a la manière de ...

2018

preludes for solo piano
for David Kalhous

Clifton Callender

a la manière de …
preludes for solo piano

for David Kalhous

Durata

Chopin .....1’
Bach .....2’
Langetiessen .....4’30”
Tatum.....3’
Crawford.....2’
Liszt .....3’

Total.....15’30”

The preludes may be performed complete, as selections, or individually.

This work was completed while in residence at Copland House, Cortlandt Manor, New York, as a recipient of the Copland House Residency Award.

For additional information and to let me know of any performances, please contact me at clifton.callender@gmail.com.

© 2018 Clifton Callender

Notes

I composed the first of these preludes on a lark after studying numerous passages of Chopin consisting of staggered chromatic lines descending in all voices. Unsure what to do with such a brief, seemingly backward-looking piece, it remained dormant. A few years later, having written the second prelude on somewhat less of a lark, the set of six tributes to musical forebears began to take shape. In each prelude some aspect of a composer's style, technique, or even specific fragments form the basis for my own take. The preludes were not intended to be stylistic exercises or parodies, but rather opportunities to explore without inhibition elements (latently) present in my own voice. The title itself is a reference to Ravel's own works synthesizing his voice with the styles of Borodin and Chabrier/Gounod.

"Chopin" is inspired by several passages of the composer's, especially the finale of the B♭ minor sonata, in which the pianist plays a single highly chromatic line doubled in octaves. Despite the occasional description of the finale as "atonal," the implied harmonies and embedded contrapuntal lines tether the seemingly free-floating melody to B♭ minor and D♭ major. The prelude is my attempt to excise the last vestiges of tonality, allowing the lines to become unmoored while retaining much of Chopin's style.

The opening of "Bach" comes from an old counterpoint assignment for solo violin. Here the melody is cast as a (mostly) two-voice canon in a fairly clear rounded binary. In fact, my teacher Thomas Benjamin would likely have approved, provided he overlooked the persistent substitution of diatonic seconds for traditional consonances.

"Langetiessen" is inspired by three contemporary composers whose works have had a strong influence on my own musical thinking. The prelude combines the extreme economy of material of David Lang and the more modernist, jazz-tinged harmonies of Louis Andriessen with a formal design tending, as in much of György Ligeti's music, toward a limit point. (The title is a portmanteau of their names.)

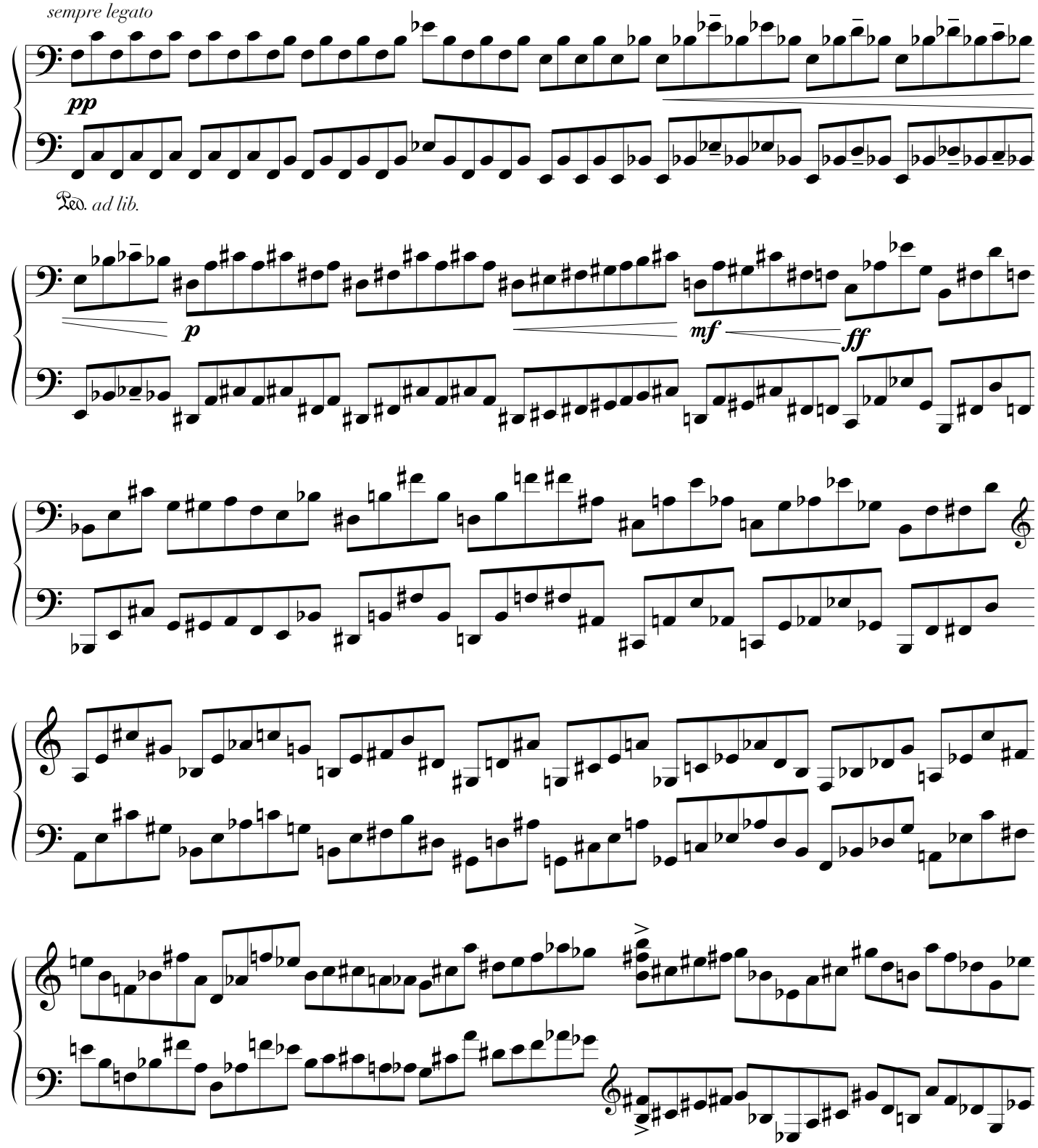
"I used to come apart whenever he'd come in, you know, just be destroyed." Such was the overwhelming and even intimidating nature of Art Tatum's virtuosity for the great Oscar Peterson. "Tatum" is inspired by the jazz pianist's astounding technique, including my own variations of his two- and three-fingered runs, and includes allusions to his recording of the jazz standard "Tiger Rag."

"Crawford" borrows liberally from the opening of Ruth Crawford's *Music for Small Orchestra*, including the insistently repeated F, the extended tertian chord on G, and a five-note melodic ostinato, reconfiguring and transforming these motifs to exploit their tonal potentials en route to the final blues cadence. Listening closely, one might also hear echoes of Debussy's "Des pas sur la neige."

The pianistic technique of fast repeated notes, featured in Liszt's *La Campanella* and many other works in the repertoire, is an obvious source of inspiration and point of departure for the final prelude. In "Liszt" these high repeated notes are gradually absorbed into an expanding and accelerating chaconne, encompassing the entire range of the piano before collapsing onto the lowest note with repeated, furious hammering.

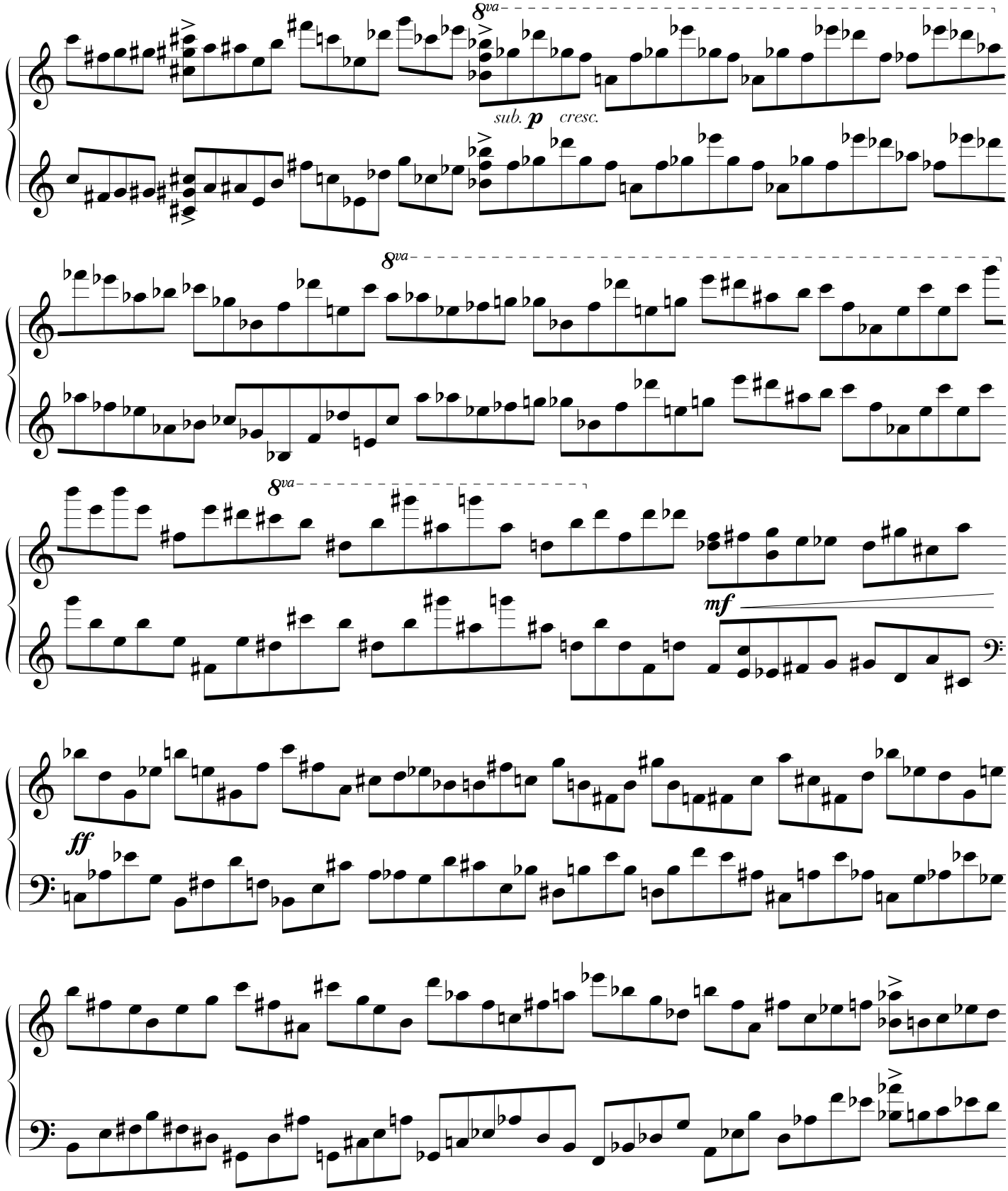
Chopin

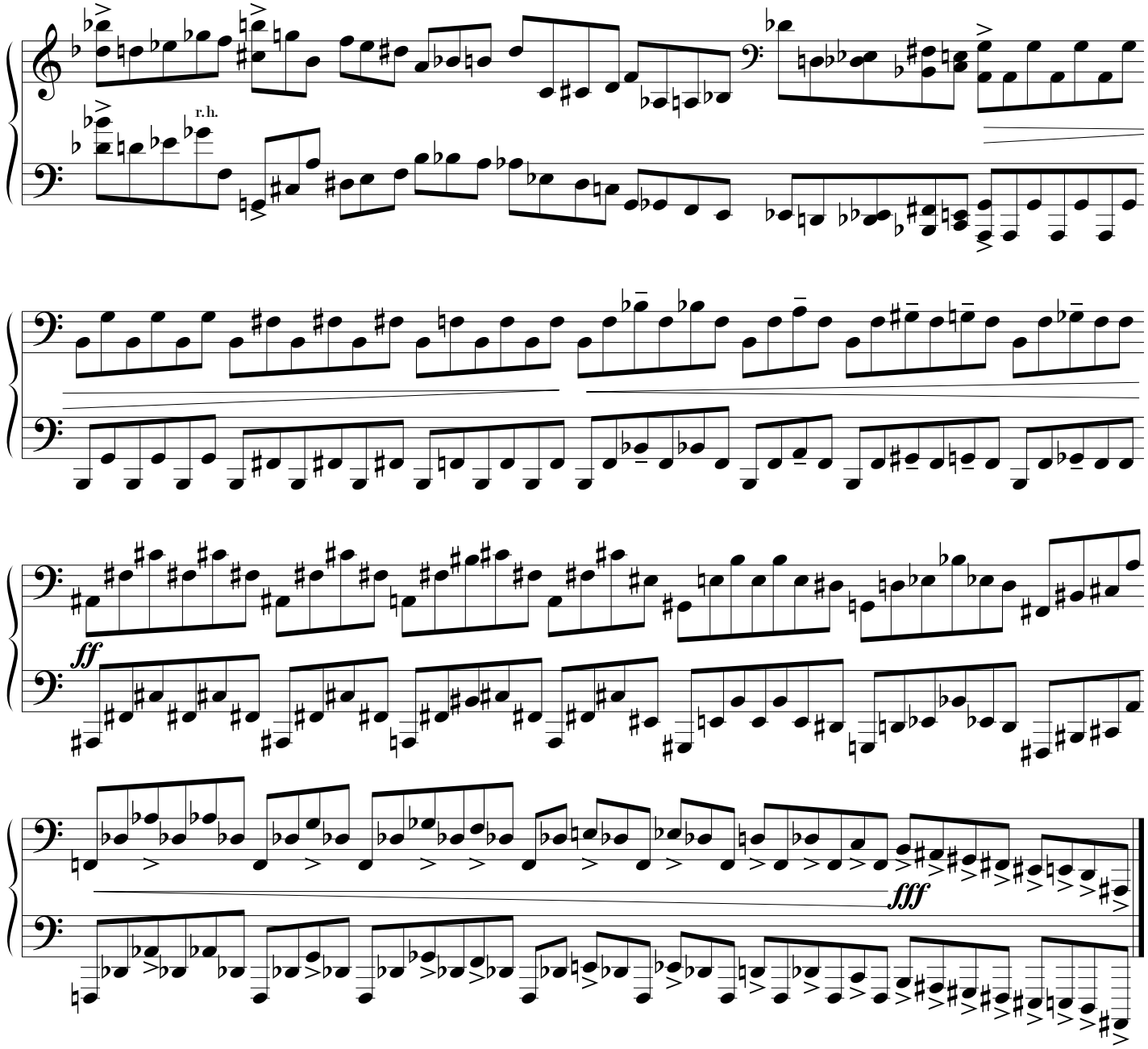
Allegro appassionato 𝅗𝅥 = 132



Accidentals apply only to the notes they immediately precede.

