Refracted Fragments

for viola and piano

DANIEL OTT

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When the ultra-talented violist Rebecca Albers approached me to compose a piece for her I was deeply enmeshed in another work, Blue Water*, and I initially thought to decline the generous offer. Yet, two things in her favor ultimately persuaded me to accept: 1) The fact that she proclaimed herself a "fan" of my music and approached me out of the blue; and 2) The promise of a Parisian premiere—she had won an audition that would allow her to give a debut recital in the Auditorium du Louvre. So, I took time out from work on* Blue Water *and composed* Refracted Fragments *in the span of a few short weeks in the winter of 2007-08.*

The work, a single movement for viola and piano, is based on the concept of skewed mirror images (hence refraction, not reflection). A comparison of the first and last measures of the piece shows the relationship (like the opening and closing images of a collapsing tower in Cocteau's 1930 film, Le Sang d'un poète*). Indeed, the entire first half of the work is heard, mostly in reverse, during the second half. I chose as the mid-point not an obvious moment but a subtle one. I leave it to the listener to detect.*

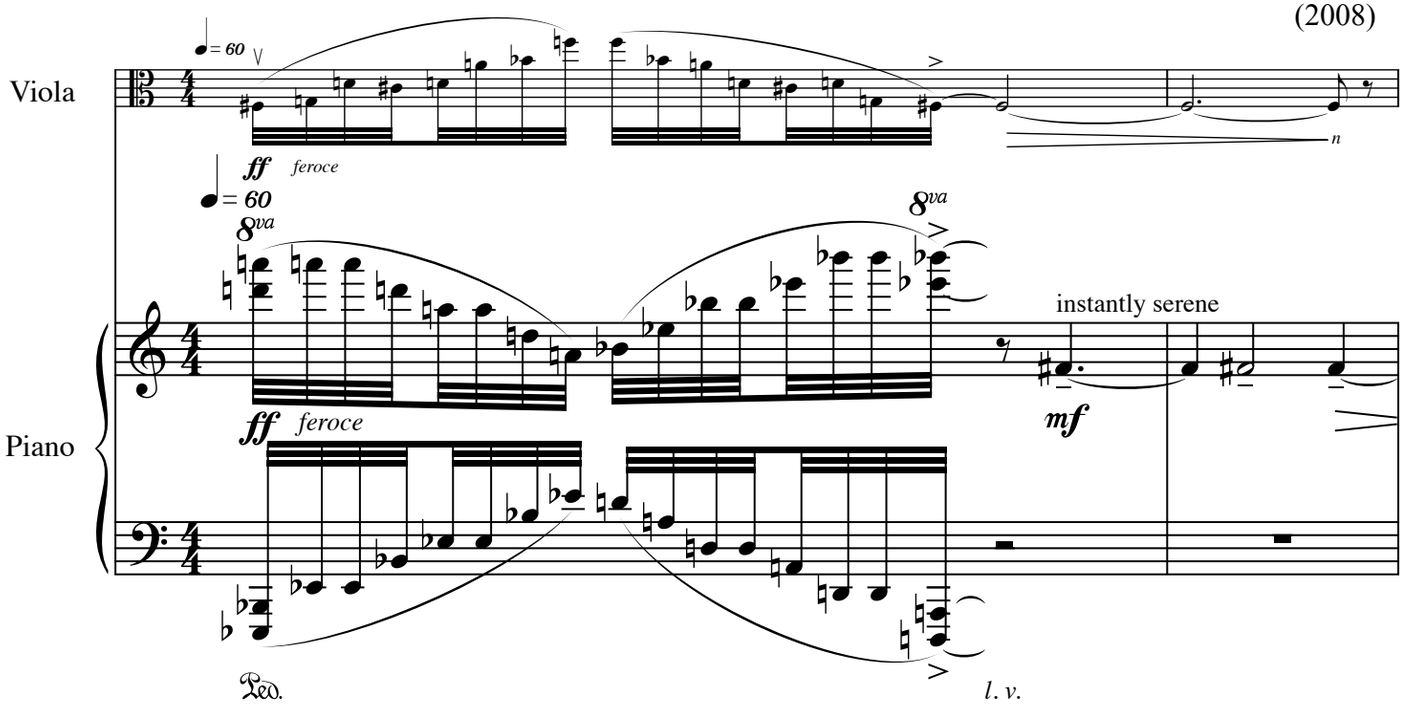
The only other aspect of the music worth mentioning in advance of hearing is that, at the time of its composition, parts of Refracted Fragm*ents were inspired by the heartbreakingly gorgeous closing bars of Carissimi's* Jephte *("Plorate filii Israel"), a work that sounds as fresh today as it did in the 17th century.*

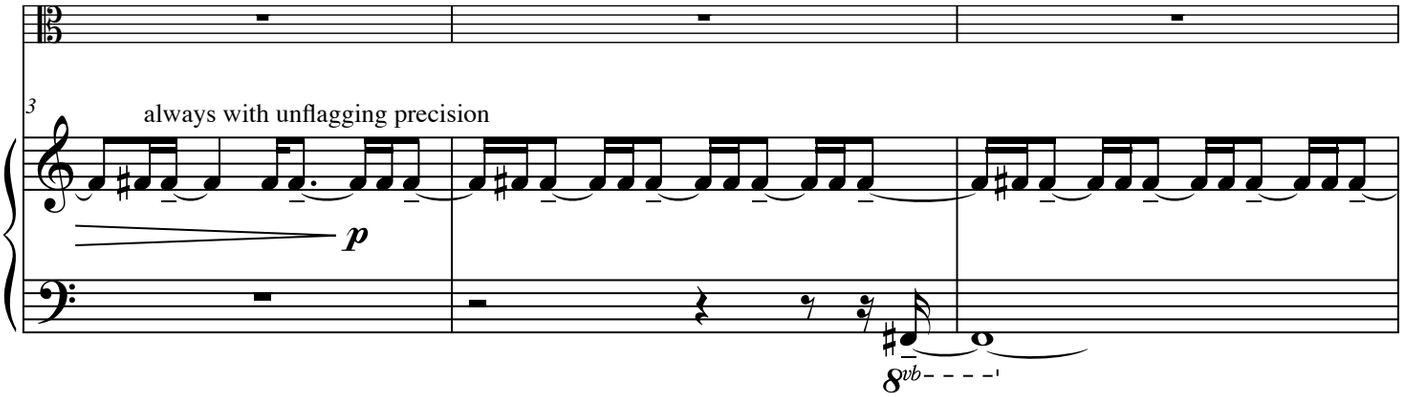
for Rebecca Albers

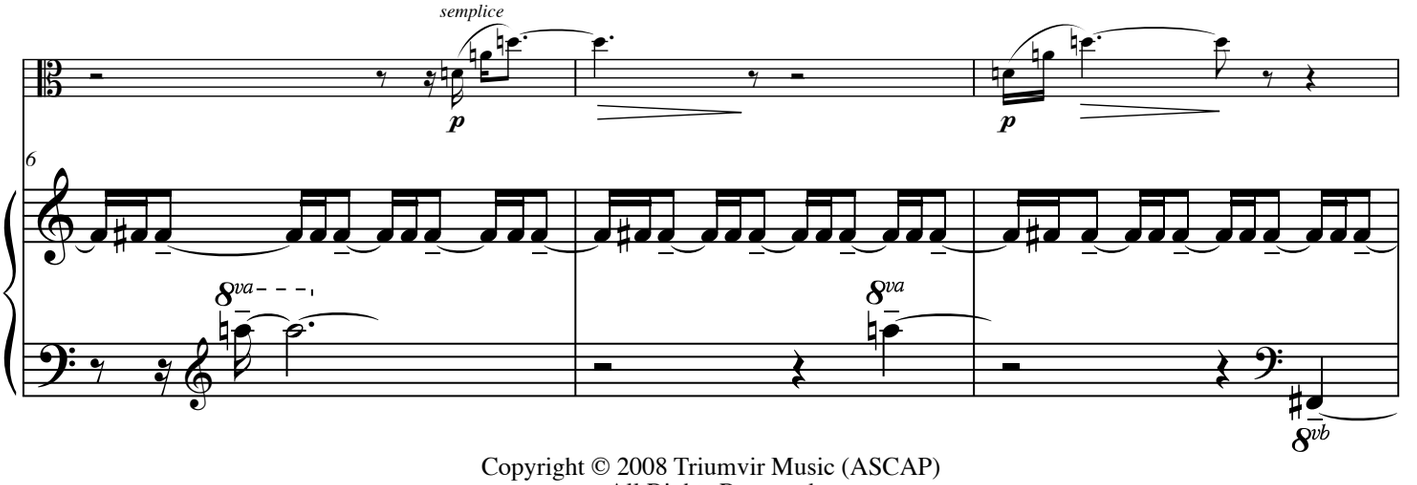
Refracted Fragments

for Viola and Piano

Daniel Ott
(2008)







