37
42
48
54


60
66
dim.
72
p
rapide
pp

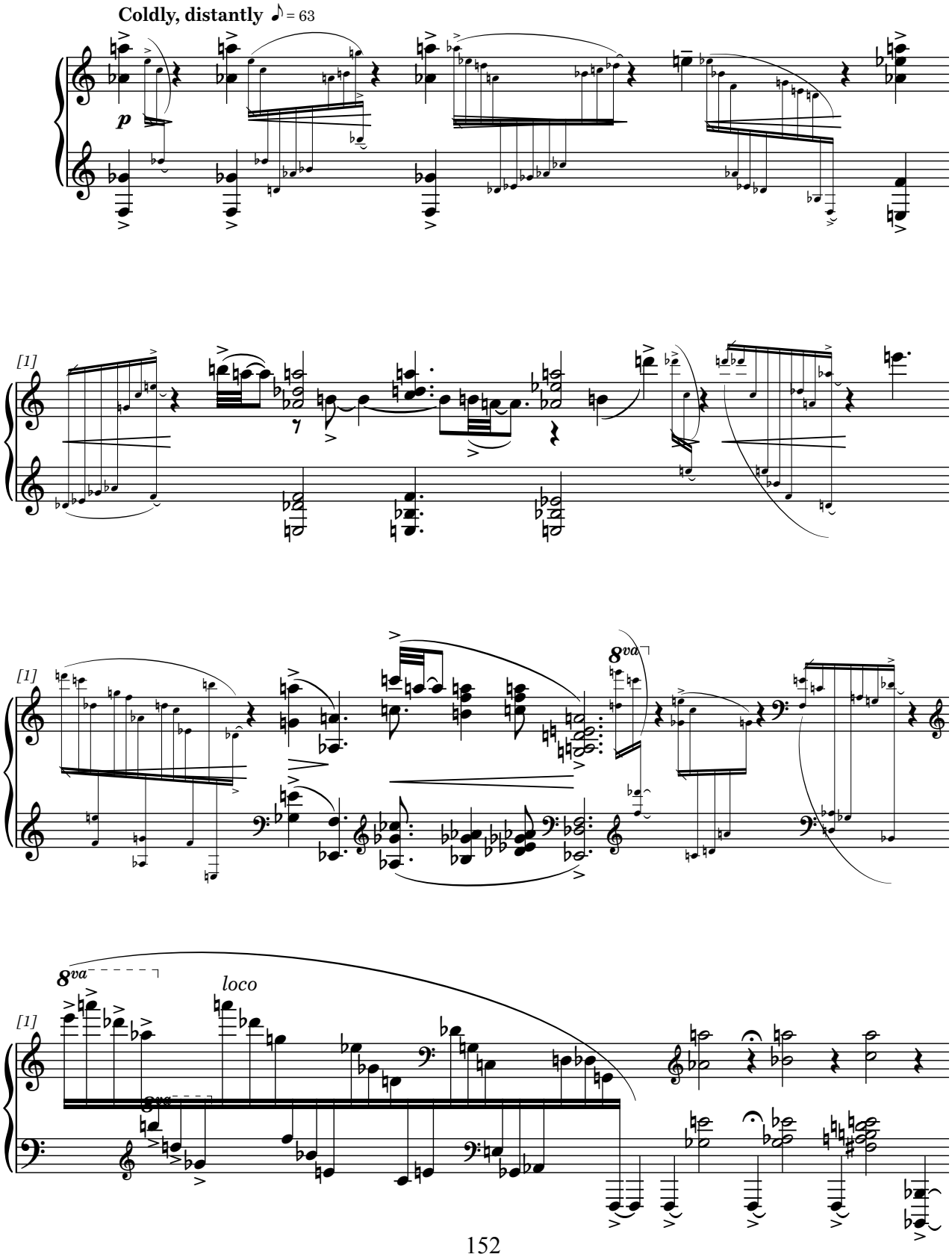
Fugue in F Major

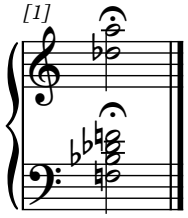



25
29
34
39
43


46
50

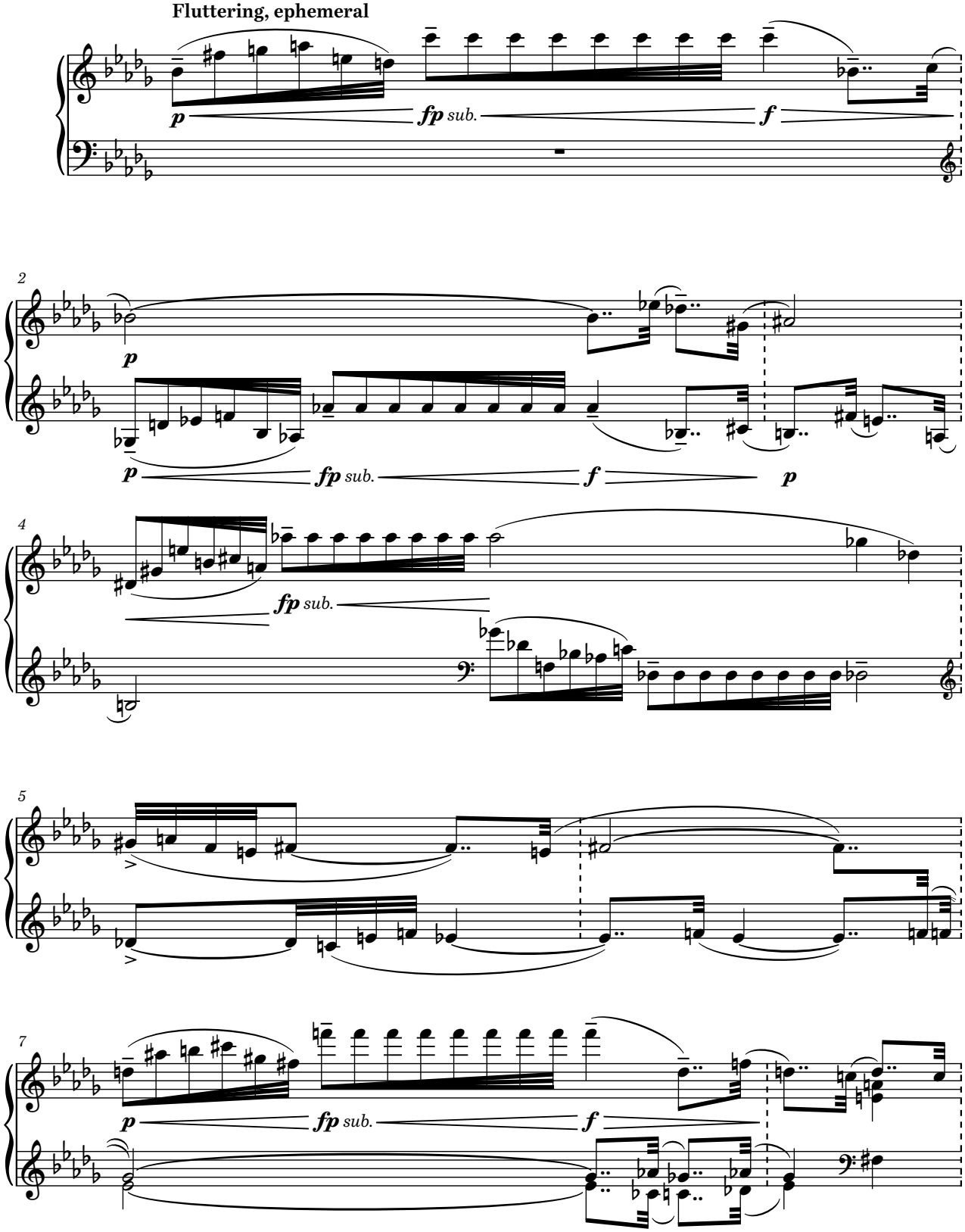
Prelude XII

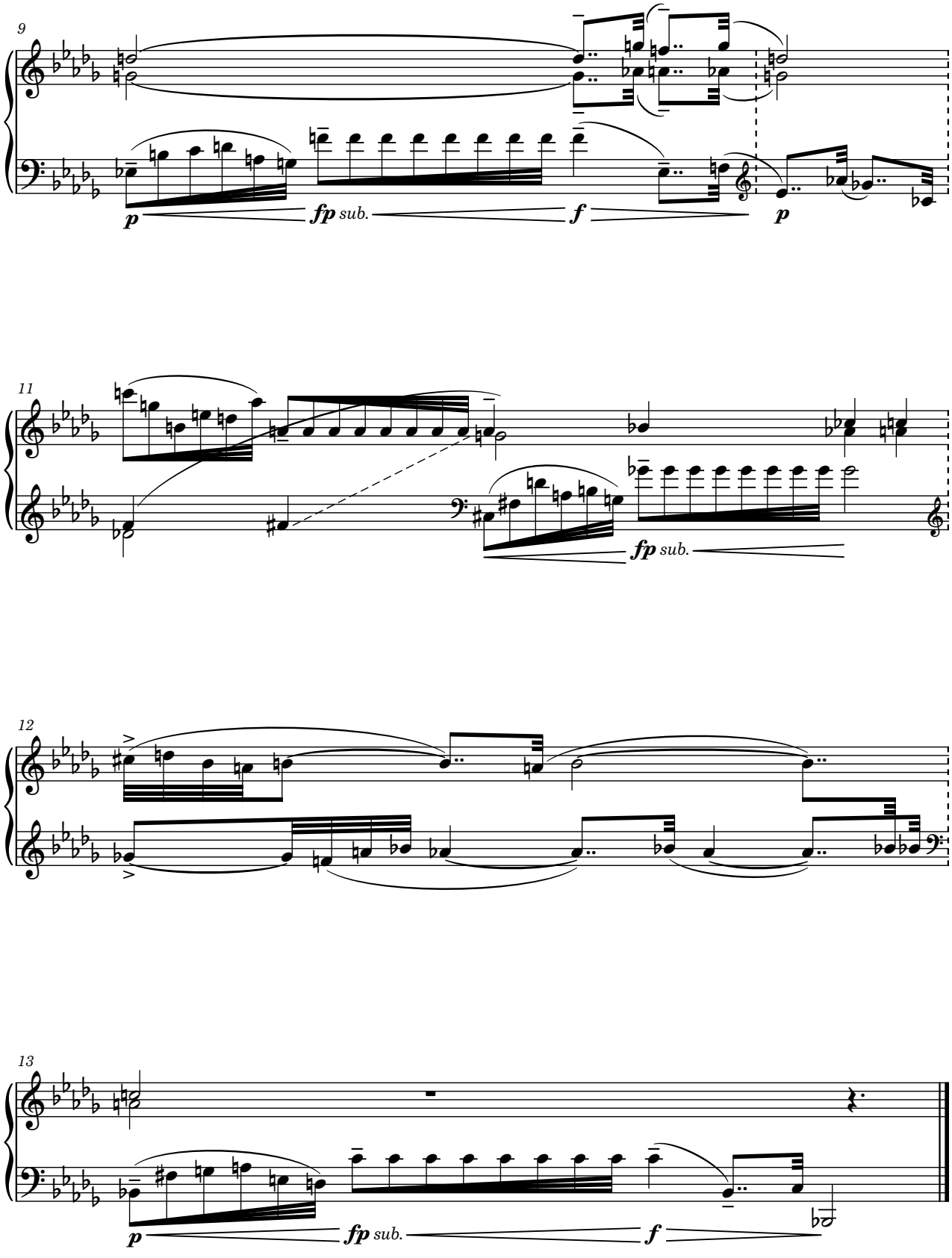



[1]

