Cabinet of Curiosities

for clarinet (or viola) & piano

Karim Al-Zand

(2009)

PROGRAM NOTE:

A "cabinet of curiosities," also known as a *Wunderkammer*, is an elaborate cupboard used as a repository of diverse and exotic objects, the assembly of which was a popular pastime for the affluent European of the 16th and 17th centuries. A typical cabinet would contain a wide array of small, rare and intriguing items drawn from the natural world (ornate coral and shells, bizarre insects), science (intricate clocks and toys, distorted mirrors), history (letters, relics, antiquities) and art (carvings, miniature paintings, figurines). *Cabinet of Curiosities* presents a similarly diverse musical collection: six short pieces, each one with a somewhat peculiar and idiosyncratic character. The first imagines a still life painting in which one of the subjects is less than stationary. The second is a sort of vaulting dance, written as a musical palindrome. There follows an anamorphic fantasy on an old English folksong, a stately Baroque dance built on ascending and descending scales, and a *billet doux* for solo viola. The last movement is a set of rhythmic variations on the eleven-beat Bulgarian *kopanitsa* rhythm. *Cabinet of Curiosities* was written for a consortium of twenty clarinetists, assembled with the generous assistance of my friend and colleague Michael Webster.

Premiere Performance: *Cabinet of Curiosities* was written for the following performers, all of whom presented premiere performances of the work in 2009–2010: J. Lawrie Bloom, Kelly Burke, Chad Edward Burrow, Jane Carl, Linda A. Cionitti, Steve Cohen, F. Gerard Errante, Kenneth Grant, William Helmers, Stephanie Key, Patricia Kostek, Richard Nunemaker, Andreas Ramseier, António Saiote, Robert Spring, Jo-Ann Sternberg, Jennifer Stevenson, Michael Webster, Charles West, Nathan Williams, Peter Wright.

Dana Al-Zand. September 2009

DURATION:

1. Still life with lizard	2'
2. Saltarello al rovescio	2' 30"
3. Early one morning in a convex mirror	2' 45"
4. Sarabande selon la règle de l'octave	2' 15"
5. Love letter	2' 15"
6. Divisions on a Bulgarian rhythm	3' 15"
TOTAL:	ca. 15' 00"

Cabinet of Curiosities, Andrea Domenico Remps (Flemish/Italian, ca. 1620–ca. 1699)

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VIOLA TRANSCRIPTION BY MOLLY WISE

KARIM AL-ZAND
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1. still life with lizard

Timeless; floating tranquilly

Viola

Piano

count in 𝅘𝅥𝅯s
𝅘𝅥𝅯= 144

placid, serene

pp

no dynamic change

mp

Ped.

relaxed, without accentuation

poco espres.

furtive
sul pont.

ord.

p

suddenly scurrying very quickly (still 𝅘𝅥𝅯= 144)

(’) as before

sul pont.

very animated (but softly)

pp

ord.

mp

very animated (but softly)

pp

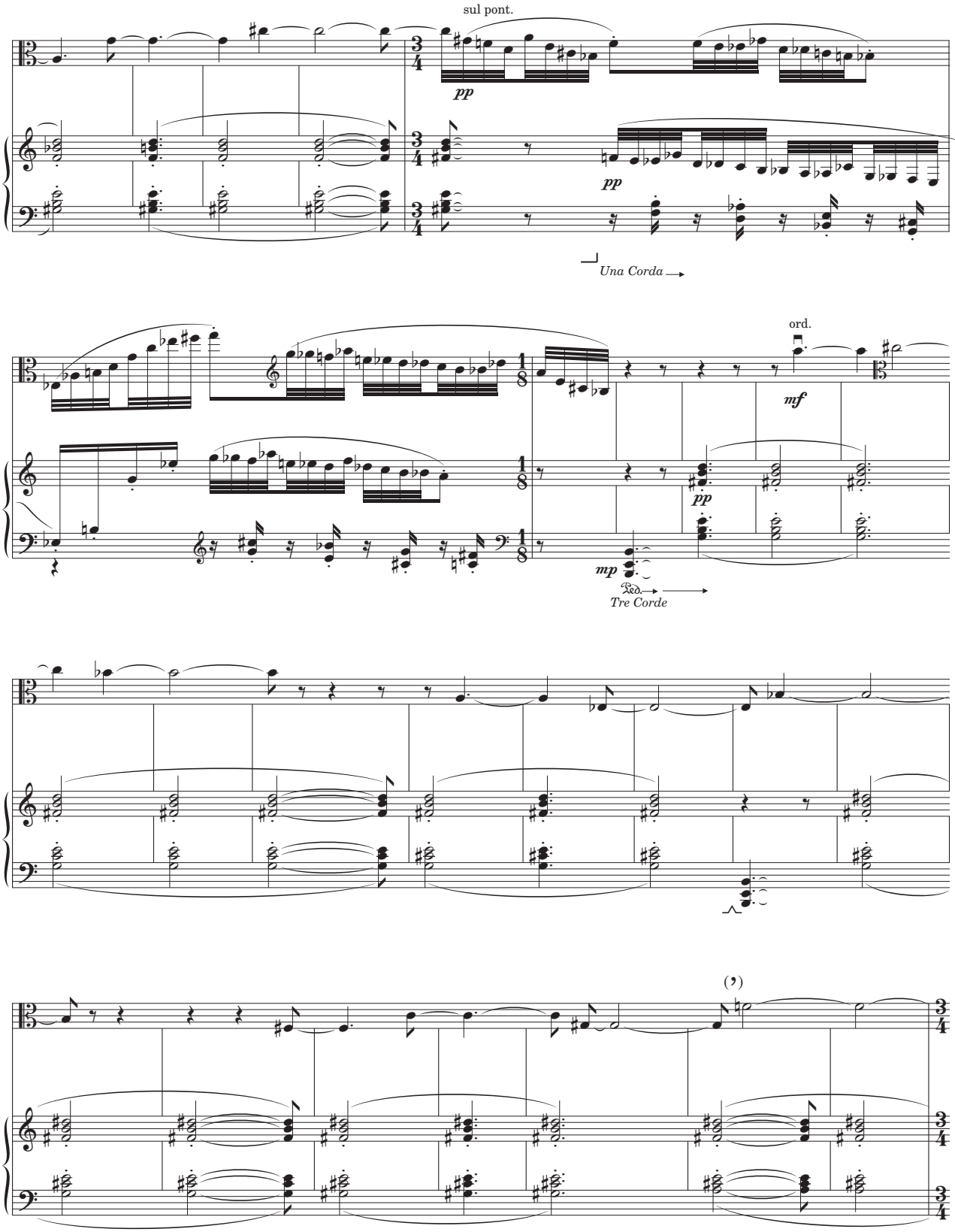
pp

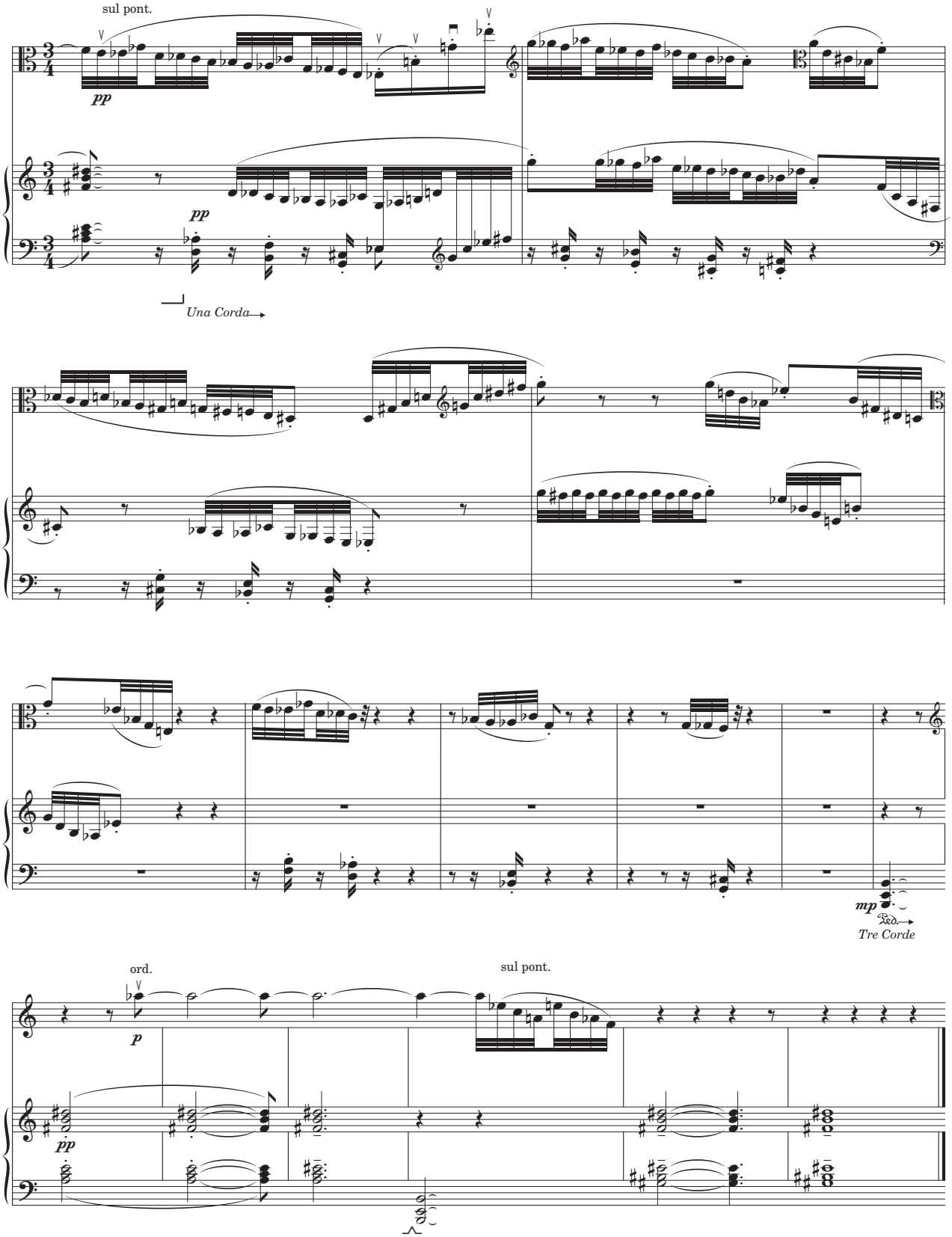
mp

Ped.

