Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy

Octet for Strings

OPUS 20

by Felix Mendelssohn

A Facsimile of the Holograph in the Whittall Foundation Collection

With an Introduction by Jon Newsom

WASHINGTON · 1976

INTRODUCTION

THIS OCTET was written by a boy of sixteen—an astonishing fact not because juvenile compositions are so rare, but achievements of both personal character and artistic technique are so evident in the piece that it would be a great accomplishment for a man of any age. As fresh and spontaneous as it seems, however, the OCTET as we know it is not the result of one stroke of youthful inspiration. Mendelssohn habitually revised his works before their publication and the OCTET, typically, underwent many changes. Thus, the autograph score is of special interest, for it allows comparison between the earliest known version of the work and the composition as published in its final form more than six years later. About the circumstances of its composition and the specific nature of the revisions more shall be said. But it seems appropriate first to make some general remarks on Mendelssohn's habit of revising and on the circumstances of his early life and education; they certainly influenced his development as a fastidious and highly critical artist who did not allow himself the luxury of easily won acclaim, in spite of the facility he possessed from early youth. Indeed, the problems he faced in preparing his works for publication were greater than are generally supposed.[1] Regarding his obsession with revision, a remark made to Karl Klingemann in a letter dated June 12, 1839, is most interesting:

> As long as [the compositions] remain here with me they really torment me, because I am far too reluctant to see such clean manuscript pass into the dirty hands of engravers, customers, and the public, and I strengthen a little here, and polish a little there, and revise just so that it may remain here. But once the proofs are here, I am just as unaware and unconcerned about it as if it were a stranger's.[2]

Mendelssohn expresses some disdain for a public that he perhaps felt was incapable of appreciating the best he was able to offer. But in preparing his works for public scrutiny, he worked painstakingly and, in the case of one famous work, the "Italian" Symphony, he was never sufficiently satisfied to have it published. Indeed, he seems to have been unusually reluctant to publish his music, even to the extent of using the revisions themselves as an excuse for postponing the surrender of his manuscript and commitment of his creations to a final form in which they were to be judged. And there is evidence that, after offering a work for publication, he continued to revise it even after receiving proofs. On July 10, 1838, he writes to the publisher Simrock:

> From the time of your first letter about *St. Paul*, in which you expressed a wish to have it for your house, when I had not yet thought of publication at all, much less of success,—also during the period of its being printed, with its manifold alterations and interpolations, up to the present moment,—you have been cordial and complaisant towards me to a degree which, as I already said, I never met with, and for which I cordially thank you.[3]

Born to wealth, the son of a banker, he was not insensitive to practical considerations of time and money, though one may assume from this letter that his publisher must have borne an unusual financial burden in printing the work at hand. But, as the grandson of a famous philosopher, Moses Mendelssohn, Felix was also certainly made aware of a high standard of intellectual accomplishment against which his own talents would inevitably be measured; and in the attainment of these standards Mendelssohn often made demands on himself and others.

The view of Mendelssohn given so far is not entirely consistent with some common prejudices that reflect the relatively lower esteem in which he has been held since the late nineteenth century when he was considered, if not the greatest Teutonic composer since Beethoven, at least the equal of Schumann among Beethoven's successors. These prejudices

1. See Donald M. Mintz, *The Sketches and Drafts of Three of Felix Mendelssohn's Major Works*, Cornell University diss., 1960 (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms [No. 61–16], 1961); his article: "*Melusine*: a Mendelssohn Draft" in *The Musical Quarterly*, October 1957, pp. 480–499; and Gerald Abraham, *Slavonic and Romantic Music* (London: Faber, 1968), Ch. XX, "The Scores of Mendelssohn's *Hebrides*," pp. 256–260.

2. *Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy's Briefwechsel mit Legionsrat Karl Klingemann in London*. Hrsg. und eingeleitet von Karl Klingemann (Essen: G. D. Baedeker, 1909), p. 282. This translation by JN.

3. Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, *Briefe an deutsche Verleger* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1968). English trans.: *Letters of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy from 1833 to 1847*, ed. Paul Mendelssohn-Bartholdy and Carl Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, comp. Julius Rietz, trans. Lady Wallace (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green, 1863), p. 150.

—for example, the notion that as a child prodigy born to luxury he lived a life of ease and deteriorated for lack of depth of character—may represent a reaction to his former popularity, a popularity based in part on idealized accounts of his personal life and an uncritical admiration for some of his later and less ambitious compositions.

In some recent biographies, however, a more complex picture of the man has been presented. Eric Werner, for example, cites as a factor of deep and troublesome significance in Mendelssohn's life the persecution of Jews in Germany that, in addition to exposing the youth to some incidents of personal abuse, led his father to renounce Judaism and adopt Christianity for the security of his family.[4] This decision led to a difficulty that reflects on the personalities of Abraham and his son; and so the matter deserves brief discussion.

As the son of Moses Mendelssohn, Abraham, overshadowed by the greater fame of his illustrious father and his brilliant son, might have been contented with a life of domestic happiness, social prominence, and material prosperity. Werner, however, depicts him as a gloomy and tragic man; he experienced considerable anguish as a Jew born to a position of high responsibility in a Christian world, raised neither as a Christian convert nor in the faith of his ancestors. He undoubtedly felt that upholding the dignity of his family under considerable social pressure was a duty whose importance precluded his indulgence in envious reflections on the greater accomplishments of Moses and Felix; but if service to this duty spared him from envy, it caused him much anxiety and led ultimately to a conflict with his son. For he believed that to raise his children as Christians also required out of social necessity the eventual and complete suppression of the name Mendelssohn in favor of Bartholdy, a name that had been adopted by his brother-in-law. But Felix, devout Christian though he was, refused to follow his father in this. The reasons for the conflict, which occurred in 1829 when Felix was in London, are not known; and, in any case, the conflict seems to have been relatively short-lived. Previous writers who have relied on the bowdlerized editions of letters and glorified accounts of the Mendelssohn family (presented by Sebastian Hensel) do not dwell on such problematic aspects of the Mendelssohns. Eduard Devrient, however, in his *Meine Erinnerungen an Felix Mendelssohn*, notes the father's "contentious disposition" which became "at last intolerable." Unlike Werner, he speculates that it might have had "physical causes," though he does not specify what they may have been. And he asks: "Had this excessive irritability anything to do with his sudden death [in 1835], and was it to descend upon Felix?"[5]

This somewhat difficult but devoted father had a decisive role in the education of his children, a task for which he seems to have possessed unusual industry and talent. His methods were strict and under his guidance Felix must have acquired the working habits and critical attitudes that compelled him to take extraordinary pains which, combined with his native genius, enabled him to work successfully toward the goals he set for himself. And they were formidable: he became a composer, performer, and cultural statesman whose sphere of influence was international in his own lifetime.

As father and educator, Abraham was authoritarian, but explained himself and appealed to the good sense of his children. There were four: Fanny (b. 1805), Felix (b. 1809), Rebecca (b. 1811), and Paul (b. 1813), and passages from his letters to them, written from 1817 to 1820 and published in Hensel's *Die Familie Mendelssohn*, reveal him as a devoted and reasonable, if autocratic, father. From Hamburg to his family in Berlin, on October 29, 1817, he writes to Felix:

> Mind my maxim, "True and obedient!" You cannot be anything better if you follow it, and if not you can be nothing worse. Your letters have given me pleasure, but in the second I found some traces of carelessness, which I will point out to you when I come home. You must endeavour to speak better, then you will also write better.[6]

Felix thrived, as did the other children, on the discipline and broad curriculum imposed by the father. Except for Sundays, rising was at five in the morning. He studied not only music, for which Fanny, as well as he, had great ability, but the classics, philosophy, and literature. Moreover, his watercolors and drawings show his skill in the visual arts; and his physical education in swimming and gymnastics was encouraged as well.

Devrient describes the attitude of the child prodigy in his *Erinnerungen*. On his first glimpse of Felix as composer and conductor at the Mendelssohns' house, which "gave an impression of studied plainness," (p. 3) he says: "It struck us the very first evening how weak self-consciousness and vanity were in his nature, in comparison with emulation, and the determination of thoroughly mastering whatever he undertook." (p. 4)

And of the effectiveness of the early works he undertook (he preserved his compositions from the beginning of 1820) he was able to gain through practical experience a far better knowledge than do most young composers. For a great asset to his development was this opportunity of which Devrient writes:

> The wealthy father was able to assemble a small orchestra selected from the court-band—so that Felix enjoyed the inestimable advantage of becoming acquainted with the nature and treatment of the different instruments already in his boyish years, and of hearing his

4. Eric Werner, *Mendelssohn: A New Image of the Composer and His Age* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963). See Ch. III, "Judaism in Transition," pp. 28–44.

5. Eduard Devrient, *Meine Erinnerungen an Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy und seine Briefe an mich* (Leipzig: J. J. Weber, 1869). English trans.: *My Recollections of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy*, trans. Natalia MacFarren (London: Richard Bentley, 1869; repr. New York: Vienna House, 1972), pp. 9–10.

6. Sebastian Hensel, *Die Familie Mendelssohn, 1729–1847*. Nach Briefe und Tagebüchern. Zweite durchges. Aufl. (Berlin: B. Behr's Buchhandlung, 1880). English trans.: *The Mendelssohn Family, 1729–1847*, from letters and journals, second rev. ed., trans. by Karl Klingemann and an American collaborator. 2 vols. (New York: Harper & Bros., 1882), 1:76–84.

own compositions with the instruments for which they are written.

Another observer of the young Mendelssohn, Adolf Bernhard Marx, wrote his *Erinnerungen*[7] after his close friendship with the composer had already ended abruptly in 1839 as the result of a dispute over an ill-fated artistic collaboration. Although he was sufficiently bitter to have destroyed Mendelssohn's letters to him, his view of Mendelssohn's personality is by no means unsympathetic, and, indeed, it complements Devrient's. The occasion was Marx's first visit to the Mendelssohns' when the composer was "at the border between boyhood and adolescence."

> I took the opportunity to play for him my Psalm 137, which I had just finished and in which, at the words "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem" I had even attempted a fugue, a form about which I was enlightened only insofar as was possible from Marpurg's treatise and the enigmatical example of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*.
>
> Felix looked through the score, first astonished, then shaking his head; finally, he broke out: "That—that cannot be! That is not correct! That (indicating the fugue) is not music at all!"
>
> I was delighted. I could not be offended; for I was well aware that with my burning ambition and possible talent I lacked a third quality: artistic technique. But I was delighted, for here I found frankness! And that seems to me the first condition for every human relationship. (Vol. 2, p. 111. Trans. by JN.)

With this brief introduction some aspects of Mendelssohn's character have been presented. Unfortunately, he had no outstanding contemporary biographer and much must be left to speculation.

The Composition of the OCTET

The year 1825 saw three significant events in the life of the sixteen-year-old Mendelssohn. The first was a trip to Paris during which Abraham introduced his son to Cherubini, then an aging and cantankerous composer. His favorable judgment of the young musician surprised almost everyone, with the possible exception of Felix himself, preoccupied as he seems to have been with his own disdainful criticism of musicians and musical life in Paris (even Cherubini he compared to "an extinct volcano"). The second was the move in Berlin of the Mendelssohns to their palatial residence in Leipzigerstrasse, the family home until the death of Felix in 1847. And the third was the composition of the OCTET, which bears the date "October 15, 1825" on the final page.

The work was dedicated to Eduard Rietz (1802–1832), and intended as a gift for his birthday on October 17. Rietz was Mendelssohn's violin teacher and friend, who, if not well remembered today, was nevertheless a distinguished member of the brilliant circle of intellectuals and men of genius—with whom the Mendelssohns were acquainted. It included Goethe and Mendelssohn's composition teacher, Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758–1832), a connoisseur of the music of Bach. It was from Zelter's copy of the *St. Matthew Passion* that Rietz made the copy which was presented to Felix at Christmas, 1823. The dedication of the OCTET does not appear in the autograph score, although the front flyleaf bears Rietz's name (here, "Ritz," as it was sometimes spelled). At the top of the first page appear the letters "L.e.g.G."—for "Lass es geling Gott"[8] ("Let it succeed, God"), one of two such formulas with which Mendelssohn was accustomed to inscribe his manuscripts. Not only did the OCTET succeed, it became a favorite of his among his own early compositions.

Mendelssohn himself attached special importance to the scherzo. His sister Fanny, in a frequently quoted statement from her unpublished recollections, says of it:

> To me alone he told his idea: the whole piece is to be played staccato and pianissimo, the tremulandos coming in now and then, the trills passing away with the quickness of lightning; everything new and strange, and at the same time most insinuating and pleasing, one feels so near the world of spirits, carried away in the air, half inclined to snatch up a broomstick and follow the aerial procession. At the end the first violin takes a flight with a feather-like lightness, and—all has vanished.[9]

The idea is supposed to have originated in these lines from Goethe's *Faust* describing Walpurgis night:

> Wolkenzug und Nebelflor
> Erhellen sich von oben;
> Luft im Laub, und Wind im Rohr,
> Und Alles ist zerstoben.
> (Pt. I, l. 4395–98)

This movement is not Mendelssohn's first attempt at the mood he was to capture most famously in his overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, composed the next year: Grove mentions the scherzo (Allegro molto) of the Piano Quartet in B Minor, op. 3, which he had completed before the trip to Paris and taken there with him;[10] and Tovey speaks of some earlier "visits to his own fairy kingdom" in piano works composed at fourteen.[11] But the explicit declaration of his expressive intent is rare, if not unique, among Mendelssohn's remarks about one of his own compositions. Regarding that statement, conveyed through Fanny and quoted years after her and Felix's death by Hensel, we must remember Mendelssohn's aversion to explaining his music or considering it a subject for either theoretical or aesthetic speculation.

7. Adolf Bernhard Marx, *Erinnerungen. Aus meinem Leben.* 2 vols. (Berlin: Otto Janke, 1865).

8. See Eric Werner's article: "Mendelssohn, Felix" in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1949–), 9 (1961), col. 61.

9. Hensel, *The Mendelssohn Family*, 1:131.

10. Sir George Grove, article on: "Mendelssohn, Felix" in his *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: MacMillan, 1940), 3:379–380.

11. Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis* (London: Oxford, 1935), 2:146.

On May 25, 1829, at a performance in London of his First Symphony, op. 11 (composed in March 1824), he substituted an orchestral arrangement of the scherzo of the OCTET for the menuet of the symphony. He describes the event to Fanny in a letter of May 26:

The success at the concert last night was beyond what I could ever have dreamed. I began with the symphony; old François Cramer led me to the piano like a young lady, and I was received with immense applause. The adagio was encored—I prefered to bow my thanks and go on, for fear of tiring the audience; but the scherzo was so vigorously encored that I felt obliged to repeat it, and the finale they continued applauding, while I was thanking the orchestra and shaking hands, and until I had left the room.[12]

Mendelssohn presented the score of his First Symphony, including the orchestrated scherzo, to the London Philharmonic Society, and the gift was formally acknowledged on June 4, 1829. The symphony, with the original menuet, was published in 1828. The orchestrated version of the scherzo, however, was not published until 1911 (London: Novello), a fact that requires that we accept the score with a particular reservation. Indeed, in examining any of Mendelssohn's compositions published posthumously we must wonder with frustration how the composer might have revised the work; for, as has been said, he habitually revised his compositions in preparing them for publication.

Plans for Publication and Some Early Performances

Mendelssohn's first recorded reference to the publication of the OCTET is in a letter to Fanny from Paris on January 21, 1832.

I now receive in every letter a little cutting reprimand, because I am not punctual in answering, and so, dear Fanny, I will dispose at once of your questions about my new works for publication.

It has struck me, namely, that the octet and the quintet could quite well be counted in my works, and are even better than many others already among them. Since now the publication of pieces costs me nothing, but rather earns something, and since I, nevertheless, do not want completely to upset the chronological sequence, I thus propose to seek until Easter a purchaser for the following works: quintet and octet (the latter also arranged for four-hands), *Midsummernight's dream*, seven songs without words, six songs with words. . . .[13]

Mention of the OCTET appears in several other letters of 1832. Writing to Breitkopf & Härtel on January 23 from Paris (where he stayed until April 19), he offered, among several other works, "an octet for stringed instruments (that is for two quartets, in parts and arranged for four-hands)."[14] And, in a letter written on February 4 (to his family?), just after the death of Eduard Rietz (on January 23), he mentions the parts which Rietz had copied for the OCTET.

Tell me please, a good deal more about him, and all kinds of details; it does me good to hear more about him. Before me lie his neat octet parts, and they gaze up at me.[15]

To his mother, in the letter of March 15–17, he writes of Pierre Baillot (1771–1842), the noted violinist, whose performance of the OCTET Mendelssohn especially admired:

After the rehearsal, Baillot played my octet in his class, and if there is yet a man in the world who can play it, it is he. . . . Besides, I now must fully prepare the overture and the octet, and put the quintet in order, since Simrock has bought it.[16]

Further in this letter, he mentions several scheduled performances of his OCTET, one of which amuses him.

And Monday, ridiculous as it may seem, my octet will be played in church for the commemoration of Beethoven's death; this is the silliest thing the world has ever seen, but it was impossible to refuse, and I rather look forward to the experience of hearing a low Mass said during the scherzo. (pp. 326–327)

His report on the last mentioned performance of the OCTET appears in his letter of March 31. The absurdity of the event fulfilled his expectations; but he adds, disdainfully: "The people found it ever so spiritual, and very pretty."[17]

At the end of June, Mendelssohn returned to Berlin from his extensive travels of 1830–1832; and there he again wrote Breitkopf & Härtel on July 5. In a postscript to this letter, he mentions that "the [four-hand] arrangement of the octet will certainly follow next week."[18] But on July 19, he writes concerning his unexpected difficulties over the arrangement.[19] The letter closes with an acknowledgment of the receipt of 30 louis d'or as an honorarium for, among other works, the OCTET.

Revision

From this correspondence, it appears that the revised version of the OCTET was ready for the engraver at least by July 19, if not July 5, when Mendelssohn promised the four-hand arrangement. It is unlikely that he would have begun the piano

12. Hensel, *The Mendelssohn Family*, 1:185.

13. *Reisebriefe von Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy aus den Jahren 1830 bis 1832*. Hrsg. von Paul Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (Leipzig: Hermann Mendelssohn, 1861), pp. 312–313. This translation by JN.

14. Mendelssohn, *Briefe an deutscher Verleger* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1968).

15. *Reisebriefe*, p. 317. This translation by JN.

16. Ibid., p. 326. This translation by JN.

17. Ibid., p. 329. This translation by JN.

18. Mendelssohn, *Briefe an deutscher Verleger*, p. 16.

19. Ibid., p. 17.

arrangement before he was satisfied with the string octet version.

As for the actual dates of revision, or the material used for revision, I can only speculate. The original score was presumably the property, until his death, of Eduard Rietz. But even had it been returned to Mendelssohn (we know he had Rietz's parts) the lack of extensive revisions in it shows that it was not the copy used for the publication of the parts. Had Mendelssohn not revised the work, he could have sent the engraver his original score or Rietz's parts. But Mendelssohn not only cut many measures, he recomposed portions so extensively that the use of another score seems certain. Of course, it is possible that this hypothetical revised score predated Rietz's parts, and that the parts were then usable for the engraver. In any case, there must have been a working score and it is not likely to have been a set of engraver's proofs, for only parts and a four-hand piano arrangement were published; nor did Mendelssohn intend the publication of a full score at this time, according to his letter of January 23. It is possible that the working score used in his preparation of the revised version became the property of Breitkopf & Härtel, though neither the present location of such a score nor the whereabouts of Rietz's parts is known.

As for the provenance of the holograph score now in the Library of Congress, only two previous owners are known: Eduard Rietz and the Musikbibliothek Peters. In 1951, Mrs. Gertrude Clarke Whittall purchased the manuscript for the Library of Congress through the dealer Walter Schatzki of New York who acted as the agent for Walter Hinrichsen of C. F. Peters.

Publication

The title page of the first edition of the OCTET, published by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1832 in the form of instrumental parts, reads as follows:

Ottetto / pour / des instruments à cordes / 4 Violons, 2 Violes et 2 Violoncelles / composé et dédié / à son Ami / Edouard Ritz / par / Felix Mendelssohn- / Bartholdy / Propriété des Editeurs. / Oeuv. 20. – Pr 3 Thlr. 12. Gr. / Leipsic / Chez Breitkopf & Härtel. / Enregistré dans l'Archiv de l'Union.

The plate number 5282 does not appear on the title page but at the bottom of each page of music.

The following note also appears on the first page of each part, in German and French:

This octet must be played in the style of a symphony in all parts; the *pianos* and *fortés* must be very precisely differentiated and be more sharply accentuated than is ordinarily done in pieces of this type.

The allusion here to the symphonic style has sometimes been interpreted as meaning that the work may be performed by a string ensemble of more than eight players. However, it would hardly be necessary to advise the members of a string orchestra to play "in the style of a symphony." The remark is clearly directed to string players who, playing one to a part, might disturb the balance of the work with the more individualistic approach that is the aim in other "pieces of this type," which is to say, other chamber music.

Of the style of scoring of this OCTET, Louis Spohr writes in his autobiography:

> My four double quartets remain the only ones of their kind. An octet for stringed instruments by Mendelssohn-Bartholdy belongs to quite another kind of art, in which the two quartets do not concert and interchange in double choir, with each other, but all eight instruments work together.[20]

Indeed, we might interpret Spohr's reference to Mendelssohn's OCTET as belonging "to quite another kind of art" as meaning that it is conceived in a symphonic style. Perhaps Mendelssohn, while he certainly intended the work to be played by those who took part in the musical life of his own home, may also have had in mind the possibility of a larger ensemble, as his orchestral arrangement of the scherzo suggests. Nevertheless, the work does not gain in effect by assigning more than one player to a part. And if the OCTET is not his most tightly organized work, its instrumentation is perfectly conceived.

To have composed such a work when so young establishes Mendelssohn as one of the most extraordinary musical prodigies in European culture; and he fulfilled the highest expectations for his success. Today, many know only a few of his works, of which some of the best, such as the secular oratorio *Die erste Walpurgisnacht*, are neglected. And many who admire Mendelssohn's early maturity regret a decline they detect in his later compositions, although the Violin Concerto in E minor and *Elijah*, composed near the end of his short life, show that he was then still in full command of his creative powers. Or they regret that he did not develop further in later years (indeed, his style did not markedly change), as if, having already discovered in his teens what it was to be himself, he should have discovered by the time he died what it was to be someone else. To be at thirty-eight what you were at sixteen is not always admirable; it is arguably admirable, however, if you happen to be Mendelssohn.

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20. Louis Spohr, *Lebenserinnerungen*. 2 vols. (Cassel: Wiegand, 1860; rev. ed., Tutzing: H. Schneider, 1968). English trans.: *Louis Spohr's Autobiography*. 2 vols. (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green, 1865), 2:152.

Comparison of the Early and Final Versions

TO ASSIST the reader in making his own comparison of the two scores only the most striking differences will be mentioned. In referring to the printed score, measure numbers for each movement shall be used. Measures are counted by beginning with the first full measure and continuing straight through a movement, ignoring repeats (i.e., counting measures within a repeated section only once), but, of course, counting the measures of a first as well as a second ending of a repeated section.

Measures in the original manuscript score are not numbered but referred to by page, system, and measure in the following abbreviated way: MS4:1:11, for example, means page 4, system 1, measure 11 of the manuscript. This point corresponds to (for "corresponds to" the symbol ~ is used) measure (hereafter abbreviated "m") 37 of the first movement in the printed score. Thus, MS4:1:11~m37. In the manuscript, numbers for pagination (not foliation) appear in faint pencil at the upper right-hand corner of the recto only of each leaf.

Regarding the use of the word "corresponds," correspondence will be considered to exist between measures even where there are significant changes, as long as the essential melodic function of a measure of the revised final version represented by the printed score "corresponds" to a measure of the manuscript in such a way that a complete rewriting or cut is not involved. Thus, for example, MS25:1:5~m238 even though the return of the second subject in the tonic key is more sophisticated in the final version by the postponement of the tonic cadence (by means of a $\frac{6}{4}$ pedal of three measures) and the first note of the theme is prolonged.

I. [First movement.] "Allegro moderato ma con fuoco" ("Allegro molto e vivace" in the manuscript).

Mendelssohn, either independently or on the advice of other musicians, decided to change the notation of this movement by halving the note-values so that two measures of the manuscript score equal one of the printed score. Given this two-to-one relationship of the measures, the two scores "correspond," using the word as defined above, up to m60 of the printed score. The following list of corresponding points in the scores before that measure may be helpful:

MS2:1:1~m10.
MS3:1:2~m21.
MS4:1:11~m37.

The first violin line (m59–68) at the transition to the "second theme" (key of the dominant) has been changed significantly; and the change has been made simply by cutting about four measures in the manuscript. The transformation is striking and worth examination. Pursuing his original intention of writing a melody that employs rhythmic variation of the arpeggiated first theme, Mendelssohn, in his revision, achieves a better rhythmic preparation for the structural downbeat at m68 by eliminating the strong downbeat at MS6:2:5, together with the two measures preparing it (MS6:2:3–4); and he omits the first violin's f′ at MS6:2:9, which would also have produced a strong downbeat, spoiling the climactic effect of the cadential downbeat at m68. Mendelssohn also cut two measures at MS6:2:11 (from the second quarter) through MS7:1:2 (the first quarter), presumably because to follow the compressed statements of the preceding measures with three simple ascending arpeggios on the V of V would seem too expansive or even redundant. By making a quicker ascent to the g‴ of m65, Mendelssohn improves the rhythmic effectiveness of the passage—an effectiveness that depends on the prolongation of the V of V through sustained rhythmic tension. It is important to note that the final result is more classically "four-square" than the original; and the individual phrases of the passage are more symmetrically balanced. It should not be inferred, however, that Mendelssohn made his revision merely out of deference to convention.

