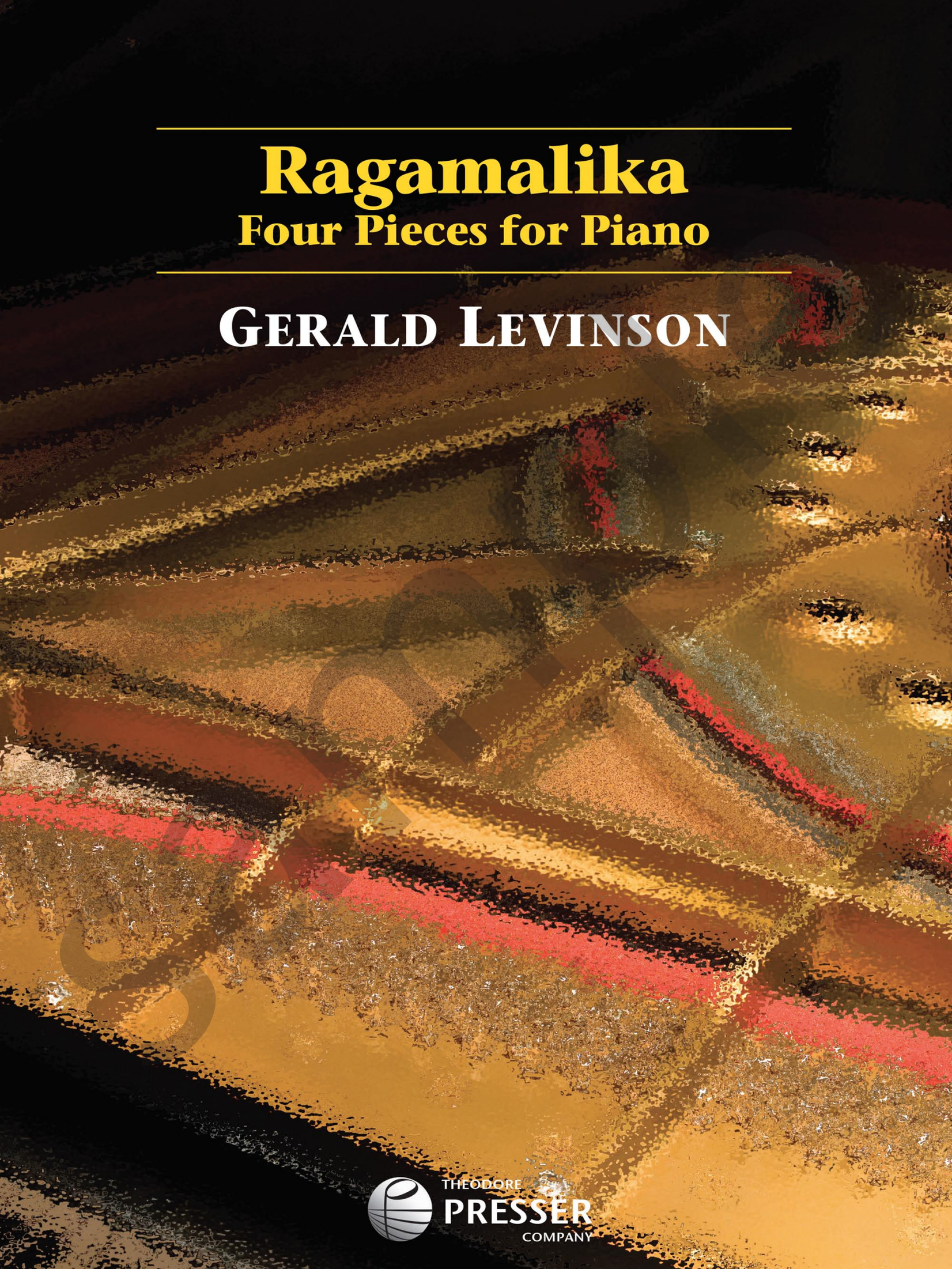
Ragamalika
Four Pieces for Piano

GERALD LEVINSON



THEODORE PRESSER COMPANY

Ragamalika
Four Pieces for Piano

Gerald Levinson

I. Prelude

II. Ragamalika

III. En blanc et noir (pour les sonorités opposées)

IV. Postlude

PROGRAM NOTE

This set of four brief pieces was commissioned by Marcantonio Barone, for whom I had previously written TIME AND THE BELL ... , a large work for piano and ensemble. I had long been eager to explore his unique musicality and extraordinary sense of color in a solo work.

Ragamalika ("garland of ragas") is a virtuosic practice in North Indian classical music in which the soloist departs from the principal raga, or melodic mode, and whirls through a series of other, "foreign" ragas. These four pieces are all conceived in a fundamentally modal manner, broadly defined; each has its own basic melodic and harmonic coloration, influenced in varying degrees by actual or invented Indian ragas. Thus the whole set may be heard as a "garland of ragas." An influence of Balinese gamelan may be heard as well in the bell-like resonances and steadily flowing textures of the first and fourth pieces. The second piece, a virtuoso perpetual-motion study, is a new version of a movement by the same name from TIME AND THE BELL ... , extensively rewritten to incorporate elements of the orchestral counterpoint and harmonic layering into the solo part, also including some entirely new passages. The title of the third piece is a double homage to Debussy, whose music has long been of formative importance in my whole conception of what music can be. The "opposed sonorities" often involve juxtapositions of black and white keys, complex combinations of resonances, and abrupt contrasts of speed, register, and character.

RAGAMALIKA was first performed by Marcantonio Barone at the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, March 2001. It is recorded by Mr. Barone on Albany Records, TROY 936.

