NINE FORGOTTEN VARIATIONS

for solo piano

(2021)

LIAM RITZ

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Commissioned by Adam Sherkin and The Piano Lunaire,

With support from the Ontario Arts Council.

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Nine Forgotten Variations (2021)

for solo piano

Duration: ca. 17 minutes

PROGRAMME NOTE

At its core, *Nine Forgotten Variations* is an exploration of memory and the way in which music can so strongly connect us with events, people, and our past experiences. Specifically, I wanted to capture the ephemeral quality of nostalgia and familiarity that is inherent within musical memories – aiming to recreate this visceral feeling within a set of distant and fragmented recollections.

Each movement of *Nine Forgotten Variations* is linked with a personal musical experience and corresponding work from the piano repertoire. With these connections, I wanted to explore how I could distill the essence of these pieces that trigger my "musical memories" and magnify these elements into fully realized aural landscapes. Through this process of thematic distillation and development, my hope was to produce a sense of *déjà vu* wherein a listener has that instinctive feeling of familiarity and *knowing*, without the ability to necessarily name the association.

In addition, this set of miniatures is very much an homage to my mother – a pianist herself – whom I grew up listening to, performing with, and with whom I formed most of my fondest musical memories. Many of the pieces that are alluded to in this set are ones that either she would play when I was young or that we have played together throughout the years

Nine Forgotten Variations was commissioned by Adam Sherkin and The Piano Lunaire with generous support from the Ontario Arts Council.

COMPOSER BIOGRAPHY

Liam Ritz (b.1996) is a Canadian-born composer based in Toronto, Ontario.

He has worked with renowned musicians and ensembles including the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Gemma New, Veronique Lacroix, Etsuko Kimura, and Cameron Crozman. Ritz's works have been performed in festivals and workshops across Canada, as well as performances in the United States, Italy, and Finland.

Recognized for his work, Ritz has received multiple SOCAN Foundation Young Composers Awards, a City of Hamilton Arts Award, and was selected as the inaugural winner of the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra's Composer Fellowship Program during their 2018-19 season.

A graduate of the University of Toronto, Ritz's work has been supported by organizations such as the Toronto Arts Council, Ontario Arts Council, Canada Council for the Arts, and the RBC Emerging Artists Project.

Contact
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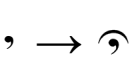
PERFORMANCE NOTES

Accidentals apply only to the octave indicated and apply throughout entire measure. Accidentals may be repeated later in the measure as a reminder.

Shortest Fermata Longest Fermata

Shortest Breath Marking  Longest Breath Marking

Grace notes are to be played before or after the beat, respective of where they are placed. Grouped grace notes marked with a slash are always to be played quickly, regardless of tempo.

When specific pedalling is not idicated, it is left to the performer to apply pedalling at their discretion.

ALTERNATIVE PERFORMANCE OPTIONS

In the situation that one would like to programme an subset of the work, there are movements that have been written to allow for suggested subsets and groupings.

For example:
Movements 1 (Aria I), 5 (Sarabande), and 9 (Aria II) can be performed as a stand-alone set, and are written to seamlessly connect to one another.

Movements 1 – 5 **or** Movements 5 – 9 may also create smaller performance subsets.

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Nine Forgotten Variations

for solo piano

1. Aria I

Liam Ritz (b.1996)

lento, con rubato (♪=60)

ppp dolciss.

3

5

accel. poco a poco

p cresc. poco a poco

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più mosso (♪=76)

mf

subito tempo I (♪=60)

pp subito

accel. poco a poco

mp

più mosso (♪=76)

rit.

