JOHN SYKES

PASSACAGLIA for ORGAN

The JOHN SYKES PROJECT

MMXI

John Austin Sykes (1909 – 1962)

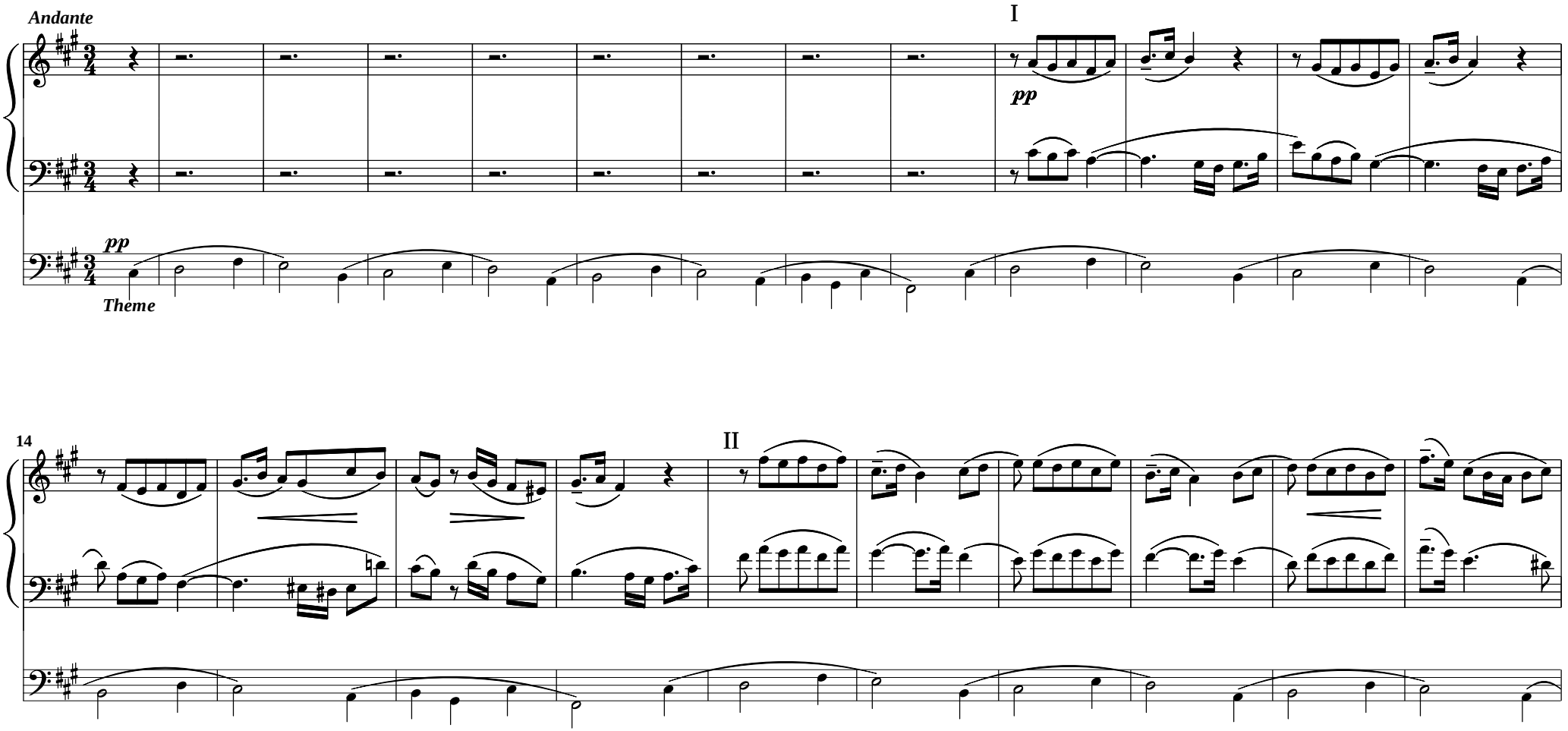
John Sykes was born in India in 1909 - in India because his father was in the Indian civil service. Back in England he won a music scholarship to Clifton College, Bristol, and whilst still a schoolboy gained his A.R.C.O. and F.R.C.O. In 1928 he went up to Oxford as organ scholar at Balliol. In those days, undergraduates were not able to read Music as a first degree, so Sykes read Modern History, and followed it up with a B.Mus. One contemporary source considered him to have been the most distinguished musical undergraduate of his time. He was president of the famous Oxford University Opera Club and active in the Music Club and Union. He was sufficiently important to be given a full-page spread in the undergraduate newspaper 'Isis' – which referred to his ability to 'make a piano do anything but swim'. He was a friend of the left-wing poet Randall Swingler, and also a contemporary of W.H. Auden, Stephen Spender and C. Day Lewis, whom he knew, so it is perhaps not surprising that he was a fluent, though not distinguished, poet. After Oxford, he went to London, to the Royal College of Music, where he studied composition under Ralph Vaughan Williams, R. O. Morris and Gordon Jacob. In 1936 he was appointed to the staff of Kingswood School, and there he stayed, except for war service, until he died of cancer in the school Sanatorium in the summer term of 1962.

