Two Old Postcards from Formosa

(2007)

for piano

Ming-Hsiu Yen

Two Old Postcards from Formosa (2007)
兩張來自福爾摩沙的舊明信片

for solo piano

I. **Crying Bird 泣鳥 (pp. 1-12)**

II. **Plowing Song 駛犁歌 (pp. 13-23)**

"Two Old Postcards from Formosa" contains two movements. Each is based on a different Taiwanese folk song, and each captures an image of Taiwanese history. To me, folk songs are the authentic "diaries" that preserve the memories of the life and experiences of the people. As the composition unfolds, I hope the music will transport the audience to the world that inspired these poignant songs.

The first movement, "Crying Bird" is based on the folk song, "A Chu-Chu Crying Bird" (一隻鳥仔哮啾啾). The song was created during the period of Japanese colonialism in Taiwan. The text states, "Who broke and stole my nest [country]? If I catch you, I will not let you go." Unlike many Taiwanese folk songs that are based on the pentatonic scale, this song is unique in its use of the minor triad, which expresses the mood of hopeless very well.

The second movement, "Plowing Song" (駛犁歌) is the title of a song, whose origin can be traced back to the local dance-theater music. The song describes a farmer who is plowing the field by pushing an ox under the burning sun, and it also sends a message of "no pain, no gain," encouraging people to work hard.

"Two Old Postcards from Formosa" was commissioned by the Hanson Institute for American Music of the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester for pianist, Susan Tang.

《兩張來自福爾摩沙的舊明信片》包含兩個樂章。每個樂章的靈感分別來自不同時期的台灣民謠。對我而言，民謠就像是最真實的日記一般，記錄著生活中的每一片刻。藉著音樂的傳遞，帶領聽眾遊歷不同的時空。

第一樂章〈泣鳥〉的靈感來自《一隻鳥仔哮啾啾》。此首民謠於日據時期所作，歌詞中「乎阮掠著不放伊干休」象徵著在日本殖民統治下的台灣人民，充滿著國破家亡的憤恨與無奈。不同於其他許多使用五聲音階的台灣民謠，《一隻鳥仔哮啾啾》以小三和弦為架構，更貼切地敘述這樣的悲情。樂章先是以鳥泣聲開場，再道出以小三和弦為主體的主題，伴以大七和絃不和諧的音響，憤恨的激情漸漸延展，使得鳥泣聲與主題緊密地結合，然而，高潮後的平靜卻留下滿腔的無奈。

第二樂章〈駛犁歌〉的靈感則來自於同名民謠。此民謠源自地方戲曲，敘述農夫在炎日下犁田的辛苦，道出一分耕耘一分收穫的省思，並表達台灣人民認真努力的天性。相較於前一個樂章，此曲十六分音符、重音與切分音的使用，使得此樂章輕快活潑。民謠中五聲音階的結構，在此曲不時擴張到以不同音高為始的五聲音階，在調性與節奏的結合下加深樂曲的張力。

此曲由 Hanson Institute of American Music 委託創作，2007 年由鋼琴家 Susan Tang 博士於紐約市卡內基韋爾廳作世界首演。

Two Old Postcards from Formosa (2007) *was commissioned by the* Hanson Institute for American Music of the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester *for Susan Tang.*

