Sergei RACHMANINOV

PRELUDES

Opus 32 N° 9 A major

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Musical Health Warning : please be aware that these editions are definitely not urtext and should be consulted together with a traditional version. They have been devised purely to help solve musical and technical problems at the piano.

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Sergei RACHMANINOV

1873 - 1943

PRELUDE Opus 32 N° 9 A major

The composition of 24 preludes covering all the major and minor keys is a huge challenge and Rachmaninov's contribution was spread over 20 years. In spite of the demands of an active and successful stage career at the piano and on the podium, with limited time for composing, between August and September 1910 he rapidly completed thirteen for opus 32. These tone poems created in his middle years reveal an even more improvisatory style, often with a distinctive identity and no precise form. Unlike opus 23, they are without dedication.

At the age of 19 his celebrated C♯ minor prelude gained so much success that his fans would not allow him to leave the stage unless he performed it, yet again, as an encore. He believed that any of the 23

preludes following this youthful first essay in the genre were far superior, although one must admit that he had certainly hit upon a unique formula to enthuse his audiences. However, the "Bells of Moscow" would cause him intense irritation.

Russians love an operatic bass and this prelude, composed in August 1910, is built over a deep and continuous scale motif. The treble melody reminds me of the *Arietta* from Beethoven's final sonata. Some of the central voice's more unexpected dissonances have been replaced in this edition. The *più vivo quasi cadenza* in the higher register provides luminous contrast and at **58-59**, is there is a subtle allusion to *les Tuileries* (Pictures at an Exhibition) of Mussorgsky?

Given that the composer was born in 1873, an age of great artistic individuality, it is not surprising that he typically performed without wholly respecting the score. His choice of tempi is quite idiosyncratic and this edition reflects a few of the more effective deviations. Phrasing, dynamics and agogic markings have been occasionally modified and a zealous student will need to consult the original Russian Gutheil or Robert Threlfall's Boosey & Hawkes 1992 edition.