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Sample

for Marcantonio Barone

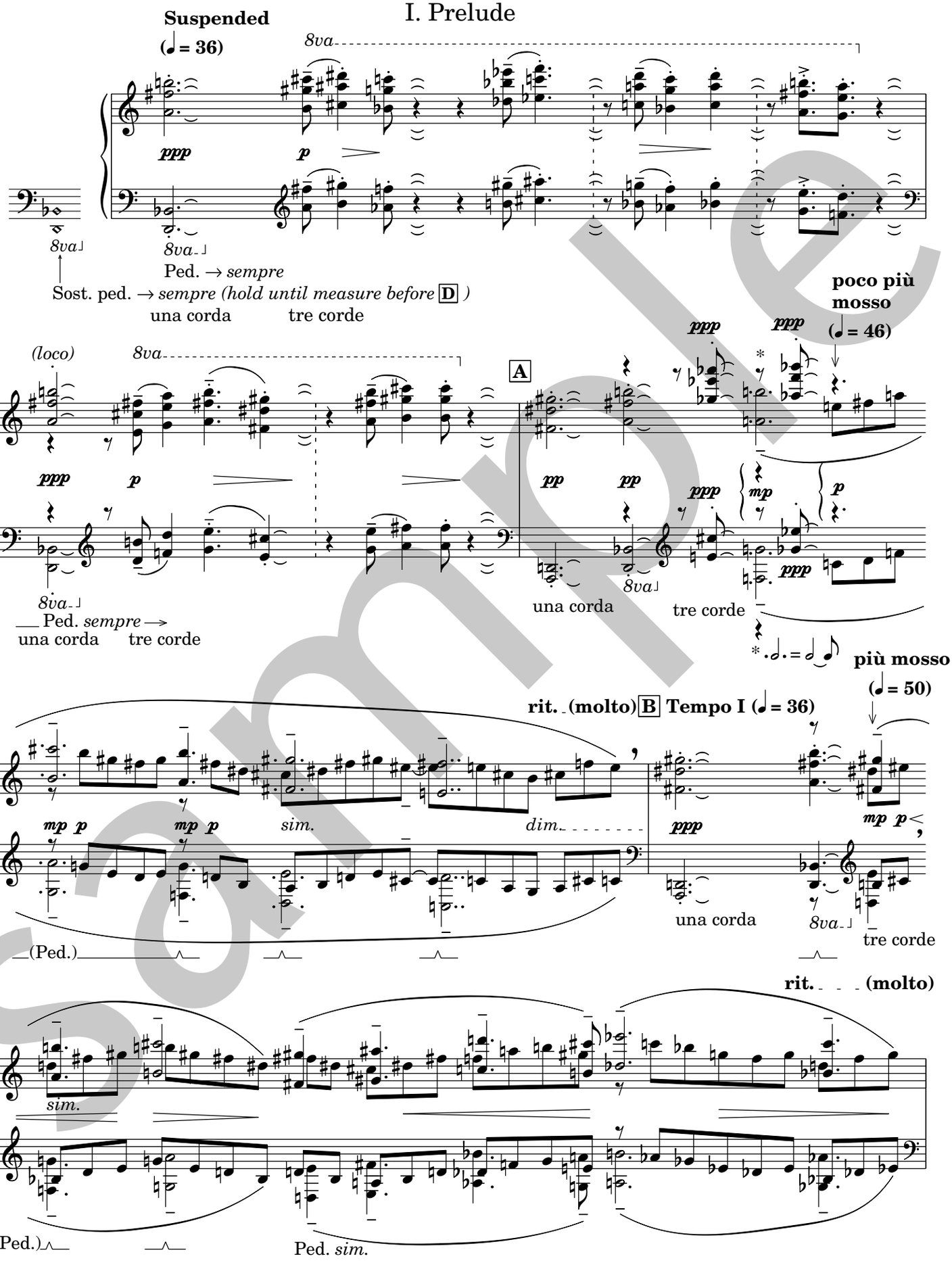
Ragamalika

Four Pieces for Piano

Duration: c. 16'