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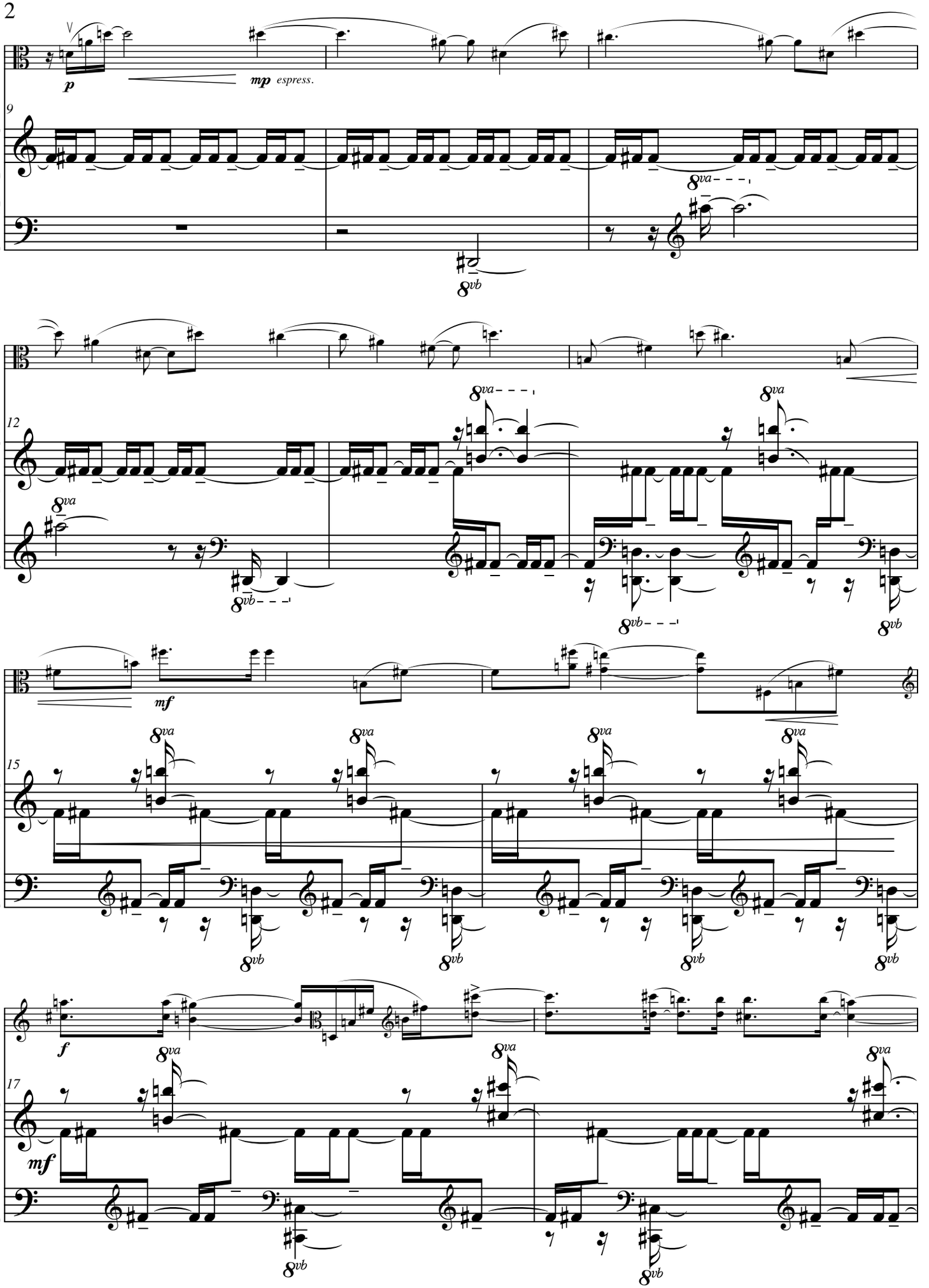
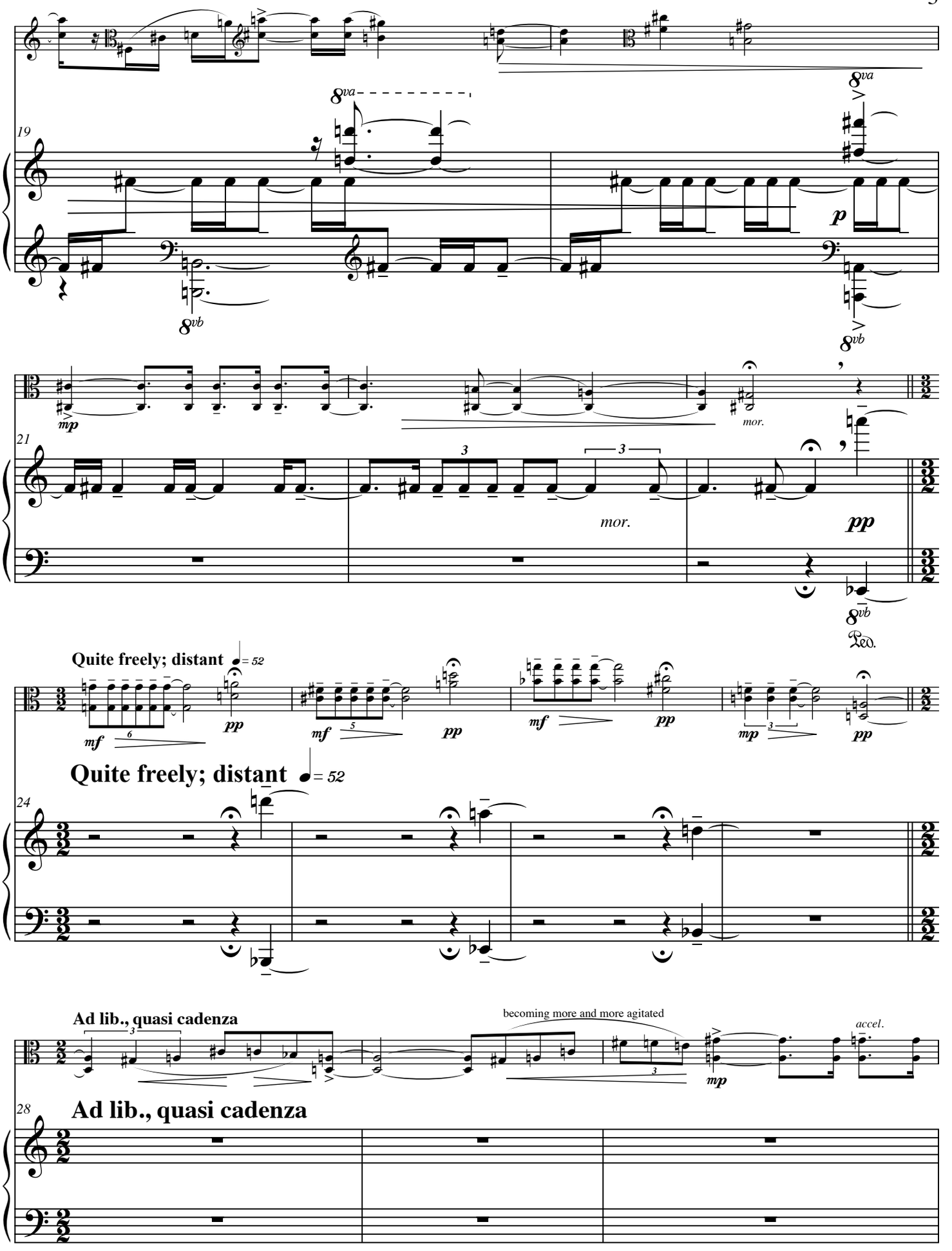