2/6 (and similar) alto ties have been removed

3/4/7/28/29 modification of text

13-14 editorial bass octaves

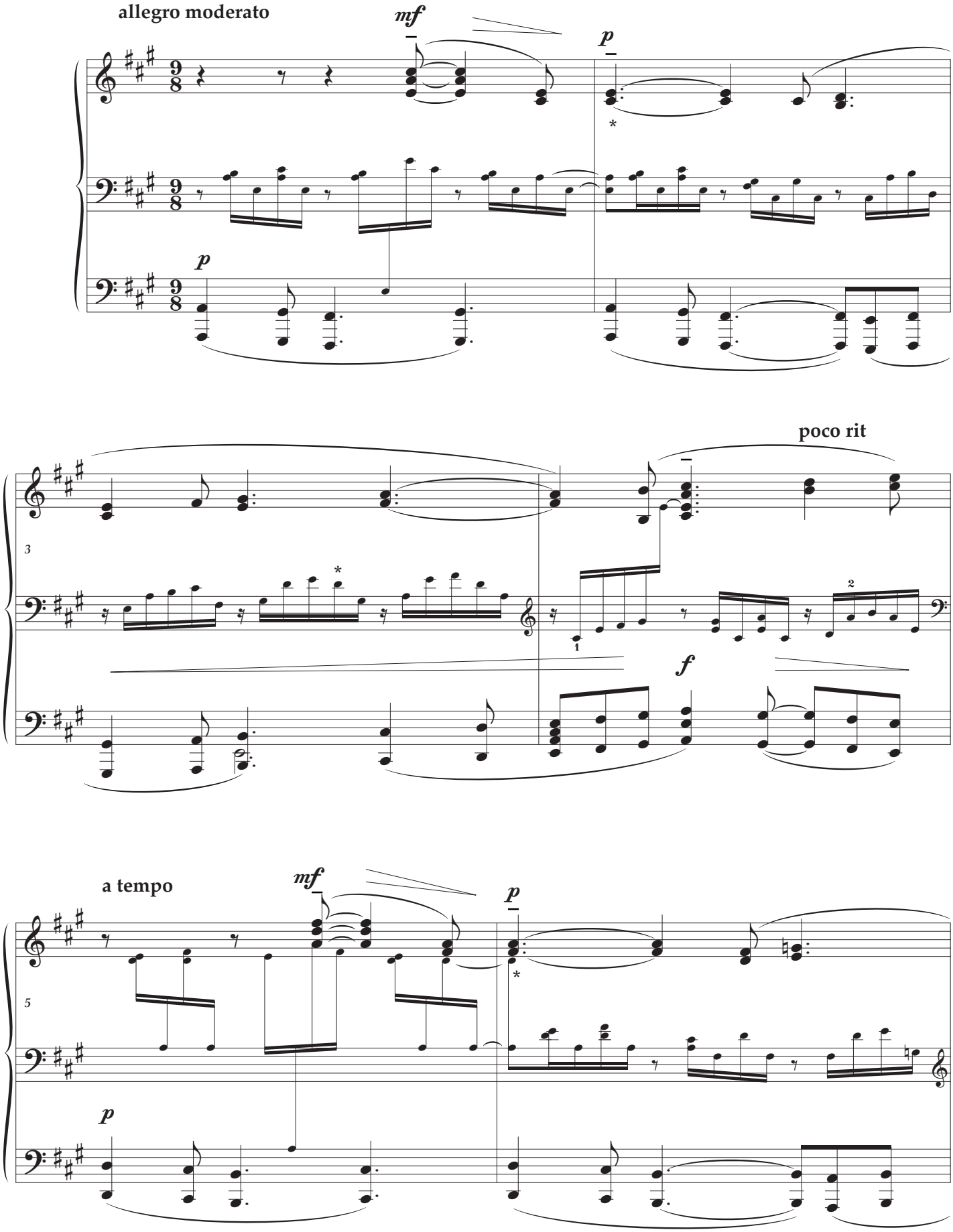
18 this B replaces a rest

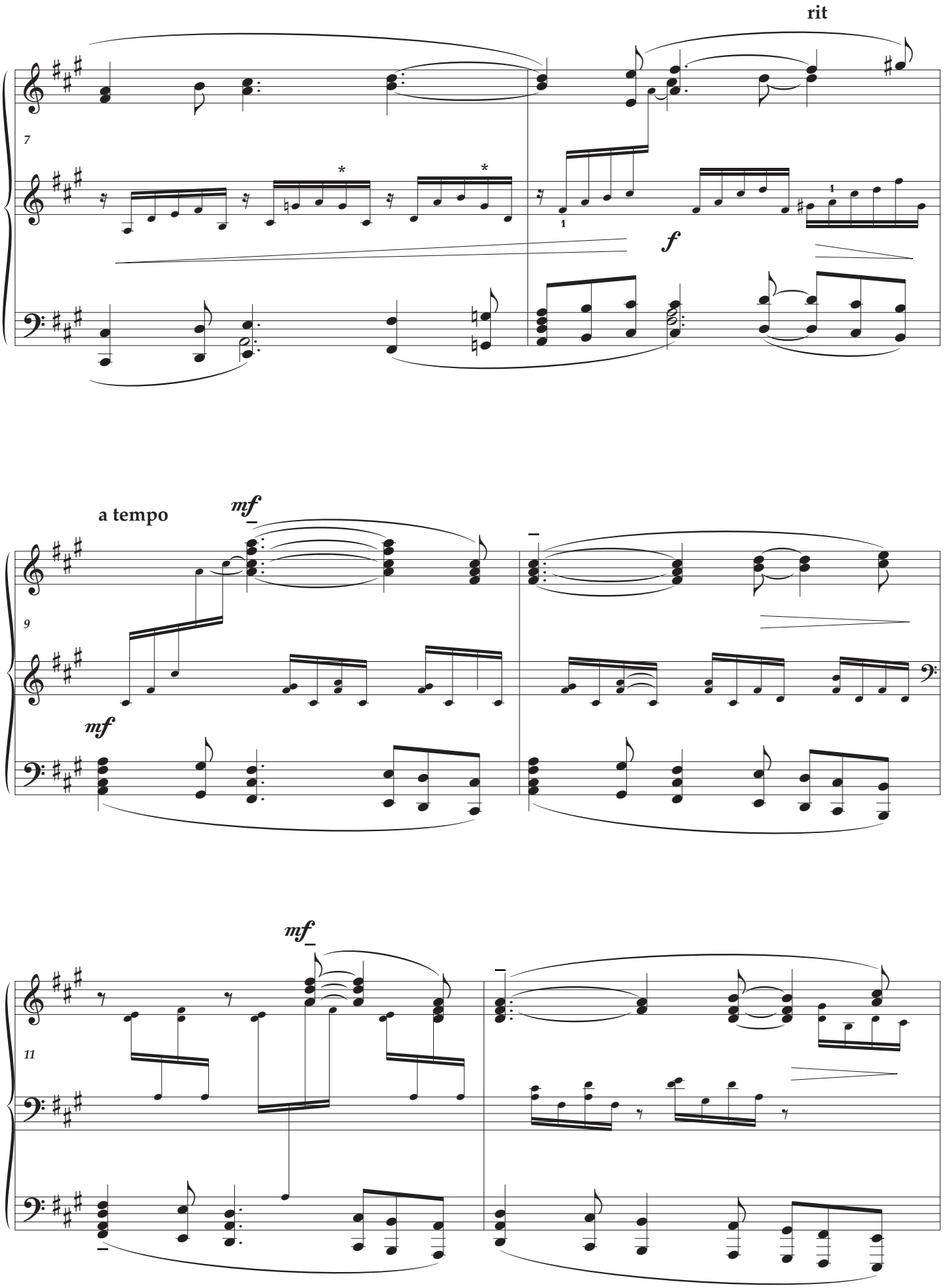
27-29 modification of time-signature and bar-lines

