Theresa Thordarson

hypoballad

for solo piano
(2022)

PERFORMANCE NOTES

- Mute strings between pins and dampers, still allowing for some string resonance to remain
- try using the full pinky side of the left hand very close to the pins.
- Pedal is to be used generously in muted string sections, and generally
(except when obvious harmonic shifts are occuring).
- If performing on an upright, or a grand piano with an interior structure which differs greatly
from the one used in creating this piece, the interior extended techniques may be modified or
performed entirely on the keyboard, with care to emulate the intended sonorities.

- Notes with diamond note-heads in the ***murky, wandering*** section are emulating a *langspil,*
an ancient Icelandic folk instrument. Folk practitioners are uncertain of how this instrument
was originally played so, dear player, you are encouraged to experiment! Plucking strings with fingers/nails,
hitting with various household objects, or investing in an actual dulcimer hammer could all be options.
Plucking may be easiest given the short time to prepare for playing the right hand on the keyboard.

PROGRAM NOTES

Hypoballad explores narrative musical elements from the lives of Icelandic twin sisters Herdis and Olina Andrésdóttir,
both poets in the ballade and *rímur* tradition whose work centered on nature and the experiences of peasant women.
It draws musical inspiration from Frédéric Chopin, Icelandic folk traditions, and Björk Guðmundsdóttir.

This music features "twin themes", one representing each sister, which weave together to portray their childhood,
unravel after their father's tragic death at sea, are explored independently during their lives of separation,
and are once more entwined upon their reunion in Reykjavik after 50 years apart.
Together, in 1924 at the age of 66, Herdis and Olina published their first written work *Ljóðmæli* (Poems)
to much acclaim.

For the performer: an example of each theme is found in full in bar 24 - 28.
(Herdis is the top voice here and Olina the lower.)

Are you rising from your twilight slumber,
O goddess of rhymes?

Hover over your friends,
awaken them with your bright voice,
let poetry's light and warmth
stream throughout the world

- Olina Andrésdóttir
translated M.J. Driscoll

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for page turning purposes.

for Brendan Jacklin

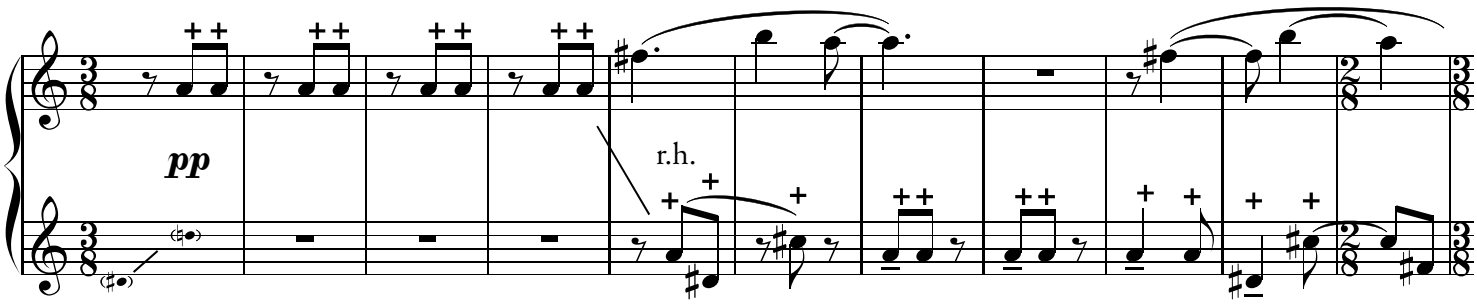
hypoballad

for solo piano

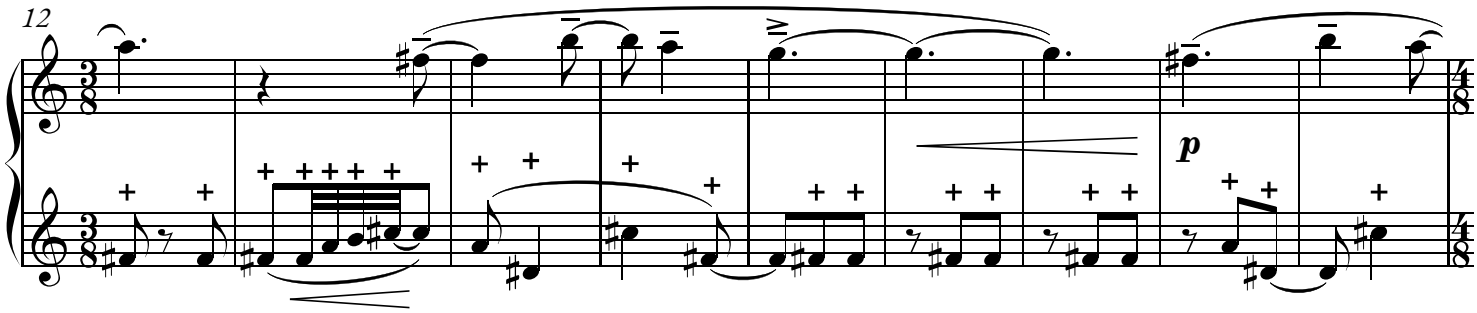
Theresa Thordarson
(b. 1990)

