Judith Shatin

WIDDERSHINS

Program Note

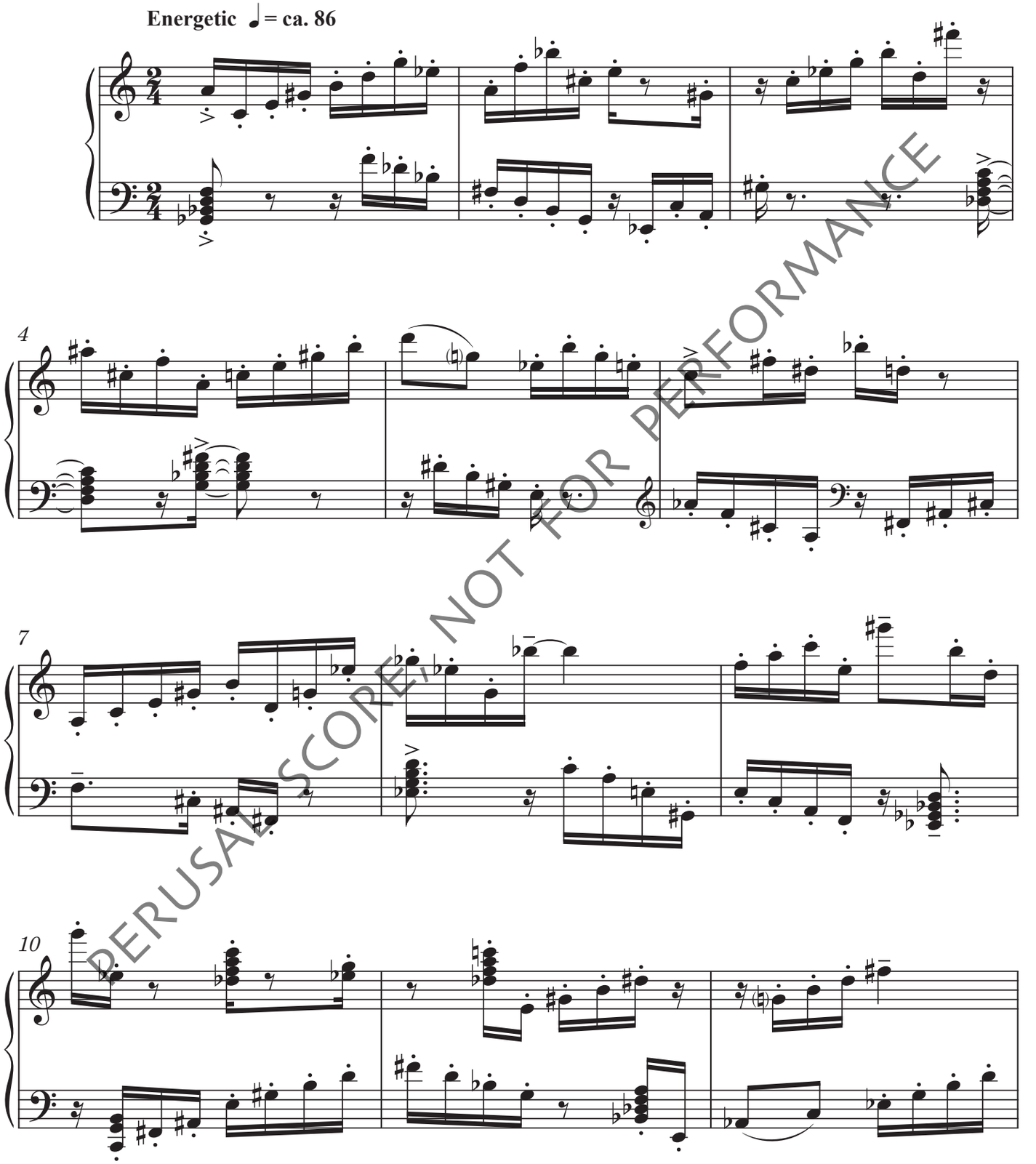
Widdershins is a little-known English word meaning contrary or counterclockwise. When I first heard the word, in conversation with my father, I was taken with its sound; when I learned its meaning, I realized how suggestive it was for musical interpretation. The three-movement piece that resulted reflects the title in intervallic choices, motivic relationships, and contours. The word “widdershins” also suggested the transformations of the piece’s harmonic surface, the background of which consists of three seventh chords – chords that together create the entire twelve-note collection. The first movement, *Energetic*, is a distorted scherzo whose syncopated rhythms give the action an excited feeling. The second movement, *Tranquil*, uses the same harmonic background, but in a more expansive, even luxurious, manner. The third movement, *Savage*, whirls to a dramatic close. *Widdershins* was recorded by pianist Mary Kathleen Ernst on *Tower of the Eight Winds*, a portrait CD of Shatin’s violin and piano music on the Innova label, #770. –JS

Commissioned by Music-at-La-Gesse Foundation

Widdershins

1.

Judith Shatin



PERUSAL SCORE, NOT FOR PERFORMANCE

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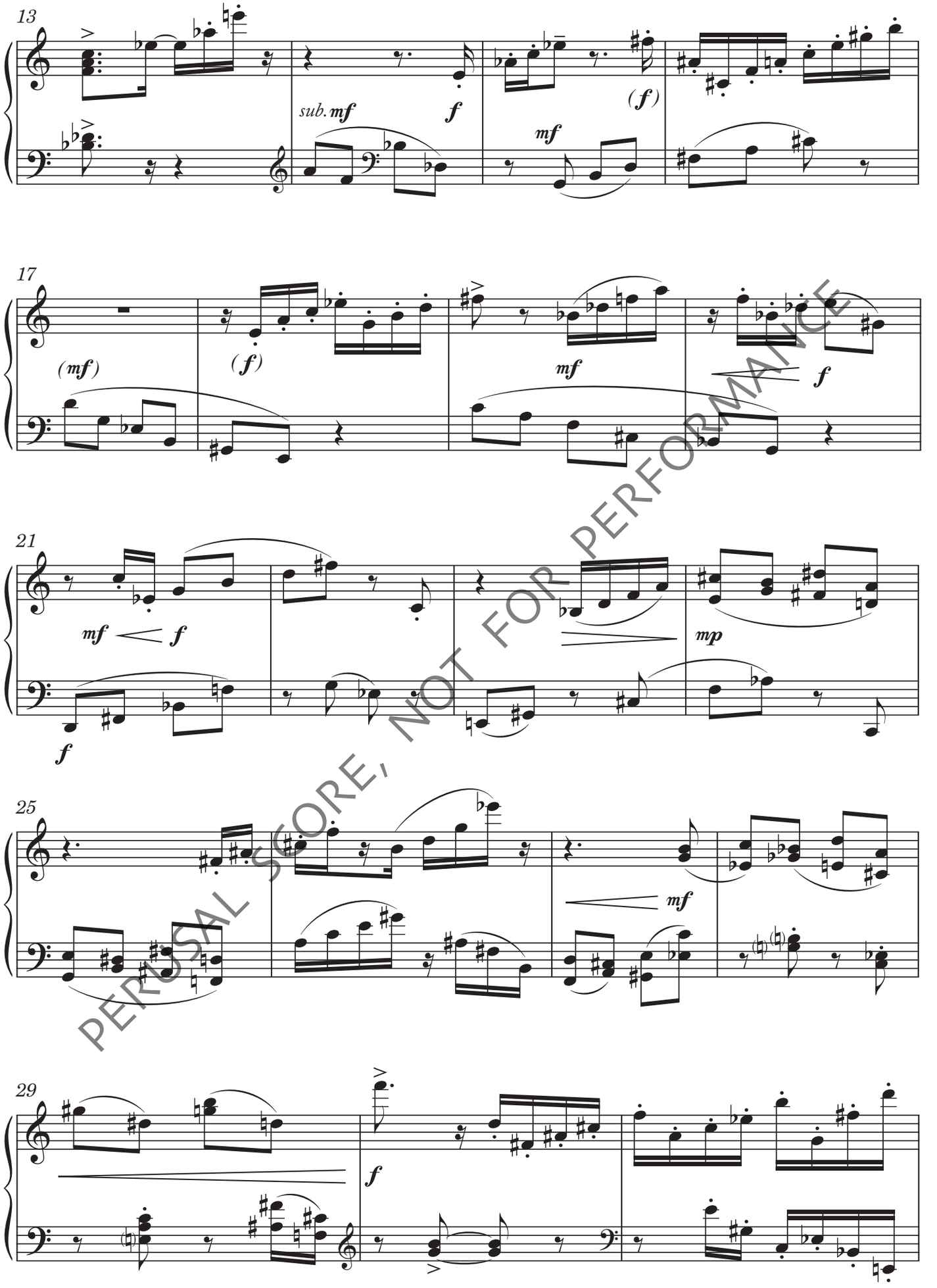
American Composers Edition (BMI)



