Maurice RAVEL

MENUET ANTIQUE

Pour PIANO

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Maurice RAVEL 1875 - 1937

MENUET ANTIQUE

During a prestigious composing career, Ravel wrote many dance movements, and minuets seem to have been a particular favourite, as he wrote no less than five: *Menuet* in C♯ minor, the Sonatine 2nd movement, a *Menuet sur le nom de Haydn*, the *Tombeau de Couperin* 5th movement and this *Menuet Antique*, his first published composition. Written in 1895 while still a student at the Paris Conservatoire*, the central section is clearly inspired by Chabrier (the *Menuet Pompeux 1881)* who gave early efforts much encouragement and helped to establish his reputation.

In spite of his youth, this early creation is clearly stamped with an individual style of chromatic and harmonic originality. We notice that he is already using a title inspired by “antique” dance forms and an

archaic scale, thereby enriching a musical world that only recognised two modes — major and minor. Underlining its antiquity he uses the old literary description *alenti* instead of *rall*. The tempo is somewhat slow — a *sarabande* perhaps, and the "majestic" instruction is incongruous, as a minuet at the height of its fashionable period was graceful and probably "with small steps". With hindsight we can now see that this piece is a foretaste of a mature style which would evolve in the early years of the 20th century.

In conclusion, Ravel's minuets are at once joyful and nostalgic, continuously revolving around modes and archaic language, always moving towards the future with more than a glance at the past. They are quite unique, neither modern nor impressionist nor classical… they are simply masterpieces by a sensitive and meticulous genius.**

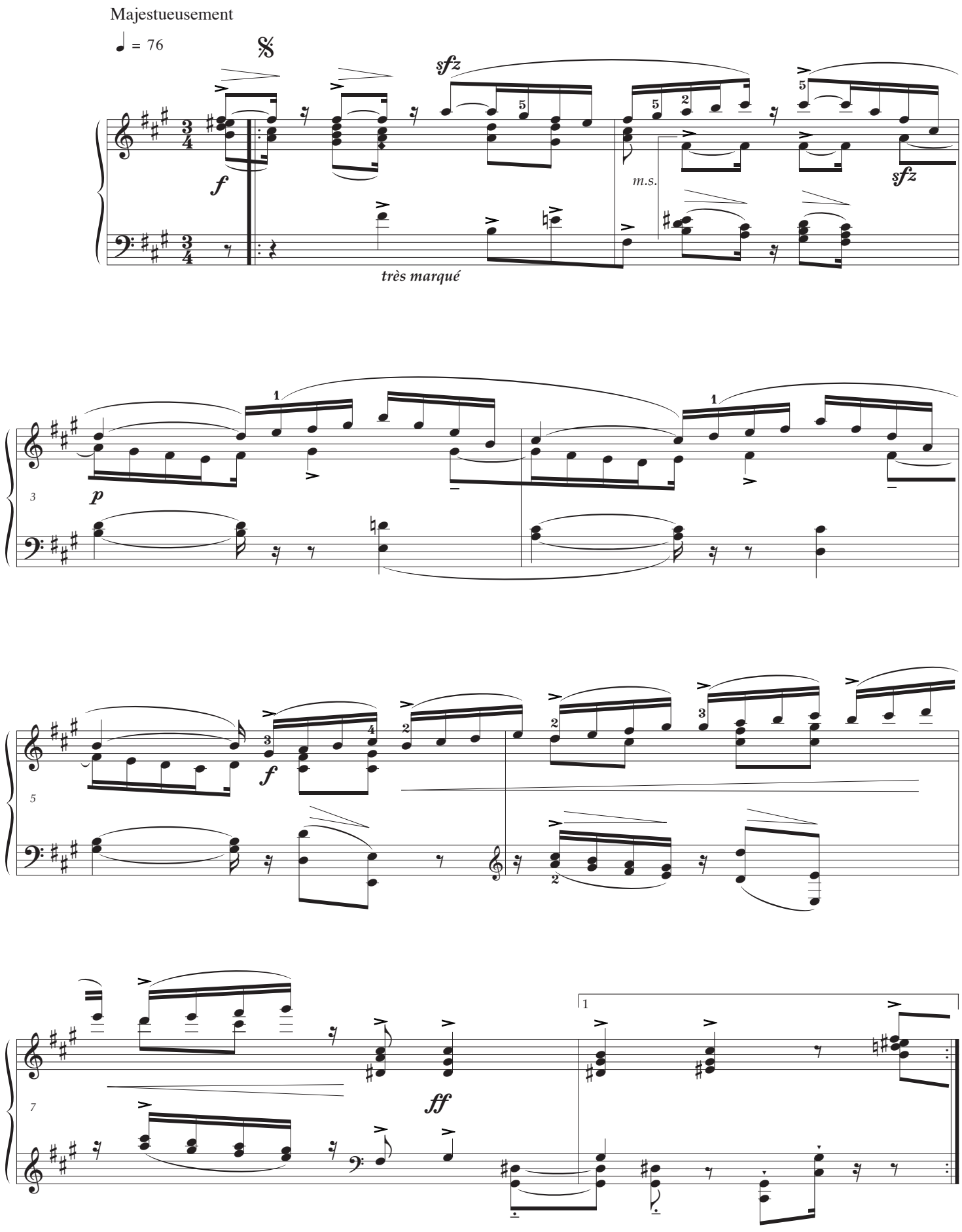
Some 35 years later, Ravel made a successful orchestration suggesting that he considered his "first born minuet" worthy of further attention. The present edition contains some modification of articulations and phrasing influenced by the orchestral score, together with a few minor corrections, some fingering and sostenuto pedal suggestions.

