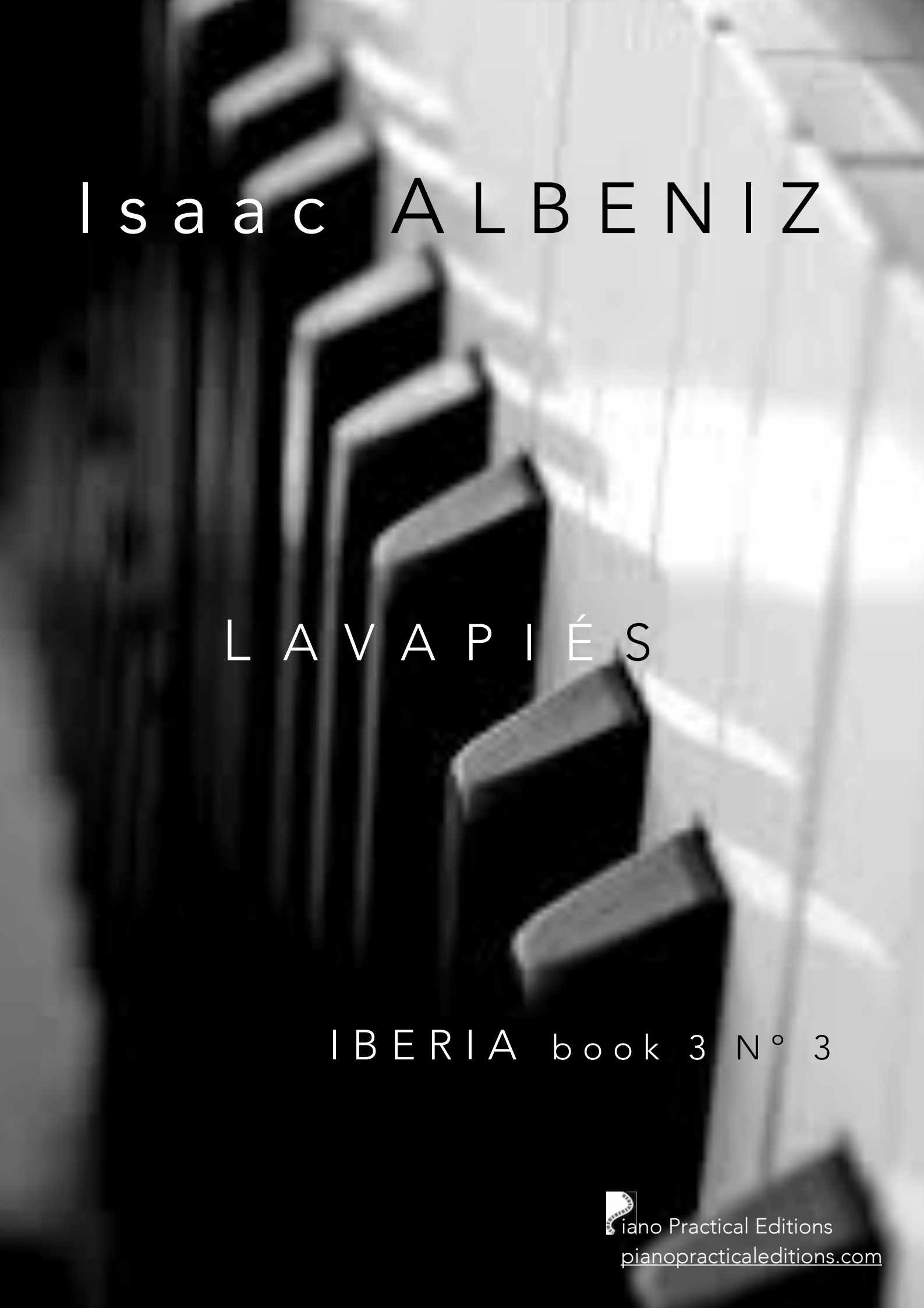

Isaac ALBENIZ

LAVAPIÉS

IBERIA book 3 N° 3

Piano Practical Editions
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Musical Health Warning : please be aware that these editions are definitely not urtext and should be consulted together with a traditional version. They have been devised purely to help solve musical and technical problems at the piano.

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Isaac ALBENIZ 1860 - 1909

LAVAPIÉS

de la suite "IBERIA"

In his later years Albeniz was writing very challenging and masterful music, inspired by the sounds of Spain, his homeland. Described as an exuberant and generous individual, these pieces reflect his attitude towards practically the only solo instrument for which he wrote — the piano.

Iberia, a suite of twelve piano pieces, was created at the age of 45 and hitherto Albeniz had not produced any work that could be considered outstanding*. Just a few years before his death in 1909, he composed his swan-song, these "impressions" of Spain. With this extraordinary suite, Albéniz dragged Spanish music into the twentieth-century'; orchestral in scale, many of the movements have been successfully orchestrated.

retrato Plaza de Lavapiés
© Jorge Dolç
(with kind permission of the artist)

Albeniz loved Spanish urban street scenes, which are particularly noisy and lively. Whereas *Fête Dieu* was set in Seville, we find ourselves in a working class area in Madrid, and here the composer is relatively discreet with his dynamic range (*ppp* to *fff*). With continuous dissonance, he captures the raucous noise of the people, barrel organs, bells — a typically intoxicating and cacophonic scene — with remarkable perception and skill, superimposing sounds that can be heard in cities all over the country even today. *Iberia* is a very challenging work, and *Lavapiés* is certainly one of the most difficult to perform even with imaginative re-writing and the replacement of some rather awkward cross-hand leaps.

Dedicated To Marguerite Hasselmans (Fauré's mistress), *Lavapiés*** is the only work from *Iberia* that is not inspired by Andalusia. The opening is in the style of a *habanera*, fashionable in Madrid at the end of the 19th century, and the central section is a sarcastic take on a vulgar Spanish carol — *Campanas Sobre Campanas*. The very soft and original bitonal coda is quite magical.

In the original editions, Lavapiés was so difficult to read and perform that the composer seriously considered destroying *Iberia*, fearing it was unplayable. He nevertheless indicated that it should be played joyfully and with freedom just as the *chulos madrileños** would have lived.

When I first heard Alicia De Larrocha perform piano music by Albeniz I was amazed and impressed by the language and technical mastery of both composer and interpreter. And when I was finally able to attempt *Iberia* myself I noticed that the music (I used the French edition *Salabert*) was often difficult to study: there were inaccuracies, many accidentals and too many instructions, coupled with sub-standard engraving ; so I decided to re-edit the music, boldly inserting changes of key signature eliminating some of the markings in excess and often extending the music over 3 staves.

I plead guilty to not having religiously copied every dot, accent, sign, pedal marking and many others. Albeniz was rather over zealous in having often embellished many, sometimes conflicting, instructions and I have tried to simplify the music within reason relying upon present-day sophisticated pianists and teachers reading the score philosophically.

Alfredo Ruiz de Luna

Albéniz was an extrovert with a keen sense of humour, loved and respected by all who knew him. In this wonderful and imaginative music, he was also flamboyant with long descriptions in French and pedalling directions which sometimes seem to be a whirlwind of far-fetched impossibilities — unreasonable and endearing as they are. While the titles are mostly in Spanish, many of the instructions are in French, which is not surprising as he lived for much of his life as an expat in France.

In addition to some suggested fingerings, the appendix contains duration, comments, afterthoughts and a French vocabulary.

Redistribution between the hands comes under close scrutiny to make certain passages easier or more persuasive. It is possible, even desirable, to use the sostenuto and sustaining pedals combined throughout the piece, although this is entirely editorial.

*This is how Albeniz commented on his own music written before Iberia: "here are among them a few things that are not completely worthless. The music is a bit infantile, plain, spirited; but in the end, the people, our Spanish people, are something of all that. I believe that the people are right when they continue to be moved by *Córdoba*, *Mallorca*, by the copla of the *Sevillanas*, by the *Serenata*, and *Granada*. In all of them I now note that there is less musical science, less of the grand idea, but more colour, sunlight, flavour of olives. That music of youth, with its little sins and absurdities that almost point out the sentimental affectation... appears to me like the carvings in the *Alhambra*, those peculiar arabesques that say nothing with their turns and shapes, but which are like the air, like the sun, like the blackbirds or like the nightingales of its gardens. They are more valuable than all else of Moorish Spain, which though we may not like it, is the true Spain".

**An old working-class quarter of Madrid where the people were known as *manolos* and *chulapas*. The name of *Lavapiés* comes from the ritual of foot washing in the Church of San Lorenzo, on Maundy Thursday.