Duration: approx. 9 minutes

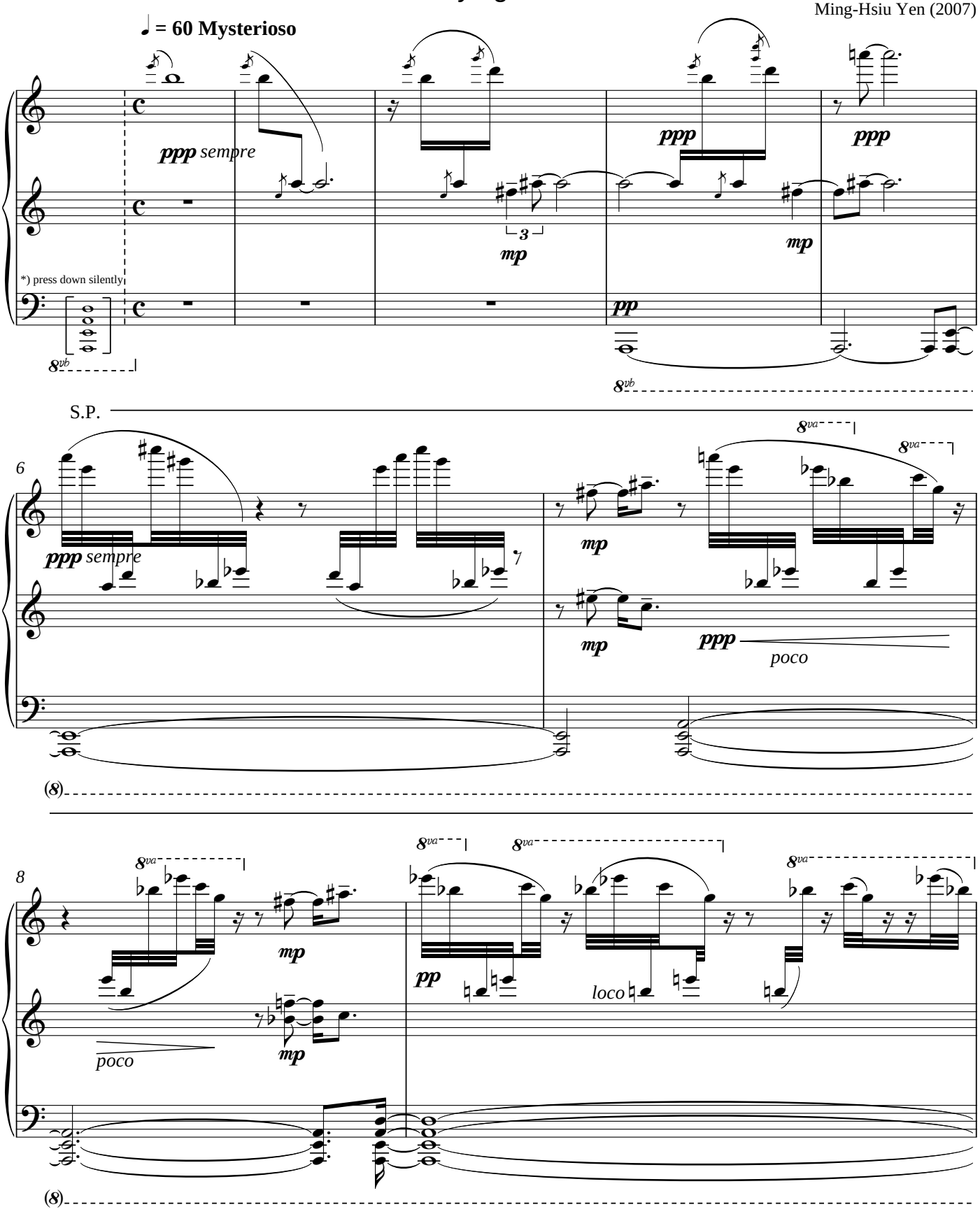
Premiere: Susan Tang Piano Recital, Carnegie-Weill Hall, New York, NY (May 19, 2007)

Commissioned by the Hanson Institute for American Music
of the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester
for Susan Tang

Two Old Postcards from Formosa

I. Crying Bird

Ming-Hsiu Yen (2007)



