Palouse Songbook

for flute and piano

Emily Doolittle, 2019

Palouse Songbook

I. American Goldfinch
II. Long-Eared Owl
III. Snow Bunting

for flute and piano
duration: approx. 10'00"

I drove through the Palouse once, on my way from Seattle, Washington (where I lived from 2008-2015) to a conference in Moscow, Idaho. As I was seeing the unusual beauty of the rolling hills for the first time, an intense dust storm blew in, blocking visibility almost completely. I pulled over to the side of the road and watched as the light turned a dusty red-gold, and the landscape became alien. After an hour or so, the storm retreated and I was able to continue on my way. I later learned that dust storms such as the one I encountered are primarily the result of unsustainable farming practises, and that the native Palouse prairie is one of the most endangered ecosystems in the US. Not long after this trip, I moved away from the Pacific Northwest, but my curiosity about the Palouse remains.

When Sophia Tegart, professor of flute at Washington State University, in Pullman, Washington, asked me to write this piece for her, it seemed like the perfect opportunity to explore the soundscape of the Palouse. I found a guide to birds of the Palouse, and listened to recordings the songs of about 150 bird species which are regularly found there! From these recordings, I chose three species whose songs most vividly suggested musical ideas for flute and piano to me. These birds are not necessarily most representative of the Palouse – the American Goldfinch and Long-Eared Owl are widely distributed across North America, while the Snow Bunting is only an occasional Palouse visitor – but if you spend long enough listening, you could expect to hear them all there. I wondered if I should keep the title *Palouse Songbook*, as this combination of birds could be heard in other habitats as well: but eventually I decided I should, because memories of my visit to the Palouse were so integral to the composition of this piece.

for Sophia Tegart and Michael Seregow

funded by a Washington State University
New Faculty Seed Grant

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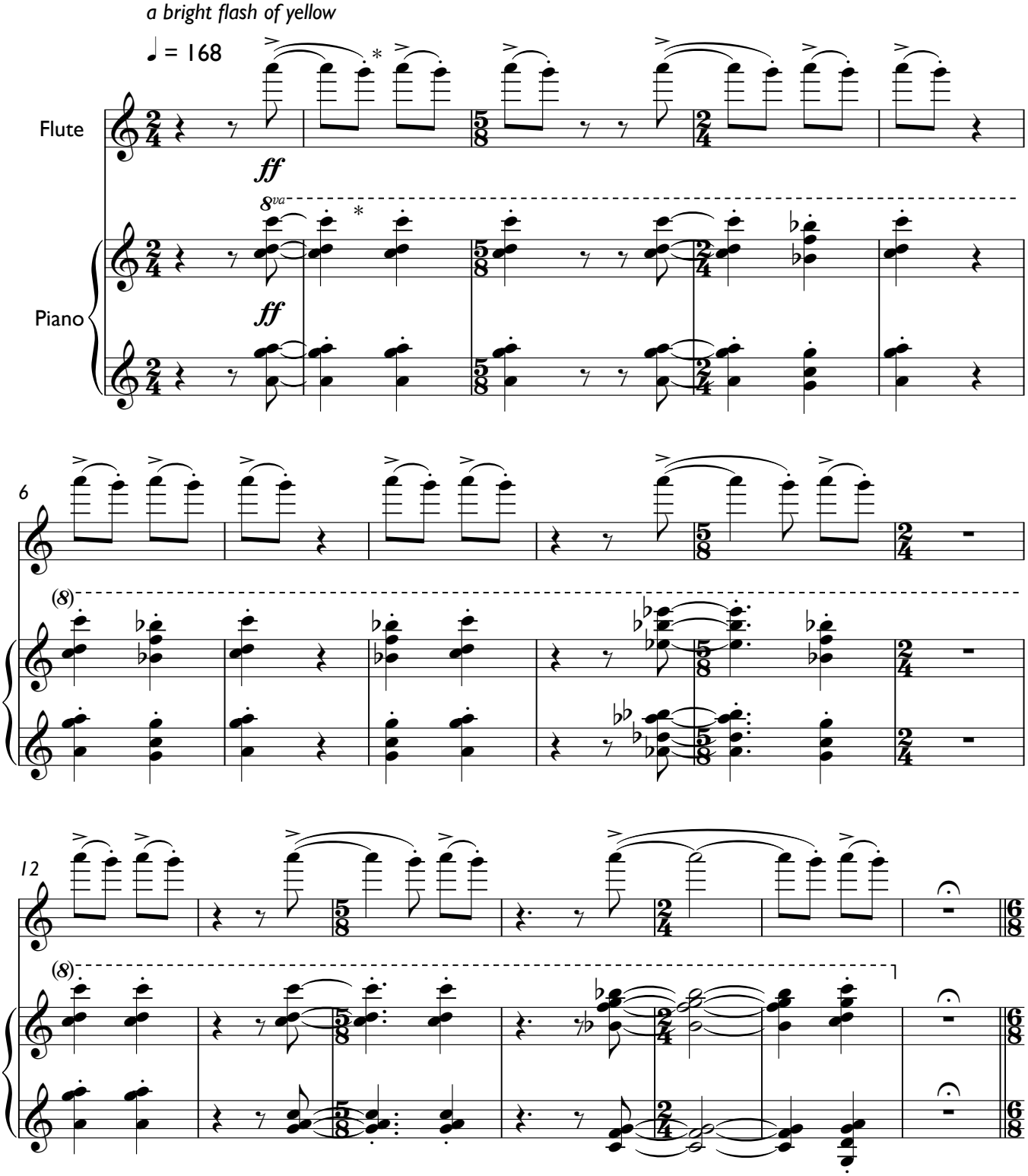
I
American Goldfinch

Emily Doolittle



* Staccatos not too short. Flute and piano come off staccatos together (even when the notes with staccatos are of different lengths).