GERALD LEVINSON

I. Prelude



Sample

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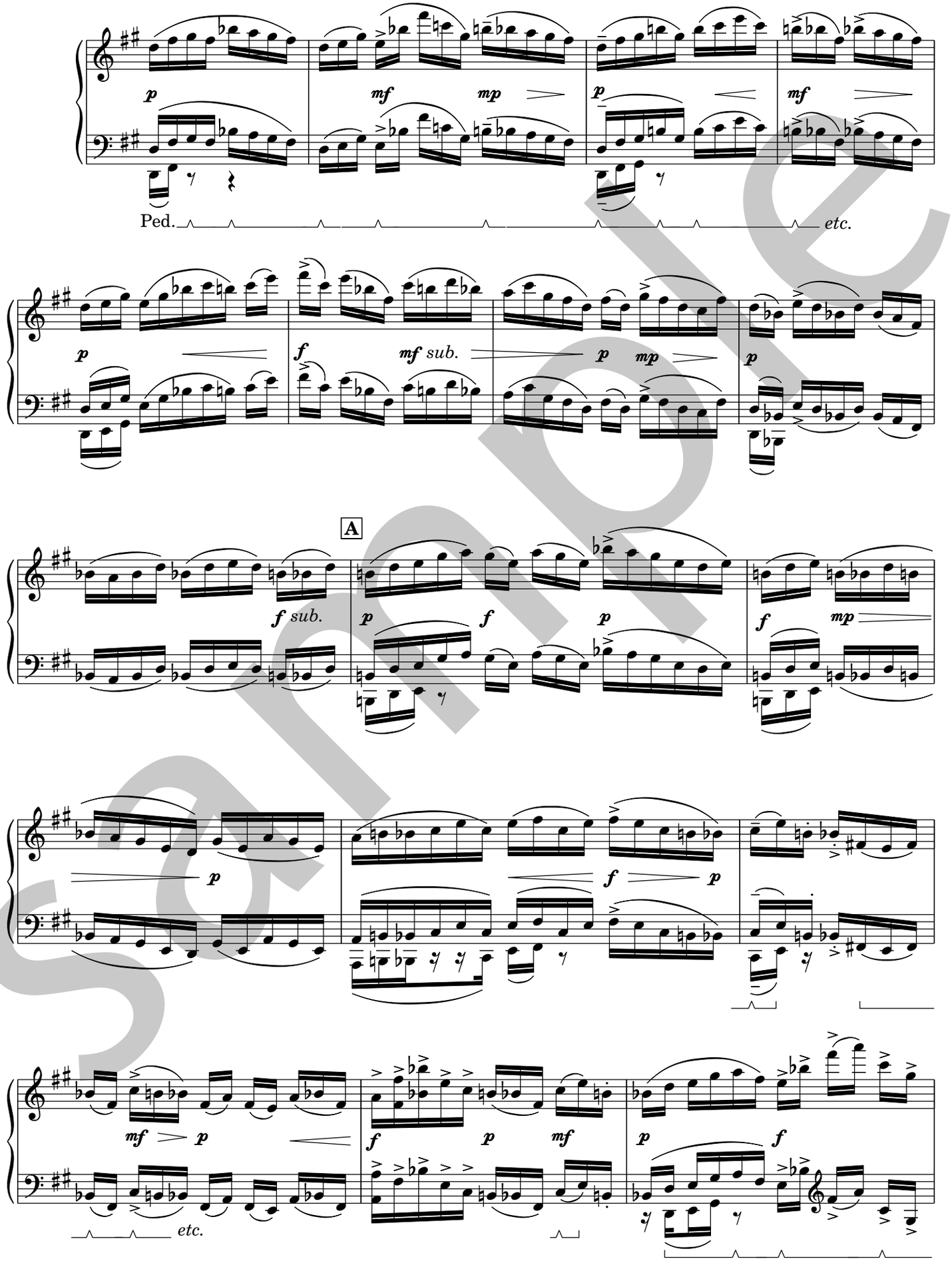
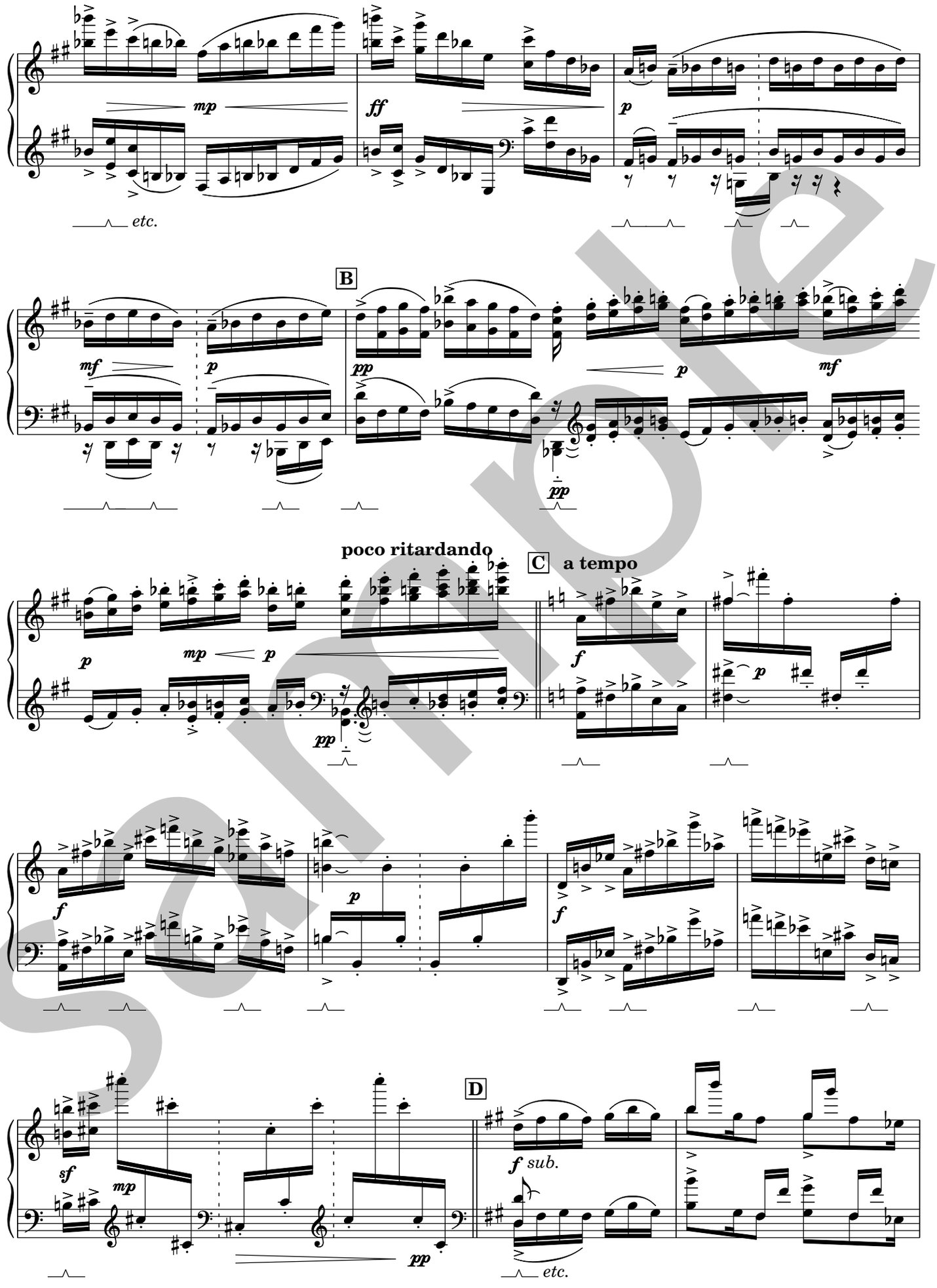
140-40091
Printed in U.S.A.