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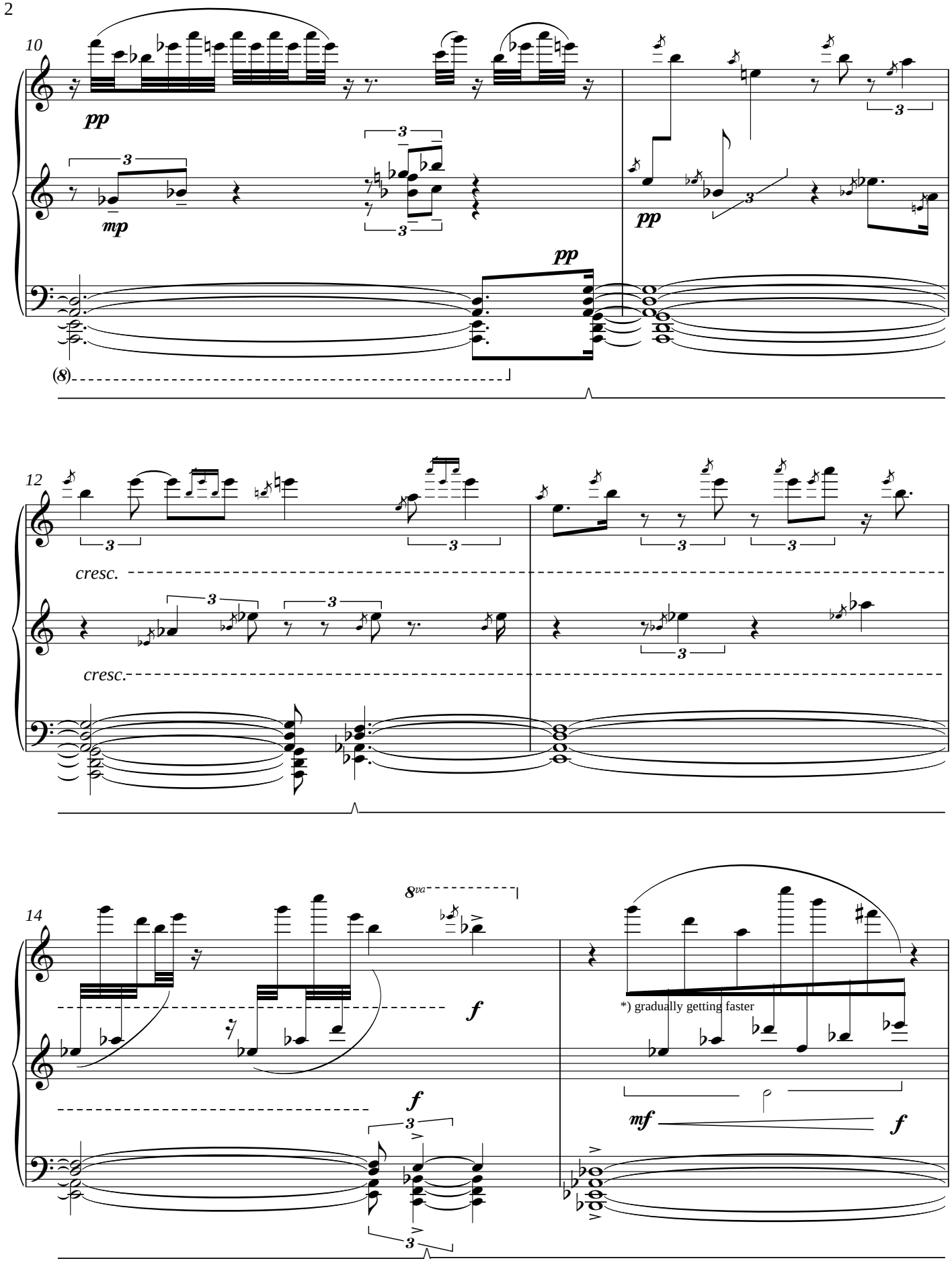
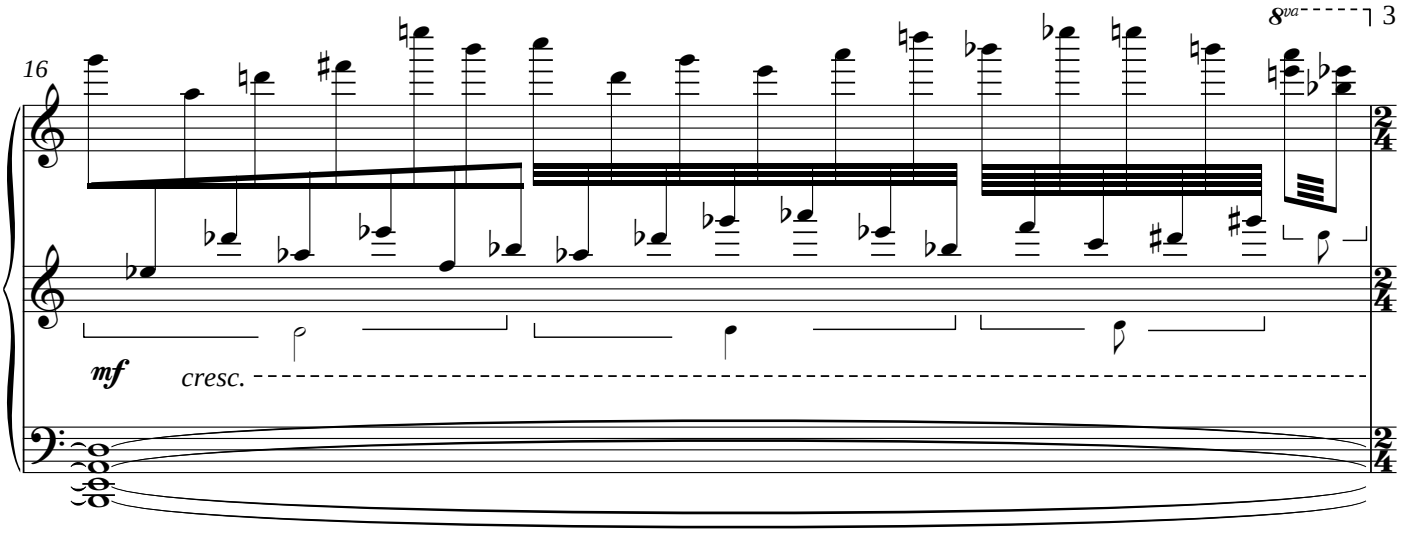
