Isaac ALBÉNIZ

RONDEÑA

IBERIA book II N° 1

Piano Practical Editions
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Isaac ALBÉNIZ 1860 - 1909

RONDEÑA

de la suite "IBERIA"

Rondeña was completed in October 1906 and dedicated to the pianist Blanche Selva, the first to perform all four books of *Iberia.* Although a difficult piece to master, It is considered one of the less challenging of the collection.

Those of you who know and love Andalusia, will immediately respond to this second volume with three pieces expressing heat, passion and Flamenco from this corner of Spain. The music draws inspiration (architecture, harmony, riffs and motifs) from *Iberia* — in particular, el Albaicín, el Puerto, Triana and Almería. The title refers to the picturesque town of Ronda but might also be about a marriage celebration with dancers clapping as illustrated by the two crisp chords in bar 2. *America* from Bernstein's *West Side Story* features a similar metric interchange between 6/8 and 3/4. With stunning harmonic invention and a heartfelt melody, the central *copla*, in *cante jondo**, is steamy, languid and melancholic. I love this ecstatic episode, and the way the composer develops and combines thematic and rhythmic ideas, disappearing finally with a distinctive nocturnal final section. The witty coda is most unexpected.

FRANCISCO GOYA

When I first heard Alicia De Larrocha perform 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,* I noticed that the text (Éditions *Salabert*) was often difficult to read: there were inaccuracies, many accidentals and too many instructions, coupled with sub-standard engraving; so I decided to edit the music myself.

In spite of passing through a number of key changes, the composer has curiously written this work entirely with a key signature of 2 sharps. Was this through negligence or by design? If the former, I humbly offer this edition which makes quite a few changes of key and time signature, rendering, I believe, the text easier to comprehend and read by eliminating quite a few challenging accidentals.

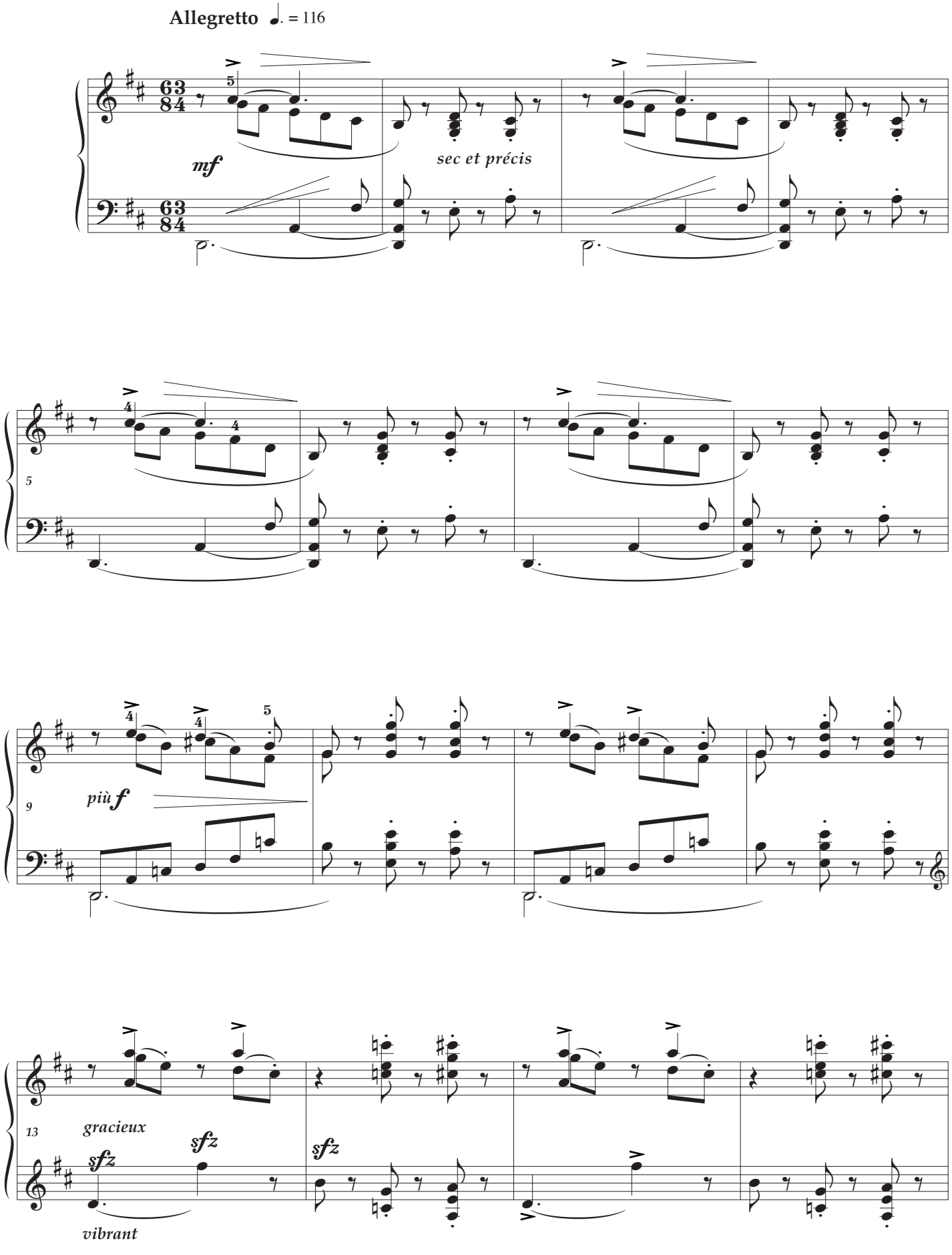
I plead guilty to not having religiously copied every dot, accent, sign, pedal marking and many others. Albeniz was very zealous in having often embellished many, sometimes conflicting, instructions and I have tried to simplify the music within reason relying upon present-day sophisticated pianists and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

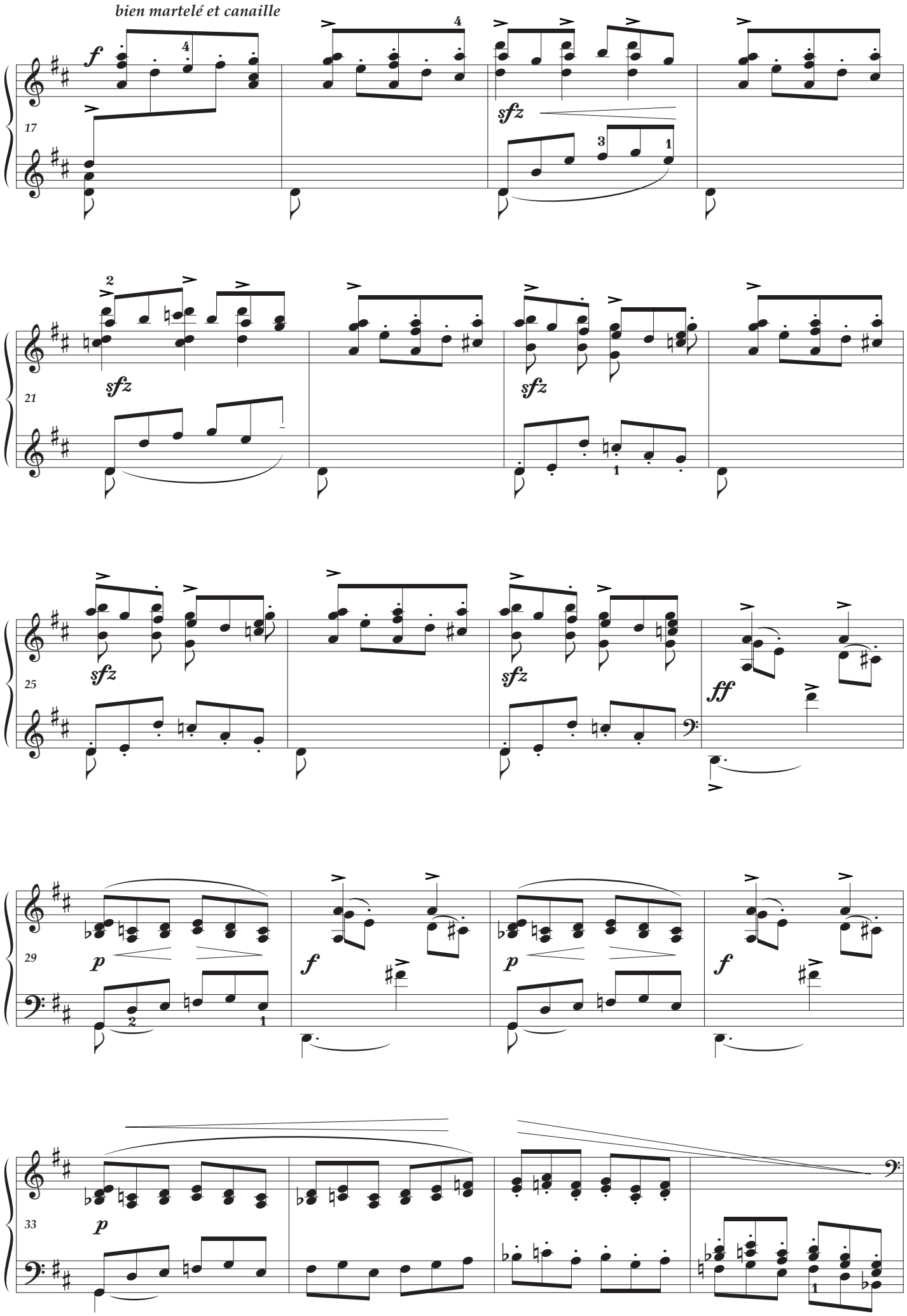
Albéniz was an extrovert with a keen sense of humour, loved and respected by all who knew him. In this wonderful and imaginative music, he was also flamboyant with descriptions in French and Italian, and pedalling directions which sometimes seem to be a whirlwind of far-fetched impossibilities — unreasonable and endearing as they are.