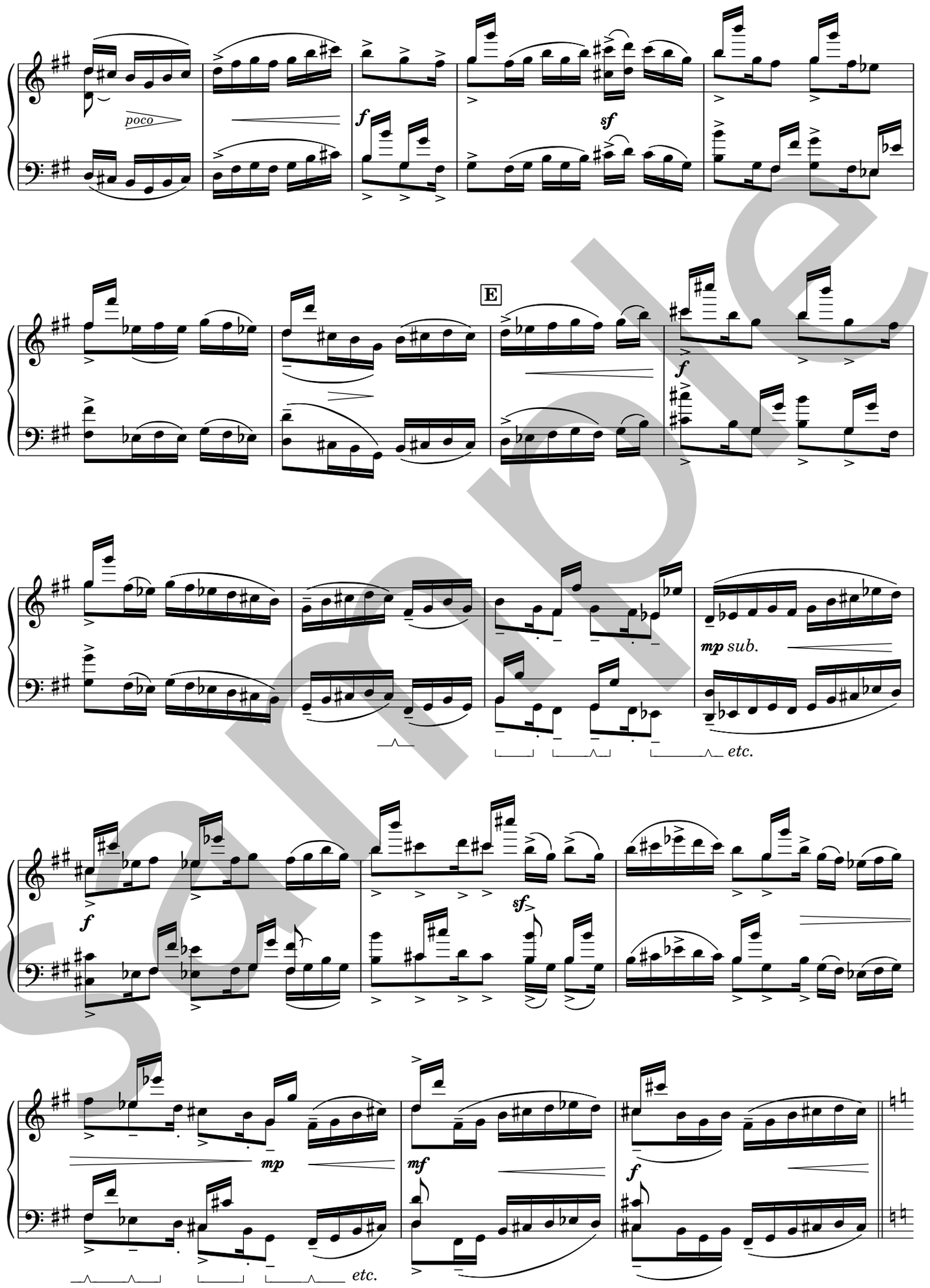
Swift but clearly articulated (♩= ca. 100)



