Mostly Blues

Seven Character Pieces
for Solo Piano
(and One for Piano and Bass)

Clark Winslow Ross
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Programme Note by the Composer

Mostly Blues. (26' 35") Is a collection of piano pieces (one with bass guitar or double bass) written between about 2005 and 2010. I often have ideas for compositions that are unrelated to the particular project on which I am working at the time, which I notate and save for possible use in subsequent compositions. Some never turn into anything, but some do, as was the case with these pieces.

One approach to composing that I sometimes take is to pick a musical genre, such as the blues, or a musical gesture that might be familiar to us, such as the opening to *Keep on Truckin'*, and then take it in a direction that a listener might not expect; this was the approach taken with most of these pieces. In the case of *iPad Riff Revisited*, I used the first bar of the catchy, repetitive, three-note musical idea used in an Apple iPad commercial that aired frequently in October, 2010 in North America, and took it in a different direction. As I subsequently found out, the listed composer for the iPad commercial, "Chilly Gonzales," seems to have appropriated this minimalist "riff" from Steve Reich; *Music for 18 Musicians*, Section VIII, uses the identical material. *Alexander's Snowy Day*, inspired by watching my younger son play outside during a relatively heavy snowfall that cancelled school, is the lone exception; I was thinking of Bela Bartok's *Mikrokosmos* when I wrote it. Like Mikrokosmos, some of my pieces were written with younger players in mind, and some are more demanding.

Blues For Jim was begun after watching several YouTube video performances by Jim Croce, a singer-songwriter whose death in 1973 affected me as a teenager because I used to play his songs and listen to his music. Watching videos of these performances more than thirty years later reminded me of what terrific musicians Croce and his musical partner Maury Muehleisen (who also died in the same plane crash as Croce) were, and it also moved me to write a musical tribute/reflection. *Jennifer's Tune* was written for my wife, who inspires me every day.

These may be played individually, or in any ordering of the pianist's choice.

1. Keep On Truckin' (4:34)
2. Alexander's Snowy Day (0:48)
3. Blues for Jim (5:30)
4. Jennifer's Tune (with bass; 5:30)
5. Boppin' Along (0:48)
6. Cascades (1:13)
7. Blues and Greens (2:47)
8. iPad Riff Revisited (5:25)

   (total time: 26:35)

Clark Winslow Ross's compositions have been performed in Japan, England, Ireland, Israel, the United States, and across Canada by some of Canada's finest musicians, ensembles, and orchestras. He was Composer-in-Residence at Ireland's *Waterford New Music Week* in 2003, and has won *Young Composer's Awards* in national competitions by the *Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra* and the *Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra*. He has also received over 20 commission grants from various funding agencies, including the *Canada Council*, the *CBC*, and the *Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council*. Clark is the founder and Artistic Director of the *Newfound Music Festival*, held every February in St. John's, and was a founding member and later President of *Continuum*, the Toronto-based new-music group. He has served on the national executive of both the *Canadian League of Composers* and the *Canadian Music Centre*.

Born in Maracaibo, Venezuela, Clark was raised there and in Caracas (Venezuela), Lima (Peru), Lennoxville (Quebec), New York City, Fort Lee (New Jersey), Brussels (Belgium), and Toronto, where he attended university. Upon receiving a Mus.Doc. (composition) degree from the *University of Toronto* in 1992, he was hired by *Memorial University's School of Music*, where he is currently an Associate Professor, teaching composition, orchestration, theory, electronic music, and classical guitar. He was awarded Memorial University's *President's Award for Outstanding Research* (1999) in recognition of his extensive compositional activities. He is married to Dr. Jennifer Porter (professor of Religious Studies, Memorial University), and has three children (Alexander, (*b.* 2004), Andrew (*b.* 2001), and Julia (*b.* 1990). His interests outside of family and music include baseball, cats, cooking, ethnic food, reading, and writing short stories.

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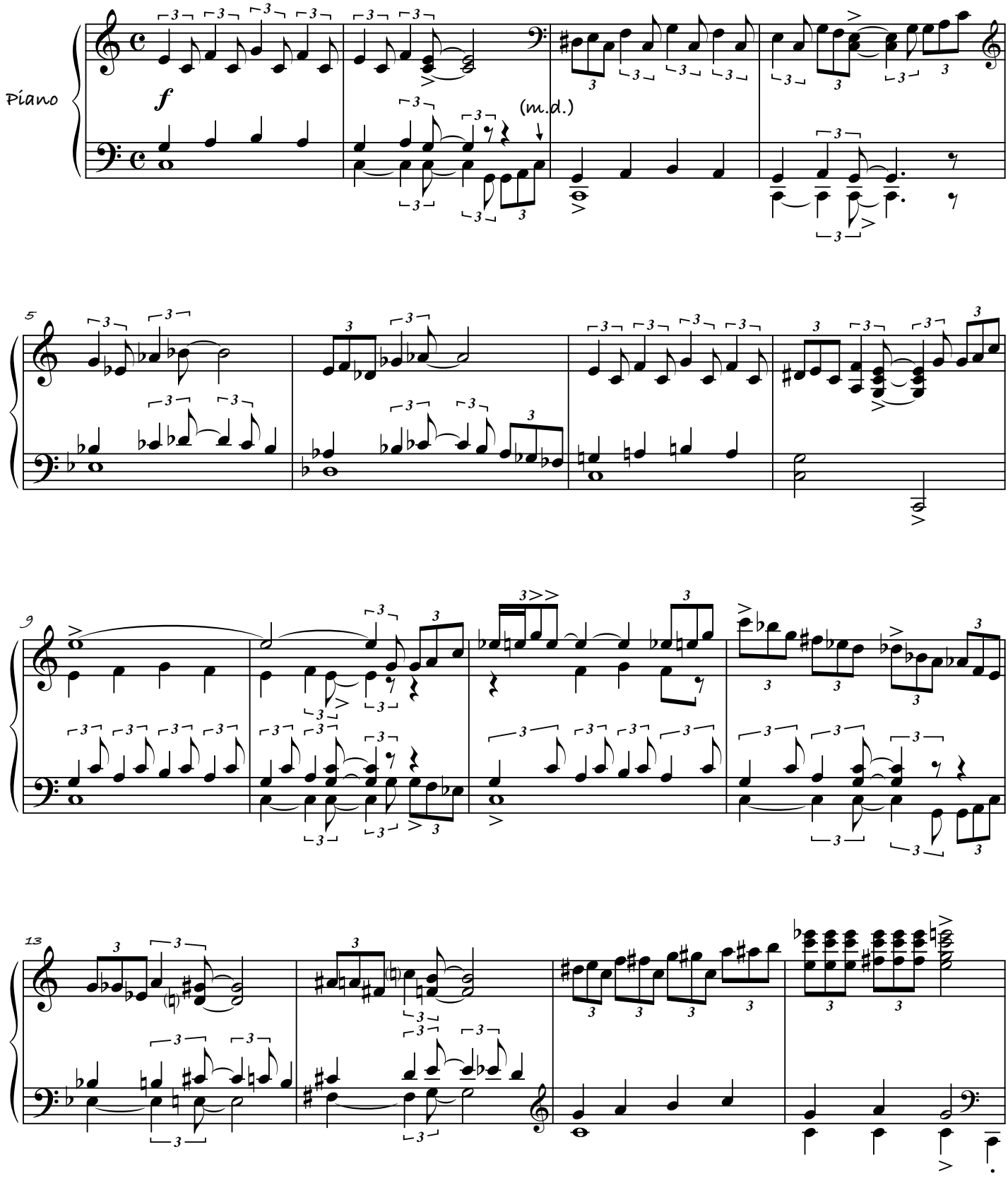
Keep on Truckin' (Blues)

