Claude DEBUSSY
CENTENARY EDITION 2018

SUITE BERGAMASQUE

IV PASSEPIED

Piano Practical Editions
pianopracticaleditions.com

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.

Please send comments and error reports to
Ray Alston : contact@pianopracticaleditions.com

Claude DEBUSSY 1862 - 1918

SUITE BERGAMASQUE

IV PASSEPIED

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*.

Unlike the *Bergamasque*, a clumsy rustic dance, this movement requires

"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".

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.

In addition to some suggested fingering, redistribution between the hands comes under close scrutiny to make certain passages easier or more persuasive.

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**

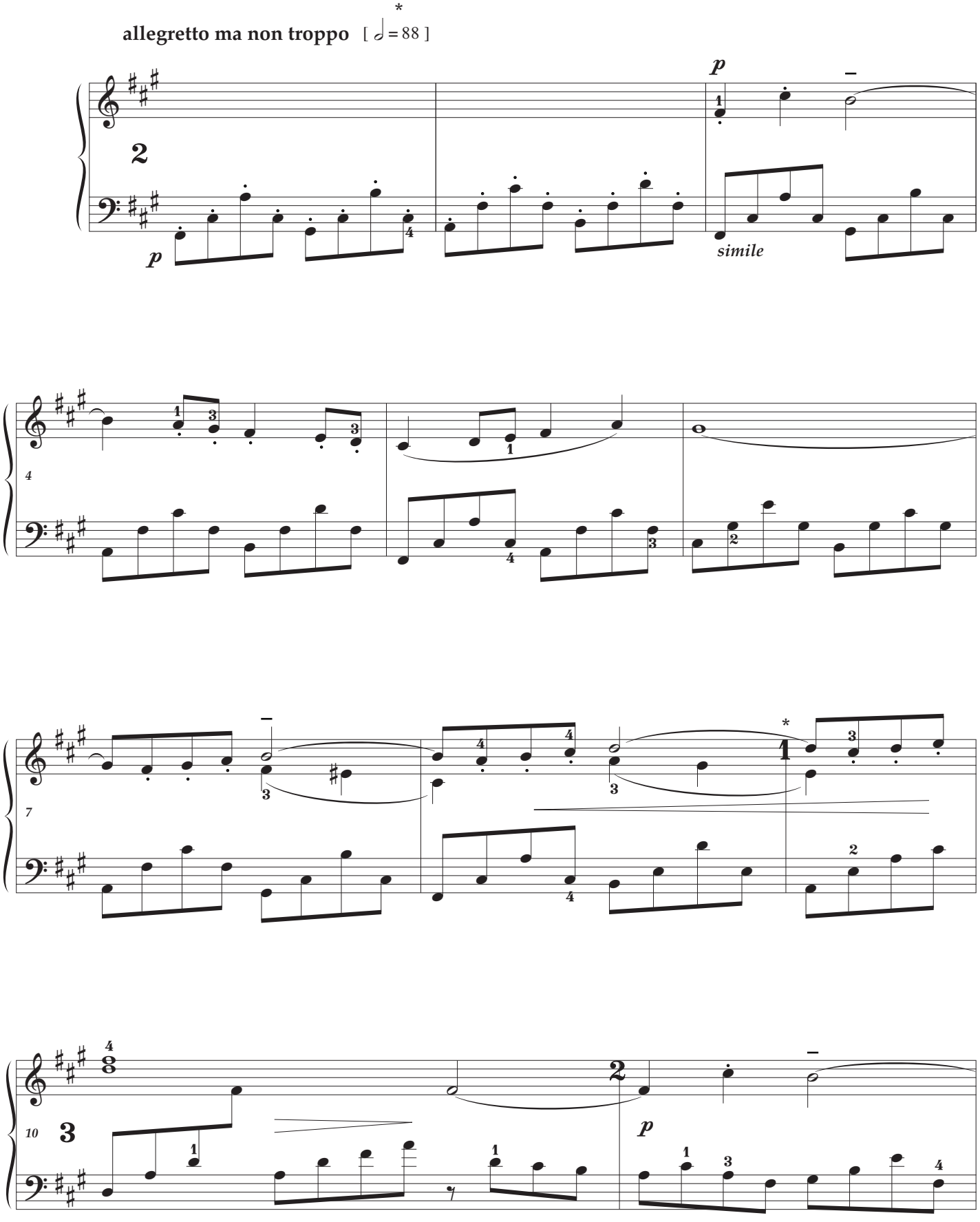
106-109 editorial bass phrasing

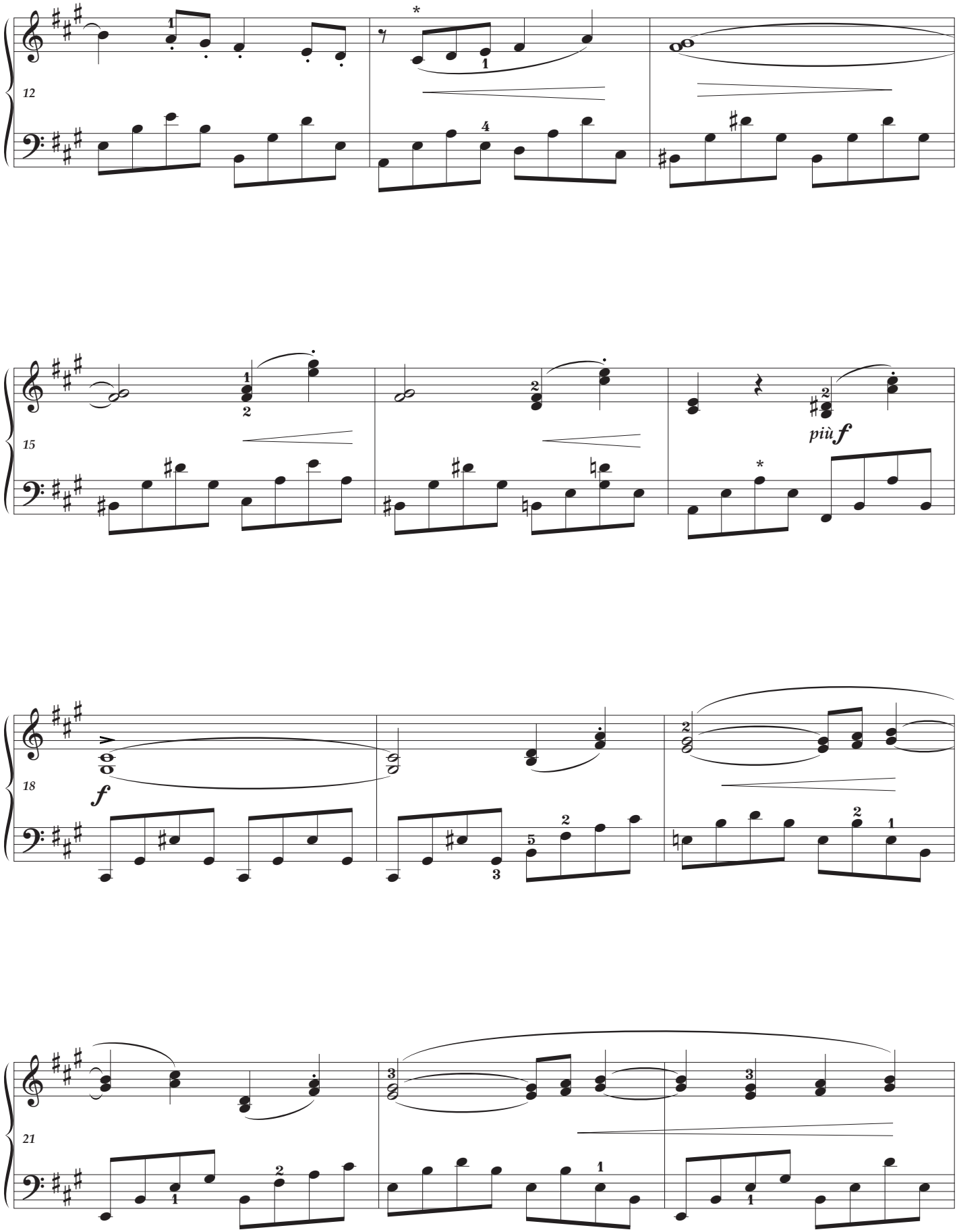
Three pieces published separately in 1903-04
may form a possible second *Suite Bergamasque* :
Masques – d'un Cahier d'Esquisses and l'Isle Joyeuse …
They are united in one volume by PPE, possibly for the first time,
where their interconnection as a group can be readily appreciated.