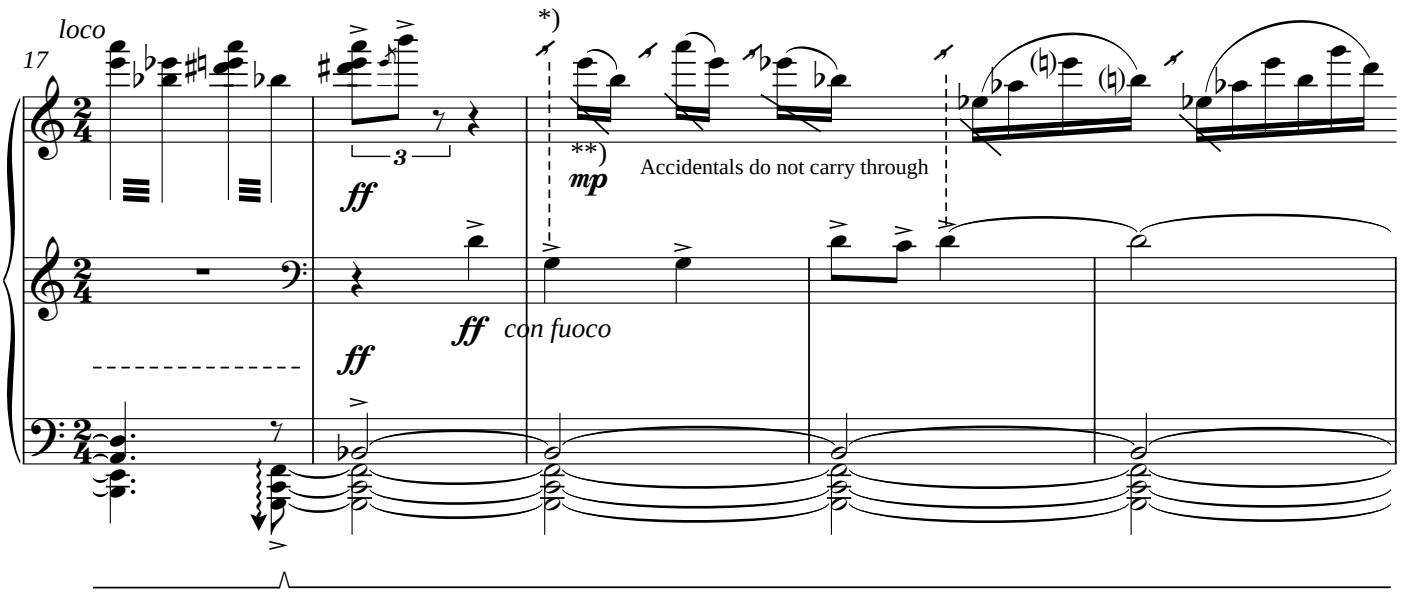
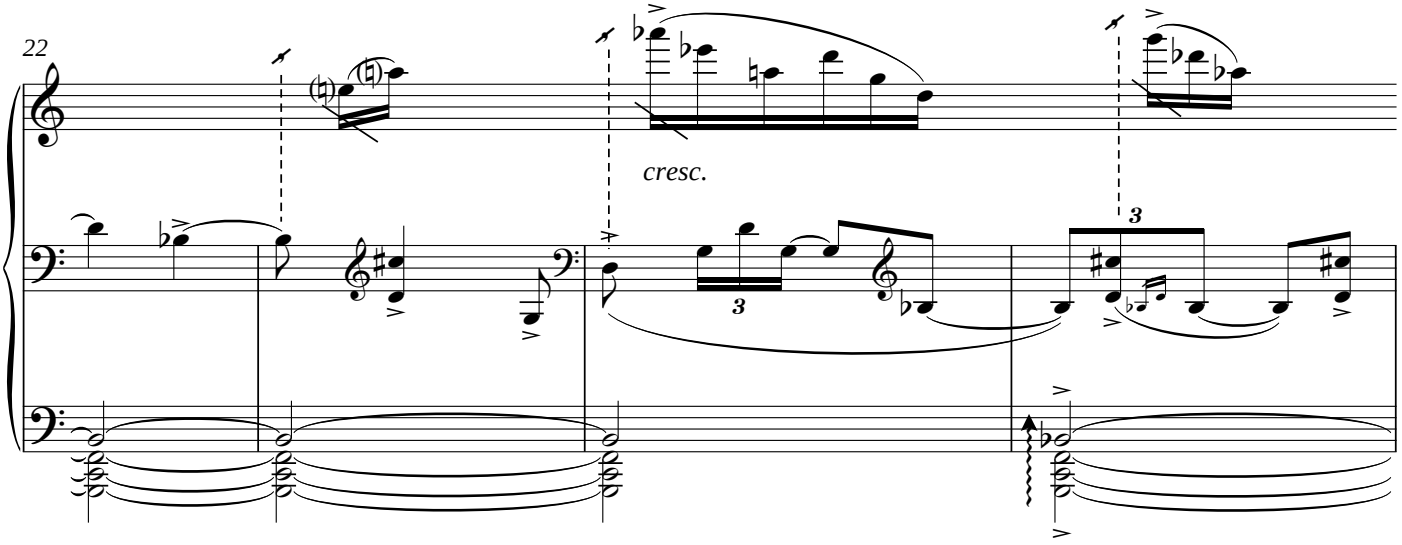