Clark Winslow Ross

With Boundless Optimism; ♩= 116



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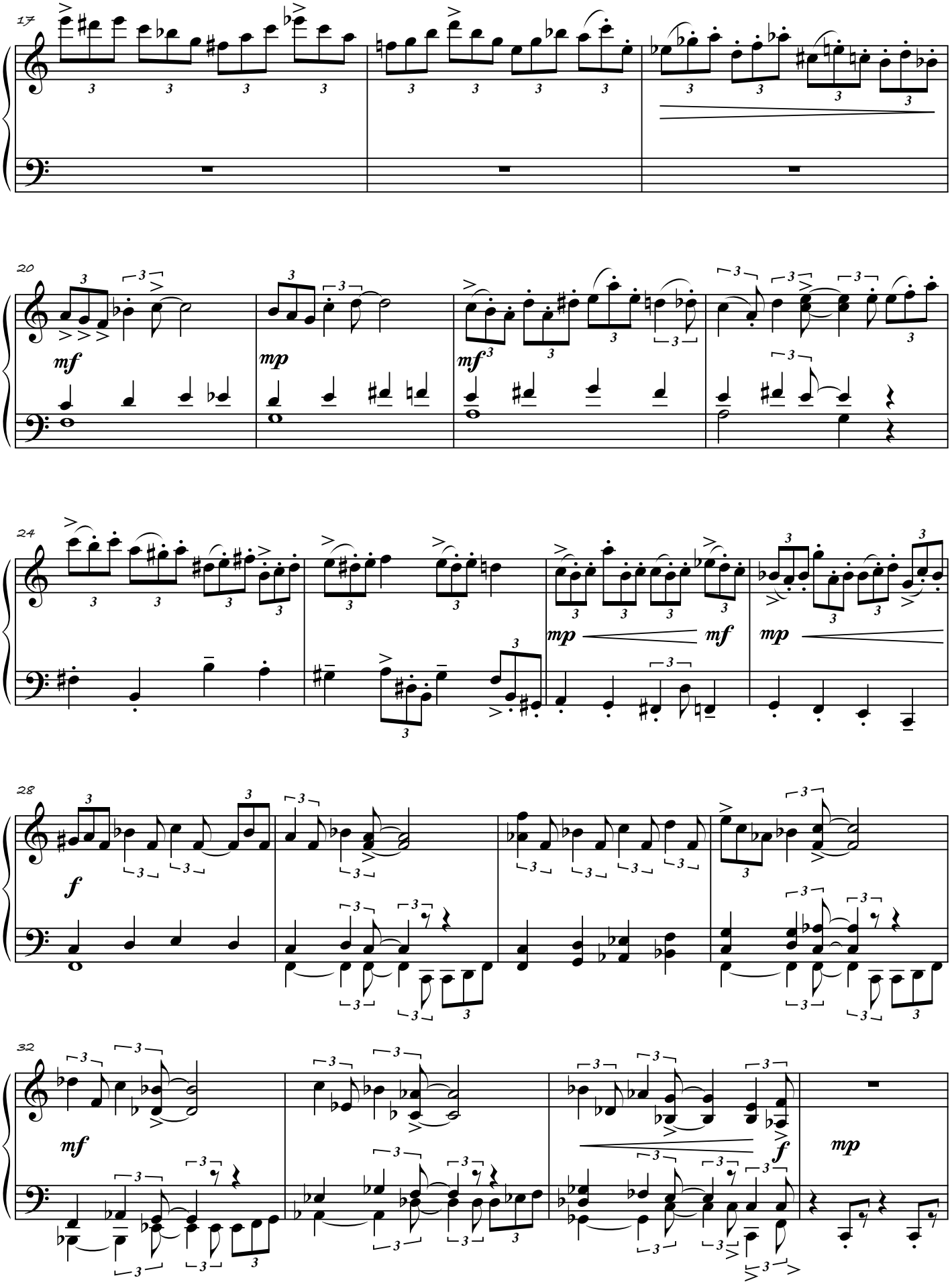
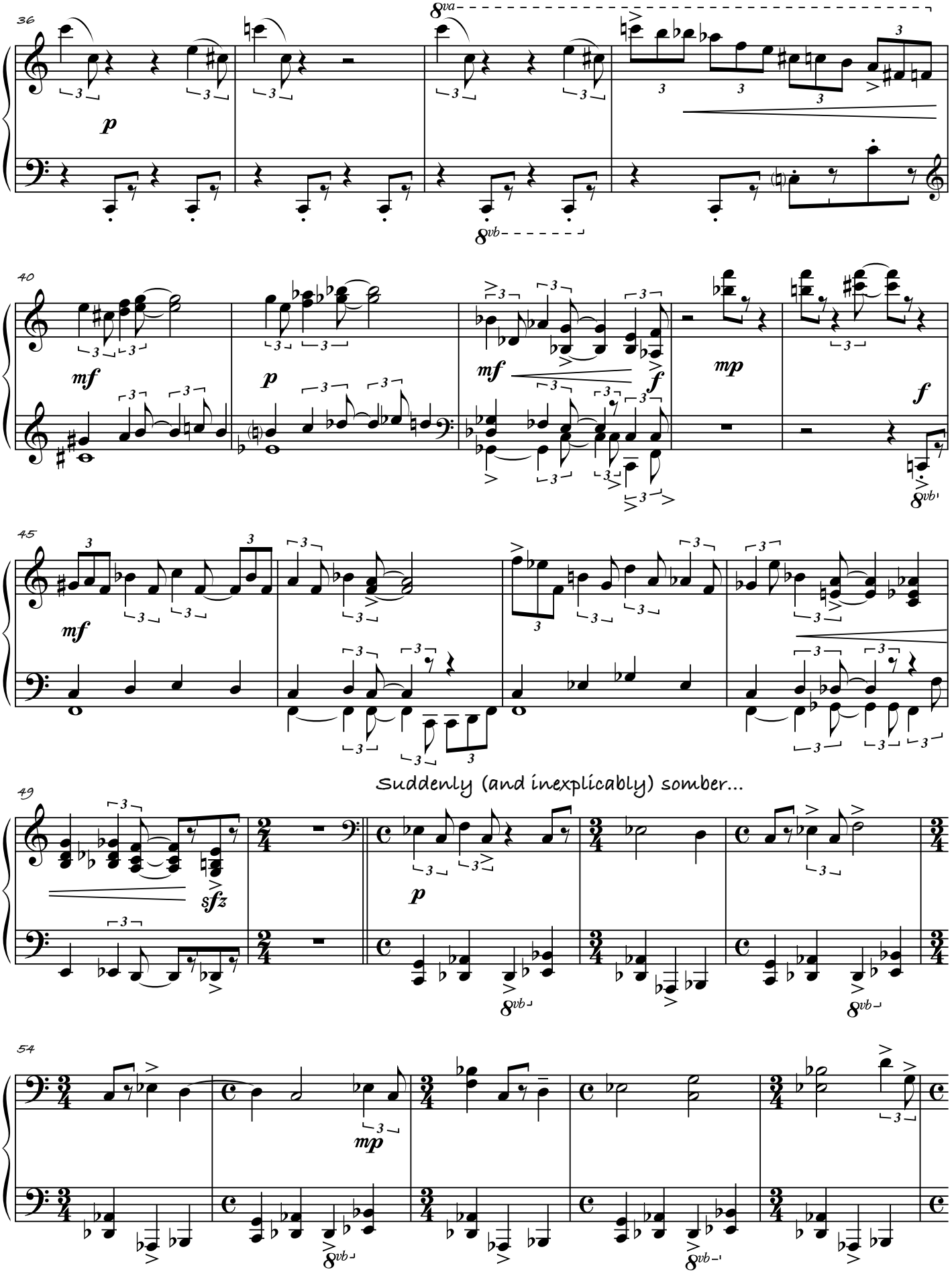
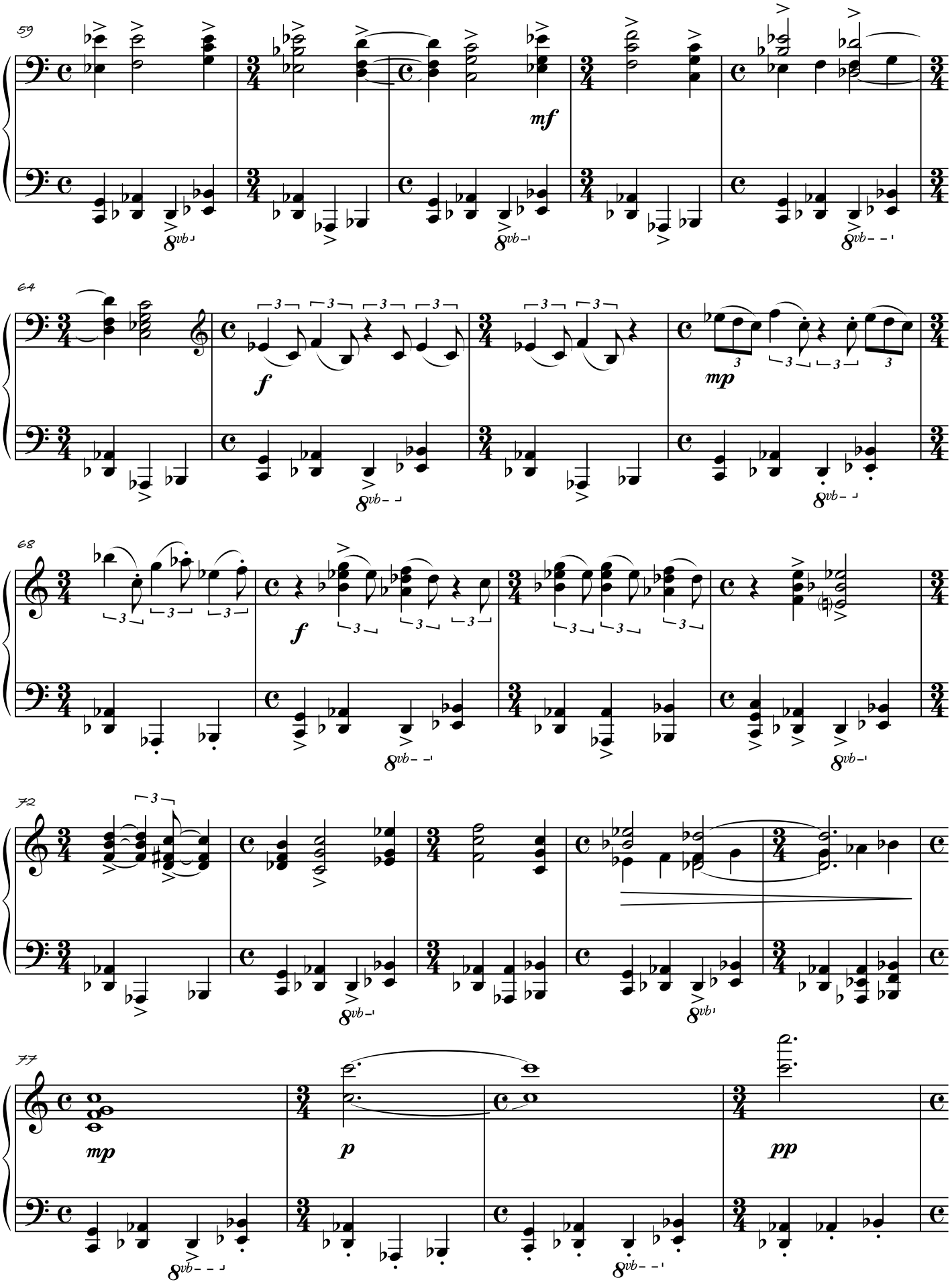
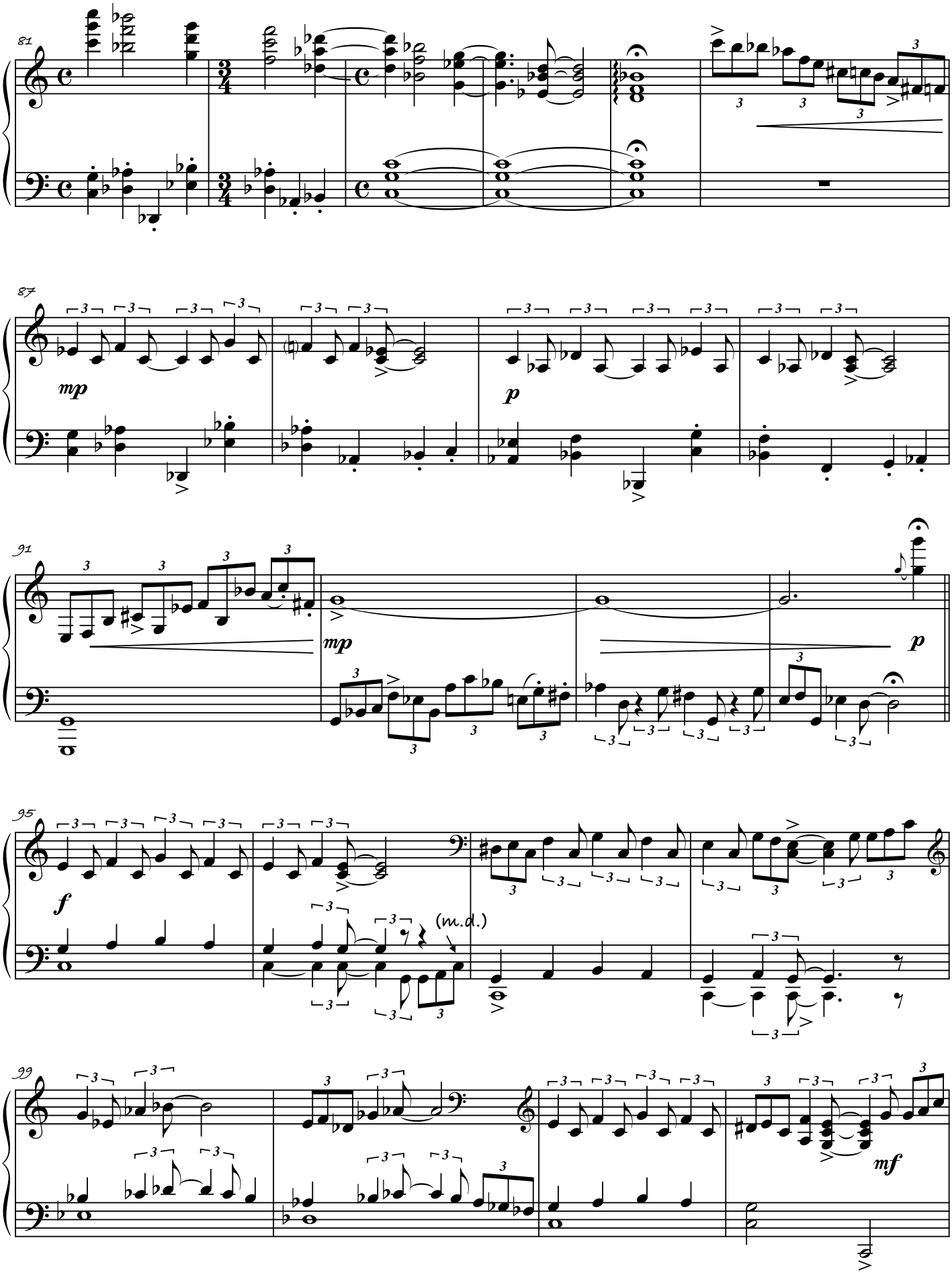
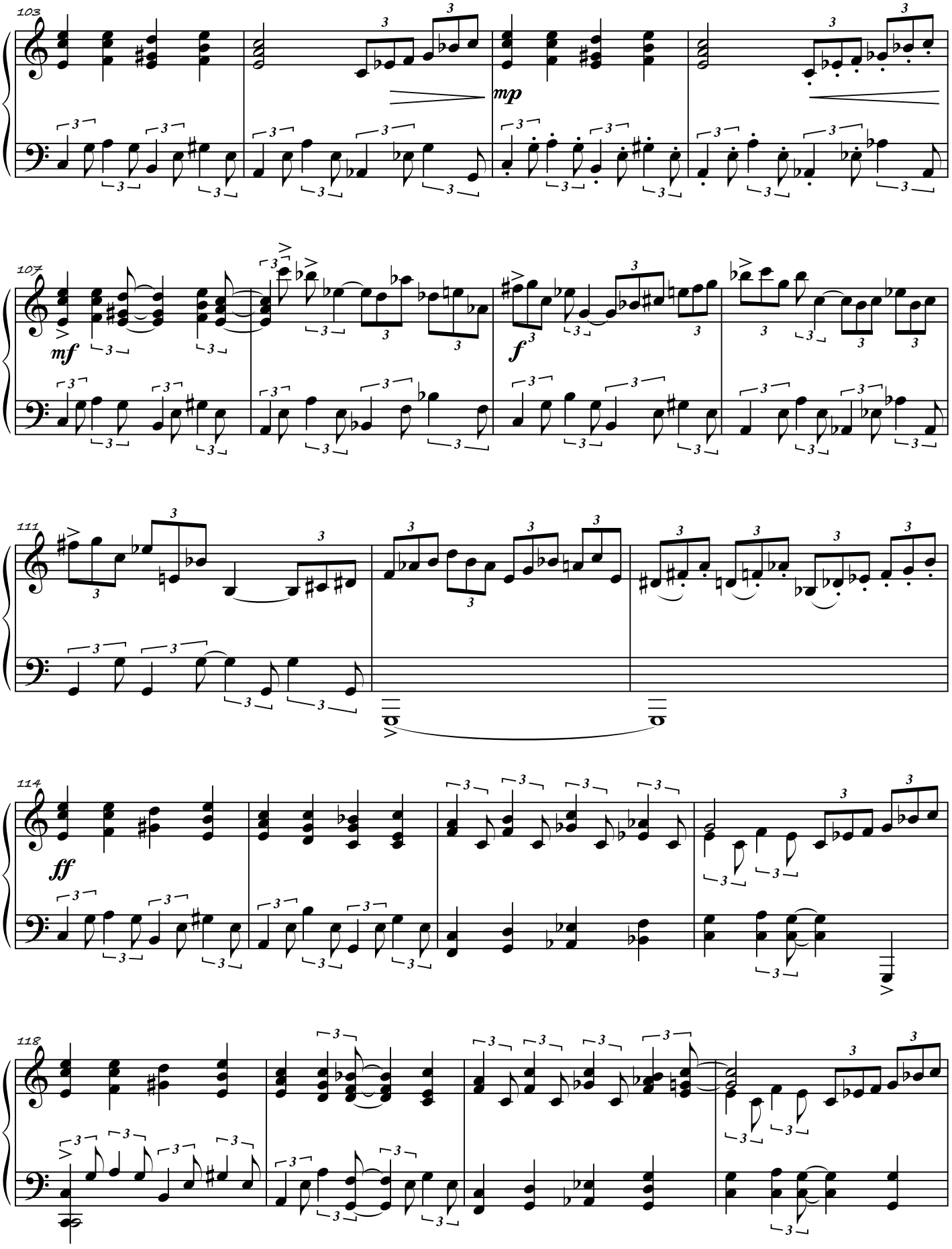
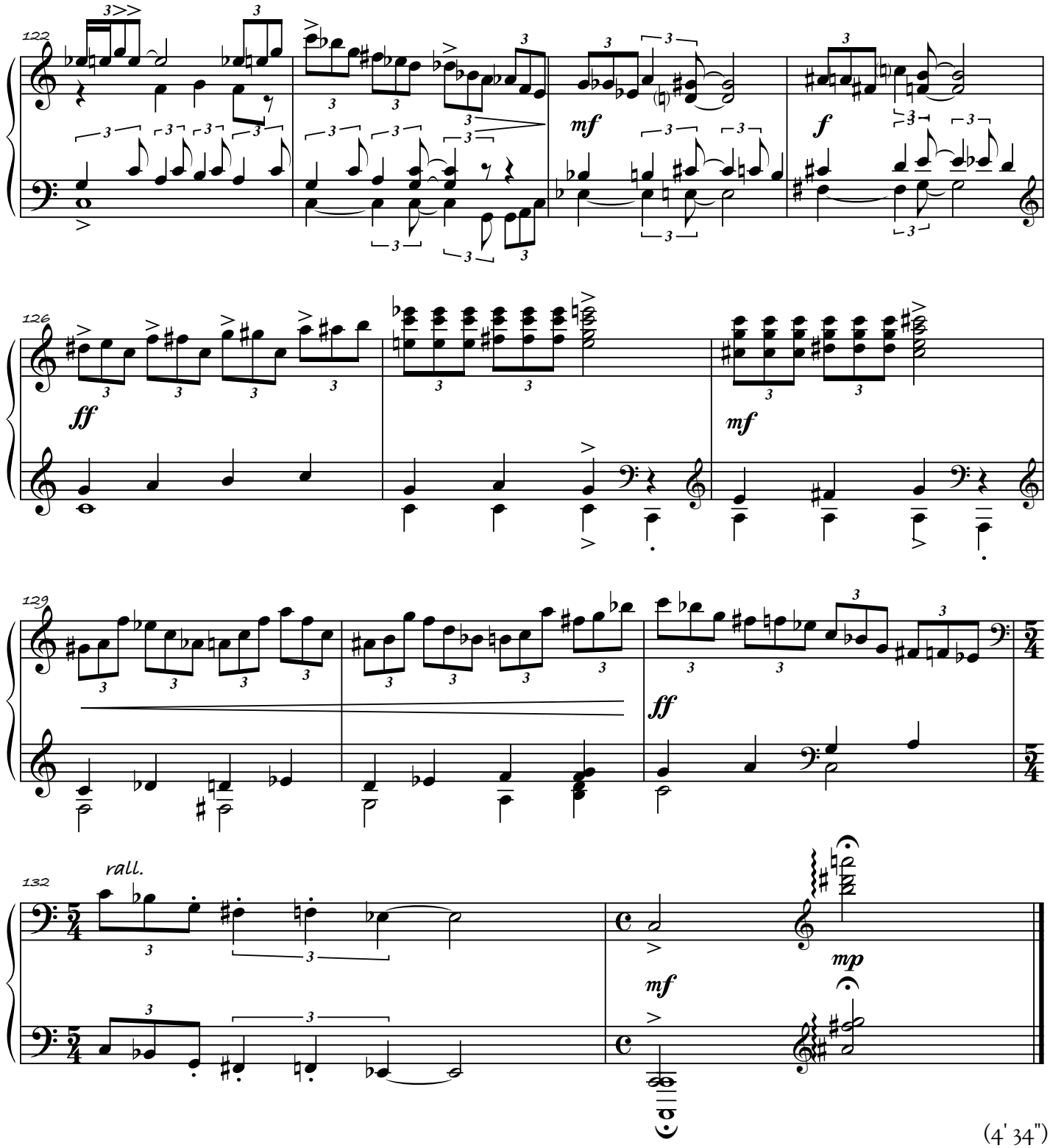

17
20
mf
mp
mf
24
mp
mf
mp
28
f
32
mf
f
mp


36
8va
8vb
p
40
mf
p
mf
f
mp
f
8vb
45
mf
49
sfz
Suddenly (and inexplicably) somber...
p
8vb
8vb
54
mp
8vb
8vb


