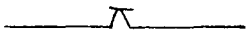
Performance notes

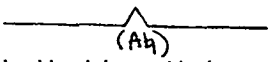
Tempo
Metronome markings provide a suggested tempo. This tempo may be varied to accomodate the performing acoustic: for instance, in a very dry acoustic the last movement would probably need to be quicker.

Pedalling (sustain pedal)

change pedal, clearing resonance completely


half-pedal: do not completely clear sustained resonance

'pump' pedal to gradually clear previous sustained resonance whilst sustaining what follows. This should be done almost imperceptibly.



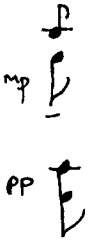
(Fourth movement). Change pedal whilst holding pitch indicated.

Una corda pedal should *only* be used in the second movement, where it should be held down throughout the entire movement.

is used to indicate phrases that should be brought out.

(i) Cold Light, 6 a.m.
It is very important to ensure that the pedal is *completely* cleared, where indicated, whilst holding down the note concerned (e.g. bar 2): the idea is to build up brief resonances which disappear as a subsequent note is struck; this note should be sufficiently loud to mask the disappearance of the sustained sound.

(ii) Still, clear (for V.R.M.)
The movement consists of a series of overlapping melodic phrases, 'picked out' of the accompanying texture. The melody notes are indicated by tenuto markings and phrase marks. There should be two distinct layers: the long melodic lines, which should be quite pronounced, and the lilting 'accompaniment', which should be extremely quiet. Crescendo and diminuendo markings beside phrase marks apply *only* to the melody lines. The accompaniment remains pp, unless indicated otherwise.



Play with both hands, the melody note is louder than the accompanying note, which is generally pp.

Play with one hand (preferably). The dynamic marking applies to both notes.

From bar 5 the sustain pedal is used throughout, changing or half-pedalling where indicated. From this point, notes should be struck and left to ring, except when a note is tied.

Preview File Only

(iii) Frozen Edge

The unmeasured bars at the beginning of the piece (i.e. bar 4, 5) are to be freely interpreted, but should be long. The ad lib. repetitions of the *sfff* low chord at bar 5 should be sufficient to become oppressive, disrupting the listener's sense of time. The unmeasured repetitions at the end of the piece should be similar, but less oppressive (i.e.fewer repetitions, and probably shorter)

It is important that the loud, crashing chords, which occur throughout the movement, should be heard as interruptions to a continuing melodic 'flow' provided by the repeated semiquavers. The loud chords should be played *a tempo* unless otherwise indicated. The semiquavers should be played with alternating hands.

Bars without time signatures (marked //) are ad lib, in a fast tempo (generally 'furioso')

(iv) Long Causeway

The performer needs to strike a balance between a slow, at times almost static, tempo and a sense of forward movement provided by the melodic lines and harmonic progression. By the final section of the movement (molto meno mosso) the tempo should be so slow that the melodic lines are *almost* impossible to follow, leading the ear to focus on single notes.

The movement should, until its closing stages, sound quite strong, and very resonant. In this movement, the pedal changes are particularly important and will result in shifting 'clouds' of harmonic resonance, at times quite pronounced. Because of this, the audible dynamic level will, at times, be louder than the dynamic indications given to the performer.
Notes should be held as indicated by ties, which are simplified to avoid (even more) confusion.

Only one note is ever sounded at a time, and a note is struck on every quaver of the piece. At points where the the score may be unclear, the intended pitch is given in square brackets, e.g. bar 10 (penultimate quaver is C#)