p

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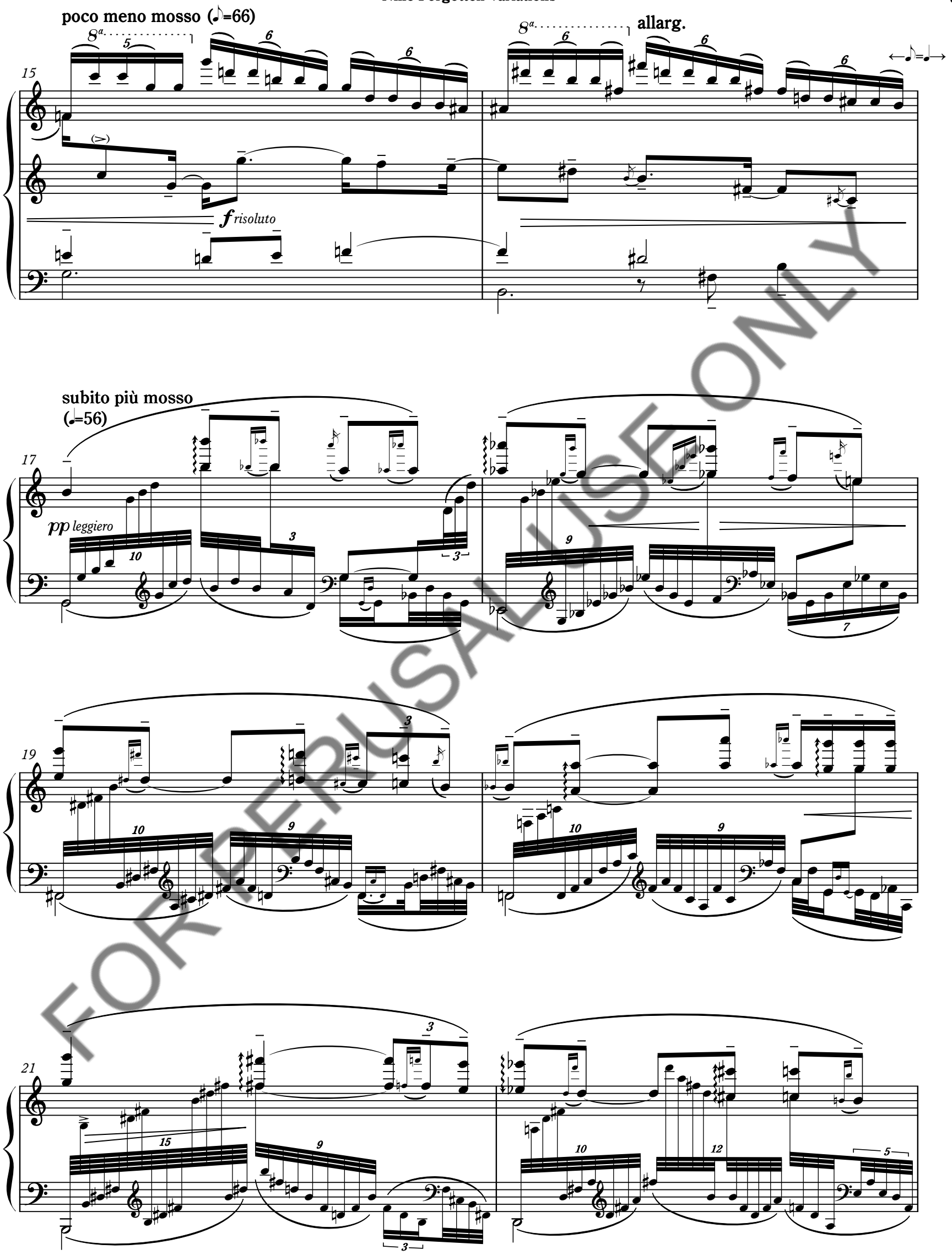

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23

24

poco stringendo

25

crescendo poco a poco

26

ritenuto

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27

molto allargando

28

mf

ad libitum (molto rubato)

29

p cresc. poco a poco

(loco)

ff

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mp

calando

lunga

p

ppp

2. Mazurka

tempo di valse (♩=138)

rit.

a tempo

(2+3+2)

quasi-gliss.

accel.

rit.

a tempo

molto rit.

ten.

p giocoso

mf

loco

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12
a tempo
accel.
molto rit.
ff p f p sf

16
meno mosso (♩=116)
accel.
tempo I (♩=138)
accel.
molto rit.
(2+3+2)
sf pp subito f p f pp

20
a tempo
stringendo
f pp cresc. poco a poco
sf sf sf sf

24
più mosso e scorrevole (♩=152)
sf sf ff pp
½ Ped. una corde

28
ff pp ff pp
½ Ped. una corde ½ Ped. una corde

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32

ff pp ½Ped. una corde

ff pp ½Ped.

ff pp ½Ped.

36

molto rit. tempo I (♩=138) accel.

ff (2+3+2) p sf p giocoso mf p

40

a tempo

f pp f p f

44

accel. rit. subito più mosso (♩=c.210)

f p f ten. ten. mp scherzando

48

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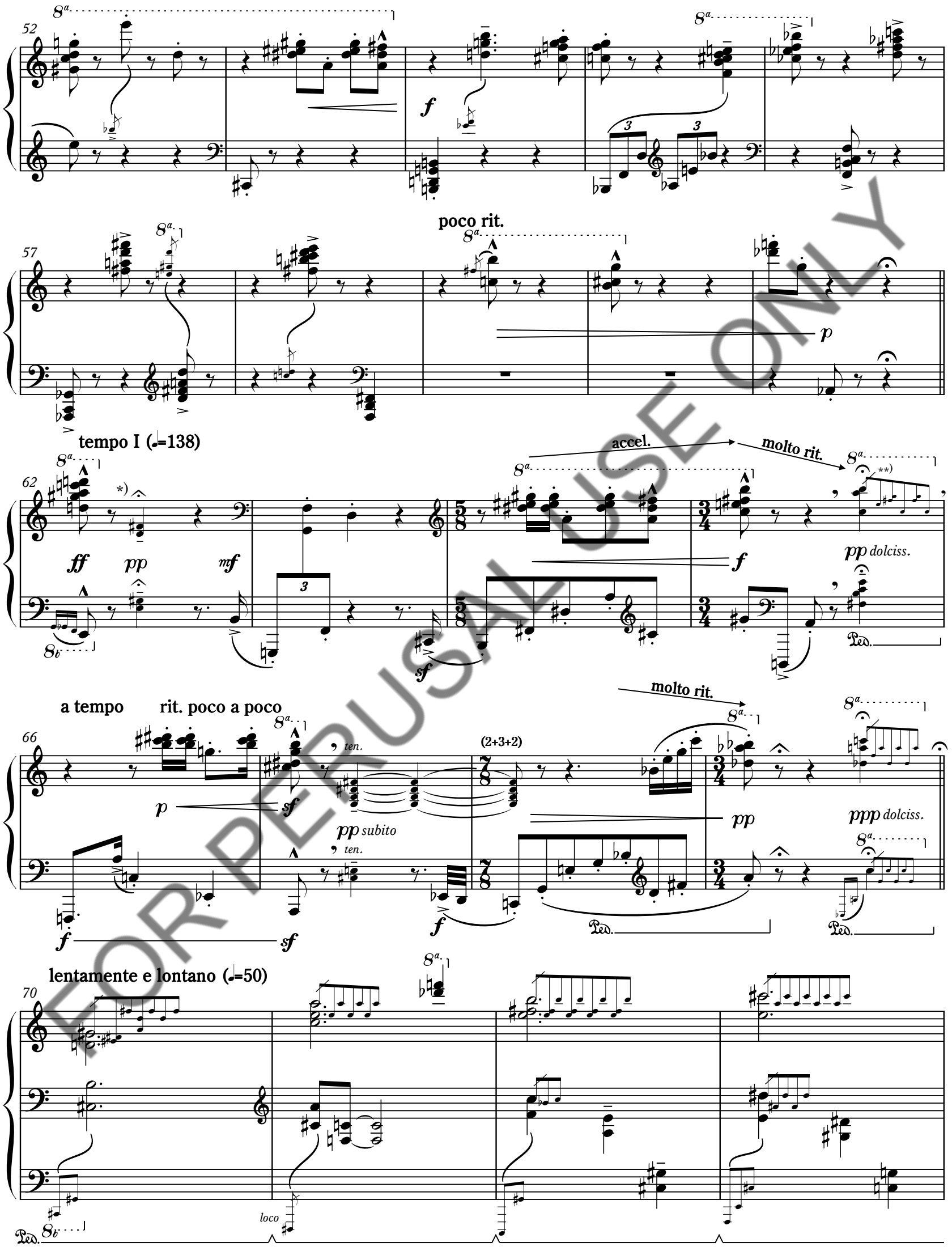