The John Sykes Project is an informal group of former pupils who are transcribing and publishing his music on the internet, and encouraging its performance.

www.jasykes.online
sykesproj@talktalk.net

Passacaglia for Organ in F# minor

John Sykes



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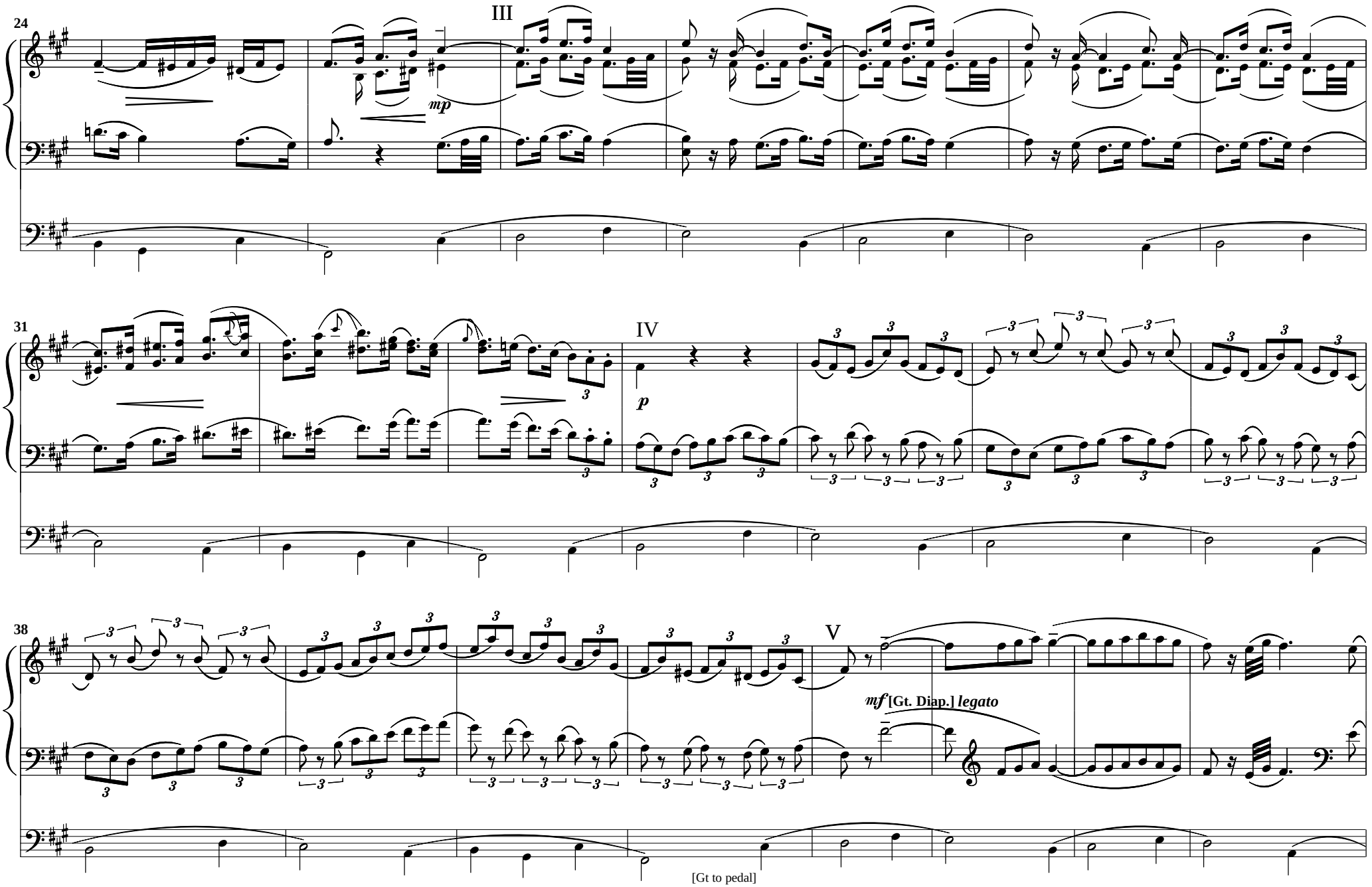
