Richard Cumming

POSTCARDS FROM ITALY
(Cartoline)

Twelve explorations and sidetrips for adventurous pianists

for solo piano and recitation

POSTCARDS FROM ITALY (Cartoline) (9:40)

Twelve explorations and sidetrips for adventurous pianists

1. Maggiore	**1**	(0:24)
2. Capri	**2**	(0:56)
3. Venezia	**3**	(1:13)
4. Firenze	**5**	(0:53)
5. Siena	**7**	(0:40)
6. Ansedonia	**8**	(0:54)
7. Spoleto	**9**	(0:30)
8. Orvieto	**10**	(0:26)
9. Sori	**11**	(0:47)
10. Roma	**12**	(1:15)
11. Tarquinia	**14**	(1:05)
12. Positano	**15**	(0:37)

Just as it may be neccessary to change the routing arranged by a well-intentioned travel agent, so the individual pianist should feel free to change fingerings when they prove cumbersome or uncomfortable.

Also, the pedal marks are only those specifically desired for a certain effect and individual pianists should feel free to add it elsewhere as desired to enhance the local color. (RJC)

The composer spent many summers in Italy, as often as his schedule would permit. The pieces in this score were all written in Ansedonia during his trip in the summer of 1968.

Richard Cumming (9 June 1928 – 25 November 2009), composer of more than sixty theater scores, studied with Ernest Bloch, Arnold Schoenberg, and Roger Sessions. The catalog of his music includes works for chamber groups, chorus and vocal ensembles, opera, orchestra, solo piano, strings, voice, film, radio, and television. Born in Shanghai in 1928 he was raised in Manila and went to school on the US west coast. A student at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music he studied piano with Lili Kraus and Rudolf Firkusny and toured much of the US, Canada, Europe and the Far East as soloist, Assistant Conductor of the Santa Fe Opera and accompanist for numerous instrumentalists and singers. He wrote music for New York's Phoenix Theater, the Milwaukee Repertory Theater, the Loretto-Hilton in St. Louis, California's Marin Shakespeare Festival, Esso Repertory Theater (nationwide TV), and the Trinity Square Repertory Company, Providence, RI where he was composer-in-residence from 1966. In 1968 that company was the first professional American regional theater to be invited to the Edinburgh Festival, where Cumming received worldwide acclaim with his score for their premier production of Norman Holland's "Years of the Locust." His compositions earned awards from ASCAP, the Ford Foundation, Meet the Composer, the National Endowment for the Arts, National Federation of Music Clubs, Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, Rubin Opera, and Wurlitzer Foundation, among others.

POSTCARDS FROM ITALY (Cartoline)

