Jeff Manookian

Songs of Armenia

for Flute and Piano

Windsor Editions

Songs of Armenia

for Flute and Piano

by

JEFF MANOOKIAN

It was just a matter of time before my Armenian heritage caught up with me. I am what is called a "second-generation" Armenian. My grandfather, Kerikan Manookian, narrowly escaped the horrific genocide inflicted upon the Armenian nation in 1915-23 by the, then, Turkish regime. It was only through the few stories he disclosed to my father, that I had any claim or knowledge of Armenia and its diverse and rich history. I was, after all, a self-proclaimed "American" composer.

However, fate took its course. In the ultimate year of the 20th-century, I was commissioned to compose an epic choral/orchestra work – "Symphony of Tears" – memorializing this, the world's first, genocide of that century. Not only did I have to be historically accurate in relating through text and music this horrific event, I took it upon myself to intensely research Armenia's rich tome of music.

"Symphony of Tears" found its way to Yerevan, Armenia for a performance and recording in Khachaturian Hall. Through this pilgrimage to the land of my blood, as well as via subsequent journeys to Armenia for additional recording/performance projects with the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra and intensely experiencing the land, the people, and Armenia's unique personality; I found that my research into this country and its music took on a intimate reality.

The music of Armenia was now not just a study, this music became, and is, a vital part of me as a person and as a composer. As a result of the profound experiences I had while in my "motherland" I can label myself an American-Armenian composer. Of course my roots are those of America, and my music reflects that. But I can enjoy a duality of compositional personality.

The music of Armenia figures among the world's oldest written musical tradition, and its folk music is even older. Indeed, it is cliche to state that Armenian music, both instrumental and vocal is copious. It's modalities and rhythms are distinctive – unlike any other on this planet.

The "Songs of Armenia" is, by no means, my only work incorporating Armenian music quotations into my music. However, what distinguishes the "Songs of Armenia" is that this grouping was not a commission. It was composed out of the sheer joy of writing.

There are personal reasons I cast this work for flute and piano. (As with the majority of my works, "Songs of Amenia" is an auto-biographical reflection.) The writing is blatantly indulgent. Its virtuosic demands on its interpreters are abundant.

Each of the five movements indeed reflect "borrowings" from Armenian folk music. Other than an occasional four-measure melodic quote, the development, texture, and even an occasional counter-subject are original. I believe, nonetheless, I have recreated a few aural glimpses into this proud nation and its heritage.

Some of the melodies might be familiar to those entrenched in Armenian heritage. But because of the multi-thousands of tunes that have been (fortunately) preserved, surely some or most of these melodies will be fresh, not only for the non-Armenian, but for the Armenian him/herself.

I have purposely not titled any of the movements – although some of the quotations did come from titled songs. The character of each tune was changed enough that carrying over, or assigning, any titles would interfere with this work's intent – that of being pure music.

"Songs of Armenia" received its world-premiere by flutist Linda Chatterton and pianist John Jensen on January 16, 2004 at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

This work is recorded on the Azica Records label, via a grant from the Aaron Copland Foundation, by flutists Pam Youngblood and pianist Gabriel Bita. "Songs of Armenia" was featured at the 2010 National Flute Association Convention in Anaheim, California by the same artists.

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Songs of Armenia

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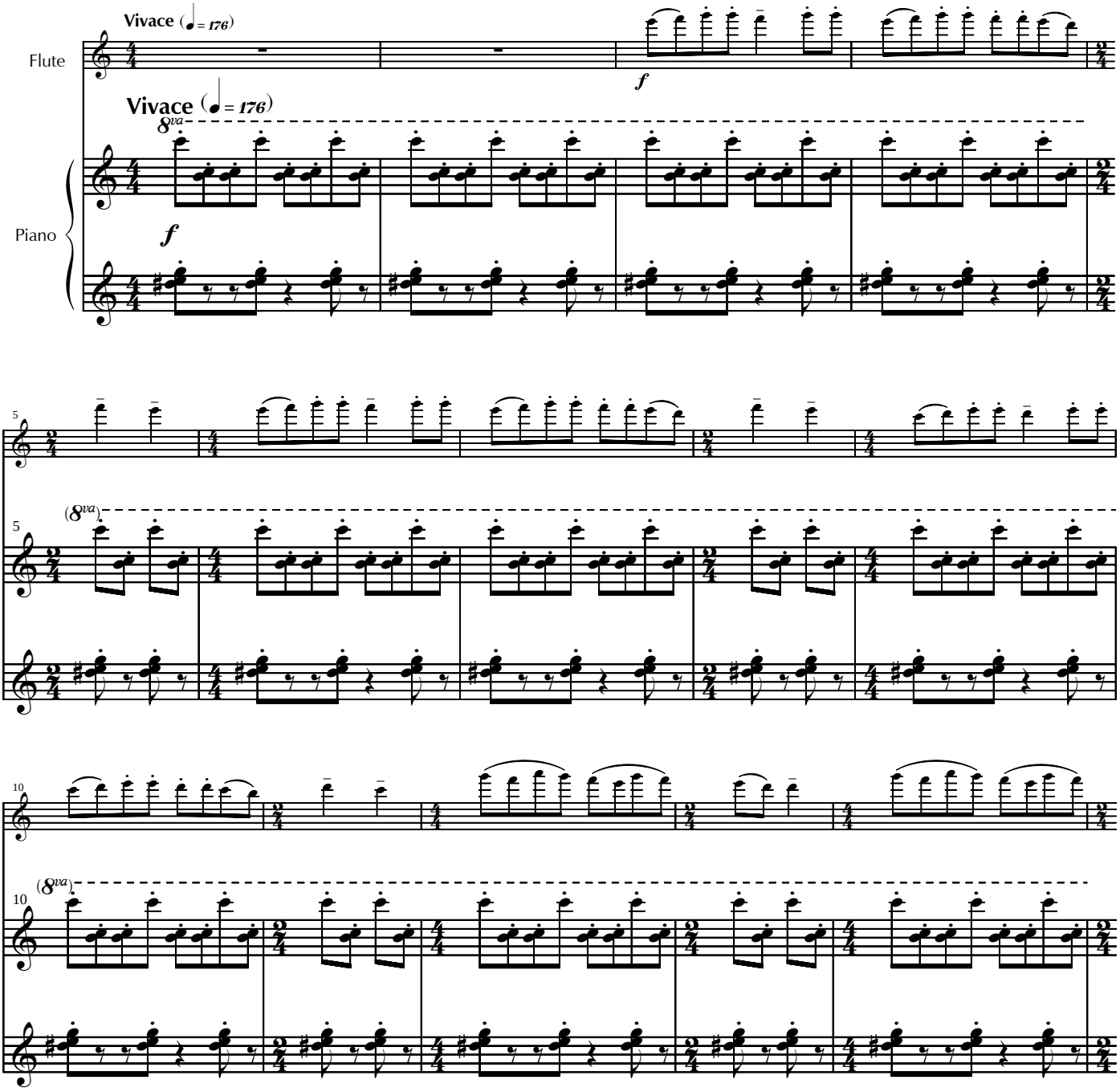
I.

JEFF MANOOKIAN



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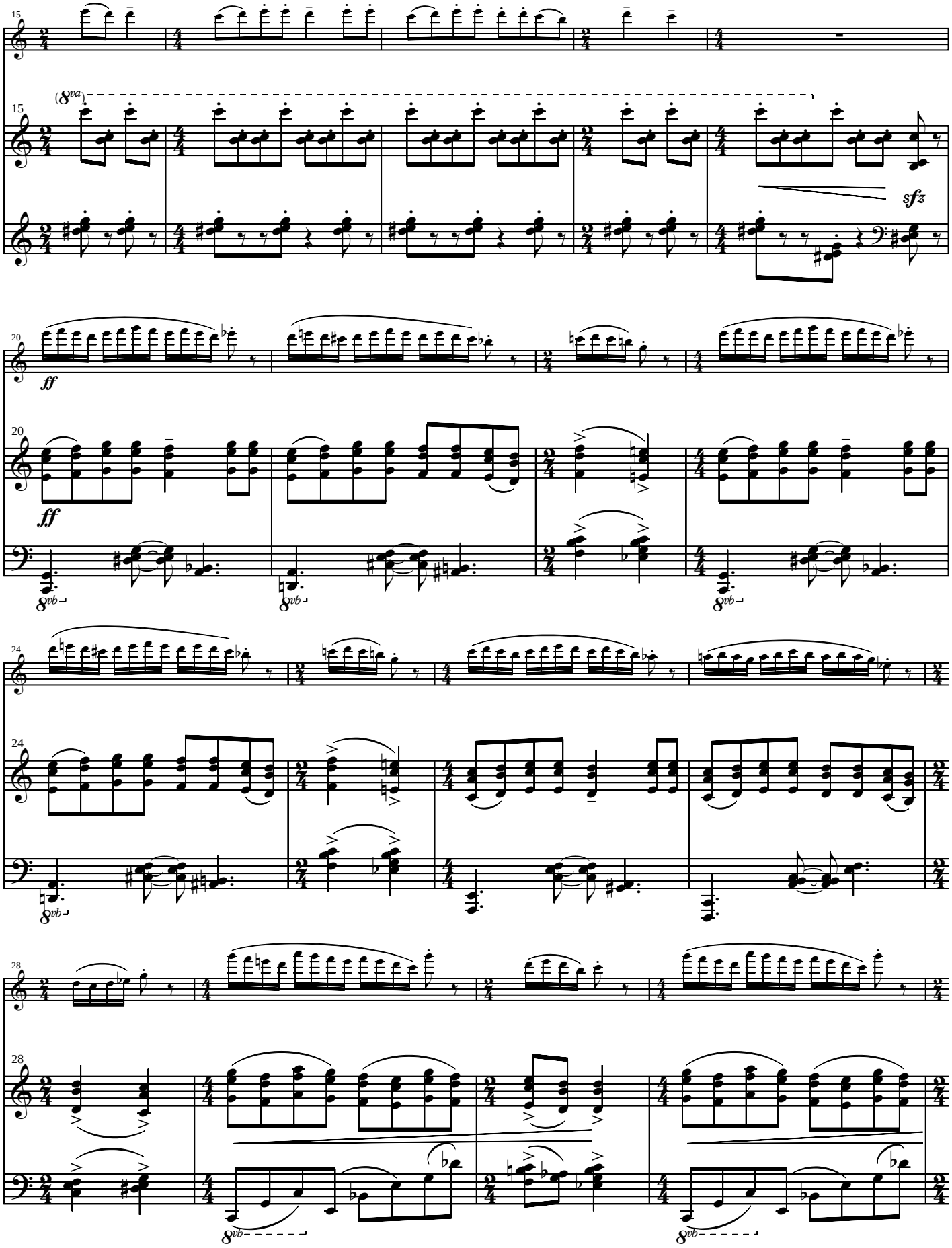

