Pacific Rim: Three Preludes

for Piano

1. **Zephyr**
2. **Beyond the Curtain**
3. **Earth Dance**

Brian Belet

2006

PROGRAM NOTE

Pacific Rim: Three Preludes (2006)

for Piano

These preludes were composed for pianist Gwendolyn Mok in 2006, and were premiered by her in Hong Kong in October of that year. These preludes continue my plan to compose a full cycle of twenty-four preludes that started with *Four Proportional Preludes* (1991). Like its predecessors, these preludes reference, in their own way, various major and minor key areas (here G Minor, C Minor, and C Major). The compositional challenge of addressing the essence of the designated keys without resorting to the exhausted conventions of traditional European tonality remains for me the most interesting dilemma for each short work.

These three preludes can be performed separately, combined in any order, combined with the earlier 1991 preludes for a larger set of seven, and/or grouped with a larger collection of preludes by various composers.

Zephyr
Zephyr (alternately Zephyrus or Zephuros) was the west wind and bringer of spring and summer breezes in Greek mythology. The primary pulse is not fast (quarter note equals 78 bpm), yet the background sextuplets keep the prelude running forward with a constant internal energy. The brief middle section is a momentary sidestep from the main composition; a calm interlude, perhaps just in memory, of another music. The primary music soon returns, rushing forward, and then dissipates into the upper atmosphere.

Beyond the Curtain
This prelude is contemplative, calm, and introspective.

Earth Dance
With relentless driving energy, this prelude is earthy, physical, and gut-centered. It is indeed a dance, for the pianist's hands and fingers (and arms and shoulders and …), as well as for the listener. This dance celebrates the earth as it was in the mythical days of our distant ancestors. The earth remains our grounding force (literally and metaphorically): it is the sand between our toes at the ocean beach; it is the rocks we climb over on alpine trails; it cradles the deepest ocean trenches; and it touches the clouds. Along fault lines it rumbles and jolts. When we fall, it is where we land, and where we finally embrace our origins. As old as old, ever changing and always new, the earth shapes us more than we can shape it.

- B. Belet

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Pacific Rim: Three Preludes (2006)

for Piano

General:

- Accidentals refer only to the notes they immediately precede (octave specific), unless tied or immediately repeated.
- Grace notes are performed fast, with a snap, and on the beat.
- These Preludes can be performed in any order, individually or as a set (either a complete set by themselves or as part of a larger set of Preludes). These Preludes can be combined and performed with *Four Proportional Preludes* (1991).

Movement Specific:

Zephyr

- Each hand follows individual dynamic markings for most of this prelude. This is necessary to articulate the linear independence of the two lines and to keep the foreground / background levels balanced.
- Keep sextuplet texture smooth and wispy — the voice of the west wind.
- Trills on page 2 begin on the notated primary note, on the beat, and rapidly trill with the auxiliary note (indicated within parentheses).
- The brief middle section (page 3) is a premonition (or memory) of the second prelude, as if parting the curtain to view (hear) into an adjoining room.
- Duration ca. 2.30

Beyond the Curtain

- Contemplative, calm, and introspective throughout, with mild rubato phrasing.
- The final measures are a reference back to the first prelude.
- Duration ca. 2.30

Earth Dance

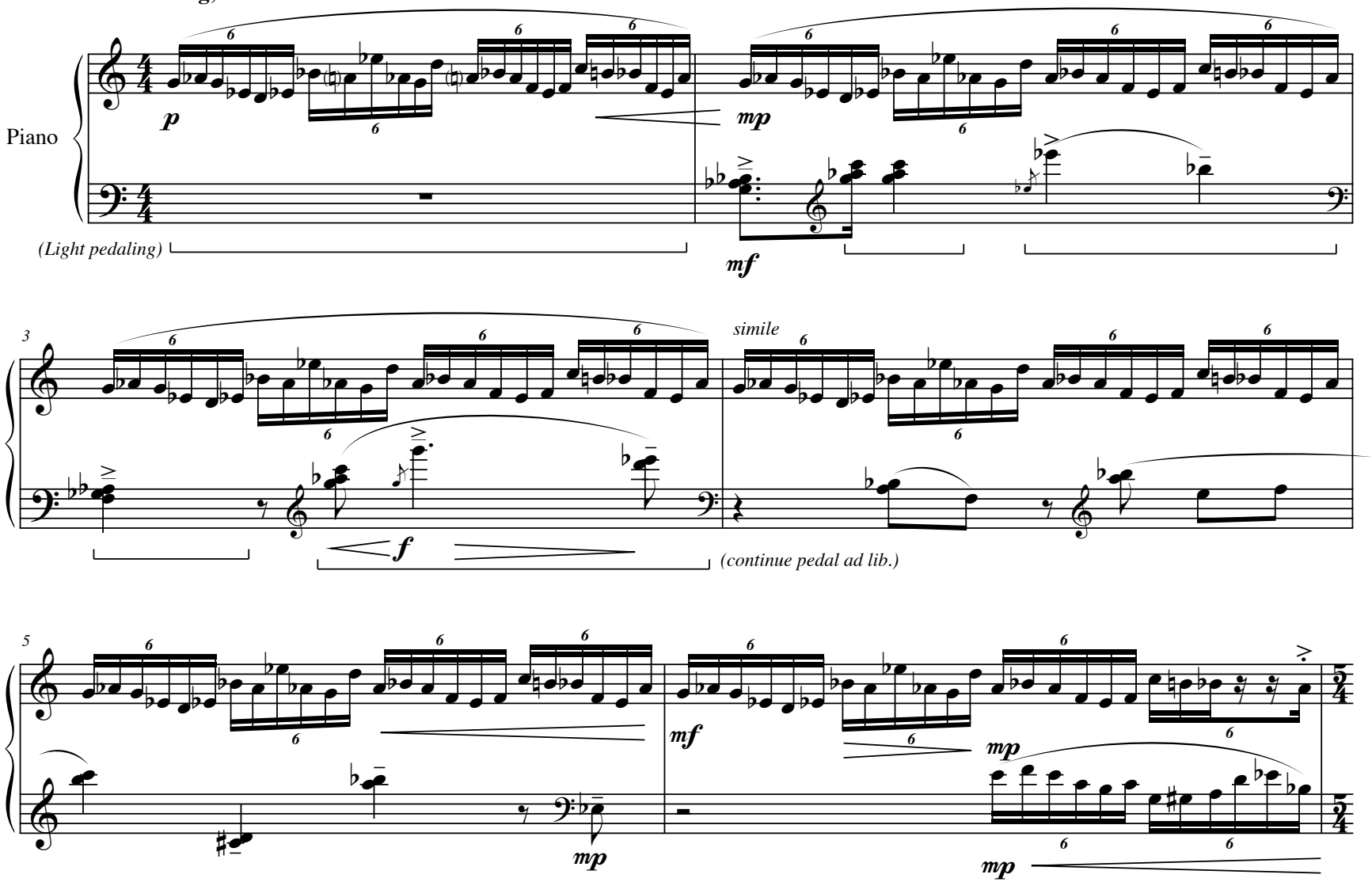
- Relentless, driving energy — a literal and physical dance.
- Duration ca. 3.00

Brian Belet
Campbell, California, USA
September 2006 (Revised: November 2007)

