Cello Concerto

Arranged for Cello and Piano

Bill Robinson

Cello Concerto

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October 22, 2015—January 25, 2016
Cello and Piano version March 27—April 8, 2022
Duration: about 27 minutes

for Bonnie Thron and Grant Llewellyn

I have had the pleasure of making music with Principal Cellist of the NC Symphony Bonnie Thron and her husband clarinetist Fred Jacobowitz since 2008. She spoke with Grant Llewellyn, music director of the orchestra, in April 2015 about writing something for her as soloist. Grant then asked me to come up with a piece. After finishing other projects, I got to work on this concerto, after asking Grant for Welsh themes; one of his suggestions is the basis for the first movement.

I. Over the Stone (Tros y Garreg)		
	Adagio; Cyflym; Adagio; Cyflym; Cymedrol; Ychydig yn gyflymach	[9']
II. Heart Song	*Largo*	[8']
III. Contradanza	*Fidelio*	[2']
IV. Schlimmbesserung	*Vivace*	[7:20]

The theme for the first movement is the traditional Welsh song "Tros y Garreg", or "Over the Stone". The song is attributed to Rhys Bodychen, who fought at the Battle of Bosworth Field on the side of the Tutors against Richard III in 1485. The lyrics reflect on those who have fallen in battle. This melody has been altered from the original by George Thompson, who published Welsh airs in 1809, 1811, and 1817. I prefer his version for this purpose to the original. Note that the end of the melody resembles the theme from the last movement of J. S. Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No. 5*, which factors into my treatment. Also, the traditional harp music of Wales led me to have an important harp part throughout this concerto. After having written music influenced by Russia, France, Germany, Austria, Moravia, Hungary, Romania, Spain, Cuba, India, and Mississippi, it was about time for me to try Wales—somewhere closer to my actual ancestry (English, Dutch, Scotch-Irish, Manx).

I made a point of using particularly incomprehensible, unspellable, and unpronounceable Welsh words for tempo markings in the first movement. *Cyflym* means "fast"; *Cymedrol* means "moderate"; *Ychydig yn gflymach* means "a little faster."

The very short third movement started life back about 1990 as the second movement of my *Fourth Sonata for Solo Violin*. (There is a total of ten such sonatas.) Originally I thought it was a tango, as I am easily bored with details in music theory and sometimes don't look things up. In fact it is a contradanza, with the dance form originating in Havana. Hence the tempo marking "Fidelio". The solo cello part can be performed by itself in a pinch.

The fourth movement is titled *Schlimmbesserung*, which is German for "an effort to make things better that ends up making things worse".

In addition to this arrangement for cello and piano, there is a chamber version for cello and two pianos.

Cover art: frontispiece from *Musical and poetical relicks of the Welsh bards* by Edward Jones, 1784.

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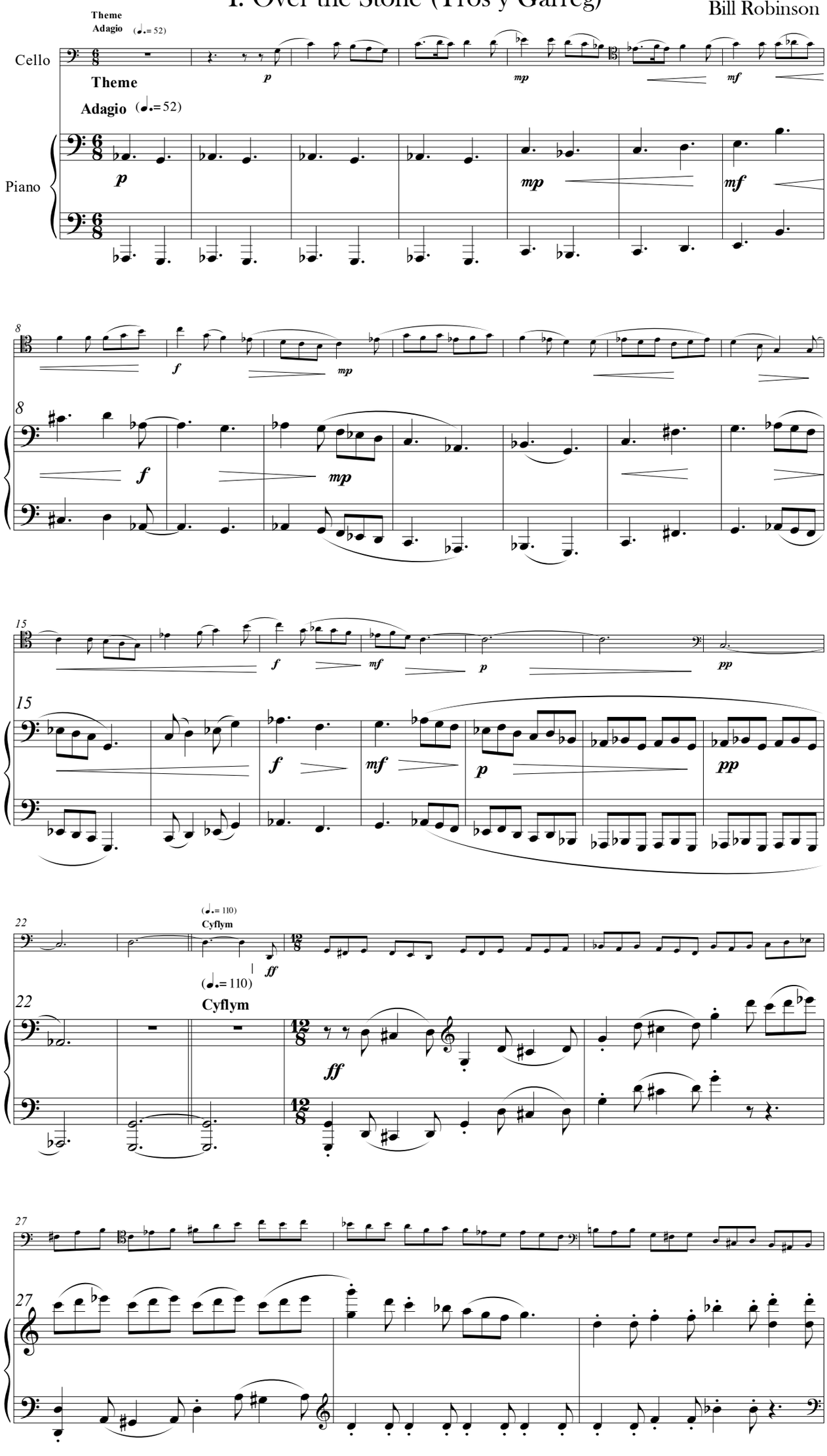
Cello Concerto

I. Over the Stone (Tros y Garreg)

[9']