LAVAPIÉS

ce morceau doit être joué avec allégresse et librement

Allegretto bien rythmé mais sans presser ♩ = 84

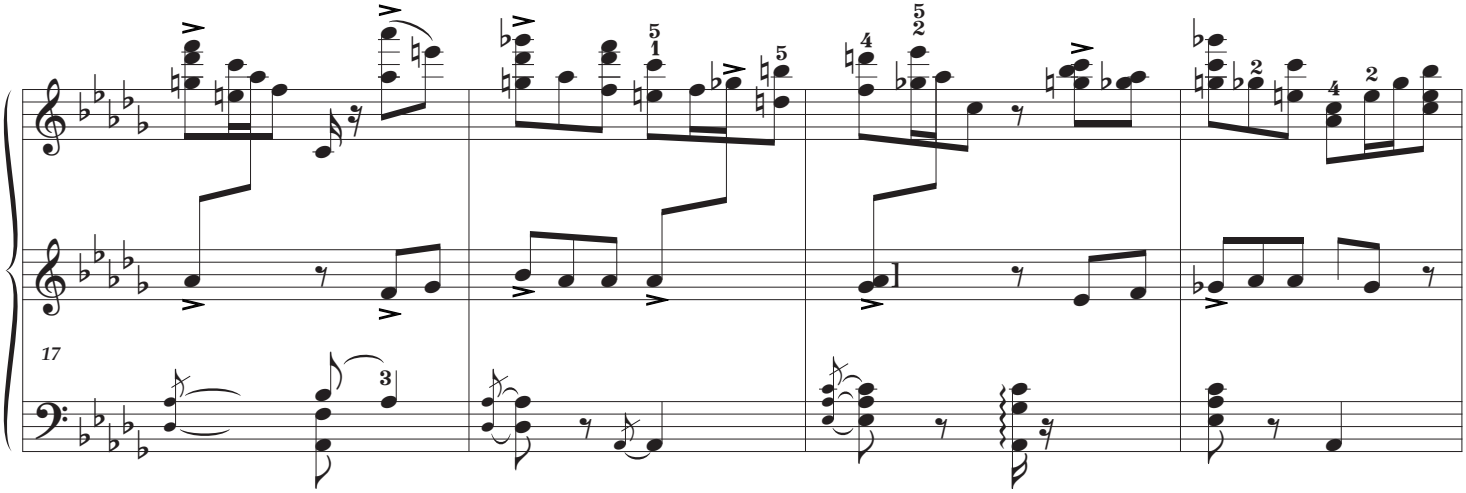
très brillant *m.s.* *aimable*

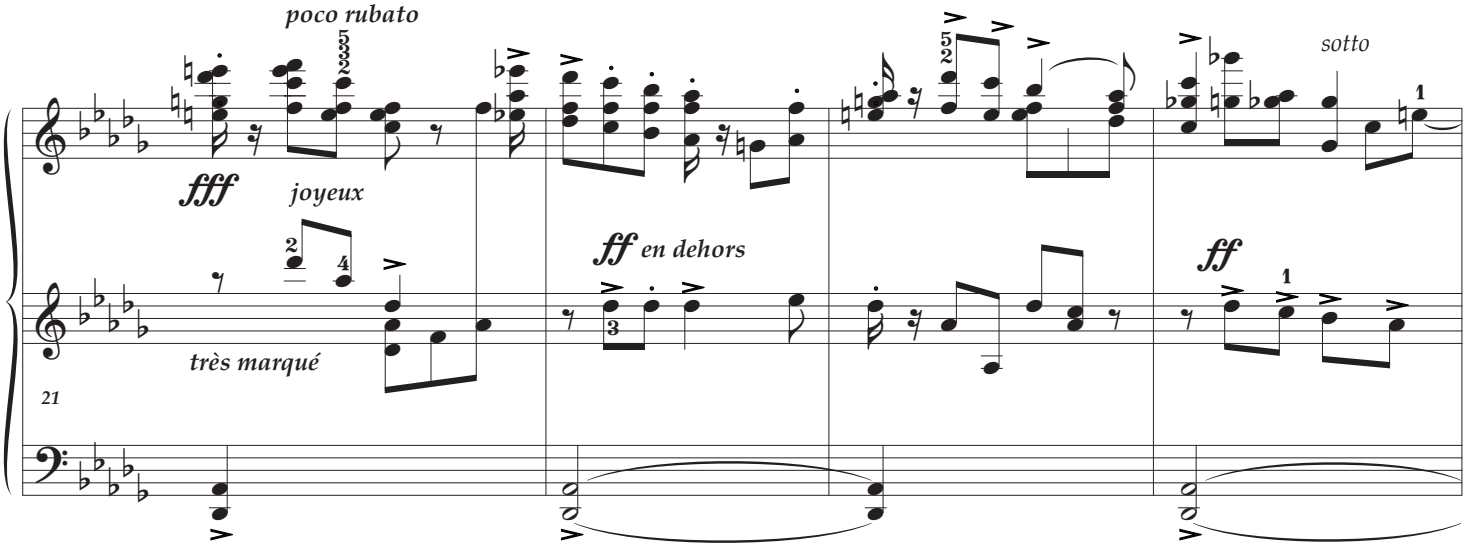
f sonore *m.s.*

sec *sfz*

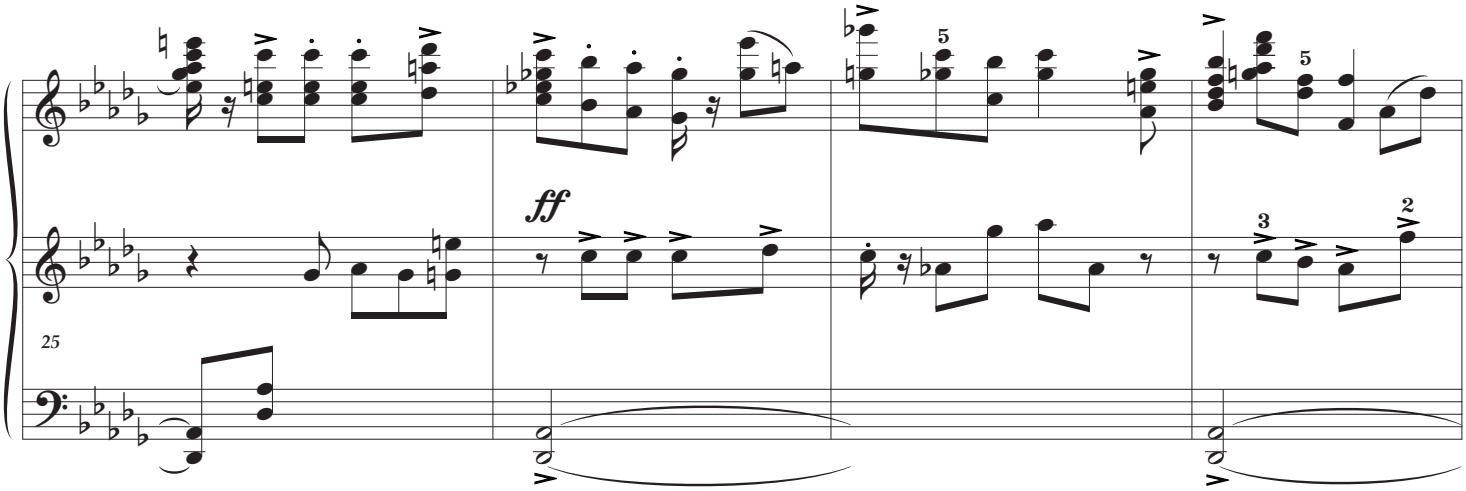
sec *sfz*

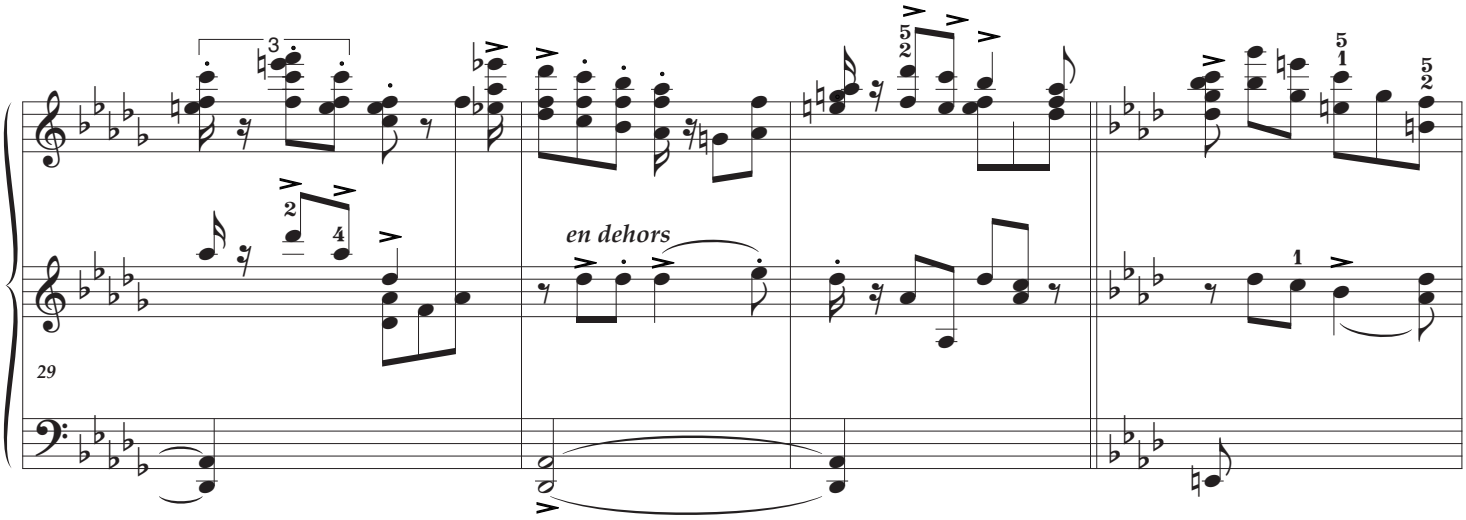