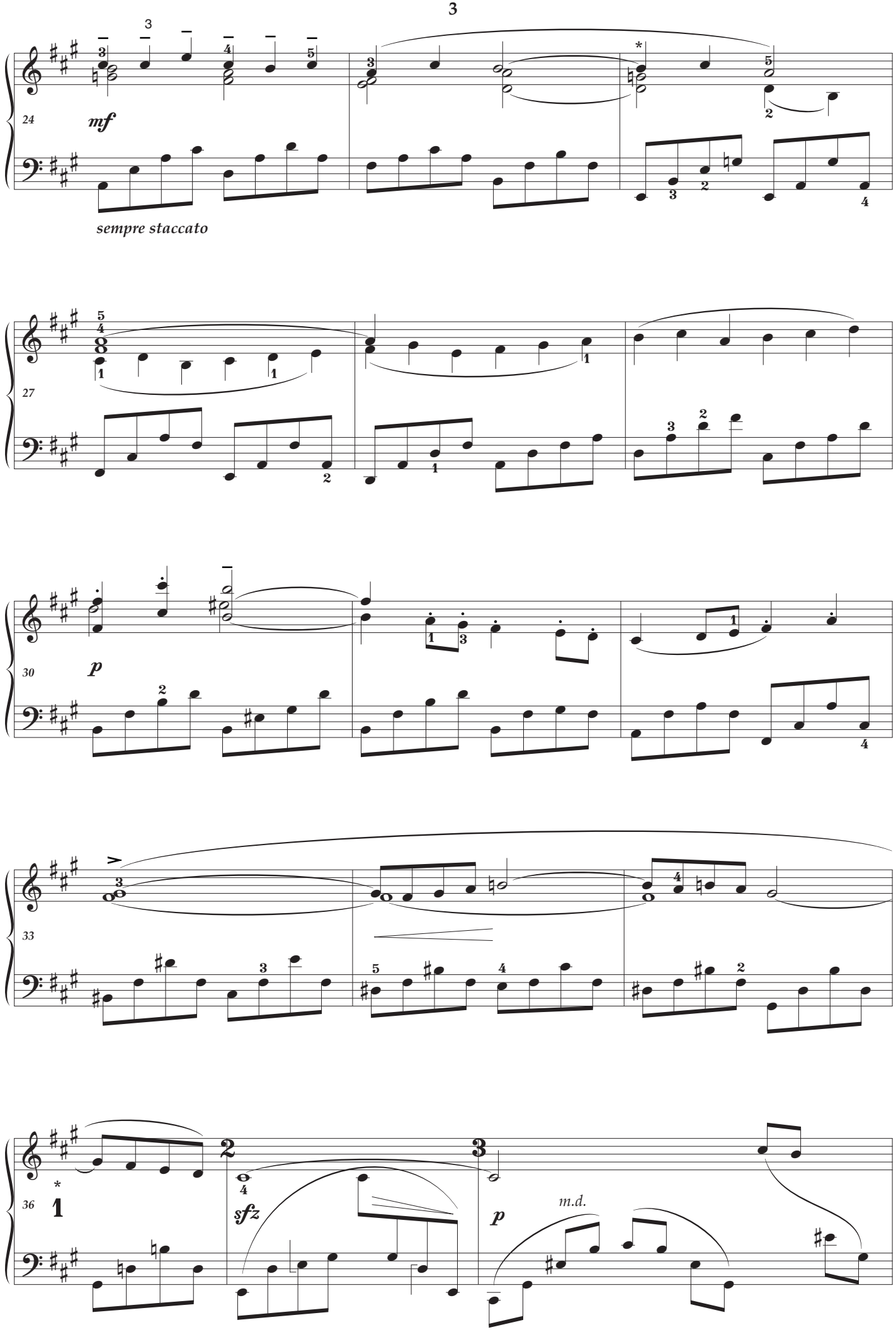
https://pianopracticaleditions.files.wordpress.com/2020/06/3-morceaux.pdf

