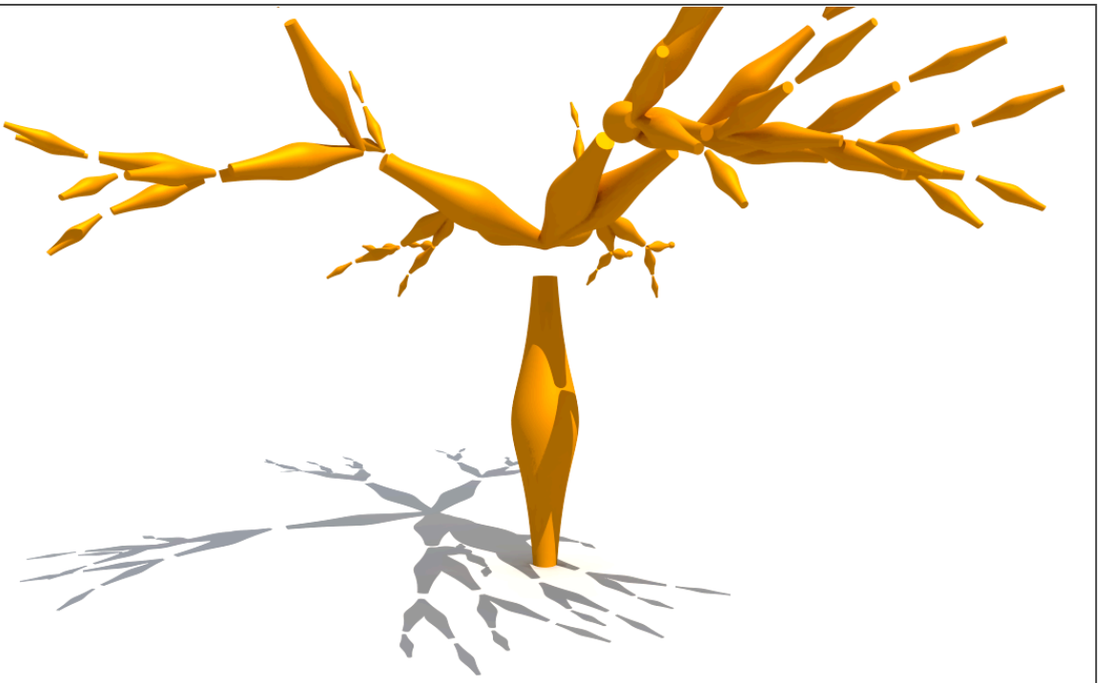


GREGORY LEE NEWSOME

Ouroboros

for solo piano + reverberation

Gregory Lee Newsome

Ouroboros

Acknowledgment

This piece was written at the request of Rachel Kiyo Iwaasa, and is dedicated to her in friendship and admiration.

Support for *Ouroboros* was provided by the Canada Council for the Arts.

Duration

10:15

Instrumentation

Piano

Reverberation

This work requires a cathedral-like reverberation, either from the performance space or a sound system, or a combination of both. The reverb should be audible, diffuse, and transparent, never blurry or overwhelming.

Sound System

Rig: microphone, mixer, reverb unit, amplifier, speakers

Configuration: the sound of the piano (the input) is received by the microphone and sent to the mixer. The mixer is configured such that the operator may use faders to send the input to the reverb unit. The processed sound (the output) is then sent to the amplifier for broadcast through the speakers. The operator balances the processed sound from the speakers with the original sound from the stage.

Performance Instructions

The character of this work is continuous and legato throughout. Use the sustain pedal to facilitate performance of notated durations.

"+" indicates finger mute.

The piano requires preparation. On c4 and b-flat4, insert a small coin, preferably a Canadian ten-cent piece, at the exact midpoint of the string. The two outer strings should be under the coin, and the middle string above it. The coin should be placed such that it creates a resonant, gong-like tone; there should be no artifacts (e.g. buzzing, rattling).

Premiere

This piece was premiered by Rachel Kiyo Iwaasa on February 5th, 2013 at Cellar Restaurant and Jazz Club, Vancouver, presented by Music on Main. Ms. Iwaasa subsequently performed it on March 19th, 2013 at Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, Toronto, presented by Music TORONTO.

Version

Revision 2013-03-28 (ISO)

Programme Note

A typical portrayal of an alchemist is that of a half-scientist, half-hermetic, naïvely attempting to transmute a common metal into a noble one. But for an alchemist, this transmutation was but a metaphor for spiritual evolution, a personal quest to achieve perfection, immortality, and redemption. Transmutation, then, is subtly different from transformation -- to not merely change, but to create something higher, something more perfect. In this work, I explore the metaphor of transmutation, using something familiar to all of us: the sense of time passing. Through reiteration, this work's sonic material is constantly returning -- as a different timbre, with reverberation, echoing, as a distant memory -- striving for transmutation. But the ultimate point of return in this work is also its point of departure, a metaphor for the cycle of life and death that the alchemist sought to escape, the ancient symbol Ouroboros, the serpent eating its own tail.

