# V I C T O R  F R O S T

## Suite pittoresque

for bassoon and piano, op. 48

*(also available for bassoon and chamber orchestra)*

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*New York*

## **Suite pittoresque** for bassoon and piano, op. 48

This set of characteristic pieces was sketched in 1984 but only brought to fruition this year in alternative versions with either chamber orchestra or piano accompaniment. (I had meanwhile tried to arrange the music for different forces from these but, dissatisfied with the results, returned this summer to my first sketches, for bassoon with a somewhat bigger orchestra, to effect the present realization.)

1. Samba City. Yes, this town really exists, on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro. (A lot of the floats that they use in the annual Carnaval are fashioned there.) An homage, then, to Villa-Lobos.

2. Auf der Ringstraße. The "Waltz City" would of course be Vienna, and this circular boulevard is one of its main attractions. One of its many monuments honors "The Waltz King," Johann Strauß II. (A friend of mine, in admiration of works like this one, once tried dubbing me "The Waltz Queen." I was relieved that it never stuck!) There is a theoretical construct called by musicologists the circle of fifths, around which my own music actually revolves but little. But I thought it would be fun here to indulge in the roundabout harmonic usage so many Viennese composers relied upon, in this paean to its giant circle of a street. Thus most every one of my waltz ideas gets jacked *Schnell!* into the key a fifth either up or down the rim. By the end of course everything has come full circle!

3. Out of the Mist. The piano plays an ostinato which dissolves only after the bassoon finds one of its own. The safe harbor of C-flat major is established only in the number's very last moments, the fog having finally cleared.

4. Introduction and Tarantella. Interrelationships subsist among all the movements of my Suite. The harmonic fifths in the Ringstraße are presaged in the opening Samba's prominent open fifths in the left hand of the piano. What is more, the three canonic voices from Samba City expand into five once caught up in the concluding Tarantella's heady whirlwind, which also ensnares the tone-row foghorn ostinato out of Out of the Mist. Even the Tarantella's own languorous Intro gets sped up eventually to form part of the fray! I paid composers homage in my notes for the first two numbers, so let me go on. For me, the third movement evokes Bartók and Hindemith, while the finale could be a tribute to compound-meter Mendelssohn! But the general concept of sharing material among otherwise varied movements harks back of course to Berlioz and Liszt.

I can now dedicate my picturesque suite to the seminal American bassoonist Frank Morelli.