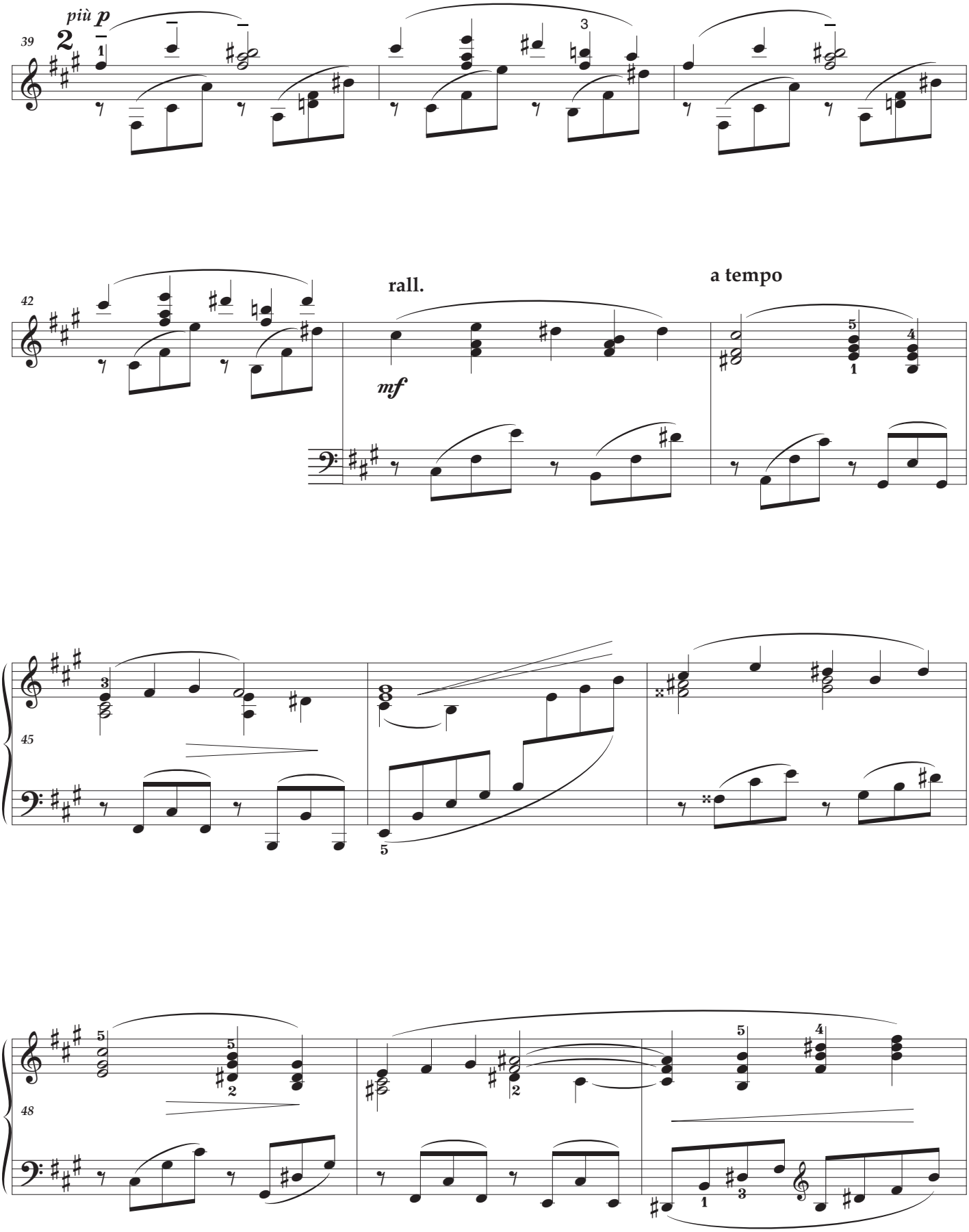
PASSEPIED

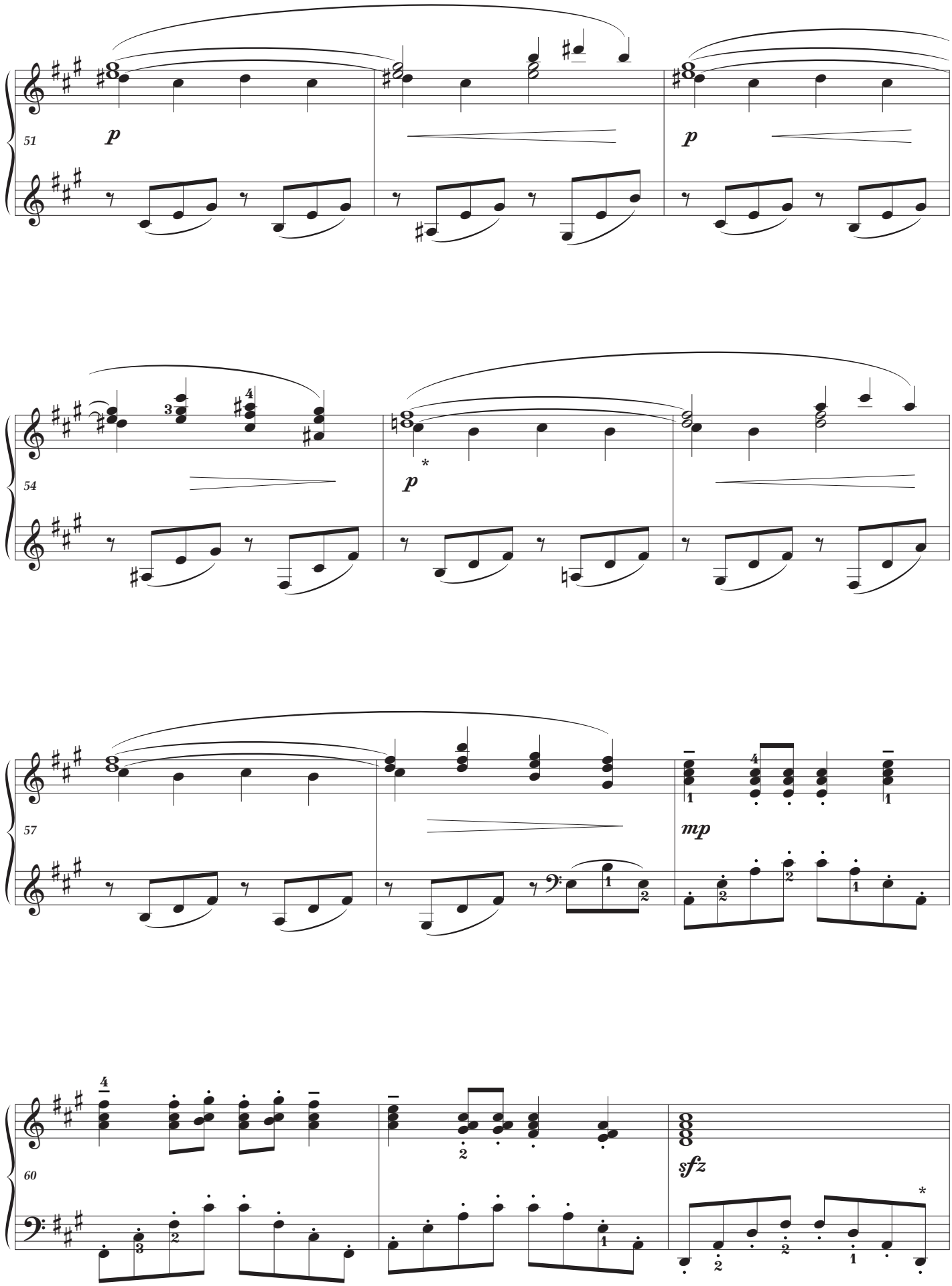
allegretto ma non troppo [𝅗𝅥 = 88]

