Partita for violoncello and piano, op. 66

1. Introduction
2. Minuet ('cello solo)
3. Bourrée (piano solo)
4. Habañera
5. Pavane in Fifths
6. Polka

The present suite was composed in the winter that straddled 1986 and 1987. In my use of the designation *partita* I emphasized the derivation of the work from Baroque models. That is to say, a free prelude followed by different national dances. But, as you can see, I indulged in dance forms (like the habañera) that were not available to the Baroque composer! Indeed, my Partita betrays influences ranging past the Baroque through Beethoven (the gruff Polka) and Tchaikovsky (the stylized Introduction) to of course the many popular world musicians I have so long enjoyed.

I dedicated my Partita to the 'cellist who premiered the work with me, Frank Murphy.

Victor Frost
3 VII 90
New York City

Performance notes

1. In the Introduction, each of the pairs of mm. 18–19, 58–59, and 70–71 takes the place of what would have been a single m. The augmentation by degrees we see in them is, of course, just a written-out rit. (Easiest to see this process in the middle pair there. It would otherwise have been identical to m. 54. In case you're curious, it's deliberate that the hairpin here doesn't match that of 54; rather, it harks back to the 18–19 pair.) The interpretive effect of following such notation would seem sufficient. A further rit. upon the augmented notes themselves would probably just gild the lily!

2. The slashed grace notes in the Minuet are all to be played as consistently as practicable, always before the beat (even when they don't "have" to be). In m. 88 there are three stems-up chords whose top notes, in spite of the grace-note notation, are probably the main melody. If not, they would constitute a quite viable countermelody.

3. Sometimes staccato is just a note shortener, but usually it implies a sharper articulation to the note. (When I want the former, it is my usual practice to simply write a shorter note value followed by a rest, as in m. 87 of the Minuet.) In the Habañera, m. 194 of the 'cello part, I seem to want to have it both ways. A shortening so that the E and F match the previous two pairs of notes, but an articulation to give the cadence more point. The tendency has been for 'cellists to treat that downbeat F as if the staccato were on an eighth note rather than quarter.

4. The small notes for the pianist in mm. 288 to 298 of the Pavane in Fifths add very little to the musical argument and should simply be omitted if they are not completely comfortable. Try playing everything on the downbeat of m. 292. If it can be played comfortably without recourse to arpeggiation, then fine. Otherwise, *all* of the small notes in the eleven mm. should be left out.

5. In m. 308 of the Pavane, 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 the precise tremolo notes showing before m. 309. And of these, the two indicated thumb notes in each hand would get tied into the 309 downbeat.

6. While it could be argued that the whole suite is greater than the sum of its parts, the fact is that the individual numbers can be (and have been) programmed separately, particularly as encores. If by chance you want to do the Introduction out of context, feel free to use a title I had considered giving it early on: Hommage à Tchaikovsky.