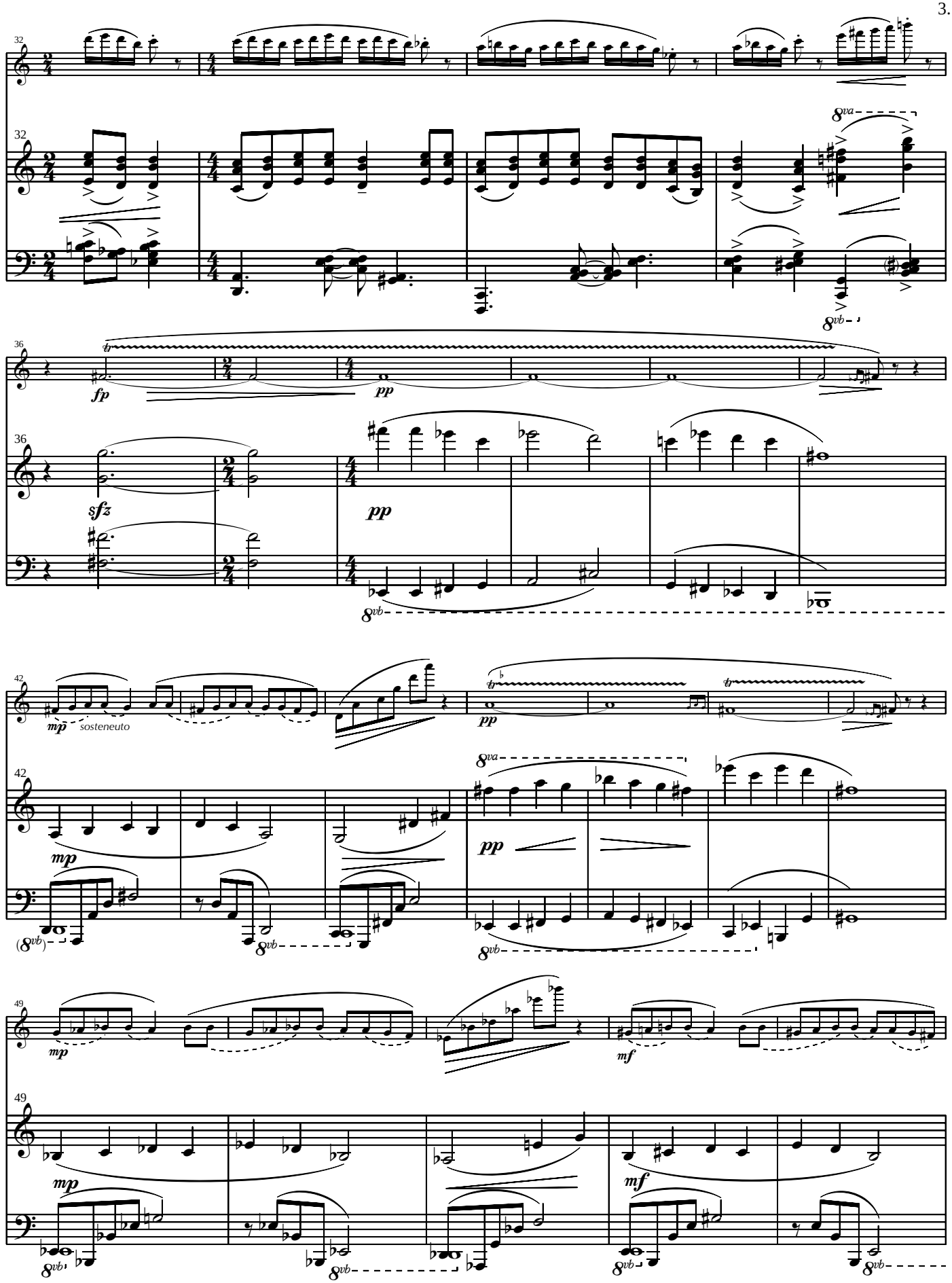
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8vb
fp
pp
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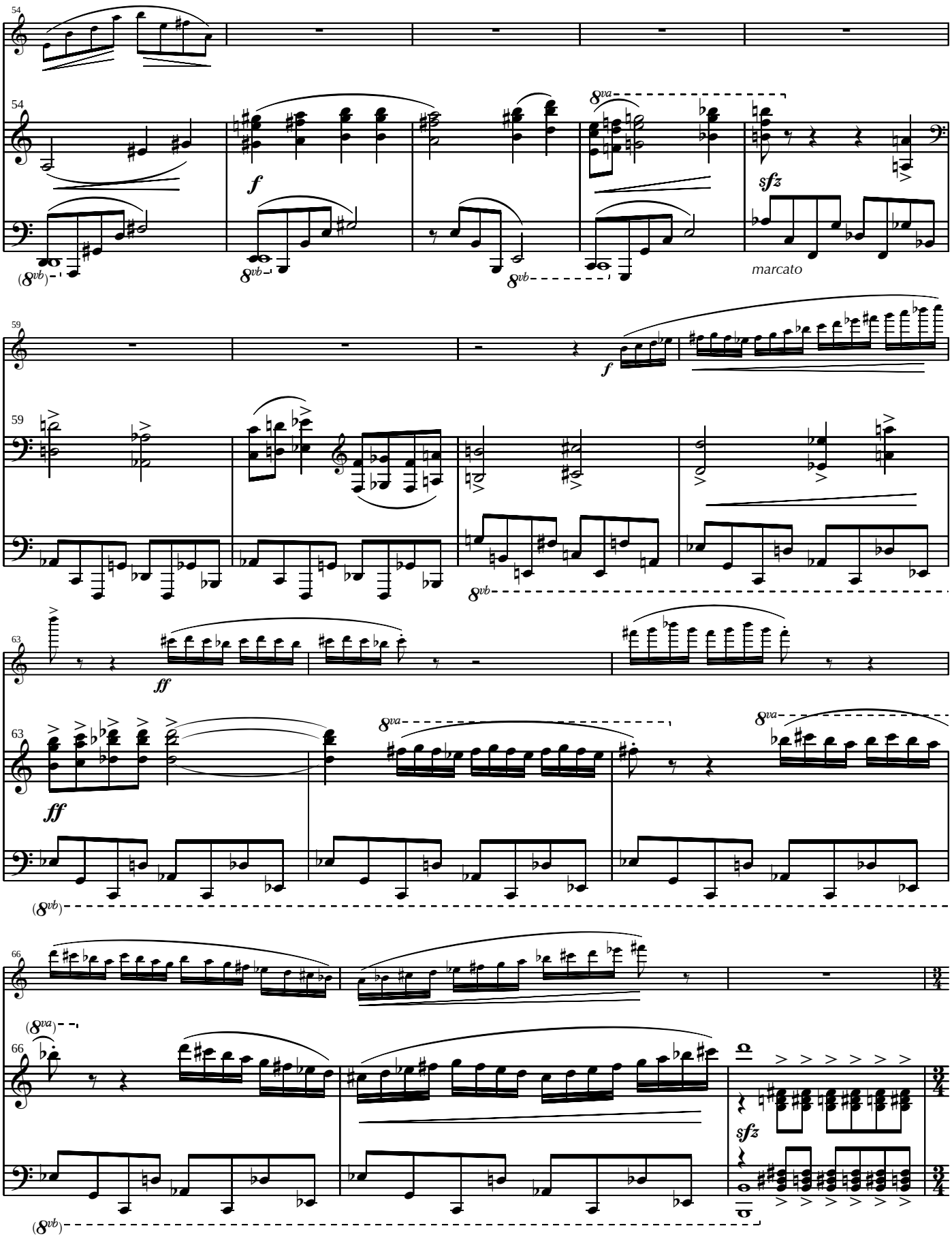
sfz
pp
42
mp
sosteneuto
pp
8va
(8vb)
49
mp
mf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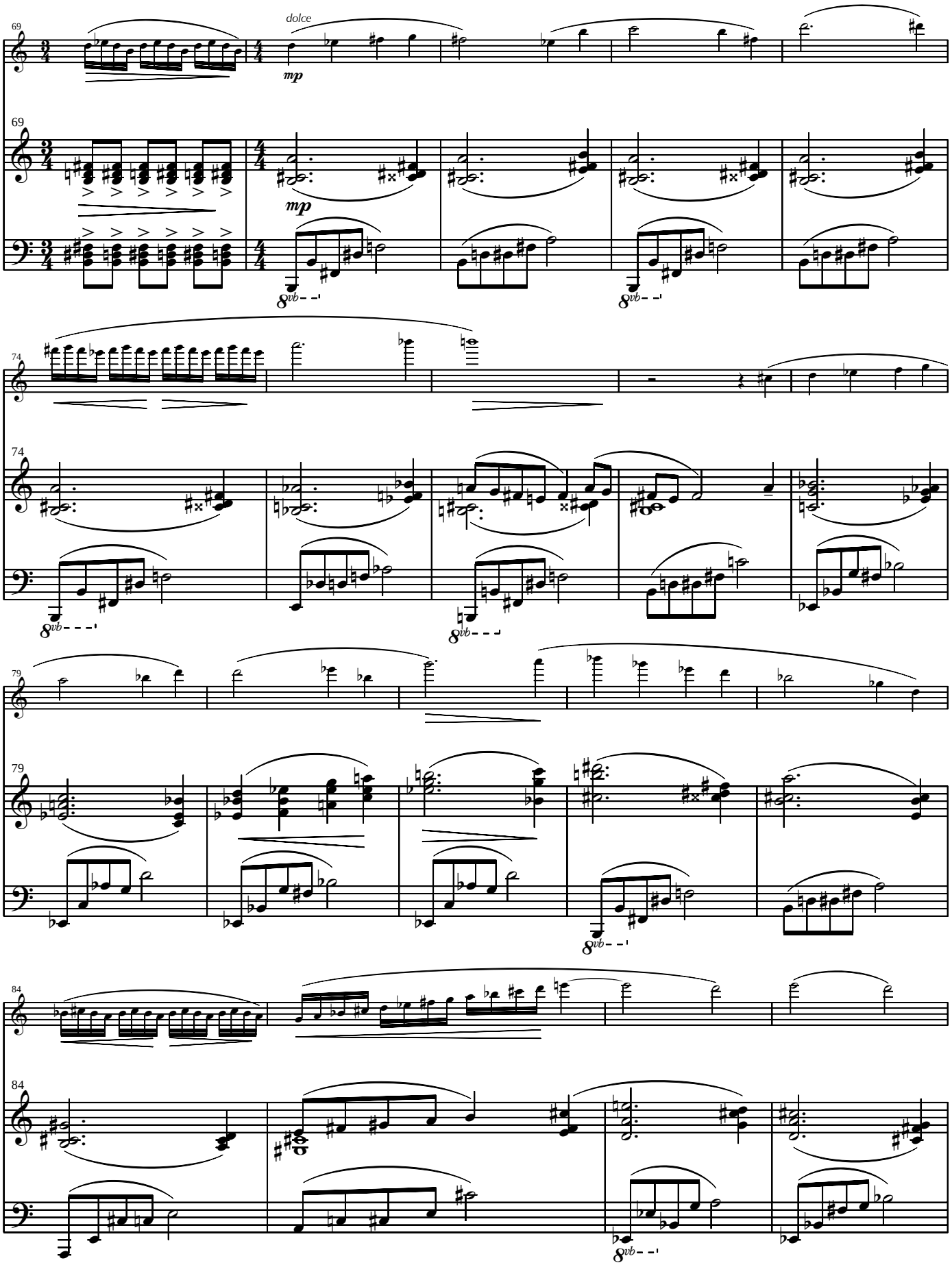
f
8va
sfz
marcato
(8vb)
59
f
63
ff
ff
66
(8va)
sfz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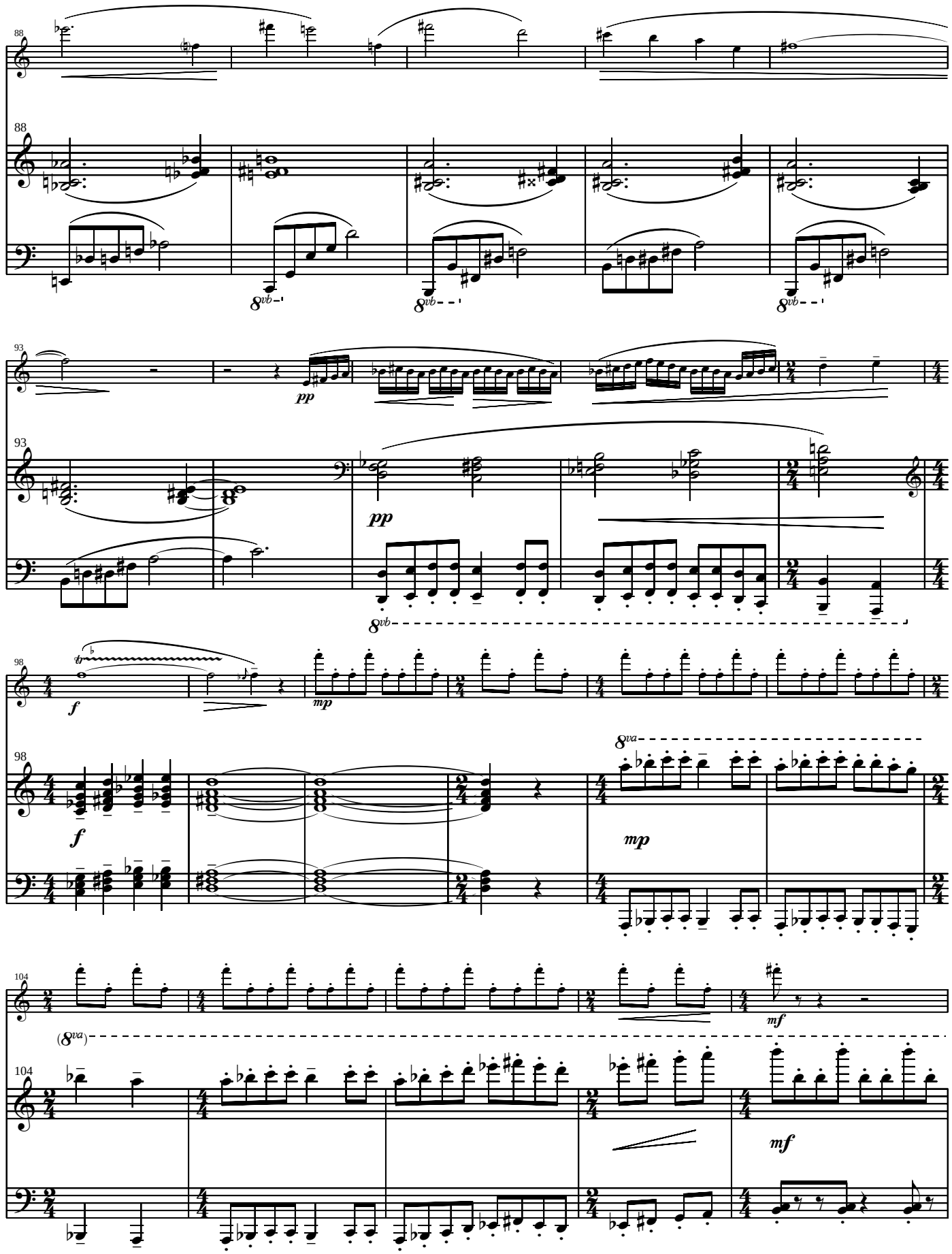
dolce
mp
69
mp
74
74
79
79
84
84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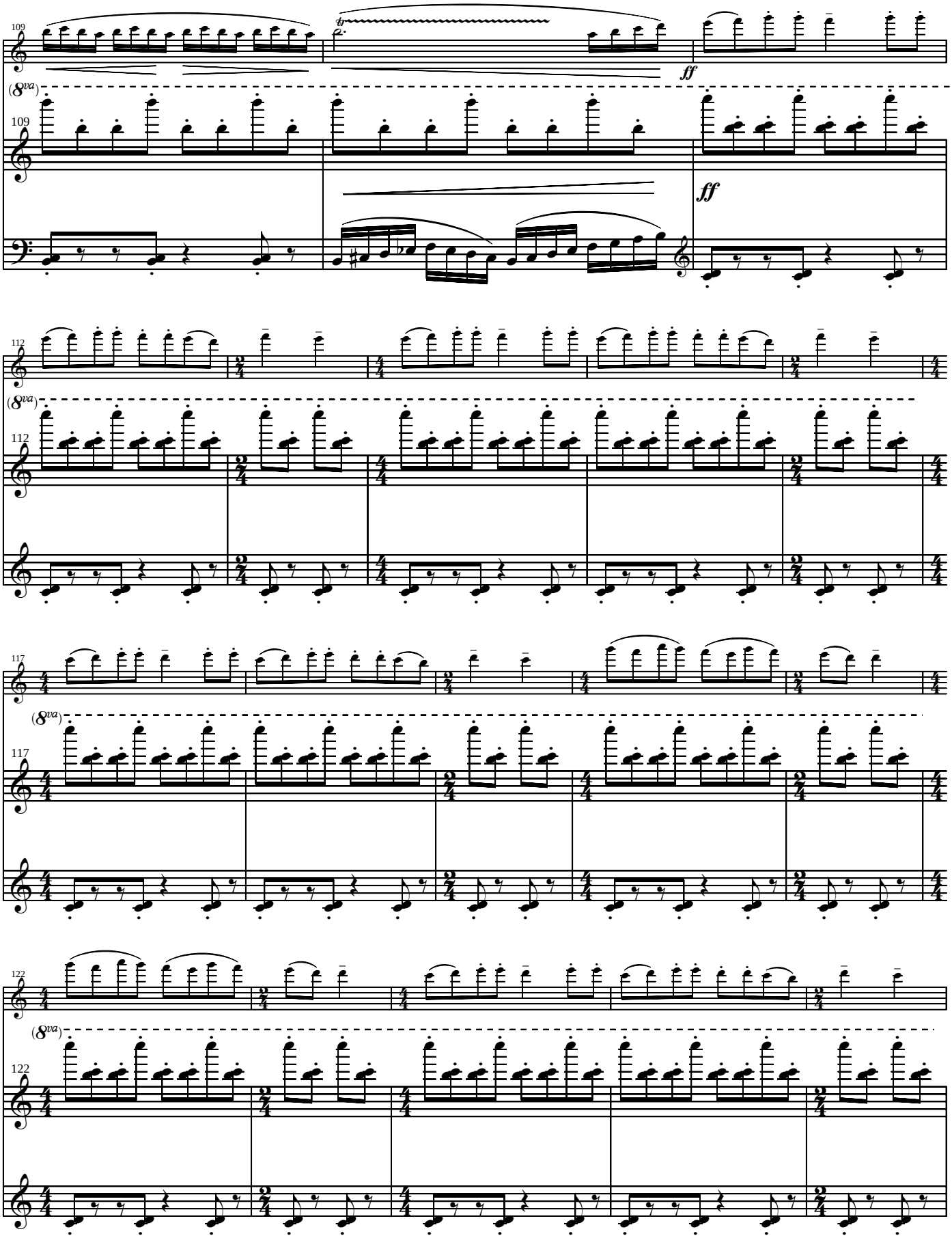
93
pp
98