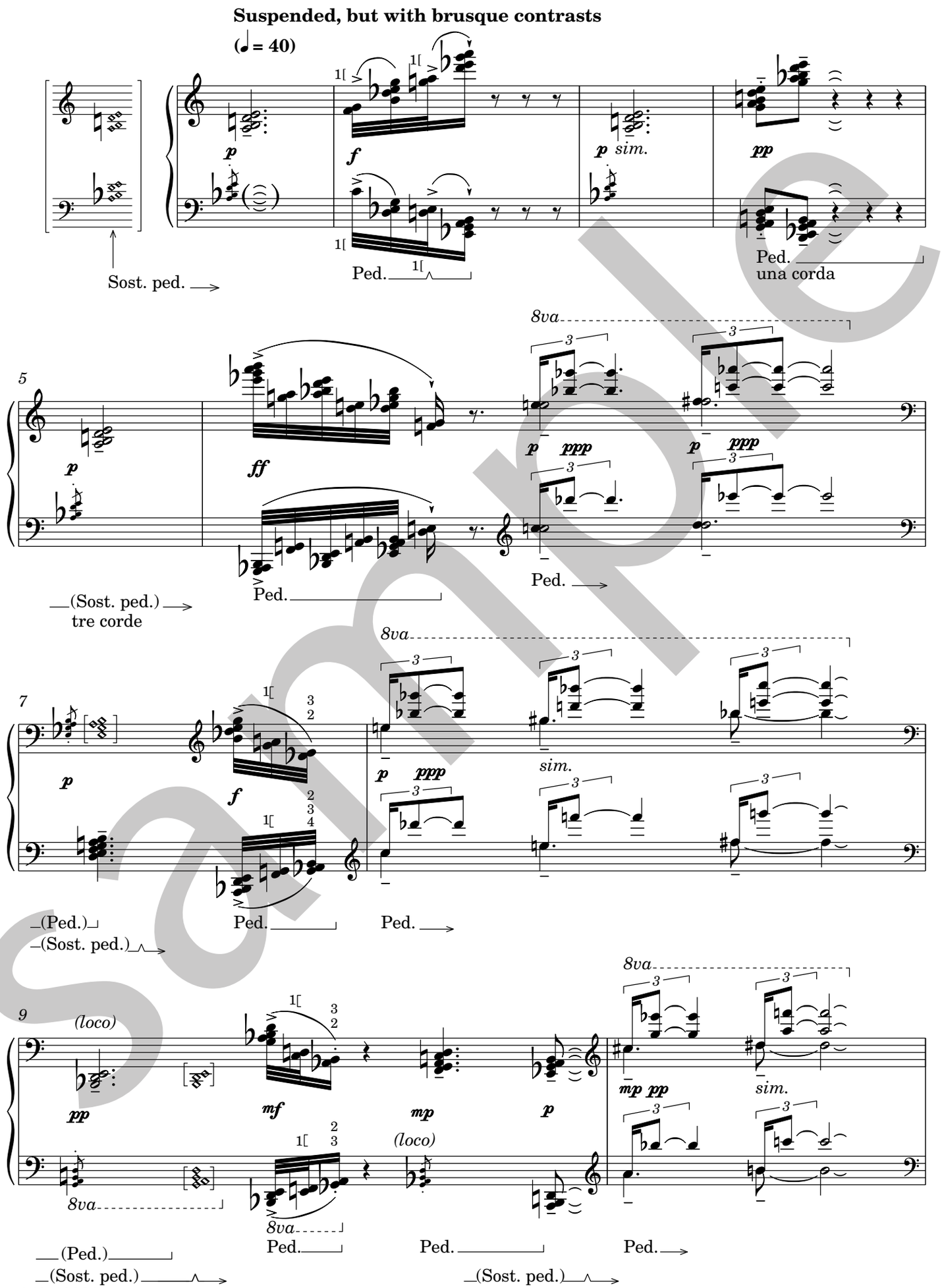
sample


mp
ff
p
etc.
B
mf
p
pp
p
mf
pp
poco ritardando
C
a tempo
mp
p
pp
f
p
f
p
f
sf
mp
pp
D
f sub.
etc.

