Claude DEBUSSY
CENTENARY EDITION 2018

SUITE BERGAMASQUE

IV PASSEPIED

arranged for four hands by
Ray Alston

Piano Practical Editions
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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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Ray Alston : contact@pianopracticaleditions.com

Claude DEBUSSY 1862 - 1918

SUITE BERGAMASQUE

IV PASSEPIED

arranged for four hands by Ray Alston

By 1890 Debussy was deeply involved in the poetry of Verlaine – "*charmant masques et bergamasques quasi tristes sous leurs déguisements fantasques*" [1]. He once confided to Marguerite Long: « it is not the *comédie italienne*, but the tragic expression of existence. »

The suite was shelved for 15 years during which time his compositional technique and fame had developed and grown, and in 1905 he was persuaded to revise and publish the set of four pieces. Although it is open to conjecture how much was conceived earlier, we do know that the *Passepied* probably started life as a *Pavane*.

"I believe more and more that music in its essence is not a thing that can be poured into a rigorous and traditional mould. It is made of colours and rhythmical beats. Music is a mysterious mathematical process whose elements partake of infinity, capturing mysterious relations between nature and the imagination".

Unlike the *Bergamasque*, a clumsy rustic dance, this movement requires much delicacy of step and expression. The title seems to have no reference to a true *passepied*[2] and some mystery surrounds the tempo description and choice of common time. *Allegretto ma non troppo* – what does that really mean? Fairly quick without excess ? Generally performed as a typical fast movement to end the suite, a lively *allegro alla breve* seems most likely. Does *passepied* perhaps refer to the light use of our delicate feet at the pedals? Indeed a successful performance of this neo-classical work does require sensitive footwork ! Whatever its origins and meaning, it makes a delightful (no pun intended) contrast to the ever popular *Clair de Lune*, which precedes it.

1. beguiling masks and bergamasks feigning sorrow beneath their whimsical disguises
2. French court dance, adapted in the 16th century, found frequently in 18th-century French opera and ballet, also in baroque instrumental suites. Most examples are in triple time.

The metronome speed is editorial

9-10 editorial modification of time-signatures

13 absence of phrasing

17 possible misprint

26 G♮ semibreve

36-38 editorial modification of time-signatures

55-58 alto voice tenuto marks removed

62 possible misprint

102 ***f*** seems likely in view of the *molto diminuendo* at **104**

106-109 editorial bass phrasing

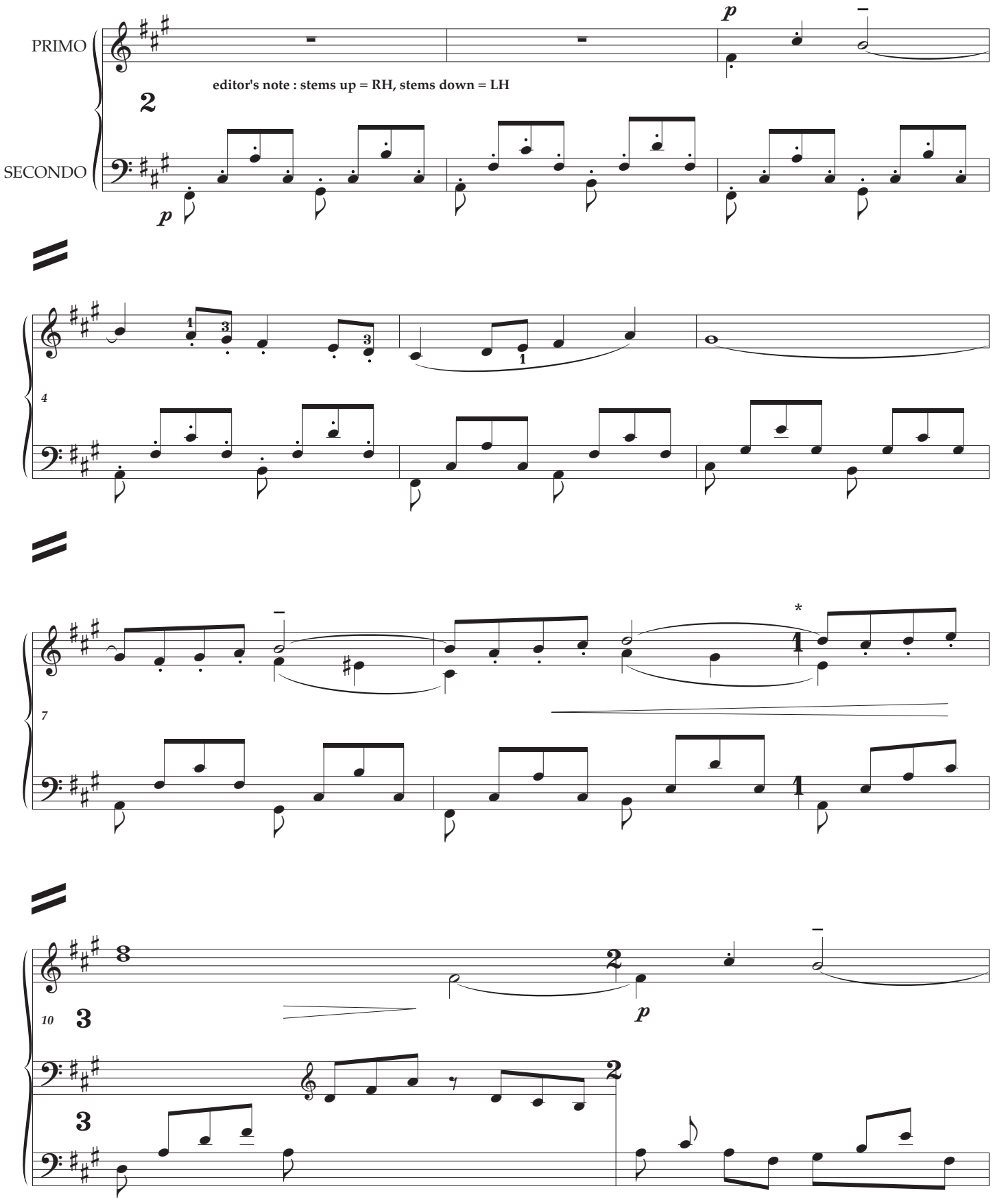
Three pieces published separately in 1903-04
may form a possible second *Suite Bergamasque* :
Masques – **d'un Cahier d'Esquisses** and **l'Isle Joyeuse** …
They are united in one volume by PPE, possibly for the first time,
where their interconnection as a group can be readily appreciated.

