Paths To Recovery

For Two Pianos

Jon Fielder

Program Note

Paths To Recovery traces the process of healing from years of relational trauma through dialog with a trusted partner. The narrative unfolds as a discourse between two pianos, each with its own distinct voice and character. Piano 1 presents material that is more jagged, discordant, dissonant, angular and unsettling. Piano 2, on the other hand, takes on a more stable, consonant and less aggressive presence within the texture, though not meek or reserved. The two voices interact as equals, occupying the same space but bringing different energies, in some ways baggage, to the conversation.

The composition unfolds gradually, Piano 1 reorienting itself through becoming less forceful, its harmonies less harsh and melodies less disjointed and irregular. The volatility begins to wane while Piano 2 remains vigilant in its steadiness, remaining grounded. Material that was once individualized and unique becomes shared, echoed and overlapped. Angular melodies give way to a sonic mobile of floating ever-shifting chords. However the harmonies remain bitonal and relatively without tonal function, resulting in a progression that is in constant flux, but always stable. Two trajectories of chord progressions result in the pianos remaining as two distinct voices, two identities, in consort with one another to create a single harmonic entity. The two are not completely fused nor are they in opposition. They move in tandem, each evolving indivdiaully while remaining on a unified path. Ultimately, the final chords ring out consonant and stable, even if unresolved.

Paths To Recovery is dedicated to my partner, Gwen Wenzloff. It was completed on February 27th, 2026 in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Performance Note

Players may read from score or from parts. Individual parts are available directly from the composer.

Accidentals carry throug the bar, but not across octaves. For example, a Bb4 will remain flat through an entire measure, unless canceled out by a natural or sharp, whereas any other octave B in that same measure should be assumed to be natural, unless notated otherwise.

Players should adhere to pedal markings as they appear in the score. In some cases, pitches will bleed and create a wash of sound. This is intentional and intended to create a greater sense of chaos in the first half of the piece, and to blur the harmonic field in the second half.

Moments with the sustain pedal up should sound sharp and pointed. Piano lids should be at full stick if possible, but in the case of a particularly reverberant performance space half-stick is adequate. The goal is to provide piano resonance but not drown out the dryness in the first half of the piece so that the interaction between the two voices is articulated.

