frank stemper

BLUE13

PIANO SOLO

8.5 mins

BLUE 13 – notes/thoughts

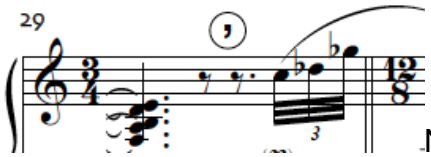
Written Grace Figures:
There are many instances that I have notated, precisely (and therefore looking somewhat more complex than they should sound), ornamentation that could have been notated much easier as merely grace notes. I "knit-pick" in these instances, because I am trying to affect the exact Jazz-like performance nuance of these instances. I.e., there are many different ways throughout history to perform a grace figure, which would of course be contrary to the goal of this composition.
It is my hope that this practice will help those performers not versed in Jazz articulation, but then, after understanding/hearing the affectation by this "knit-picking" notation, the performer will then ease up on the exactness in favor of a more natural "feel."

Tempo:
The music remains at a steady pulse of 96 bpm, throughout the piece. However, this universal pulse alternates between simple and compound meters:

♩ = 96 (4/4, 2/4. 3/4., etc.)—and — ♩. = 96 (12/8, 6/8, 9/8, etc.)

This was an attempt to make the music easier to read and understand. The compound meters are actually written "Swing" music, i.e. Jazz feel, *accurately* written rather in the traditional shorthand. This is a rather simple concept of American Jazz rhythm: with its constant fluctuations of swing and "straight" subdivision of the beat; and then added to that: *syncopation – polyrhythm – hemiola – polymeter*. The point is that the pulse remains the same throughout the piece (with the exceptions of various ritards, accelerandos, etc.)

Circle-Enclosed Breath Mark:
There a few occasions of this special symbol.

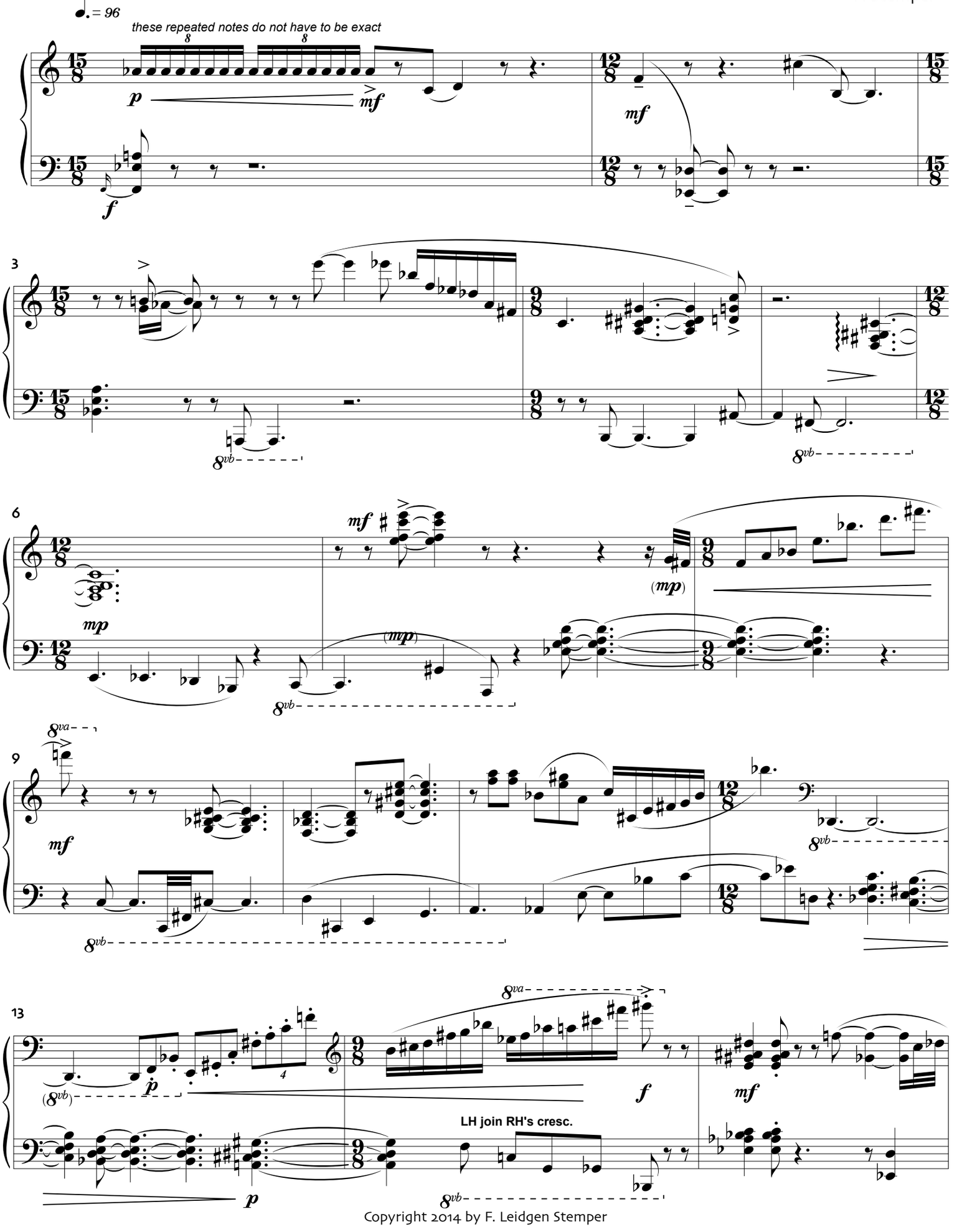


Normally, a breath mark indicates a very brief pause before continuing, which is certain indicated by this symbol. However, this symbol also indicates a slight articulation to the music as it continues *after* the pause: the pause should be short, but long enough to interrupt the metric flow of the music. Then, as the music continues, it should begin out of sync with the former pulse, so that it is surprising or has a abruptness to it as it commences. The dynamic and/or articulation of the music after the pause could also add to this sudden or impulsive continuation of the music.

Jazz Articulations & Nuance:
This piece is an attempt to write a meaningful statement that includes direct reference to American Jazz. There is of course stylistic performance practice that is contradictory or "unpianistic" depending on one's point of view. I am trying to mingle various articulations that may seem conflicting, but that is also the point of this composition. It is up to the performer to decide *when* to use which articulations. I.e., for much of the lengthy fugue I would prefer a Baroque technique, yet also with a more Romantic touch — but at times the fugue quotes jazzy figures (e.g. RH meas. 104-5, meas. 134-5) which should be articulated in a more jazzy way, thus jumping out of the texture.