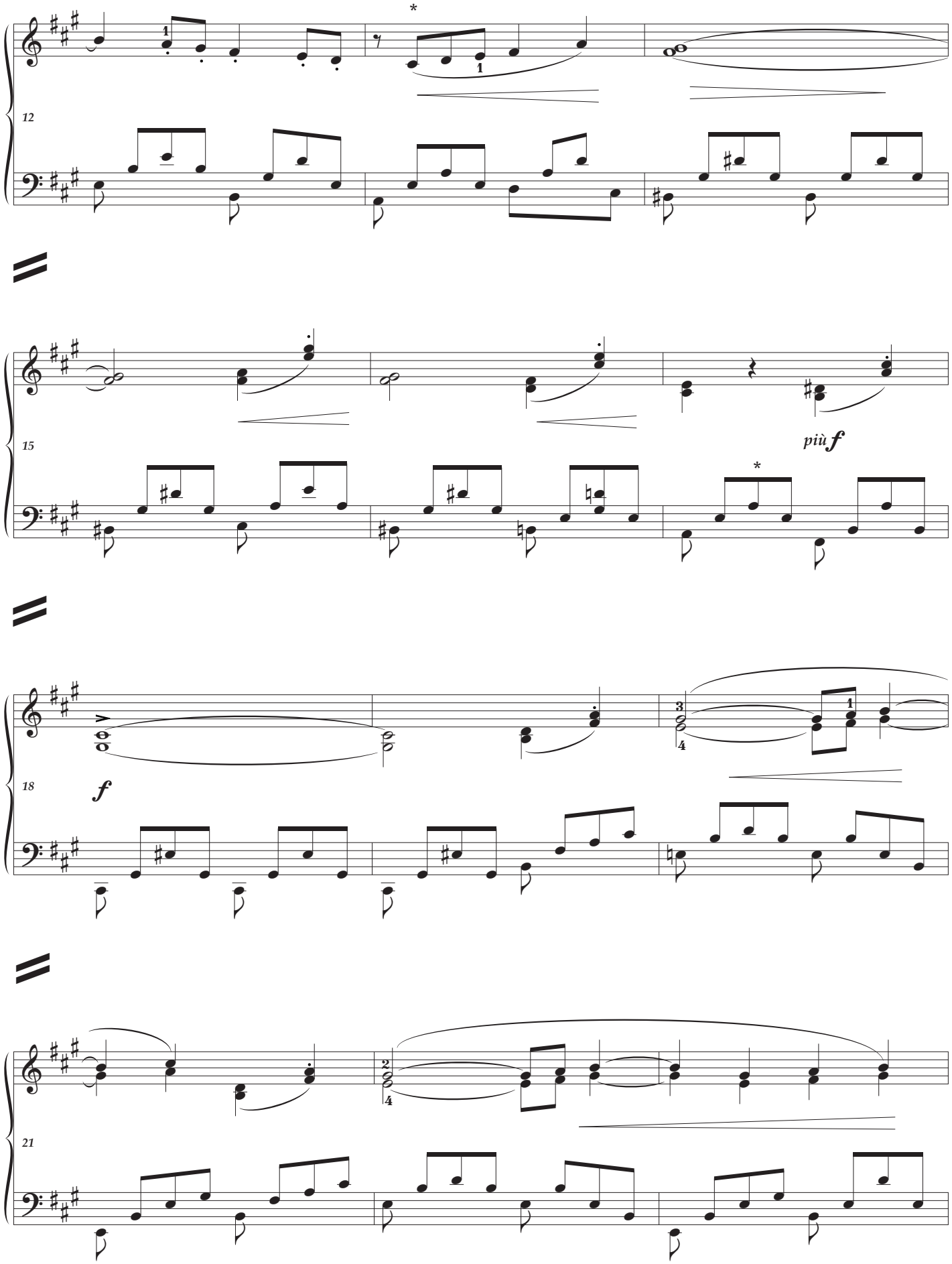
https://pianopracticaleditions.files.wordpress.com/2020/06/3-morceaux.pdf