Zephyr

B. Belet

Flowing; like the wind ♩ = 78



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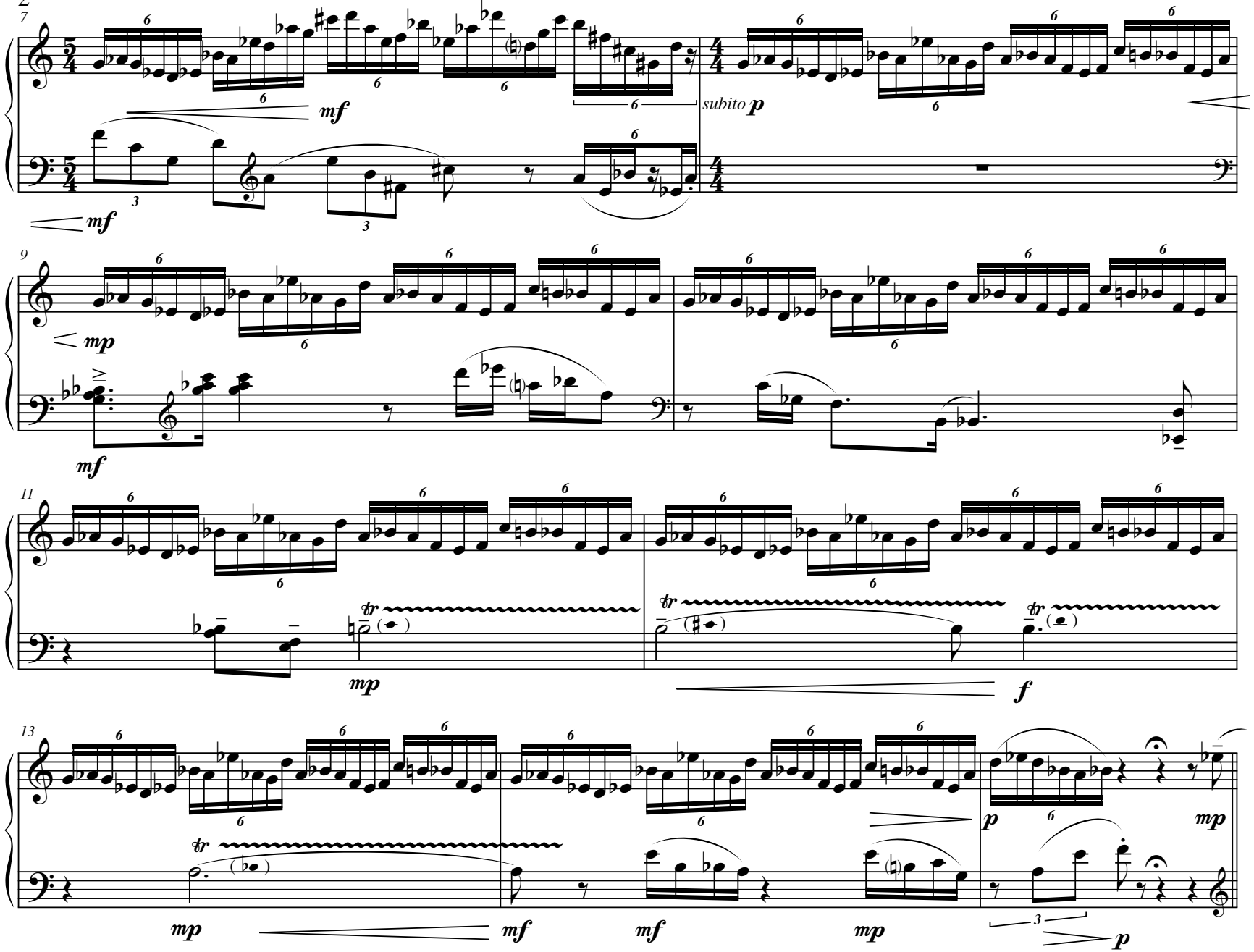