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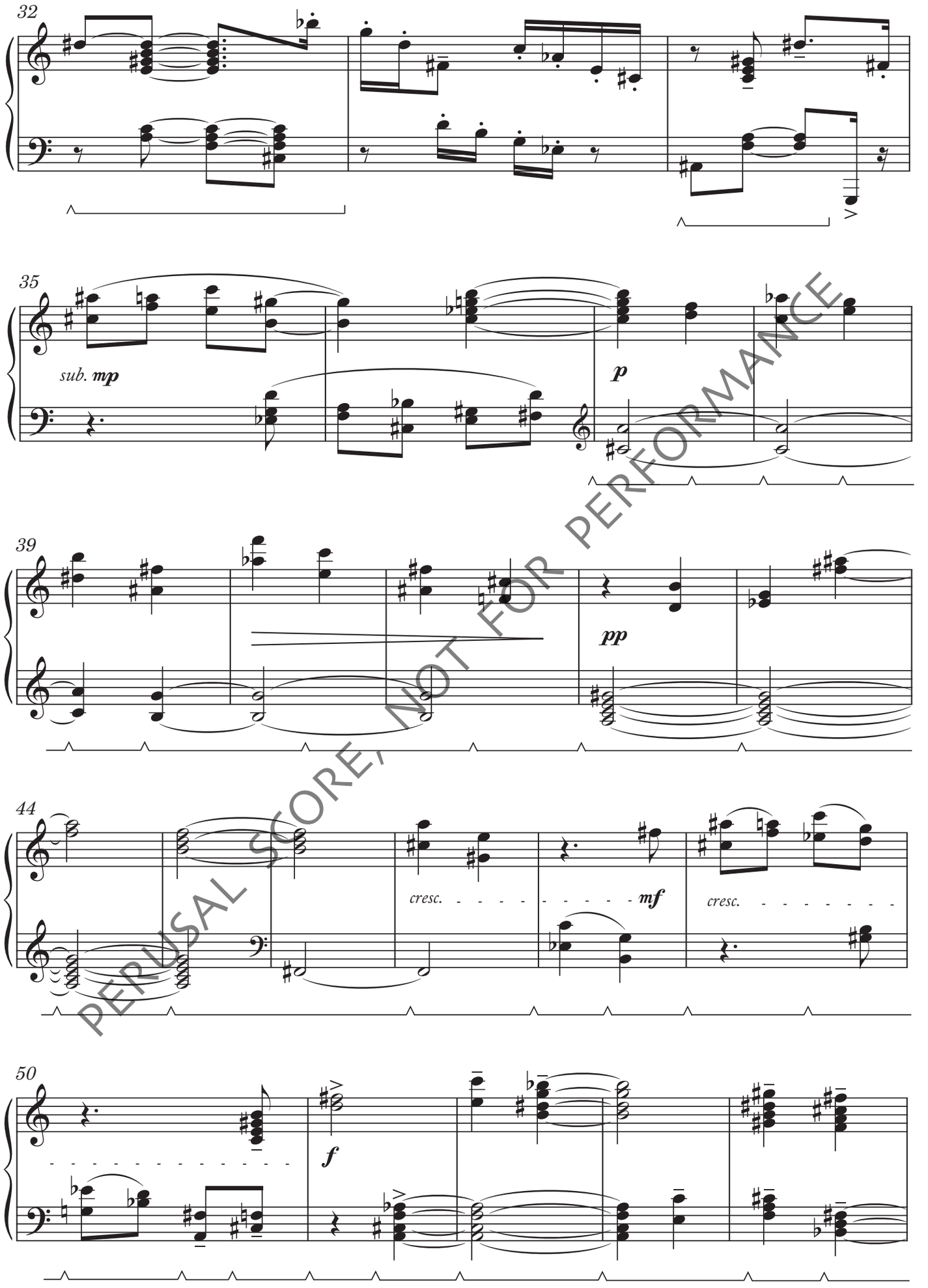

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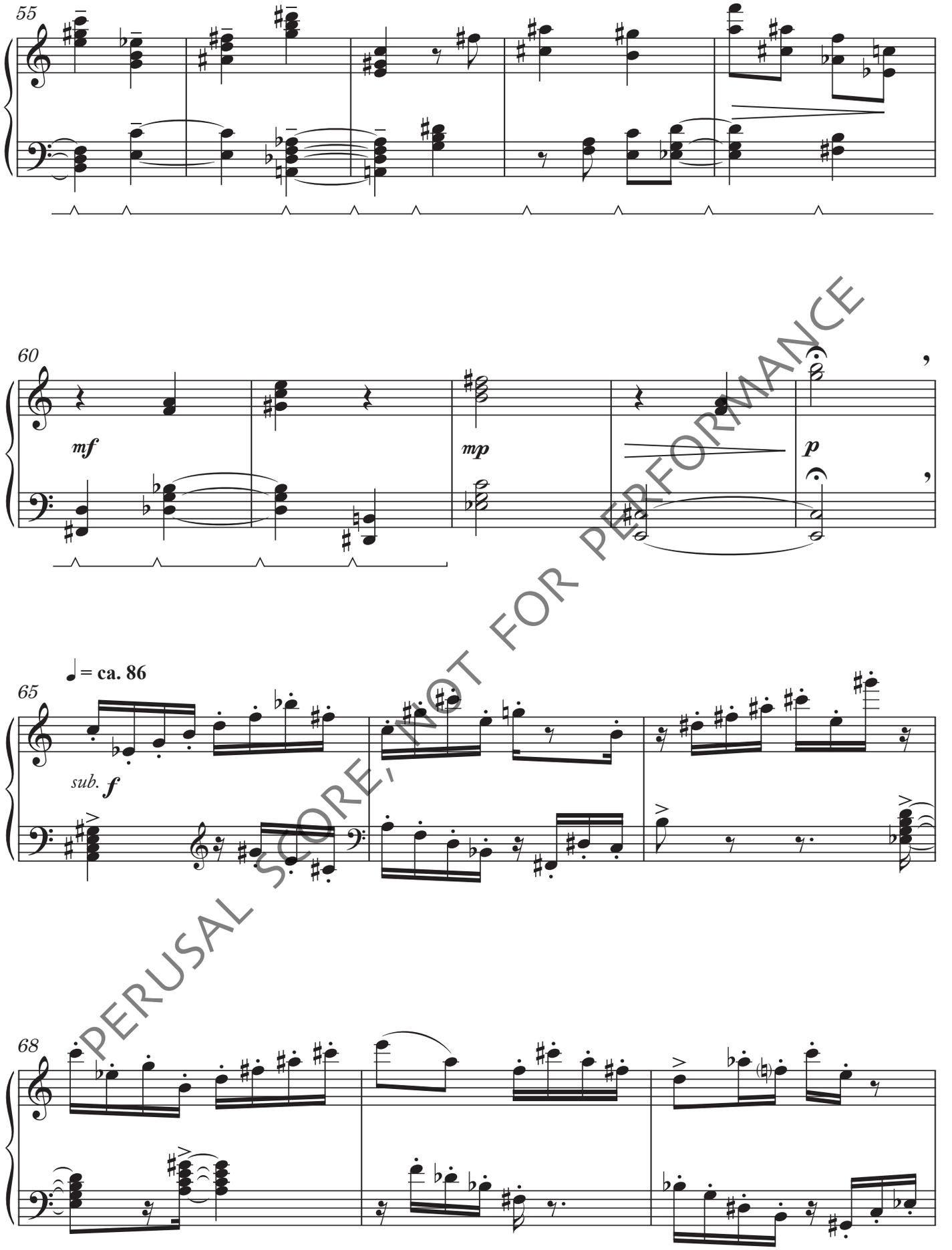