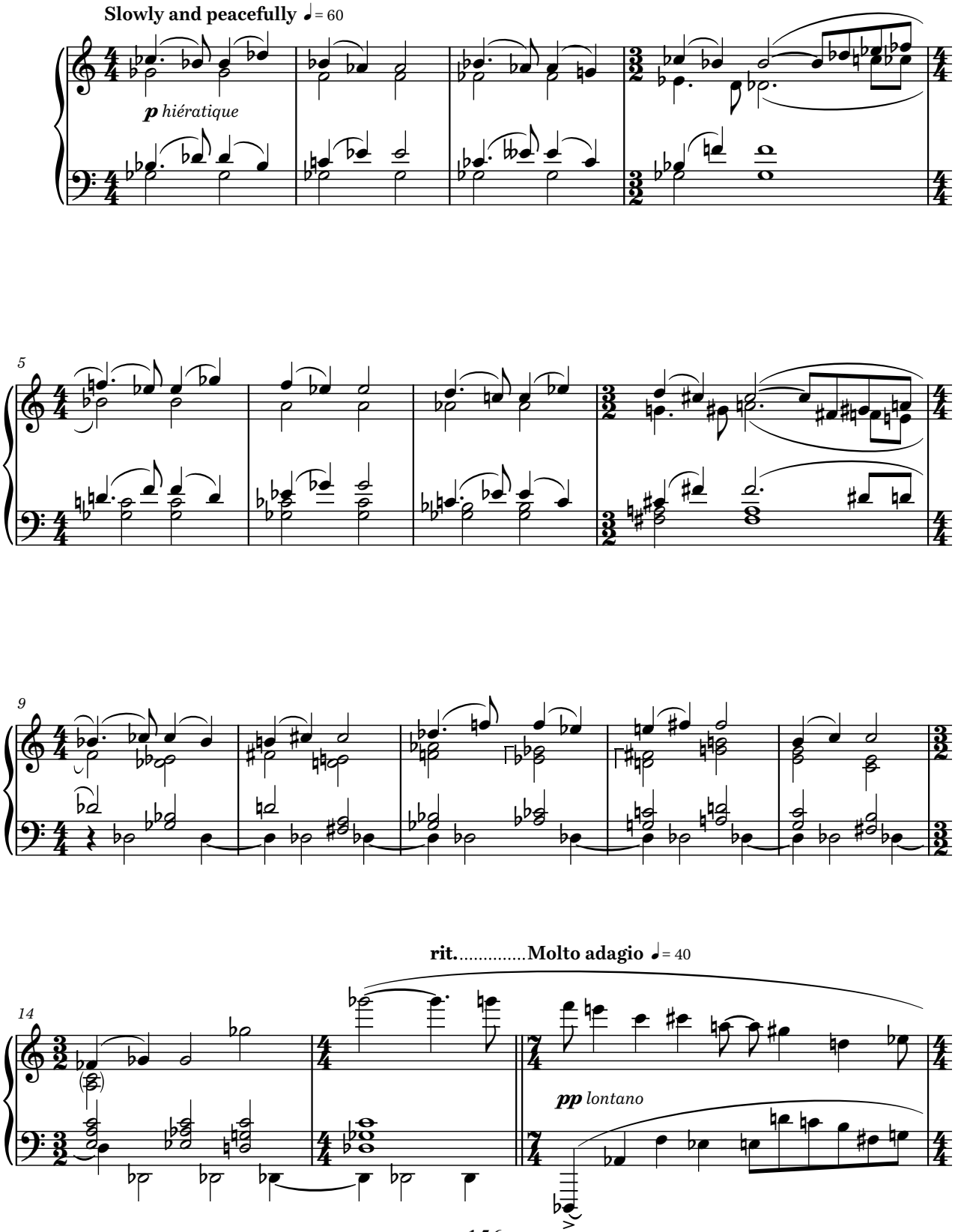
Fugue XII

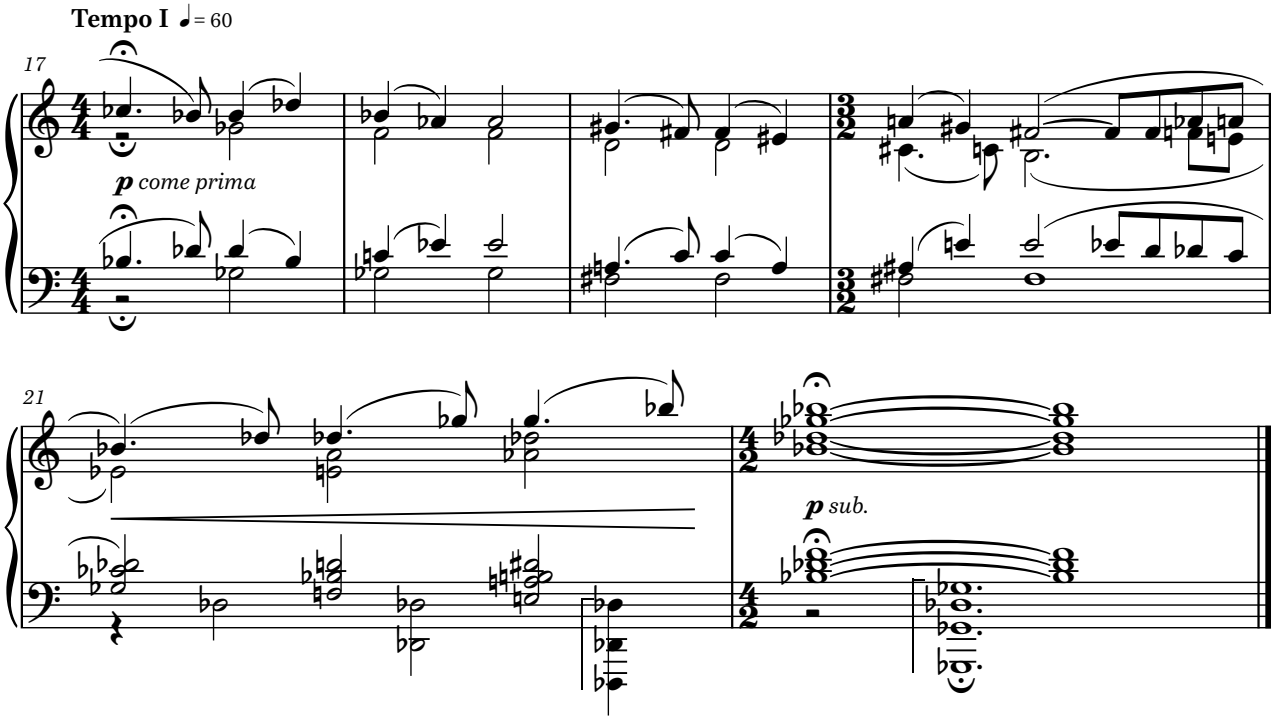
Fluttering, ephemeral



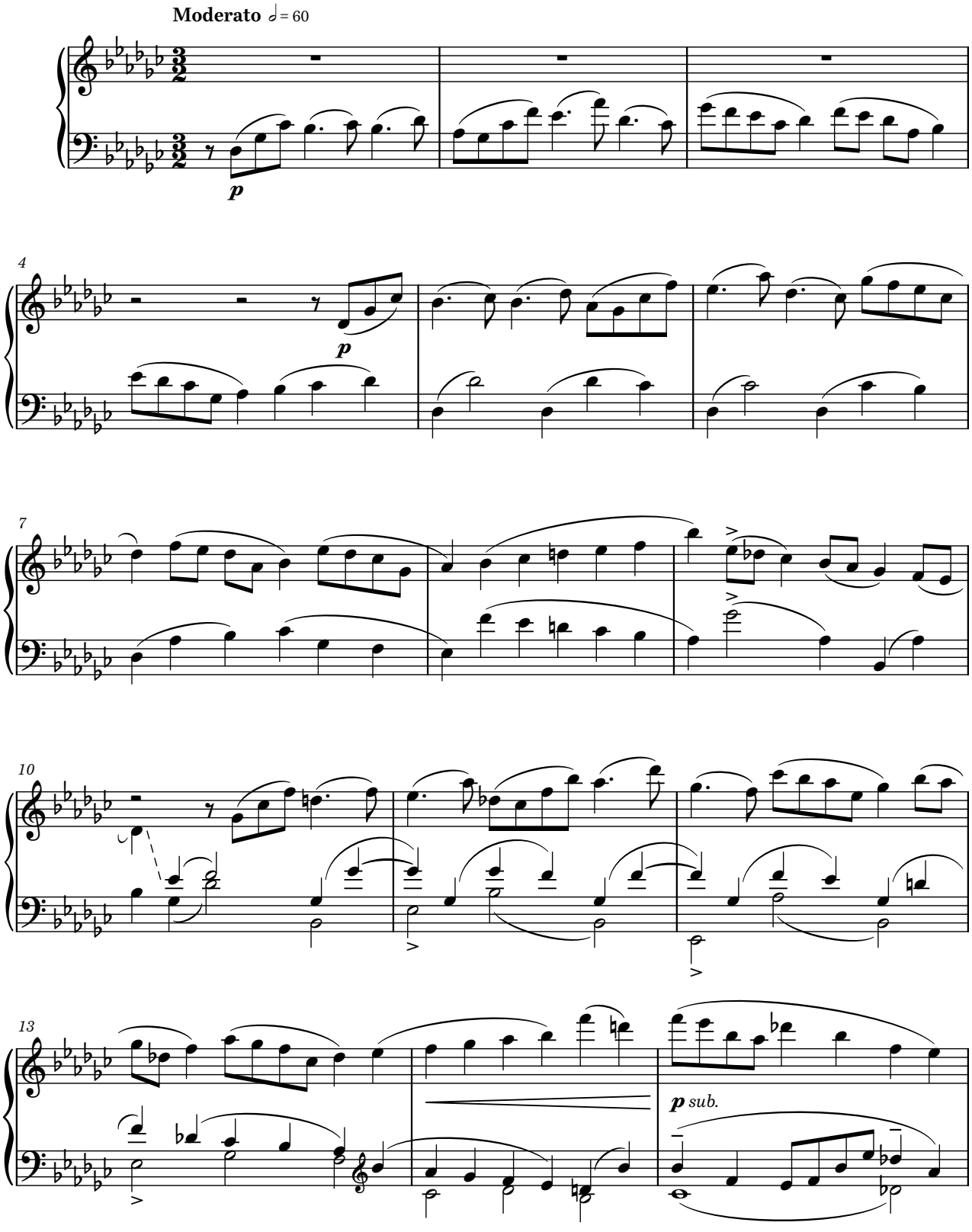

9
p
fp sub.
f
p
11
fp sub.
12
13
p
fp sub.
f

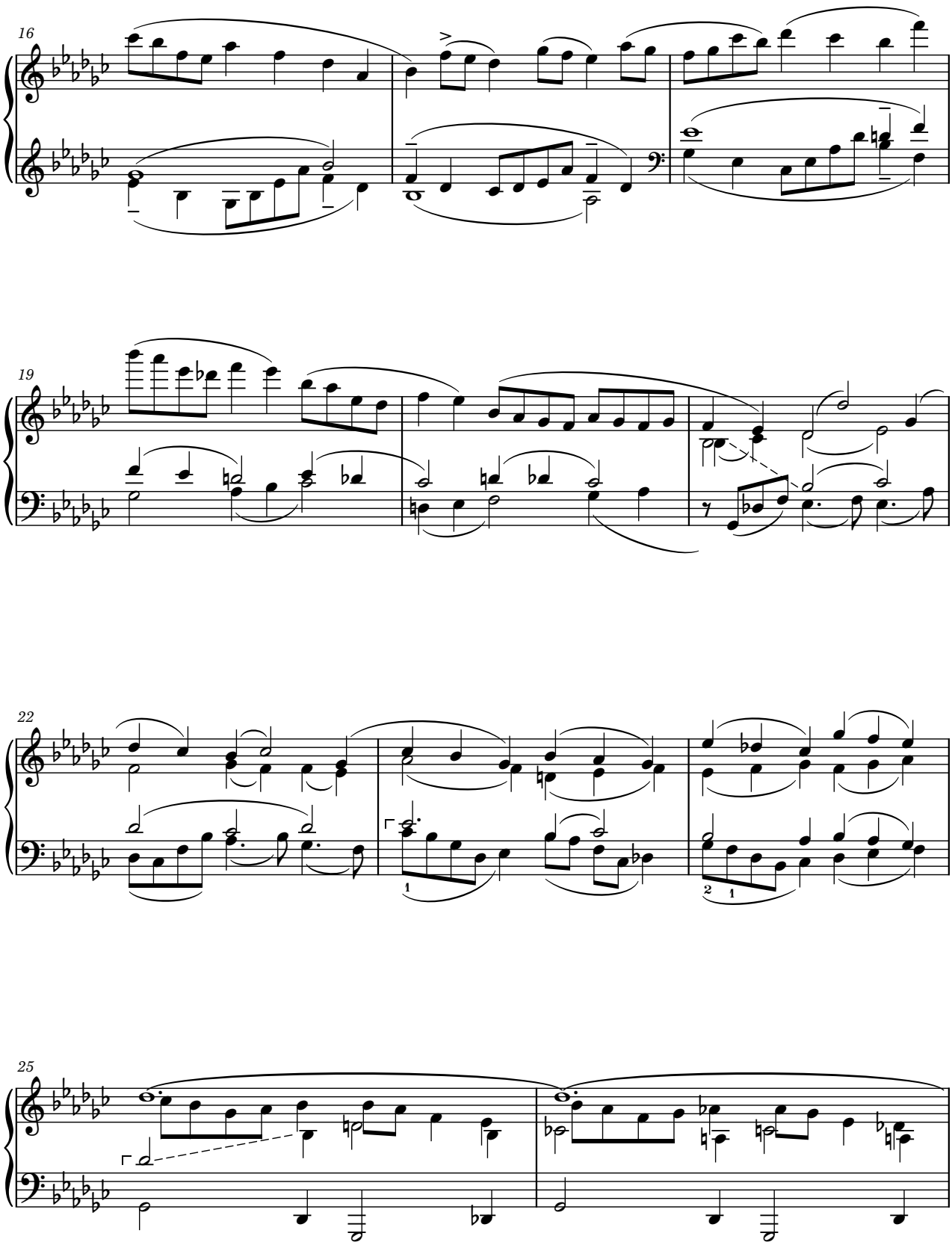
Prelude XIII

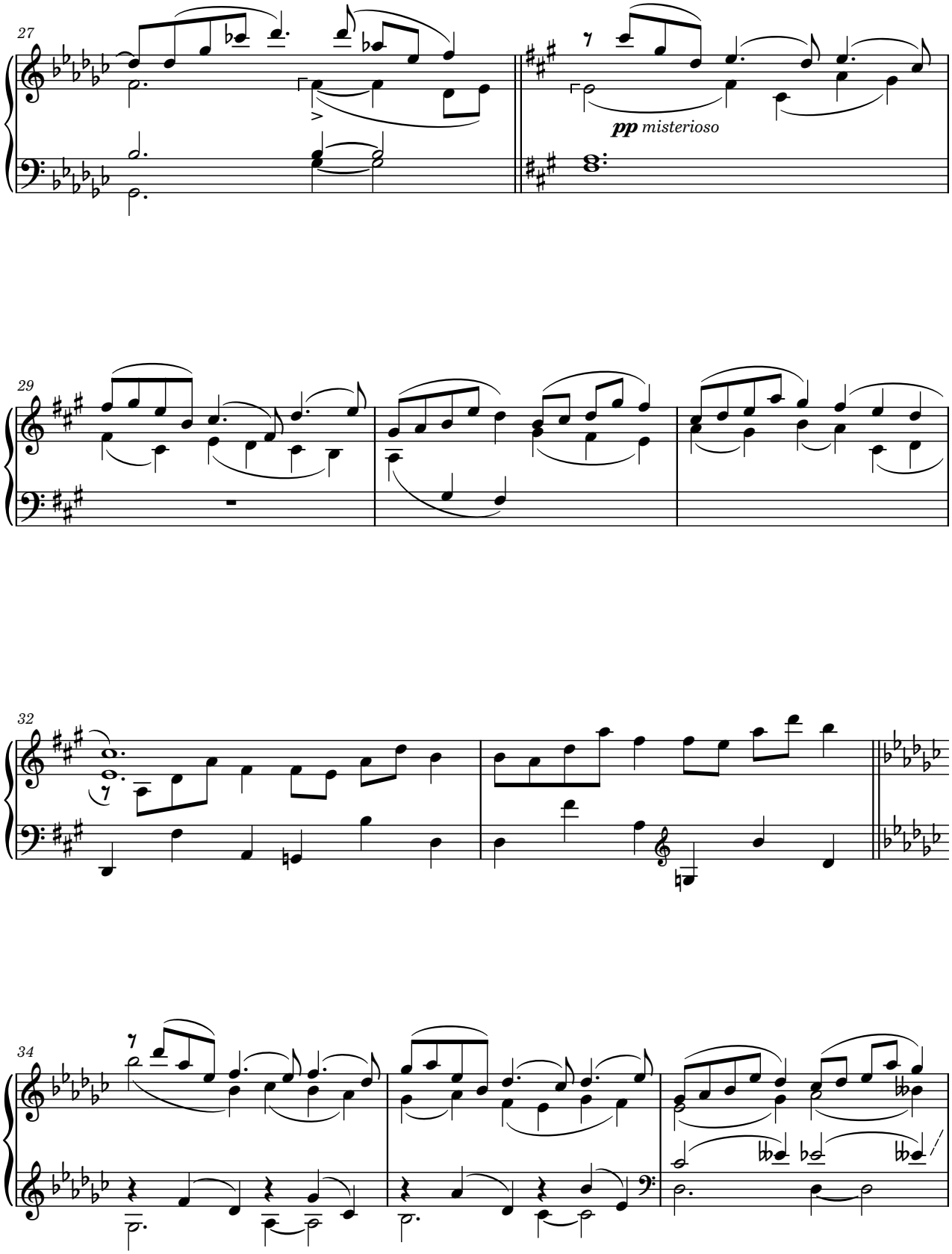


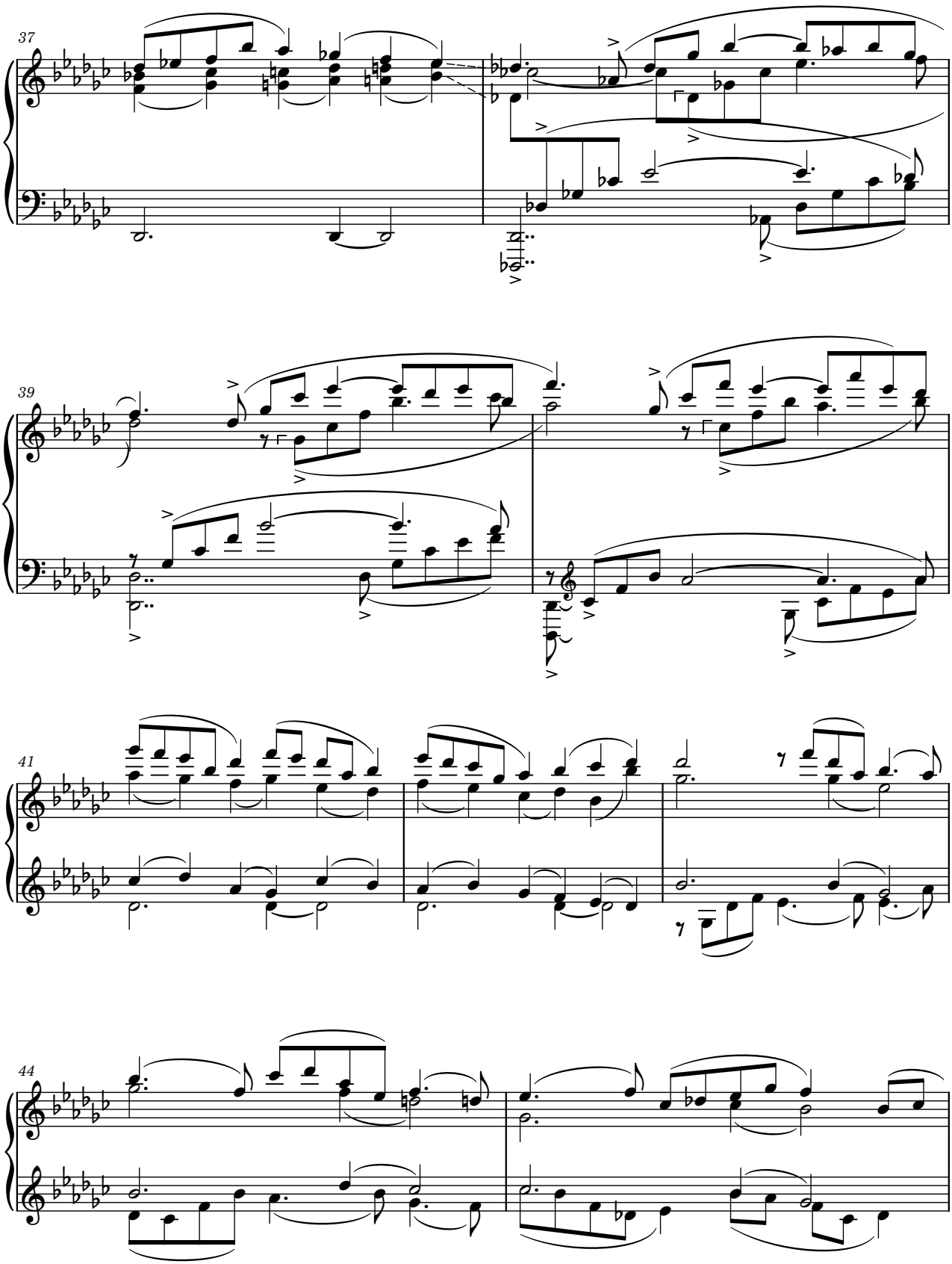

Tempo I ♩= 60
17
p come prima
21
p sub.

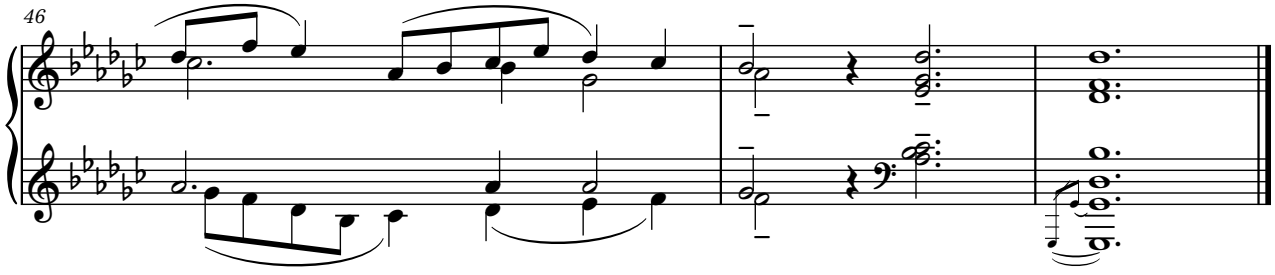
Fugue XIII




16
19
22
25

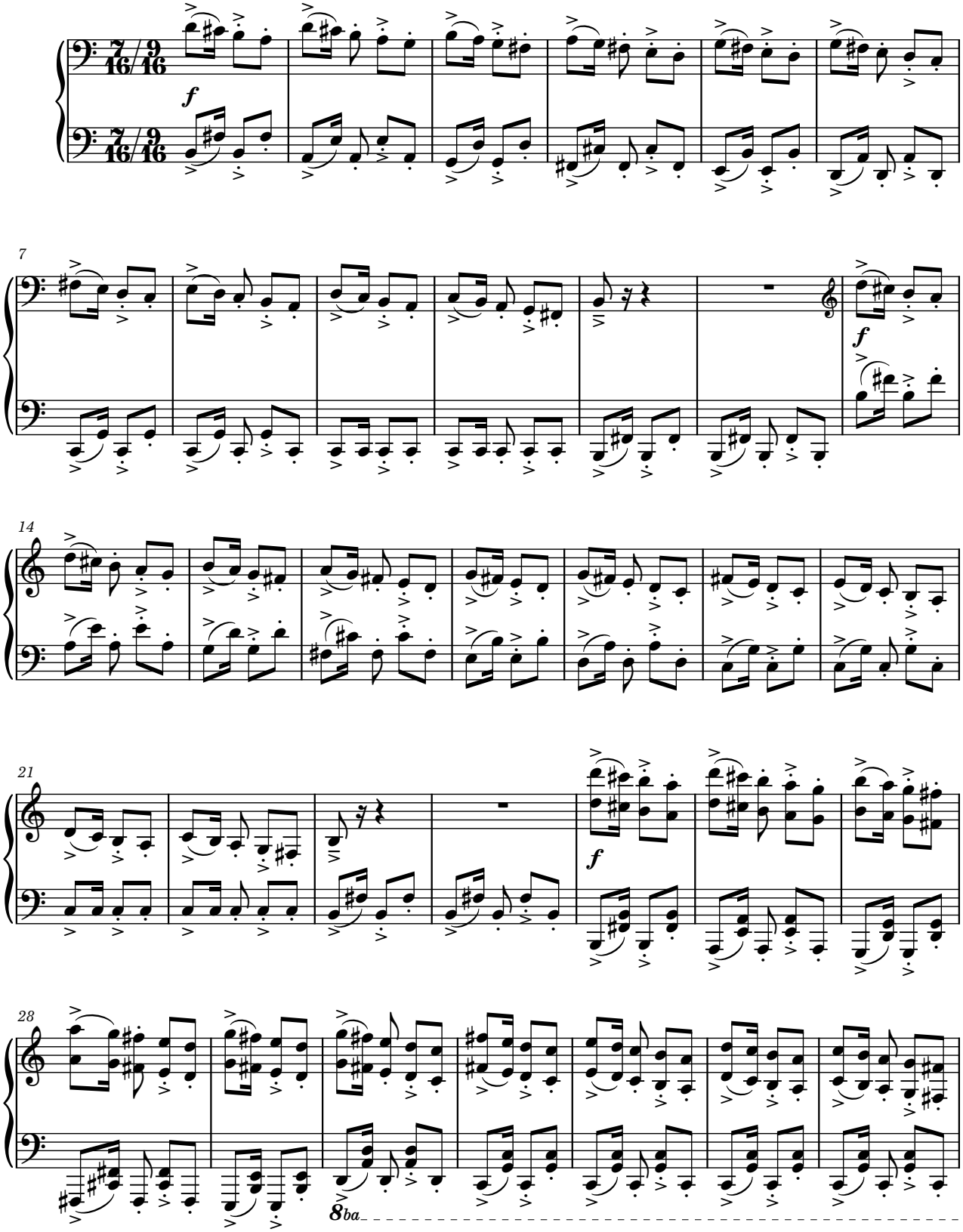

27
pp misterioso
29
32
34

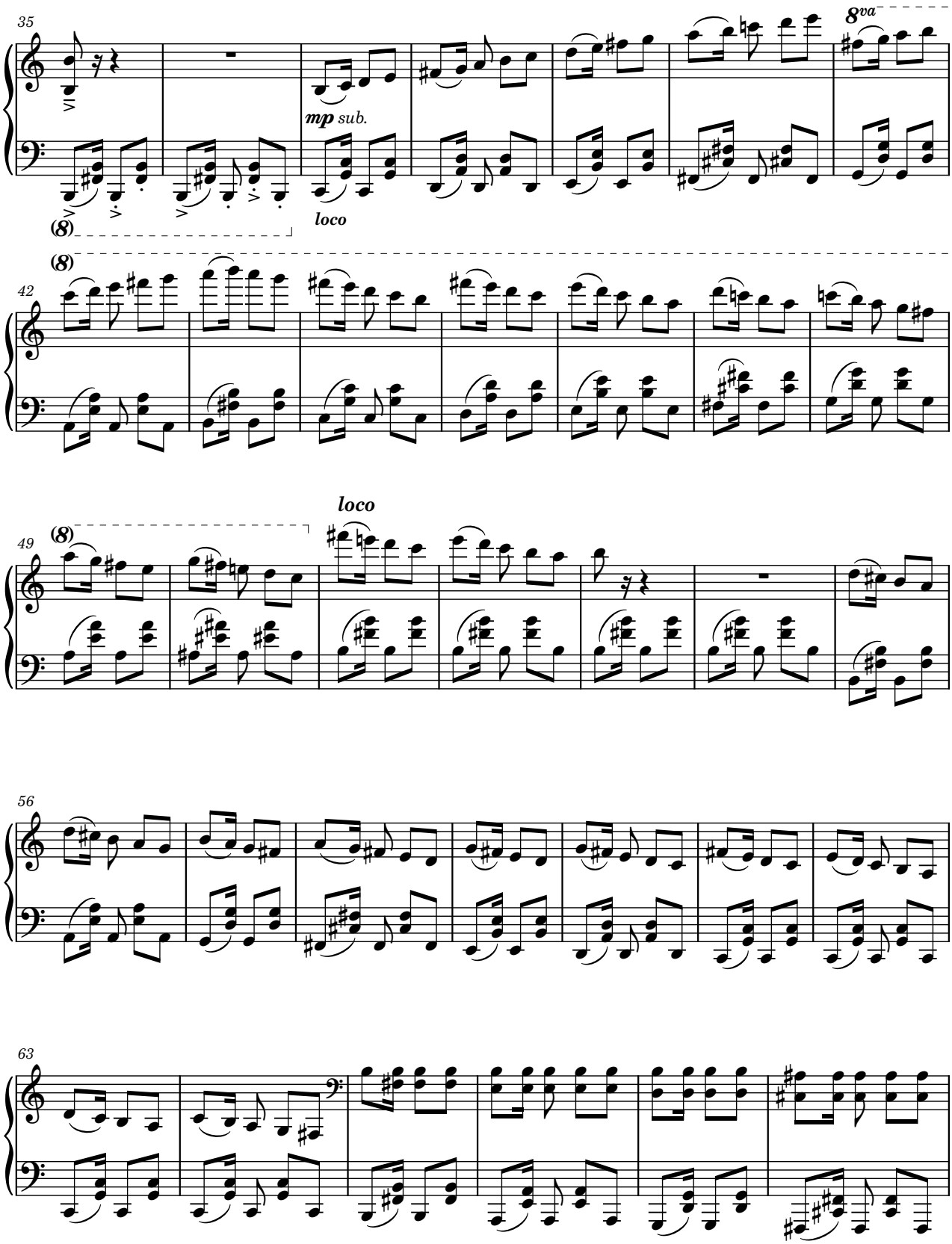

37
39
41
44

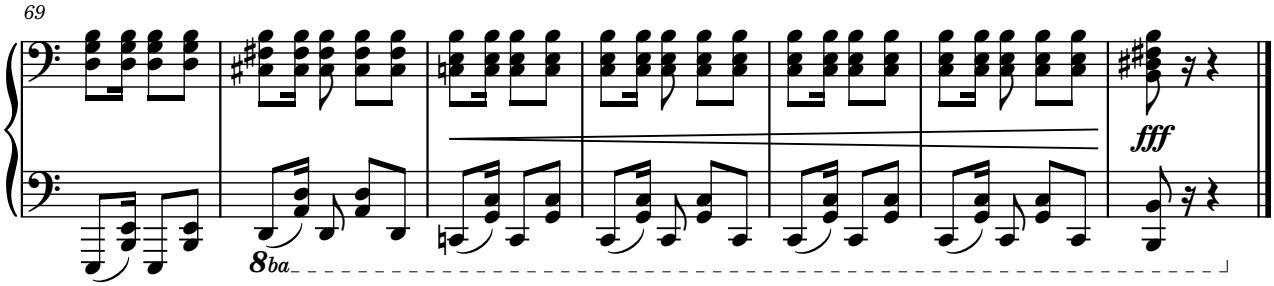

46

Prelude XIV

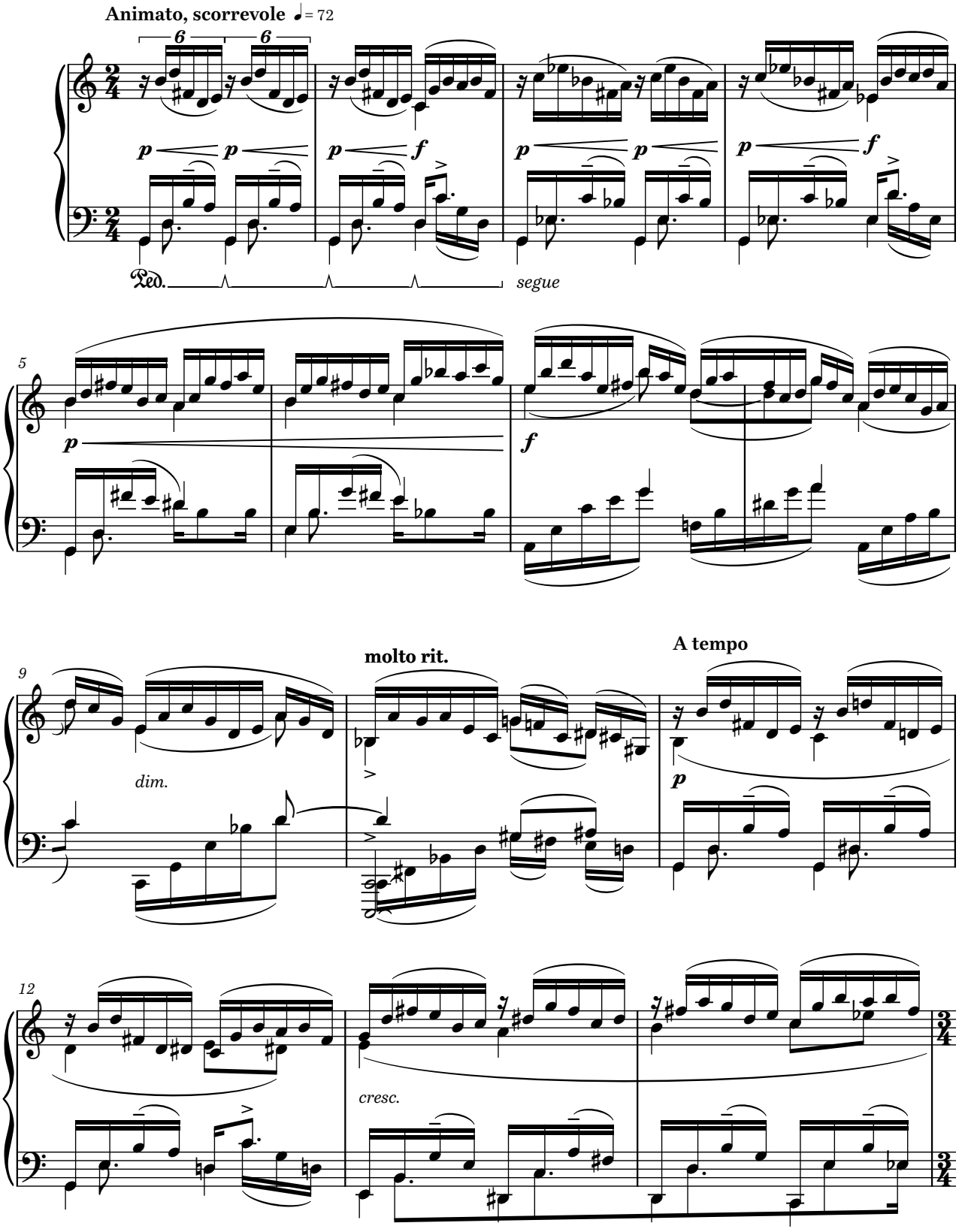
Rambunctiously, with child-like energy ♩= 144