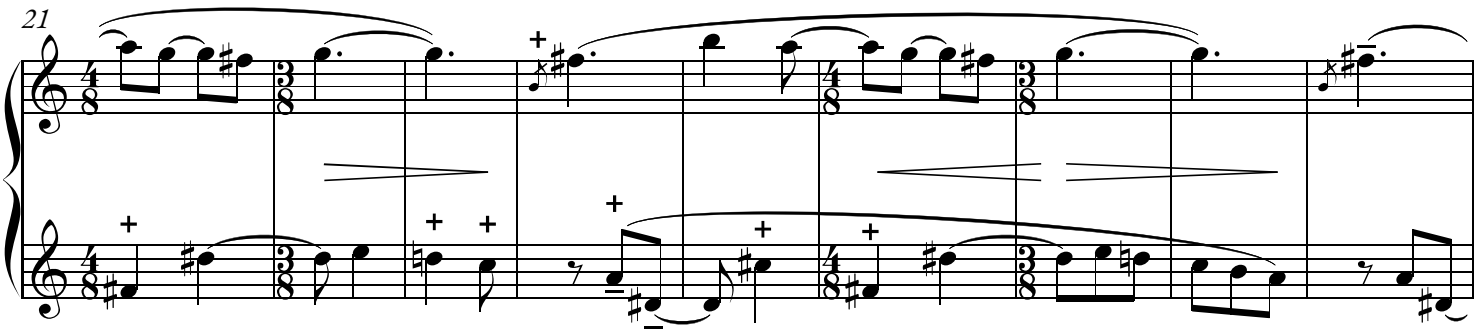
Childhood: hazy, lilting, from afar

♪= c. 116



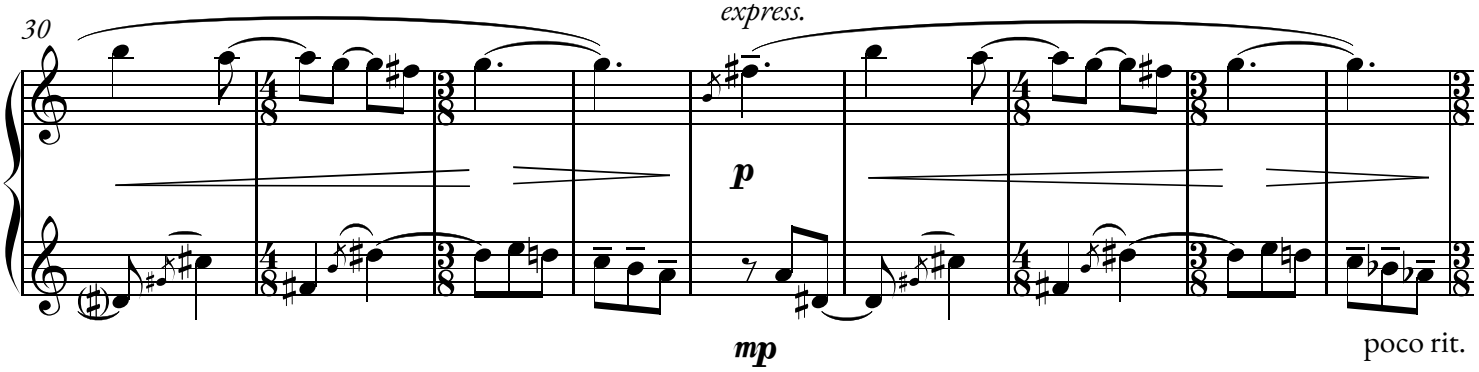
mute strings (see performance notes)
generous pedal unless otherwise indicated