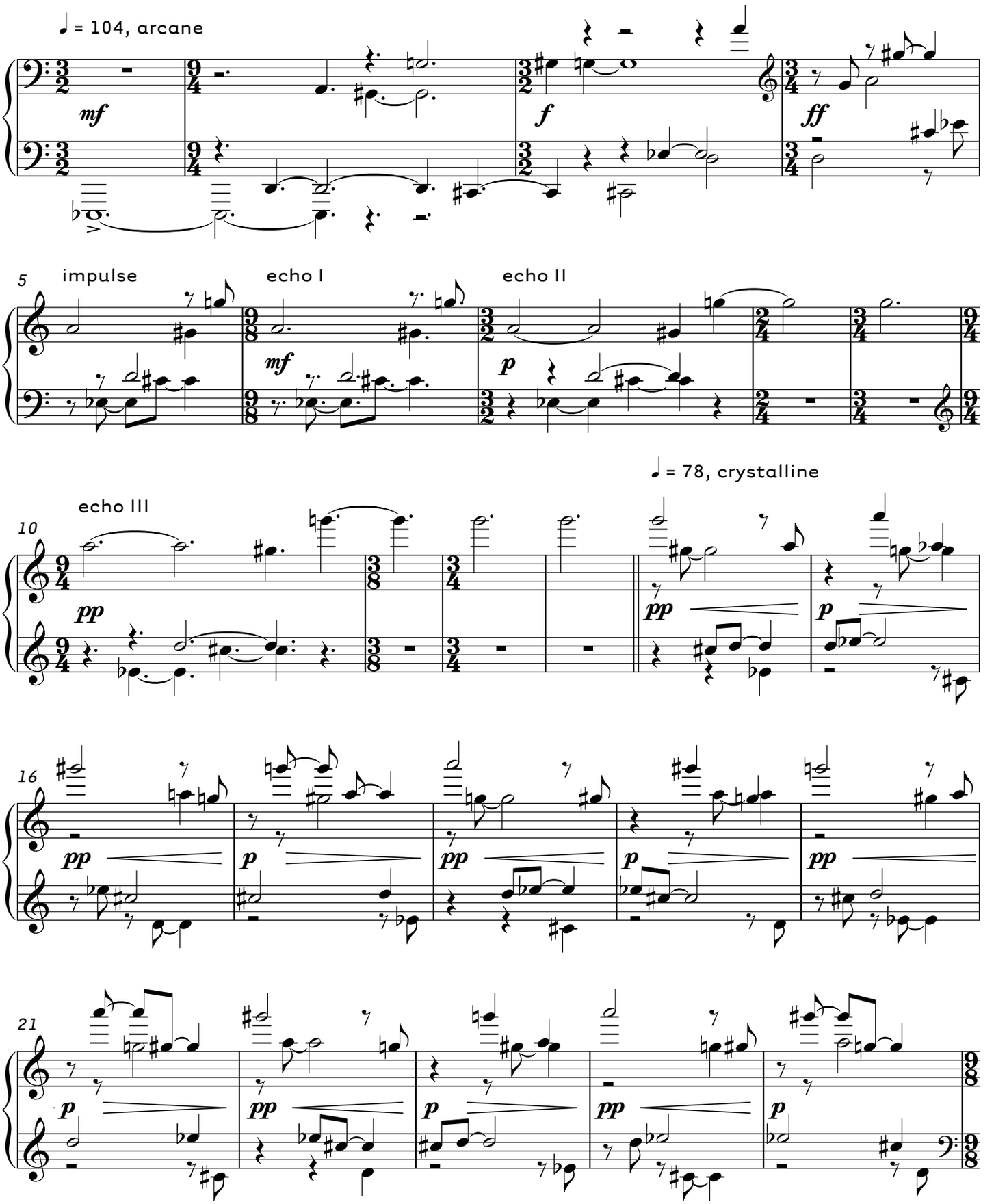
Support for *Ouroboros* was provided by the Canada Council for the Arts.