For Gwen Wenzloff

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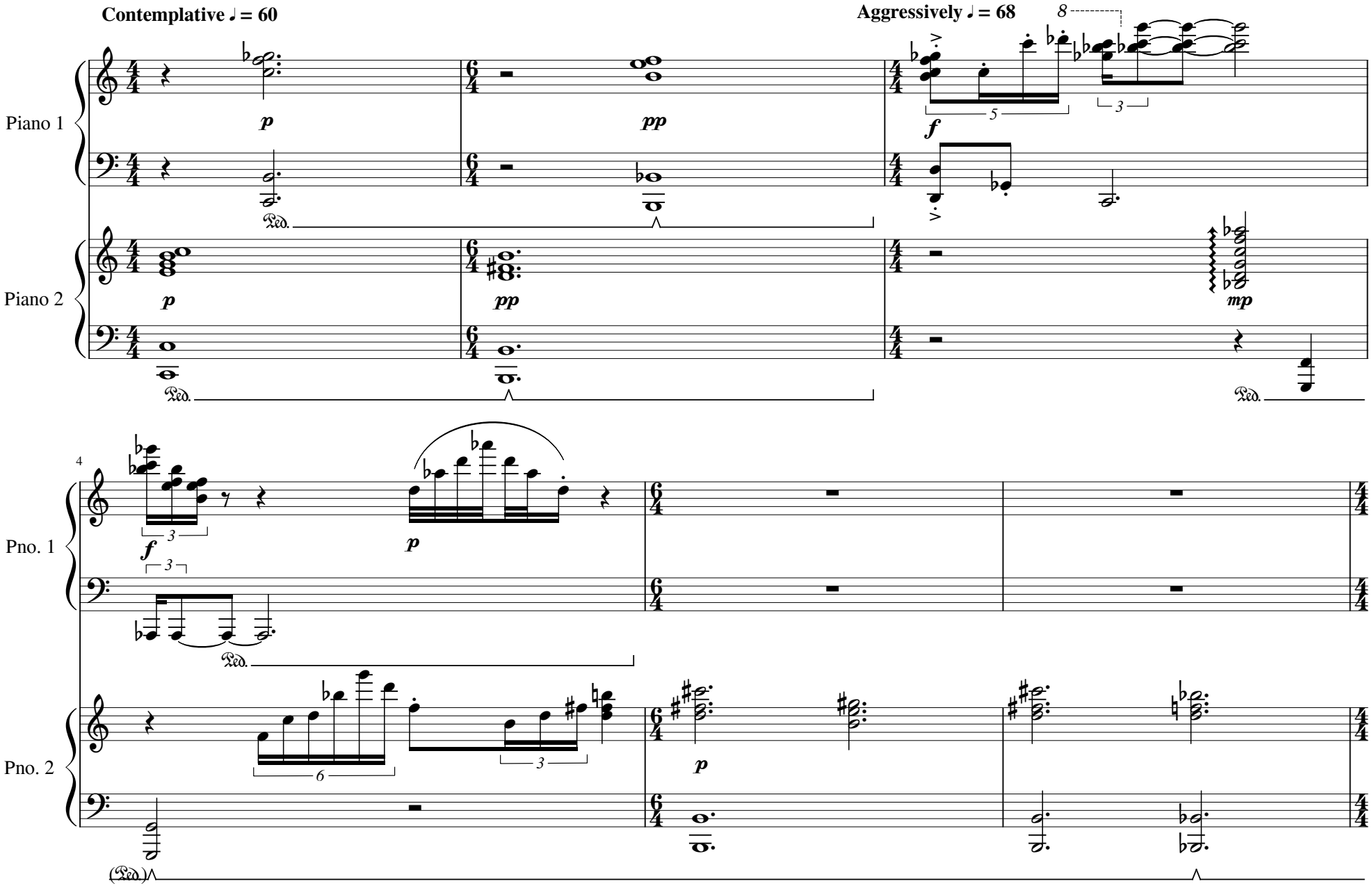
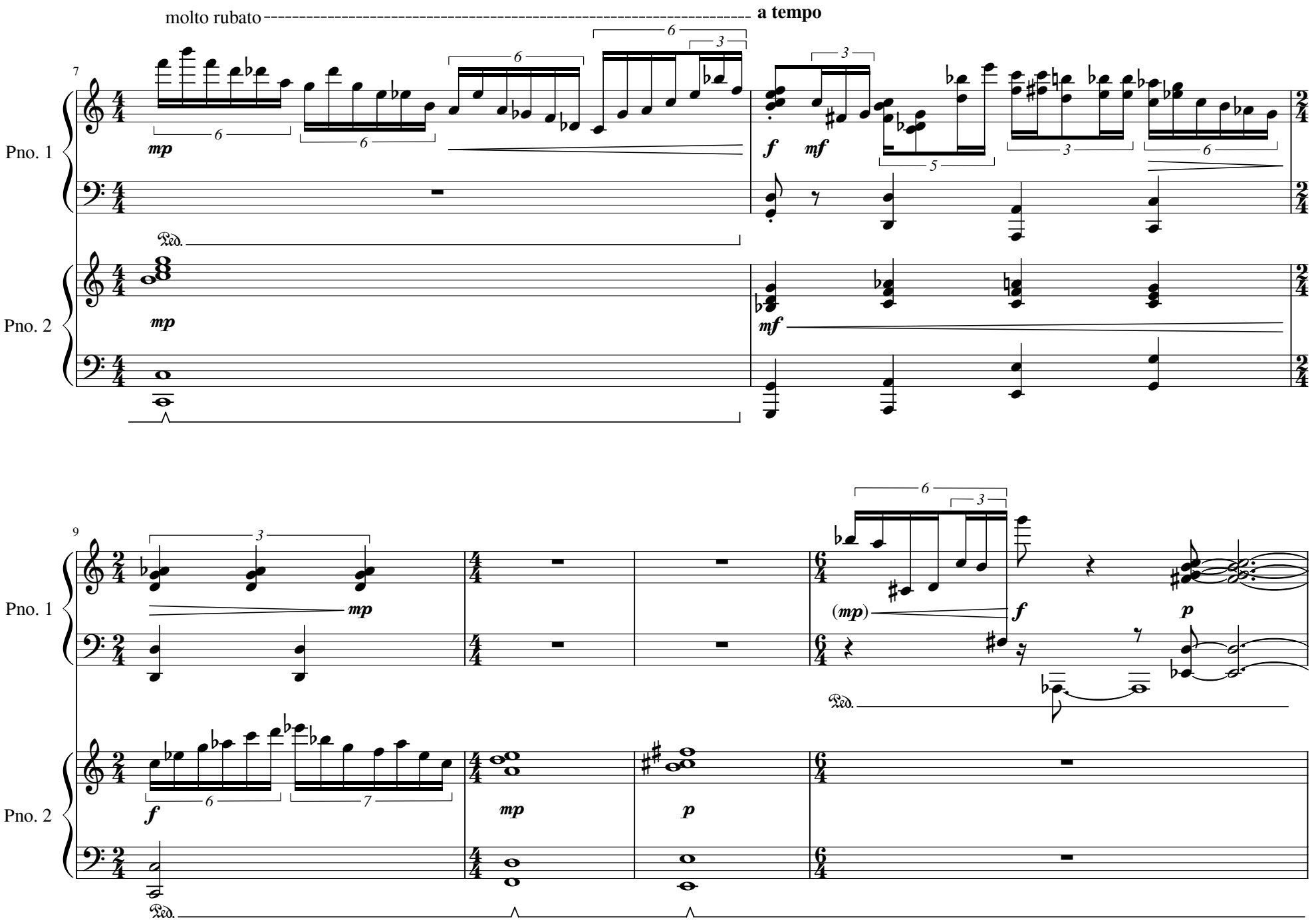