ff *animé et joyeux*

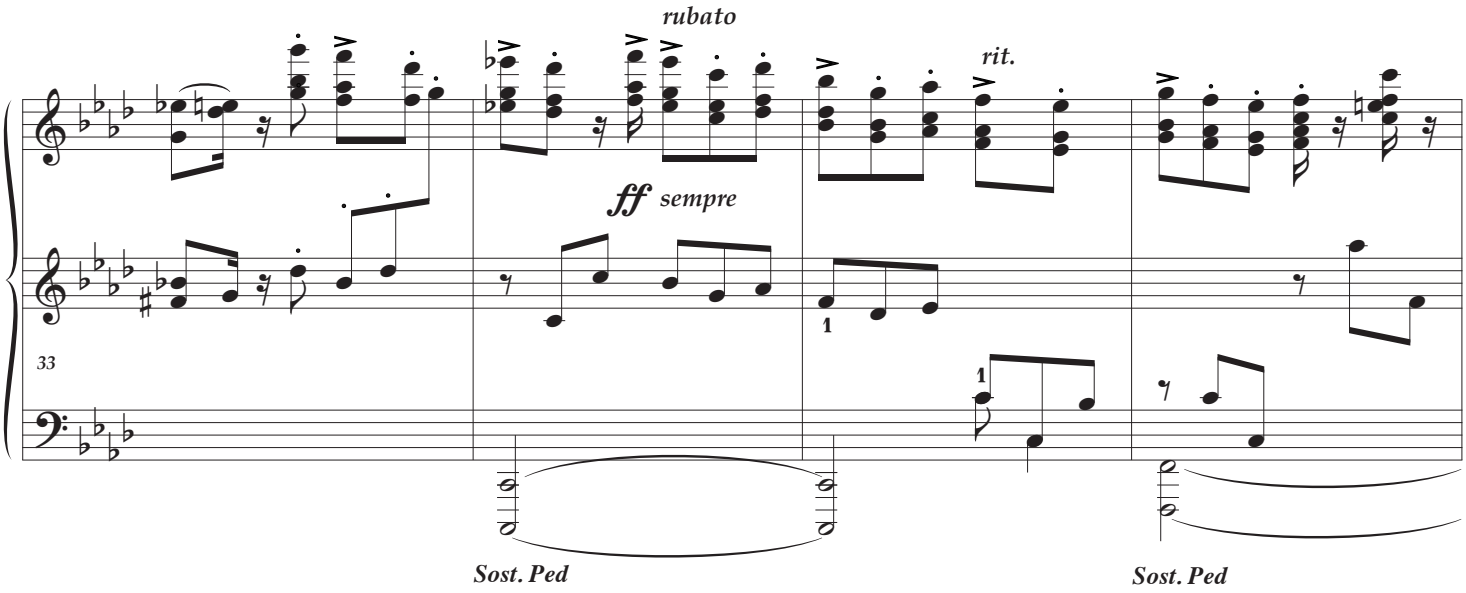


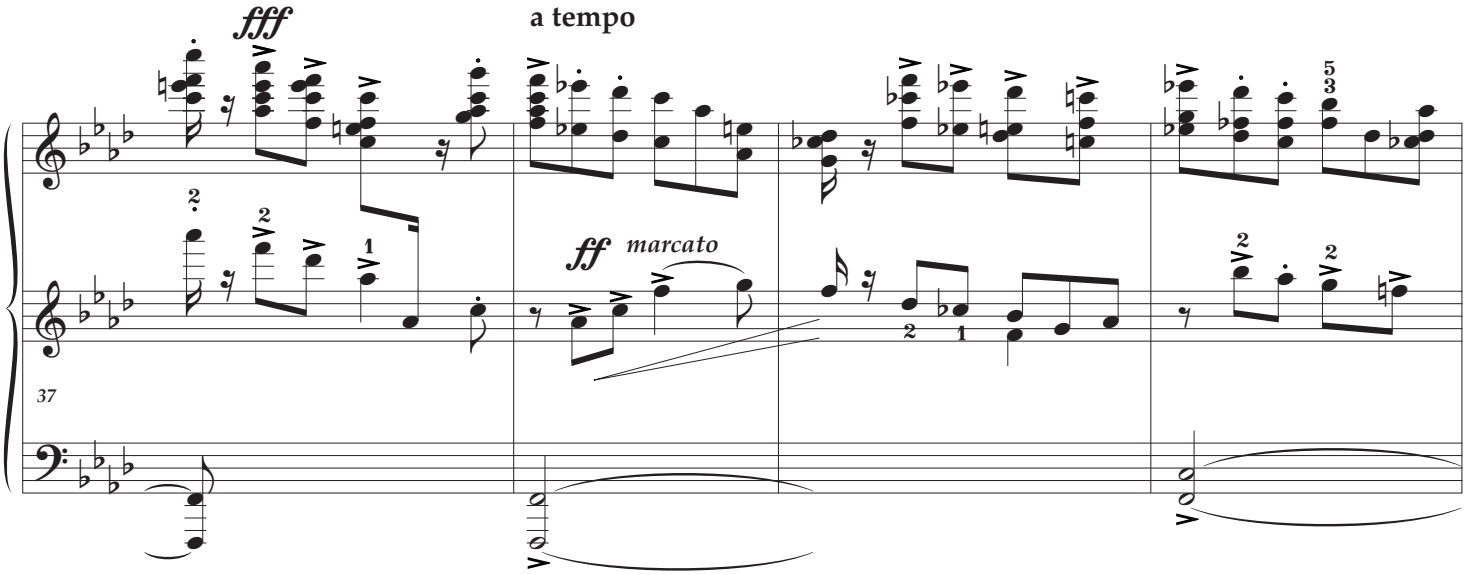


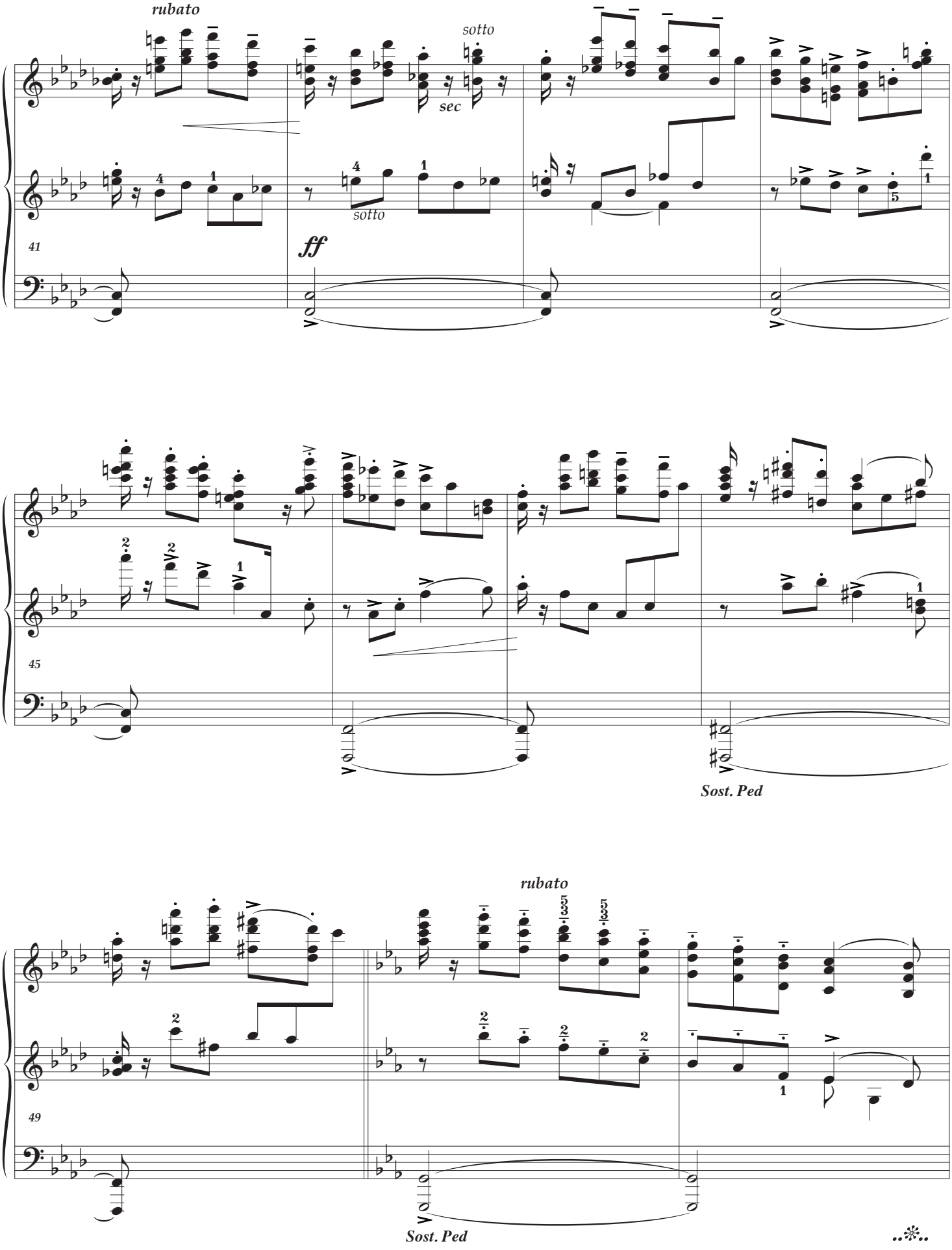
toutes les pédales bien tenues

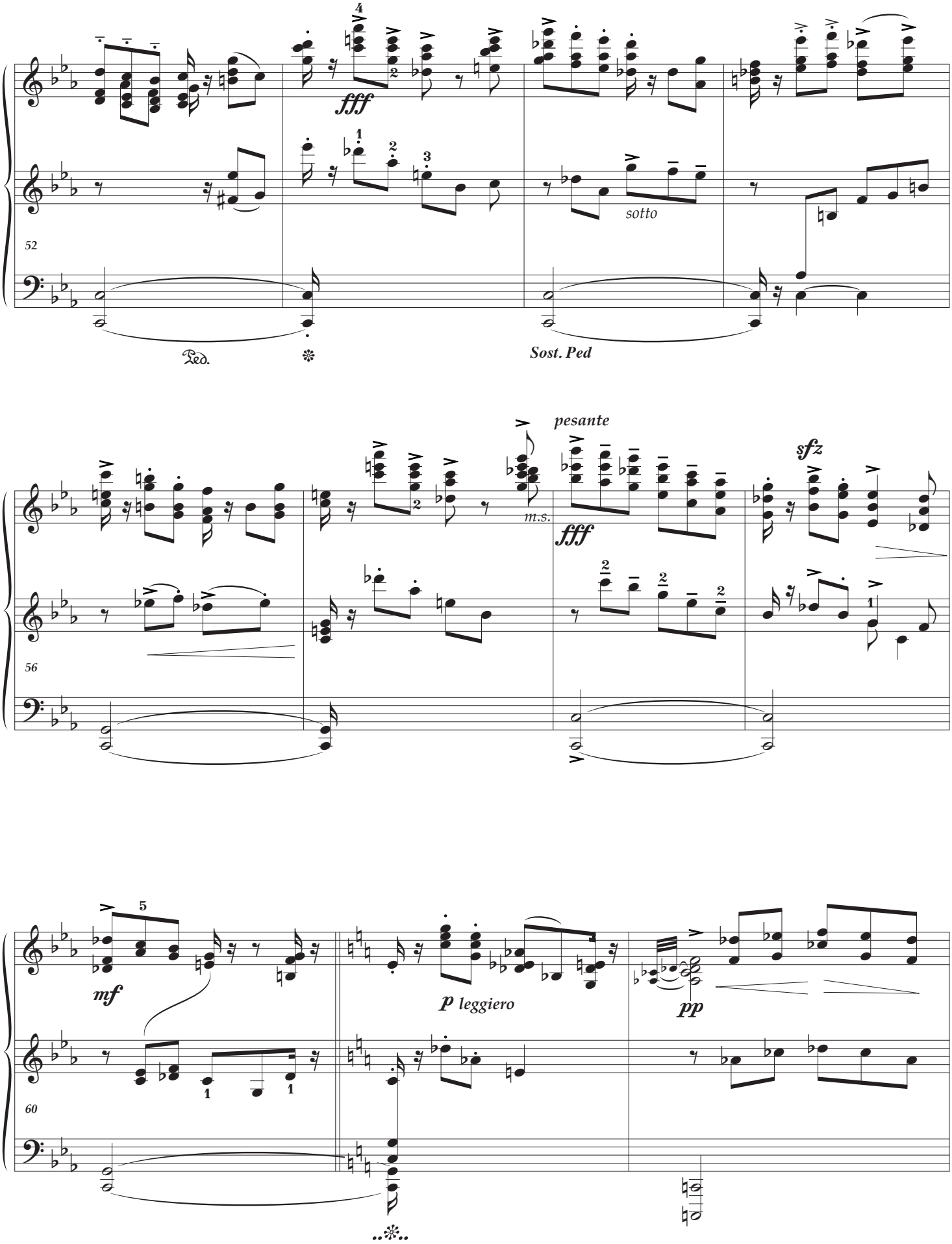


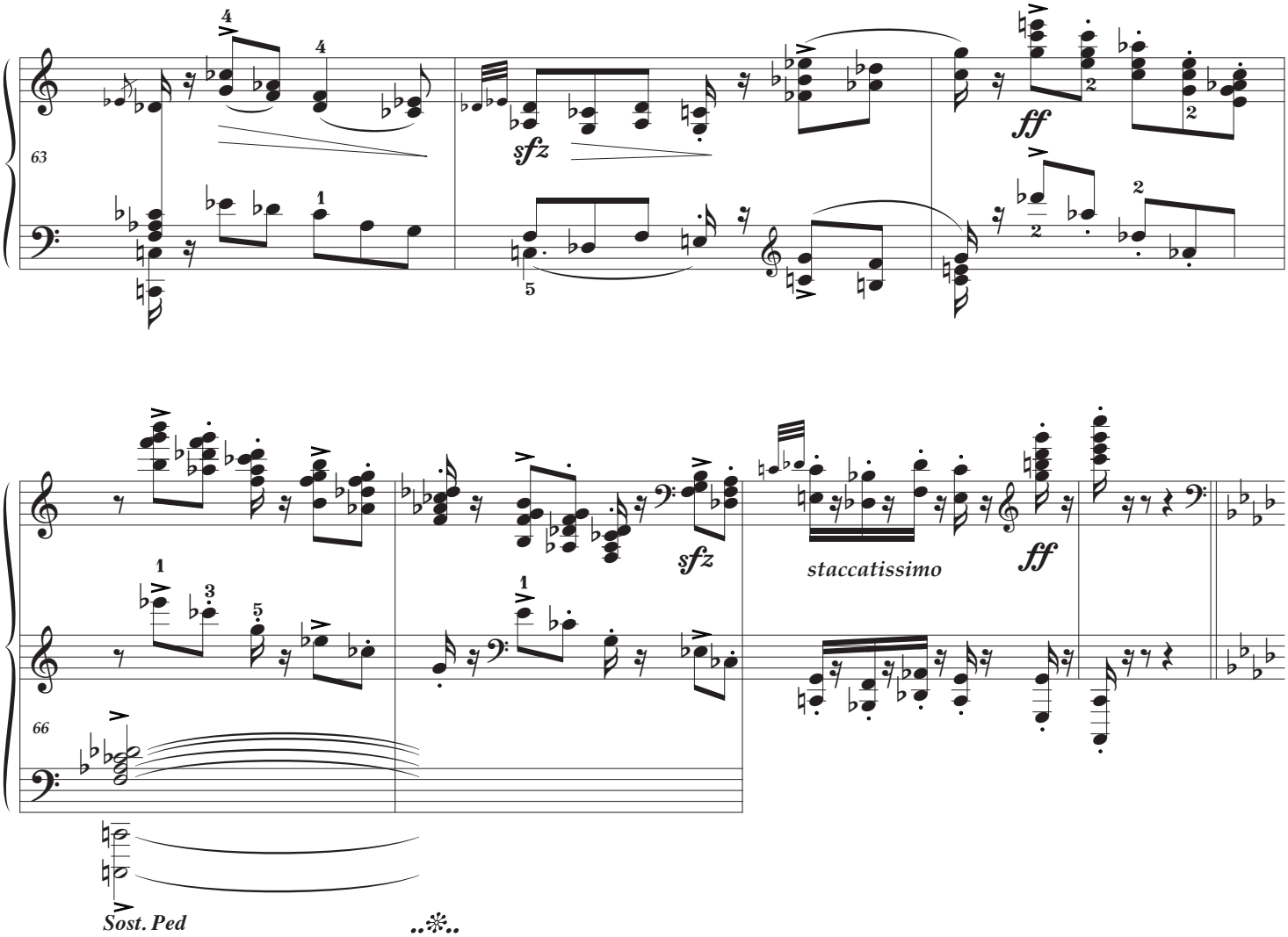

en dehors
29

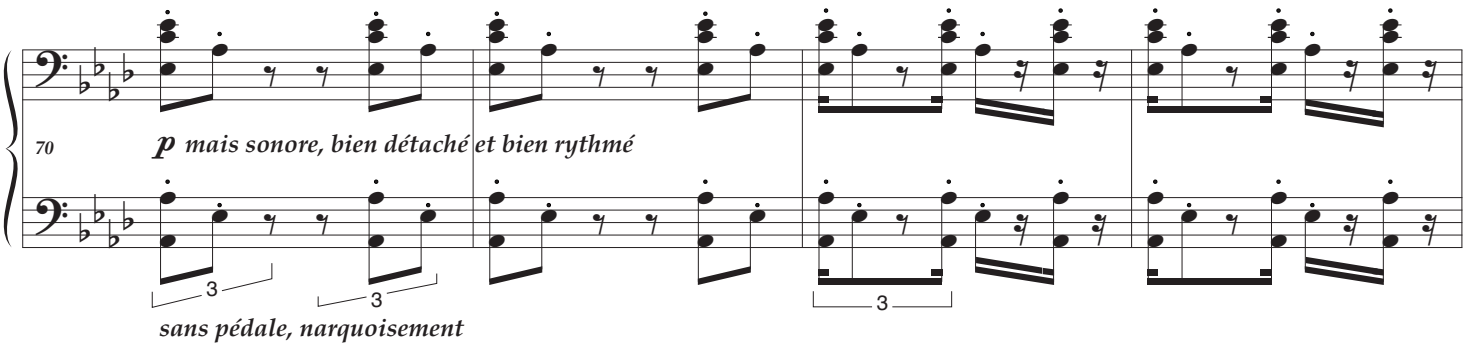

