Sinophone Influence in Piano Performance: A Pianist's Voice in Bringing Cross-cultural Influence to Contemporary Performance Practices

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To myself on the journey of music making:

‘路漫漫其修远兮，吾将上下而求索。’屈原

‘The road ahead is long and endless,

yet high and low, I will search with my resolve unyielding.’ Qu Yuan

Declaration

I hereby grant the school librarian the discretionary authority to permit the copying of my thesis, whether in its entirety or partially, without requiring any additional consultation or reference to me as the author.

None of the content mentioned in the thesis has been used to apply for a different degree or qualification from this university or any other educational institution.

Abstract

The numerous interactions I have had with audiences following my piano performances have revealed a significant interest in Eastern music among Western audiences. This has inspired me to explore the relationship that many Western composers have with Chinese culture, particularly their incorporation of Chinese elements into piano compositions, and the motivations behind such artistic choices.

However, current research primarily focuses on the theoretical analysis of compositions and compares the differences between East and West. The performers' perspective in that repertoire remains small. As a pianist, I realised how to gain insight from my cultural background, and cultural-informed practical approaches emerged from the learning process. Therefore, I will explore how the influence of the Sinophone on Western compositions manifests the cultural engagement between China and the West. It is a performance analysis based on a self-exploration of Western piano compositions from 1950 onwards. Through this research, I use three different examples to observe how my Chinese cultural background interacts with the elements, shedding light on how Chinese cultural aspects are integrated into their works and the various approaches taken by composers in this regard.

Furthermore, this study will explore how a pianist's cultural understanding can influence their piano performance practices. It will delve into discussions surrounding traditional Chinese instruments and how playing techniques for these instruments can impact piano playing. The objective is to challenge preconceived notions and stereotypes associated with Chinese musical elements present in Western piano compositions, while simultaneously

showcasing my appreciation for and comprehension of cross-cultural compositions through my cultural heritage.

Disclaimer

Due to the nature of this research project, some literature was initially written in Chinese.

Unless specified otherwise, the authors of this thesis conducted the translation.

Introduction

Music, as one of the most popular tools of cultural exchange, plays an essential role in the dialogue between the East and the West. One manifestation of this interaction is the emergence of Western piano compositions since the twentieth century that incorporate Chinese elements. However, relatively little attention has been given to how Chinese culture influences Western classical music, as stereotyped Chinese musical features are often rigidly identified as traditional folk tunes in pentatonic scales, an outdated perspective given the growing interest in Eastern elements among American composers throughout the twentieth century.[1]

Post-concert discussions with audiences have made a pianist with a bicultural background, like myself, aware of the ongoing and growing interest in Eastern music among Western audiences. It is through such discussions that I have become aware of this. This realisation prompted me to examine how twentieth-century and contemporary Western composers integrated such quintessential Chinese elements into their piano compositions.

As a pianist from China who moved to London at the age of seventeen and has spent the past decade studying here, I am particularly interested in how my cultural heritage and upbringing shape my aesthetic in learning and interpreting music, especially works with cross-cultural influence.

This prompts the question: how do I, as a performer, respond to and engage with compositions that draw on Chinese elements? While current cross-cultural research in music

[1] Frederick Lau, 'Fusion or Fission: The Paradox and Politics of Contemporary Chinese Avant-Garde Music', in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music,* ed. By Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), pp.22-39.

primarily focuses on the compositions themselves- examining their origins, structural features, and social significance- contemporary performers, who often navigate multiple cultural identities, also play a crucial role in shaping performance practice.[2] Their perspectives should be considered alongside compositional and performance analysis.

This study, therefore, demonstrates how my cultural perspective directly navigates my approach to practising and interpreting selected Western piano compositions with Chinese elements. While my experiences may differ from those of another pianist, the focus of this research is to highlight the broader issues and ideas that arise during the practice process. I aim to explore how my cultural background, whether consciously or unconsciously, influences my learning and interpretation of this repertoire. Ultimately, I aim to demonstrate how my knowledge of Chinese culture enhances my performance of cross-cultural piano works.

The thesis addresses the following questions:

Q.1: How have Western composers adopted Chinese elements into their piano compositions from the 1950s onwards?

Q.2: What are the Chinese influences reflected in these compositions?

Q.3: How can we identify the Chinese adoptions in these compositions?

Q.4: How do cultural perspectives influence the shaping of one's performing practice?

To answer these questions, this research evaluates three case studies:

A Pianist's I Ching by the British composer Geoffrey Poole,

[2] Sandra E. Trehub, Judith Becker, and Iain Morley, 'Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Music and Musicality', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 370.1664 (2015), n.20140096; and see also Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-One Issues and Concepts* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005).

Scenes from a Jade Terrace by the Canadian composer Alexina Louie,
Five Melodies by the New Zealand composer Jack Body.

This thesis consists of five chapters and an epilogue. Chapter One presents a literature review that outlines the challenges posed by various frameworks incorporating Chinese elements in Western music. This discussion focuses on why the research concentrates particularly on twentieth-century piano compositions, considering both historical and social issues of the past. The different terms, such as Chinoiserie, Neo-Chinoiserie, and Orientalism, are often associated with this kind of discussion. It should, however, be noted that this research suffers from several limitations. As mentioned in Chapter One, a large proportion of existing research refers to non-Western music as 'exotic' or 'oriental' without specifying which particular part of the non-Western influence it is referring to or the specific musical features which suggest an 'exotic' sound. This makes it challenging to identify Chinese influences within such literature. In addition, the field of cross-cultural music from a performer's perspective is relatively small, not to mention the performers' analysis of Chinese cultural elements in playing Western piano works. This chapter also explains the use of the term 'Sinophone' in this study. It highlights the significance of practice-based research in music performance, as well as my dual roles in this research, both as a performer and a researcher. It concludes with a discussion of relevant limitations and discrepancies in the *I Ching* translations.

Chapter Two introduces three Chinese cultural elements in Poole, Louie, and Body's selected piano works.

Chapter Three outlines the research methodology, presenting a general methodological framework and the specific approaches for each case study. It also explains

the rationale behind the analytical methods applied in this research. To conduct a survey in this field, one needs a cross-cultural understanding. Otherwise, it may be particularly hard to scrutinise the subtle threads of fusion between the East and the West. In addition, the difference in cultural background between scholars and composers in such cross-cultural studies could render a misinformed bias for researchers, as insiders may subjectively assume cultural influences in the composer's music where those are, in fact, not intended by the composer. I thus undertook detailed correspondence with Poole and Louie as part of this research, as explained in Chapter Three and provided the interview transcript in the appendix.

Chapter Four discusses the Chinese philosophical influences in the works of Western composers by analysing the elements of Chinese philosophy in Geoffrey Poole's *A Pianist's I Ching* and Alexina Louie's *Scenes from a Jade Terrace.* Due to the length limitations of this research, it is hard to provide a comprehensive analysis of *A Pianist's I Ching*. Given that Poole's work comprises sixty-four pieces in total, it is beyond the scope of this research to analyse the entire work. During data collection, I selected eight pieces to study, where two are discussed in depth in Chapter Four, as examples to demonstrate how Chinese philosophical influences are involved in Poole's compositional approach.

Chapter Five discusses how traditional Chinese instrumental techniques have influenced Western piano compositions. It focuses on the piano works of Alexina Louie and Jack Body, analysing how the playing of the gong and the qin inspires piano playing with sounds and choreographies. The results can illustrate my view of the Sinophone in contemporary Western composers' piano compositions by providing evidence from the three case studies.

The epilogue reflects on how the research journey reshaped the author's interpretative approach as a pianist-researcher, revealing the depth of Sinophone influence in piano music through practice-based inquiry. It highlights how dialogues with composers, performance experimentation, and recital programming became key methods of cultural mediation. The author repositions performance not as an endpoint, but as a mode of analysis and a site for intercultural connection.

As both Poole and Louie are living composers, I have had the opportunity to conduct interviews with them to better interpret my findings on the Chinese elements in relation to their works. Unfortunately, Body passed away in 2015, and thus my study of his *Five Melodies* will be based on purely existing materials, such as interviews conducted by other scholars and my own score analysis. Besides, I will only focus on the second and third movements of *Five Melodies*, which I found to have the most obvious connection to the Chinese instrument qin.

In selecting the three 'Western' piano compositions for this study, I followed Bi Minghui's definition of 'Western', which contains three conditions: geography, music genre and composer's identity.[3] The term 'Western' in this research will be limited to these conditions. Firstly, Western is limited to a particular geographical area, namely Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand. Secondly, Western piano music, which is limited to the classical piano music genre, does not encompass other genres or music played on instruments other than the piano. Thirdly, the Western composers chosen for the present study are neither Chinese nor do they have any formal educational background in China. However, whether the

[3] 毕明辉 (Minghui Bi), *20 世纪西方音乐中的"中国元素"* ['Chinese Elements' in Western Music from Twentieth Century] (Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of Music Press, 2007), pp. 1-2.

composers composed the pieces in China or the West is not a limitation of this research. Building on Bi's idea of 'Western', this research includes composers born in Western countries with Chinese heritage, such as the music by Canadian composer Alexina Louie, to provide a broader understanding of the divergences in their compositional techniques. For this reason, this research did not discuss Chou Wen-Chung's piano music, as he was born and raised in China and moved to the West only in the later stages of his life. I explore Alexander Tcherepnin's music as an example of Sinophone influence since he was born and raised in Russia and only moved to China as an adult.[4] He, therefore, had an outsider's perspective, having been exposed to Chinese culture only after reaching adulthood.[5]

As a pianist, I am keen to conduct research and build a repertoire of compositions with Chinese adaptations to provide insight to other interested scholars and pianists in this genre. To this end, I have provided a revised repertoire list based on Elizabeth C. Axford's and Dai Baisheng's literature, as found in Appendix Three.

The term 'Sinophone influence' is used in this research to examine how Chinese cultural elements manifest in Western piano compositions and how these elements shape performance practices. In this context, the terms 'Chinese elements' and 'Sinophone influence' are used side by side: while 'Chinese elements' refers more specifically to identifiable musical features drawn from Chinese culture (e.g., scales, instruments, philosophy), 'Sinophone influence' provides a broader conceptual framework that situates these features within diasporic, performative, and intercultural contexts.

[4] Tianshu Wang, *Alexander Tcherepnin's "Five Concert Studies": An Homage to Chinese Musical Styles, Instruments, and Tradition* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Arizona, 1999).
[5] Outsider here means the composer's perspective on Chinese music and culture was shaped from the outsider, rather than from within the culture itself. For a discussion of the insider and outsider view, please see page Chapter 1, p.21.

This broader framework moves beyond simplistic or essentialist labels such as ‘Oriental’ or ‘Chinoiserie’, instead framing cross-cultural music within a more nuanced, historically and socially grounded context. Drawing on Shu-Mei Shih’s articulation of the Sinophone, this research investigates the layered cultural exchanges between China and the West, highlighting how performers, particularly those with Chinese heritage, engage with and transform these influences into piano playing. The Sinophone framework also supports the performance-based methodology, enabling me to explore the performer's role as an active participant in cultural negotiation and interpretation. Therefore, I hope this research will be helpful for those studying the Chinese elements incorporated by Western composers or a model for other pianist-researchers with multicultural backgrounds as a way to share their unique cultural engagement in practice.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

Overview

> Our popular tunes are to be found in every Oriental country, played and sung on native instruments in the style of the land. […] Performances in our broadcasts of songs like the Chinese Chee Lai, which is in Westernised style, establish the bond between East and West. Yet, to allay the fear of conservative Orientals that we are trying to force Western culture on them, it is very necessary to show that we know and appreciate their old traditional music too.[6]

Since the late twentieth century, globalisation has enabled faster and more widespread cultural exchanges, albeit often muddled between appreciation and appropriation.[7] In music, this raises questions about how composers engage with non-Western traditions. The American composer Henry Cowell and others advocate the idea that adopting globalisation in music is not merely a process of blending influences but also requires an understanding of and reverence for the traditions and contexts of different cultures. Composers have debated the inclusion of such a high degree of cultural infusion, whether as part of a dialogue or as a superfluous exotic flavour to their palette of colours in their sound world. For instance, Chou Wen-Chung argues that John Cage's use of silence, indeterminacy, and chance, despite its influence from Eastern ideas, is, in reality, a creation of a modern 'American product.'[8]

With these dilemmas in mind, this research is grounded in the concept of Sinophone influence on Western piano compositions. It explores how a performer's cultural background shapes their approaches to cross-cultural piano works. It draws on Shu-Mei Shih's *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations across the Pacific*, a key text in shaping the contemporary academic use of the term. Shih defines the Sinophone as a critical framework,

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[6] Henry Cowell, 'Shaping Music for Total War', *Modern Music*, 22 (1945), 223–236 (p. 225).
[7] David M. Kotz, 'Globalization and Neoliberalism', *Rethinking Marxism*, 14.2 (2002), 64–79.
Kevin H. O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, 'When Did Globalization Begin?', *European Review of Economic History*, 6.1 (2002), 23–50.
[8] Chou Wen-Chung, 'Asian Concepts and Twentieth-Century Western Composers', *The Musical Quarterly*, 57.2 (1971), 211–29 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/741215> [accessed 17 November 2022], p. 225.

distinct from a China-centric perspective, that emphasises Chinese-speaking cultures outside of mainland China and highlights issues of postcolonialism and the politics of identity. Throughout this thesis, the term 'Sinophone' is used primarily as an adjective to describe compositions that exhibit Chinese elements and the cultural resonances evoked in their performance. It can also be used as a noun to refer to individuals or communities.[9]

This study employs the term to describe the artistic and musical characteristics of piano compositions from the twentieth century onwards. Given the complex social and historical connotations of Sino-Western encounters, approaching the Sinophone in music also requires engagement with related frameworks, which are often intertwined with these types of cross-cultural compositions.

This literature review examines the complex social and historical contexts underpinning the concept of the Sinophone through discussions and comparisons with related frameworks, as well as the terminologies used to describe cross-cultural influences in musical compositions, including 'Oriental, Exotic, Chinoiserie, Neo-Chinoiserie.' While I identify the relevance of many of these theoretical frameworks to the term 'Sinophone', I argue that the boundaries between them often overlap and, to some extent, neglect the interspersing dynamics of cultural exchange, presenting instead a predominantly slanted perspective. Music from the twentieth century onwards reflects an ongoing evolution of cross-cultural influence. Whilst this discussion does not attempt to evaluate the authenticity of these musical expressions, it acknowledges that the fluid, hybrid nature of cultural interaction resists fixed notions of identity or origin. Accordingly, this theoretical framework will be

[9] Yucong Hao, 'The Sinophone', in *Futures of Comparative Literature: ACLA State of the Discipline Report*, ed. by Ursula K. Heise, Gérard Genette, and Yunte Huang (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 267–70.

supplemented by a practice-based approach that deepens the exploration of Chinese elements in Western piano music through the interpretative act of performance.

Building on the discussion of theoretical frameworks, this study establishes a performance-based methodology essential to understanding Sinophone influences in piano music. Through critical reflection on my dual role as pianist and researcher, I demonstrate how cultural heritage is embedded in piano performance practice and argue that recognising this heritage is crucial to a more nuanced and informed interpretation of the Sinophone influenced repertoire. By integrating music analysis with detailed insights of the performer achieved through autoethnographic documentation, this research contributes to cross-cultural music studies, positioning piano performance as a site of cultural negotiation and artistic discovery.

Furthermore, this study acknowledges its limitations and proposes strategies to address them, ensuring a rigorous and adaptable approach. By foregrounding the intersection of cultural heritage, music analysis, and performer agency, it expands the discourse on piano performance in a globalised context, challenging conventional methodologies and offering new perspectives that enrich both performance and scholarship.

Cultural exchanges between East and West: Terminologies

Before delving into the scholarships that investigate how Chinese cultural elements are used by Western composers in music, it is crucial to first briefly explore the scholarship on cultural exchange between the East and West, as these form the ideologies that underpin much of the same discussions. Since the twentieth century, studies of cultural exchange between East and West have attracted significant attention, particularly following Edward Said's foundational

work on *Orientalism,* which challenges the unequal positioning of the Orient in Western discourse.

> Thus, all of Orientalism stands forth and away from the Orient: that Orientalism makes sense at all depends more on the West than on the Orient, and this sense is directly indebted to various Western techniques of representation that make the Orient visible, clear, 'there' in discourse about it.[10]

Although Said's *Orientalism* centres on criticism towards the Middle East, it opens discussions on non-Western elements used in Western music, as it often comes with reductive or superficial interpretations. In Adam Gustafson's writing, he highlighted how Western cultures use stereotypes to create an 'Oriental sound' that does not reflect the Asian music but instead serves as a projection of Western views.[11] Similarly, John Corbett further points out the power dynamic when Western composers position themselves as explorers or experimenters, defining and using non-Western music to maintain a sense of Western superiority.[12] Orientalism is a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.[13]

Moreover, this framework often leads to reductive depictions of Chinese elements as part of a 'Far East' or 'Oriental' aesthetic. For example, Elizabeth C. Axford and Derek B. Scott identify the use of pentatonic scales and parallel intervals in Western compositions as indicative of a 'traditional Chinese flavour' or 'Oriental spirit.'[14] However, these analyses frequently fail to explore the cultural or technical significance of these elements. Chou Wen-

[10] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), p.22. Said's critique has prompted critical reflection on how the East is represented.
[11] vox3collective, 'Want To Sound Oriental? Just Play the Black Notes!', *VOX 3 Collective Voice,* 30 September 2011 <https://vox3collective.wordpress.com/2011/09/30/want-to-sound-oriental-just-play-the-black-notes/> [accessed 5 February 2025].
[12] John Corbett, 'Experimental Oriental: New Music and Other Others', in *Microgroove: Forays into Other Music* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), p. 167.
[13] Said, *Orientalism*, p. 3.
[14] Elizabeth C. Axford, *Traditional World Music Influences in Contemporary Solo Piano Literature* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1997).

Chung critiques such superficial appropriation, highlighting how Western composers often neglect the nuanced aspects of Asian music, such as pitch modification, rhythmic subtlety, and the expressive function of tones.[15]

> The adaptation of Indian, Indonesian, or Japanese melodic or rhythmic treatment to Western notation and Western instruments - neglecting such life-giving elements in the original models as constant subtle modifications in pitch, rhythm, and timbre, the emphasis on the production and control of tones, the value placed on the expressive as well as the structural functions of single tones - is not, in any true sense, different from the nineteenth-century practice of forcing an oriental melody into tonal harmony.[16]

'Chinoiseries' is one of the terms scholars use to refer to the Western interest in China. Historically, the fascination with China can be traced back to Marco Polo's travels, as accounted for in his book, 'The Travels of Marco Polo', which sparked curiosity in Western readership about the unfamiliar culture of China.[17] This interest led to an increase in trade, with commodities such as porcelain, tea, and art influencing European aesthetics. By the sixteenth century, the term 'Chinoiserie' emerged to describe artistic attempts to replicate or evoke Chinese style. This was initially rooted in decorative arts such as textiles, furniture, and porcelain.[18]

In music, 'Chinoiserie' referred to Western artistic representations of China that were more imaginative under Western framework. As Tak Yen Yeung stated, 'artists and craftsmen of *Chinoiseries* did not intend to produce imitations of Chinese products. Instead,

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[15] Chou, 'Asian Concepts and Twentieth-Century Western Composers', p.221.
[16] Ibid., p. 221.
[17] It is still controversial whether Marco Polo ever reached China during his adventures. See Peter Neville-Hadley, 'Marco Polo's book on China omits tea, chopsticks, bound feet – even the Great Wall. Why does his myth endure 25 years after the author sowed doubt about the 'great explorer' who travelled east – or ever existed?', *South China Morning Post*, Available from https://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/travel-leisure/article/3103692/marco-polos-book-china-omits-tea-chopsticks-bound-feet [accessed 6 October 2020].
[18] Oliver Impey, *Chinoiserie: The Impact of Oriental Styles on Western Art and Decoration* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 102.

their works evoked China or Chinese style as Europeans imagined it.'[19] For instance, in Derek B. Scott's article, he pointed out that Ravel's *China Cup* in *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, employs pentatonic scales, parallel intervals, and exotic instrumentation to create an archetypal Chinese atmosphere.[20] Angela Kang, in her thesis, further expanded the use of the term in relation to musical compositions and explained her concept of 'musical Chinoiserie' which captured this tendency, describing it as a Western artistic practice that constructs idealised, fantastical, and reductive portrayals of China through music. [21]

As it developed, composers began to experiment with Chinese musical elements through various new approaches that were more than just imagining a surreal China. Hence, the term 'Neo-Chinoiserie' started appearing in scholarly articles and discussions. A landmark moment came in 1934, when Russian pianist Alexander Tcherepnin hosted the first composition competition in Shanghai focused on the theme of Chinese-style piano music. It brought great attention to Chinese composers and encouraged them to fuse Chinese musical elements with Western compositional techniques.[22] Despite the complexity of the political landscape of twentieth-century China, this artistic fusion became a topic of exploration for composers and scholars worldwide, reflecting the dynamic and evolving relationship between these traditions.[23] Tcherepnin's composition, *Five Concert Studies, Op.52* (1934-36), reflected his great interest in Chinese culture and an understanding of Chinese traditional instruments, including techniques imitating the guzheng. As commented by Tianshu Wang, 'Tcherepnin could not have written these pieces without first-hand knowledge of the Chinese

[19] Ibid.
[20] Derek B. Scott, 'Orientalism and Musical Style', *The Musical Quarterly*, 82.2 (1998),309-35 (p.323).
[21] Angela Kang, *Musical Chinoiserie* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Nottingham, 2011). p. 328-330.
[22] More details on the winning compositions can be found in the second appendix in Baisheng Dai, *中国钢琴音乐研究* [*Research on Chinese Piano Music]* (Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of Music Press, 2014), p. 370. And also in Shu Li, *A Study of The Piano Works of Chu WangHua, with an Emphasis On Six Preludes*, (unpublished DMA dissertation, University of Kansas, 2015).
[23] Le Kang, 'The Development of Chinese Piano Music', *Asian Culture and History*, 1.2 (2009), p. 19.

culture to which he was deeply attracted.'[24] Tcherepnin's other piano compositions were also a herald of the early emergence of the neo-Chinoiserie piano compositions.[25] Although lesser recognised than Tcherepnin in his devotion to Chinese culture, Henry Cowell's composition, *The Banshee* (1925), is also considered an exemplar of Neo-chinoiserie, within which Cowell incorporated his knowledge of the 'Sliding tone' technique studied from Chinese traditional Opera. [26] Through *The Banshee*, Cowell blended Irish mythology with Chinese-inspired elements in order to showcase the unconventional 'string piano' sound technique.[27]

However, compositions categorised simply under Chinoiserie' or 'Neo-Chinoiserie' are devoid of critical engagement with Chinese cultural elements. For example, in *Music of Changes*, Cage uses the Chinese philosophy of the *I Ching*. However, his interest was limited to tossing coins with no more profound understanding of their cultural significance and meaning. As culturally sensitive as some of Cage's early works might be considered (for instance, the gamelan-inspired *Double-Music* he wrote in collaboration with Lou Harrison), his music nonetheless contained a tint of what may be called a 'Neo-Chinoiserie' failing, as defined by Chou, shared by the music of composers with similar aspirations, such as Lou Harrison who also started on the path of 'Orientalisation' early in his career.[28]

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[24] Tianshu Wang, *'Alexander Tcherepnin's "Five Concert Studies": An Homage to Chinese Musical Styles, Instruments, and Traditions* (unpiblished DMA dissertation, University of Arizona, 1999), p. 14.
[25] Tak Yan Yeung, *Chinoiserie Reimagined: Representations of Chinese Musical Style in Western Piano Works* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Southampton, 2021), pp. 63–65.
[26] Nancy Yunhwa Rao, 'Henry Cowell and His Chinese Heritage Theory of Sliding Tone and His Orchestral Work of 1953-1965', in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, ed. by Frederick Lau and Yayoi Uno Everett (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004) p.122.
[27] 'Beyond the Score: Henry Cowell's *The Banshee*', *The New York Public Library, 9 December 2020* <https://www.nypl.org/blog/2020/12/09/beyond-score-henry-cowells-banshee> [accessed 26 February 2025]. Maria Cizmic, 'Embodied Experimentalism and Henry Cowell's *The Banshee*', *American Music*, 28.4 (2010), 436–58, https://doi:10.5406/americanmusic.28.4.0436.
[28] Chou, 'Asian Concepts and Twentieth-Century Western Composers', p.221.

Although these terms are associated with cross-cultural discussions in music, they cannot support my discussion of Chinese elements in Western piano composition, and their connotation of Western illusion can mislead the perspective of my research. Based on the information, Table 1 below compares the terms in various aspects and presents 'Sinophone' as a distinguishing term to avoid bias often tied to terms like Chinoiserie and Neo-Chinoiserie.

Table 1 . Different terminologies for categorising studies related to Chinese elements in music.

Aspect	Chinoiserie	Neo-Chinoiserie	Sinophone
Period that the words were raised	17th-18th century	20th century to present	21st century to present
How its defined	representations of Chinese culture from mainland China.	Reinterpretation of Chinoiserie.	Works shaped by Chinese-language culture, often outside of mainland China
How to use it	Borrow and use of Chinese elements in Western frameworks	Integration of traditional Chinese in Western frameworks	Integration of Chinese culture in a global context
How it relates	Imaginative portrayal	Cross-cultural dialogue through reinterpretation	Expressions shaped by multicultural experiences

While the concepts of Chinoiserie and Neo-Chinoiserie have offered valuable insights into specific historical and stylistic approaches, they often reflect a predominantly Western perspective, with an emphasis on fixed geographic and cultural positions. These frameworks may not fully capture the dynamic and multidirectional nature of contemporary music-making. For instance, Western composers increasingly engage with diverse cultural influences, often in ways that transcend singular stylistic labels. Similarly, works by Chinese composers reflect a wide spectrum of cultural influences that resist reductive categorisation.

The case studies chosen for this research are examples that cannot be neatly categorised as Chinoiserie or Neo-Chinoiserie. Rather than focusing on categorisation, this research seeks to explore the fluidity of cultural influence and expression, emphasising the role of performance in shaping and articulating these complex cross-cultural relationships. This is why we are turning to the term 'Sinophone'.

Sinophone Influence in Piano Music

The term 'Sinophone' derives from the Chinese language and refers to Chinese-speaking communities around the world, particularly those outside of mainland China. According to Shu-Mei Shi, the term 'Sinophone' refers to cultural productions in Sinitic languages and is primarily used in discussions of film, paintings, TV series and other artistic forms.[29] The term was first introduced by Shu-Mei Shih in *Visuality and Identity* in 2007 as a critique of the concept of 'Chineseness' that often contains elements of the cultural hegemonic and power dynamic of China:

> Sinophone studies disrupts the chain of equivalence established, since the rise of nation-states, among language, culture, ethnicity, and nationality and explores the protean, kaleidoscopic, creative, and overlapping margins of China and Chineseness, America and Americanness, Malaysia and Malaysianness, Taiwan and Taiwanness, and so on, by a consideration of specific, local Sinophone texts, cultures, and practices produced in and from these margins.[30]

Based on Shih's concept of Sinophone in the Visual and literary field, Nathanel Amar further explored its musical application. By analysing music from the margins, such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the Chinese diaspora, Amar highlights the diversity of Sinophone cultures

[29] Shu-mei Shih, *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations across the Pacific*, Asia Pacific Modern, 2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007) https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520940154
[30] Shih, 'The Concept of the Sinophone', *PMLA*, 126.3 (2011), 710–711 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41414144> [accessed 20 January 2025].

and their interactions in a global context.[31] The attempt of the Sinophone to shift focus away from China's dominance—Dipesh Chakrabarty's concept of *provincialising*—aligns the Sinophone perspective with postcolonial theories, prompting a reassessment of China's colonial nature.[32] He further suggests a new direction for the study of Sinophone music.

> A Sinophone music study field should support precise and detailed fieldwork, paying attention to the different meanings given by actors to the production and consumption of music.[33]

Both Amar and Shih provide a foundation for this research by enabling a shift in focus toward communities and cultural expressions that resist biases and simplistic dichotomies of 'Chineseness' or 'Westernness.'[34] By adopting the Sinophone framework in my research, I am able to view the cultural influences as having a transnational nature. I consider two main Sinophone applications in my research: one is to explore how my Chinese cultural background influenced my approach in analysing the three case studies; the second is to explore the possible piano performance approaches shaped by Chinese cultural elements. As a pianist from China, I reflect on how my learning process embodies the tension and dialogue between my Sinophone roots and Western training. I explore how Sinophone resonates with my cultural background in composition and how this resonance translates into my performance through personal reflections, tone colour, and body language. This belief echoes with what Shih said:

[31] Nathanel Amar, 'Including Music in the Sinophone, Provincialising Chinese Music', *China Perspectives*, 2019. 3 (118), 3–8 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26823834> [accessed 02 January 2025].
[32] Amar, 'Including Music in the Sinophone, Provincialising Chinese Music'.
[33] Ibid., p. 5.
[34] See Shih, *Visuality and identity*, and Amar, 'Including music in the Sinophone'.

> The Sinophone spaces are scattered around the world and Sinophone culture is produced in different locations, but in each site the Sinophone is a place-based, local culture, in dialogue with other cultures of that location.[35]

The term 'Sinophone' enables an inclusive exploration of how Western composers engage with Chinese sonic effects and cultural motifs, shifting the focus away from the problematic history and social connotations associated with other frameworks in this field. As seen above, the terms Chinoiserie and Neo-Chinoiserie both involve superficial imitation of Chinese themes, encouraging us to think in a broader sense. As discussed more in depth in chapters 2 and 3, Geoffrey Poole's approach to the *I Ching* does not directly trigger cultural connotations but rather treats it as a philosophical way of creating his music. To deepen this understanding, I will examine key issues that need to be addressed, particularly within practice-based research and a Sinophone perspective. While the Sinophone concept provides a helpful framework, our work parameters remain broad and flexible.

Building on this, it is crucial to review the relevant literature to establish the role of practice-based research in this study and to demonstrate how this knowledge can contribute to the evolving discourse within music performance studies.

Discussions on Analysis and Performance

This practice-based research focuses on three piano compositions shaped by Sinophone influences, positioning performance as both method and mode of inquiry. Central to this research is the evolving relationship between analysis and performance—two areas that are often framed as distinct but are increasingly understood as intertwined. This section outlines

[35] Shu-mei Shih, Chien-hsin Tsai, and Brian Bernards (eds), *Sinophone Studies: A Critical Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), p. 8.

how that relationship has developed historically, how it informs the performer's role in musical culture, and how it underpins the methodology of this research.

Historically, theorists such as Heinrich Schenker, Wallace Berry, and Eugene Narmour have positioned analysis as the foundation of musical understanding, with the performer responsible for realising the analyst's insights.[36] Berry's notion of 'interpretive interventions' suggests that decisions around tempo, articulation, or dynamics must be justified through formal analysis.[37] This model aligns with the belief that musical meaning lies in the structural coherence and that the performer's primary task is to reveal the structure faithfully.

However, these models have been critiqued for marginalising the performer's agency. Janet Schmalfeldt's 1985 work attempted to create a dialogue between analyst and performer, yet Nicholas Cook later argued that her framework privileged the analytical voice, turning the dialogue into a monologue.[38] John Rink similarly critiqued theorists like Berry and Narmour for overlooking the performer's interpretative and creative role, advocating for a more integrated view of performance as a site of musical meaning-making.[39] These critiques

[36] Heinrich Schenker, *Free Composition*, trans. and ed. by Ernst Oster (New York: Longman, 1979). Jeffrey Swinkin, *Performative Analysis: Reimagining Music Theory for Performance*, New edn (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2016), https://doi:10.2307/j.ctvc16ncq. Leonard B. Meyer, Eugene Narmour, and Ruth A. Solie (eds), *Explorations in Music, the Arts, and Ideas: Essays in Honor of Leonard B. Meyer*, Festschrift Series, no.7 (Stuybesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1988).

[37] Wallace Berry's thoughts on analysis and performance, as outlined in Nicholas Cook's work, revolve around a prescriptive model that positions analysis as a foundational guide for performance. Berry sees analysis as offering a direct pathway to informed interpretive decisions, with performance serving as an outlet to express the findings of analysis. Nicholas Cook, 'Analysing Performance and Performing Analysis', in *Rethinking Music*, ed. by Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 239–61. Wallace Berry, *Musical Structure and Performance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989).

[38] Janet Schmalfeldt, 'On the Relation of Analysis to Performance: Beethoven's "Bagatelles" Op. 126, Nos. 2 and 5', *Journal of Music Theory*, 29.1 (1985), 1–31. Cook, 'Analysing Performance and Performing Analysis', p. 246.

[39] John Rink, 'The (f)Utility of Performance Analysis', in *Music in Profile*, 1st edn (New York: Oxford University PressNew York, 2023), pp. 206–24.

are significant for understanding Sinophone influence, where structural analysis often misses culturally specific gestures, like the qin's glissando or timbre colour.

More balanced frameworks emerged from scholars such as Jonathan Dunsby and Edward T. Cone. Dunsby framed analysis as a guide rather than a prescription.[40] Cone argued that insightful analysis reveals how a piece should be heard, thus informing how it might be performed.

> The greatest analysts (like Schenker at his best) are those with the keenest ears: their insights reveal how a piece of music should be heard, which in turn implies how it should be played. An analysis is a direction for a performance.[41]

Cone's position reinforces that analysis and performance are not separate domains but overlapping and mutually informing processes.[42] Cone's assertion that "the greatest analysts have the keenest ears" underscores how analytical insight emerges from performative engagement—a perspective aligning with my practice. When analysing works like *A Pianist's I Ching*, I treat the score as a script to be interrogated, not a blueprint; my thoughts on taking timing between playing the notes, for instance, draw on my understanding of the commentary of the *I Ching*, which is an absence from composer's notation.

Building on these ideas, Cook and Rink suggest that performance itself can function as a form of analysis. Performance, as they argue, does not merely realise analytical findings; it raises new questions, reveals interpretive possibilities, and generates knowledge through sound and embodiment.[43] Within this reciprocal framework, performers are not passive

[40] Jonathan Dunsby, 'Guest Editorial: Performance and Analysis of Music', *Music Analysis*, 8.1/2 (1989), 5–20.
[41] Edward T. Cone, 'Analyse today', *The Musical Quarterly*, 46. 2 (1960), 172-188.
[42] Ibid.
[43] John Rink, *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

recipients of analytical insight but active participants in the construction of musical understanding. This model is particularly important for repertoire informed by Sinophone elements, which may not be legible through traditional Western analyses.

Interpretation

Interpretation lies at the heart of performance. It is shaped by the performer's perspective, cultural context, and performer identity. As Marissa Silverman suggests, two dominant stances prevail: the formalist view, which holds that performers should adhere closely to the notated score, and the subjective view, which permits broader interpretative liberty based on the performer's expressive intentions.[44]

Stephen Davies advocates a formalist approach, viewing the score as both a description and a prescription of the work.[45] In contrast, pianists like Glenn Gould and Vladimir Horowitz embodied the subjective stance, treating the score as a point of departure for creative exploration.[46] Yet, neither extreme fully captures the interpretative task for repertoire influenced by Sinophone elements. While the score may encode compositional technique, its full realisation demands culturally hybrid practices that transcend the boundaries of notation.

Roman Ingarden reinforces that the scores reveal the composer's intentions, not the music itself.[47] The music, he argues, is an imaginative construction that unfolds through

[44] Marissa Silverman, 'Musical Interpretation: Philosophical and Practical Issues', *International Journal of Music Education*, 25.2 (2007), 101–17, https://doi:10.1177/0255761407079950.
[45] Stephen Davies, 'Once Again, This Time with Feeling', *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 38.2 (2004), p. 4, https://doi:10.2307/3527312.
[46] Kenneth Hamilton, 'Do They Still Hate Horowitz? The "Last Romantic" Revisited', *Journal of Musicological Research*, 39.2–3 (2020), 246–71, https://doi:10.1080/01411896.2020.1774755.
[47] Roman Ingarden, *The Work of Music and the Problem of Its Identity*, ed. by Jean G. Harrell (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1986), p. 172, https://doi:10.1007/978-1-349-09254-3.

performance and listening. This idea resonates with my experience interpreting Jack Body's *Five Melodies*, where I mirror qin playing techniques, such as using shifts to produce overtones and employing plucking gestures within the piano. These choices reflect not just fidelity to the notation but a deeper engagement with cultural sound worlds.

Daniel Leech-Wilkinson's concept of 'meaning-in-performance' offers a robust framework for understanding this process. He writes:

> Performance, then, is not simply a reproduction, a performance of something, but a process, experienced in a particular cultural context, created by performers (using the notation) and mentally constructed (uniquely and temporarily) by each listener. Meaning is generated from moment to moment during performances, and traces of meaning remain in the memory of the listener (or score reader), inflecting their sense of the nature of the piece… [48]

Here, he challenges the traditional view of performance as secondary to composition, proposing instead that meaning is dynamic, emergent, and shaped by cultural, bodily, and perceptual factors. This view situates the performer not merely as an interpreter of fixed meanings but as a co-creator; those embodied actions, timing, rubato, tone and gesture, unfold the music's multiple potentialities.[49] As Peter Hill also wrote,

> But the music itself is something imagined, first by the composer, then in partnership with the performer, and ultimately communicated in sound.[50]

Thus, interpretation becomes a philosophical and practical act. It's not just a translation of notation but an act of meaning-making grounded in cultural memory, physical

[48] Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, 'Compositions, Scores, Performances, Meanings', *Music Theory Online*, 18.1 (2012), 1–17.
[49] Robin Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 11.
[50] Peter Hill, 'From Score to Sound', in *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding*, ed. by John Rink (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 129–43.

gesture, and sonic imagination. Especially in repertoire that engages with Sinophone elements, interpretation becomes a space where meaning is communicated through culturally situated performance practices.

This understanding of interpretation as an act of meaning-making naturally leads to a broader question: how does music generate meaning across creation, performance, and reception? To address this, it is necessary to consider semiotic and relational models of musical meaning that have shaped contemporary thought.

Meaning across creation

Music's meaning is not confined to the written score. Jean-Jacques Nattiez, expanded on Jean Molino's tripartite model and developed a semiotic framework to explain how musical meaning emerges through creative and receptive processes.[51] Molino's three levels are: the Poietic, Neutral, and Esthesic, which correspond to different stages in the music. The Poietic, not just the composer's intent, but implies all creative acts, including performers' editorial decisions; the Neutral, the trace as score or recording, is a scientifically analysable object; the Esthesic, indicates cultural codes shape the listener's perceptions.[52] By linking Molino's model to semiotic theory, Nattiez offers a powerful tool for understanding how musical meaning is constructed through multiple, interrelated processes that unfold not from a single source but through multiple methods.

Eric Clarke further develops this relational perspective. He proposes that musical meaning is context-dependent, shaped by the interactions between the performer, the listener,

[51] Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music,* trans. by Carolyn Abbate (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), Chapter 1.
[52] Ibid., 45-63.

and the environment.[53] Daneil Leech-Wilkinson's more recent studies build on these ideas by highlighting that interpretation becomes a site of meaning.[54] He examines how performance tradition, audience expectations, and embodied memory inform the emergent meanings generated in live and recorded performances.[55]

Taken together, these perspectives allow me to view performance as an active space of meaning-making that transforms the composer's original intention. The performer becomes not just a player of predetermined instructions but a co-creator of meaning.

Their thoughts align closely with the aims of this thesis: to explore how culturally situated gestures, sounds, and concepts from Sinophone traditions are brought into being through performance. In this context, I become both a craftsman and researcher, reinterpreting traditions and constructing meaning through embodied knowledge and artistic choice.

Creativity in Performance and Performance Traditions

The view that music comes to life in performance, as a sounding object, highlights the importance of analysing the creative processes. As scholars like Aaron Williamon, Irène Deliège, Geraint A. Wiggins, and others argue, creativity in performance is not just an event but a structured process shaped by practice, reflection, and tradition.[56] As Isabelle Héroux observes, performers navigate 'a constant back-and-forth' between divergent exploration and

[53] Eric Clarke, 'Expression in Performance: Generativity, Perception and Semiosis', in *The Practice of Performance: Studies in Musical Interpretation*, ed. by John Rink (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 21–54.
[54] Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, 'Compositions, Scores, Performances, Meanings', *Music Theory Online*, 18.1 (2012), https://doi:10.30535/mto.18.1.4.
[55] DLeech-Wilkinson, 'Classical Music as Enforced Utopia', *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 15.3–4 (2016), 325–36, https://doi:10.1177/1474022216647706.
[56] Aaron Williamon and others, 'Creativity, Originality, and Value in Music Performance', in *Musical Creativity: Multidisciplinary Research in Theory and Practice,* ed. by Irène. Deliège and Geraint A. Wiggins (Hove: Psychology Press, 2006), pp. 161–80.

convergent refinement, ensuring interpretations balance structural fidelity with innovative expression.[57] Research by Roger Chaffin, Tânia Lisboa and others, in various articles, demonstrates that expert performers develop and refine interpretations through cycles of self-regulated learning, memory consolidation, and strategic problem-solving.[58]

As Charise Hastings and Jane W. Davidson argue, performance traditions play a crucial role in shaping creativity by situating performers within evolving frameworks that both constrain and enable artistic choices.[59]

Importantly, these creative processes are embodied. Mine Doğantan-Dack emphasises that musical meaning is intimately tied to the performer's physical engagement with their instrument.[60] Studies such as Bell Yung's work on *qin* performance reveal musical gestures' choreographic and kinaesthetic dimensions, where posture, breath, and motion are integral to meaning-making.[61]

These insights are especially significant in repertoire drawing on Sinophone cultural memory. For instance, in my interpretation of Alexina Louie's Memories from an Ancient Garden, the opening cluster gestures evoke the resonant quality of the Chinese gong. Physical

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[57] Isabelle Héroux, 'Creative Processes in the Shaping of a Musical Interpretation: A Study of Nine Professional Musicians', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9 (2018), 665, p. 13.
[58] Roger Chaffin, Anna F. Lemieux, and Catherine Chen, Spontaneity and Creativity in Highly Practiced Performance', in *Musical Creativity: Multidisciplinary Research in Theory and Practice*, ed. by Irène Deliège & Wiggins. ibid, pp.200-18. Tânia Lisboa, Roger Chaffin, and Topher Logan, 'A Self-Study of Learning the Prelude from Bach's *Suite No. 6* for Cello Solo: Comparing Words and Actions', in *Practice of Practising*, ed. by Anna Cervino, Maria. Lettberg, Caroline Laws, and Tânia Lisboa(Leuven: Orpheus Research Centre in Music, 2011), pp. 9–31.
[59] Charise Hastings, 'Musical Practicing: A Hermeneutic Model for Integrating Technique and Aesthetics', *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 48.4 (2014), 50–64. Jane W. Davidson, 'Practice-Based Music Research: Lessons from a Researcher's Personal History', *Music Performance Research*, 7 (2015), 34–48.
[60] Mine Dogantan-Dack (ed.), *Artistic Practice as Research in Music: Theory, Criticism, Practice* (London: Routledge, 2015). Similarly, Tobias Matthay's writings on touch and tone production underscore how arm weight, finger technique, and bodily coordination are fundamental to realising expressive tonal qualities on the piano. Tobias Matthay, *The Act of Touch in All Its Diversity: An Analysis and Synthesis of Pianoforte Tone-Production* (Classic Music Collection, 2018).
[61] Bell Yung, 'Choreographic and Kinesthetic Elements in Performance on the Chinese Seven-String Zither', *Ethnomusicology*, 28.3 (1984), 505–17.

gesture and cultural intuition combine to shape the sonic result and perceived meaning. Through nuances of rubato, articulation, and touch, meanings emerge that are otherwise invisible in the score.

Thus, understanding music as a sound object created in performance calls for close analysis of the embodied, cultural, and cognitive processes that bring it into being. Performance is not merely a delivery of composed ideas but a dynamic, situated act of meaning-making, where tradition and creativity continually interact.

Practice-based Research (PBR): Knowledge through action

The methodological foundation for this research lies in Practice-based research (PBR), a framework that emerged in the late twentieth century and centres on the idea that artistic practice generates knowledge.[62] As Donald Schön's concept of 'reflection-in-action' suggests, practitioners learn and theorise through doing, thinking in embedded in the moment of making.[63] This view indicates the dynamic nature of artistic practice, where knowledge emerges not from external analysis but from the process of creation itself.

Christopher Frayling's influential essay distinguishes between research 'into,' 'through,' and 'for' art and design, underscoring the potential for creative processes to generate new insights.[64] In music, this has enabled performers to frame their work as a craft and a form of research. British pianist Alexander Soares outlines how PBR has influenced contemporary musicology by embracing physical intuitive, and affective dimensions of

[62] Bob Scholte, 'Discontents in Anthropology', *Social Research*, 38.4 (1971), 777–807 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40970768>.
[63] Donald A. Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (New York: Basic Books,1984).
[64] Christopher Frayling, *Research in Art and Design*, (Royal College of Art, 1993), p. 5.

performance.[65] This shift has opened up new ways for understanding the relationship between performer, composition and interpretation.

Building on this, Mine Doğantan-Dack has expanded the PBR framework in her writings on 'artistic research' arguing that the piano is not merely a medium for sound production but a tool for epistemological inquiry.[66] Her work challenges composer-centric models in musicology and positions the performer as a primary generator of musical knowledge, an idea that aligns closely with the aims of this thesis.[67] Her insights are reinforced by the work of Brad Haseman, who argues that PBR fosters a reflective practice where action and reflection are inseparable, enabling the practitioner to generate knowledge through their creative process.[68]

Jane Ginsborg, Roger Chaffin, and Alexander P. Demos contribute further to this understanding by examining how performers engage with their bodies and minds in the process of musical creation, demonstrating that PBR leads to deeper integration of the embodied aspects of performance.[69] Ginsborg's research highlights how performers' physical and cognitive actions in the moment of performance generate valuable insights that are often inaccessible through purely analytical methods. Additionally, Richard Schechner's concept of

[65] There are different centres: Centre advances the History and Analysis of Recorded Music (CHARM), the Research Centre for Musical Performance as Creative Practice (CMPCP), 'Practice-based' research supported by institutions that enable performers, educators, and composers to examine and reflect on their practices. See, Alexander Soares, *Memorisation of Atonal Music* (unpublished doctoral thesis, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, 2015), p.26.
[66] Mine Doğantan-Dack, 'Artistic Research in Classical Music Performance', in *Music and Practice: Artistic Research in Music*, ed. by Mine Doğantan-Dack (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), pp. 1–16.
[67] Mine Doğantan-Dack, 'The Role of the Musical Instrument in Performance as Research: The Piano as a Research Tool', in *Music and Practice: Artistic Research in Music*, ed. by Mine Doğantan-Dack (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), p. 173.
[68] Brad Haseman, 'A Manifesto for Performative Research', *Media International Australia*, 118.1, (2006), 98-106.
[69] Jane Ginsborg, Roger Chaffin, and Alexander P. Demos, 'Different Roles for Prepared and Spontaneous Thoughts: A Practice-Based Study of Musical Performance from Memory', *Journal of Interdisciplinary Music Studies*, 6.2 (2014), pp. 201–31.

'performance as a field of inquiry' offers a broader perspective, framing all performance activities, whether artistic or social, as sites for knowledge creation.[70] By viewing performance as a *performative* act of knowledge generation, Schechner's approach aligns closely with the idea that performance itself, through its physical and cognitive dimensions, produces new understandings.

Thus, PBR challenges the traditional boundaries of musicological research, empowering performers to be active researchers and create and share knowledge through their practice. This approach frames the performer as a co-creator of meaning, offering fresh perspectives on how musical works can be interpreted and understood beyond the page. However, using PBR to generate new insights also contains challenges and limitations.

Limitations of using PBR

As David J. Chalmers pointed out, introspection, verbal descriptions of experience, is a primary way to study consciousness.[71] However, studying consciousness has several key limitations. For instance, the subjective experiences in self-study are private and cannot be directly observed by others.[72] Regarding the PBR, my practice sessions can suffer from subjectivity, making it difficult to resonate with the process with a broader community.

Another perspective that Daniel C. Dennett pointed out is that the decisions and creative processes may not be as consciously directed as assumed.[73] This implies the PBR narratives might overemphasise intentionality when much artistic practice is intuitive or unconscious. Anders K. Ericsson and Herbert A. Simon thinks verbal protocols can be

[70] Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction,* 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2002), p.10.
[71] David J. Chalmers, 'Consciousness and Cognition' (1990), https://consc.net/papers/c-and-c.html [accessed 27 April 2025]. David J. Chalmers, *The Conscious Mind: In Search of a Fundamental Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
[72] Ibid., pp. 3-4.
[73] Daniel C. Dennett, *The Illusion of Conscious Will* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991).

limited by memory and reconstruction biases.[74] This warns that the artist or researchers doing PBR may not fully capture the decision-making process.

Richard E. Nisbett and Timothy DeCamp Wilson criticised people's inability to accurately report their cognitive processes.[75] This in PBR can relate to researchers' accounts, which may be post-hoc rationalisations rather than accurate explanations. Thus, I will explain my position to clarify how PBR works as a research framework.

My role as a Pianist-Analyst

Building on my hybrid positionality, my research explores the intersection of embodied performance and cultural analysis. As discussed earlier, scholars such as John Rink and Nicholas Cook argue that performance is not merely the delivery of pre-existing analytical truths but rather a generative act of interpretation and analysis in itself.[76] Their views have profoundly shaped my understanding of performance as a form of inquiry. As a pianist-analyst, I engage in a dynamic, reflective process where music is not merely an object to be reproduced but an active space for inquiry. My case studies examine how Sinophone influences, often expressed through gesture, rhythm, or timbre, can be accessed through performance, offering new insights beyond traditional score-based analysis.

By drawing on my positionality as a pianist-analyst, I use performance not only to explore general interpretative strategies but to investigate culturally specific musical gestures, particularly those shaped by Sinophone influence. My case studies show how this kind of

[74] Anders K. Ericsson and Herbert A. Simon, *Verbal Reports as Data* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993).
[75] Richard E. Nisbett and Timothy DeCamp Wilson, 'Telling More than We Can Know: Verbal Reports on Mental Processes', *Psychological Review*, 84.3 (1977), 231–59.
[76] Nicholas Cook, *Beyond the Score: Music as Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); John Rink,'Analysis and (or) Performance', in *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding,* ed.by John Rink (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2002), pp. 35-38.

performative inquiry can surface nuances, such as gesture, timing, or timbral colour, that remain latent in purely analytical readings. Thus, performance becomes both a method and a site of cultural mediation, revealing the interpretative potential of PBR in contexts where cultural specificity is embedded in sound and gesture.

Using my learning process as a site of inquiry, I allow meanings to emerge through doing, rather than imposing fixed interpretative frameworks. For instance, in engaging with the works of Alexina Louie, Geoffrey Poole, and Jack Body, I negotiated between inherited Western pianistic skill and culturally inflected sound worlds rooted in Sinophone concepts. Ideas such as yin yang or the thoughts raised after reading the *I Ching* informed my phrasing and articulation in ways that were neither symbolic nor merely illustrative, but intensely physical and felt.

These interpretive decisions were not imposed from pre-formed ideas but cultivated through iterative, situated practice. In this sense, I position myself as part of the emergent discourse on performers as analysts and researchers whose insights arise through abstract reasoning and bodily engagement with musical material. This performative methodology offers a culturally responsive, improvisatory, and generative approach to analysis.

While existing scholarship on cross-cultural pianism, such as Huang Beibei's studies on Chinese piano compositions and Mirzayeva's research on Azerbaijani mugham and Baroque improvisation, focuses more on stylistic integration than on the lived cultural encounters through practice.[77] Focusing on the underexplored Sinophone influences in Western piano repertoire, this research demonstrates how a PBR can generate new insights

[77] Gunel. Mirzayeva, *The Piano Music of Azerbaijan: National and Cross-Cultural Influences on Contemporary Performance Practices* (unpublished doctoral thesis, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, 2020).

into interpretative and learning processes involved in cross-cultural piano performance. The practice model developed here offers a transferable framework for other pianists and researchers engaging with culturally hybrid repertoire or undertaking cross-cultural musical inquiry.

Insider or outsider

Cross-cultural music study requires critical reflection, particularly when the researcher assumes dual roles as both observer and participant. Bruno Nettl identifies key challenges and biases in such work, including the limits of outsider understanding, power imbalances between researcher and participants, and the imposition of Western analytical paradigms onto non-Western music.[78] Timothy Rice suggests that an outsider can meaningfully engage with a musical tradition by both embodying it (through performance and experience) and critically reflecting on it.[79] These concerns are especially pertinent to my study, where my dual identity as a Chinese-born pianist trained in Western classical music problematises conventional insider-outsider binaries. My positionality, simultaneously connected to and distanced from the cultural traditions I examine, necessitates a nuanced approach that acknowledges both the fluidity of cultural belonging and the risks associated with essentialism.