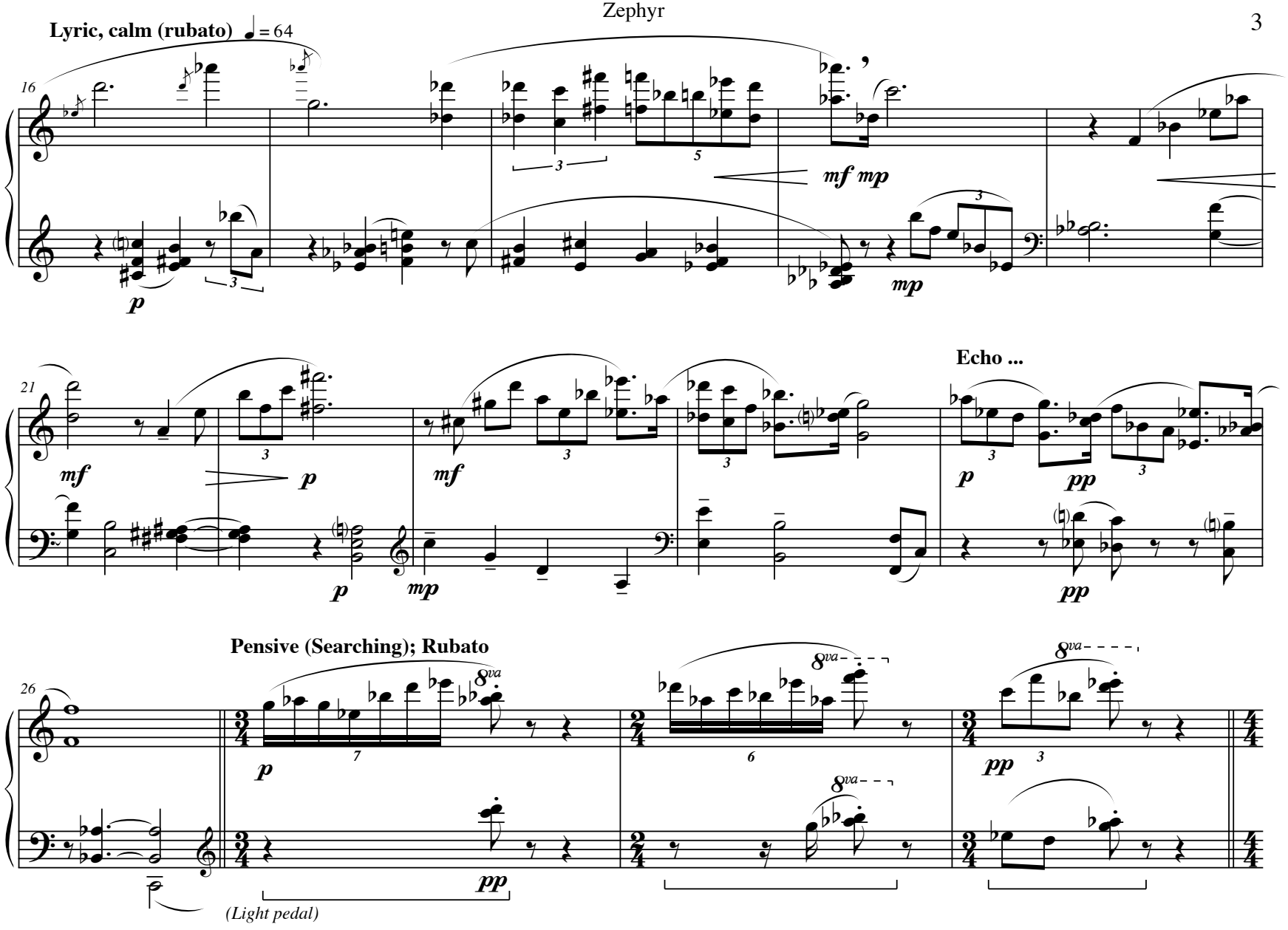
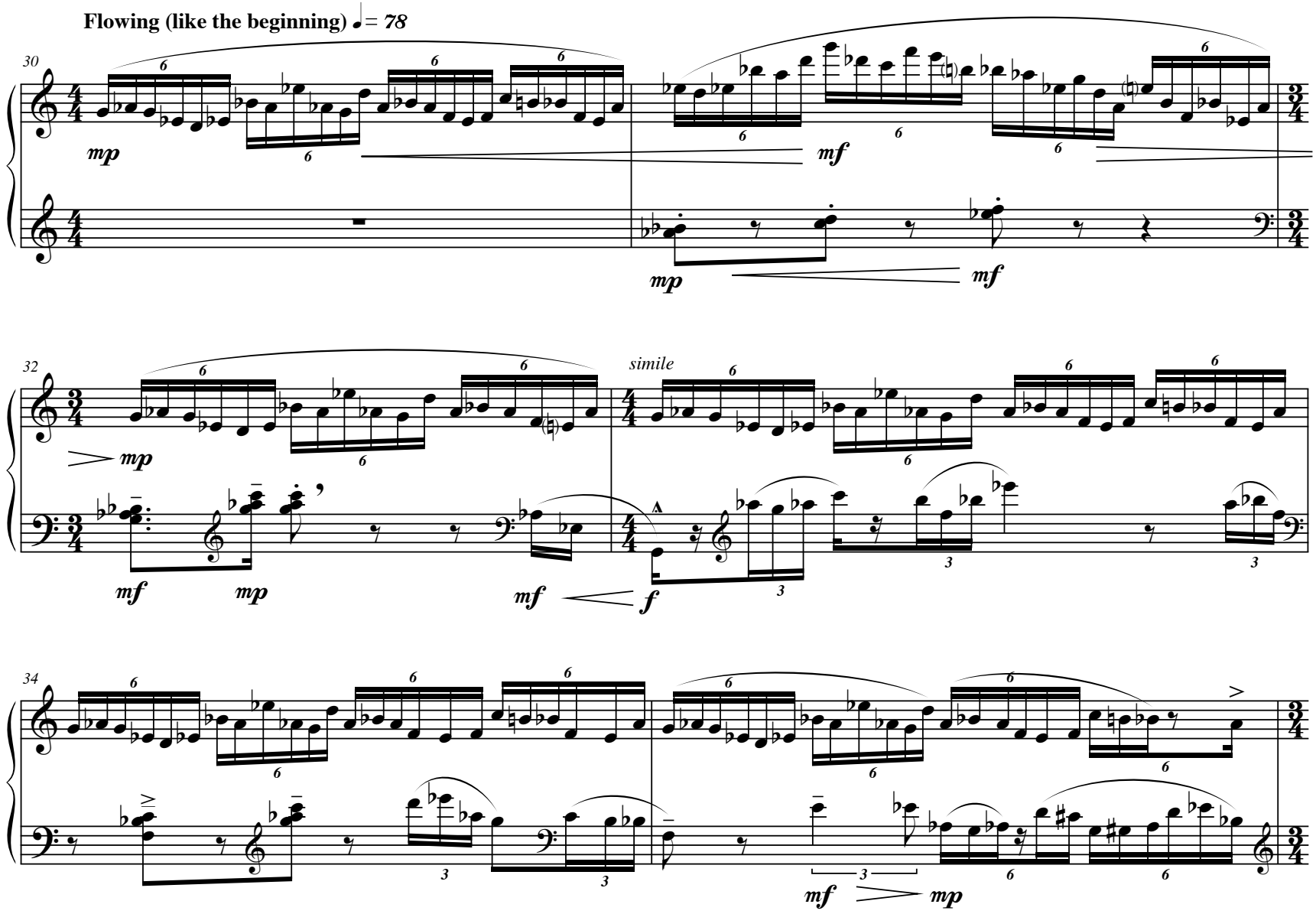
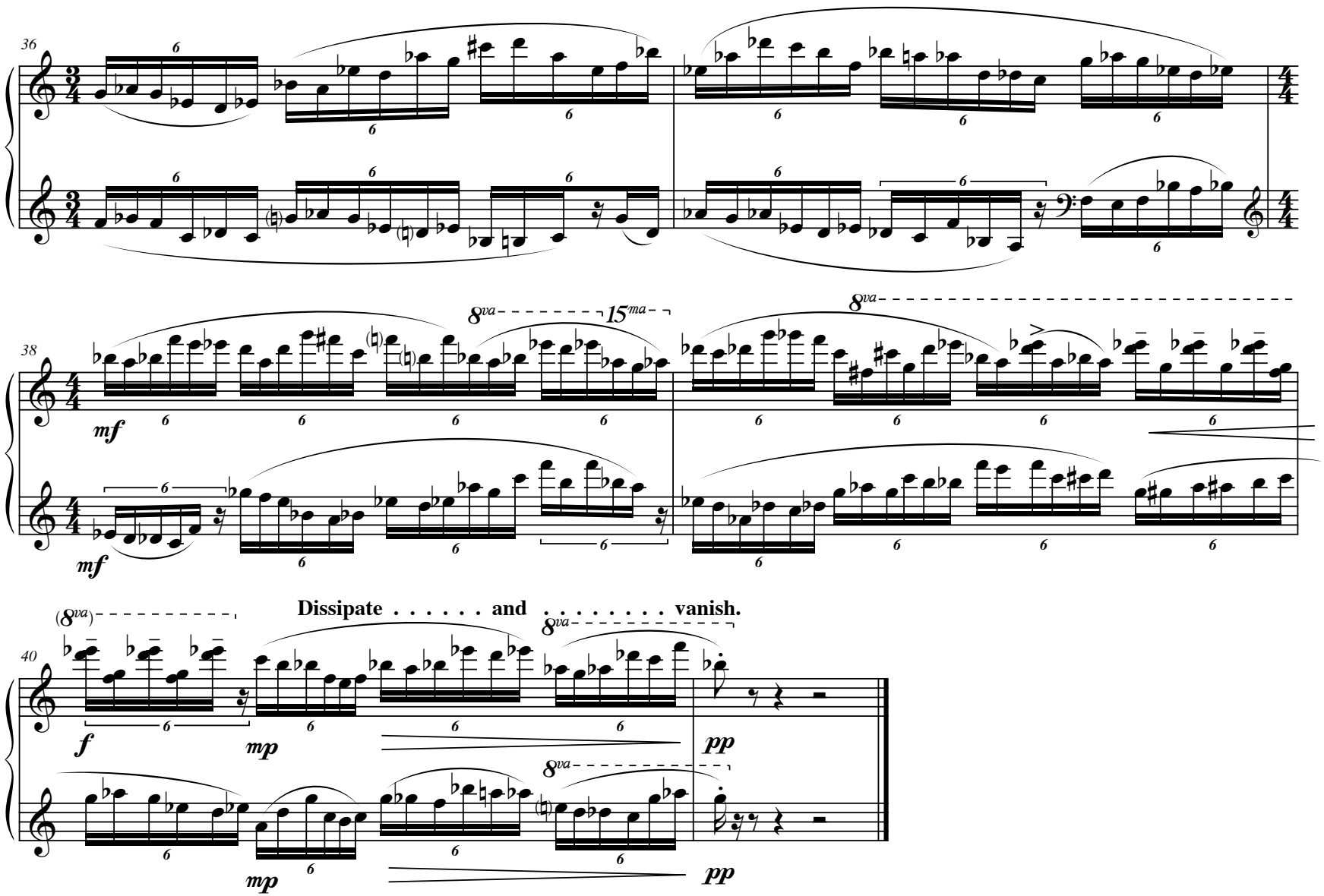
Zephyr




