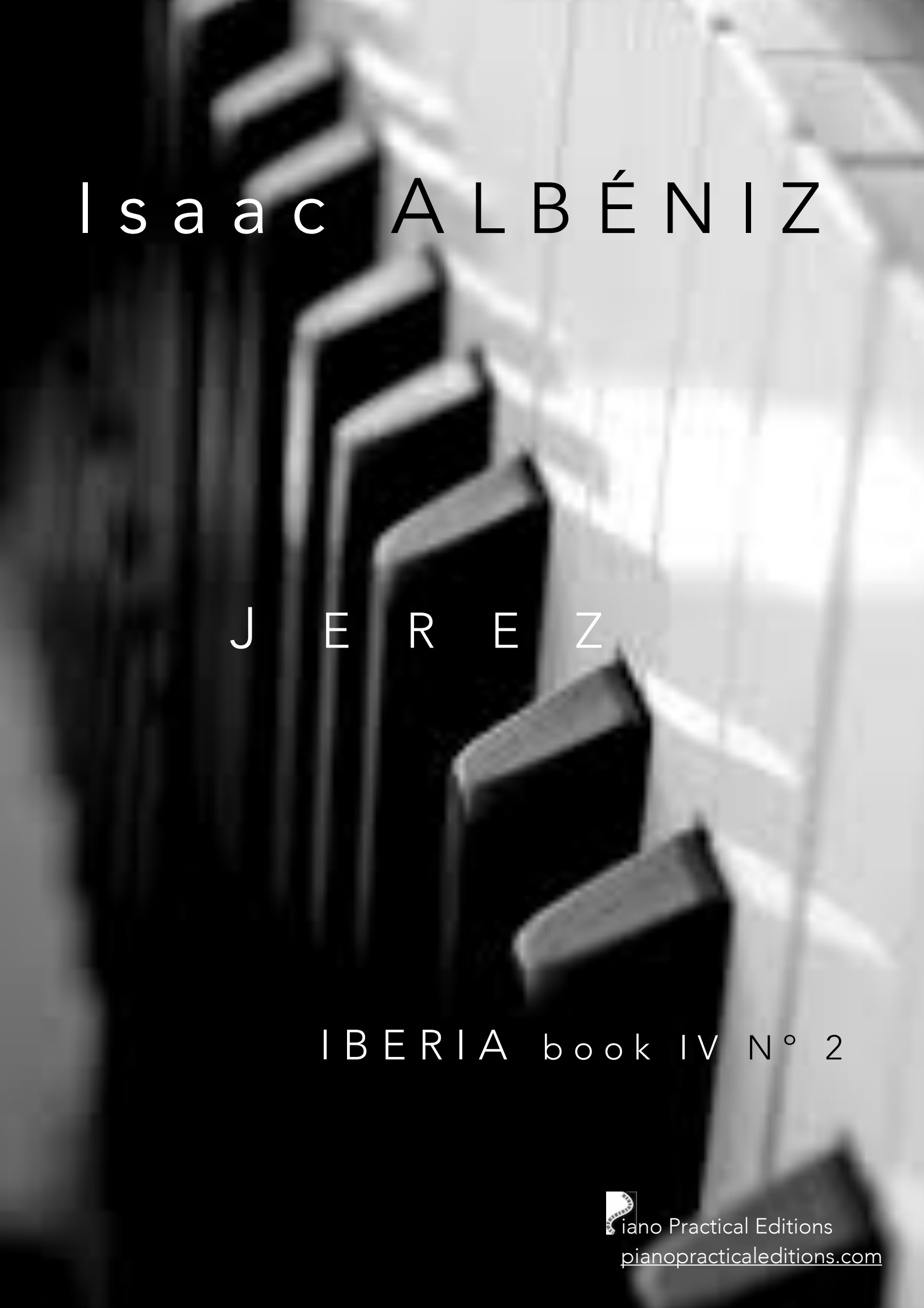

Isaac ALBÉNIZ

JEREZ

IBERIA book IV N° 2

Piano Practical Editions
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consulted together with a traditional version. They have been devised purely to help solve musical and technical problems at the piano.

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Isaac ALBÉNIZ 1860 - 1909

JEREZ

de la suite "IBERIA"

Preface to Volume 4

And so we come to the fourth and final volume of this huge undertaking by one of Spain's most illustrious composers. Aged 45 with health problems, Albéniz struggled to complete the volume dedicated to Madame Pierre Lalo, first performances occurring a few years later just before his death in 1909.

Of all the pieces which make up the first three volumes, I found Lavapiés the most challenging to decipher, play and edit — for early 20th century publishers, much of *Iberia* must have been an engraver's and proofreader's nightmare. The three pieces comprising Volume 4 seem to be increasingly tough to play — ever more cross-rhythms, interweaving of fingers and hands, quick leaps, and clusters containing a multitude of accidentals, not to mention an abundance of instructions in French and Italian. As Donal Henahan suggested — if only we had three hands! No pianist can hope to play all the notes and we have to become especially inventive, finding ways to perform at several registers, often simultaneously, whilst bringing out hidden melodies among clusters or rapidly flowing accompaniments, and all this with a mere 10 fingers. One can take comfort from Albéniz himself who confided to Manuel de Falla that he came close to destroying the manuscript because it seemed unplayable.

This edition therefore addresses these problems, by removing a minimum number of notes and suggesting alternative ways to perform this sublime, passionate and rewarding music. To clarify the text some adjustments have been made to non-essential counterpoint and unnecessary rests have been omitted. In a quest to remove challenging accidentals, a number of appropriate key signatures have been inserted.

Although Albéniz was a Catalan, his heart was immersed in the folklore and sounds of Andalusia, declaring "*Soy un moro*" — "I am a Moor". Drawing inspiration from their southern rhythms, distinctive idioms and modes, while inventing new themes — the composer writes with virtual Flamenco in his blood, giving an impression of

spontaneous improvisation — a fusion of French impressionism and Andalusian folklore.

After the *Reconquista* Flamenco was born of Moorish, Gypsy and Jewish traditions and culture, minority ethnic groups who were persecuted by the Inquisition. Their common suffering found outlet in this highly expressive and passionate music. Eleven of the twelve pieces portray places and scenes in southern Spain using the typical *Phrygian* and other modes, pedal points and images of guitar strumming, clapping, stamping and castanets.

Subtitled *Douze Nouvelles Impressions*, one can see that the composer had an enormous affinity with France, and musicians from Debussy to Messiaen were particularly impressed and inspired by his music. Albéniz had been living there for more than a decade when he began *Iberia*, the impressionist sounds, exotic modes, and dissonant clusters reflecting his Francophonic credentials. Granados described the music of Albéniz as quite unique: "an elegance that smiles with sadness and progresses by degrees until it achieves a mastery both commanding and serene; like Goya's *Maja, Iberia* evokes memories of our 'golden century."

***Jerez* was completed in Nice, January 1908**

Albeniz inserted a signed and bracketed sub-title : *bolero aburrio !* which can be roughly translated as "boring bolero*. *Navarra*, described by the composer as *descaradamente populachero**, was rightfully rejected and replaced with this work, far more worthy of inclusion in such an illustrious volume.

This tone-poem is as complex and intoxicating as the local sherry with an extended and exquisitely meandering and inpenetrable copla* — an ideal breathing space between *Málaga* and *Eritaña. Jerez* is an intimate work and difficult to bring off, as it is rather long and the reflective melancholy is maintained almost throughout.

The tonality moves from hypodorian, C and A minor, beginning and ending on the pseudo-dominant of E. Where possible, to avoid too many accidentals, modulations are presented with an appropriate change of key signature. The unusual alternation of metre underlines its flamenco roots and imbues the piece with a typical enigmatic complexity.

When I first heard Alicia De Larrocha perform Albeniz I was amazed and impressed by the language and technical mastery of both composer and interpreter. And when I was finally able to attempt *Iberia*, I noticed that the text (*Éditions Salabert*) was often difficult to study: there were inaccuracies, many accidentals and too many instructions, coupled with sub-standard engraving; so I decided to edit the music myself.

I plead guilty to not having religiously copied every dot, accent, sign, pedal marking and many others. Albeniz was very zealous in having often embellished many, sometimes conflicting, instructions and I have tried to simplify the music within reason relying upon present-day sophisticated pianists and teachers reading the score philosophically.

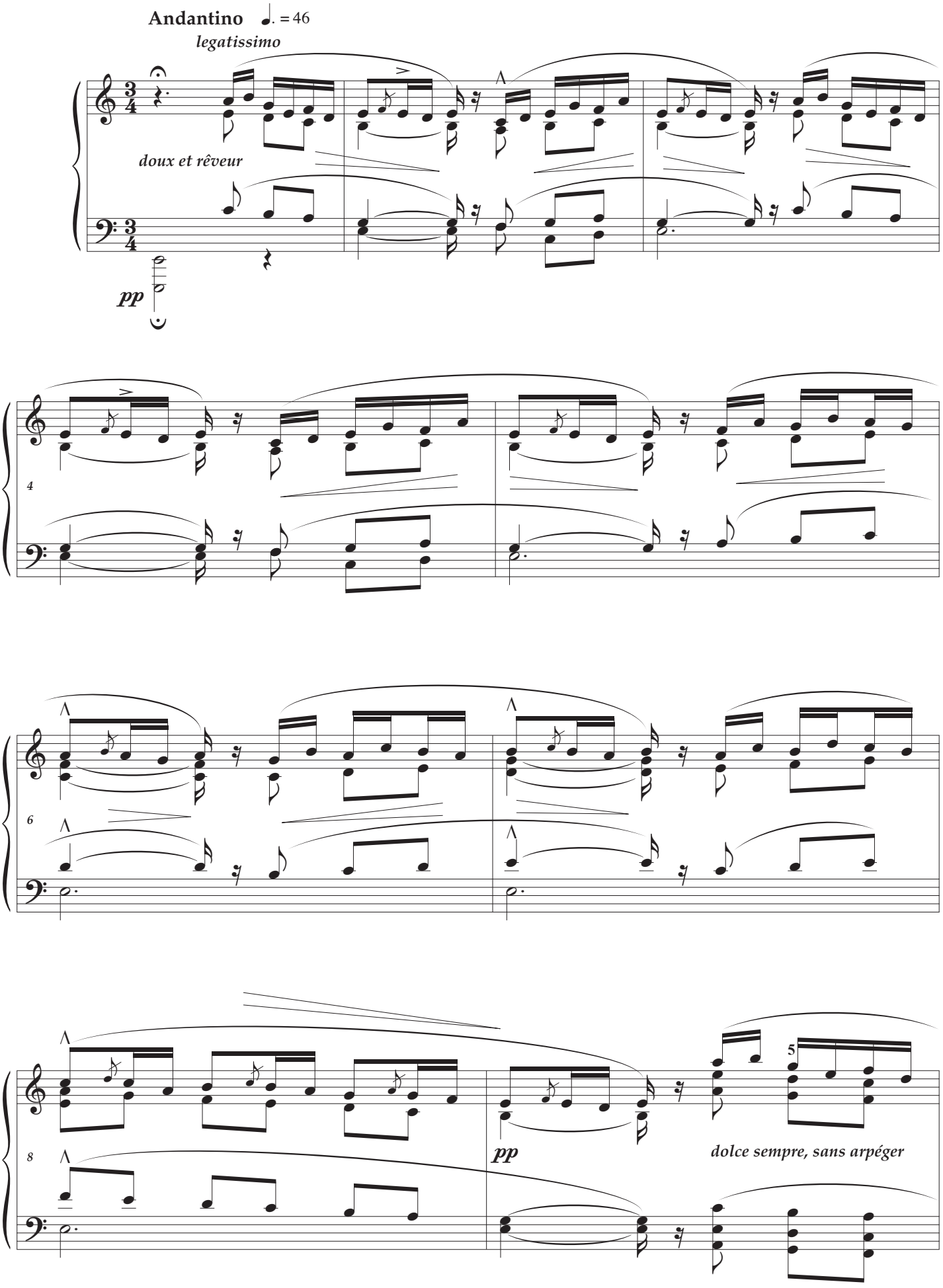
Albéniz was an extrovert with a keen sense of humour, loved and respected by all who knew him. In this wonderful and imaginative music, he was also flamboyant with long descriptions in French with pedalling directions which sometimes seem to be a whirlwind of far-fetched impossibilities — unreasonable and endearing as they are.

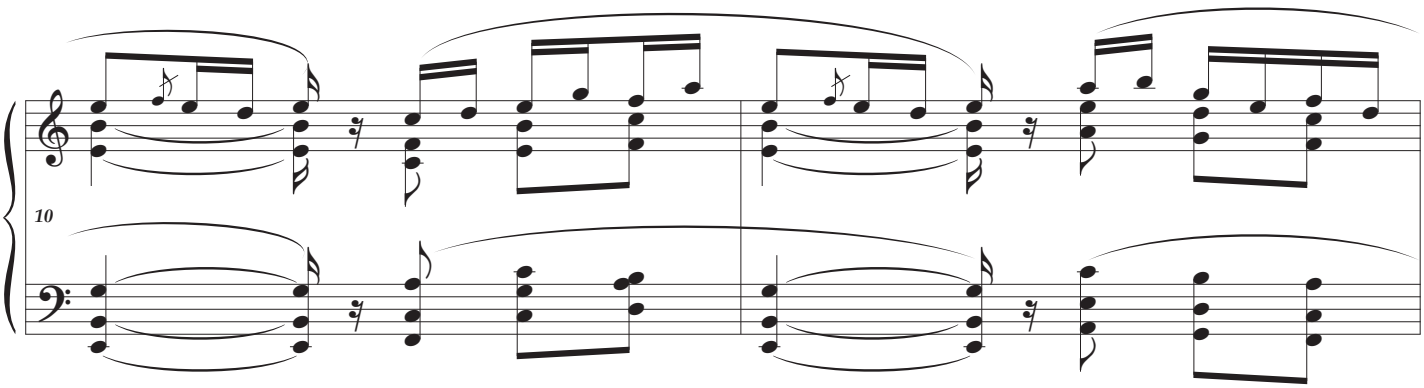
In addition to some suggested fingerings, the appendix contains comments, afterthoughts and a French vocabulary. Redistribution between the hands comes under close scrutiny to make certain passages easier or more persuasive. It is possible, even desirable, to use the sostenuto pedal effectively, although this is entirely editorial.

* **boleras is a type of flamenco based on the seguidilla and the Spanish dance known as bolero — slow-tempo Latin music**
* **shamefully cheap**
* **copla — deeply moving vocal flamenco**

JEREZ

(bolero aburrio!)

