terry vosbein

paris sonata

for

solo piano

1999

paris

New Orleans born composer, **Terry Vosbein** has received numerous commissions to write new works from such organizations as the Cleveland Orchestra and the Cleveland Museum of Art. He has composed works for orchestra, wind ensemble, various chamber ensembles and choir.

Vosbein has received performances at music festivals throughout the United States and Canada. During 1998 and 1999 he was awarded summer residencies at La Cité International des Arts in Paris, where he composed a violin concerto one year and a piano sonata the next. In the fall of 2001 he was awarded a fellowship at University College in Oxford, to compose a concerto for cello and orchestra. And his composition "A Prayer for Peace," a reaction to the events of September 11th, has received performances all over the world.

Since January of 1996 Vosbein has been teaching music composition and jazz studies at Washington and Lee University. He received his Doctorate in composition from the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he was a student of Donald Erb, and where he taught in the theory and composition departments.

In addition to his activities as a composer, Vosbein has been an active jazz bassist and arranger for the past twenty-five years, performing and arranging for a wide variety of ensembles, including the Glenn Miller Orchestra and the Atlanta Pops. He traveled "on the road" for many years, performing in a wide range of genres: country western twang, big band swing, disco fever, country club wallpaper, plus a never ending assortment of jazz combos and studio encounters.

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If you perform this composition, please inform the composer.
He loves to hear from performers.

The *Paris Sonata* was composed during a summer residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris in 1999. For the second year in a row I spent the summer living and composing in the city of dreams. In 1998 I approached Paris as a new love. I returned to her the next year as an old familiar confidant. I strolled her familiar streets, shared experiences with her and watched as she turned from spring to fall. And I composed. During my 1998 stay I composed a violin concerto. In 1999 the *Paris Sonata* was born.

Having composed quite a lot of chamber music which includes the piano, I was very aware that I have not written a work for solo piano. My compositional lacuna. It is a weighty matter to compose a piano sonata: so many great composers seem to be looking over one's shoulders, shaking their heads as each note drops on the page. But while listening to my friend and colleague, Timothy Gaylard, in performance, I immediately decided that a sonata for him *must* be my next composition. So I left for the dream city in June with my mission clear.

My routine, if you can call it that, was much the same as the previous year. I had the same studio overlooking the Seine. I took frequent strolls, ate a lot of bread and discussed the care and feeding of contemporary art with my artist neighbors. I composed in my studio as well as at various parks throughout Paris. I always carried my score with me, ready to stop and compose when the urge struck. And it frequently struck. I even wrote within Notre Dame.

The city of Paris is divided by the meandering Seine. Historically commercial activities were relegated to the right bank, or *rive droite*, and scholastic pursuits were found on the left bank, or *rive gauche*. It is here that one finds numerous universities, including the Sorbonne, as well as the Latin Quarter, Luxembourg Garden and Montparnasse. And it was here that I loved to walk the streets, soaking up the atmosphere that so inspired the likes of Gertrude Stein, Ernest Hemingway and James Joyce.

The title of the first movement of the sonata is *Rive gauche*. It begins with a slow prelude, introducing several themes which will be heard throughout the entire work. The introductory material is followed by a romping allegro, complete with stride effects. There are two contrasting themes. One is highly rhythmically charged, full of syncopation and crunching dissonances. The second theme is more lyrical and is first heard in the left hand accompanied by block chords. A development follows as both themes are bandied about until all hell breaks loose in a rip-snorting coda.

The second movement, *L'aube sur la Seine*, reflects the Seine as the sun rises, tranquil but bursting with promise. Before Paris awakens there is a calm across the city. And nowhere is it more evident than on the shimmering Seine. This slow movement is comprised of a sixteen measure theme and a set of variations.

The finale is off and running from the first note. The music is marked "with constant energy." Every summer on the longest day of the year Paris celebrates *Fête de la musique*. The city is overflowing with music. Every street corner features a different band and the revelry goes on throughout the night. This final movement of the sonata attempts to express the feeling of excitement as I wandered through the night following the sounds. There are two main ideas which weave in and out much as I did that music-filled night.

Wrapped within the sonata are many feelings and experiences of my summer overlooking the Seine. Paris is truly a city of dreams…in all senses. One cannot help but be affected by her.