f
mp
8va
104
(8va)
mf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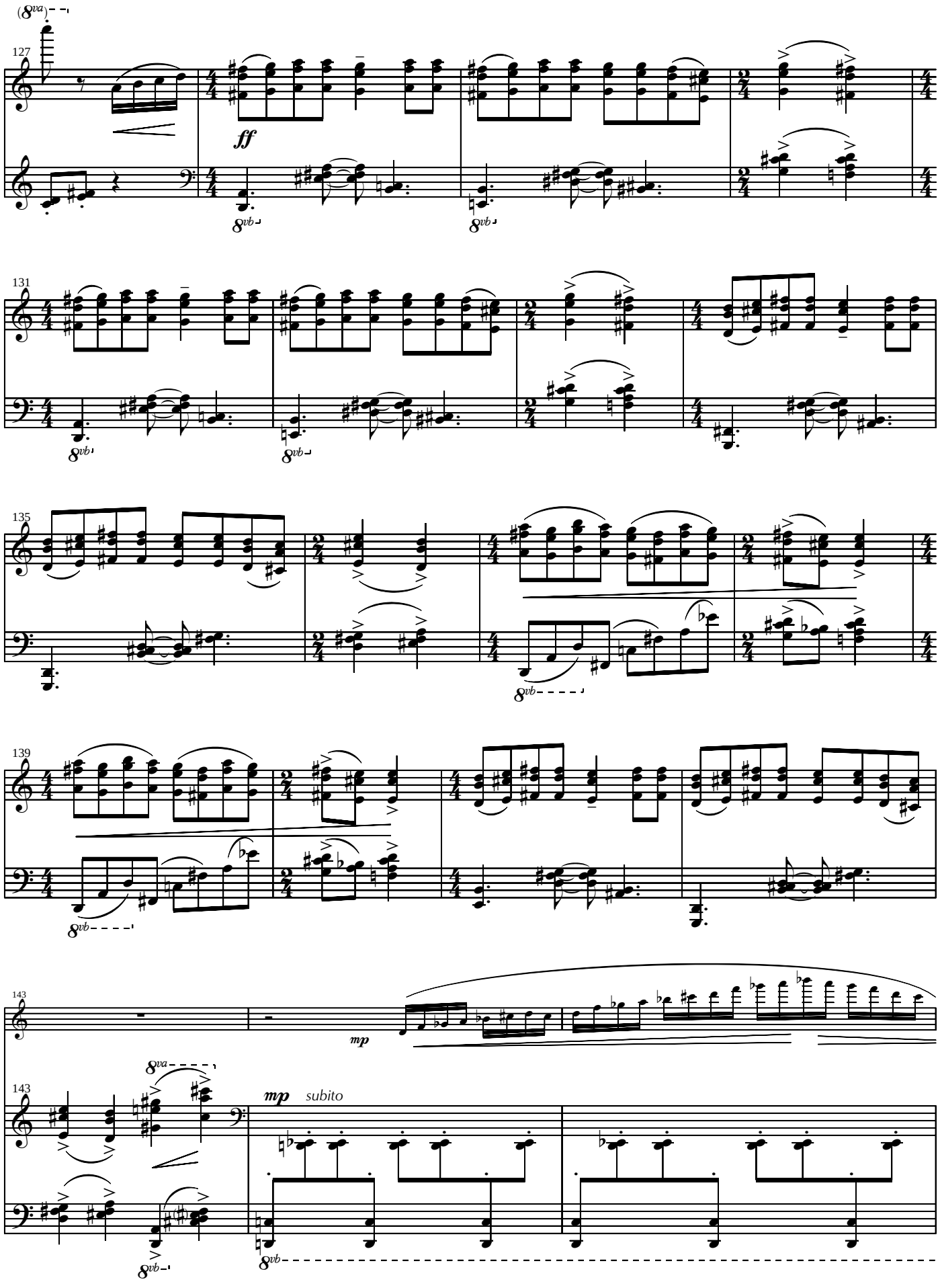
tr
ff
(8va)
109
ff
112
(8va)
112
117
(8va)
117
122
(8va)
122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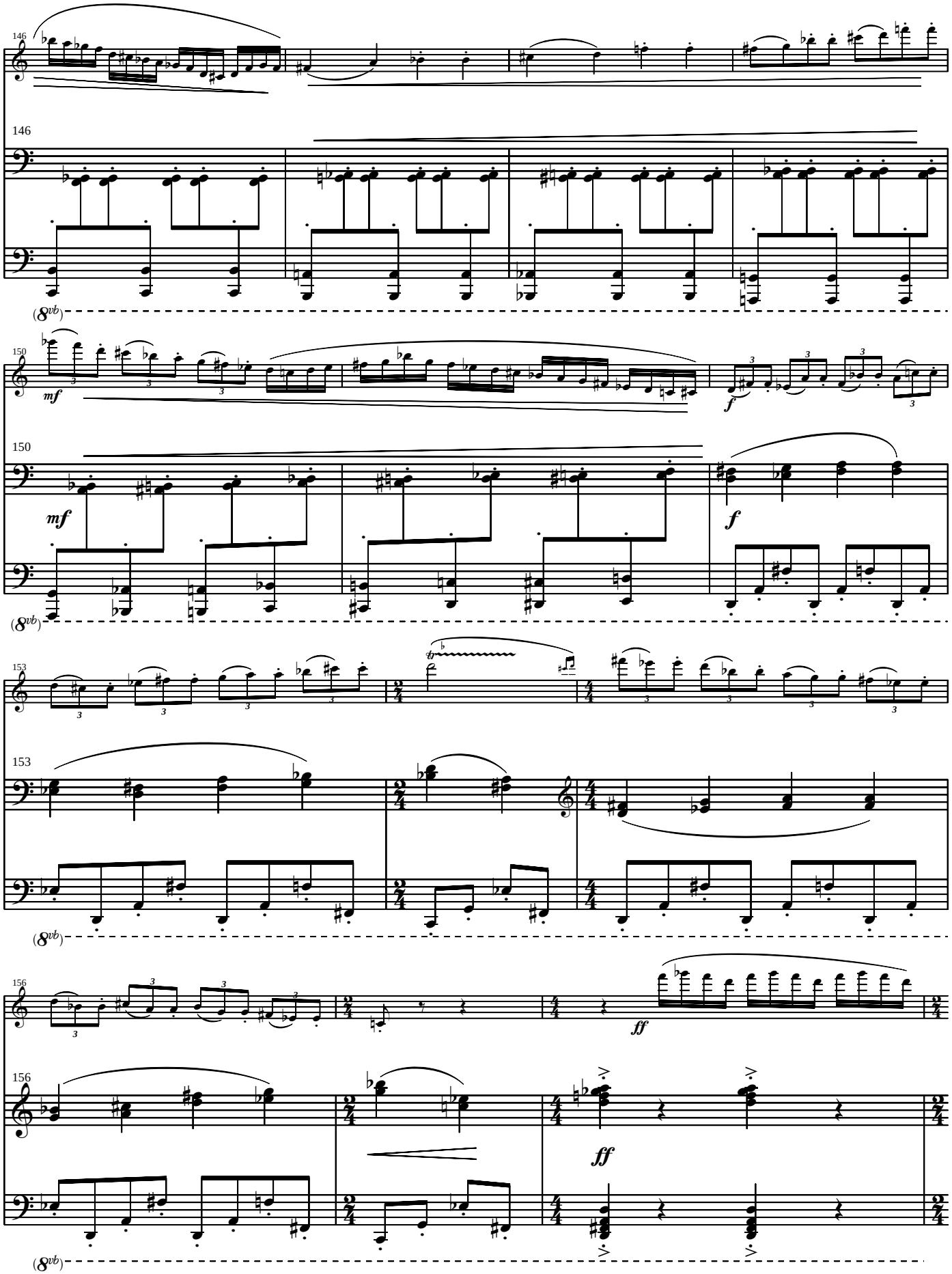
ff
8vb
131
135
8vb
139
8vb
143
mp
143
8va
mp subito
8vb
8vb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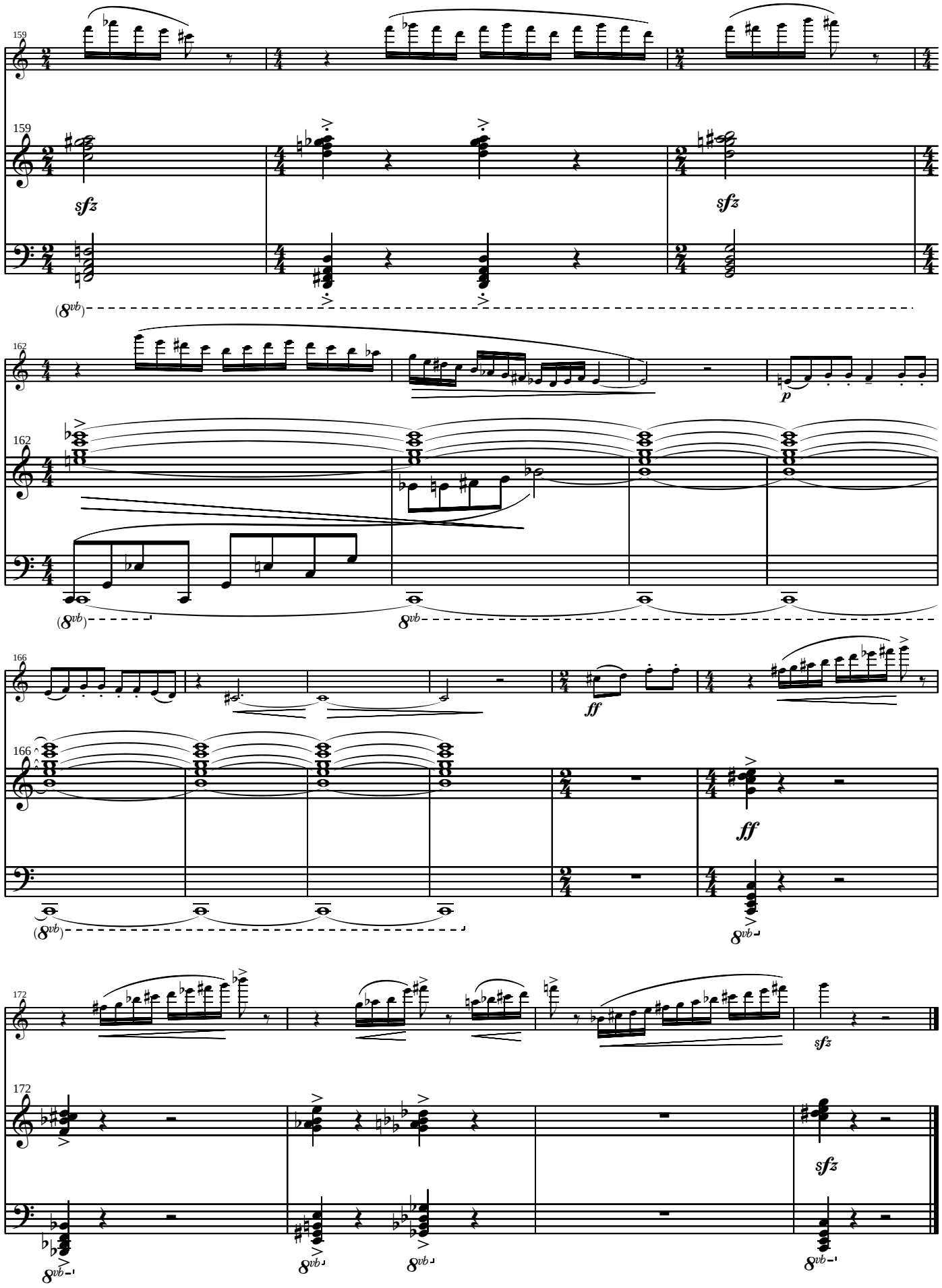
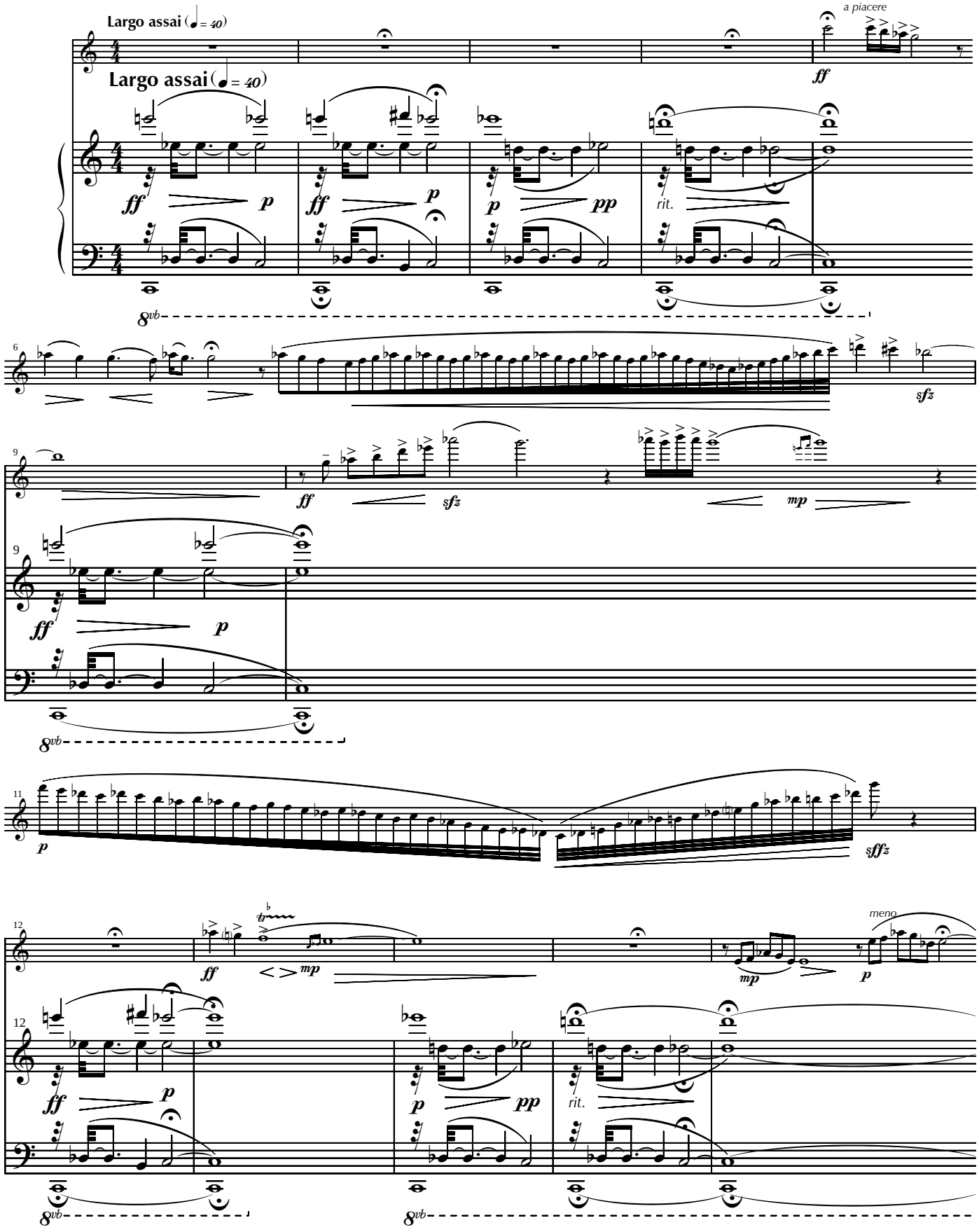
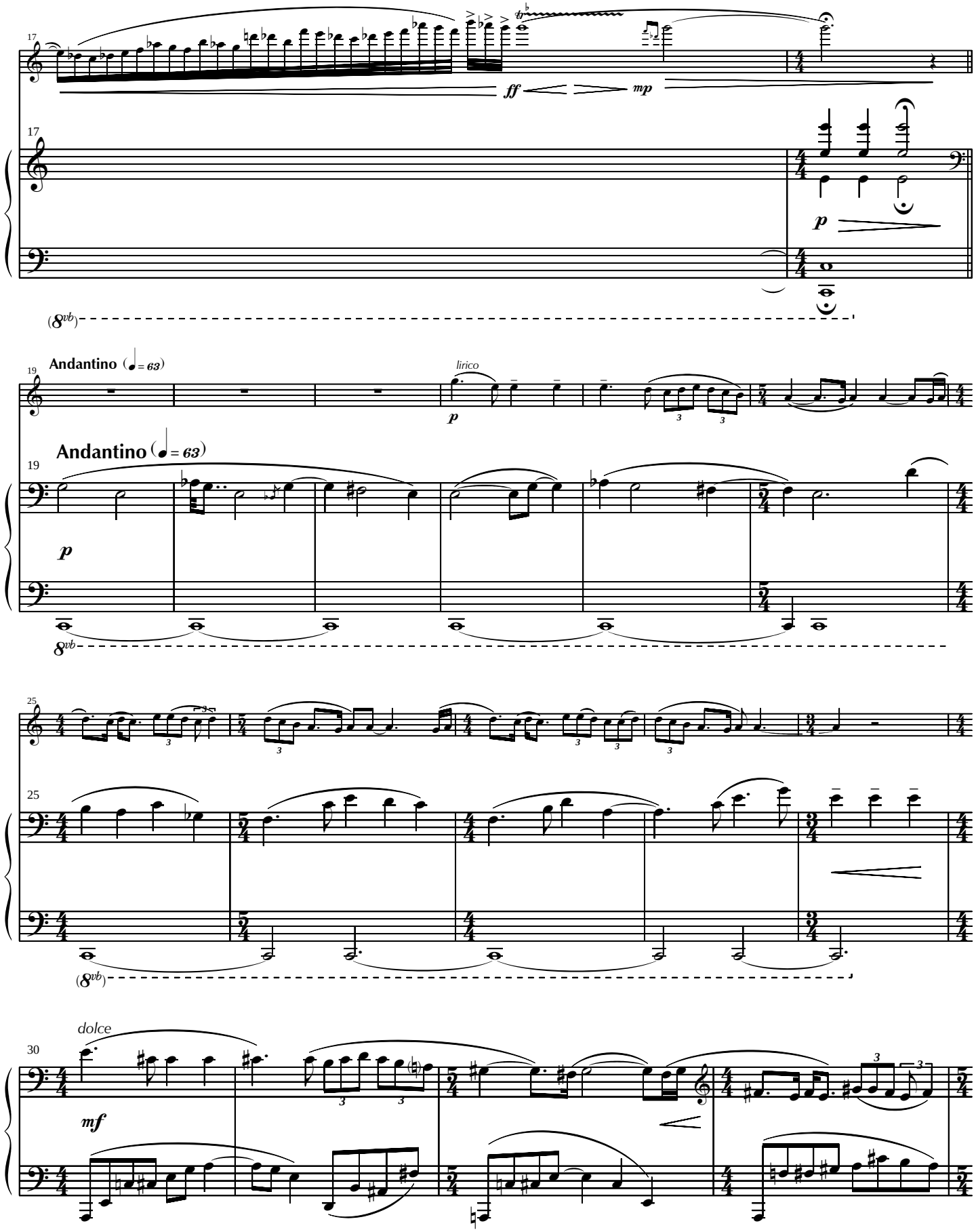
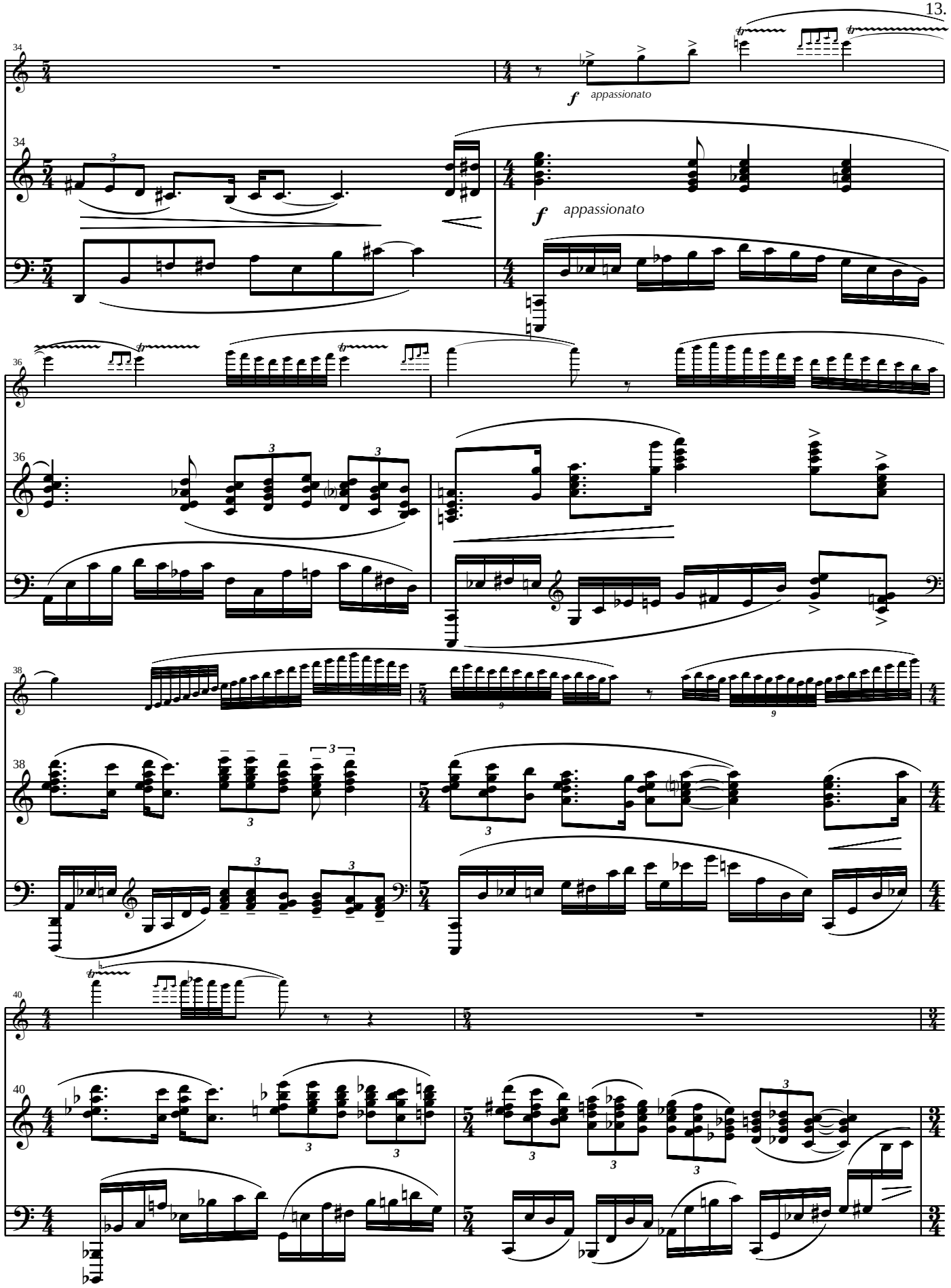
146
(8vb)
150
mf
f
150
mf
f
(8vb)
153
153
(8vb)
156
ff
156
ff
(8vb)