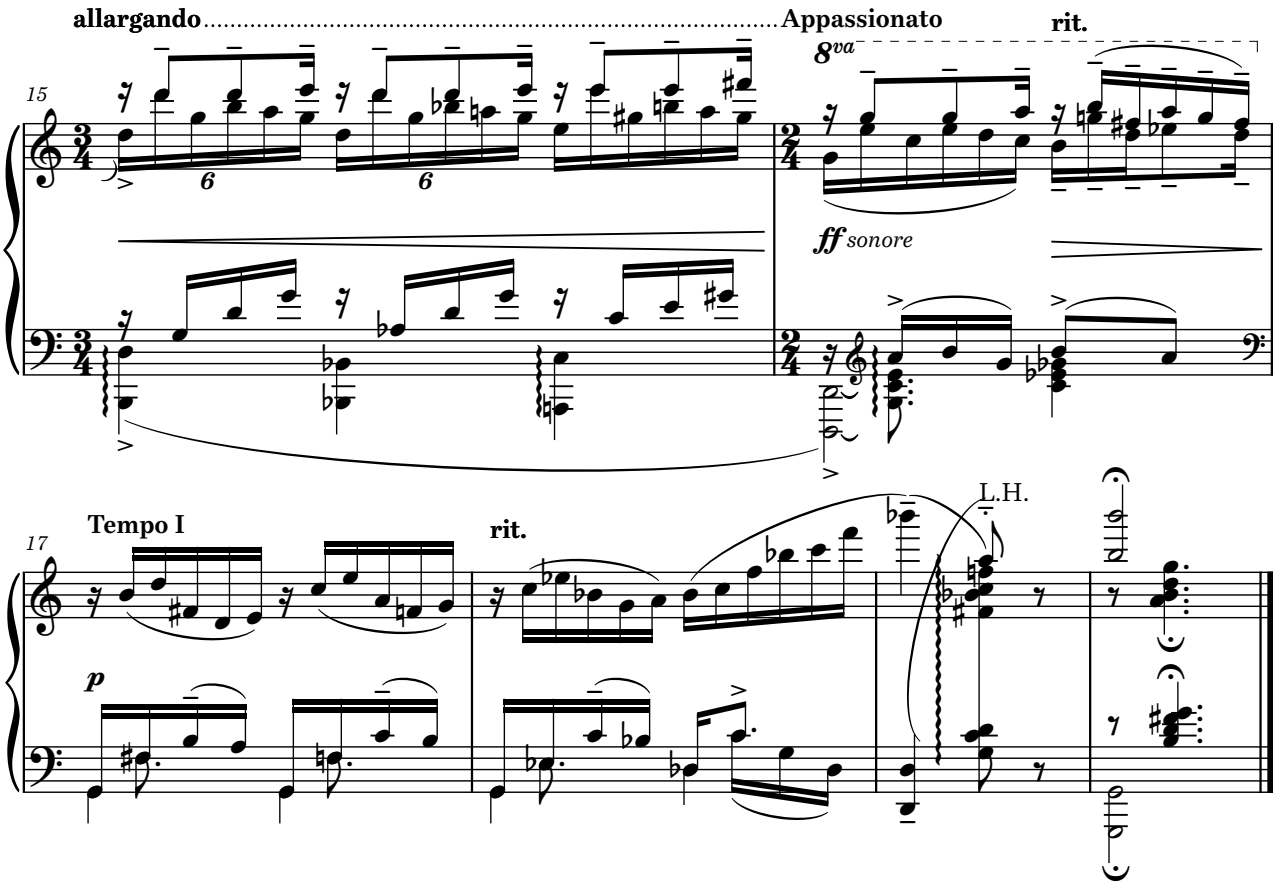



35
8va
mp sub.
loco
(8)
42
(8)
49
(8)
loco
56
63

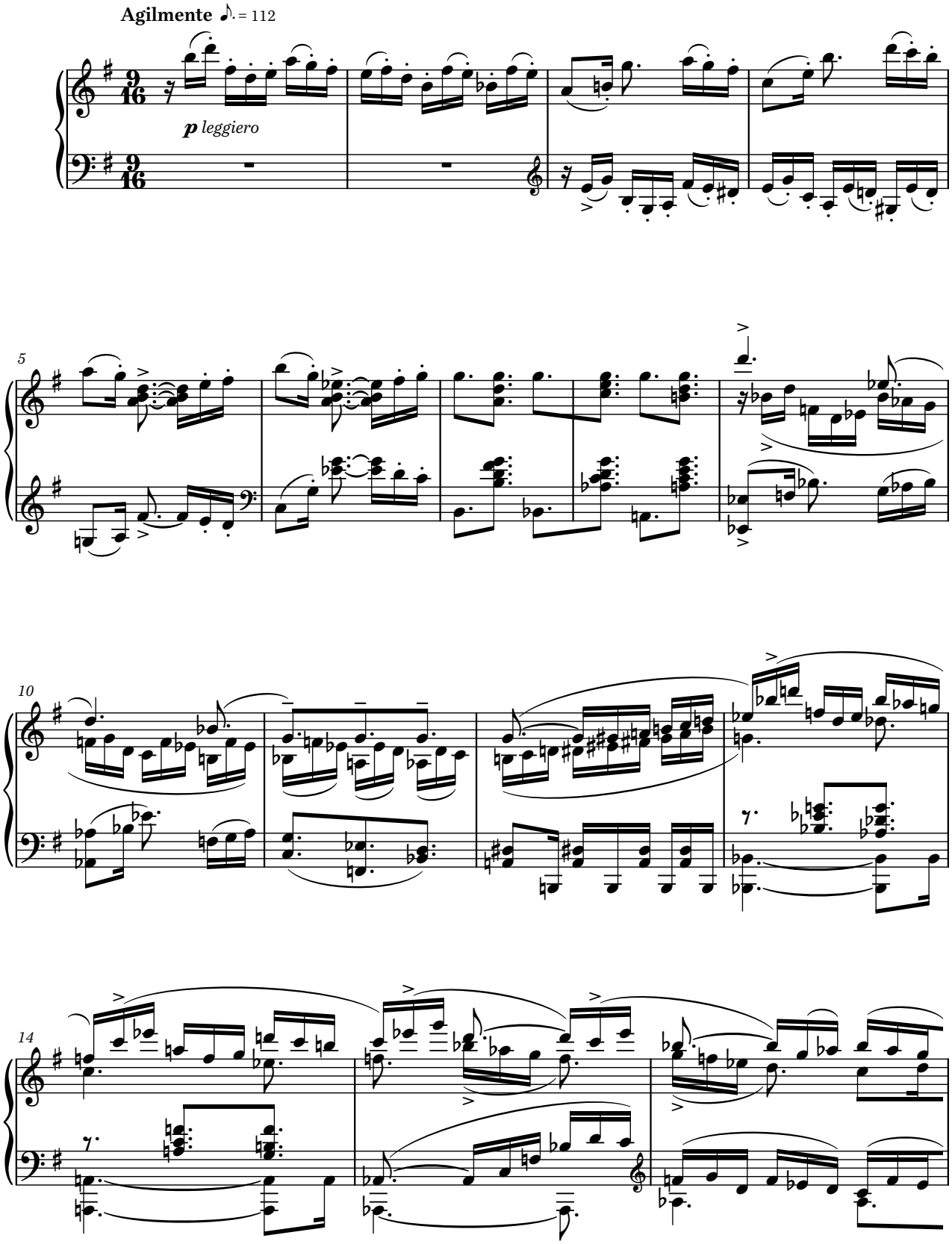

69
8ba
fff

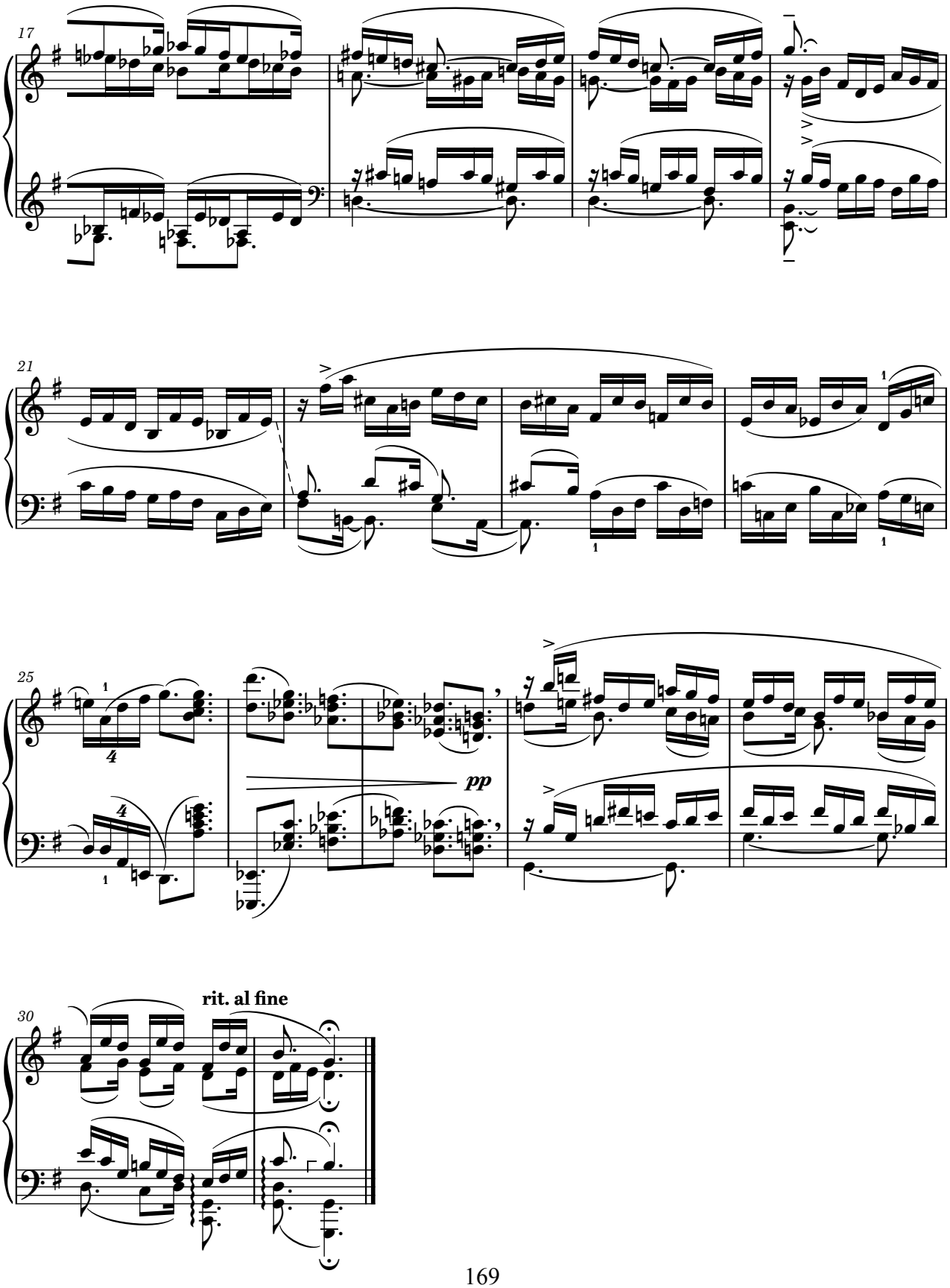
Prelude XV




allargando
Appassionato
rit.
15
8va
ff sonore
Tempo I
rit.
17
p
L.H.

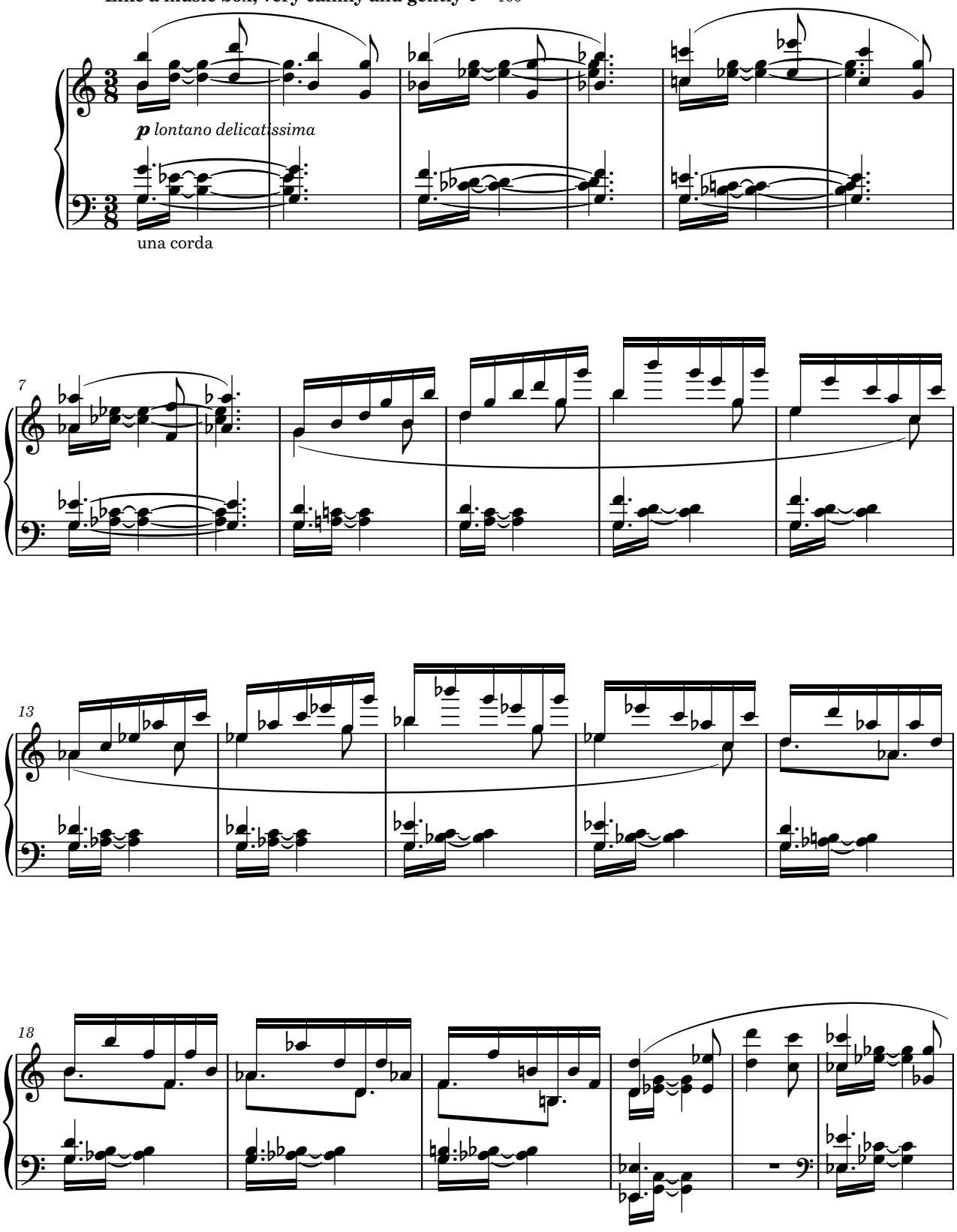
Fugue XV

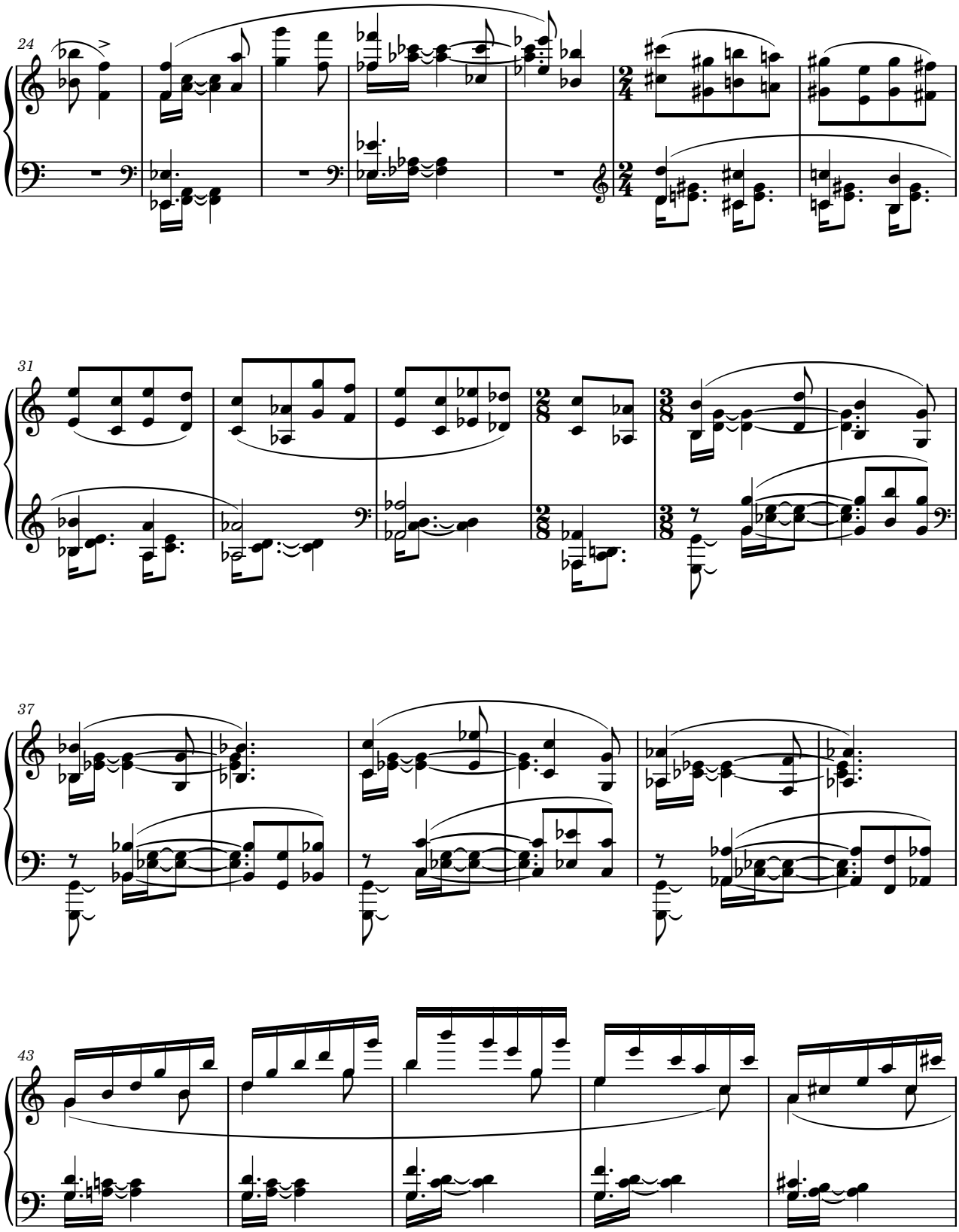


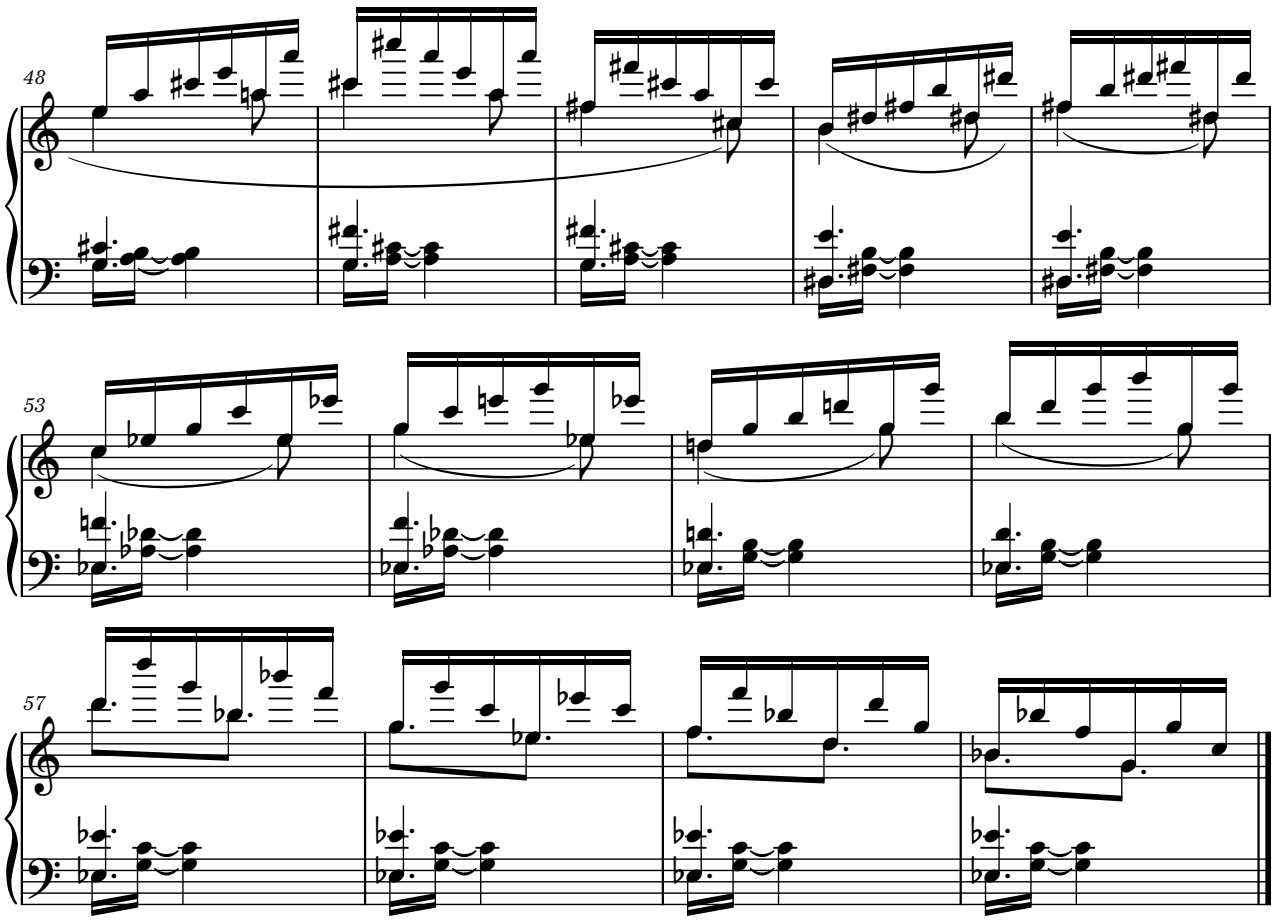

17
21
25
pp
30
rit. al fine

Prelude XVI

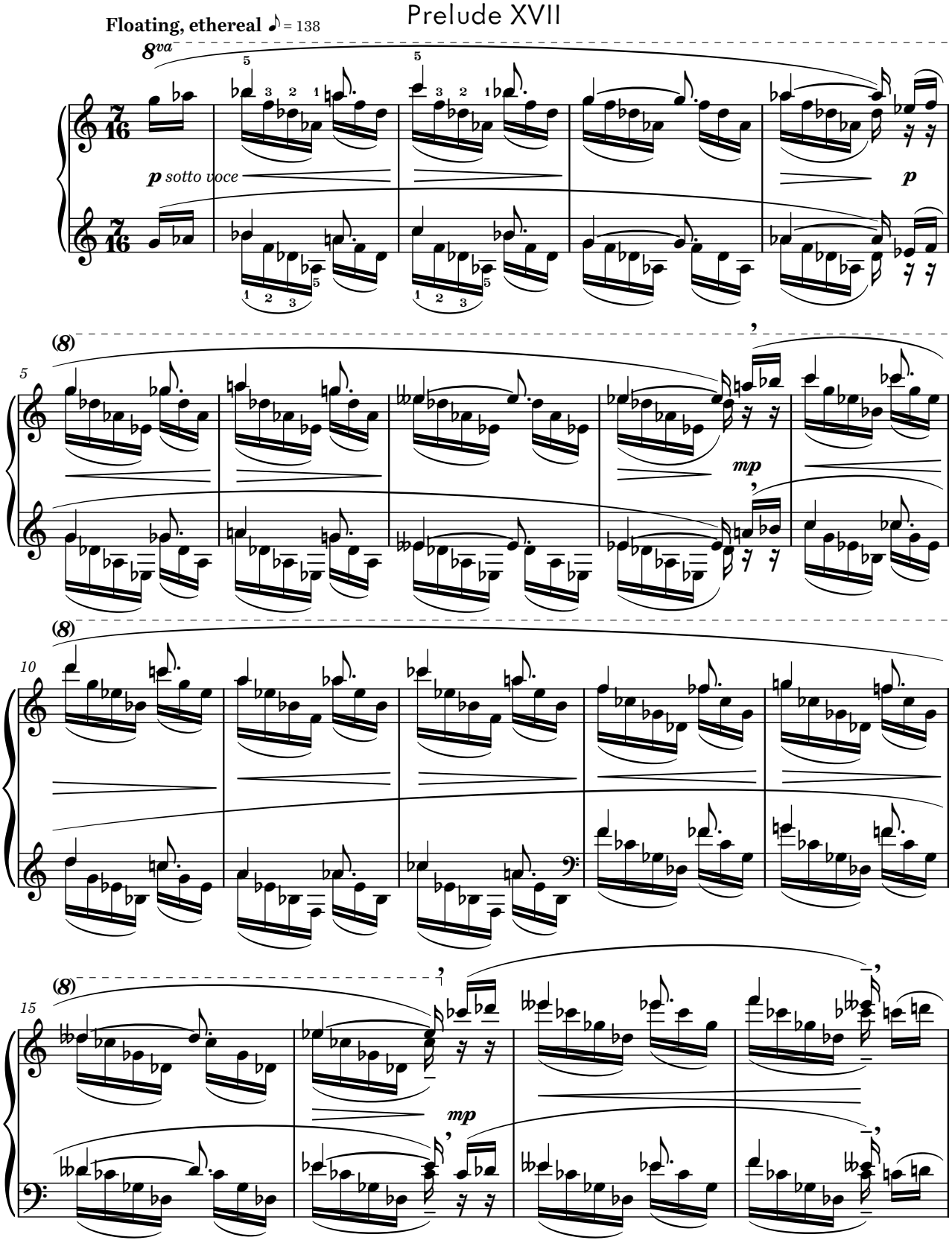
Like a music box, very calmly and gently ♪ = 100