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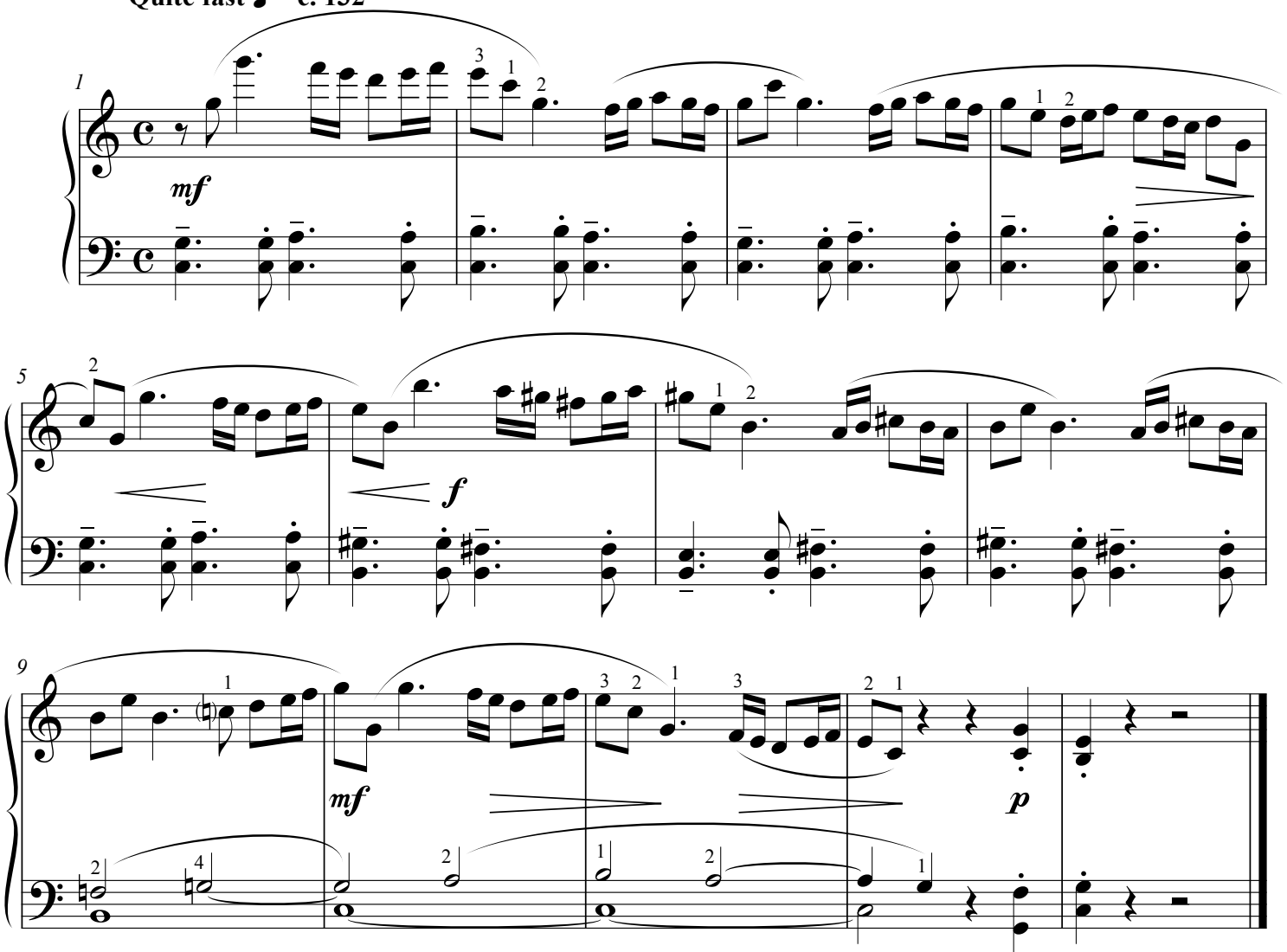
Richard Cumming

1. Maggiore

Oh! The absolute and joyous bliss of it...with this blue lake at our feet as we sit and eat lunch, and the Alps behind us (those Swiss snowfields we left two hours ago: imagine the vulgarity of snow in July!), our senses are caressed again by sights and sounds and smells and tastes - and they're all Italian. We' ve come home!