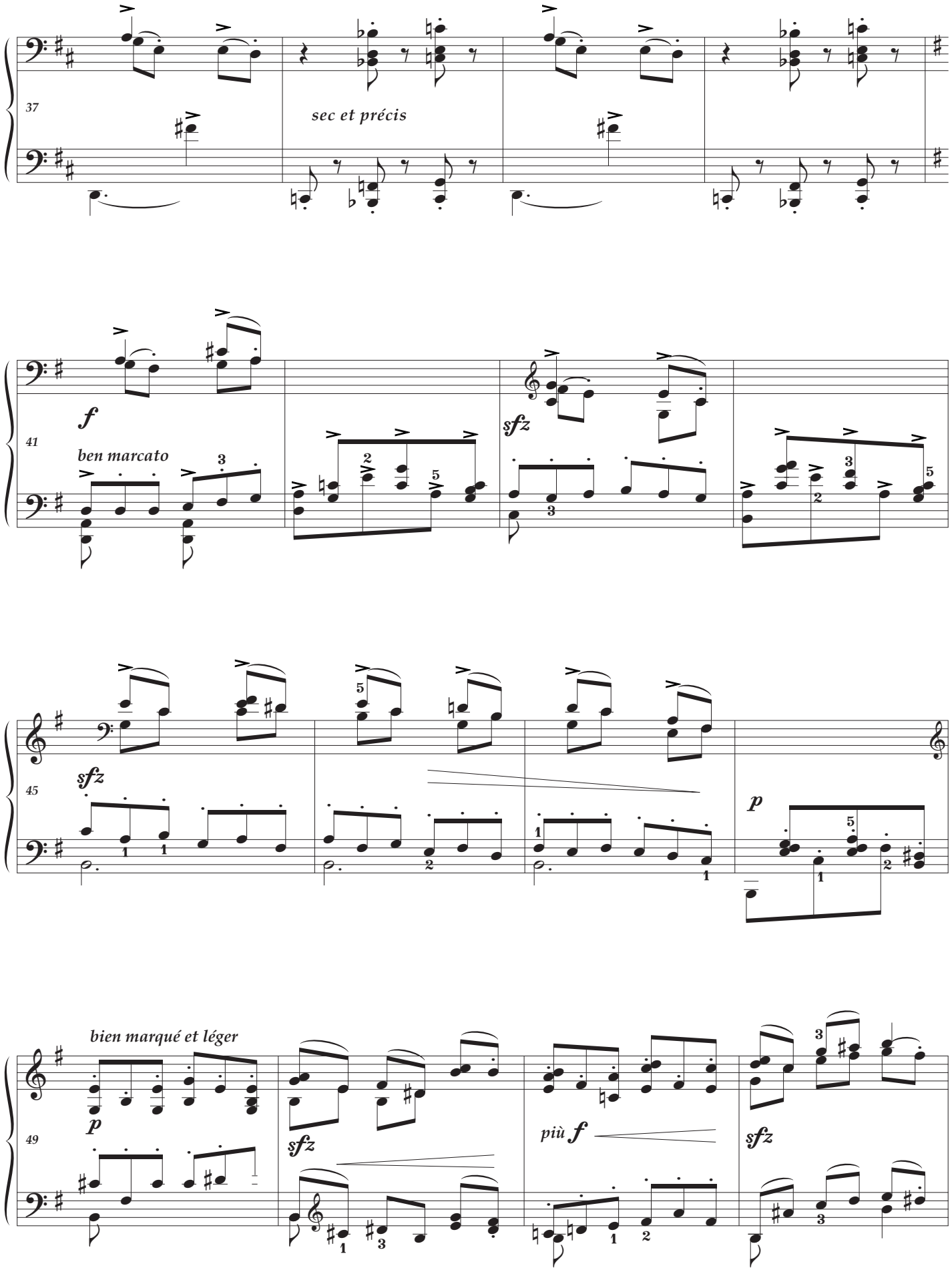
In addition to some suggested fingering, the appendix contains comments, afterthoughts and a vocabulary. Redistribution between the hands comes under close scrutiny to make certain passages easier or more persuasive. It is possible, even desirable, to use the sostenuto pedal effectively, although this is entirely editorial.

