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My heroes are not your heroes

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My heroes are not your heroes

for solo piano

duration: 9 minutes

John Dorhauer

2011

In the most general terms, *My heroes are not your heroes* is about the loss and subsequent regaining of the self. Semantically, the piece blends varying elements of modernism, postmodernism, quotation and the absurd. Ideally, *My heroes* satisfies a few different musical trajectories simultaneously, although the exact interpretation of the piece was left intentionally open-ended.

Everything is structured around four separate lines of spoken text – "I am Batman," "Your mother is Batman," "No one is Batman," and "We are all Batman" – that require the pianist to momentarily break the fourth wall. The idea for these texts came from the pianist for whom the piece was written, as did the idea of incorporating quotations of both the Batman and Superman themes. The most effective way I found to make elements that are so absurd (at least on the surface) work was to have them operate on different levels in equal proportions.
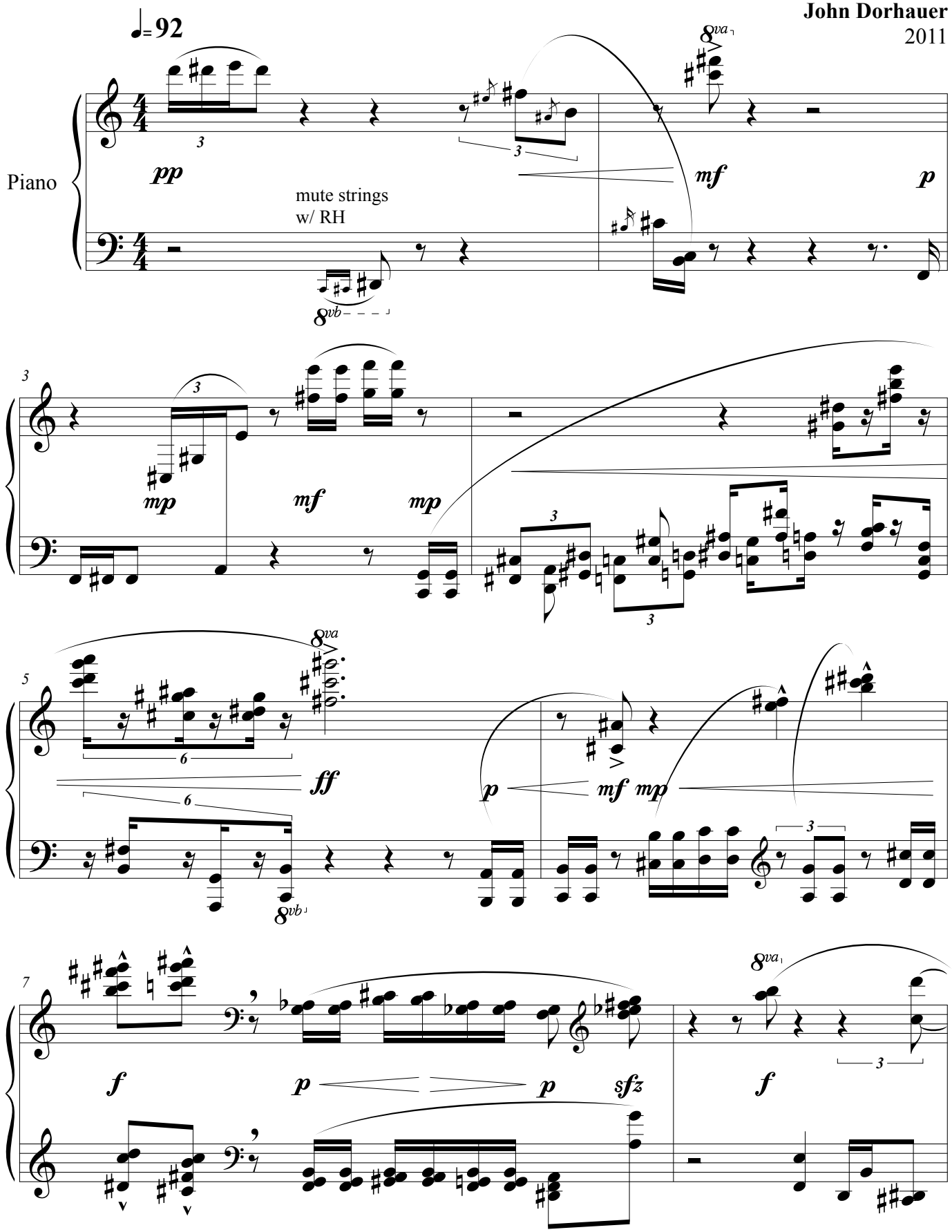
On a deeper level, I perceive the idea of "Batman" to be a superhero in the more general sense. In other words, Batman represents the idealized self. The two themes then represent opposite spectra of the self: Batman's theme, which is reliant on driving rhythms and smaller intervals, represents the flawed nature of man, while Superman's theme, which is defined by spacious, fanfare rhythms and wider intervals, is associated with the purer aspects of man and the desire for immortality. This image of the idealized self is originally associated internally in the first section. The second section begins to lose this sense by projecting it onto others, only to lose it completely in the third section. The final section presents the resolution of this conflict, where the idealized self can be shared with all humanity.