10
pp
mp
pp
pp
(8)
12
cresc.
cresc.
14
8va
f
f
mf
f
*) gradually getting faster



Piu Mosso ♩ = 68





*) very short rest **) as fast as possible

II. Plowing Song

Allegro ♩ = 114-128

fff

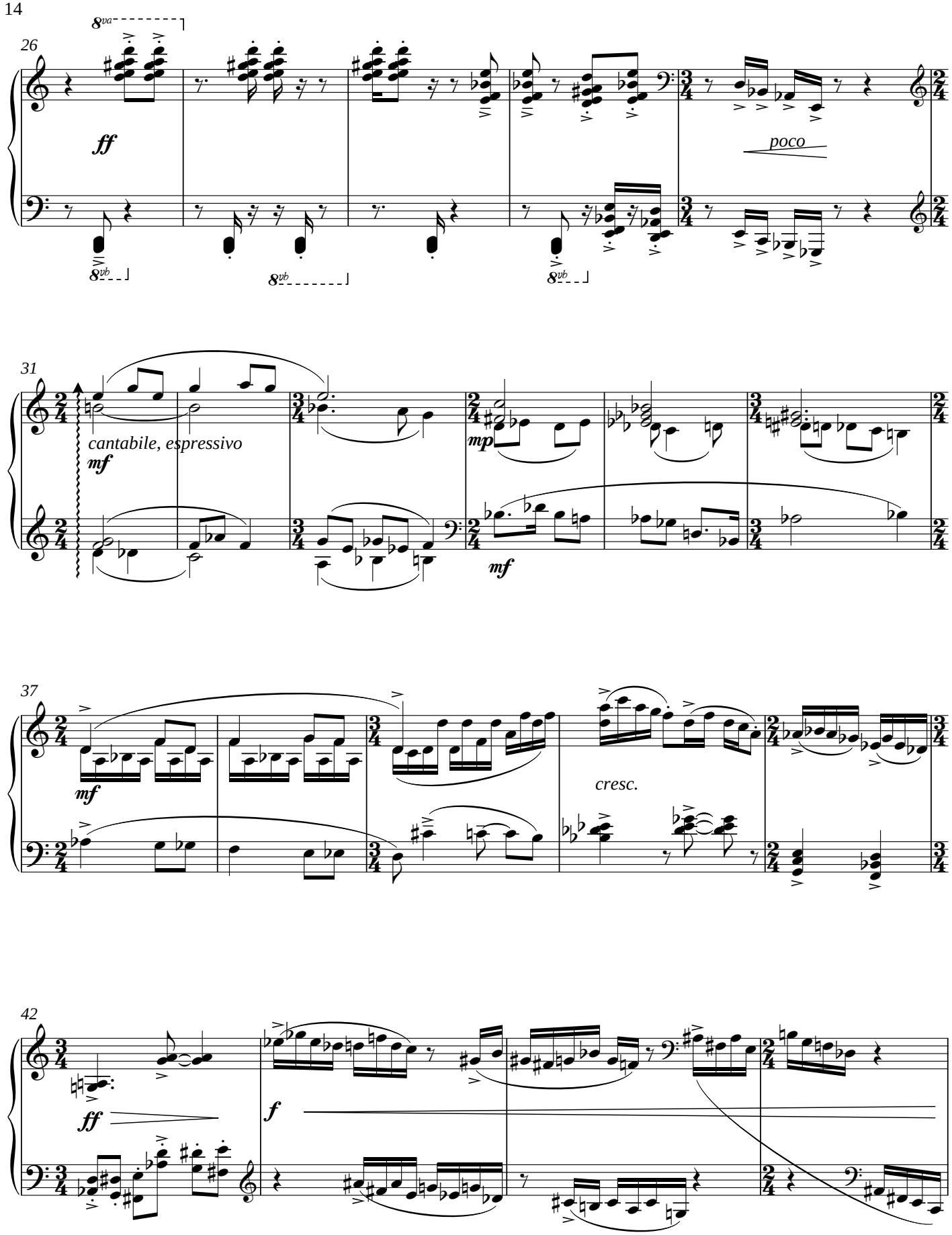
*) White-note clusters at the lowest register.