BLUE13

F. Stemper



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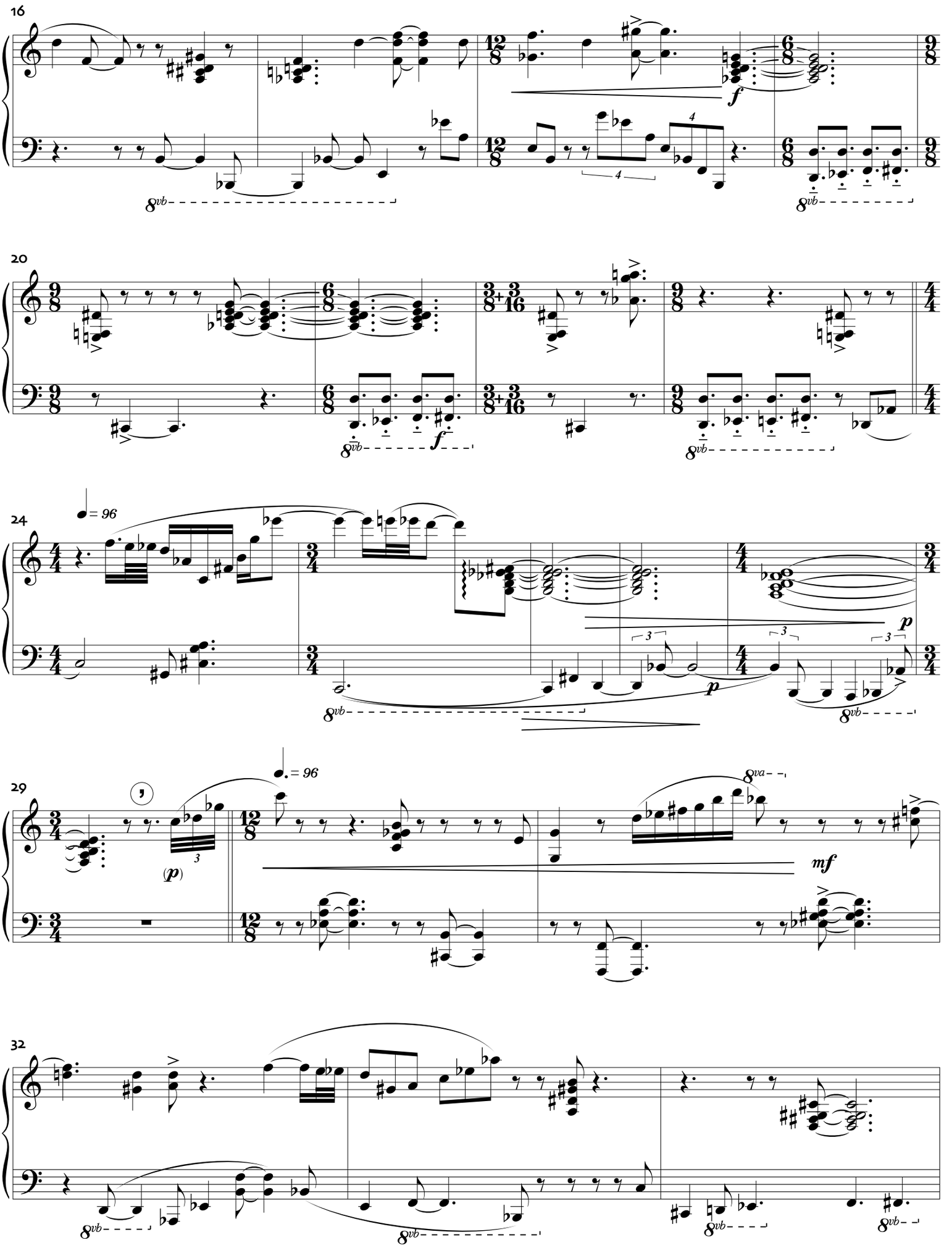
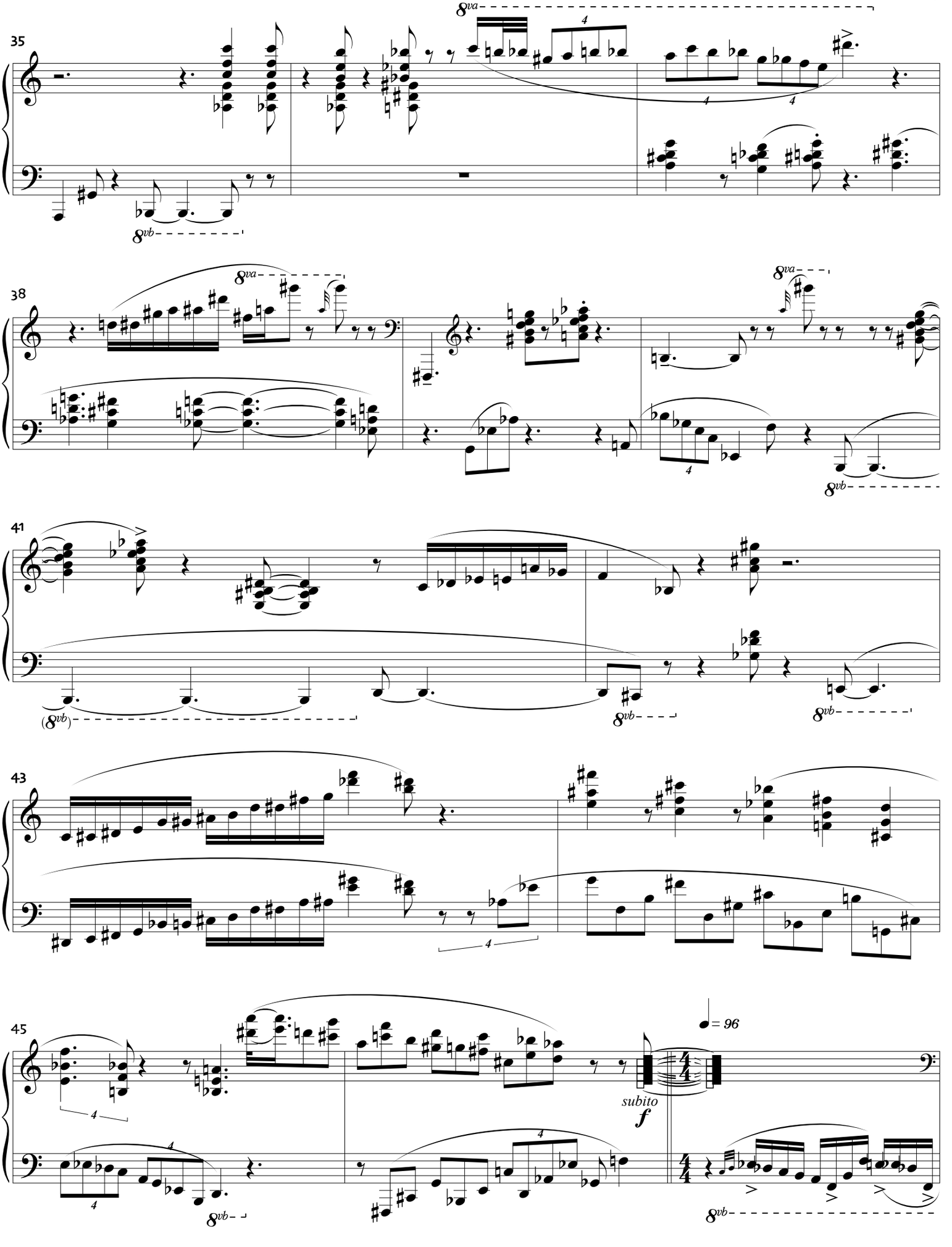
