let down the scale of music from the sky

fantasy on a ground by Purcell
for solo organ

Karim Al-Zand
(2022)

Let Down the Scale of Music from the Sky borrows music from Henry Purcell's *Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis*, the composer's so-called "Evening Service," written for mixed chorus. The beginning of my solo organ work presents two short and plaintive phrases, drawn from the Purcell, which together form a gently descending scale. This gesture is used as a sort of repeating refrain in the piece, a "ground." The work's title is drawn from an encomium by poet John Dryden, written in 1695: *An Ode, On the Death of Mr. Henry Purcell.*

> The Heav'ly Choir, who heard his Notes from high,
> Let down the Scale of Music from the Sky.

The work was commissioned by the American Guild of Organists for the 2023 Ronald G. Pogorzelski and Lester D. Yankee Annual Competition, and received its premiere on the Pogorzelski/Yankee organ.

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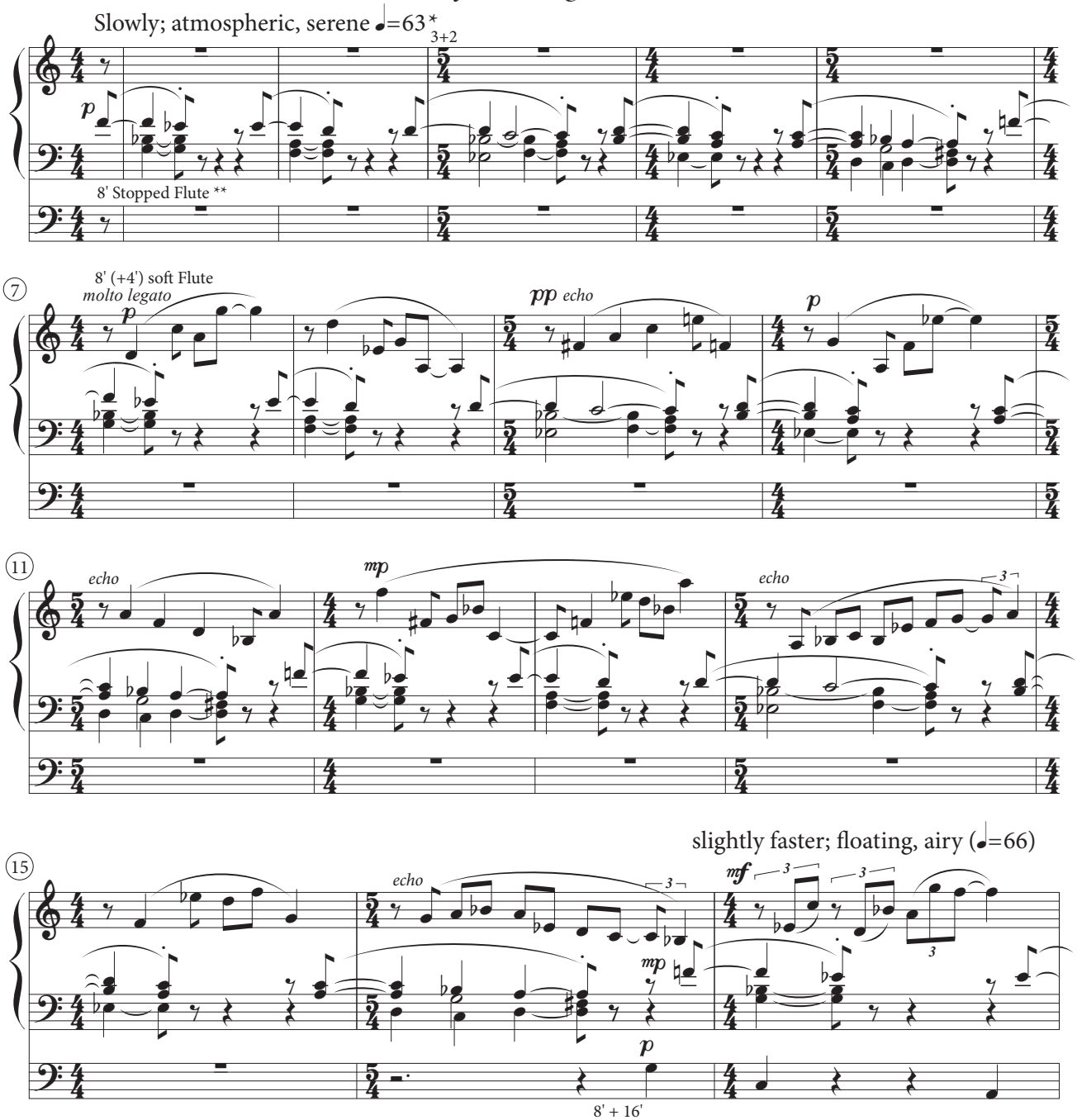
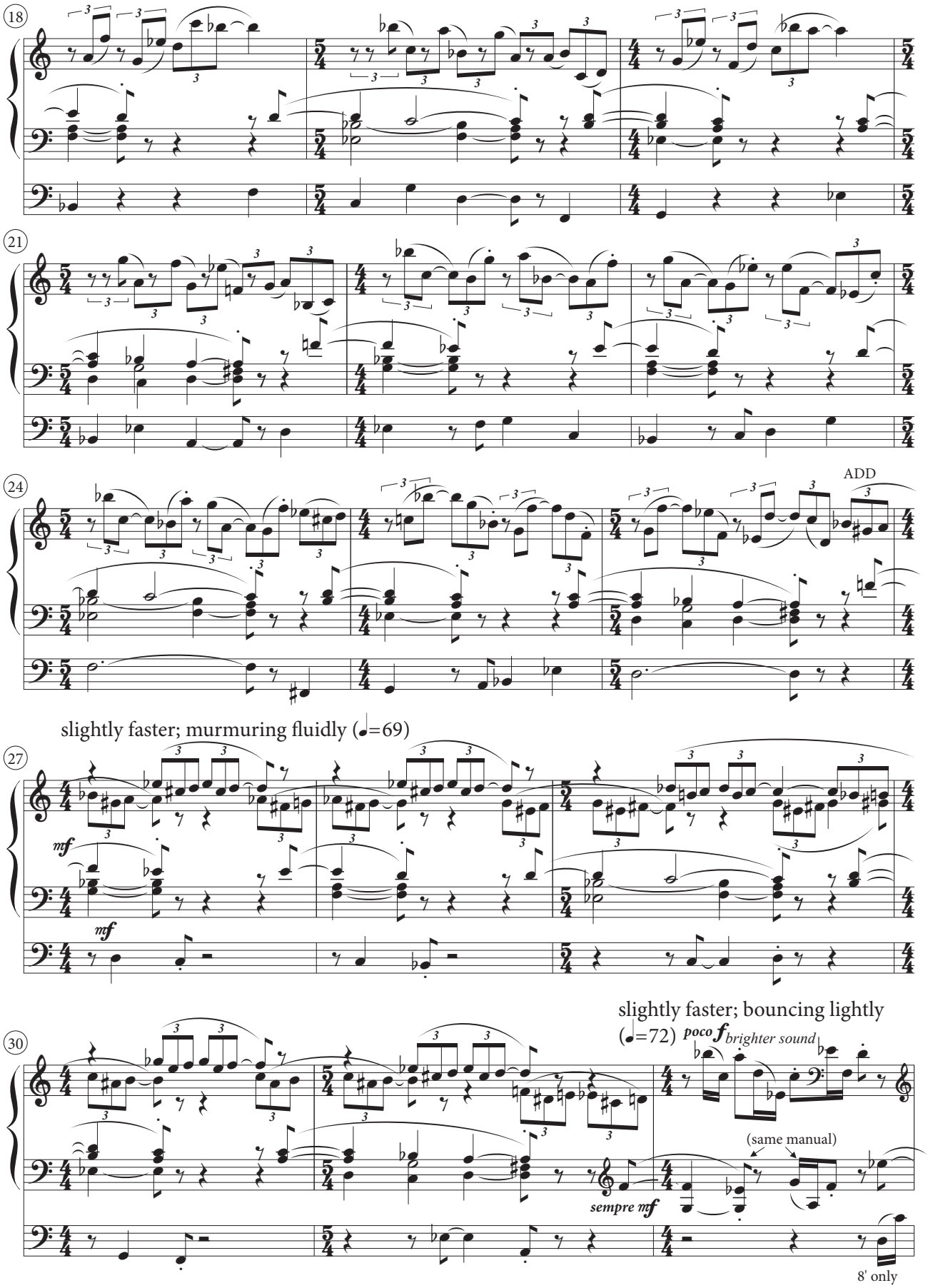
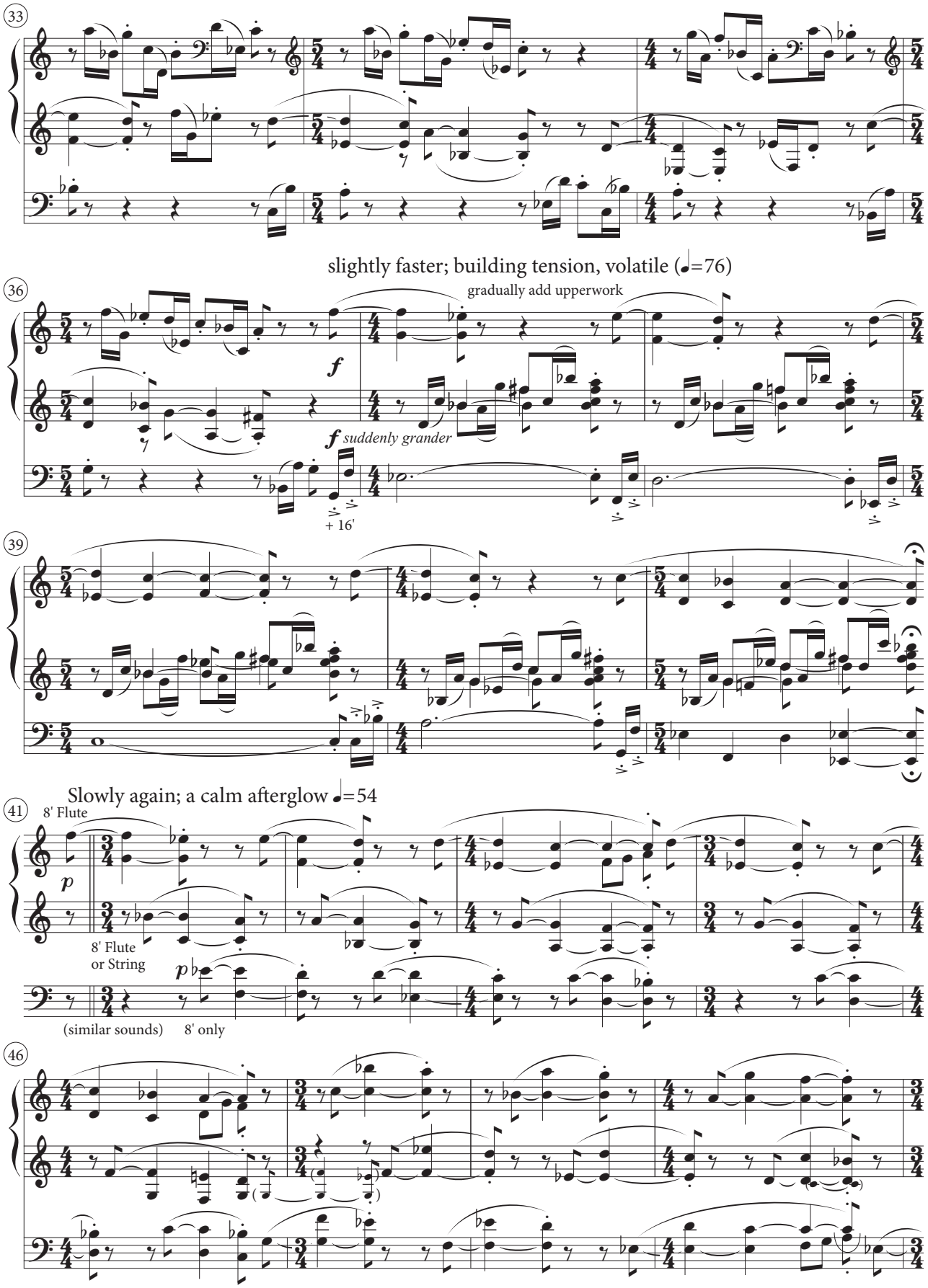
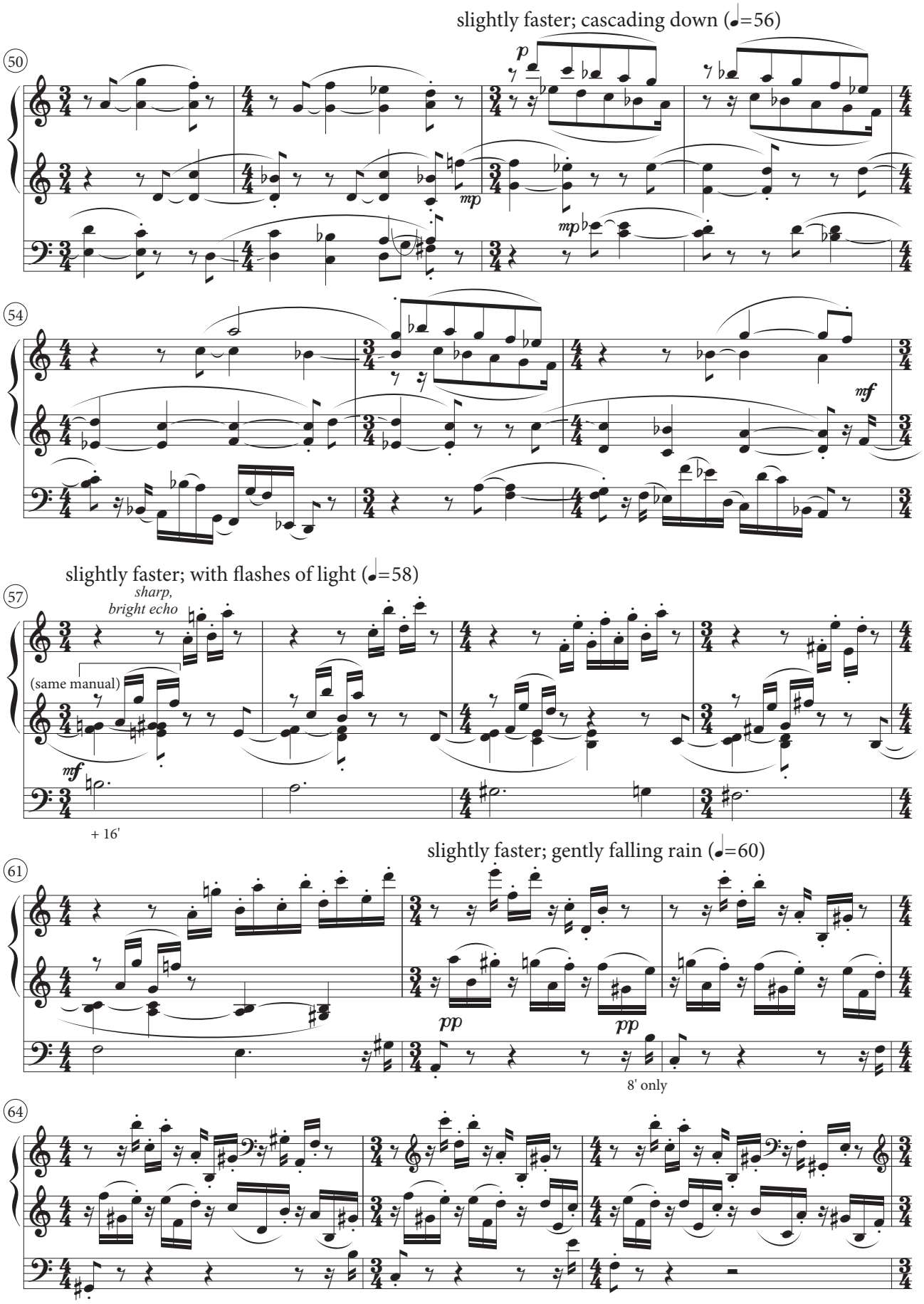