Lyric, calm (rubato) ♩ = 64
16
p
mf mp
mp
21
mf
p
p
mf
mp
Echo ...
p
pp
pp
26
Pensive (Searching); Rubato
p
8va
pp
(Light pedal)
8va
8va
pp

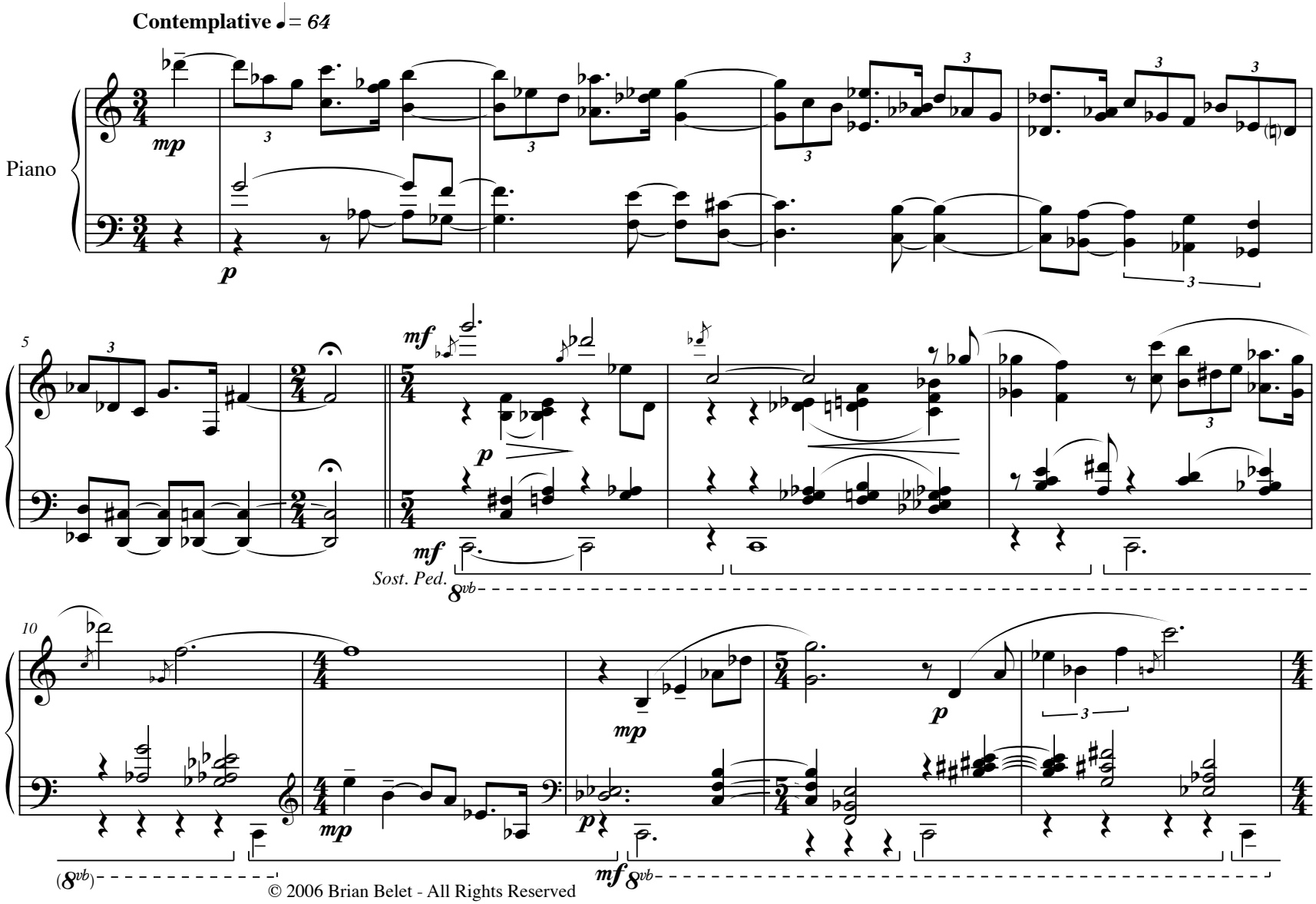
Flowing (like the beginning) ♩= *78*




36
38
40
mf
mf
8va
15ma
8va
(8va)
Dissipate . . . . . and . . . . . vanish.
8va
f
mp
pp
8va
mp
pp