The Insider-outsider dichotomy, a longstanding theoretical framework in qualitative research, traditionally categorises scholars based on their cultural relationship to the group being studied.[80] As Hanin Bukamal describes, an 'insider' researcher shares cultural, ethnic,

[78] Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-one Issues and Concepts*, 2nd edn (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005), pp. 167–72.
[79] Timothy Rice, *May It Fill Your Soul: Experiencing Bulgarian Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994). Jane C. Sugarman, review of *May It Fill Your Soul: Experiencing Bulgarian Music*, by Timothy Rice, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 49.2 (1996), 332–43.
[80] Thomas Headland, Kenneth Pike, and Marvin Harris, 'Emics and Etics: The Insider/Outsider Debate', *The Journal of American Folklore*, 105.418 (1992), 291-300 https://doi:10.2307/541632.

or experiential traits with participants, whereas an 'outsider' operates without such embodied knowledge.[81] While insider status can facilitate deeper cultural understanding, it risks overfamiliarity or the assumption that all members of a culture share the same experiences. Conversely, outsider status may offer objectivity, but it can also lead to oversimplified interpretations.[82]

However, scholars like Deborah Wong argue that this insider-outsider split is too simplistic. In her study on Asian American music, Wong explicitly rejects the 'privileged stance of a cultural insider,' advocating instead for building alliances through shared political goals, while still recognising differences within communities. As she asserts:

> I write not from the privileged stance of a cultural insider but as an activist mindful of difference and with a commitment to coalition politics. A shared sense of involvement with the Asian American movement sometimes created additional affective bonds between myself and the friends I write about. Some of the people I write about think of themselves as Vietnamese or Cambodian rather than as Asian American, and our relative political and ethnic affiliations were sources of difference more than anything else. I am trying to make it clear that this is no voyeuristic insider's account, but rather a meeting ground between people with passionate investments in music and Asian America who rarely see things in the 'same' way.[83]

This perspective resonates with Dwyer and Buckle's concept of the 'space between,' where researchers work in an in-between position, neither fully inside nor outside a community, which involves both flexibility and challenges.[84]

> We cannot retreat to a distant "researcher" role. Just as our personhood affects the analysis, so, too, the analysis affects our personhood. Within this circle of impact is the space between. The intimacy of qualitative research no longer allows us to remain true outsiders to the experience under study, and, because of our role as researchers, it

[81] Hanin Bukamal, 'Deconstructing Insider–Outsider Researcher Positionality', *British Journal of Special Education*, 49.3 (2022), 327–49 https://doi:10.1111/1467-8578.12426, p. 332.
[82] Nettl, The Study of Ethnomusicology, pp. 167-179.
[83] Deborah Wong, *Speak It Louder: Asian Americans Making Music* (New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 82.
[84] Sonya Corbin Dwyer and Jennifer L. Buckle, 'The Space Between: On Being an Insider-Outsider in Qualitative Research', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8.1 (2009), 54–63.

> does not qualify us as complete insiders. We now occupy the space between, with the costs and benefits this status affords.[85]

My own research embodies this 'space between,' shaped by the hybrid identity that resists simple categorisation. As a native of China who trained in Western conservatories from an early age, I occupy an ambivalent position: an insider by birth and through embodied knowledge of Chinese cultural aesthetics, yet an outsider due to my formal education in Eurocentric Conservatory traditions. For instance, when interpreting works like *Scenes from a Jade Terrace*, I intuitively emulate the qin's glissandi through pianistic articulation, a decision rooted in cultural familiarity, particularly given the composer's use of the strings inside the piano. This gesture aligns with one of the qin's traditional playing techniques.[86] However, replicating the qin's timbral qualities on the piano is not straightforward. During practice sessions, I experimented with different methods to approximate qin effect and recorded my playing. I then sought feedback from the composer to refine the sound. This process highlighted a key limitation: my understanding of Chinese music theory remains fragmentary, a gap made especially clear when interviewees assumed I possessed authoritative knowledge that I, did not.

This tension mirrors Gunel Mirzayeva's account of her Azerbaijani-Western background, which allowed her to critique Orientalist narratives from dual perspectives.[87] Like Mirzayeva, I leverage my hybridity to interrogate cross-cultural compositional practices, such as how Bright Sheng translates pipa techniques into Western musical notation, while simultaneously scrutinising my assumptions through performance analysis and correspondence with composers.

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[85] Dwyer and Buckle, 'The Space Between', p. 61.
[86] The detailed discussion can be found in Chapter 4.
[87] Mirzayeva, 'The Piano Music of Azerbaijan: National and Cross- Cultural Influences on Contemporary Performance Practices'.

I also recognise that 'Chinese culture' is not a monolith. The Sinophone world encompasses diverse regions, including mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and diaspora communities, each with distinct historical, linguistic, and musical lineages. This research does not claim to represent all of them but focuses on the cultural logics and aesthetic values that have shaped the particular works under study.

Methodologically, I address these complexities through reflexive praxis. Using autoethnography and recorded practice sessions allows me to examine how I engage with cultural intuition when making performance decisions. For instance, I consider how applying rubato to certain passages can evoke yun, 韵, in Chinese, which in this context, refers to shaping phrasing and timing in relation to melodic or rhythmic pattern.

When learning one of the pieces from *A Pianist's I Ching,* I initially attempted to follow the score instructions strictly. However, I soon felt dissatisfied with the results. The composer leaves several large, open spaces for the performer to decide how much time to take between notes, and I noticed that my interpretation varied significantly each time I played the piece. In an effort to bring more clarity to my performance, I experimented with counting out the pauses to make my phrasing more decisive. Yet this more calculated approach raised a new challenge: it seemed to limit the expressive and characteristic qualities of the music, making it harder to organise musical thoughts naturally.[88]

I triangulate my reflective writing with the composer interview to mitigate the risk of subjective overreach. For instance, in preparing *A Pianist's I Ching*, I interviewed the

[88] The more detailed discussion can be found in Chapter 4.

composer to juxtapose his experience of the *I Ching* with my own. This comparative strategy enables me to distinguish culturally inferred interpretations in my practice from those rooted in the composer's intention. Such an approach aligns with Wong's emphasis on methodological transparency and responds to Nettl's cautions against analytic imperialism.

Ultimately, this research reframes positionality not as a fixed label but as a dynamic critical lens. By interrogating my own 'space between,' I challenge exoticised readings of Chinese-influenced music and propose a framework for performers engaging with cross-cultural music repertoires. Rather than attempting to resolve the insider–outsider tension, this research explores how occupying the 'space between' can serve as a creative and critical tool. This model not only informs my own performance practice but also provides a framework for other performers engaging with a culturally hybrid repertoire. It advocates for a more inclusive and reflexive pedagogy—one that transcends surface-level references to 'Chineseness' and instead embraces the complexity of cultural memory, translation, and embodiment.

Considerations of Limitations in this Research

On Sinophone

There are various ways for Western composers to adopt Chinese cultural elements, so it is impossible to discuss every approach and trace every origin of their inspiration from Chinese culture. Besides, since the 'May Fourth movement' in 1919, the concept of 'new culture' was quickly spread around the community, which evoked new ways for Chinese songs and music. Liu Ching-Chih's *A Critical History of New Music in China* reviewed in detail the conflict between 'old' and 'new' concepts in Chinese music around that time and covers a wide range of topics, including the adoption of Western musical traditions, the rise of Chinese composers blending indigenous styles with Western techniques, and the impact of political and cultural

shifts, such as the May Fourth Movement, the Cultural Revolution, and post-reform globalisation.[89] The period after 1919 shows a significant incorporation of Western compositional techniques and Chinese music and a significant divergence in Chinese musical style.

Based on this historical change, Tak Yan Yeung limited his discussion on the style and features of Chinese music to traditional music before 2000 BC, to the end of imperialism in 1911, in contrast with the 'new music' that emerged afterwards.[90] Since Yeung's view of 'New Music' primarily aligns with the European style, his research focuses on Chinese music that existed before the emergence of "New Music" or any form of Western influence and refers to the pre-westernised music as "traditional Chinese music," as it represents the culmination of thousands of years of Chinese musical heritage. [91]

I agree with Yeung's idea to limit the discussion of traditional Chinese music before 1911. Music before that period tended to reflect more traditional Chinese characteristics, largely uninfluenced by Western elements. Music composed after 1911 became increasingly diverse, shaped by the growing impact of globalisation in China.

Discrepancies in the *I Ching* editions

The inclusion of Chinese cultural elements as a resource for Western composers is a critical aspect of this research. The *I Ching*, as one of the elements, introduces another complex issue that must be addressed, namely, clarifying my positionality within this context.

[89] Jingzhi Liu, *A Critical History of New Music in China* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2010).
[90] Tak Yan Yeung, *Chinoiserie or Chinese? Chinese-Inspired Piano Works from the Late Nineteenth to the Mid-Twentieth Century* (unpublished DMA thesis, Texas Christian University, 2020), pp. 44-45.
[91] Ibid.

First of all, the *I Ching* has been translated by various scholars and historians over the years, with many notable English versions: James Legge's translation in 1882, Richard Wilhelm-Baynes's translation in 1950, John Blofeld's in 1965, Richard John Lynn's in 1994, Richard Rutt's in 1996, Margaret Pearson's in 2011, John Minford's in 2014, Geoffrey Redmon's in 2017 and L. Michael Harrington in 2020.[92] According to Michael Loewe, Wilhelm's edition is readable but cannot be used for historical studies.[93] Joseph Aldler argues that both Wilhelm's and Blofeld's translations are non-historical and do not focus on providing the original texts of the ancient Chinese *I Ching*.

In my view, historical research on *the I Ching* requires originality in sourcing and accuracy in presenting original texts without embedding the translators' perspectives as part of the ancient wisdom. However, the ultimate goal of my research is to explore how the *I Ching* can be used as a source to enhance and deepen my understanding of *A Pianist's I Ching* by Geoffrey Poole. I selected Wilhelm Baynes's version not only to align with Poole, who also consulted this translation and drew musical inspiration from its texts but also because Carl Jung's forward in Wilhelm's edition influenced my autoethnographic approach, which is explained in detail in Chapter 3.

Conclusion

Reviewing the existing literature on this topic reveals gaps in the current study on cross-culture music in piano performance. Firstly, there is a lack of studies on the Sinophone influence in Western composition. The most up-to-date literature in the West regarding

[92] Joseph A. Adler, *The Yijing: A Guide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), pp.143-47. In Chapter 6, the author provided a great and detailed discussion on different I Ching translations.
[93] *Early Chinese Texts: A Bibliographical Guide*, ed. by Michael Loewe, Early China Special Monograph Series, no. 2 (Berkeley: Society for the Study of Early China, Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1993), p. 225.

‘Chinoiserie’ in music is the theses by Angela Kang, Tak Yan Yeung and Gong Hongyu. Bi Minghui explained the reason for this gap in the literature as follows:

> Western music scholars do not take "Chinese elements" as a topic in the research field. The main reason is that Chinese elements is the research object of ethnomusicology, however, ethnomusicology studies focus on traditional Chinese music.[94]

Secondly, there is a lack of discussion on how cultural heritage can influence one’s piano performance or using cultural elements as a guide to learning cross-cultural repertoire. As I define it, the term ‘Sinophone’ does not refer to a single kind of Western composition but focuses on the more profound understanding of Chinese cultural elements adopted by Western composers. In my research, I analyse three compositions that I argue can be rightly categorised as ‘Sinophone’. However, before introducing the three compositions, it is necessary to introduce the reader to the elements of Chinese culture associated with the selected composers and the role of these cultural elements in Chinese culture, which may not be known to everyone. In the next chapter, I will provide a comprehensive analysis of these cultural elements and their relationship to the lives of the selected composers.

[94] Bi, *'Chinese Elements' in Western Music from Twentieth Century*’ p. 4, Chinese footnote translated by Ke Ma.

Chapter 2: Sinophone influences in three ways

Overview

Chinese culture is a diverse and evolving blend of traditions, philosophies, and artistic practices that has fascinated people globally for centuries. This chapter introduces three prominent cultural elements that have profoundly influenced the Western composers featured as case studies in this thesis: the I Ching, the Yin Yang theory, and traditional Chinese instruments, such as the gong and the qin. These cultural components are explored in relation to the works of Geoffrey Poole, Alexina Louie and Jack Body.

This chapter provides a foundational overview, offering the necessary cultural context for the detailed musical and philosophical analyses presented in Chapters 4 and 5. Insights drawn from my interviews with Geoffrey Poole and Alexina Louie are included where relevant in this chapter and discussed in more detail, along with their methodology and ethical considerations, in the following chapter.

The *I Ching*, has served many roles in Chinese culture over thousands of years, as a philosophical system, a divinatory tool, a guide for rulers, and a framework for ethical life. The Yin Yang theory, which has roots in the *I Ching*, evolved into a central philosophical perspective shaping Chinese cosmology. Alongside these, two traditional instruments – the gong and the qin – will be introduced with attention to their characteristics and cultural aesthetics. Understanding these instruments is essential for appreciating how their timbral and technical features are reimagined in the selected Western piano works.

The following sections introduce each of these elements individually. While their historical and philosophical complexity defies exhaustive treatment, this chapter offers

focused summaries of their relevance to the composer discussed. The aim is not to provide comprehensive explanations of the *I Ching*'s or Yin Yang theory, but to contextualise their key principles in ways that enhance interpretive insight. Likewise, the descriptions of the gong and the qin are limited to those aspects that directly inform the piano techniques adopted in the case studies.

The *I Ching* (*Book of Changes*)

The *I Ching,* or *Book of Changes*, is one of the most foundational texts in Chinese intellectual history, with origins dating back to the Western Zhou dynasty (c. 1046- 771 BCE). According to legend, Fu Xi, a mythical figure said to have lived in the 29th century BCE, is credited with creating the first eight trigrams that form the basis of the *I Ching*'s symbolic system.[95] These trigrams, in Figure 1, composed of broken and unbroken lines, were designed to reflect patterns of change observed in nature and the cosmos.

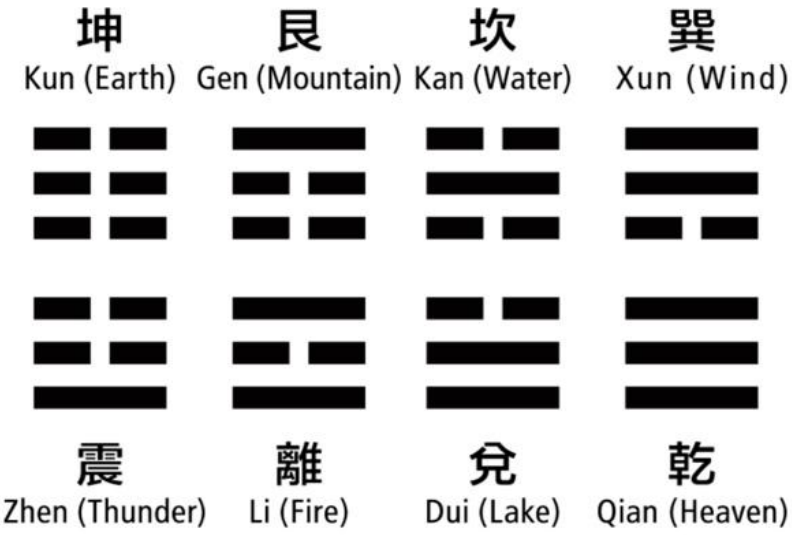

Figure 1 symbols represent the natural elements in the I Ching.

[95] 'Fu Xi | Chinese Mythological Emperor', *Encyclopedia Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Fu-Xi [accessed 28 September 2021]. A more detailed introduction can be found in, Tze-Ki Hon, 'Chinese Philosophy of Change (Yijing)', in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. by Edward N. Zalta, Summer 2019 edn (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2019).

Over time, these symbolic elements were developed further by King Wen and the Duke of Chou, who arranged them into sixty-four hexagrams, each representing a particular state of transformation.[96] In the third century BCE, the text was expanded with a series of commentaries known as Ten Wings, which embedded the *I Ching* within a Confucian philosophical framework.[97] As Richard J. Smith notes, *the I Ching* served as a dynamic intellectual and spiritual resource throughout imperial China, inspiring interpretations across a wider range of domains, including ethics, cosmology, politics, and ritual practice.[98]

The upper classes in early China used the *I Ching* to guide decisions concerning warfare, natural disasters, and ceremonial conduct. Beyond its divinatory functions, it became a philosophical resource for understanding balance, transformation, and interconnectedness, principles that have persisted in various forms throughout Chinese history.[99]

The *I Ching* also gained significant attention in the modern West, inspiring thinkers and artists across disciplines.[100] Richard Wilhelm, whose German translation of the text was highly influential, considered it one of the most important works of world literature. He wrote that the *I Ching* 'sheds new light on many a secret hidden in the often-puzzling modes of thought of that mysterious sage, Lao-tse and his pupils.' [101] The psychologist Carl Jung, the

[96] Yu-lan Fung, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* (New York: The Free Press, 1948), p. 139. He explains the unclear statements regarding who contributed to the *I Ching*; however, finding the exact contributor is not the focus here. The important point is to understand the trigrams and hexagrams associated with the *I Ching,* which provide the fundamental tool for divination.
[97] Richard J. Smith, *The I Ching: A Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012). This book discusses the contributions made by Chinese scholars to the understanding of the *I Ching* and how the text influenced intellectual traditions worldwide.
[98] *Smith, The I Ching: A Biography,* pp. 1-13.
[99] Hon, 'Chinese Philosophy of Change (Yijing)'.
[100] Smith, The I Ching: A Biography, *pp.10-11*.
[101] Wilhelm, *Book of Changes*, 3rd edn (penguin books, 1968).

composer John Cage, and others have drawn on the *I Ching* as a tool for generating indeterminacy and self-reflection.[102]

While the I Ching is deeply embedded in Chinese society and has shaped centuries of intellectual thought, it is important to resist the assumption that those of Chinese heritage engage with the text in the same way. Interpretations of the *I Ching* vary widely depending on historical context, philosophical orientation, and personal experience. As such, my own approach to the *I Ching*, particularly in the context of interpreting Geoffrey Poole's *A Pianist's I Ching*, should not be taken as representative of a broader Chinese perspective, nor as a measure of cultural authenticity.

Instead, I draw on the *I Ching* as a performer and researcher, informed by my own background and artistic practice. My engagement with its symbolic structures and philosophical principles is personal and subjective, serving as a creative lens through which I interpret Poole's work. This performative response is not a claim to authoritative cultural insight, but a situated interpretation that contributes to the broader dialogue between tradition and contemporary performance.

Geoffrey Poole and the *I Ching*

From the 1970s, new traditions and literature brought to the West enabled Poole to explore astrology and the *I Ching*.[103] To Poole, astrology and the *I Ching* were 'fascinating alternative models' of how one thinks and feels.[104] Between 1987 and 1994, Poole wrote books on astrology and musical imagination despite never having published them. In his

[102] Carl G. Jung, 'Foreword', in *The I Ching, or Book of Changes*, trans. by Richard Wilhelm, rendered into English by Cary F. Baynes (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951), pp. xxv–xl. See also, John Cage, *Music of Changes* (New York: Peters Edition, 1951), composed using chance procedures based on the *I Ching*.
[103] Richard J. Smith, 'How the "Book of Changes" Arrived in the West', *New England Review (1990-)*, 33.1 (2012), 25–41 (p.33).
[104] See Appendix One, interview with Geoffrey Poole.

books, Poole used calculations of planet positions to analyse classical composers, including Beethoven, Bach and Palestrina. Poole's astrological reasoning emphasised the positions of the planets, which were seen as representing personalities. As a result of his interest in astrology, Poole composed his *Harmonice Mundi* piano quintet in 1978, as a depiction of 'a spiral of life.'[105] This piece became an exemplary precursor to his compositions on the *I Ching*.

Around the same time, he was exposed to astrology, Poole accidentally discovered his first *I Ching* book at a local bookstore. Upon reading Jung's preface, Poole felt curious about this mysterious ancient Chinese book. Poole was so intrigued by the book that he began consulting the *I Ching* for his own life matters.

In 1976, he became the Head of Composition at the University of Manchester. His career reached another level, and he remarried in the same year. He experienced success in both his career and marriage, and he was with his second wife, Beth, in Kenya for two years. However, things gradually took an unexpected path. Beth was diagnosed with breast cancer. Meanwhile, he found it harder and harder to keep up with the busy environment around him, as they were living on the east coast in Yorkshire. So, they moved together to Bristol, where he was appointed as a Professor at the University of Bristol. However, Beth did not get any better and became seriously ill. Another recurrence hit Beth in 2000, and around the same time, his younger daughter was struggling with depression. It was a very difficult time not only for him but also for his entire family.

> I was thinking about these things, and about what the *I Ching* would say about it. And I'm sitting on the train, I remember exactly, around April 2001, coming along the train

[105] From email correspondence with Geoffrey Poole. See also Andrew Burn, 'Geoffrey Poole: An Introductory Note on His Music', *Tempo*, no. 145 (1983), pp. 12–18 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/945034>.

> line. Around Reading, I sort of thought, turn your problem and see into your inspiration, yes, use the *I Ching.*[106]

Although the *I Ching*'s prophecy was not a cure to save Poole or change the direction of traumatising periods in life, nor did it change his life at that time, it functioned like a close friend to him, helping him understand the circumstances he was facing.

> …one part of it is that is makes a number of suggestions while appearing to be one text. And what resonates with you as the one that resonates, is because you need it. You are sitting there in a frame of mind, that's going to welcome any advice. You are perplexed about something that it said. And if somebody says something, that may not be the last word to be said on it but it rings a bell that helps me see the situation. Thus, in that sense, I just find that it's a fantastic resource for when things that are worrying you and you don't know quite where to go.[107]

Poole shared a very touching story when I asked which piece from *A Pianist's I Ching* was the closest to his life event. He said, deliverance. It was during Beth's illness that he thought about consulting with the book. When he received 'deliverance' as the answer from the *I Ching*, he thought things would eventually become better, Beth will survive her cancer. However, it was when Beth died that he realised what deliverance meant was her soul delivered away, for her to become free.

> Hexagrams 29, 40 and 59 are certainly deeply impacted by the situation, when my wife Beth Wiseman was dying in June 2007. Her initial B, and my G-E-F are (all flattened) inscribed into 40 - with some bitterness, because when I read the *I Ching* advice I failed to pick up its implication that she would die: I thought it said this was a tough period and then she'd recover. [108]

In Poole's case, the Sinophone influence can be found in the transforming process, that use of the *I Ching* from an external influence into an intrinsic part of his creative and personal journey.

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[106] See Appendix one, interview with Geoffrey Poole.
[107] Poole, interview, Appendix one.
[108] From email correspondence with Geoffrey Poole. 10/04/2022.

The Yin Yang theory

The primary philosophy and aesthetic of Yin and Yang are based on principles of dynamic duality and balance. The earliest written records of these concepts appear on oracle bones (animal bones) from Shang dynasty (1750 B.C.-1040 B.C.), where the characters of Yin, 阴 and Yang, 阳 were used individually.[109] The pairing of Yin and Yang as complementary opposites emerged later, first appearing together in the *Book of Odes* (诗经), where they were described as the contrasting sides of a hill, one bright and one dark. As Benjamin Isadore Schwartz notes, at this early stage, Yin and Yang were not yet fully developed into an abstract system of duality.[110]

It was during the period of 770-221 BCE that Yin Yang developed into a philosophical theory relating to cosmogony, 'highlighting the interrelatedness of the cosmos and human nature' (see Fig. 2 below).[111]

[109] Emily Mark, 'Oracle Bones', *World History Encyclopedia* <https://www.worldhistory.org/Oracle_Bones/> [accessed 21 September 2022].

[110] Benjamin Isadore Schwartz, 'Correlative Cosmology The "School of Yin and Yang"', in *The World of Thought in Ancient China* (Massachusetts and London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press Cambridge, 1985), p.352.

[111] Wang, p.209. More details regarding to the history of the development of Yin-yang, can be found in, Yu-lan Fung, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* (New York: The Free Press, 1948).

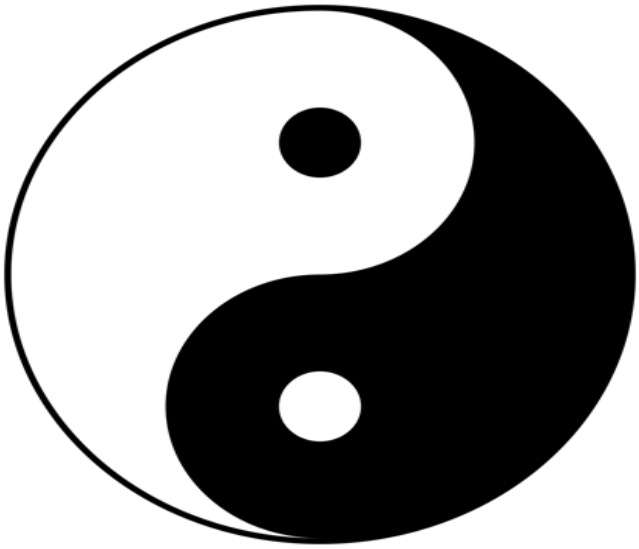

Figure 2 Yin and Yang picture.

Table 2 below illustrates the symbolic characteristics of Yin and Yang and contextualises them in a musical sense. The attributes I discuss here reflect a personal understanding of these concepts within Chinese cultural frameworks. In principle, Yang is often associated with qualities like brightness, warmth, and directness, whereas Yin is linked to coolness, fluidity, and introspection. Crucially, Chinese philosophy emphasises the interdependence of these forces, neither can exist without the other, and their tension produces harmony.

Table 2 Yin and Yang characteristics in musical context.

Symbols	Characteristics[112]	In Music
Yang	Bright, Warm, Hard, Heaven, Day, Straightforward	Sharp, Loud, Strong, Notes in the lower register, Fast, Strict in tempo,
Yin	Cool, Soft, Earth, Night, Fluid	Flat, Soft, Gentle, Notes in the higher register, Slow, flexible in tempo

[112] This is the author's own description of the contrasting nature in Yin Yang, the contrast elements are listed vertically.

While Yin and Yang have historically been associated with dualities, including some gendered interpretations, this thesis does not seek to reinforce such associations. For comparision, Western music theory has also used gendered terminology, such as Adolf Bernhard Marx's 1845 description of sonata form using 'masculine' and 'feminine' thematic oppositions.[113] However, my research focuses on how contrast and balance, as embodied in Yin Yang's thinking, inform musical structure and playing techniques, rather than social or gendered meaning.

This dynamic interplay of opposites is a fundamental principle in many musical traditions. In Chinese music, Yin Yang theory offers one model for conceptualising contrast, much like how Schumann's dual characters, Florestan and Eusebius, embody expressive polarity in Western Romantic music.[114] While the philosophical readings of Yin and Yang continue to evolve, in this context they are treated as a compositional tool rather than as ideological or cultural absolutes.

Alexina Louie and the Yin Yang theory

Louie's interest in the Yin and Yang philosophy emerged during a deeply personal moment in her life. The sudden death of composer Claude Vivier in 1986 was a profound emotional loss for Louie and the wider musical community. Vivier's compositional ideas resonated closely with Louie's, and his passing prompted her to search more deeply for her artistic voice and identity.[115]

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[113] James Hepokoski, 'Masculine Feminine: Gendered Themes in Sonata Form?', *The Musical Times*, 135.1819 (1994), 494-99.
[114] Liane Curtis, 'Rebecca Clarke and Sonata Form: Questions of Gender and Genre', *The Musical Quarterly*, 81.3 (1997), 393–429. And another example of discussing the gender in social and music context is *Gender in Chinese Music*, ed. by Rachel Harris, Rowan Pease, and Shzr Ee Tan (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2013).
[115] Sara Constant, 'Unvanishing: The Musical Life of Claude Vivier', *The WholeNote* <https://www.thewholenote.com/index.php/newsroom/feature-stories/27377-unvanishing-the-musical-life-of-claude-vivier> [accessed 4 June 2022].

Her orchestral work *Music for a thousand Autumns* was composed in response to this loss.[116] It reflects her contemplation of life and death, as well as her desire to integrate personal experience with her artistic output. This period of reflection also drew Louie toward aspects of her Chinese heritage, particularly the aesthetics of the qin and the philosophy of Yin and Yang.

> I see myself as a creator, as someone who creates something from nothing. I have to plumb the depths of who I am in order to make that expression. Someone who is a re-creative artist, a performer of any sort, a dancer, a musician, has a completely different function – they take the creation that we creative artists bring to the world and give it life.[117]

During this time, Louie studied the qin for approximately six months with a Chinese maestro while travelling between San Diego and Los Angeles.[118] Her interest in Yin Yang theory, alongside her experience with the qin, helped her formulate a musical language that reflects her bicultural identity, not through quotation of traditional Chinese music theory, but through an aesthetic grounded in contrast, timbral exploration, and philosophical depth.[119]

In Louie's music, the influence of Chinese cultural thought manifests less in theoretical constructs and more in expressive approaches. As a precursor to my analysis of her composition, Chapter 5 will explore how the idea of Yin and Yang is contextualised musically, building on Jon Kimura Parker's structural analysis and offering performance insights shaped by my own Chinese heritage and interpretive decisions.[120]

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[116] Yoomi Jun Kim, *The Evolution of Alexina Louie's Piano Music: Reflections of a Soul Searching Journey* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 2009), p. 5.
[117] *Reflections in a Dancing Eye: The Role of the Artist in Contemporary Canadian Society*, ed. by Carol Anderson and Joysanne Sidimus, 1st edition (Banff, Alta.: Banff Centre Press, 2006), p. 285.
[118] Esther Yu-Hui Chu, *Biographical sketch* 'On the Musical Silk Route: Piano Music of Alexina Louie' (University of Alberta, 1997), p. 2-4. Chu and Kim both mentioned this in their thesis. In Chu's thesis, Louie explained 'how she was amazed by the depth evoked by the subtle, refined, and quiet sound of the Ch'in', p. 11.
[119] Chu, p. 35.
[120] Jon Kimura Parker, 'The Solo Piano Music of Alexina Louie: A Blend of East and West' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Juilliard School, 1989).

The gong and the qin

The Chinese gong and the qin stand as iconic instruments that represent the heart of Chinese cultural history. Each of the traditional instruments has its own distinctive characteristics that play integral roles in Chinese culture. The percussion instrument has been a part of the Chinese civilisation for thousands of years and is mostly associated with military activities or sacrificial ceremonies. The Chinese gong is a sonorous and striking percussion instrument. The function of gongs and other percussive instruments in the band is to create a rhythmical effect for opera singers on stage.[121] They were often used to open important ritual events or signify war in ancient China.

There are different types of Chinese gongs, and while they span a spectrum of sizes, materials and designs, they all produce indefinite pitch. The generic term for the gong, in Chinese, is Luo 锣.[122] The type of gong that I will discuss in the musical examples later will be jingluo and chao gong. There are two types of jingluo, 京锣; big jingluo, 大京锣 and small jingluo 小京锣, which is demonstrated in Video 1 video 1: jingluo.[123] The jingluo is

[121] Wang-Ngai Siu and Peter Lovrick, *Chinese Opera: The Actor's Craft* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013), p. 28.
[122] Dolores Menstell Hsu, 'Musical Elements of Chinese Opera', *The Musical Quarterly*, 50.4 (1964), 439–51 (p.51).
[123] Video demonstration link: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1M4doz_e0dhJpC1CtVm9YGQZnfFQdUYrH/view?usp=share_link

known for its clear and focused sound, as the jingluo gong produces a crystalline resonance. The following is a picture of a small jingluo (Fig. 3).

Figure 3 Small jingluo.

Another type of gong that I will be discussing later is called chao gong, 抄锣 which is distinguished by a 'wowing' tone and sudden rise in pitch after being struck, as demonstrated in Audio 1 audio 1: chaogong.[124] The following is a picture of chao gong (Fig. 4).

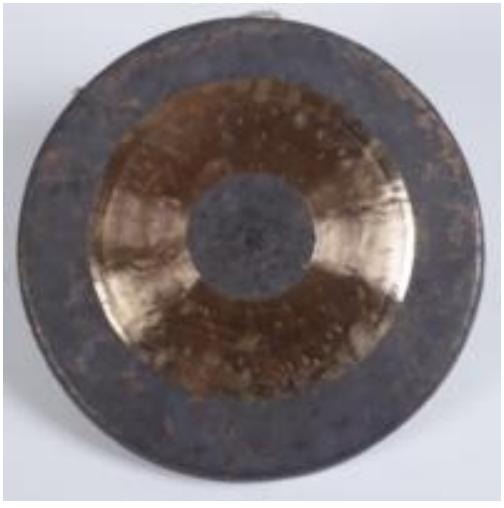

Figure 4 Chao gong.

[124] The link to chao gong on Google drive: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qxQZwI4VZc7jD4JHHbTUgEuW0BotD4ZC/view?usp=share_link

In addition to these two types of gongs, inspirations from the qin instrument can also be found in Alexina Louie and Jack Body's music. The qin, also known as Guqin, is a seven-string instrument that originated in ancient China, with different texts attributing its invention to either Fu Xi or Huang Di, (see Fig. 5, below).[125] The qin has played a significant role in Chinese history, representing the Chinese literati class and being played by scholars or Wenren (文人), including the most well-known scholar, Confucius.

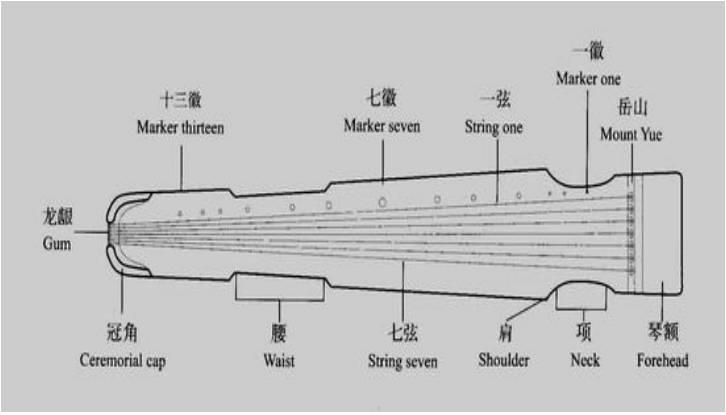

Figure 5 The qin image.

The sound of the qin is often described as calm, soft and offering a lingering charm, which lies between the notes.[126] It holds a rich history and possesses its own unique ideology within Chinese culture.[127] According to Anne Henochowicz, the qin music itself possesses a sense of restraint, leading the performer and listener to suppress their own emotions and fervour.[128] The instrument features thirteen emblems that mark the harmonic points of its strings. With a range spanning four octaves and two notes, the qin covers the pitches from C2 to G5.[129] About thirty distinct playing techniques exist for plucking the strings, each

[125] More details about the qin will be discussed in Chapter 4. See also Anne Henochowicz, 'Evolving Antiquity: "Guqin" Ideology and National Sentiment', *College Music Symposium*, 49/50 (2009), p. 377.
[126] For more information on qin and its playing technique, see Chapter 4. An audio example is available in an album recorded by Shuishan Yu on Spotify.
https://open.spotify.com/track/2cfQJ8H3ohfXiLTbuy0kE1?si=c7fb7646b9f14e0d [03 January 2024].
[127] Yiqian Song, 'When Chinese Sounds Meet Western Instruments: *Yü Ko* Ensemble for Violin, Winds, Piano and Percussion by Chou Wen-Chung' (unpublished master's thesis, Arizona State University, 2020).
[128] Henochowicz, p. 379.
[129] Echo Ho, Alberto De Campo, and Hannes Hoelzl, 'The Slow Qin: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Reinventing the Guqin', *NIME'19, Federal University of Rio Grande Do Sul*, 19 (2019).c

producing a slightly varying tone.[130] Here is a demonstration of qin playing, Video 2 video 2: Qin demonstration.[131]

In addition to the unique playing of the qin, the musical notation system of qin music is not as detailed as the Western music notation system (see Fig. 6 below).

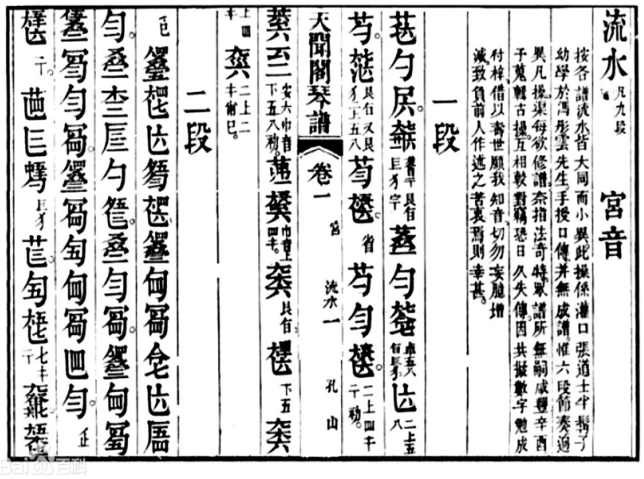

Figure 6 Qin music score, tablature score, Jianzipu, 减字谱

In qin music, it is common to encounter notations that lack temporal indications.[132] The tablature score does not provide specific guidance on the duration of the individual notes.[133] Instead, the transmission of qin music relies on demonstrations and teachings passed down across generations. Descriptive words are used to suggest which finger or hand movement to employ. The absence of metrical indications allows players the freedom and flexibility to interpret and perform the music in their own way.

[130] Henochowicz, 'Evolving Antiquity', p. 377.
[131] The link to watch a short screen recording of qin demonstration: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xsmLHf5ffLcmFeI_gm8xO4Tr0hoU_p4V/view?usp=share_link This demonstration was a short screen recording from Chutong guqin,(楚童古琴) YouTube channel: https://youtu.be/BcElotwrZ8o [accessed on 20 May, 2022].
[132] Chun-Yan Tse and Chun-Fung Wong, 'Metrical Structure and Freedom in Qin Music of the Chinese Literati', *Analytical Approaches to World Music*, 8.2 (2020), p. 168.
[133] Ibid.

Alexina Louie and Jack Body with the Chinese musical elements

During the 1970s, Louie had the opportunity to immerse herself in a compositional environment that was welcoming and open-minded to contentious and original ideas.[134]

> It was the first time that I was introduced to theatre music. All the graduate students had to perform in these theatre pieces. You had to "play" water and I remember having climbed up on a ladder with a pitcher of water and dump the water into a big drum at the bottom of the ladder. All these strange and incredible things that we had to perform in and experience... [135]

Her compositional teacher, Pauline Oliveros changed her perception of sound. In addition, she was also involved in timbral experiments with her mentor Robert Erickson. All the sonic experiments she conducted in UCSD enhanced her sensitivity to sound and musical creativity. During her stay in California, her passion extended to the music from East Asian countries, such as Korea, Japan and China. This curiosity was boosted by her friends around her at college and the general atmosphere in UCSD that gradually evoked her interest in her Chinese heritage. She was fascinated with exploring Asian instruments, such as, the qin, gong, and Chinese operas, as well as poetry and ghost stories. In 1973, her father took the whole family back to their village in China, from where Louie brought back a number of Chinese instruments to explore.[136]

Jack Body, on the other hand, was born in 1944 in Waikato, New Zealand and displayed a keen interested in non-Western cultures, particularly the folk music of Asia.[137] His fascination with Indonesian, Javanese and Chinese music is evident in many of his

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[134] Kim, *The Evolution of Alexina Louie's Piano Music*. p. 17.
[135] Mira Kruja, *Piano Inside Out: The Expansion Of The Expressive, Technical, And Sonrous Spectrum In Selected Twentieth-century Art-Music Repertoire For The Modern Acoustic Piano* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Kentucky, 2004), p. 139 https://uknowledge.uky.edu/gradschool_diss/396 [accessed 4 June 2022]. This quotation is also cited in Kim's dissertation.
[136] The Musical Mind, dir. by Esprit Orchestra (2016) https://youtu.be/bQSTuuEn2aI [accessed 4 June 2022].
[137] Carol Shortis, *Distilling the Essence: Vocal Provenance in the Work of Jack Body* (unpublished master's thesis, New Zealand School of Music, 2010), p. 6.

compositions. He undertook extensive fieldwork in Asian countries, notably in Indonesia and China, where he documented various songs and traditions.[138]

In 1987, with the assistance of scholar Gong Hongyu, he visited China's Guizhou province to record songs in the dialect, Qing Ge(情歌), known as 'loved songs' in Chinese from the Han ethnic group, along with songs from other national ethnic minority groups.[139] The same year saw the creation of his *Three transcriptions* for string quartet, which also reflected his close association with elements from the Yi (彝) ethnic group.[140]

The traditional Chinese elements inspired his compositional approach, and he actively brought Chinese players to New Zealand for performances.[141] In 2008, he was invited to the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. During a radio interview with his friend, a Chinese pianist and composer Gao Ping on a New Zealand radio channel, Body shared his thoughts on cross-cultural interaction in music:

> Body: The Western music is renovated or rejuvenated by encountering other musical cultures. The aesthetic of the avant-garde was always to find something new, and I think in Europe it has kind of ran out of new things to find. By venturing across borders, across cultural borders, they could discover not necessarily things that identified with other cultures, but new ways of thinking about sound and thinking about music and thinking about how music is created and made. How one sound can be articulated, looking at a Chinese instrument, Guqin for instance, how one sound can be created and sculpted. So, it's not just a pitch, it's actually a whole line contained within that one cell.
>
> Interviewer: And that's something that the Western notation doesn't really allow you to indicate.

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[138] Henry Johnson, 'Jack Body: Crafting the Asian Soundscape in New Zealand Music', in *Music and Identity in Asia and the Pacific*, ed. by Andy Bennett (New York: Routledge 2015), p. 224.
[139] Lu Guang, review of *Aspects of Chinese Music -- The Art of Negotiation: Teahouse Courtship Dialogues (quing-ge) from Guiyang & Transcriptions of Vocal Polyphony of the Dong, Buyi, Zhuang, Yi, Mulao, Yao and She Minority Nationalities of China*, by Jack Body and Nicholas Wheeler, *Asian Music*, 24.1 (1992), 159–61 https://doi.org/10.2307/834461.
[140] Nalin Shen, *The Integration of Chinese Opera Traditions into New Musical Compositions* (unpublished thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 2010), p. 18.
[141] Hong-Yu Gong, 'Disseminating Chinese Music in New Zealand: Jack Body and China, 1985-2015' (unpublished research project, Unitec Institute of Technology, 2015) https://www.researchbank.ac.nz/handle/10652/3554 [accessed 21 June 2022].

Body: Absolutely.[142]

In Chapter 5, I will analyse the compositions by Louie and Body and share my views as a pianist on playing the pieces in a way that imitates traditional Chinese instruments.

Conclusion

This chapter explores three fundamental Chinese cultural elements that have had a profound influence on Western composers. The focus on 'harmony' between nature and man in the *I Ching* plays such an important role in Poole's life, and these inspirations from the *I Ching* almost became a belief, and can even be considered as a faith. This had a strong influence on Poole's musical concept when writing sixty-four pieces of *A Pianist's I Ching.* Therefore, it is essential to understand the reason why the *I Ching* intrigued him so much that he was willing to spend nearly ten years composing with the *I Ching*.

The Yin Yang theory, which is rooted in abstract duality principles, has influenced Louie's exploration of her Chinese heritage and her journey in search of her unique style and identity as a musician. The interplay of contrasting elements and the balance they create are reflected in her work, adding a distinctive layer to her artistic expression.

Furthermore, the evocative sound from the gong and the qin creates a special timbre effect in Louie and Body's music. Their engagement with these folk instruments demonstrates the cross-cultural exchange that nourishes the concept of Sinophone. All three composers show a unique engagement to Chinese elements. In the following chapter, I will

[142] Transcript by Ke Ma. 'SOUNZ Interview with Jack Body and Gao Ping - Audio', SOUNZ Centre for New Zealand Music https://sounz.org.nz/resources/1023 [accessed 4 July 2022].

explain the methodology used in this research, followed by Chapters 4 and 5 that focus on explaining the intricate connections between these cultural influences and the works of Western composers. The further contextualisation of the cultural elements and analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 will demonstrate the musical realisation of Sinophone.

Chapter 3: The Methodology

Overview

This chapter discusses the combination of methodologies employed in this research and explains the fundamental rationale behind their use. Since the three Western composers selected for this study do not come from the same social background and their piano compositions are not of the same musical style, there will be some differences in the methods used for each of the three case studies.

Since my research focuses on Sinophone influence in Western composers' compositions from 1950 onwards, the three composers chosen for the study were born around 1940-1950 and come from different parts of the world. They are British composer Geoffrey Poole, Canadian composer Alexina Louie and New Zealand composer Jack Body. All three of them have had encounters with Chinese culture in different ways and have been attracted by the Chinese cultural elements introduced in Chapter 2. In addition to an introduction to each of the composers, the following sections will also give a general introduction to each of their piano works included in my research.

Following this general introduction, I will introduce the methodological framework for this research, explain the general importance of having practice-based research and clarify my role as a pianist during the learning process. I am using the influences from cultural elements in piano performance practice to show the Sinophone in a musical context, as I define it. By highlighting the role my cultural understanding plays in helping me play these compositions, I explain the benefit of understanding the cultural elements in music through a performative lens. I will also discuss how my Chinese cultural background influenced my

thoughts and process of learning the repertoire and the limitations of having such a background.

In this research, a mixture of methodologies has been used, including: autoethnography, score analysis, interviews, and analysis of recordings. Each methodology will be explained individually according to the four research questions for this thesis. The explanations for the methods will be combined with my learning process for individual piano works. Then, I will provide explanations on how I analyse the raw data gathered during this process into my final results.

In recent decades, the field of analysis and performance has evolved significantly, moving beyond traditional score-centred approaches. Scholars such as Nicholas Cook, Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, Janet Schmalfeldt, and Mine Doğantan-Dack have argued for a more inclusive understanding of musical meaning—one that foregrounds the performer's interpretative agency, cultural positioning, and embodied practice. While John Rink's performance-related analysis remains foundational, these later models expand the field by recognising performance itself as a mode of inquiry. This practice-based research contributes to that expanding body of work by introducing a Sinophone-informed perspective, where interpretative choices are shaped not only by structural or technical considerations but also by culturally embedded experiences, philosophical resonance, and cross-cultural negotiation. In this sense, the act of performance becomes both a method and a mode of analysis, offering a culturally situated way of understanding music composed with Chinese influence.

Three Sinophone-Influenced Piano Works

This section briefly introduces each of the three piano compositions selected for this study - *A Pianist's I Ching*, *Scenes from a Jade Terrace* and *Five Melodies*.

Geoffrey Poole's A Pianist's *I Ching*

A Pianist's I Ching consists of sixty-four pieces, each representing one of the hexagrams from the *I Ching.* In 2001, the *I Ching* took a different meaning in Poole's life; as noted in the previous chapter, it now became a source of inspiration for his compositions. From that moment, he started to compose a few piano pieces with the *I Ching,* which were performed by several pianists in the Purcell Room, Southbank, in 2003. At that time, he did not plan to have all sixty-four pieces of this composition done.

Poole talked about the *I Ching* 'as a guide' to him. Unlike Cage's interest in tossing coins, there was not one fixed compositional procedure to Poole's work. But through his *I Ching* collections and his own notes on the commentary by various editors and translators for different hexagrams, his compositions reveal his interest in the Chinese culture and show how the meaning of these texts influenced his life and shaped his compositional ideas.

> When I consult the *I Ching,* I do so in all sincerity: sit still, breathe, and focus. Eventually, energy comes, and I toss coins and then rest, giving thanks. When I read its advice I feel humble, the Ego is dismissed, I am simply at the foot of the Sage, leaning what I can. As I acknowledge in the CD booklet, I know that my personal worries and tastes etc. will also come through and give shape to each setting of each hexagram, the same way as a painter's brushstrokes reveal who s/he is as well as what the subject is. But in Zone 6, Hexagram 29, 40 and 59 are certainly deeply impacted by their situation when my wife Beth Wiseman was dying in June 2007. Her initial B, and my G-E-F are (all flattened) inscribed into 40 – with some bitterness, because when I read the I Ching advice, I failed to pick up its implication that she would die: I thought it said this was a tough period and then she'd recover. The music came after.[143]

The way Poole engages with the *I Ching*—consulting it for guidance in moments of uncertainty—resonates with certain traditional practices, but it is important to acknowledge that interpretations and uses of the *I Ching* have varied widely across historical periods and

[143] Geoffrey Poole, email correspondence with the author, 10 April 2022.

among individuals, including those within Chinese cultural contexts. In the next chapter, I will discuss the philosophical influences in the two selected pieces from Poole's *A Pianist's I Ching.* They are *Contemplation* and *Drawing together.*

Alexina Louie and Scenes from a Jade Terrace

The second case study is on Alexina Louie's *Scenes from a Jade Terrace*, which was composed in 1988. During this time, Louie was already gaining international recognition for being a composer with a distinguishable and unique artistic voice.[144] In her compositions published before 1988, Louie experimented with adding different combinations of instruments to create different sounds, in particular, tonal and timbral elements and sounds that were influenced by Asian culture and her Chinese heritage.[145] Her exploration of her Chinese cultural heritage stimulated her musical creativity. For example, her use of pentatonic scales in her first unpublished work, *Dragon Bells,* involved one prepared piano and one pre-recorded piano.[146] This set the stage for her first major piano composition, *Scenes from a Jade Terrace*, which consists of three separate movements: *Warrior*, *Memories in an Ancient Garden* and *Southern Sky*.

In Esther Yu-Hui Chu's thesis, she identified the Yin Yang in Louie's composition in the use of piano from register of keyboard and pedal, where she noted 'Louie's piano works are rarely composed in the "comfort zone" which is the middle register'.[147]

[144] More details on Louie, Chu, *On the Musical Silk Route*, pp. 2-4.
[145] For example, her compositions during this time reflecting this genre: *Dragon Bells* which was composed for pre-record prepared piano.
[146] Kim, *The Evolution of Alexina Louie's Piano Music*, p. 174.
[147] Chu, *On the Musical Silk Route*, p. 36.

According to Jon Kimura Parker, the experimentation with timbre in Louie's compositions was mainly inspired by oriental cultures.[148] In his thesis, Parker analysed the oriental instrumental influence in Louie's orchestral work by highlighting the parts of her compositions where she used various combinations of Western instruments to produce the sound of Asian instruments.

Jack Body and Five Melodies

The third case study is on Jack Body and his *Five Melodies*, which consists of five short pieces completed in 1982.

> This collection of pieces explores unusual melodic idioms in response to the composer's preoccupation with musical genres outside the Western traditional "classical" heritage, such as bagpipe music and the Chinese guqin among others.[149]

However, this case study focuses only on the second and third pieces of *Five melodies* and not the entire composition. This is because the second and third pieces from this composition share the majority of similarities with the characteristics of the Chinese traditional instrument qin. A detailed analysis of the Chinese instrumental influences on piano in both Louie and Body's compositions will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Methodological framework

The goal of this research is to understand the Sinophone engaged in Western composers' compositions through the use of Chinese cultural elements in the piano works of contemporary Western composers. By doing so, I aim to update the concept of Sinophone in piano music and explore the connection between cultural elements and piano performance

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[148] Parker, *The Solo Piano Music of Alexina Louie: A Blend of East and West,* p. 7.
[149] Quotation from *Five Melodies, SOUNZ Centre for New Zealand Music* https://sounz.org.nz/works/10413 [accessed 25 January 2023].

practice. The cross-cultural nature of this performance-based research requires the methodological framework to focus on understanding the cultural interactions between China and the West as manifested in piano compositions while simultaneously examining the cultural influences in shaping piano performance practice. By utilising methods such as autoethnography, score analysis, semi-structured interviews in different learning phases and practice sessions within the three case studies, these approaches seek to decipher (RQ1) how Western composers have adopted Chinese elements into their piano compositions from the 1950s onwards. (RQ2) What are the Chinese influences reflected in these compositions? (RQ3) How do we identify the Chinese adoptions in these compositions? Then, by analysing the recordings from different practice sessions, I can answer my (RQ4) on how cultural perspectives influence the shaping of one's performing practice.

Mixture of methods

Autoethnography is the main methodological approach I have used throughout my first case study on understanding the *I Ching* influences in Geoffrey Poole's *A Pianist's I Ching.* The rationale for this comes mainly from Poole, who he expressed the importance for pianists to understand the *I Ching* in order to play *A Pianist's I Ching*:

> If you happen to know how to consult *I Ching*, you will be able to ask it anything, including whether to buy this volume, or which musical hexagram to play or listen to.[150]

To fully understand the Sinophone reflected in the work, it was essential to consult the *I Ching* as part of my practice-based methodology. By using my own process of learning and consulting the *I Ching* as the research subject and then analysing my thoughts and musical decisions in the whole process to find a way to interpret the selected pieces from

[150] Geoffrey Poole, *A Pianist's I Ching,* preface.

Poole's *A Pianist's I Ching*, I explore how cultural understanding can help pianists shape their piano performance. Through the analysis of my personal experience, this analysis presents the possible process that a composer may go through when absorbing the *I Ching* culture, thereby demonstrating the Sinophone in piano works.

As Brydie-Leigh Bartleet and Carolyn Ellis assert, similarities lie in music and autoethnography as both aim to share personal stories through music and words, which make people think, feel and often respond.[151] In a book edited by Bartlett and Ellis, they pointed out that the essence of using autoethnography is not to make a statement but to evoke a feeling for the readers.[152] This is the reason why I chose autoethnography to reveal the pre-existing cultural influences that shape my playing of these pieces and which may resonate with those who share a similar multi-cultural background. The self-reflection in my study was inspired by Ellis's chapter on autoethnography writing, where Ellis in her writing expressed this methodology as a 'systematic sociological introspection and emotional recall to try to understand an experience I've lived through.'[153] Ellis's 'Emotional recall' is a technique of autoethnography in which the writers mentally place themselves back in a scene both emotionally and physically.[154] This process helps one remember more emotional feelings during the process. This template is borrowed in my research. I designed three practice sessions for learning the same piece so I could come back to review my thoughts which further triggered new thoughts during this process. In addition to making notes on the scores and writing my thoughts, I also recorded each of my practice sessions so that I can

[151] Carolyn Ellis and Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, 'Music Autoethnographies: Making Autoethnography Sing: Making Music Personal', in *Music Autoethnographies: Making Autoethnography Sing/Making Music Personal,* ed. by Brtdie-Leigh Bartleet and Carolyn Ellis (Brisbane: Australian Academic Press, 2009), p. 8.
[152] Ibid., p. 9.
[153] Carolyn Ellis and Arthur P. Bochner, 'Autoethnography, Personal Narrative, Reflexivity: Researcher as Subject', in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 2nd edn (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000), pp.733-68 (p. 737).
[154] Carolyn Ellis, 'Heartful Autoethnography', *Qualitative Health Research,* 9 (1999), 669-83 (p. 675).

review the practice sessions later. According to Ellis, both immersing oneself emotionally and stepping back for analysis are essential for creating a successful autoethnography.