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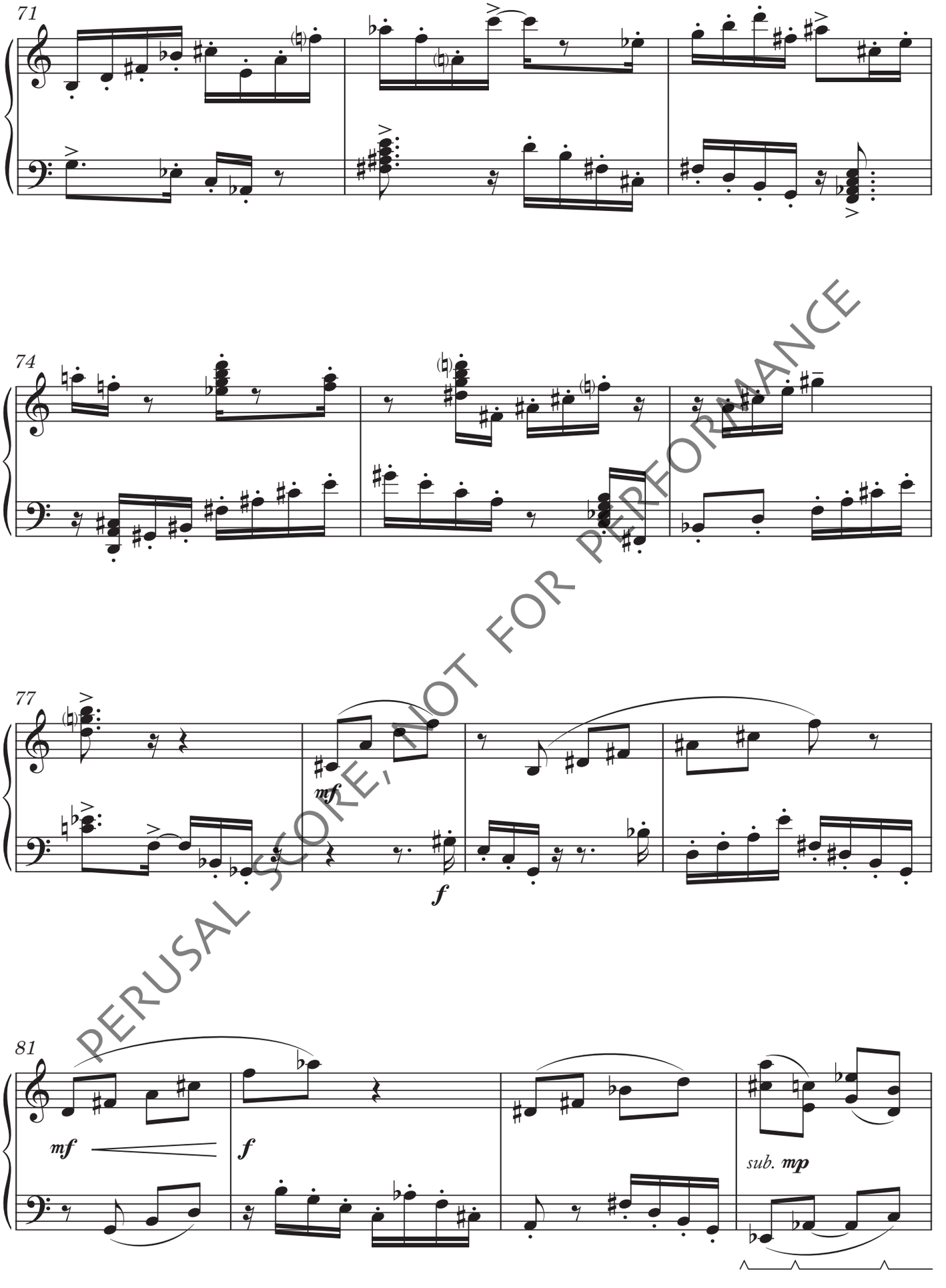