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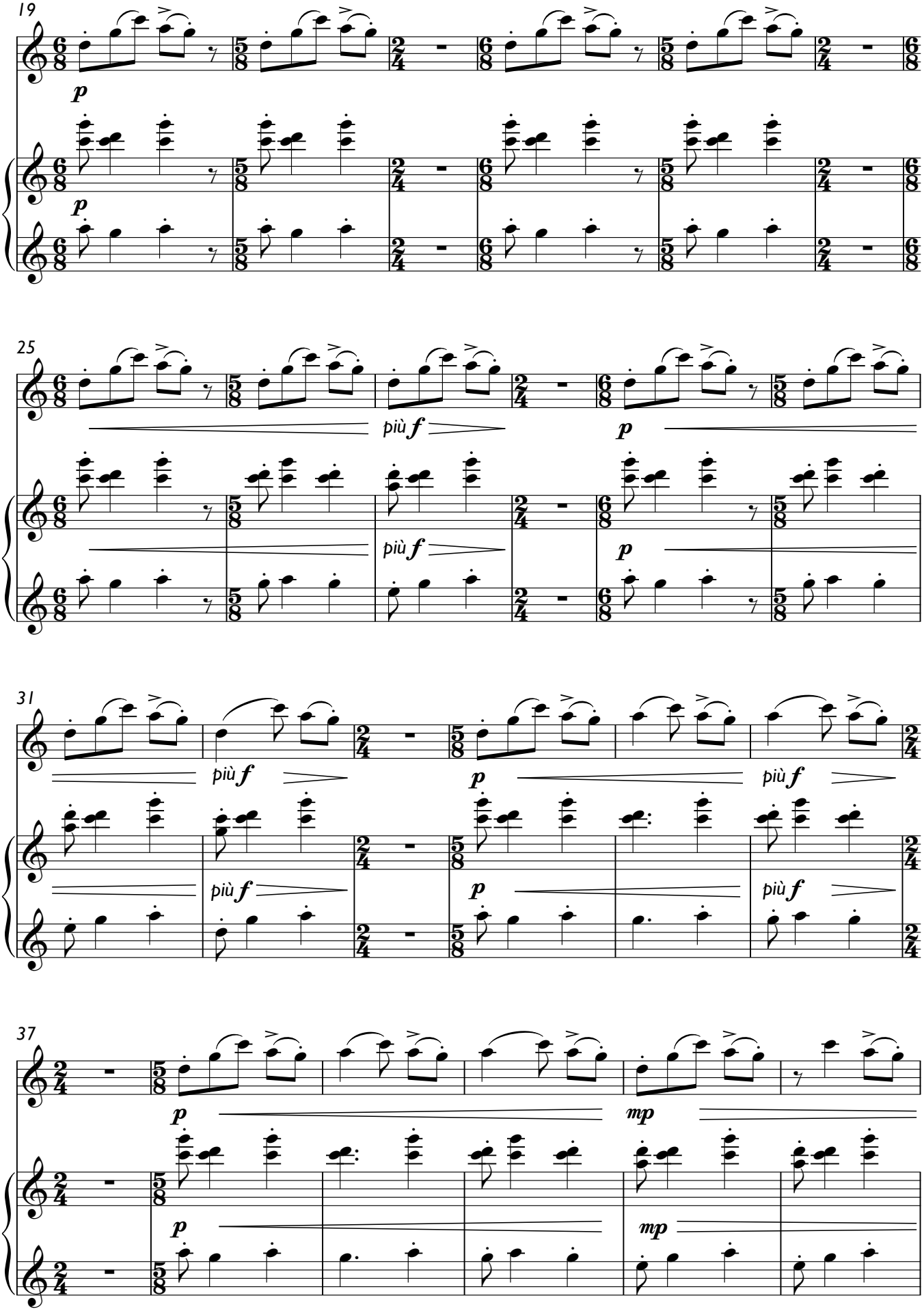
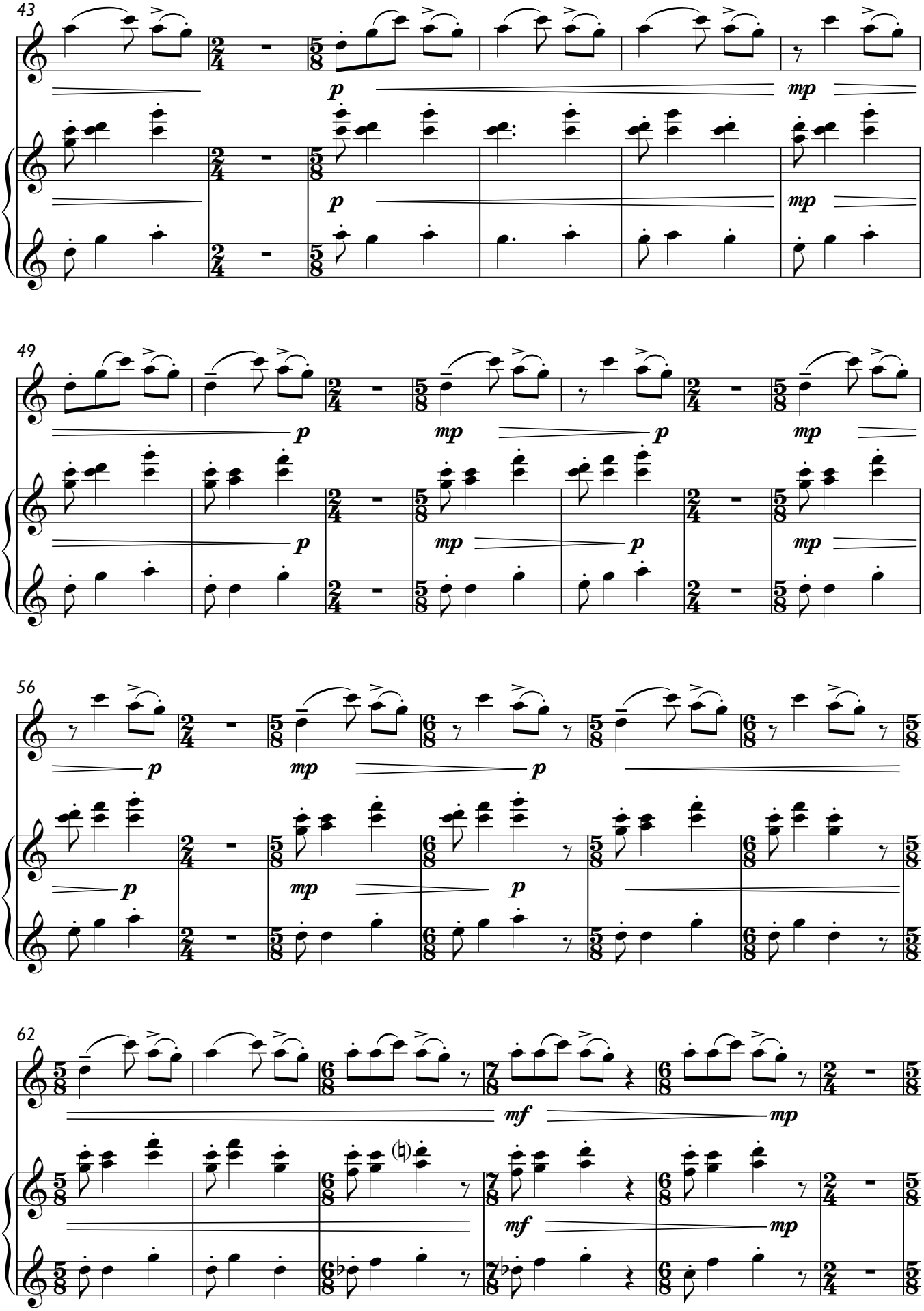
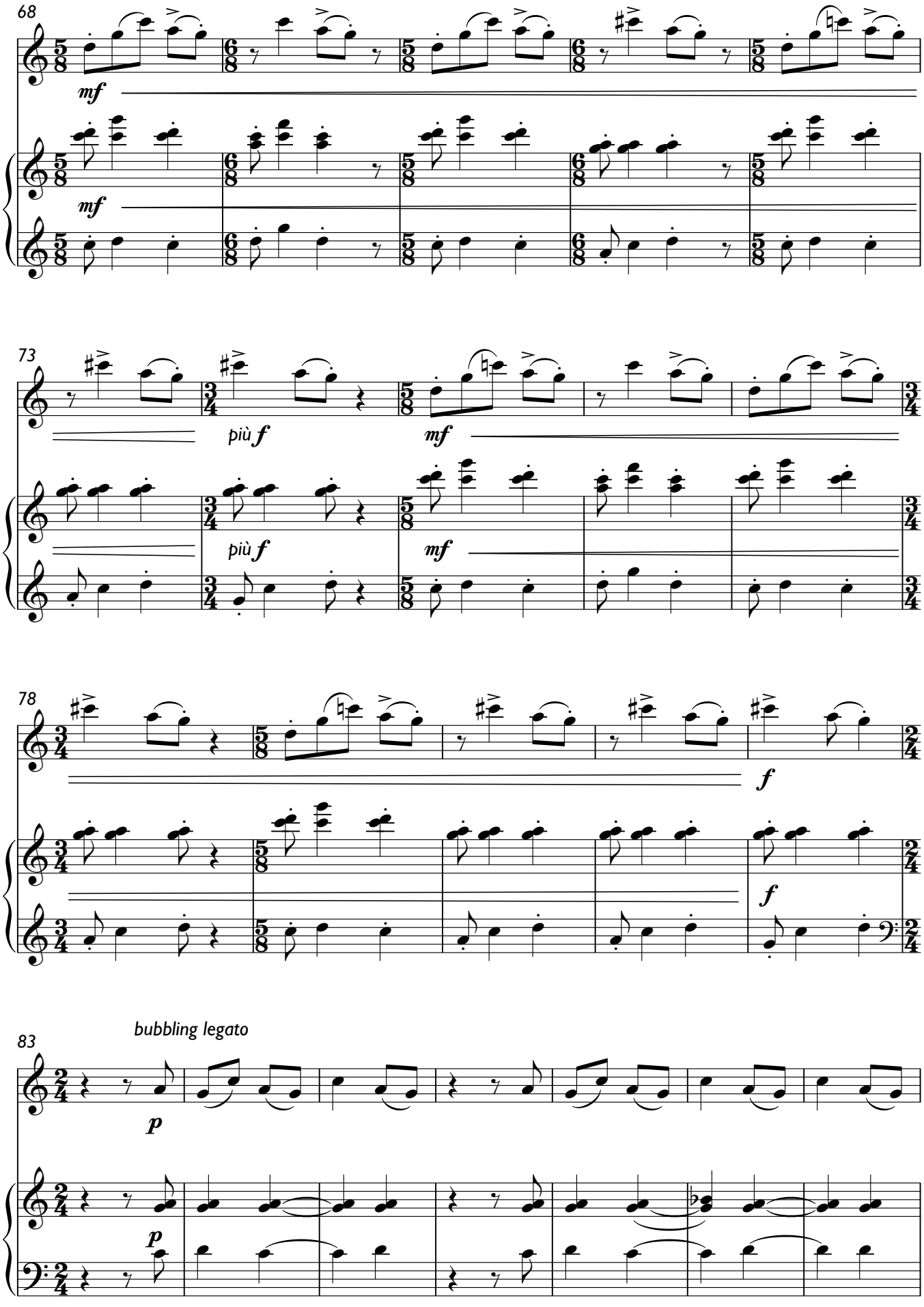
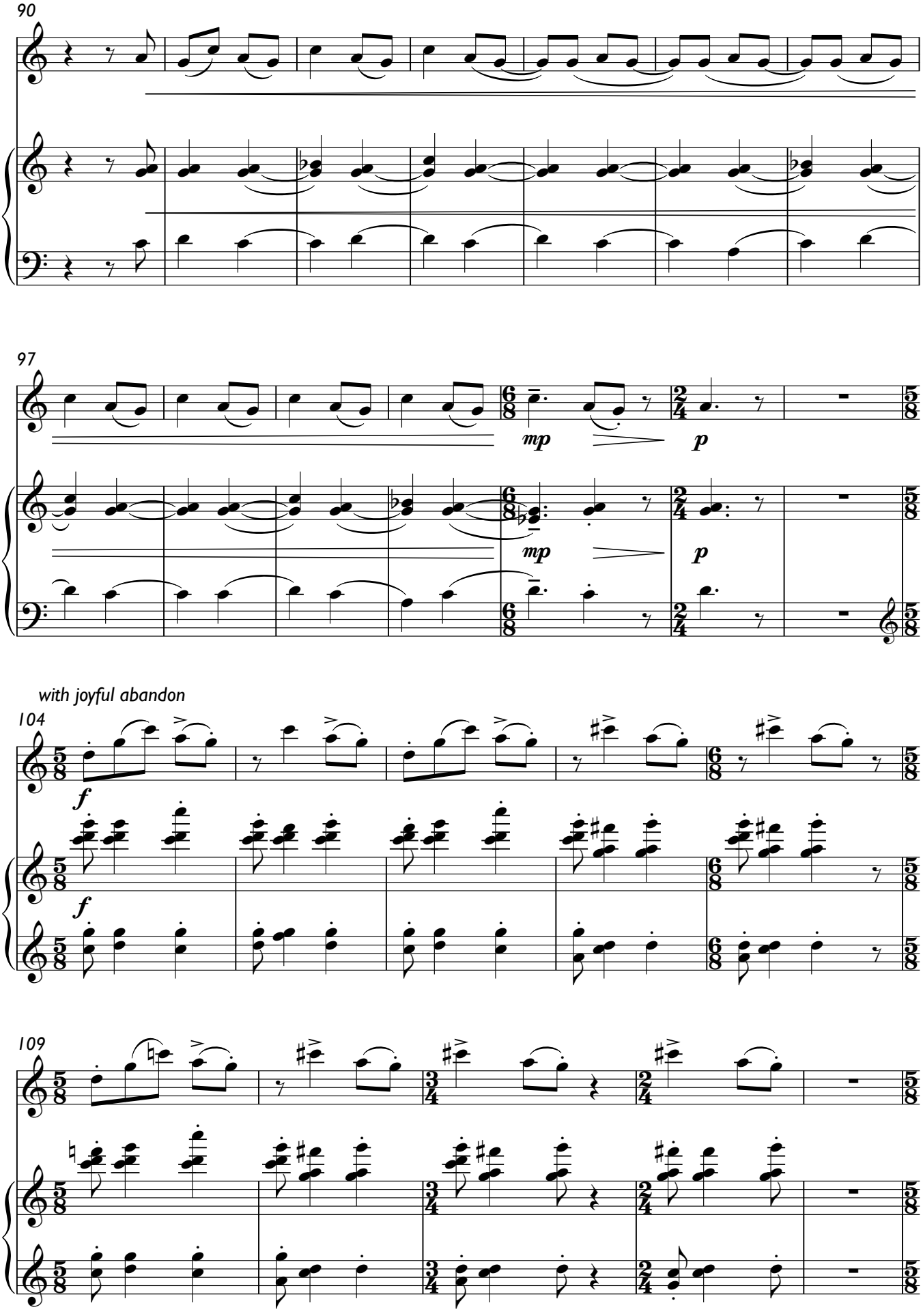
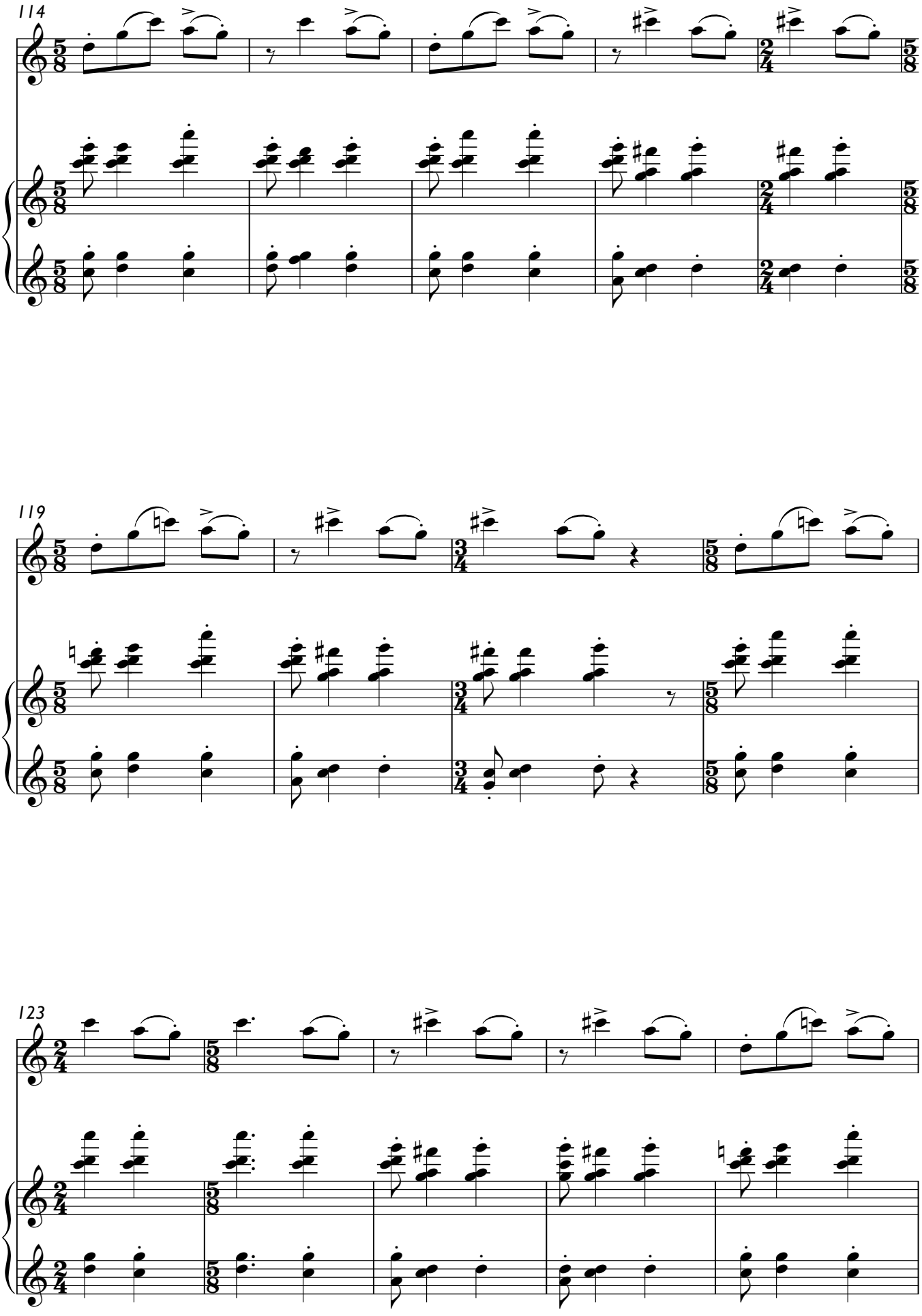
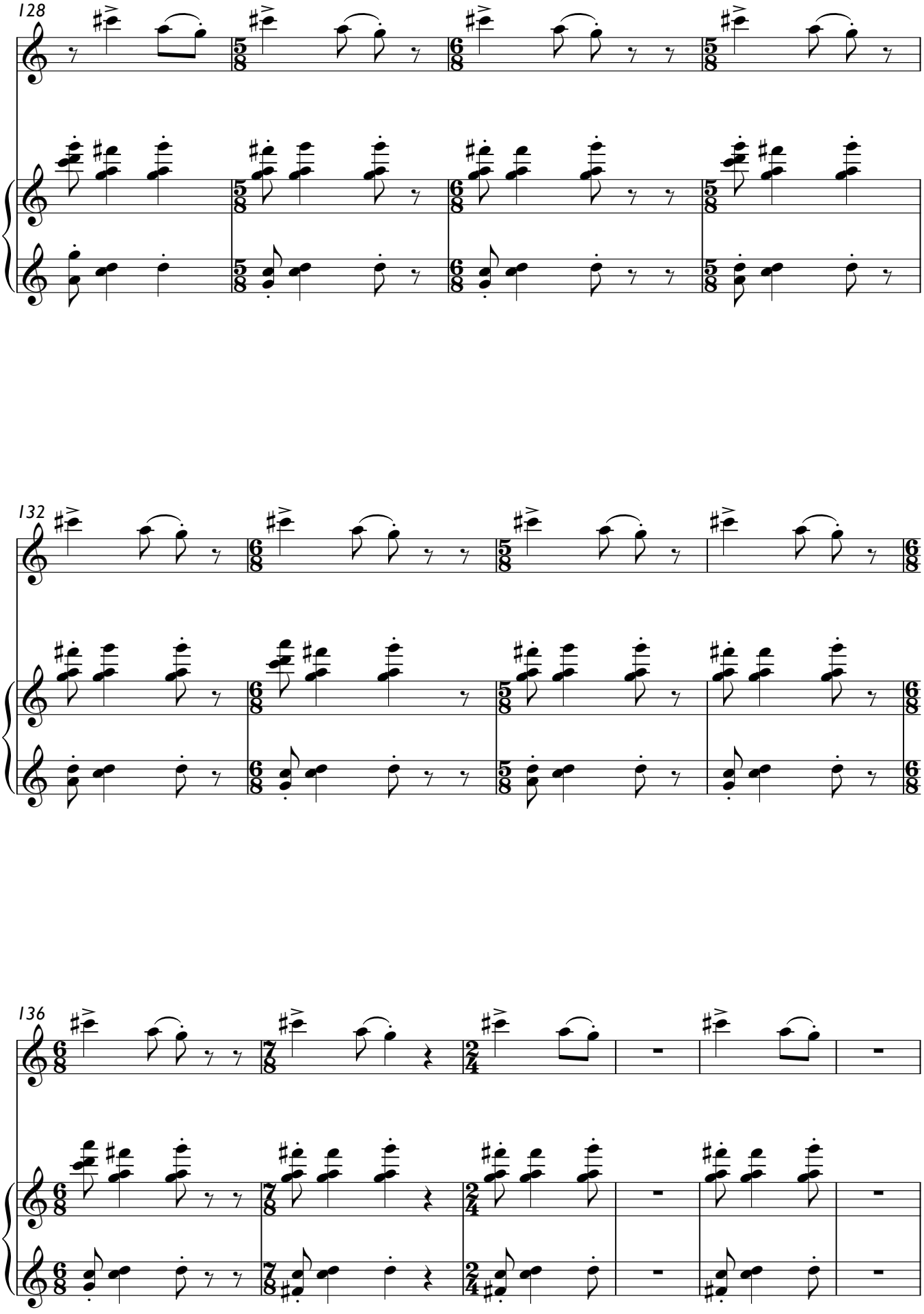