Quite fast ♩ = c. 132



Ansedonia 06-26-1968

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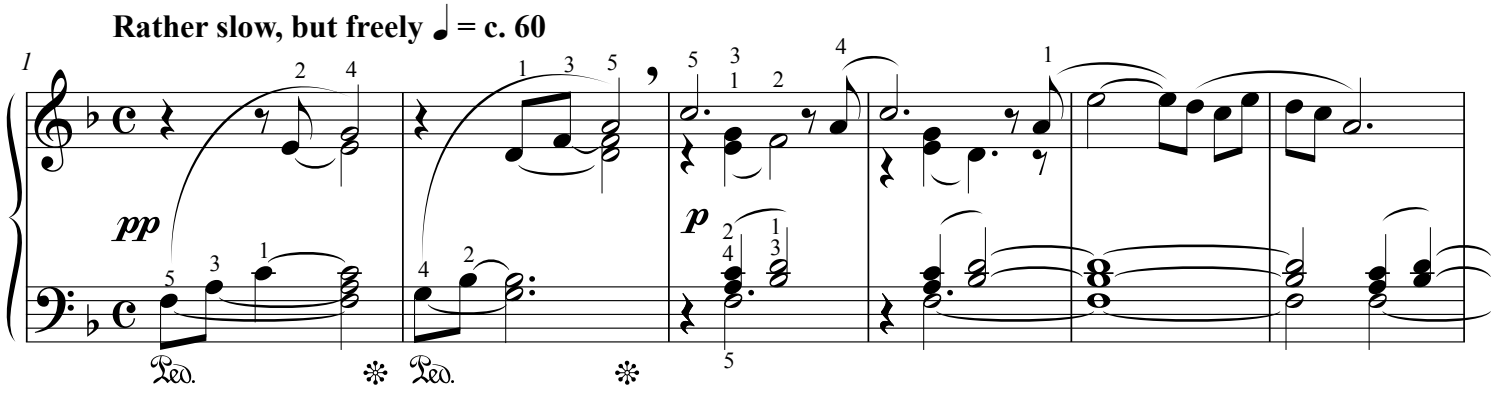
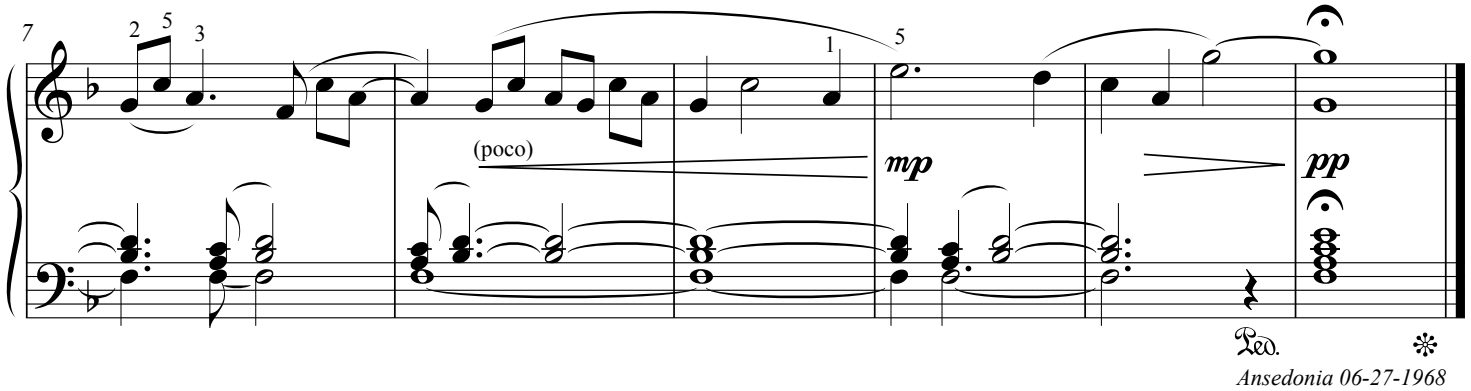
2. Capri

I don't know if the Italians have exclusive artistic rights to moonlight or not, but they certainly do know how to use it. It is unreal for anything to be so ravishing as this full-mooned night on this fabled isle - yet, magically, it has become the reality.