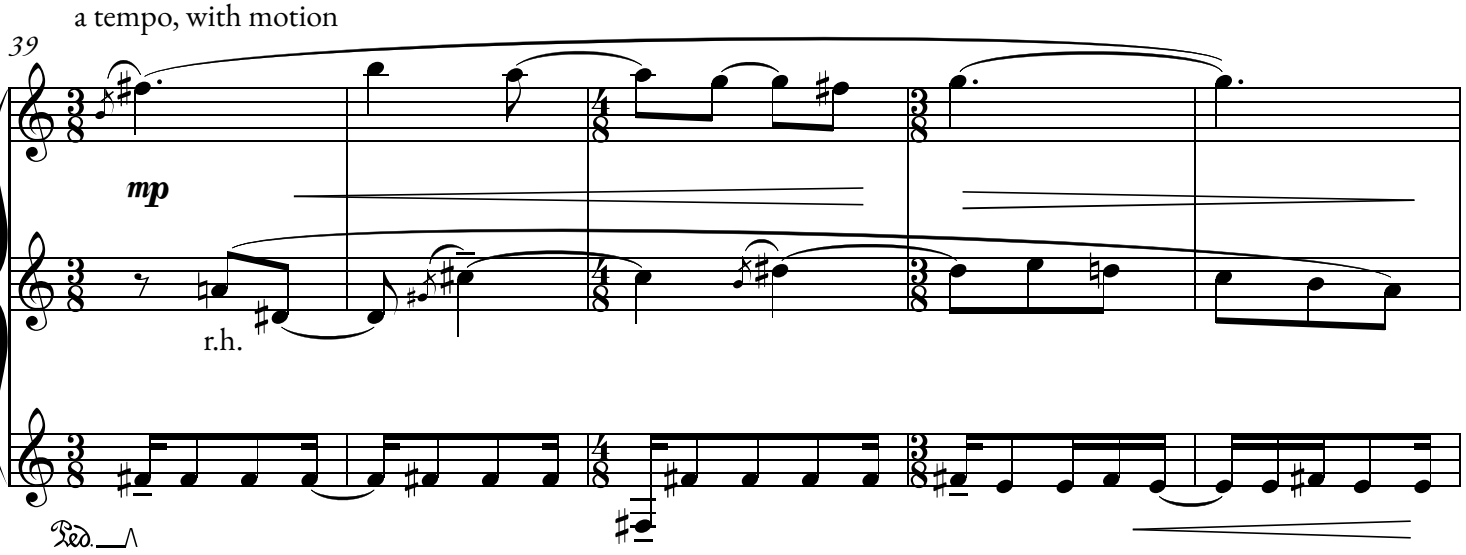


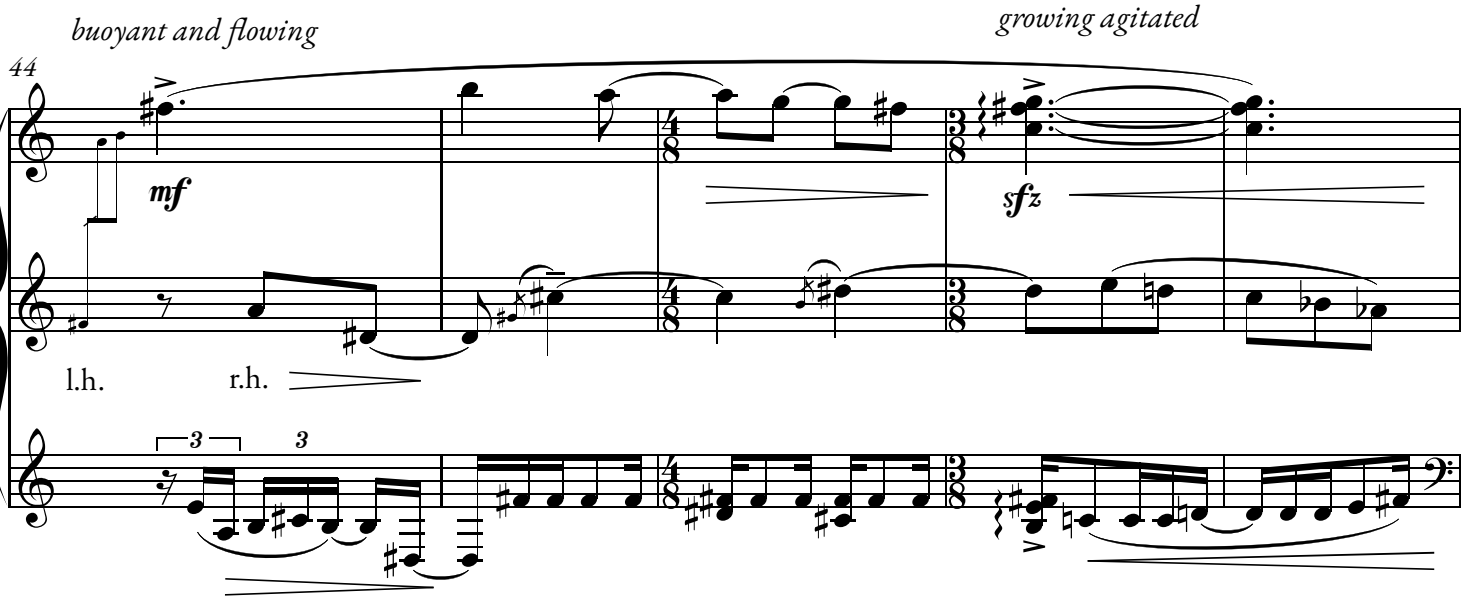


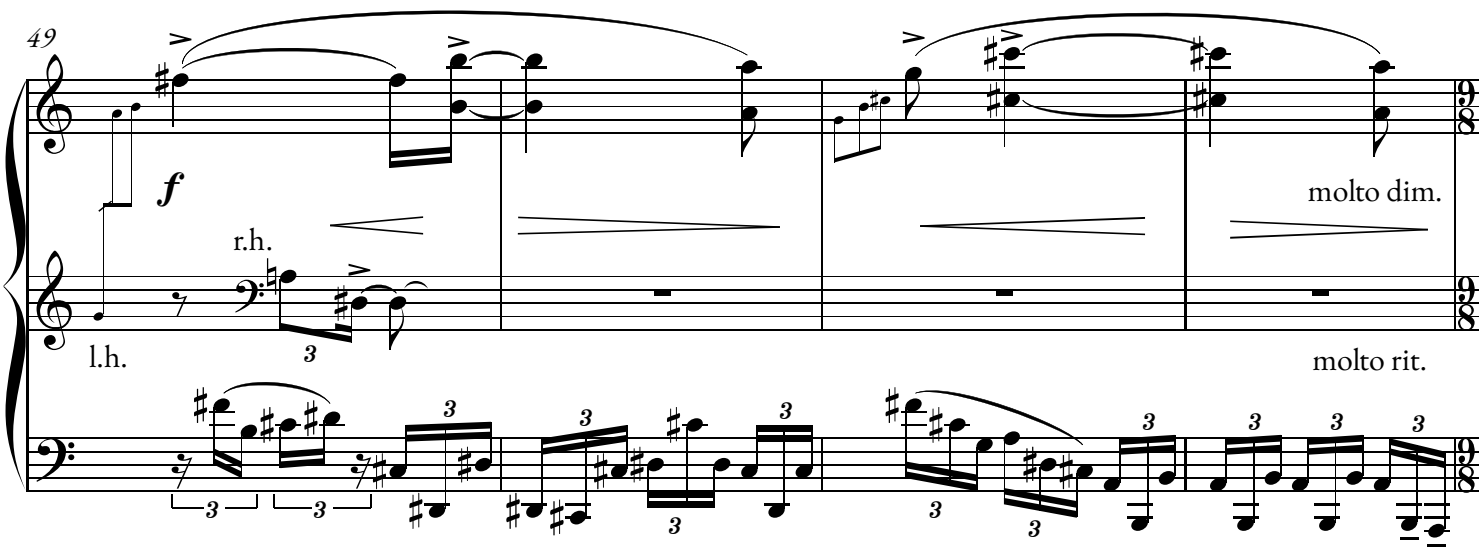
l.h. on keys