19
p
p
25
più f
più f
p
p
31
più f
più f
p
p
più f
più f
37
p
p
mp
mp

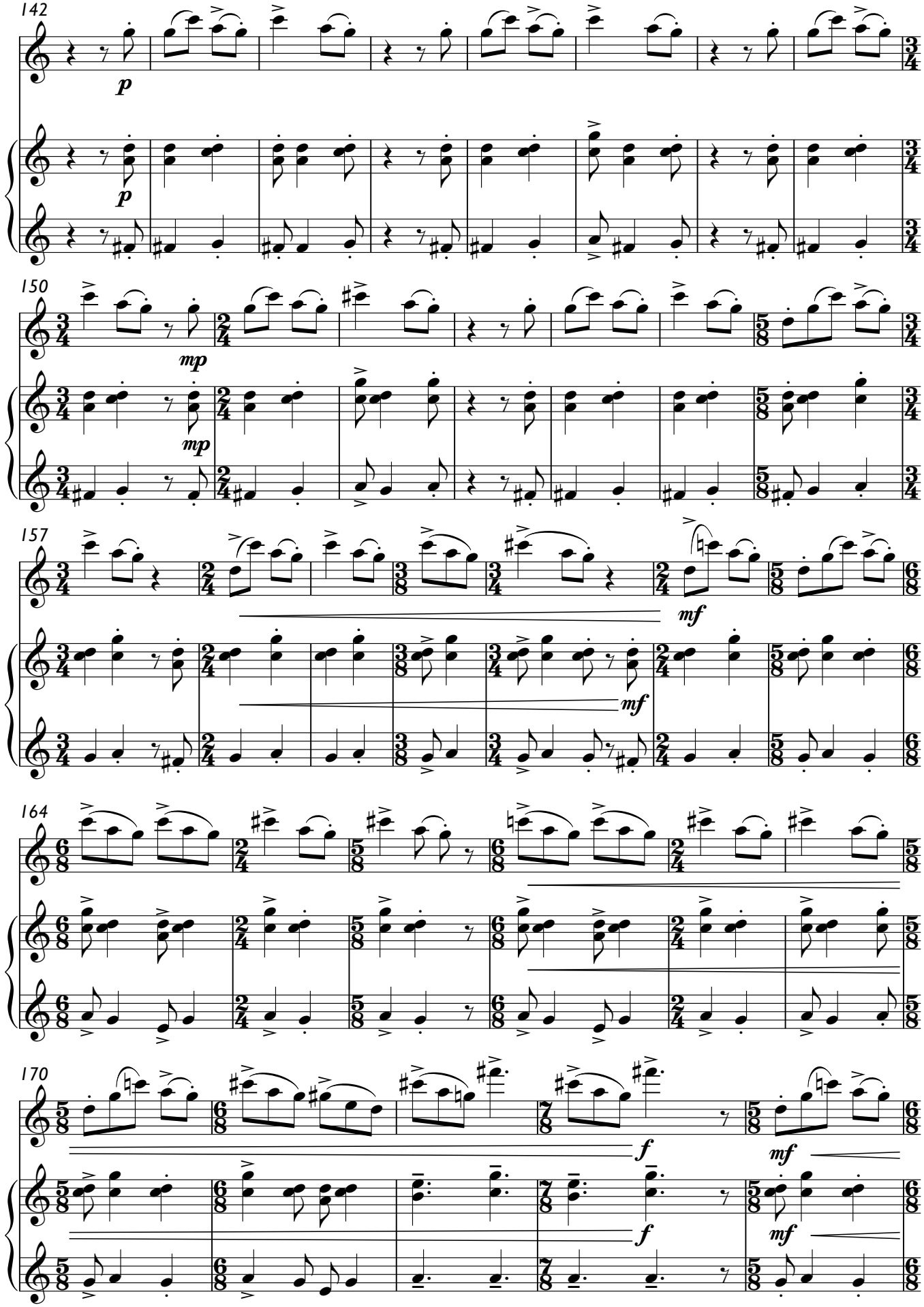

43
49
56
62
p
mp
mf

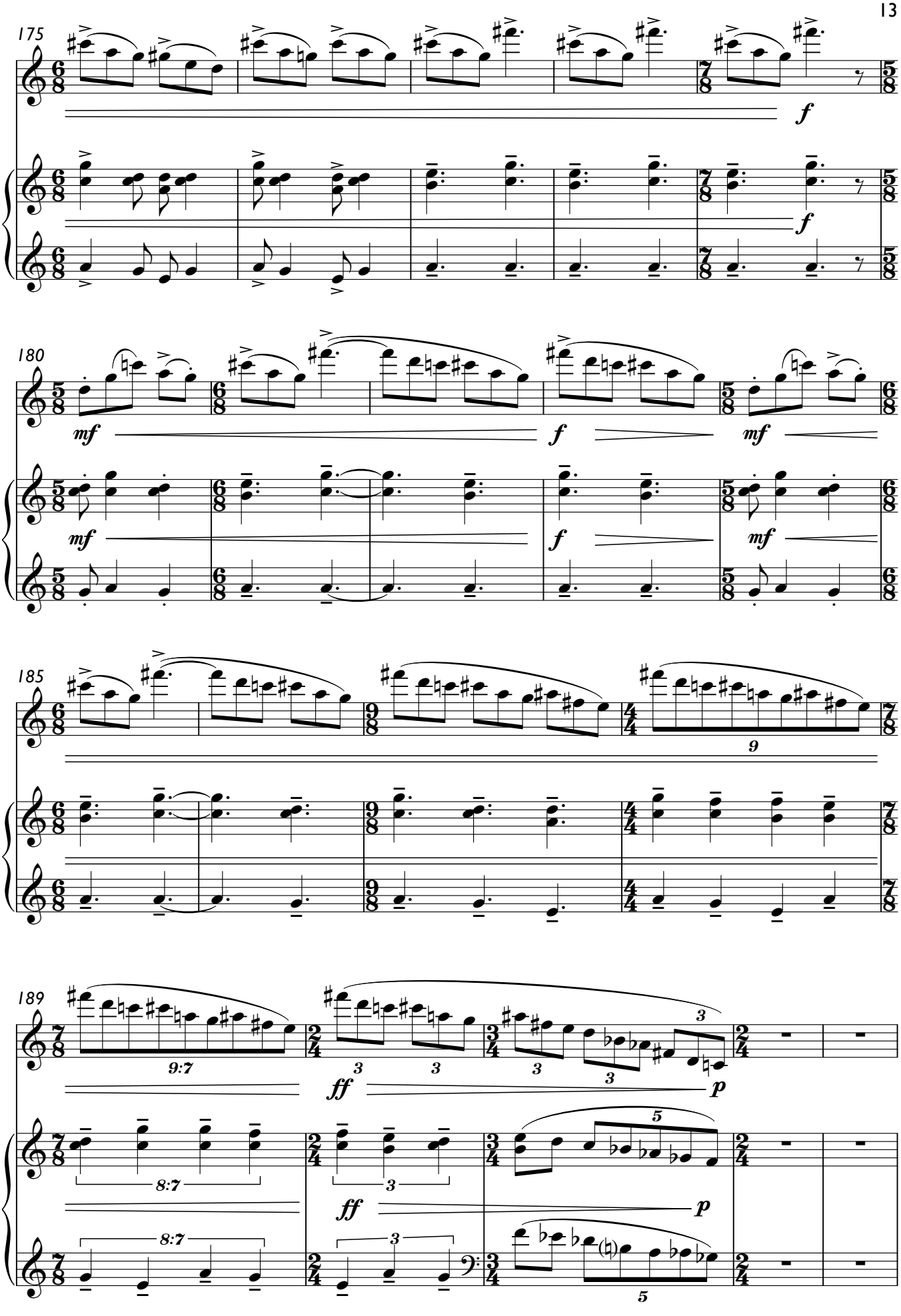

68
mf
mf
73
più f
più f
mf
mf
78
f
f
83
bubbling legato
p
p

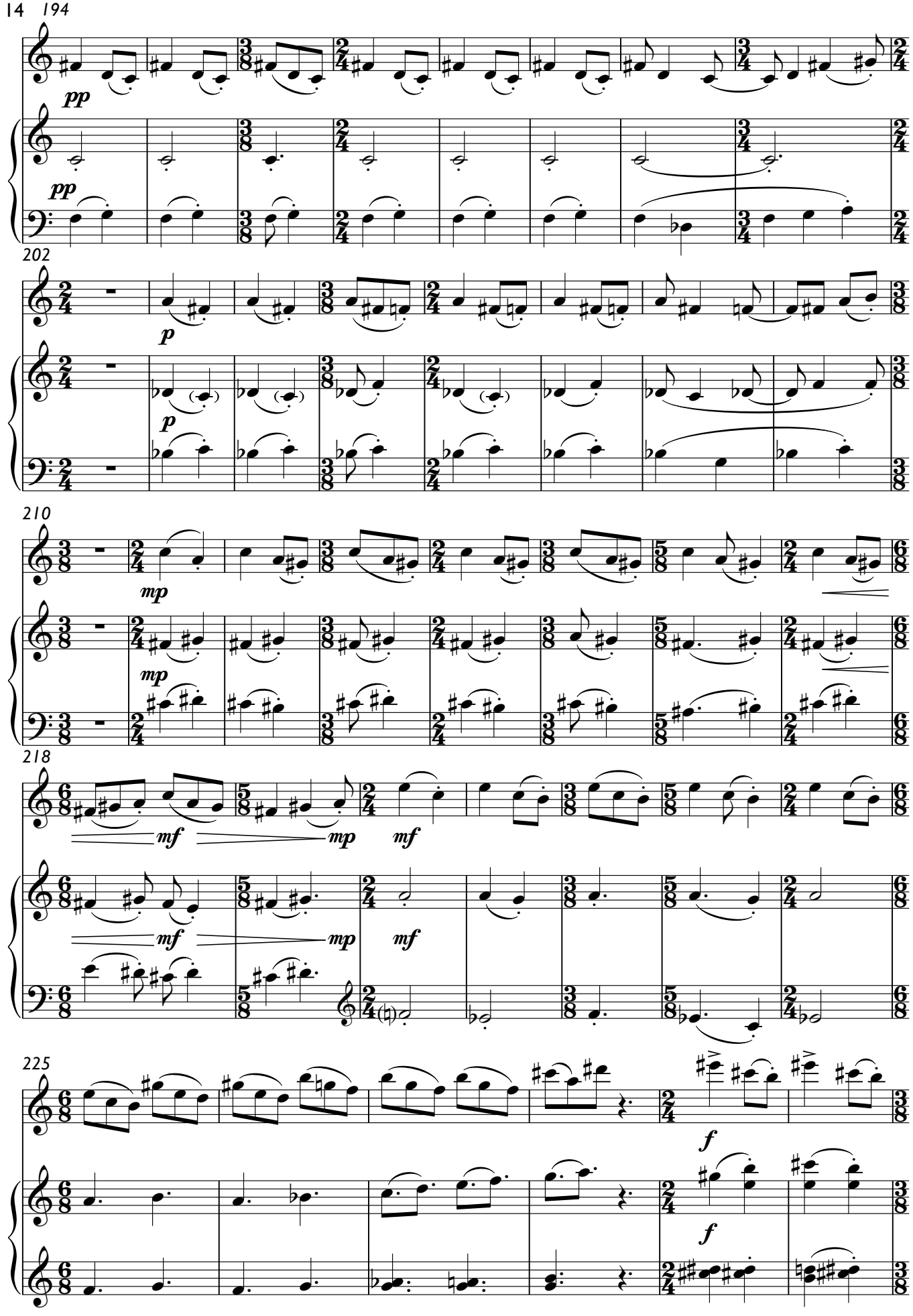

90
97
mp
p
mp
p
with joyful abandon
104
f
f
109

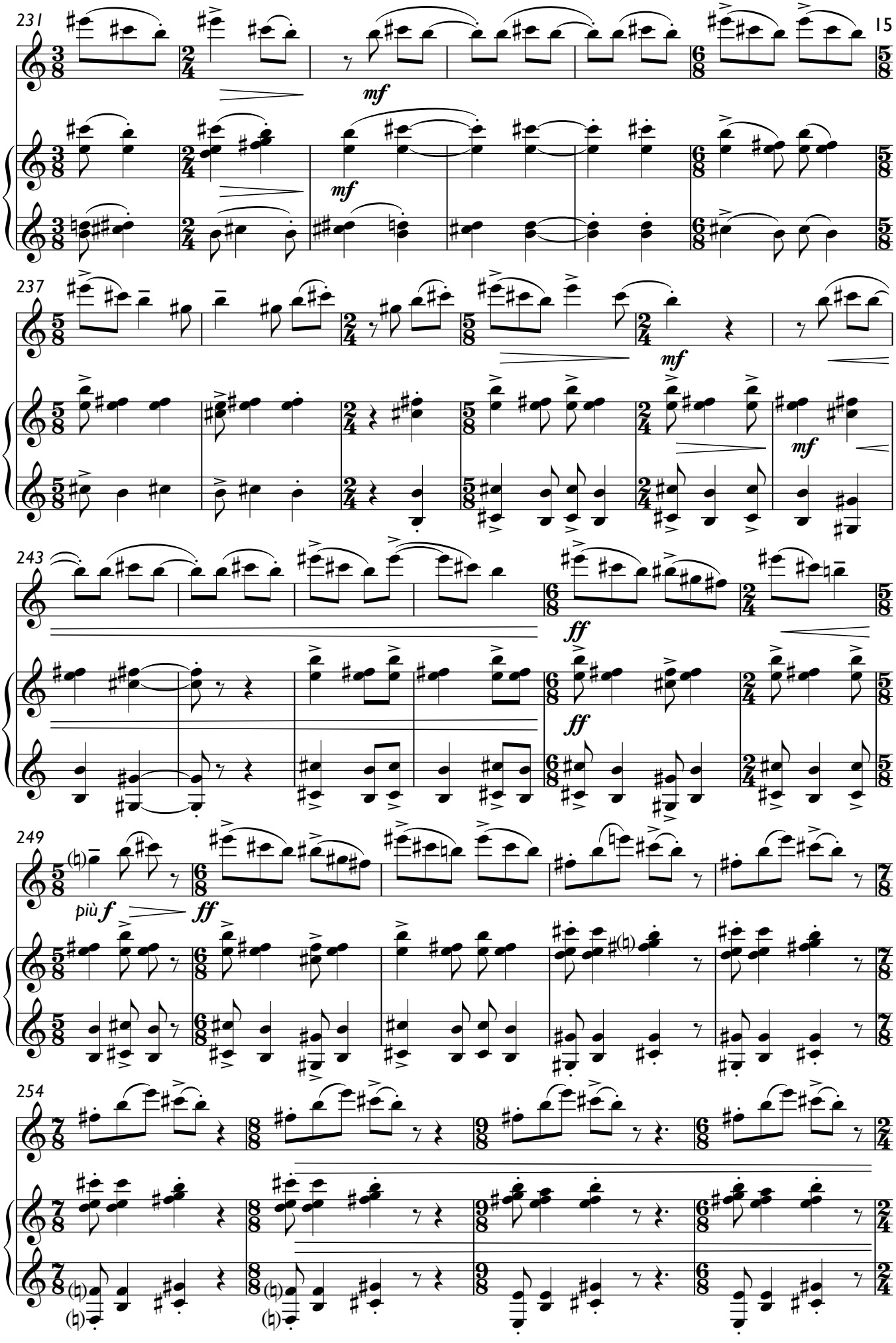

114
119
123

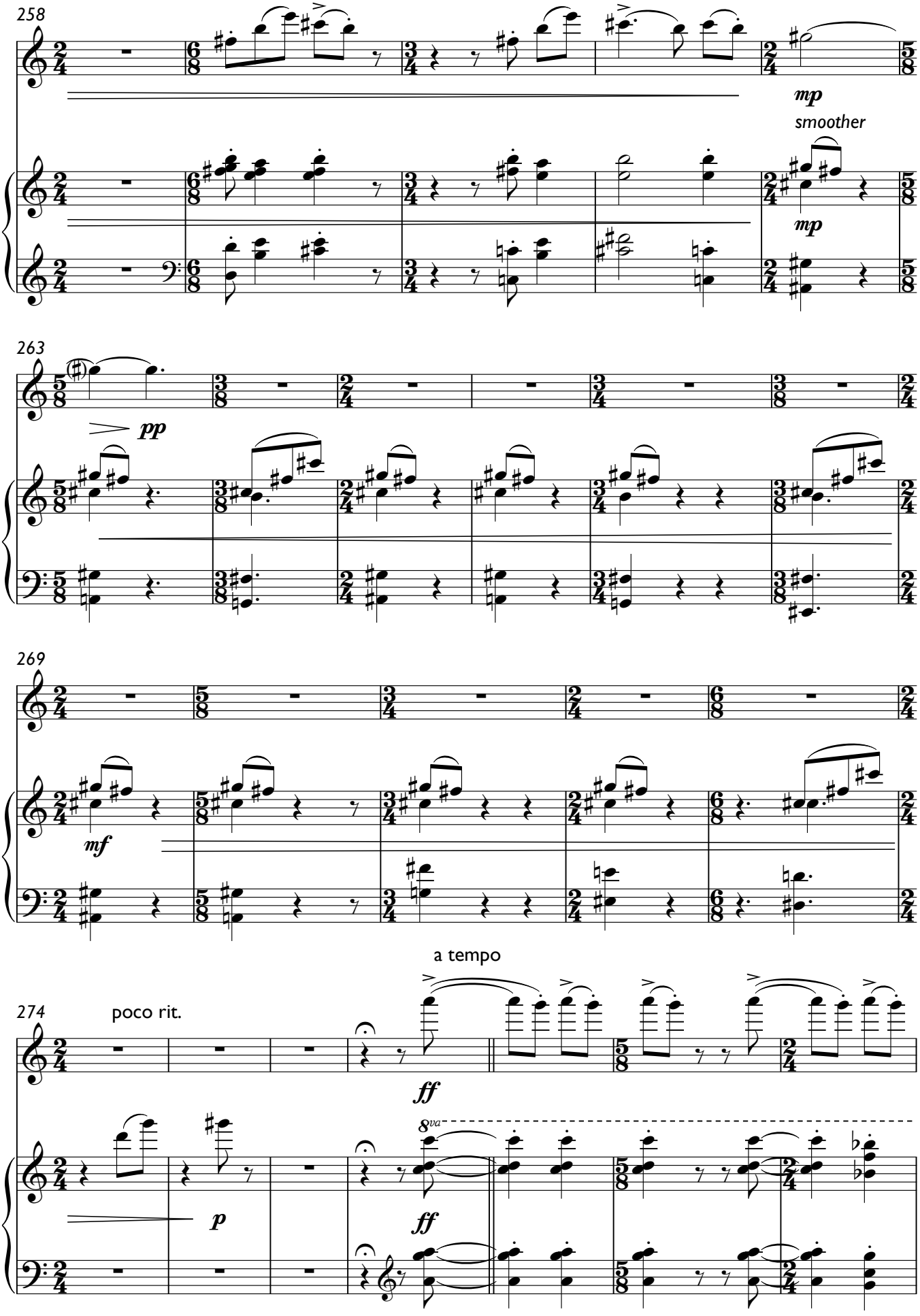

128
132
136