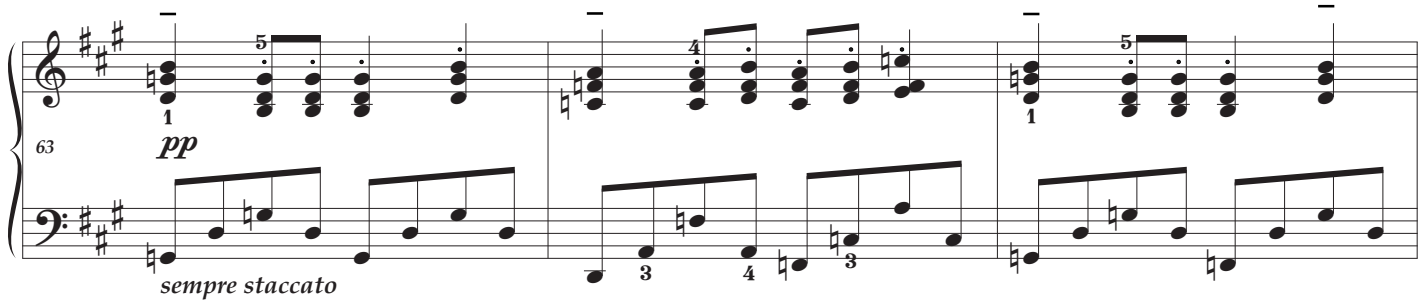


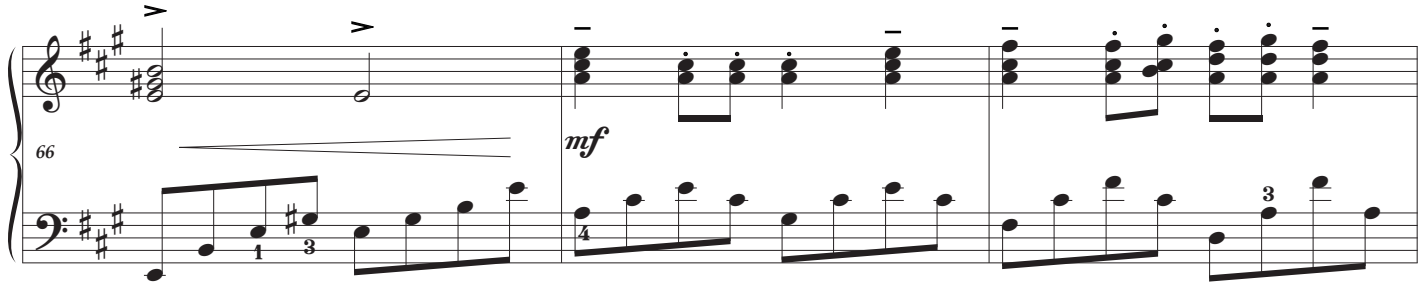

12
15
più f
18
f
21

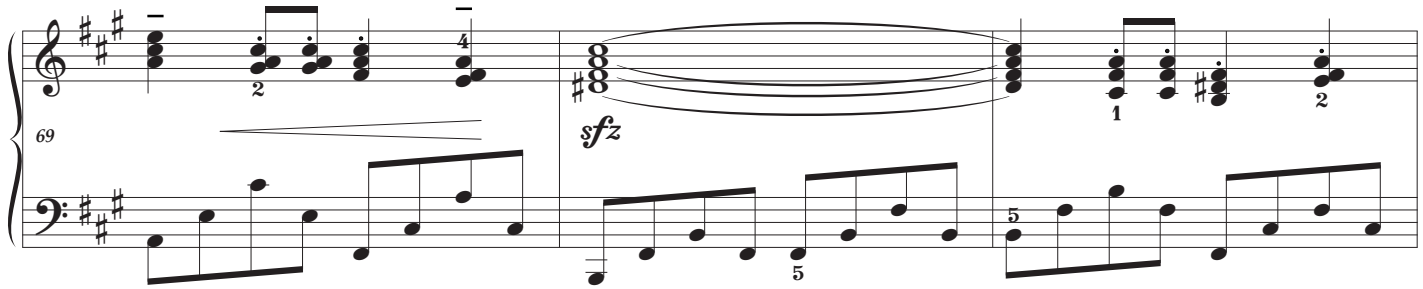

24
mf
sempre staccato
27
30
p
33
36
sfz
p
m.d.