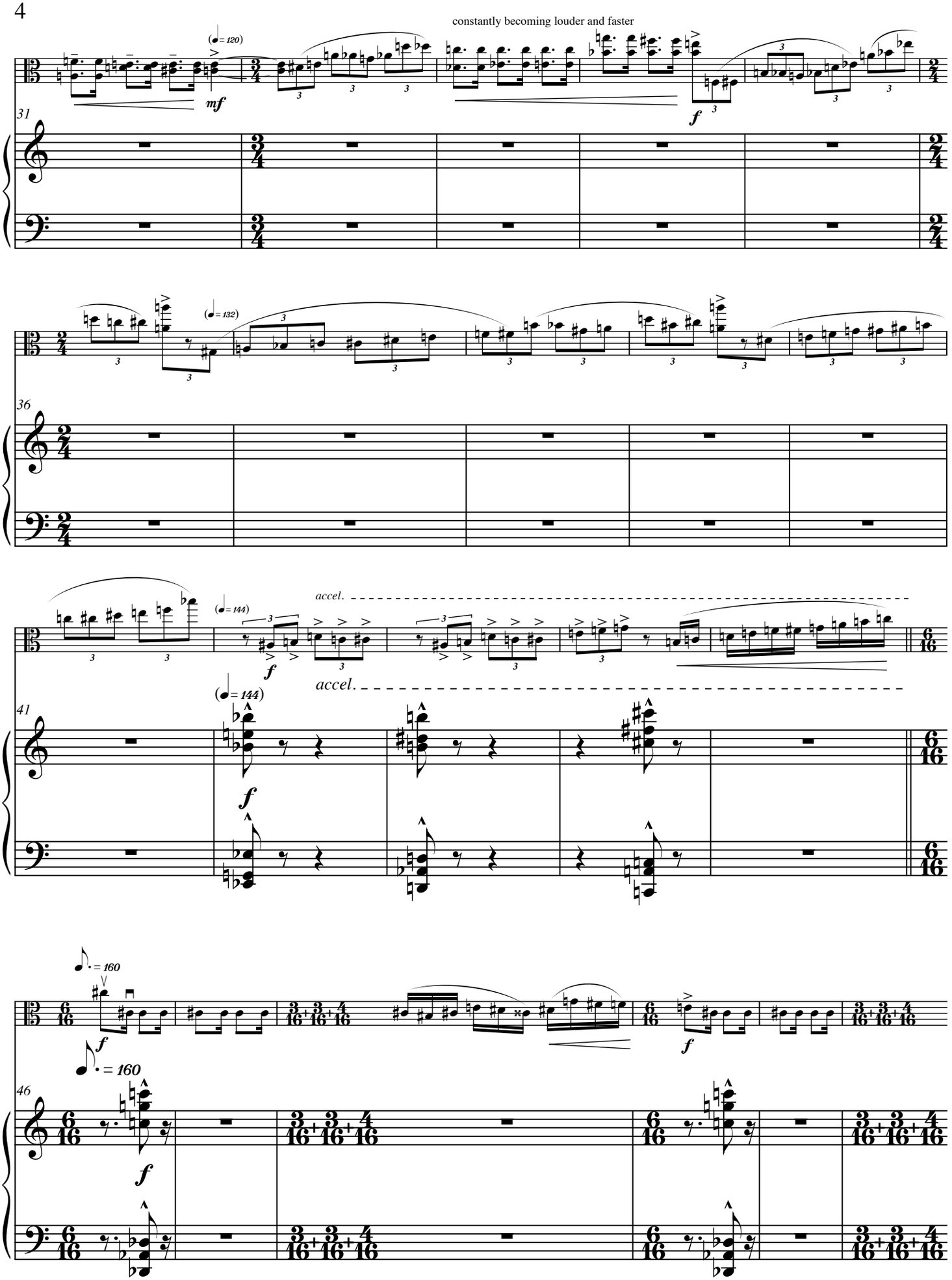
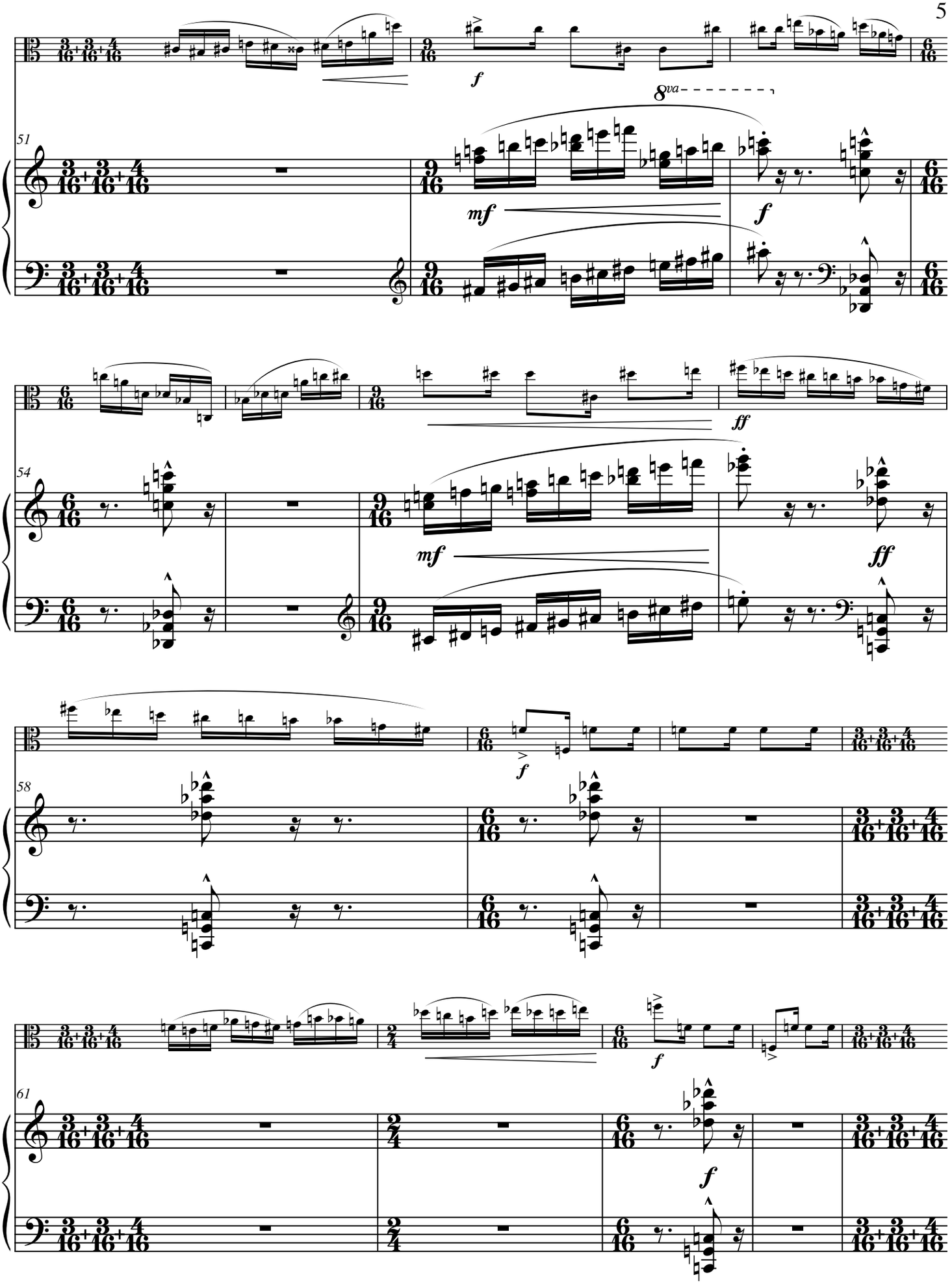
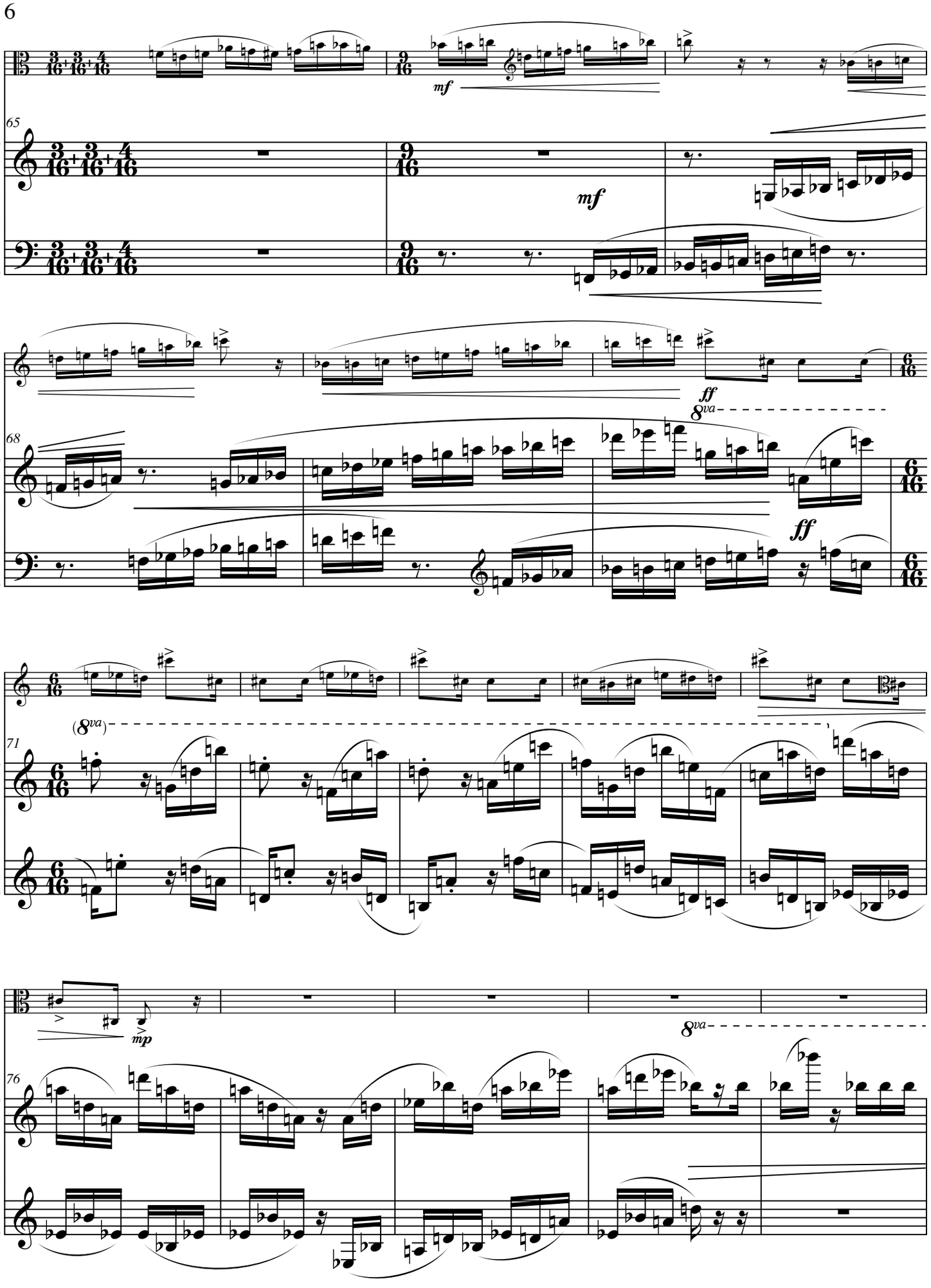
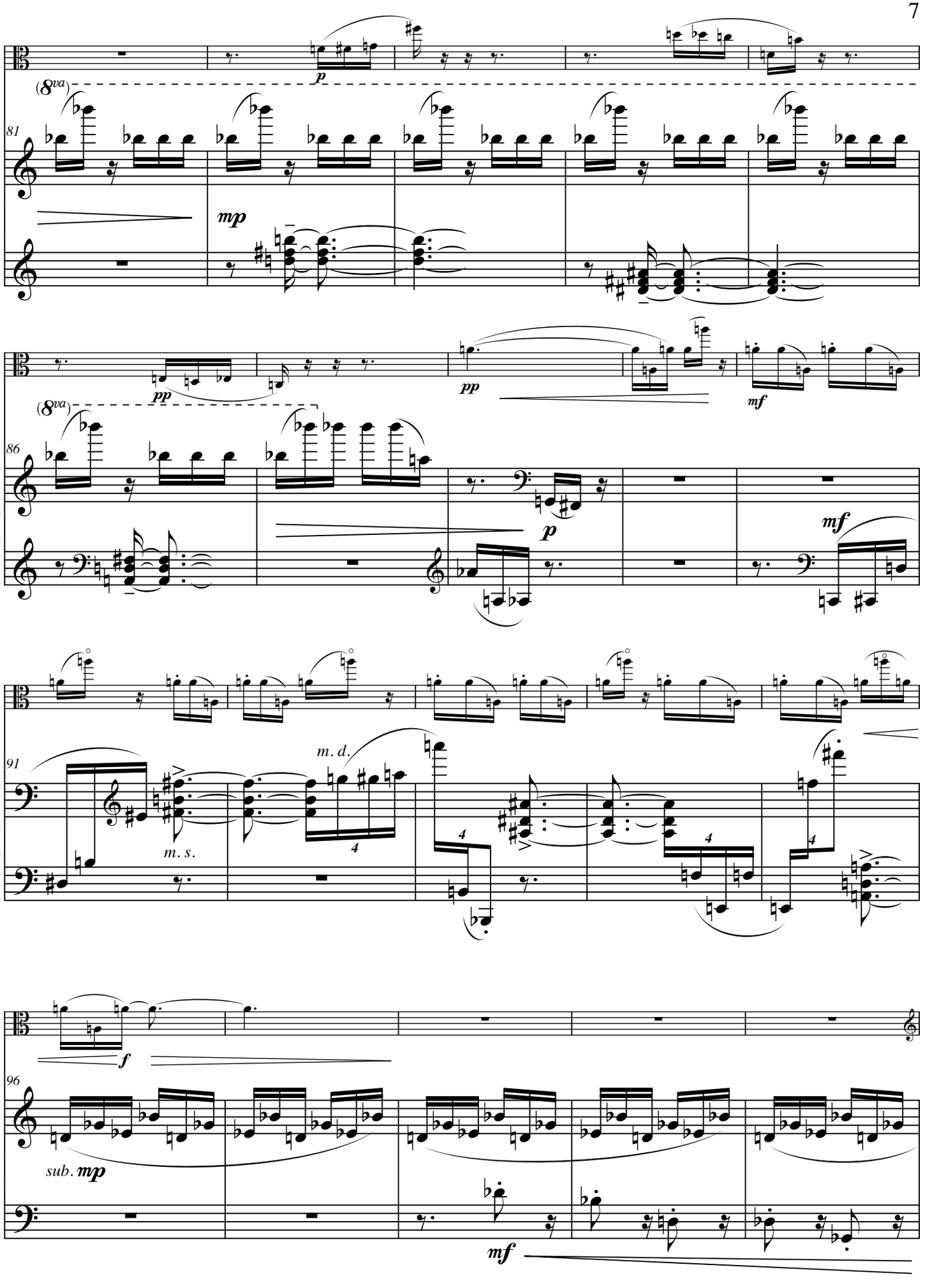