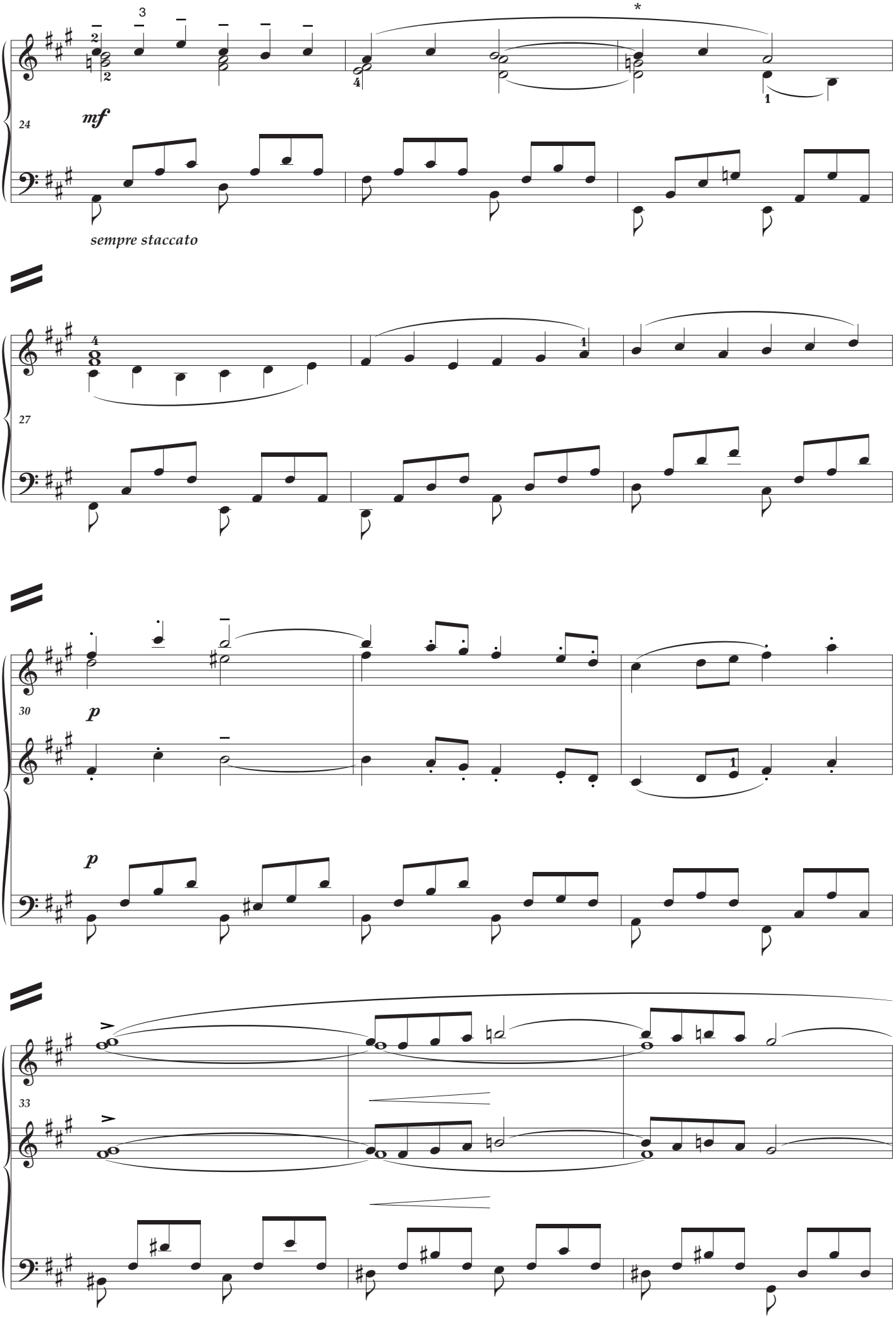
PASSEPIED

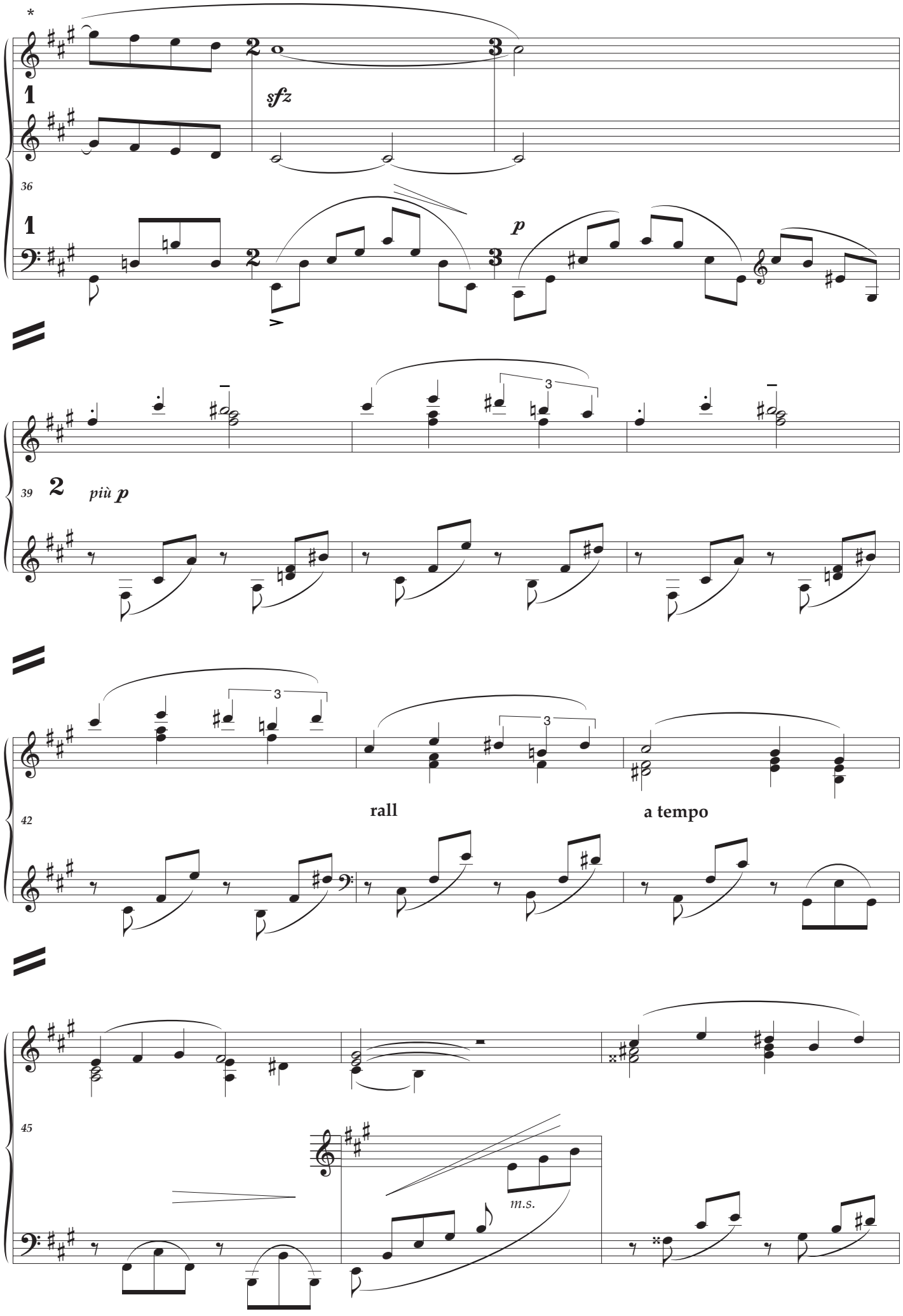
duet version by Ray Alston

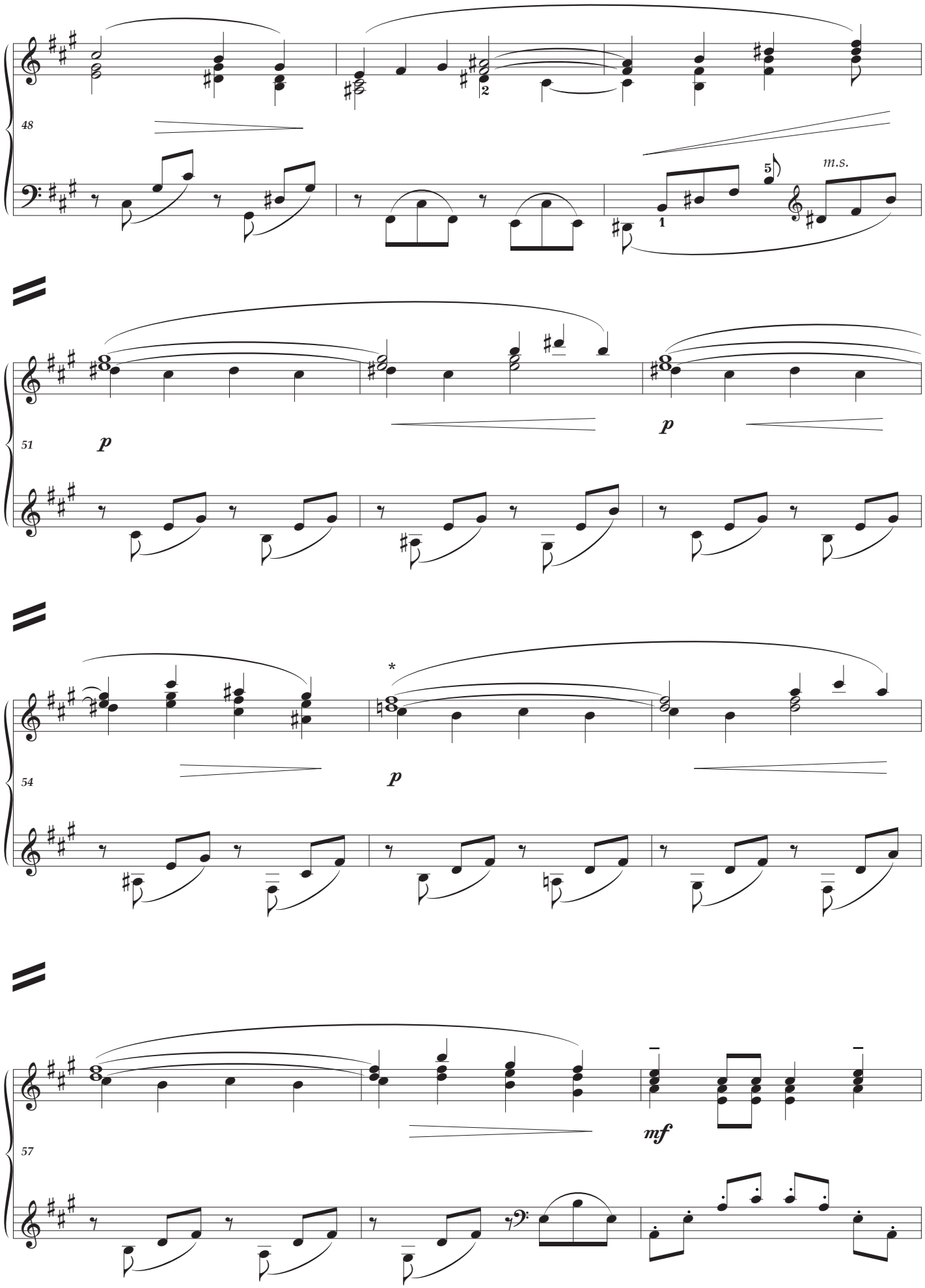
allegretto ma non troppo [𝅗𝅥 = 88]