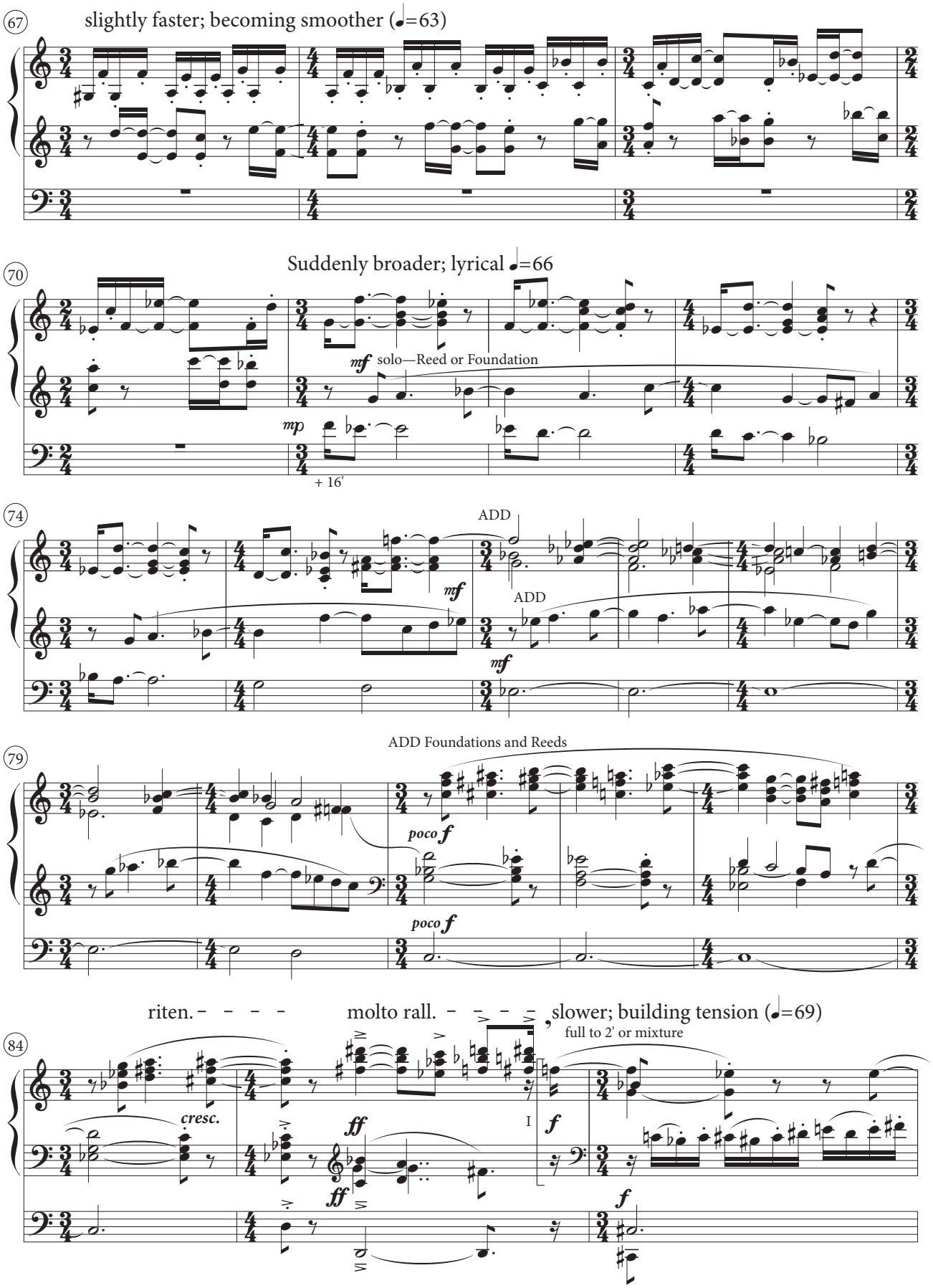
* Measures 1–41 should become progressively fuller registrationally and gradually gain momentum.

