Sonata

for Viola and Piano

by

Alan Belkin

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My Sonata for Viola and piano was commissioned by the Jutta Puchhammer in 2006. In two movements, the work lasts about 13 minutes. Like all my instrumental music, it refers to classical forms, which however take unexpected turns. Salient moments recur, but with unexpected new continuations.

The first movement starts with a strong, rising gesture. This is mysteriously echoed in the piano, and leads to a singing, lyrical theme in the viola. A second idea, with insistent, repeated notes, follows, and then leads to another quiet, section. The mysterious character, from the opening, returns, and the work seems to be starting over. But this time the rising phrase takes a new turn. Leaving behind a long, held note, *senza vibrato,* in the viola, the piano plays quiet, harp-like arpeggios, as the viola line slowly rises. At the top of this phrase, the viola cannot resist returning to normal, expressive playing *(con vibrato)* and the piano accompanies it, with a strange, cool, wandering figure. This leads to a new, lively theme. A short transition brings back the repeated note idea, which however now grows into an insistent, emphatic coda.

The second movement has a quiet introduction. Then the same material appears in a much more vigorous character. Some contrapuntal development leads to a climax, followed by a lyrical section, derived from the introduction, which culminates in another climax. A long, mysterious middle section, in low viola and piano, eventually brings back the lyrical second theme, now more expansively. The final section begins with a quick variant of the opening material, and gradually speeds up to a broad, dramatic climax, ending the work on an affirmative note.