for Rachel Kiyo Iwaasa

Ouroboros

for solo piano + reverberation

Gregory Lee Newsome



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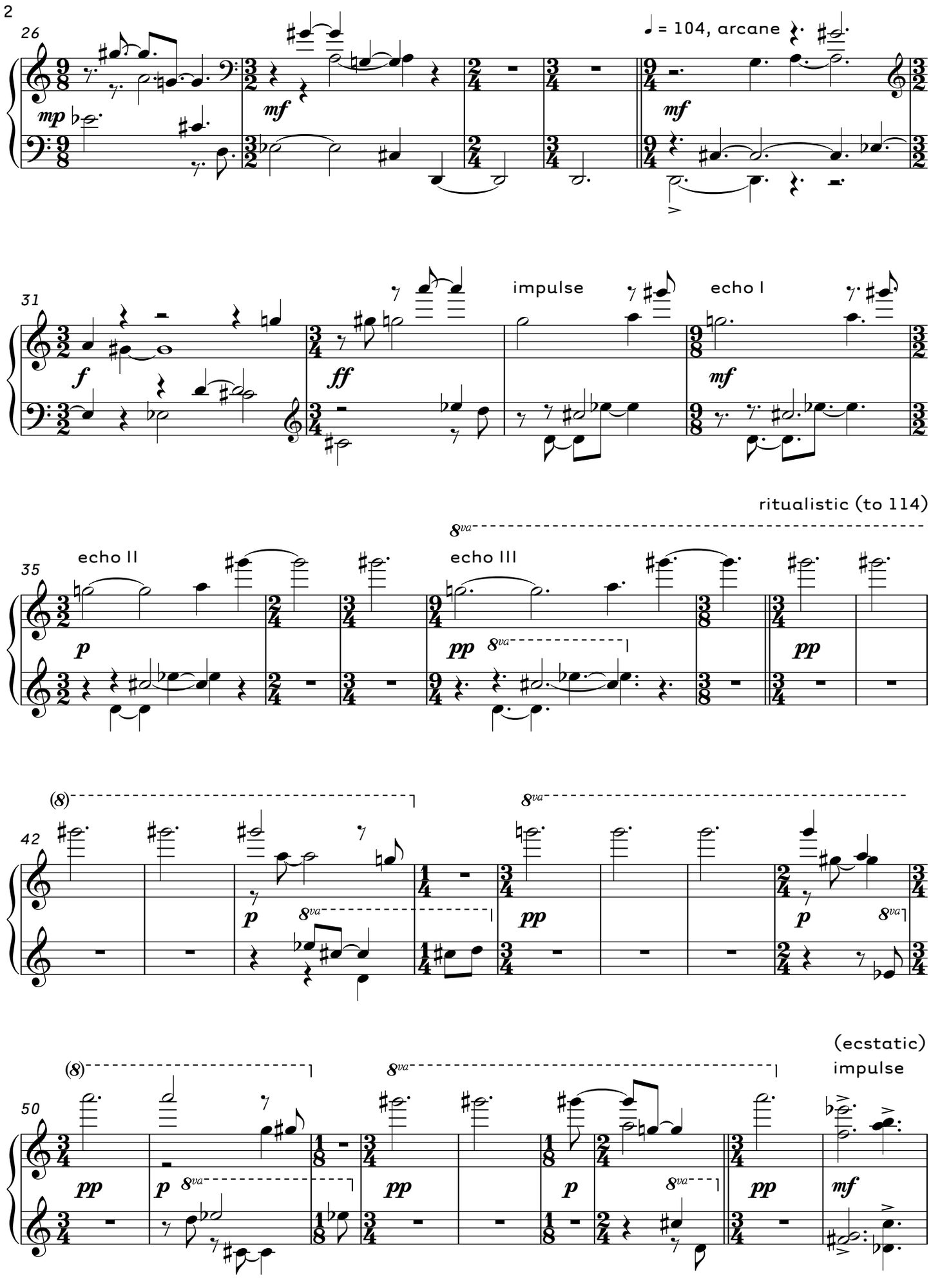
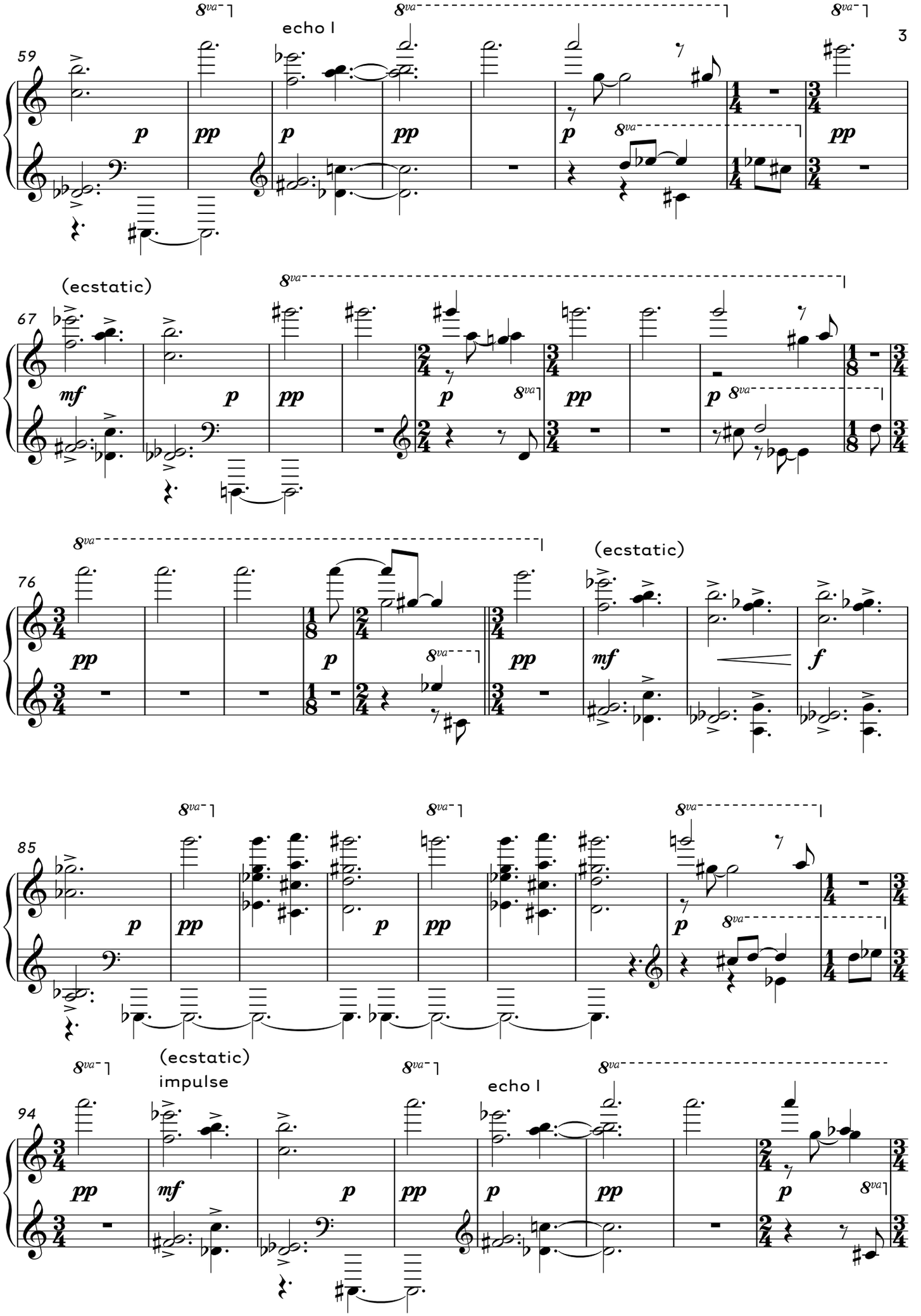