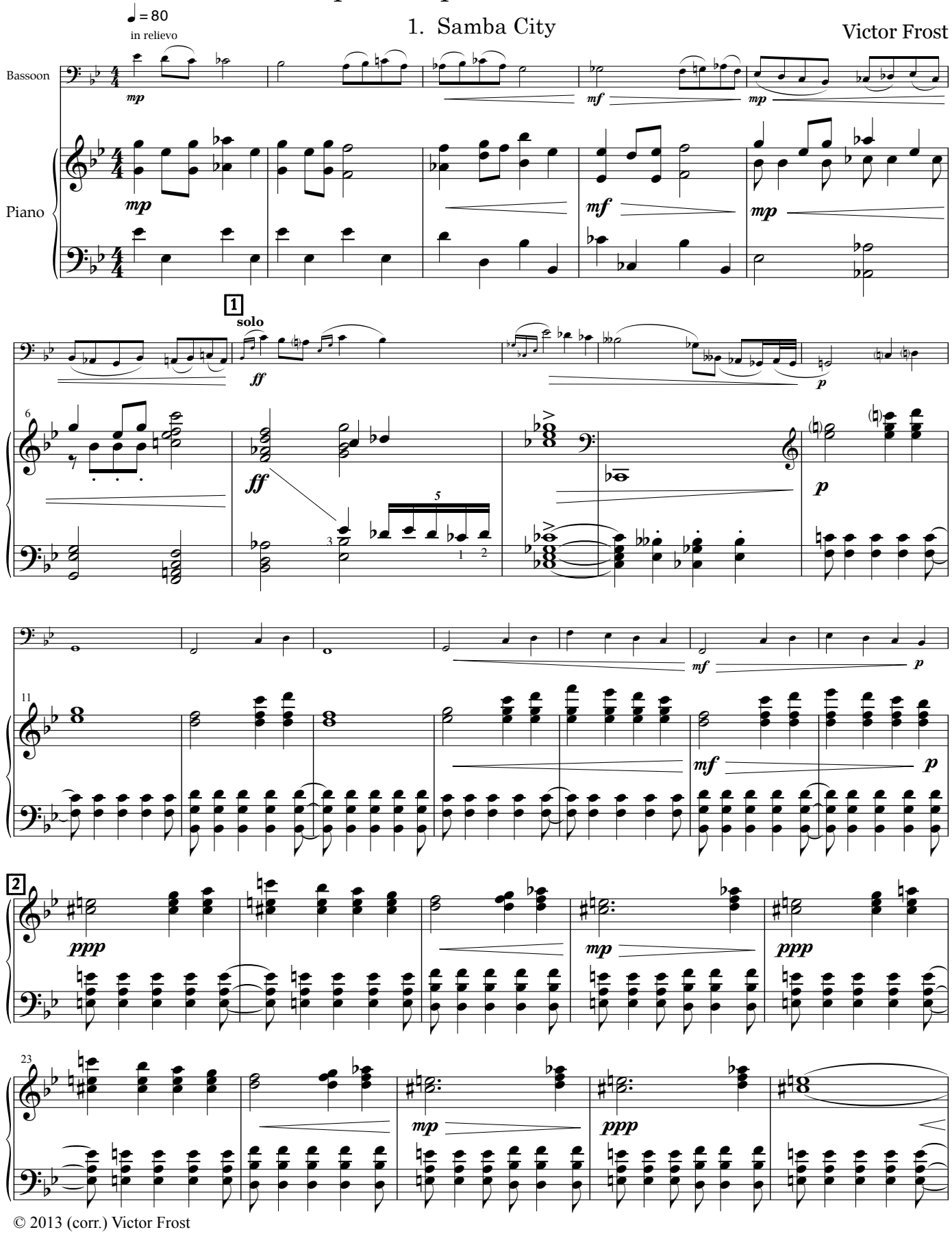
Victor Frost
4 X 13
New York City

*to Frank Morelli*

# Suite pittoresque for bassoon and piano, op. 48

## 1. Samba City

Victor Frost

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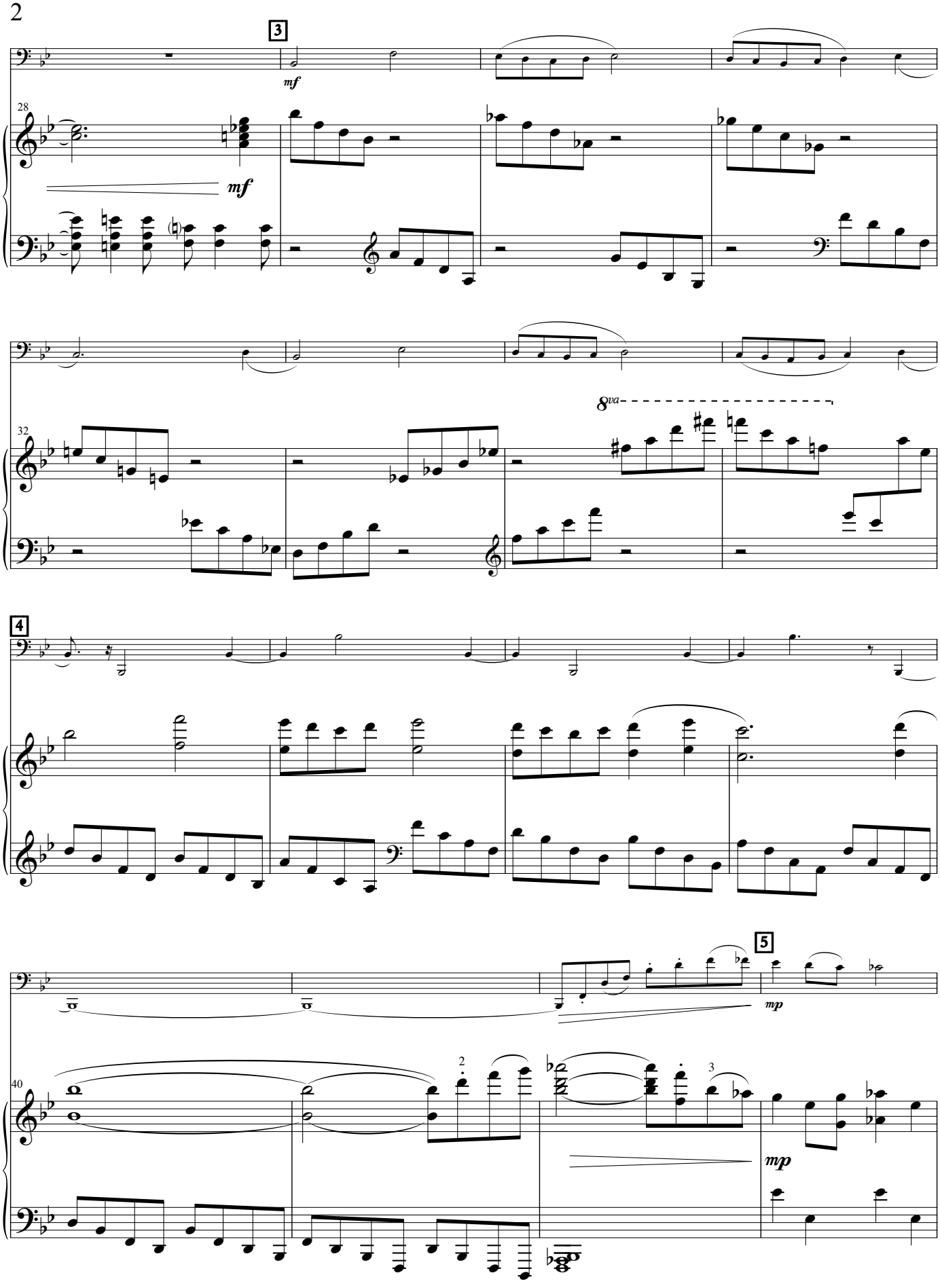
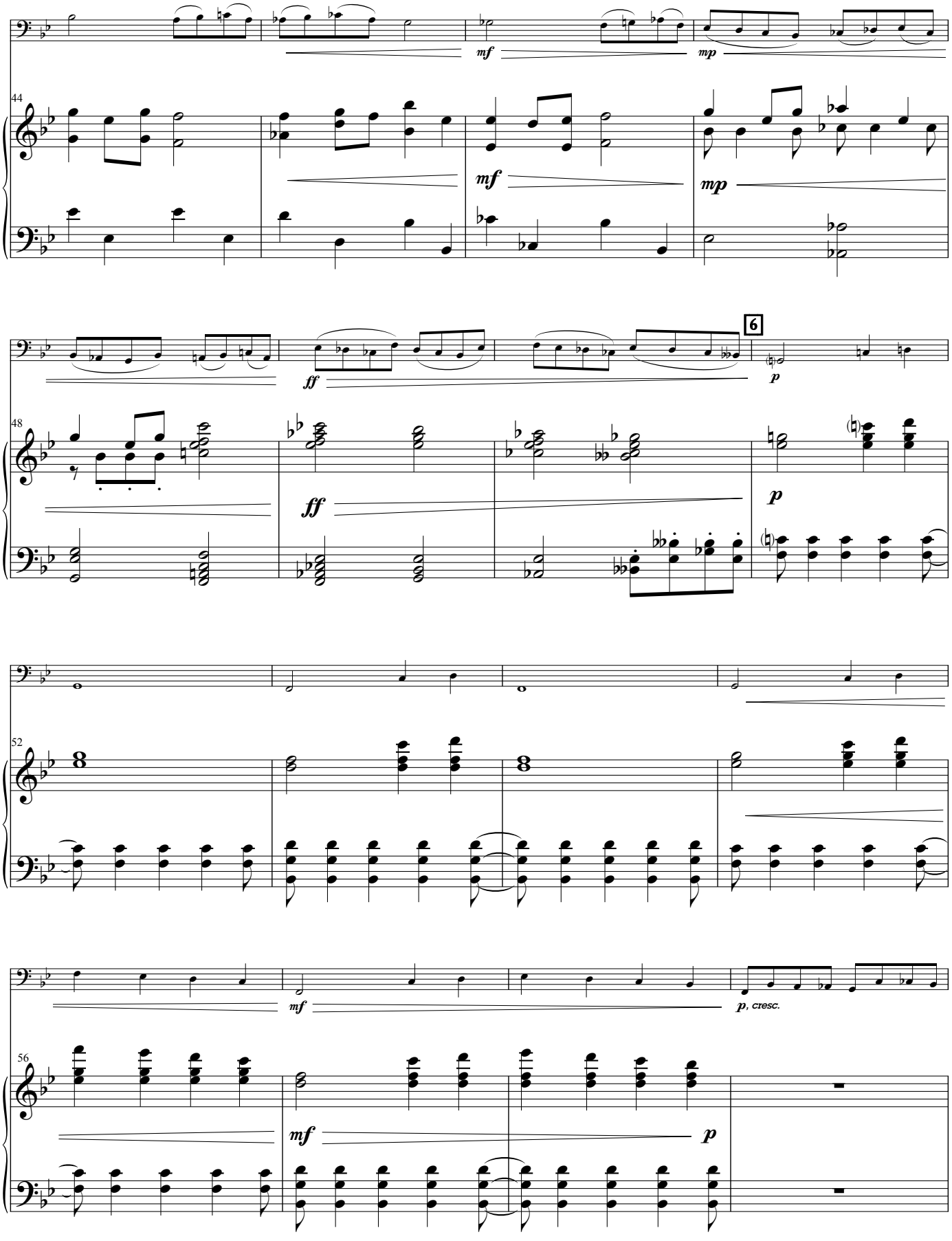
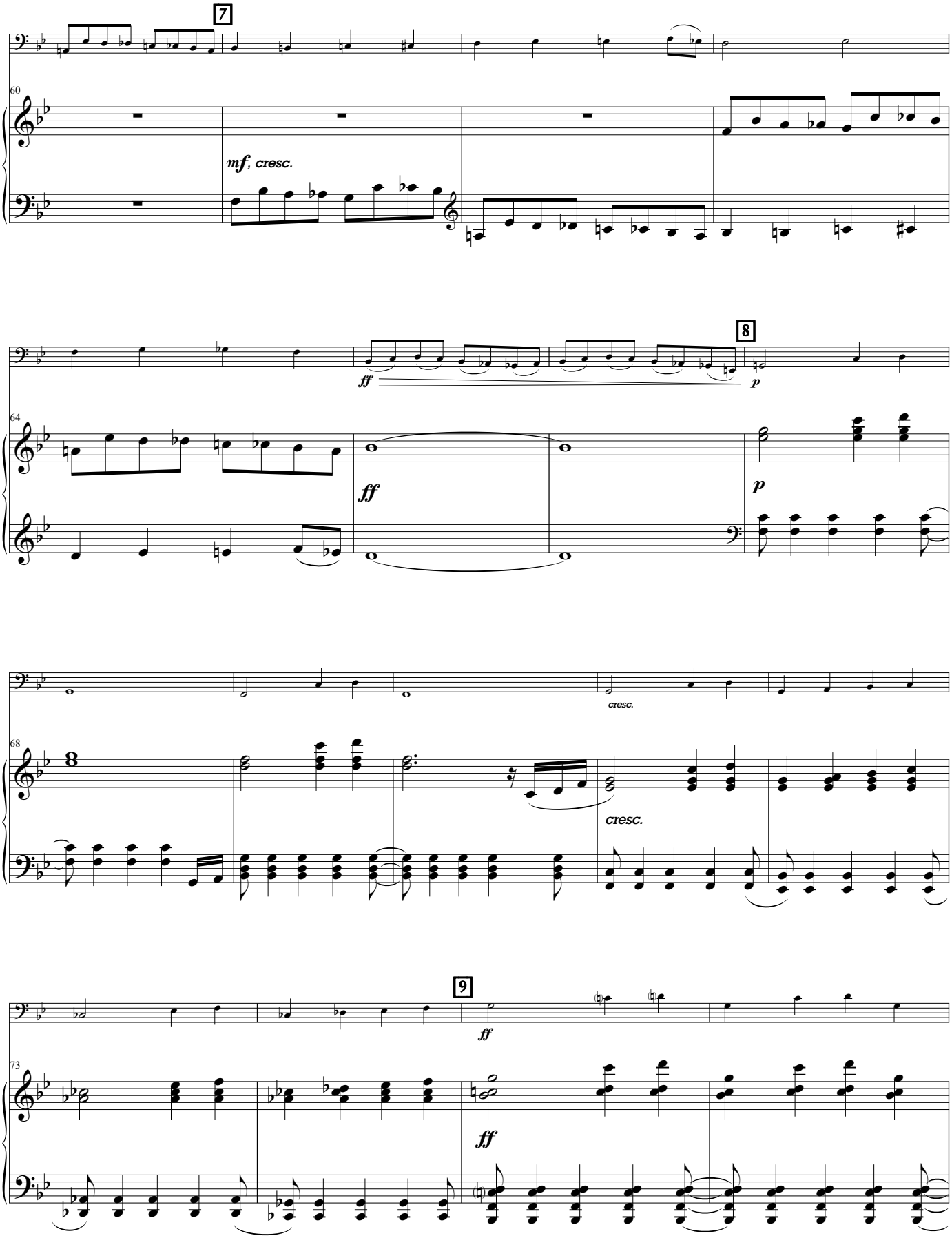
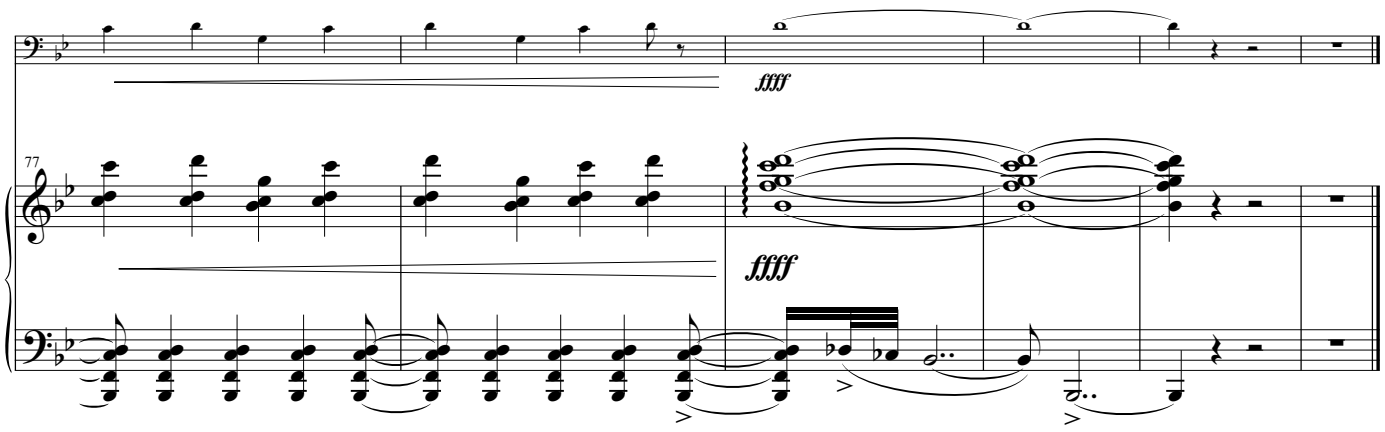
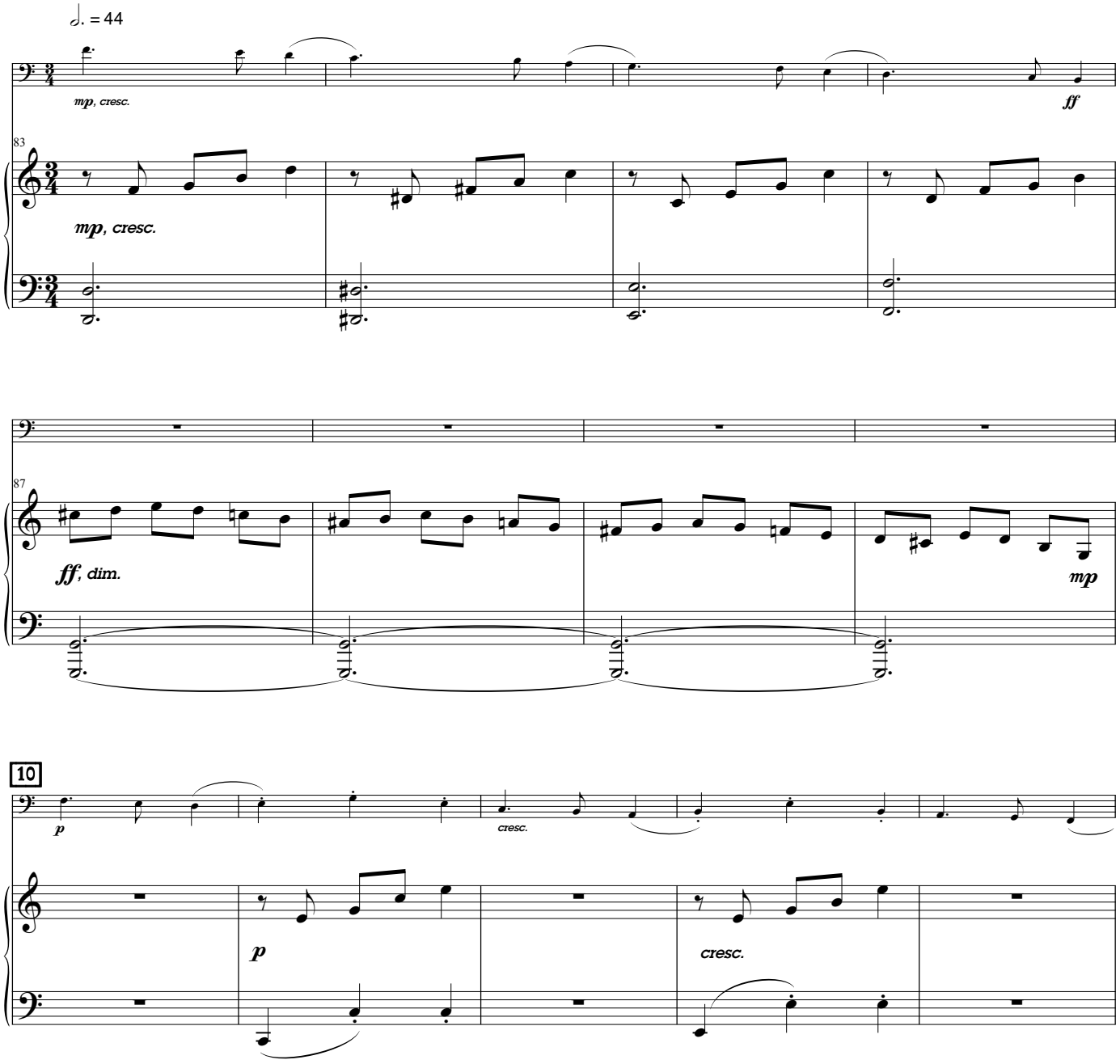