Until m108, the two scores correspond:

MS7:1:10~m68.
MS10:2:1~m102.

Mendelssohn has cut MS11:1:5 through 11:2:2. Thereafter, the scores correspond to the end of the exposition.

MS11:2:3~m109.
MS13:1:6~m127.

It should be noted that in the manuscript the first ending begins at MS13:2:3, not MS13:1:6. Indeed, the beginning of the development has been completely recomposed, so that MS13:2:5 through MS15:1:11 have been cut; and in the printed score, m132 through the first half of m143 are entirely new.

Until the next large cut in the manuscript from MS22:2:1 through MS25:1:5, the scores correspond:

MS15:1:12~m143 (second half).
MS17:1:9~m169.
MS19:1:7~m200.
MS21:1:4~m221 which begins the recapitulation.

The question of the correspondence of MS25:1:5 to m238 has been discussed above. This point immediately follows the large cut beginning at MS22:2:1. Except for a small cut of MS28:1:5–6, and a compression of MS28:1:1–4 into one measure, m269, the scores correspond to the end of the movement:

MS27:1:6~m262.
MS28:1:7~m270.
MS29:1:1~m281.

II. [Second movement.] "Andante" (in both scores).

In revising this movement, Mendelssohn made numerous cuts. At one point, the correspondence between the manuscript and the printed score becomes slightly cumbersome to follow because of a cut through half a measure, resulting in rebarring.

MS33:2:5~m21, immediately before a cut in the manuscript of one and one-half measures beginning at MS34:1:1. Thus, the second half of MS34:1:2~m22 and the second half of MS34:2:2~m27.

The second cut occurs at the second half of MS35:2:3 and continues through MS36:2:2 (note that part of this cut, from MS36:1:1 through MS36:1:6, already appears in the manuscript).

MS36:2:3~m41.

Mendelssohn cuts one measure, MS37:2:4, so that MS37:2:5~m56. Another cut of one measure occurs at MS38:1:2, so that MS38:1:3 ~m59.

The fifth cut extends from MS38:2:2 through MS39:1:1, so that MS39:1:2~m65.

The sixth and last cut of the movement extends from MS40:1:2 through MS41:2:5 (two measures of this cut appear in the manuscript at MS40:2:2–3). Thus MS42:1:1~m76.

III. Scherzo (as it is called in both scores). "Allegro leggierissimo" ("Allegro moderato" in the manuscript).

Significantly, only the scherzo has undergone no important revisions. The manuscript shows some minor corrections, most of which seem to have been made in the course of Mendelssohn's writing down of the movement as the result of his errors in copying. This score is almost certainly not a first draft, and here, Mendelssohn, working as his own copyist, made mistakes which he immediately saw and corrected, such as those at MS49:1:4, second viola; MS49:2:3, first cello; and MS49:2:5, first viola. In the course of copying, he may also have solved some minor problems, such as the notation of the ornament in the first violin part at MS49:1:4 which appears in its corrected form at MS49:2:3.

For the scherzo, the two scores correspond as follows:

MS45:1:6~m25.	MS50:1:4~m115.
MS46:1:3~m42.	MS51:1:9~m137.
MS46:2:1~m51.	MS52:1:3~m153.
MS47:2:5~m71.	MS53:2:3~m197.
MS49:1:2~m95.	MS55:1:2~m229.

IV. [Finale.] "Presto" ("Molto allegro e vivace" in the manuscript).

MS58:1:2~m33.

MS59:1:9~m63.

MS60:2:10, where all parts except the first violin have been changed in the manuscript, ~m92.

MS62:2:4~m133.

MS64:2:6~m179.

Mendelssohn cuts from the second half of MS67:1:7 through the first half of MS68:1:1. Thus MS67:1:6~m232 and MS68:1:2~m234.

The second violin part from MS68:1:6–8 has been rewritten, though the three measures otherwise correspond to m238–240.

Another cut occurs from MS69:1:1–4. MS69:1:5~m255.

Several short passages have been rewritten, notably: the second viola at MS69:1:9; the first viola at MS69:1:11; the second cello at MS69:2:5; and the third violin at MS70:2:5–6.

Although MS70:2:10 through MS72:1:4 correspond to m291–316, the five inner parts have been extensively revised.

MS72:1:9~m321, but in the next measure, MS72:1:10, Mendelssohn begins a cut which extends through MS73:1:5. MS73:1:6~m322.

MS74:1:1~m339.

Although no other measures are cut, a revision involving mostly inner parts begins at MS75:2:3 which corresponds to m377.

MS76:1:2~m387.

Facsimile

Ottetto.

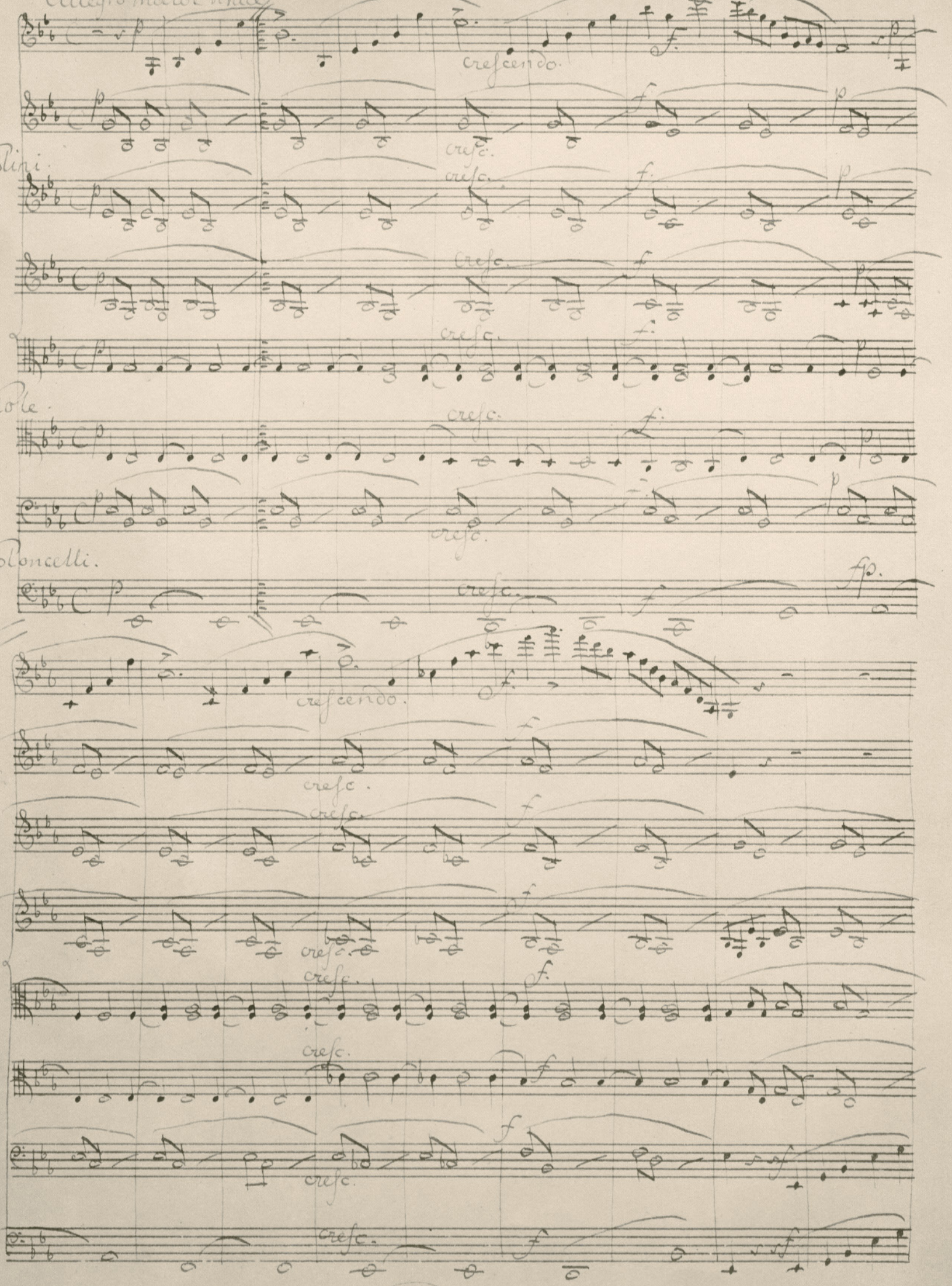
L. v. g. G.

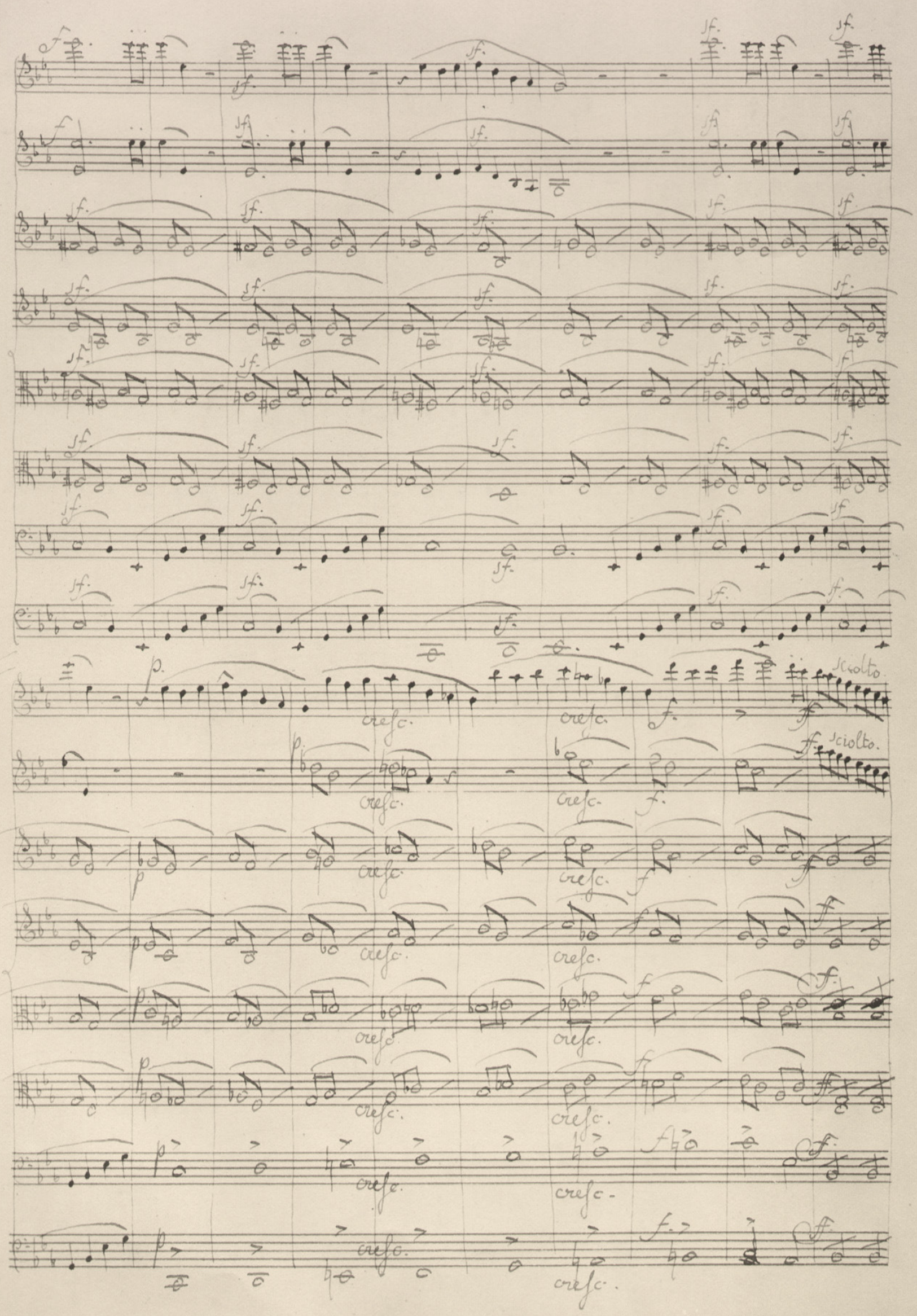
Allegro molto e vivace

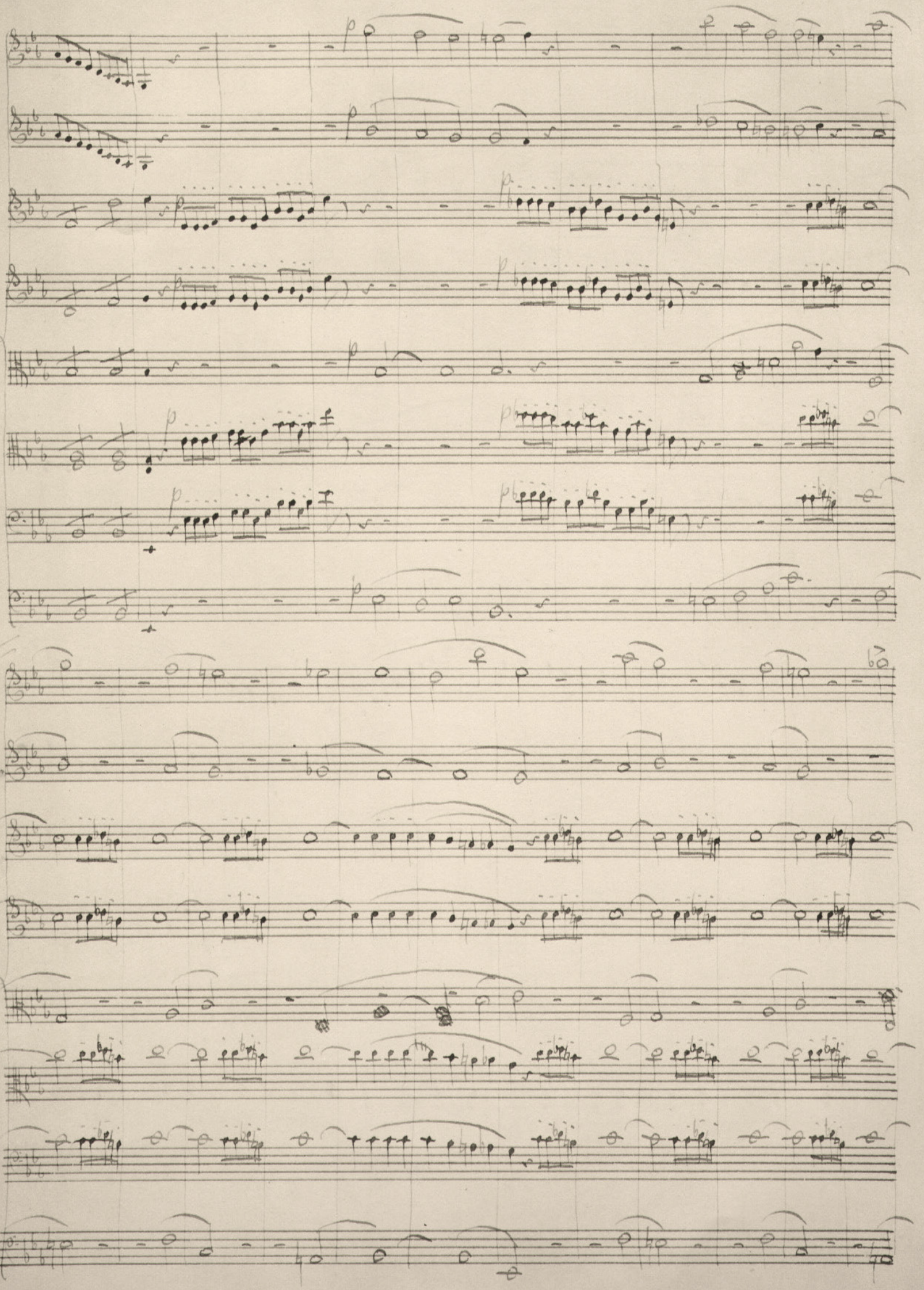
4 Violini.

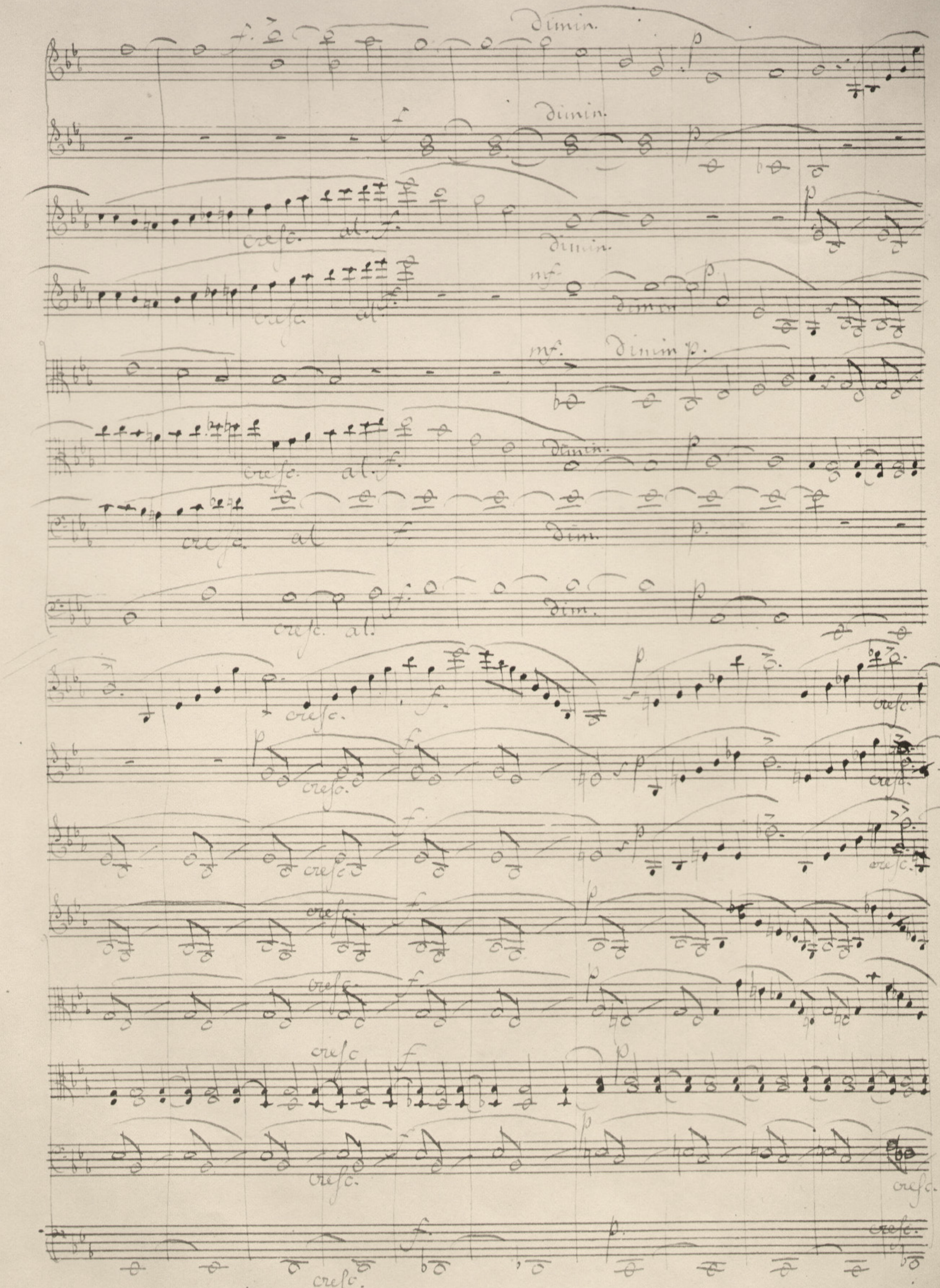
2 Viole.

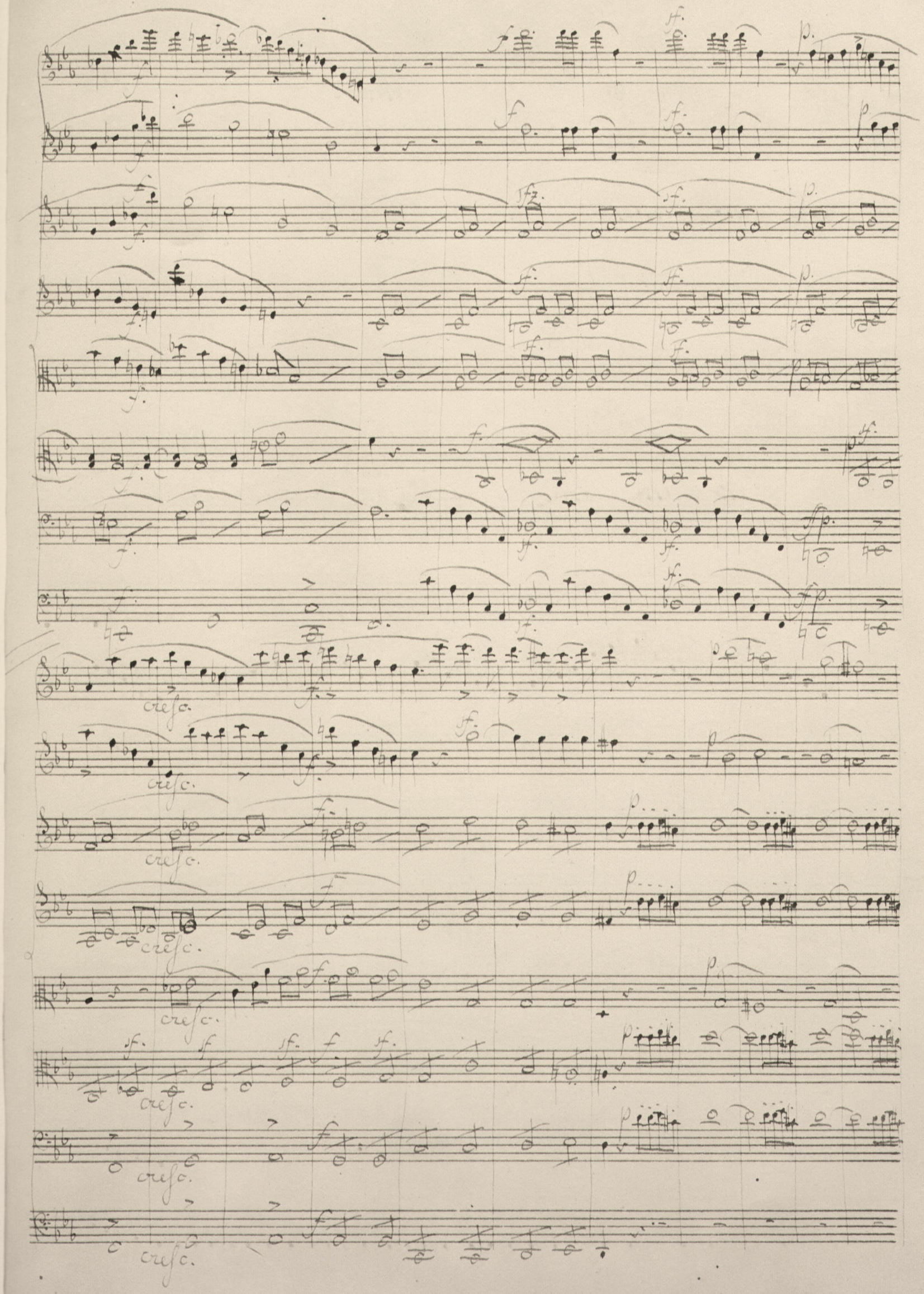
2 Violoncelli.




sciolto
sciolto.
cresc.




f.
dimin.
p
f
dimin.
p
cresc.
al f.
dimin.
p
cresc.
al f.
mf
dimin
p
mf.
dimin p.
cresc.
al f.
dimin.
p
cresc.
al
f
dim.
p.
cresc.
al.
f.
dim.
p
cresc.
f.
p
cresc.
p
cresc.
f
f
p
cresc.
cresc.
f.
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
f
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
p.
cresc.
cresc.
f.
p.
cresc.
cresc.


cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.

p dim.

cresc. molto.

dim.

dim.

dim.

dim.

cresc. molto. p.

pp

rit.

cresc. molto.

p. dim.

cresc. molto. p.

cresc.

cresc.

