11 Short Piano Pieces

1. Waltz
2. McGillicuddy's Rant
3. Invention: Canon at the Octave; Syncopated Rhythm
4. Invention: Canon at the Ninth
5. C-E-G Prelude
6. Sue's Song
7. Study: Chromatic Noodling
8. Dream: Hearing Footsteps
9. Broken Glass
10. Julia's Prelude
11. Waltz (reprise)

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Clark Winslow Ross

11 Short Piano Pieces (1980-98) Clark Winslow Ross

11 Short Piano Pieces (1980-98) is a collection of piano compositions written over a fairly long period of time. Most are for beginning-to-intermediate pianists, but the last four are more demanding. The pieces that have very little in common, save their brevity. They can be played independently of one another, or in any combination of the performer's choice.

Waltz was written for the 1994 Kiwanis Music Festival of Greater Toronto as a theme on which young composition students were to write variations, and *McGillicuddy's Rant* was written in 1980, the year I started studying composition. This also exists in a version for classical guitar with numerous variations. I played it for my guitar teacher many years ago, before I had come up with a name for it, and, for reasons I have never been able to fathom, he suggested the name *McGillicuddy's Rant*. I felt the pentatonic tune had a vaguely Scottish, folk-like quality, and although it bears little resemblance to a Rant, I did not know that at the time, so the name stuck. The two *inventions* were commissioned by *Frederick Harris Publishing* for possible use in the *Royal Conservatory of Music* graded piano albums, aimed at earlier grades, and the *C-E-G Prelude* was written much later (1998), also as a relatively easy student piece. I wrote *Sue's Song* for my former sister-in-law, Susan Griffin, in 1986 as her birthday gift. The next three pieces become increasingly chromatic and challenging. *Chromatic Noodling* was conceived as a study, and is a fun, rather nutty piece. *Dream...*, is an impressionistic composition written for my friend and former colleague Liana Lam (who came up with the idea of making a collection of my short, but unrelated, piano pieces, and performed them), while *Broken Glass* is short but very challenging. It was written for Barbara Pritchard, also a close friend, who specializes in the performance of insanely-difficult modern works, and she commissioned it through the *Canada Council* in 1991. *Julia's Prelude* was named for my wonderful daughter, and was written in the style of Schumann just for the heck of it, after a harmony class one day in which we analyzed Bach's *Prelude* to the *Bb Fugue* from the *Well-Tempered Clavier* (book 1). Yes, there is a connection!

Clark Winslow Ross's compositions have been performed in England, Ireland, the United States, and across Canada by some of Canada's finest musicians, ensembles, and orchestras. He was Composer-in-Residence at Ireland's *Waterford New Music Week* in 2003, and has won *Young Composer's Awards* in national competitions by the *Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra* and the *Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra*. He has also received over 20 commission grants from various funding agencies, including the *Canada Council*, the *CBC*, and the *Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council*. Clark is the founder and Artistic Director of the *Newfound Music Festival*, held every February in St. John's, and was a founding member and later President of *Continuum*, the Toronto-based new-music group. He serves on the national executive of both the *Canadian League of Composers* and the *Canadian Music Centre*.

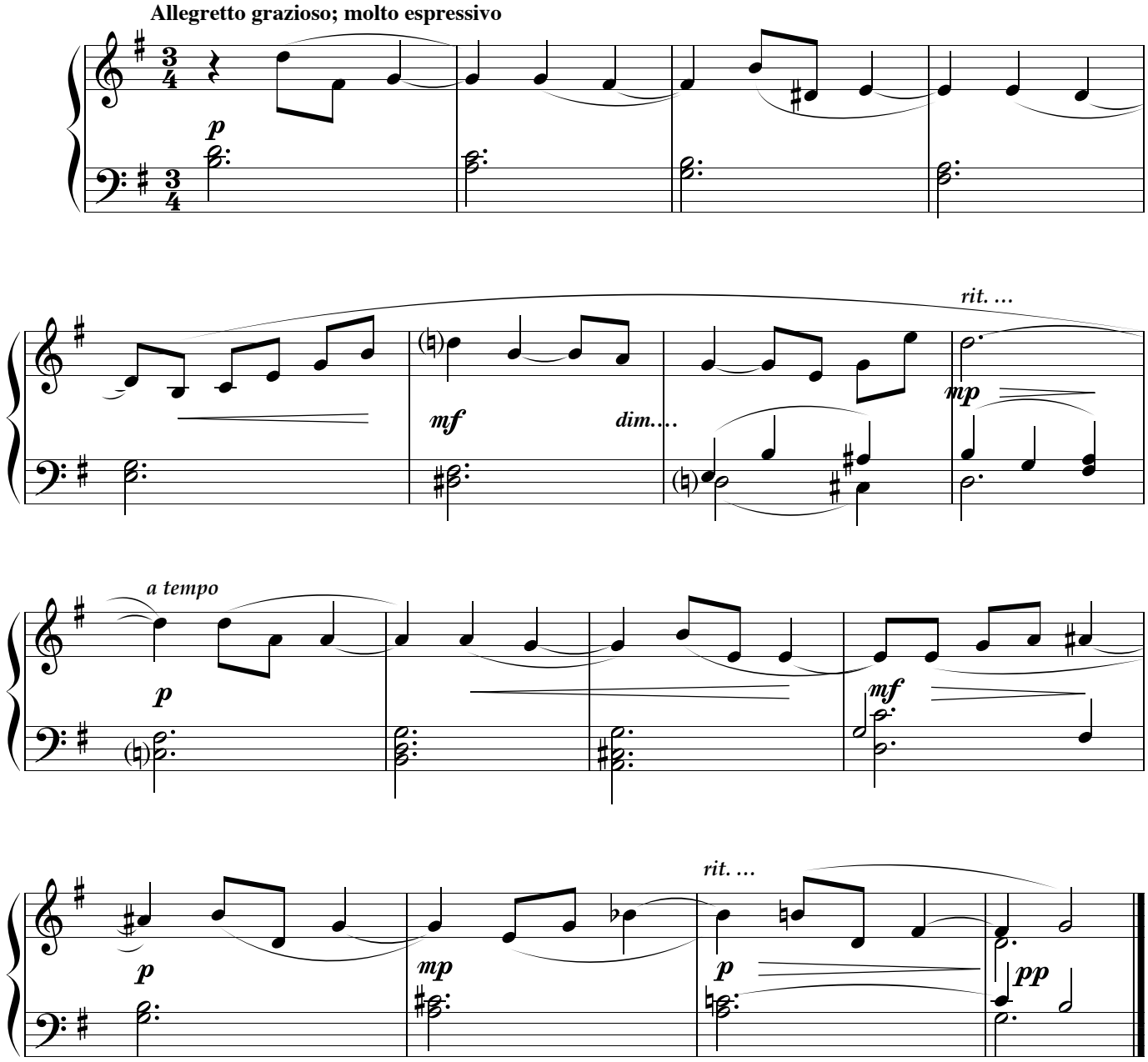
Born in Maracaibo, Venezuela, Clark was raised there and in Caracas (Venezuela), Lima (Peru), Lennoxville (Quebec), New York City, Fort Lee (New Jersey), Brussels (Belgium), and Toronto, where he attended university. Upon receiving a Mus.Doc. (composition) degree from the *University of Toronto* in 1992, he began working at Memorial University's School of Music, where he is currently an Associate Professor, teaching composition, orchestration, theory, electronic music, and classical guitar. He was awarded Memorial University's *President's Award for Outstanding Research* (1999) in recognition of his extensive compositional activities. He is married to Dr. Jennifer Porter (professor of Religious Studies, Memorial University), and has three children (Alexander, (b. 2004), Andrew (b. 2001), and Julia (b. 1990). His interests outside of family and music include baseball, cats, cooking, ethnic food, reading, writing short stories, and invigorating jumping dances.

Other works for piano and other instruments can be heard and downloaded at: **www.clarkross.ca**