3
mf
28
mf
32
8va
4
5
mp
40
2
3
mp

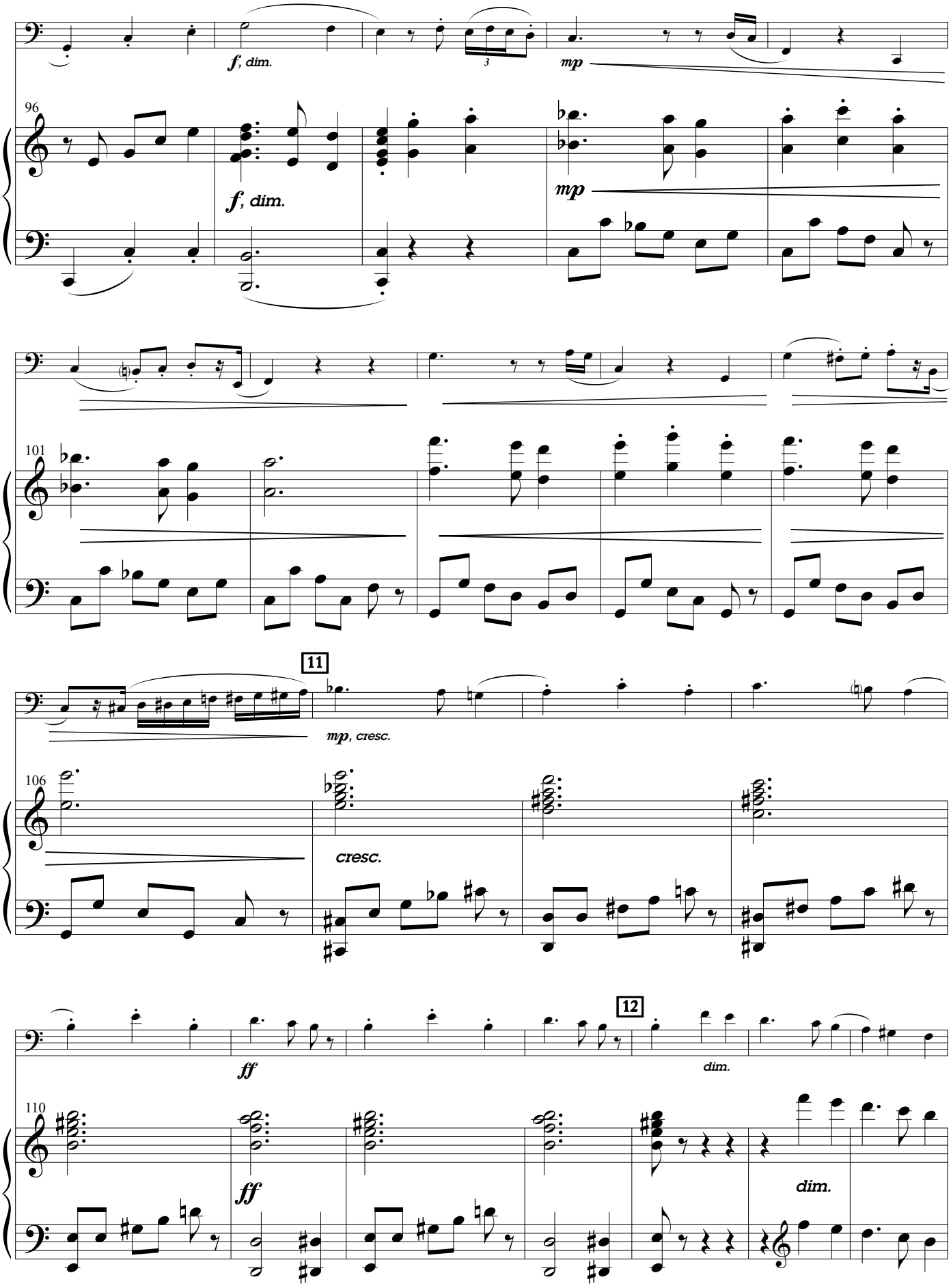

mf
mp
44
mf
mp
ff
6
p
48
ff
p
52
mf
p, cresc.
56
mf
p

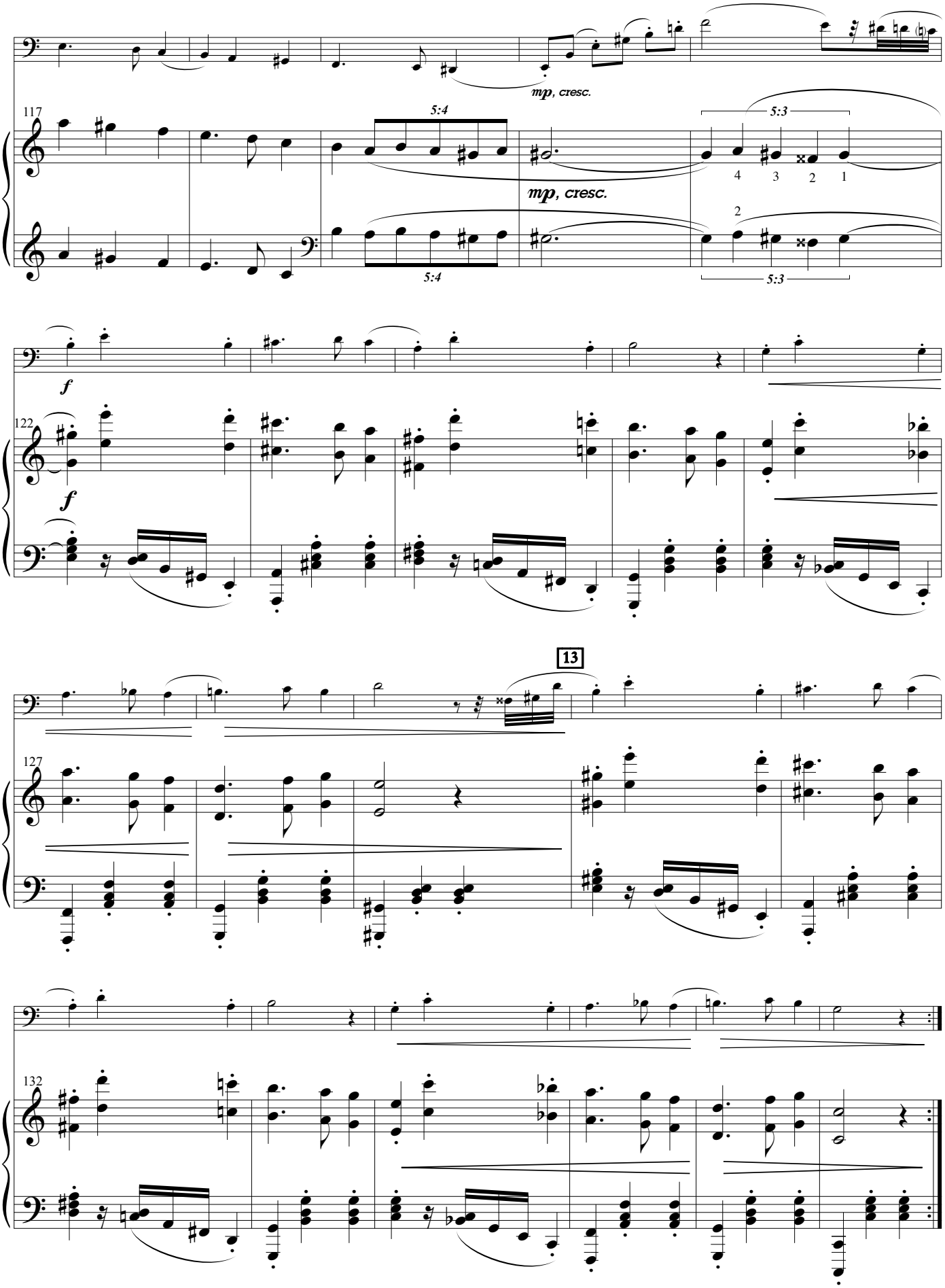

7
60
mf, cresc.
8
64
ff
p
68
cresc.
9
73
ff

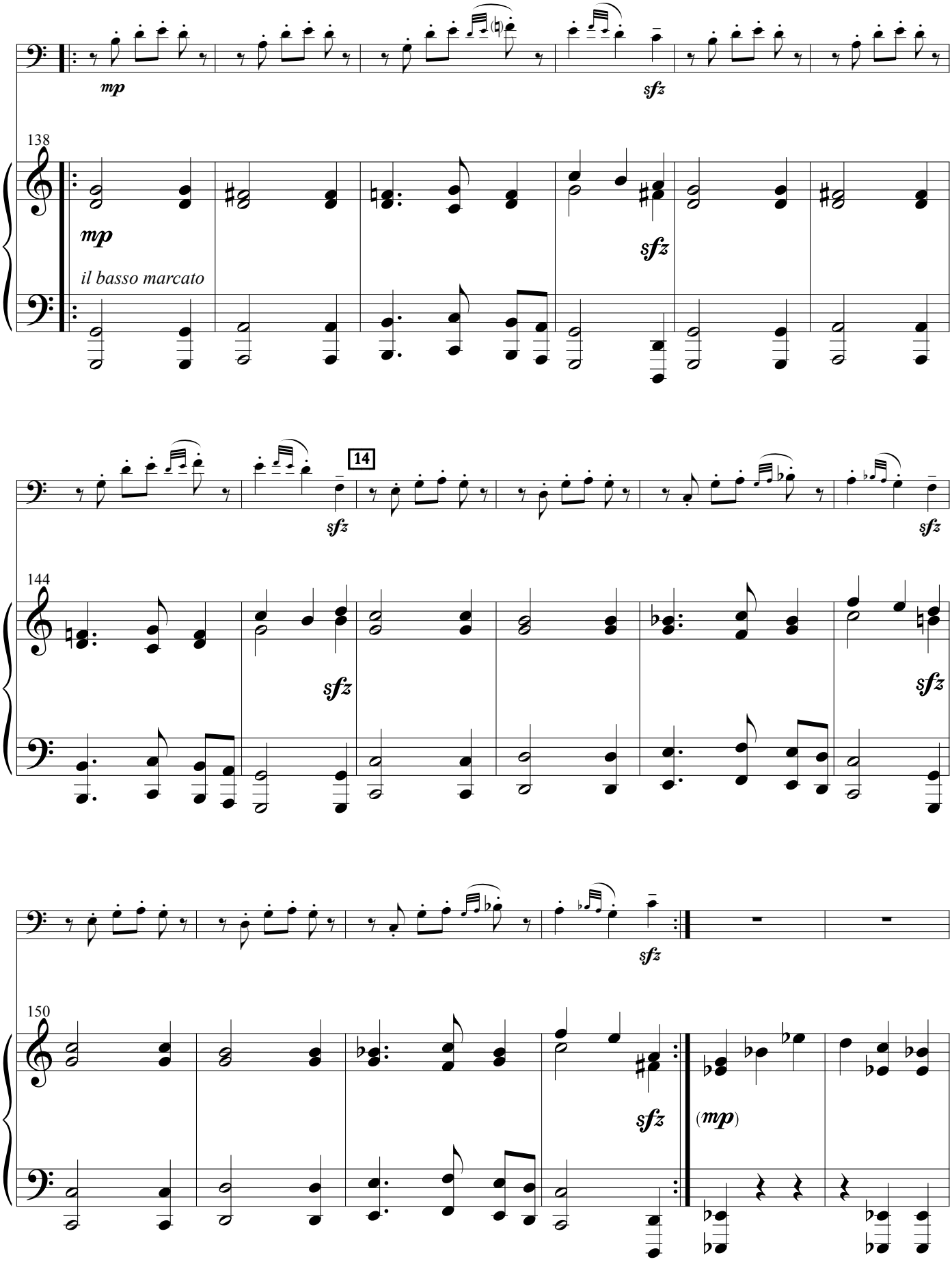


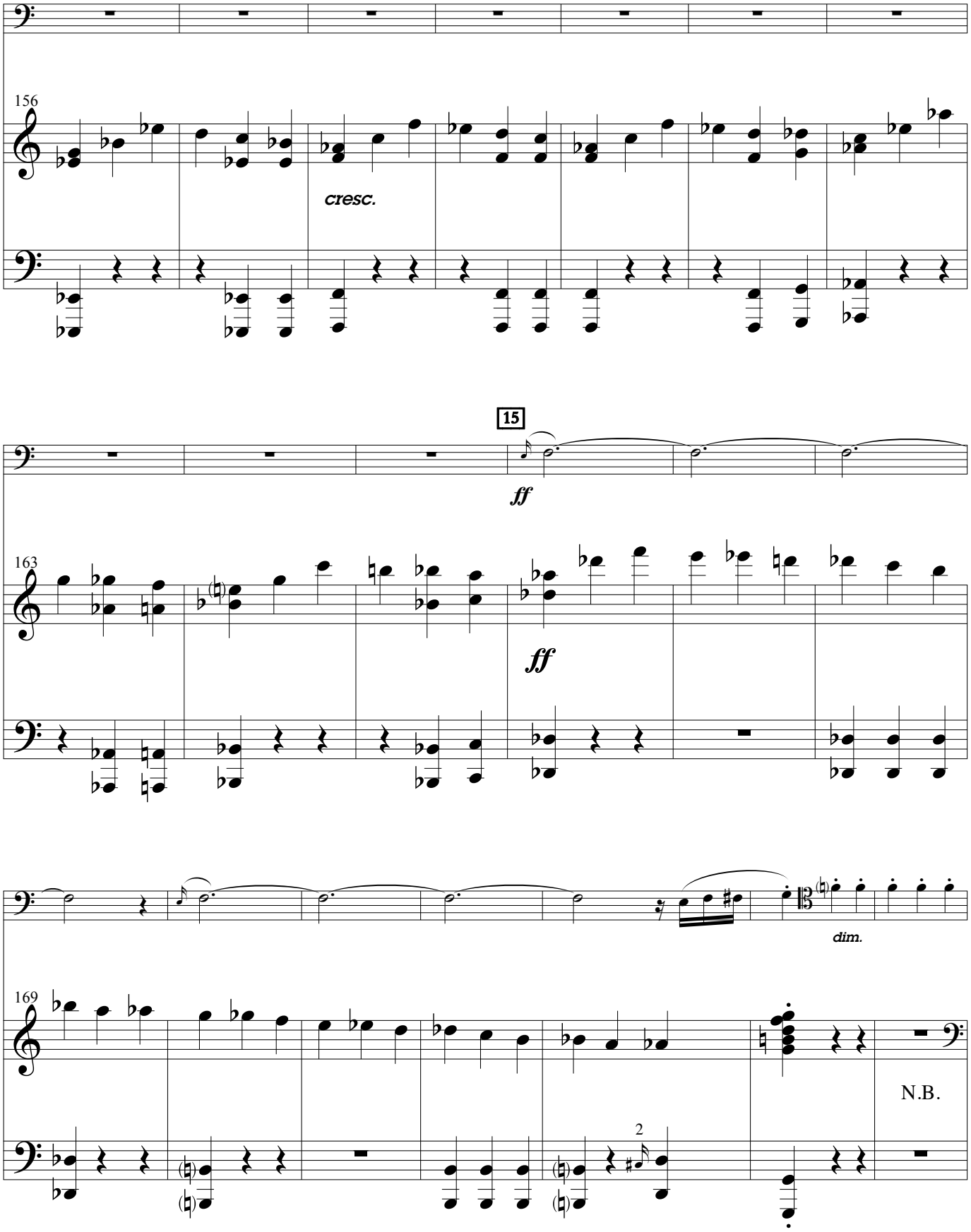