— Terry Vosbein
Paris, August 1999

paris sonata

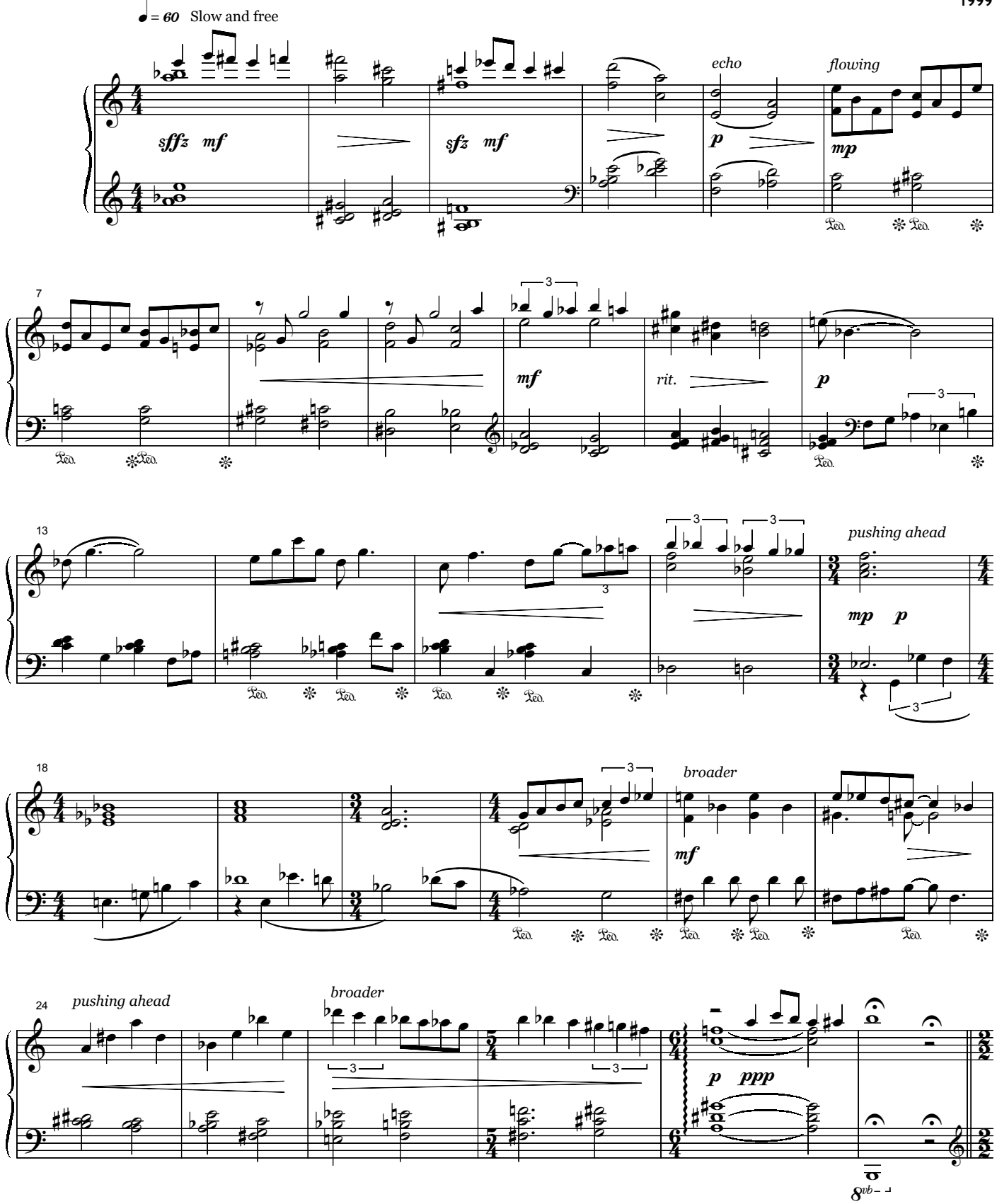
i. rive gauche

ii. l'aube sur la seine

iii. fête de la musique

paris sonata
I. rive gauche

terry vosbein
1999



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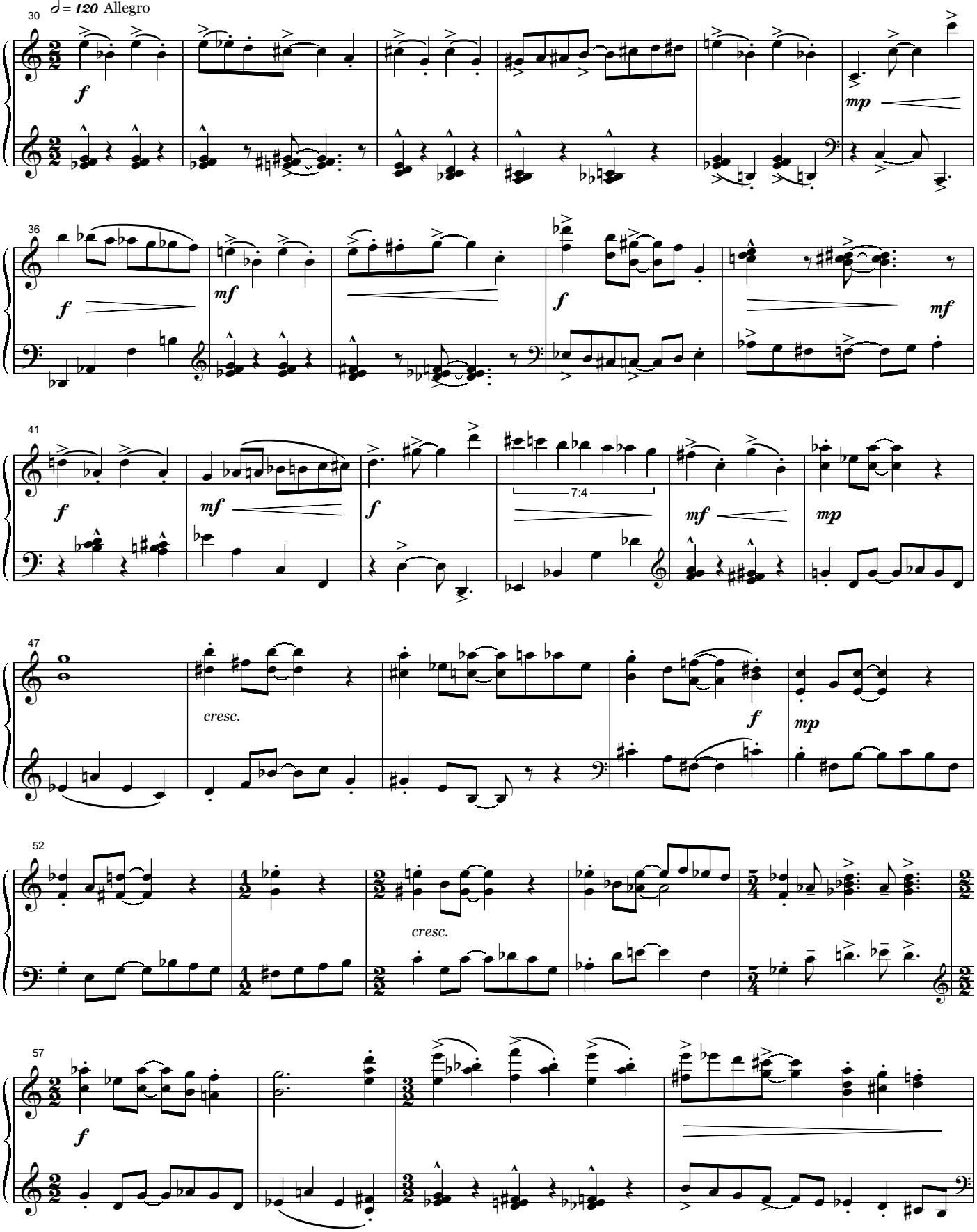
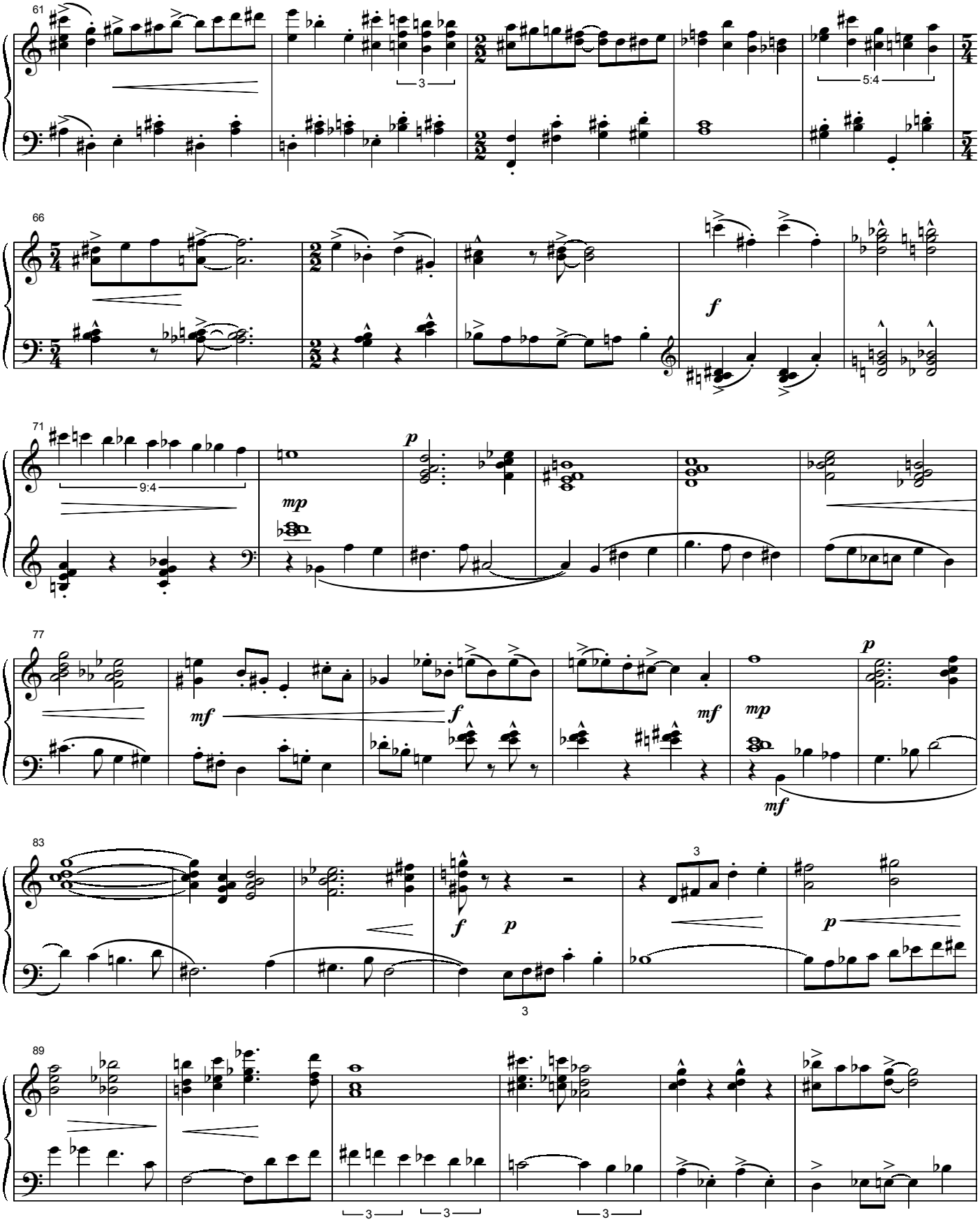
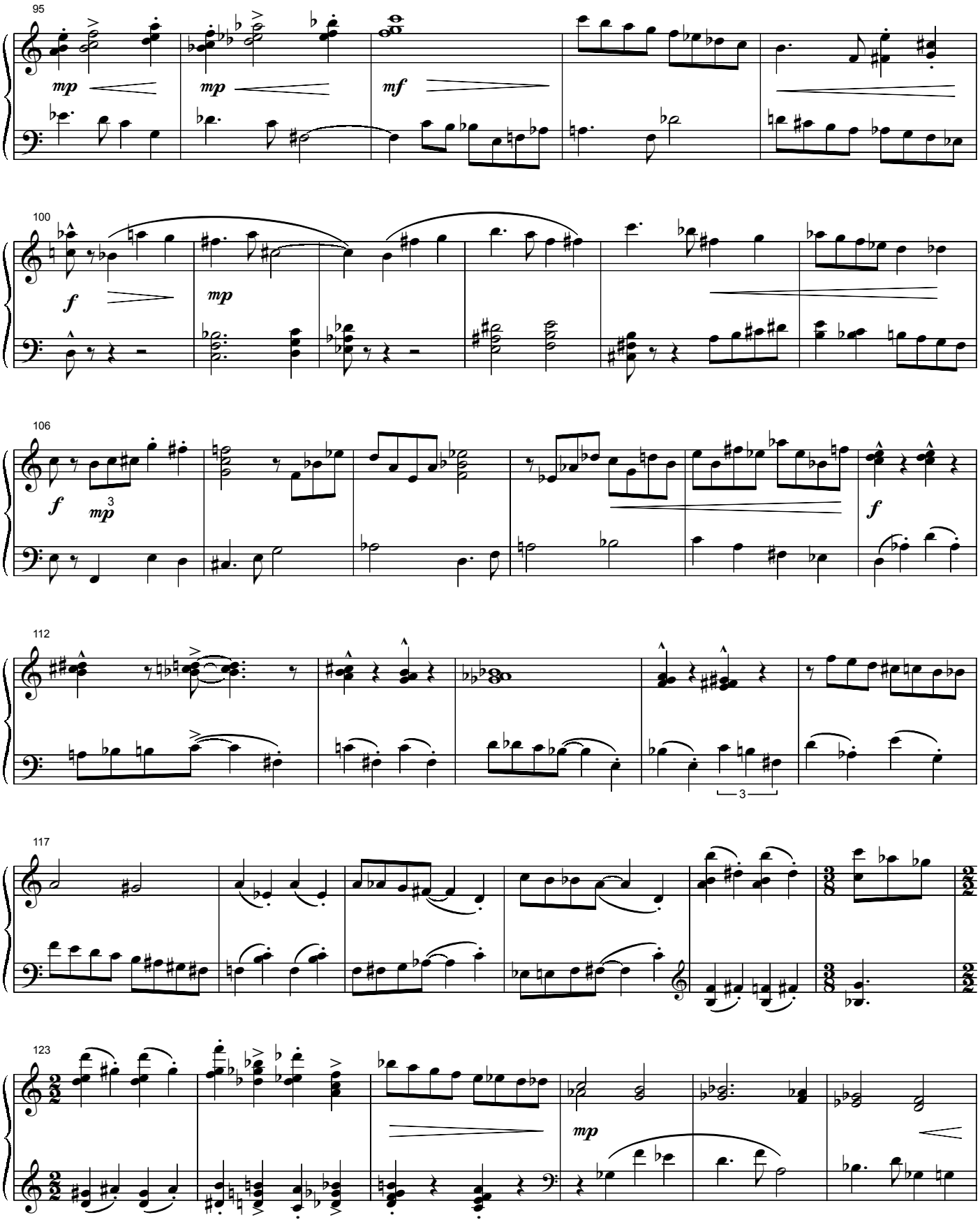