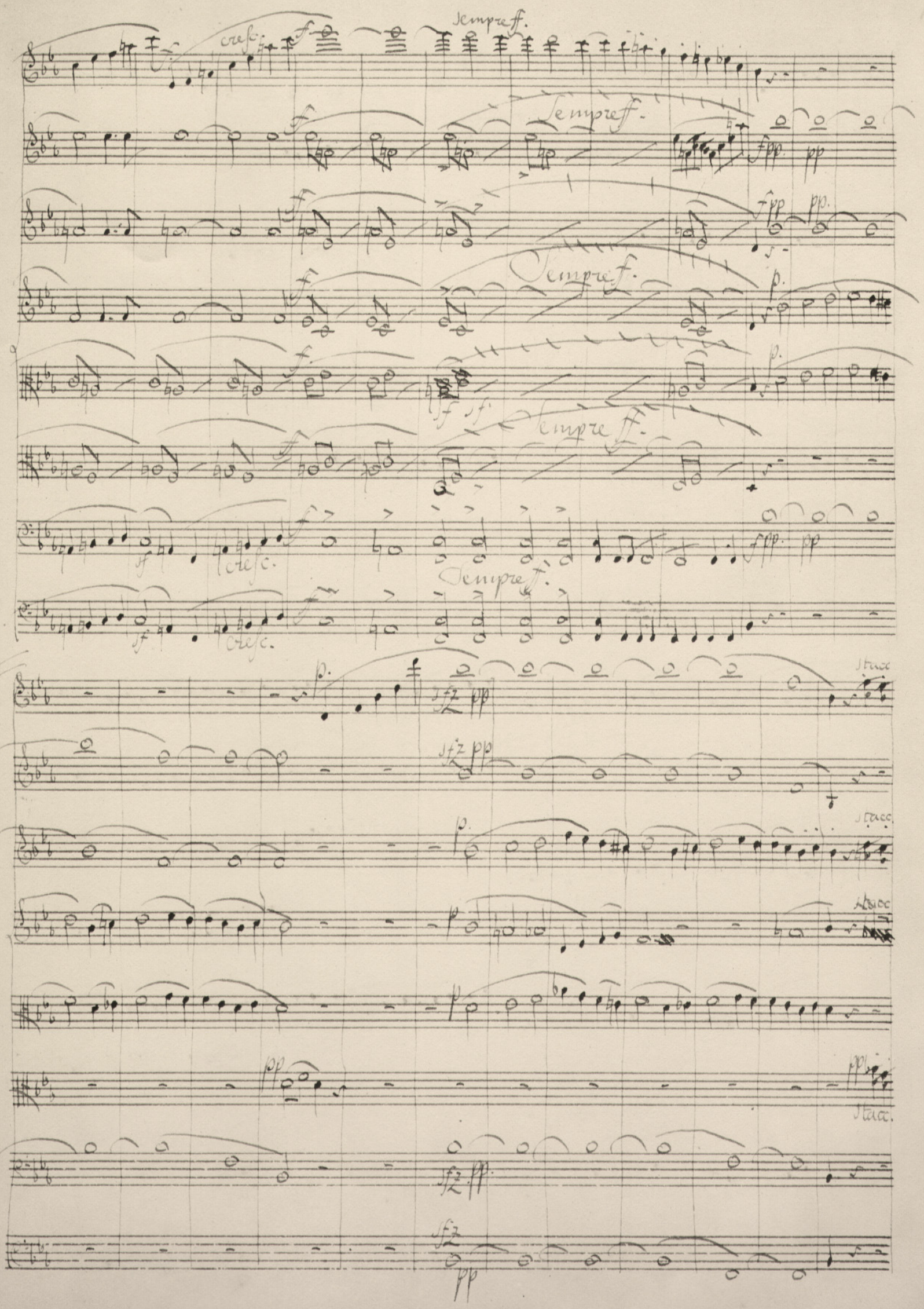
cresc.

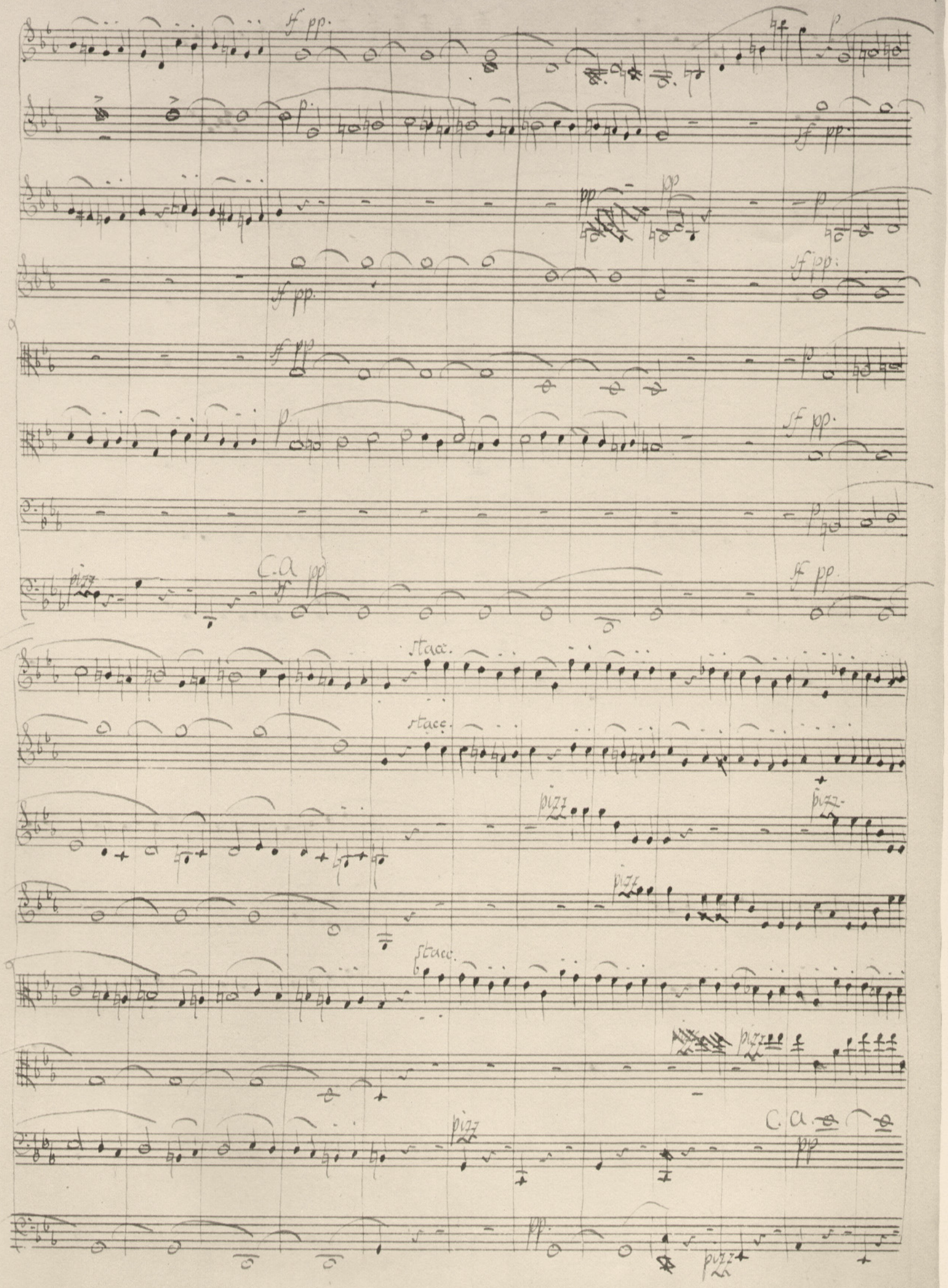
cresc.

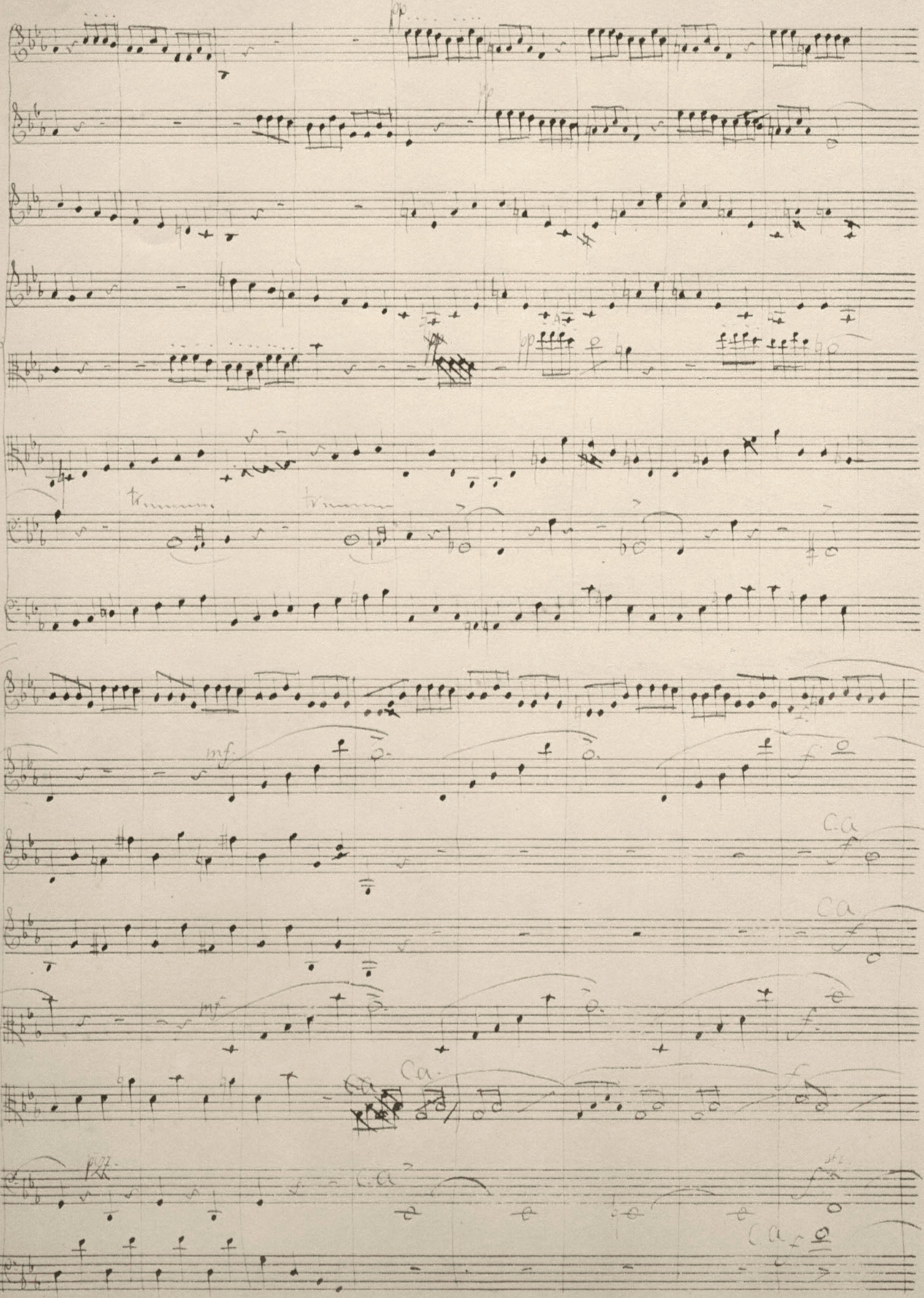
cresc.

cresc.

f.


cresc.
sempre ff.
Sempre ff.
fpp
pp
Sempre f.
p.
sf
Sempre ff.
cresc.
Sempre ff.
sfz
pp
stacc.


sf pp.
p
sf pp.
pp
pp
p
sf pp.
sf pp.
sf pp
p
p
sf pp.
p
pizz
C.a
sf pp
sf pp.
stacc.
stacc.
pizz
pizz
pizz
stacc.
pizz
pizz
C.a
pp
pp
pizz


pp
mf
Ca.
pizz.

Sempre ff.

Sempre ff.

Sempre ff.

cresc. ff. p.

cresc. ff. fp. Crescendo.

cresc. ff. fp. Cresc.

cresc. ff. fp. Cresc.

cresc. ff. Cresc.

cresc. fp. Cresc.

Crescendo.

Con fuoco.

con fuoco

Con fuoco.

con fuoco

I

II

Bvaalda

Loco

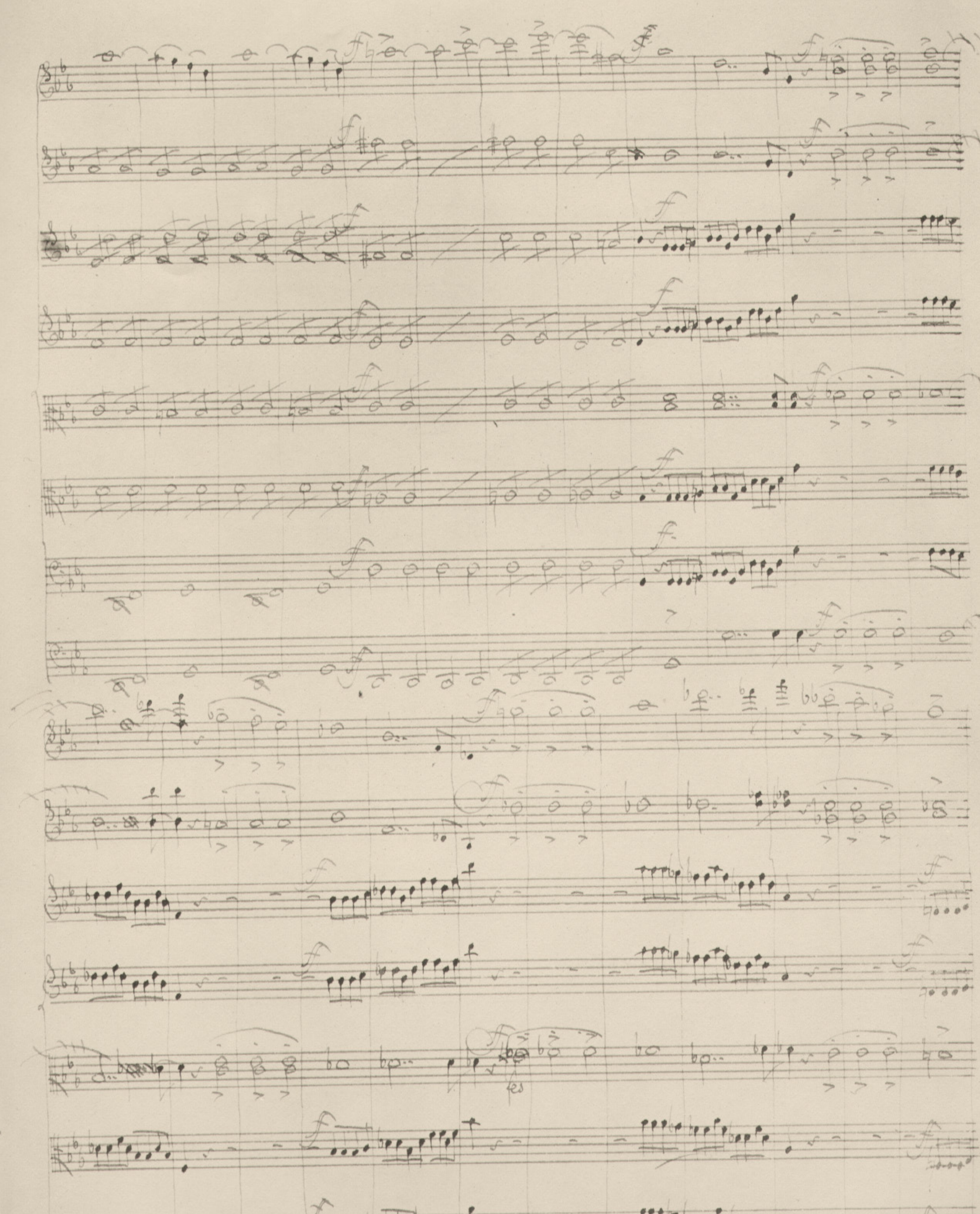
Sempre ff.

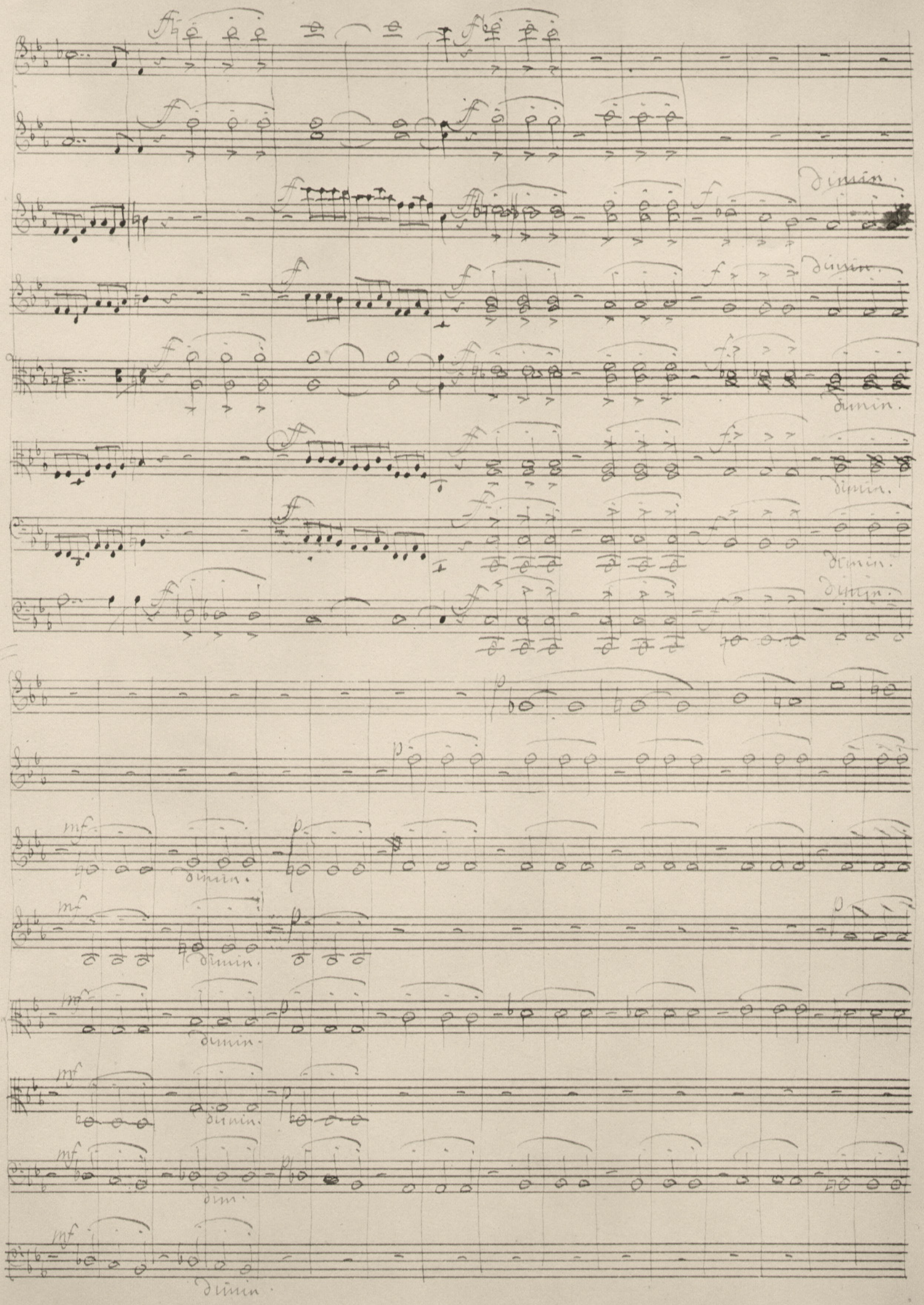
Sempre ff.

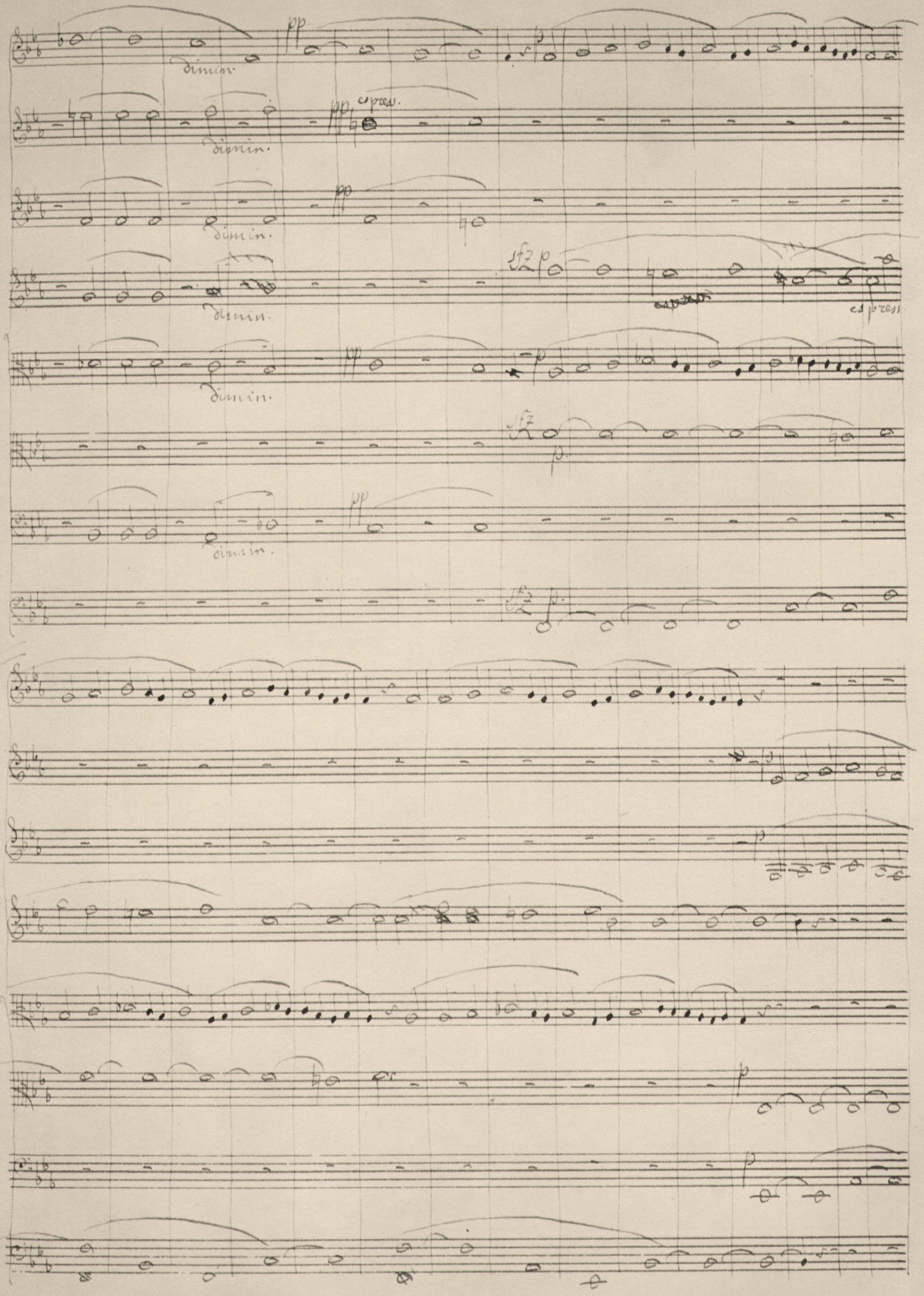
Sempre ff.

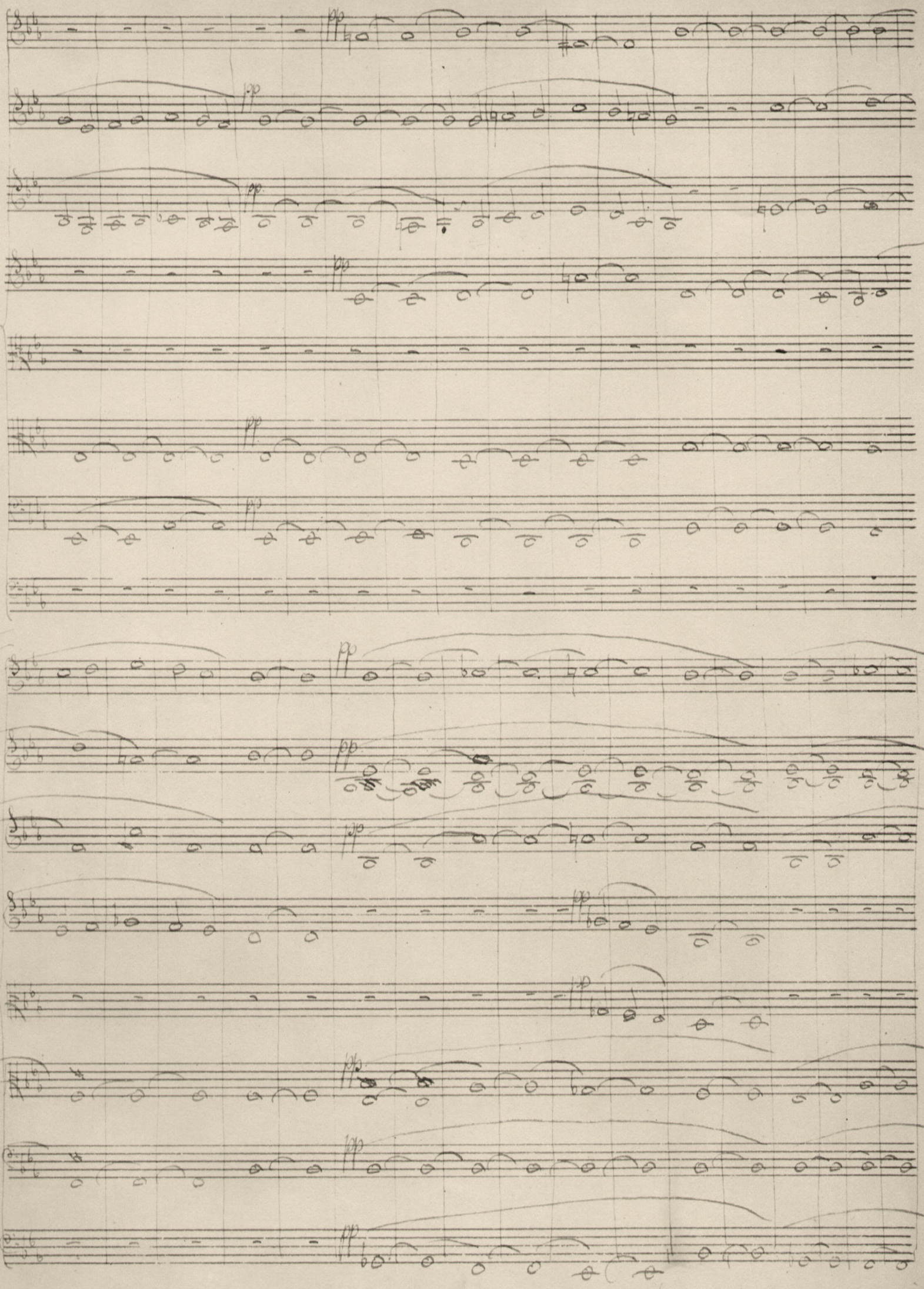
Sempre ff.

