Daniel Fox

Two Studies of a Piano

(2016)

Performance Notes:

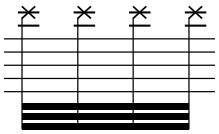
Accidentals only apply to notes that they immediately precede. (Notes that are tied to a previous note inherit the accidental of the previous note.)

Trills should sound as a fast blur. In mm. 1-24 slight pedaling may be used to blend the trills. In mm. 25-28 trills and pedaling are complementary: except as indicated, do not pedal during trills. Rather, a slight pedal may be used between trills.

The arrow in the following pedal marking,

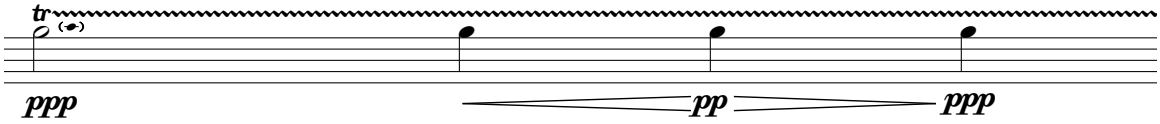
indicates a gradual release, resulting in a gradual decrease in resonance. Whereas an arrow pointing to an open circle

indicates a transition to harmonic pedaling in which the dampers are lowered so that they lightly interfere with the vibration of the strings, altering the timbre. A "½" indicates half-pedal, which is more resonant than the harmonic pedaling.



The **x-noteheads** indicate that the fingertip should strike the key so as to make a percussive sound, but the hammer should not strike the string. These repeated notes should be played by alternately striking with the index (or middle) fingers from the left and right hands. This technique only occurs—in this study—in the last measures. A loose wrist aids this technique. It is acceptable for the hammer to strike once or twice in this passage.

Repeated notes under trills should *not* be emphasized. Rhythmic divisions are used under trills to indicate the rhythms of dynamic changes. For example:



Accidental signs above a trill apply to the trill note, which is also indicated in parentheses:

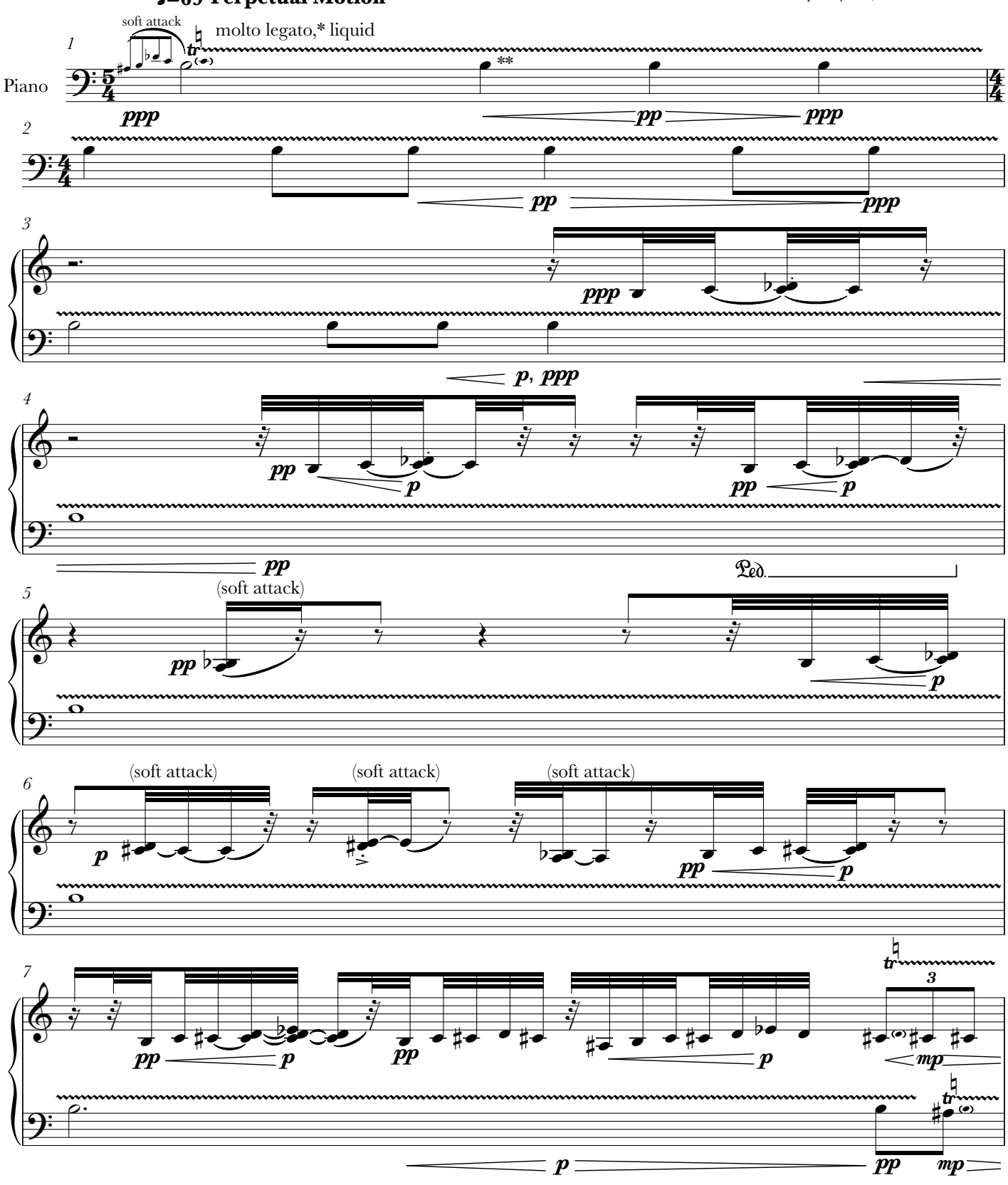
Some **tremolos** are notated as trills (e.g. m. 11).

A **slur from a note to the following rest** indicates that the key should be released gradually so that the damper at first lightly touches the vibrating string, effecting a brief change in timbre, before the key is fully released and the sound is silenced.

Study of a piano

*Legato technique implies here that notes should be released smoothly as well as attacked smoothly.