159
sfz
sfz
(8vb)
162
p
(8vb)
8vb
166
ff
ff
(8vb)
8vb
172
sfz
sfz
8vb
8vb
8vb
8vb

II.


Largo assai (♩= 40)
Largo assai (♩= 40)
a piacere
ff
p
pp
rit.
8vb
sfz
mp
sffz
meno


17
ff
mp
p
(8vb)
Andantino (♩= 63)
lirico
p
Andantino (♩= 63)
p
8vb
25
(8vb)
dolce
30
mf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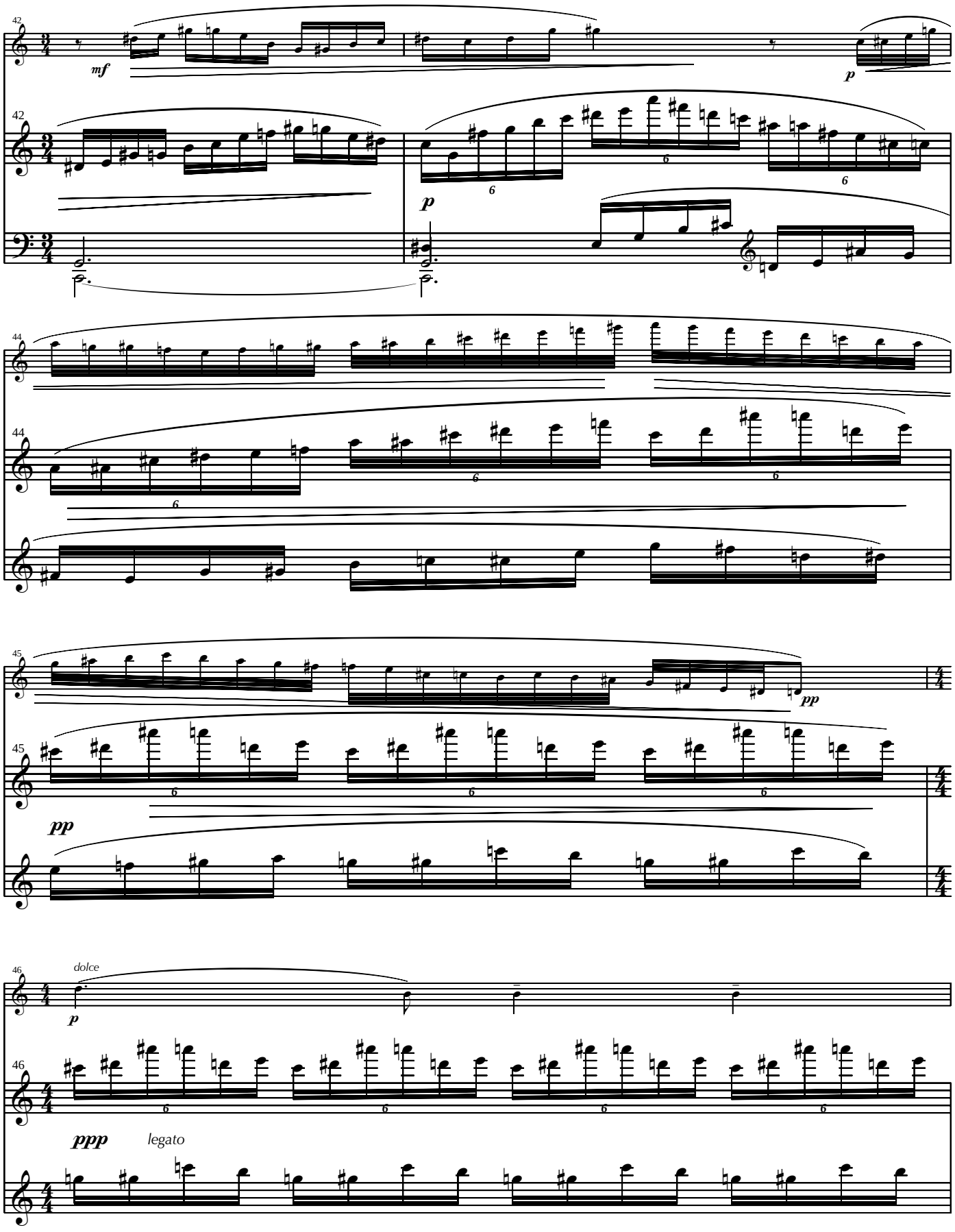
f appassionato
34
f appassionato
36
36
38
38
40
40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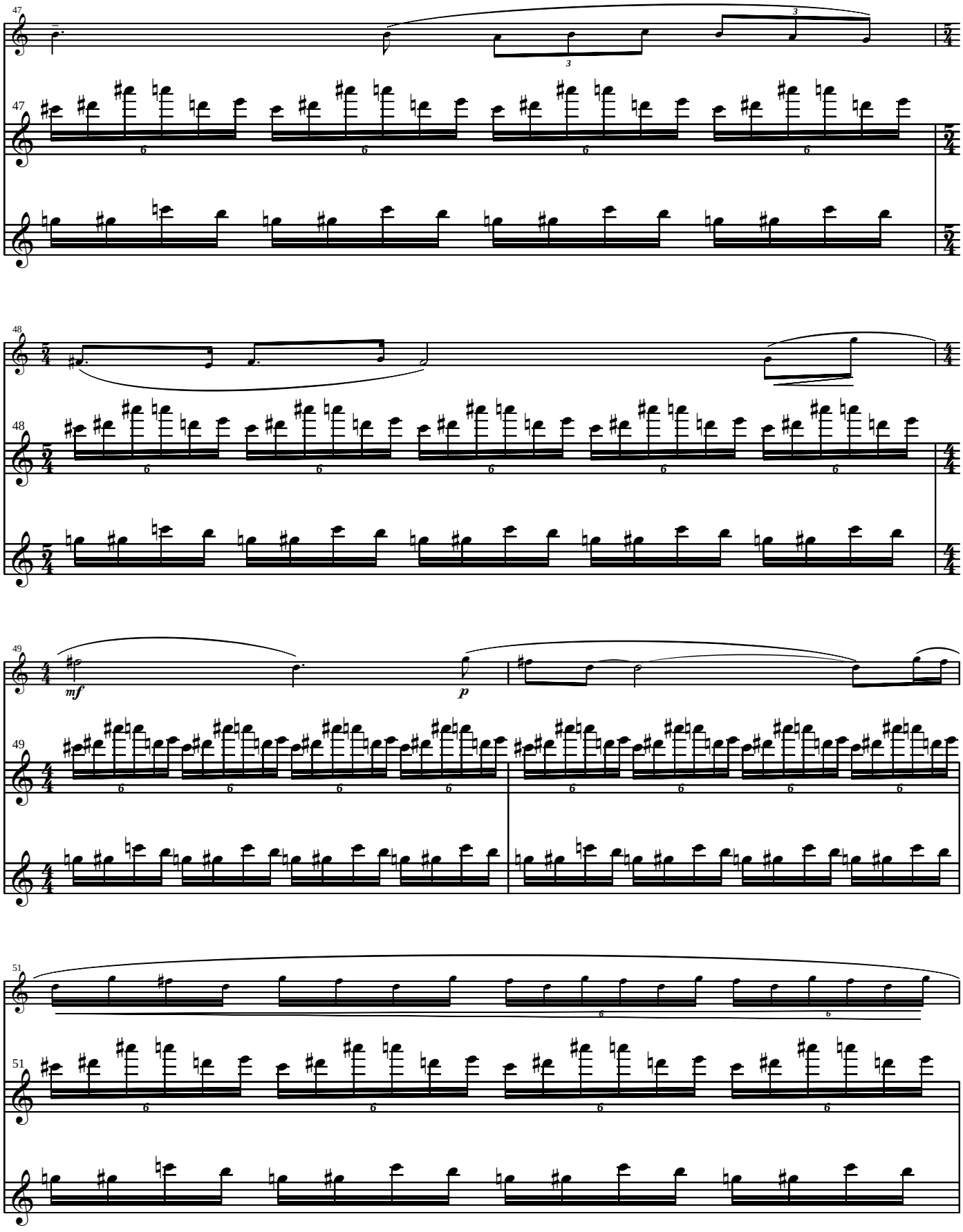
mf
p
42
p
44
44
45
pp
45
pp
46
dolce
p
46
ppp
legato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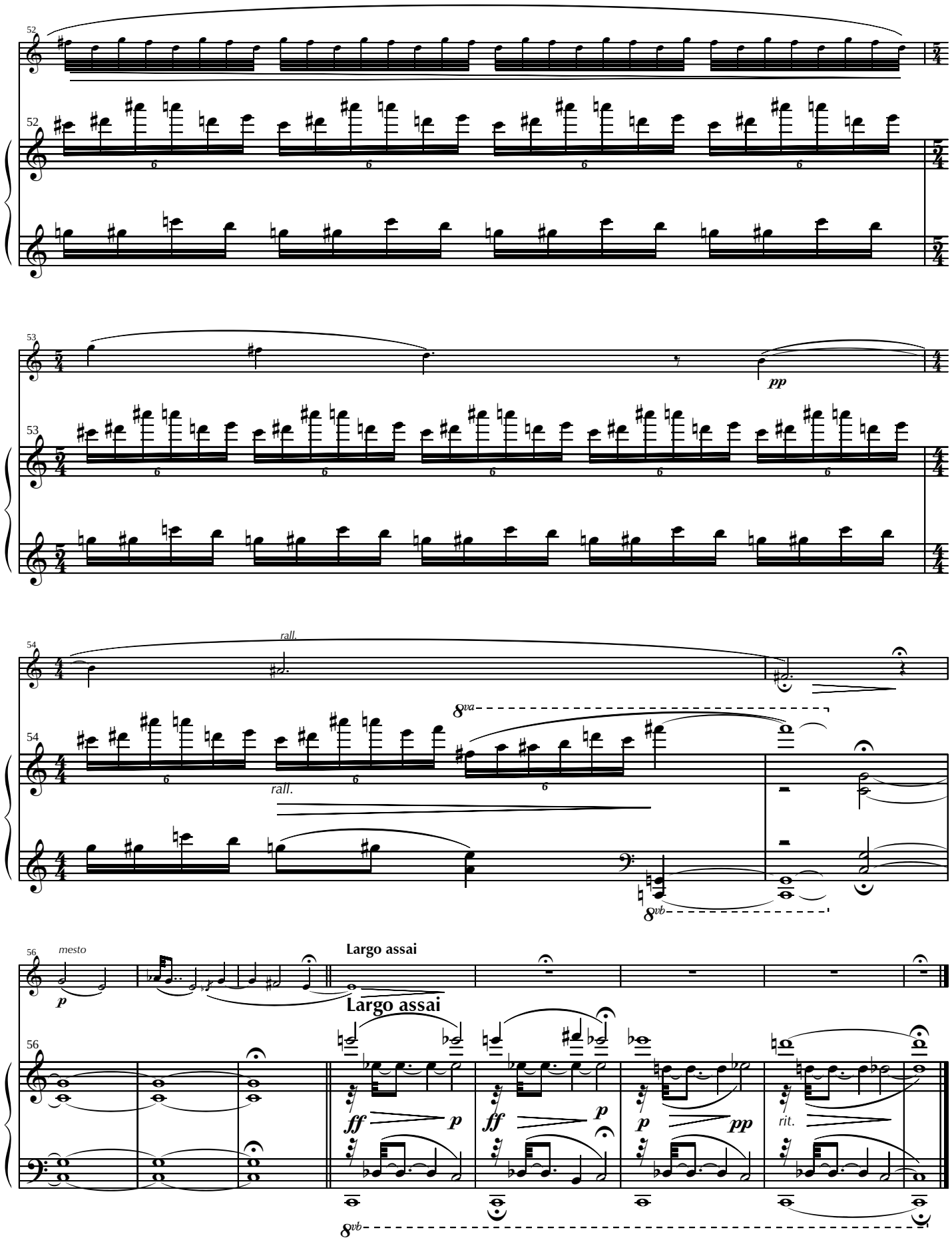
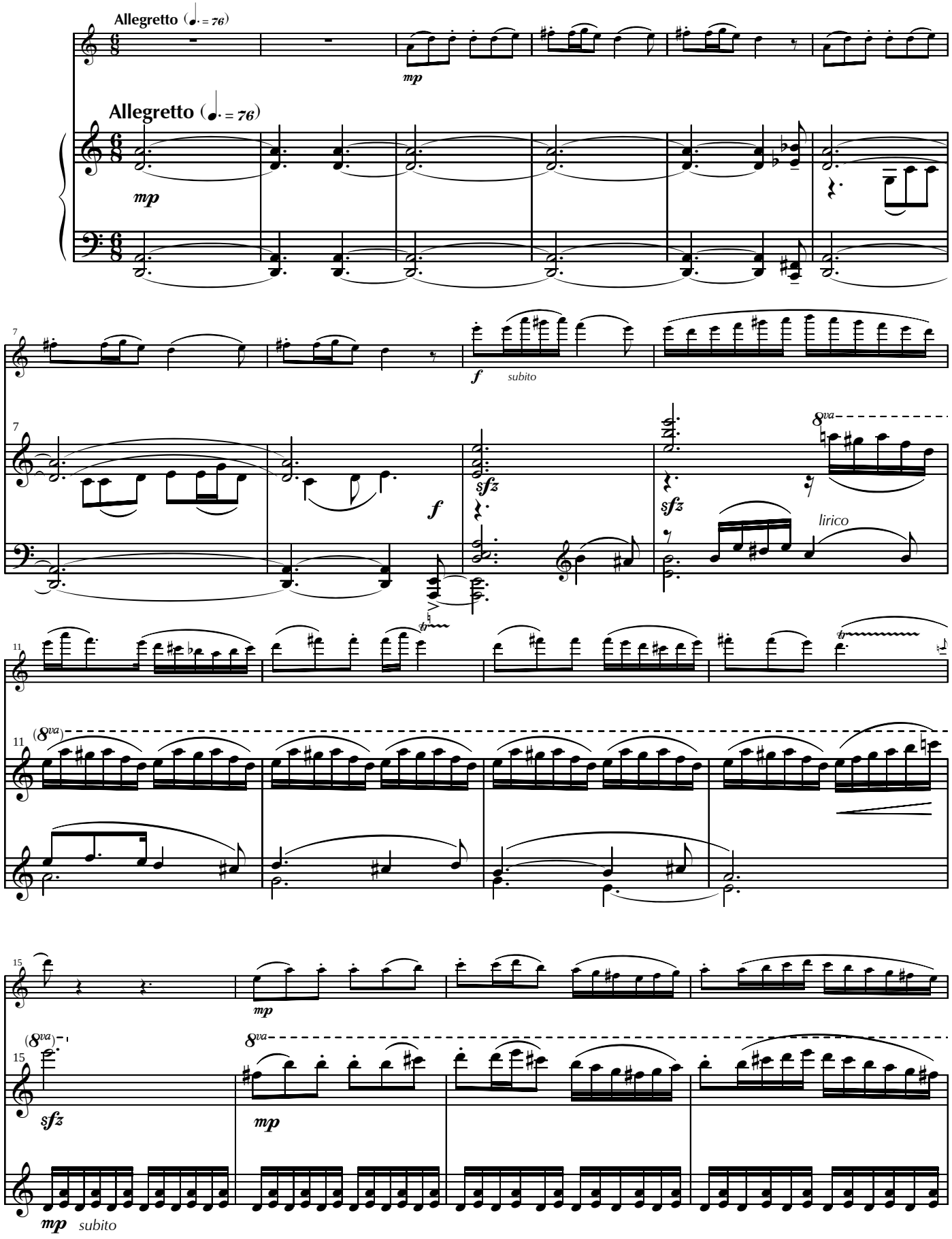
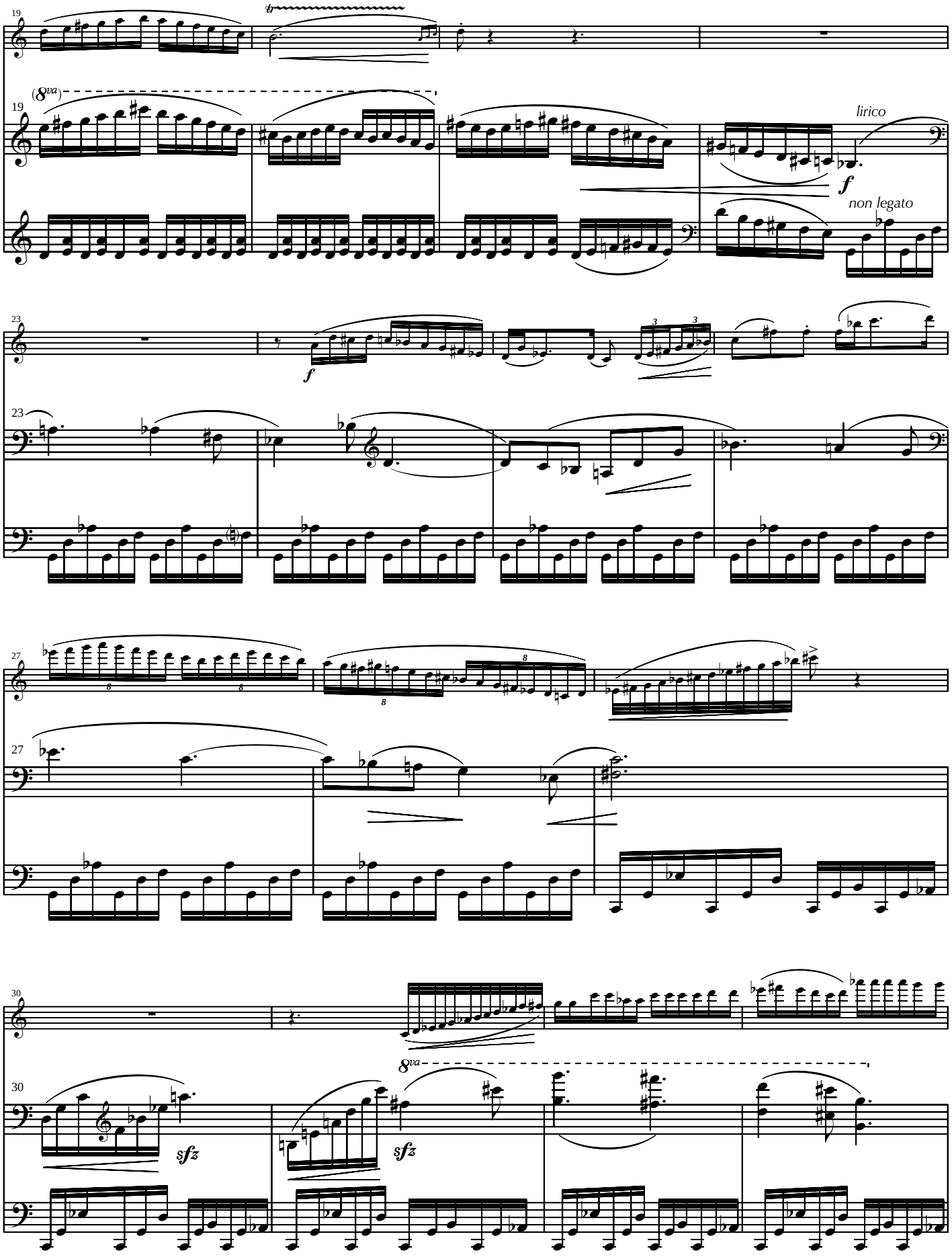
48
49
mf
p
51


52
52
53
53
pp
54
rall.
54
rall.
8va
8vb
56
mesto
p
Largo assai
Largo assai
56
ff
p
ff
p
p
pp
rit.
8vb

III.