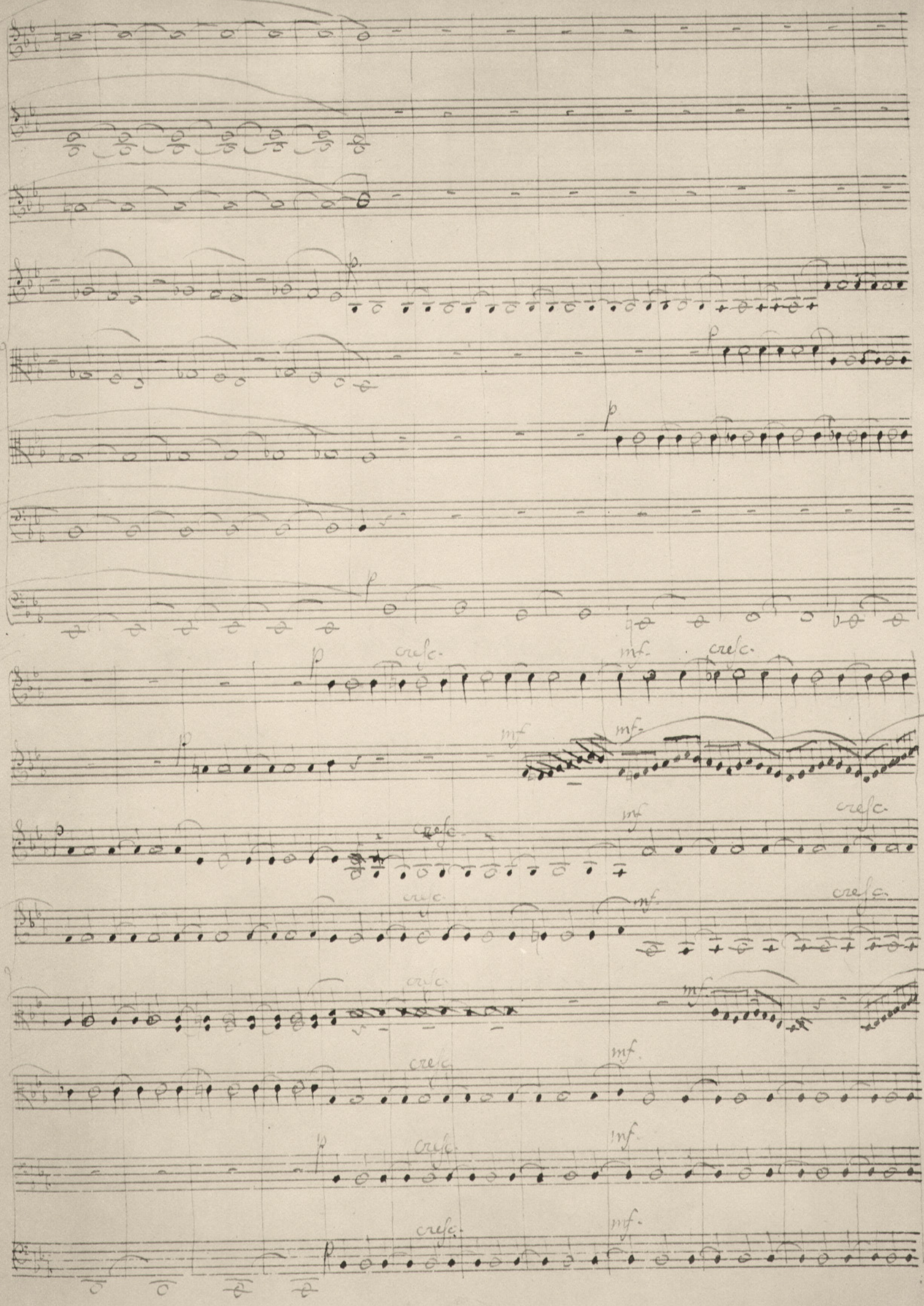
Sempre f.

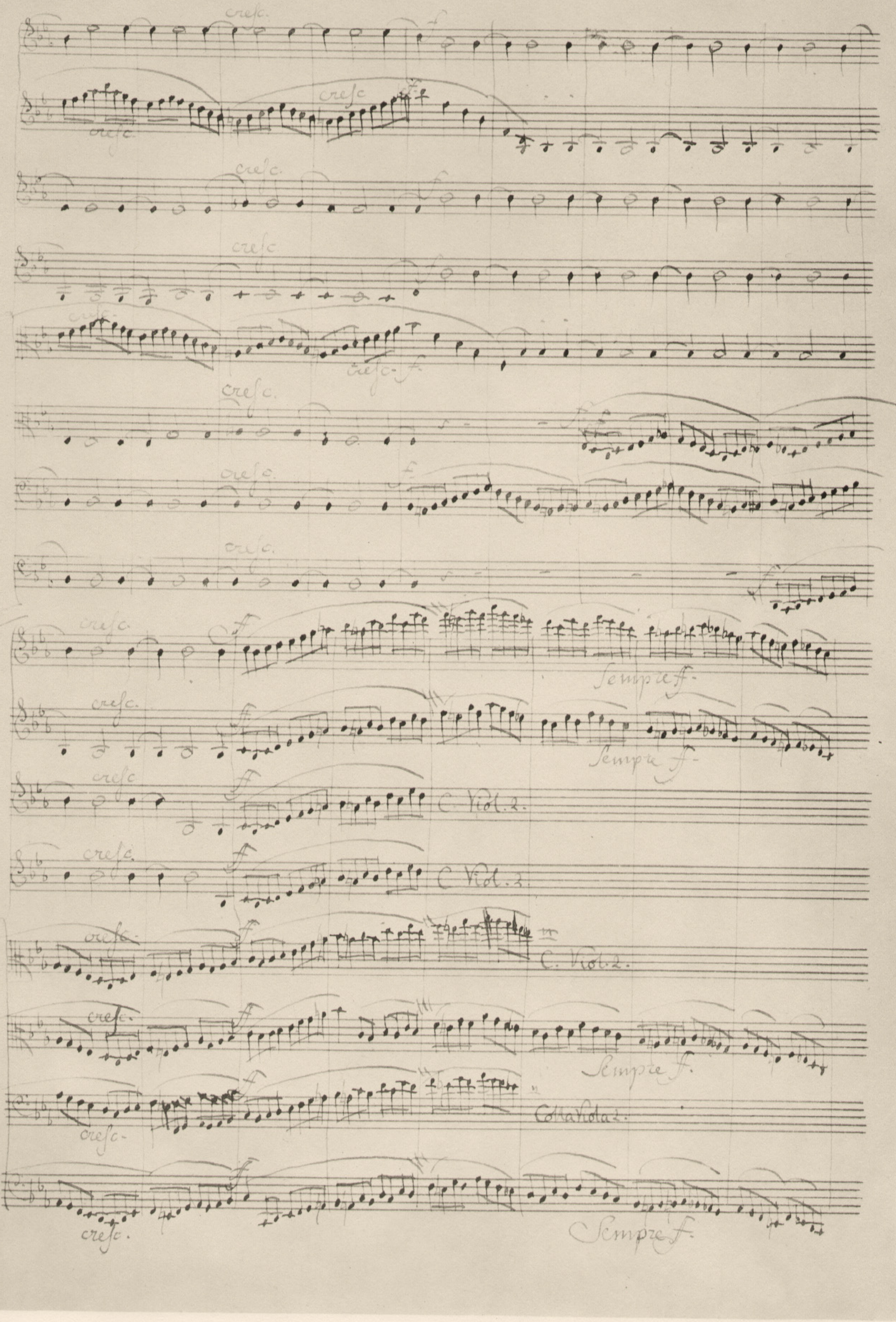


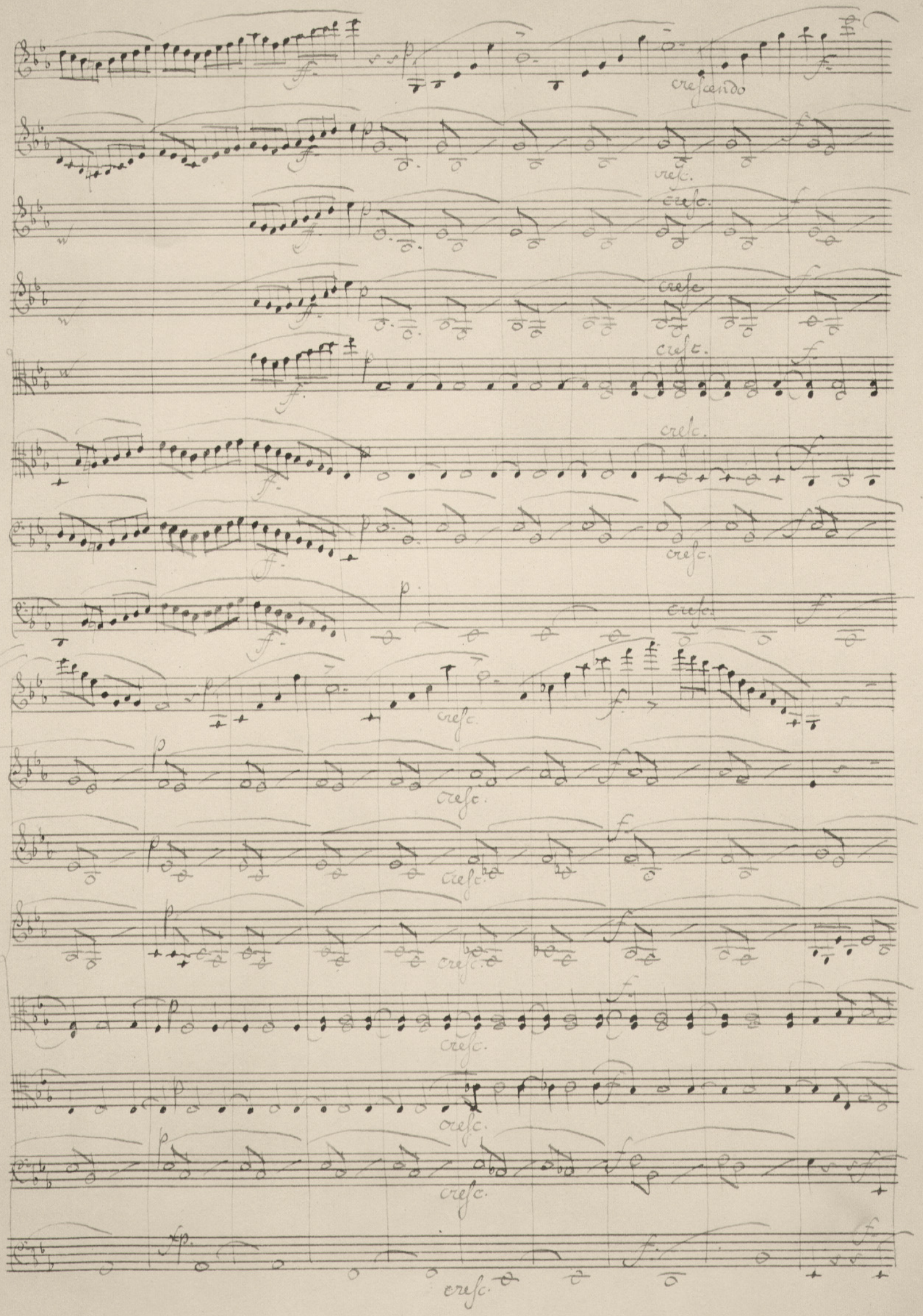

dimin.
dimin.
dimin.
dimin.
dimin.
dimin.
dimin.
dimin.
dimin.
dimin.
dimin.
dimin.
dimin.
dimin.


dimin.
pp
dimin.
pp espress.
dimin.
pp
dimin.
sfz p
espress
dimin.
pp
sfz
p
dimin.
pp
sfz p
p
p




p
p
p
p
cresc.
mf.
cresc.
p
mf
mf.
cresc.
mf
cresc.
cresc.
mf.
cresc.
cresc.
mf.
cresc.
mf.
p
cresc.
mf.
cresc.
mf.
p


cresc.
f
Sempre ff
C. Viol. 2.
Colla Viola 2.


crescendo
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.
cresc.

cresc.

cantabile.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

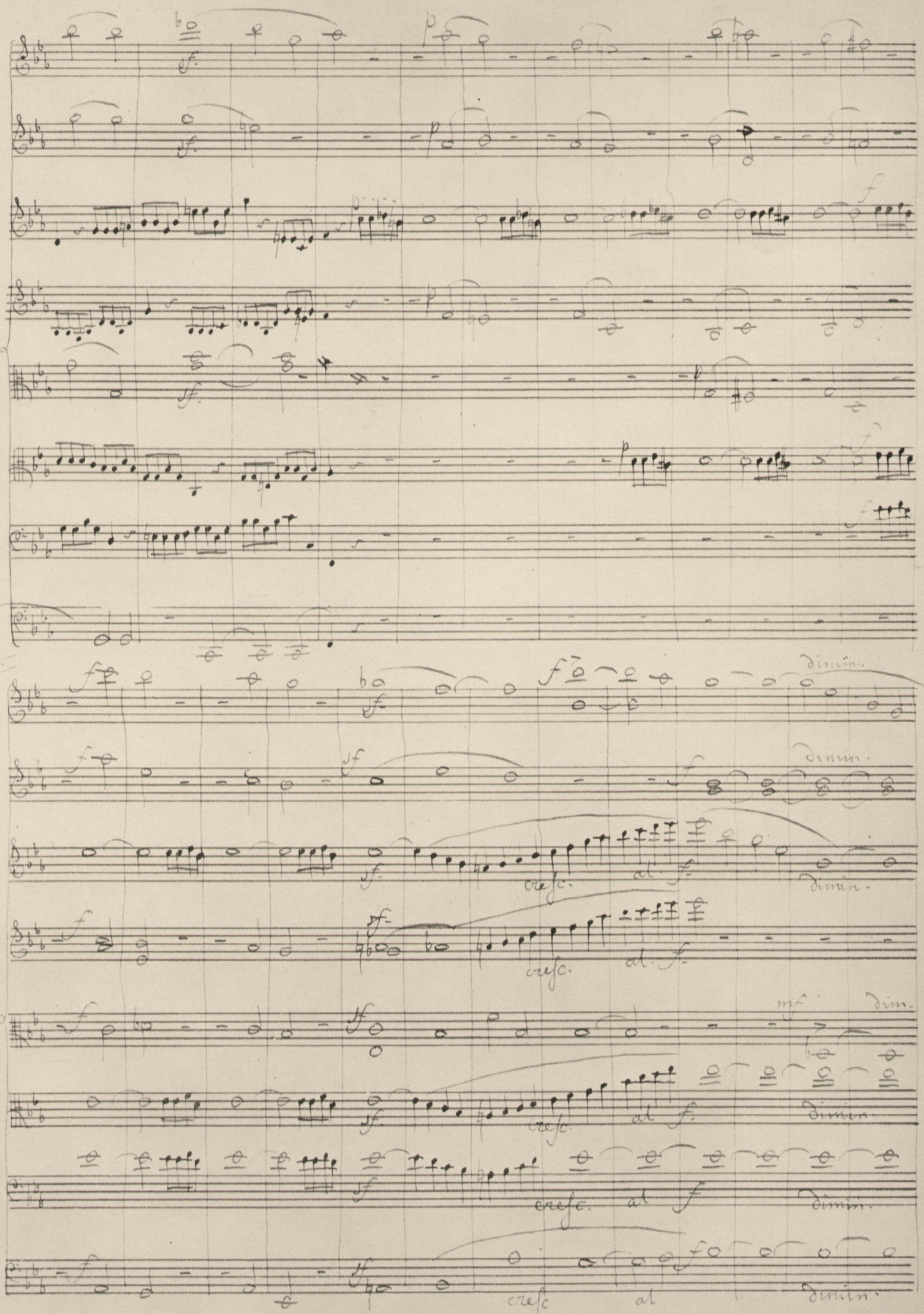
cresc.

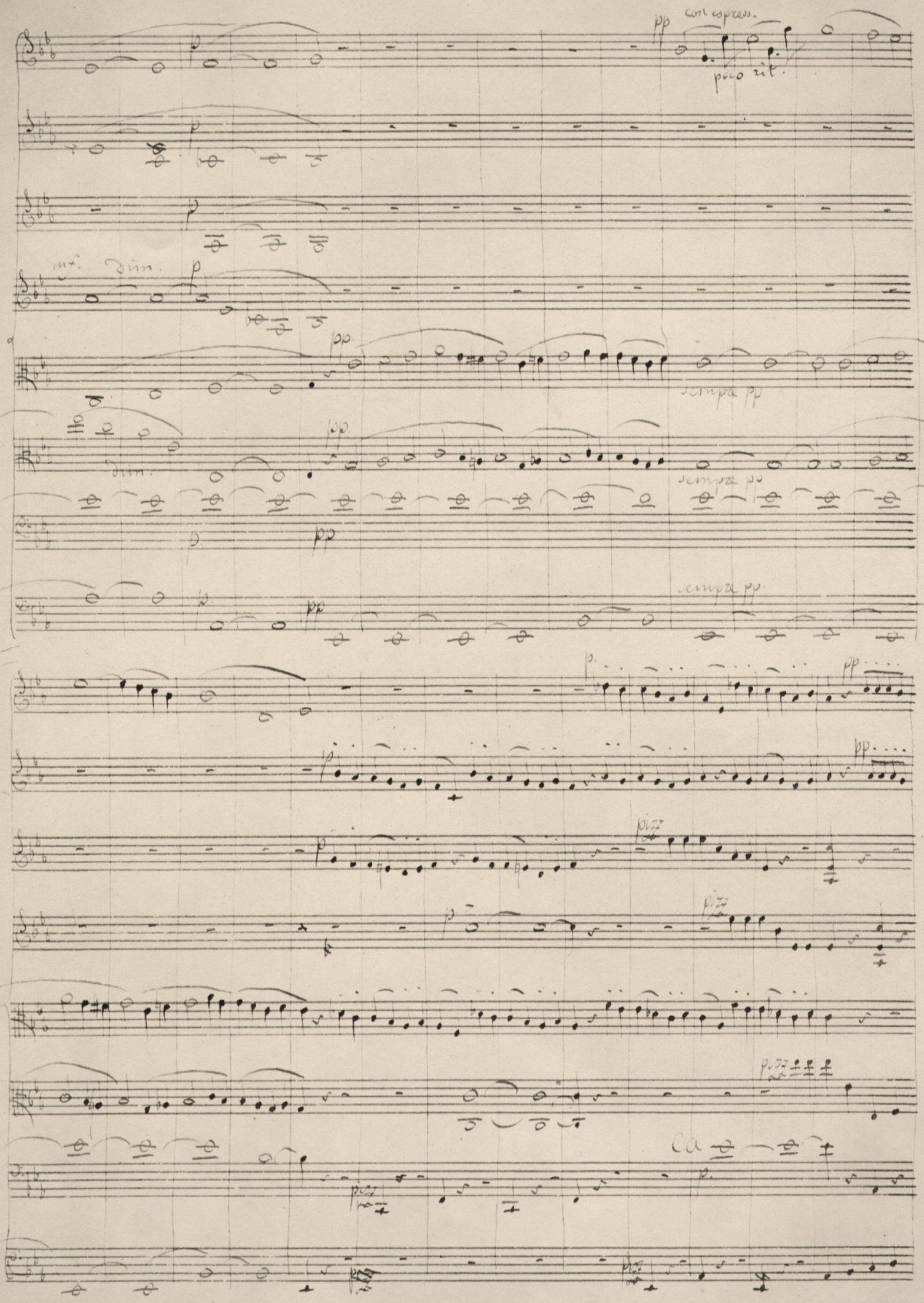
sciolto.

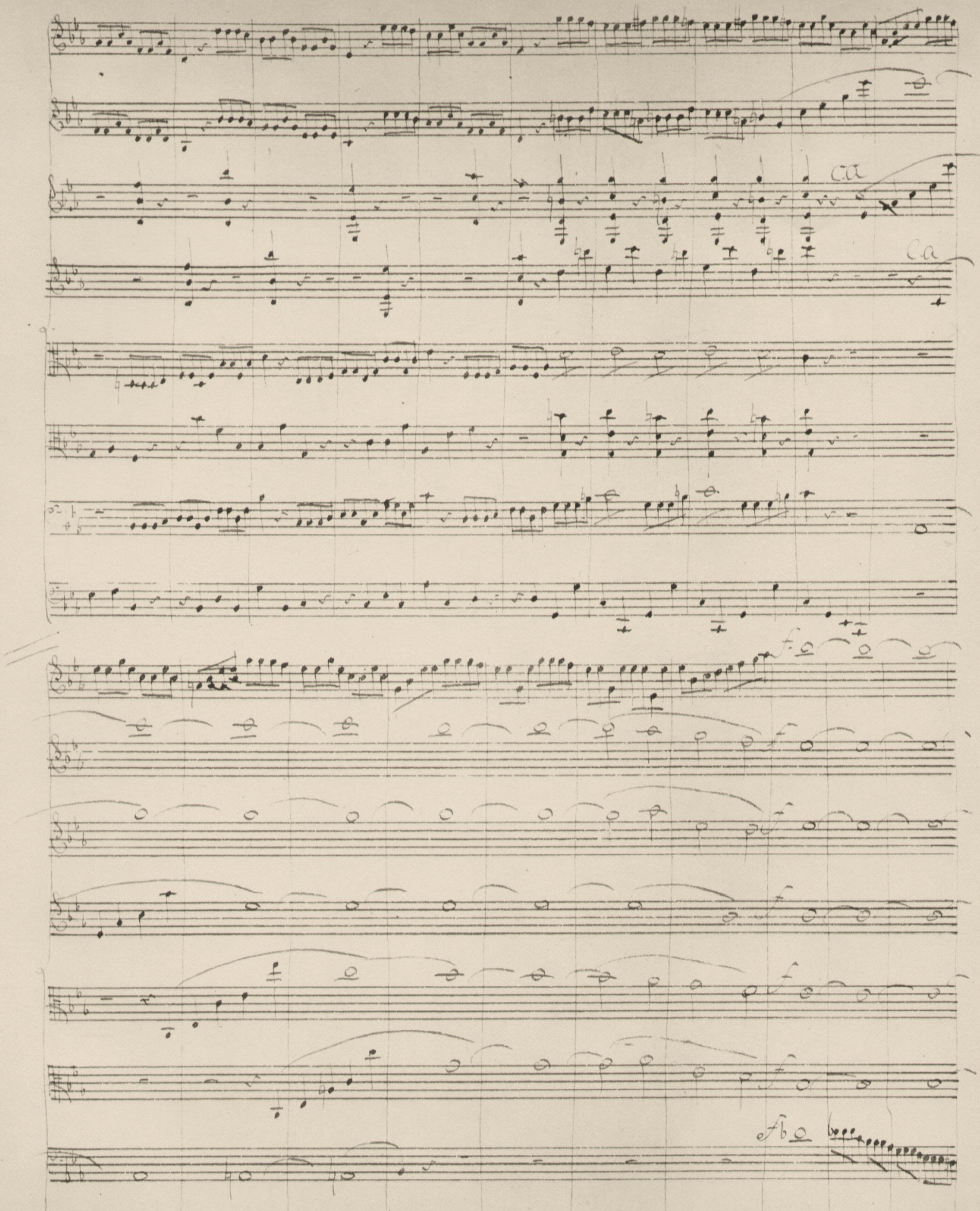
stacc.

stacc.

stacc.


dimin.
dimin.
cresc.
al
dimin.
cresc.
al
mf
dim.
cresc.
al
dimin.
cresc.
al
dimin.
cresc
al
dimin.


pp
con espress.
poco rit.
mf.
dim.
p
pp
sempre pp
dim.
pp
sempre pp
p
pp
sempre pp
p
pp
p
pp
pizz
p
pizz
pizz
Ca
p
pizz
pizz


Ca

cresc. ff

cresc. f

cresc.

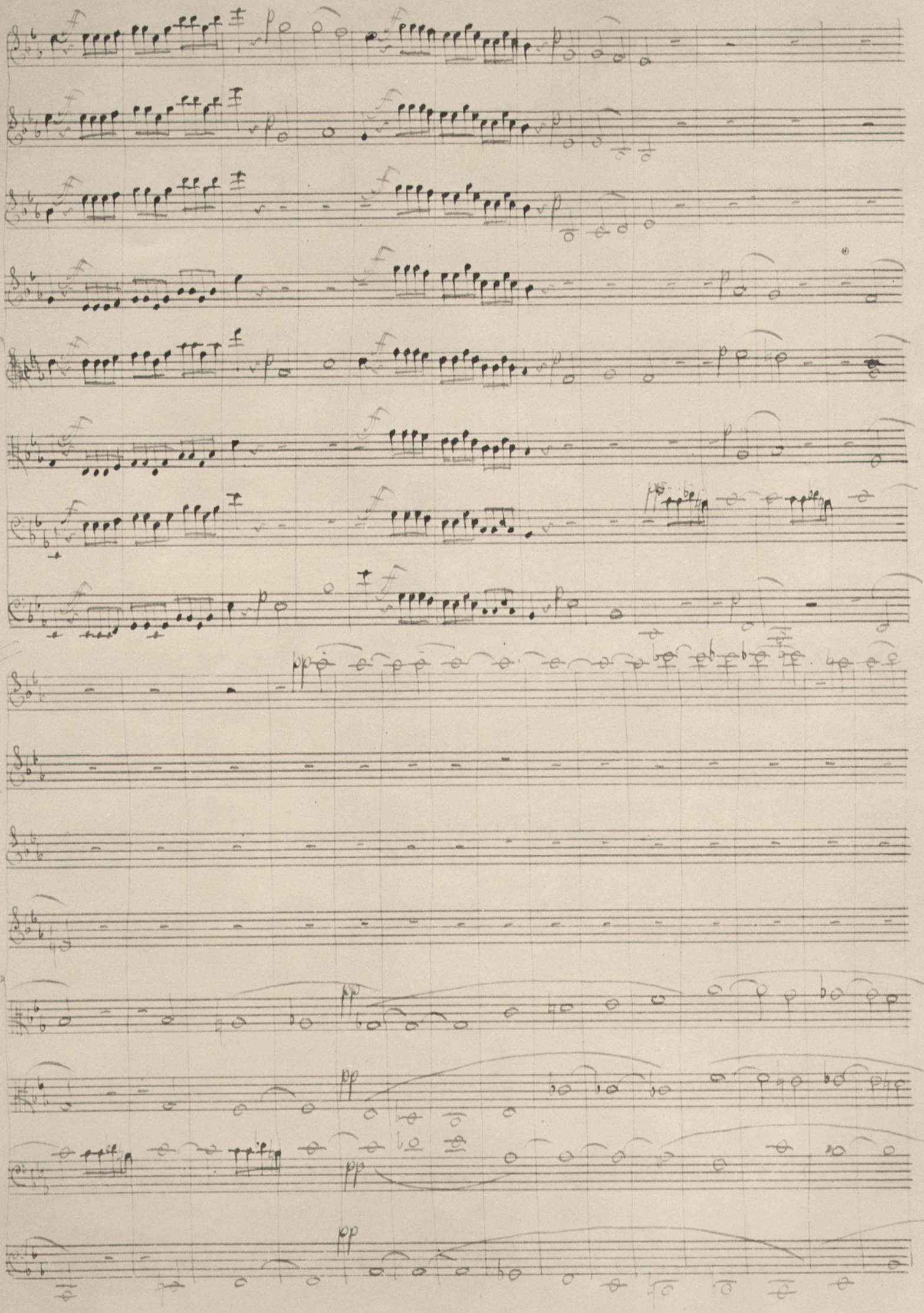
cresc.