**Repeated notes under a trill are implicitly tied, not rearticulated.



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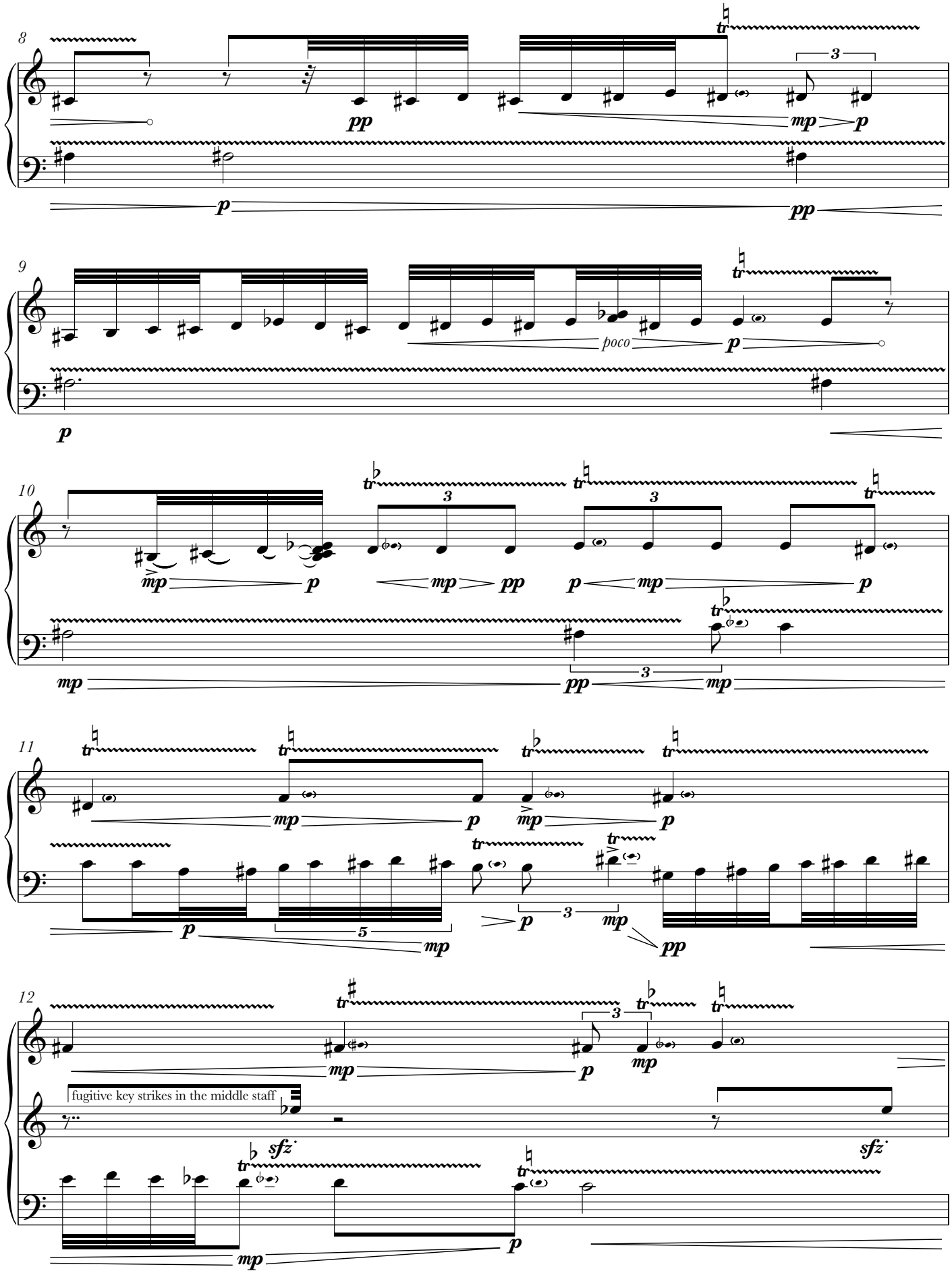
