BRANDENBURG CONCERTO NO. 6 IN B-FLAT MAJOR BY JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH: A NEW ARRANGEMENT TRANSCRIBED FOR TWO PIANOS

by

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ABSTRACT

BRANDENBURG CONCERTO NO. 6 IN B-FLAT MAJOR
BY JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH:
A NEW ARRANGEMENT FOR TWO PIANOS

by

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Advisor: Professor Peter Basquin

This thesis presents a new arrangement of Johann Sebastian Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No.6 transcribed for two pianos. The arguments for creating a new score are supported by an analysis of the two known piano transcriptions of this Concerto, the two-piano version (1872) by Gustav Krug and the four-hand version (1905-06) by Max Reger.

These earlier transcriptions of the Concerto were intended for easy accessibility by amateur performers. The new arrangement presented here is intended for concert performance. The analysis of the previous transcriptions is made from the viewpoint of a pianist and illuminates the advantages and the drawbacks for recreating this masterwork with the piano duet as the medium.

Moreover, this dissertation examines the rise of the piano duet transcription during the nineteenth century and the approaches taken by Reger and Krug in this context. The analysis provides, movement by movement, solutions to sonic and textural problems. Additional suggestions with a view to successful public performance are also provided.

The new two-piano arrangement highlights the counterpoint and the imitative structure of the Concerto. By expanding the registers and adding octaves to create a brighter sound, this author has created a more virtuosic work and clarified the consistent contrapuntal interplay between the solo viola lines of Bach's original orchestral version. A recording of the Concerto performed by the author is submitted as part of the dissertation.

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Introduction

It is crucial to consider many essential ideas when tackling the composition and the playing of a musical work transcribed for two pianos. Such a work is part of a larger genre of various forms that has emerged since composers have thought to exploit the extraordinary powers of the keyboard in creating music for more than one player. As in the development of any artistic innovation, the history of attempts at creating music in this idiom has exposed as many pitfalls as virtues, while composers found—or did not find—their way around technical challenges now familiar to us in the discipline of transcription.

This dissertation presents an examination of these considerations in a comparison of three transcriptions of Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 in B-flat Major by Johann Sebastian Bach: one for four hands by Max Reger, one for two pianos by Gustav Krug, and a third by myself for two pianos. It has been my goal to achieve a successful, performance-worthy arrangement through the resolution of problems identified (both by myself and others) in the two existing transcriptions.

Consisting of five chapters, this dissertation begins with a review of the larger field of genres for duo pianism. Historical factors are identified that have led to the

piano's pre-eminence as the instrument for performing both transcriptions and great original works for four hands (two pianists at one keyboard). The consideration is further enlarged to encompass the potential unleashed when such range is doubled to two pianos. The second chapter, focusing on the Reger and Krug transcriptions, provides background on each piece, and describes the technical and musical issues (movement by movement) that I have addressed in composing my own arrangement. The third chapter examines Reger's and Krug's editorial markings from the viewpoint of musical style in general and Bach's own artistic intentions in particular. Chapter Four provides a concentrated comparison of Krug's transcription with my own (again, movement by movement). Here, I present my arrangement in the light of solutions to problems I have discussed throughout the paper, those of sonic and musical nuance, authenticity of style, characteristic expression, and technical execution. Chapter Five concludes the paper with a discussion of the performance aspects of my arrangement. Practical matters of preparing and rehearsing and also technical caveats with respect to Bach's style are considered.

Chapter One:

The Sudden Popularity of Four-Hand Arrangements in the Mid-Eighteenth to Late-Nineteenth Centuries

The four-hand piano repertory is immense. Although the focus of this dissertation is the transcription of non-piano music for one and two pianos, the literature consists of three categories: pedagogical pieces; original works by master composers; and transcriptions of instrumental and vocal works (Friskin 321). These classifications are important and useful when distinguishing between the different types of duet music. The most fundamental difference between the three kinds of four-hand music is the intended audience.

There is a vast number of pedagogical works in existence today, and the level of difficulty varies greatly; these duets usually include an easier part for the student and a harder part for the teacher. Apart from these teacher-pupil compositions, this keyboard ensemble idiom has also attracted great composers, such as Mozart, Schubert, Brahms, Dvořák, and Debussy. These composers truly understood the characteristics of four-hand works, and they composed music of great originality and

artistry. The last category, four-hand arrangements, is the largest of the three and includes transcriptions of instrumental, symphonic, chamber, and opera works.

Depending on the music's difficulty, four-hand music can be enjoyed by beginners, pupils, amateurs, and professionals. Each category of four-hand music is equally fascinating and deserves analytic attention. An examination of the extensive literature of original four-hand works and the pedagogic works is beyond the scope of this dissertation. The following sources, however, are recommended to interested readers: *The Piano Duet; A Guide For Pianists,* by Ernest Lubin and *Keyboard duets: From the 16th to the 20th Century for One and Two Pianos: an Introduction,* by Howard Ferguson.

The Rise of *Hausmusik*

It is impossible to comprehend the musical and social function of four-hand transcriptions without first understanding the concept of *Hausmusik*. In the second half of the eighteenth century and in the early-nineteenth century, dramatic developments were occurring in both music and society: the culmination of the Classical era, including the music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven; a proliferation in

the number of public concert halls; and the dissolution of the traditional musical patronage system. Music, which had been primarily an "aristocratic" activity, began to attract the middle-class bourgeoisie. As Thomas Christensen observes, this created a new fashion—domestic music making—leading to a demand for performing concert repertory in one's own home (256). The most popular *Hausmusik* became duet arrangements consisting of a wide variety of genres. Christensen describes this proliferation:

> During the nineteenth century, a mind-boggling number of transcriptions of every possible musical genre and performing force rained down upon European consumers in piano duet format: symphonies, string quartets and trios, clarinet and violin sonatas, opera overtures and arias, solo piano genres of every kind, Lieder and ballads, marches for military bands, ballet music, and *a cappella* choruses. (258)

As the number of public concert halls increased in the late-eighteenth and the early-nineteenth centuries, the growing bourgeoisie began enjoying public concerts. It remained an expensive luxury, however, for a member of the middle class to attend a musical performance. At the same time, those who lived in small towns away from any metropolitan area had little chance of hearing larger ensemble works (259). It was through the purchase and playing of piano-duet arrangements that a broad

spectrum of music lovers could gain immediate and personal access to a wide variety of newly-premiered works. Christensen aptly concludes:

> No other medium was arguably so important to nineteenth-century musicians for the dissemination and iterability of concert repertory. Assuming a role that would be played by the radio and phonograph in the twentieth century, the duet arrangement offered any two amateur pianists an opportunity to hear in their own home a wide variety of symphonic, chamber music, and choral works beyond what they might have access to in live performance. (256)

Why the Piano?

Hausmusik thus directly influenced the rise of the four-hand medium and brought the pianoforte into almost every middle-class household. What, however, made the piano the preferred instrument? Many kinds of arrangements besides the piano duet were published at that time. An unknown author published in 1822, in the *Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review,* the following list of selected new arrangements from that period (228):

- Selected Airs, from Rossini's Opera of *Il Barbiere di Seviglia*, arranged for two Performers on the Piano Forte; by T. Latour; also for the Piano Forte, flute, and Violoncello. London. Chappell &Co.
- Winter's Overture to *Il Ratto di Proserpina*, arranged for the Piano Forte, Flute, and Violoncello; by J. Little. London. Power

- Selections of Choruses, arranged as Duets for the Harp and Piano Forte, with Accompaniments, *ad. lib.* for Flute and violoncello; by J.F. Burrowes

Despite the great variety of ensemble combinations, there were disadvantages associated with the works listed above. Assembling a group of musicians playing multiple instruments was not always practical. It was much easier to have two amateur pianists in front of one keyboard. As practicality and convenience led to increasing demand for four-hand arrangements, publishers were thus encouraged to mass-produce scores of a great number of works. One unnamed critic from 1822 commented on the transcription rage:

> The passion for arrangement is, we think, a little run mad—It however has its benefits: it extends very widely the knowledge of the greatest composers, for there are many persons, in the provinces especially, who have few other chances of becoming acquainted with their works. (229)

Ultimately there followed a proliferation of four-hand arrangements as described by Christensen: "As soon as an orchestral composition or opera by even the lowliest of composers was premiered, one could count on a four-hand arrangement following in tow, with or without the composer's consent" (258–9).

The same phenomenon that excited amateur musicians worried some critics who were concerned about the low quality of some arrangements of masterworks.

Christensen quotes a German critic's complaints: "It is horrifying and worthy of the strongest censure how masterpieces have been arranged—particularly for four hands—with such ineptitude, superficiality, and disrespect" (269). In the duet repertory, however, while Czerny's four-hand arrangements of Beethoven's symphonies gained more criticism than praise, Czerny attempted to transcribe every voice line and register doubling on the piano. This resulted in over-packed, unpleasant, and difficult arrangements for pianists to play. One music critic of the day stated in *Dwight's Journal of Music:*

> Czerny is not properly to blame for it, since the uselessness of his arrangement does not proceed from his off-hand manner of going to work; on the contrary, Czerny was too conscientious and, with a mistaken piety, transferred from the score to the keyboard more than is good for a clear presentation. Czerny packed both hands full, so that very often the possibility of making single tones and voices prominent ceases. (41)

Brahms, on the other hand, was known for his meticulous attitude towards arranging his own works for piano duets. Brahms commented in his correspondence to Robert Keller, who was the appointed transcriber at Simrock, that good transcriptions should be "light, brisk, leaving out all that is possible . . . just so it sounds really well for four hands and is playable!" (Bozarth xxii).

A successful arranger should understand the keyboard idiom and the limits of the instrumentation and find the best way to achieve the original ensemble effects on the piano. Two common weaknesses typically found in piano duo arrangements are the displacement of important voicing or melodic lines and the random movement of registers so that less prominent notes become over-emphasized. Also, the colorful sonorities in the original instrumentation sometimes are lost or become pallid in piano transcriptions. Nonetheless, it is important to realize that the success or failure of an arrangement is partly attributed to the particular types of musical choices the transcriber makes. For example, dense orchestral works, when arranged for piano duet, often create a muddy sound with unclear melodic lines if the arranger fails to make the right decisions. Music of the Classical era translates well for four hands in large part because the music is mostly homophonic and the important themes can be clearly presented. The most challenging pieces to arrange for piano duo are works that include complicated, tightly woven lines. This also explains why contrapuntal music often loses its original full effect in arrangements. A German reviewer in 1865 found Bach's choral music (in this case the *St. Matthew Passion*) "unbearable to listen to since the contrapuntal lines were fragmented by their migrations through the

hands of the two performers" (Christensen 272). The reviewer thought that Handel's choral music (*Messiah*) seemed to work more effectively in transcription, perhaps because it utilized more massive, homophonic sonorities (272).

Why Two Pianos?

People who have not experienced two-piano playing might wonder why there is even a need for such medium. The most basic answer is that two pianos allow for more physical and musical opportunities than those available when a single piano is played by two people. Important differences, however, go further. There are four significant aspects that may differentiate four-hand and two-piano transcriptions. They are: color, register, pedal usage, and public marketability. From a technical point of view, no other instrument covers such a wide range of registers. With its great range, merely a single keyboard is sufficient to produce rich orchestral sonorities. This attribute prompted brilliant composers such as Liszt and Busoni to arrange orchestral music for piano. It is not hard to imagine the additional possibilities and varieties of colors offered by two keyboards when the technical advantage of the piano is doubled. The usage of these colors, however, must be managed skillfully.

The arranger now has two orchestras at hand, and it is important that he or she understands how to manipulate so much possibility of sound in order to create enchanting colors. Doublings must be handled with caution so that they do not function simply to make the volume louder but instead are used with taste and for some creative or contrapuntal purpose.

As noted by the American pianist, composer, and theorist Preston Ware Orem (1865–1938), the keyboard can be divided into four distinct registers: the topmost brilliant section, the treble section, the baritone register and the bass register (Modenhauer 173). Practically, these four registers could never be in use simultaneously with only one player. One might argue that four hands on one piano could easily cover four registers of the keyboard at once. However, assigning each player a limited range results in a one-sided distribution of each part and creates less musical interest for the players. Physically, two-piano playing affords both players complete freedom at the instruments and access to all four distinctive ranges, ones that can be combined in any way to create various coloristic effects.

Besides the physical liberation noted, independent pedal usage at two pianos also adds tremendous advantages in creating contrasting articulations. Pedal usage is

always a problem with four-hand arrangements, since shared usage can never really satisfy both players' independent needs in producing different articulations at the same time. In addition, the *Primo* and the *Secondo* parts may require pedal usage at different places in the music. This would cause added inconvenience because the players would need to take turns in controlling the pedal. In public performance, the shuffling of two performers' feet back and forth is quite troublesome. On the contrary, when each pianist controls a complete set of pedals, one player can deliver a phrase with pedal while the other player can do without. Obviously, this is only possible with two pianos. All duo pianists understand the importance of complete control of their pedaling. Factors of pedal usage influencing musical interpretation include most importantly: articulation, melody, and color. Imagine a musical excerpt that requires a *legato* melody with a *staccato* accompaniment—a passage that calls for a full-organ sounding bass juxtaposed with an articulated and transparent treble—one piano with four-hands would inevitably fail to deliver these special tonal effects. This problem is solved, however, when two pianos are used instead of one. As the famous husband and wife piano duo team Josef and Rosina Lhevinne concluded:

> . . . four-handed playing upon two pianos . . . is of greater interest to us than four hands at one piano. Musically, its scope is richer. And, from the point of view of the playing itself, the players have

> greater freedom, for each one can draw upon both bass and treble, and each one is master of his own pedaling. (Modenhauer 174)

In addition to the advantages mentioned above regarding two-piano performance, there is an additional, highly-valued aspect to this medium: its natural potential for effective antiphonal interplay or genuinely balanced musical conversation.

The exact origin of two-piano playing is unclear. It is generally believed, however, to have begun in England in the mid-seventeenth century (McGraw ix). The earliest original piece, for two virginals, is a work by Giles Farnaby found in the well-known *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book* (Hinson *ix*). In the seventeenth century, two-piano compositions were few and appeared only sporadically. In the Baroque period however, J. S. Bach approached the medium with great interest. This master of counterpoint would not miss this opportunity to explore the perfect medium for creating his highly antiphonal music. Bach composed three concertos for two claviers (harpsichords) and orchestra (BWV 1060–1062), and two concertos for three claviers (BWV1063–1064). He also arranged a concerto for four harpsichords (BWV 1065) derived from Antonio Vivaldi's Violin Concerto for Four Violins in B Minor, Opus 3, No. 10 (Maxwell 9–12). Modenhauer writes, "Antiphony indeed is one of the greatest advantages of the art; it is the *concertante* style of playing which

has elevated duo-pianism to become a true ensemble" (175). Dr. Orem describes the antiphonal potential of the two-piano genre:

> For two orchestras, as it were, comes first the antiphonal aspects. Like many Greek derivatives, the word antiphonal has a wide meaning: not even musical necessarily; two anvils might be beaten antiphonally; or even echoes might be considered antiphonal. And two orchestras? Well, good old father Bach showed us how to manage those; and of antiphonal choruses there are a multitude. Two pianos are susceptible of many such effects, almost inexhaustibly so. . . . If two orchestras can conduct a colloquy, how much more readily two pianists? (175)

Their father's passion continued to inspire J. S. Bach's sons, Carl Philipp Emmanuel, Wilhelm Friedemann, and Johann Christian, to write in this medium. Their works include many concertos and sonatas for two pianos.

Apart from the technical elements mentioned above, showmanship is also an attraction that the audience associates closely with the two-piano medium in a public performance. Compared with four-hand writing, the technical writing in two-piano compositions is often more virtuosic, democratic, and equal. Thus, the phenomenon of one player being dominant at the keyboard, as seen in four-hand works, is almost never seen in two-piano writing. There is something exciting and enchanting about watching two pianists play at the same time. The exaggerated choreography and

interaction between the two players seem to engage the audience more easily. Moreover, the audience is especially amazed by the seeming telepathy that can develop within the duo team. There has always been an interesting commercial application to the marketing of duo piano teams. An added attraction exists when promoting sales of two related players (as with the Mozart siblings), such as sisters, brothers, twins, or husband and wife teams. In the history of duo playing, the famous husband and wife team mentioned earlier, Joseph and Rosina Lhevinne, and the team of sisters from France, Katia and Marielle Labèque, have both found favor with audiences and enjoyed international fame.

One can see that several key elements came together in the mid-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to foment and foster the popularity that four-hand arrangements have enjoyed then and since. While these arrangements brought a wide range of musical experiences into the home and into the hands of pianists of all levels of talent and proficiency, the exciting "showmanship" aspect of piano duet performance even further added to the popularity of this effective musical format.

Chapter Two:

Reger's Four-Hand and Krug's Two-Piano Arrangements of Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 6

In this and chapters to follow, I will present my analysis of the effectiveness with which Max Reger and Gustav Krug have managed to convey counterpoint in their distinctive versions of the Brandenburg Concerto No. 6. Counterpoint is the chief overall musical element of this Concerto. My analysis is oriented toward those characteristics of the piece most strongly influencing its successful performance.

Max Reger (1873–1916) was a prolific German composer devoted to the music of J. S. Bach. Reger wrote for wide variety of genres, including organ, orchestra, string ensembles, choral, vocal, and piano. Throughout his short, productive life as a composer, Reger dedicated himself to studying and promoting Bach's music. Inspired to make the master's music better known to a broader audience, Reger arranged for four-hand piano nearly 150 of Bach's instrumental works.

Reger's publisher, Henri Hinrichsen, the owner of the C. F. Peters Publishing Company in Leipzig, wrote to the composer in July of 1904 and offered two

transcription projects of works by Hugo Wolf and J. S. Bach. Reger's response reveals the composer's enthusiasm. Journal editor and author Susanne Popp provides this translation of Reger's eager words, "Of course I would like to arrange ten Möricke-Hugo Wolf songs for piano solo and the six Brandenburg Concertos for four hands! Everything easy to play!" (6)[1] Popp herself writes:

> Reger's readiness and willingness to comply with Hinrichsen's request is explained by his own wish to obtain understanding of these highly valued works among a broad audience and his own intention to write *Hausmusik* on the easiest possible level. (7)

Reger's work on the project spanned about two years. The set of six Brandenburg Concerti was completed in 1907. In the beginning, when Reger was working on the first Concerto, he was quite optimistic about making the arrangements "playable to a fine degree" (*Briefwechsel mit dem Verlag* 98). As he further

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[1] "selbstredend bearbeite ich Ihnen mit Vergnügen 10 Möricke-Hugo Wolf für Klavier-*solo* und die 6 Brandenburgischen Konzerte *4* händig–Alles leicht spielbar!" (Reger 92).

immersed himself into the concerti, however, he found it difficult to omit certain aspects of the music because of its elaborate contrapuntal nature. In a correspondence to Hinrichsen dated 3 May 1907, soon after the composer had completed a four-hand arrangement of Bach's Orchestral Suites, Reger commented on the arrangements of the Brandenburg Concertos. They did not turn out to be as easily played as he had wished:

> This wonderful music [Orchestral Suites] is significantly simpler in structure, so that the four-hand arrangements will be much easier to play than, for example, that of the Brandenburg Concertos! (*Briefwechsel mit dem Verlag* 146)

The amateur pianists who played *Hausmusik* typically possessed limited pianistic abilities. The slow movements and the dance movements of the sixth Concerto were appropriate for amateur pianists since these portions required only fairly basic techniques. However, in the first movement, which appears to be the most contrapuntal, the writing is at times awkward.

Popp makes the following observations concerning the sixth Concerto:

> It is especially in the slow movements and dance movements that he makes his greatest accommodations to the requirements of *Hausmusik*. The contrapuntal movements did not lend themselves so easily to simplification owing to their tightly woven fabric of independent, sometimes intertwined voices. Here the arrangement often meant having to make a choice, primarily with regard to the orchestral part: the solo parts were left unchanged insofar as this was possible. (8)

Sources are limited and sporadic concerning the arrangement and publication of Gustav Krug's two-piano version of Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 6. Krug was born on 22 December 1803 in Berlin and died on 30 June 1874 in Bad Ems. In addition to his piano transcriptions, he also composed sonatas for piano and violin, piano trios, string quartets, and songs. The year of publication for Krug's arrangement of the sixth Brandenburg Concerto is 1872. The original publisher, Breitkopf & Härtel, discontinued the printing of this arrangement around the time of World War II. Perhaps this was due to a lack of strong sales combined with the financial pressures of wartime.

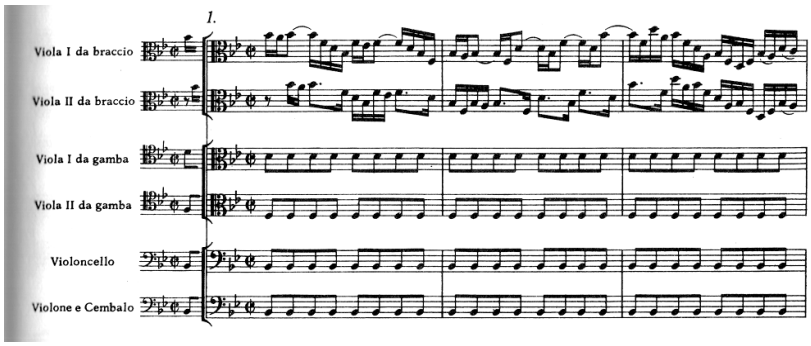
Comparative Analysis of Two Approaches to Transcription

Close inspection of the arrangements of Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 by Krug and Reger reveals that, despite the differences between the two transcriptions, both arrangers keep the writing simple—assigning certain instruments to a particular hand while remaining quite faithful musically to the original score. Reger's duet form, however, restricted as it is by range, poses more pianistic difficulties than the two-piano arrangement by Krug. This chapter will examine in detail the challenges performers might encounter when playing either of these arrangements, and how these challenges may be addressed most successfully.

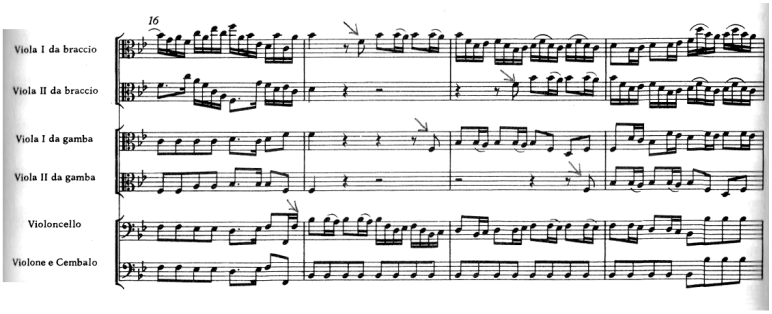
The First Movement

Among the three movements of the Concerto, the first movement exhibits the most complicated contrapuntal design. As shown in Example 2.1 below, the two violas da braccio begin with a canon played an eighth beat apart while the rest of the musicians provide a static accompaniment with chords set in an eighth-note rhythm. Example 2.2 shows a section involving five voices in canonic imitation with the two gambas treated with a simplified rhythm.

Example 2.1: Two-voice canon with eighth-note accompaniment. J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition (mm. 1–3).



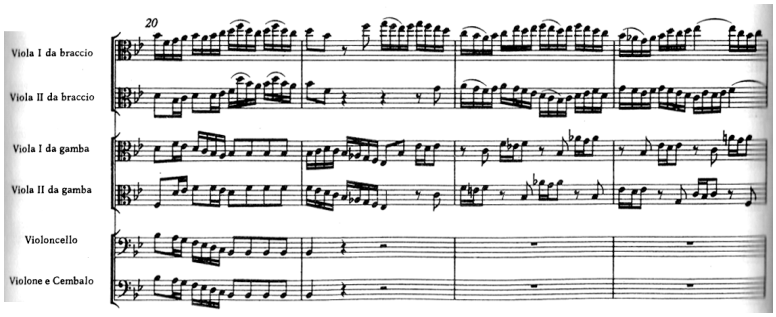
Example 2.2: Five-voice canonic imitation (entrances indicated with arrows). J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition (mm. 16–19) .



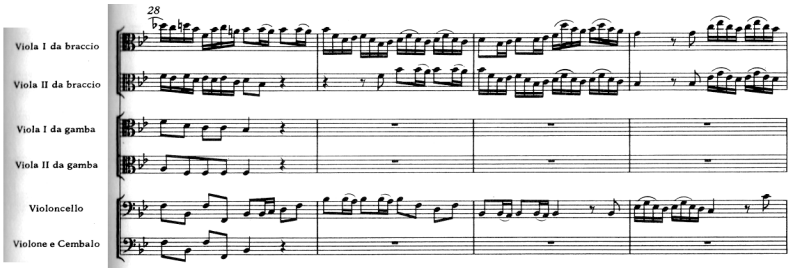
Example 2.3 shows another example of Bach's imitative writing. In this case, a two-voice canon is presented by the violas da braccio while the gambas provide an accompaniment incorporating fragments from the opening theme. Example 2.4 demonstrates further imitative treatments. In this passage, the two violas da braccio

present canonic passages while the violoncello echoes with fragments from the subject.

Example 2.3: Two-voice canon (two violas da braccio) with accompaniment (two violas da gamba). J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition (mm. 20–23).



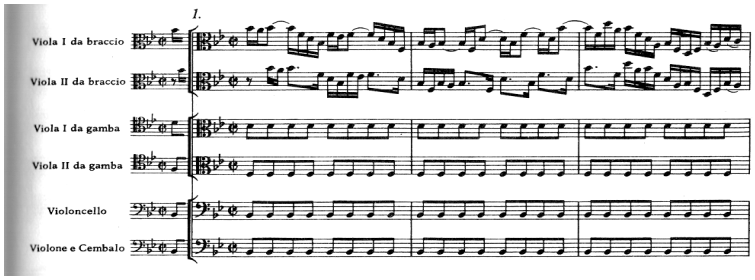
Example 2.4: Two-voice canon (two violas da braccio) with accompaniment (violoncello). J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition (mm. 28–31).



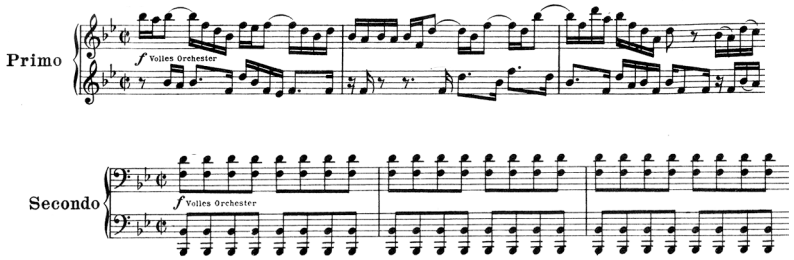
In Reger's transcription, the counterpoint of the two violas da braccio is assigned to the *Primo* part. The *Secondo* part features mostly chordal accompaniment and occasionally takes a contrapuntal line when there are too many voices to be covered by the *Primo*. This is seen below in examples 2.5a and 2.5b, which compare the opening measures by Bach with those of Reger's duet. The

disadvantage of Reger's division of labor is that one player is given a much more challenging part to play while the other player is left with less interesting and demanding materials. For pedagogical purposes, a treatment like this is suitable for the teacher and the student; however, for performance, one pianist might feel subordinate to the other.

Example 2.5a: Two violas da braccio present the canonic melodies in the original orchestral setting. J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition (mm. 1–3).



Example 2.5b: The two canonic voices are presented by each hand in the *Primo*. The chordal accompaniment is written for the *Secondo*. Four-hand arrangement by Reger (mm. 1–3).

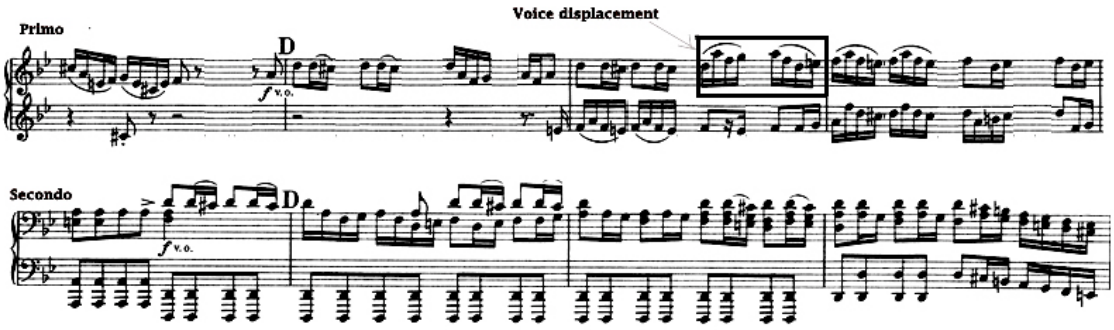


Example 2.5b illustrates the canon in the *Primo* played against chordal harmony in the *Secondo*. When comparing the second entrance of the canon subject in viola da braccio II (example 2.5a) with the subject played by the left hand in the *Primo* (example 2-5b), it is apparent that the second canonic voice in the duet transcription has been altered. Moreover, some notes are displaced an octave higher or omitted altogether due to the migration of the hands. This creates the effect of a more randomly moving musical line. In fact, the canon itself is not preserved.

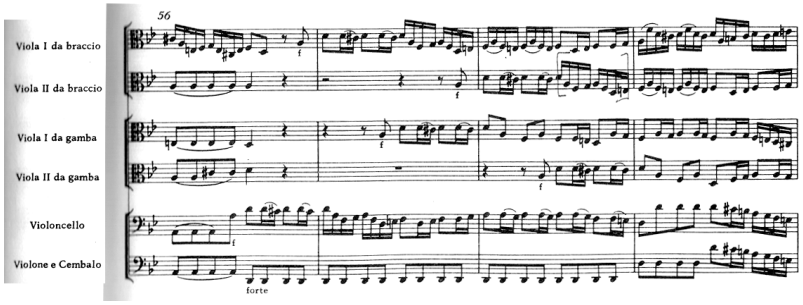
A second strategy for the distribution of an original voice among several voices is shown below in example 2.6a. Here, the *Secondo* player helps to present a contrapuntal voice. In one sense, it seems reasonable for the *Secondo* to take part in the presentation of the subject if necessary. In a contrapuntal section like this however, such an arrangement alters the effect of the original imitative treatment by creating misleading changes in voice lines that make it difficult to discern the original subject. The boxed areas in examples 2.6a and 2.6b show how the original musical lines are broken due to the hands colliding. The passage begins with three descending intervals followed by an ascending second. The second viola da braccio voice must be displaced to the *Primo* piano part to avoid the overlapping of hands.

A close look at mm. 111–114 (examples 2.7a and b) shows, not unexpectedly, that Reger assigns the two violas da braccio to the *Primo* and the third voice to the *Secondo* right hand. When comparing the melody line in the second viola da braccio with the left hand in the *Primo*, it is clear that the voice is broken into random fragments in Reger's arrangement. Apparently, the greatest challenge here is to keep the multiple layers of voices well distinguished. However, due to the collision of the hands, Reger sometimes had no choice but to alter the original lines.