59
mf
64
f
mp
68
f
72
77
mp
p
pp


81
87
mp
p
91
mp
p
95
f
(m.d.)
99
mf

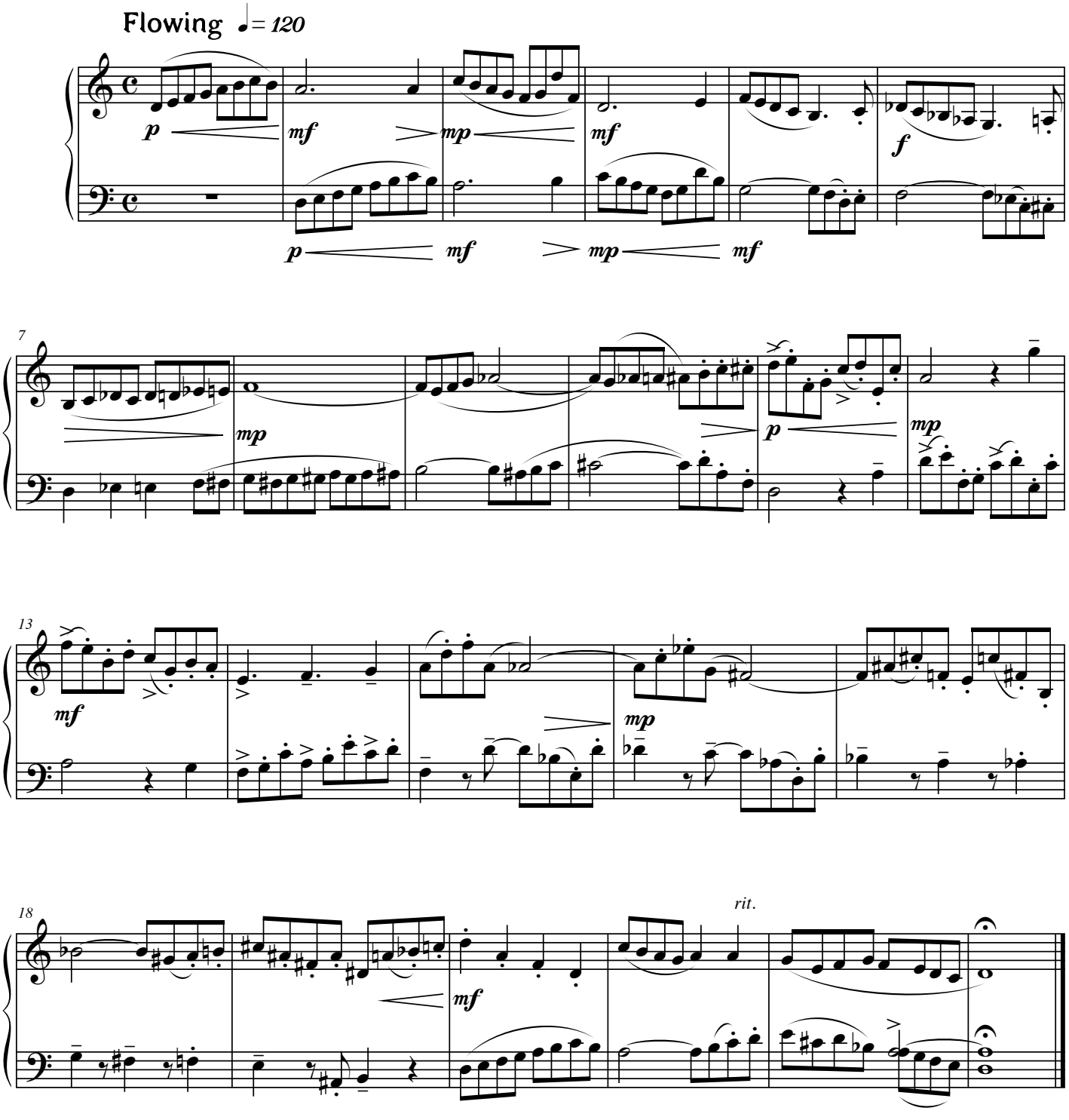

103
mp
107
mf
f
111
114
ff
118



(4' 34")

Alexander's Snowy Day

Clark Ross



(48")

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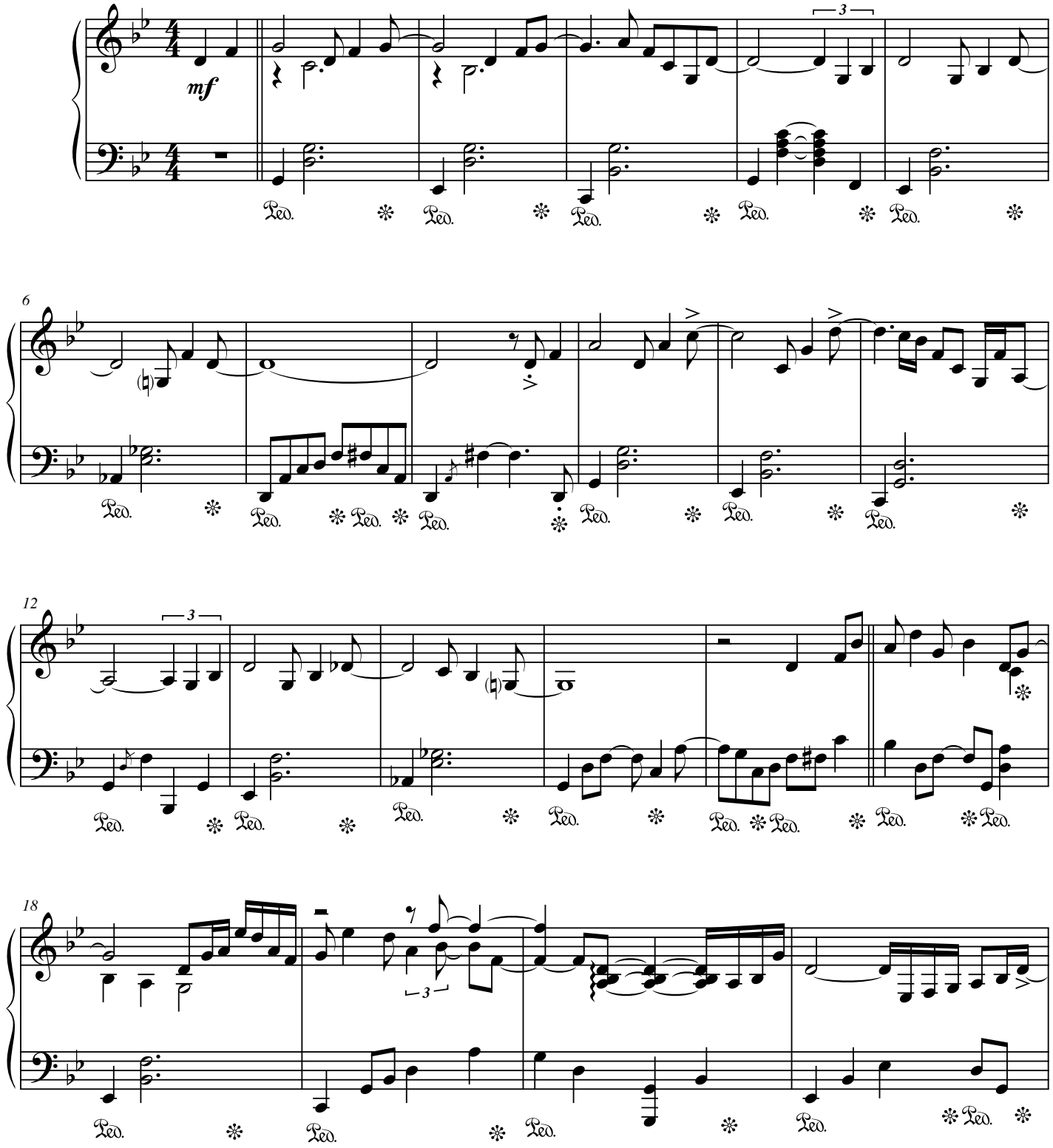
Blues for Jim