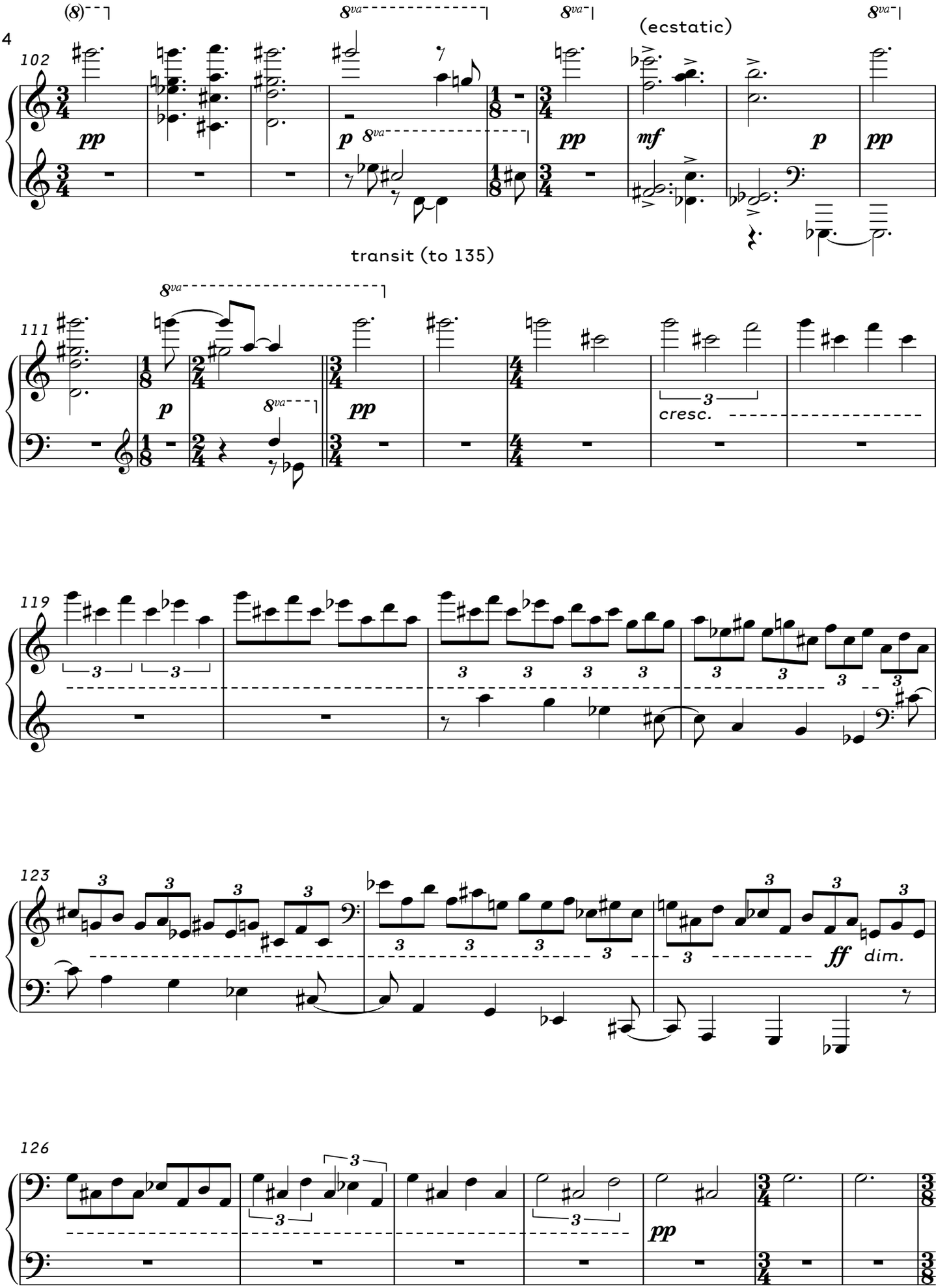
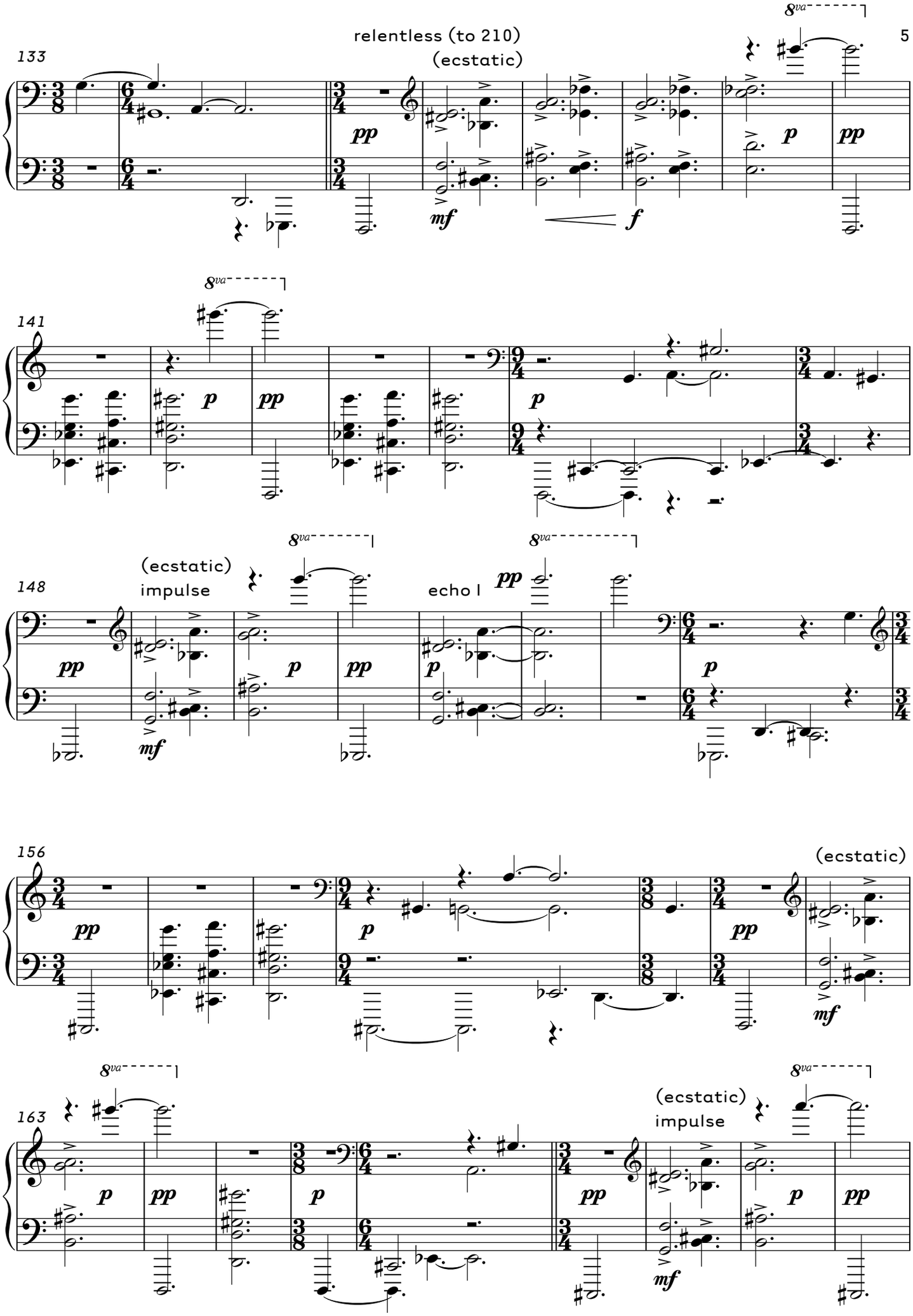