© 2018 Clifton Callender


8va
sub. p
cresc.
8va
8va
mf
ff

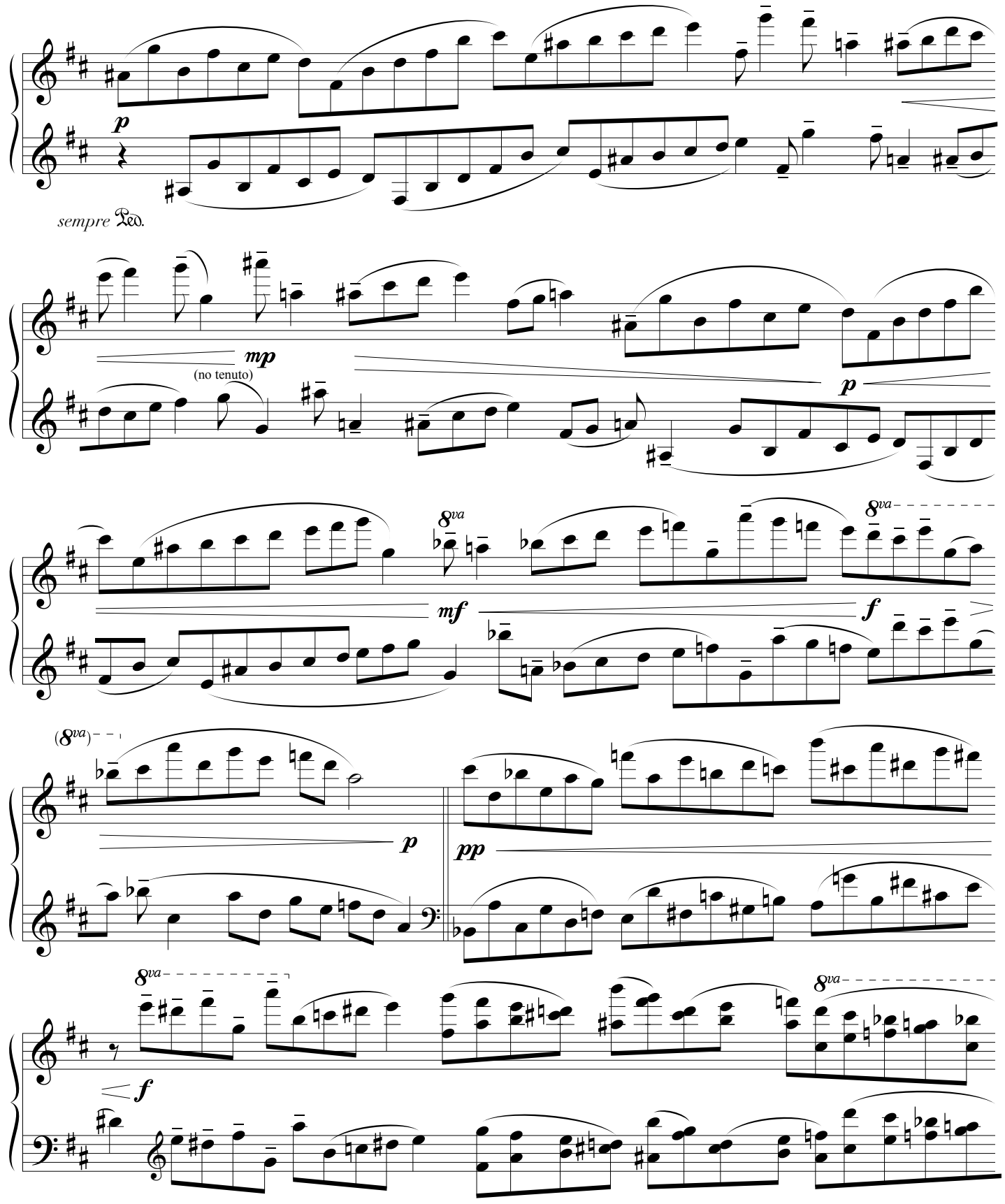

r.h.
ff
fff

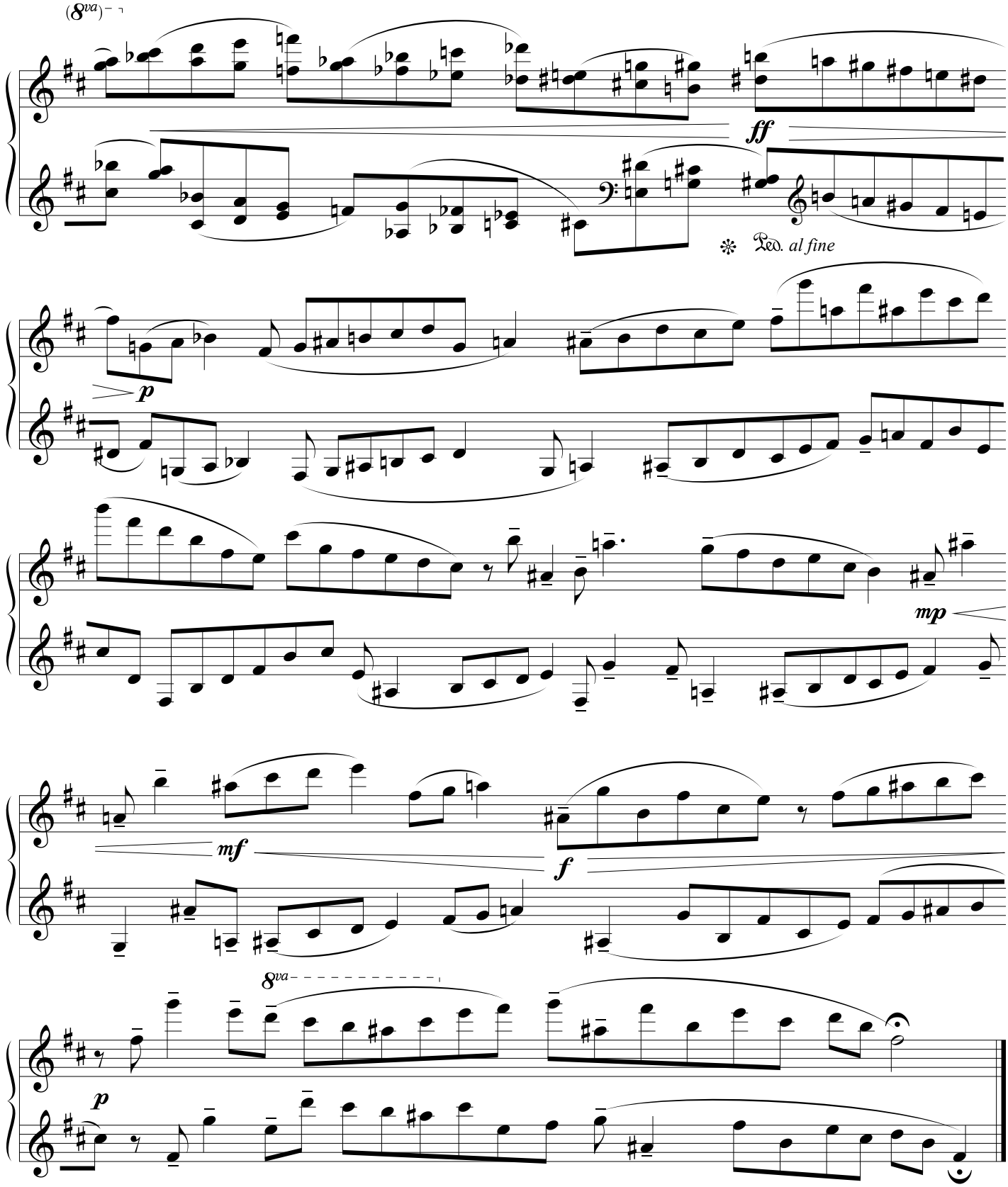
Bach

dedicated to Shulamit Ran

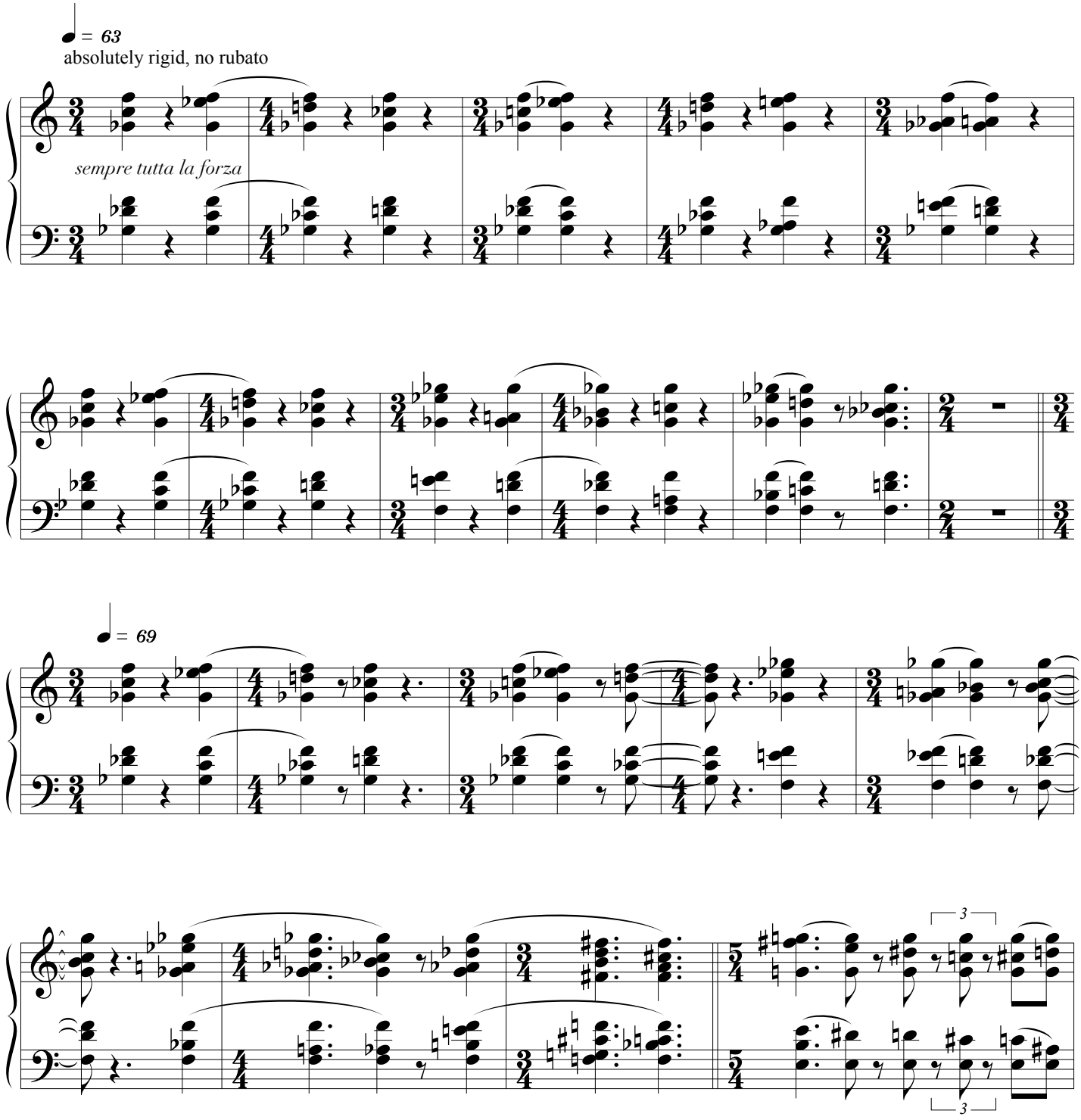
Andante con tenerezza

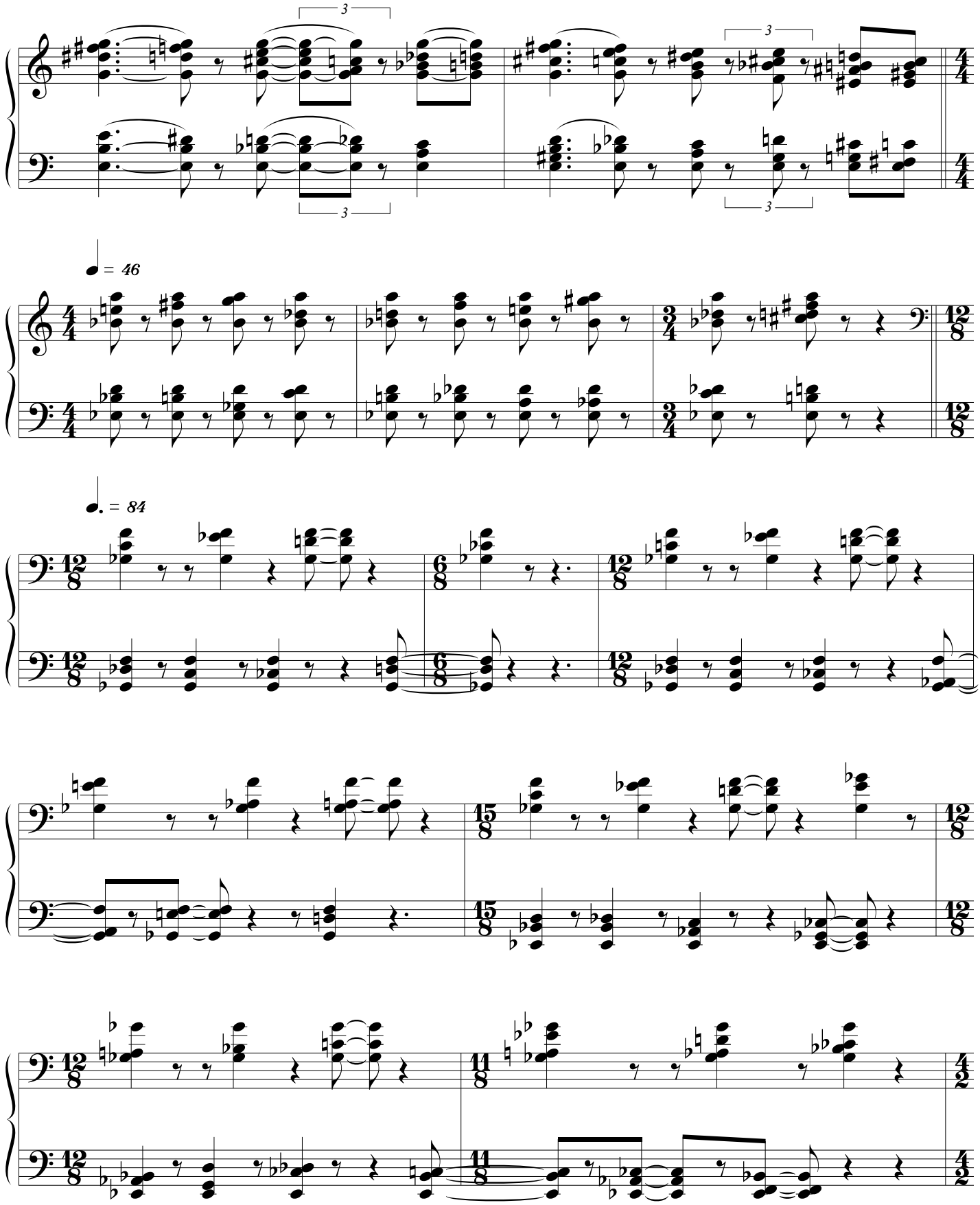
espressivo e poco rubato

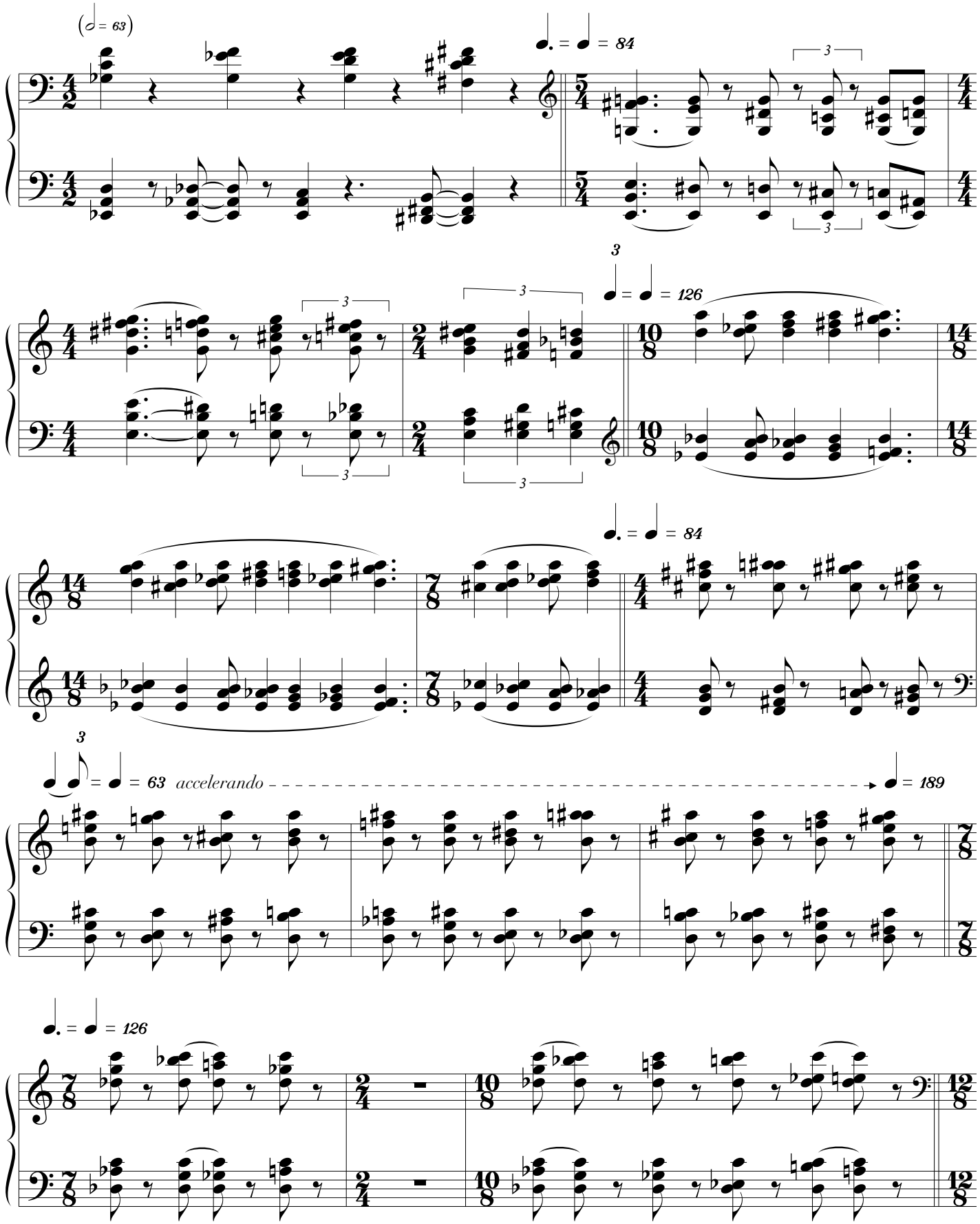