Contact Clark Ross via E-mail at: clark@mun.ca, or through his website

1. *Waltz*

Clark Winslow Ross



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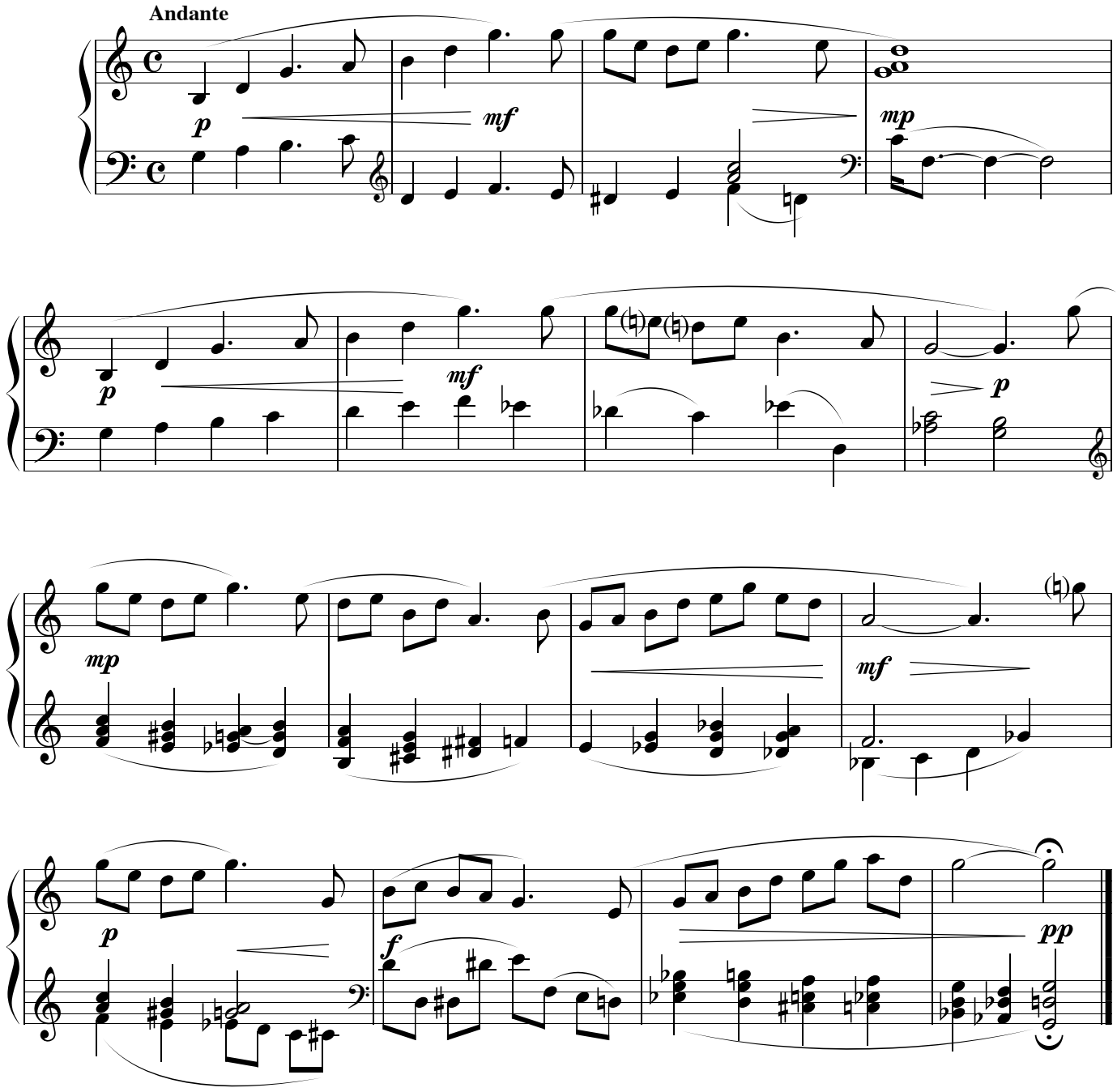
2. *McGillicuddy's Rant*

Clark Winslow Ross



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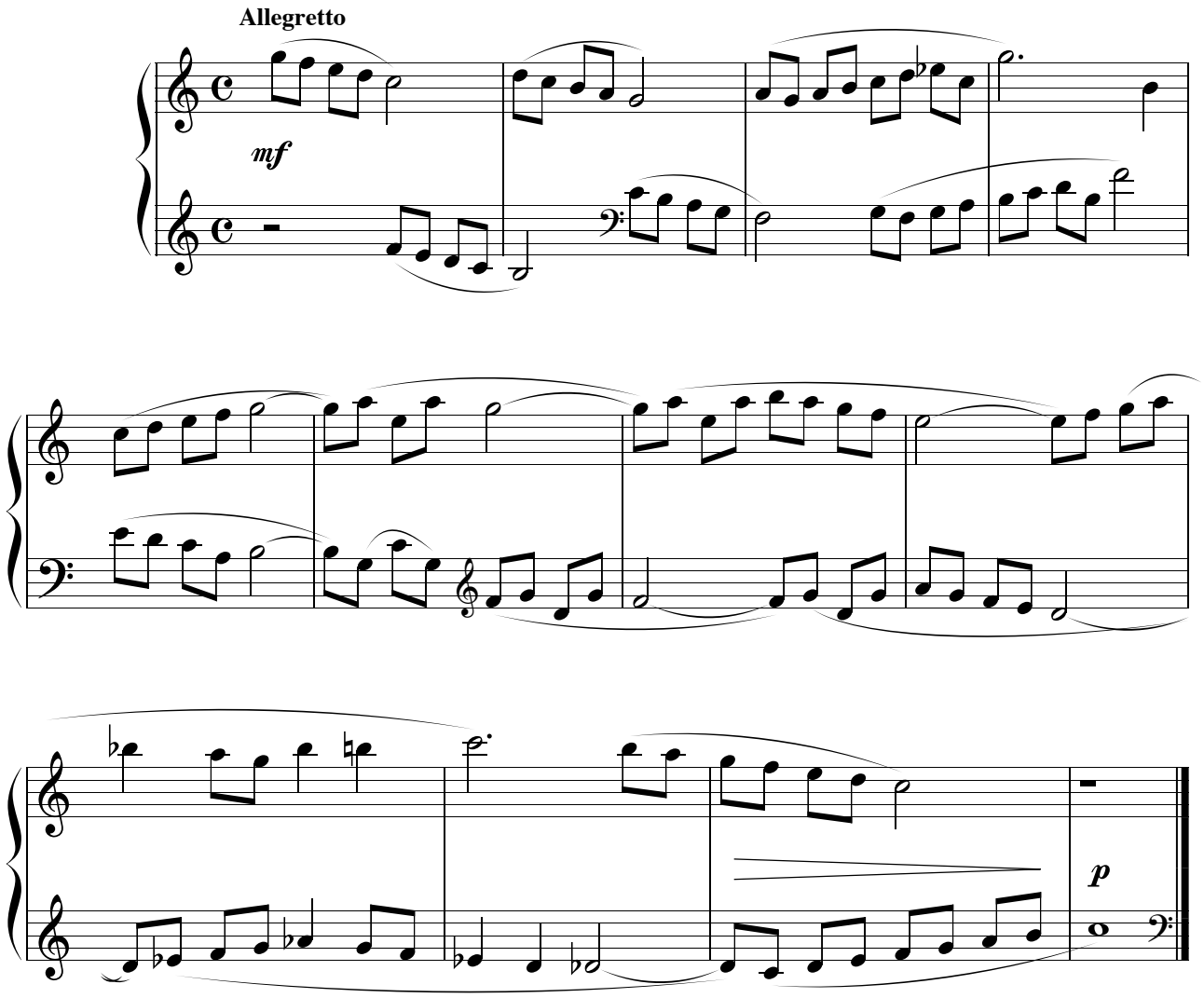
3. Invention
Canon at the Ninth

Clark Winslow Ross



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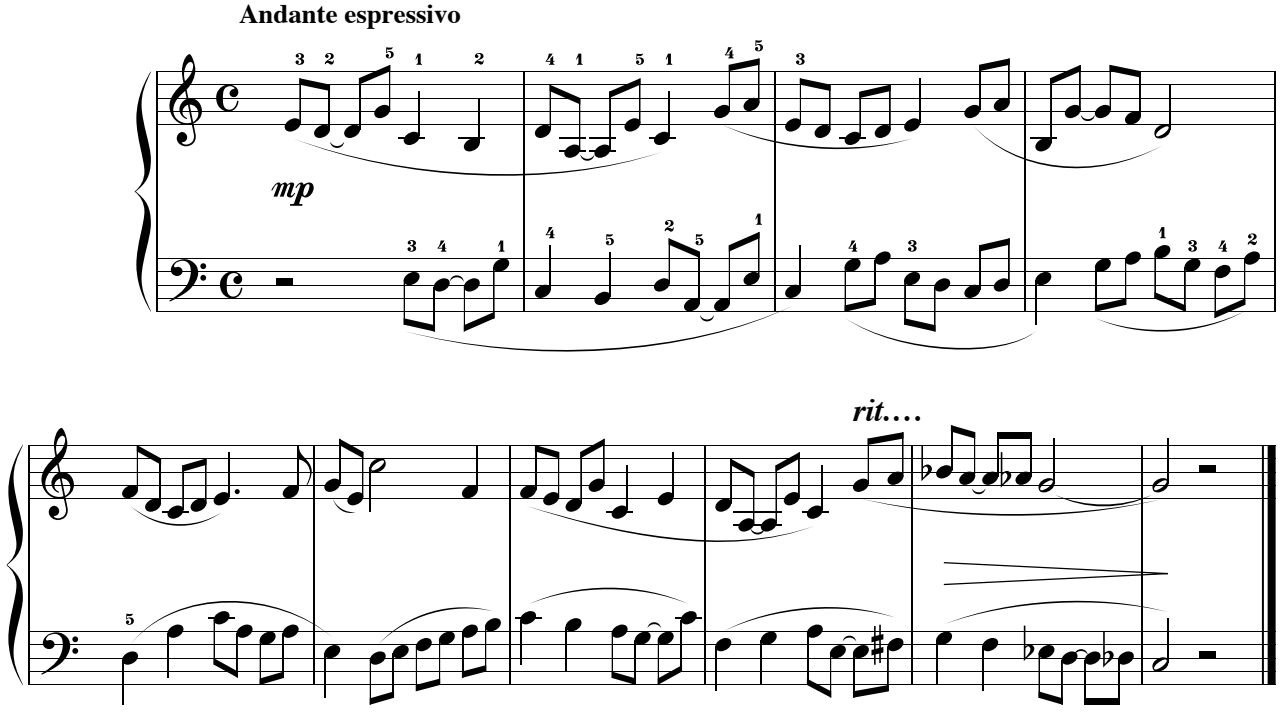
4. Invention