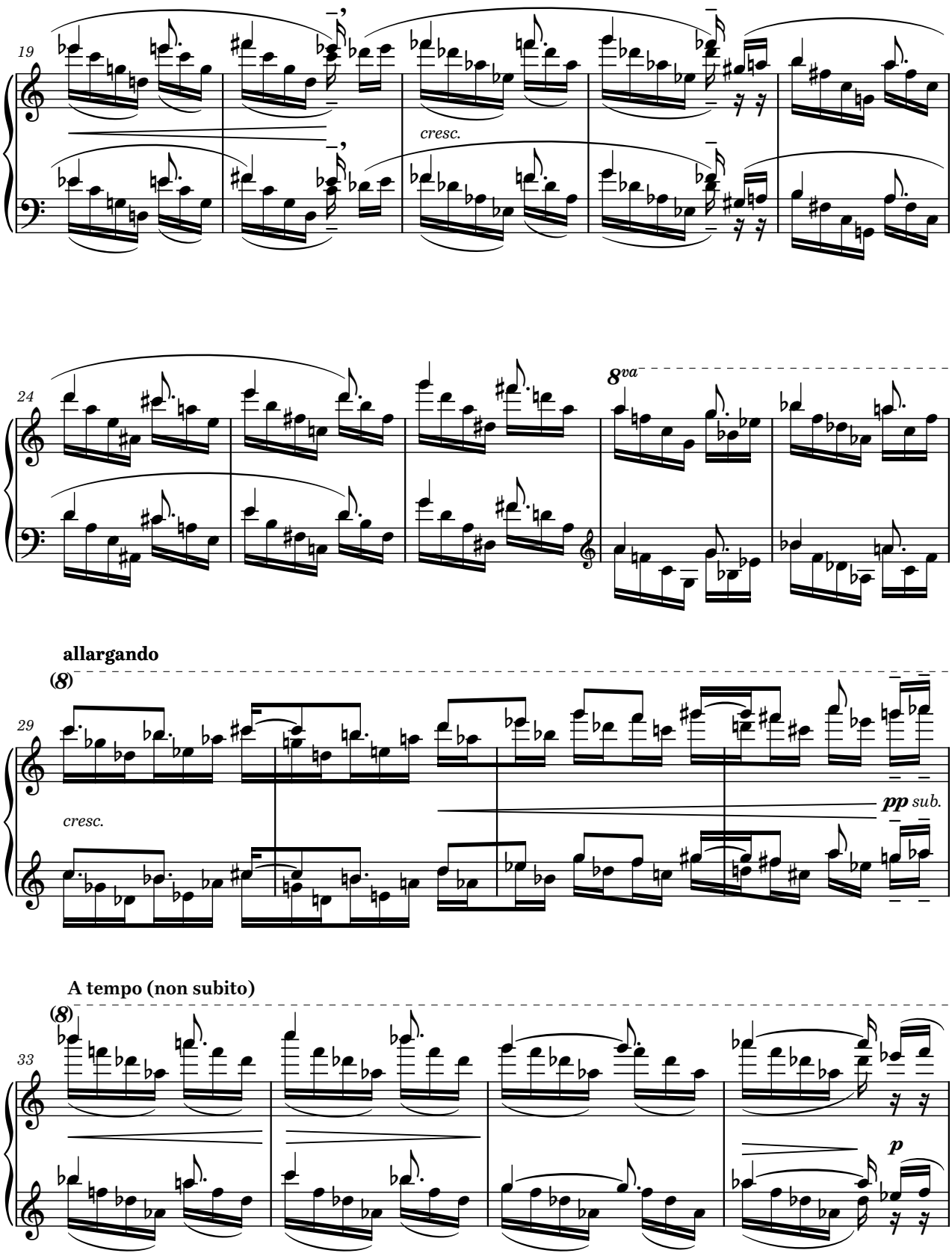


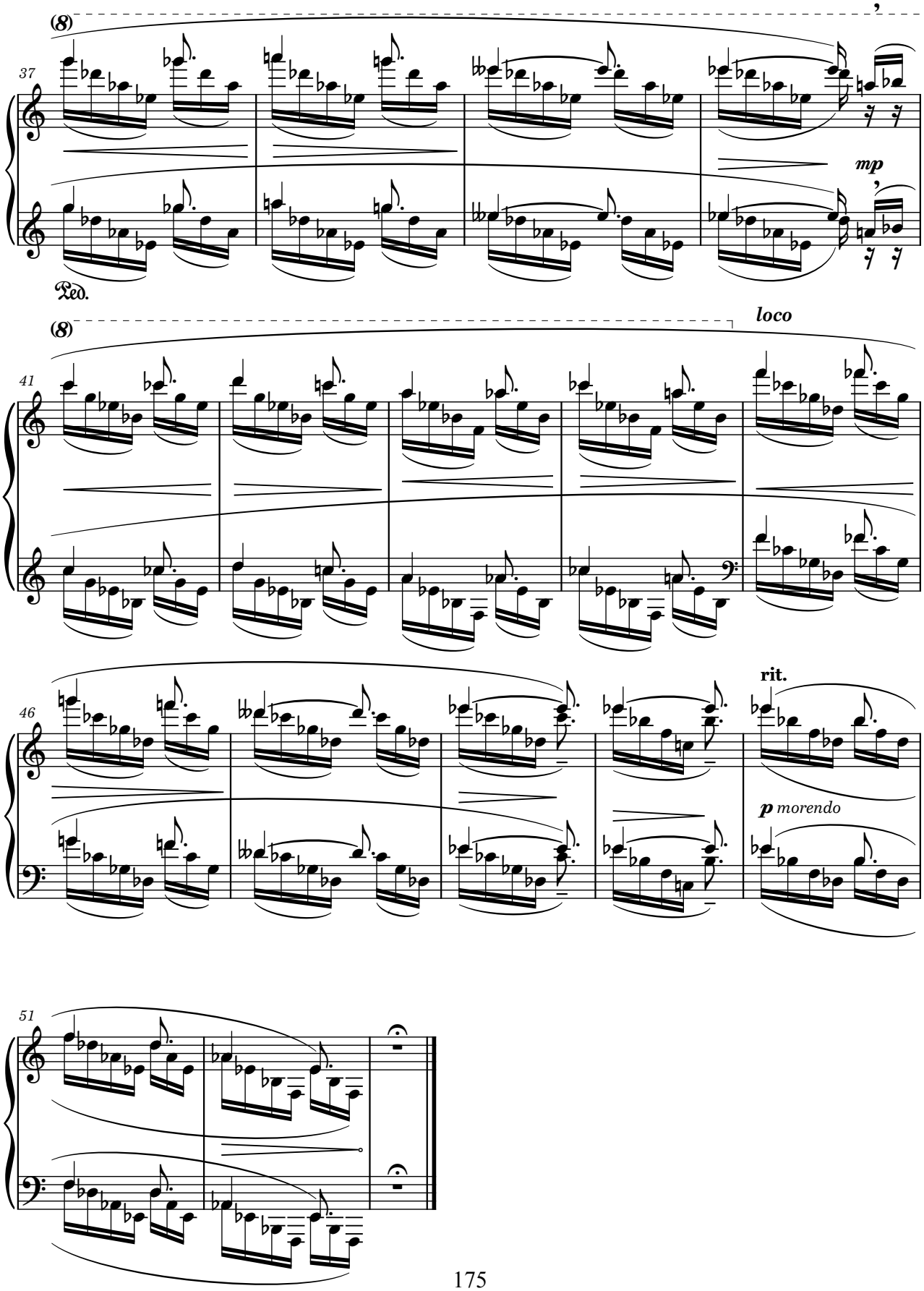

24
31
37
43


48
53
57

Prelude XVII

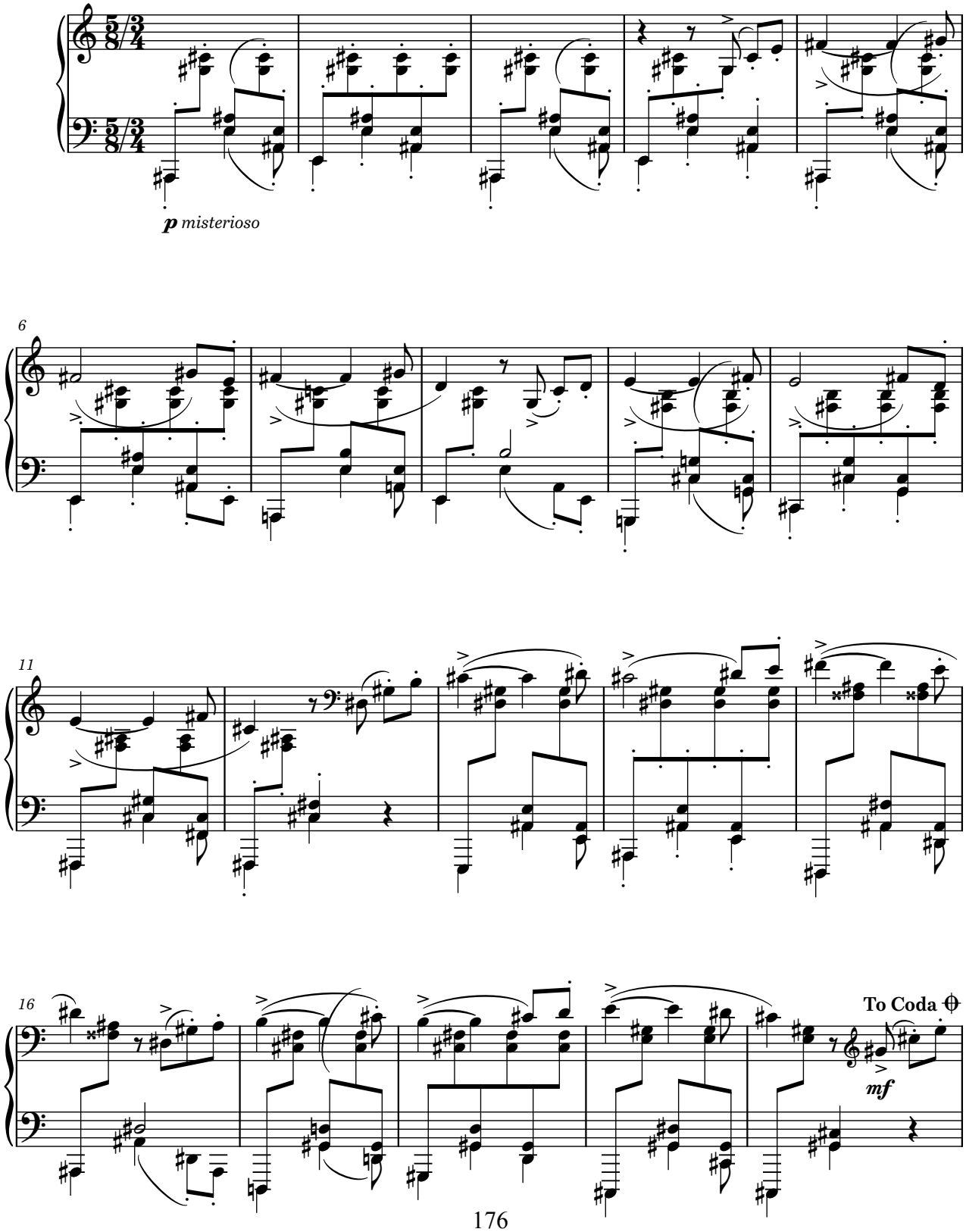


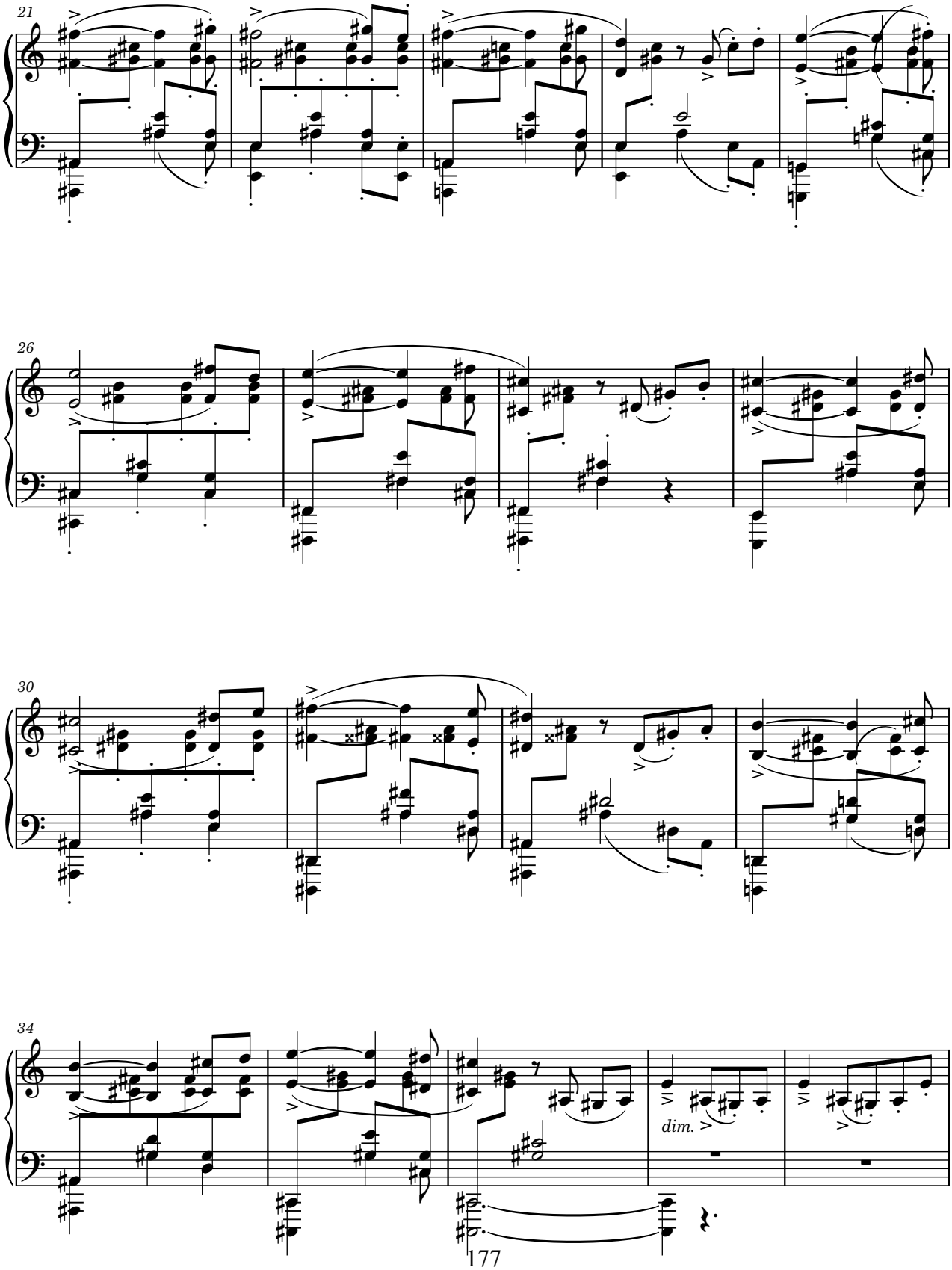

19
cresc.
24
8va
allargando
(8)
29
cresc.
pp sub.
A tempo (non subito)
(8)
33
p

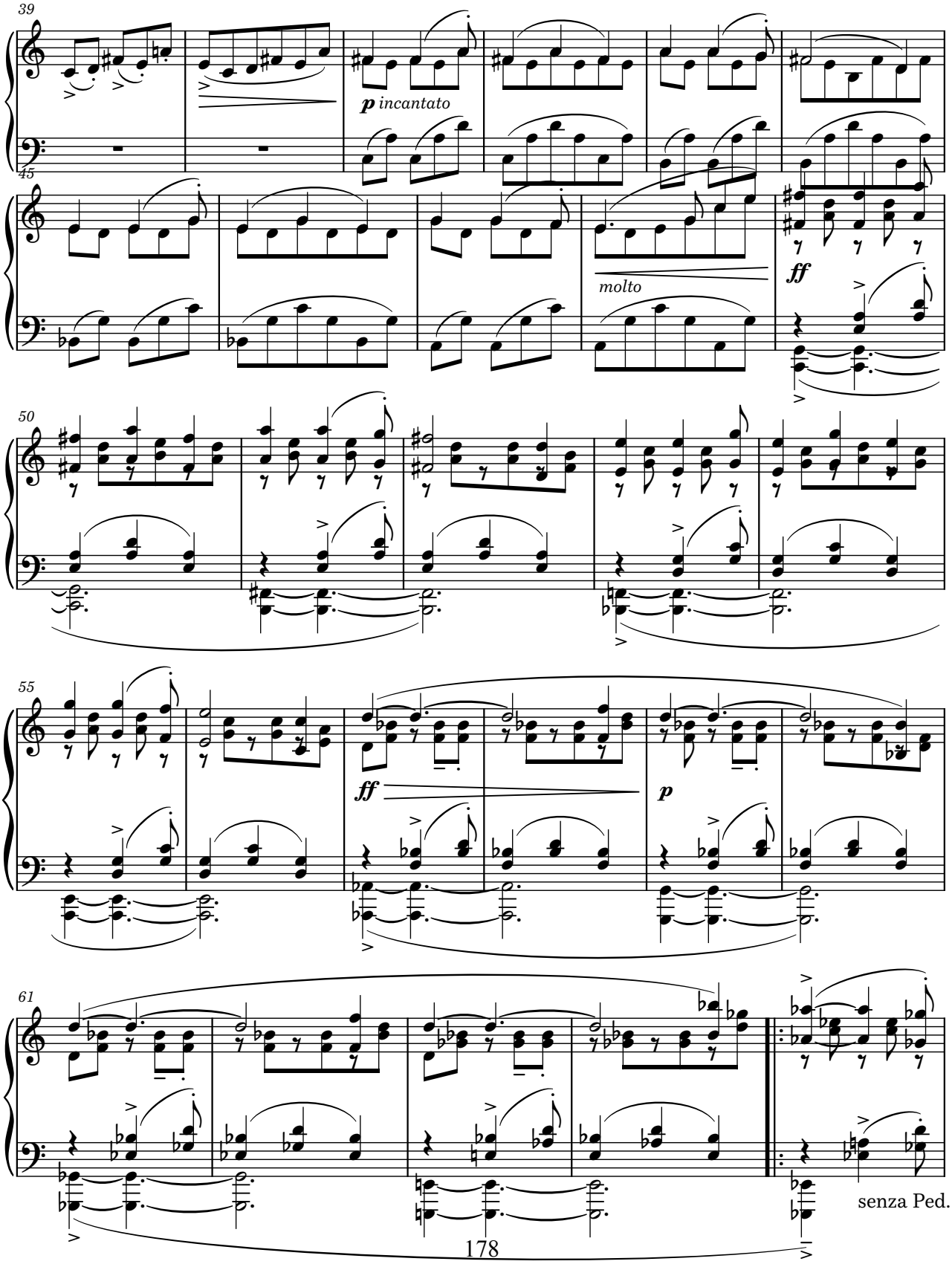

(8)
37
mp
Ped.
(8)
loco
41
rit.
46
p morendo
51

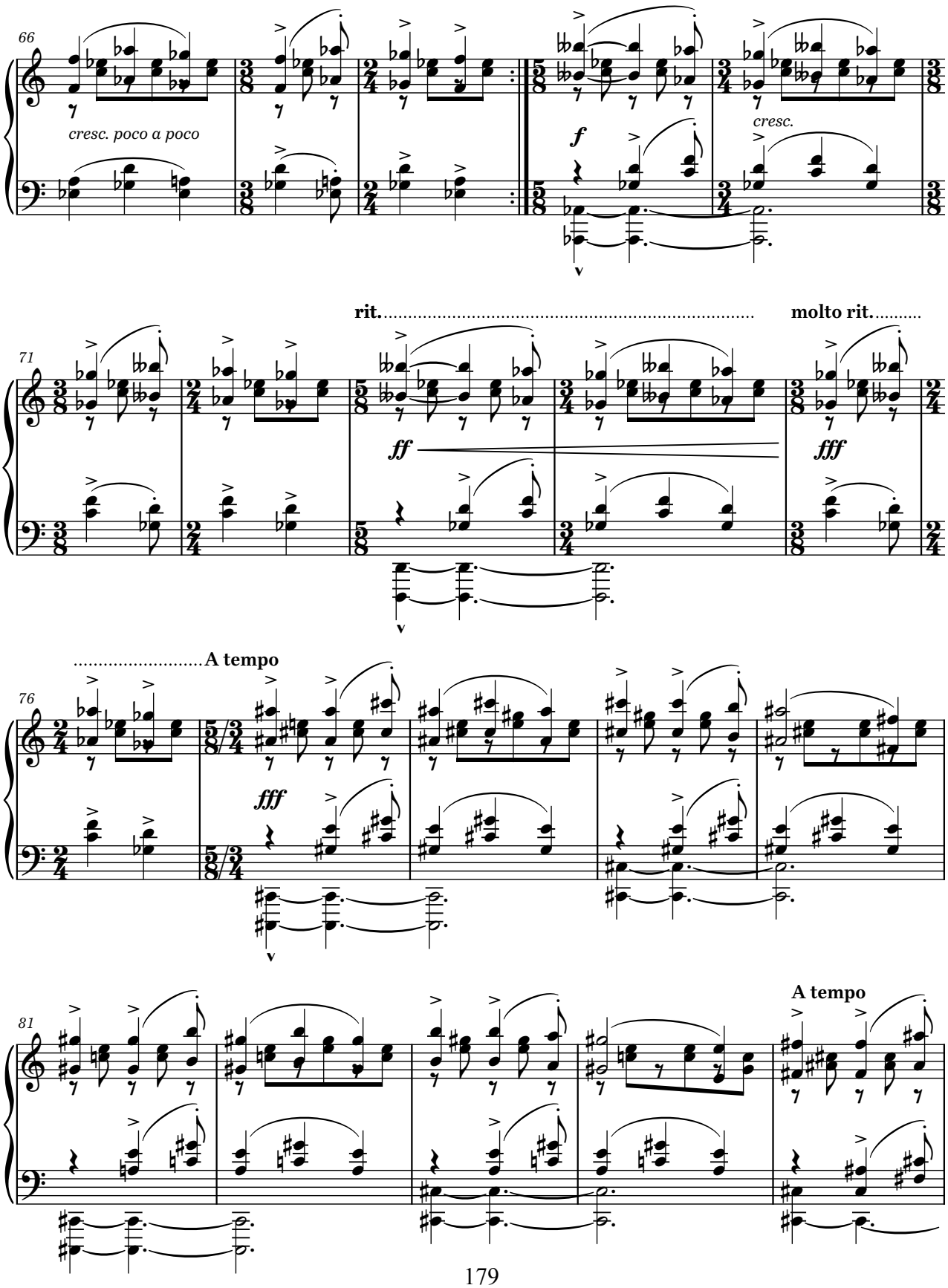
Prelude XVIII

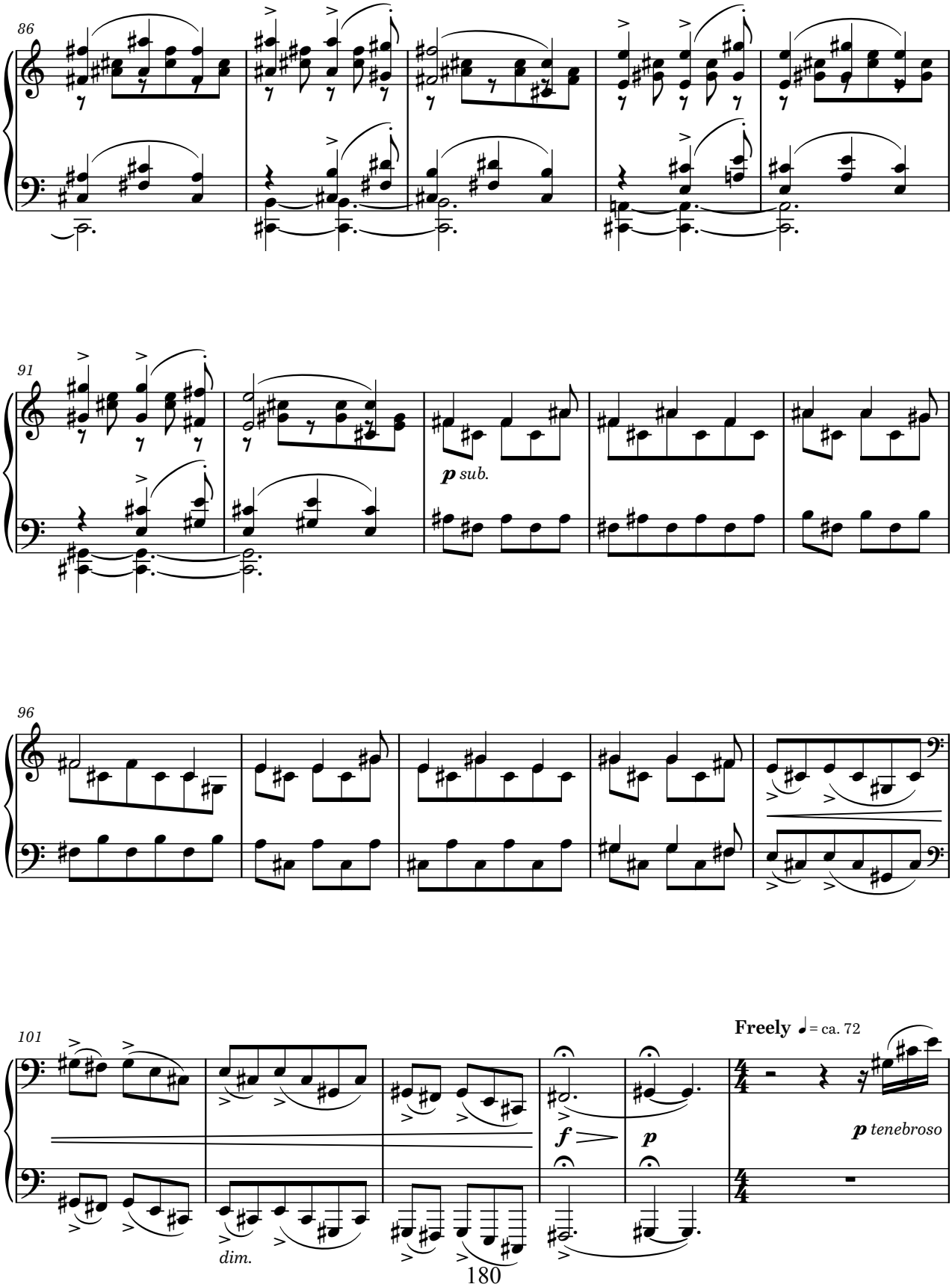
Quick and light, like a dance ♩= 168

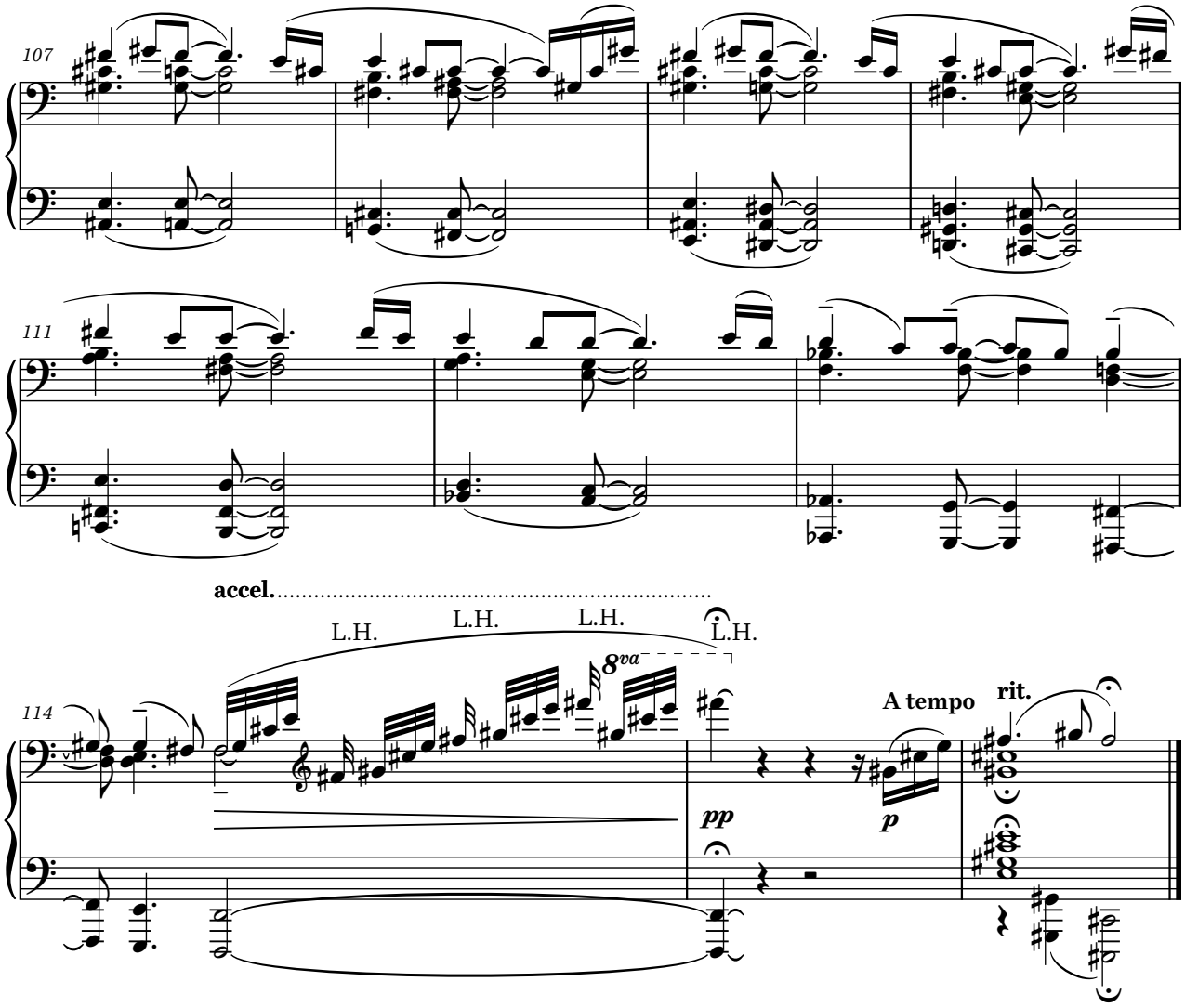



21
26
30
34
dim.