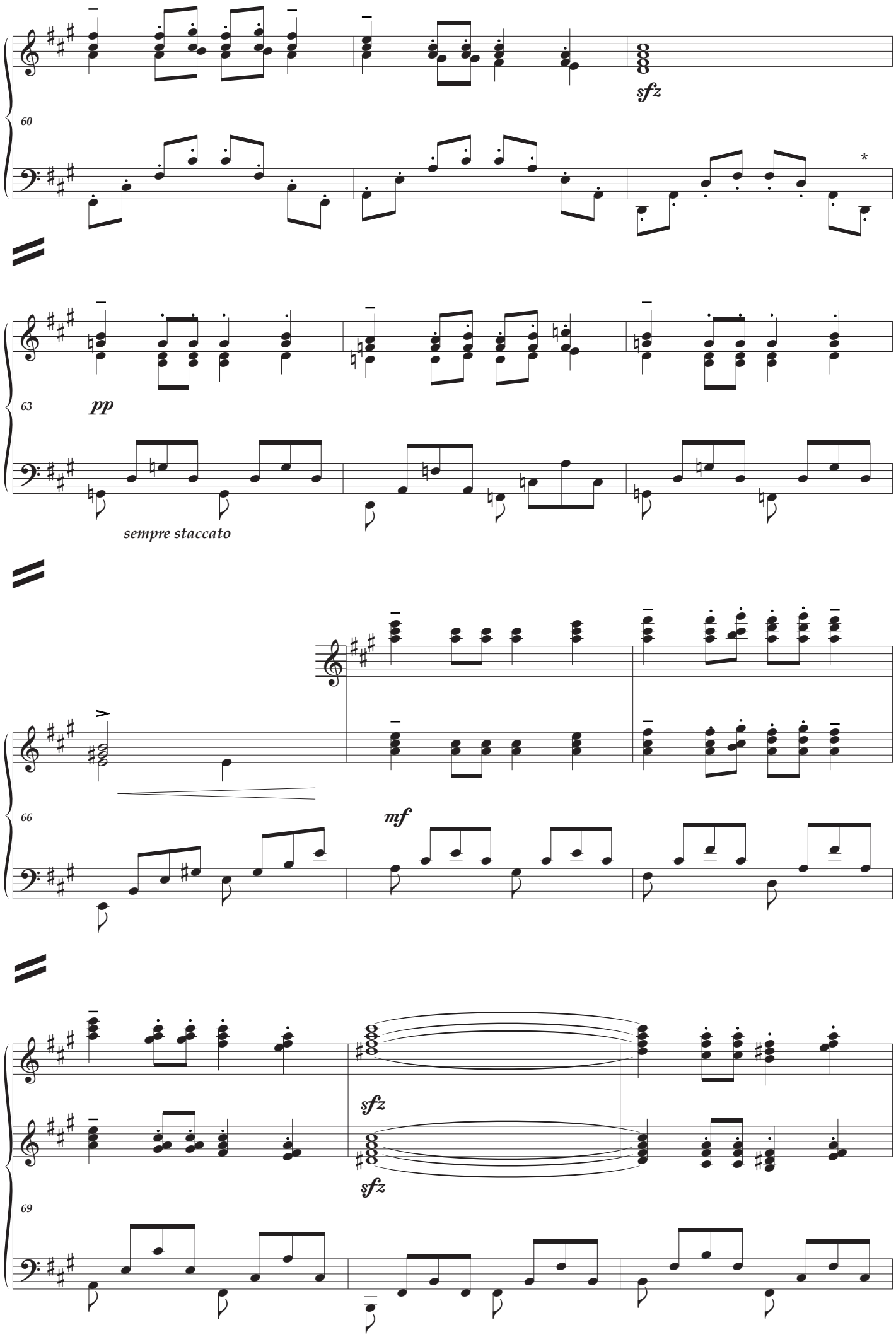


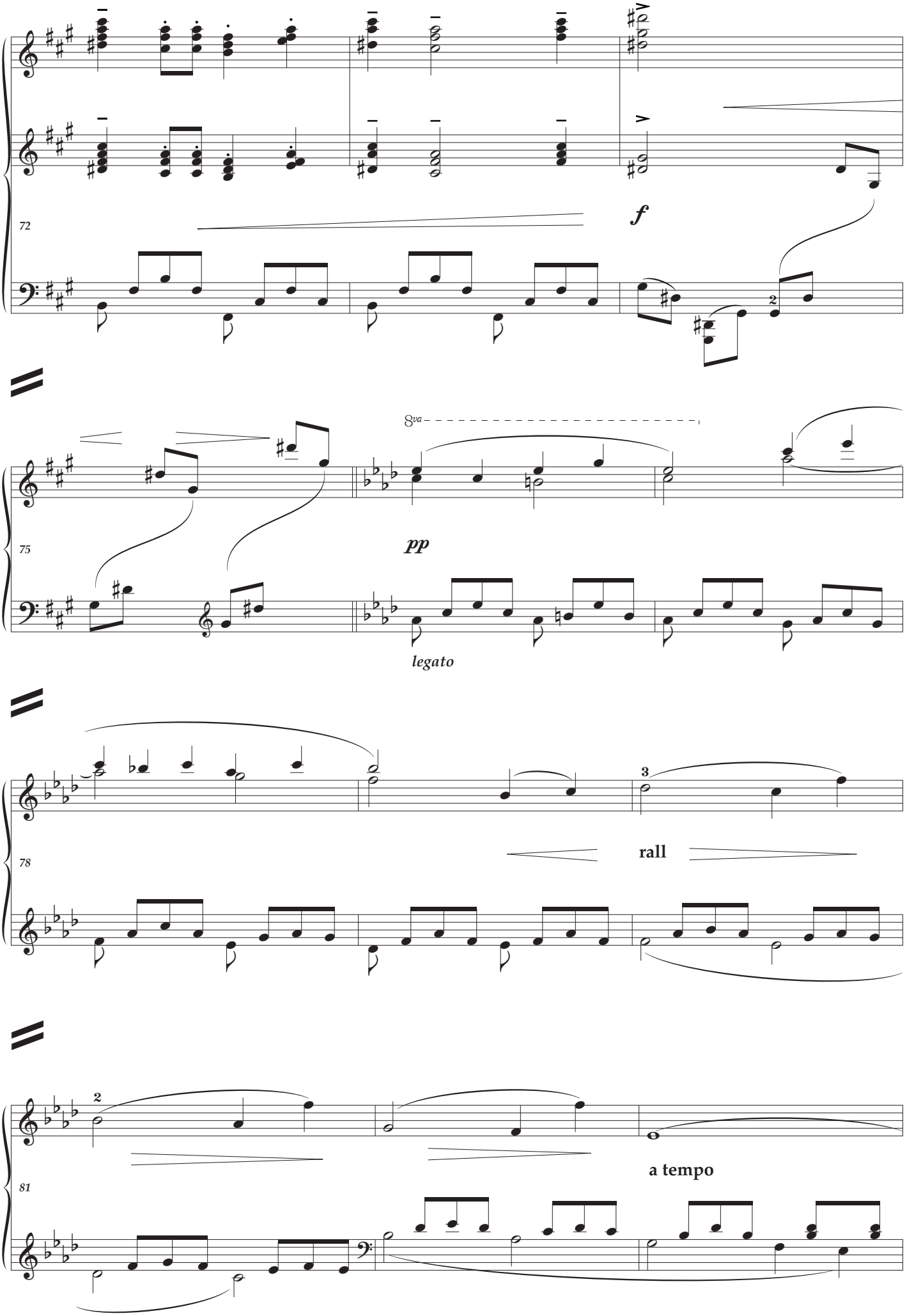

12
15
più f
18
f
21

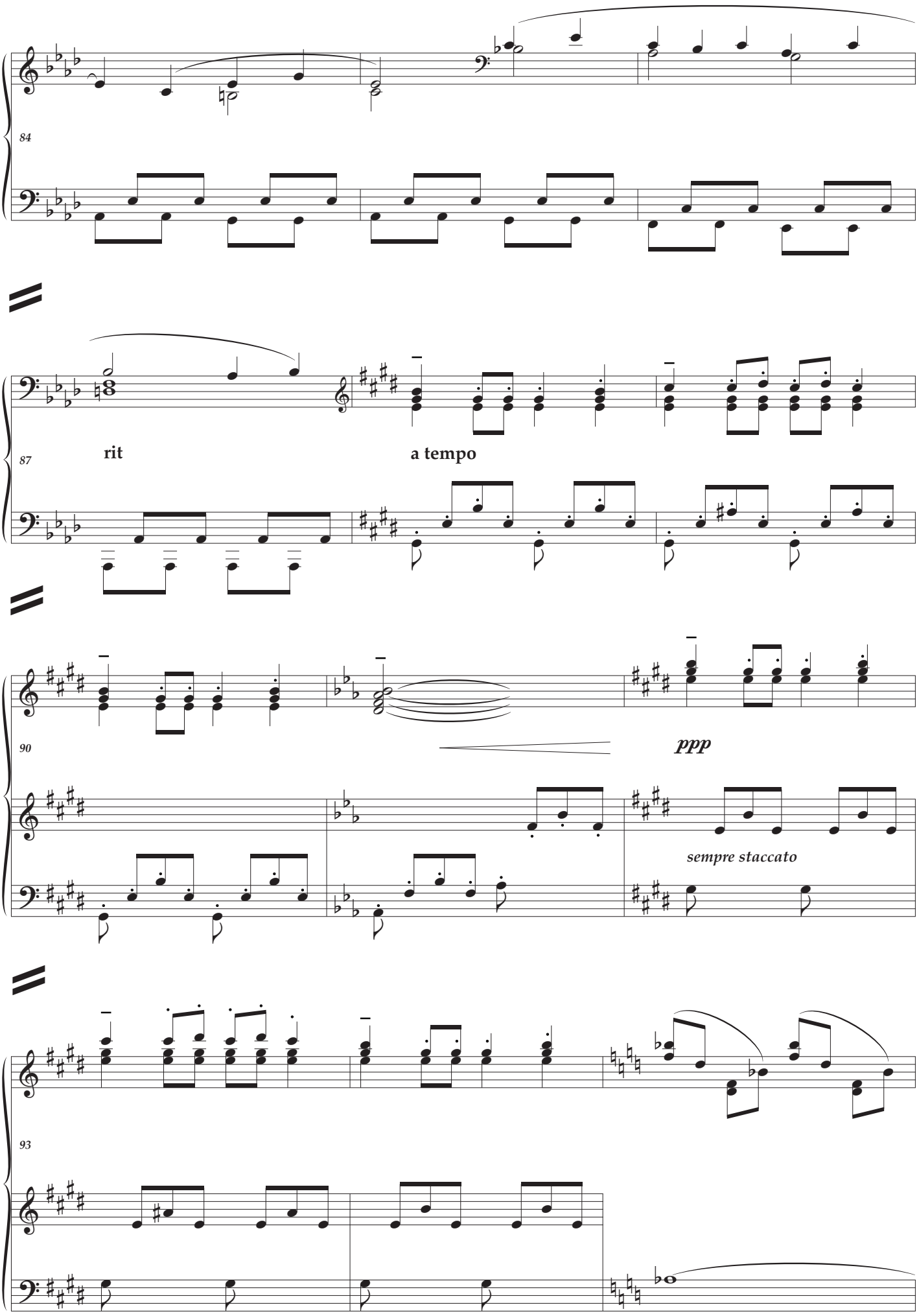