Canon at the Octave; Syncopated Rhythm

Clark Winslow Ross



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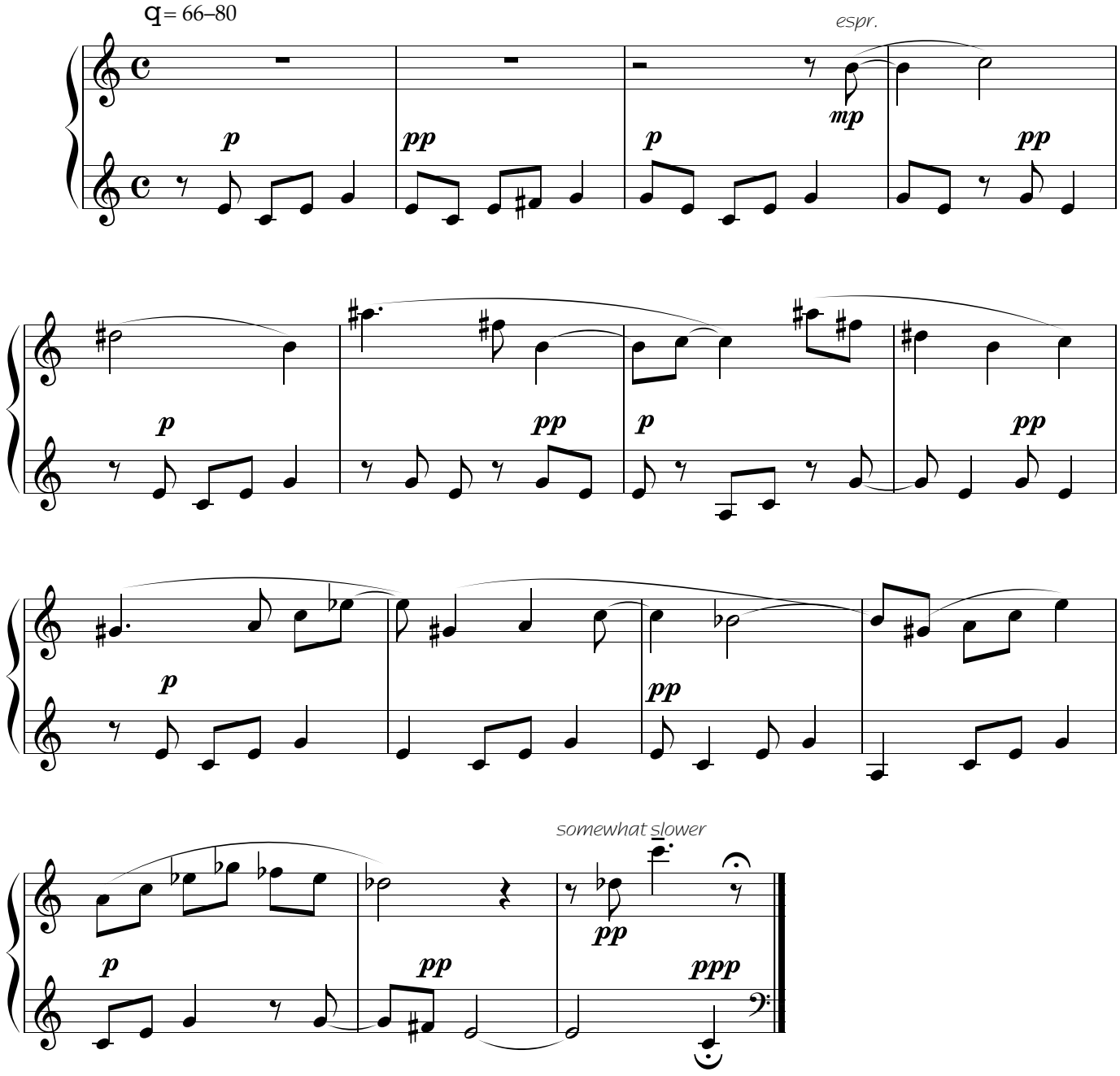
5. *C - E - G Prelude*

Clark Winslow Ross
June 21, 1995



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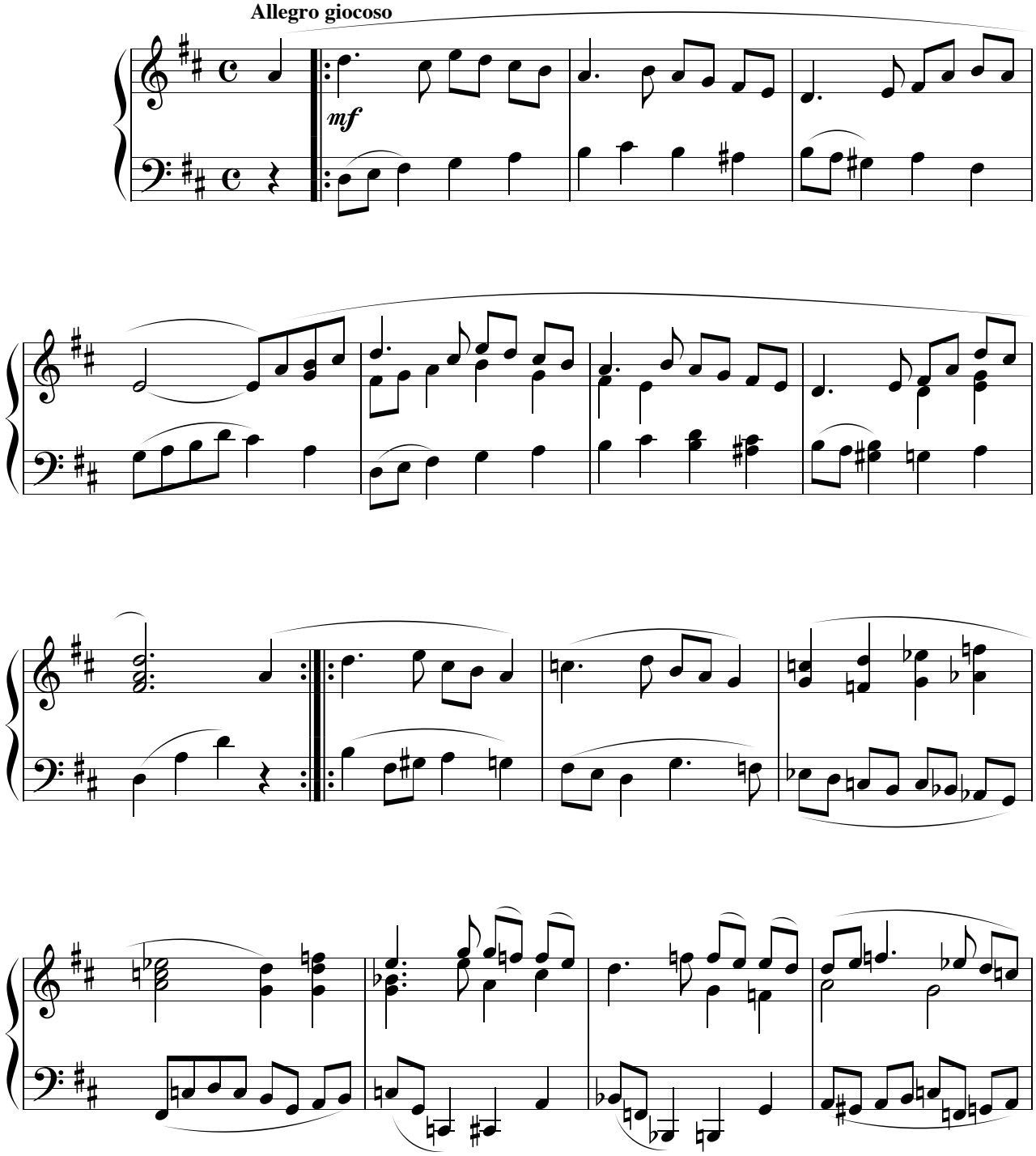
6. *Sue's Song*