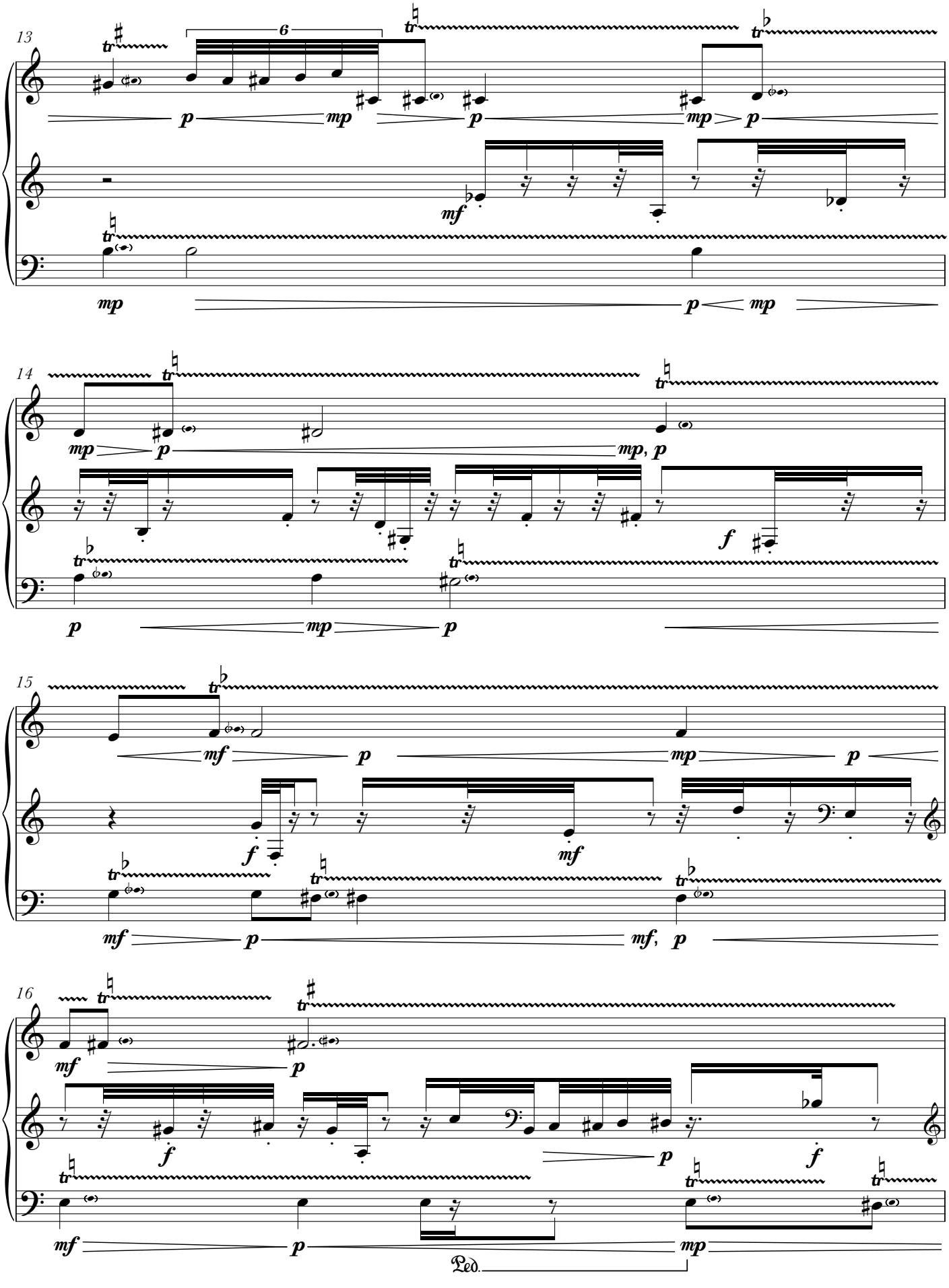
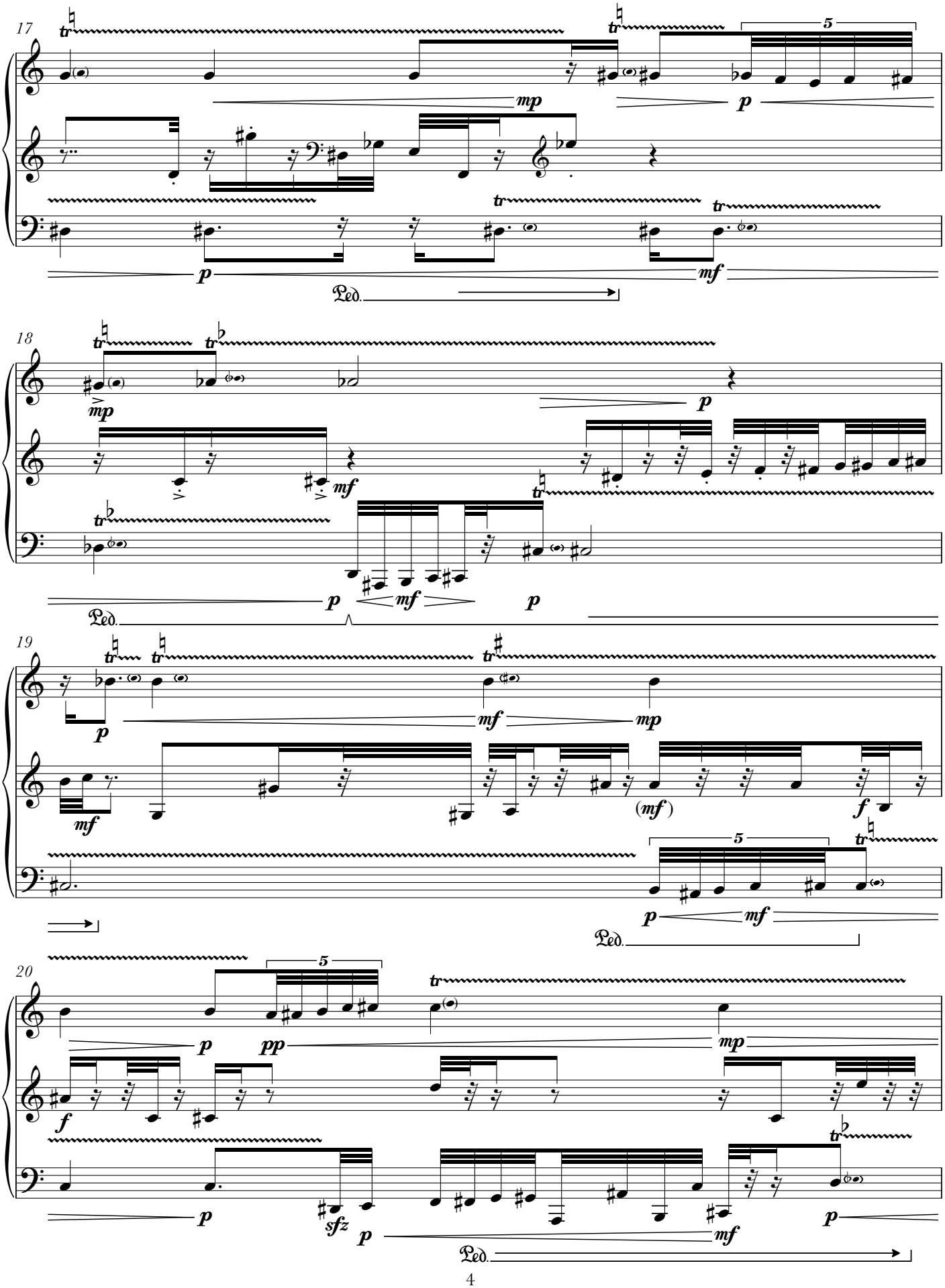
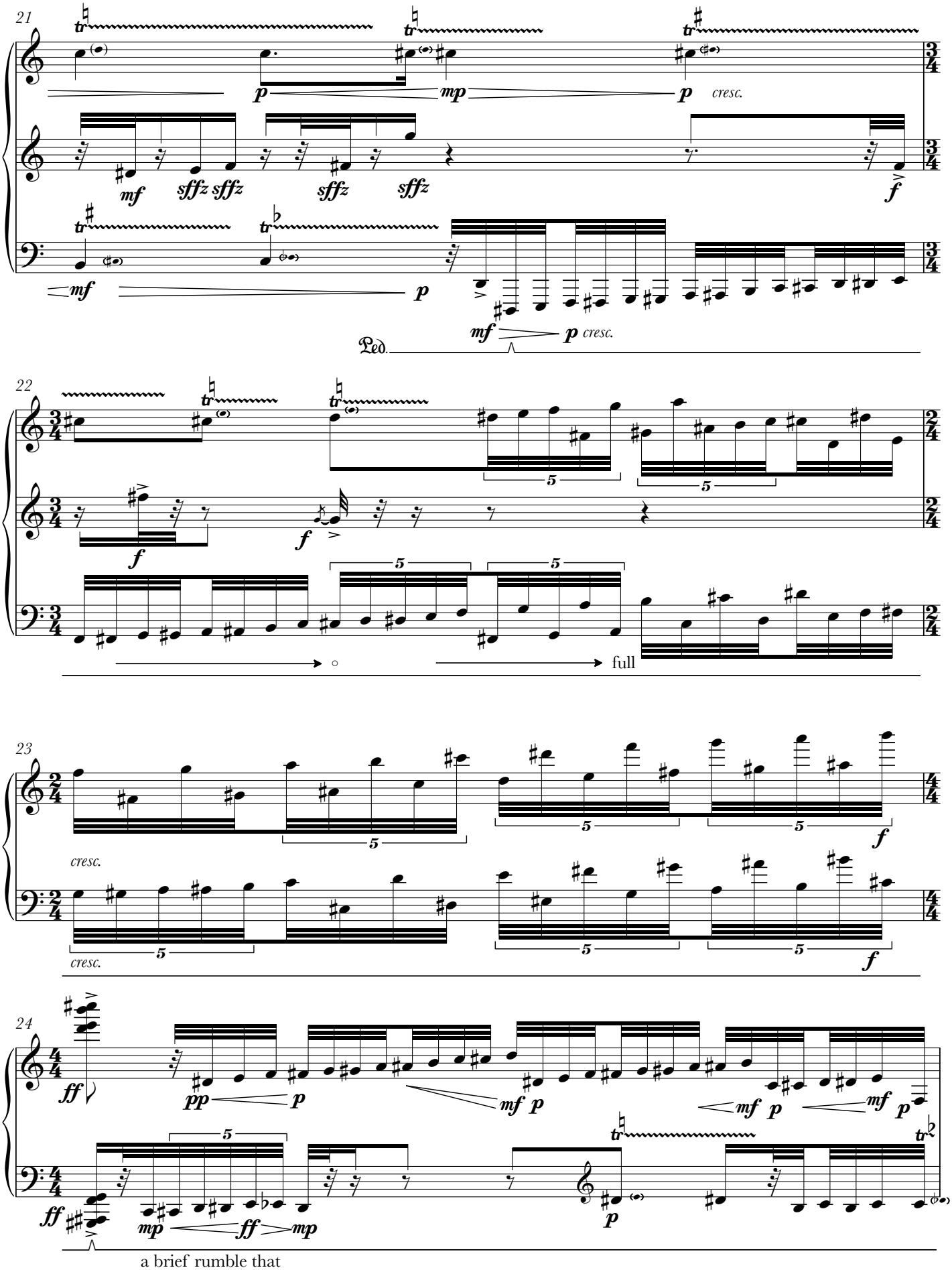
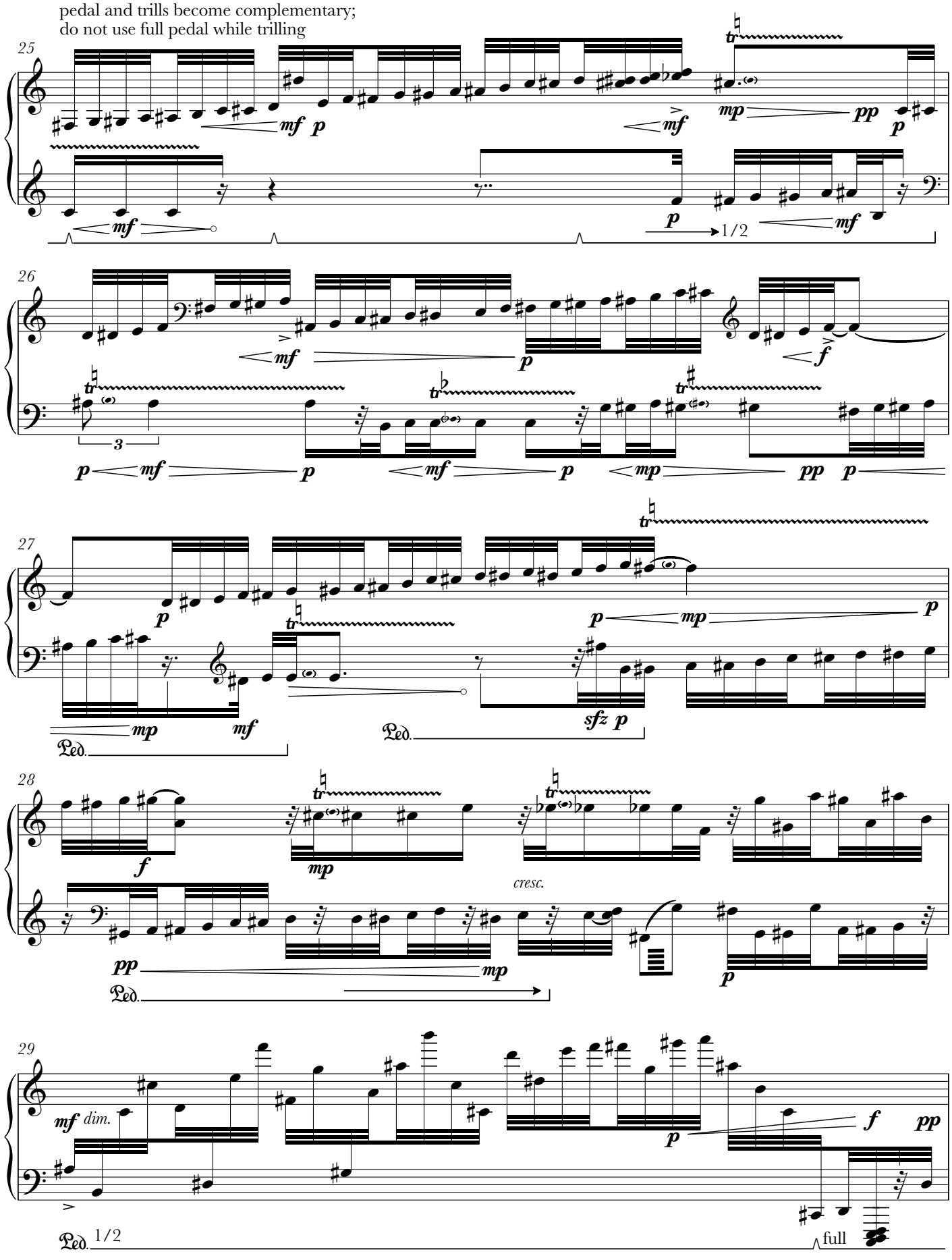
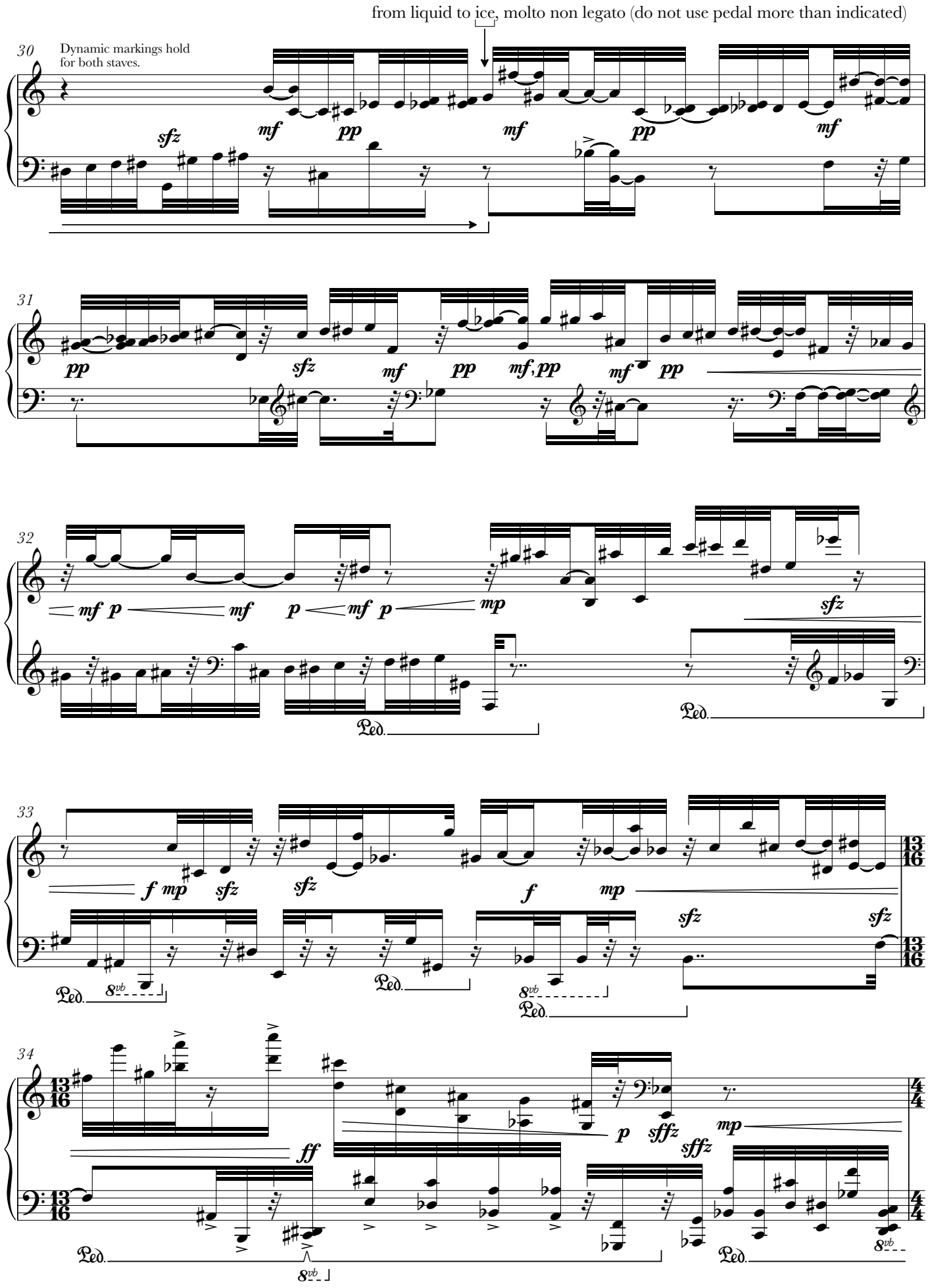