Allegretto (♩. = 76)
mp
Allegretto (♩. = 76)
mp
7
f subito
7
sfz
f
sfz
8va
lirico
11
11
(8va)
15
mp
(8va)
15
sfz
8va
mp
mp subito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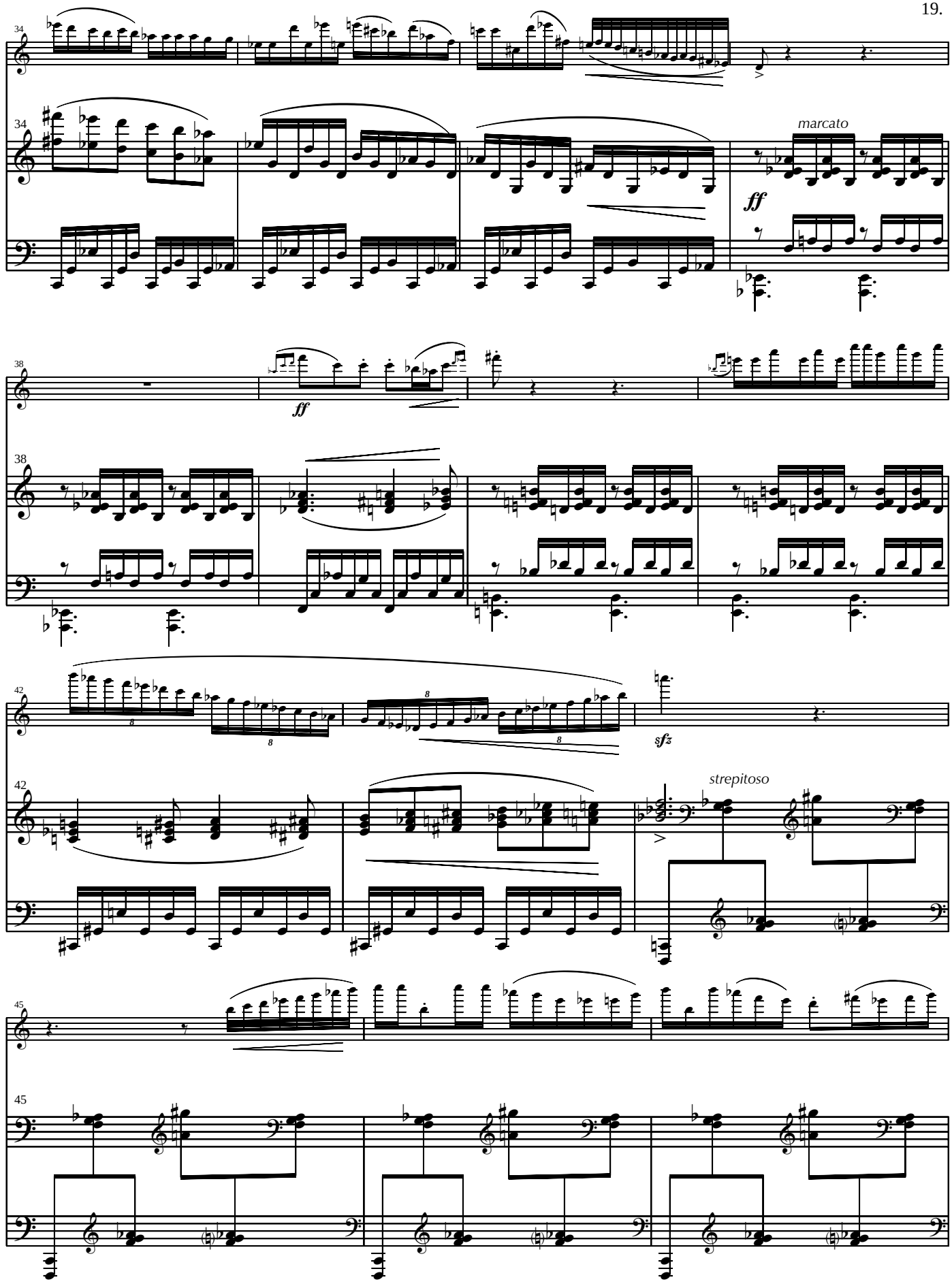
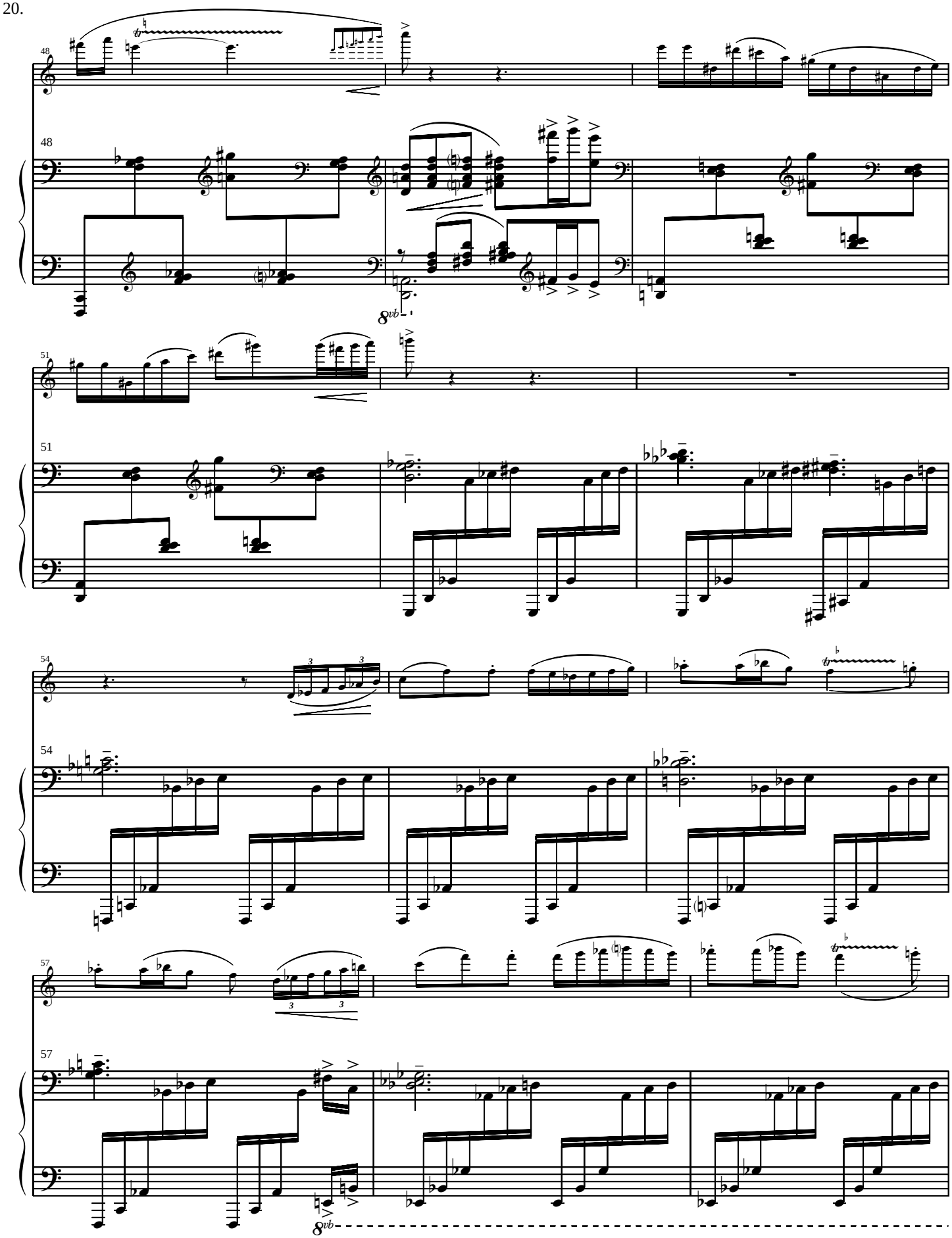
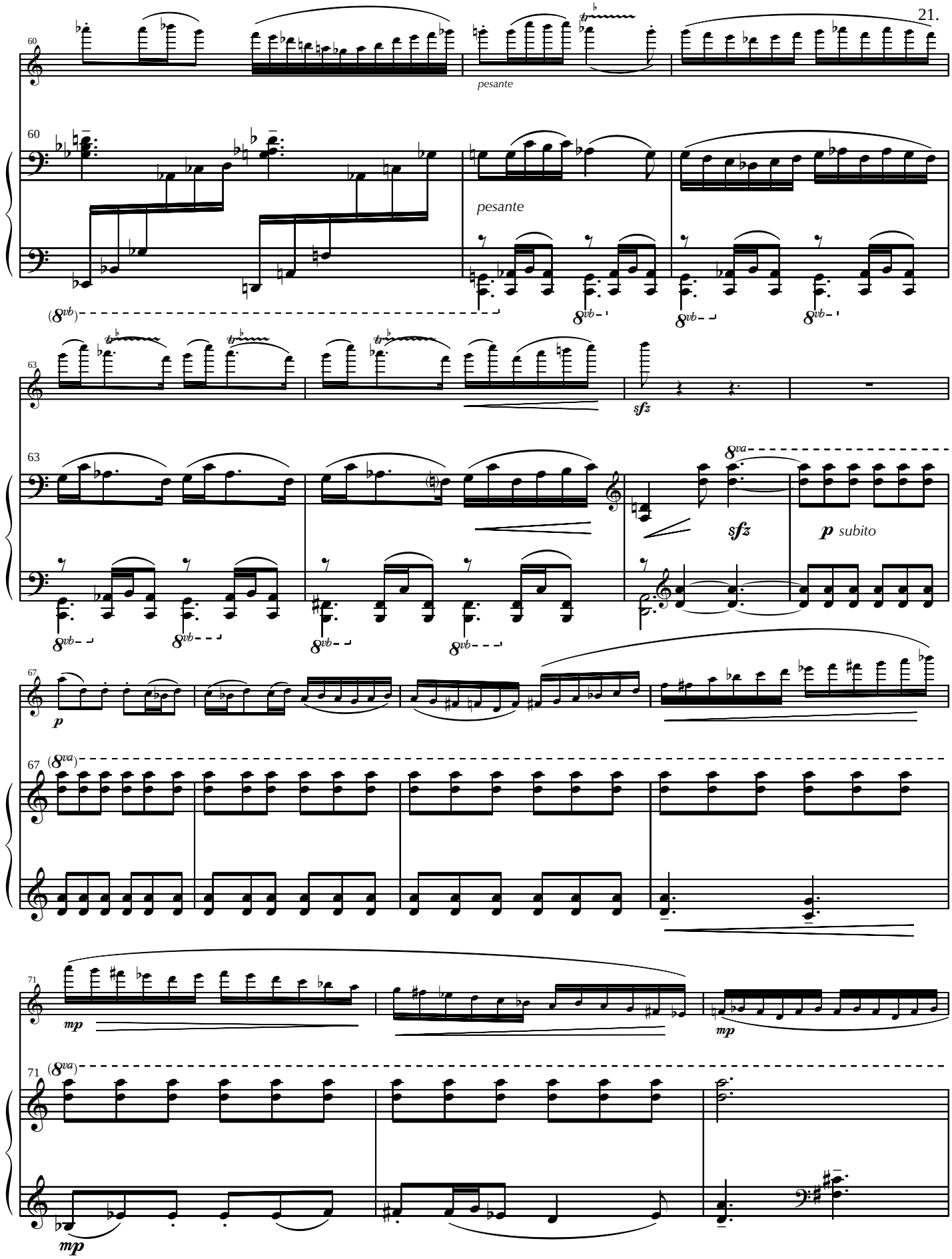
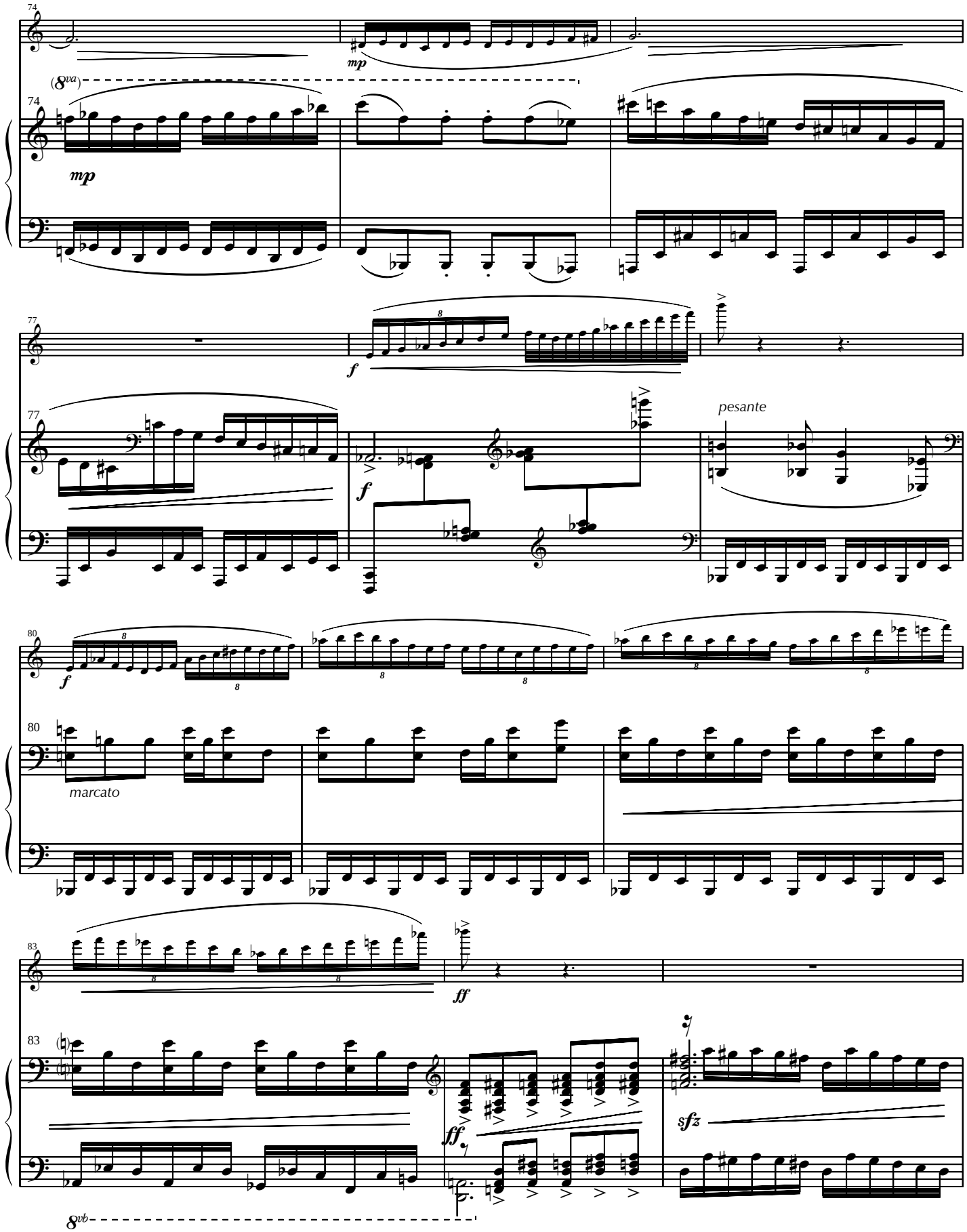
(8va)
lirico
f
non legato
23
f
27
30
8va
sfz
sfz