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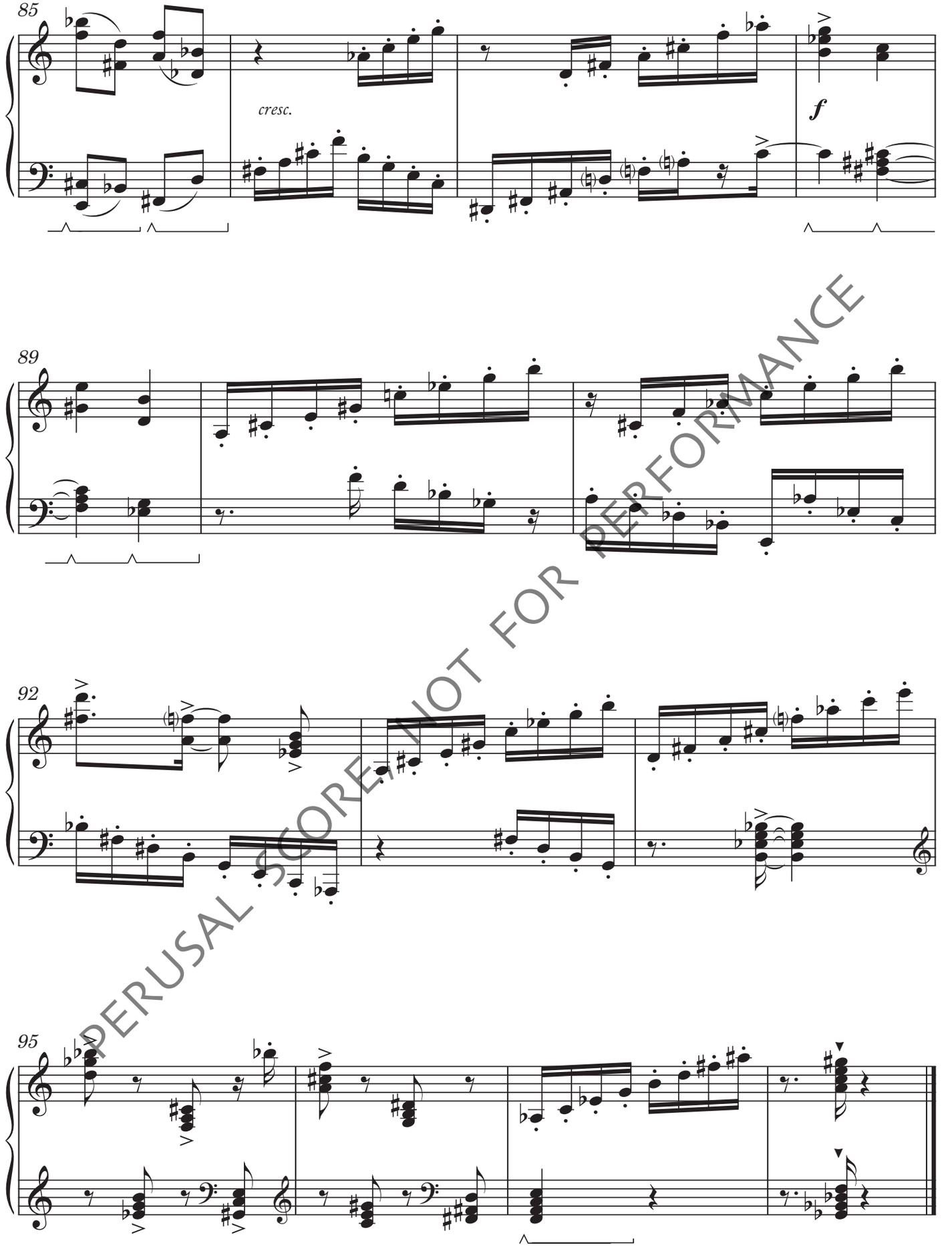

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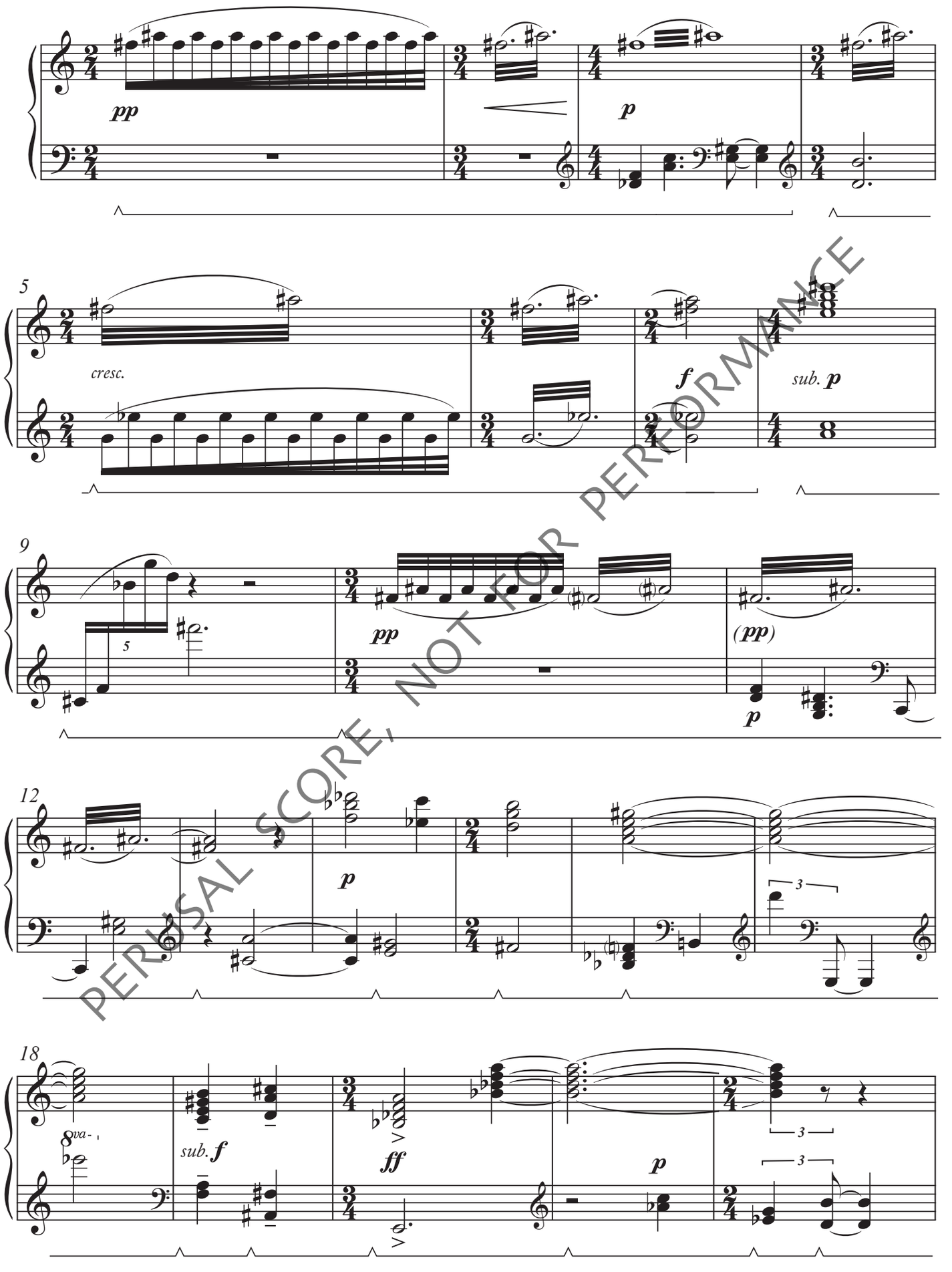
2.