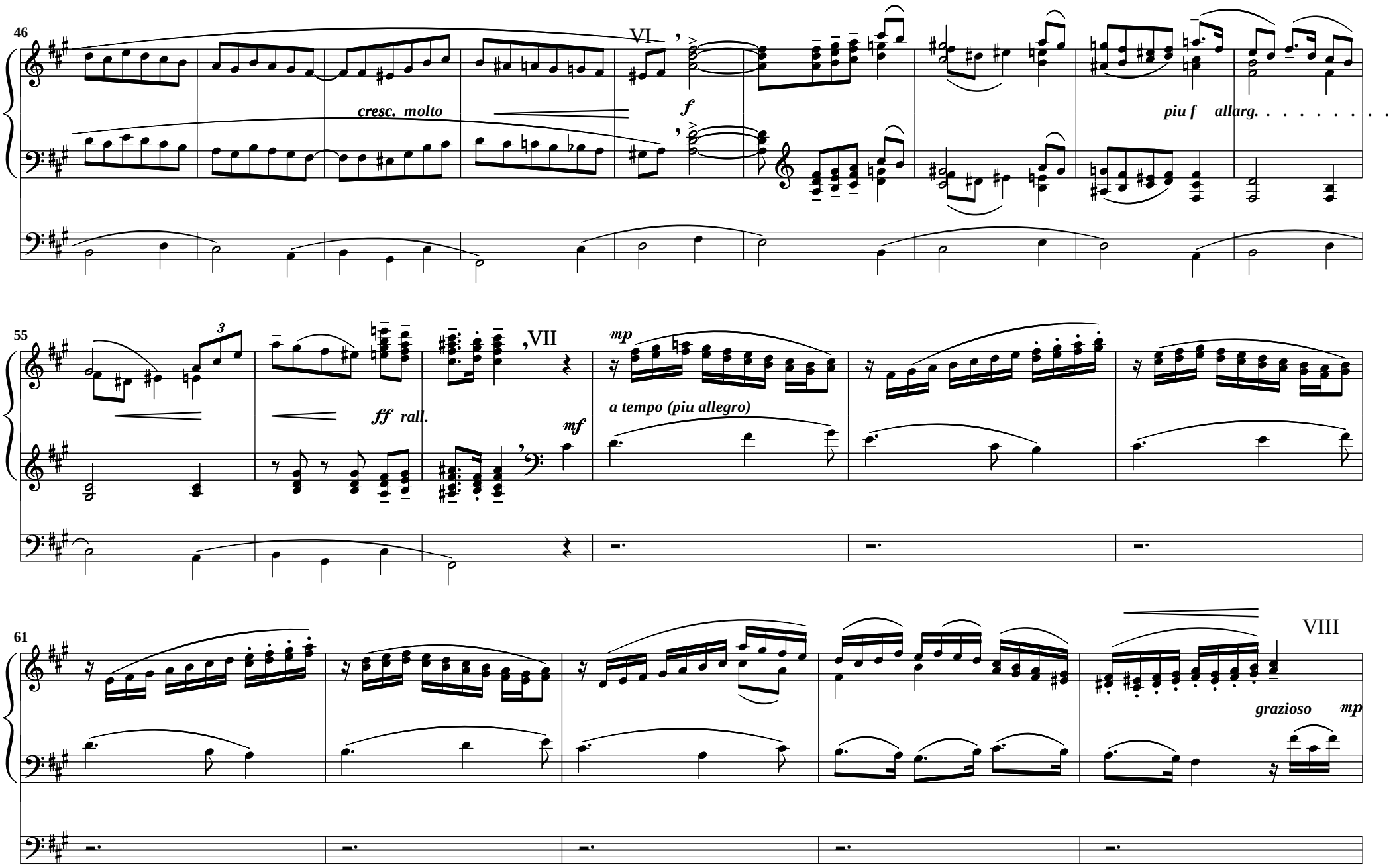
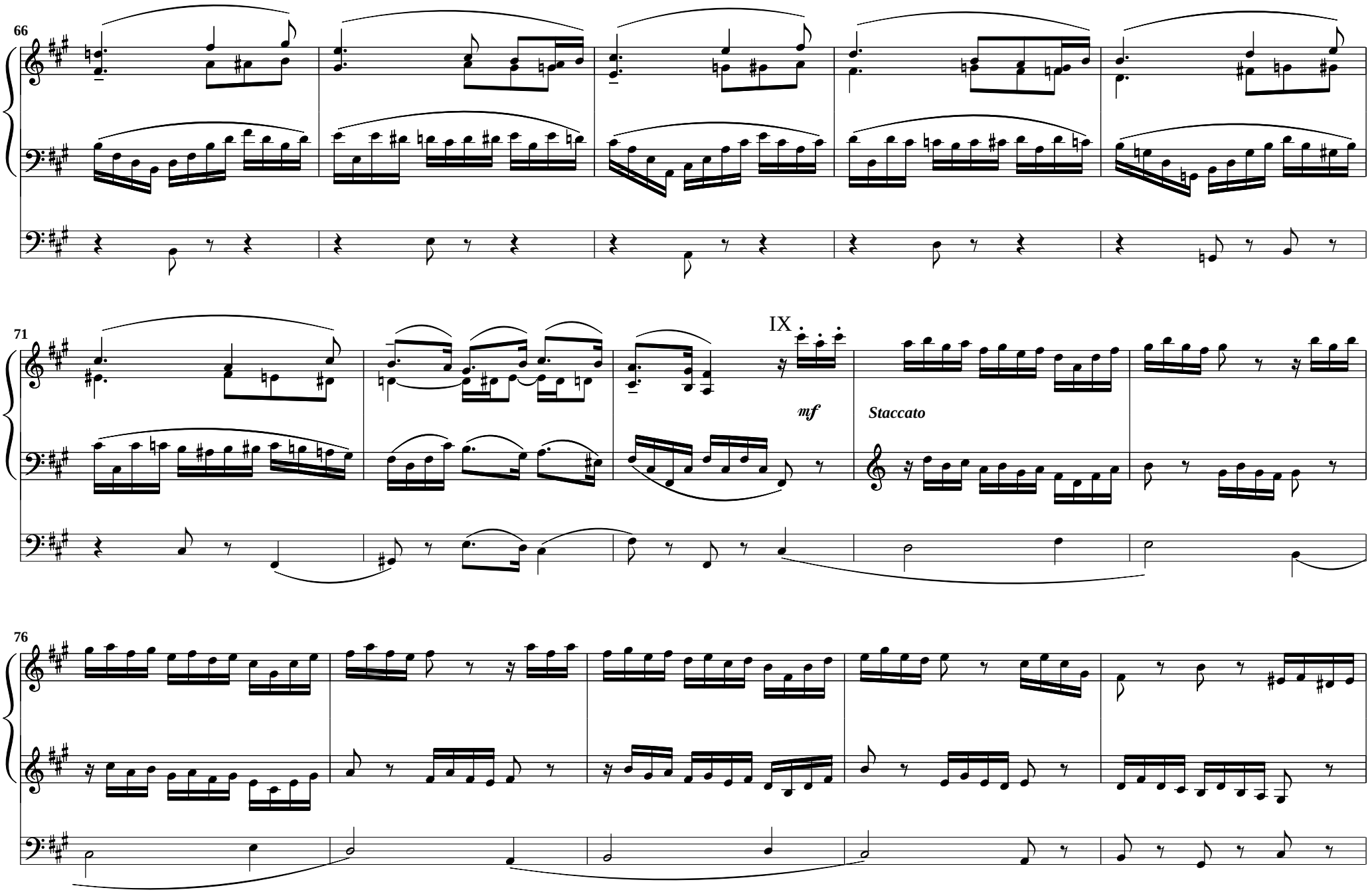
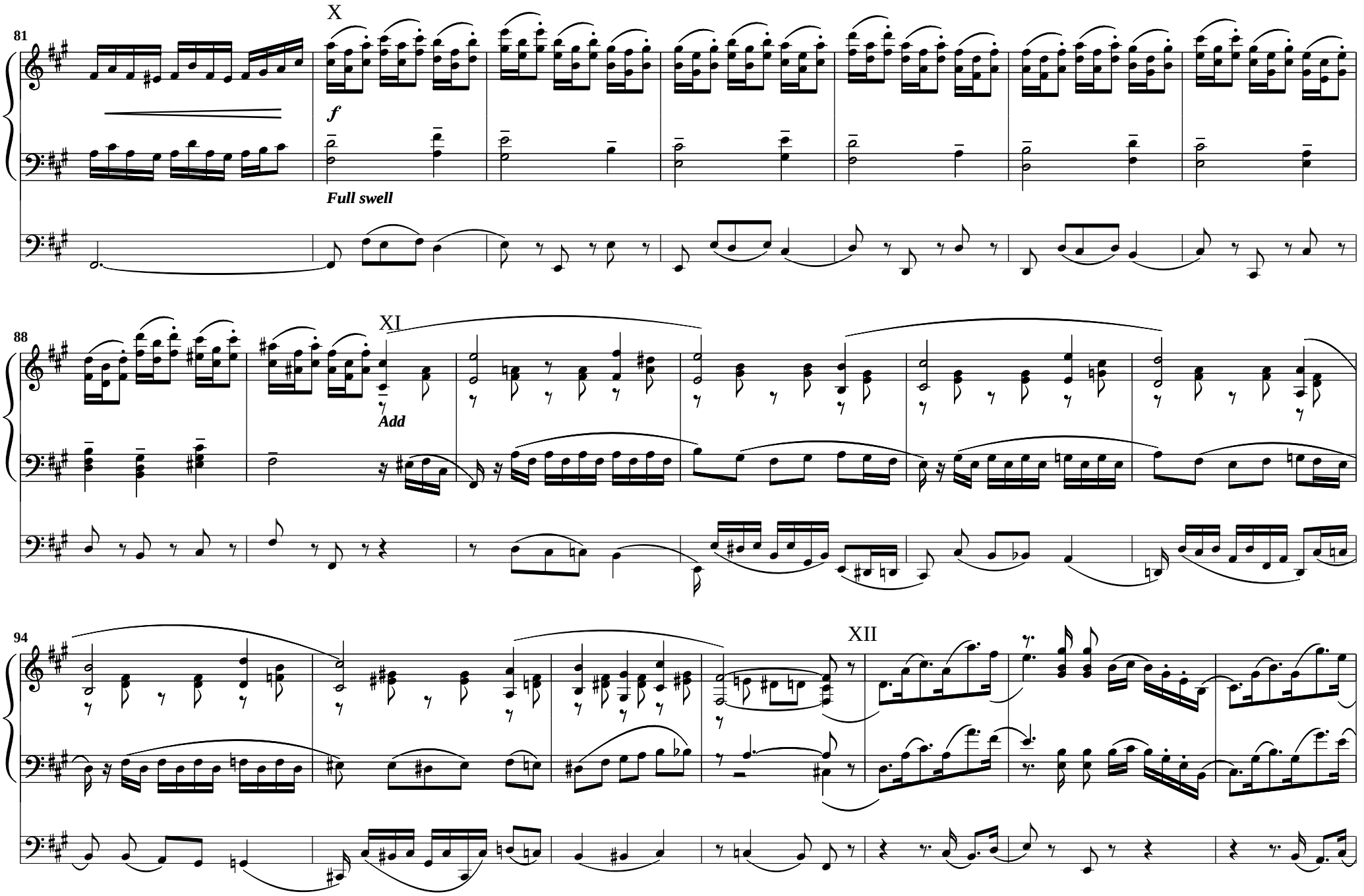
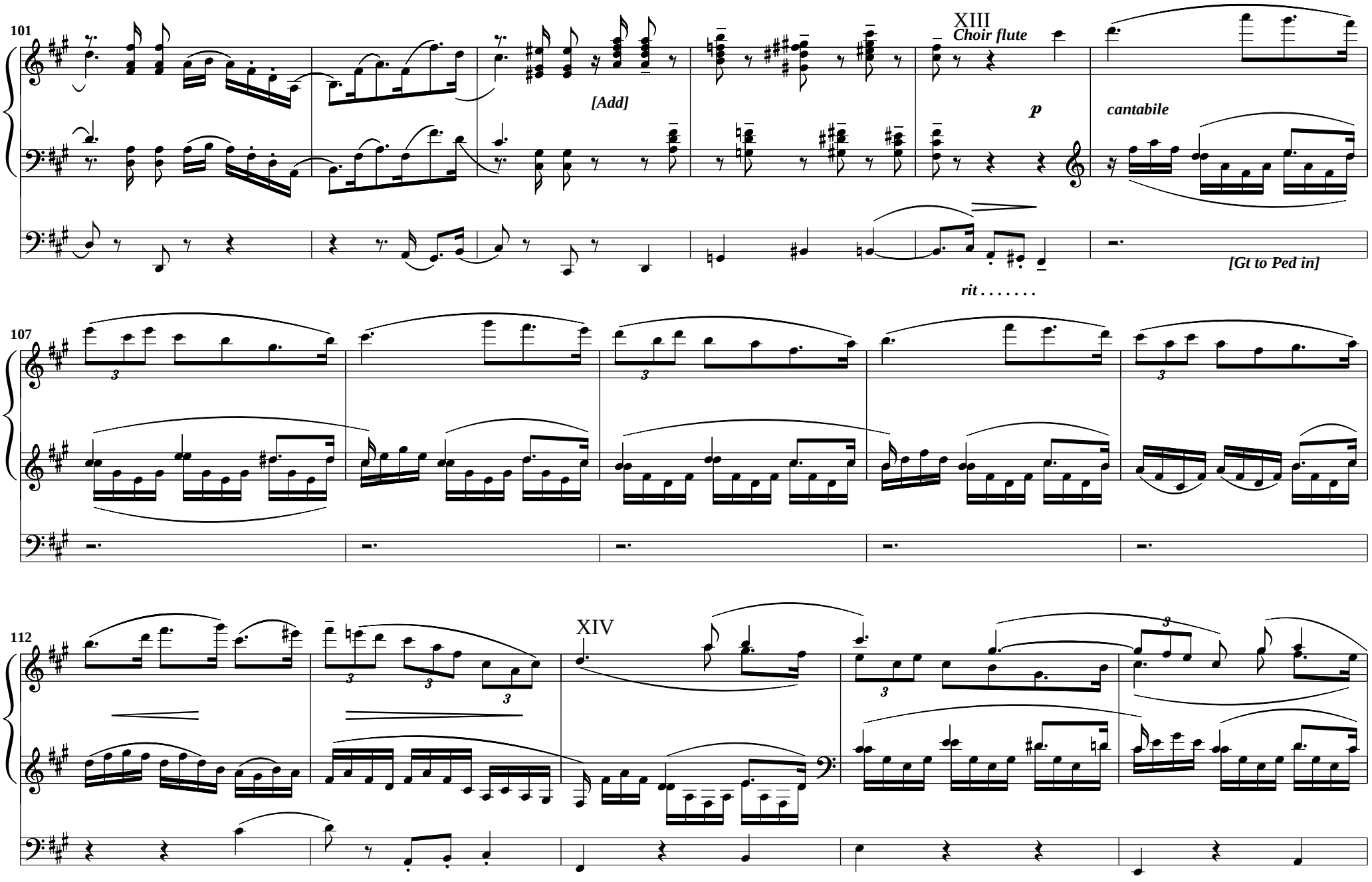