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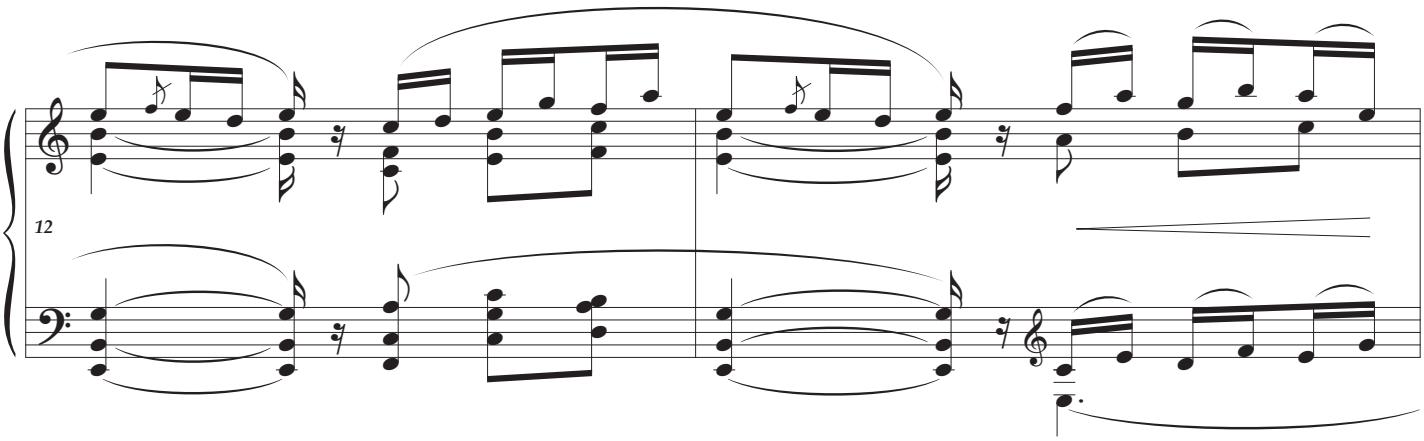
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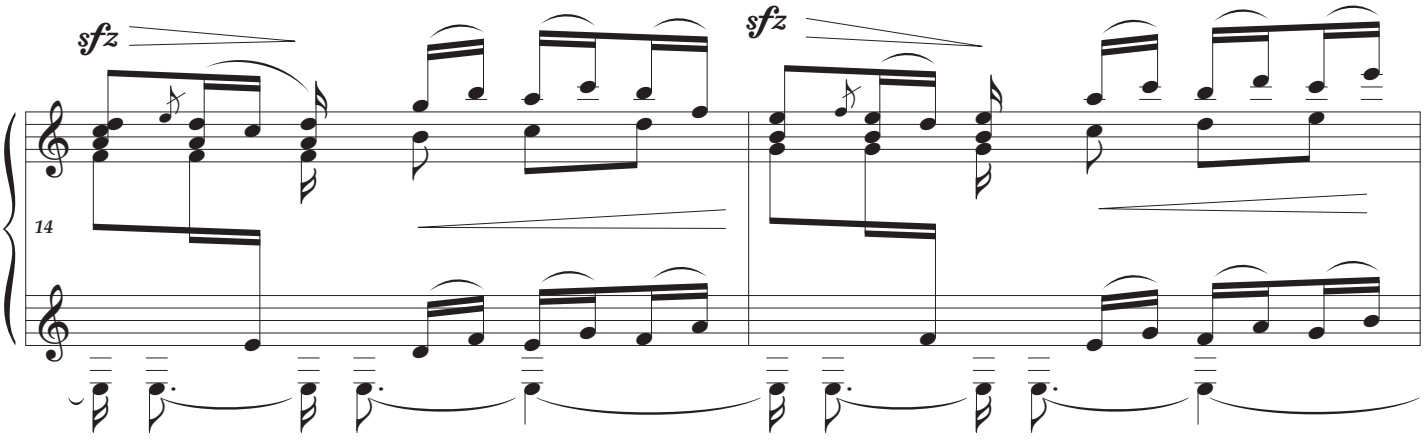
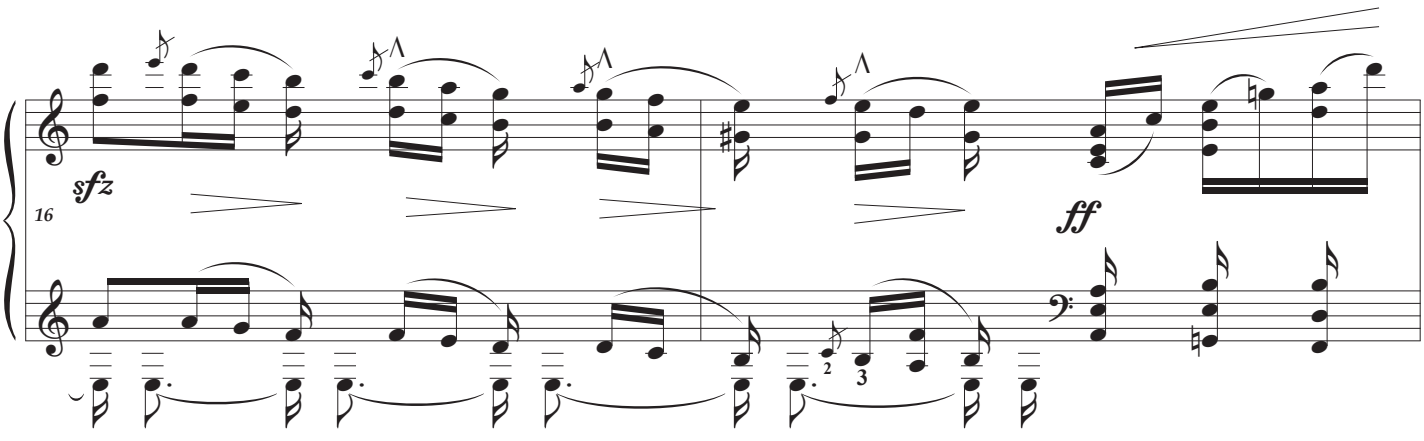
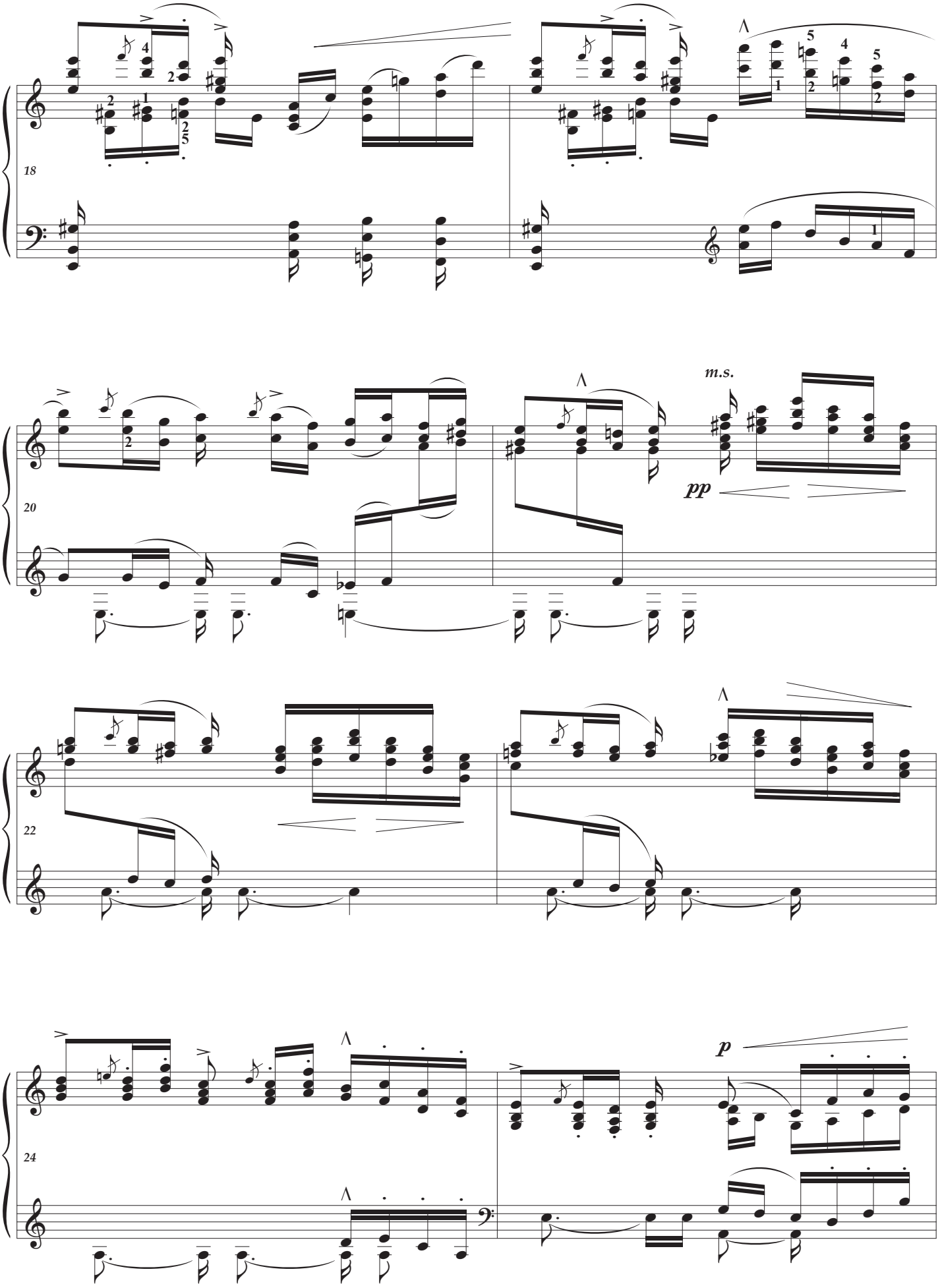
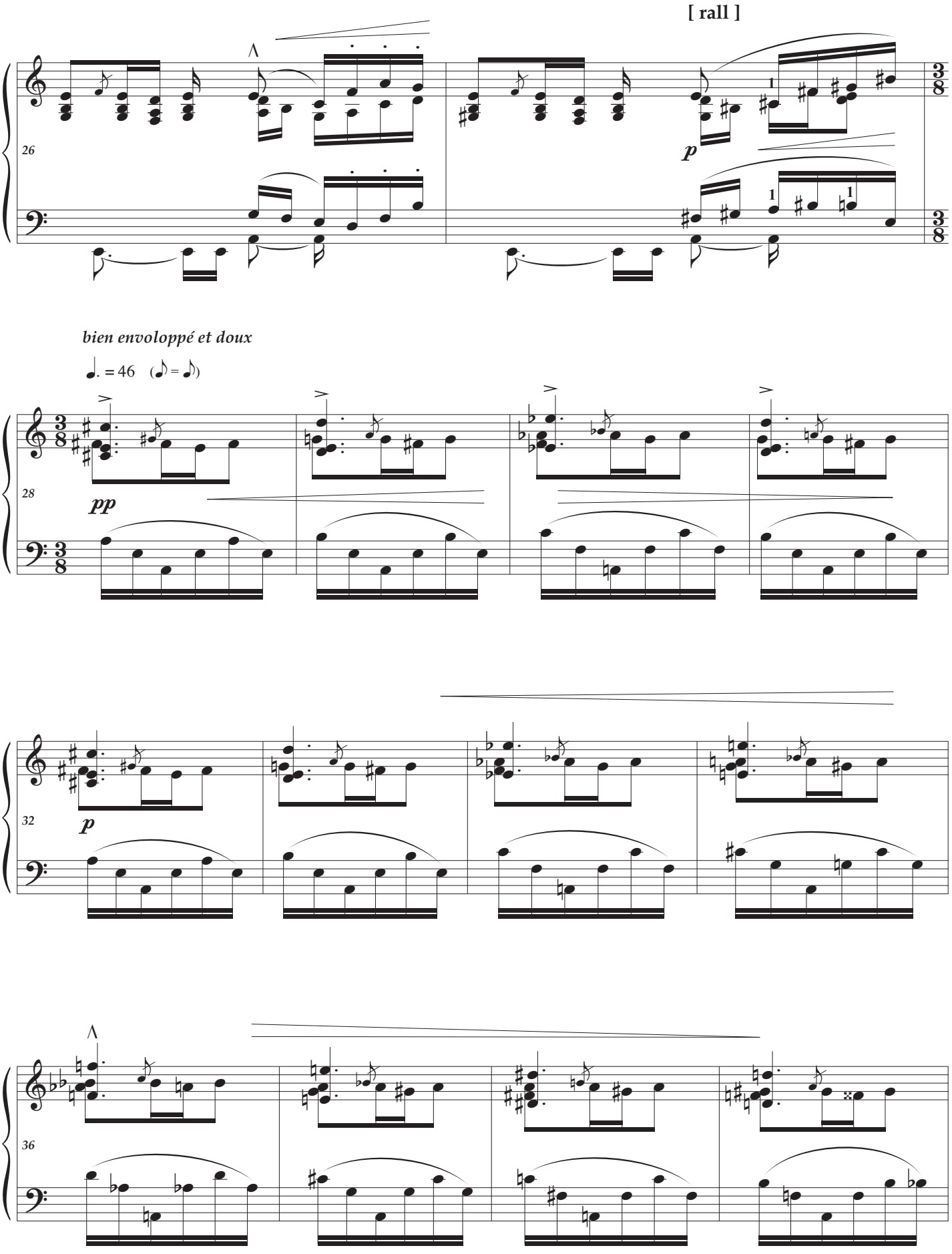
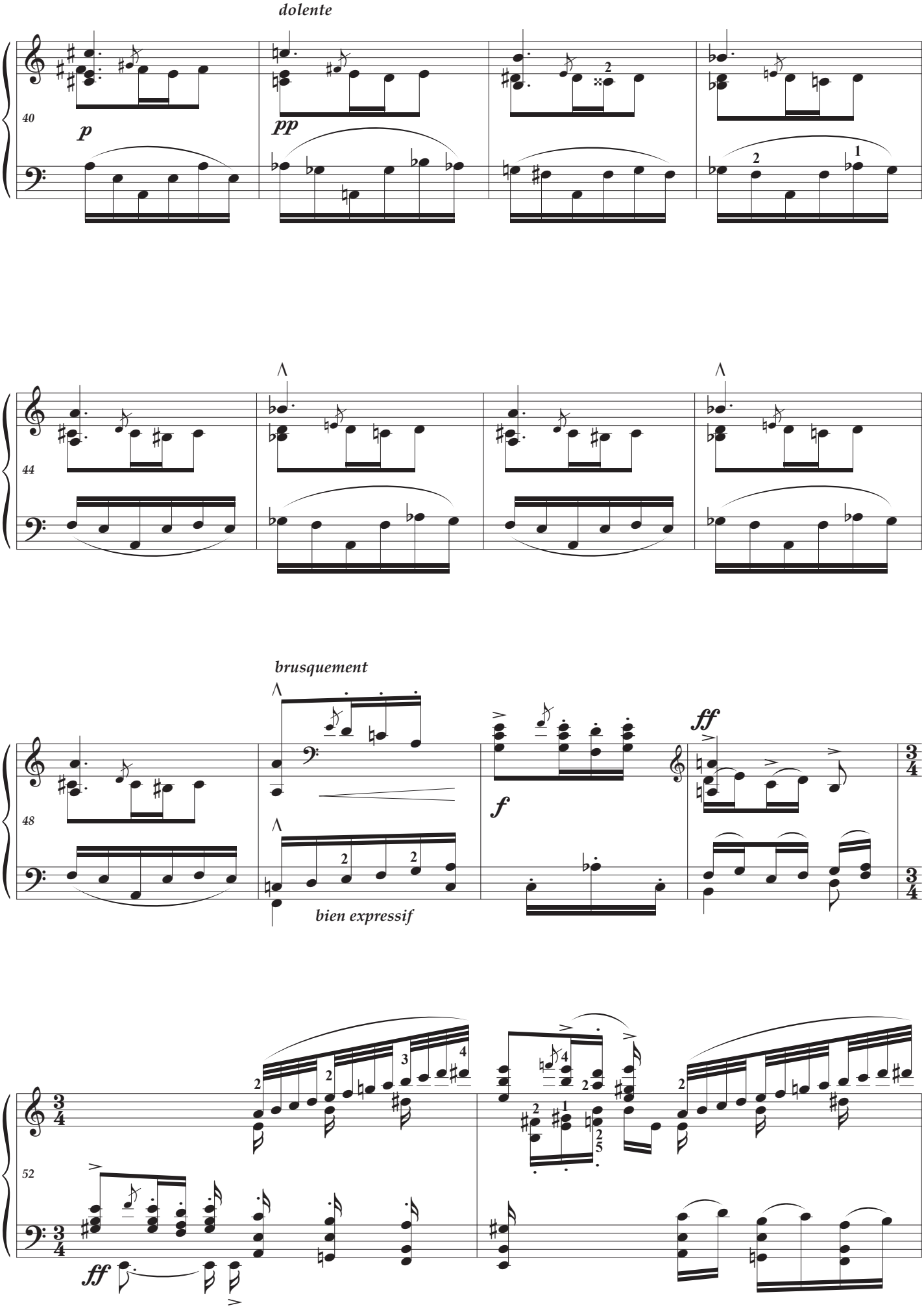
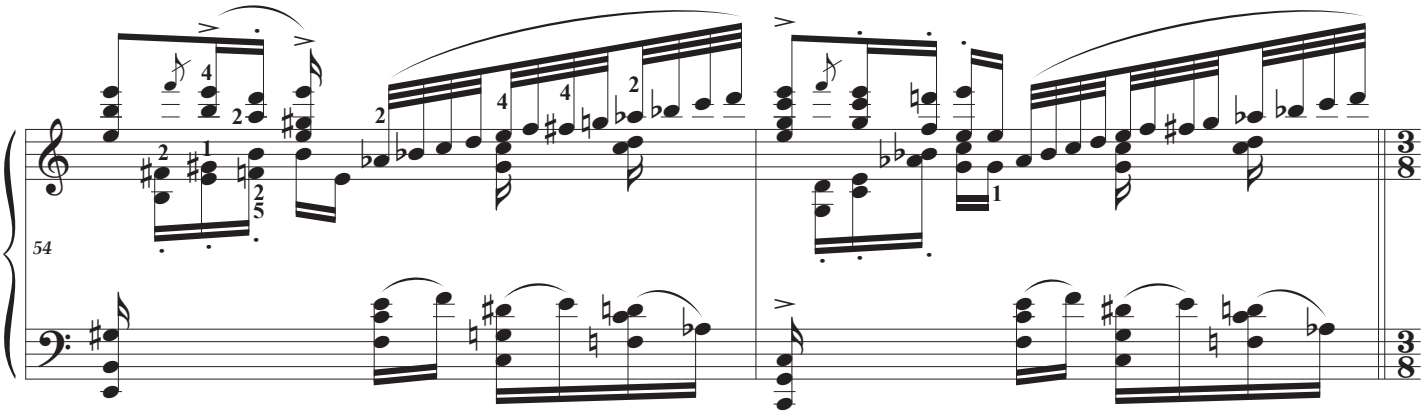