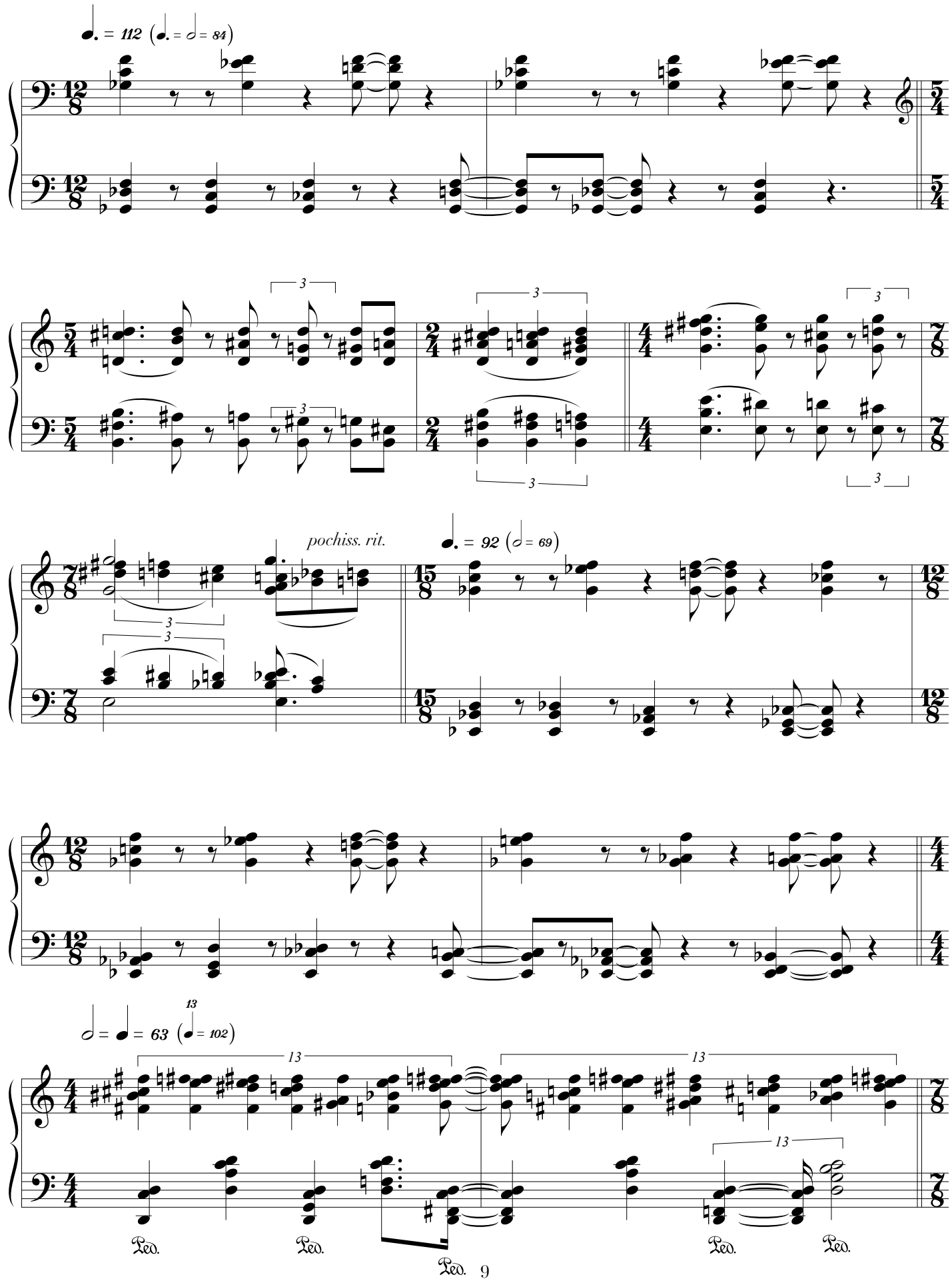

(8va)
ff
Ped. al fine
p
mp
mf
f
8va
p

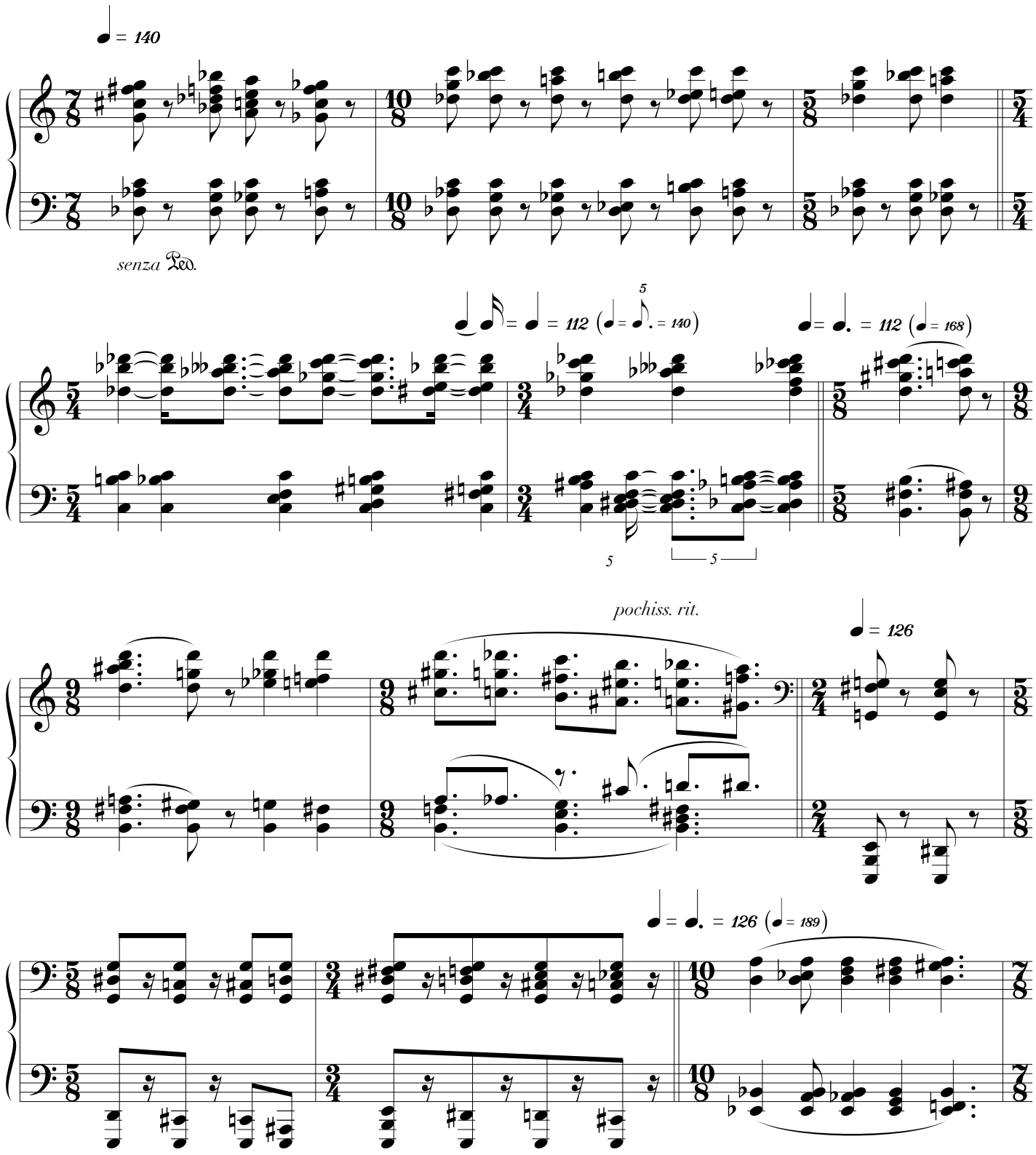
Langetiessen

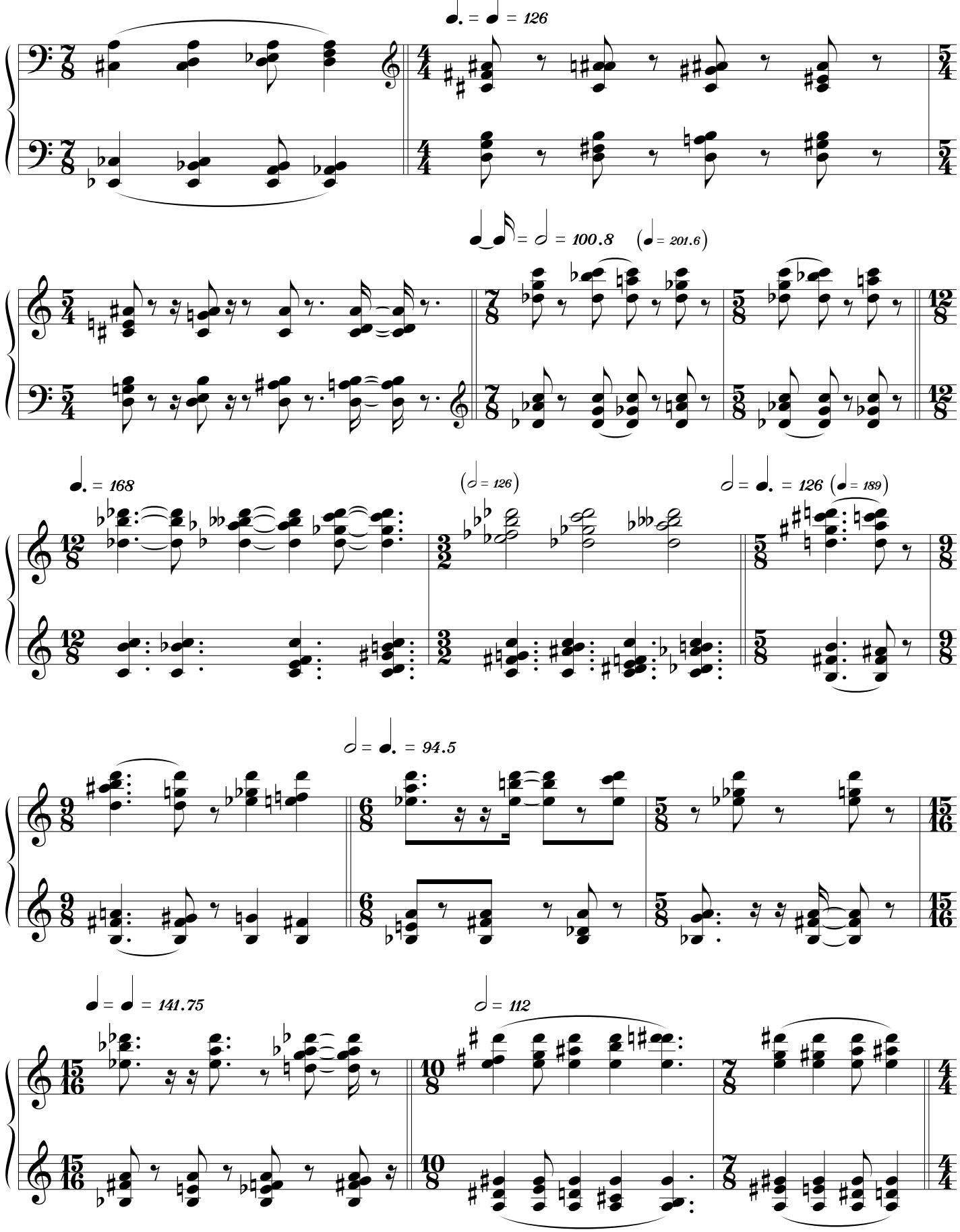


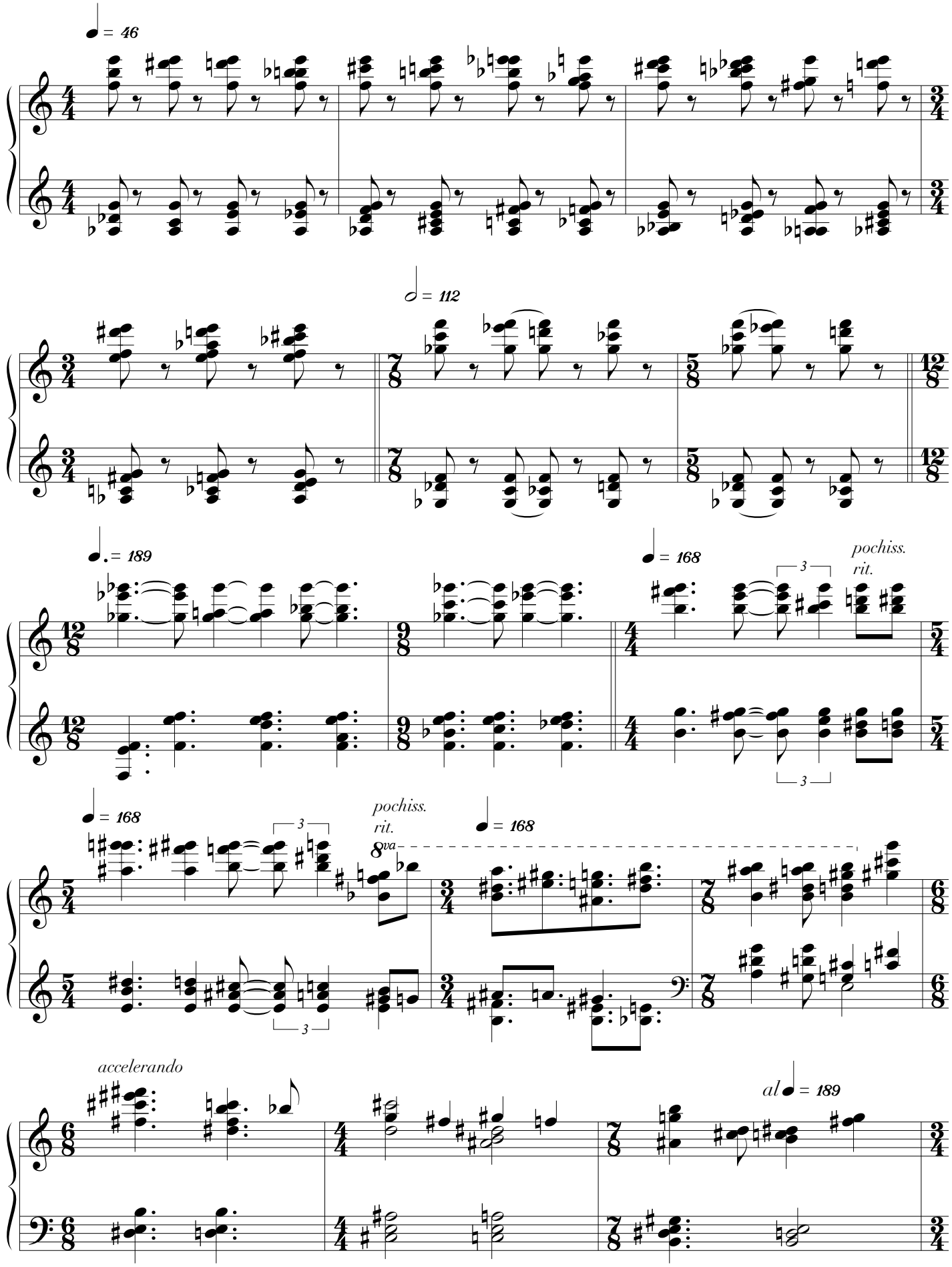

3
3
3
3
♩ = 46
♩. = 84

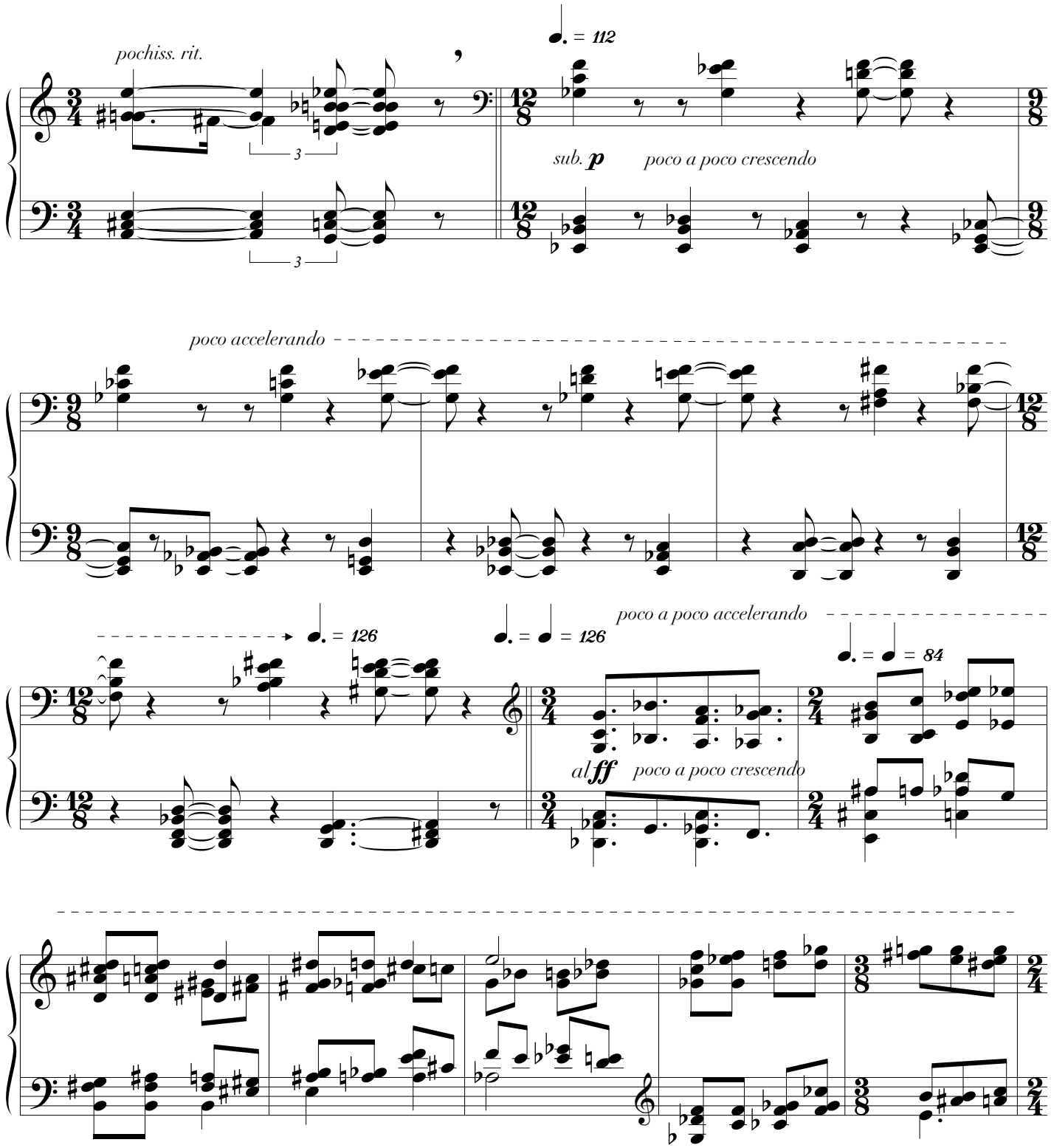

(𝅗𝅥 = 63)
♩. = ♩ = 84
3
♩ = ♩ = 126
♩. = ♩ = 84
3
♩ ♪ = ♩ = 63 accelerando
♩ = 189
♩. = ♩ = 126