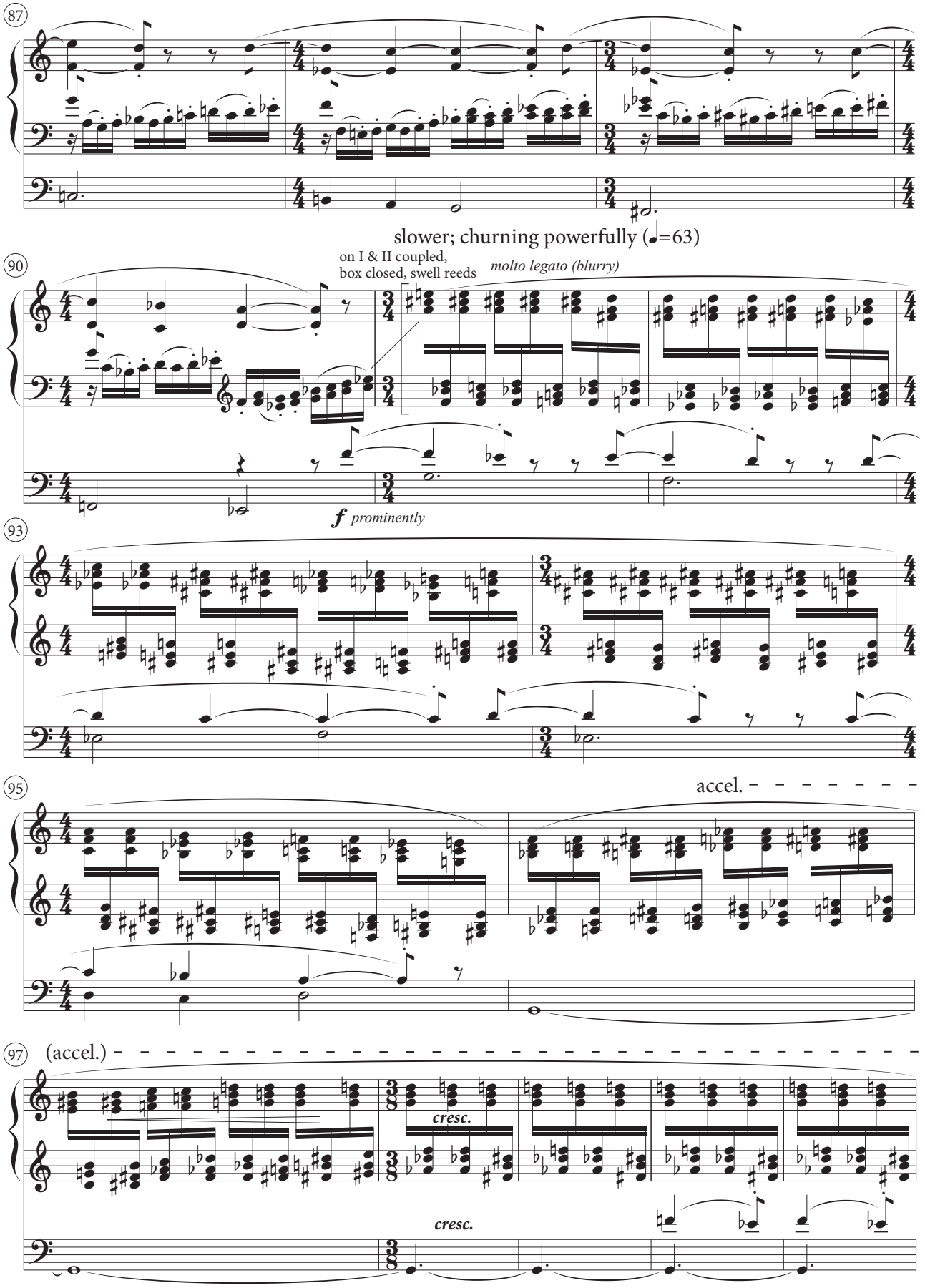
** Wth some exceptions, the piece is executed on (at least) two manuals, usually with contrasting sounds. Only very basic suggestions are given for registration. Many additional possibilites may be found, especially on larger organs. With some exceptions, the two upper staves generally show material played each on different manuals.