24
III
mp
31
IV
p
38
V
mf [Gt. Diap.] legato
[Gt to pedal]


46
VI
cresc. molto
f
piu f allarg.
55
3
ff rall.
VII
mf
mp
a tempo (piu allegro)
61
VIII
grazioso
mp


66
71
IX
mf
Staccato
76


X
81
f
Full swell
XI
88
Add
XII
94


101
XIII
Choir flute
[Add]
p
cantabile
[Gt to Ped in]
rit . . . . . .
107
112
XIV

117

XV

pp

123

XVI

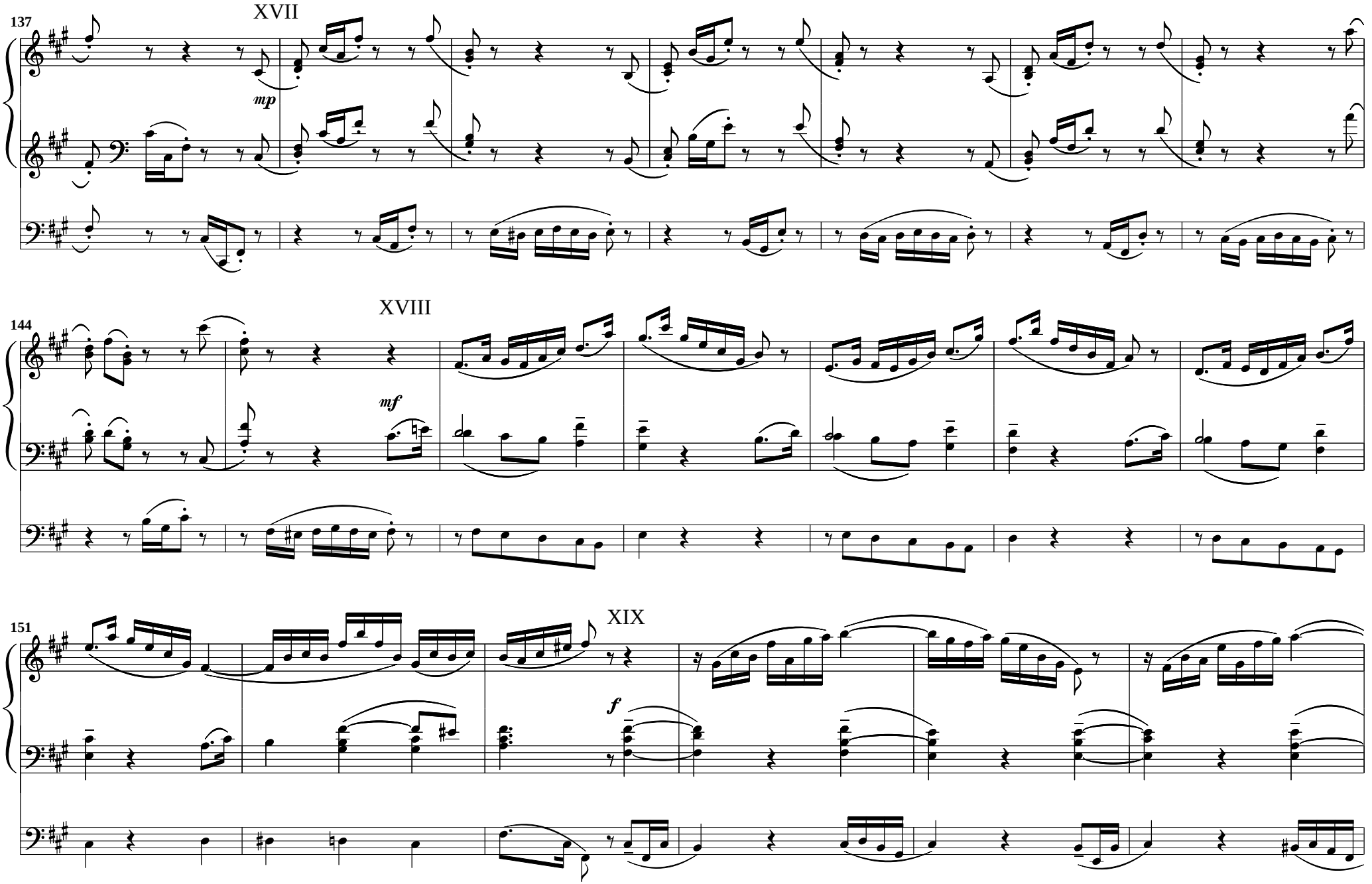
Più Allegro