Tranquil ♩ = ca. 60



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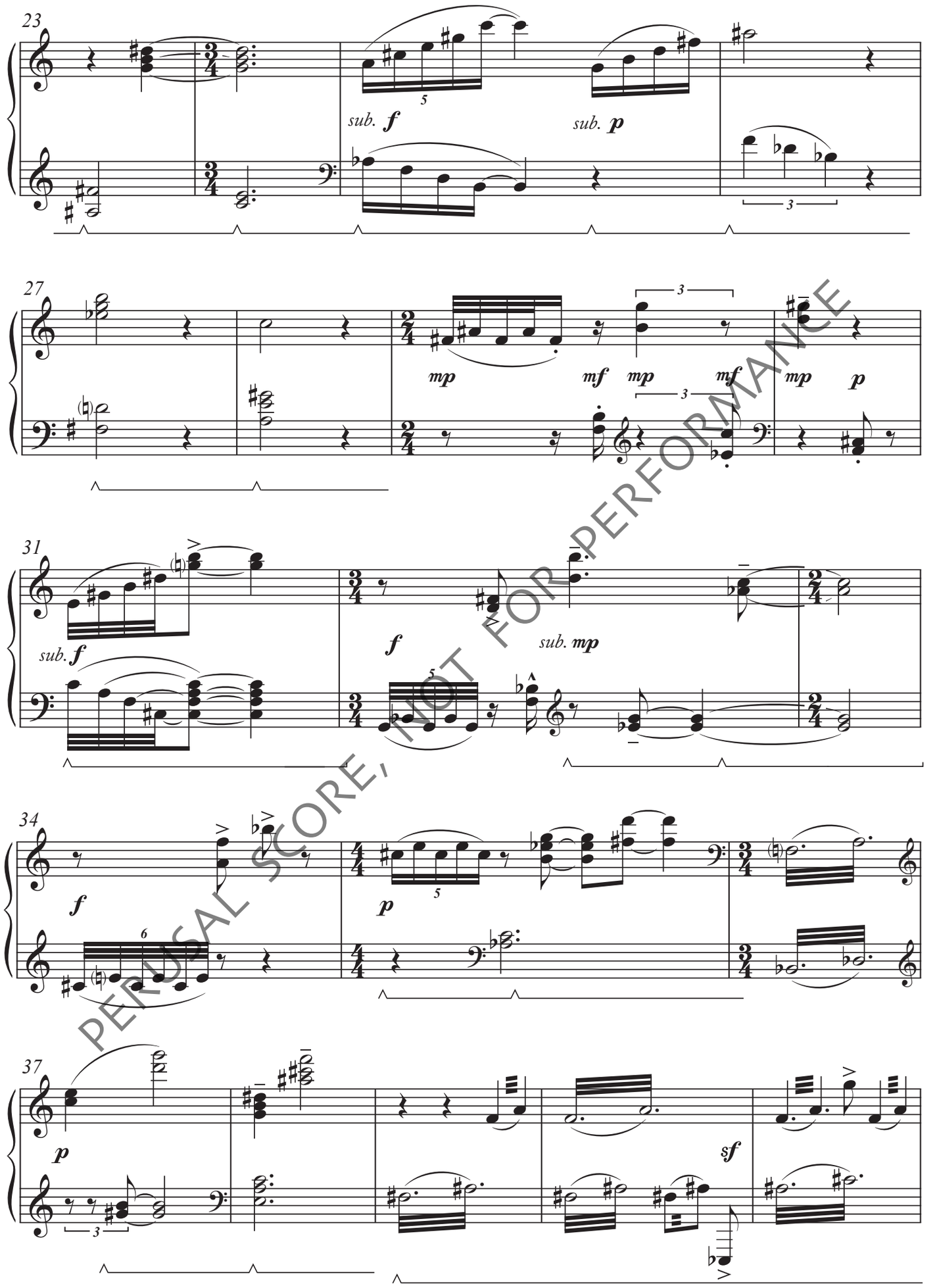

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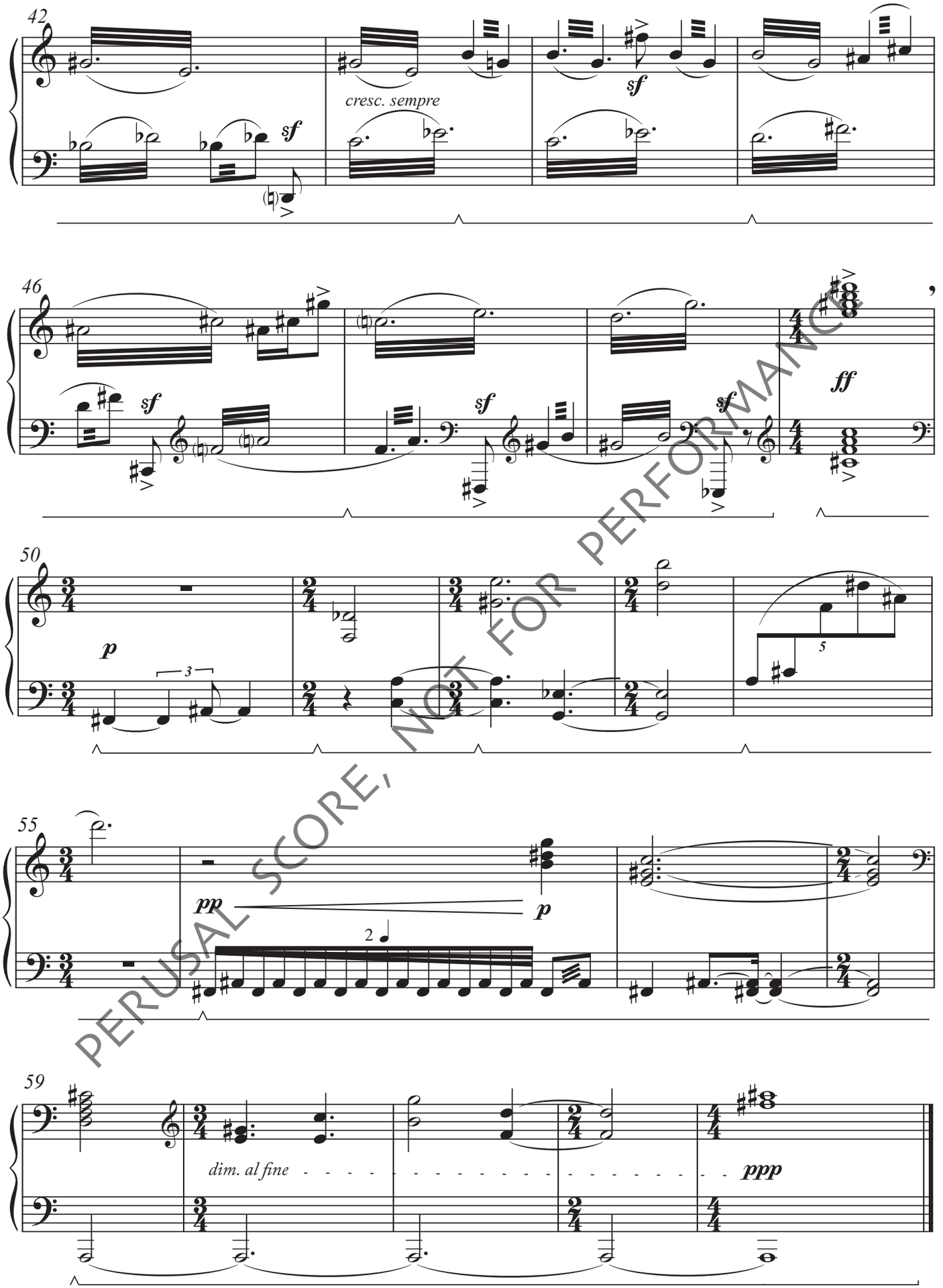