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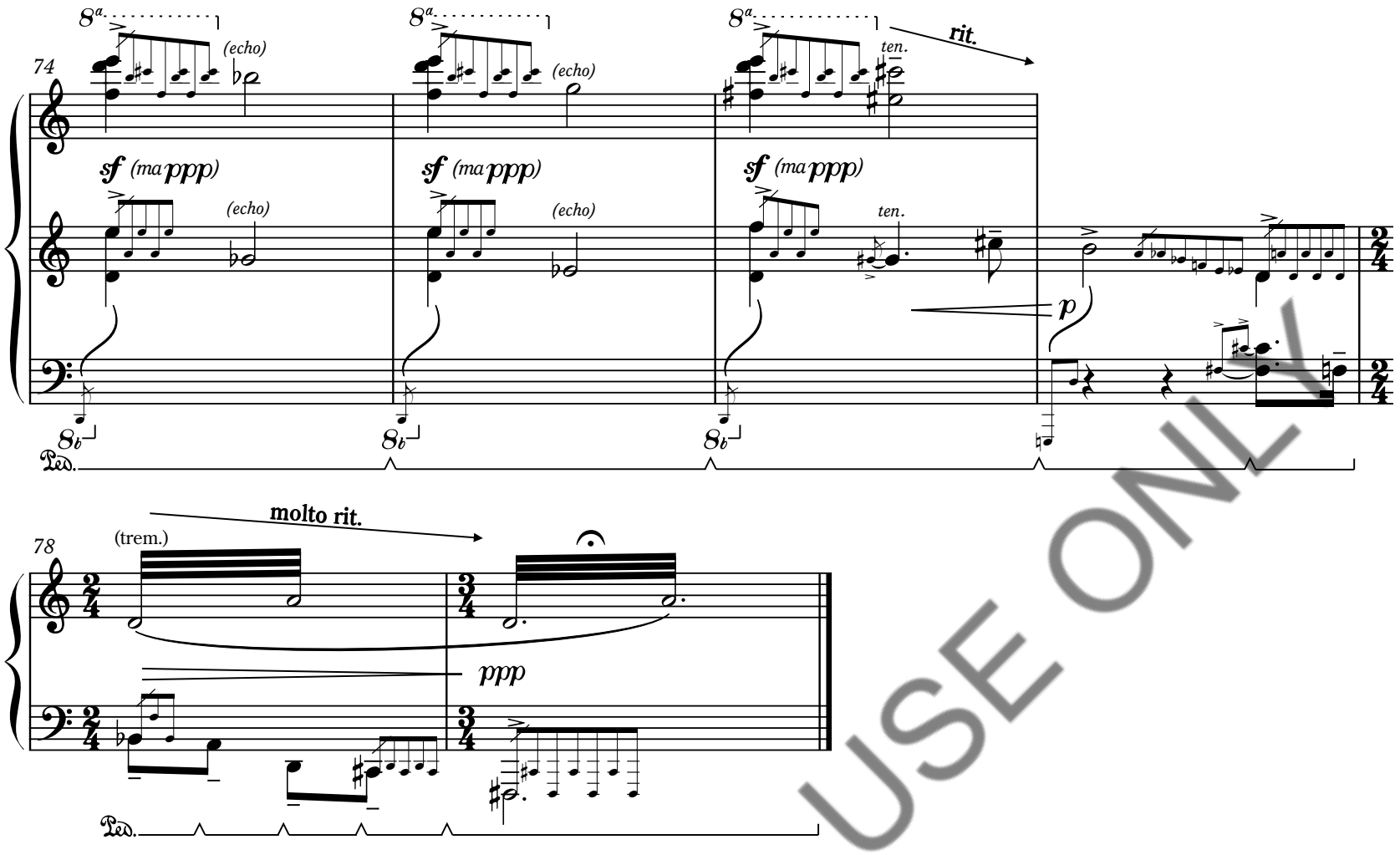
*) Reduced notes to be played in a suddenly distant and separate character; emotionally removed from the surrounding musical phrase.