## 2. Auf der Ringstraße



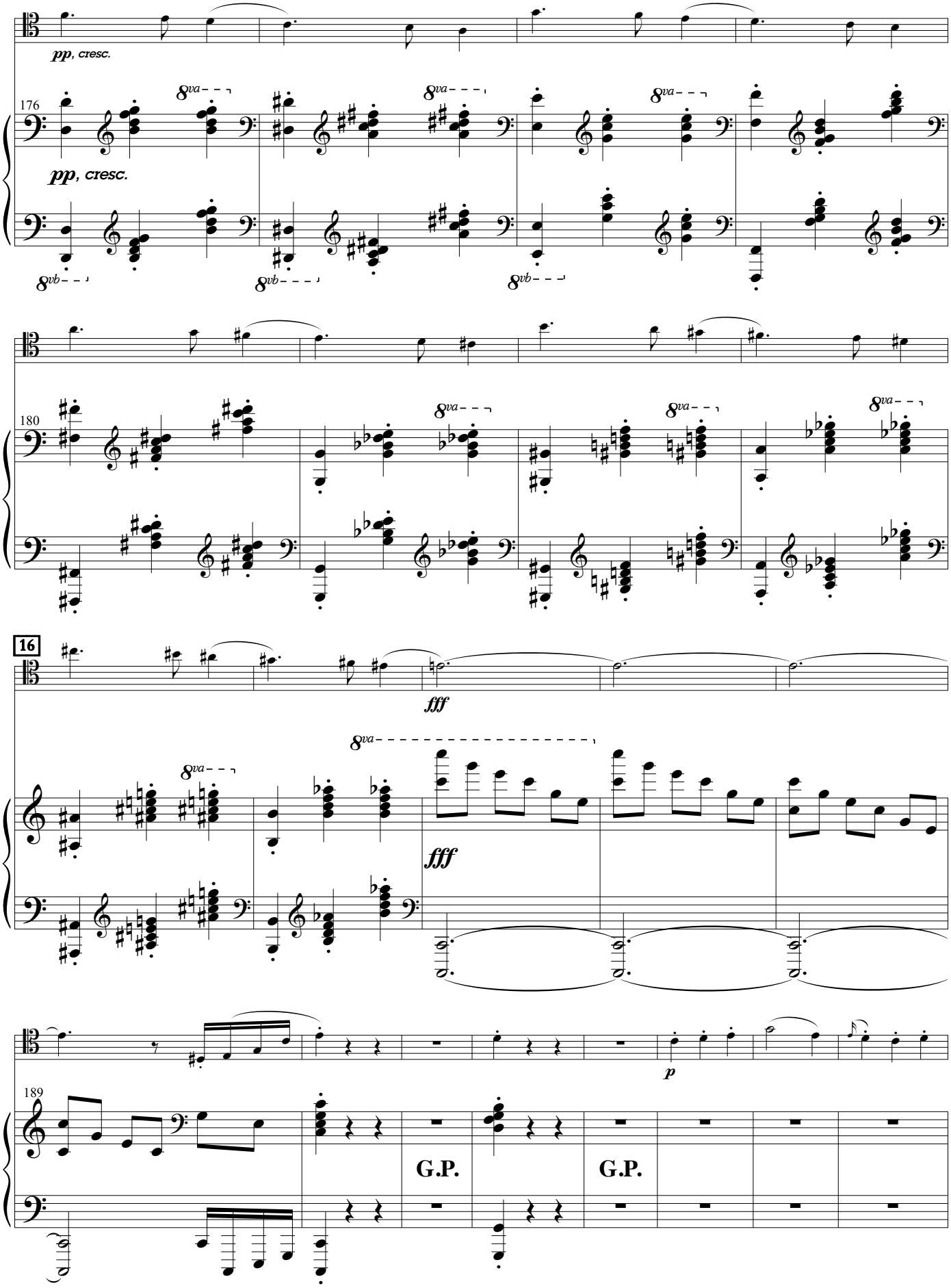

f, dim.
mp
96
f, dim.
mp
101
11
mp, cresc.
106
cresc.
12
ff
dim.
110
ff
dim.

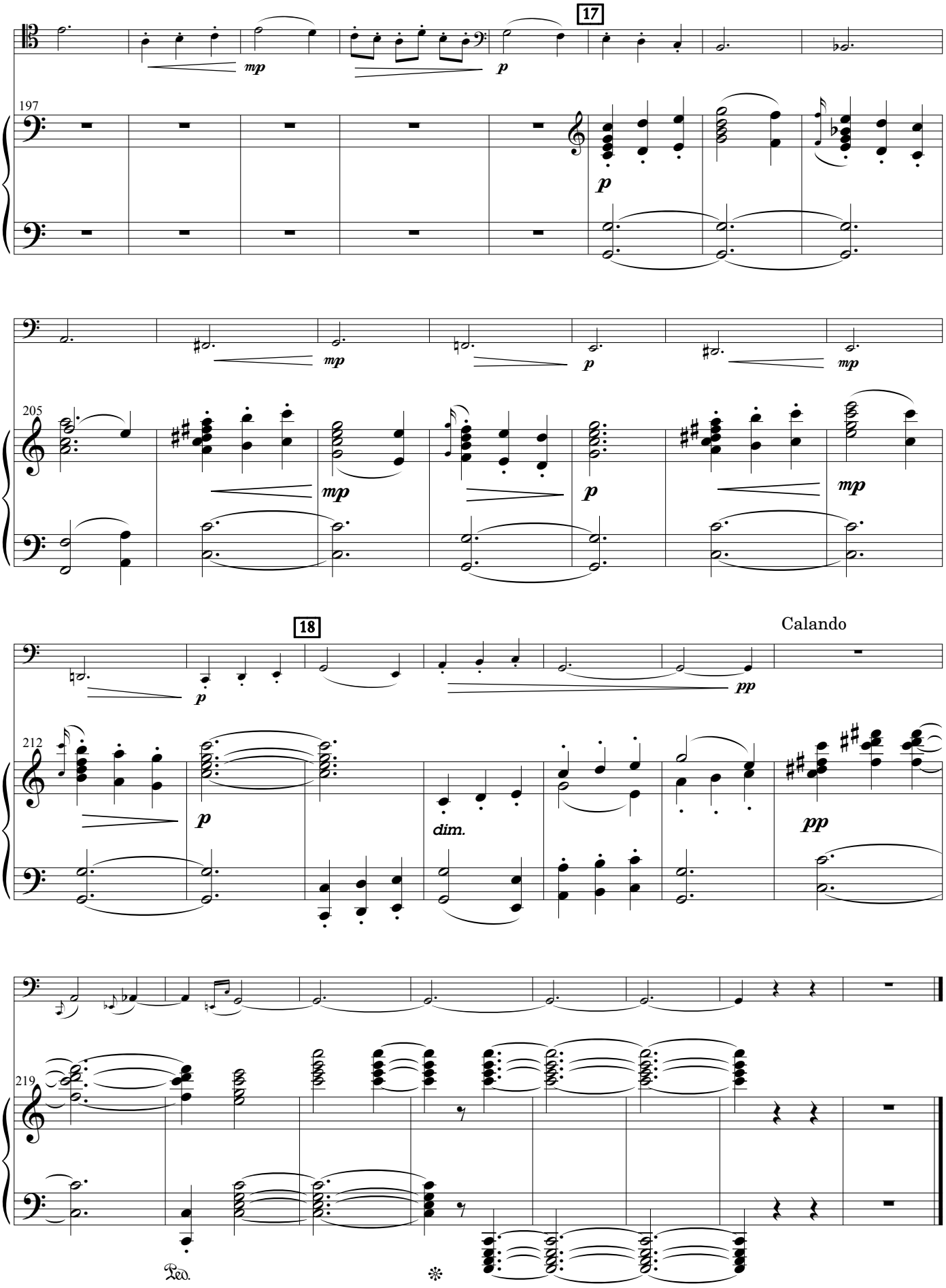

mp, cresc.
117
5:4
5:3
mp, cresc.
5:4
5:3
f
122
f
13
127
132


mp
sfz
138
mp
il basso marcato
sfz
14
sfz
sfz
144
sfz
sfz
sfz
150
sfz
(mp)