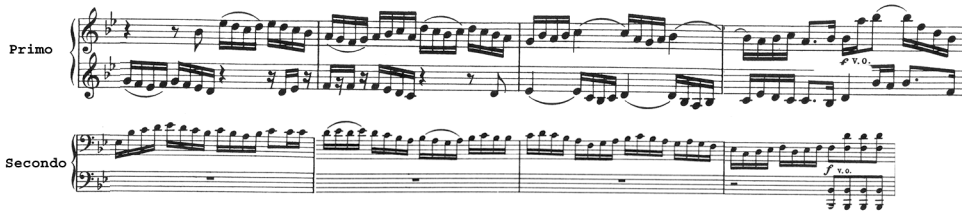
Example 2.6a: Voice displacement. Four-hand arrangement by Reger (mm. 56–59).



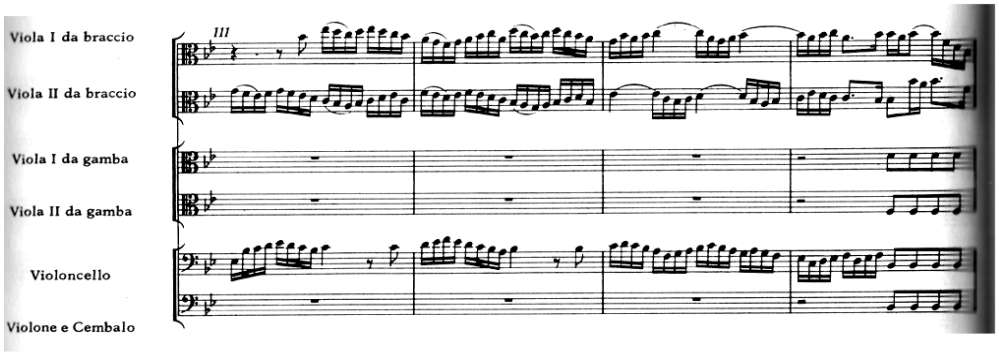
Example 2.6b: Bracketed notes show corresponding notes in the original setting that are displaced in Reger's transcription (compare with example 2.6a above). J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition (mm. 56–59).



Example 2.7a: Three-voice canon, two voices in *Primo* and one in *Secondo*. Four-hand arrangement by Reger (mm. 111–114).

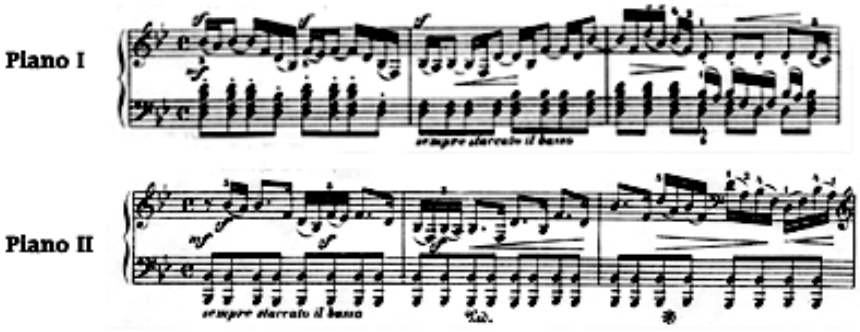


Example 2.7b: Three-voice canon in the original setting. J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition (mm. 111–114).

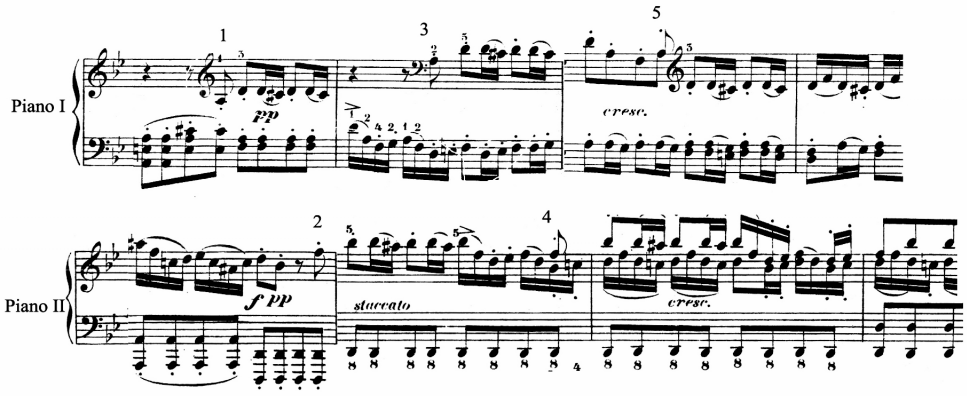


In Krug's two-piano arrangement, the technical difficulties pianists encounter in playing four-hand transcriptions, such as hand-crowding and fragmented phrasings, were resolved by the availability of two keyboards. Particularly in this movement, voice displacement and random melodic lines are not found in Krug's arrangement. Krug was easily able to maintain the counterpoint in the exact tonal register and shape as in the original score. Example 2.8 below demonstrates how both pianists are able to present a complete canonic subject. This setting thus seems more satisfactory than Reger's duet version. Example 2.9 shows another instance where all five canonic entrances are all kept in the same registers as in the original.

Example 2.8: The right hand of each player presents a complete canonic voice. Two-piano arrangement by Krug (mm. 1–3).



Example 2.9: Five canonic voices with entrances numbered in the order of their appearance. Two-piano arrangement by Krug (mm. 56–58).



One of the most distinctive characteristics of the sixth Brandenburg Concerto is its low *tessitura*. Bach did not include any violins in the instrumentation. Instead, he innovatively employed two violas da braccia, two violas da gamba and a violone plus continuo. The absence of any high-sounding instruments creates a distinctive and noble sonic effect. Confining all the voices to the lower register of the keyboard, however, does not necessarily translate the music well. One difficulty is that the alto register on the keyboard does not generate as distinct a sound as that of the original stringed instruments. When the bass joins in, the alto voice thus becomes easily submerged. The resulting murky sound makes the subject difficult to discern in this particular type of contrapuntal texture. Thus, matching the alto registers of both viola parts on the keyboard actually results in a lack of clarity. In this case,

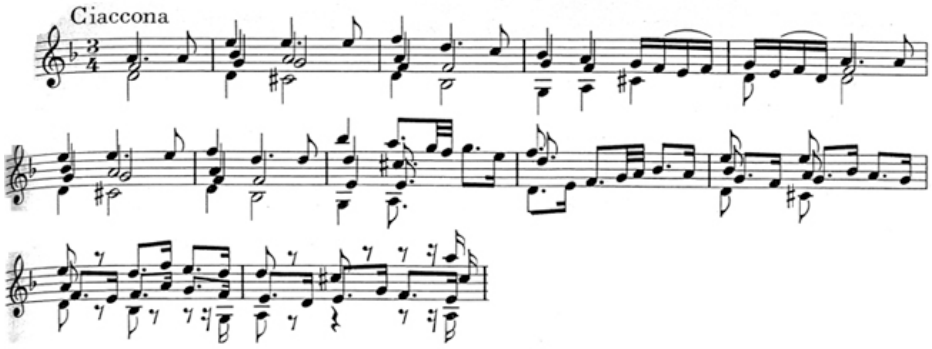
performers and audience alike could easily find the overall sound to be flat and dull unless the performers were to take care to highlight the parts to clarify the texture.

The question of whether to use Bach's instrumental registers as written is worth exploring further. Naturally, in the transcribing process, an important decision for the arranger is how faithful to be to the original score in terms of register, color, and texture. One of the most important factors in this regard is the choice of instrumentation to be used. If an aria sung by a soprano is to be transcribed for a stringed instrument, for example, the violin might be an excellent choice, as both media have a similar tonal range. Suppose, though, that an arranger chooses to transcribe the same piece for the viola. This lower, warmer-sounding instrument can probably manage to play the same high notes as could a violin, but the viola's tone might sound more forced and less natural in such a high range. Shall the transcriber choose to keep the vocal melody in the original register or write it in a lower register or perhaps even in a different key, to better fit the viola's own beautiful *tessitura*?

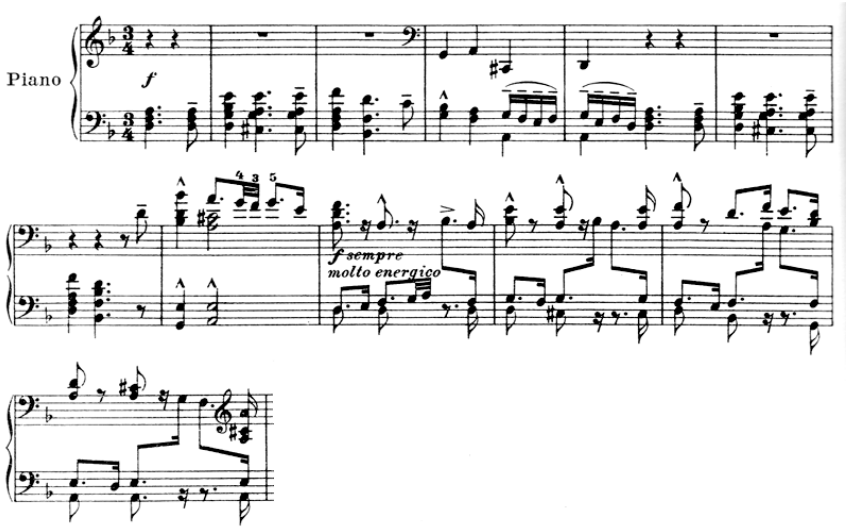
Busoni's famous piano transcription of Bach's Chaconne in D minor from his Sonata No. 4 in D minor for solo violin serves as a useful example here. Compare

example 2.10 with example 2.11 for the opening of both the original Chaconne for violin and Busoni's transcription for keyboard.

Example 2.10: The Opening theme in the original Chaconne scoring for violin. J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition (mm. 1–12).



Example 2.11: The opening theme in Chaconne transcribed one octave lower. Piano transcription by Busoni (mm. 1–12).



Notice how the piano arrangement begins with the opening theme an octave lower than the violin. If listening to a performance of this music by a violinist, one would undoubtedly agree that the opening statement is powerfully expressed with a strong direct character. Busoni could have easily presented the opening theme in the same register as the violin in his piano transcription. Instead, he set the opening one octave lower (see previous page), just as Brahms had done previously in his own piano version for left hand alone. Busoni understood that the emotional intensity that this music delivers so strongly in the beginning would be completely missing if the theme were played on the keyboard in the same register that Bach set it for the violin.

In a similar vein, Thomas Christenson quotes from *Dwight's Journal of Music* this criticism by Louis Köhler of Czerny's four-hand arrangement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony:

> Czerny packed both hands full, so that very often the possibility of making single tones and voices prominent ceases; indeed in the light-winged scherzos he frequently leads on a dance of leaping hands full of chords, in a manner that is absolutely impracticable; for even with the correct execution of a master's hand, the inward and essential characters of the music is not always presentable. . . . Moreover, Czerny always brings in play the entire surface of the keyboard from the lowest to the highest tones; hence there is an end to all alternation of coloring; a continual screaming descant tortures

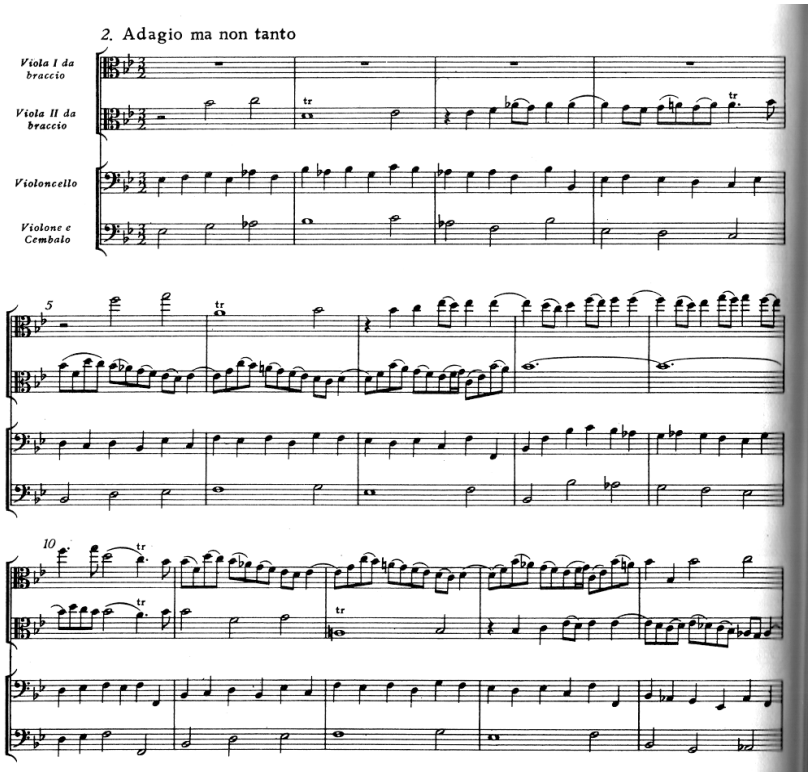
> the nerve of hearing, besides falsely representing the orchestral effect. For Beethoven does not continually employ the high violin registers nor half a dozen of never resting piccolos. (Christensen 269)

Apparently, to keep faithful to every musical detail does not necessarily guarantee a good arrangement. The arranger must carefully consider all possibilities, both musical and technical, and make decisions thoughtfully and artistically so as best to capture the distinctive tonal and emotional character of the original piece.

The Second Movement

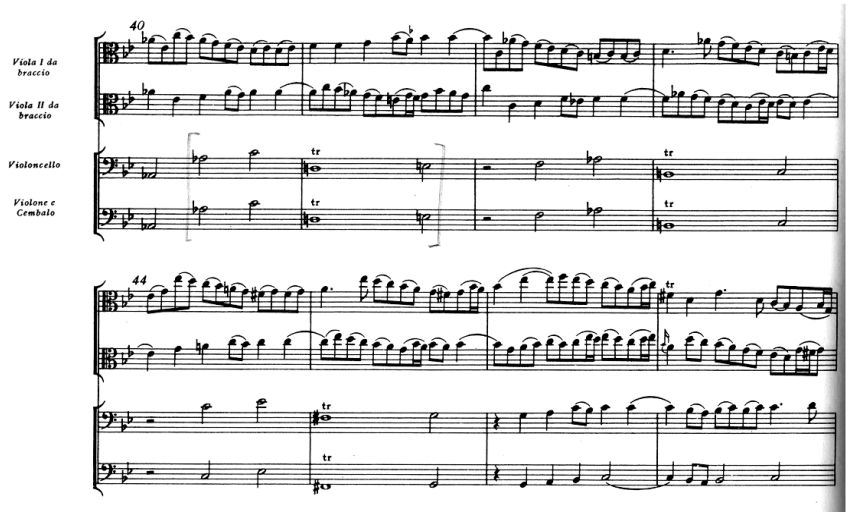
Both Krug's and Reger's versions of the second movement of Bach's Concerto are arranged without sacrificing any crucial musical elements, due to the simple four-voice texture of the Bach's original scoring. The opening exhibits fugal characteristics; the two upper voices present the theme, first entering in the tonic, while the second voice enters in the dominant (example 2.12).

Example 2.12: The opening section of the second movement. J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition (mm. 1–10).



The theme continues to be developed between the voices, somewhat like a two-part invention. The entire movement contains an accompanying bass line that at first meanders and supplies the harmonic basis of the phrases and later presents the opening theme (example 2.13).

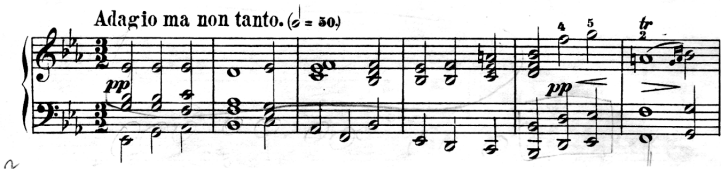
Example 2.13: The opening of the main theme is heard in the violoncello starting on the second beat of m. 40. J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition (mm. 40–46).



At the same point in his arrangement, Krug is able to utilize the potential of two keyboards, and thus the soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices all remain independent of one another and are presented effectively in their respective ranges throughout the

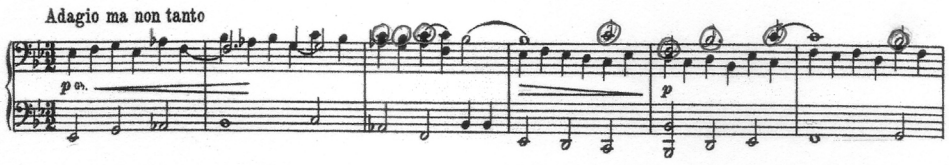
movement. The two-piano arrangement is not difficult to play, and Krug is able to maintain the shapes of the phrases, including the holding of the sustained notes for their full values. One change made by Krug occurs where he thickens the harmony in the first piano part by adding octaves and chords to the bass line occasionally, echoing the violone and the cembalo parts (example 2.14).

Example 2.14: Harmonic thickening in Piano I. Two-piano arrangement by Krug (mm. 1–6).



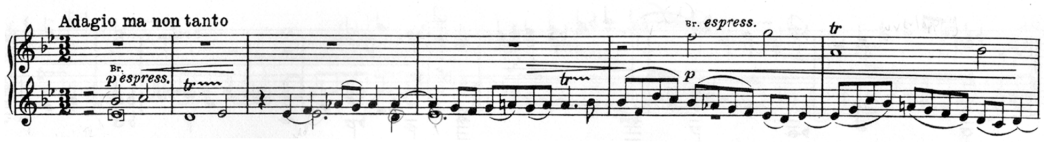
In Reger's four-hand version, all voices remain within their own range, which, in this case, one keyboard can accommodate sufficiently. Therefore, the phrases are able to move smoothly without interfering with each other. Reger, like Krug, also occasionally adds thirds, sixths, and fifths to augment the bass line (example 2.15).

Example 2.15: Doubled notes in thirds and octaves played by the right hand in the *Secondo.* Four-hand arrangement by Reger (mm. 1–6).



Reger's arrangement, like Krug's, poses no great difficulty for the performer. There are some long trills featured in the main theme that are not idiomatically pianistic, however. As the trills are always arranged with the hands crossing each other, they are awkward to play, and it is virtually impossible to prolong them for the indicated length (example 2.16).

Example 2.16: Hand-crossing in executing trills in the *Primo*. Four-hand arrangement by Reger (mm. 1–6).

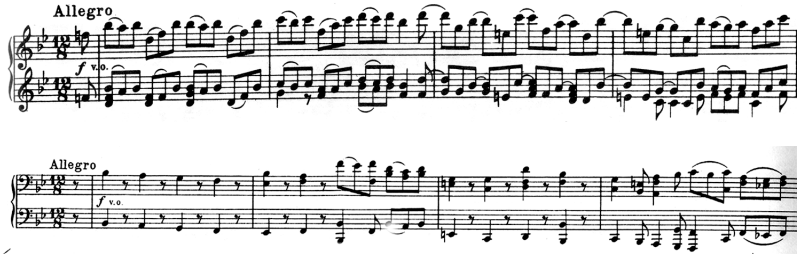


The Third Movement

The third movement of the Concerto is in ABA form. The A section presents a principal theme, in eighth notes, played by the two violas da braccio, first in unison

and then in canonic sections. The B section modulates to G minor first and then to D minor through successive canonic episodes. In this movement, Reger and Krug arrange the voices of the main theme quite differently. In his duet version, Reger presents the unison theme played one octave apart in the hands of the *Primo* while the *Secondo* plays a combination of octaves and primarily three-note chords as accompaniment (example 2.17).

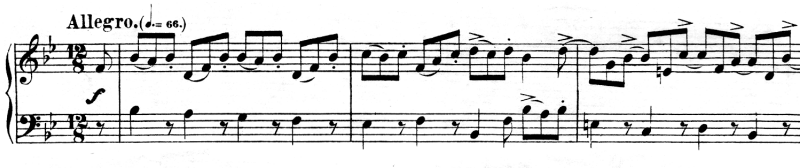
Example 2.17: The *Primo* presents the theme in both hands one octave apart. The *Secondo* plays accompaniment in octaves or chords. Four-hand arrangement by Reger (mm. 1–4).



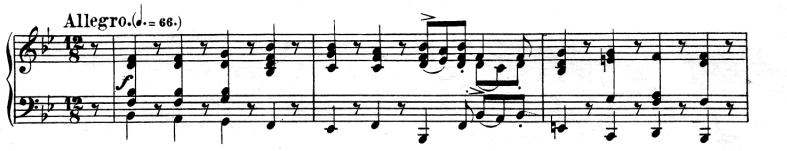
In contrast, Krug, in his arrangement, omits the doubled voice, presents the eighth-note theme in a single voice in the middle register, and arranges the chords in four notes (example 2.18).

Example 2.18: The theme is presented in one voice played in the right hand by Piano I. The chords in Piano II are written mostly in four voices. Two-piano arrangement by Krug (mm. 1–3).

Piano I



Piano II



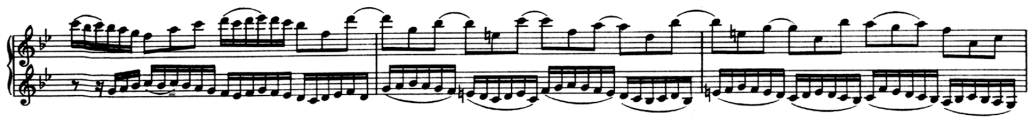
These two approaches for the opening section create very different sonic effects. In the case of Krug's two-keyboard arrangement, the chords in the second piano produce a thicker accompaniment, and one might also find that missing the unison voice in the opening theme makes a significant difference in the character of the music. The effect of the opening becomes rather less grand in comparison with the original scoring whereas in Reger's duet the music sounds brighter. In addition, Krug chose to keep all the voices in the same low range as in Bach's original settings. As far as the sound is concerned, this is probably not the best option, because doubling the low

tessitura on two keyboards makes the music sound more flat and dense, as discussed previously. Reger's duet, on the other hand, gives a brighter and more orchestral sound because the hands cover a wider range of registers.

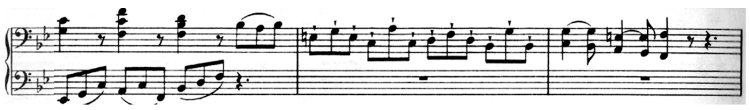
From a technical standpoint, the awkwardness in the Reger transcription, created by crossing hands, exists in this third movement as well as in the first. Another flaw in the third movement is that the level of difficulty for the *Primo* part is much greater than for the *Secondo*. This can be seen easily in the canonic section in mm. 10–12 where Reger assigns the canonic figurations to the *Primo* player, leaving the *Secondo* player with a sparse accompaniment (example 2.19). The arrangement would be better if the two pianists alternated playing the theme, thus maintaining the original imitative effect.

Example 2.19: The challenging *Primo* part in comparison with the *Secondo.* Four-hand arrangement by Reger (mm. 10–12).

Primo:



Secondo:



The foregoing analysis of Krug's and Reger's arrangements of Bach's original writing demonstrates that the differing arrangements have their own flaws and merits and, also, that the benefits and drawbacks offered by each type of arrangement depend upon the application of each method to a particular passage in the music. The analysis also has brought to light the challenge of transcription in general; how to remain faithful to the original composer's intentions while effectively translating musical ideas and effects in the hands of instruments with vastly different artistic and technical characteristics. In Chapter Three, the focus will shift to issues relating to interpretation.

Chapter Three:

Editorial Markings

Found in the Krug and Reger Arrangements

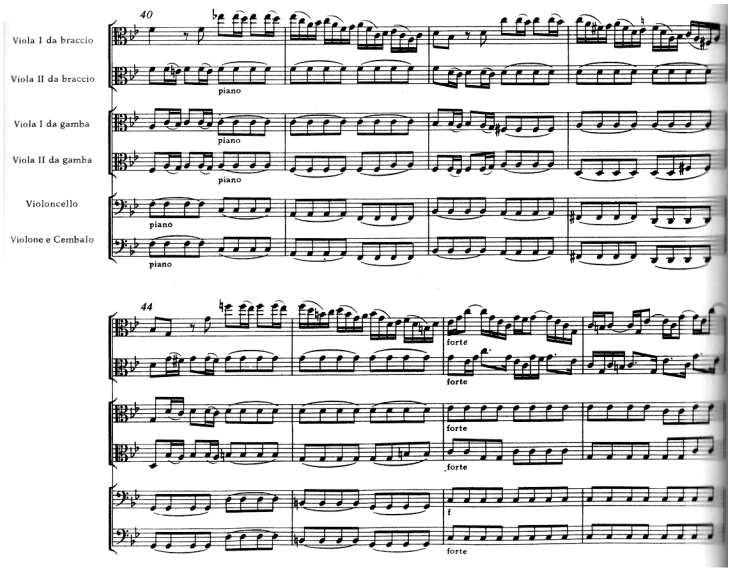
From the point of view of performance, one must carefully consider the potentially controversial issue of editorial markings. What type and how many are suitable to include in a transcribed edition? Suggestions for tempi, dynamics, and musical expression are all acceptable as long as they do not violate the performance style of Bach's time. On the other hand, other editorial areas, such as markings for articulation and slurs, require more caution because they could dramatically alter the composer's intended phrasing.

In order to follow as accurately as possible the intentions of the original composer as I was deciding upon my own articulation markings and dynamics, I compared Reger and Krug's arrangements with the *Bach-Gesellschaft* and *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* editions in addition to consulting the facsimile of the original autograph manuscript of the Concerto. In the *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* version of Bach's work, slurs are indicated in all three movements. Dynamic markings are more

limited; only *forte* and *piano* are indicated and only in the first movement, between mm. 40 and 86 (example 3.1).

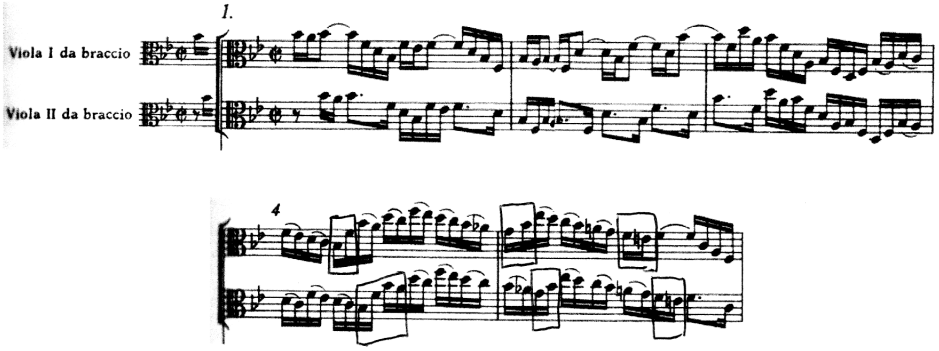
The tempo markings of *Andante ma non tanto* and *Allegro* are found in the second and third movements in all three sources mentioned above. In the arrangements, Krug suggests *Maestoso* for the first movement in his arrangement, and Reger indicates *Allegro non tanto*. Both composers retain Bach's original tempo markings for the second and the third movements, *Adagio ma non tanto* and *Allegro*, respectively.

Example 3.1: *Forte* and *piano* indications. J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition (mm. 40 –46).

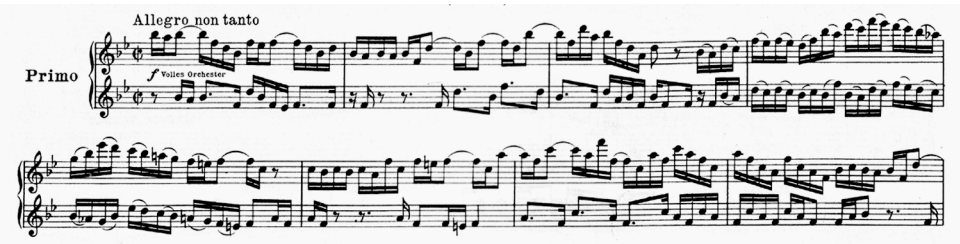


In comparison with Reger's arrangement, Krug's editorial divergences from the original are much more extensive, both in articulation and in dynamics. In Krug's two-piano score, metronome values are suggested for all three movements. Krug also frequently alters, or even adds, slurs. For example, Bach marks the slurs in the opening section of the first movement in groups of two sixteenth notes (example 3.2, mm. four and five). In the duet arrangement, Reger adds dynamics but keeps the articulation markings mostly unchanged. In mm. four and five however, where Bach breaks the slur for two notes intermittently in the violas, Reger continues the slurs without interruption (see boxed notes in example 3.3).

Example 3.2: Slurred sixteenth notes (groups of two) and un-slurred notes (boxed in mm. 4 and 5). J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition.

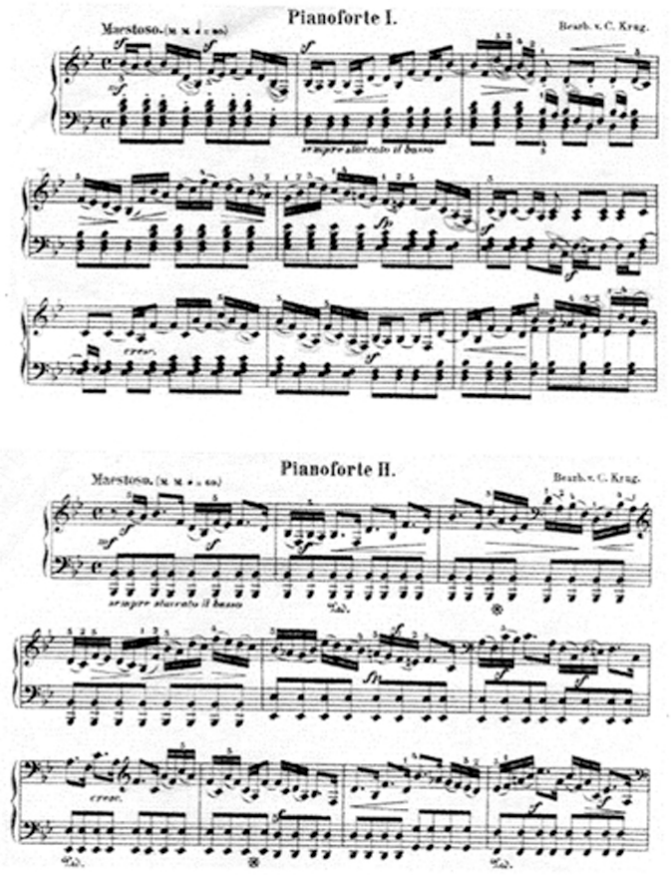


Example 3.3: Added dynamic indication of *forte* and retention of original sixteenth-note slurs (mm. 4 and 5). Four-hand arrangement by Reger (mm. 1–8).