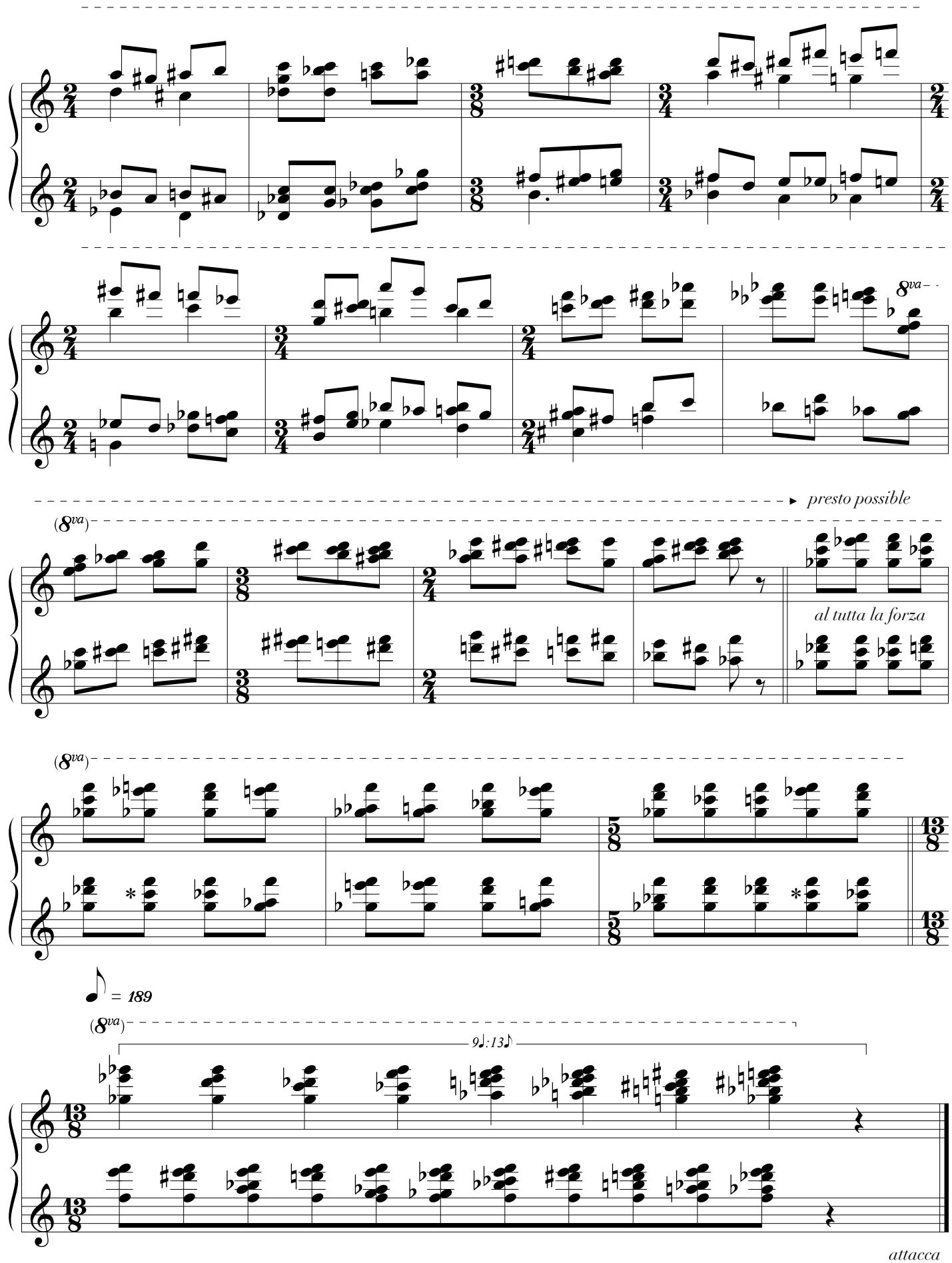

♩. = 112 (♩. = 𝅗𝅥 = 84)
3
pochiss. rit.
♩. = 92 (𝅗𝅥 = 69)
𝅗𝅥 = ♩ = 63 (13 ♩ = 102)
13
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.


= 140
senza Ped.
= 112 (= 140)
= 112 (= 168)
pochiss. rit.
= 126
= 126 (= 189)


♩. = ♩ = 126
♩ ♪ = 𝅗𝅥 = 100.8 (♩ = 201.6)
♩. = 168
(𝅗𝅥 = 126)
𝅗𝅥 = ♩. = 126 (♩ = 189)
𝅗𝅥 = ♩. = 94.5
♩ = ♩ = 141.75
𝅗𝅥 = 112

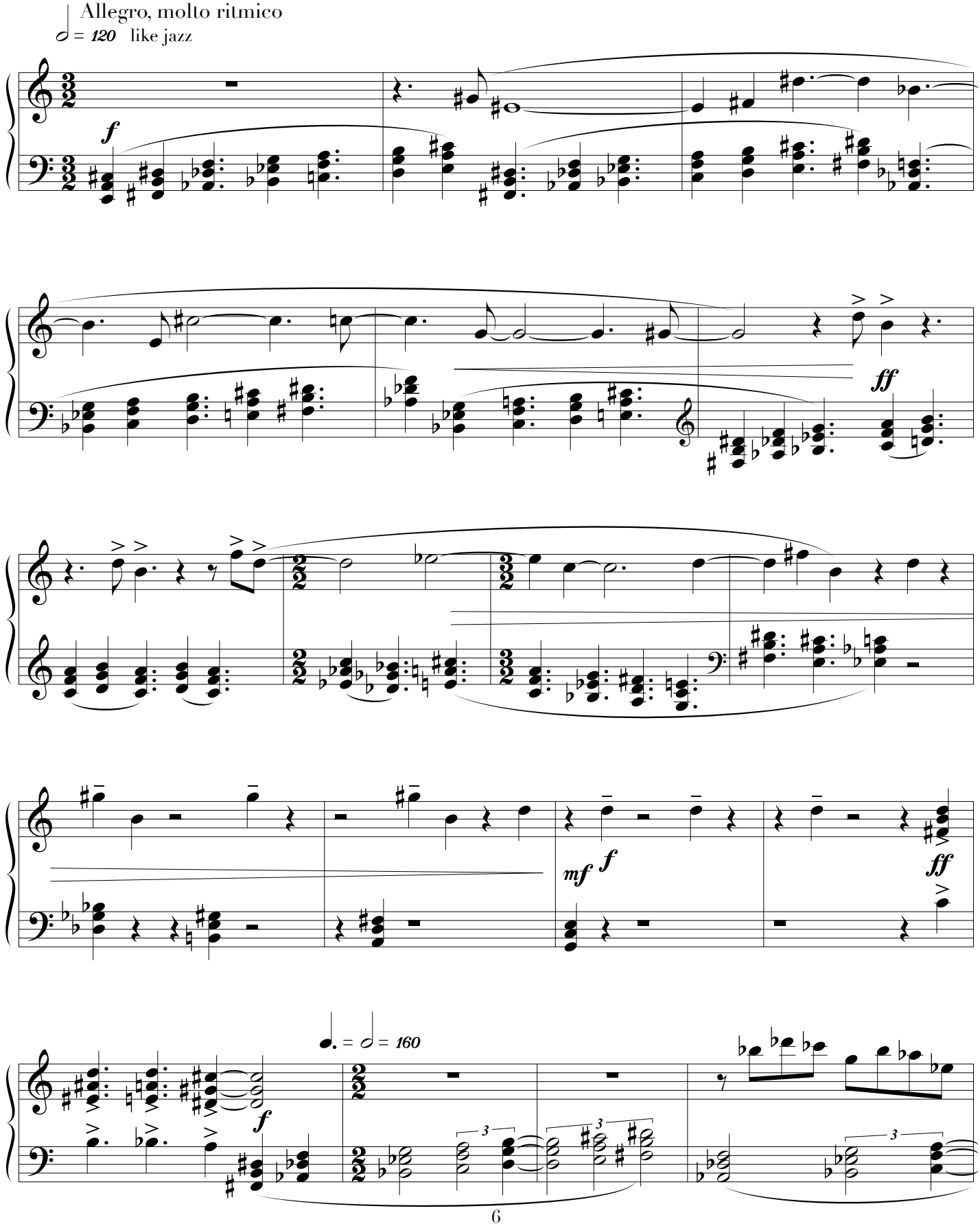

♩ = 46
𝅗𝅥 = 112
♩. = 189
♩ = 168
pochiss.
rit.
3
♩ = 168
pochiss.
rit.
8va
♩ = 168
accelerando
al ♩ = 189

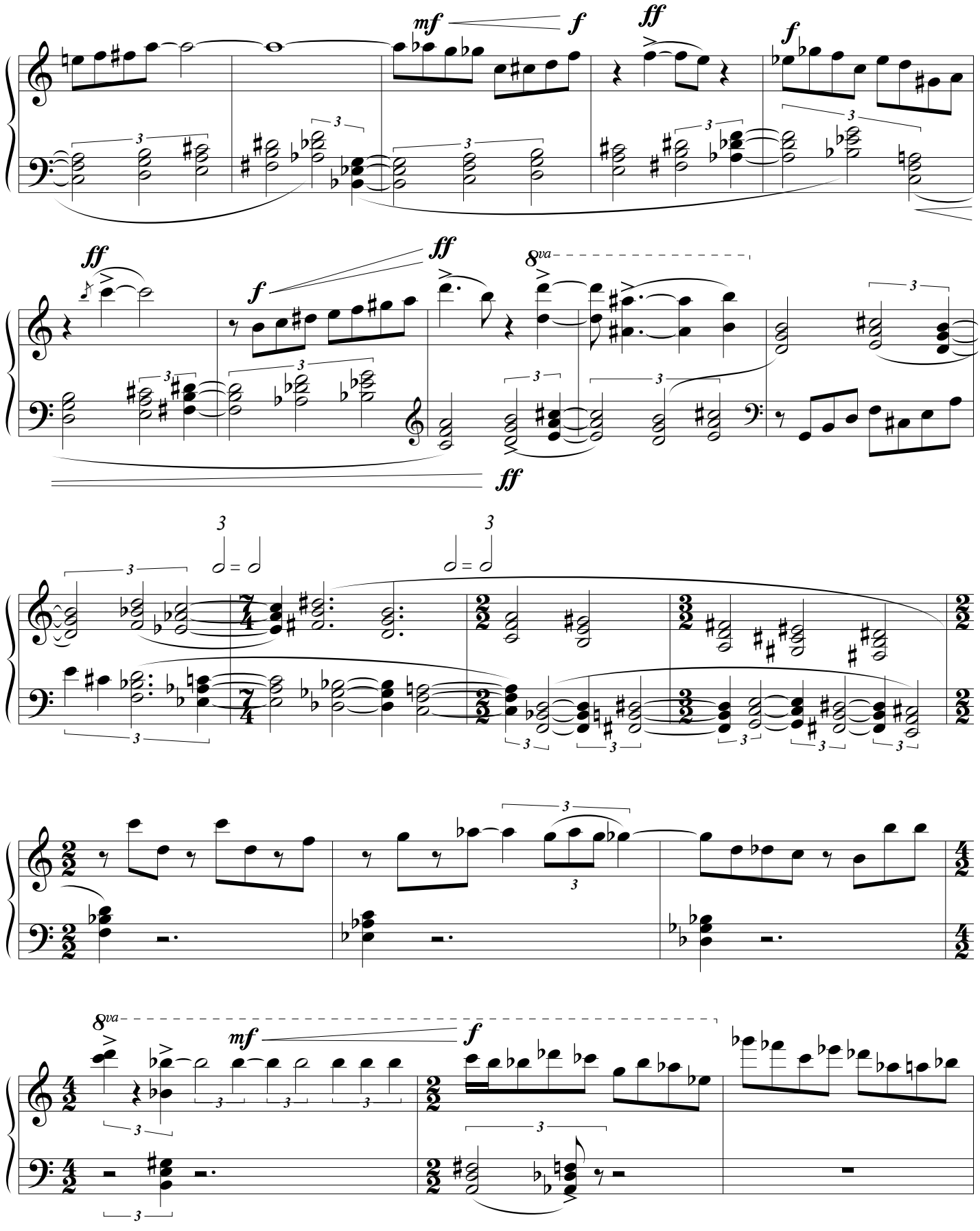

pochiss. rit.
3
3
♩. = 112
sub. p
poco a poco crescendo
poco accelerando
♩. = 126
♩. = ♩ = 126
poco a poco accelerando
♩. = ♩ = 84
al ff
poco a poco crescendo

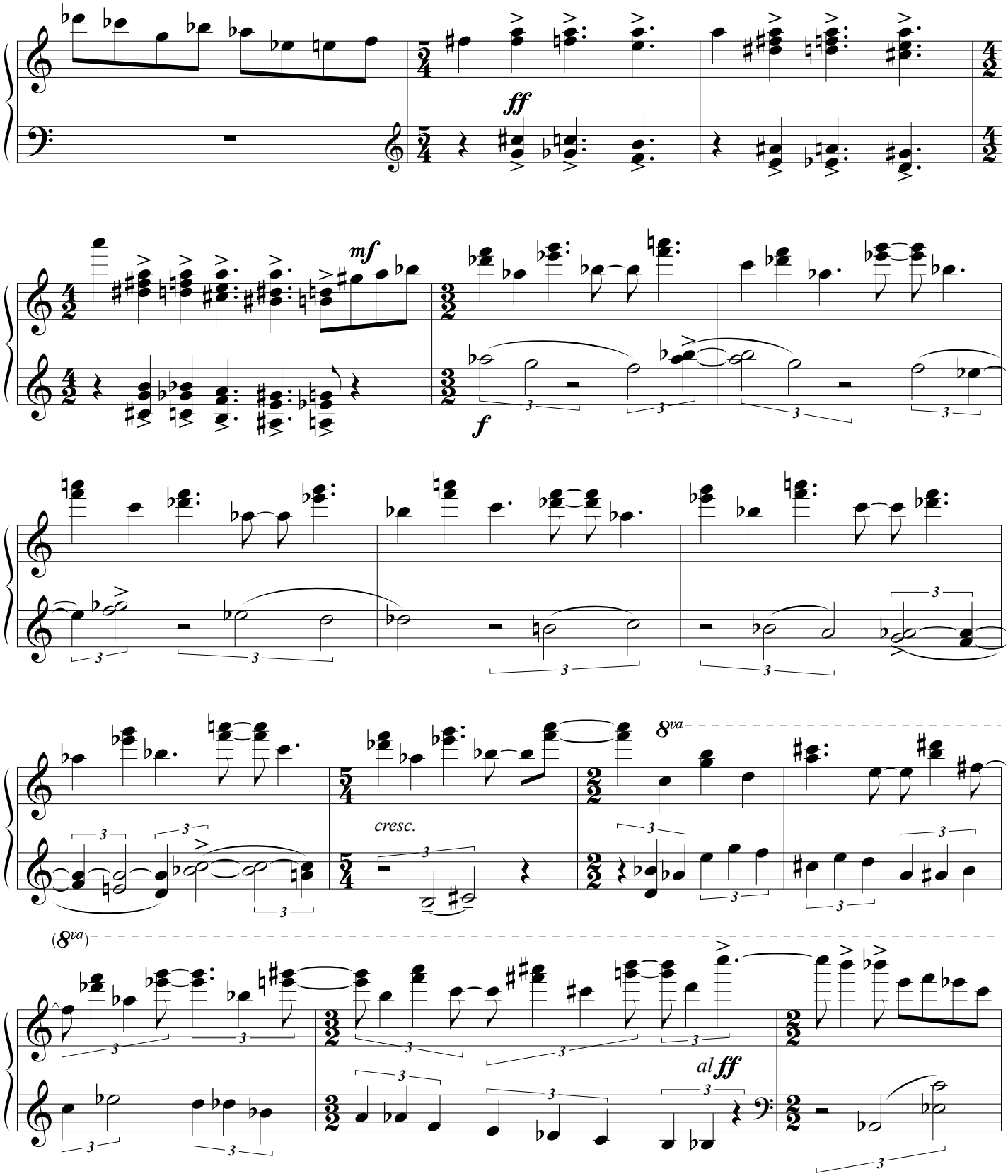


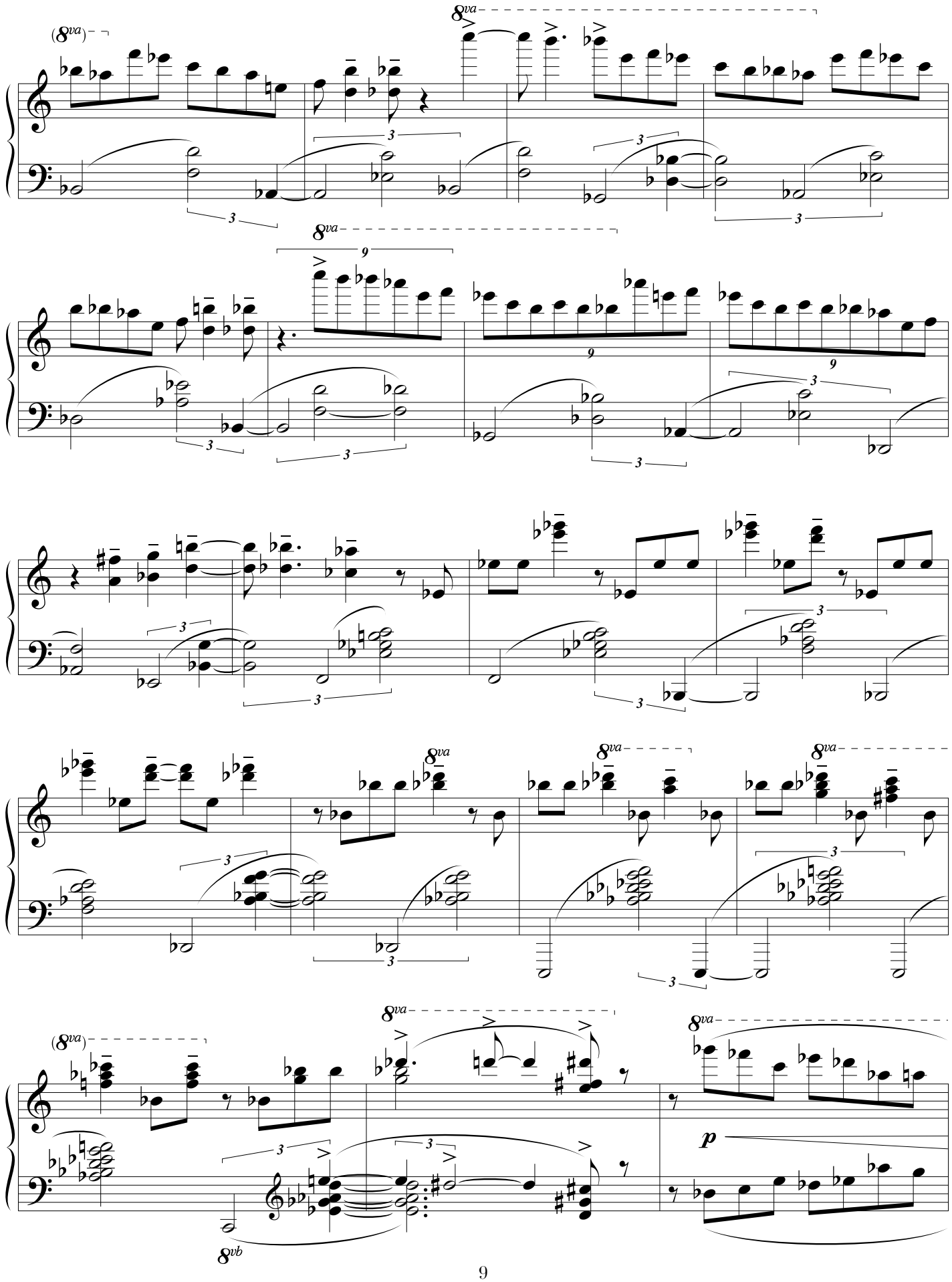
* Ossia l.h.: play D♭ instead of C♯.