**) Grace note figures in upper-voice are not to be played in strict time, but rather should resemble an echoing effect of the primary beats. When both hands have grace notes, they do not need to be rhythmically aligned.



3. be still [...]

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10

mf maestoso

p

13

ppp dolciss.

16

4. Prelude

andante con moto e poco rubato (♩=88)

8a

ppp dolciss.

8a

Ped.

Ped.

silently depress notes with sostenuto pedal – sustaining through until measure 33.

Sost. Ped.

3

pp leggiero

LH

Ped.

Ped.

*) ½ Ped.

***) Within this movement, indentation in pedalling always indicates to lift to half-pedal, with the terminal hook indicating to fully clear pedal.**

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5

Ped.

(sempre sost. ped.)

Ped.

7

LH

Ped.

Ped.

9

LH

Ped.

Ped.

11

Ped.

Ped.

13

LH

Ped.

Ped.

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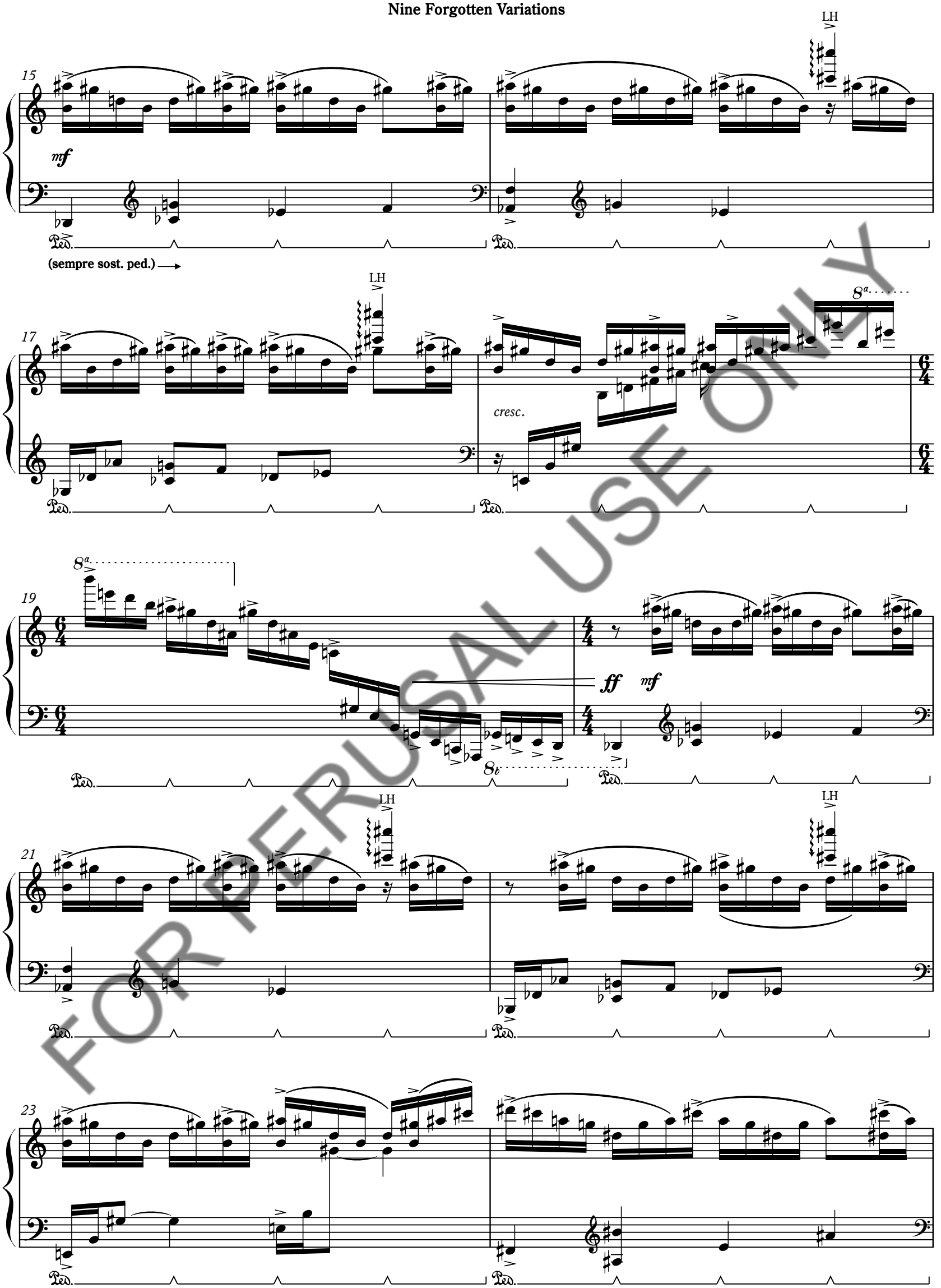

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25

Ped.

(sempre sost. ped.)

27

Ped.

poco stringendo

29

cresc. poco a poco

Ped.

31

Ped.

più mosso (♩=96)

33

ff

Ped.

(Sost. Ped.)

tempo I (♩=88)

8ª

ppp dolciss.

8ª

Ped.

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35

8a

Ped.

(loco)

37

39

41

LH

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5. Sarabande

adagio assai e teneramente
(♩=50)

continuous phrase

pp cantabile

8a

poco rit.

ten.

mp

p ten.