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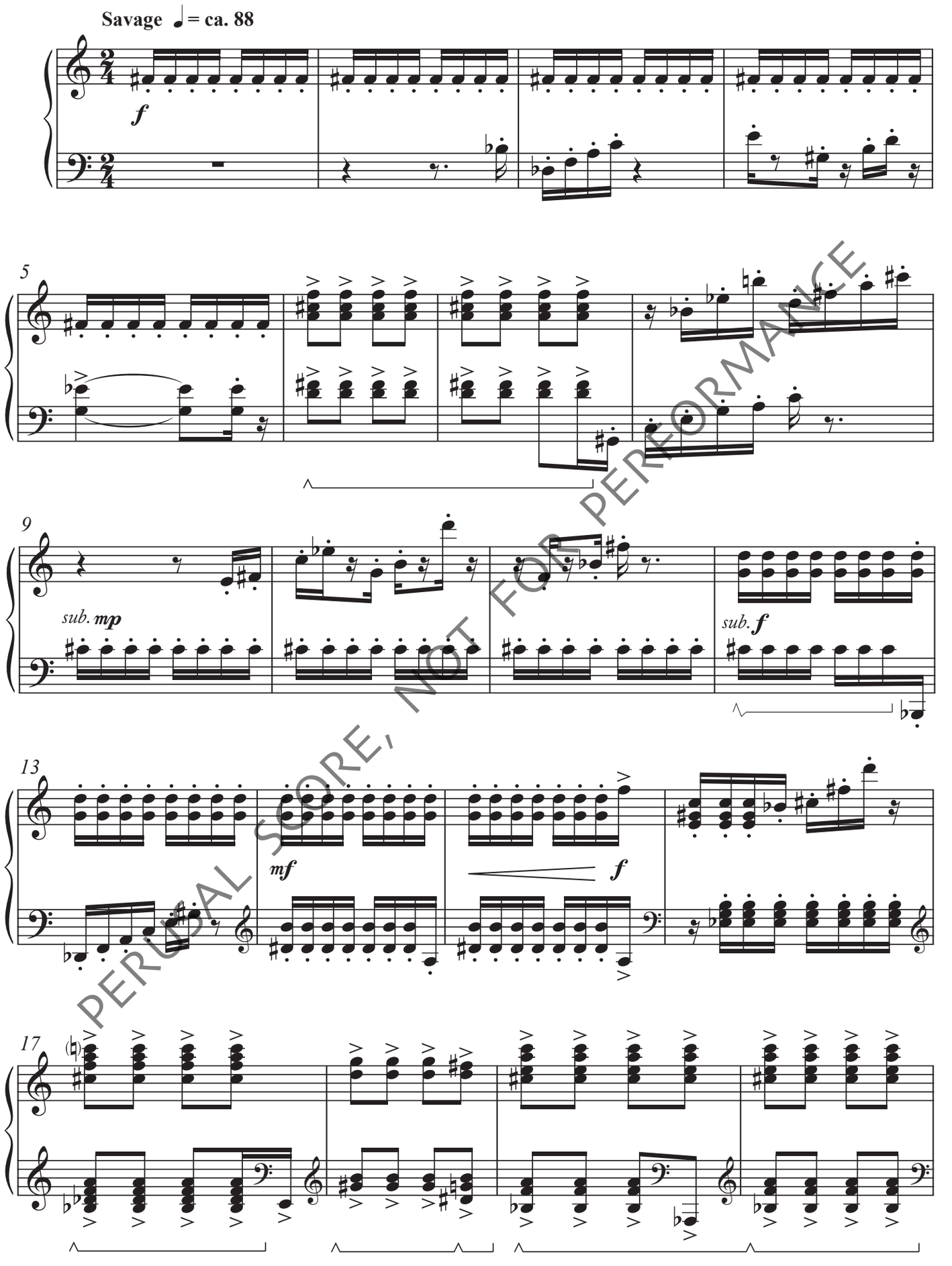

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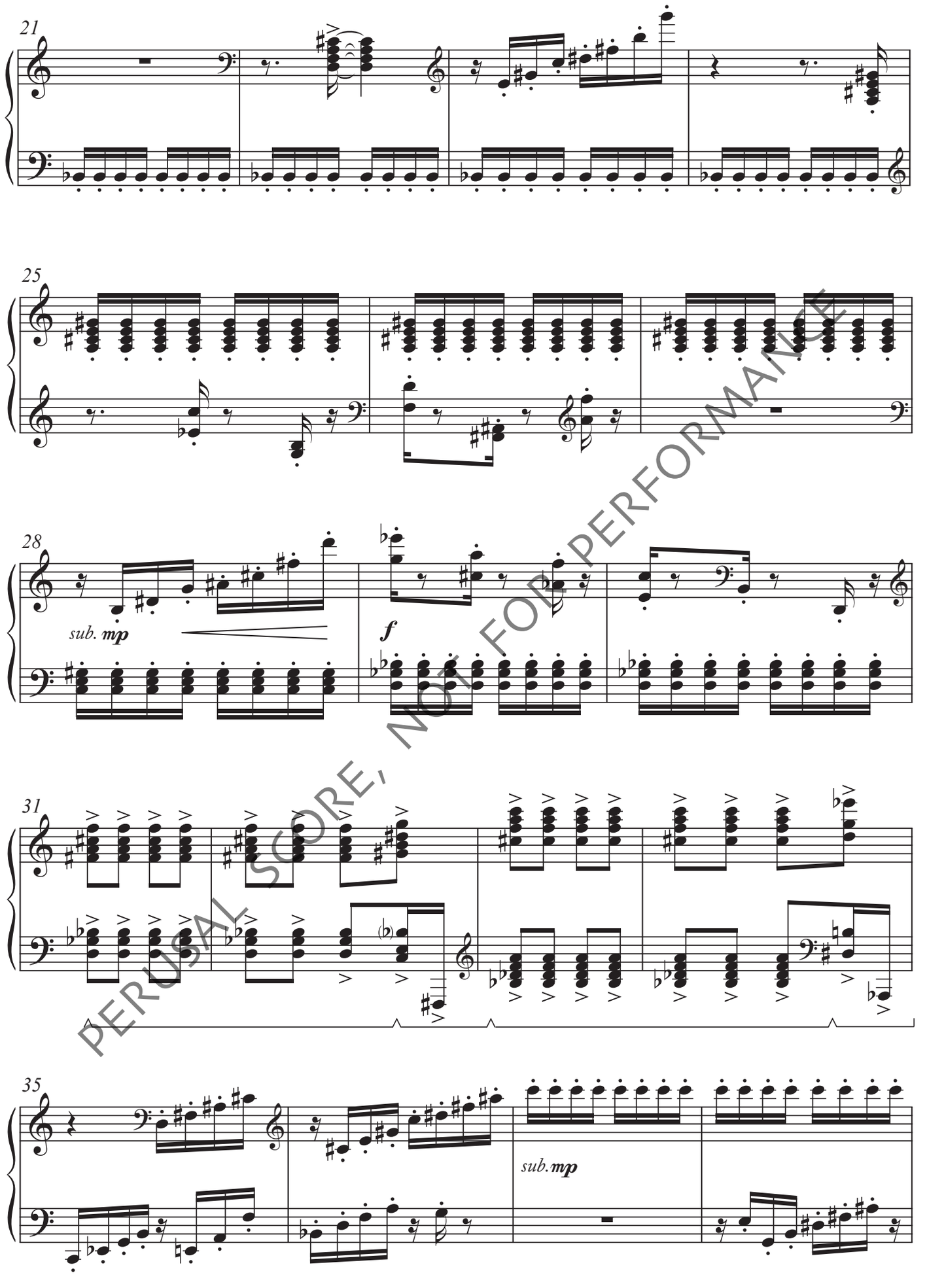