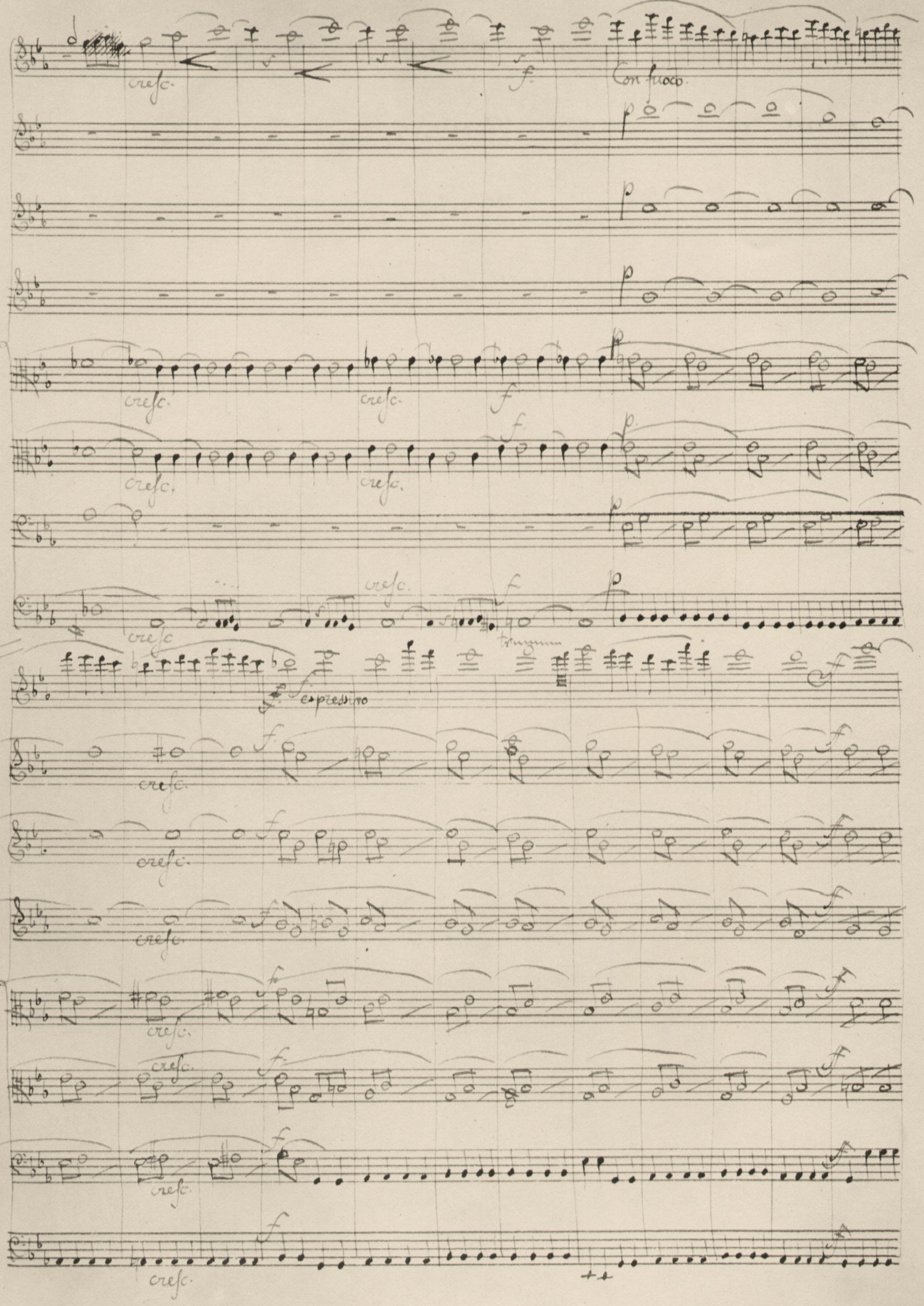
cresc.

cresc

cresc. f

cresc.




cresc.
Con fuoco
espressivo

8va alta

Crescendo al

Crescendo al

Crescendo al

Crescendo al

crescendo al

Crescendo al

Cresc.

cresc. f

cresc.

cresc. f

cresc.

cresc.

Cresc.

Andante.

Andante

cresc.

cresc.

Cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

dimin.

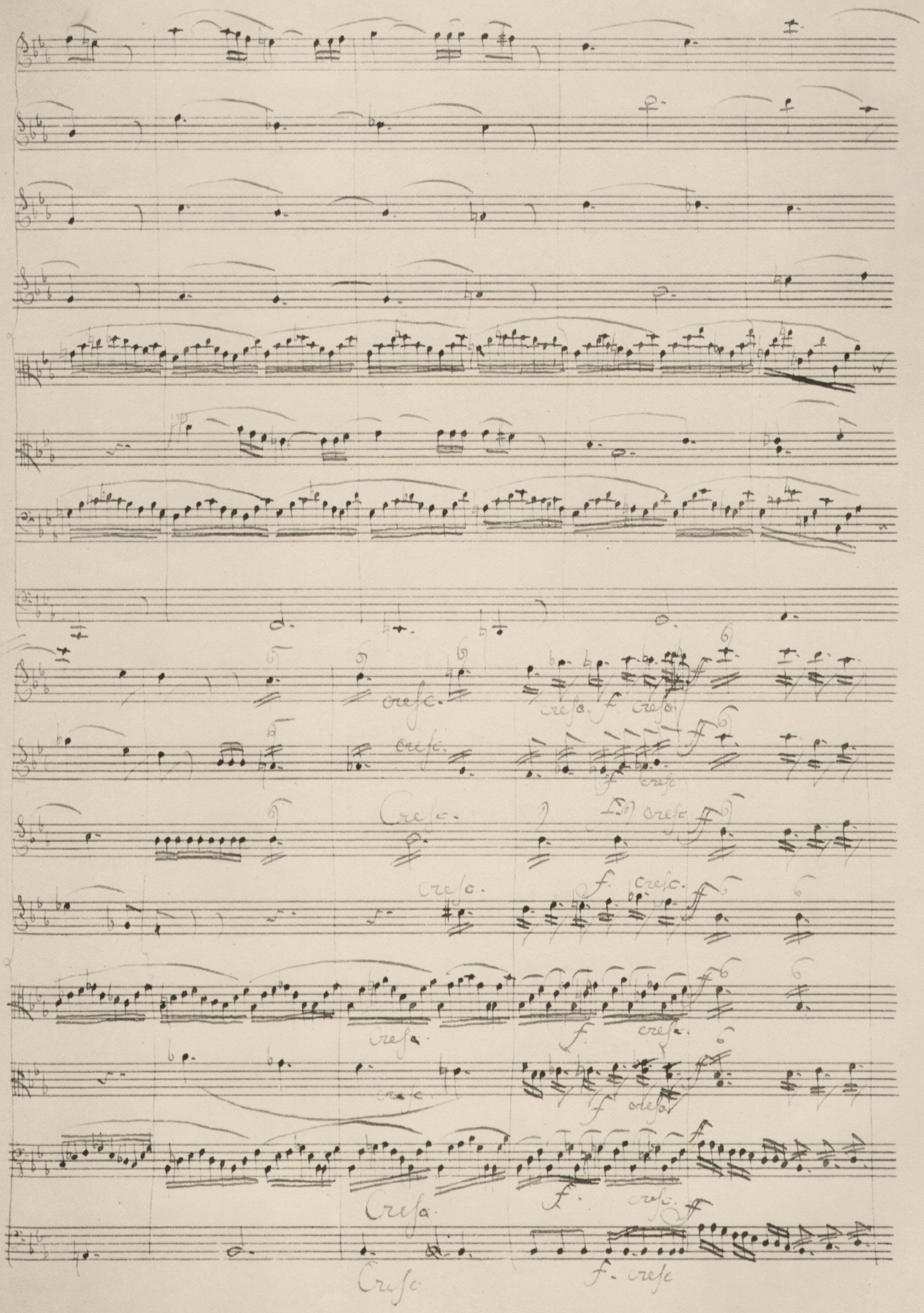
dimin.

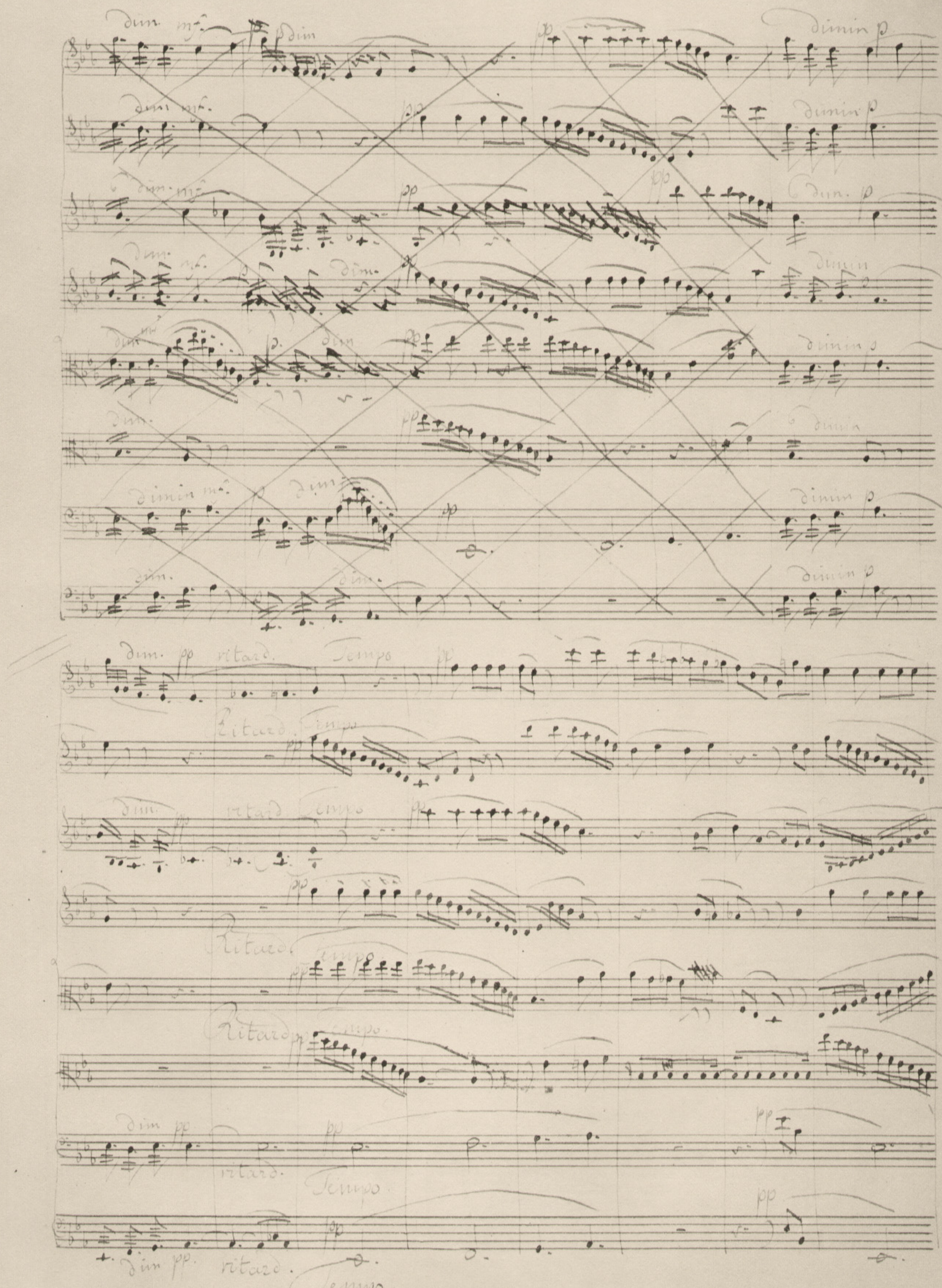
dimin.

dimin.

dimin.

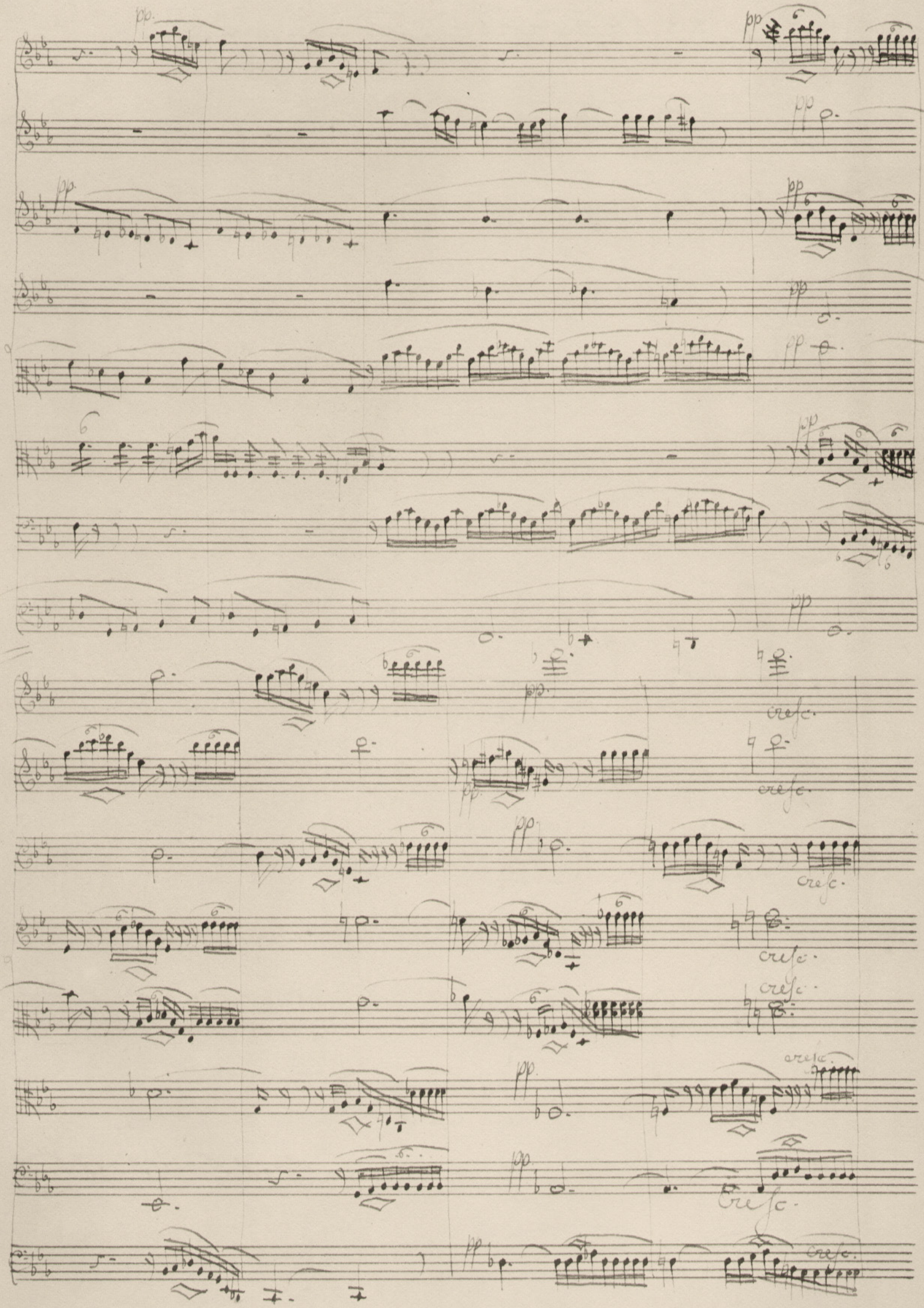
Dim.


cresc.
cresc.
f
cresc.
cresc.
f
cresc.
Cresc.
f
cresc.
cresc.
f
cresc.
cresc.
f
cresc.
cresc.
f
cresc.
Cresc.
f
cresc.
Cresc.
f
cresc.


dim. mf.
pp
dimin p
dimin
ritard.
Tempo
dim pp

dolce

dolce


pp
cresc.

Cresc.

Cresc.

Cresc.

Cresc.

Cresc.

Cresc.

Cresc.

Cresc.

sciolto.

sciolto.

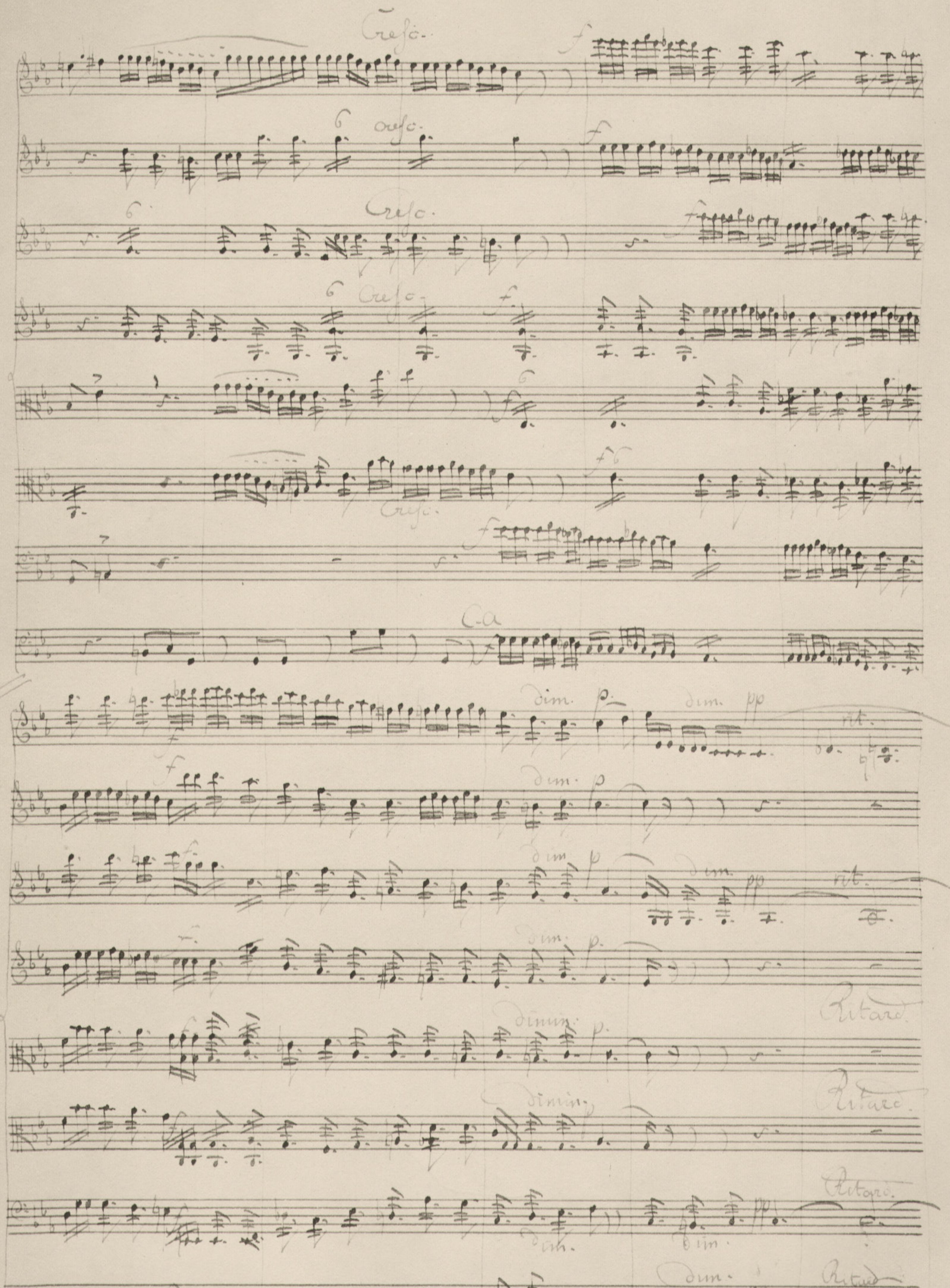
dimin.

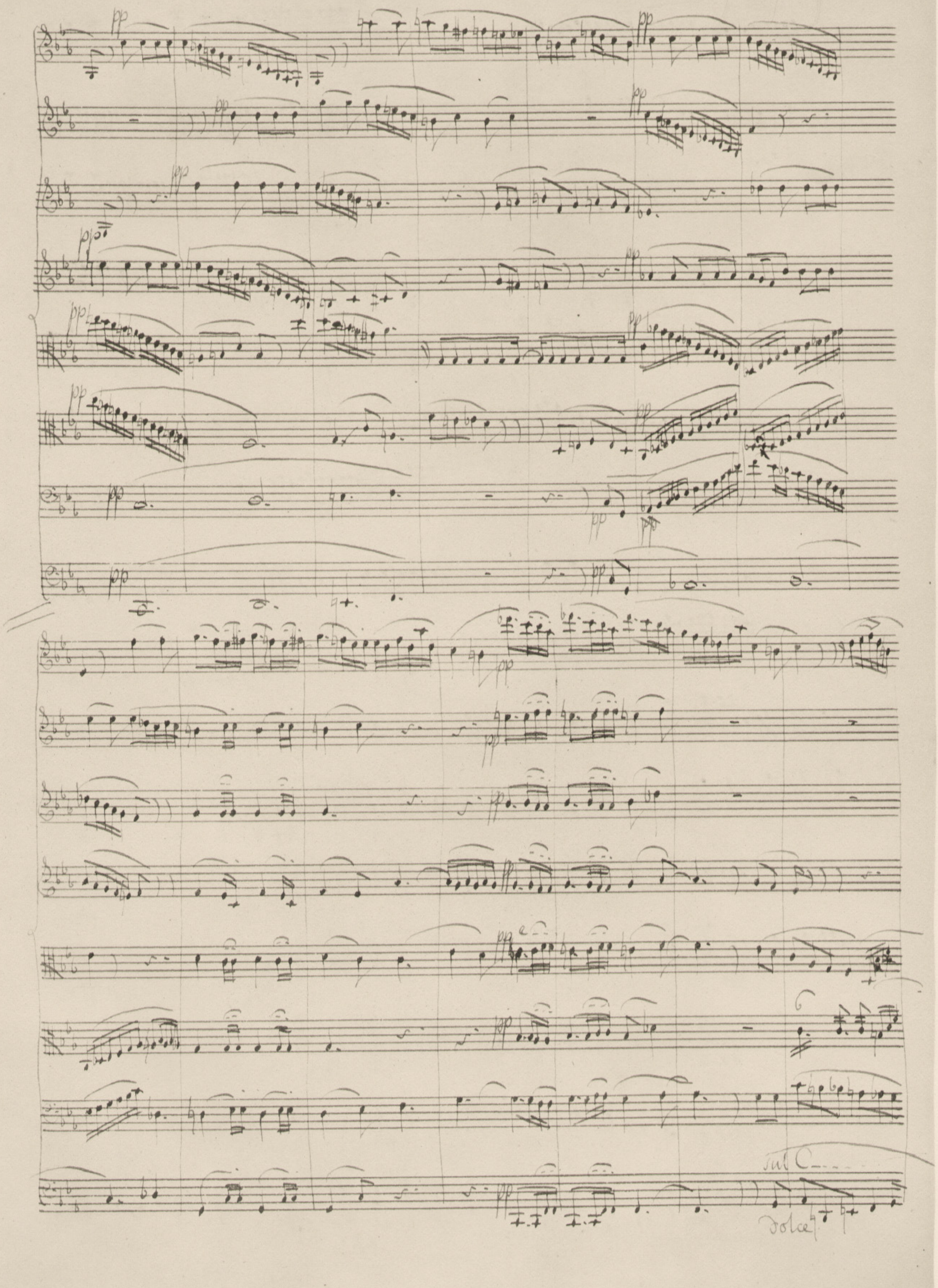
Cresc.