On a more visceral level, there is a constant conflict between motives associated with these widely known musical themes. Musical elements that are connected with either theme are presented independently in the introduction, but there is an escalating sense of conflict between these two distinct characters that drives the rest of the piece. Quotations are disguised amidst a dense harmonic language, but moments of more isolated quotations are intended to provide accessibility to the listener. This conflict ultimately leads towards the resolution that occurs at the end, where the Superman chorale remains in triumphant glory.
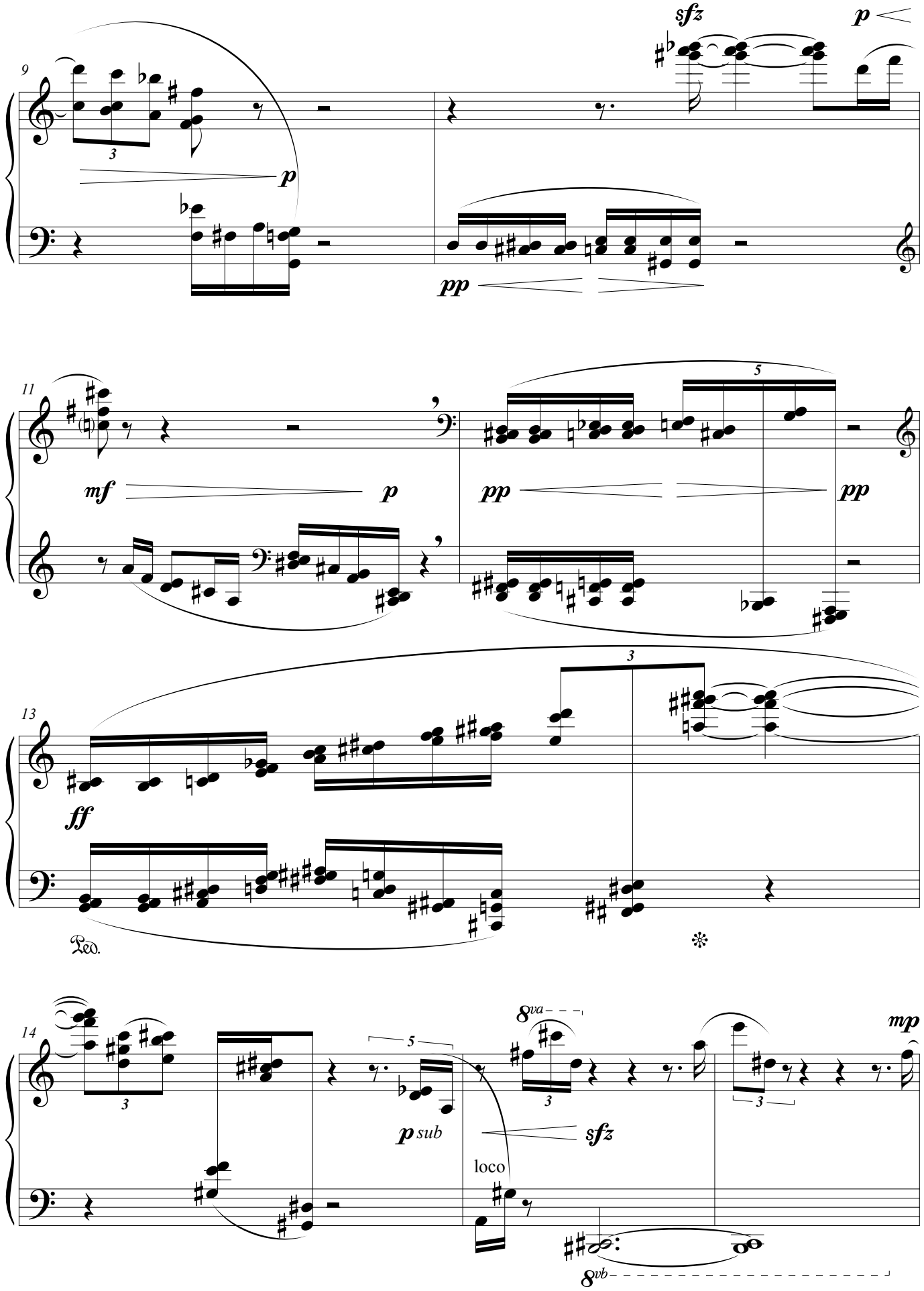
Whether the listener chooses to engage in an arc that is more philosophical or philistine (or something in between), there will undoubtedly be something to take away from this piece.
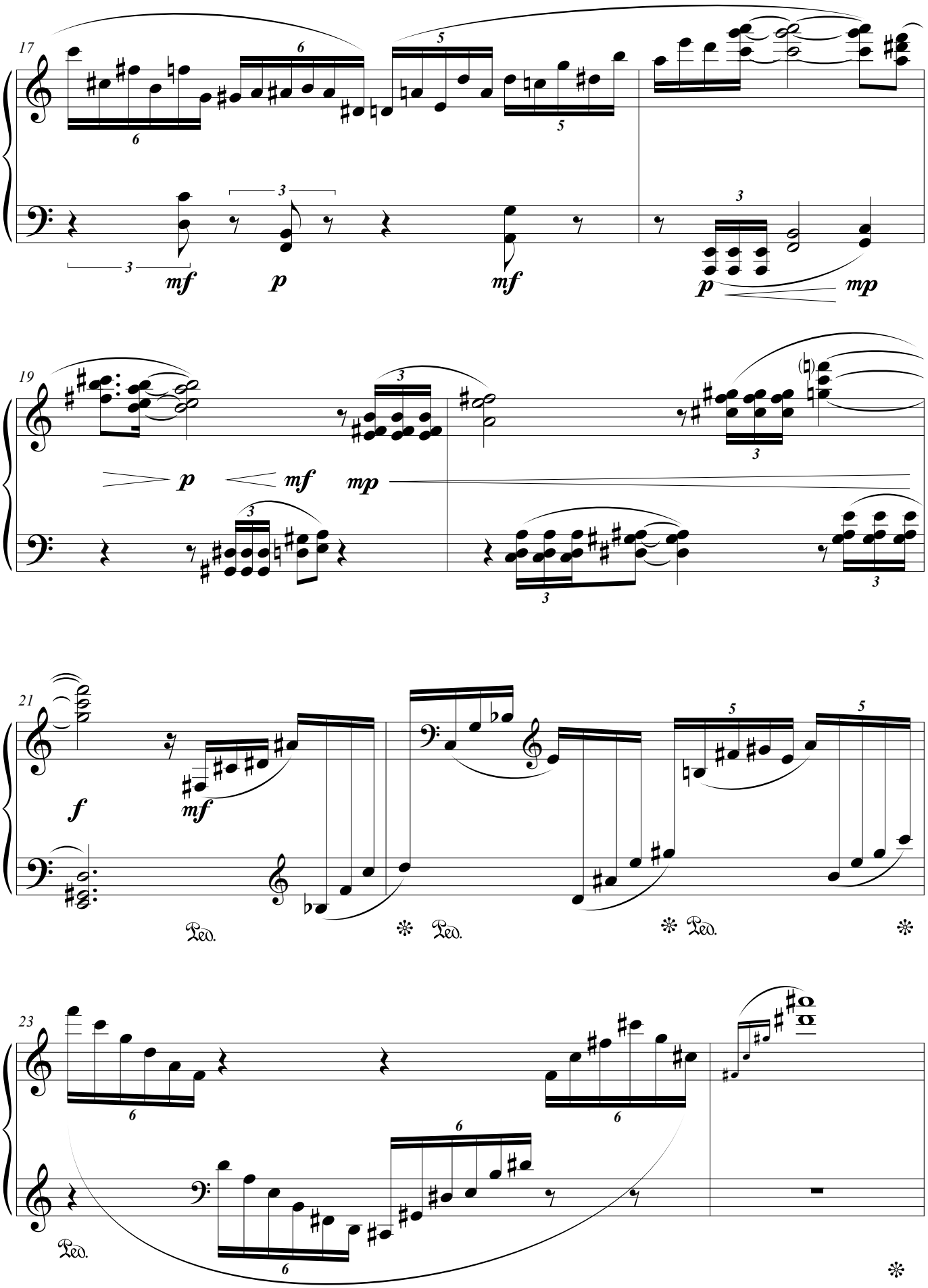
My heroes are not your heroes