Bill Robinson



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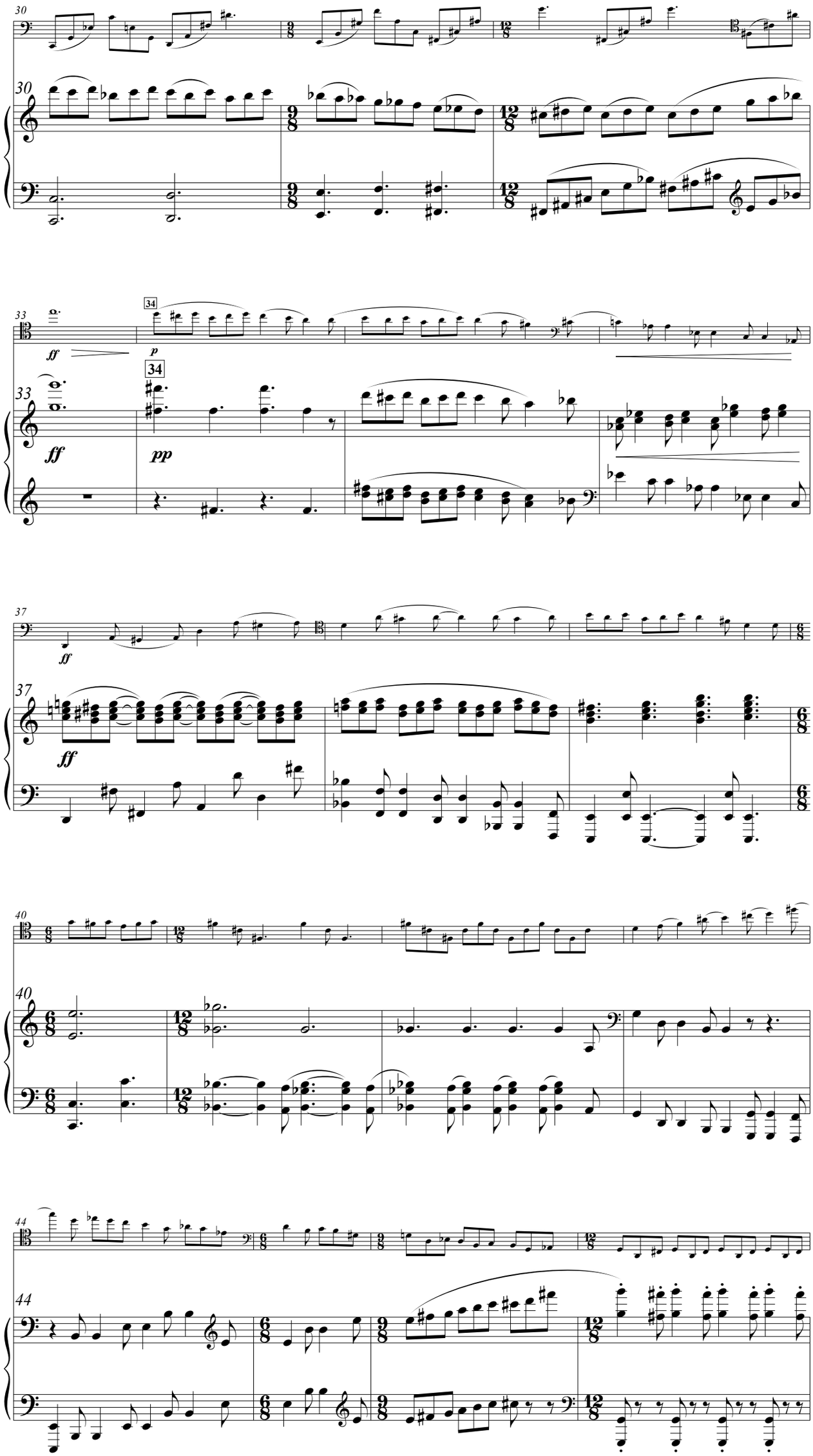
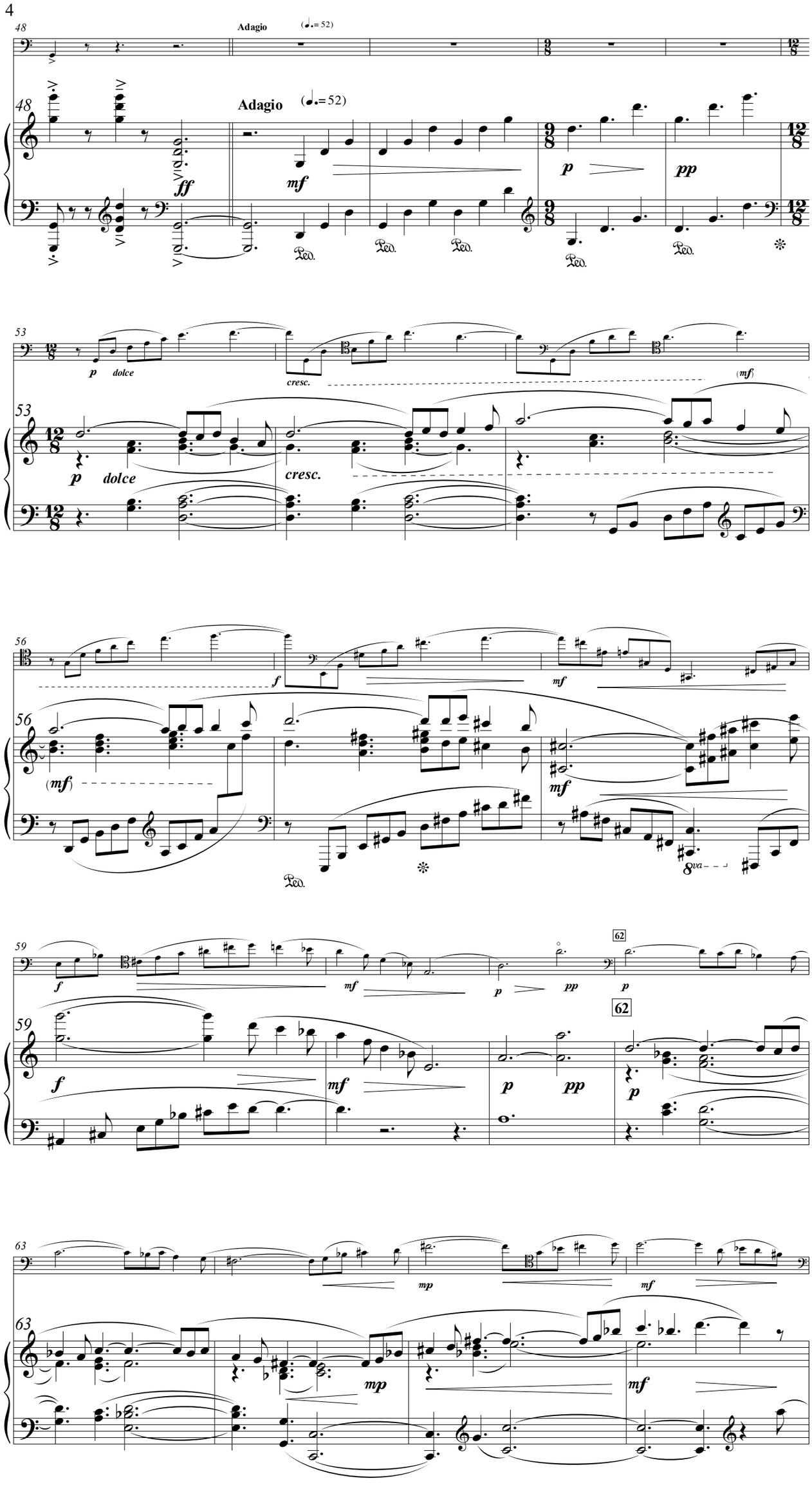
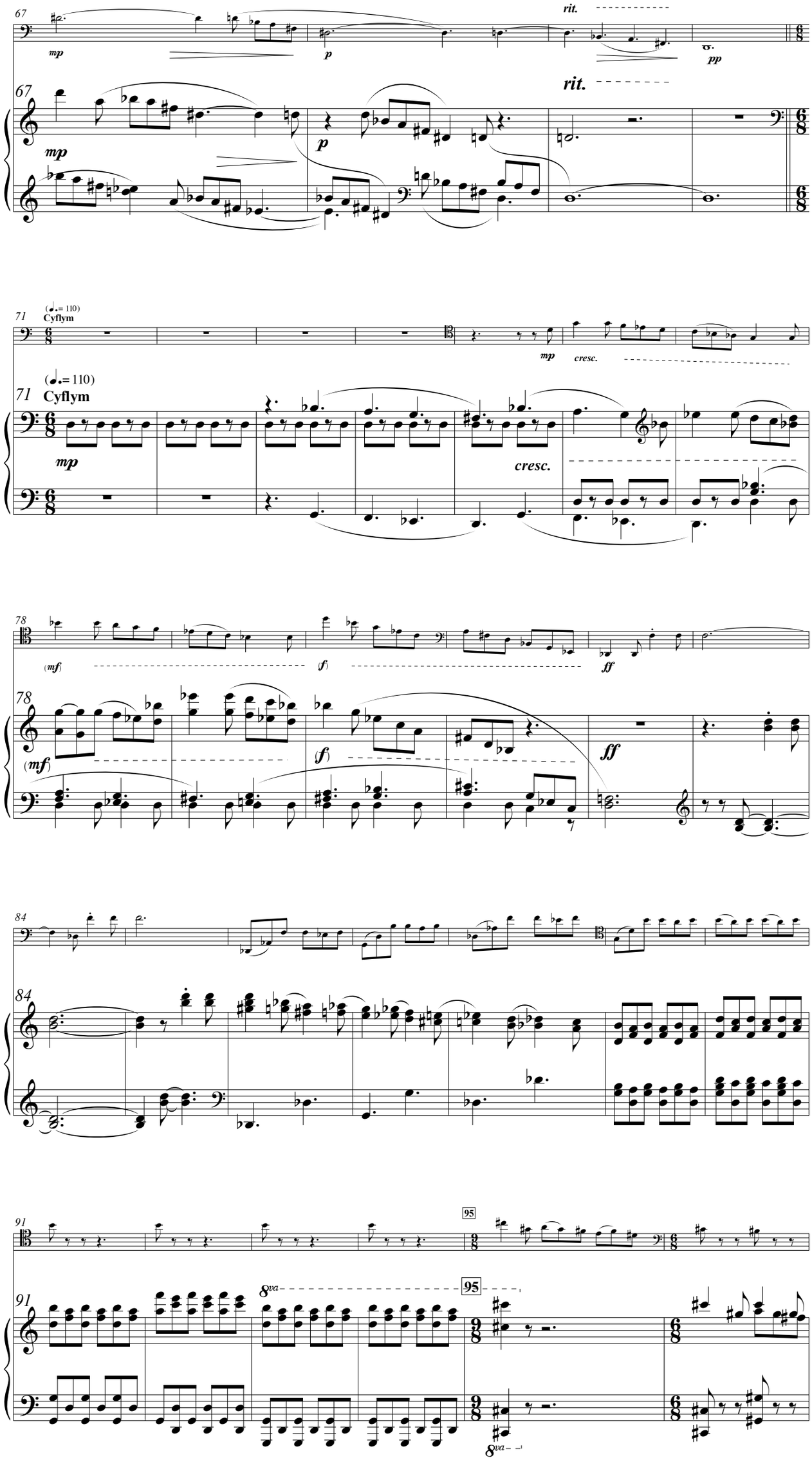
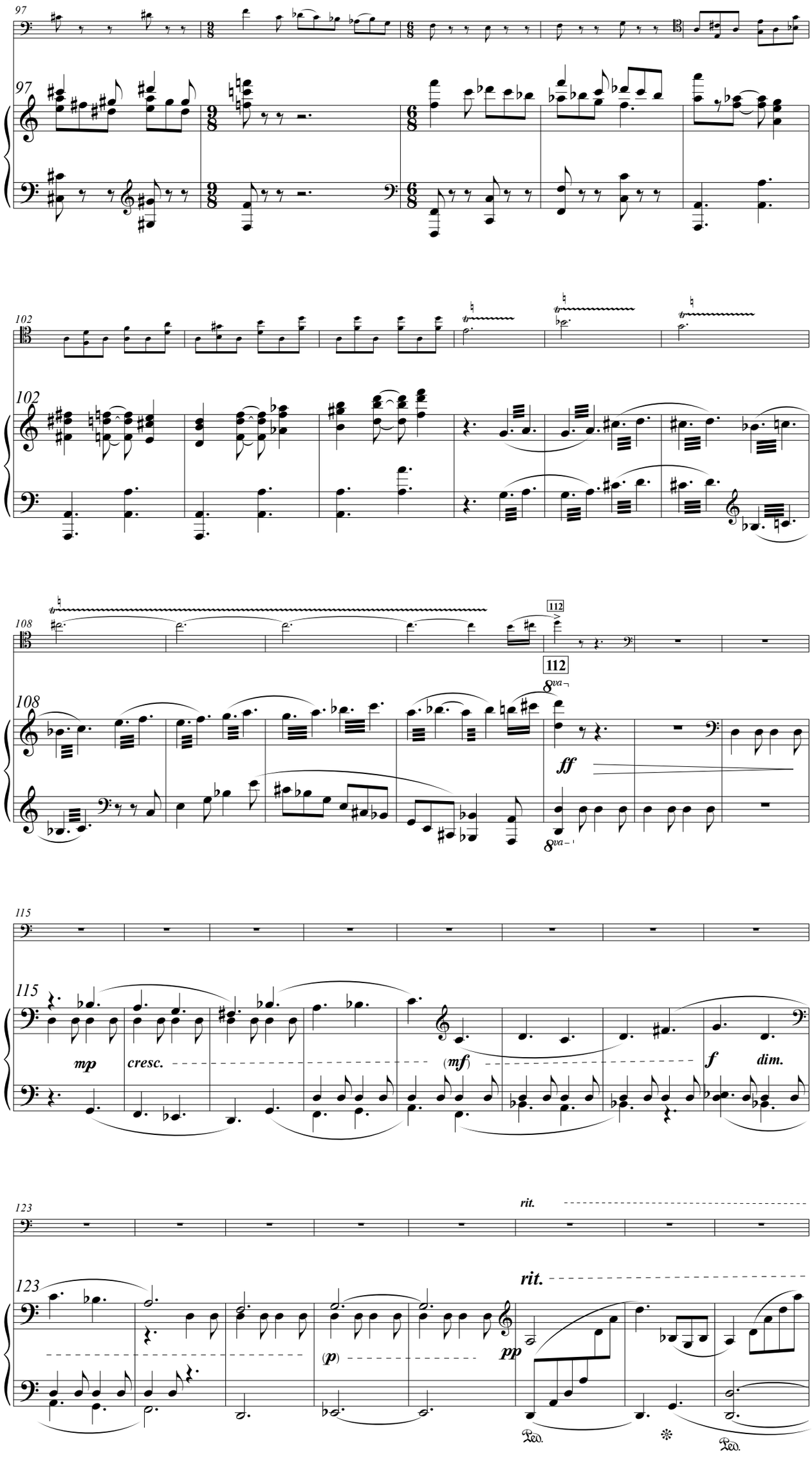
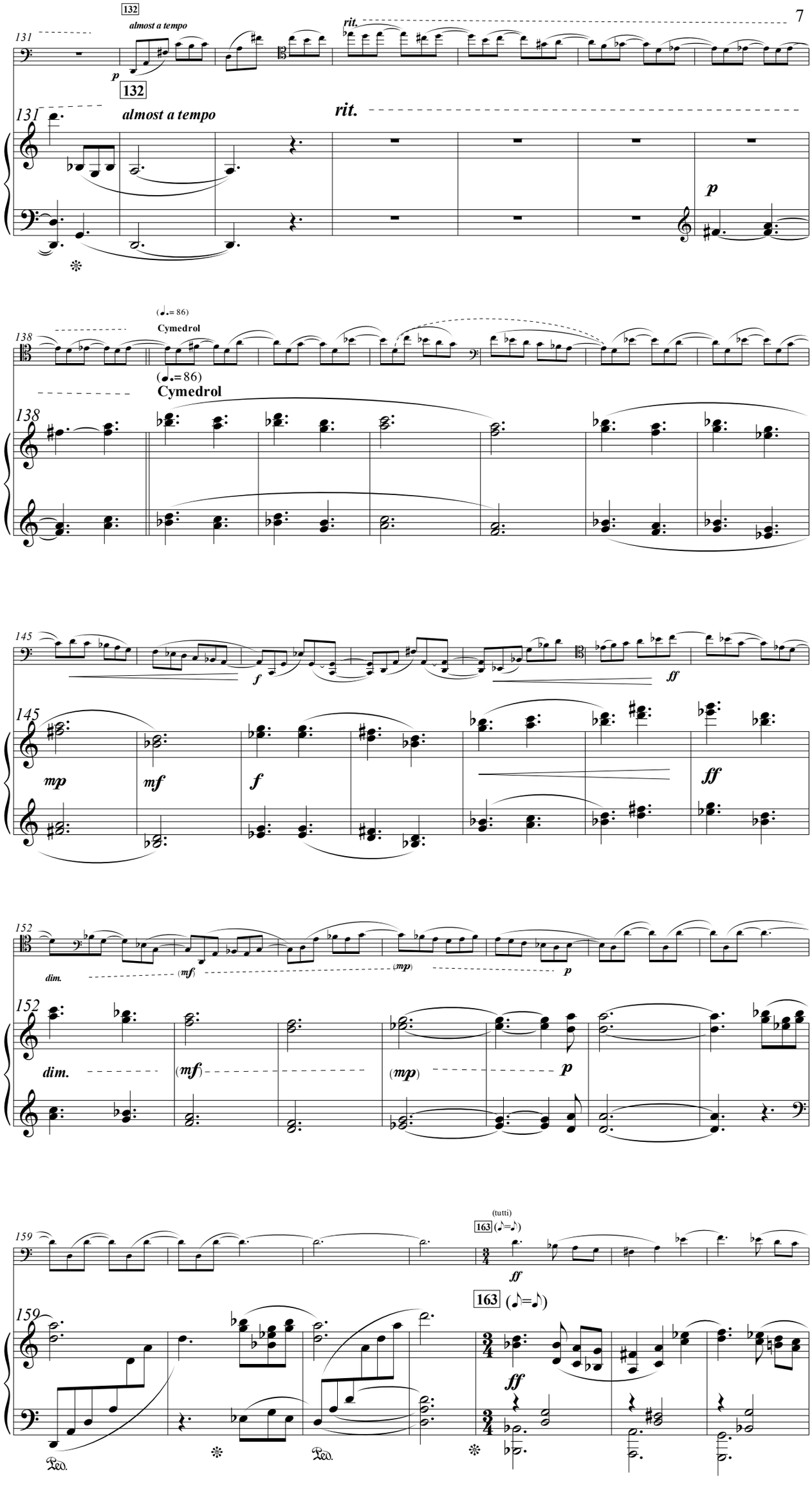
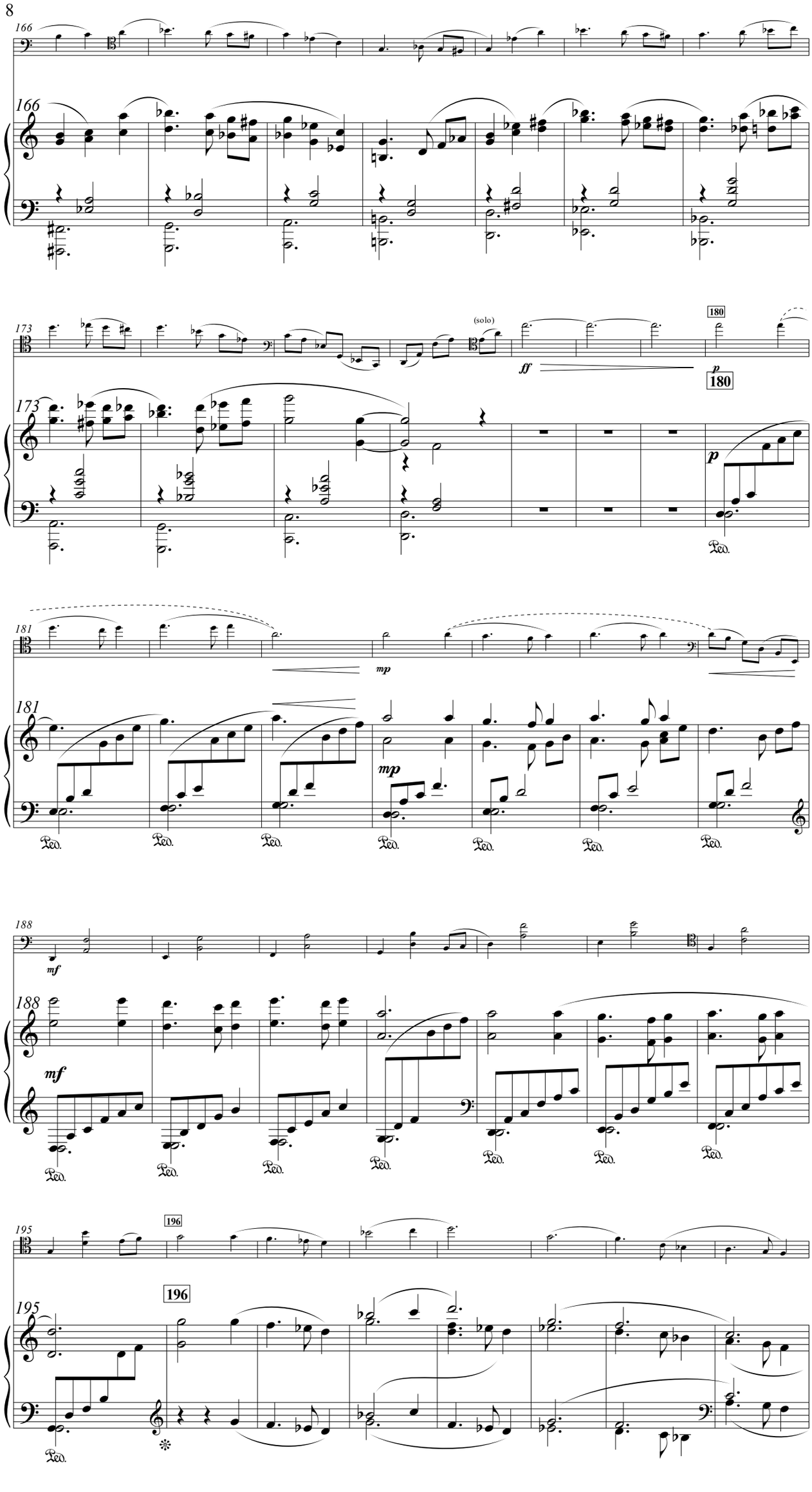

