studies in resonance II

for piano

Elo Masing

2012/2013

studies in resonance II for piano explores the physical functioning of the instrument and the physicality of piano playing through the use of various unconventional playing techniques. The movements of the pianist can be regarded as choreographed in the notation, therefore the visual aspect of the performance is almost as important as the aural. Instead of becoming restricted by the notation, the performer should let himself go in the physical act of playing, the raw energy and playfulness inherent in it. If in this process a few notes should be missed, it would not harm the general outcome as much as an overly restricted performance.

Techniques on keys:
Various different hand and arm parts are used. (See chart with parts of hand.)
Right hand/arm – R
Left hand/arm – L

Parts of hand to be used for playing:
Hand – [hnd] – hit keys with the whole hand (from heel to fingertips)
Fingers – [fg] – fingertips
Palm – [plm] – from the heel of the hand to the joints where the fingers begin
Heel – [hl] – the heel of the hand
Fist – [fst] – hit keys with a clenched fist

Ways the arm is to be used for playing:
Arm: elbow to fingertips – [e-fg] – arm length on white keys 2 octaves + 6th
Arm: elbow to fist – [e-fst] – arm length on white keys 2 octaves + 2nd, occasionally 3rd
Arm: elbow to wrist – [e-w] – arm length on white keys 1 octave + 6th, occasionally 7th

If no special indications are given, the player should play with his fingers in a normal way.
Arm lengths given above are of course ideal conditions – if the player's arms are longer or shorter, he should adjust the range of the arm clusters accordingly, taking into account that the range where the notes need to be silently depressed after the cluster is taken off remains either covered or uncovered, depending on the author's intentions as seen in any given passage. The beginnings of glissando clusters should remain fixed as they are in the score and the length of the cluster should be measured from there in all cases except when doing so would interfere with the intended resonance of the silently depressed keys.
All clusters are chromatic unless otherwise indicated. To facilitate reading, chromatic clusters are notated with a thicker line than only white or black key clusters.
In *crystalline* section the lower two notes of all the chords are to be played with the thumb. If this is not possible, keep the lowest note of the chord and leave out the one above.

Techniques inside the piano:
Remove front panel/music stand to gain easy access to the strings.

Piano harmonics:
Remove finger from string quickly after hitting the key to gain maximum resonance.
3 different harmonic nodes are used that should yield complex bell-like sounds. The positions of the harmonics are notated with a tablature-style damper+string symbol:

1 cm up from damper 5 cm up from damper 1 cm down from damper

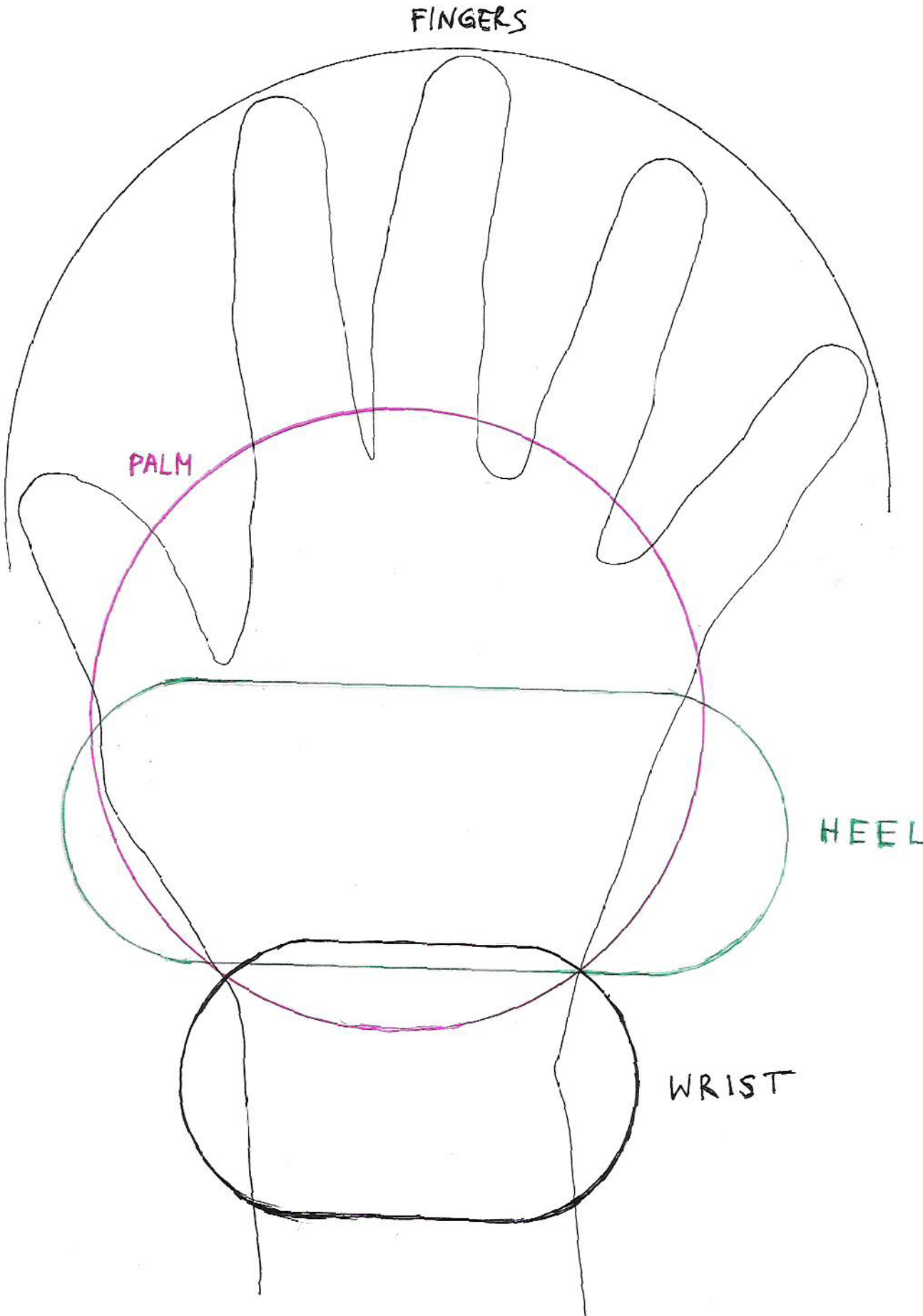
Retakes – hitting keys once with harmonics and immediately thereafter silently depressing a key – should produce a clearly audible single harmonic sound. The pedalling there is intended to help catch the harmonic's resonance.
Harmonic glissando (*senza misura*) – move right hand fingers slowly up and down the indicated strings from near the damper to 2nd harmonic node at ca 20 cm up from the damper. Listen out for various very high partials.

Glissandi on strings:
The range of glissandi can be adjusted to fit the position of the beams inside different pianos, provided that the various sonic principles in the piece are adhered to, as already explained above with regard to arm clusters and silently depressed keys. The glissandi here work well on a Stainway model with 3 beams, where beam I (lowest) is situated between E and F (Great Octave) and beam II between c'' and d-flat''. Some pianos have more than 3 beams dividing the strings. *Ossia* staves in the beginning of the piece show possible solutions in case a beam is inconveniently in the middle of a glissando. The *ossia* versions should be seen as guidelines of how to possibly deal with the specifics of different pianos, but the performer is free to find his own ways.

Fingernail symbol. Play glissando with surface of fingernail, palm turned upwards, nail surface towards the strings; *thumb* - thumbnail surface turned towards the strings; *fingertip* – flesh of the fingertip
Scraping strings with nails – the direction of the scraping movement can be either towards or away from the performer, whichever gives better sonic results for each individual performer.

General notes:
Diamond note heads signify silently depressed keys.
In the whole piece accidentals apply only to the octave they are written in and for the duration of the bar they appear in.
Throughout the piece pedalling instructions given by the author should be carefully followed.