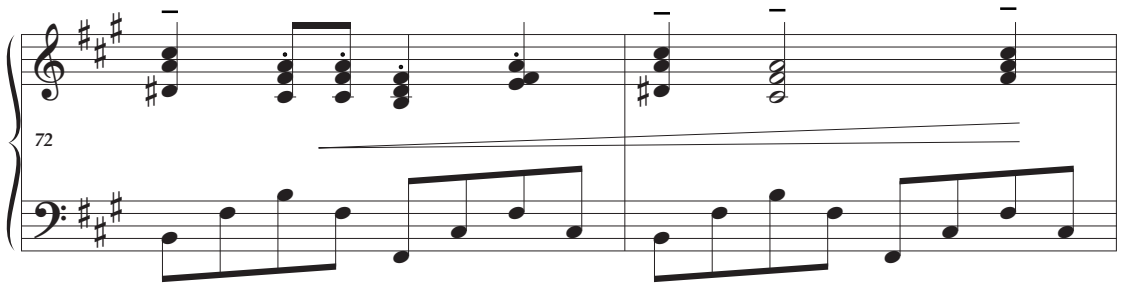

più p
39
2
1
3
42
rall.
mf
a tempo
5
1
4
45
3
5
48
5
2
5
4
1
3

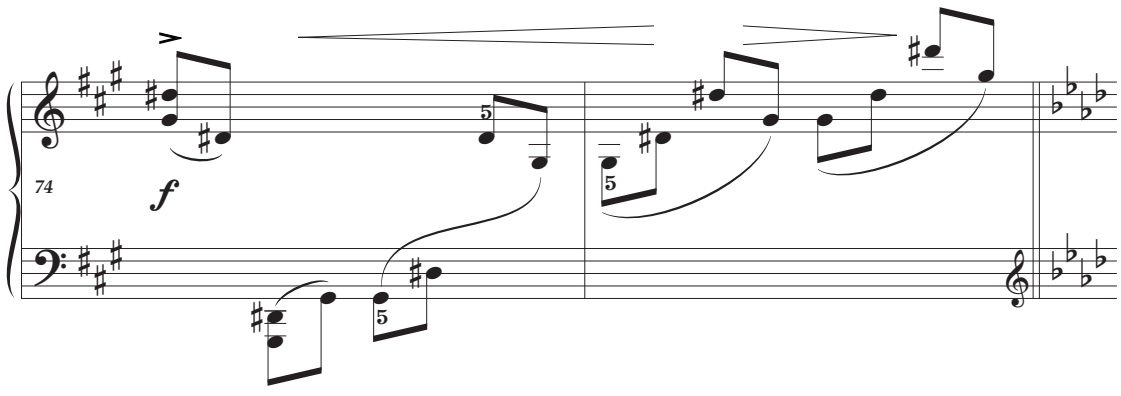

51
p
p
54
p
57
mp
60
sfz

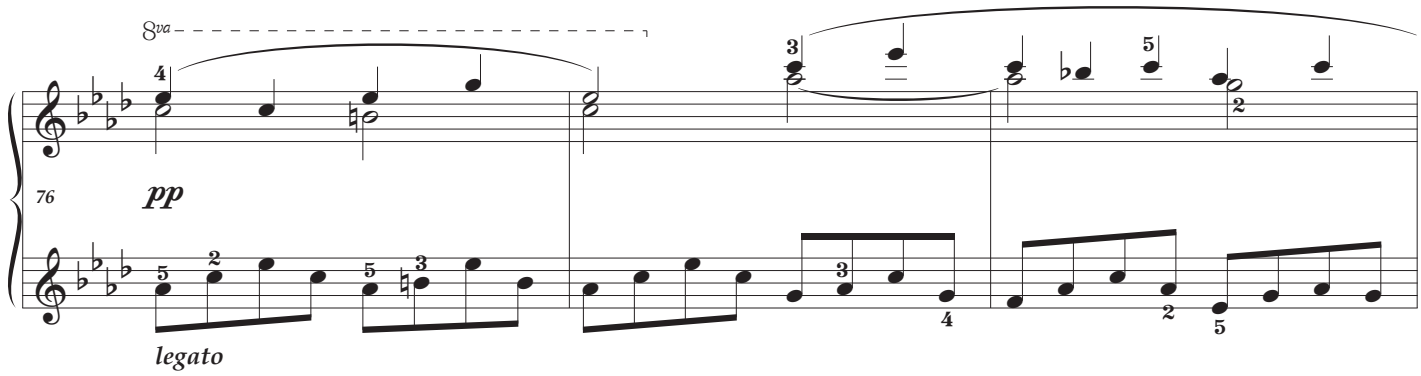

63
pp
sempre staccato

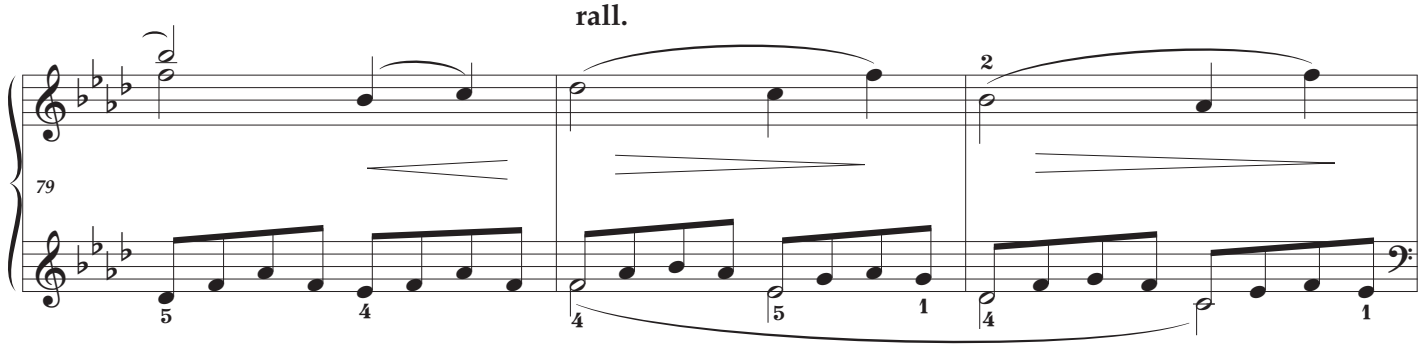

66
mf