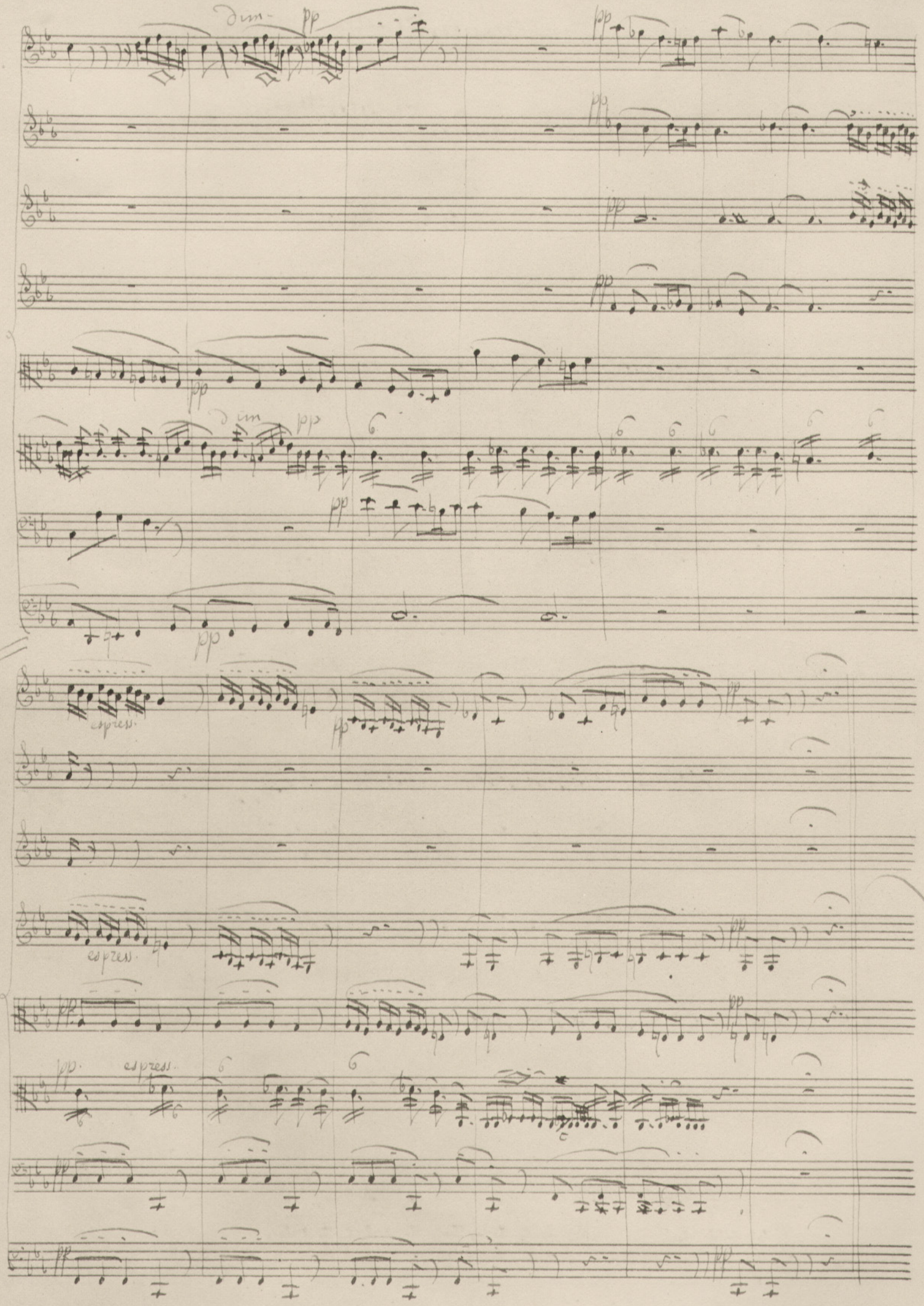
Cresc.

Cresc.

MUSIK-BIBLIOTHEK P. TSCHAIKOWSKY

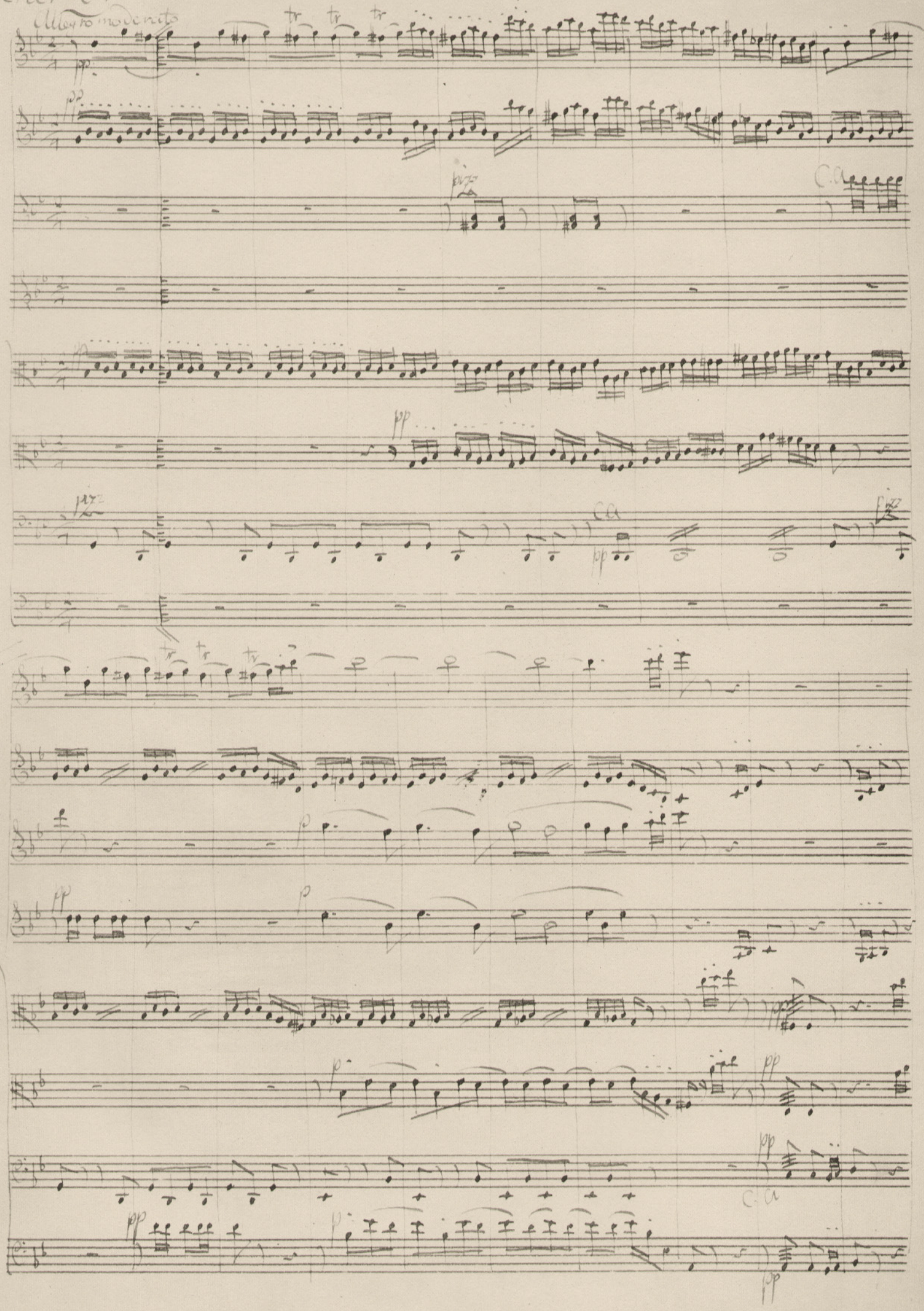

Cresc.
f
cresc.
f
Cresc.
f
Cresc.
f
f
Cresc.
f
dim.
p
dim.
pp
rit.
f
dim.
p
dim.
p
dim.
pp
rit.
dim.
p
dimin.
p
Ritard.
dimin.
Ritard.
Ritard.
dim.
dim.
dim.
Ritard.
dim
p

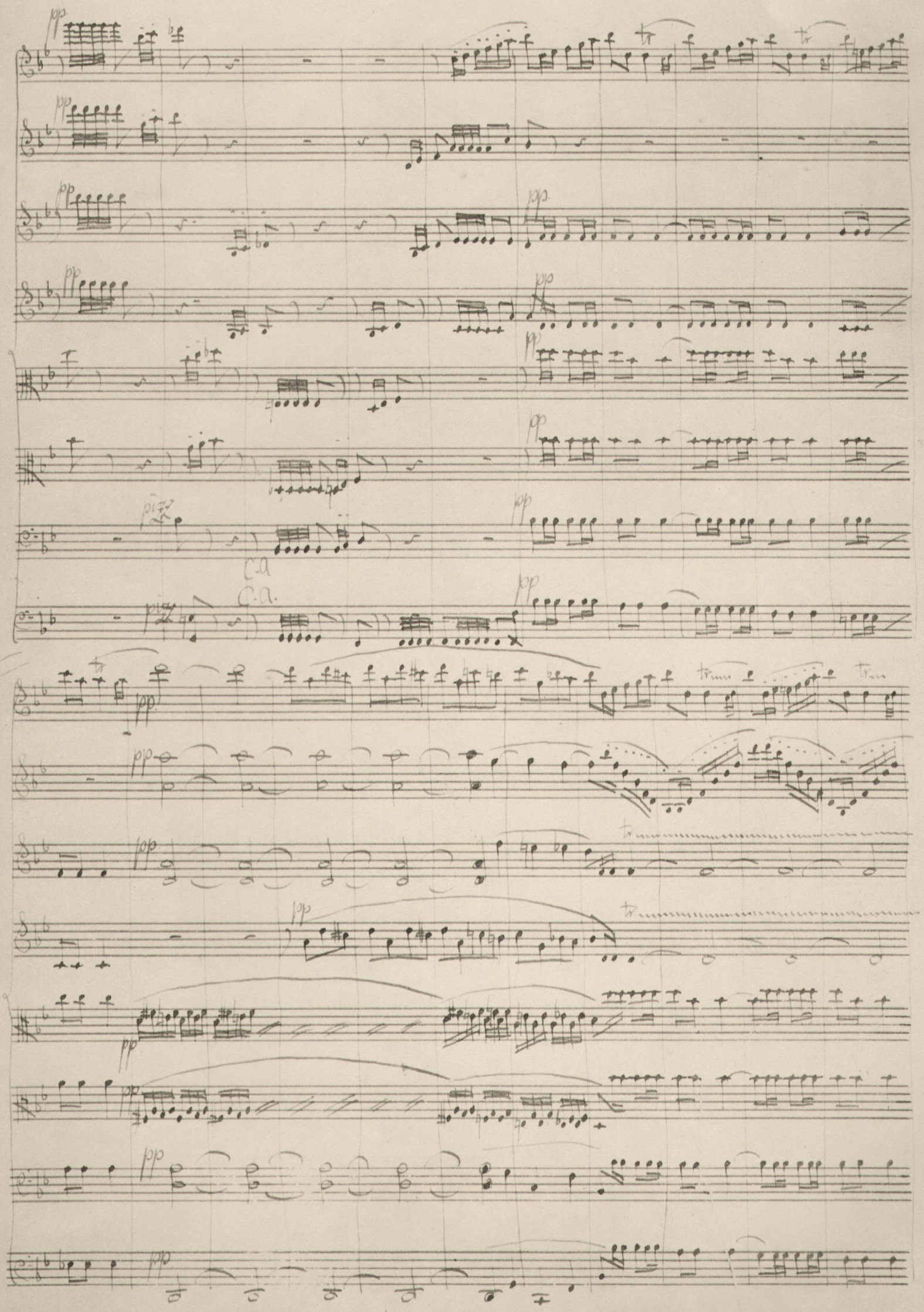

sul C
dolce


dim.
pp
espress.
espress.
pp
espress.

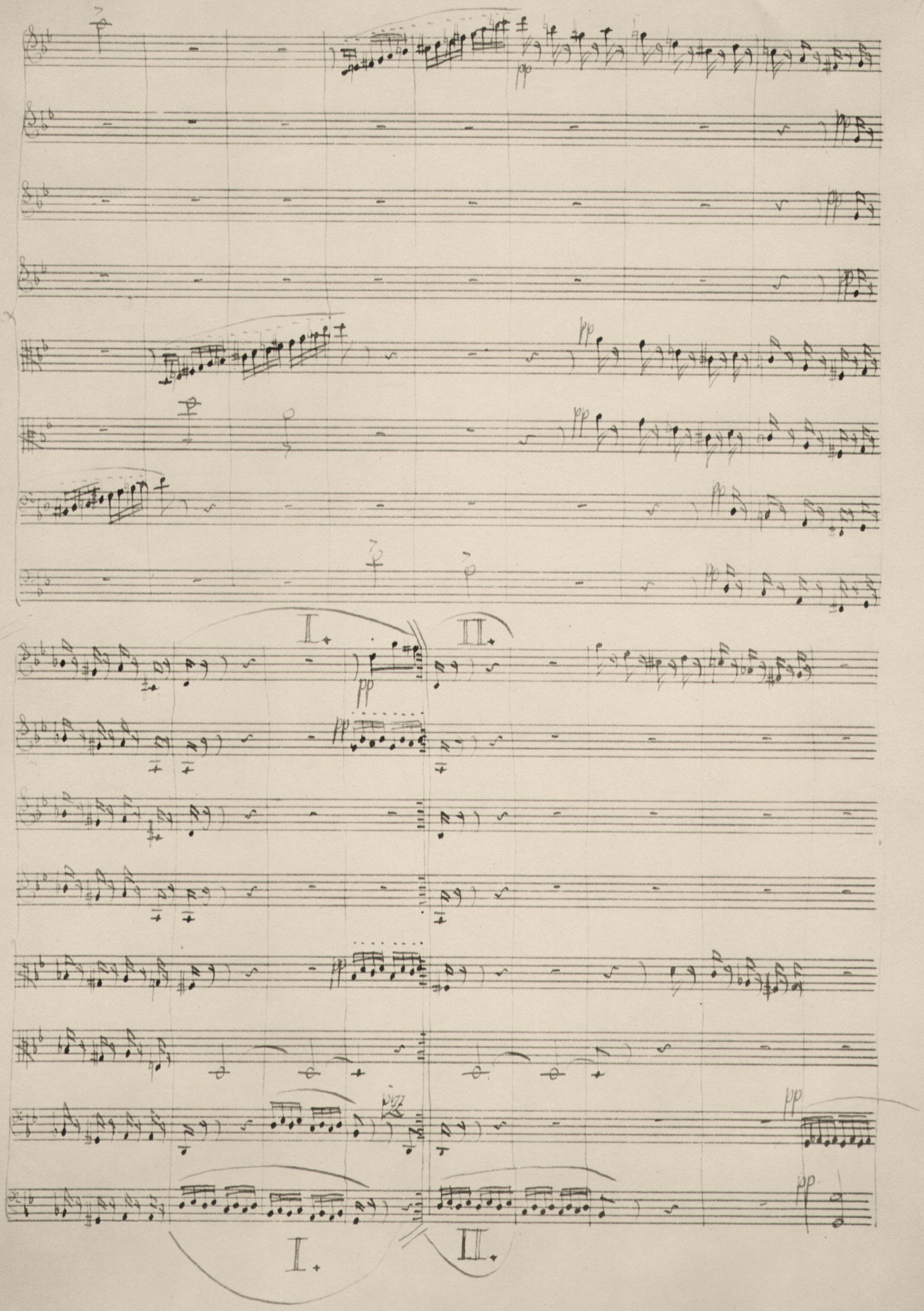
Si deve suonare questo Scherzo sempre pianissimo e staccato.

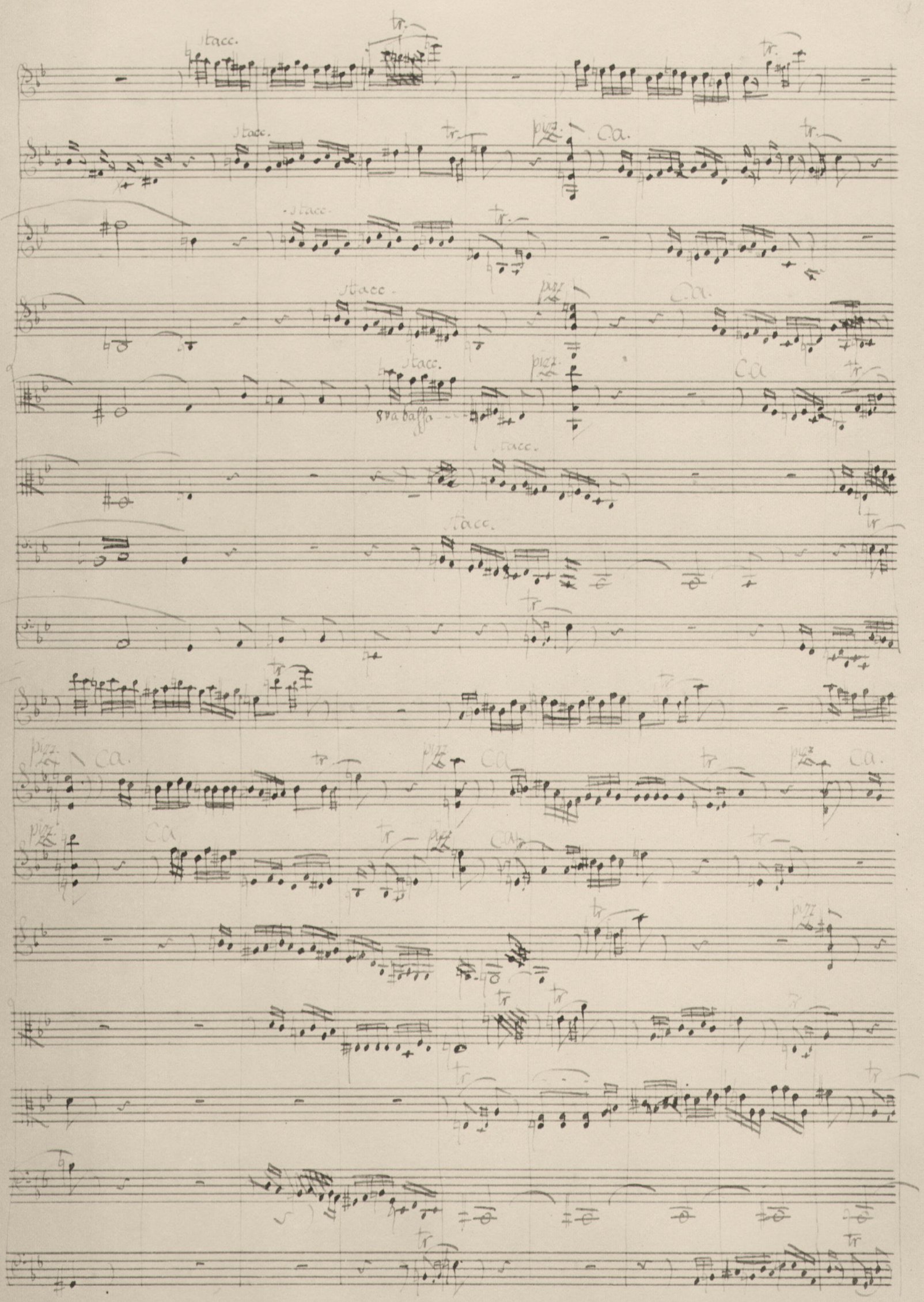
Scherzo

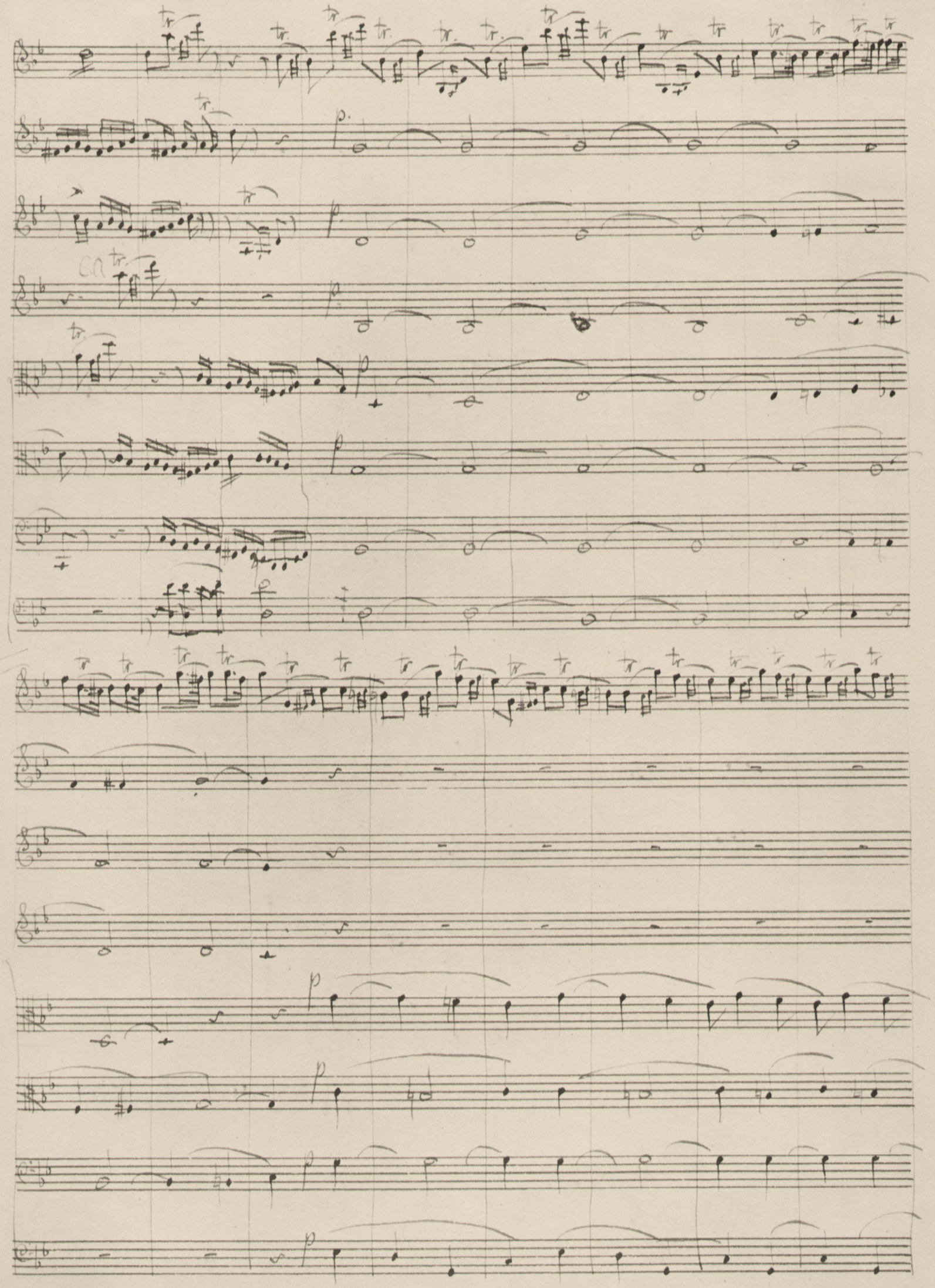



pp
pizz
C.a
C.a.

stacc.


pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pp
pizz
pp
pp
I.
II.
I.
II.