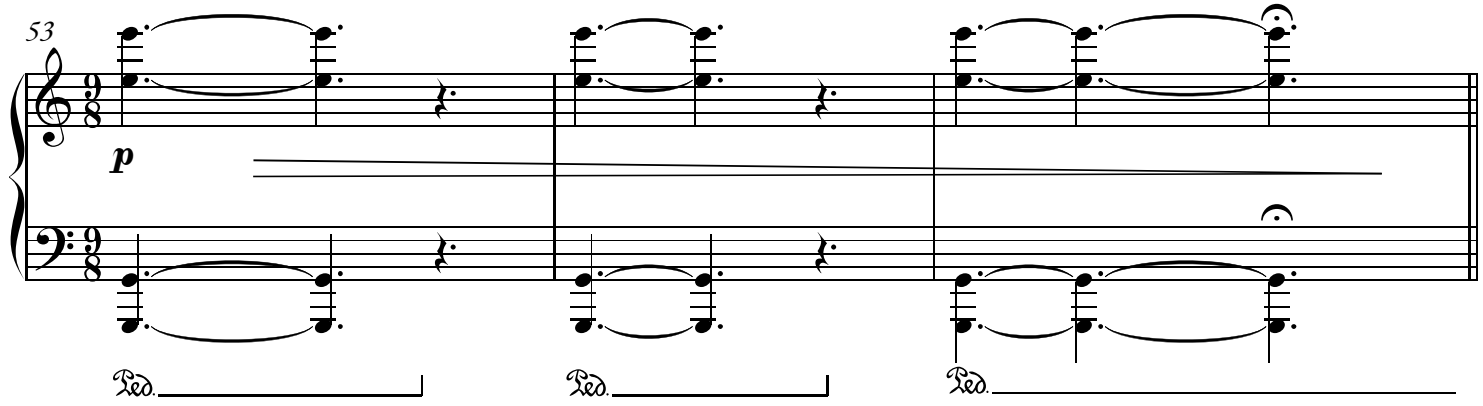
Theresa Thordarson © 2024


30
express.
p
mp
poco rit.

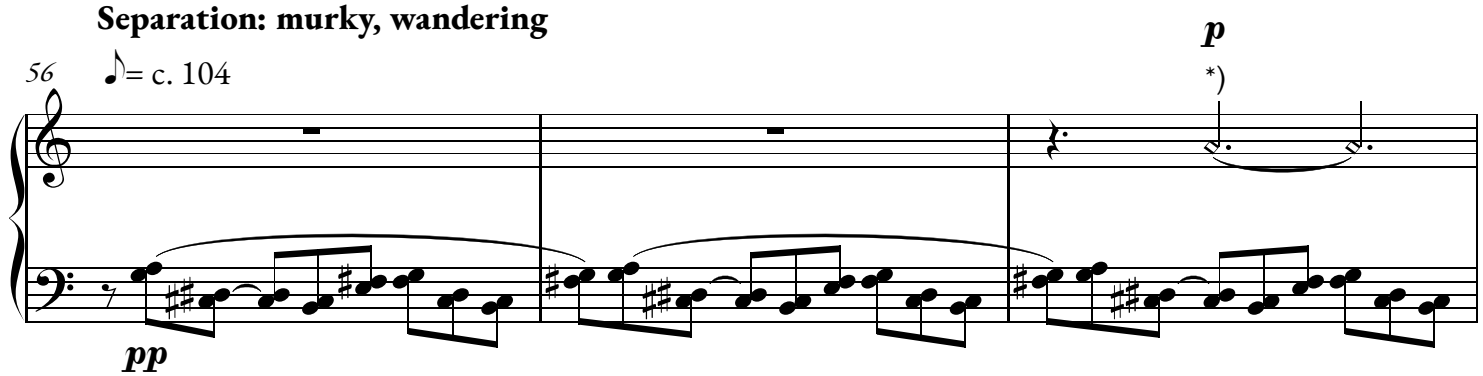

a tempo, with motion
39
mp
r.h.