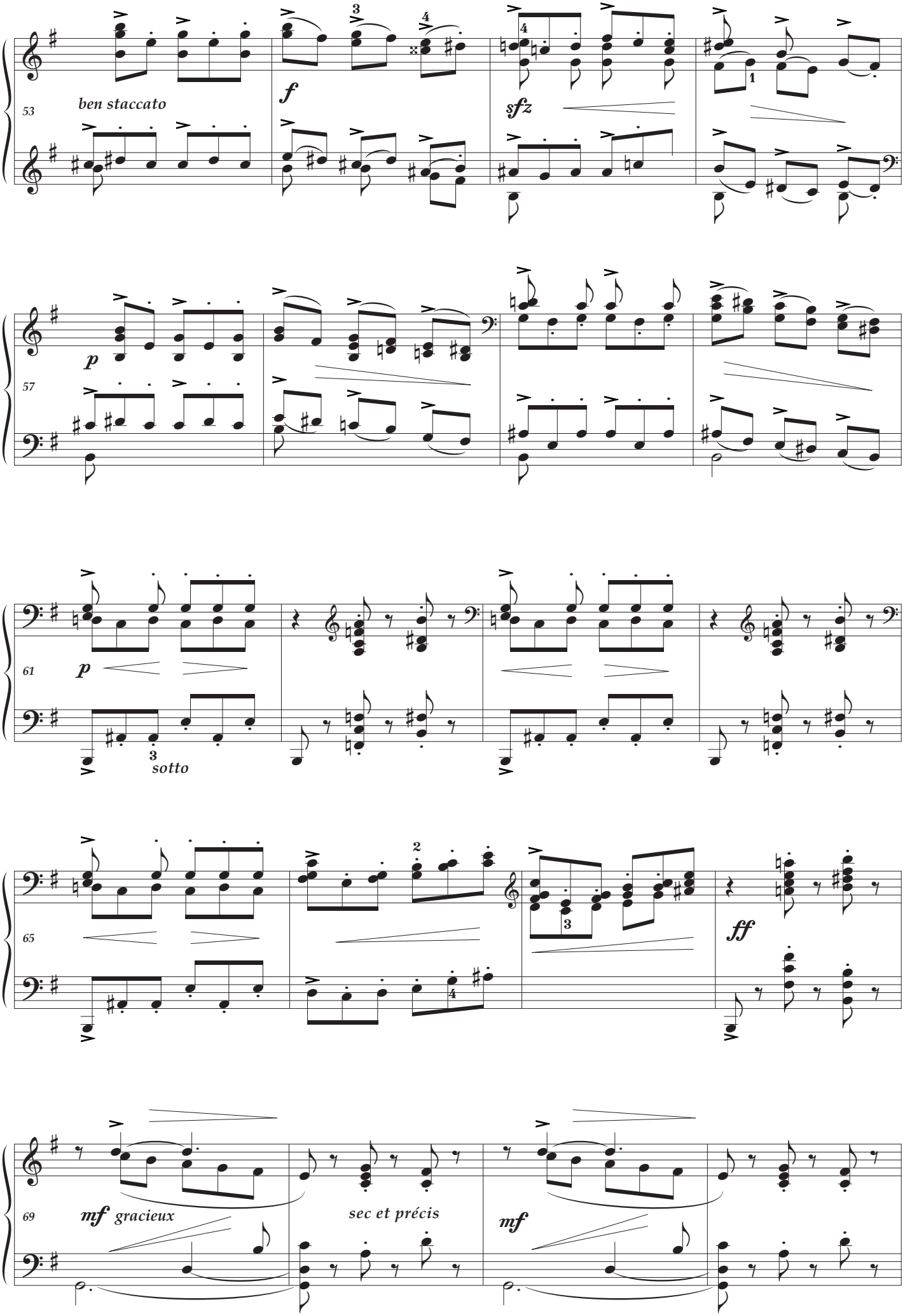
* Deeply moving vocal flamenco

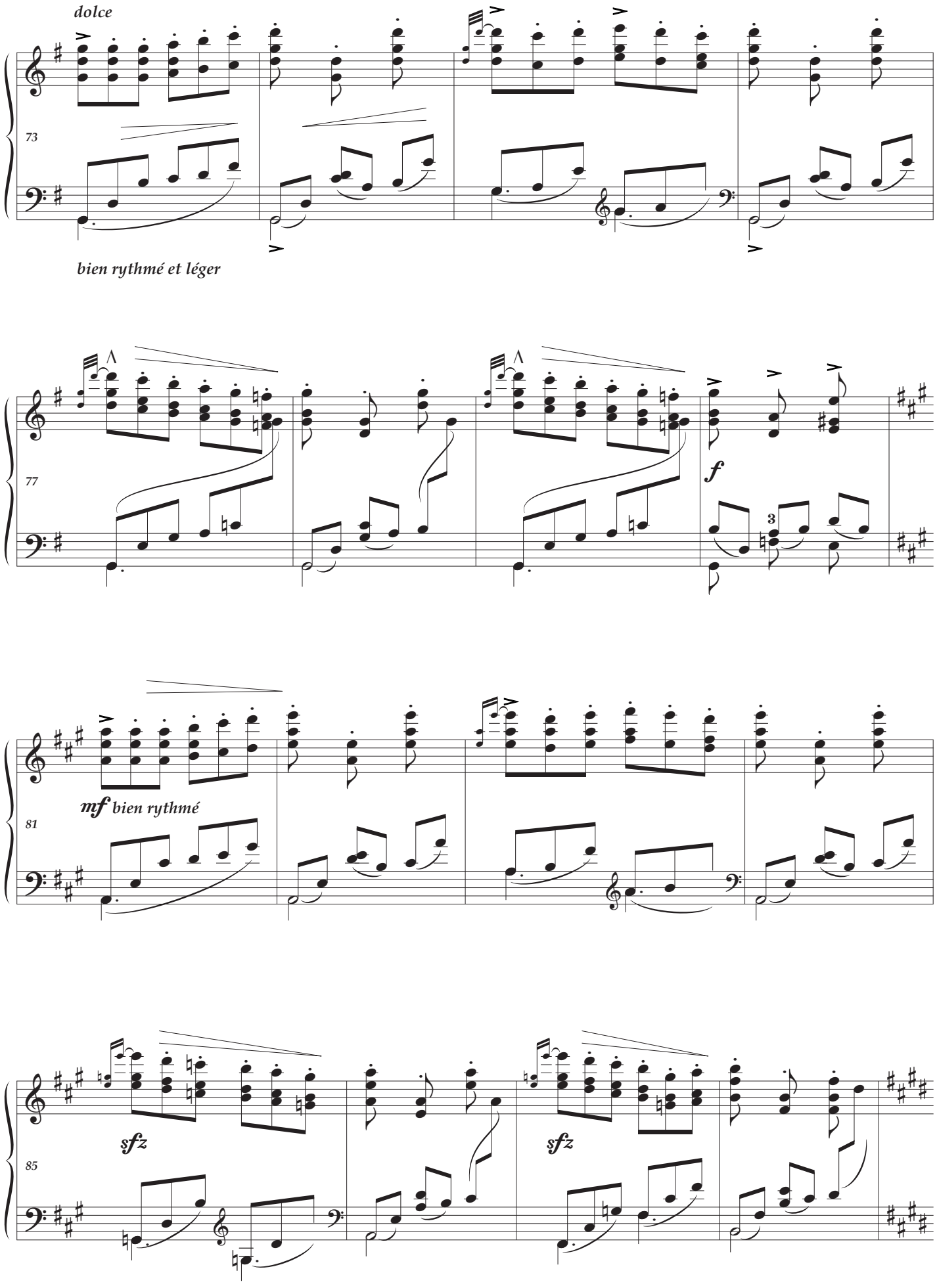
RONDEÑA

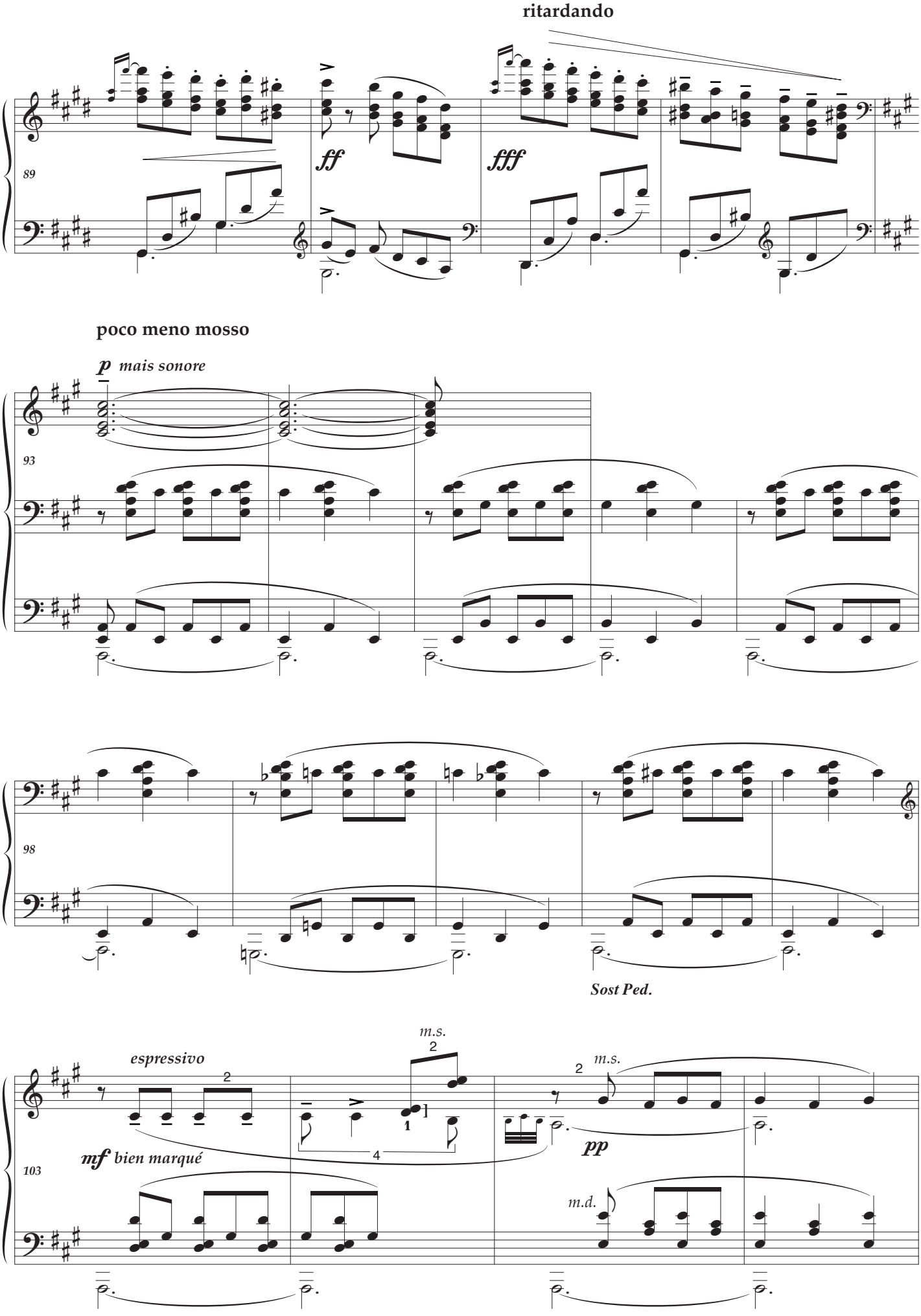

Allegretto ♩. = 116
mf
sec et précis
5
più f
9
gracieux
sfz
13
vibrant

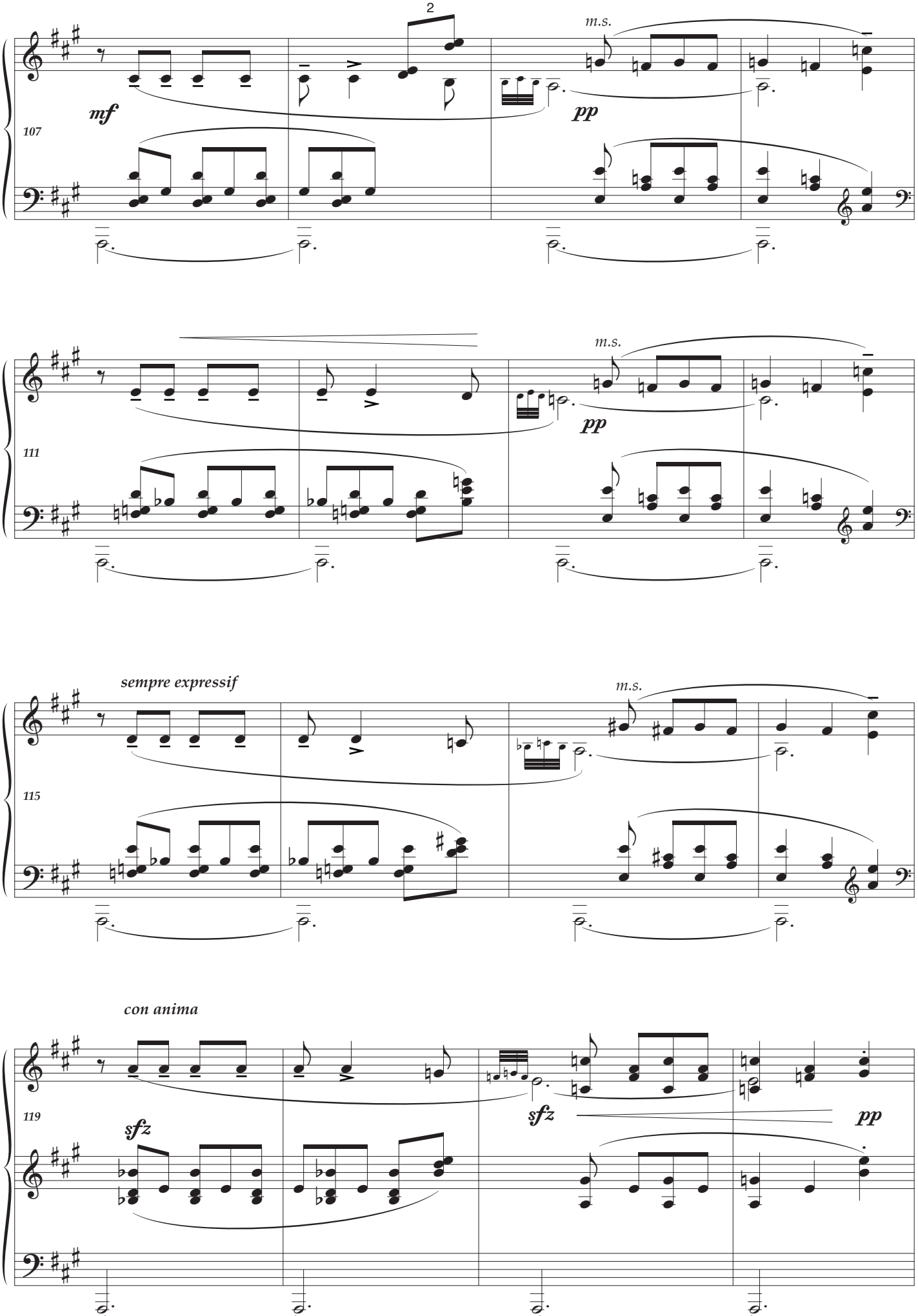

bien martelé et canaille
17
21
25
29
33

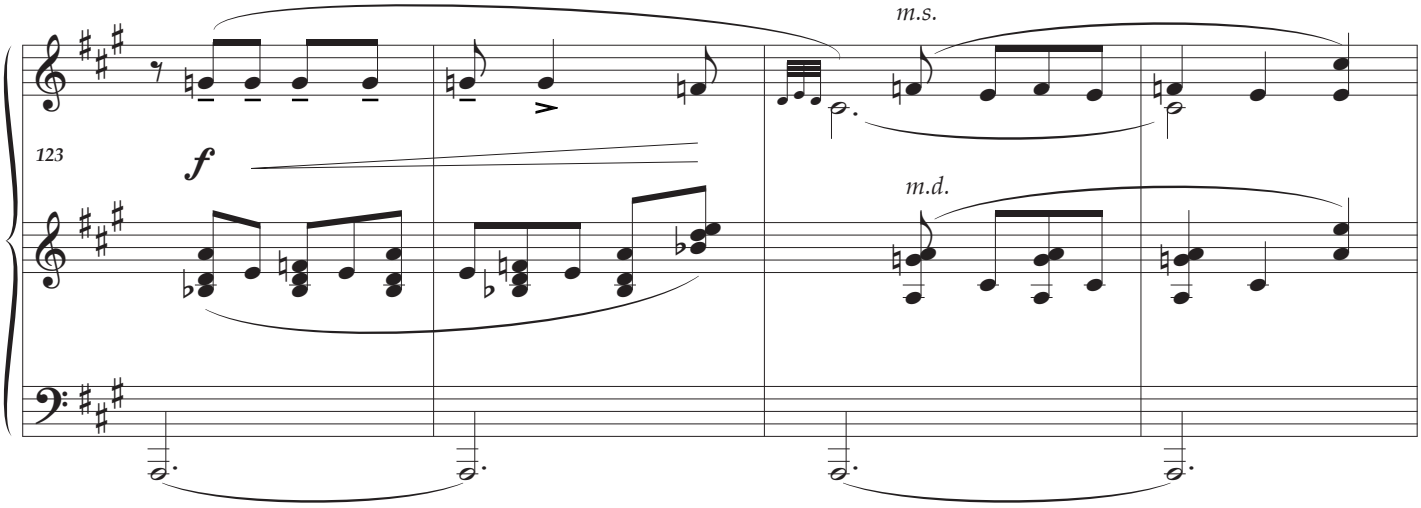

37
sec et précis
41
f
ben marcato
sfz
45
sfz
p
49