p
mp espress.
9
8va
8vb
12
8va
8vb
mf
15
8va
8vb
f
mf
17
8va
8vb

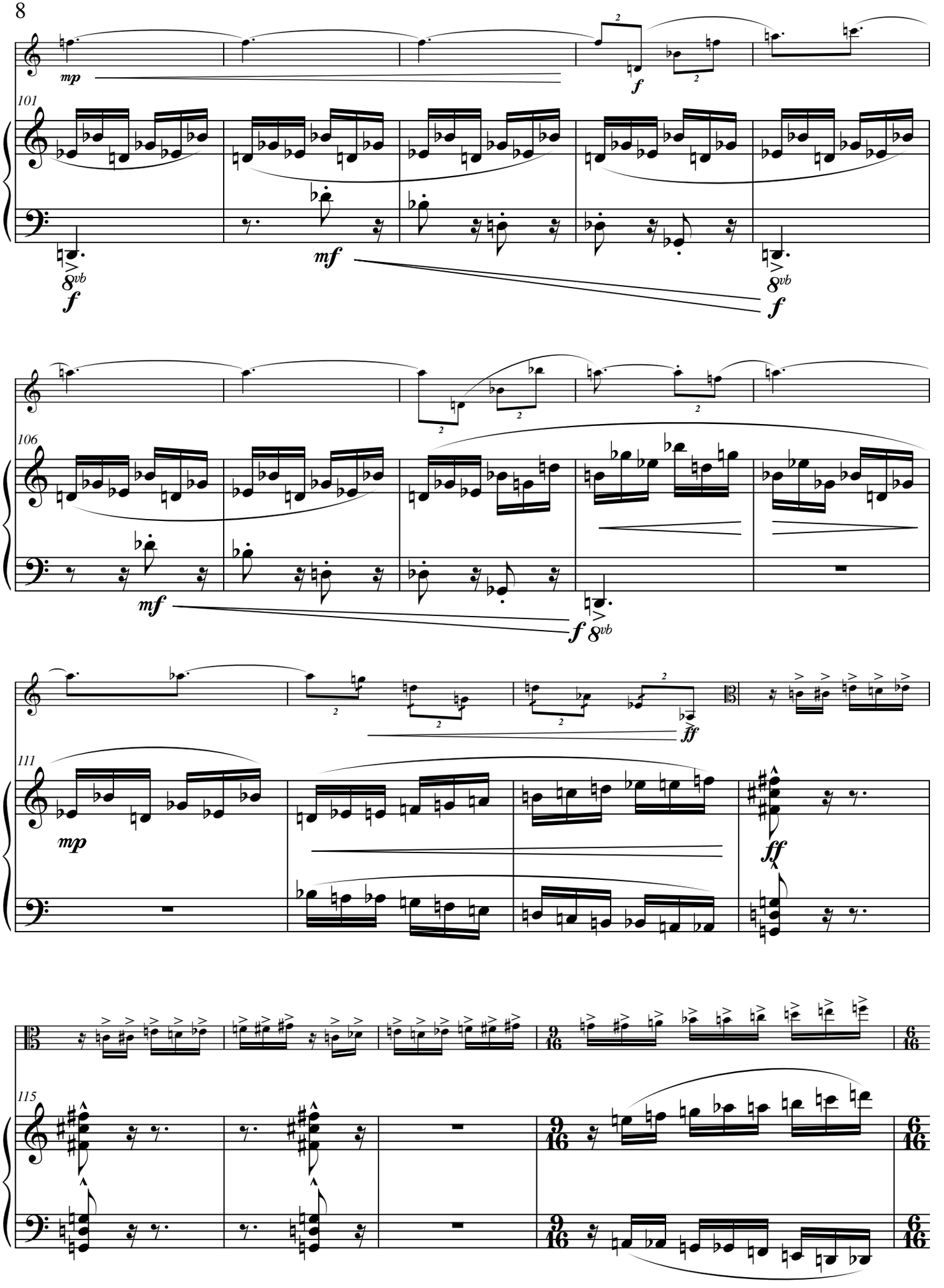

19
8va
8vb
p
mp
mor.
21
3
pp
Ped.
Quite freely; distant ♩= 52
mf
6
5
24
Ad lib., quasi cadenza
becoming more and more agitated
accel.
28