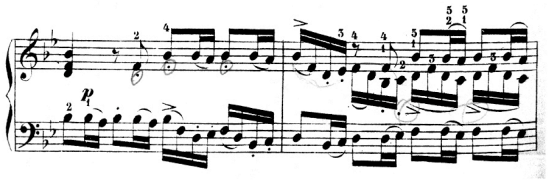


Krug, on the other hand, takes the liberty of adding many more interpretative suggestions to his arrangement, such as extra slurs (found in mm. 1, 3, 7 and 8) and also pedal markings. Furthermore, his choice of dynamic range is greater and is more dramatic than Reger's. The example below illustrates Krug's editorial additions at the beginning of his arrangement (example 3.4). A variety of articulation markings as well, such as *staccato* indications and accents, are added liberally in Krug's version of this movement (example 3.5).

Example 3.4: Additional editorial markings. Two-piano arrangement by Krug (mm. 1–10).



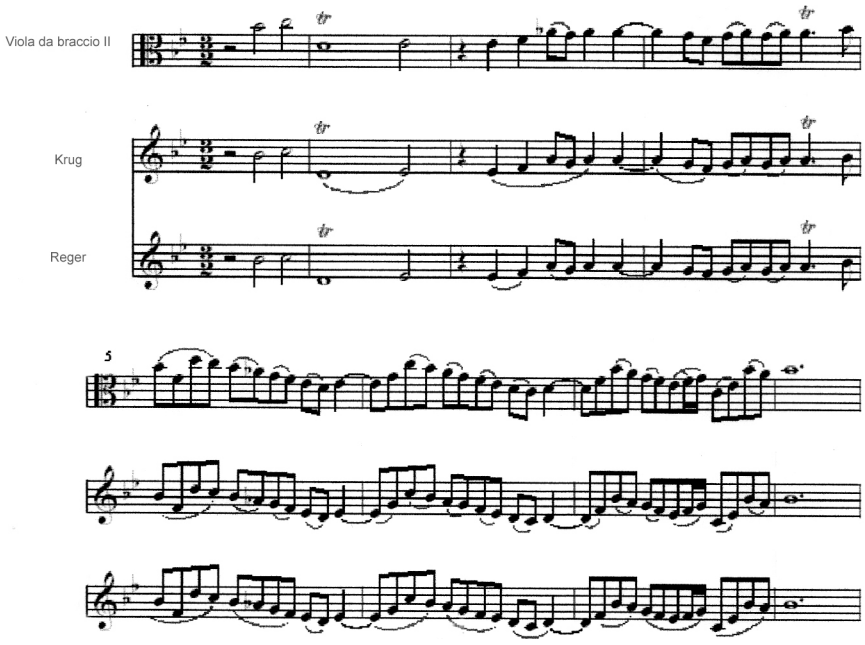
Example 3.5: Accent, *staccato,* and slur indications in Piano I. Two-piano arrangement by Krug (mm. 17–18).



In the second movement, in many instances, both Krug and Reger alter the duration or location of slurs in comparison with the facsimile edition, though both

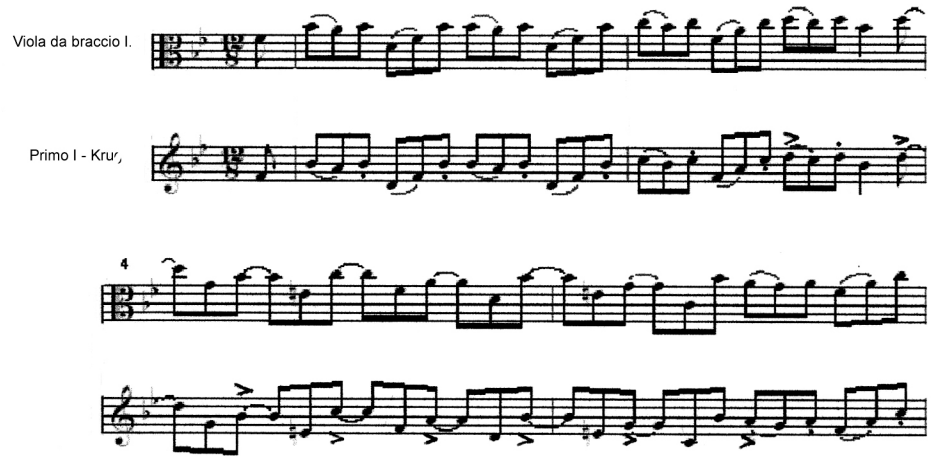
Krug and Reger do choose to retain the original slurs at various times throughout the piece. Example 3.6 provides a comparison of the first eight bars of all three versions.

Example 3.6: Comparison of slurs (mm. 1–8) in Bach's, Krug's, and Reger's works. Bärenreiter Urtext Edition, two-piano arrangement by Krug, and four-hand arrangement by Reger.

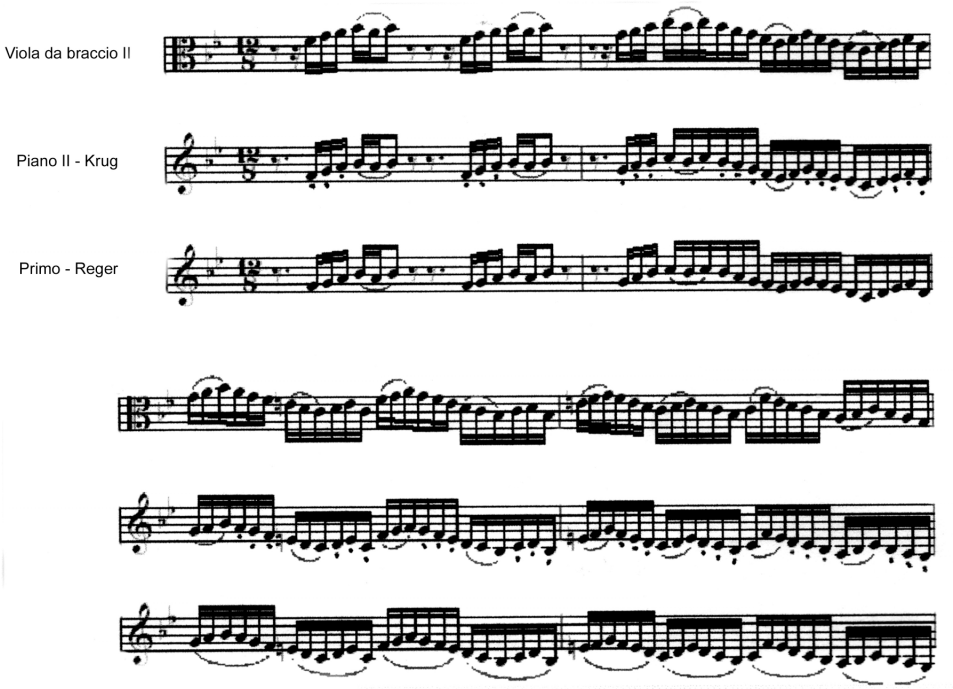


Both arrangements of the third movement also contain many editorial dynamic markings, articulations, and phrasing alterations. Again, Krug tends to place *staccato* indications and accent markings where they are not found in the facsimile edition. The following two examples show Krug's and Reger's articulations and slur alterations in comparison with Bach's writing (examples 3.7 and 3.8).

Example 3.7: Comparison of articulation markings of Bach and Krug (third movement, mm. 1–4). Bärenreiter Urtext Edition and two-piano arrangement by Krug.



Example 3.8: Comparison of *staccato* and slur markings by Bach, Krug and Reger (third movement, mm. 9–12). Bärenreiter Urtext Edition, two-piano arrangement by Krug and four-hand arrangement by Reger.



As mentioned previously, these arrangements were intended for amateur musicians. Therefore, the arrangers may have felt the need to indicate specifically the climax points of the phrases. Krug's additional accents and dynamics may also be quite helpful for performers in differentiating the prevailing contrapuntal voices and thus bringing out the counterpoint. While his additions may be a bit overdone—if one were to follow his suggestions absolutely faithfully, the music could sound too well-mannered or overly fussy compared with what Bach probably intended—nonetheless, Krug's suggestions in the areas of articulation and dynamics all seem acceptable and even helpful to those desiring interpretational assistance.

There is a significant difference, however, between adding dynamics and altering slurs. Since Bach did not place many of his own dynamic markings in the original score, the possibility for interpretation is left fairly open. It seems reasonable, therefore, for the arrangers to have made suggestions in this area. Slurs, though, are a very different matter. Scholars have come to the conclusion, based on surveying Bach's manuscripts, that the articulation markings in his music have a variety of different implications. For example, according to Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne,

the articulation and the distinction of the phrases could very well imply a dance rhythm. In their book *Dance and the Music of J.S. Bach*, the authors assert:

> The core of our approach to Baroque dance music is that rhythm and articulation grow from the performer's conception of phrases. Most of the dance types consist of phrases of a definite length and shape. (20)

In a different vein, John Butt, in his book *Bach Interpretation: Articulation Marks in Primary Sources of J. S. Bach,* asserts that "musicians at Bach's time were trained in an oral tradition and the constant cross-fertilization of singing and playing techniques was common in the Lutheran tradition" (36). Furthermore, musicians in the Baroque period related bowing to breathing when it came to interpretation of a musical style (36). It is thus expected that "string players possessed much the same musical knowledge as singers and that they interpreted the music in a similar fashion" (36). Butt summarizes his view of the subject in the following two excerpts:

> Bach's attention to articulation varies and is difficult to predict. Slurs are often added to specific figures in the *Decoratio*[2] but comprehensiveness and accuracy of detail are not always evident. At the very least slurs act as a mnemonic reminding the players to give attention to the articulation of the figuration. When Bach takes string-playing technique into account, the implication of articulation

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[2] *Decoratio* is a rhetorical figure involving the elaboration or embellishment of material.

> markings multiply. Here there are not only precise directions for the articulation of specific figural patterns but the accentuation of the music is influenced by the succession of bow-strokes. Slurs may also affect the dynamic and resonant qualities of the instruments involved. (163)

> A study of J. S. Bach string slurring should take several factors into account. As in singing, certain ornamental figuration deriving from improvisation may have been associated with particular delineation or articulation patterns. Secondly, slurring often has the technical task of making the music manageable, and here the player had to be aware of the accentual implications of the metre and slurring. Such is the rhythmic power of slurring on contemporary instrument that bowing is fundamental to the interpretation of the music, to the rhetorical-affective message which the composer intended. The initial distinction between the instructive (technical) and interpretative (musical) functions of slurs is obviously not clear cut. (46)

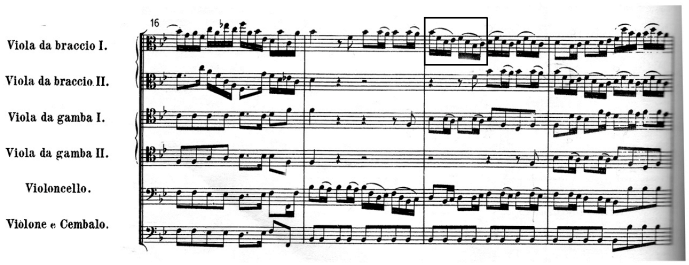
Furthermore, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians (2nd ed.)* describes the performance practice of slurs in Bach's time:

> Slurred groups such as those in much of J.S. Bach's music, where there is a clear intention to elicit particular patterns of phrasing, were evidently intended to be made audible to the listener, and there are many references in theoretical writing to a manner of performance in which the first note under the slur would receive an accent (sometimes agogic) and the final note would be shortened. This mode of execution seems more likely to have been regarded as normal in the 18th century than in the 19th century . . . ("Articulation Markings")

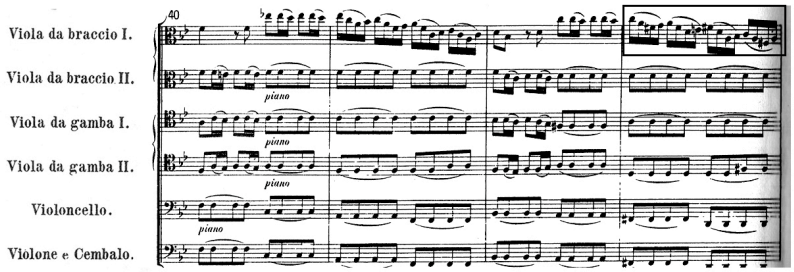
Thus, the notes found under the slur should be connected as smoothly as possible in contrast to the essentially detached normal mode of baroque performance when there are no slurs.

In the beginning of this chapter, I compared three currently available versions of Bach's composition: the *Bach-Gesellschaft* score (which is the most accessible but is widely considered to be out-dated), the *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* score, and the manuscript facsimiles. The slurs in *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* edition and the facsimiles appear to be identical in all three movements. The only changes the *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* scholars made which differ from the facsimile were to place the two gambas in the alto clef instead of the tenor clef and to indicate accidentals according to the rules of modern musical notation. Some discrepancies in the notation of slurs are found in *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition, however, when compared with the facsimiles and the *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* score. In the first movement, for example, some four-note and two-note slurs found in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition are not present in the *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* edition (example 3.9). Moreover, some slurs joining four sixteenth notes seen in *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition are marked only on the first three sixteenth notes in each grouping instead in the *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* (example 3.10).

Example 3.9: Boxed slurs found in the Bach-Gesellschaft Edition are not found in the Neue Bach-Ausgabe score. J. S. Bach, Bach-Gesellschaft Edition (mm. 16–19).



Example 3.10: Boxed four-note slurs found in the Bach-Gesellschaft Edition are marked as three-notes slurred followed by a single note in the Neue Bach-Ausgabe Edition. J. S. Bach, Bach-Gesellschaft Edition (mm. 40–44).



Since the more modern *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* score is currently considered to be the more authoritative version, in considering the discrepancies in slurring between the two editions, one might conclude simply that the *Bach-Gesellschaft* scholars assumed Bach's slurs suggested a general feeling of *legato* whereas the *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* editors felt that Bach's markings indicated specific bowings.

It would not be particularly useful to compare Reger's and Krug's slur markings to the more current edition because it was not available to either of them. Both arrangers would have referred to the earlier *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition when they transcribed the Concerto. I therefore made a thorough comparison between the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition and both arrangements. While Krug's and Reger's slur markings appear to be identical to the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition in some places, there are still quite a number of personal editing changes in all the movements.

The current availability of the facsimile of the original manuscript serves as a very reliable indicator of how Bach indicated the slurs for his Concerto. The challenge to the modern transcriber remains, however, both to discern exactly where it was that Bach intended to have slurs and also how best to express Bach's string-music indications through music written for the keyboard. This effort is confounded by the inconsistency of the slurring indications found in works for strings written by Bach himself. His slur markings are frequently inconsistent even in different sections of the same piece. There are also practical considerations for the transcriber. In the case of the sixteenth-note groupings, while accomplished string players may execute these passages effectively by slurring the first three notes and changing bow direction

for the fourth, producing a smooth yet lively effect, it would be extremely challenging for a pianist to play these passages well with the same articulation. The effect could be quite unbalanced and distracting.

Bach's original articulation markings, whether implying bowings or phrasings, should be viewed as fundamentally important to the musical style of the piece, or he would not have bothered to include them. It is crucial that the transcription reflect the basic intentions of the composer as much as possible; therefore, to provide as much original information as possible to the pianist performers, the slur markings in my arrangement are indicated as they are found in the *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* edition.

Chapter Four:

Two-Piano Arrangements by Krug and Chiang—

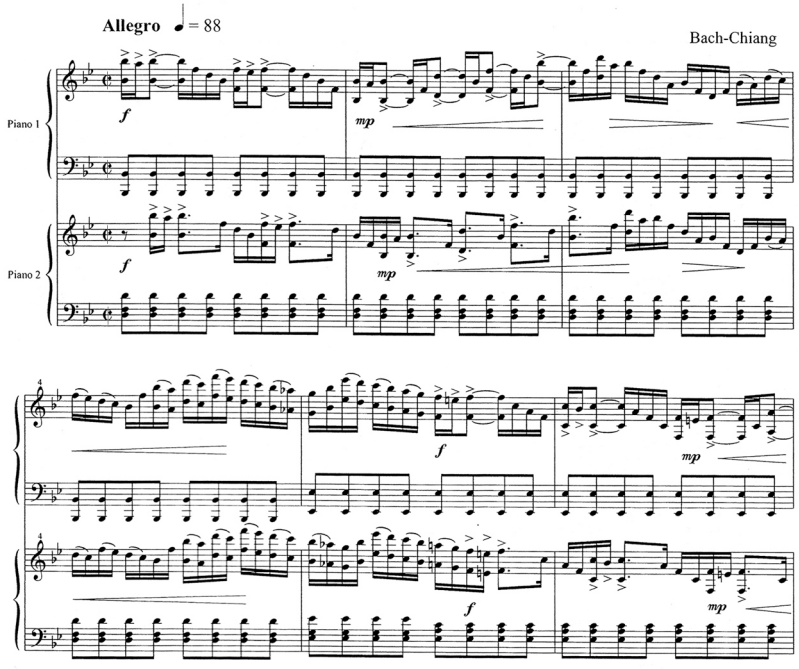
A Comparative Analysis

The First Movement

My analysis of the two existing arrangements of Bach's Concerto (one for four hands and one for two pianos), has shown that, from a performance perspective, neither reaches the full potential of the musical material as conceived by Bach. With this in mind, my goal has been to arrange a version of the Concerto that is more exciting and has a greater impact on the listener. I have made a great effort to improve the overall effect of the sound of the piece, especially in the first and the last movements. Much of the beauty of the Concerto in its original form is found in the highly imitative texture, especially the dialogue between the two violas da braccio in all three movements. An important goal in transcribing this work, therefore, has been to make certain that in performance the intricate counterpoint can be perceived both by the players and the audience.

As mentioned earlier, the original orchestration includes no violins, calling only for lower-range, stringed instruments. This no doubt contributes to the somewhat dull overall effect of Krug's arrangement of the first movement with its noticeable lack of contrast. In order to accentuate the counterpoint and to provide more color contrast when arranging the score for the piano, one must avoid the excessive use of the middle range of the keyboard. For this reason, I have endeavored to use octaves in a variety ways to provide contrast and interest while maintaining the integrity of the original work. Krug's two-piano version, though already more comfortable to play than Reger's four-hand version, does not utilize many octaves for the purpose of obtaining a more symphonic sound. Taking this all into consideration, I decided to move the two main melodic lines played by the violas da braccio one octave higher to widen the overall register. Furthermore, as illustrated in example 4.1, I added octaves, for rhythmic emphasis, to notes which occur at key points in the melody lines (in the first and the third movements) both in the original primary contrapuntal voices (the two violas da braccio) and in the accompaniment (the two violas da gamba, the violoncello, and the violone e cembalo).

Example 4.1: Octaves are added to selected melody notes. Two-piano arrangement by Chiang (mm. 1–3).



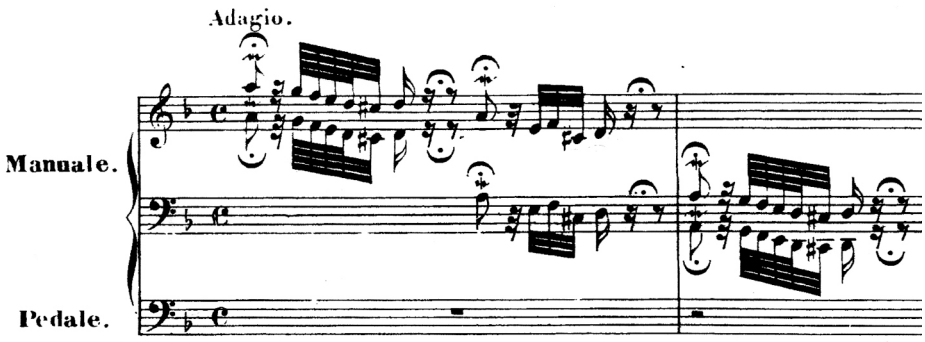
The octave is the first overtone of the original note. Therefore, one seems strongly justified in employing upper octaves, as long as one remains within tasteful stylistic limits.[3] In addition to enhancing the overtones, doubling at the octaves lends a greater emphasis to the contrapuntal entrances, which are extremely important to the

[3] Bach, too, was comfortable with this practice. In his compositions for organ, he frequently took advantage of the greater range in the bass pedals as well as the upper octaves that one can achieve through use of the organ stops.

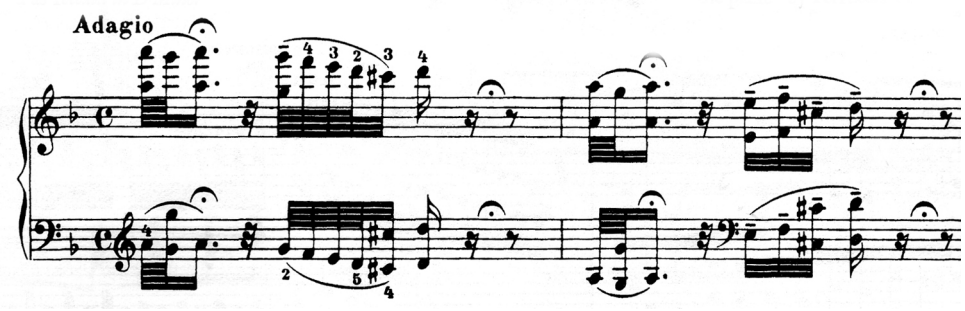
rhythmic vitality of this particular work. It is in this vein that I have attempted to bring Bach's composition to its proper acoustic place on the piano.

This method is also found in Busoni's transcriptions of Bach's organ music. The opening measures of Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565, transcribed by Busoni, provide a good example. In his solo arrangement, Busoni frequently employs octaves to obtain the desired effect of sound in performance. Examples 4.2 and 4.3 compare the introductory measures of Bach's original score with Busoni's piano-solo arrangement. In example 4.3, illustrating Busoni's transcription, notice how octaves are employed only on selected keynotes instead of on all of the notes, thus providing the best overall effect. The octaves are placed in the higher register in the first beat (the mordant which is written out A-G-A), and octaves are added on selected notes in the following groups of pitches as compared with the original score.

Example 4.2: The opening measures of the organ score. Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565. J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition.

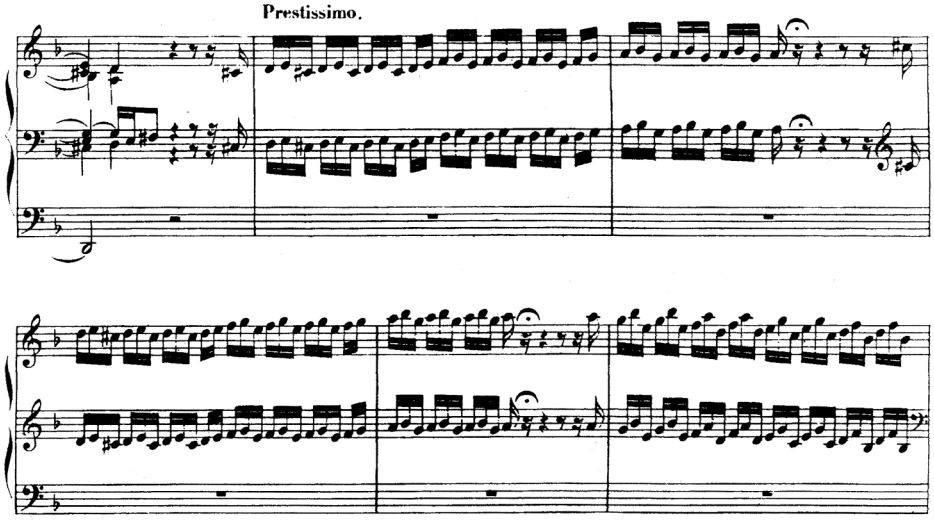


Example 4.3: The opening measures with added octaves on selected notes. Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565. Piano transcription by Busoni.

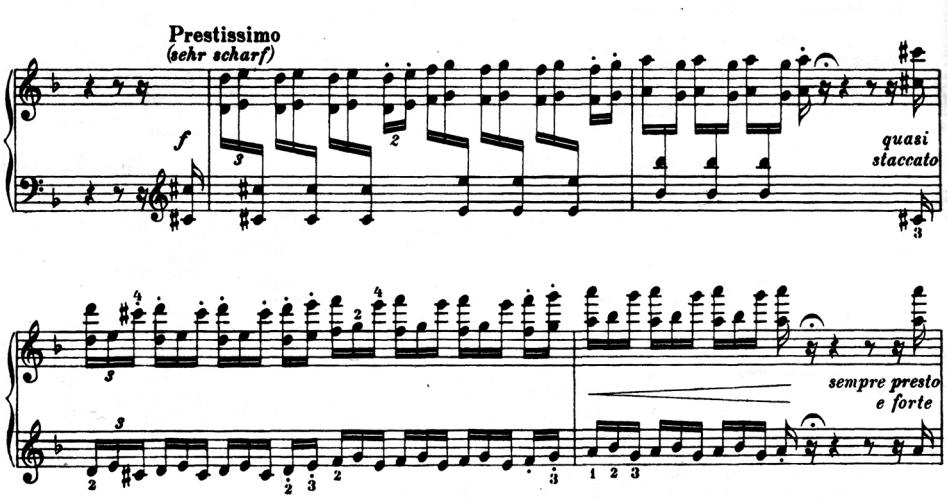


Examples 4.4 and 4.5, below, illustrate how Busoni moves the register one octave higher and, also, adds octaves to selected notes. As mentioned above, the added octaves should be placed in optimal locations to accentuate the melody while delivering the maximum sonic effect.

Example 4.4: Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565. J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition (mm. 4–7).



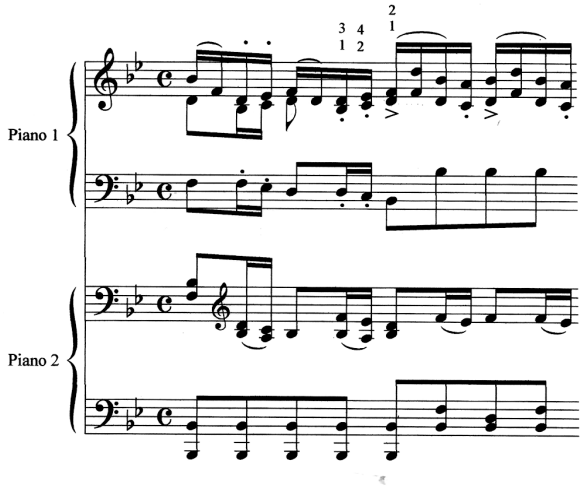
Example 4.5: Use of octaves in the Busoni arrangement of Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565 (mm. 4–7).



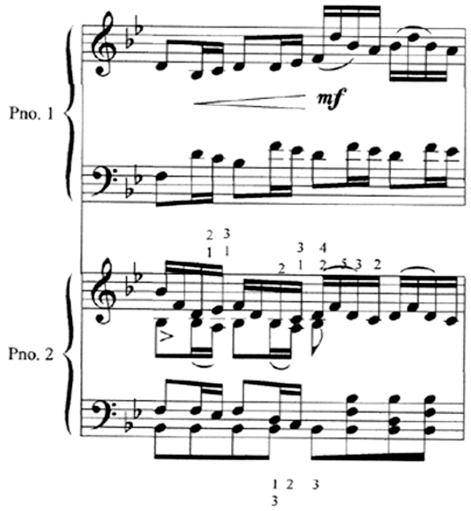
Another performance consideration is that of effective fingerings. There are places in Krug's arrangement that do not allow for smooth pianistic execution. This

can be improved through rearrangement of the voices. In m.19, for example, Krug has placed parallel thirds and sixths in the right hand in Piano I. The repeated note D in the treble clef in this passage creates a sudden period of awkwardness for the pianist among phrases that are generally more fluid (example 4.6). Example 4.7 shows how I arranged the voices here differently. Notice that the piano lines are much more natural to play in both hands, and the Piano-II part has smoother fingerings for the double notes. Neither player has to struggle with awkward fingerings, and the voices remain perfectly clear. This modification is made in all similar passages.

Example 4.6: Consecutive parallel thirds and sixths create difficult fingerings. Two-piano arrangement by Krug (m. 19).



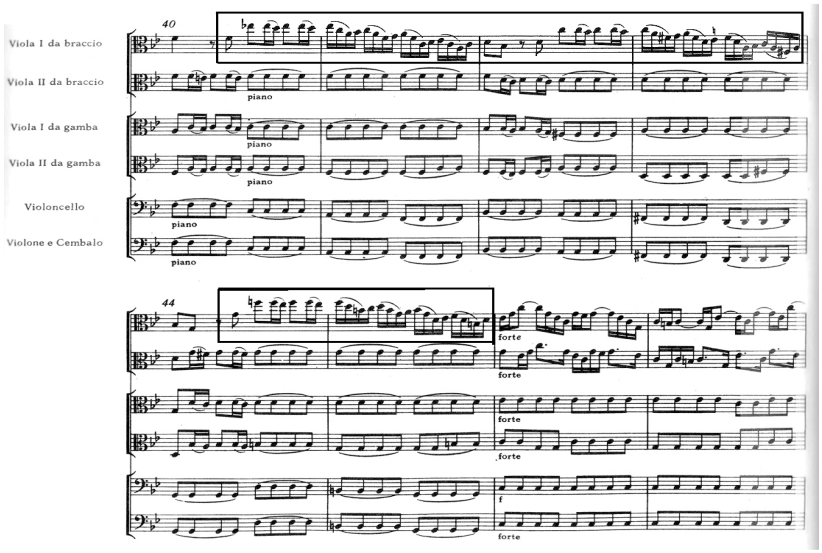
Example 4.7: The voices are rearranged for ease of execution. Two-piano arrangement by Chiang (m. 19).



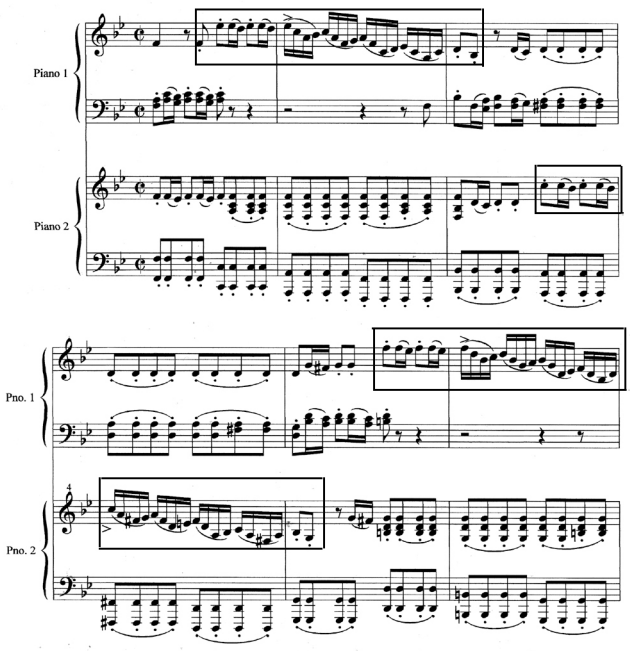
In this first movement, it is also interesting to see how Krug distributes the individual lines of the original Concerto among the two pianos. Krug does not assign a specific instrument to a particular pianist. On the contrary, he mixes the voices so that the melodies of the viola da braccio parts are assigned at different times to different piano parts. In mm. 40–45, for example, the main melody in the original score is played by the Viola da Braccio I, and the rest of the orchestra accompanies in eighth notes (example 4.8). Comparing Krug's setting to the original composition, one can see that the melody, which repeats three times in different keys (first in B-flat major, second in G minor, and third in C minor), migrates back and forth between the two pianists (example 4.9). This sharing of a melody line by two pianos is seen

frequently. I apply this method as well in my arrangement, though in other locations in the piece. In this case however, I am able to avoid switching the melody between pianists (example 4.10). In music transcription, the assigning of voices (among other types of decisions) largely depends on the arranger's musical taste and judgment. Whether to keep a particular instrument in one pianist's part or to alternate between players for variety makes little difference to the listener. To the players however, it might make more sense to retain one melody line and thus to know the origin and destination of phrases.