Later, a conversational writing style is used, which was inspired by an excerpt from a recent doctoral thesis by Yundu Wang.[155] In Wang's autoethnographical writing, she was inspired from Ellis's ideas of 'emotional recall' and 'systematic sociological technique' and developed a writing style involving a dialogue between two voices, one in a questioning tone and another voice in an answering tone.

I use Wang's methodological template for my reflection on the text from the *I Ching* as I tried to understand the essence of the hexagrams that Geoffrey Poole's pieces draw inspiration from. I then use that understanding of the hexagram to better understand how to play his music. Using autoethnography can allow me to examine how one's cultural heritage can help one as a pianist in the process of understanding a cross-cultural composition. It is an approach to understand the music through an insider perspective, instead of using traditional score analysis, which can only reveal the musical content on the page but cannot go deeper and dig out the cultural and social influences which shape one's interpretation of music. This does not mean that score analysis should be entirely abandoned from a study such as this. Rather, the score analysis can be more effective when combined with evidence collated from my semi-structured interview with the composer and my own insight from playing the piece as a pianist.

[155] Ellis and Bochner, 'Autoethnography, Personal Narrative, Reflexivity'. See also the autoethnography excerpt in Yundu Wang, *Finding My Voice: An Interdisciplinary and Multi-Methodological Investigation into the Relationship between Performers' Speech and Musical Expression* (unpublished doctoral thesis, Guildhall School of Music & Drama 2019).

I conducted practice sessions to contextualise my understanding of the hexagrams and analyse how this affects my playing of the piece. However, using autoethnography alone can be too descriptive and self-indulgent, which is the danger of this methodology. So, I also utilised alternative methods, including score analysis of the selected pieces from A Pianist's *I Ching* and interview transcripts with the composer.

In my analysis, I create a consulting scene with the *I Ching* in order to explain how I craft my playing according to the *I Ching.* The consulting dialogue begins with me asking a personal question to the *I Ching*, as a way of starting the process. This reflects the way Chinese people interact with or use the *I Ching*: ask the *I Ching* a personal question; then throw three same coins simultaneously for six times which will lead you to a pair of hexagrams; then interpret the hexagrams with commentary and draw the thoughts from them; finally relate all the information to the music from *A Pianist's I Ching*.[156] This is followed by a series of questions and answers between me and the 'I Ching' to extract the musical character through a deep analysis. The conversation is delivered in a non-scientific way but provides a reflection on my thoughts while playing these pieces, and the reason behind my thoughts. This is intended to contextualise the reflections on the hexagram to give the reader an insight into the meaning of those hexagrams and subsequently use them for understanding the compositions.

This consulting style was inspired from Carl Jung's foreword for Wilhelm's edition, in which he also followed the same method to interact with and understand the *I Ching*. Jung used the method of throwing coins to consult the *I Ching* on the prospects of popularity for Wilhelm's edition. I similarly used the method to consult the *I Ching* about my professional

[156] A detailed demonstration is provided in Chapter 4, p. 76.

projects during the pandemic as a way of selecting the hexagrams for this study. This also indicates the composer's intention to create a personal connection between his piece and the performer. Such reflection and analysis are not limited to Chinese culture, but their centrality changes in different composers' works. The use of the *I Ching* by Geoffrey Poole makes such analysis essential for understanding cross-cultural compositions and gives the rationale for involving my personal experience with the *I Ching* as part of my analysis. I present this analysis in a dialogue form so that even readers from a non-Chinese background can understand how I interpret and play the composition based on my understanding of the Chinese culture and the *I Ching*. This can also help people understand how the *I Ching* works and replicate the process. I think it is essential for a pianist to read Confucius's commentary before playing *A Pianist's I Ching*, for creating a personal link to the music and building a channel between the composer and the pianist. Therefore, I will also rely on commentary for each hexagram as the only philosophical factor for me to build my own interpretations on.

The data for this research was collected in three phases (see Fig. 7).

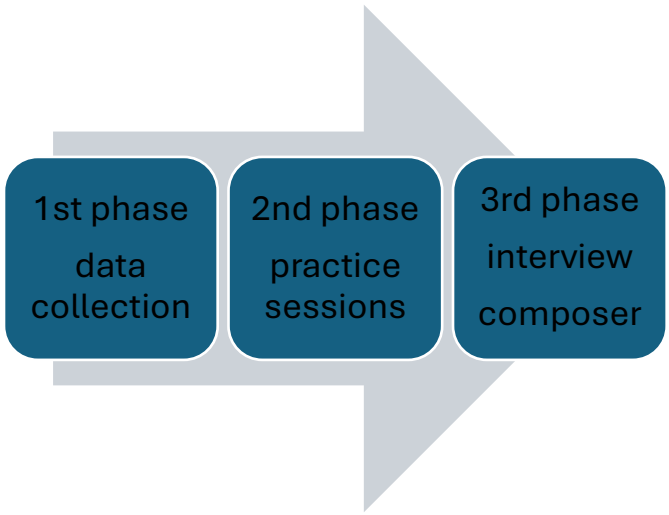

Figure 7 Three phases in the data collecting process.

The first phase focussed on choosing a number of pieces from the sixty-four pieces from *A Pianist's I Ching*.[157] As the composer wrote his pieces based on his inspiration from consulting the *I Ching*, I prepared four questions that were most relevant to my life at the time, consulted the *I Ching* on those questions, and then I received eight hexagrams based on the *I Ching's* answers to my questions. Then, I read the commentaries of the eight hexagrams and wrote down my reflections based on my understanding of the commentaries by Confucius (from Wilhelm's version). As Confucius's commentaries were written in the ancient Chinese epoch, the sentences appear rather abstract, and so my reflections are based on my subconscious reaction to the explanations in Wilhelm's translation and interpretation of each line. But the whole point here is to decipher the imagery of these hexagrams so that they serve as an overall interpretative guide for me to play the eight corresponding pieces from A Pianist's *I Ching* in the next phase.

The second phase involved practice sessions on the eight selected pieces. I conducted three sessions (each was less than one hour), on each pair of pieces and all the sessions have been video recorded. During my practice sessions, I made annotations on scores regarding tempo, dynamic, articulation, tonality, and pedal. Afterwards, I reviewed my practice sessions and noted down questions raised during these sessions so as to prepare questions regarding the notations as well as those related to cultural perspectives for my interview with the composer.

In the third phase, I conducted a semi-structured interview session with Poole. The questions were mostly collected after each practice session, but I have also included

[157] As part of the autoethnography process, I consulted with the *I Ching* to explore the meaning of a hexagram. I followed a traditional method involving the casting of coins to generate a hexagram, which is then interpreted as a response to a specific question. In this research, I present only one such consultation: a pair of hexagrams resulting from a single question, selected from the four questions I initially posed.

additional questions that emerged while analysing my thoughts from practice sessions in the first phase about what kind of Chinese elements were used intentionally by Poole and to what extent Chinese influences were involved in Poole's composition. The purpose of doing the semi-structured interview was to prevent me from suggesting or leading the answer to my research questions, as well as to keep me from assuming connections between his composition and Chinese culture where Poole intended no such connections.

With this raw data collected through the autoethnographic approach, my reflections on the commentaries on the hexagram and my thoughts on playing the selected pieces were reviewed after different practice sessions and indented and labelled as '*…[PS]'. Then, I converted my reflections into two tables, one focussed on my understanding of the commentaries on the related hexagrams while the other is a summary of my thoughts on playing, which explains my role as a pianist in this process and how my musical decisions were shaped by my understanding of the hexagrams. I present these thought processes in a conversational style in each table, in which two columns represent two persons, myself as a 'pianist' and myself as the 'I Ching'. The framework for presenting the introspection process in the dialogue form was finally designed after my interview with Poole, as during our discussion, Poole confirmed he did not compose to represent another culture, but the *I Ching* was closely engaged in his compositional process. Therefore, no matter how many pieces from the composition are analysed, the analysis should be focussed not simply on the music itself, but also on the profound meanings that underpin the music.

> I couldn't really pretend the music belonged to the Chinese culture. Obviously, I got to be a visitor and worked in the Western language, so the connection is through the imagery of the *I Ching* rather than through the musical materials themselves.[158]

[158] Poole, interview, Appendix One.

I present the analysis of my inner feelings according to Ellis' emotional recall and Wang's question-and-answer model in the form of a dialogue, which is intended to recreate the process of the composer absorbing the ideas of the *I Ching* and then creating his composition and to concretise the abstract philosophical thoughts behind it. The internal examination of my thoughts during the conversations allows me to understand what kind of traditional Chinese elements or Western playing techniques have influenced my performance. In the final version of my thesis, I have selected two pieces instead of presenting all eight pieces.

In addition to autoethnography, score analysis is used throughout the three case studies whenever I need to explain my playing based on my understanding of the composer's notation. In the first case study on Poole's *A Pianist's I Ching*, it is used at a later stage when I discuss the relationship between the elements from the *I Ching* and playing the music with these elements. This is because a traditional score-analyses approach on its own is insufficient to reveal a thorough understanding of how cultural influences can be applied in a musical composition. Interviews with the composers were used to confirm the points of the analysis. In the second case study on Alexina Louie's *Scenes from a Jade Terrace*, the score analysis is used mainly in the first phase in order to understand the structure of the music. As Nicholas Cook said, 'Structural approaches can help in steering a way through complex music, rather like finding a path through the undergrowth.'[159] With an understanding of the structure, it is easier to compare the characteristics of the Yin Yang theory with the music and reveal the connections underneath the content of the music. I have also recorded my three practice sessions for Louie's *Scenes from a Jade Terrace* and Body's second and third movements from *Five Melodies*, but not for the autoethnography method for the case studies

[159] Cook, *Beyond the Score*, p. 91.

on Louie and Body as I only make notes in these practice sessions regarding challenges in playing or imagining the sound I was trying to produce, for instance in the choreography of hands movement.

Given the nature of the practice-based core in this research, the score analysis methods were designed differently from a traditional score analysis for the third case study on Jack Body's *Five Melodies*. This was inspired by John Rink's approaches to performance-related analysis. These methods aim to identify Chinese elements from a practical perspective and create a convincing interpretation for playing the second and third pieces from *Five Melodies*. Rink emphasised the importance of making decisions about certain musical features and understanding the consciousness involved in articulating them.[160] Additionally, he introduced six techniques for conducting performance-related studies that serve as a basis for interpretation:

1) identifying formal divisions and basic tonal plan
2) graphing tempo
3) graphing dynamics
4) analysing melodic shape and constituent motifs/ideas
5) preparing a rhythmic reduction
6) renotating the music [161]

Based on Rink's strategy, in analysing the second piece, I created two tables (see Tables 16 and 17) to depict the music, to help visualise and understand the logic and organisation of the composer's musical notations, as well as its structure.[162] I categorised the musical elements according to phrases, key areas, rhythm organisations, dynamics of the

[160] John Rink, 'Analysis and (or?) Performance', in *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding*, ed. by John Rink (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp.35–58.
[161] Rink, *Analysis and (or?) Performance*, p. 41.
[162] Table 16 and 17 are presented in Chapter 5, pp.119-20, alongside the analysis.

main notes (the notes with diamond headnotes), main notes, melodic shape, intervals, range of the keys that were used, notes at the end of each phrase and the use of pedal.[163]

In addition to Rink's methods of analysing music, I found Peter Hill's advice of 'away from the instrument' to be very useful for building my own interpretation of this composition.[164] Preparing a piece without using the instrument, as Hill suggested, can free the player from technical concerns and prevent excessive repetition in practice. It encourages one to think deeply about the desired sound and the meaning of the music that the performer aims to convey. For example, Hill's approach to practising Stockhausen's *Klavierstück VII* highlights the importance of taking a moment to mark the score and mentally preparing the music before practising and playing the musical notes.[165] I base my study of the third piece on Hill's advice, as I am searching for a possible way to replicate the qin's sound on the piano. While Body's notation of the third piece shares some similarities with Alexina Louie's (see Chapter 5), it is also distinct in many ways. Therefore, imitating the qin playing technique becomes a guideline for my practice in this case study and leads to a different result in performance.

Semi-structured interviews were also used in order to understand the composers' intentions and analyse the elements adopted from Chinese culture. It was used in the third phase of my case studies on Poole's *A Pianist's I Ching* and Louie's *Scenes from a Jade Terrace*. The purpose was to observe and understand how the *I Ching* or Yin Yang inspired them to compose and, at the same time, to prevent me from assuming connections between

[163] The 'main notes' here refer to the notes with diamond-shaped noteheads.
[164] Peter Hill, 'From Score to Sound', p. 133.
[165] Ibid, pp. 129–43.

these compositions and Chinese culture where no such connections are intended by Geoffrey Poole or Alexina Louie.

The semi-structured interviews with all participants in this research were conducted after ethical approval was granted by the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. It was ensured that the interview process followed the procedure and was within the ethical guidance. It was considered whether the interviews may involve questions of a sensitive nature due to the role of culture within this study. It was held that there was very low risk of this. Written consent was obtained from all the participants before the interview sessions. All the data collected from the interviews, such as the transcripts, scores and recordings, were saved on a hard drive until the completion of this study, after which the data was destroyed.

The next chapter focuses on the philosophical influences, including the *I Ching* in playing two selected pieces from *A Pianist's I Ching* and Yin Yang aesthetic in *Scenes from a Jade Terrace*.

Chapter 4: The Philosophical Influences

Overview

This chapter begins by introducing a general historical background of Eastern philosophies that have intrigued Western composers and inspired their creative processes. It then narrows its focus to two compositions that reflect Sinophone influence: the *I Ching* in Geoffrey Poole's *A Pianist's I Ching* and the Yin Yang philosophy in Alexina Louie's *Scenes from a Jade Terrace*. Building on the cultural elements outlined in previous chapters, this chapter demonstrates how these ideas are woven into compositional structure and interpreted through performance.

Two pieces from *A Pianist's I Ching* are analysed to show how Poole incorporates Chinese philosophical concepts drawn from the *I Ching,* which are also evident in his compositional methods. The second half of the chapter explores how Louie integrates Yin-Yang aesthetics into her work, particularly in the structure of the three movements of *Scenes from a Jade Terrace*.

Eastern Philosophy in the West

Since the early twentieth century, several Western composers have drawn on Eastern philosophies in their search for alternative artistic perspectives. John Cage's use of chance operations, influenced by his engagement with Zen Buddhism and the *I Ching*, is one well-known example. Similarly, Pauline Oliveros's concept of Deep Listening combines spiritual and somatic practices, such as Yoga, tai chi, and meditation, with her musical thinking.[166] In her book, *Deep Listening,* Oliveros articulates a mode of attention that challenges conventional divisions between mind and body, sound and self.

[166] Pauline Oliveros, *Deep Listening: A Composer's Sound Practice* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2005).

Tracy McMullen has examined how the improvisational strategies of Cage and Oliveros interrogate the Western philosophical tradition's privileging of rationality and individual control. She observes that 'music poses a problem for a Western intellectual tradition that privileges reason and the mind over the body,' noting how both composers drew on non-Western frameworks to critique the norms of their own culture.[167]

However, it is important to avoid simplistic oppositions between 'Eastern' and 'Western' philosophy. While classical Western thought, such as Plato's version of an ideal, rational society, emphasised analytical reasoning, contemporary Western philosophy increasingly engages with concepts of embodiment, interdependence, and ecological awareness.[168] At the same time, Chinese philosophical traditions are themselves diverse, historically situated, and internally contested.

The Daoist notion of balance, illustrated in the following verse from the *Daodejing* 道德经, reflects a vision of cosmological unfolding:

> The Dao produced the One,
> The One produced the Two;
> The Two produced the Three;
> The Three produced All Things.[169]

This chapter now shifts from a broad overview of 'Eastern' influences on American experimental music to a more focused engagement with Sinophone thought, not simply as a matter of language or identity, but as a transhistorical space of Chinese-speaking

[167] Tracy M. McMullen, 'Subject, Object, Improv: John Cage, Pauline Oliveros, and Eastern (western) Philosophy in Music', *Critical Studies in Improvisation / Études Critiques En Improvisation*, 6.2 (2010), 1-13 (p. 1).
[168] Wayne D. Bowman, *Philosophical Perspectives on Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 25.
[169] Laozi, *Dao De Jing*, trans. and annotated by Rao Shangkuan (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2006), p. 105. Yueh-Ting Lee, Honggany Yang, and Min Wang, 'Daoist Harmony as a Chinese Philosophy and Psychology', *Peace and Conflict Studies*, 16.1(2009), 68-81 (p. 68).

philosophical and artistic expression. British composer Geoffrey Poole's *A Pianist's I Ching* offers a case study of how the interpretive structure and symbolism of the *I Ching* can inform compositional logic. Rather than treating the text as a timeless artefact, Poole engages with it as a living philosophical tool. Concepts such as change, polarity, and transformation are translated into musical elements like: rubato, tempo, and contrast. In this way, *A Pianist's I Ching* opens up a Sinophone mode of musical thought that engages with, and contributes to, the global afterlives of Chinese philosophy through sound.

I Ching in A Pianist's *I Ching*

This section discusses the philosophical influences in Poole's *A Pianist's I Ching.* There are many ways of interpreting the hexagrams and the music. The following table is the explanation of the lines in the hexagram that *I Ching* gave as its response to my question. These are noted in the right column.[170] I have listed my understanding of the hexagrams according to Wilhelm's translation and explanation of each broken and unbroken line in the left column. I then explain what I learned from the text and how it helped me play the piece. For each hexagram, I will present the titles translated by Wilhelm and the title of the music that Poole has given to it to prove that the music is strongly associated with the hexagram.

Contemplation - Guan [171]

The time I decided to consult with the *I Ching* was my second year of study, when the global pandemic happened, unfortunately. It seems to me that the whole world was stopped; there was a lockdown in the U.K., everyone stayed at home, and no one knew where music concerts could develop next. At that time, all my concerts were either postponed or cancelled; I remember missing the chance to play the Tchaikovsky piano concerto No.1 in Barbican, one

[170] The interpretation of the lines and broken lines from bottom to the top, is taken directly from Wilhelm's edition of the *I Ching*, in order to help readers understand the hexagram.
[171] The title Guan is the Chinese name of the hexagram; *Contemplation* is the translation, which corresponds with the title used in Geoffrey Poole's *A Pianist's I Ching.*

of my dream concert halls. It was a strange time; I felt I needed to think of another job. So, I decided to ask *I Ching a question*: "How can I survive as a pianist in the current situation with the ongoing global pandemic?"

I used the coin method: I threw the coins and sincerely hoped that the *I Ching* would guide me to an answer.[172] For this method, I used three one-pound coins and decided on the Yang and Yin sides before throwing them. Additionally, I predetermined the number for each side to help me draw the hexagram later (See Table 3).

Table 3 I Ching methodology: representing sides of a coin into number value.

Type	Number
Head (Yang)	3
Tail (Yin)	2

Then, I threw the coins together six times (see Table 4). The interpretation of the coins as lines in the hexagram follows a specific pattern. For the second hexagram, you simply interchange the broken and unbroken lines received from the three heads or three tails. If the lines in the hexagram are obtained only through combinations such as two heads, one tail, or two tails, one head, the hexagram stays the same.[173]

Table 4 I Ching methodology: possible combinations of tossed coins

type	number	line
Two heads one tail	3+3+2 = 8	broken line
Two tails one head	2+2+3 = 7	unbroken line
Three heads	3+3+3 = 9	unbroken line
Three tails	2+2+2=6	broken line

[172] There are different methods for casting hexagrams, I chose the coin method as I found it more straightforward.
[173] A video demonstrating this process, which closely matches the method I used, can be found on the YouTube channel: *I Ching 101: How to Cast the I Ching Coins?* - YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lN1lfXtrbzU [accessed 20 June 2022].

The *I Ching's* answer to my question was Guan. According to the changing rules, the second hexagram was Cui. Here is an image of the hexagram of Guan (see Fig. 8).

Figure 8 Hexagram of Guan consists of 'wind'(top) and 'earth'(bottom).

In Table 5, I copied Wilhelm's translation of Confucius's commentary in the left column and provided my understanding based on Wilhelm's interpretation of each sentence in Confucius's commentaries for the hexagram in the right column. The order of explanations goes from the bottom line to the top line (please refer to Fig. 8 for broken and unbroken lines). After the table, I also analysed my thoughts during my practice sessions on this piece with the guidance of the *I Ching*, which shows how the dialogue affected my musical decision in playing the Contemplation.

Table 5 Understanding the lines of hexagram Guan, from bottom to top.[174]

'*I Ching*'[175]	Me as a 'researcher'
The bottom (broken line): Boylike contemplation. For an inferior man, no blame. For a superior man, humiliation.	It uses a boy-like (because the broken line appears at the bottom place) contemplation as a metaphor to encourage people to look at their problems from different perspectives and be open-minded.
The second (broken):	When observing things, one should have a broad vision and not be too narrow. This

[174] Wilhelm, *Book of Changes*, p. 84-85 and p. 487-89.
[175] This is a direct copy from Wilhelm's translation on Confucius's commentary of Guan from I Ching. In addition, it worth reminding the reader that Wilhelm's *I Ching* texts were translated by Cary F. Baynes, so it is a translation of a translation. I find it is easier to reflect on it by copying it here, so you can compare my understanding of the text with Wilhelm's interpretation of each line.

Contemplation through the crack of the door. Furthering for the perseverance of a women.	will be conducive to the development of the career.
The fourth (broken): Contemplation of the light of the kingdom. It furthers one to exert influence as the guest of a king.	Based on Wilhelm's explanation, if a ruler runs his society, he needs to have a broad vision as if he watches things from a higher place and also have self-confidence in his ability to run his society.
The fifth line (unbroken): Contemplation of my life.	It is right to re-analyse what you have done to eliminate the fault at its root.
The sixth line means (unbroken): Contemplation of his life.	A gentleman must act with a pure heart, only in this way will it be conducive to the development of his career.

The above table shows how the *I Ching* responded to my question regarding my career as a pianist during the pandemic. The most important thing that I learned from it is to focus on myself and retain a deep inner concentration while performing. I should not worry about the next step but instead wait until the moment when I am ready to take a step forward. By understanding the Guan and relating my thought to the same piece that Poole composed on Guan, which is called *Contemplation*, the first thing that immediately came to mind as a result of the hexagram and my contemplation of its meaning for me was the tempo and the spaces between the notes. I aim to play this music as if participating in a religious ceremony, allowing myself to enter a state of transformation by creating a meditative atmosphere.

The following text (Table 7) represents a dialogue between me as the 'pianist' with the 'I Ching'. Through this conversation, I aim to demonstrate how I built my understanding of playing via our discussion. In contrast with the previous conversation where I played the

role of a ‘researcher’, I adjusted this dialogue, which involves my thoughts as a ‘pianist’. These are presented in the left column, and my responses as ‘the I Ching’ are italicised in the right column. The self-introspection was borrowed from Ellis’s emotional recall, and Wang’s methods inspired the dialogue setting.

Poole’s *Contemplation* has five lines, so I will demonstrate my thoughts on the notations of lines individually in the following tables alongside the pictures.

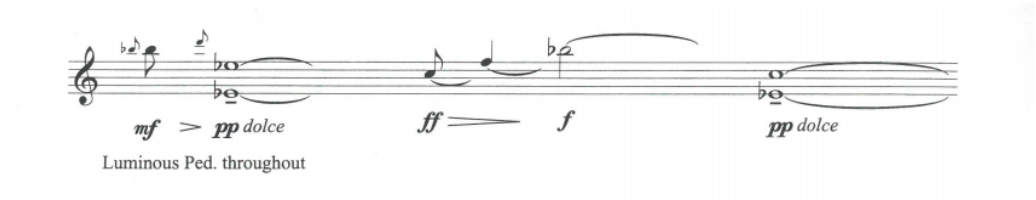

Figure 9 A Pianist's I Ching, Contemplation, first line.

Table 6 Contemplation, Conversation 1: table showing the dialogue between myself the ‘pianist’ and the ‘I Ching’.

The ‘Pianist’	The ‘I Ching’
What does the first note sound like? (see Fig. 9)	
	The first flat notes sound like a bell to me, the one you hear in the pagoda.
The octave in E flat need very quiet playing.	
	Not just quiet, what is important here is the sound after playing the note and also the gesture to stay still.
The c in fortissimo interrupted the silence	
	And don’t drop the energy to nothing, the b flat is still in forte!
How long should I hold the last chord of this line?	
	Until you think you are ready for the next one. Remember the deep inner concentration it requires you to have, so if

	you imagine entering a ceremony in an old temple, as an act of sincere piety, the waiting time of the sound allows one to enter a state of transformation.
I understand my struggle of holding the notes long enough is because I am worried the audiences will be bored or feel it's too empty, I start to feel less comfortable about playing like this, because I am used to play music with lots of notes on score.	
	If you read the fourth line in the hexagram, it can probably help you in this situation.

My thoughts during practice reflected the struggle with timings, as documented in practice session 2:

*[**PS.2**] After a point, the whole learning process of getting used to the rhythmic timings almost became a meditation. It was firstly very hard for me to control the speed of counting, because occasionally I realised I lost the patience for it or started getting bored.

But what the *I Ching* asked me to do is to be faithful to myself, so if I believe the concentration is about listening to the descending sound after playing the chords, it should be the atmosphere I aim to create in this piece.

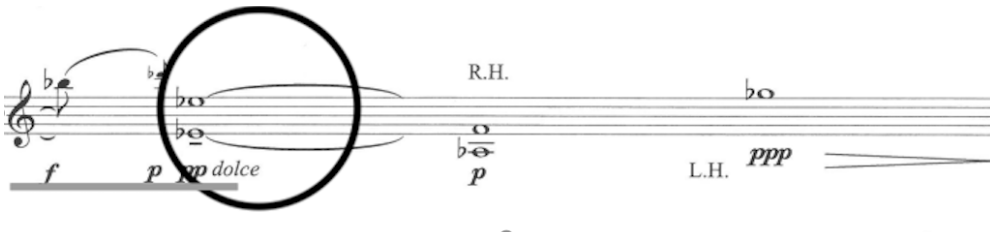

Figure 10 Contemplation, second line.

Table 7 Contemplation, Conversation 2

The 'Pianist'	The 'I Ching'
This is very rapid change from a quaver note in forte to a 'pp dolce' chord. And the chord is like a pause gesture, that interrupts the loud sound before (see Fig. 10).	
	From loud to soft, it should be easy to do. But in the middle of this line, you have A flat note for the first time. So far, it makes a complete scale. (See below Fig. 11).
Yes, but the G flat (Fig.10) is an interruption, it breaks the sound of pentatonic scale (see Fig.11) and also, the left hand gesture, for playing that note.	
	So, your hand movement can interrupt the stillness and meditativeness
To avoid that, I will move my hand, even slower.	

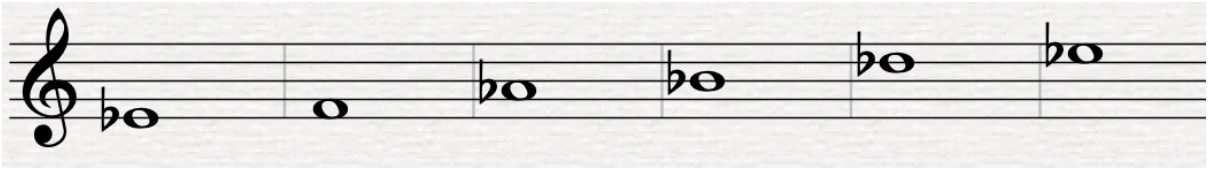

Figure 11 pentatonic scale (Shang)

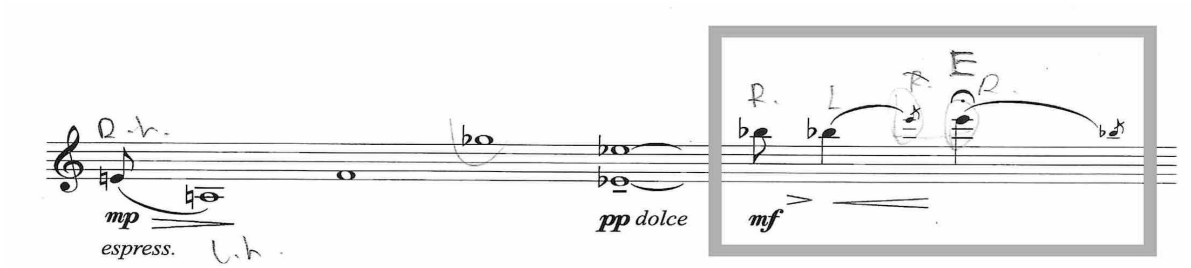

Figure 12 Contemplation, third line.

Table 8 Contemplation, Conversation 3

The 'Pianist'	The 'I Ching'
How do I do it, play crescendo after a long note (see Fig.12)? Technically, it is unreal to play a crescendo after playing a note on piano. Because of the nature of the piano as a percussive instrument.	
	That's right, then what about a stringing instrument playing in this part, like qin? [176] *As scholar like Confucius that believe the qin can worship and communicate with God.*[177] *And you can use the hand arrangement, use the gesture to your hand movement to help.*
Yes, I tried that in my Practise session **[PS 2]** as below.	

***[PS 2]** (Fig. 14) I decided to use my left hand for the crochet note, as for playing qin, one hand normally plucks the string while the other hand will extend the sound after the note by pressing the string.

[176] Historically, qin is the preferred instrument among the Literary class in China, so called Wenren,文人.
[177] R. H. van Gulik has explored more on qin's ideology in 'The Lore of the Chinese Lute. An Essay in Ch'in Ideology', *Monumenta Nipponica*, 1.2 (1938), 386–438. The way that qin is played, and its divine purpose resound with the hexagram, and echoes effectively with the music. It is played ad libitum, as the score is not written with musical notes but with the Chinese characters（Jian zi pu, 减字谱). More details can be found in Chapter 5, where I discuss the qin in Jack Body's music.

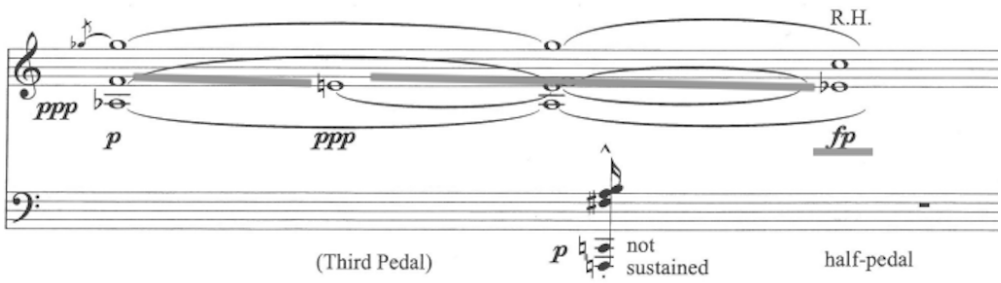

Figure 13 Contemplation, fourth line.

Table 9 Contemplation, Conversation 4

The 'Pianist'	The 'I Ching'
I found there are many things happening in this line.	
	The chord here is from the second line but now is played with a note at the top together (See Fig. 14).
But what surprises me most is first time the chord appears in bass clef, it also requires the player to play it short and crisp (See Fig. 14).	
	The short note interrupts the long chords which are written in treble clef. But what interest me more is after the interruption; you go back to the calmness and play the last note in 'fp'.
The chords are always like an anchor that make me stop and listening back to the echoes or receding sound after playing the chord in that moment.	

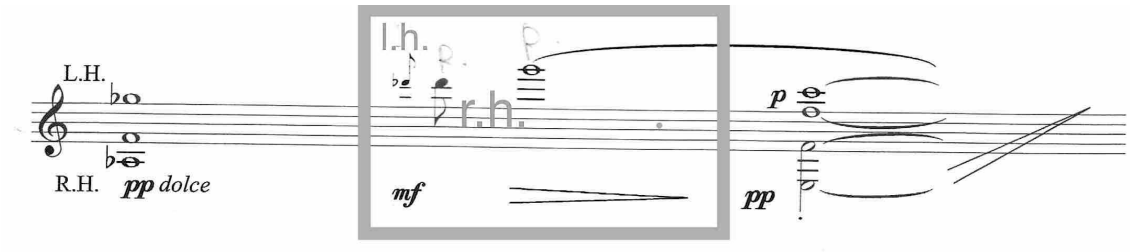

Figure 14 Contemplation, fifth line.

Table 10 Contemplation, Conversation 5

The 'Pianist'	The 'I Ching'
The chord at the beginning of this line is strange (see Fig. 15).	
	Is that because of the hand position?
Yes, it reminds me of György Kurtág's *Homage a Schumann*, where he asked for the specific hand movements and positions.[178]	
	The left at the top is good, because it brings different balance of the chord. *The G is highest note in the whole piece. And from D flat to G, is like a wind blow over the ground, whereas the very last chord is like the ground earth.*
I like how Geoffrey Poole ends this piece without an ending line, as if the sound continues forever.	

In the above tables, I discussed the details of playing *Contemplation,* such as tempo, articulation, and gesture. This process benefited my playing decisions, such as hand positions,

[178] This is a trio Kurtág wrote for piano, clarinet and viola. The hand movement was associated with the third movement of this piece. I linked the hand movement automatically to that piece because I was learning it at the same time.

understanding of the structure, dynamic awareness, and speed, by influencing my insights into Guan's commentary.

The next part of my journey involved learning Cui, which is the changed hexagram derived from Guan.

Cui - Drawing Together – Gathering together[179]

Here is an image of the hexagram for Cui (Fig.15). I will first explain my understanding of the hexagram in Table 11, just as I did for Guan.

Figure 15 Hexagram Cui, consists of 'lake' (top) and 'earth'(bottom).

Table 11 *Understanding the lines of the hexagram Guan, from bottom to top.*

'I Ching' [180]	Me as a 'researcher'
The bottom (broken): If you are sincere, but not to the end, There will sometimes by confusion, sometimes gathering together. If you call out, Then after one grasp of the hand you can laugh again. Regret not. Going is without blame.	When doing things, I should be consistent and not change my mind easily.

[179] Cui is the name of the hexagram. Drawing together is Wilhelm's translation. Gathering together is Poole's title of the piece.

[180] Just to remind that the interpretation of the line and broken lines from bottom to the top, are exactly copied from Wilhelm's' edition, so as to help readers understand what the hexagram means.

The second (broken): Letting oneself be drawn Brings good fortune and remains blameless. If one is sincere, It furthers one to bring even a small offering.	To live in the world, we should take honesty and sincerity as our fundamental values, just like in a religious ceremony where the priests are pious in their hearts.
The third one (broken): Gathering together amid sighs. Nothing that would further. Going is without blame. Slight humiliation.	Even if you attend a gathering of friends, it is difficult to fit in and find like-minded friends. If you want to work with competent co-workers, you should treat others with humility and sincerity, so that even if there may be some small troubles due to personality differences or other reasons, there are but no major disasters.
The fourth (unbroken): Great good fortune. No blame.	Because the position is inappropriate, as long as you stick to the right position and do not do wrong things, there will be no danger.
The fifth (unbroken): If in gathering together one has position, This brings no blame. If there are some who are not yet sincerely in the work, Sublime and enduring perseverance is needed. Then remorse disappears.	If you can stick to justice unswervingly and promote pure customs, you can avoid the regret of doing wrong.
The top (broken): Lamenting and sighing. Floods of tears. No blame.	Being in a higher position among others can make one feel isolated and sad.

The above hexagram Cui was the transformed hexagram from Guan. This was obtained after interchanging the broken and unbroken lines received by combining three heads or three tails. It is the second hexagram received as advice from the *I Ching* regarding

my question. Based on Wilhelm's explanation, Cui creates a completely different feeling from Guan's. Guan creates a stillness and spacious feeling for self-reflection, whereas Cui is much more flowing and fluid in timing. What I learnt from Cui is people can influence each other in society, but one needs to be consistent and not worry when isolated or feeling sad. Eventually, it will be a good ending if one keeps sincere and does not do wrong things in life. Thus, the basic characters and feelings derived from reading the commentary were wondering, hesitation, and happiness at being united with others. In relation to Poole's music on Cui, I tried to play this piece and react to these thoughts.

As *Drawing Together* is a much longer piece compared to *Contemplation,* in my analysis of this piece, I focus on bringing different perspectives from understanding *Contemplation* to avoid repetitions.

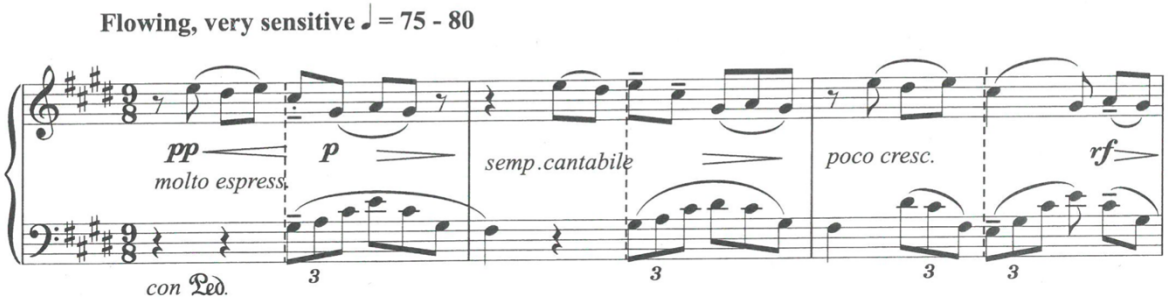

Figure 16 Drawing together, b.1-3.

Table 12 Drawing together, Conversation 1: Table showing the dialogue between me, 'the pianist' and the 'I Ching'.

The 'Pianist'	The 'I Ching'
Firstly, this is a much longer piece than *Contemplation*, and there are many repeated motives, for example, in Figure 16 above, the first line of the music, already shows three types of articulation in three bars, but they all based on one motive. How do I organise them and understand it?	

	Perhaps, you can start with analysing the structure of the piece? Even though the tonal centre of each section is not so absolute and clear, the uncertainty in keys and intervals is just like describing a situation which is unstable.
Yes, I found three sections (Table 13). In each of the sections, the common thing is that the triplet quaver appears throughout the whole piece Poole wrote, he made 9 quaver beats in each bar and divided them into one group of four beats and another group of five beats, while L.H. normally has a triplet followed by a group of three quaver notes. While playing, the triplet in the L.H. being played simultaneously with two quavers in the R.H. creates a swing feeling (Fig. 16).	
	(Fig. 16) Also, the different emphasis within the first three bars in r. h. create a sense of freedom.

Table 13 Structure of Drawing together.

Bar (b.)	Key	Time signature
1-13 A	E Major/c sharp minor	9/8
14-39 B	C Major/a minor	9/8
39-end A^1(coda)	Back to E Major	5/8, 9/8

In addition, in B section, the quick tempo changes in this piece are so different from *Contemplation*. For example, in places such as b. 33-36, b. 50-60, the speed changes a lot in both places in a short time, which confused me during my **[PS.2]**.

***[PS.2]** Why did the composer make so many tempo changes here while requesting the sound gradually get much louder and then followed by a long diminuendo (see

Fig. 17 and 18)?

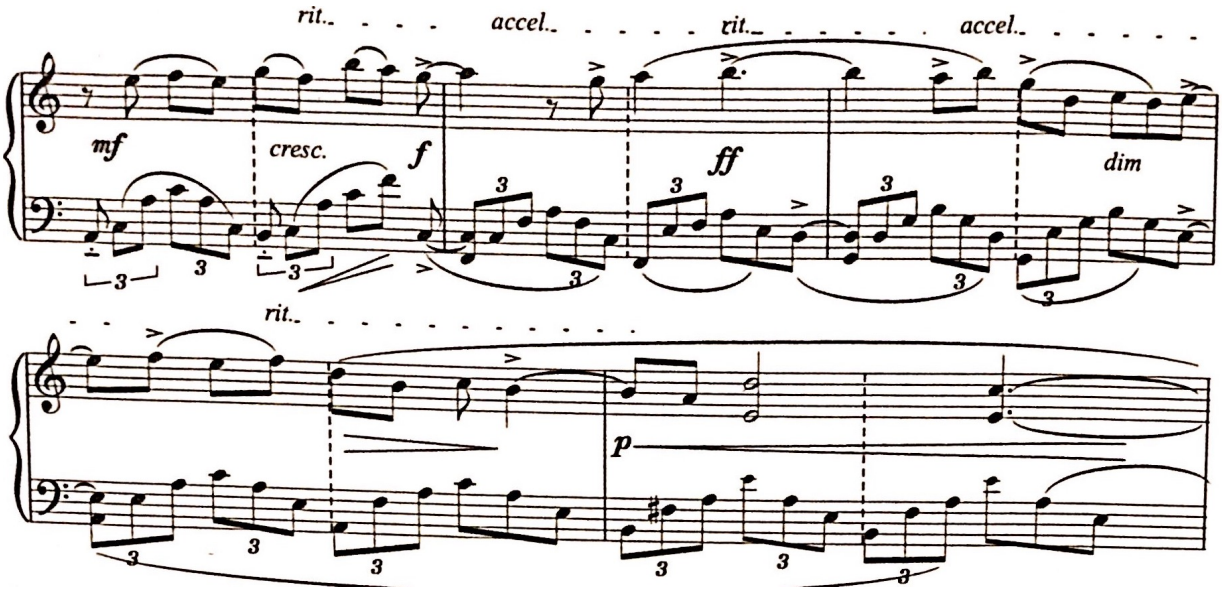

Figure 17 Drawing together, b.33-37.

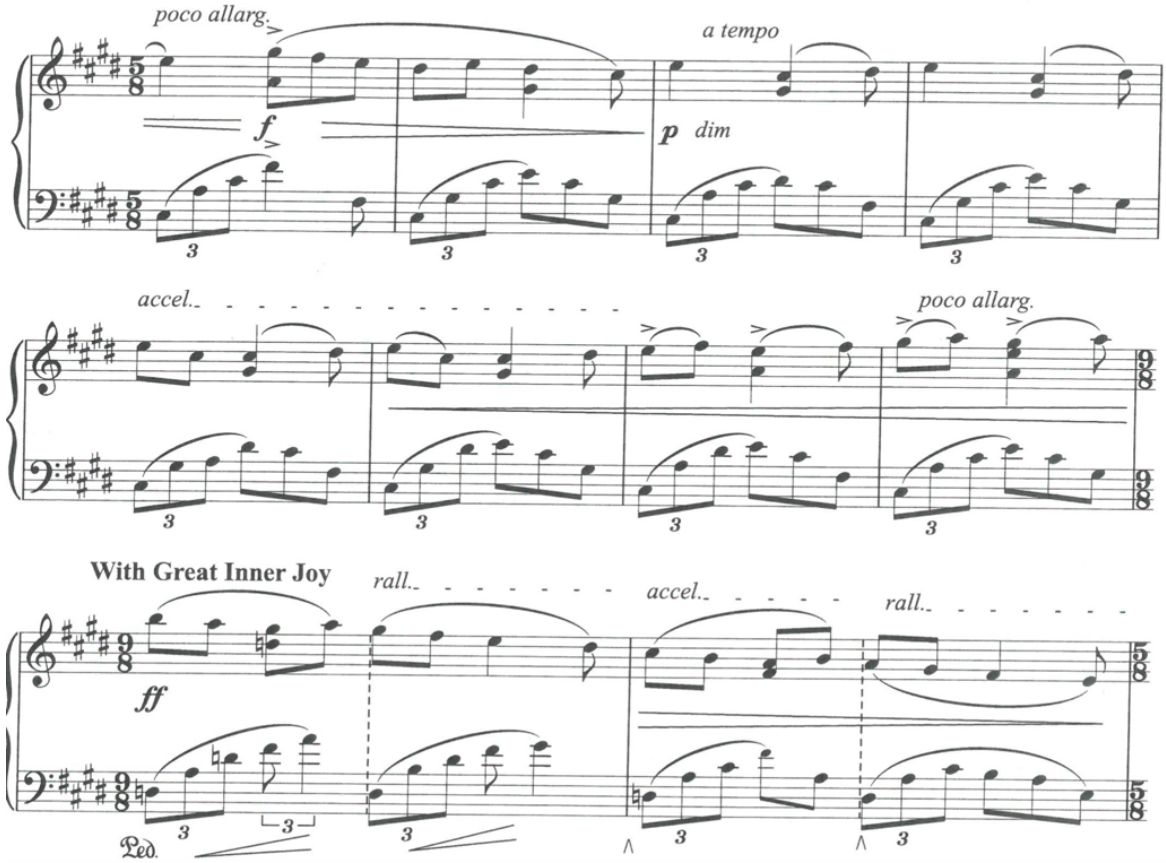

Figure 18 Drawing together, b.48-57.

Poole's writing is quite easily understood when the music is linked to the character of the piece that I crafted after reading the commentary. According to the commentary on Cui, the

piece conveys a sense of losing oneself and eventually finding one's way back with the help of others. The changes in speed parallel the thoughts in the text.

Table 14 Drawing together, Conversation 2.

The 'Pianist'	The 'I Ching'
Overall, the dynamic range in this piece is not dramatic. There are two bars marked fortissimo, one is b.35 in the middle part, and the other one is b.56, at the Coda part in the last section.	
	Do you think the two fortissimo marking means the same level of loud sound?
My understanding is the b.35 (Fig. 17) will be a loud sound, but in b.56 (Fig. 18) as he marked it with 'great inner joy', which suggests an inner emotional state, it will be a rather extroverted expressive sound.	
	Maybe if you linked the music to meaning of the trigram, which is called Dui (兑). Dui means joy, in Chinese. Thus, the attribute of this trigram is joyful.[181] *In relation to the playing, perhaps it can be achieved with more tension or space in playing the fortissimo in b.56.*

In the last section of this piece, it is worth noting the quick emergence of the pentatonic scale at b. 41, which appears in the L.H. part for the first time (Fig. 19). The scale is: f sharp, g sharp, b, c sharp, d sharp, f sharp. According to the pentatonic scales, this is the Zhi, (徵) scale, which is dominant note of the B Gong (宫) five tone scale.

[181] Wilhelm, Book of Changes, p.li.

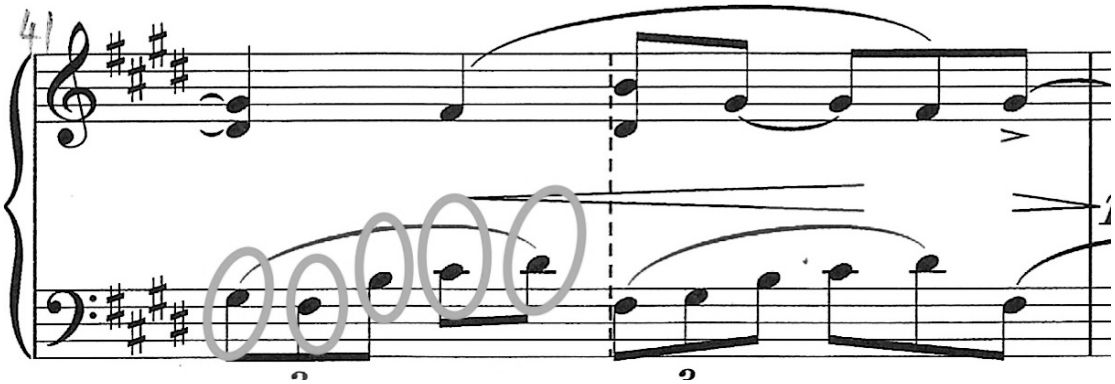

Figure 19 Drawing together, b. 41.

During my interview with Poole, he confirmed that he used pentatonic scales intentionally in this composition as a reference to China, because the Chinese influence of the *I Ching*.[182] Jeremy Day-O'Connell explain the Pentatonic scale in Asian music and points out the typical difference in the Chinese system 'features a pentatonic core plus two pien-tones (变音), to filling the minor third in the gap.'[183] Poole did not use 'Pien-tones' in this piece, but his confirmation of using the pentatonic scale as a hint of Chinese influence is an interesting point, which can resonate with the development of using the pentatonic scale since Chinoiserie composition as Arensky's piano etude.

For the second piece, I analysed three aspects of the piece's three sections in relation to the *I Ching*. Firstly, I explored the various emphases in the music motive that create the swinging feeling. Secondly, I delved into the quick tempo changes in the B and Coda sections, which match the feeling of hesitation and uncertainties in the third line in Table 10. Lastly, I examined the difference in playing fortissimo in this piece. The most effective part of my process is the *I Ching* as a bridge that bound me with the music; the thoughts raised

[182] Poole, interview, Appendix One.
[183] Jeremy Day-O'Connell, *Pentatonicism from the Eighteenth Century to Debussy* (Rochester, NY: University Rochester Press, 2007), p. 2.

while understanding the commentary provide a suggestion to my question and guidance to play the music. To me, the playing of contemplation is a journey of meditation, whereas *Drawing Together* needs to be so free and flowing.

Yin Yang in Scenes from a Jade Terrace

Scenes from a Jade Terrace

The following score analysis conducted in the first phase gives insights into my understanding of the contrasting elements of Yin Yang in relation to Louie's compositional techniques. The influence of the Yin Yang theory is evident in the structure of the three movements. In contrast with Parker's macrography, I mostly observe the contrasting elements from a micrographic view, which also shows a fusing of the contrasting nature of Yin Yang. The first piece, *Warrior*, contains three sections (A, B, A') (see Fig. 20).

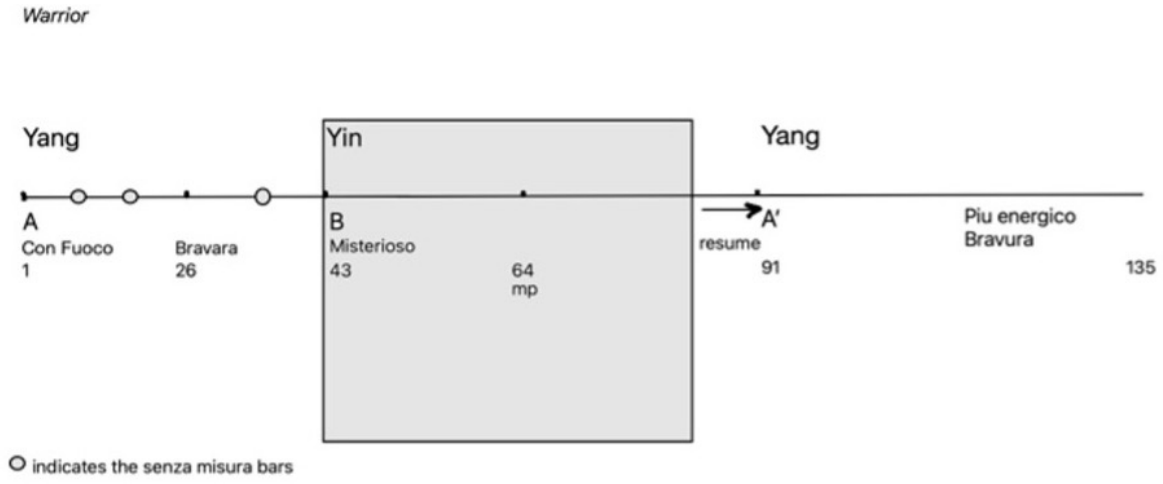

Figure 20 Diagram shows the structure of Warrior.

The beginning of the *Warrior* immediately creates an energetic and strong opening (Yang) from b. 1 to 42. The D-flat octave at the bottom sets the haunting scenes of a lonely warrior sitting on the wall and ready for a fight. The E flat and A in the upper two voices form a tritone to enhance the uncomfortable and scary feeling (Fig. 21, below).

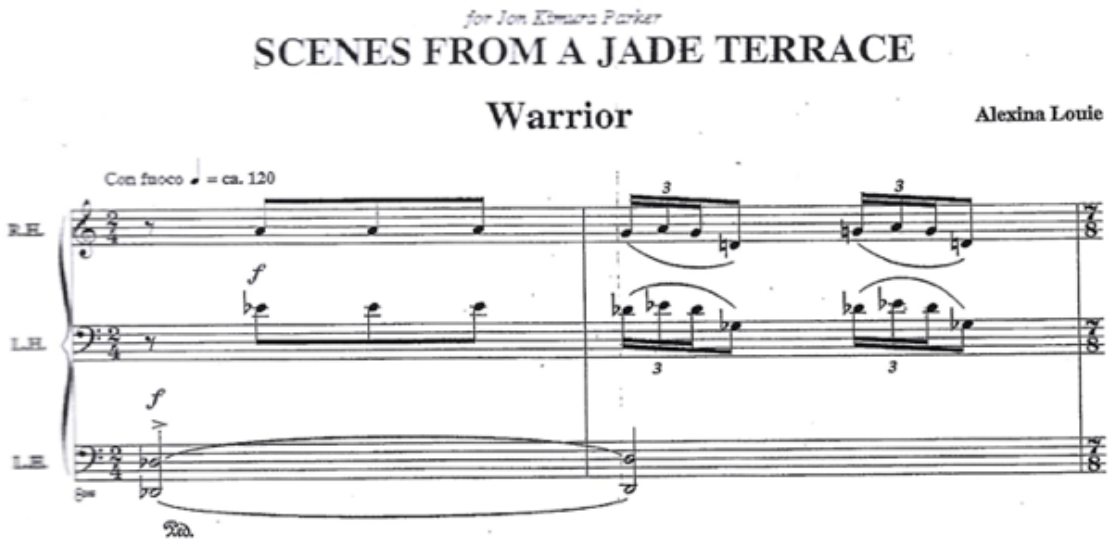

Figure 21 Warrior, beginning section.

Then from b.43, the character changes dramatically to a much calmer state and an image full of misterioso (Yin). The use of a lower register in triple p and the fermata all requires the performer to consider the balance of timing and different layers of soft playing in this section (Fig. 22).