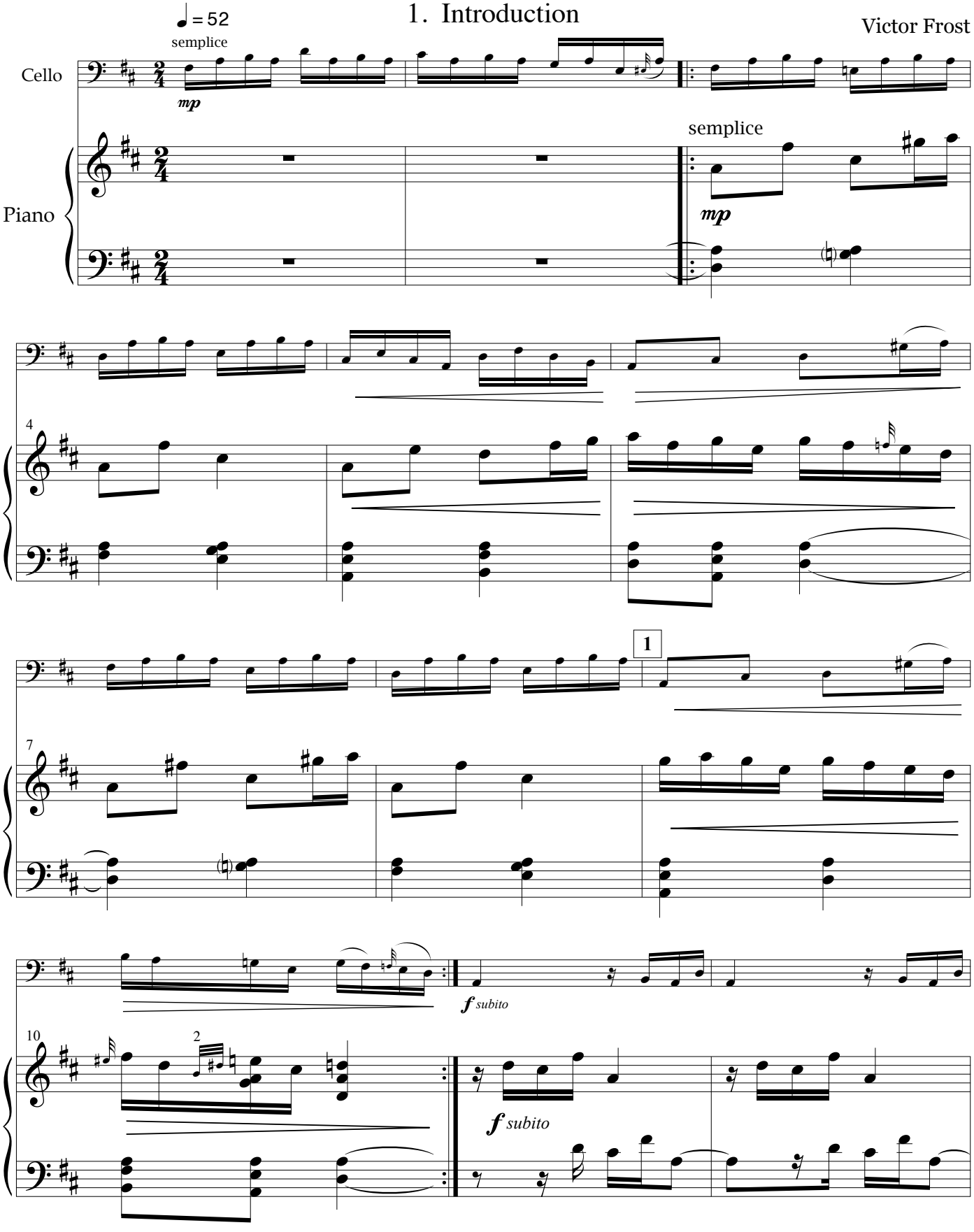
to Frank Murphy

Partita

for violoncello and piano, op. 66

1. Introduction

Victor Frost



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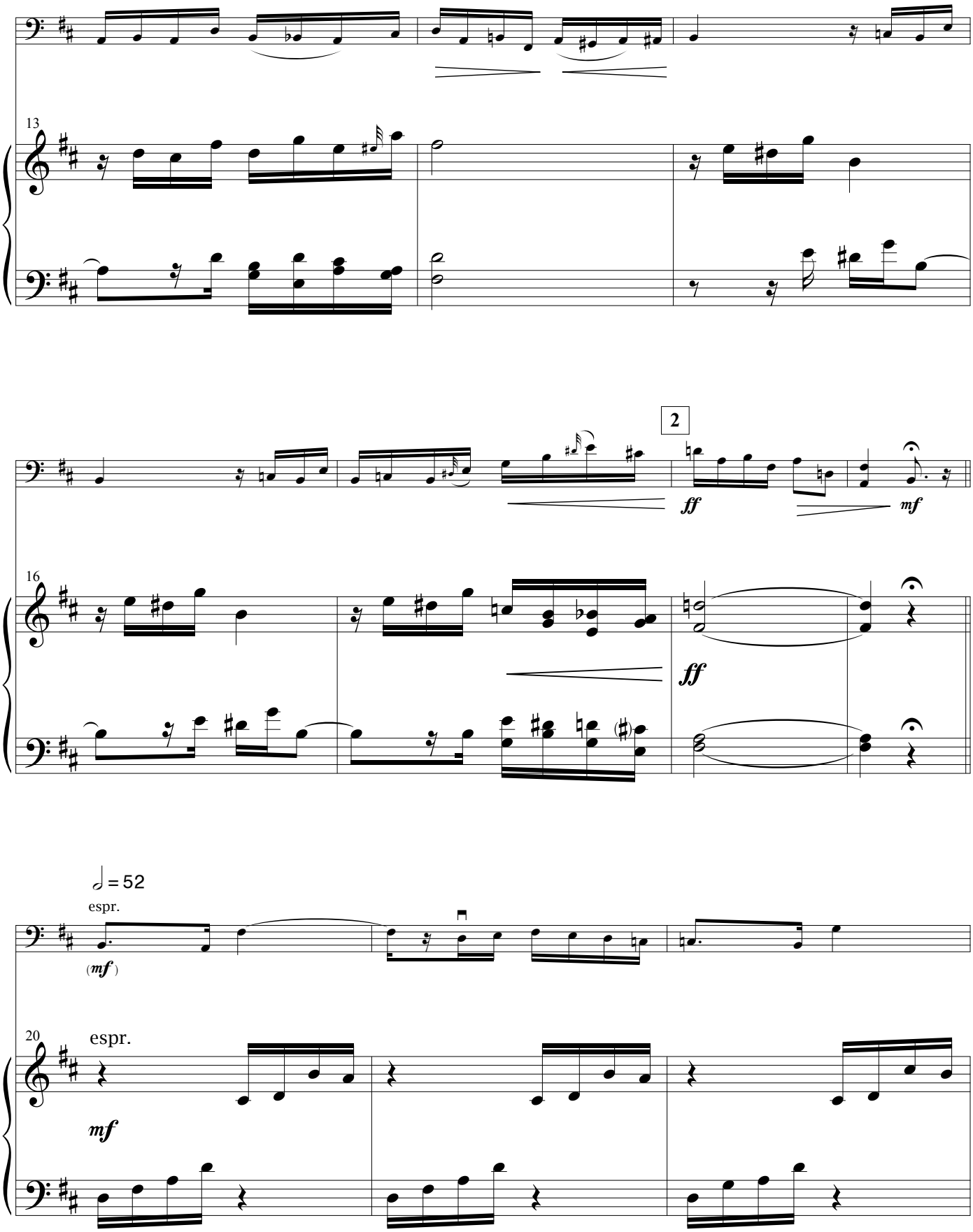
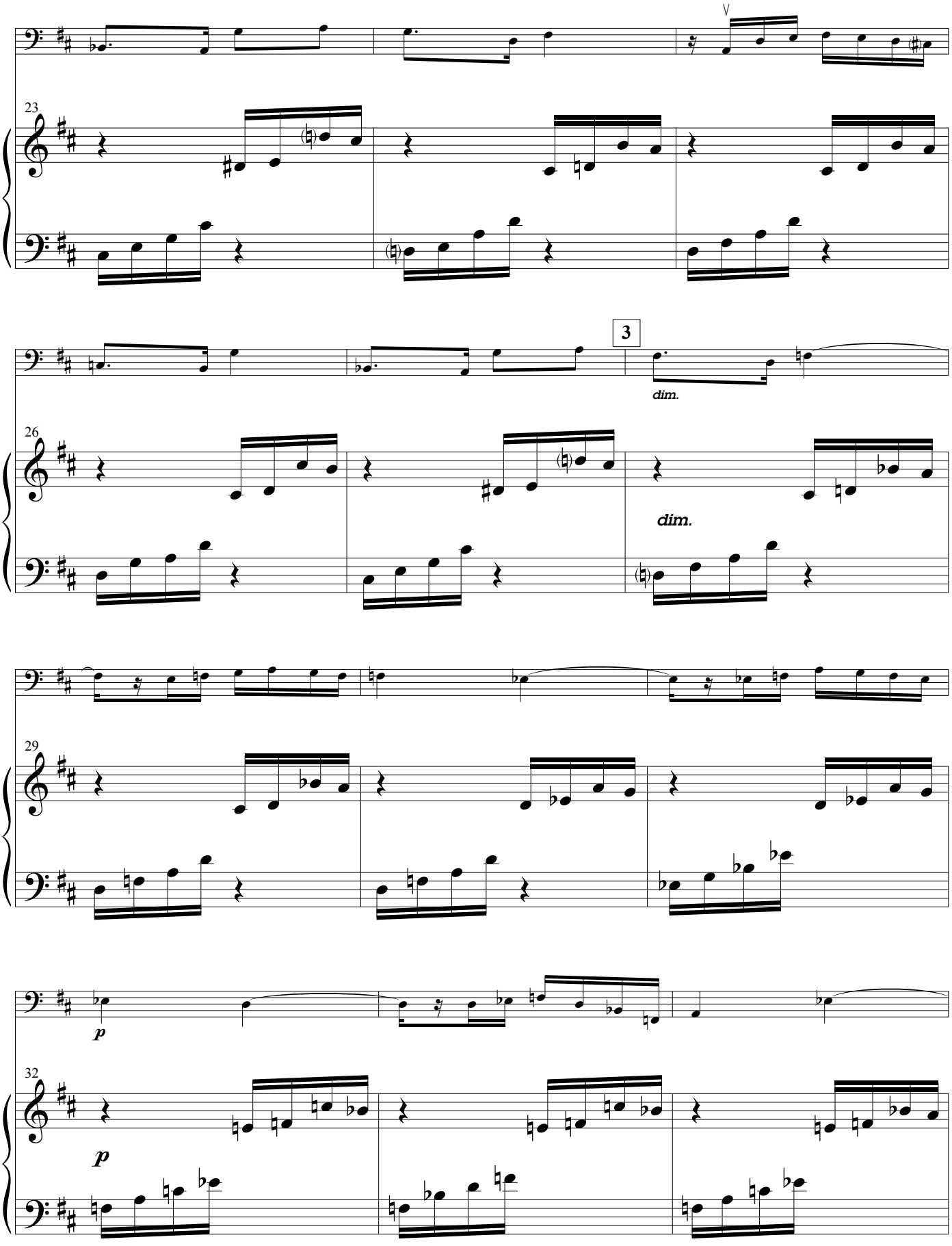
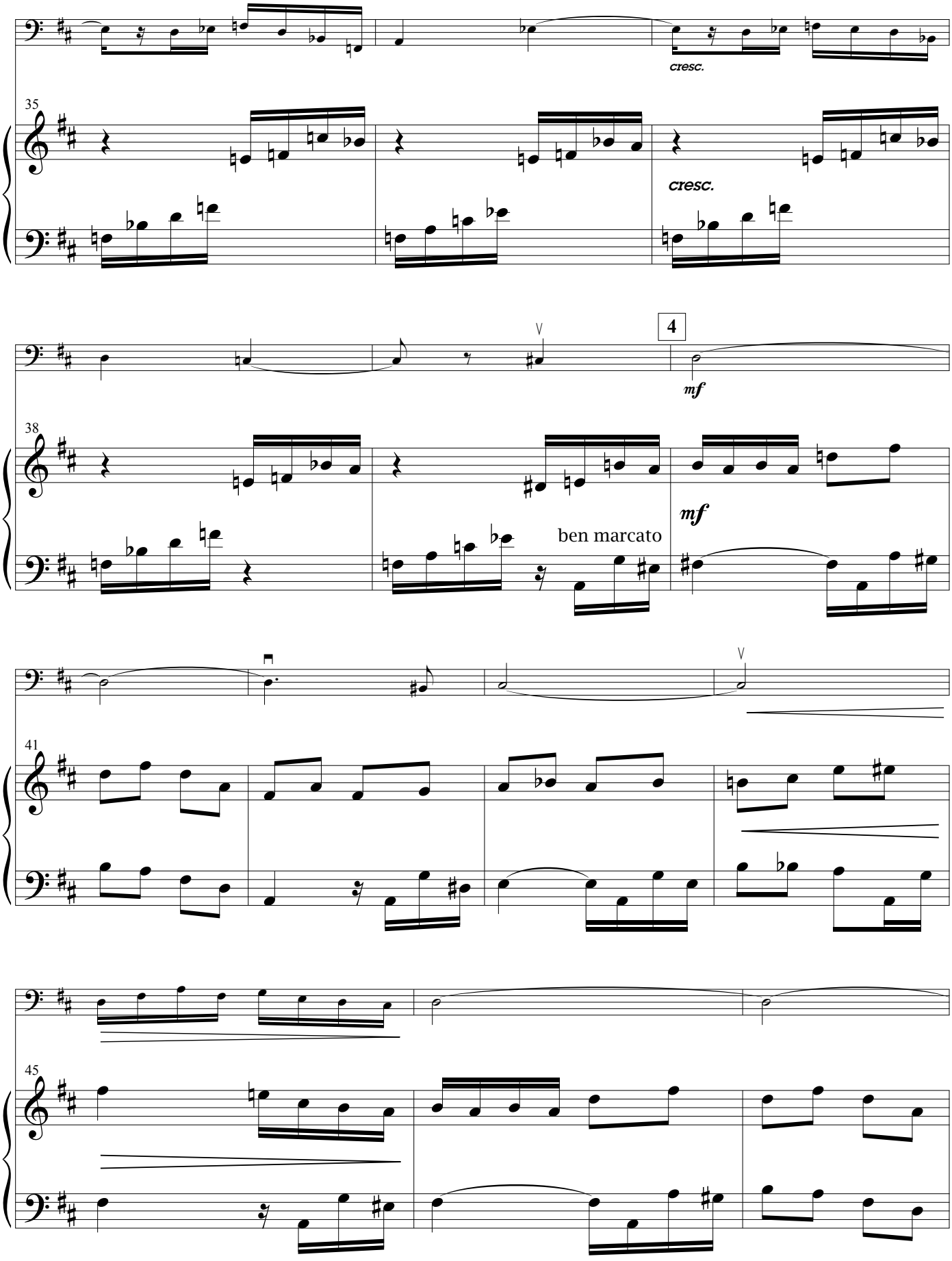
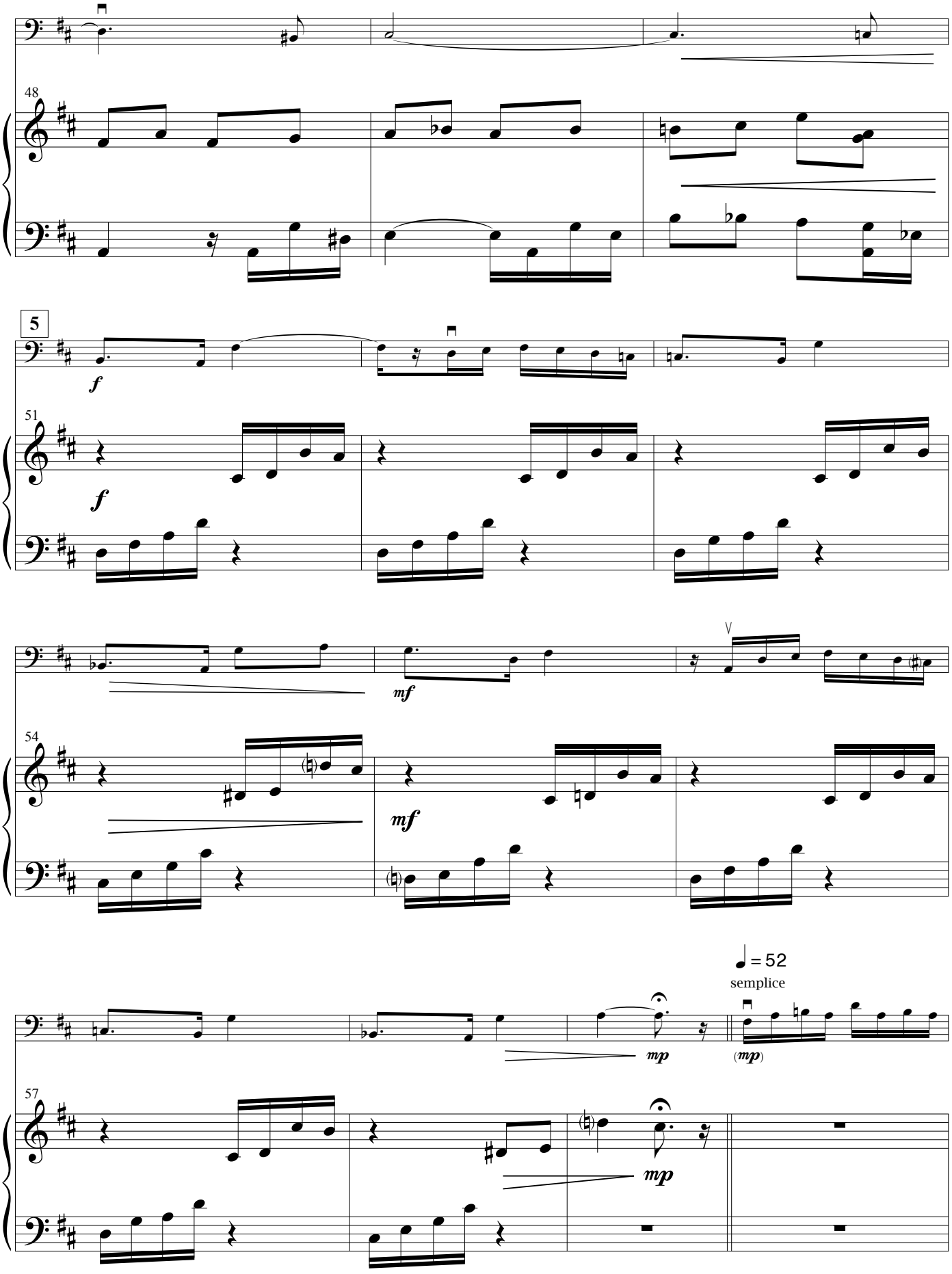
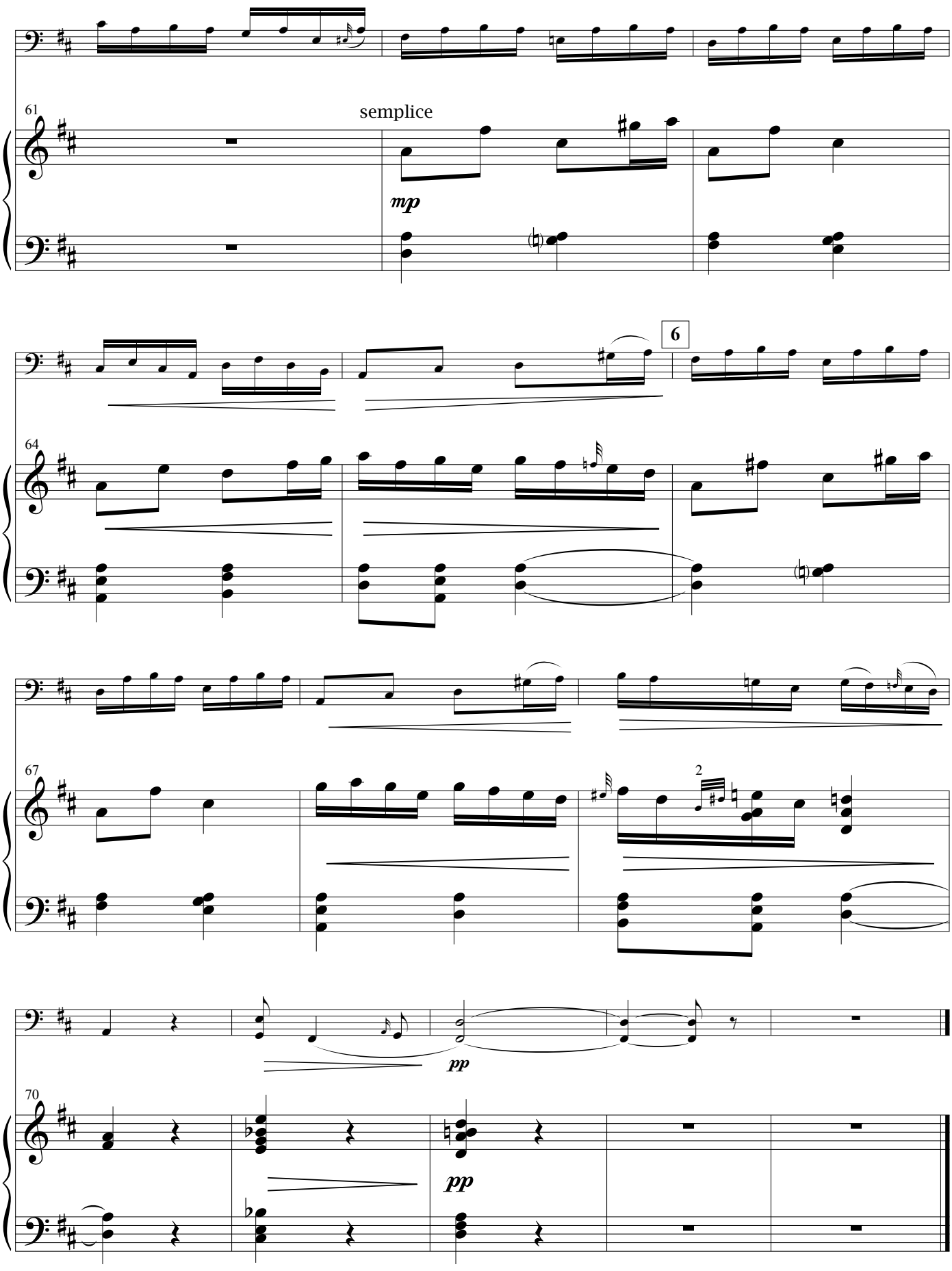
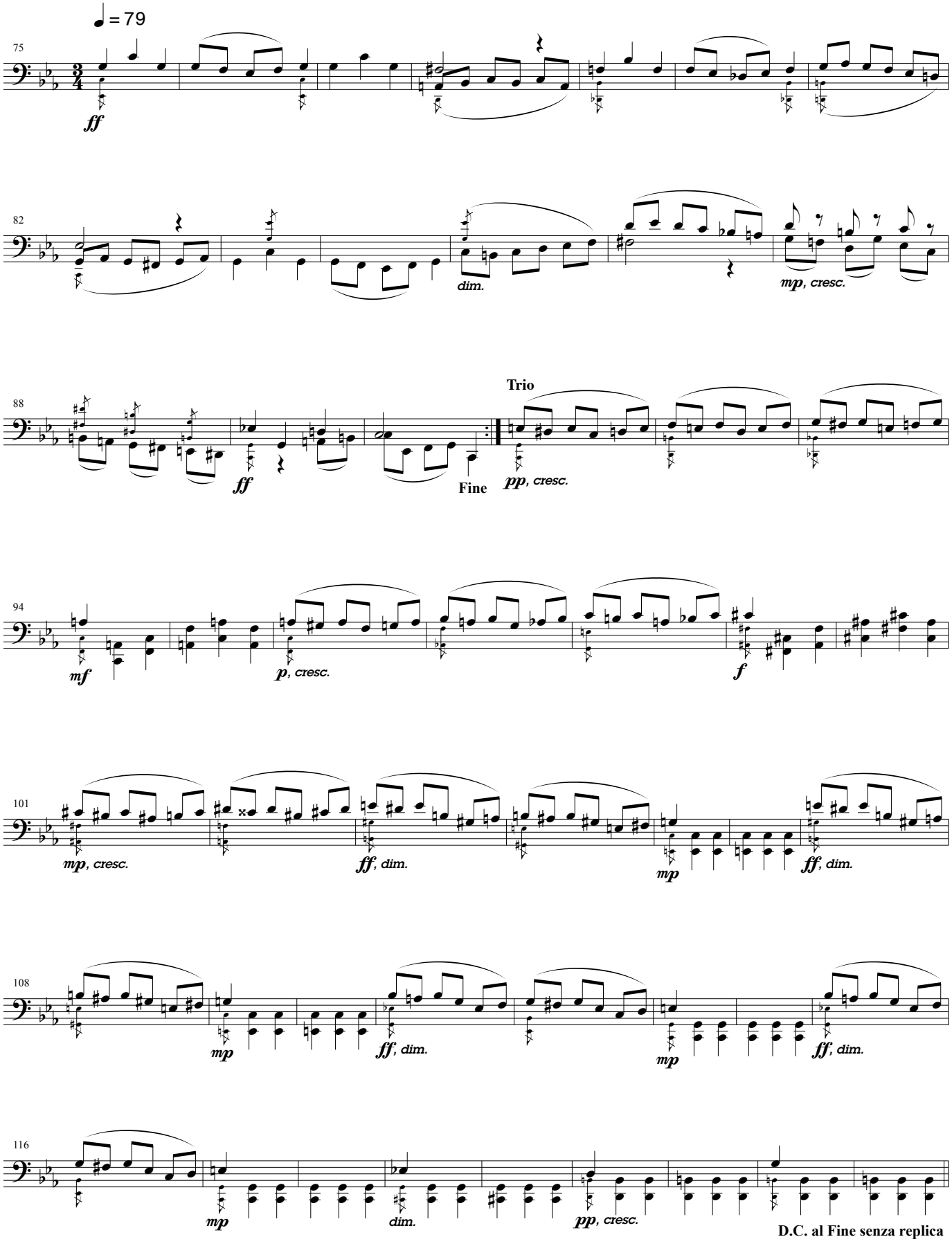