John Dorhauer
2011



Hostile Postulate Pub., ©2011


9
sfz
p
p
pp
11
mf
p
pp
pp
13
ff
Ped.
14
p sub
8va
sfz
loco
mp
8vb


17
mf
p
mf
p
mp
19
p
mf
mp
21
f
mf
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
23
Ped.

25

"I am Batman"

Violently slam 1st &
3rd pedals together

Nostalgic (♩= 60)

sempre ***pp***

(continue to suppress sustain pedal)

26
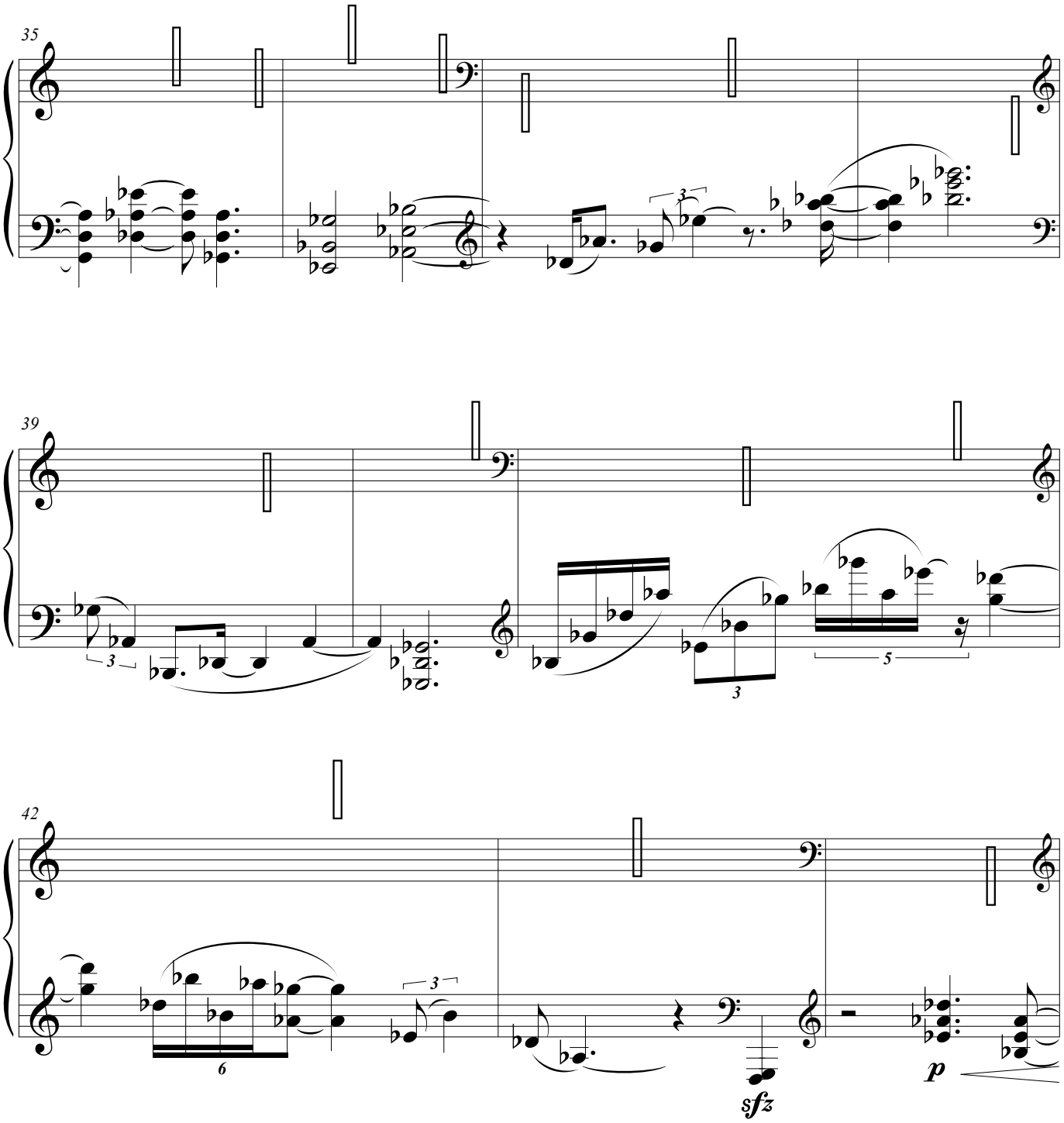
Gently brush strings
within the pitch range
with the skin of the fingers