Clark Winslow Ross

December 7, 1986



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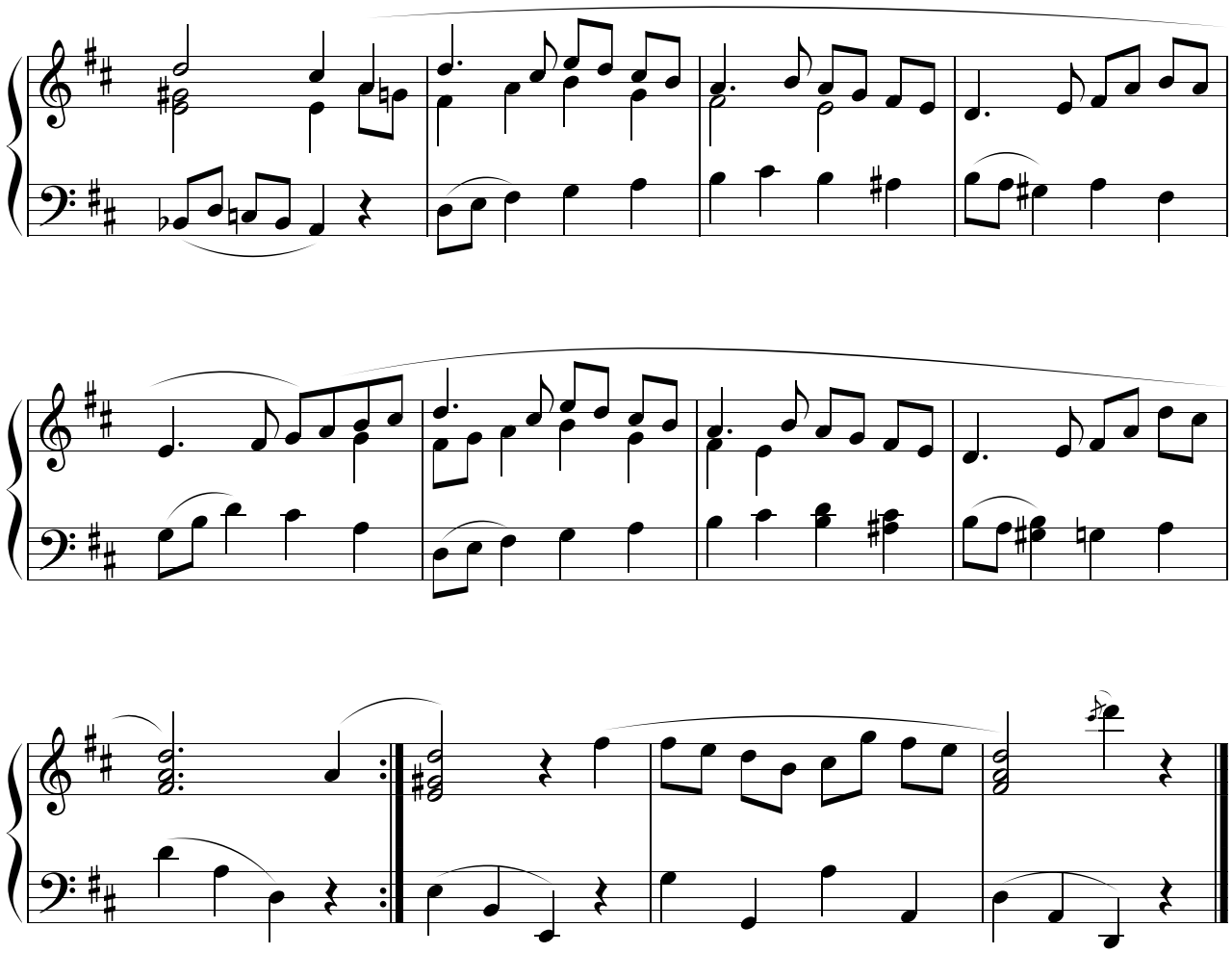
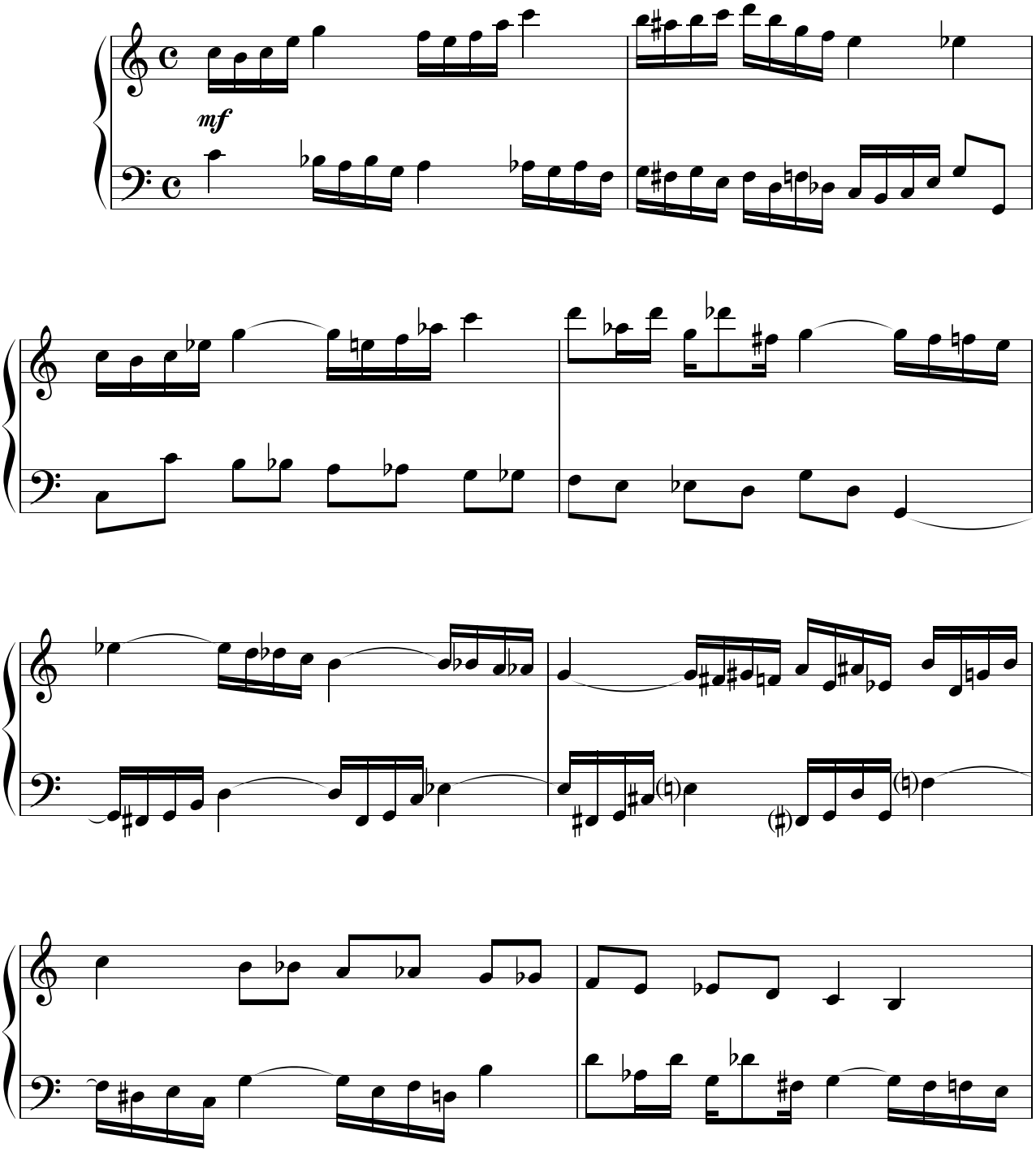