39
p incantato
45
molto
ff
50
55
ff
p
61
senza Ped.

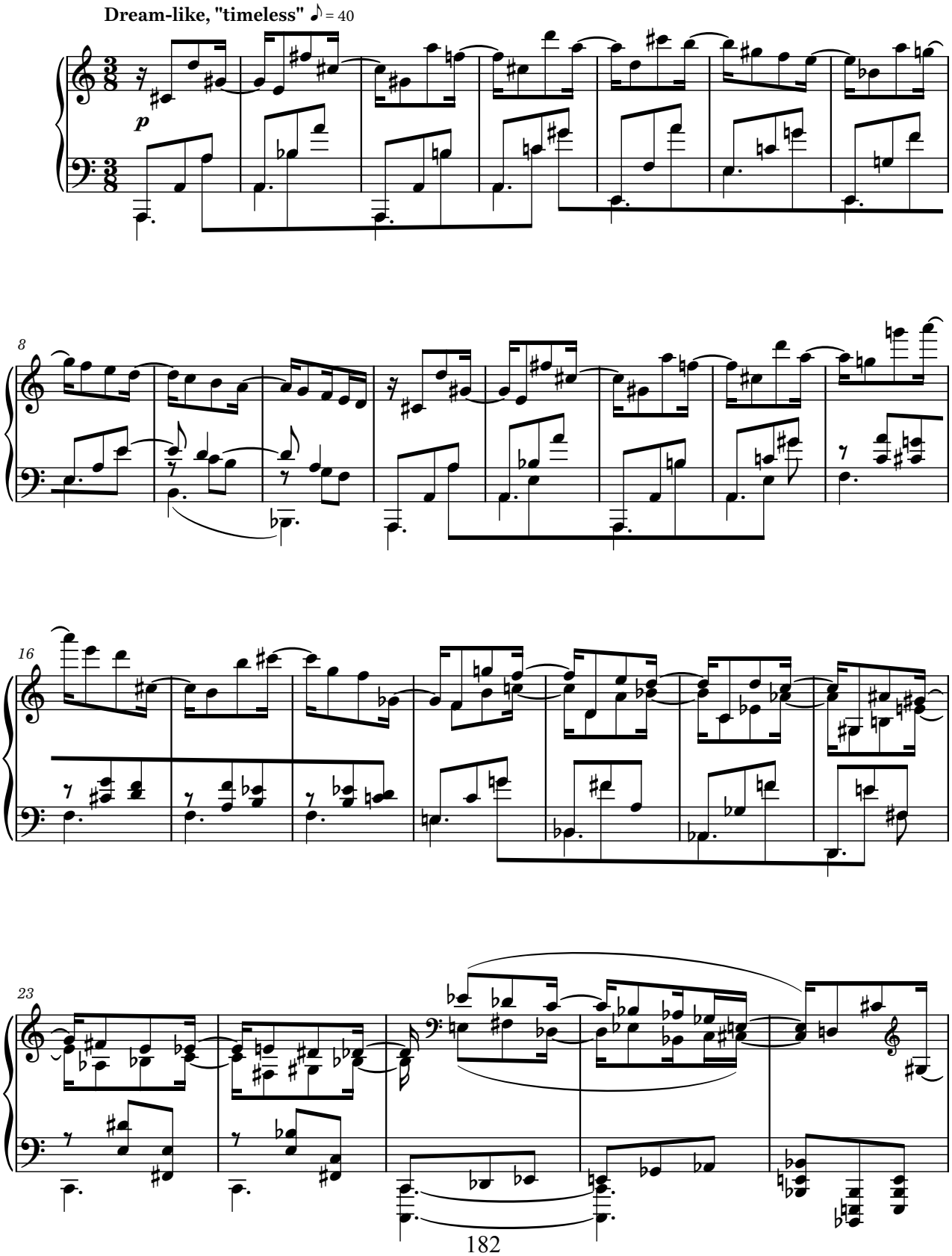

66
cresc. poco a poco
f
cresc.
rit.
molto rit.
71
ff
fff
A tempo
76
fff
A tempo
81

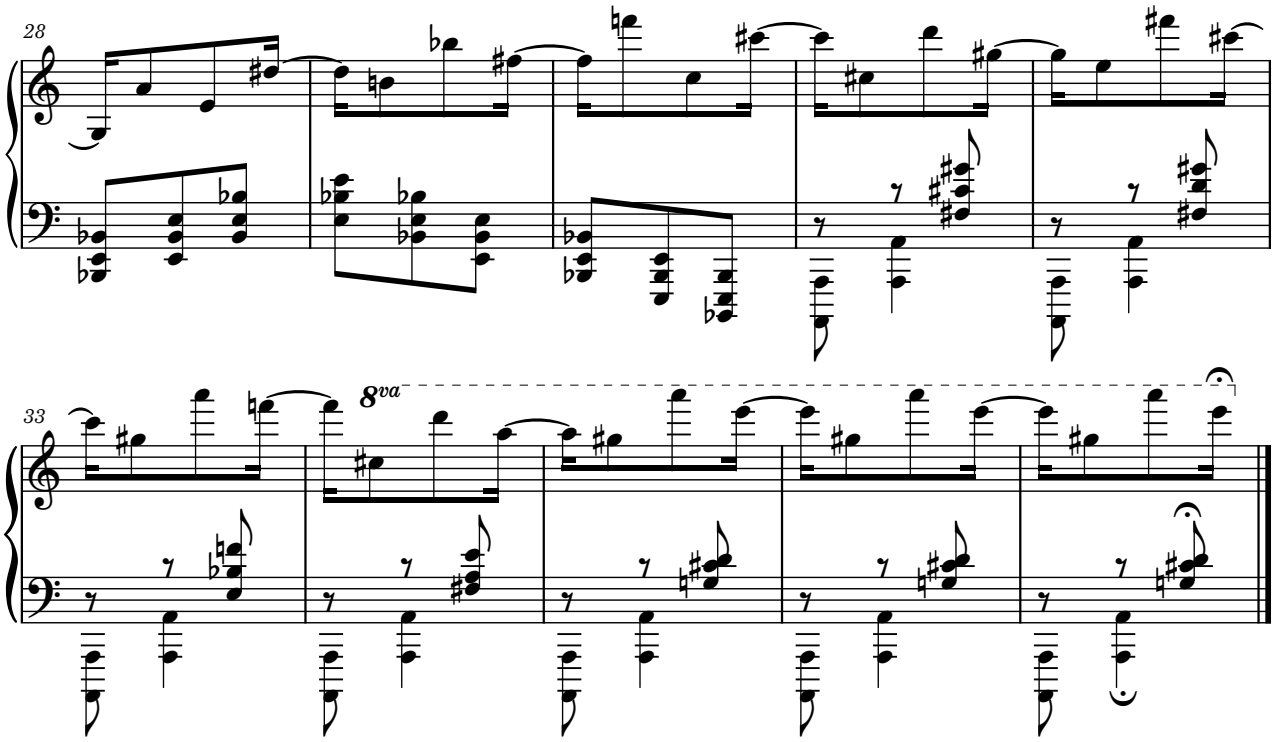

86
91
p sub.
96
101
dim.
f
p
Freely ♩= ca. 72
p tenebroso


107
111
accel.
L.H.
L.H.
L.H.
L.H.
8va
114
pp
p
A tempo
rit.

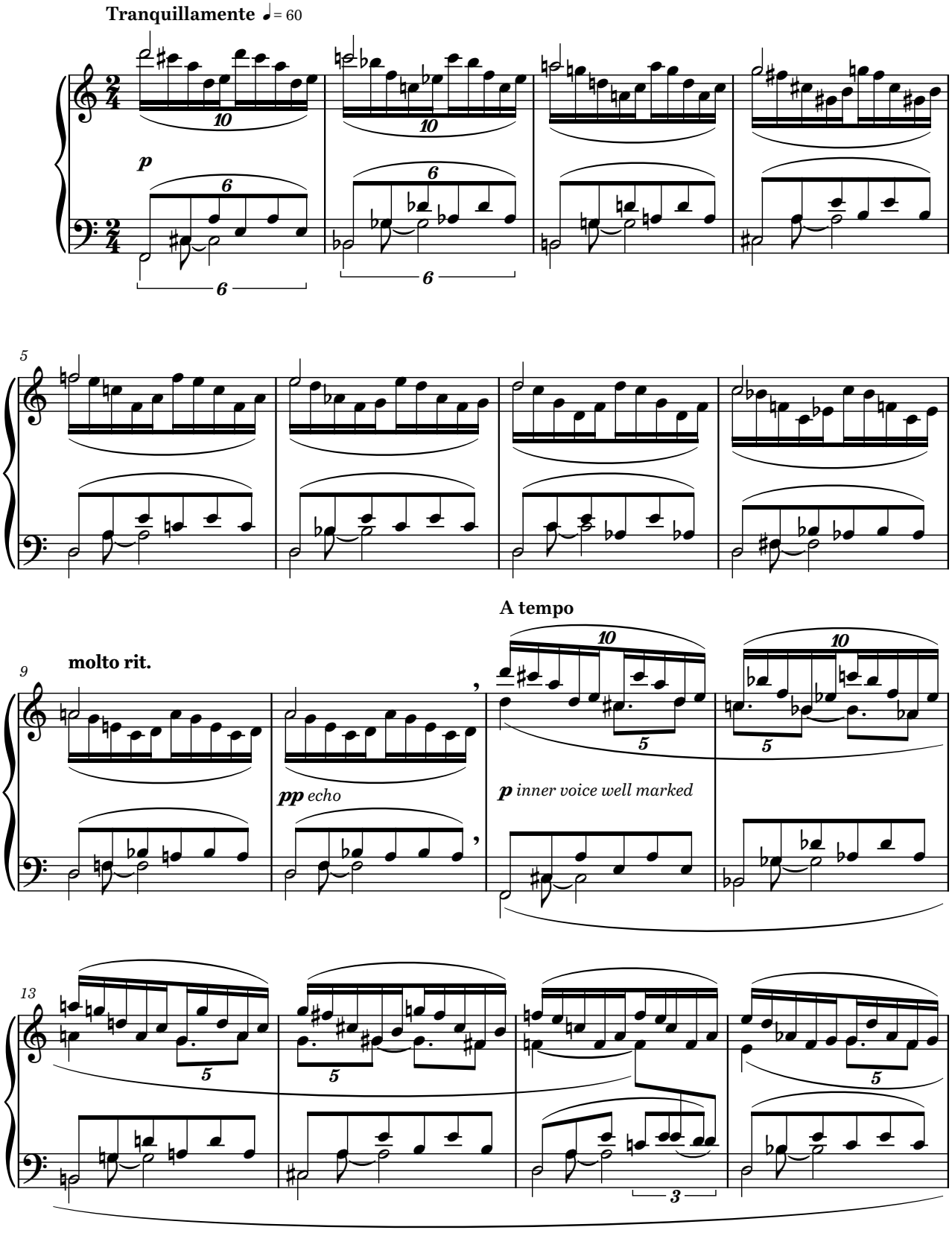
Prelude XIX

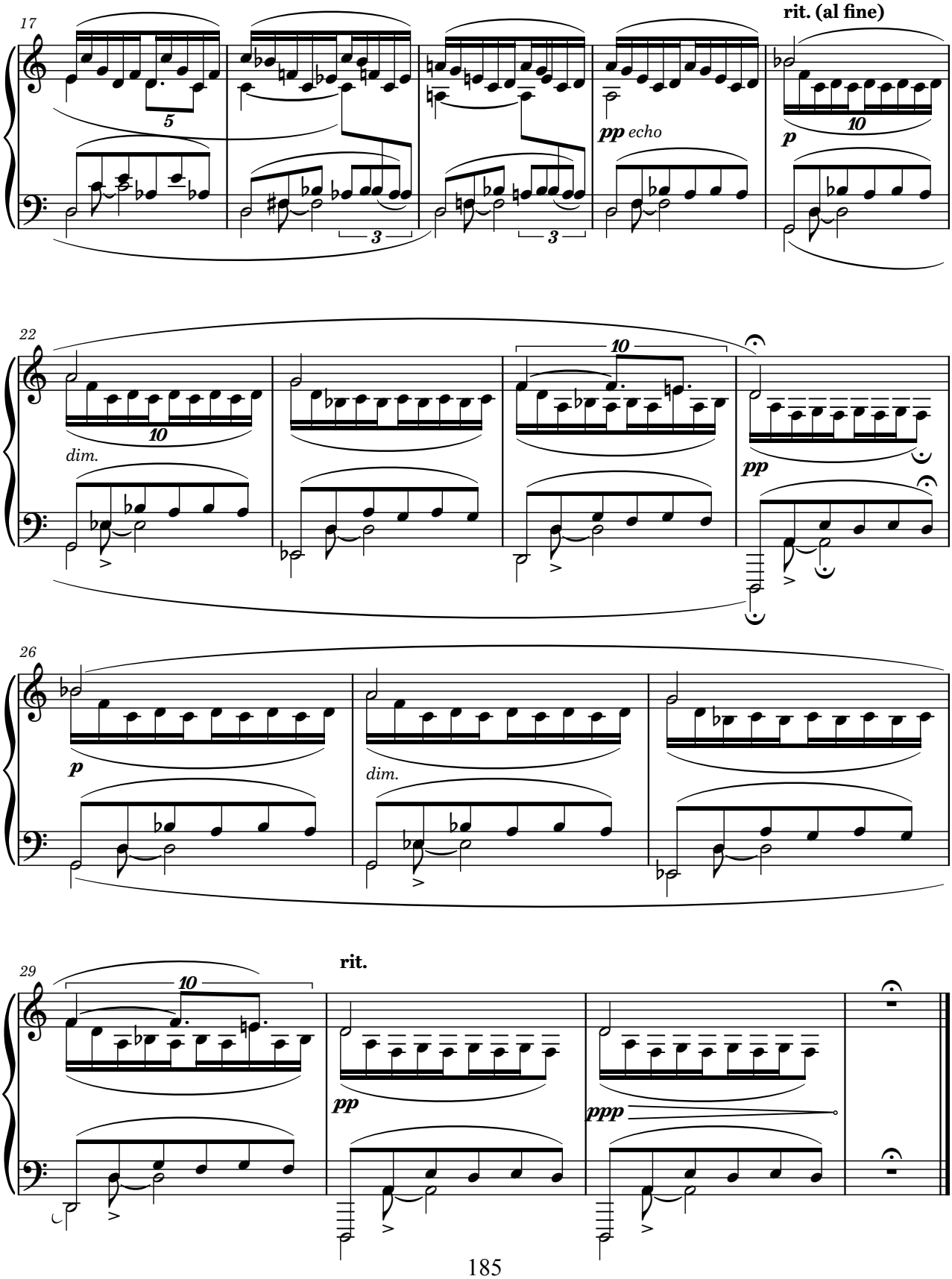
Dream-like, "timeless" ♪ = 40




28
33
8va

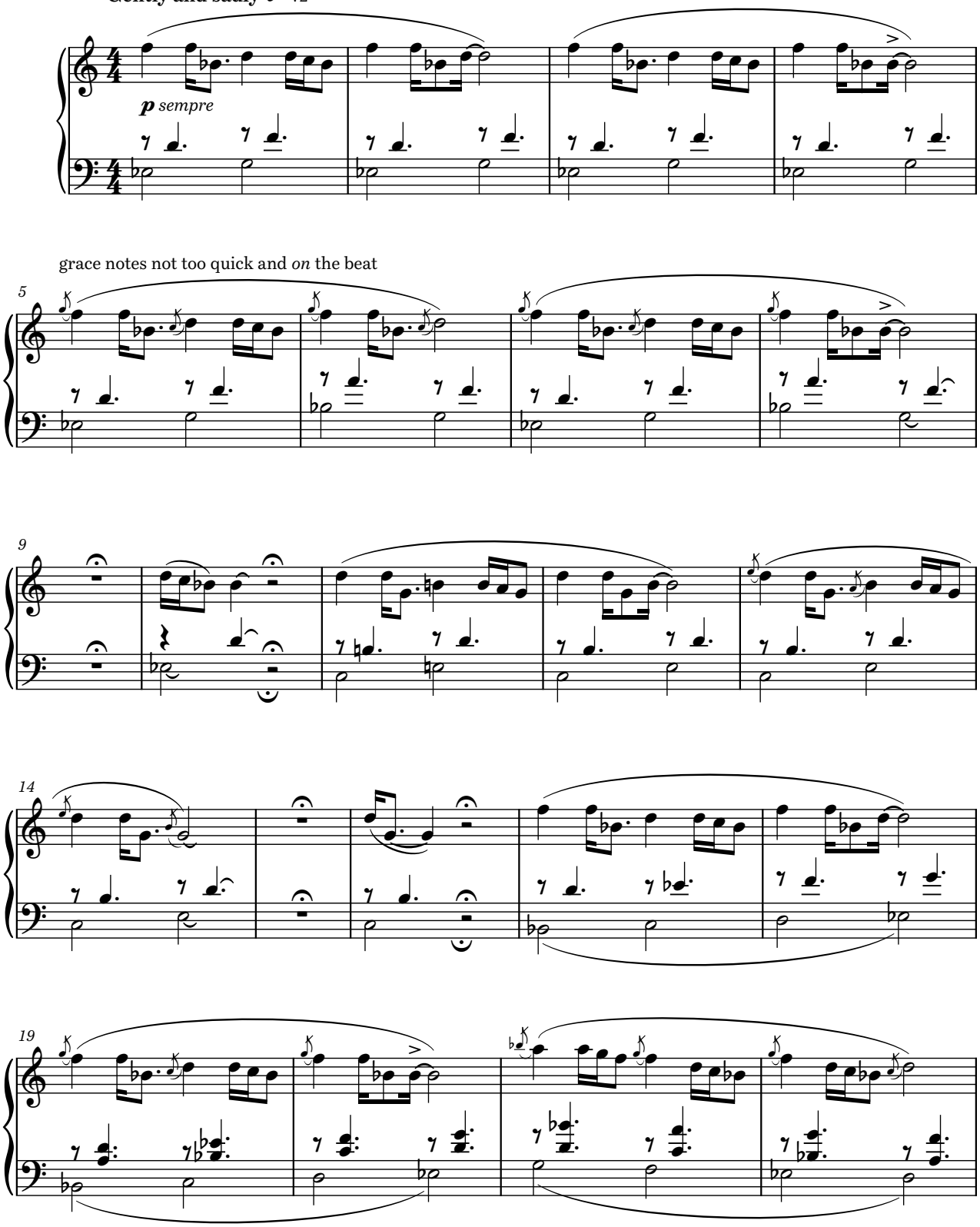
Prelude XX

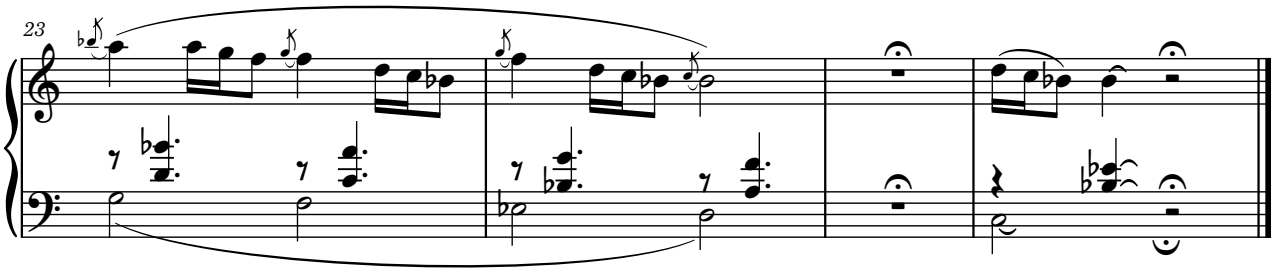

Tranquillamente ♩= 60
p
5
9
molto rit.
A tempo
pp echo
p inner voice well marked
13


17
rit. (al fine)
5
3
3
pp echo
10
p
22
10
10
dim.
pp
26
p
dim.
29
10
rit.
pp
ppp