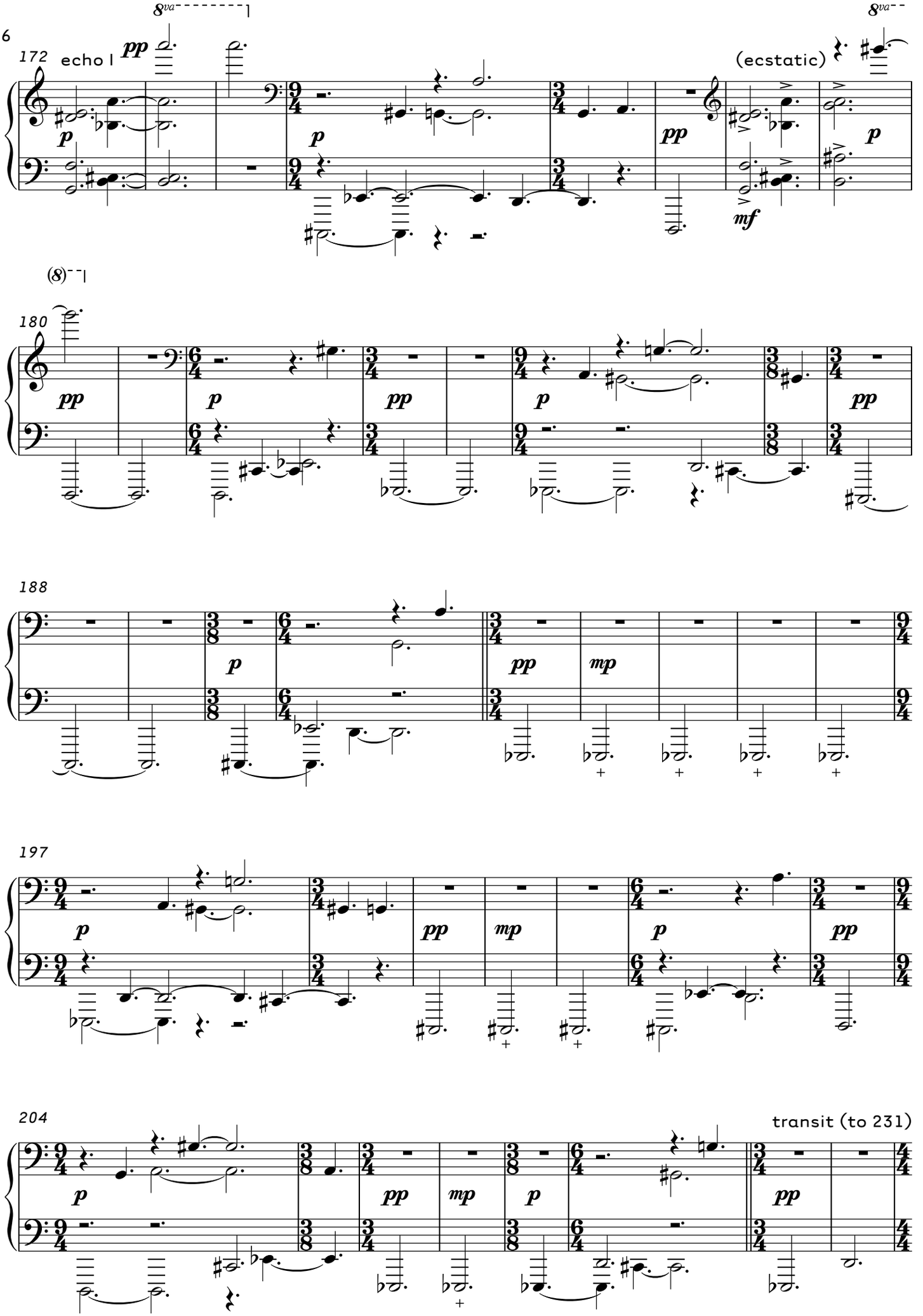
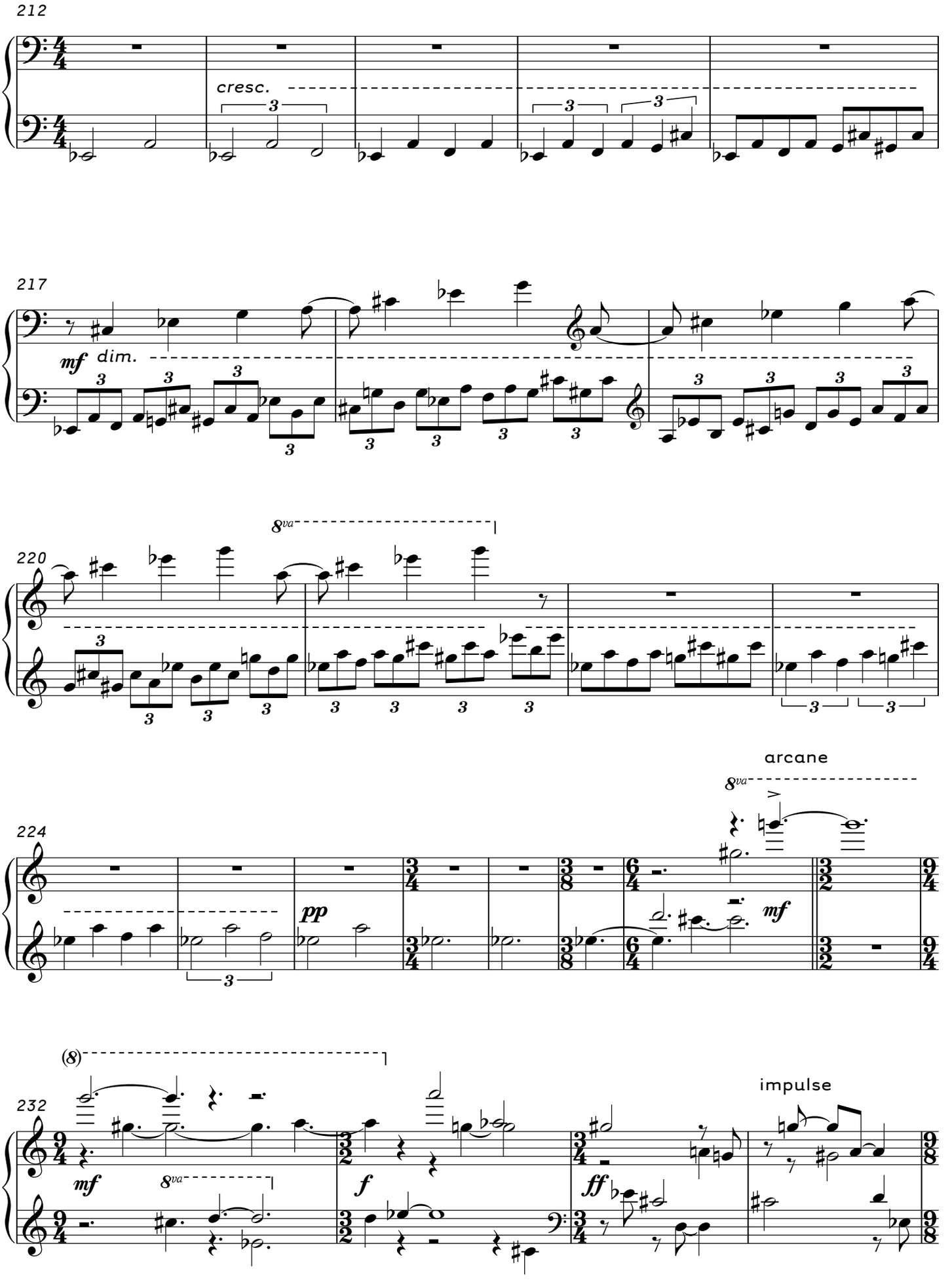