30
♩ = 120 Allegro
f
mp
36
f
mf
f
mf
41
f
mf
f
7:4
mf
mp
47
cresc.
f
mp
52
cresc.
57
f


61
3
5:4
66
f
71
9:4
mp
p
77
mf
f
mf
mp
mf
p
83
f
p
3
p
3
89
3
3
3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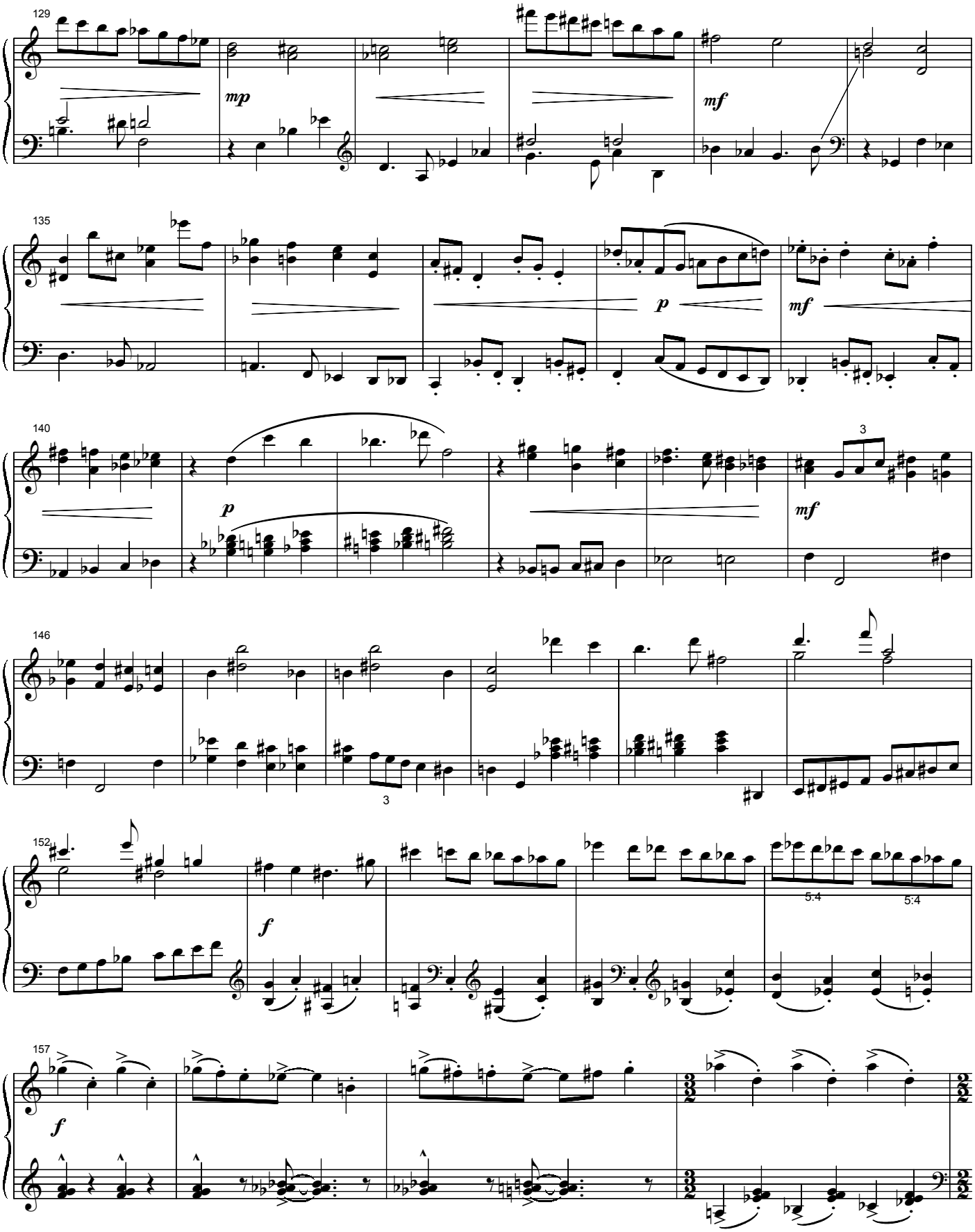
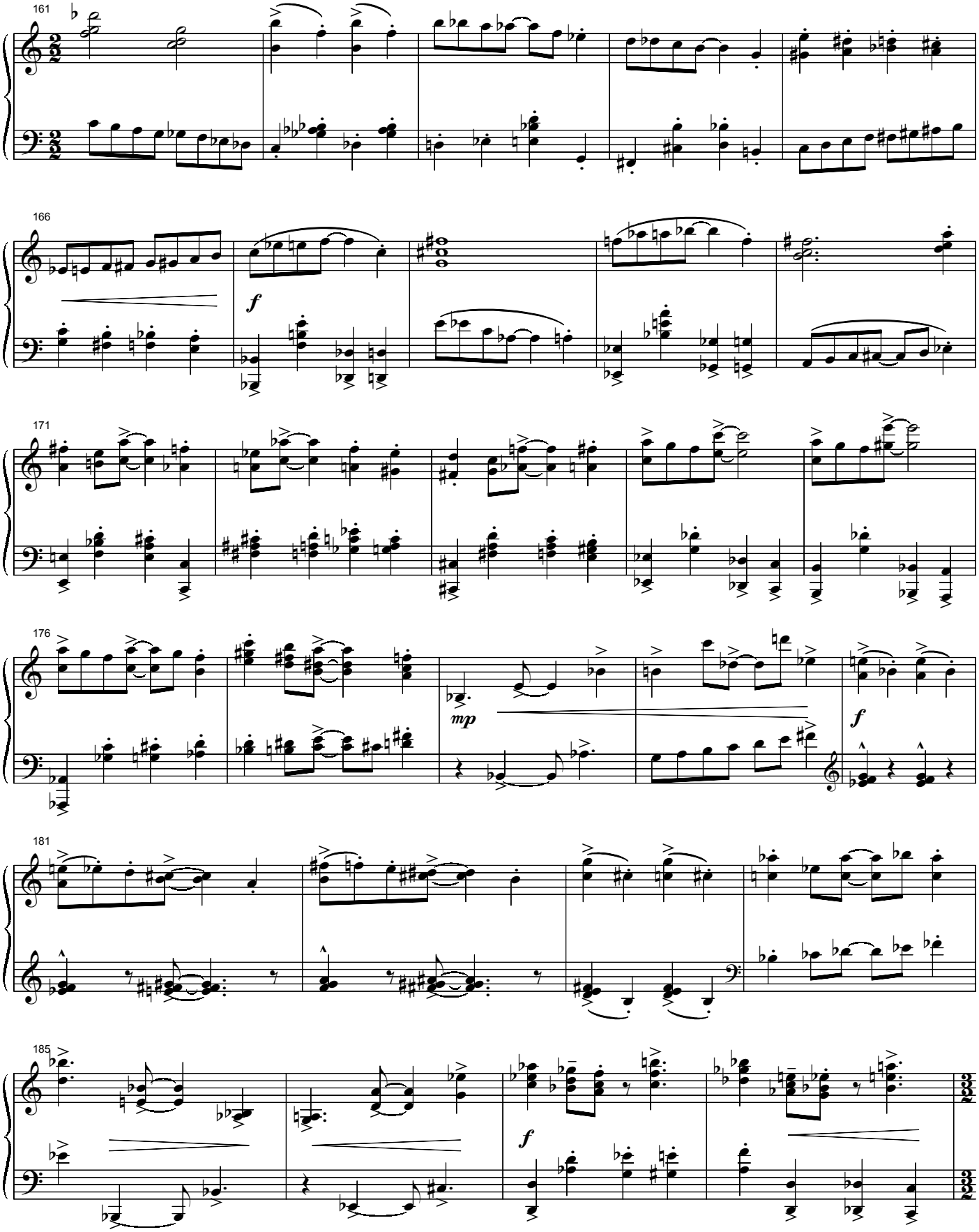
mp
mp
mf
100
f
mp
106
f
mp
3
f
112
3
117
123
mp