5

a tempo

poco

pp subito

molto rit.

p

9

a tempo

(D)

pp

13

poco rit.

3

5

p

17

a tempo

pp articulato

12

p

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molto rit.

a tempo e scorrevole

allargando

20

(quasi-trill)

mf risoluto

p

sf

pp subito
e molto flessibile

pp subito

cresc. poco a poco

(♩=50)

(♪=72)

23

(B♮)

(B♭)

molto rit.

senza misura e molto rubato

(loco)

mf risoluto

ten.

adagio assai e teneramente

(♩=50)

(24)

p cantabile

f

pp cantabile

poco rit.

a tempo

27

mp

p

poco

calando

30

pp subito

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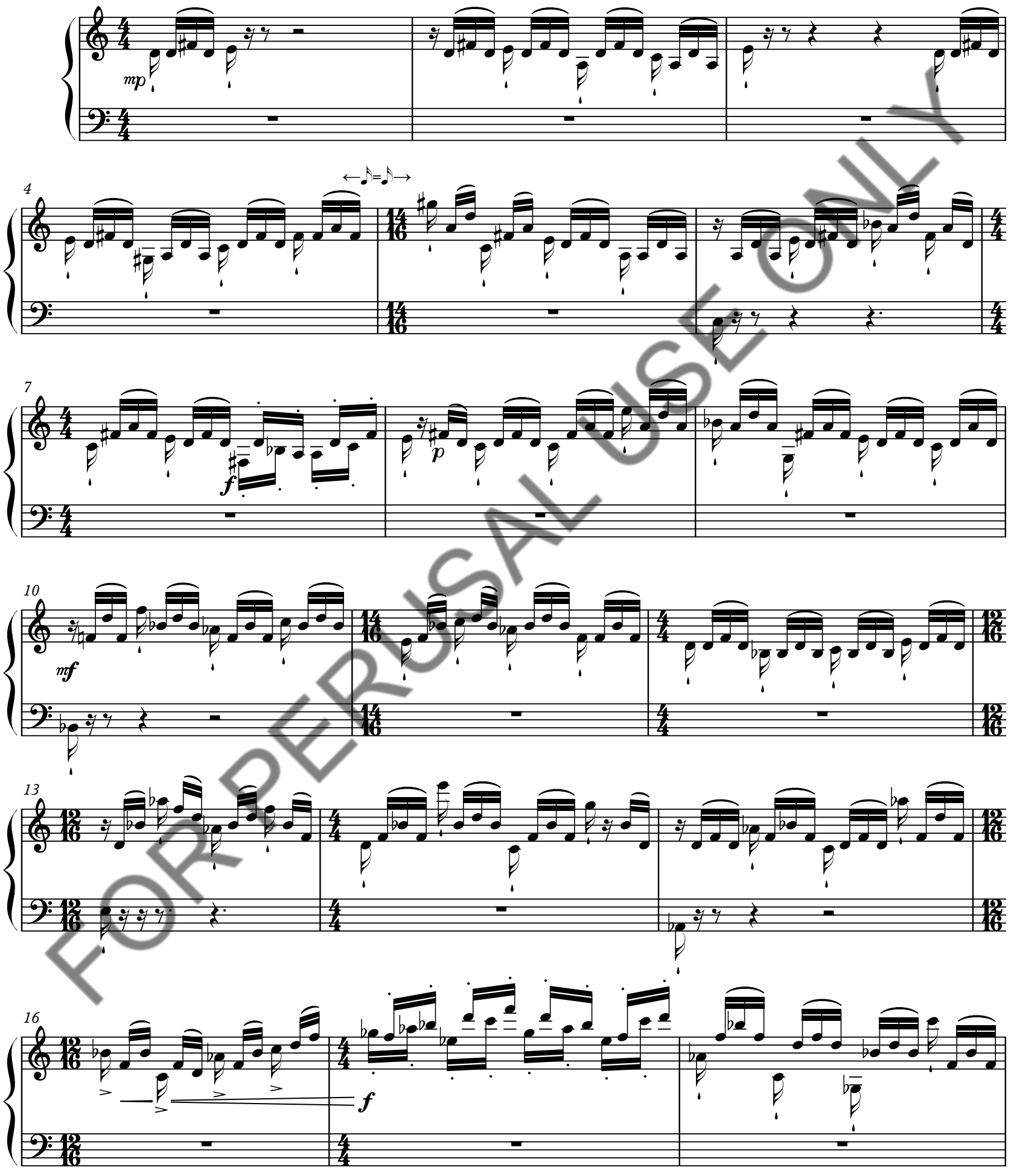
6. Sonata

allegro con spirito (♩=132)