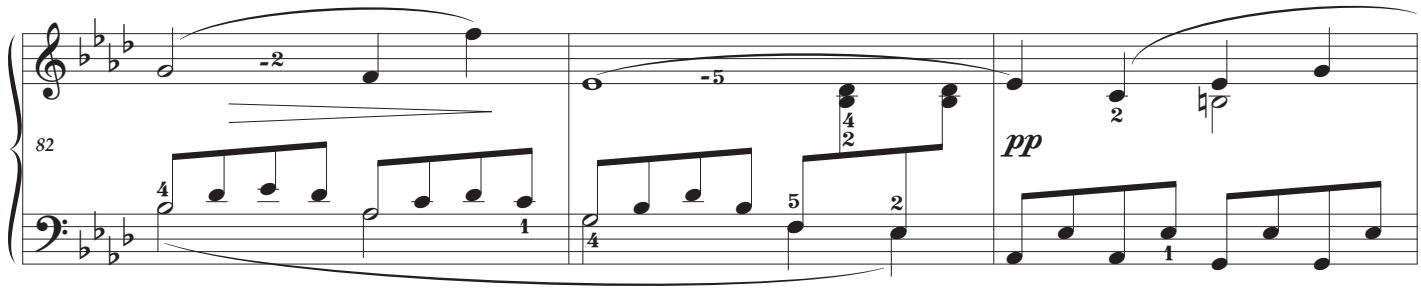

69
sfz

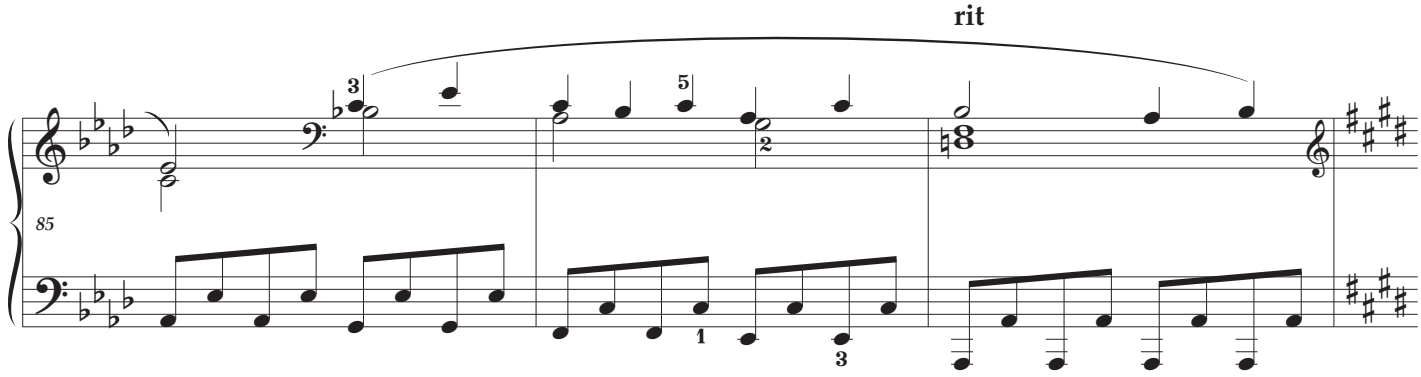

72

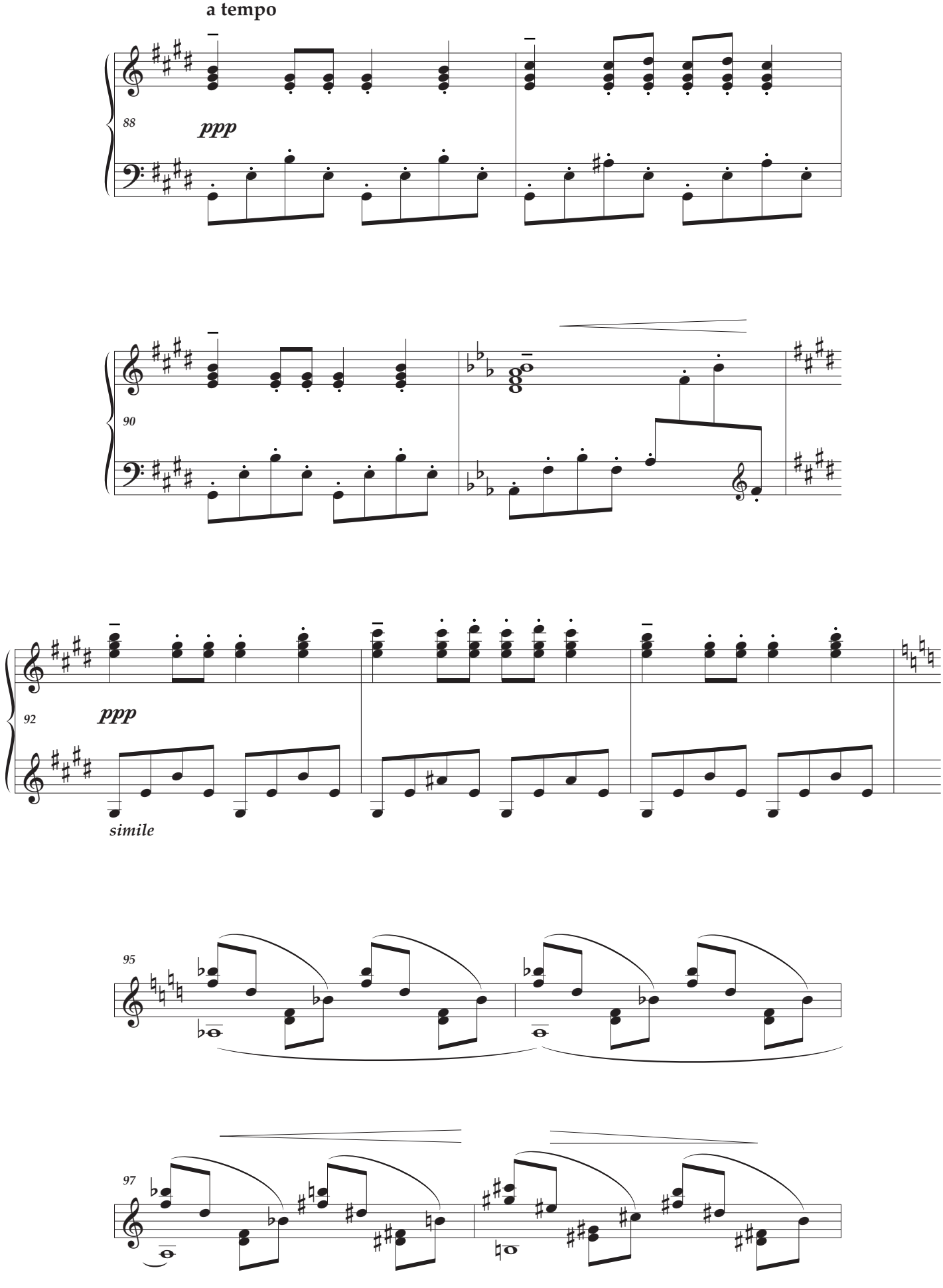

74
f

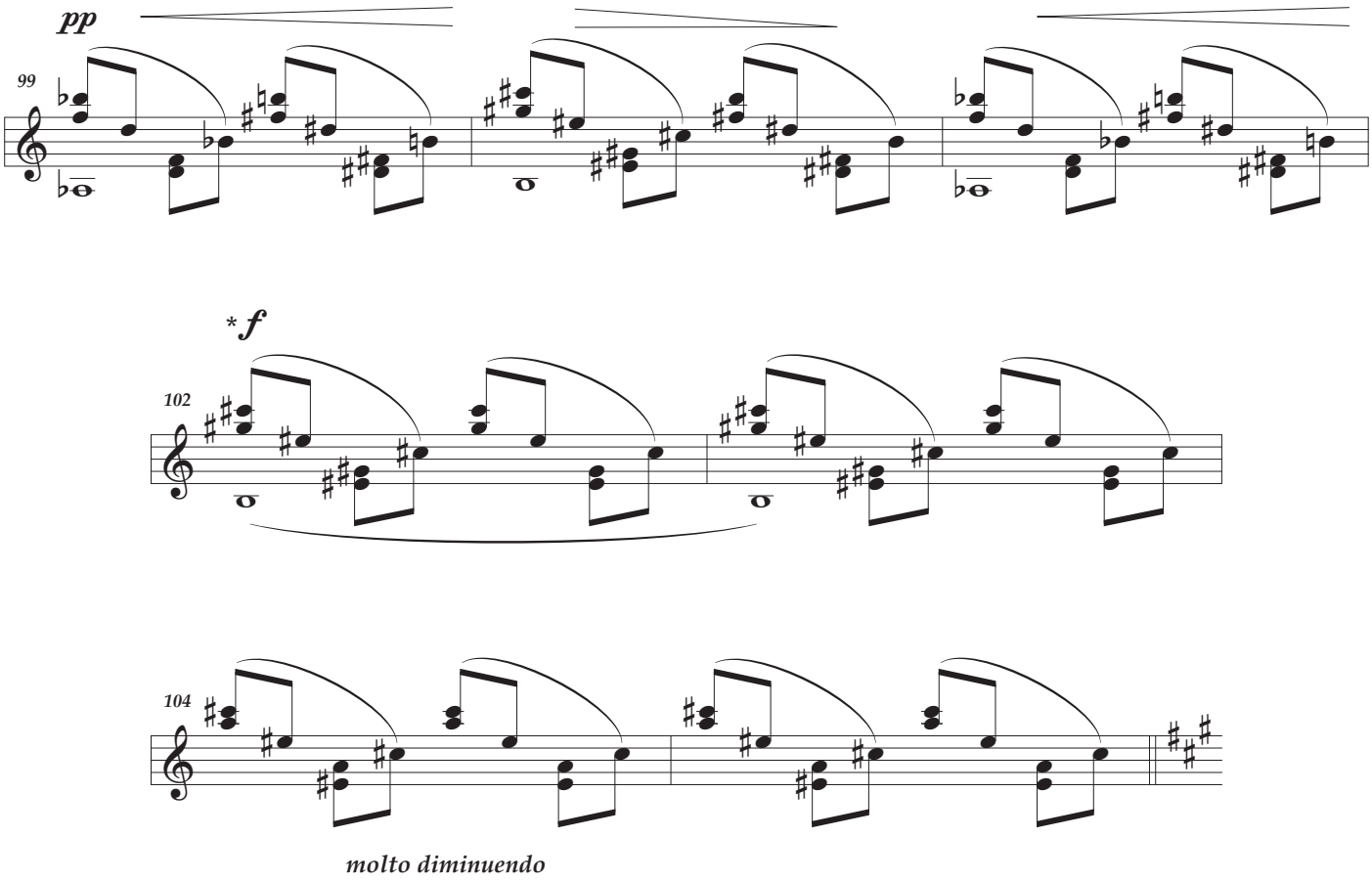

8va
76
pp
legato


rall.
79

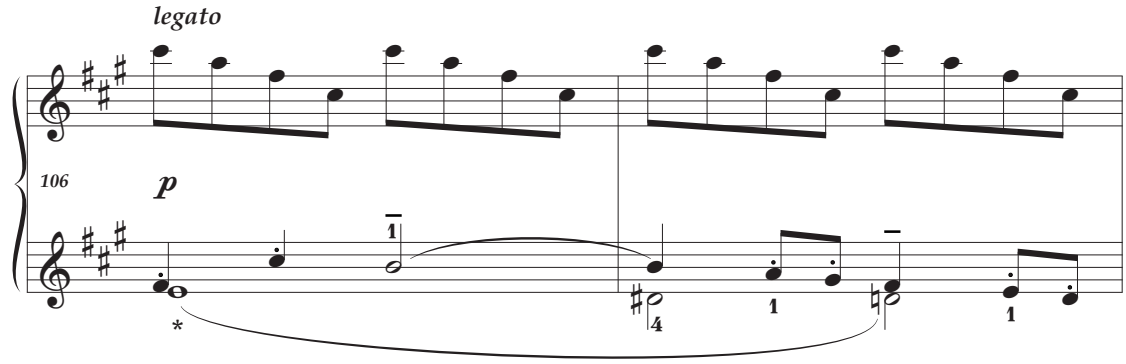

a tempo
82
pp

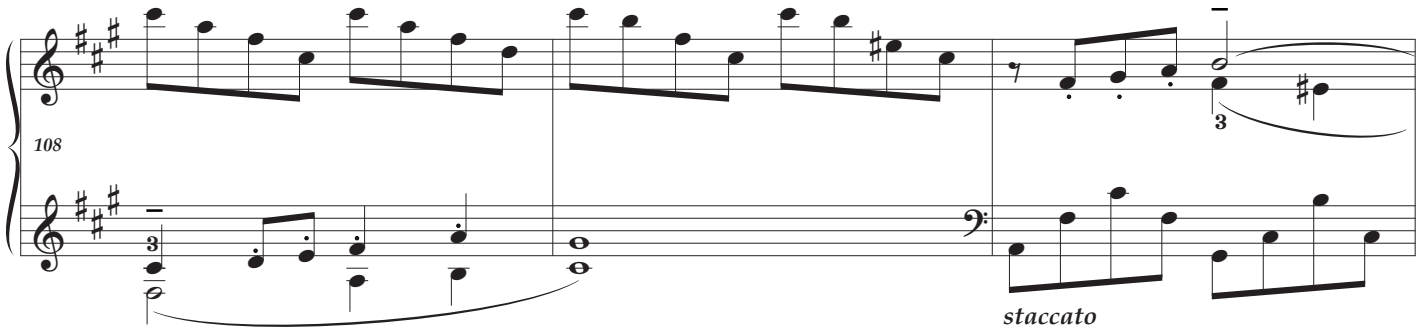