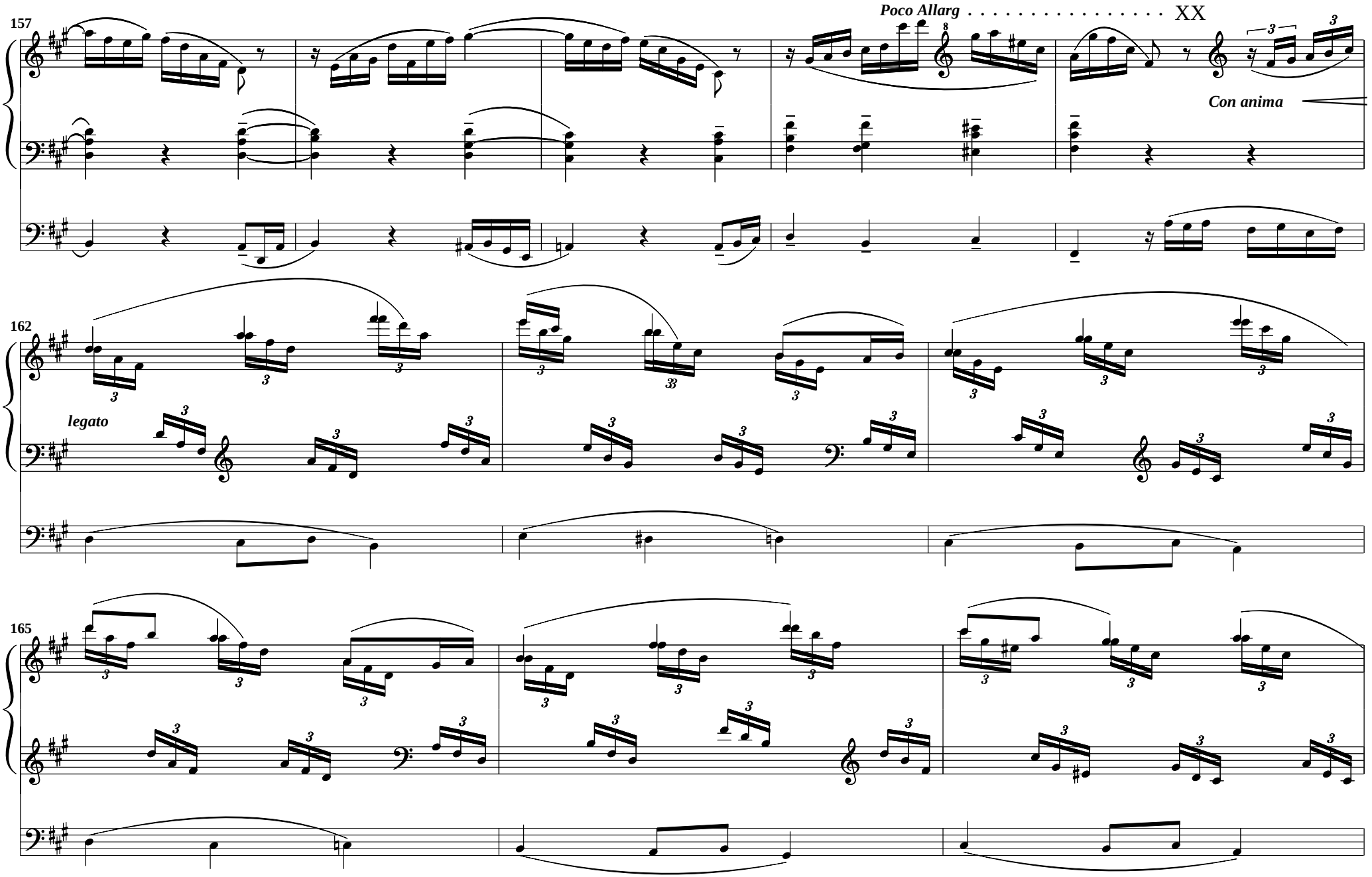
pp e rit. . . . . p

Gt. to pedal

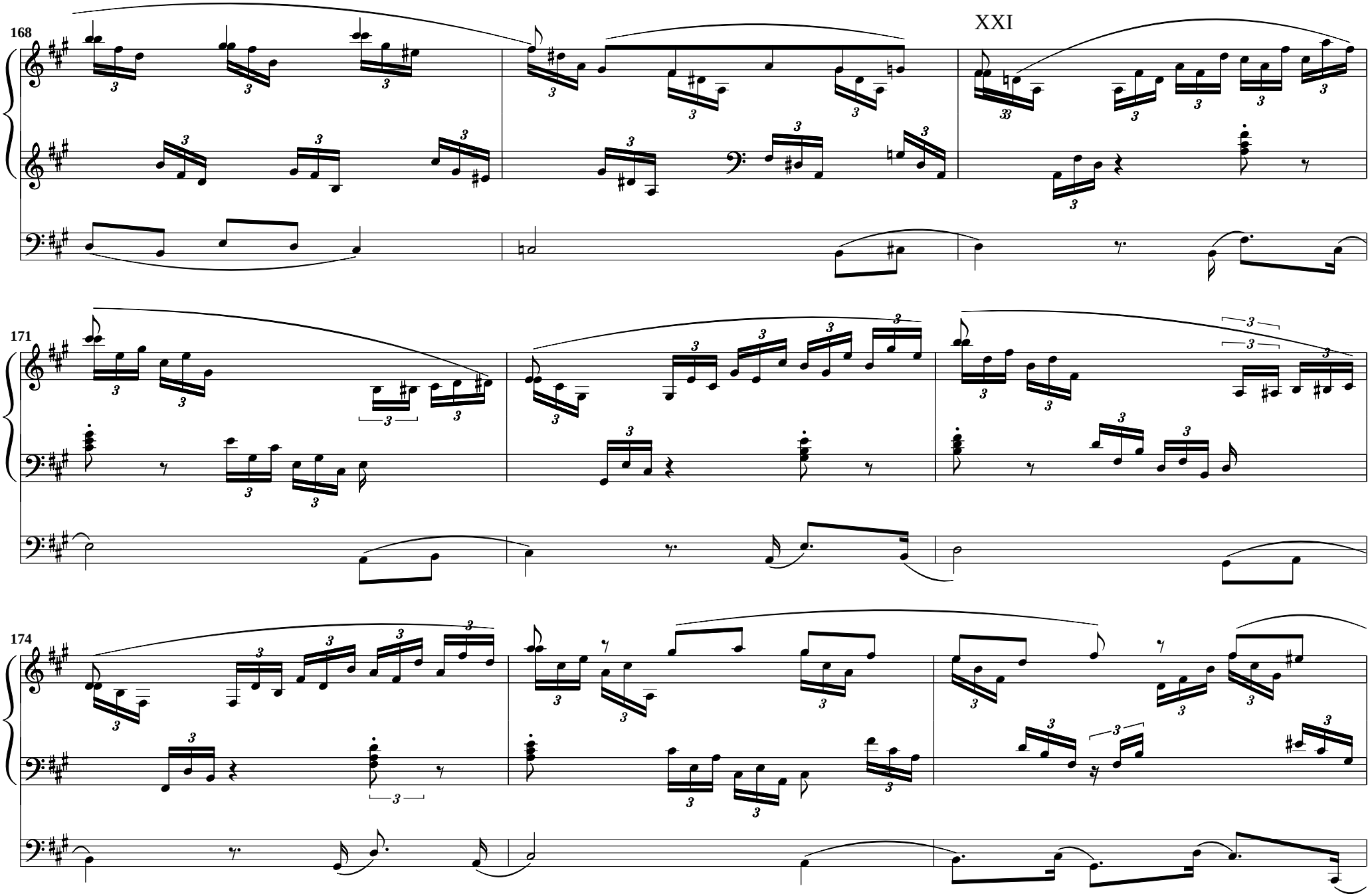
130

leggiero


137
XVII
mp
144
XVIII
mf
151
XIX
f


157
Poco Allarg XX
Con anima
162