13
2
ff
mf
16
ff
♩ = 52
espr.
(mf)
20
espr.
mf

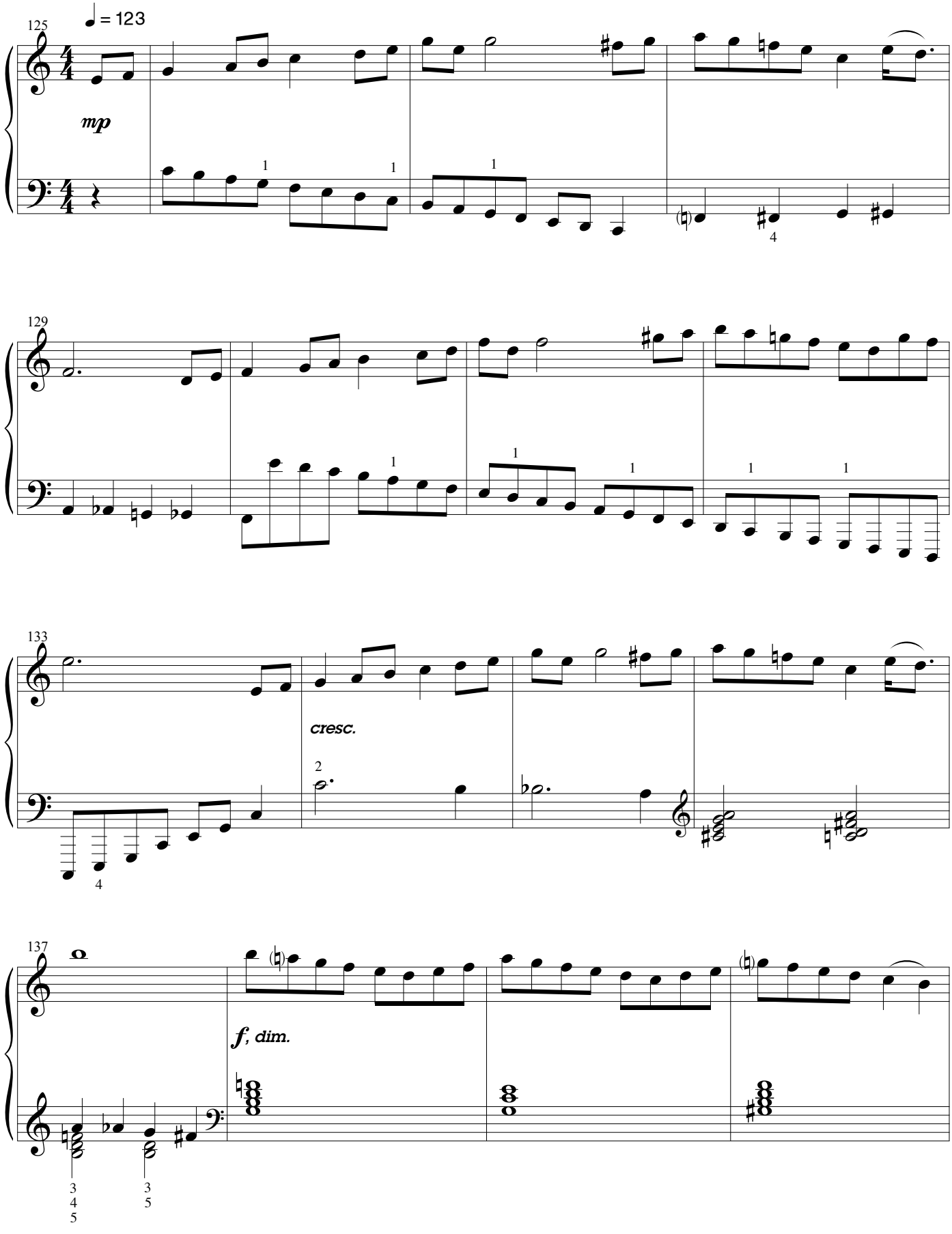

23
3
dim.
26
dim.
29
p
32
p

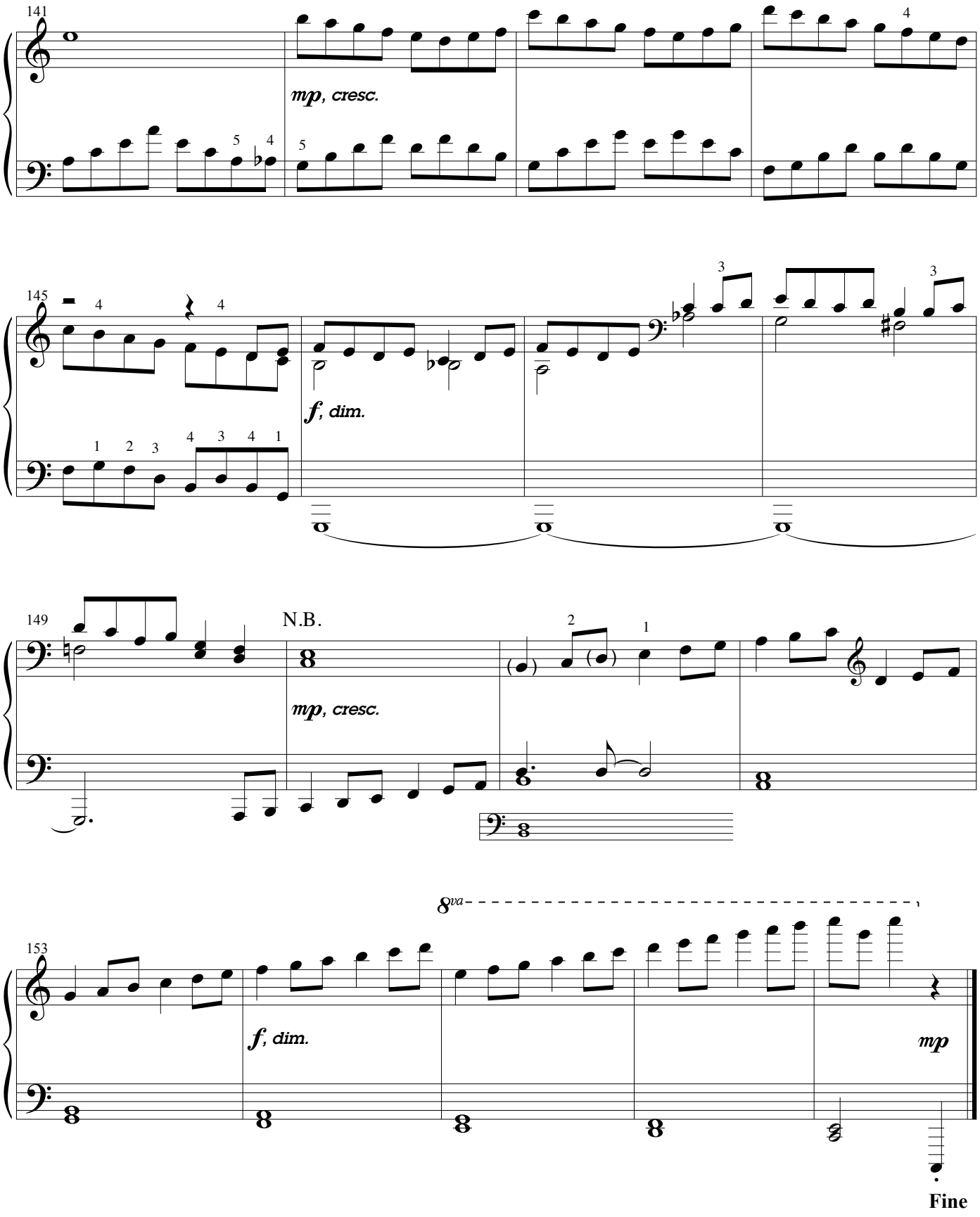

cresc.
35
cresc.
4
mf
38
mf
ben marcato
41
45


48
5
f
51
f
mf
54
mf
♩ = 52
semplice
mp
(mp)
57
mp


61
semplice
mp
6
64
67
2
pp
70
pp


♩ = 79
75
ff
82
dim.
mp, cresc.
88
ff
Fine
Trio
pp, cresc.
94
mf
p, cresc.
f
101
mp, cresc.
ff, dim.
mp
ff, dim.
108
mp
ff, dim.
mp
ff, dim.
116
mp
dim.
pp, cresc.
D.C. al Fine senza replica


125
♩ = 123
mp
129
133
cresc.
137
f, dim.

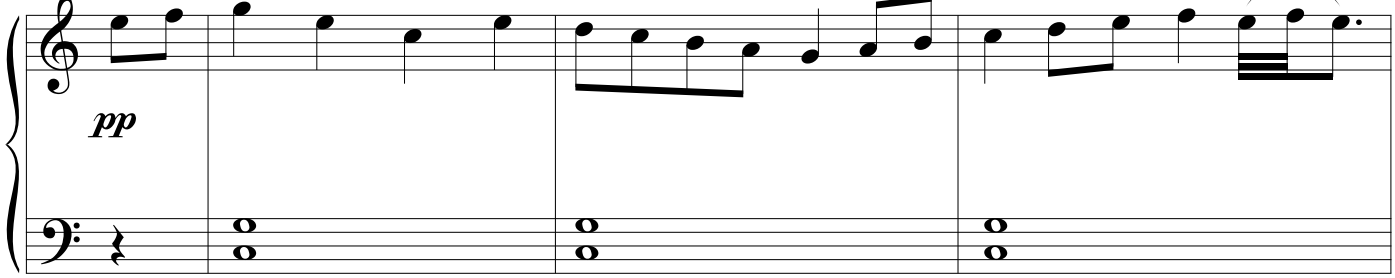


N.B. Beginning in m. 150, we have descending whole-note thirds while a sequence of the Bourrée's anapestic motive ascends to the instrument's highest note. These pass between hands (and thus clash) in the next m., 151. The small, freely suspended m. clarifies the voice leading. As to the melody, obviously the l.h. must render the two notes it needs takes over just as the r.h. would do were it unimpeded.