Beyond the Curtain

B. Belet



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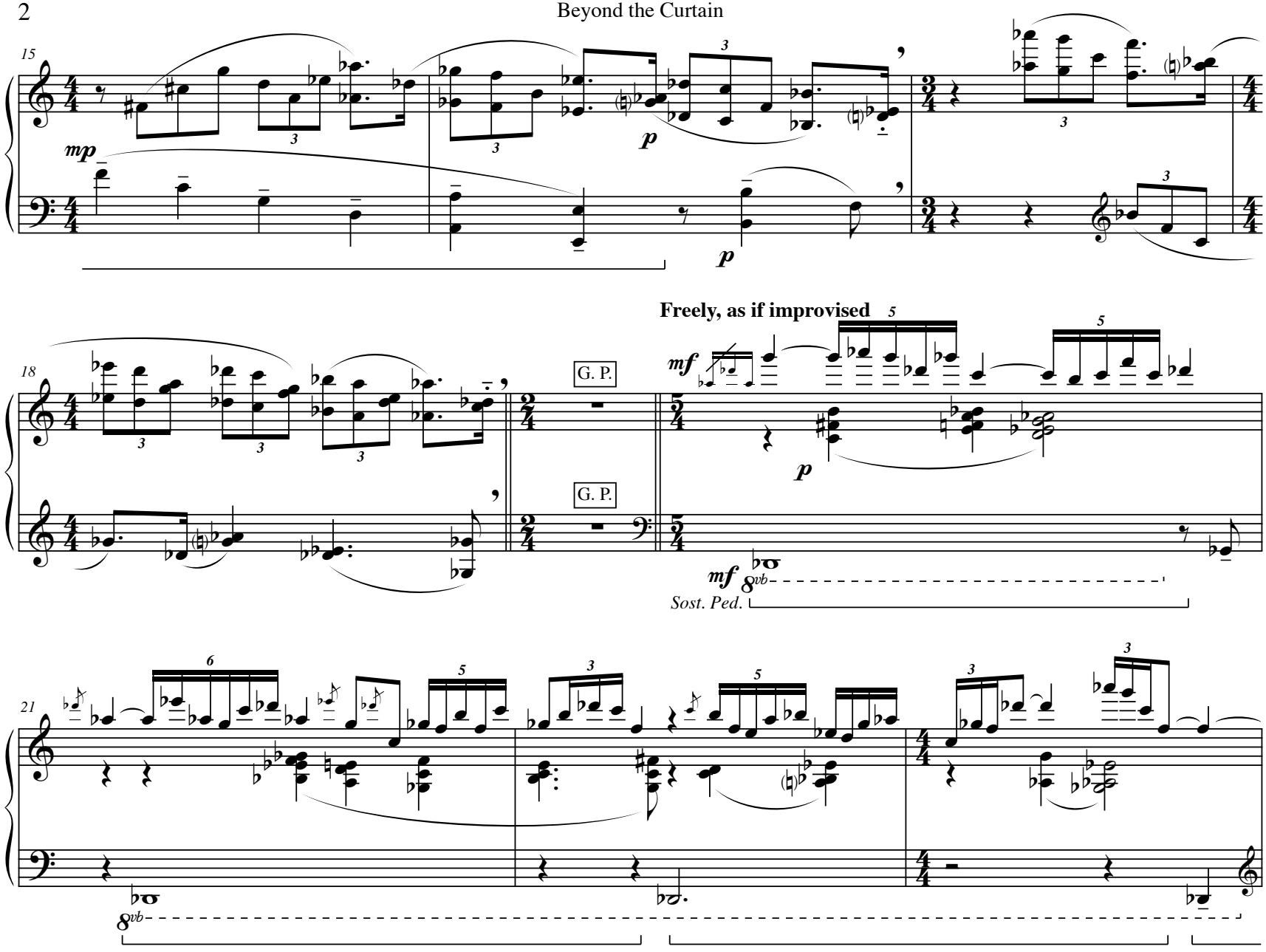
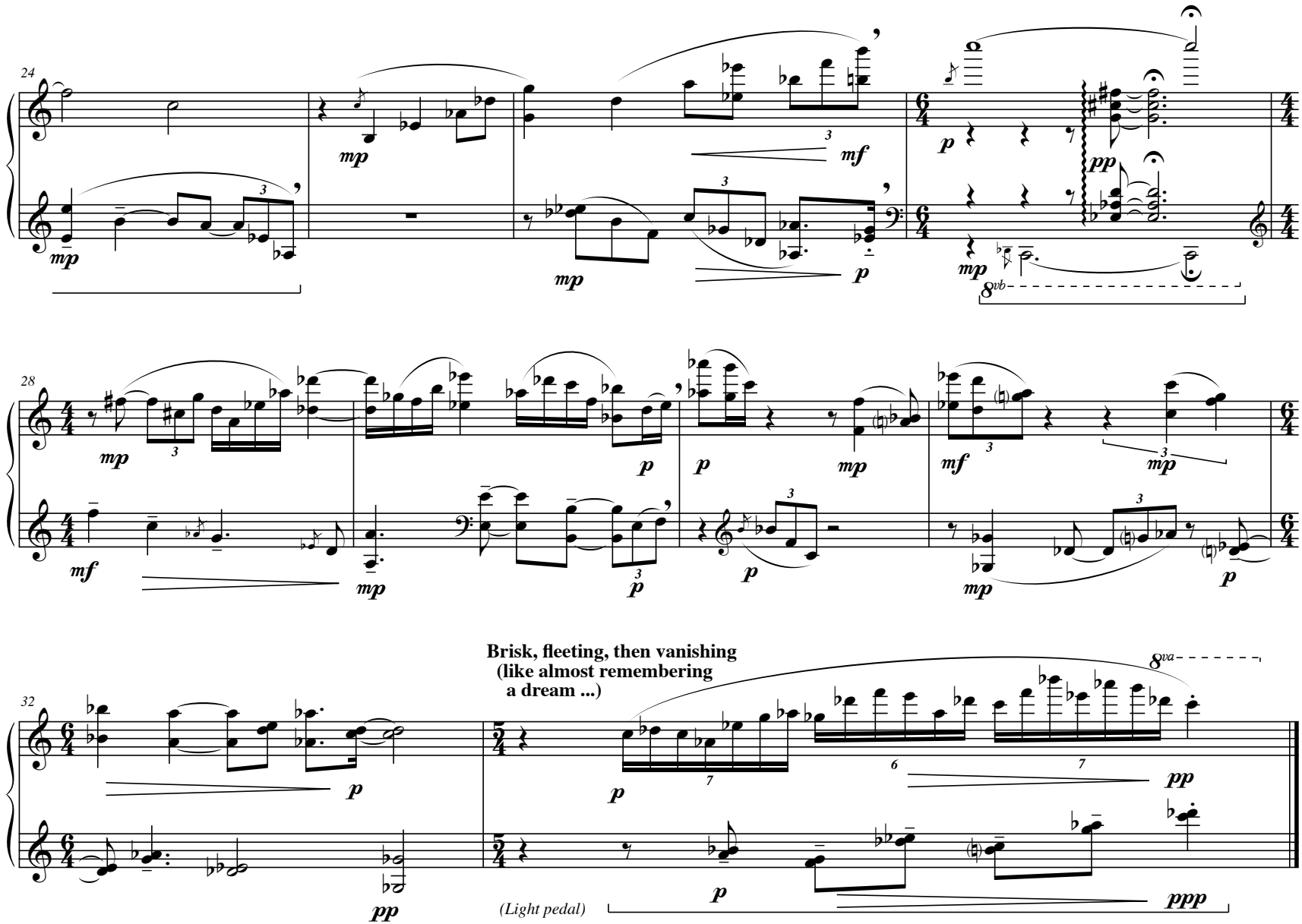
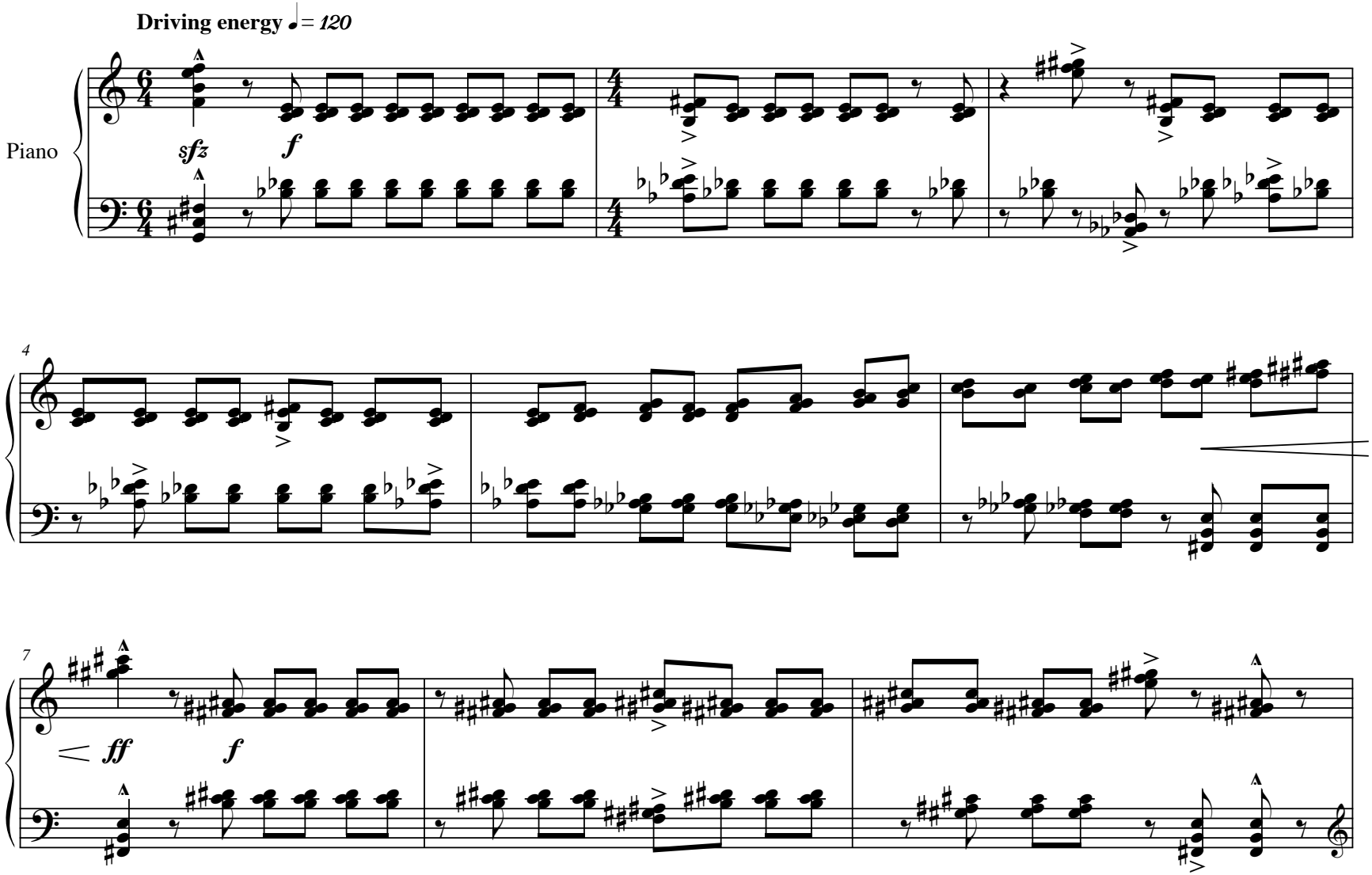