30
30
33
34
ff
p
34
33
ff
pp
37
ff
37
ff
40
40
44
44

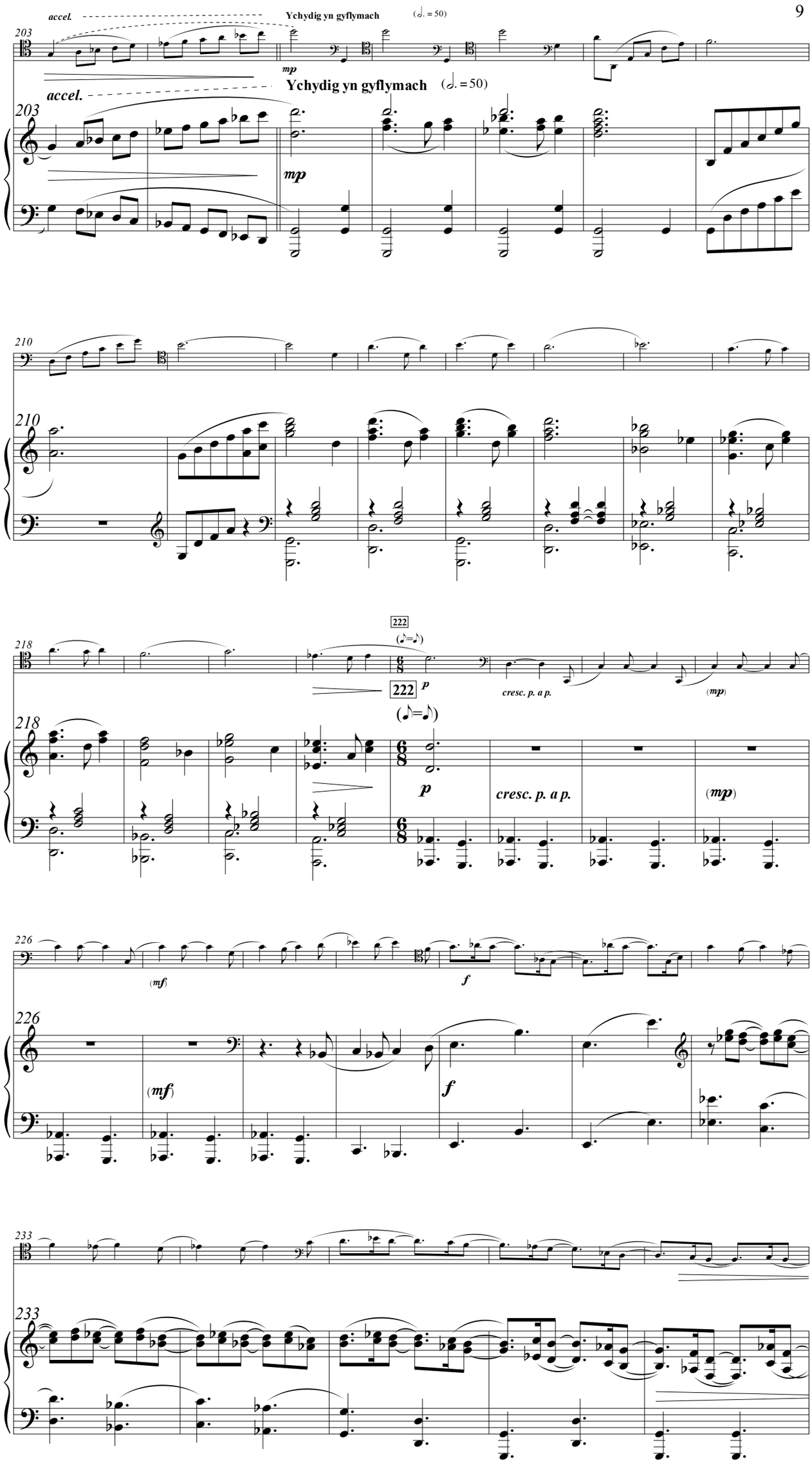

48
Adagio
(♩.= 52)
ff
mf
p
pp
Ped.
53
p dolce
cresc.
(mf)
56
f
mf
(mf)
8va
59
62
63
mp

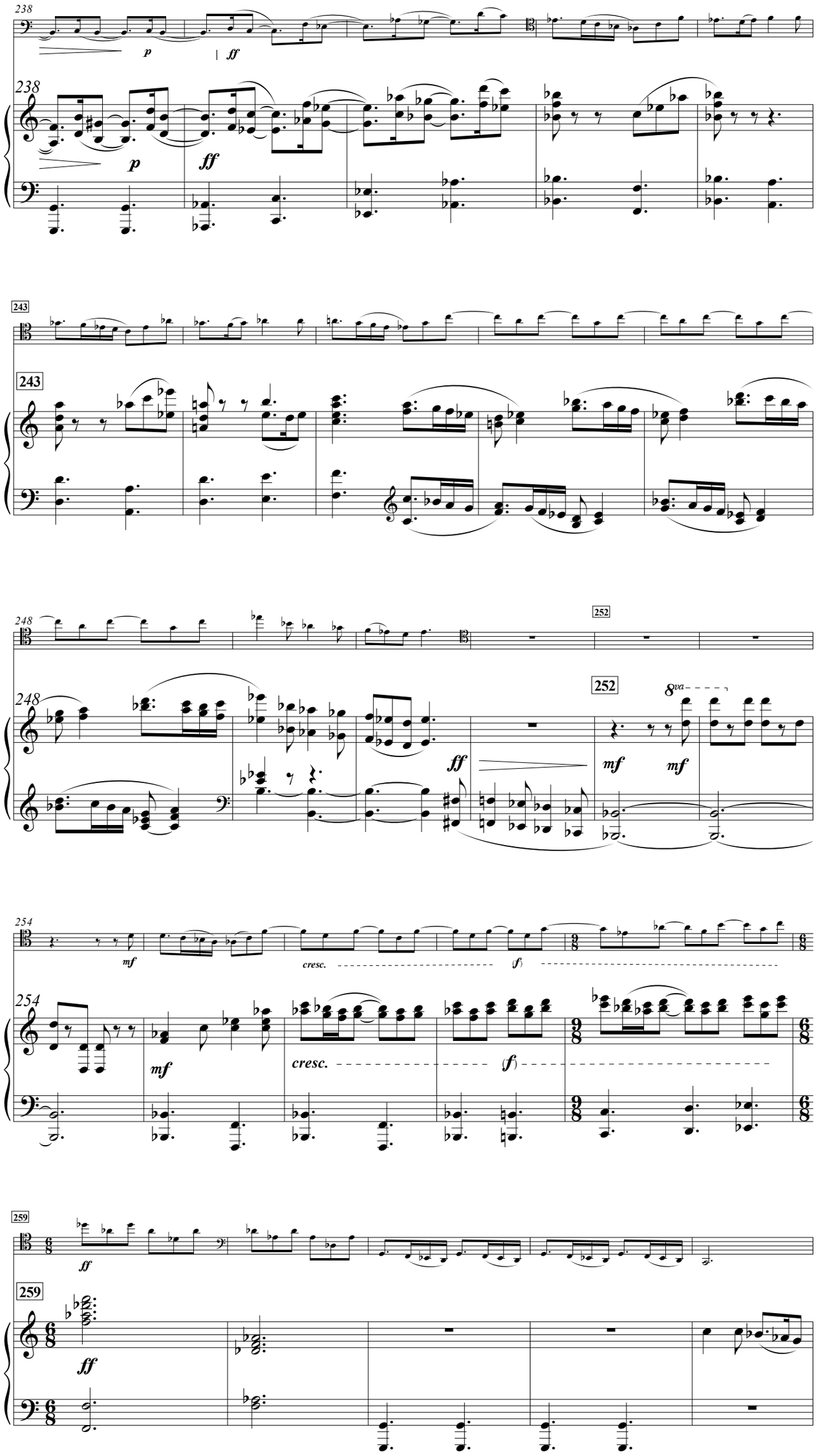

67
mp
p
rit.
pp
71
(♩.= 110)
Cyflym
cresc.
78
(mf)
(f)
ff
84
91
95
8va

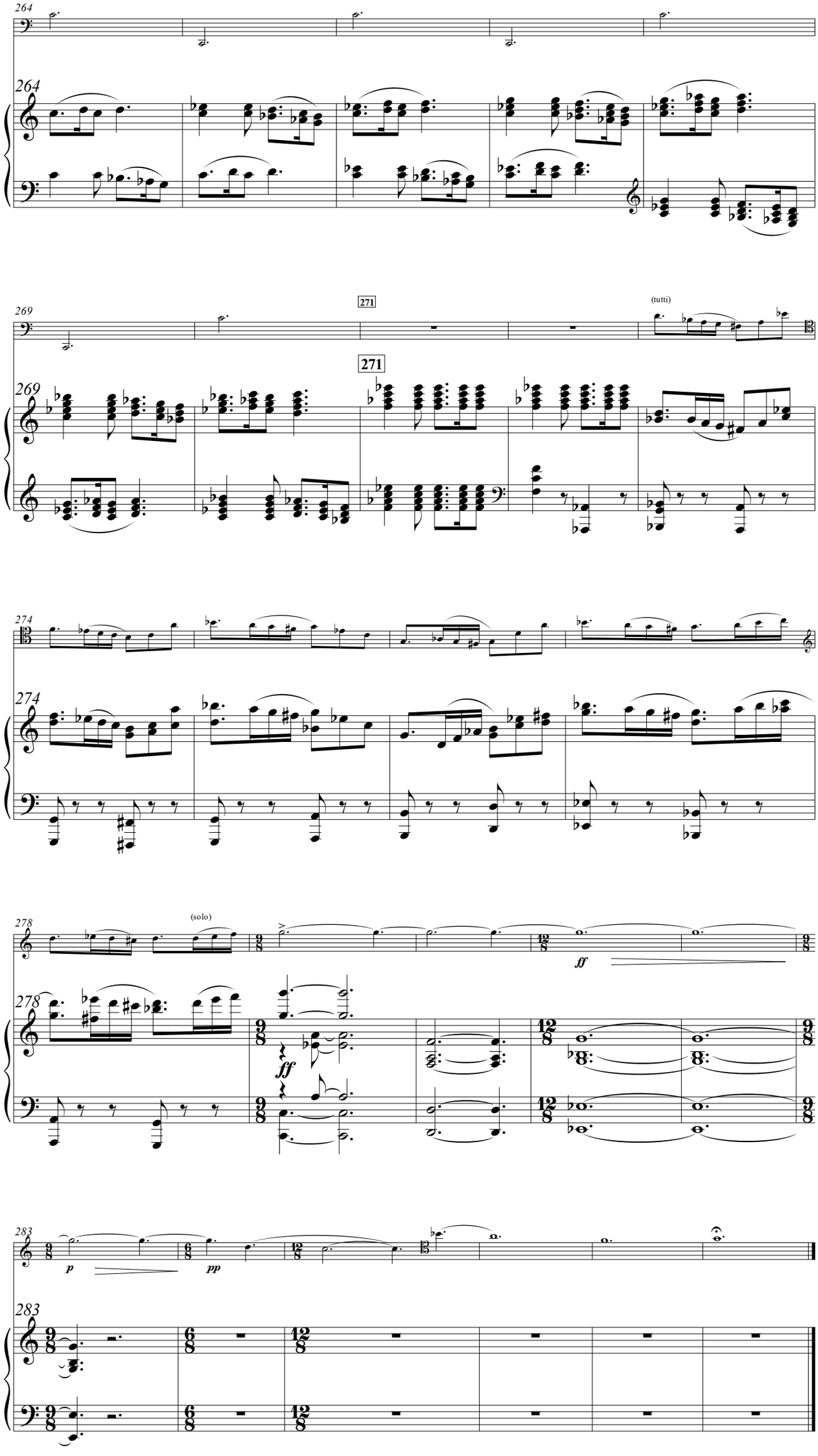

97
97
102
102
108
108
112
112
8va
ff
8va
115
115
mp
cresc.
(mf)
f
dim.
123
123
rit.
rit.
(p)
pp
Ped.
Ped.