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19

pp subito

f *pp subito*

22

25

28

mf

31

34

f

mp subito cresc. poco a poco

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37

40

f brillante

43

p

46

mf subito

49

f

mp subito *cresc. poco a poco*

52

ff

8a

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7. [...] love begotten

adagio e molto liberamente
(𝅗𝅥=44)

pp cantabile

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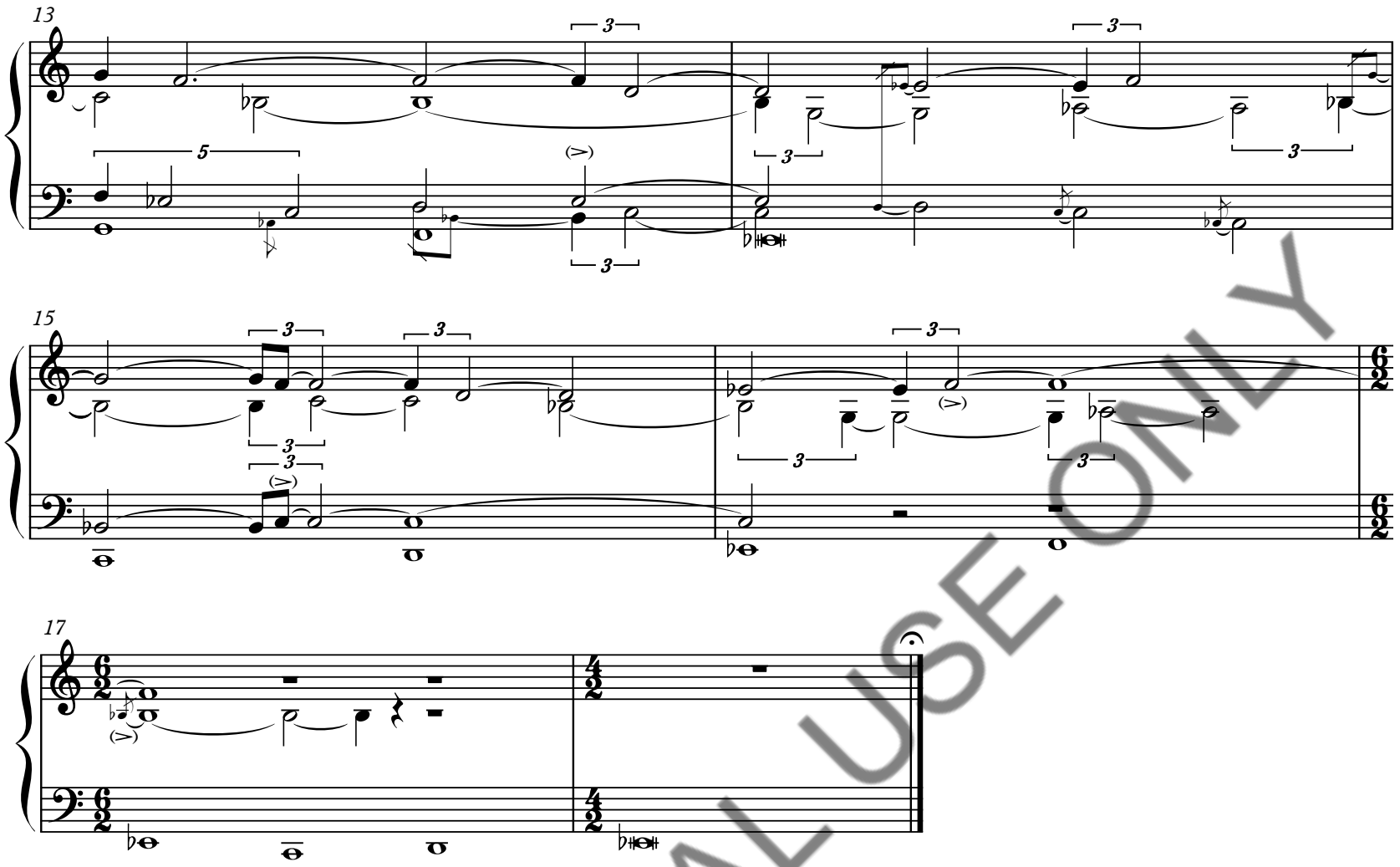
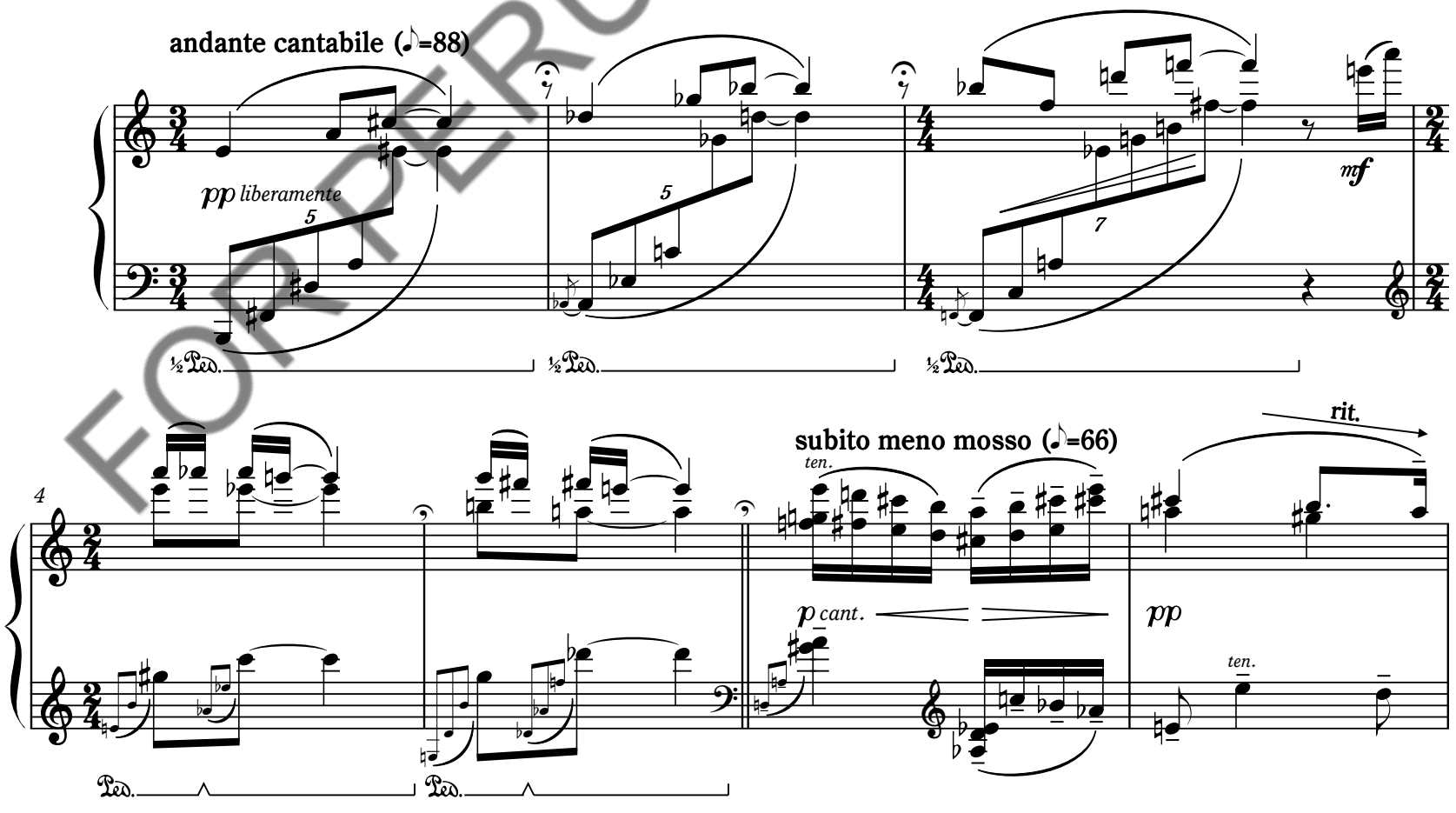