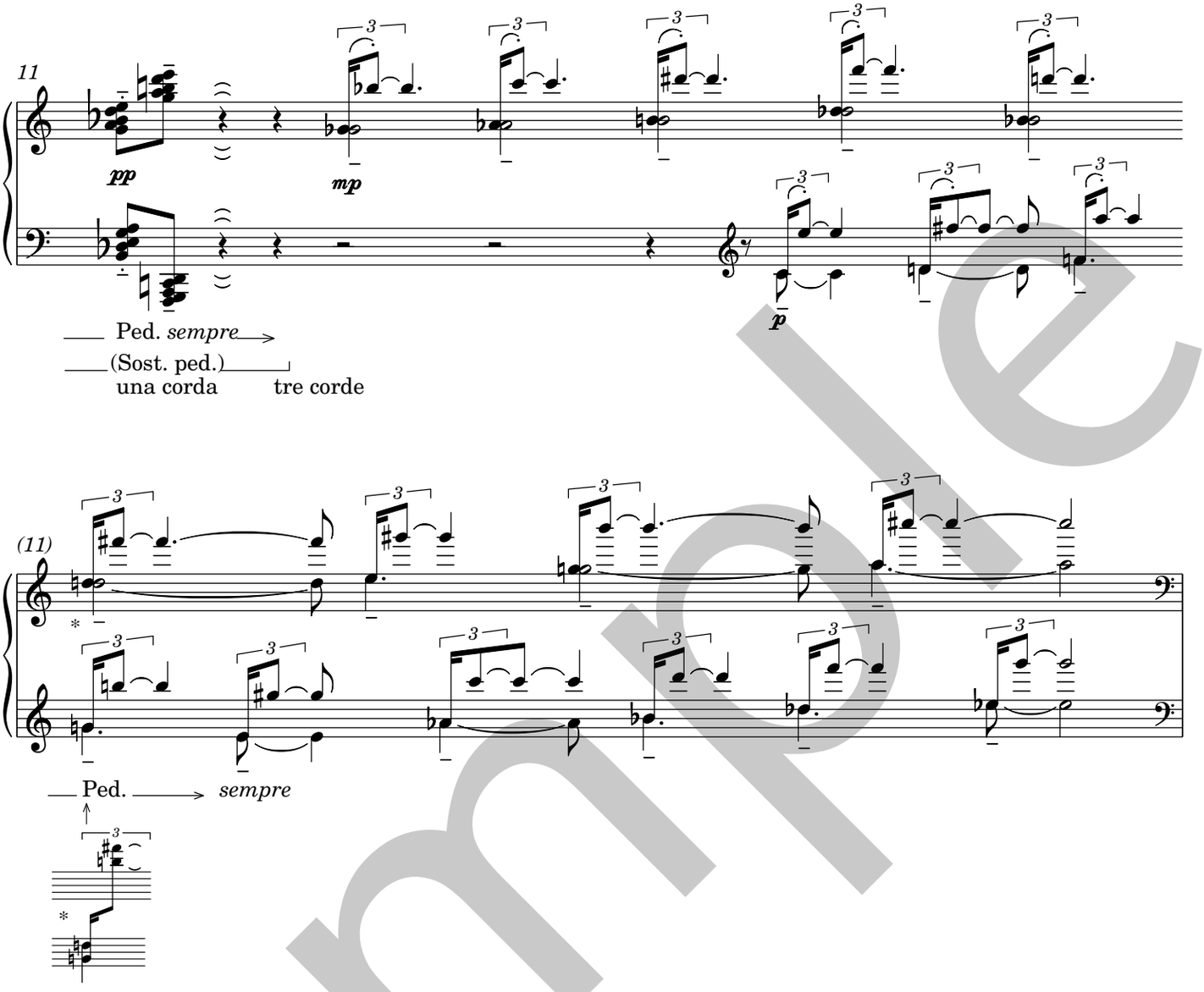
sample



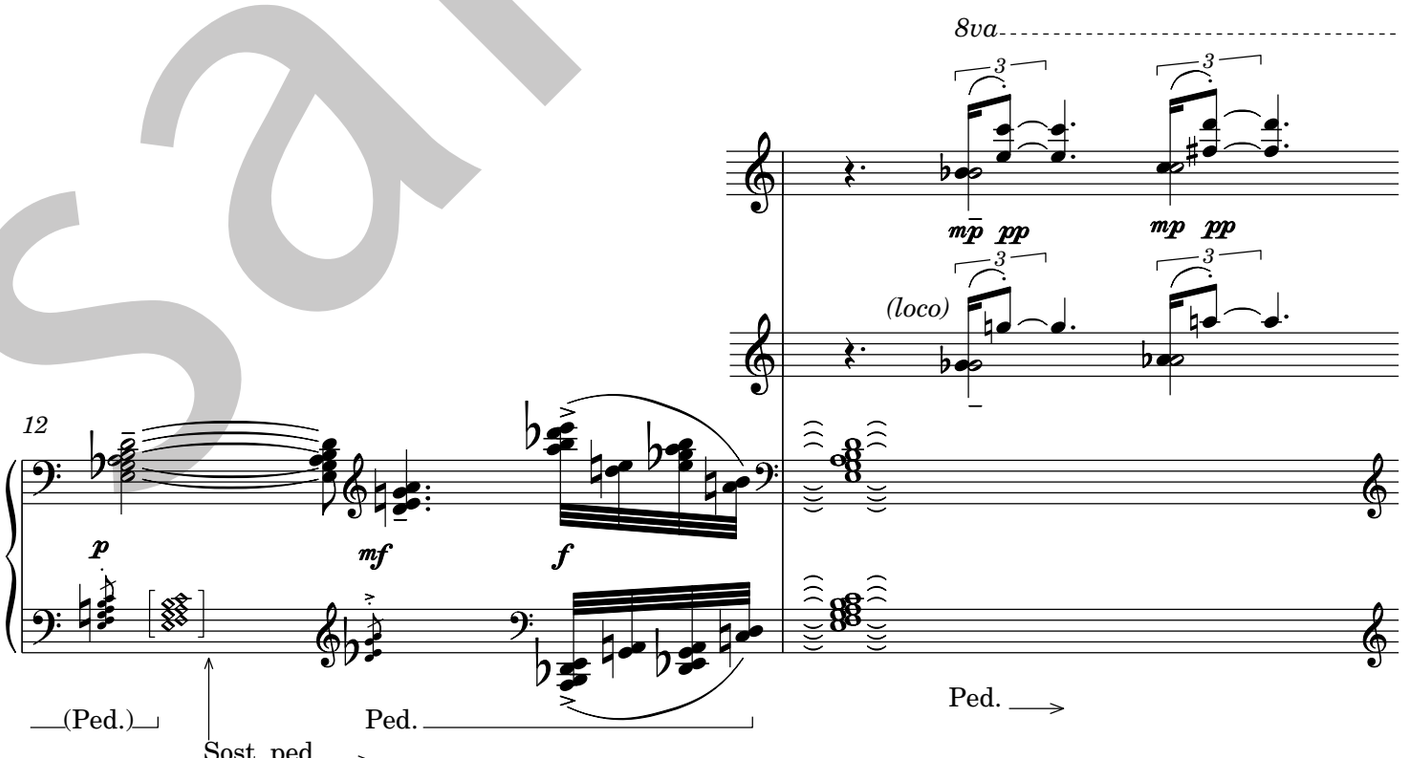
sample


Suspended, but with brusque contrasts
(♩ = 40)
Sost. ped.
Ped.
una corda
8va
(Sost. ped.)
tre corde
(Ped.)
(Sost. ped.)
(loco)