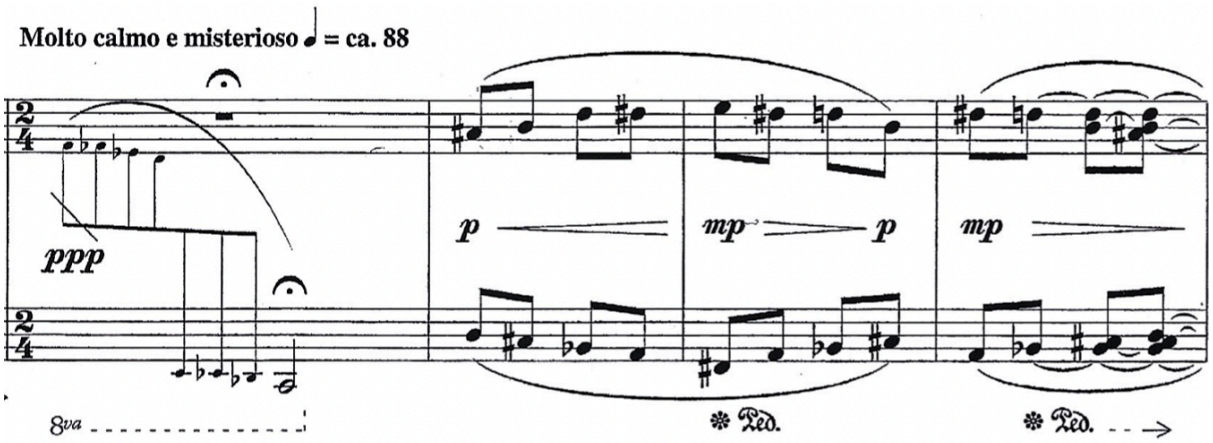

Figure 22 Warrior, middle section.

As the arrow I labelled in Figure 20 shows, which is the cadenza part with accelerando from bar 86 to bar 91, by exploring the direction of the chords while increasing the intensity in speed and dynamics, the music finally leads to the Yang (A') again. This

writing exploring colour and timing (Yin section) also contrasts with the senza misura bars in (the Yang section). One is moving forward whereas the other leaves much space for timing.

Later, the A' section begin with a similar musical motif as A, but not in the same way as people would expect in a traditional ternary form. It appeared as a variation of A's motif (see Fig. 23).

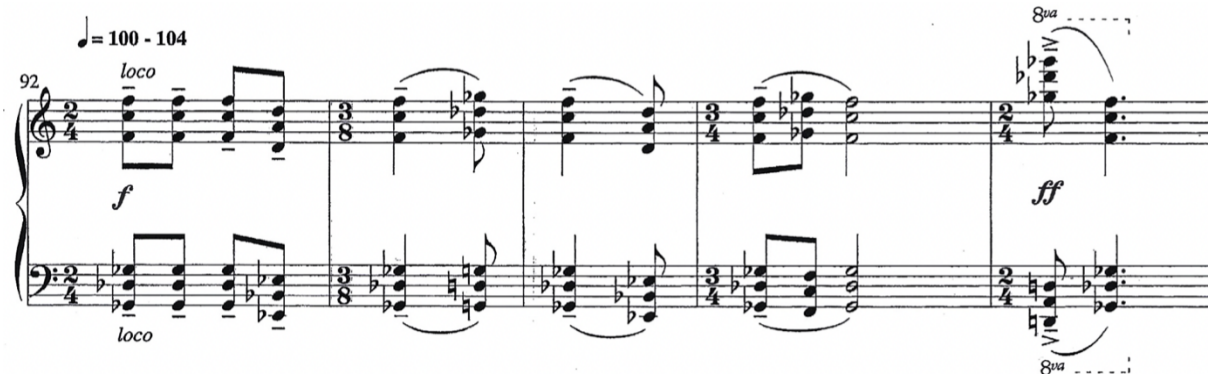

Figure 23 Warrior, last section.

The Yin and Yang sections in the second movement *Memories in an Ancient Garden* is in a reversed order compared to *Warrior* (see Fig. 20 above and Fig 24 below). Louie wrote in her notes to performers 'whereas that the second movement needs to be more introverted and mysterious in character and atmosphere at the beginning, and then the intensity is gradually built up by the ostinato passage into the peak part of the piece.'[184]

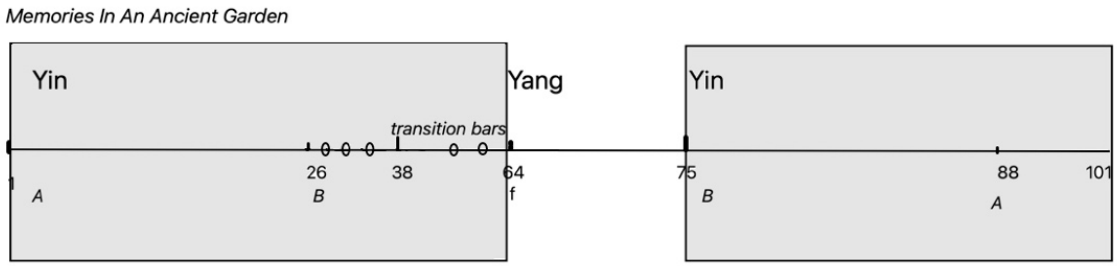

Figure 24 Diagram shows the structure of Memorise in an Ancient Garden.

[184] Composer's notes to performers, *Scenes from a Jade Terrace*, p. 1.

The playing speed of the first motive (A) at the beginning is relatively slow, which creates a similar atmosphere as the Yin section in *Warrior.* But it has an even darker character because of its texture which is to press all the white and black keys at the lowest part of the piano gently. Later, from bar 38, the new music idea (B) starts where the left-hand plays the ostinato bass in D, while the right-hand plays the melody with a grace note in the diminished 5th interval. Although bar 38-63 is much more flowing than the beginning of this piece, the whole dynamic range remains on a soft side, so I consider that bar 38-63 is still a part of the Yin section. Towards bar 64, the intensity is built over the transition bars (b.52-63) and finally reaches the peak moment b.64 in this piece (Fig. 25).

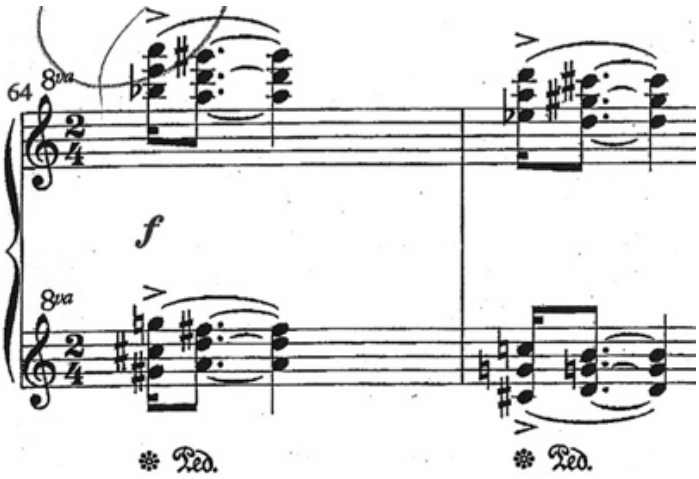

Figure 25 Memorise in an Ancient Garden, b.64.

There is an interesting coincidence that the motive in bar 64 of the first and second movements are similar in pitch, falling semitone in the right hand: (G Flat to F; D and D flat), (A to G sharp, D to C sharp), (Fig. 25 and 26).

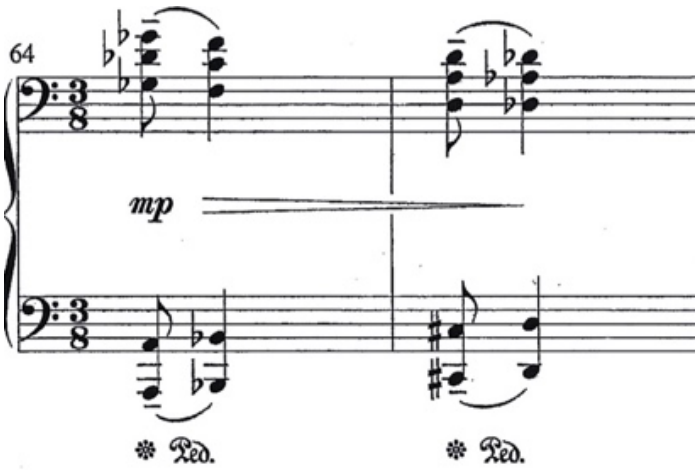

Figure 26 First movements, b. 64.

But they contrast in rhythmical speed: (three quaver beats) (two crotchet beats), dynamic: (mezzo piano) (forte) and articulations: (tenuto on the first note with a slur) (accent on the first note with a slur). In the middle section of the first movement, the motif in bar 64-65 marked mezzo piano, has chords played in bass clef for both hands, and it appears in the Yin part which is more relaxed (see Fig. 26); whereas in the reappearance in the second movement, at the same bar 64-65, the chords are played in treble clef, and it appears in the Yang part which is more forte and intensive (see Fig. 25). This is an example that shows the same motive but appears contrastive while depicting an inner connection between the two movements. This provides another support to Parker's idea of new structural conventions based on the Yin Yang theory in the first two movements of Louie's innovative writing.[185]

After the energetic chordal bars (64 to 74), the energy finally descends from bar 75 (B) towards the end. The musical ideas from A and B sections, which were heard previously, are both recalled in the last Yin section (Fig. 27). The circled chords in the treble clef from bar 88 were the musical idea from the A section, while the musical ideas on the other two

[185] Parker, p.59.

bass clefs from bar 87 are from B section. The left-hand plays D ostinato appears consistently as a background until both hands finish with D in the different registers of the piano.

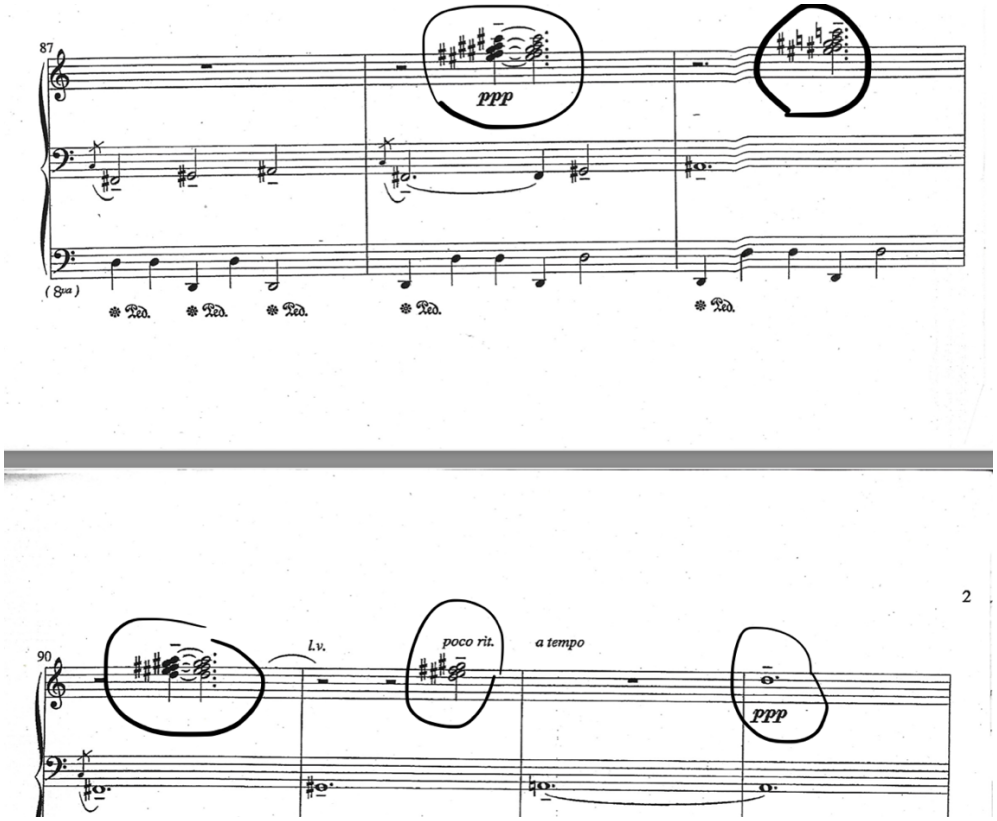

Figure 27 Memorise in an Ancient Garden, b.90-93, right hand chords.

In *Southern Sky*, the third movement, the contrasting elements as a reflection of Yin Yang is not in the sense of its structure. According to Parker this movement is not in a typical Yang mode.[186] In terms of the structural plan, I agree with Parker because it does not have a soft and calm B section as one would expect of a Yin-mode, in contrast to the fast and sparking opening section. But it is worth noting that in *Southern Sky*, the Yin Yang contrast is still reflected in the change of the speed and using different ranges of the keyboard (see Fig. 28).

[186] Parker, *The Solo Piano Music of Alexina Louie,*p. 65.

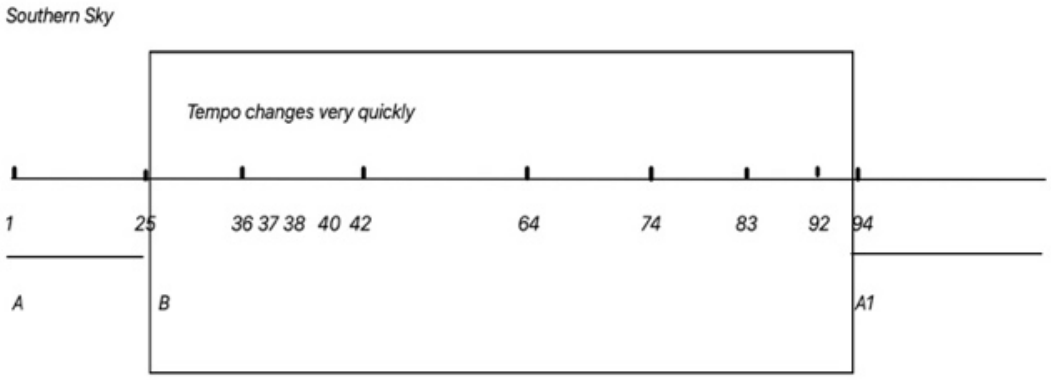

Figure 28 Diagram shows the structure of Southern Sky.

By looking at Figure 33, it is easier to spot that the tempo in A and A' is more stable compared to the B section between bars 25-93. Crossing these bars from 25-93, the tempo changes 8 times, largely alternating between slower (crotchet = 100) and faster (crotchet = 176) sections, but with constant manipulations. This gives a sense of volatility and a lively character. The sparse and crowded drawing in between bars is because I want to show the changing speed in this part compared to the rest of the piece.

In addition to the contrast in tempo, it is also worth observing the use of the range on the piano because this is closely linked to the timbre colour in different ranges of the piano. In Chu's thesis, she viewed the Yin Yang in the use of the piano from the register of keyboard and pedal, where she noted, 'Louie's piano works are rarely composed in the "comfort zone" which is the middle register'.[187] For most of the bars in this movement, Louie chose both hands to play the notes of treble clefs, while only 12 bars used bass clef for the left hand. However, the use of the higher register of the keyboard is varied in this movement.

[187] Chu, *On the Musical Silk Route*, p. 36.

The sound and character at the beginning are like fireworks; the fast semiquavers need to be played with sparks and bright sounds, as there are many accented notes. In her conversation with Kim, Louie mentioned that she often found it difficult to convince performers who have been trained to 'play nicely' to play with a harsh and forceful sound.[188] Based on [PS2], I can understand the concerns of others about making direct and forceful sounds. The way I was trained to play the standard Western classical repertoires is mostly associated with the touch and sound I produce from the piano. It always requires a gentle and speaking tone colour from the piano; even when some parts require a louder sonic effect, I will try to voice the chords to ensure the balance of the top voice in the chord while aiming for a richer sound in the bass. Thus, I am not very used to making direct sounds, which may explain why performers like me feel conscious when following Louie's instructions on dynamics.[189]

Conclusion

In this chapter, Chinese philosophical thought is explored primarily through Geoffrey Poole's compositional process, rather than through overt musical signifiers commonly associated with Chinoiserie. Poole's approach differs significantly from John Cage's use of the *I Ching* in *Music of Changes*, where compositional choices were determined by randomised procedures such as coin tossing. Instead, Poole engages with the *I Ching* as a reflective and philosophical text, drawing on its commentaries and symbolic structure to inform the creative process. His compositional response is shaped by sustained dialogue with the text—particularly its emphasis on transformation, relational thinking, and responsiveness to change. In this way, Poole's work resonates with a Sinophone mode of thought: one that engages

[188] Kim, *The Evolution of Alexina Louie's Piano Music,* p.35.
[189] This was a reflection after [PS2].

Chinese philosophical frameworks not as fixed cultural markers, but as evolving resources for thinking, feeling, and making. Rather than relying on stylistic mimicry, his music participates in the broader circulation and reinterpretation of Chinese ideas across cultural and linguistic contexts, contributing to an ongoing global conversation around the *I Ching* as both a historical text and a generative tool for artistic practice.

The chosen methodology replicated his process in composing and transformed it into a practising model. I used my understanding of Chinese culture to interpret the pieces and guide my performance. The dialogue between the 'Pianist' and the 'I Ching' demonstrates this process, with the 'I Ching' represents my own consciousness, guided by the objective framework provided in the commentaries. This framework played a crucial role in interpreting the hexagrams and ultimately helped me make detailed decisions about how to play the pieces.

In *Contemplation,* the absence of common musical indications left ample space for exploration. Understanding the meaning of the hexagram before practising offered me an overview of the tempo, dynamics, and voicing of the chords. During practice, my dialogue with 'I Ching' laid a theoretical foundation, and my association with the qin instrument helped me determine the gesture of playing and defect speed fluctuation in hand movements.

In *Drawing Together*, I learned the structure and understood Poole's intention in composing swing and freedom motives. His use of pentatonic scales is another implication of his music is associated with some level of Chinese element. The quick tempo changes in the two sections further explore the flow of the musical character, aligning with the meaning of the lines of the hexagram Guan. This exploration mirrors situations in one's life, as reflected in Poole's music.

The reproduction of the questioning and answering scene, derived both from Wang's methodological model of an internal dialogue and Ellis's 'emotional recall' process, serves as an example for people and other pianists who are interested in *A Pianist's I Ching*, showing how they can replicate the process. However, the outcome will surely be entirely different. For instance, my understanding of *Contemplation* and *Gathering together* is exclusively linked to my situation three years ago during the pandemic. This means that while one might receive 'contemplation' after asking *I Ching*, it will be understood based on one's self-reflection and may not necessarily lead to the same outcome.

As Poole discussed how he thinks the *I Ching* can help people interested in playing *A Pianist's I Ching*:

> I confess I am not an "authority" on I Ching; I am more an amateur who respects its innate wisdom and the good that it can do if used intelligently. But so far as I am aware, the Sage knows very little about the technical aspects of 21st-century piano performance or the tastes of various audiences. So, its advice can only be very general - if it meets the question at all!
>
> However, having said that, what I have found amazing - and often fruitful - about I Ching is that it casts a slightly different light on the question posed. So if you ask, "Should I play this piece faster?" it will probably answer in different terms altogether from those of the piano teacher or critic or audience, yet when you think ", What does that advice mean?" you might actually discover a fresh perspective - aha! I see; it isn't the speed; it's the fact that the piece must sparkle, and so you realise that this is a question of articulation, and it may actually work better at a slower speed. Both the Sage and the Score pose challenges of interpretation.
>
> That's an invented example to illustrate the way the *I Ching* could (in my view) lead to improved performance.[190]

Although it is impossible to include all sixty-four pieces in this case study, based on Poole's writing, it is not necessary to play all sixty-four pieces as a completed work. Instead,

[190] Poole, email, 25/05/2023

by using autoethnography as part of my methodology for this piece, I aimed to create an example for others to understand the cultural relationship with music. Although every pianist might craft their playing differently, one needs some understanding of the hexagrams to doing so.

This analysis provides a new example of cross-cultural piano compositions. Based on the analysis, Poole's Chinese adoption is a consultation between the composer and the *I Ching*. Poole uses the interaction with the book as a compositional model, which is the most unique part of the Sinophone influence in this composition.

In conclusion, although the most obvious Chinese musical adoption in *A Pianist's I Ching* is the use of pentatonic scale, which is also confirmed by the composer himself for its association with China, the composition does not belong to Chinoiserie musical compositions. Instead, it showcases new possibilities for cross-culture compositions. What truly matters in this composition is the personal attachment to the music itself as a musical implication of the associated hexagram. It breaks the expectation for pieces with 'musical Chinoiserie'. Poole's Chinese adoption is based on his deeper understanding of the *I Ching*. Therefore, I consider this work as a Sinophone piano composition.

In addition to Poole, the Yin Yang philosophy assumes a profound symbiosis with the *I Ching,* aligning harmoniously within the realms of ancient Chinese philosophy and cosmology.[191] At its core, this relationship hinges upon the ideals of equilibrium and

[191] As mentioned previously in Chapter 2 in relation to the *I Ching*, the unbroken line represents Yang, and the broken line represents Yin; the interaction of Yin and Yang symbolises the dynamic changes between male and female in human life. This reflects a broader speculation within Chinese cosmological thought. For a more detailed explanation of Yin and Yang as derived from the *I Ching,* and their development into the Yin Yang school, one of the key branches of early Chinese philosophy, see Yu-lan Fung's, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* (New York: The Free Press, 1948), pp. 137-142.

interconnectivity, elements that find exquisite expression within the structure in Louie's *Scenes from a Jade Terrace*, seamlessly interwoven with contrasting elements across its three movements. Notably, the utilisation of distinct musical features from Chinese folk instruments – such as the resonating gong and the evocative qin – illuminates an avenue of response to the research inquiry, shedding light on the nuanced adaptions embraced by Western composers, which will be explained in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Two Instrumental Influences

Overview

This chapter focuses on analysing the elements from the Chinese gong and the qin in Louie's *Scenes from a Jade Terrace* to understand the Sinophone musical influence on piano performance practice through imitating the choreography of playing and the sound of these two traditional instruments. Furthermore, the result of studying Louie's composition enhances the identification of qin influences in the 2nd and 3rd movements from Body's *Five Melodies*, where I compare their similarity in using the strings inside the piano. I also highlight how their ideas come from completely different elements of qin playing. This addresses my [RQ1 and 2] on how Western composers adopted Chinese elements into their piano compositions from the 1950s onwards and what the Chinese influences reflected in them. By discussing the instrumental influences from these two instruments, my study can provide a thorough understanding of the divergency of Chinese adoptions in Western composers' piano compositions and a new angle on understanding the diversity of Sinophone in piano works. As a precursor to studying the Sinophone elements that are reflected in compositional techniques, I will first provide an introduction to the musical features of Chinese traditional instruments to draw attention to the parallel these elements share with Louie and Body's music in order to answer my [RQ3] on how we identify the Chinese adoptions in cross-cultural compositions. The chapter is a Practice-based study with demonstrations in order to answer my [RQ4] on how cultural perspectives influence the shaping of one's performance practice. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the methods used in learning Louie and Body's compositions include the score analysis, recordings from my practice sessions for comparisons, and a transcript from my interview with Louie.

Choreography and timbral effects

The fertile Chinese cultural elements provide a rich resource for Western composers to explore a new way in their instrumental writing and evoke their imagination through searching for timbral colour on piano. Through piano writing, Louie clearly demonstrates the influences of traditional Chinese instruments in her compositions. This is because of the sound from traditional Chinese instruments that intrigued her greatly, as found in her blog: during her family trip to China, Louie brought some of these instruments back with her, including the Chinese gongs.[192]

Gong: from sparse to dense in texture

In *Scenes from a Jade Terrace*, gong sounds are prominently reflected through various compositional ideas. At the beginning of *Warrior*, the repeated left-hand D Flat (See Fig. 29 below) shares the characteristics of Chinese gong playing. In [PS1], I labelled the quaver beats number under the repeated left-hand D Flat to demonstrate the texture of the music writing moves from sparse to dense, and simultaneously the playing goes from slow to fast, which mirrors the traditional way of playing the gong. The use of different lengths and the low register of the note produces an intensity that evokes a haunting scene in the atmosphere. A similar effect is achieved at b.9, with the sustaining B flat leading to b.16-17 where the sustaining A, the lowest note of the *Warrior,* is introduced.

[192]Alexina Louie, 'My Chinese Opera Gong', *Esprit Orchestra* http://www.espritorchestra.com/blog/my-chinese-opera-gong/ [accessed 3 August 2023].

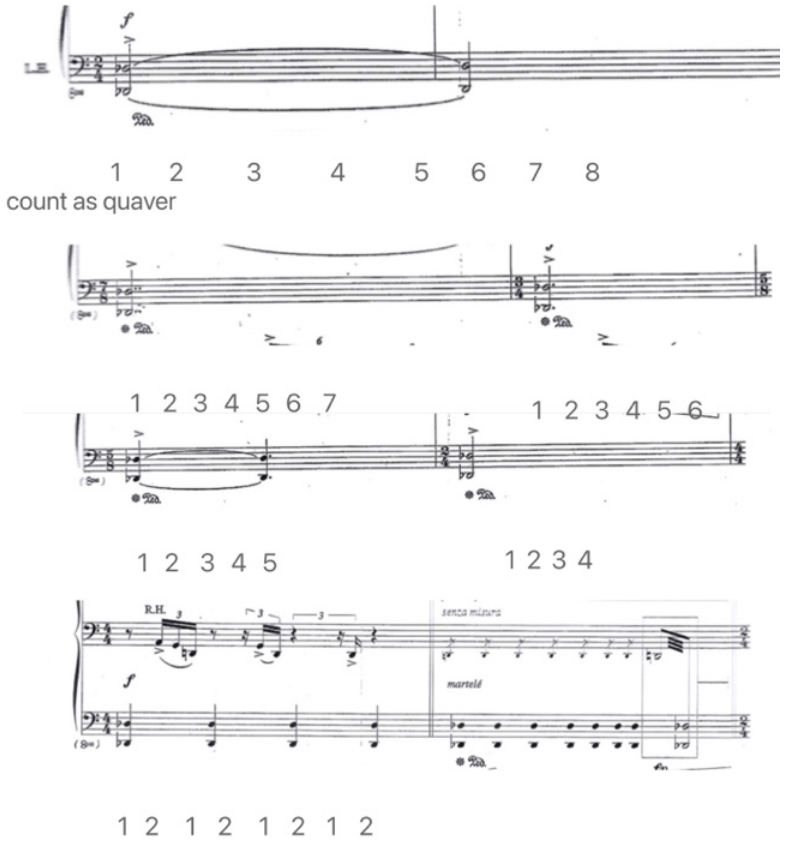

Figure 29 Warrior, b. 1-8, left hand.

The way Louie employs the gong effect resembles a piano arrangement in a Chinese composition, originating from a piece of Chinese folk music played by bamboo flute and drum, called *Music at Sunset* (see Fig.30). This section serves as an introduction, imitating the playing method of Chinese bells and drums, where the sound goes from sparse to dense, from strong to weak. The pianist achieves this effect by using different levels of strength in

their fingers. In the first line, the repeated B flat notes gradually become shorter and shorter, which is a typical way that Chinese drums are played.

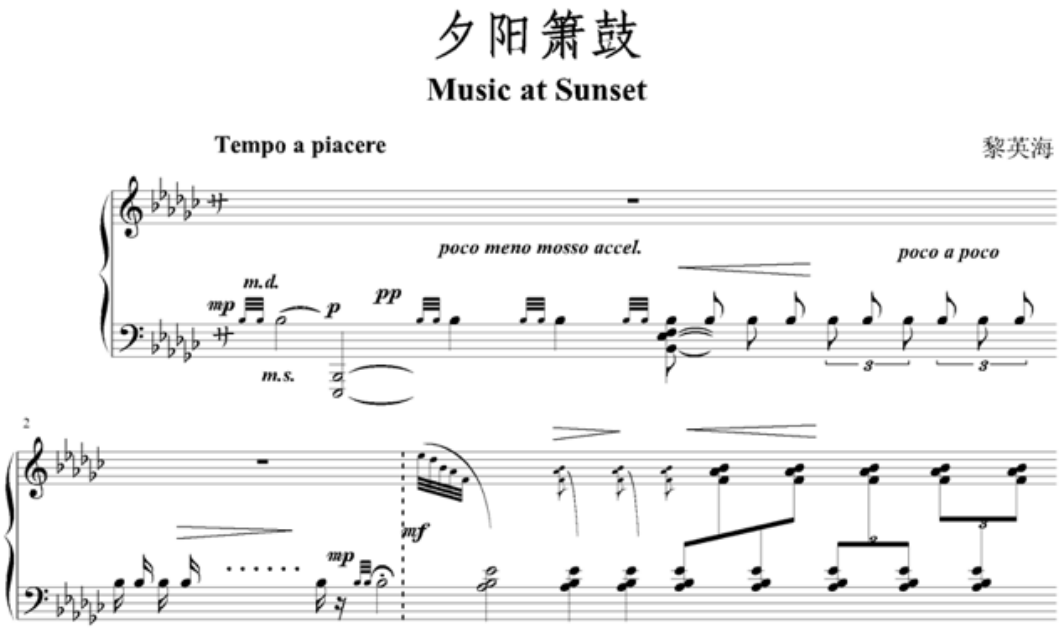

Figure 30 Music in Sunset, arranged by YinHai, Li.

Thus, since [PS1], I tried to imagine the distinct gong sound and imitate it with the left hand playing in the beginning of the *Warrior*, from b.1-17 which features the characteristic and function of gong sound (see Fig. 34 above). I was trying to emphasis the sustaining D flat at the lower register of the keyboard to create a strong momentum feeling. The register of this note on piano is similar to the gong sound, and here is the recording example after [PS3], I have finished learning the piece in first phase: Video 3 video 3: Warrior opening.[193]

During my interview with the composer, I mentioned this gong effect in the left hand to Louie, especially the figure in b.7-8. The following are her thoughts on this:

[193] Performance of 'The Warrior' from [PS3]: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gG-vLyCmKHc53N7Xgf7OYeevkaXhYDLl/view?usp=share_link

> It's not that I specifically want to do it, but it (the sound) certainly was in my ear. That kind of figure you hear in the Chinese New Year as accompanying the lion dance.[194]

Besides this, Louie frequently mentioned exploring the elasticity in playing her music, which inspired me to explore the possibility of the gesture and rubato. Here is a performance version of me playing the same passage: Video 4 video 4: Warrior opening (performance).[195] This time, I raised my hands higher and emphasised less at the beginning of the scale between playing the lower notes. The playing speed of Video 3 is only two seconds faster than that of Video 2, but it has a much more flowing and forward feeling, but still effective character. The importance of understanding the connection between body movement and music playing was pointed out in Marc R. Thompson and Geoff Luke's article 'Expressive Body movements are an integral part of Performing Music.'[196] According to their investigation, body movement can affect players' interest in performance.

Gong: Cluster effect

Chords cluster is a different kind of writing that imitates the gong sound as well. They appear in b.63, b.75 and b.80 of the first movement (see Fig.31, below), as well as in the opening of the 2nd movement (see Fig. 32, below).

[194] Louie, interview Appendix Two, 20/08/22.
[195] Performance of 'Warrior' in live concert, video recording, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BbbA-55n0K32MNWsK0m8YpFJrSqRO2ln/view?usp=share_link
[196] Marc R. Thompson and Geoff Luck, 'Exploring Relationships between Pianists' Body Movements, Their Expressive Intentions, and Structural Elements of the Music', *Musicae Scientiae*, 16.1 (2012), p. 19.

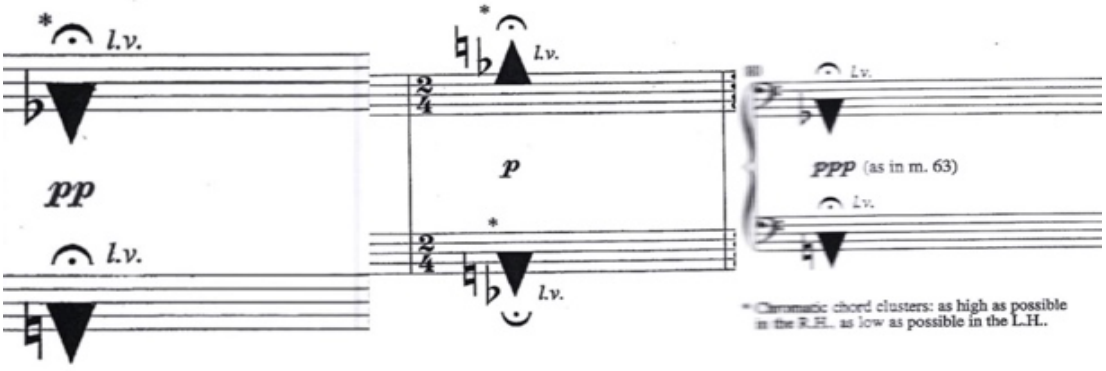

Figure 31 From left to right, chord clusters in the first movement b.63, b.75 and b.80.

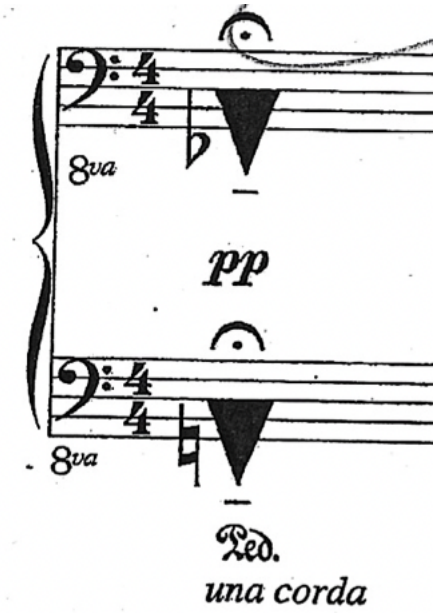

Figure 32 Memorise in an Ancient Garden, b.1.

Louie uses the tone cluster that requires the performer to play with the palm, softly pressing the lower part of the piano. During my practice sessions, I was concerned about bringing different layers of the cluster effect, which can be affected by the speed of pressing the keys at the bottom of the piano. Especially in b.1 and b.14 of the 2nd movement, there are also tenuto marks under the cluster chords with una corda, audio 2 audio 2: 2nd mvt.

Opening.[197] The use of tone cluster at the lowest part of the piano shares similarities in resonance with audio 1 chao gong, (see page 43).

In [PS2], I imagine the gesture of playing the gong but in a gentle way and replicate this hand movement on the piano to create resonance. During the interview, when we discuss the beginning of the second movement, Louie reiterated the importance of finding resonance in her compositional process and playing her music.

> I am seeking a certain resonance to the music that people have told me is unique to myself. I don't expect you to eliminate that leaning on the top note, but one has to feel the resonance of the music is supporting that…I have been influenced by the impressionistic composers, the resonance of the music is important.[198]

Another example is in the second movement, b.19, where the pianist needs to strike the lowest strings inside the piano. Kruja also mentioned the *sulle corde* effects in Louie's composition, which are used to imply the gong sound (see Fig. 33).[199]

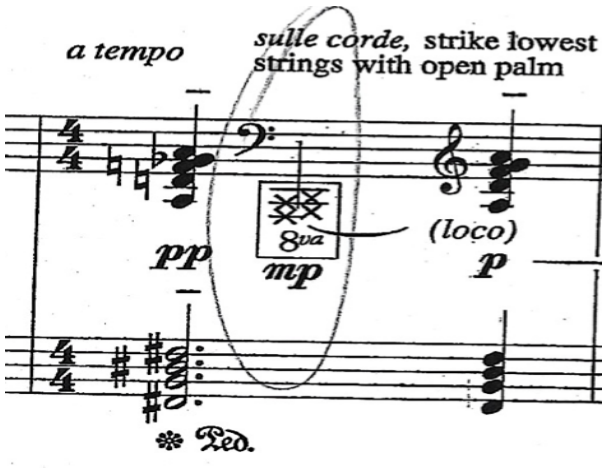

Figure 33 In b.19, strike the lowest strings.

[197] Audio excerpt from *Memories in an Ancient Garden*: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sohJsynhyV6eT7vugxe6EWo3NRvnSs5Z/view?usp=share_link
[198] Louie, interview Appendix Two.
[199] Mira Kruja, *Piano Inside Out: The Expansion of the Expressive, Technical, and Sonorous Spectrum in Selected Twentieth-Century Art-Music Repertoire for the Modern Acoustic Piano* (unpublished DMA thesis, University of Kentucky, 2004), p. 112.

In fact, the choreography of striking the piano strings is also a reflection of playing the gong.

In [PS3], I tested to imitate the way of playing gong with my right hand, but it was not a success. By reviewing the video, I realised it was not because of the imitation but because I did not fully allow my hand to strike the strings loud enough, Video 5 video 5: Memorise in an Ancient Garden, strike strings.[200]

After listening to the recording from [PS3], I thought again about the speed of attack the strings and also the dynamic I wanted to bring. Here is another playing version of the same bar, Video 6 video 6: Memorise in an Ancient Garden. Strike strings in performance.[201] From Video 6, You can see a much higher right-hand movement and quicker attacking of the strings. As a result, the sound and playing is even more similar to a gong.

The gong influence in *Scenes from a Jade Terrace* can be identified from three musical elements. Firstly, using the note in the lower piano register creates more resonance in sound. Secondly, striking the strings on the piano produces an indefinite pitch, just like the gong, which also has an indefinite pitch. Lastly, the gesture to produce sound on the lower strings requires an open palm, with a dynamic marking of the mezzo piano. This gong effect presented on a piano creates a unique timbre colour on expression; Parker also stated that the piano was treated by Louie as an orchestra, and the different registers of the piano had their unique timbre colour.[202] Imitating the way of playing gong helped me realise the importance of gestures and hand movement in my learning process, which influenced how I play.

[200] Video excerpt of bar 19 from *Memories in an Ancient Garden* [PS3]: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NeFUOTWYRIeSGNgDGAjKA74YC9asbuWV/view?usp=share_link
[201] Video excerpt of bar 19 from *Memories in an Ancient Garden* [live performance], https://drive.google.com/file/d/15tHN1WESho8yWziLooC0gzqE4FxmPi7l/view?usp=share_link
[202] Parker, The Solo Piano Music of Alexina Louie, p. 58.

The qin's inspiration

In addition to the gong effect, people discuss qin's influences in Louie's work, especially in the second movement, *Memories in an Ancient Garden*, where similarities are reflected in asking the performer to play inside the piano and use glissandi on the piano strings. But its cultural meaning goes beyond the actual music and the instrument itself. Scholars consider playing the qin as a form of 'self-cultivation', which aims to 'clear the heart of the performer.[203] That is to say, learning qin is a journey player who meditates and expresses the performer's character through the music. Various qin performance practices exist, but the most directly related to Louie's compositional technique can be found at the b.50 (see fig. 34). In this bar, it requires a flick of the strings at the end of the glissandi on the piano strings, which is the same technique as 'Ti' (踢) in Chinese, meaning 'kick'. This technique in qin playing involves the performer flicking the string. [204]

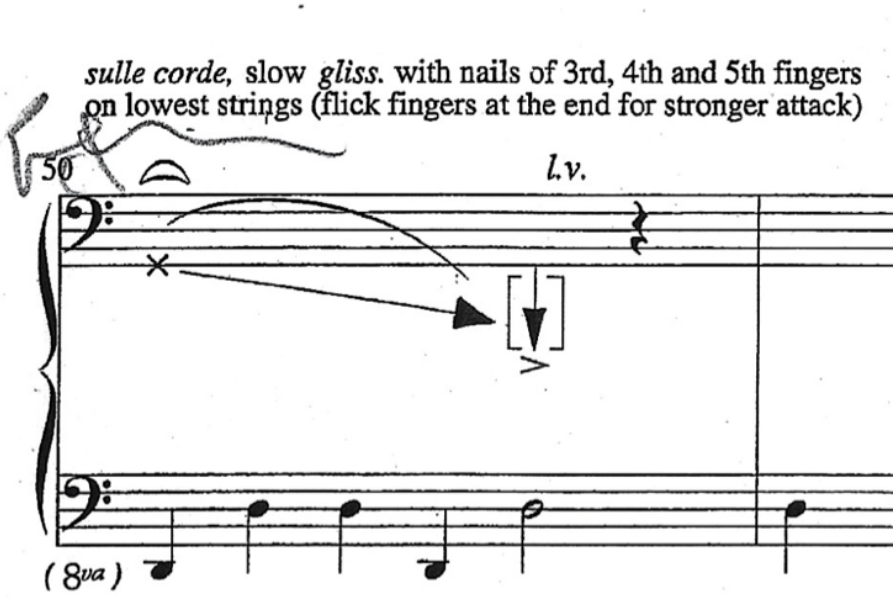

Figure 34 Memories in An Ancient Garden, b.5.

[203] Leonard Tan and Mengchen Lu, '"I Wish to Be Wordless": Philosophising through the Chinese Guqin', *Philosophy of Music Education Review*, 26.2 (2018), pp. 139–54.
[204] Nier, "Ti" *Demonstrated,* YouTube video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JuOsfWK9qlo [accessed on 10 June 2022]

Despite the complexity and variety in the qin's playing techniques, the simplest principle is that the left-hand controls the overtone of the note that is plucked by the right hand, and the sound is modified by sliding the left hand upwards and downwards. Table 16 below lists the three basic qin performance techniques.[205]

Table 15 Three Basic Qin Performance Techniques

San yin (散音)	Scattered sound	right hand plucks the open strings
Fan yin (泛音)	Floating sound	left hand plays on the dot (emblems) of the strings that is plucked by right hand, in order to create its overtone.
An yin (按音)	Stopped sound	left hand presses the string down at the certain dot (emblems).

The danger of playing this part inside the piano is that, in most practice rooms, the cast iron frame inside a baby grand piano has four sections, whereas a concert grand normally has five sections. The frame inside the concert grand piano will prevent the pianist from moving their hands freely and from playing glissandi in the middle strings in the second movement.

[205] These three basic techniques have more detailed subdivided categories, which is not the focus of this thesis, so will not be explained further.

Figure 35 concert grand, model D.

For instance, in Figure 35, I usually practice on a grand piano with four sections, which allows me longer to make the glissandi on middle strings. However, in the recording during [PS3], I adapted to the concert grand piano. Still, the sound was a lot weaker at the b.74. On this issue, Louie agreed in the interview that it is up to the performers' discretion. They can differ from her original instructions, Video 7 video 7 Memorise In An Ancient Garden, [PS3].[206]

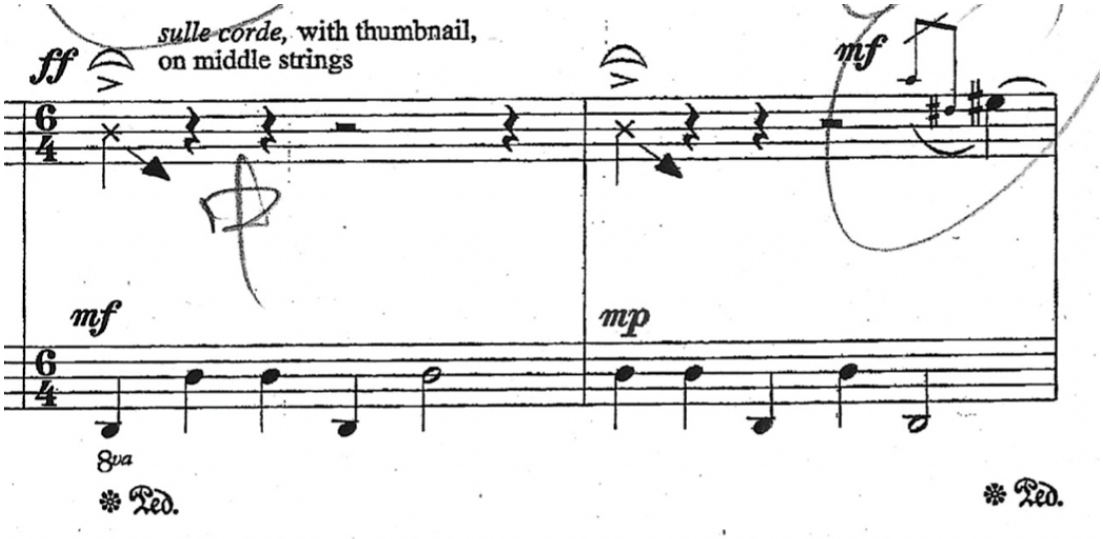

Figure 36 Memories in An Ancient Garden, b.74-5.

[206] Video excerpt of bar.74-75 from *Memories in an Ancient Garden* [PS3]: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vuJj0Ofb_4Es_GRLe6uQtW5wmV1DUqQg/view?usp=share_link

The way of producing the overtone inside the piano is evidence of qin influence as well, even though the use of piano strings has already become one of the common features in Twentieth-century piano compositions; as in Table 16 above, the three basic qin playing techniques for producing different sounds are listed.

At the end of Louie's *Memories in An Ancient Garden*, she used the overtone elements where pianists need to stand up and put their right hand on the strings at the furthest point from the tuning pins and move along the strings towards the pins and away while the left-hand plays the note on the piano. It is a typical 'Floating sound', Fan yin (泛音) from qin instrument (see Fig. 37). This is a recording from a real performance, as the camera captured the hand movements better than my own recording from [PS3], video 8 video 8 Memorise in an ancient garden, b.97-99.[207]

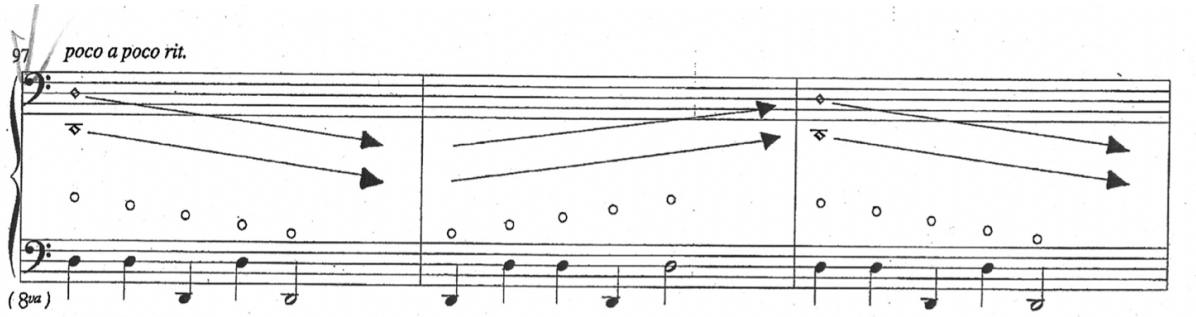

Figure 37 Memorise in an Ancient Garden, b.97-99.

Similar physical gestures can be considered and implemented while playing the third piece of Jack Body's *Five Melodies*. For example, all the lower notes on each line are played by my right hand on the keyboard, whereas my left-hand controls the overtones on the strings inside the piano being played by my right hand. This physically imitates the qin gesture by playing the strings inside the piano. Firstly, the player needs to find the harmonics of the notes, which the composer indicates: 2 means half of the string; 3 means one-third of the

[207] Video excerpt of bar 97-99 from *Memories in an Ancient Garden*: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f0eWQ6AlPuAPJBOhB1Qih25iHHEVvZUp/view?usp=sharing

string. Then, mark these harmonic points on the strings; these marks offer the same functions as the thirteen emblems on the qin, like the frets on a guitar (see Fig. 38 below).

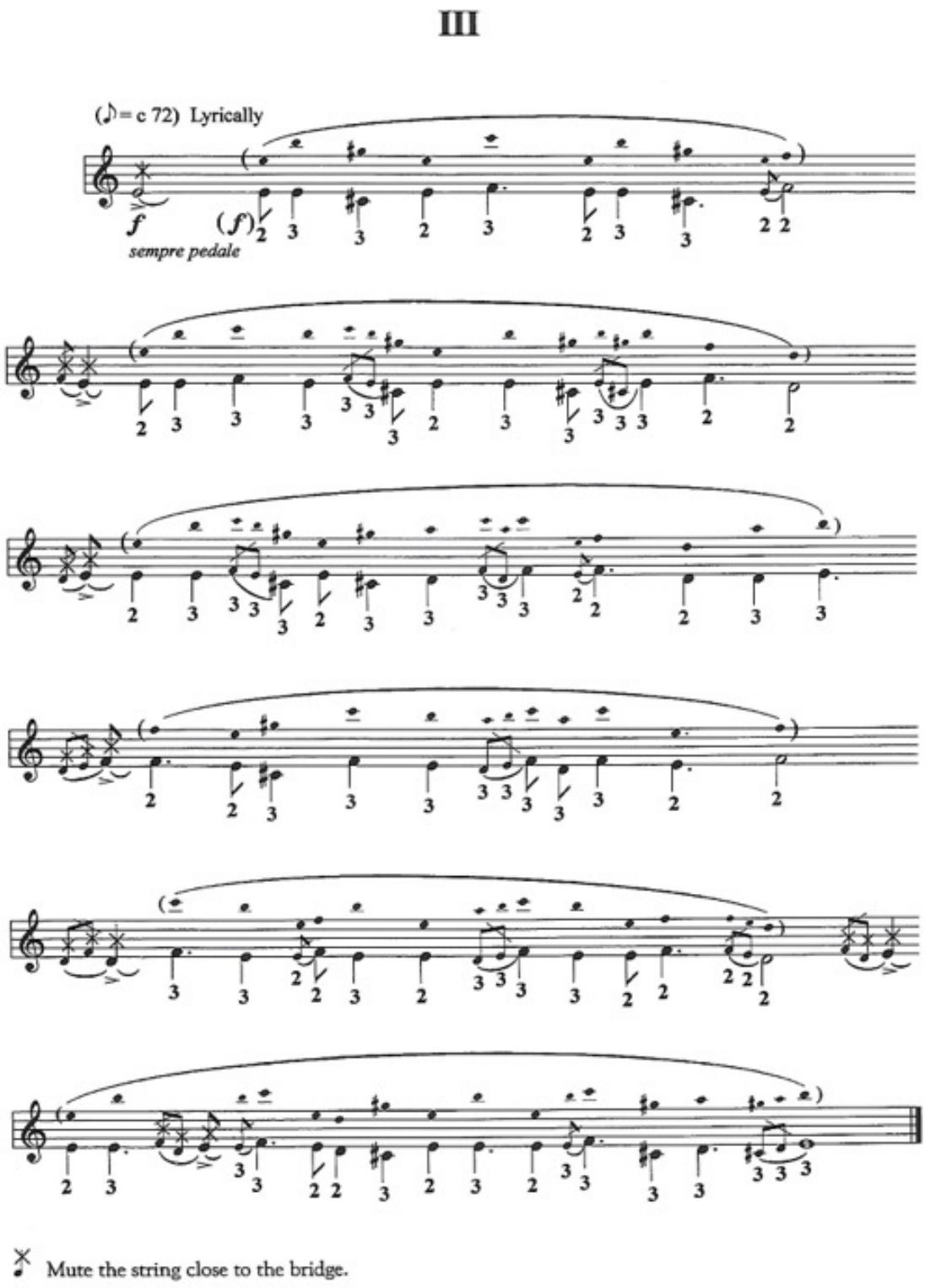

Figure 38 Five melodies, third mvt.

At the opening of this piece, the right-hand plays E on the piano, whereas the left-hand touches the two harmonic points ‘e’ and ‘b’ of that E string. There is the option of playing these two notes separately, as two separate sounds, which creates the ‘Fan yin’ (floating sound) as an overtone in the qin technique. However, by using ‘An yin’ (stopped sound), which is the technique to stop sound (as described in Table 16 above) and moving the finger simultaneously downwards, the two harmonics notes can be played by the left hand with a legato sound. Video 9 video 9: Sliding the piano strings.[208] This small gesture can enhance the qin sound in a piano performance.

In this movement, Body fully utilised the piano and simultaneously turned it into a string instrument. In the qin playing technique, the left hand touches the string gently and releases it simultaneously with the right hand plucking the string. This new way of playing helps imitate the qin’s sonic and timbral effect using piano strings. Thus, the choreography of controlling the overtones and sliding fingers on the qin strings is very distinctive.

In addition to the temporal organisation, which makes Body’s music similar to qin music, it is important to consider the qin's choreography and how it is to be reproduced on the piano. This aspect reveals an element of meditation and communication, which is the essence of qin’s aesthetic.

Temporal organisation in qin’s music

In addition to the choreography of playing the qin, the musical notation system of qin music is not as detailed as the Western music notation system.[209] For example, as mentioned in Chapter 2, temporal organisation is missing in qin music. Chun-Yun Tse and Chun-Fung

[208] Video excerpt demonstrating sliding on the piano strings, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1X28KyRFbDKj9jiK_OoUWx7AlXCmwIUuM/view?usp=share_link
[209] See also Chapter 2 for a discussion of Jianzipu, p. 58.

Wong have analysed and categorised qin music by revealing distinct yet interconnected types of temporal organisation manifesting in qin compositions (See Fig. 39 below).[210]

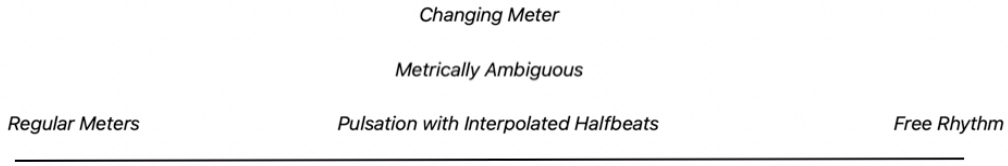

Figure 39 Diagram of qin's temporal organisations.

Tse and Wong identified two sub-categories under 'Free Rhythm': 'Pulsation' and 'Non-Pulsed'. Both sub-categories share common features, with the music comprising various phrases separated by pauses.[211] Notably, the 'pulsation' category within free rhythm exhibits a characteristic pattern of starting slowly, accelerating towards the middle section, and then decelerating towards the end.[212] In this 'free rhythm' category, qin music has the following musical features:

1. Structured into phrases and each marked by a 'breathing space,' characterised by a pause.
2. Generally, in a slow pace.
3. Lack of a perceived pulsation pattern.
4. Intervals between musical notes lack a consistent pattern.
5. Erasing the sense of pulse.
6. Instances of extreme rubato result in pulsation within certain parts of a phrase.
7. Non-pulsed sections may feature long notes with added vibratos.
8. Vibratos start gradually with a strong amplitude and accelerate as the sound lingers.[213]

[210] Chun-Yan Tse and Chun-Fung Wong, 'Metrical Structure and Freedom in Qin Music of the Chinese Literati', *Analytical Approaches to World Music,* 8.2 (2020), p. 170.
[211] Ibid., p. 175.
[212] Ibid.
[213] Ibid.