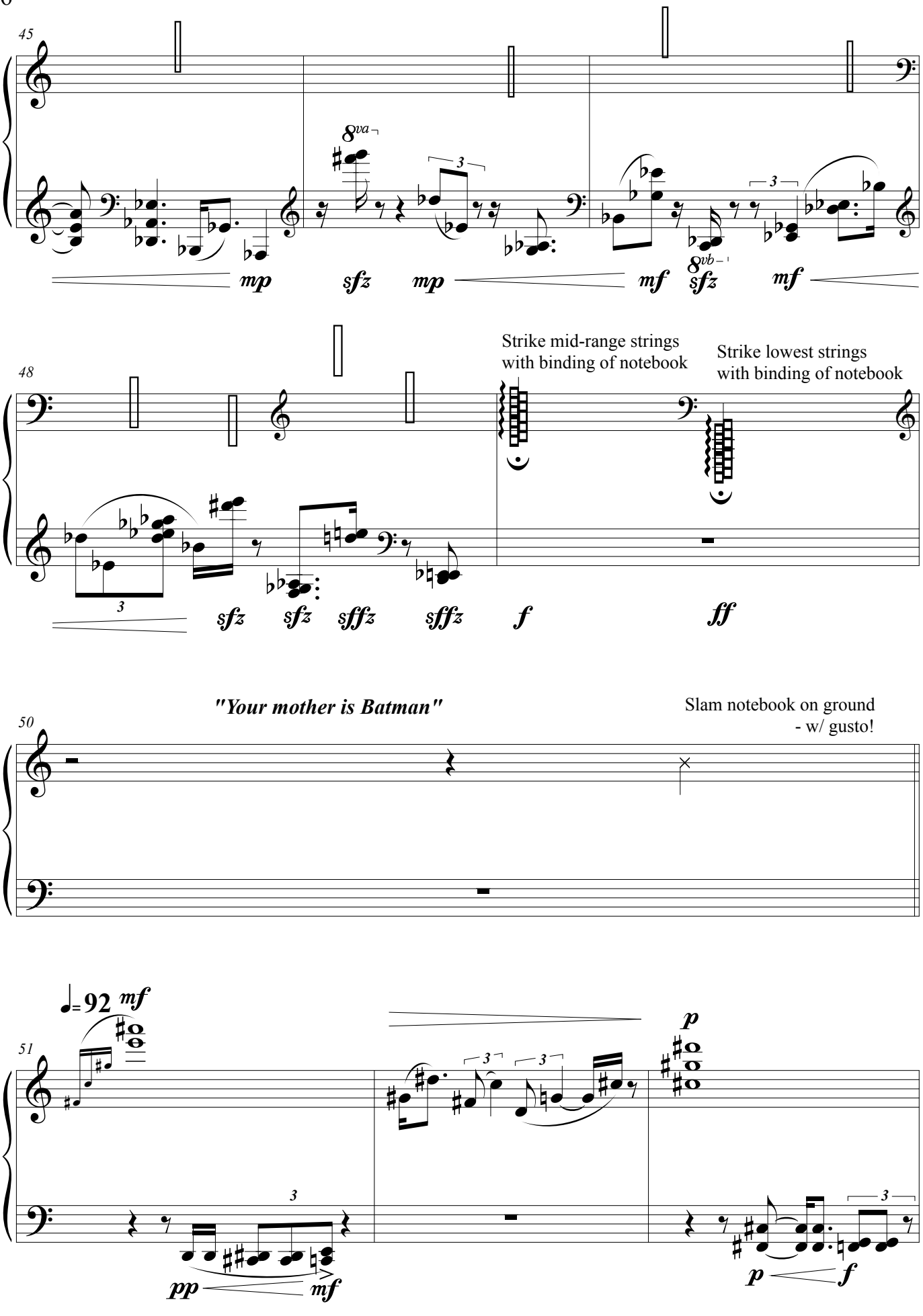
p
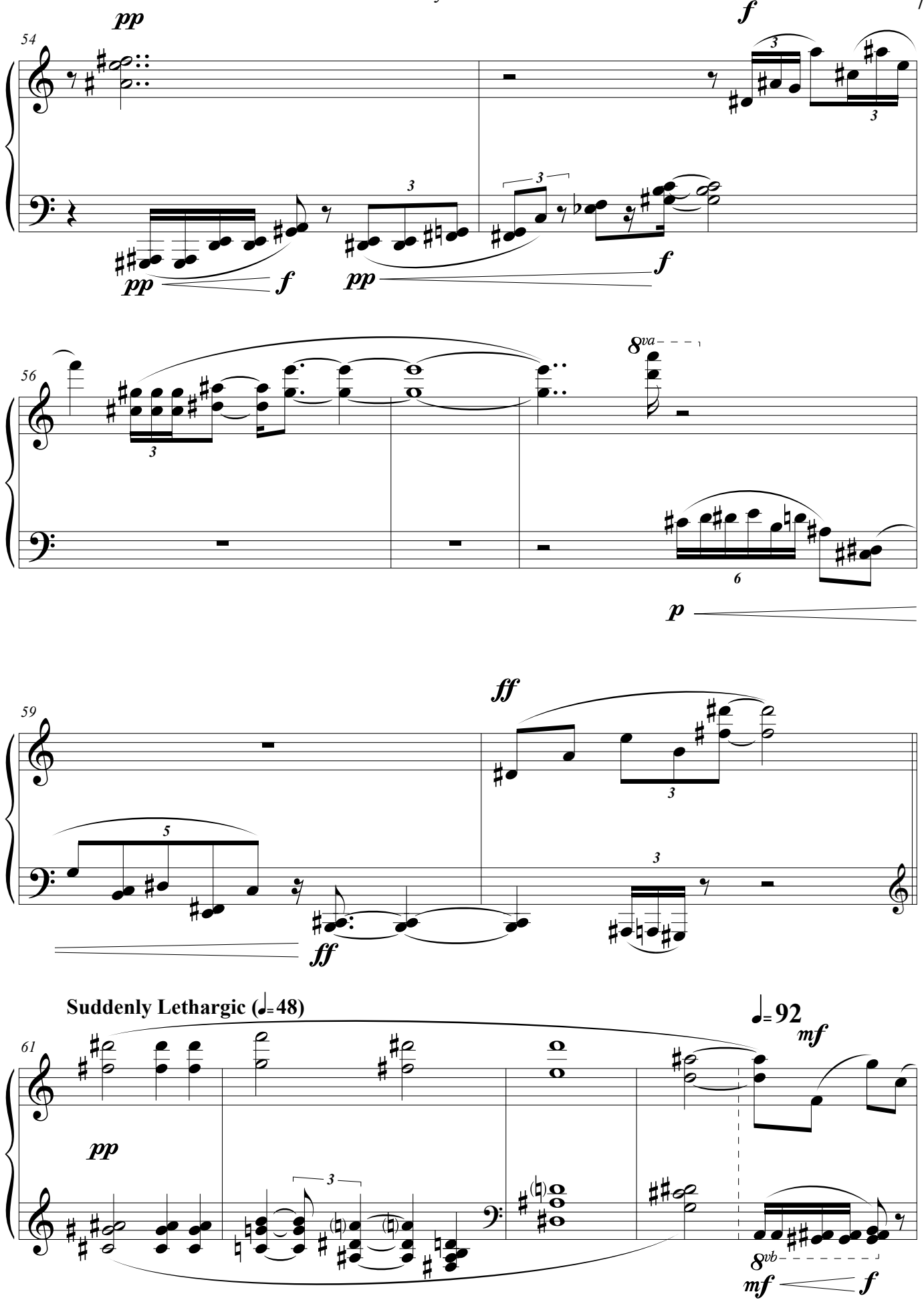
29
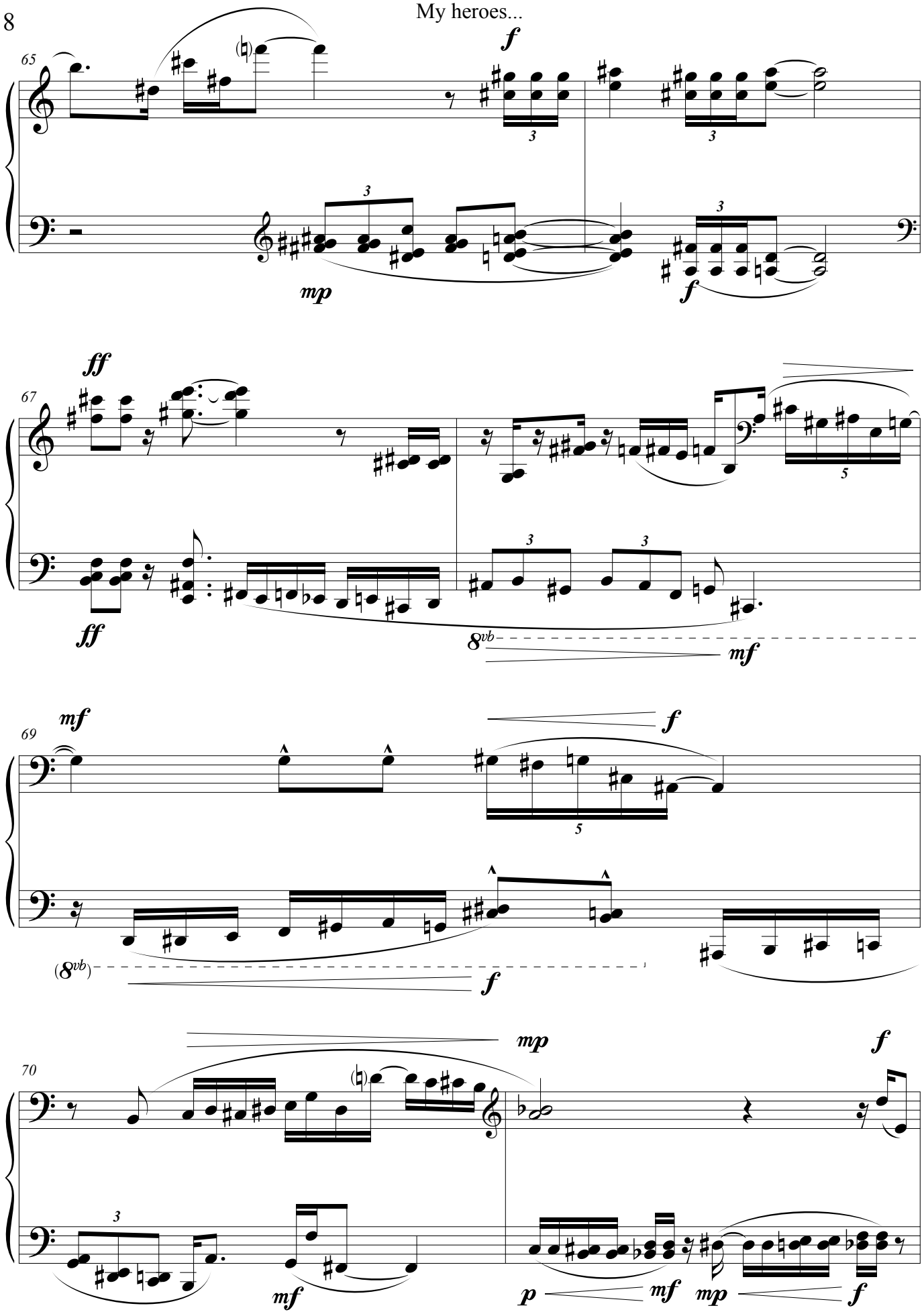
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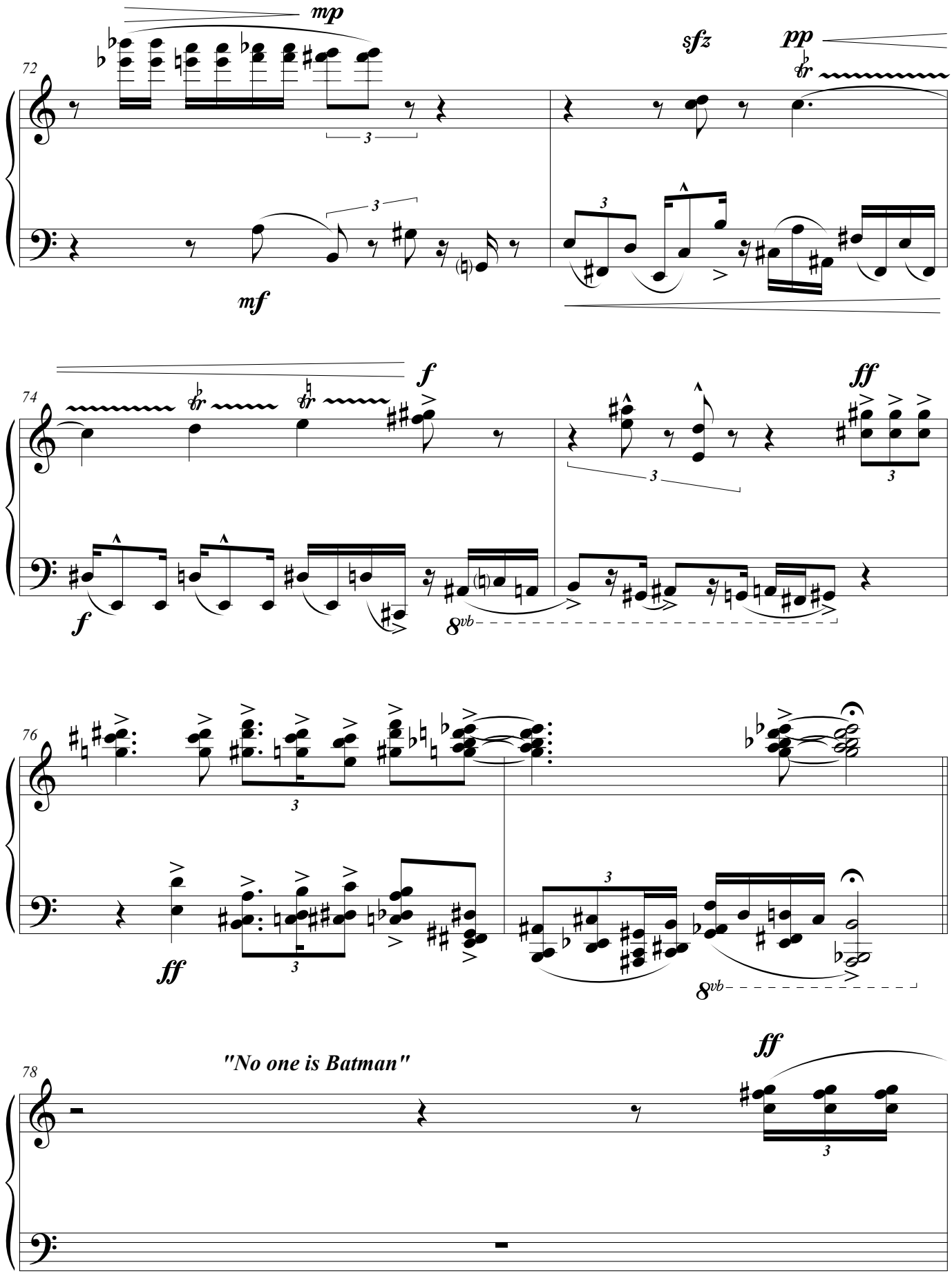
