Ballade no. 1

for solo piano

Grace Ma
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I intend, with my first *Ballade*, to capture a sense of deep emotion and an array of rhetorical possibilities via a highly chromatic palate, inspired by music of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century. I was particularly moved by the directionality and coherence still present in the highly-colorful, quasi-tonal works of Strauss, Mahler, Berg and early-mid Schonberg, and the intense beauty in the complexity and struggle achieved through their melodic, thematic, contrapuntal and harmonic techniques. I also intend, with a work of such ambition, to pay homage to an earlier composer who provided me with much of my musical thoughts, attitude, and inspirations—Fréderic Chopin, and his *Ballades* which were truly innovative and powerful during his time and beyond, for their narrative qualities, harmonies, and formal structure.

Duration: c. 5'30"

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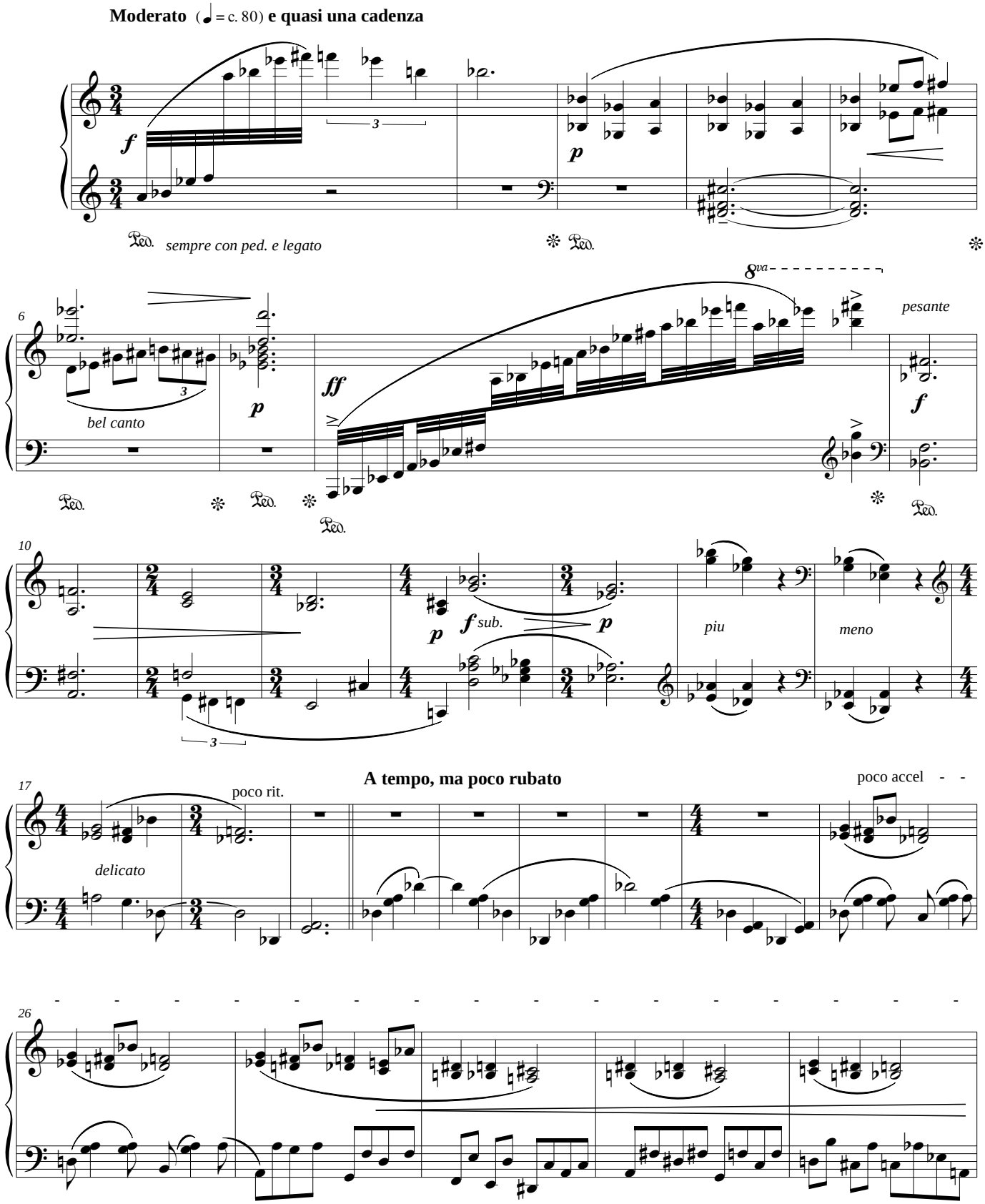

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Con moto (♩ = 120)

31

p

36

mf *p* *pp*

41

con fuoco

mf *f*

45

f

Ped.