34
marcato
ff
38
ff
42
sfz
strepitoso
45


48
48
8vb
51
51
54
54
57
57
8vb


60
pesante
60
pesante
(8vb)
8vb
63
sfz
63
8va
sfz
p subito
8vb
67
p
67
(8va)
71
mp
mp
71
(8va)
mp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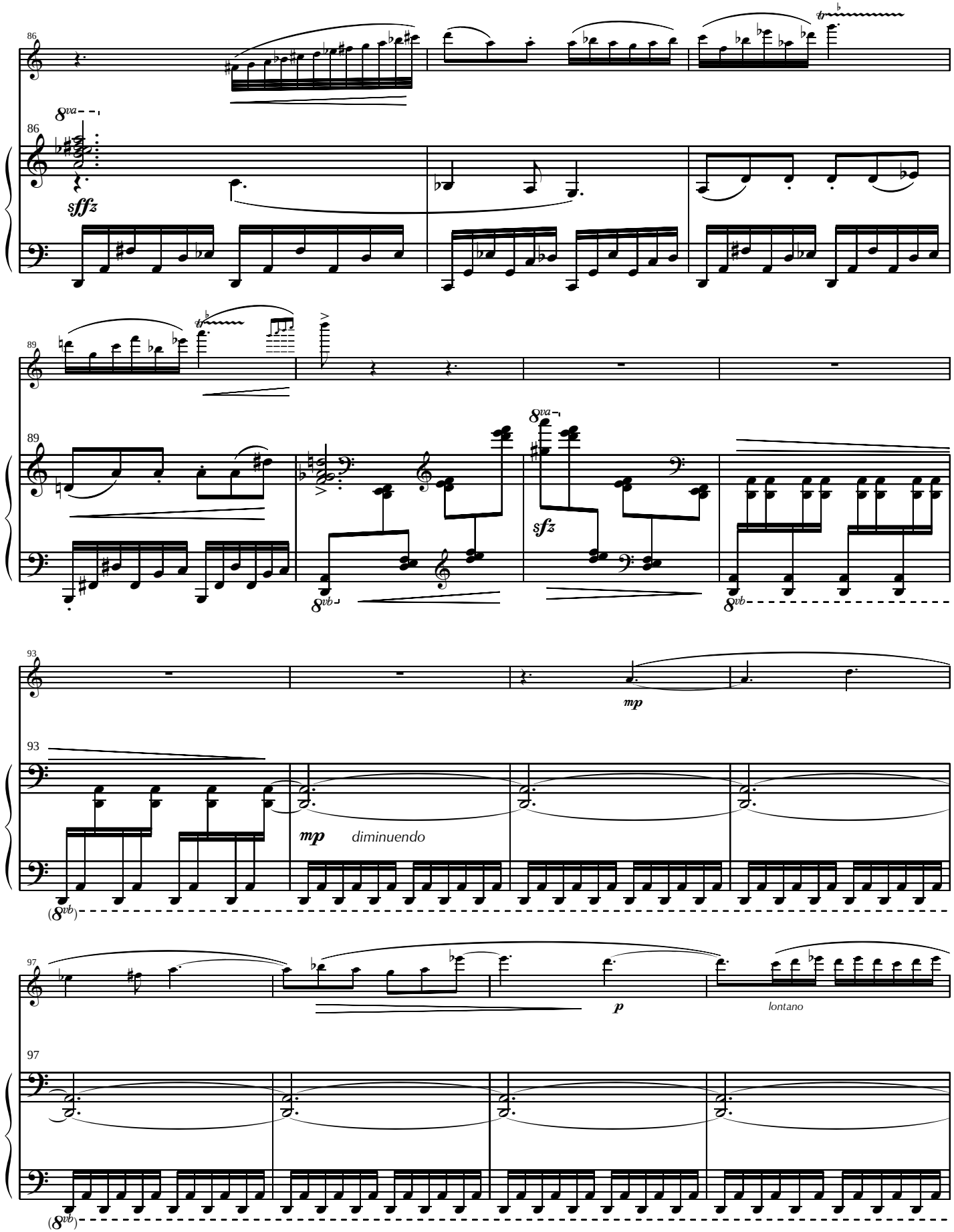
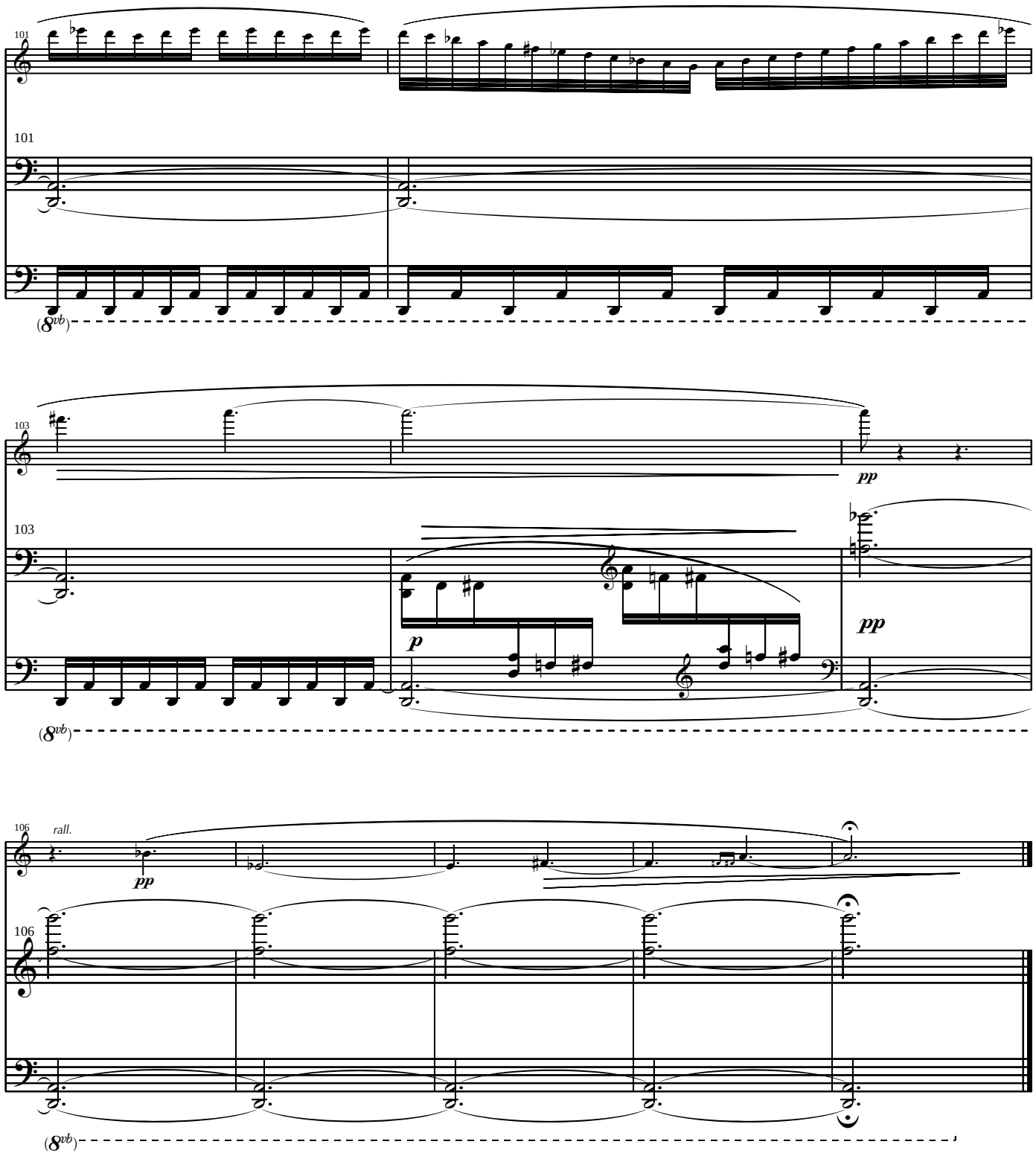
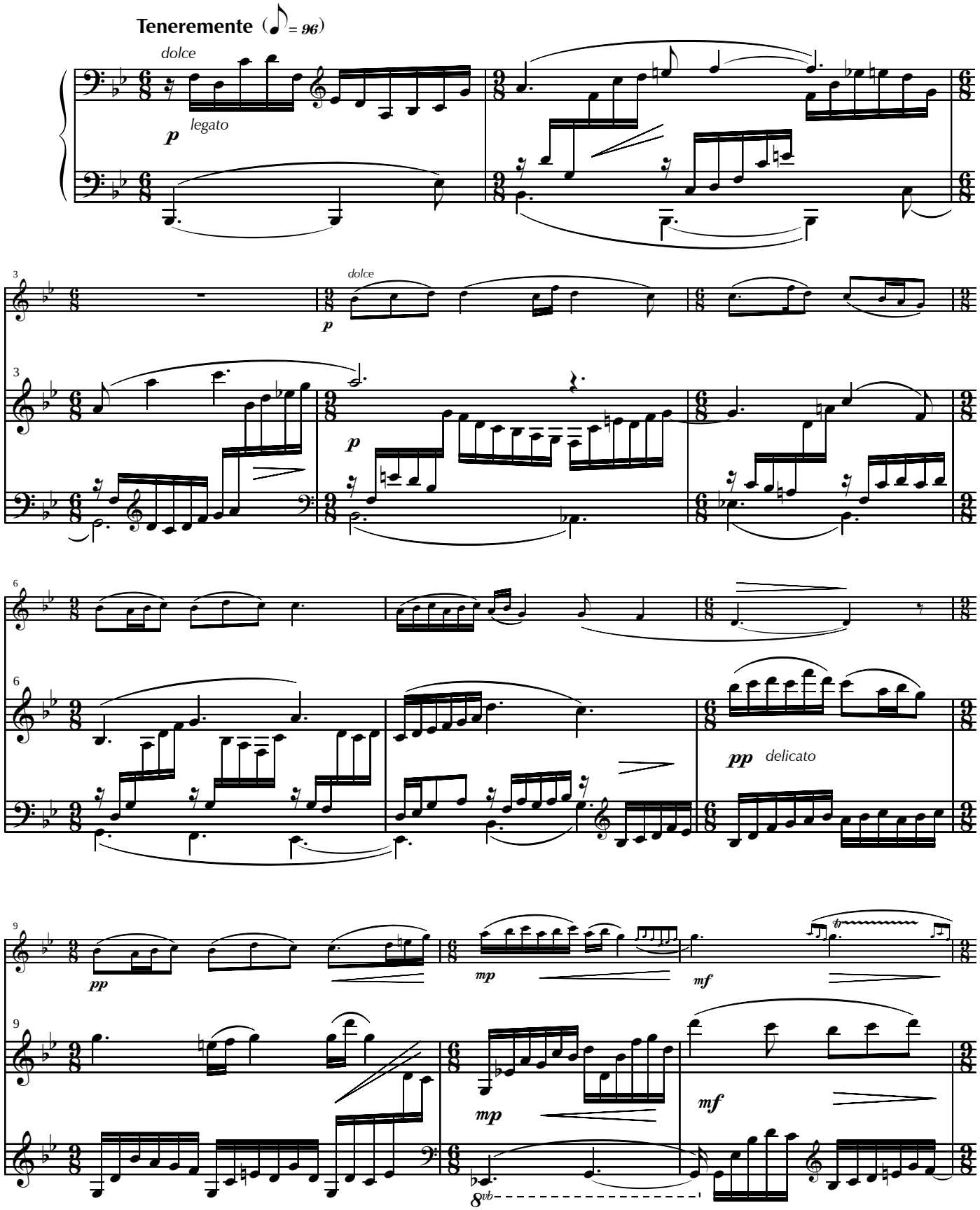
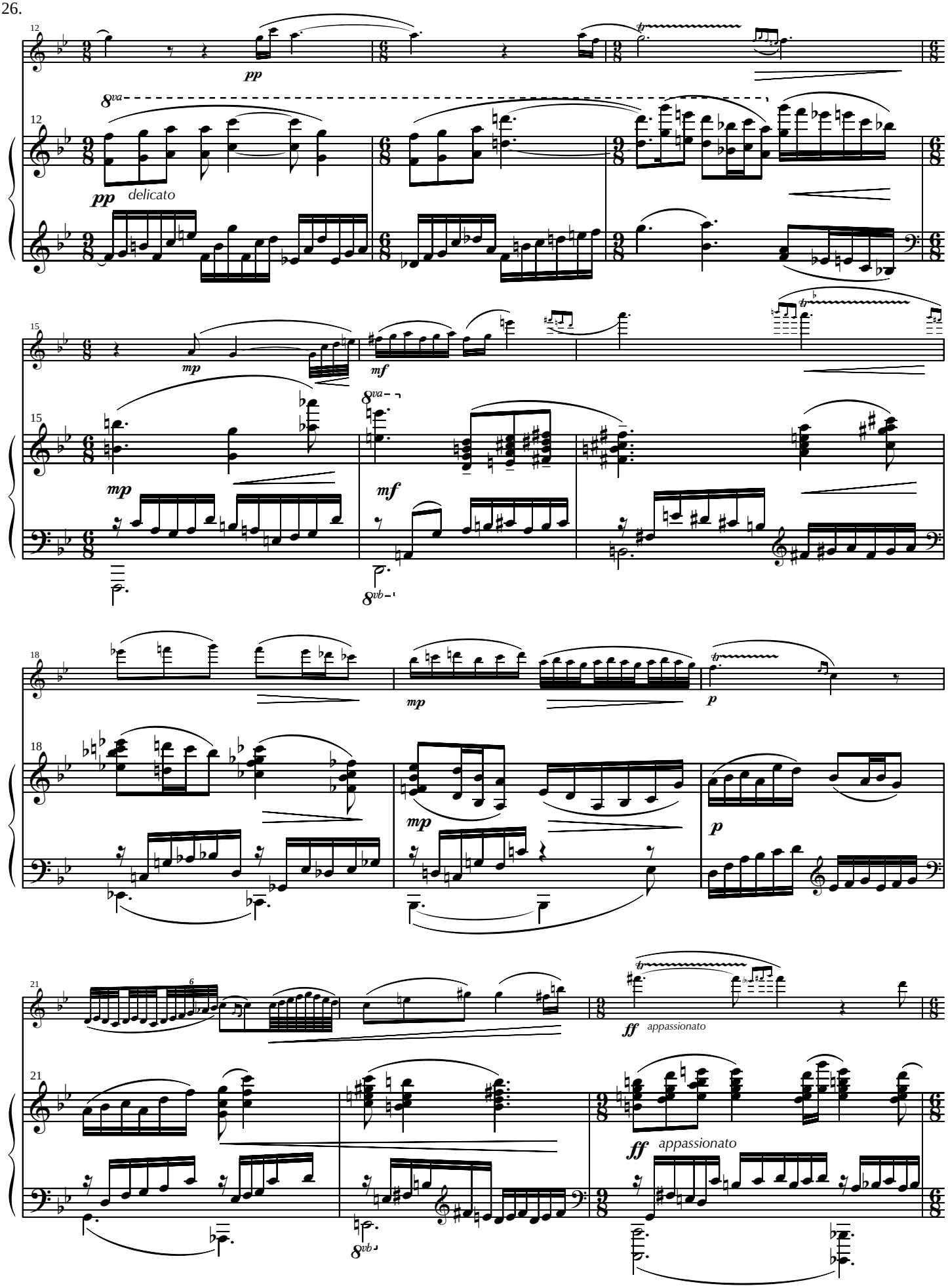
(8va)
mp
77
f
pesante
80
marcato
83
ff
sfz
8vb

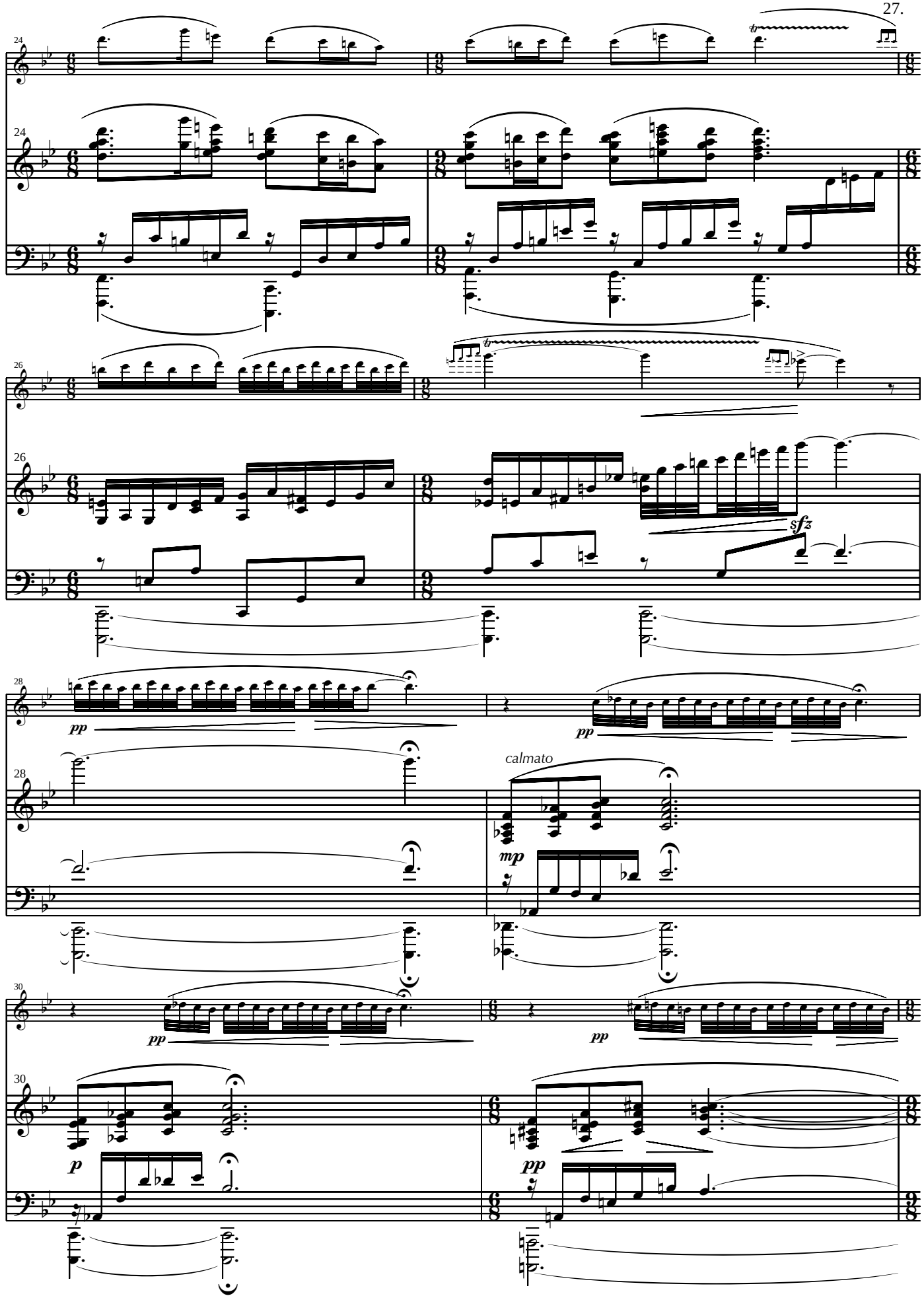

86
8va
sffz
89
8va
sfz
8vb
8vb
93
mp
93
mp
diminuendo
(8vb)
97
p
lontano
97
(8vb)


101
101
(8vb)
103
pp
103
p
pp
(8vb)
106
rall.
pp
106
(8vb)

IV.