sfz
sfz
14

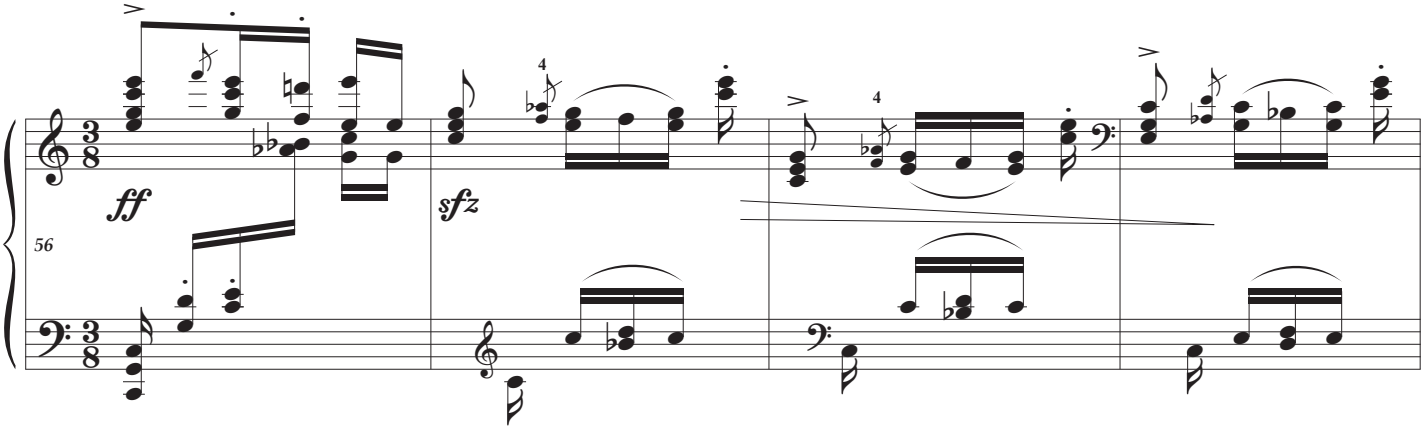

sfz
16
ff
2
3


18
20
m.s.
pp
22
24
p

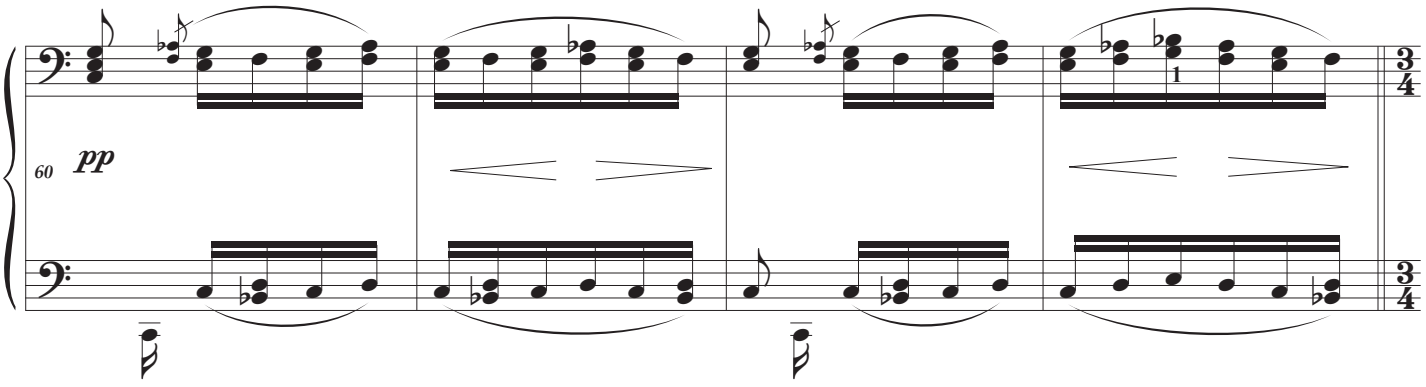

[rall]
26
p
bien envoloppé et doux
♩. = 46 (♪ = ♪)
28
pp
32
p
36


dolente
40
p
pp
44
brusquement
48
bien expressif
f
ff
52
ff



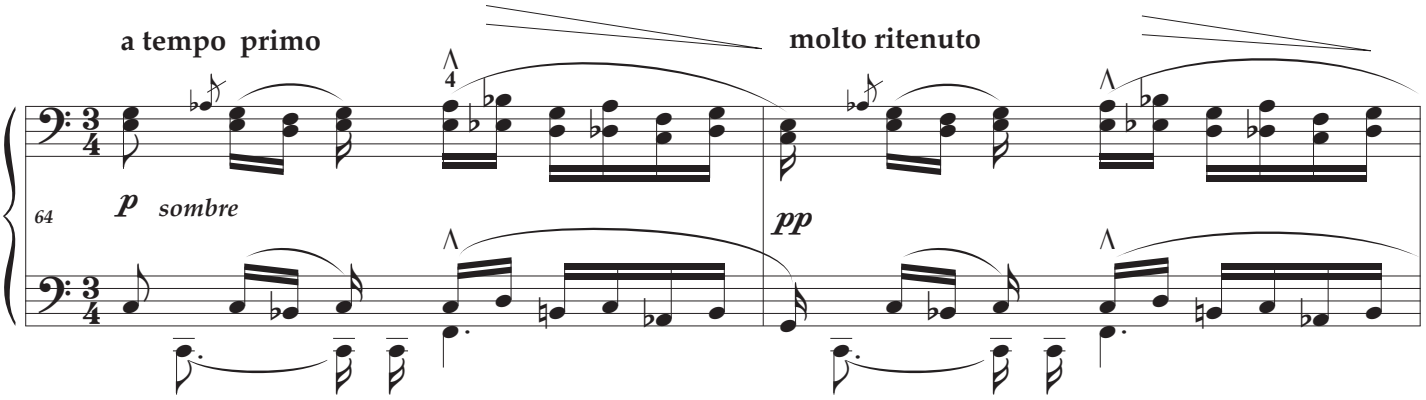


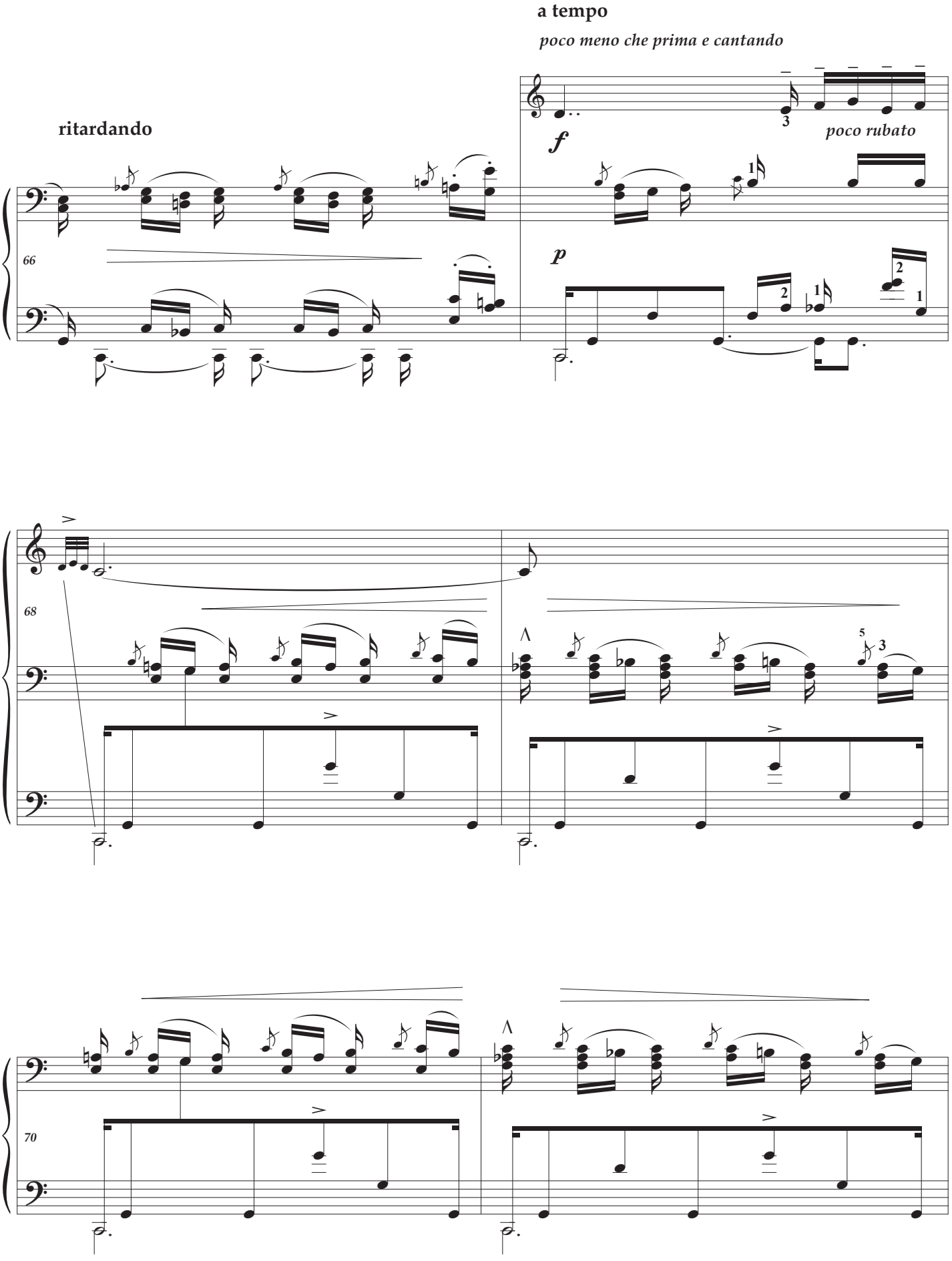
ritardando

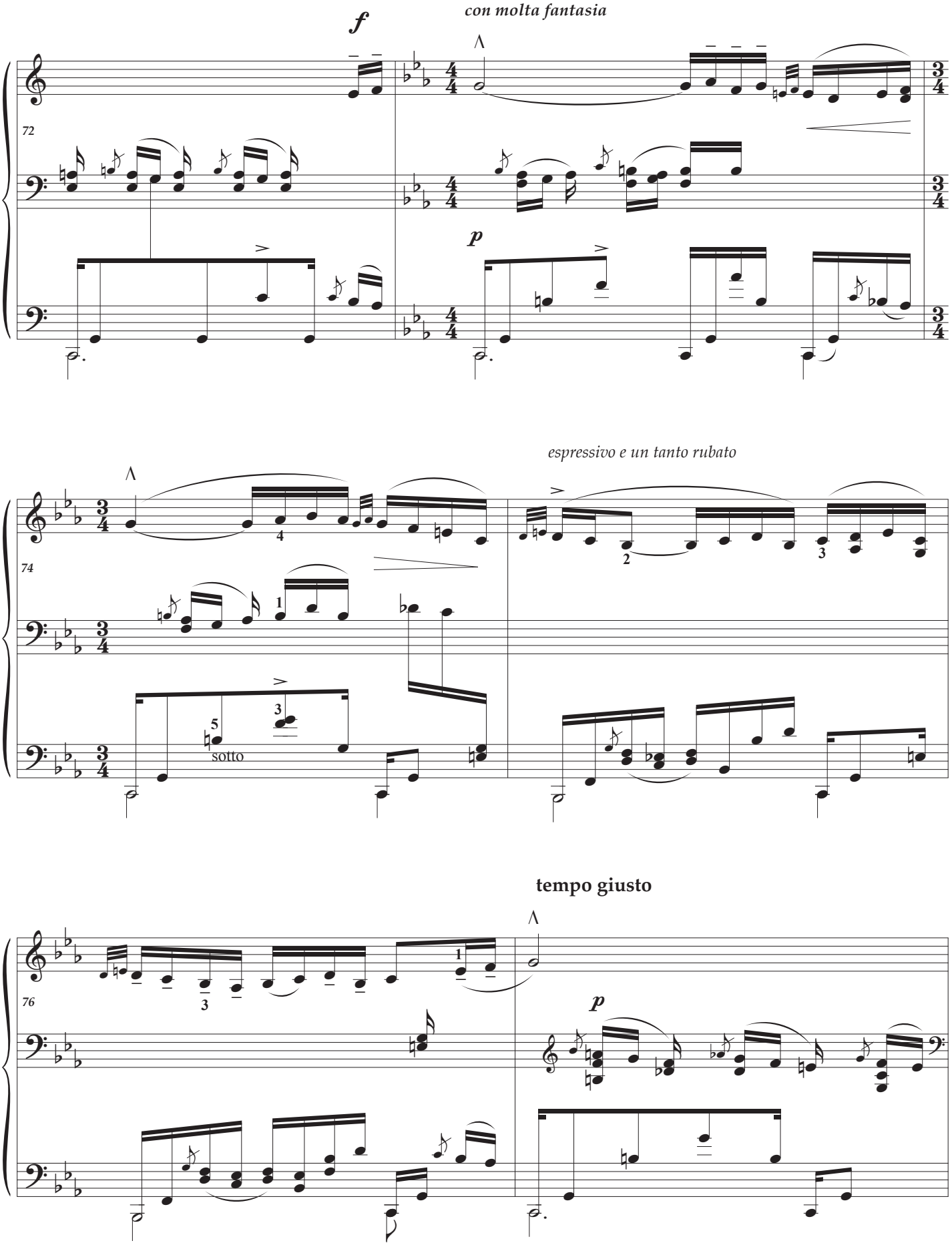


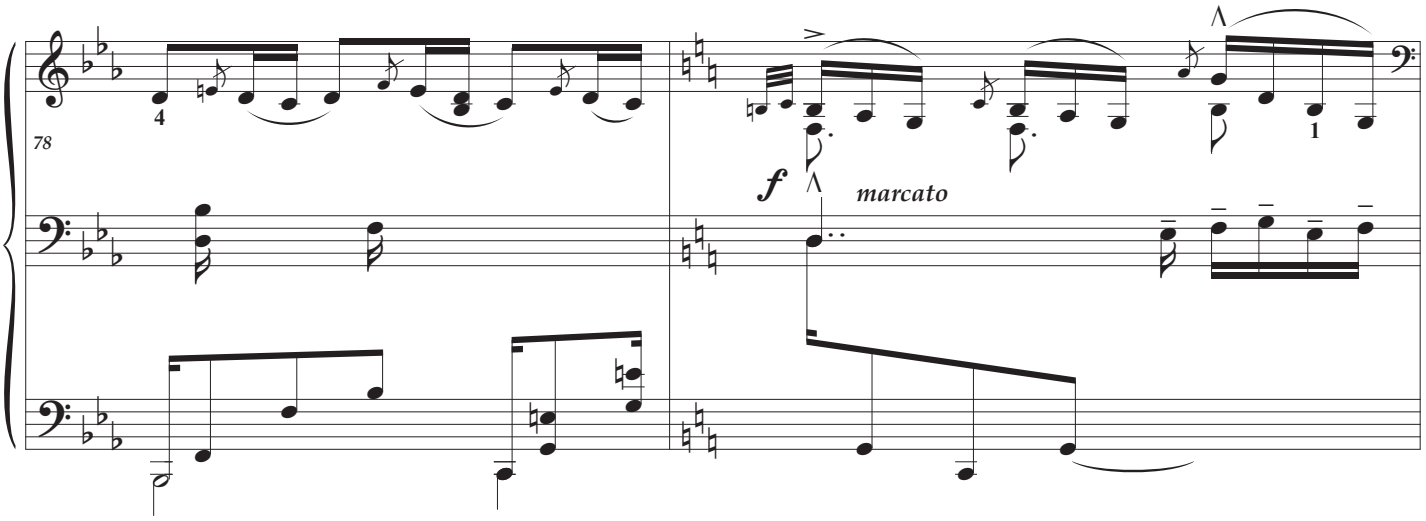
a tempo primo

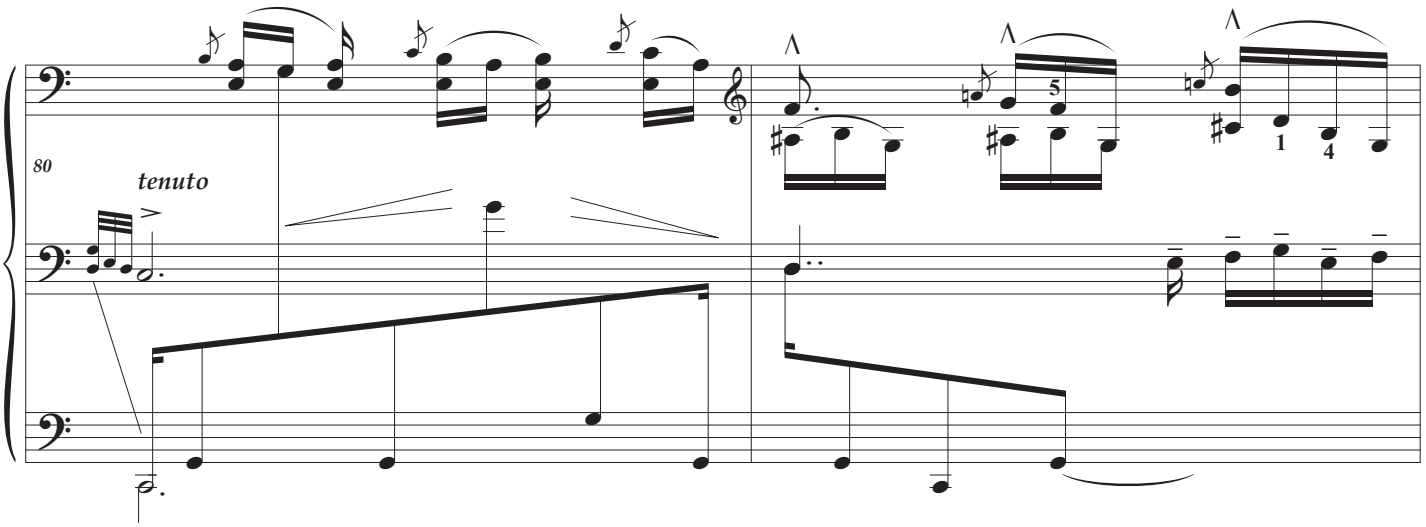
molto ritenuto

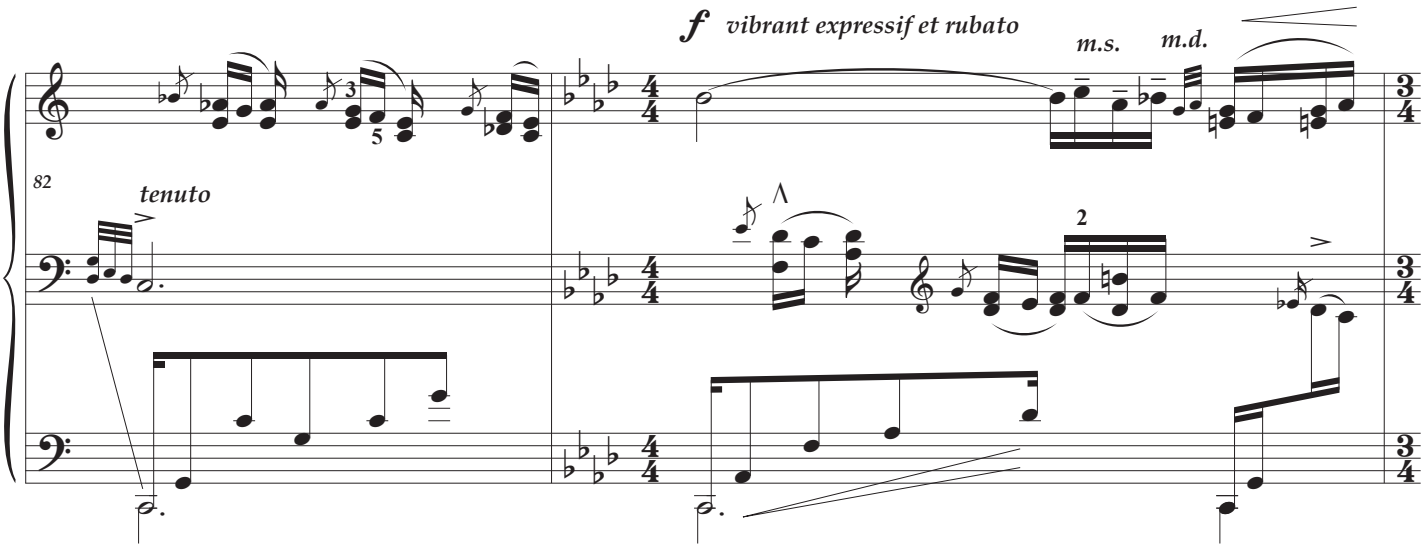


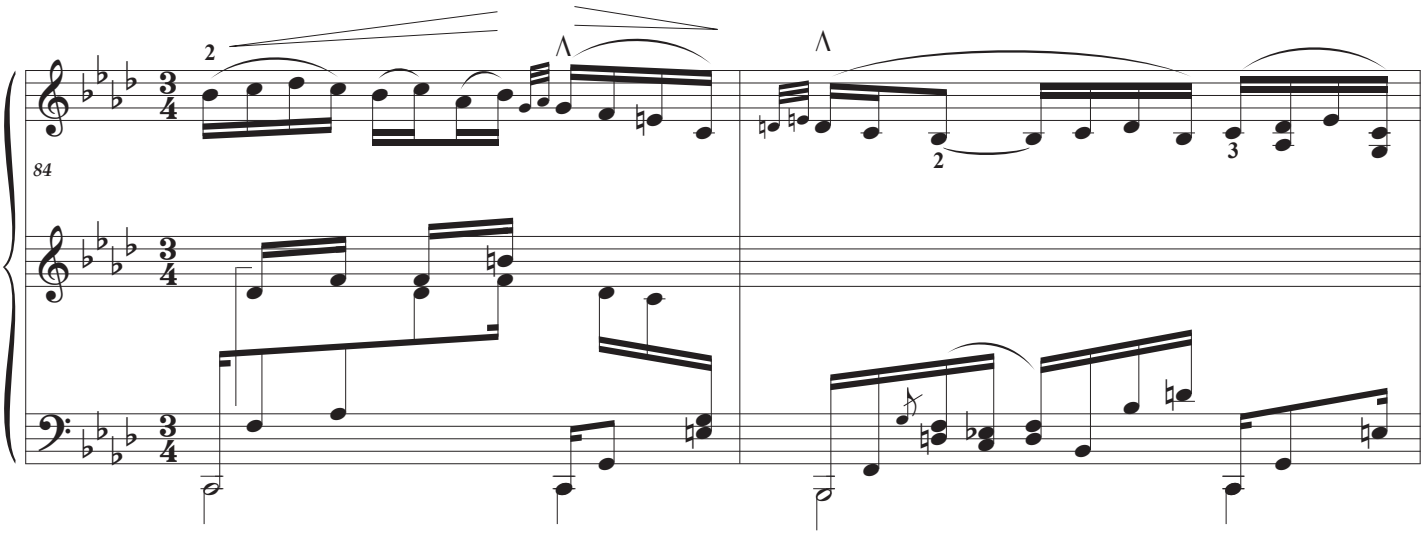

a tempo
poco meno che prima e cantando
ritardando
poco rubato
f
p
66
68
70


con molta fantasia
f
72
p
espressivo e un tanto rubato
74
sotto
tempo giusto
76
p