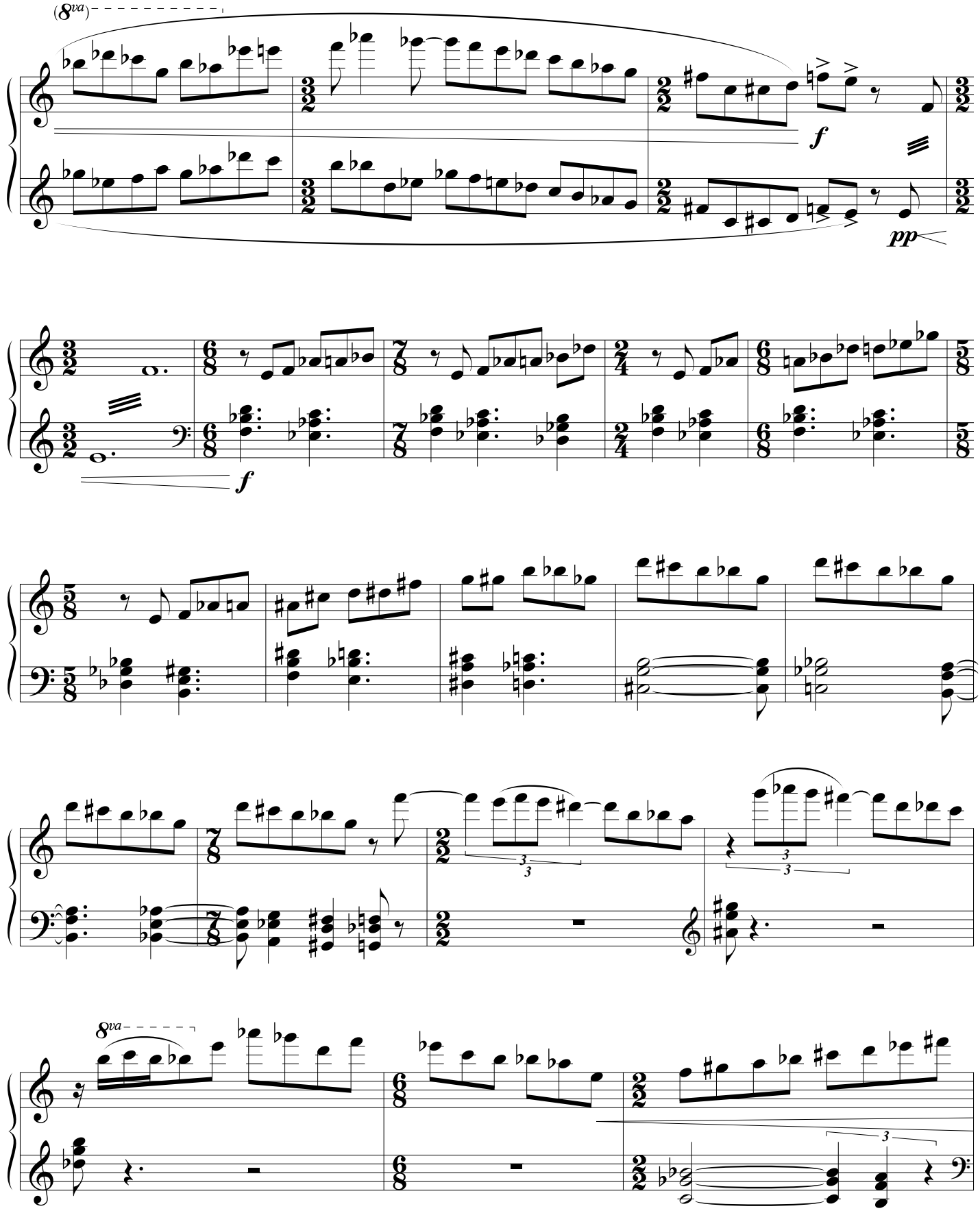
Tatum

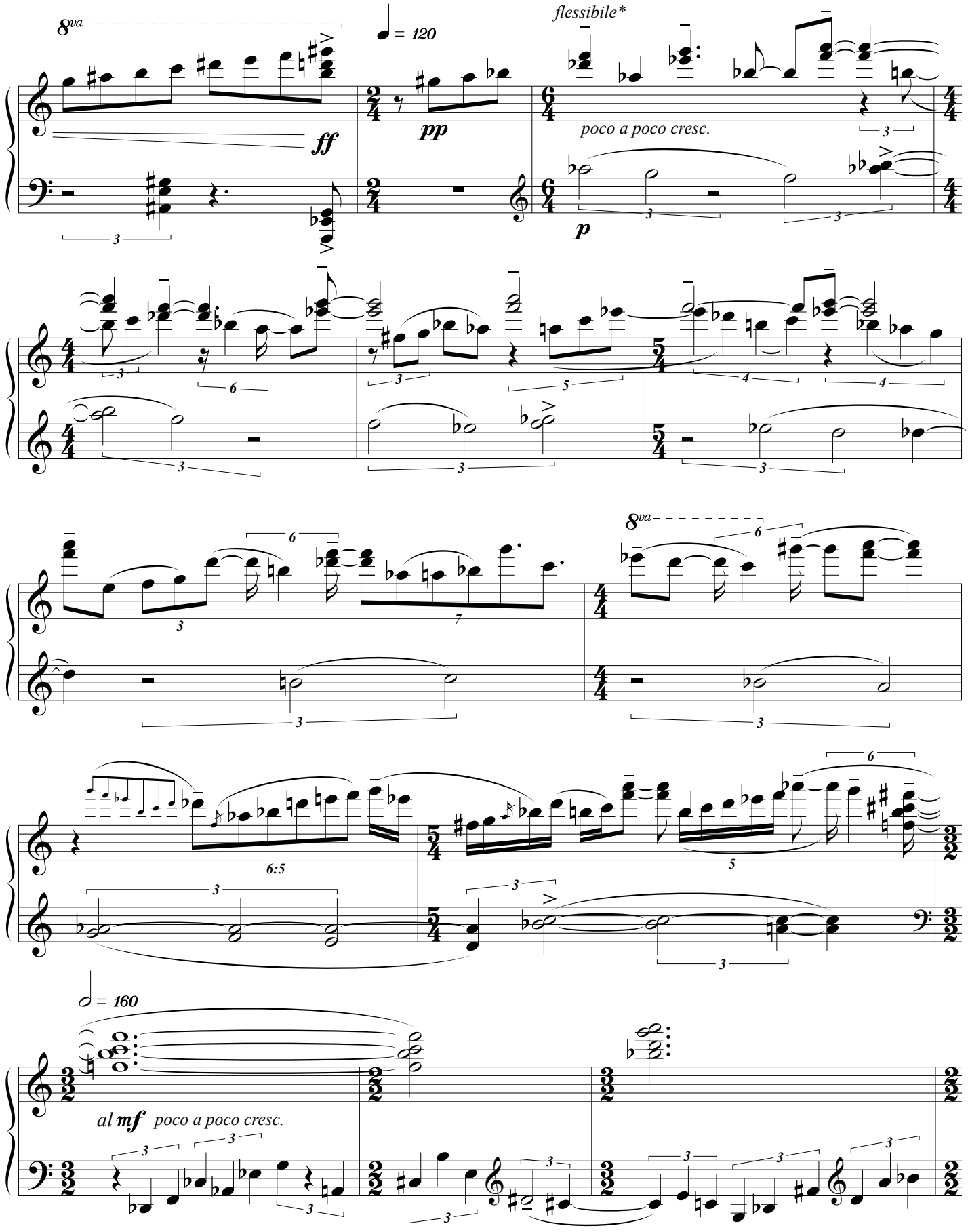



mf
f
ff
f
ff
f
ff
8va
ff
3
3
3

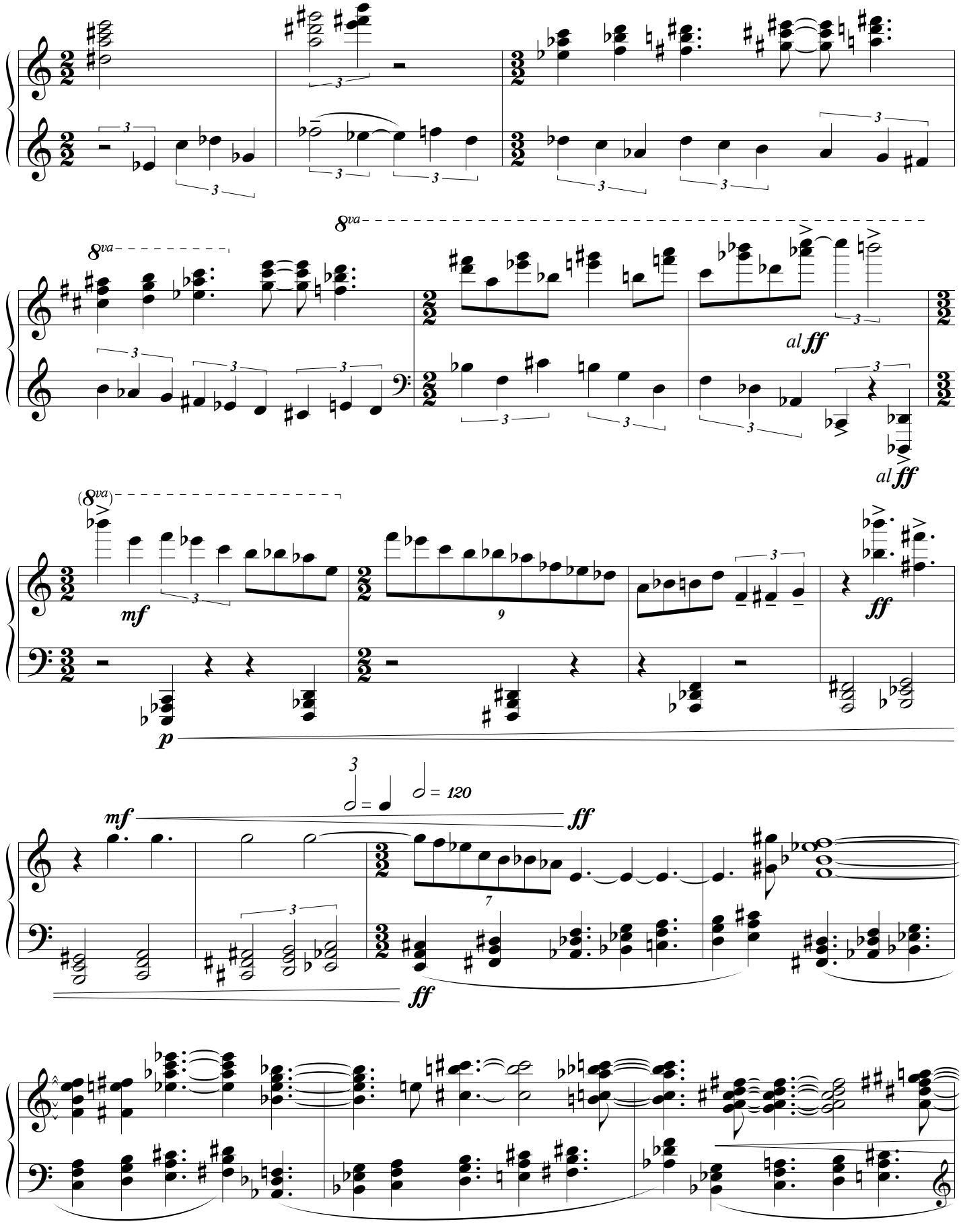

ff
mf
f
cresc.
8va
(8va)
al ff

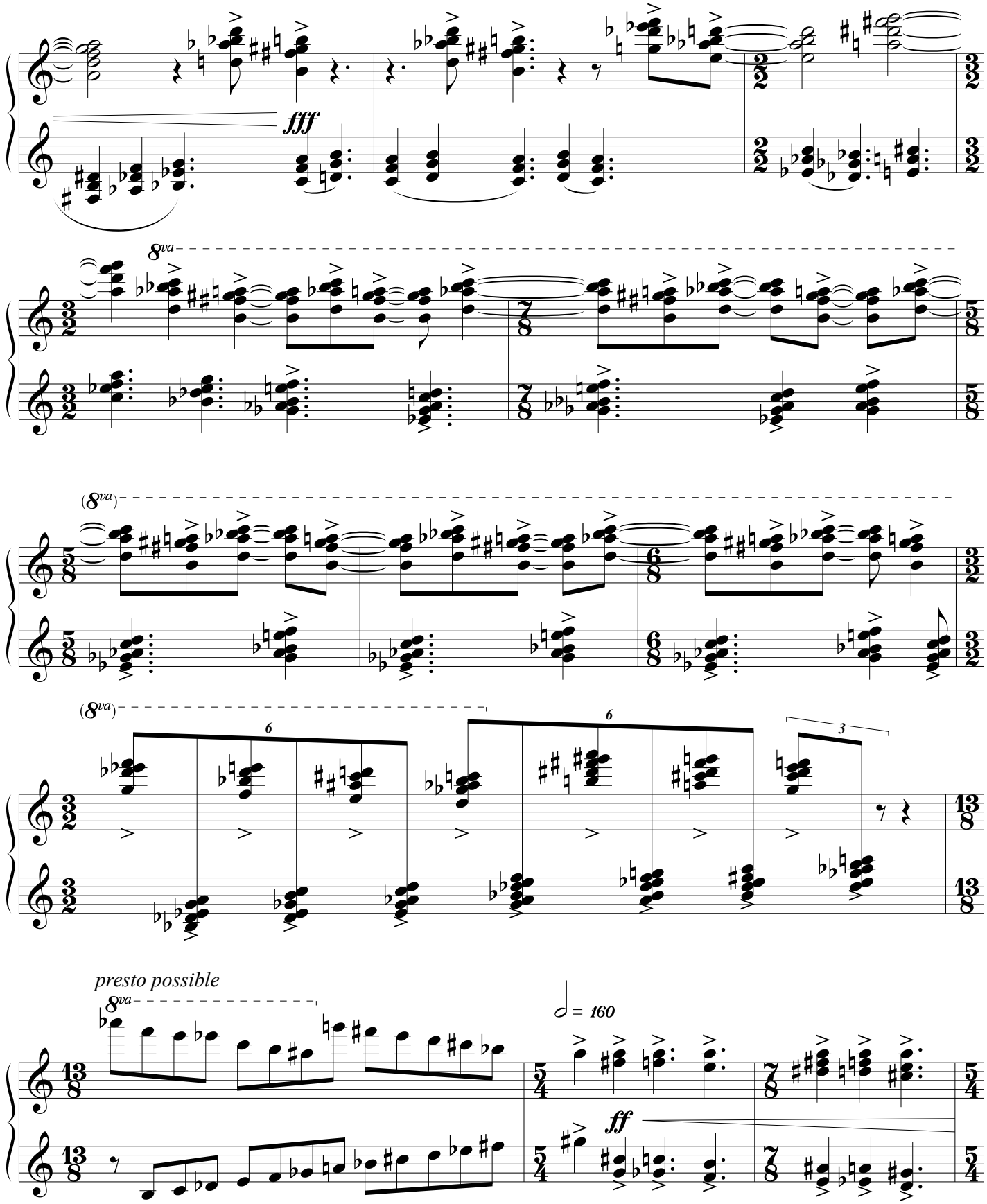

(8va)
8va
8va
8va
8va
8va
(8va)
8va
8vb
p

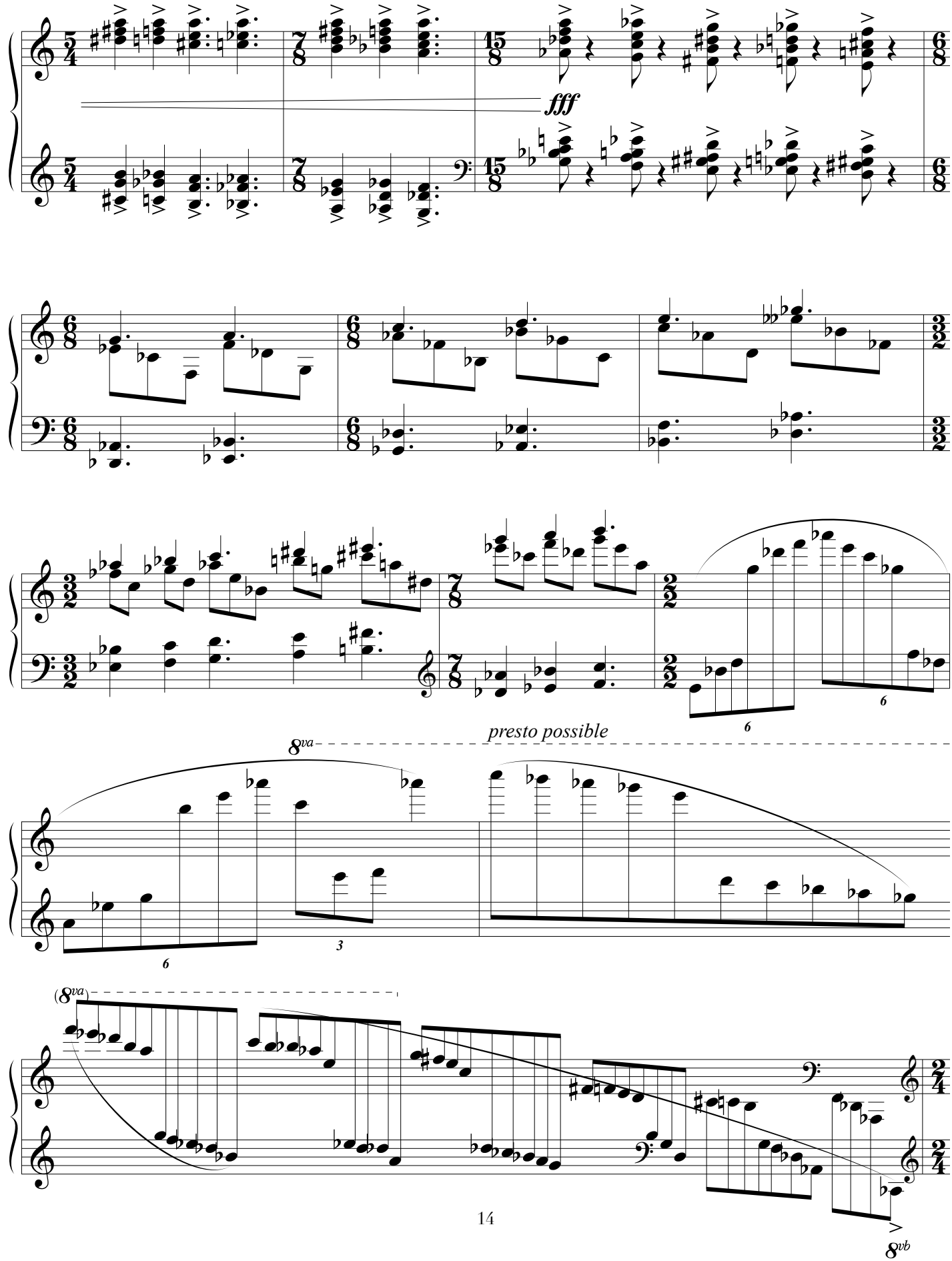

(8va)
f
pp
f
8va
3
3
3
3

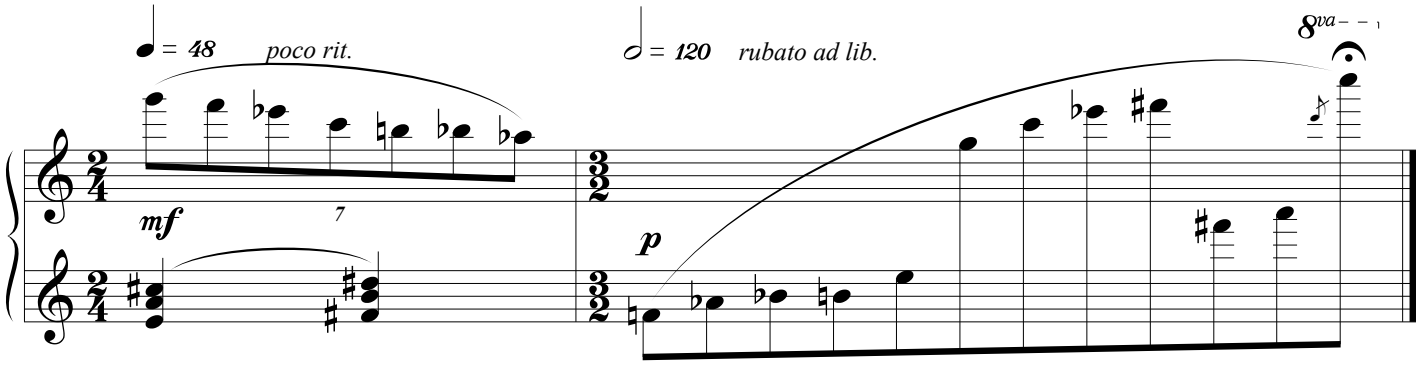


* While the relationship between the two hands in this section should remain