132
almost a tempo
rit.
131
p
132
131
almost a tempo
rit.
p
(♩.= 86)
Cymedrol
138
(♩.= 86)
Cymedrol
138
145
f
ff
145
mp
mf
f
ff
152
dim.
(mf)
(mp)
p
152
dim.
(mf)
(mp)
p
159
(tutti)
163 (♪=♪)
ff
159
163 (♪=♪)
ff
Ped.
Ped.


166
166
173
(solo)
ff
180
p
180
173
p
Ped.
181
mp
181
mp
Ped.
188
mf
188
mf
Ped.
195
196
196
195
Ped.

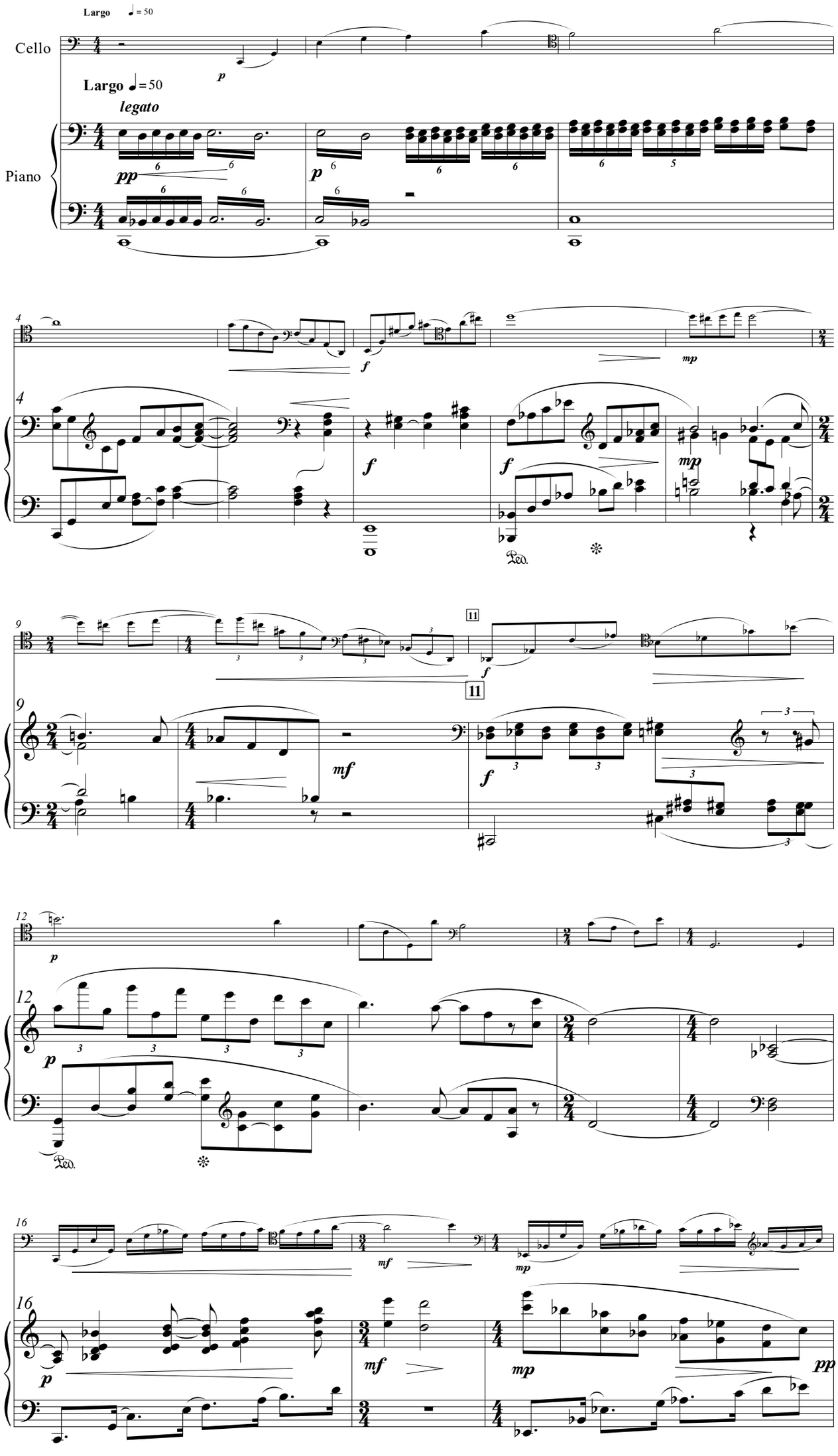

accel.
Ychydig yn gyflymach
(𝅗𝅥. = 50)
203
mp
210
218
222
(♪=♪)
p
cresc. p. a p.
(mp)
226
(mf)
f
233

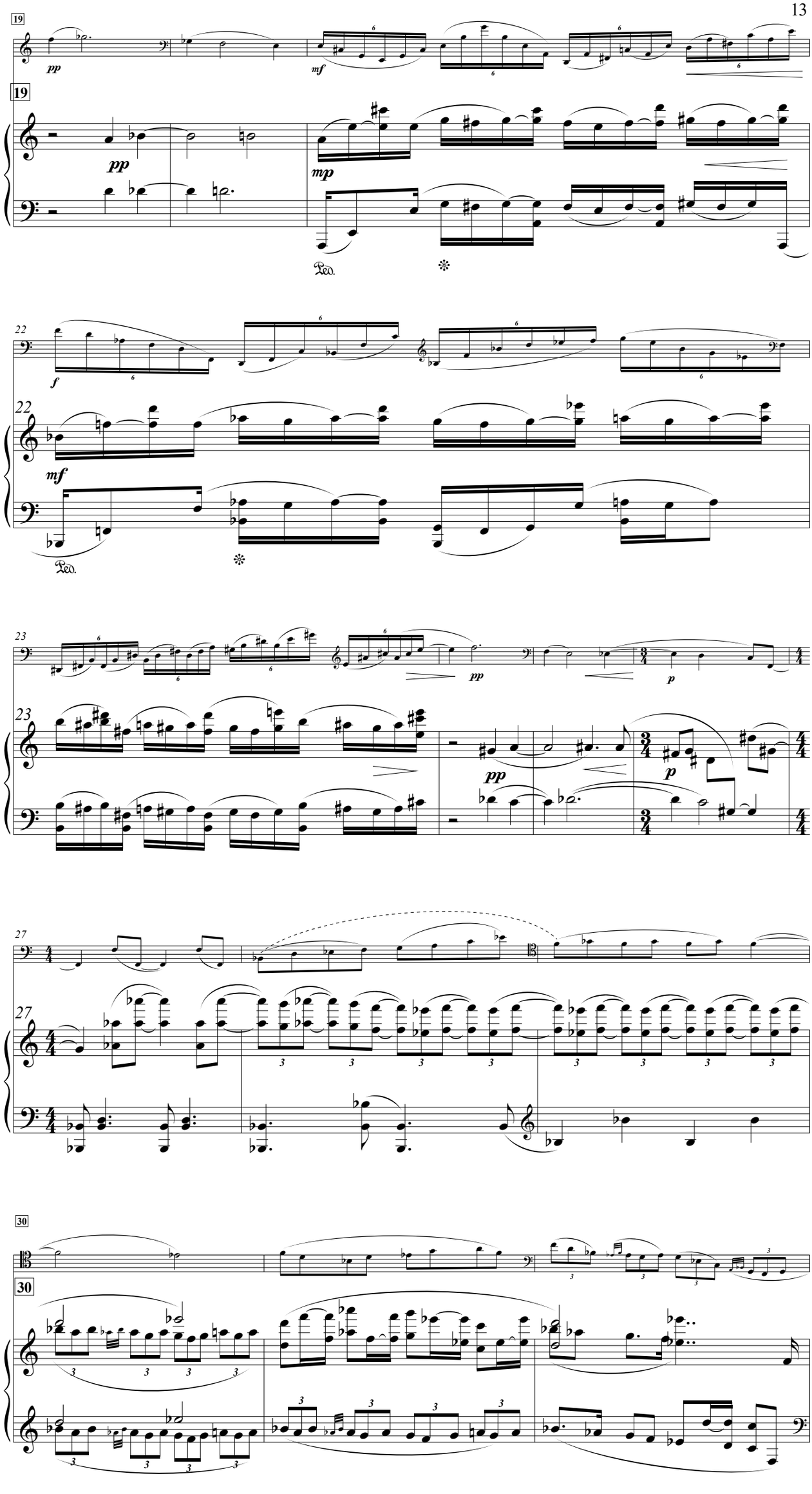

238
p
ff
238
p
ff
243
243
248
252
248
ff
252
8va
mf
mf
254
mf
cresc.
(f)
254
mf
cresc.
(f)
259
ff
259
ff