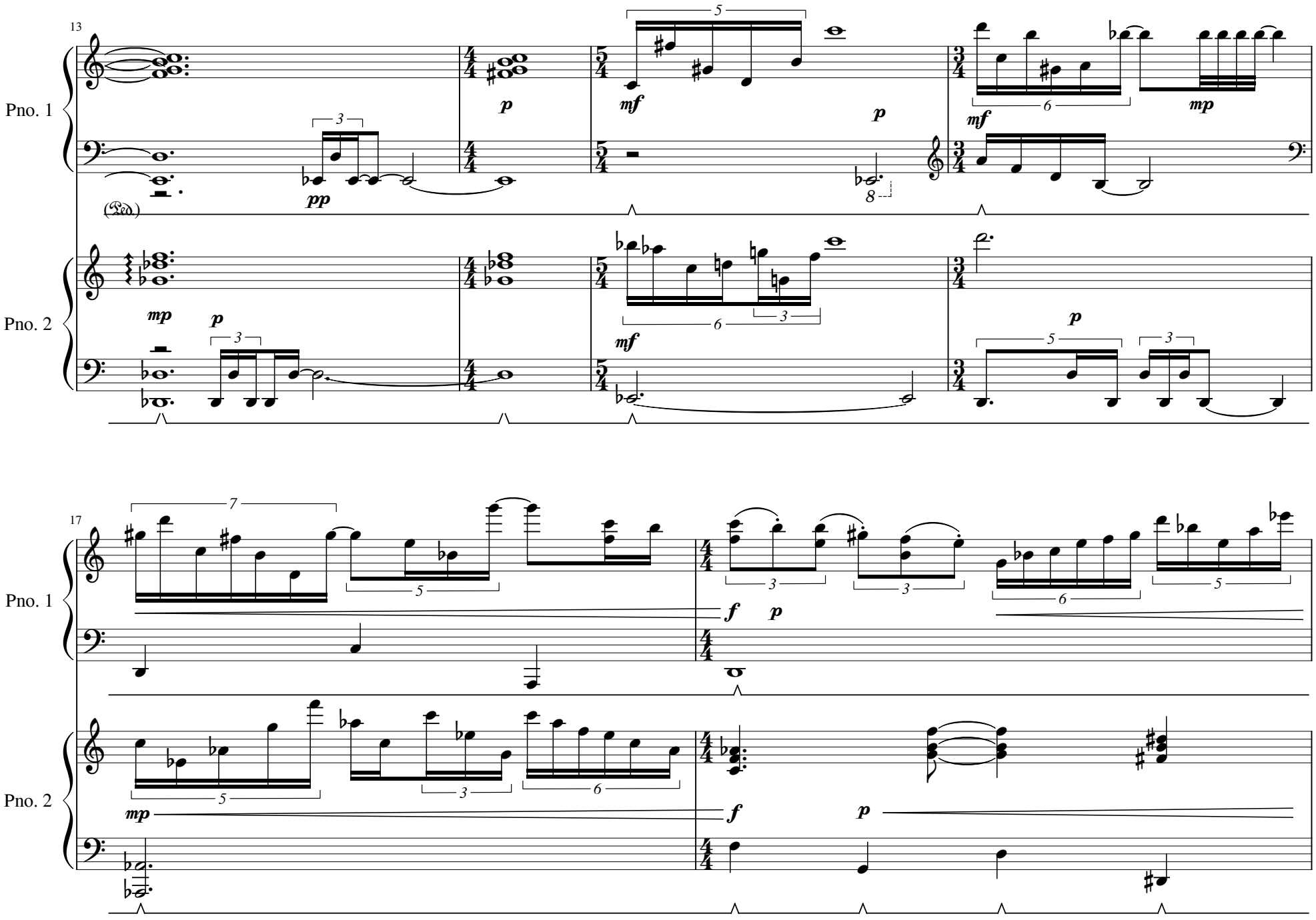
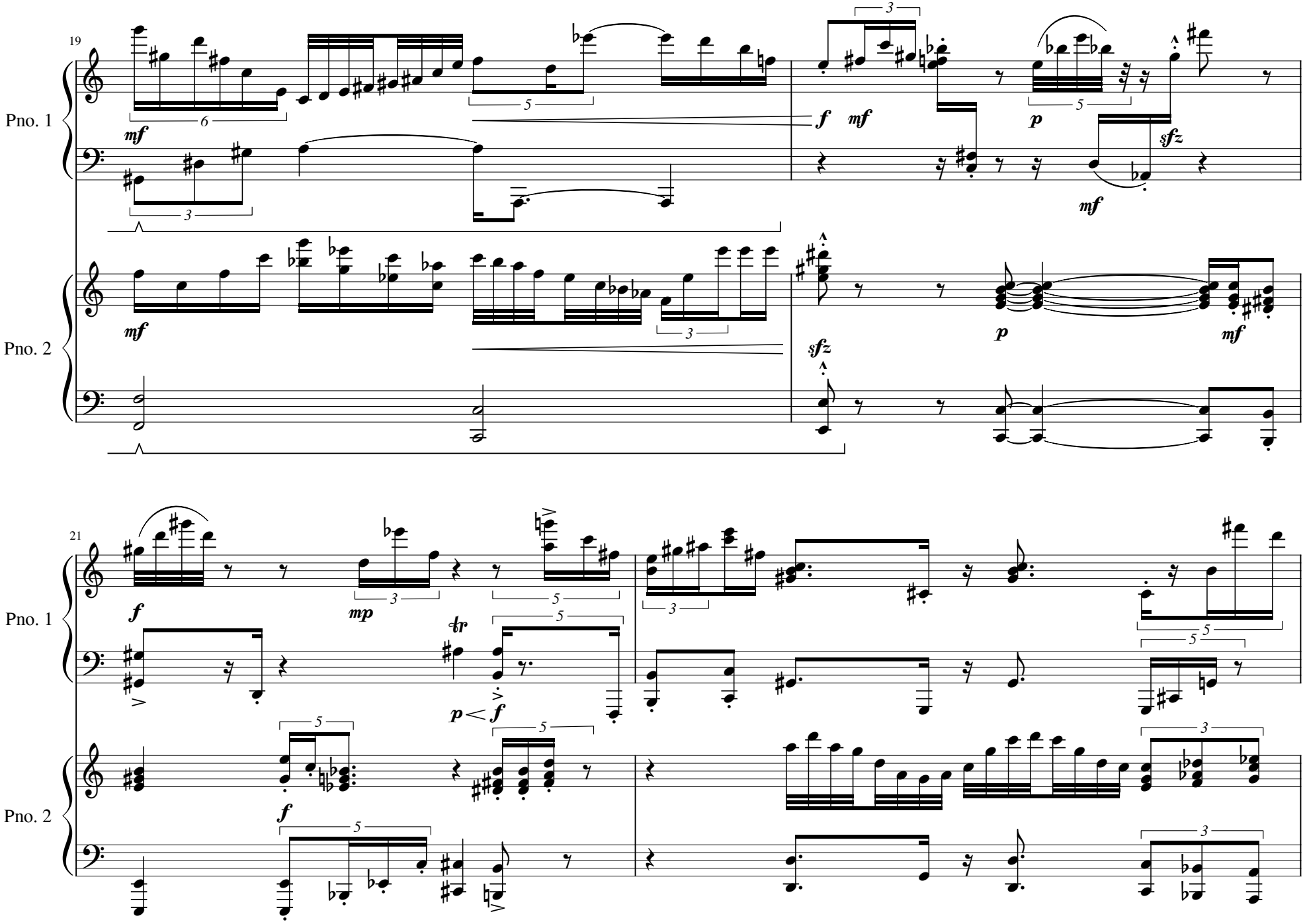