24
mf
sempre staccato
27
30
p
p
33

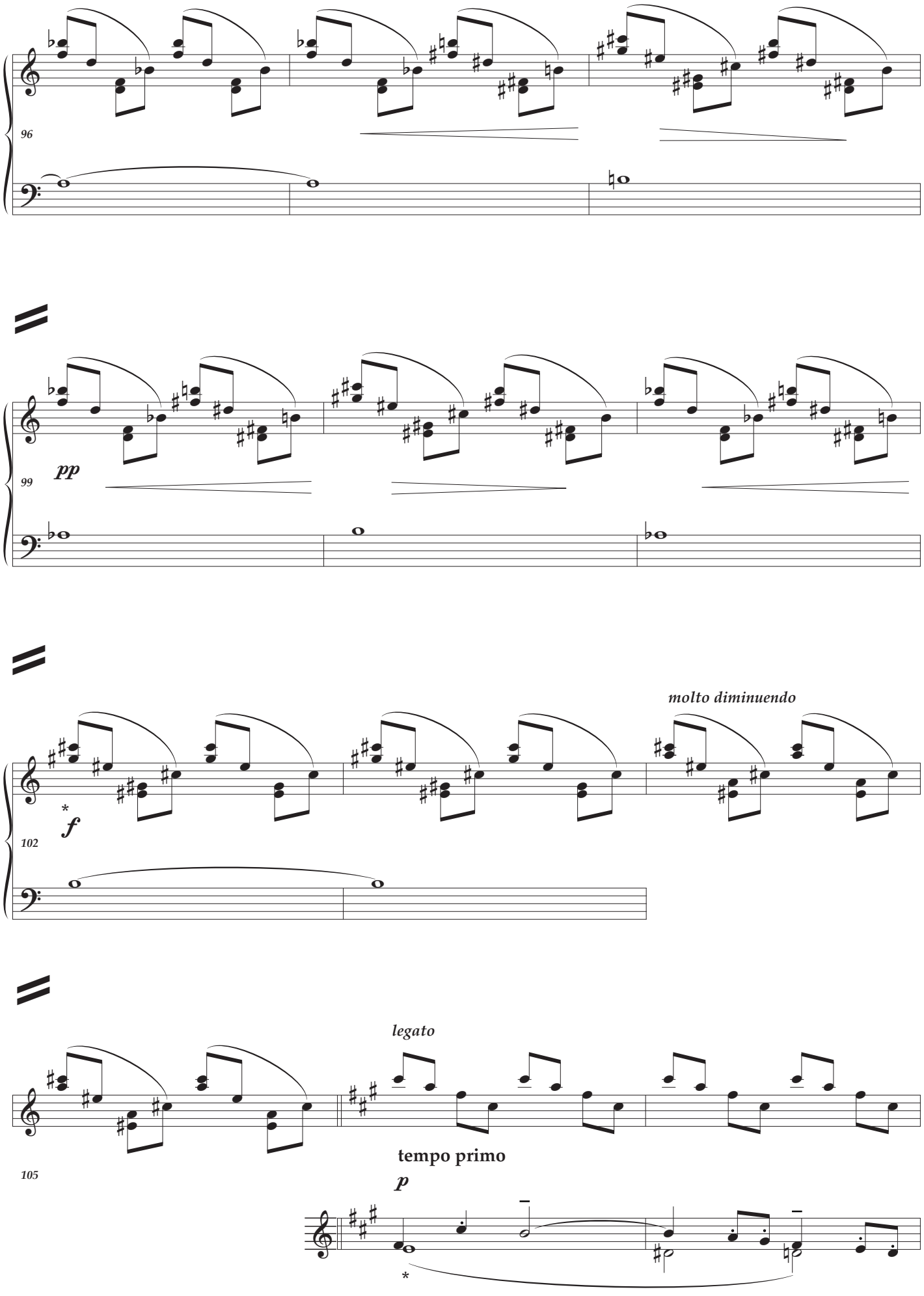

*
sfz
36
p
39
più p
rall
a tempo
42
45
m.s.