8. Bagatelle



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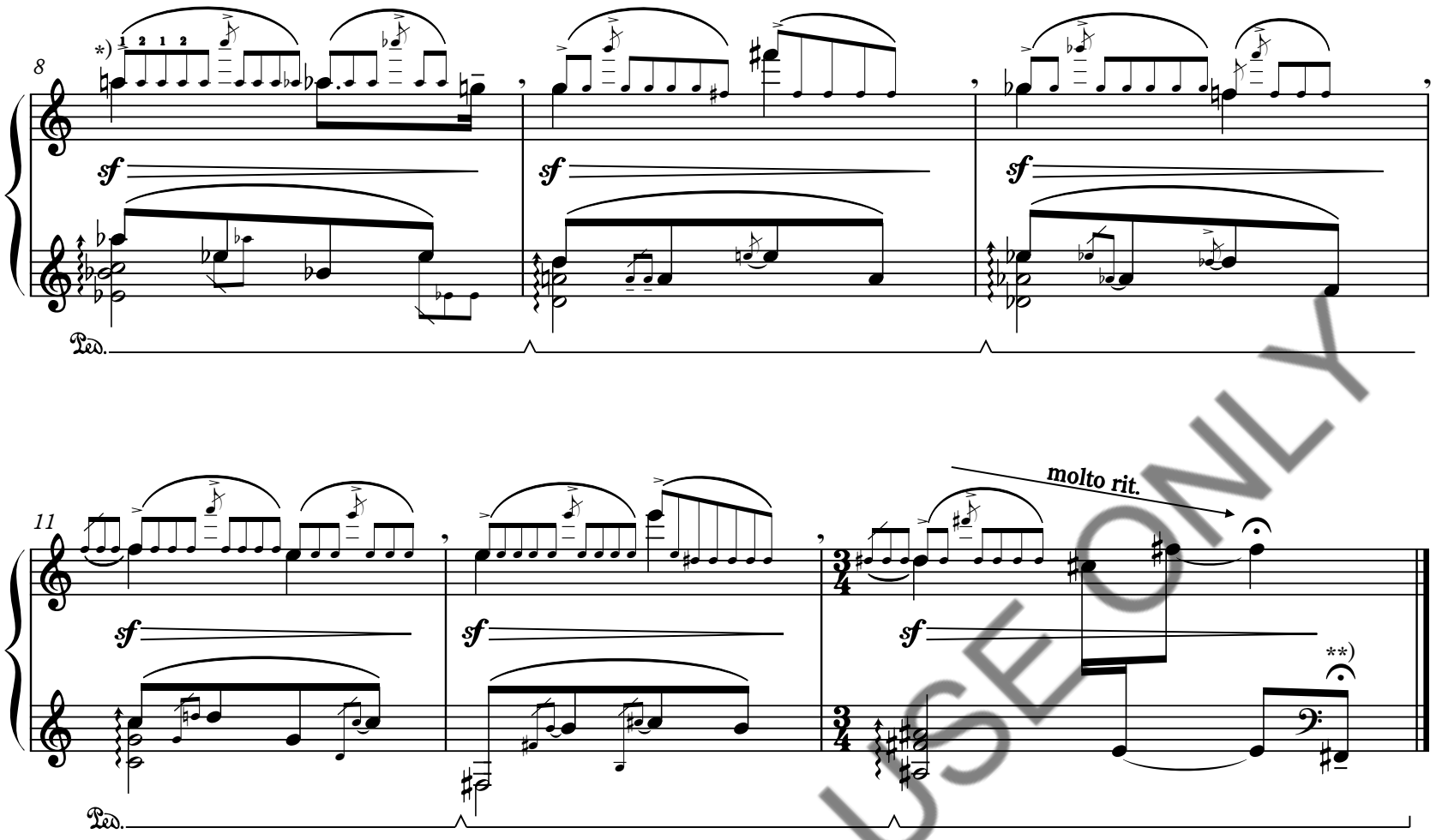
cantabile e molto rubato (♪=74)