8
pp
mp
p
p
pp
9
poco
p
p
10
mp
p
mp
pp
p
mp
p
mp
3
pp
3
mp
11
mp
p
mp
p
p
5
mp
p
3
mp
pp
12
mp
p
3
mp
fugitive key strikes in the middle staff
sfz
sfz
mp
p

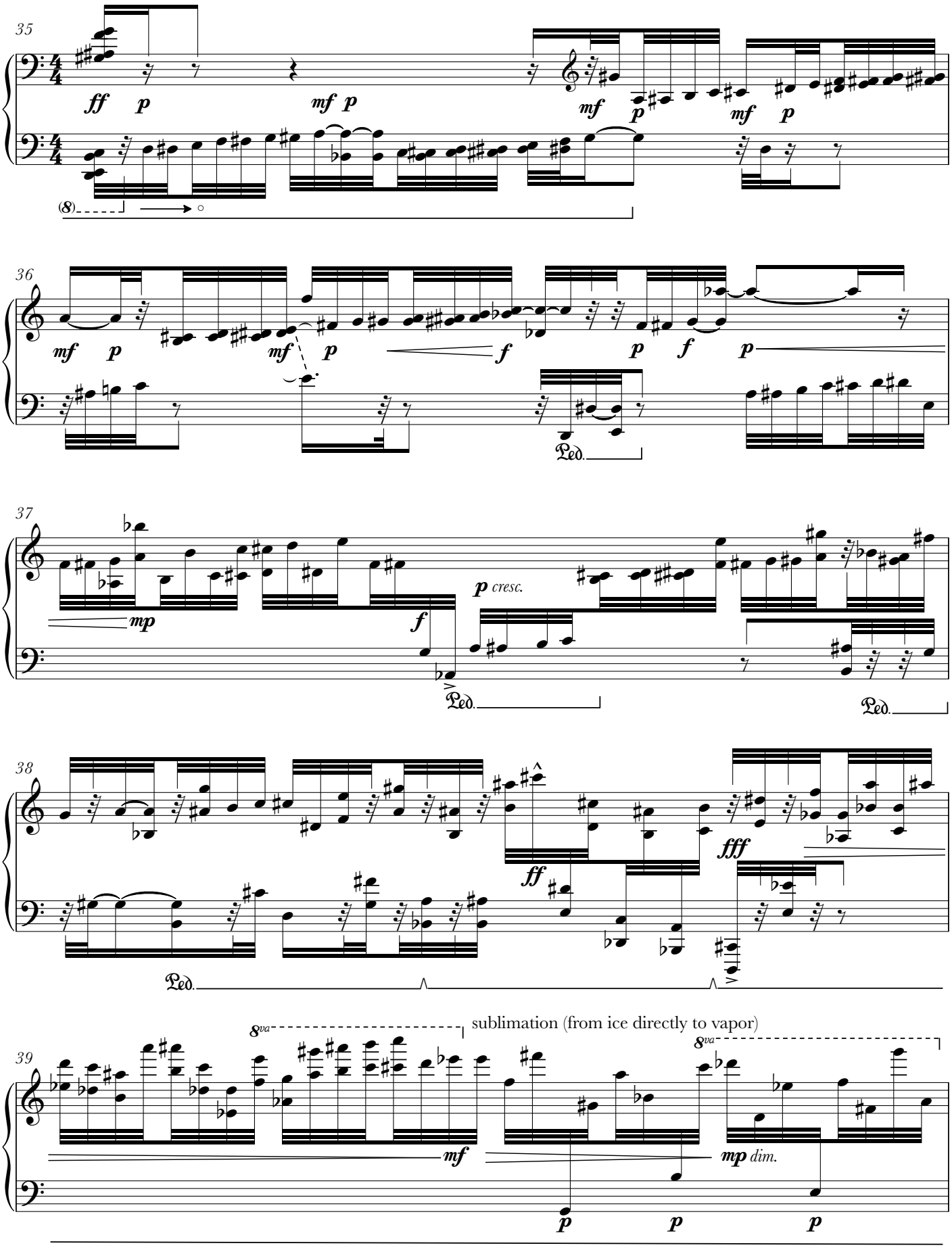

13
14
15
16
Ped.

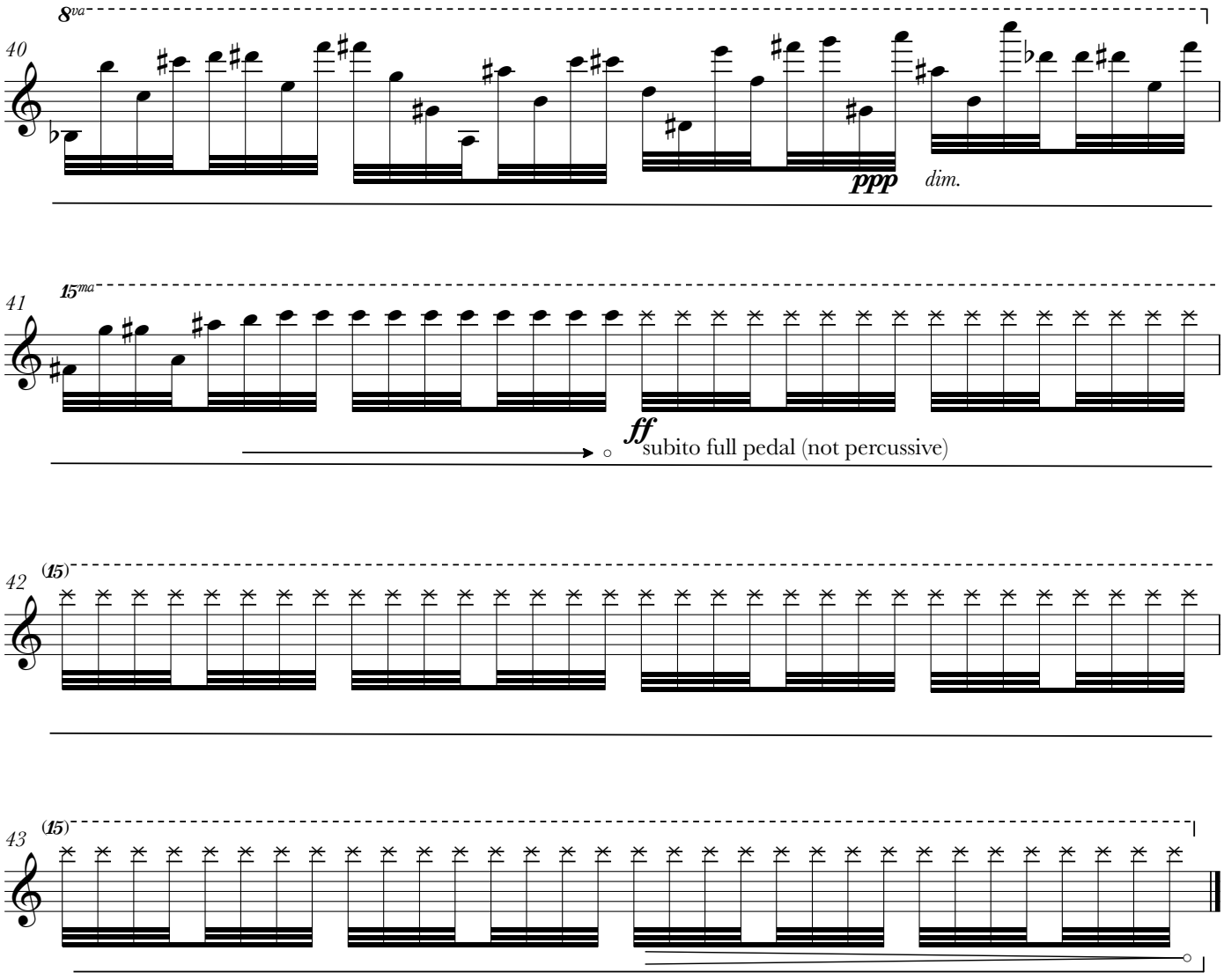

17
18
19
20
Ped.