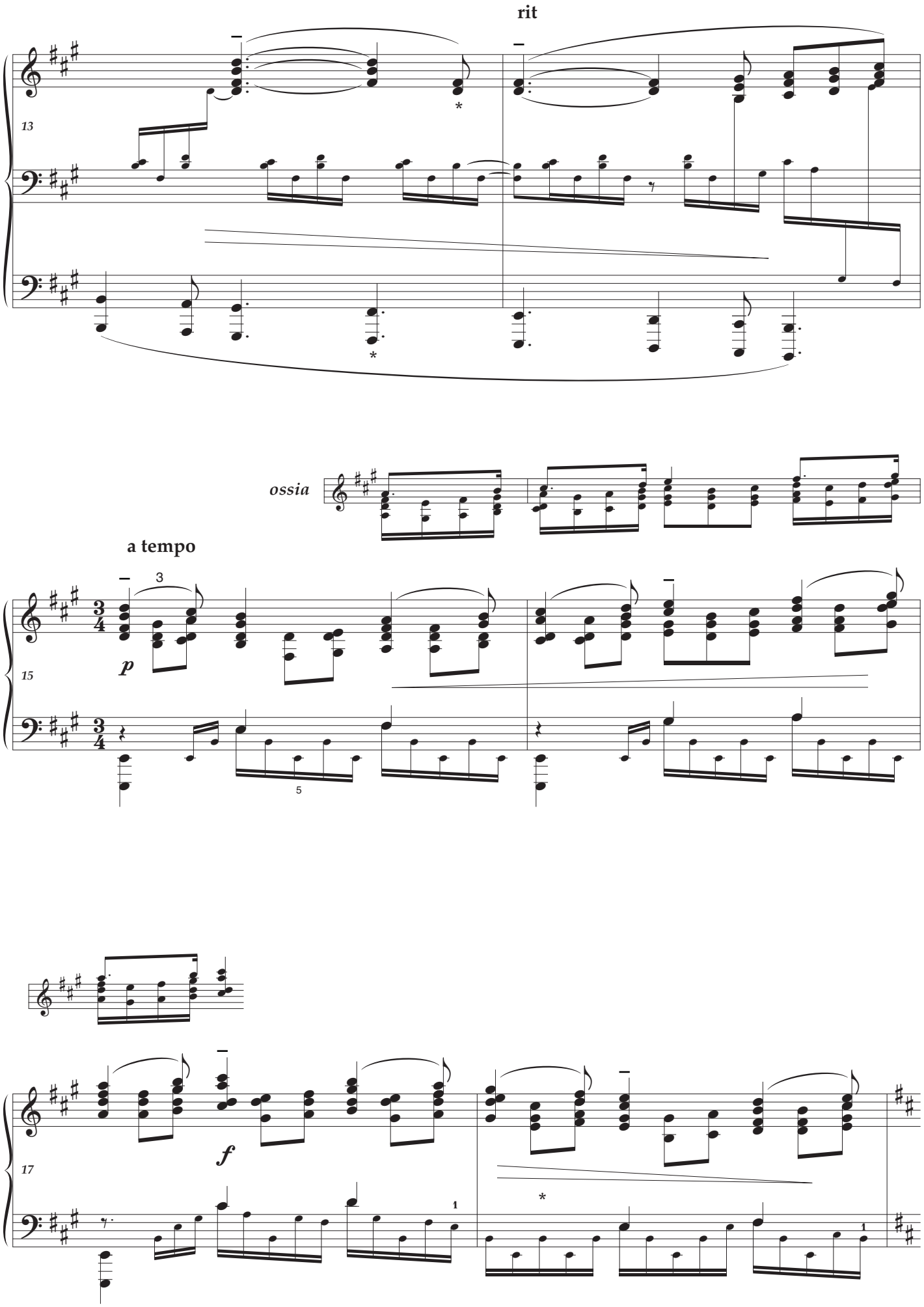
40-42 modification of time-signature and bar-lines