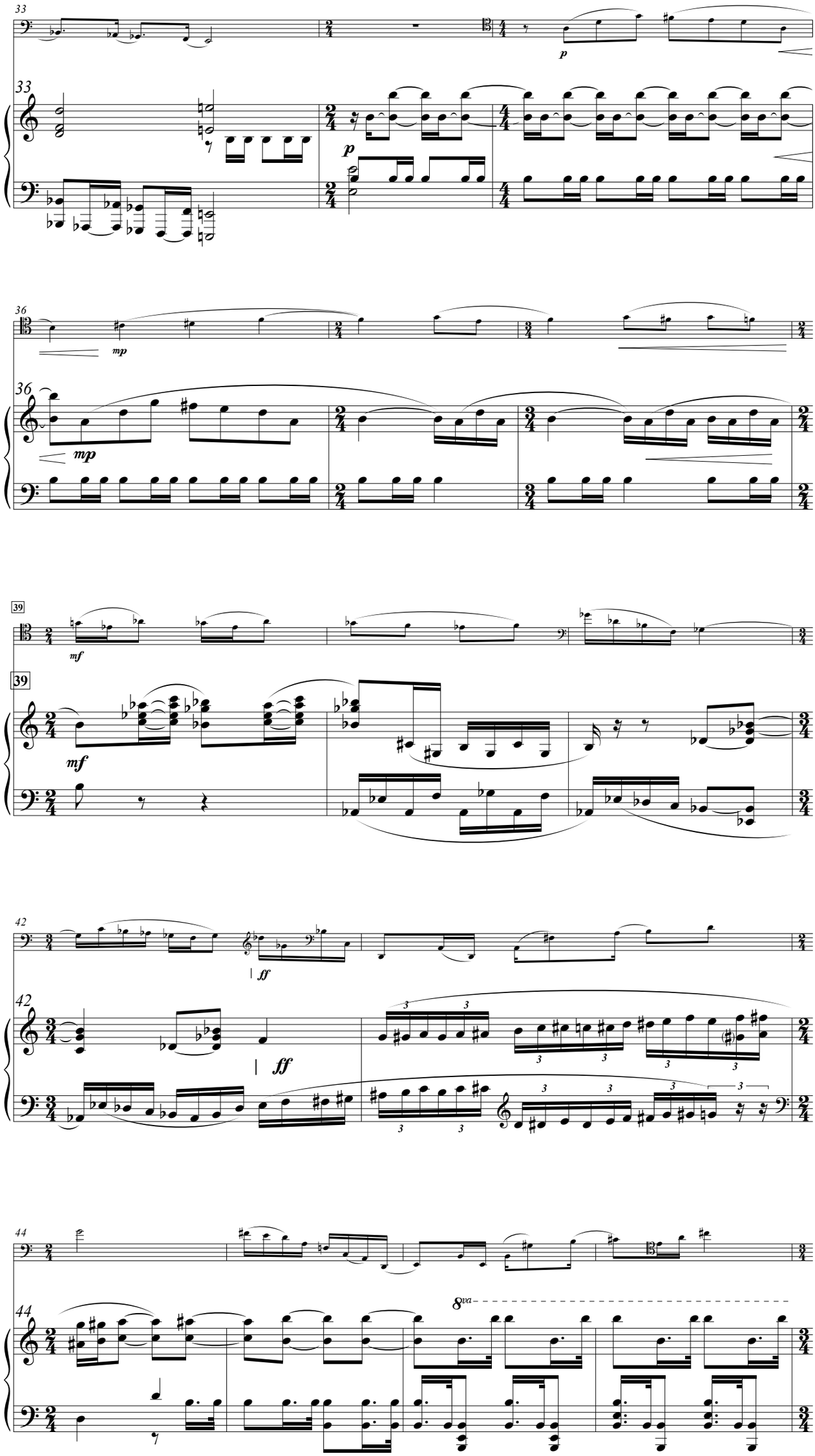

264
271
(tutti)
269
274
(solo)
278
ff
p
pp
283

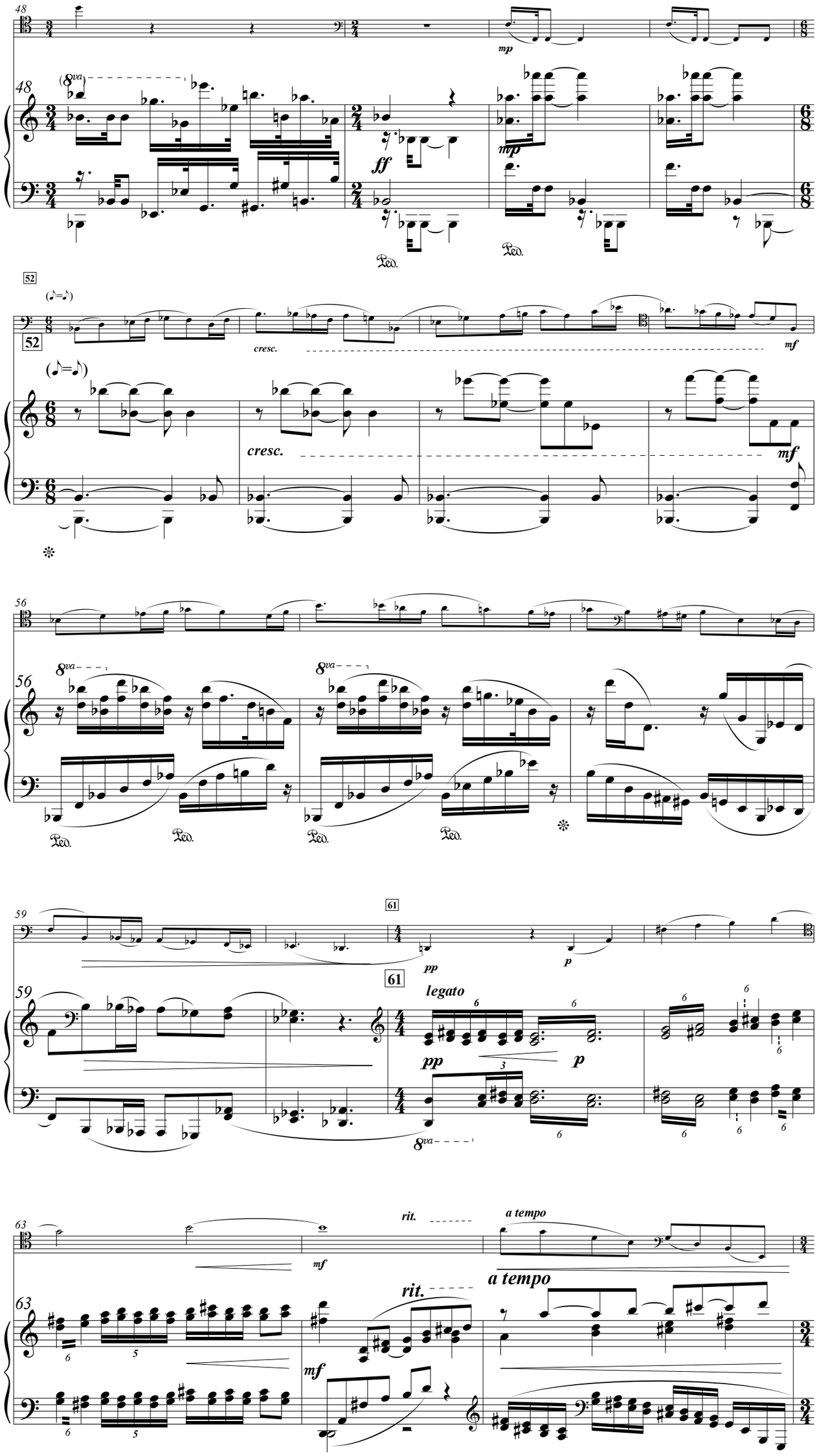
II. Heart Song

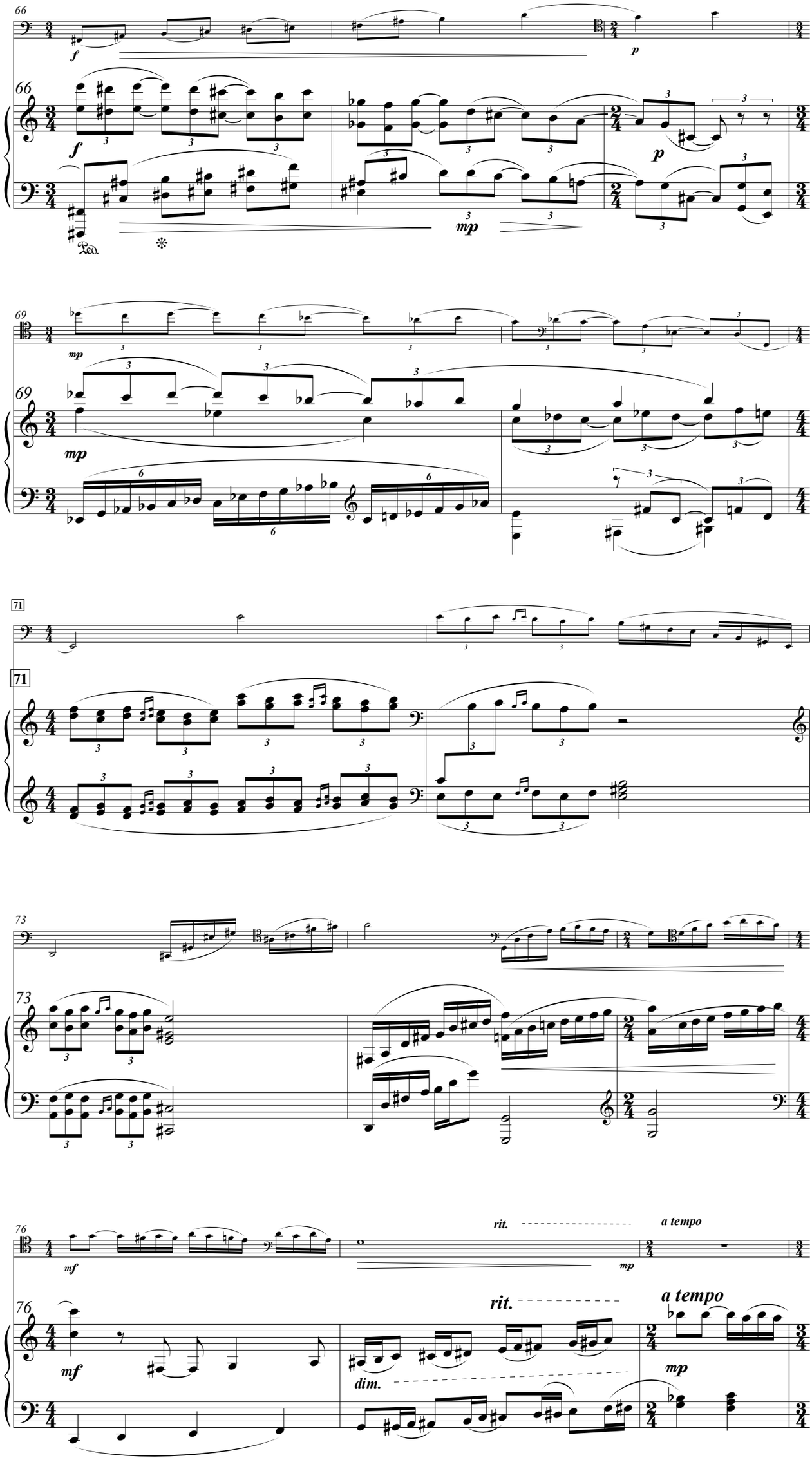
[8']