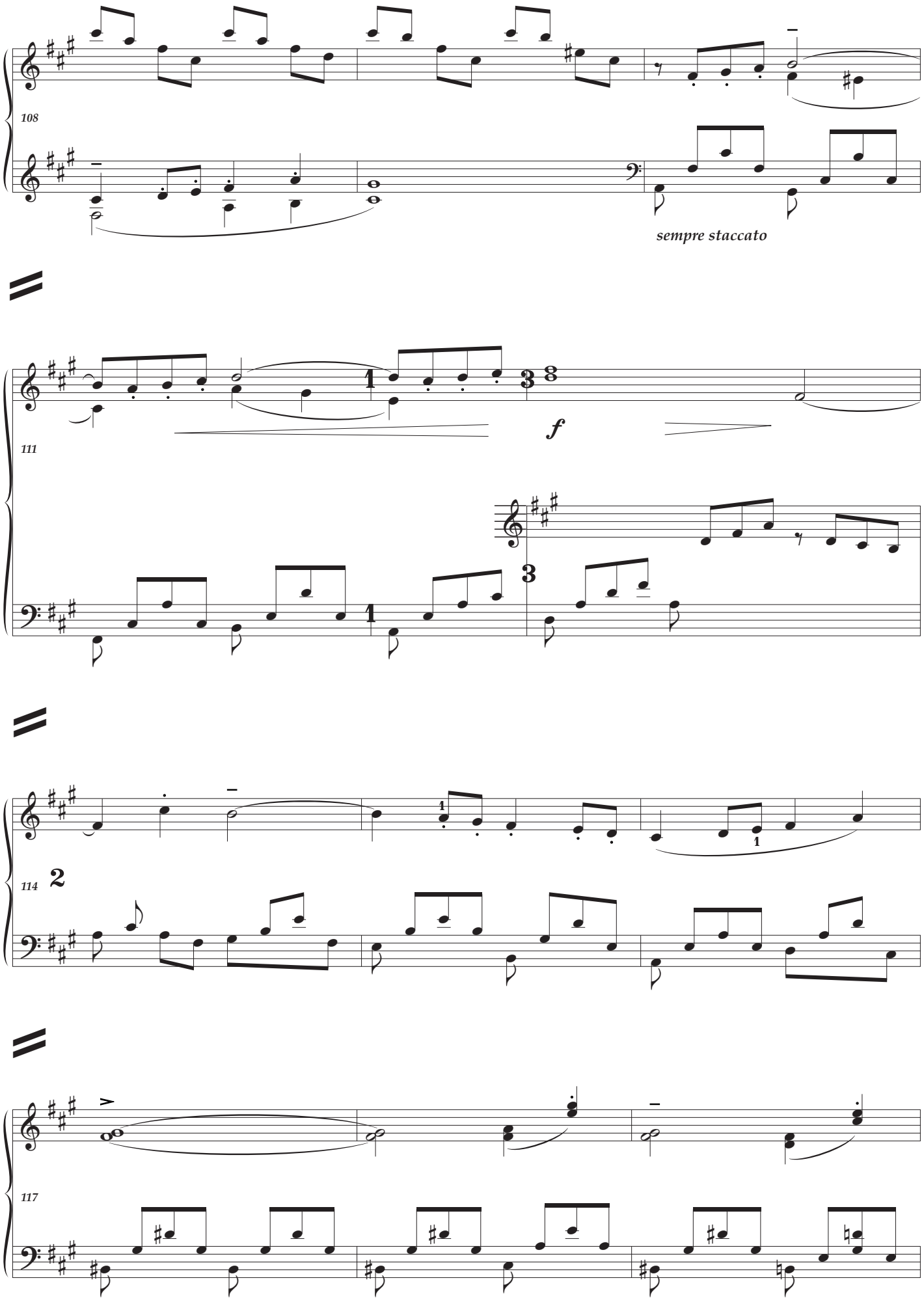

48
m.s.
51
p
p
54
*
p
57
mf

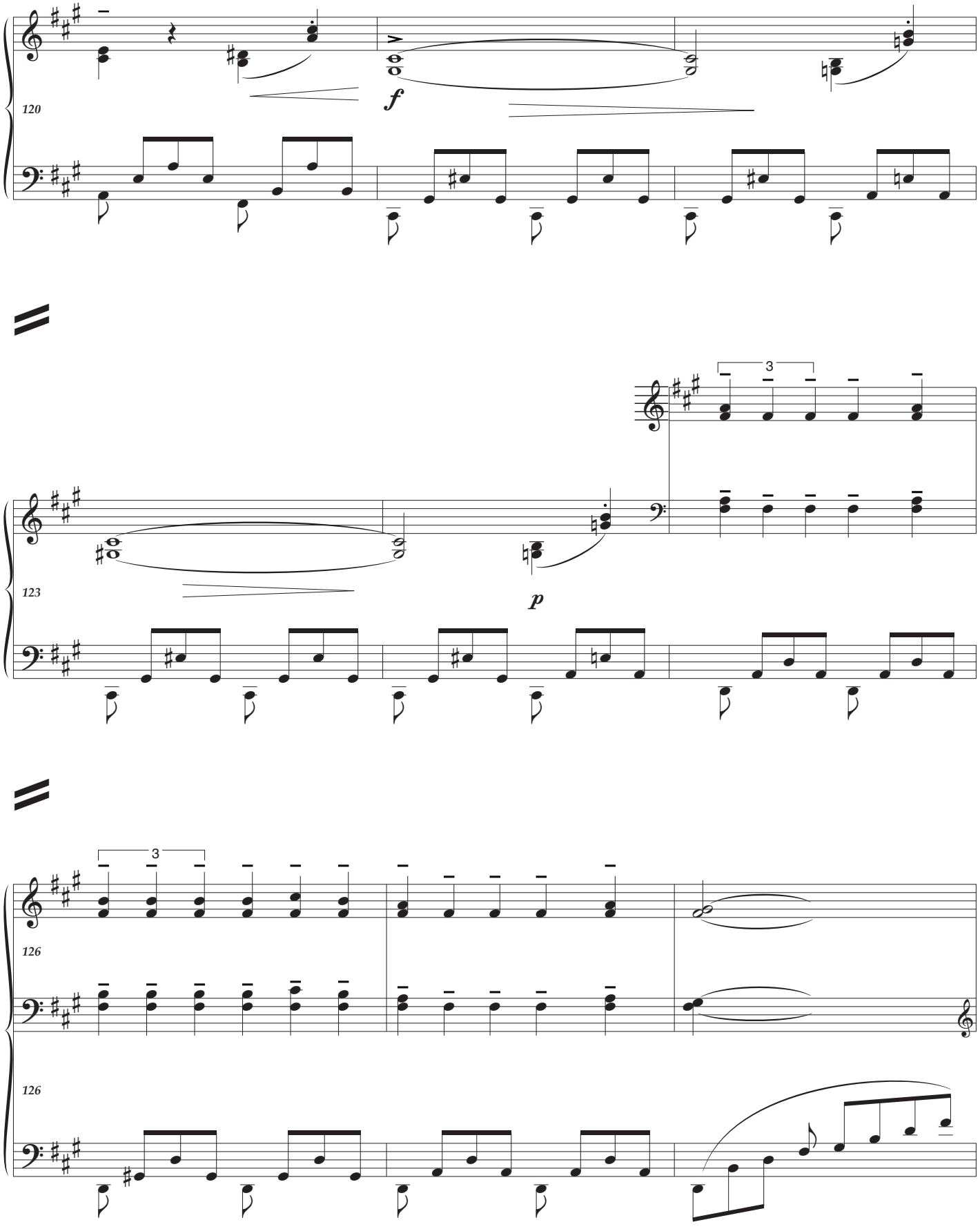

60
sfz
*
63
pp
sempre staccato
66
mf
69
sfz
sfz

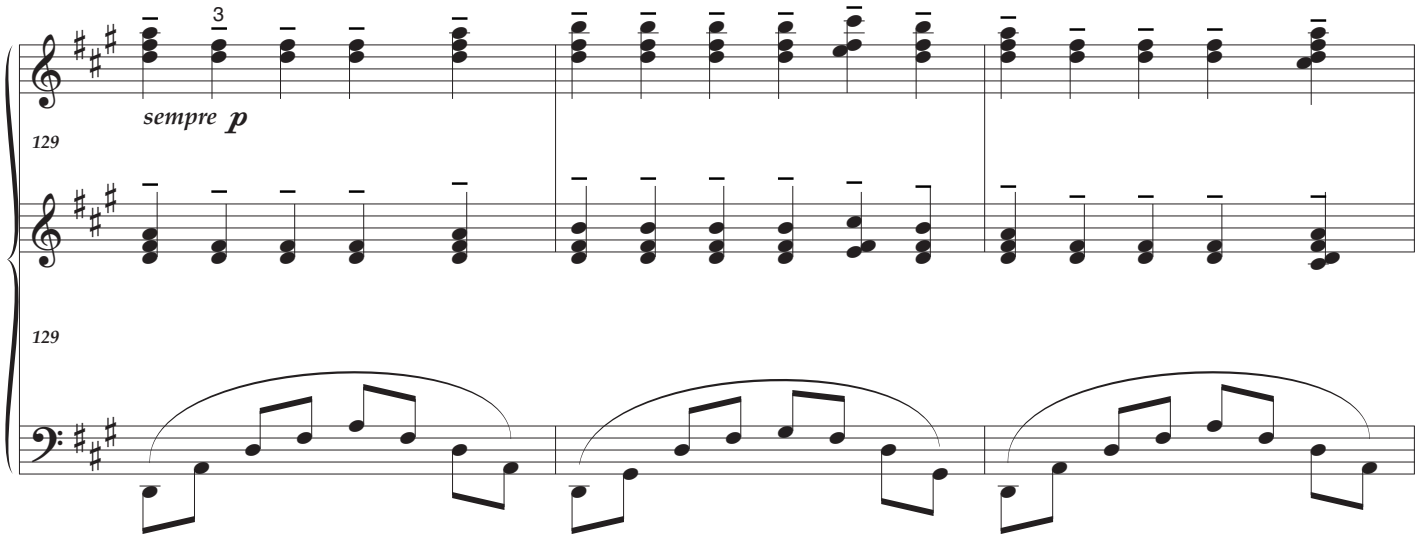

72
f
2
75
8va
pp
legato
78
3
rall
81
2
a tempo

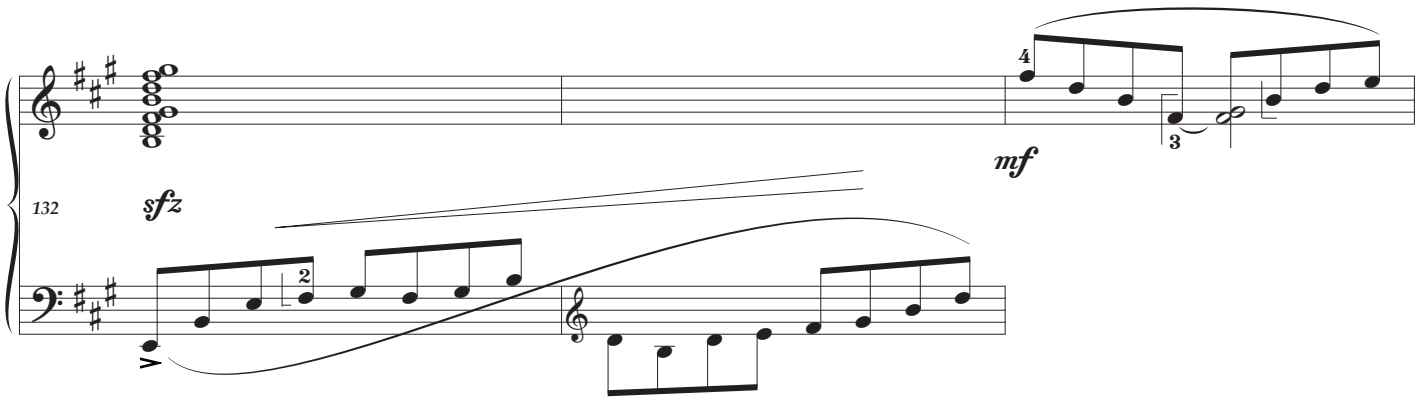

84
87