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Sonata for Viola and Piano

I

Alan Belkin

Molto Adagio ♩ = 40

ff *sfp*

ff *pp* *misterioso*

Adagio espressivo ♩ = 55

p

p

6

10

p *cresc.*

p *cresc.*

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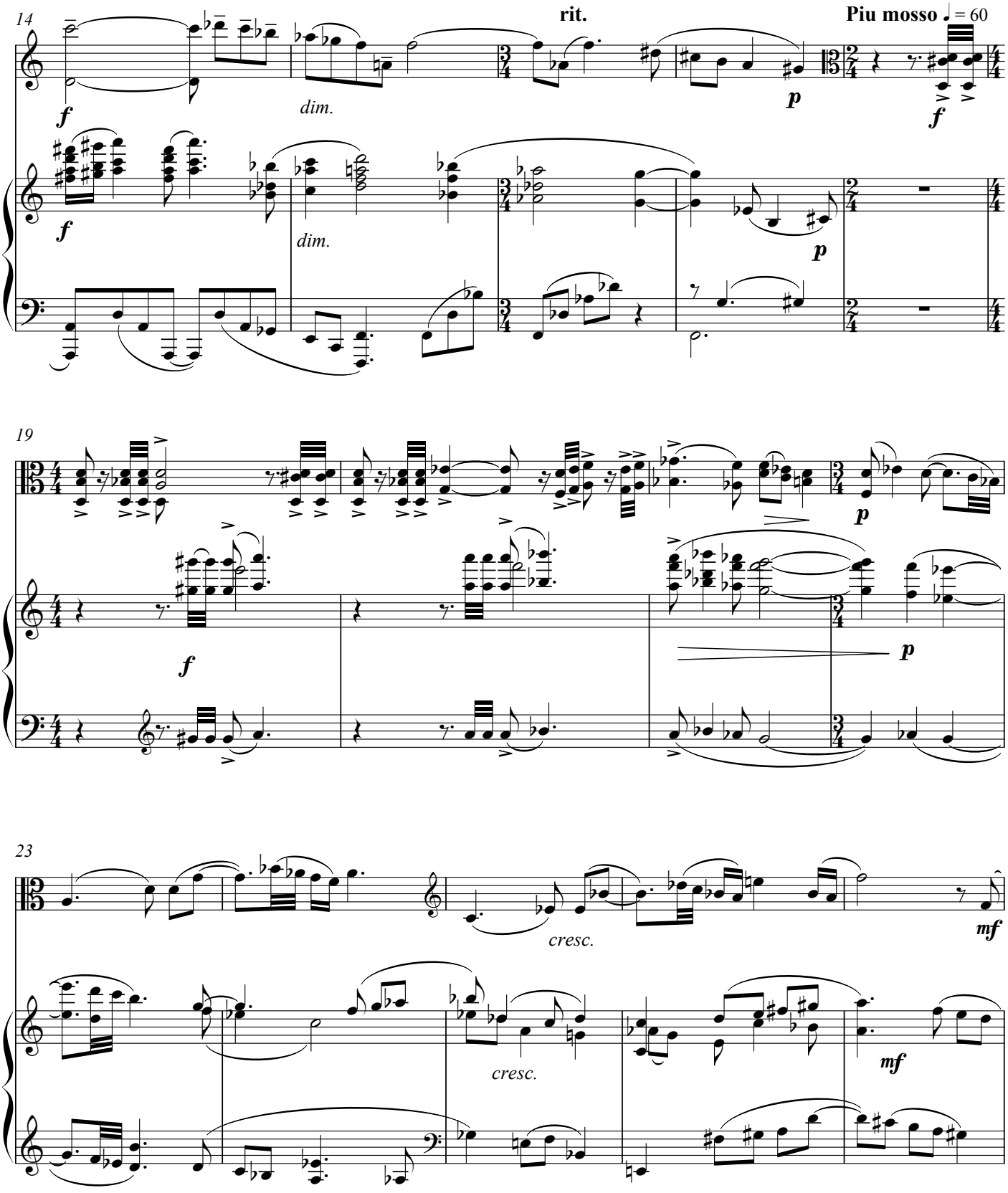
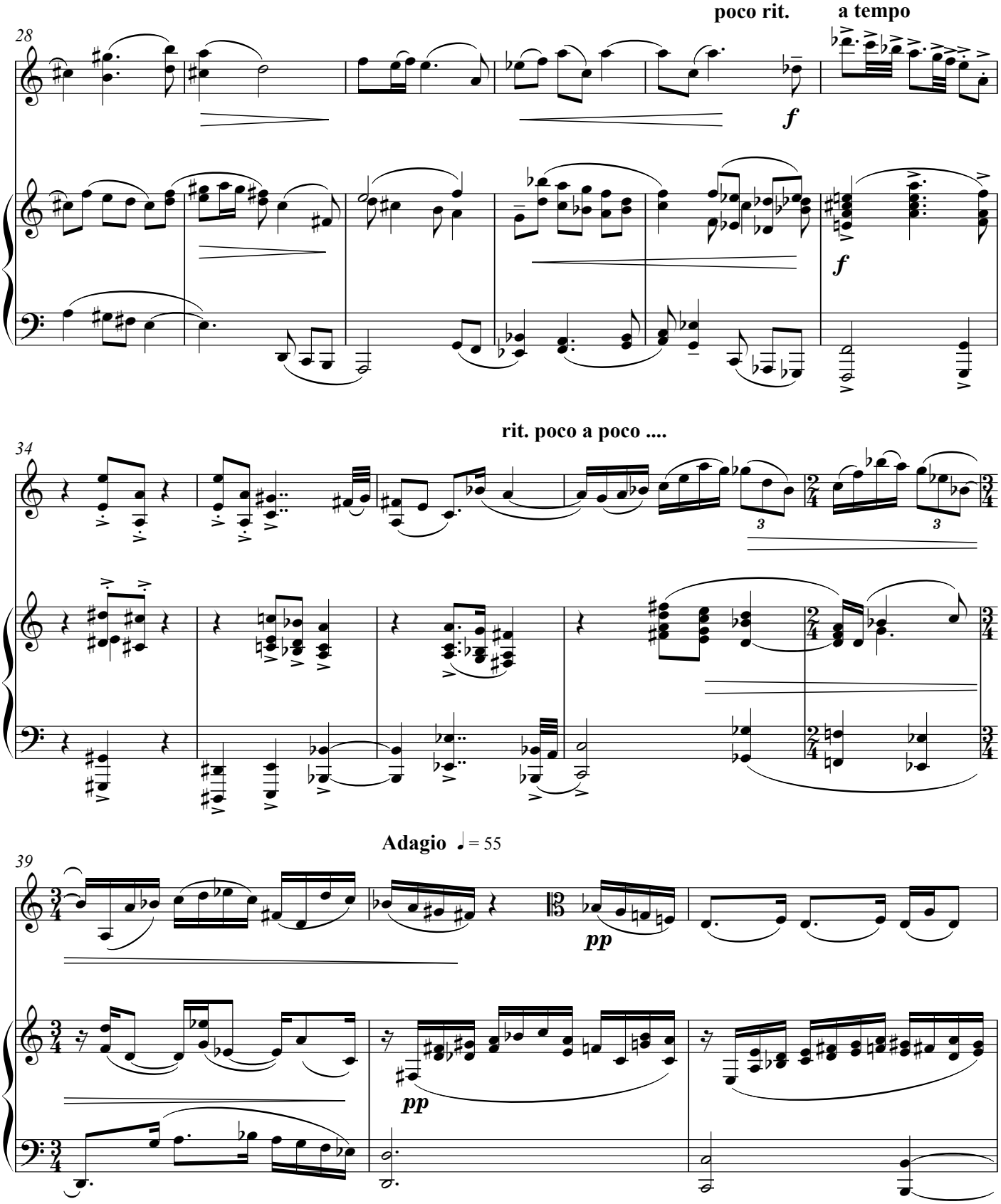
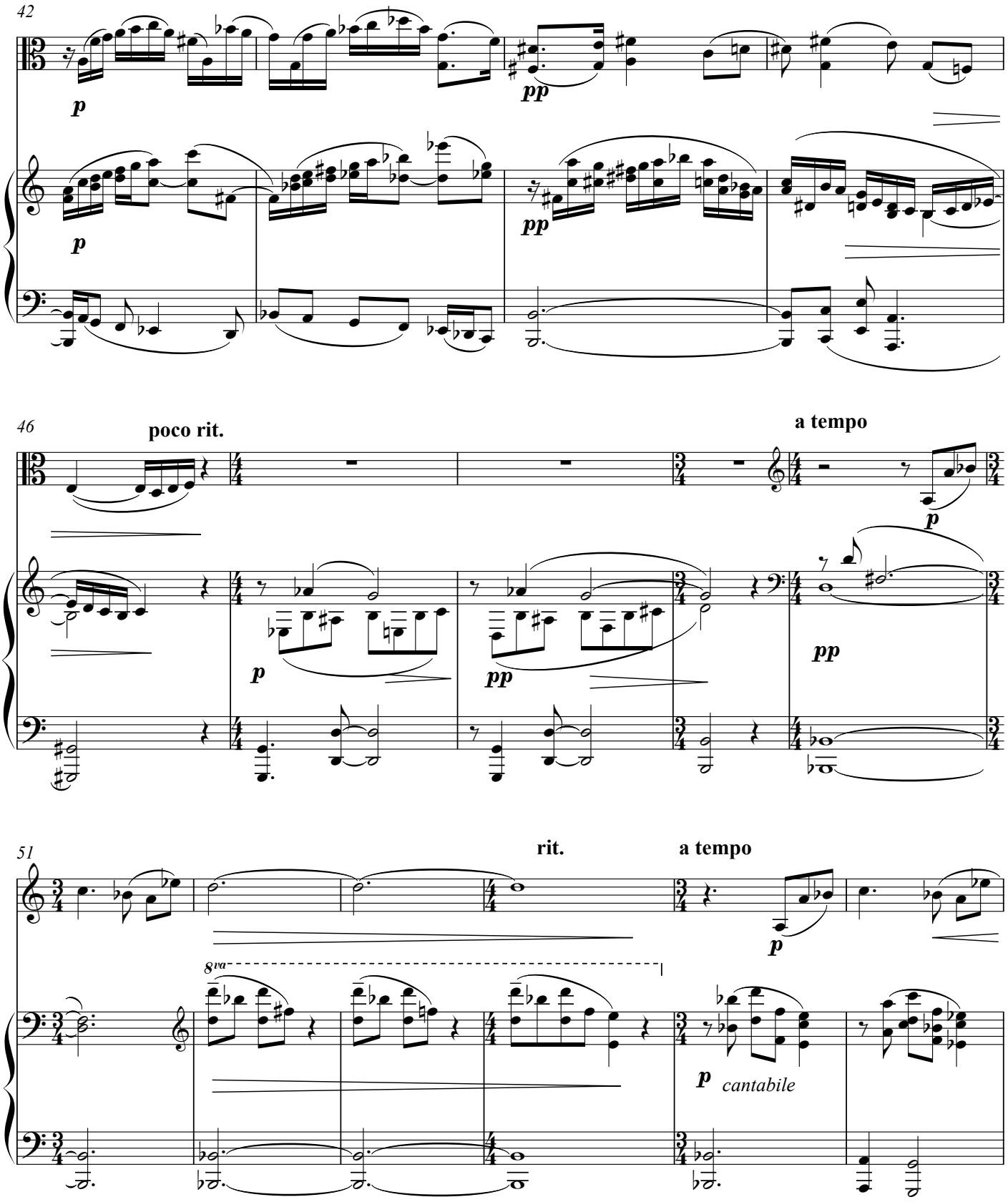
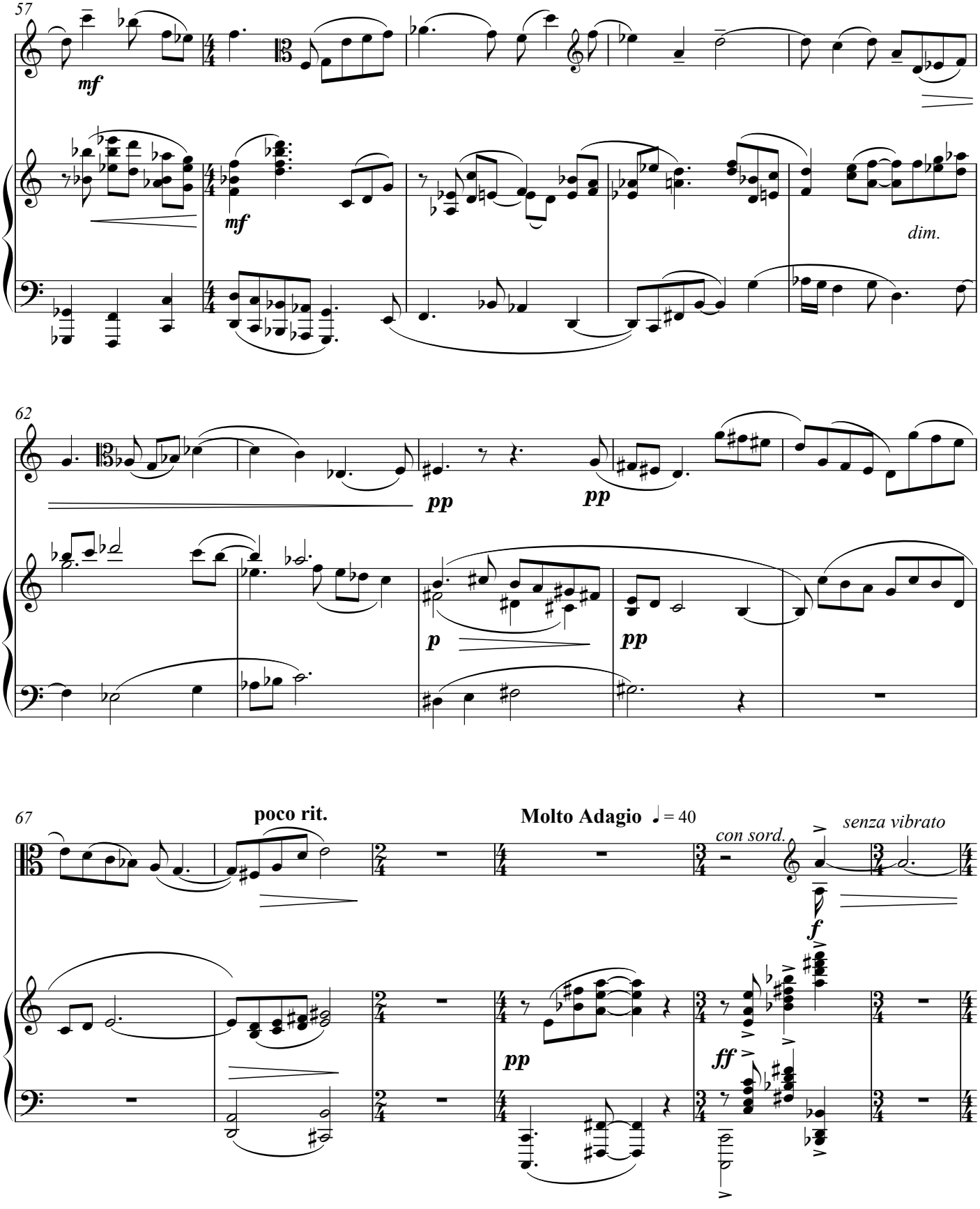
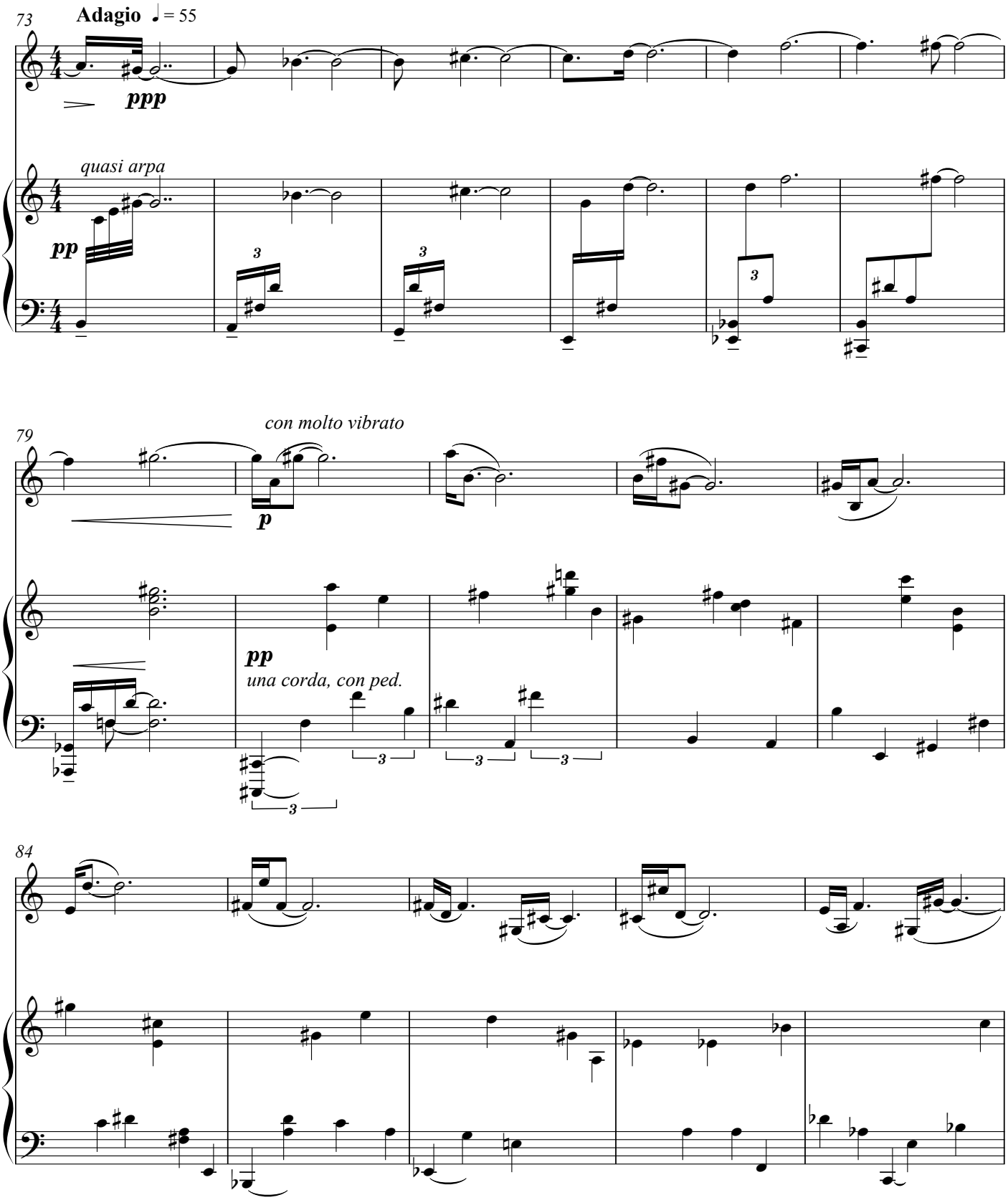
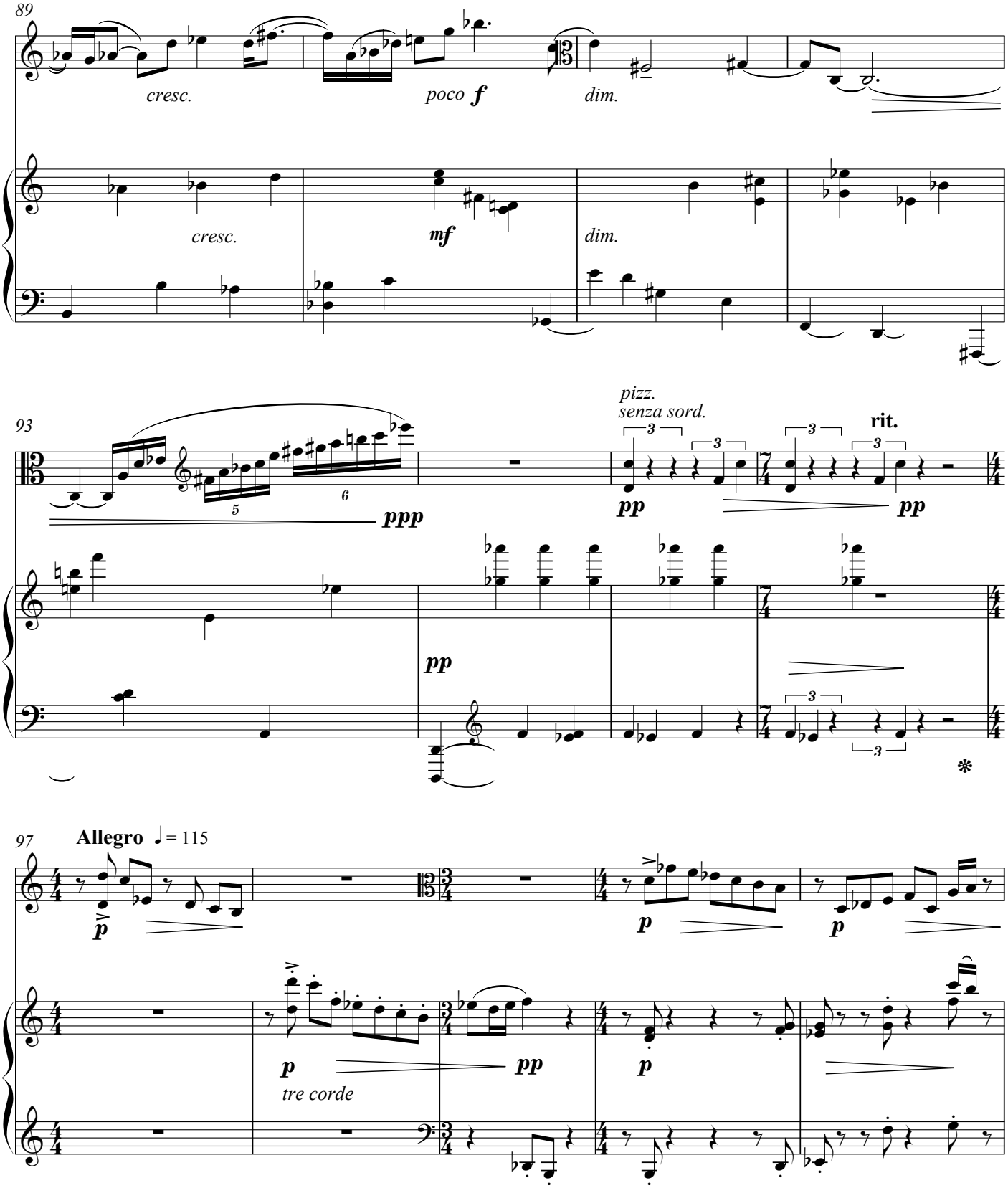