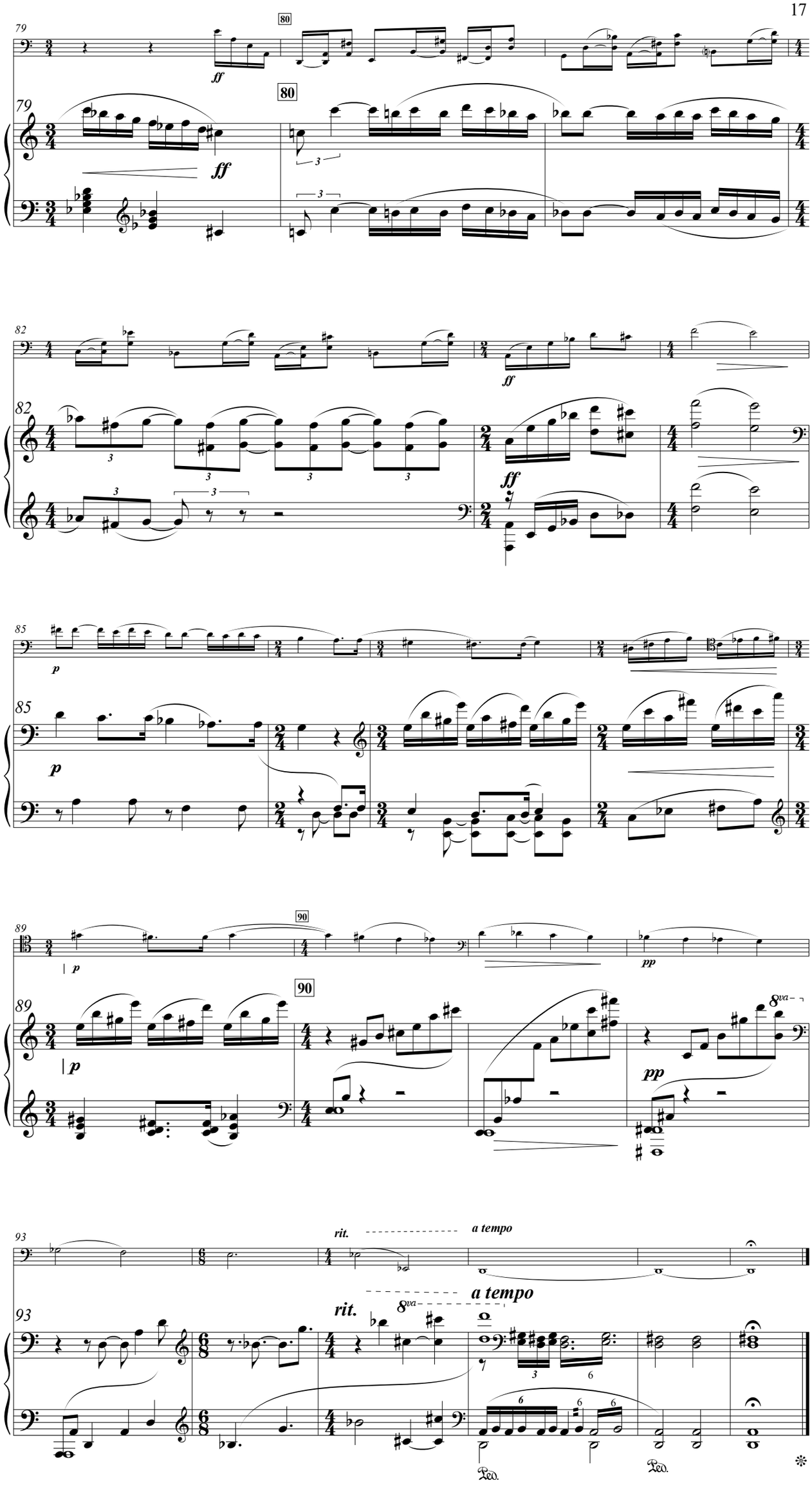


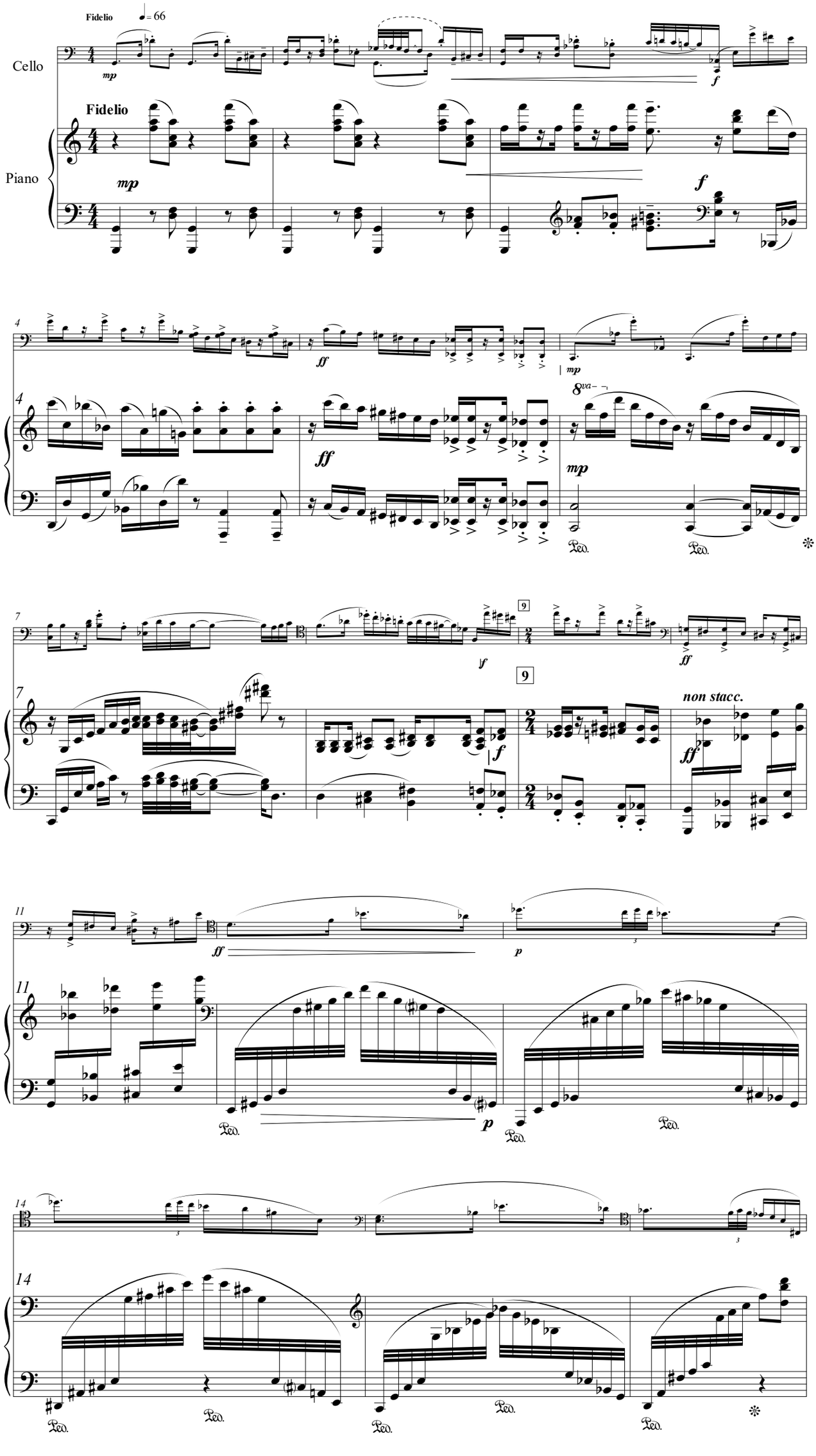

19
pp
mf
19
pp
mp
Ped.
22
f
22
mf
Ped.
23
pp
23
pp
p
p
27
27
30
30

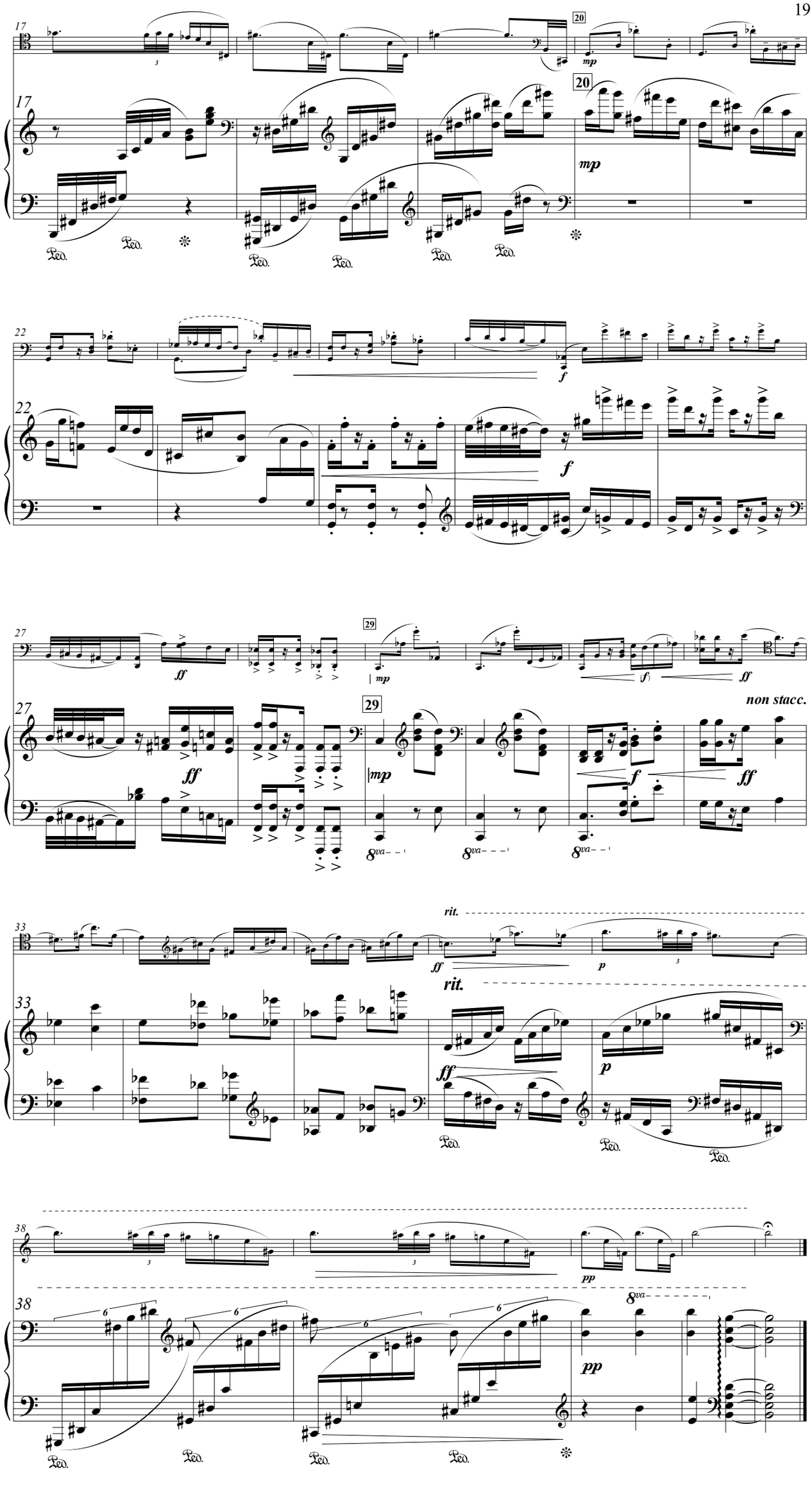

33
p
36
mp
39
mf
42
ff
44
8va


48
mp
(8va)
ff
mp
Ped.
Ped.
52
(♪=♪)
cresc.
mf
56
8va
8va
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
59
61
pp
p
legato
pp
p
8va
63
rit.
a tempo
mf
rit.
a tempo
mf

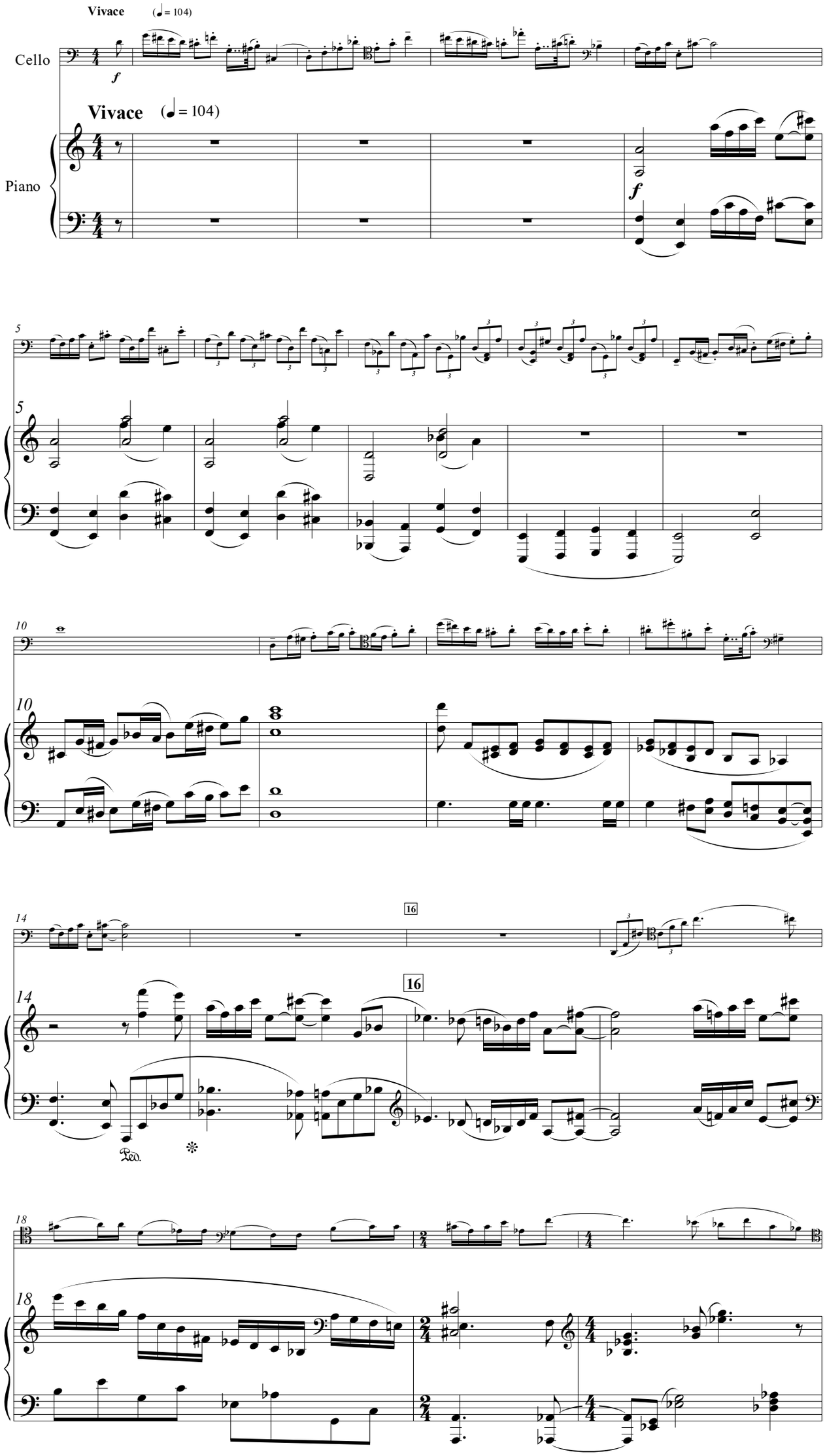

66
f
p
mp
Ped.
69
mp
71
73
76
mf
rit.
a tempo
dim.

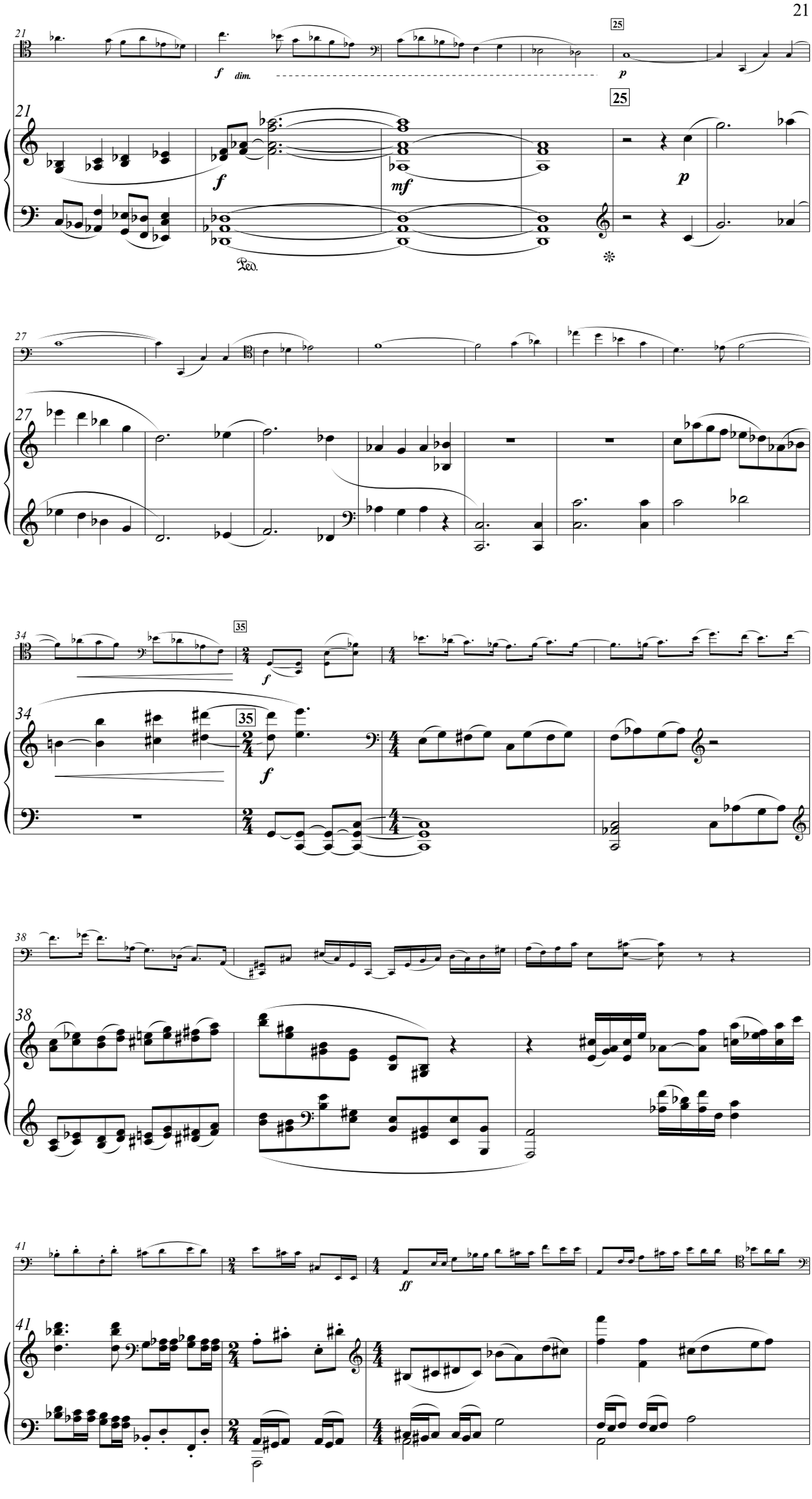

79
80
ff
3
82
ff
85
p
89
90
pp
8va
93
rit.
a tempo
Ped.