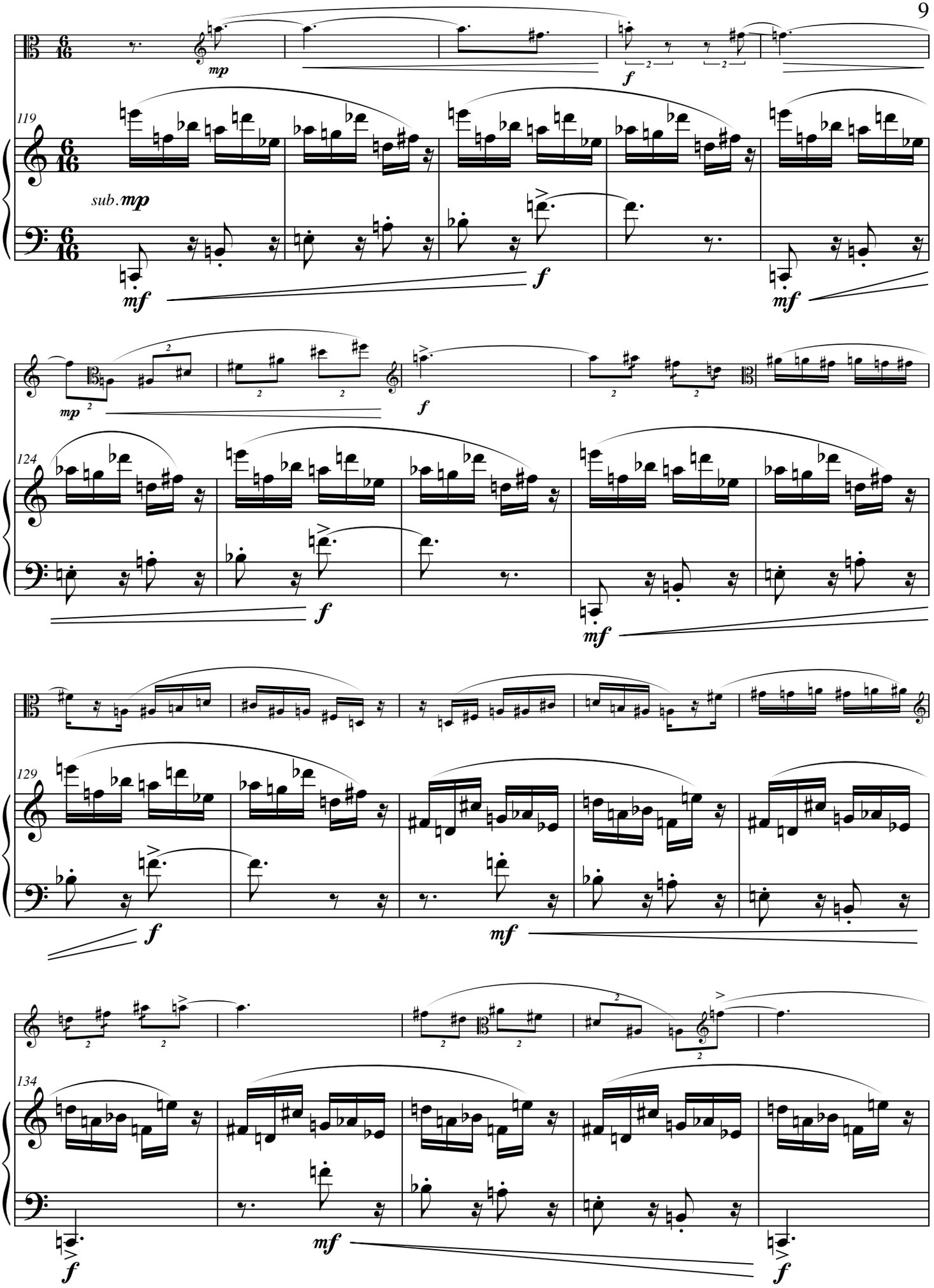

constantly becoming louder and faster
(♩= 120)
mf
f
31
(♩= 132)
36
(♩= 144)
accel.
f
41
(♩= 144)
accel.
f
♪. = 160
f
♪. = 160
f
46
f