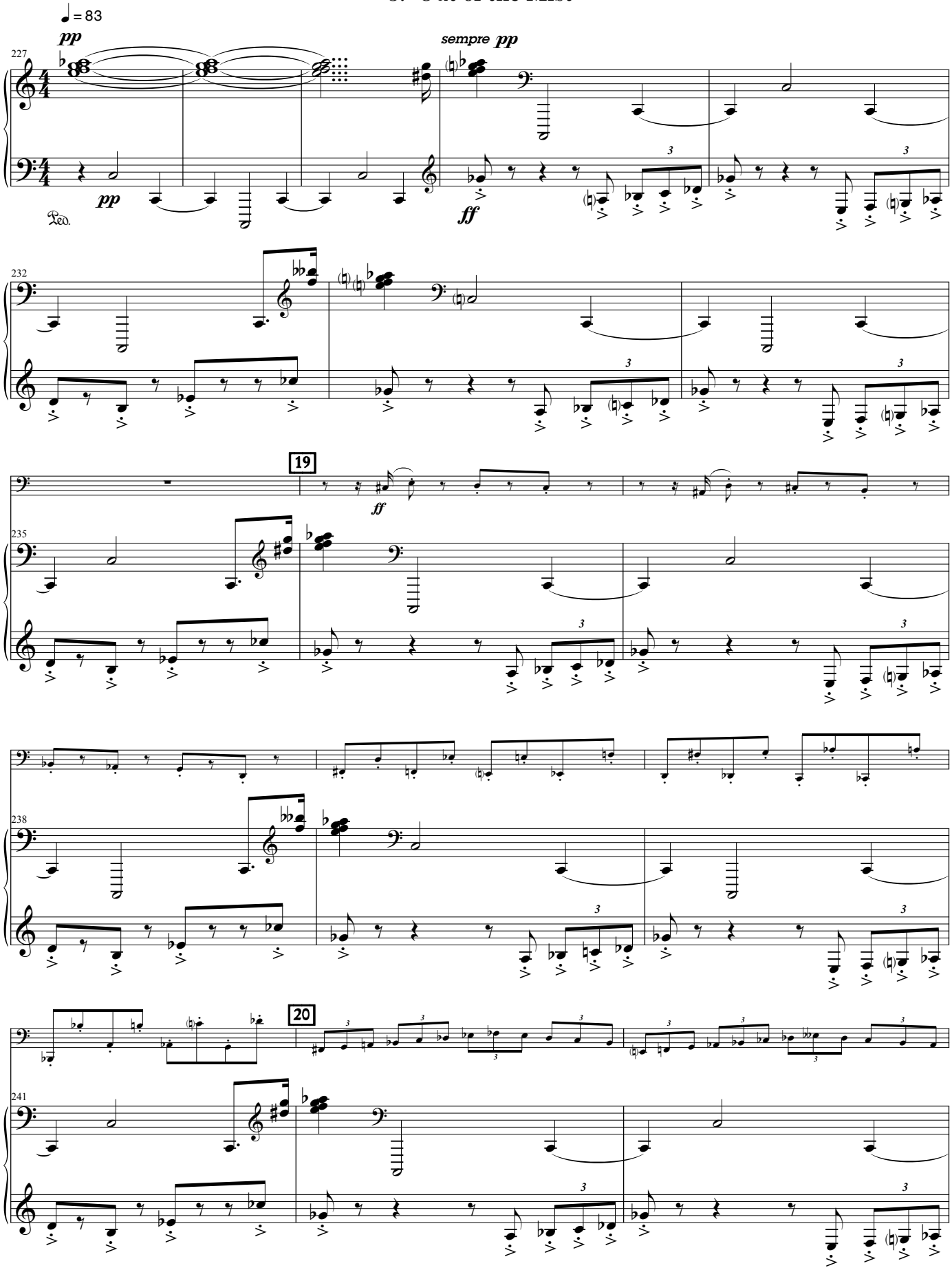


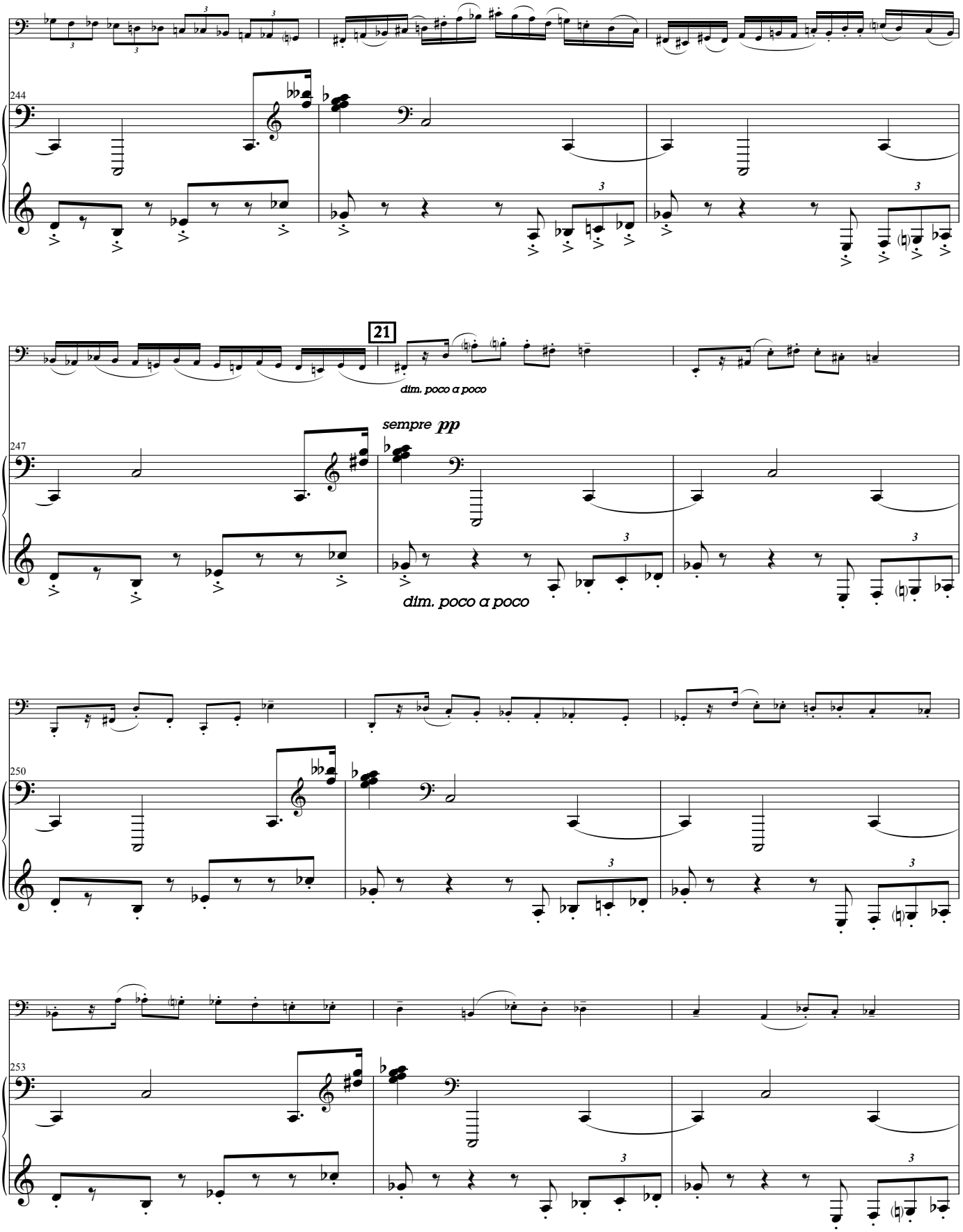

N.B. Facilitation: in the following passage, the orchestral harp does not play on the first beat in the r.h., or the last beat in the l.h.

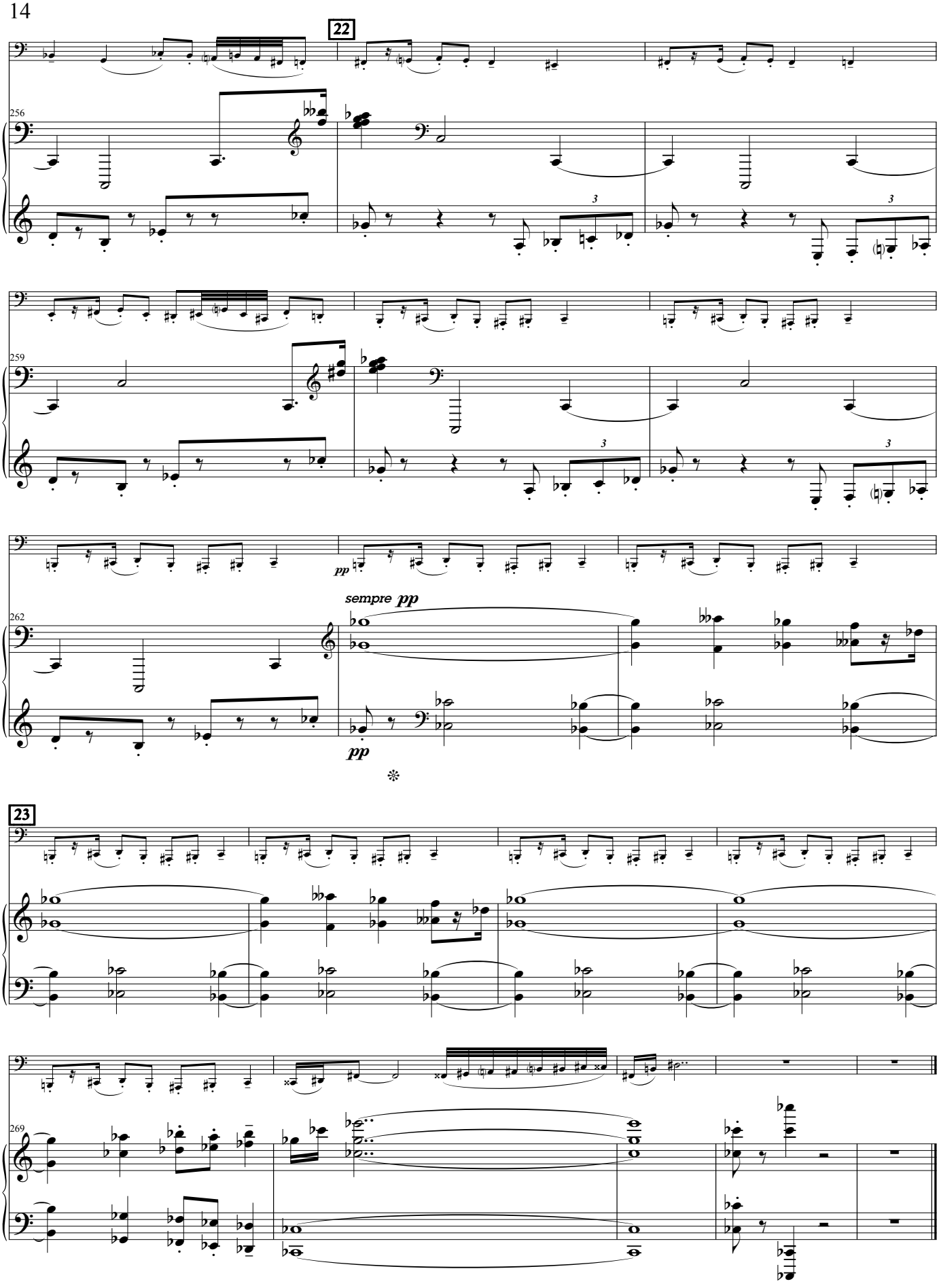

pp, cresc.
176
pp, cresc.
8va
8vb
180
16
fff
fff
189
p
G.P.
G.P.