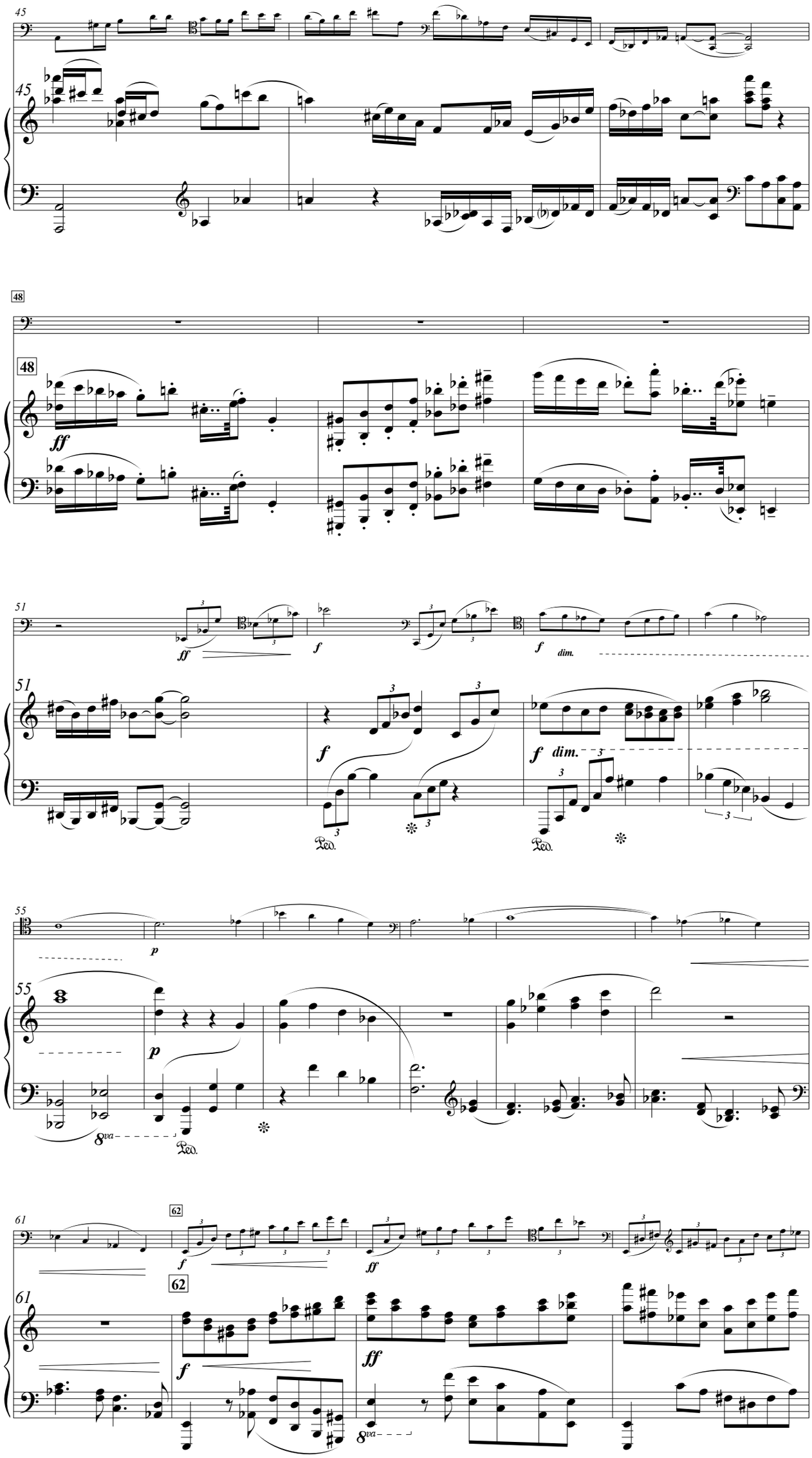

Fidelio
♩= 66
Cello
Piano
mp
f
ff
8va
non stacc.
p
Ped.