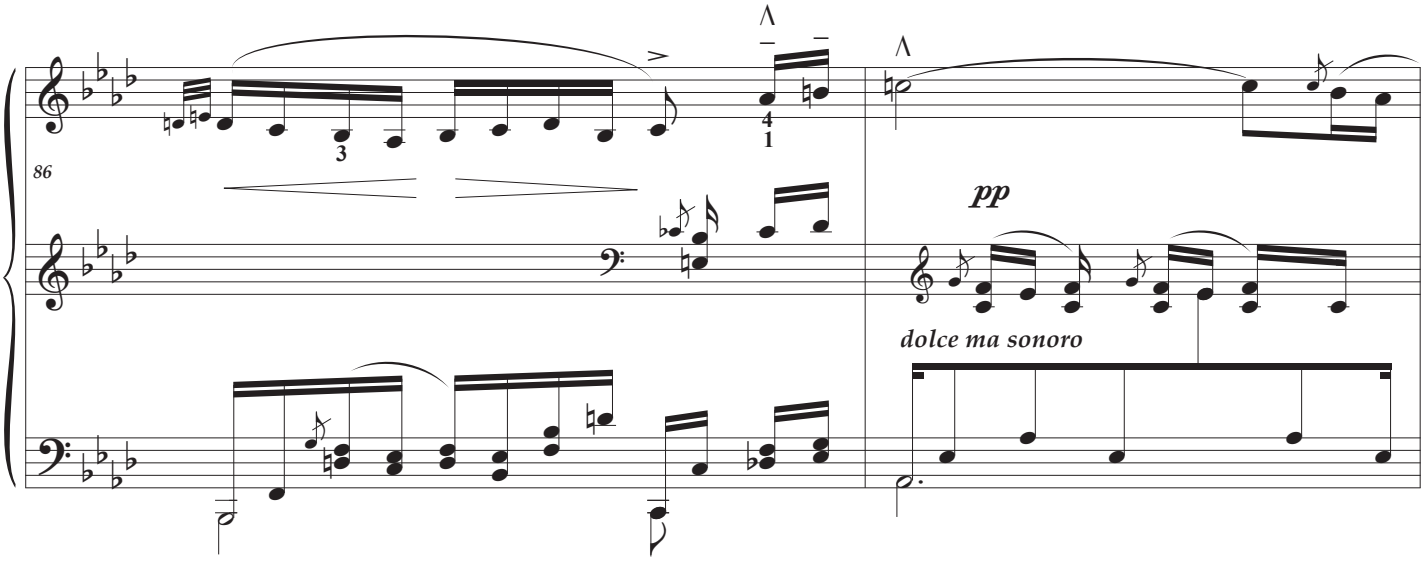

78
f
marcato

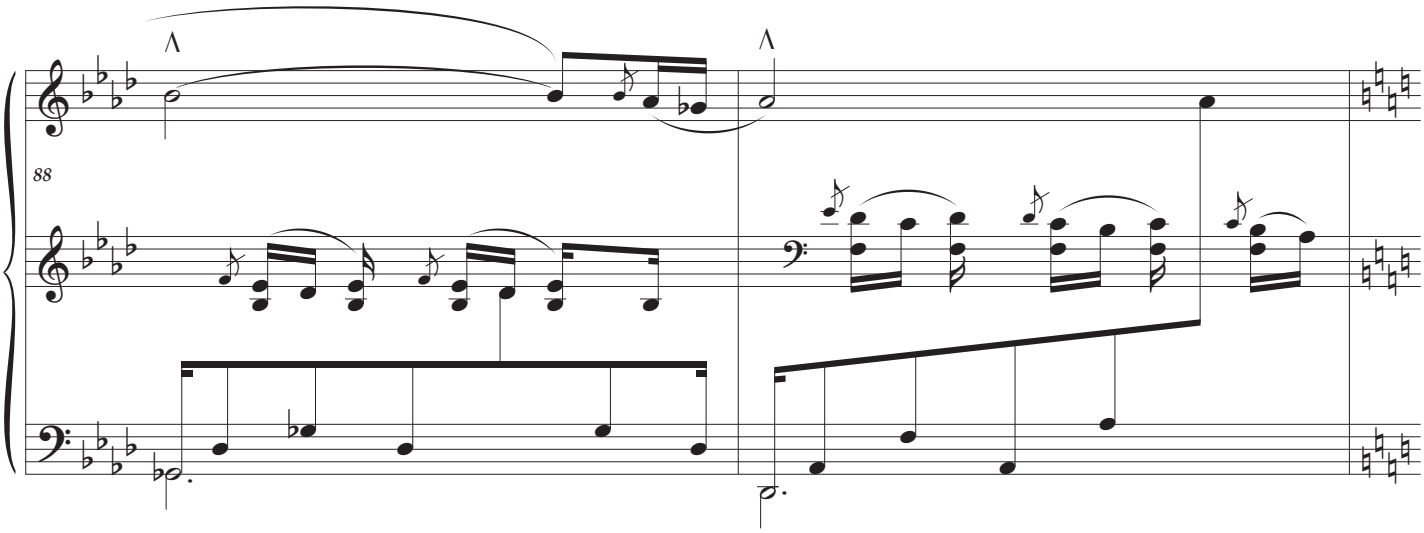

80
tenuto

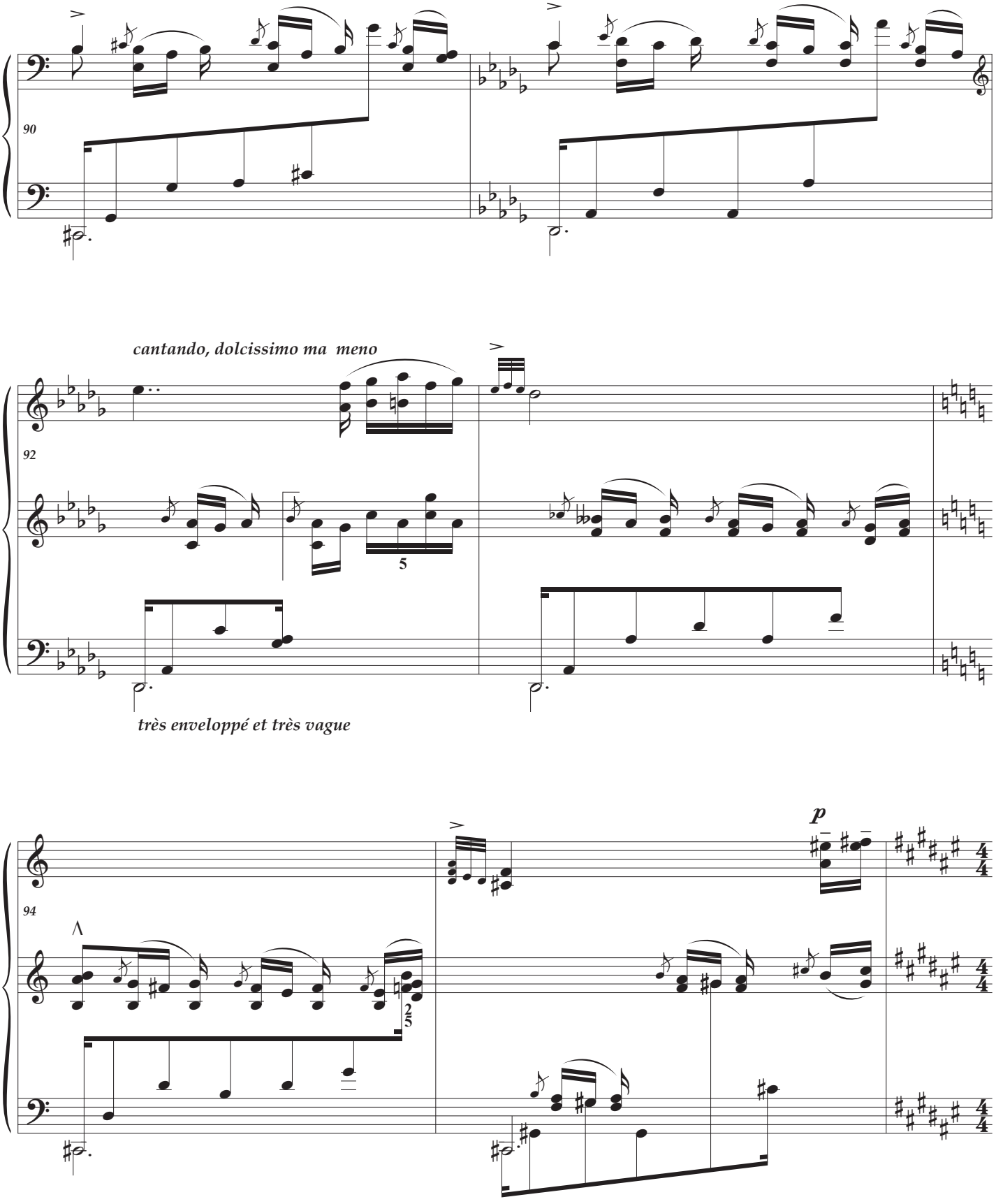

f
vibrant expressif et rubato
m.s.
m.d.
82
tenuto

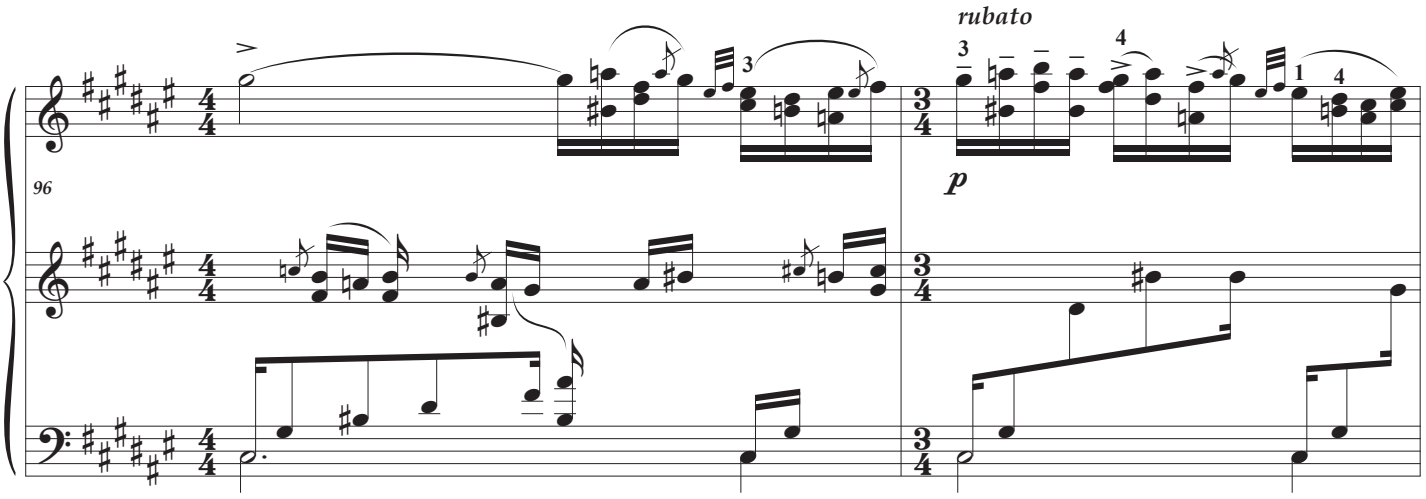


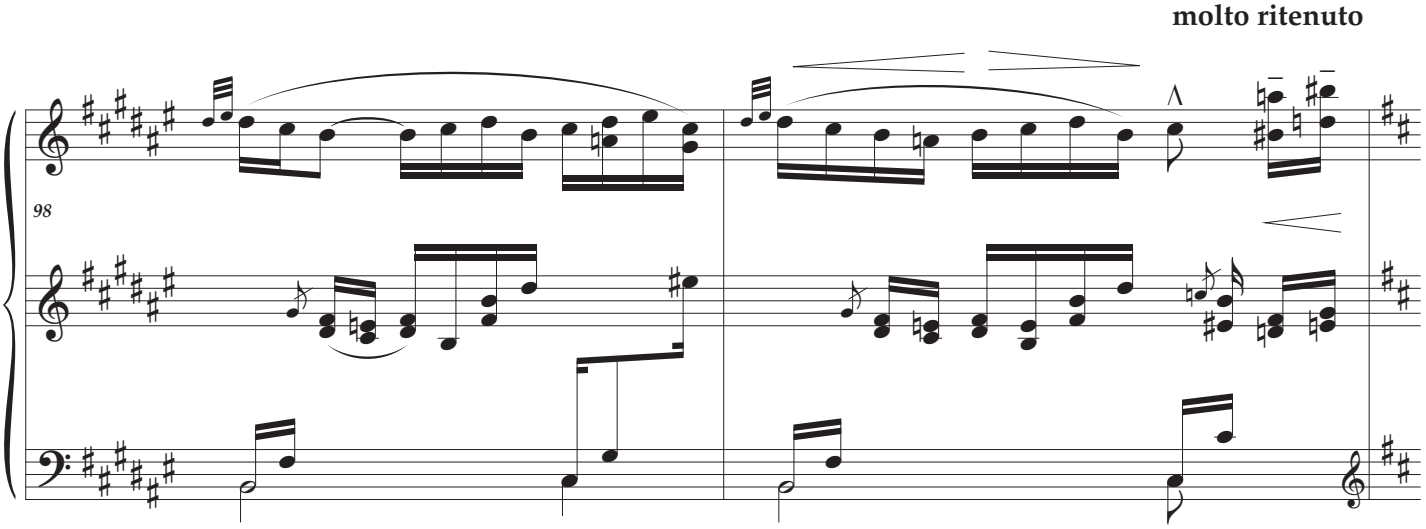
molto ritenuto a tempo

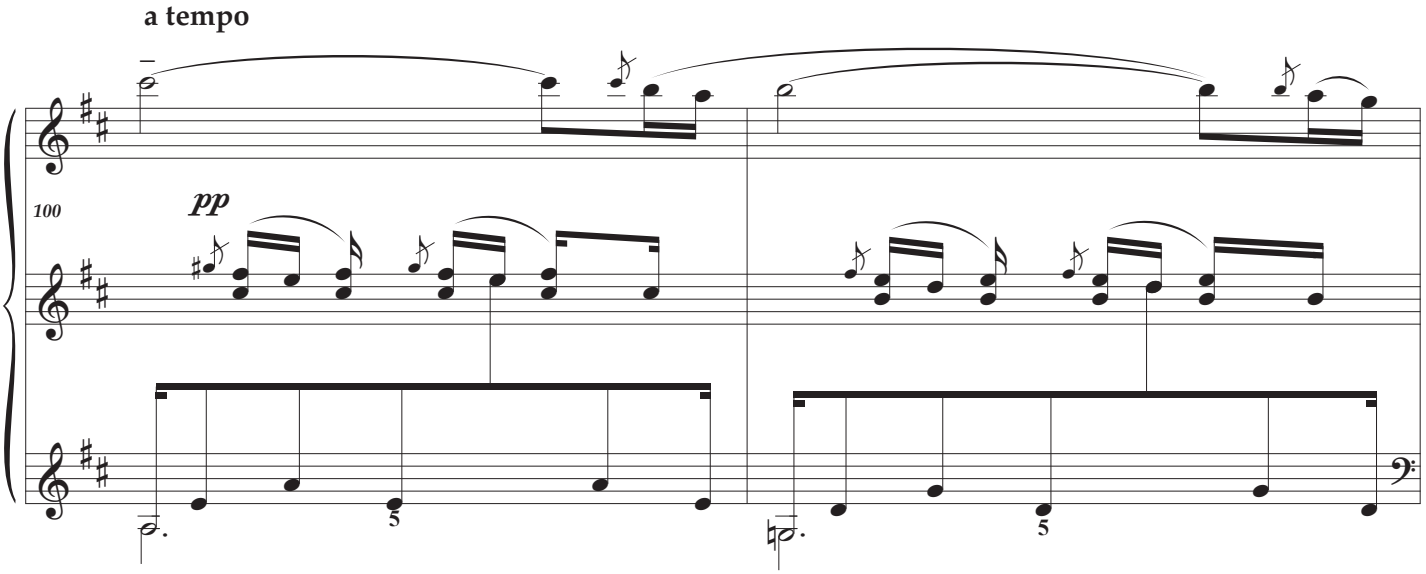


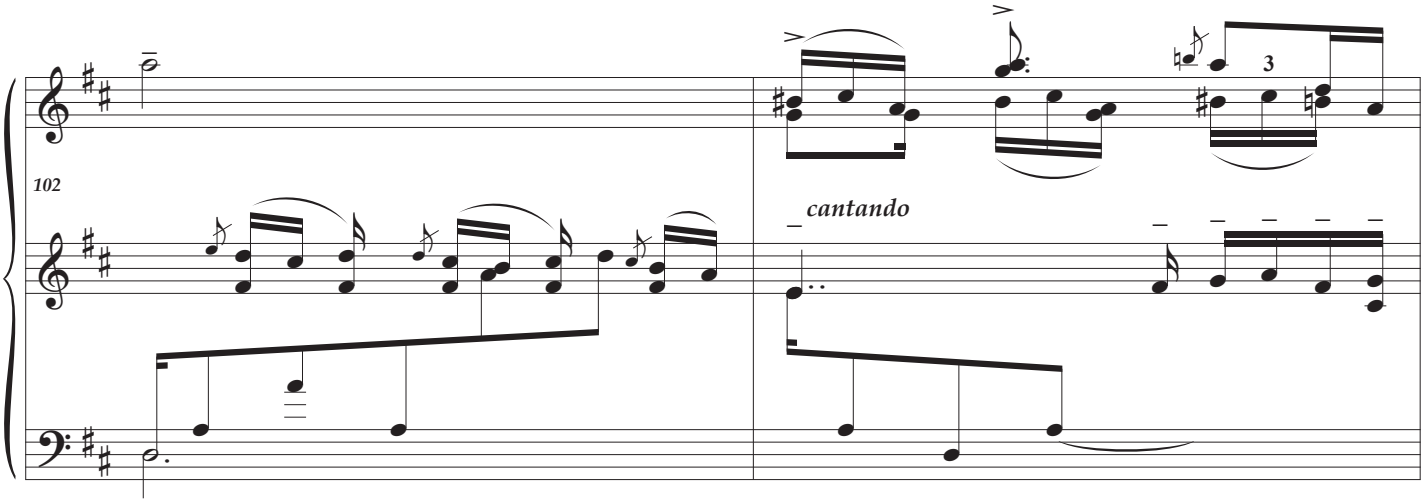


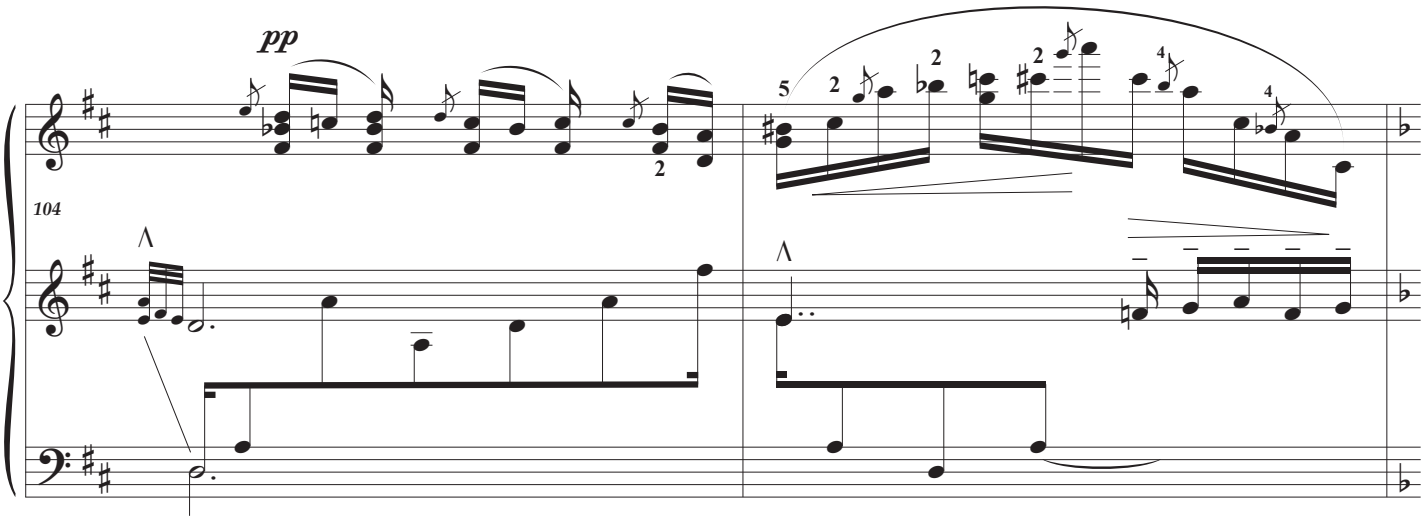

90
92
cantando, dolcissimo ma meno
5
très enveloppé et très vague