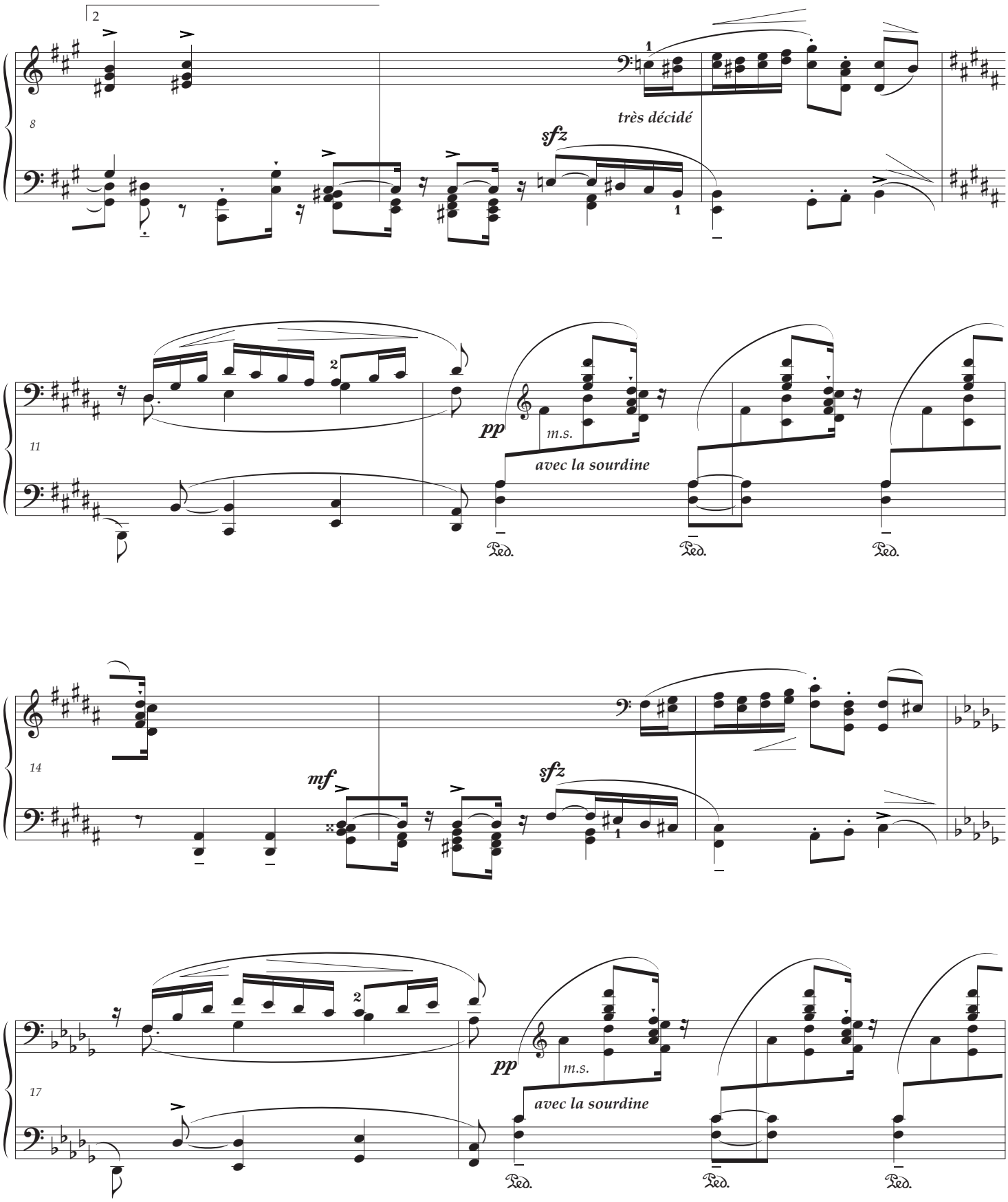
original cover with scant reference to the minuet