Prelude XXI

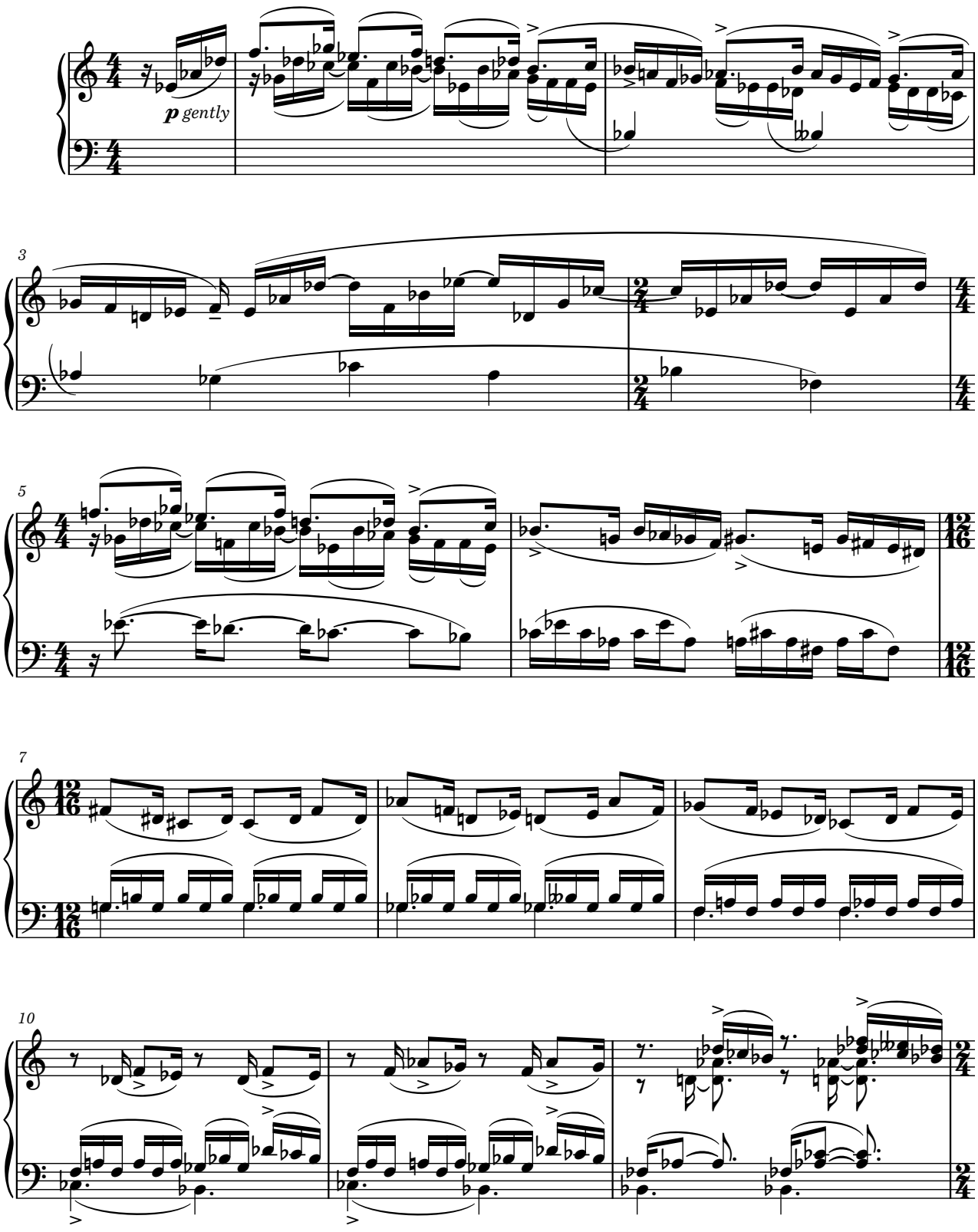
Gently and sadly ♩= 72

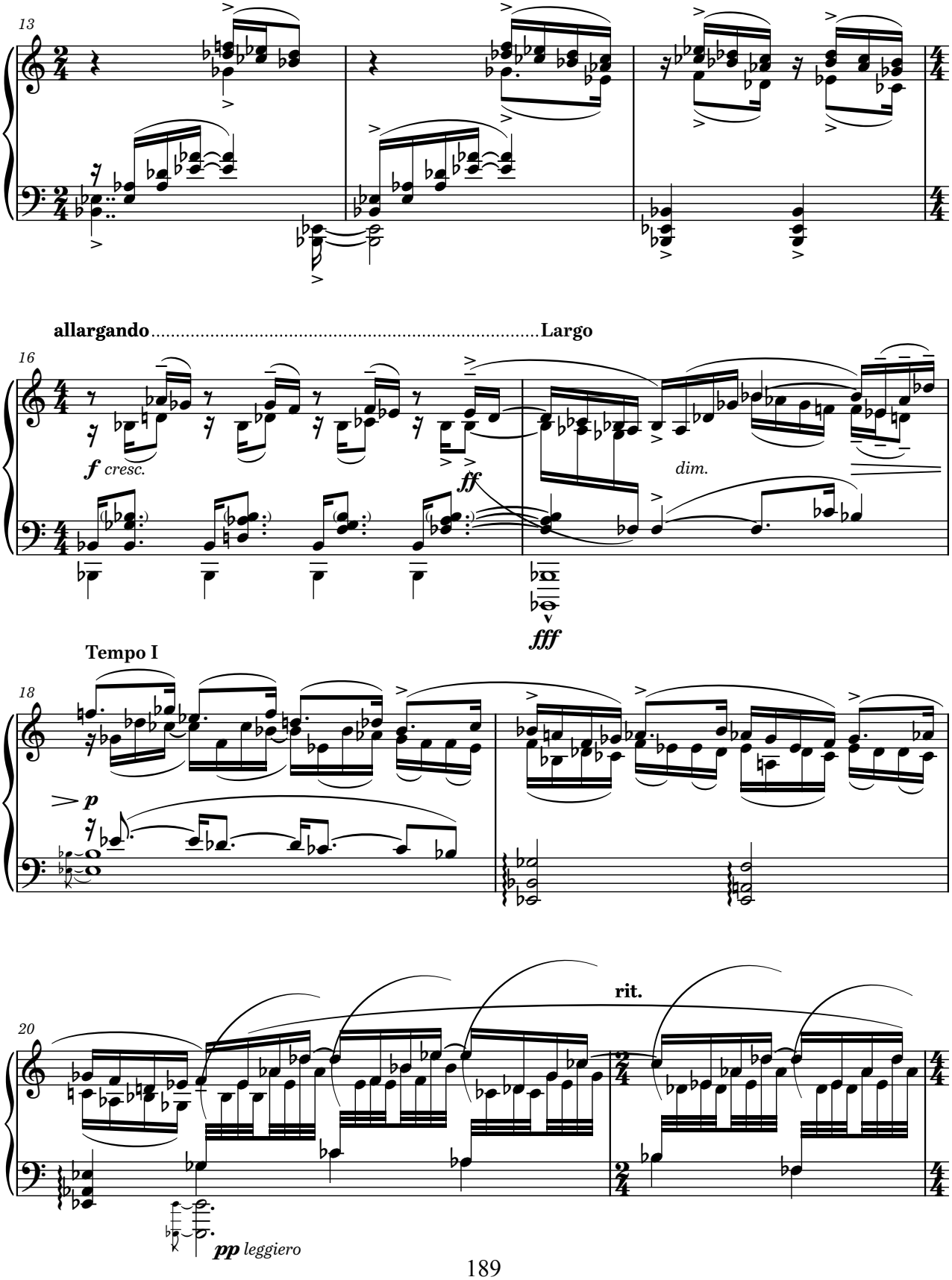


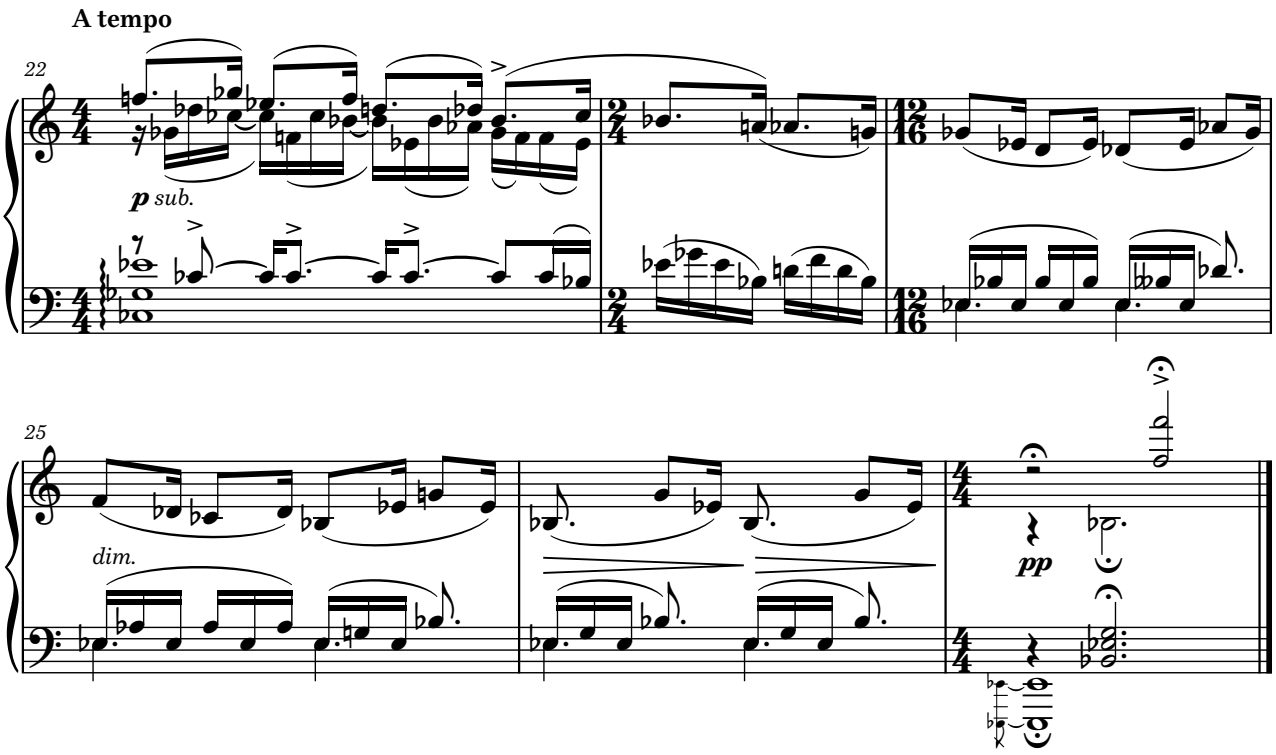

23

Prelude XXII (for the left hand alone)