7. Study
Chromatic Noodling

Clark Winslow Ross

With a brisk sense of purpose *(as if avoiding a mandrill in the wild)*



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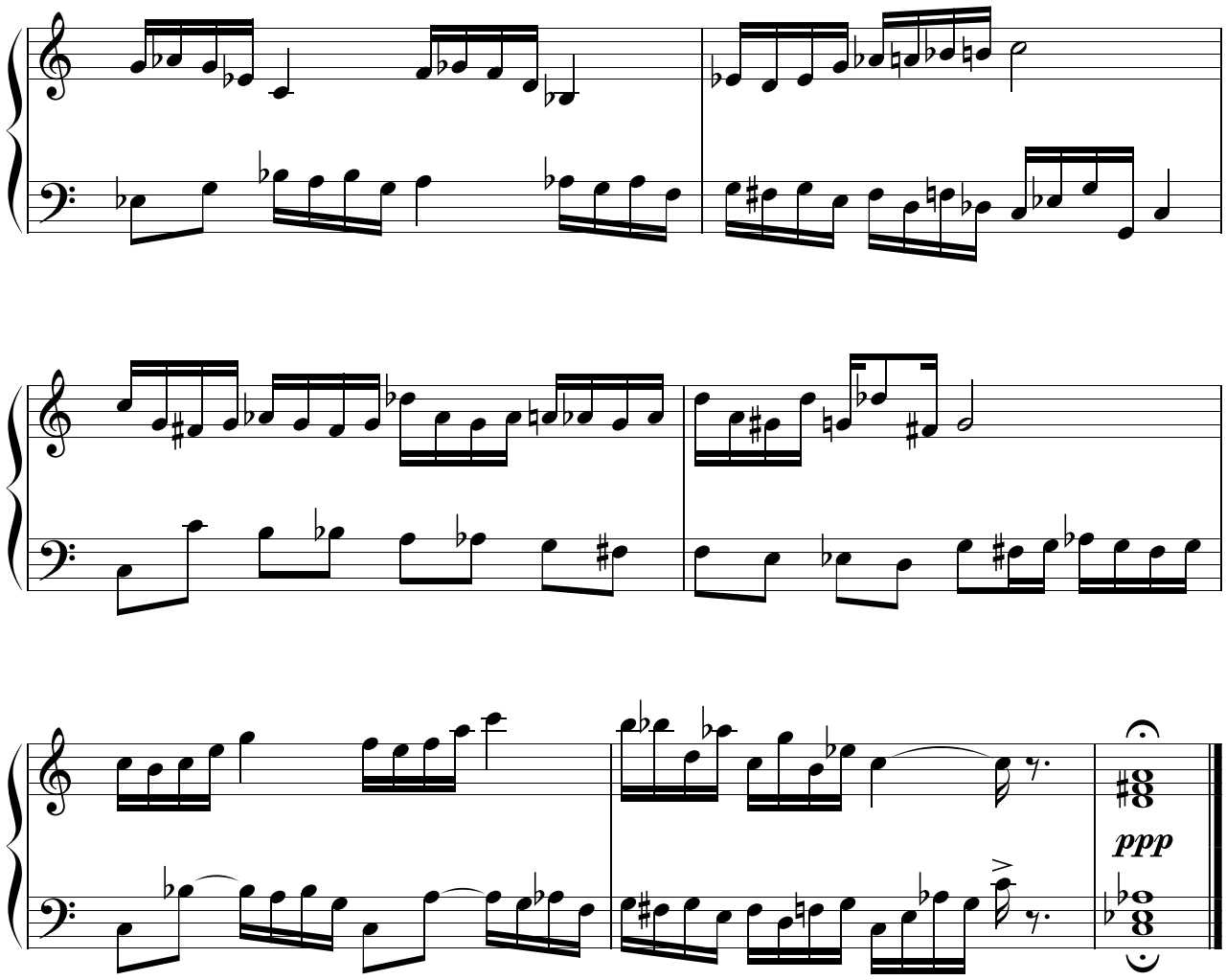
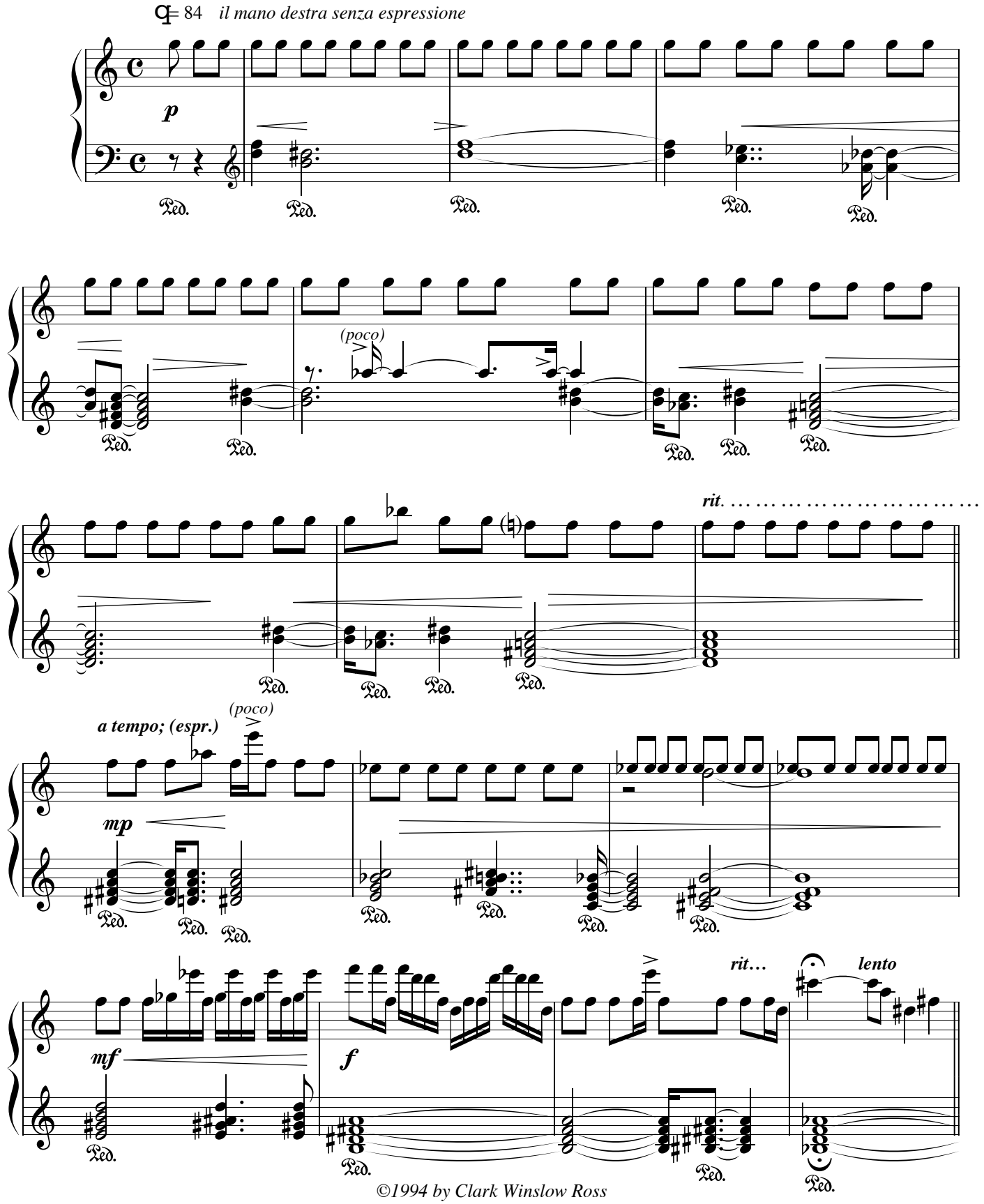