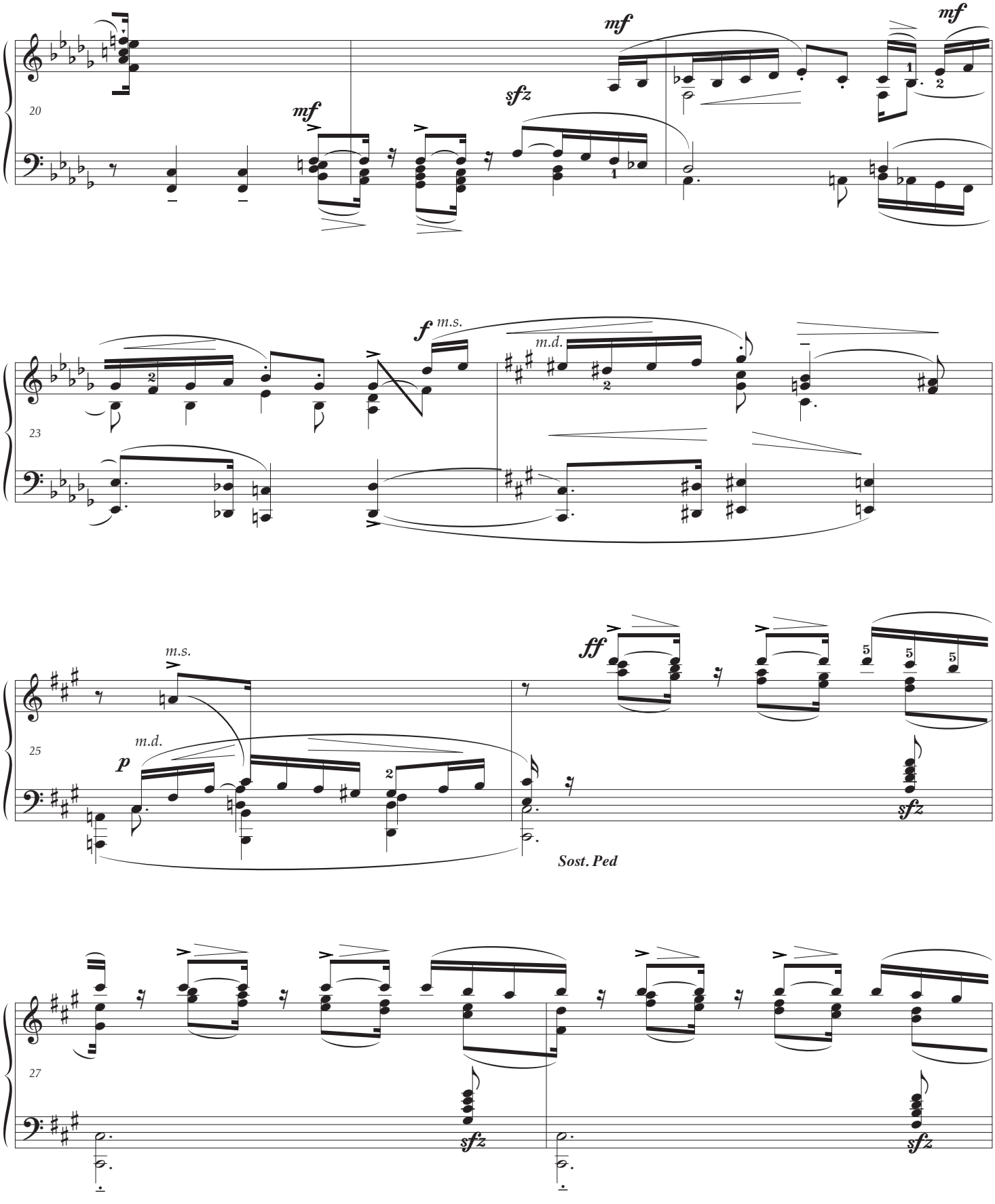
* Cortot states that it was written for a Conservatoire examination in November.