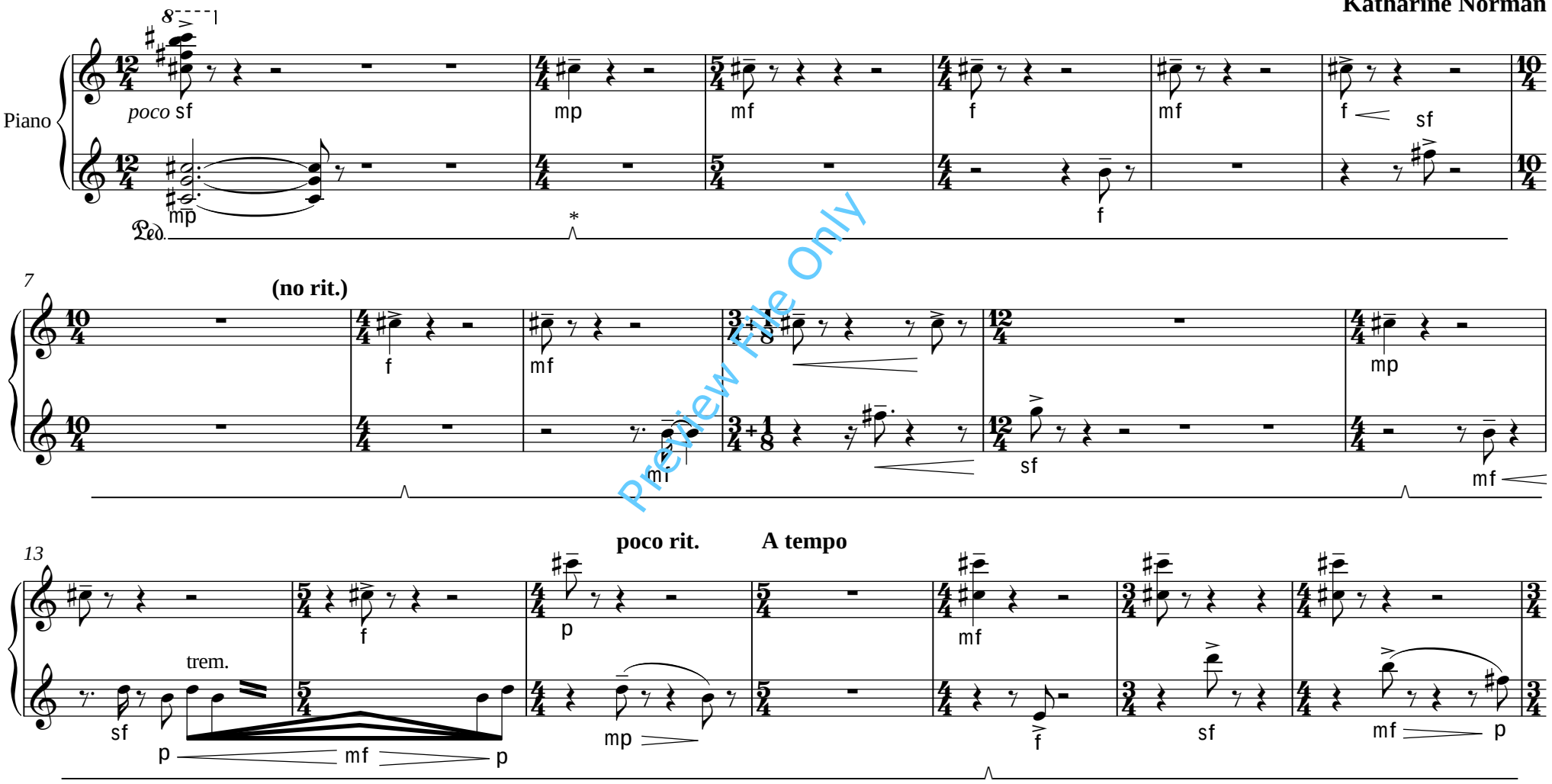
for Stephen Gutman

Transparent Things

I Cold Light, 6 a.m.

Tense, ringing ♩ = 96 (in strict time)

Katharine Norman



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* Change pedal whilst holding note, sim. throughout