ppp

8. *Dream: Hearing Footsteps*

Clark Winslow Ross



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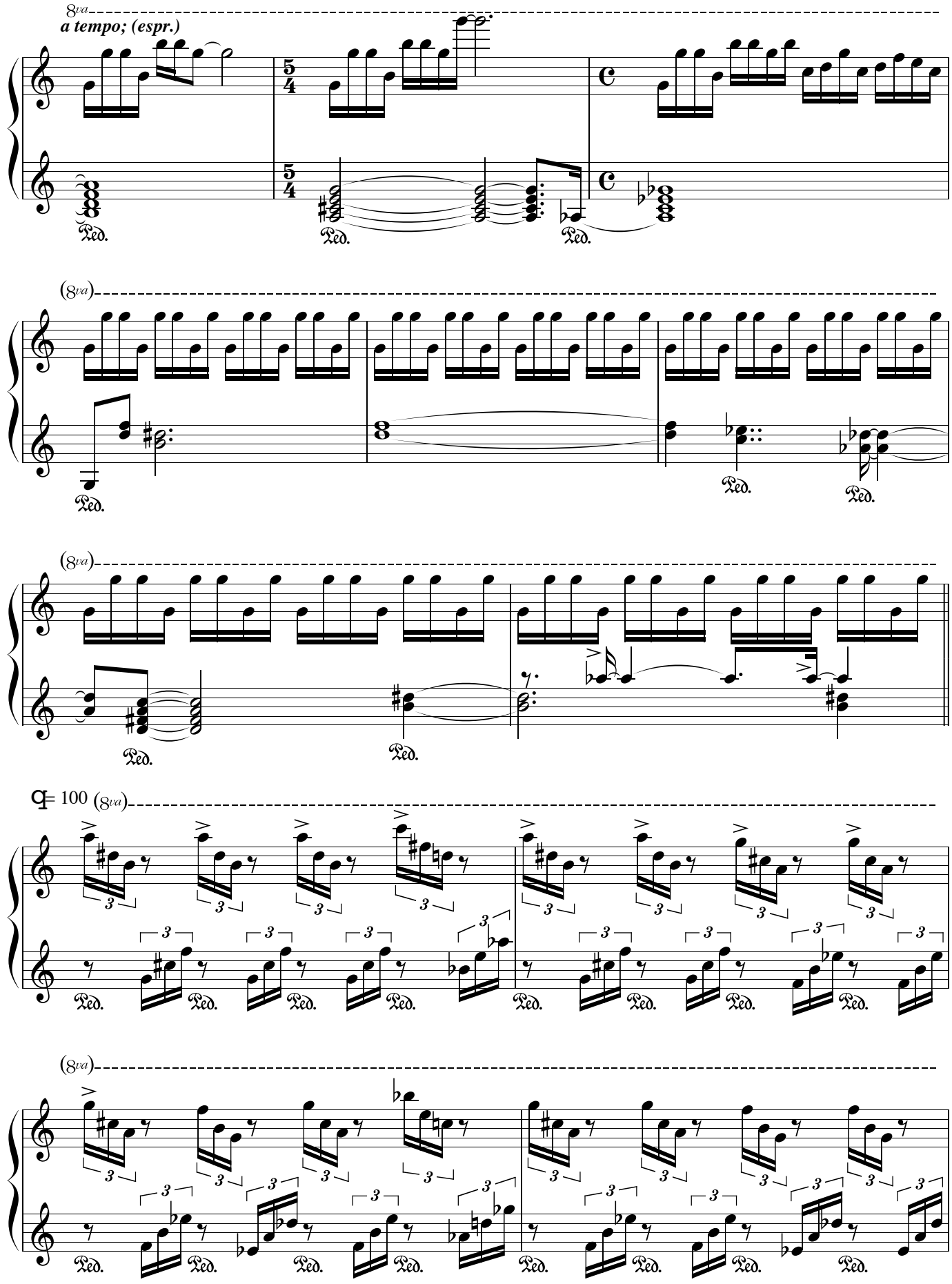
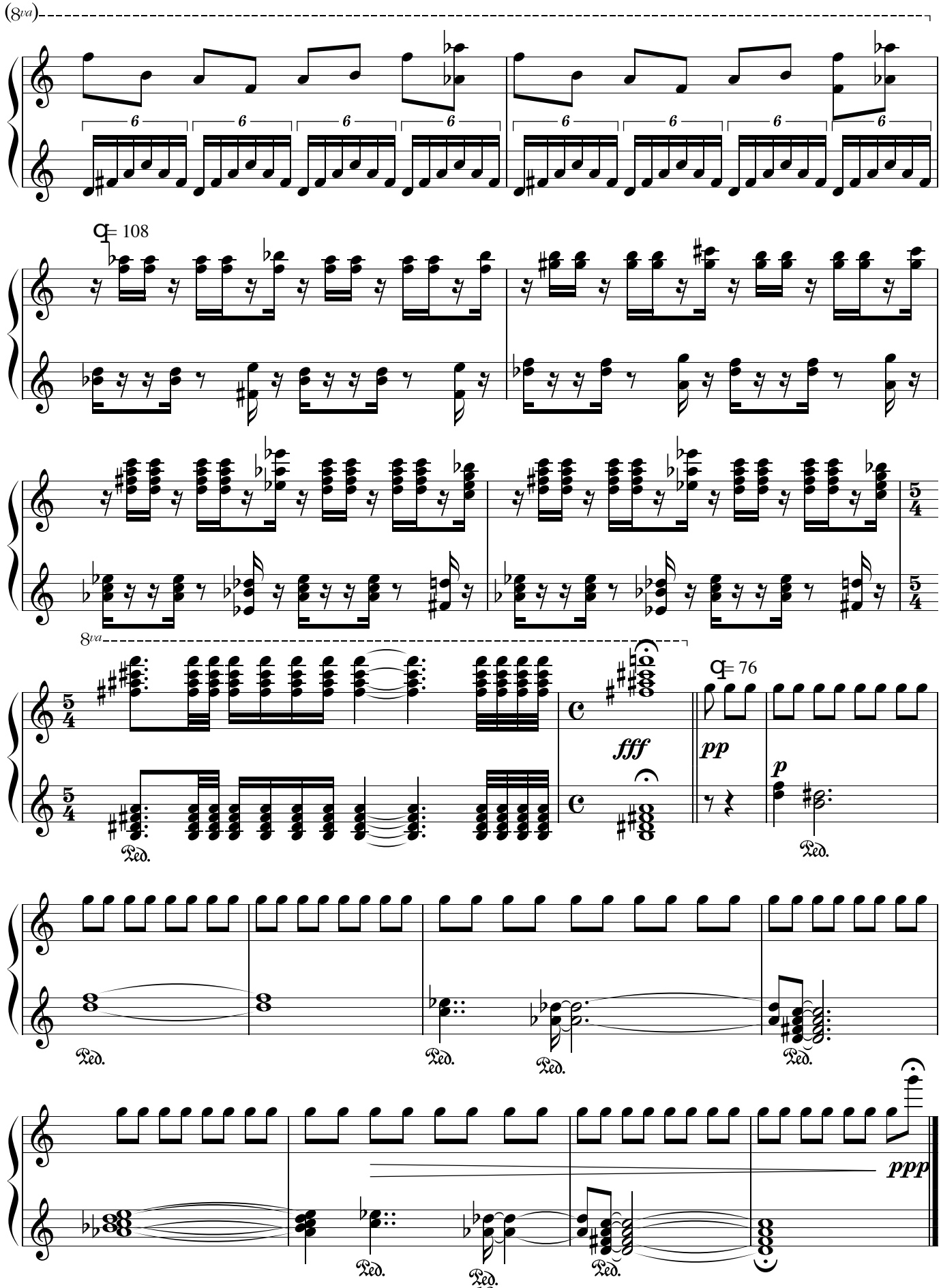
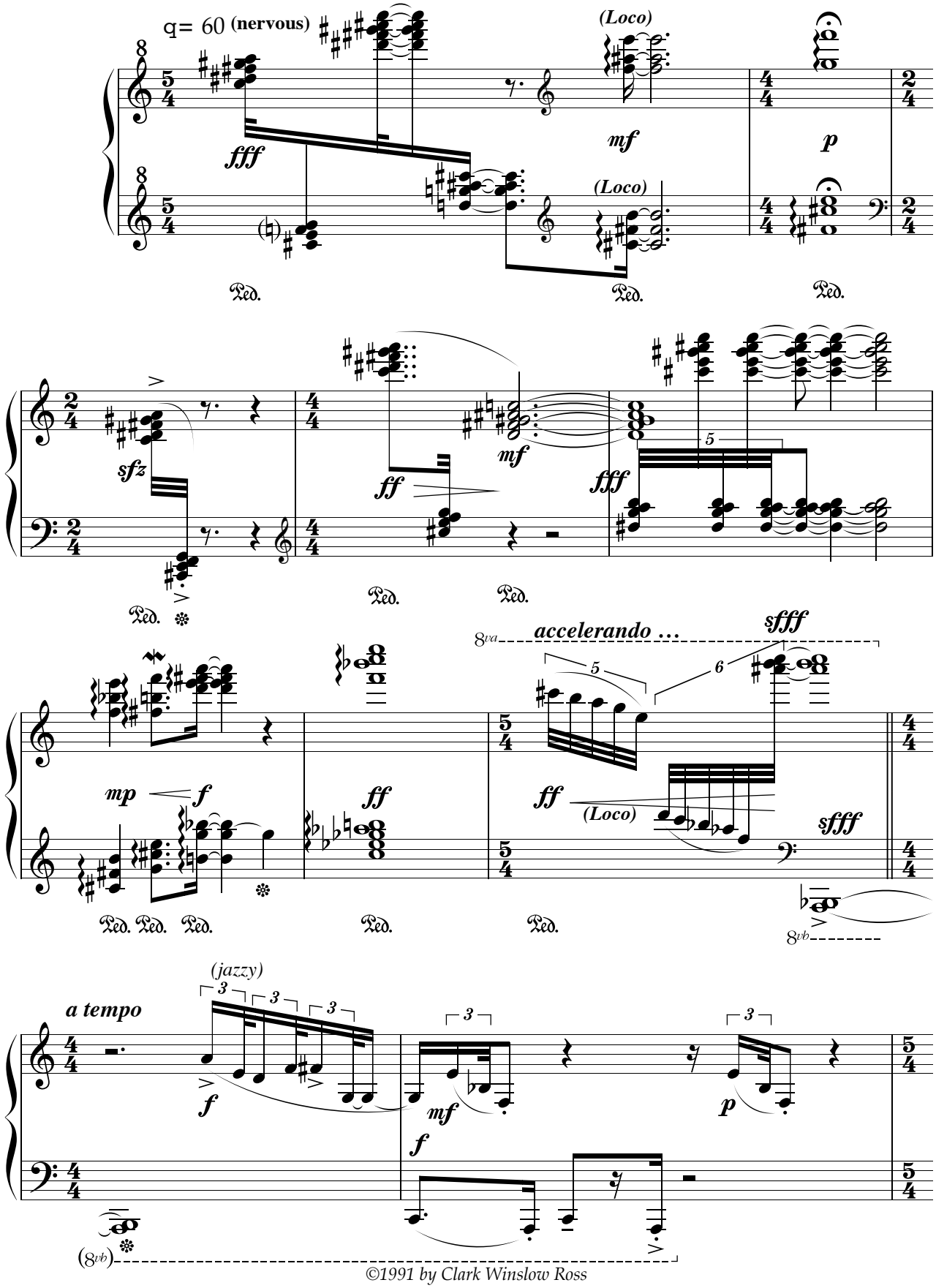