bien marqué et léger
p
sfz
più f
sfz

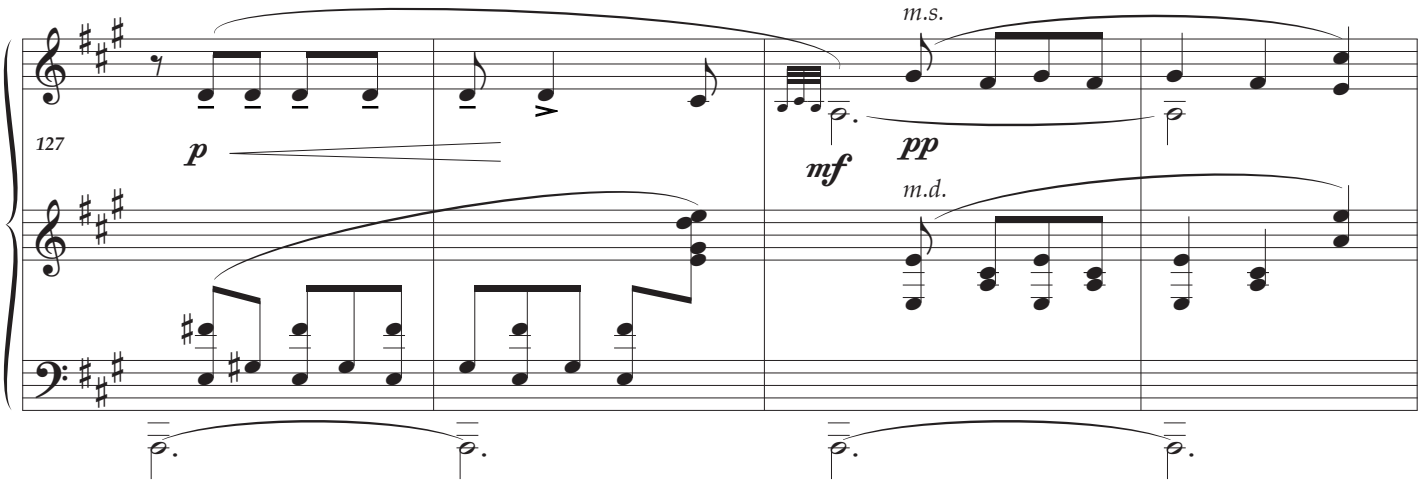

53
ben staccato
f
sfz
57
p
61
p
sotto
65
ff
69
mf gracieux
sec et précis
mf

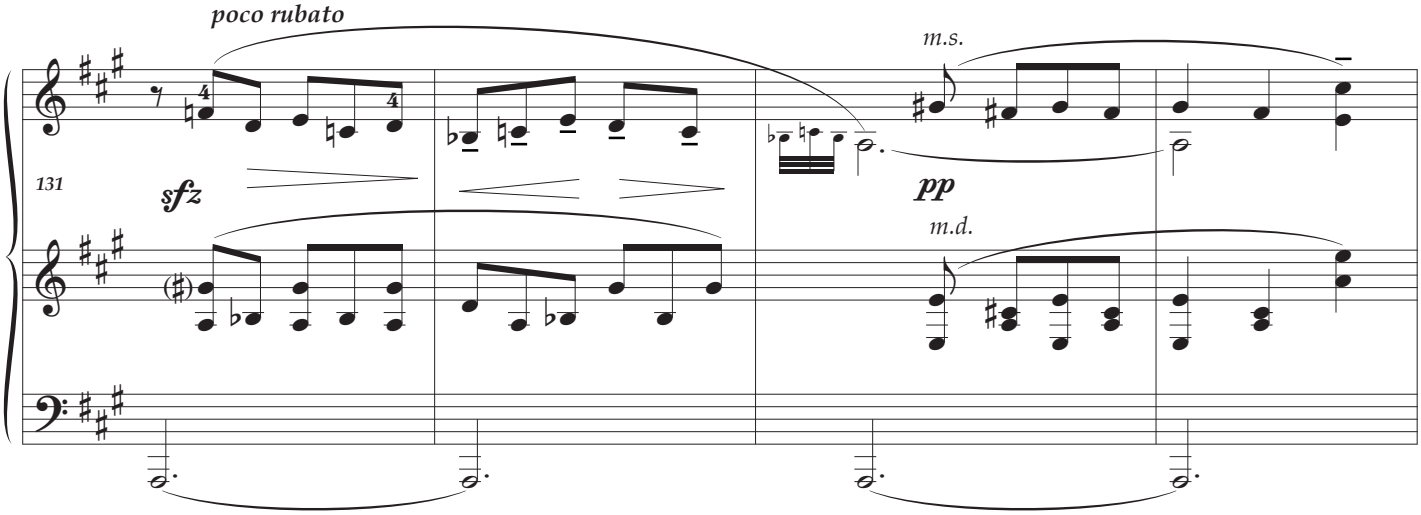

dolce
73
bien rythmé et léger
77
f
3
81
mf bien rythmé
85
sfz
sfz

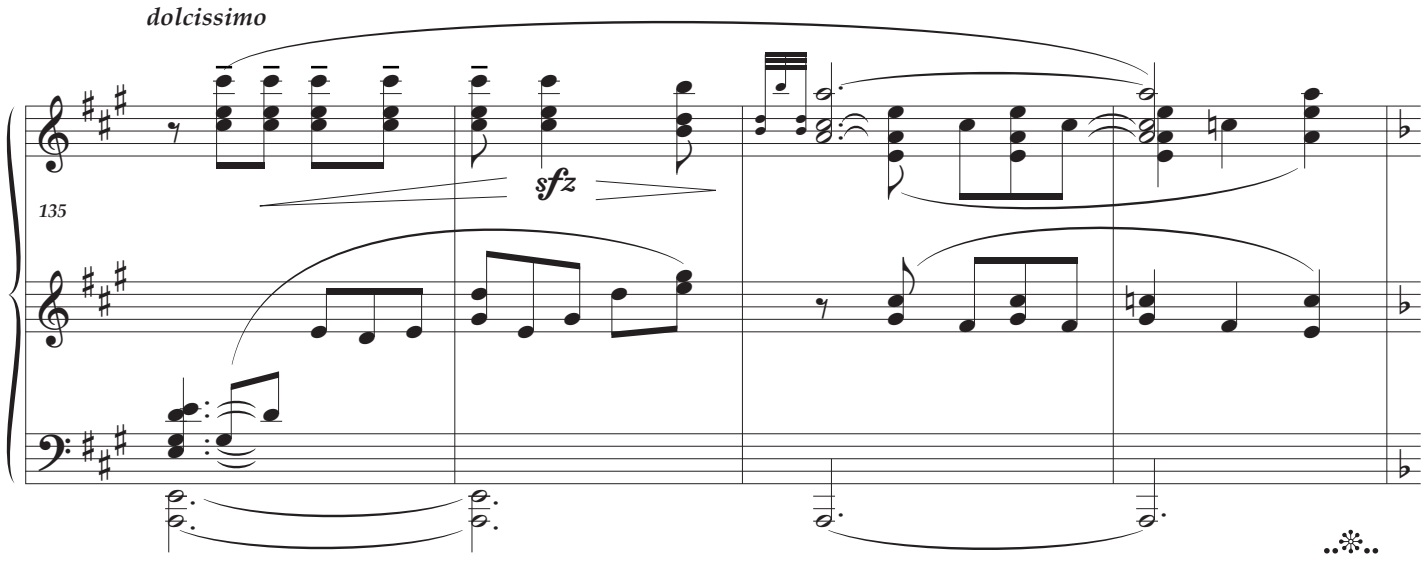

ritardando
89
ff
fff
poco meno mosso
p mais sonore
93
98
Sost Ped.
espressivo
m.s.
2
mf bien marqué
103
pp
m.d.