stacc.
tr.
pizz.
ca.
8va bassa



tr. tr tr tr tr. tr tr tr

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp

pp

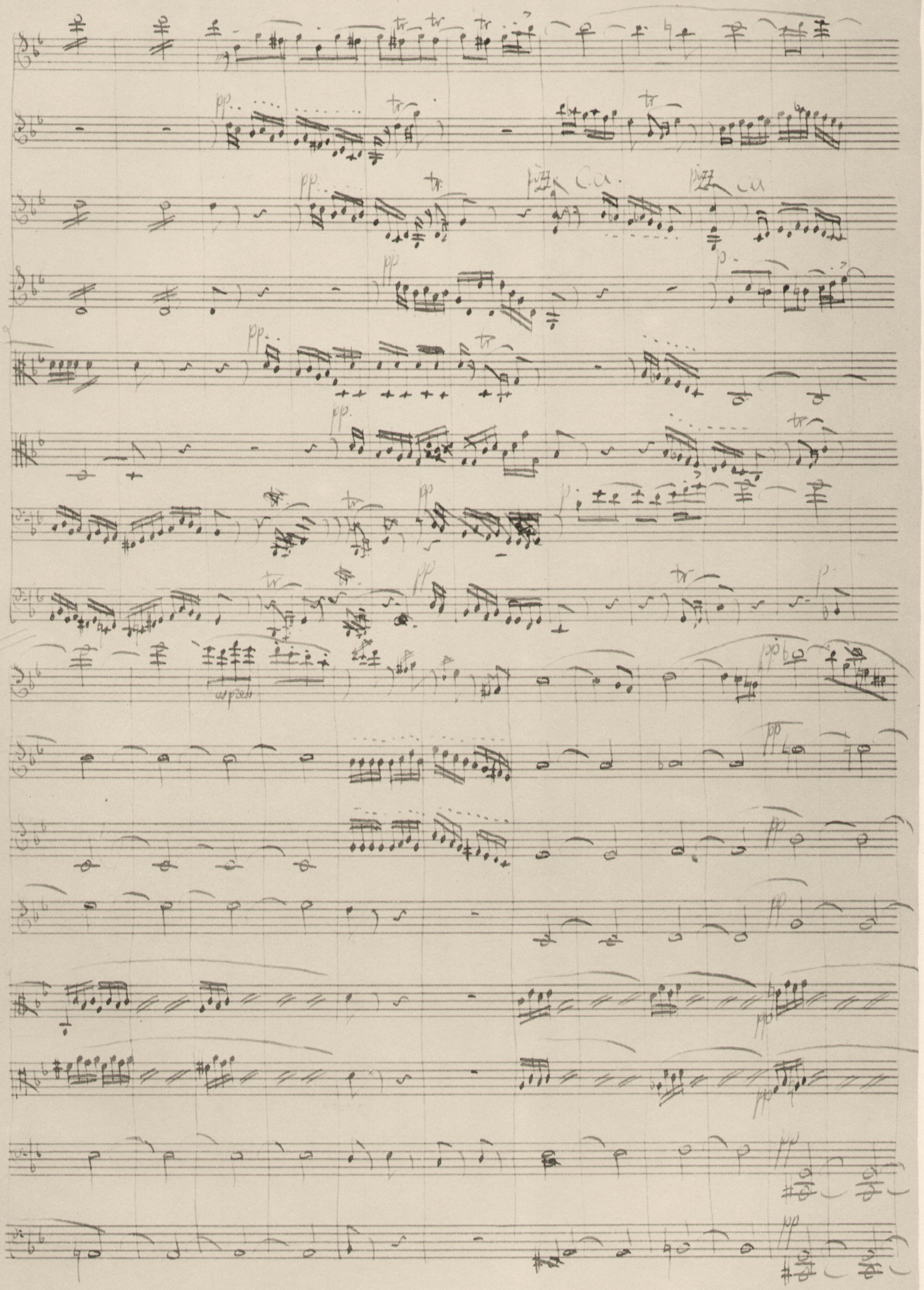
pp

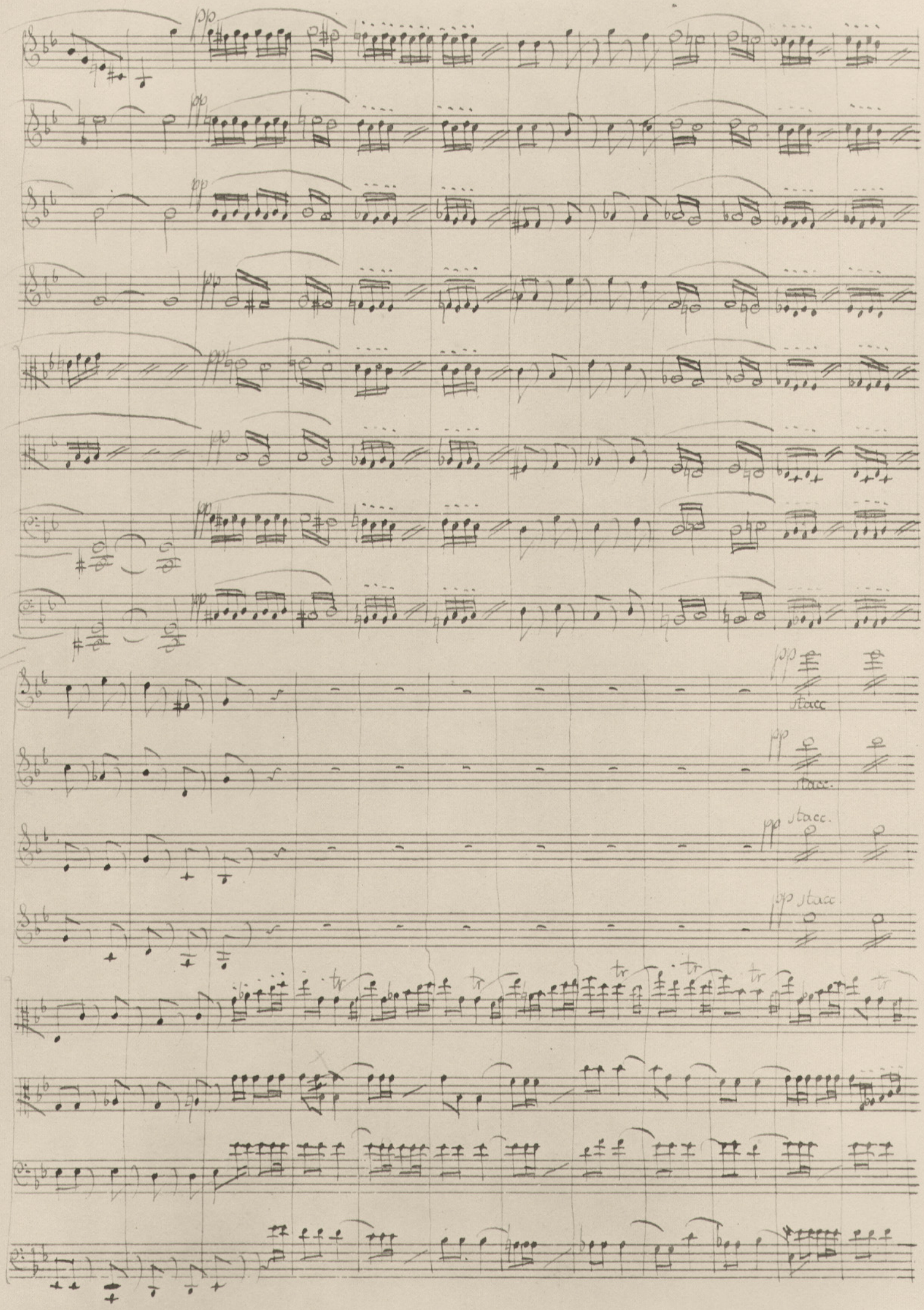
espress.

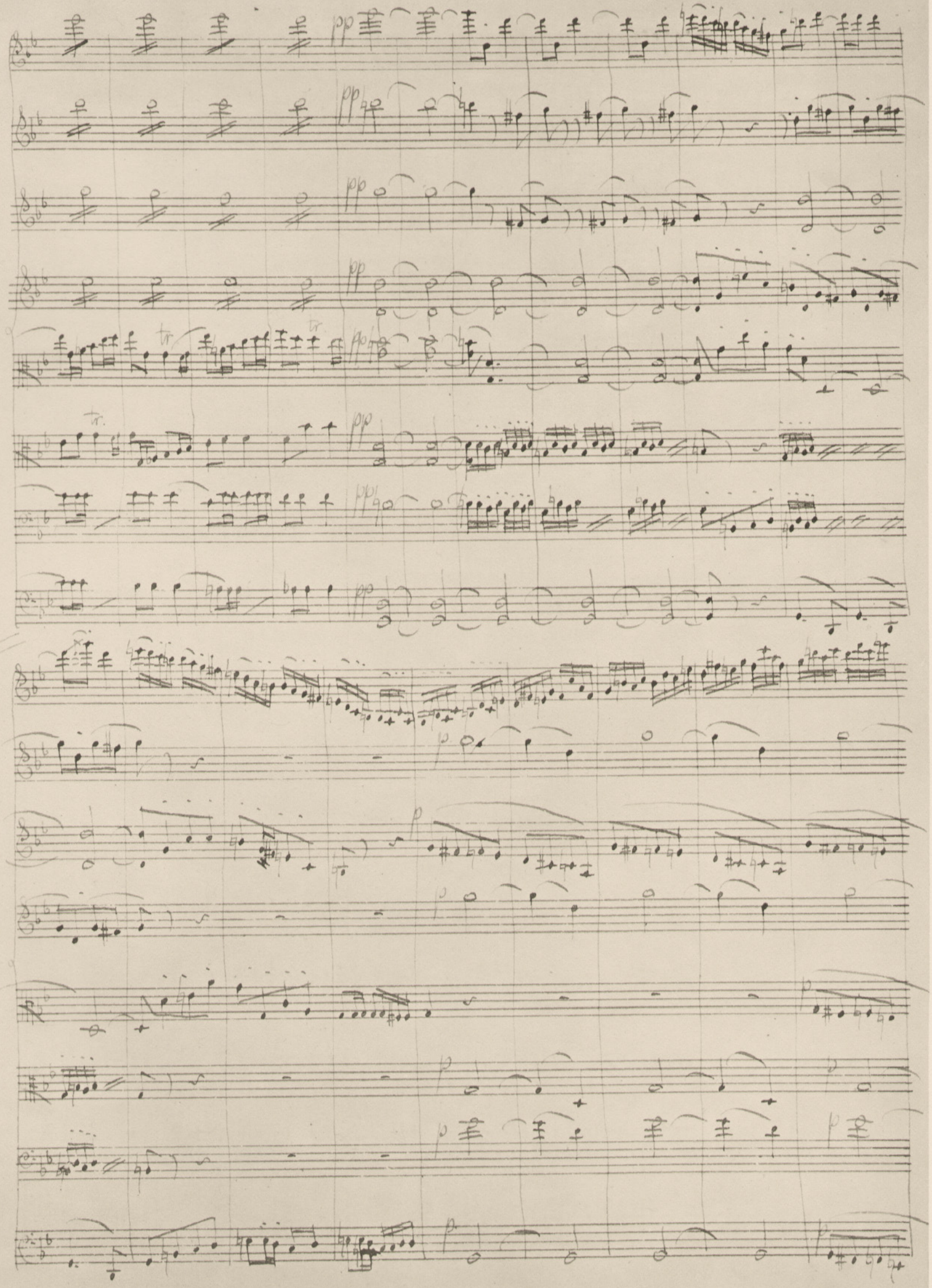
pizz.

c.a.

c.a.


pizz. c.a.
pizz. c.a.


pp
stacc.
pp stacc.
pp stacc.
tr



Violoncello 2do

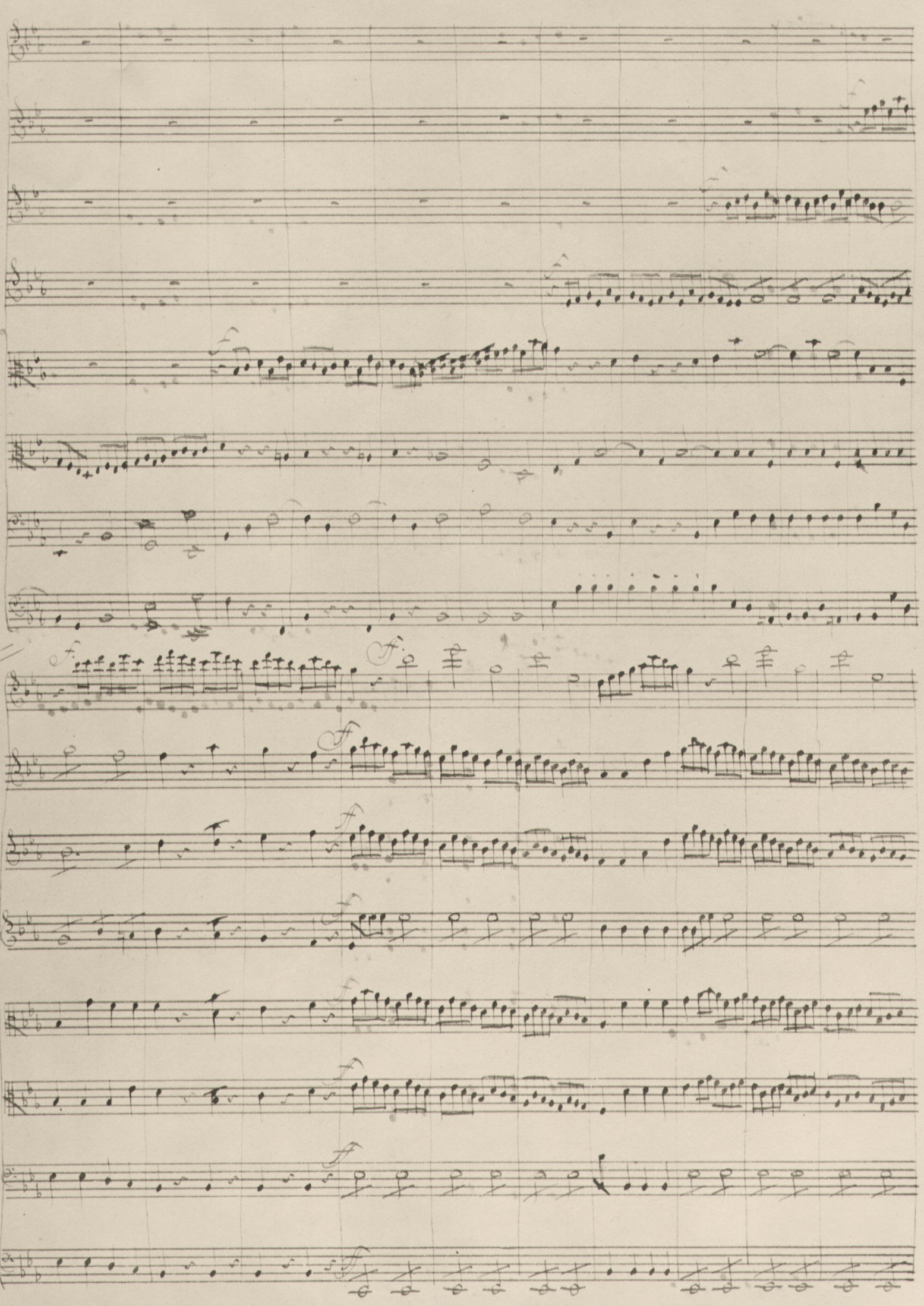
pp.

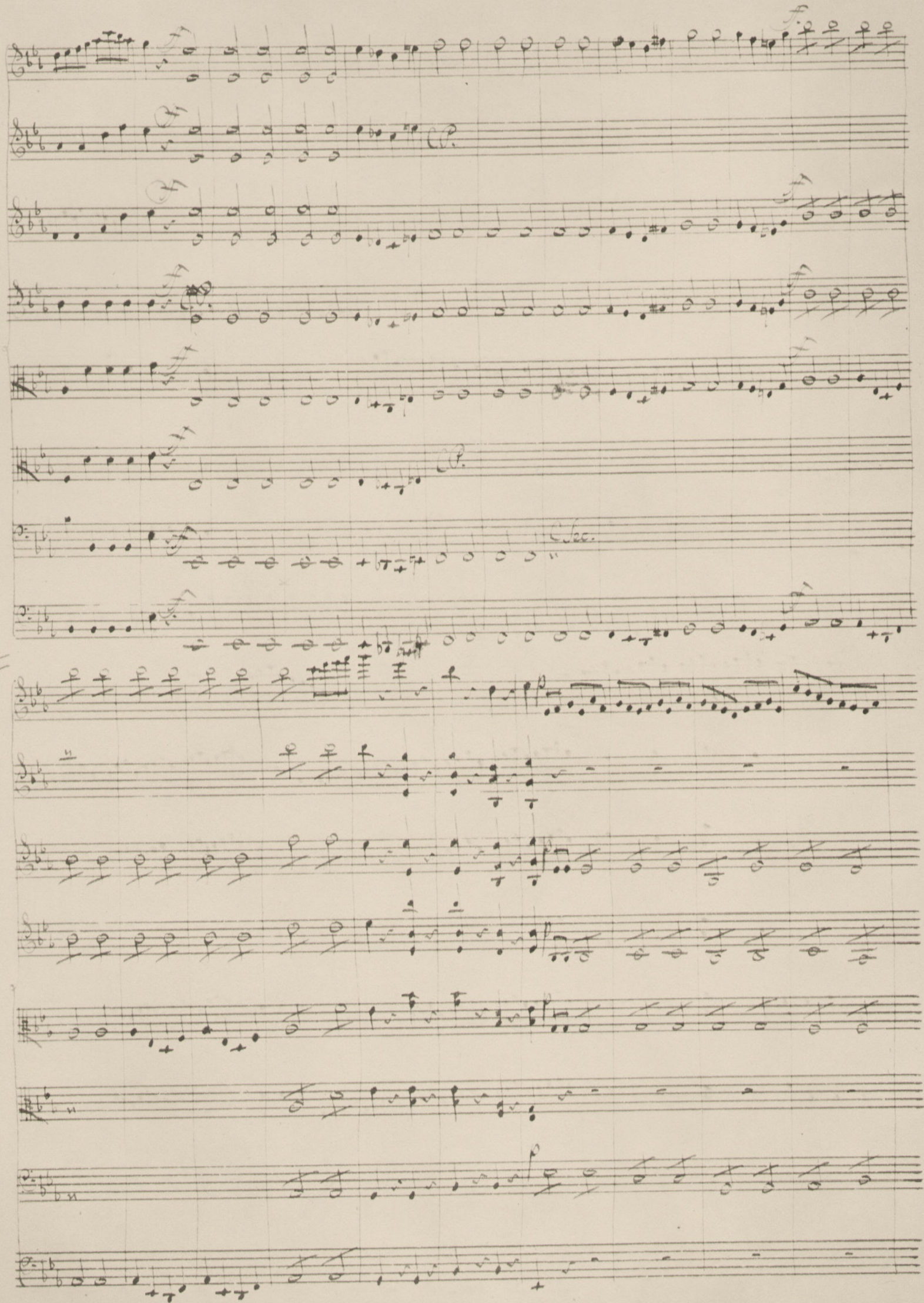
Molto Allegro e vivace

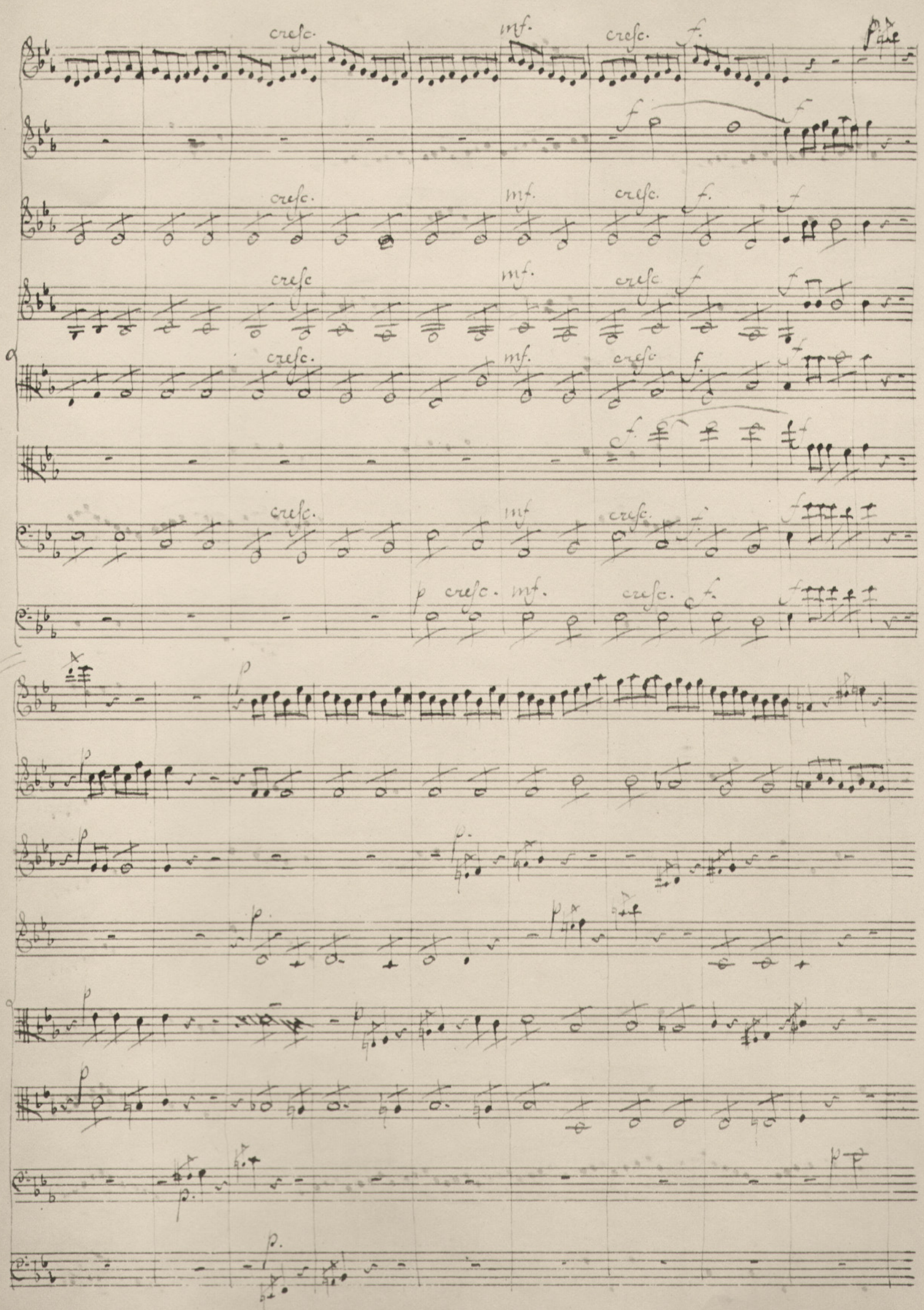
f.

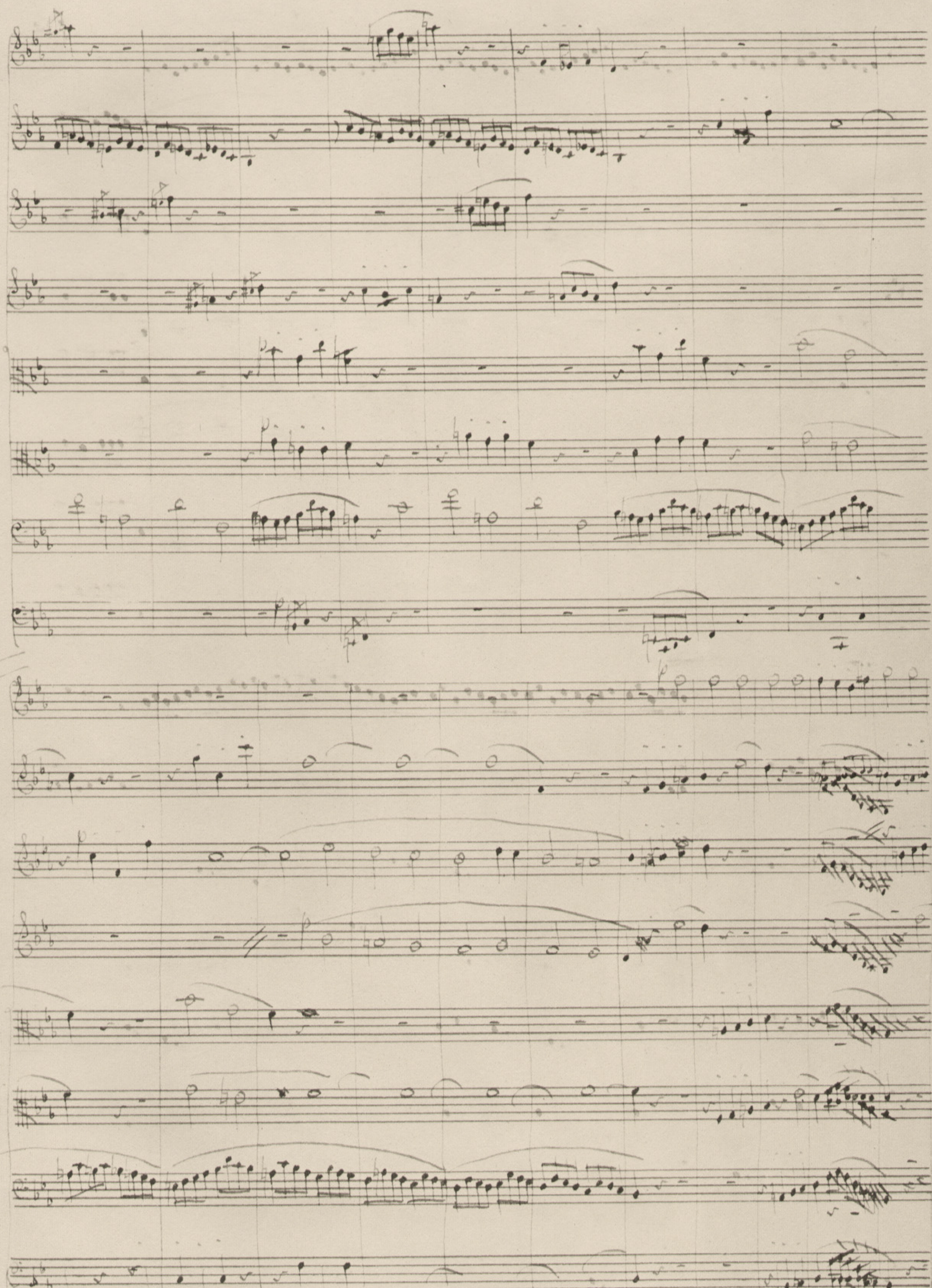
f.

Molto Allegro e vivace.






cresc.
mf.
cresc.
f.
p
f
cresc.
mf.
cresc.
f.
f
cresc
mf.
cresc
f
f
cresc.
mf.
cresc
f.
f
f
cresc.
mf
cresc.
f
f
p
cresc.
mf.
cresc.
f.
f
p
p
p
p
p
p
p
p
p
p
p
p



cresc.

cresc.