8va
a tempo; (espr.)
Ped.
(8va)
♩= 100


8va
6
♩= 108
5/4
8va
fff
♩= 76
pp
p
Ped.
ppp

9. *Broken Glass*

Commissioned by Barbara Pritchard
through a grant by The Canada Council

Clark Winslow Ross



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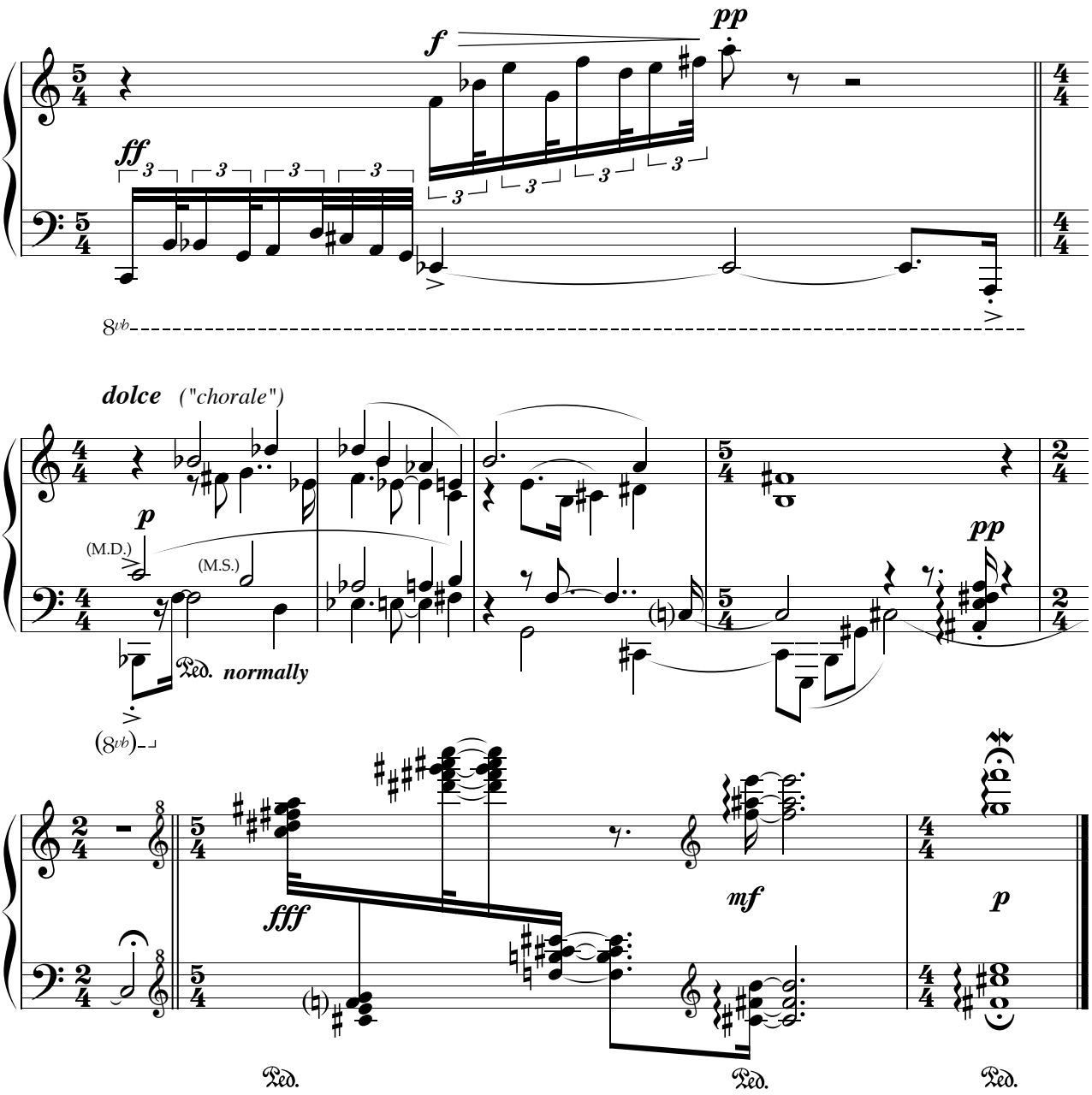
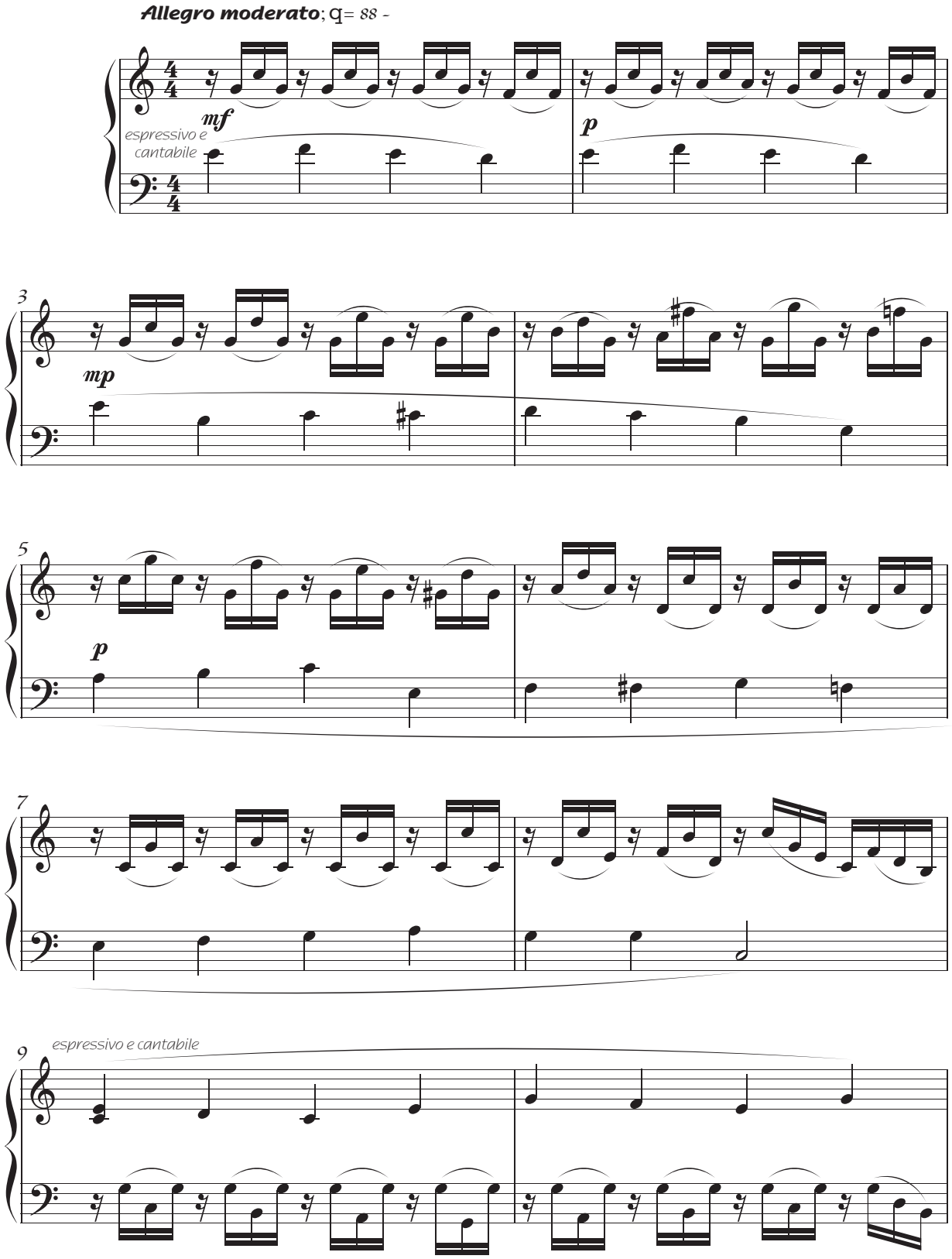

f
pp
ff
3
8vb
dolce ("chorale")
p
(M.D.)
(M.S.)
Ped. normally
(8vb)
pp
fff
mf
p
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.