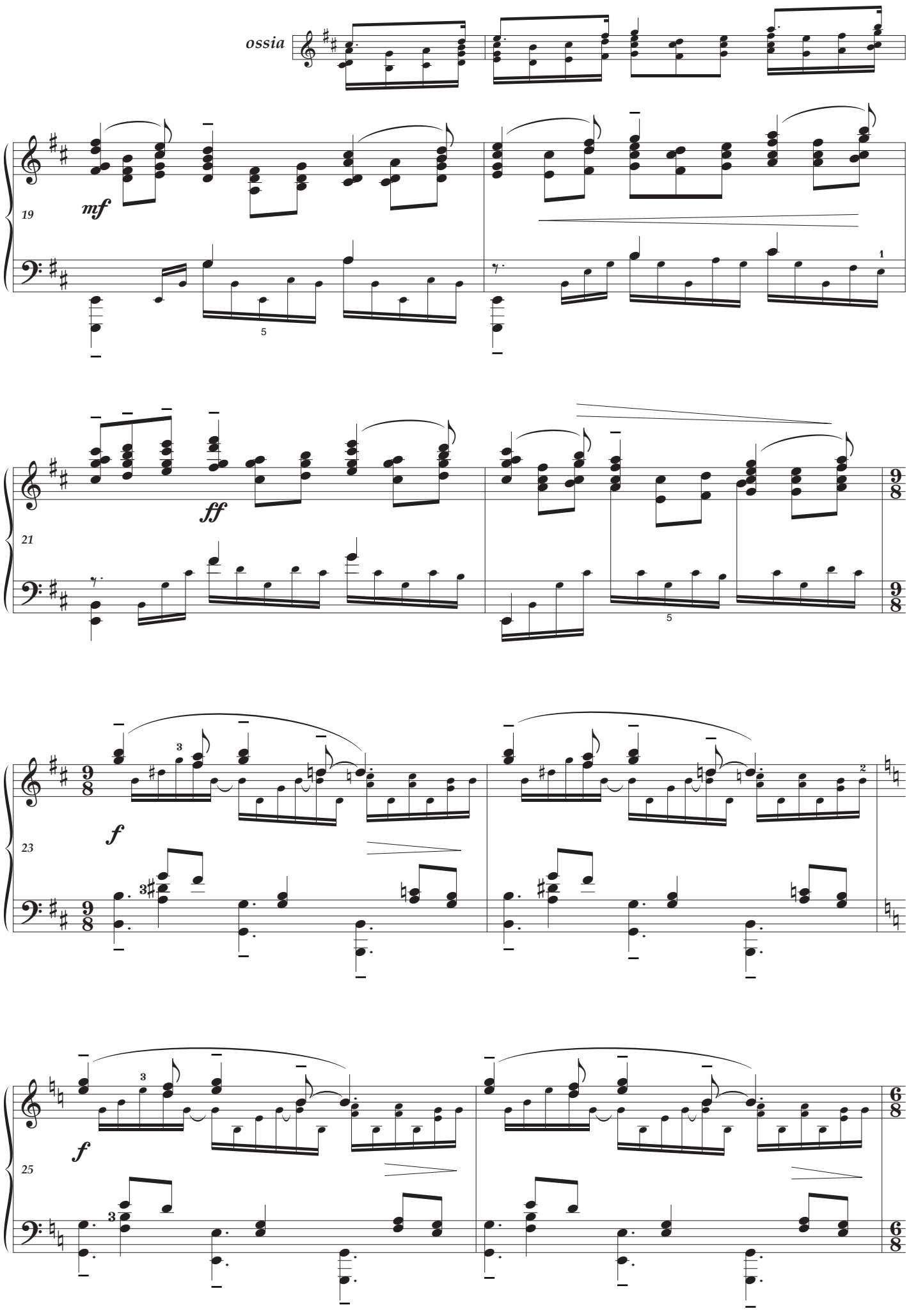
PRELUDE

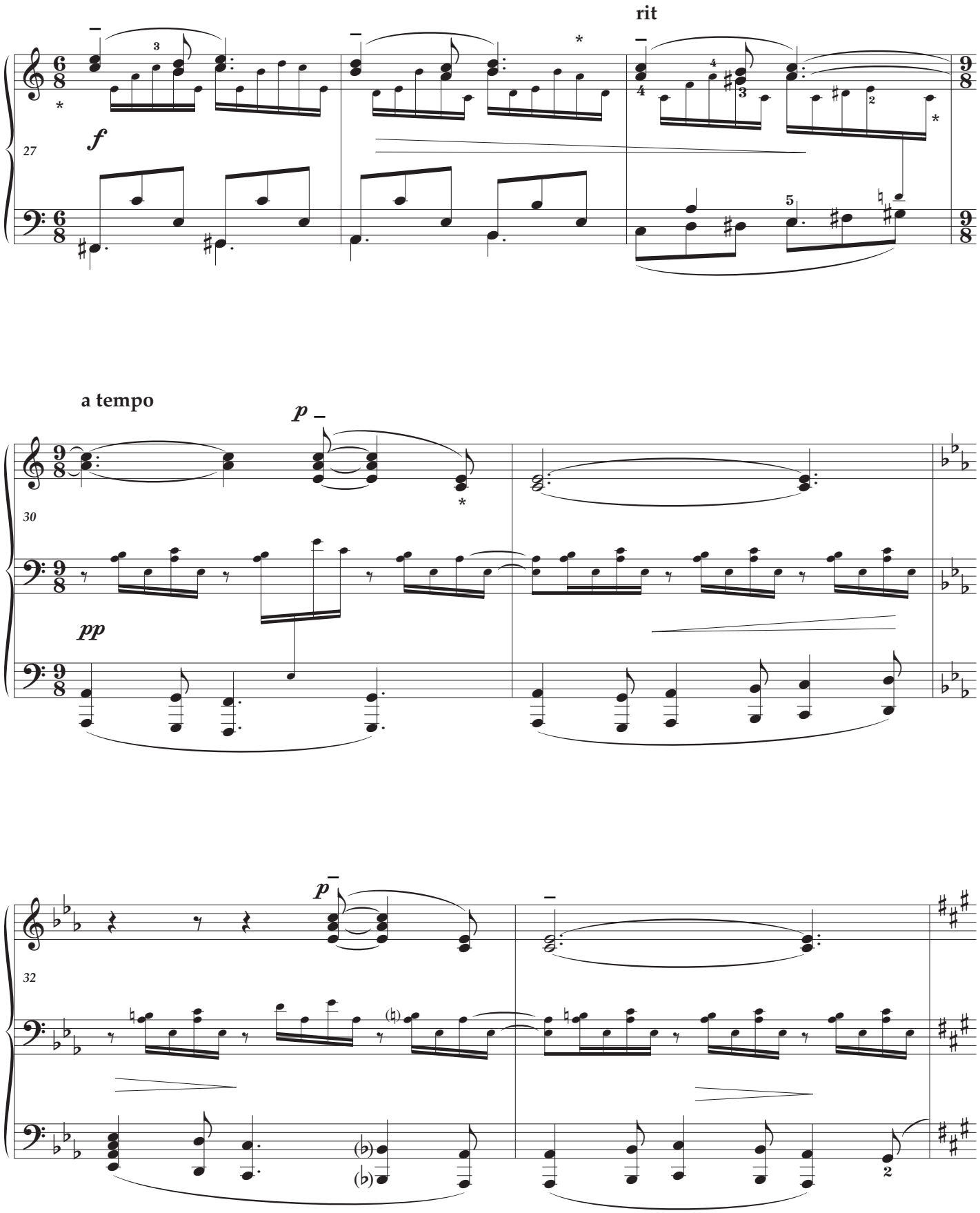
Op 32 Nº 9

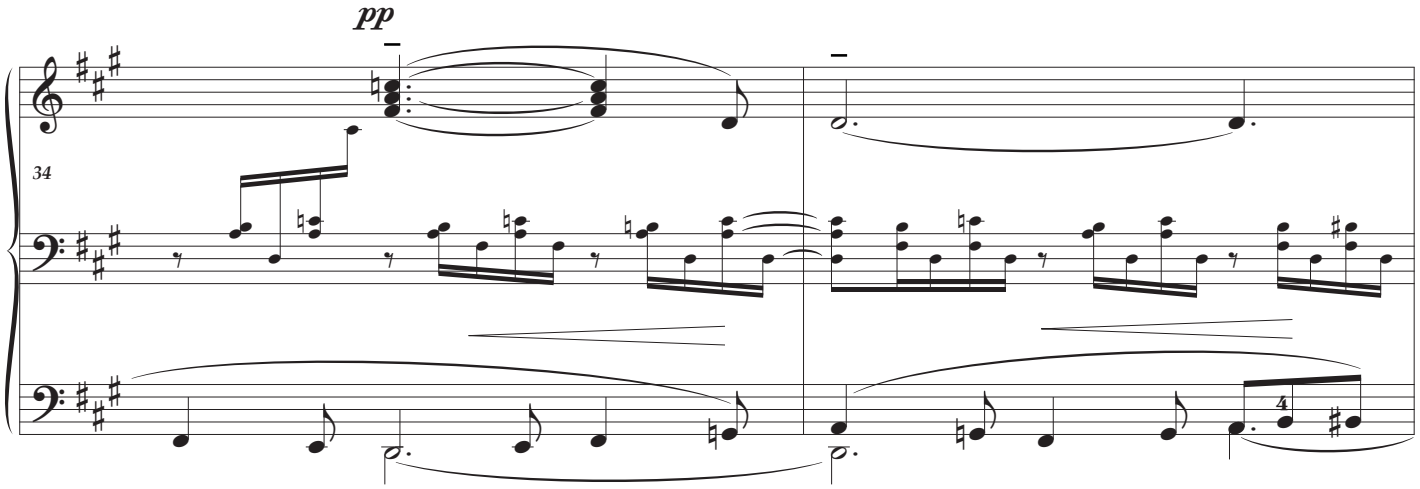


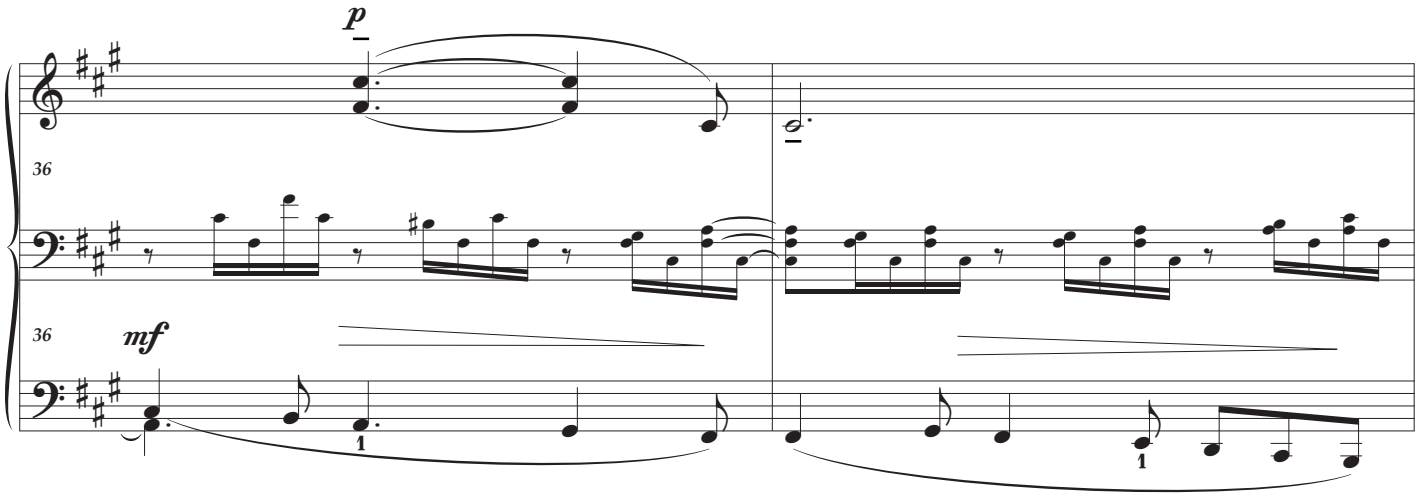