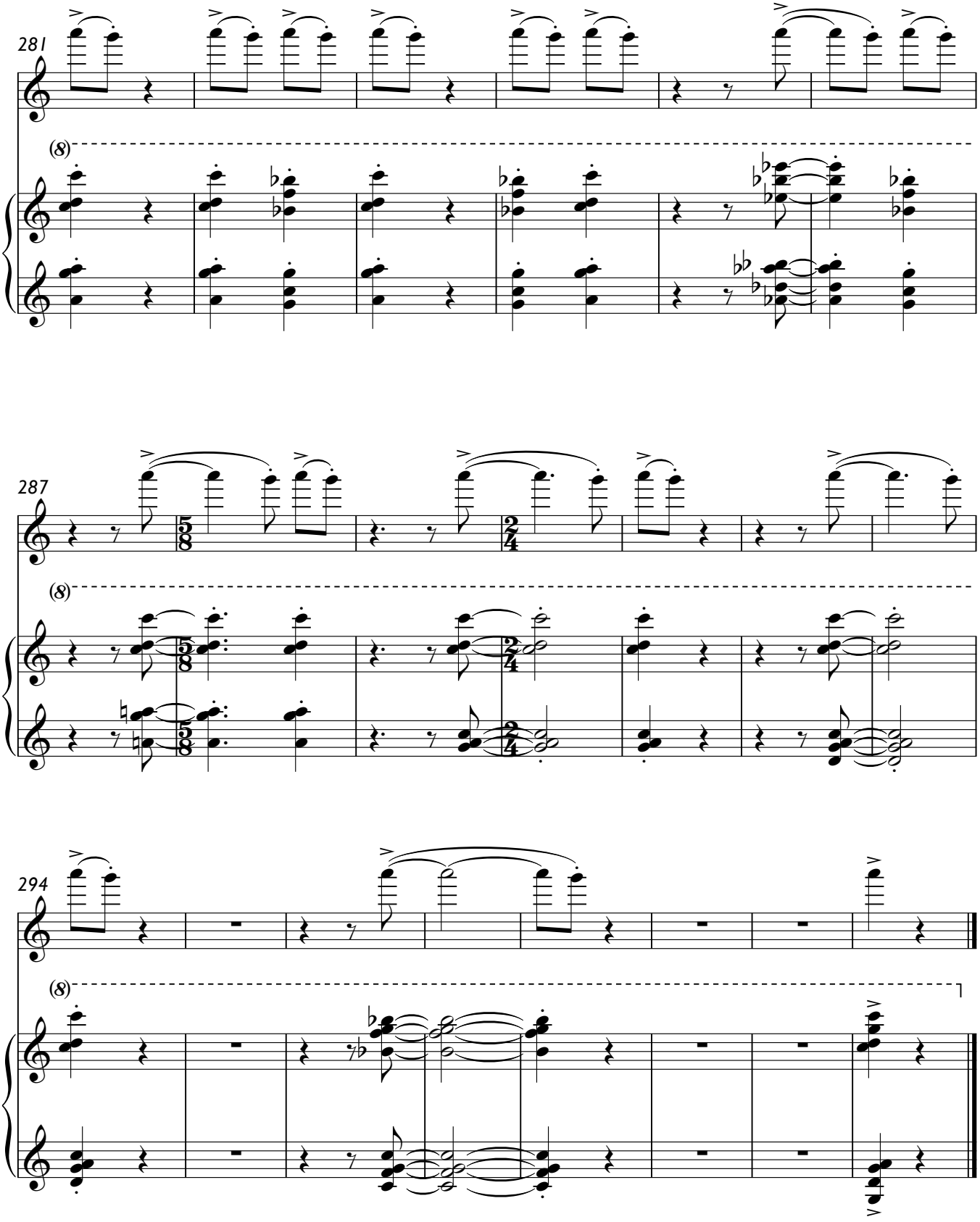

142
p
p
150
mp
mp
157
mf
mf
164
170
f
mf
f
mf


175
f
f
180
mf
f
mf
mf
f
mf
185
9
189
9:7
ff
p
8:7
3
ff
p
8:7
3
5
5


194
pp
pp
202
p
p
210
mp
mp
218
mf
mp
mf
mf
mp
mf
225
f
f


231
mf
mf
237
mf
mf
243
ff
ff
249
più f
ff
254

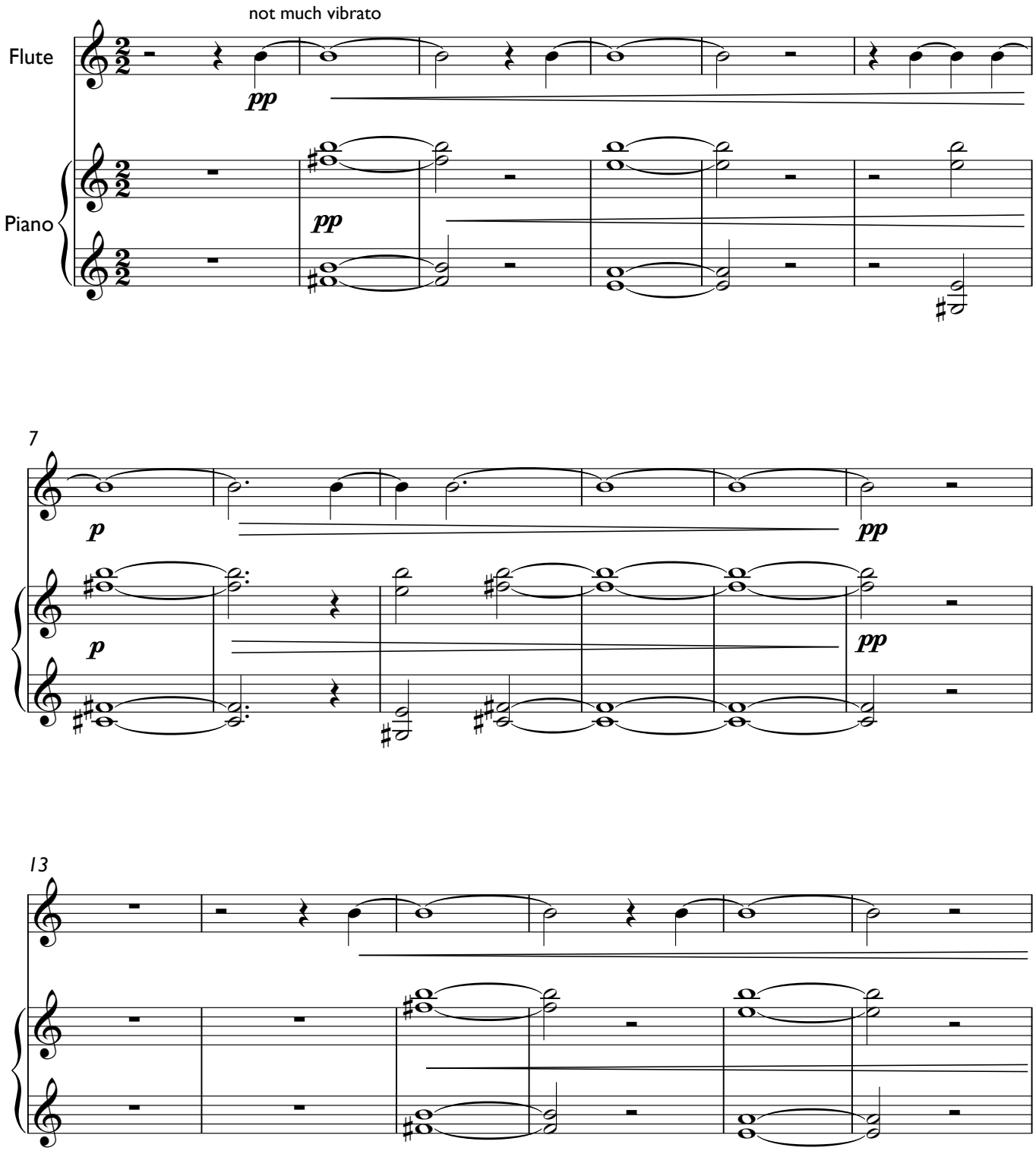

258
mp
smoother
mp
263
pp
269
mf
a tempo
274
poco rit.
ff
8va
p
ff

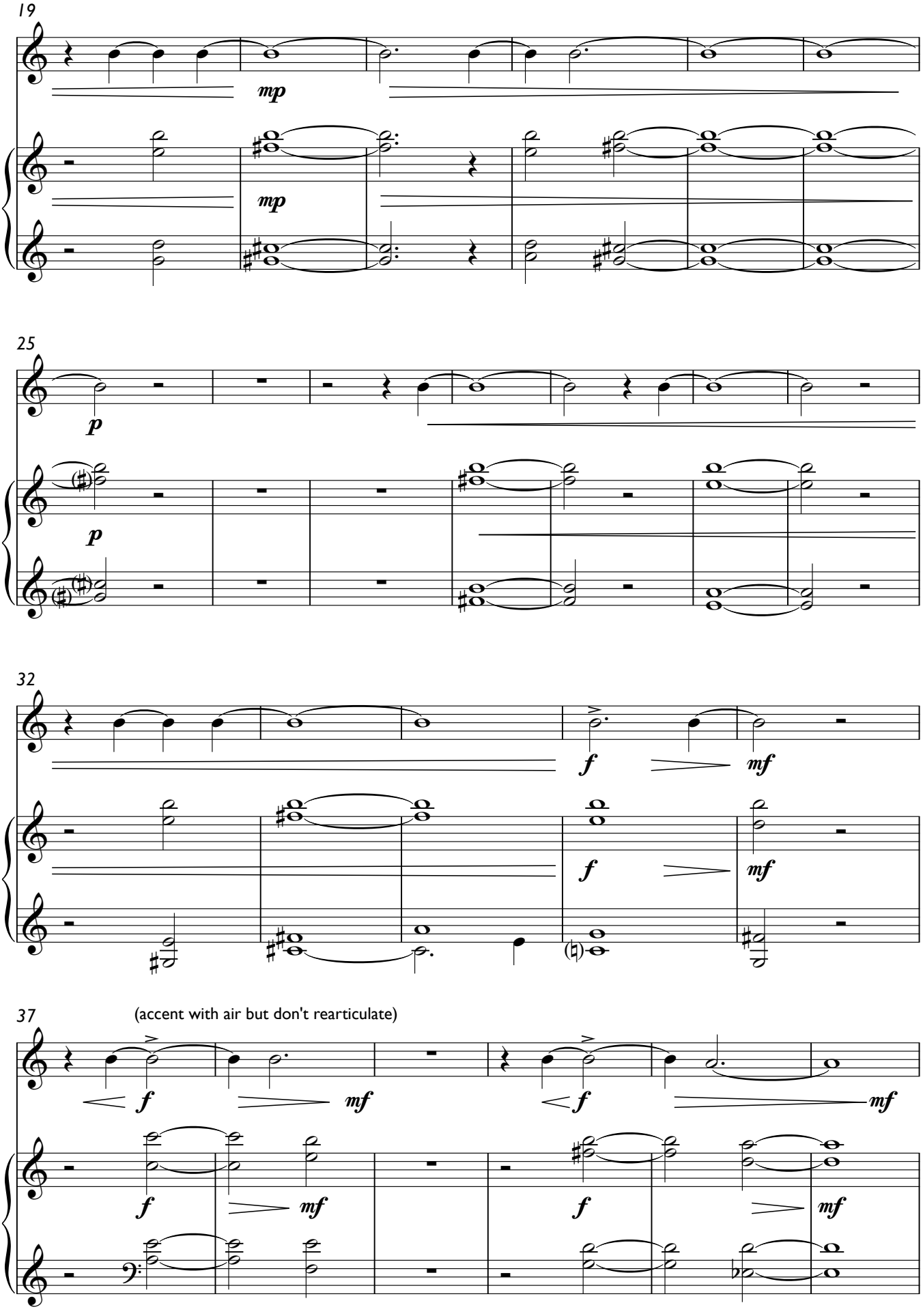

281
(8)
287
(8)
294
(8)