94
p
4/4
2/5


rubato
96
p

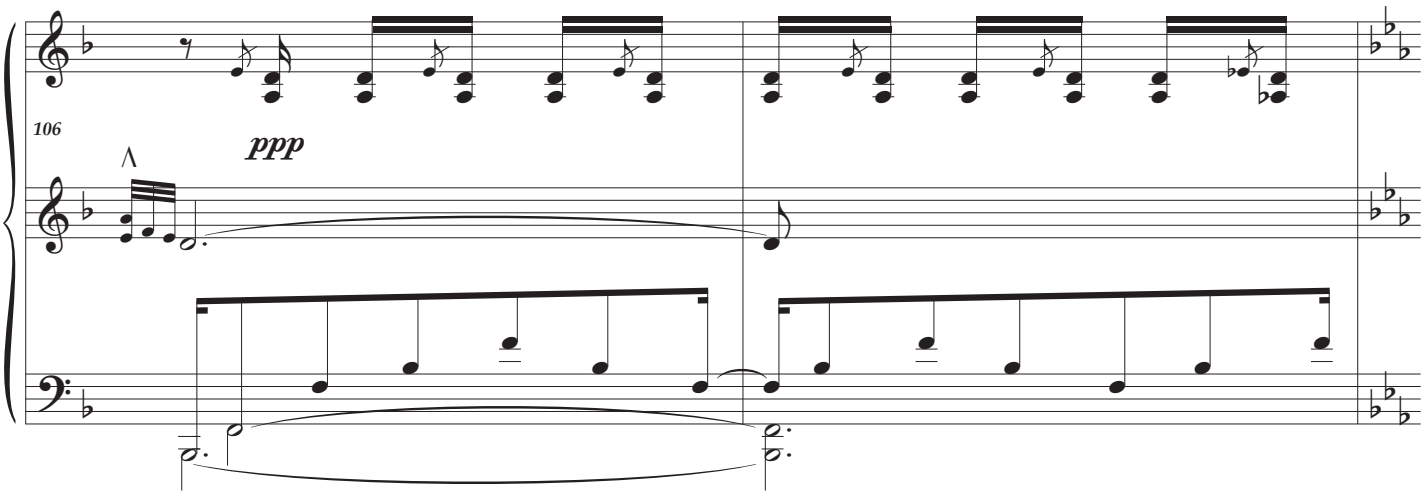

molto ritenuto
98

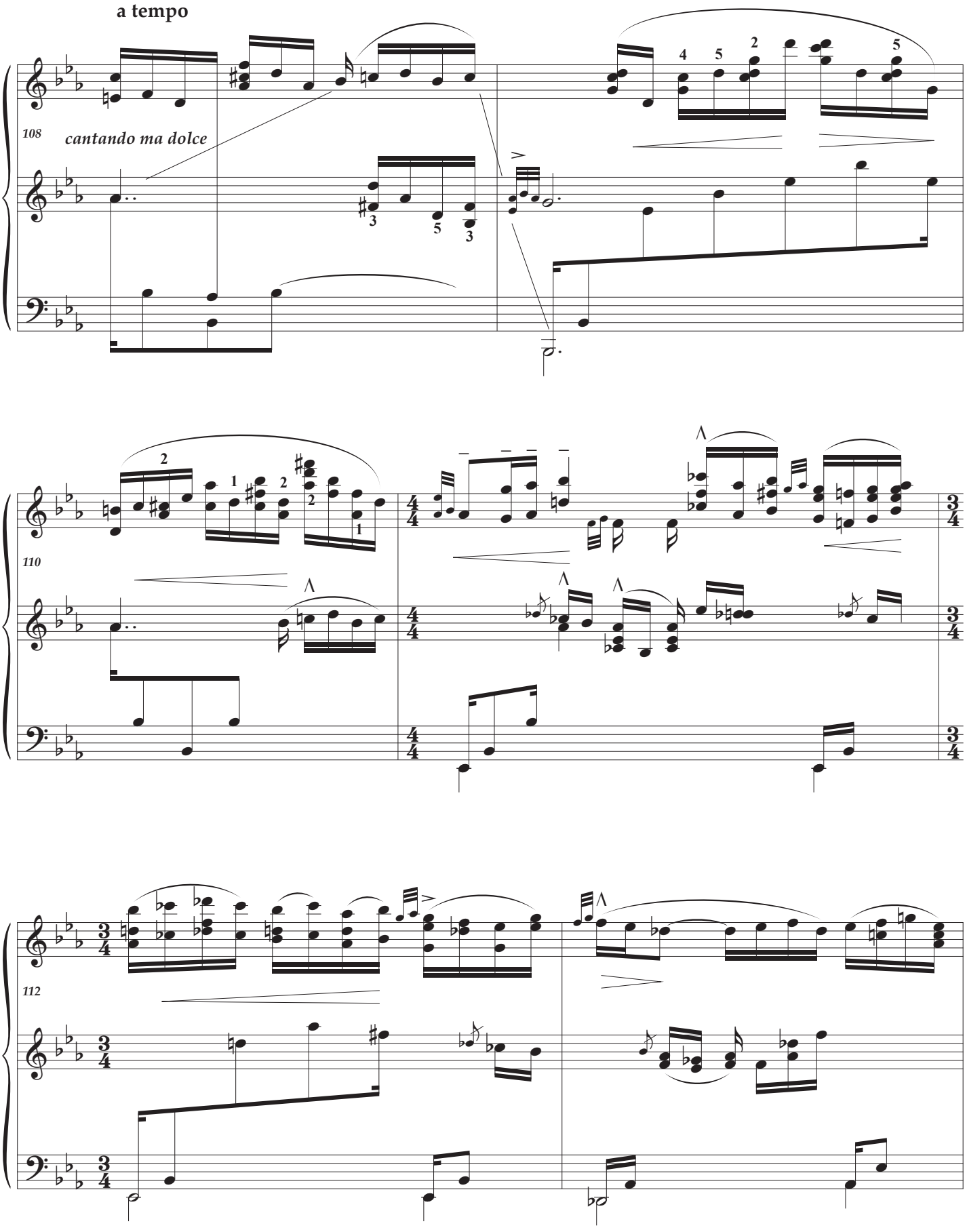

a tempo
100
pp



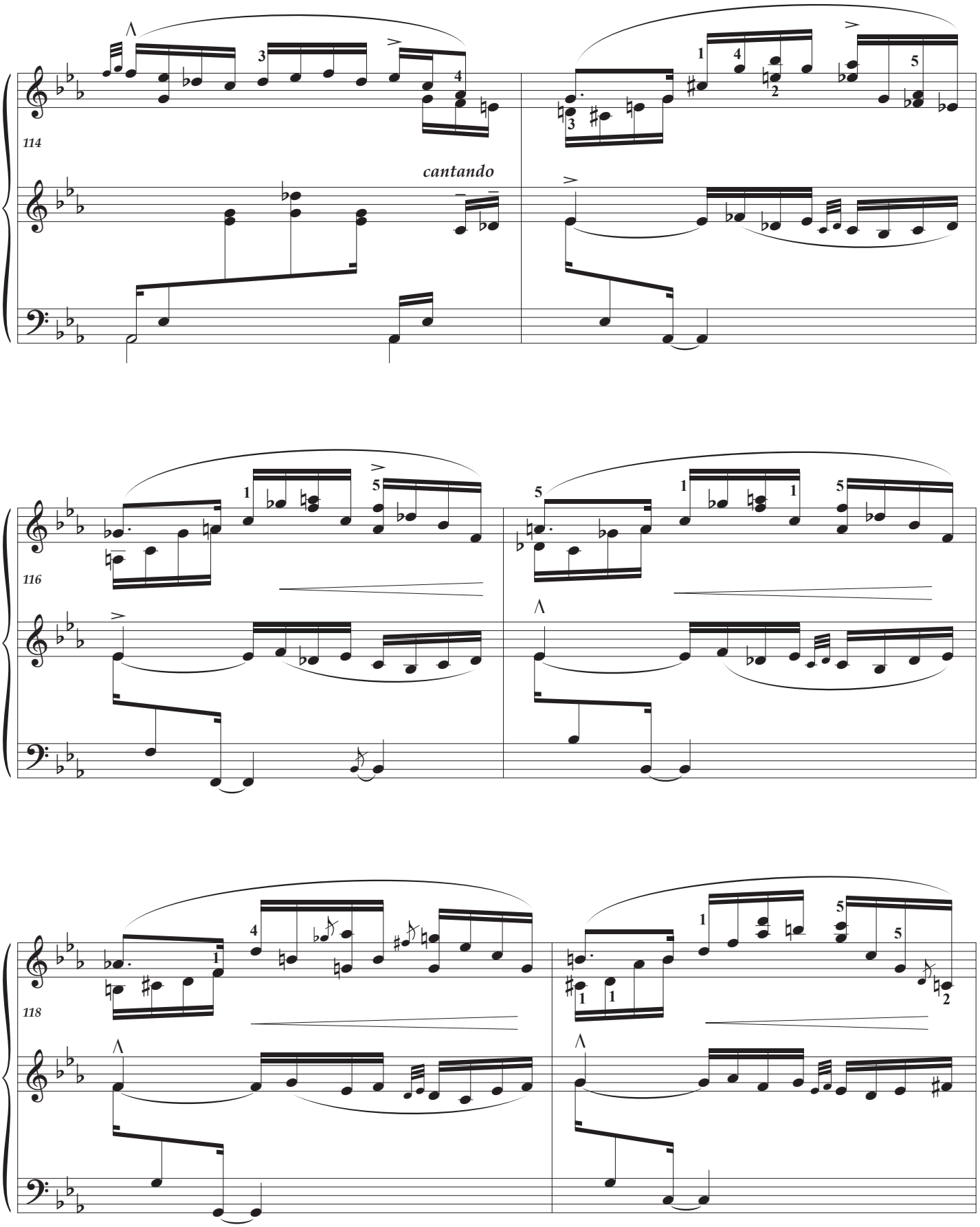


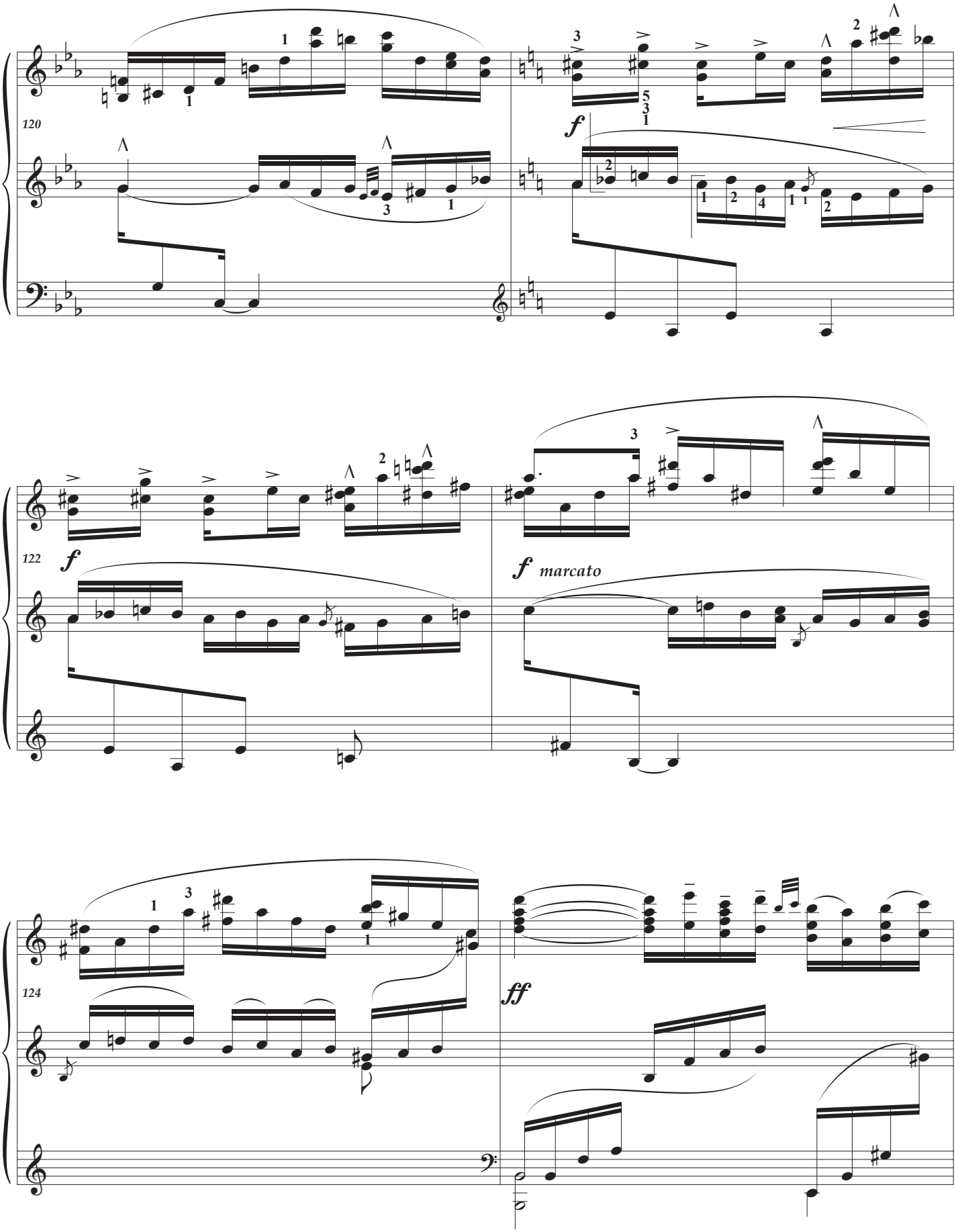
ritardando

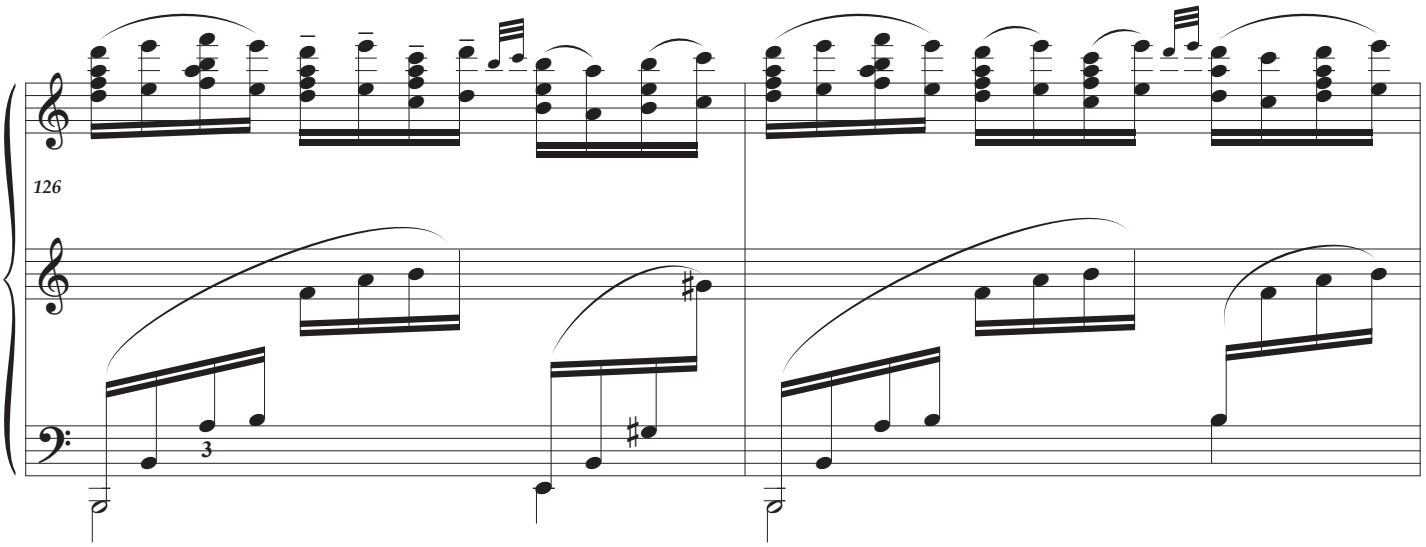


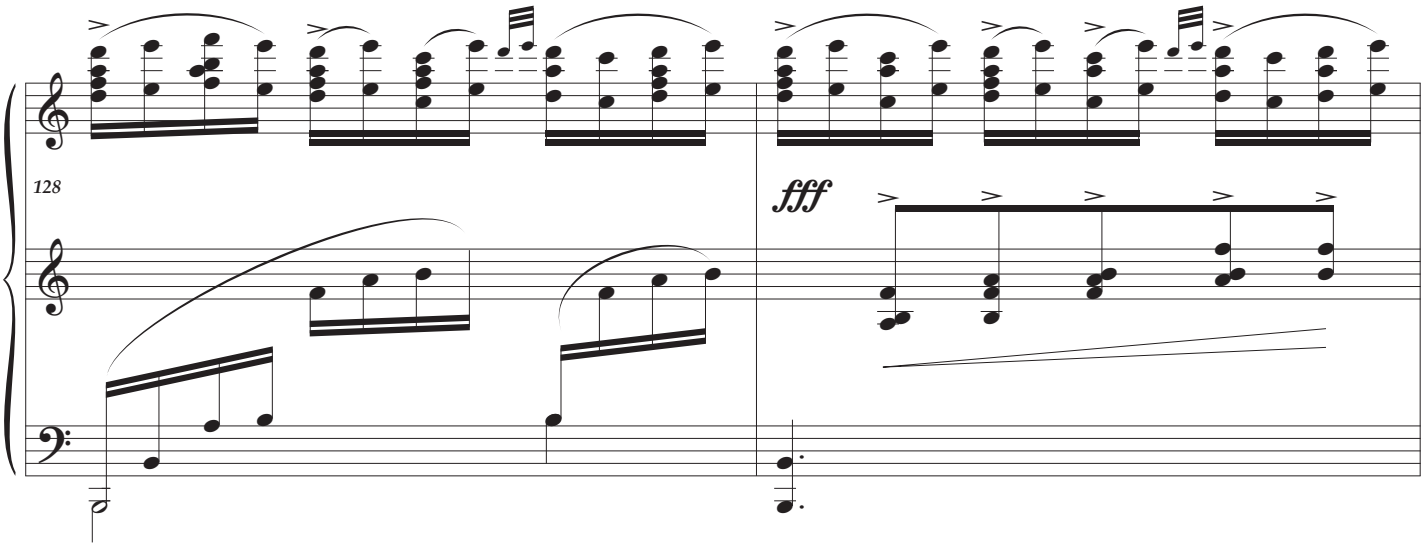

a tempo
108
cantando ma dolce
110
112

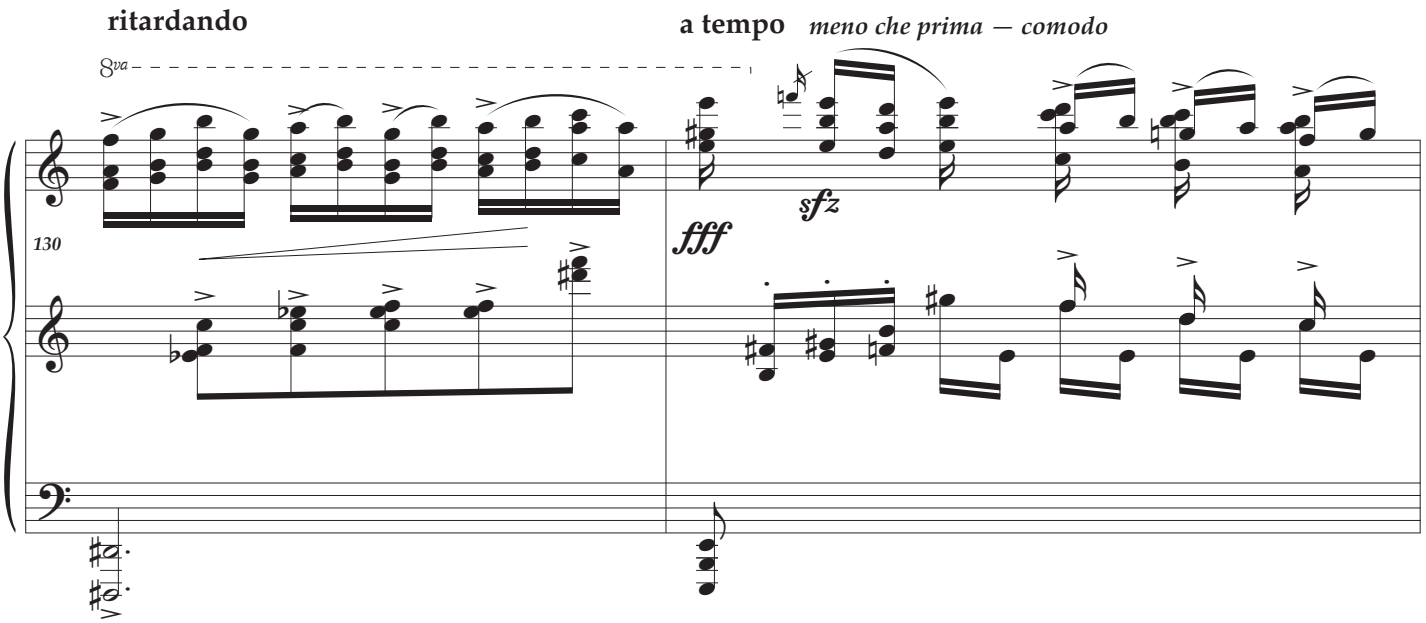
la main droite très légèrement, le chant très marqué sans être fort