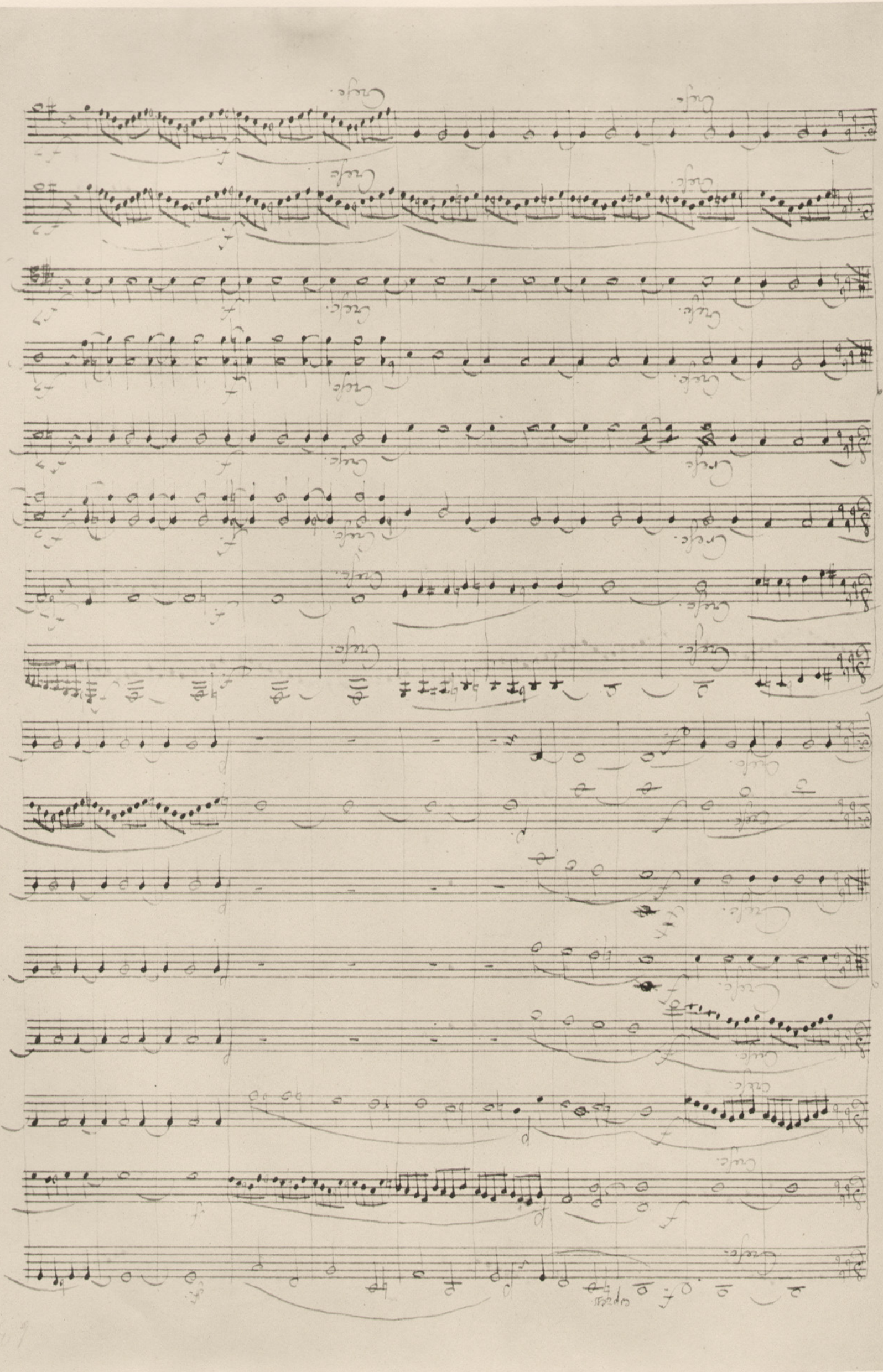
cresc.

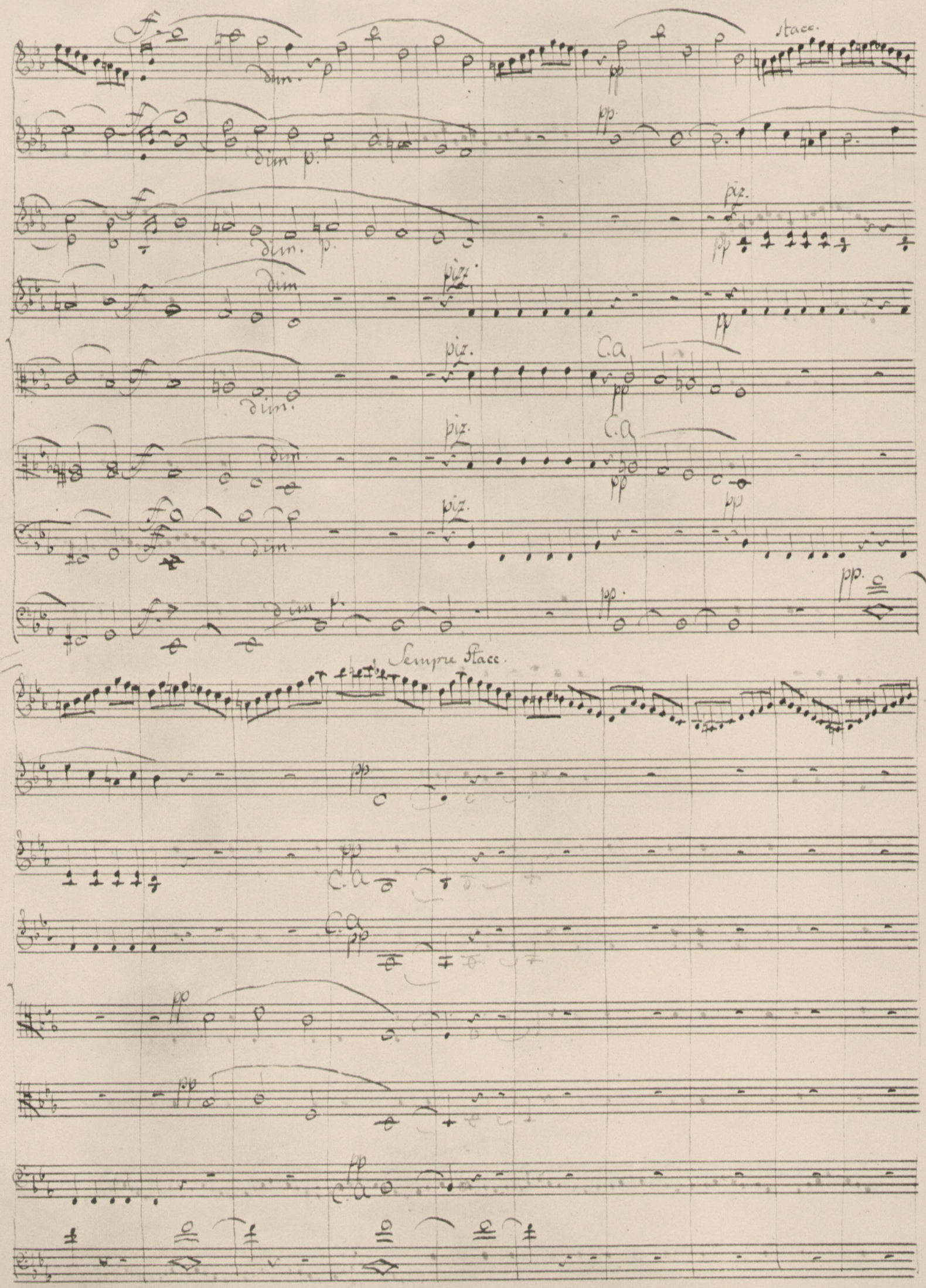
cresc.

cresc.

cresc.

cresc.




stacc.
dim.
pp
piz.
C.a
Sempre stacc.

cresc.

ff.

ff.

ff.

ff.

ff.

ff.

ff.

ff.

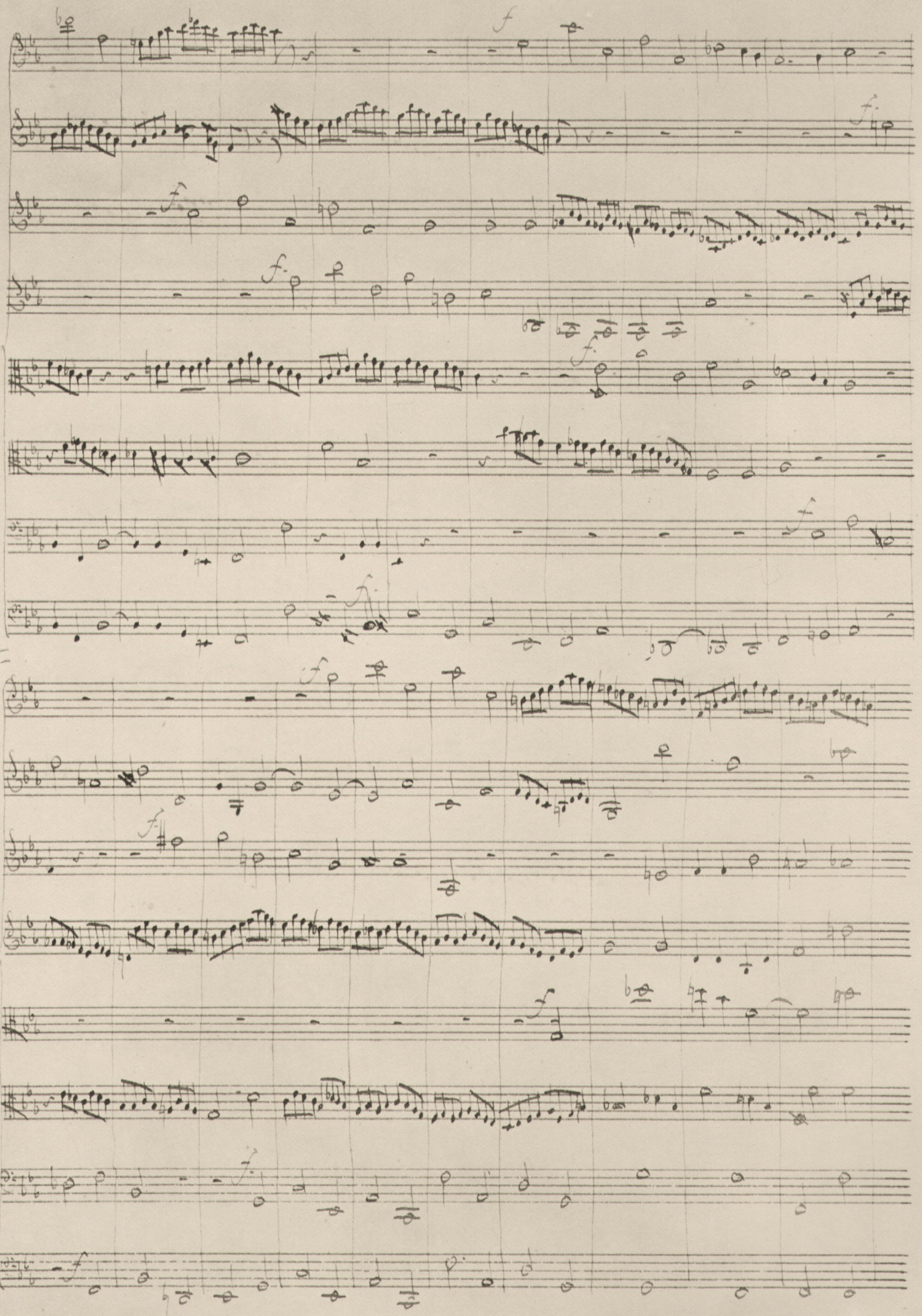
Sempre f.

f.

f.

f.

f.



Viola 2da

Viola 1ma

Viola 2da

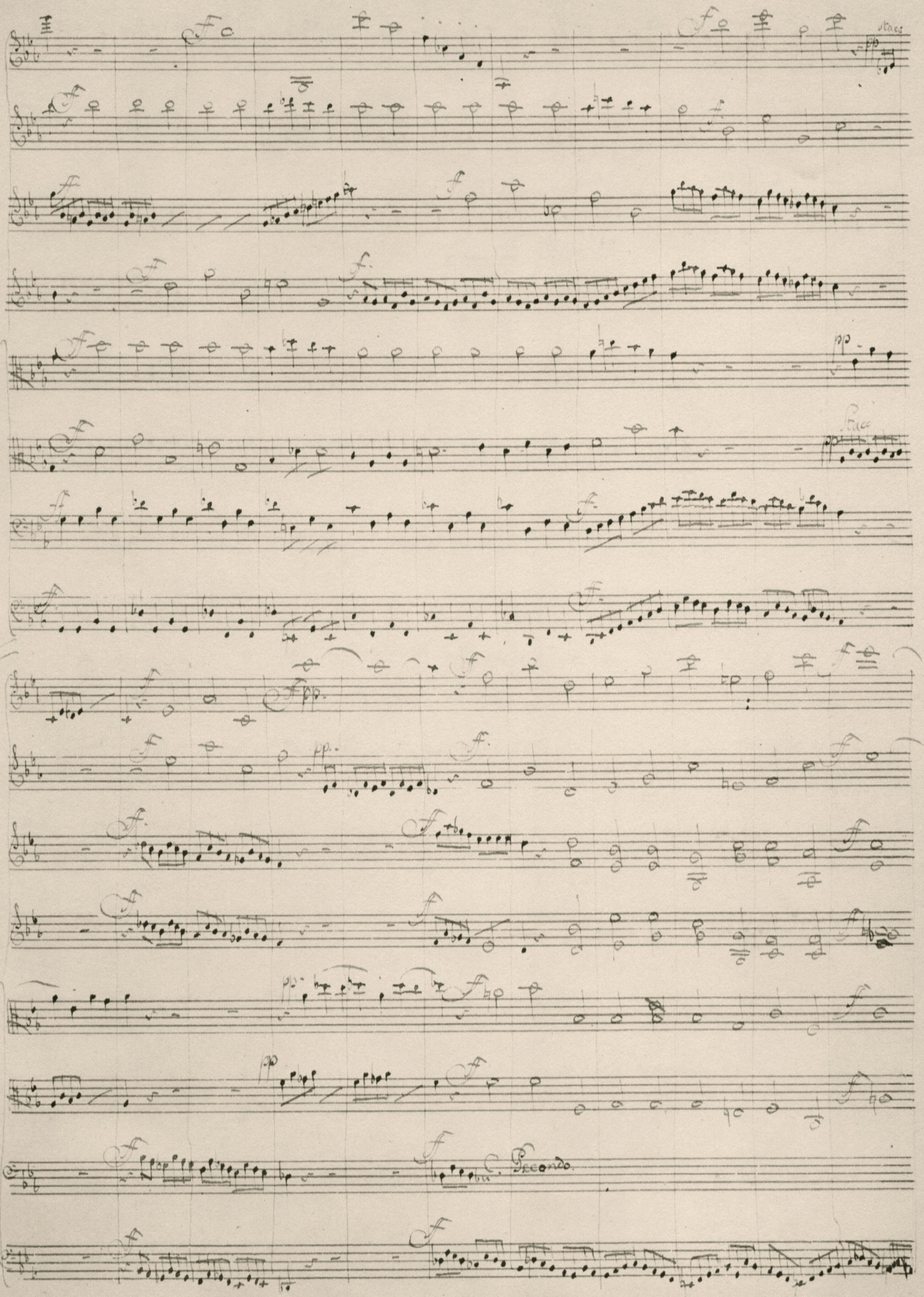
Viola 1ma

Sempre stacc.

Viola I.

Viola II.

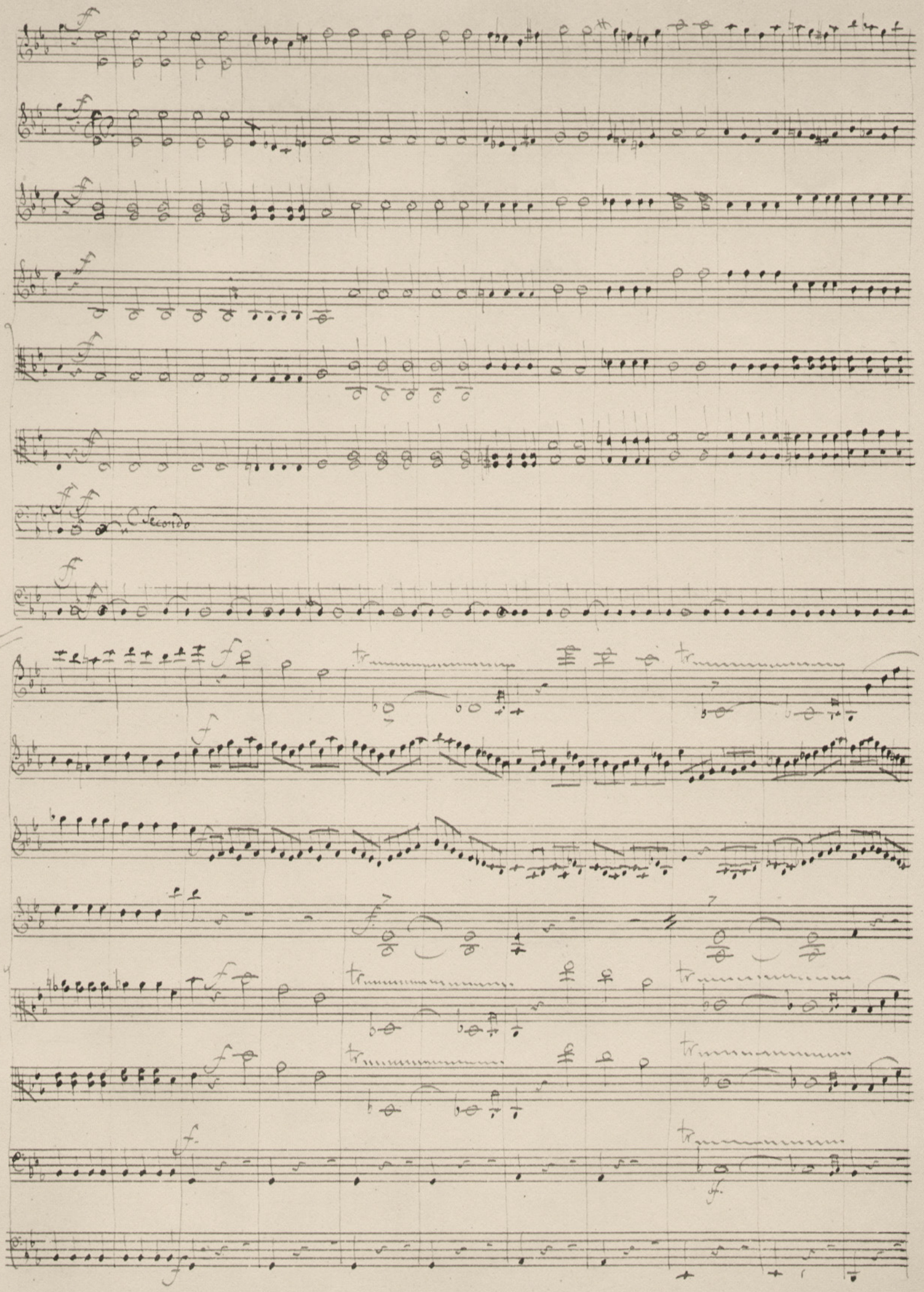
Sempre stacc.

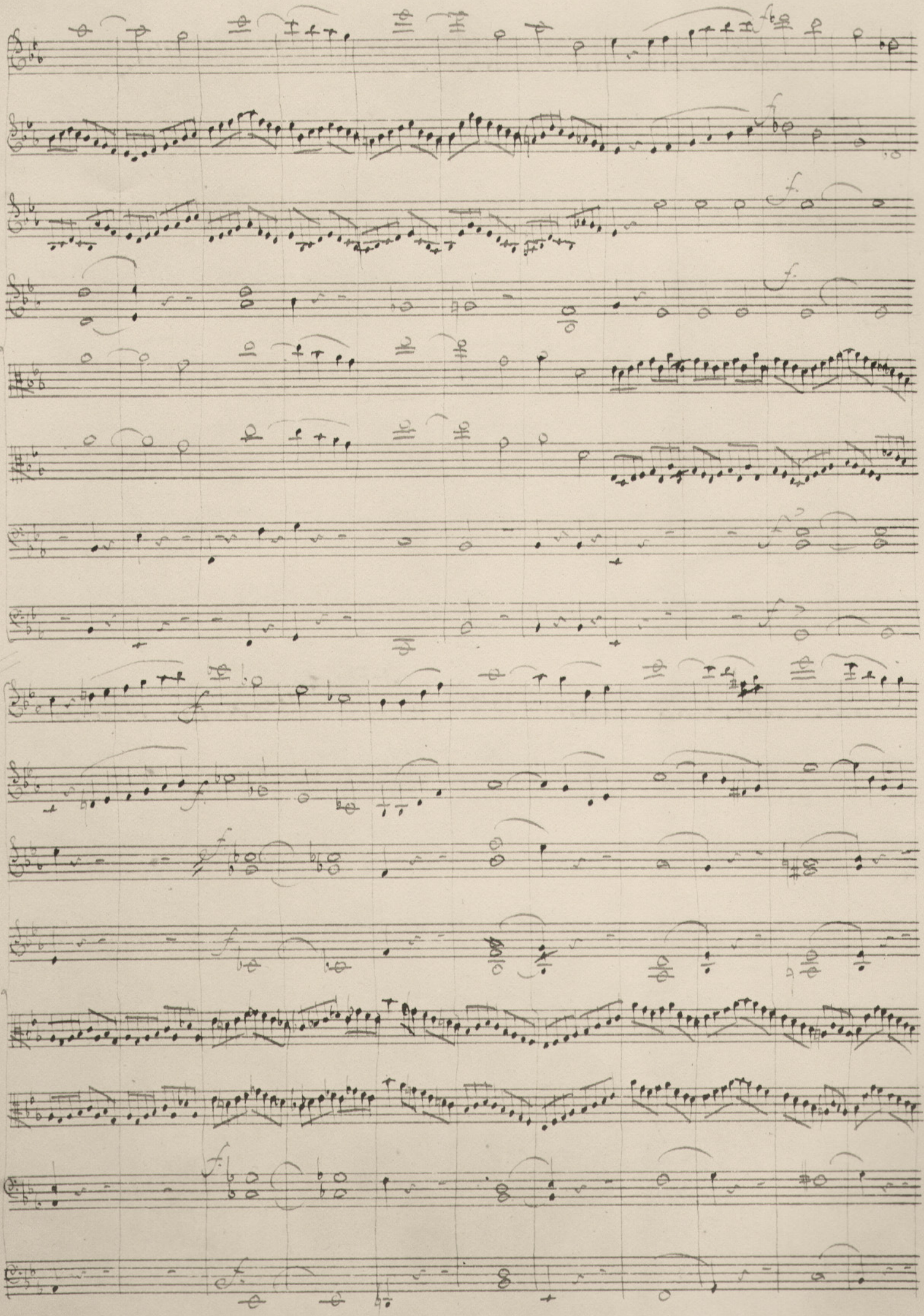

Stacc
Stacc
C. Secondo

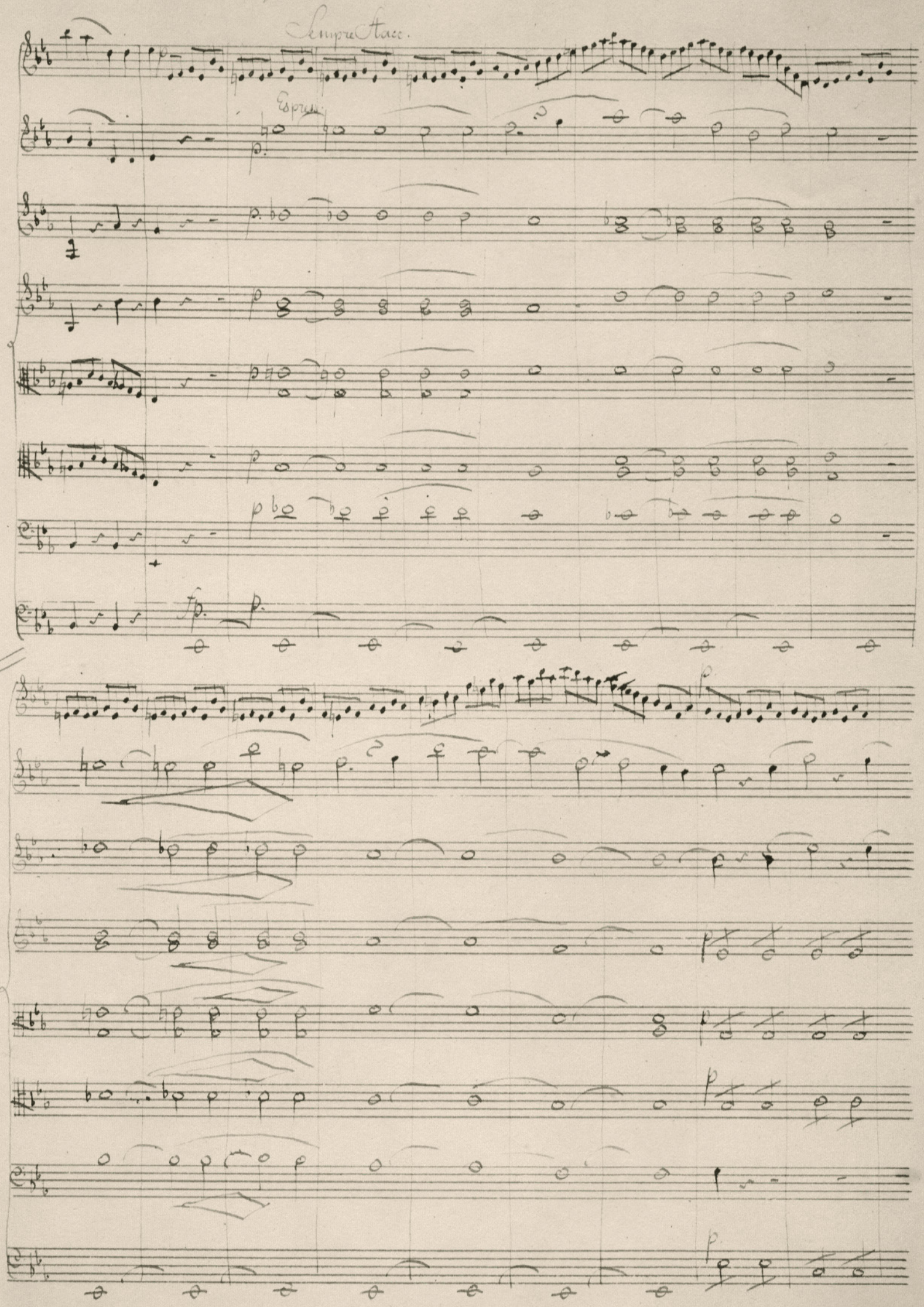
Terzo

Vcc.

cresc.


Secondo




Sempre Stacc.
Espress.

Crescendo. mf. Crescendo. f.

Cresc. mf. Cresc. f.

Cresc. mf. f

Cresc. mf. Cresc. f.

Crescendo. mf. Crescendo. f.

p Crescendo mf. f.

Crescendo. mf. Crescendo f.

Crescendo. ff ff

Cresc. ff

Cresc. ff

Cresc. ff

Cresc. ff

Cresc. ff

Berlin d. 15 Oct 1825