26
mp
mf
♩ = 104, arcane
mf
31
f
ff
impulse
echo I
mf
35
echo II
p
echo III
8va
pp
8va
pp
ritualistic (to 114)
42
(8)
p
8va
8va
pp
p
8va
50
(8)
pp
p
8va
8va
pp
p
8va
pp
(ecstatic)
impulse
mf

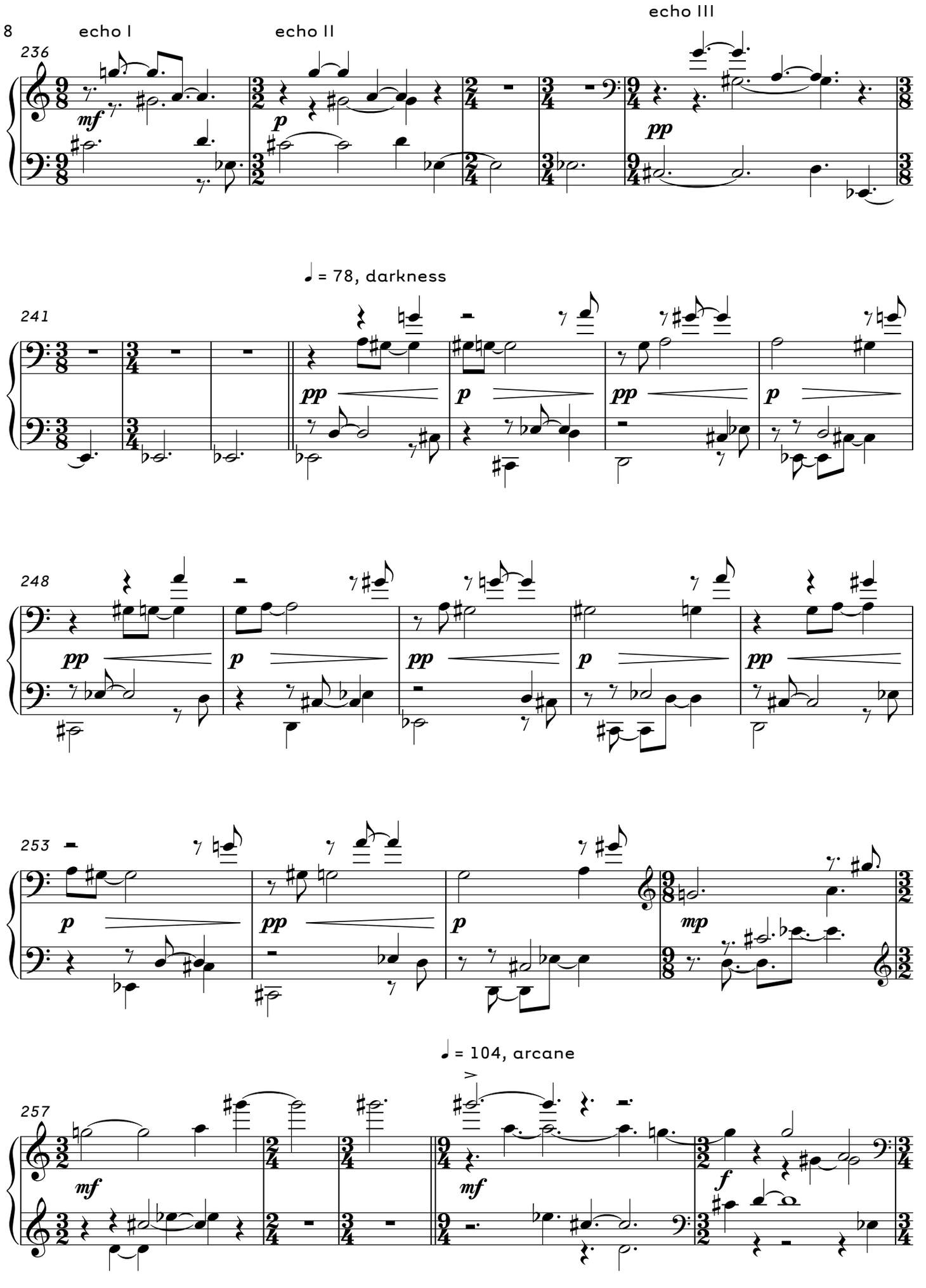

59
echo l
67
(ecstatic)
76
(ecstatic)
85
94
(ecstatic)
impulse
echo l


(8)
8va
8va
8va
(ecstatic)
102
pp
p
8va
pp
mf
p
pp
transit (to 135)
8va
111
p
8va
pp
3
cresc.
119
3
3
3
3
3
3
3
123
3
3
3
3
3
3
3
3
3
3
ff
dim.
126
3
3
3
pp


133
relentless (to 210)
(ecstatic)
8va
pp
mf
f
p
pp
141
8va
p
pp
p
148
(ecstatic)
impulse
8va
echo I
8va
pp
mf
p
pp
p
p
156
(ecstatic)
pp
p
pp
mf
163
8va
(ecstatic)
impulse
8va
p
pp
p
pp
mf
p
pp


172
echo l
pp
8va
(ecstatic)
mf
(8)
180
188
197
204
transit (to 231)


212
cresc.
217
mf
dim.
220
8va
224
pp
arcane
8va
mf
232
(8)
mf
8va
f
ff
impulse


236
echo I
echo II
echo III
241
♩ = 78, darkness
248
253
257
♩ = 104, arcane

impulse echo I echo II

262

ff mf p

♩ = 78, transmutation

echo III

267

pp p

273

p mp

279

mp p mp p

285

(gong) (gong)

pp p ppp