Trio

158

pp



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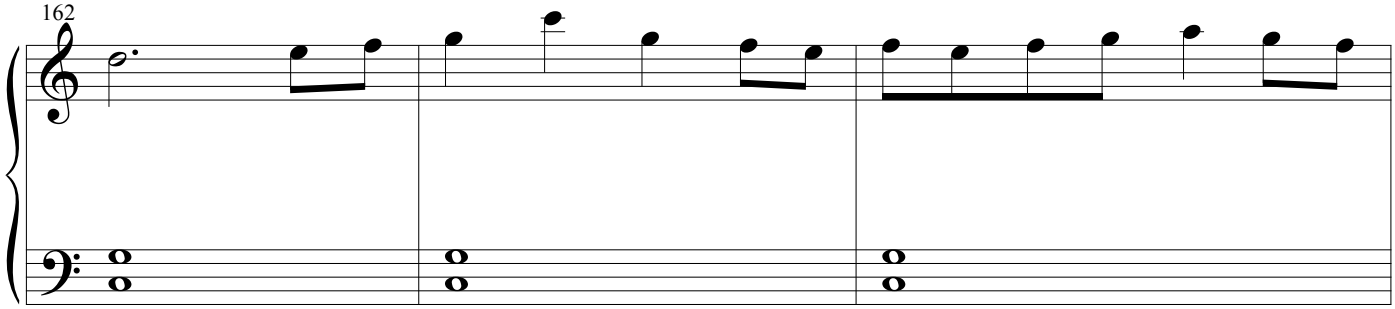

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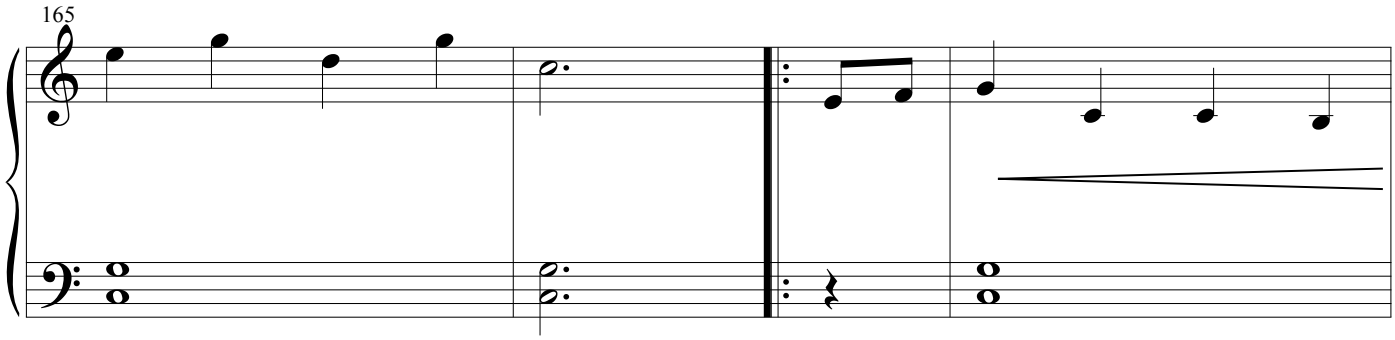

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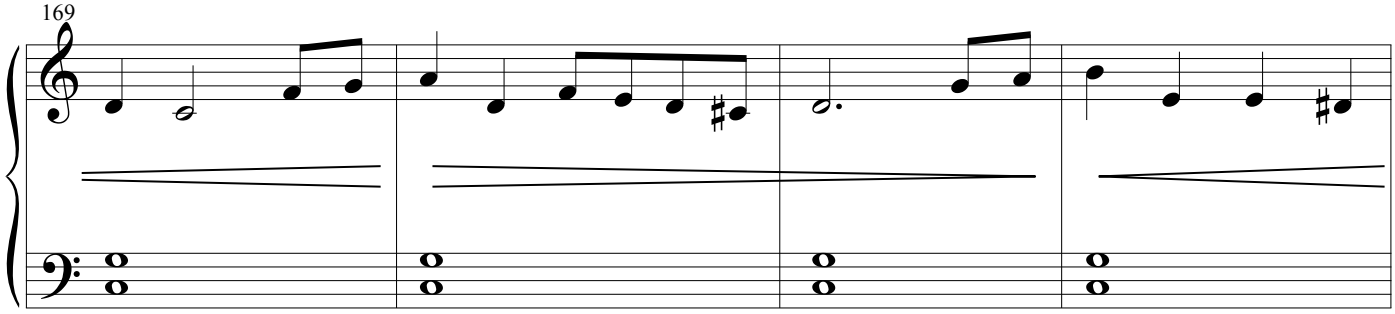
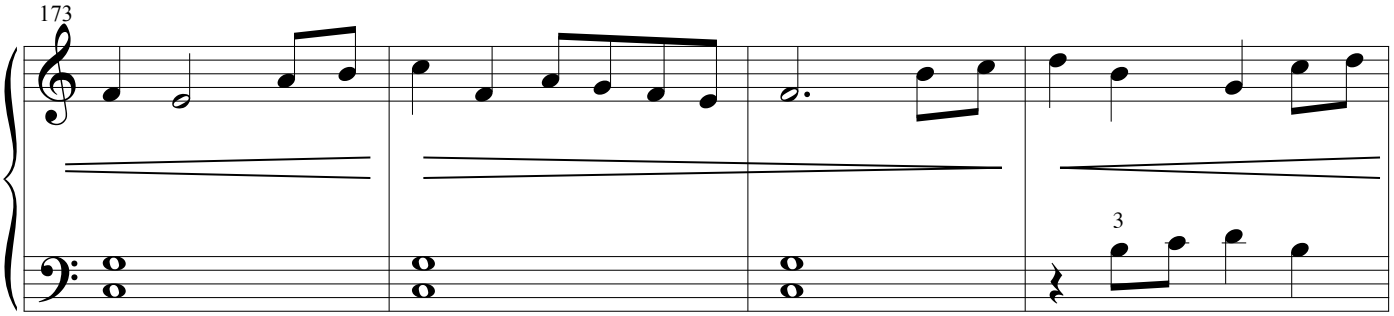
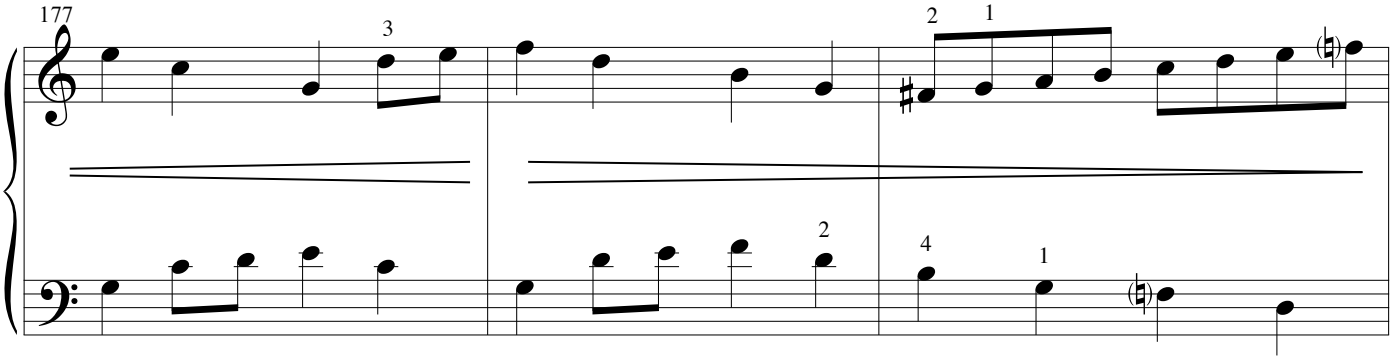
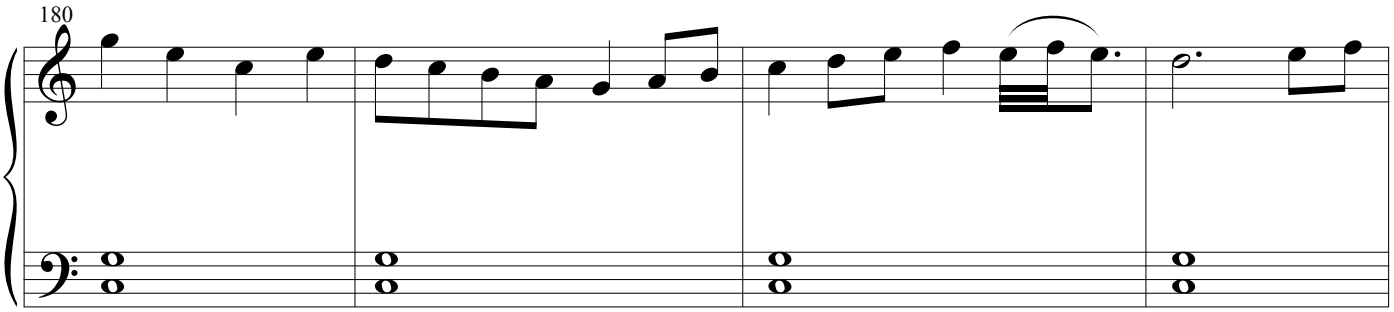
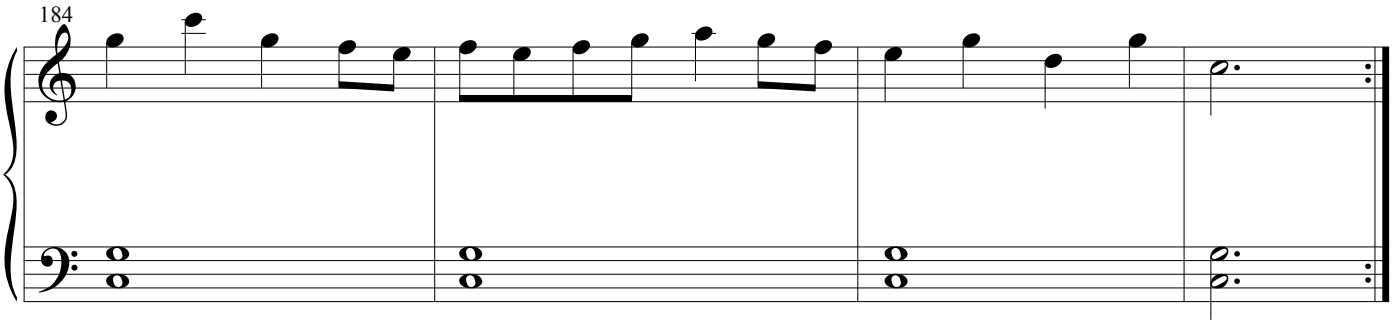