Teneremente (♪ = 96)
dolce
p
legato
3
dolce
p
6
pp
delicato
9
pp
mp
mf
mp
mf
8vb


12
pp
8va
pp delicato
15
mp
mf
8va
mp
mf
8vb
18
mp
p
mp
p
21
6
ff appassionato
8vb
ff appassionato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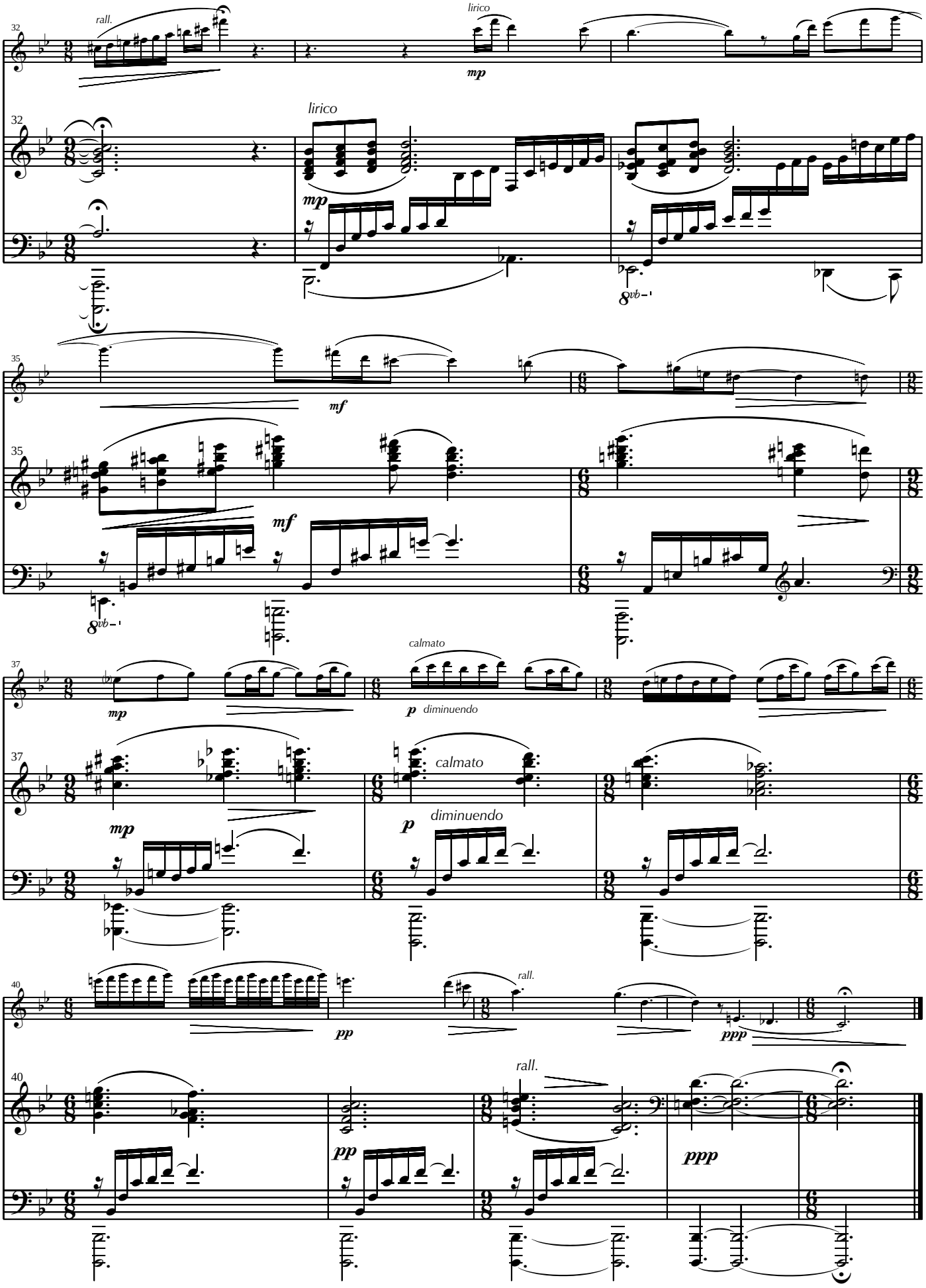
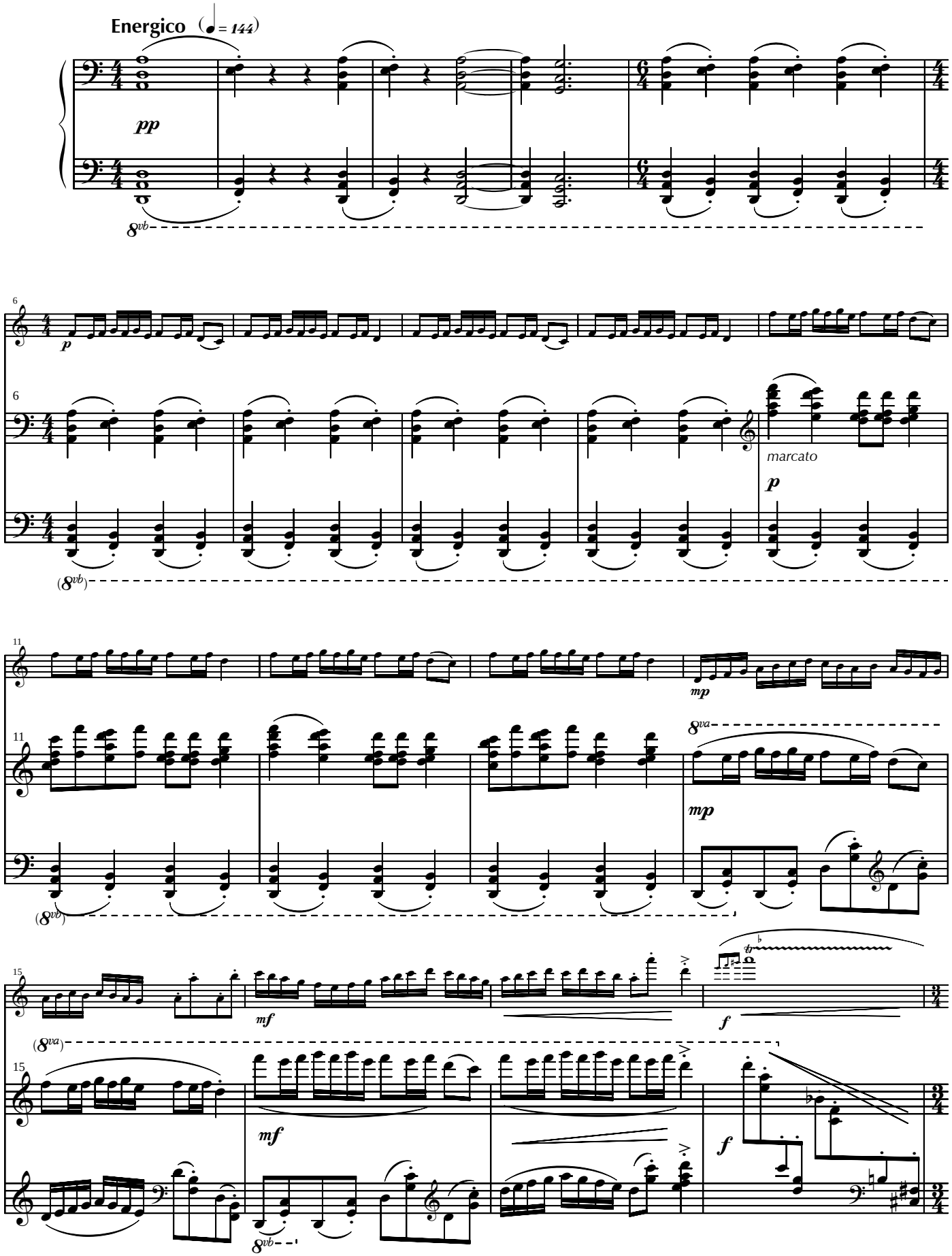
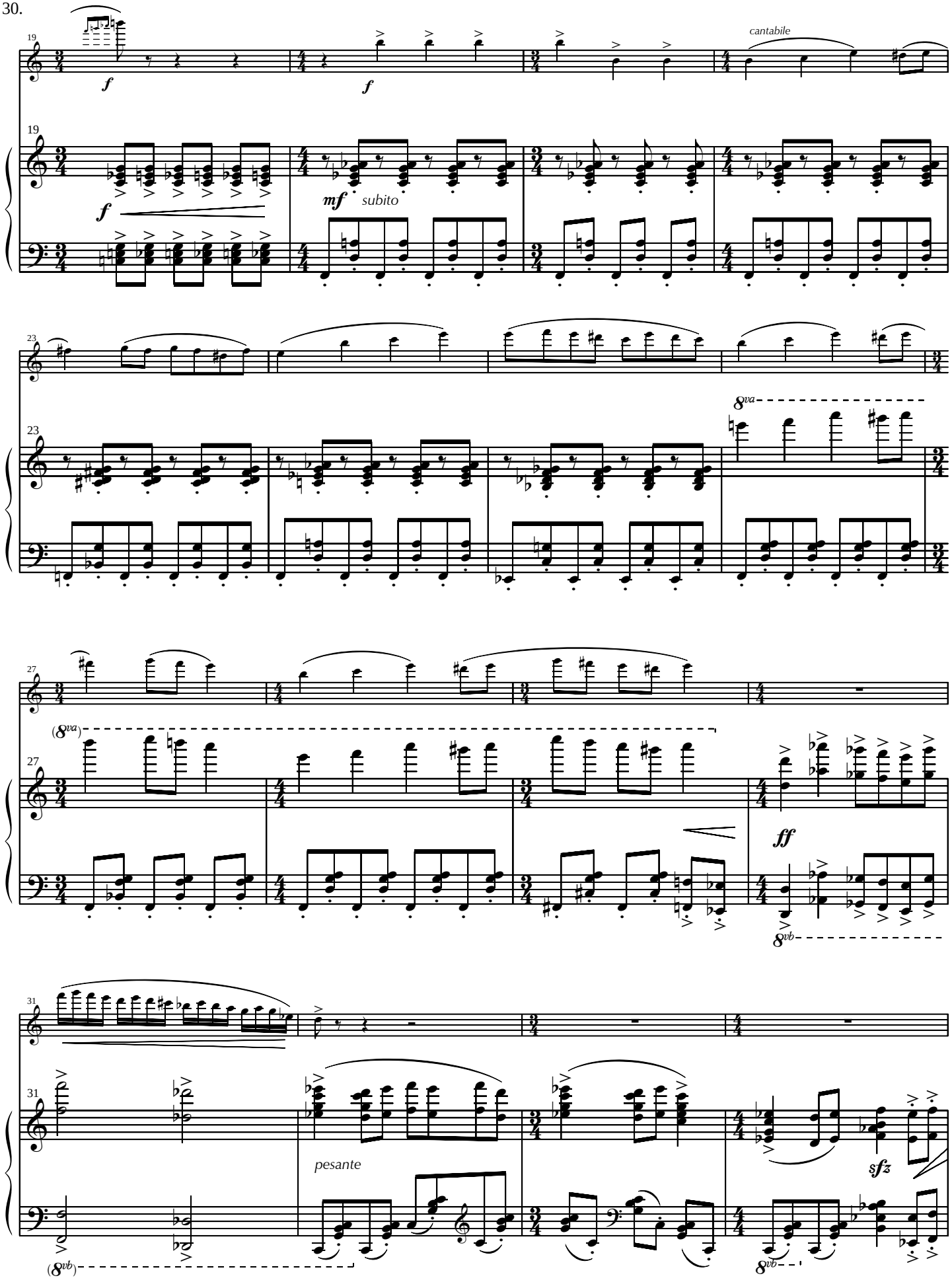
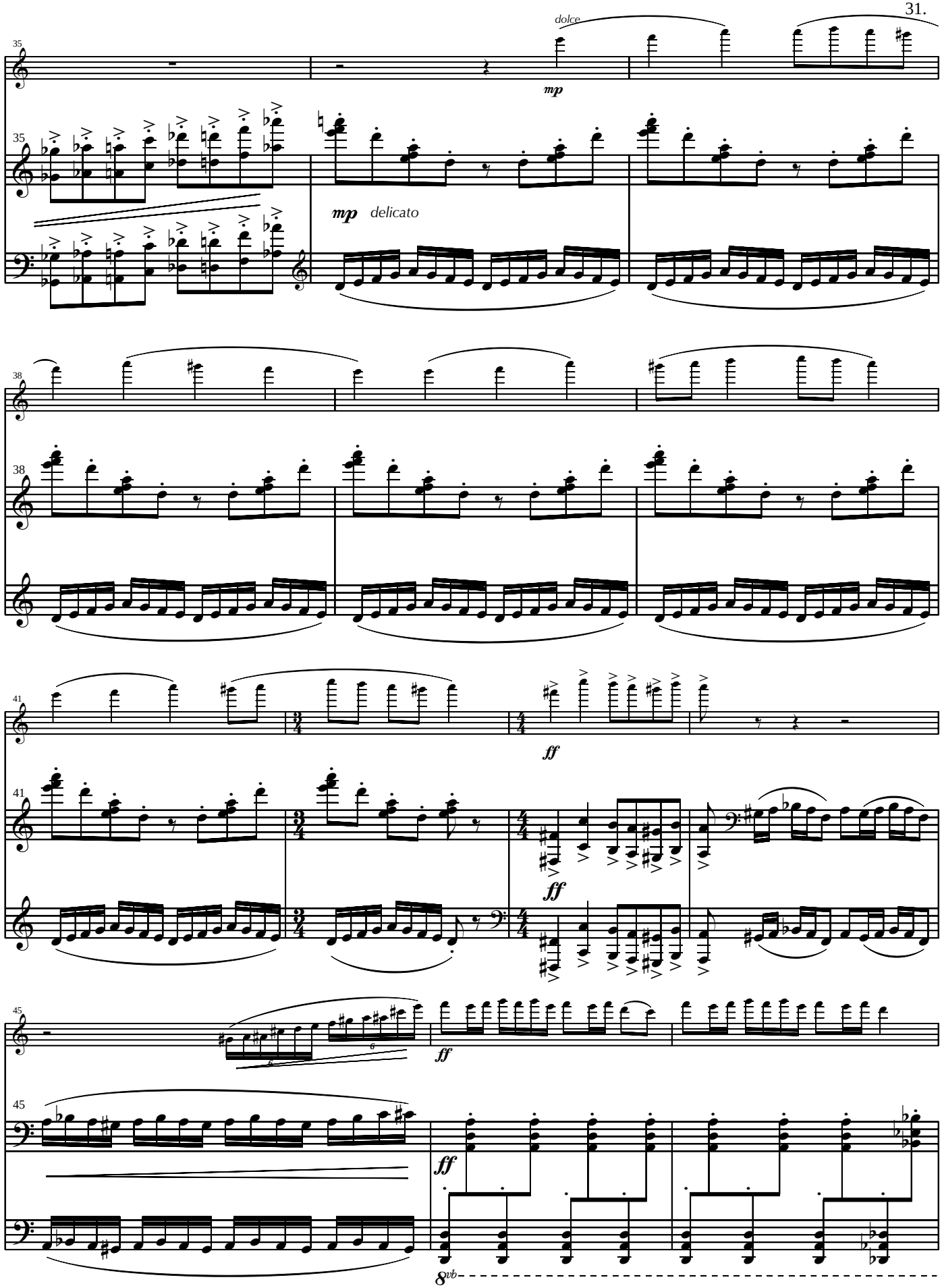
24
26
26
sfz
28
pp
pp
28
calmato
mp
30
pp
pp
30
p
pp

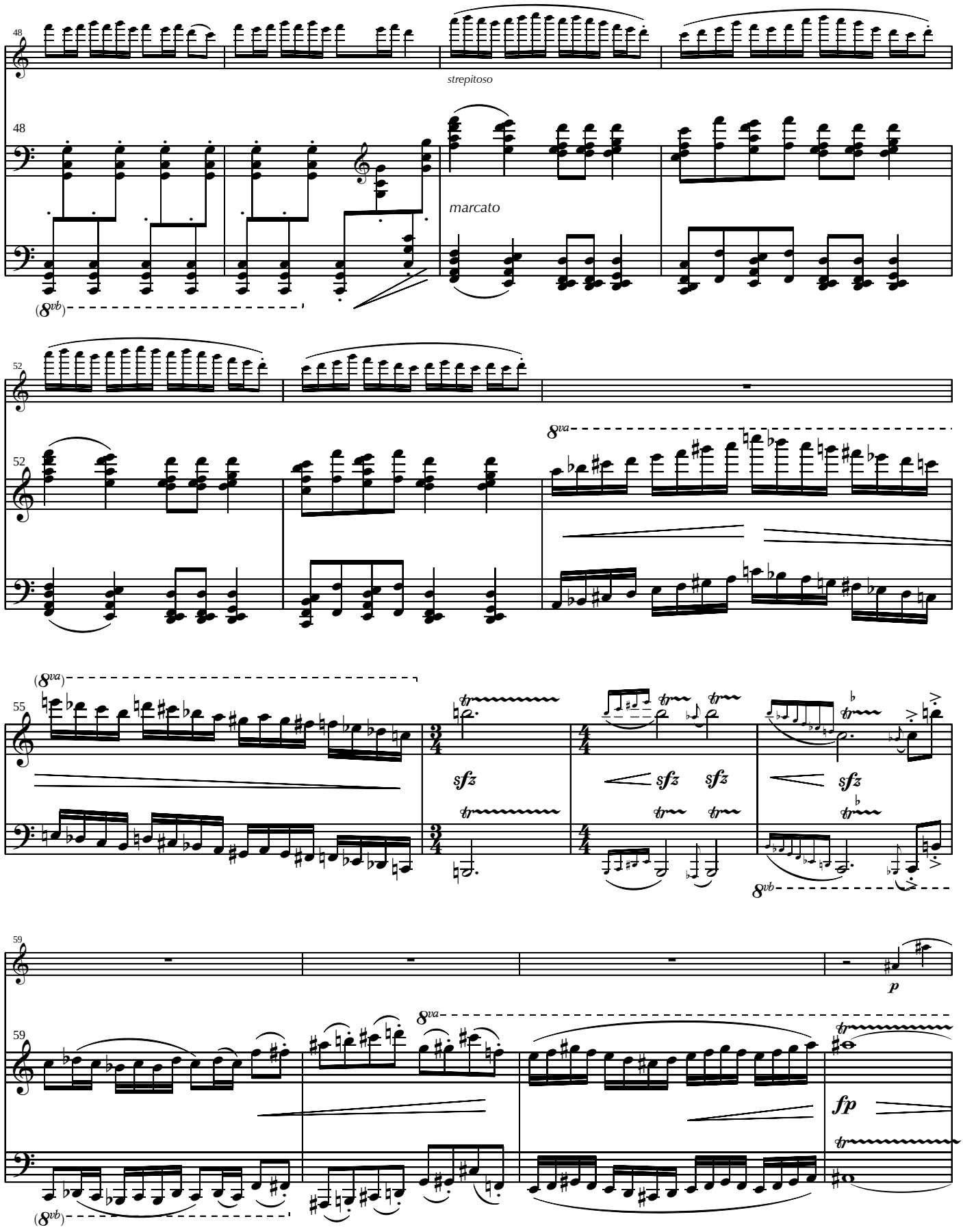

32
rall.
lirico
mp
lirico
mp
8vb
35
mf
mf
8vb
37
mp
calmato
p
diminuendo
mp
calmato
p
diminuendo
40
pp
rall.
ppp
rall.
pp
ppp

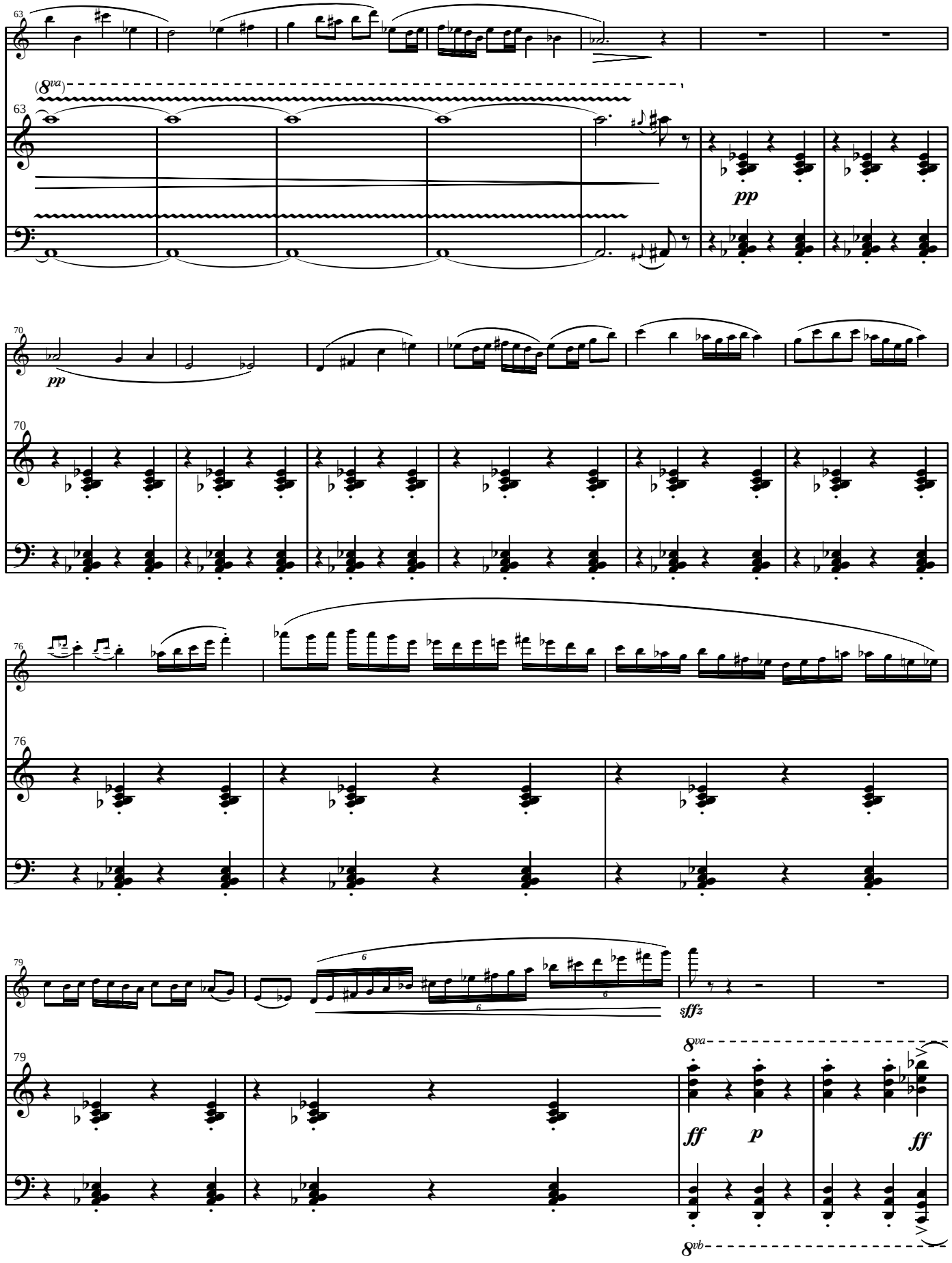
V.