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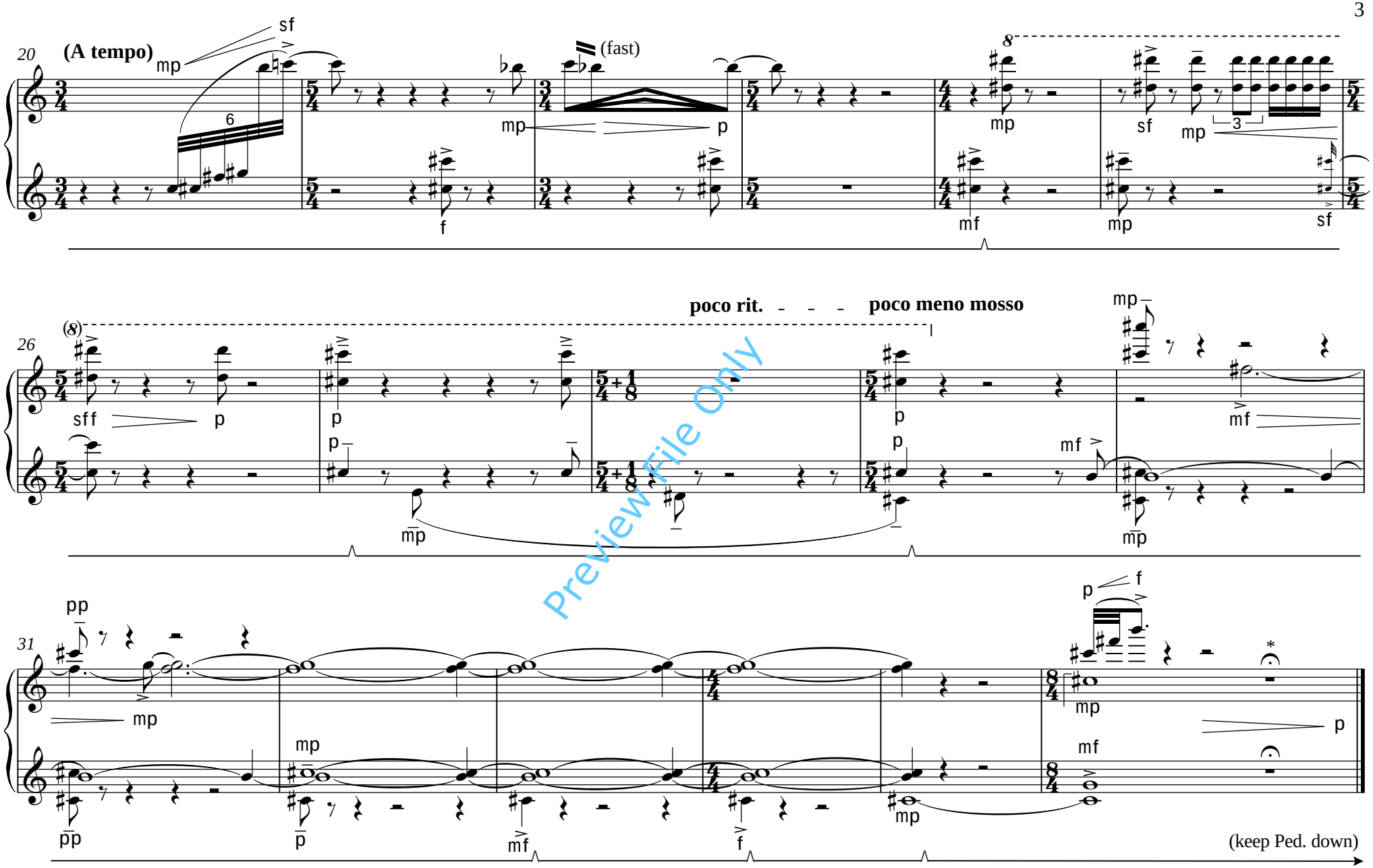