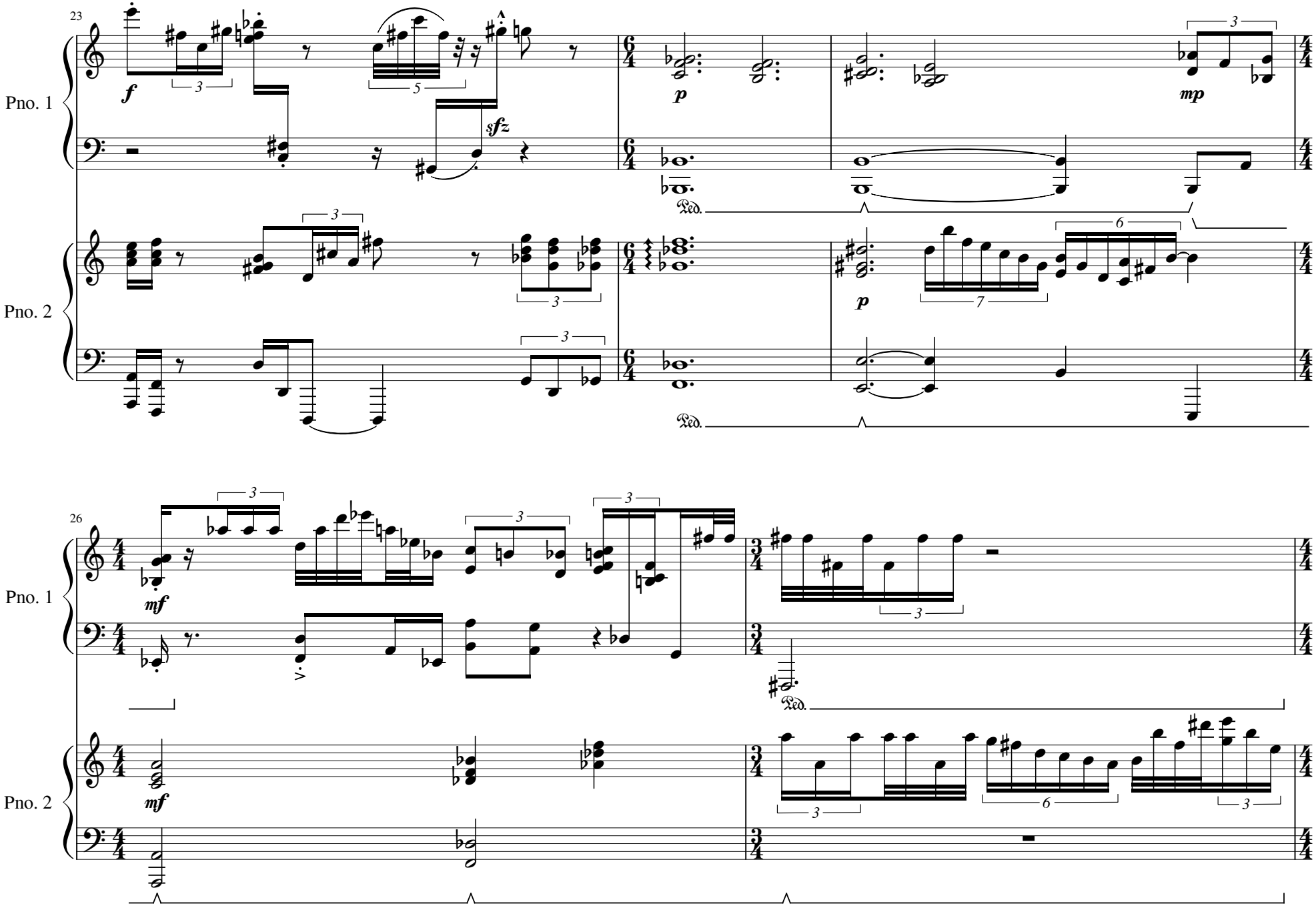
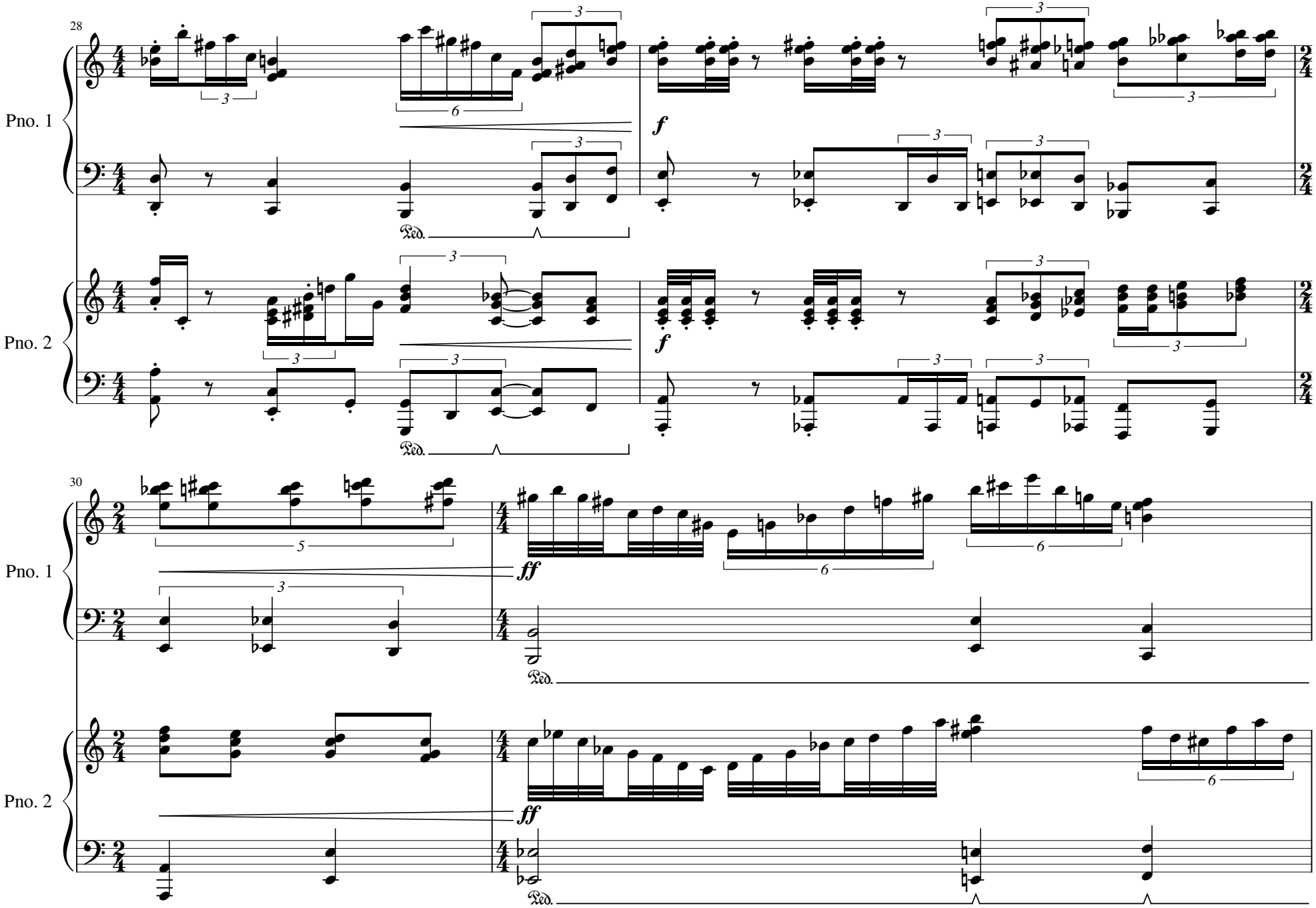