15
mp
p
p
18
G. P.
G. P.
Freely, as if improvised
mf
p
mf
8vb
Sost. Ped.
21
8vb


24
mp
mf
p
pp
mp
8vb
28
mf
mp
p
mf
32
Brisk, fleeting, then vanishing
(like almost remembering
a dream ...)
8va
pp
ppp
(Light pedal)

Earth Dance

B. Belet



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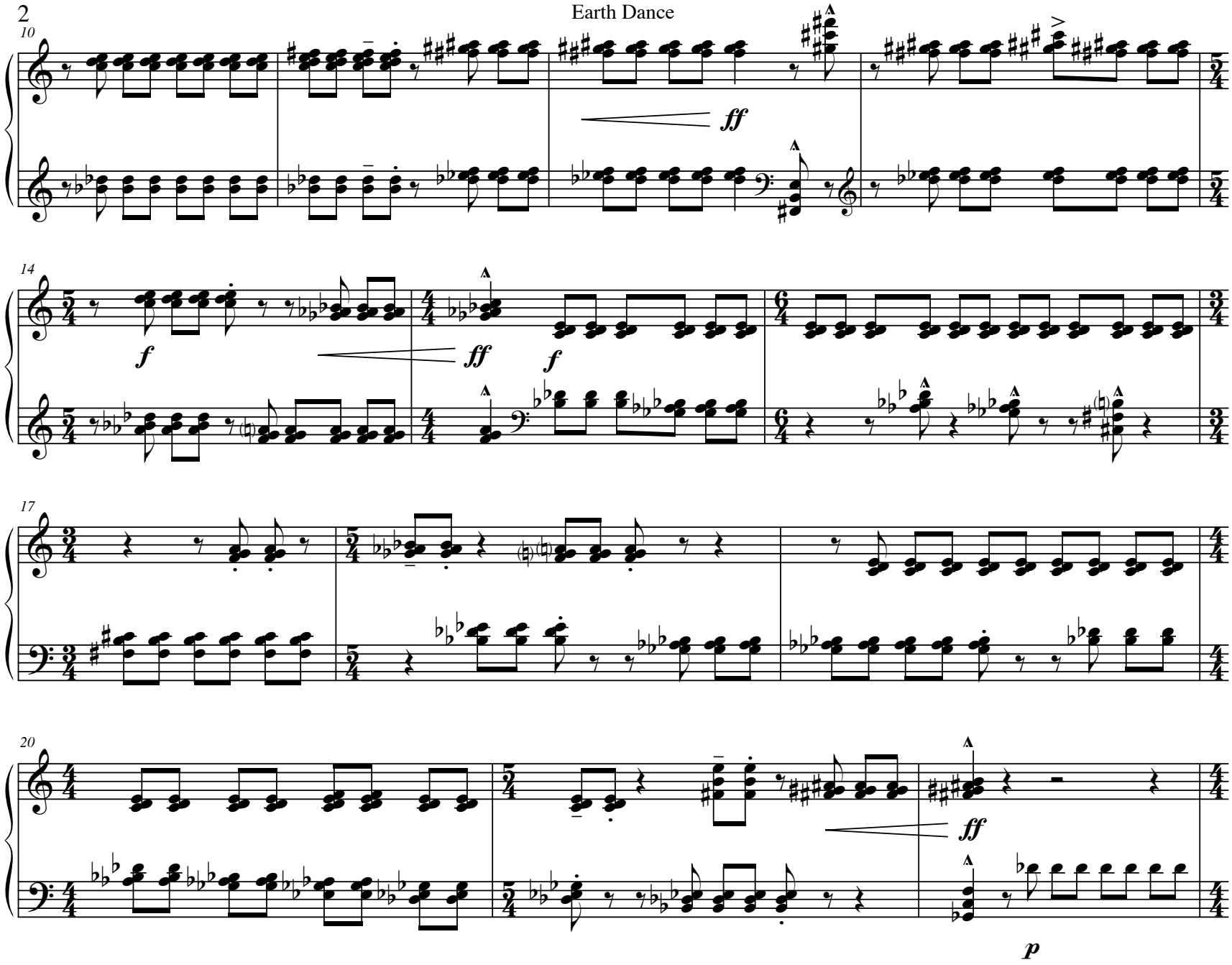
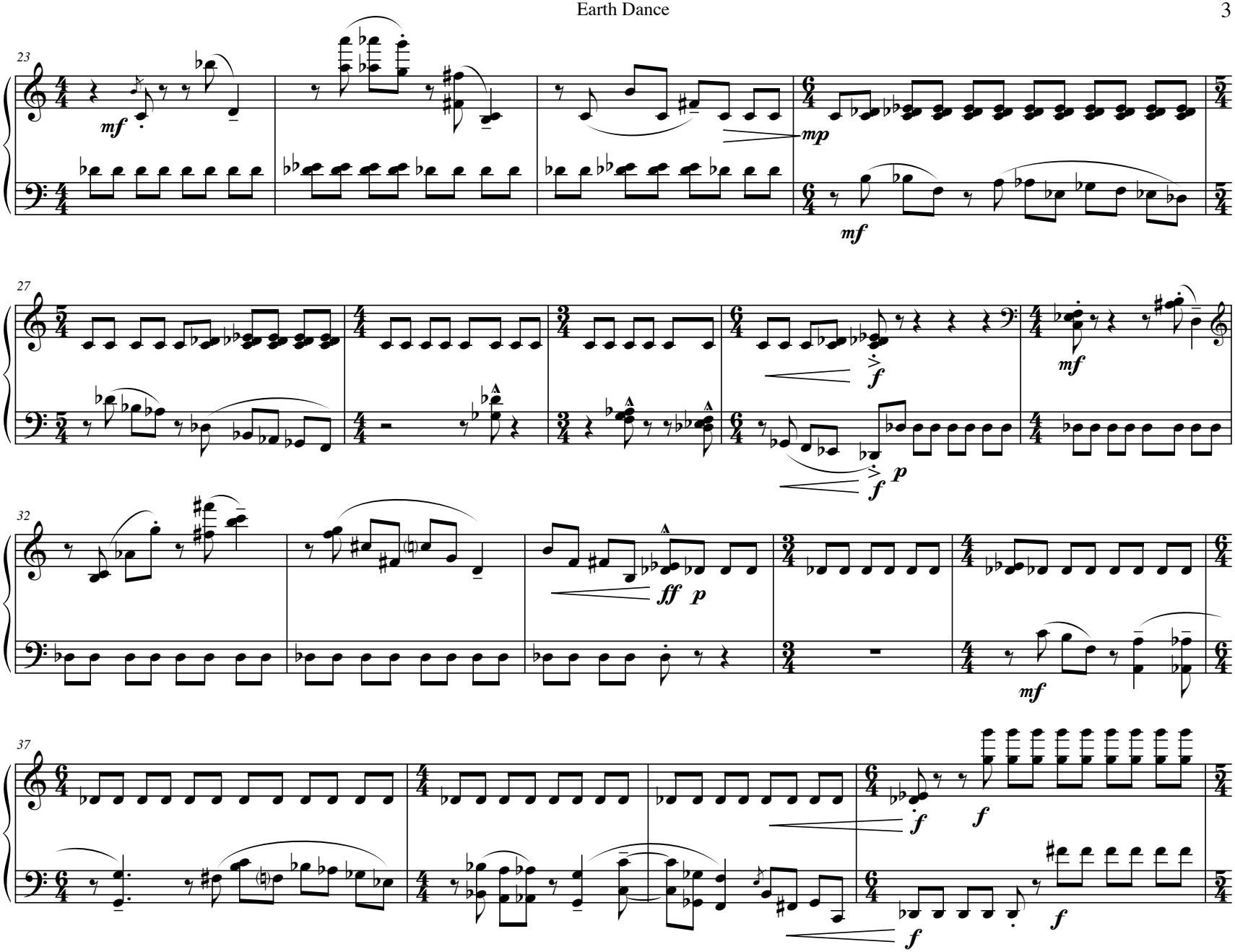
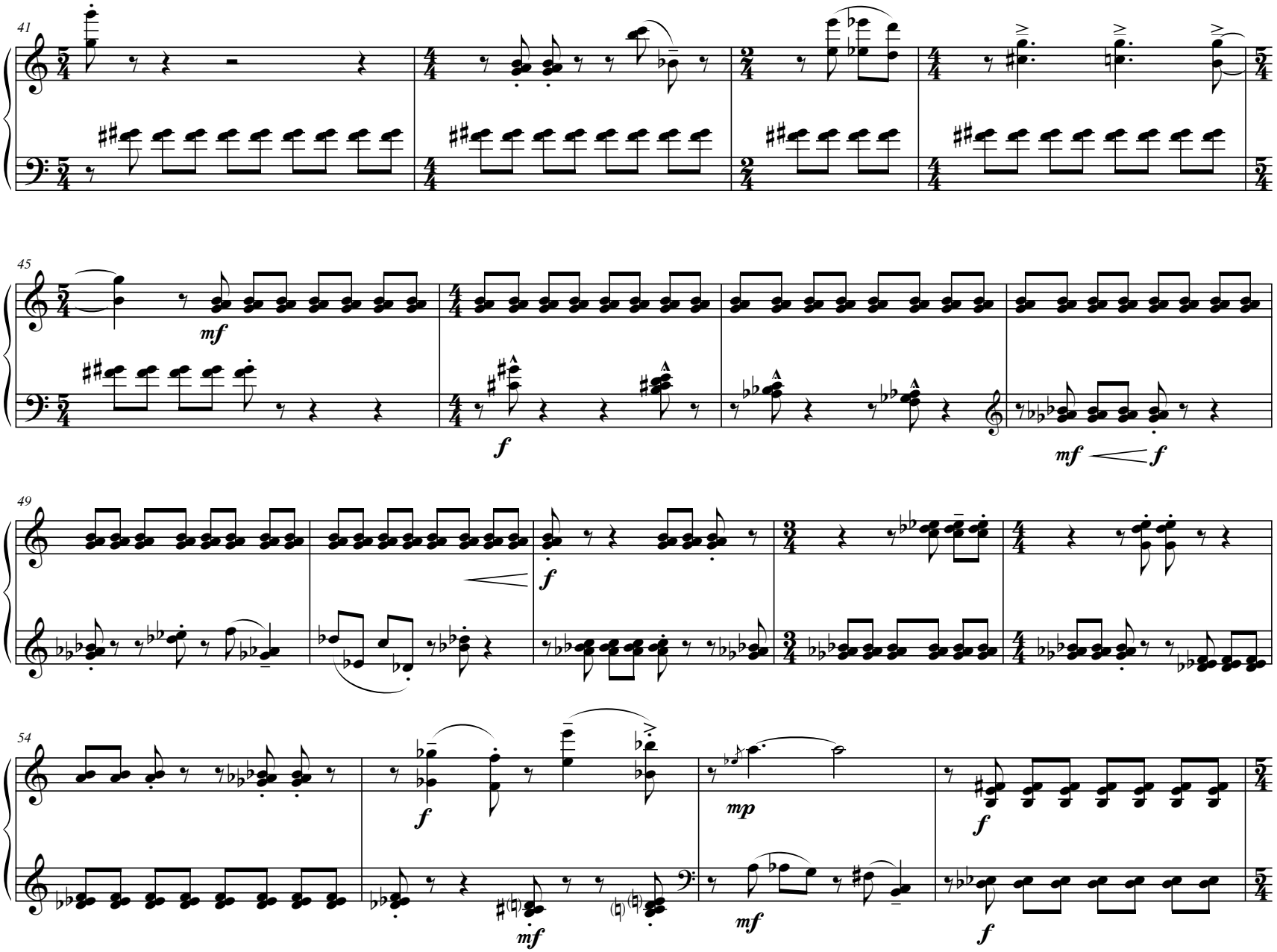