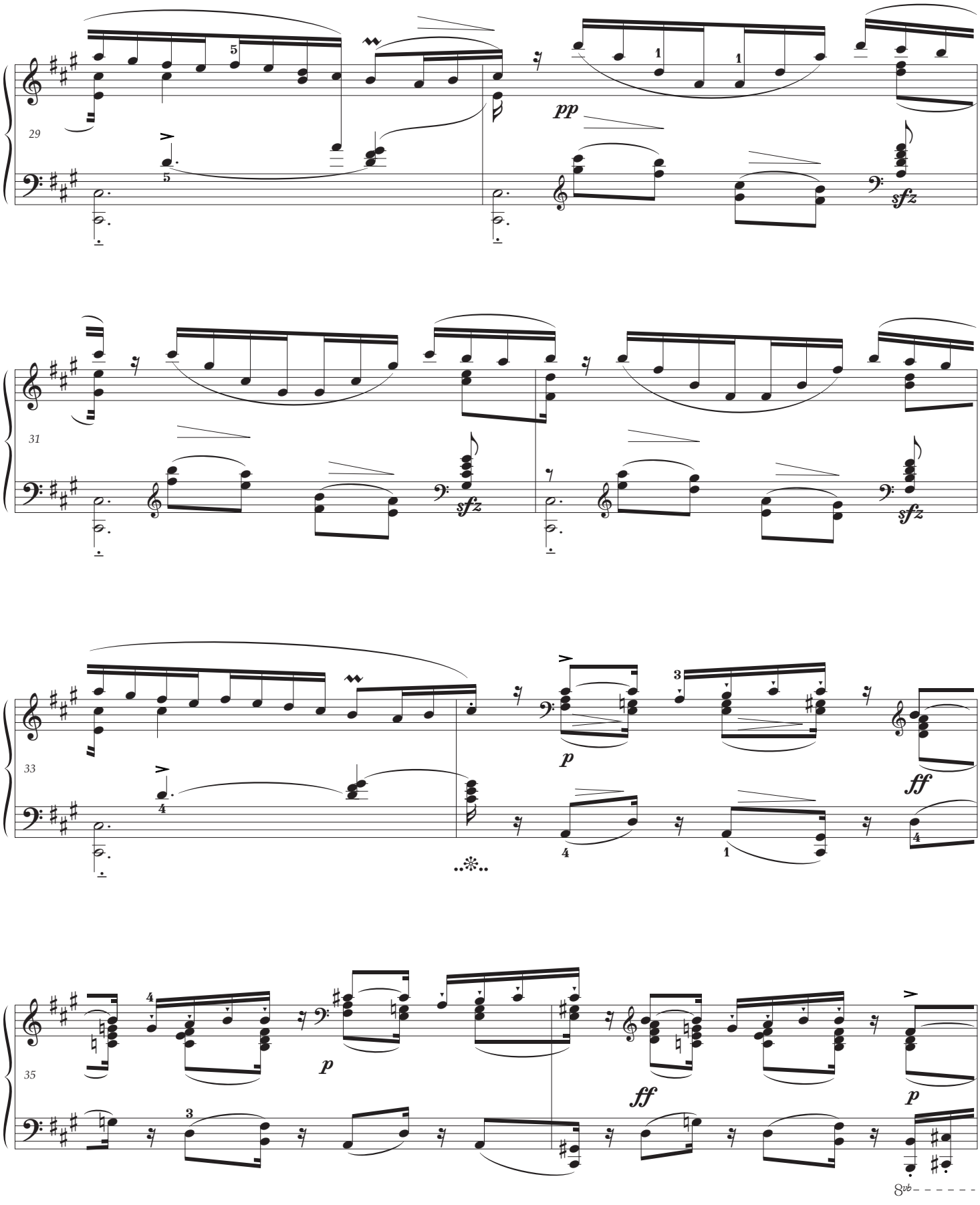
** Sina Fallahzade — January 2011