molto rubato
a tempo
7
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
mp
f
mf
Ped.
9
(mp)
p

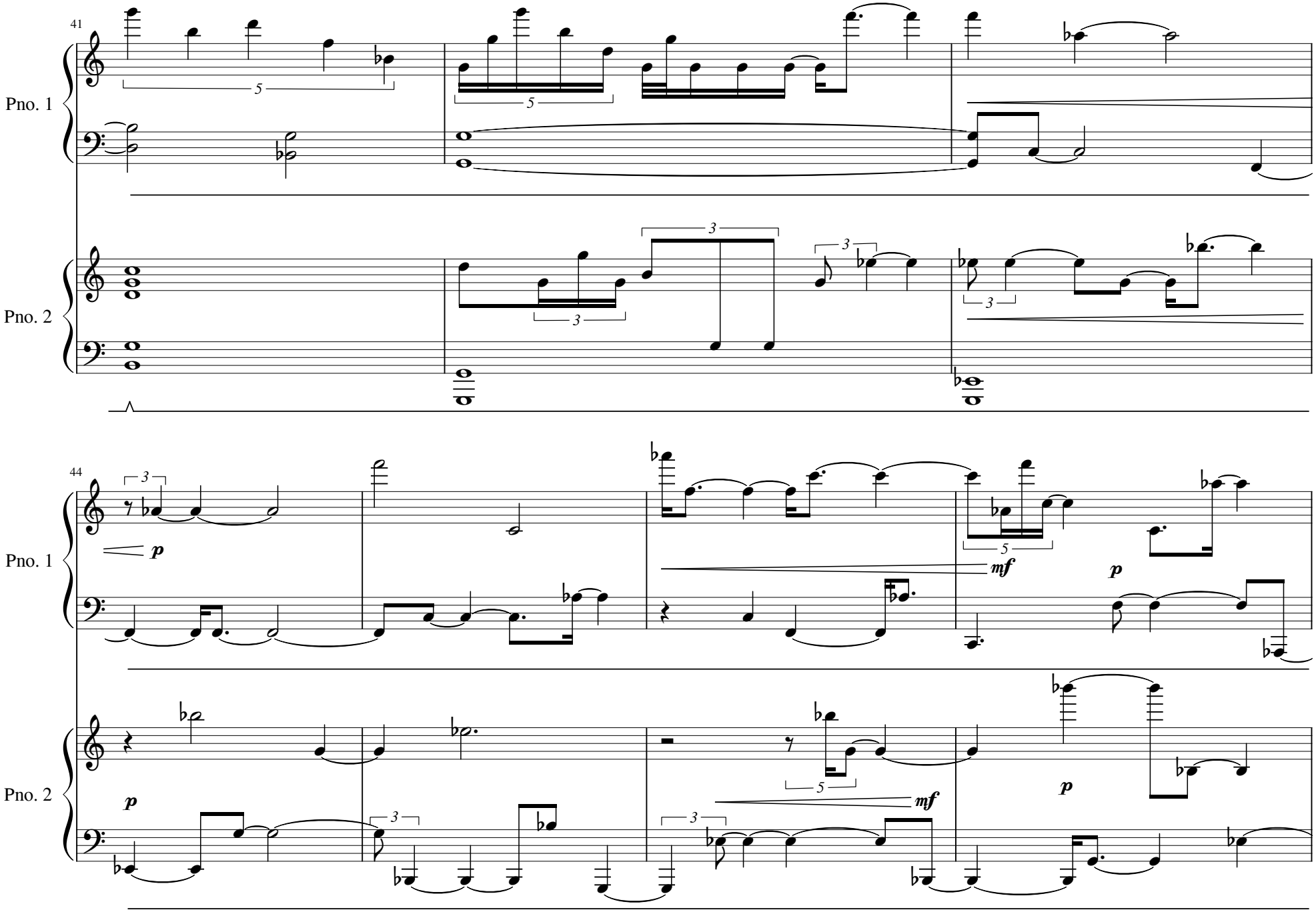

13
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
(Ped.)
17
Pno. 1
Pno. 2

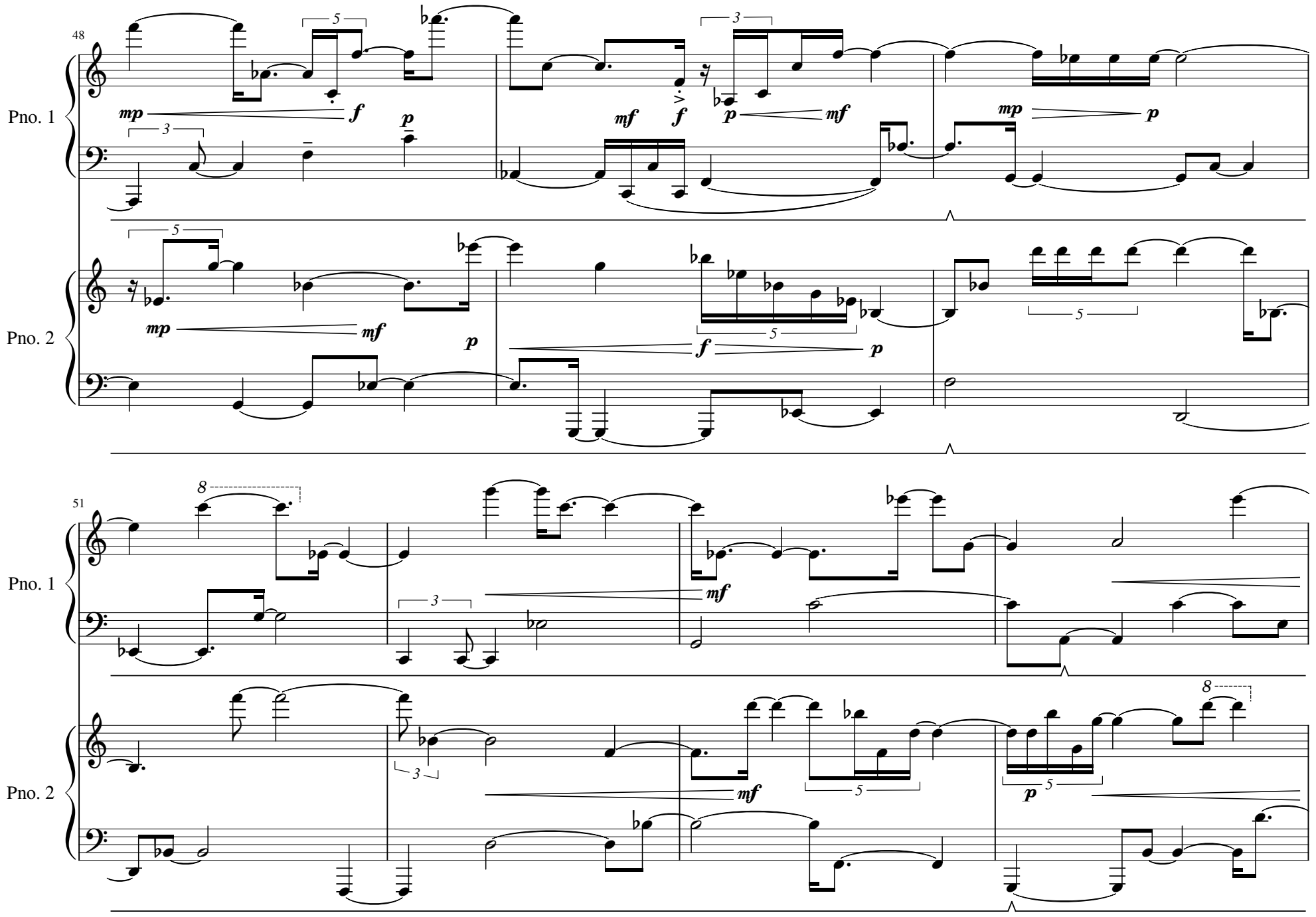

19
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
21
Pno. 1