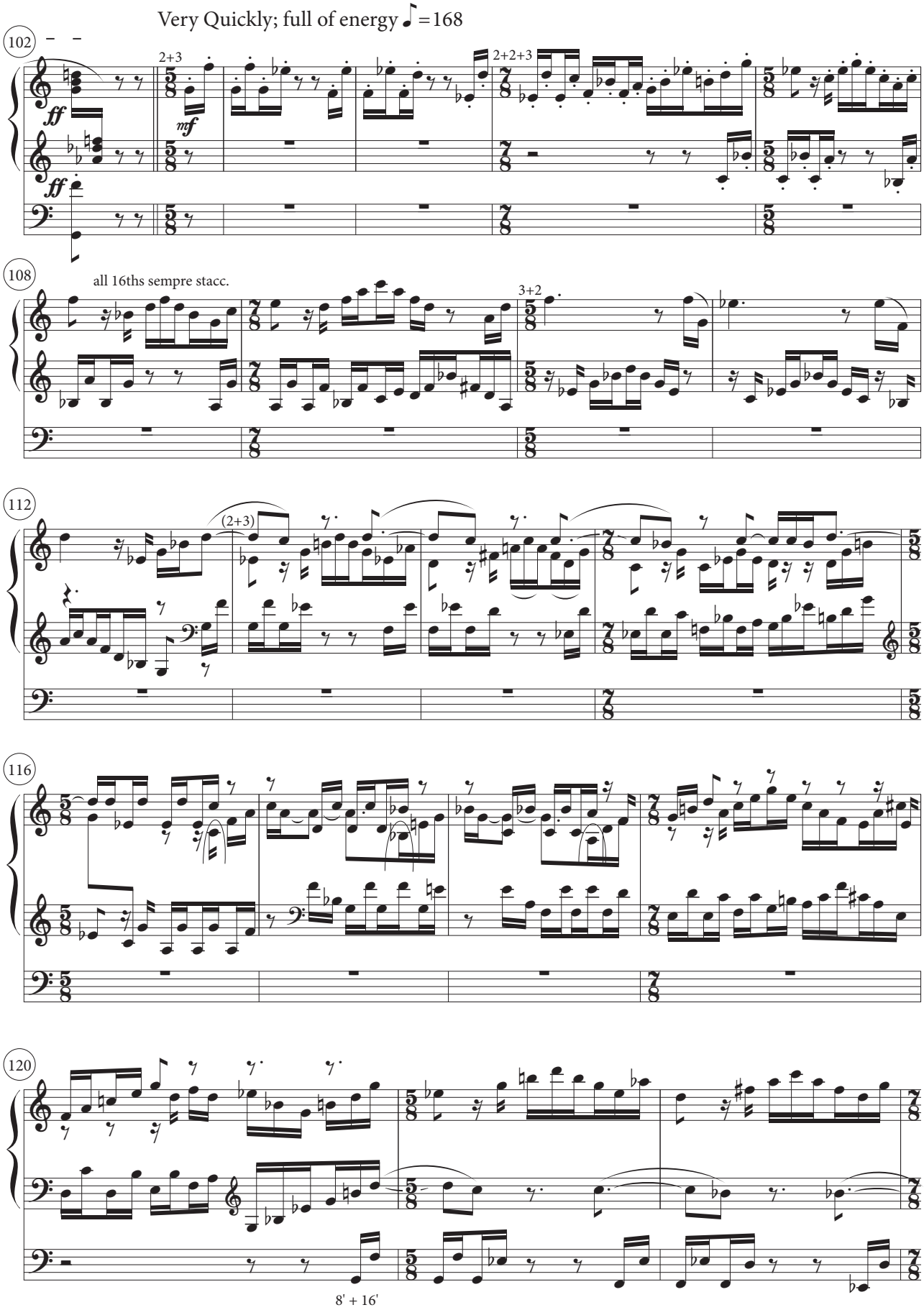

18
21
24
ADD
slightly faster; murmuring fluidly (♩=69)
27
mf
mf
slightly faster; bouncing lightly
(♩=72) poco f brighter sound
30
(same manual)
sempre mf
8' only

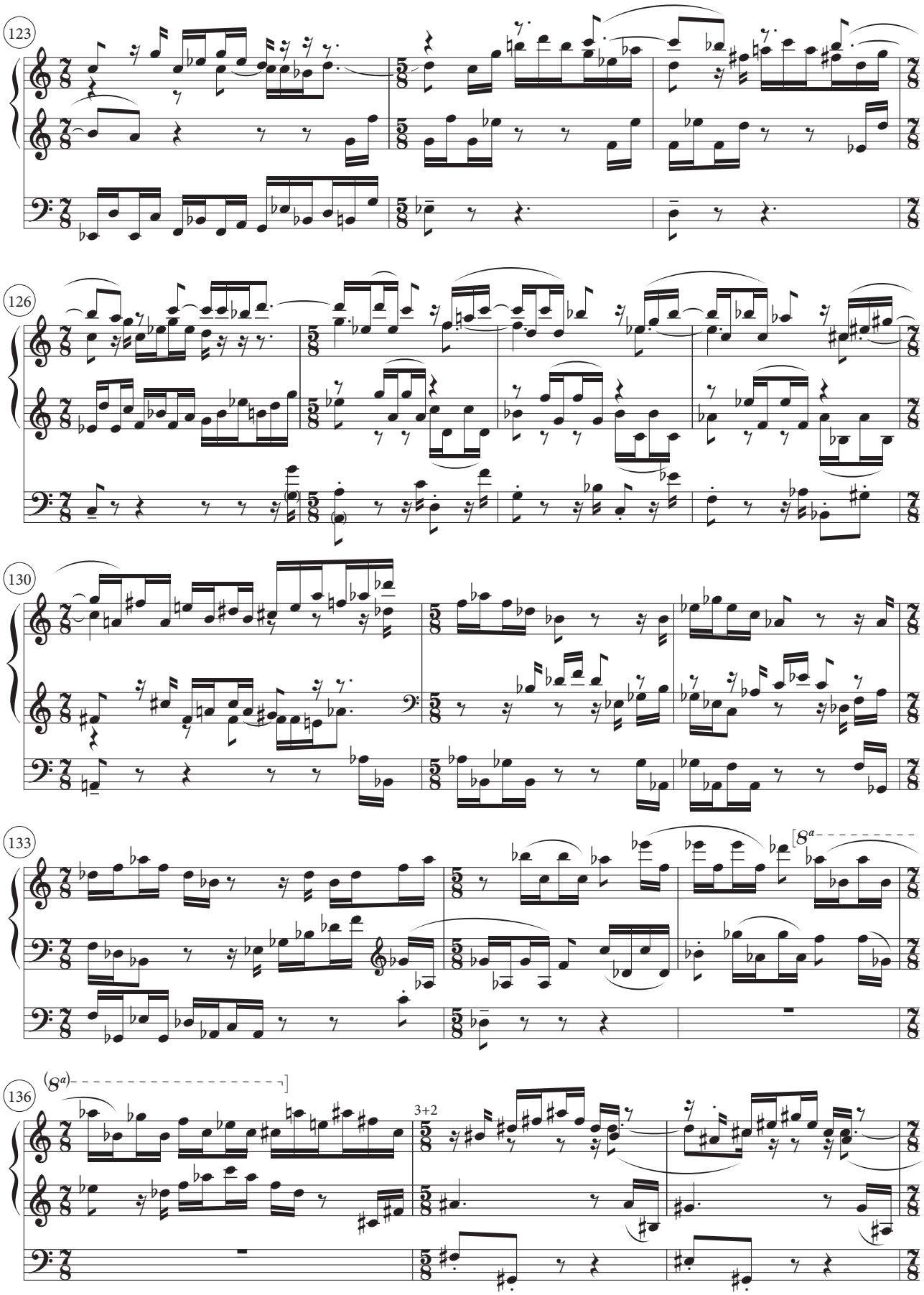

33
slightly faster; building tension, volatile (♩=76)
36
gradually add upperwork
f
f suddenly grander
+ 16'
39
Slowly again; a calm afterglow ♩=54
41
8' Flute
p
8' Flute
or String
p
(similar sounds)
8' only
46