rubato
rit.
ff sempre
33
Sost. Ped
Sost. Ped

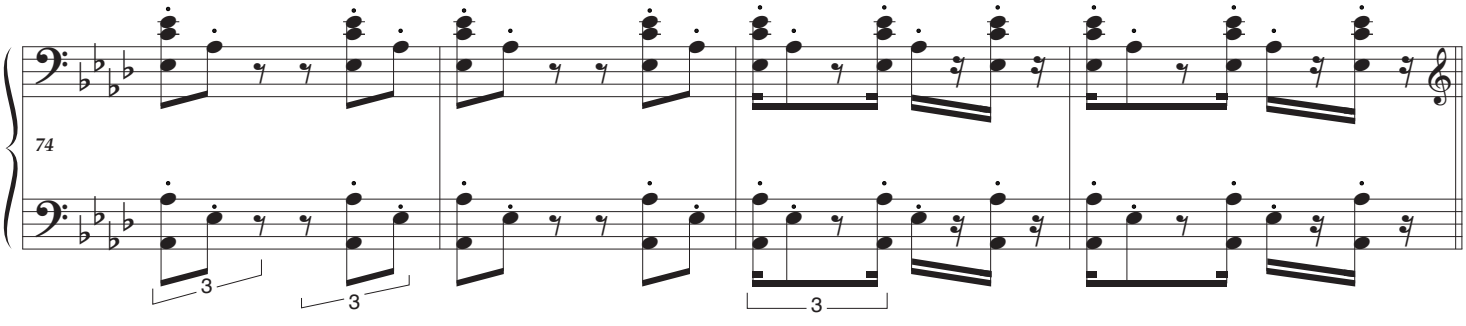

fff
a tempo
ff marcato
37


rubato
sotto
sec
sotto
41
ff
45
Sost. Ped
rubato
49
Sost. Ped


fff
sotto
52
Ped.
Sost. Ped
pesante
m.s.
fff
sfz
56
mf
p leggiero
pp
60

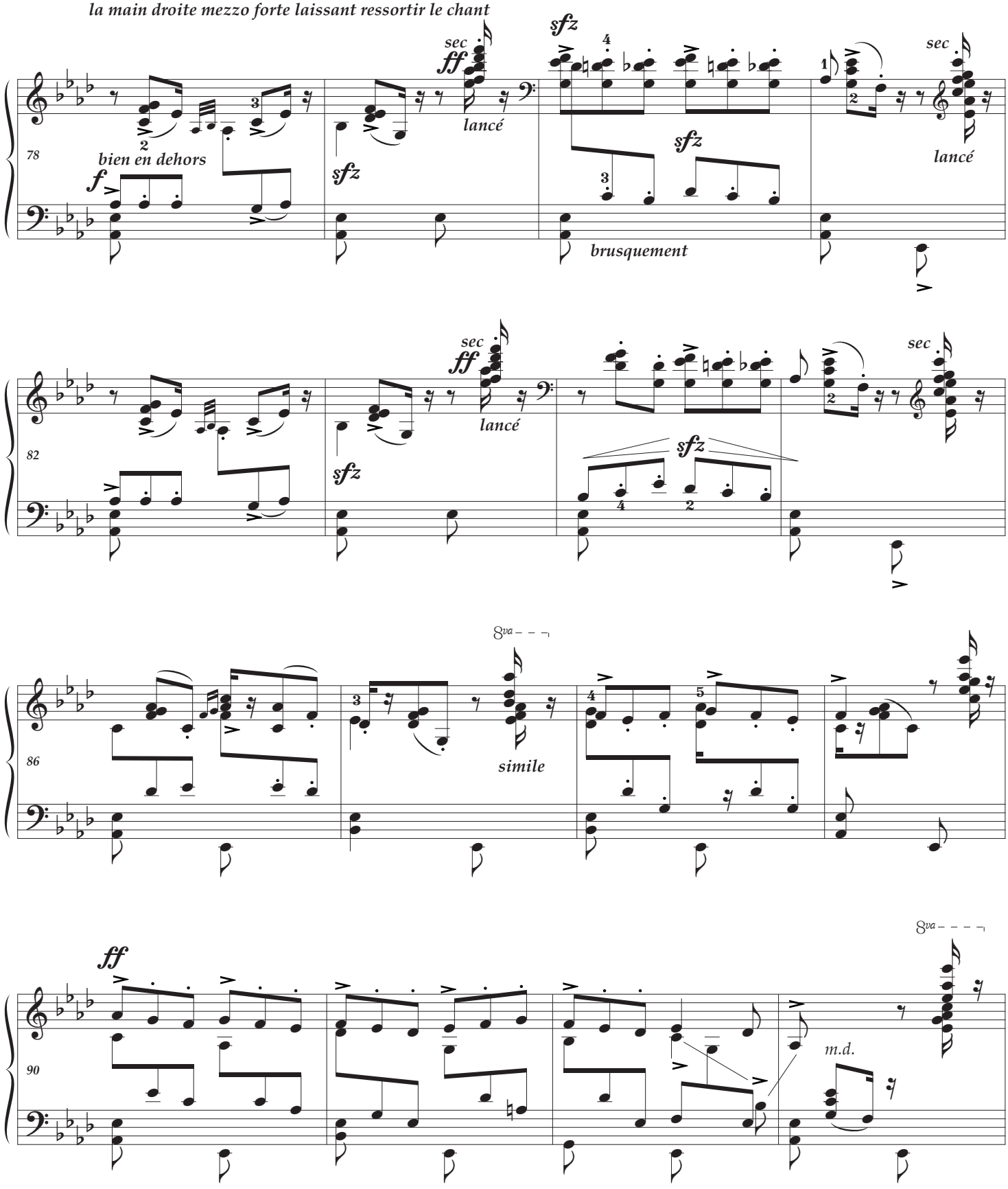

63
sfz
ff
66
sfz
staccatissimo
ff