Julia's Prelude

Clark Winslow Ross



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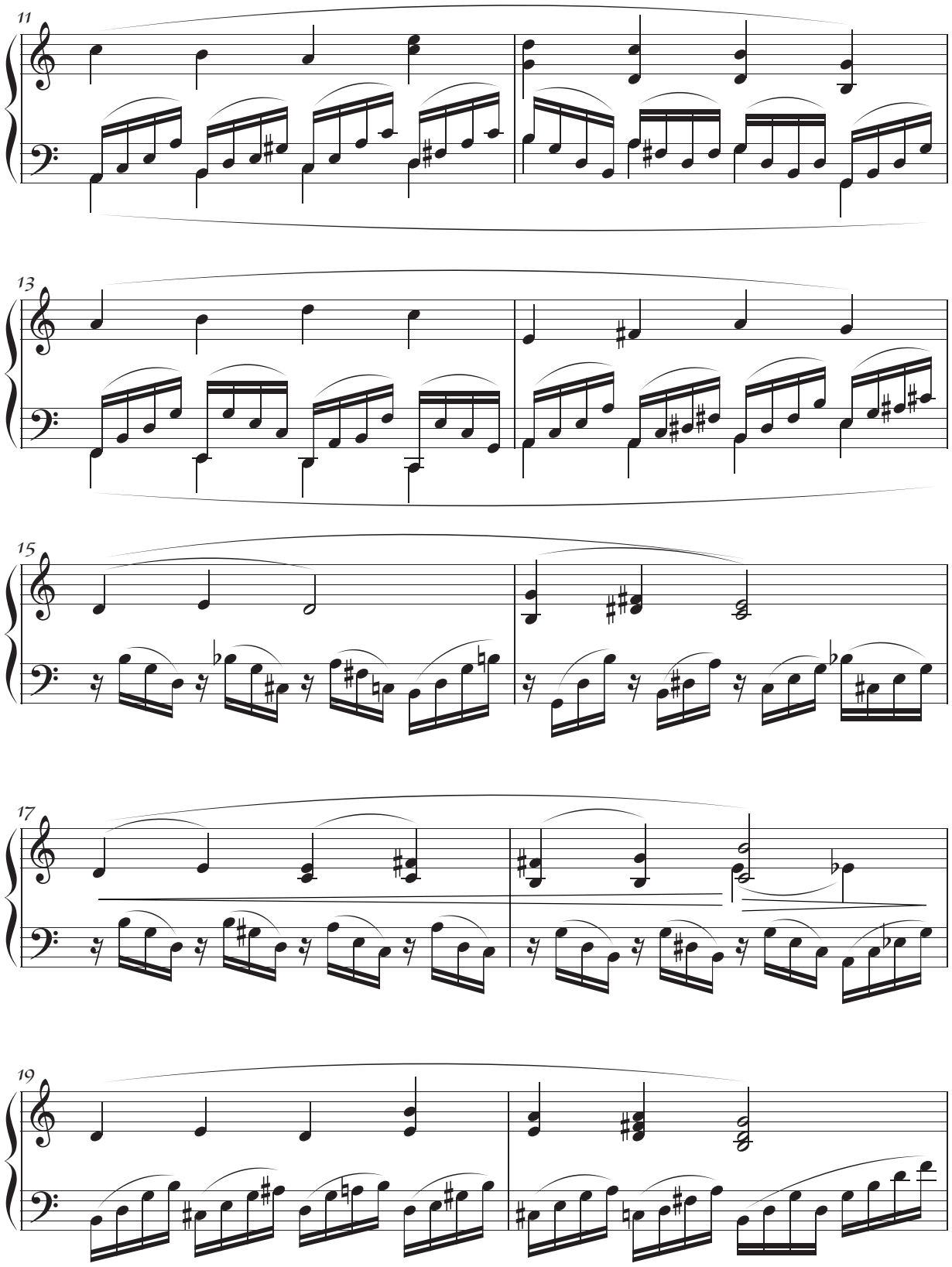
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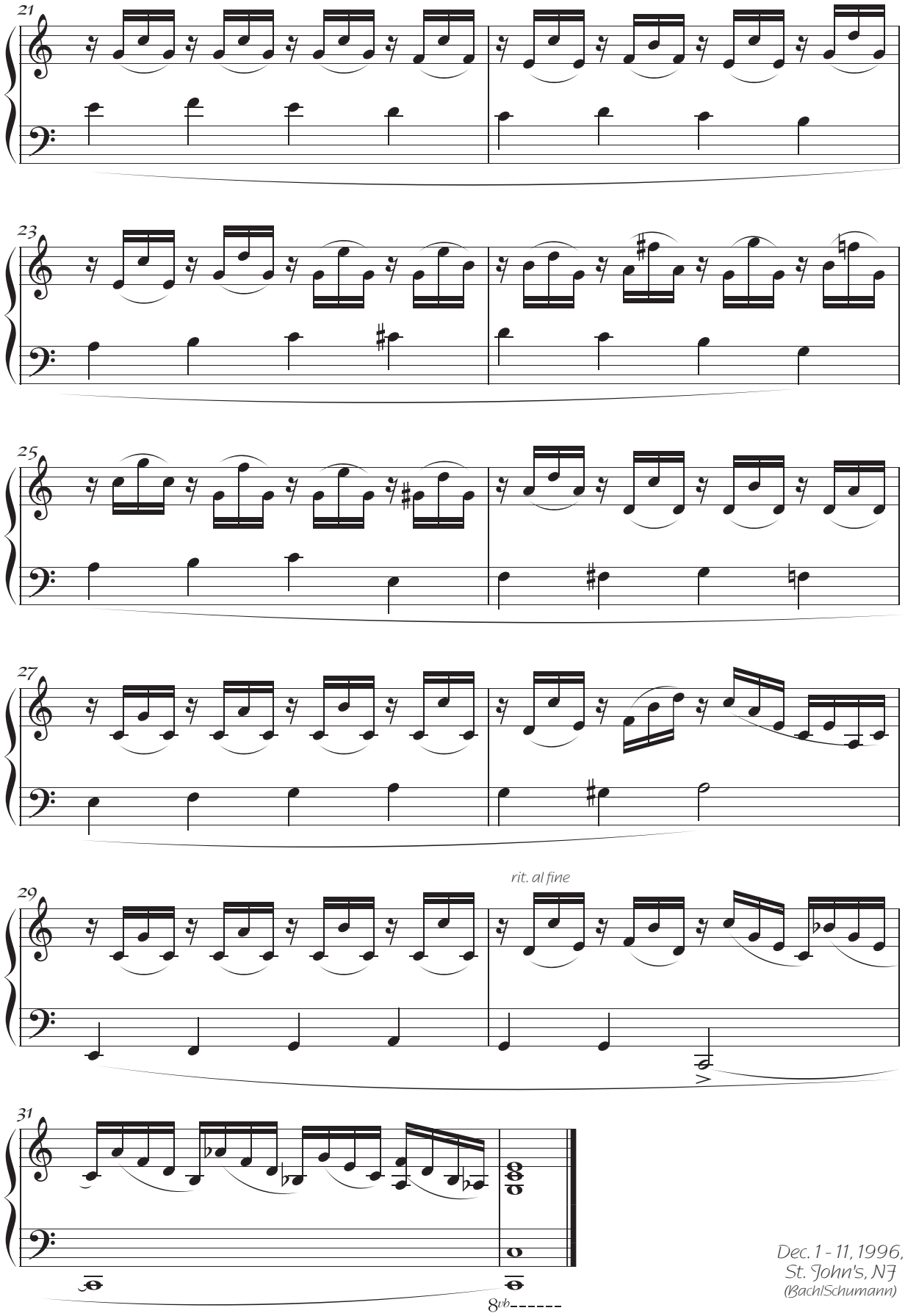
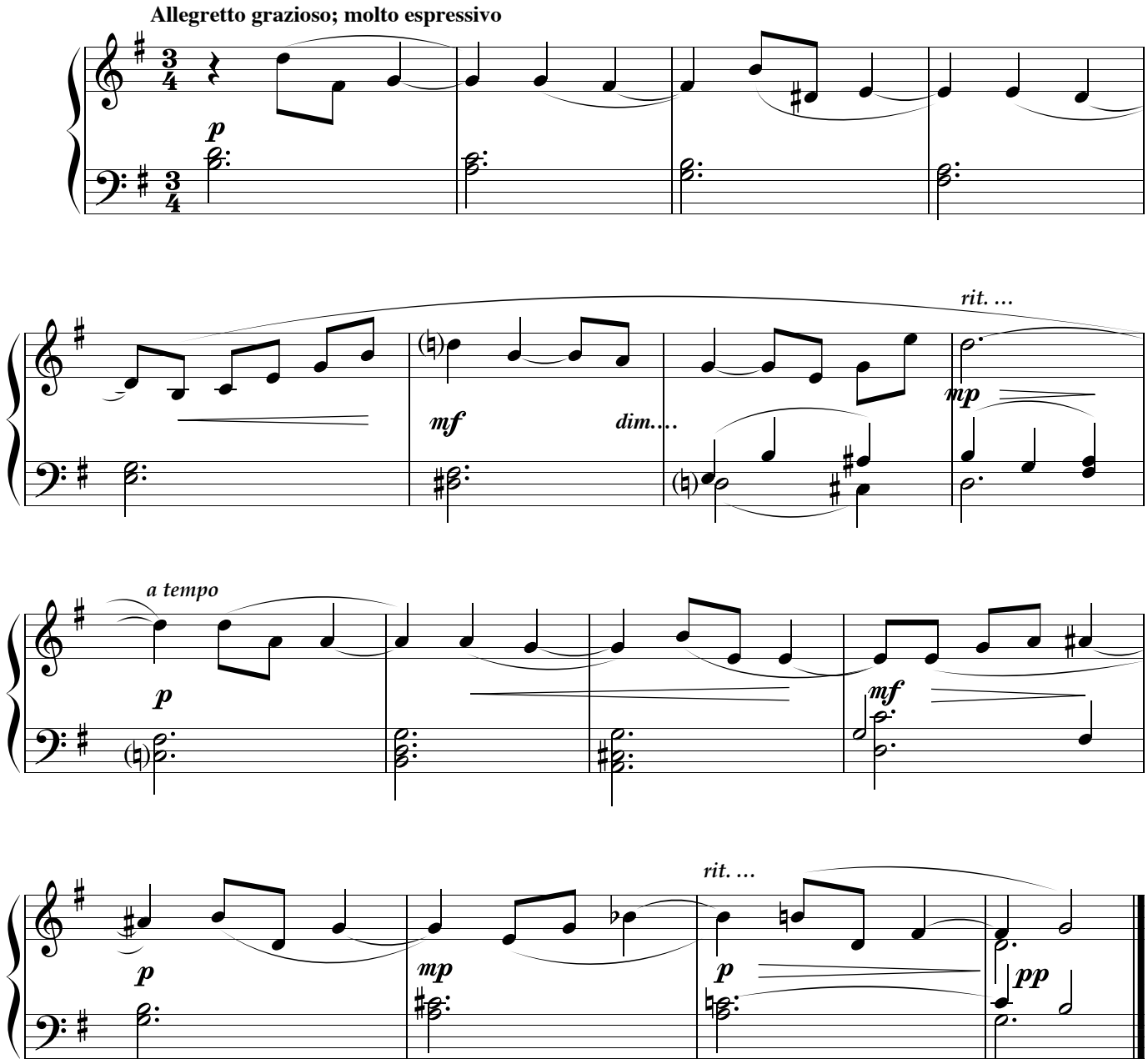


Dec. 1 - 11, 1996,
St. John's, NF
(Bach/Schumann)

1. *Waltz*

Clark Winslow Ross



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