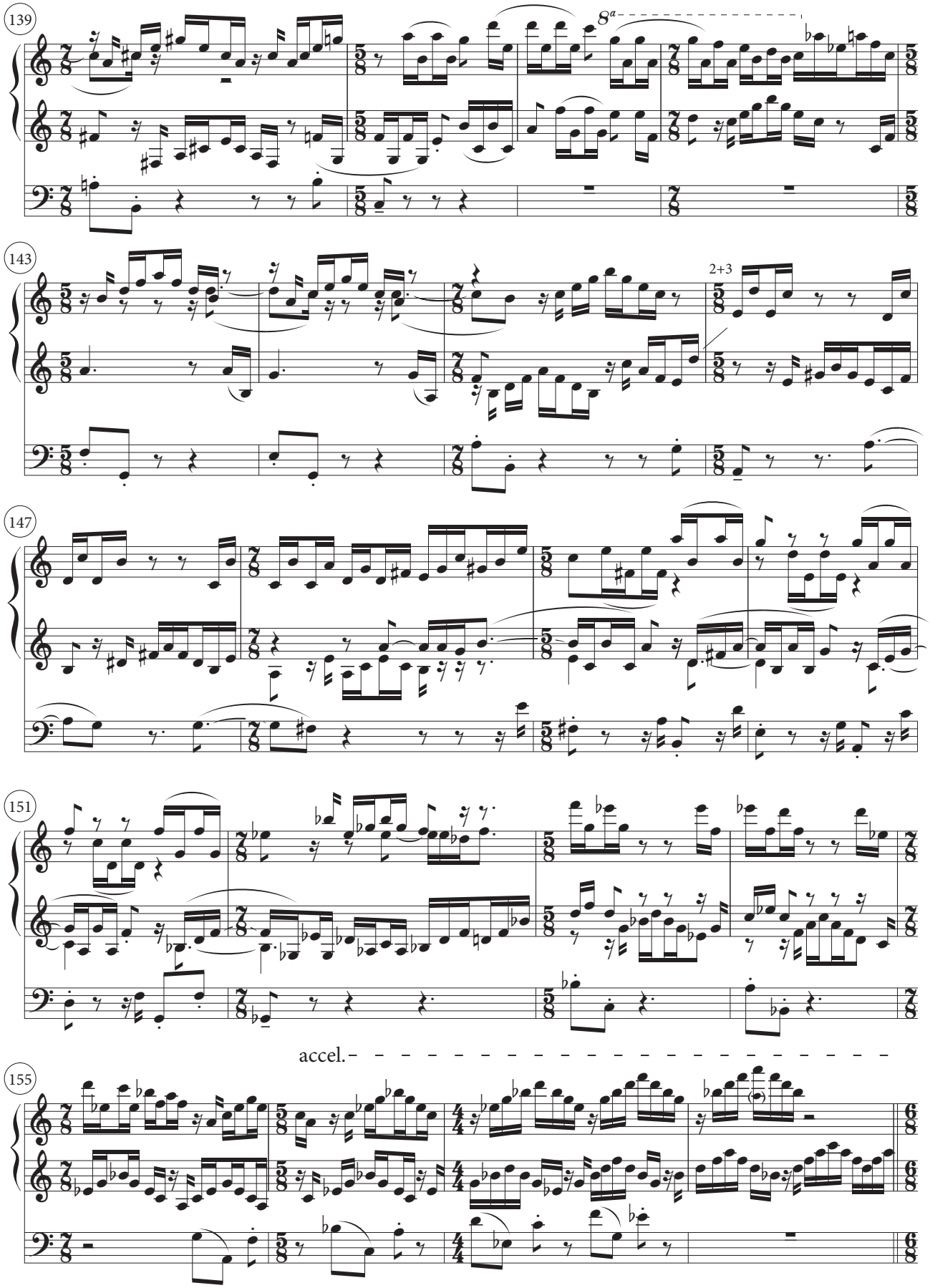

slightly faster; cascading down (♩=56)
50
p
mp
mp
54
mf
slightly faster; with flashes of light (♩=58)
57
sharp,
bright echo
(same manual)
mf
+ 16'
slightly faster; gently falling rain (♩=60)
61
pp
pp
8' only
64

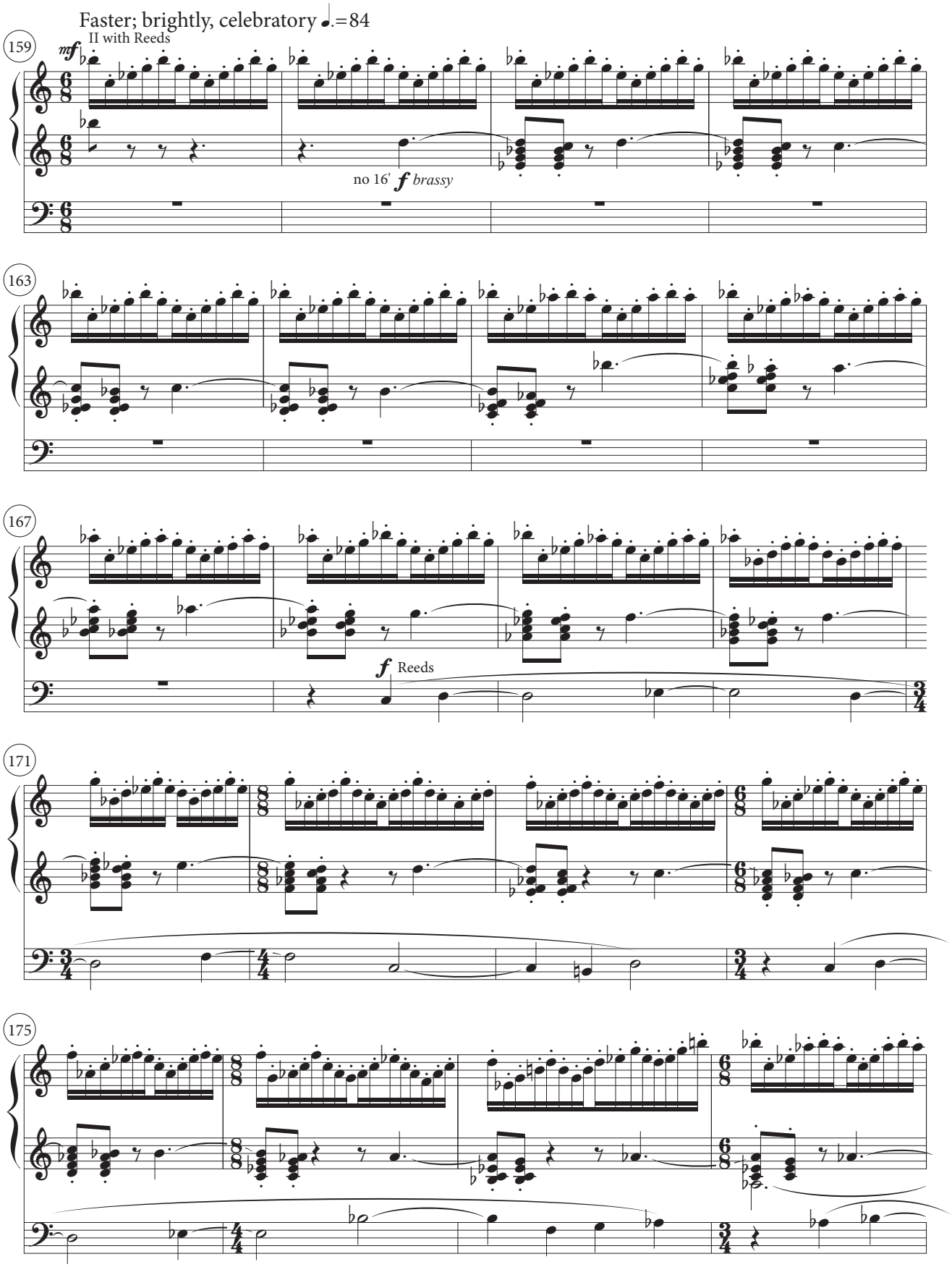

67
slightly faster; becoming smoother (♩=63)
70
Suddenly broader; lyrical ♩=66
mf solo—Reed or Foundation
mp
+ 16'
74
ADD
mf
ADD
mf
79
ADD Foundations and Reeds
poco f
poco f
riten.
molto rall.
slower; building tension (♩=69)
full to 2' or mixture
84
cresc.
ff
ff
I
f
f