Using bound edge of 9 3/4" length notebook with
a rounded binding, gently press groups of black keys.
Notation approximates both pitch range and placement in time.
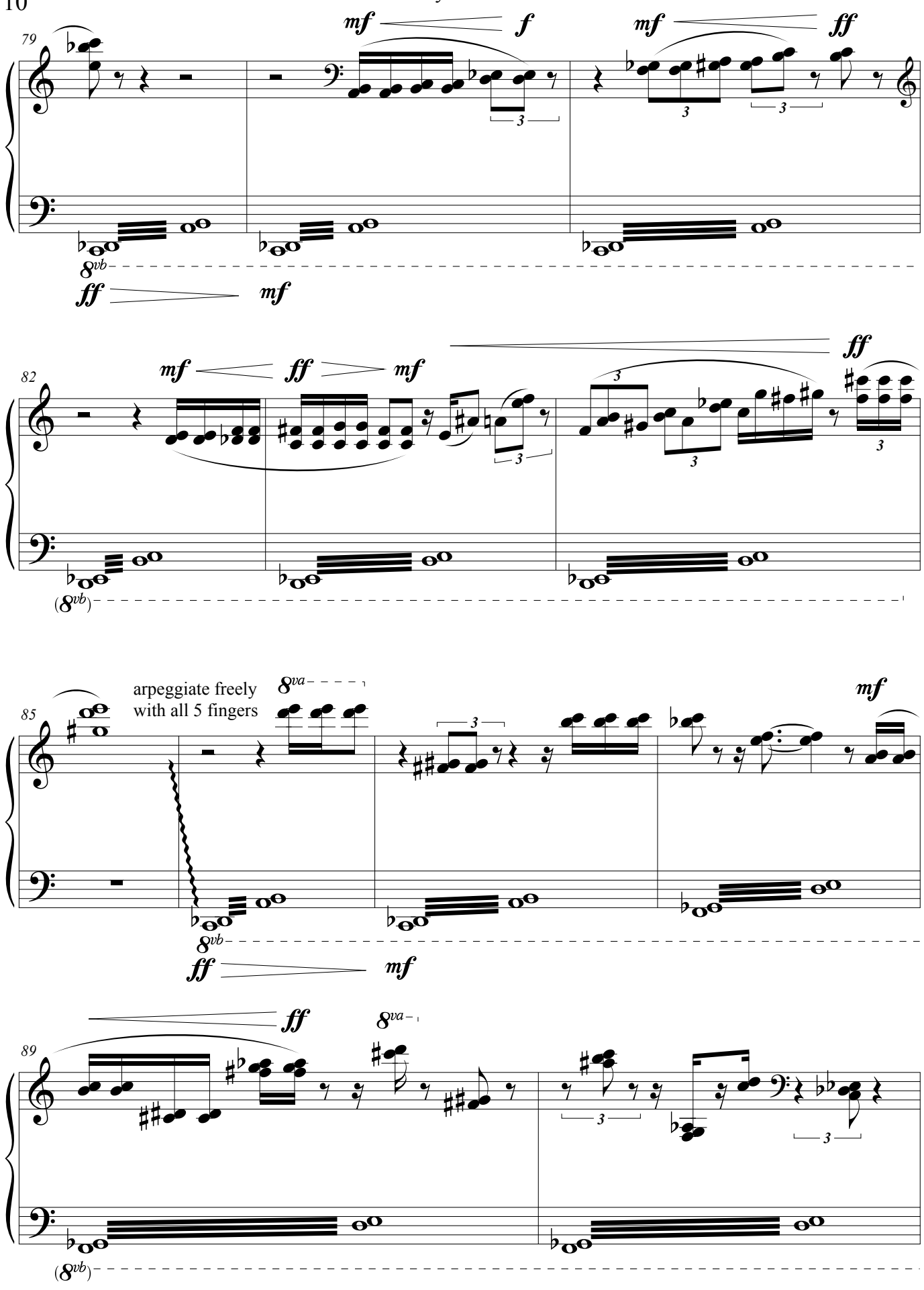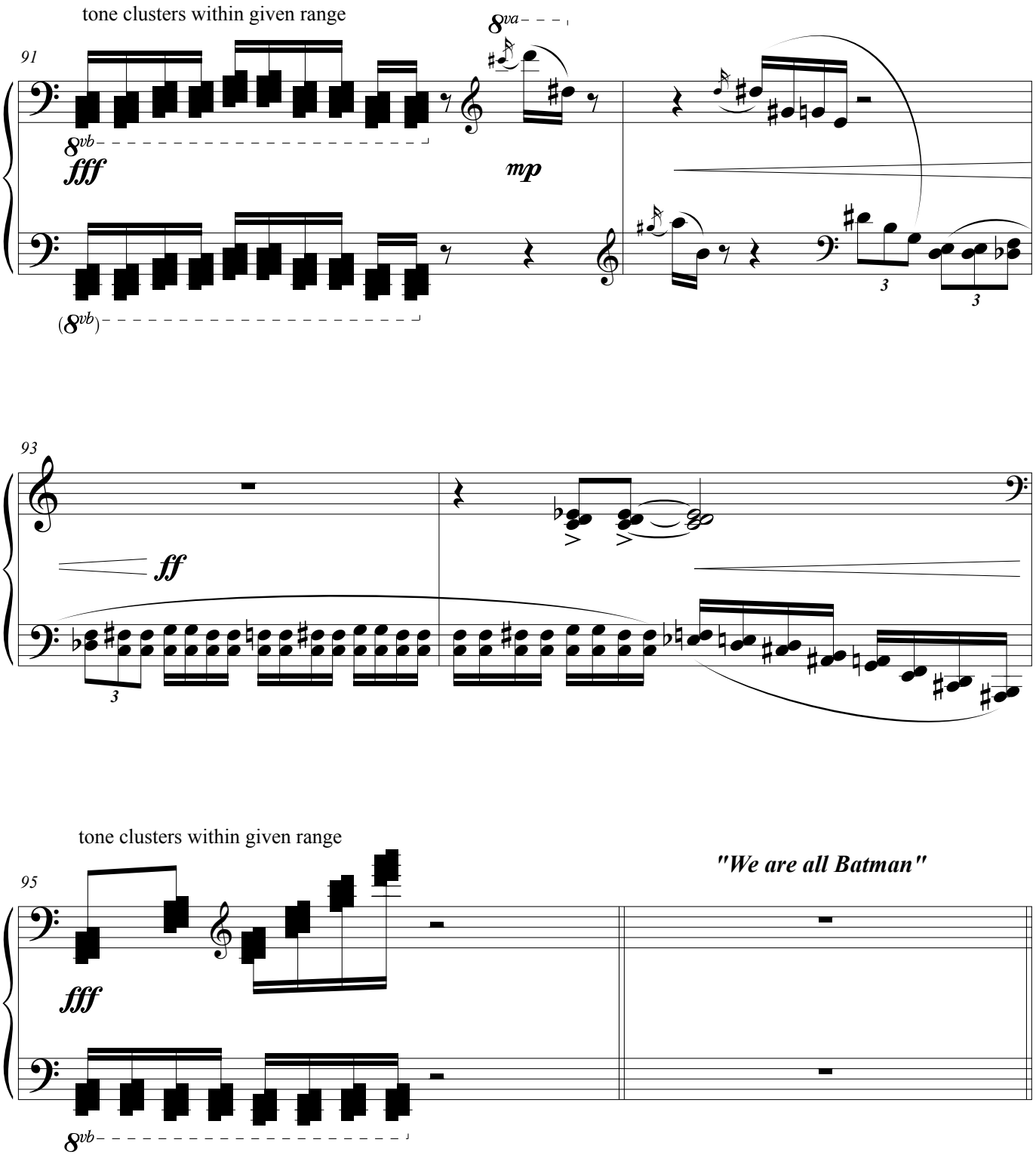