LEFT HAND
PALM UPWARDS



studies in resonance II

for Zubin Kanga

Elo Masing

dark and mysterious ♩ = c. 56

Piano

on strings
harmonics

ossia

(on strings)

on strings

scrape

on keys

on strings

ossia

fingertip

fingertip

poco giocoso, leggiero

11

thumb

on keys

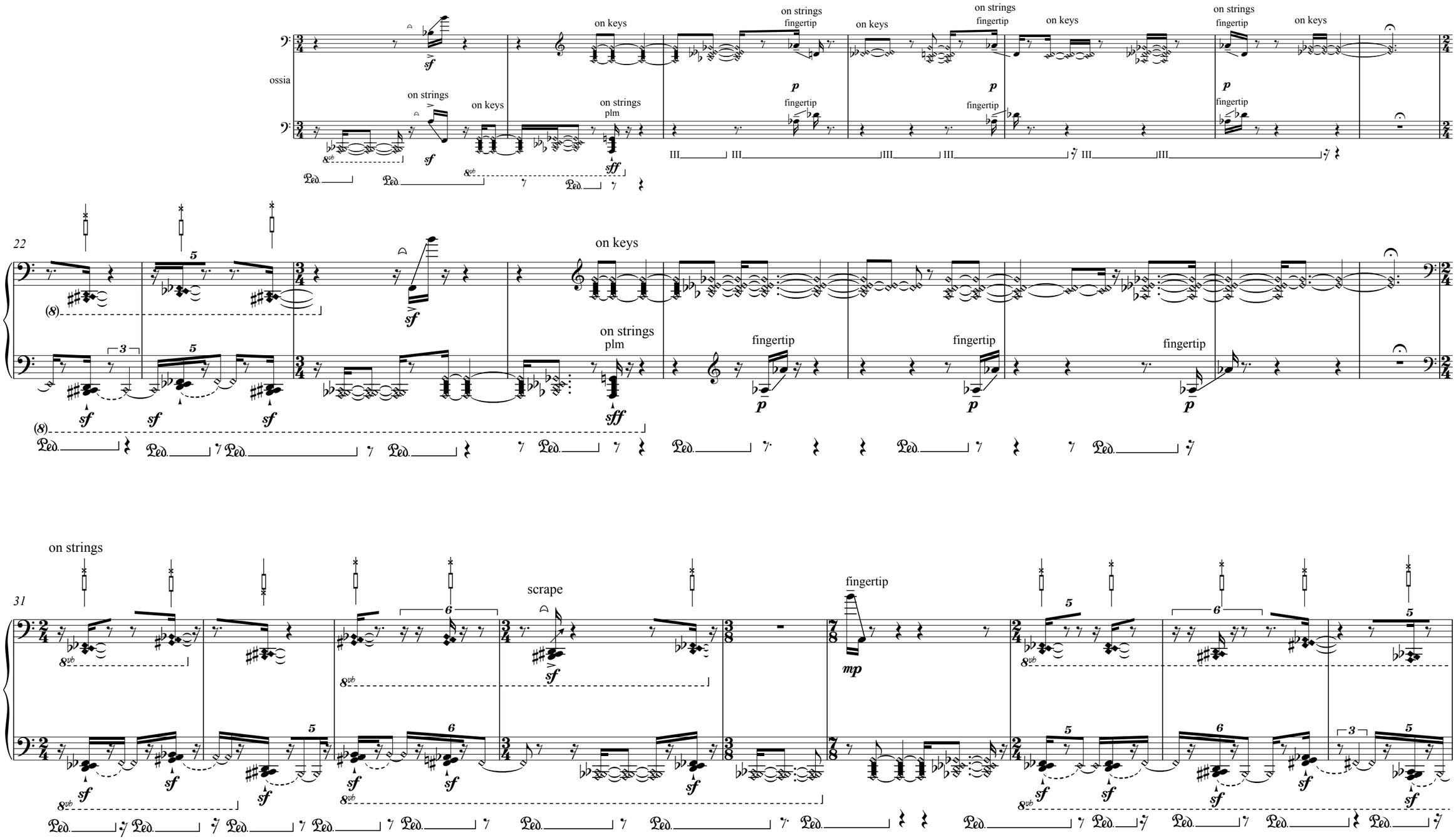
on strings
plm

fingertip

on strings

on keys

scrape


ossia
on strings
on keys
on strings
plm
fingertip
on keys
on strings
fingertip
on keys
on strings
fingertip
on keys
on strings
fingertip
on keys
22
on keys
on strings
plm
fingertip
fingertip
fingertip
31
on strings
scrape
fingertip

40

on keys
on strings
on keys
on strings
on keys
on strings
plm
plm

wild, like a force of nature

50

on strings
on keys
on strings
on keys
F
on keys
on strings
on keys
on strings
thumb
on keys
on strings
on keys