Clark Winslow Ross

Introspective ♩ = *80*



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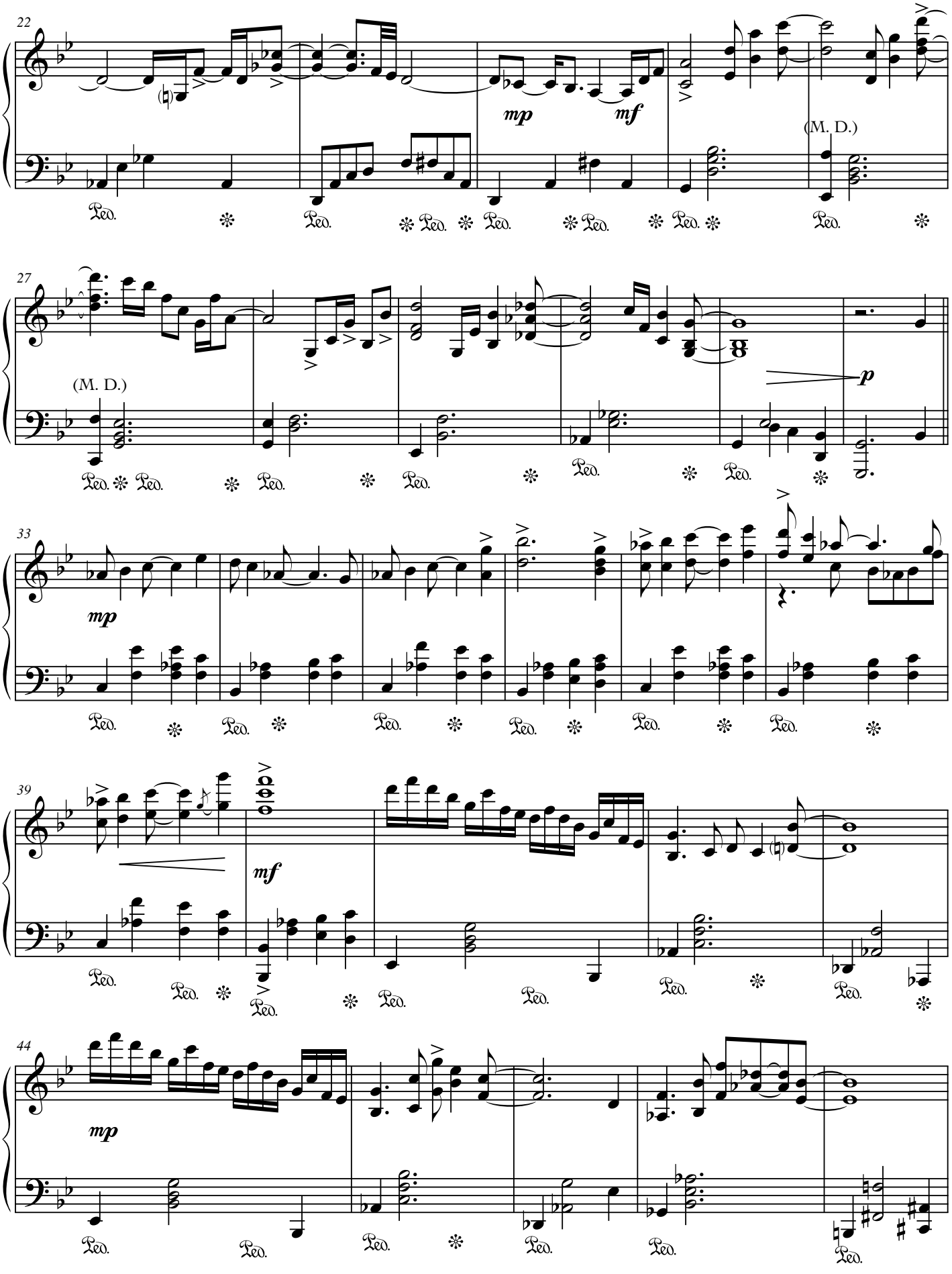
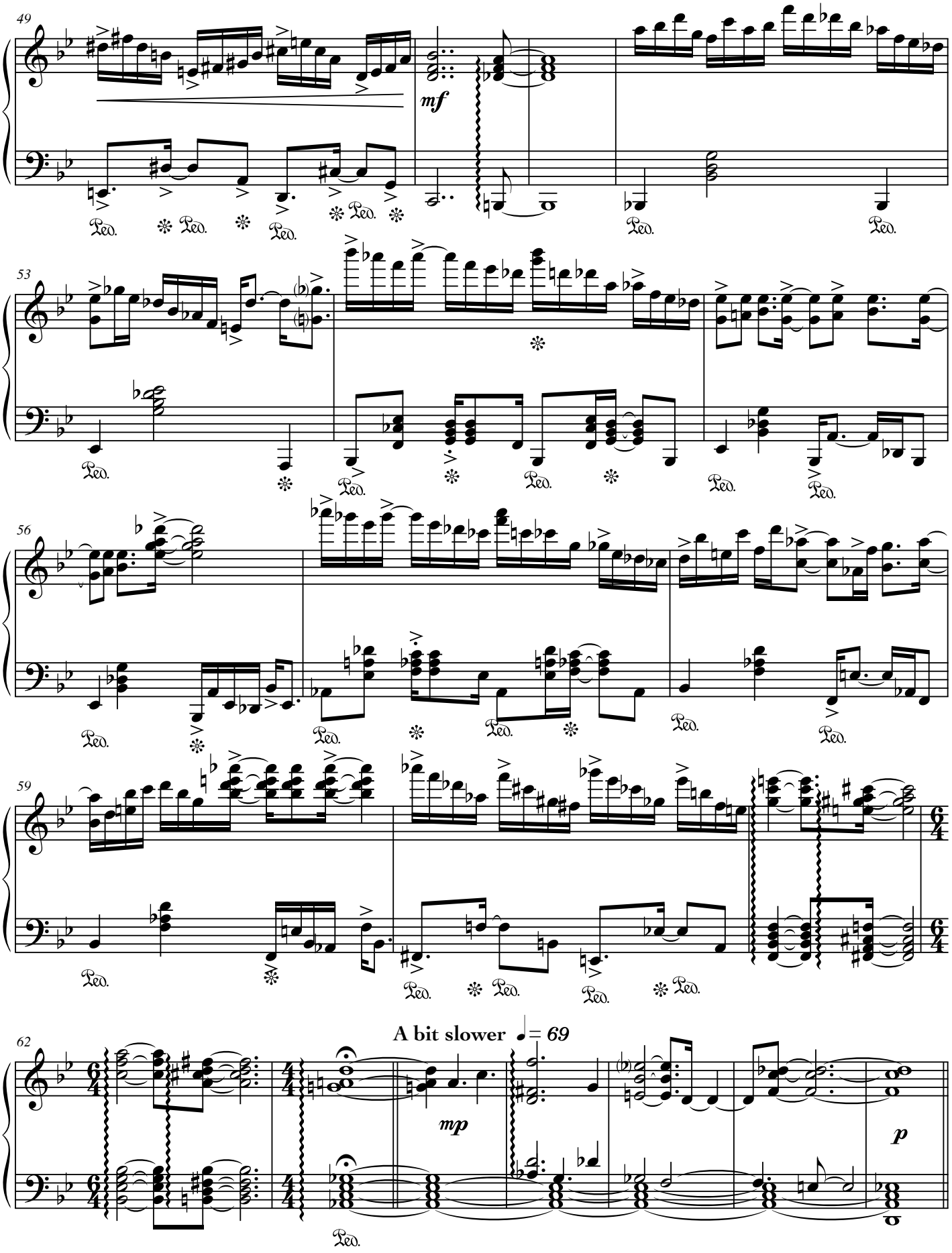
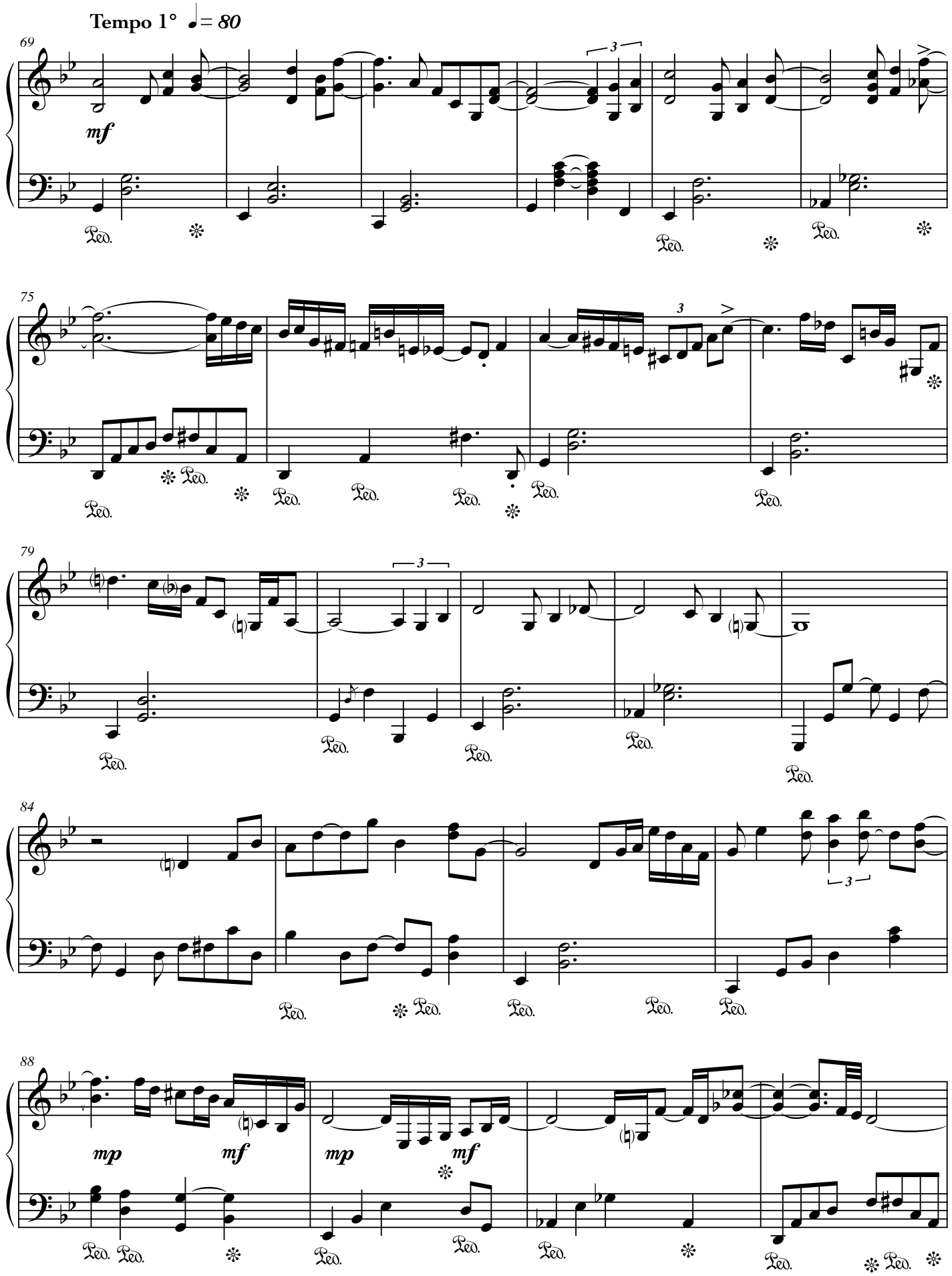
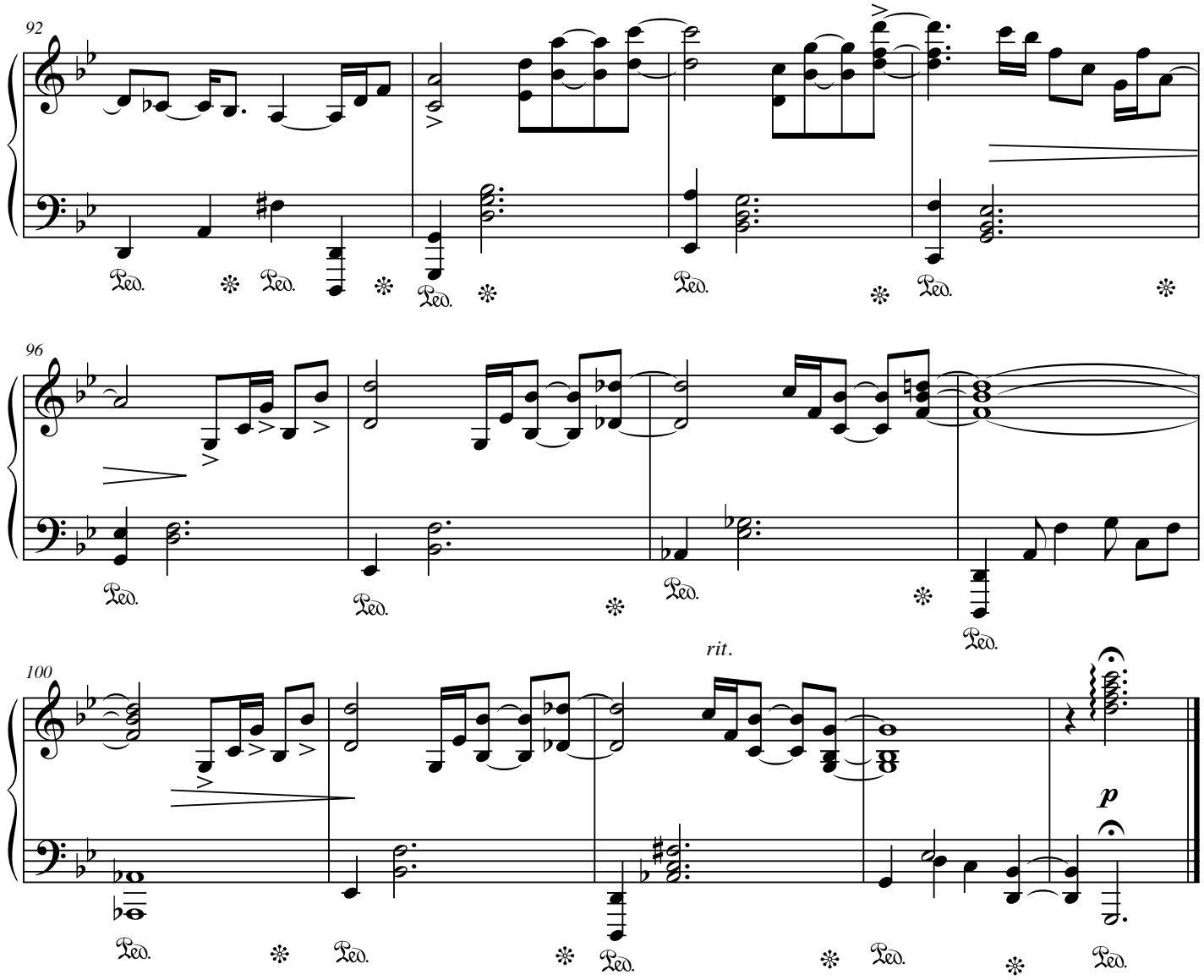

22
mp
mf
(M. D.)
27
(M. D.)
p
33
mp
39
mf
44
mp


49
mf
53
56
59
62
A bit slower ♩= 69
mp
p


Tempo 1° ♩= 80
69
mf
75
79
84
88
mp
mf
mp
mf

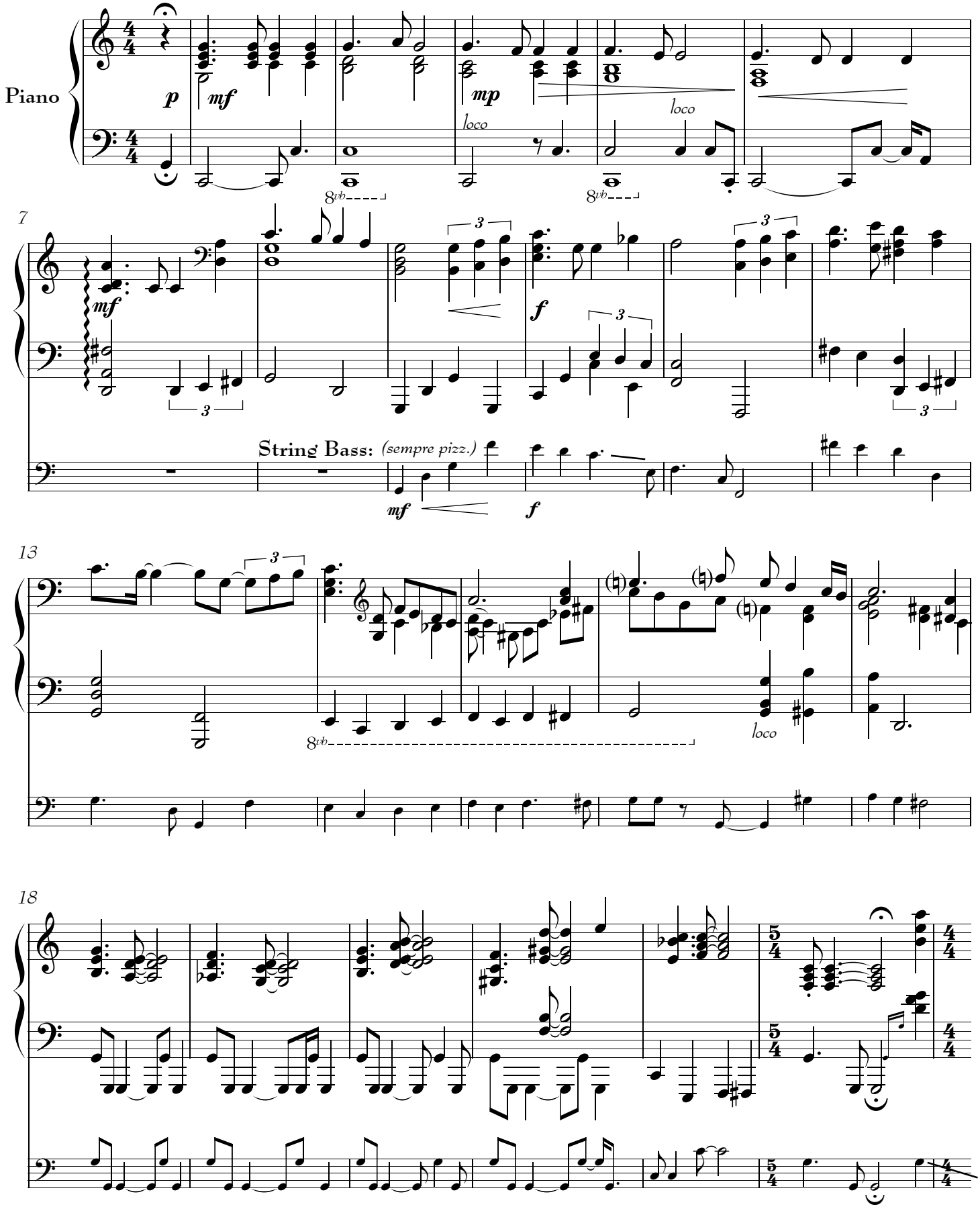


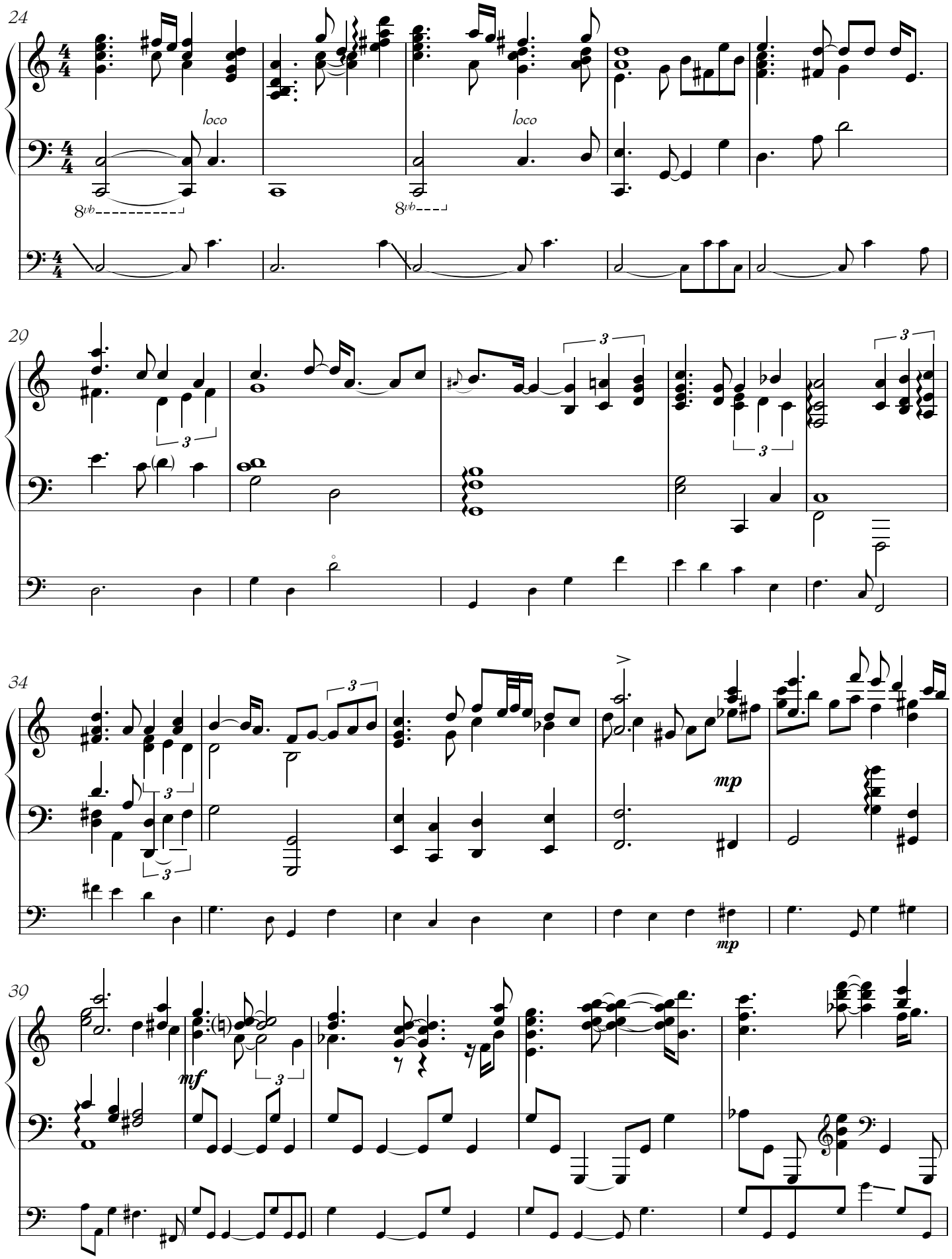
(5' 30")