Sost. Ped

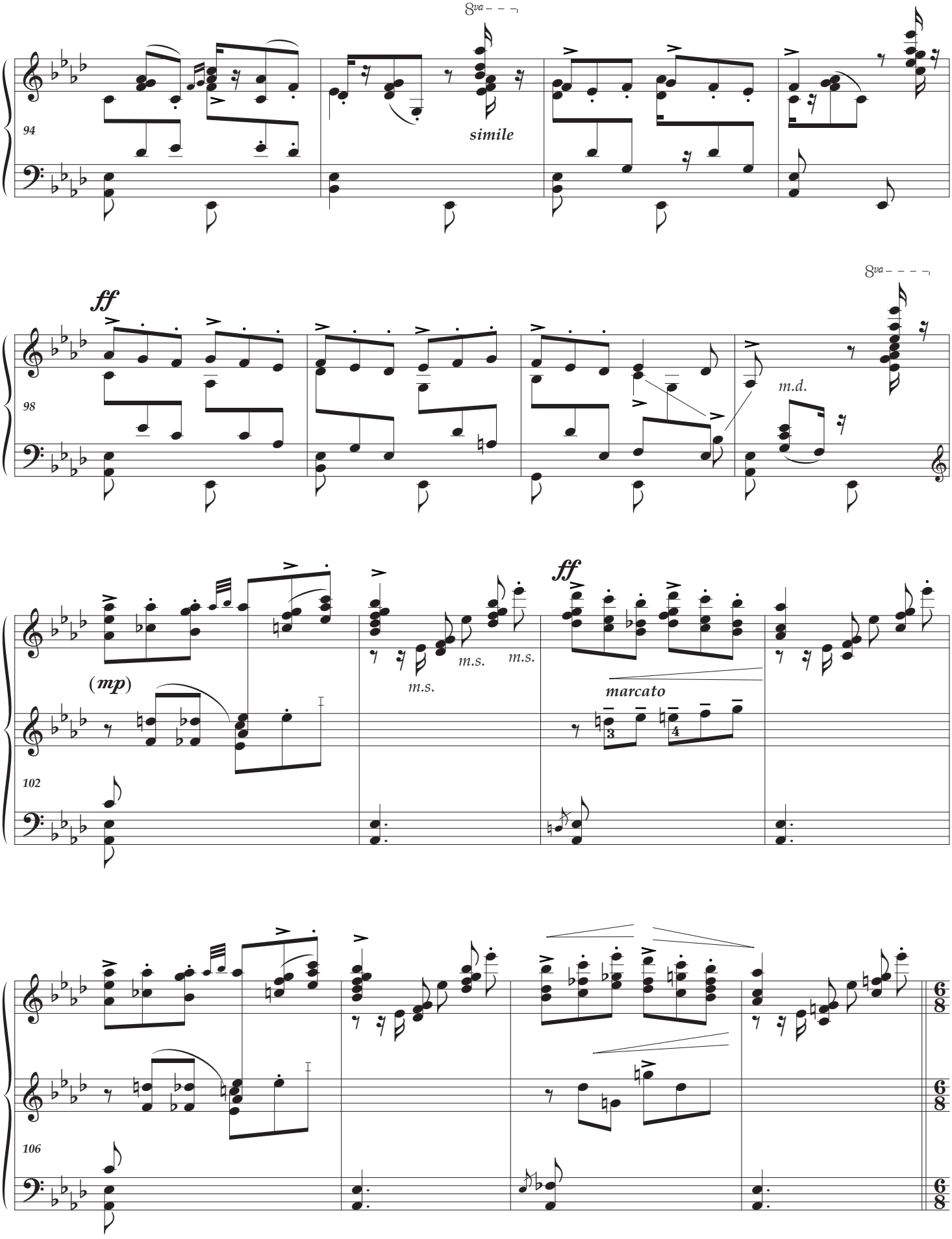

70
p mais sonore, bien détaché et bien rythmé
sans pédale, narquoisement

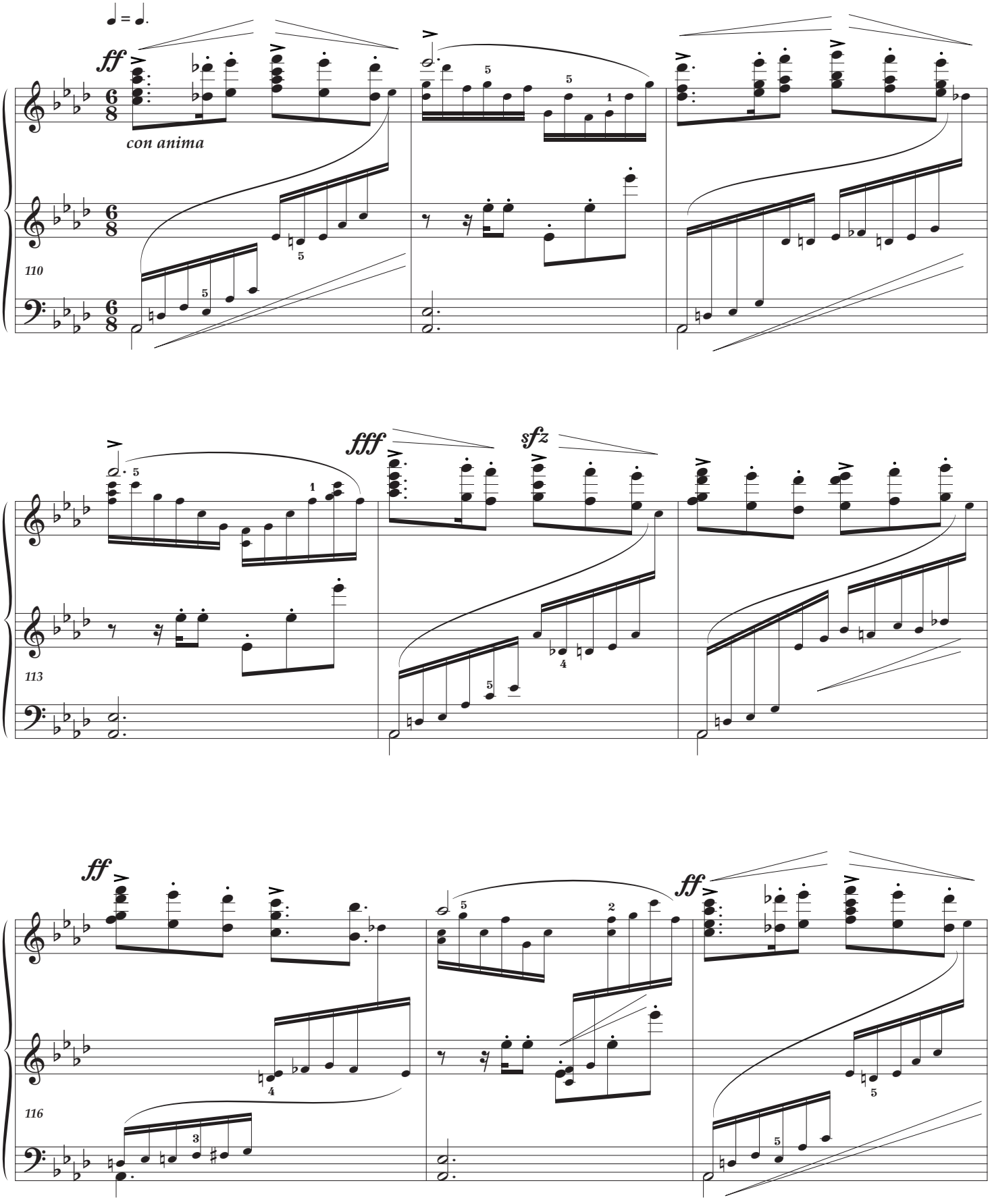

74

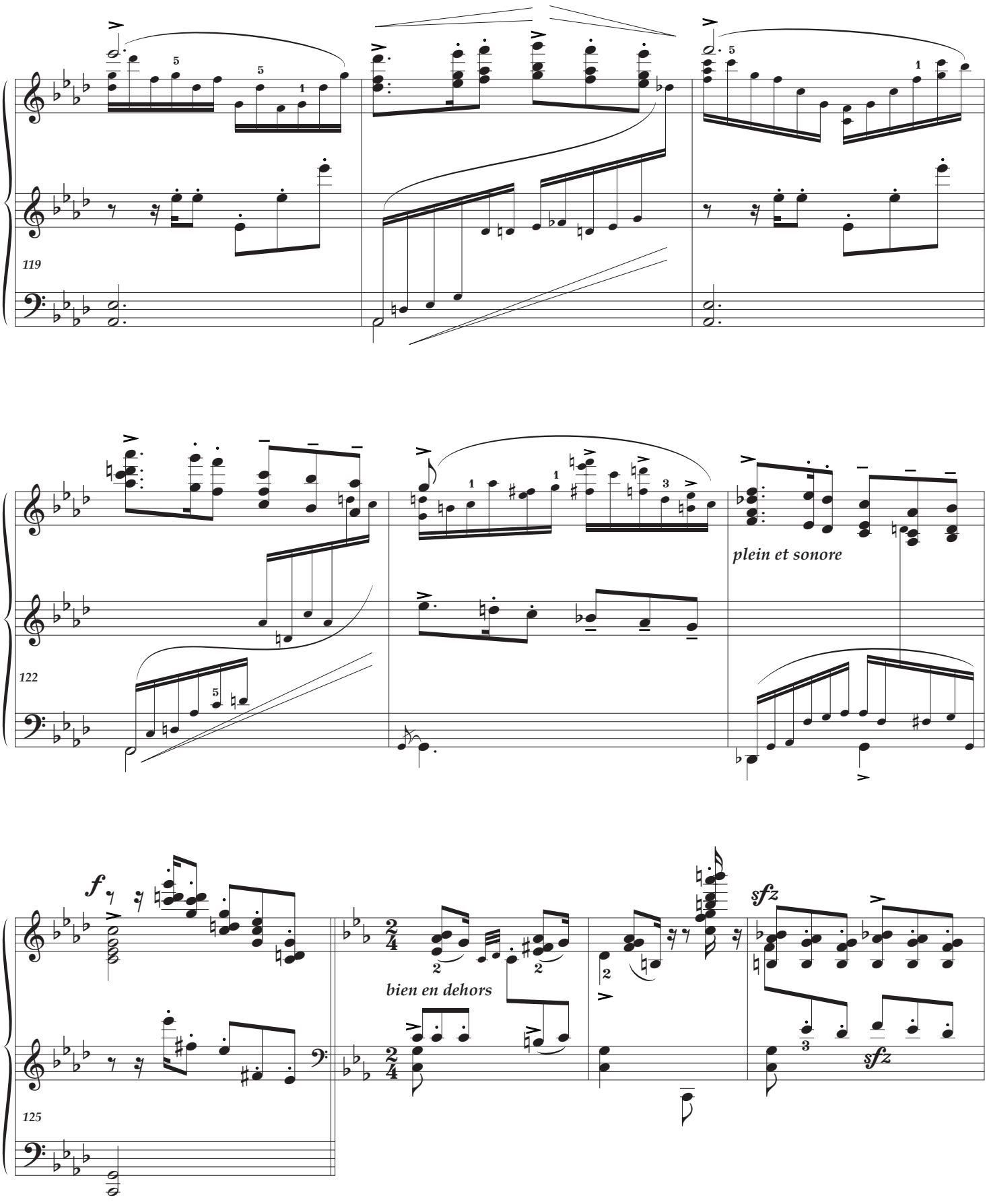
Lo stesso tempo, bien rythmé

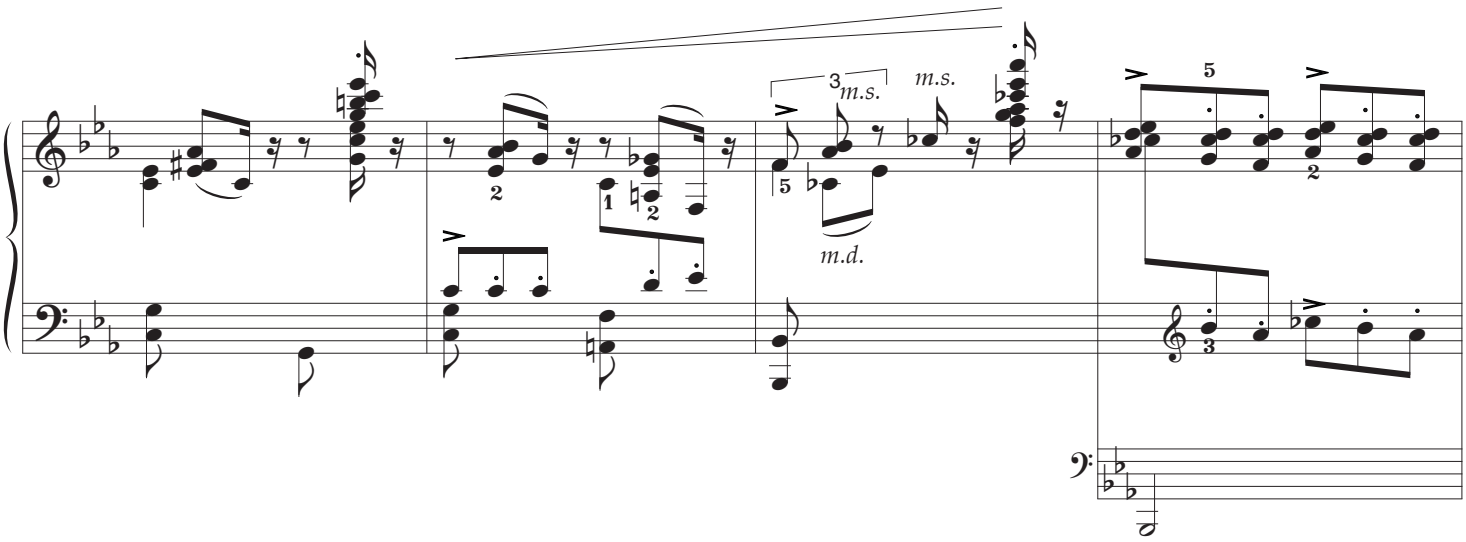
la main droite mezzo forte laissant ressortir le chant