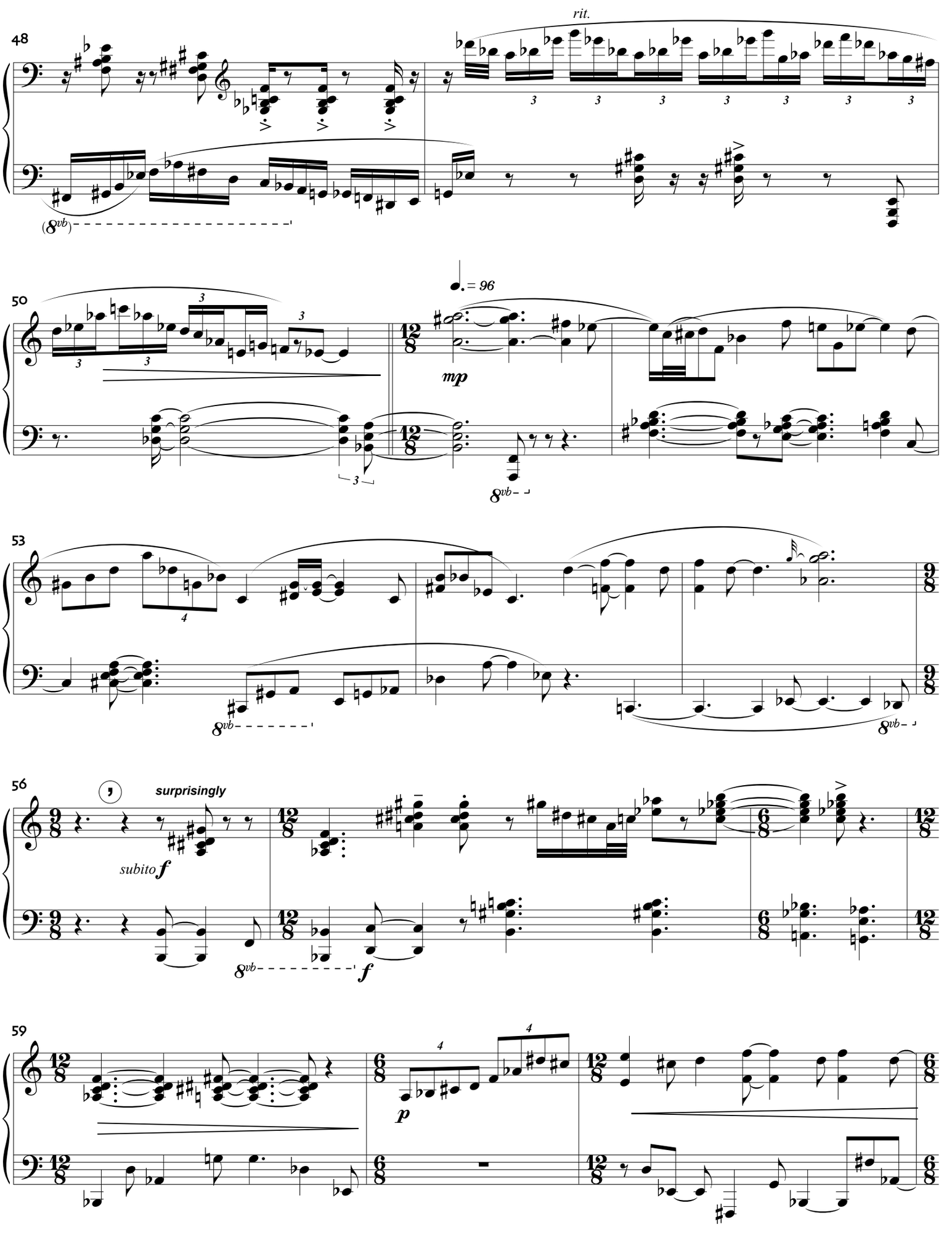
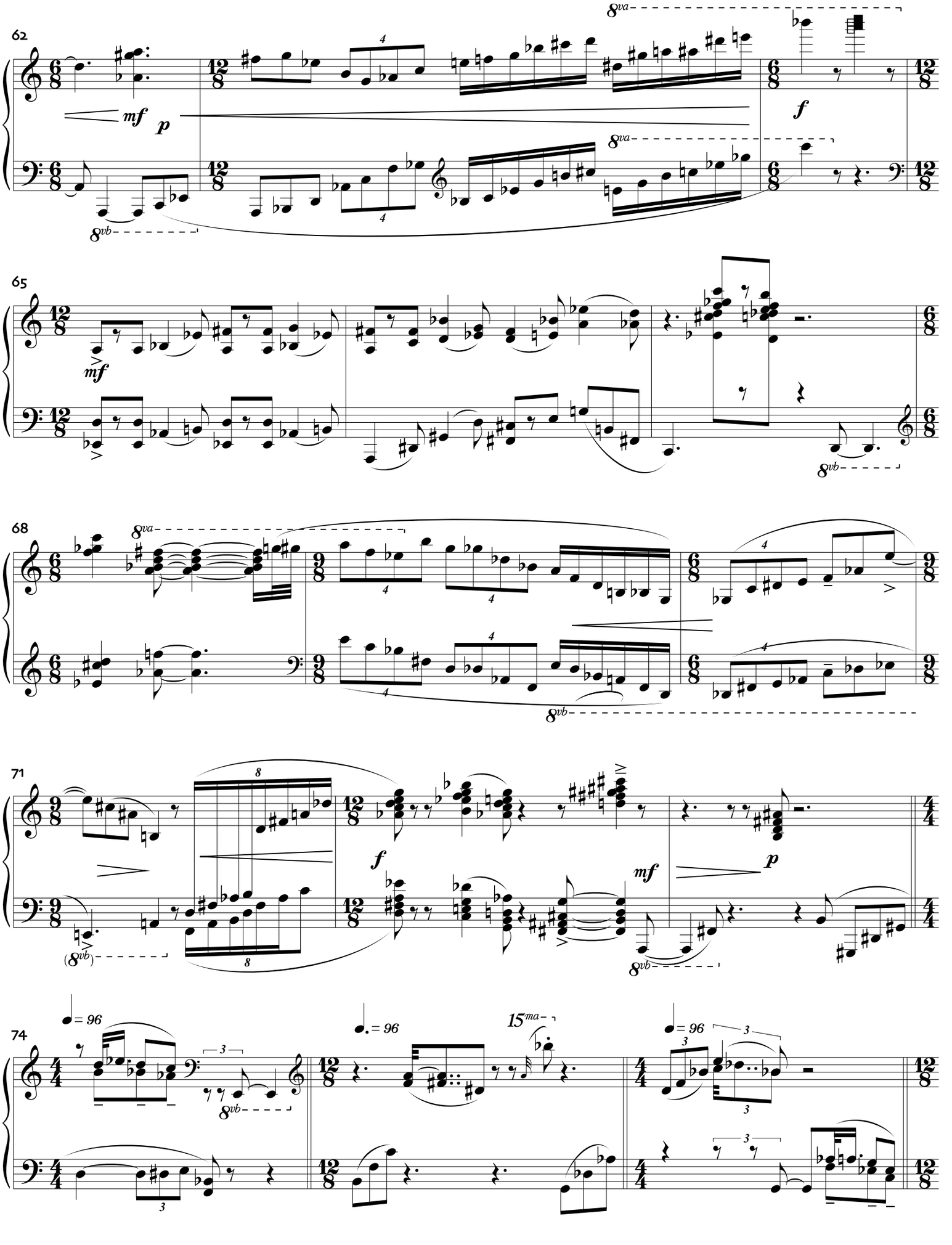
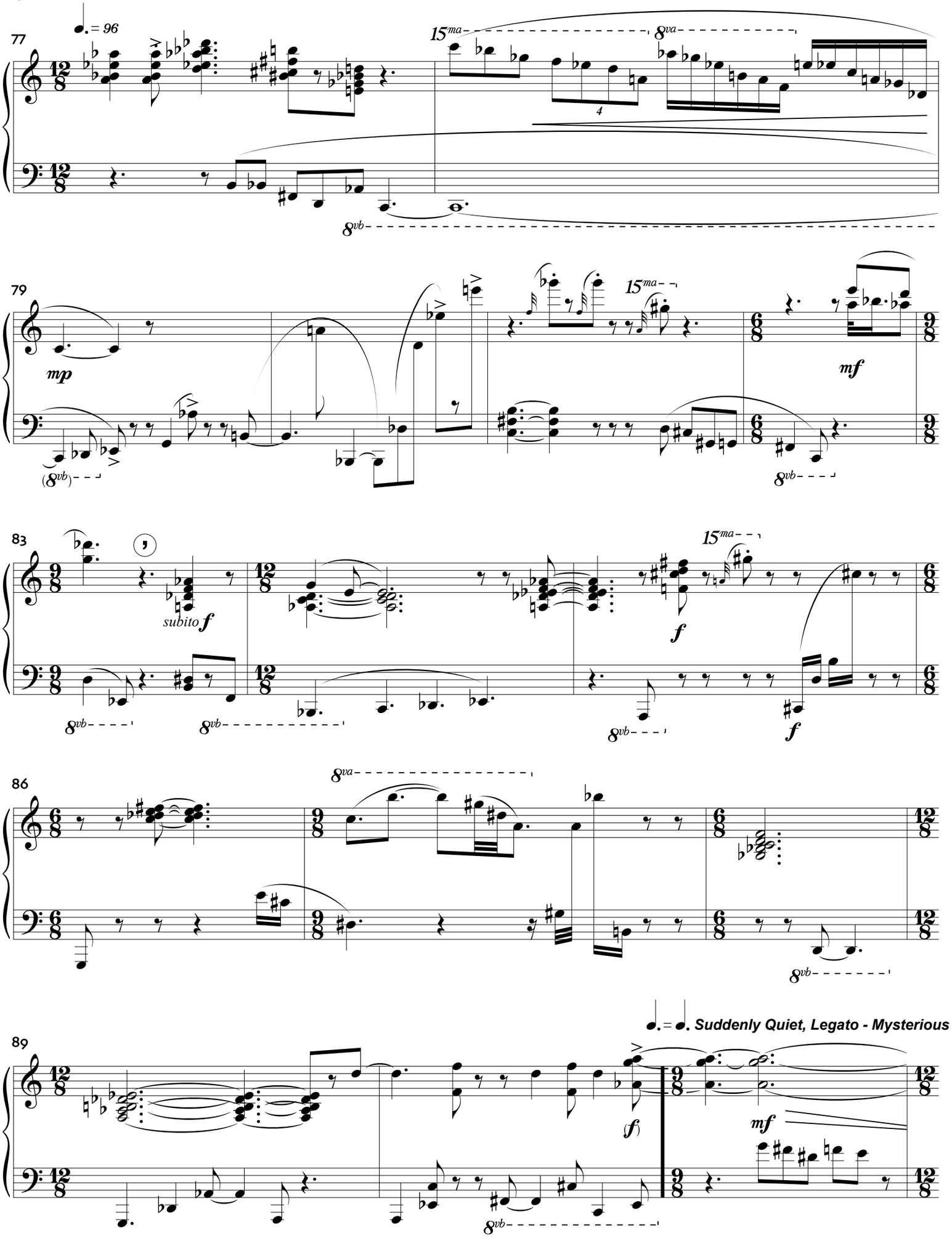