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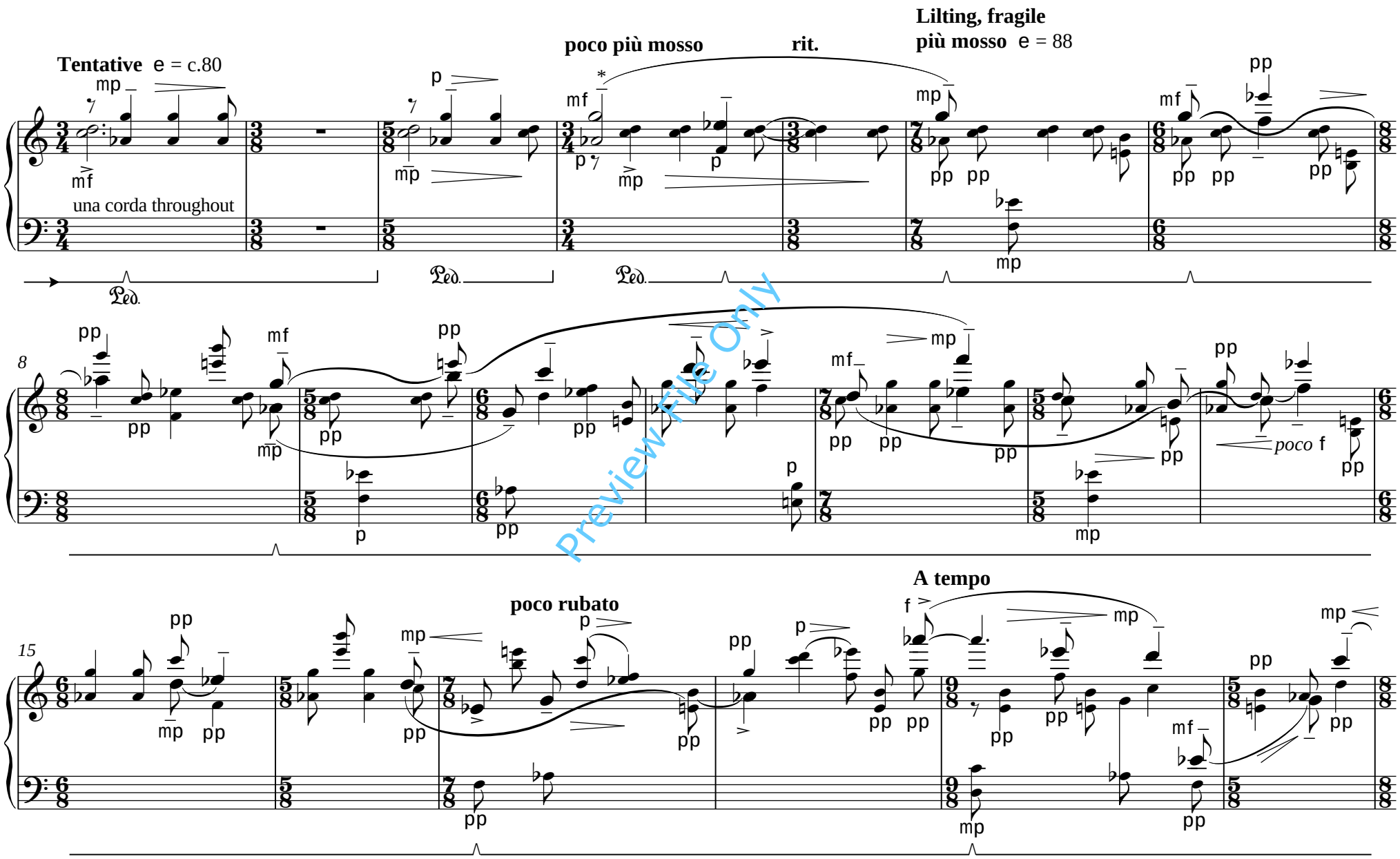
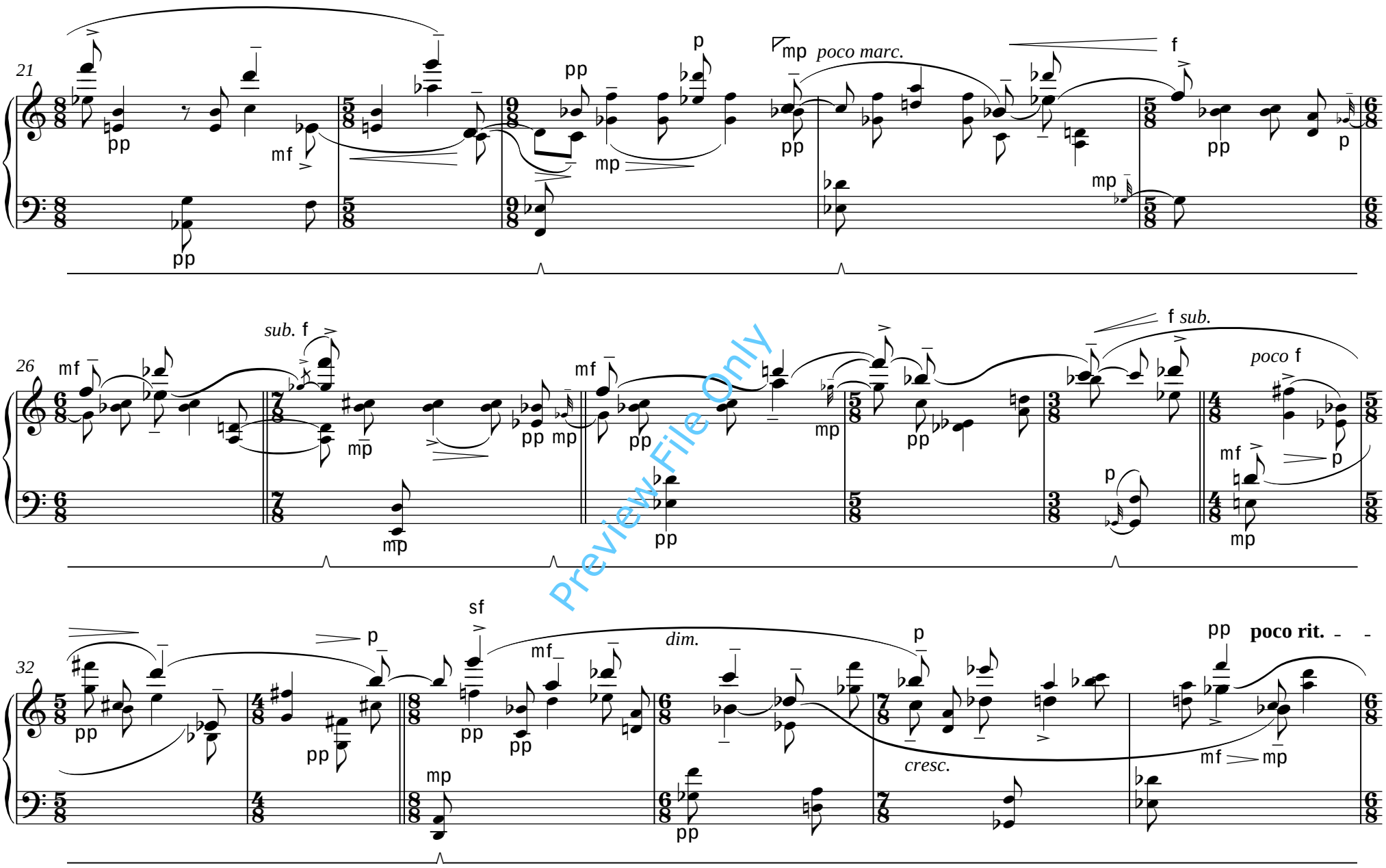
* If performed as a single movement, hold *a niente*, then release Ped. If performed as part of the set, hold until dynamic level reaches p, then into second movement without releasing Ped.