58

on strings
fingertip
on strings
on keys
on strings
thumb
on keys
on strings
on keys
on strings
on keys

66

A♭

mf f p f sub. pp f f mp sub. f sub. pp

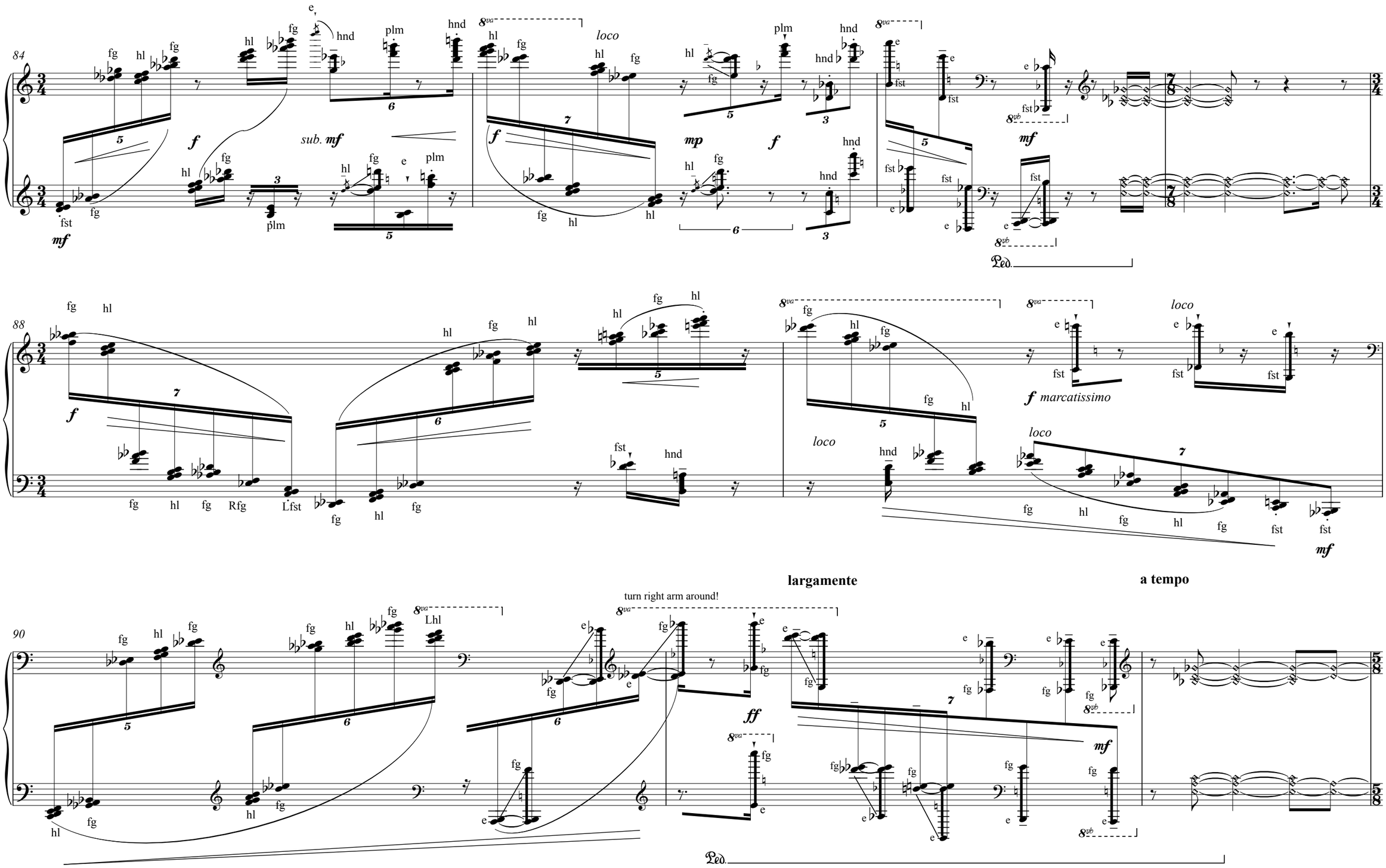
loco

74

mf f pp sub. pp f ff

80

f pp ff loco


84
88
90
sub. mf
loco
f marcatissimo
largamente
a tempo
turn right arm around!