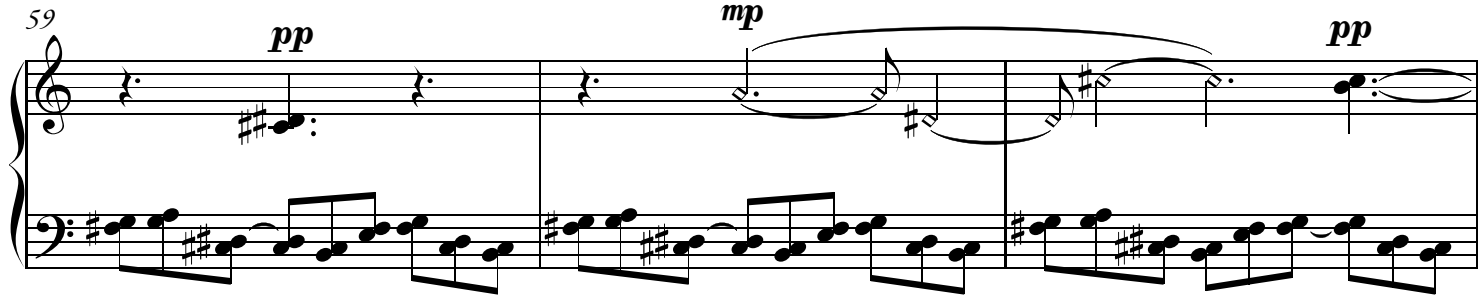

buoyant and flowing
growing agitated
44
mf
sfz
l.h.
r.h.
3
3



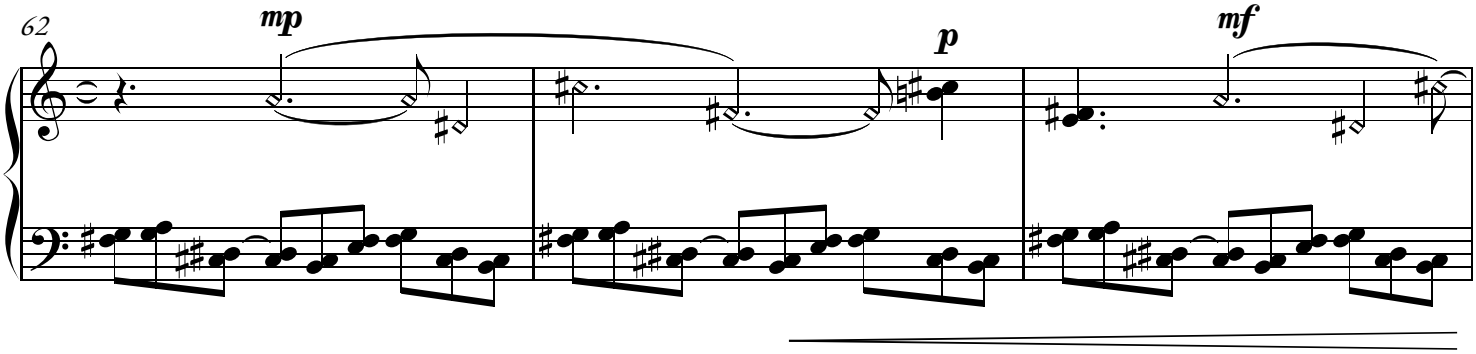


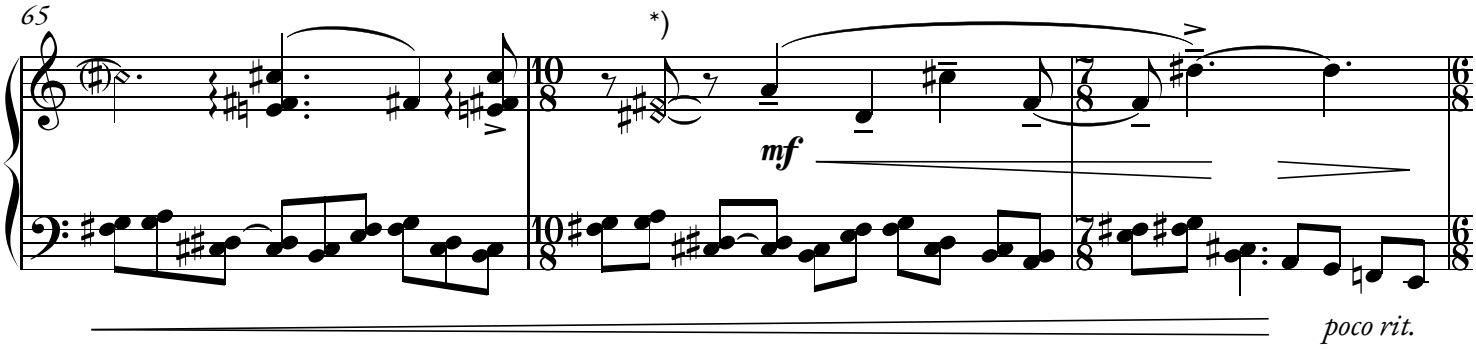
Separation: murky, wandering

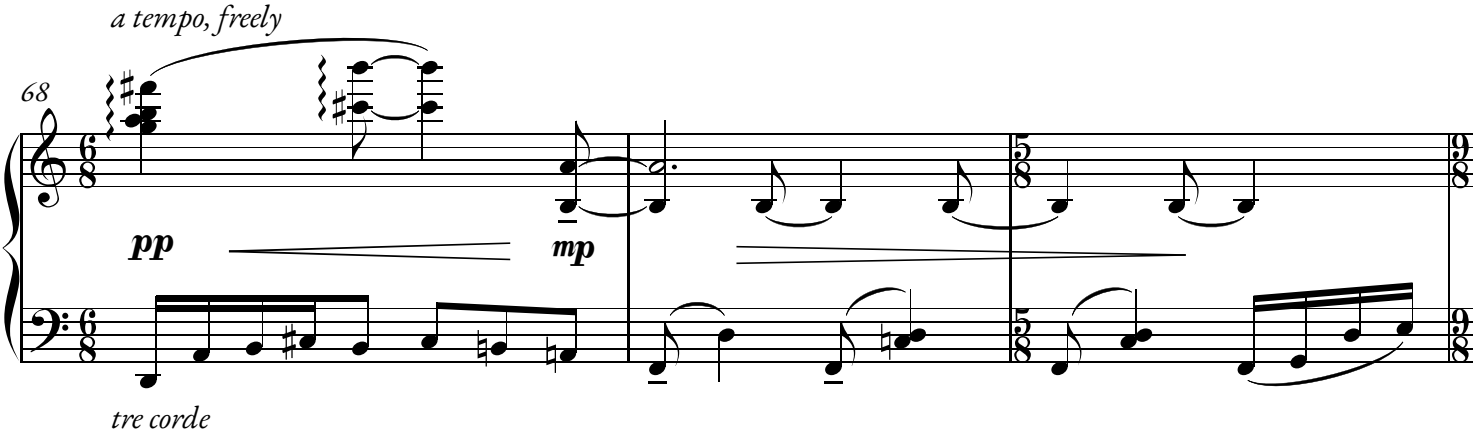


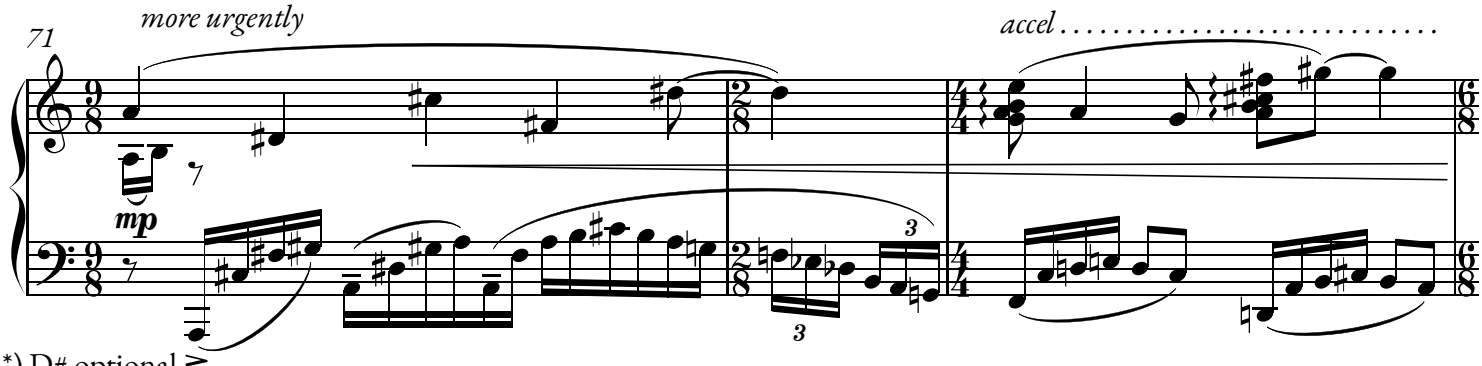


*) diamond-head notes on strings, see performance notes


62
mp
p
mf


65
*)
mf
poco rit.