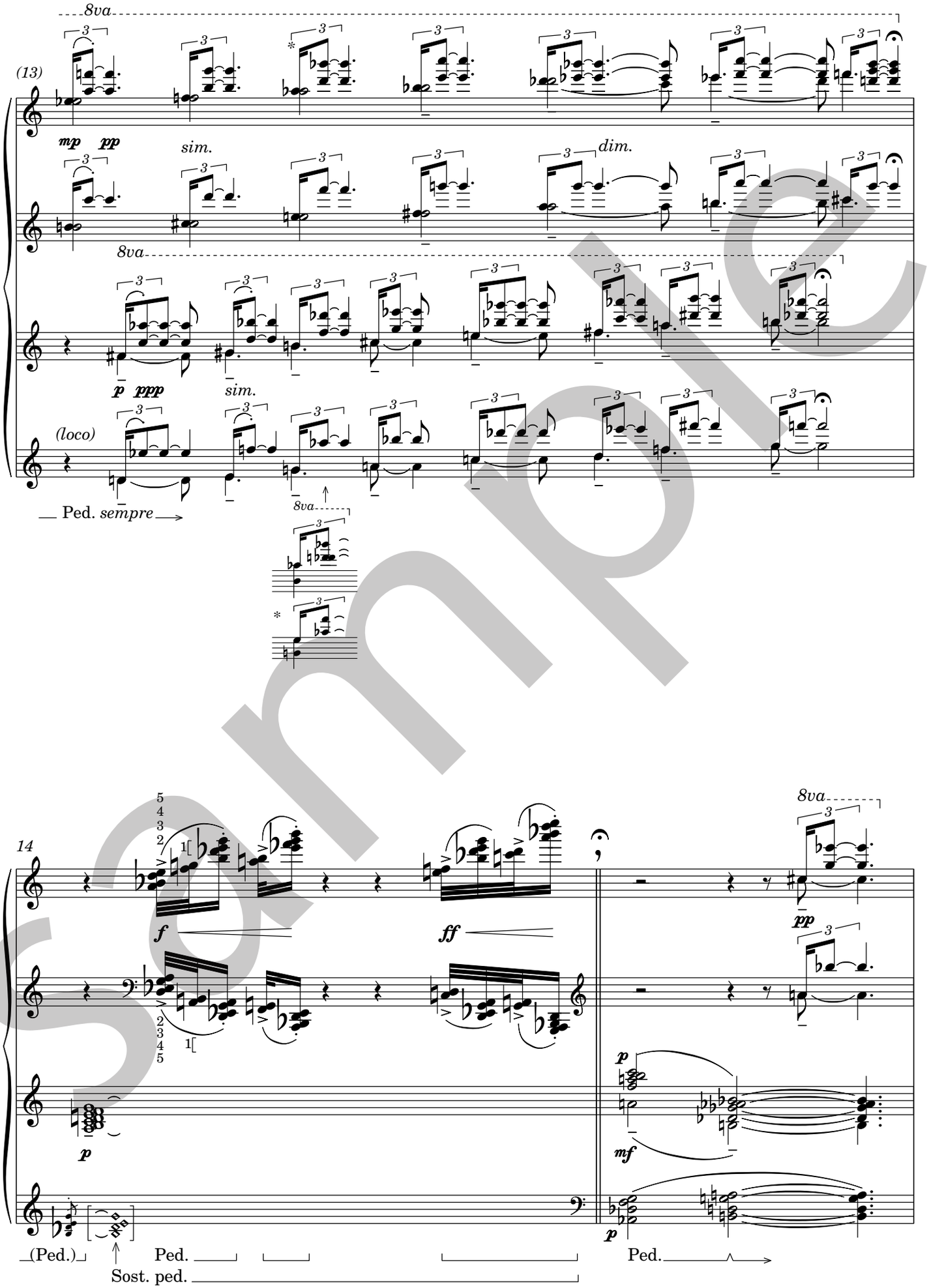
sample


11
pp
mp
p
Ped. sempre
(Sost. ped.)
una corda
tre corde

(11)
Ped.
sempre

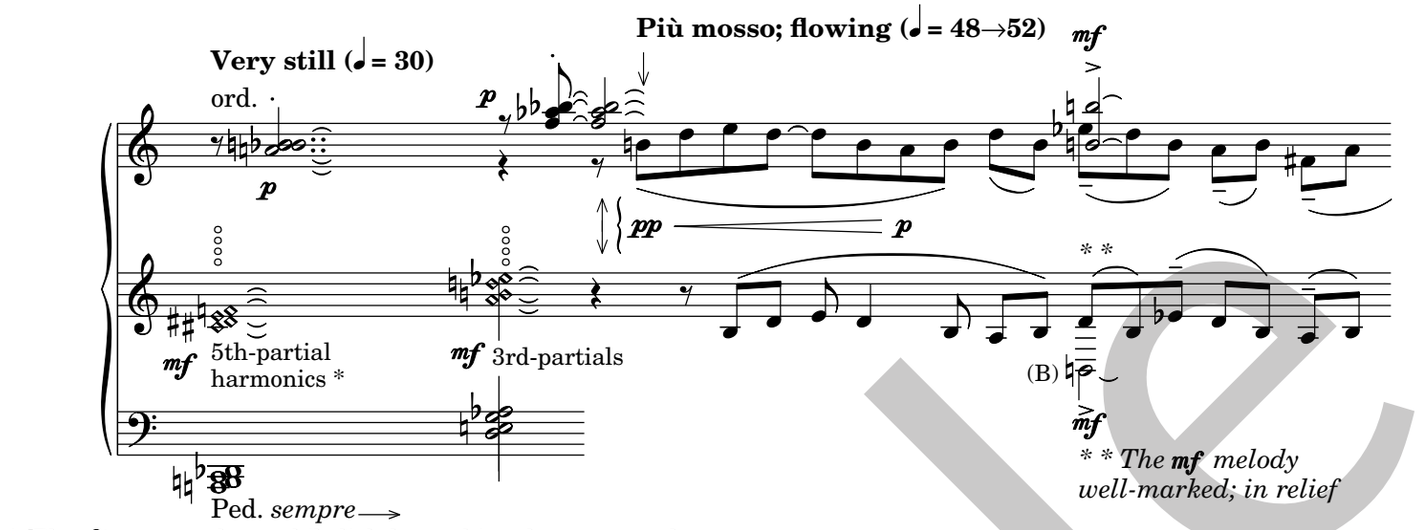

8va
mp pp
mp pp
(loco)
12
p
mf
f
(Ped.)
Sost. ped.
Ped.
Ped.