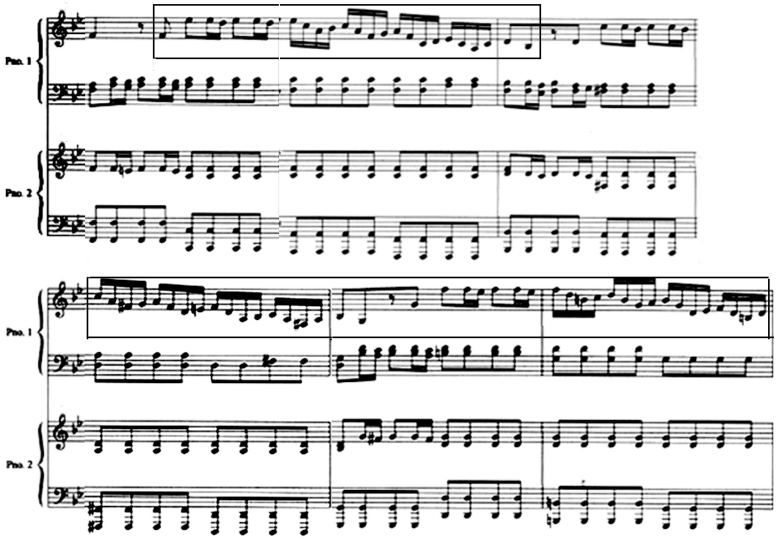
Example 4.8: The modulating sequence is played by Viola da Braccio I in the boxed measures. J. S. Bach, Bärenreiter Urtext Edition (mm. 40–45).



Example 4.9: The modulating sequence is broken up between the two pianists in the highlighted measures. Two-piano arrangement by Krug (mm. 40–45).



Example 4.10: The modulating sequence remains in Piano I in the highlighted measures. Two-piano arrangement by Chiang (mm. 40–45).



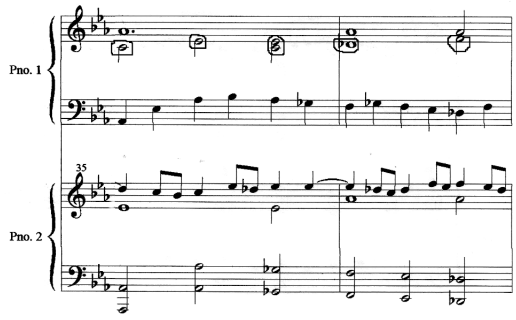
In my version, each pianist is given one of the two viola da braccio melodies in its entirety. Thus, there is no voice-switching of the viola parts. This has the advantage of maintaining the clarity of the two voices primarily responsible for presenting the counterpoint in the Concerto.

The Second Movement

In comparison with the intricate design of the counterpoint in the first movement, the four-voice structure of the second movement is rather simple to arrange. I changed the key signature, adding one flat, in accordance with modern notation. There are some challenges, nonetheless. The music here has many long sustained notes, for example. If the pianists were to hold these notes without any added auxiliary harmony, the texture would become thin, and the sound would be empty. I use octaves, fifths, and thirds, therefore, to fill in the harmony, thus obtaining a richer and fuller sound. In the original score, for example, in mm. 37 and 38, the long A-flat appearing in the right hand of the Piano I part is written as a single, tied, dotted-whole note. In my arrangement, I thicken the sound by adding octaves in the bass of the

second piano part and the circled harmony notes in the right hand of the first piano (example 4.11).

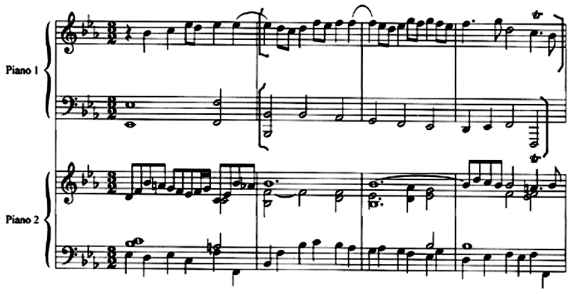
Example 4.11: The added harmonies of thirds and fifths in Piano I and octaves in Piano II. Two-piano arrangement by Chiang (mm. 37–38).



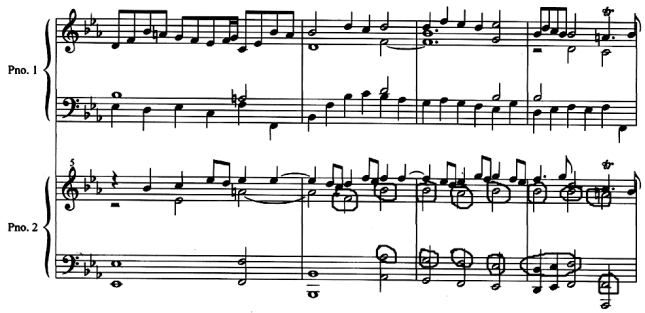
Krug generally takes the similar approach, but in a few places he retains the single notes of the original in his arrangement. Examples 4.12a and 4.12b, below, compare our different treatments of the same melody. Krug's version, shown in 4.12a, presents the melody as single notes in the Piano I part (see the right-hand notes in brackets). Taking a different approach, I have transcribed these measures by assigning the melody to Piano II instead. Octaves are also added in the left hand and

inner harmony in the right hand in order to enhance the texture (see the circled notes in example 4.12b).

Example 4.12a: The Single Melody Notes and Bass Notes in Piano I. Two-Piano Arrangement by Krug (mm. 7–10).



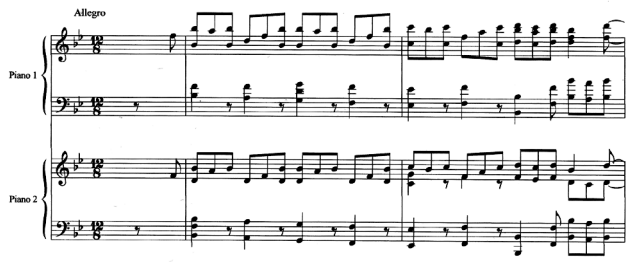
Example 4.12b: The added harmonies and octaves in the bass in Piano II. Two-piano arrangement by Chiang (mm. 7–10).



The Third Movement

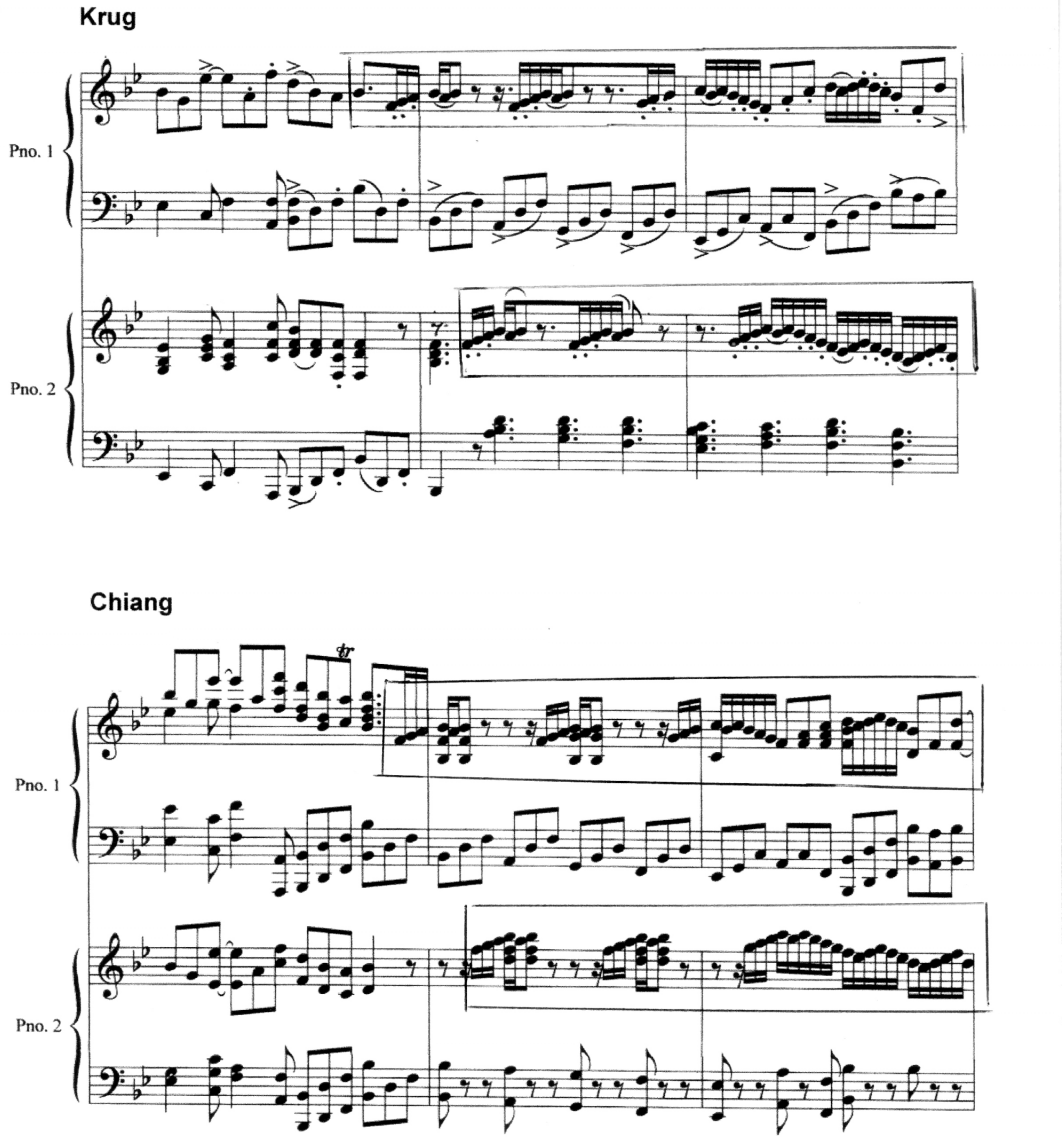
The third movement, as mentioned earlier, alternates between the eighth-note opening themes and the canonic sections. The joyful and light *gigue* character of the opening subject and the exciting chasing passages in the counterpoint are the two most important elements I chose to highlight in my transcription. Krug's arrangement for this movement omits one voice from the opening subject, and the writing for both pianists is centered primarily in the middle and the low registers of the keyboard. This produces a muffled effect. In my transcription, the registers are expanded through the frequent use of octaves intended to brighten the sound. For example, the eighth-note opening theme, which is played in unison by the two violas in Bach's score, is transcribed in my arrangement one octave apart for the pianos. Furthermore, in order to strengthen the rhythmic energy, I take the liberty of adding harmonies of eighths and sixths on downbeat and upbeat notes in both of the right hands (example 4.13).

Example 4.13: The registers of the main theme are expanded with octaves. Two-piano arrangement by Chiang (mm. 1–2).



In order to maximize the conversational effect in the canonic section, I have transcribed the registers for the sixteenth-note passages one octave apart from each other (example 4.14). Also, chords are added to punctuate the downbeats (see the boxed section in the example on the bottom). Krug places both canonic melodies in the same register (see the boxed section in the example on the top). In addition, he uses chords to fill in the bass harmony whereas I decided to use only octaves for this purpose. Effective methods of transcription—expanding registers, adding octaves, thickening harmonies, and accentuating contrapuntal effects—have guided my process of transcribing Bach's music. As a result, in comparison with Krug's, I believe my arrangement delivers sharper contrasts in sound and, while easier to play, its effect is more virtuosic.

Example 4.14: A comparison of the treatments of registers and harmonies. Two-piano arrangements by Krug (above) and Chiang (below) (mm. 8–10).



Chapter Five:

Preparation and Rehearsal

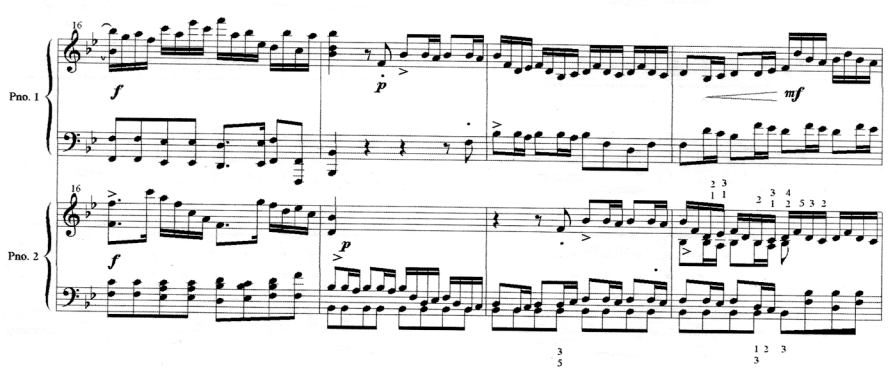
This chapter addresses performance-practice ideas and will provide information specifically applicable to the preparation for performance of my own two-piano arrangement. Subjects such as practicing, rehearsal, dynamics, phrasing, articulation, and pedal usage will be discussed. Explanations of the editorial markings in the arrangement are provided to assist players in achieving the intended performance effects.

Practicing

Players should first recognize that both parts in this arrangement are intended to have an equal level of technical difficulty. It is a common misunderstanding among musicians and audiences that the Piano I part is always the leading part and the Piano II part is "subordinate." In my arrangement, the musical materials are distributed equally to each player in order to create a responsive antiphonal affect. For the most efficient practicing, it is recommended that pianists practice their parts individually to work out all technical issues before rehearsing, then play through the

entire arrangement together. In order to bring out the counterpoint effectively, pianists should in the beginning refer to the original score to ensure that all subjects and imitative treatments are recognized. Several fingering suggestions are made in the first movement to help the players with some awkward phrases that have resulted from maintaining the original counterpoint from Bach's score. For example, in m. 19, the double notes are a challenge to play because the two-voiced canon is being presented by one hand.

Example 5.1: Fingering suggestions for the double notes in m. 19 in Piano II. Two-piano arrangement by Chiang (mm. 16–19).



A note on the general practice of thirds and double notes may be of help here. *Legato* execution of double notes requires just as smooth a connection of both tones as

one would strive to achieve with single tones. In order to obtain the required strength, independence, and coordination of the fingers and to gain evenness, an excellent practice method is to play trills that alternate any two sets of two fingers in any combination. Pianists might also find selected exercises on double notes from *Fifty-one exercises for the Piano,* by Johannes Brahms, very helpful in practicing this particular technique.[4]

Tonal Balance

Tone balance is an important topic to consider in piano-ensemble playing. In Moldenhauer's *Duo-Pianism,* the author asks the question: "Should two-piano playing sound like *one* piano, or should there be antiphonal (choir) effects at work?" He poses this question to several different piano-duo teams and solicits their opinions (214). Piano-duo Ethel Bartlett and Rae Robertson believe that:

> In certain kinds of music, for instance music which is harmonic in structure rather than contrapuntal, it is important that the two pianos should blend in one homogeneous sound (which you might call 'sounding like one piano'). In contrapuntal music, however, differences of tone-color should be employed and orchestral effects can be obtained. (214)

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[4] Exercises 2, 3, 18, and 33 from this volume are excellent choices for practicing double notes.

Livington Morley and Virginia Gearhart answer: “Yes and no, depending upon the musical concepts to be communicated.” E. Robert Schmitz subscribes to the same attitude, which allows for flexibility of treatment “according to score” (214).

Apparently, the answer varies because it depends on the type and the texture of the music. In my arrangement, the goal is to achieve a sonic alternation between the two keyboards reflecting the imitative quality that Bach originally intended. Therefore, it is clear that the two pianos, in this case, should sound like two string groups and not one piano. In order to achieve this effect, the two players need to decide how to render distinguishing tones and touches. For example, one player could play with a *legato* touch and use slightly more pedal for contrast while the other player could employ a more *staccato* touch and play with a more austere or “dry” style.

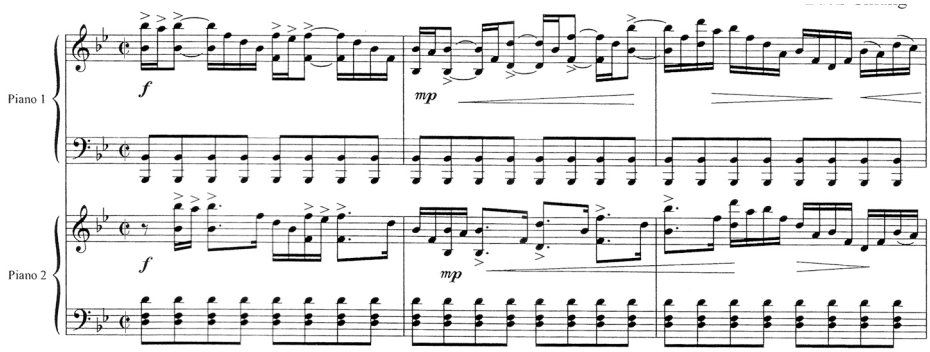
Articulation

Baroque scores such as Bach’s have few explicit articulation markings. Articulation, however, is one of the most important factors that help to create a performance that is historically informed. Therefore, performance conventions, even when they are not specifically notated, should be taken into consideration. As discussed in Chapter Three, the slur markings in this arrangement are based on the

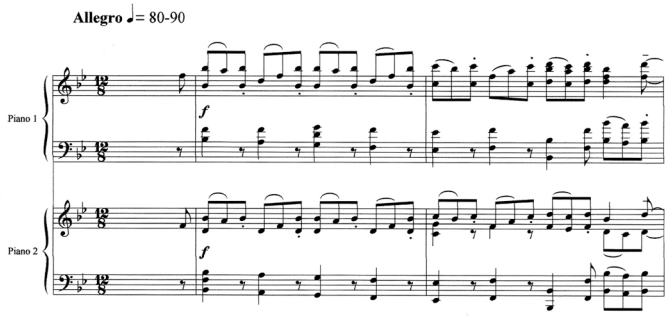
Neue Bach-Ausgabe version and remain unaltered. According to Baroque performance practice, as a general rule for playing slurs, the last note under a slur is shortened and the following un-slurred notes are to be played detached, not receiving their full value. In my score, accents, *staccato* markings, and *sostenuto* signs, are added, mimicking various articulations that string players produce when playing the Concerto. The decision as to where to add the articulations is personal, and I have based it upon three elements: first, the natural up and down pattern of the rhythm; second, the location of main melodies needing to be emphasized; and third, the natural or "logical" need to apply articulations to indicate the internal shaping of the phrases which delineates the motive or musical idea (Rosenblum 144).

In the opening of the first movement, accents are added to enhance the imitative quality of the canon (example 5.2). In the third movement, the two eighth-note slurs in the opening measures create a distinctive rhythmic character. *Staccato* markings are added on the third beat of each of the three eighth notes in the melody to assure a stylish lightness in performance, and *sostenuto* marks are employed as well to accentuate the syncopations in mm. 3–8 (examples 5.3 and 5.4).

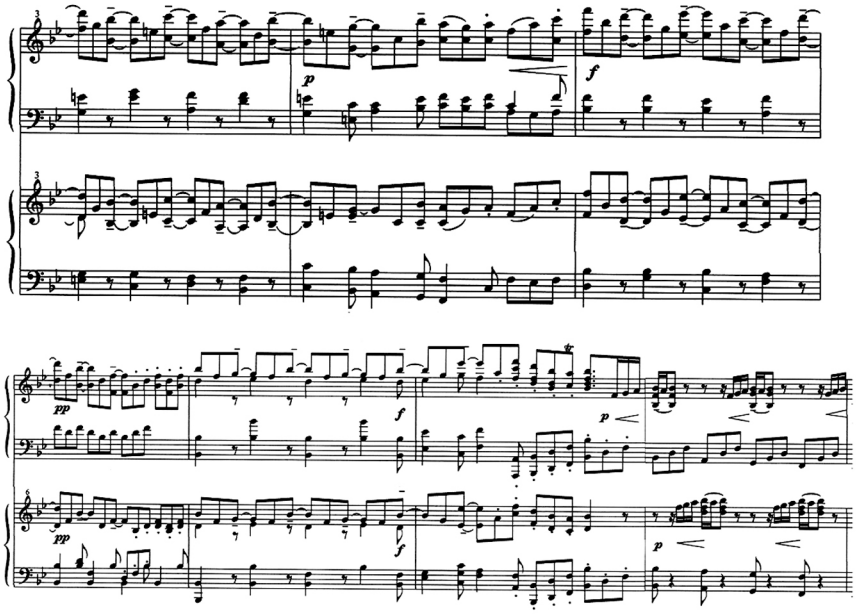
Example 5.2: Added accents. Two-piano arrangement by Chiang (mm. 1–3).



Example 5.3: Added *staccato* markings in the third movement. Two-piano arrangement by Chiang (mm. 1–2).



Example 5.4: Added *tenuto* markings in the third movement. Two-piano arrangement by Chiang (mm. 3–9).



Dynamics

I have applied dynamic markings generously throughout the piece to suggest the direction of the phrasing and the location of the climax of each movement. The dynamics for the three movements in this work range from *forte* to *pianissimo.* These choices for dynamics are based on the original orchestration in the music. For example, the *tutti* sections are usually given *forte* markings while the solo sections are often in *piano.* In addition, *piano* is often indicated when the texture is lighter and *forte* when the texture is thick. In the sequential passages, *crescendos* or

diminuendos are suggested. It is important to note that although this arrangement is written with ample use of octaves in order to enhance the sound, pianists should keep in mind that the R.H. fifth finger carries the main melody and therefore must not be overpowered by the thumb.

Tempo Markings

As mentioned in Chapter Three, tempo markings are indicated in the second and the third movements but not in the first in Bach's original score. For Reger's arrangement, there is no metronome value indicated for any movement, and the tempi marked are *Allegro non tanto*, *Adagio ma non tanto*, and *Allegro* for the three movements, respectively.

In Krug's transcription, the arranger changed the time signature to 4/4 and suggests *Maestoso* (M. M. = 60 per quarter) for the first movement. Bernard Sherman, in his article, considers tempi with relation to time signatures and discusses implications for tempi in interpreting Bach's music. His ideas are applicable here. The metronome range suggested by Baroque performance-practice scholars for common time *tempo ordinario* is between M. M. 60–85 (457). Krug's tempo marking for this movement is found within this range—but on the slow side. In several recordings

currently available, the first movement is usually played above M. M. = 80 per quarter. I listened to four recordings: Benjamin Britten with English Chamber Orchestra; Masaaki Suzuki with the Bach Collegium Japan; Christopher Hogwood with The Academy of Ancient Music; and Trevor Pinnock with The English Concert. The chart below indicates the range of first movement tempi including those of the recordings and of Krug's and my own arrangement.

First Movement Tempi

Britten	M. M. = 76 per quarter
Suzuki	M. M. = 84 per quarter
Hogwood	M. M. = 88 per quarter
Pinnock	M. M. = 88 per quarter
Krug	M. M. = 60 per quarter
Chiang	M. M. = 88 per quarter

Keep in mind, however, that this movement is written in cut time and, with its chasing counterpoint, displays an energetic character. Krug's suggestion for the tempo marking, *Maestoso* (M. M. = 60 per quarter beat), thus seems inappropriately slow. Moreover, because the harmony is so static, the notes need to flow quickly. If the tempo is too slow, the movement lacks energy. Therefore, the suggested tempo marking for my arrangement of the first movement is 88 per quarter beat. In the second movement, Krug suggests a metronome marking of 50 per half beat for Bach's

Adagio ma non tanto. Although it feels suitable to this slow movement, personally I prefer a slightly slower tempo, and my tempo marking for this movement is 42 per half beat. Interestingly, the tempi of the orchestral recordings are much slower than those of the piano arrangements—the piano cannot sustain this movement's long notes as well as a string orchestra. The performance tempi of the second movement for the recordings and for Krug's and my own arrangements are listed below:

Second Movement Tempi

Britten	M. M. = 40 per half beat
Suzuki	M. M. = 38 per half beat
Hogwood	M. M. = 38 per half beat
Pinnock	M. M. = 38 per half beat
Krug	M. M. = 50 per half beat
Chiang	M. M. = 42 per half beat

Krug's suggestion for the *Allegro* third movement is 66 per dotted quarter which seems too slow and lacking in energy when compared with the recorded performances (see below). Taking into account that this *Gigue* is written in 12/8 time and that *Allegro* literally translated means "happy," playing at a metronome speed of 66 per dotted quarter beat results in the loss of necessary rhythmic vitality. I would suggest, therefore, a faster metronome marking, between 80 and 90 per dotted quarter beat.

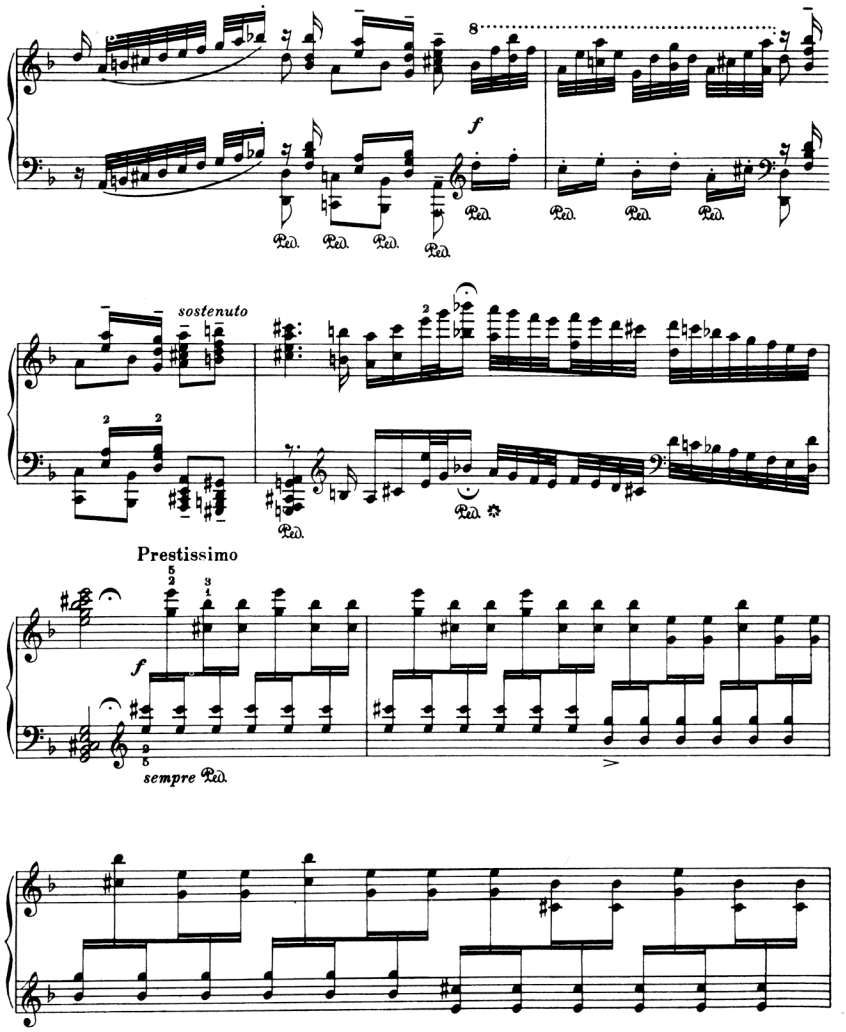
Third Movement Tempi

Britten	M. M. = 72 per dotted quarter beat
Suzuki	M. M. = 88 per dotted quarter beat
Hogwood	M. M. = 84 per dotted quarter beat
Pinnock	M. M. = 84 per dotted quarter beat
Krug	M. M. = 66 per dotted quarter beat
Chiang	M. M. = 80-90 per dotted quarter beat

Pedal Usage

I leave decisions regarding pedal usage to the discretion of the pianists. In general, pedals are often suggested in piano arrangements of Bach's organ works. For example, pedal markings are found in Busoni's transcriptions of Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565 (example 5.5). Similar pedal treatments can also be found in other piano transcriptions of Bach's organ works such as the Ten Chorale-Preludes. It is logical for these solo piano arrangements to employ ample use of pedals in order to mimic the sound of the organ. Quite to the contrary, since the sixth Brandenburg Concerto is a string chamber work, there is no need for pedaling to emulate an organ sound, and thus there is a diminished need for pedaling overall. In addition, pianists

Example 5.5: Pedal usage indications. Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565. Arranged by Busoni (mm. 22–27).



could even consider using finger-pedaling to deliver a more transparent texture and clarity for this music. Finger-pedaling, also known as *overlegato,* is a technique

associated with early keyboard performance practice. It is used to achieve a *legato* texture without using the pedal. Mark Kroll describes the technique:

> *Overlegato* is achieved by use of the fingers alone. This is consistent with the finger technique advocated by pianists through the second decade of the 19th century, in which the hand was kept quiet and the fingers remained close to the keys. (Kroll 22)

Pedals may be applied generously in the second movement for the sustained long notes, whereas in the first and the third movement, if the pianists feel the need to use some pedal, the amount should be limited so the effect does not conceal the counterpoint.

It is worth noting that in the present time when historical performance issues are being explored so intensely, my arrangement is made with modern instruments in mind, which create a much thicker and heavier sound. It is true that a musical arrangement of any type would never render exactly the same sound and effects as the original. However, when certain historical interpretive and musical techniques are applied to the performance of my arrangement such as appropriate pedaling and slurring, one may still perceive the proper historical style, various textures, and the counterpoint as intended in the original orchestral setting. Even though the pianos will not be able to reproduce the sound of the strings, one need not be overwhelmed by the heavier action of modern instruments. Overall, what I have strived to accomplish is to ensure that the musical

concept of Bach in his day can be successfully communicated through two modern pianos.

All the performance suggestions above are based upon thoughtful research combined with years of performance experience and are offered in the spirit of assisting performers in their concert preparation while ensuring that the Concerto is played with an artistic and historically appropriate musical style. While these ideas may not be agreed upon by all, if pianists feel that there is a need to change any of the musical editing for this arrangement, these changes should be carefully considered.