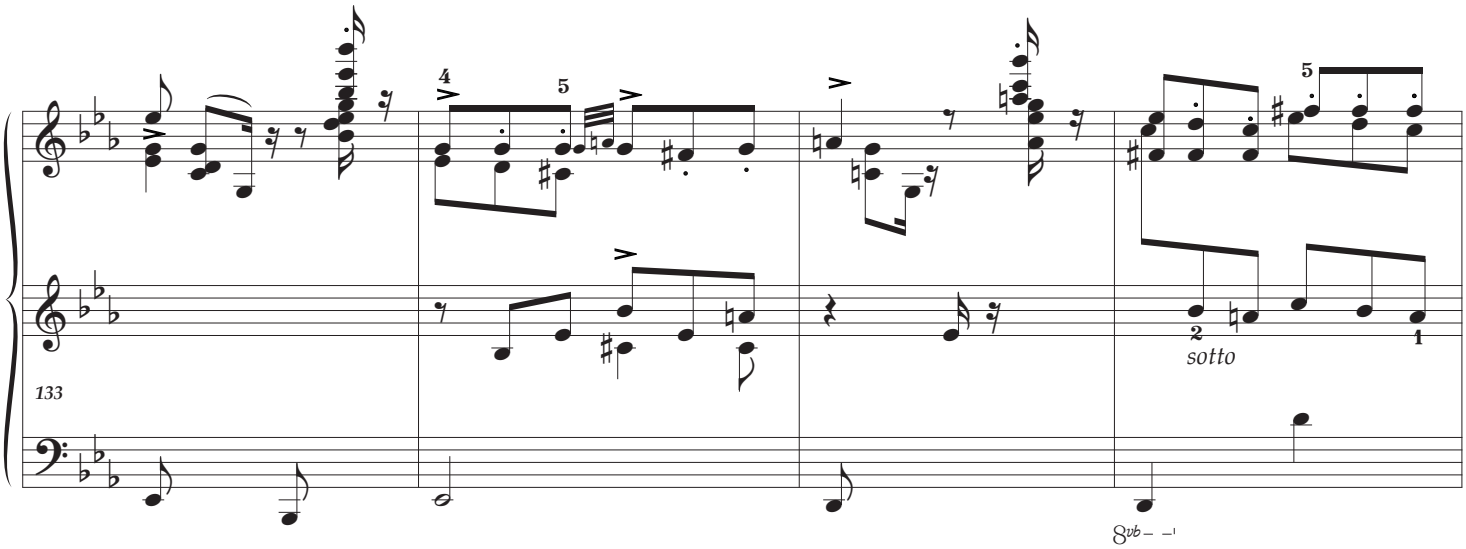


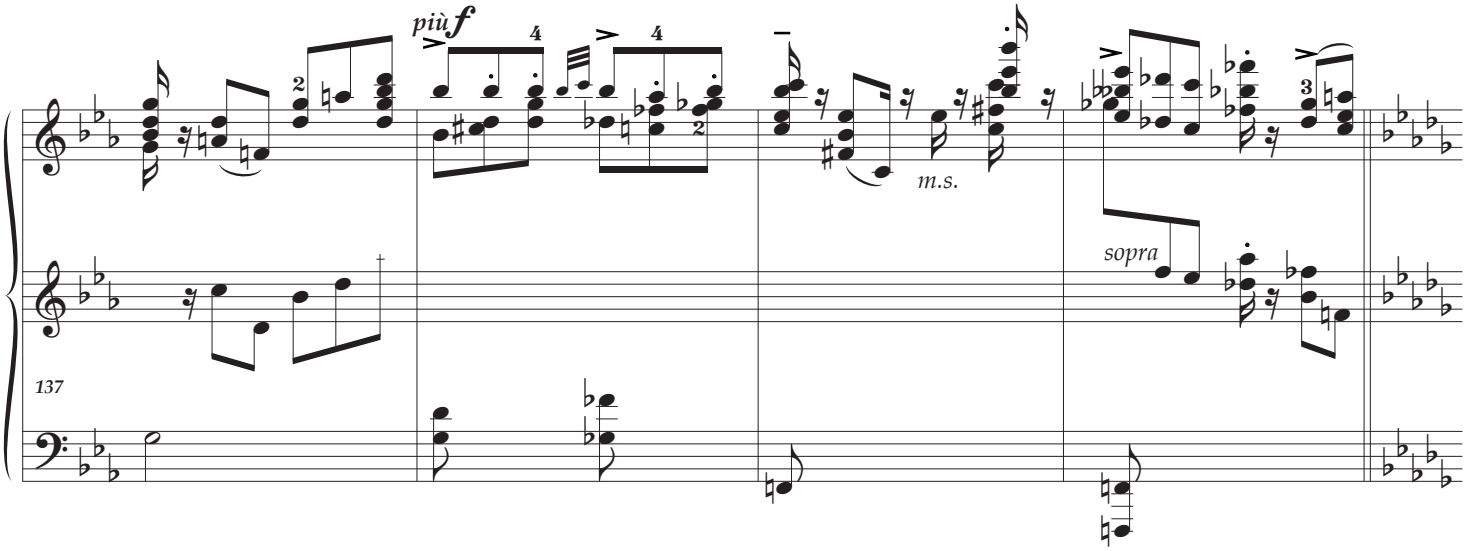

8va
simile
94
ff
98
m.d.
(mp)
m.s.
m.s.
m.s.
ff
marcato
102
106
6/8

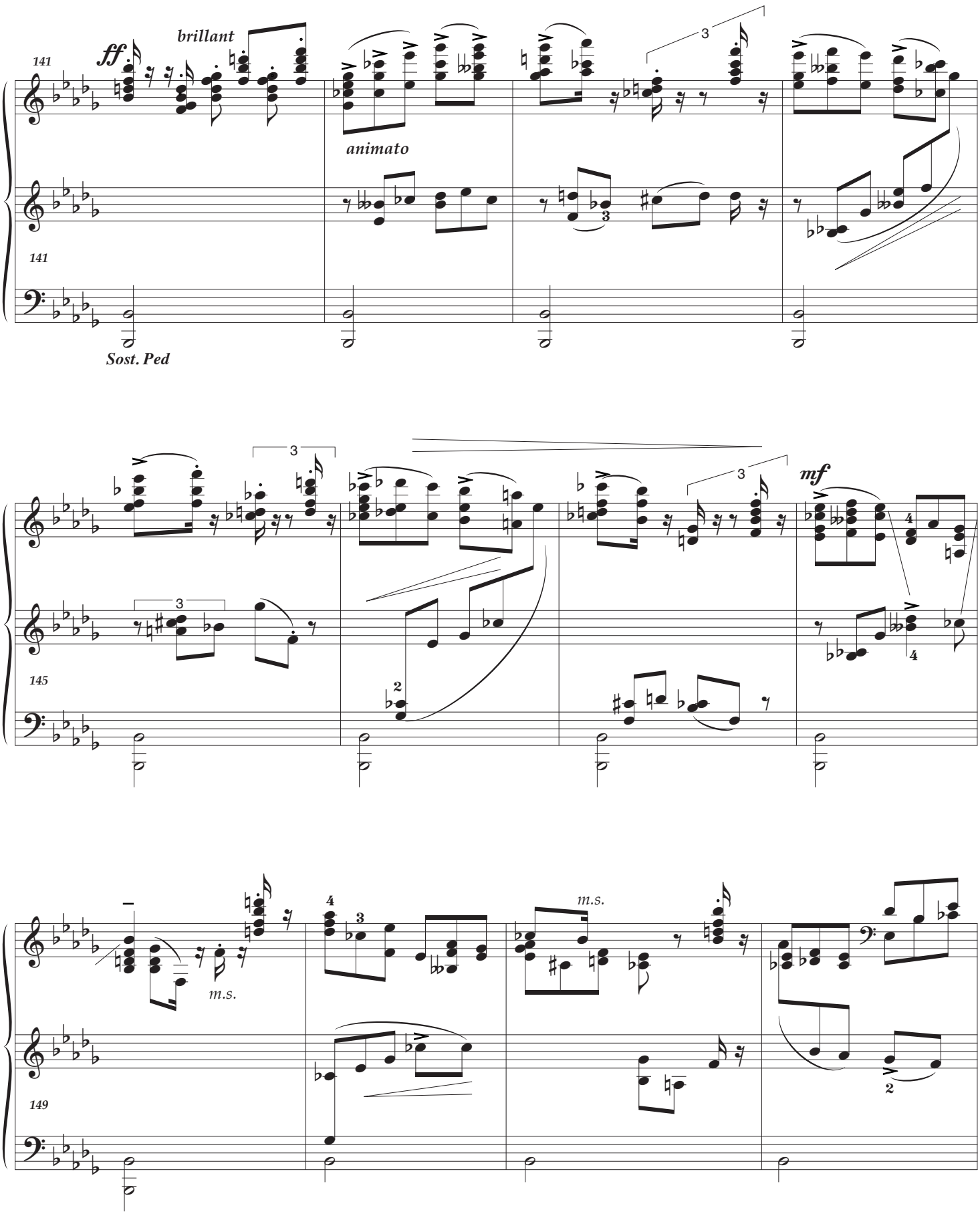

ff
con anima
110
fff
sfz
113
ff
ff
116

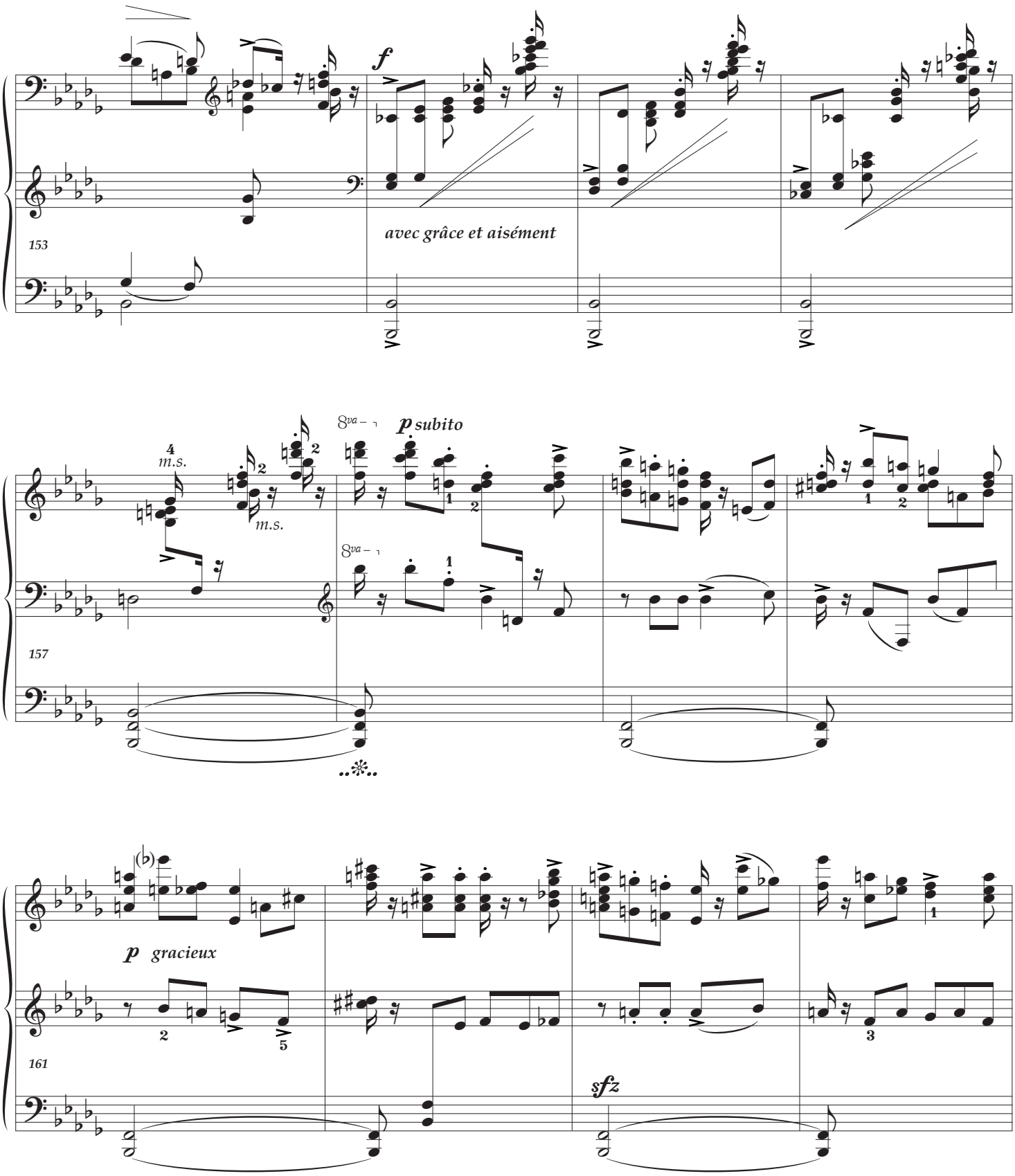

119
122
plein et sonore
f
bien en dehors
sfz
sfz
125

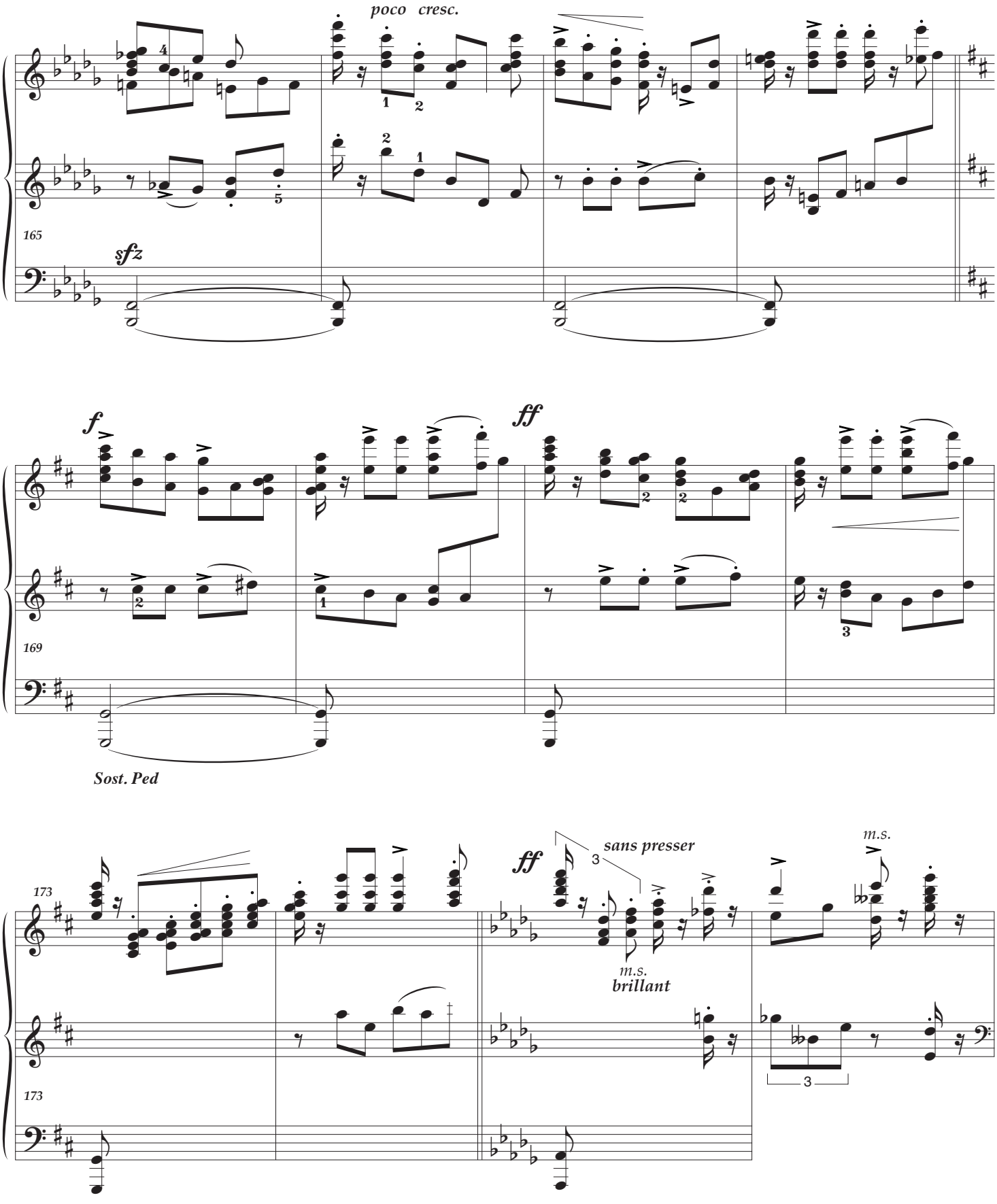

m.s.
m.s.
m.d.