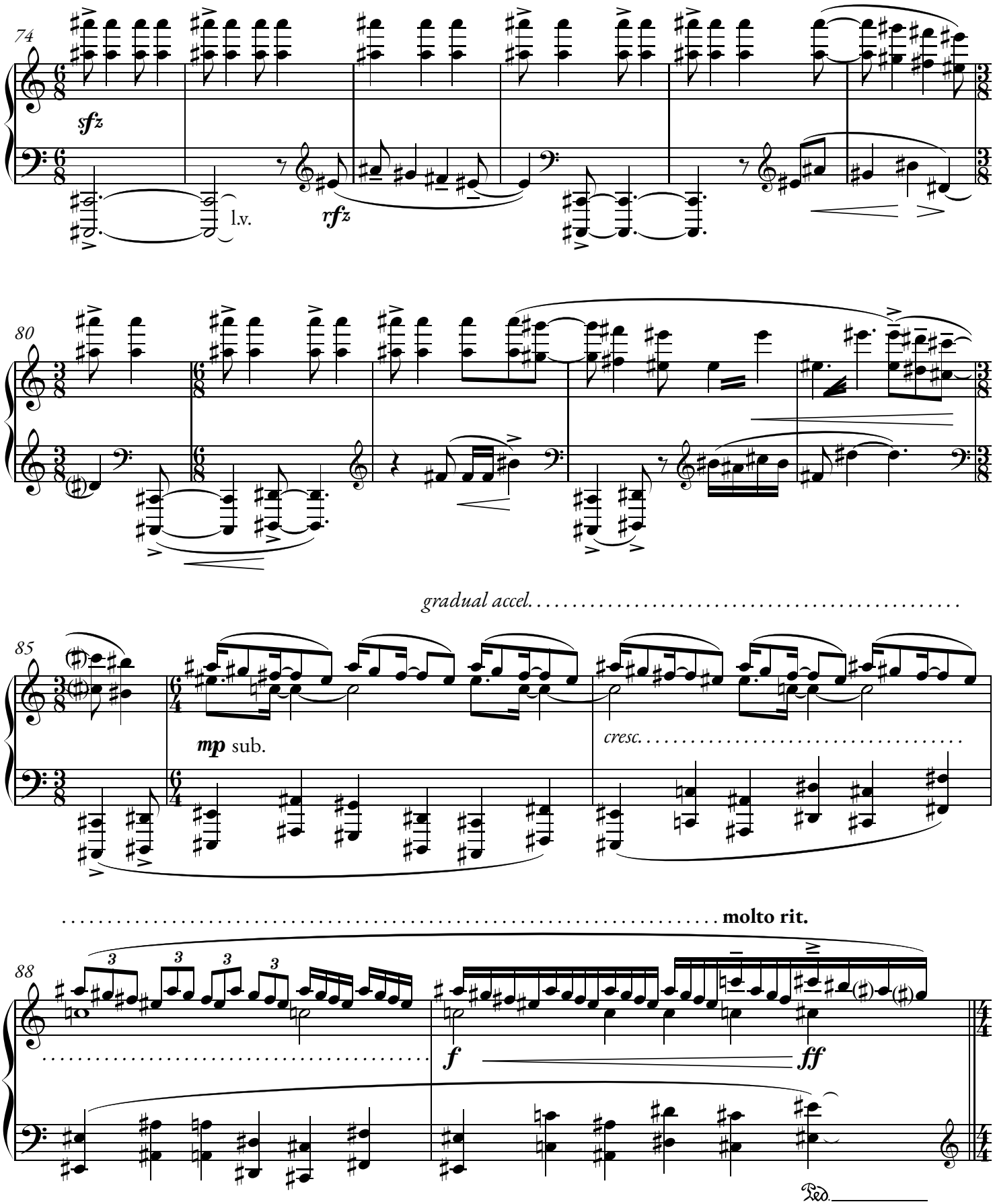

a tempo, freely
68
pp
mp
tre corde


71
more urgently
accel . . . . . .
mp
3
3

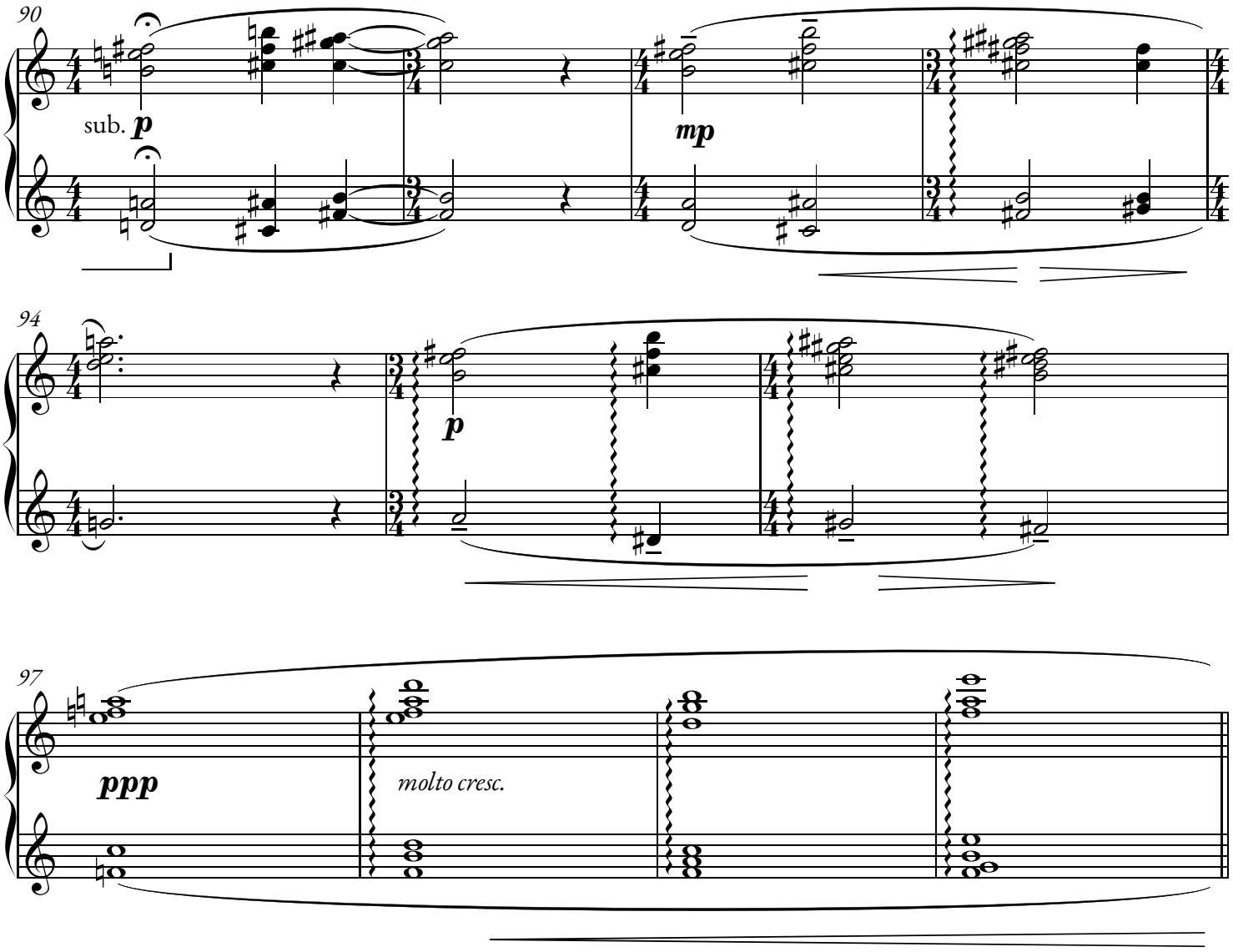
*) D# optional

With strict discipline

♩ = ♩.