14
rit.
Piu mosso ♩ = 60
dim.
dim.
19
23
cresc.
cresc.

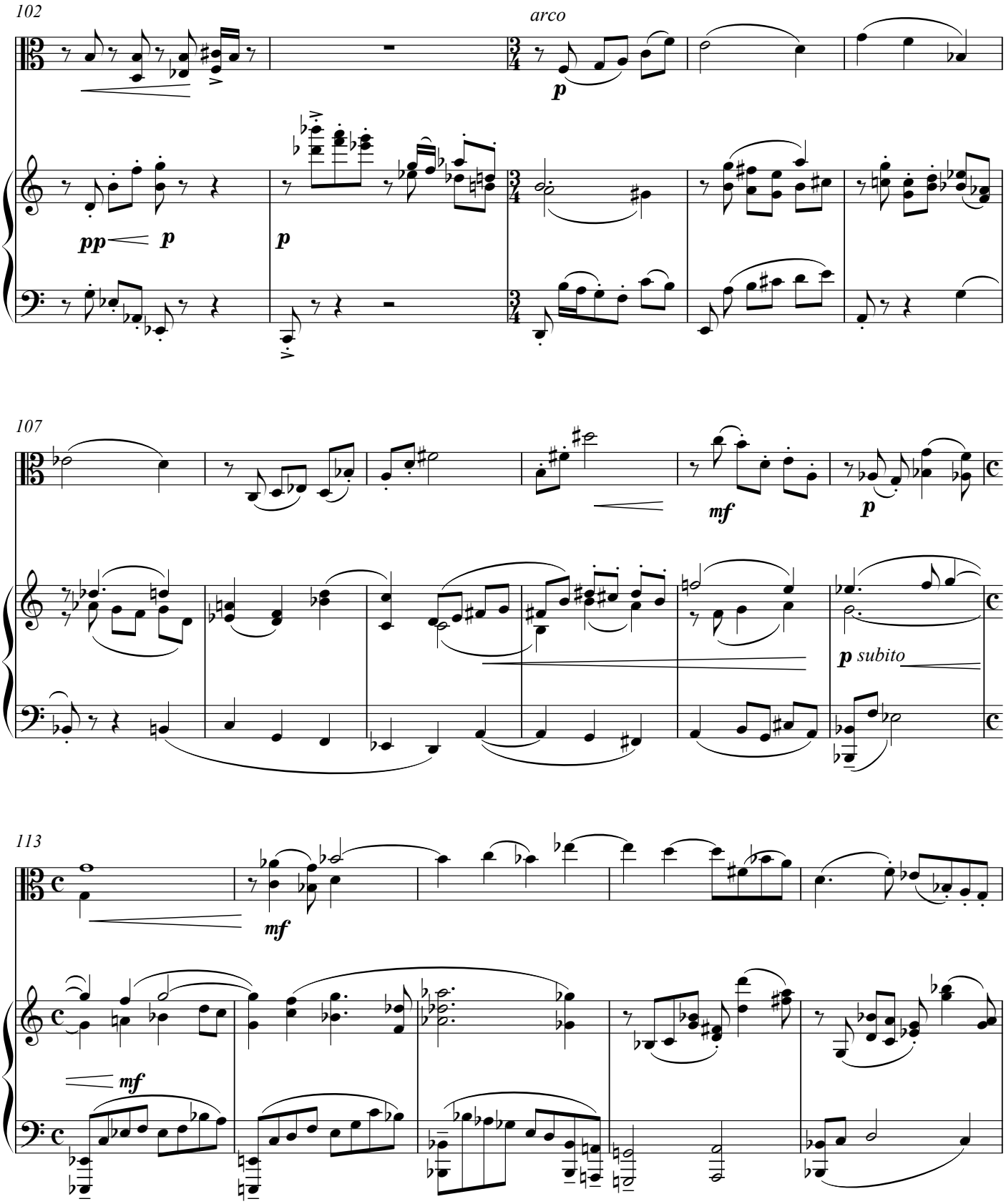

poco rit.
a tempo
28
f
f
rit. poco a poco ....
34
Adagio ♩ = 55
39
pp
pp

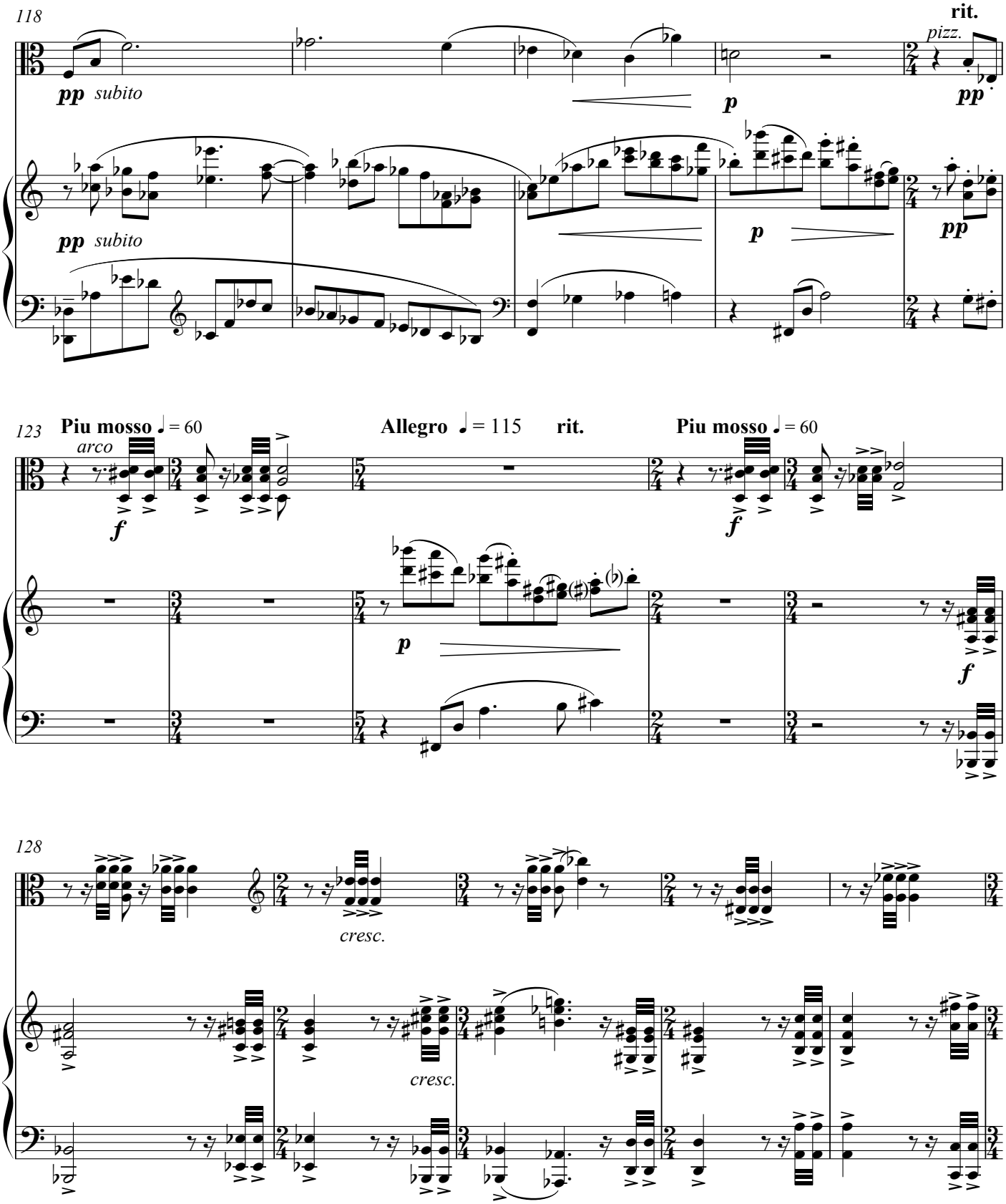

42
p
pp
p
pp
46
poco rit.
a tempo
p
p
pp
pp
51
rit.
a tempo
8va
p
p cantabile

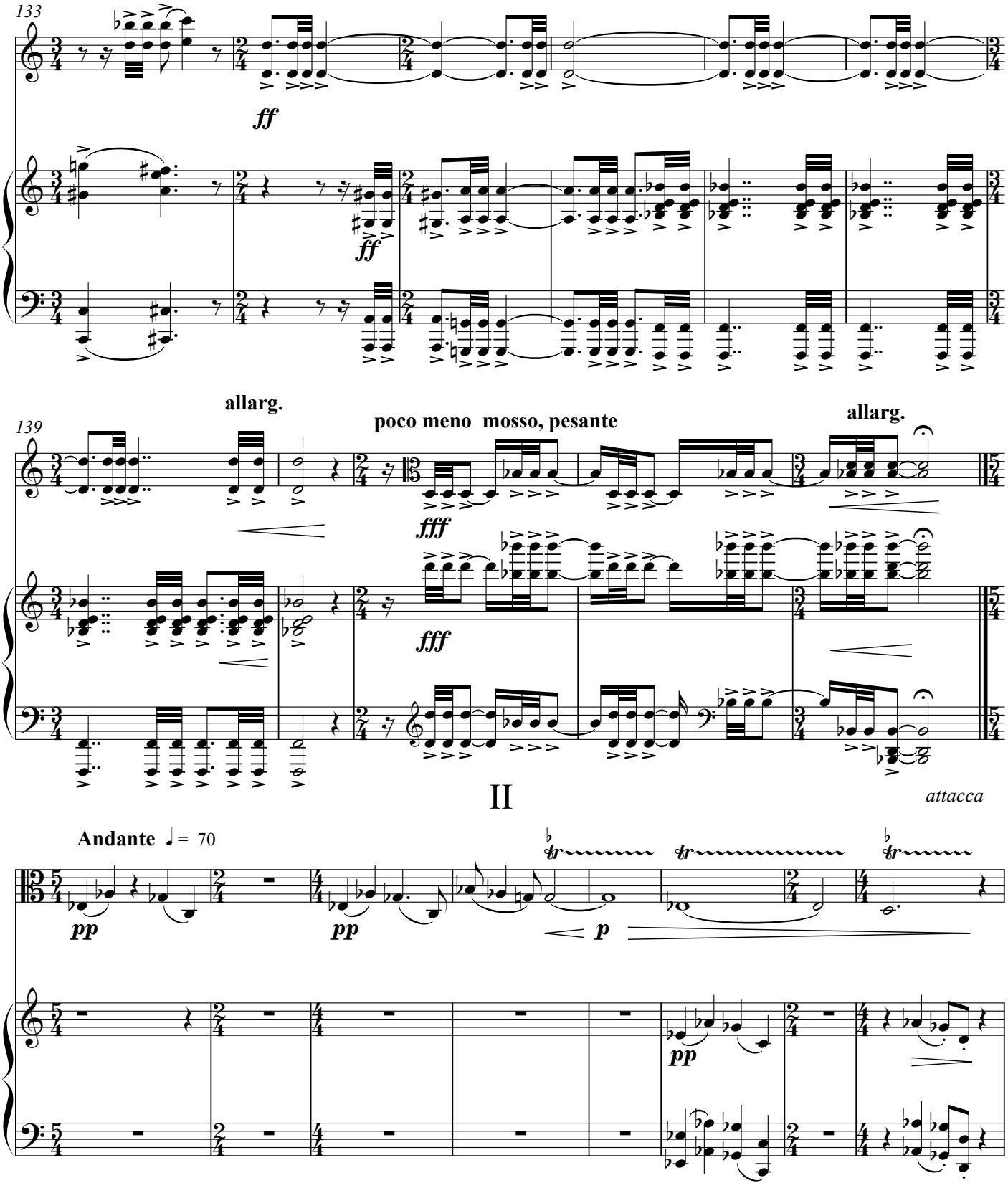

57
mf
mf
dim.
62
pp
pp
p
pp
67
poco rit.
Molto Adagio ♩ = 40
con sord.
senza vibrato
f
pp
ff