Pno. 2

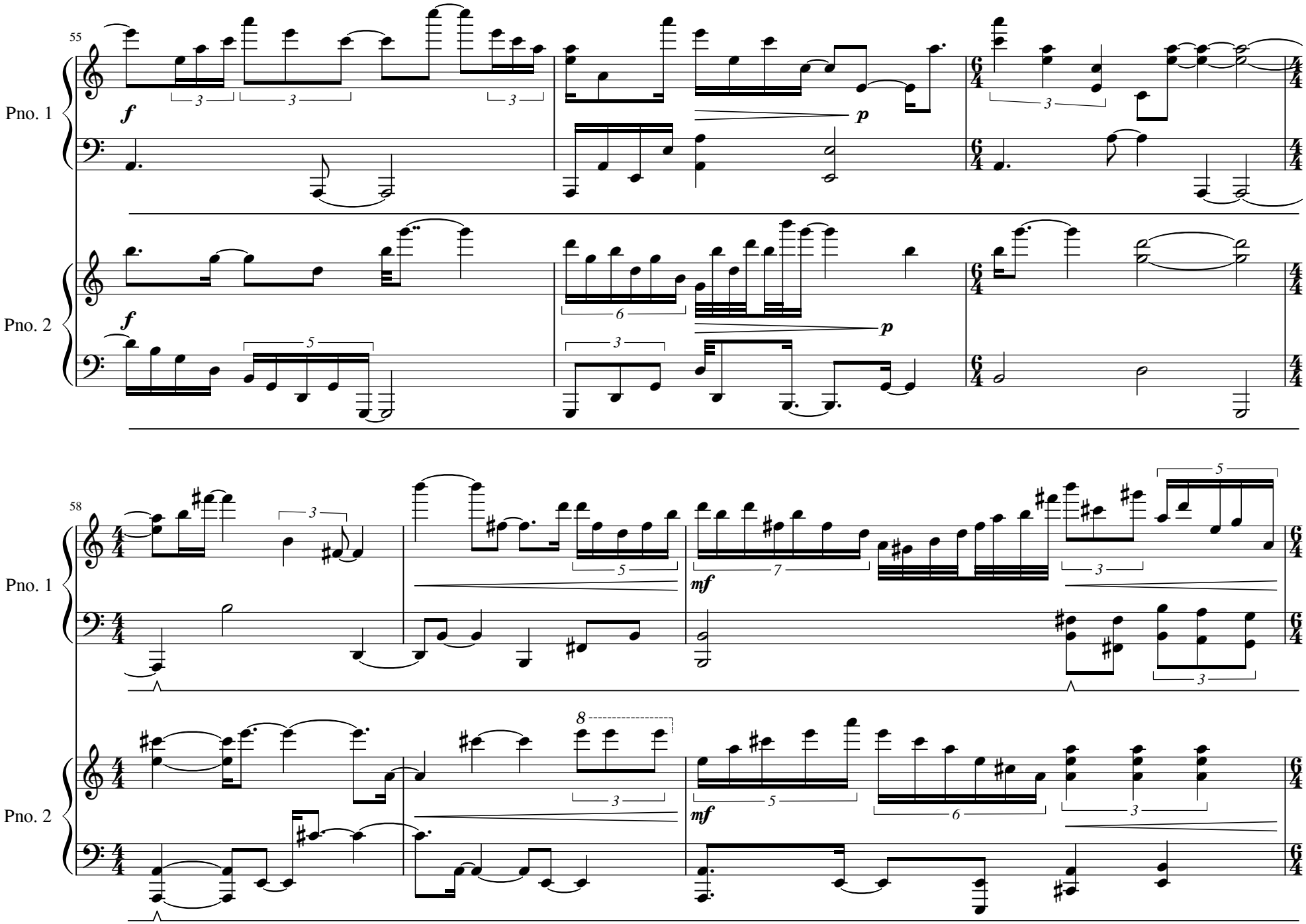

23
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
f
sfz
p
mp
Ped.
26
mf


28
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
f
Ped.
30
ff

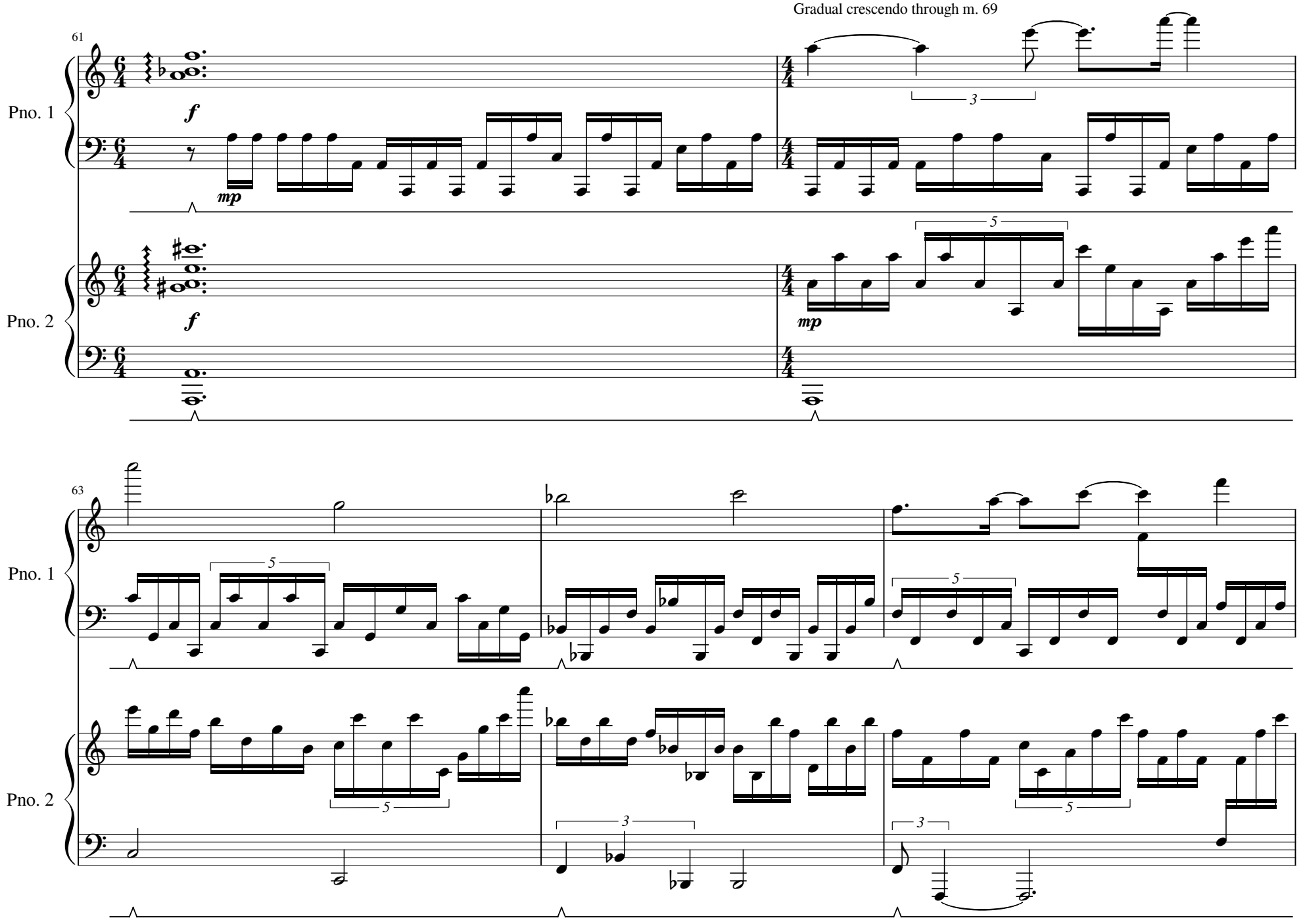
32
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
mf
mp
p
Meno Mosso ♩ = 60
37
pp