129
mp
mf
135
p
mf
140
p
3
mf
146
3
152
f
5:4
5:4
157
f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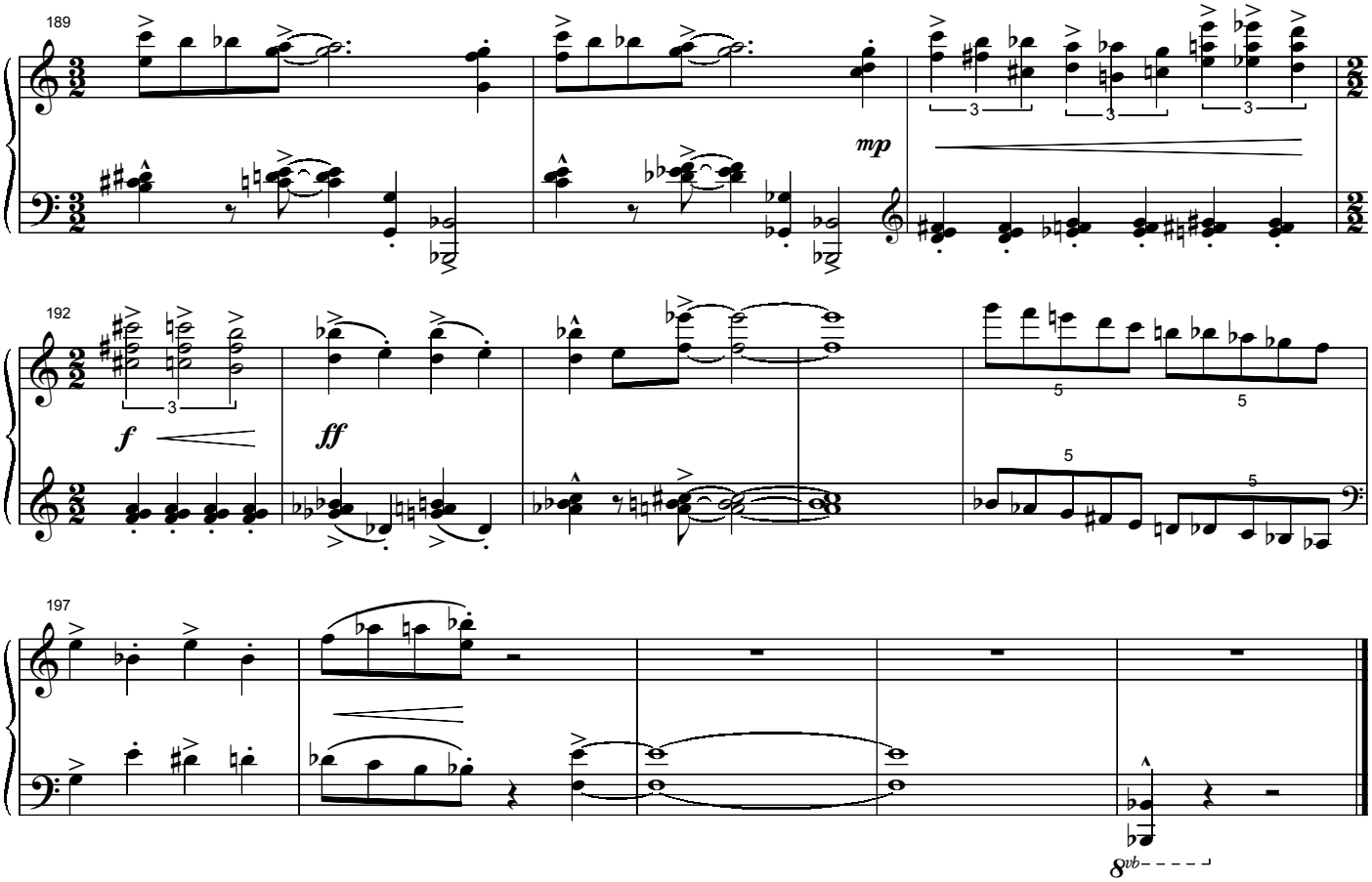
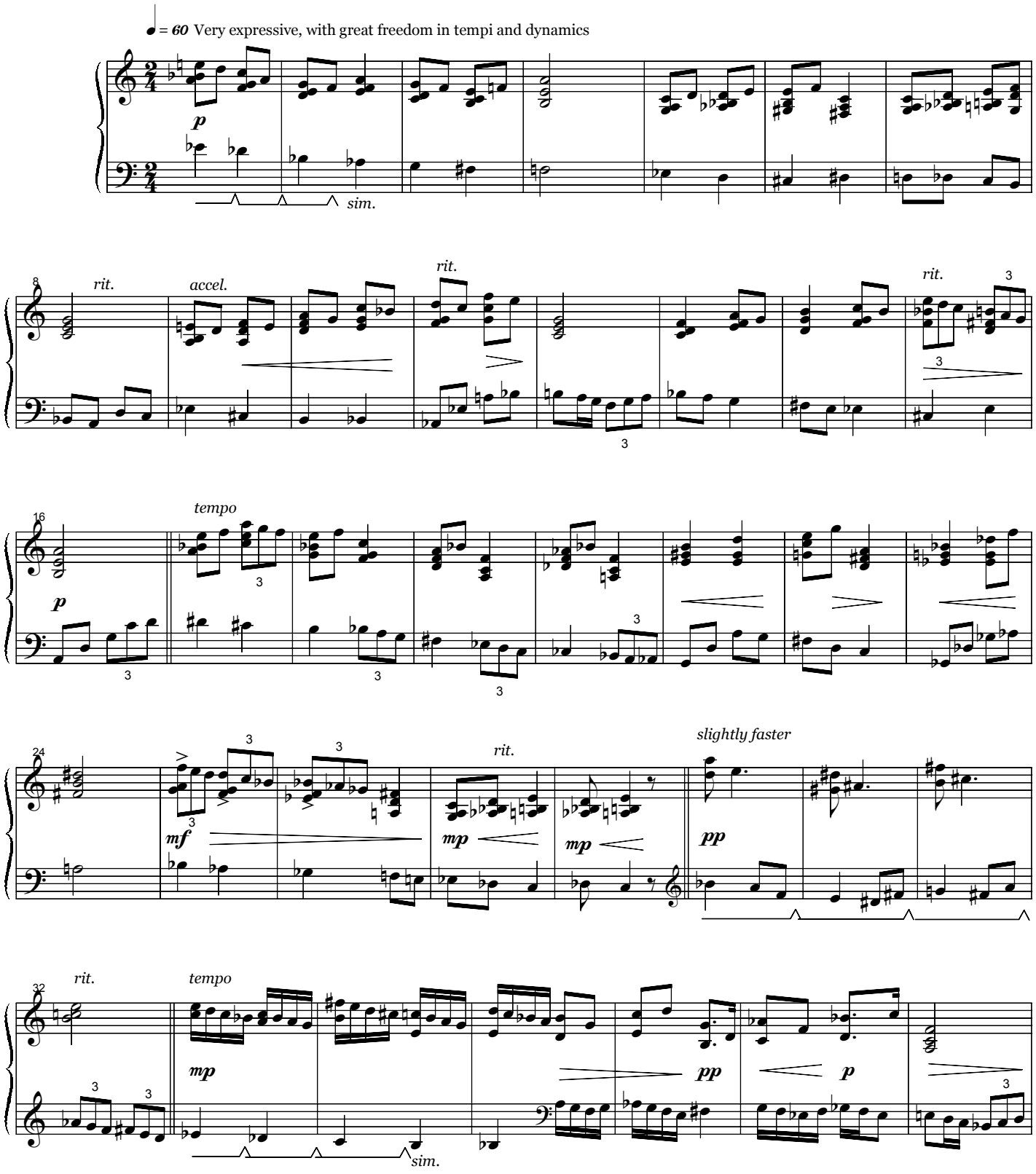
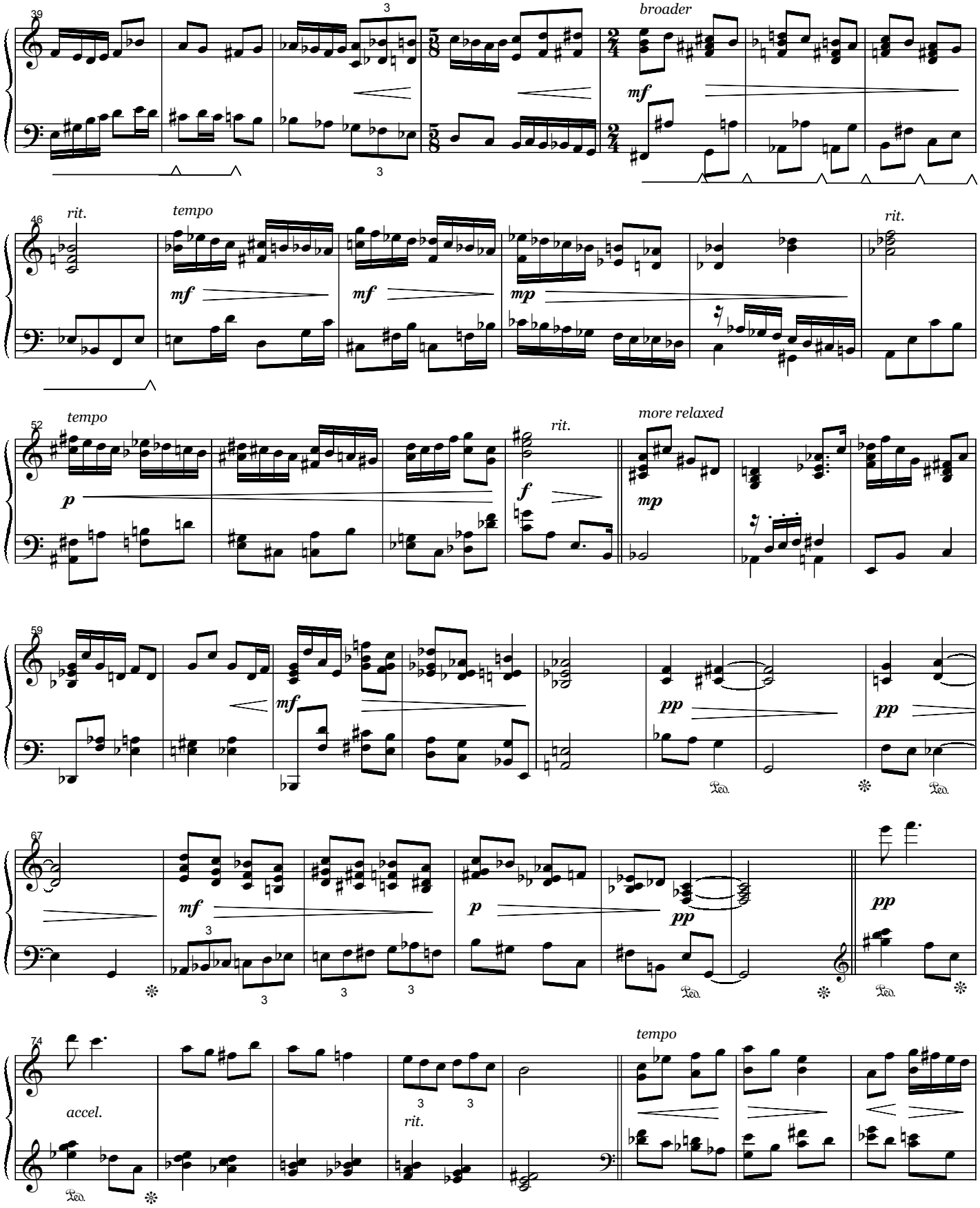
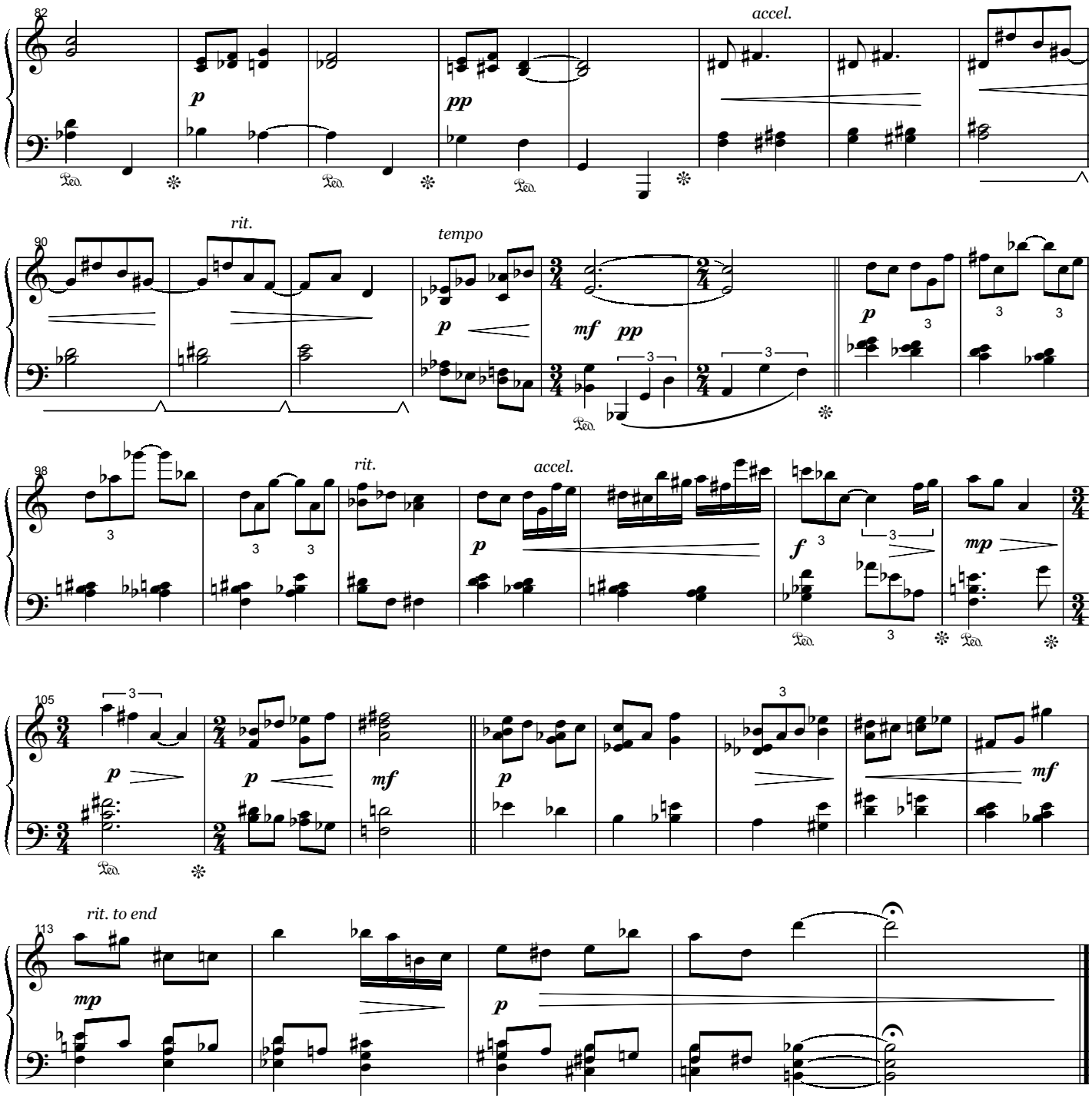
166
f
171
176
mp
f
181
185
f