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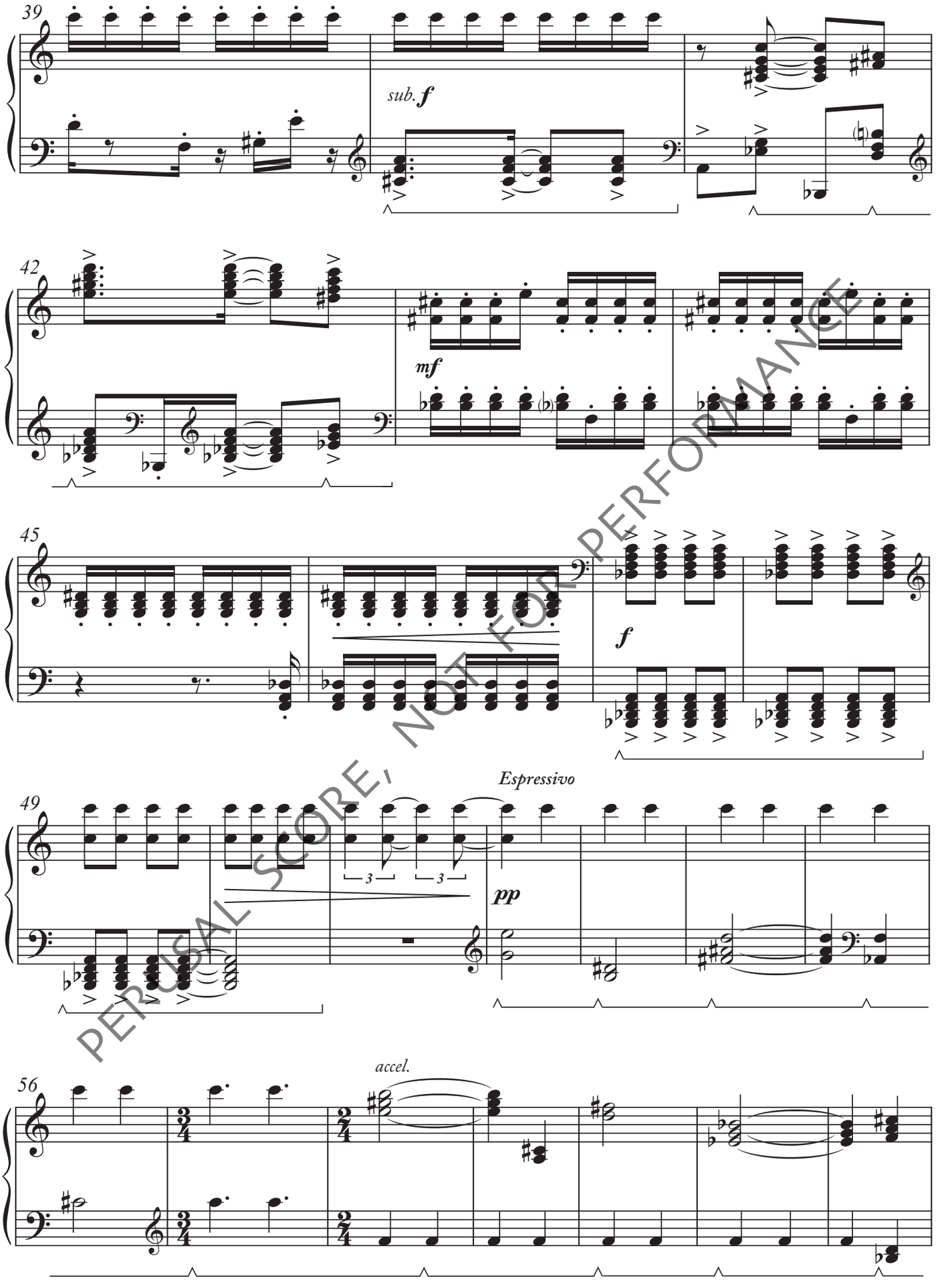

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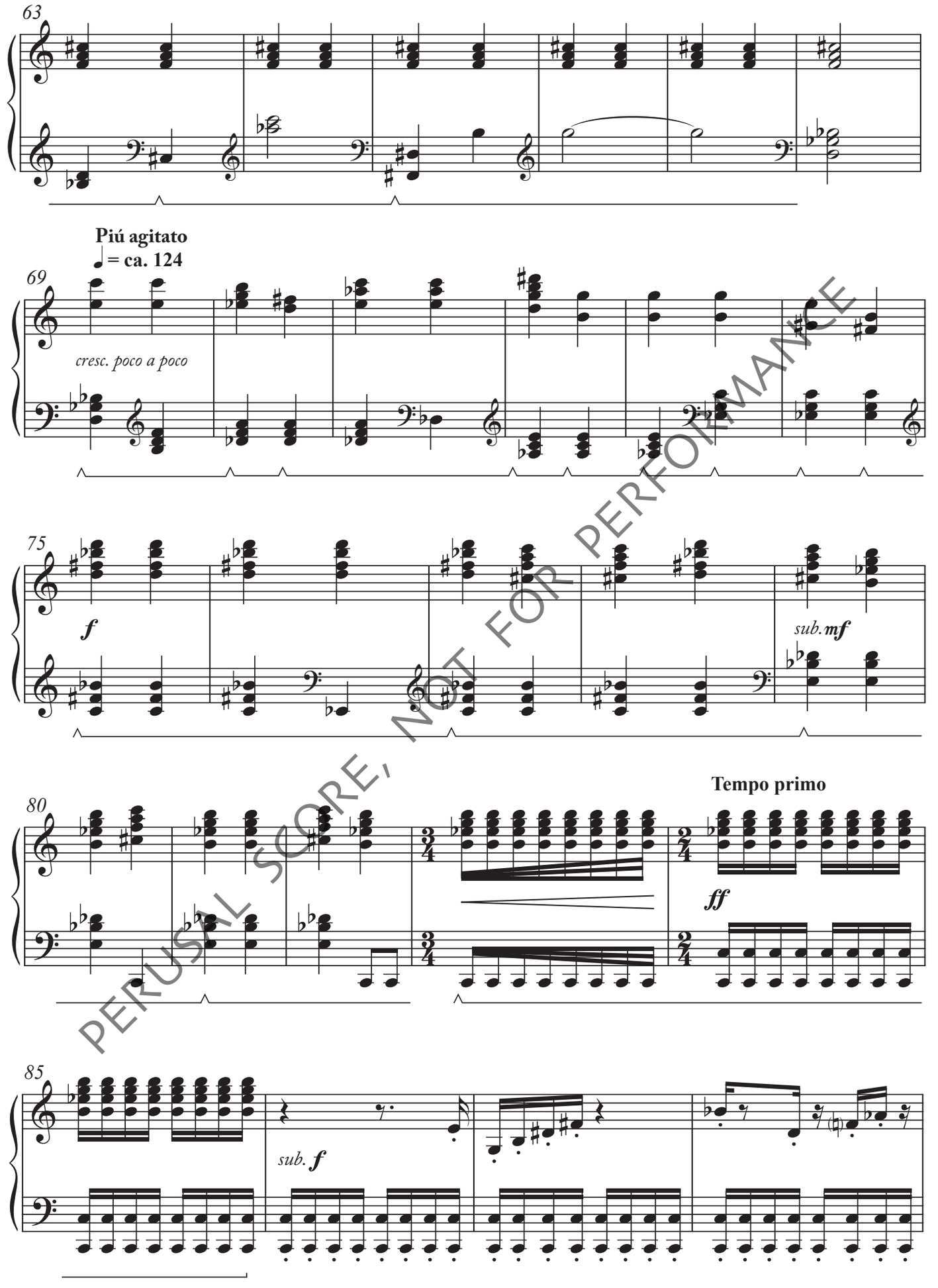