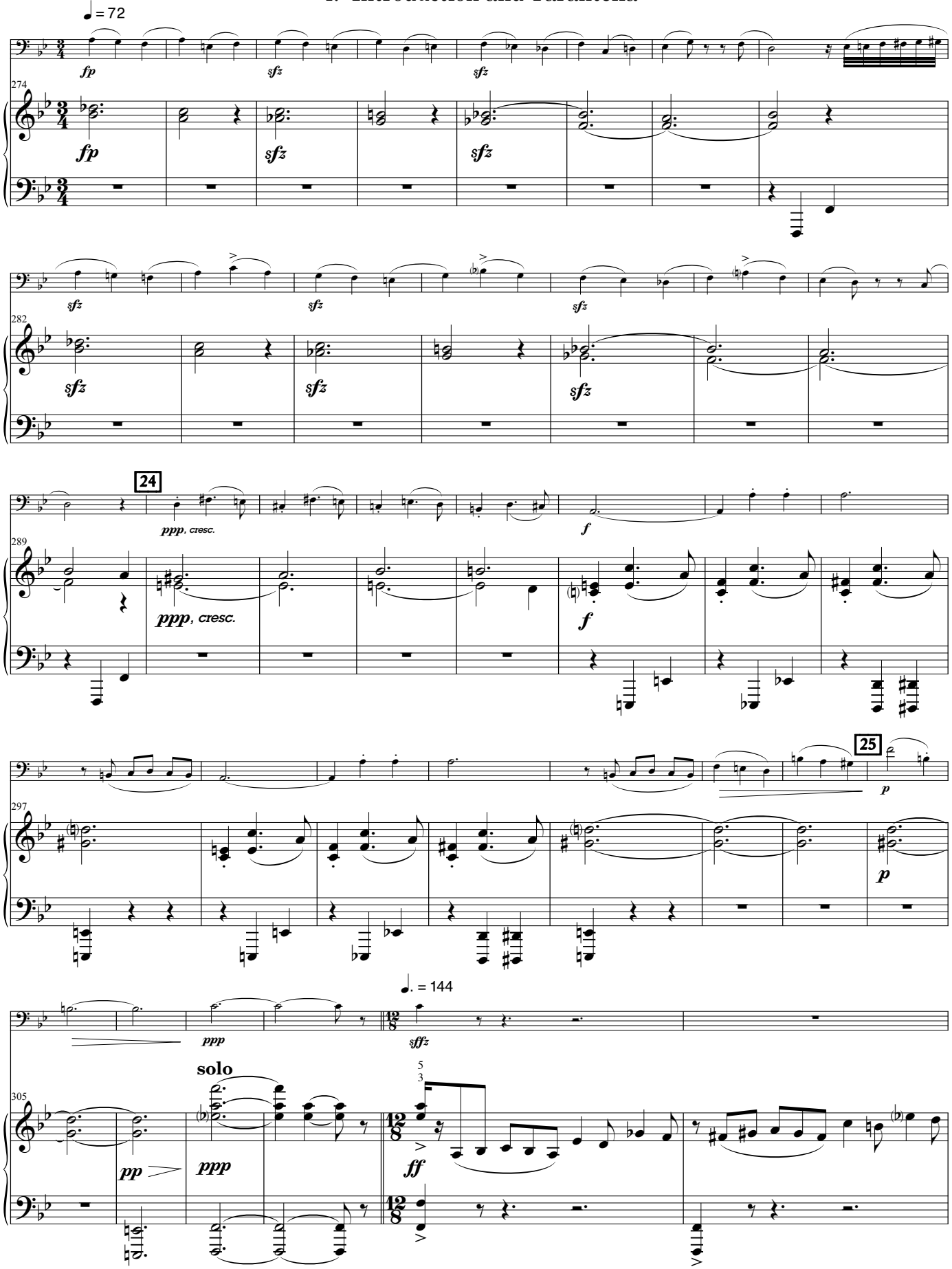

17
197
mp
p
p
205
mp
mp
p
mp
18
Calando
212
p
dim.
pp
pp
219
Ped.