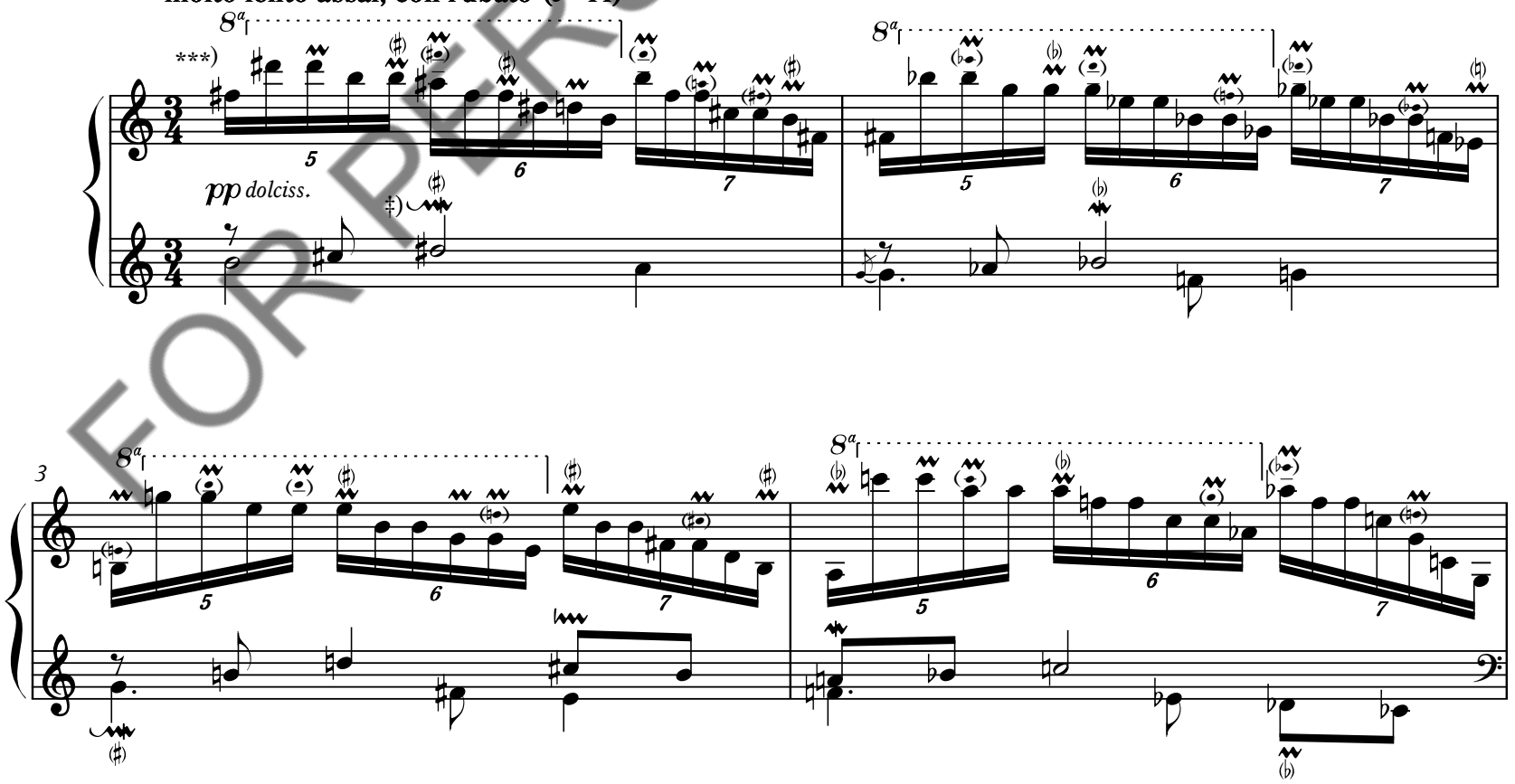


*) Grace note figures in upper-voice are not to be played in strict time, but rather should resemble an echoing effect of the primary beats.

**) Although this movement is not necessarily performed attacca into Aria II, care should be taken to achieve a sense of harmonic continuity between this final measure and the beginning of the next movement.

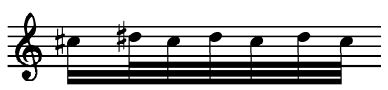
9. Aria II

molto lento assai, con rubato (♪=44)



***) Ornamentation throughout Aria II should be performed with quasi-baroque stylization, at performer's discretion. Bracketed noteheads indicate the pitch with which a mordent alternates between. When no bracketed note is given, it is assumed to be a mordent between either upper or lower neighbouring tones.

‡) Execution:



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5

7

poco rit.

9

a tempo

pp

11

rit.

mf

13

poco più mosso (♪=54)

p leggiero

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(14)

12

12

8a

(15)

12

12

rit. poco a poco al fine

8a

16

18

18

loco

17

12

6

(𝅗𝅥=32)

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