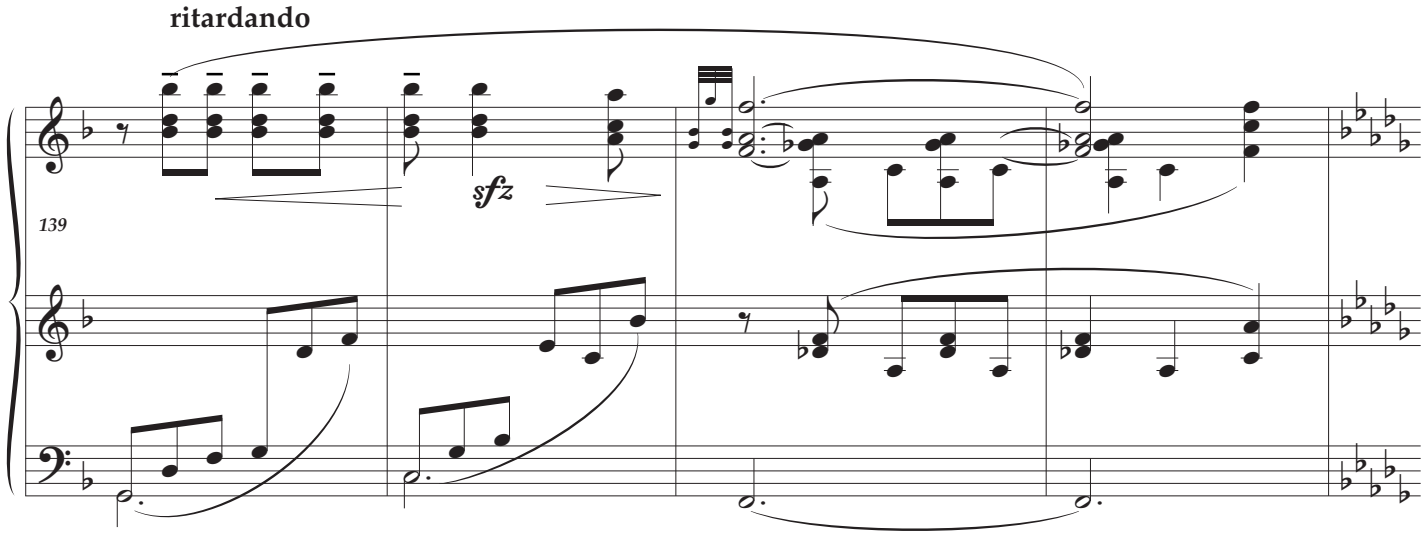

2
m.s.
mf
pp
107
m.s.
pp
111
sempre expressif
m.s.
115
con anima
sfz
sfz
pp
119

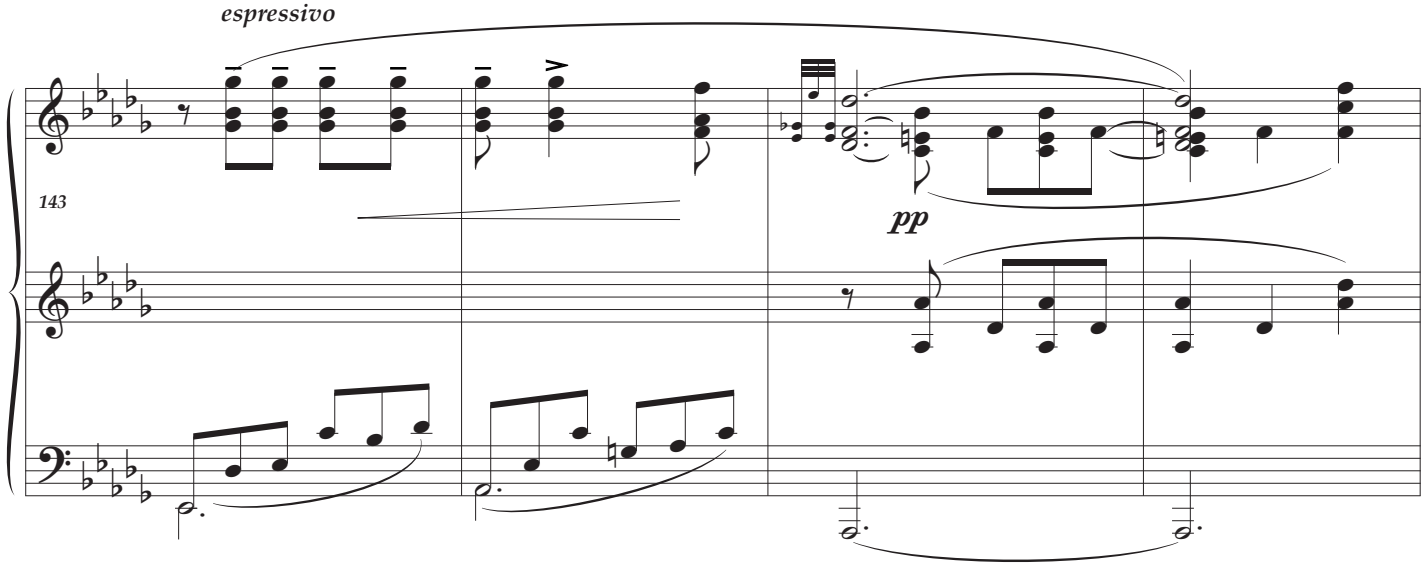

m.s.
123
f
m.d.

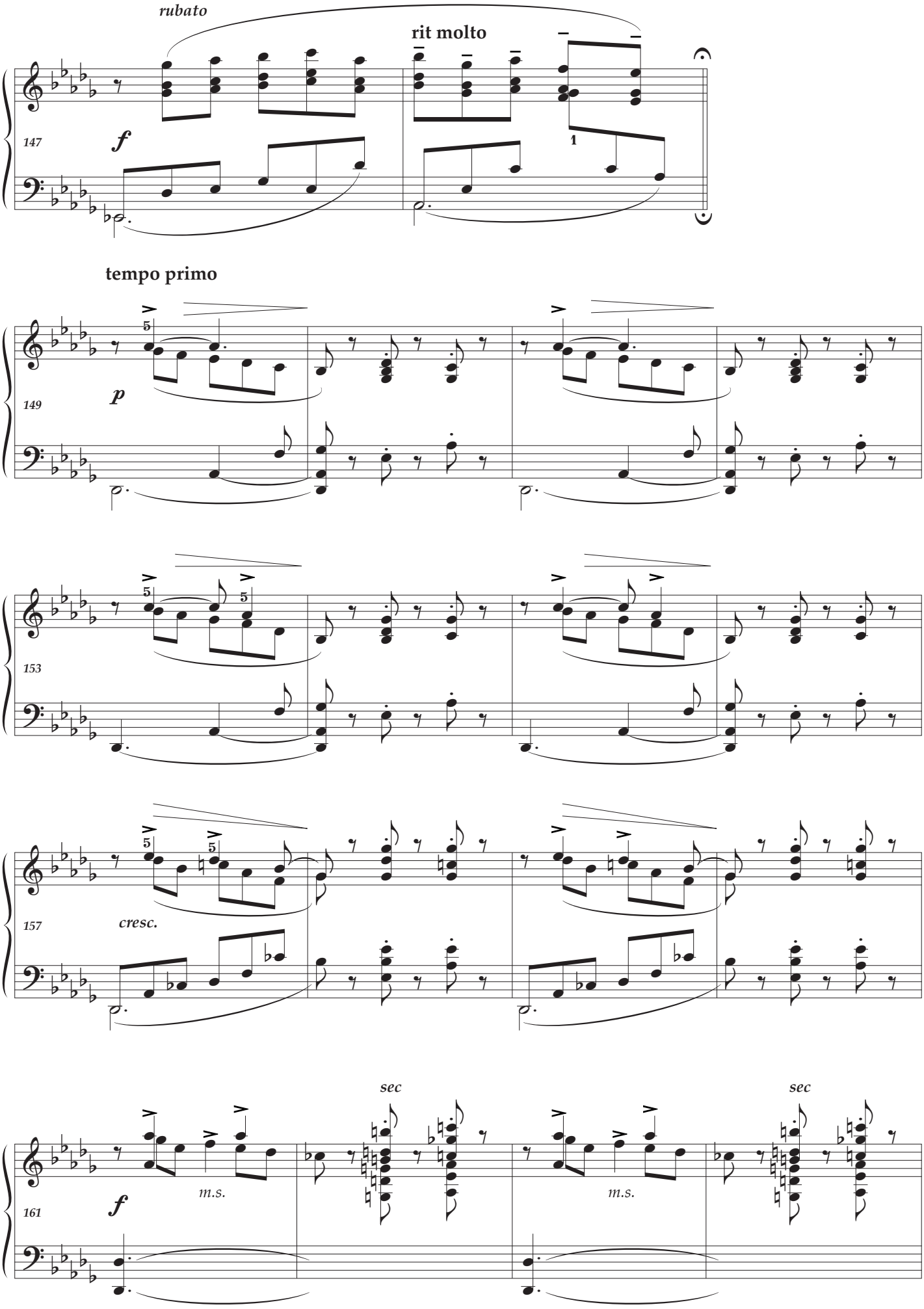

m.s.
127
p
mf
pp
m.d.