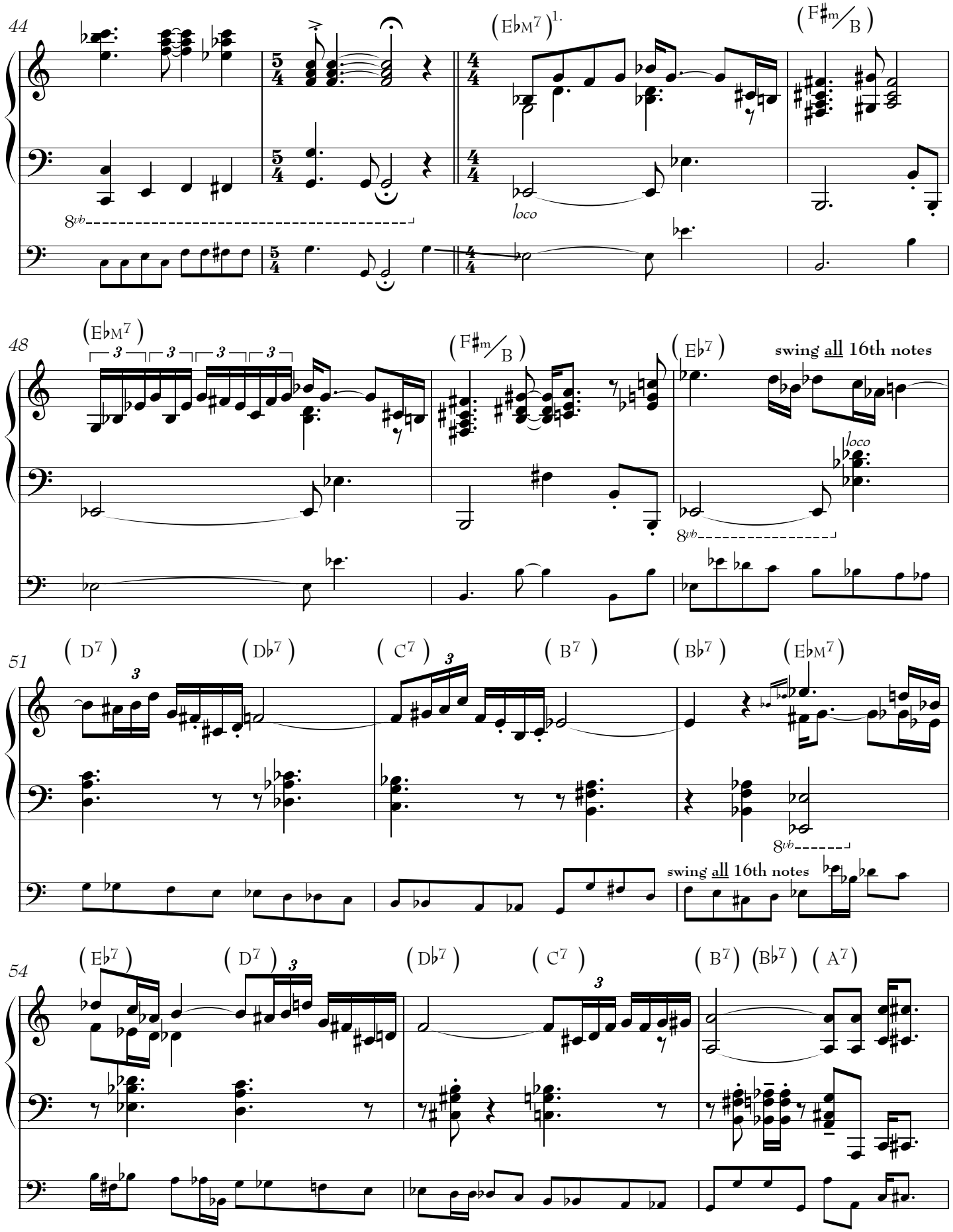
Jennifer's Tune

Clark Winslow Ross

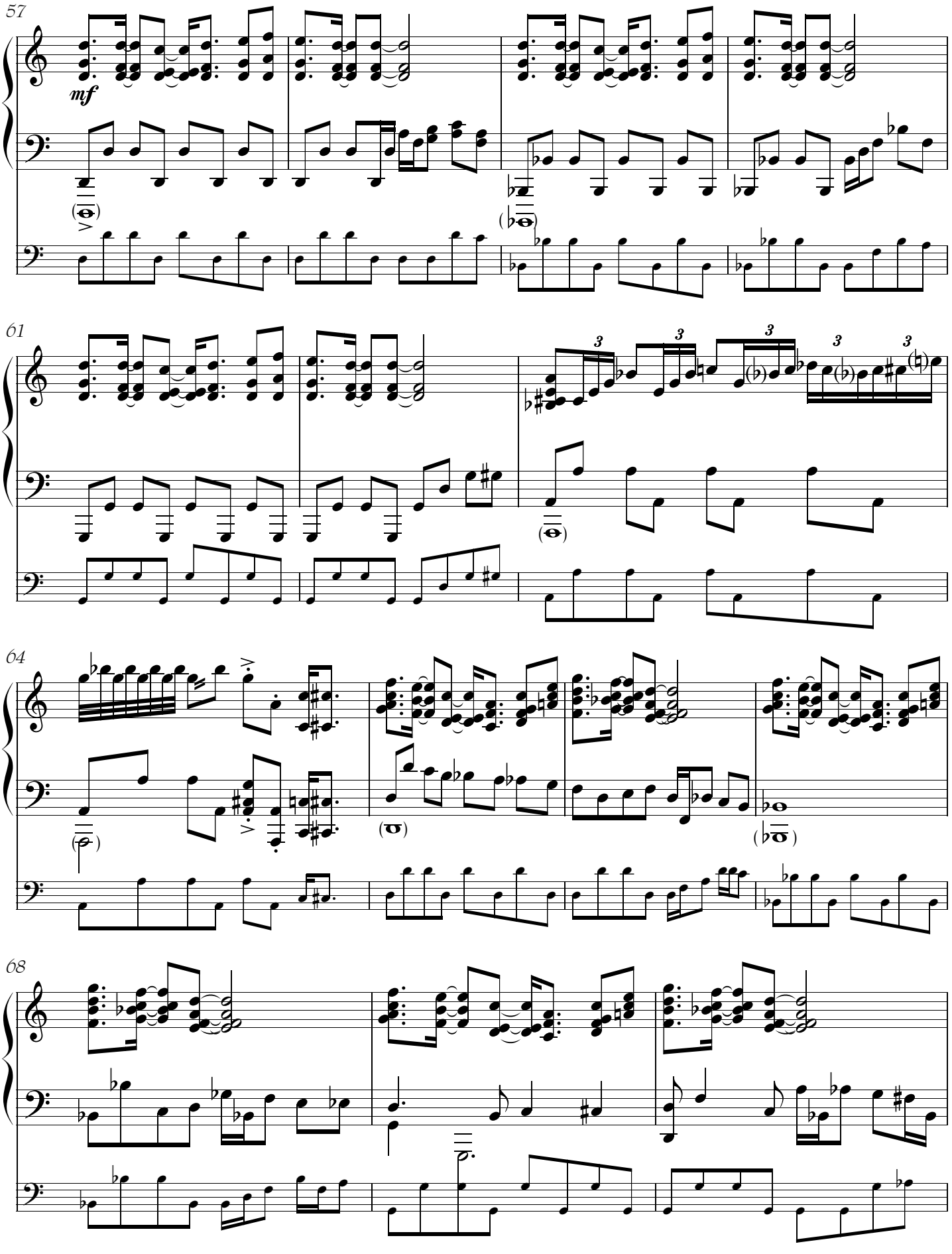
♩ = 88; expressive

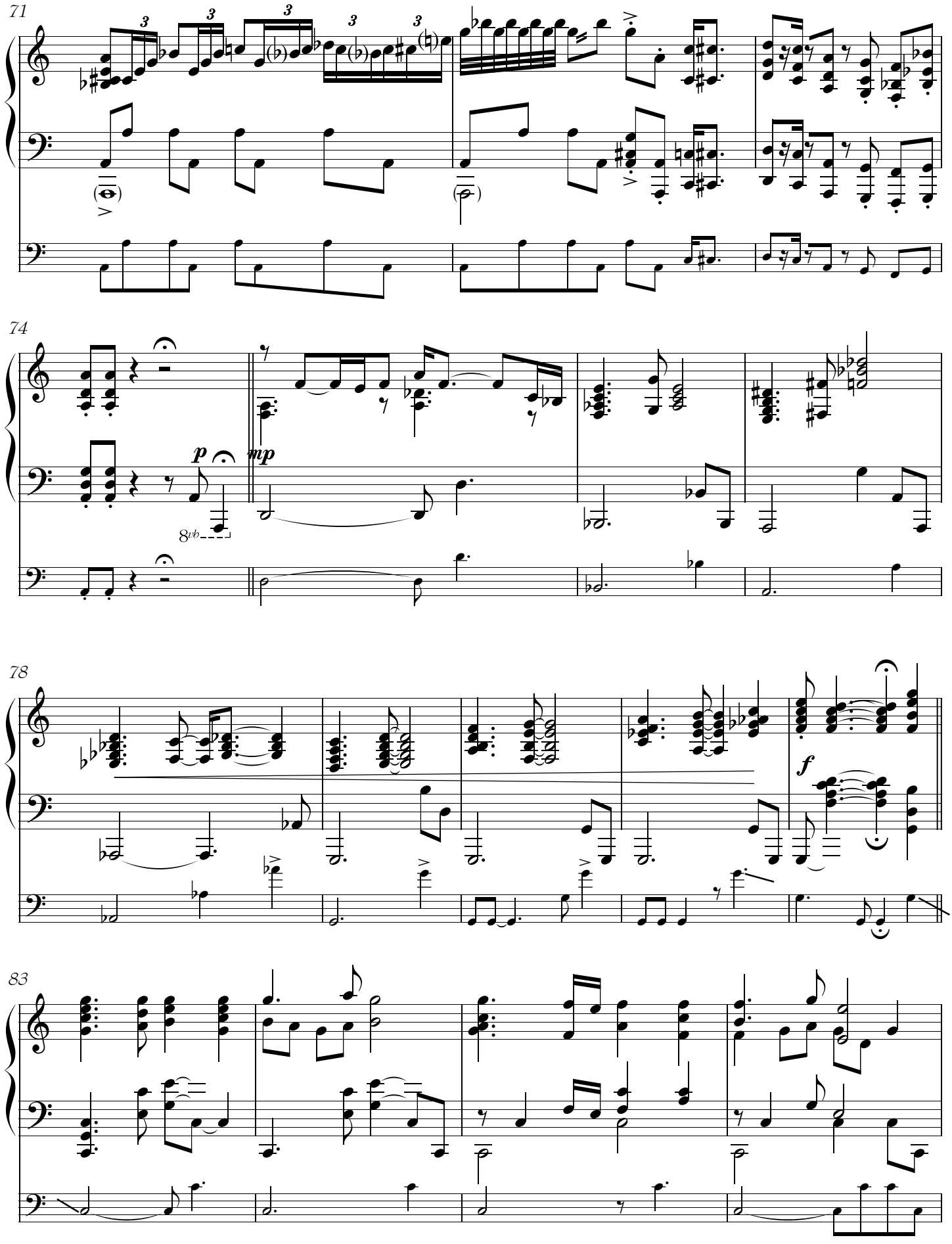


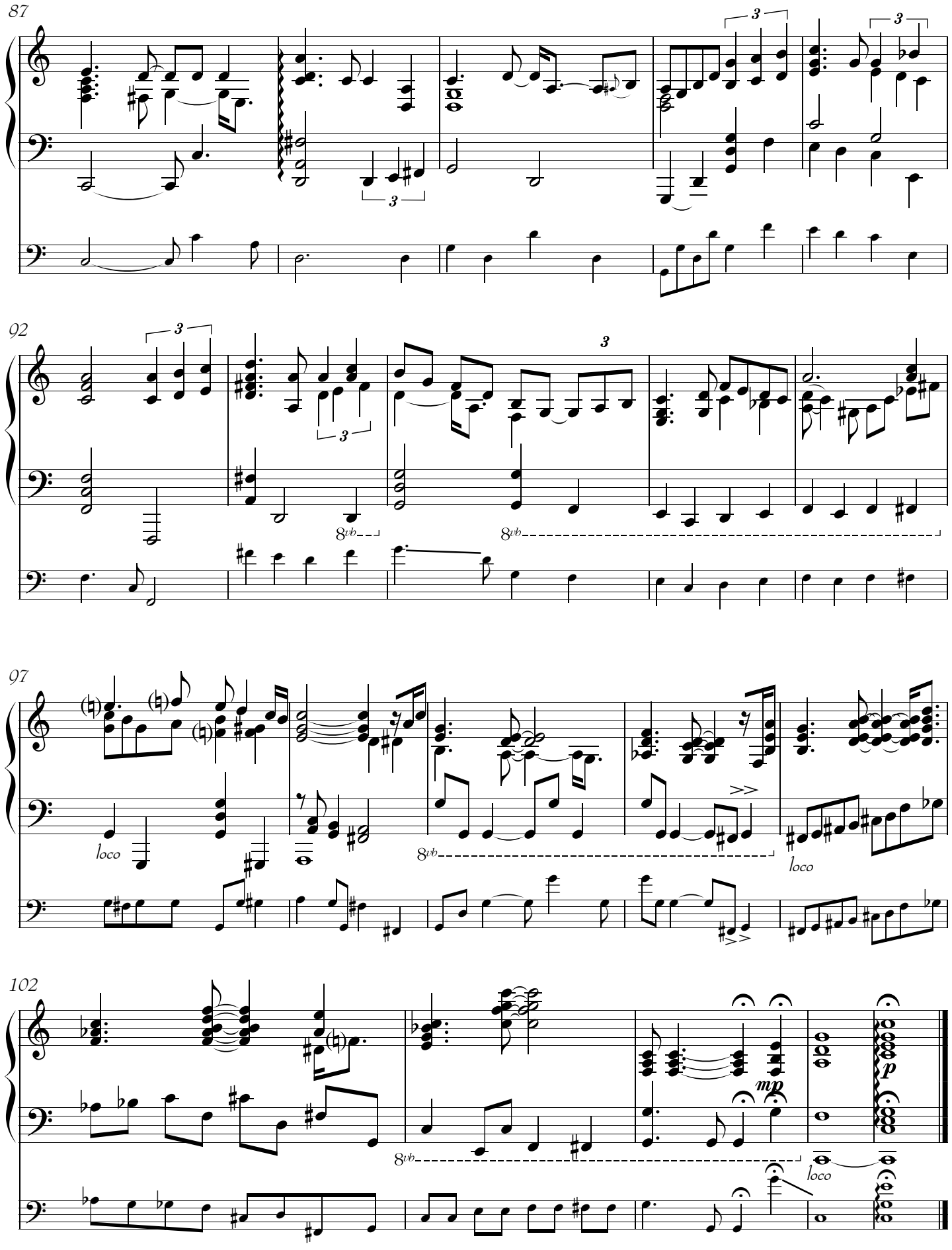

24
loco
loco
8vb
8vb
29
3
3
3
34
3
3
3
mp
mp
39
mf
3



1. Chord symbols included (a) in case someone else wants to jam with you, (b) in case you want to revoice these chords. If not, just play as written.