rit
85

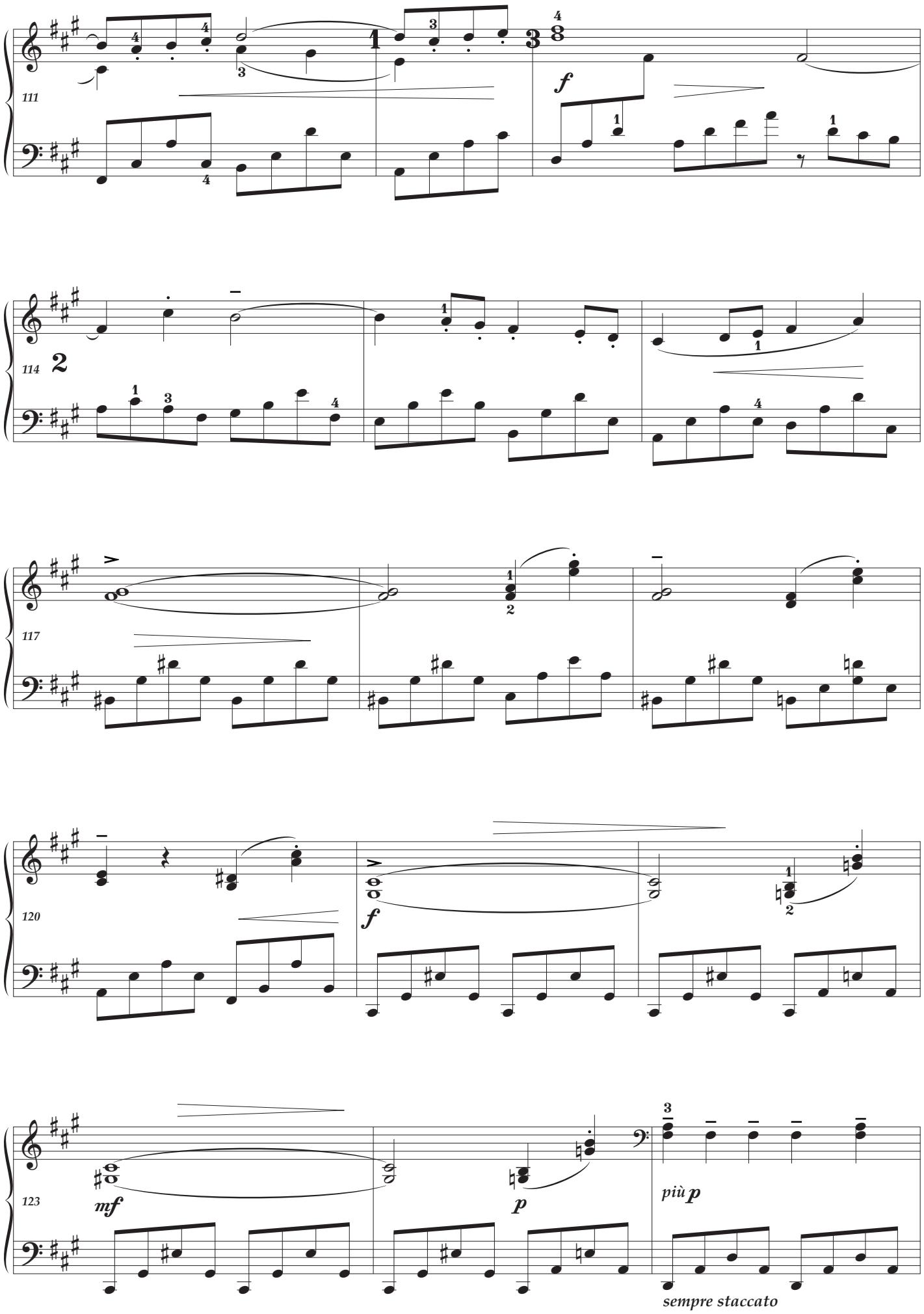

a tempo
88
ppp
90
92
ppp
simile
95
97

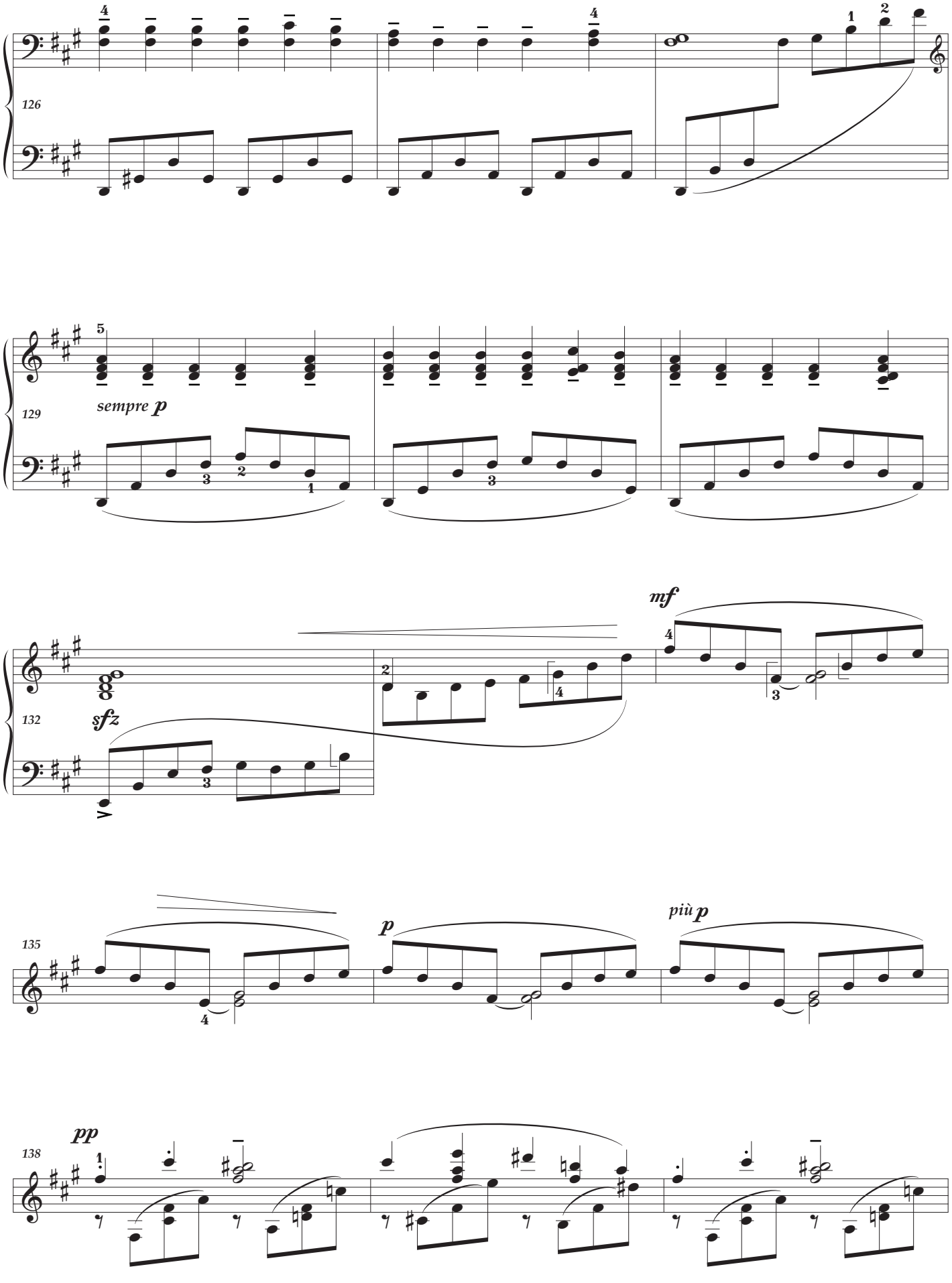


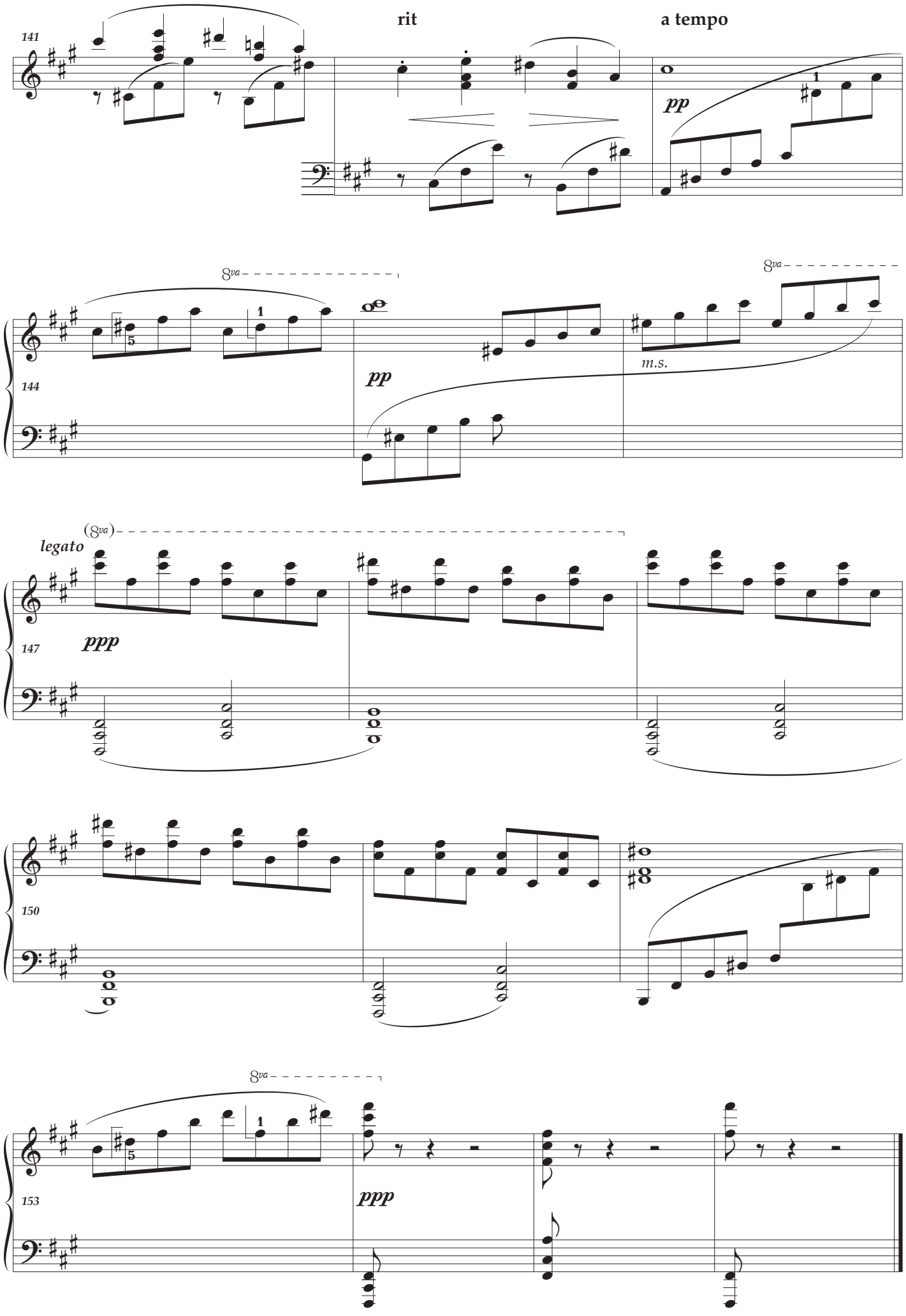
tempo primo






111
114
2
117
120
f
123
mf
p
più p
sempre staccato


126
129
sempre p
132
sfz
mf
135
p
più p
138
pp


141
rit
a tempo
pp
144
8va
pp
m.s.
147
(8va)
legato
ppp
150
153
8va
ppp

DEBUSSY

SUITE BERGAMASQUE

Passepied

published October 2020

Please send comments and error reports to
Ray Alston : contact@pianopracticaleditions.com

Piano Practical Editions
pianopracticaleditions.com