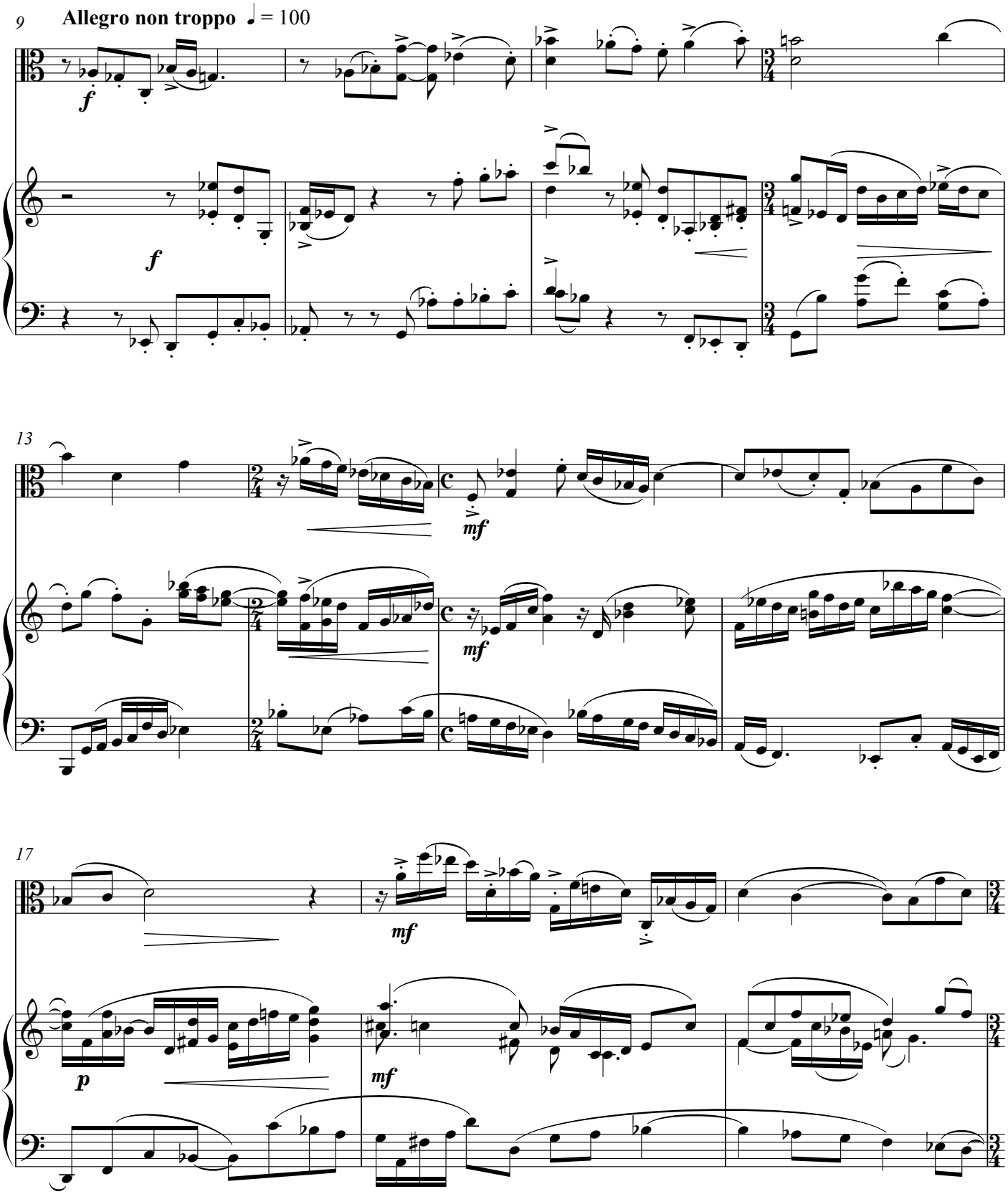

73
Adagio ♩= 55
ppp
quasi arpa
pp
79
con molto vibrato
p
pp
una corda, con ped.
84

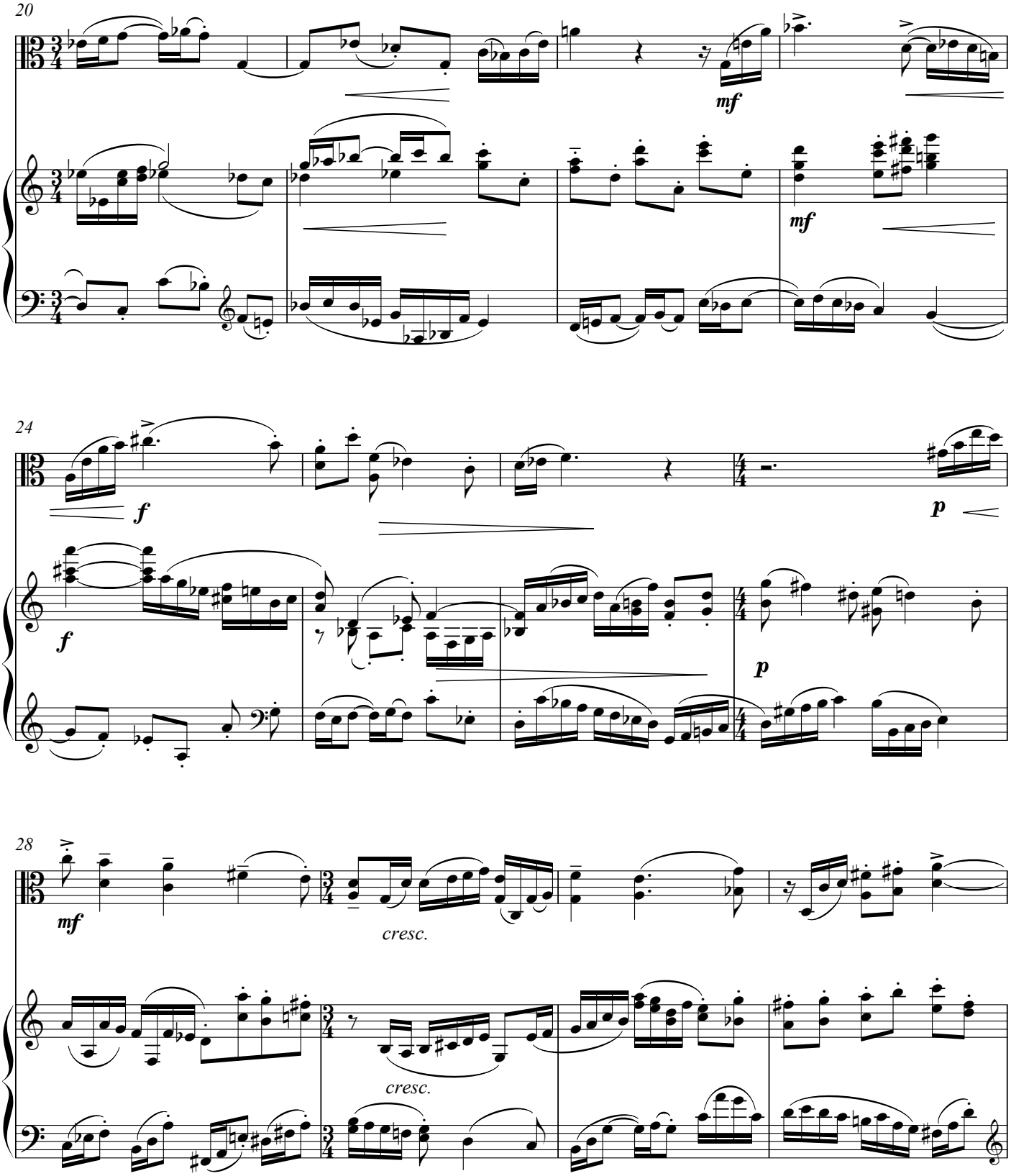

89
cresc.
poco f
dim.
cresc.
mf
dim.
93
ppp
pizz.
senza sord.
pp
rit.
pp
pp
97
Allegro ♩= 115
p
p
p
p
pp