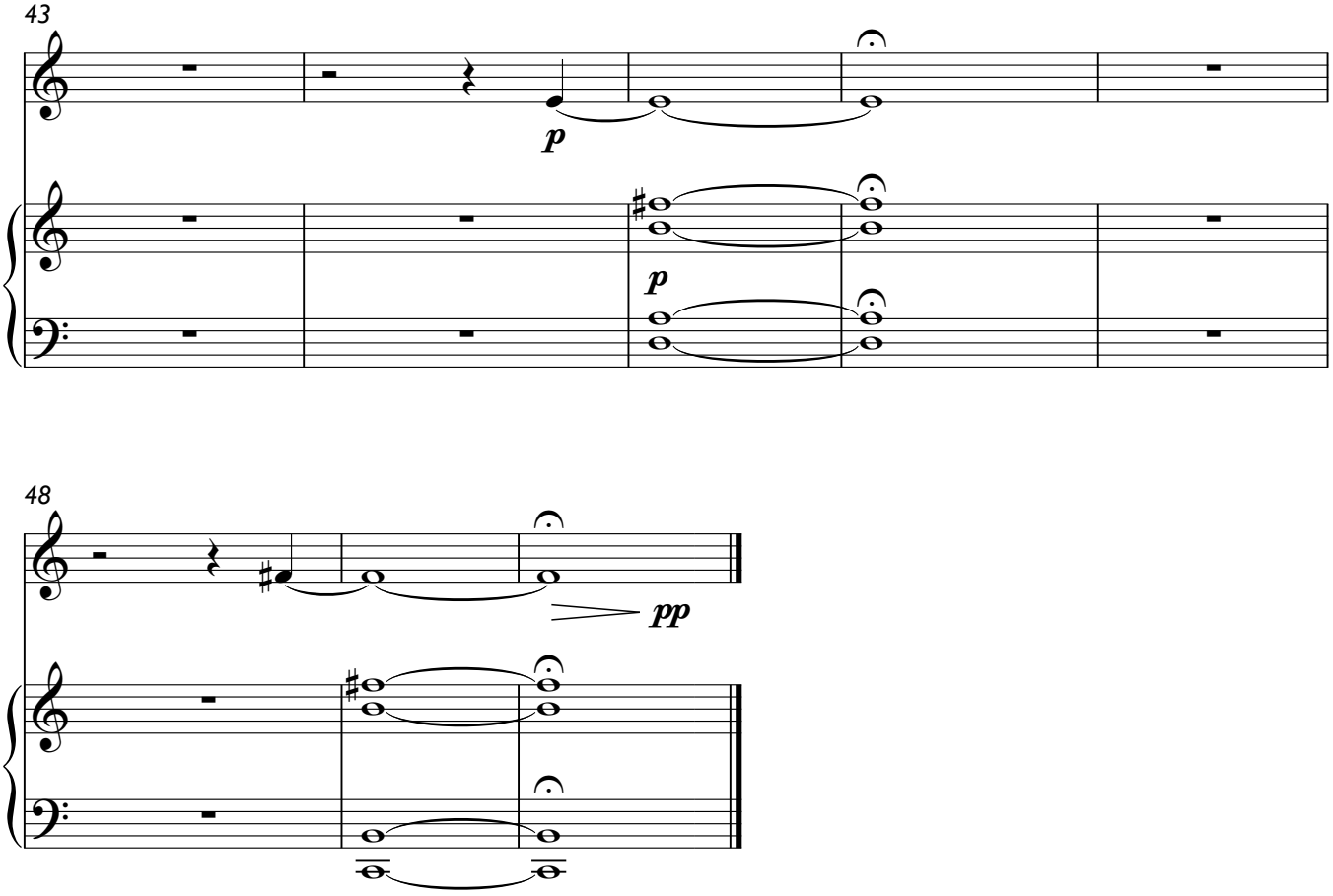
II
Long-Eared Owl

3 a.m.: shadowy, still

♩ = approx. 72




19
mp
mp
25
p
p
32
f
mf
f
mf
37
(accent with air but don't rearticulate)
f
mf
f
mf
f
mf
f
mf