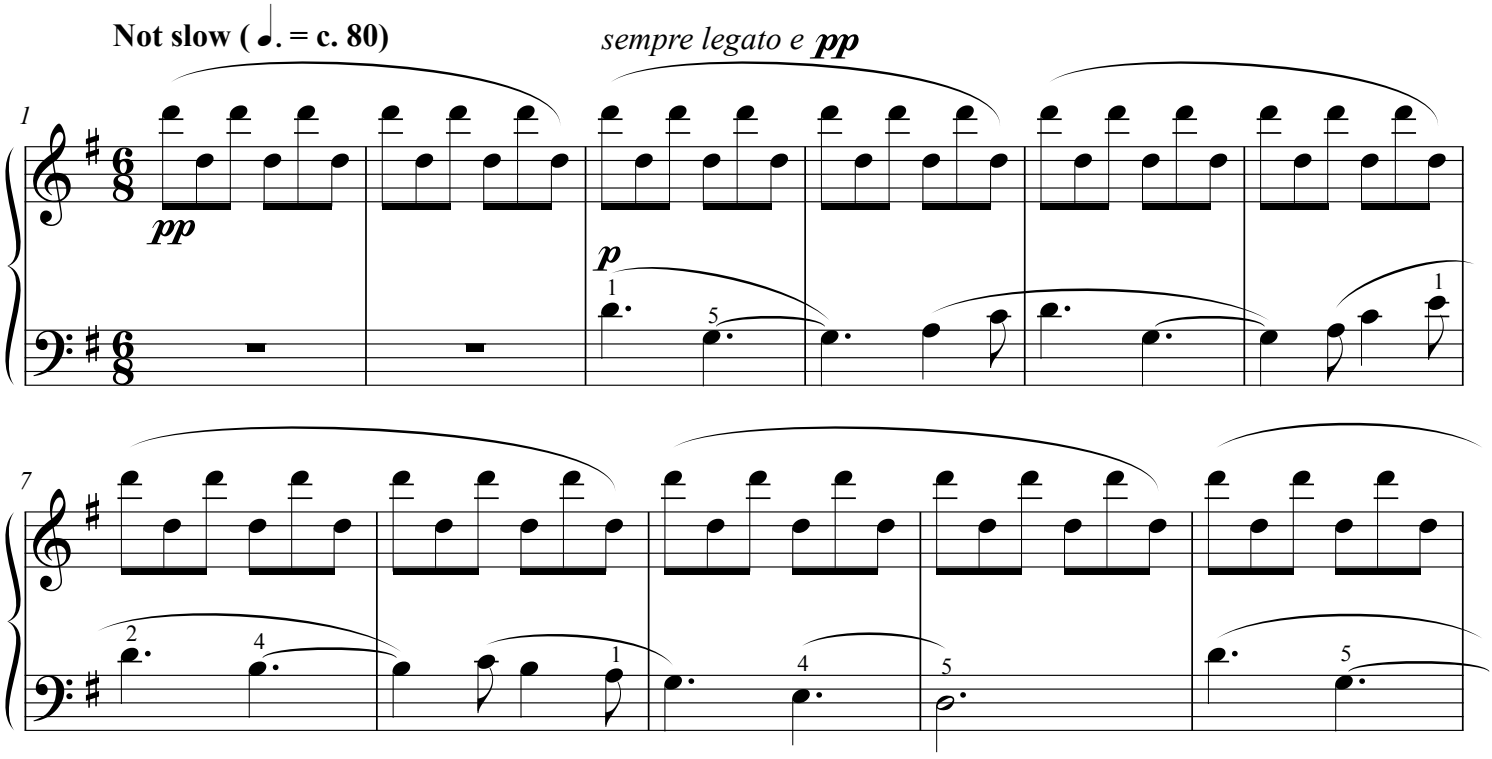


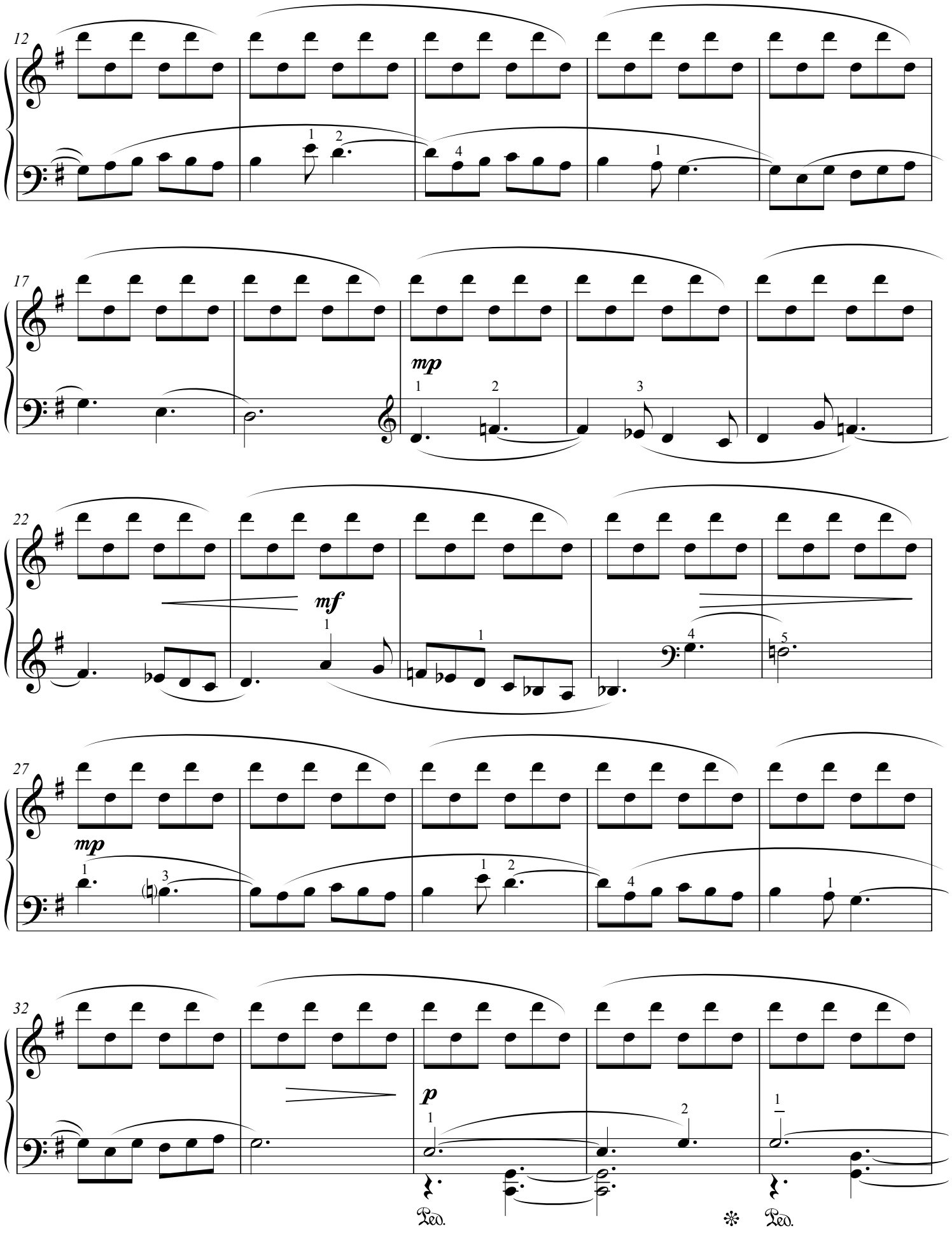


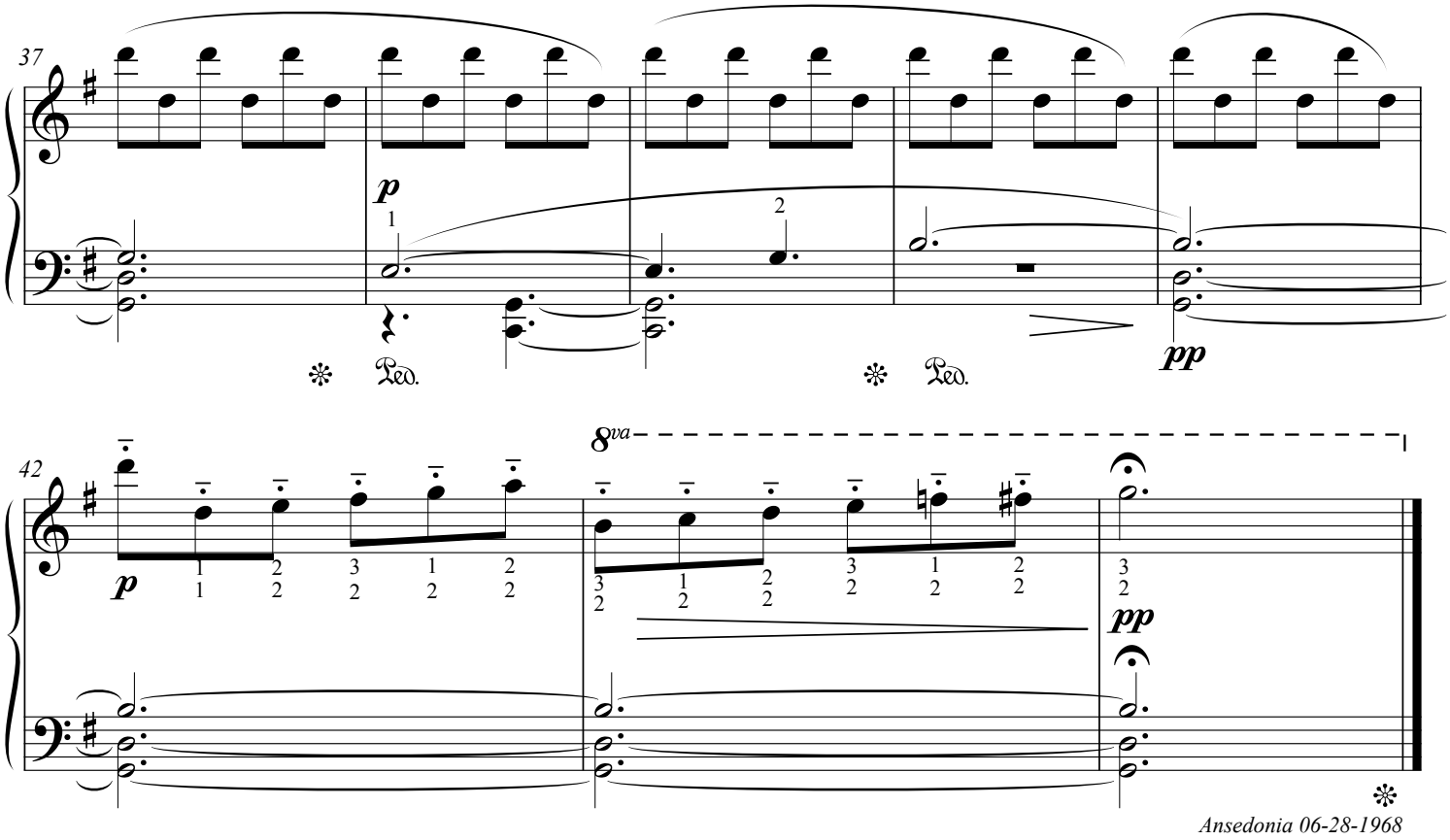
Ansedonia 06-27-1968

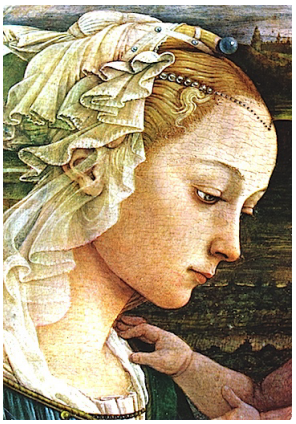
3. Venezia

Have you noticed how often the combinatin of this mad miracle called Venice with that miraculous madness called music seems to result in an excessive amount of 6/8 time? (Chopin, Offenbach, Bernstein, etc.). Everyone has a special Venetian memory (and far too many involve those awful pigeons in Piazza San Marco carrying on like so many feathered chorus-girls). My favorite, as of now, came about through a terrible night of insomnia which drove me to sit up reading til all hours. Perhaps I dozed, but when I next looked out the window, dawn was gently breaking - all pale blues, pinks and rose. Floating across the lagoon was one lone gondola and, suddenly, for me to have Venice at dawn and the gondolier's song all for my very own, was almost too beautiful to bear. He was singing, of course, in 6/8 time.




12
17
mp
22
mf
27
mp
32
p
Ped.
Ped.