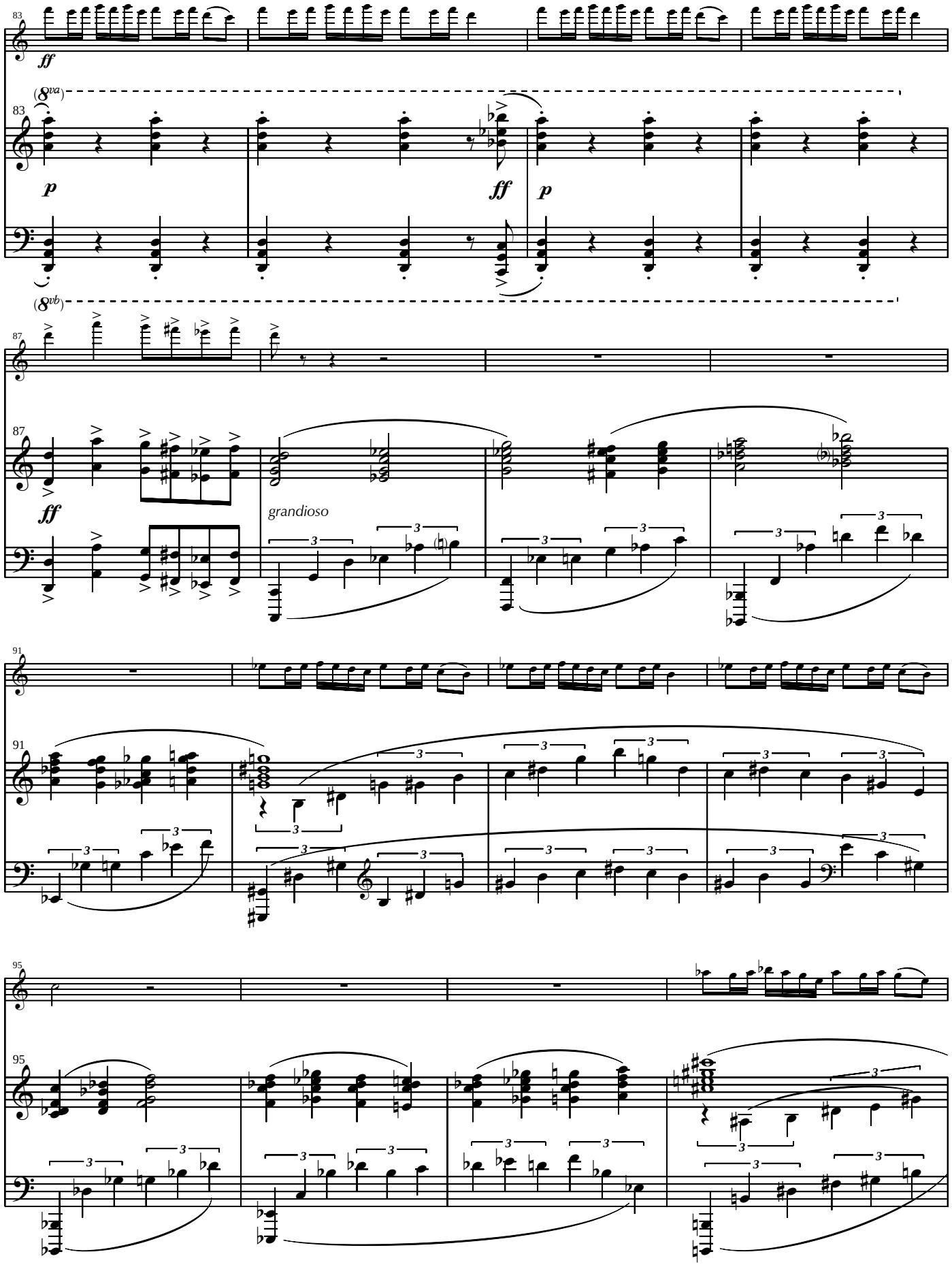



19
f
f
cantabile
19
f
mf subito
23
23
8va
27
(8va)
27
ff
8vb
31
31
pesante
sfz
(8vb)
8vb


dolce
mp
mp delicato
ff
ff
ff
ff
8vb


48
strepitoso
48
marcato
(8vb)
52
52
8va
(8va)
55
sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz
8vb
59
p
59
8va
fp
(8vb)


63
(8va)
63
pp
70
pp
70
76
76
79
sff
79
8va
ff
p
ff
8vb


83
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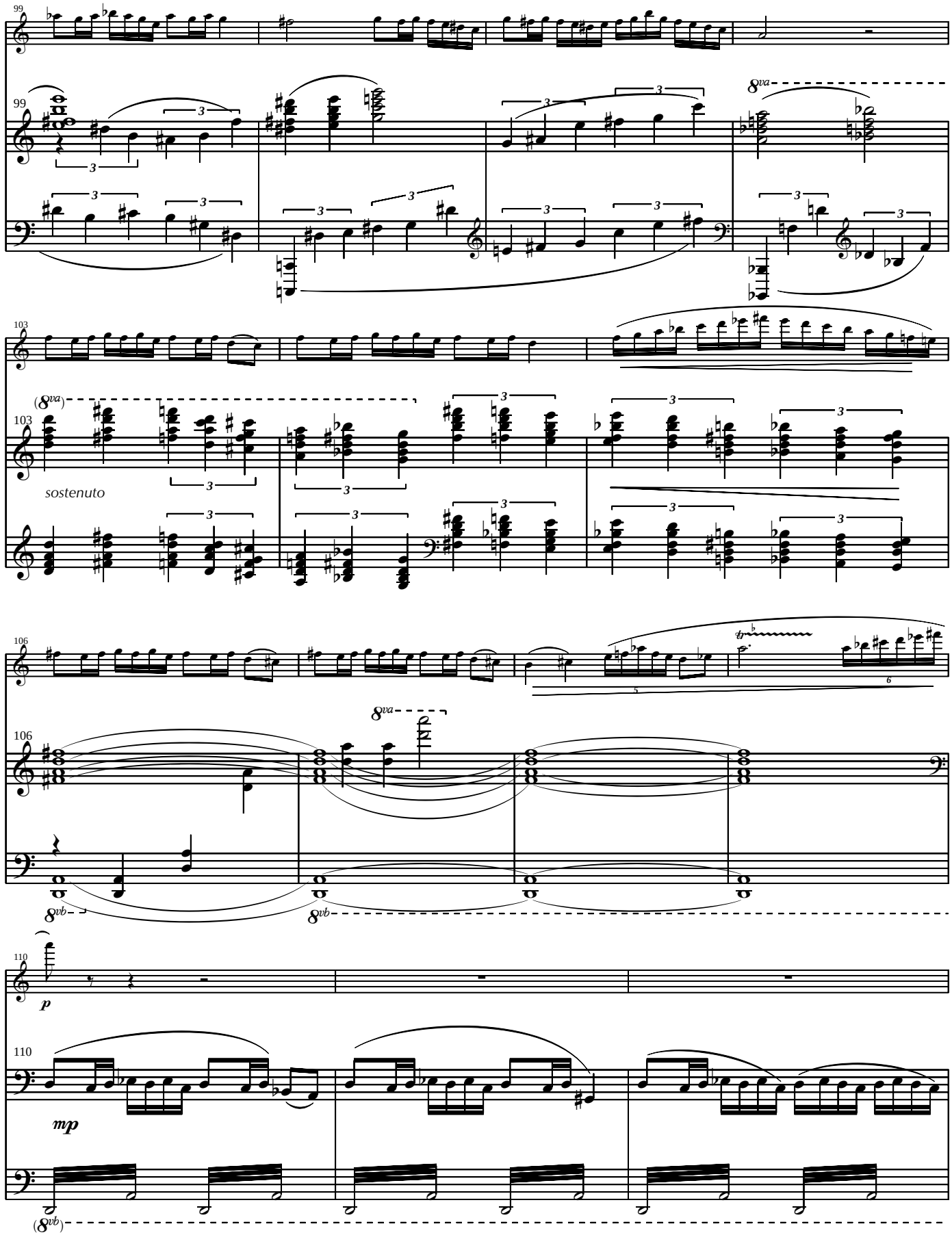
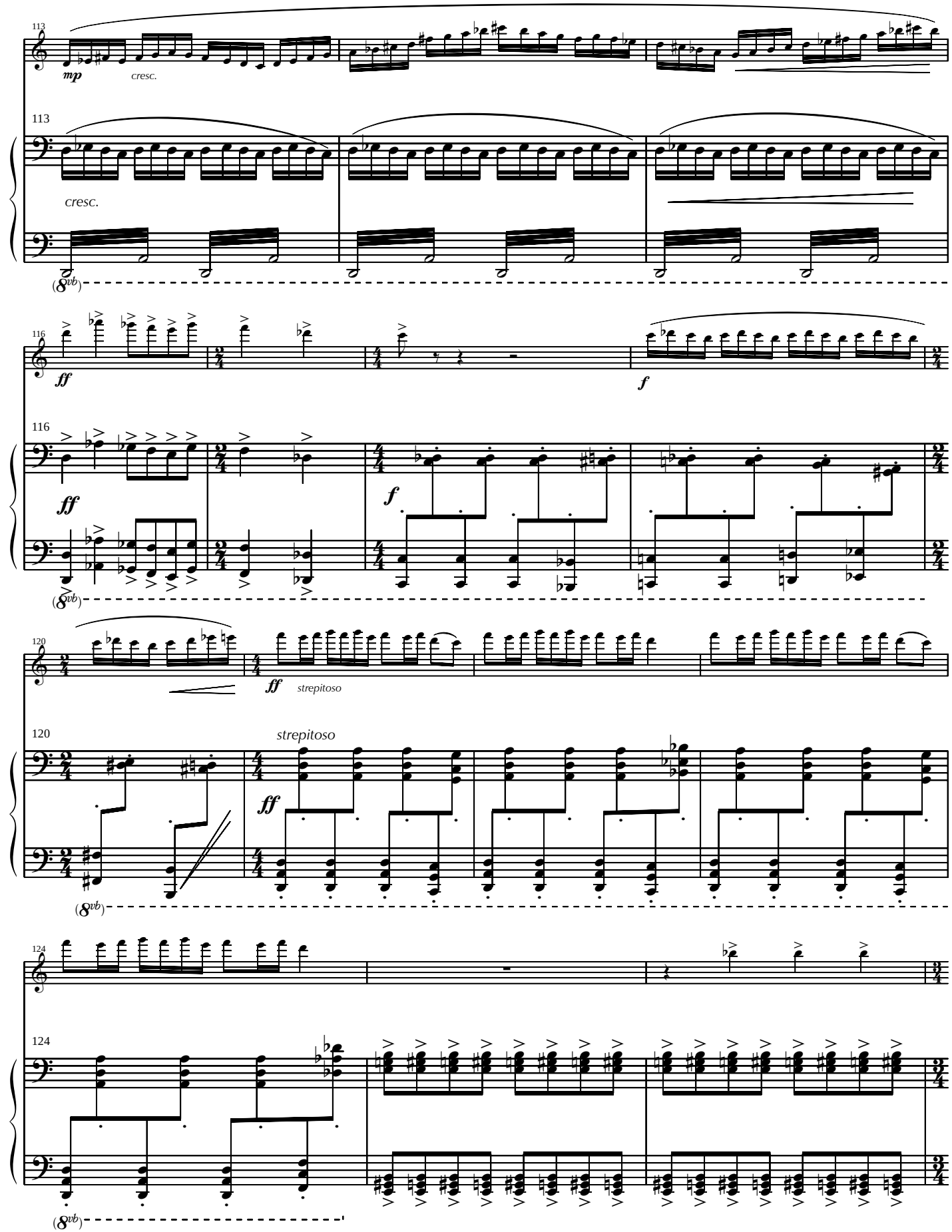
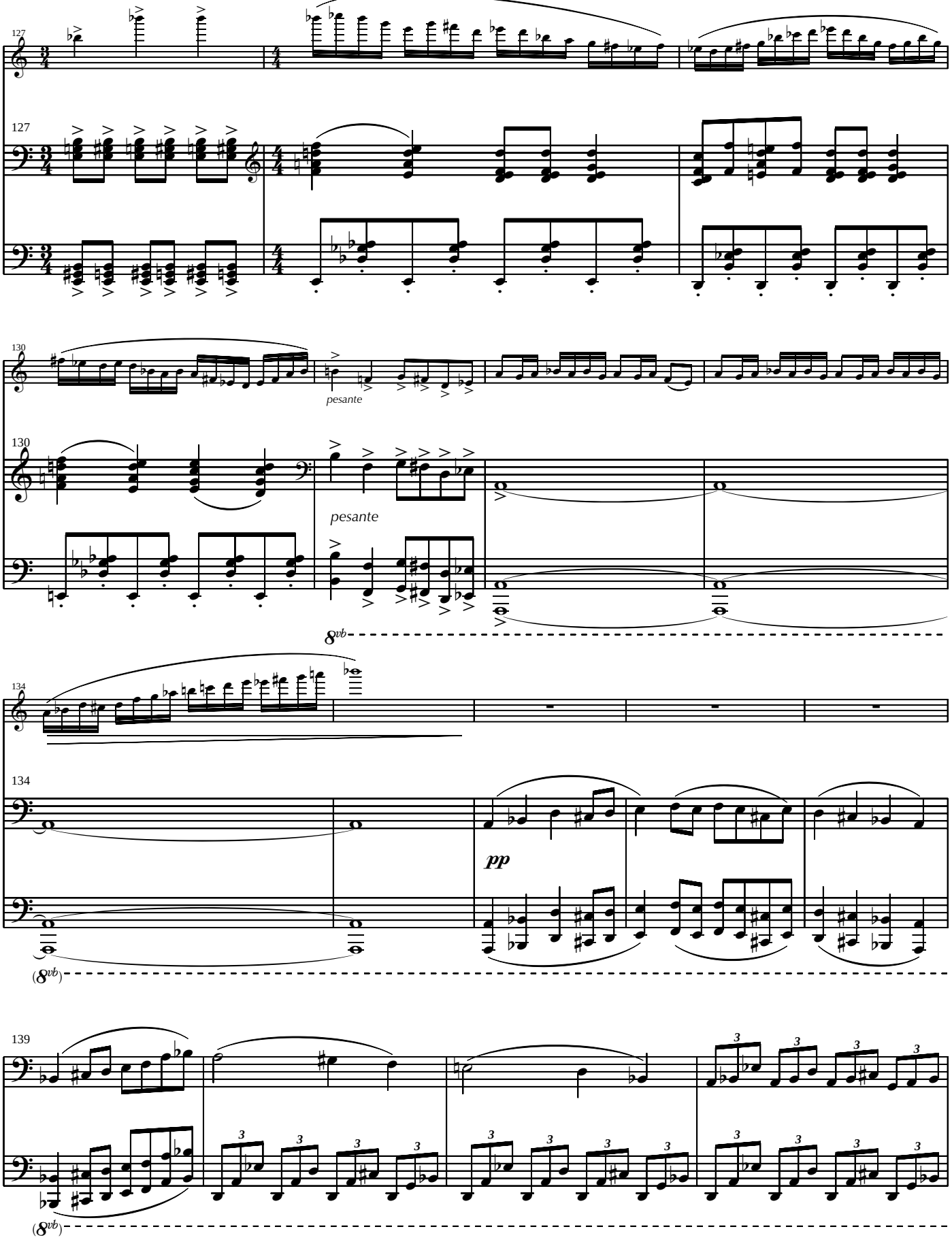
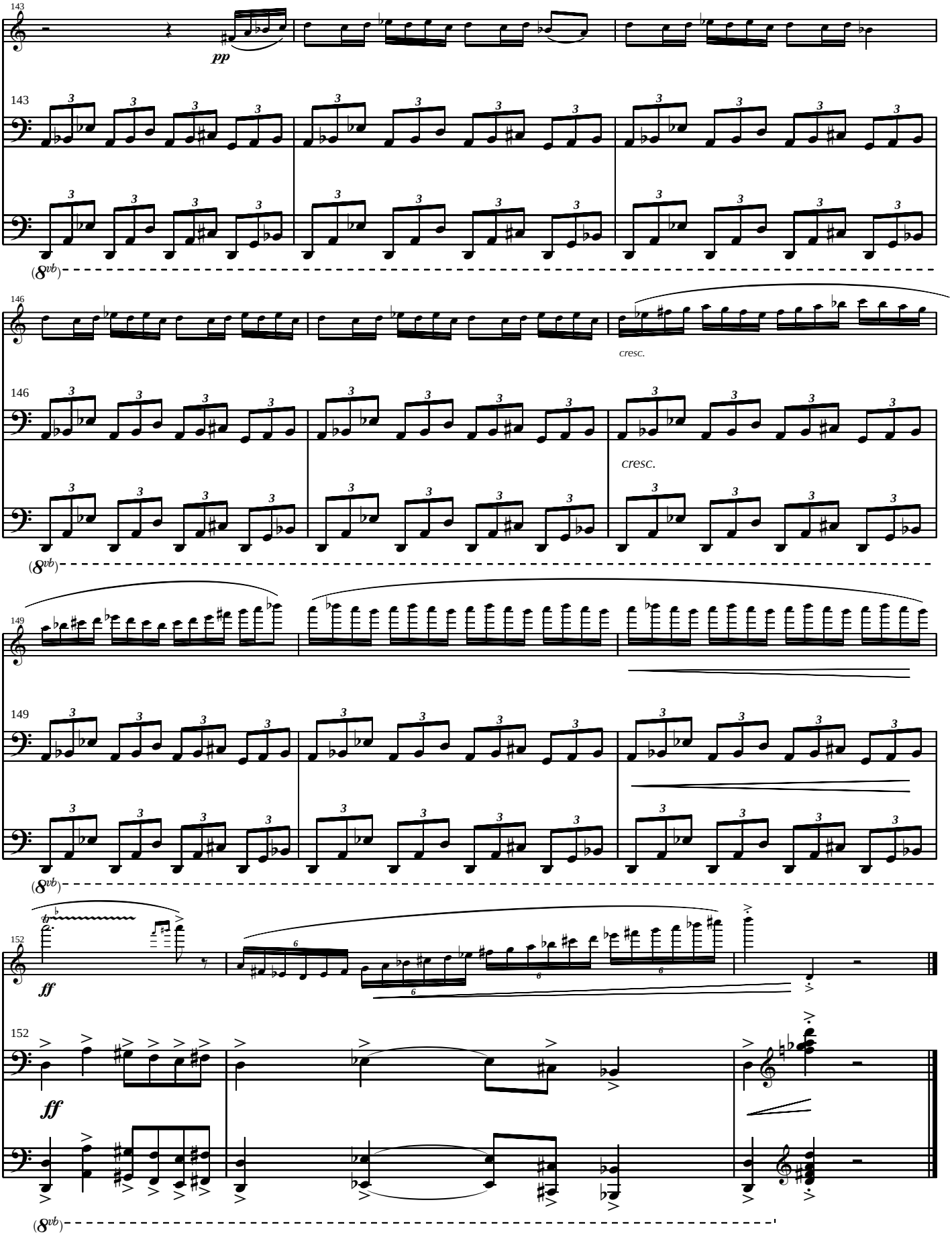
(8va)
83
p
ff
p
(8vb)
87
87
ff
grandioso
91
91
95
95


99
8va
103
(8va)
sostenuto
106
8va
8vb
8vb
110
p
110
mp
(8vb)


113
mp
cresc.
113
cresc.
(8vb)
116
ff
f
116
ff
f
(8vb)
120
ff
strepitoso
120
strepitoso
ff
(8vb)
124
124
(8vb)


127
127
130
pesante
130
pesante
8vb
134
134
pp
(8vb)
139
3
(8vb)


143
pp
143
(8vb)
146
cresc.
146
cresc.
(8vb)
149
149
(8vb)
152
ff
152
ff
(8vb)