57
mf
61
64
68

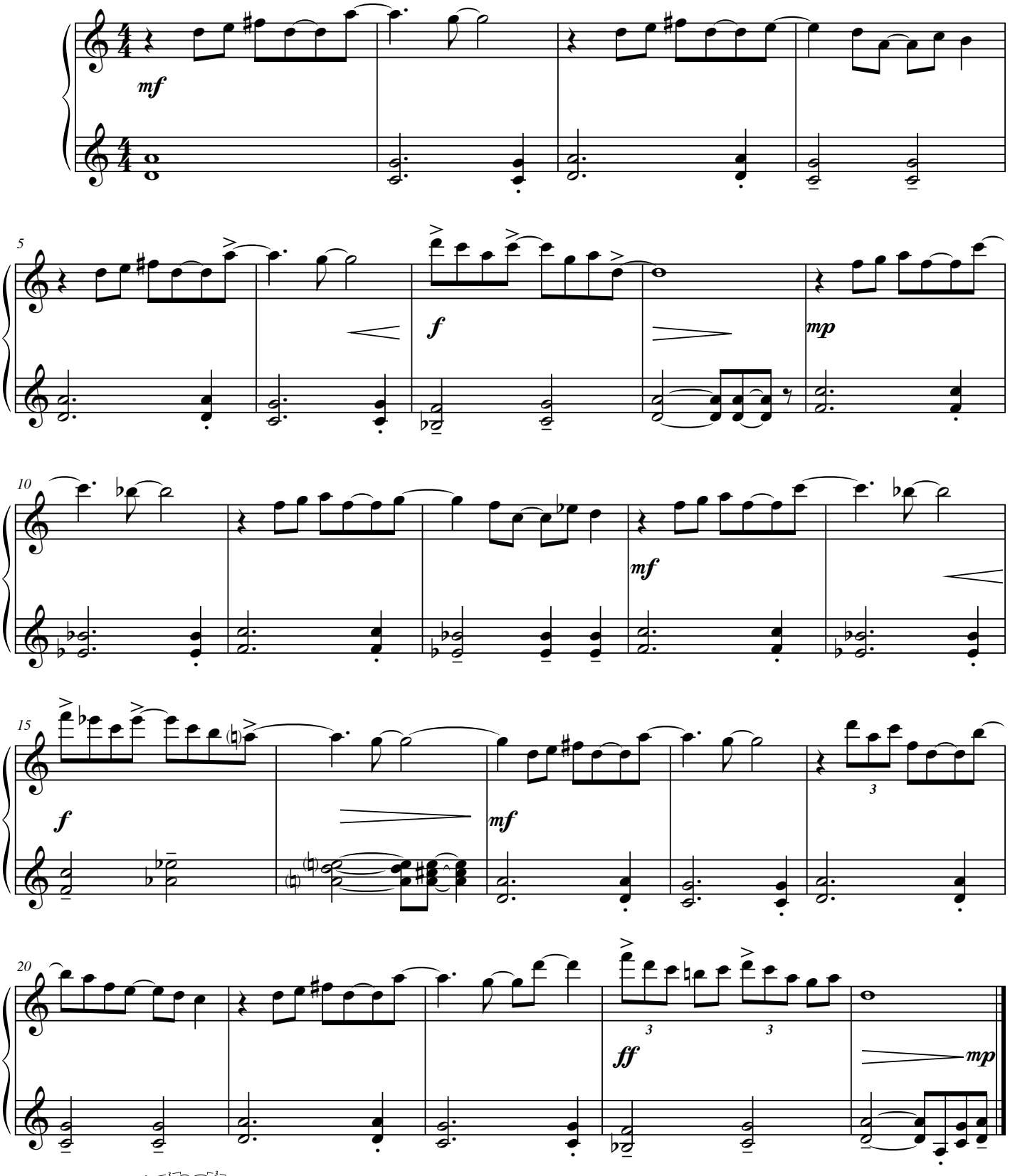

71
74
p
mp
8vb
78
f
83


87
92
97
102
3
8vb
loco
mp
p

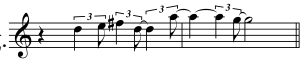
Boppin' Along

Clark Winslow Ross

Swing eighths;* ♩ = 120



* e.g.



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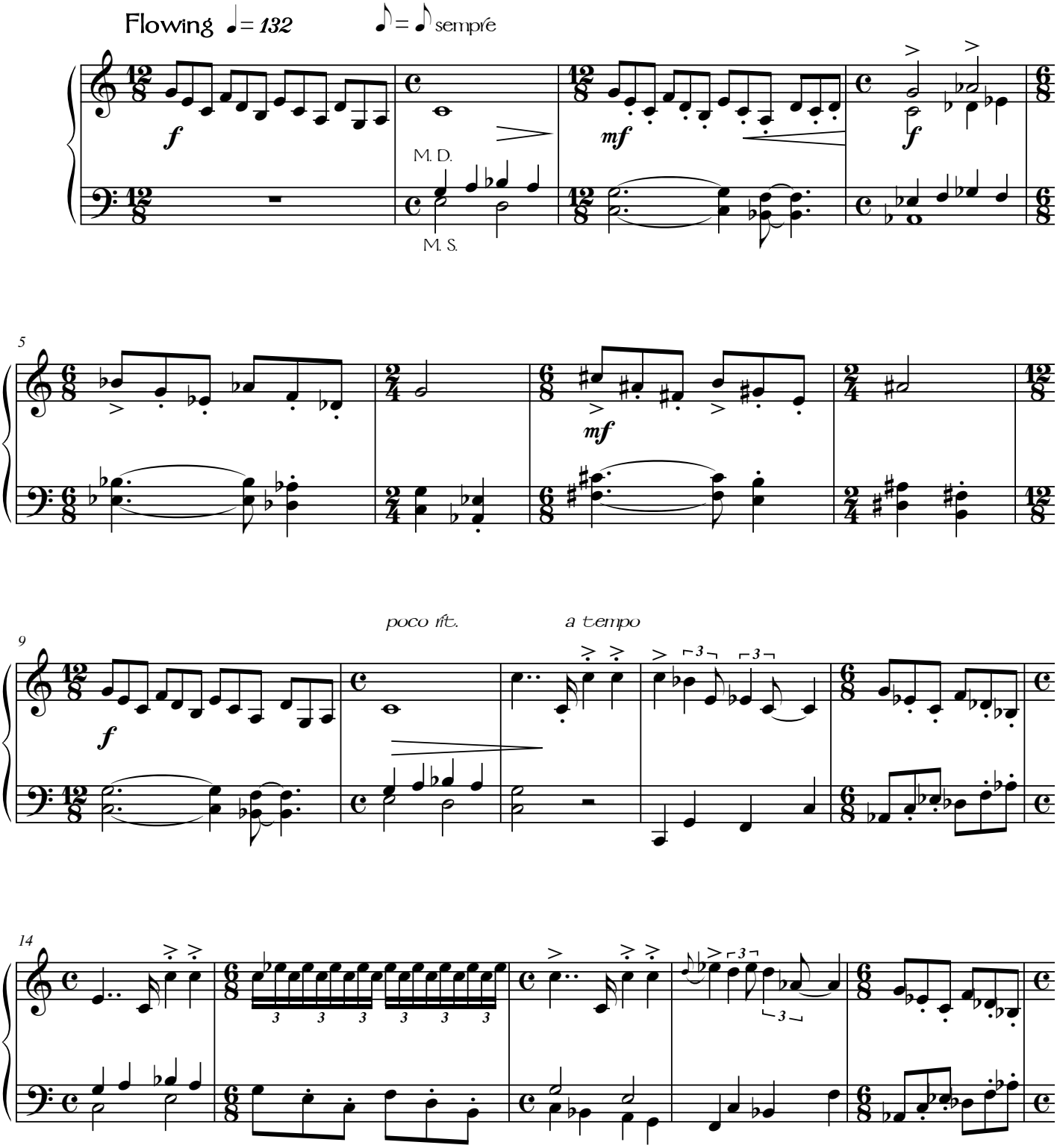
Cascades

Clark Winslow Ross



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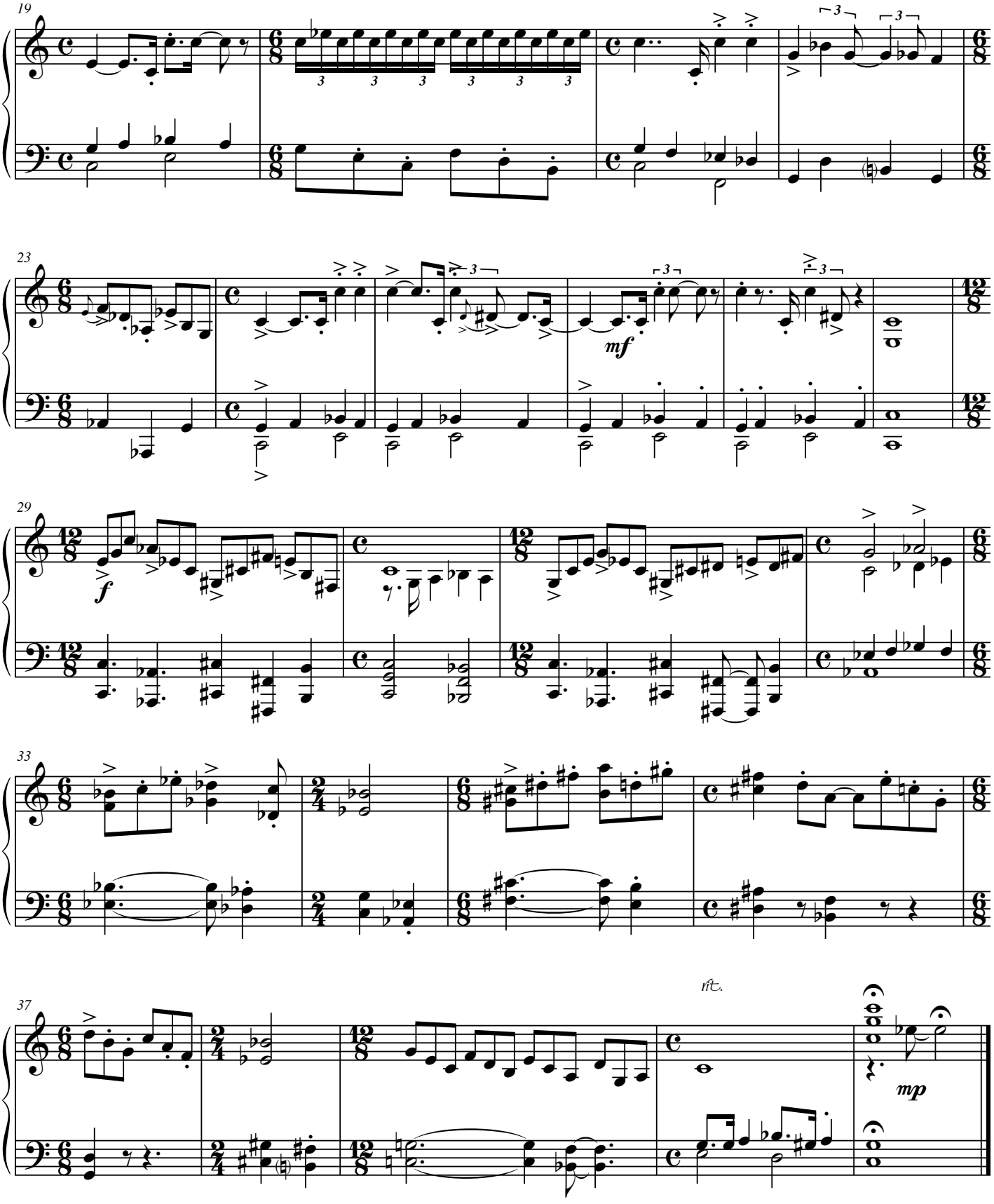
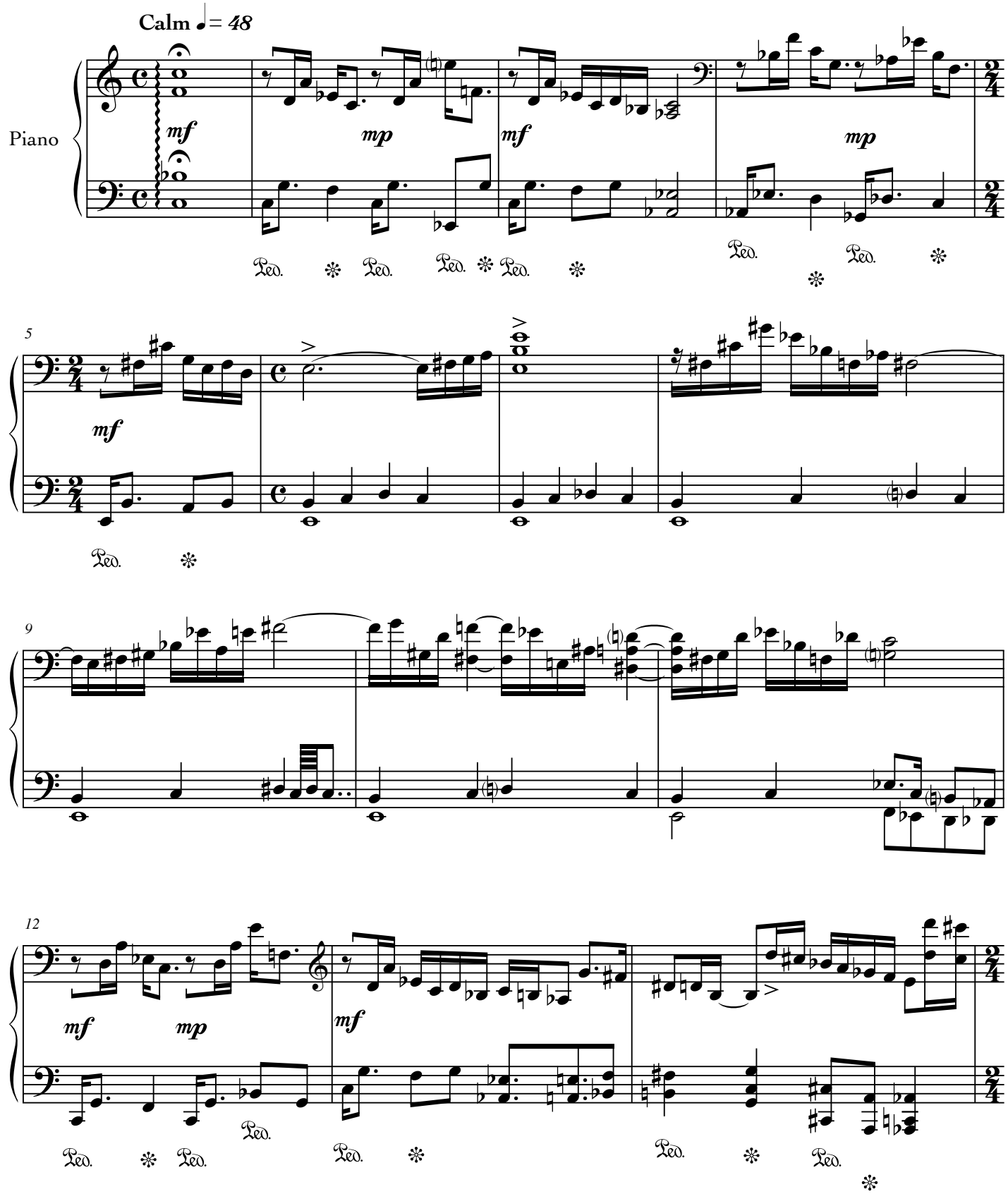