16
20
24
♩ = 96
29
(p)
♩. = 96
mf
32


35
8va
8vb
38
8va
8va
8vb
41
(8vb)
8vb
8vb
43
4
45
4
4
4
8vb
subito
f
♩= 96
8vb


48
rit.
(8vb)
50
♩. = 96
mp
8vb
53
8vb
8vb
56
surprisingly
subito f
8vb
f
59
p


62
mf
p
f
65
mf
68
71
f
mf
p
74
♩ = 96
♩. = 96
15ma
♩ = 96


77
♩. = 96
15ma
8va
8vb
79
mp
15ma
mf
8vb
83
subito f
15ma
f
8vb
f
86
8va
8vb
89
♩. = ♩. Suddenly Quiet, Legato - Mysterious
(f)
mf
8vb

92

bring out each new voice as it enters

p

95

mf

98

p

p

bass only

101

mf

mf

p

104

f *bring out*

mp

p

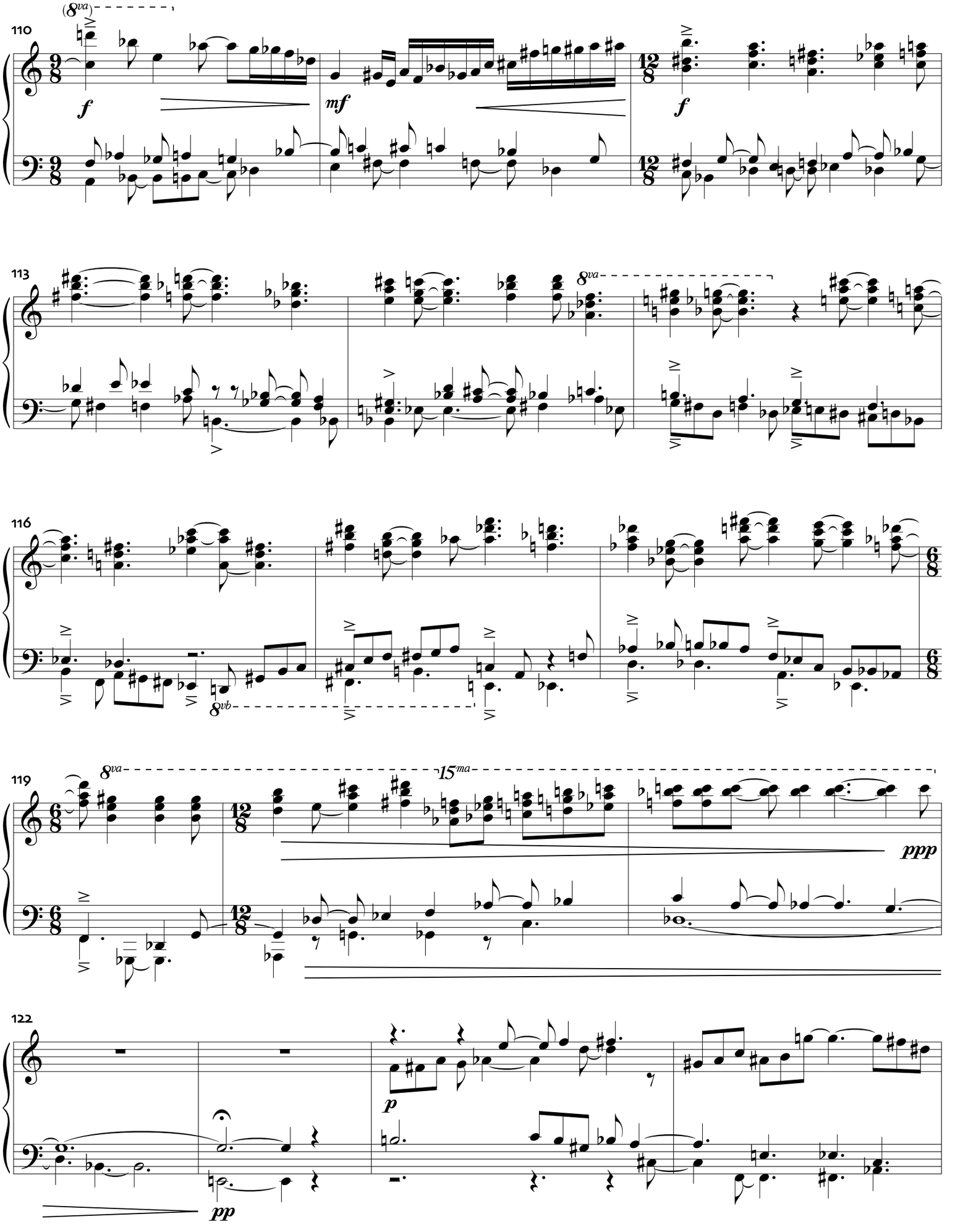
8vb

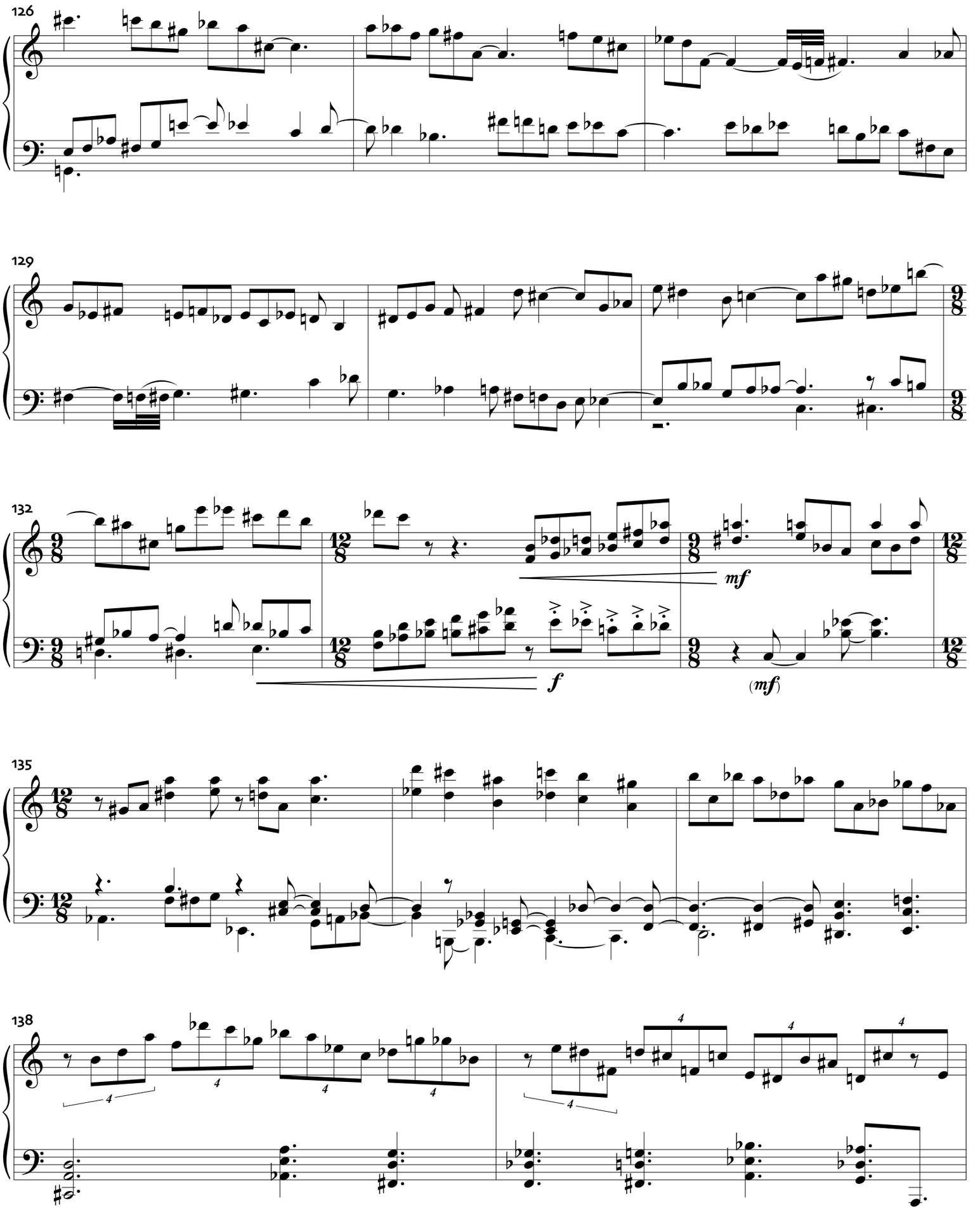
107

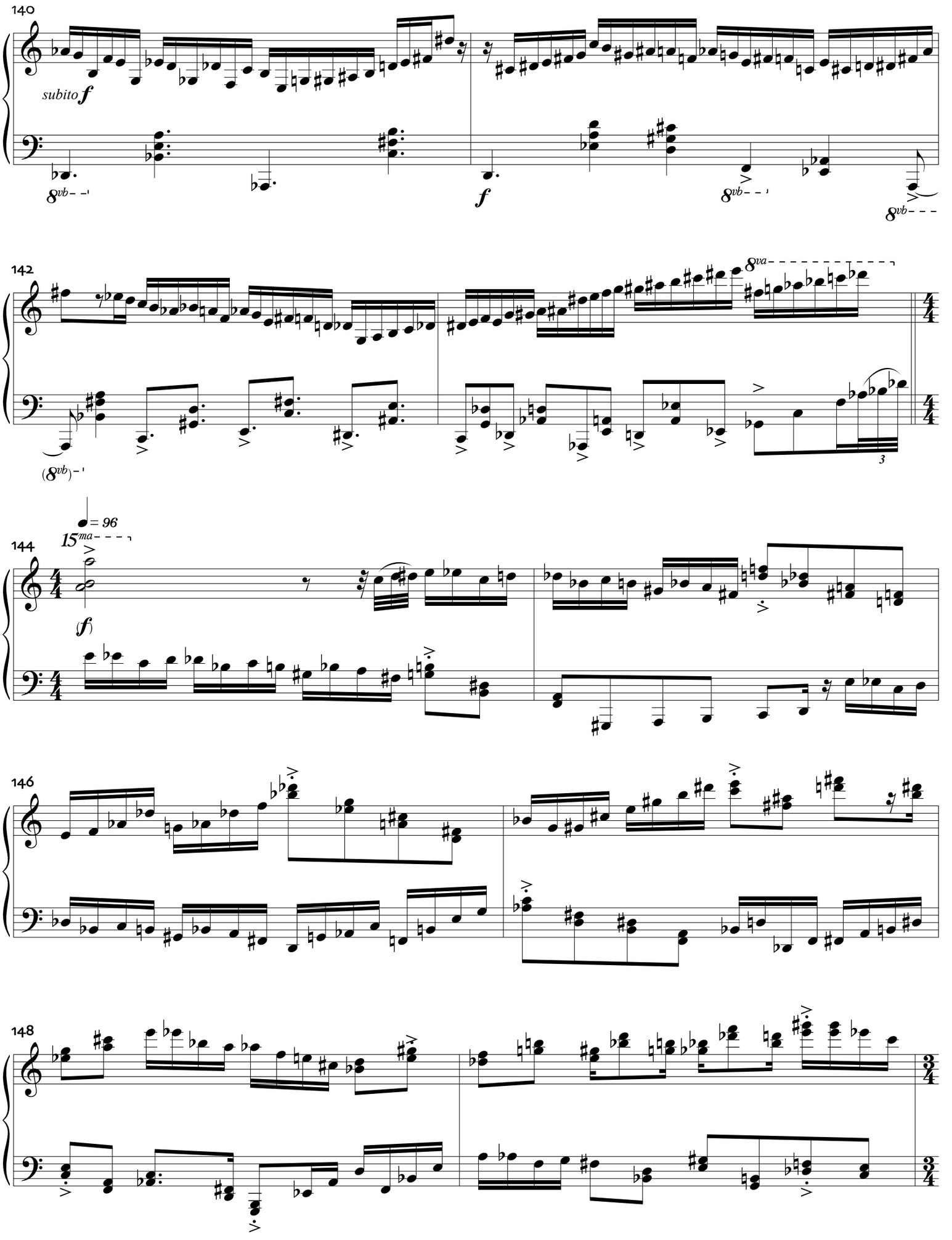
mf

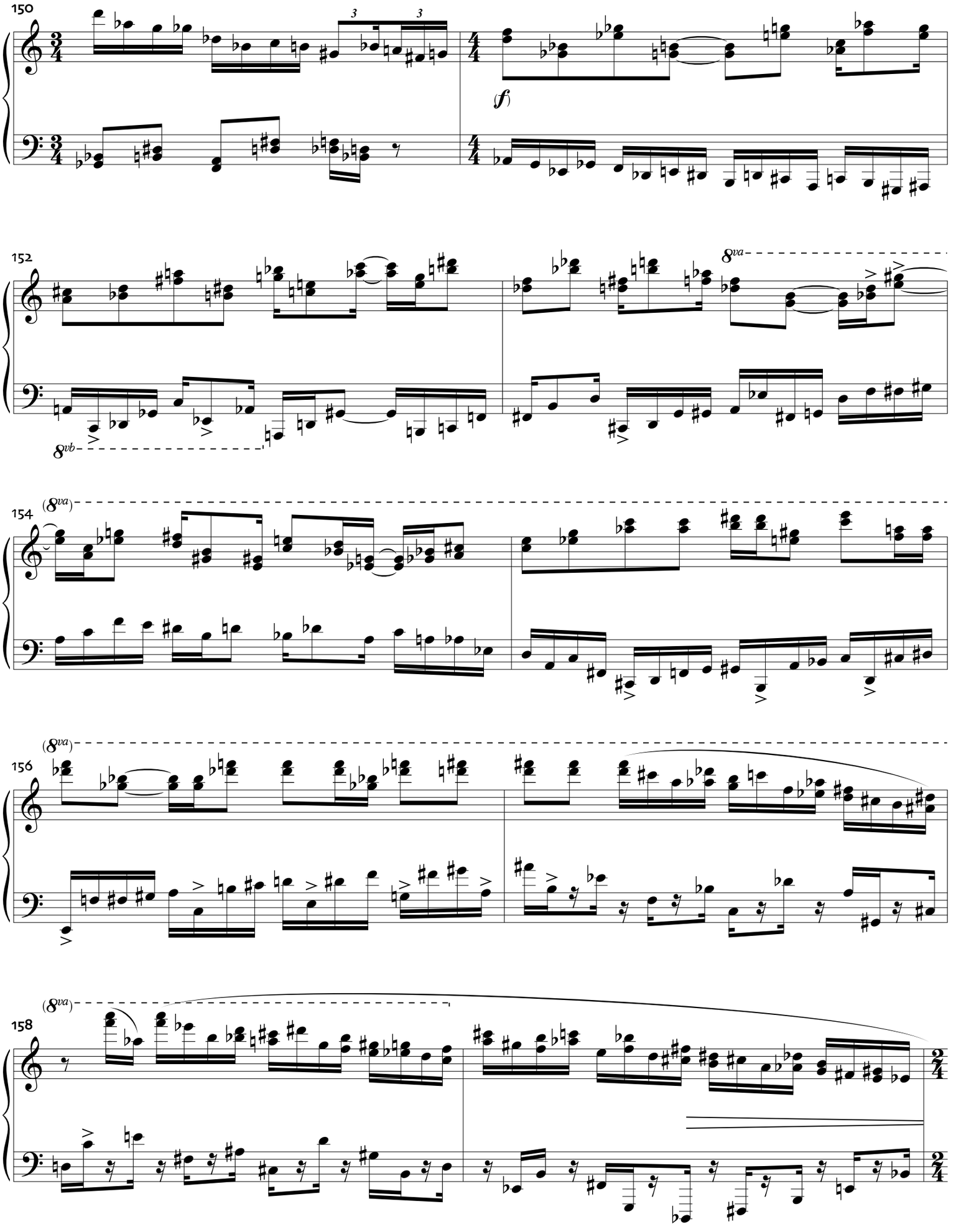
4

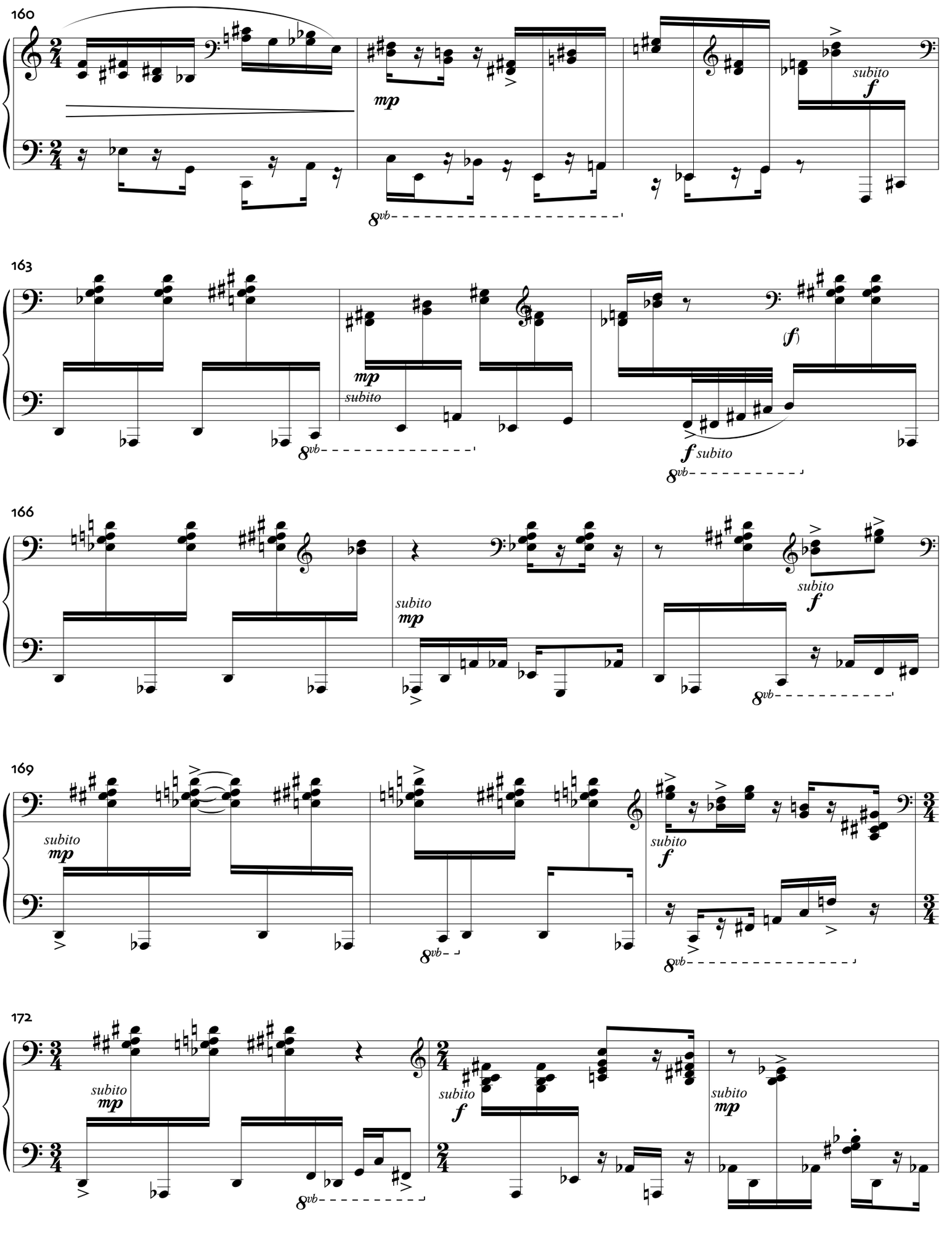
8va