tre corde

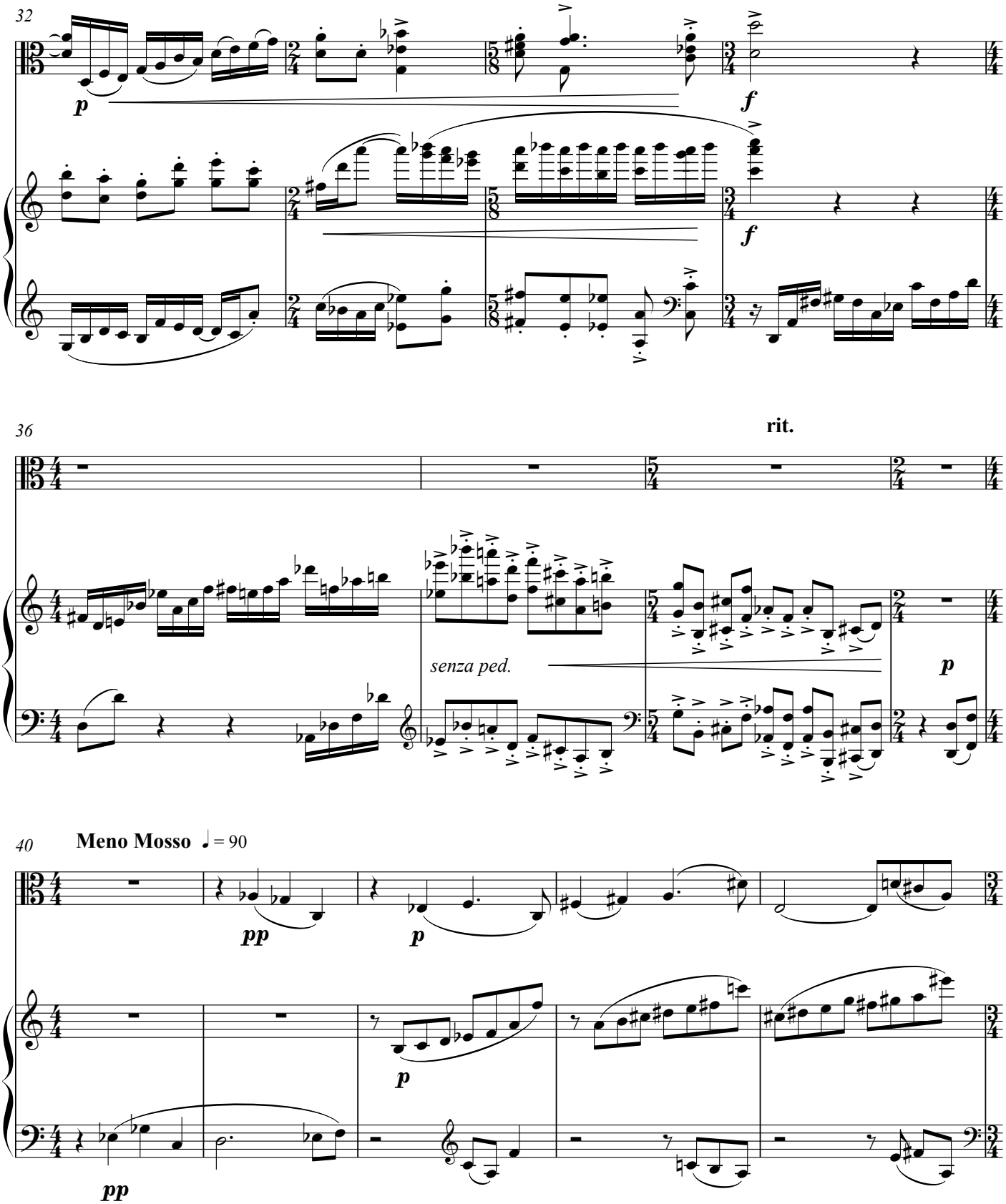

102
arco
p
pp
p
p
107
mf
p
p subito
113
mf
mf

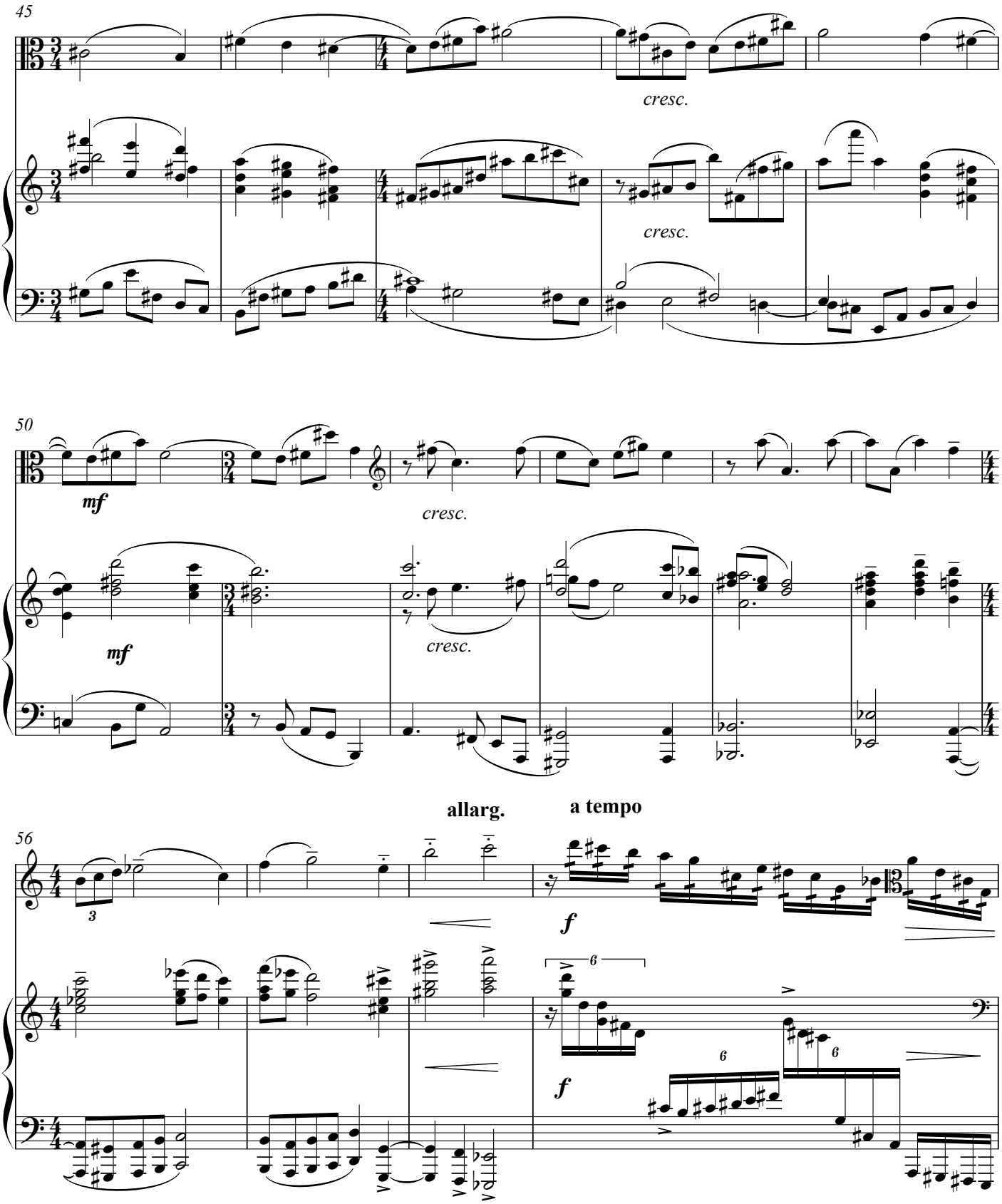

118
rit.
pizz.
pp subito
p
pp
pp subito
p
pp
123
Piu mosso ♩ = 60
Allegro ♩ = 115
rit.
Piu mosso ♩ = 60
arco
f
f
p
f
128
cresc.
cresc.