legato
165

XXI



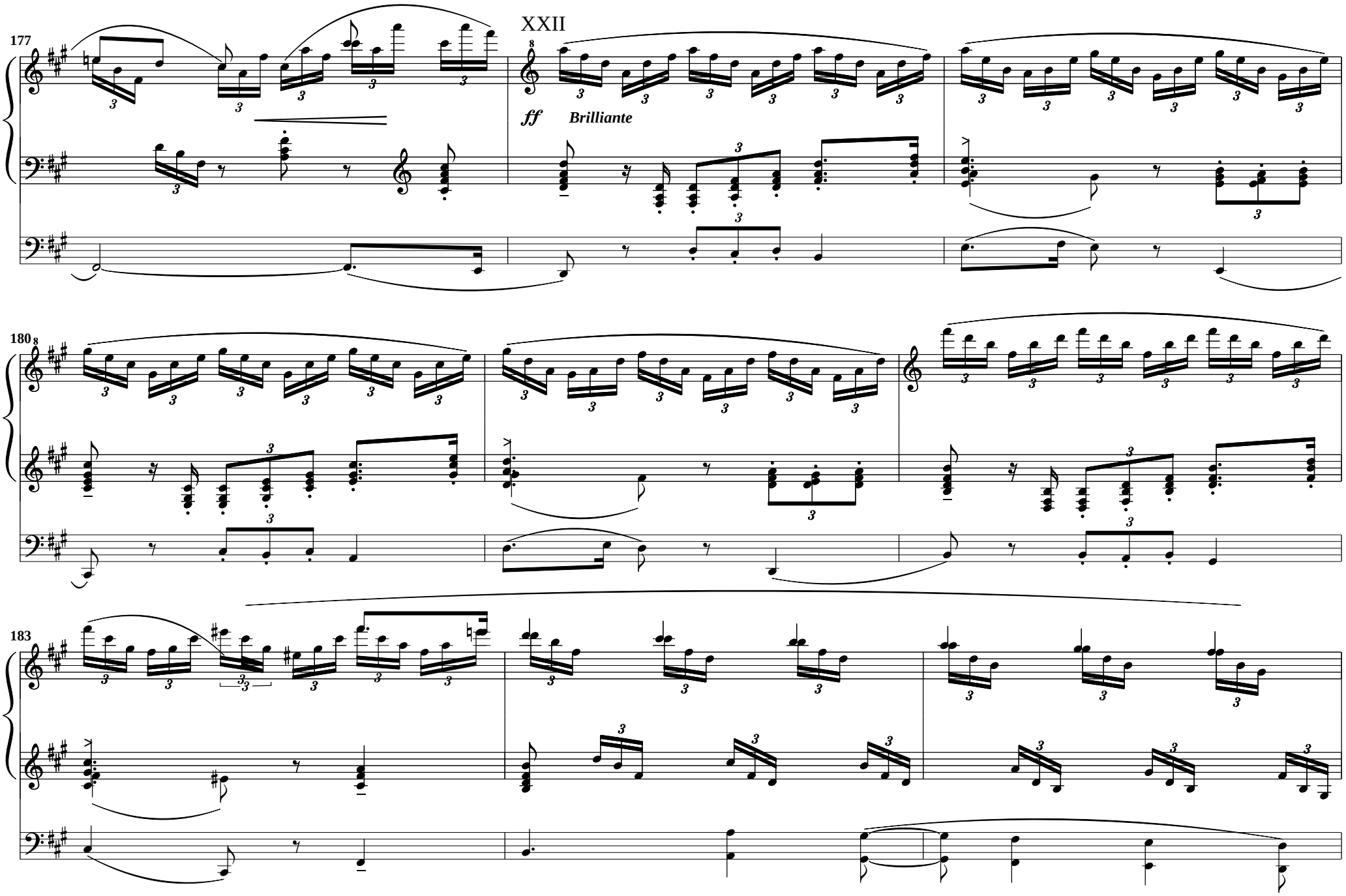
XXII

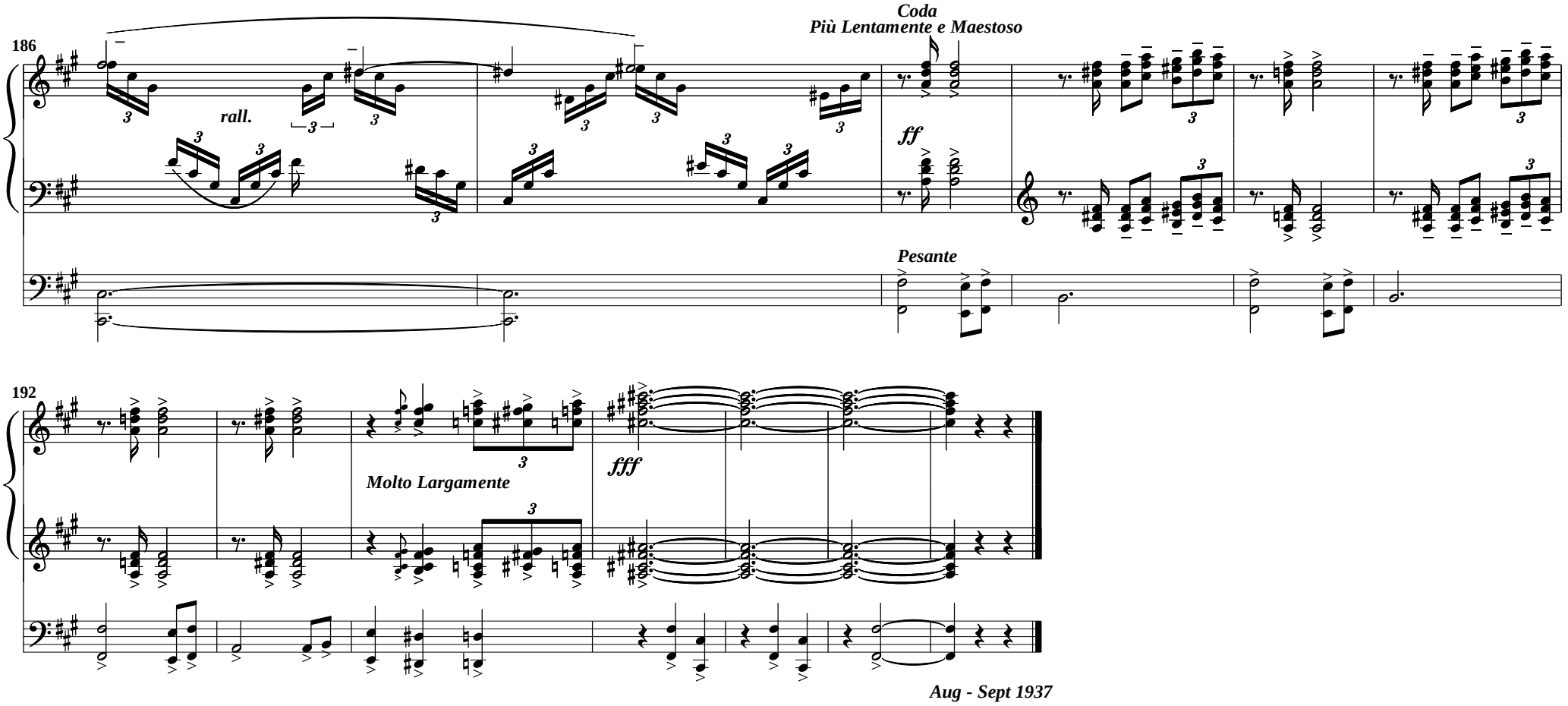
177

ff *Brilliante*

180

183





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