50

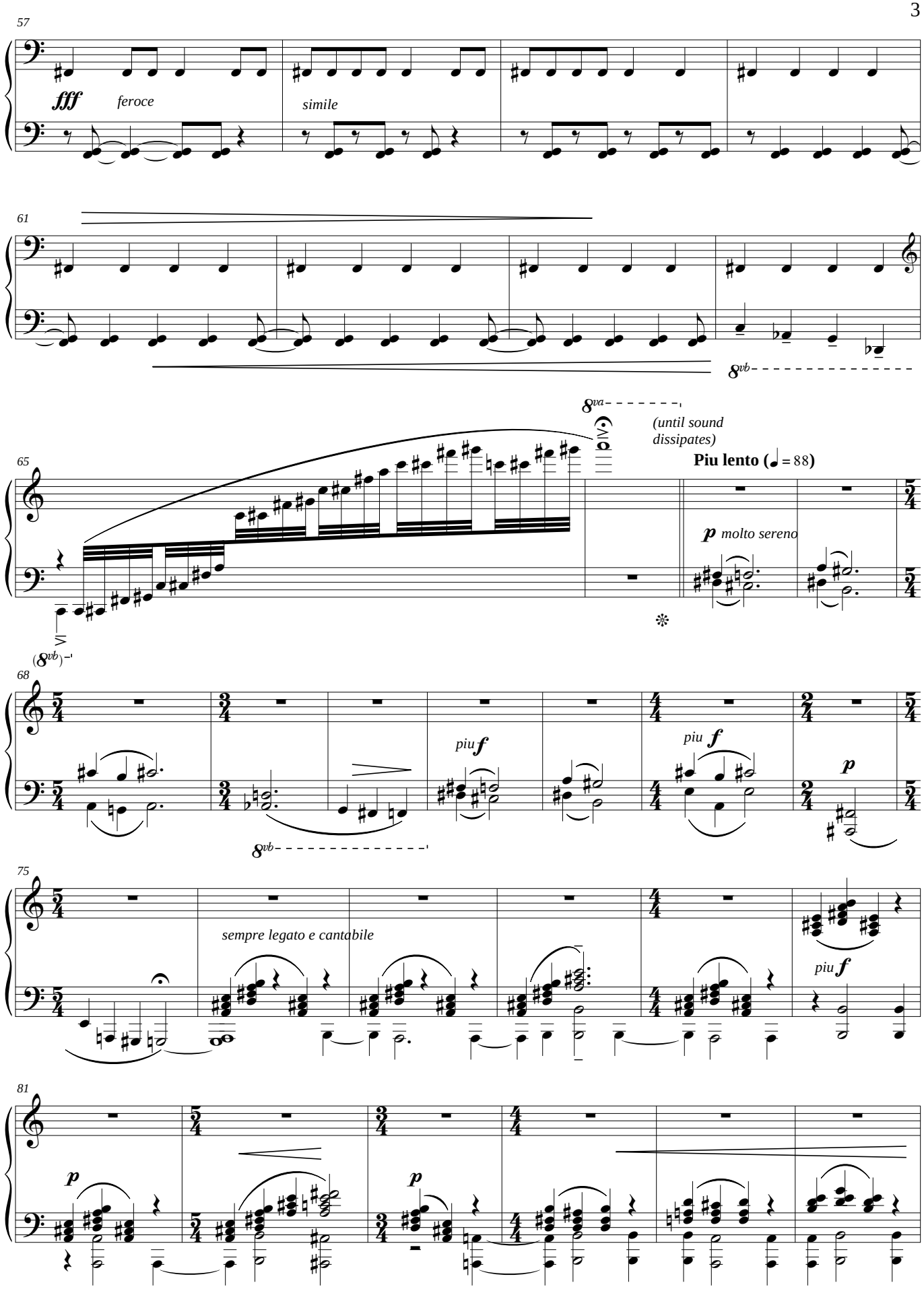
ff *p*

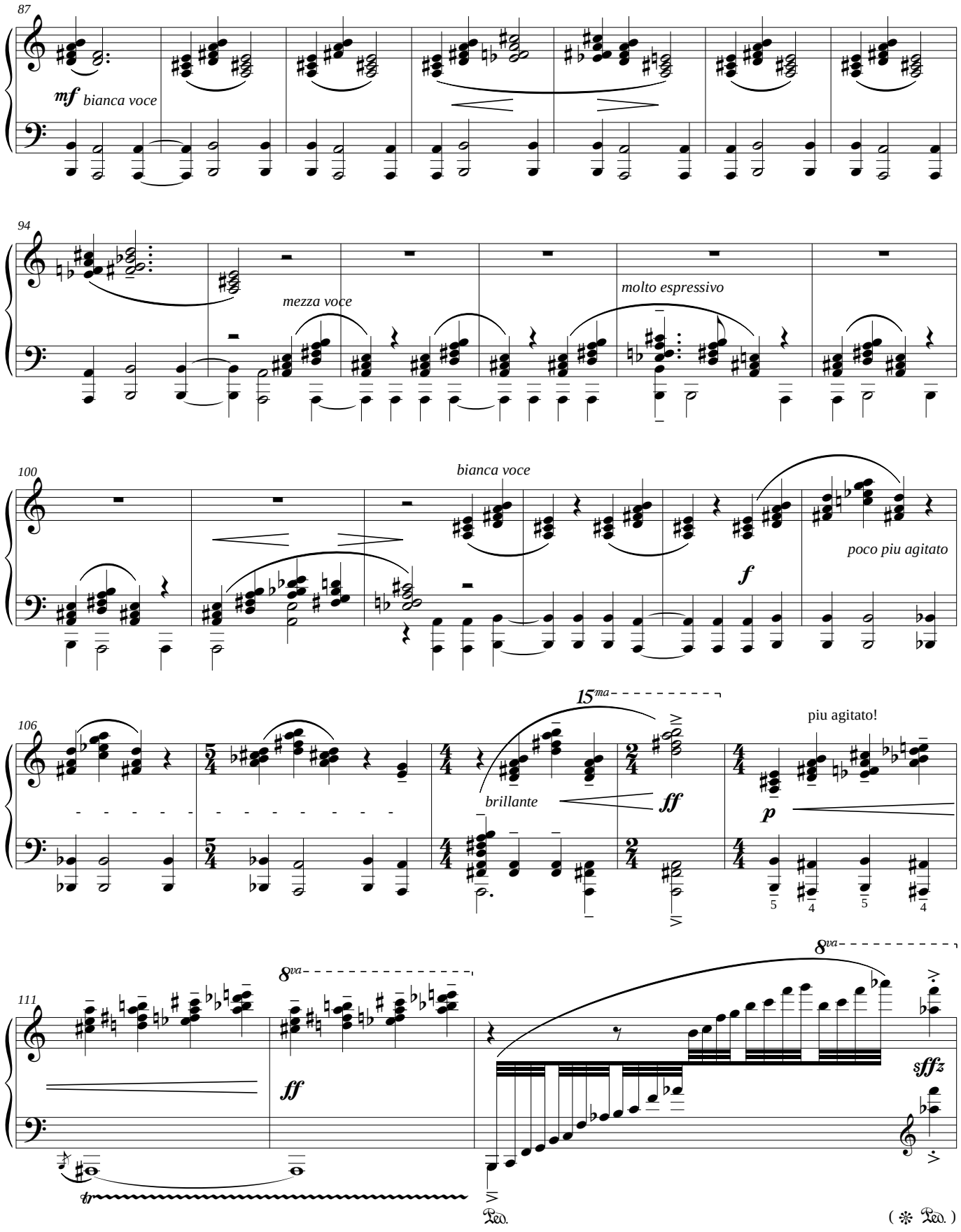
pesante

53

f *ff*

strepitoso


57
fff
feroce
simile
61
8vb
8va
(until sound dissipates)
65
Piu lento (♩= 88)
p molto sereno
(8vb)
68
piu f
piu f
p
8vb
75
sempre legato e cantabile
piu f
81
p
p


87
mf bianca voce
94
mezza voce
molto espressivo
100
bianca voce
f
poco piu agitato
106
15ma
brillante
ff
p
piu agitato!
111
8va
ff
8va
sffz
tr
Ped.
(✻ Ped.)

Meno mosso (♩ = 96)

114

p *(until LH disspates)*

delicato assai

(Ped.)

120

mf *cantabile*

123

125

ppp

mp

Ped. Ped. Ped.

129

rit. - - - - - -

pp

a tempo

peasante - - - *brillante*

f

8va

8vb

Ped. Ped.

p

poco rit. - - - **Lento assai**

(8va)

rit. - - - - -

133

fp

pp

delicatissimo

ppp