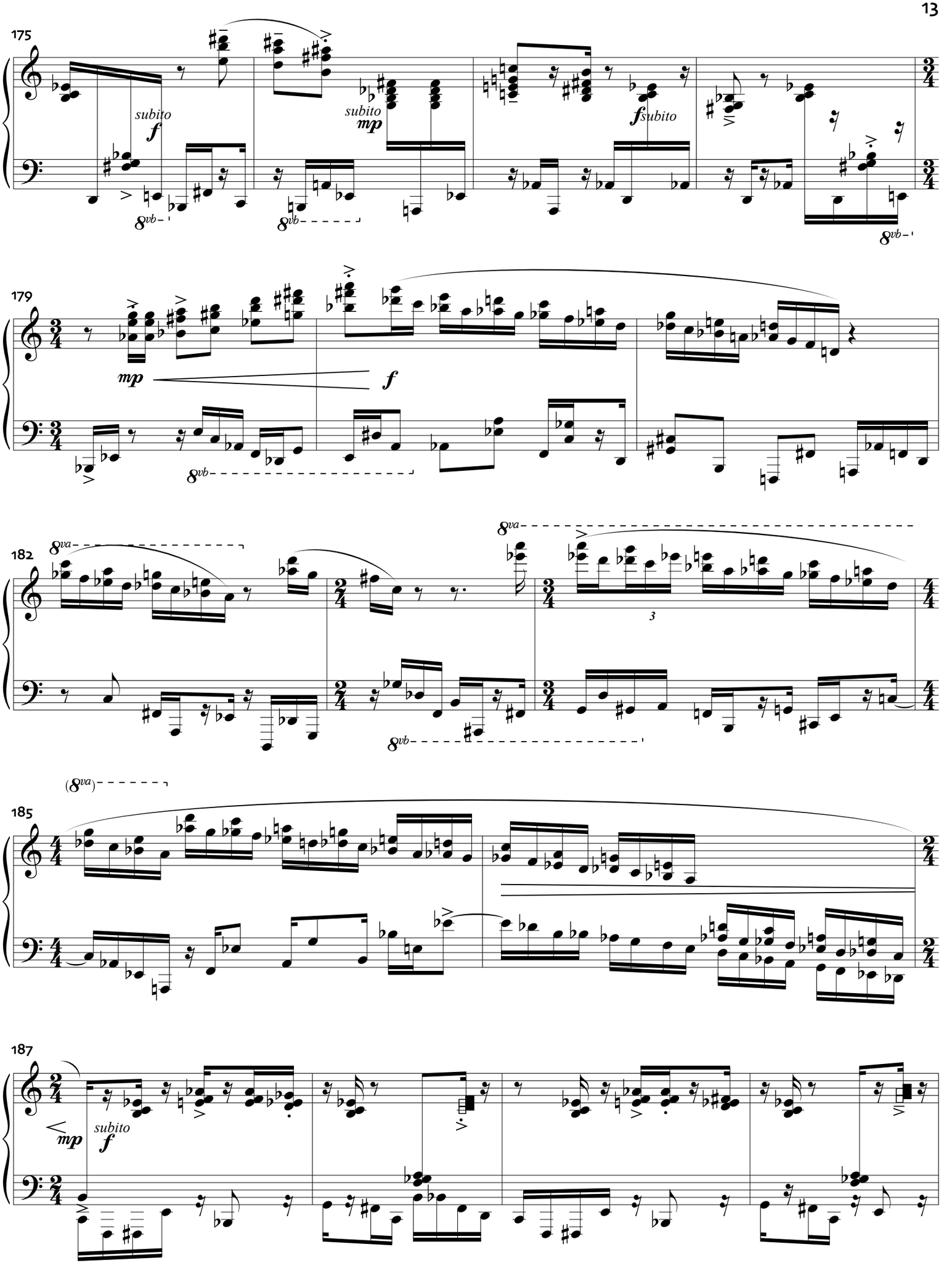

110
(8va)
f
mf
f
113
8va
116
8vb
119
8va
15ma
ppp
122
p
pp

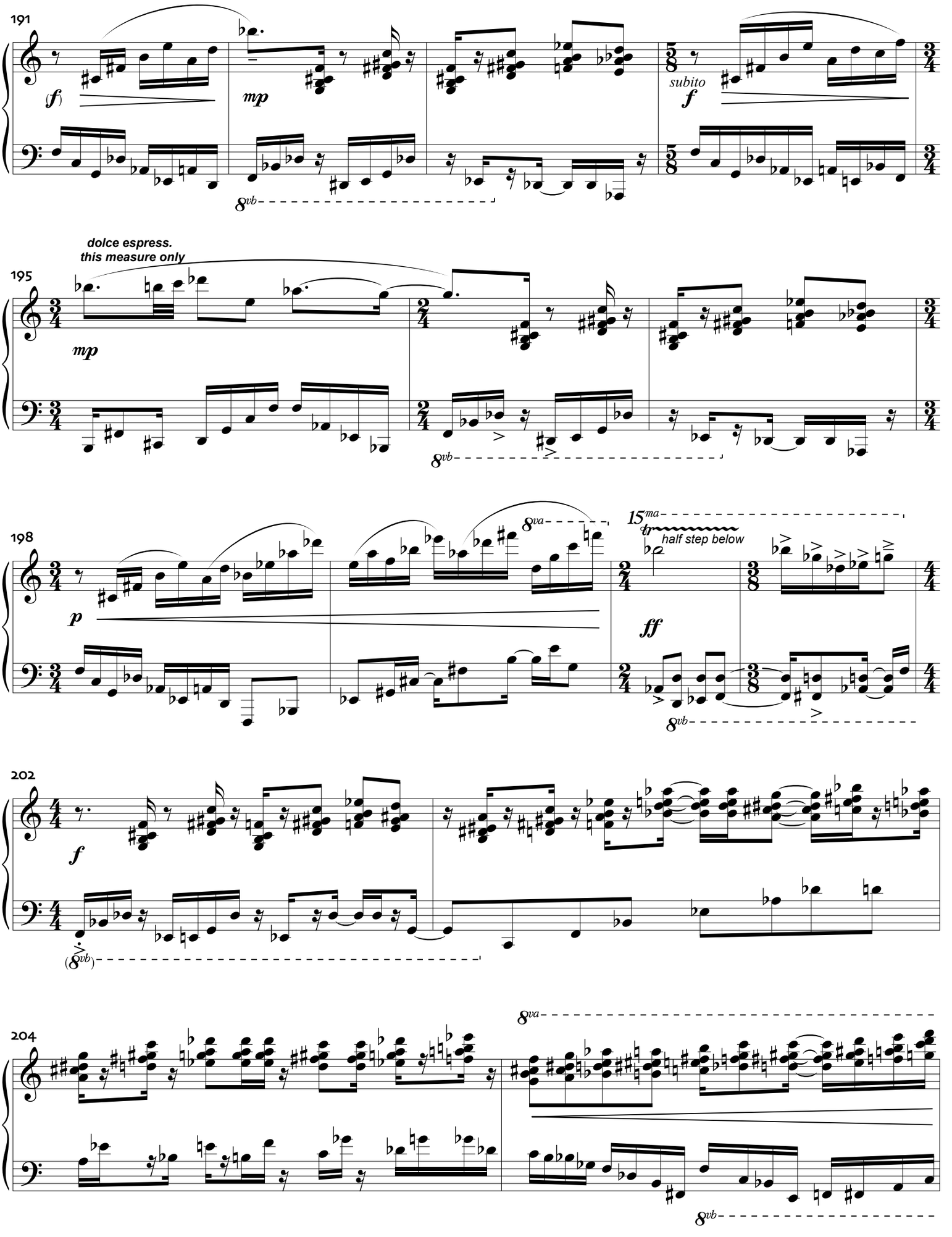

126
129
132
mf
f
(mf)
135
138

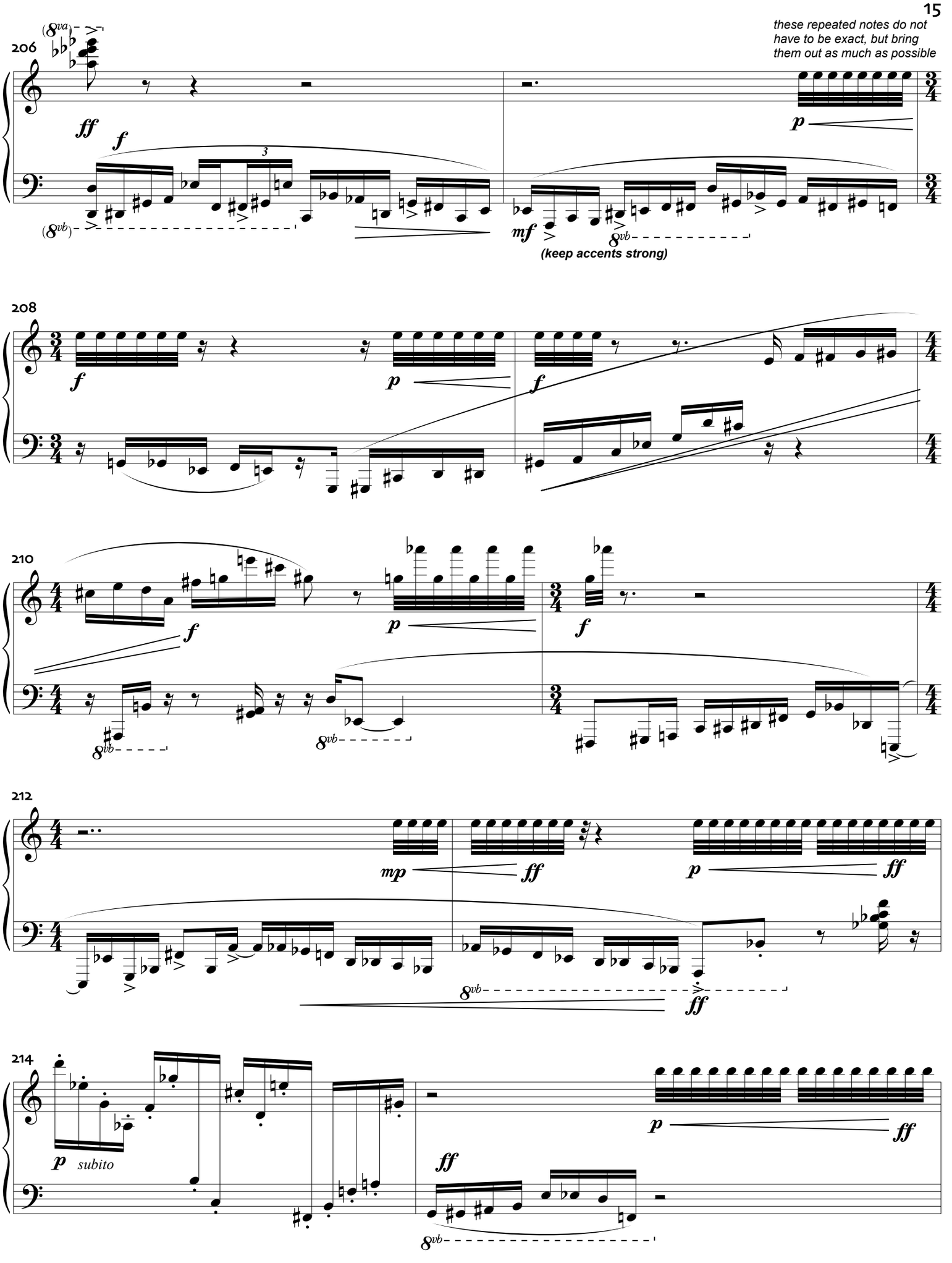

140
subito f
8vb
f
8vb
8vb
142
8va
(8vb)
3
144
♩ = 96
15ma
(f)
146
148

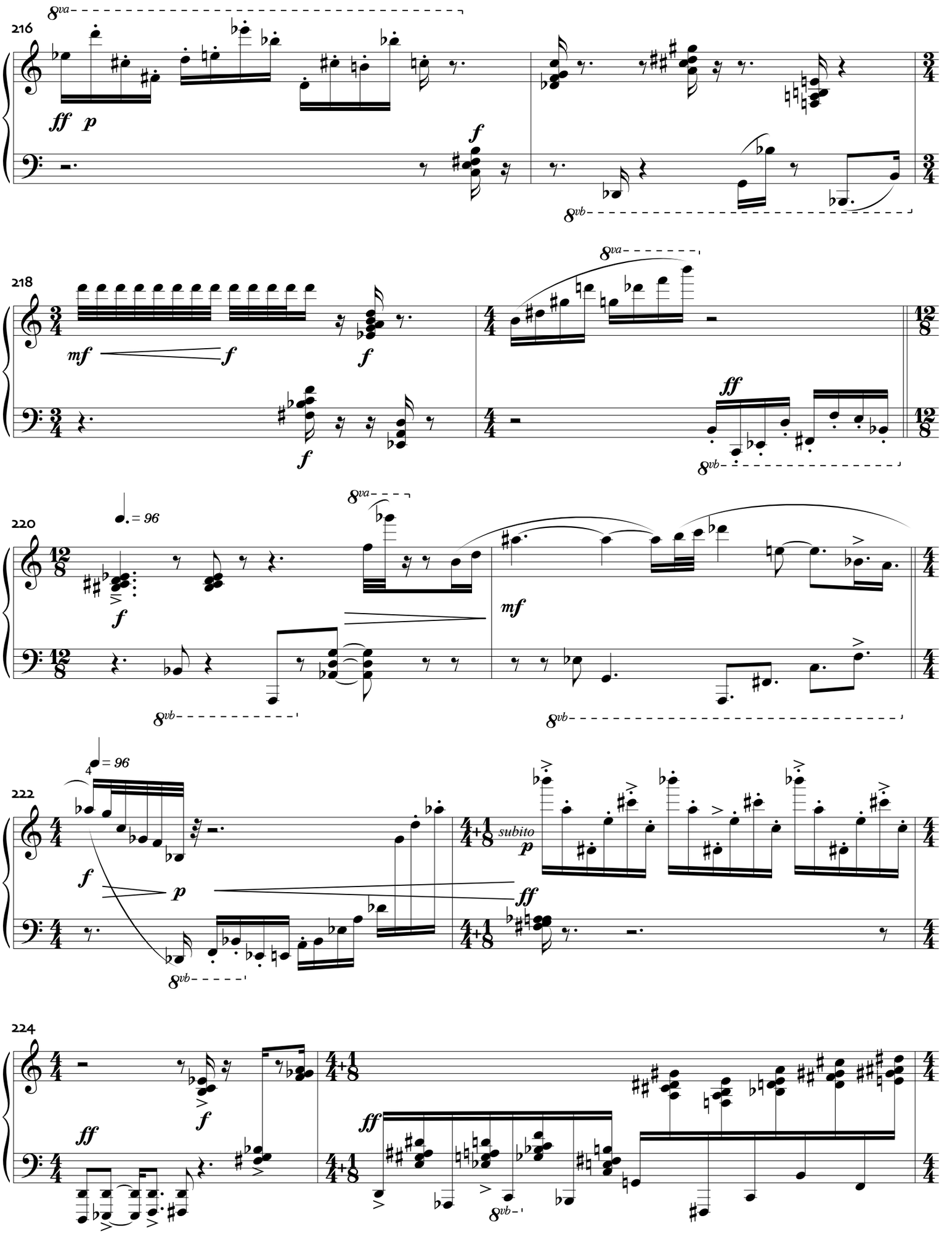

150
(f)
152
8va
8vb
154
(8va)
156
(8va)
158
(8va)