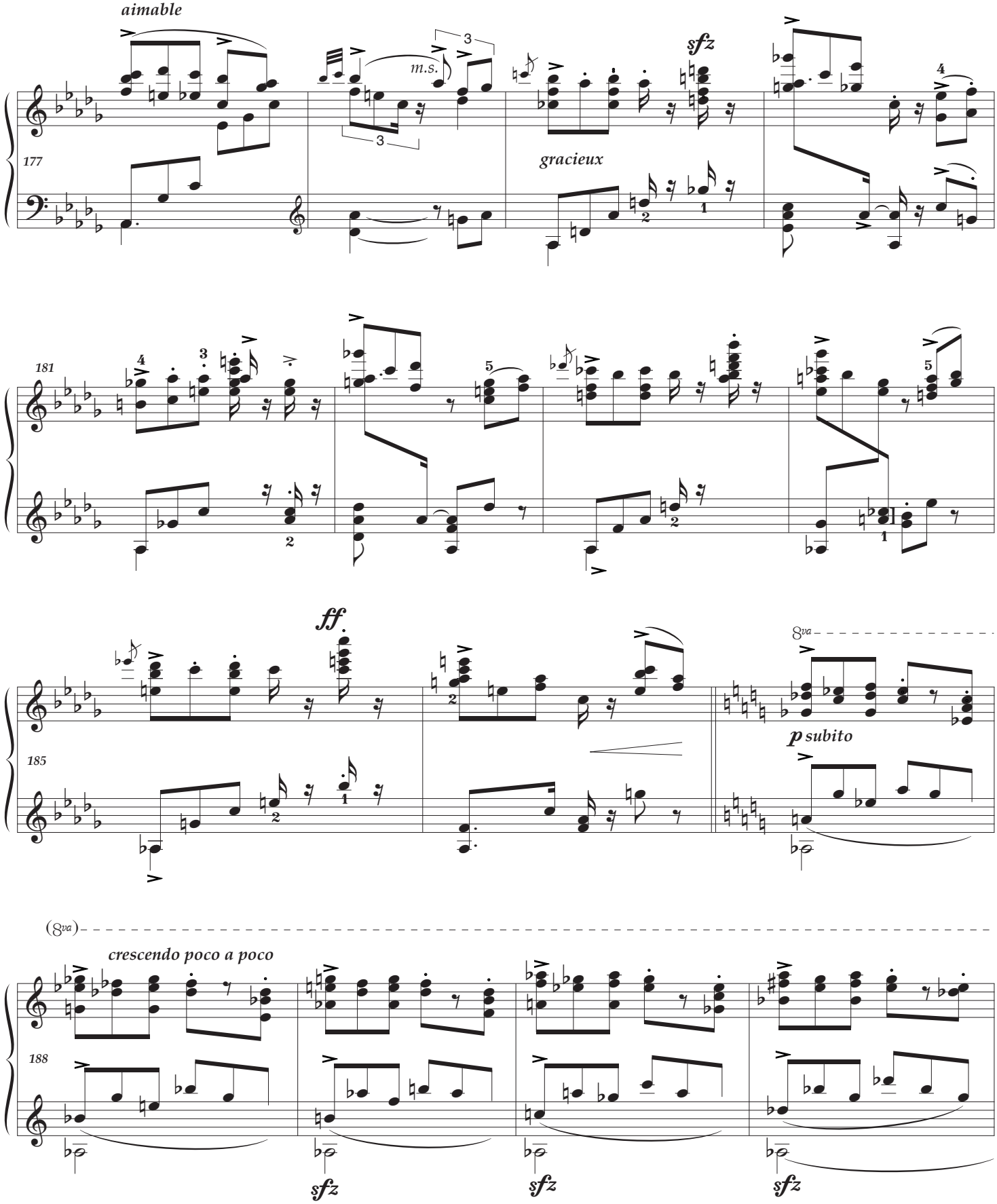

133
sotto
8vb

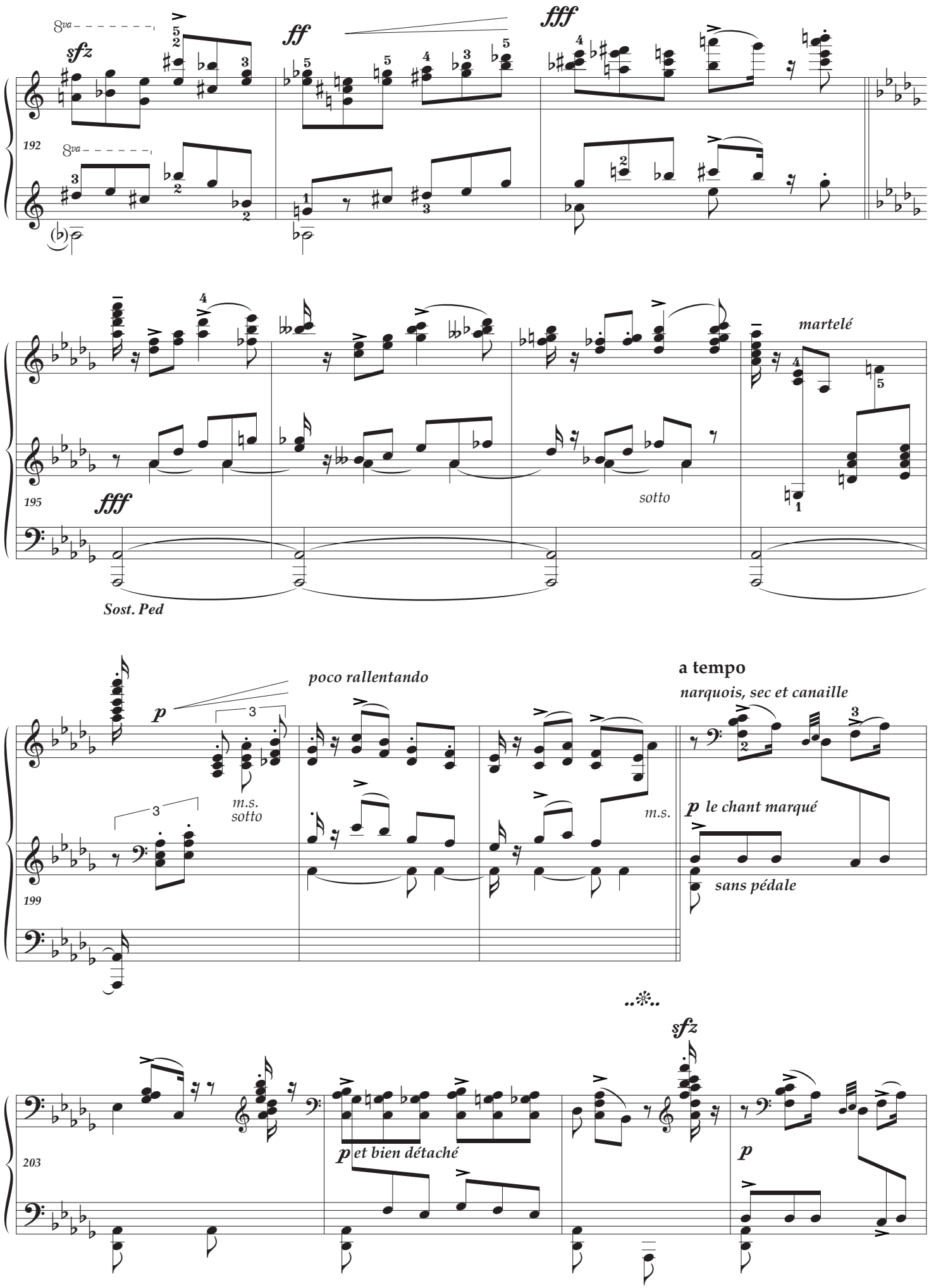

più f
137
m.s.
sopra

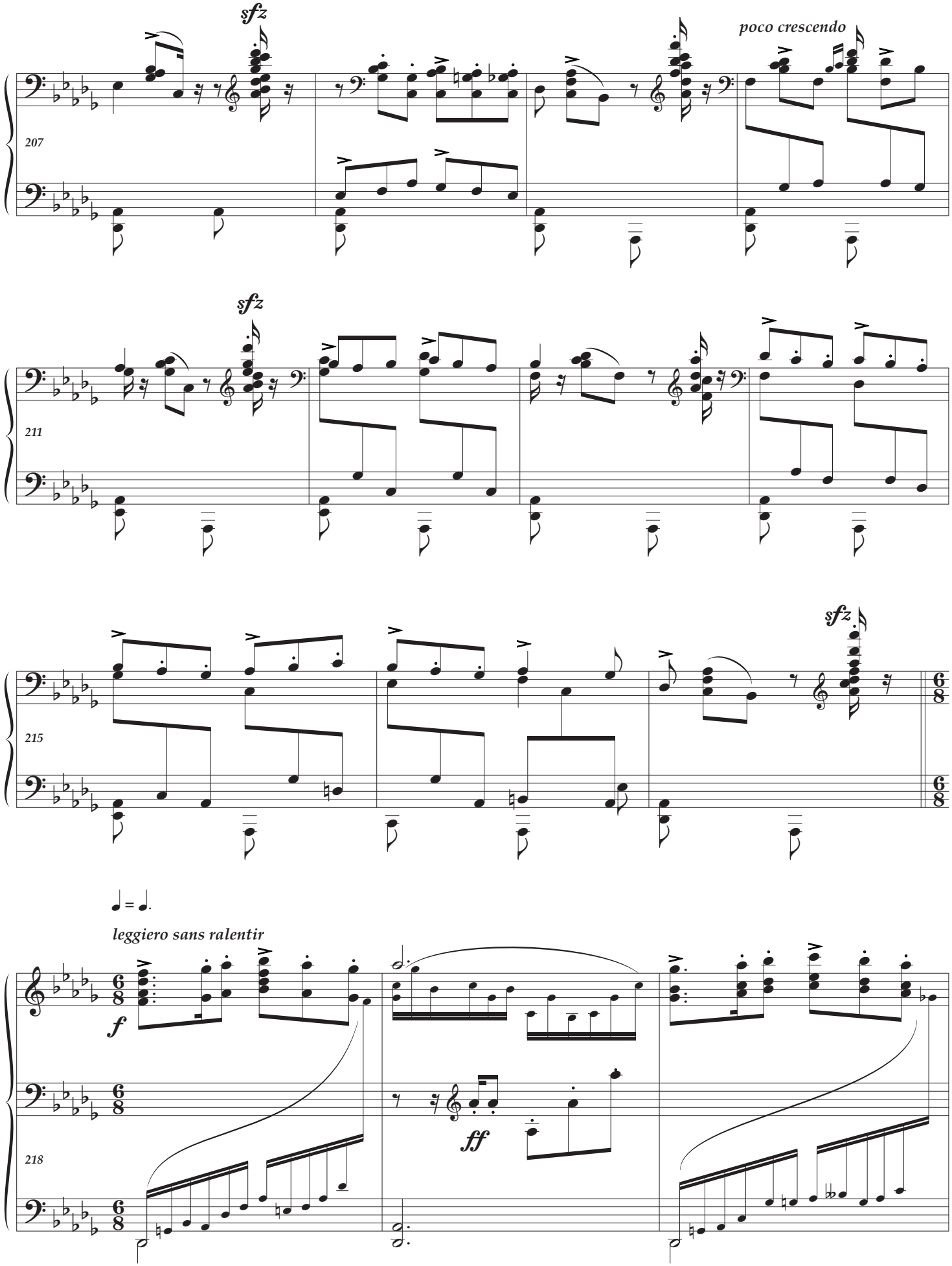

141
ff
brillant
animato
141
Sost. Ped
145
mf
149
m.s.
m.s.