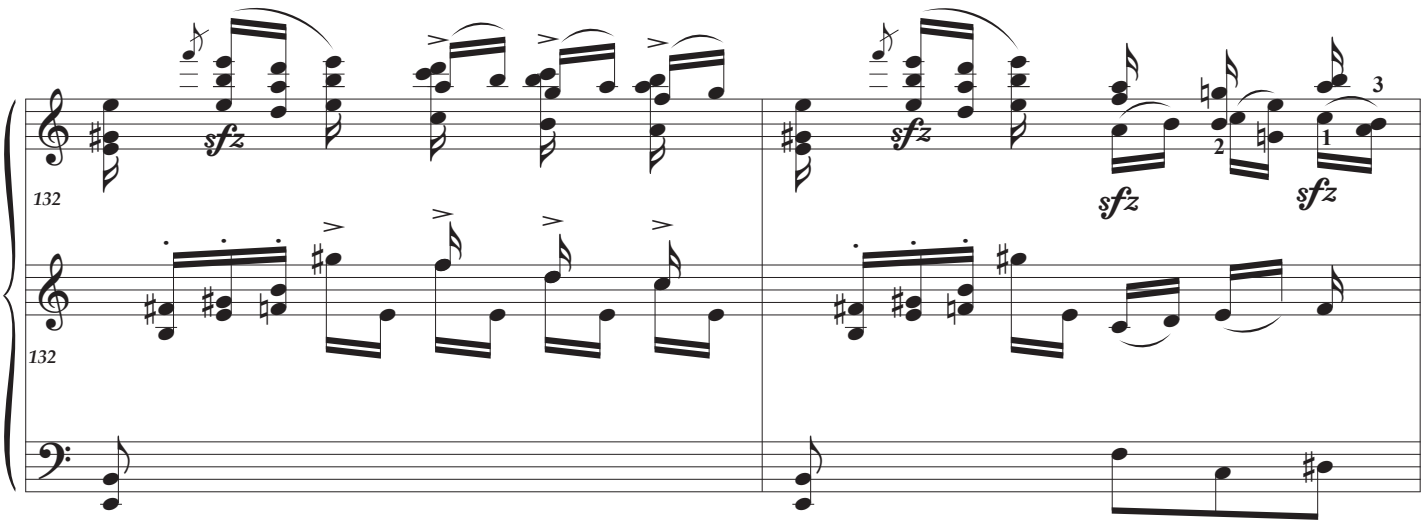



120
f
122
f
f marcato
124
ff


126
3


128
fff


ritardando
a tempo
meno che prima — comodo
8va
130
sfz
fff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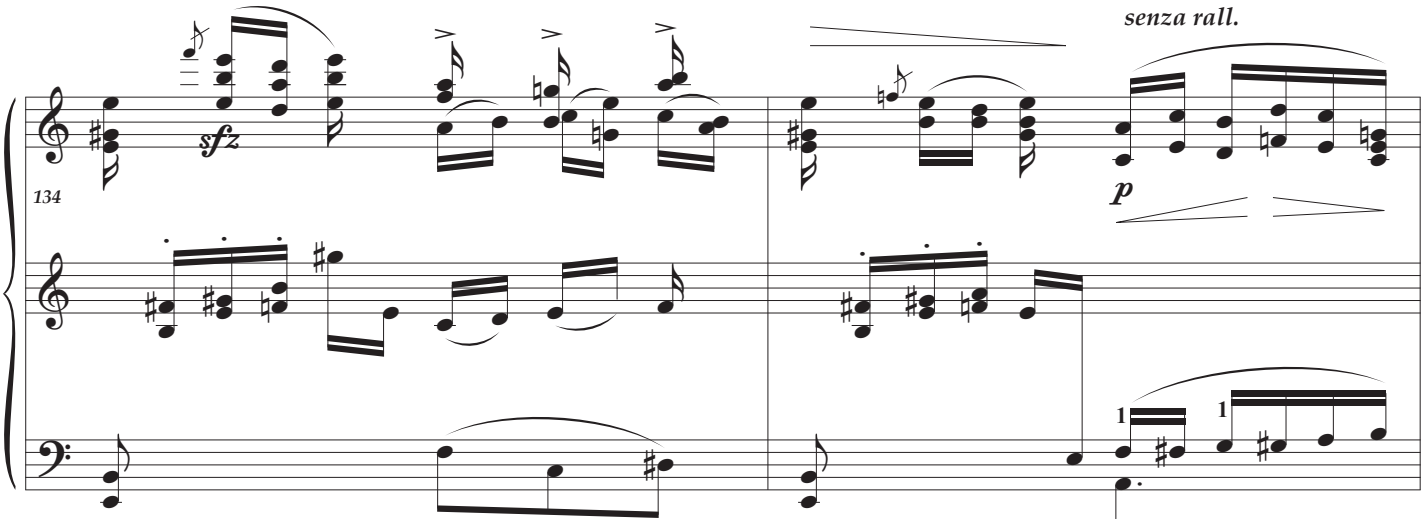
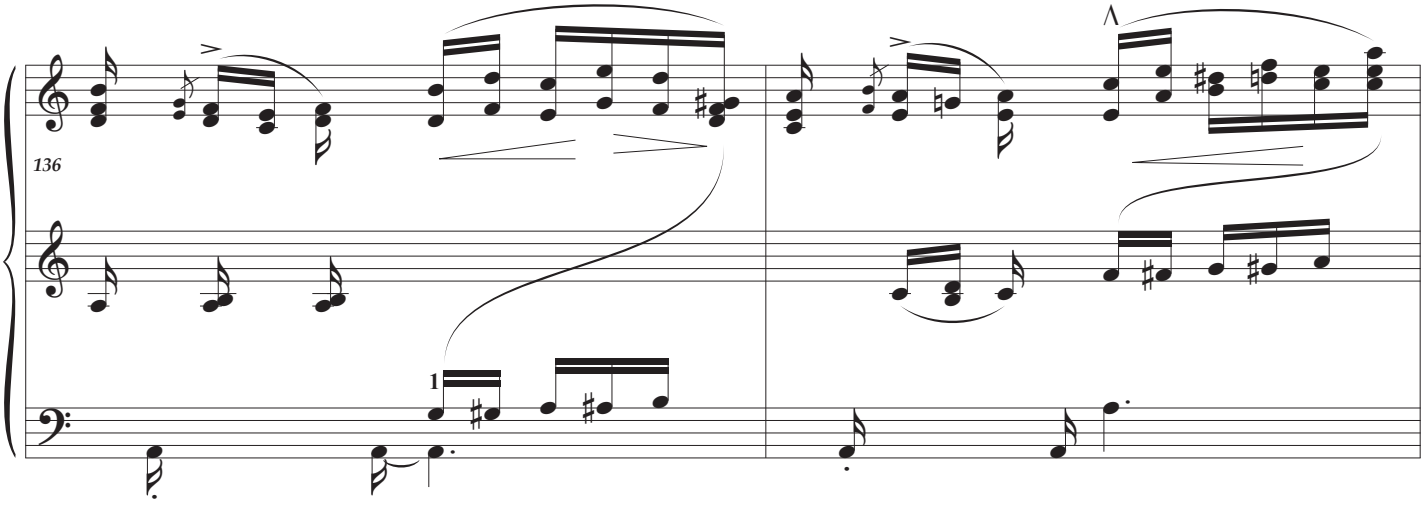
sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz
132


134
sfz
senza rall.
p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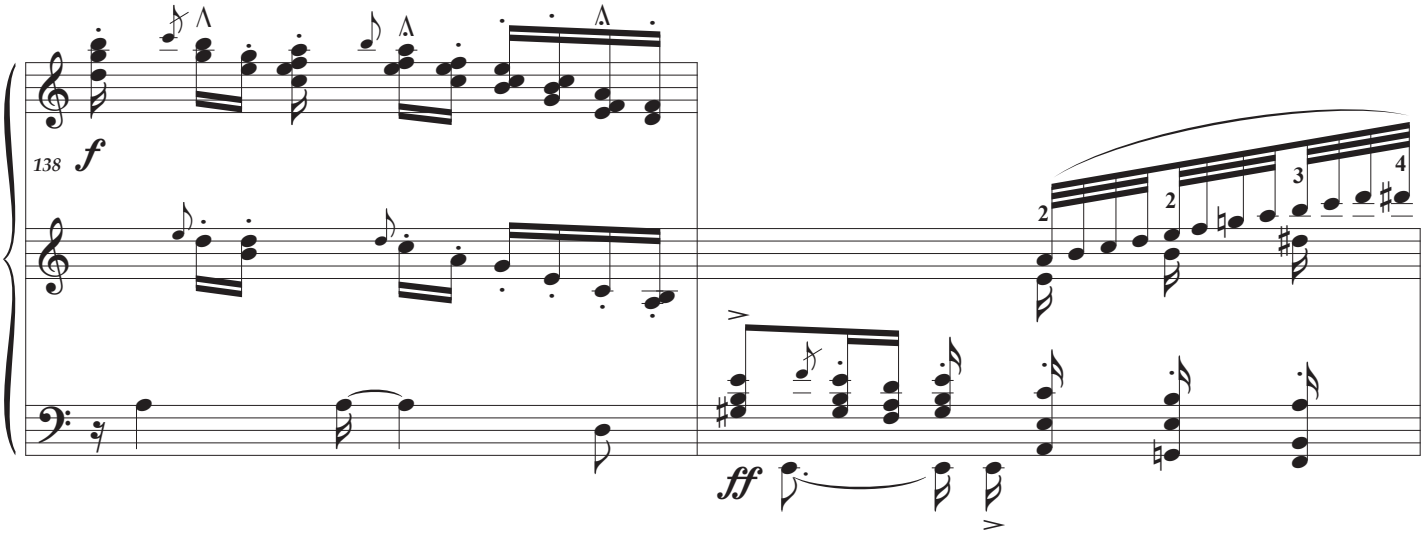
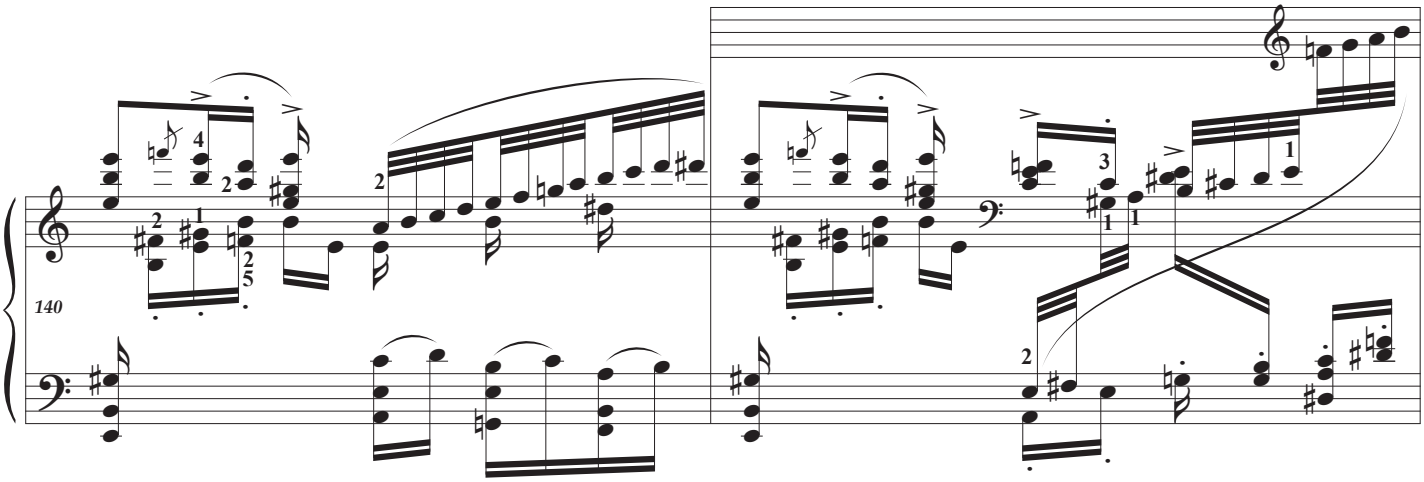