189
mp
192
f
ff
197
8vb

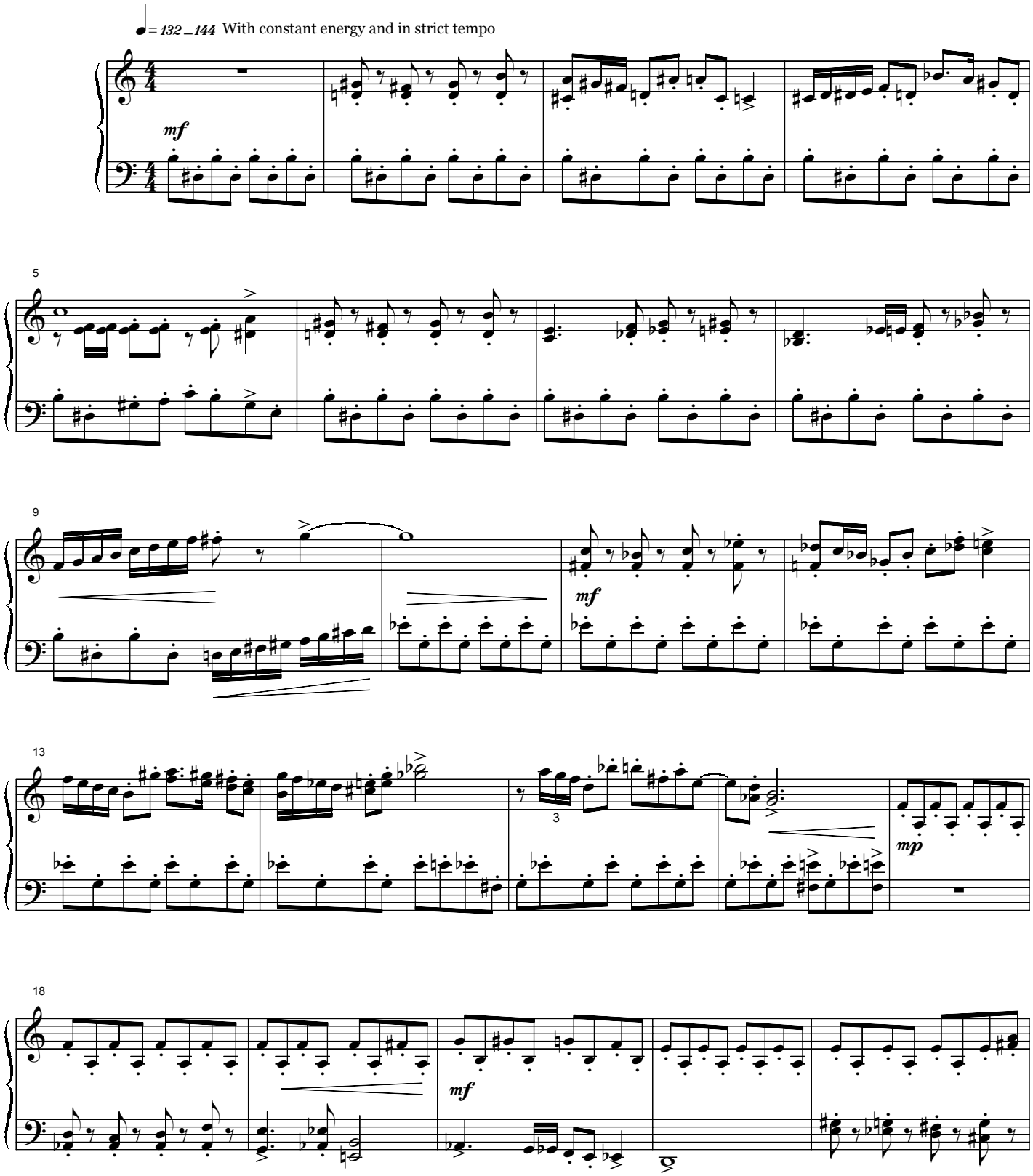
II. l'aube sur la seine

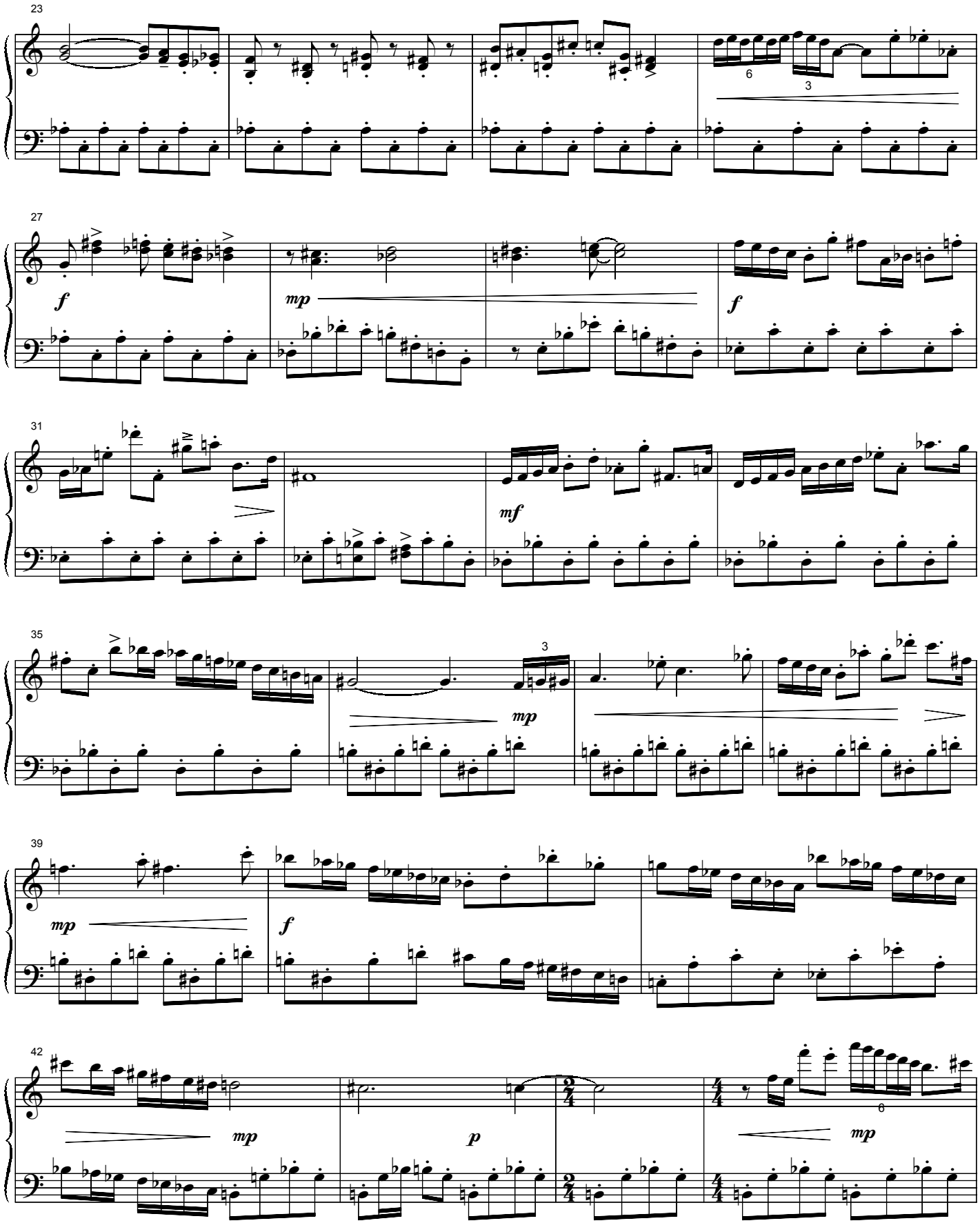


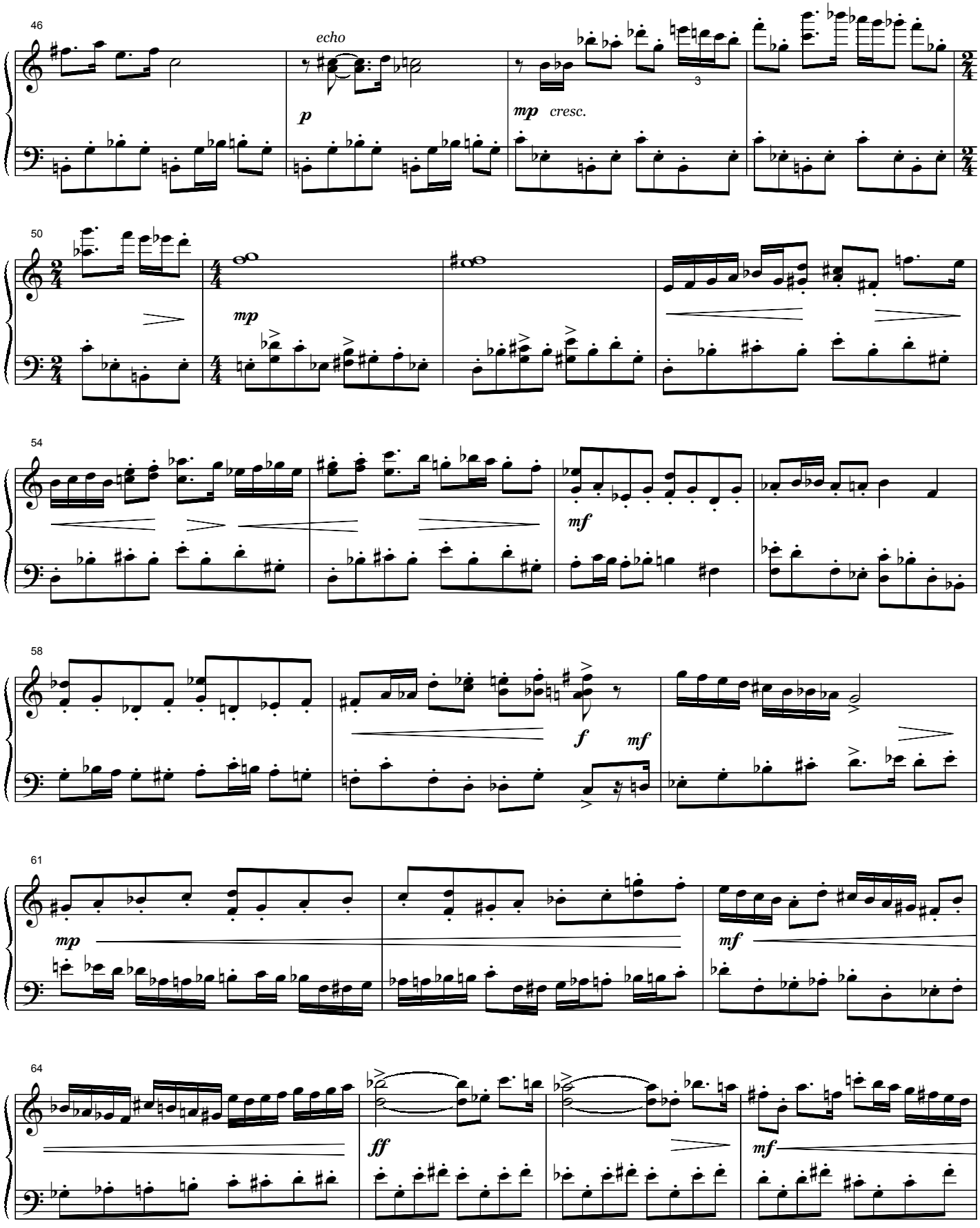

39
broader
mf
46
rit.
tempo
mf
mf
mp
rit.
52