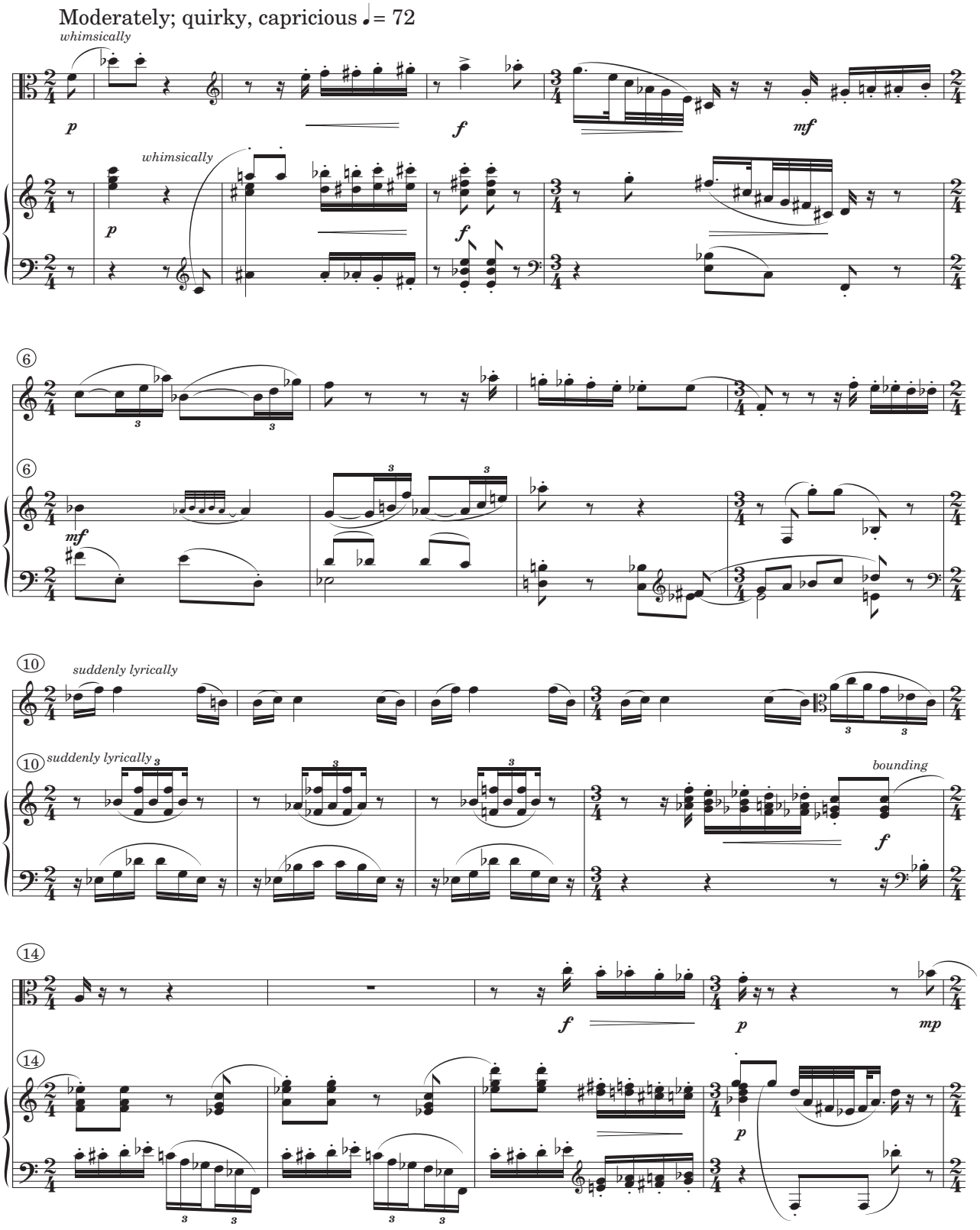
Una Corda

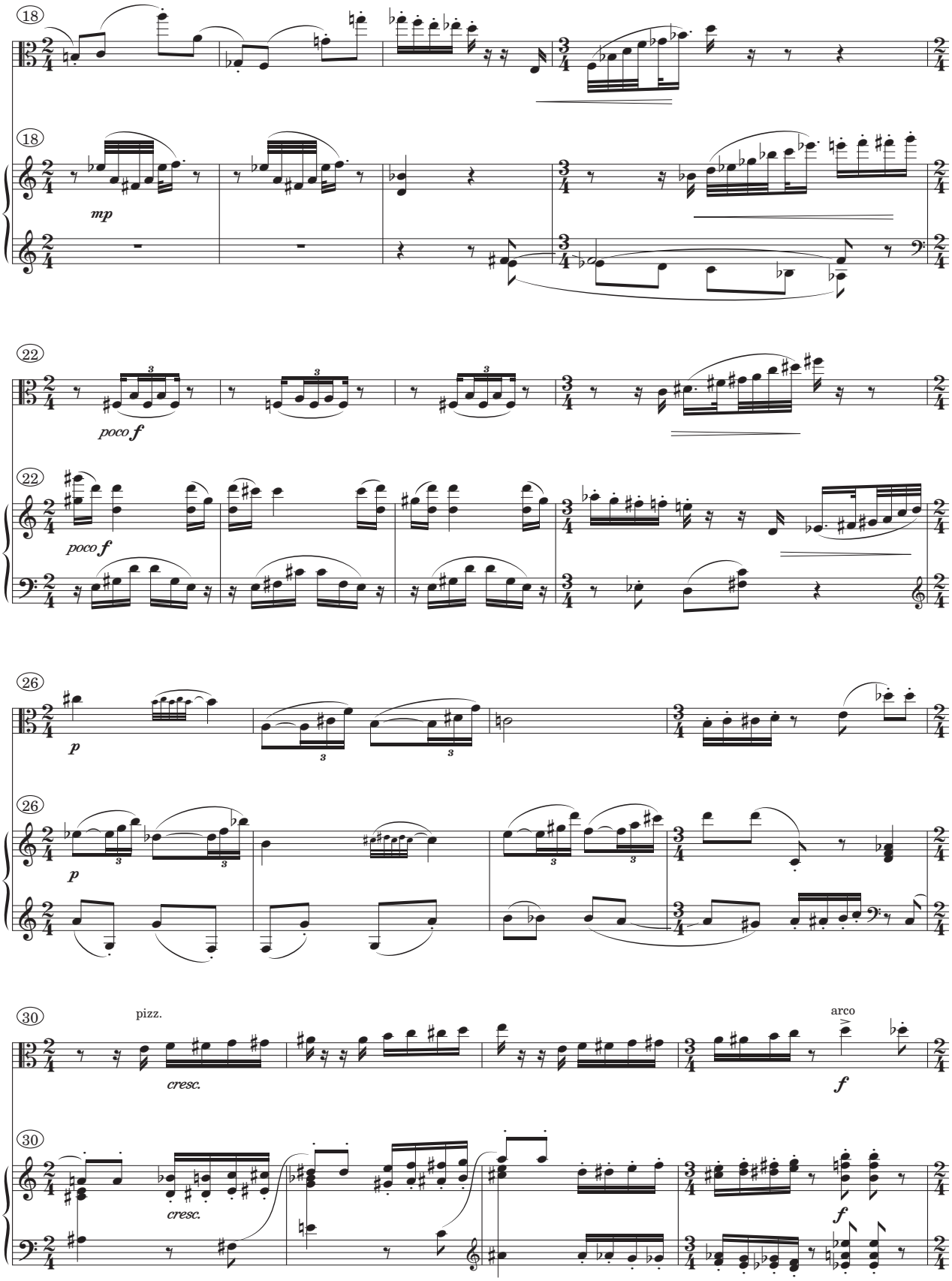
Tre Corde

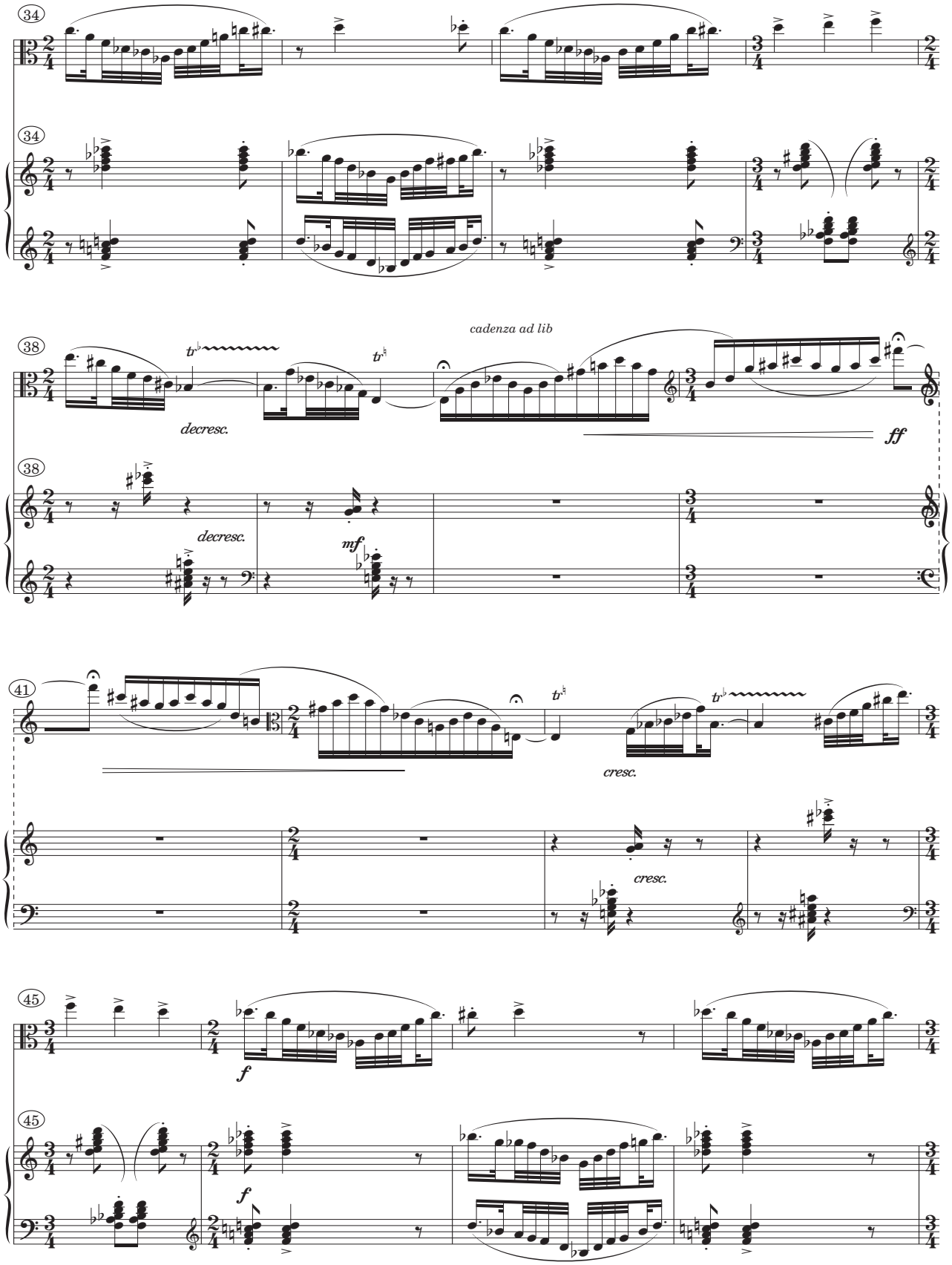

sul pont.