Conclusion

The piano duo has served, intriguingly, to provide the keyboard medium with the ability to emulate rich orchestral sounds. In contrast with four-hand compositions, music for two pianos presents more musical possibilities and fewer technical and physical restrictions. This form of ensemble has interested composers and arrangers throughout the history of the keyboard, and a huge repertoire for two pianos has accrued as a result. Both original works and arrangements have been composed for two pianos.

A duo pianist will come across a great many arrangements of orchestral and chamber pieces both for four hands and for two pianos. Given the plentitude of choices offered by these numerous arrangements however, one finds that the pieces vary greatly in quality. This is especially true with four-hand arrangements of orchestral works. These arrangements commonly pose problems such as uncomfortable crowding of the hands, poor musical phrasing, extremely dense texture, and too much material packed in the voices. Many arrangements, therefore, are not suitable for concert performance, and difficulties encountered in the performance

setting have led many duo teams to play original four-hand works rather than transcriptions. Although performance-related problems with arrangements are often excused because the arrangements are written as *Hausmusik* intended for private amateur playing, performance-worthy arrangements of great orchestral and chamber works would be a valuable addition to the concert repertoire for duo pianists.

Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 in B-flat Major presents an excellent opportunity for demonstrating a two-piano arrangement that would be effective in a concert performance setting. Although the Concerto has been previously arranged for both four-hands and two pianos by Max Reger and Gustav Krug, respectively, neither version serves very effectively on the stage. My goal in this project has been to create an improved two-piano version of the Concerto, intended for concert performance. In doing so I have based my choices on my experience as piano-duo performer combined with knowledge gained from the detailed analysis of the two existing arrangements by Reger and Krug, and of Bach's original.

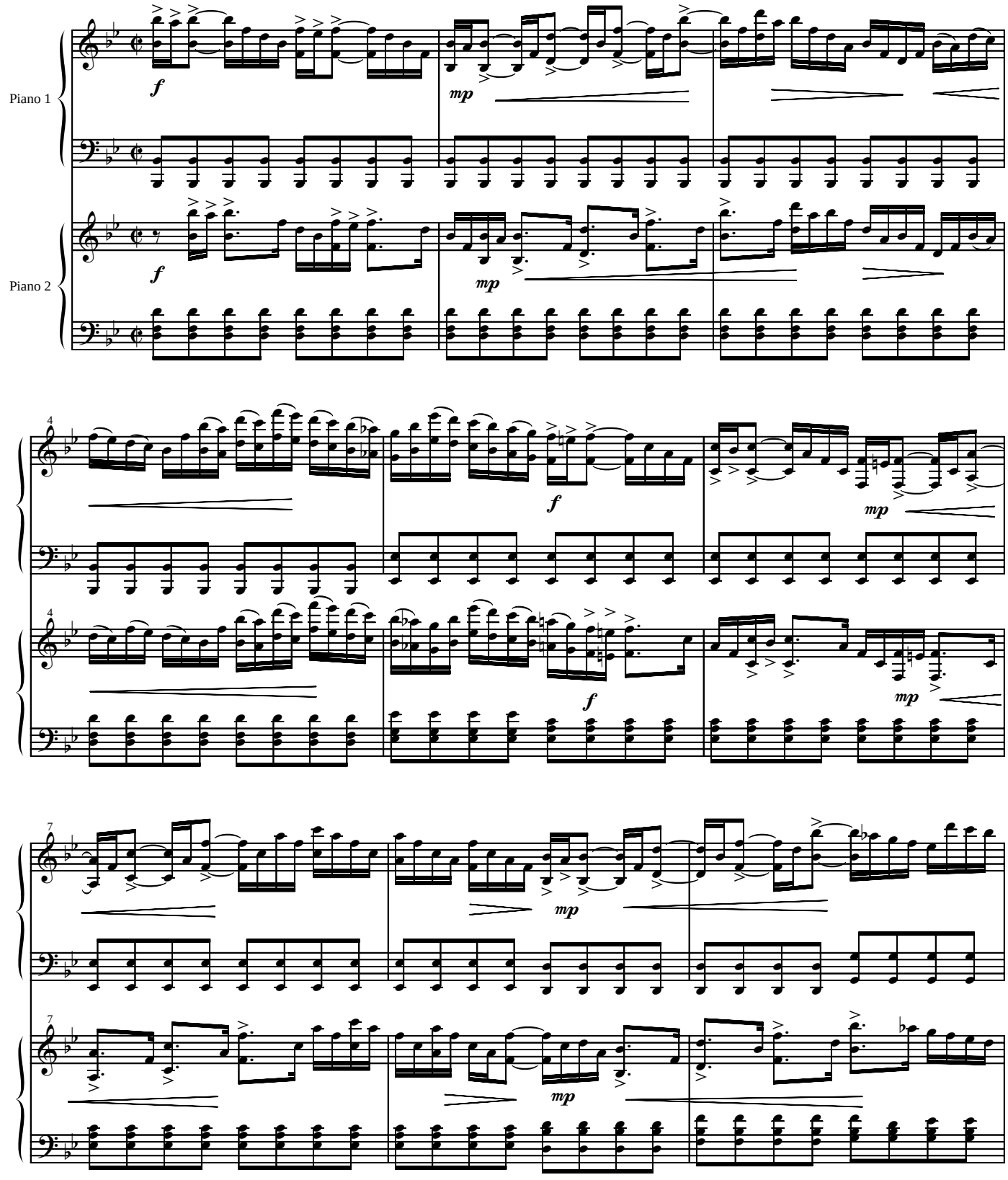
Appendix:

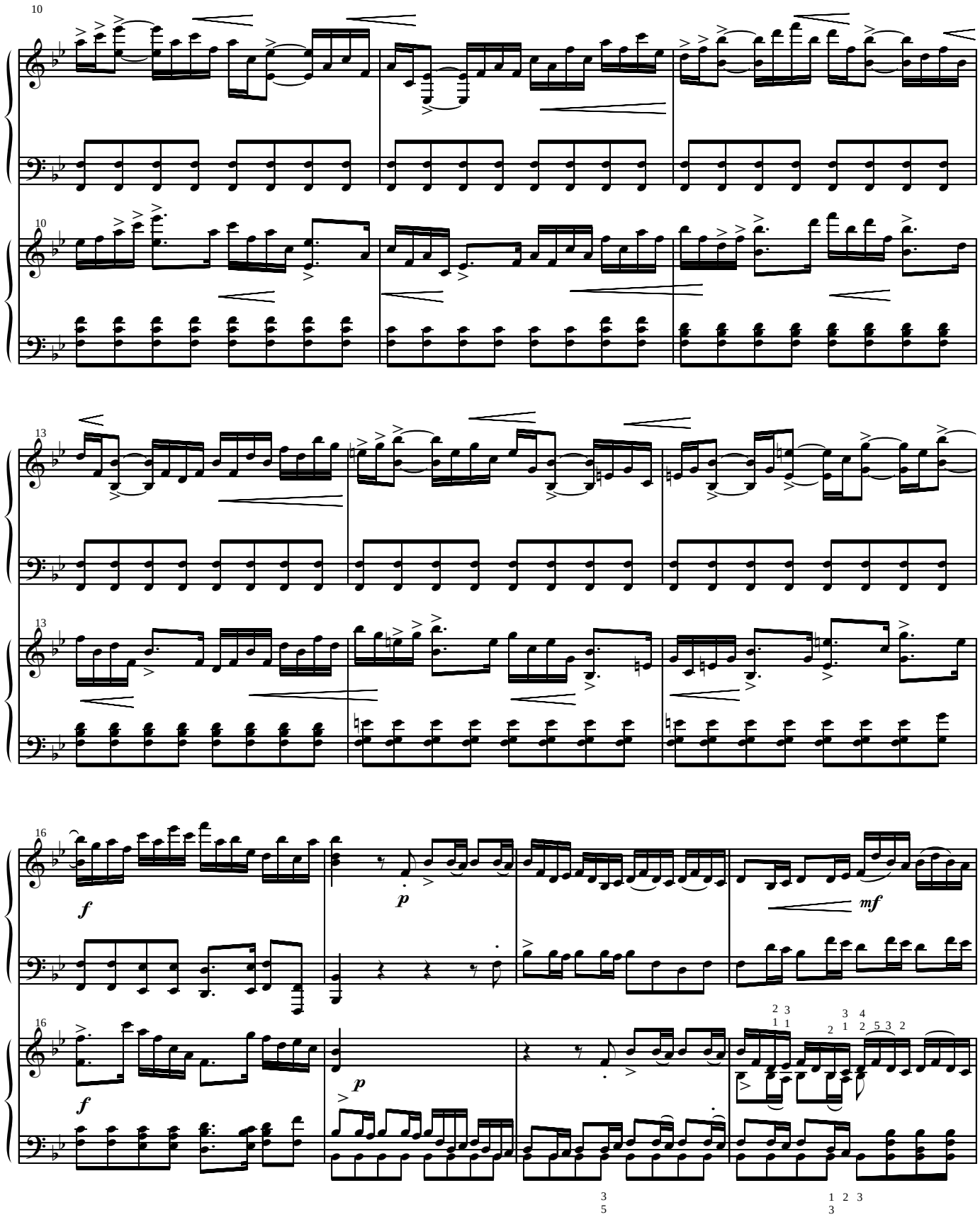
Score of Transcription by Chiang

Brandenburg Concerto No.6

Allegro ♩ = 88

Bach-Chiang

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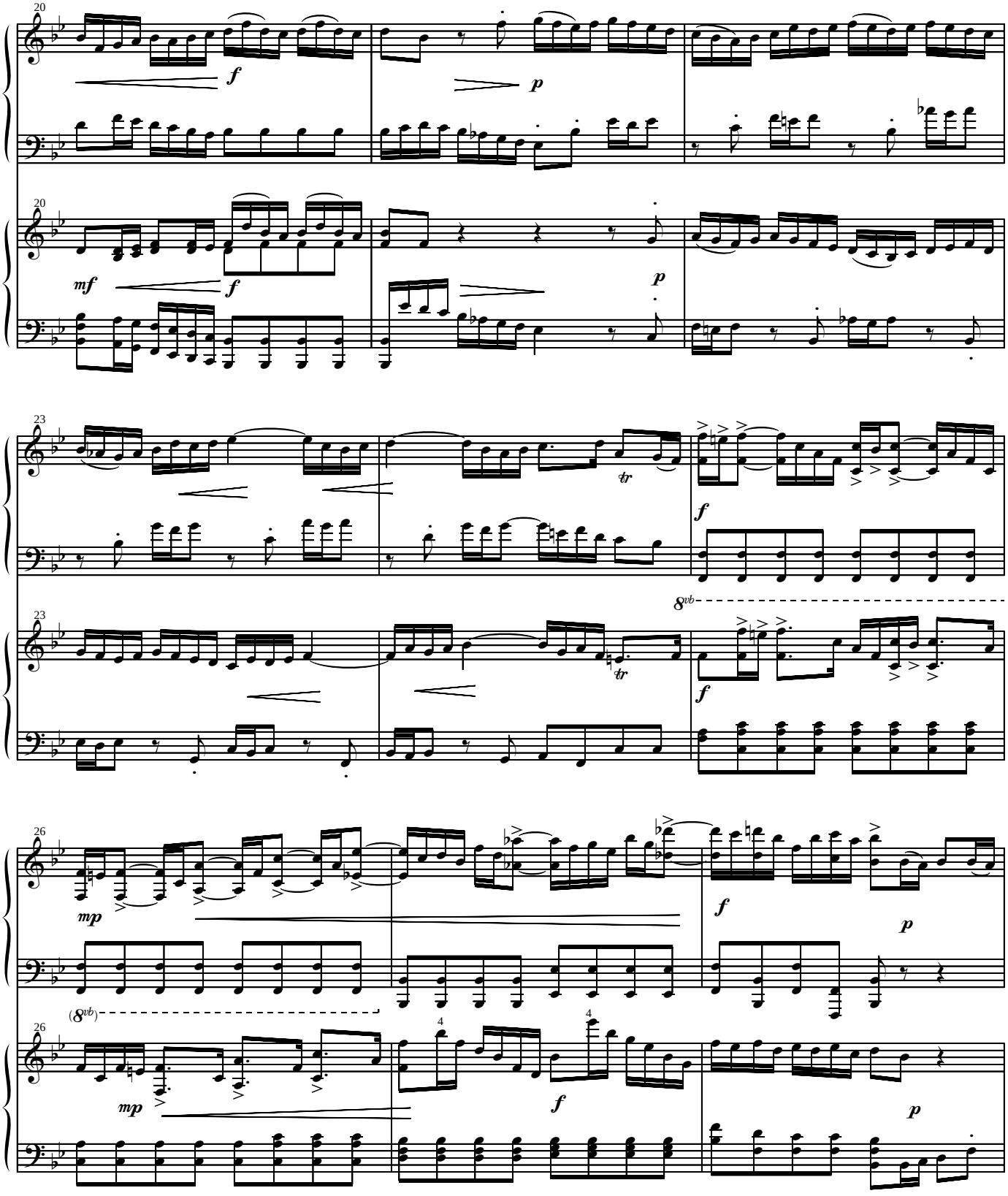
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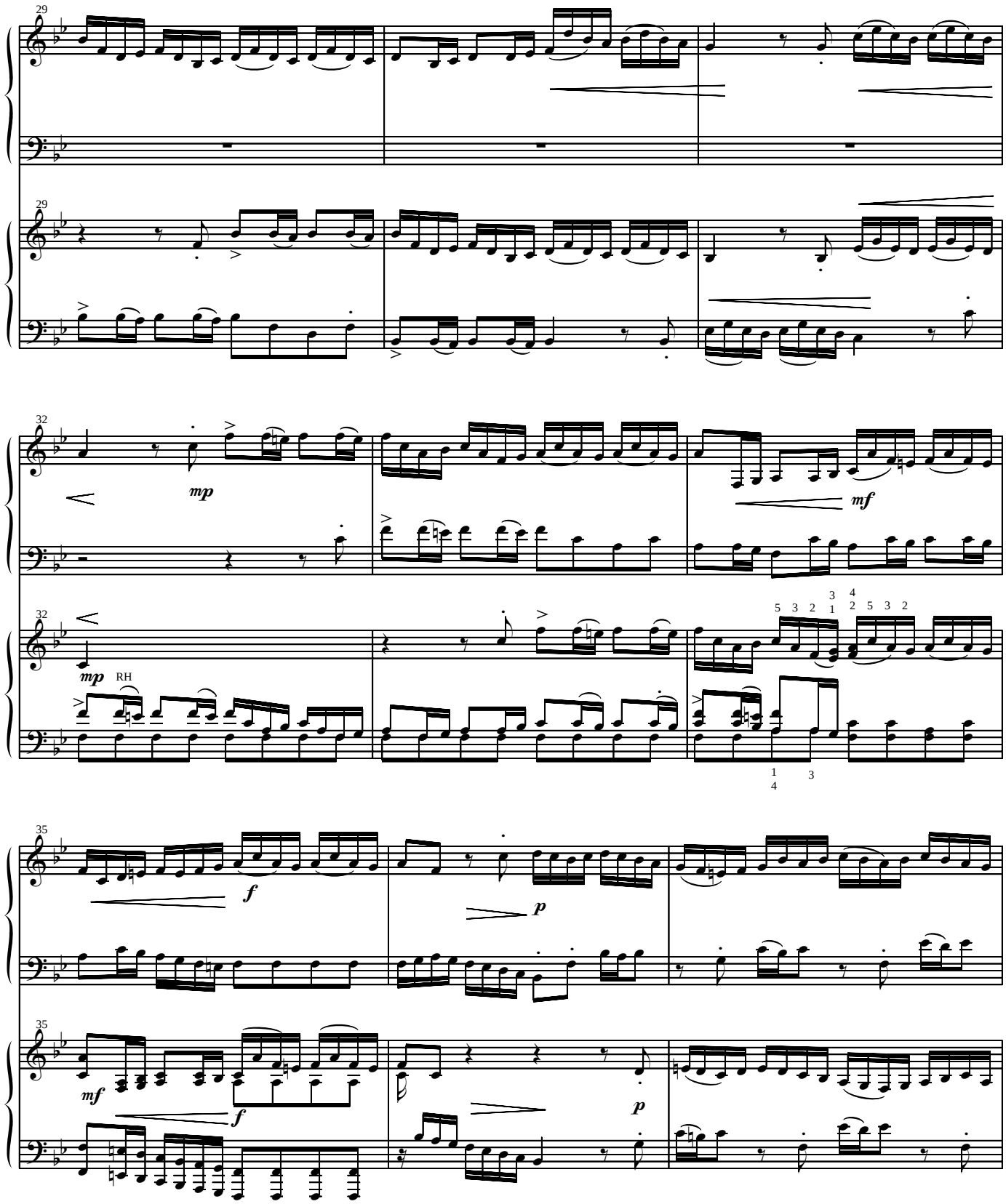
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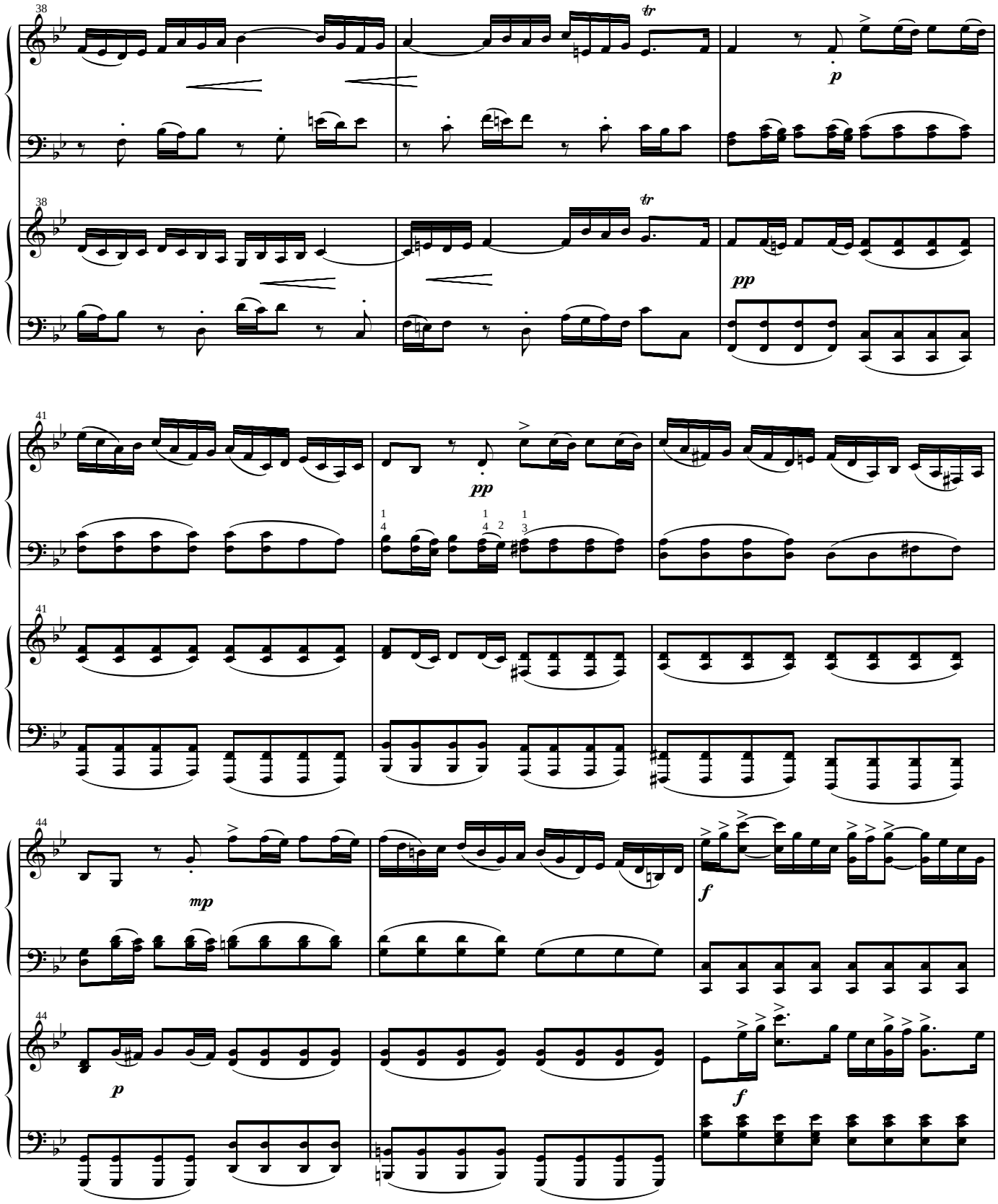
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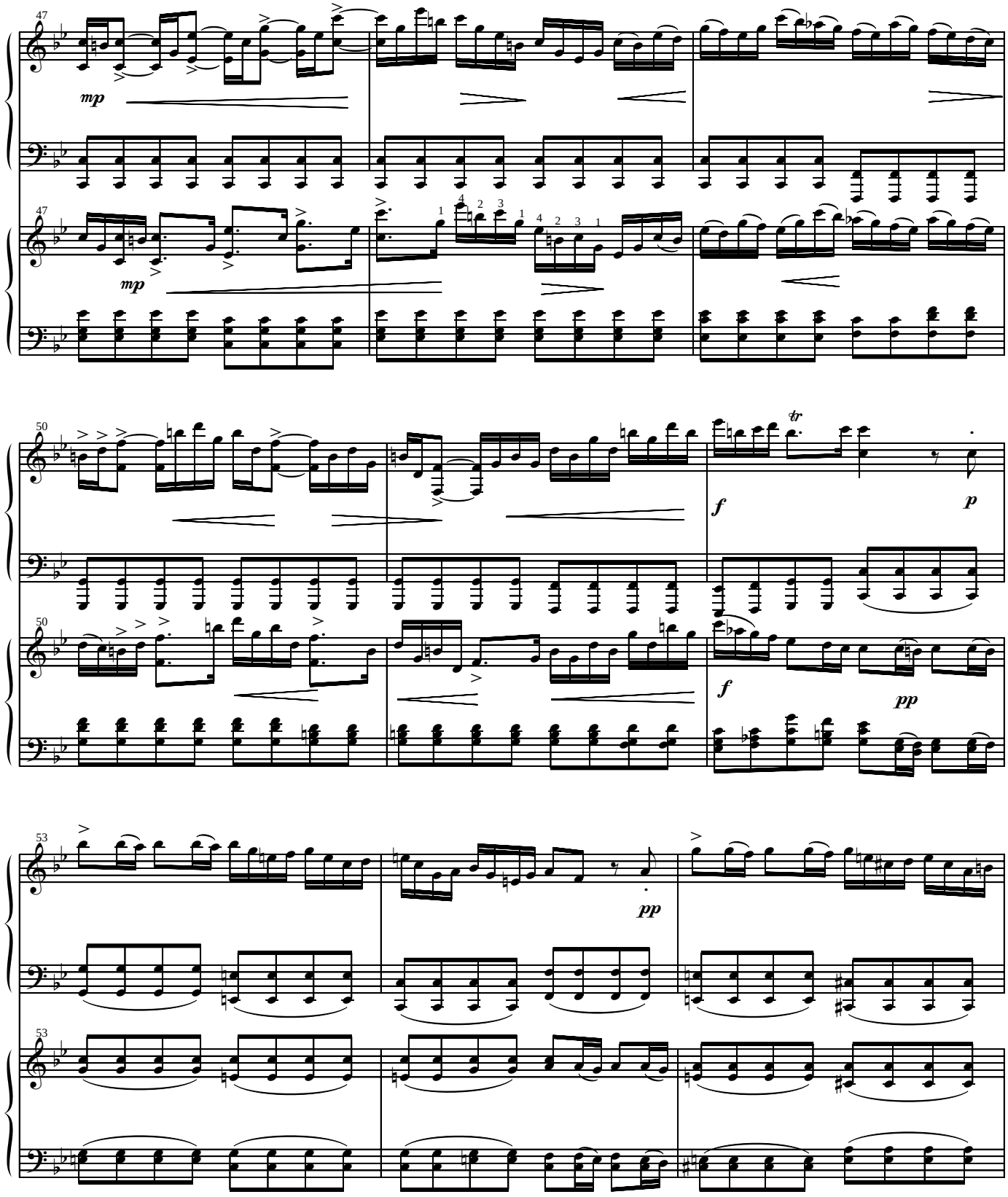
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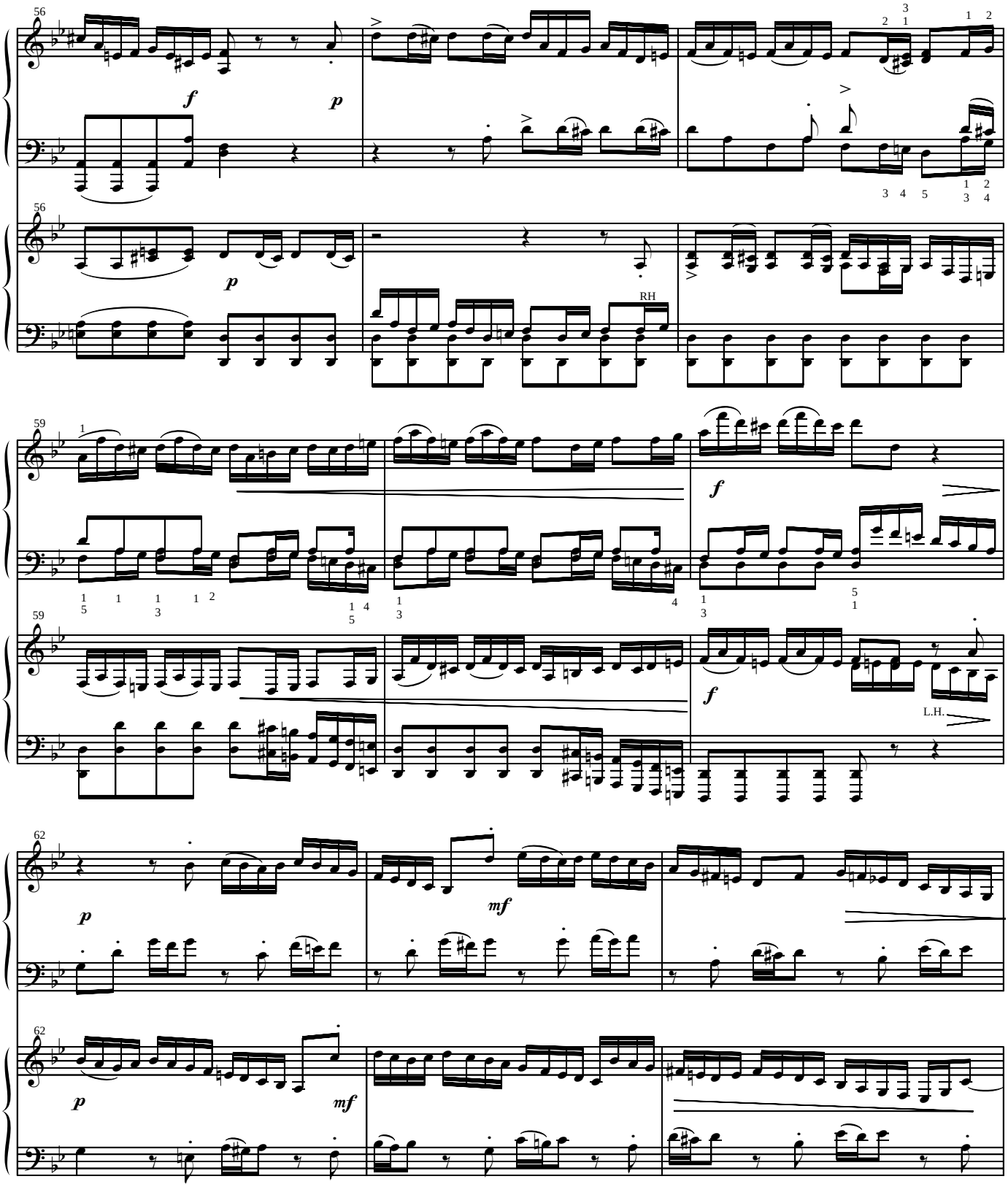
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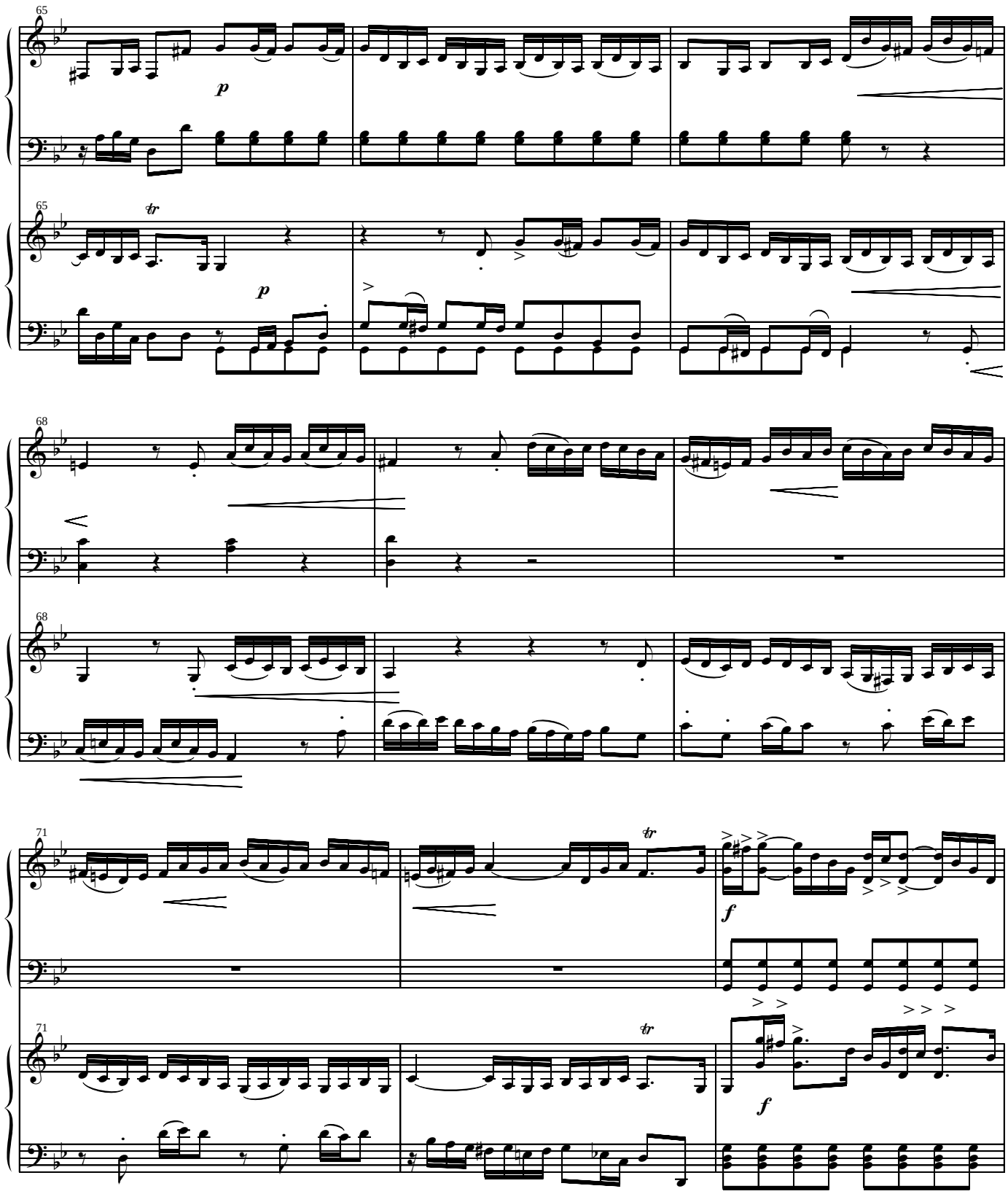
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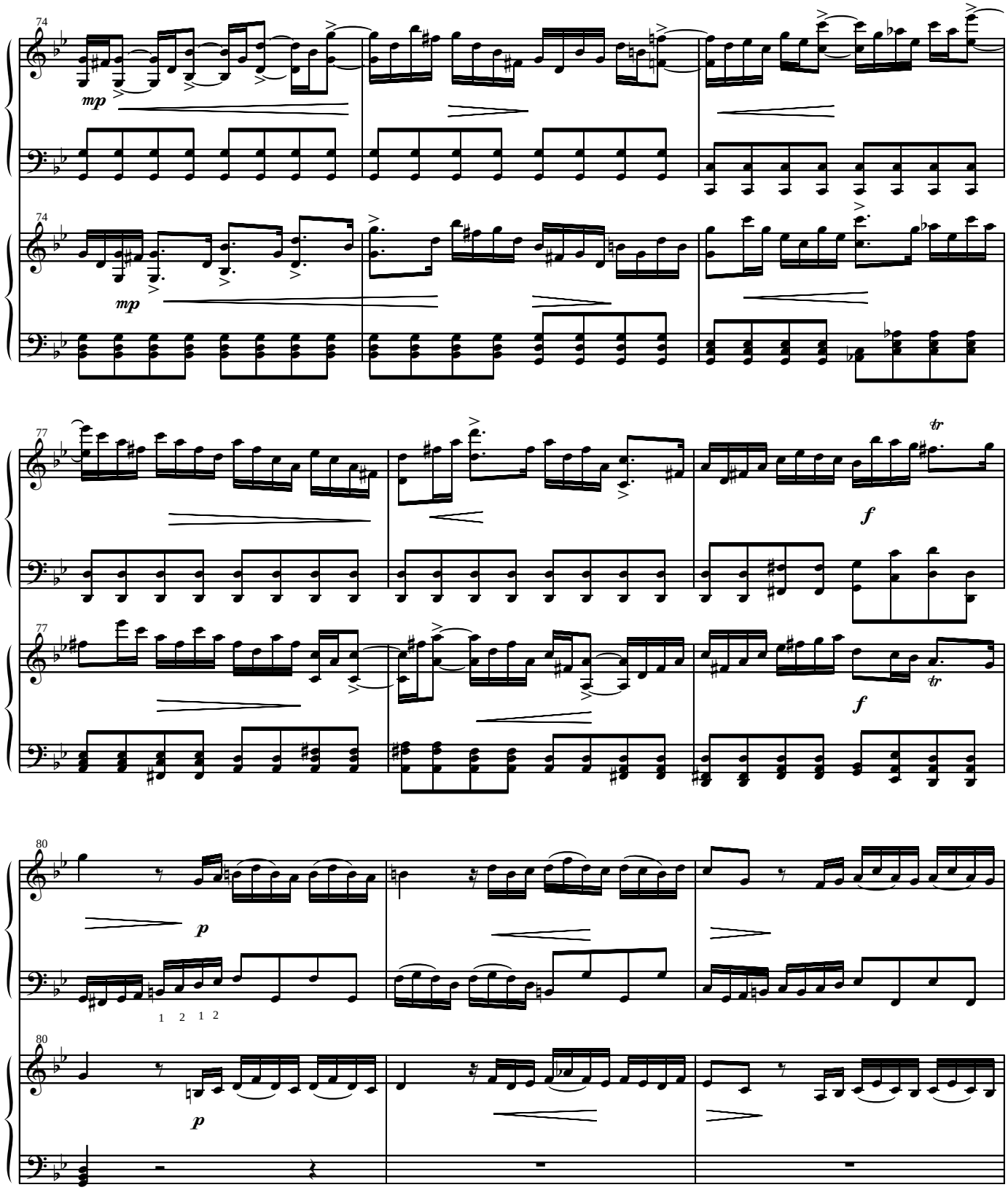
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80
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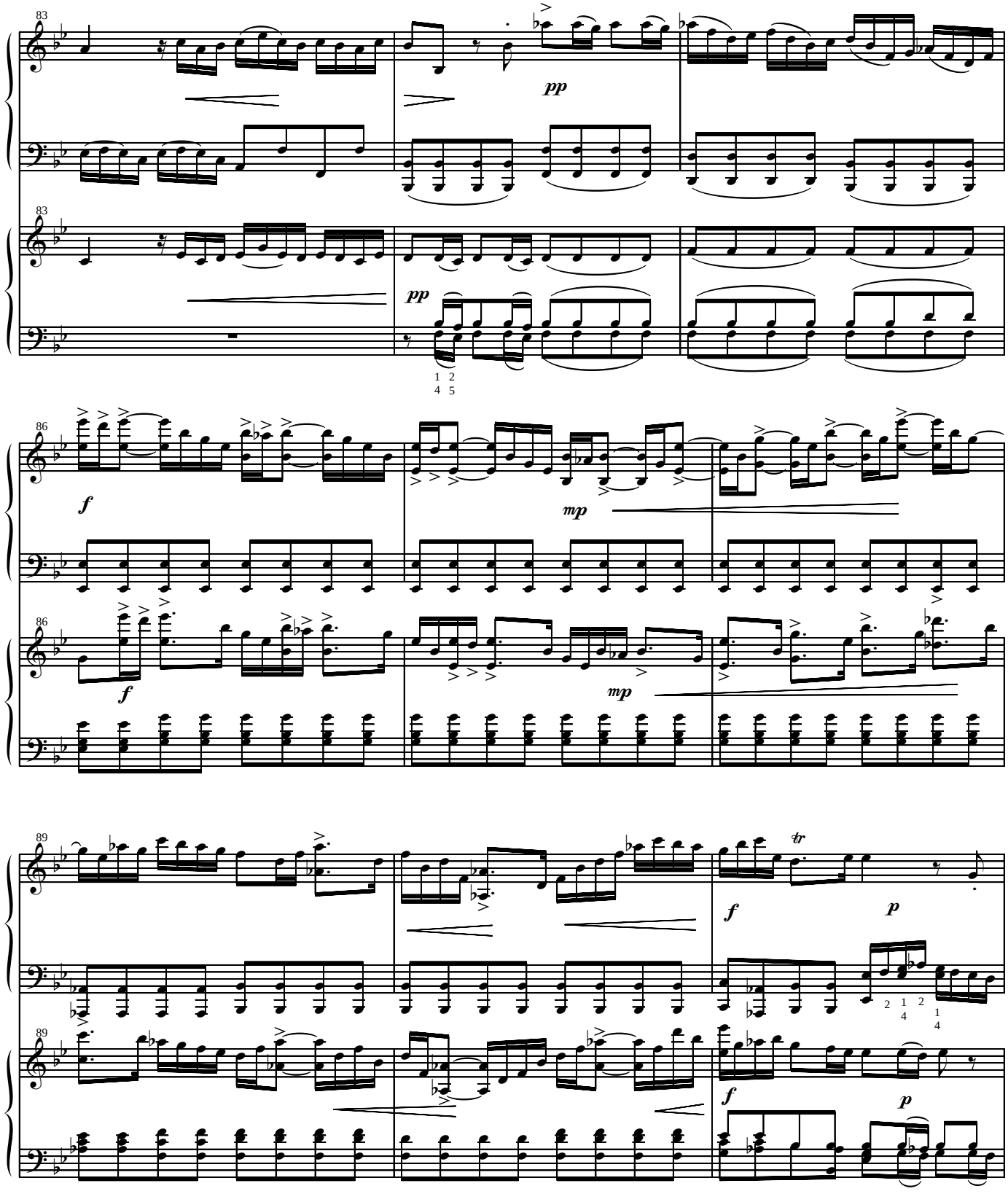
83
pp
83
pp
1 2
4 5
86
f
mp
86
f
mp
89
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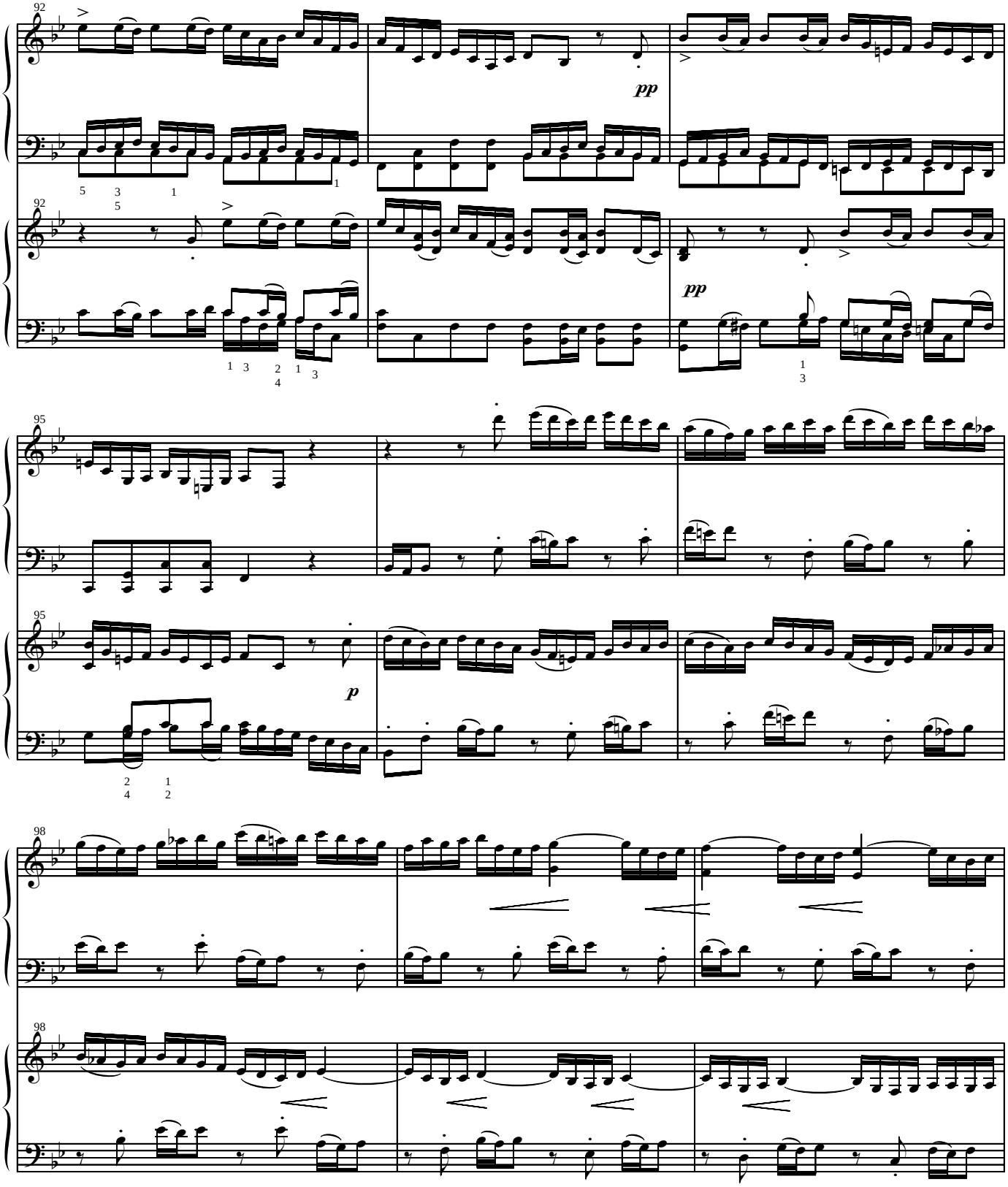
p
2 1 2
4 1
4
89
f
p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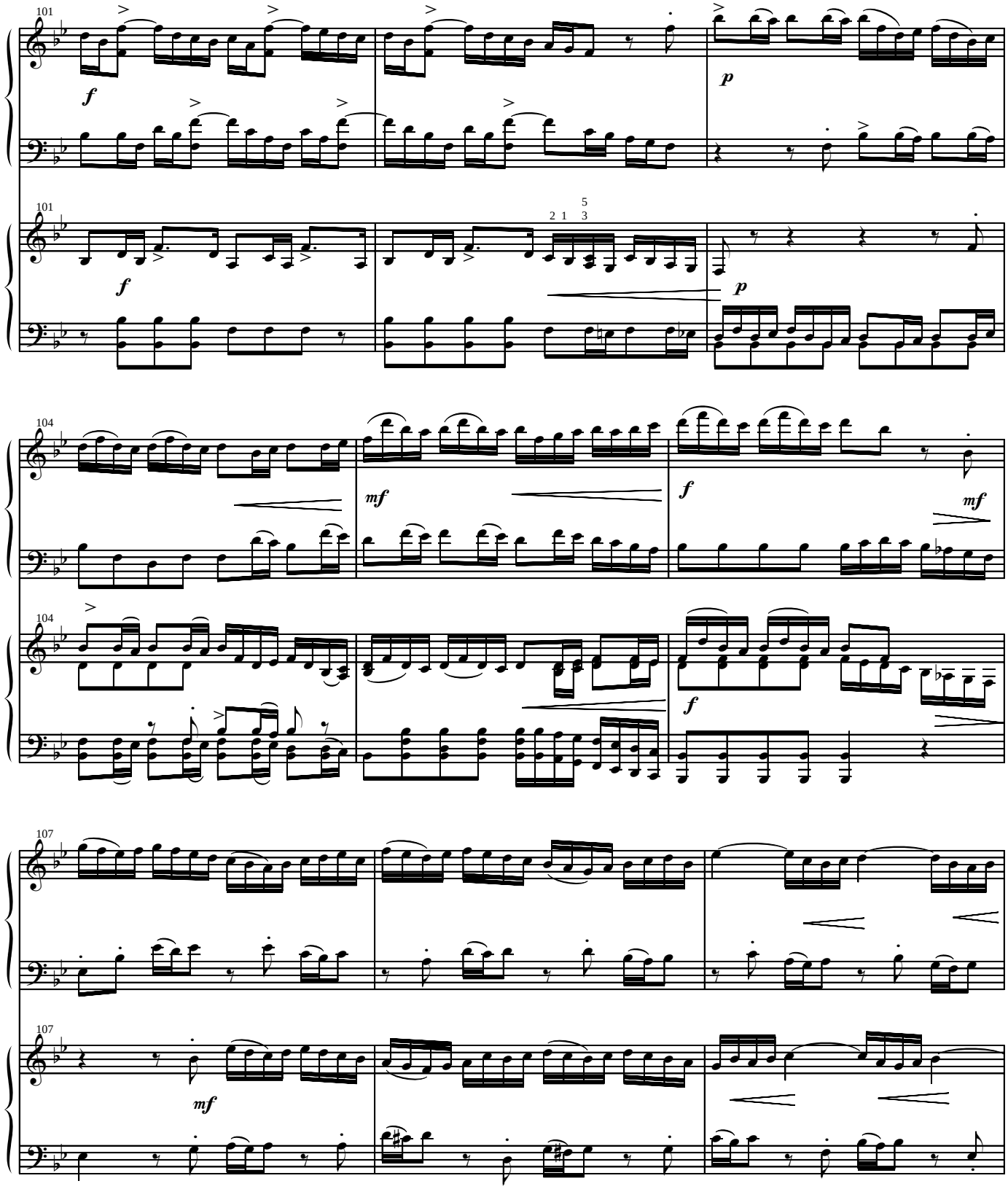
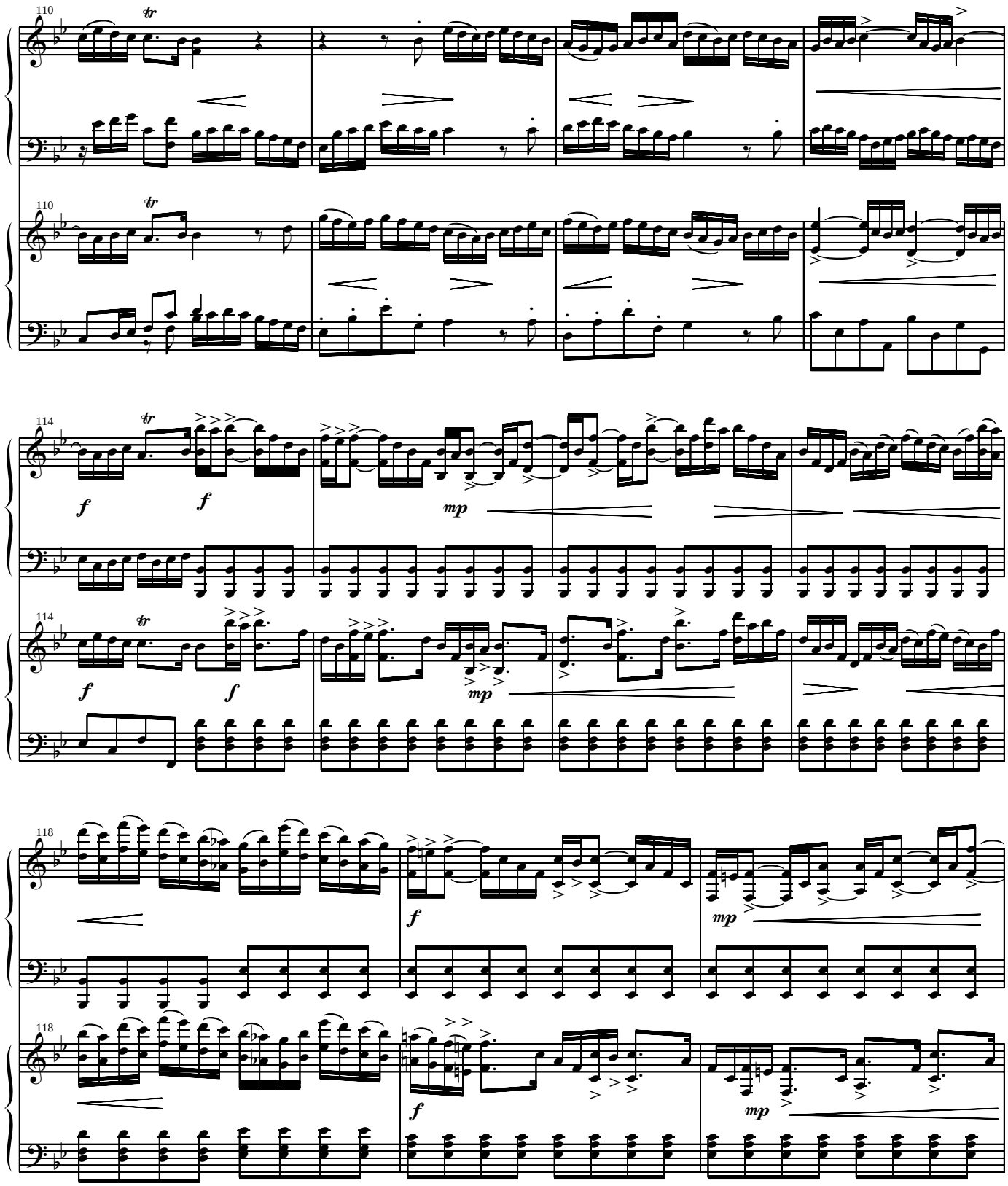
95
p
95
98
98