21
p
mp
p
cresc.
mf
sffz sffz
sffz
sffz
f
mf
p
mf
p
cresc.
Ped.
22
f
f
5
5
5
5
full
23
cresc.
cresc.
5
5
5
5
5
f
f
24
ff
pp
p
mf p
mf p
mf p
ff
mp
ff
mp
5
p
a brief rumble that
emerges and disappears


pedal and trills become complementary;
do not use full pedal while trilling
25
26
27
28
29
cresc.
dim.
1/2
full


from liquid to ice, molto non legato (do not use pedal more than indicated)
30
Dynamic markings hold for both staves.
31
32
33
34
Ped.
8vb


35
ff p
mf p
mf p
mf p
(8)
36
mf p
mf p
f
p f p
Ped.
37
mp
f
p cresc.
Ped.
Ped.
38
ff
fff
Ped.
sublimation (from ice directly to vapor)
39
8va
mf
8va
mp dim.
p
p
p


8va
40
ppp
dim.
15ma
41
ff
subito full pedal (not percussive)
(15)
42
(15)
43

Performance Notes:

Accidentals only apply to notes that they immediately precede. (Notes that are tied to a previous note inherit the accidental of the previous note.)

uc. = una corda
tc. = tutte le corde

In terms of **rhythm**, this music has three types of notes. (1) The grace note arpeggios (with a slash through the beam) should be played at a speed at which the distinct attacks of each note are given just barely enough time to make a distinct impression. They stand outside of the measured time, borrowing time neither from the beat before nor the beat after. (2) Ordinary notes with metric values should be played with the durations indicated. (3) The grace notes with *x-noteheads* tied to the preceding chord indicate the release of a key rather than the striking of a key. Mechanically, the release is carried out in two stages: 1) the key is rapidly released to the point at which the damper just grazes the vibrating string causing a harmonic and 2) after this has been given a brief moment to sound the key is fully released. This is carried out very rapidly, resulting in a smoothly blended change in sonority. The exact rhythm of release should be chosen as to bring out the smoothly blended changes in sonority as much as possible. A slur to a rest indicates that this timbral shading applies to the last note before the rest.

When two notes are played simultaneously, one with a staccato mark and the other with a tenuto, the former should be played slightly louder than the latter so that upon the earlier release of the former a smoothly **blended transition** between perceived pitches, almost like a glissando, is achieved. The desired effect is reinforced often by giving the staccato note a shorter metric value, e.g. the C# and F# at rehearsal **B**. The desired effect is similar to that described in the third case in the preceding paragraph

The **pedal** should generally be avoided, except where indicated, and should definitely not be used on the grace-note arpeggios.

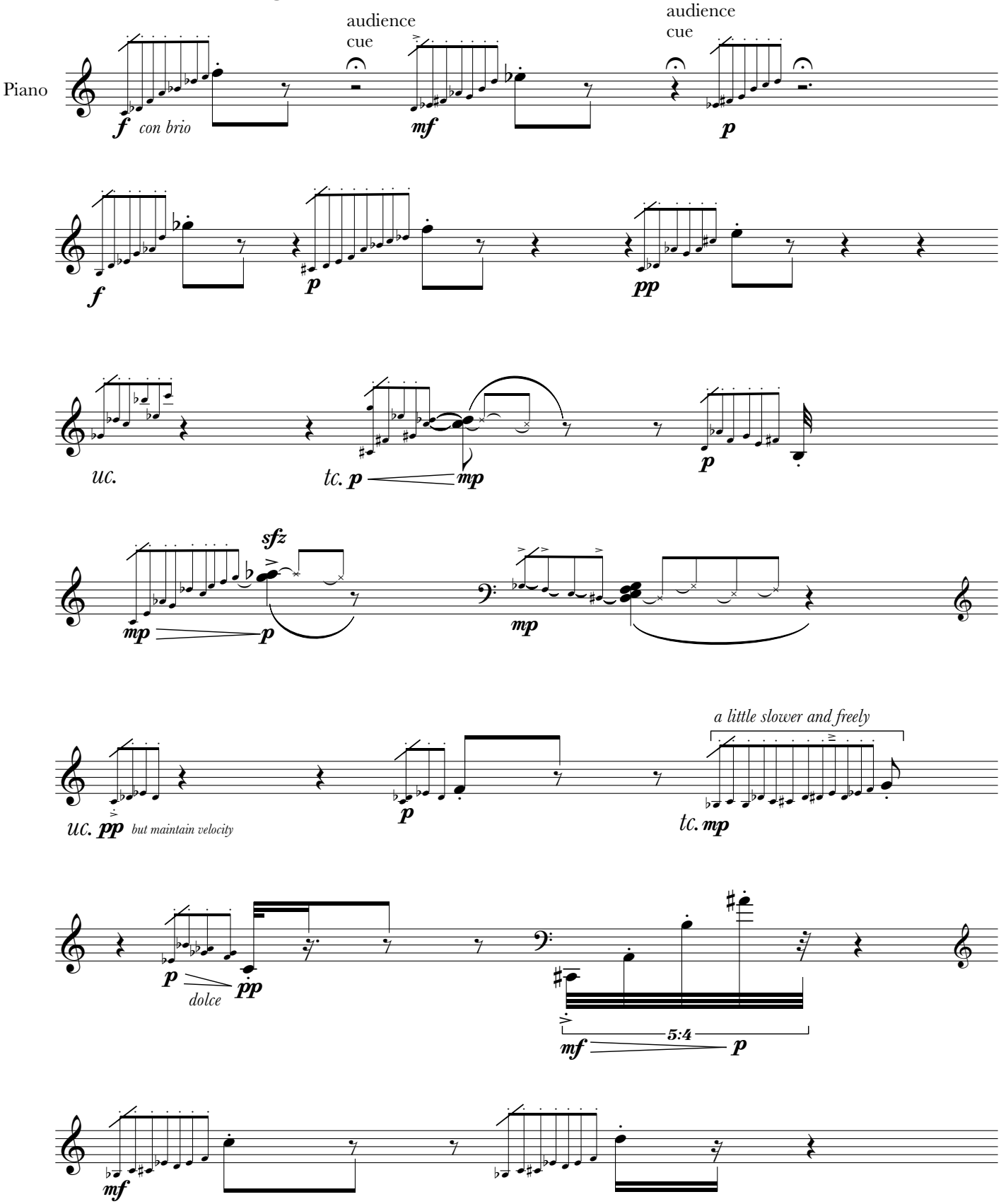
The relative strengths of the **dynamic** markings should be observed. The overall dynamic level must be adjusted—depending on the performance space—so that the changing sonorities affected by systematic note release are made audible to the audience.

For each indication of "**audience cue**" at a fermata the performer should hold the fermata until a sound from the audience triggers them to proceed. The sound might be an exhalation or the sound of someone shifting in their seat. The aim is to hold the fermata until the audience breaks the tension in the air. The performer should be poised, ready to pounce on the subsequent gesture with urgency. This aspect of the piece should not be announced in advance of the performance in preconcert remarks, though it may be openly discussed if the performer is questioned later.