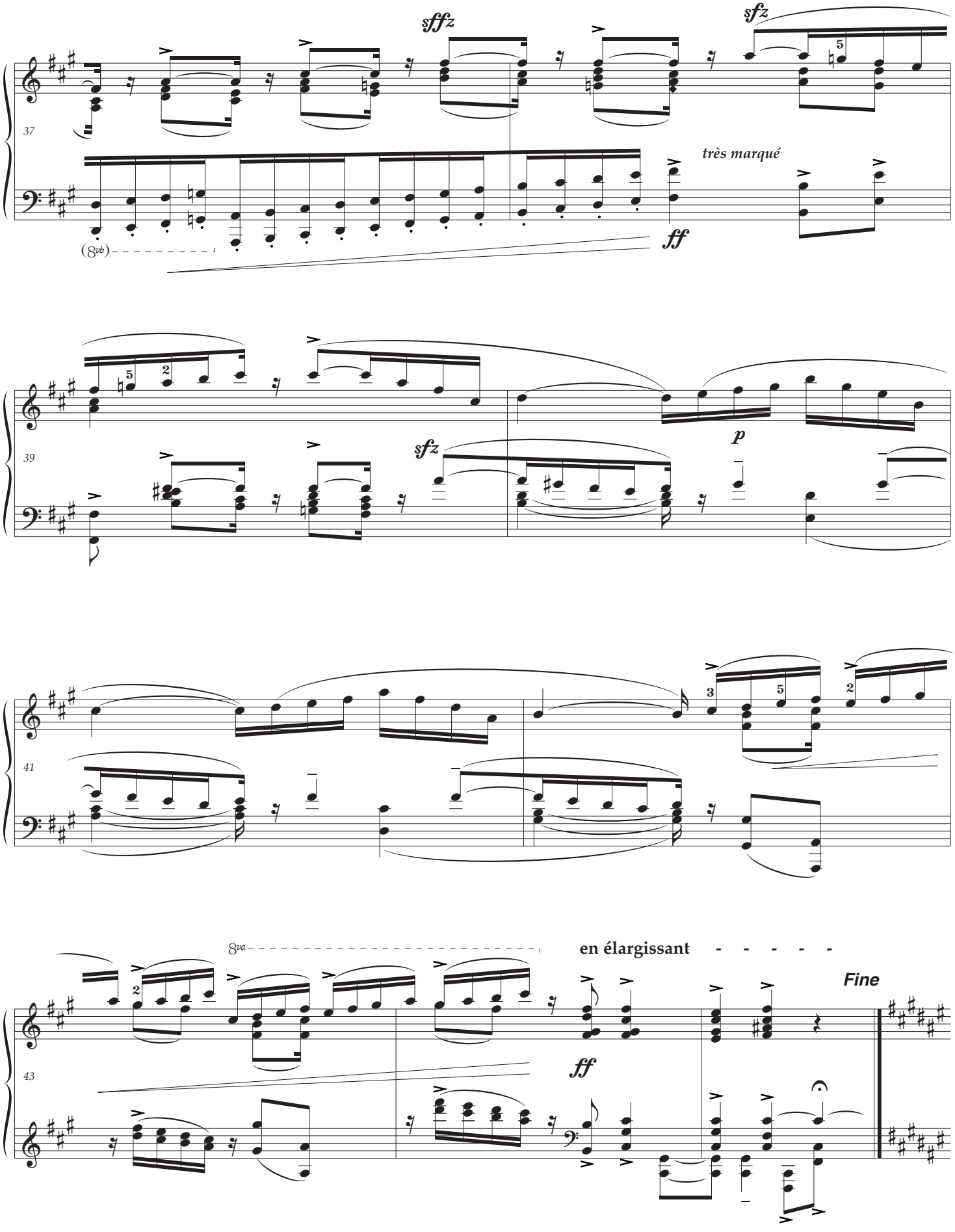
MENUET ANTIQUE

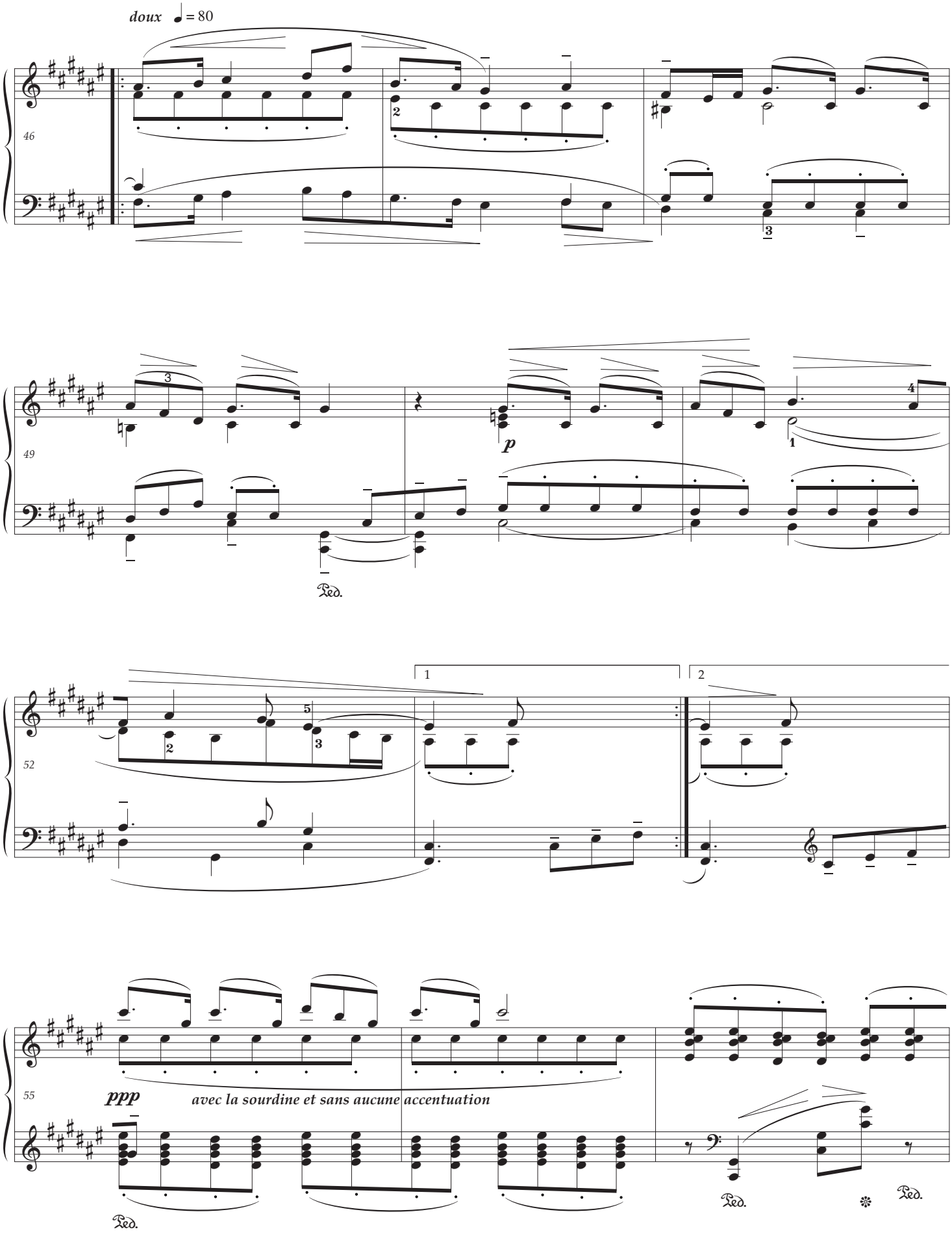