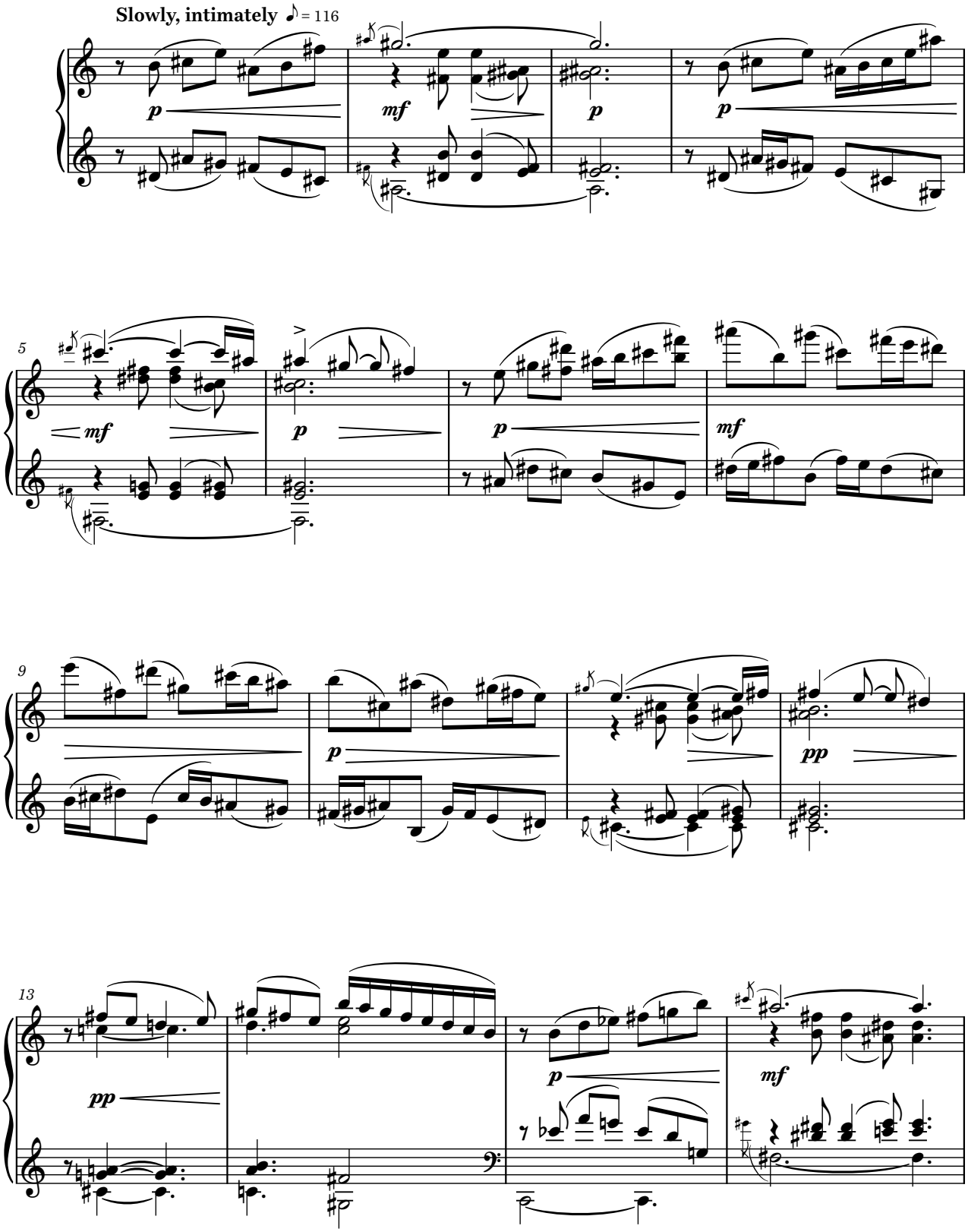
Gracefully flowing ♪ = 72

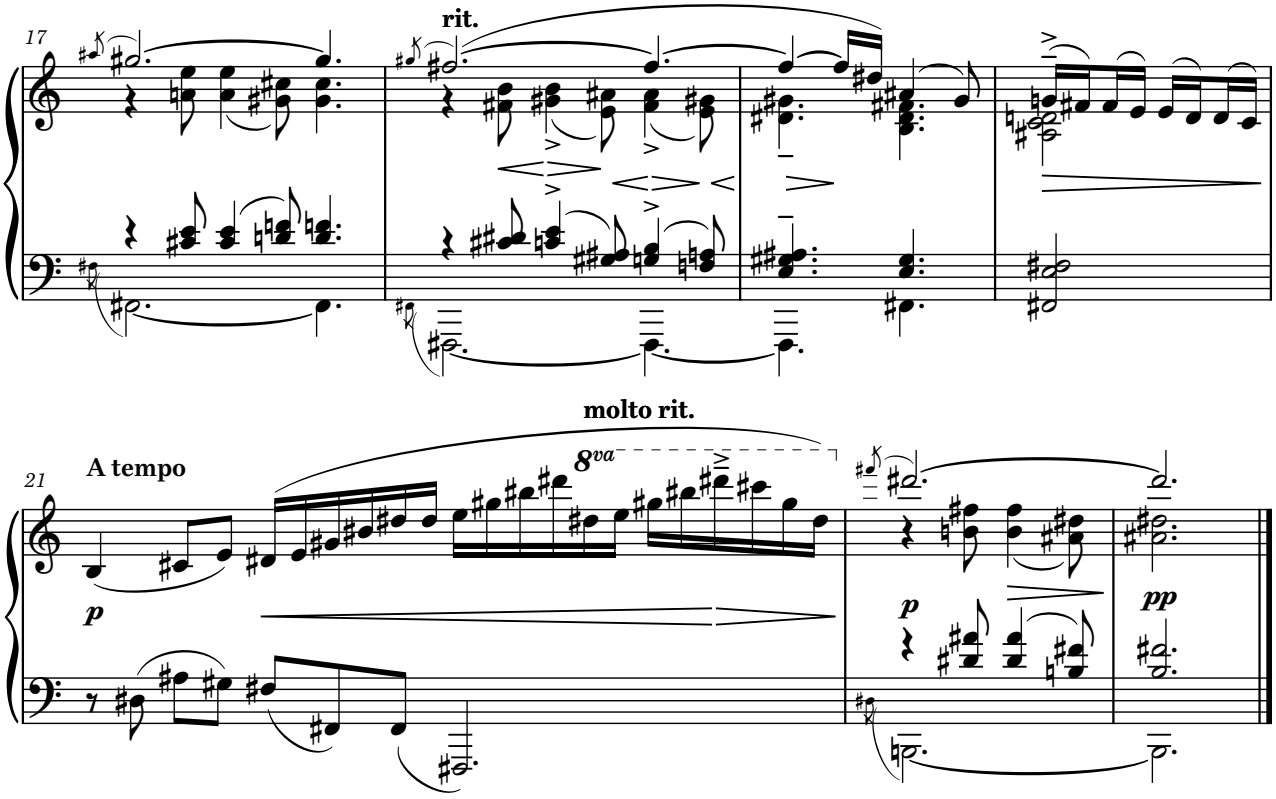



13
allargando
Largo
16
f cresc.
ff
dim.
fff
Tempo I
18
p
20
rit.
pp leggiero

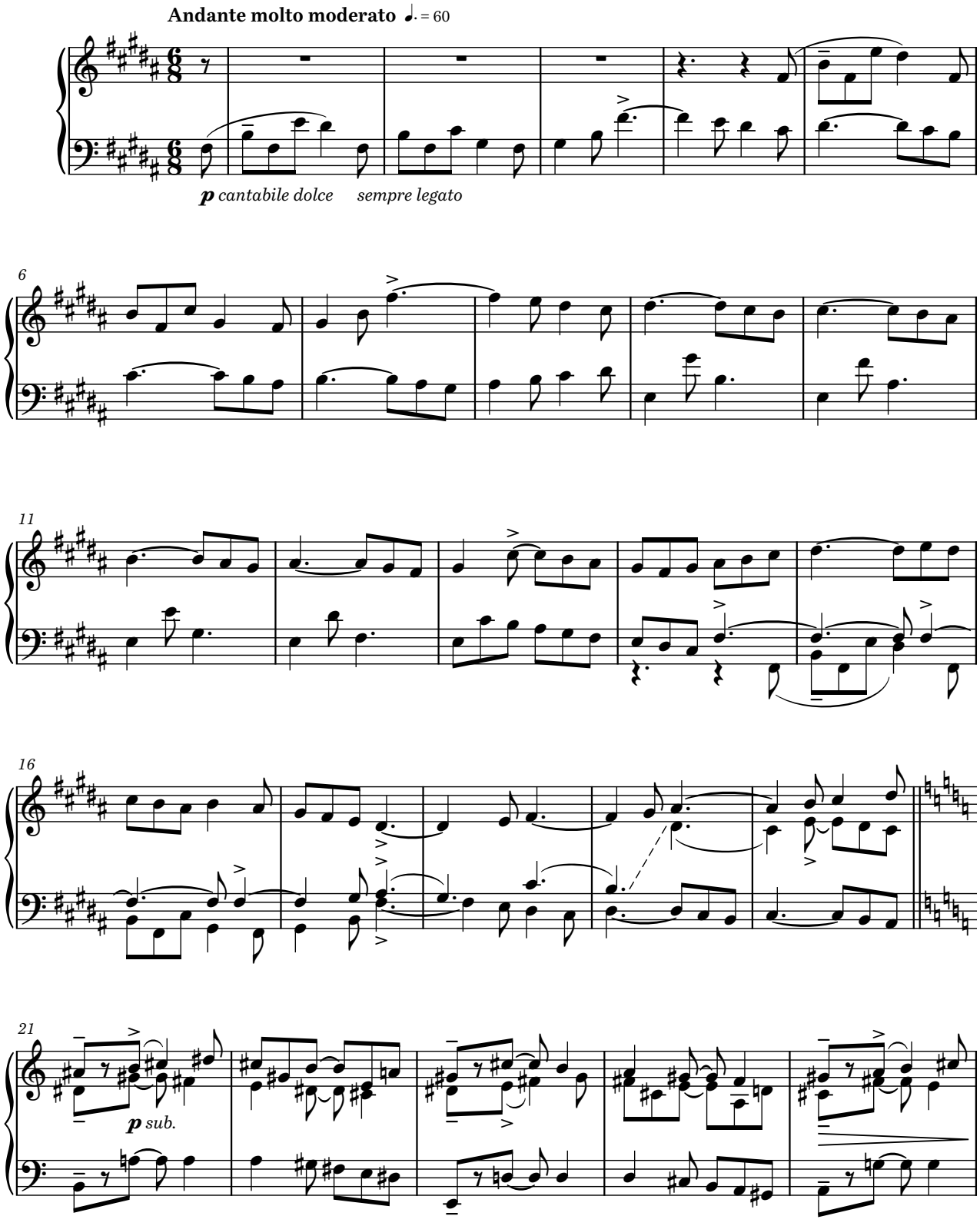

A tempo
22
p sub.
25
dim.
pp

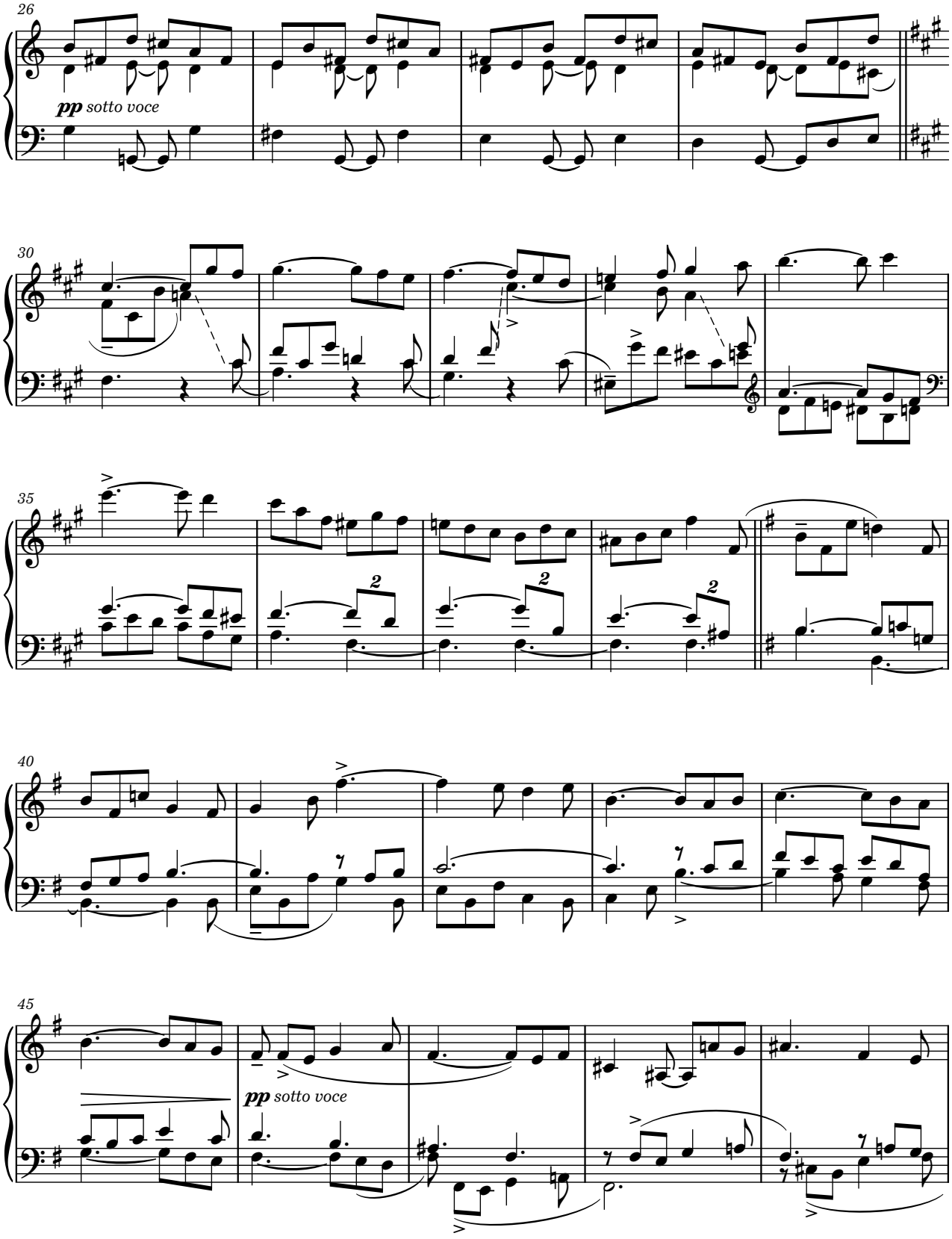
Prelude XXIII

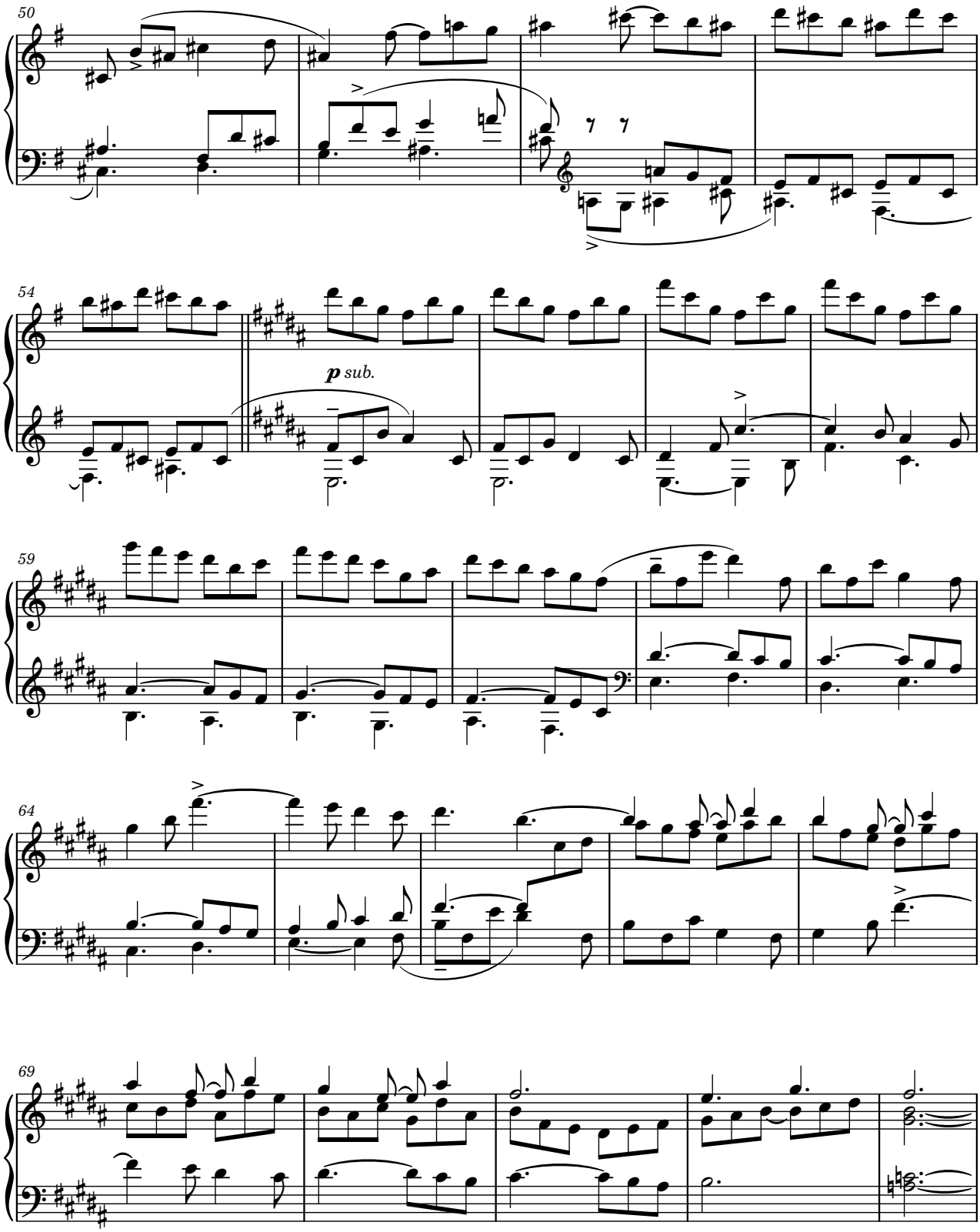


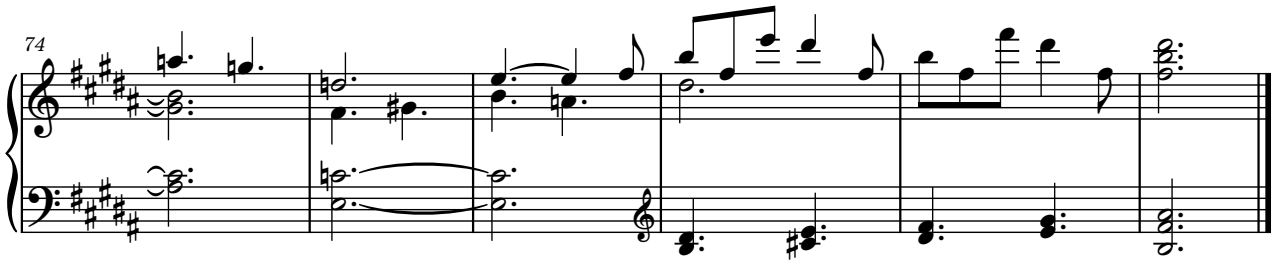

17
rit.
21
A tempo
molto rit.
8va
p
p
pp

Fugue XXIII

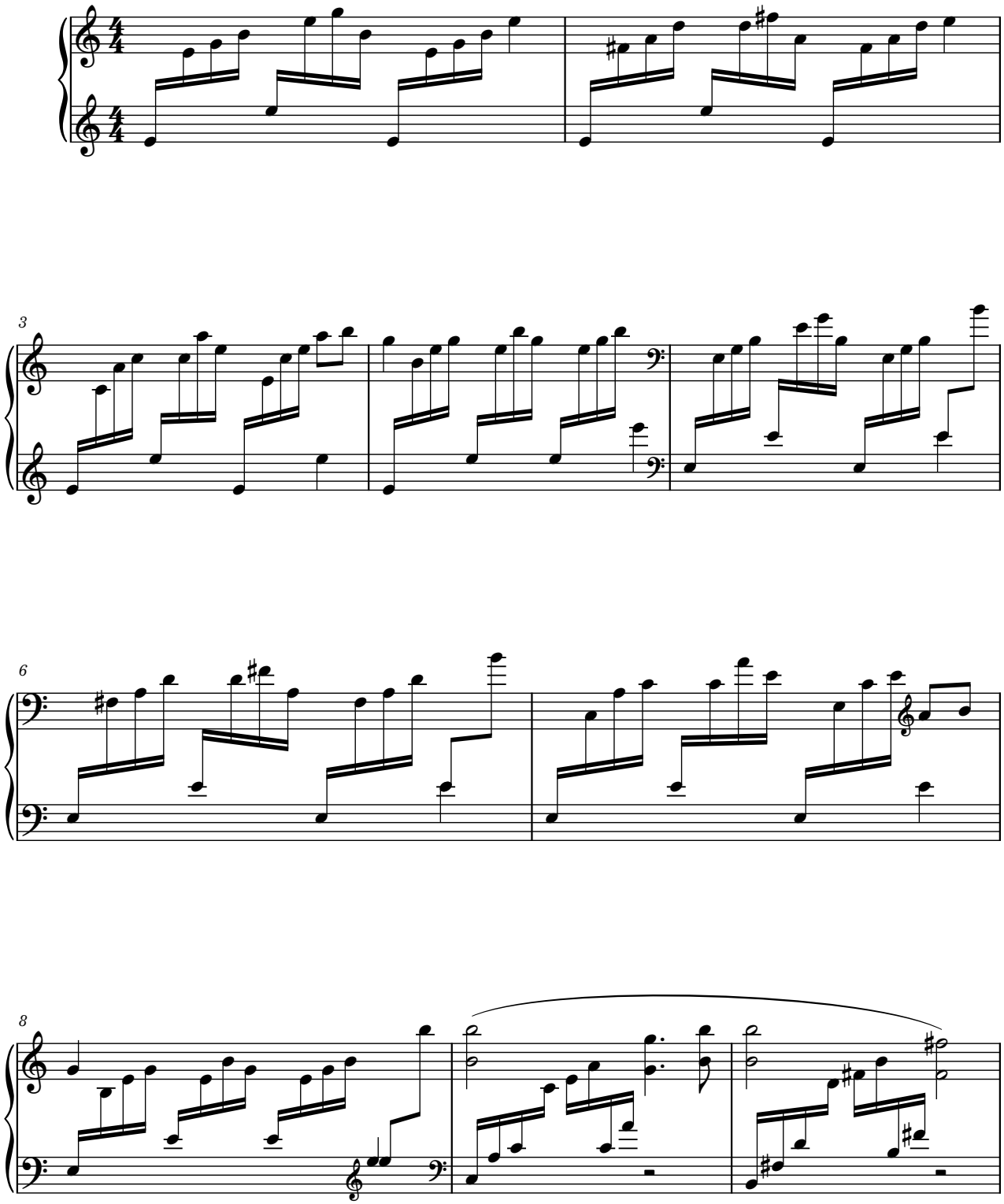

Andante molto moderato ♩. = 60
p cantabile dolce sempre legato
6
11
16
21
p sub.