Study of a Piano

Daniel Fox

♩=60 **With startling bursts of sound**



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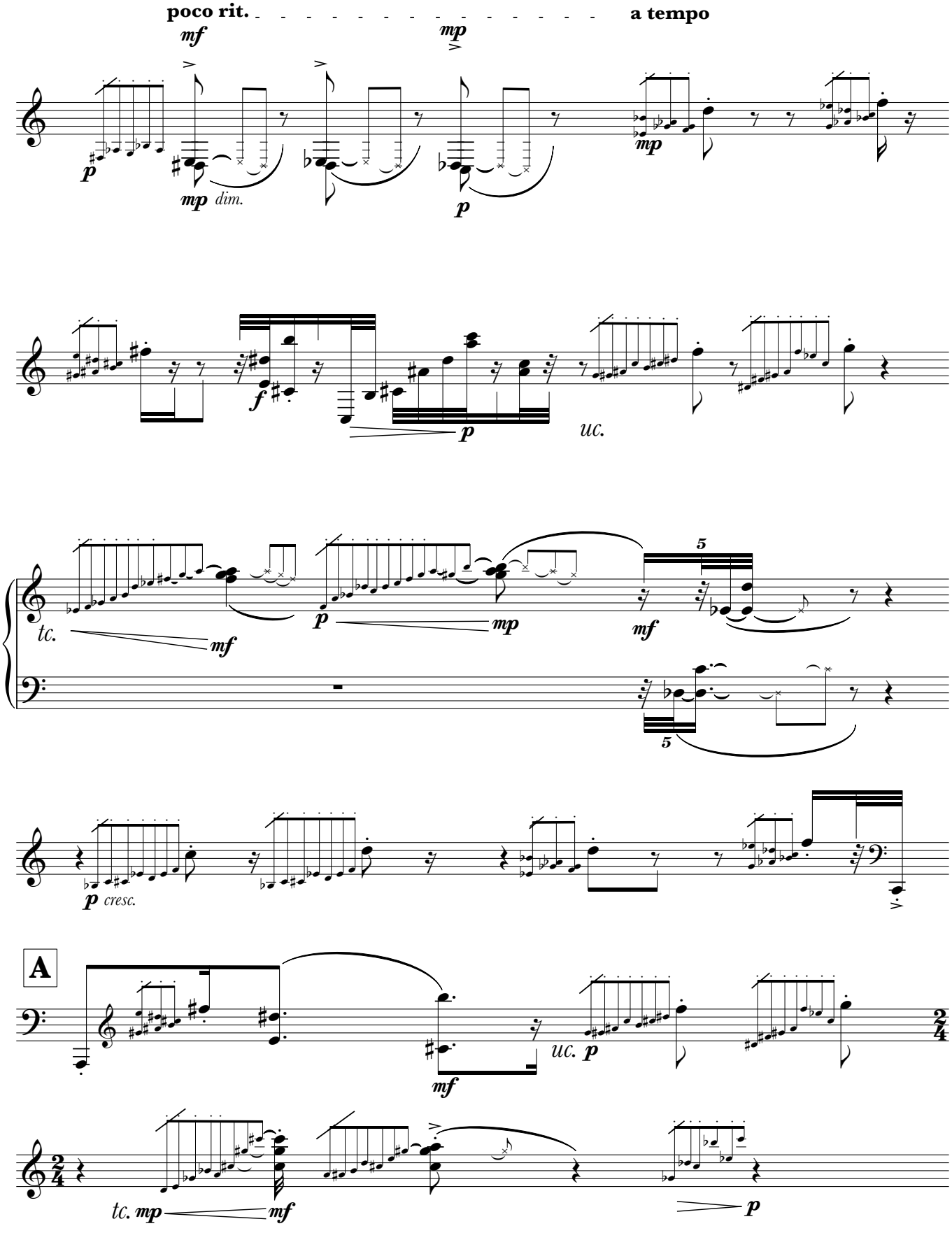
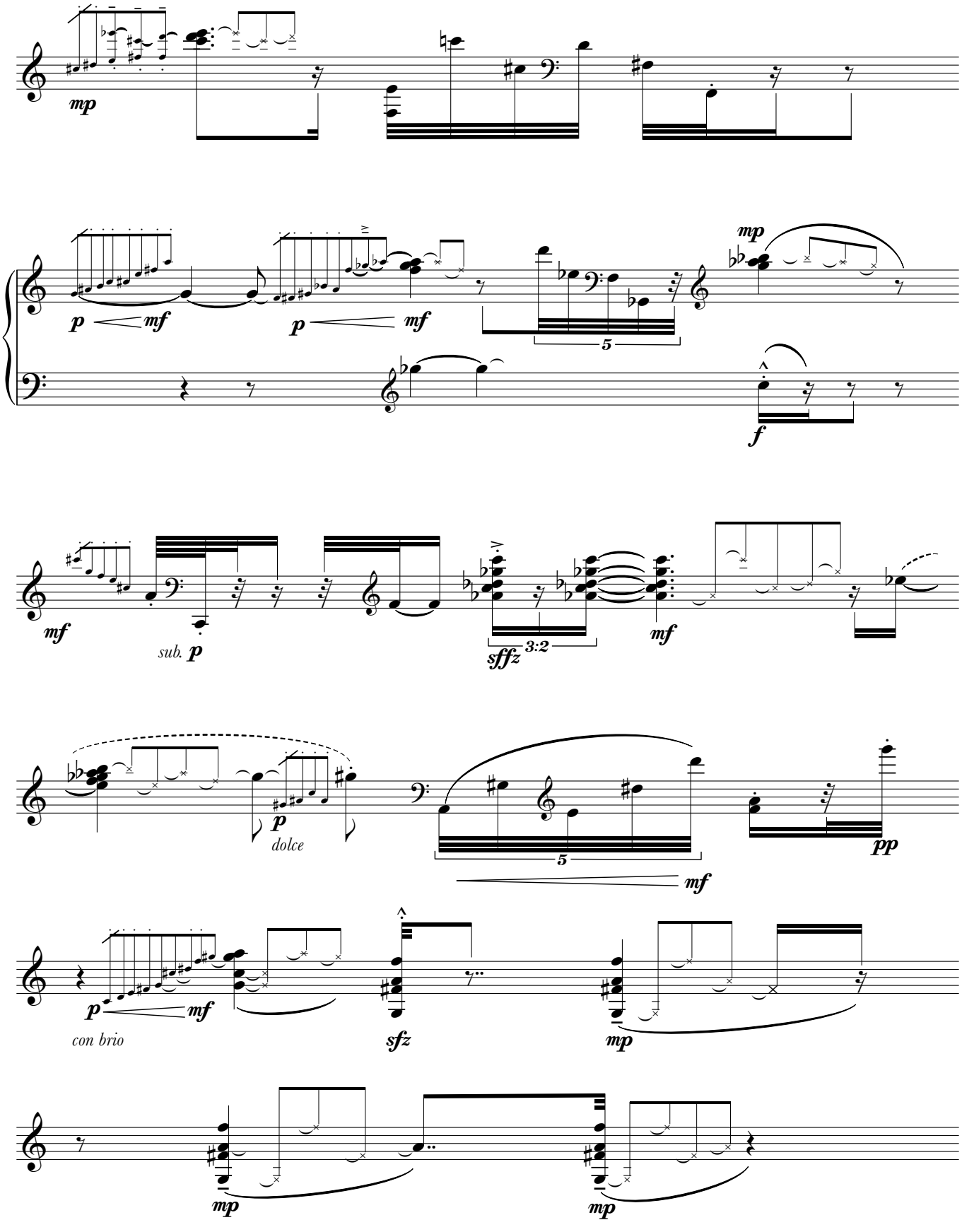
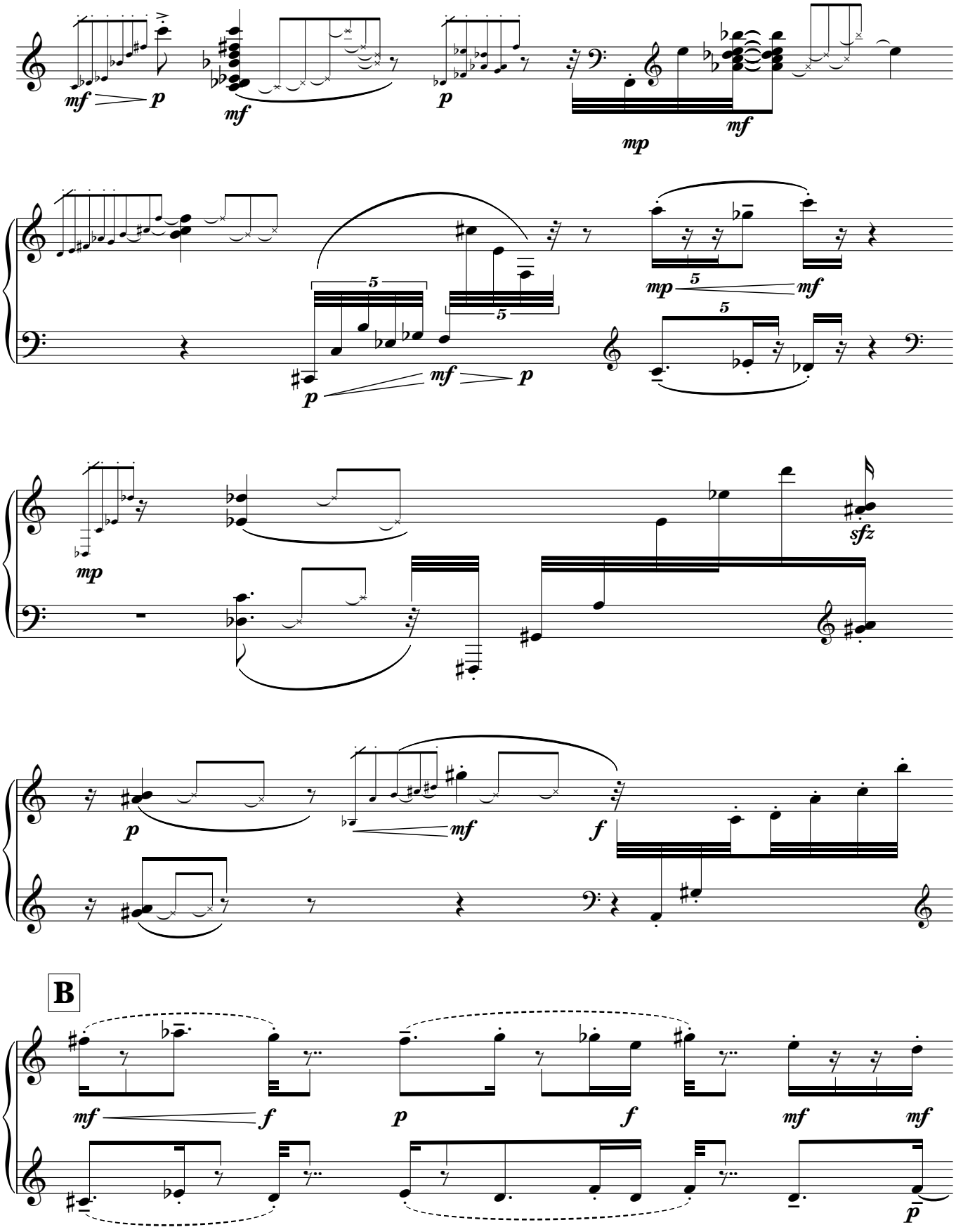
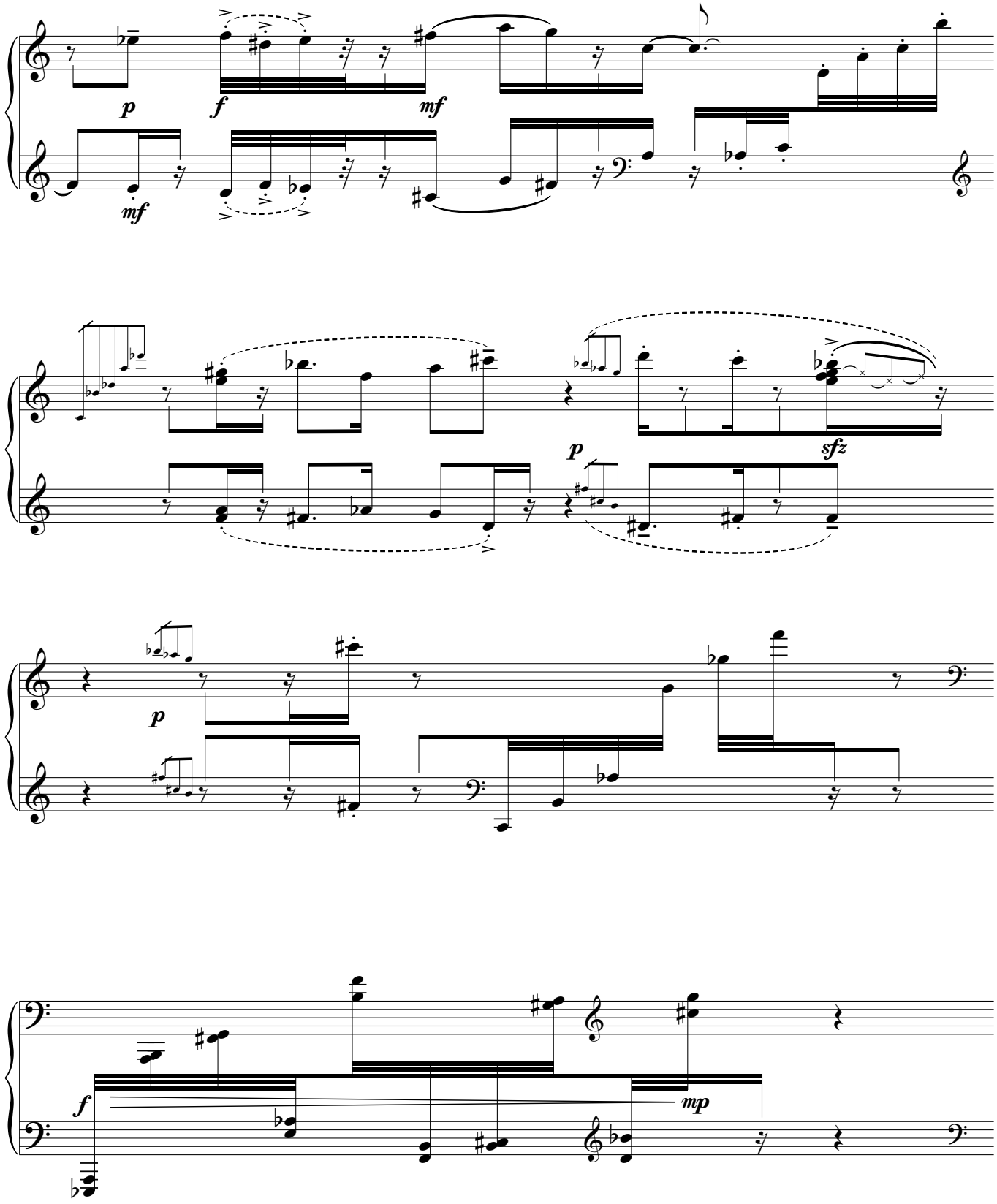
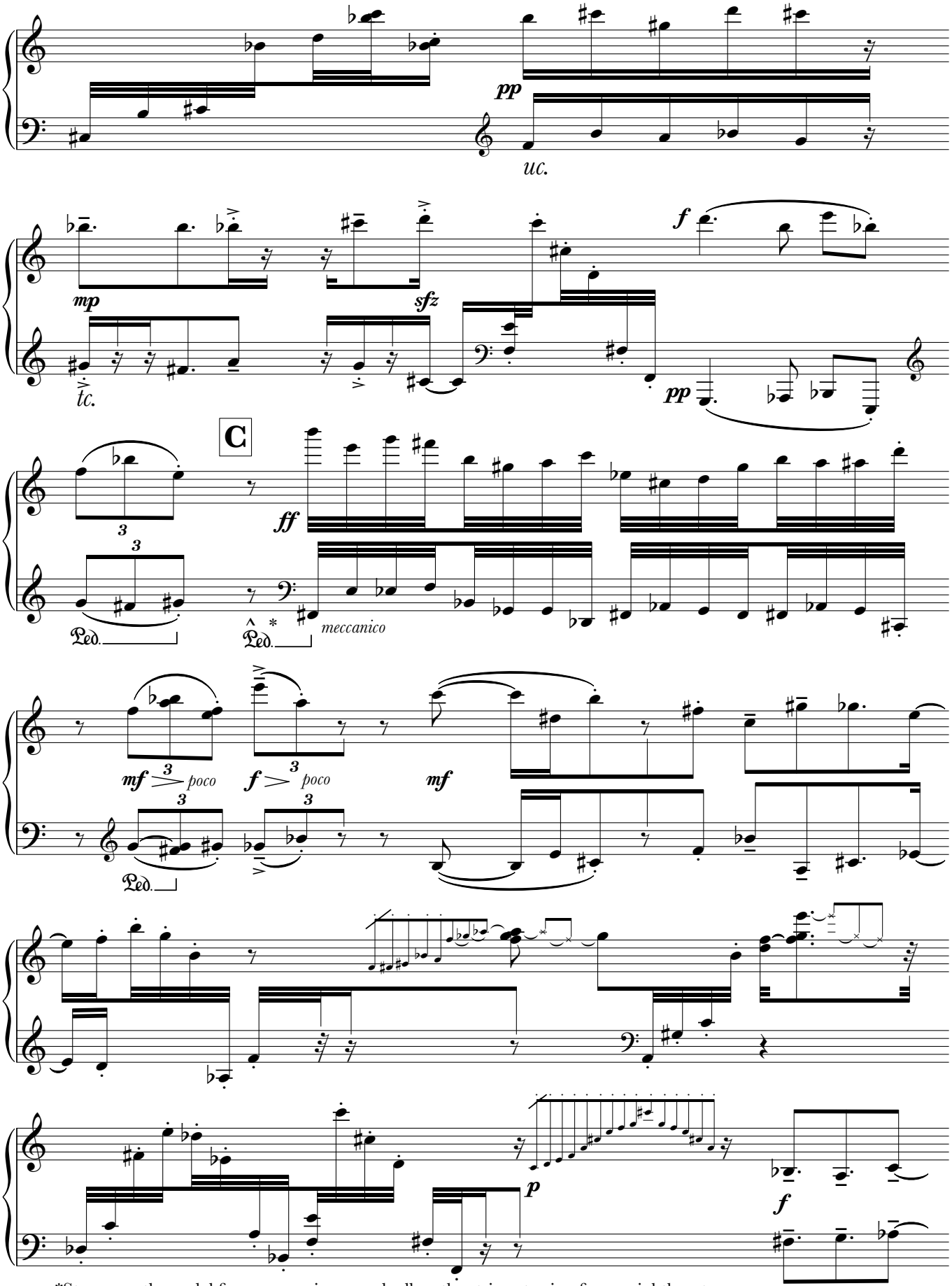