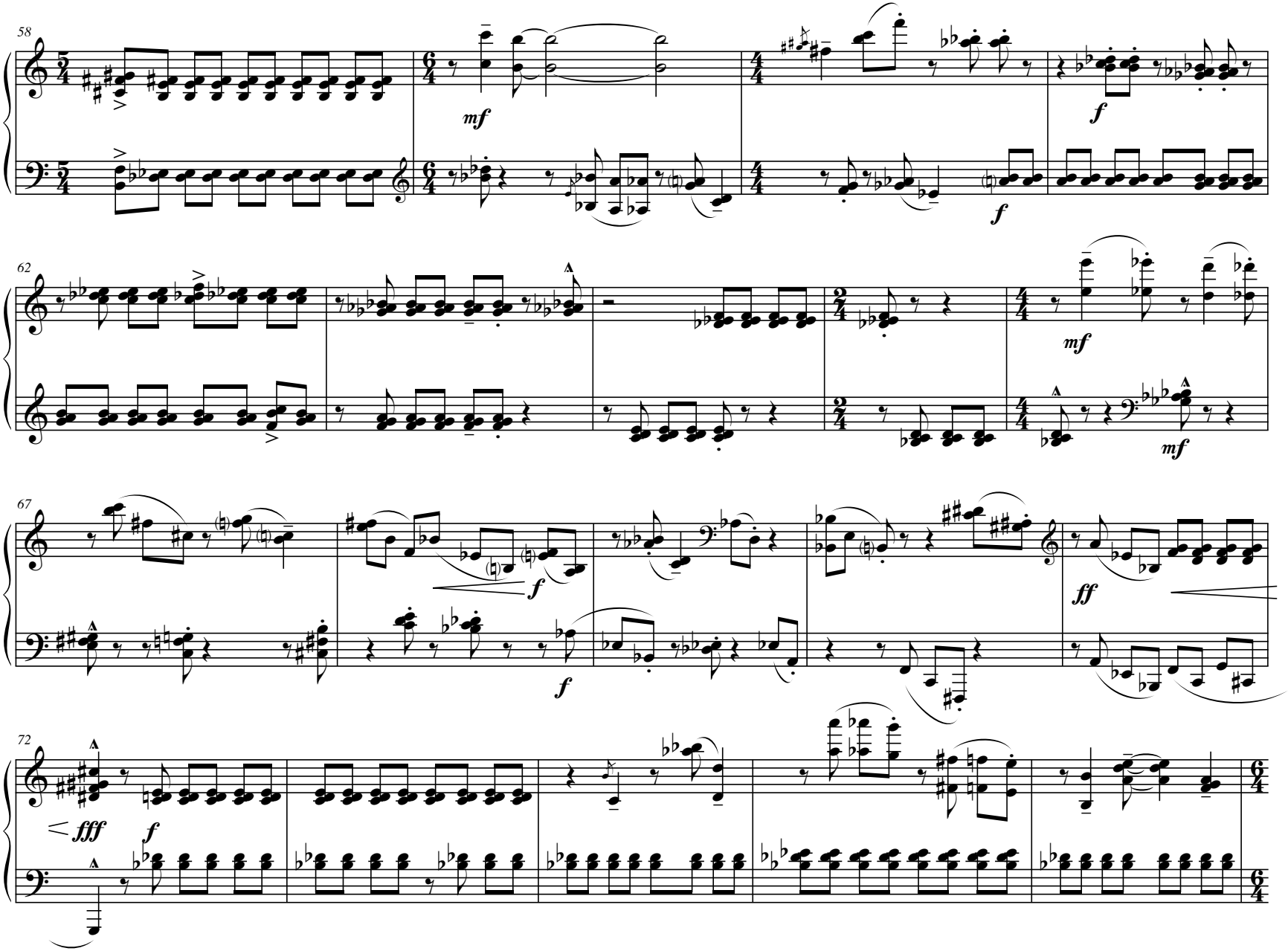
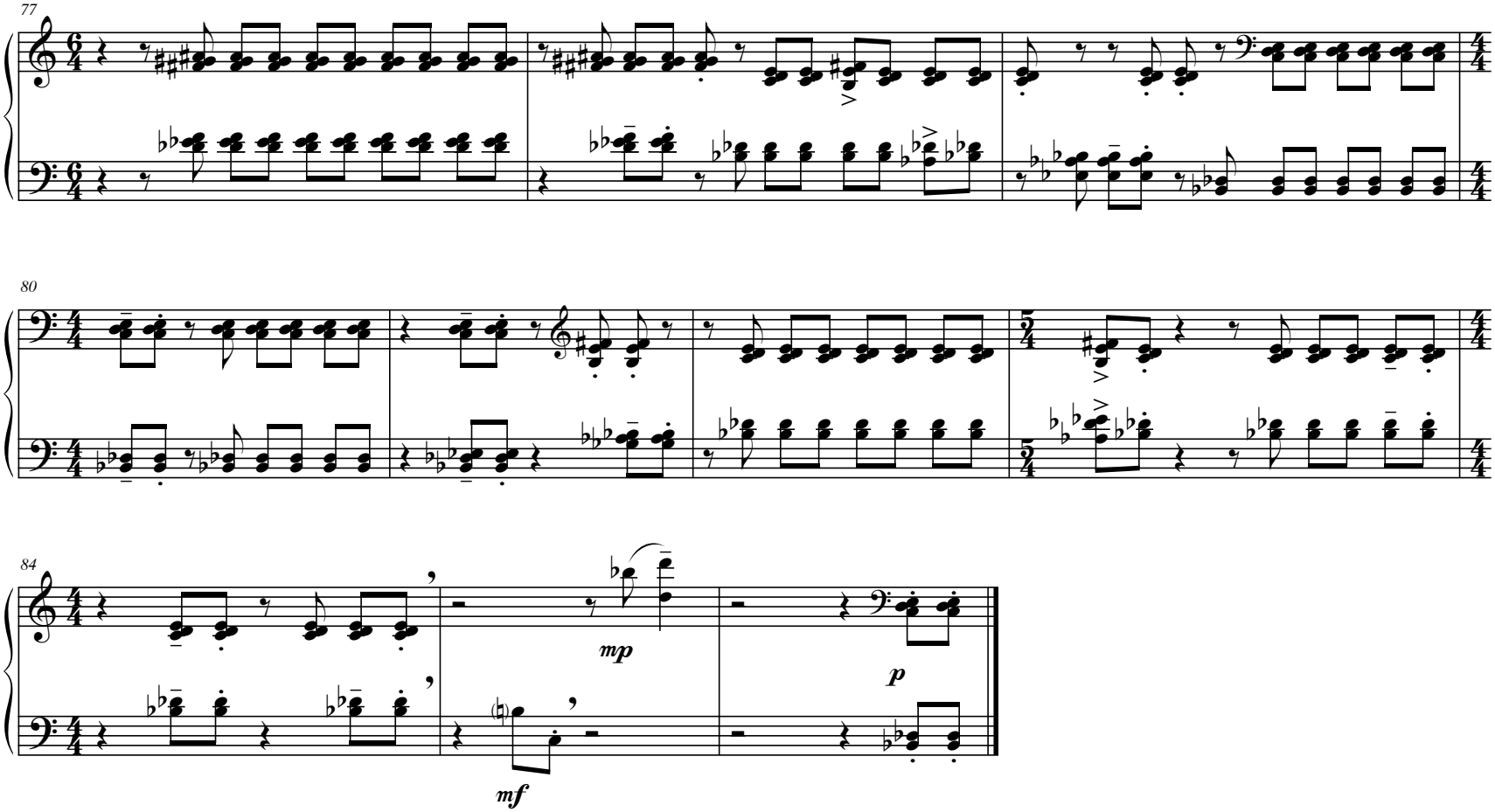
Earth Dance




23
mf
mp
mf
27
f
mf
f
p
32
ff
p
mf
37
f
f
f


41
45
mf
f
mf
f
49
f
54
f
mp
f
mf
f


58
mf
f
f
62
mf
mf
67
f
f
ff
72
fff
f


77
80
84
mp
p
mf