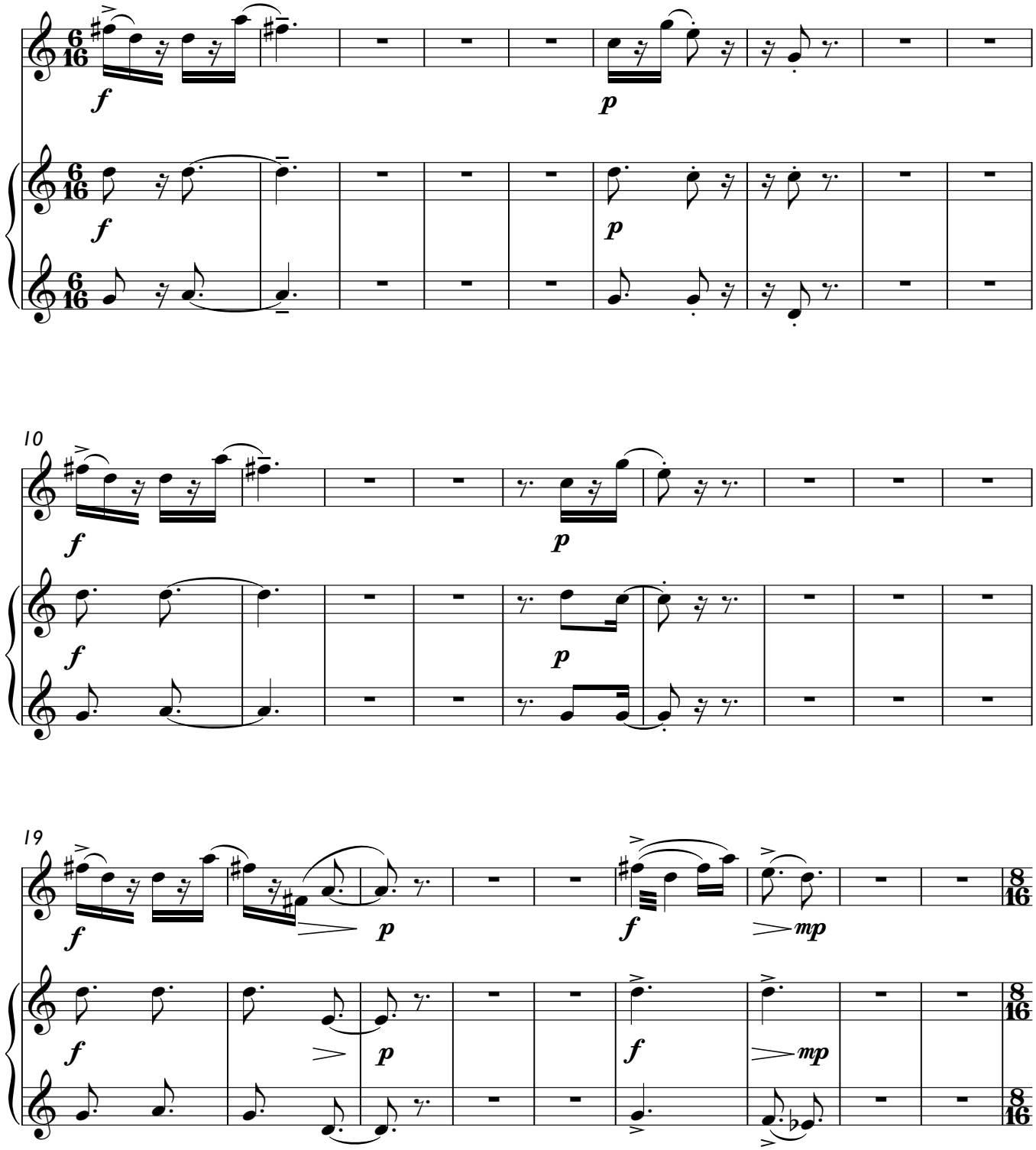

43
p
p

48
pp

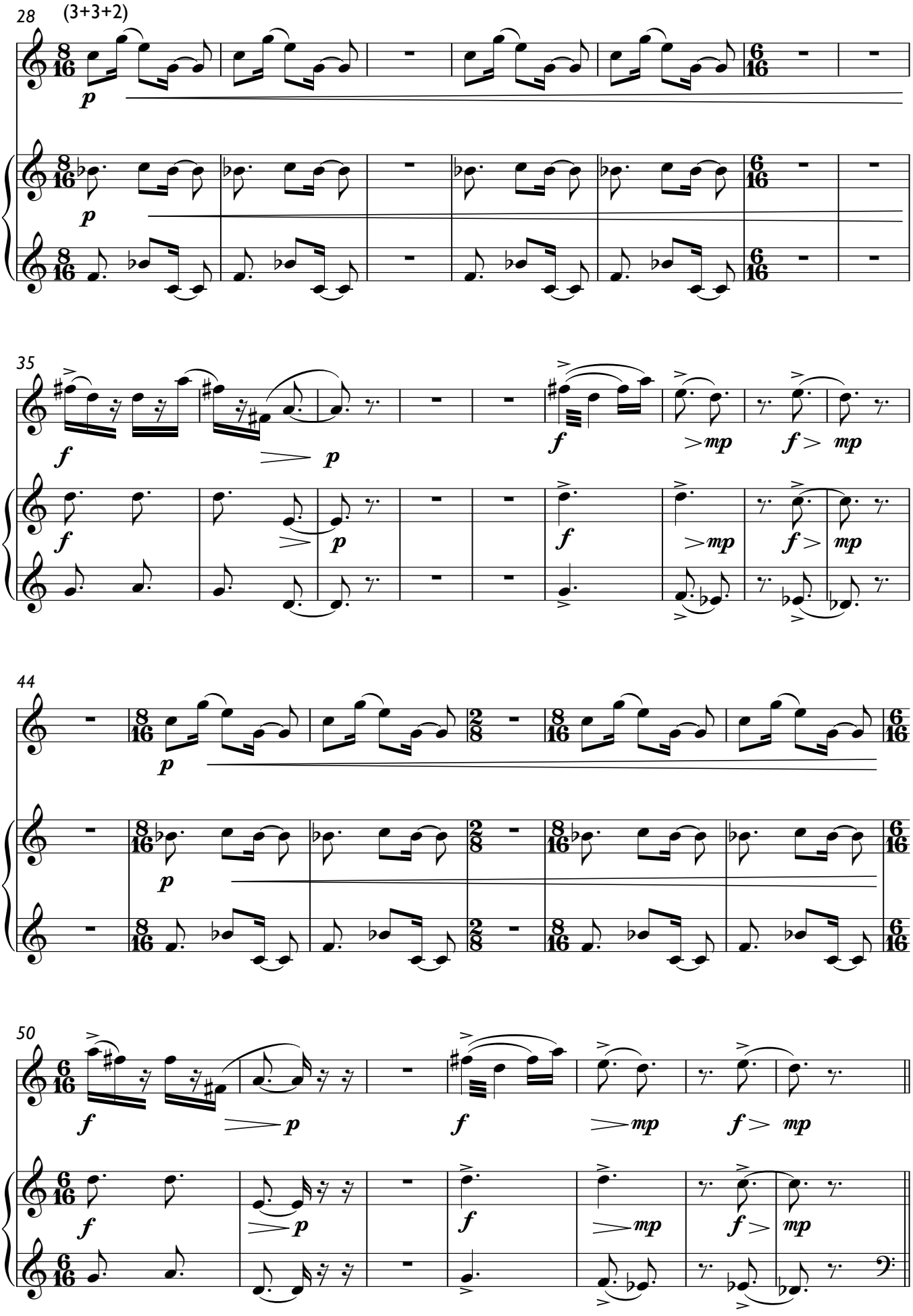
III
Snow Bunting

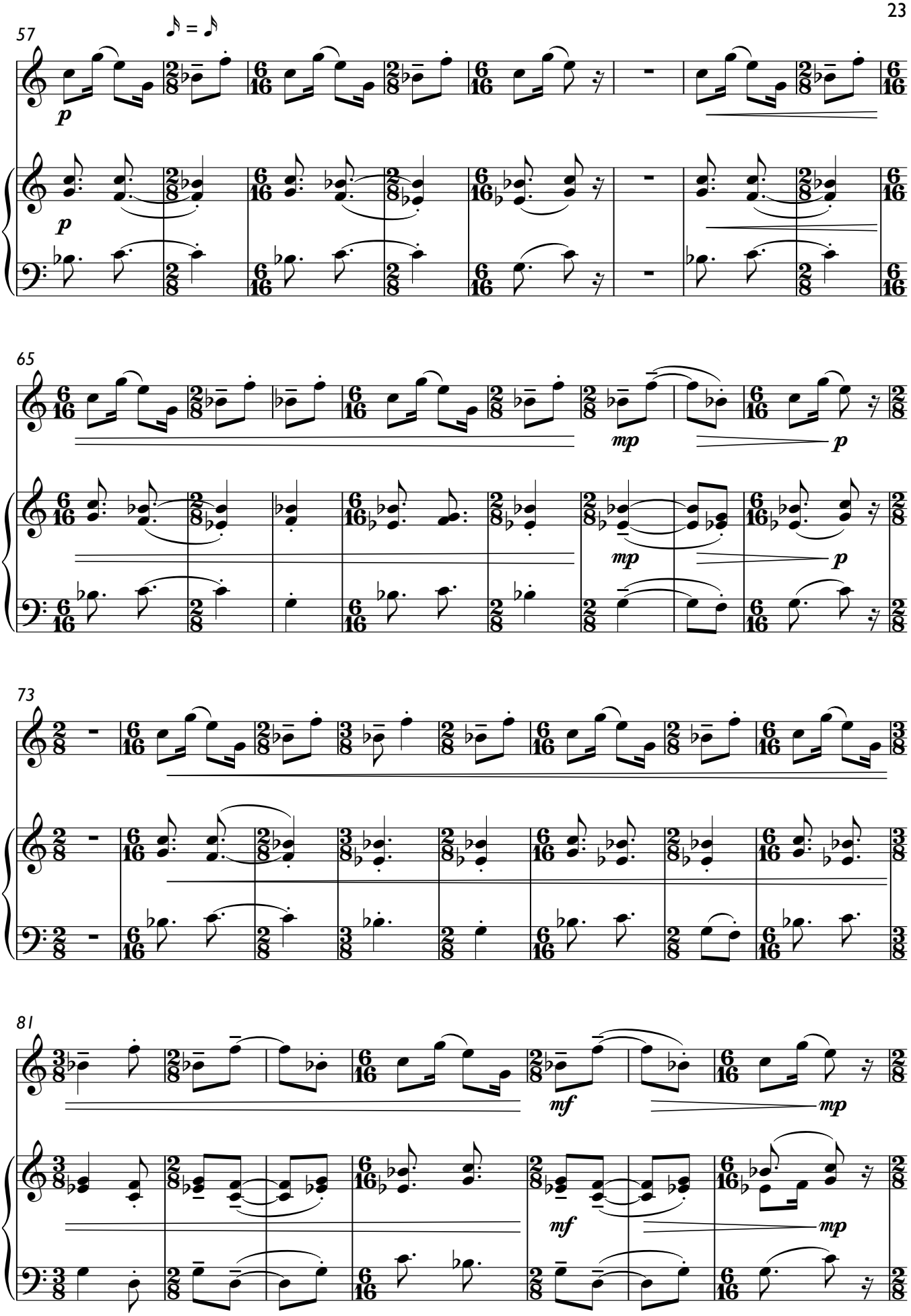
light

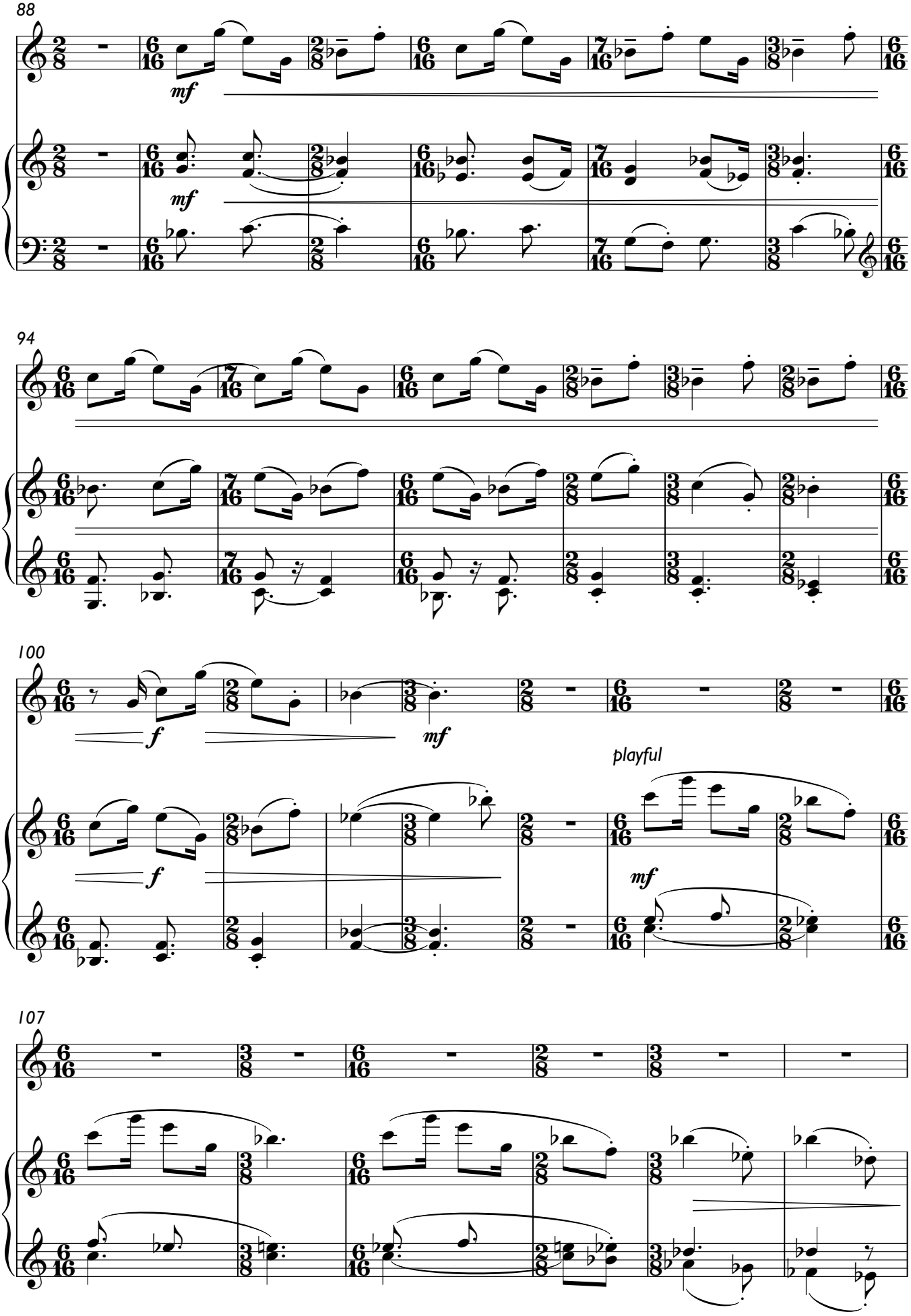
♪. = 132

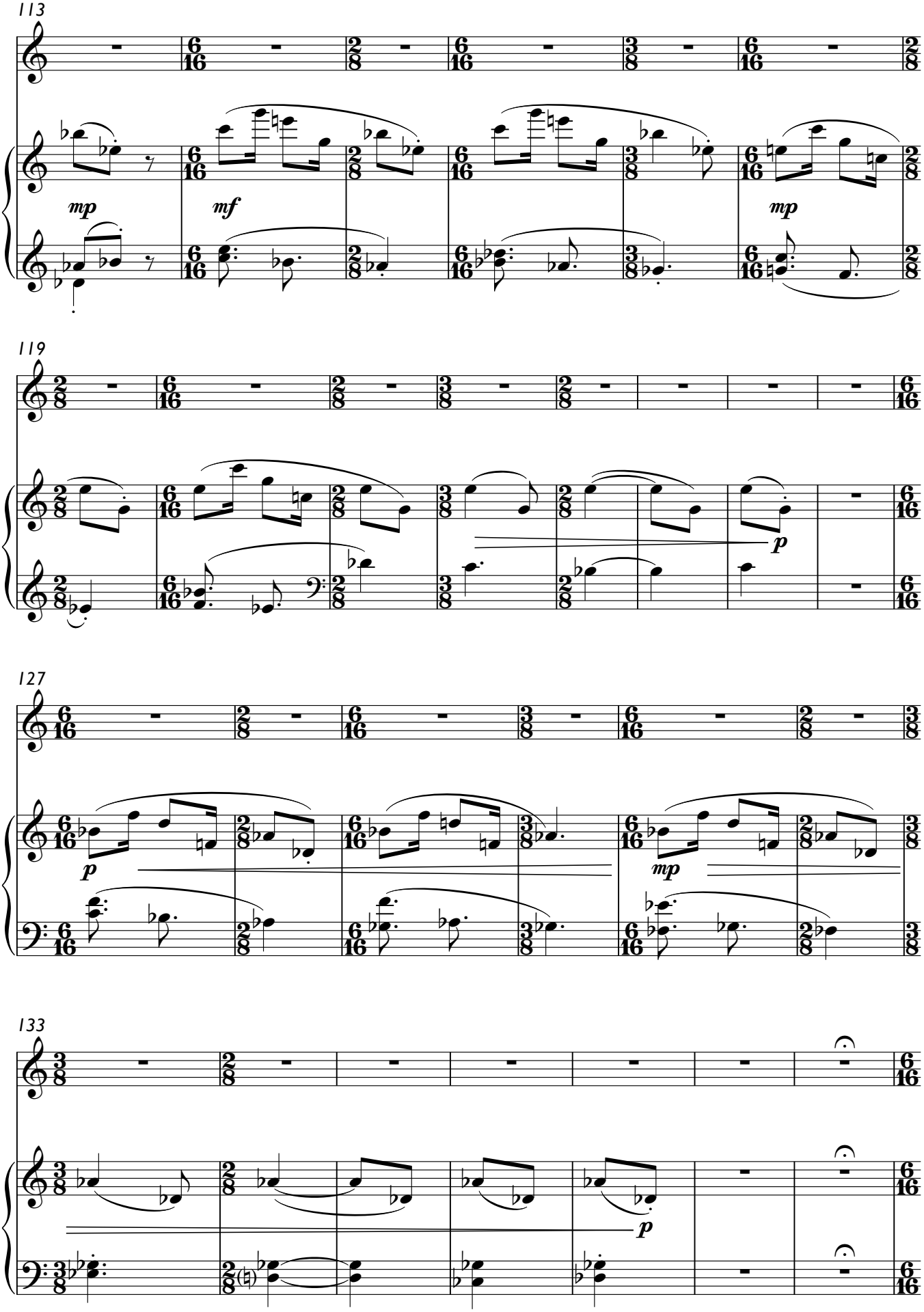