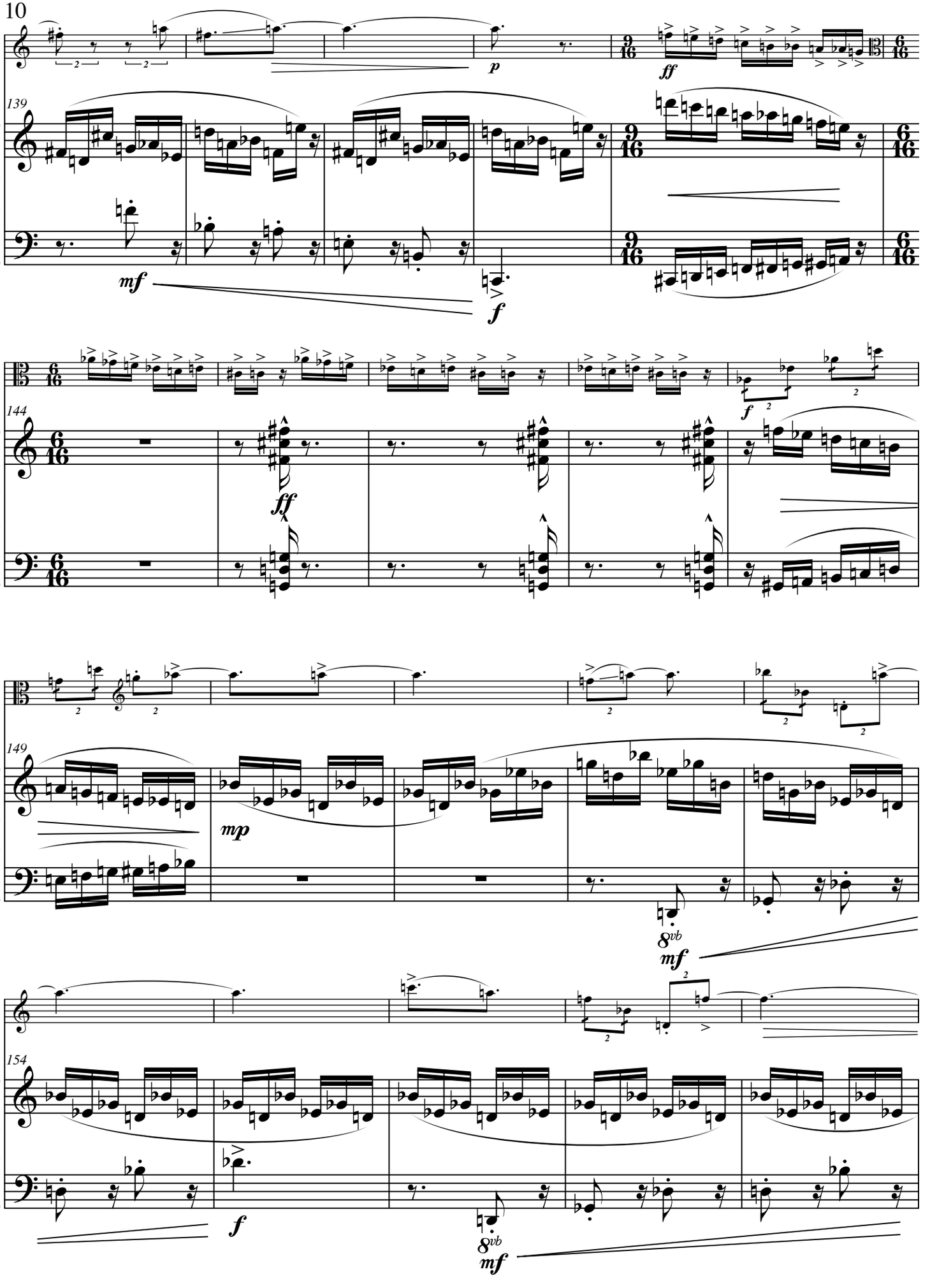

51
8va
f
mf
f
54
ff
mf
ff
58
f
61
f

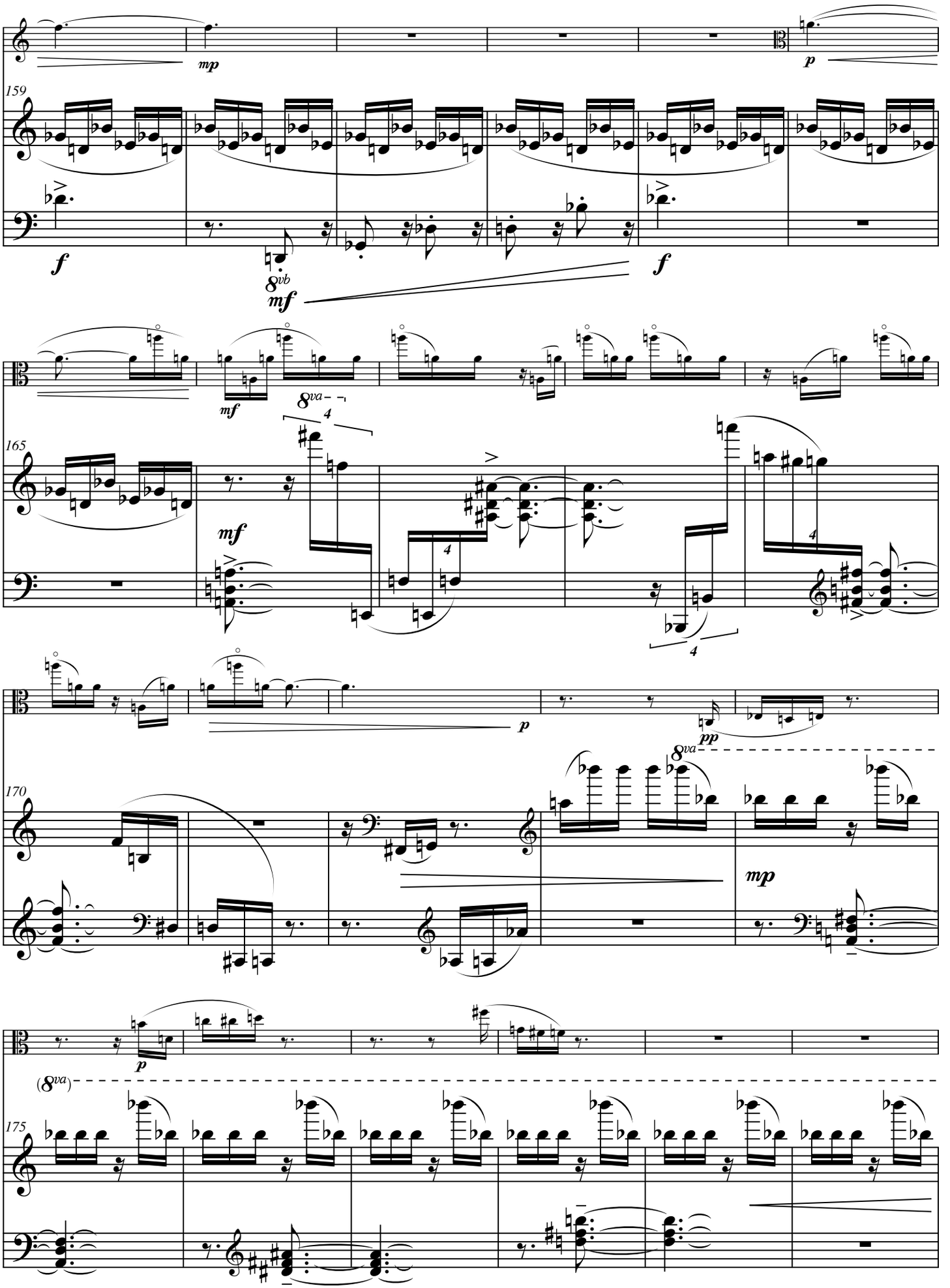

65
mf
mf
68
ff
8va
ff
71
(8va)
76
mp
8va

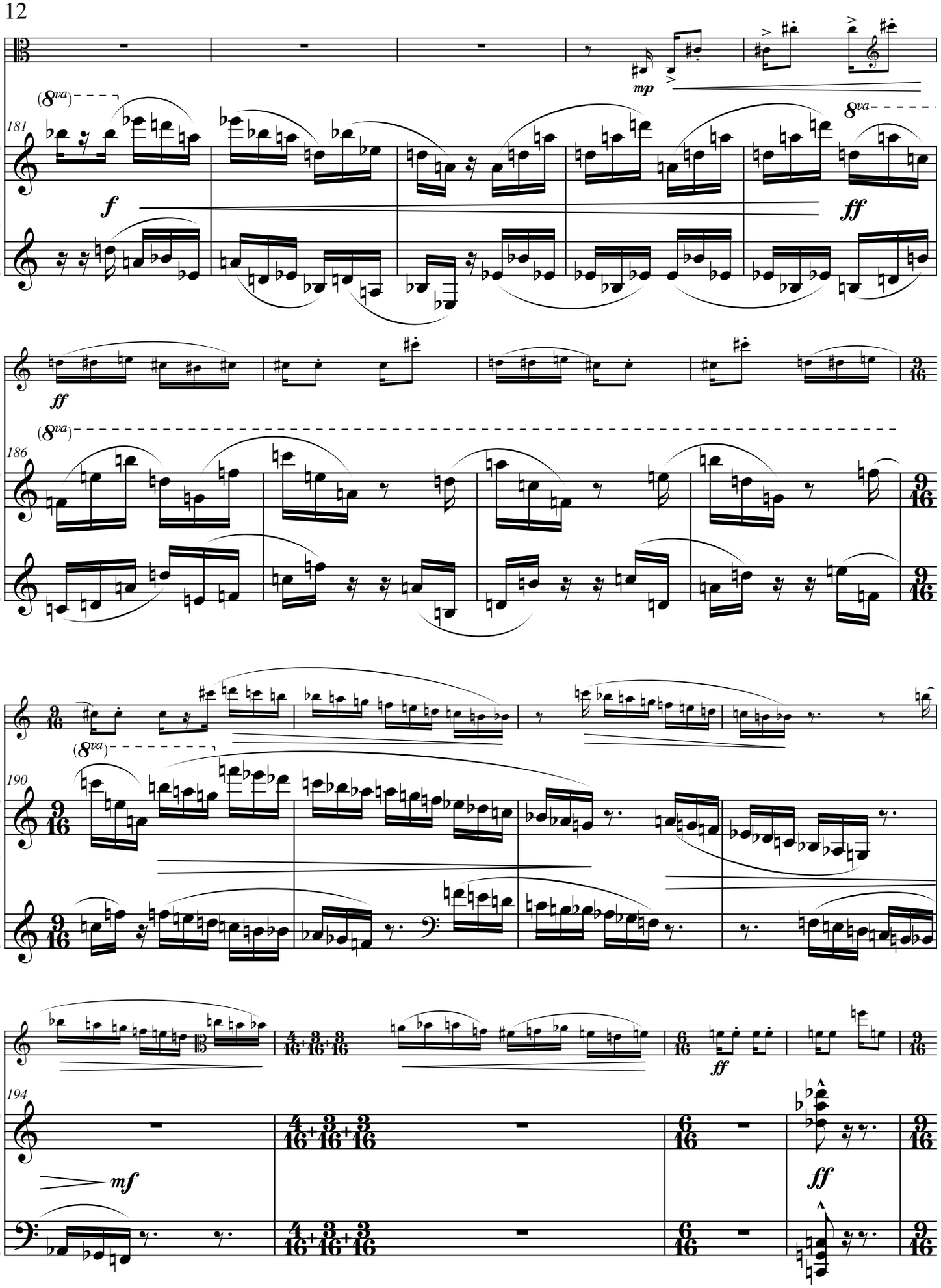

81
(8va)
p
mp
86
(8va)
pp
pp
mf
p
mf
91
m. d.
m. s.
4
4
4
4
96
f
sub. mp
mf

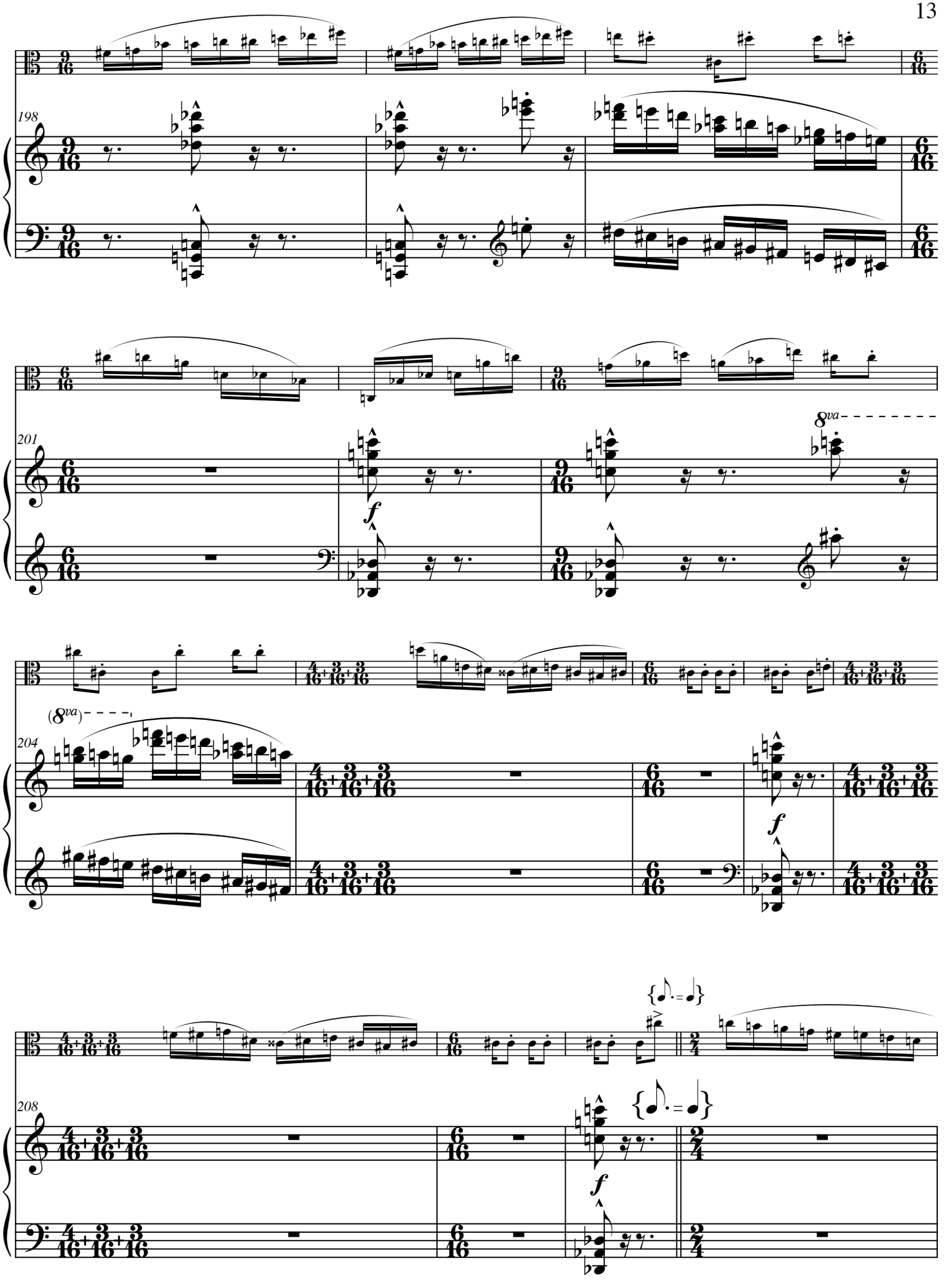

101
mp
f
mf
8vb
f
106
mf
f
8vb
111
mp
ff
ff
115