In Body's 2nd movement, the composer wrote 'Cantabile, Slow, with pathos', as the markings of expressions and tempo for playing this piece. His notations provide detailed instruction on the speed and dynamics of playing grace note, under the first line:

> All grace notes very fast and clearly articulated, sounding almost simultaneously with the melodic notes they precede. All grace notes should be P relative to the melody notes F.[214]

In addition, he notes above the first line, but in brackets – 'rhythm aperiodic, melody always legato' (Fig. 40).

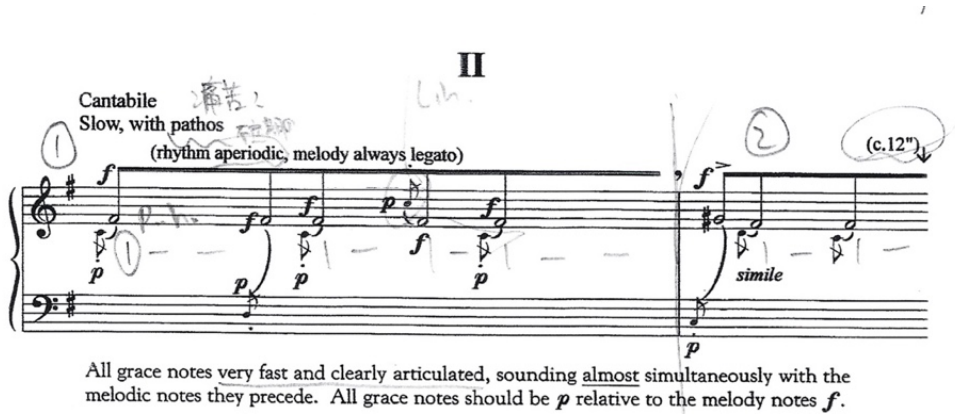

Figure 40 Five Melodies, 2nd movement.

In [PS1], my initial thought was that the composer is concerned that there may be a risk of the pianist playing the entire piece with a certain pattern of time intervals. Thus, I created a table to help me practise and categorise the musical elements to track my thoughts (see Tables 16 and 17 below). The first thing I was concerned about was the lack of meter in the notations and ensuring my playing remained non-metrical. This Table helped me keep the space between these notes 'aperiodic'.

Based on the notations, I made nine different categories in the table, S = slow, Q = quick, QS = play the next note immediately, then hold back before proceeding to the next

[214] Instructions by Jack Body, the 2nd movement of *Five melodies*.

note, QQS = play three notes immediately, holding back before proceeding to the next note. All the numbers marked after QS are the counts I will await after playing the note. I also used apostrophes after Q or S to indicate how many little notes there are after the last note. Between phrases 6 and 7, and phrases 7 and 8, there are two empty spaces, which means the bar only contains a few little notes. Between phrases 9-12 (see Table. 17, below), I use dot(s) after QS1 to indicate the rest after a note is played. All the Q or S as well as the numbers after them, were firstly marked on the score during first phase, then assimilated into the tables.

By observing the rhythm organisations section in Tables 16 and 17, it is clear that it matches Tse and Wong's points 1-6 about the 'free rhythm' in qin music (listed above). Due to the nature of the piano instrument, the vibrato on a string is impossible to be produced; the points 7 and 8 will not be included in this discussion. But points 1-6 show the significant rhythmic features which resonate not only with Body's second and third pieces of *Five Melodies* but also with Louie's approach in *Memories in An Ancient Garden.* Both composers abstain from providing meter indications, opting instead for comma signs or timing indications at *senza misura* bars to suggest an estimated duration for playing each phrase (see Fig. 40 and 41).

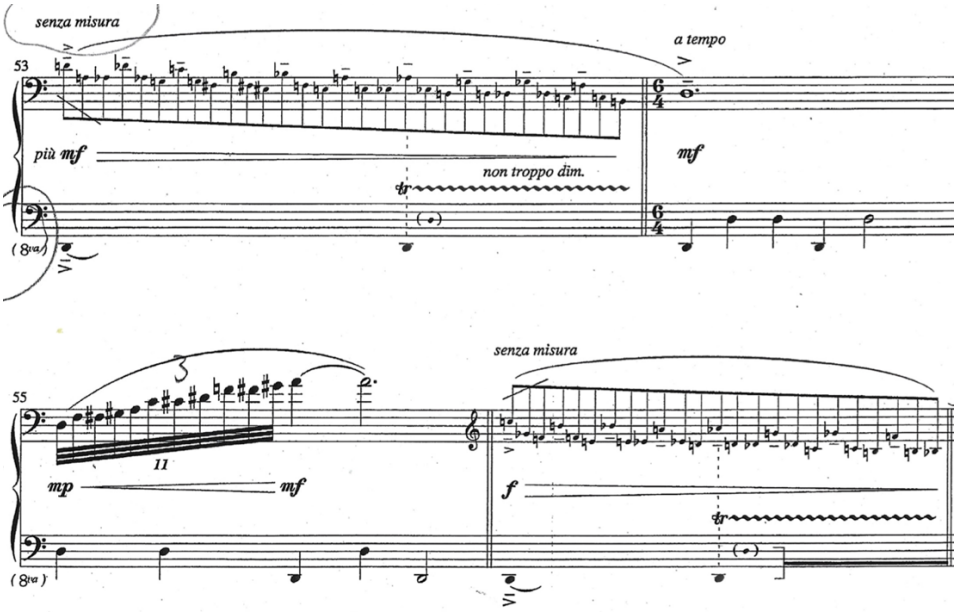

Figure 41 Memories in an Ancient Garden, senza misura bars (b.53-56).

Table 16 Five melodies, 2nd piece, phrases (1-8)

Phrase 1-8	1	2	3	4	5	6	-	7	-	8
Key signature	F sharp									
Rhythm Organisations	S2, QS1, S1, S2	QS1, S1, S1'	S2, QS2, S1, S1, S1''	QS1'', QS1, QQ'''	QS1, QS1, S1, QS1, S1, QS1, S1'''	QS1, QS1, S1, S1, QS1, S'''	-	QQS1, S1, S1,	-	QS1, QS1, QQQS1, S1, QS1'''''
Dynamics of the main notes	F						PP	MF, F,	PP	MP, F, FF,
Main notes	F sharp	F sharp, G sharp			F sharp, G sharp, A			F sharp, G sharp, A, B flat		G sharp, A, B flat, C
Shape	smooth						Three ascending notes	Ascending	Three descending notes	Ascending
Intervals	+4°, Maj10，-5°	+12°, Maj3, +4°, -5°	+11°, -5°, min6, +4°,	Maj3, +4°, -5°, +11°,	Maj3, +5°, Maj10, -4°,	-5°, Maj3, +4°,	-	Maj3, Maj2, +11°, min6(chord)	-	Maj3, Maj2, min6(chord)
Use of register	D-c2	C-c2	C-g sharp2	D-b1	C-c2	c1-f2		B1-f2		B1-a flat 2
Notes at the end of each phrase		d	c, g sharp	d, g sharp. c e flat b	b e flat d,	b e flat c,	b e flat c,	b e flat c,	b e flat c,	f,a,b,b flat g
Pedal	Use									No

Table 17 Five melodies, 2nd piece, Phrase (9-12)

Phrase 9-12	9	10	11	12
Key signature	B flat and E flat			Natural
Rhythm Organisations	QQQS1, S1, QS1， S2	QQQS1, QS1，	S1, QS1, QQS’’’’’’	S1, S1, QS1, S..., QS1, S.., QS1, S1.1, QQS1, S1, S1.1, QS2, S1.2.*
Dynamics of the main notes	F			F, mf, p, mp,
Main notes	B flat,C, E flat,	B flat,C, E flat, F	F, E flat, F Sharp	F Sharp,F, G, A, C,
Shape	smooth	Shape consists of a perfect 4^{th} (B flat to F)	smooth	Shape consists of a diminished 5^{th} (f sharp to c)
Intervals	min6， min3, min6(chord)	min3, +4°,	+4°, Maj3,	Maj3, +5°, min6, +4°
Use of register	B1-b flat2	A-b flat 2	A-d3	A-f sharp3
Notes at the end of each phrase	-	-	A Flat, C, A, E, B, F, D,	
Pedal	use			

Conclusion

Upon a comprehensive analysis of Louie's *Scenes from a jade terrace*, a rich tapestry of varied approaches in incorporating Chinese elements emerges. These cultural facets manifest across two main dimensions: the infusion of philosophical underpinnings and integration of musical attributes drawn from traditional instruments. The sounds of Chinese gong and qin in her music give her piano compositions a unique and fresh perspective. These Chinese influences make her music stand out from other composers who also use Chinese elements.

Translating qin sound or transcribing its music on the piano has been experimented with many composers, including Chinese composers. However, it is interesting to observe how each composer has developed their own unique way of integrating the qin elements into their composition. Body's innovative approach of using the piano strings in the third piece is very distinctive compared with the other composers. In the 2nd and 3rd piece of *Five Melodies*, the non-metrical restriction and the physical gesture reproduce qin's notation and choreography on the piano.

The qin's choreography can provide more options in piano performances of the compositions in this trend. By demonstrating these two main features, this case study shows how Body possibly adopted qin influences from its sound by using the overtones and rhythmical patterns within the piece. For a pianist, with some knowledge of qin's playing techniques can help in imitating it on the piano which may enhance the listening experience of cross-cultural music.

The imitation of the qin is a deeper cultural borrowing and this composition can be considered a part of Sinophone music cross-cultural piano compositions. The last case study

shows a different way in which Chinese cultural elements have been incorporated in compositions by Western composers. Though the type and aspects of Chinese influences in these three compositions are different, they all show a musical engagement with Sinophone influence. Thus, this study demonstrates the emergence of Sinophone influence in contemporary piano composition, as evidenced in the compositions of Geoffrey Poole, Alexina Louie and Jack Body.

Epilogue

At the conclusion of this thesis, I wish to reflect on the research process and how it has reshaped my perspective as a pianist-researcher engaged in cross-cultural inquiry. The journey has revealed not only the depth and complexity of Sinophone influence in contemporary piano compositions but also the interpretative demands this influence places on performers. From the outset, my practice-based approach prompted a fundamental question: how can performance convey culturally embedded meanings that are not immediately audible, and how might such insights inform the design of a recital programme?

Initially, my interpretative lens was shaped by my background as a Chinese musician trained in the Western classical tradition. I began by identifying surface-level musical traits, such as pentatonic scales, characteristic rhythms, or programmatic associations suggested by the titles, but soon realised these markers were insufficient. This score-analysis approach reduced cultural identity to decorative stylistic markers, lacking the depth needed for meaning interpretation. I had to unlearn ingrained assumptions and adopt a more exploratory and dialogic process.

Preparation

Interviews with composers became essential in uncovering the deeper intentions behind their works. For example, my conversation with Geoffrey Poole revealed that the Sinophone influence in his work stems not only from compositional techniques but more profoundly from his engagement with the *I Ching*. This encounter required me to approach the *I Ching* not as a familiar thing, but as a conceptual system to interpret performatively. For my final recital, I consulted the *I Ching* to determine which pieces to present to the audience as a culmination of my research. The answer was hexagram No.60, Jie 节 and hexagram No.29, Kan 坎. Interestingly, Jie in Chinese signifies division into periods, for example, the twenty-

four solar terms in agriculture; while Kan, in its turn, signifies danger and difficulties, symbolised by the depths and abysses of water. Thus, in the programme, I placed the Jie 节 earlier in the programme to symbolise the end of this study and Kan 坎 later to suggest the future challenges inherent in cross-cultural music research.

Similarly, my interview with Alexina Louie offered a contrasting perspective. She seeks to express her Chinese cultural heritage through the lens of Yin-Yang duality. In *Scenes from a Jade Terrace*, contrasting elements such as structure, motives, interval, dynamics, speed, and texture interact to reflect this cosmological balance. Her imaginative use of the piano evokes traditional Chinese instruments such as gongs and the qin, blurring the boundaries between cultural sound worlds. Below is a part of our interview regarding cultural listening habits in piano performance:[215]

> **KM:** When I first played the 2nd movement, *Memories from an ancient garden*, for my teacher, he thought my interpretation sounded "too Western." I asked what he meant by that, and he pointed out that I was voicing the top of the chords too prominently. It's probably a habit from my training, as we often highlight the top voice very much in repertoire by Chopin and Debussy to guide the audience. He wondered if you prefer the chords to have a richer, fuller sound instead of focusing on a single line.
>
> **AL:** That's an interesting observation, and I would say it's a mix of both approaches. My music seeks a particular resonance—it's something people often tell me is unique to my work. Like you, I was raised as a Western pianist, playing the traditional repertoire, and I understand the tendency to emphasise the top line.
>
> In my music, I don't expect pianists to eliminate that habit, but it's also important to feel how the resonance supports that top note. The interplay of harmony and overtones is vital to the overall texture. It's a balance between bringing out the melodic line and capturing the depth of the chords.
>
> Early in my career, some performers approached my music with a very contemporary technique, often making it sound too rigid or lacking in the dynamic contrast I was aiming for. Over time, musicians—especially in Canada,

[215] Louie, interview, Appendix Two.

> where my piano music is on many conservatory and competition lists—have become more attuned to my style.

Practice

This exchange revealed the subtle interplay between culturally conditioned interpretative habits and the nuanced aesthetic preferences embedded in her music. My teacher's comment that my interpretation sounded 'too Western' prompted a reflection on my voicing choices—specifically, the tendency to emphasise the top line of chords. This approach, rooted in my training in the Western Romantic and Impressionist repertoire, foregrounds melodic projection, particularly in composers such as Chopin and Debussy. However, it became clear that this interpretative default did not necessarily align with Louie's compositional language.

Rather than rejecting melodic prominence outright, Louie described her music as seeking a particular resonance that arises from a balance between harmonic depth and melodic clarity. She emphasised the importance of sensing how resonance and overtones support the melodic line, pointing to a more integrated mode of listening—one that embraces vertical depth and sonic interrelationship. Louie's perspective challenges the Western hierarchical voicing norm and calls for a performance approach attuned not only to line, but also alert to acoustic space and textural sensitivity.

Moreover, Louie's reflections suggest a broader evolution in performance practice. She noted that early performances of her music were often rigid and lacked expressive nuance. Over time, particularly as her works became more widely performed in Canada, performers gradually developed a more idiomatic understanding of her compositional voice. This illustrates how familiarity, context, and dialogue shape interpretative conventions and how performance can serve as a site for intercultural learning.

Programming and Performance

These exchanges reflect the kind of critical self-awareness and dialogue that lies at the heart of practice-based research. By examining my own interpretative instincts to the composer's intentions, I came to understand how culturally situated habits can both enrich and limit performance. The process of practice became one of reflection and recalibration, requiring listening, experimentation, and sometimes unlearning.

These new understandings also reshaped my recital programming. I began to see programming as a form of cultural mediation, an opportunity to create meaningful resonances for the audience and to reflect the underlying cultural philosophies that shaped each piece. In curating the recital, I was inspired by composer Bright Sheng's observation:

> Mixing Chinese liquor with California wine yields a result that is not only superficial but also unsatisfactory. It must come from the deepest roots of both cultures: when two seemingly opposites meet at their most original end, a transformation occurs naturally. And the result should enrich both.[216]

Sheng's insight encapsulates what I sought to achieve through this project: not a superficial fusion of cultural signs, but a deep, embodied understanding that informs how music is presented, interpreted, and experienced.

To enhance the experiential dimension of the programme, I incorporated a visual element: a live projection of my hand movements inside the piano, especially during sections where I slid or plucked the strings directly. This allowed the audience to see the physical gestures behind the sound, making the performance more transparent and immersive. Combined with programme notes and a designed poster, these curatorial decisions sought to

[216] Essays by Bright Sheng, *Never Far Away*, http://brightsheng.com/articles/essayfilesbybs/Never%20Far%20Away-article.pdf [accessed 2 December 2022].

open up an interpretative space for the listener, not only to hear the music differently, but also to feel its layered cultural meanings more vividly.

As Edward T. Cone suggests, true analysis works ‘through and for the ear.’ His assertion that ‘an analysis is a direction for a performance’ has reshaped my perspective.[217] Sinophone influence in these works often exists not in the notes alone, but in the compositional philosophy and metaphorical resonance they convey.

Figure 42, Final recital poster, generated using Ideogram[218]

[217] Edward T. Cone, Analyse today, *The Musical Quarterly,* 46. 2, Special Issue: Problems of Modern Music. The Princeton Seminar in Advanced Musical Studies (April 1960), pp. 172-88 (p.174).
[218] It is also interesting to generate a poster by inputting keywords such as Sinophone influence and piano into the AI tool.

Post-Performance Reflections

Reflecting on this work, I return to a remark by composer Gao Ping about performing *Five Melodies*:

> Jack's piece came as such a refreshing air, so clean it feels just one line and yet so inventive. And this language immediately we could relate because somehow it has something of us in it.[219]

One question that emerged during performances was whether audiences would intuitively perceive the Sinophone influence embedded in these works. While certain musical elements, such as pentatonic gestures or evocative titles, might provide clues, much of the cultural resonance remains elusive without context. This prompted me to reflect more deliberately on my role not just as a performer but also as a curator and cultural mediator.

Post-concert conversations often revealed that audiences felt something 'different,' even if they could not articulate it. Several friends mentioned that it was their first time seeing the piano played in such a way, reaching inside the instrument to slide or pluck the strings, which made them realise the piano could produce sounds and gestures they hadn't associated with it before. One person commented, 'it was fascinating to see the piano played like that, I didn't know it could sound so much like other instruments.' These reactions underlie for me how performance, particularly when visually transparent, can open up new layers of understanding. Even when audiences are unfamiliar with the cultural background, they can still sense its presence through sonic and gestural cues. This reinforces my belief that the pianist's interpretive sensitivity is central to making such music intelligible and emotionally accessible.

[219] Jack Body - Topic, *Five Melodies: I. First Melody*, YouTube, 28 July 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWRjyFARoYI [accessed 14 May 2024]

Looking forward

This research contributes to cross-cultural music studies for both academic scholars and musicians, including pianists and composers. From an ethnographic perspective, as a pianist-researcher with a Chinese background, I have gained insight into how certain cultural cues in these compositions may remain unnoticed by performers unfamiliar with Chinese elements. Yet, as ethnomusicologist Bruno Nettel reminds us, the 'outsider' can offer valuable perspectives, sometimes even more so than the 'insider.' Cross-cultural understanding does not belong to any single group; instead, it emerges through dialogue, study, and creative exchange.

For composers, this thesis highlights multiple pathways for engaging Sinophone elements: from the philosophical underpinning of the *I Ching* to the textural metaphors of the qin. For performers, it offers an approach that is both analytical and intuitive, grounded in listening, experimentation, and curatorship. Future research might further explore how traditional Chinese instruments and aesthetics continue to shape the expressive languages of Western piano music.

For me, performance is no longer merely the endpoint of research. it is a method of inquiry, a form of knowledge production, and a site of intercultural connection. When we approach the piano simple as an instrument, but as a conduit for meaning, performance becomes a place where traditions can meet and where something new can begin.

Appendix One

Personal interview with Geoffrey Poole

Transcribed and edited

Composer's House, Ipswich, Britain

23rd February 2022

16:00-18:00

The meeting began with the author thanking the composer for doing the interview, followed by a discussion about Geoffrey Poole's early music studies.

KM: Could you share what first inspired your interest in music and whether your family background influenced it?

GP: There were. I was taught piano by my uncle, who, like my family, had moved down to London, and they were quite close. He was a primary school headmaster and a very good pianist. And I gather my grandfather was a violinist as well. So, there's sort of talent coming down in the family, but the idea of being a professional musician, other than just teaching, I think, was very scary. Nobody encouraged me to do that.

KM: It sounds like there was musical talent in your family, but also some hesitation about pursuing music professionally. How did you overcome that reluctance? At what point did you decide that music was the career path you wanted to follow?

GP: Well, from about 13, I found what I wanted to do was always playing the piano. I was 15, I was playing - there was one weekend I played all of the Beethoven sonatas. I wouldn't say I played them very well. And I also analysed lots of the music. But my strongest subject other than music was probably mathematics and then went on to science in sixth form. And then, because I didn't want to do science and technology, I did eventually go to university to study music. But meanwhile, I was applying to do psychology. This seemed to be something in the middle, that was the sort of science but human-based, which really interested me.

And the reason why I'm quite interested to be telling you this is because I've only just realised how it hangs together, eventually, with the *I Ching*. Because through psychology, I was more interested in Carl Jung and archetypes. And it includes his idea of different types of, you know, the thinking type of person and feeling and the sensation and the intuitive types. So these four psychological types are themselves based on astrological types - fire and water and so on. I found that all of that imagery very potent, that, you know, we're not just one sort of person, we're all a mixture of these elements, but they're useful analytical tools.

KM: How did you come across the *I Ching*?
GP: So in 1973, my favourite uncle, the one who taught me piano at the beginning, decided to chase a legal case, because some elders in our family had quite a lot of money. And then none of it came to the family. It turned out it was because a doctor and a solicitor had stolen it. So he decided to go into this and find out about it. And it's funny, because it vividly comes back to me, I had just bought my *I Ching* book and the family were arguing about it. And I

said, ‘well, I wonder what's going to happen.’ So I tossed the coins, and it said, ‘your diligence will be rewarded’ and that we're going to win. And everybody laughed. But the next year we won.

KM: Do you find that the principles or ideas in the *I Ching* influence your approach to creativity or music composition?
GP: It's very interesting. By now, I had graduated, and becoming a postgraduate. I'd even professionally performed my first compositions. But quietly, I was getting very interested in alternative ways of thinking. And that has remained part of my character: I'm interested in alternative ways of thinking and find that there's more… You have to use your intuition as well as your logic. But, you know, I like that. And I think it's not very different from how it works as a composer.

KM: Since you mentioned your piano studies, could you share how your formal studies in composition began and where you studied?
GP: My early compositional studies were deeply influenced by my music master at Forest School, William Buncher. He was the sole music teacher there, and I benefited from being in a very small class—just one other student and me. The lessons were quite personal, and we had about two 40-minute weekly sessions. The teaching was informal, more conversational than formal, which suited me well. We focused on understanding music naturally and intuitively rather than getting bogged down in rigid analytical systems.

I remember a lot of the discussions revolved around harmony. For example, Buncher would help me identify and understand chords like the dominant 9th, especially in works like Schubert’s. He didn’t push me to memorise theoretical systems like Schenkerian analysis or other compositional methods that you might encounter in a conservatory. Instead, it was more about listening to the music and identifying how things flowed, how certain chords or progressions fit together, and then learning the right vocabulary to describe them.

We studied specific set works for my A-levels, such as Benjamin Britten’s *War Requiem*. These pieces were a core part of my education at that stage, and we would analyse them in depth—though, again, this wasn’t through any formal analytical methods but more through conversation and a deep dive into the music itself. Buncher would ask us to consider things like how the music made us feel or how certain moments seemed to shift direction. It was a very organic approach to music analysis.

Looking back, my education was much more about experiencing and understanding music intuitively. I wasn’t taught methods like Schenkerian analysis or detailed voice leading, which I later encountered in my compositional studies. But in those early years, it was all about the flow of music and responding to it as a listener, using whatever vocabulary I could develop to describe what I heard.

While I did have to prepare written work and perform analysis for exams, there was no pressure to analyse music in the formal ways you might find in more recent college-level education. My learning was more about the experience of music itself—how it naturally made sense to me as a listener and a developing composer.

KM: After Forest School, did you continue your studies with any other compositional teachers or mentors who shaped your compositional approach? How did they influence your compositional approach?

GP: Well, after Forest School, I applied to both psychology and music programs at university - six applications in total. Four were for psychology, which my parents supported because it was a science, and two were for music, in case the psychology route didn't work out. I ended up applying to York and East Anglia, and it was East Anglia that I went. The decision was somewhat serendipitous.

I had already been accepted to study psychology at Coventry, which was my original plan, but something about East Anglia appealed to me more. I remember arriving in Norwich, walking past the Cathedral, and being so captivated by the place that misread the map and got lost! I ended up missing the first assessment and was interviewed later. I played the piano and brought some of my compositions, including an orchestral piece and a piano sonata, and I also had to do an aural test and sightreading. They offered me a place on the spot and encouraged me to travel around Europe and not worry about exams.

At that time, psychology was still my primary focus, but music took centre stage in ways I hadn't expected. Through my music studies, I worked with Imogen Holst, singing in Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*, and collaborating with Britten and Pears. It was a real turning point. By the end of it all, my parents finally accepted that I was going to follow my passion for music.

KM: Did you have different teachers after you went to universities and how did your teacher influence you in composition?
GP: After graduating with first-class honors from East Anglia, I went on to study for a Composition Master's at Southampton in its inaugural year for composition. Jonathan Harvey was on the staff and very influential, though not officially my teacher. My actual teacher was Alexander Goehr, who visited every fortnight. Goehr, whose father was a student of Schoenberg, was a prominent serial composer, but he respected my choice not to follow serialism. Instead, he encouraged me to explore other approaches, like plainchant and gave me the freedom to develop my style. Over that year, he supported me significantly in my early career.

KM: At East Anglia, did you have a compositional teacher?
GP: No, not formally. The facilities were still being established, and the staff included a medievalist and a historian but no dedicated composer. Essentially, I became "the composer" there because I was actively writing music. One of my works, *Wymondham Chants*, was composed during that time and later performed by the King's Singers without any formal compositional teaching. A visiting teacher heard it and connected me with the King's Singers, which opened up opportunities.

KM: Was it the time you started to know the *I Ching* book?
GP: No, it'll probably be a few years after that. 1971, 72? I can't remember exactly. But they certainly didn't have it in Norwich.

KM: Why do you think the *I Ching* book resonates with you? I noticed you have several editions on your bookshelf.
GP: I think it ties back to my early interest in psychology and personality types. I've always been intrigued by the idea that there isn't a single "right" way to behave—that people are unique, and the key is understanding yourself and your situation. The *I Ching* provides models for exploring these questions. It doesn't offer definitive answers, but it helps you

think about timing and perspective—what might feel right now, but maybe not last year or next.

KM: Do you think of the *I Ching* as superstitious?
GP: Not exactly. It's different from Western science, more of an alternative way of seeing questions. I couldn't scientifically explain why it works, but I don't think that's the point. When you consult it, you're already in a frame of mind that's open to advice. The text suggests possibilities, and what resonates with you is often what you need to hear. It's not a final answer but a tool to clarify your perspective. For me, it's been a fantastic resource when I'm unsure about something.

KM: When did you start composing using the *I Ching*?
GP: I know it was early in 2001. By then, I'd had a long and fulfilling career. After studying with Alexander Goehr in Southampton, I started teaching at Manchester University in 1976, where I became Head of Composition. It was a productive time—teaching, composing, and building programs.

In the mid-1980s, I took a two-year leave to work in Kenya, which was an incredible experience. When I returned, Manchester was undergoing financial restructuring, and I found myself sidelined as new staff were brought in. Around the same time, my personal life became more challenging. I was commuting long distances because my wife, whom I married in 1976, was teaching on the East Coast. Balancing family, career, and long commutes became unsustainable, and I eventually moved to Bristol.

In 1993, my wife (Beth Weissman) was diagnosed with breast cancer, and her health declined over the years. By 2000, she wanted a quieter life, so we relocated again. Shortly after, her illness worsened, and my younger daughter was also struggling. I found myself reflecting on these difficulties during a train journey in April 2001. As I sat near Reading, I thought about how the *I Ching* might offer guidance. I decided to turn my personal challenges into inspiration, using the *I Ching* as a creative tool. That marked the beginning of composing with it, and I've continued to consult it in difficult situations ever since.

KM: How has the *I Ching* influenced your compositional approach?
GP: It's hard to pinpoint. My music has become more introspective over time, but I'm not sure if that's due to the *I Ching* or simply age and life circumstances. In my younger days, I wrote larger, more extroverted works like a wind band piece and a piano concerto. Now, my focus is quieter and more reflective, perhaps because of my stage in life.

The *I Ching* offers a way to bypass conscious barriers—similar to how ideas sometimes come to me in the middle of the night when I'm half-asleep. It's less about structured methods and more about allowing unconscious creativity to surface. The random, open-ended nature of consulting the *I Ching* mirrors this process, creating space for ideas to emerge organically.

KM: I'm curious—when composing, do you develop melodies first and then shape them, or does the process work differently for you?
GP: I don't begin with notes and shape them afterwards. For me, the feeling and overall shape come first, and the notes naturally follow. That's why I could never embrace serialism—it feels too detached from the emotional and structural integrity of the piece.

KM: You mentioned starting to use the *I Ching* in 2001. Did you initially compose for piano?
GP: Yes, I started with piano, but the 64-pieces project took years to evolve. Early versions of the pieces were grouped by the lower trigram of the hexagram, reflecting their shared

mood. Some were published in smaller volumes by Edition Peters in 2009, and later I reworked them into the final collection. The process was gradual, with pieces developing and connecting to the hexagrams over time.

KM: Can you give me an example of consulting the *I Ching* for your compositions?
GP: Yes, I often consult with it, especially when I'm stuck on a piece. For instance, in December, while composing for John Turner, I consulted the *I Ching* and received Hexagram 17, "Following." It suggested moving with delight, sincerity, and rest after completing the work. It also spoke about leadership and being accessible without being obvious—something I interpreted as a balance between originality and approachability.

This guidance helped me break out of my creative route and complete the piece. It's less about whether the *I Ching* is random and more about how it disrupts habitual thought patterns, offering fresh perspectives. Over the years, I've grown to appreciate its depth and humanity, finding its insights increasingly sophisticated as I continue to compose.

KM: Since you sometimes consulted the *I Ching* while composing, do you feel any specific pieces are closely linked to events in your past?
GP: Yes, definitely. The most striking examples are those connected to the time when my wife (Beth Weissman) passed away. Some of the pieces are deeply grief-laden. For instance, several from *The Book of Black Waves* were written during her final illness and after her death. Pieces like *The Voyage Across the Dark Sea* capture the feeling of battling against oneself, an endless struggle that I felt during that time.

The most expressive one is *Deliverance*. I had consulted the *I Ching* during her illness, asking whether Beth would recover, and it gave me the hexagram "Deliverance." At first, I interpreted it as hopeful, but when she passed, I realised it signified her soul being delivered away from us. It's an incredibly bleak piece, full of falling and unresolved emotions—essentially an expression of death. You'll notice personal elements in the music. For instance, I embedded references in a flat minor key for both of us: G-flat for Geoff and B-flat for Beth.

KM: These are very much like a Schumannesque approach, it's very much tied to your emotions and experiences.
GP: Absolutely. These pieces came directly from what I was going through. Take *The Voyage Across the Dark Sea*—it starts with endless searching, dramatic shifts, and a sense of being forced back again and again. It's deeply personal and captures the struggle of coping with loss.

KM: This is all fascinating. And my next question is what kind of message you were sending through the *A Pianist's I Ching*? Or how did you include your own voice in the composition?
GP: Goodness, I don't think I was trying to convey a specific message. It's more about responding to the prompts that the *I Ching* gave to my imagination. Often, the connection between the hexagram and my life was subtle, sometimes conscious, but often private and difficult to articulate.

Towards the end of the project, I did begin looking at certain hexagrams that hadn't appeared in my life, wondering what they might mean and what music might accompany them. But most of the pieces arose naturally, reflecting life experiences at the time with the *I Ching* as a guide.

There weren't any strict rules or systems. It was an intuitive and opportunistic process—like most artistic endeavours. If an idea felt right, I followed it. It wasn't about daily consultations or systematic readings; rather, it was about responding in the moment.

KM: So, would you say *A Pianist's I Ching* is like a mirror or a reflection of your life? A kind of musical autobiography?
GP: I suppose you're right. I hadn't intended it that way, but in the end, that's what it became.

After this, the author thanked the composer, and the conversation transitioned into more personal and informal discussions. As the author reviewed and organised the data collected from the interview, realised there was an additional question that could enrich the document. The author reached out to Mr Poole via email, and he kindly agreed to provide his insights.

The email interview that he responded to on 25th May 2023, is as follows:

KM: How do you think these pieces should be played? Do you recommend performers use the *I Ching*, as you wrote: *"If you happen to know how to consult the I Ching, you will be able to ask it anything…"*?
GP: That's a very interesting question. I must confess, I'm no authority on the *I Ching*—just an amateur who respects its wisdom and the good it can do when used thoughtfully. But as far as I know, the *Sage* doesn't concern itself with the technicalities of 21st-century piano performance or the tastes of various audiences. Its advice is often general, and sometimes, it doesn't directly address the question at all.

What I find remarkable, though, is how the *I Ching* can cast a different light on a question. For example, if you ask, "Should I play this piece faster?" the answer might come in entirely different terms. You might realise the issue isn't speed but something else—perhaps the need for the music to sparkle. This insight could lead you to focus on articulation, and you might discover the piece works better at a slower tempo.

Both the *I Ching* and the score pose challenges of interpretation, and in this way, the *I Ching* could—at least in my view—offer a fresh perspective and improve performance.

Appendix Two

Personal interview with Alexina Louie

Transcribed and edited

Online meeting

30th August 2022

14:00-16:00

The focus of this meeting is to explore the incorporation of Chinese elements in the composer's work and their significance within her compositions. Additionally, the author prepared her recording of *Scenes from Jade Terrace* and planned to discuss the performance details with the composer.

KM: When I first emailed you and introduced my research project on understanding the Sino-Western piano repertoire from a Chinese perspective, you recommended *Scenes from Jade Terrace* and specially the 2nd movement, *Memories in an Ancient Garden* for me to study. How do you think the Chinese elements in this piece? Additionally, there is your piano composition, *Dragon Bell*. Titles like 'dragon' and 'garden' can easily associated with Chinese culture, so I'm curious – was this connection intentional when naming these works?
AL: That's an interesting question. As for *Dragon Bell*, that was one of my earlier works. It was written for pre-recorded prepared piano, and in that piece, I was more intentional about capturing the essence of Asian music. It's quite hard for me to recall all the details now, as *Scenes from Jade Terrace* was my first major piano commission. It was commissioned by Jon Kimura Parker, a pianist from the same city I grew up in, Vancouver. Although we didn't really know each other back then, we both studied piano in the same city and have since become friends.

Jon is half-Japanese, and at the time I composed this piece, I had already been exploring Asian themes in my music for many years. I wanted this major piano solo to reflect some of that, but not by directly imitating Asian instruments like the *erhu* or other traditional sounds. Rather, I aimed for a general flavor or impression of Asian music.

The title didn't come to me immediately, but I knew I wanted to create three contrasting movements. I imagined someone sitting in an old garden in China, reflecting on memories of the past. That image inspired me and guided the creative process.

In 1973, my father took our whole family back to China during the Maoist era. We visited Hangzhou, Shanghai, and our ancestral village. That trip left a profound impression on me. Having grown up in Vancouver with Chinese parents, visiting China was transformative—it helped me understand a deeper part of myself. The scenic beauty and the cultural experiences of that time stayed with me and likely influenced my work on *Scenes from Jade Terrace*. But everything about the piece is more general; I wasn't attempting to emulate something specific, like Cantonese opera. By the time I wrote it, I had been incorporating Asian elements into my music for many years. It took some time for those influences to naturally become part of my musical language.

KM: How would you like the audience or performers to perceive the Asian influences in your music? Do you think about a specific audience when composing?
AL: For me, it's more about my inspiration. If the audience recognizes or feels the Asian influences, that's wonderful, but my primary goal has always been to find my own musical voice.

Growing up, my exposure to Chinese culture came from traditional celebrations—weddings, baby banquets, Chinese New Year—and, of course, food and the values my parents and grandparents instilled in me. But musically, I didn't have a direct connection to traditional Chinese music. From the time I was about seven, I was immersed in Western piano studies, focusing on developing my talent in the Western classical tradition.
It took many years to find my compositional voice, which eventually became an amalgamation of my musical training, and my deeper understanding of why Asian music resonated with me. I wasn't exposed to it directly as a child, but whenever I heard it, I found it deeply moving and interesting. This personal exploration, both general and specific, naturally found its way into my music.

There wasn't a direct link initially, although I did study a Chinese instrument during graduate school. While studying in San Diego, I took the opportunity to drive to UCLA to learn the *Guqin*. That was the first and only time I played an instrument other than the piano, and I found it incredibly beautiful.

KM: Do you still play the *Guqin*? What was it about the instrument that intrigued you?
AL: No, I never progressed beyond the very preliminary stages. But there was something about the *Guqin* that deeply affected me. It's the combination of quietude and intensity—both

are present simultaneously. Despite being a relatively simple instrument with only seven strings and no complex mechanisms, the *Guqin* is incredibly expressive.

What fascinated me most were the subtle nuances—the variety of tones, the different kinds of vibratos, and the array of colors you can produce. It draws you into an internal world, a very introspective space.

Even though I didn't advance far in playing it, the learning experience itself was profound. I studied with a master, and the teaching method was unlike anything I'd encountered before. We sat across from each other at the same table, each with our instrument. He would correct me by playing and demonstrating directly. It was such an immediate and intuitive way of learning.

KM: It's so fascinating to learn that your *guqin* lessons were guided entirely by your mentor's demonstrations—just by listening and imitating him. Is that correct?
AL: That's right. It wasn't a technical or theoretical way of studying. Since I don't speak Chinese, he would correct me by saying, "It should sound like this," and then demonstrate by playing. I had to listen closely and try to replicate the sound. We would continue until I got it right.

Another interesting aspect is that my exposure to Chinese culture when I was younger was quite limited and elementary. As a child, I took Chinese lessons for a few years and learned very basic things—like how to use a brush pen for calligraphy. I remember learning to write my name in a very childlike way. The tactile feel of the brush and the motion of using ink left an impression on me, even though it was just copying symbols onto translucent paper.

This came back to me while learning the *Guqin*. For instance, Chinese notation for the instrument is incredibly sophisticated. Each symbol conveys four different pieces of information, which was entirely new to me. It was a whole different way of learning.
The *Guqin* itself is simple yet deeply poetic and nuanced. It taught me about bending tones, the beauty of harmonics, and the resonance of the instrument. The right hand alone produces a variety of colors through different techniques. These experiences shaped the way I think about music. While I didn't consciously or specifically incorporate these elements into my

Western compositions, they influenced my overall approach in a very general and organic way.

KM: When you were composing *Scenes from Jade Terrace*, were all three movements structured simultaneously, or did they come together at different times?
AL: No, I started with the first movement. Jackie [Jon Kimura Parker] had told me he needed a piece of about 15 minutes for a specific tour and that he was planning to open his concerts with it. Because he was going to use it as an opening piece, I wanted to create a very forceful and striking first movement. That's how the piece began to take shape.

The second movement, by contrast, is the complete opposite—it's very internalised. People often find it haunting, even mesmerising. Over the years, the response to that movement has been particularly striking.

For the third movement, I aimed for something refreshing, shorter, and bright in color—a contrast to the first two. Together, the movements form a cohesive set, but they're distinct enough that pianists sometimes choose to play just one of the movements individually, which I think works perfectly fine.

KM: I've thoroughly enjoyed learning the first and second movements. I also feel there's an interconnection between them. But what do you think the third movement tries to capture in relation to the other two?
L: Jackie [Jon Kimura Parker] had a tough time with the third movement because of the clusters of chords that are played quite fast. His fingers are wider than mine, so navigating the black keys was particularly challenging for him. I could play it comfortably, but he had to work out a way to make it manageable.

The third movement is very bright—it's meant to contrast the introspection of the second movement and the forcefulness of the first. At some point while composing, I had this vision, though I can't remember exactly when it came to me. I imagined sitting in a beautiful, serene Chinese garden—being alone there, surrounded by the scent of flowers and the sight of a starry sky in the dark.

It's a moment of quiet reflection, where memories might surface—perhaps of a warrior or other evocative imagery. It's about the thoughts and feelings that might arise in such a tranquil, yet powerful space. The third movement captures that brightness and sense of clarity within this imagined setting, rounding out the piece's emotional journey.

KM: I noticed there's a description about the feeling evoked by the scent of blossoms in the 2nd movement of *Scenes from Jade Terrace*, which is very poetic. But I was curious—why didn't you include similar descriptions for the first or third movements?
AL: That's a great question. For the second movement, I was focused on conveying a specific interpretation of sound—the resonance of the chords and how they contract and expand. I didn't want it to be played in a strictly metrical way. Instead of relying on a lot of written instructions, I aimed to help pianists interpret the mood and atmosphere I was seeking. Jackie [Jon Kimura Parker] found the brief instruction I included at the start of the second movement very helpful, and he's told me he still enjoys quoting it.

As for the other two movements, they're more straightforward in how they can be interpreted. The first movement is forceful and vibrant, while the third is bright and playful. But the second movement, *Memories in an Ancient Garden*, has an internalised, hypnotic quality, and I wanted to ensure the pianist could bring that to life in a way that resonates with the audience.

KM: When I first played the 2nd movement for my teacher, he thought my interpretation sounded "too Western." I asked what he meant by that, and he pointed out that I was voicing the top of the chords too prominently. It's probably a habit from my training, as we often highlight the top voice very much in repertoire by Chopin, Debussy to guide the audience. He wondered if you prefer the chords to have a richer, fuller sound instead of focusing on a single line.
AL: That's an interesting observation, and I would say it's a mix of both approaches. My music seeks a particular resonance—it's something people often tell me is unique to my work. Like you, I was raised as a Western pianist, playing the traditional repertoire, and I understand the tendency to emphasise the top line.

In my music, I don't expect pianists to eliminate that habit, but it's also important to feel how the resonance supports that top note. The interplay of harmony and overtones is vital to the overall texture. It's a balance between bringing out the melodic line and capturing the depth of the chords.

Early in my career, some performers approached my music with a very contemporary technique, often making it sound too rigid or lacking in the dynamic contrast I was aiming for. Over time, musicians—especially in Canada, where my piano music is on many conservatory and competition lists—have become more attuned to my style.

I've also had opportunities to coach or answer questions from pianists, which has helped convey the nuances of my music. Jackie was a tremendous collaborator, even during the early days when there wasn't Zoom. His doctoral work on my music allowed us to discuss these details in depth.

Then we start the second half of this interview, which was to discuss my recording of *Scenes from Jade Terrace*. Louie kindly agreed to review it movement by movement.
So, after she listened to my first movement.

KM: I often think the left-hand bottom notes are like big drums, but I am not sure if it's too much at the very start, as there is a long way to go.
AL: Louie downloaded my recording and listened to the *Warrior*.

KM: I've been wondering about some of the figures in *Scenes from Jade Terrace*. For instance, in the first movement, there's a repeated rhythmic figure at the beginning, in the left hand—could that be inspired by the percussion patterns you might hear during Chinese New Year celebrations, like those accompanying the lion dance?
AL: That's an interesting question. I don't think I consciously drew on that kind of inspiration for this piece, but it's certainly possible that those sounds were in my ear or influenced me on some level. Music we've encountered in life often finds its way into our work unconsciously, even if we don't set out to do it deliberately.

KM: What about on page 4 of the first movement, where there's a passage with rapid, percussive figures in the left hand? Would you say those rhythms come from a similar inspiration?
AL: Not in this case. It's more a result of the energy and momentum I wanted to build at that moment in the piece.

KM: Regarding pedalling, on page 4, line 3, you have some sustained pedal markings—do you intend for them to be held all the way through, or are they more flexible?
L: Good observation. My pedalling instructions are generally at the discretion of the pianist unless explicitly indicated. For passages like this, I would expect the pedal to be changed to avoid excessive blurring. It's more about achieving the right balance of resonance and clarity rather than holding it through strictly.

KM: That makes sense. Another detail I wanted to ask about—what's your perspective on bar 34, when you have the tremolo followed by the scale, should the tremolo have more priority in dynamics, or is the scale the focus? Also, the length of the tremolo—is it intended to be consistent or relative to the scale?
AL: That's a great question. In this passage, the first tremolo is intentionally longer than the others. I'd say the focus isn't on one over the other but rather on how the tremolo transitions into the scale—it's about creating a sense of coalescence. The tremolo should feel like it reaches a natural conclusion before the scale launches.

For the length, I've indicated about three seconds for the first tremolo, but these are general guidelines, not rigid timings. The scale that follows is meant to be quick and fluid, so there's no strict proportional relationship between the length of the tremolo and the scale.

KM: So, the exact timing marked there, doesn't need to be precise or overly calculated?
AL: Exactly. It's not meant to be carefully measured like in ensemble or orchestral music, where bar lines or strict timings might be added. This passage is more about feel and flow. The tremolo should have enough presence and time to set up the moment, then naturally lead into the scale. Aim for an organic sense of movement rather than adhering to specific durations.

When it comes to passages like this, my focus is on achieving a sense of musicality and natural flow, rather than rigid precision in timing. Especially in orchestral writing, I've learned that practical constraints, such as limited rehearsal time and the need for clear cueing systems, often require me to adjust my approach. Writing freer passages can sometimes present challenges in terms of synchronisation, but it also allows performers to focus on the musical intent rather than strict technicalities.

For this specific passage, the guideline of approximately 23 seconds is intended as a general framework, not an exact rule. It's perfectly fine if the passage ends up being 21 seconds or 25 seconds—it's more about capturing the spirit and overall pacing of the music. What I want to avoid is a rendition that stretches the passage to, say, a minute, which would disrupt the balance and momentum.

Ultimately, my goal is for the performer to bring the passage to life with a sense of freedom and expression, while still respecting the intrinsic flow and energy of the music. Trust your instincts and let the passage unfold in a way that feels organic and true to its character.

Appendix Three

List of Sinophone influence piano compositions

Alexander Tcherepnin
Five Concert Etude, Op.52 (1934-36)

Alexina Louie
Scenes from a Jade Terrace (1980)

Geoffrey Poole
A Pianist's I Ching (2020)

Jack Body
Five melodies (1982)

Jin Oh
Earth Dance (2022)

Zhou Long
Pianogongs (2006)

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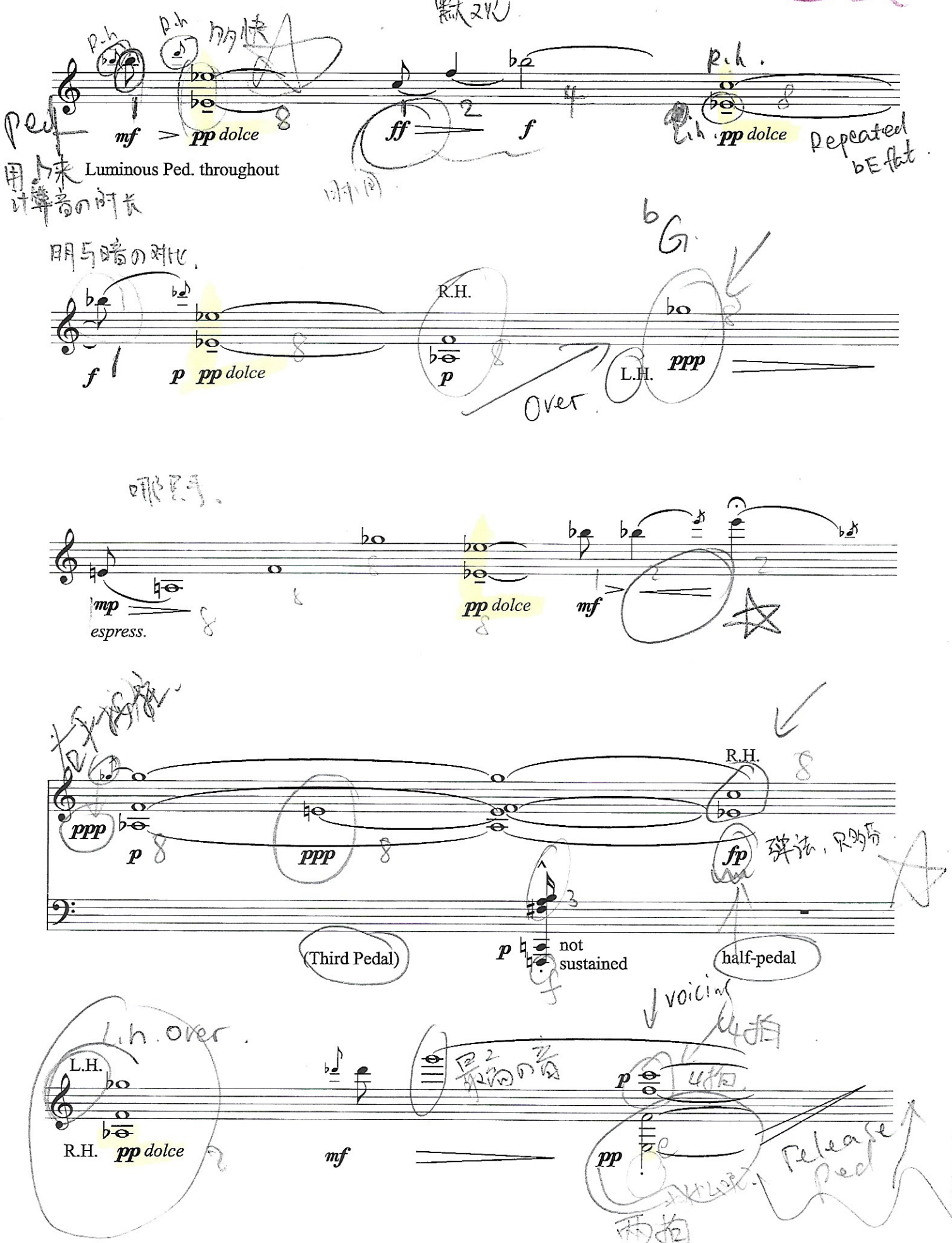
To Steven Kings

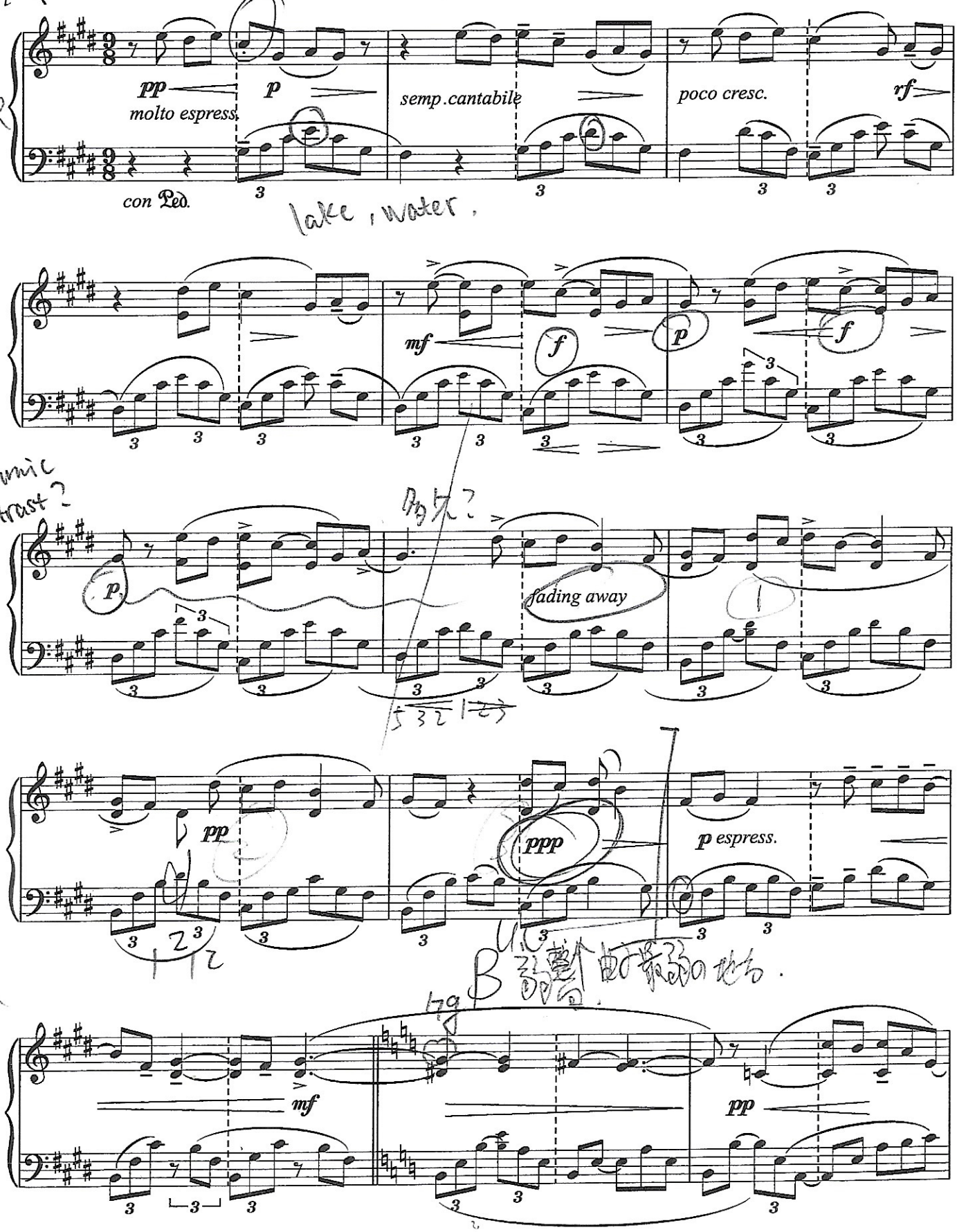
4. Contemplation *(20, Guan)*

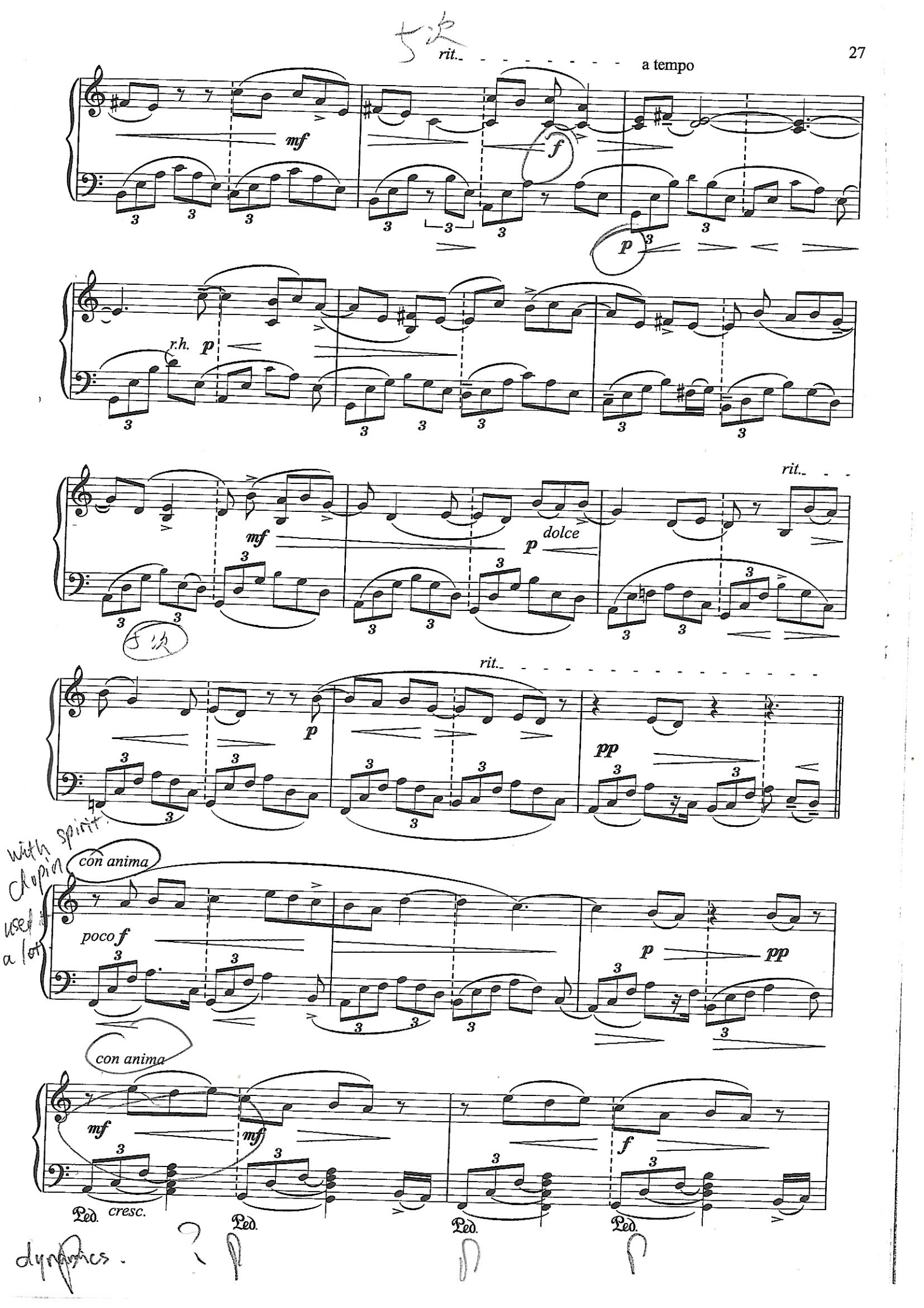


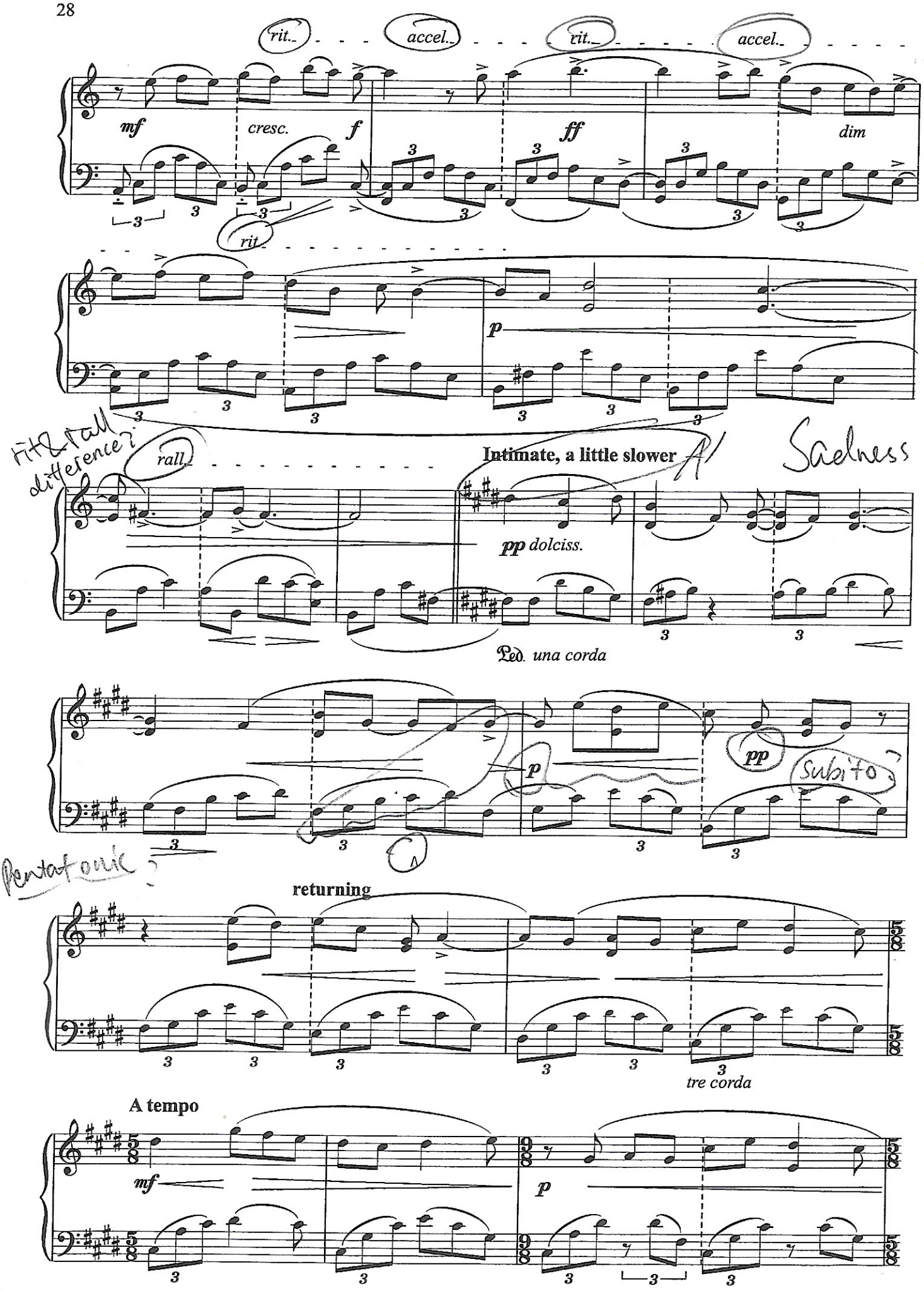
To All Environmentalists

8. Drawing Together *(45, Cui)*

A **Flowing, very sensitive ♩= 75 - 80**




rit.
a tempo
mf
f
p
r.h. p
mf
dolce
p
rit.
p
pp
rit.
with spirit
Chopin used it a lot
con anima
poco f
p
pp
con anima
mf
mf
f
Ped. cresc.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
dynamics.


rit.
accel.
rit.
accel.
mf
cresc.
f
ff
dim
rit.
p
rall.
Intimate, a little slower
pp dolciss.
Sadness
Ped. una corda
p
pp
Subito
returning
tre corda
A tempo
mf
p

poco allarg.

a tempo

f

p dim

accel.

poco allarg.