45
8va
3
mp
sfz
mp
mf
8vb
sfz
mf
48
Strike mid-range strings
with binding of notebook
Strike lowest strings
with binding of notebook
3
sfz
sfz
sffz
sffz
f
ff
"Your mother is Batman"
Slam notebook on ground
- w/ gusto!
50
♩= 92 mf
51
3
3
3
pp
mf
p
p
f


54
pp
f
pp
f
pp
f
56
8va
6
p
59
ff
5
3
ff
Suddenly Lethargic (♩=48)
61
♩=92
mf
pp
3
8vb
mf
f
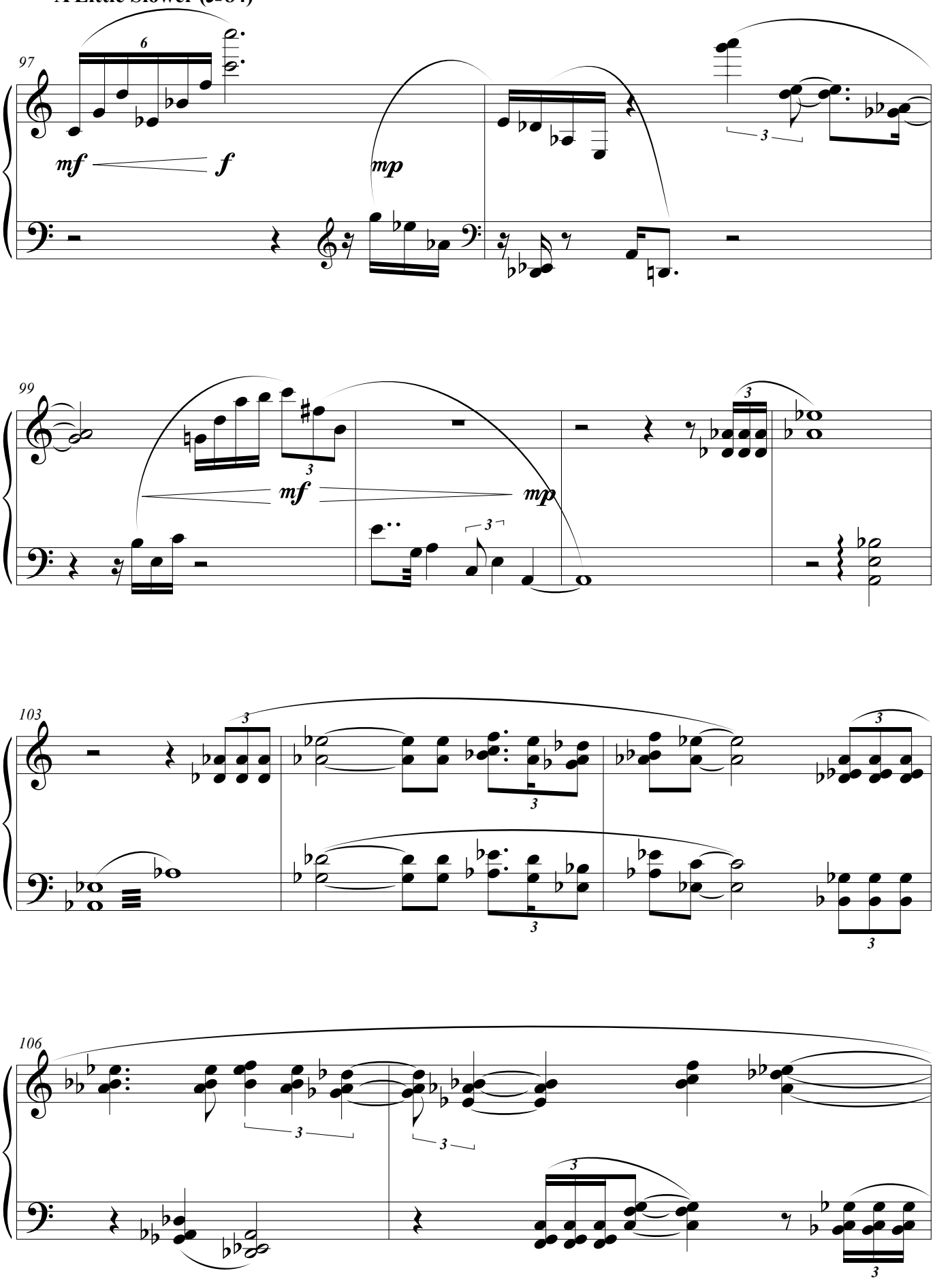