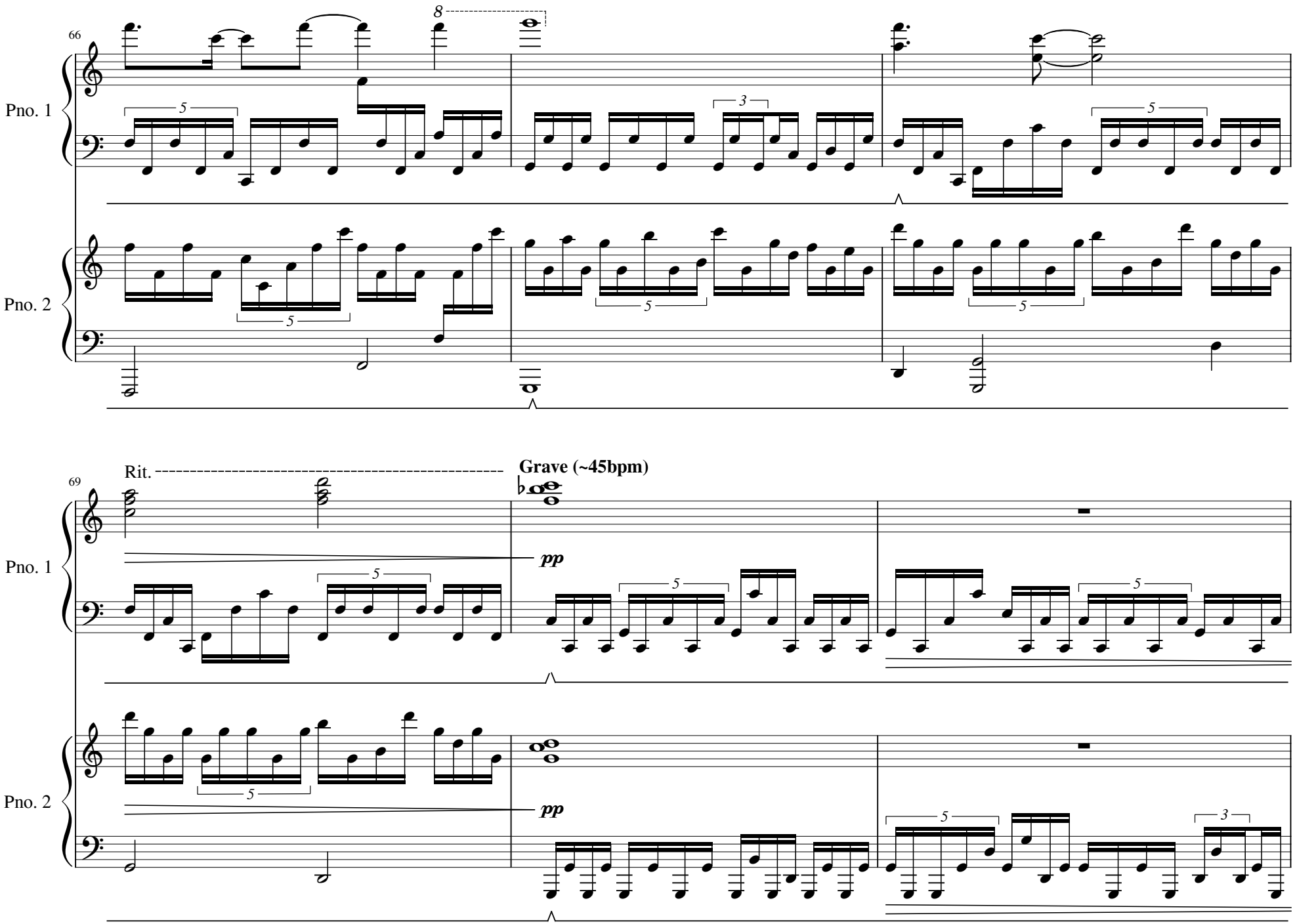

41
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
44
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
p
mf
p

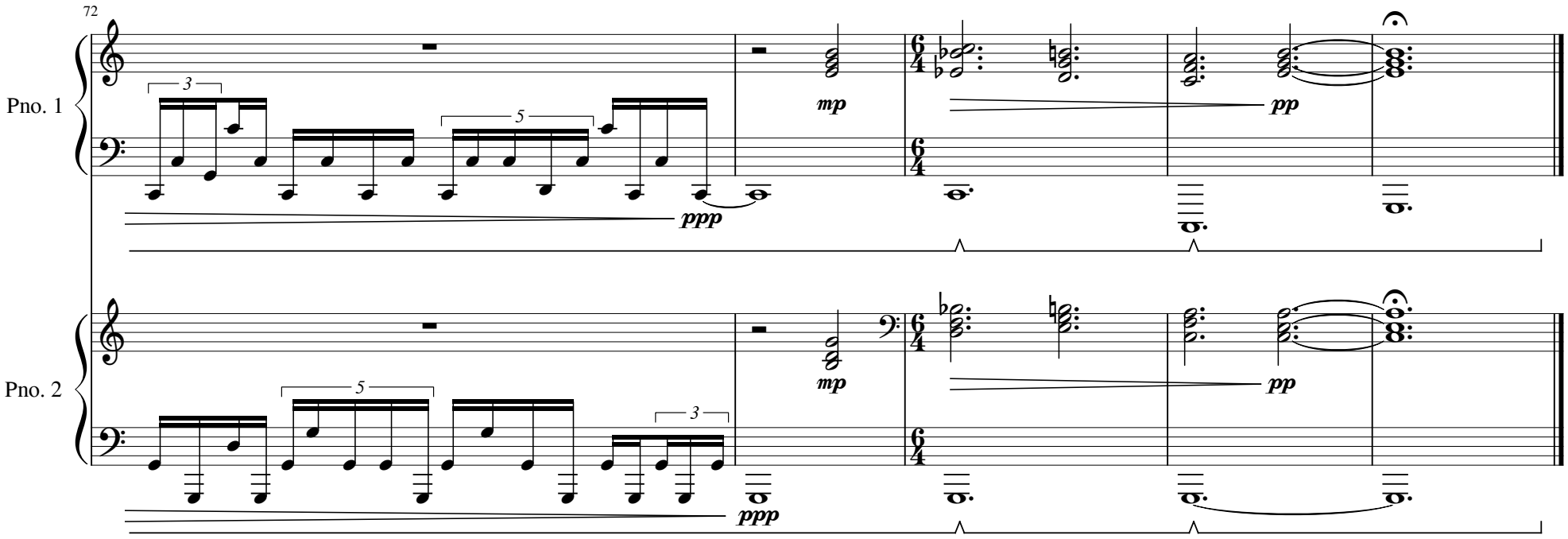

48
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
51
Pno. 1
Pno. 2


55
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
58
Pno. 1
Pno. 2

Gradual crescendo through m. 69




66
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
8
5
3
5
5
5
69
Rit.
Grave (~45bpm)
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
pp
pp
5
5
5
5
5
3


72
Pno. 1
Pno. 2
3
5
ppp
mp
pp