pp
pp
Una Corda
ord.
mf
pp
mp
Ped.
Tre Corde
(')

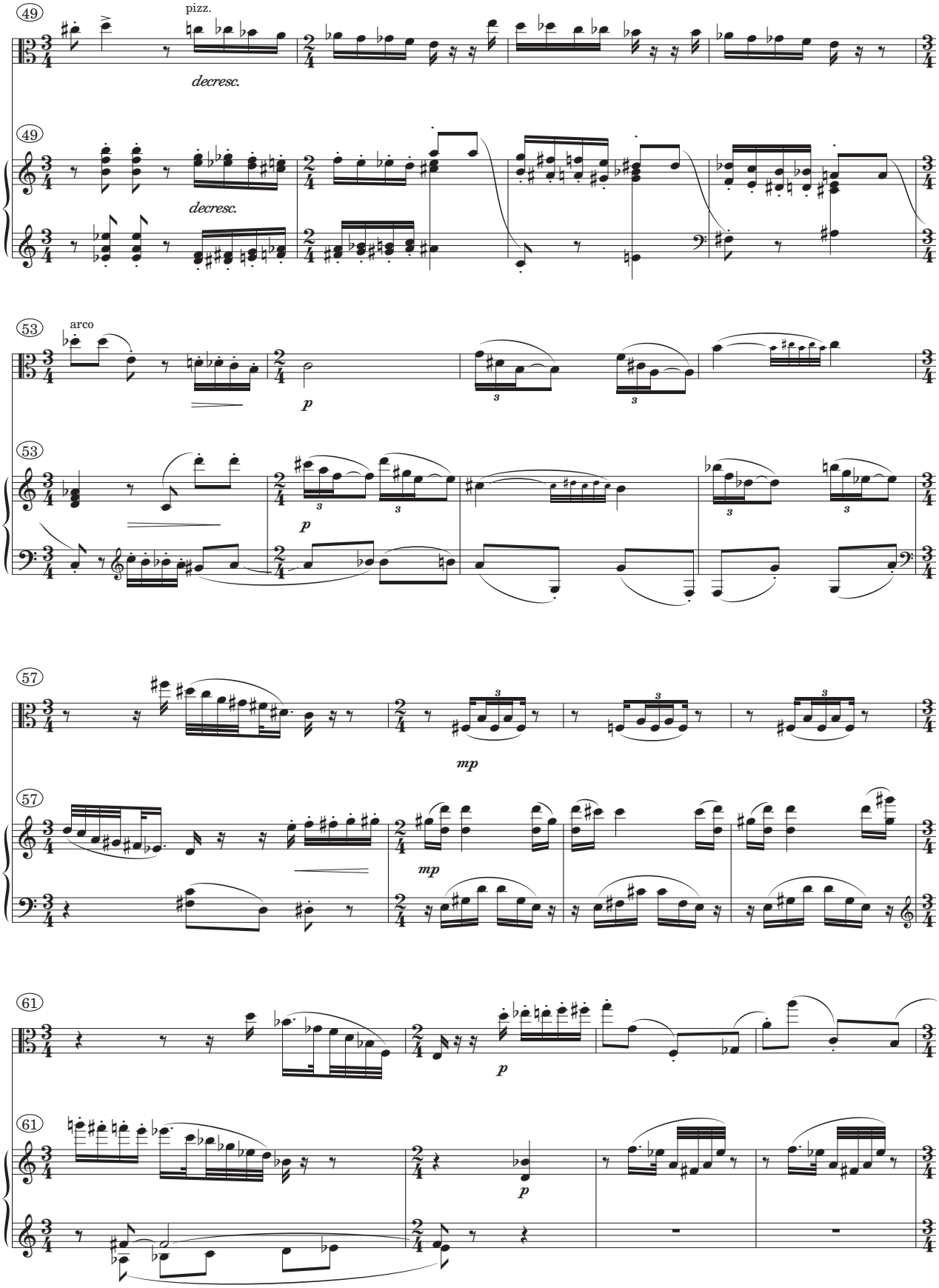

sul pont.
pp
pp
Una Corda
mp
Tre Corde
ord.
p
pp
sul pont.