101
f
p
101
f
2 1 5 3
p
104
mf
f
mf
104
f
107
mf
107


110
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114
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mp
114
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118
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118
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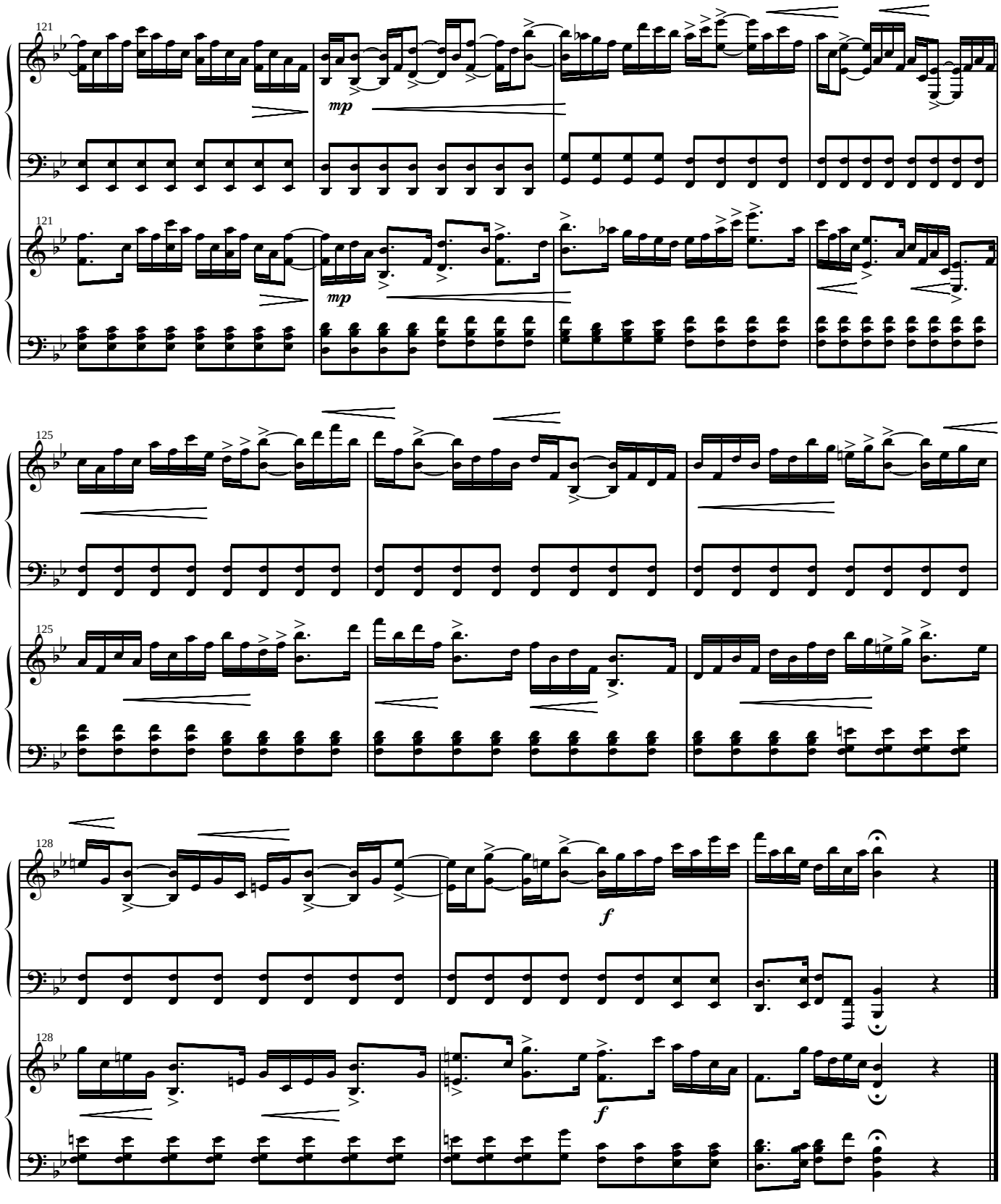
mp