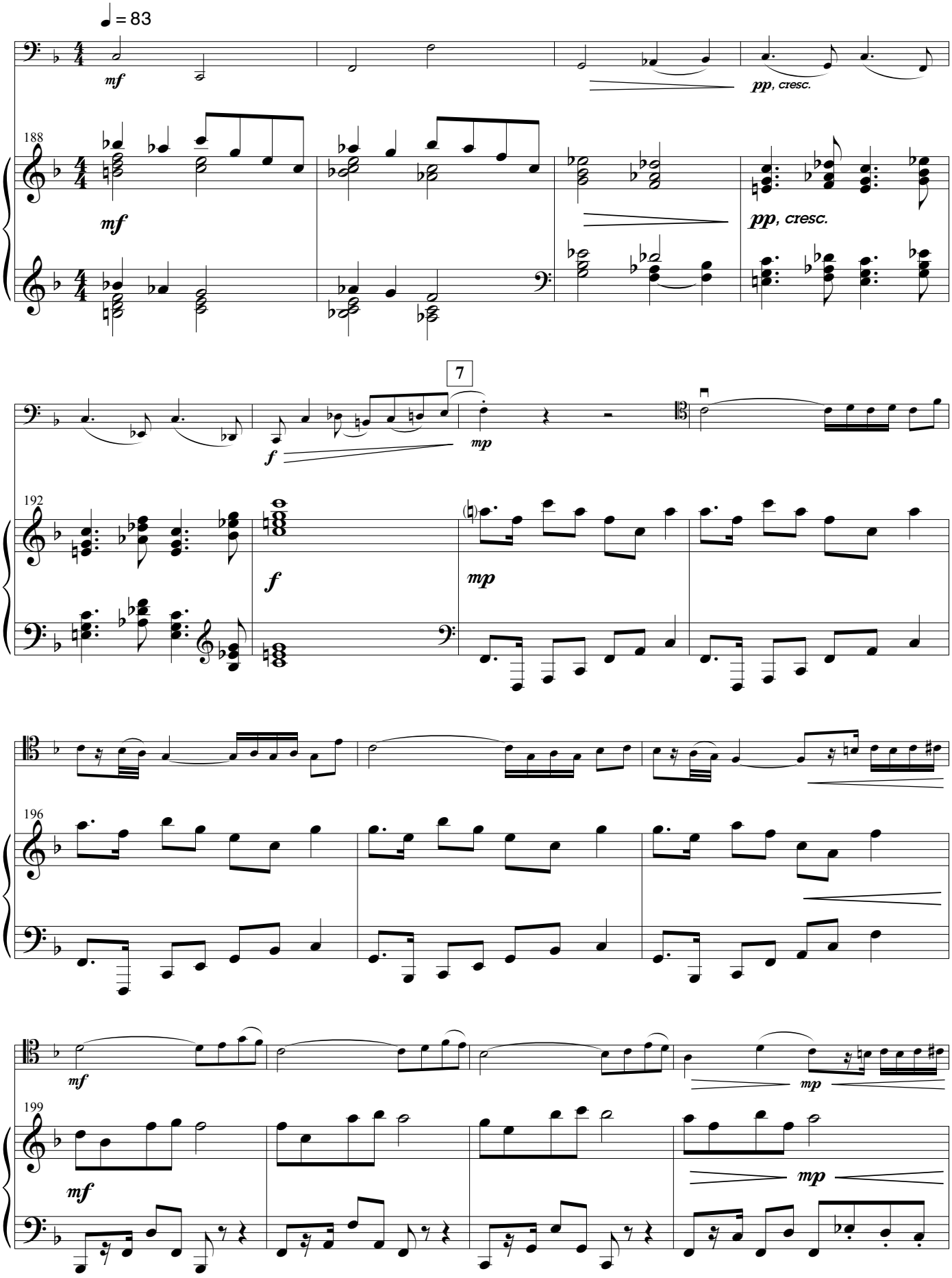


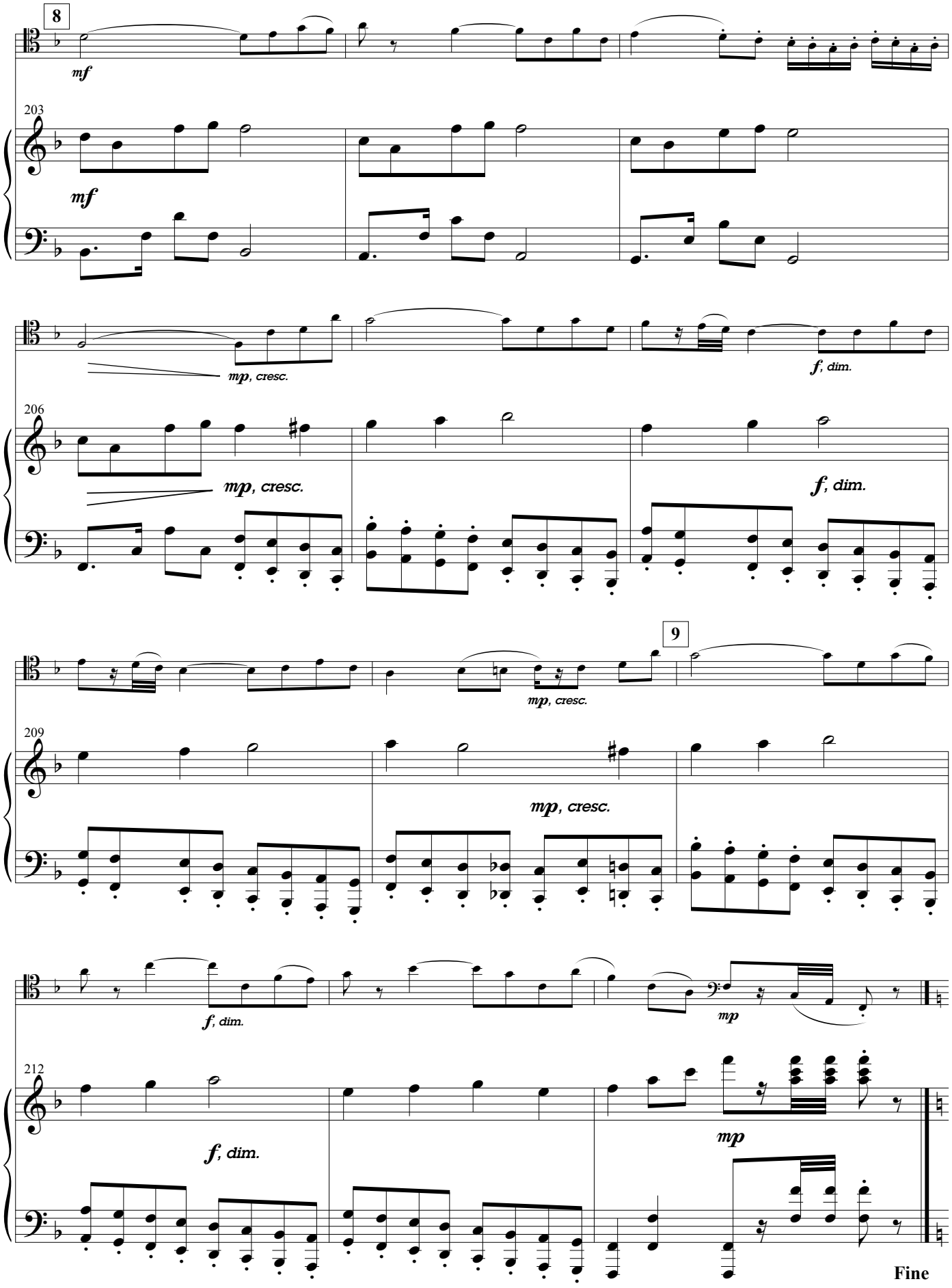


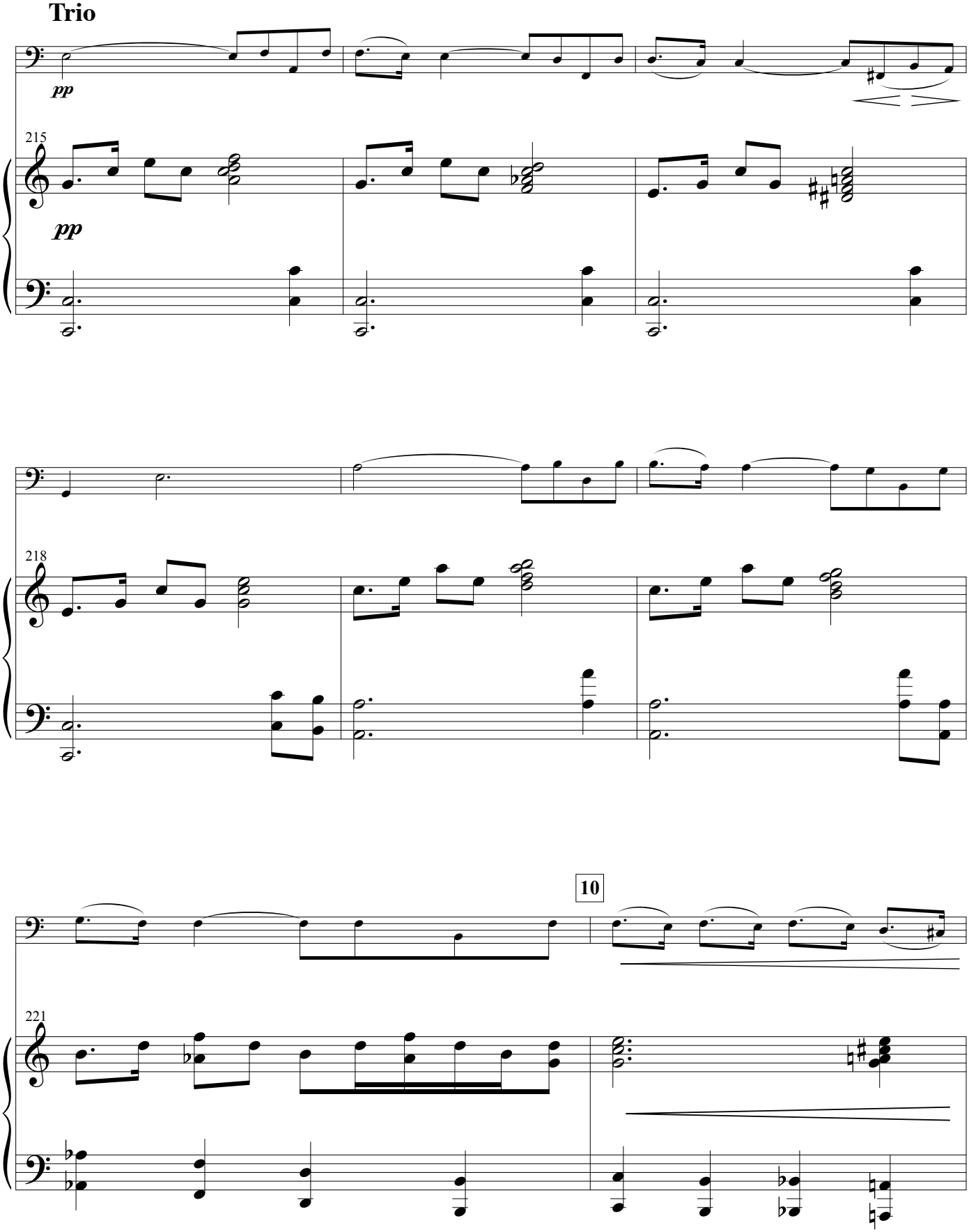


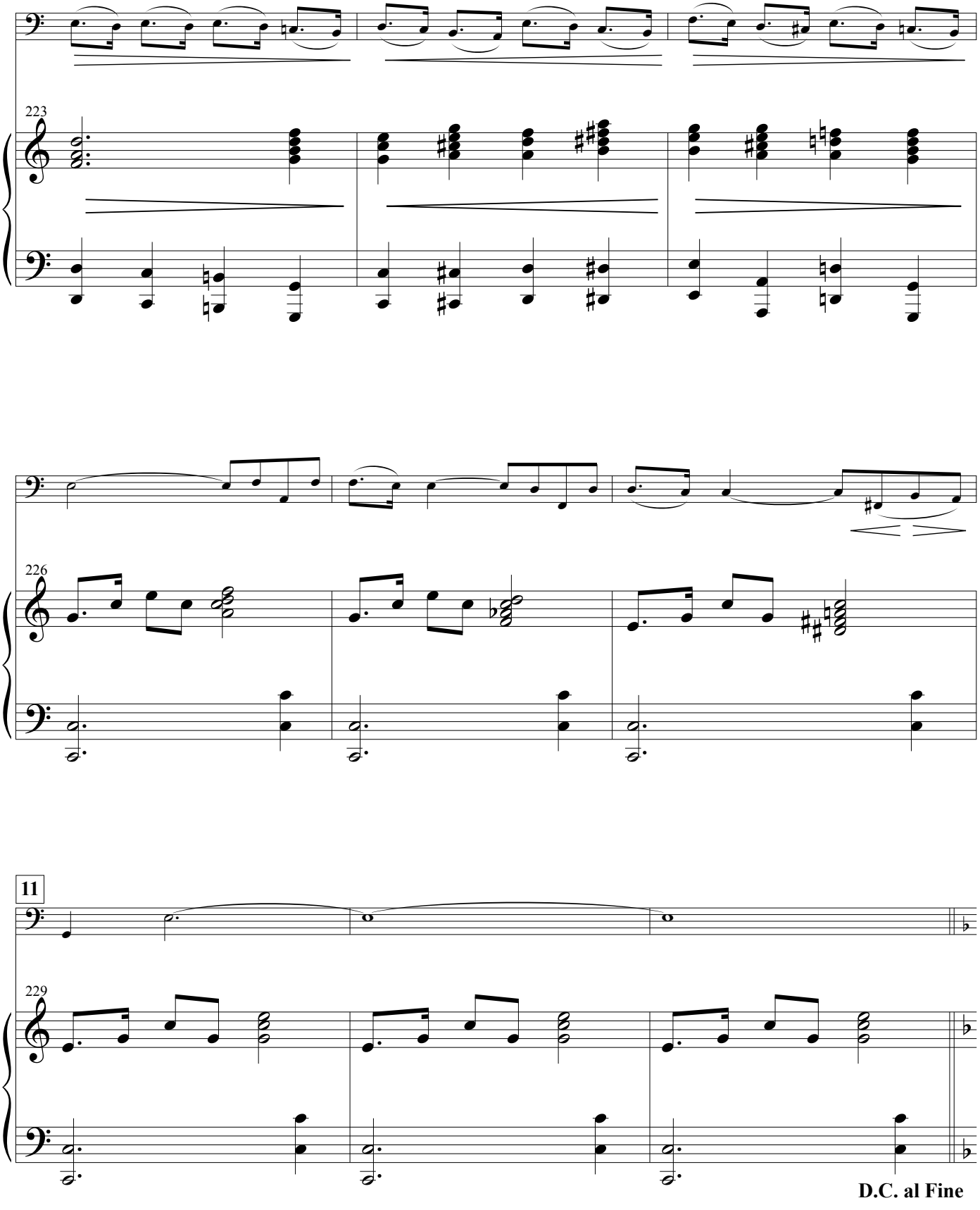
D.C. al Fine

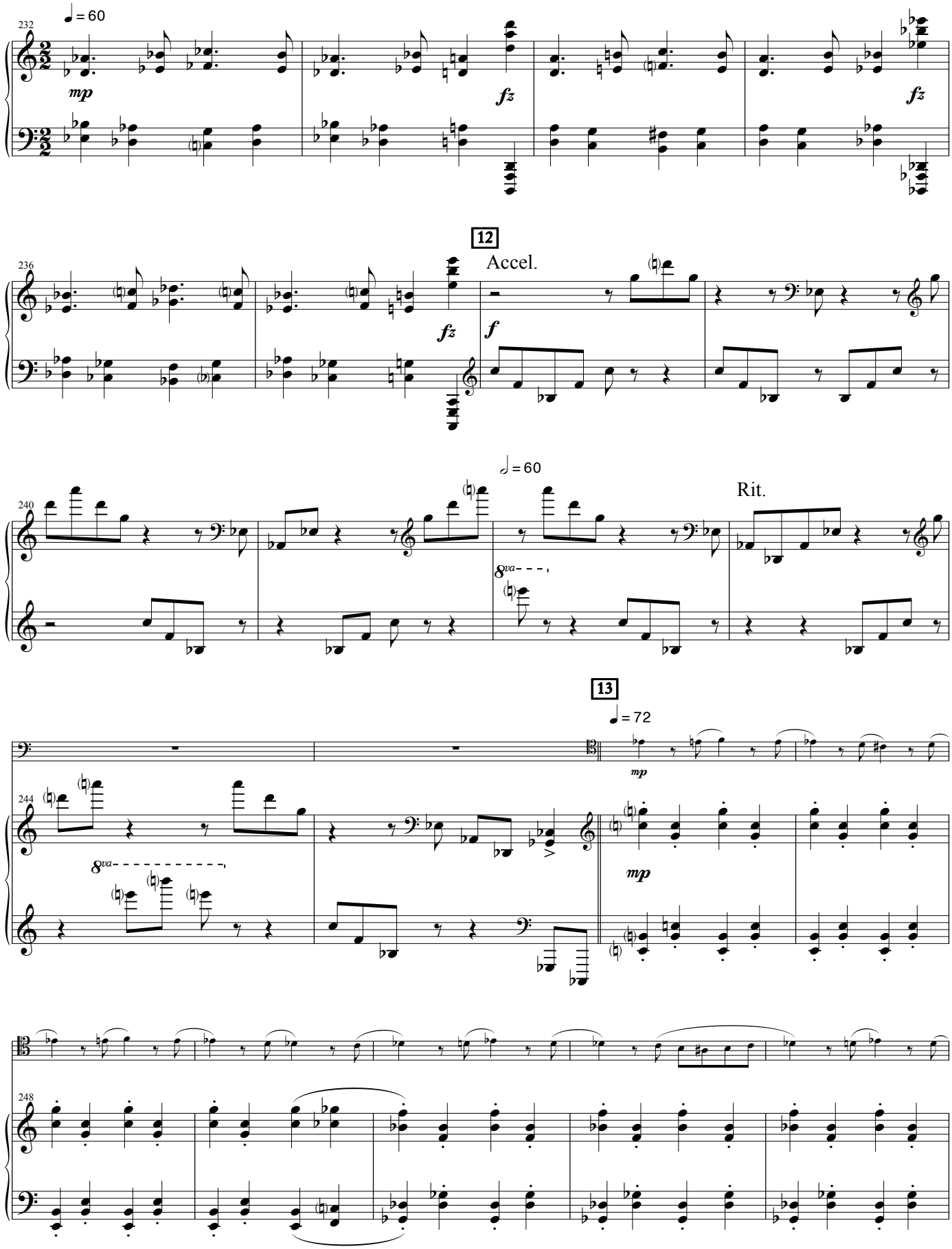