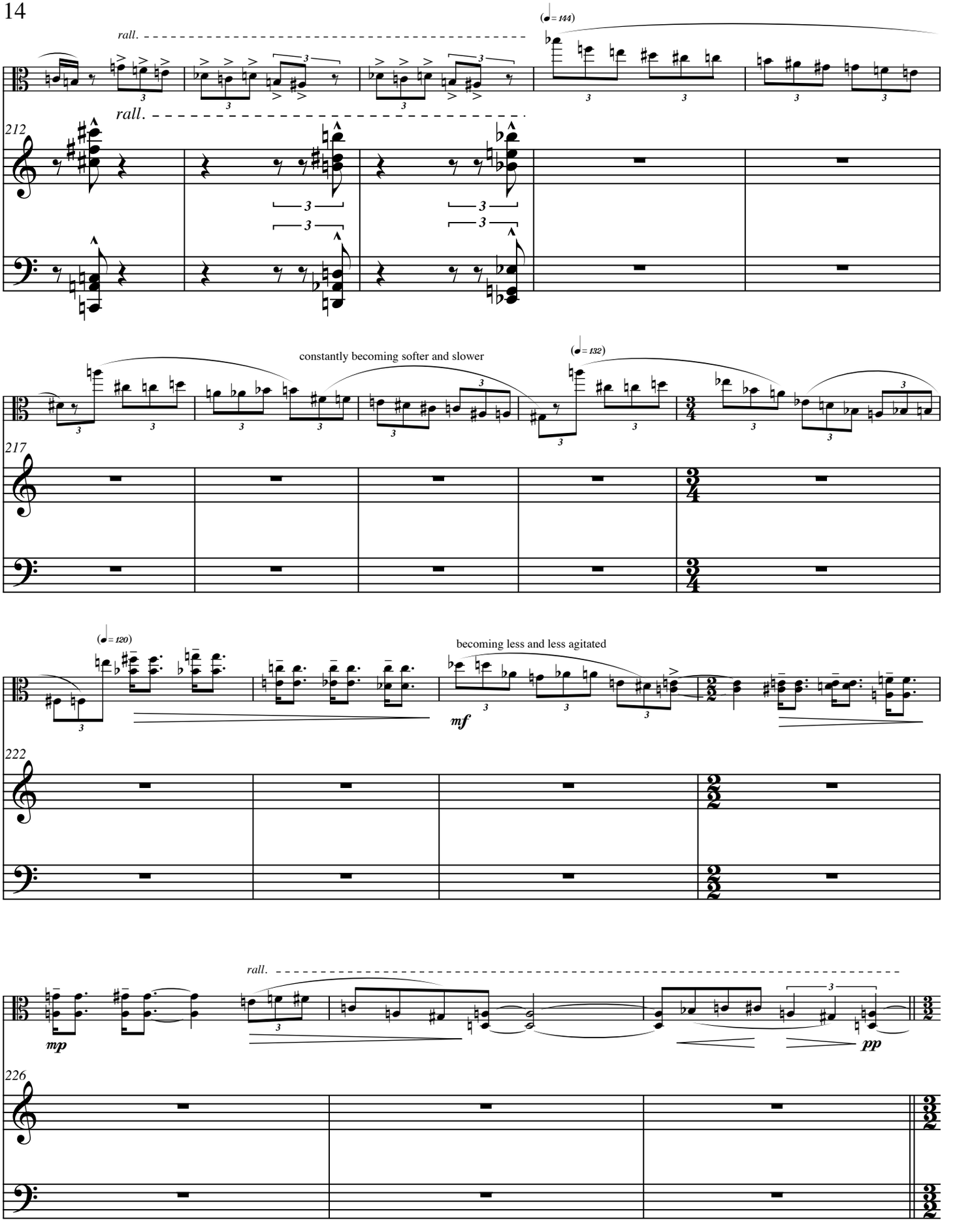

119
sub. mp
124
129
134

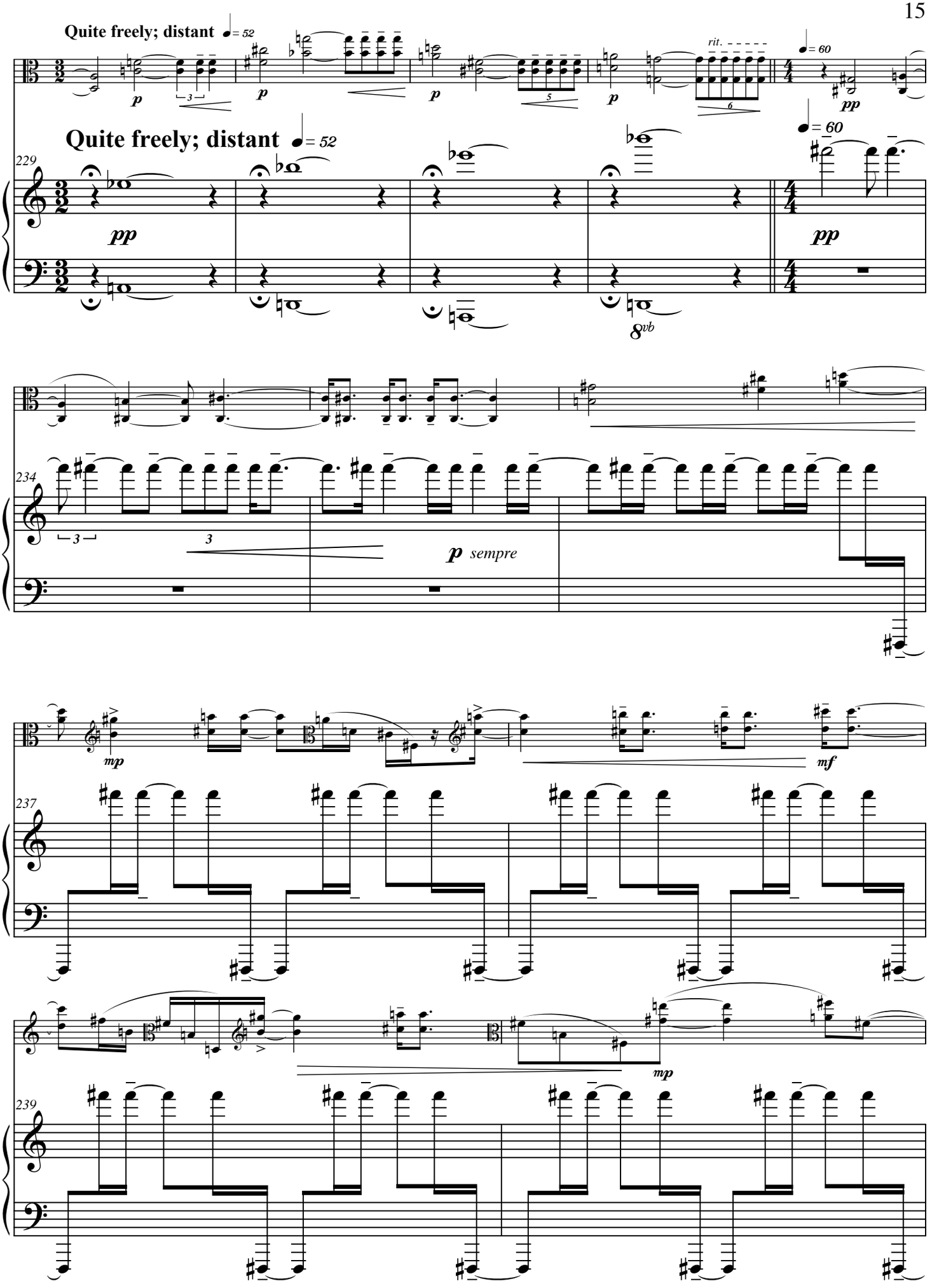

139
p
ff
mf
f
144
ff
f
149
mp
8vb
mf
154
f
8vb
mf

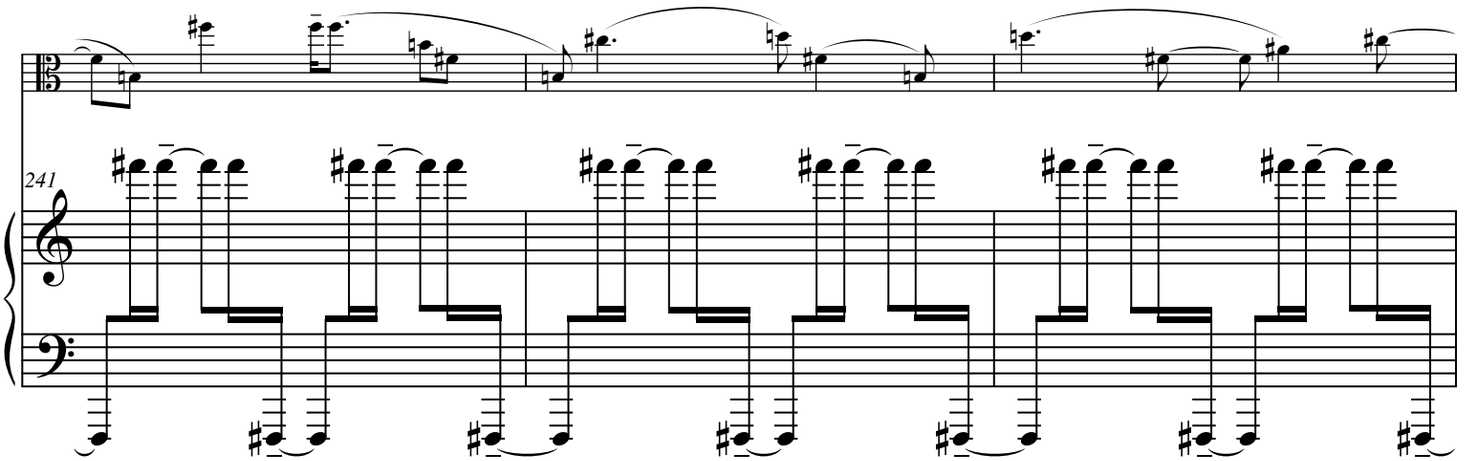

159
mp
p
f
8vb
mf
f
mf
8va
4
165
mf
4
4
4
p
pp
8va
170
mp
p
(8va)
175


181
(8va)
f
mp
8va
ff
ff
186
(8va)
9/16
190
(8va)
9/16
ff
194
mf
ff
4/16 + 3/16 + 3/16
6/16
9/16