rit
a tempo
90
ppp
sempre staccato
93

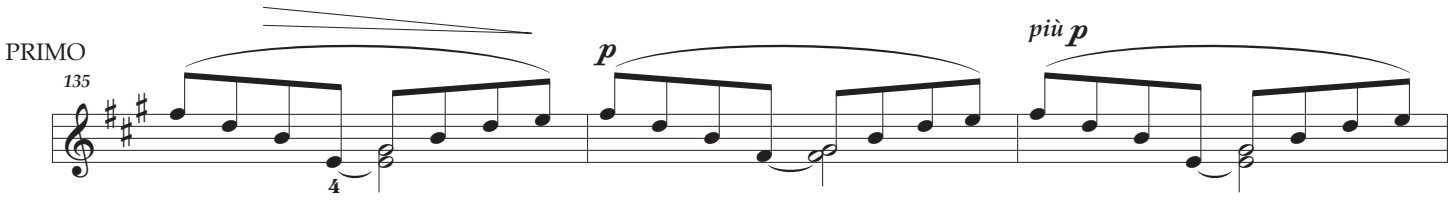

96
99
pp
102
f
molto diminuendo
105
legato
tempo primo
p

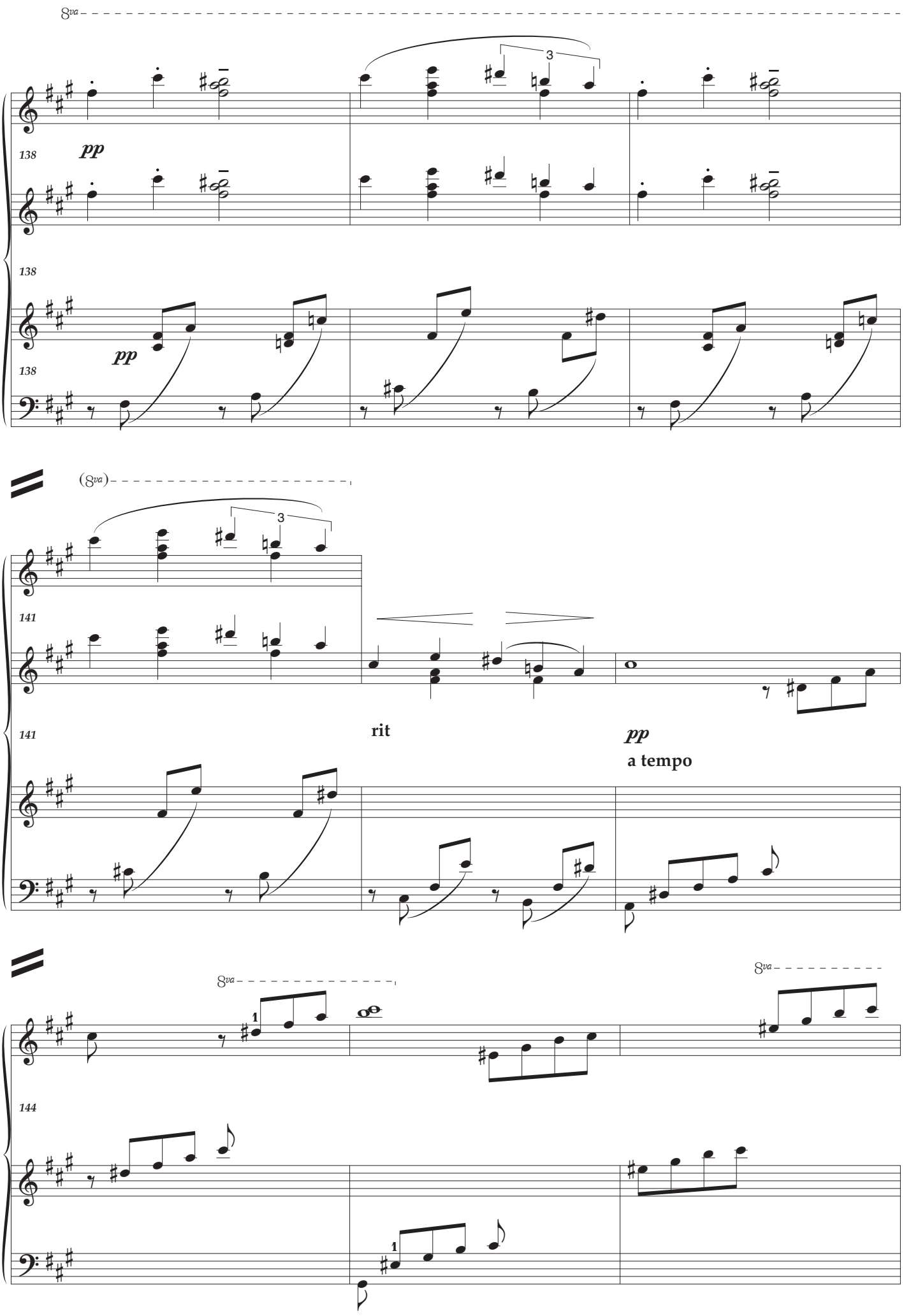

108
sempre staccato
111
f
114
2
117

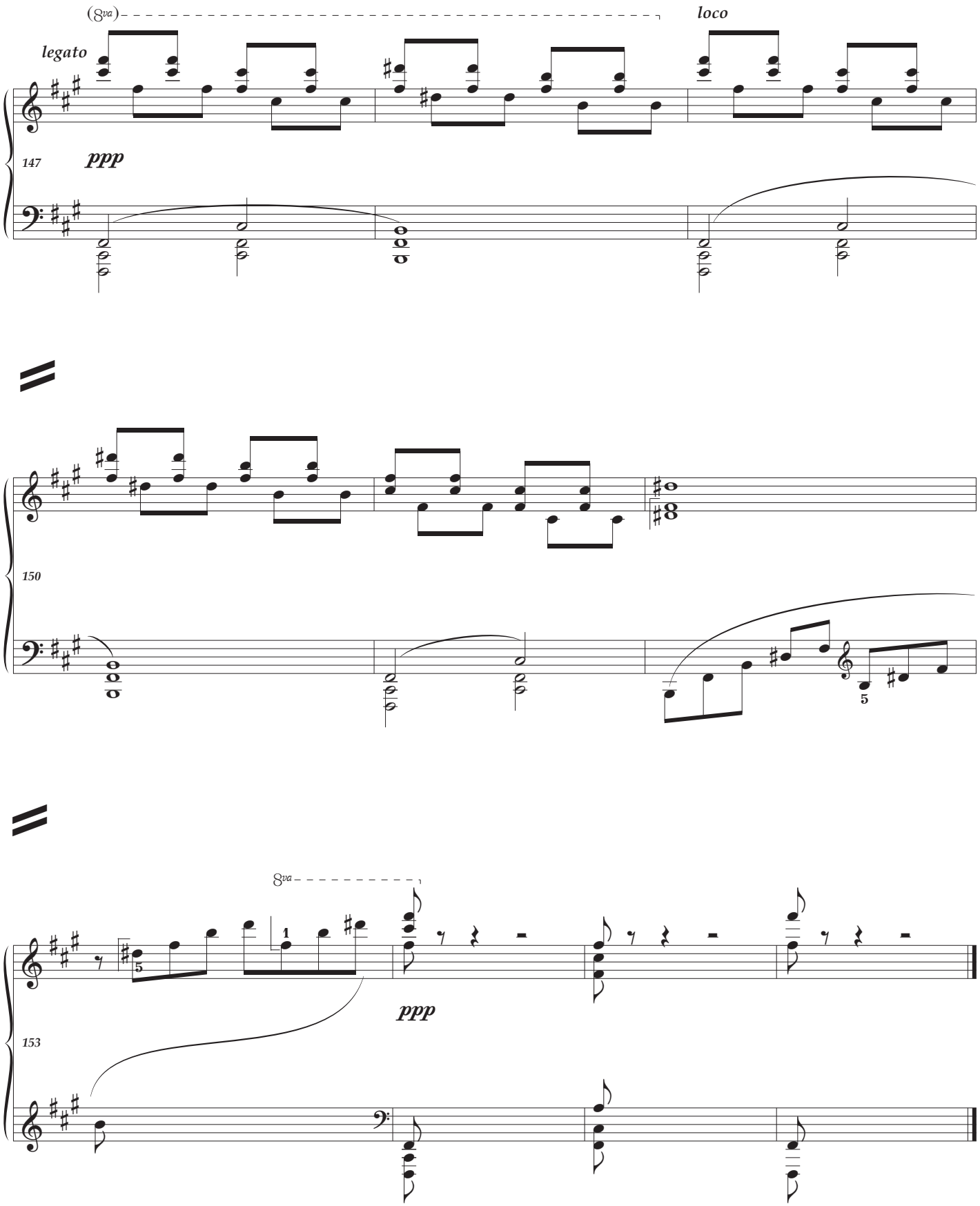

120
f
123
3
p
126
3
126


3
sempre p
129
129


4
3
mf
132
sfz
2


PRIMO
135
4
p
più p


8va
138
pp
138
pp
138
(8va)
3
141
141
rit
pp
a tempo
8va
8va
144


(8va)
loco
legato
147
ppp
150
5
8va
1
5
ppp
153

DEBUSSY

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Passepied

duet version

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