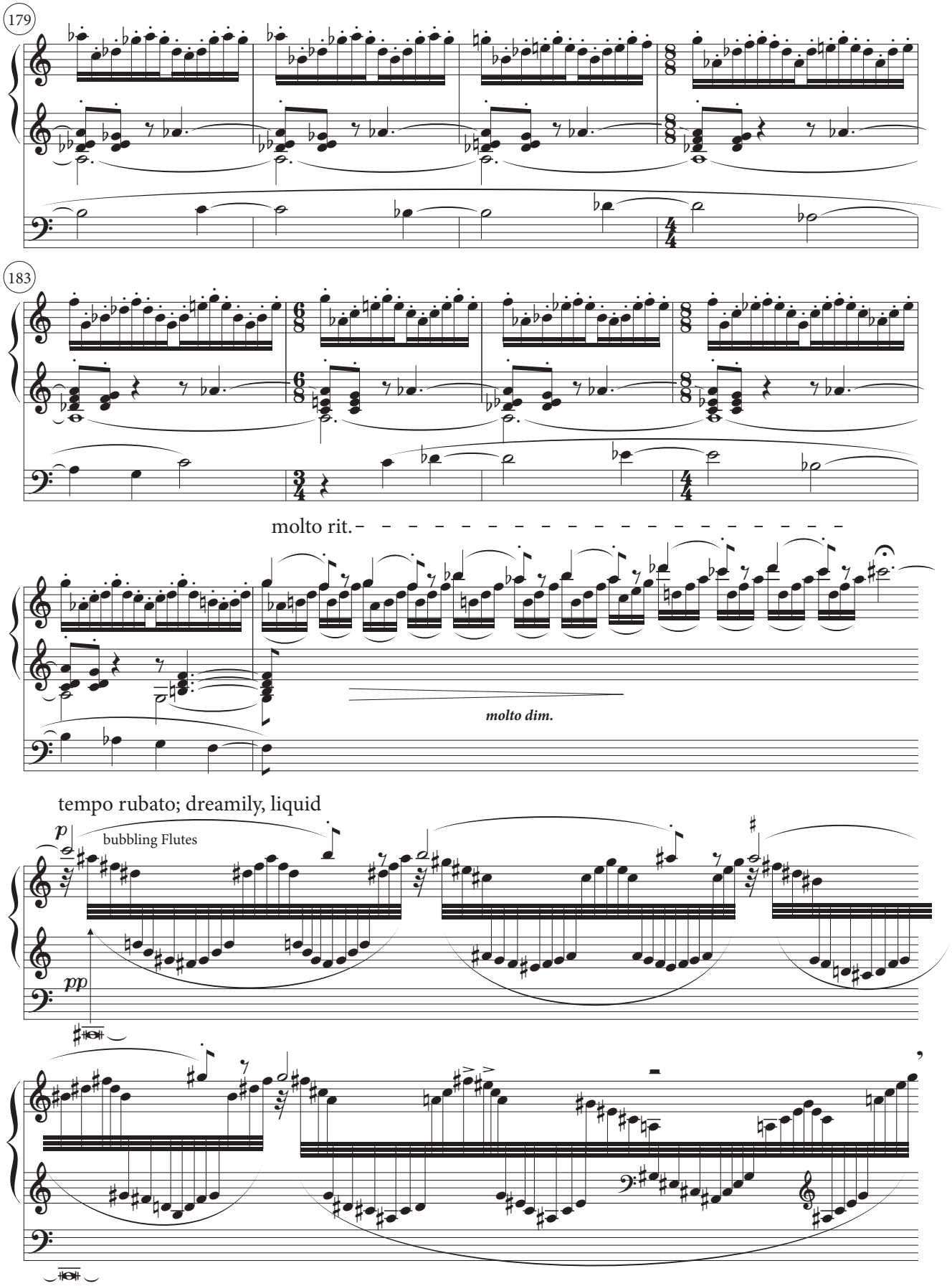

87
slower; churning powerfully (♩=63)
90
on I & II coupled,
box closed, swell reeds
molto legato (blurry)
f prominently
93
95
accel.
97
(accel.)
cresc.
cresc.