4. Habañera

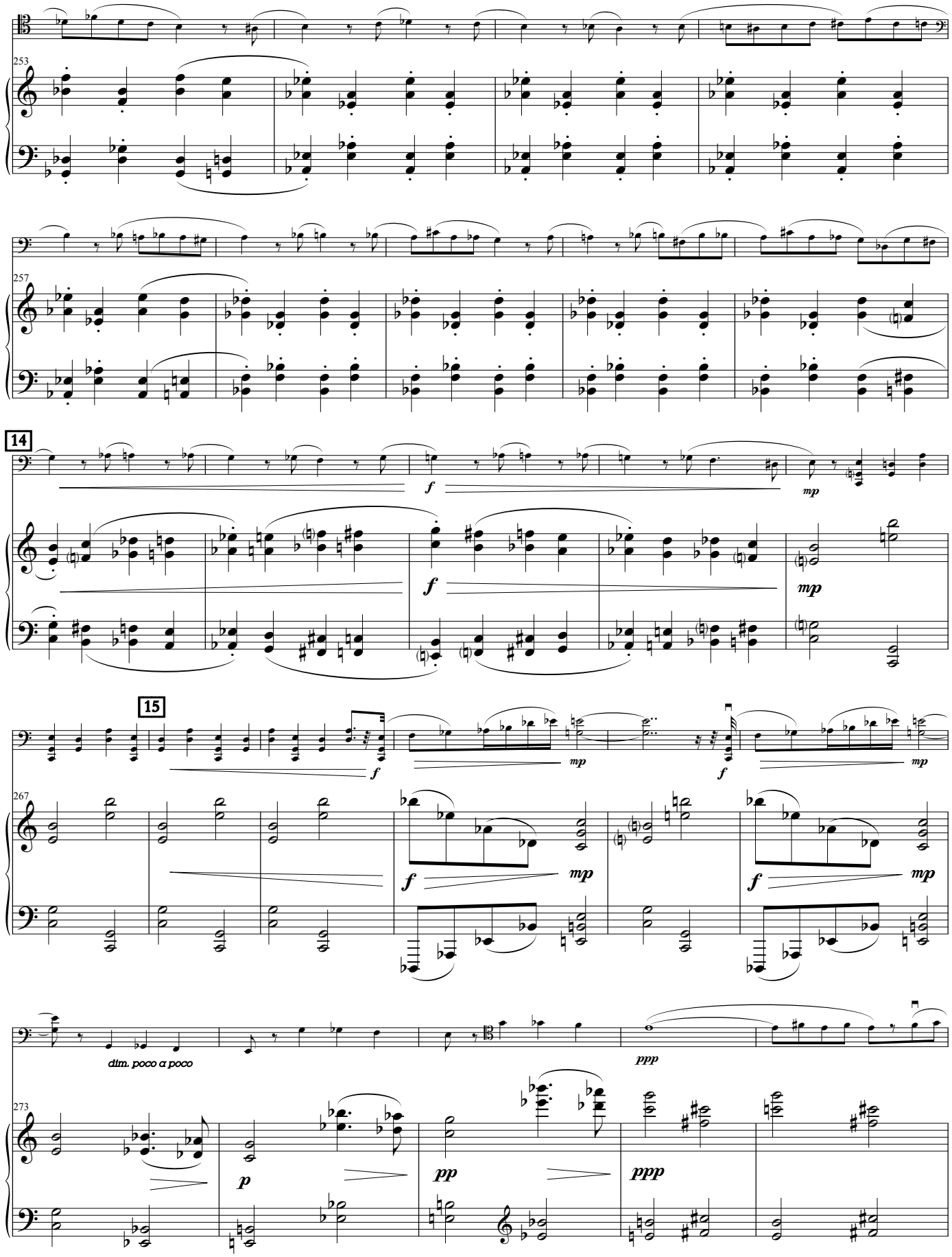


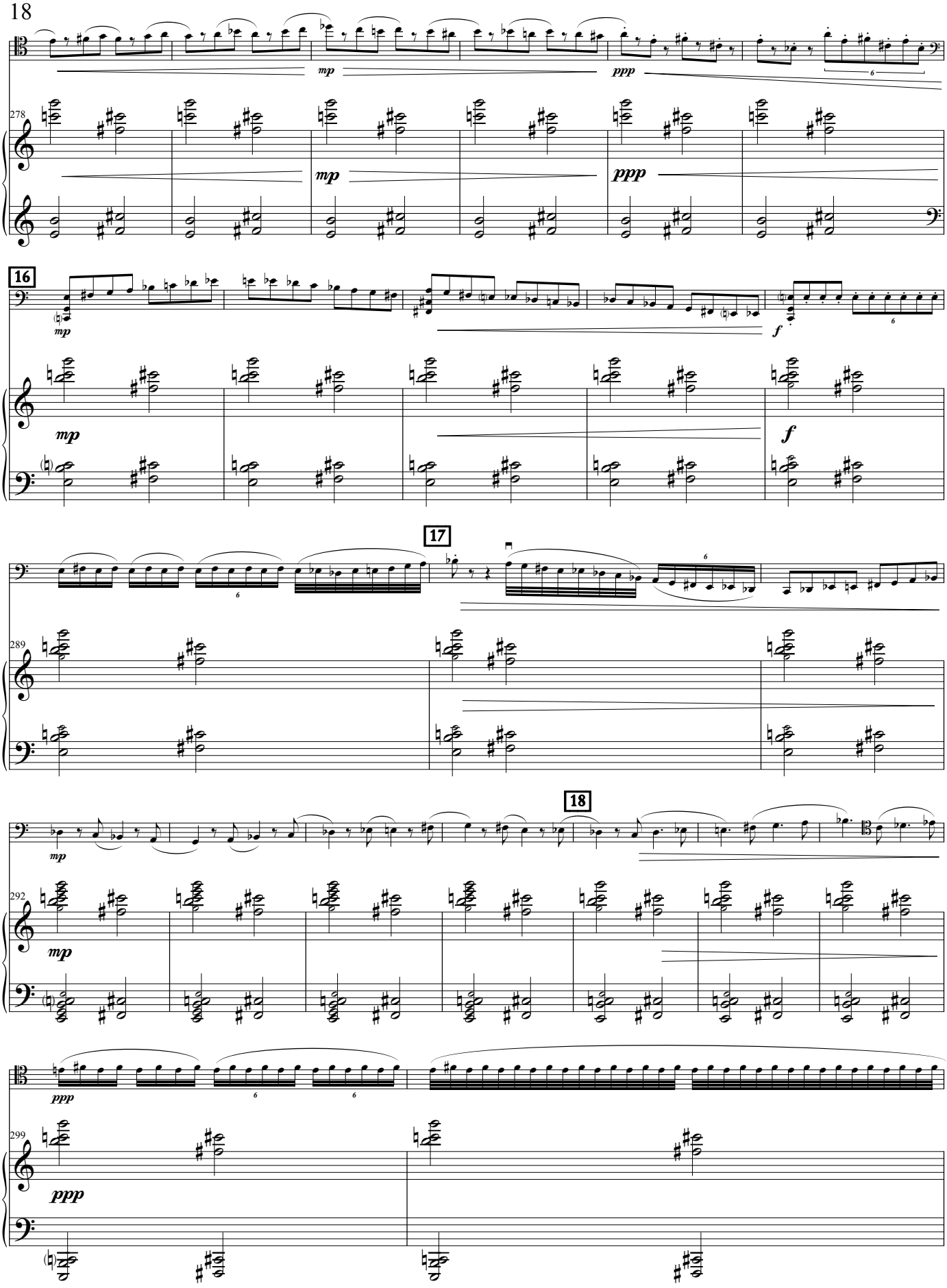

8
mf
203
mf
mp, cresc.
f, dim.
206
mp, cresc.
f, dim.
9
mp, cresc.
209
mp, cresc.
f, dim.
mp
212
f, dim.
mp
Fine