tempo
p
f
rit.
more relaxed
mp
59
mf
pp
pp
67
mf
p
pp
pp
74
accel.
rit.
tempo

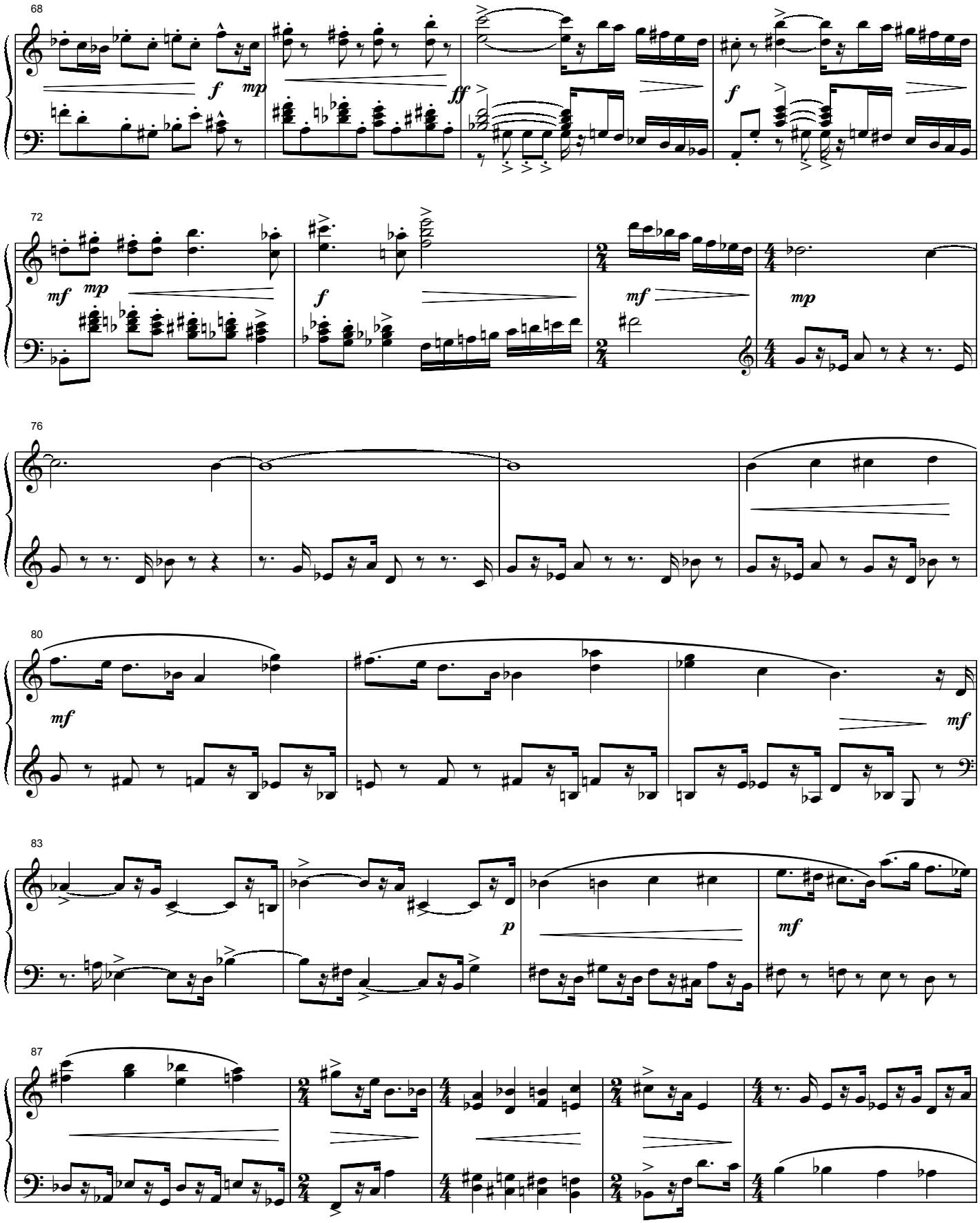

82
accel.
p
pp
90
rit.
tempo
p
mf
pp
p
98
rit.
accel.
p
f
mp
105
p
p
mf
p
mf
113
rit. to end
mp
p