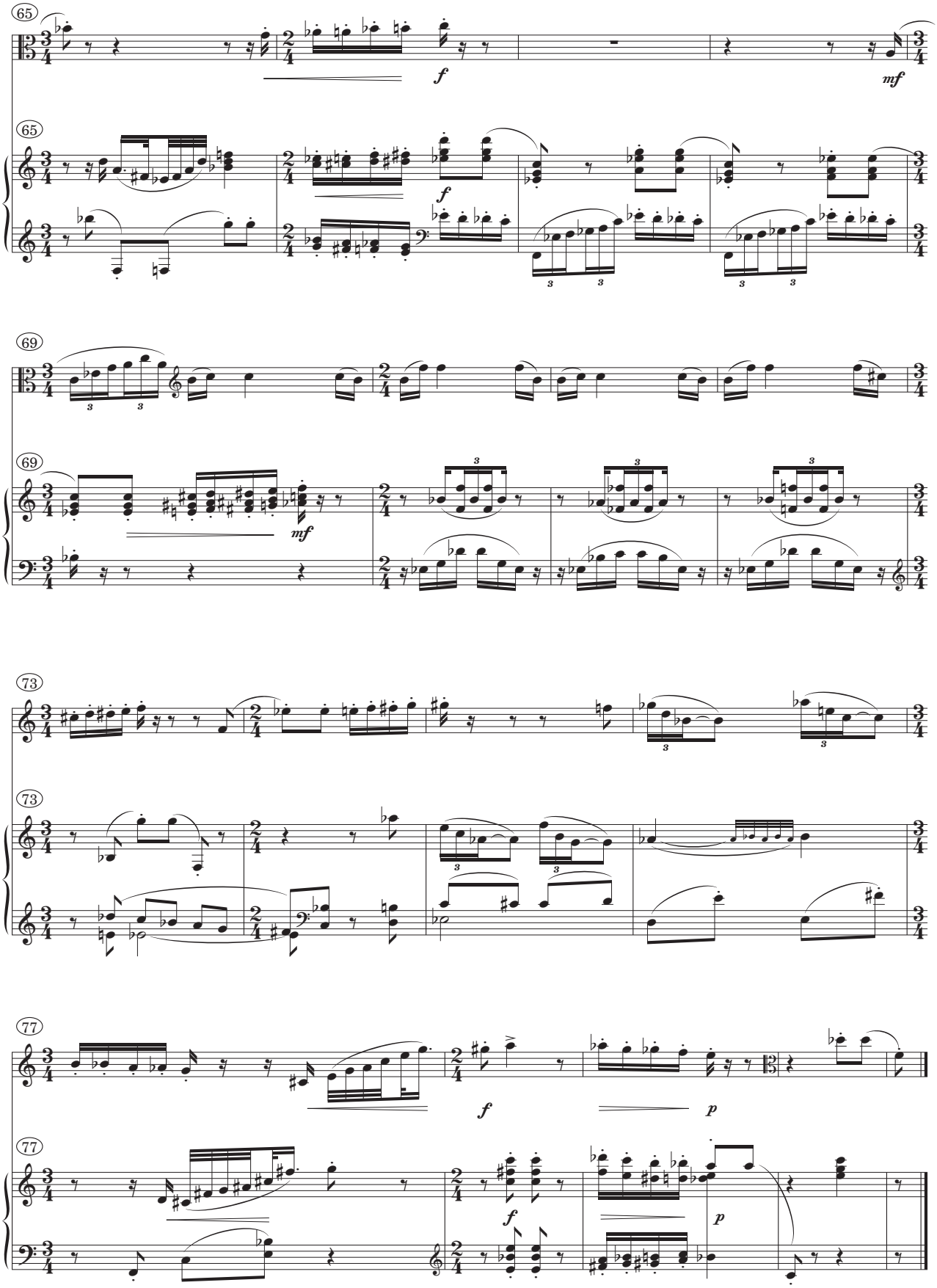
2. saltarello al rovescio



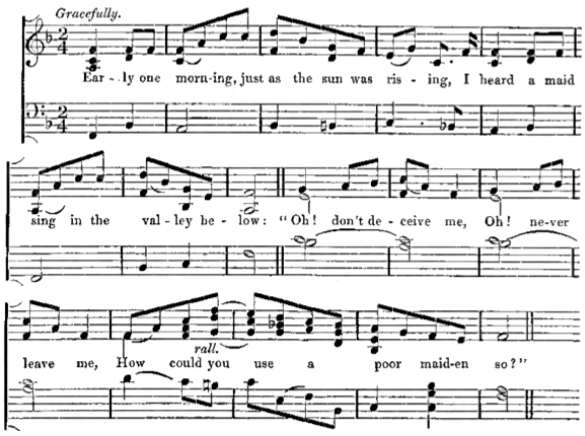

18
mp
22
poco f
26
p
30
pizz.
cresc.
arco
f


34
34
38
cadenza ad lib
decresc.
ff
38
decresc.
mf
41
cresc.
cresc.
45
f
45
f


49
pizz.
decresc.
49
decresc.
53
arco
p
53
p
57
mp
57
mp
61
p
61
p


65
f
mf
65
f
69
69
mf
73
73
77
f
p
77
f
p

3. *early one morning in a convex mirror*



Slowly; hazy, dream-like, somewhat melancholy ♩= 50

faintly

pp

a quiet flourish

mf

mp

p

soft, distant bells

pp

liberal use of Ped. throughout

sempre pp

④

more confident

p

④

mp

p

poco rit. – accel. – – – – – – –

⑦

mp

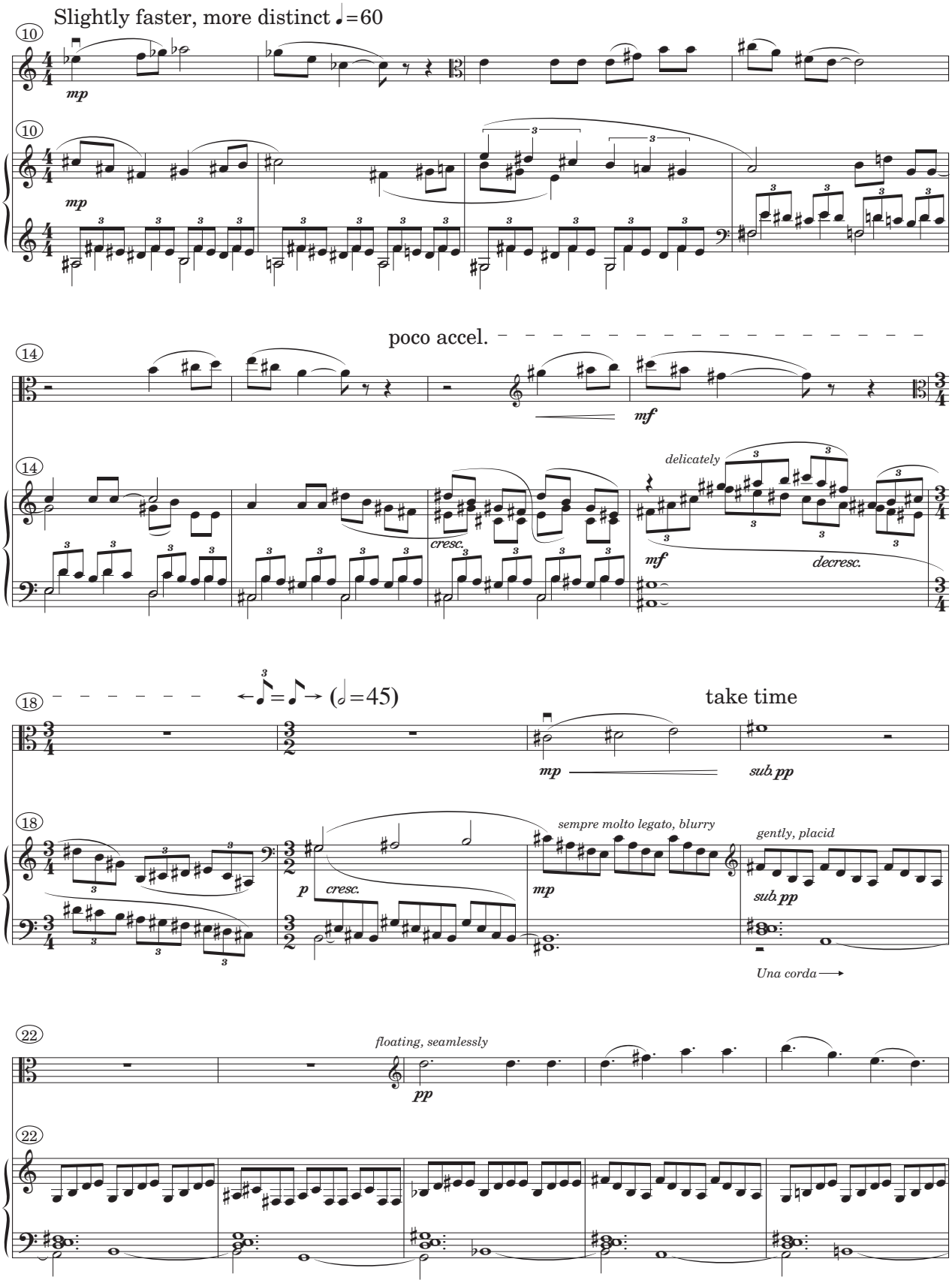
p

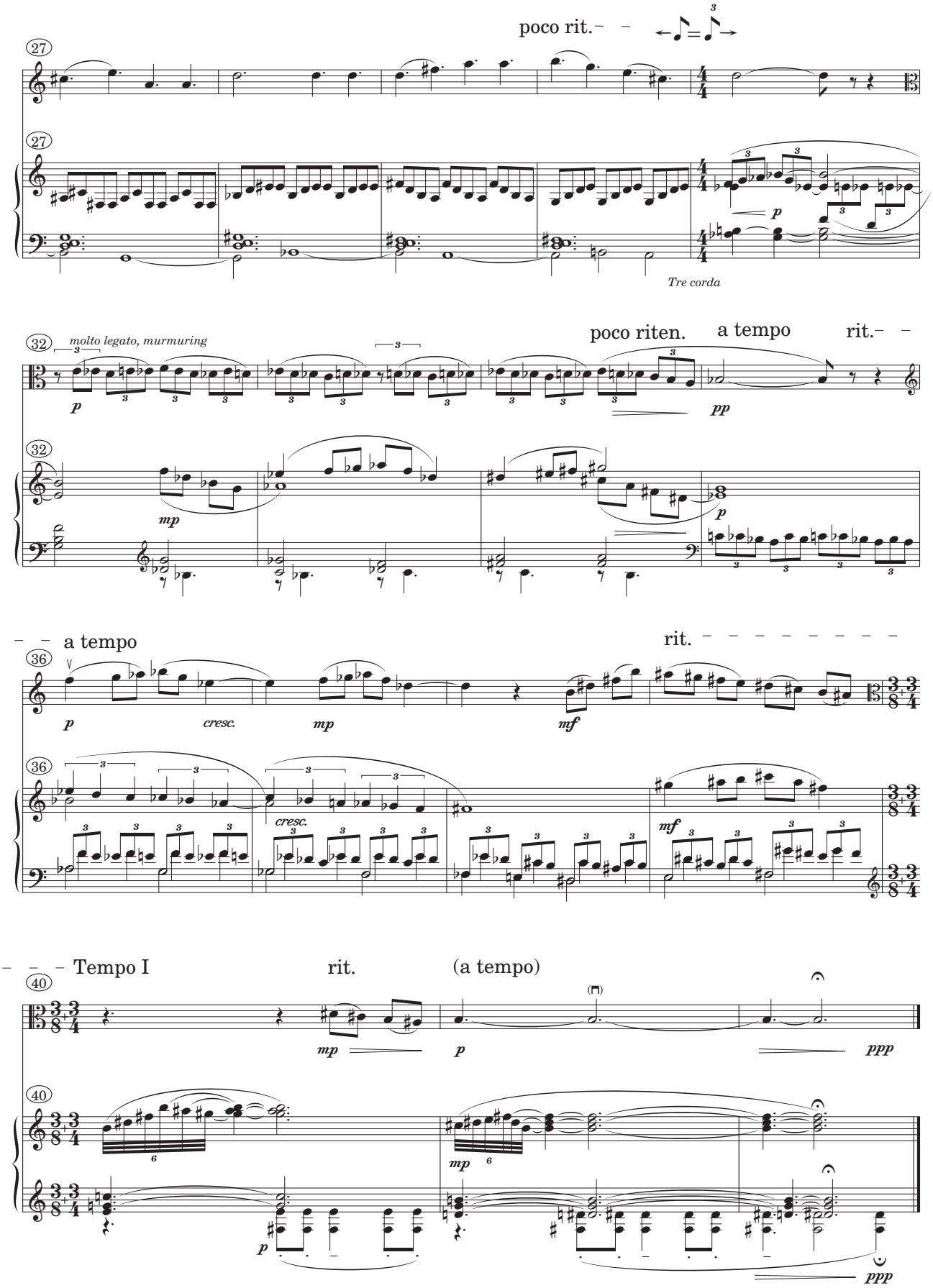