more or less as indicated, the rhythmic details can and should be flexible.

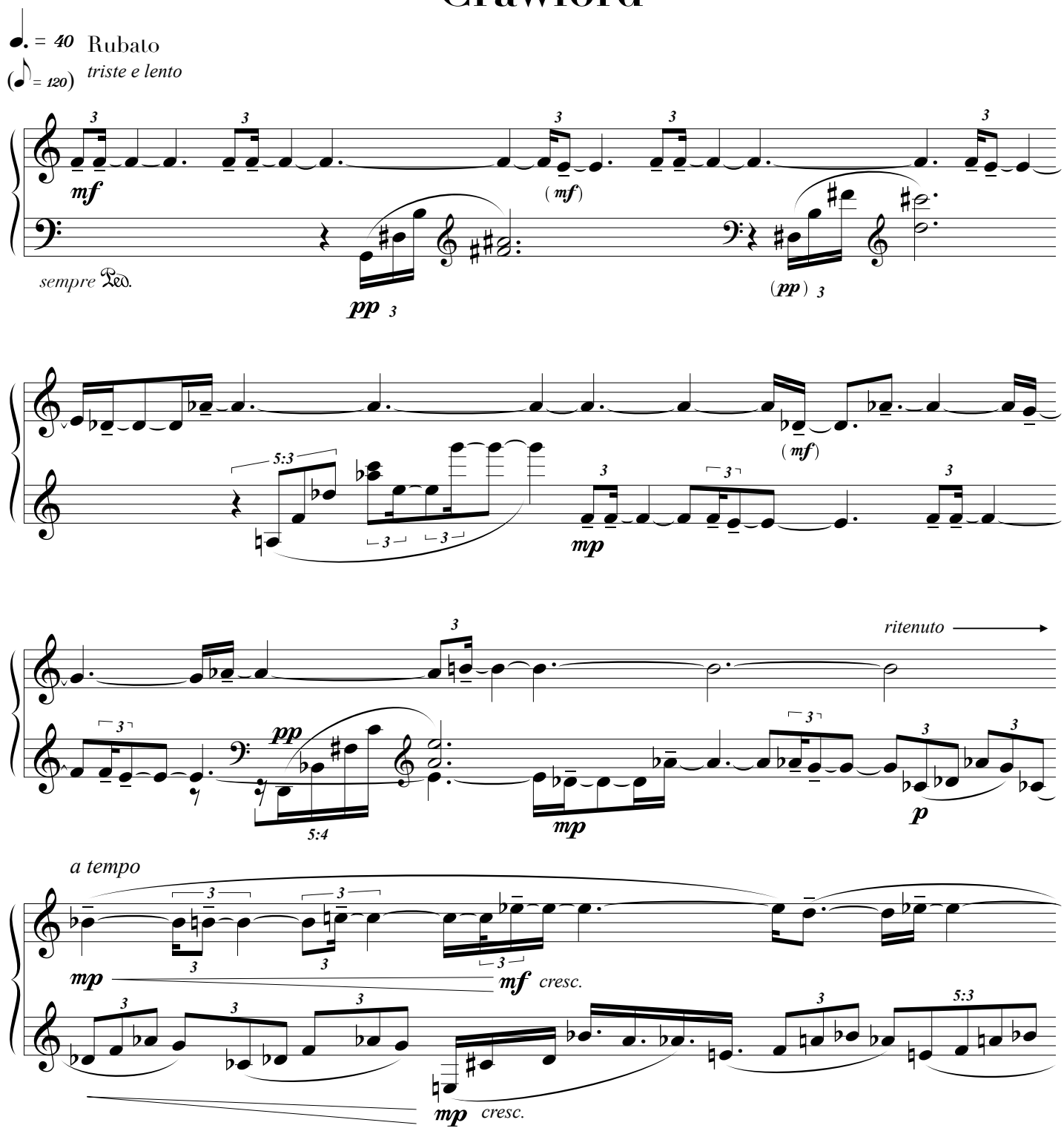

8va
8va
al ff
al ff
(8va)
mf
p
ff
mf
ff
ff
= 120


fff
8va
(8va)
(8va)
6
6
3
presto possible
8va
= 160
ff

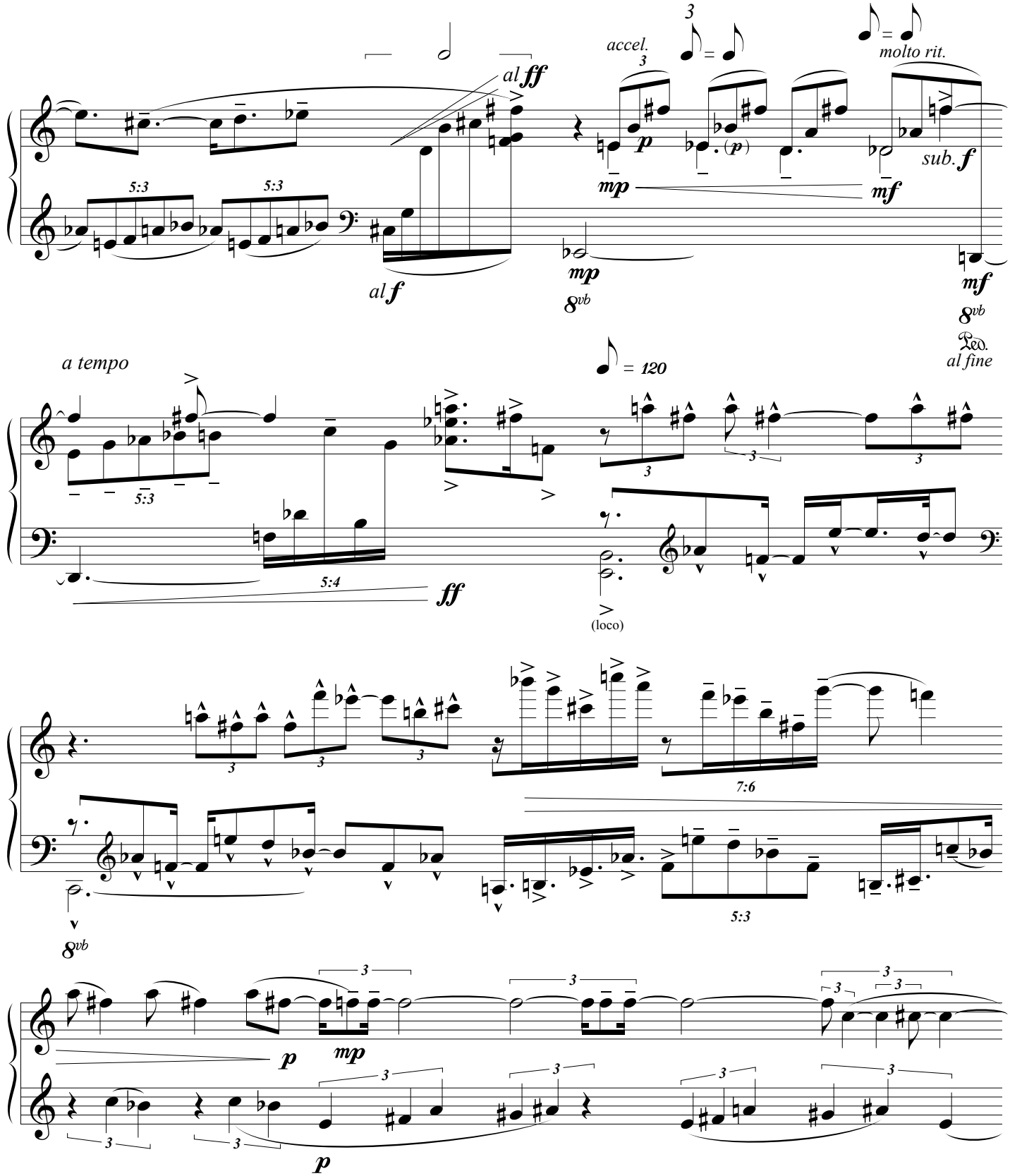

fff
presto possible
8va
(8va)
8vb

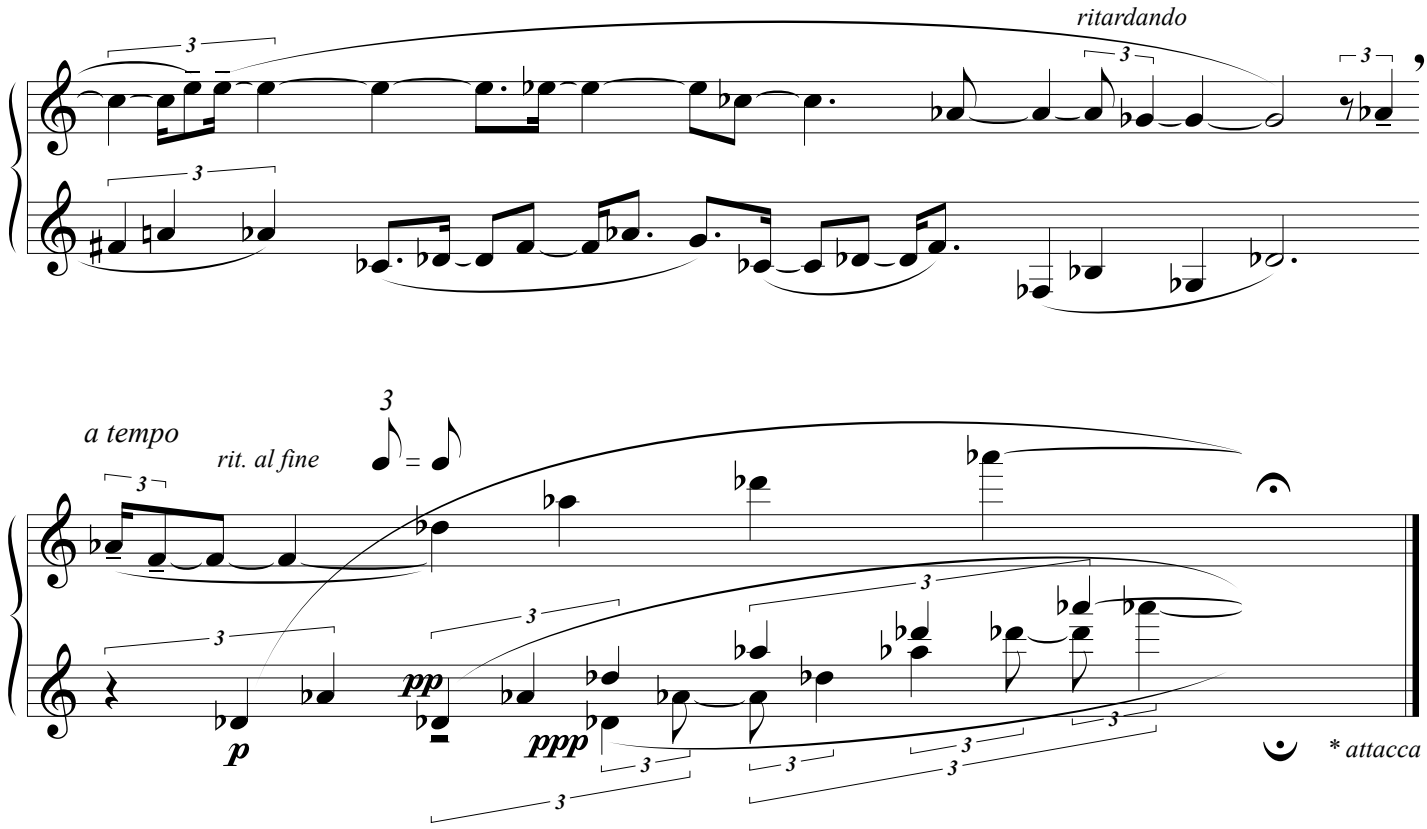

♩ = 48
poco rit.
mf
7
𝅗𝅥 = 120
rubato ad lib.
8va
p

Crawford



Accidentals apply only to the notes they immediately precede.