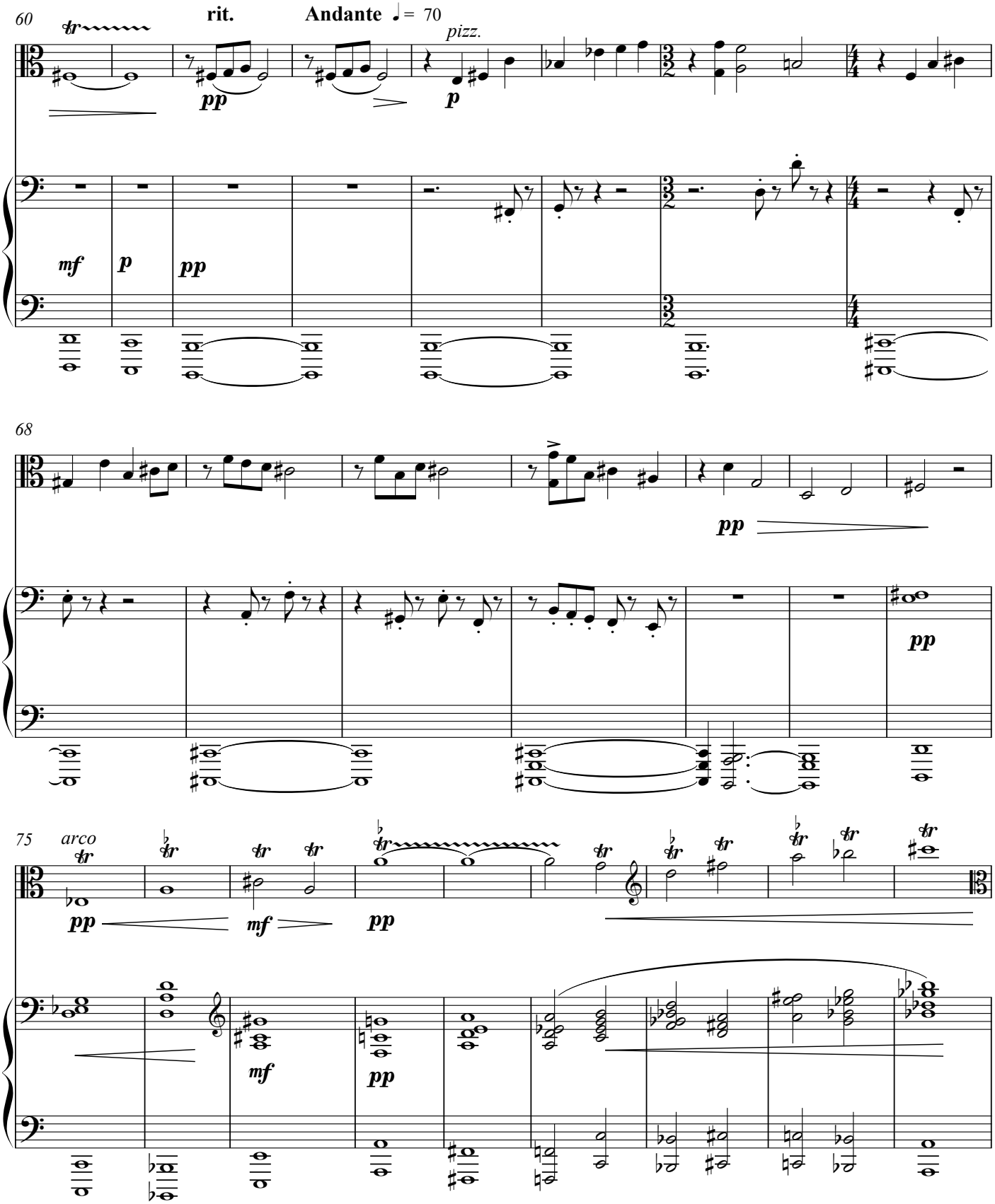

133
ff
ff
allarg.
139
poco meno mosso, pesante
allarg.
fff
fff
II
attacca
Andante ♩= 70
pp
pp
p
pp