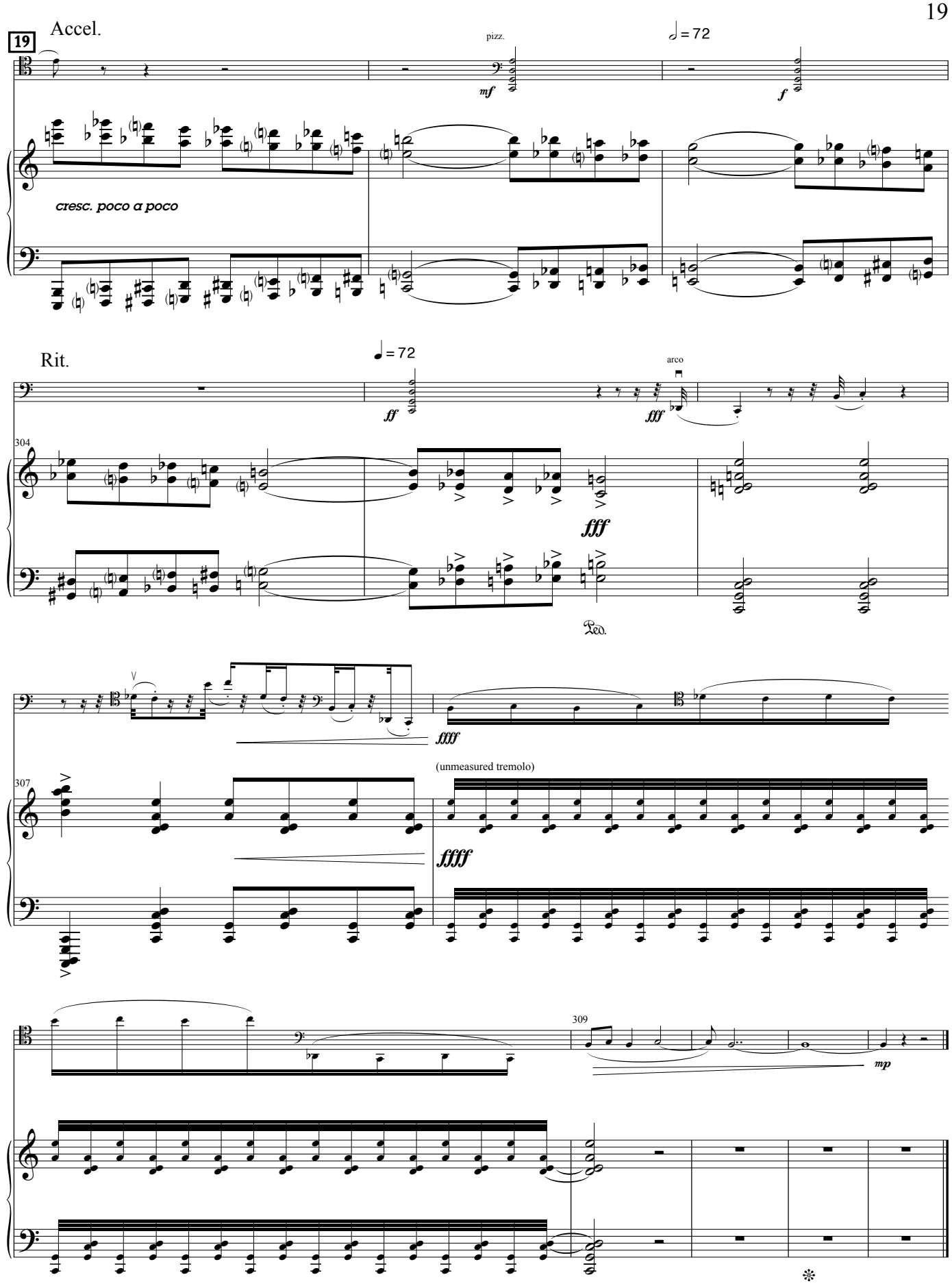

Trio
pp
215
pp
218
10
221


223
226
11
229
D.C. al Fine

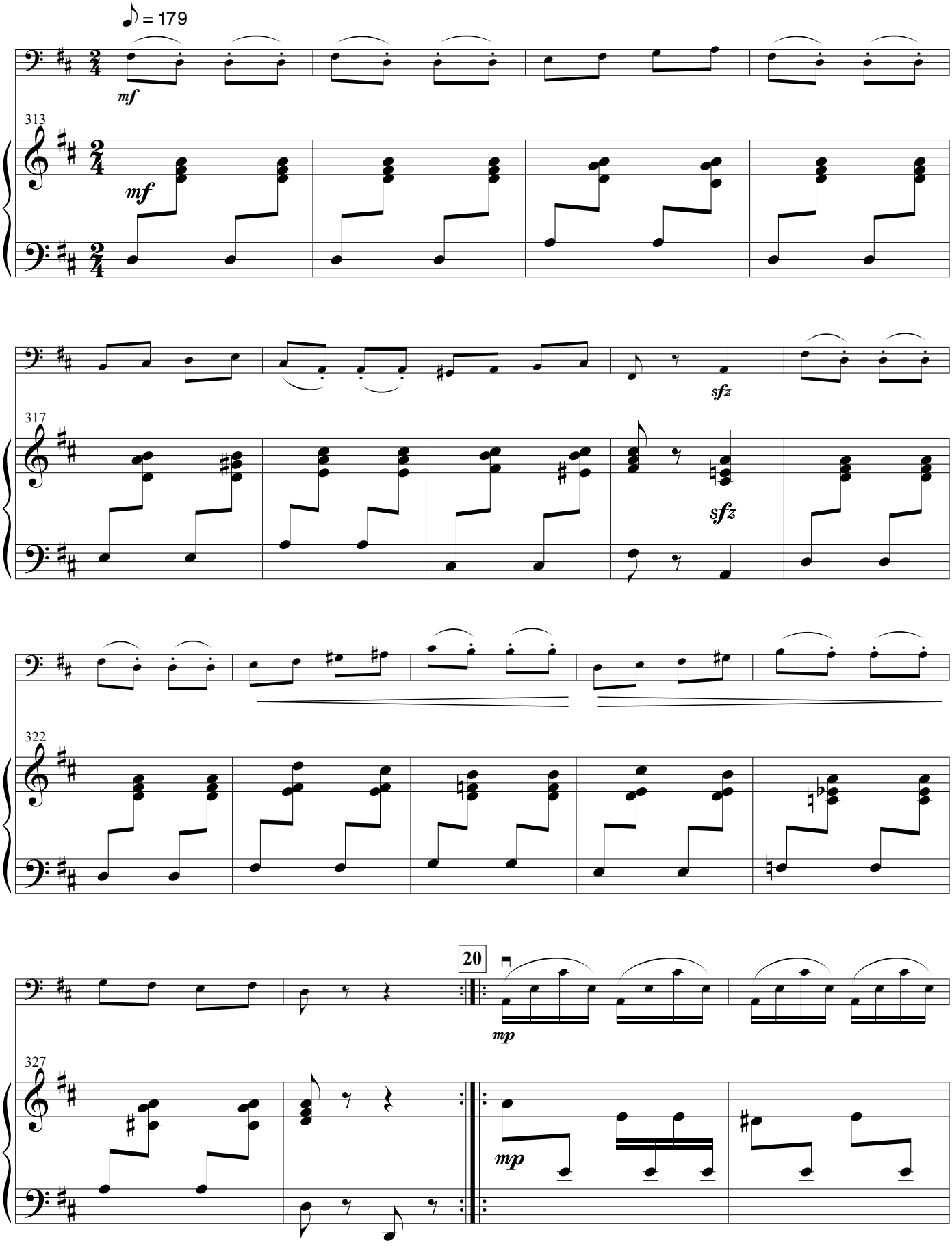

232
♩ = 60
mp
fz
fz
Piano
12
236
Accel.
fz
f
Piano
240
𝅗𝅥 = 60
8va
Rit.
Piano
13
♩ = 72
mp
244
8va
mp
248

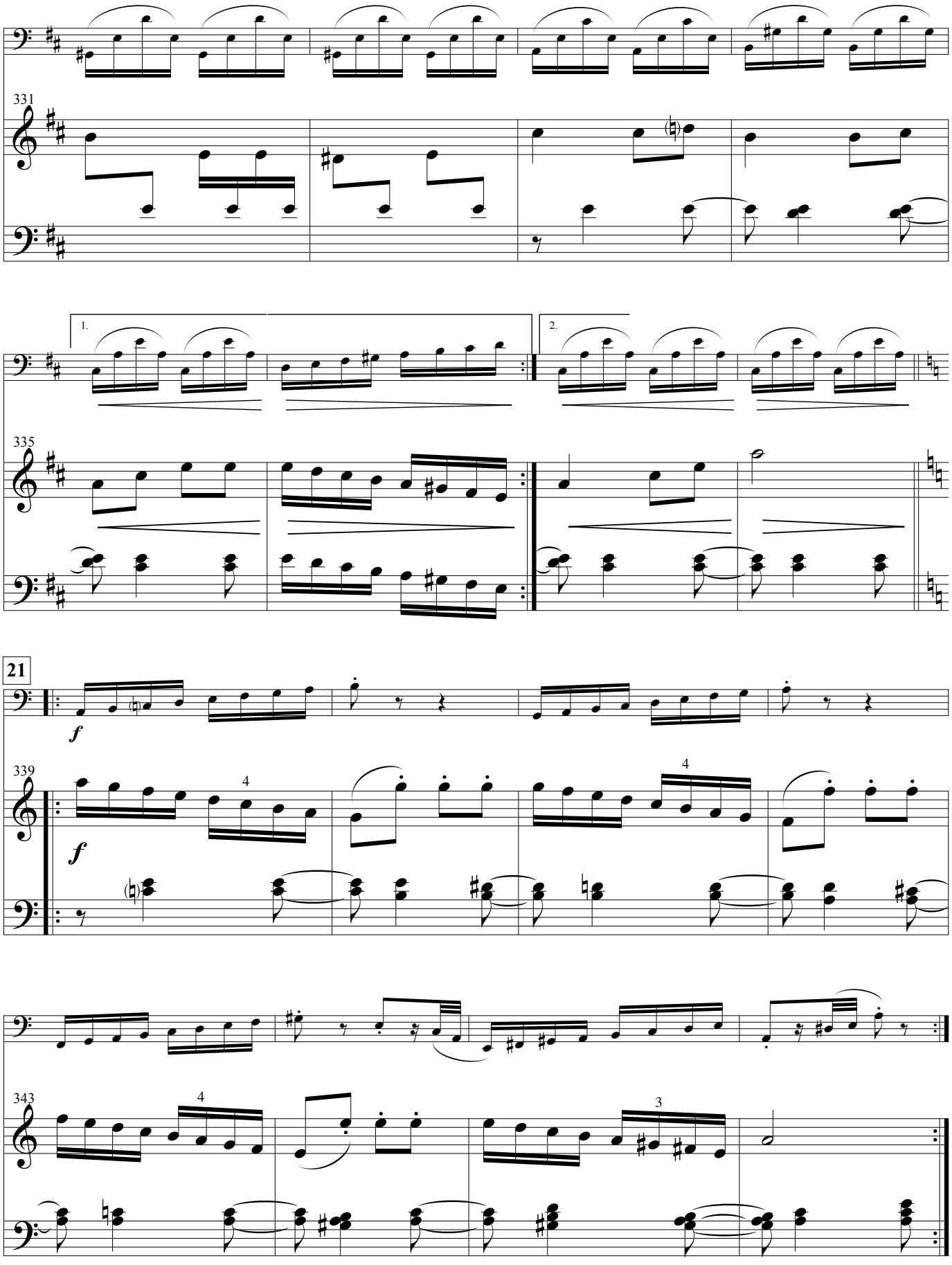

253
257
14
f
mp
f
mp
15
f
mp
f
mp
267
f
mp
f
mp
dim. poco a poco
ppp
273
p
pp
ppp

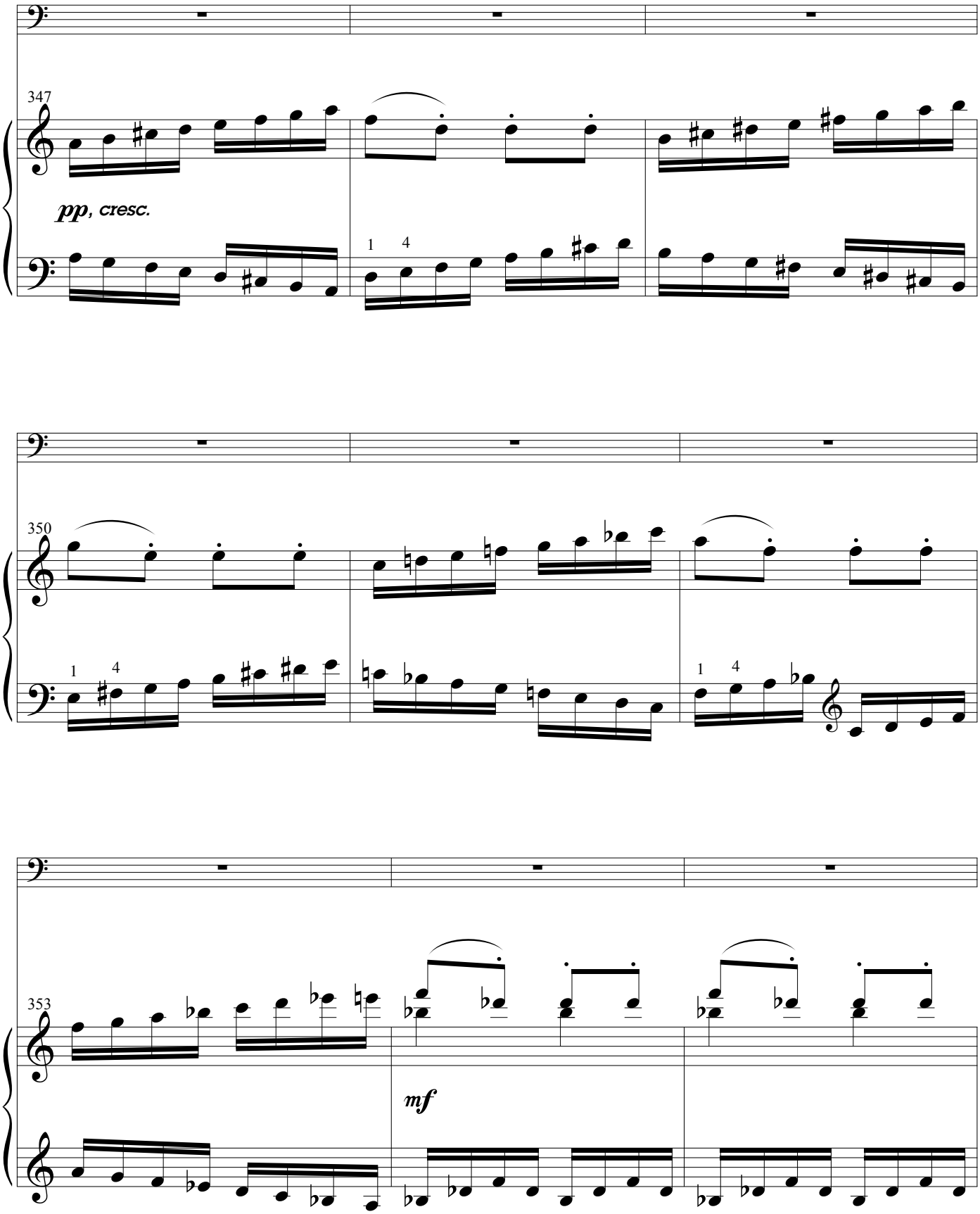

mp
ppp
278
mp
ppp
16
mp
f
17
289
18
292
mp
ppp
299
ppp

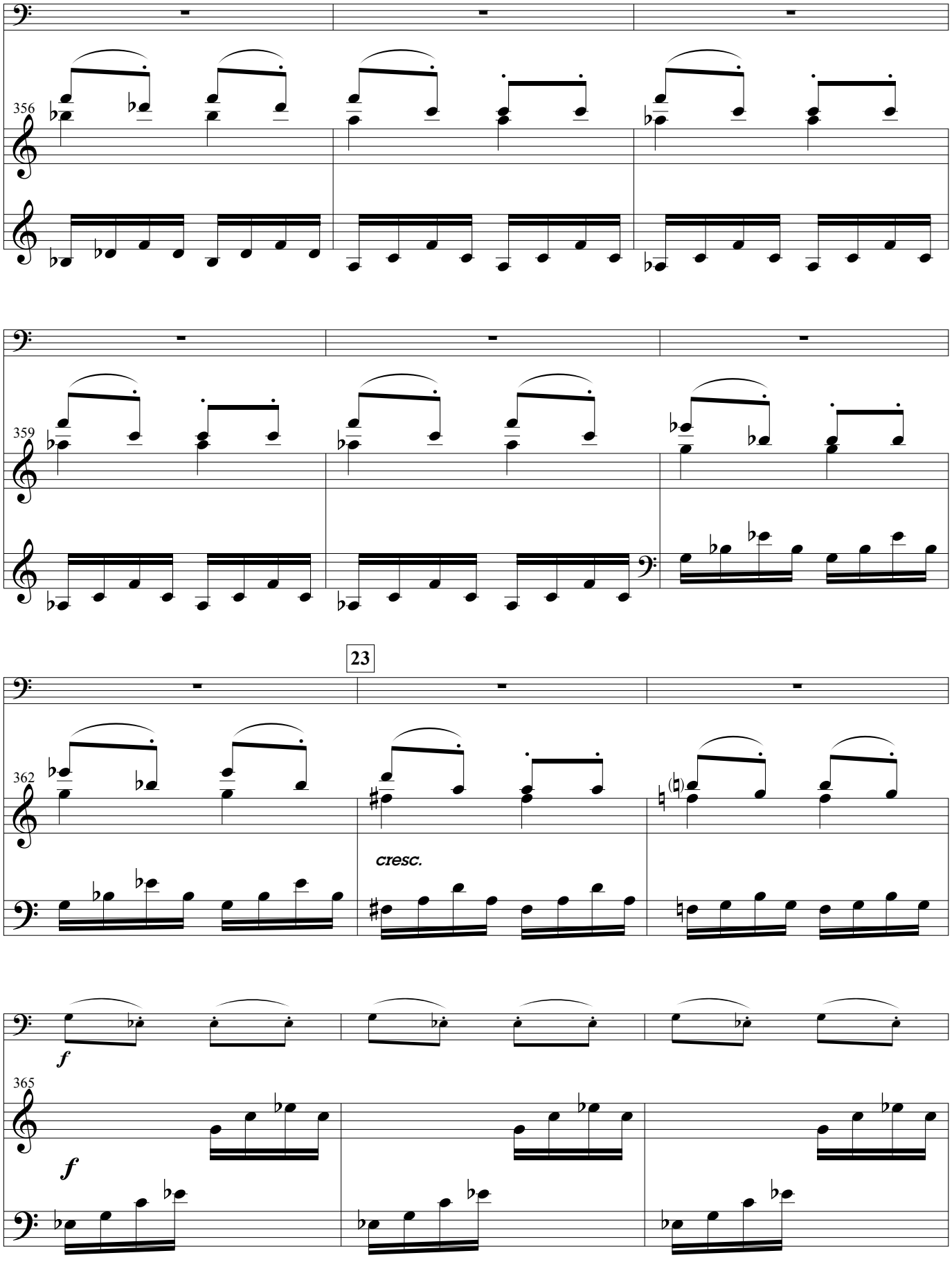

19
Accel.
pizz.
mf
♩ = 72
f
cresc. poco a poco
Rit.
♩ = 72
arco
ff
fff
304
fff
Ped.
V
ffff
(unmeasured tremolo)
307
ffff
309
mp