III. fête de la musique




23
6
3
27
f
mp
f
31
mf
35
3
mp
39
mp
f
42
mp
p
6
mp


46
echo
p
mp cresc.
3
50
mp
54
mf
58
f
mf
61
mp
mf
64
ff
mf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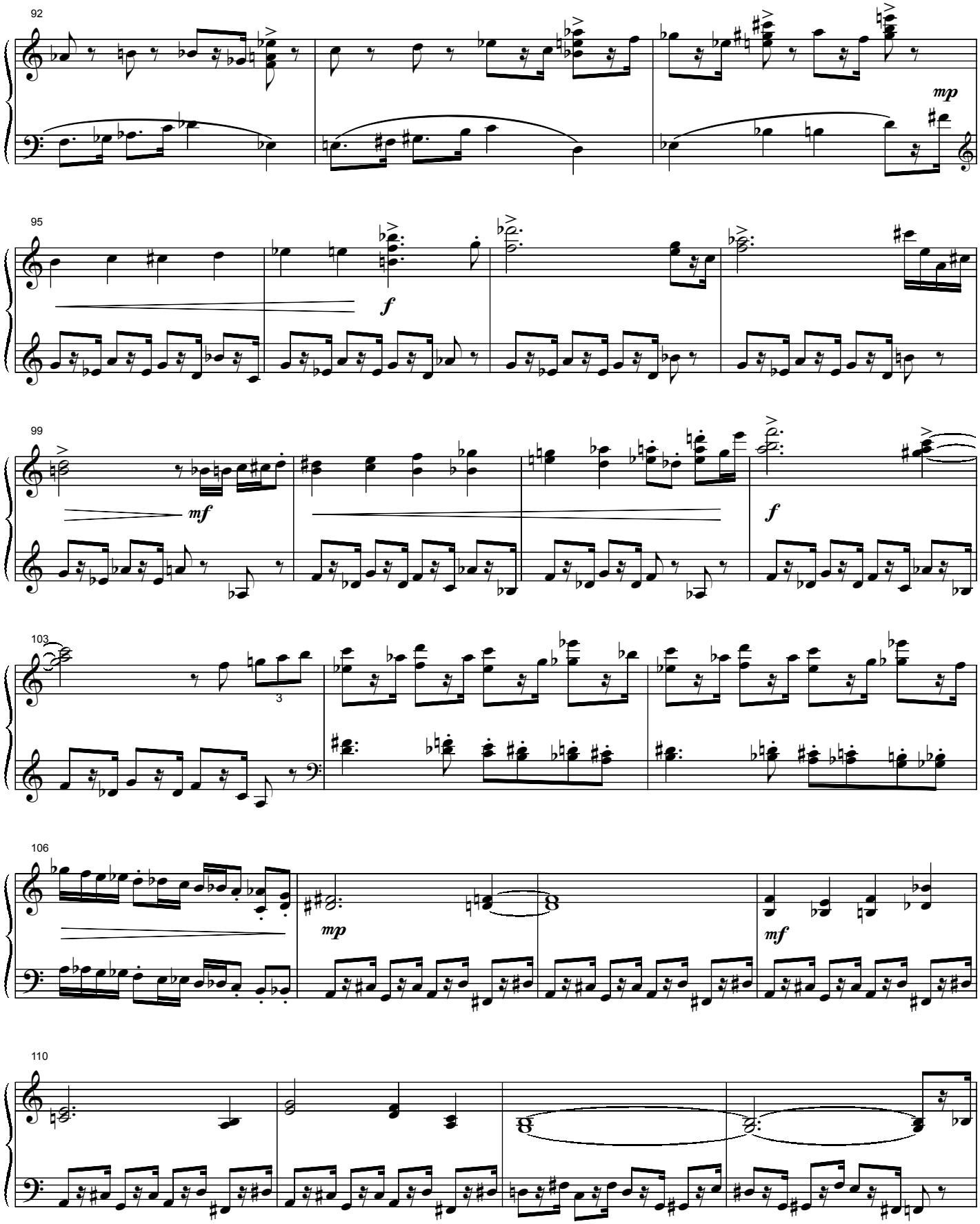
f
mp
ff
f
72
mf
mp
f
mf
mp
76
80
mf
mf
83
p
mf
87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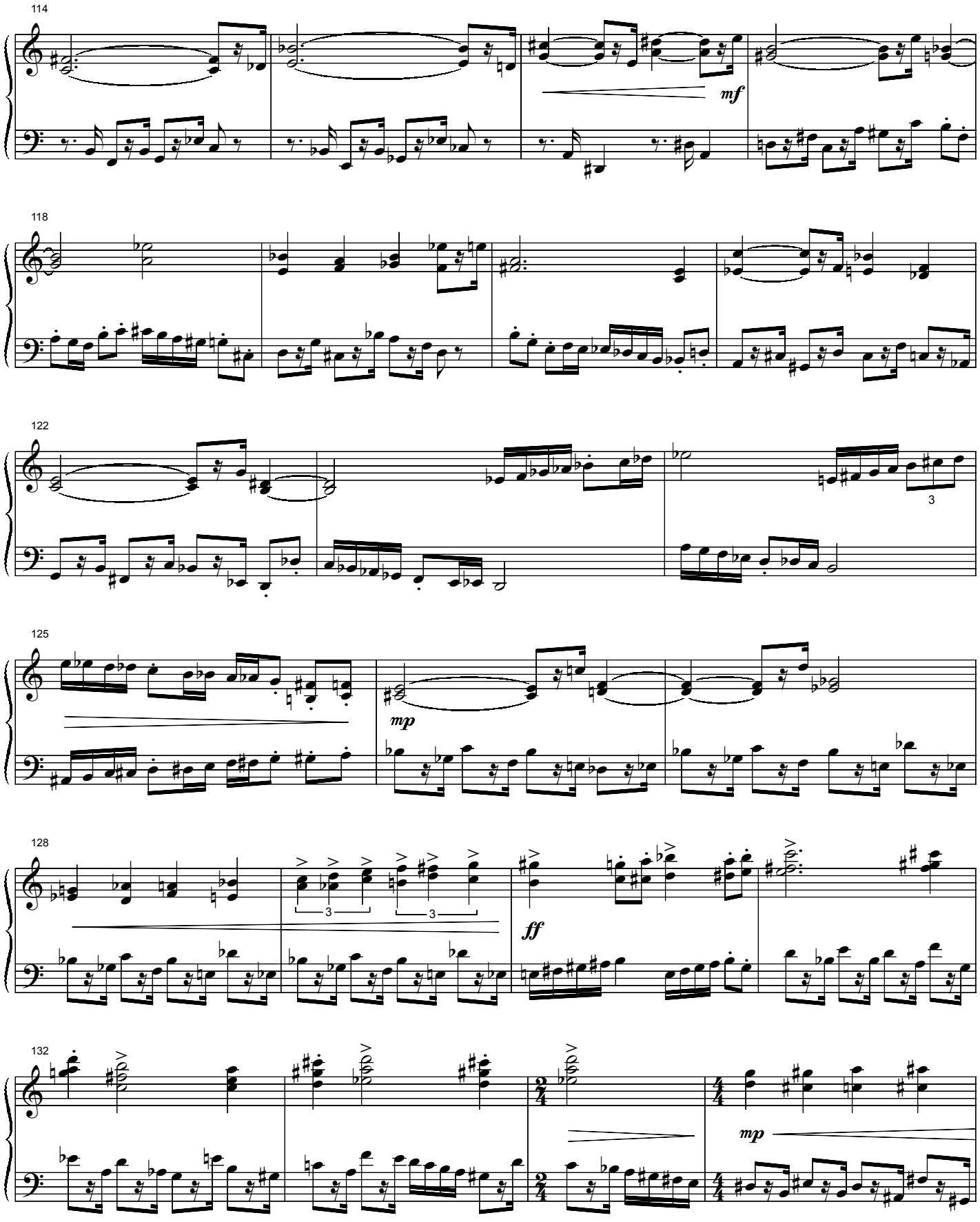
mp
95
f
99
mf
f
103
3
106
mp
mf
110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mf
118
122
3