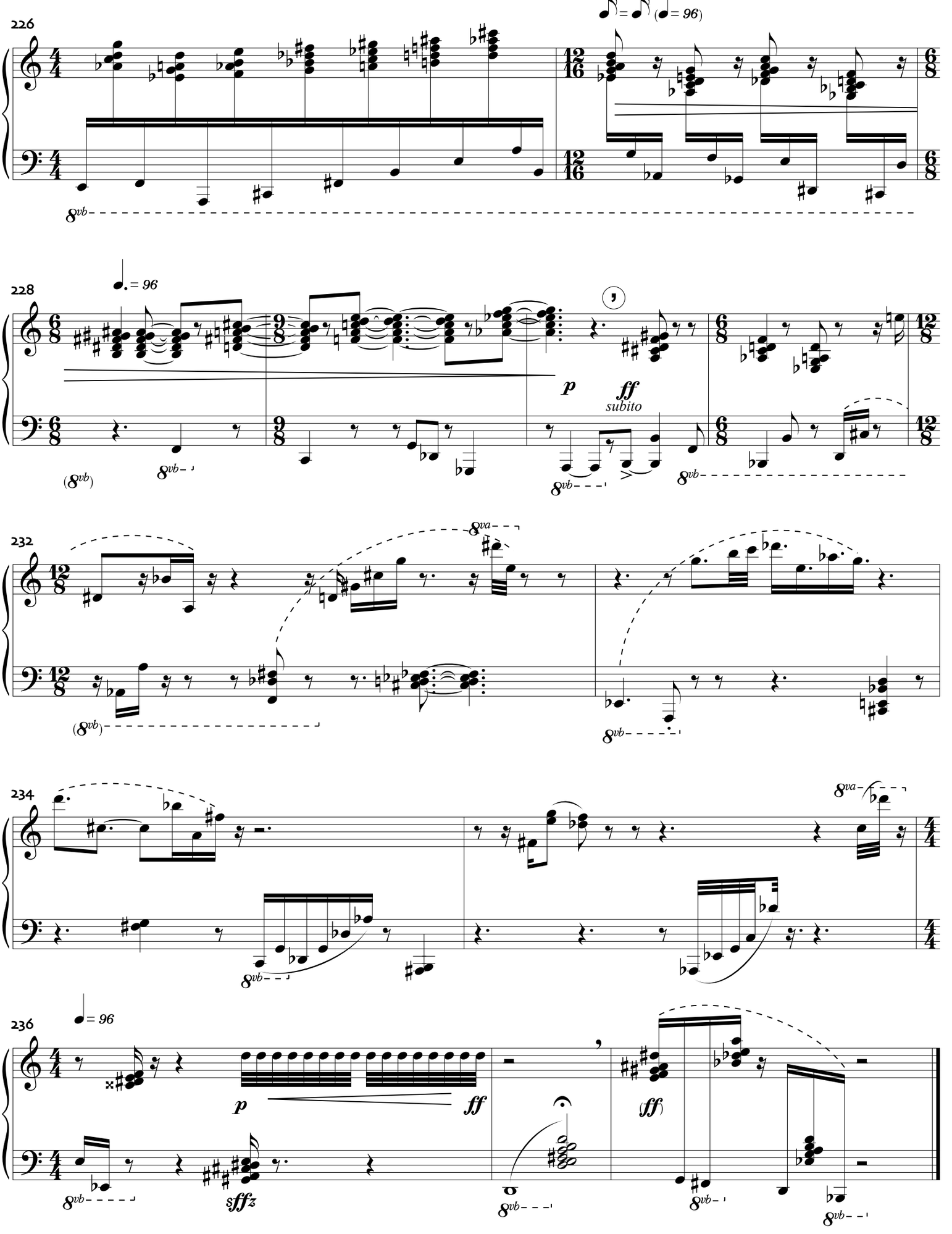

160
mp
subito
f
8vb
163
mp
subito
(f)
f subito
8vb
166
subito
mp
subito
f
8vb
169
subito
mp
subito
f
8vb
172
subito
mp
subito
f
subito
mp
8vb


175
subito
f
subito
mp
fsubito
8vb
179
mp
f
182
8va
3
185
(8va)
187
mp
subito
f


191
(f)
mp
8vb
subito
f
dolce espress.
this measure only
195
mp
8vb
198
p
8va
15ma
tr
half step below
ff
8vb
202
f
(8vb)
204
8va
8vb


these repeated notes do not have to be exact, but bring them out as much as possible
206
(8va)
ff
f
3
(8vb)
mf
8vb
p
(keep accents strong)
208
f
p
f
210
f
p
f
8vb
8vb
212
mp
ff
p
ff
8vb
ff
214
p subito
ff
8vb
p
ff


216
8va
ff p
f
8vb
218
mf
f
f
8va
ff
8vb
220
♩. = 96
f
8va
8vb
mf
8vb
222
♩ = 96
f
p
8vb
subito
p
ff
224
ff
f
ff
8vb


226
228
232
234
236
8vb
8va
p
ff
subito
sffz