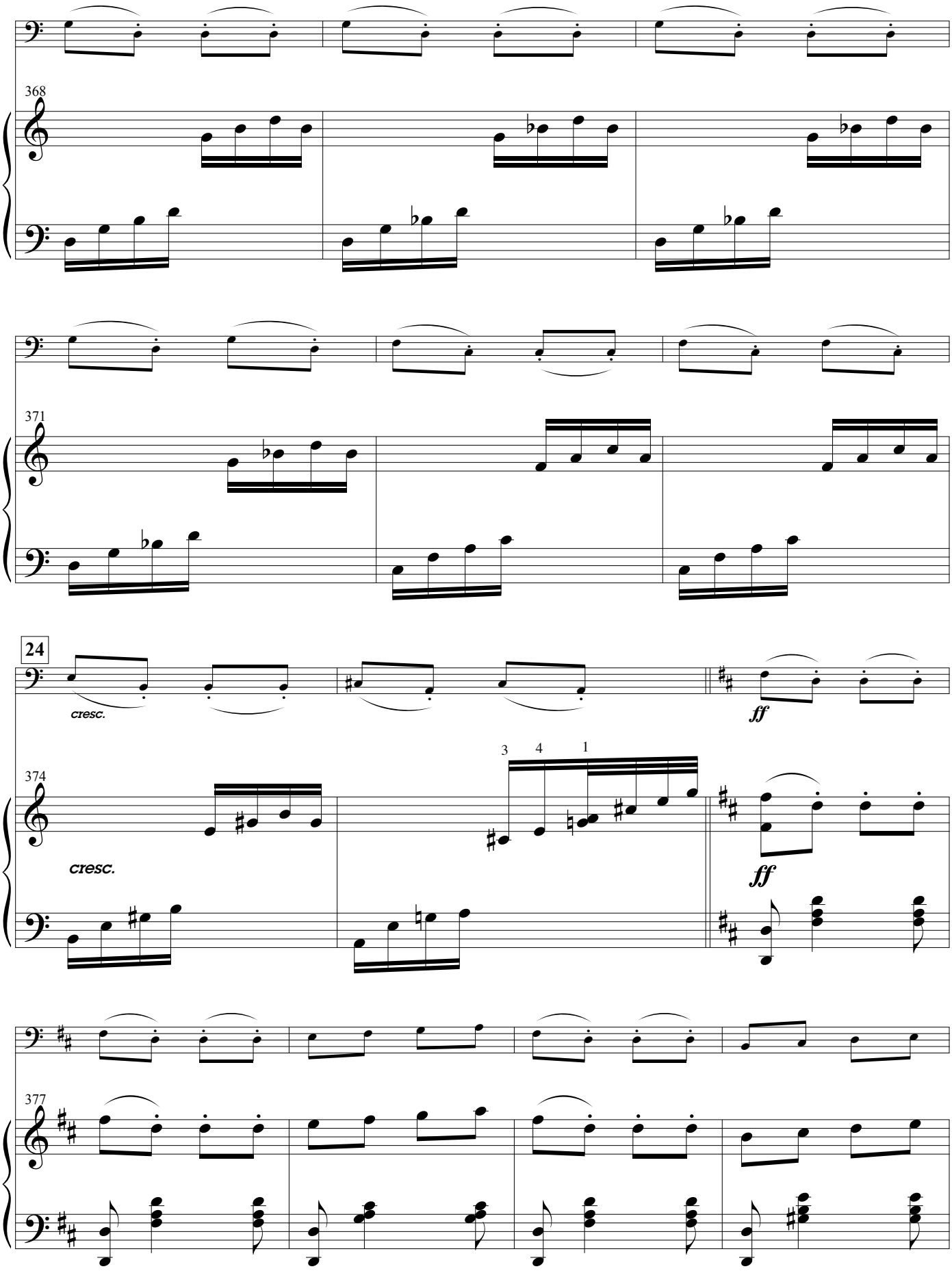
6. Polka

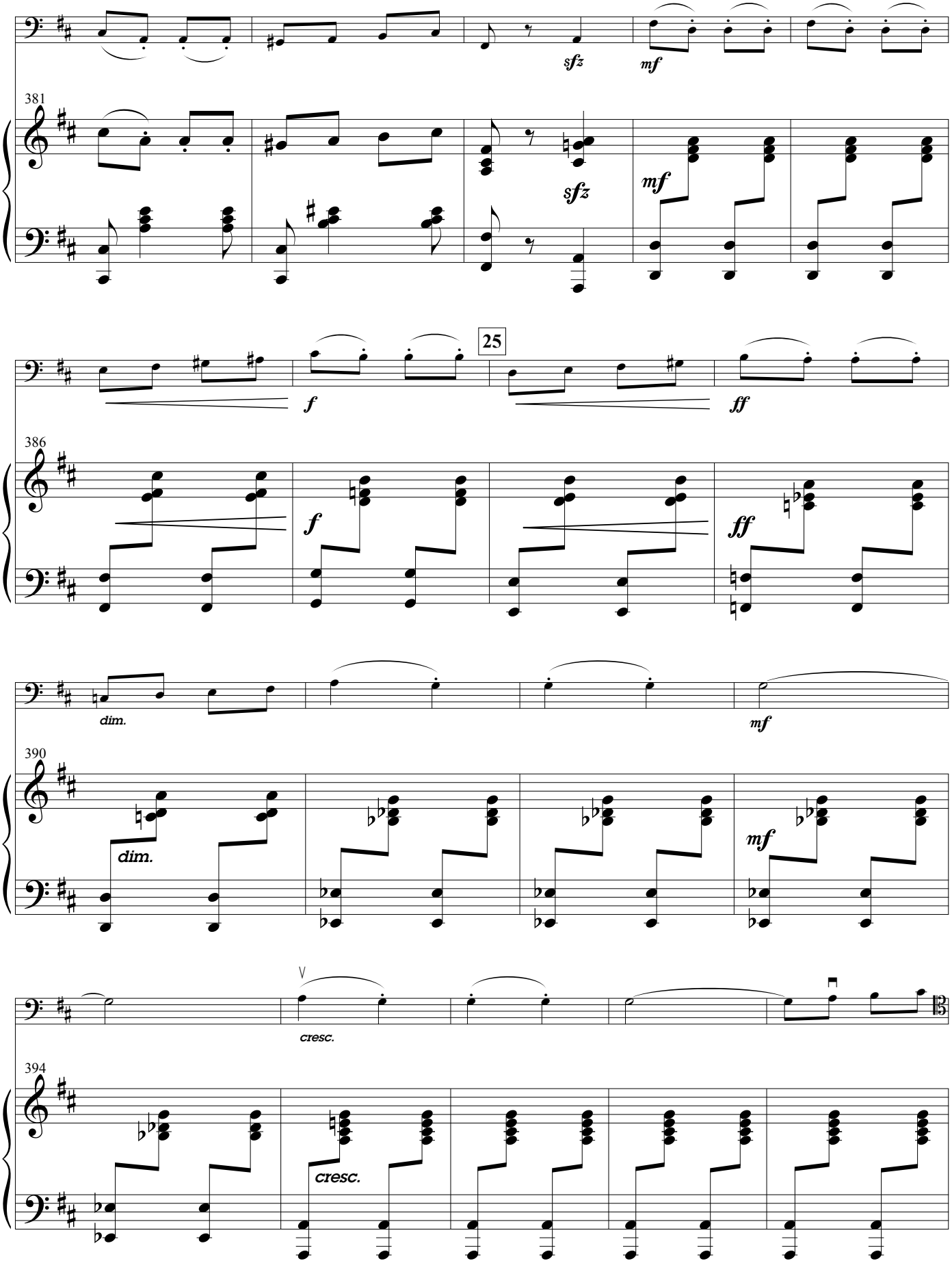


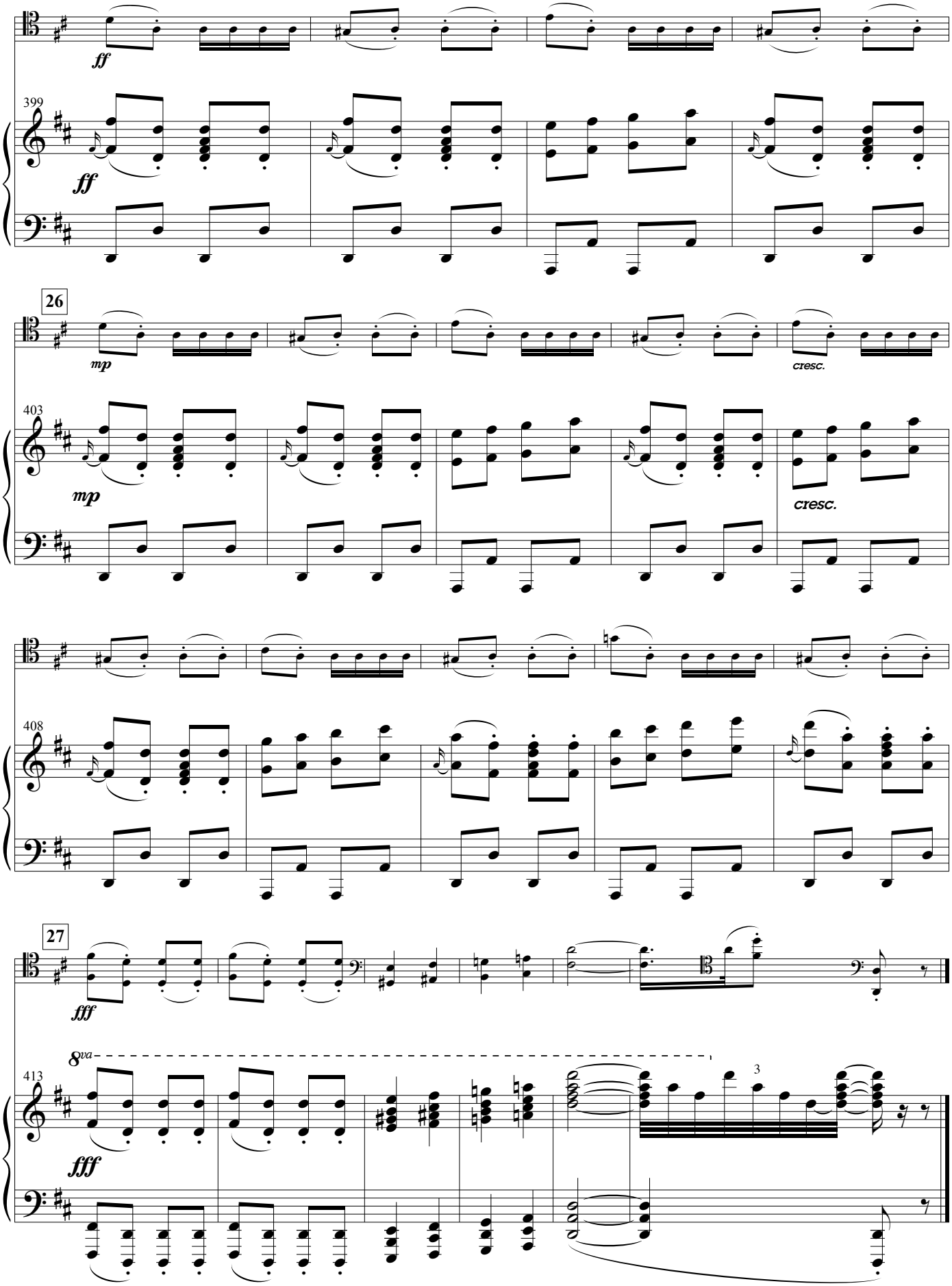

331
1.
2.
335
21
f
339
4
f
343
4
3


22
347
pp, cresc.
1
4
350
1
4
1
4
353
mf


356
359
23
362
cresc.
f
365
f


368
371
24
cresc.
ff
374
3 4 1
cresc.
ff
377


381
sfz
mf
sfz
mf
25
f
ff
386
f
ff
dim.
mf
390
dim.
mf
V
cresc.
394
cresc.


ff
399
ff
26
mp
cresc.
403
mp
cresc.
408
27
fff
8va
413
fff
3