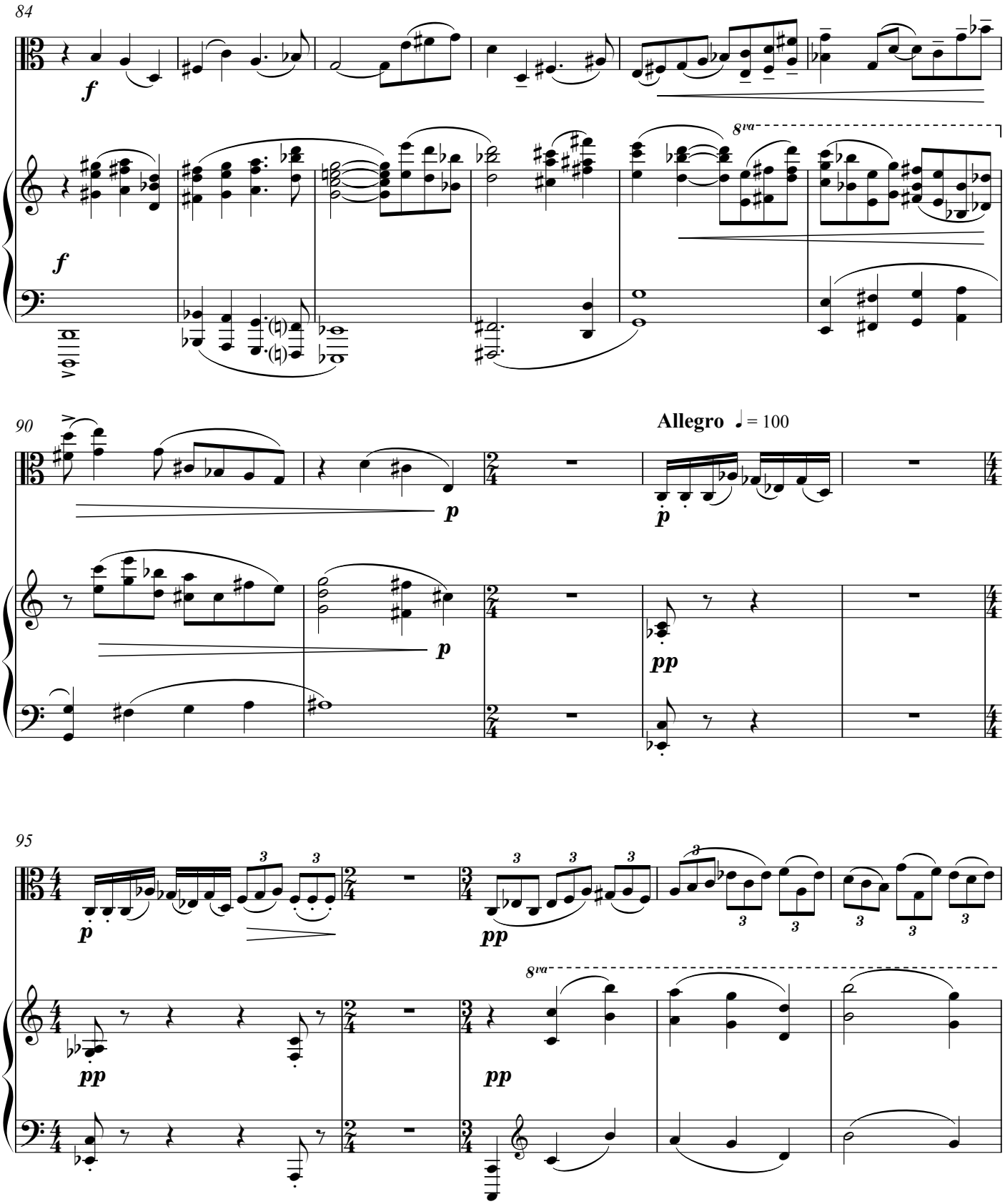

9
Allegro non troppo ♩ = 100
f
f
13
mf
mf
17
mf
p
mf

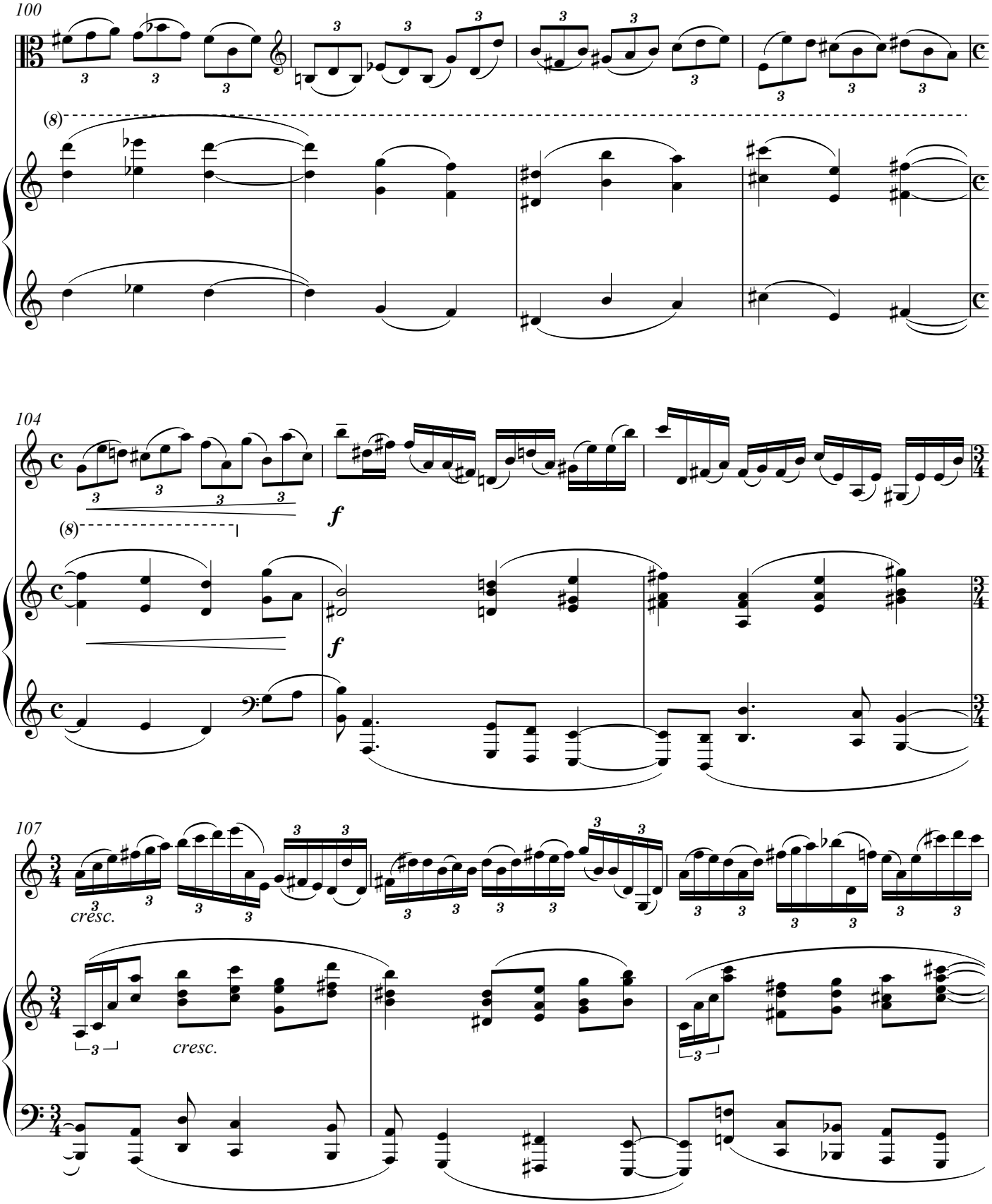

20
mf
mf
24
f
f
p
p
28
mf
cresc.
cresc.

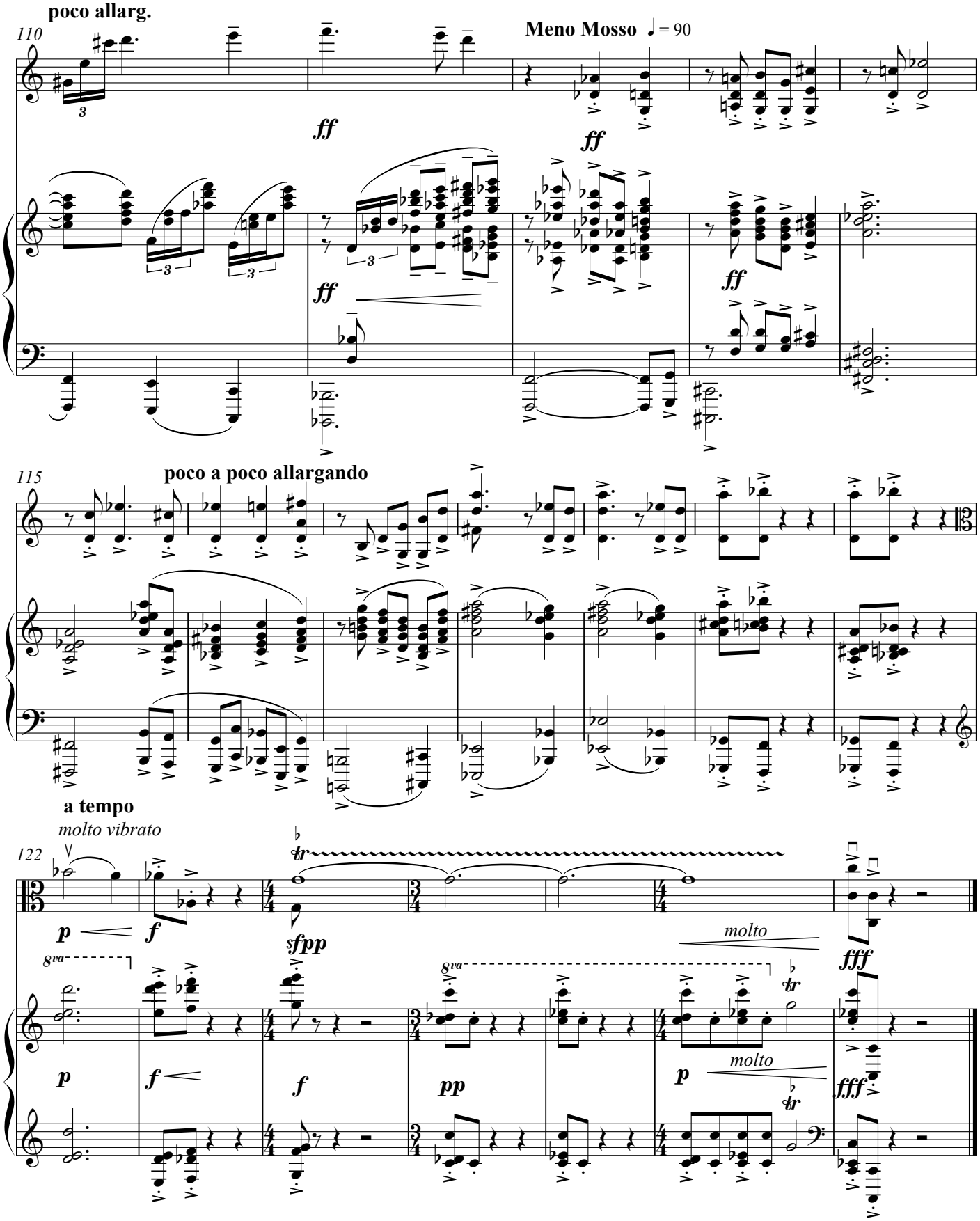

32
p
f
f
36
rit.
senza ped.
p
40
Meno Mosso ♩= 90
pp
p
p
pp


45
cresc.
cresc.
50
mf
cresc.
mf
cresc.
allarg.
a tempo
56
3
f
f


60
rit.
Andante ♩= 70
pizz.
68
75
arco


84
f
8va
90
Allegro ♩ = 100
p
pp
95
3


100
(8)
104
f
f
(8)
107
cresc.
cresc.



duration: about 13 minutes