(1' 13")

BLUES AND GREENS

CLARK WINSLOW ROSS



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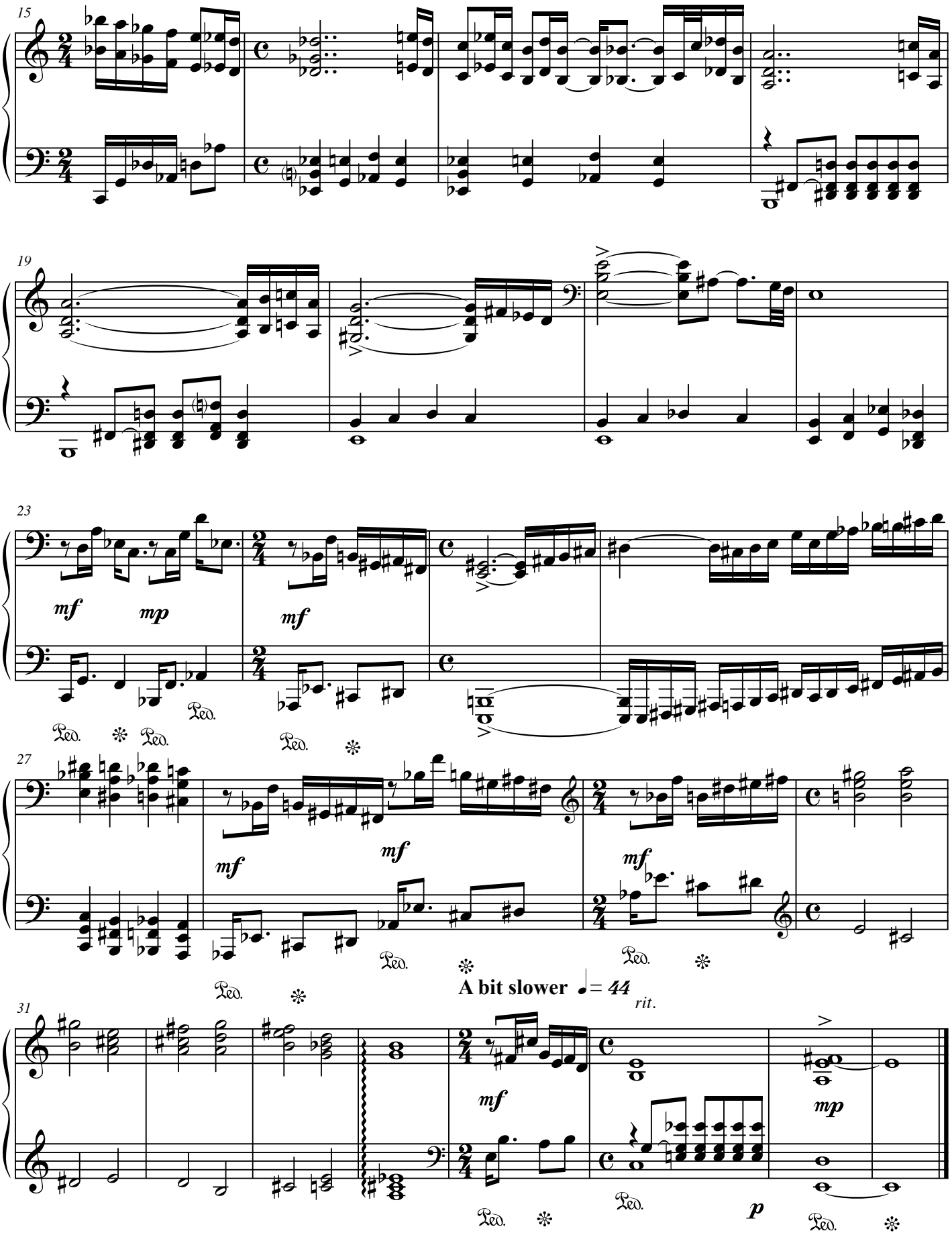
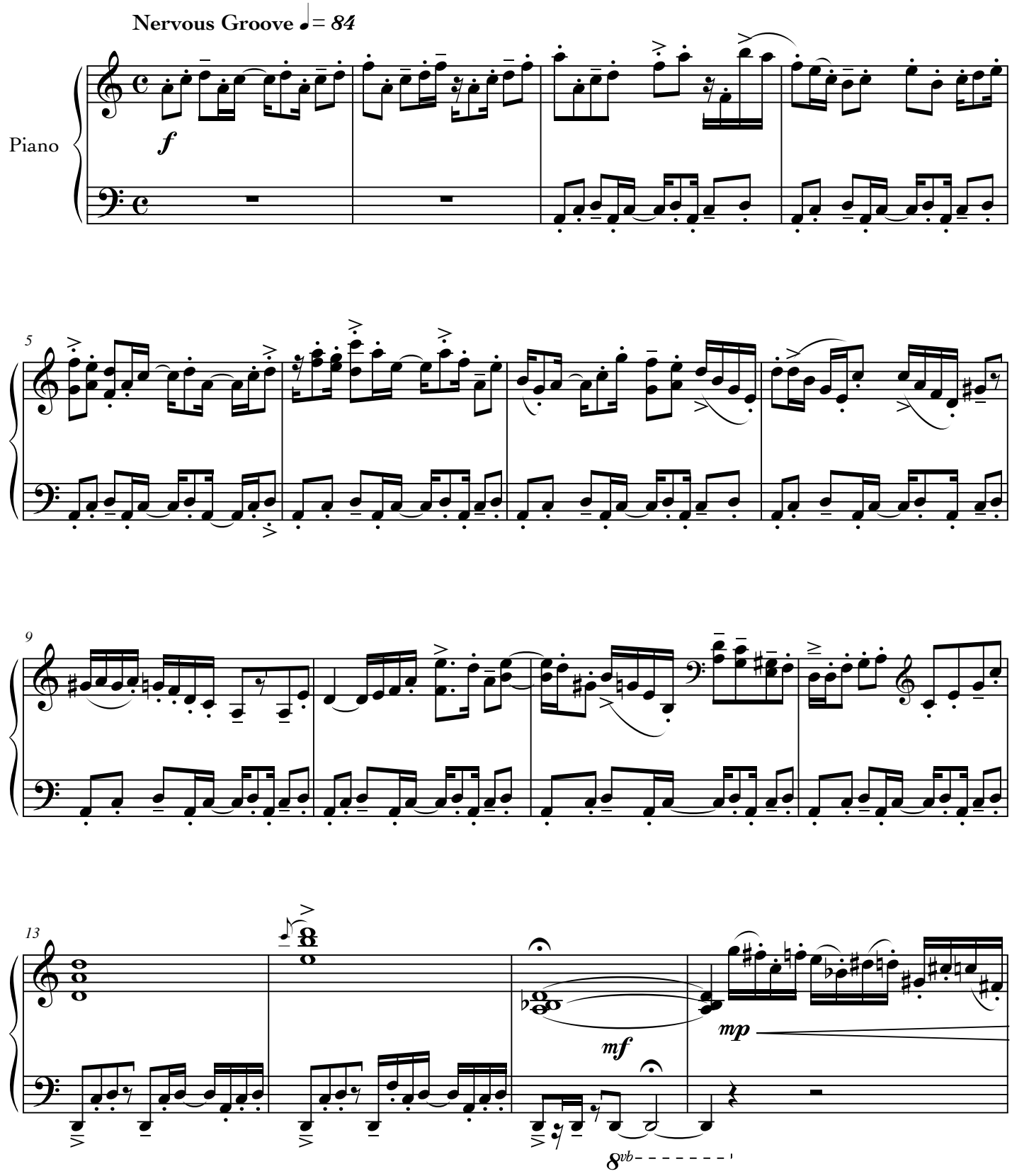


(2' 47")