138
f
ff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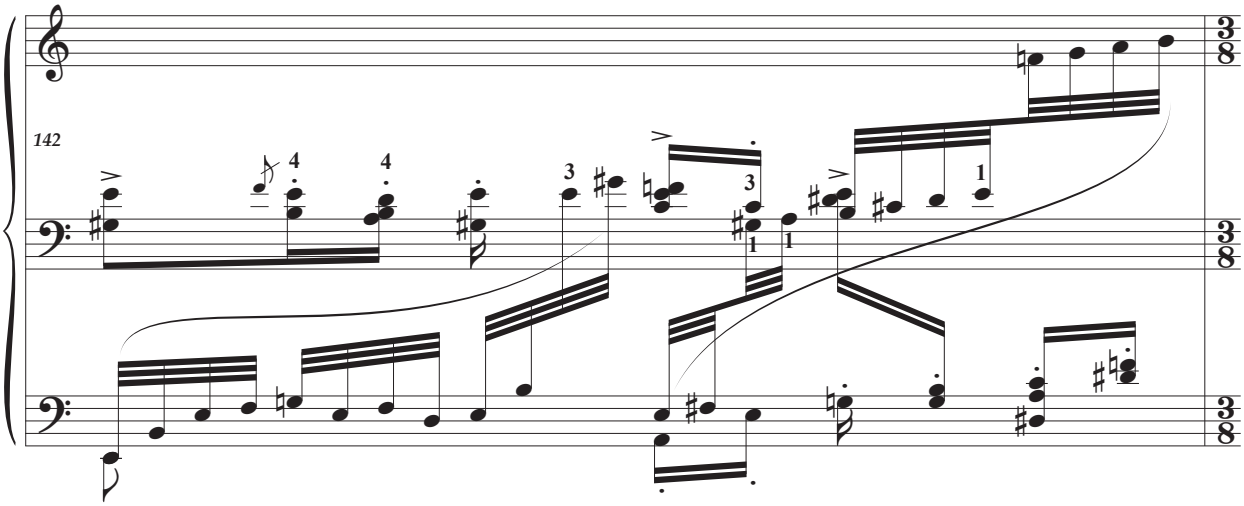
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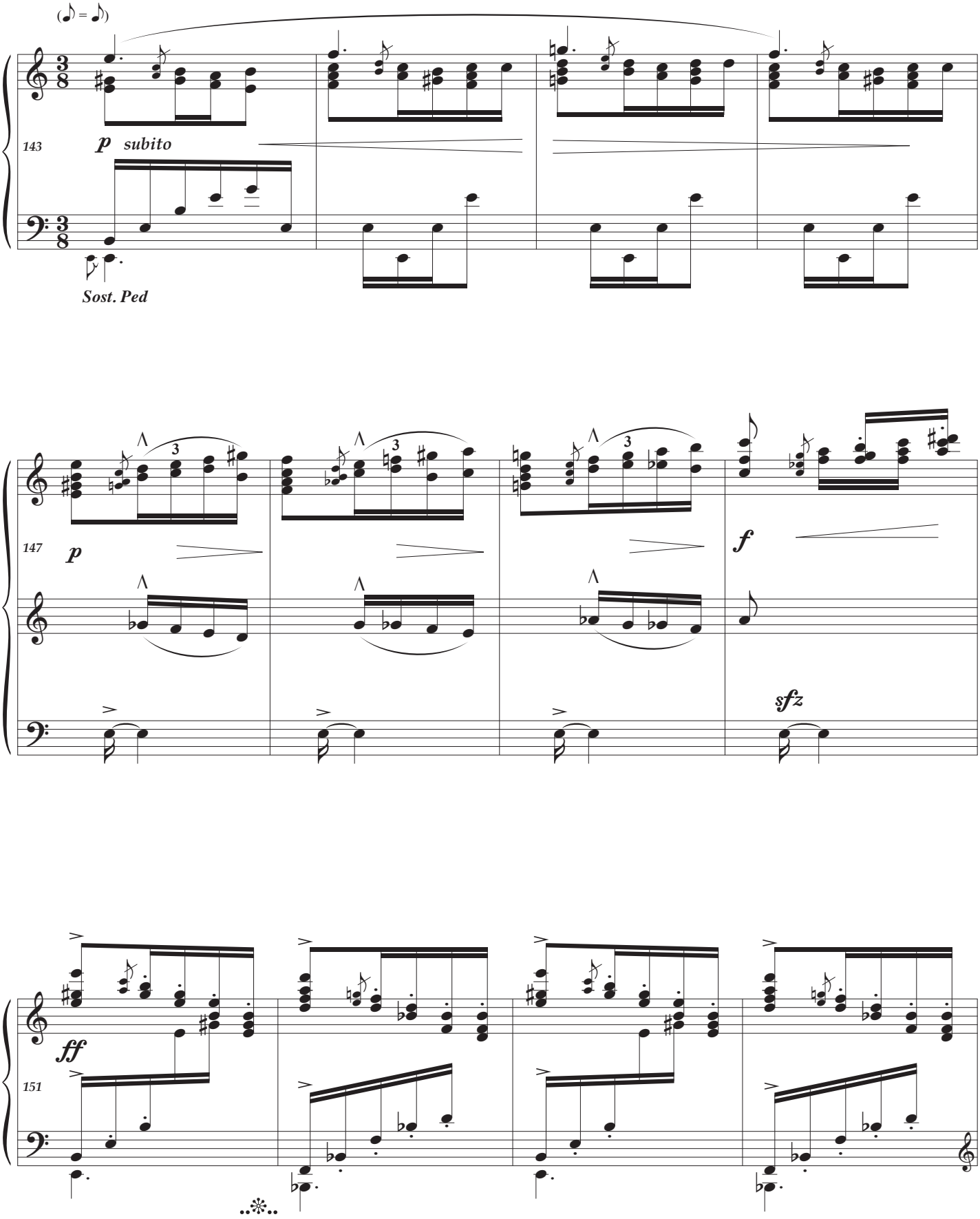
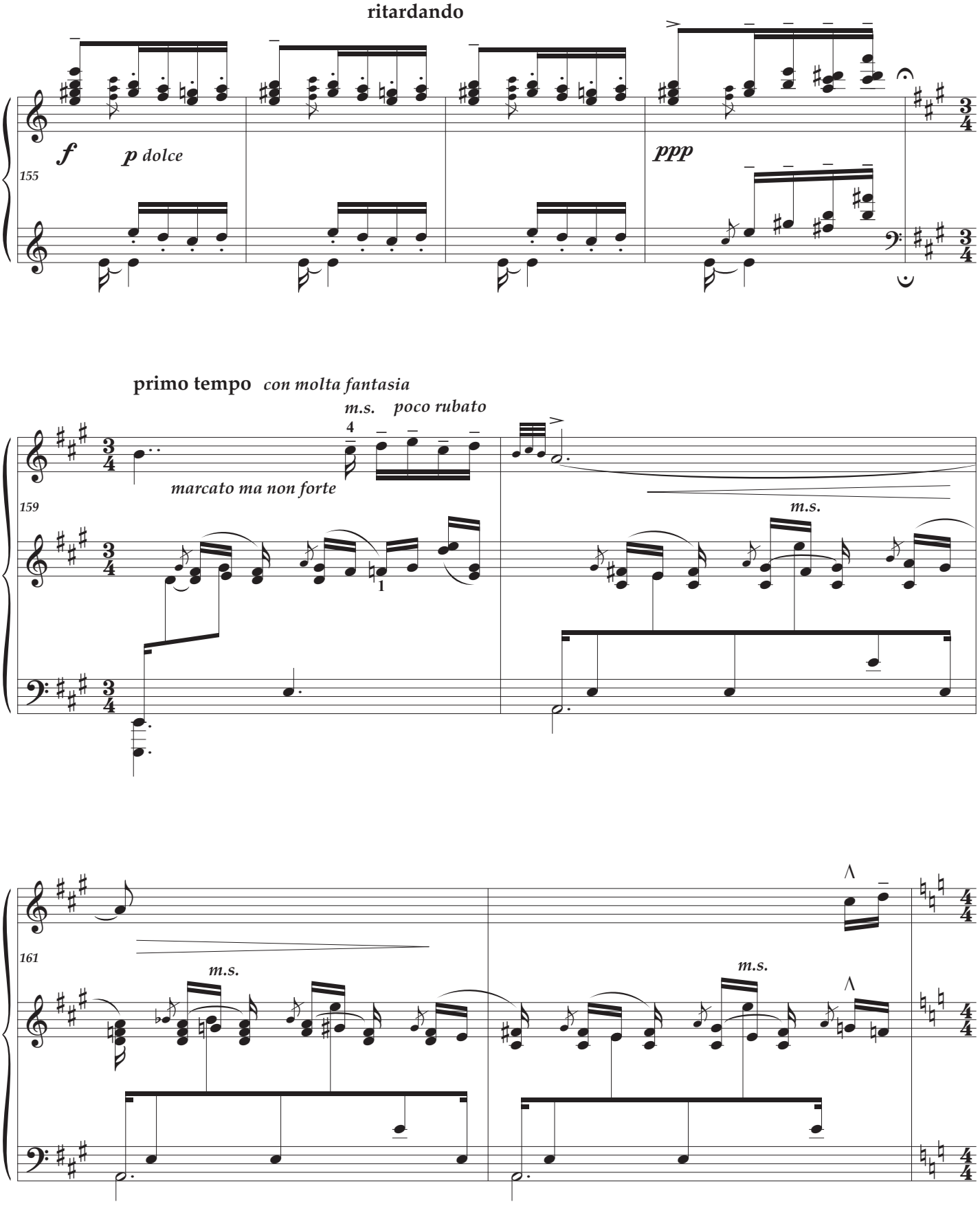
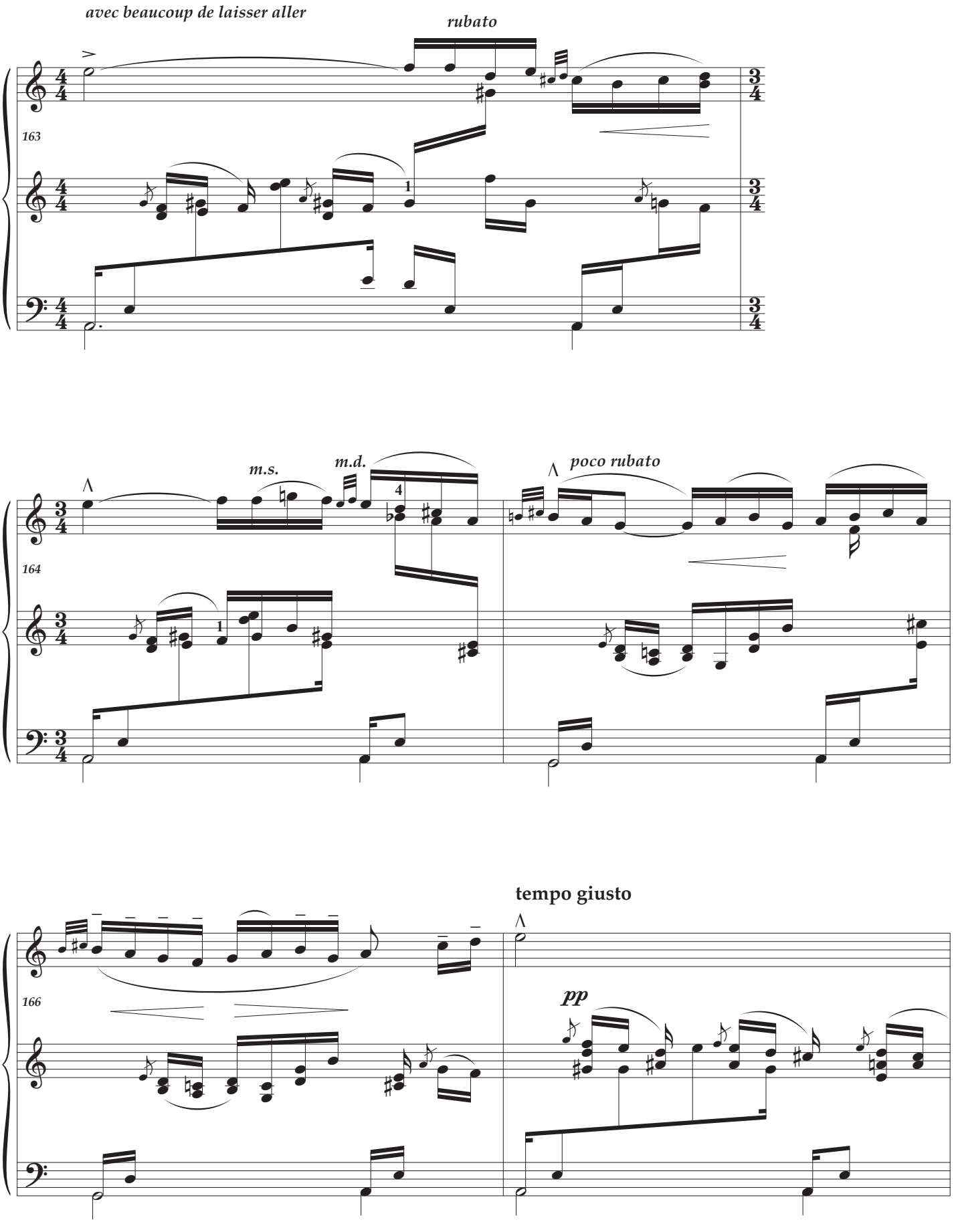
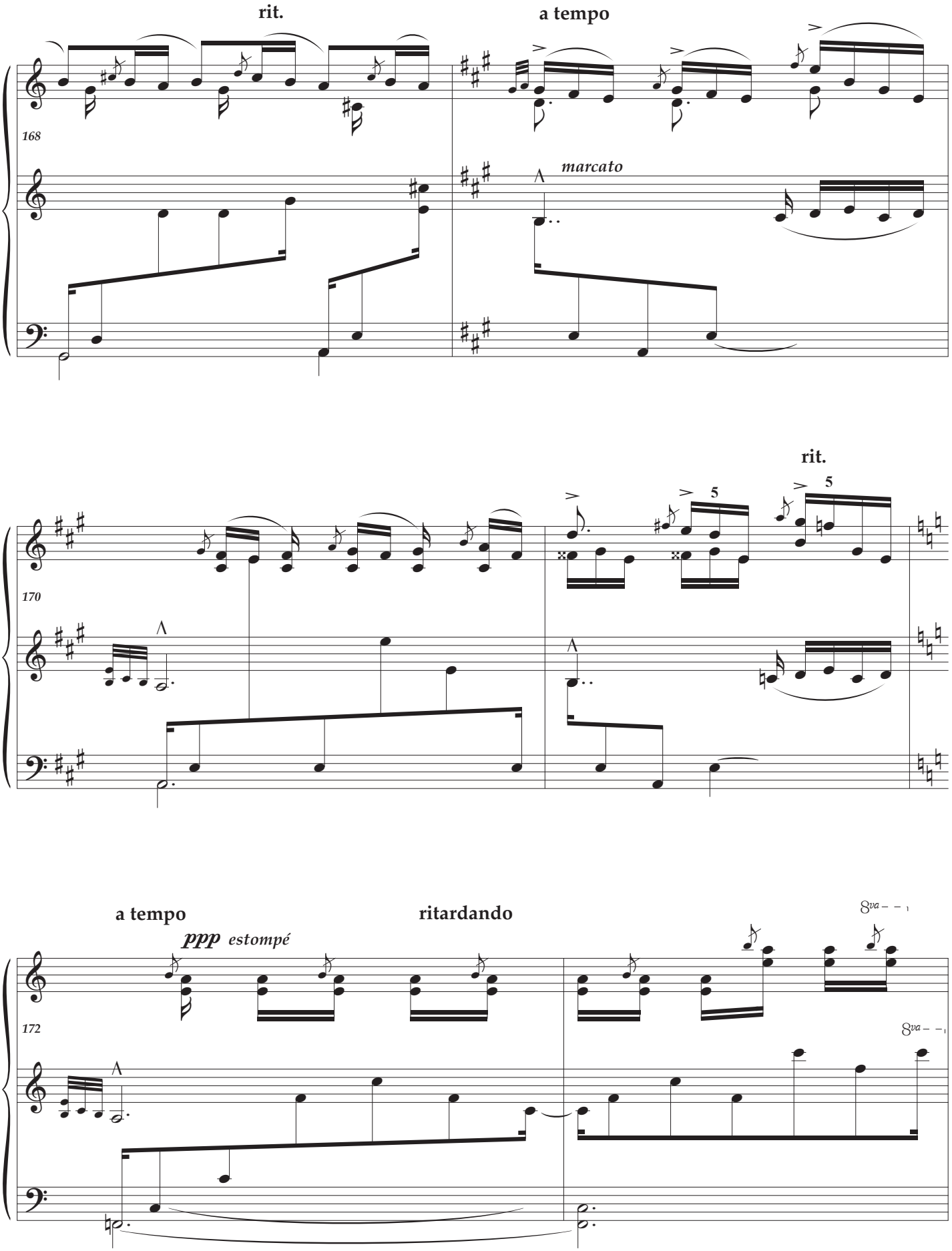
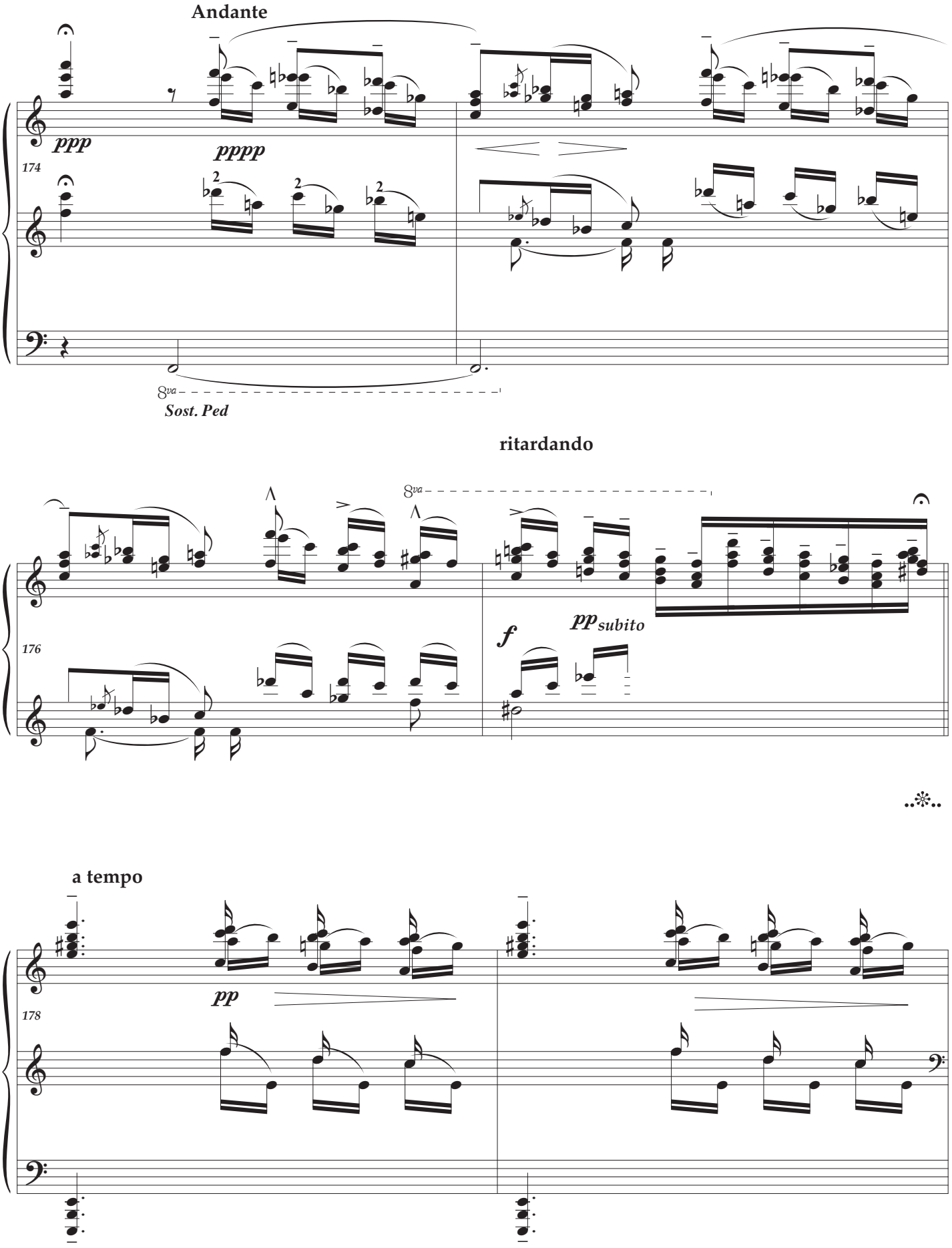
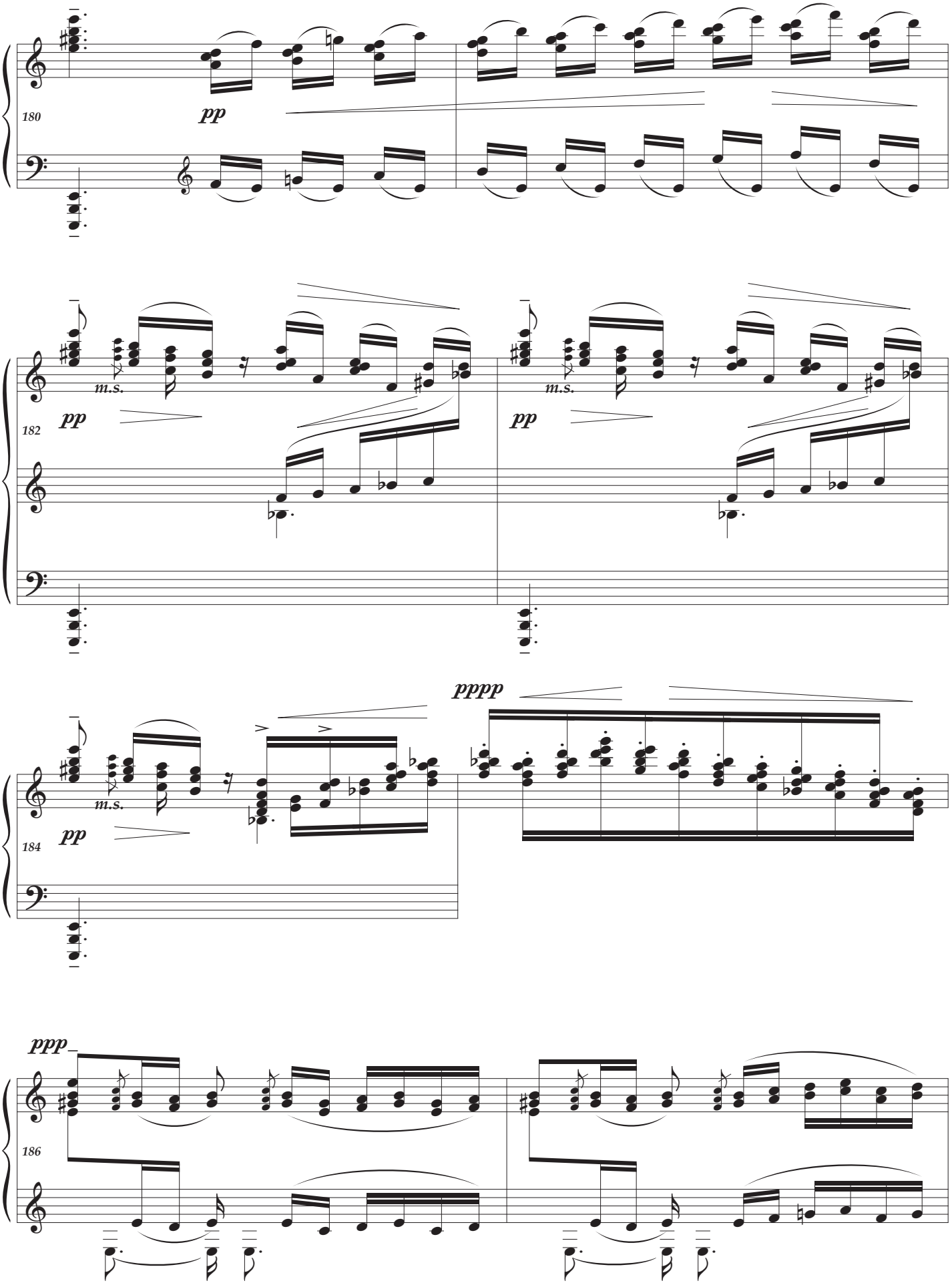