rit
7
f
a tempo
mf
9
mf
mf
11

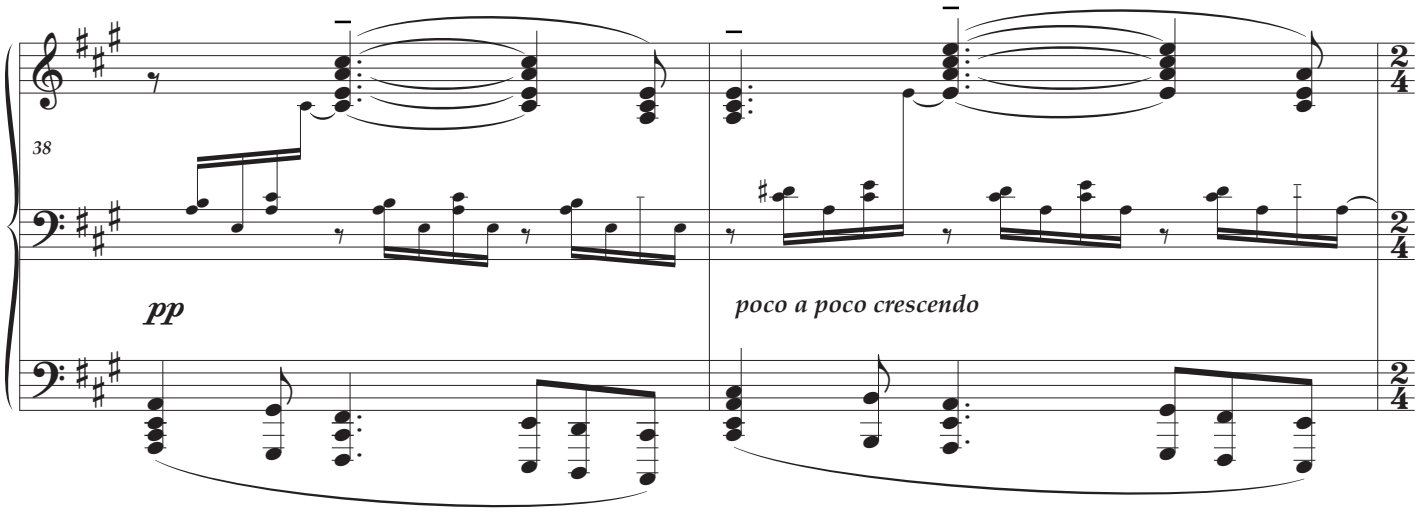

rit
13
ossia
a tempo
3
p
15
5
f
17
1
1

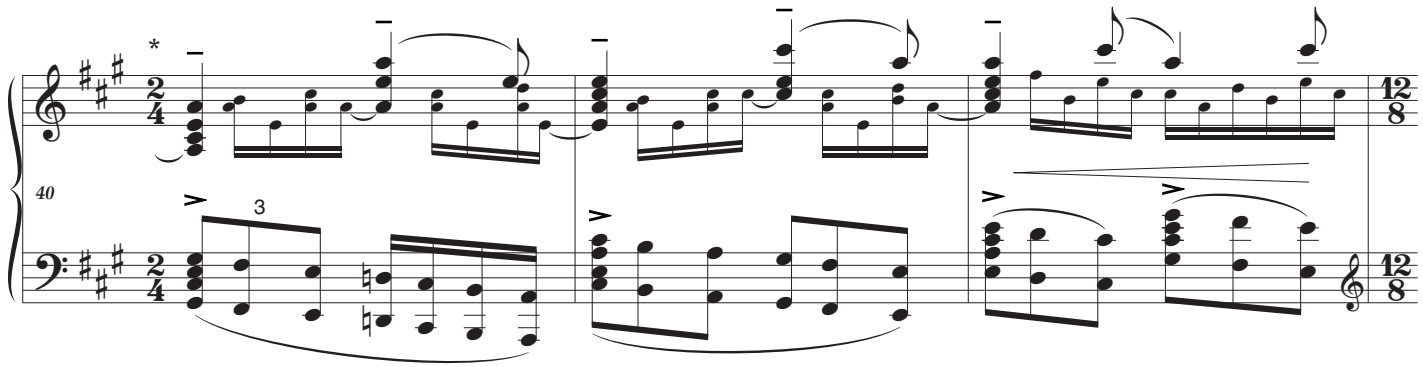