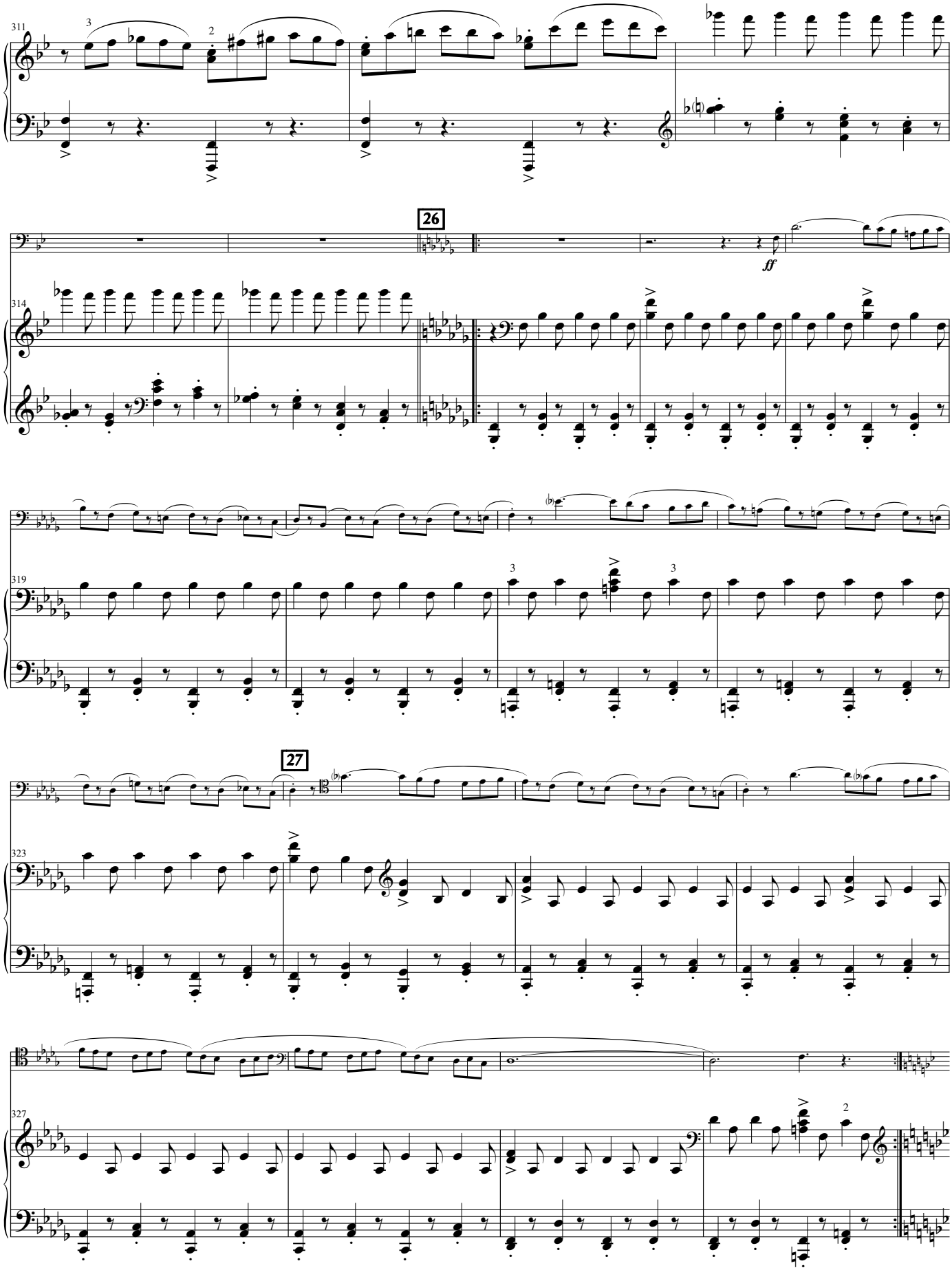
# 3. Out of the Mist

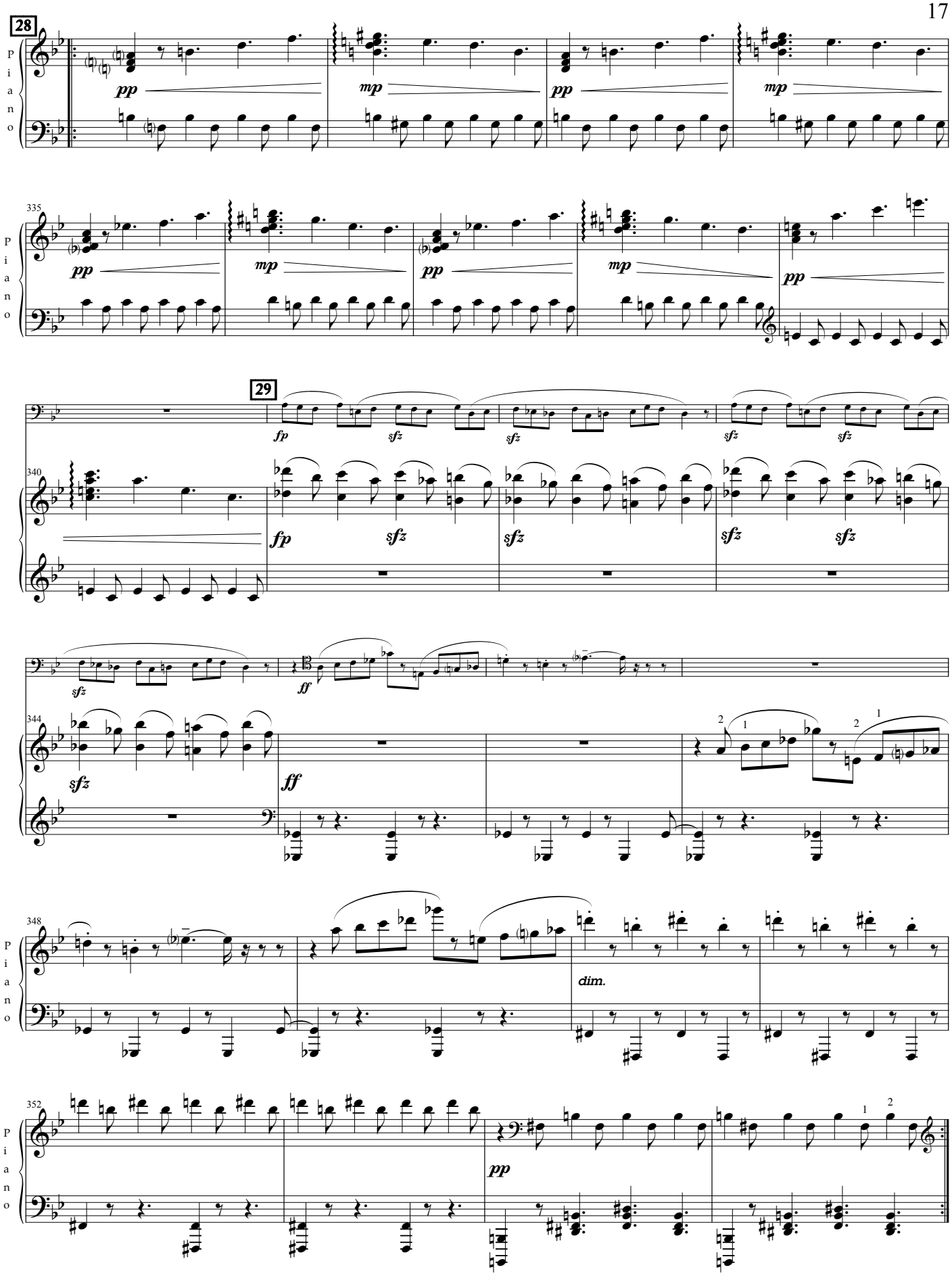


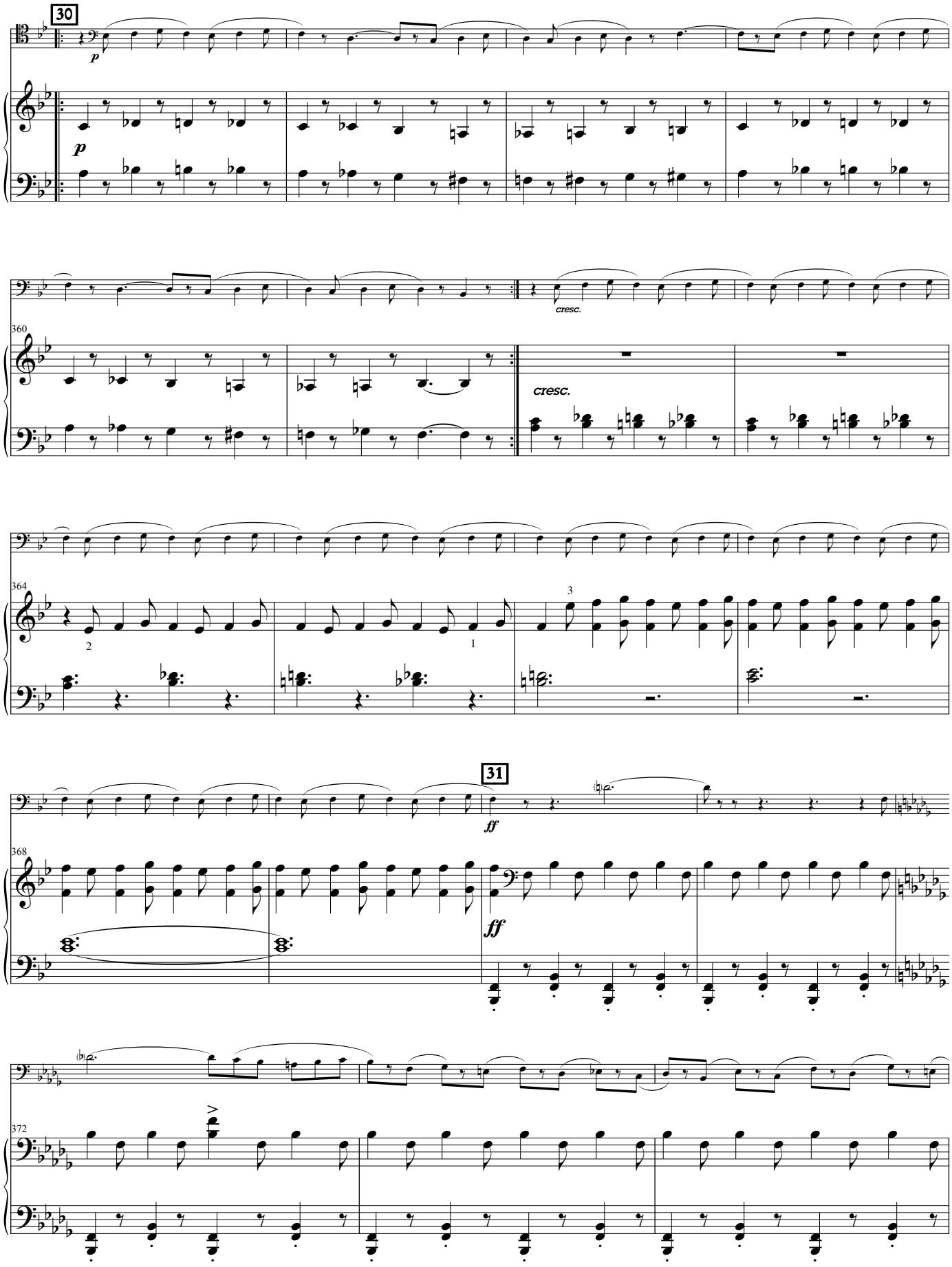

244
21
dim. poco a poco
sempre pp
247
dim. poco a poco
250
253

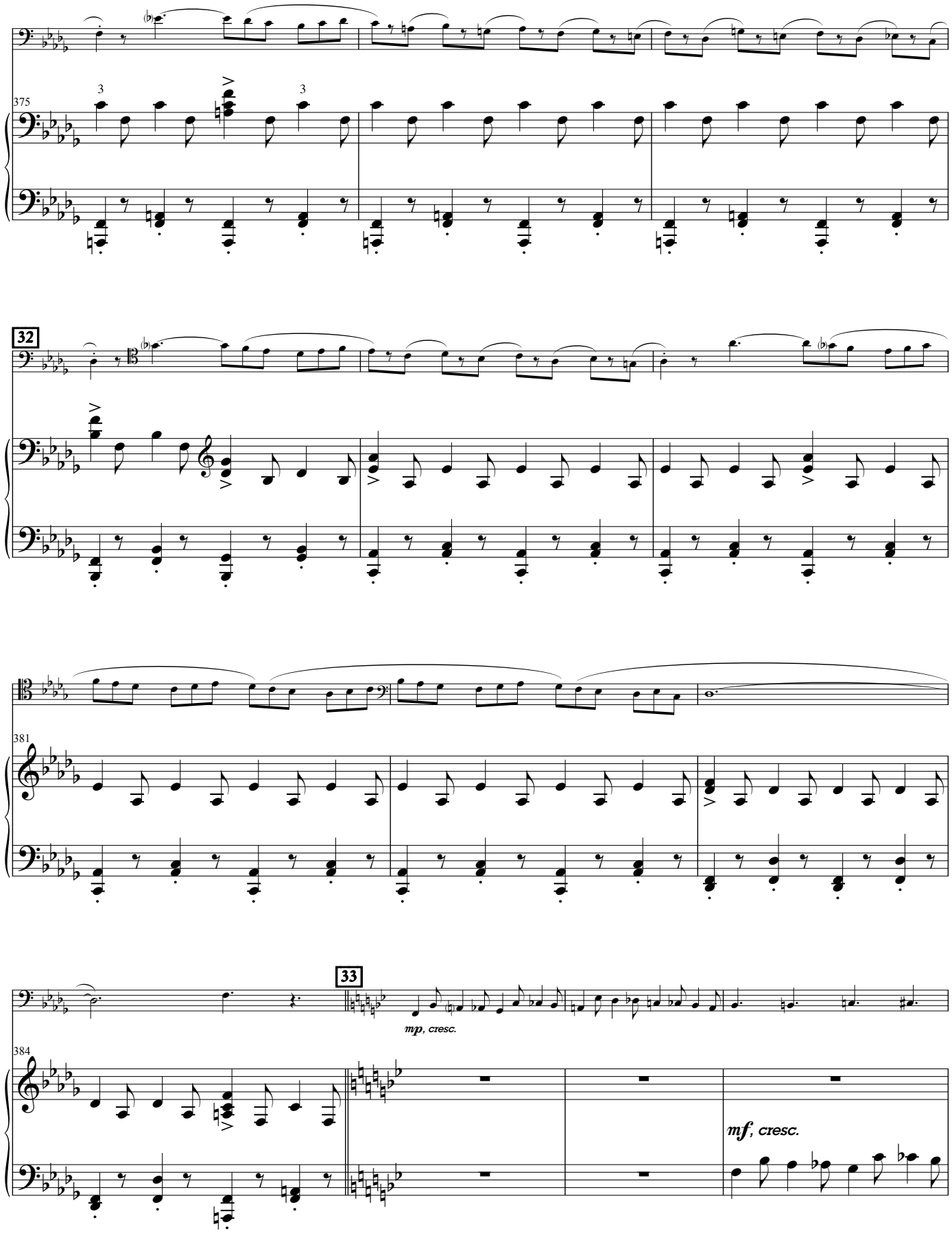

22
256
259
pp
sempre pp
262
pp
23
269

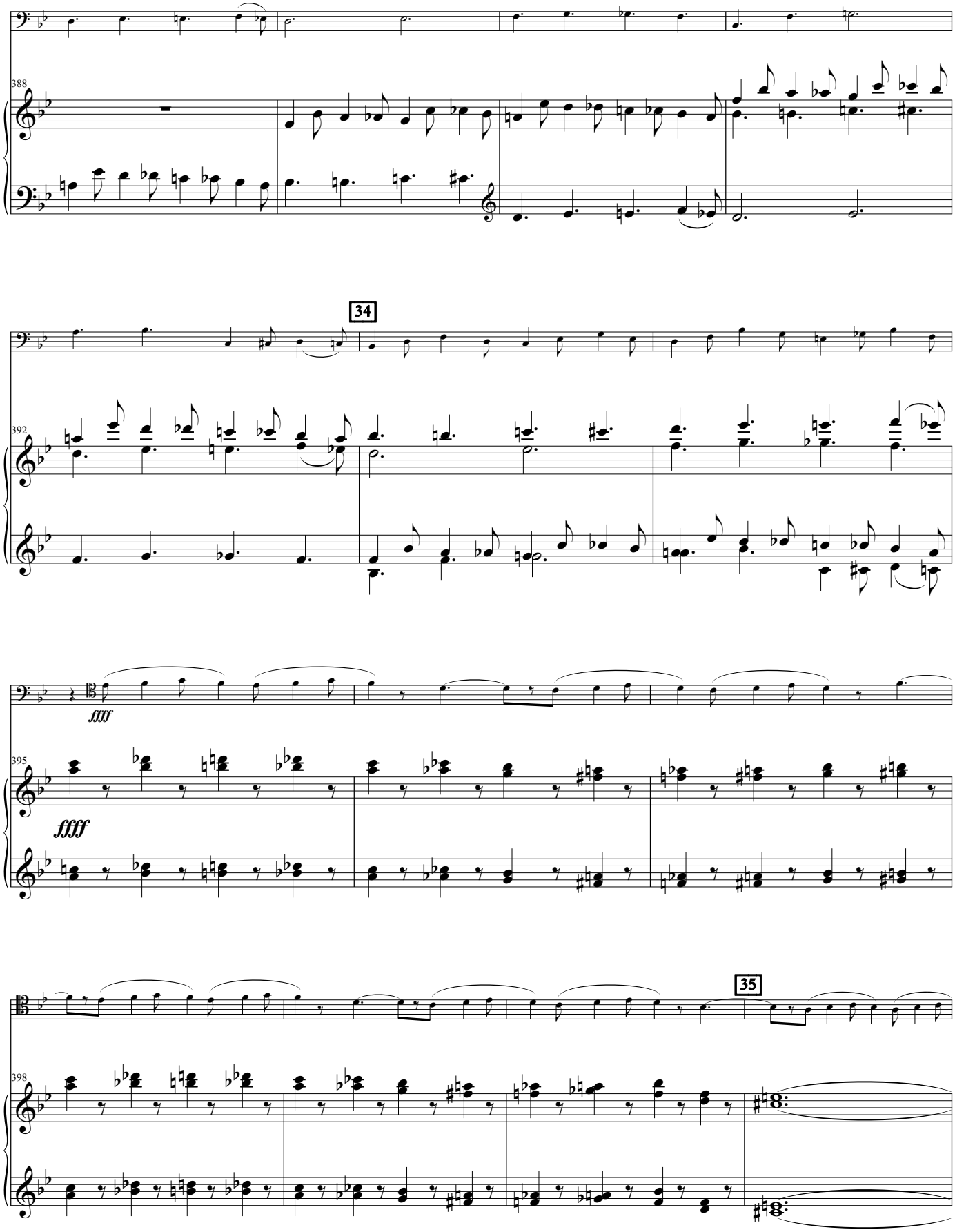

♩ = 72
fp
sfz
274
282
24
ppp, cresc.
f
289
25
p
297
♩. = 144
ppp
sffz
solo
305
pp
ff