(♪ = ♪)
143
p subito
Sost. Ped
147
p
f
sfz
151
ff

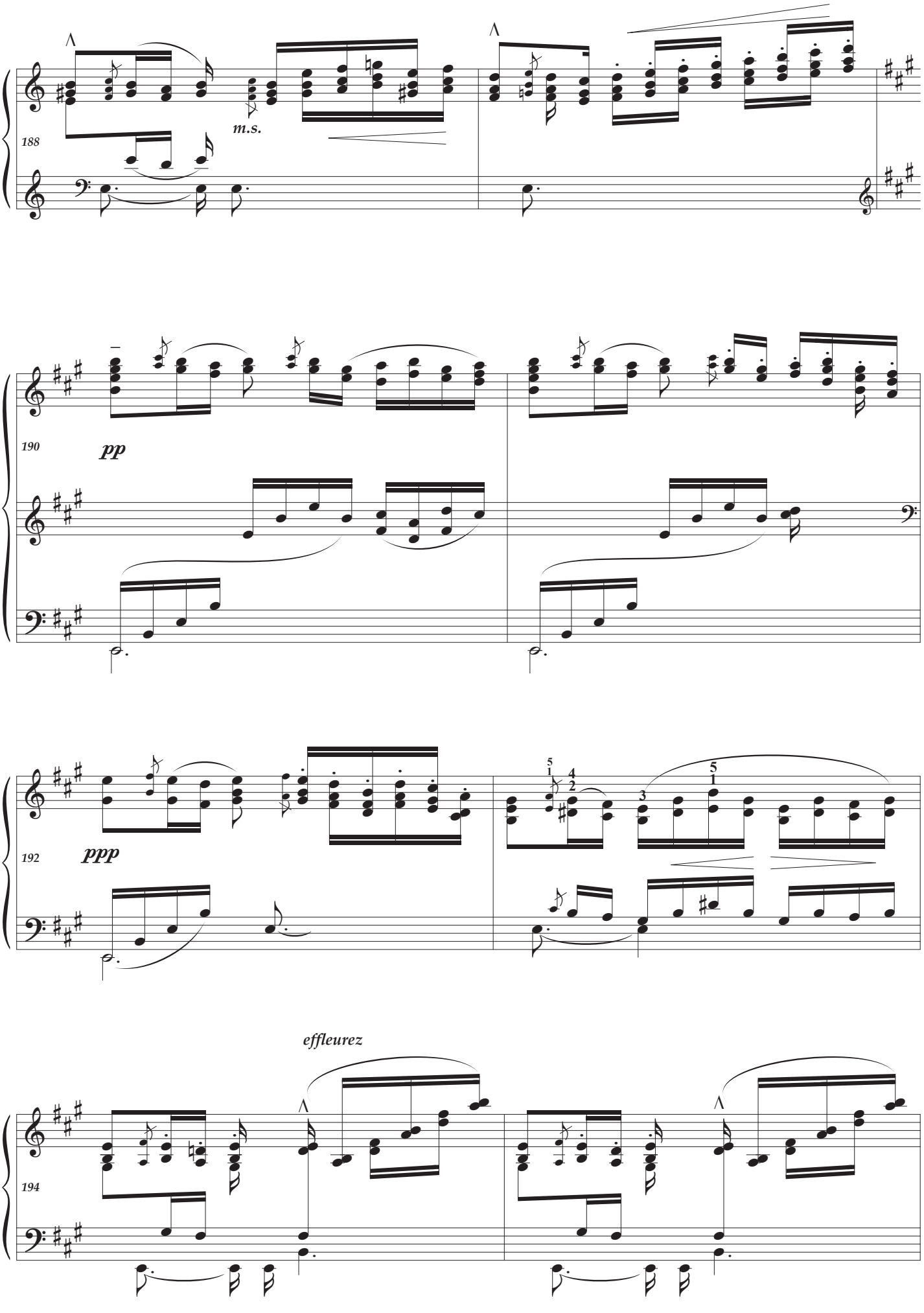

ritardando
f
p dolce
155
ppp
primo tempo
con molta fantasia
m.s.
poco rubato
marcato ma non forte
159
m.s.
161
m.s.
m.s.

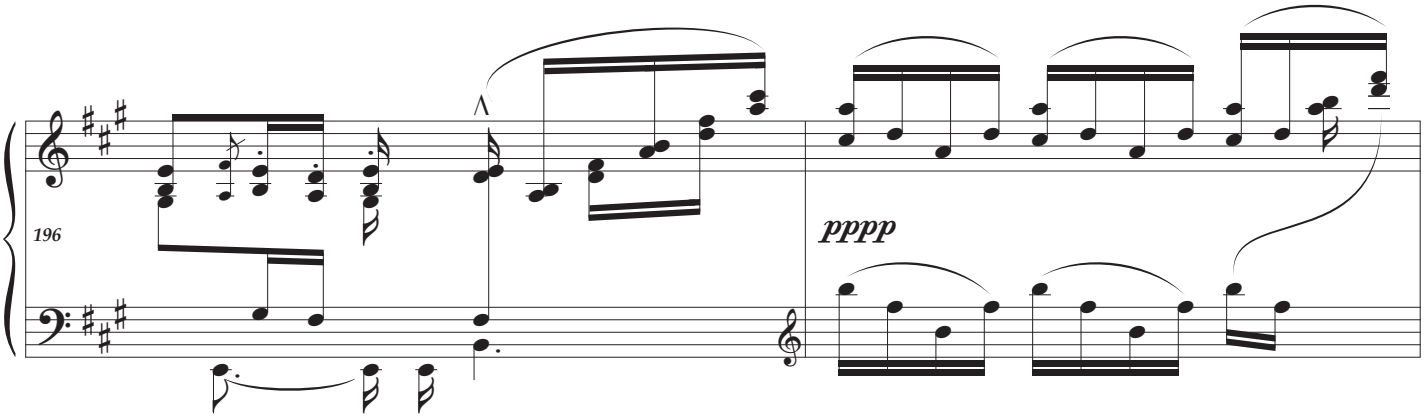

avec beaucoup de laisser aller
rubato
163
m.s.
m.d.
poco rubato
164
tempo giusto
166
pp

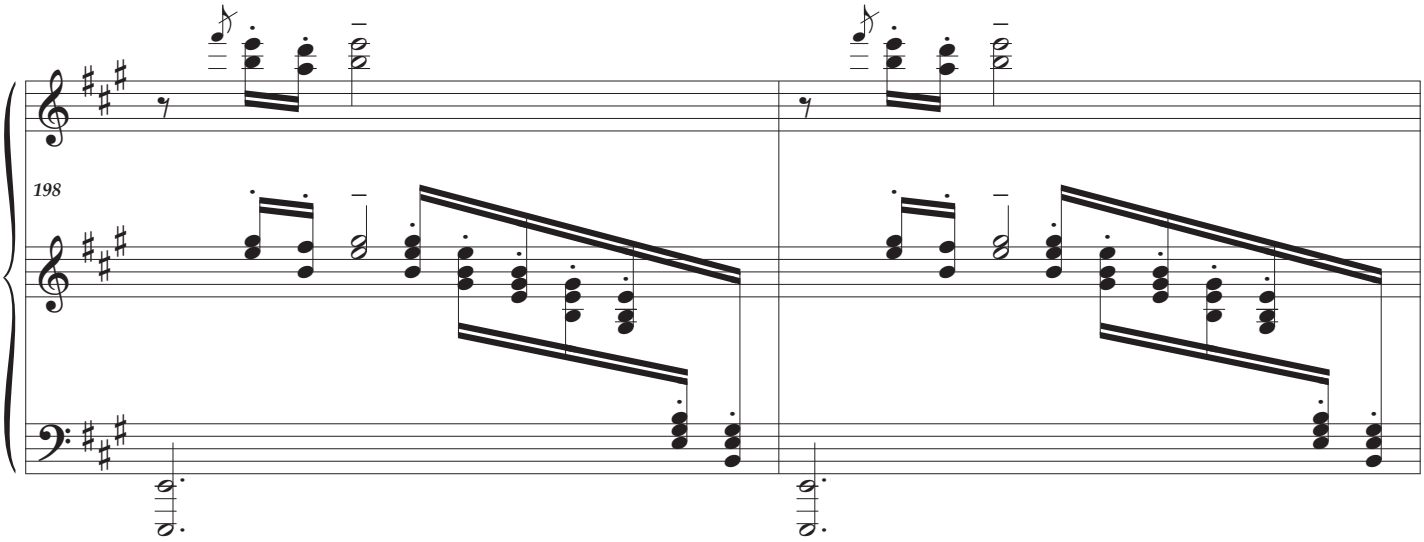

rit.
a tempo
168
marcato
rit.
170
5
5
a tempo
ppp estompé
ritardando
172
8va
8va


Andante
ppp
174
pppp
8va
Sost. Ped
ritardando
176
f
pp subito
a tempo
178
pp

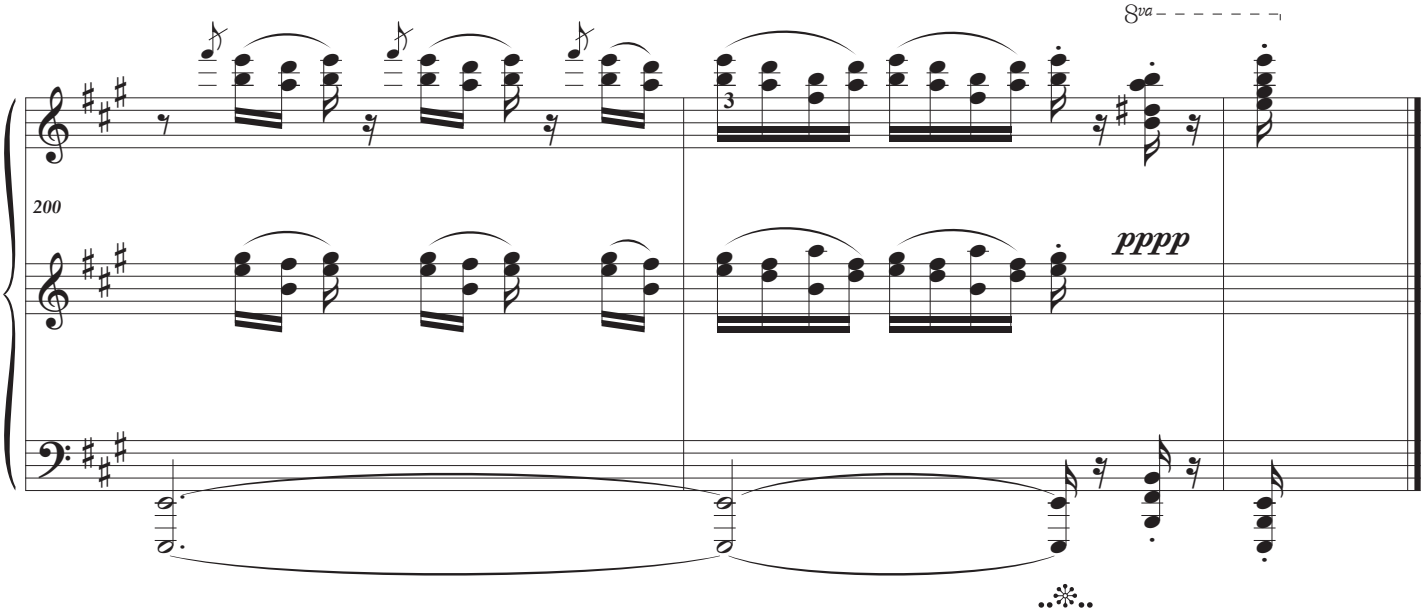

180
pp
182
m.s.
pp
m.s.
pp
184
m.s.
pp
pppp
186
ppp


188
m.s.
190
pp
192
ppp
effleurez
194





Sost. Ped



Nice, janvier 1909

iano Practical Editions
Musical Health Warning : please be aware that these editions are definitely not urtext and should be consulted together with a traditional version. They have been devised purely to help solve musical and technical problems at the piano.

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Appendix

Comments, afterthoughts & vocabulary

- In the original editions there are several pedal signs and an observation by Debussy can provide a pertinent object lesson: "Pedalling cannot be written down. It varies from one instrument to another, from one room, or one hall, to another."
- As with El Albaicín and Triana (and indeed most of *Iberia*), Albeniz presented *Jerez* with a unique key signature, appropriately modified in this edition.
- In an effort to simplify the *copla* episodes, 1/4 bars have been transferred to the final beat of 3/4 or 4/4.
- There has been some pruning of the composer's instructions in Italian and French.
- The number of staves varies according to the text, and in general stems up = RH and down = LH.
- *poco* ***sf*** has been replaced with the *marcato* sign.
- Some subsidiary grace notes have been omitted.
- The text layout is presented with maximum clarity to enable the reader to choose the most musical and practical use of the meagre ten fingers at his or her disposition.
- **28-48** The text of this section has been radically simplified.

Duration: 10'40

This is Albeniz commenting on his own music written before Iberia: "Here are among them a few things that are not completely worthless. The music is a bit infantile, plain, spirited; but in the end, the people, our Spanish people, are something of all that. I believe that the people are right when they continue to be moved by *Córdoba*, *Mallorca*, by the *copla* of the *Sevillanas*, by the *Serenata*, and *Granada*. In all of them I now note that there is less musical science, less of the grand idea, but more colour, sunlight, flavour of olives. That music of youth, with its little sins and absurdities that almost point out the sentimental affectation... appears to me like the carvings in the Alhambra, those peculiar arabesques that say nothing with their turns and shapes, but which are like the air, like the sun, like the blackbirds or like the nightingales of its gardens. They are more valuable than all else of Moorish Spain, which though we may not like it, is the true Spain".

doux et rêveur	gentle and dreamy
sans arpéger	without arpeggiation
bien enveloppé	plenty of pedal
dolente	plaintive
brusquement	suddenly
bien expressif	very expressive
sombre	dark
vibrant	stirring
très vague	very vague
la main droite très légèrement	the right hand very lightly
le chant très marqué sans être fort	the melody well marked but not loud
avec beaucoup de laisser aller	with plenty of freedom
estompé	veiled
effleurez	caress the keys