ossia
19
mf
5
1
21
ff
5
9
8
23
f
3
2
9
8
25
f
3
6
8

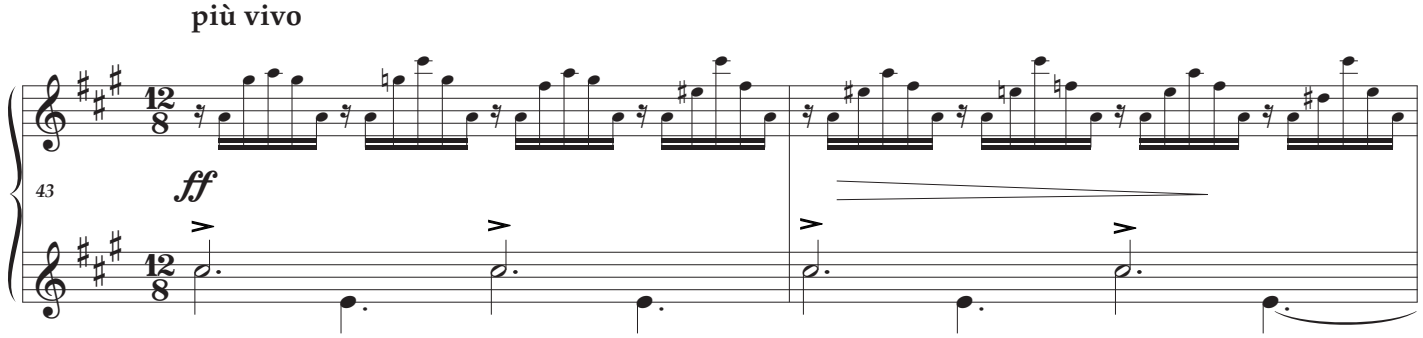

rit
27
f
a tempo
p
30
pp
p
32

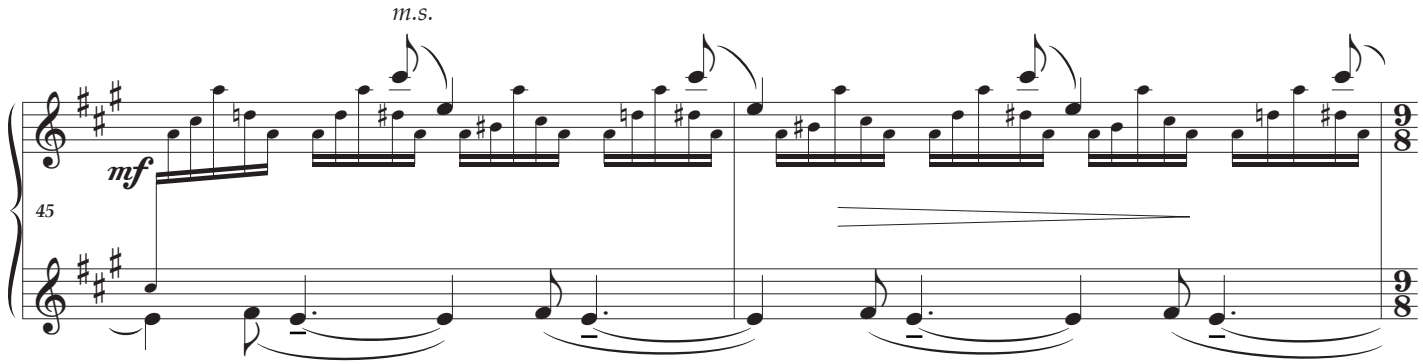