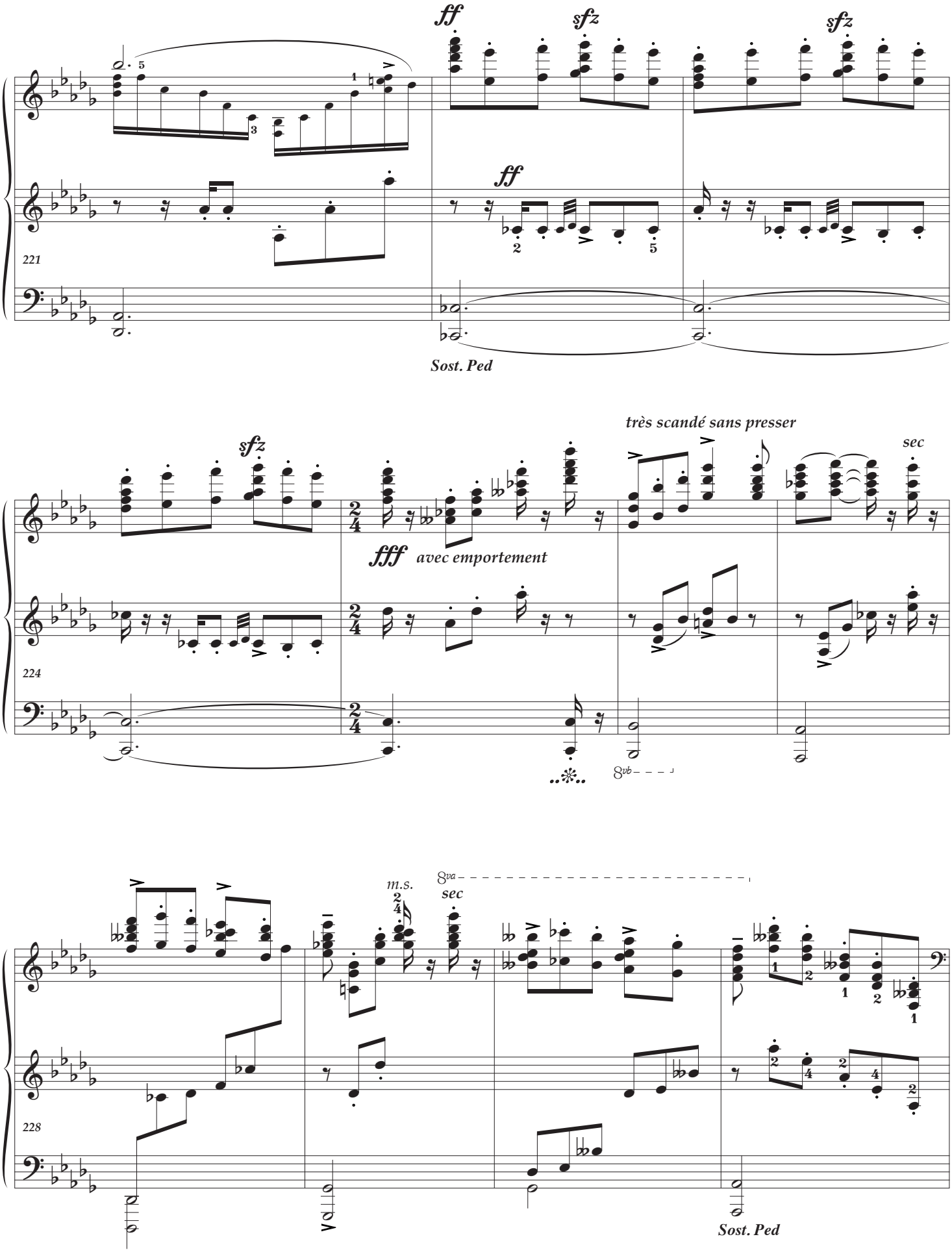

f
avec grâce et aisément
153
8va
p subito
m.s.
m.s.
157
p gracieux
161
sfz

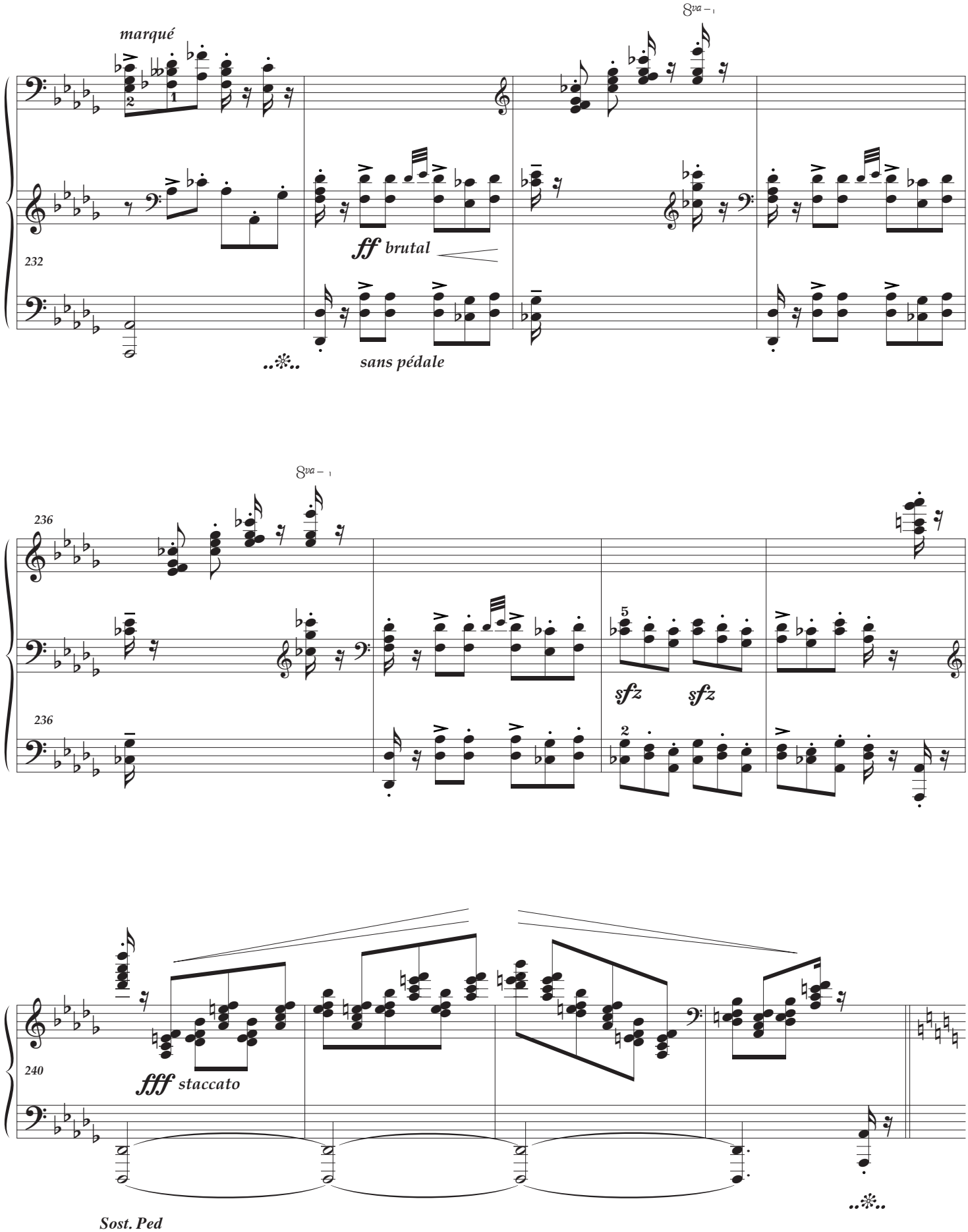

poco cresc.
165
sfz
f
ff
169
Sost. Ped
173
ff
sans presser
m.s.
brillant
m.s.
173

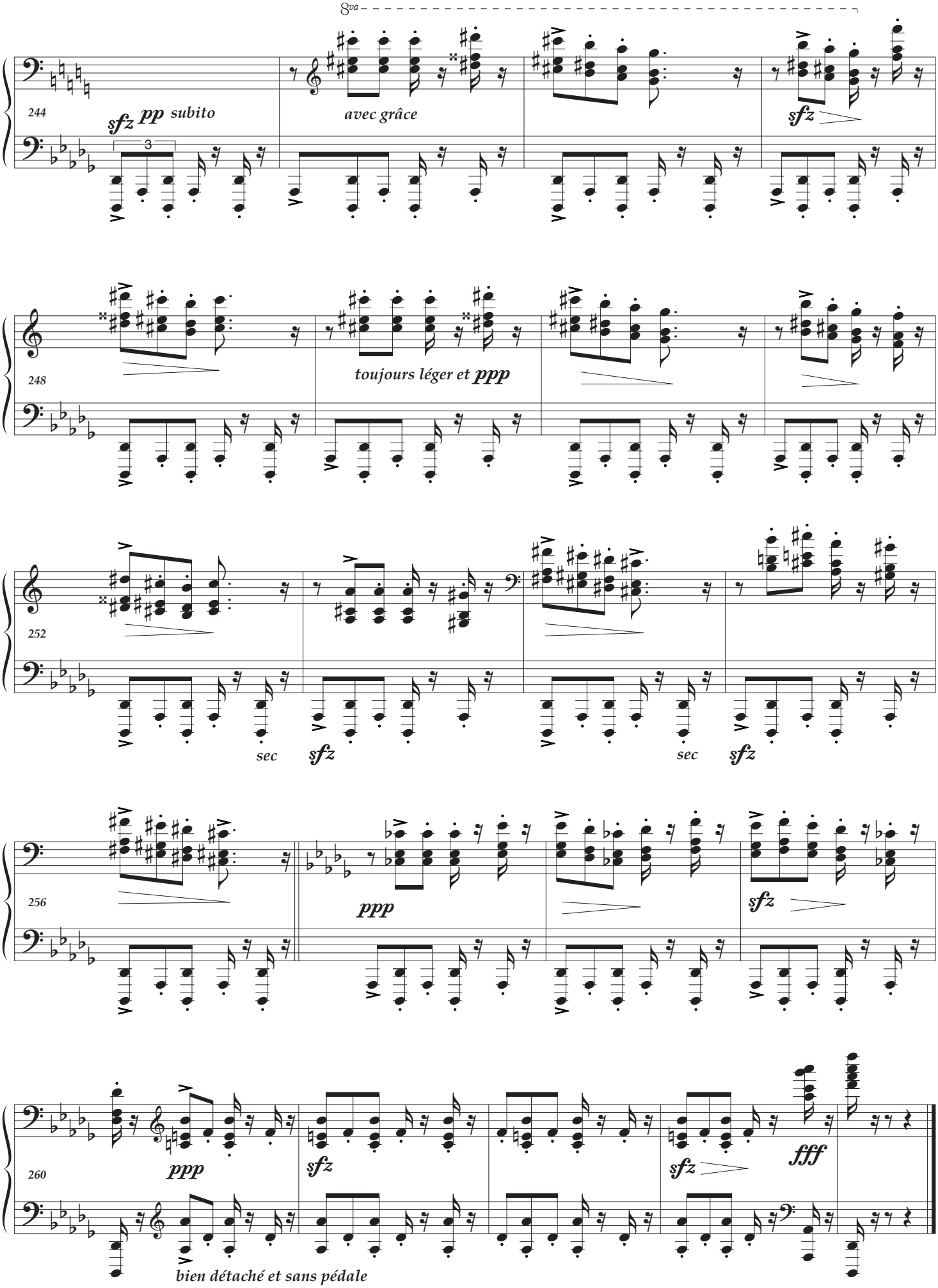

aimable
177
m.s.
sfz
gracieux
181
185
ff.
8va
p subito
(8va)
crescendo poco a poco
188
sfz
sfz
sfz


8va
sfz
ff
fff
192
8va
fff
195
sotto
martelé
Sost. Ped
p
poco rallentando
m.s.
sotto
m.s.
199
a tempo
narquois, sec et canaille
p le chant marqué
sans pédale
sfz
203
p et bien détaché
p


sfz
poco crescendo
207
sfz
211
sfz
215
6/8
♩ = ♩.
leggiero sans ralentir
f
ff
218


ff
sfz
sfz
ff
221
Sost. Ped
très scandé sans presser
sfz
sec
fff avec emportement
224
8vb
8va
m.s.
sec
228
Sost. Ped


marqué
8va
232
ff brutal
sans pédale
8va
236
236
sfz
sfz
240
fff staccato
Sost. Ped


8va
244
sfz pp subito
avec grâce
sfz
248
toujours léger et ppp
252
sec
sfz
sec
sfz
256
ppp
sfz
260
ppp
sfz
sfz
fff
bien détaché et sans pédale

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Appendix

Durations, comments, afterthoughts & French vocabulary

- None of the sostenuto pedal suggestions are attributed to Albeniz. It is very effective combining the sostenuto* and sustaining pedals.
- A third stave has been added to make the text clearer.
- Given that the dynamic range is large — *ppp* to *fff* — *f* is not really loud.

Duration: Alicia de Larrocha's definitive performance is **6'20**, although **6'55** might be more realistic for most of us.

- **1** bass octave added
- **9 & 13** RH 2nd quaver "rearranged" as **7**
- **14-20** LH added acciaccaturas and eliminated some LH leaps into the treble`
- **21** misprint 2nd beat bass (confused clef?)
- **32-49** presented in F minor
- **34 & 36** bass octaves added
- **40** bass fifth added as **38-46**
- **48, 50 & 52** bass octaves added
- **50-60** presented in C minor
- **61-69** presented with a blank key-signature
- **68-69** bass octaves are one octave lower
- **70-125** presented in A♭
- **110-125 & 218-224** presented in 6/8
- **126-140** presented in C minor
- **136** bass one octave lower
- **140** bass octave added
- **164** bass tied as elsewhere
- **169-174** presented in D
- **187-194** presented with a blank key-signature
- **205, 209** final "punched" chord one octave higher
- **217** RH accompanying figure adjusted to match **81**
- **225** bass tie and alto D♭ added
- **226 & 228** bass octave added
- **244-256** treble presented with a blank key-signature

* The sostenuto pedal was first shown in Paris at the Industrial Exposition of 1844. The idea was not immediately taken up by piano builders, but in 1874, is was perfected and patented by Steinway, soon to be fitted on all their grands and better uprights. One obvious commercial reason for not including the sostenuto pedal in musical scores must have been the thought of excluding buyers whose pianos didn't have it. Debussy and Ravel certainly played one such Steinway grand *chez* Madame de Saint Marceaux and also one bought by Winnaretta de Polignac in 1906. Apparently, in 1900 the composer René de Castéra bought a 3 pedal Steinway on the advice of Albeniz. One could say that it took over 100 years for it to become commonplace.

ce morceau doit être joué avec allégresse et librement	*this piece should be played in a joyful and free manner*
bien rythmé mais sans presser	*rhythmically strong but without rushing*
aimable	*pleasant*
sec	*crisp*
animé et joyeux	*animated and joyful*
bien marqué	*well marked*
toutes les pédales bien tenues	*hold the sustaining pedal as long as possible*
en dehors	*in relief*
p mais sonore, bien détaché et bien rythmé	***p*** *but resonant, staccato and rythmical*
sans pédale, narquoisement	*without pedal, mockingly*
la main droite ***mf*** laissant ressortir le chant	*RH* ***mf*** *allowing the melody to be projected*
lancé	*let fly*
plein et sonore	*full and resonant*
brillant	*bright*
avec grâce et aisément	*with grace and ease*
gracieux	*graceful*
narquois, sec et canaille	*mocking, crisp and mischievous*
le chant marqué	*bring out the melody*
et bien détaché	*with crisp staccato*
sans ralentir	*without slowing down*
avec emportement	*with enthusiasm*
très scandé	*very accentuated*
brutal	*violent*
toujours léger	*light throughout*