198
201
8va
204
(8va)
208


rall.
(♩= 144)
212
rall.
constantly becoming softer and slower
(♩= 132)
217
(♩= 120)
becoming less and less agitated
mf
222
rall.
mp
pp
226


Quite freely; distant ♩= 52
rit.
♩= 60
Quite freely; distant ♩= 52
229
pp
8vb
234
sempre
237
mp
mf
239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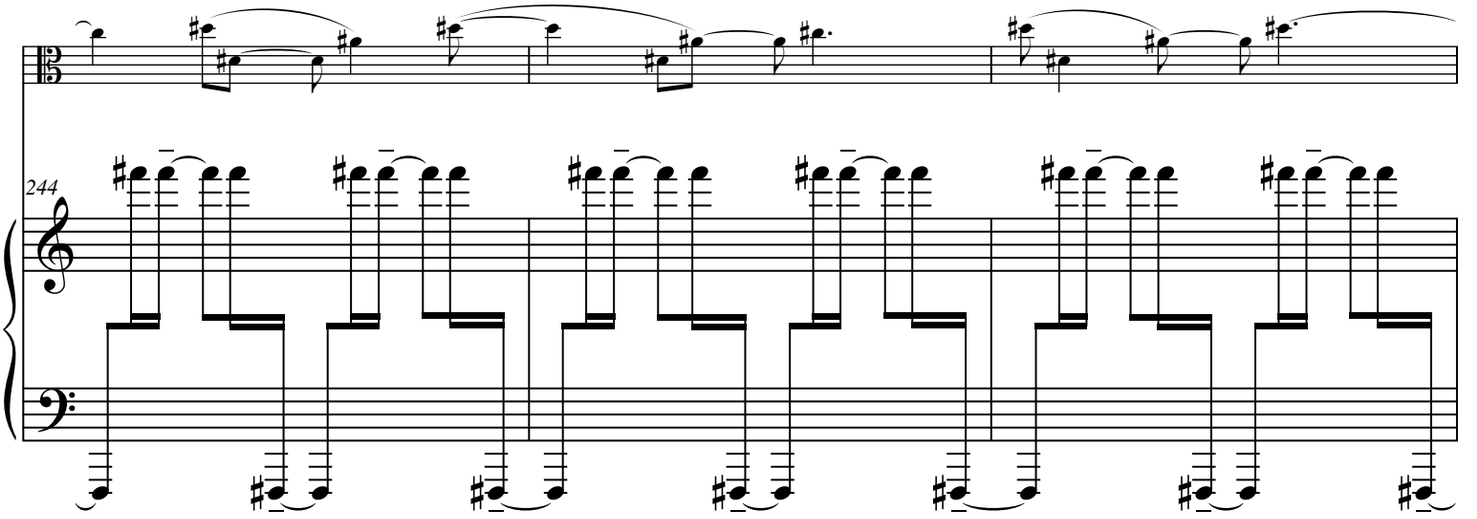
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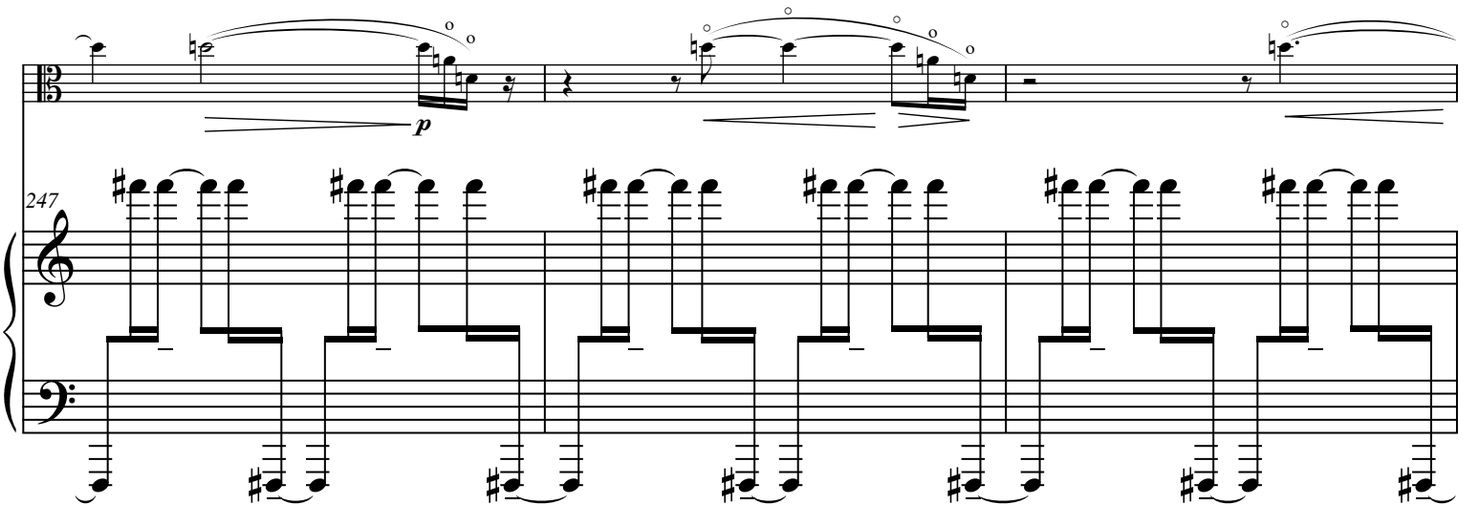
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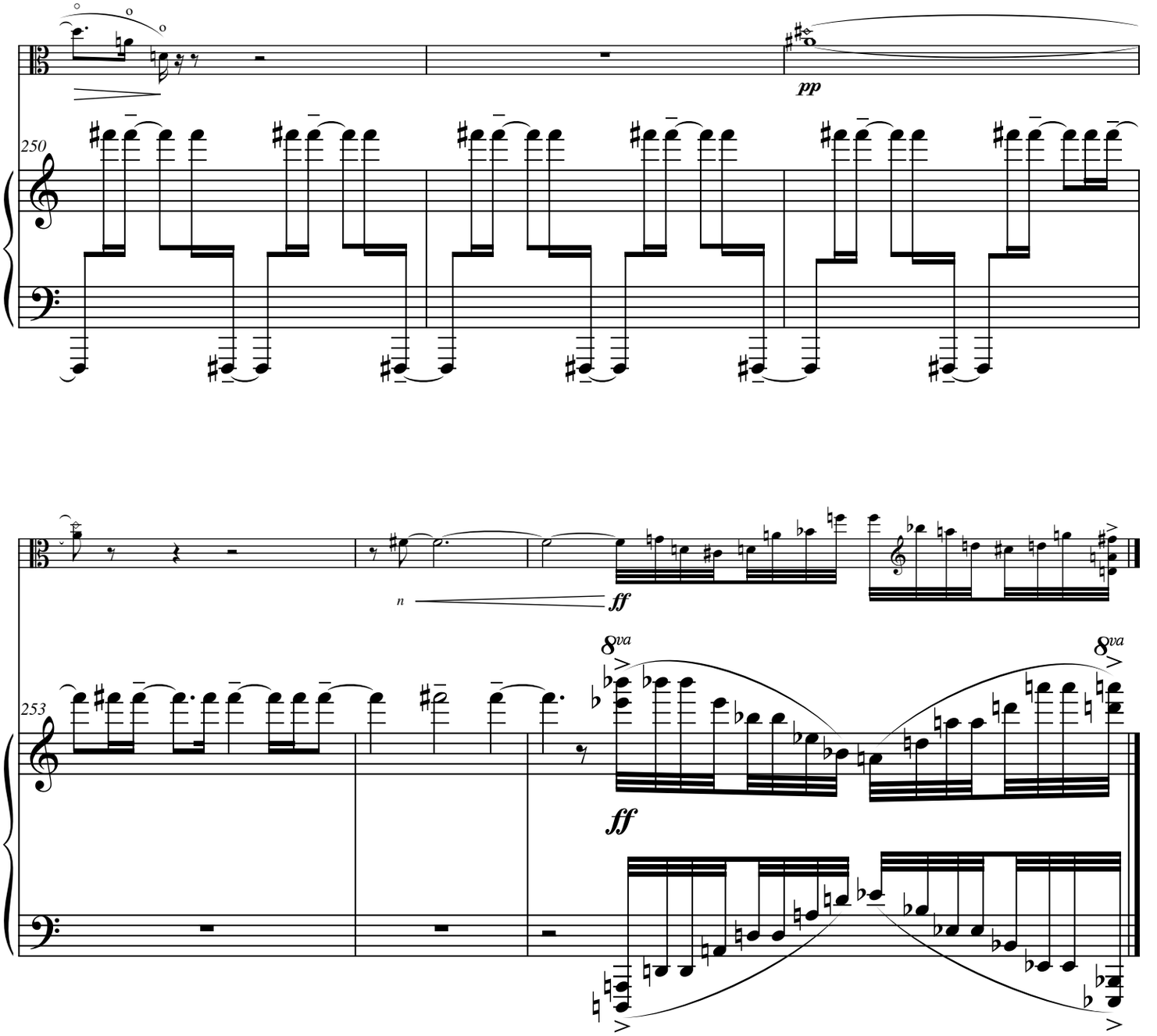
p


250
pp
253
n
ff
8va
8va
ff