pp
34

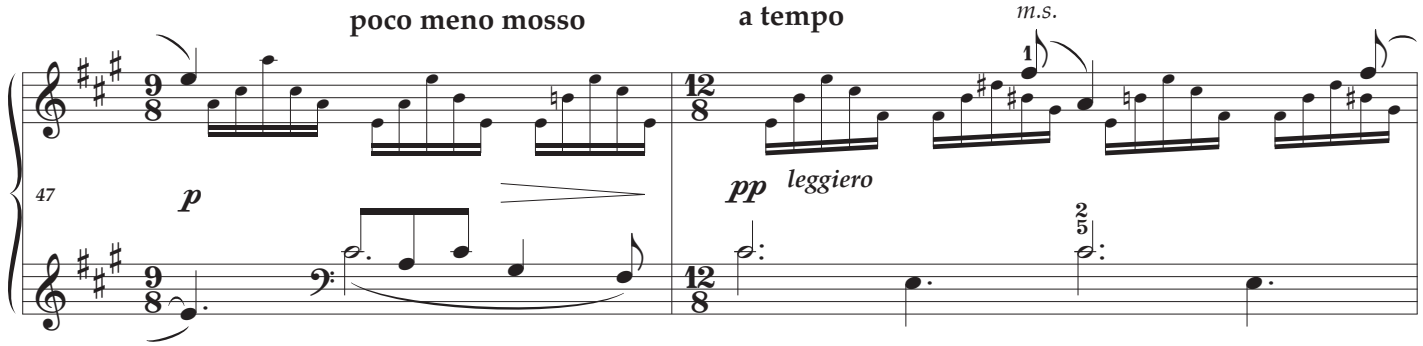

p
36
36
mf

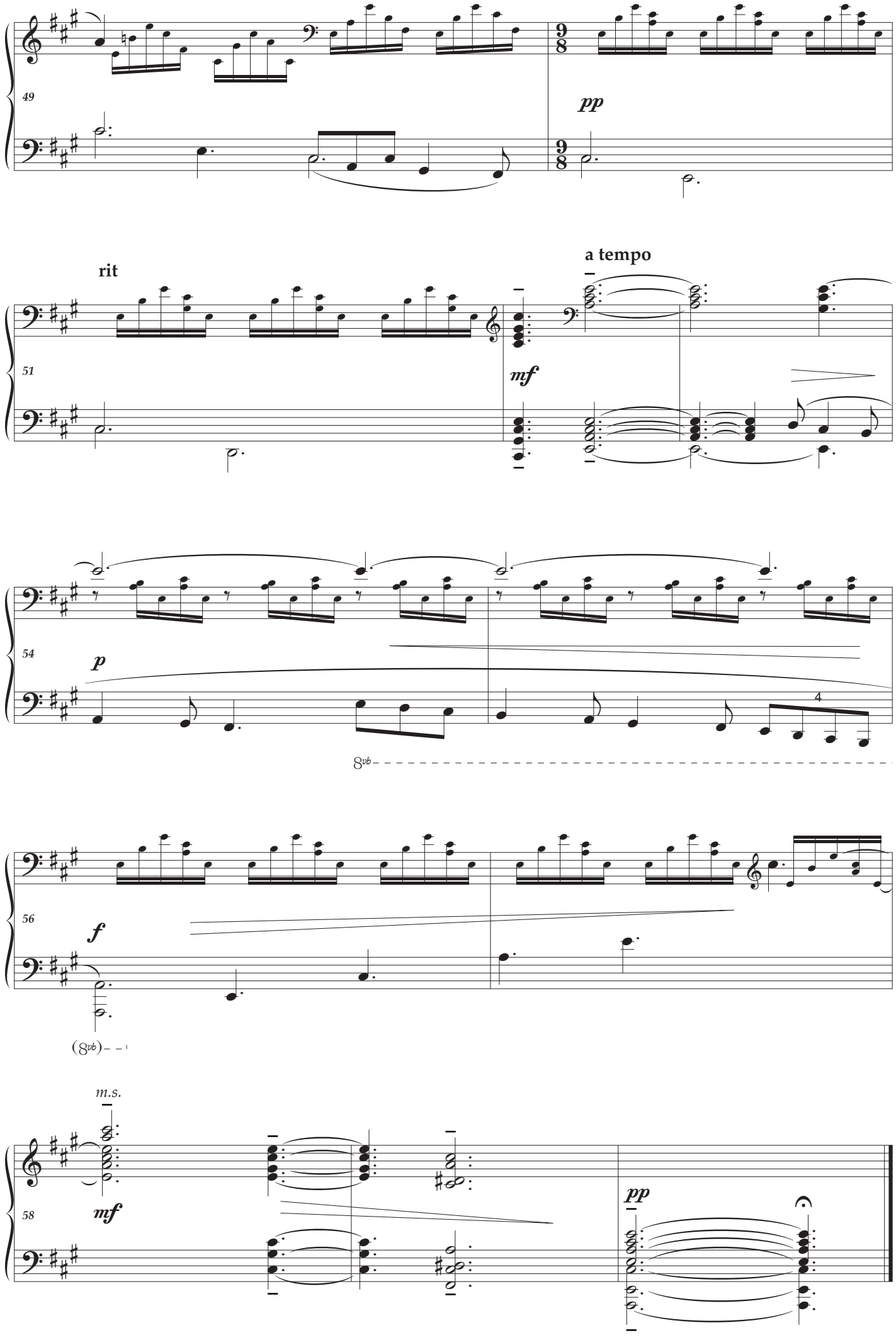

38
pp
poco a poco crescendo


40
3


più vivo
43
ff


m.s.
mf
45


poco meno mosso
a tempo
m.s.
47
p
pp
leggiero


49
pp
rit
a tempo
51
mf
54
p
8vb
4
56
f
(8vb)
m.s.
58
mf
pp

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