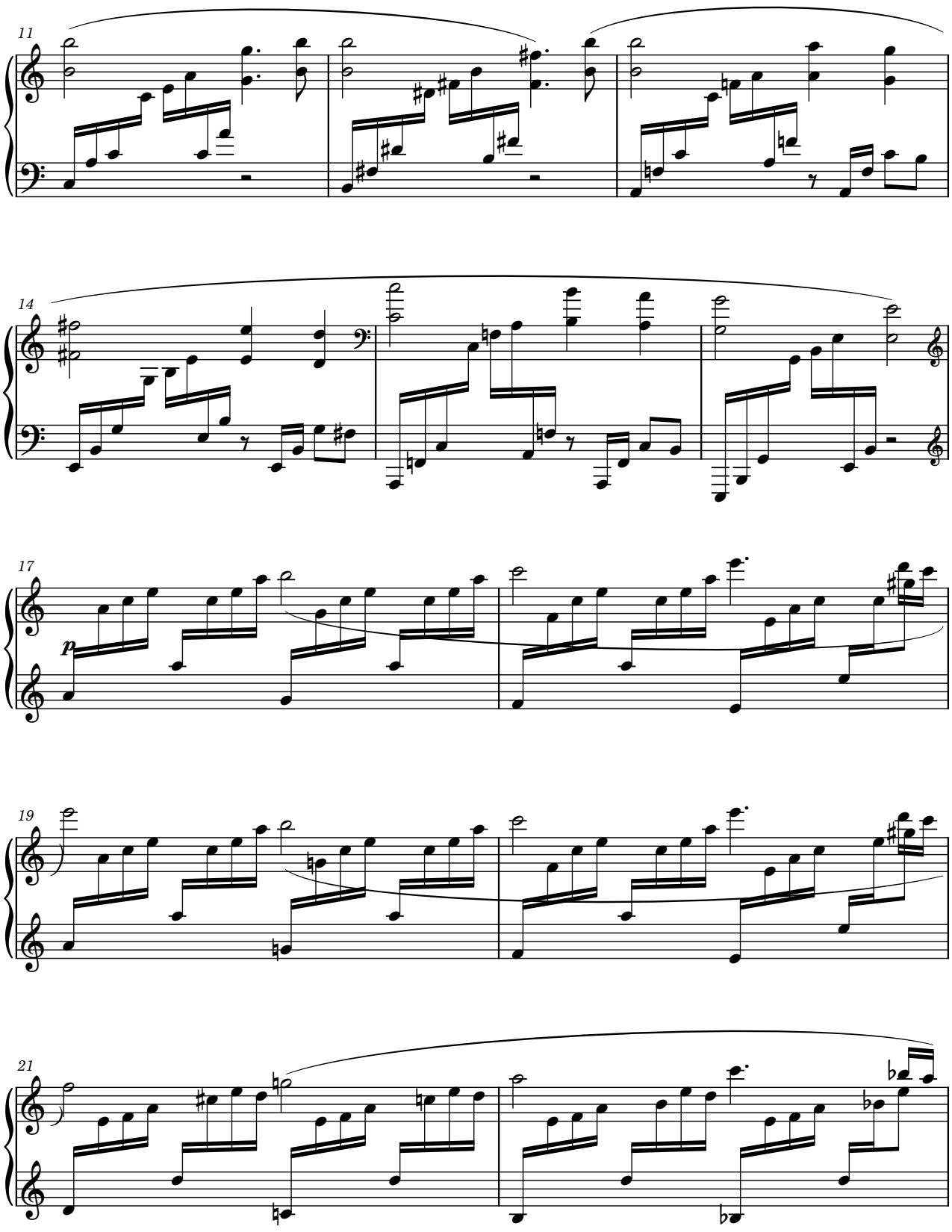

26
pp sotto voce
30
35
2
2
2
40
45
pp sotto voce

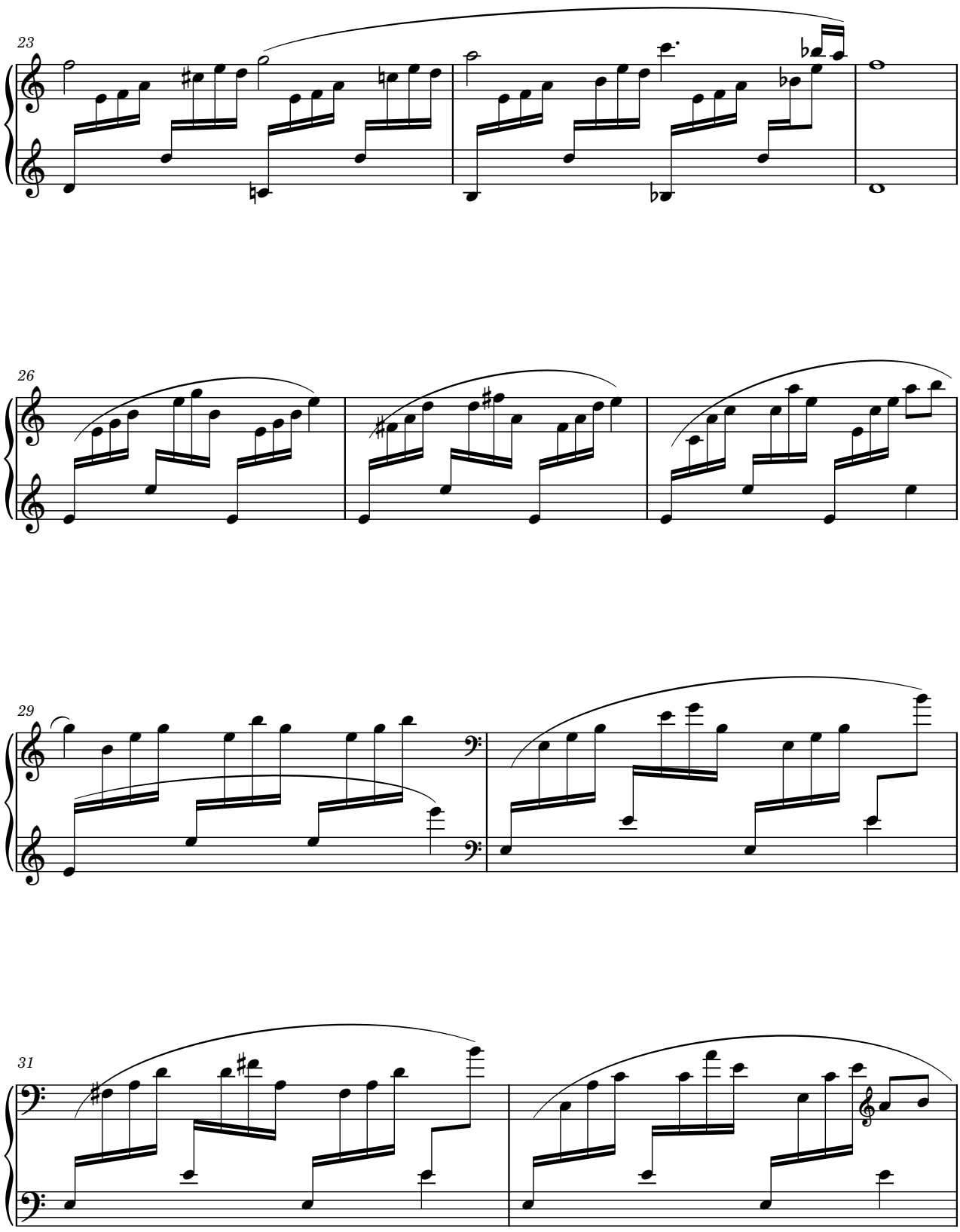

50
54
p sub.
59
64
69

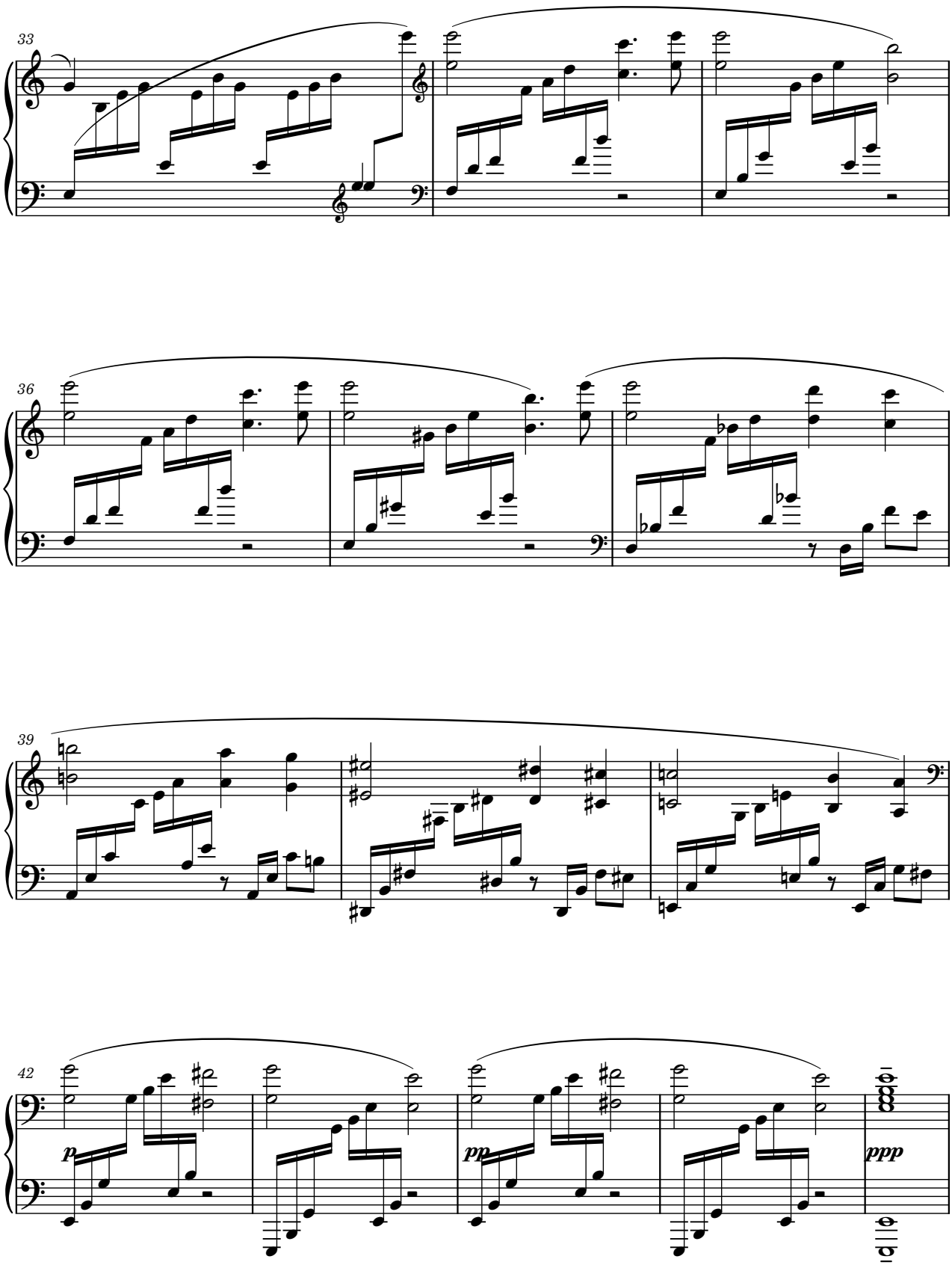

74

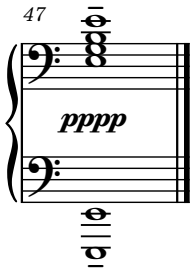
Prelude XIV



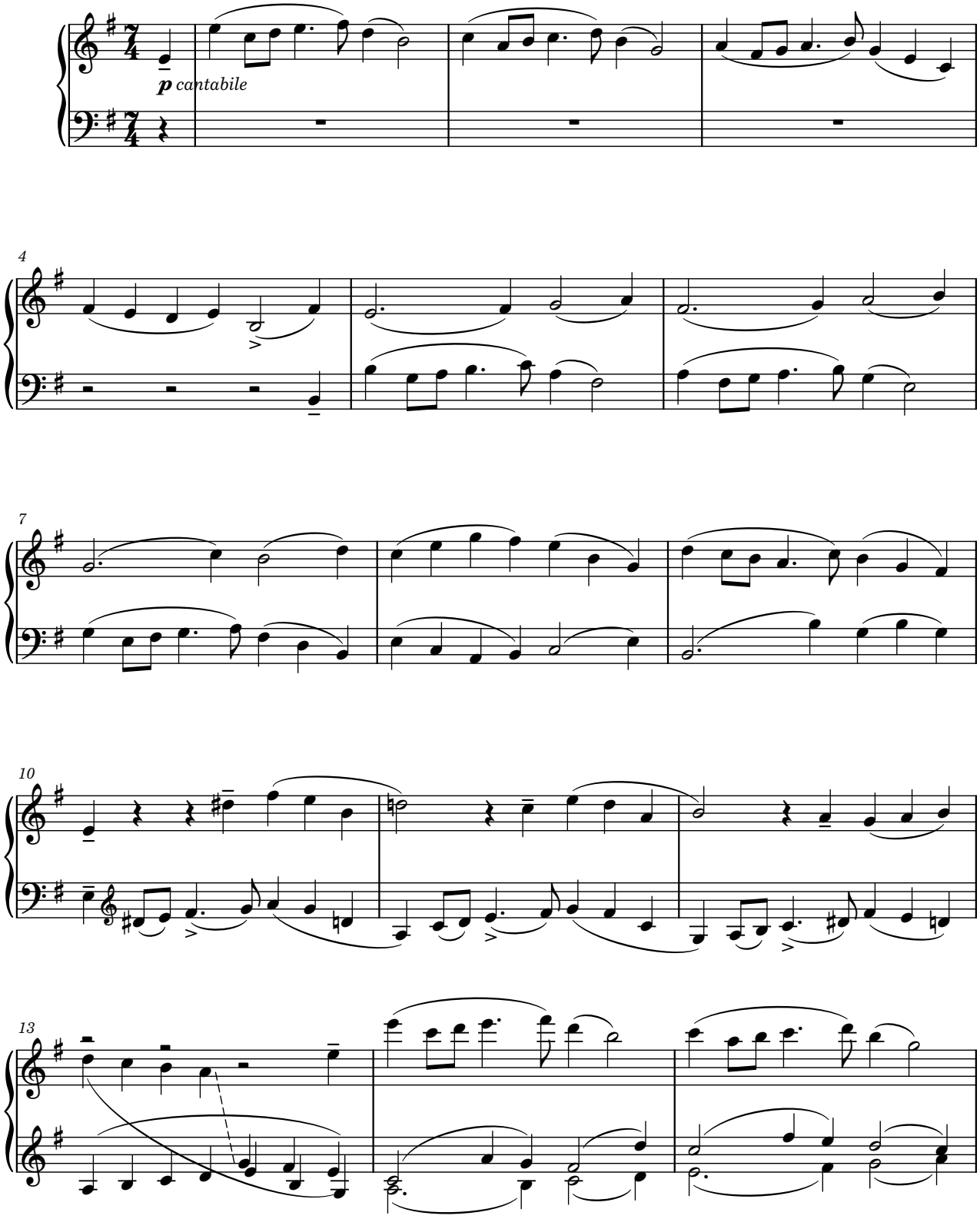

11
14
17
p
19
21

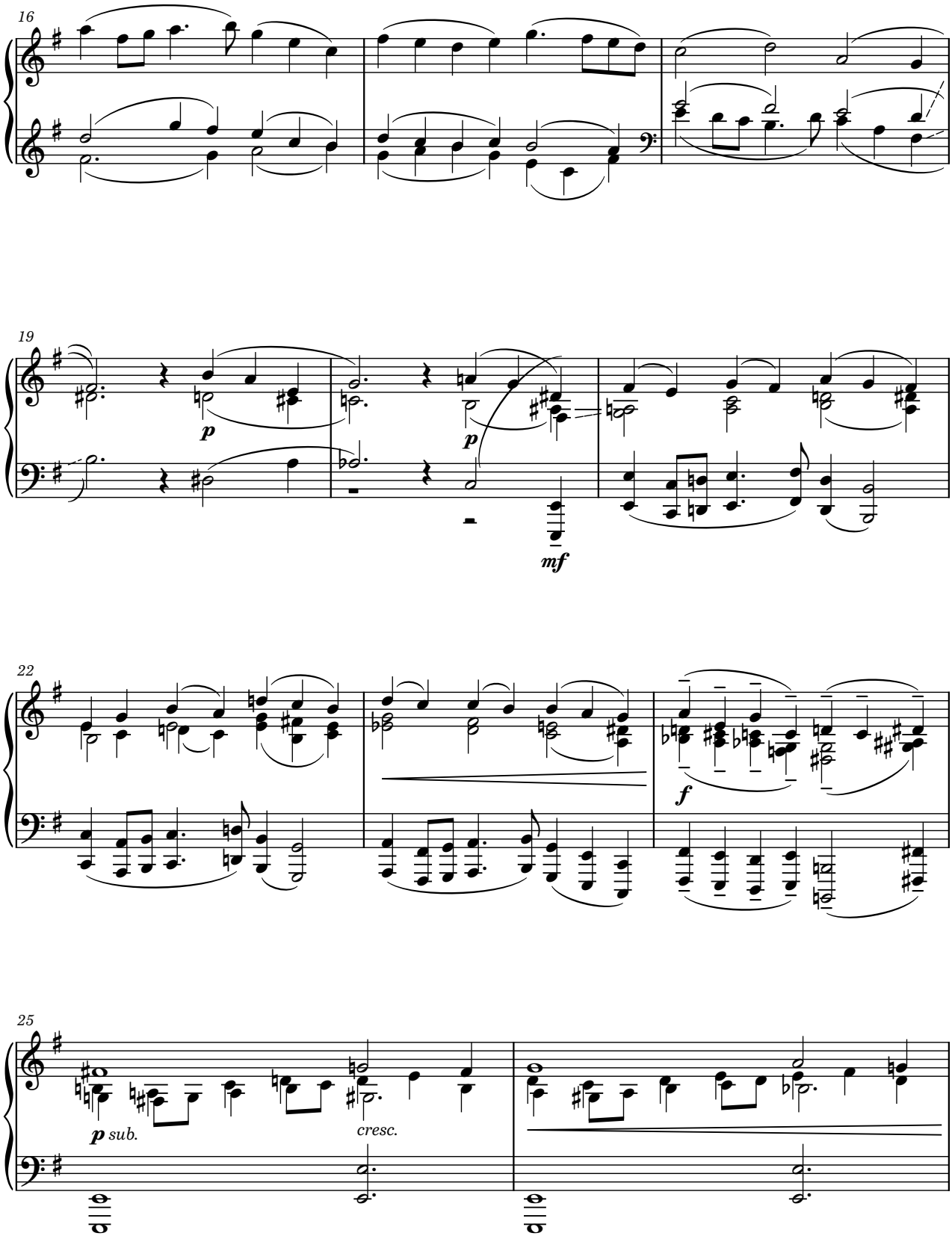

23
26
29
31

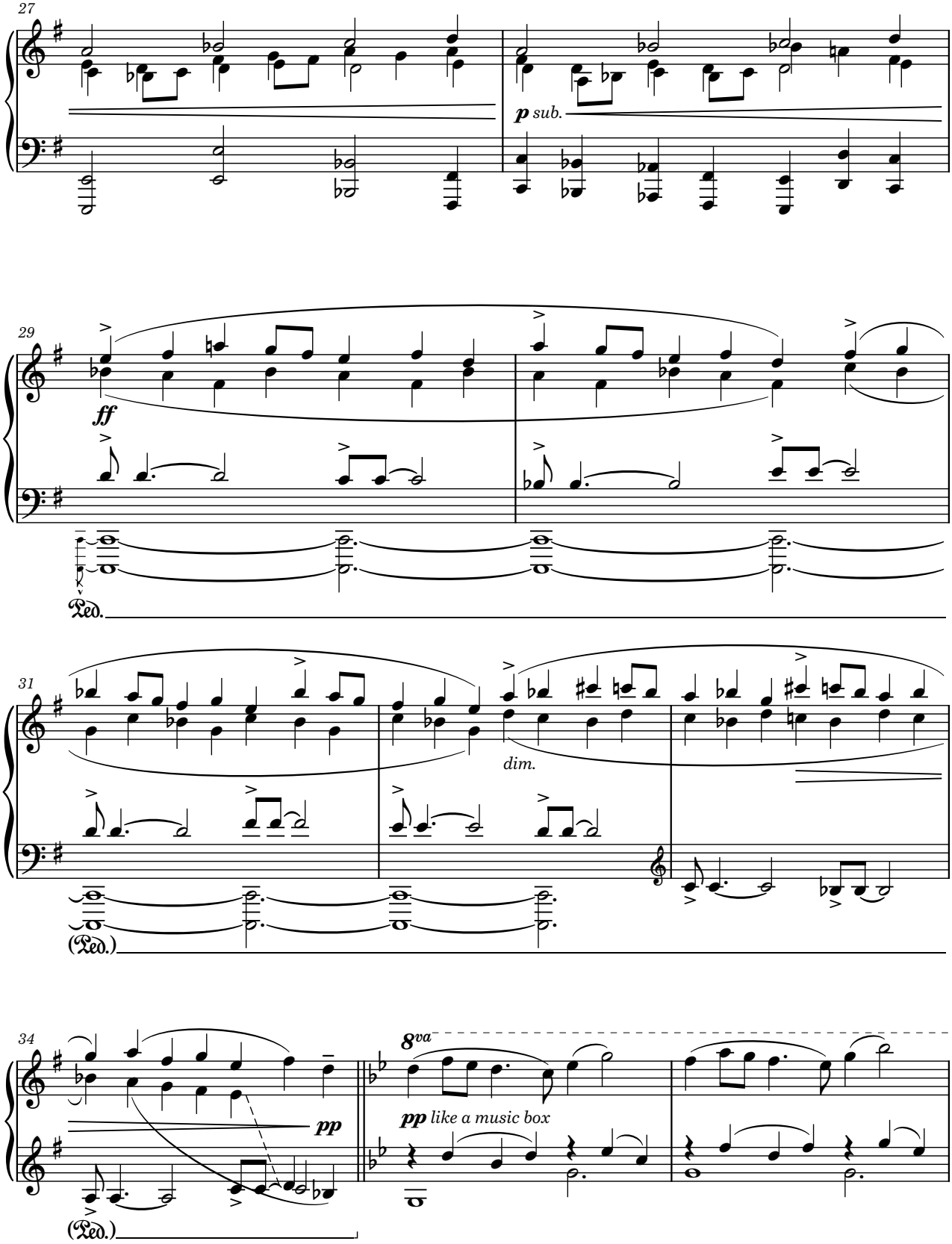

33
36
39
42
p
pp
ppp

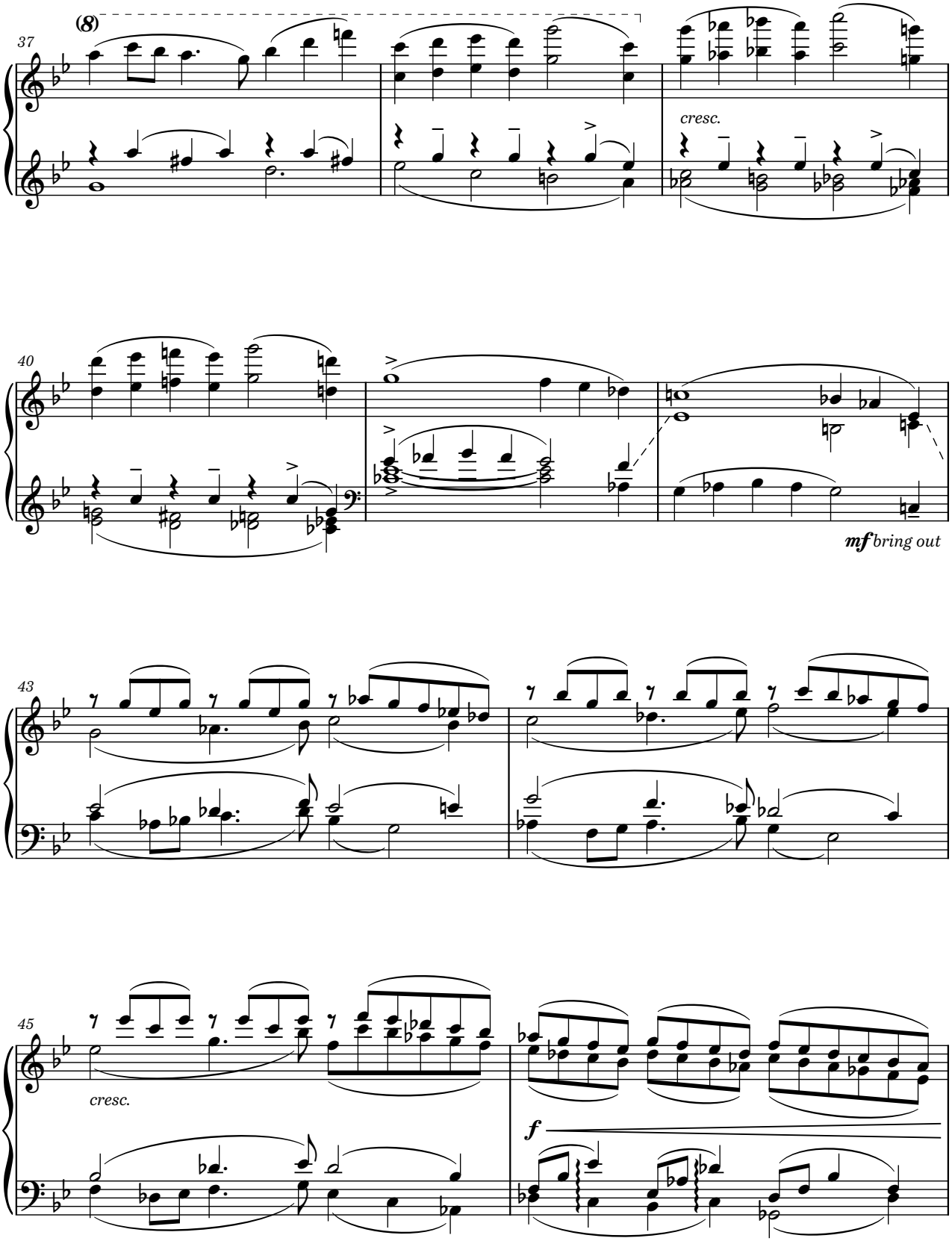

47
pppp

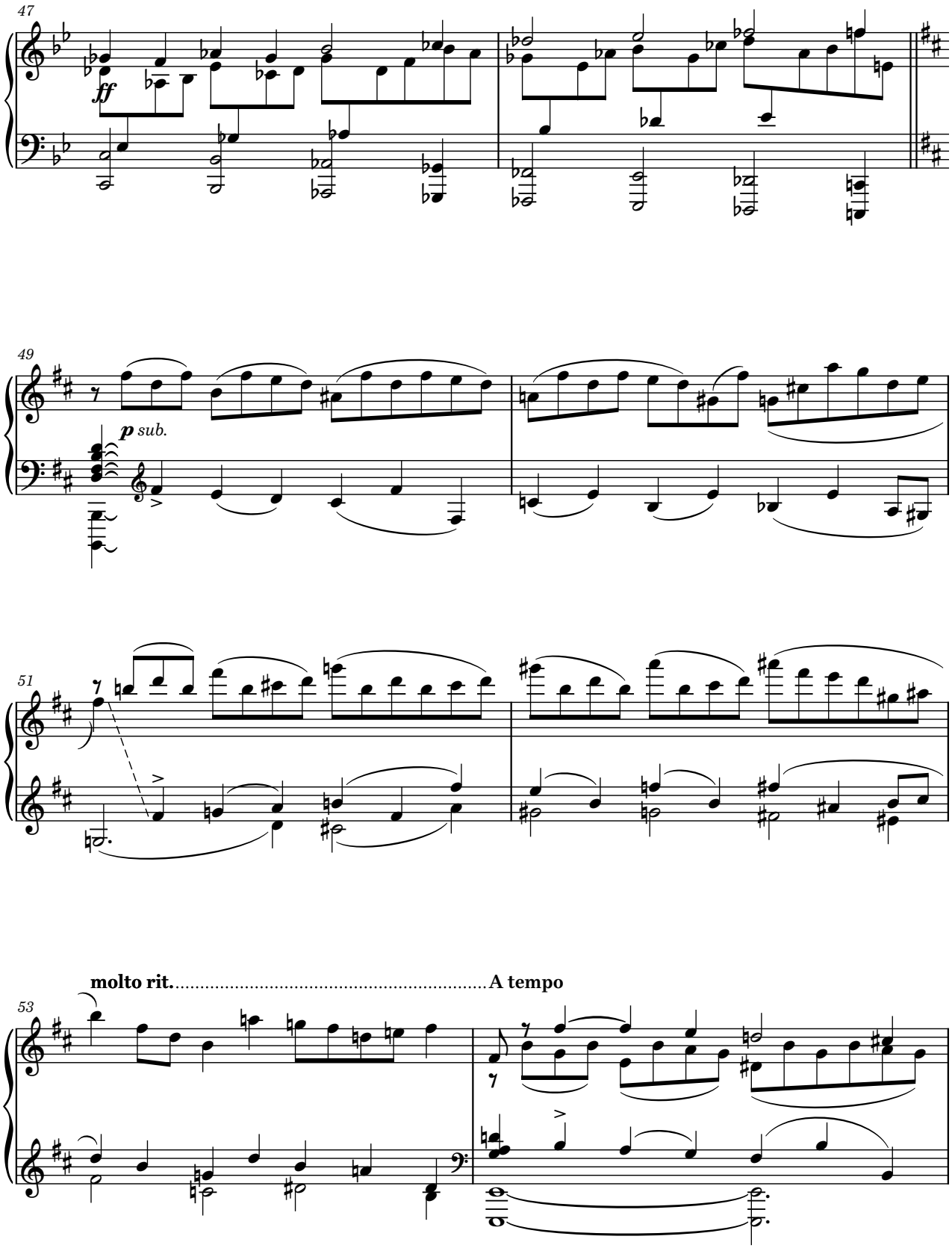
Fugue XIV

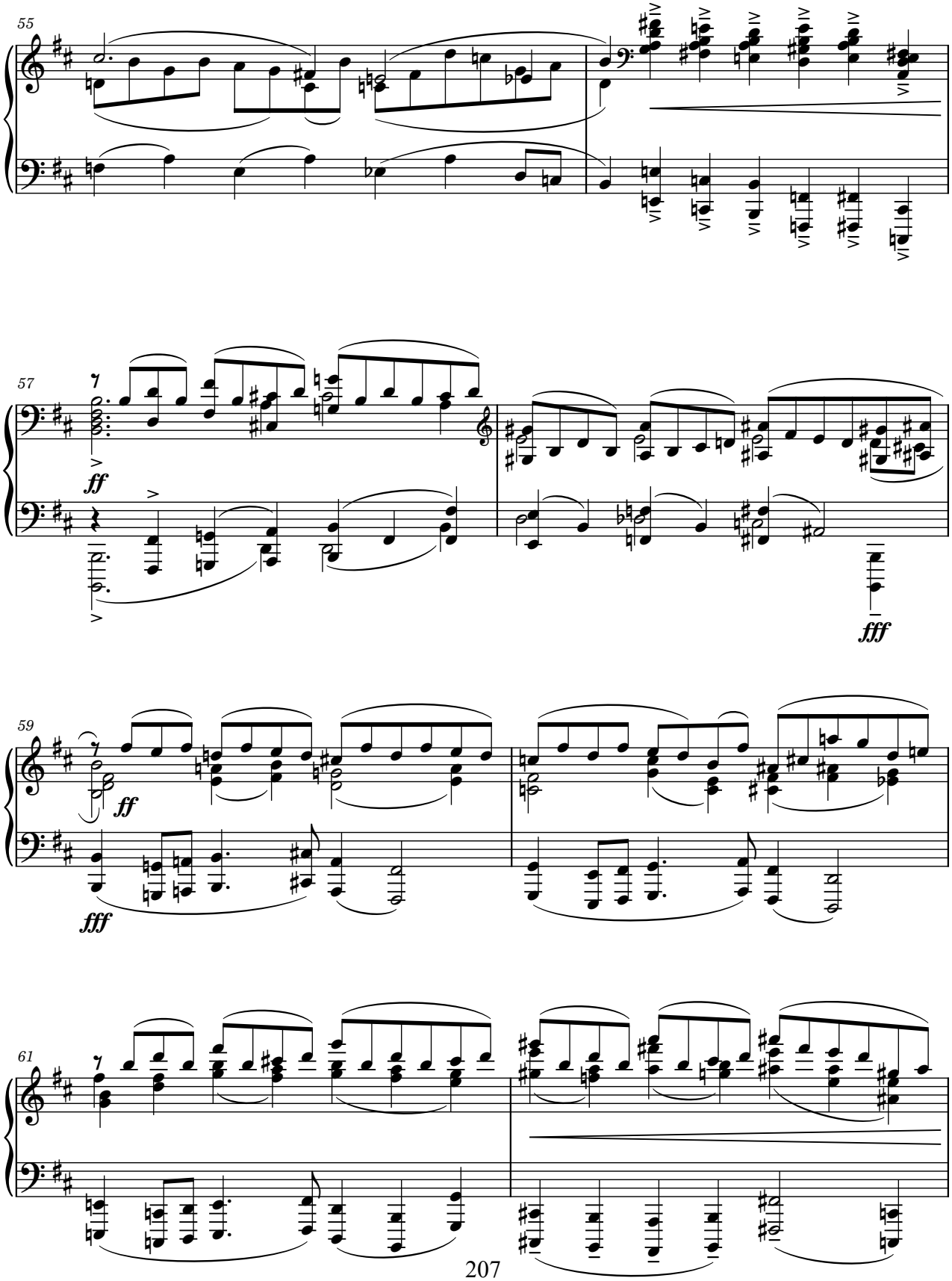


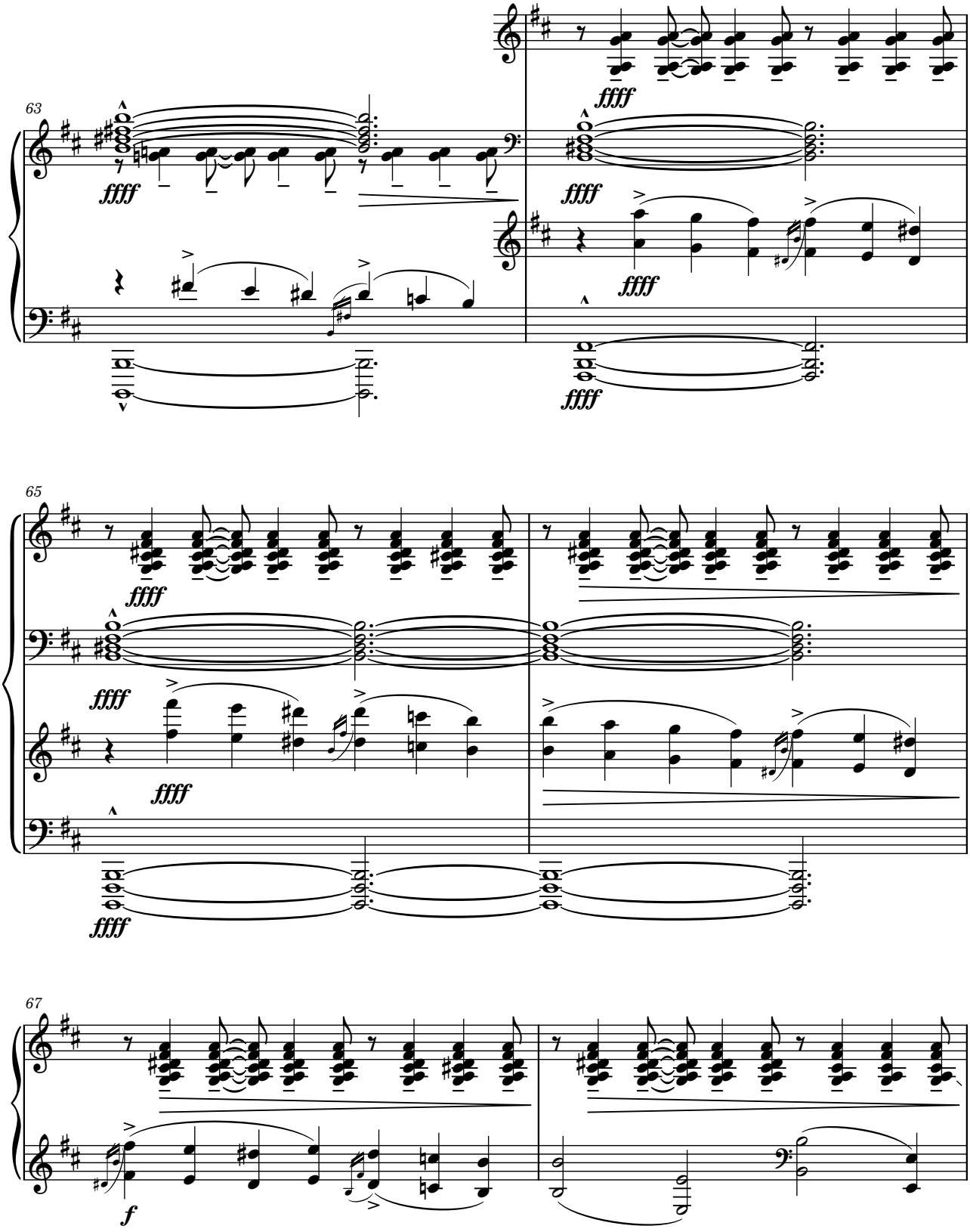

16
19
p
p
mf
22
f
25
p sub.
cresc.

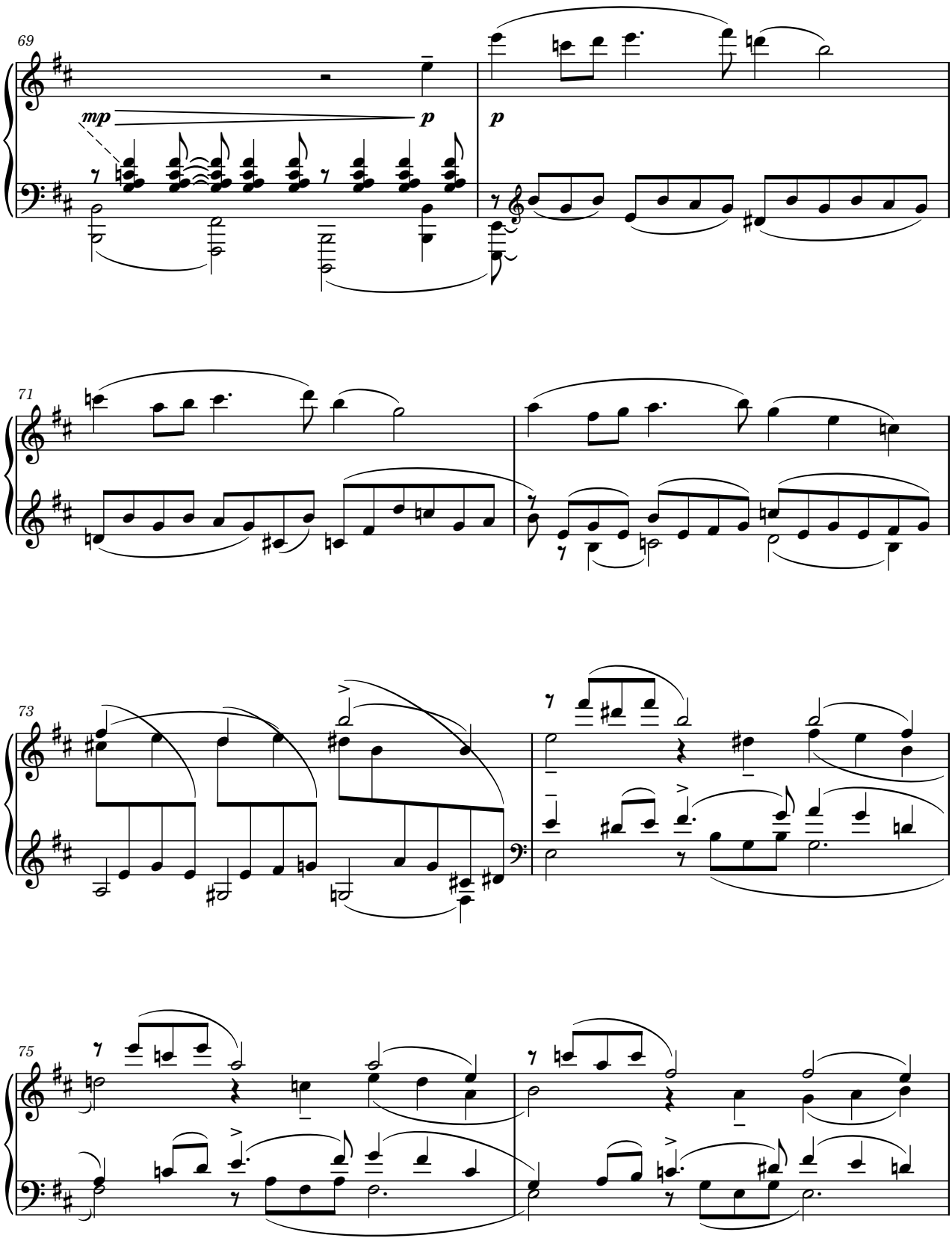

27
p sub.
29
ff
Ped.
31
dim.
(Ped.)
34
pp
8va
pp like a music box
(Ped.)

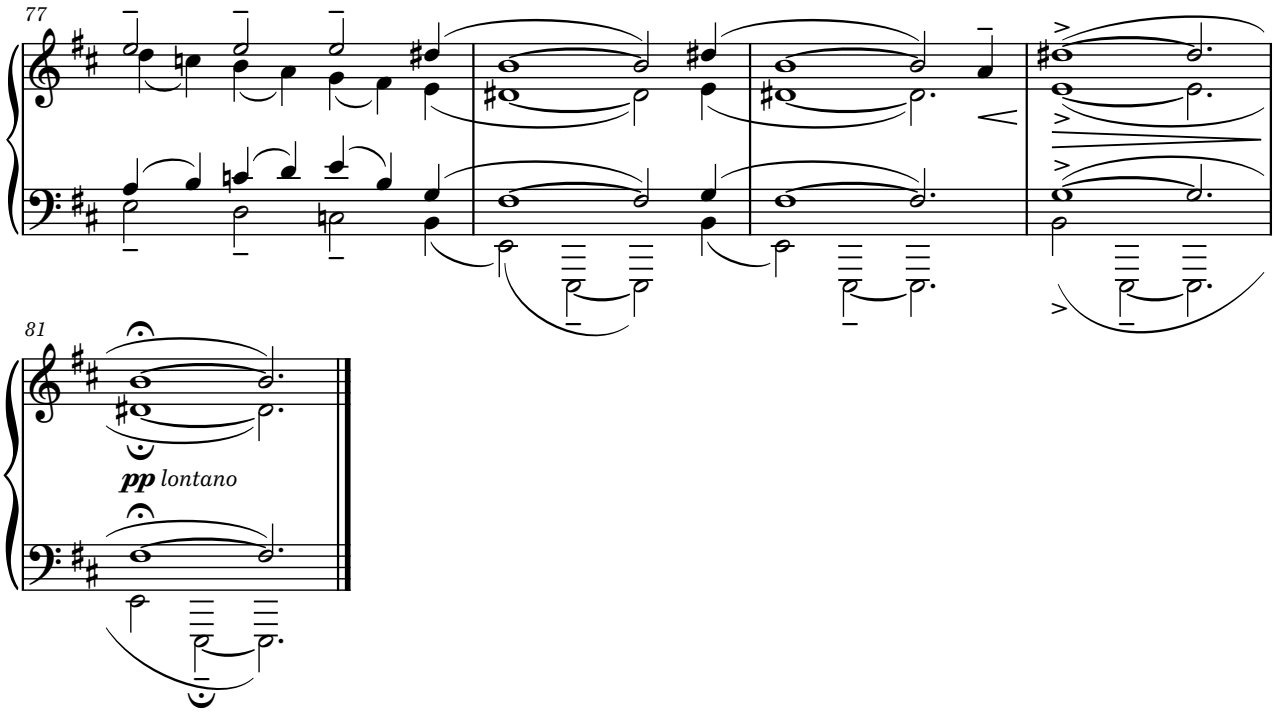

37
(8)
cresc.
40
mf bring out
43
45
cresc.
f


47
ff
49
p sub.
51
molto rit.
A tempo
53


55
57
ff
fff
59
ff
fff
61


63
ffff
ffff
ffff
ffff
ffff
65
ffff
ffff
ffff
ffff
67
f


69
mp
p
p
71
73
75


77
81
pp lontano