II Still, Clear (for V.R.M.)



* See performance notes for this movement



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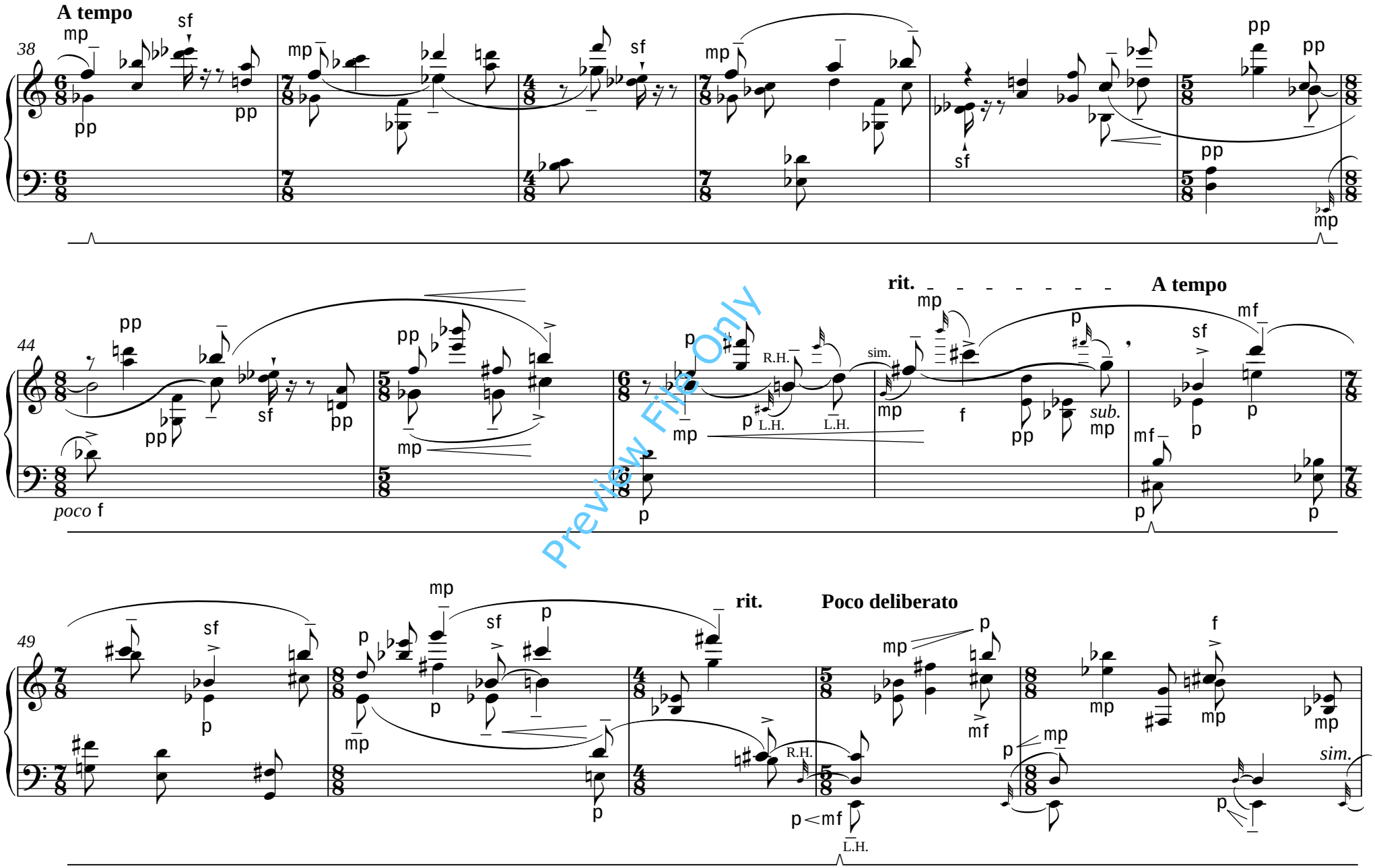
A tempo
38
44
poco f
rit.
A tempo
49
rit.
Poco deliberato
sim.
L.H.
R.H.
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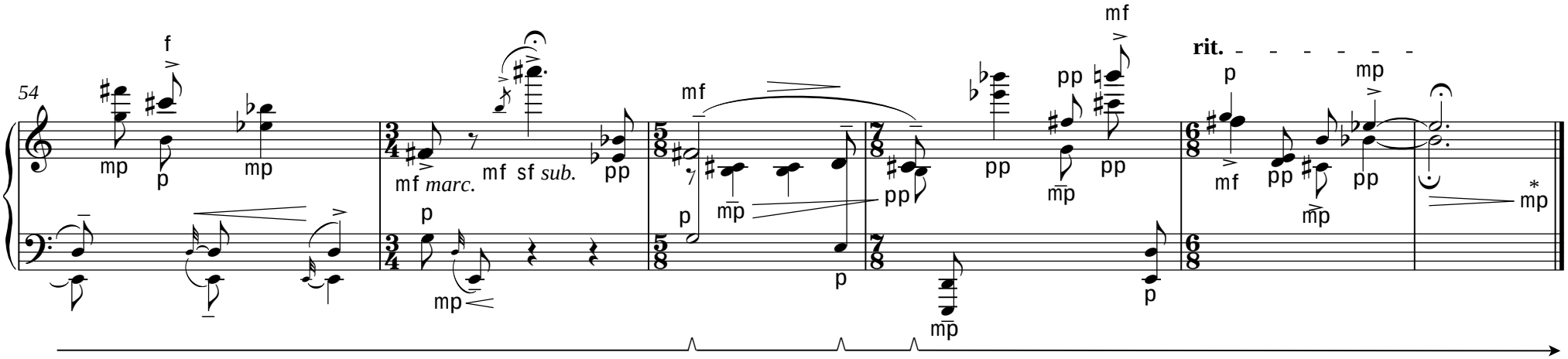

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* If performed as a single movement, hold *a niente*, then release Ped. If performed as part of the set, proceed to next movement without releasing Ped.