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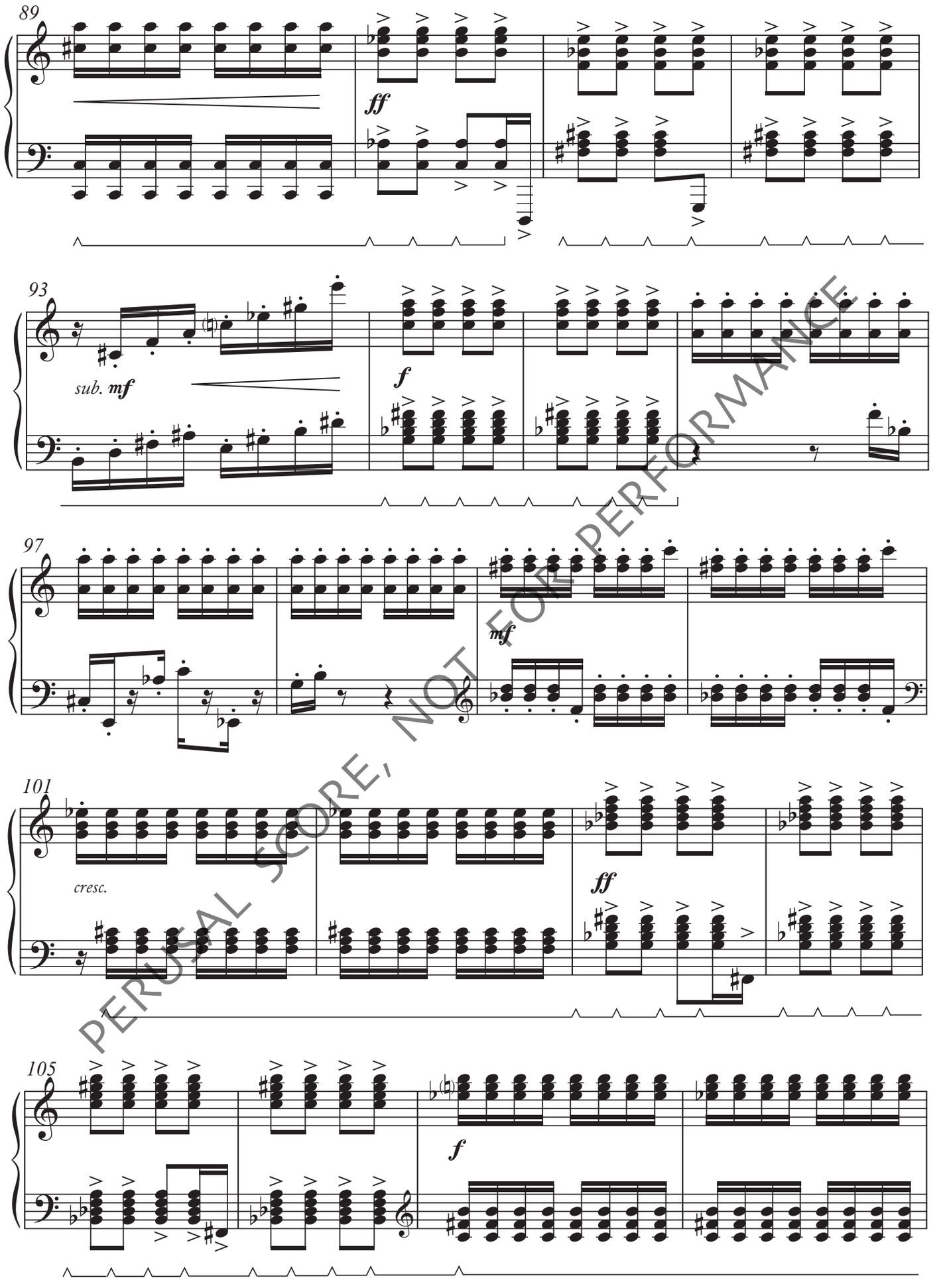

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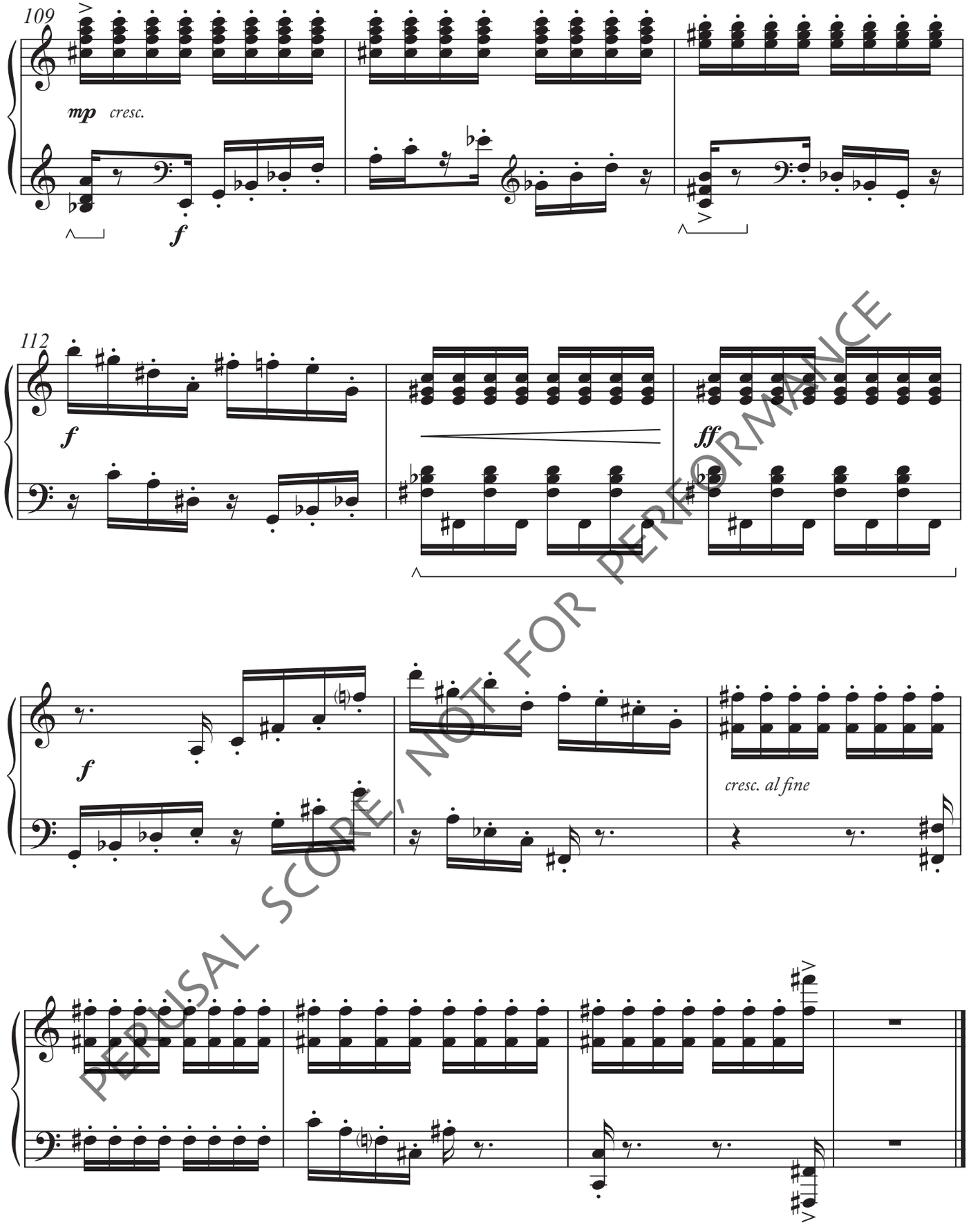

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