125
mp
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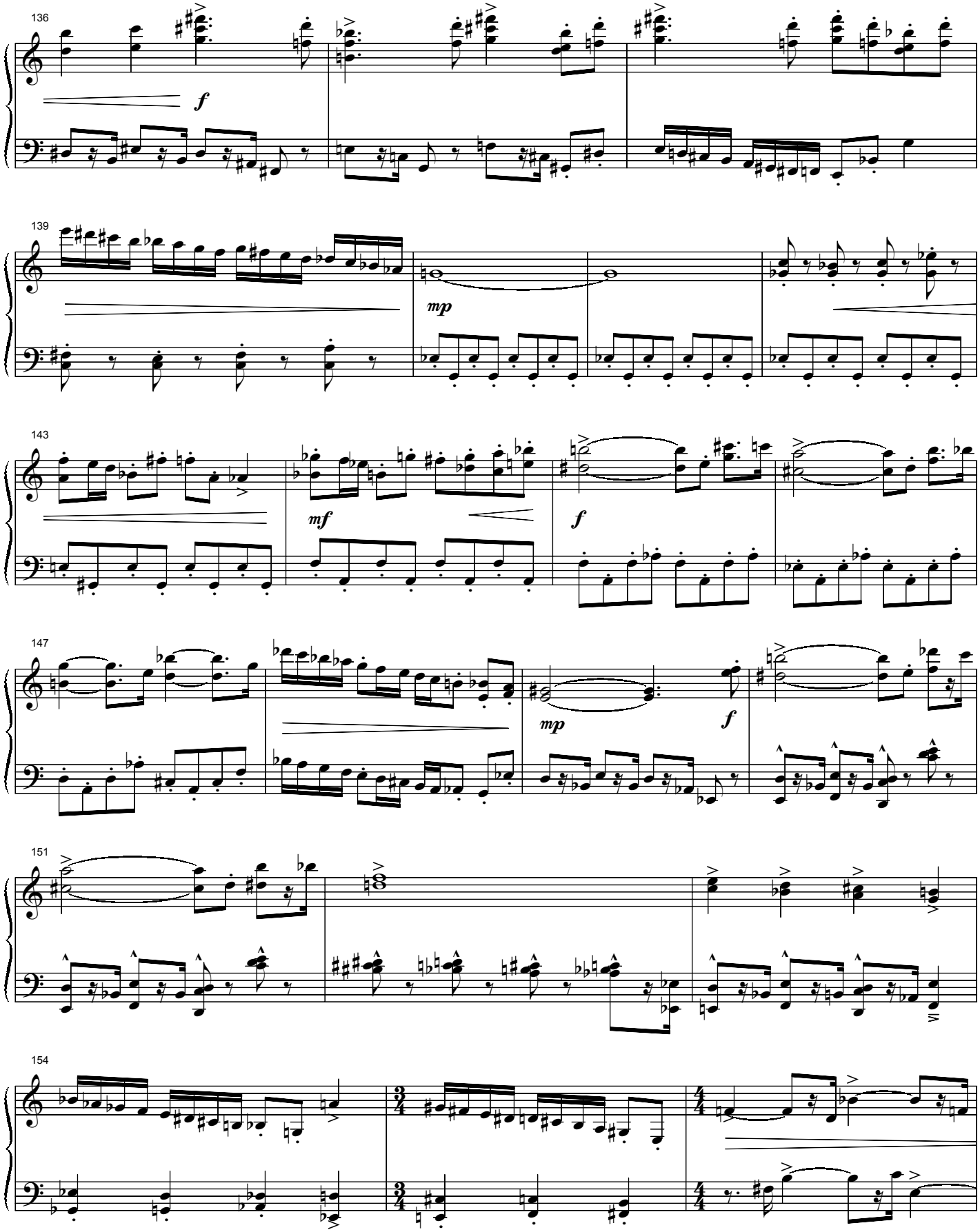
3
3
ff
132
mp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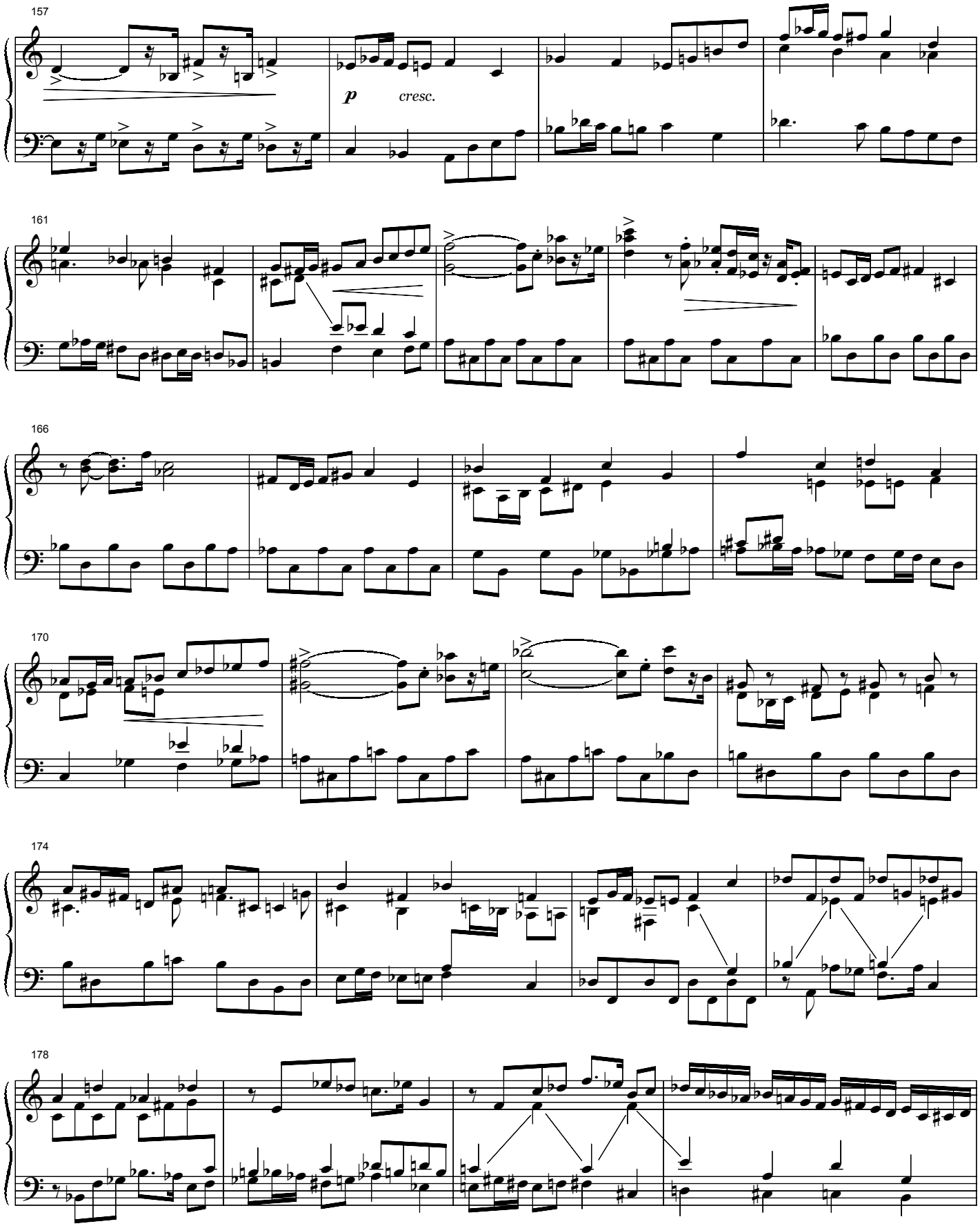
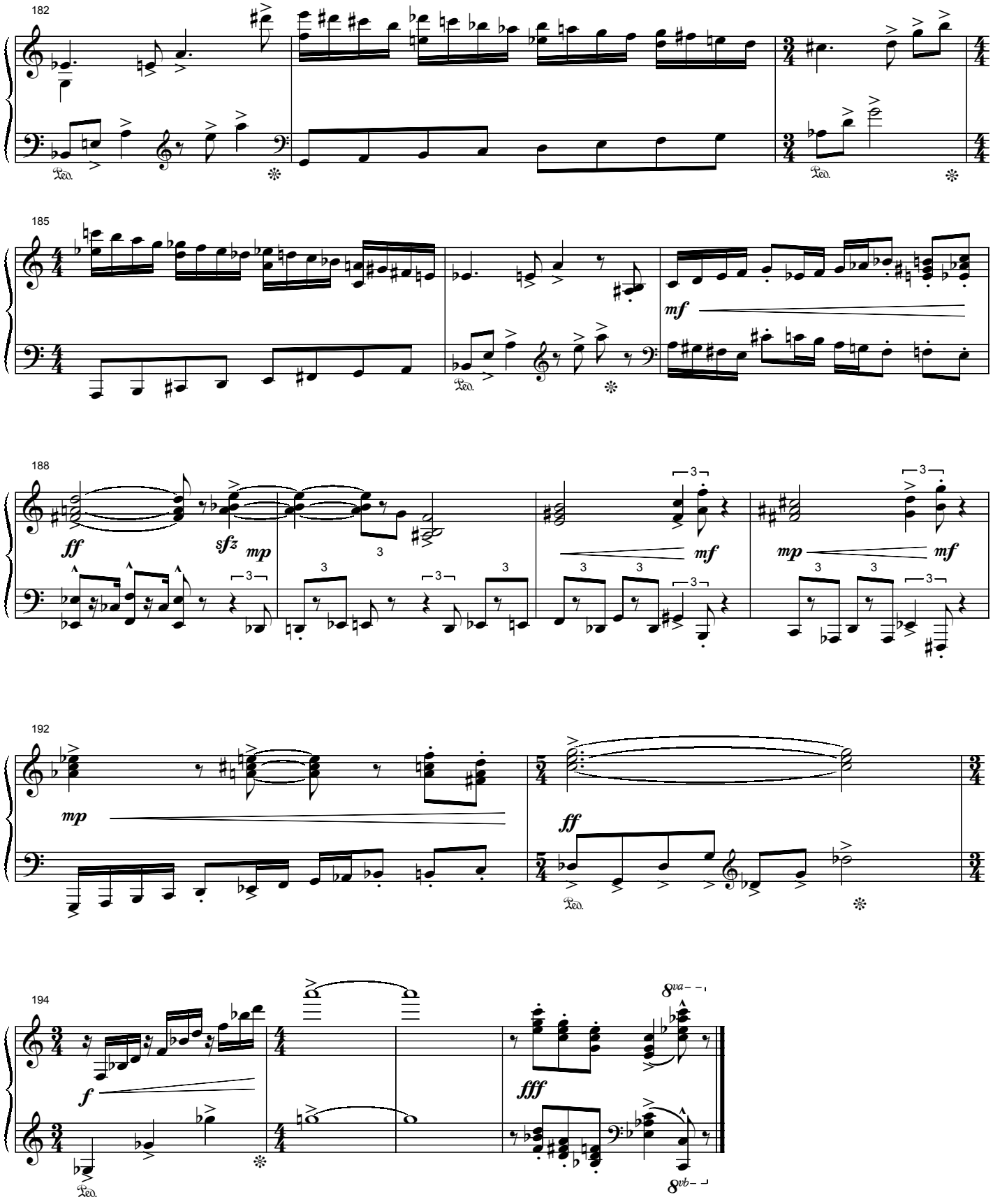
mp
143
mf
f
147
mp
f
151
154


157
p
cresc.
161
166
170
174
178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185
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8va
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