sample

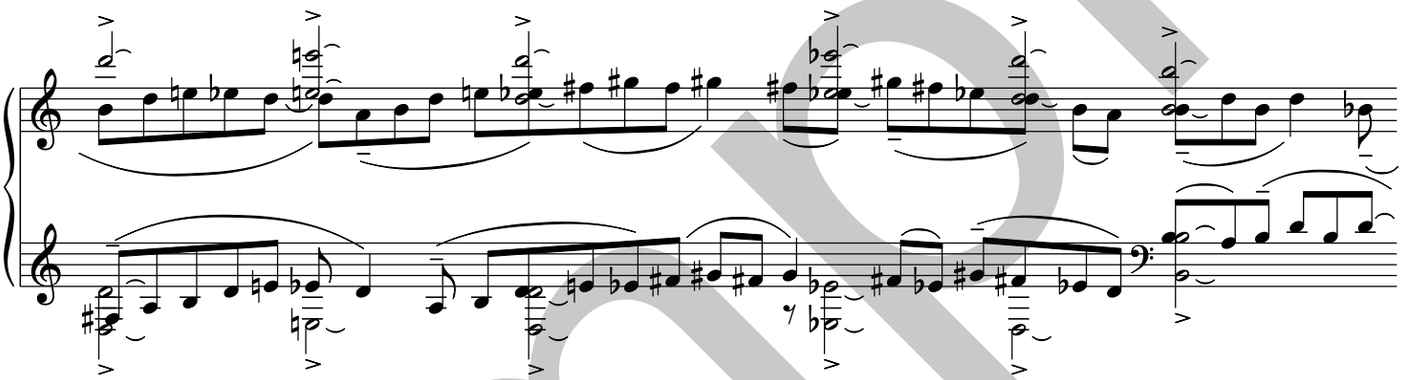

8va
(13)
mp pp
sim.
dim.
8va
p ppp
sim.
(loco)
Ped. sempre
8va
14
f
ff
8va
pp
p
p
mf
p
(Ped.)
Ped.
Sost. ped.
Ped.

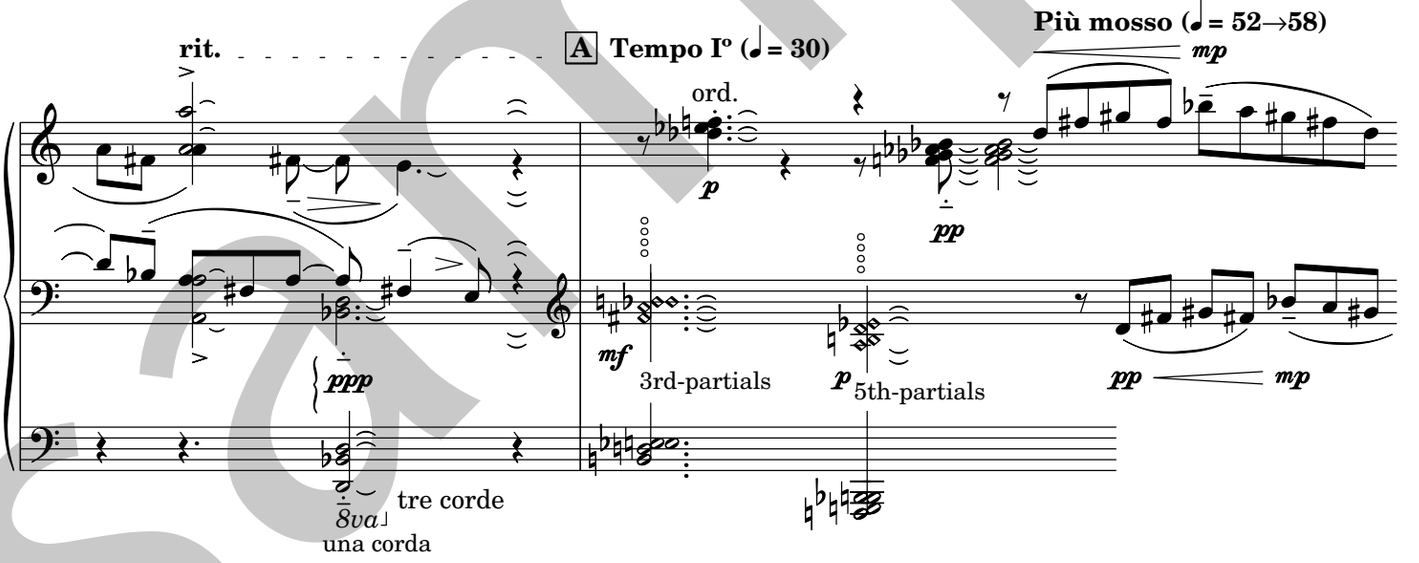
sample

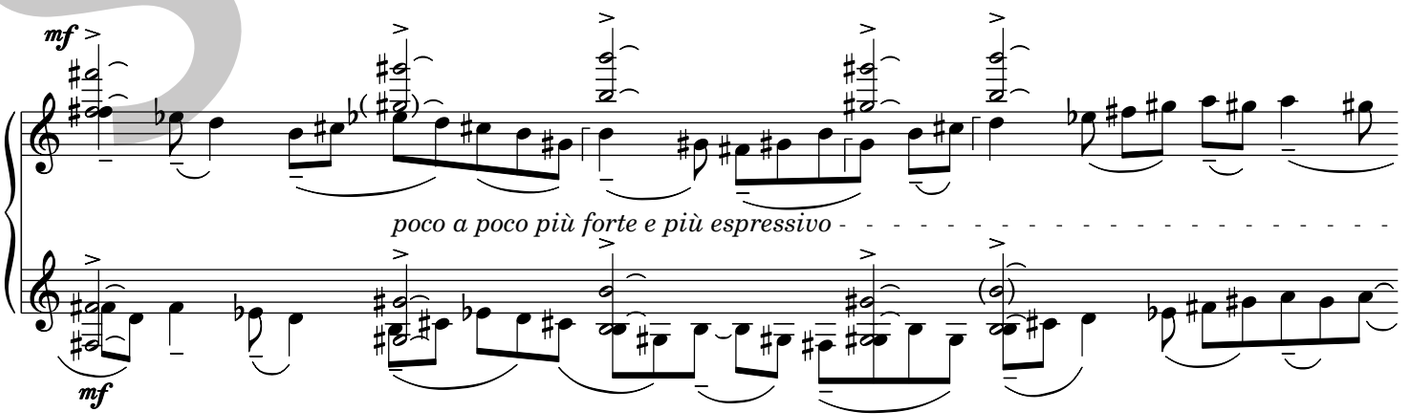
IV. Postlude



* [Play 𝄢 notes on keys while lightly touching the proper nodes on strings, so as to produce the harmonics indicated by ◇ .]







Sample