With Great Inner Joy

rall.

accel.

rall.

ff

Ped.

accel.

rall.

Coda

senza rit.

p

dim al fine

Ped.

ten

pp

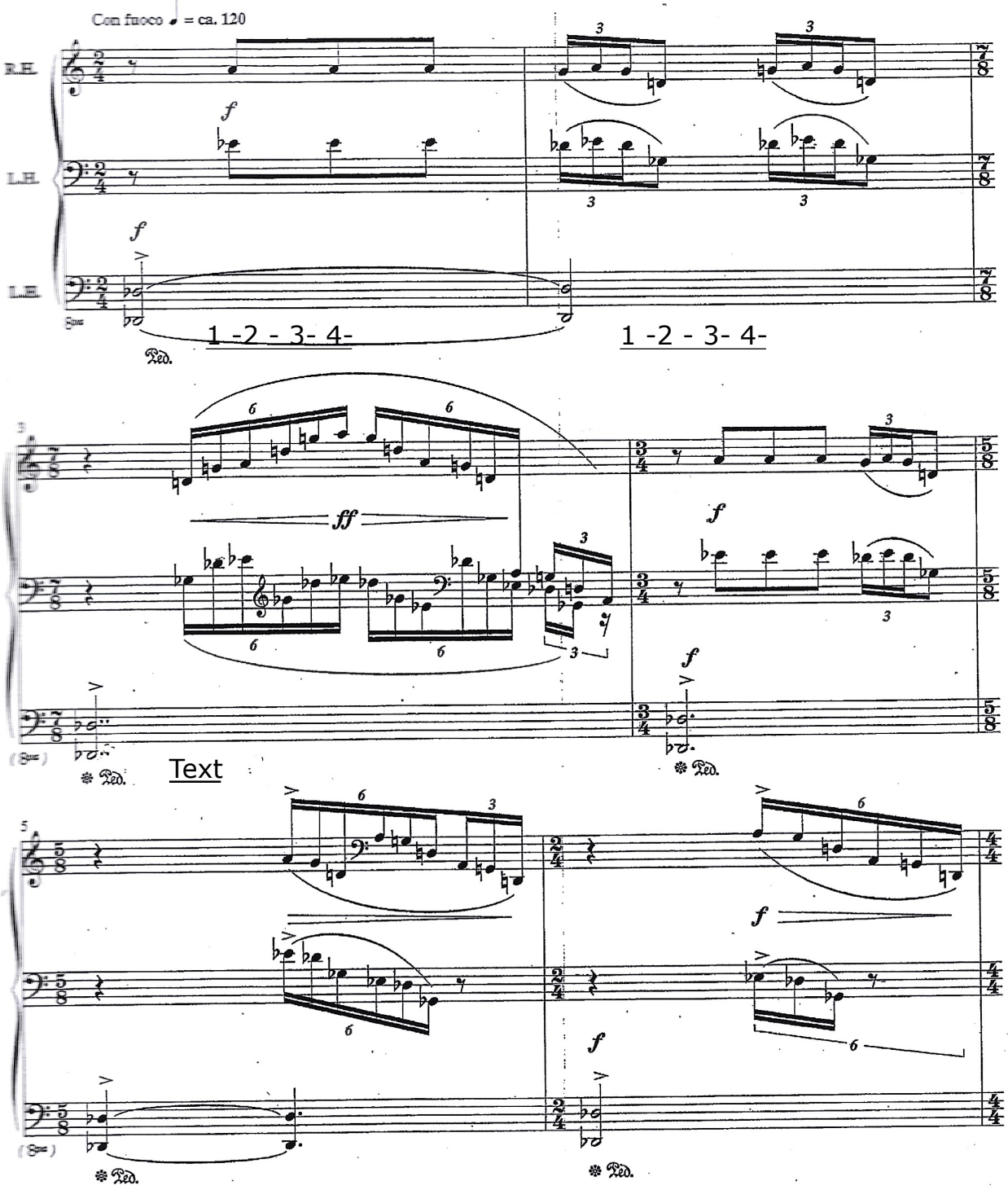
ppp

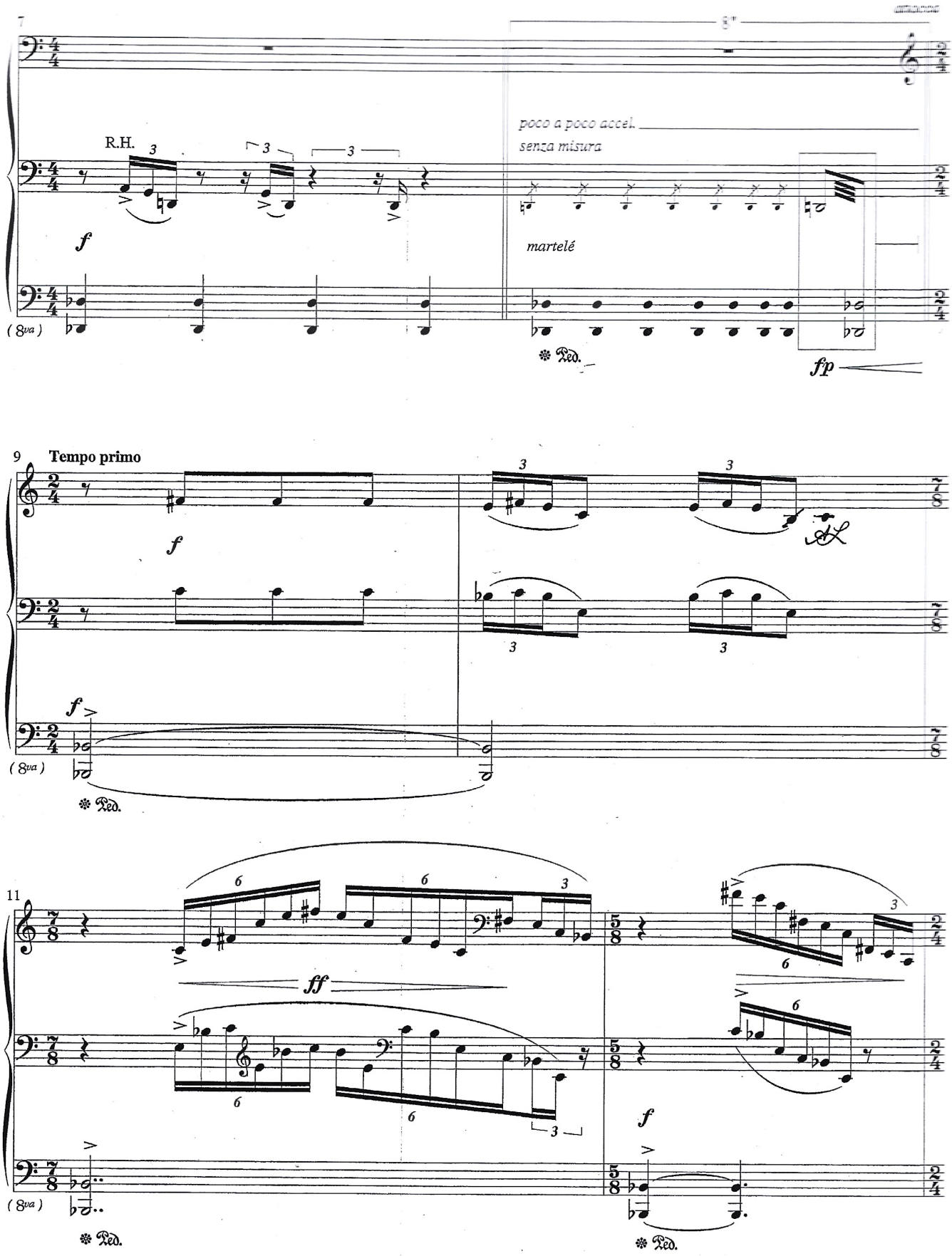
for Jon Kimura Parker

SCENES FROM A JADE TERRACE

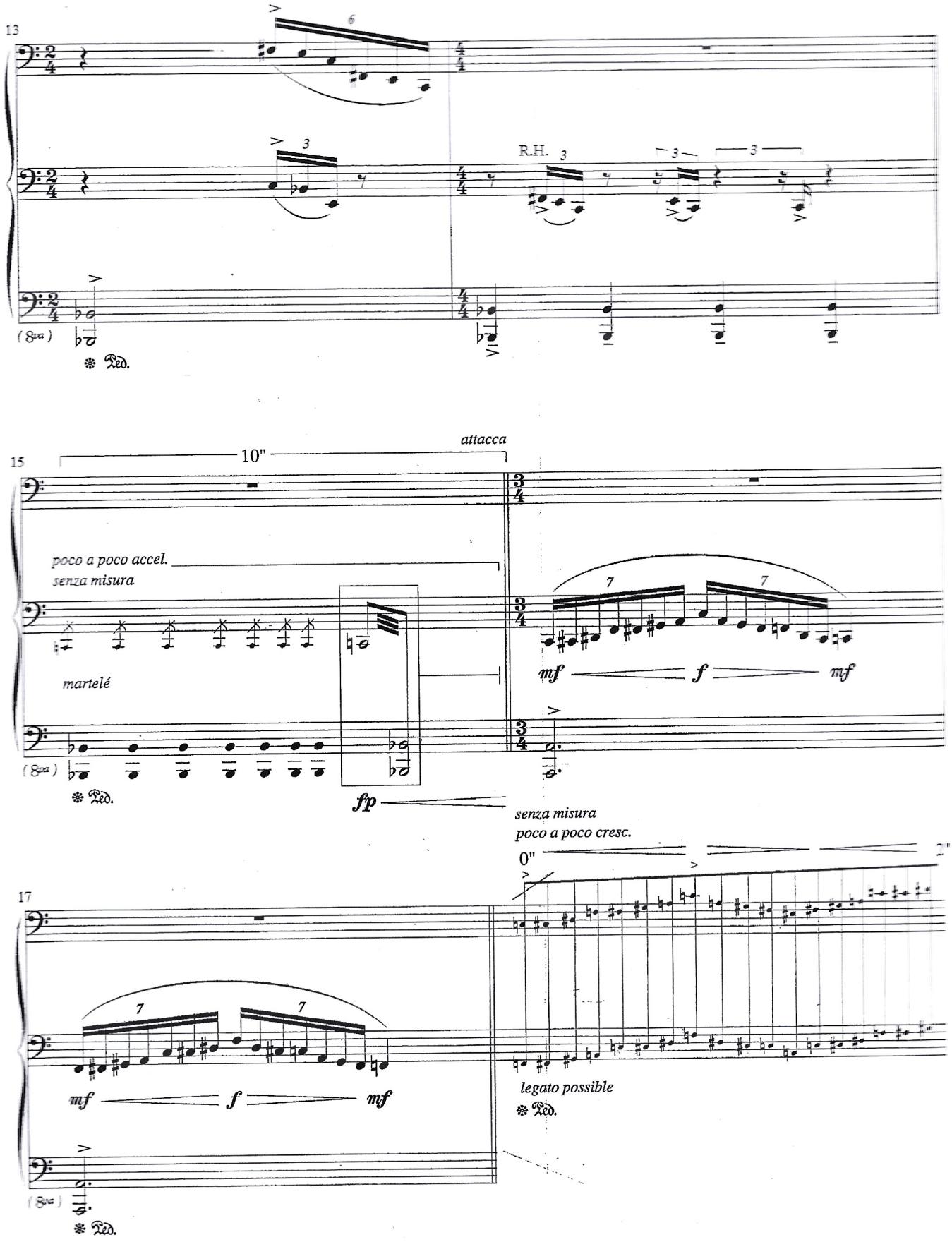
Warrior

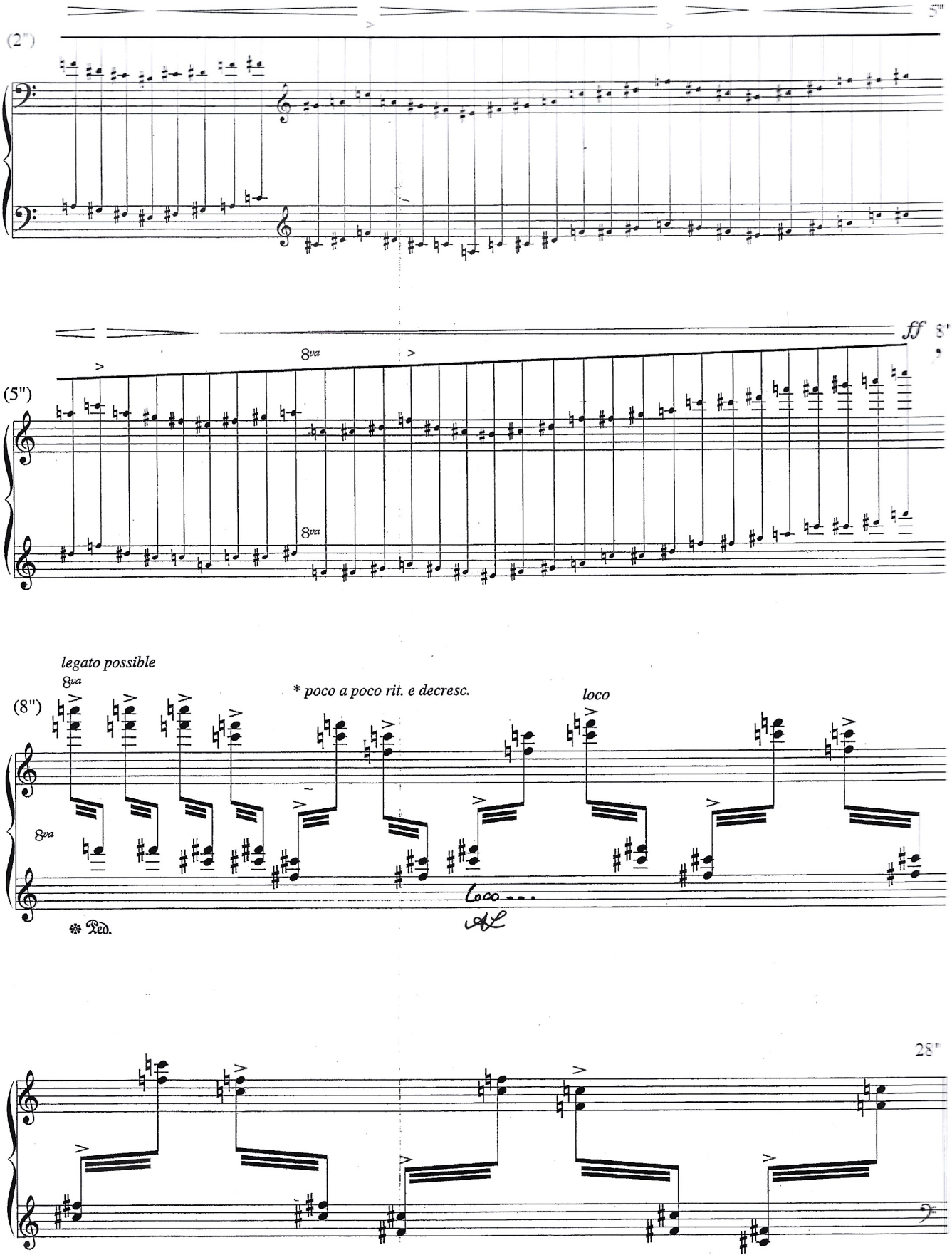
Alexina Louie



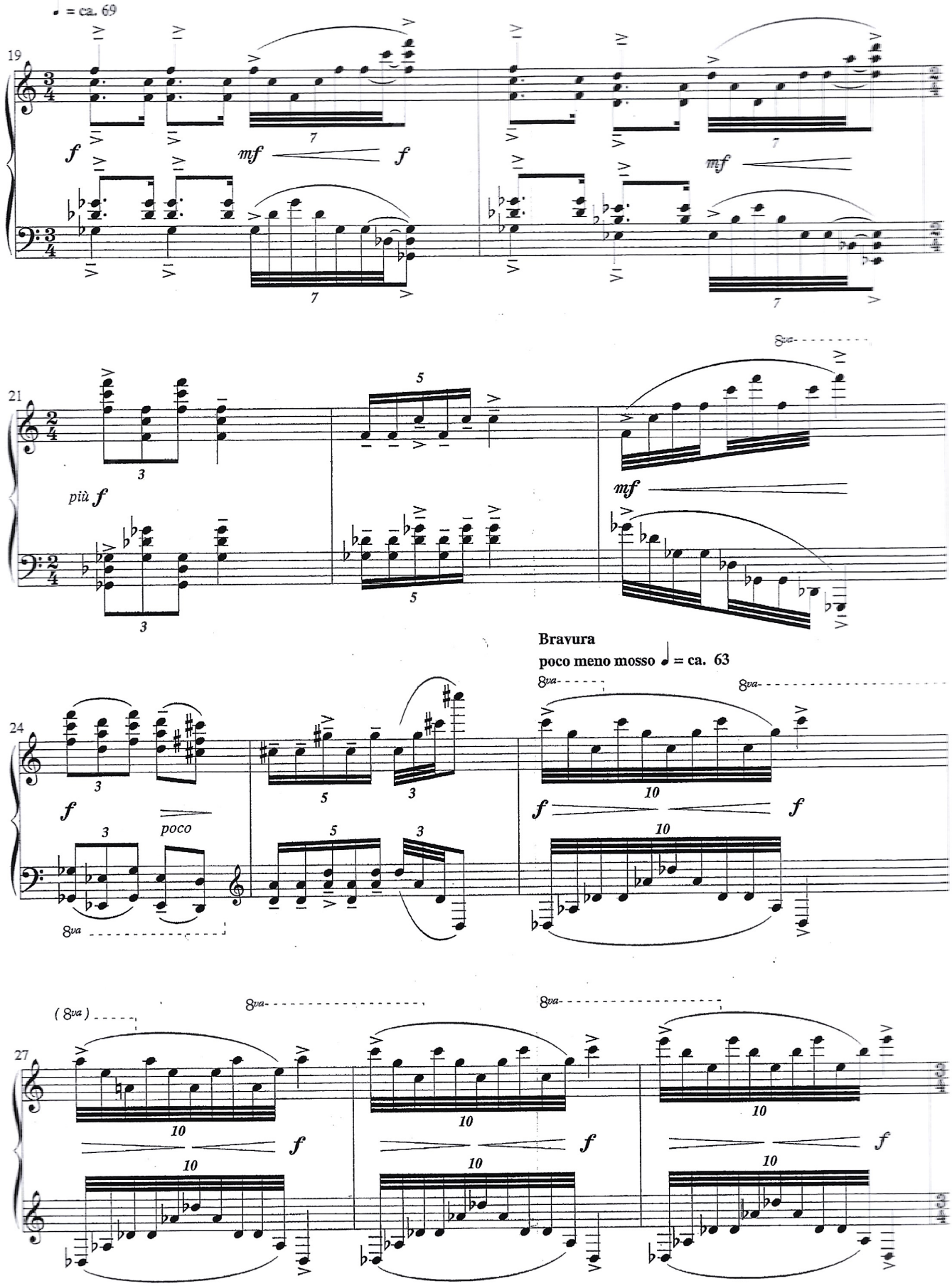


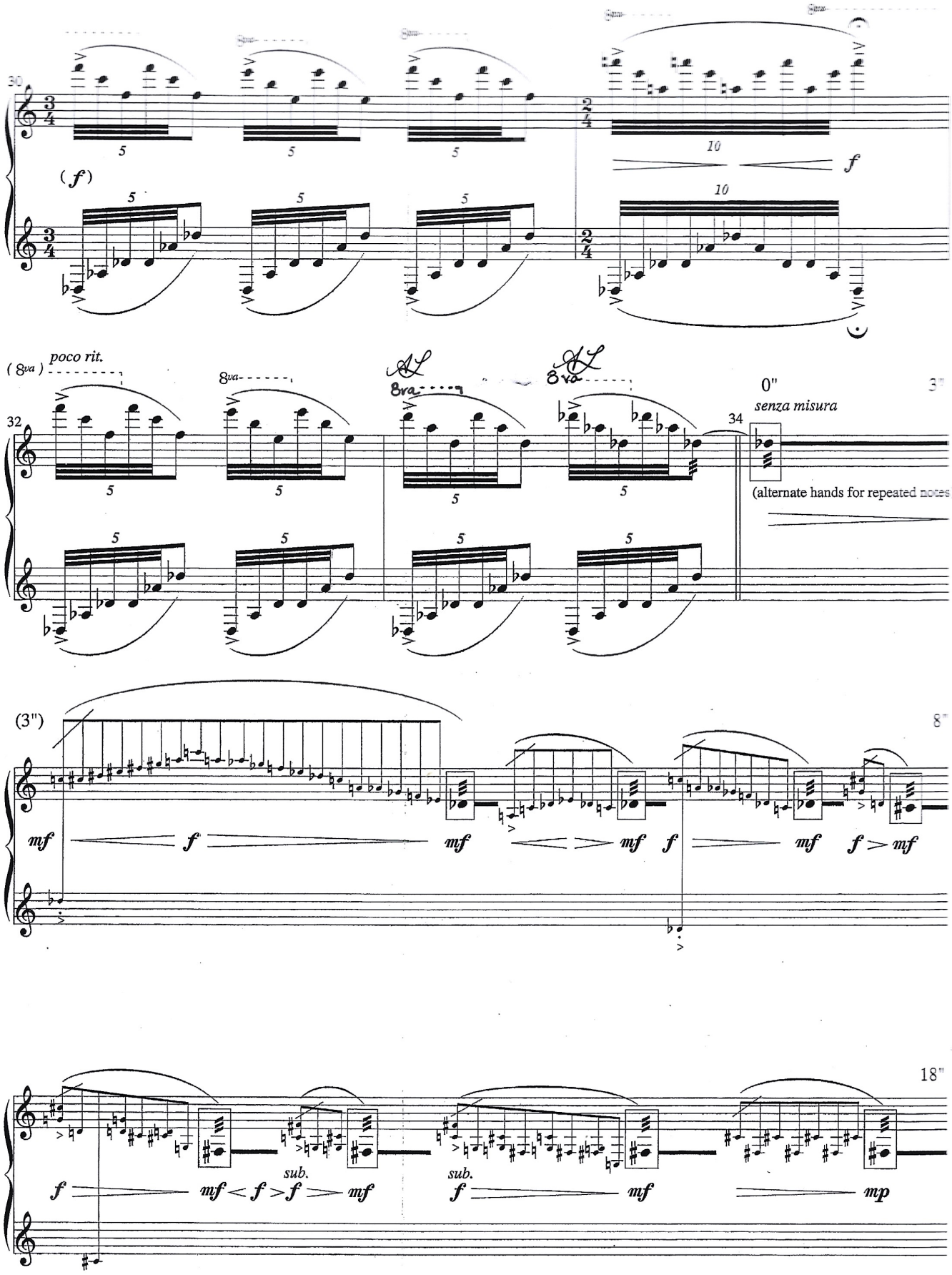
* In *senza misura* sections, accidentals pertain only to the note they immediately preceed and only to the octave in which they appear, except in the case of repeated notes which are all governed by the accidental. Courtesy accidentals are utilized for clarification. Accidentals hold through the measure in metered sections.

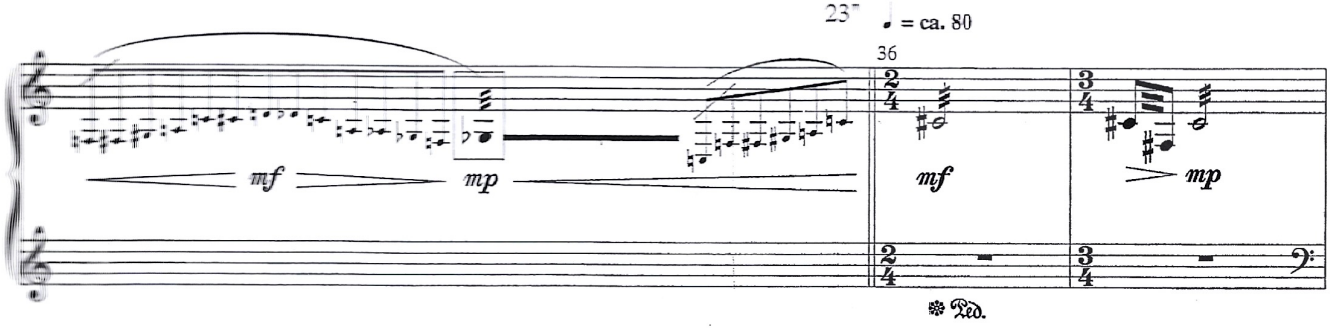

13
R.H.
(8va)
Ped.
15
10"
attacca
poco a poco accel.
senza misura
martelé
mf
f
mf
(8va)
Ped.
fp
senza misura
poco a poco cresc.
17
0"
mf
f
mf
legato possible
(8va)
Ped.

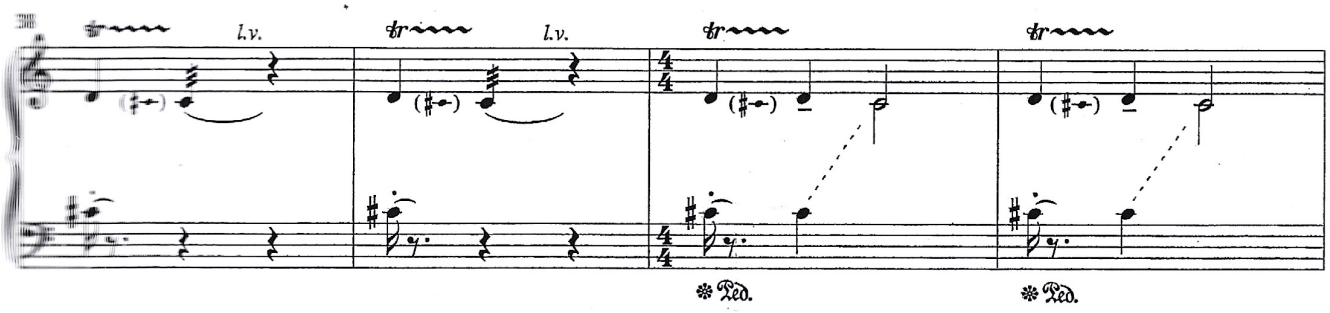


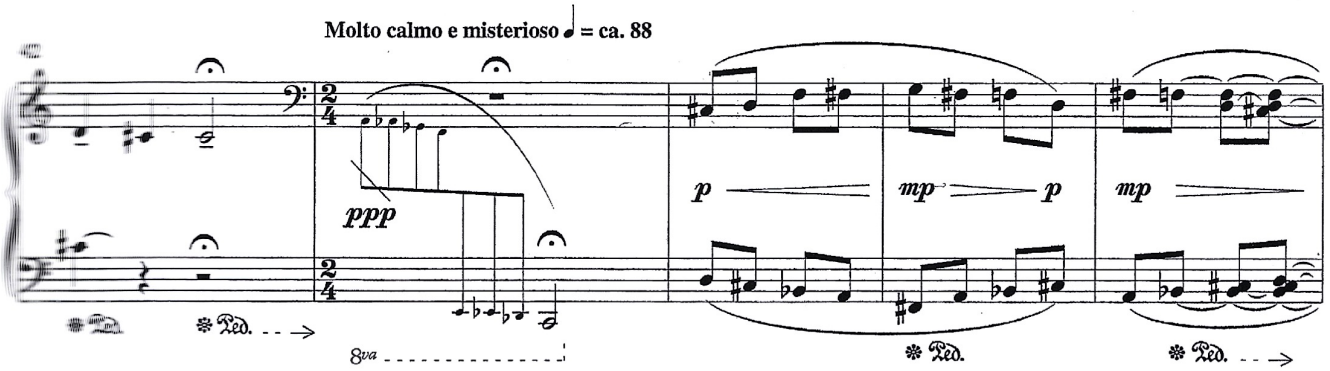
* Do not slow down the speed of the tremolo; the length of the tremolo is dictated by the *rit.*

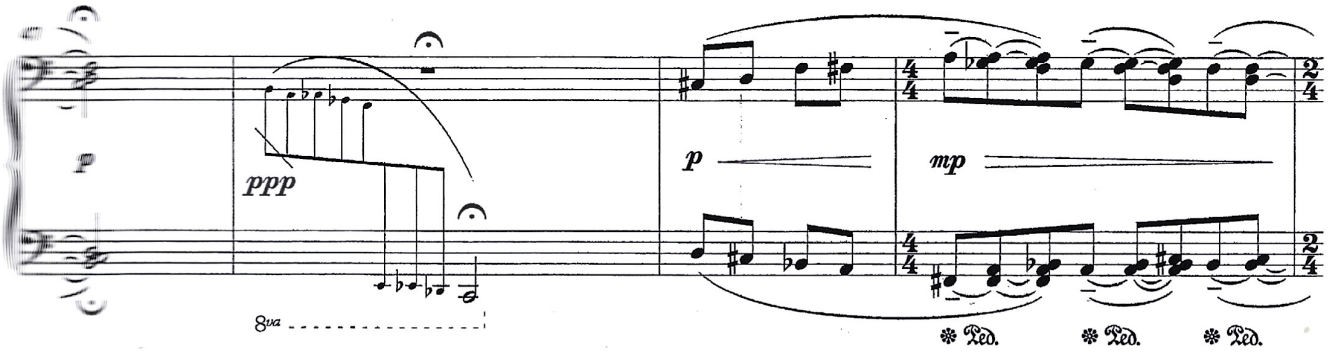

♩ = ca. 69
19
f
mf
f
mf
7
21
più f
mf
8va
3
5
Bravura
poco meno mosso ♩ = ca. 63
24
f
poco
8va
10
(8va)
27

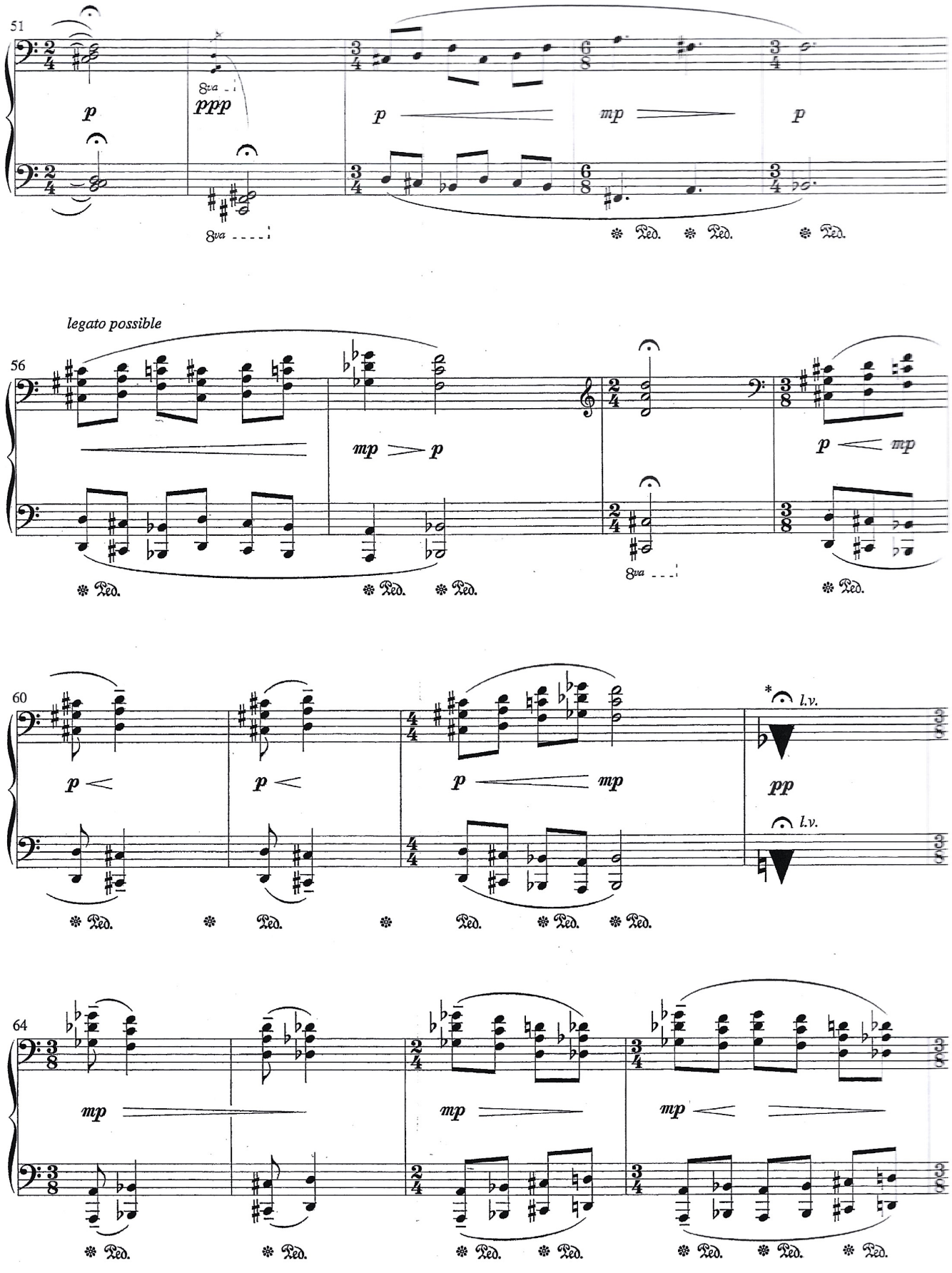

30
(f)
10
f
32
(8va) poco rit.
8va
34
0"
senza misura
3"
(alternate hands for repeated notes)
(3")
8"
mf
f
mf
mf
f
mf
f > mf
18"
f
mf < f > f
mf
sub.
sub.
f
mf
mp


237
♩ = ca. 80
36
mf
mp
mf
mp
Ped.


l.v.
tr
l.v.
tr
tr
Ped.
Ped.

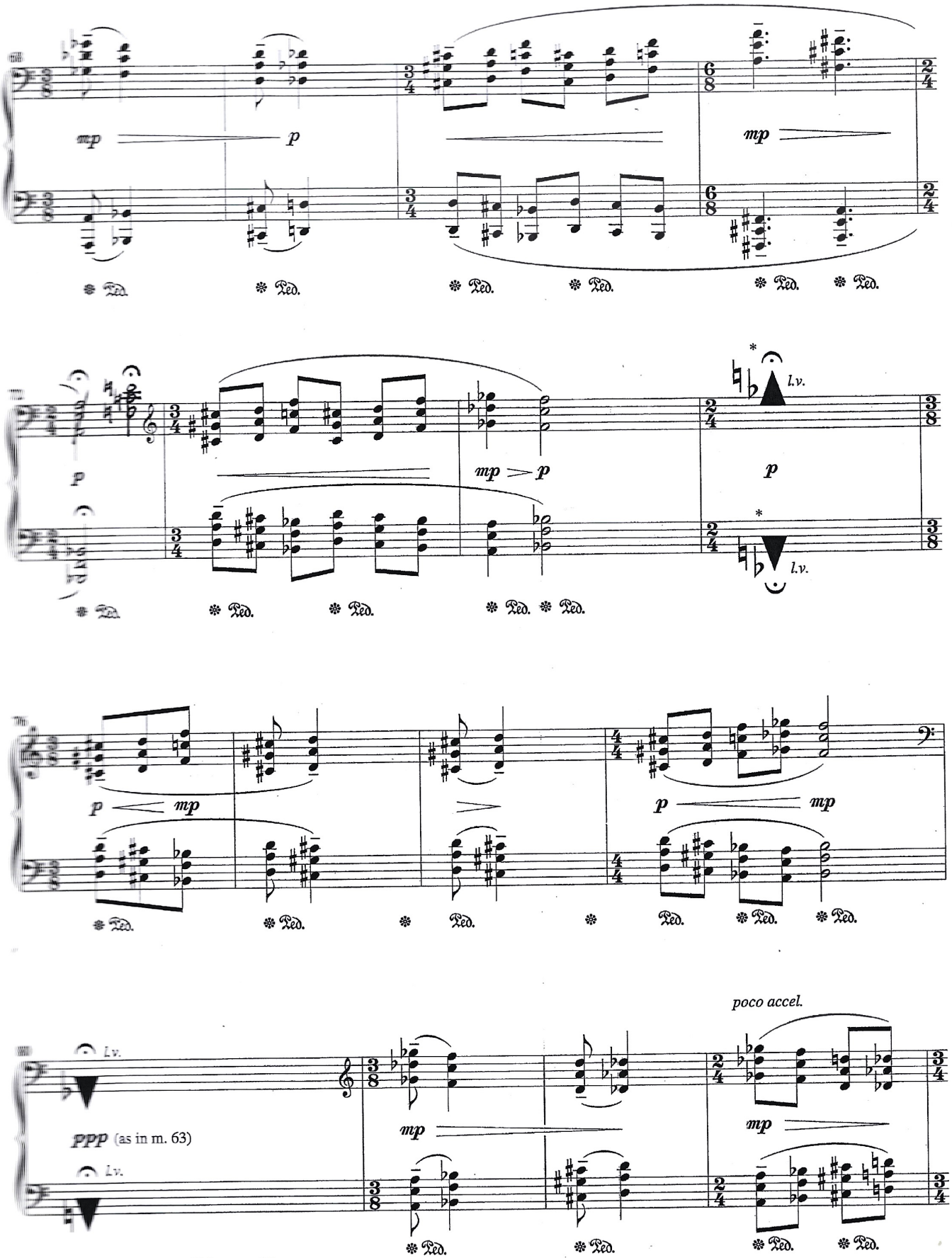

Molto calmo e misterioso ♩ = ca. 88
ppp
p
mp
p
mp
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
8va


p
ppp
p
mp
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
8va

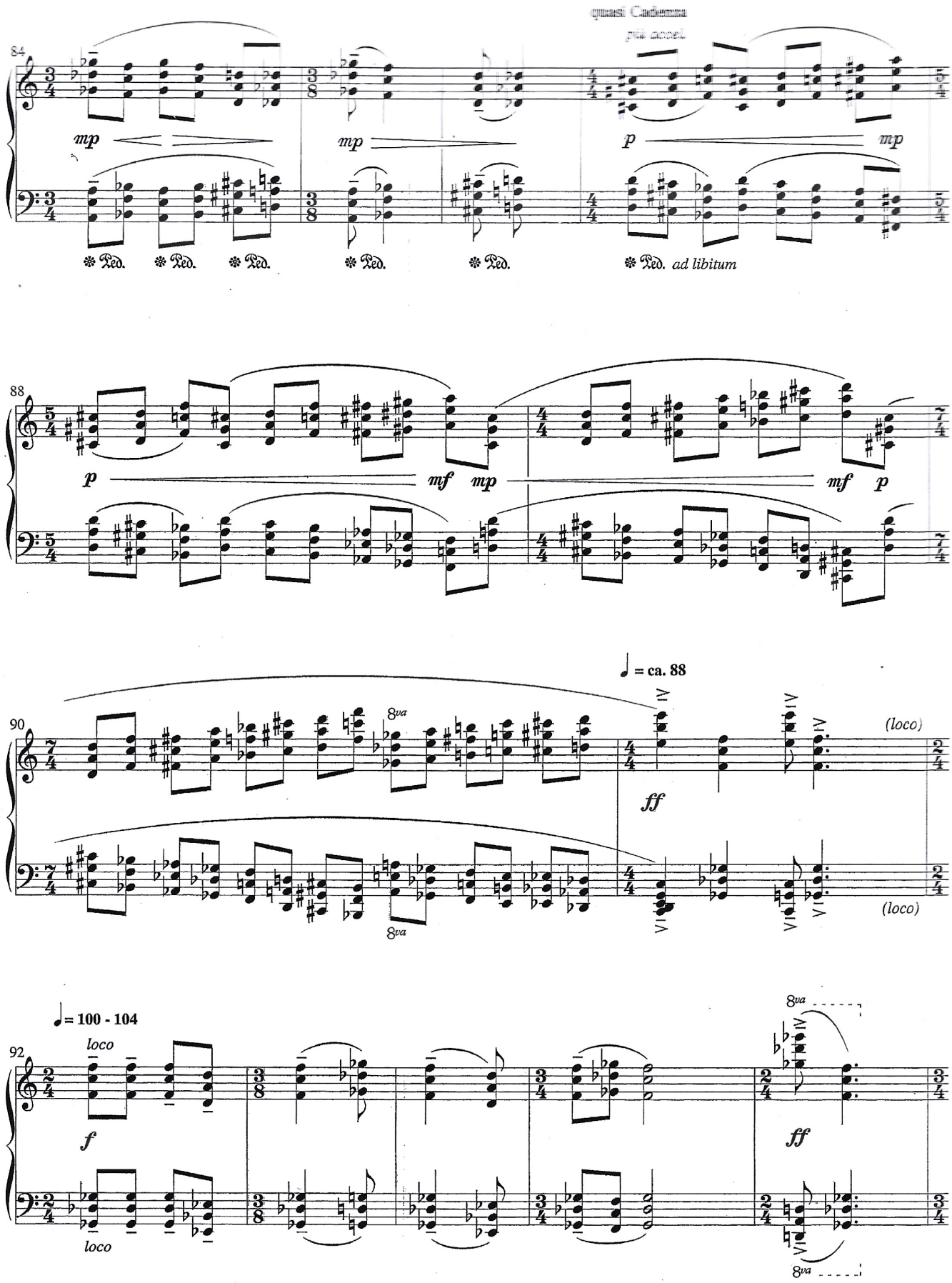


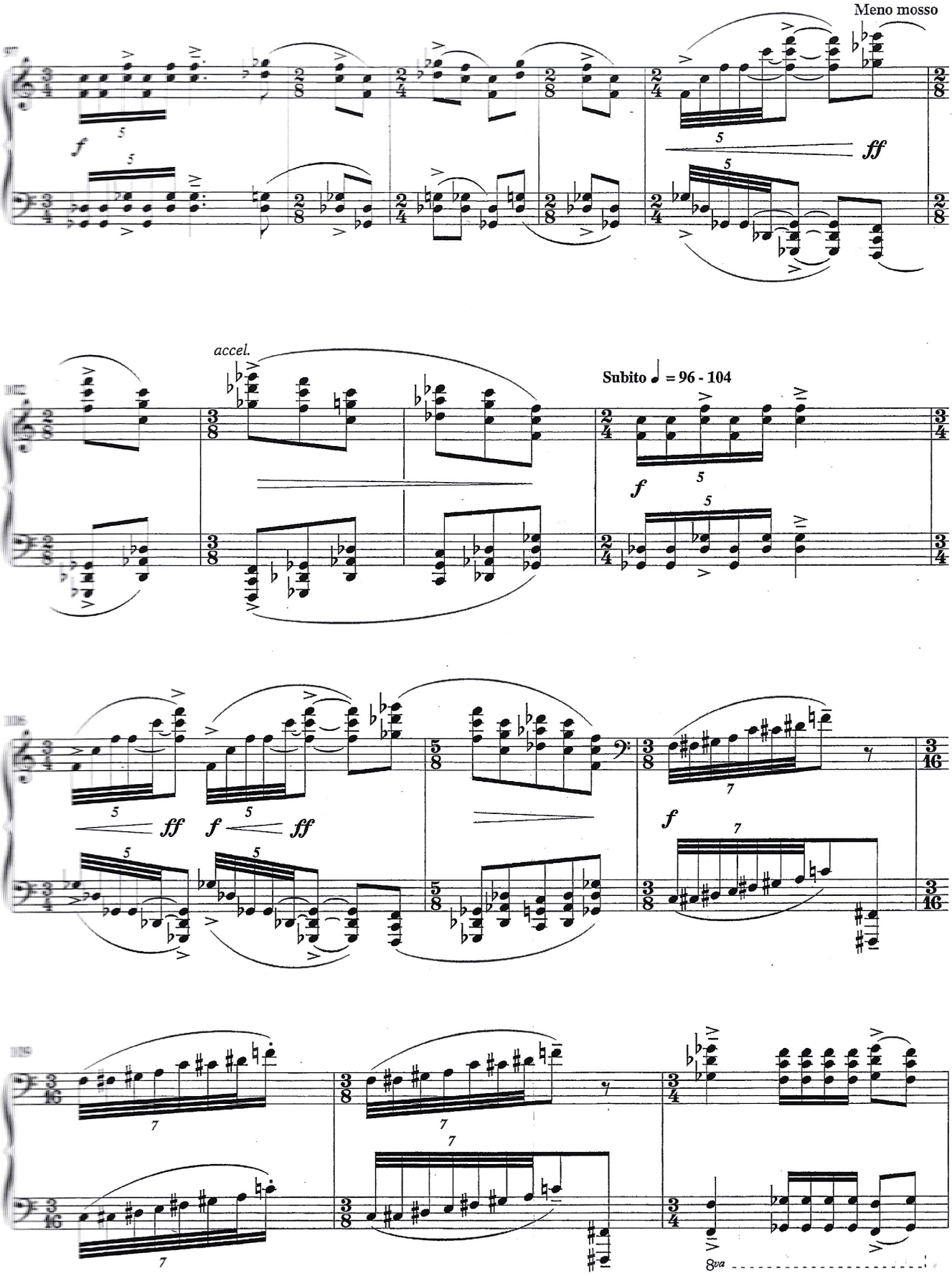
*lowest notes possible

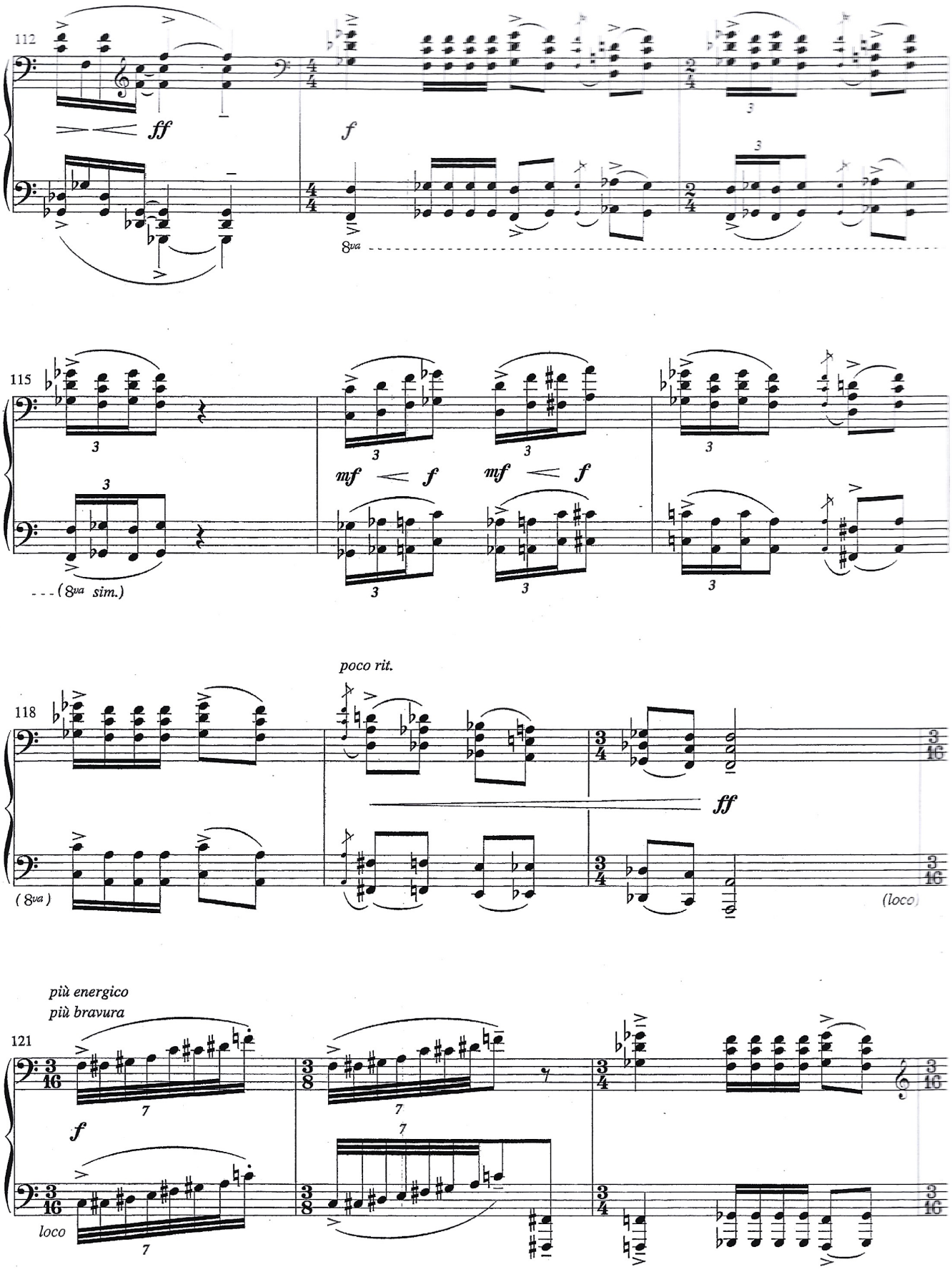
AL

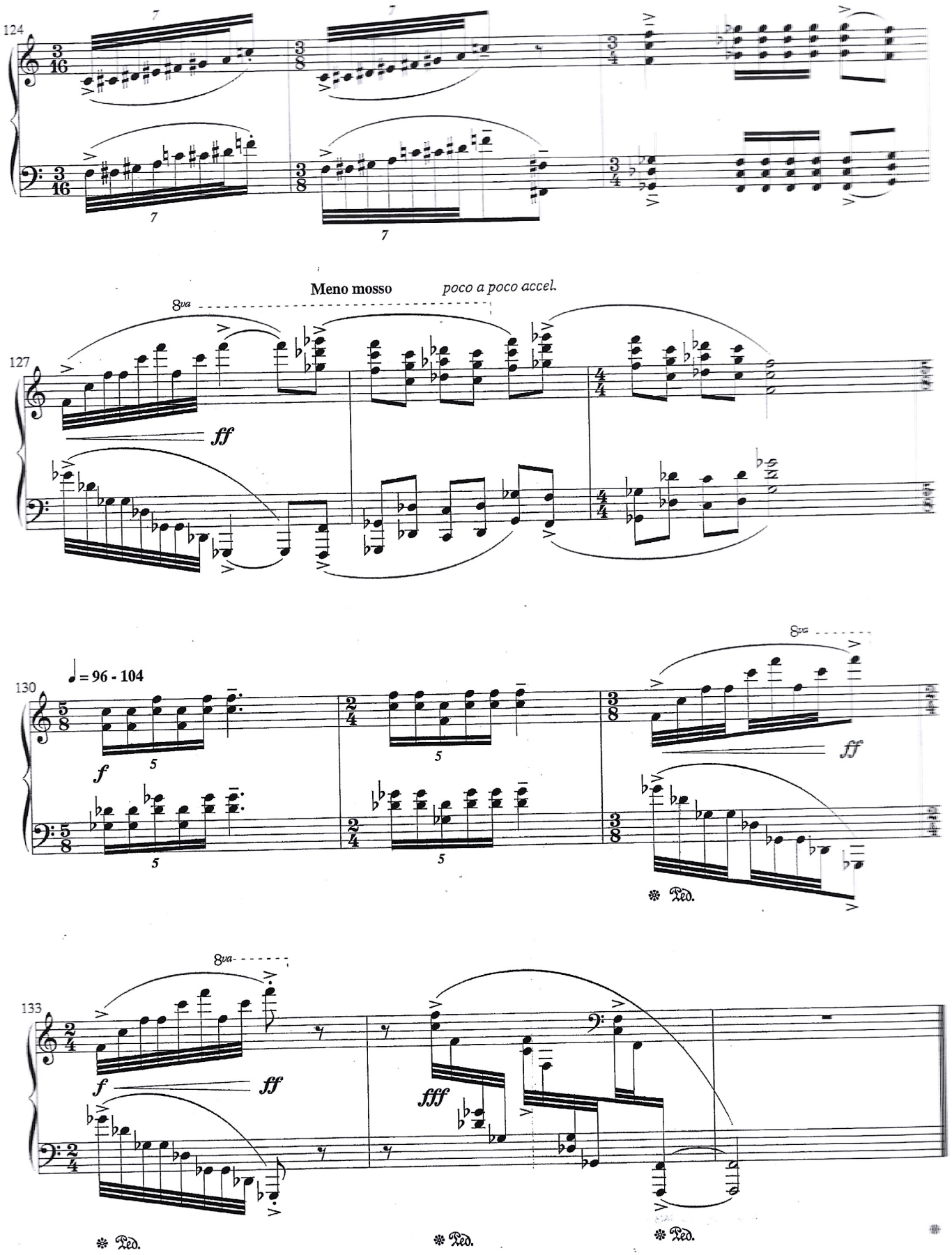


* Chromatic chord clusters: as high as possible in the R.H., as low as possible in the L.H..