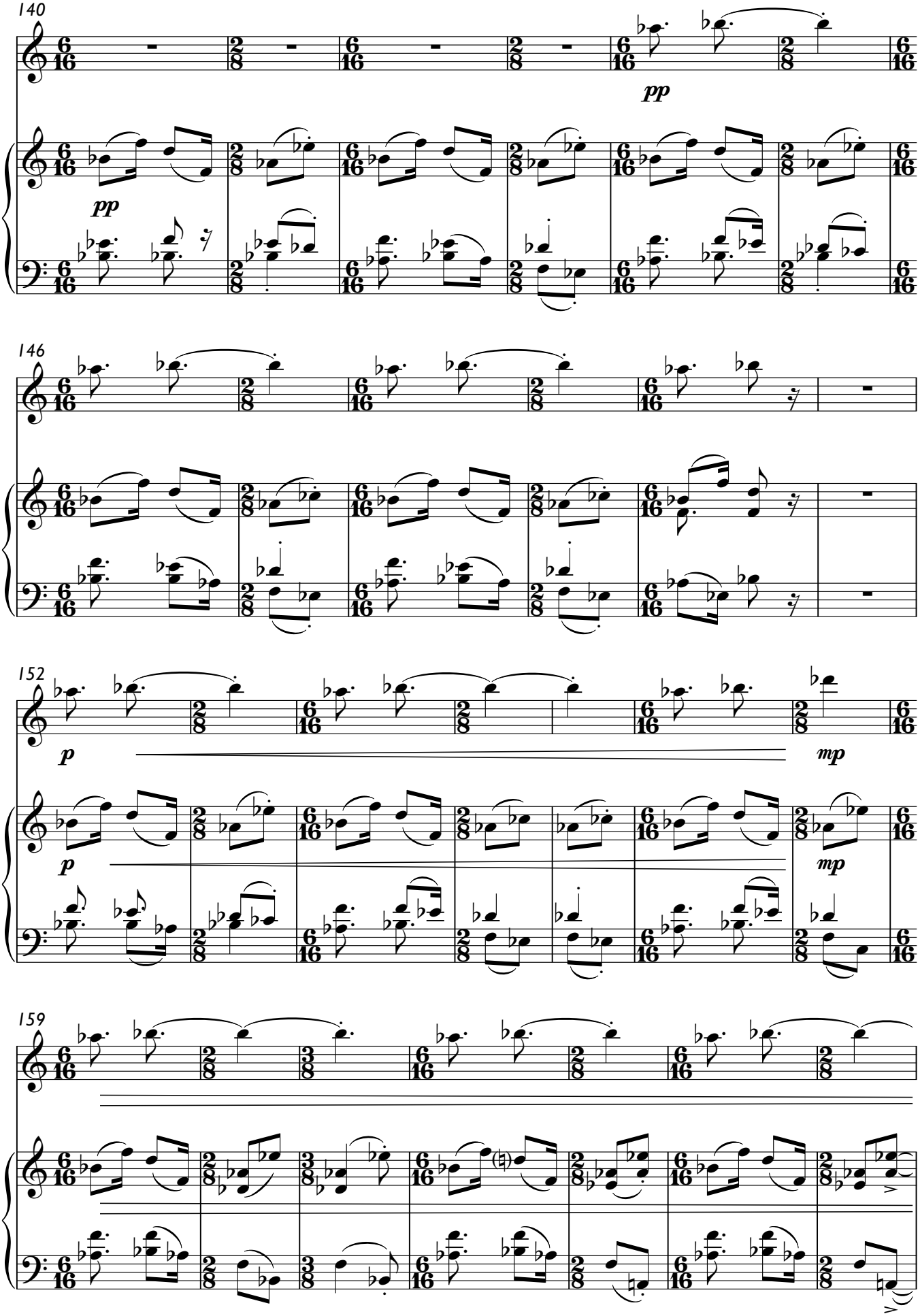
* Staccatos indicate a slight lift or roundness, but they are not too short! Flute and piano come off staccatos (or tenutos) together even if notes are of different lengths.