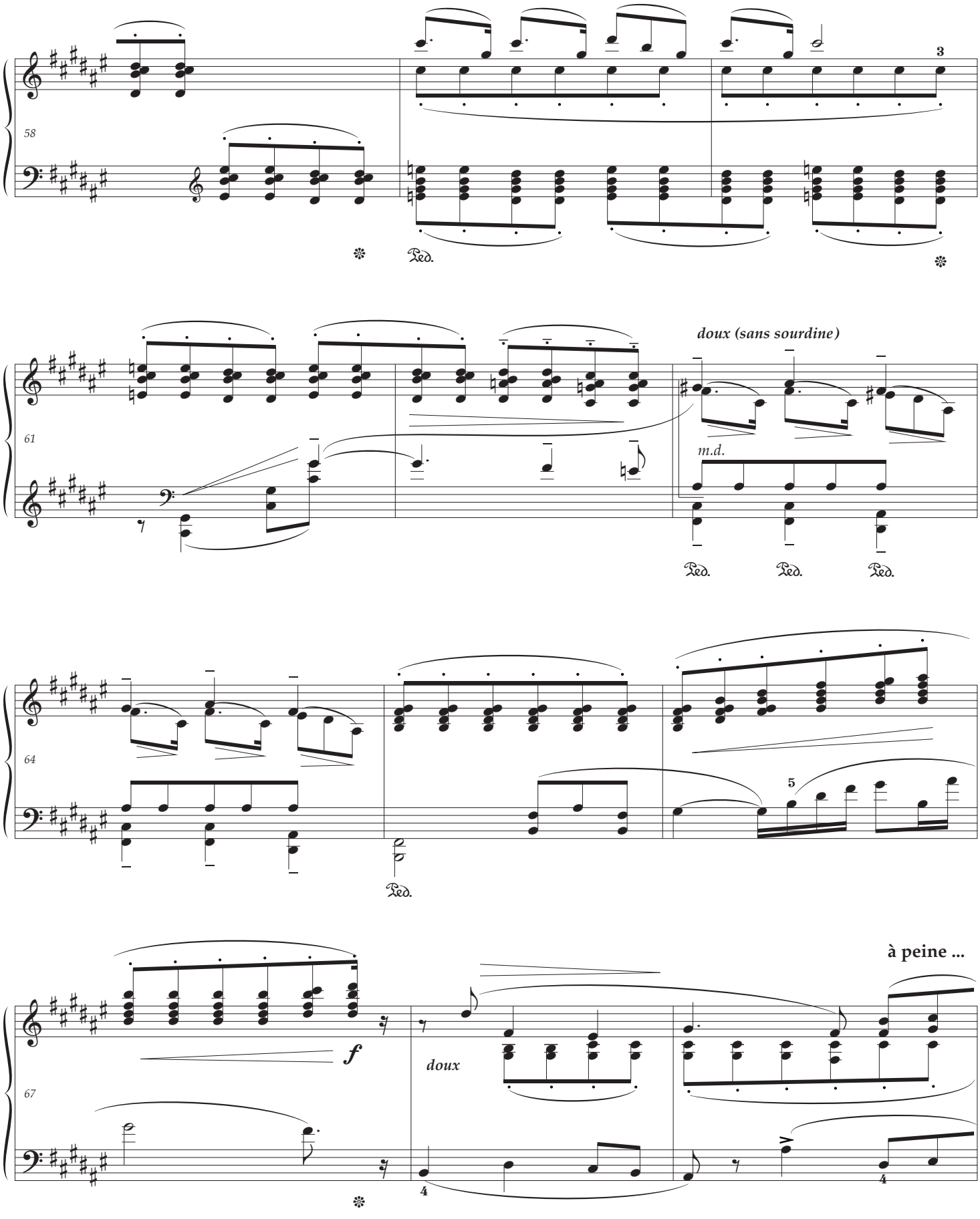

2
8
très décidé
sfz
11
pp
m.s.
avec la sourdine
Ped.
14
mf
sfz
17
pp
m.s.
avec la sourdine
Ped.