⑦

p

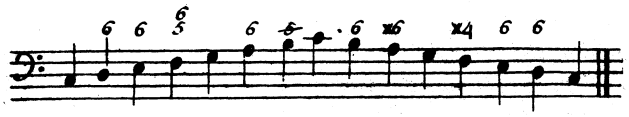
molto legato

still plenty of Ped.


Slightly faster, more distinct ♩=60
mp
poco accel.
mf
delicately
cresc.
decresc.
(𝅗𝅥=45)
take time
sub. pp
sempre molto legato, blurry
gently, placid
Una corda
floating, seamlessly
pp


poco rit.
27
27
p
Tre corda
molto legato, murmuring
32
poco riten.
a tempo
rit.
p
mp
pp
32
mp
p
a tempo
rit.
36
p
cresc.
mp
mf
36
cresc.
mf
Tempo I
rit.
(a tempo)
40
mp
p
ppp
40
mp
p
ppp

4. sarabande selon la règle de l'octave



Slowly, but still flowing; a feeling of ♩+ ♩. (♪= 63)

2+3

(3+2)

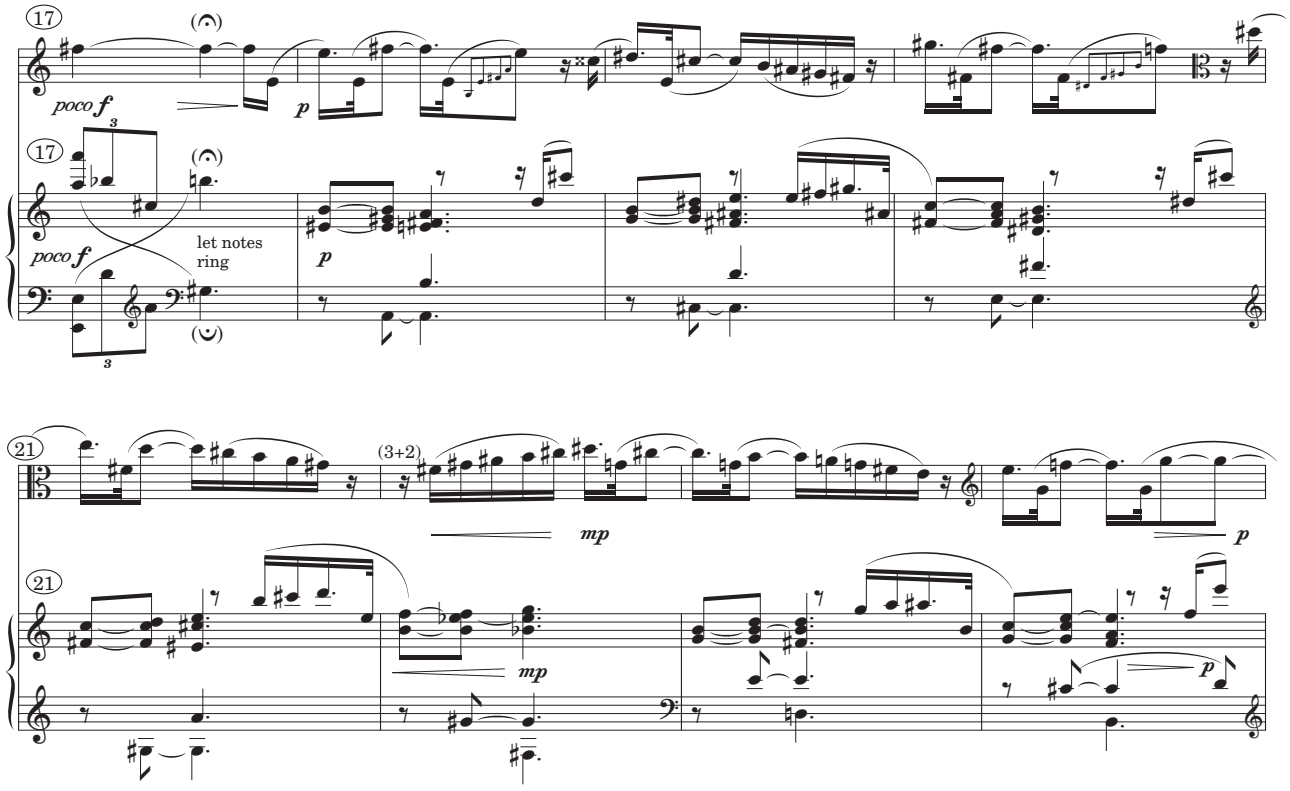
rit.

a tempo

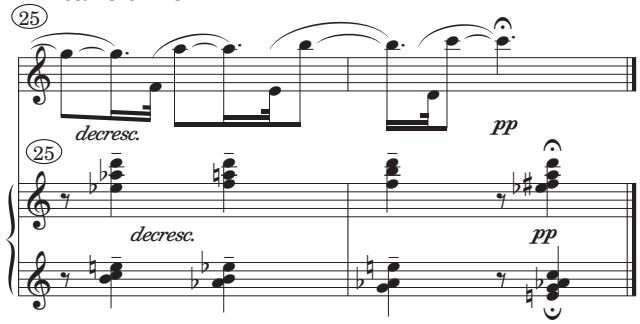
(etc.)

cresc.

cresc.