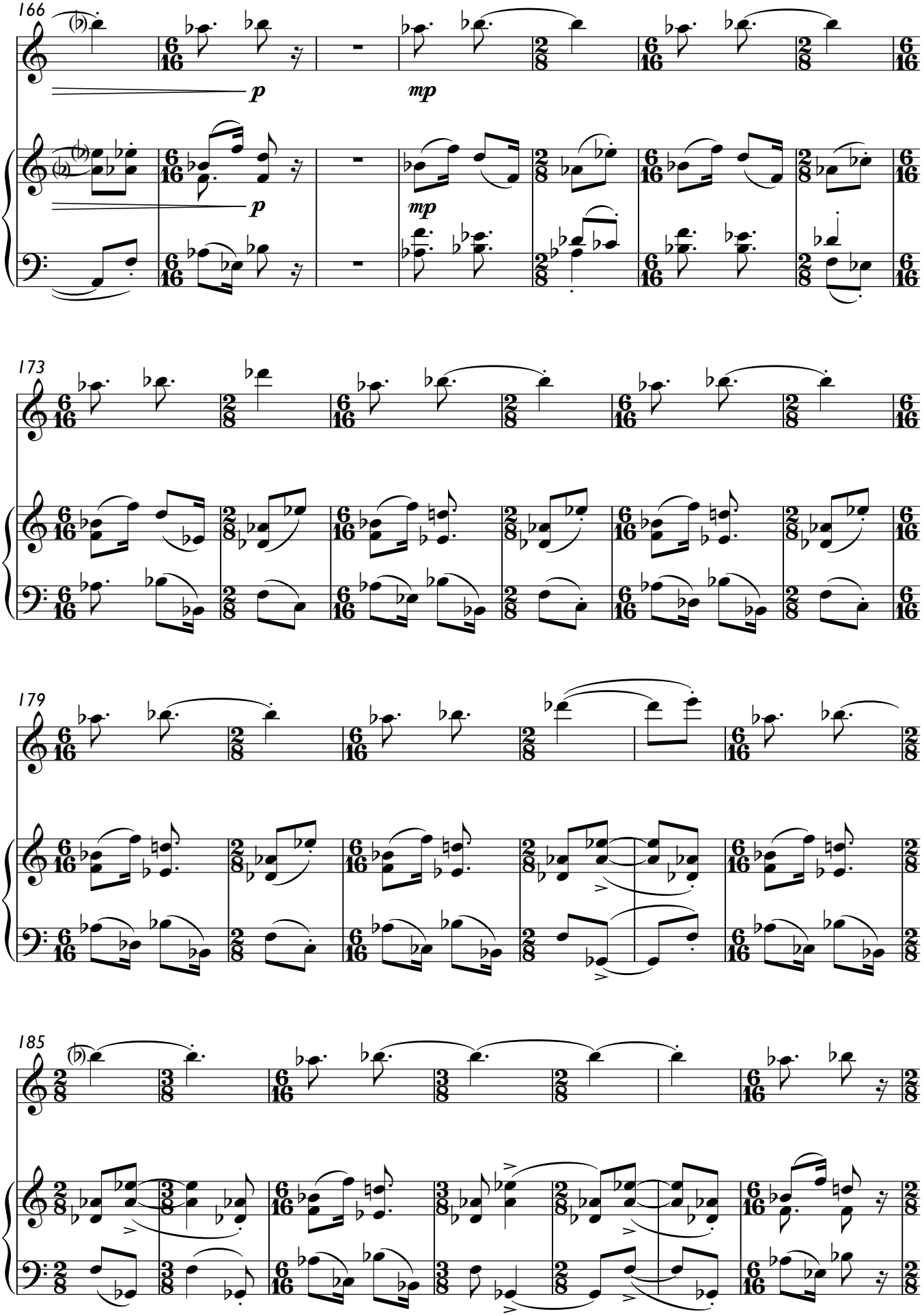

28
(3+3+2)
35
44
50

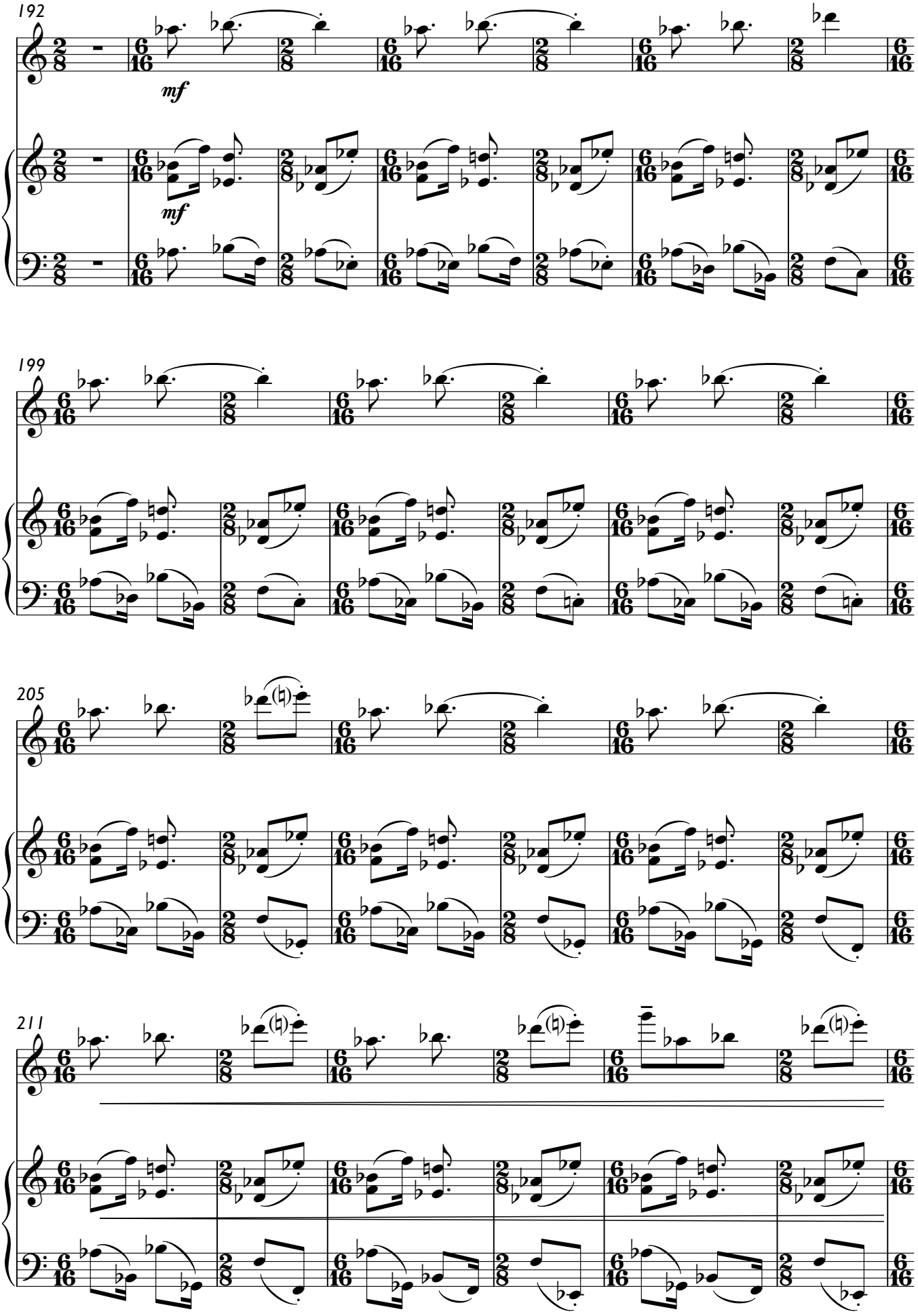

57
65
73
81
p
mp
mf

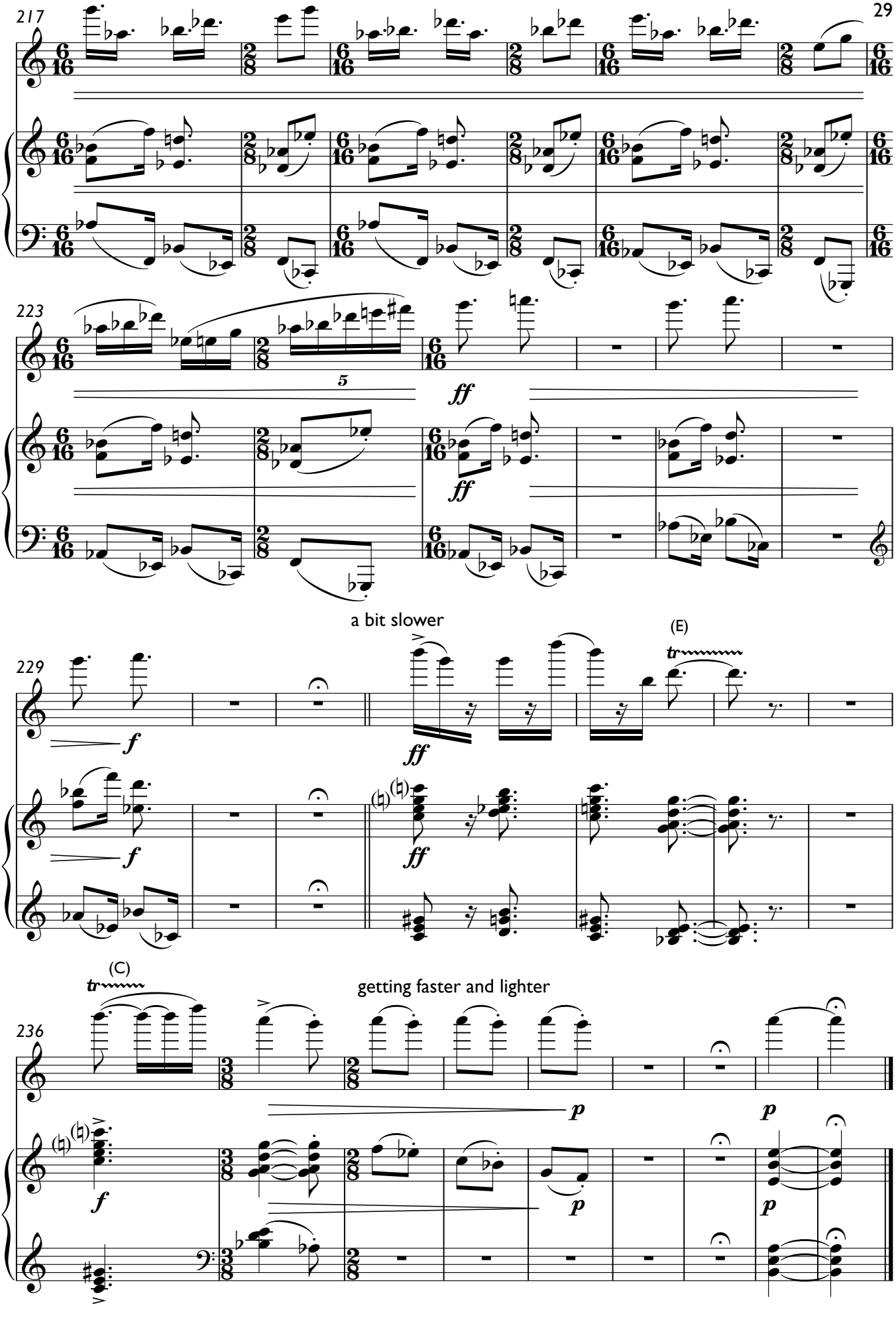

88
mf
mf
94
100
f
mf
f
playful
mf
107


113
mp
mf
mp
119
p
127
p
mp
133
p


140
pp
pp
146
152
p
mp
p
mp
159


166
p
mp
p
mp
173
179
185


192
mf
mf
199
205
211


217
223
5
ff
ff
ff
a bit slower
229
f
f
ff
ff
(E)
tr
(C)
tr
getting faster and lighter
236
f
p
p
p
p