iPad Riff Revisited…

Clark Ross



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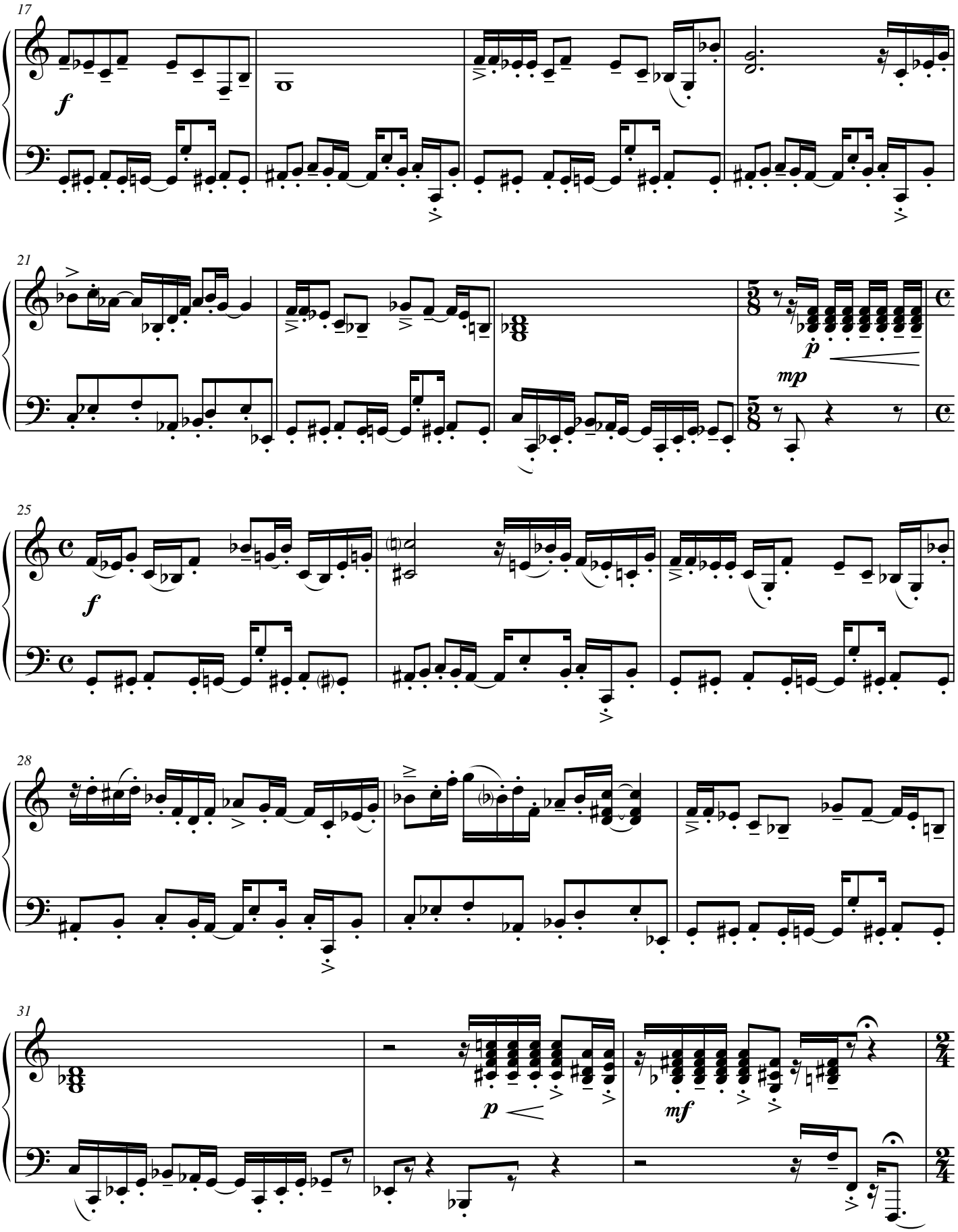
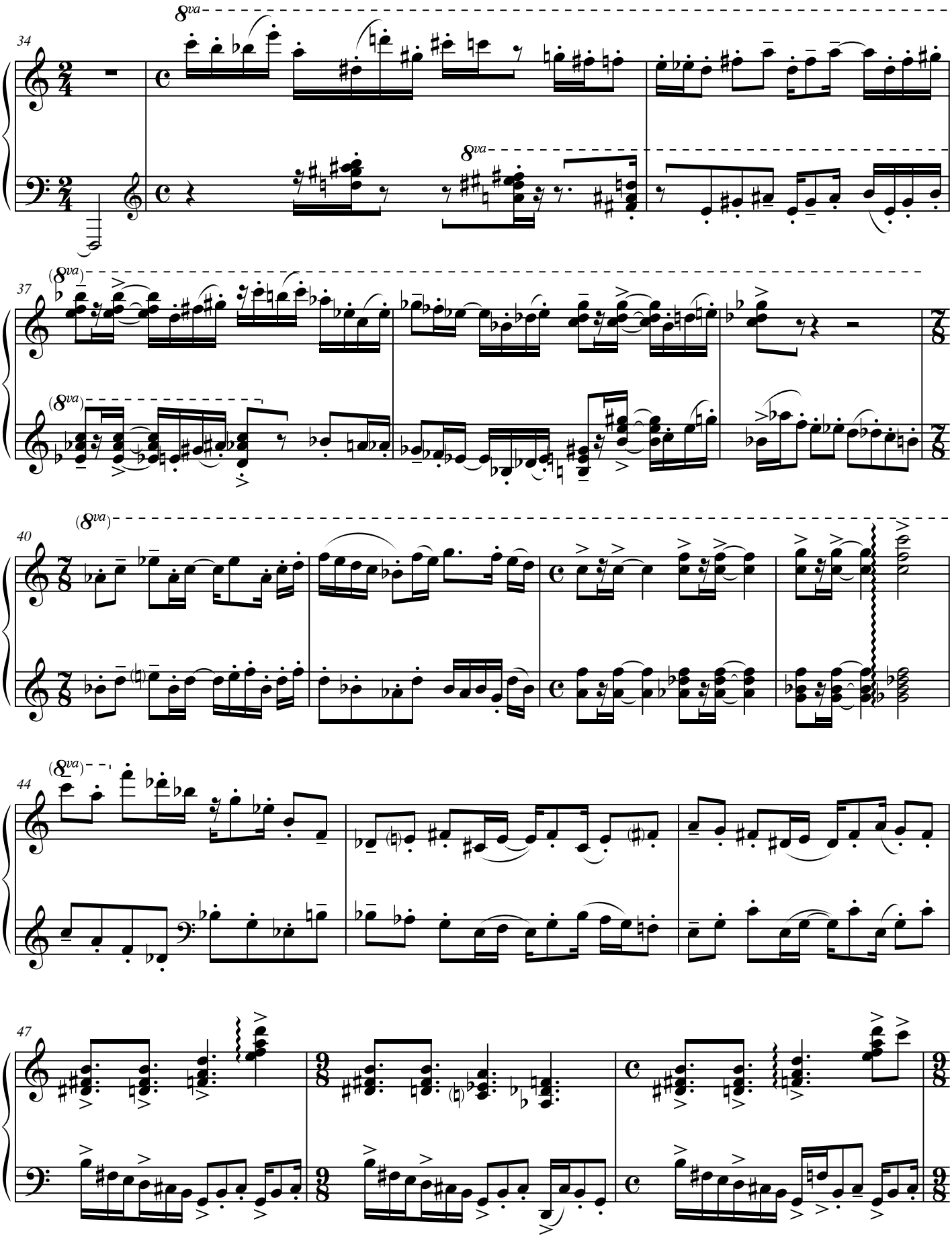
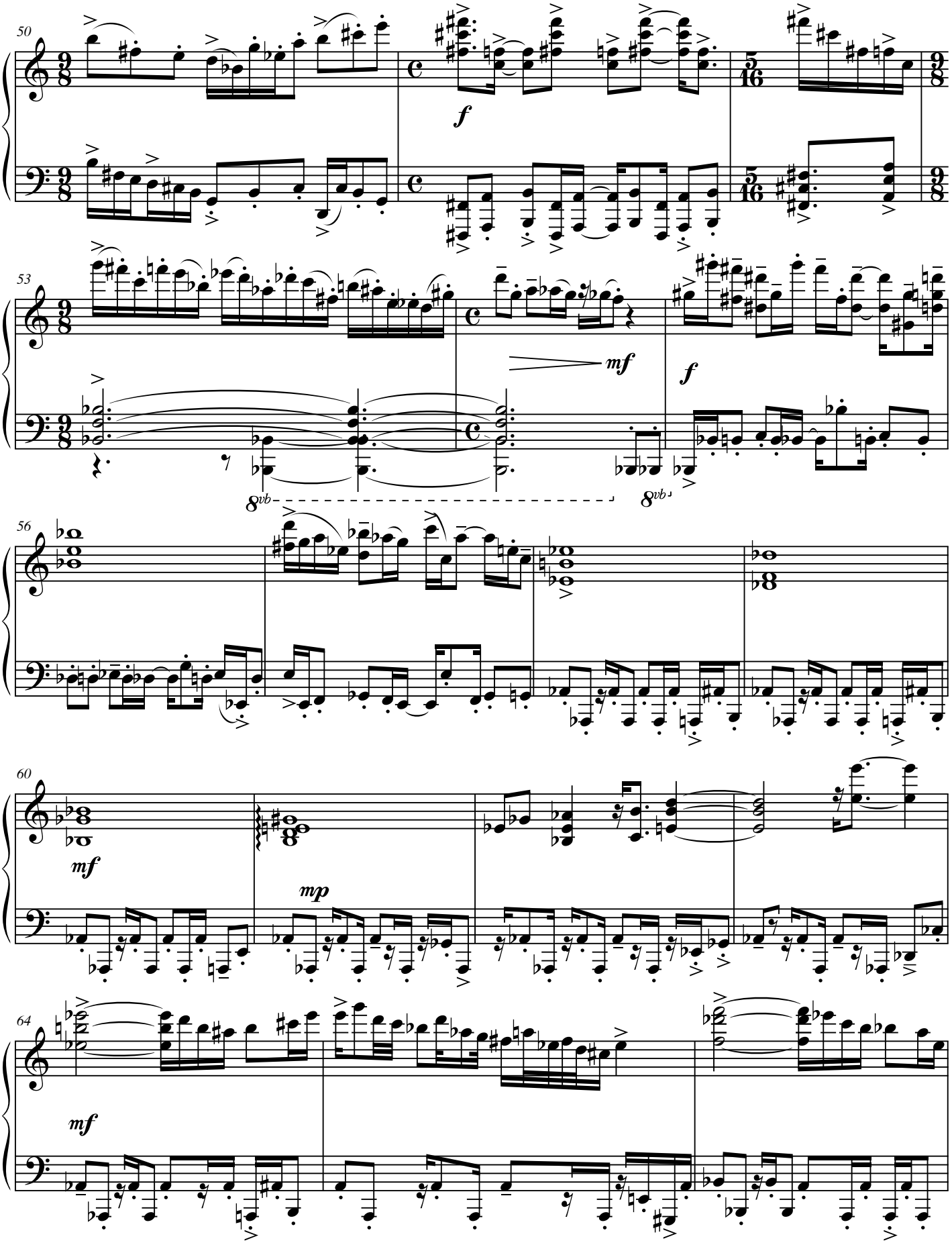
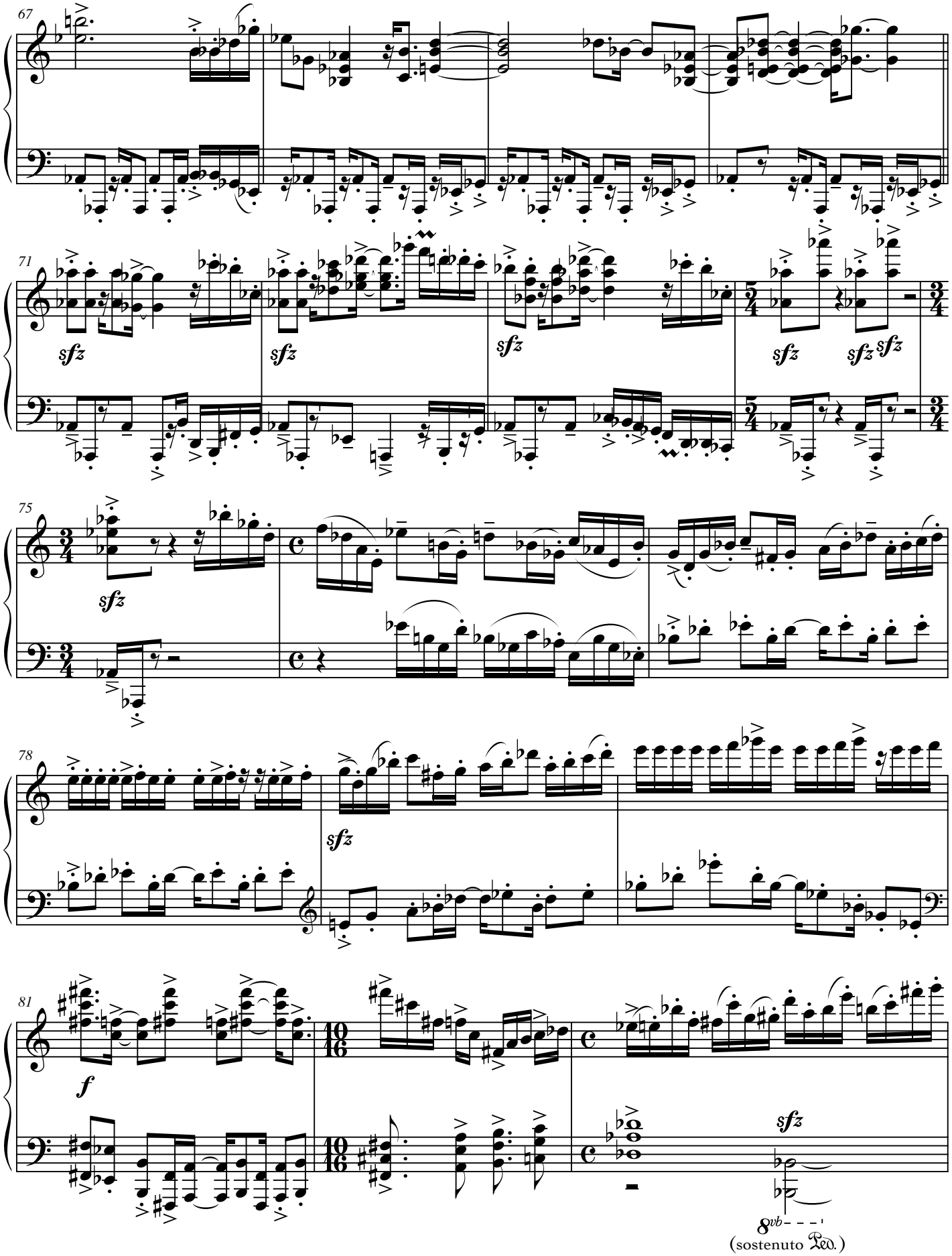
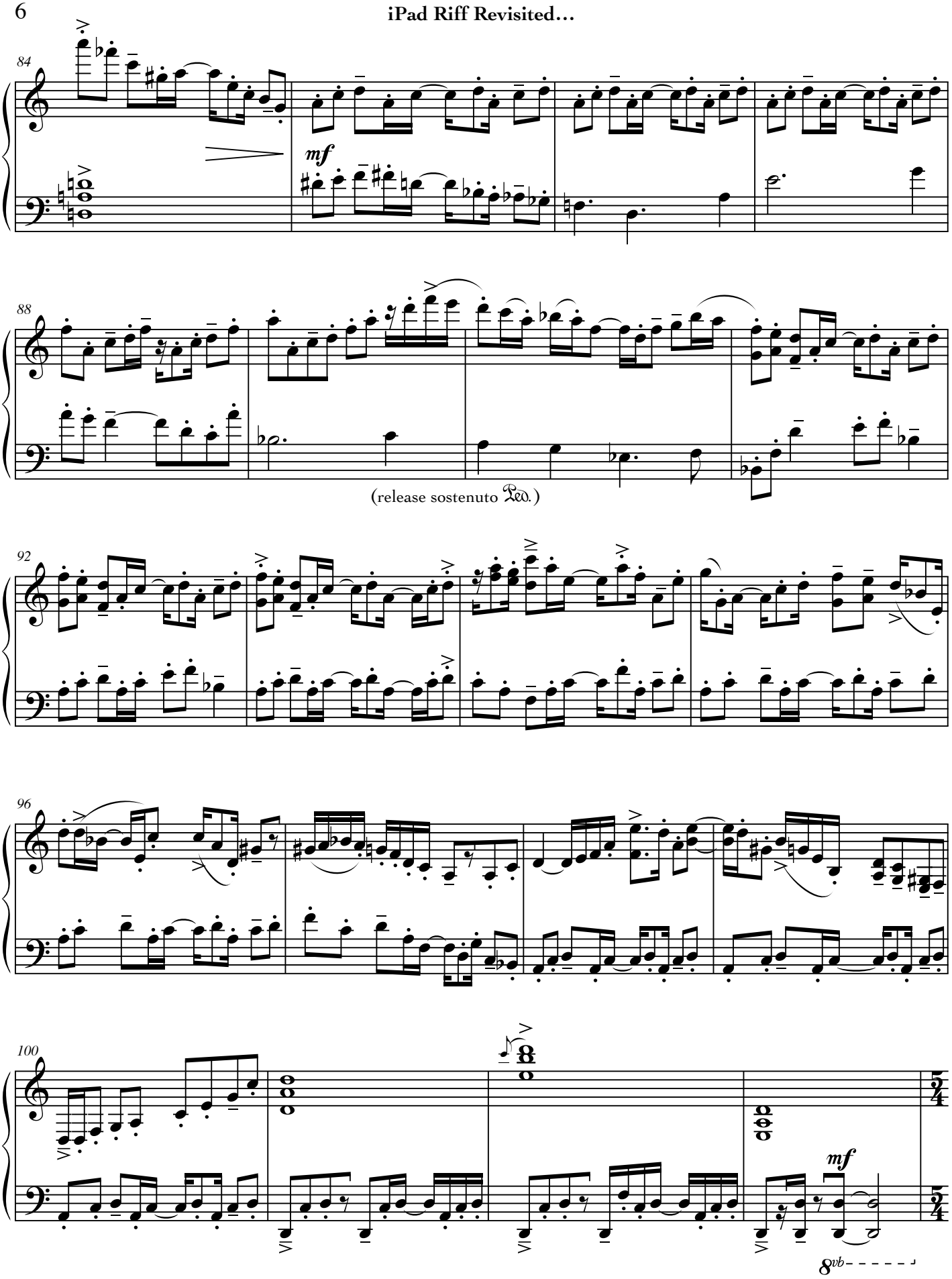
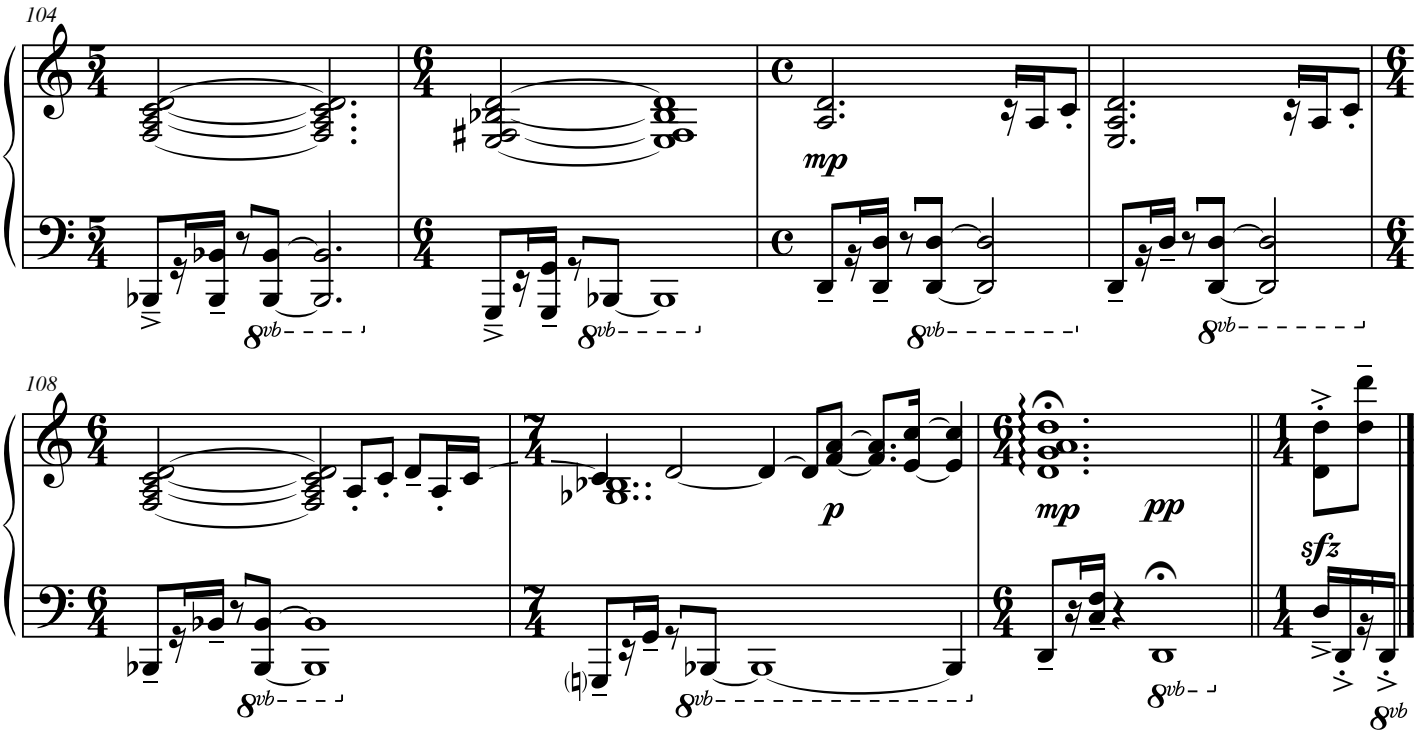

17
f
21
mp
25
f
28
31
p
mf


34
8va
8va
37
(8va)
(8va)
40
(8va)
44
(8va)
47


50
f
53
mf
f
8vb
8vb
56
60
mf
mp
64
mf


67
71
sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz
sfz
75
sfz
78
sfz
81
f
sfz
8vb
(sostenuto Ped.)


84
mf
88
(release sostenuto Ped.)
92
96
100
mf
8vb


104
mp
8vb
108
p
mp
pp
sfz
8vb