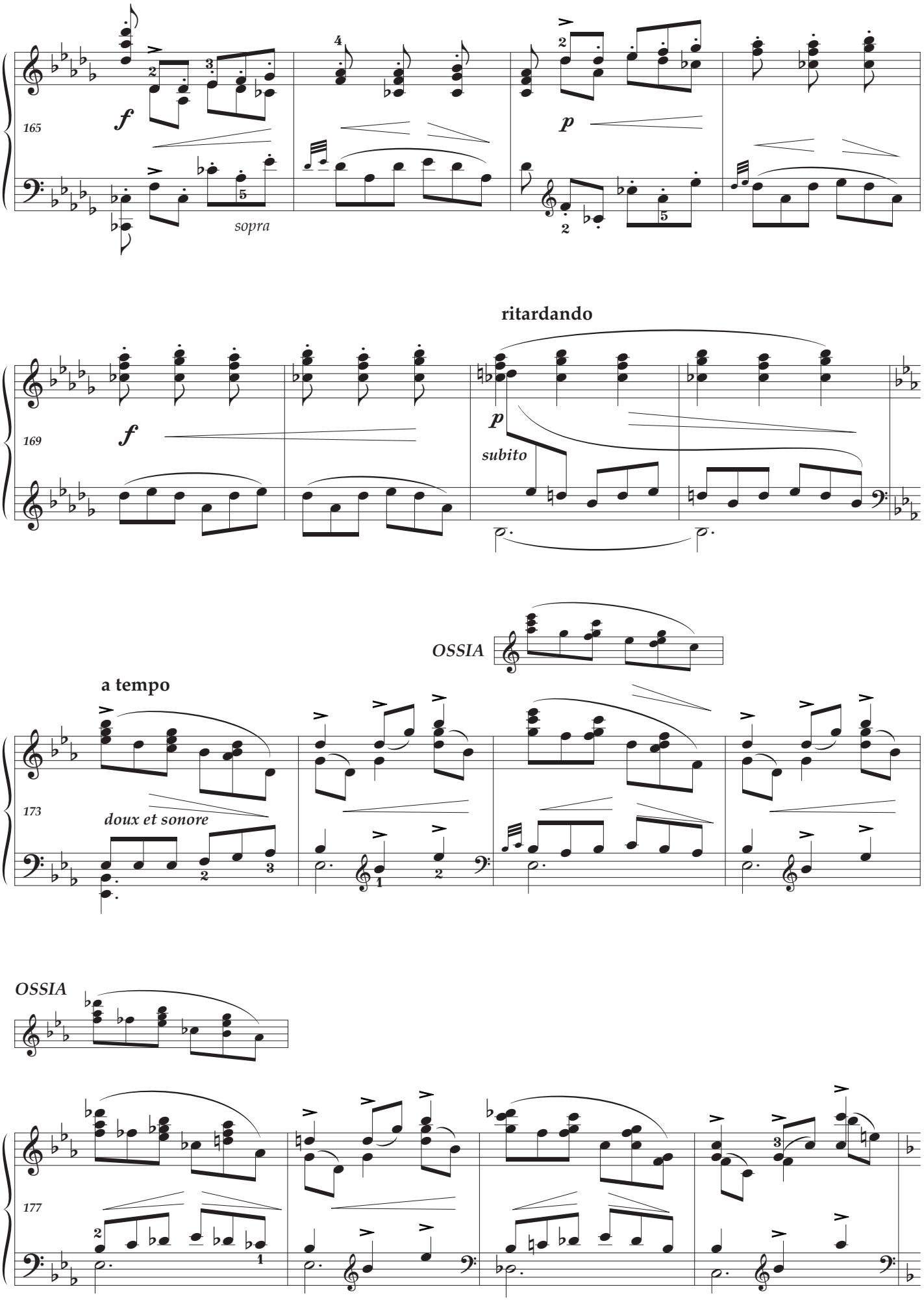

poco rubato
m.s.
131
sfz
pp
m.d.