poco rit.
a tempo
mf
mp
p
mp dim.
p
mp
f
p
uc.
tc.
mf
p
mp
mf
5
5
p cresc.
A
mf
uc. p
2/4
tc. mp
mf
p

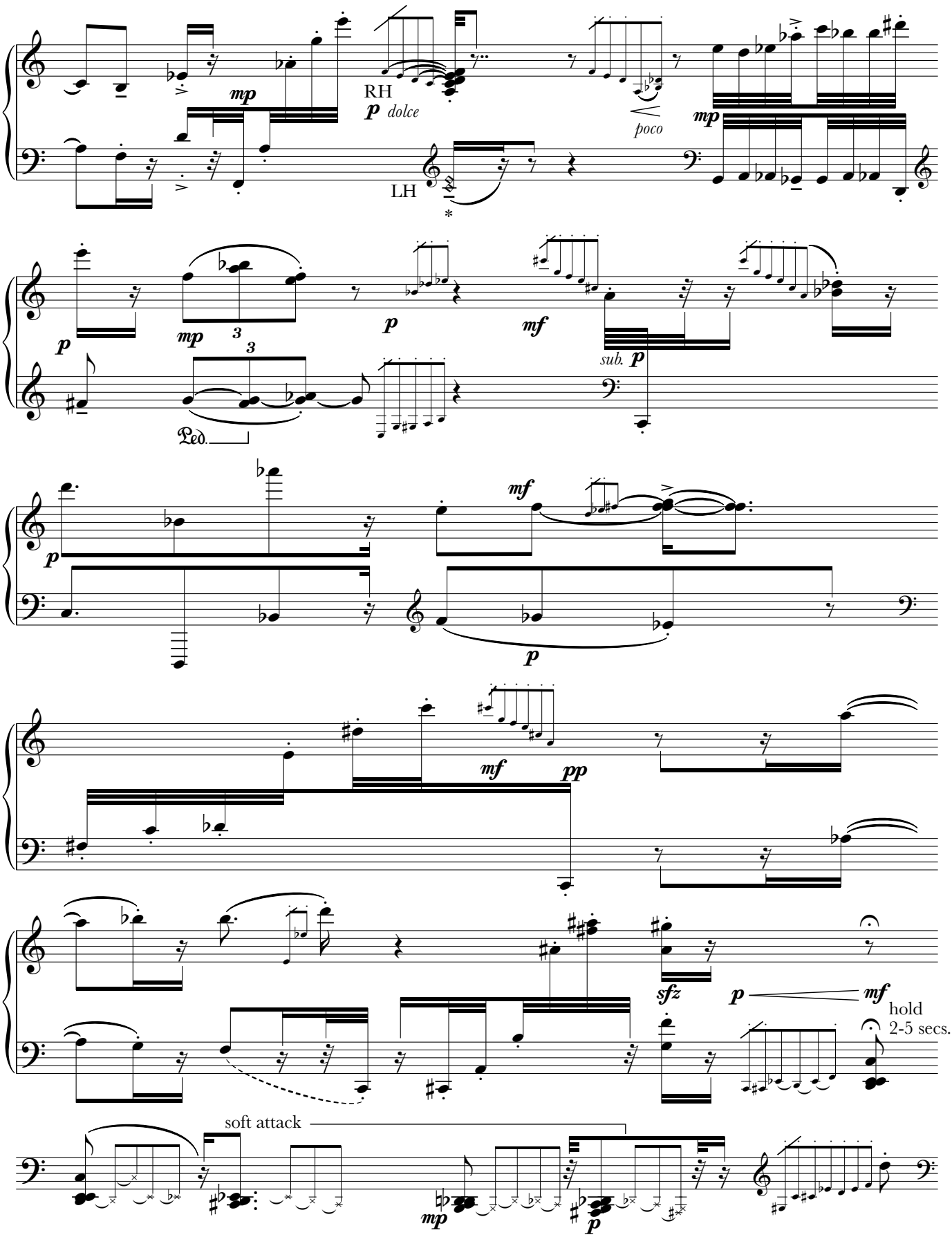

mp
p
mf
p
mf
5
mp
f
mf
sub. p
sffz
3:2
mf
p
dolce
5
mf
pp
p
mf
con brio
sfz
mp
mp
mp