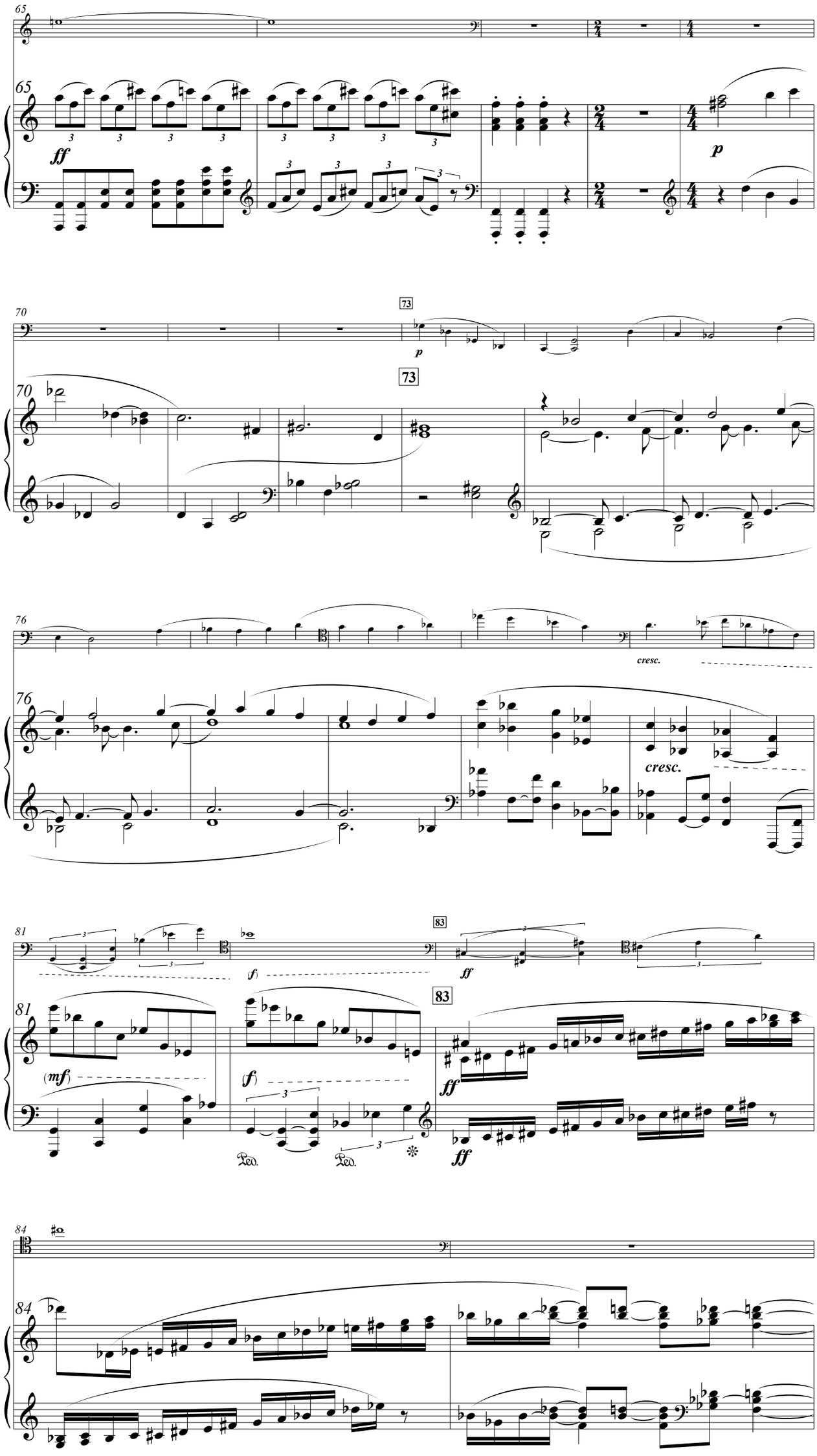

17
20
mp
22
f
27
ff
29
mp
f
non stacc.
33
rit.
ff
p
38
pp
8va

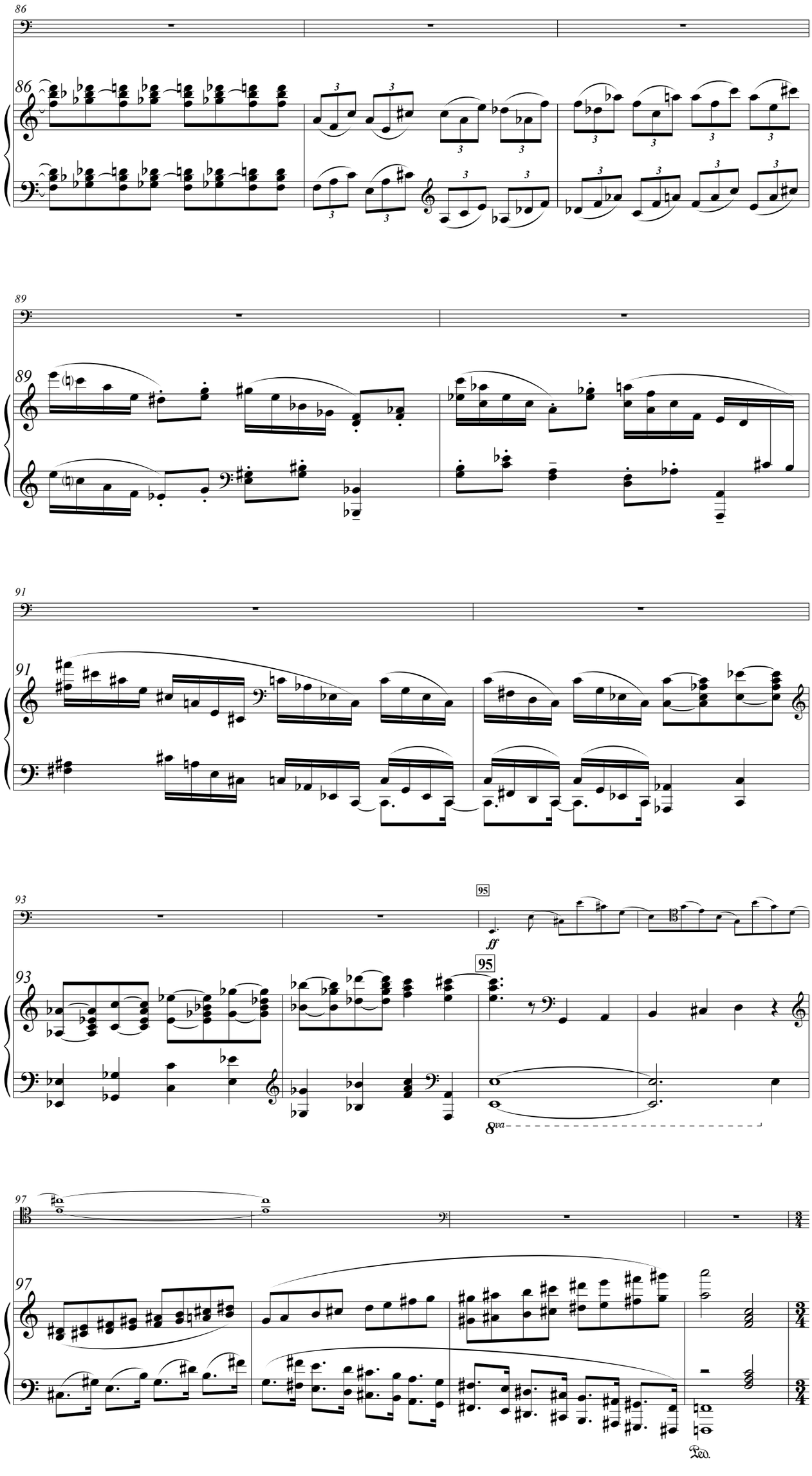
IV. Schlimmbesserung

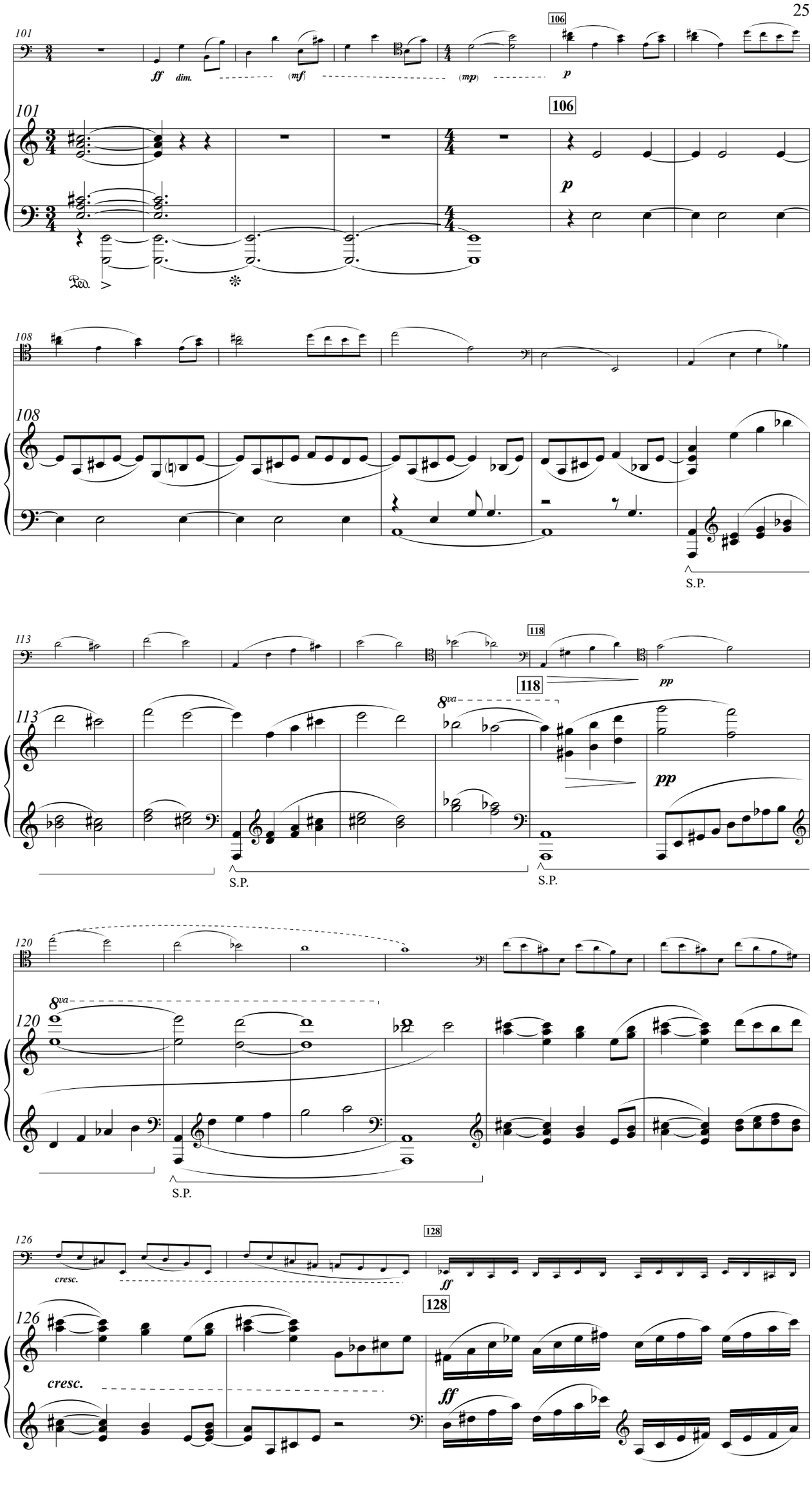


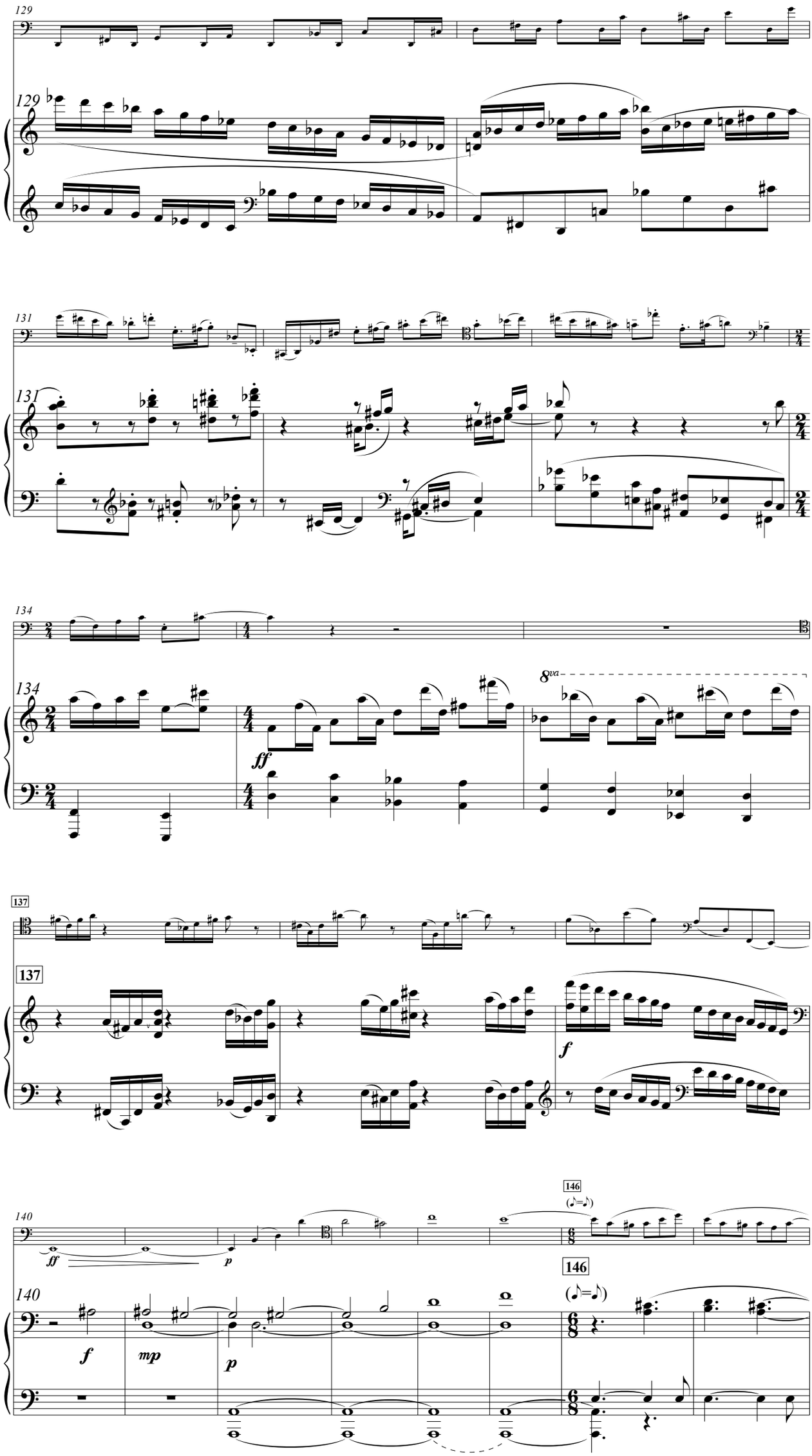

21
f
dim.
25
p
21
f
mf
25
p
Ped.
27
27
34
35
f
34
35
f
38
38
41
ff
41

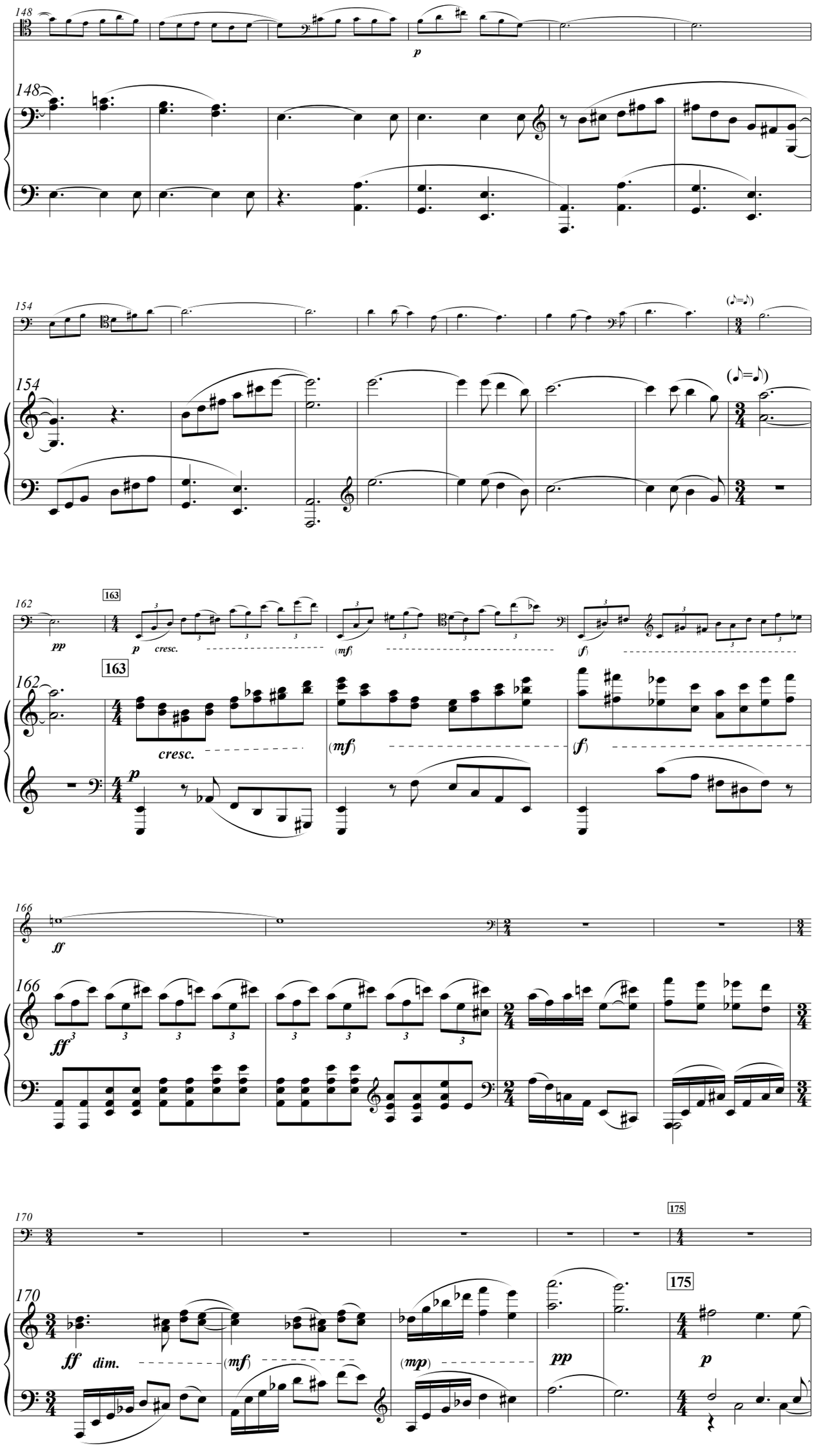

45
48
ff
51
f
dim.
55
p
8va
61
62

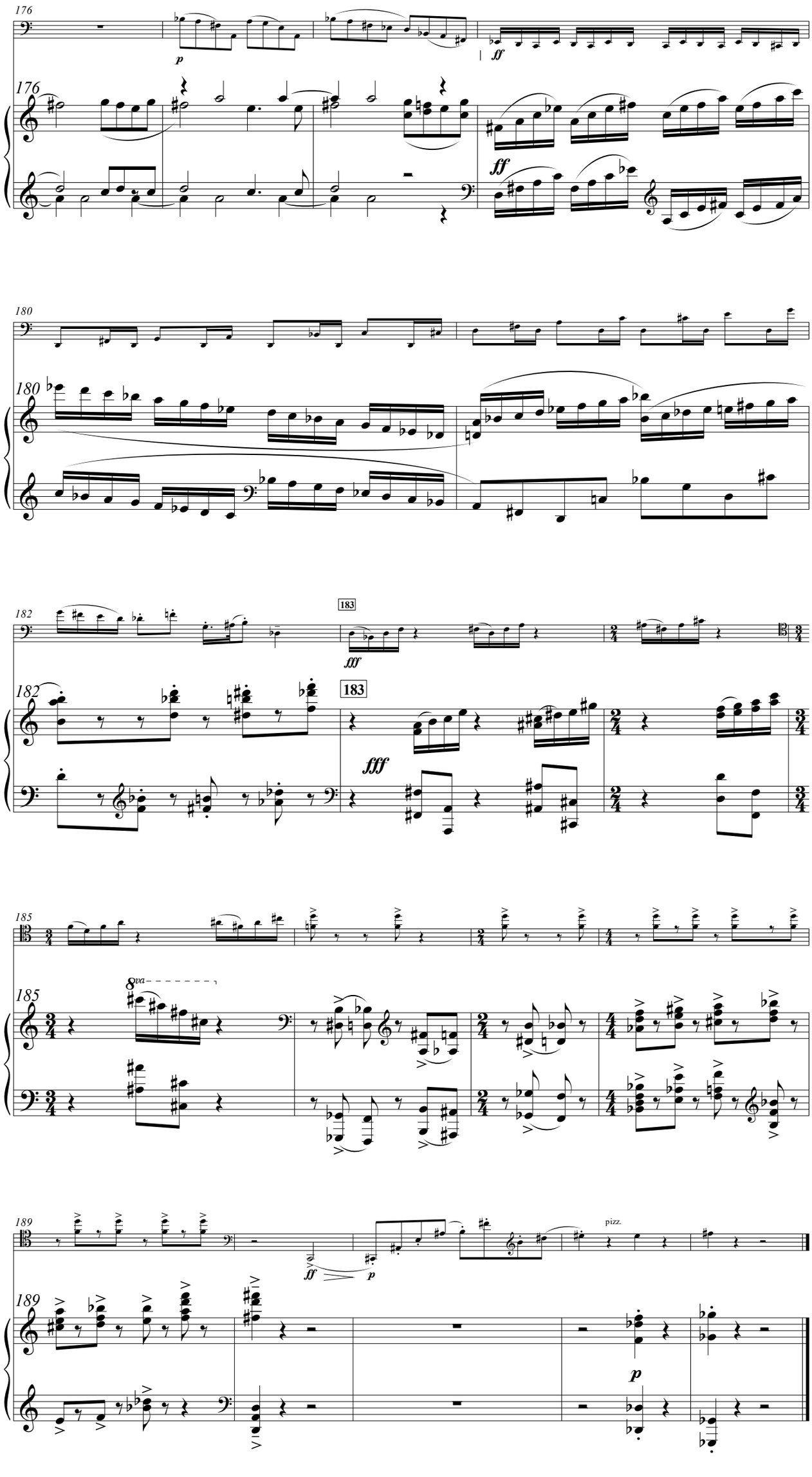

65
ff
p
70
73
p
76
cresc.
81
(mf)
(f)
83
ff
84


86
89
91
93
95
ff
8va
97
Ped.


101
ff dim.
(mf)
(mp)
106
p
Ped.
108
S.P.
113
118
pp
8va
S.P.
120
8va
S.P.
126
cresc.
128
ff


129
131
134
137
140
146
ff
f
mp
p
8va


148
p
154
(♪=♪)
162
163
pp
p
cresc.
(mf)
f
ff
dim.
(mp)
175


176
p
ff
176
ff
180
180
182
183
fff
182
183
fff
185
8va
185
189
ff
p
pizz.
189
p