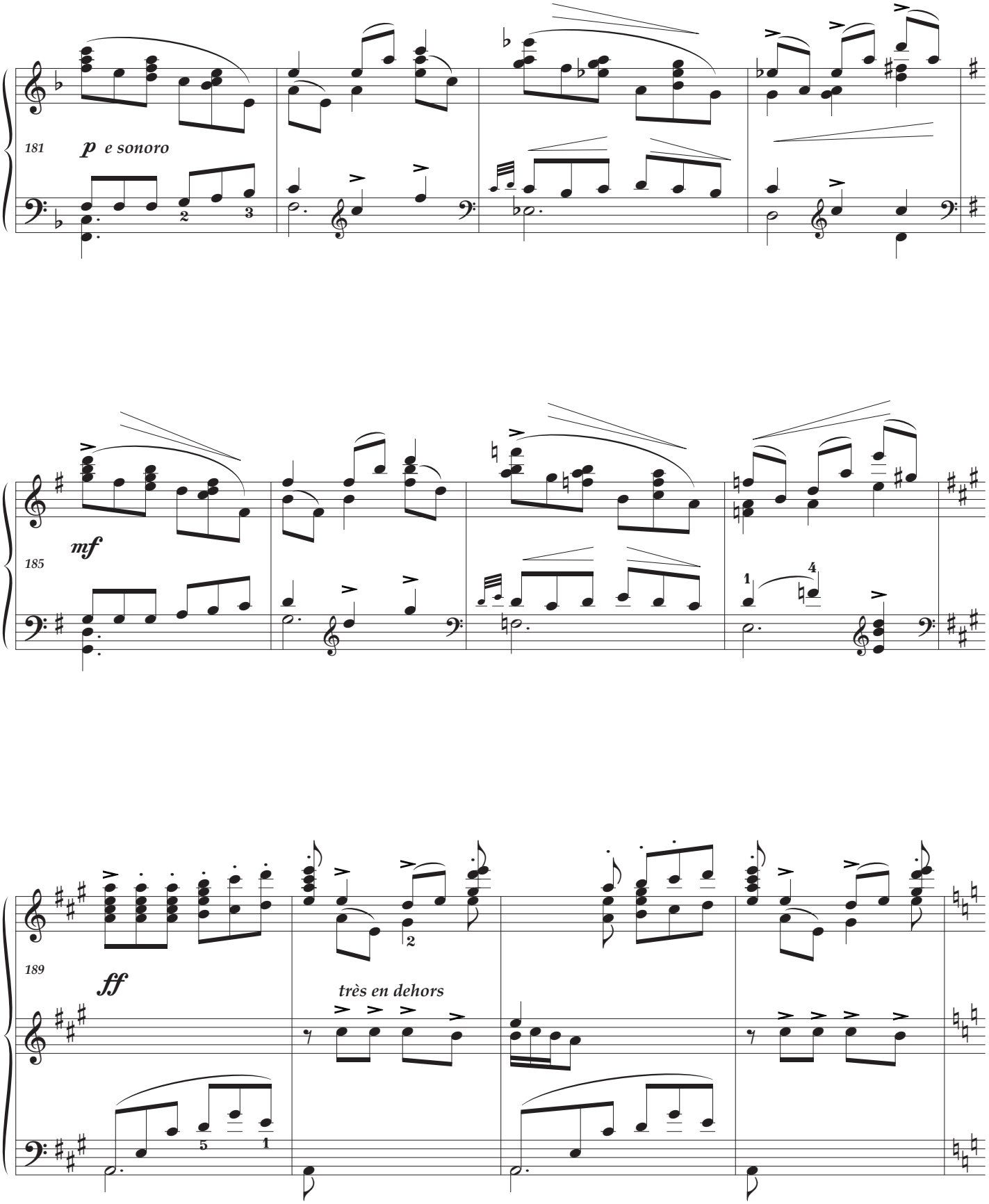

dolcissimo
135
sfz

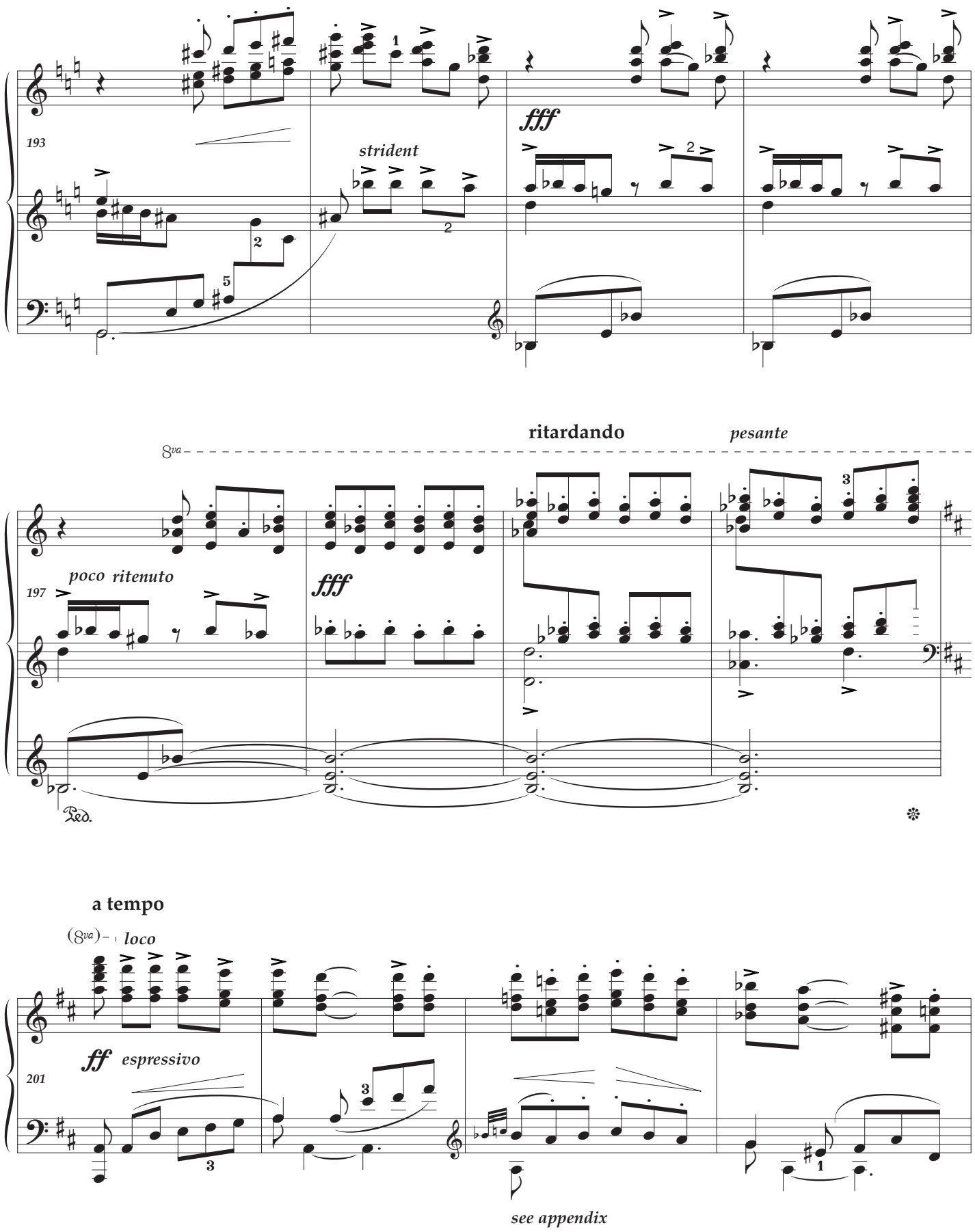

ritardando
139
sfz

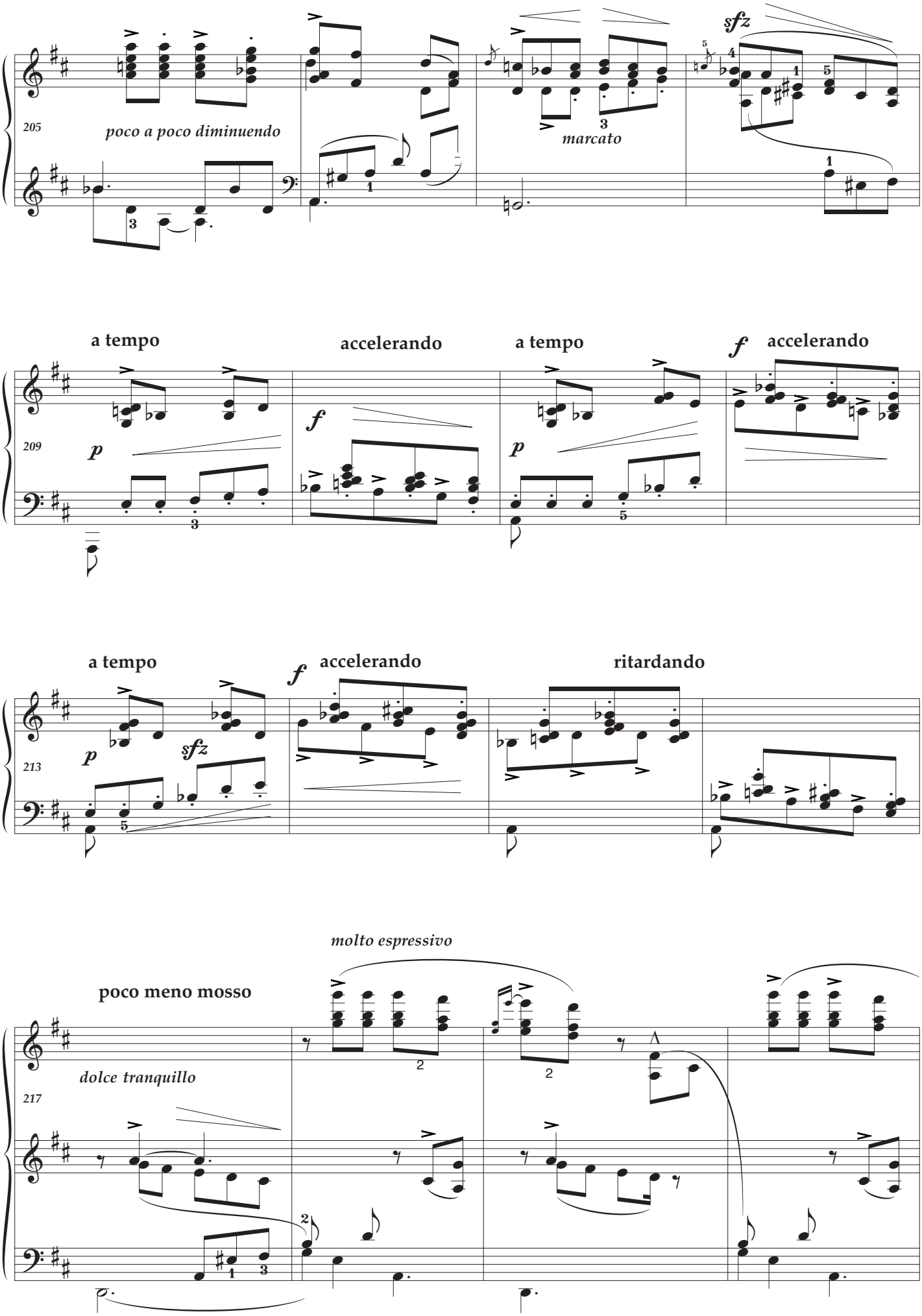

espressivo
143
pp

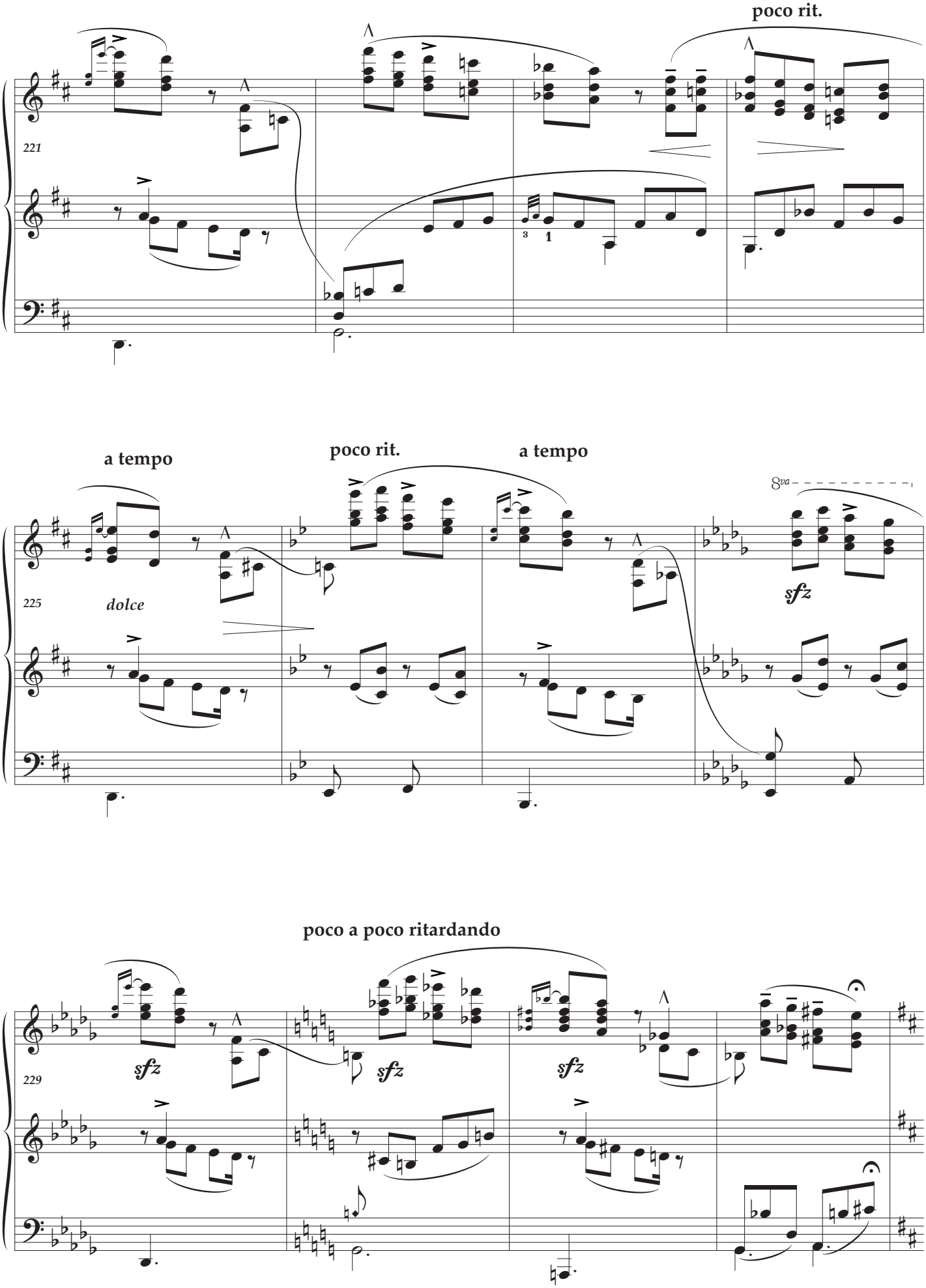

rubato
rit molto
147
f
1
tempo primo
149
p
153
157
cresc.
sec
sec
161
f
m.s.
m.s.