121
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125
125
128
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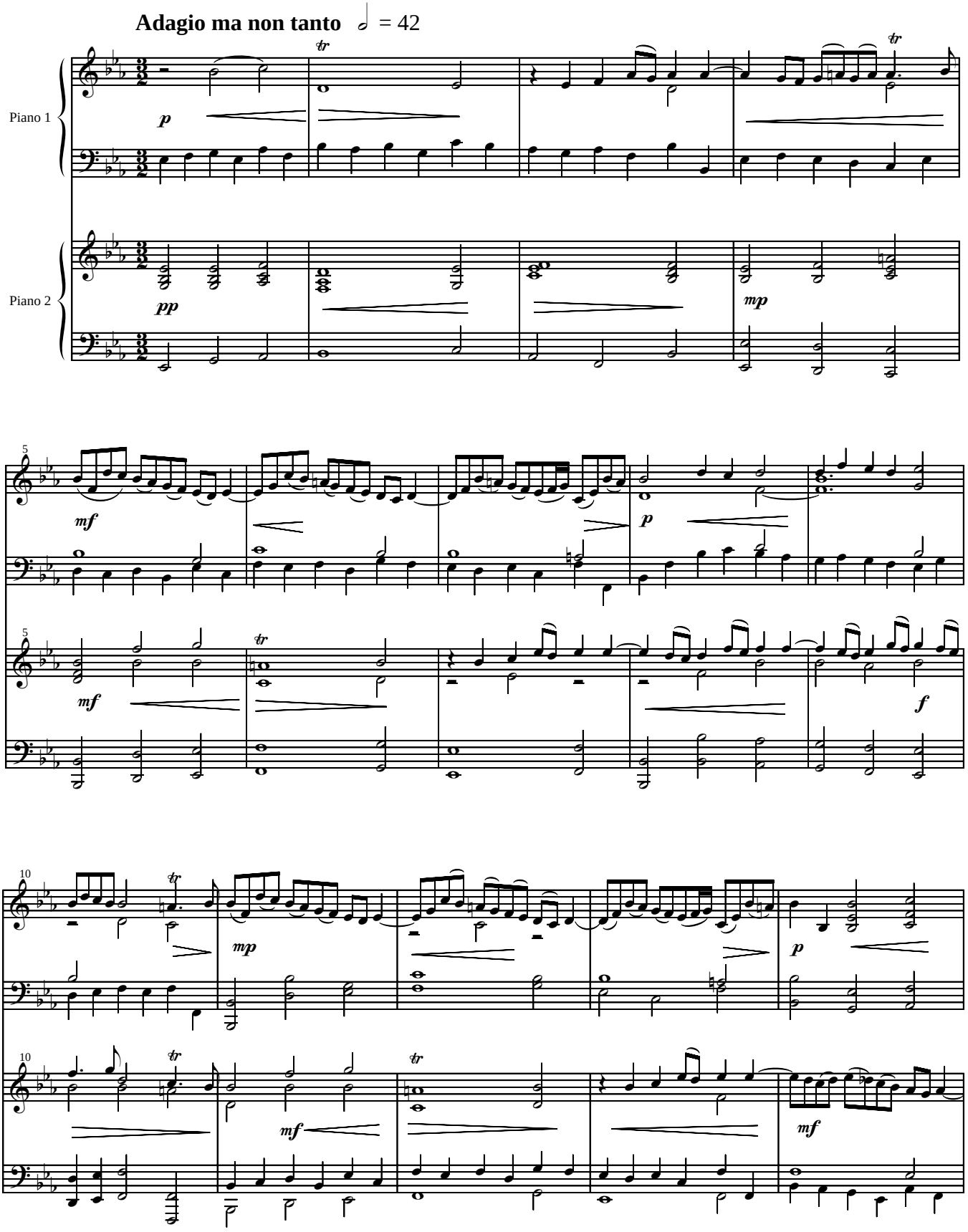
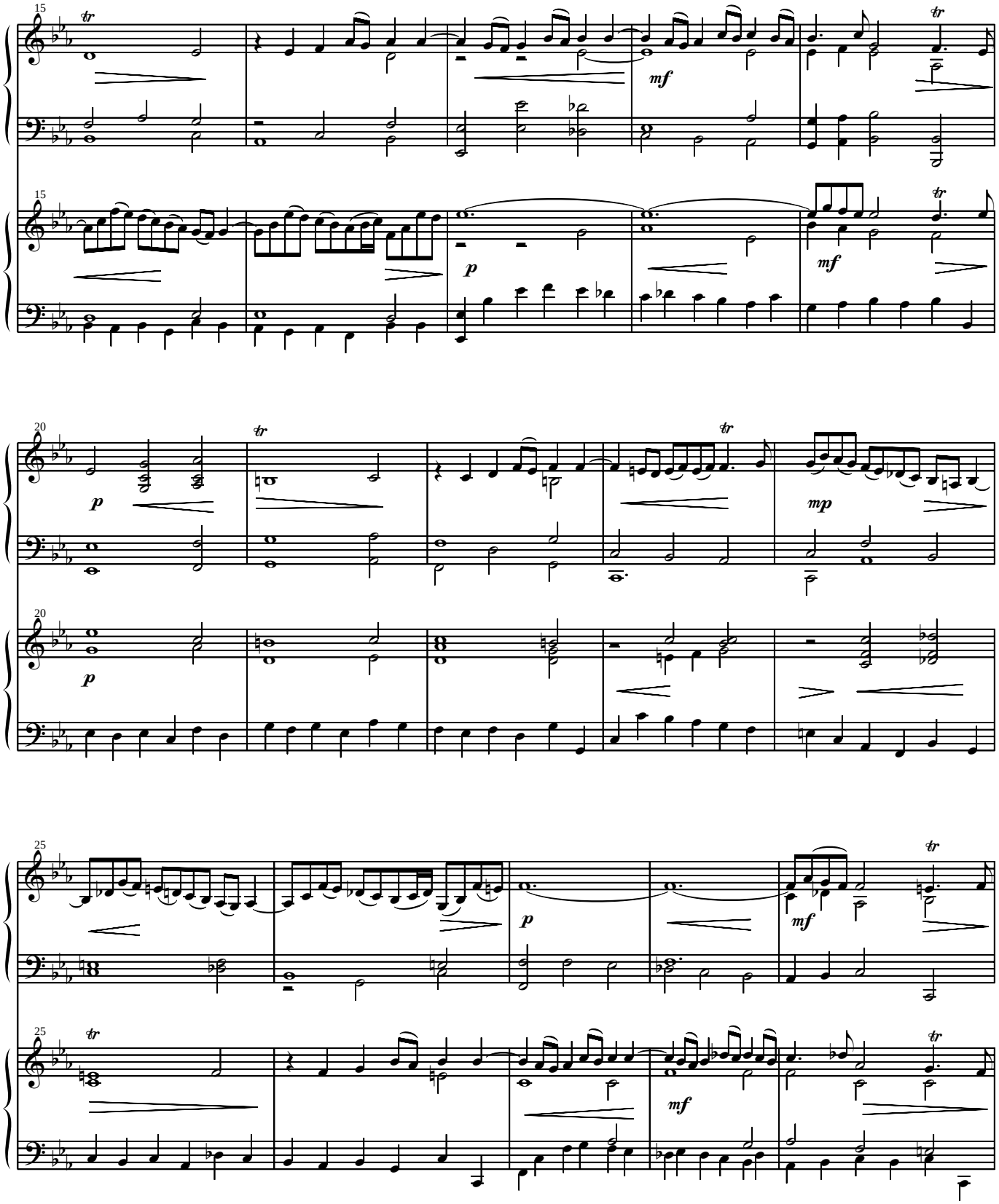
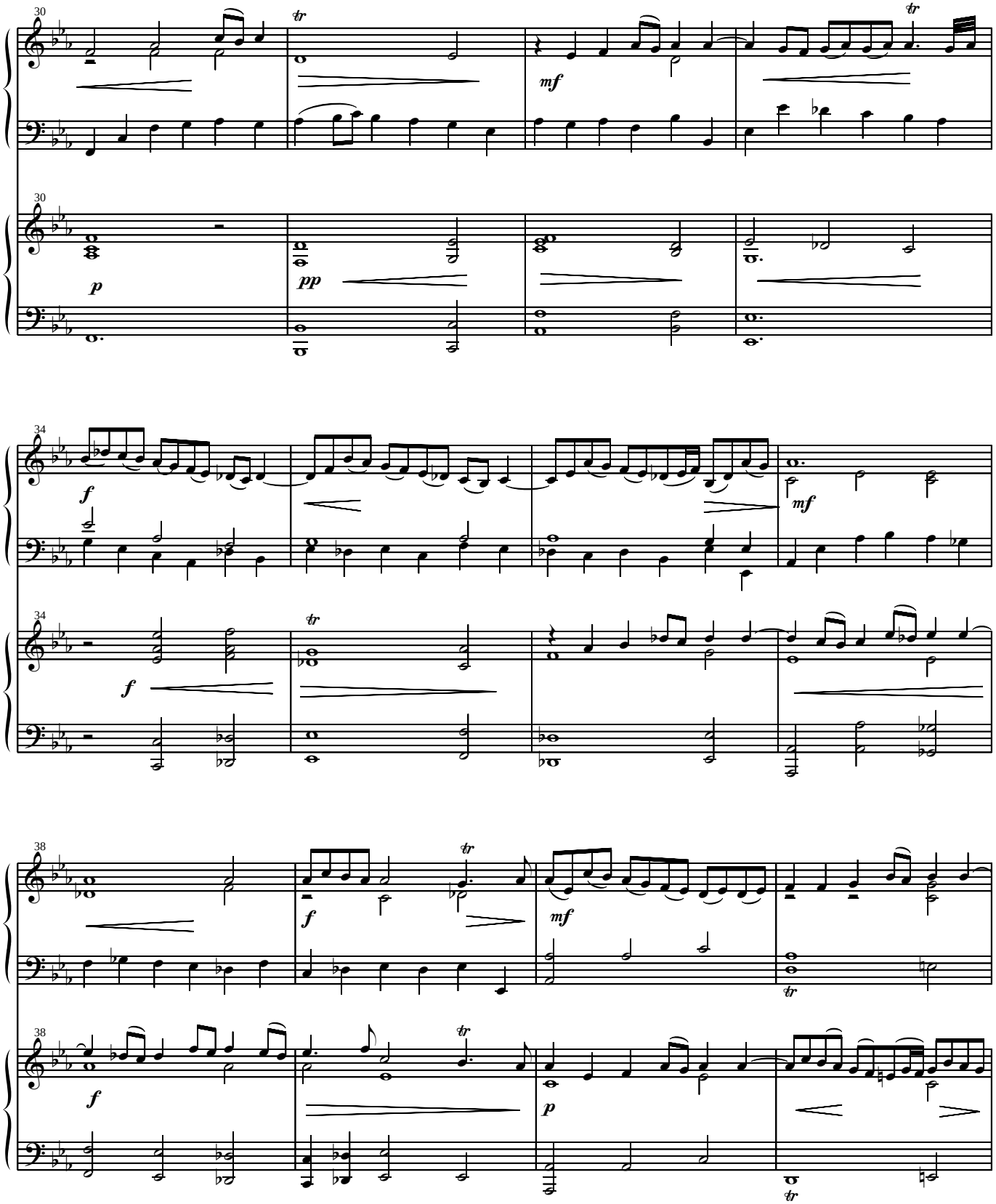
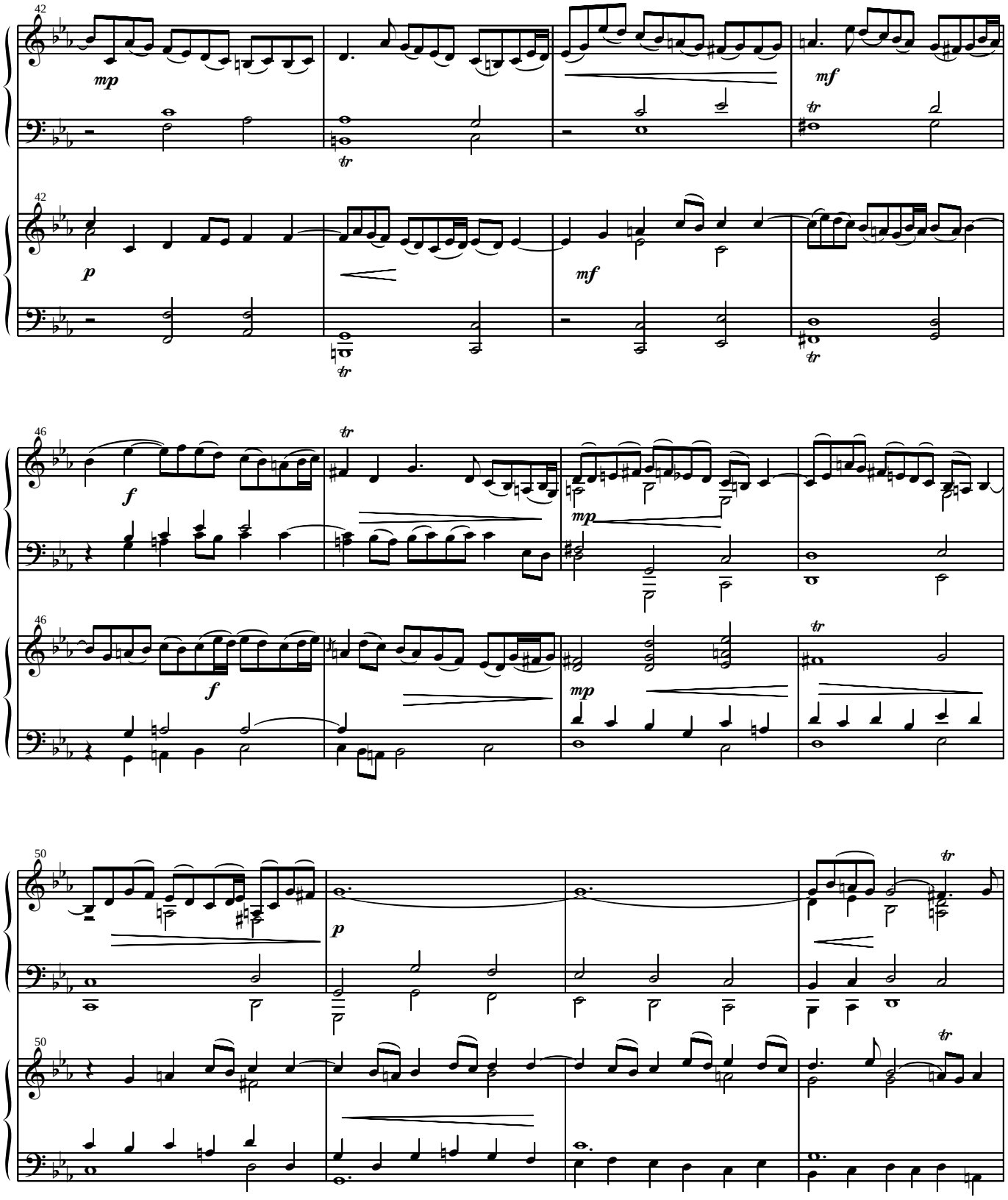
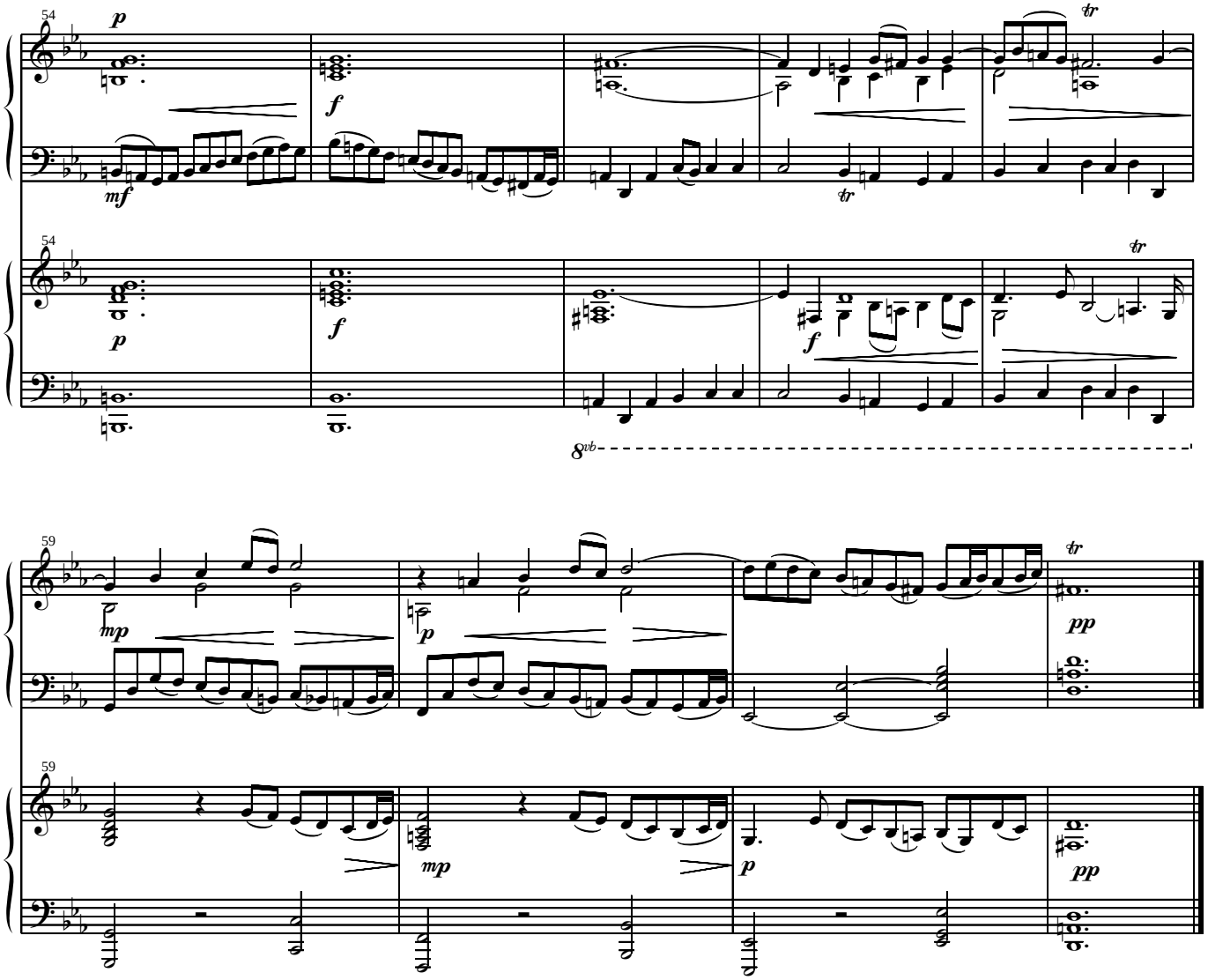
128
f