93

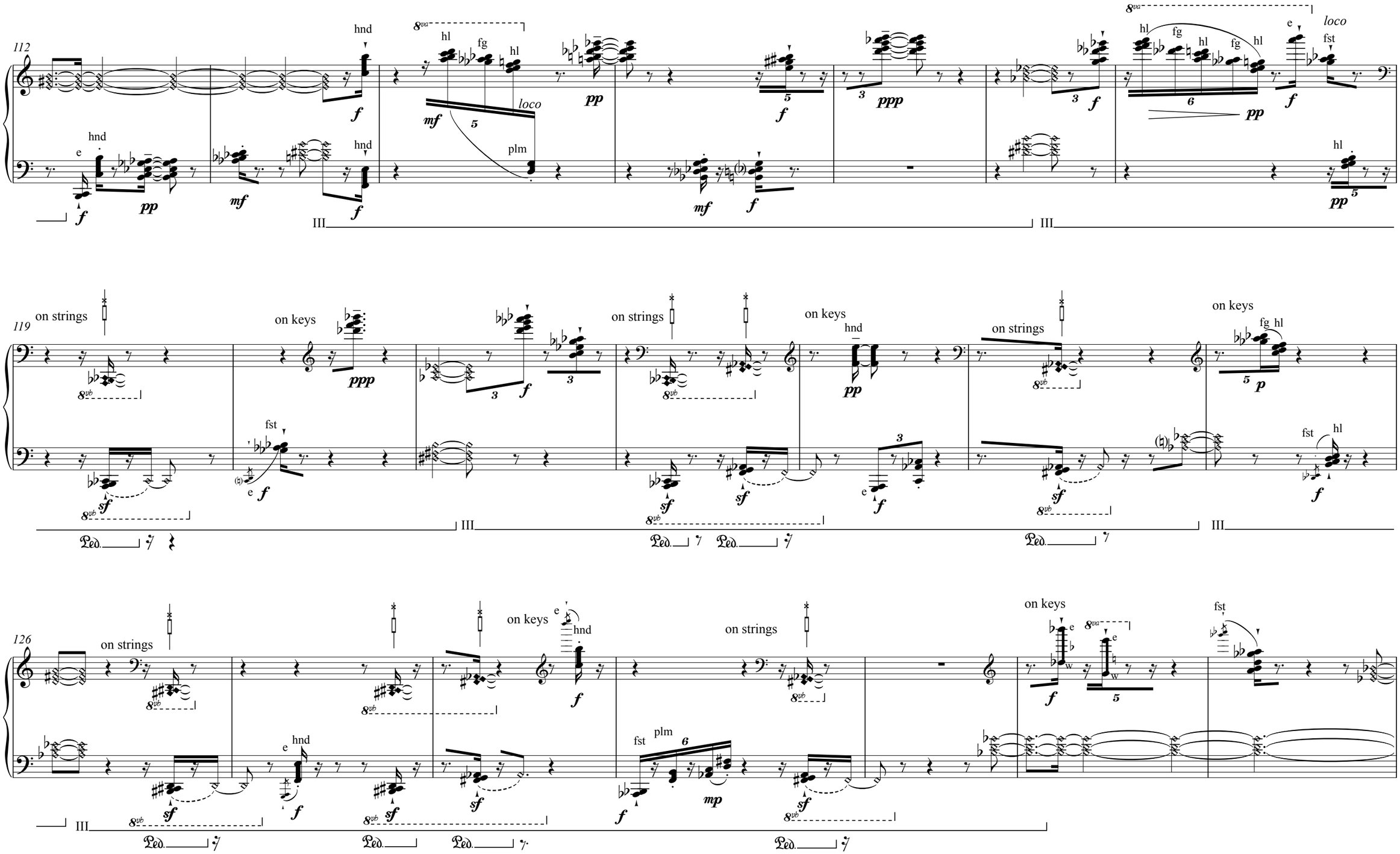
una corda

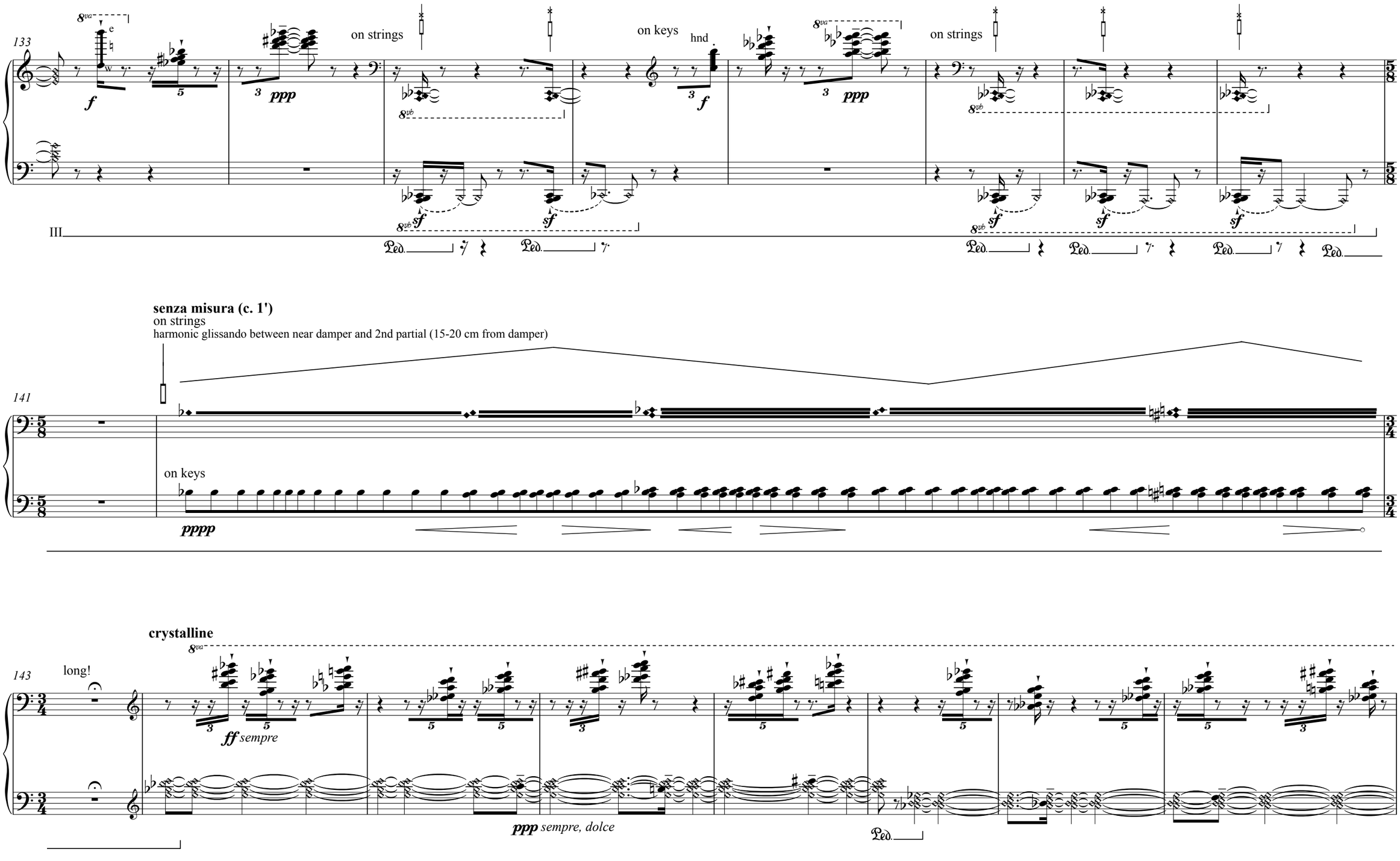
Ped.

almost lyrical, very slightly calmer (♩ = c. 52)

98

105


112
hnd
hl
fg
loco
plm
e
fst
III
119
on strings
on keys
126


133
on strings
on keys
hnd
on strings
III
senza misura (c. 1')
on strings
harmonic glissando between near damper and 2nd partial (15-20 cm from damper)
141
on keys
crystalline
143
long!
ff sempre
ppp sempre, dolce

151

(8)

Ped.

Ped.

158

(8)

162

(8)

Ped.