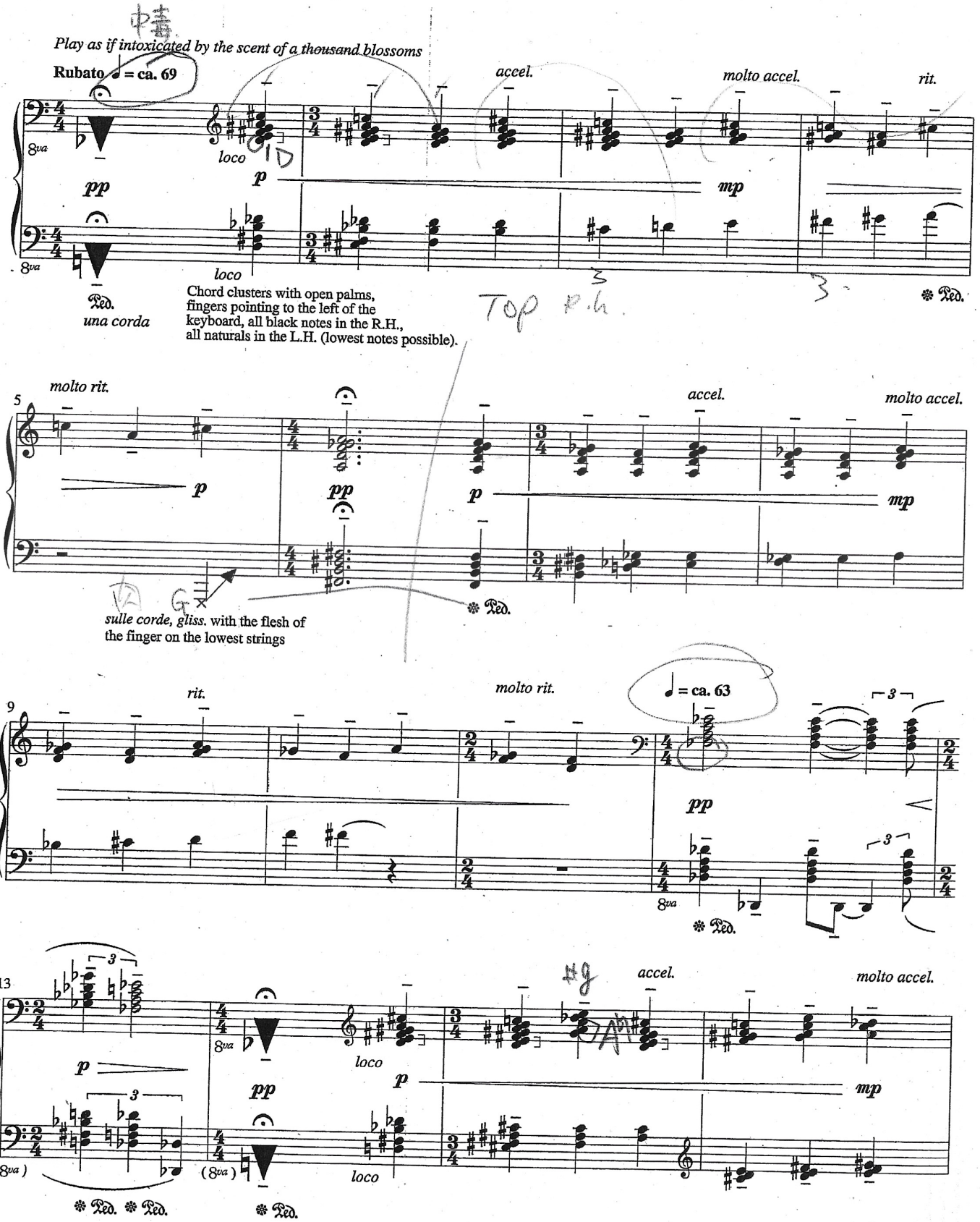

84
quasi Cadenza
più accel.
mp
mp
p
mp
Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. ad libitum
88
p
mf
mp
mf
p
90
8va
= ca. 88
ff
(loco)
8va
(loco)
= 100 - 104
92
loco
f
loco
8va
ff
8va

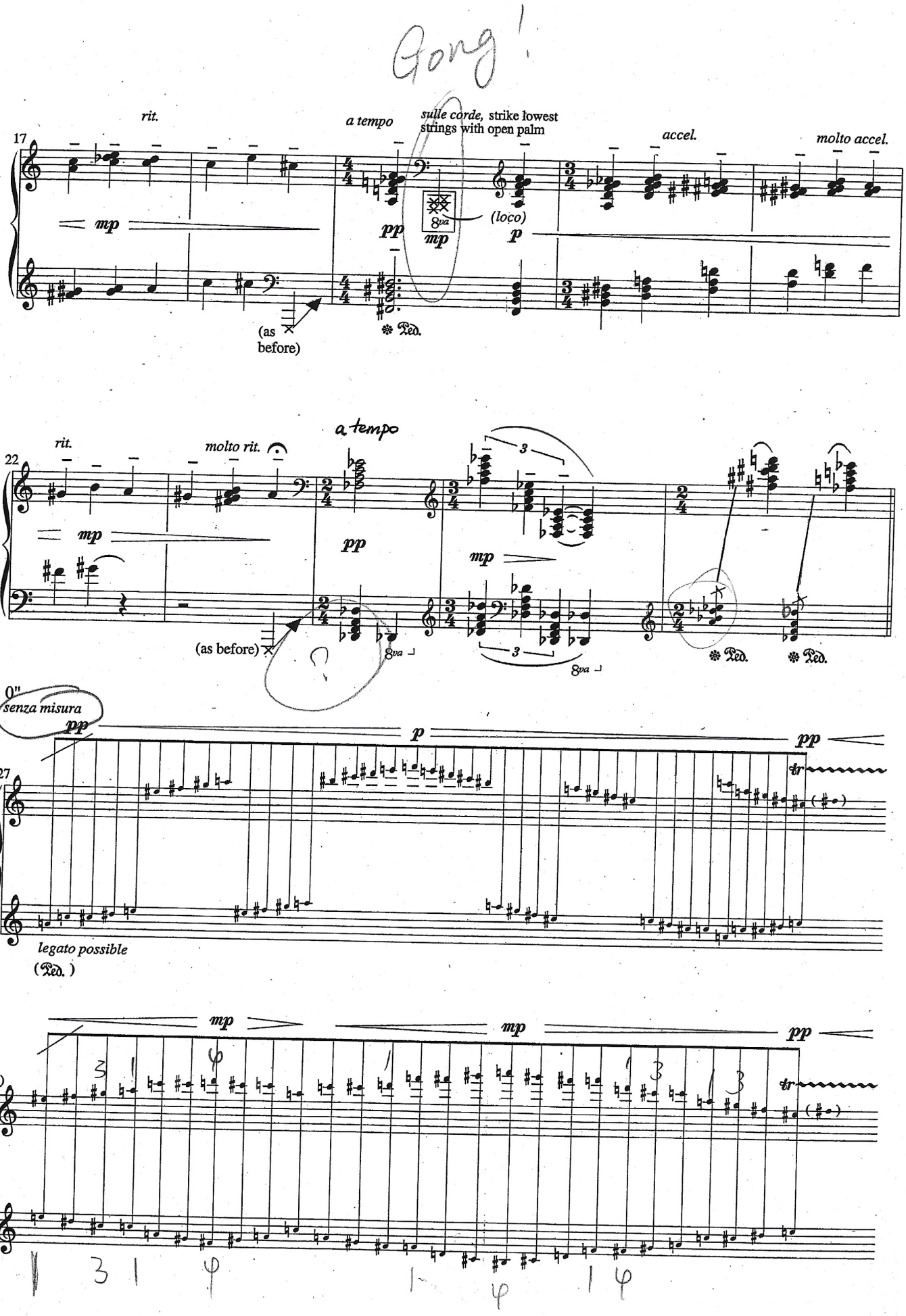

Meno mosso
accel.
Subito ♩ = 96 - 104
8va

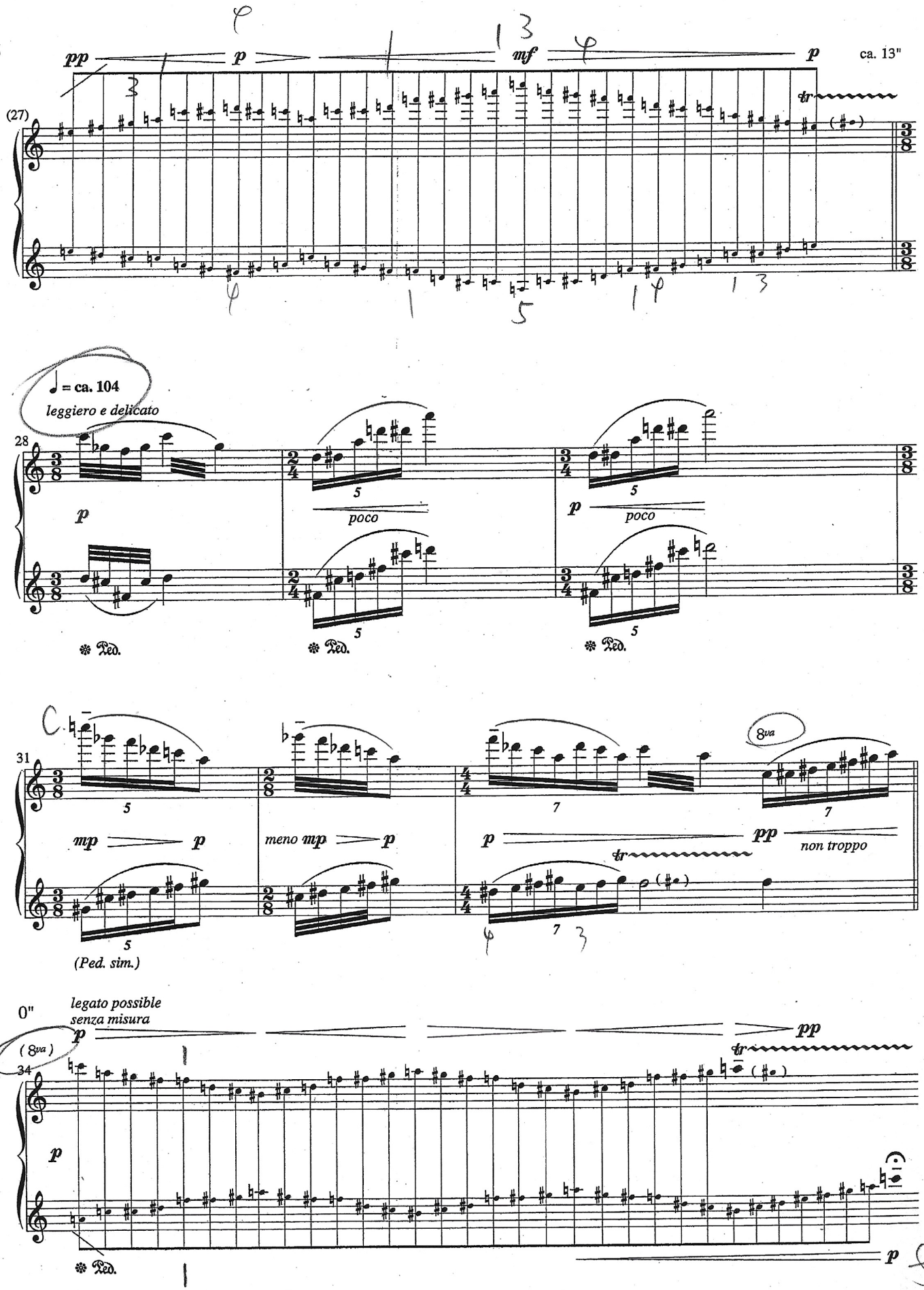

112
ff
f
8va
115
3
mf
f
mf
f
(8va sim.)
poco rit.
118
ff
(8va)
(loco)
più energico
più bravura
121
f
7
loco

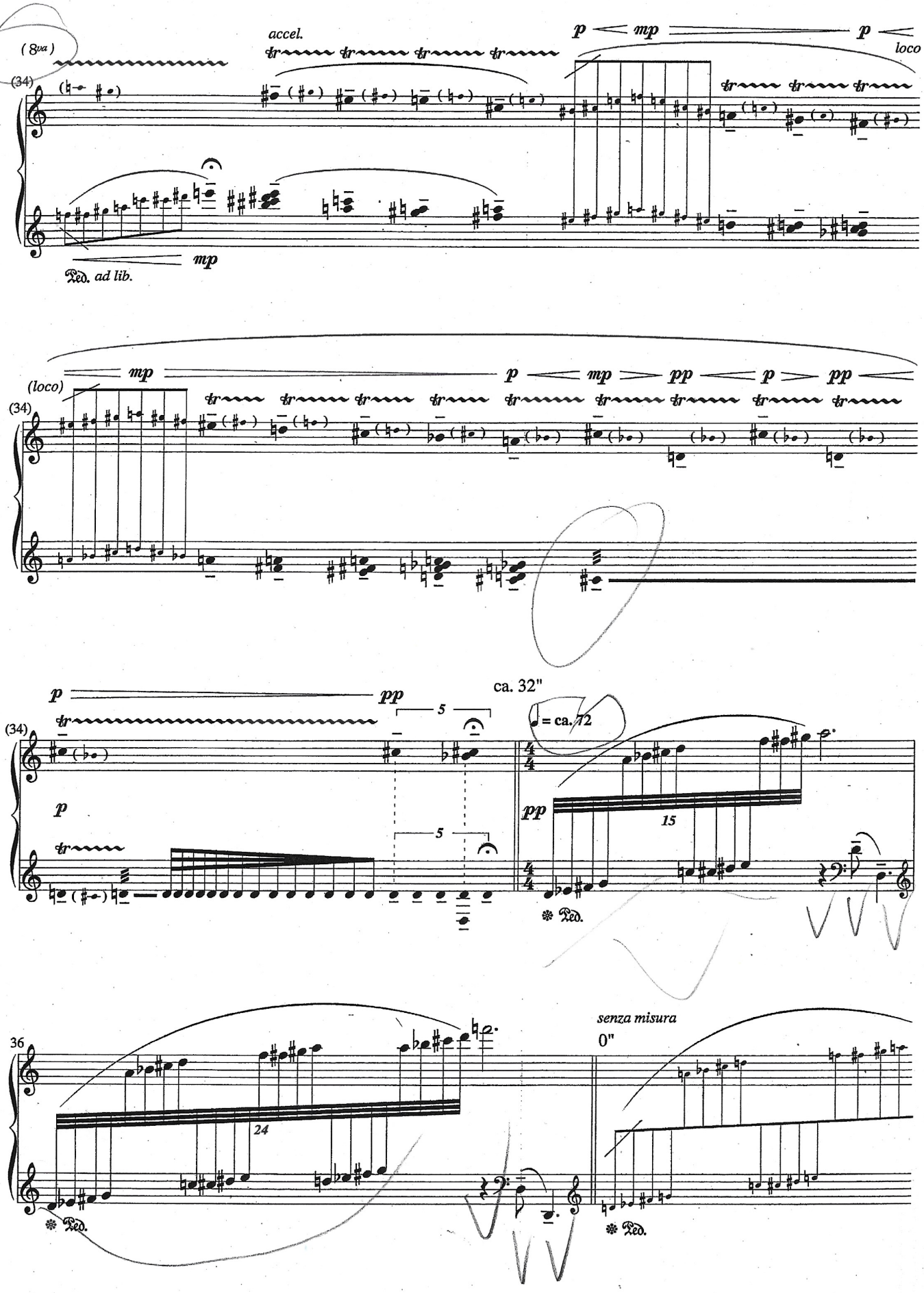

124
127
Meno mosso
poco a poco accel.
8va
ff
130
♩ = 96 - 104
f
5
ff
Ped.
133
8va
f
ff
fff
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.

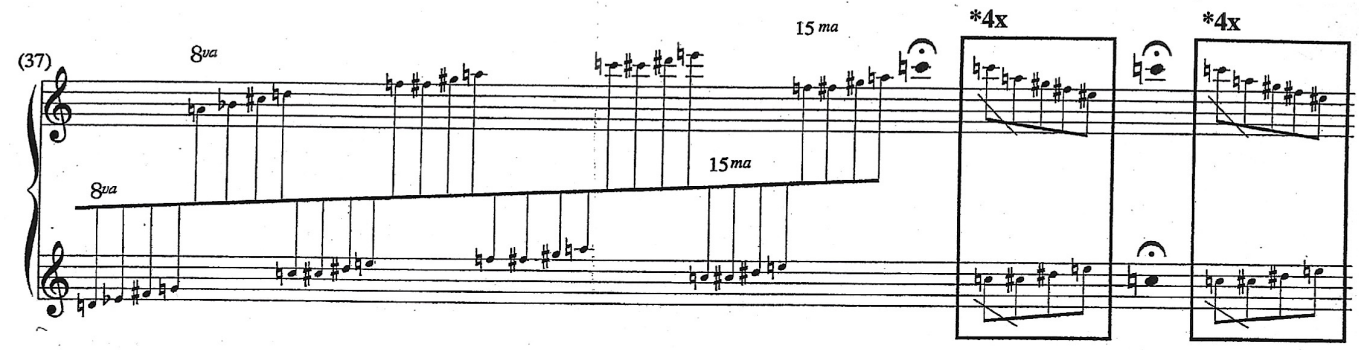
Memories In An Ancient Garden



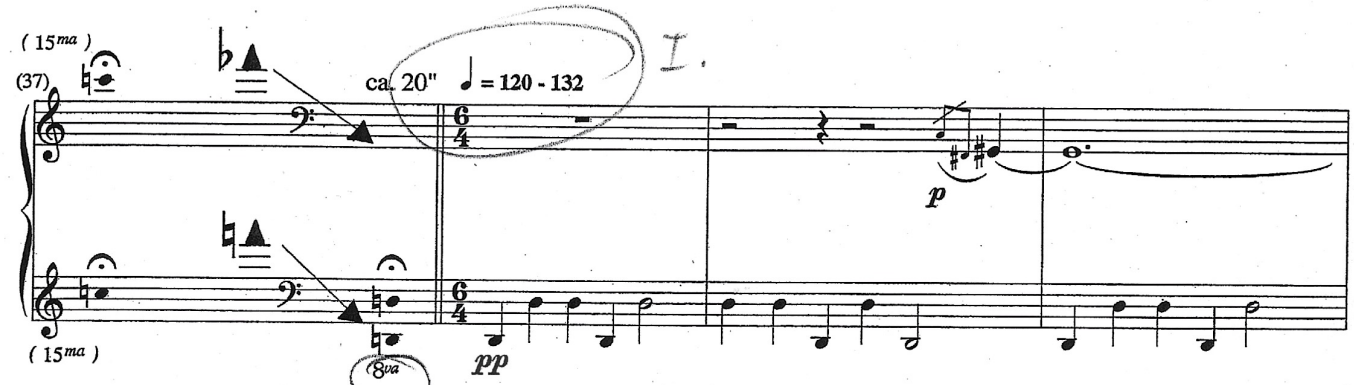

Gong!
17
rit.
a tempo
sulle corde, strike lowest strings with open palm
accel.
molto accel.
mp
pp
mp
8va
(loco)
p
(as before)
Ped.
22
rit.
molto rit.
a tempo
mp
pp
mp
3
(as before)
8va
Ped.
Ped.
0"
senza misura
pp
p
pp
27
tr
legato possible
(Ped.)
mp
mp
pp
(27)
tr
3 1 4 1 4 1 4


pp
p
mf
p
ca. 13"
(27)
tr
♩ = ca. 104
leggiero e delicato
28
poco
poco
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
31
mp
p
meno mp
p
p
pp
non troppo
8va
tr
(Ped. sim.)
0"
legato possible
senza misura
(8va)
34
pp
tr
p
Ped.
p

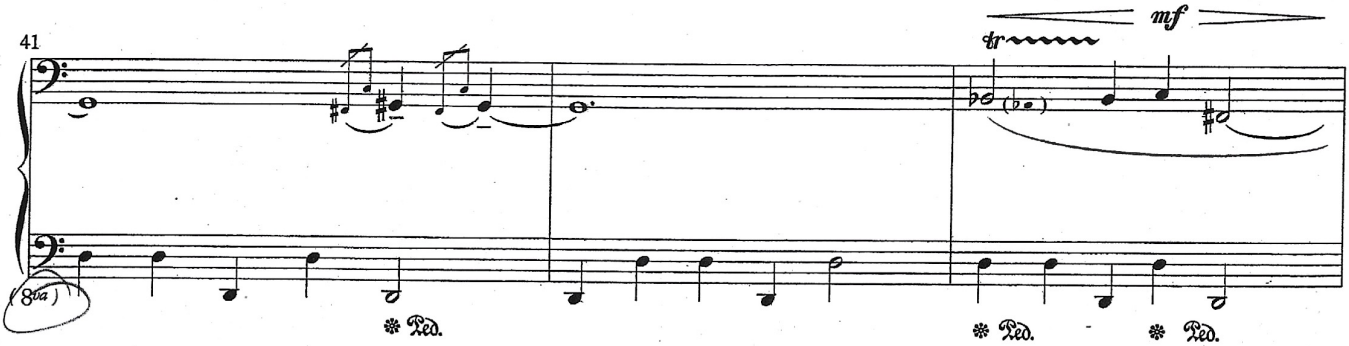

(8va)
accel.
p
mp
p
loco
(34)
mp
Ped. ad lib.
(loco)
mp
p
mp
pp
p
pp
(34)
p
pp
5
5
ca. 32"
♩ = ca. 72
4/4
p
pp
15
Ped.
36
24
Ped.
senza misura
0"
Ped.

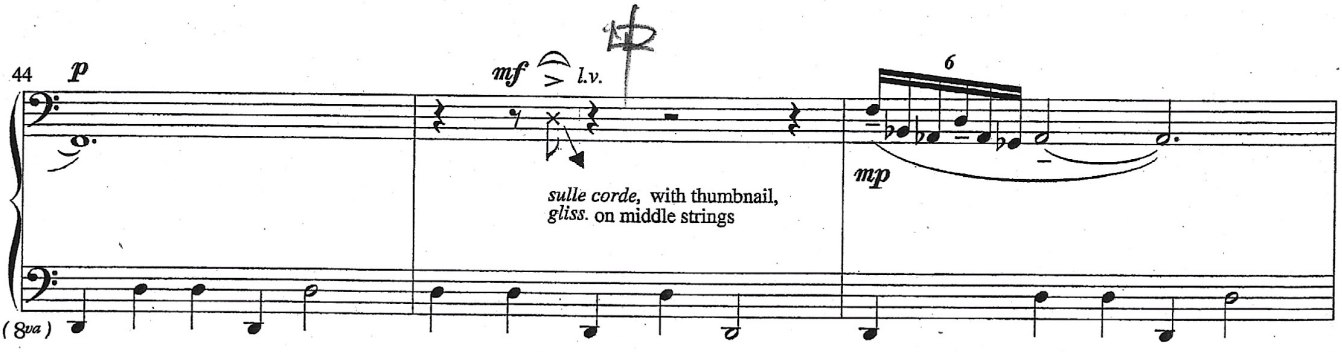


* Repeat this figure 4 times, as quickly as possible, with the external notes framing 4 against 3 notes internally.

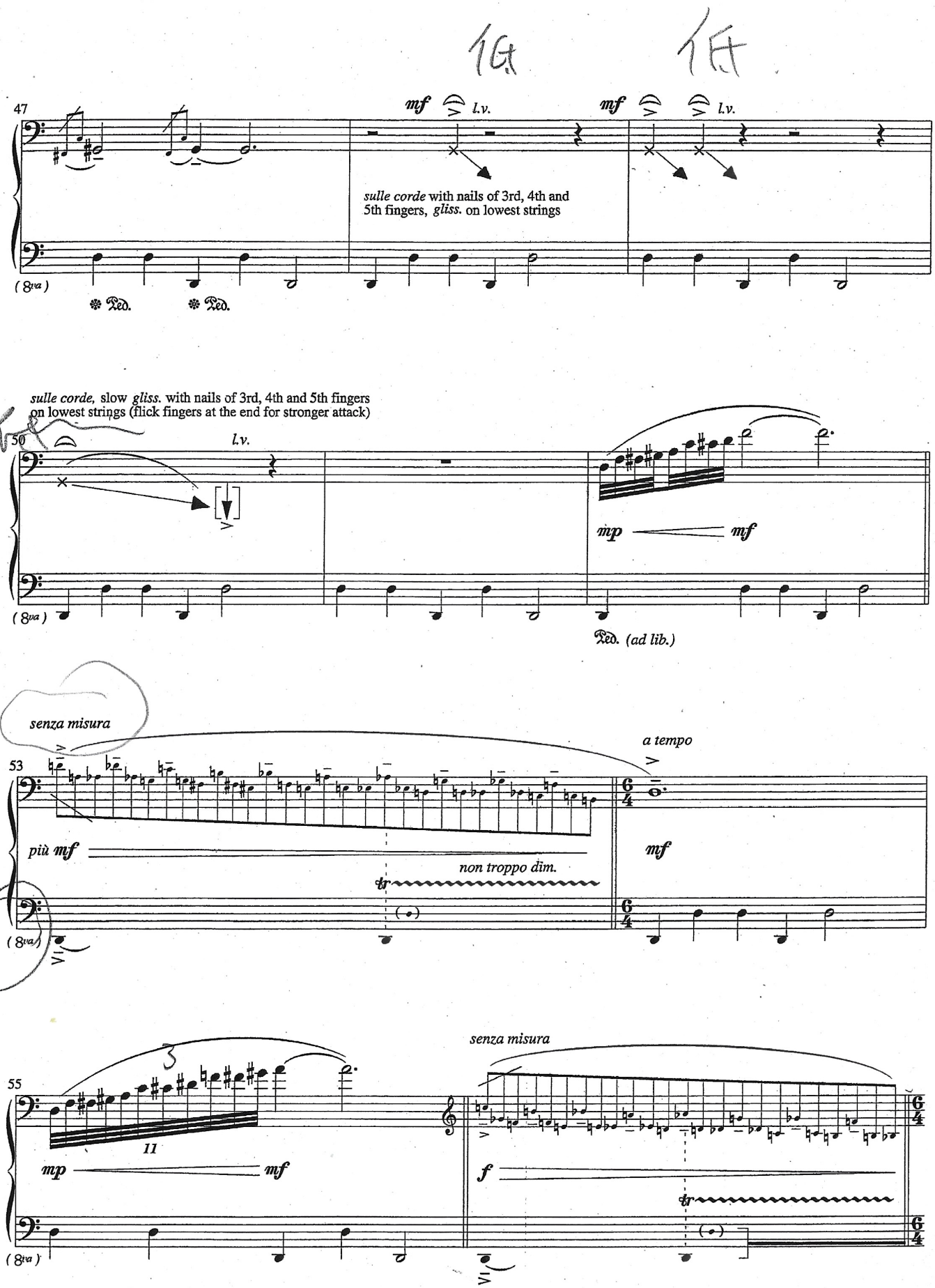


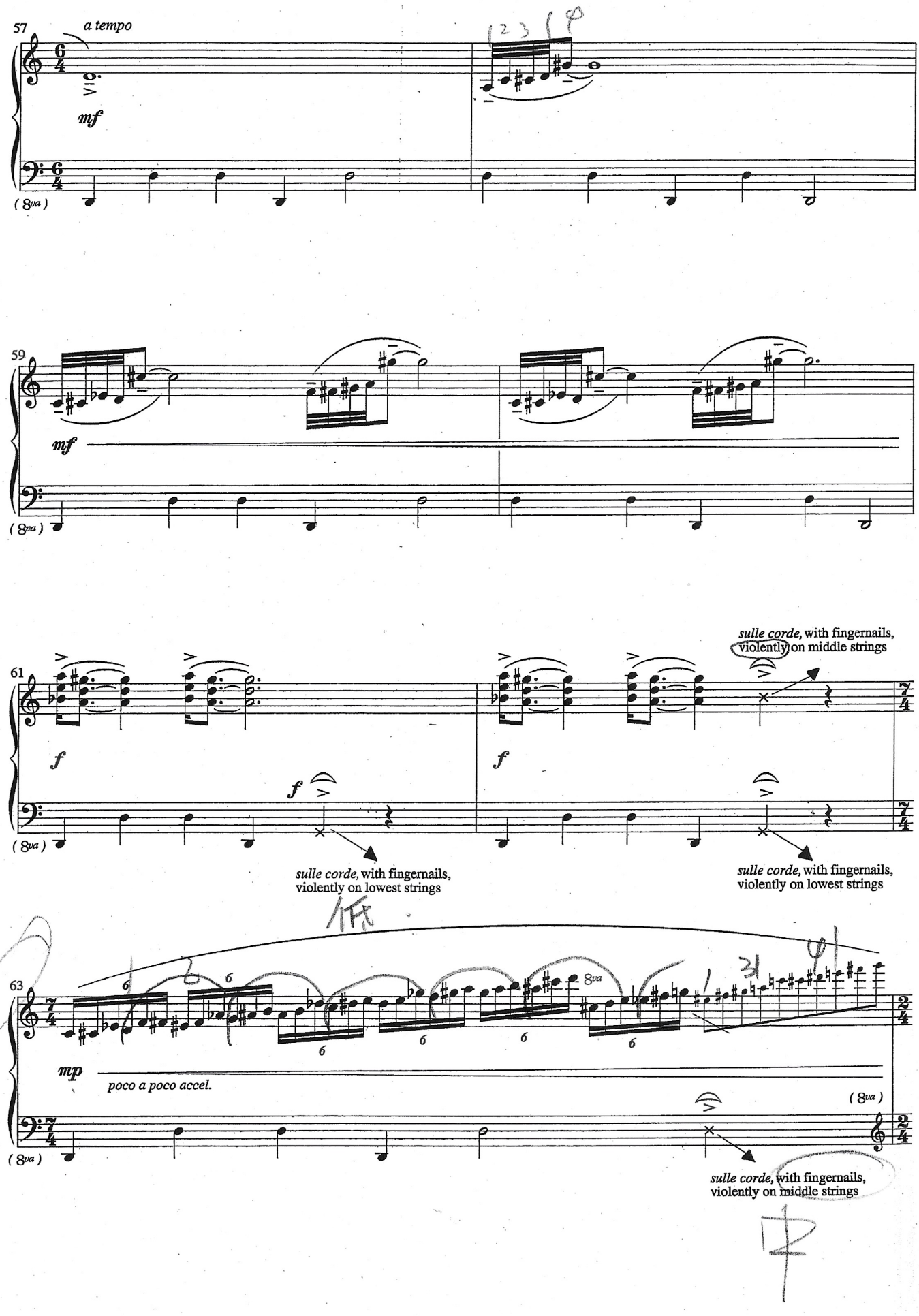
open palm *glissandi* (point fingers to the left of the keyboard) is suggested.

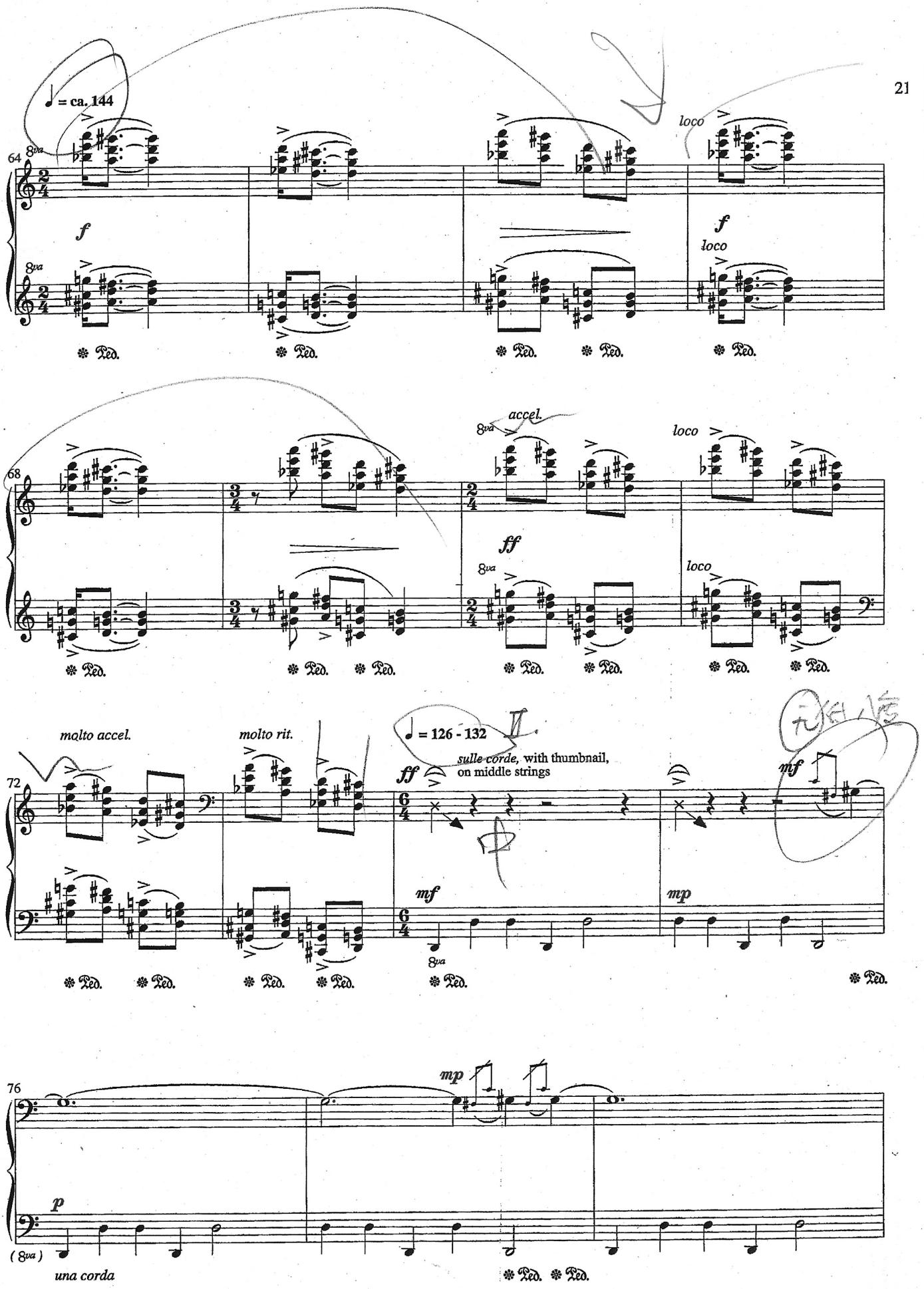


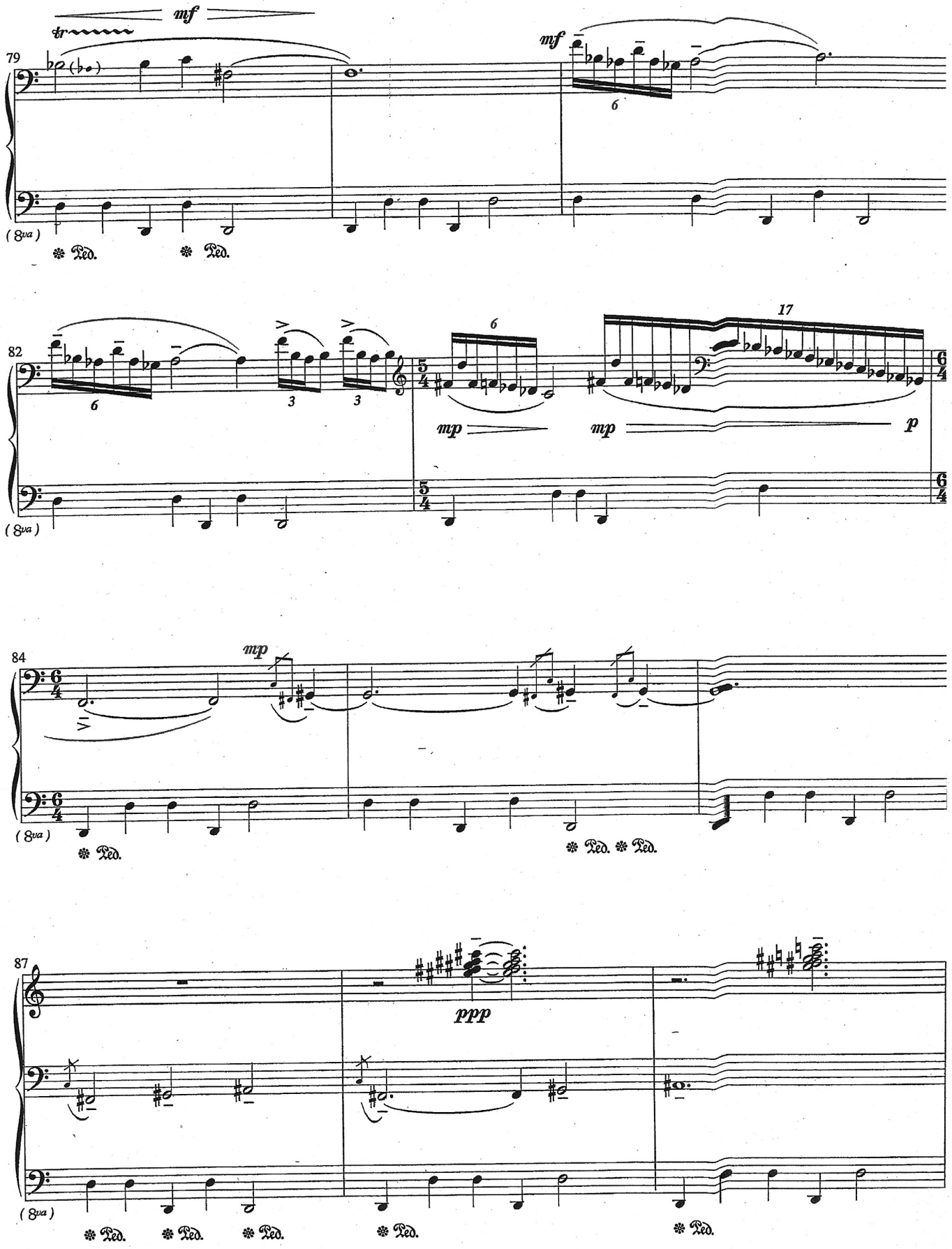


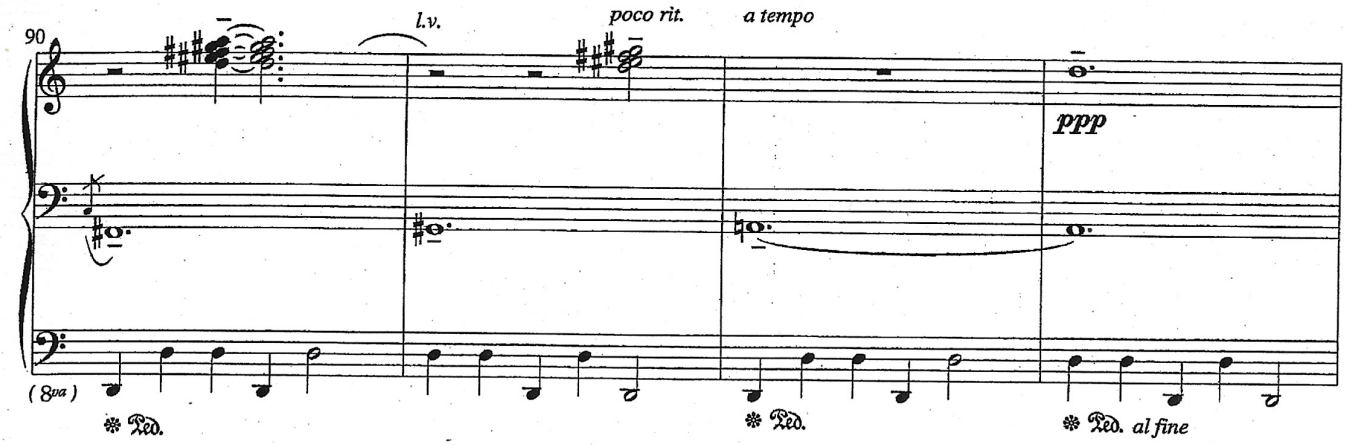
sulle corde, with thumbnail, *gliss.* on middle strings


47
mf l.v.
mf l.v.
sulle corde with nails of 3rd, 4th and 5th fingers, gliss. on lowest strings
(8va)
Ped. Ped.
sulle corde, slow gliss. with nails of 3rd, 4th and 5th fingers on lowest strings (flick fingers at the end for stronger attack)
50
l.v.
mp mf
(8va)
Ped. (ad lib.)
senza misura
a tempo
53
più mf
non troppo dim.
mf
(8va)
55
11
mp mf
senza misura
f
(8va)


57
a tempo
mf
(8va)
59
mf
(8va)
61
f
f
f
(8va)
sulle corde, with fingernails, violently on middle strings
sulle corde, with fingernails, violently on lowest strings
sulle corde, with fingernails, violently on lowest strings
63
mp
poco a poco accel.
8va
(8va)
(8va)
sulle corde, with fingernails, violently on middle strings

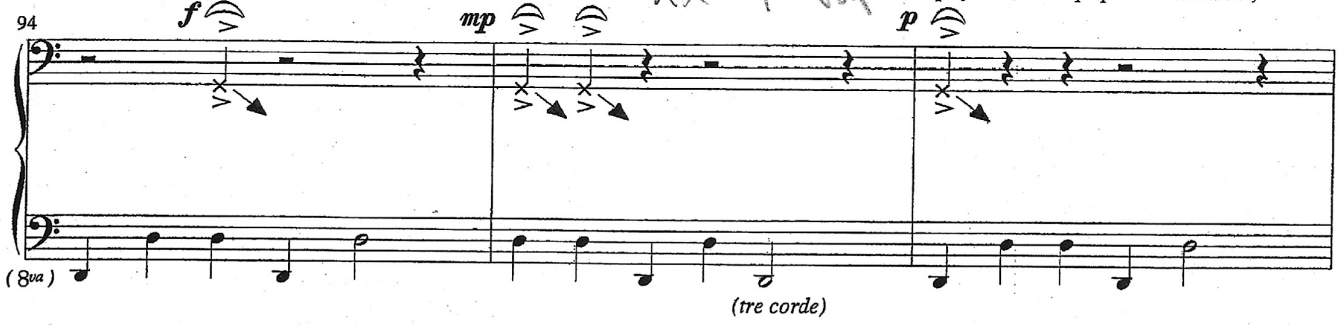

♩ = ca. 144
64
8va
f
loco
Ped.
68
accel.
ff
molto accel.
molto rit.
♩ = 126 - 132
sulle corde, with thumbnail, on middle strings
mf
mp
72
76
p
(8va)
una corda

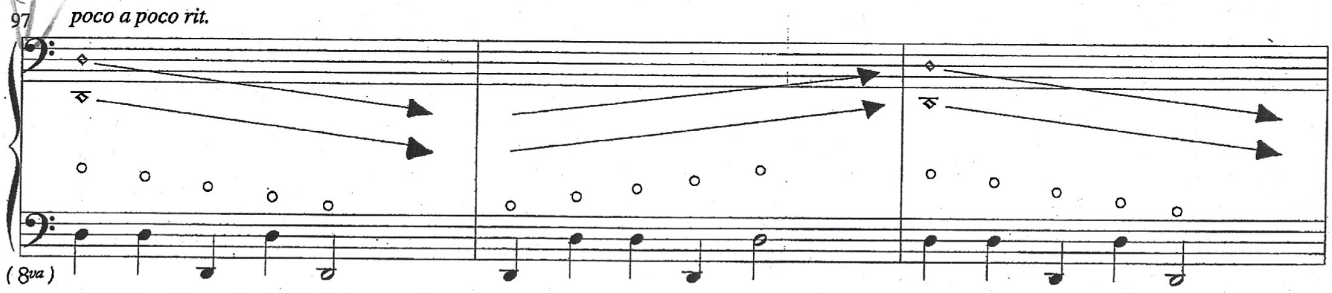

79
mf
tr
mf
6
(8va)
Ped.
Ped.
82
6
3
3
6
17
mp
mp
p
(8va)
84
mp
(8va)
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
87
ppp
(8va)
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.



sulle corde with the nails of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th fingers, *gliss.* on lowest strings

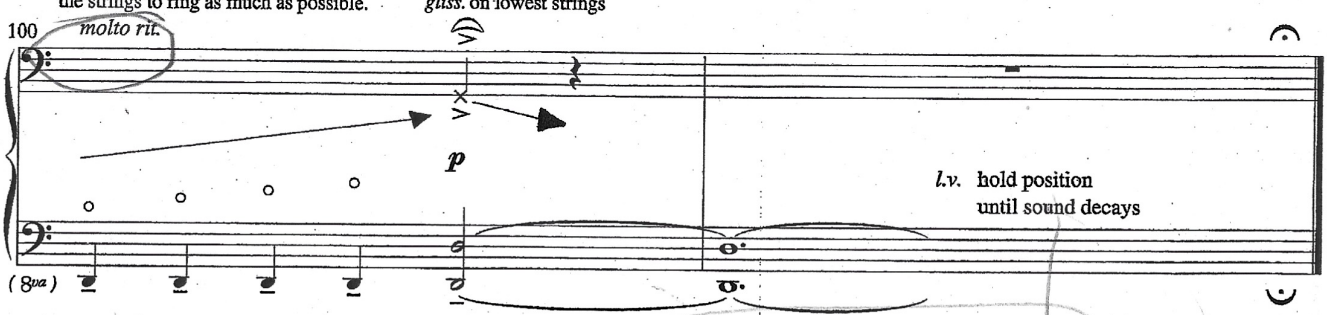
(It is suggested that the pianist stand to play this *gliss.* in preparation for m. 97.)