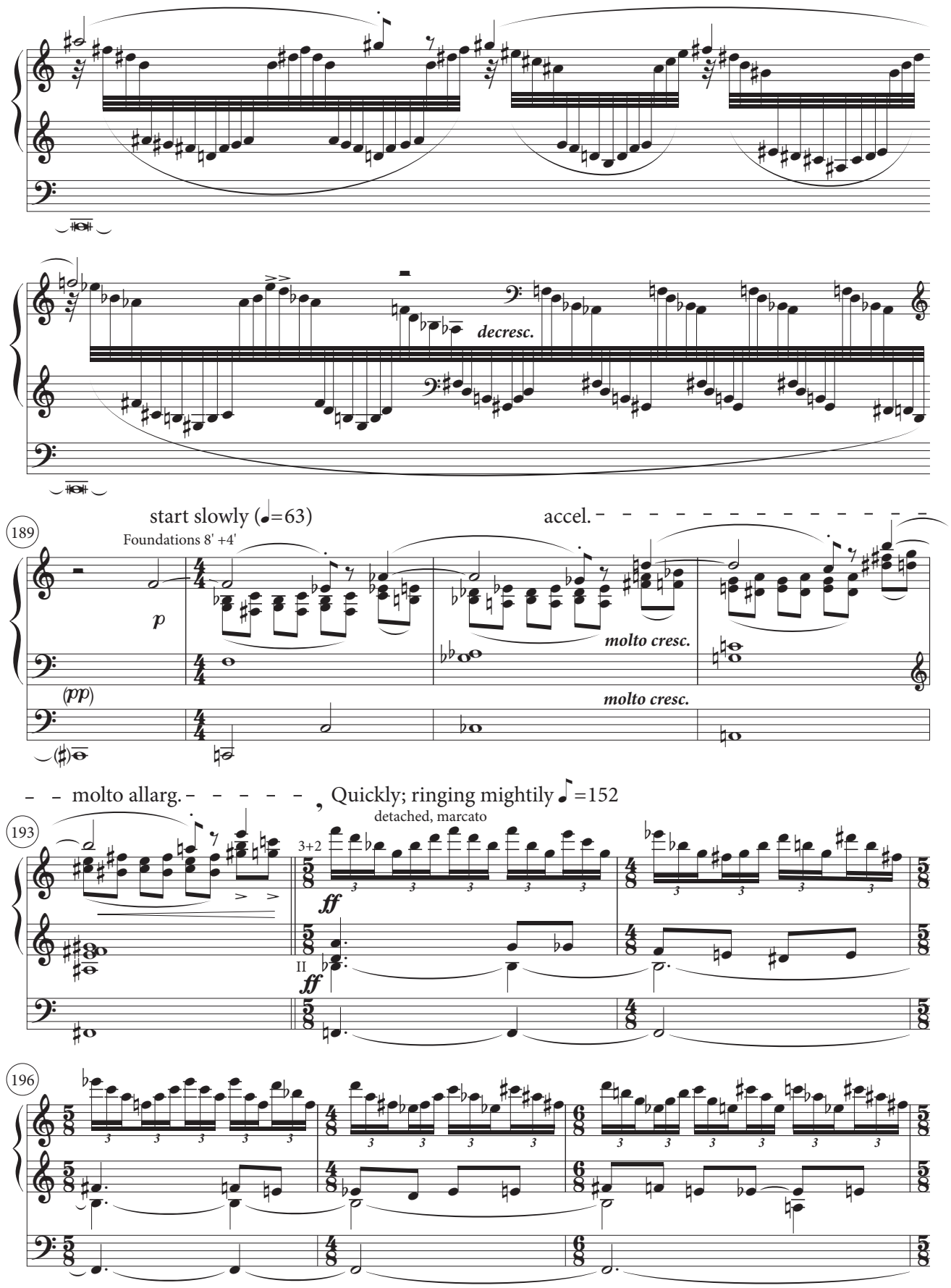

Very Quickly; full of energy ♩=168
102
2+3
2+2+3
ff
mf
108
all 16ths sempre stacc.
3+2
112
(2+3)
116
120
8' + 16'

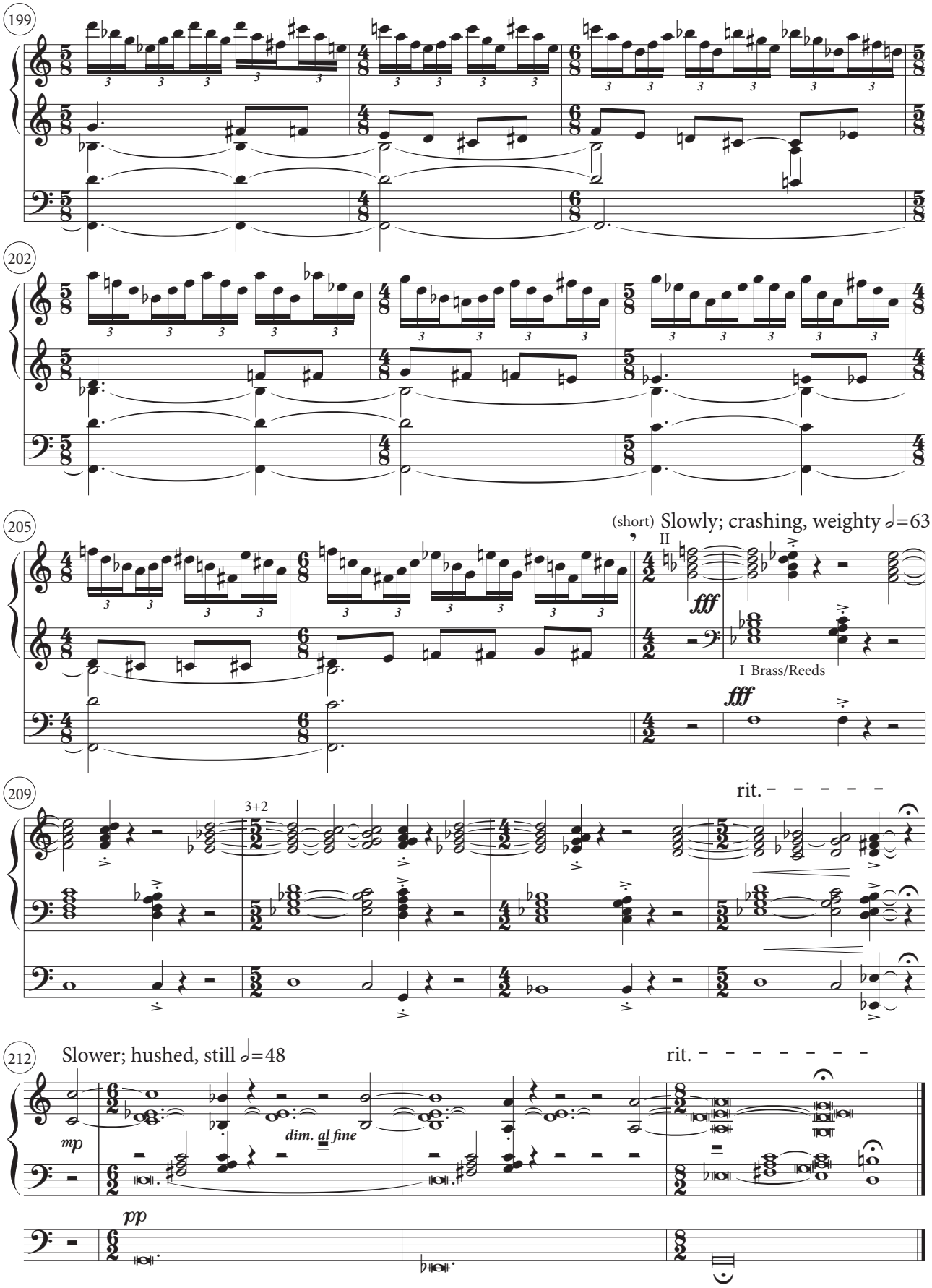

123
126
130
133
136
3+2


139
8a
143
2+3
147
151
accel.
155


Faster; brightly, celebratory ♩.=84
159
II with Reeds
mf
no 16'
f brassy
163
167
f Reeds
171
175


179
183
molto rit.
molto dim.
tempo rubato; dreamily, liquid
p
bubbling Flutes
pp


decresc.
start slowly (♩=63)
Foundations 8' +4'
189
p
(pp)
accel.
molto cresc.
molto cresc.
molto allarg.
Quickly; ringing mightily ♩=152
detached, marcato
193
3+2
ff
II
ff
196


199
202
205
(short) Slowly; crashing, weighty 𝅗𝅥=63
II
fff
I Brass/Reeds
fff
209
3+2
rit.
212
Slower; hushed, still 𝅗𝅥=48
rit.
mp
dim. al fine
pp