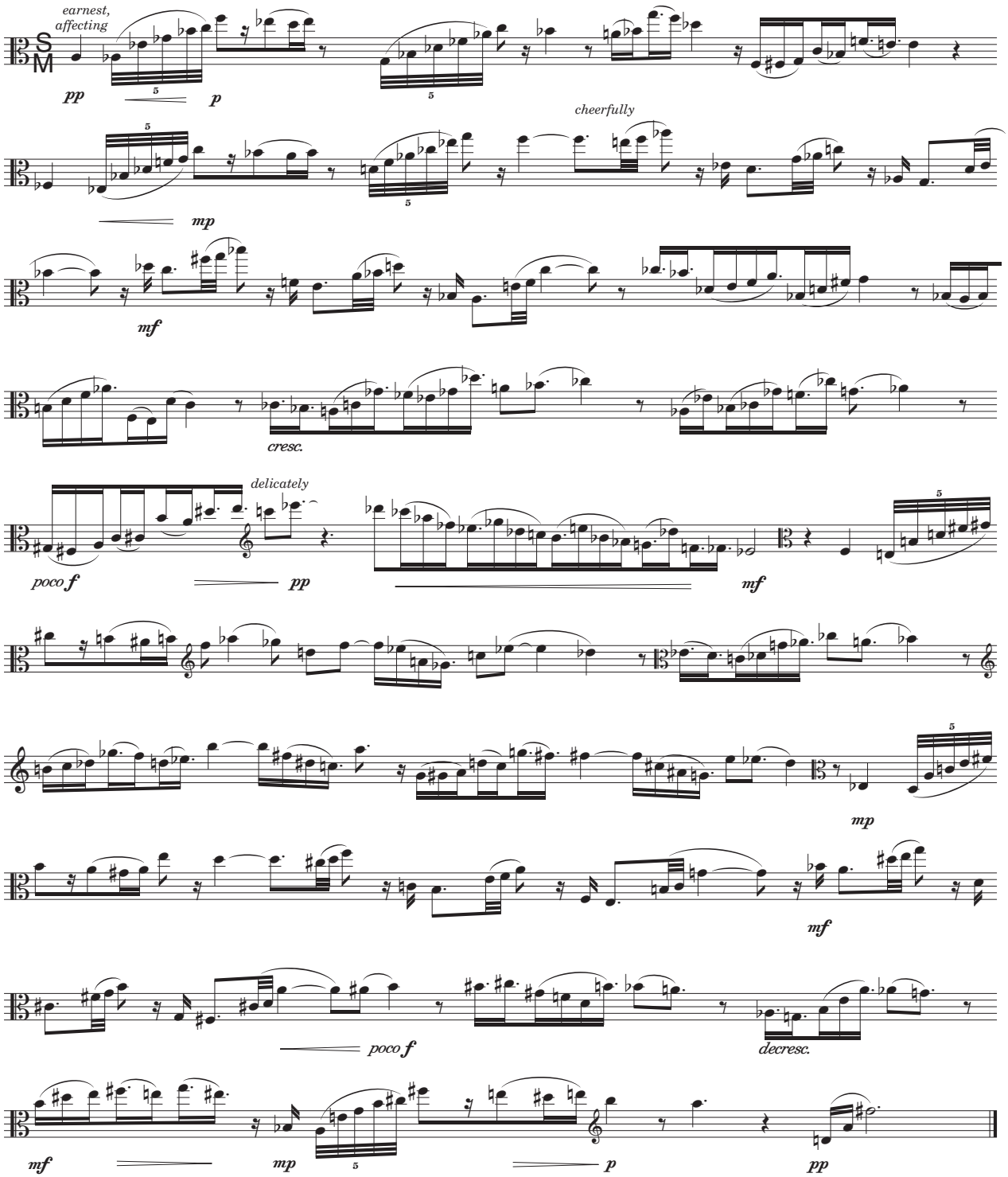
take time - - - - - - - - - - - - - -



5. love letter

Solo Viola

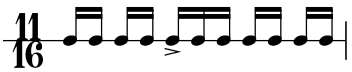
With much rubato; warmly, speech-like (ca. ♩= 56–60)*



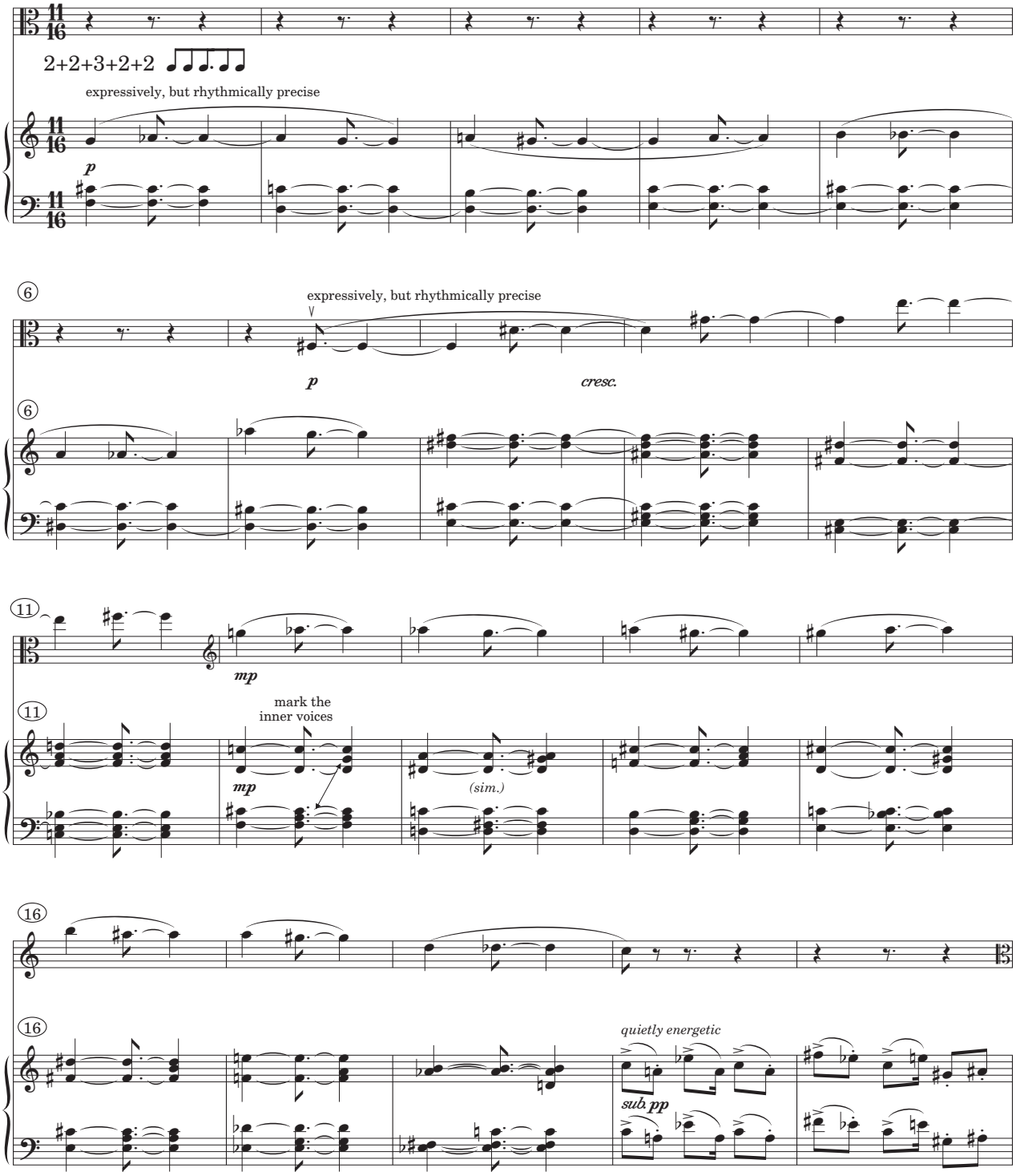
* The movement should be played with a certain rhythmic freedom. The “added value” augmentation dots on the sixteenth notes are meant to show phrasing and emphasis, and to highlight compound lines, more than to indicate precise rhythmic values. [Approximate duration: 2' 20"]