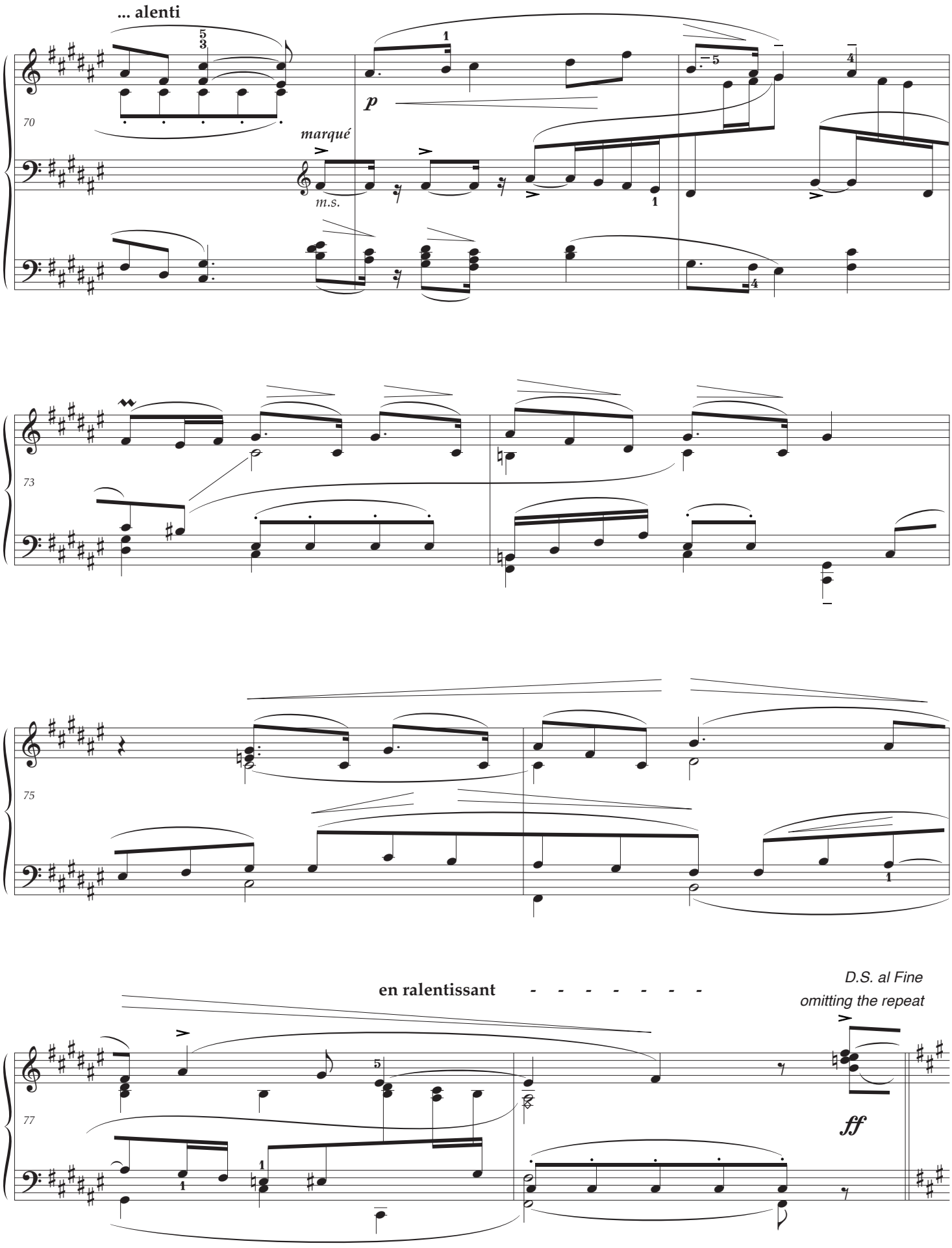

20
mf
mf
sfz
mf
23
f
m.s.
m.d.
25
m.s.
m.d.
p
ff
sfz
Sost. Ped
27
sfz
sfz


29
pp
sfz
31
sfz
sfz
33
p
ff
35
p
ff
p
8vb


37
sfffz
sfz
très marqué
ff
(8vb)
39
sfz
p
41
43
8va
en élargissant
Fine
ff


doux ♩= 80
46
49
p
Ped.
52
1
2
55
ppp
avec la sourdine et sans aucune accentuation
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.


58
3
Ped.
61
doux (sans sourdine)
m.d.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
64
5
Ped.
67
f
doux
à peine ...
4
4


... alenti
70
p
marqué
m.s.
73
75
en ralentissant
D.S. al Fine
omitting the repeat
77
ff