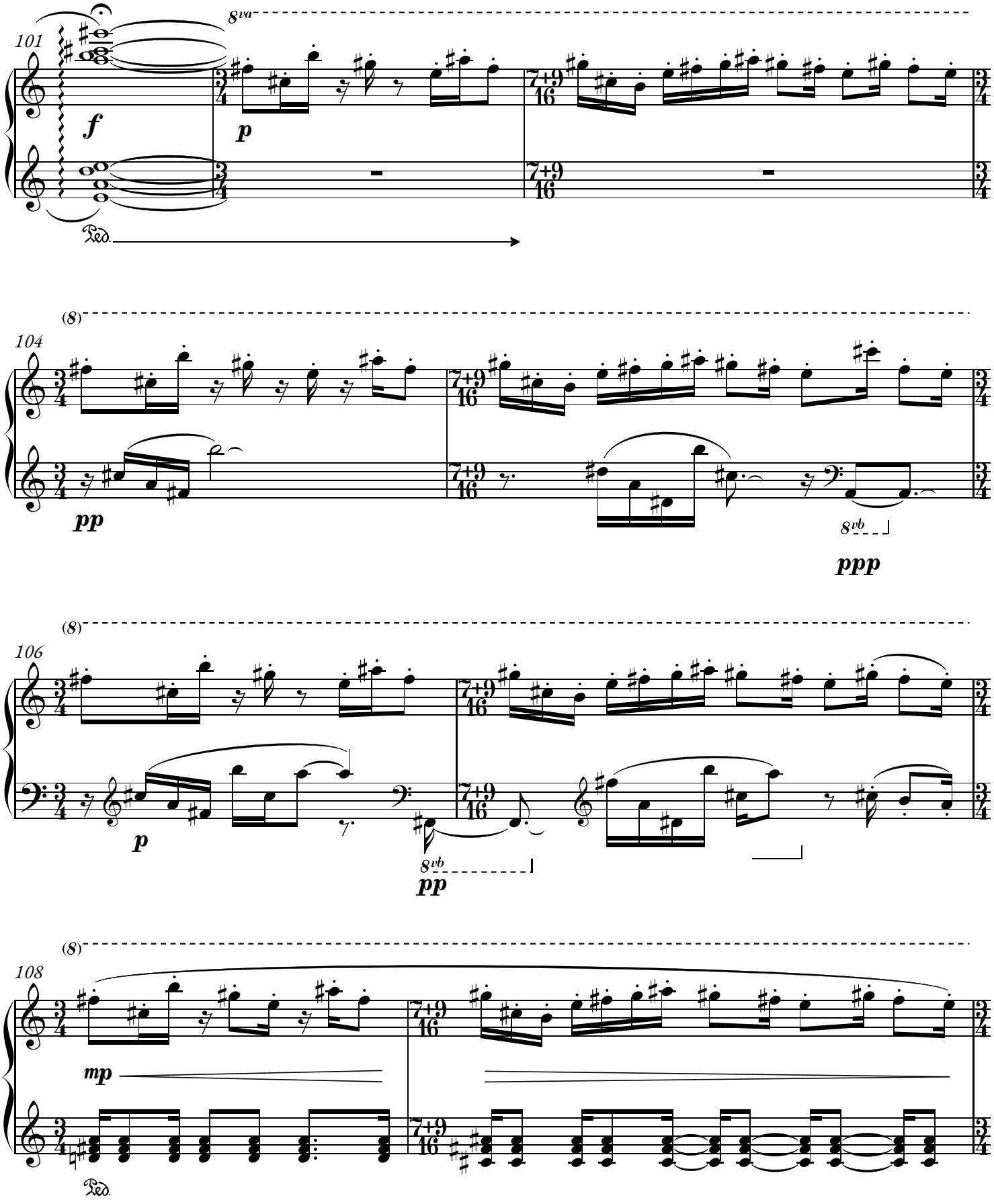


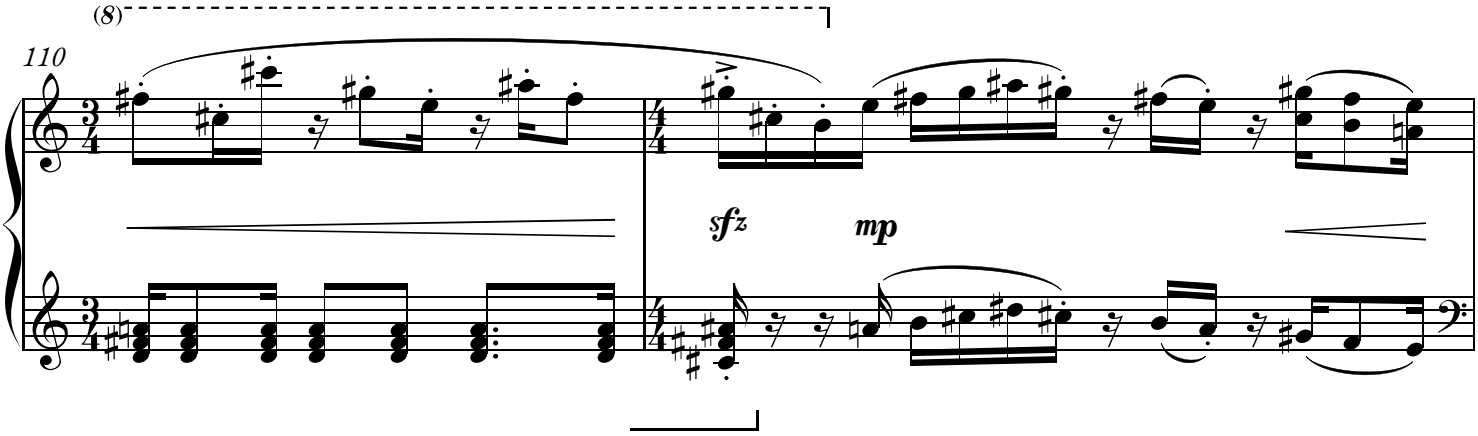
Chorale: light, warm, cantabile

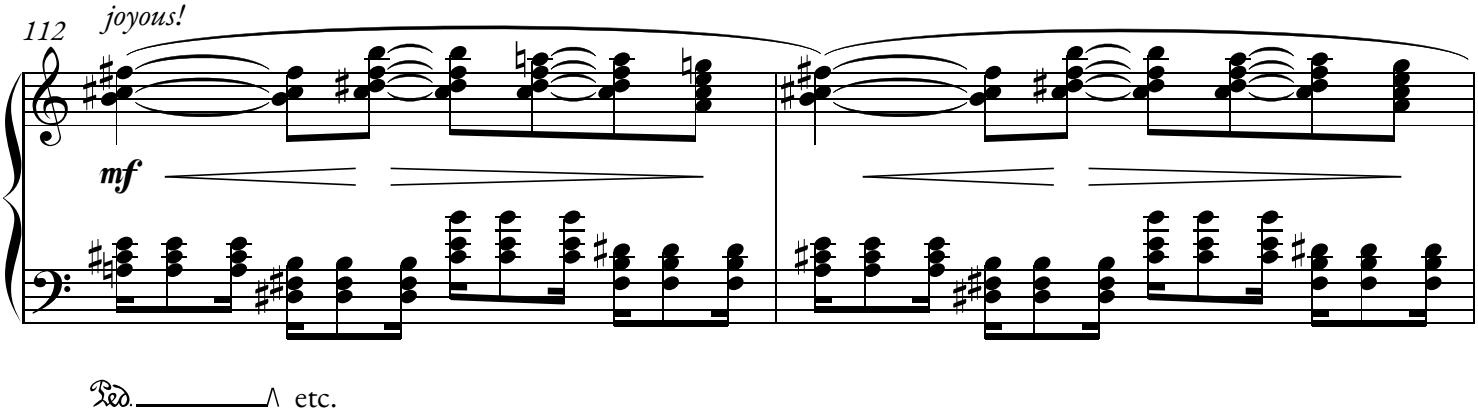


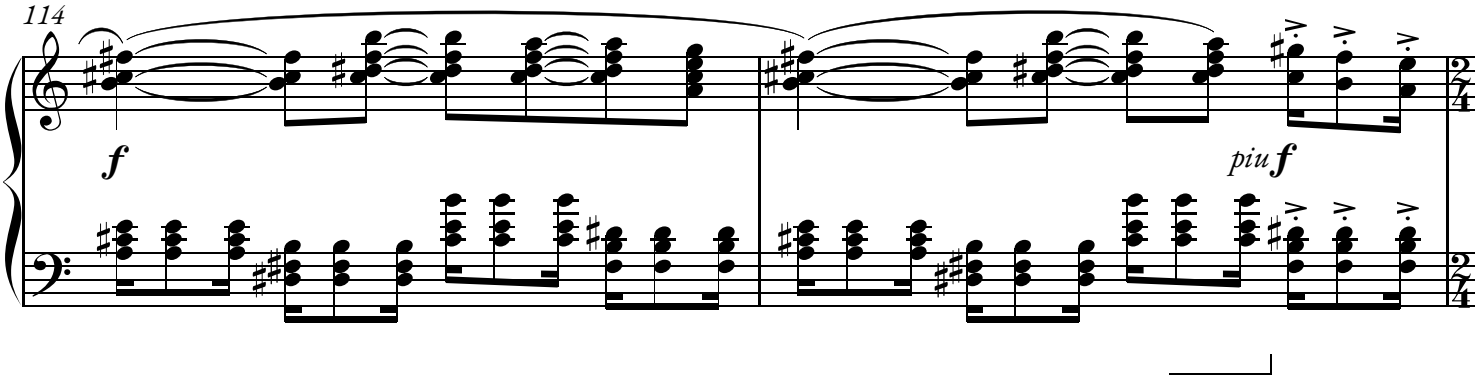
Reunion: playful, with buoyant groove

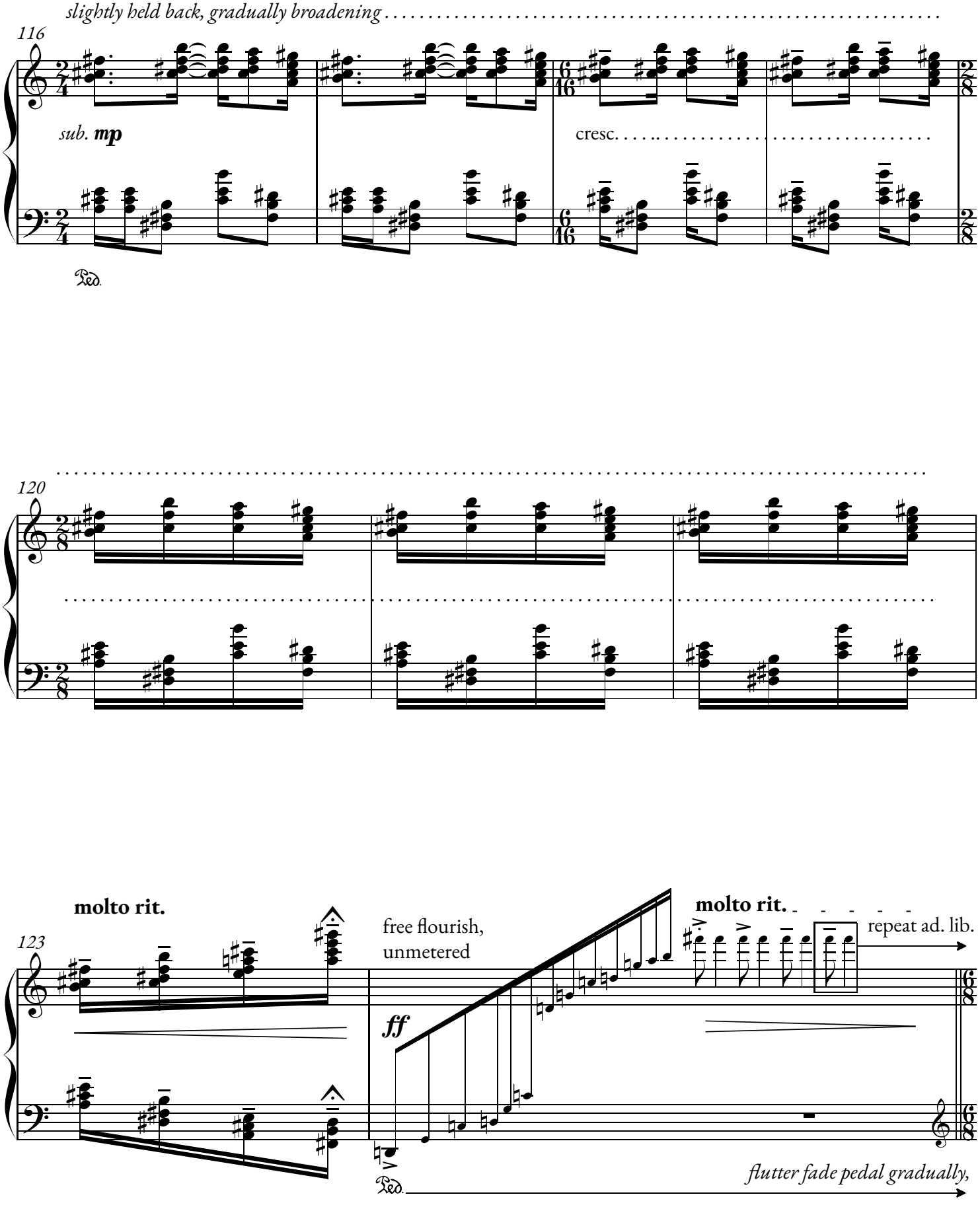
♩ = c. 88



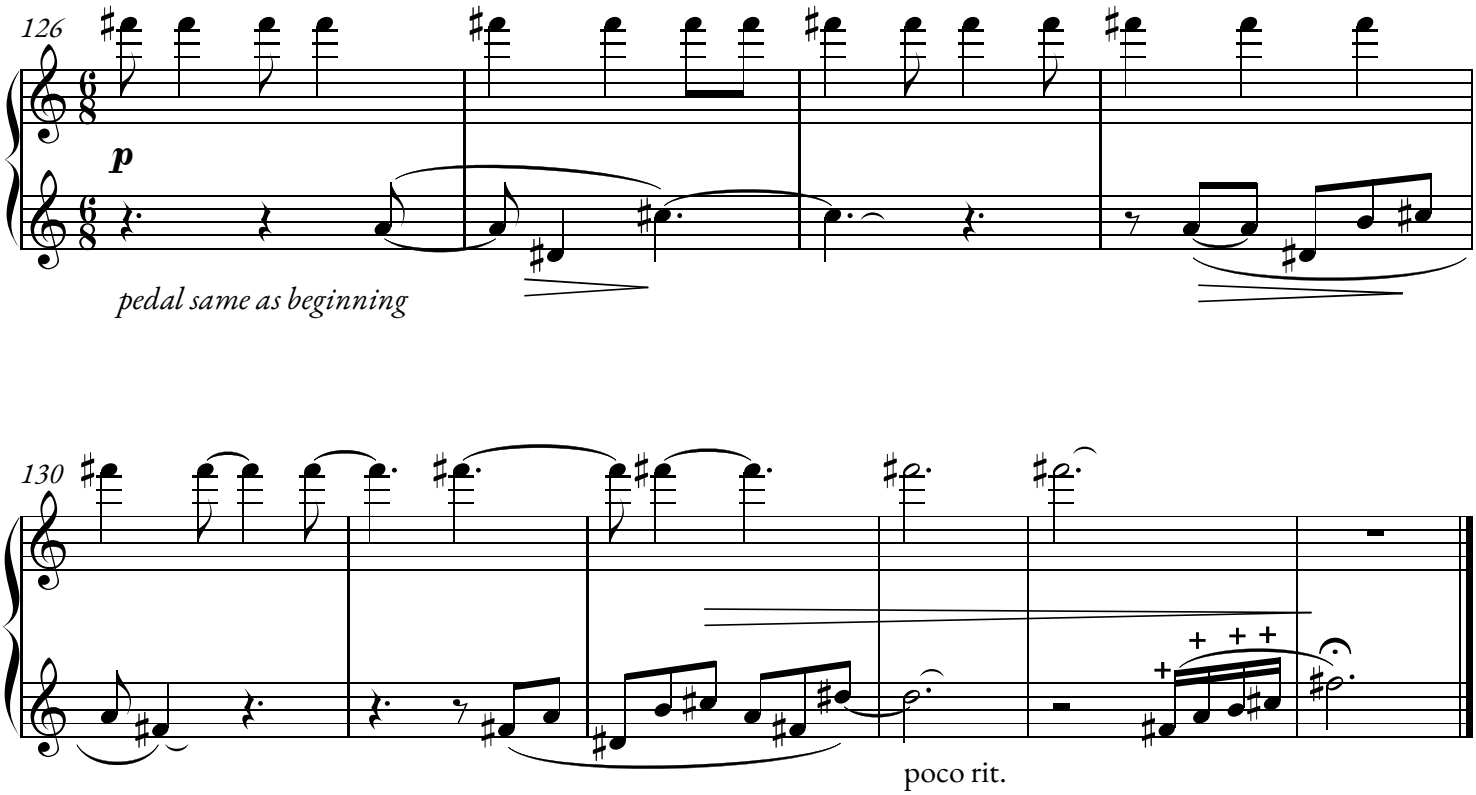

(8)
110
sfz
mp


112
joyous!
mf
Ped. etc.


114
f
piu f


slightly held back, gradually broadening
116
sub. mp
cresc.
Ped.
120
molto rit.
123
free flourish,
unmetered
ff
molto rit.
repeat ad. lib.
flutter fade pedal gradually,
Ped.

tempo primo, with movement



poco rit.

l.h. mutes strings,
same as beginning