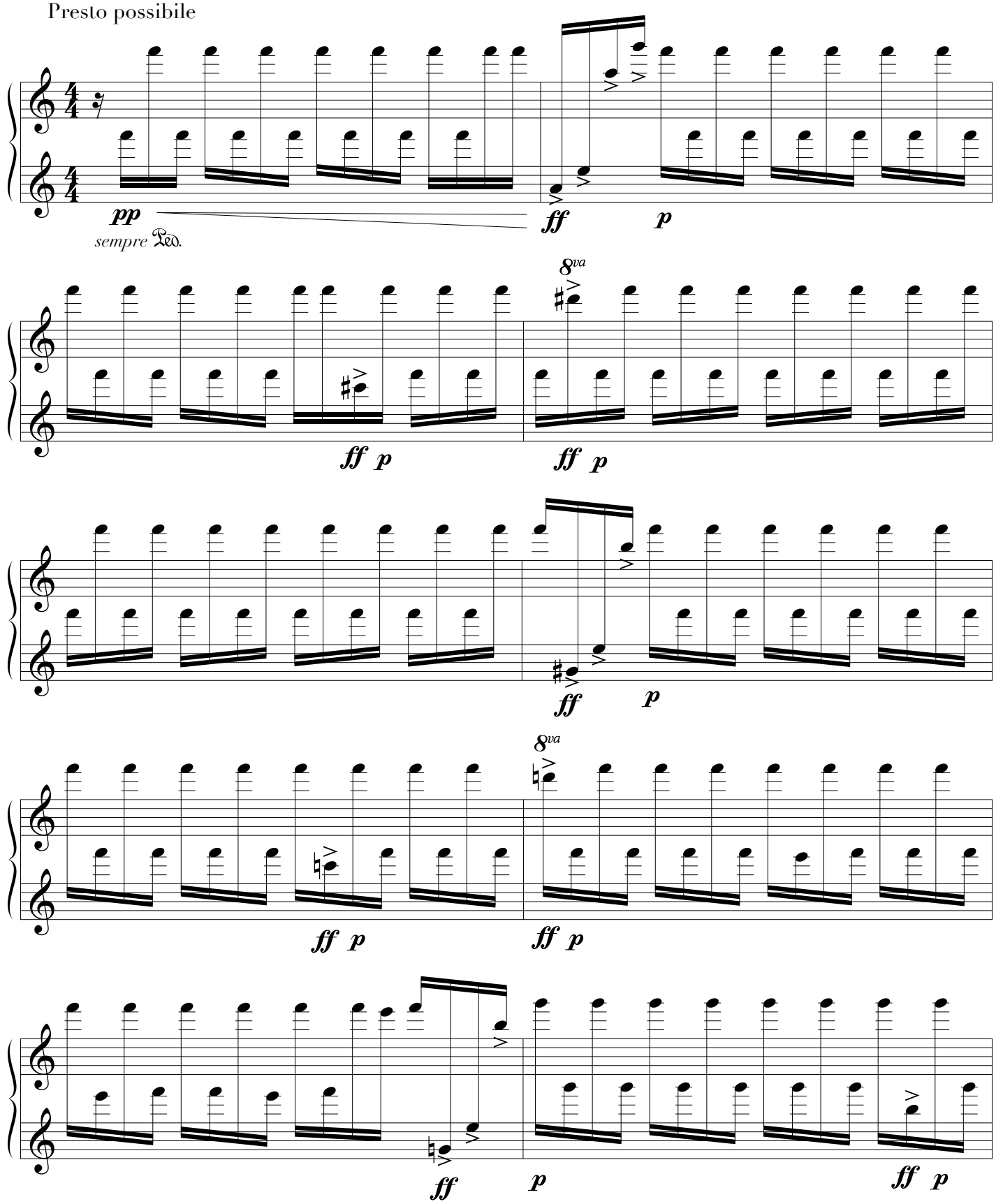

accel.
molto rit.
al ff
al f
sub. f
mp
mf
8vb
Ped.
al fine
a tempo
= 120
(loco)
5:3
5:4
7:6
p

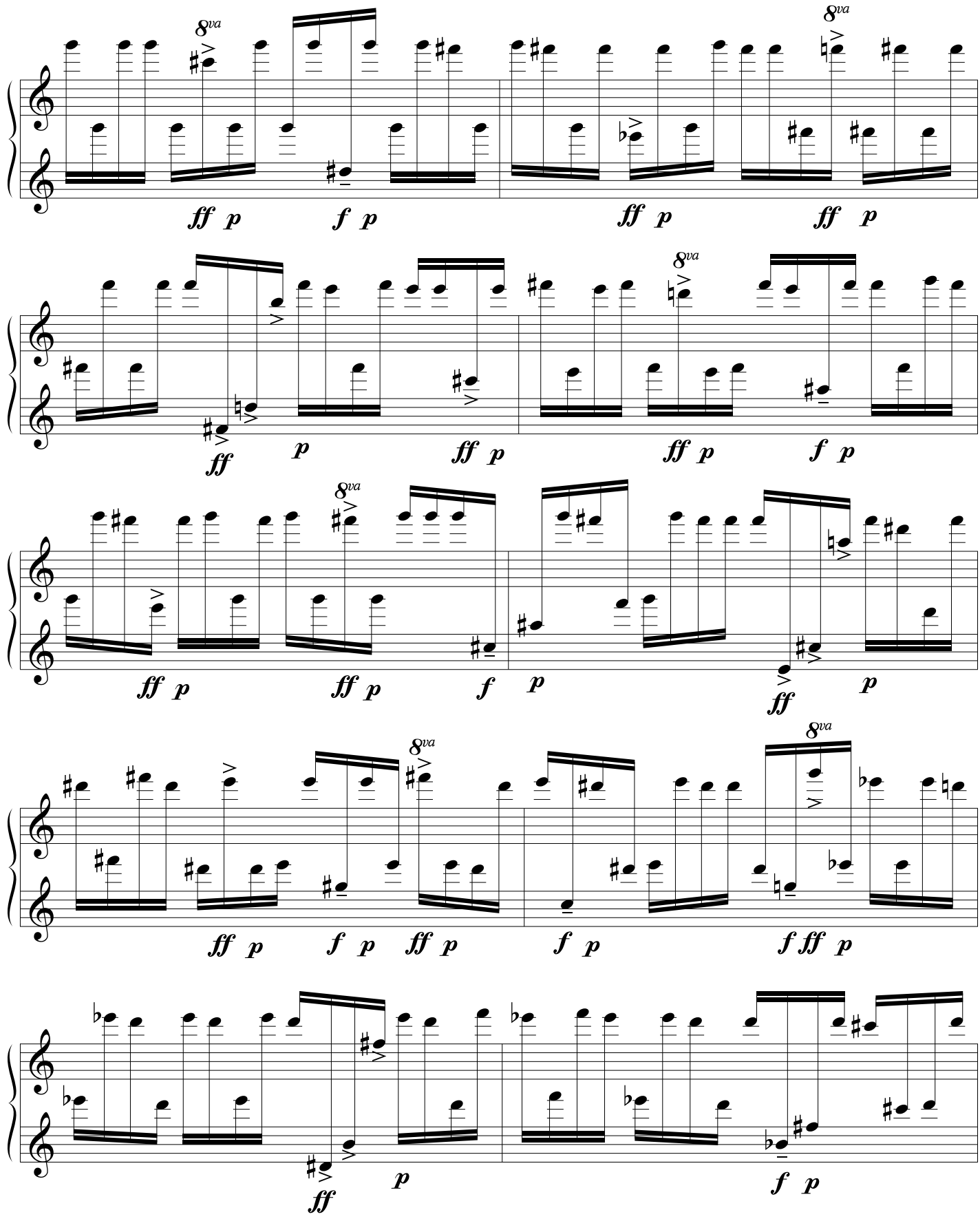


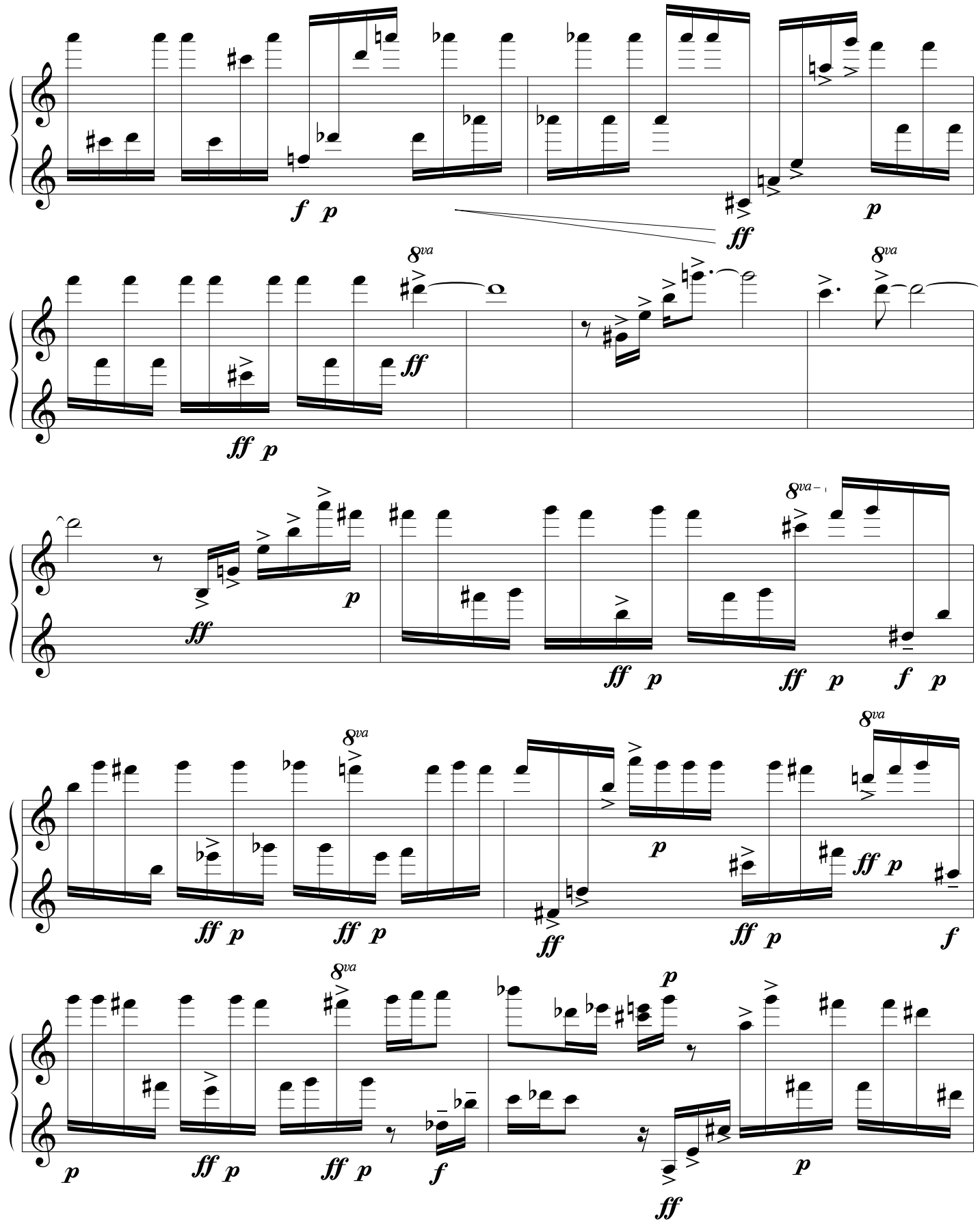
* If proceeding directly to *Liszt,* leave Ped. depressed.