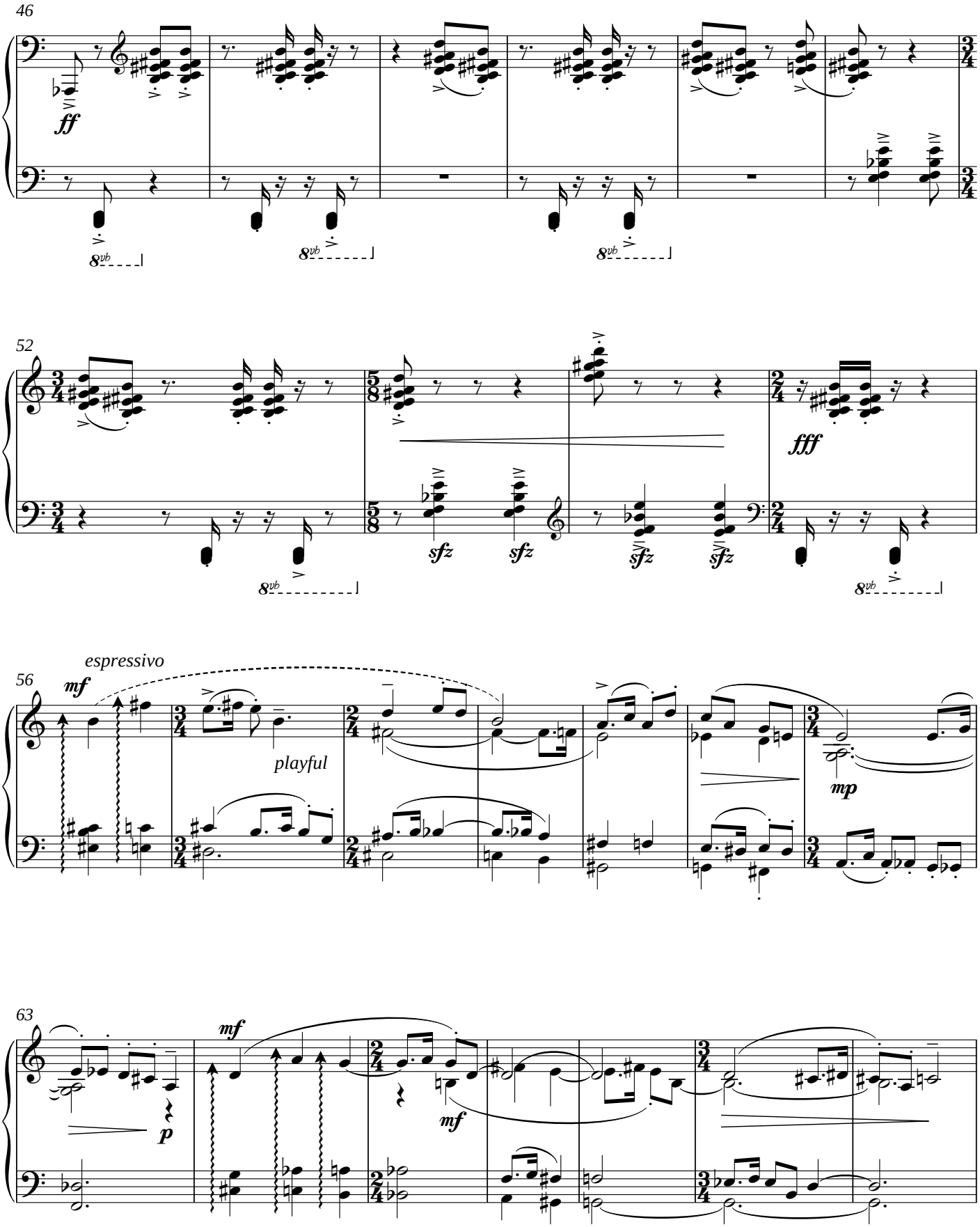
8

mf

14

20


26
8va
ff
8vb
poco
31
cantabile, espressivo
mf
mp
mf
37
mf
cresc.
42
ff
f


46
ff
8vb
52
sfz
fff
56
espressivo
mf
playful
mp
63
p
mf