mf
p
mf
p
mp
mf
mp
5
5
mf
p
p
mf
p
5
mp
sfz
p
mf
f
B
mf
f
p
f
mf
mf
p

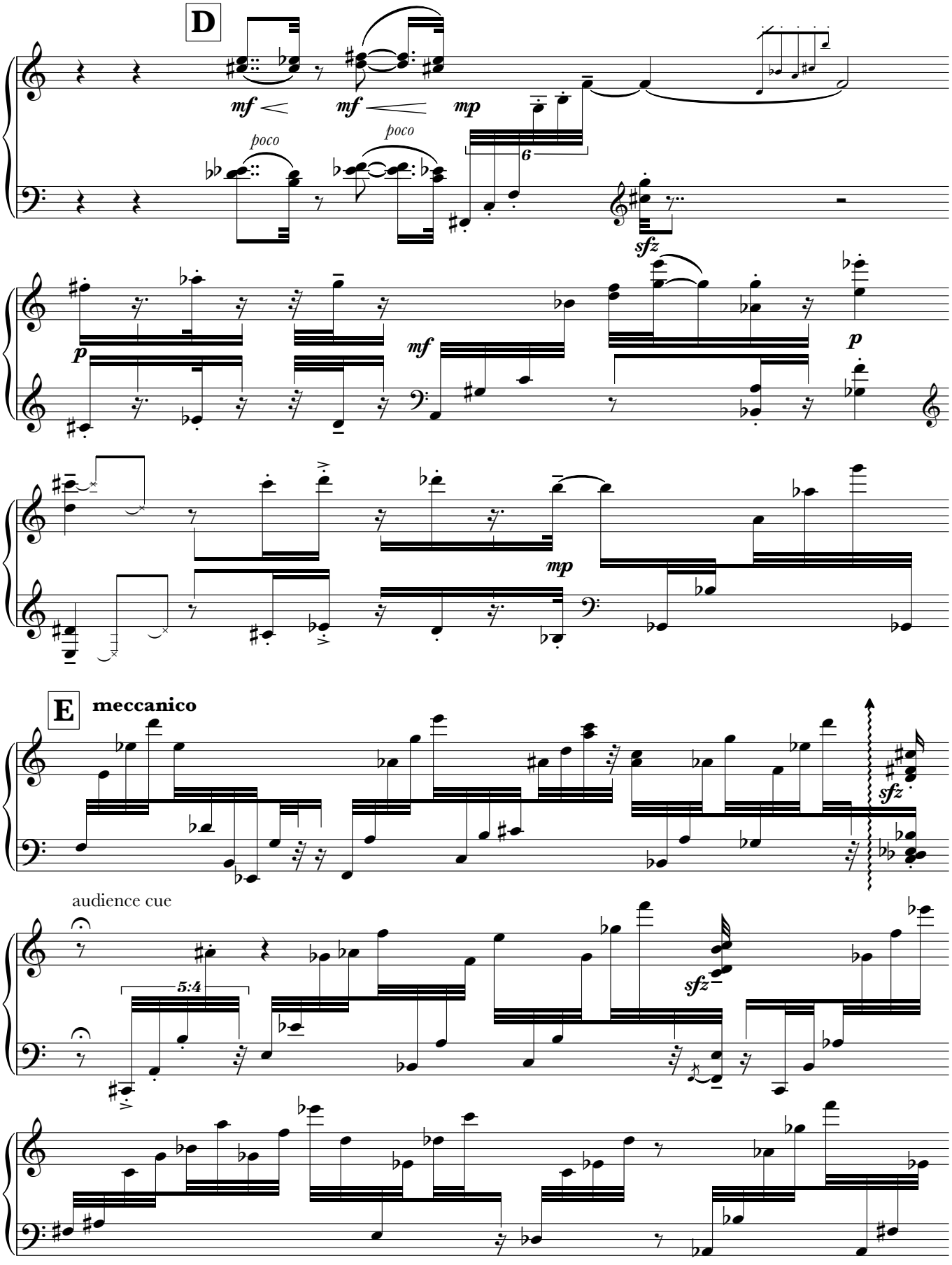

p
f
mf
mf
p
sfz
p
f
mp

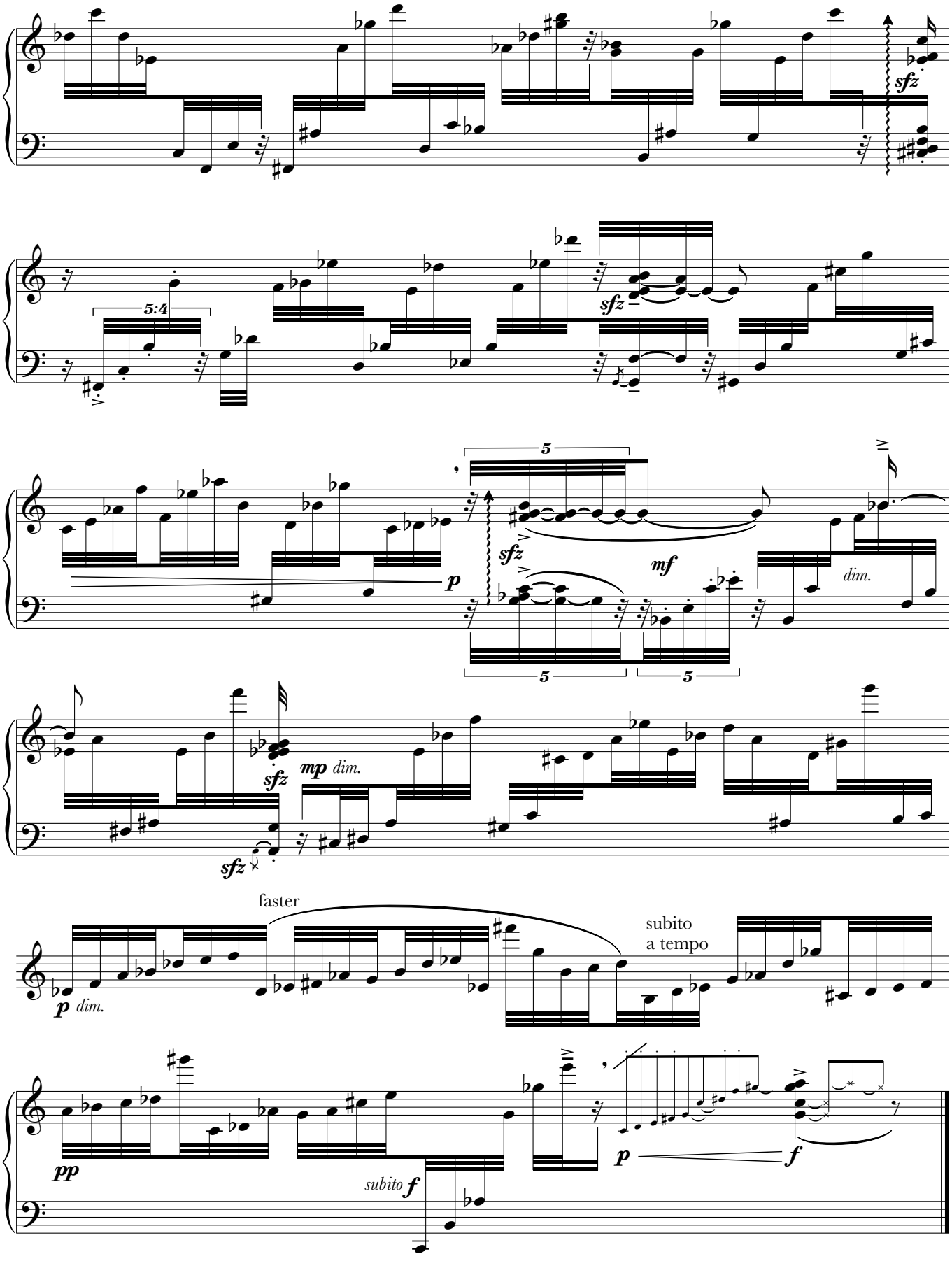


*Stomp on the pedal for a percussive sound; allow the strings to ring for an eighth note.



*The left hand holds the C4 and E4 that have been depressed by the right hand for slightly longer than the F, D, and A.


D
mf
mf
mp
poco
poco
6
sfz
p
mf
p
mp
E
meccanico
sfz
audience cue
5:4
sfz


sfz
5:4
sfz
5
sfz
p
mf
dim.
sfz
mp dim.
sfz
faster
p dim.
subito
a tempo
pp
subito f
p
f