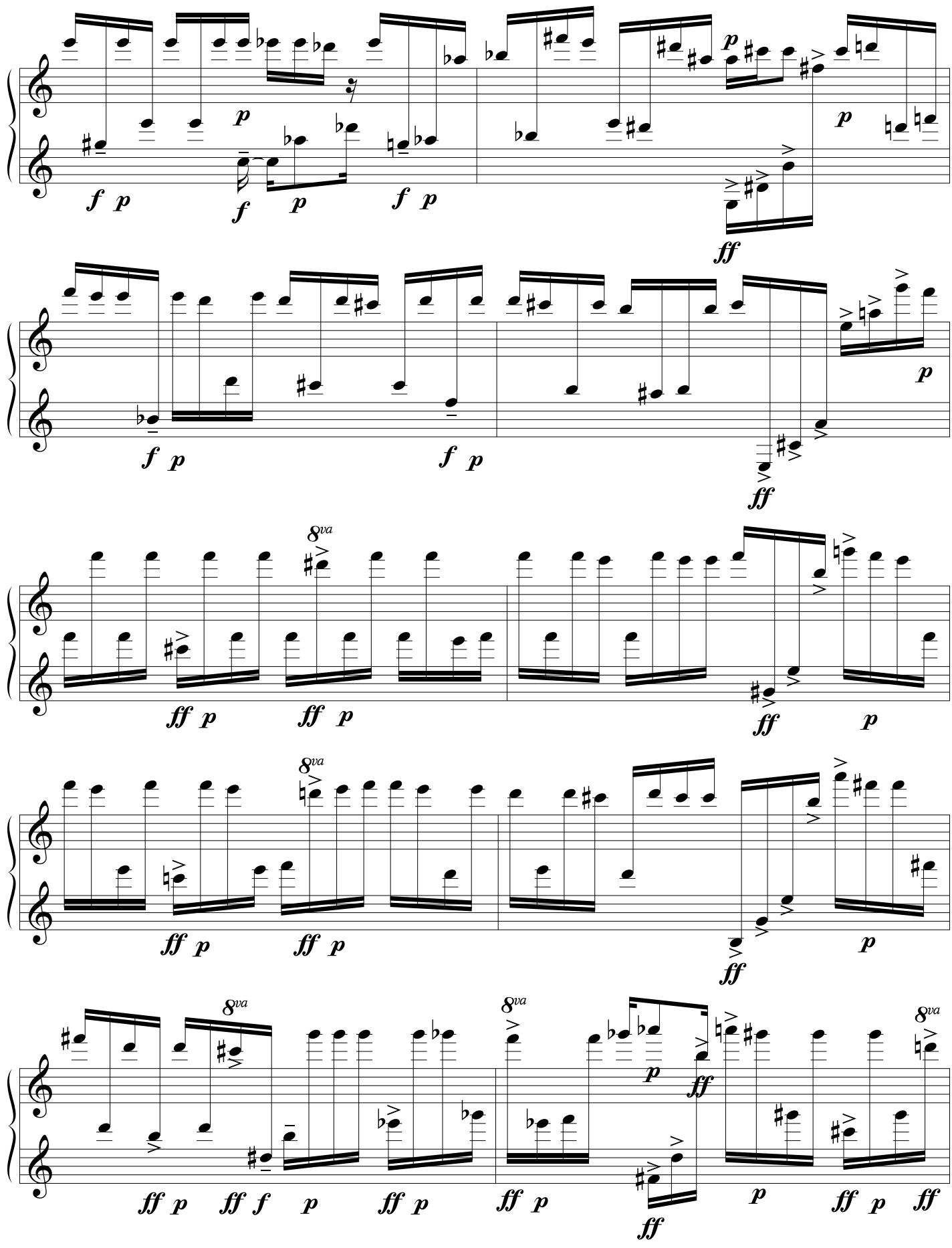
Liszt

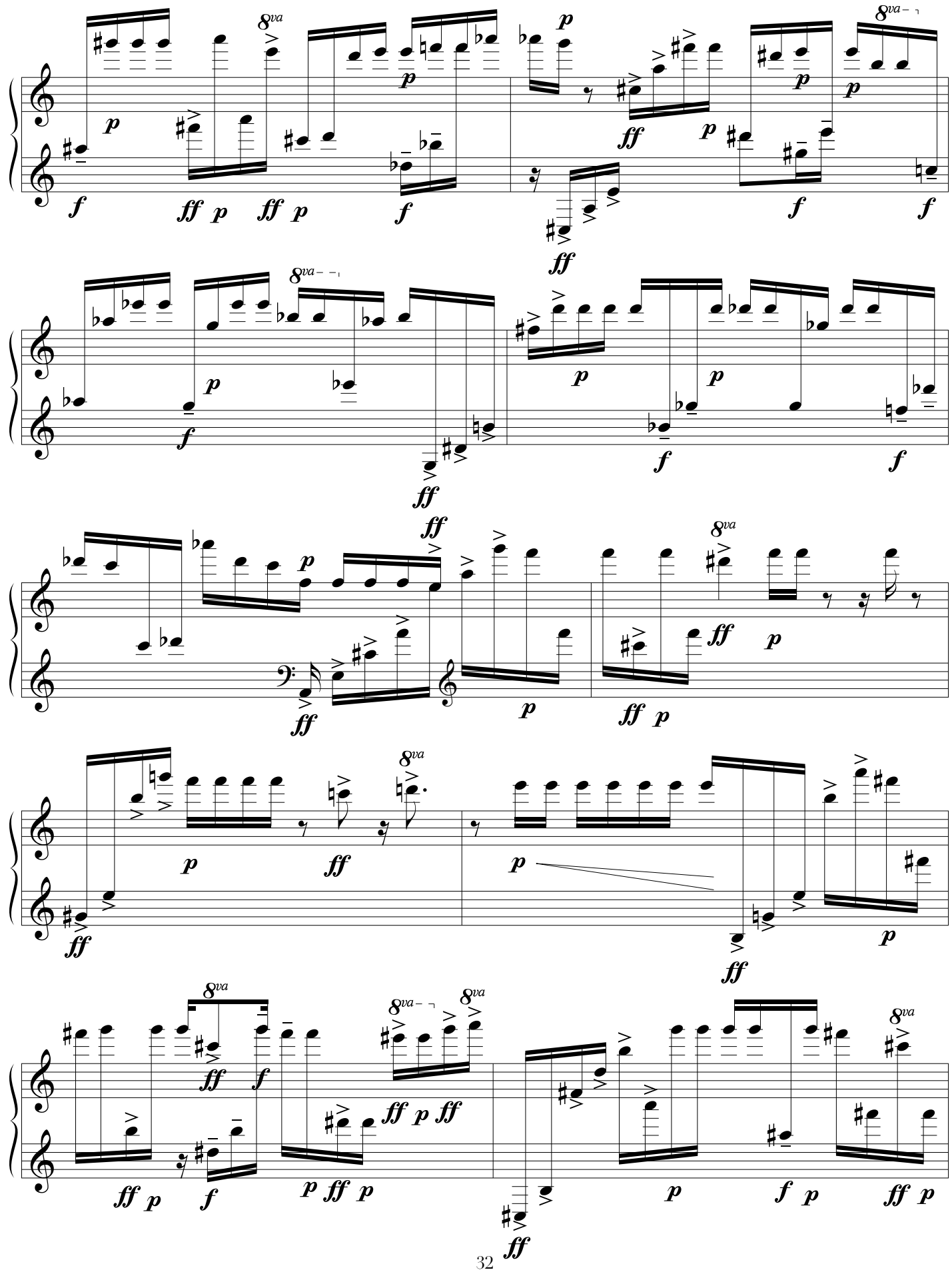
Presto possibile

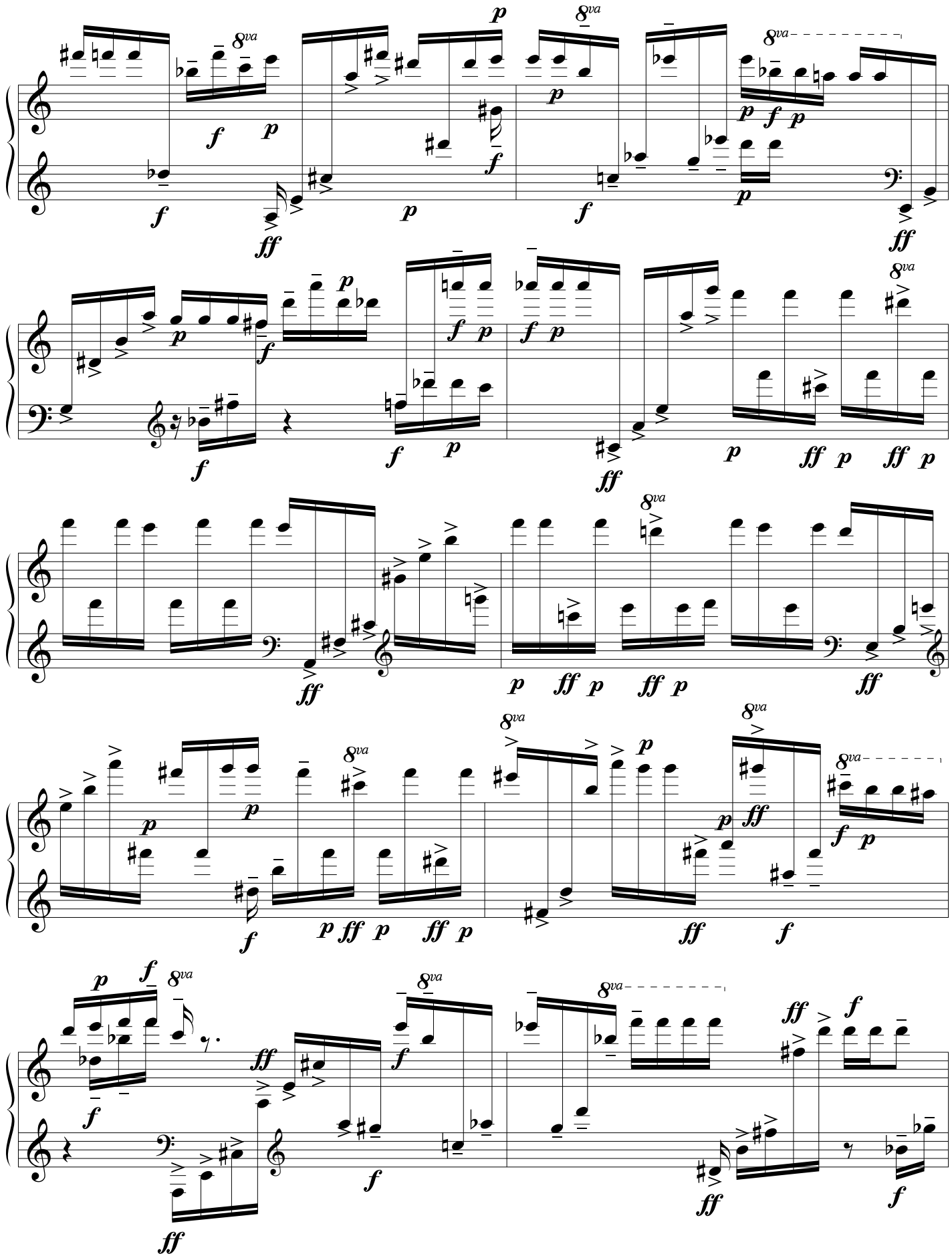


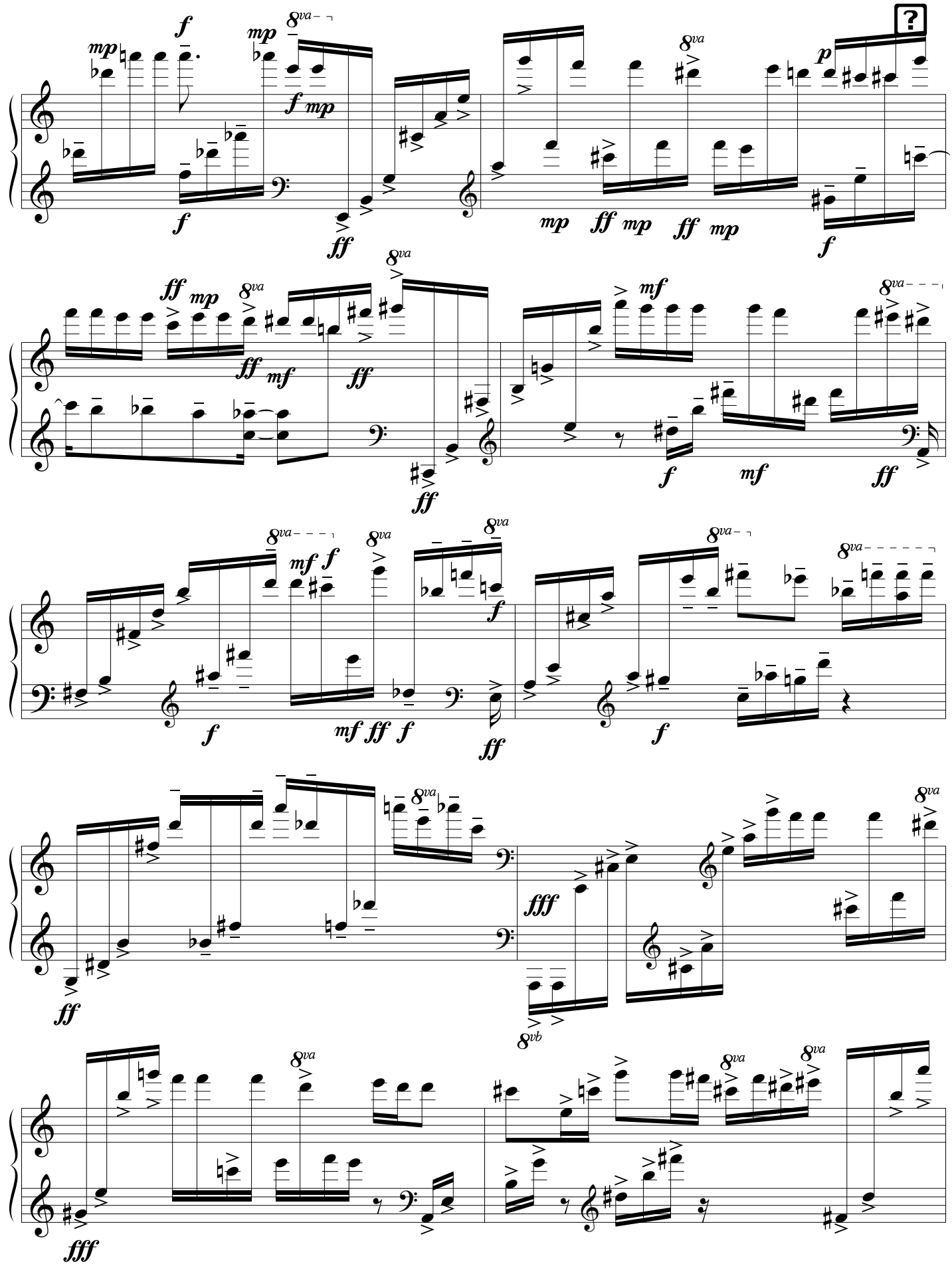

8va
ff p
f p
ff p
8va
ff p
ff
p
ff p
8va
ff p
f p
8va
ff p
ff p
f
p
ff
p
8va
ff p
f p
ff p
8va
f p
f ff p
ff
p
f p

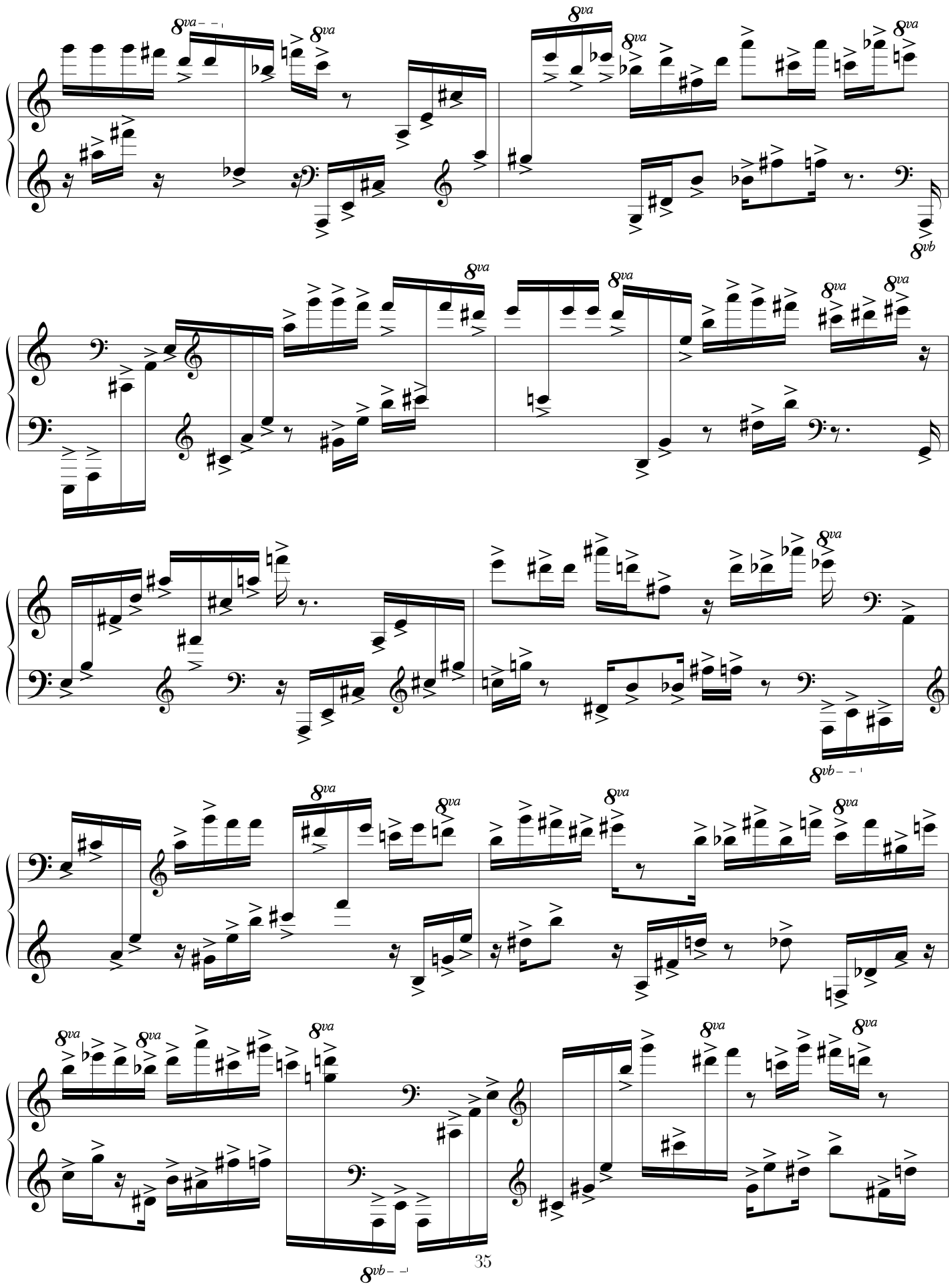

f p
ff
p
8va
ff
ff p
8va
ff
p
ff p
ff p
f p
8va
ff p
ff p
ff
p
ff p
ff p
f
8va
p
ff p
ff p
f
p
ff
p

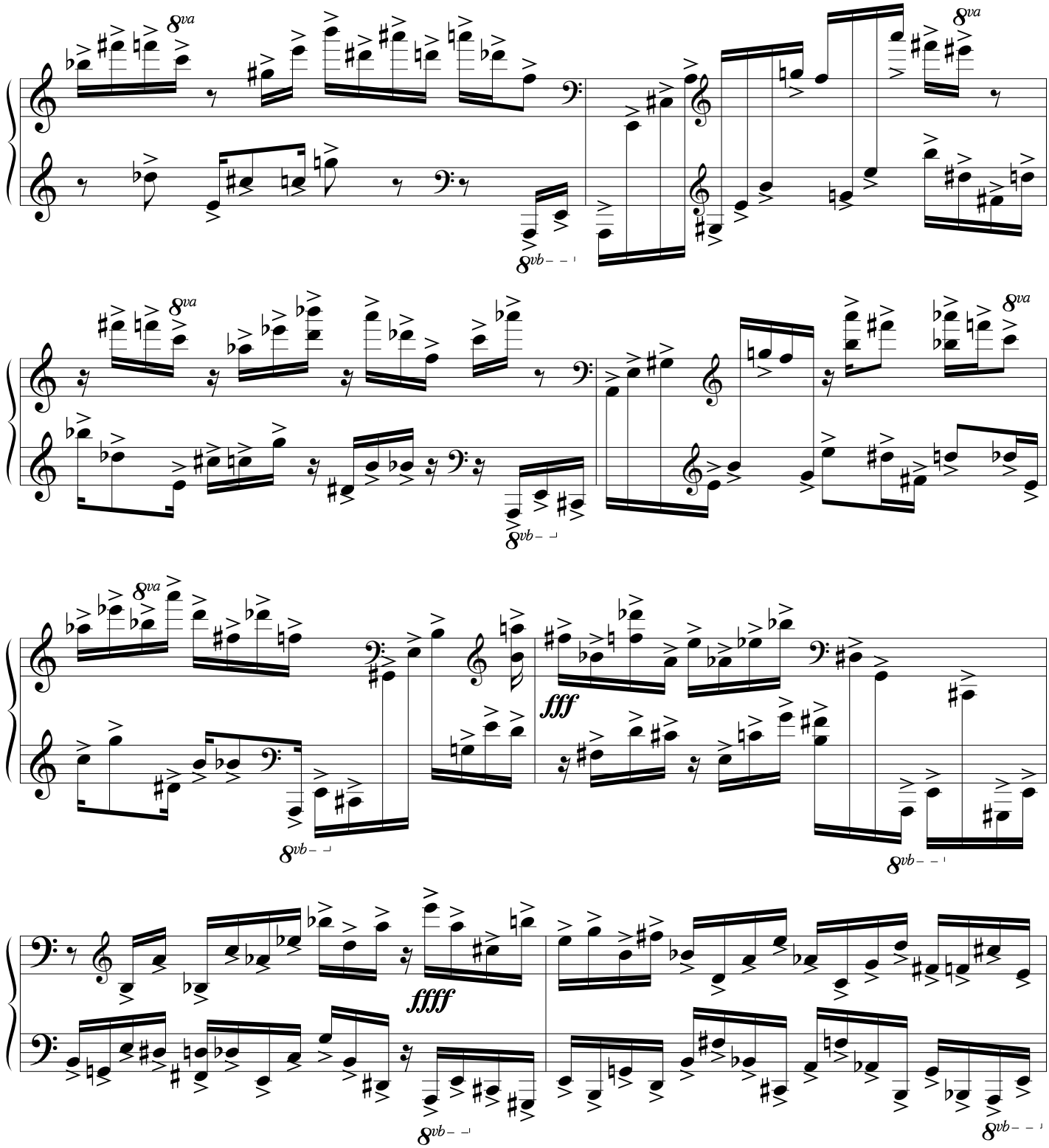

8va
8va
8va
8va
8va

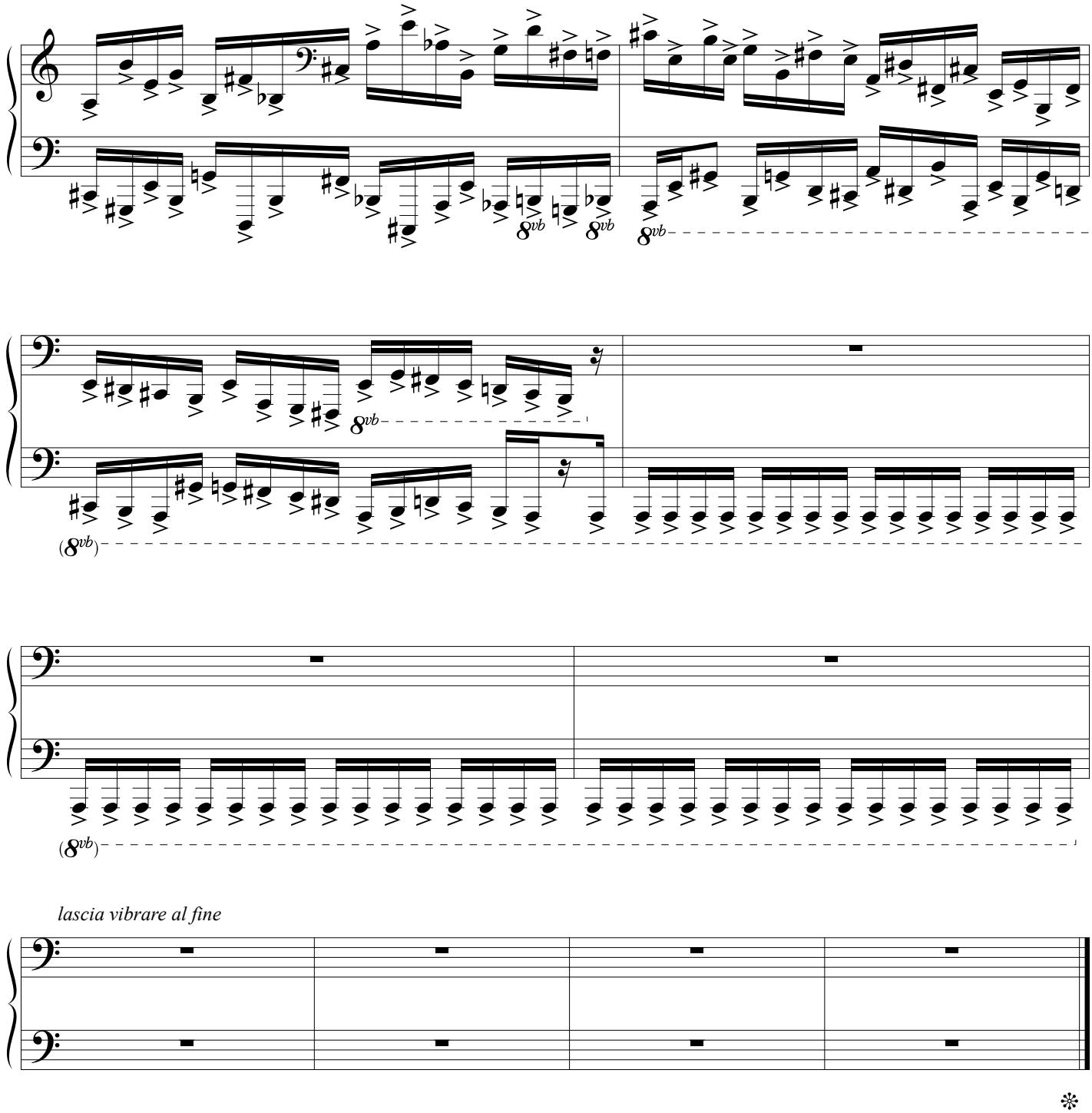

8va
8va
8va


8va
f
p
ff






8va
8vb
8va
8vb
8va
fff
8vb
8vb
ffff
8vb
8vb


8vb
8vb
8vb
8vb
(8vb)
(8vb)
lascia vibrare al fine