III Frozen Edge

Urgent, intense (Tempo 1) ♩ = c.126

8

3
sff

tre corde

sfff

(𝄐)

mf

*

allarg. - oppressive

× 6 - 9 ad lib.

sfff

f

Ped.

6

A tempo

(loco)

3
sff

sfff

3
sfff

sff

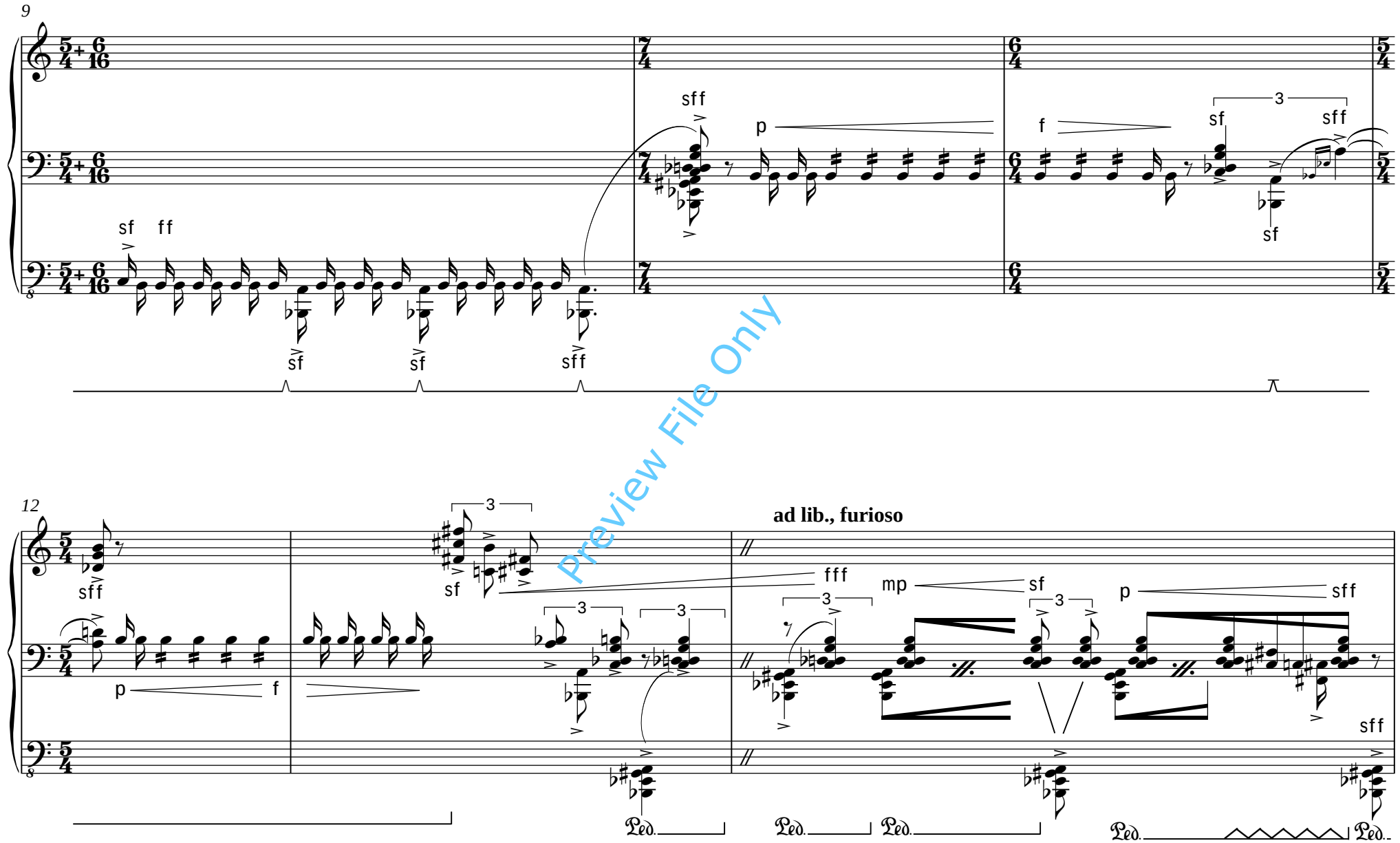
pp

sim.