65
f
mp
f
67
ff
ff
8vb
mf
69
mf
f
(8vb)
f
70
mp
f
mf
p
mf
mp
f
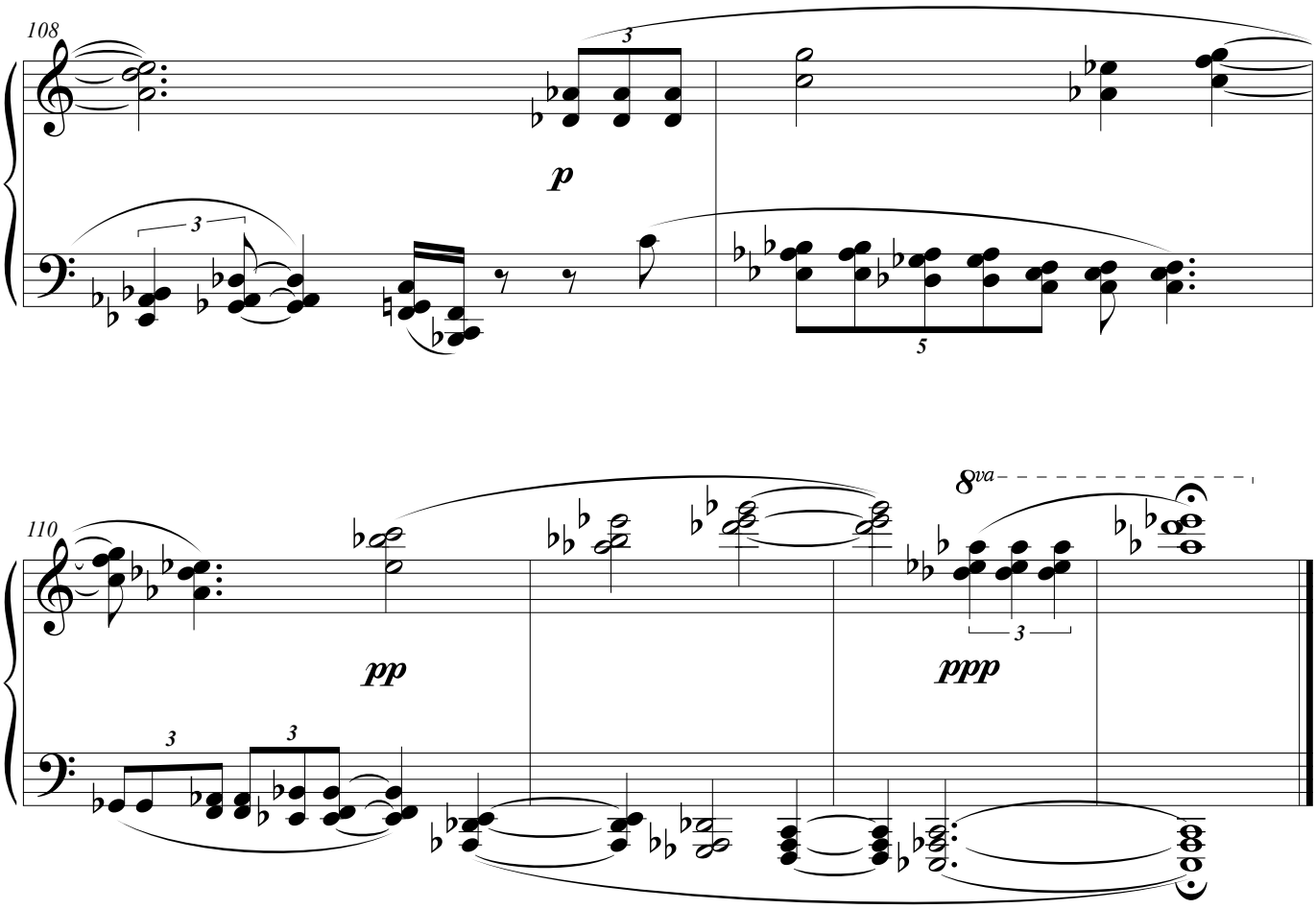

72
mp
sfz
pp
mf
74
f
ff
8vb
76
ff
8vb
78
"No one is Batman"
ff


79
mf
f
mf
ff
8vb
ff
mf
82
mf
ff
mf
ff
(8vb)
85
arpeggiate freely
with all 5 fingers
8va
mf
8vb
ff
mf
89
ff
8va
(8vb)


tone clusters within given range
91
8va
8vb
fff
mp
(8vb)
93
ff
tone clusters within given range
95
"We are all Batman"
fff
8vb

A Little Slower (♩=84)




108
p
110
pp
ppp
8va