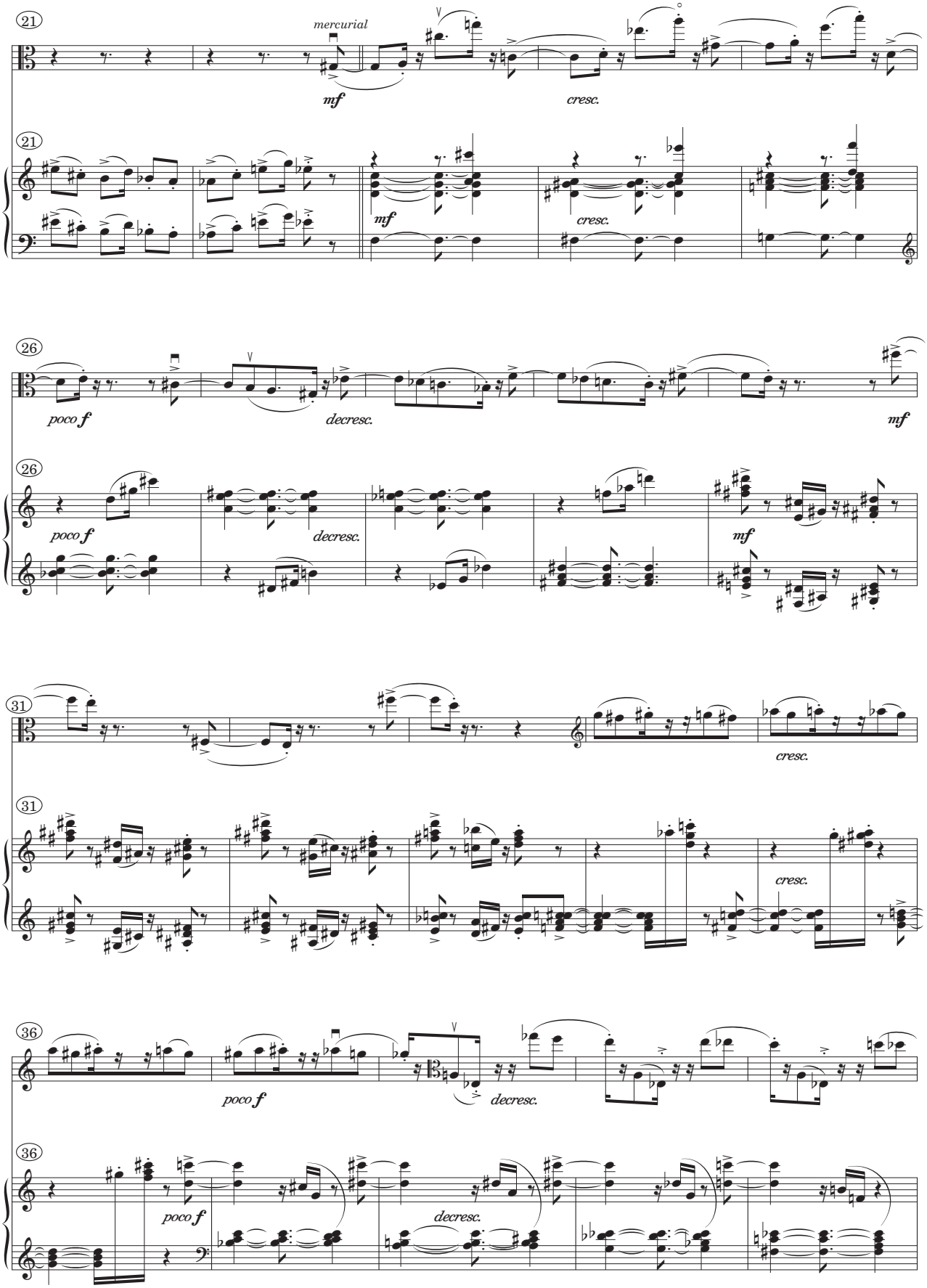
6. *divisions on a Bulgarian rhythm*

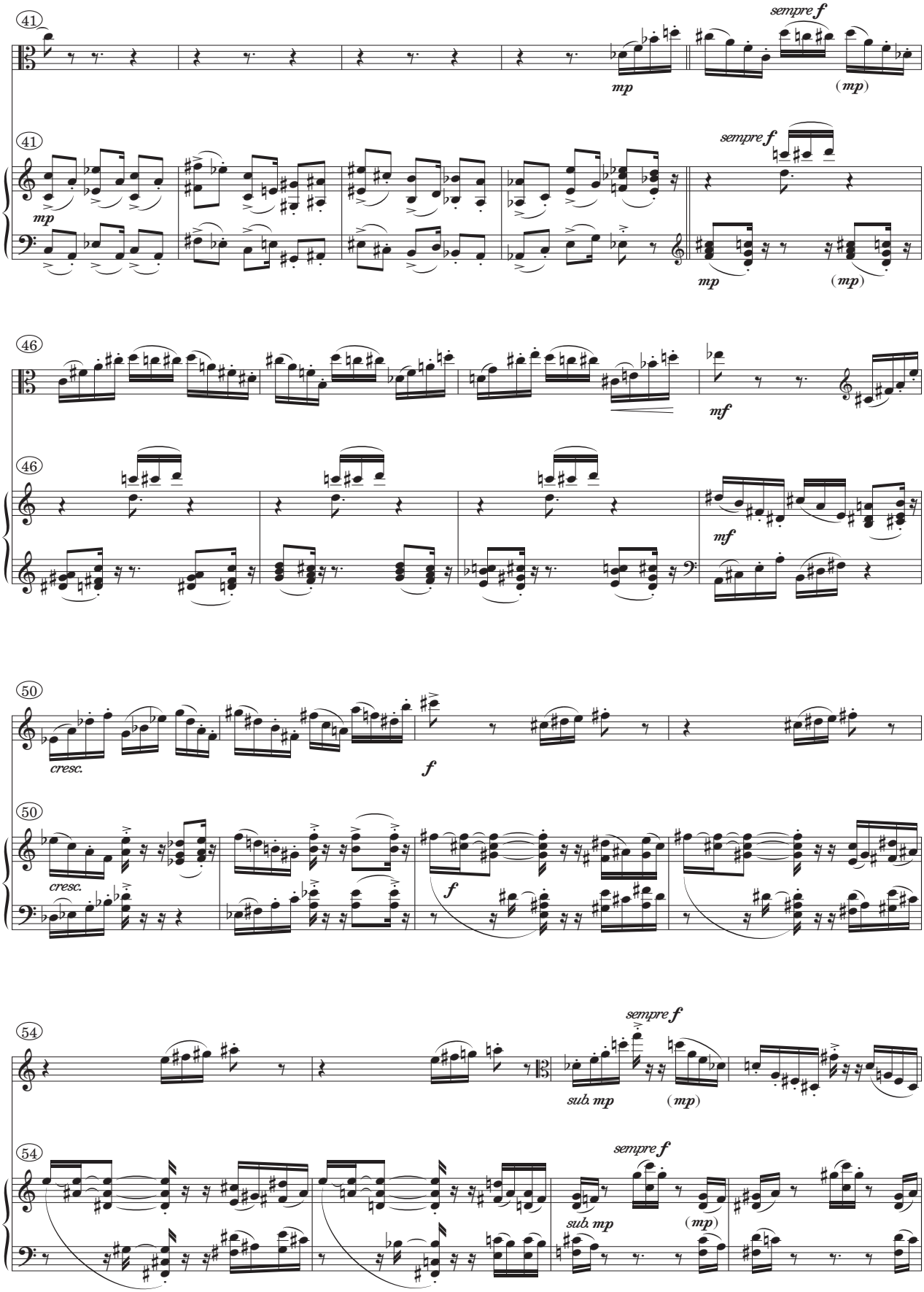
Kopanitsa (Gankino)