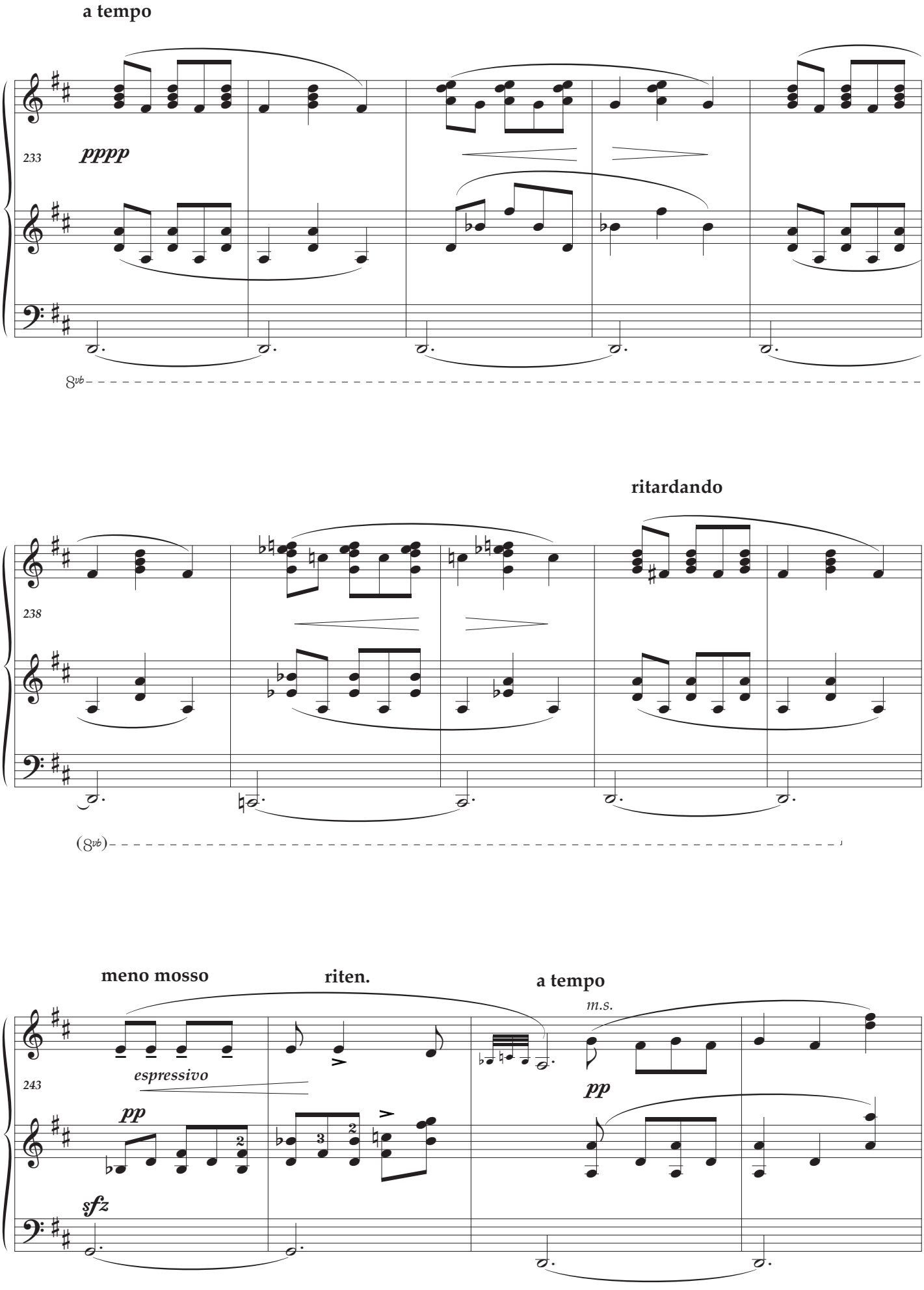

165
f
sopra
p
169
f
ritardando
p
subito
OSSIA
a tempo
173
doux et sonore
OSSIA
177

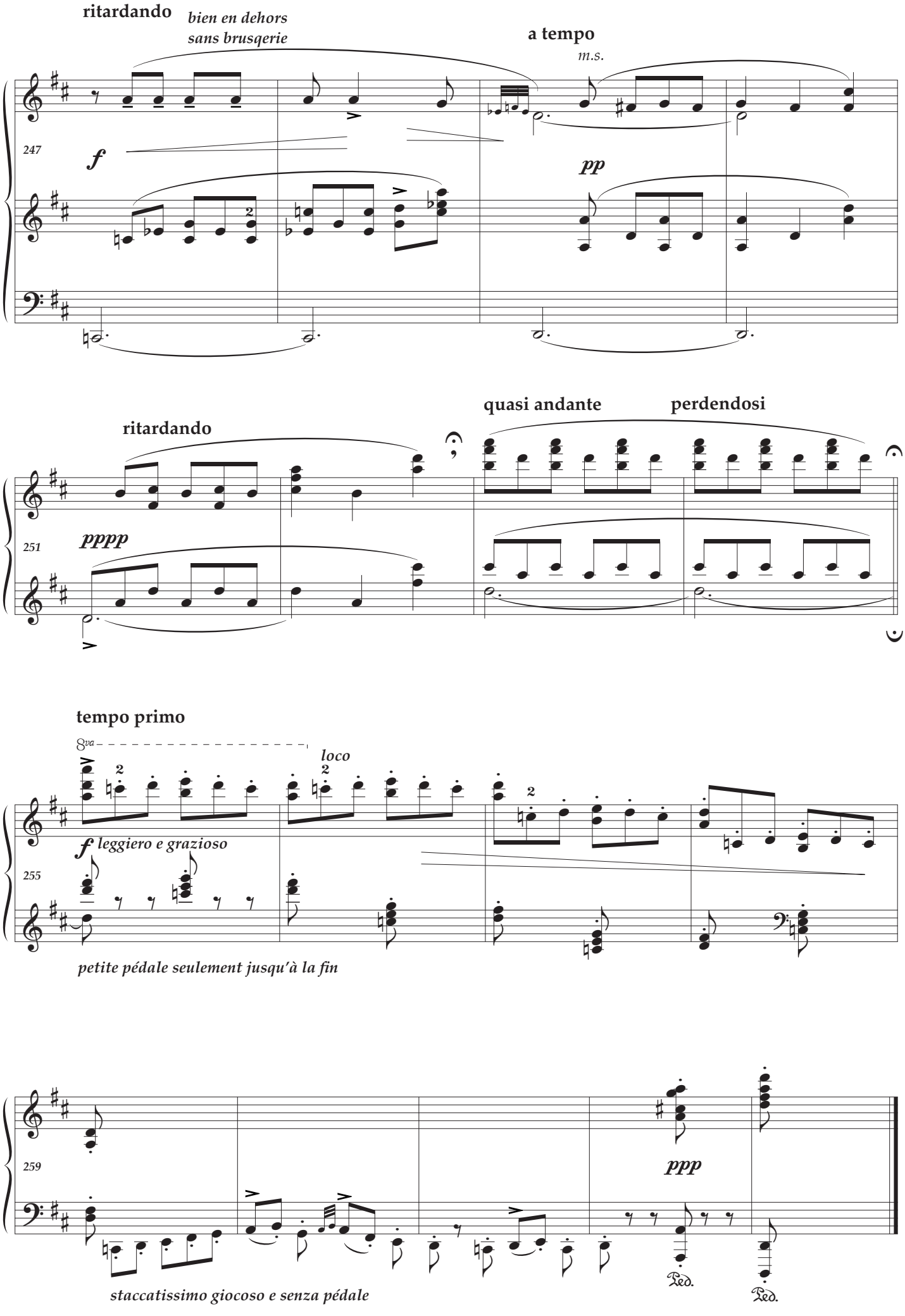

181
p e sonoro
185
mf
189
ff
très en dehors


193
strident
fff
ritardando
pesante
8va
197
poco ritenuto
fff
Ped.
a tempo
(8va) loco
201
ff espressivo
see appendix


205
poco a poco diminuendo
marcato
sfz
209
a tempo
accelerando
a tempo
f
accelerando
p
213
a tempo
f
accelerando
ritardando
p
sfz
molto espressivo
poco meno mosso
217
dolce tranquillo


poco rit.
221
a tempo
poco rit.
a tempo
8va
225
dolce
sfz
poco a poco ritardando
229
sfz
sfz
sfz


a tempo
233
pppp
8vb
ritardando
238
(8vb)
meno mosso
riten.
a tempo
m.s.
243
espressivo
pp
sfz
pp



Nice, 17 octobre 1906

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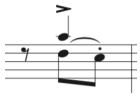
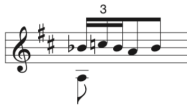
Appendix

Comments, afterthoughts & vocabulary

- There are many, many pedal signs, and an observation by Debussy can provide a pertinent object lesson: "Pedalling cannot be written down. It varies from one instrument to another, from one room, or one hall, to another." Thus I have only included those which are perhaps not evident. In this piece, there are quite a number of opportunities to use the sostenuto pedal* combined with the sustaining pedal.
- As with El Albaicín, Triana and indeed most of *Iberia*, Albeniz presented Rondeña with only one key signature. In an effort to eliminate a plethora of accidentals, this edition contains all the appropriate key signatures.
- In order to simplify the text, has been replaced throughout with 
- The time-signatures: every bar contains 6 quavers, and the metre is evident through careful beaming.
- There has been some pruning of Albeniz's multiple instructions in Italian and French.
- It is suggested that A section grace notes should be played **before** the beat, but **on** the beat for the lyrical sections.

Duration: 7'25 minutes

- **77 & 79** An early edition gives C#
- **175 & 177** An alternative RH accompaniment is offered for these 2 bars.
- **183 & 187, 232** An alternative final beat accompaniment is offered here.
- **197-200** Editorial pedal suggestion for this typical Albeniz augmented climax.
- **203** This somewhat awkward LH figure can be performed thus : 

* 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 such Steinways in the Paris *salons*. 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 widespread.

This is Albeniz commenting 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".

sec et précis	crips and precise
gracieux	graceful
vibrant	resonant
bien martelé et canaille	well articulated and mischievous
bien marqué et léger	well marked and light
bien rythmé	rhythmical
mais sonore	but with full tone
très en dehors	much to the fore
strident	raucous
sans brusquerie	without abruptness
petite pédale seulement jusqu'à la fin	use only the soft pedal until the end