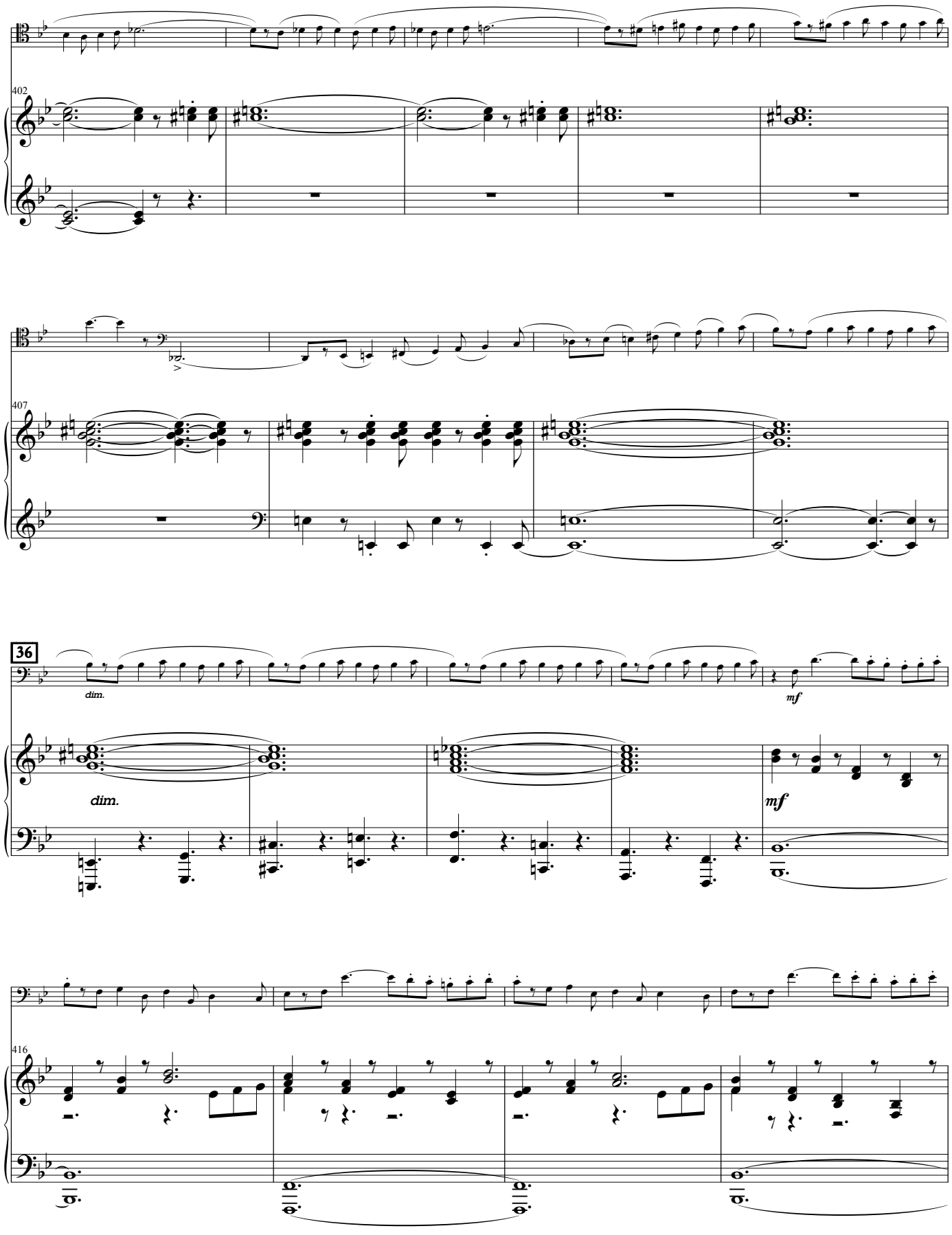

Piano
311
26
ff
314
319
27
323
327

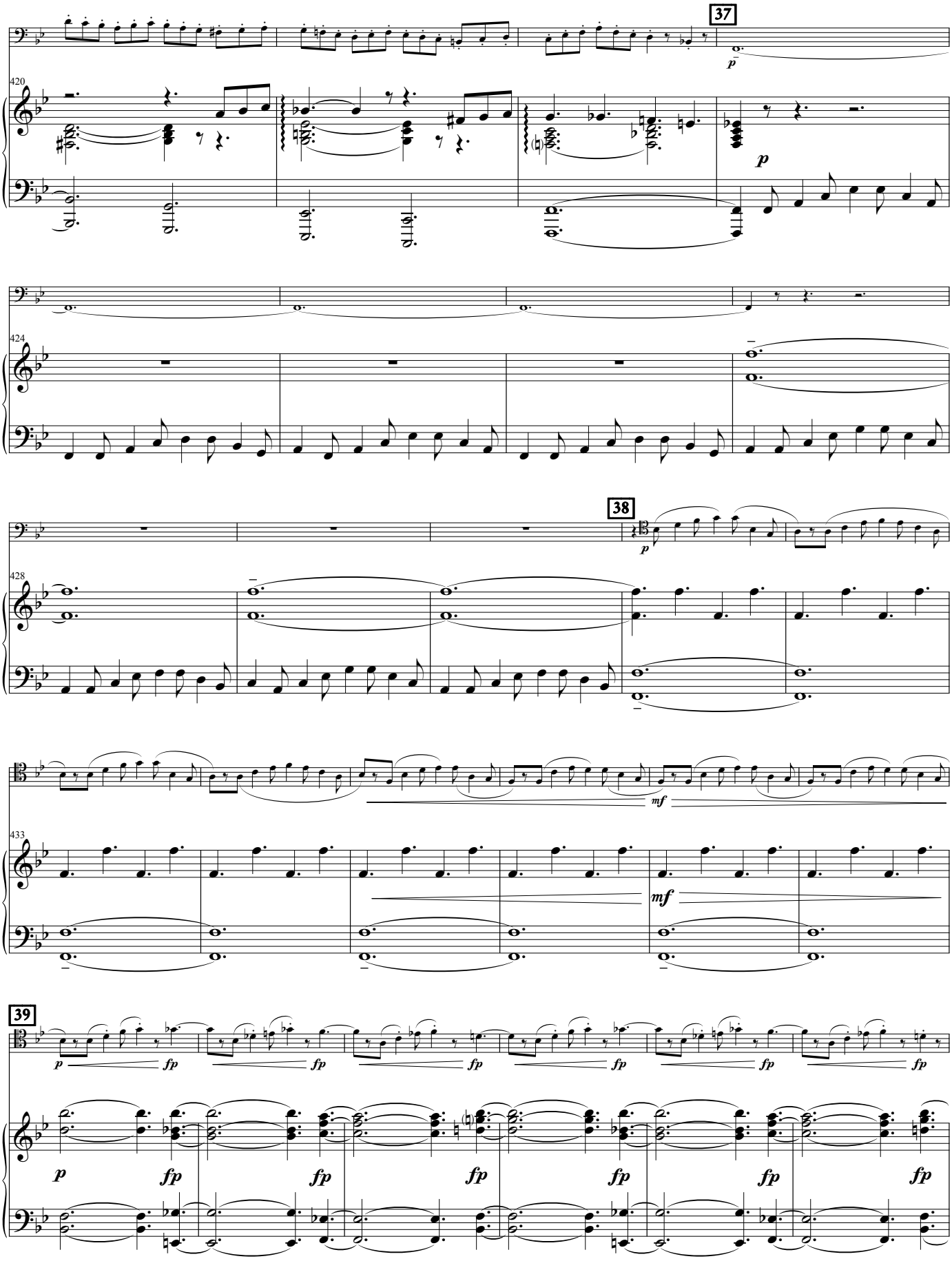

28
Piano
pp
mp
pp
mp
335
Piano
pp
mp
pp
mp
pp
29
fp
sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz
340
fp
sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz
ff
344
sfz
ff
348
Piano
dim.
352
Piano
pp

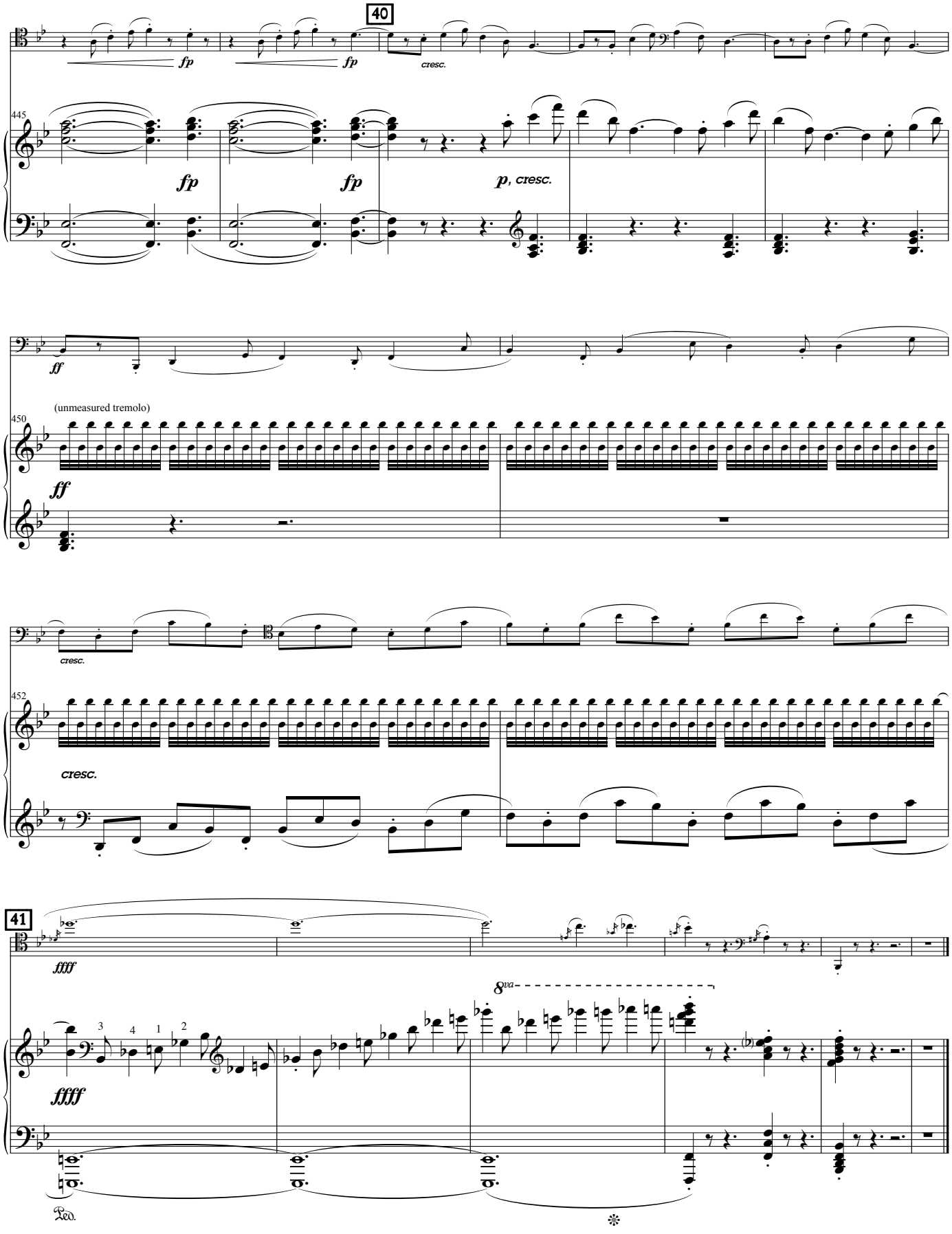

30
p
p
360
cresc.
cresc.
364
2
1
3
31
ff
ff
368
372


375
32
381
33
384
mp, cresc.
mf, cresc.


388
34
392
ffff
395
ffff
35
398


402
407
36
dim.
mf
dim.
mf
416


37
420
p
424
38
428
mf
433
mf
39
p
fp
fp
fp
fp
fp
fp
p
fp
fp
fp
fp
fp
fp


40
fp
fp
cresc.
445
fp
fp
p, cresc.
ff
(unmeasured tremolo)
450
ff
cresc.
452
cresc.
41
ffff
8va
ffff
Ped.

# **Performance notes** *(piano)*

1. In Samba City, when the l.h. has repeated chords stretching a tenth (as from m. 12), one may use a facilitation suggested by Weber in his first Sonata: arpeggiate the first chord, then let either your hand or just the pedal (depending on the size of your hand) hold the bottom note, and reiterate only the top two notes of the chord. Continue repeating this process of playing the full chord only every other iteration. (Notice that the use of such technique here runs contrary, as it were, to the syncopation in the music–a non-parallelism I confess to liking.) At rehearsal **9** we have now a four-factor chord, but the same technique can apply if one simply treats the top two notes (white) as but a single one, by playing them simultaneously with the thumb after having arpeggiated the two on the bottom. Then of course it would be the top *three* of the chord factors that would always sound through.

2. In the Ringstraße waltz, it would appear fairly clear that the melody is passing back and forth between the bassoon and piano, up until rehearsal **12**. Then comes a canonic passage which confirms the equality of these two participants, but the question then arises, all right, who has the melody from m. 122 up to the repeat sign. The answer is yes. Both lines are equally important, and whenever such is the case, no-one should be trying to call attention to his or her line at the expense of the other. (Not likely to be realized in the real world, but I can still state my ideal!)

3. In m. 227 we hold the pedal, and are only "Out of the Mist" when we finally lift it, in m. 263.

4. At the start of Introduction and Tarantella, I make a distinction between ***fp*** and ***sfz***. To anticipate two questions: yes, the ***sfz***'s get more; and, yes, the ninth m. here is deliberately different from the first one. This will all hold true again when the same motive gets sped up, at rehearsal **29**.

5. I would tend to play the six mm. after **30** with both voices in the r.h. the first time through (because of where we are coming from), but then switch to just the l.h. for the repeat. This sets the next passage up well, where these same notes, now assigned specifically to the l.h., undergo development.

6. In mm. 450 to 453 of the Tarantella, I use alternating thirty-second notes, but then mitigate these with the note "unmeasured tremolo." Although the notes can be played freely, the passage should still conclude as indicated, with that higher Bb at the very end of 453 tied into the following downbeat.