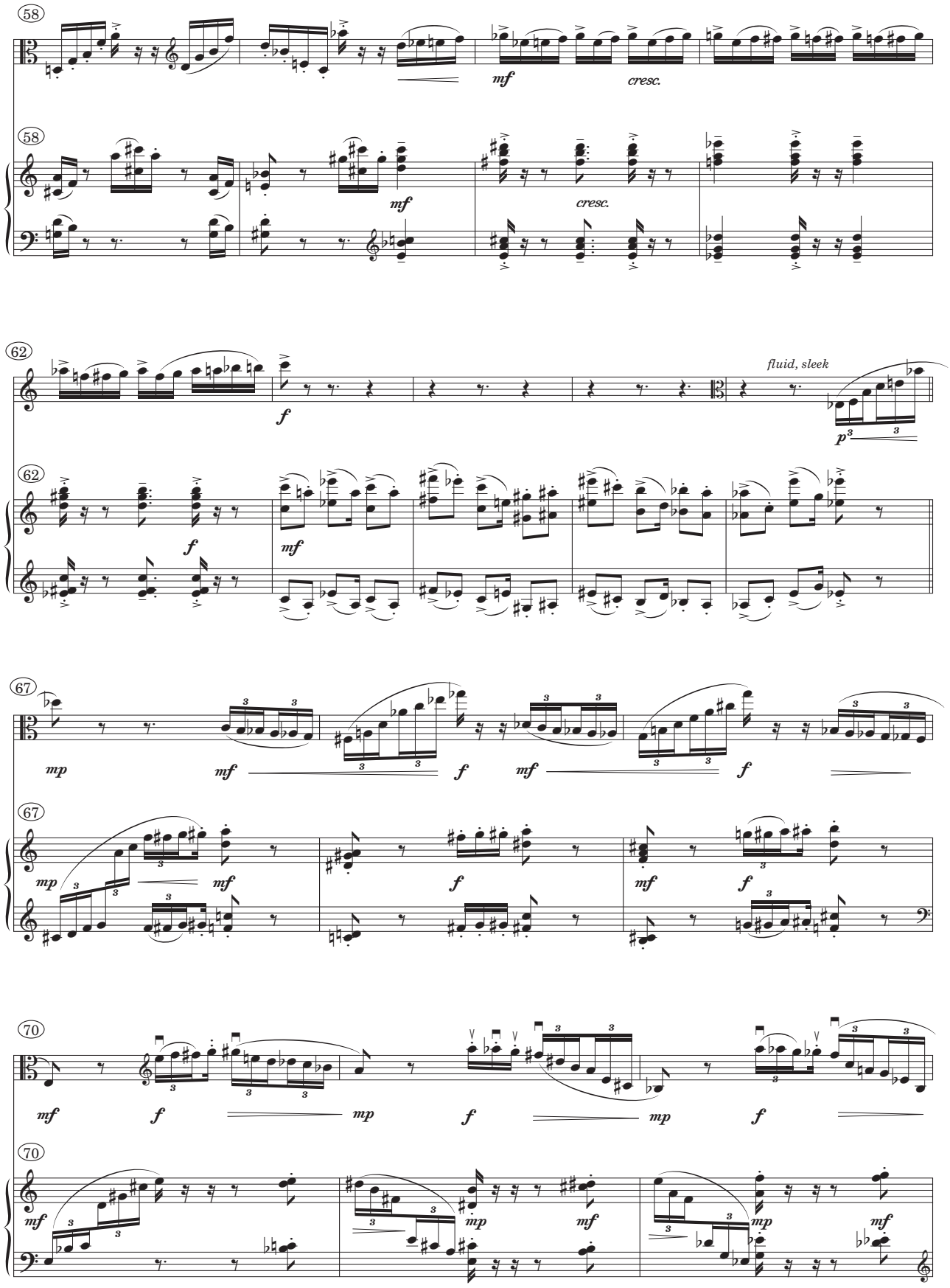


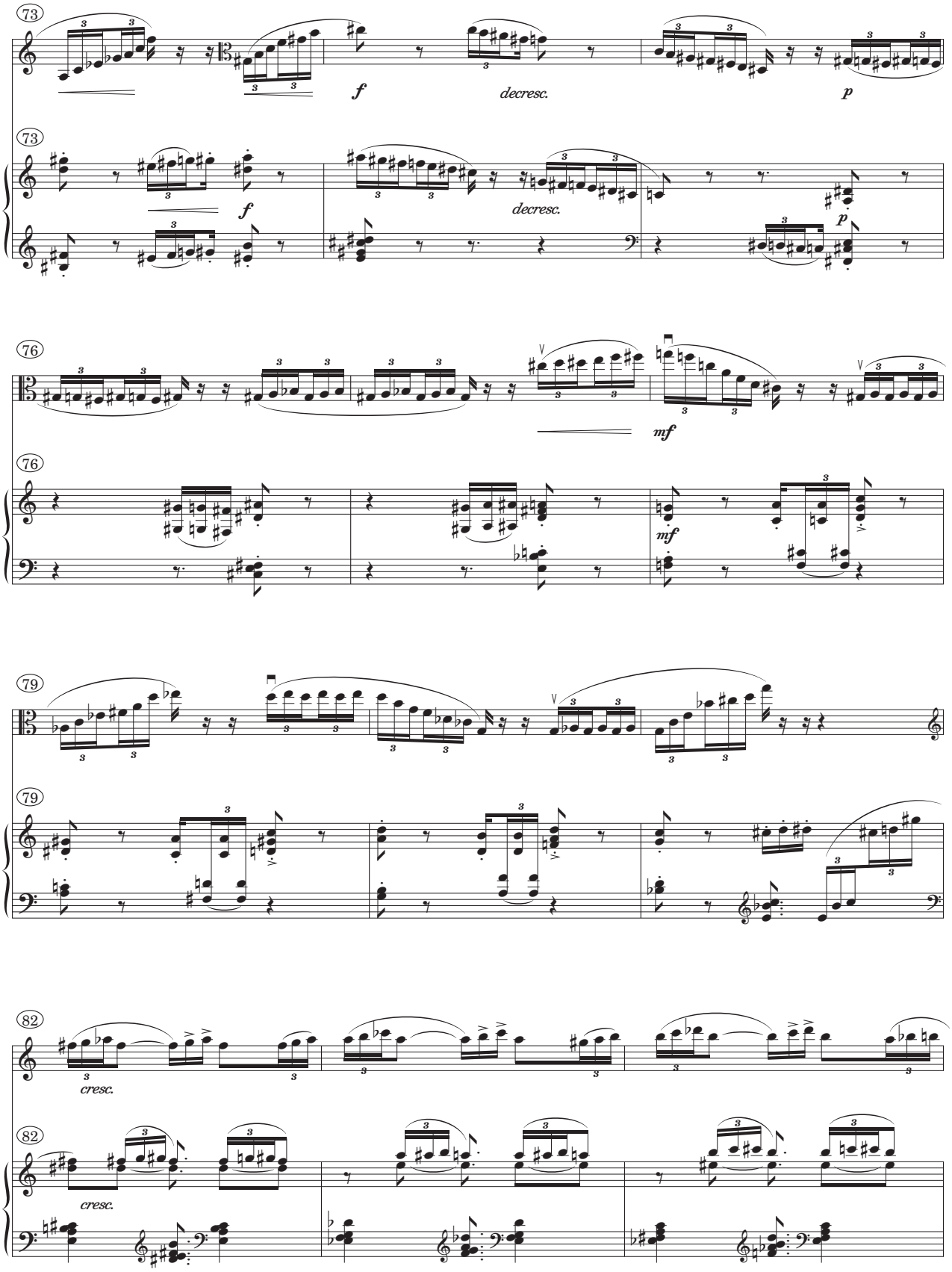
Very Quickly; lively, exuberant ♪=184 (𝅘𝅥𝅯=368)

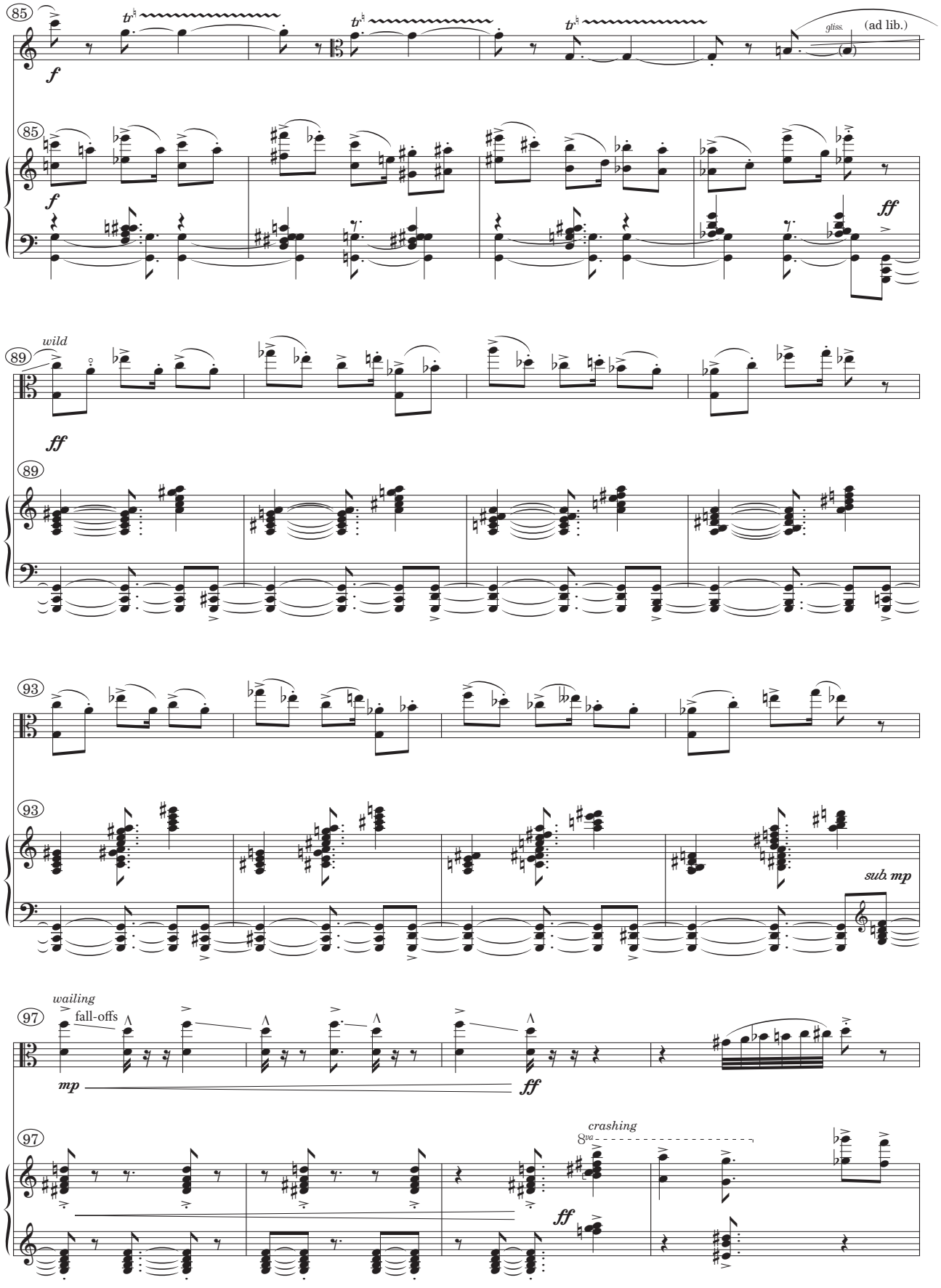


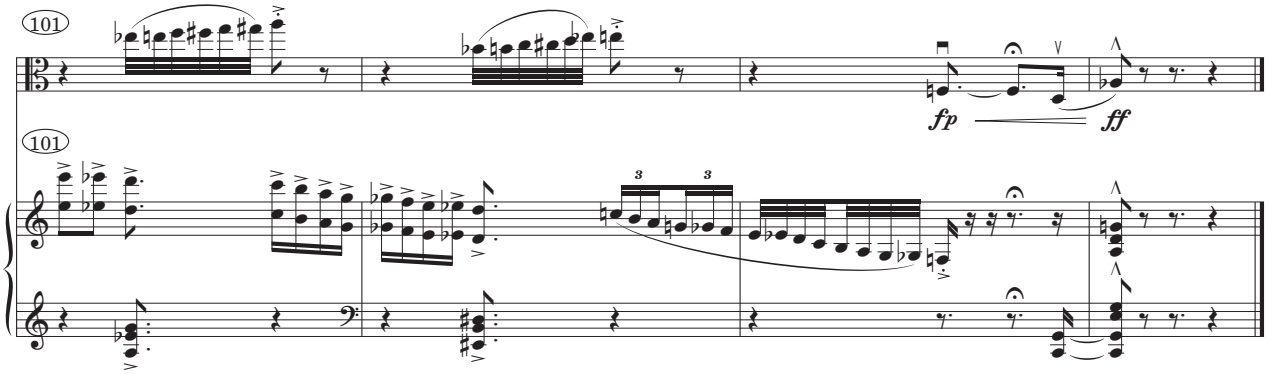

21
mercurial
mf
cresc.
21
mf
cresc.
26
poco f
decresc.
mf
26
poco f
decresc.
mf
31
cresc.
31
cresc.
36
poco f
decresc.
36
poco f
decresc.


41
sempre f
mp
(mp)
41
sempre f
mp
(mp)
46
mf
46
mf
50
cresc.
f
50
cresc.
f
54
sempre f
sub. mp
(mp)
54
sempre f
sub. mp
(mp)


58
mf
cresc.
58
mf
cresc.
62
f
fluid, sleek
p
62
f
mf
67
mp
mf
f
mf
f
67
mp
mf
f
mf
f
70
mf
f
mp
f
mp
f
70
mf
mp
mf
mp
mf


73
f
decresc.
p
73
f
decresc.
p
76
mf
76
mf
79
79
82
cresc.
82
cresc.


85
f
gliss.
(ad lib.)
85
f
ff
wild
89
ff
89
93
93
sub. mp
wailing
97
fall-offs
mp
ff
97
crashing
8va
ff


101
101
fp
ff