Ped.

Preview File Only

* See performance notes for this movement



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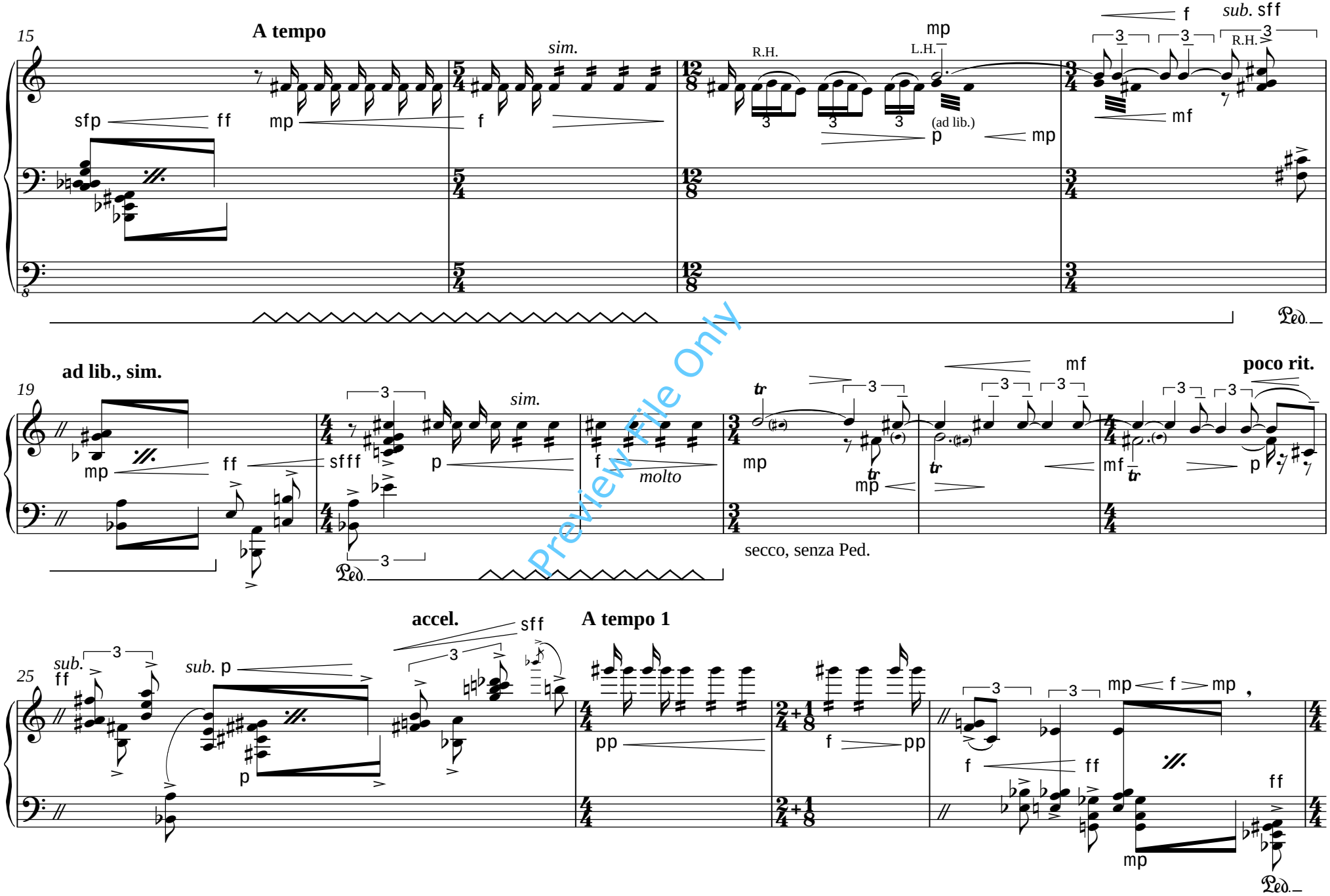

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