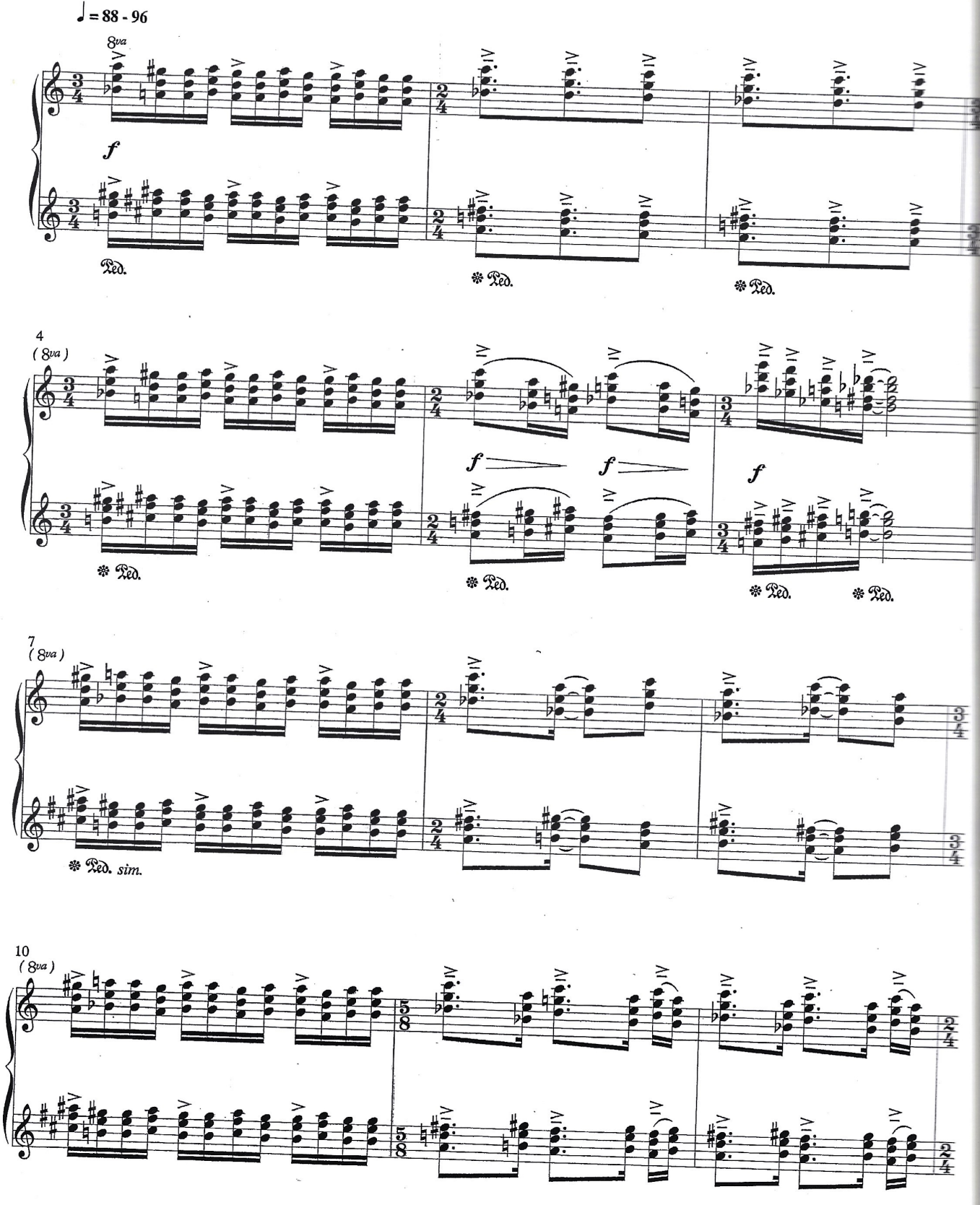


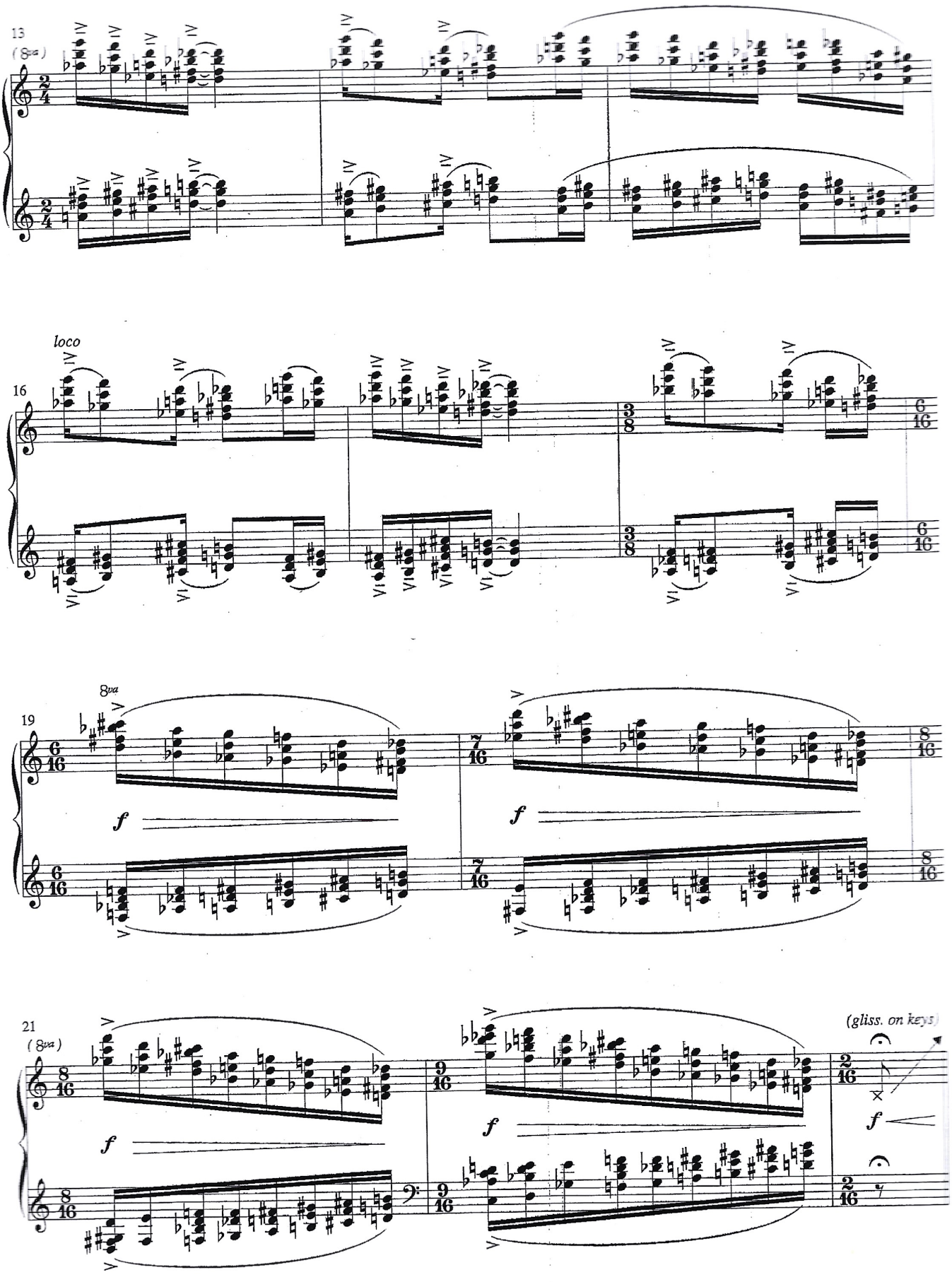
m. 97-100, *sulle corde* with fingertips
1. R.H. on the d strings played by L.H. (at the furthest point from the tuning pins).
2. Lightly touch the strings (overtone will sound).
3. Move along the strings towards the pins and away again as indicated.
4. Find the node positions which allow the strings to ring as much as possible.

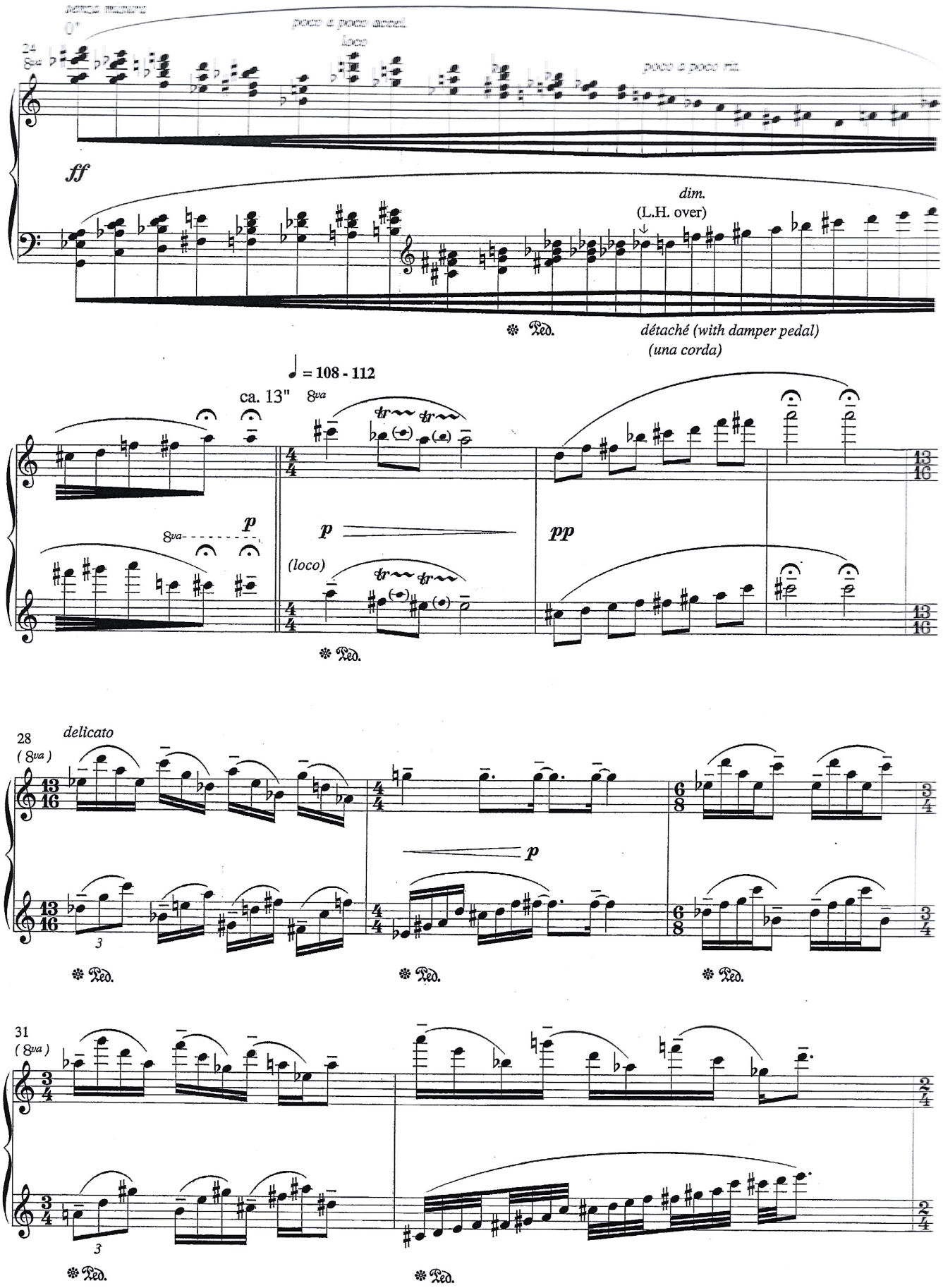
sulle corde with the nails of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th fingers, *gliss.* on lowest strings

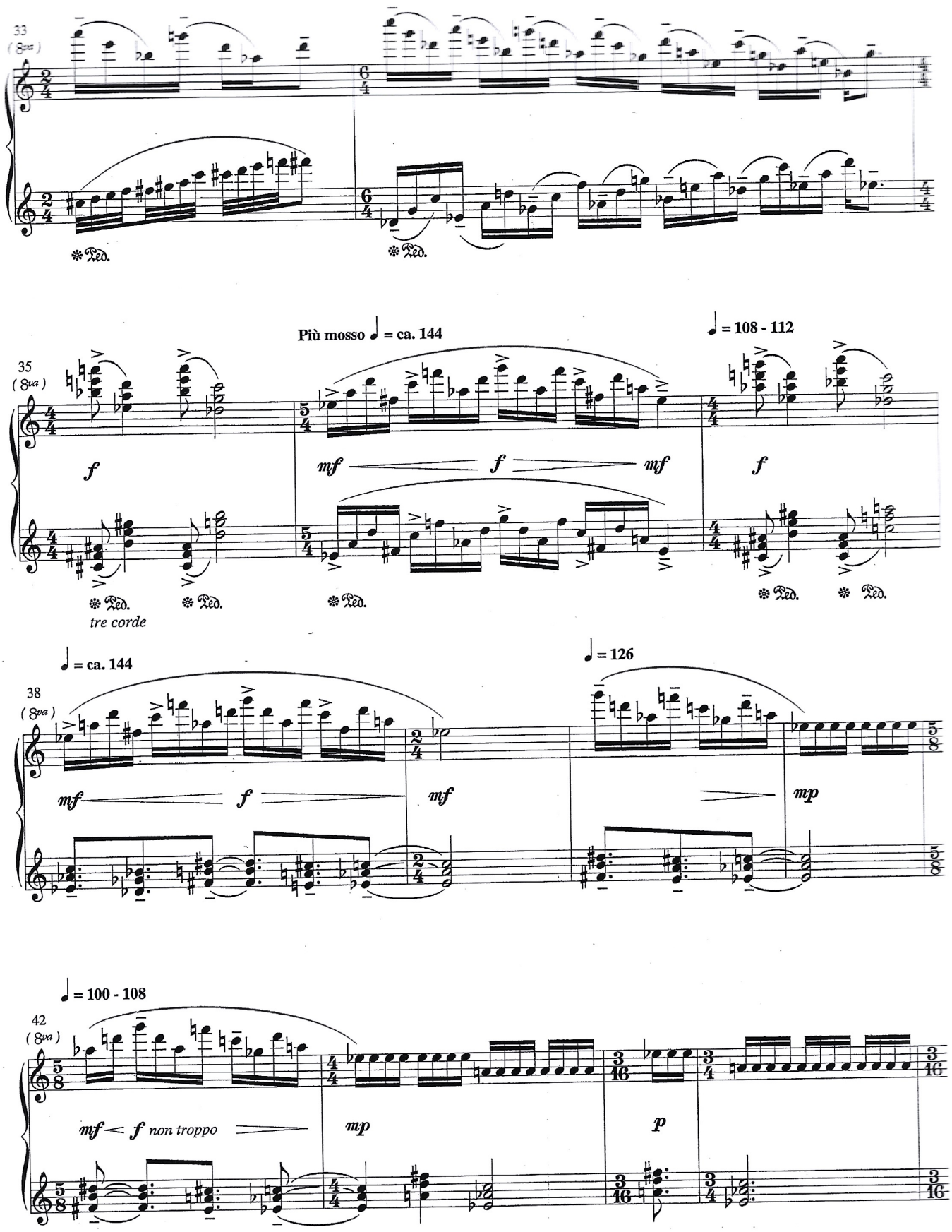


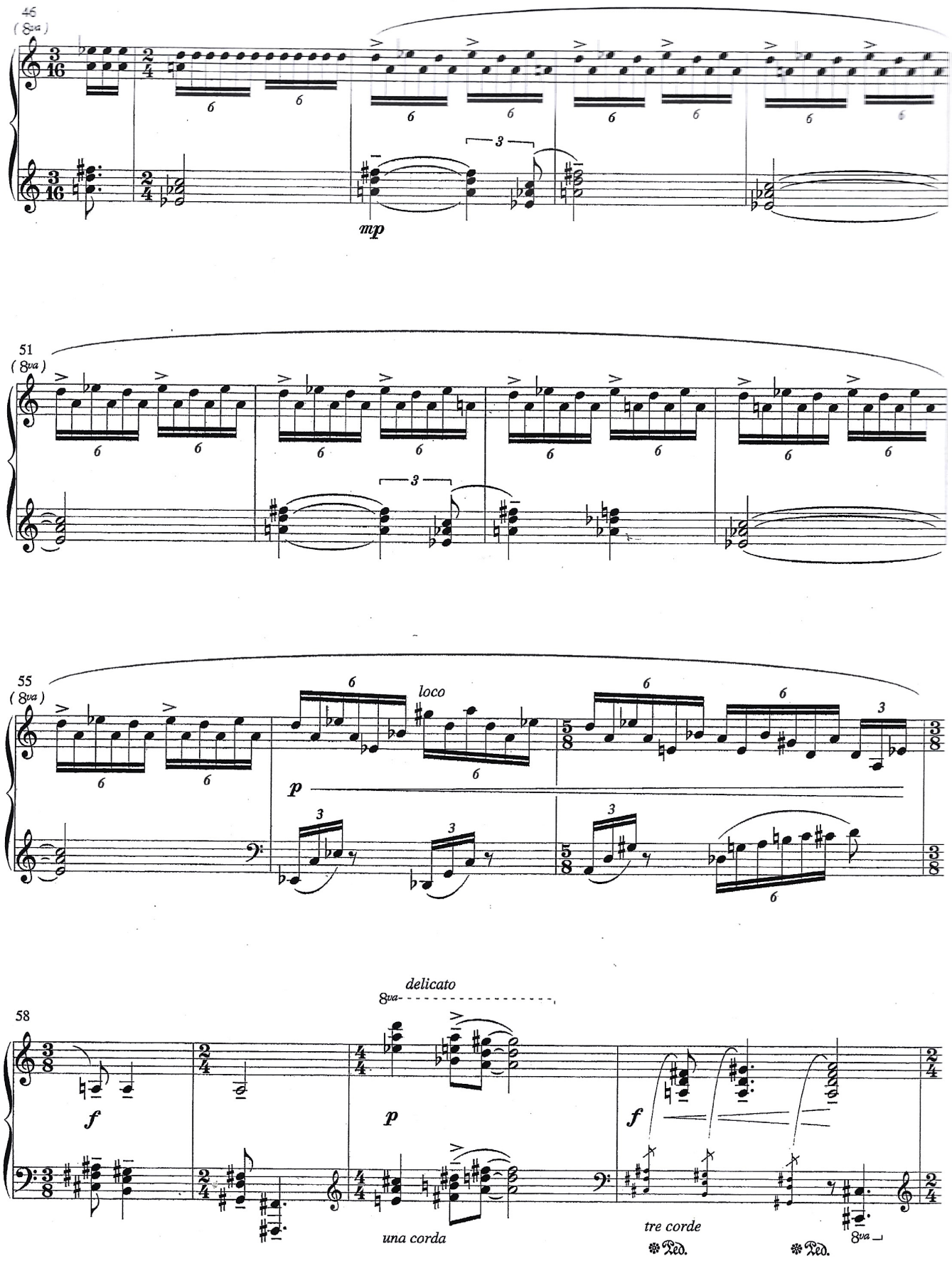
Southern Sky

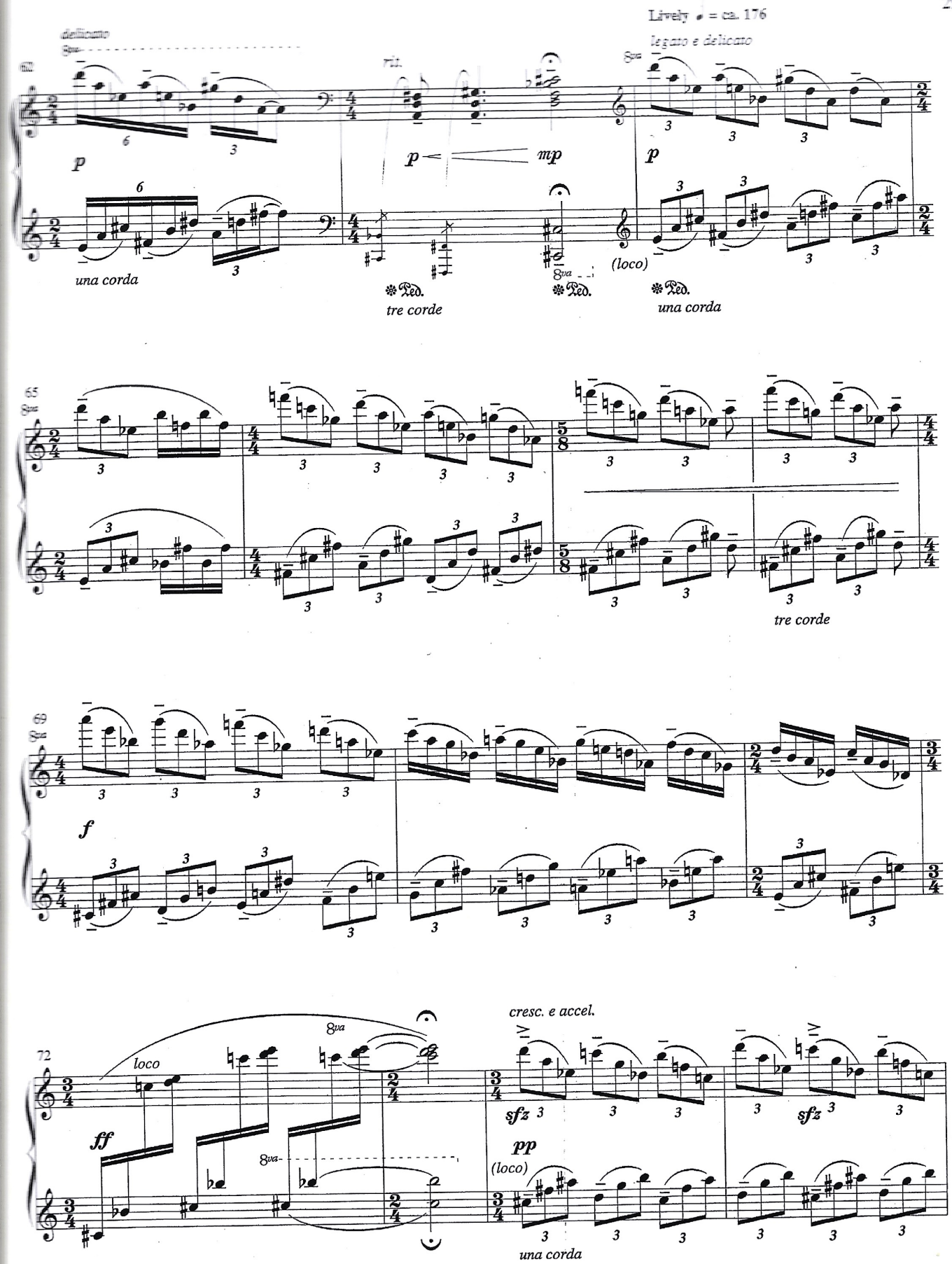


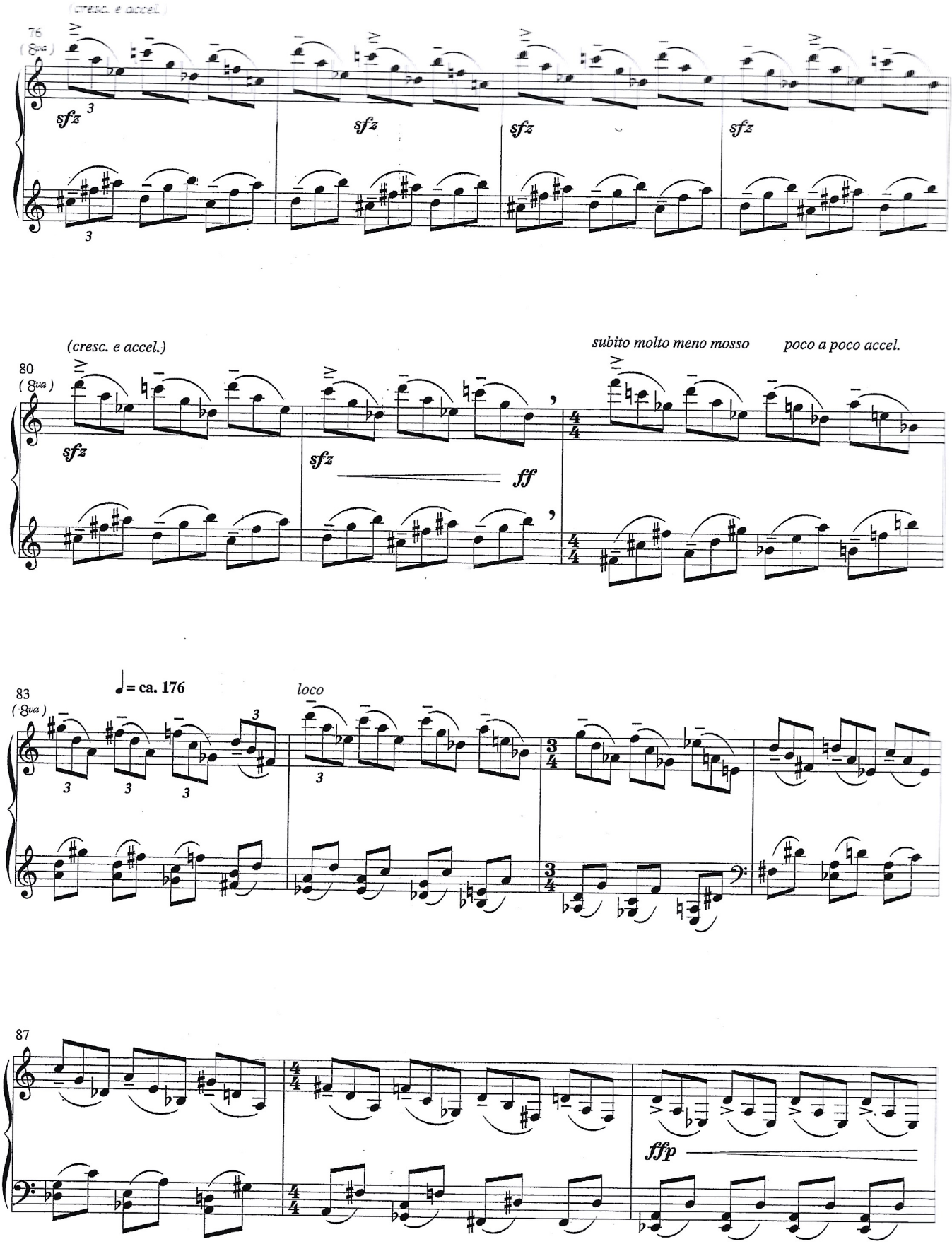

13
(8va)
loco
16
8va
19
f
f
f
21
(8va)
f
f
(gliss. on keys)
f

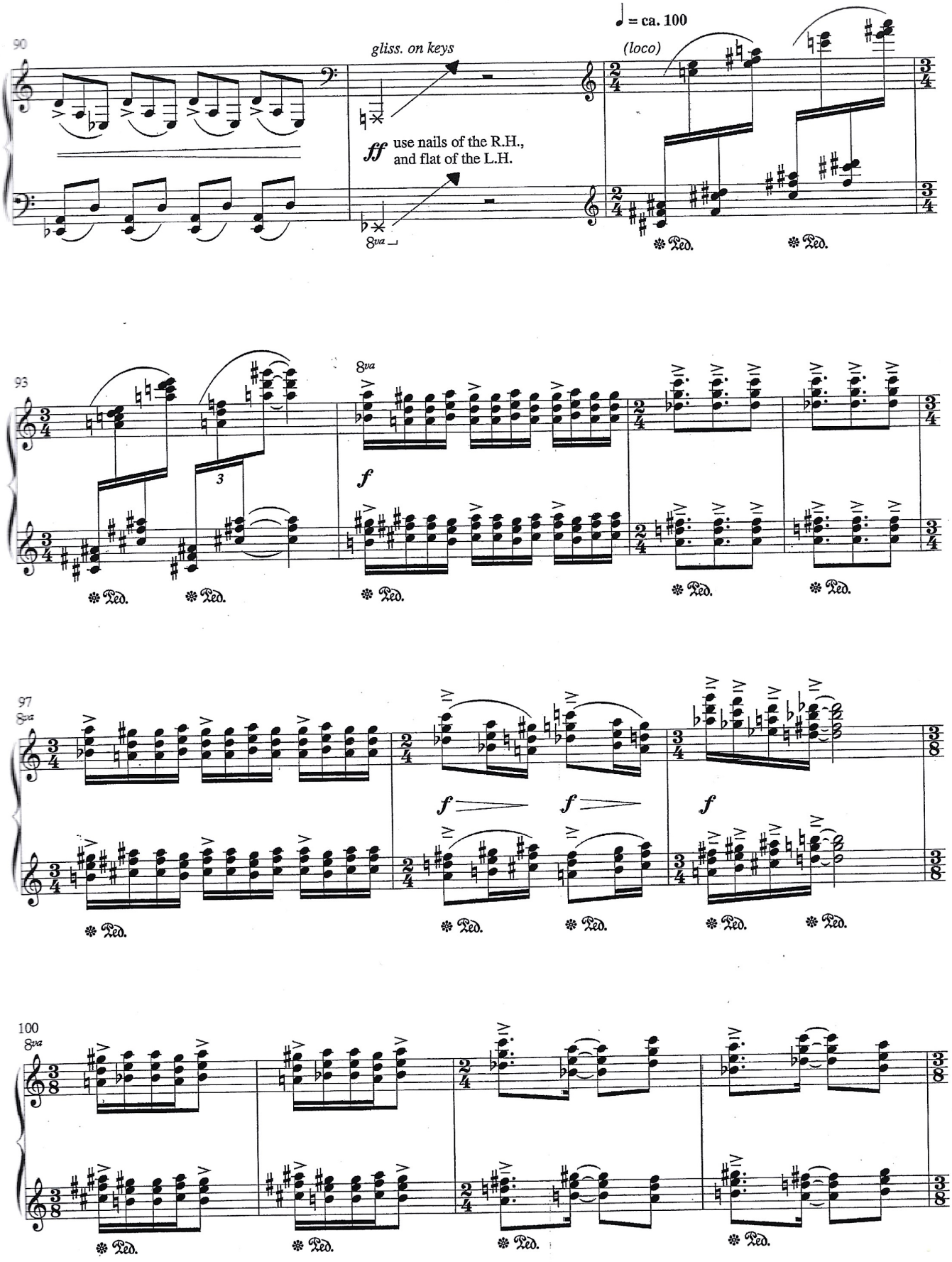

poco a poco accel.
loco
poco a poco rit.
ff
dim.
(L.H. over)
Ped.
détaché (with damper pedal)
(una corda)
♩ = 108 - 112
ca. 13"
8va
p
pp
(loco)
28
delicato
31

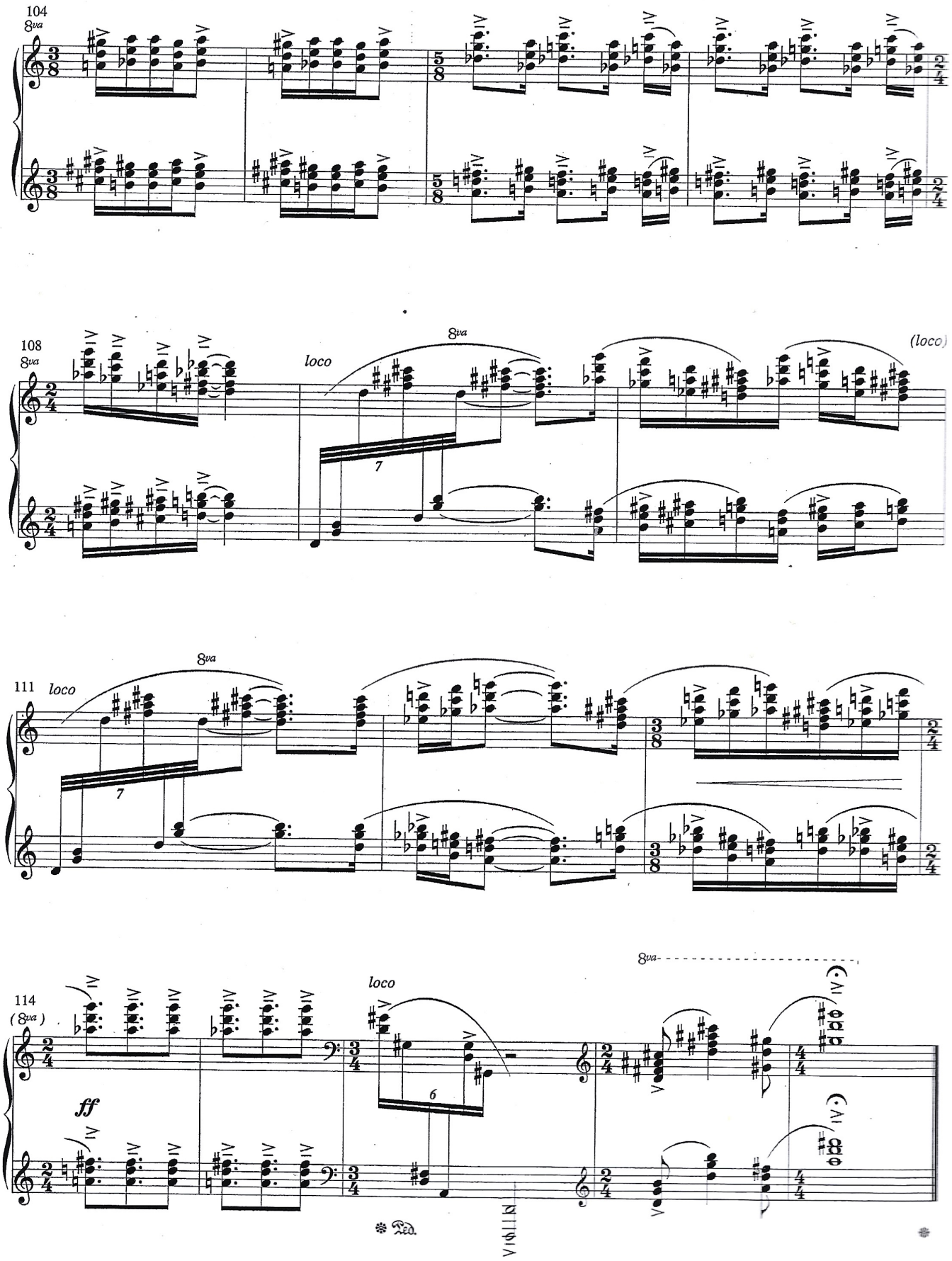

33
(8va)
Ped.
Più mosso ♩ = ca. 144
♩ = 108 - 112
35
(8va)
f
mf
f
mf
f
Ped.
tre corde
♩ = ca. 144
♩ = 126
38
(8va)
mf
f
mf
mp
♩ = 100 - 108
42
(8va)
mf < f non troppo
mp
p


46
(8va)
mp
51
(8va)
55
(8va)
loco
p
58
delicato
8va
f
p
f
una corda
tre corde
Ped.
Ped.
8va


delicato
62
rit.
Lively ♩. = ca. 176
legato e delicato
8va
una corda
tre corde
(loco)
una corda
65
tre corde
69
cresc. e accel.
72
loco
una corda

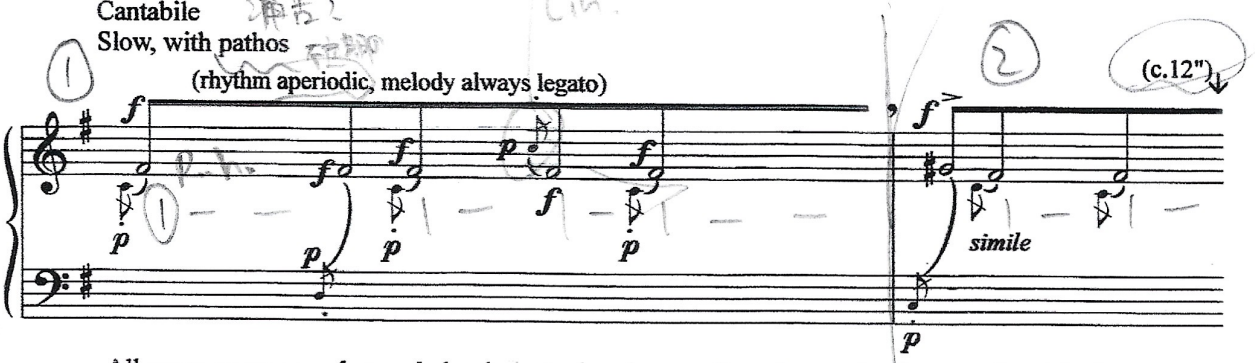

(cresc. e accel.)
76
(8va)
sfz
3
sfz
sfz
sfz
(cresc. e accel.)
subito molto meno mosso
poco a poco accel.
80
(8va)
sfz
sfz
ff
4/4
4/4
83
(8va)
♩= ca. 176
loco
3
3/4
3/4
87
4/4
4/4
ffp


90
gliss. on keys
♩ = ca. 100
(loco)
ff use nails of the R.H., and flat of the L.H.
8va
Ped.
93
8va
3
f
97
8va
f
f
f
100
8va

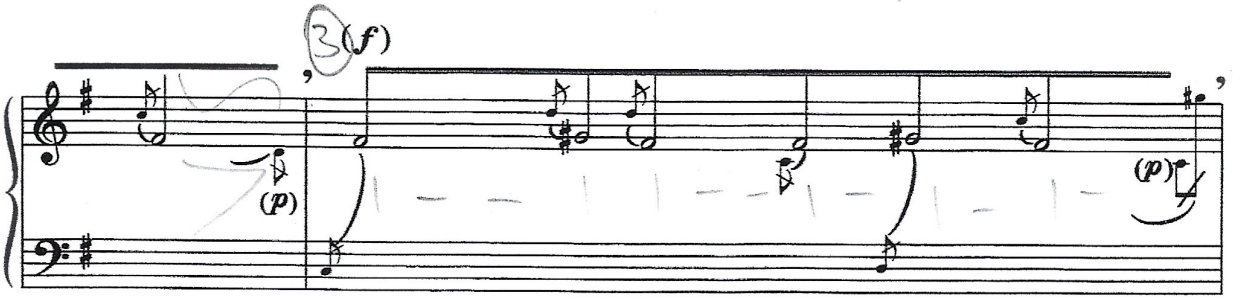

104
8va
108
8va
loco
8va
(loco)
111
loco
8va
114
(8va)
ff
loco
8va
Ped.

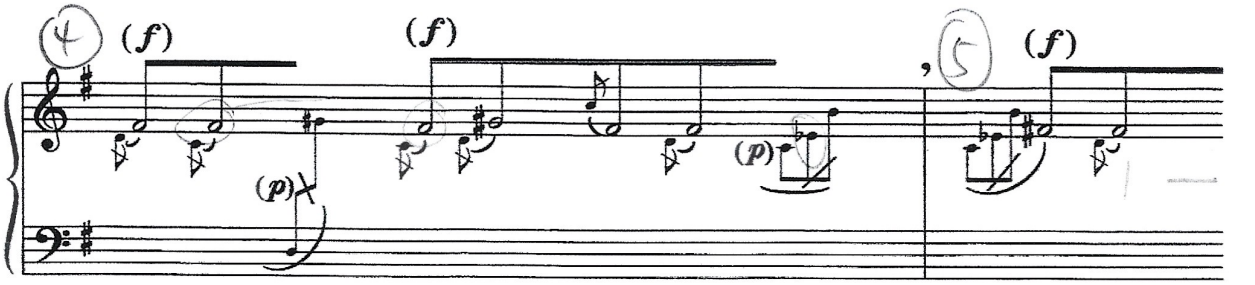
II

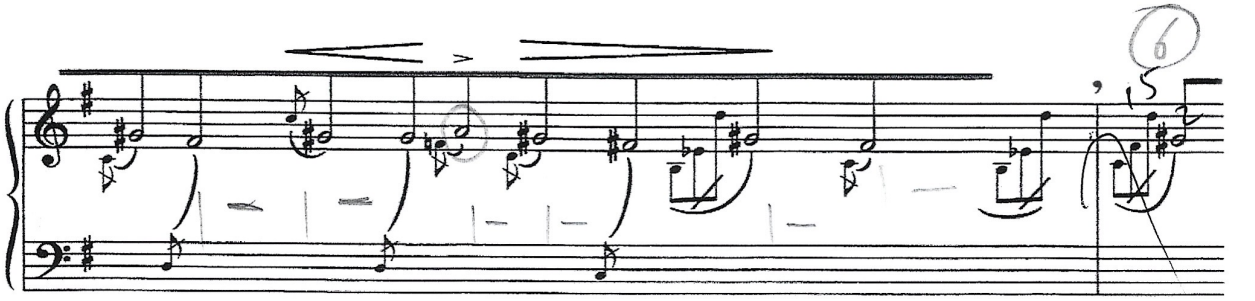
Cantabile
Slow, with pathos
(rhythm aperiodic, melody always legato)

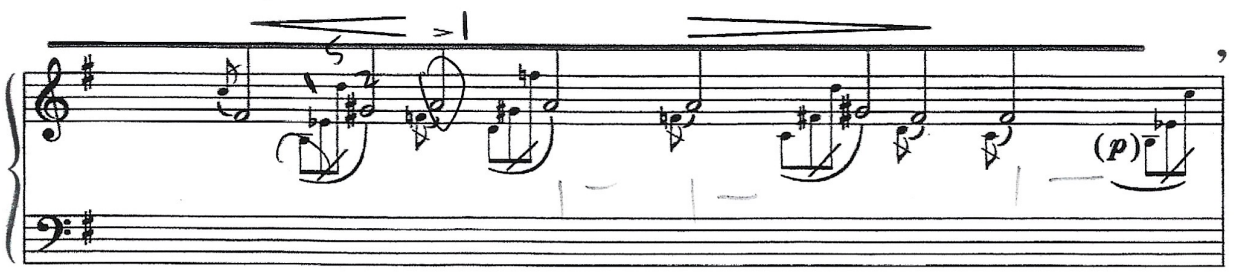


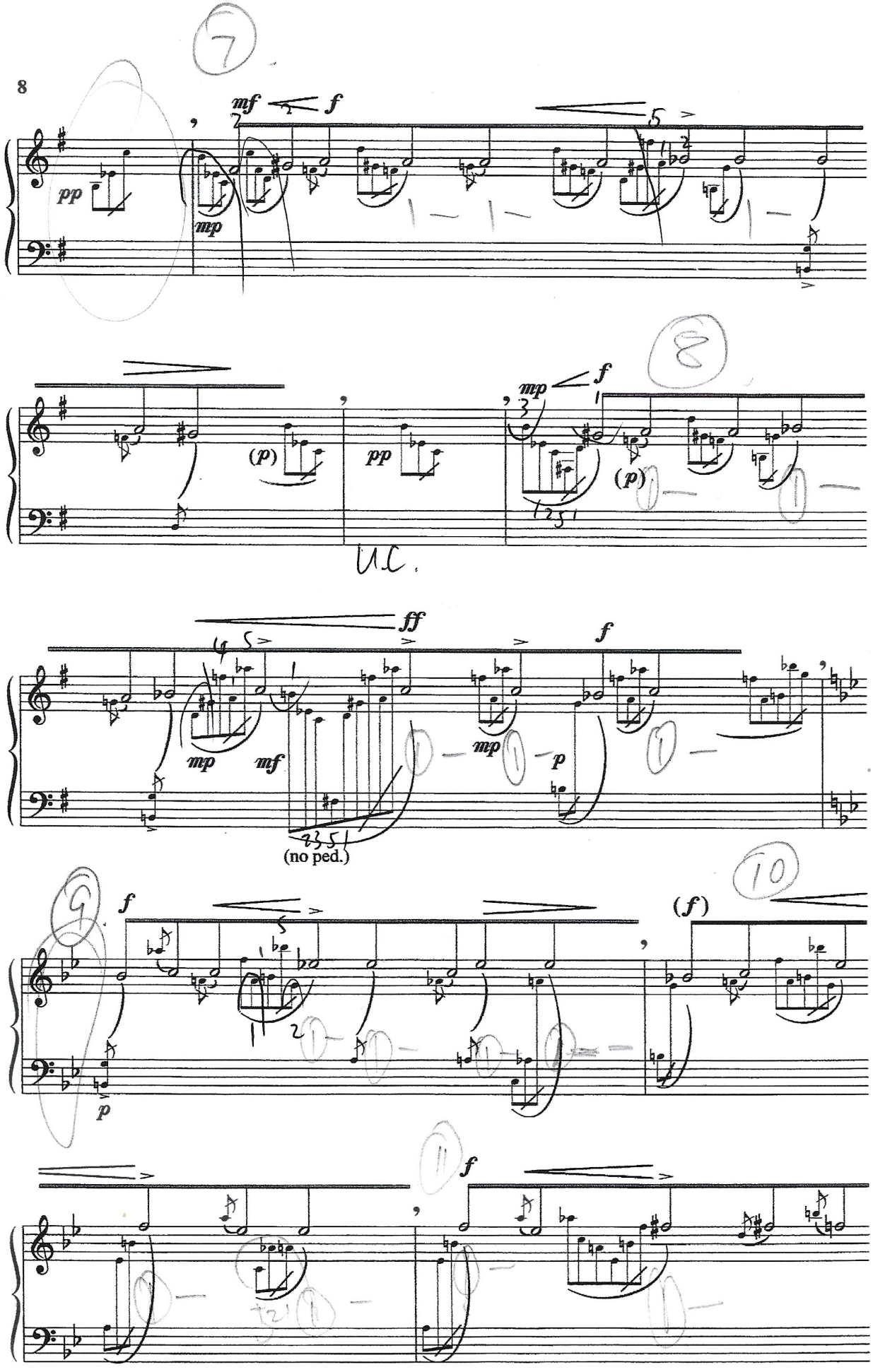
All grace notes very fast and clearly articulated, sounding almost simultaneously with the melodic notes they precede. All grace notes should be *p* relative to the melody notes *f*.

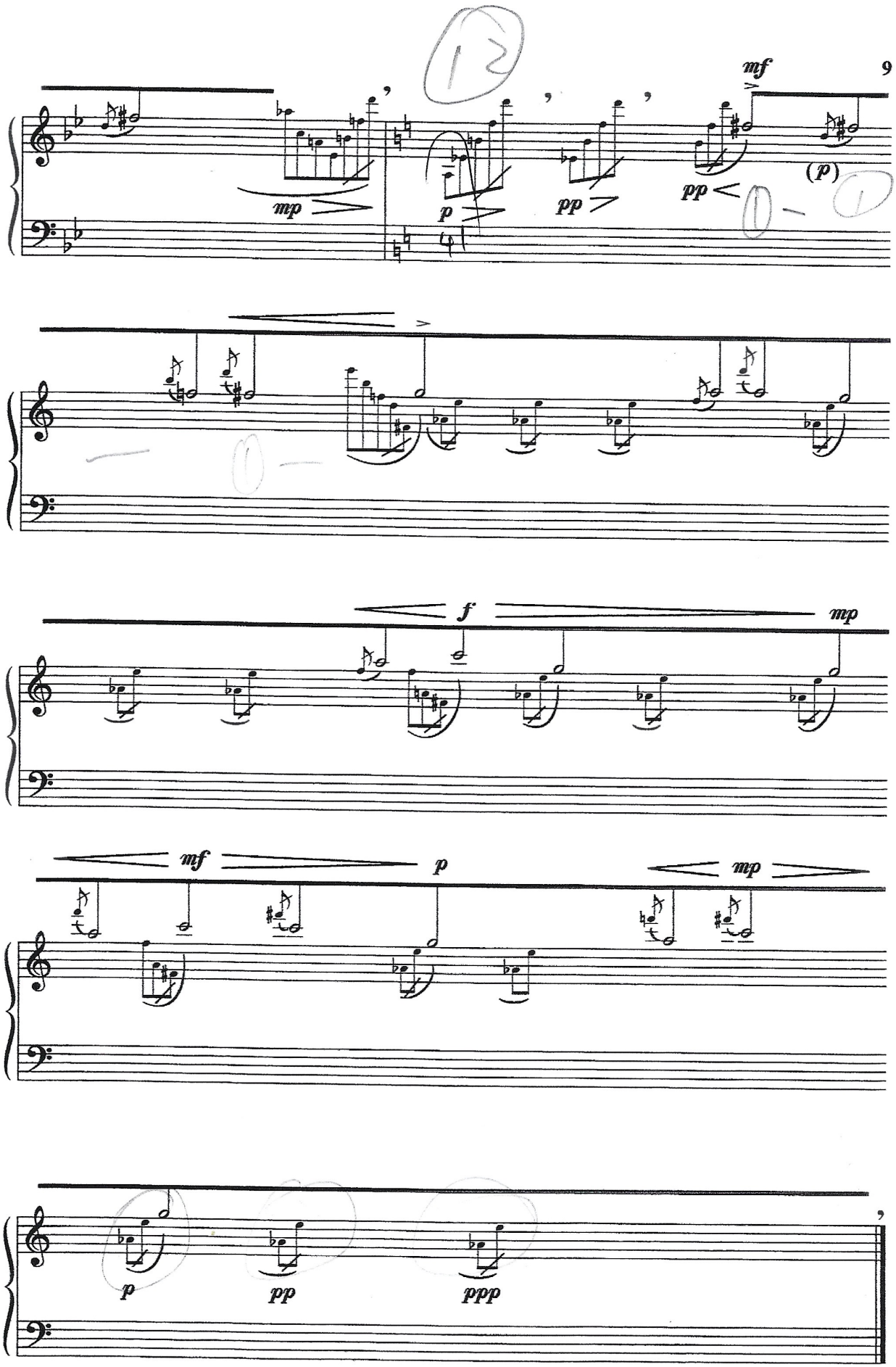




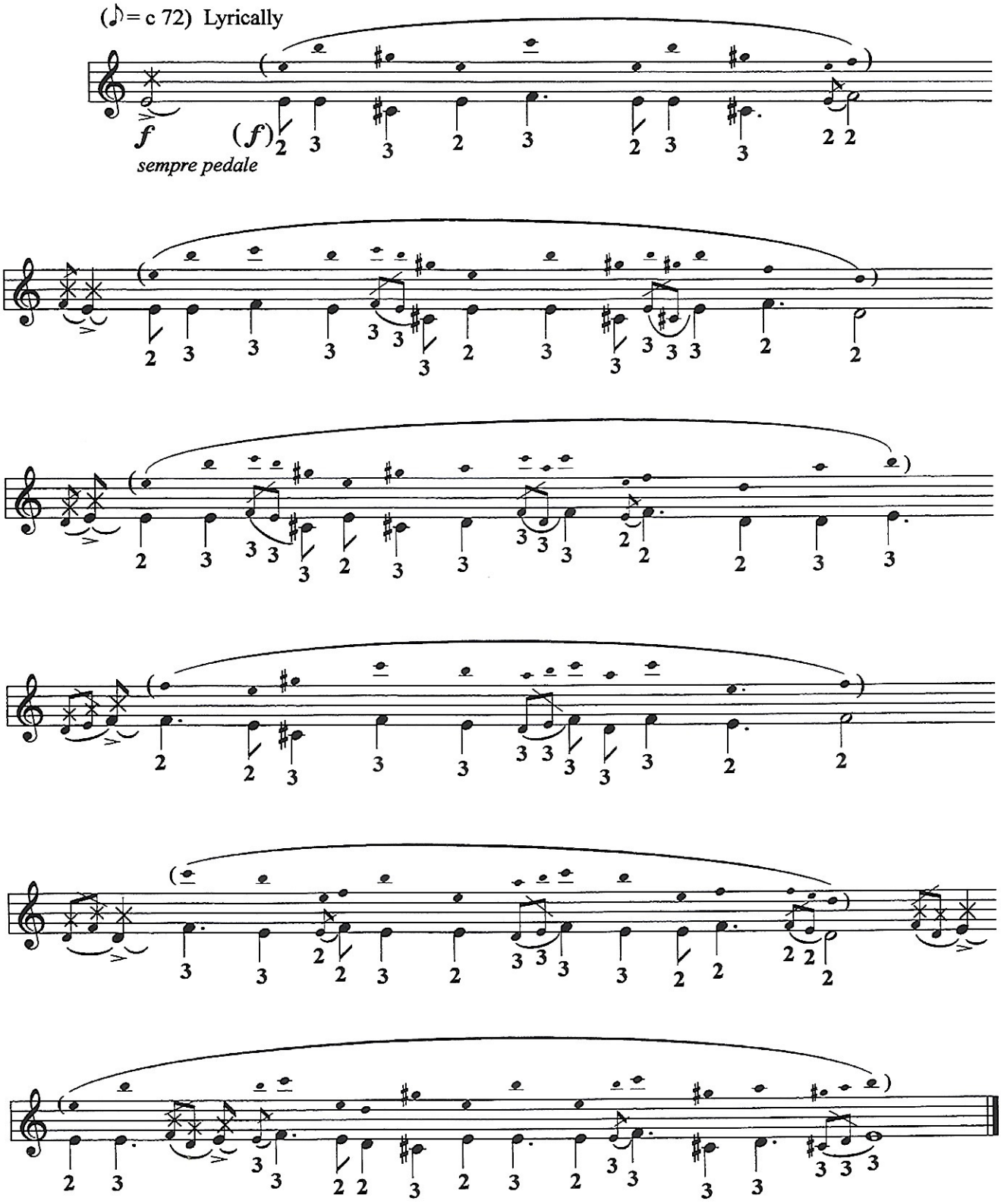





mf
f
pp
mp
(p)
pp
mp
f
(p)
U.C.
ff
f
mp
mf
mp
p
(no ped.)
f
(f)
p
f


mf
mp
p
pp
pp
(p)
f
mp
mf
p
mp
p
pp
ppp

III



Mute the string close to the bridge.

All other notes sound as harmonics: the lower pitch is the note played on the keyboard, the upper pitch the resultant tone. Notes marked "3" are stopped at the node of one third of the string length (i.e. third harmonic). Those marked "2" are stopped at the node at the string's midpoint.

Research Participant Consent

Title of project: The disappearing boundary:
A study on Chinese influences in Western piano compositions

Study approved by School Research Ethics Committee: _____yes_____

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research. The person organising the research must explain the project to you and you should have read any accompanying information sheet before you complete this form.

- If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you decide whether to participate. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.
- I understand that if I decide at any time during the research that I no longer wish to participate in this project, I can notify the researchers involved and withdraw from it immediately without giving any reason.
- Furthermore, I understand that I will be able to withdraw my data up to the point of publication on 01/08/2024.
- If you choose to remain anonymous for this research, it is not possible to withdraw your data.
- I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be treated in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Participant's Statement:

I Alexina Louie *(full name, please print)*

agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the project. I have read both the notes written above and the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research involves.

Signed: [redacted]

Date: August 16, 2022

Research Participant Consent

Title of project: The disappearing boundary:
A study on Chinese influences in Western piano compositions

Study approved by School Research Ethics Committee: _____yes_____

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- I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes explained to me. I understand that such information will be treated in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Participant's Statement:

I GEOFFREY RICHARD POOLE *(full name, please print)*

agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the project. I have read both the notes written above and the Information Sheet about the [redacted] understand what the research involves.

Signed: [redacted]

Date: 22 December 2021

Research Participant Consent

Title of project: The disappearing boundary:
A study on Chinese influences in Western piano compositions

Study approved by School Research Ethics Committee: _____yes_____

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research. The person organising the research must explain the project to you and you should have read any accompanying information sheet before you complete this form.

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Participant's Statement:

I _____ *(full name, please print*)

agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the project. I have read both the notes written above and the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research involves.

Signed: [redacted]_____

Date: _____

Research Participant Consent

Title of project: The disappearing boundary:
A study on Chinese influences in Western piano compositions

Study approved by School Research Ethics Committee: _____yes_____

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research. The person organising the research must explain the project to you and you should have read any accompanying information sheet before you complete this form.

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Participant's Statement:

I _____ *(full name, please print*)

agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in the project. I have read both the notes written above and the Information Sheet about the project, and understand what the research involves.

Signed: _____

Date: _____