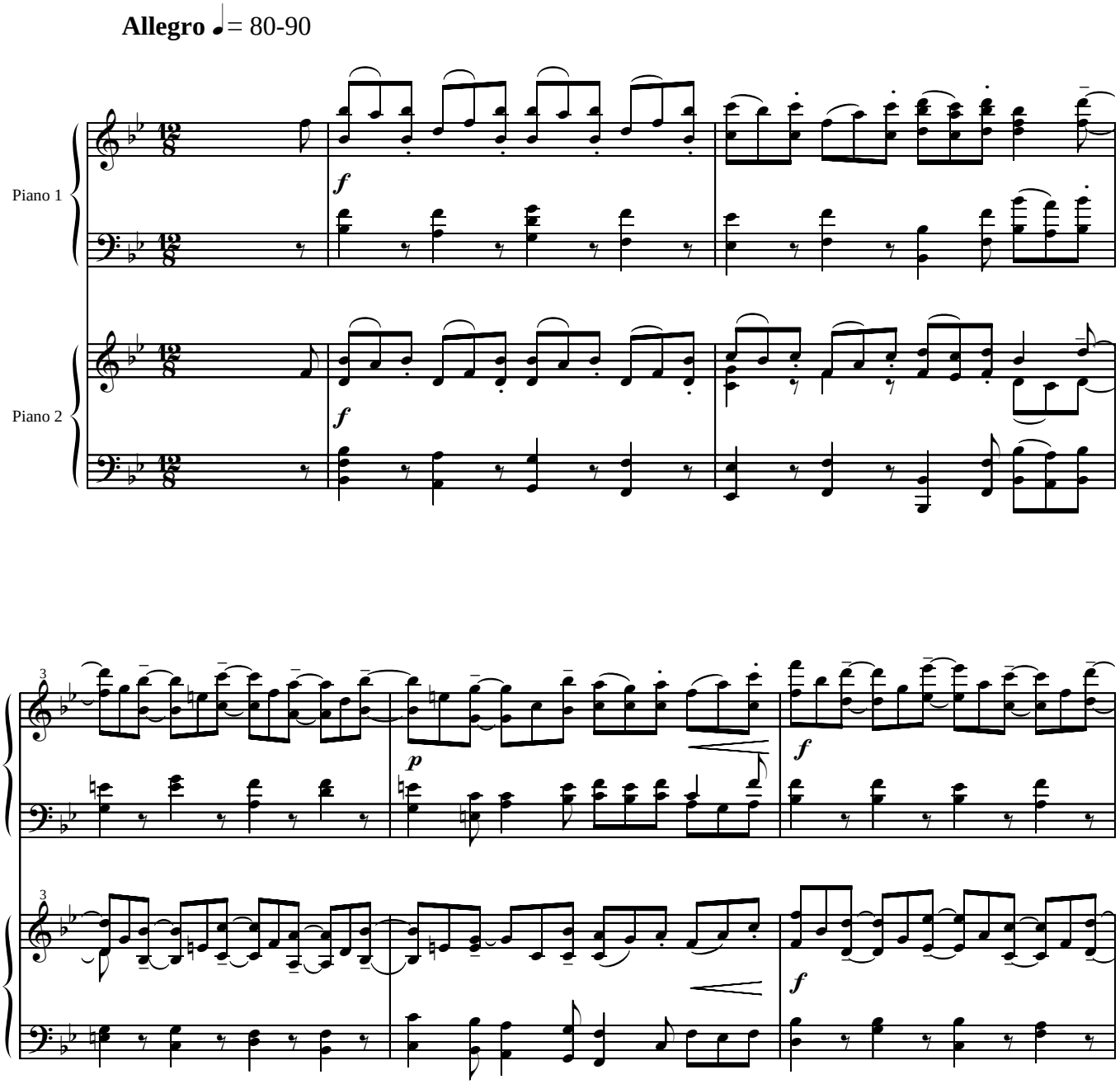

Adagio ma non tanto ♩ = 42
Piano 1
Piano 2
p
pp
mp
mf
f

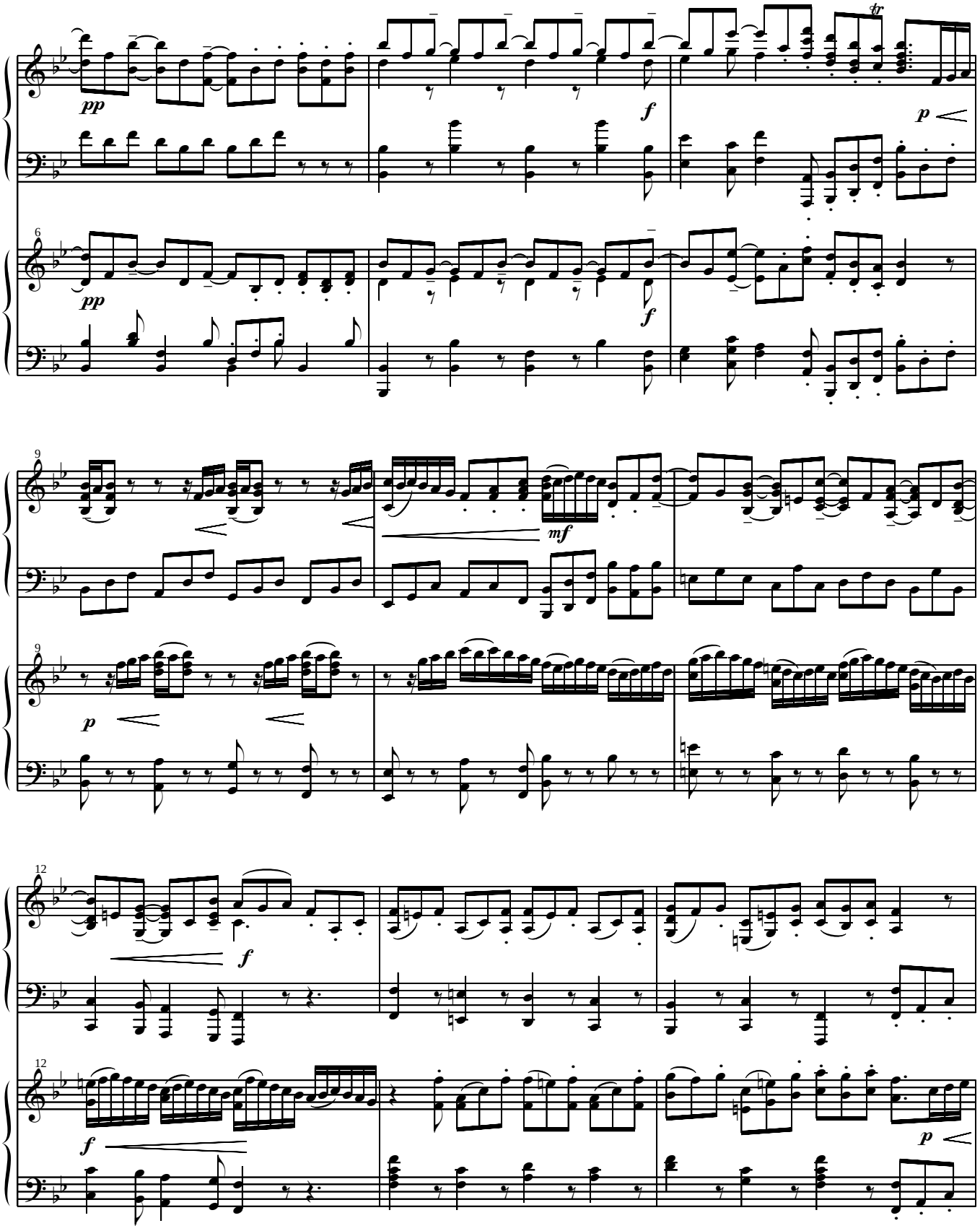

15
tr
mf
p
mf
tr
20
p
tr
tr
mp
p
25
p
tr
mf
tr

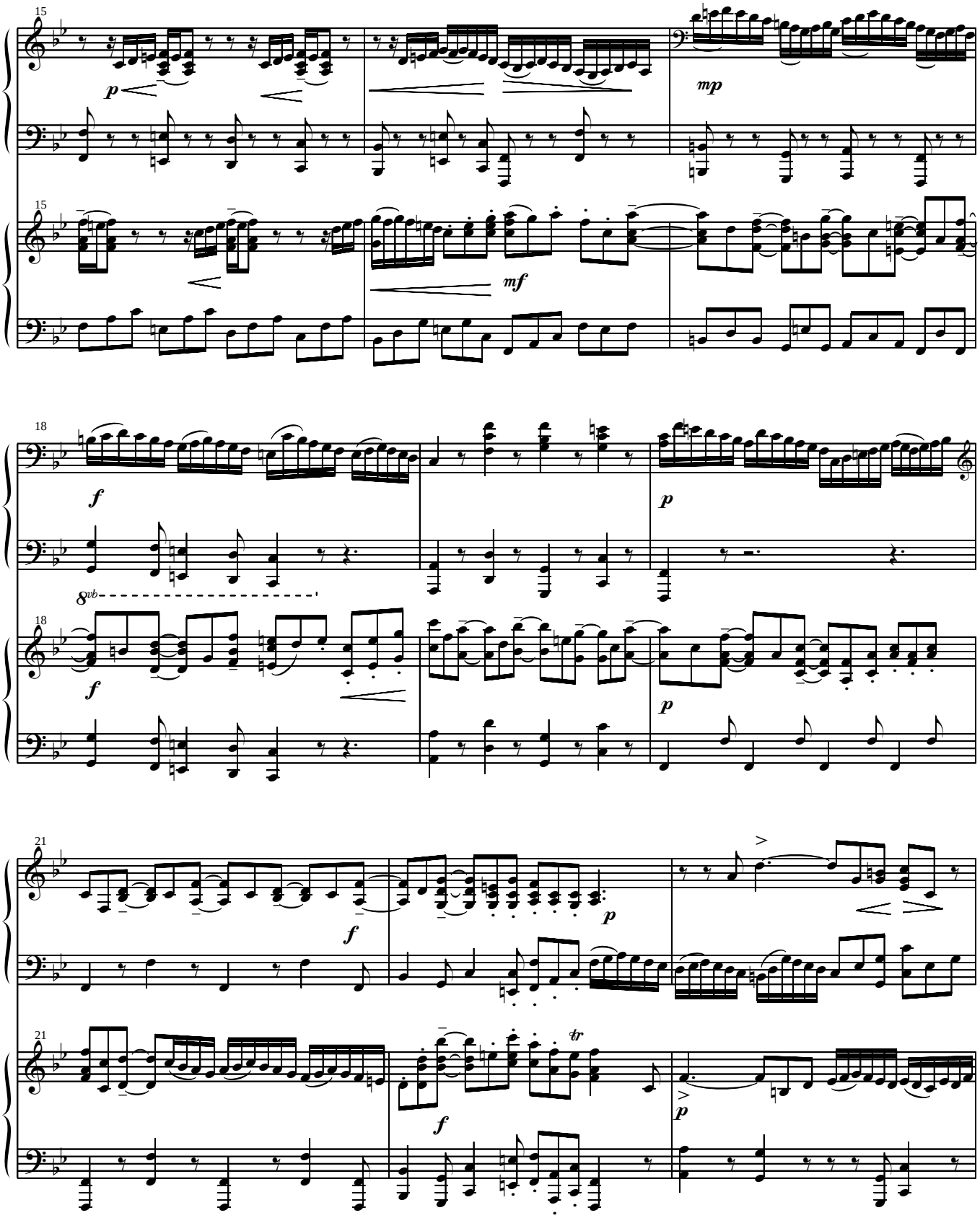

30
tr
mf
tr
30
p
pp
34
f
mf
34
f
tr
38
tr
f
mf
tr
38
f
tr
p
tr

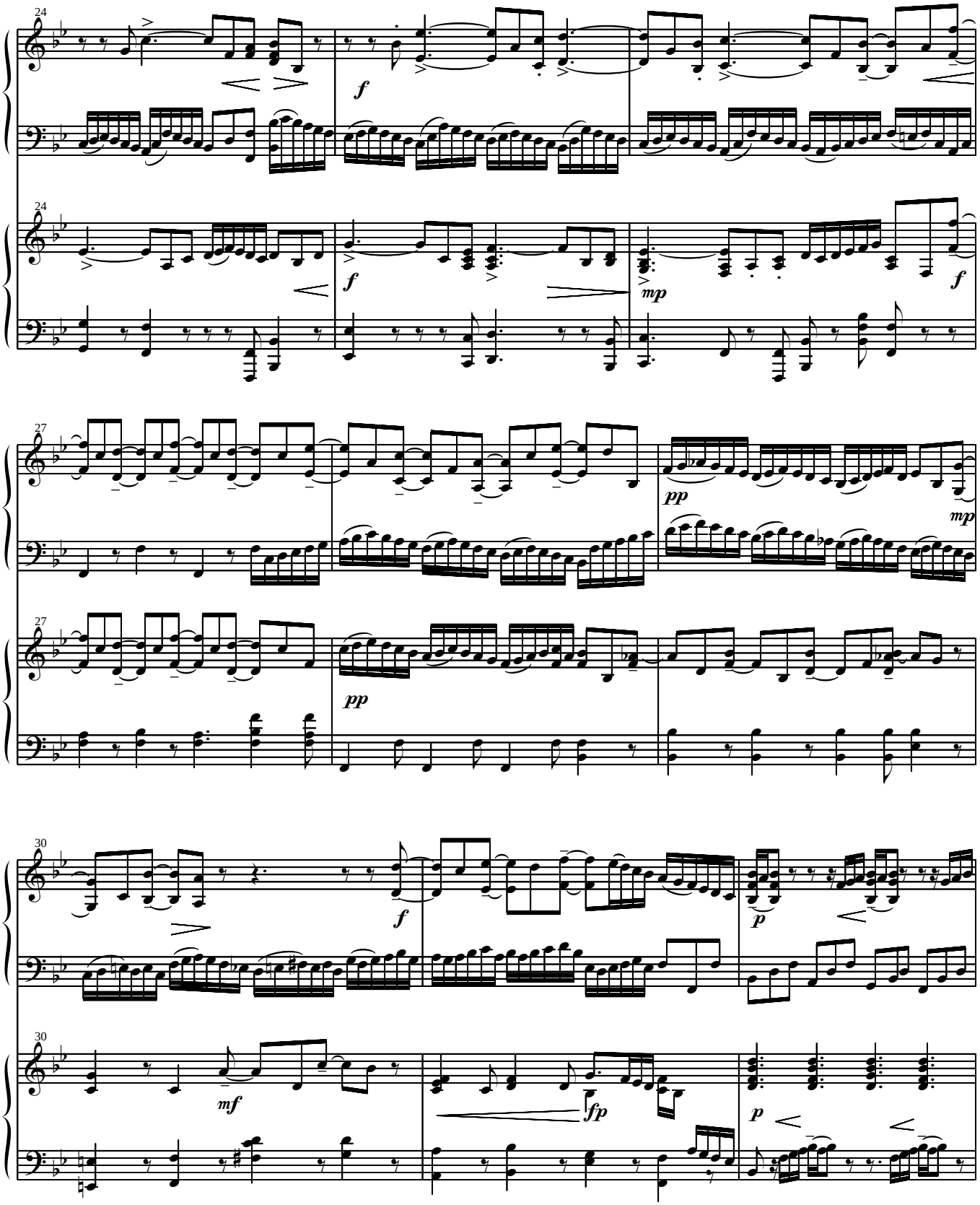

42
mp
tr
mf
tr
42
p
mf
tr
46
f
tr
mp
46
f
mp
tr
50
p
tr
50
tr

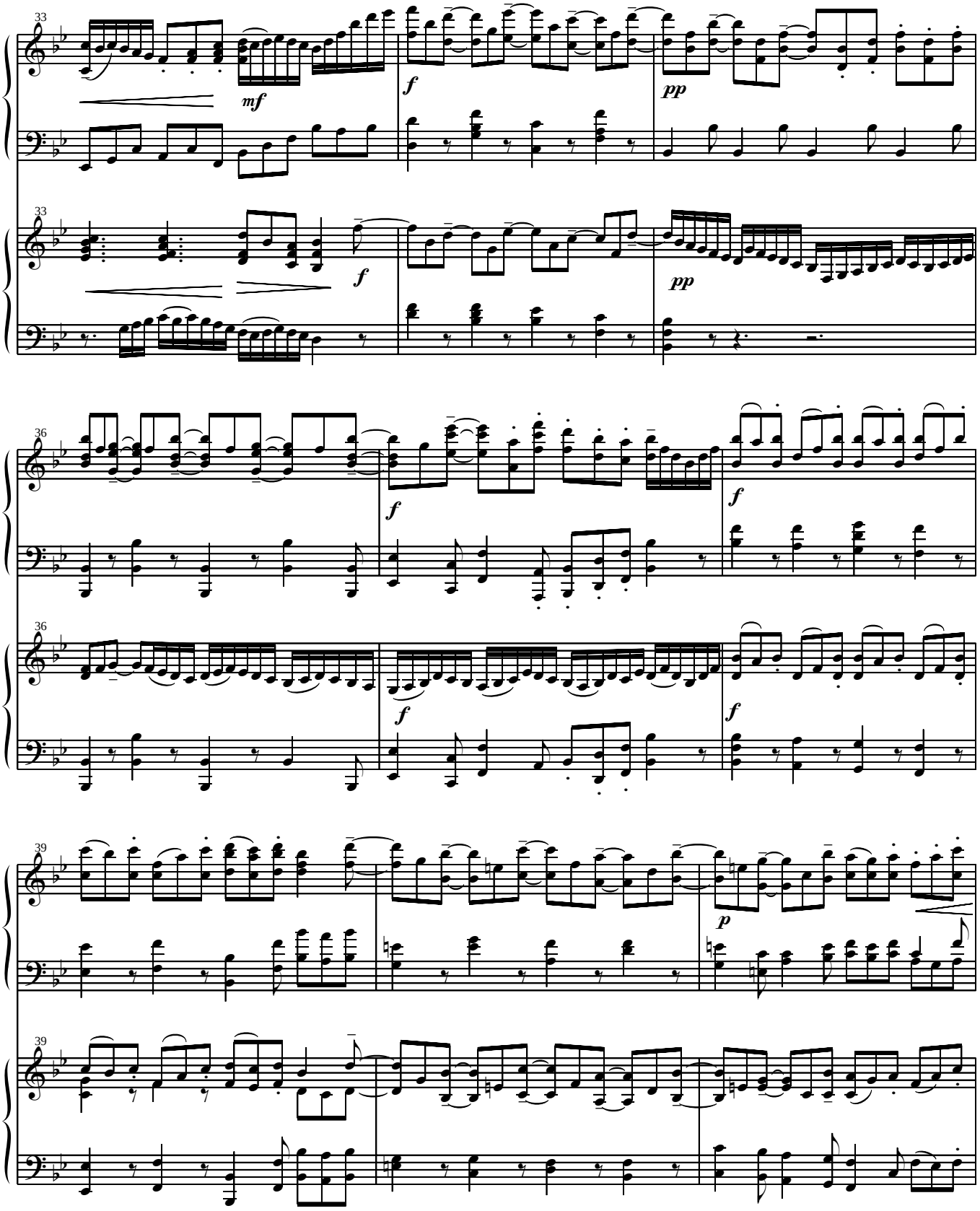

54
p
mf
f
tr
54
p
f
tr
8vb
59
mp
p
tr
pp
59
mp
p
pp

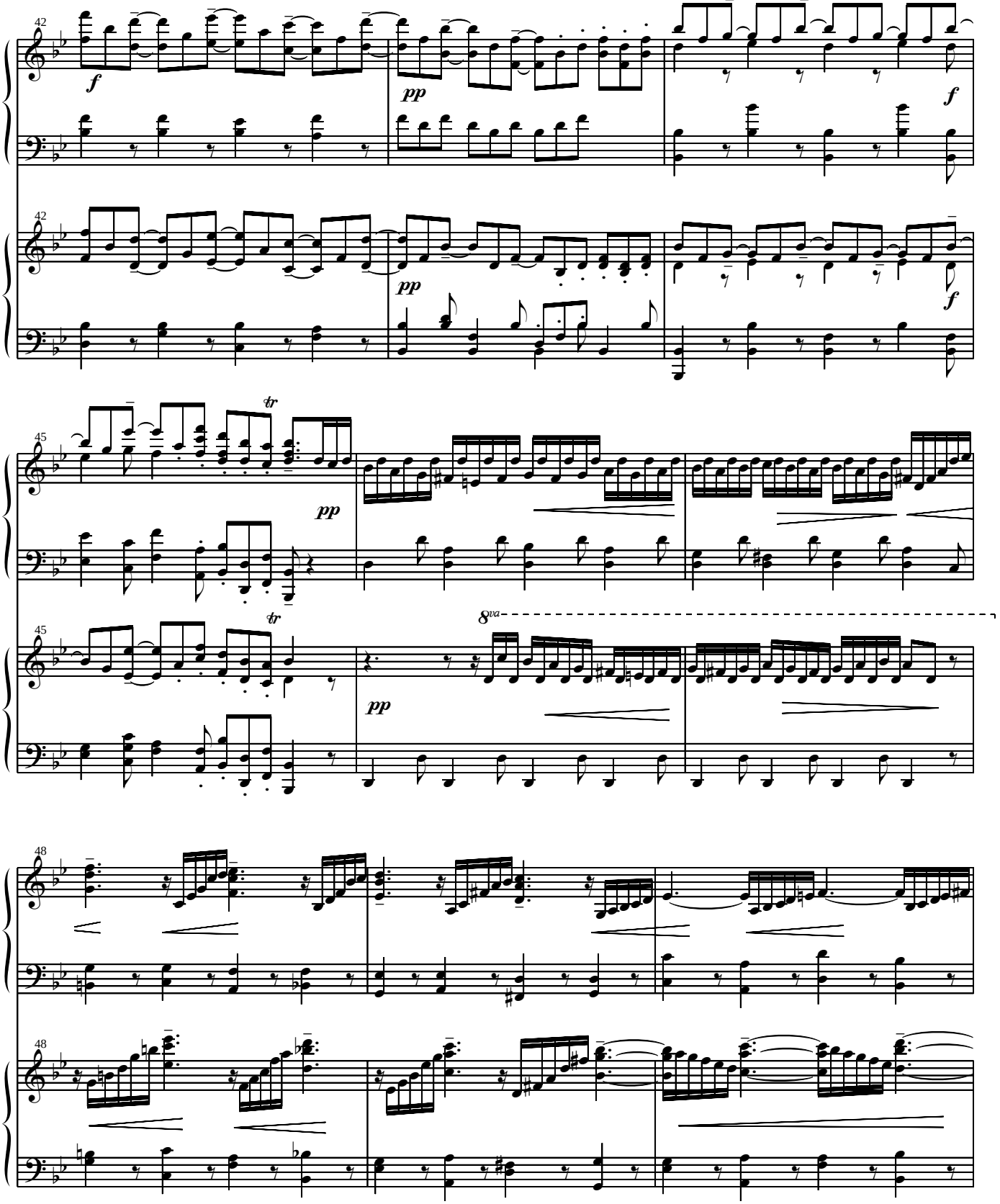

Allegro ♩= 80-90
Piano 1
Piano 2
f
f
3
p
f
3
f

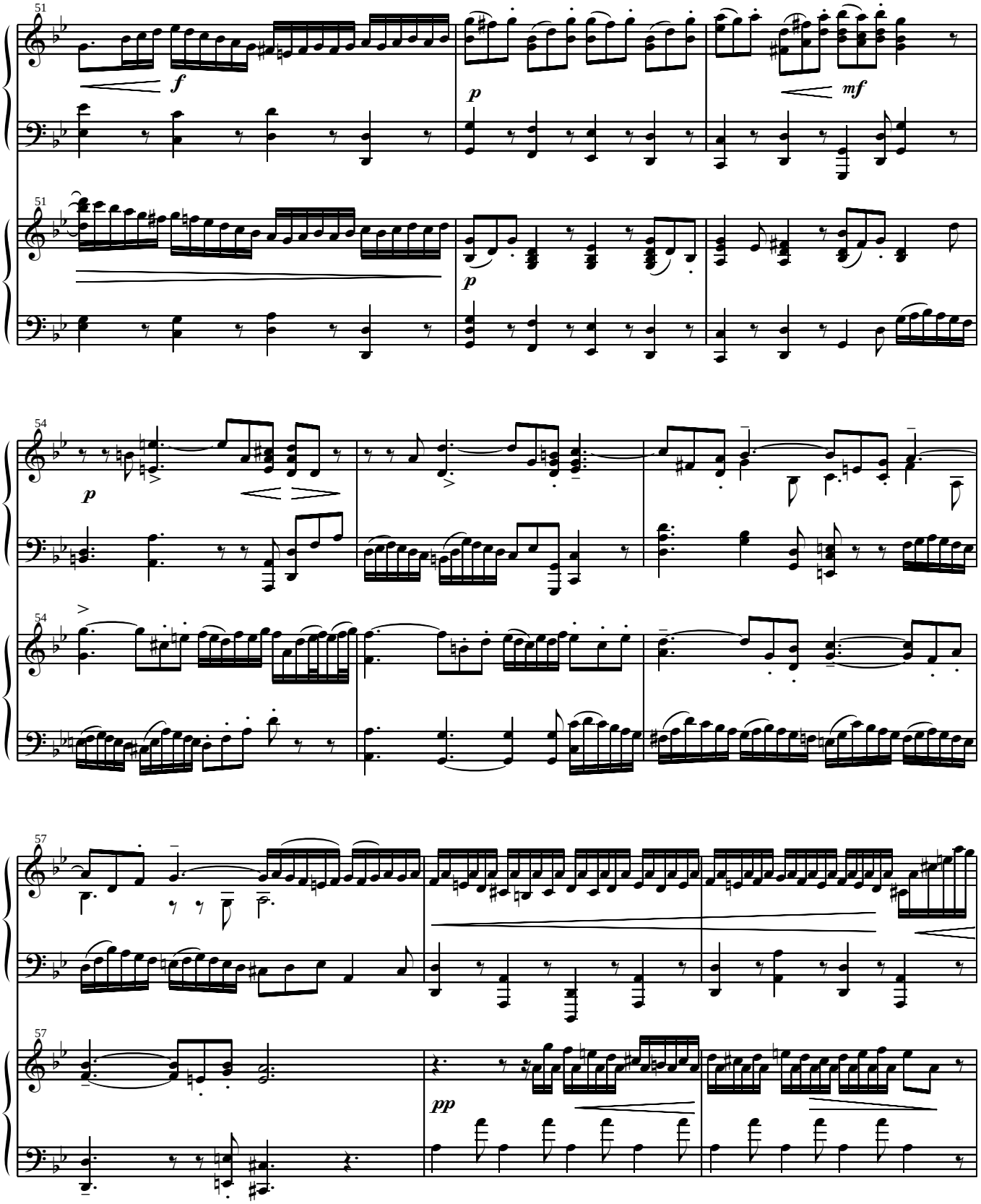

pp
f
p
6
pp
f
9
p
mf
9
p
12
f
f
12
f
p


15
p
mp
15
mf
18
f
p
8vb
18
f
p
21
f
p
21
tr
f
p


24
f
24
f
mp
f
27
pp
mp
27
pp
30
f
p
30
mf
fp
p


33
mf
f
pp
33
f
pp
36
f
f
36
f
f
39
p
39


42
f
pp
f
42
pp
f
45
tr
pp
45
tr
8va
pp
48
48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p
mf
51
p
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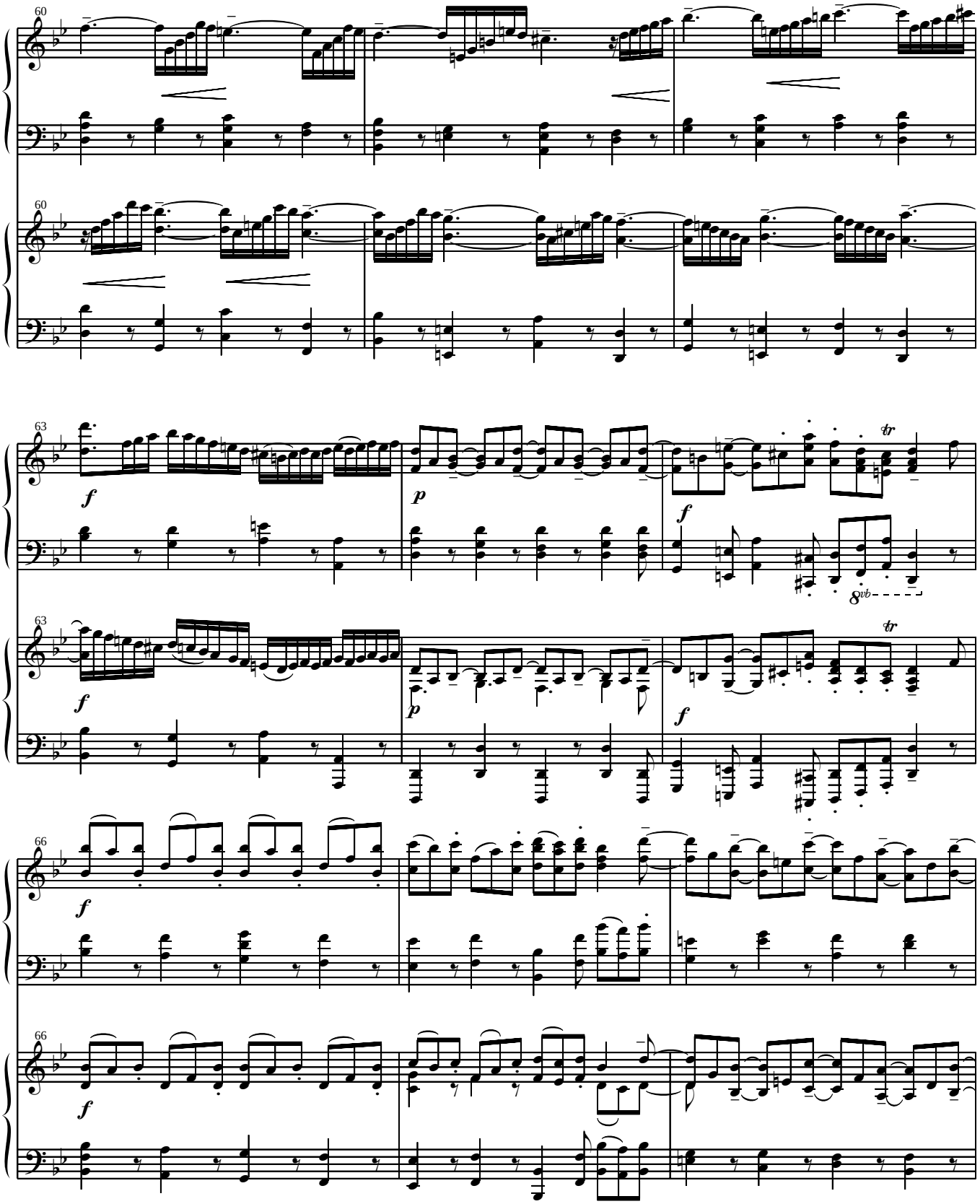
p
54
57
57
pp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63
63
66
66
f
p
f
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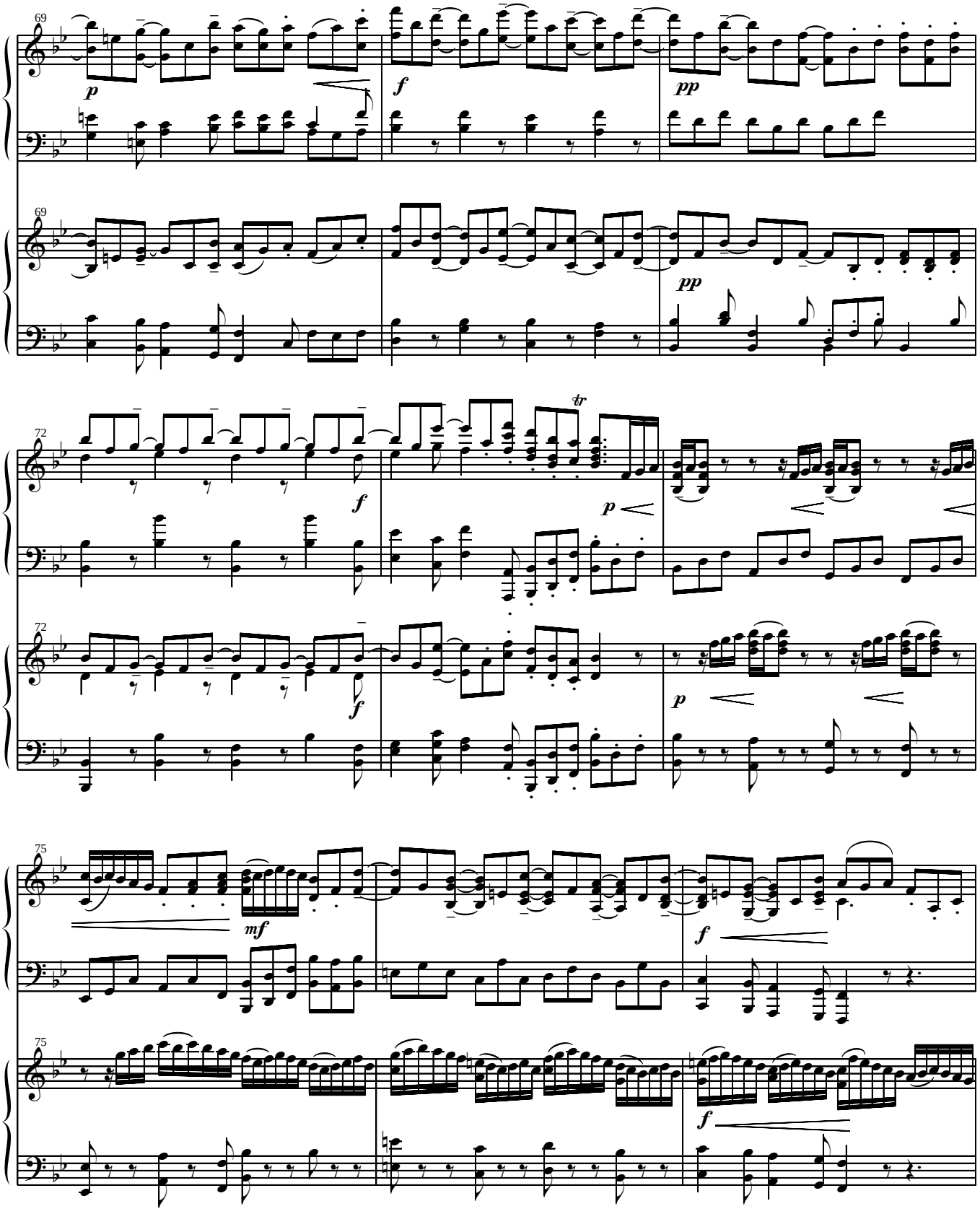
8vb


69
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f
pp
69
pp
72
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p
72
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75
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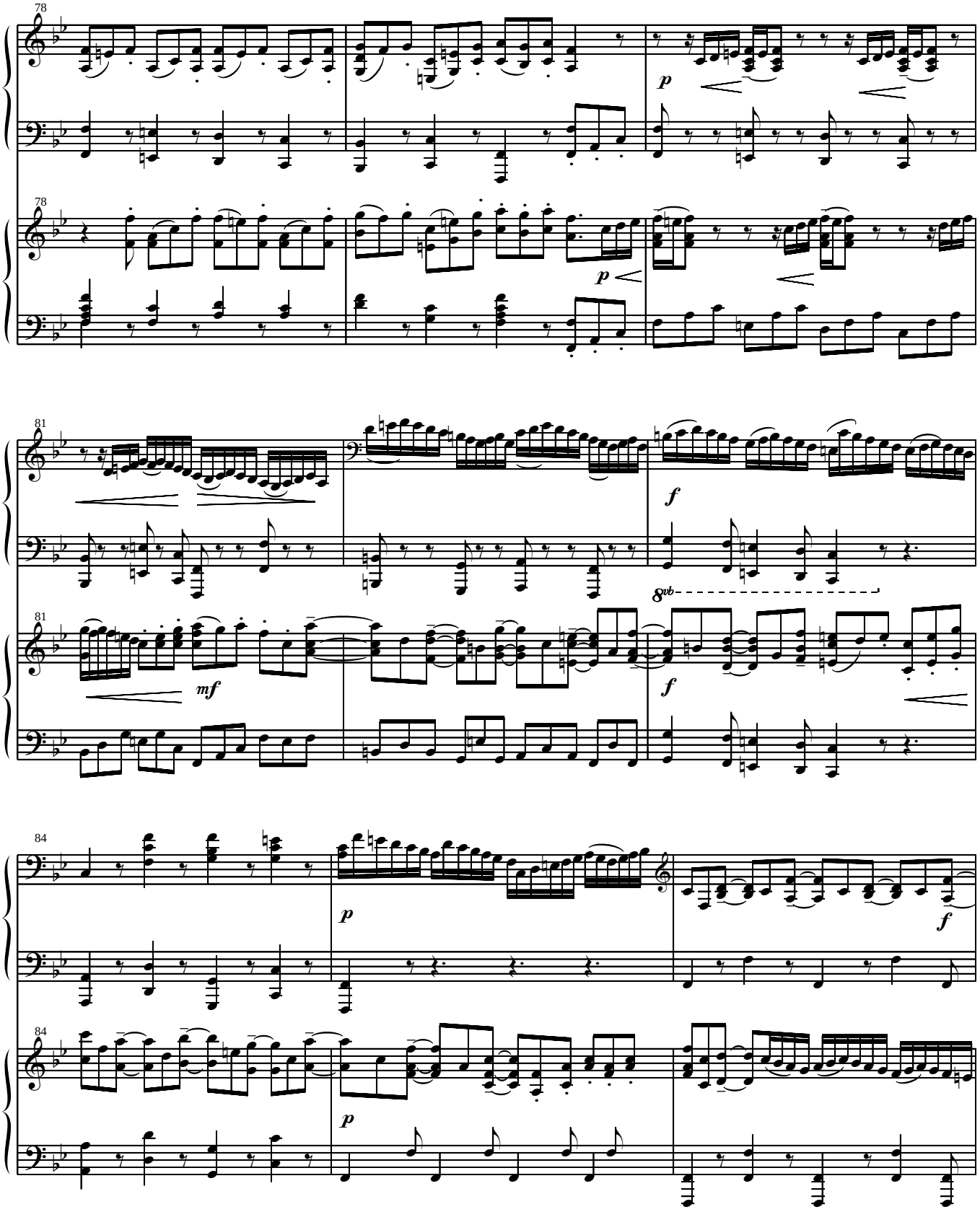
f
75
f


78
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81
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8vb
f
84
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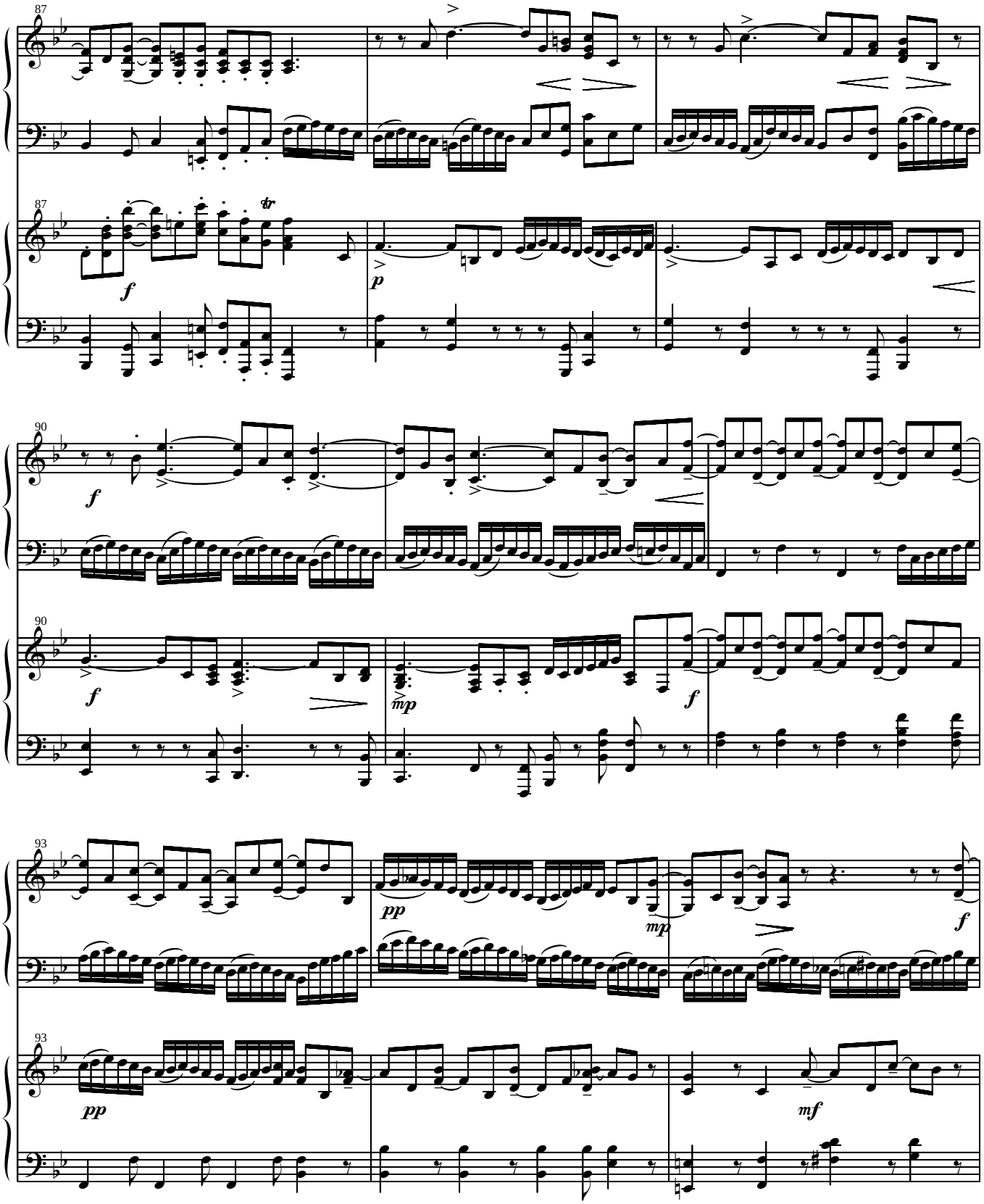
f
84
p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87
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f
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90
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93
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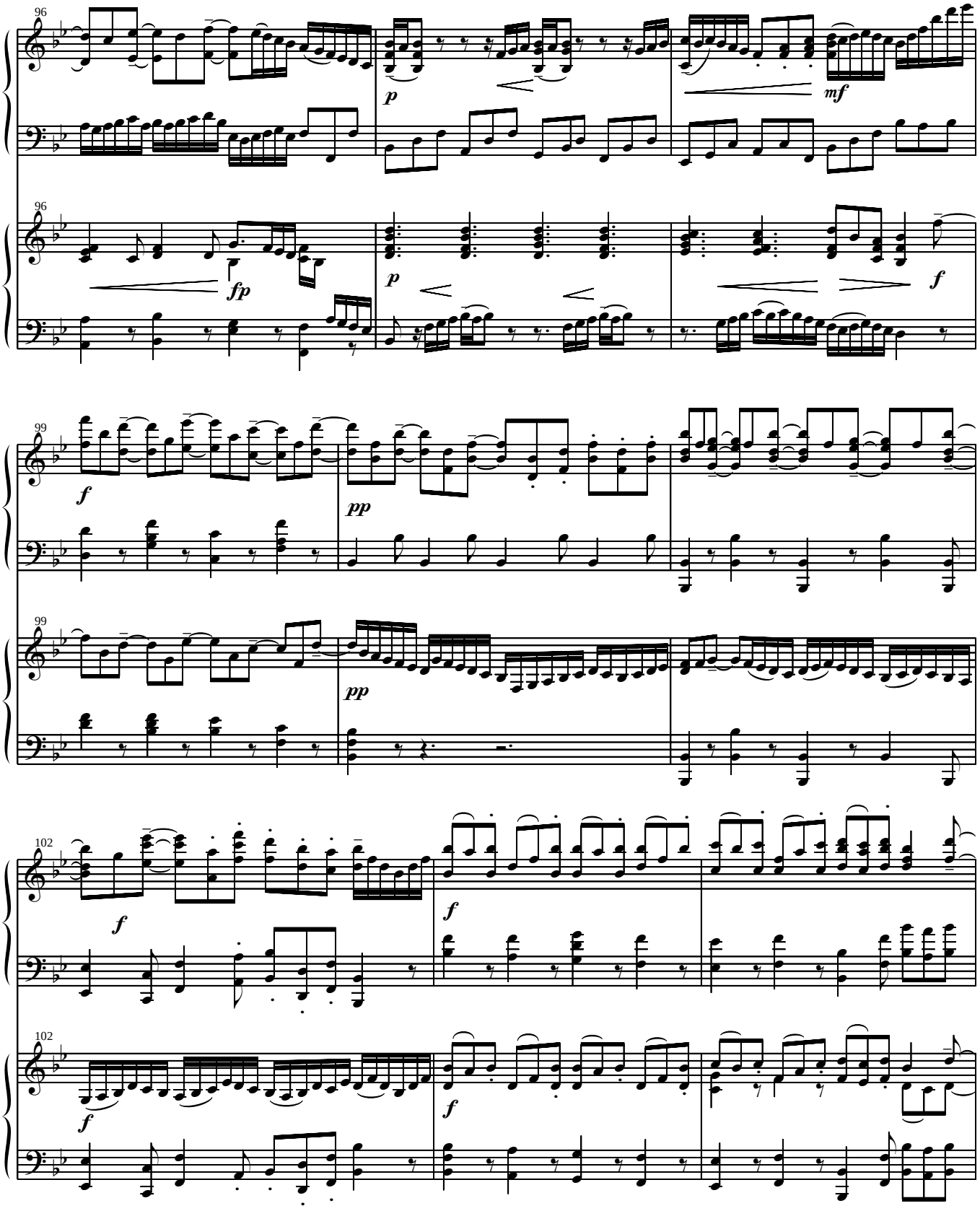
mp
f
mf


96
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96
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99
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pp
99
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102
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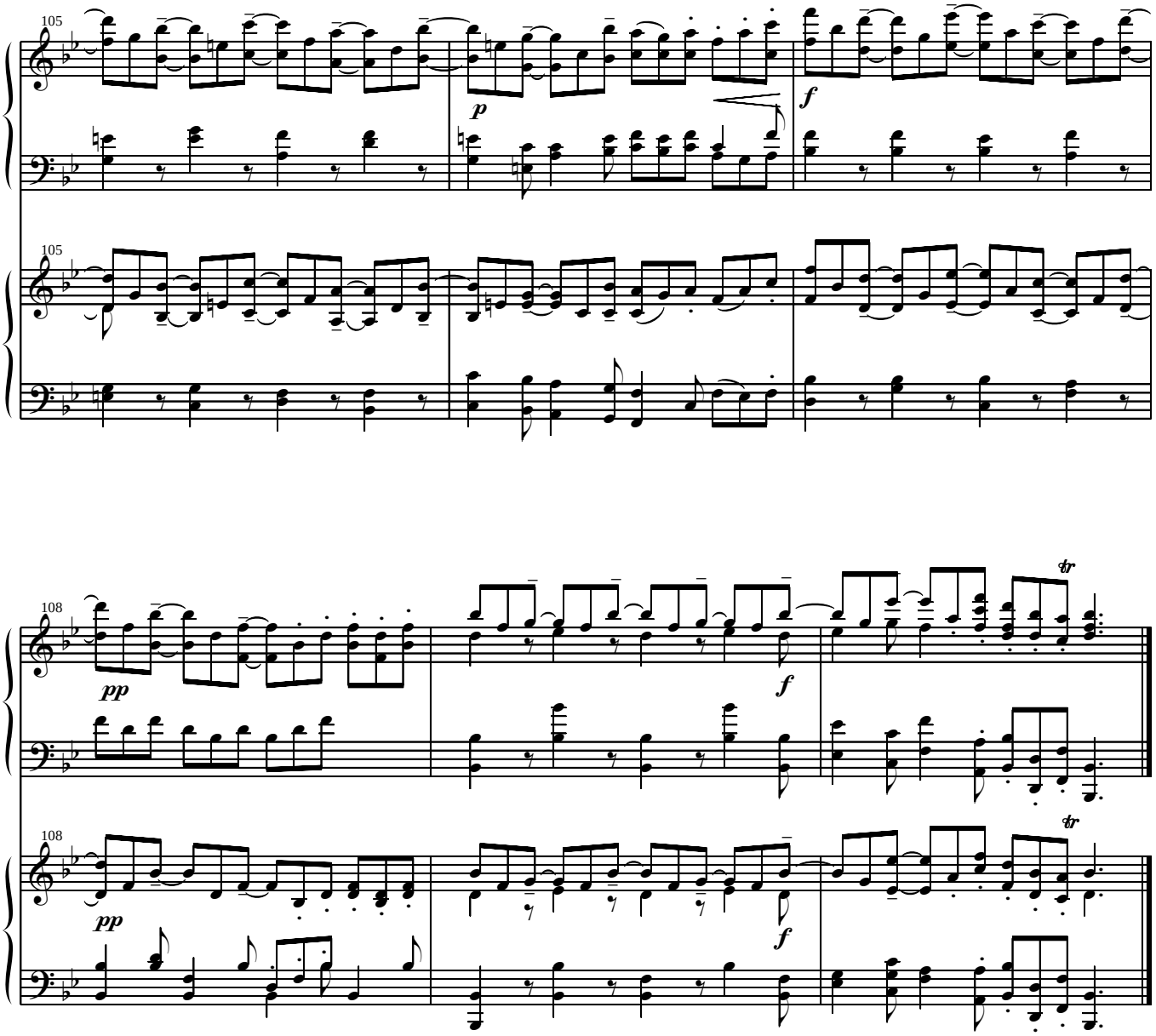
f


105
p
f
105
108
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108
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