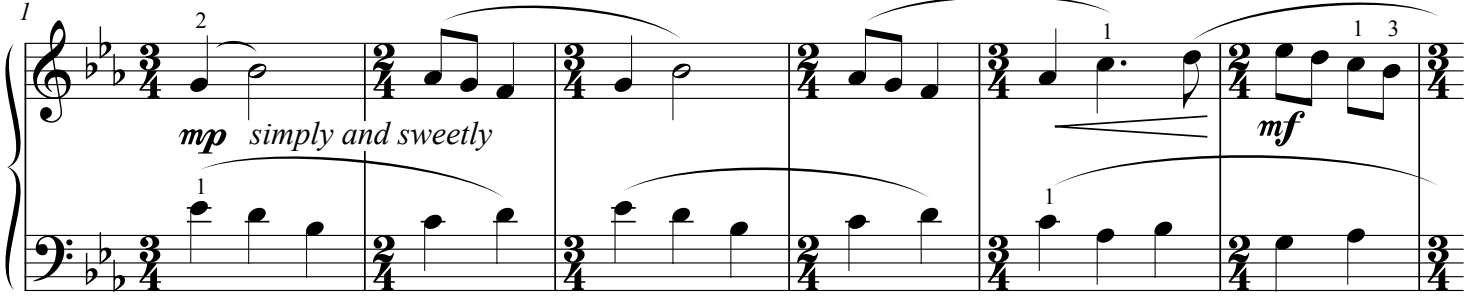


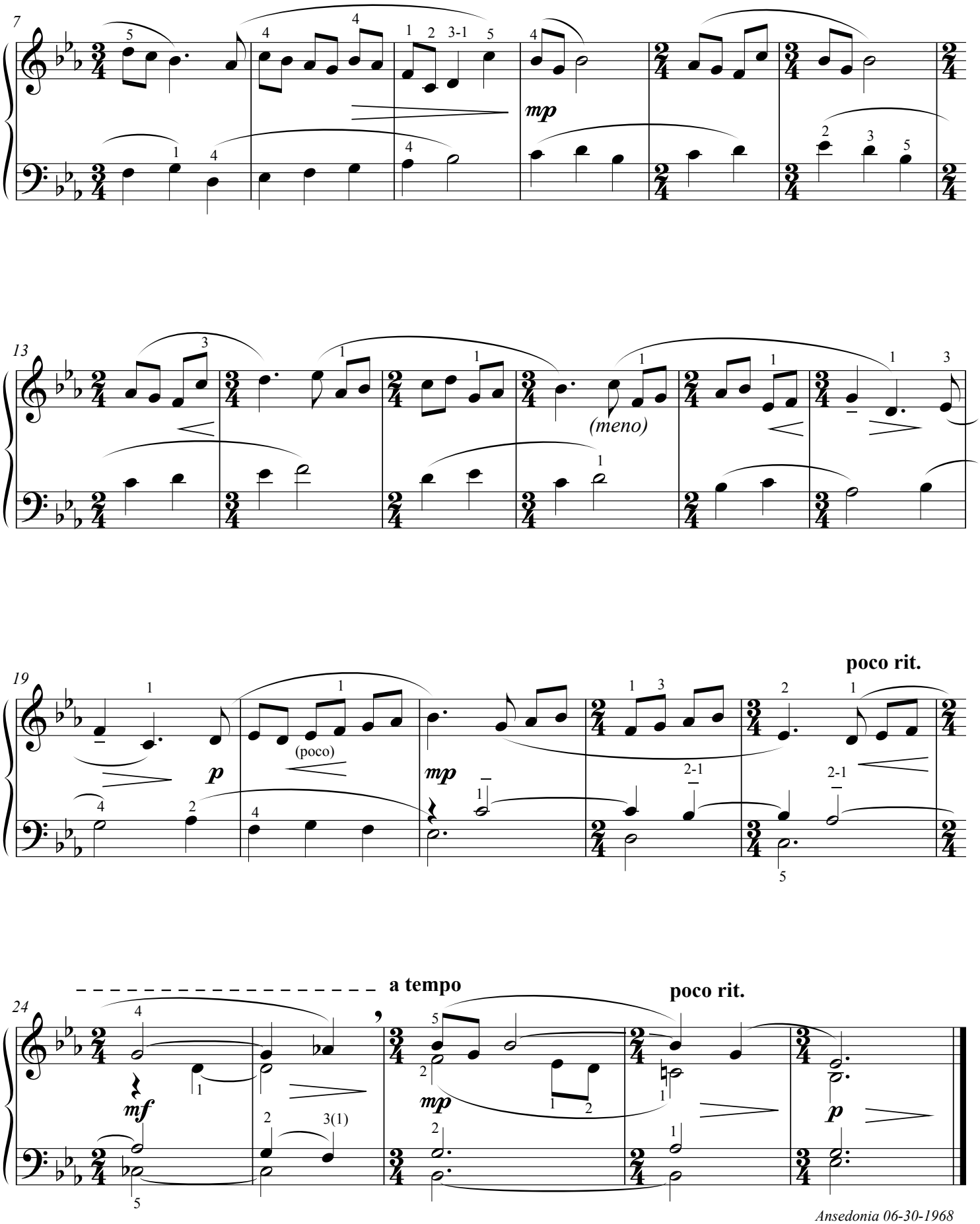


4. Firenze

Anyone foolish enough to try to get through the Uffizi Gallery in one day will carry away a memory of exhaustion, confusion and very sore feet. Fortunately, one of the first treasures to be seen in this fabulous treasuretrove is a little gem of a painting by Filippo Lippi of the Madonna, and months later, you'll suddenly find yourself being haunted by the memory and the wonder and innocence of that rapturous face.

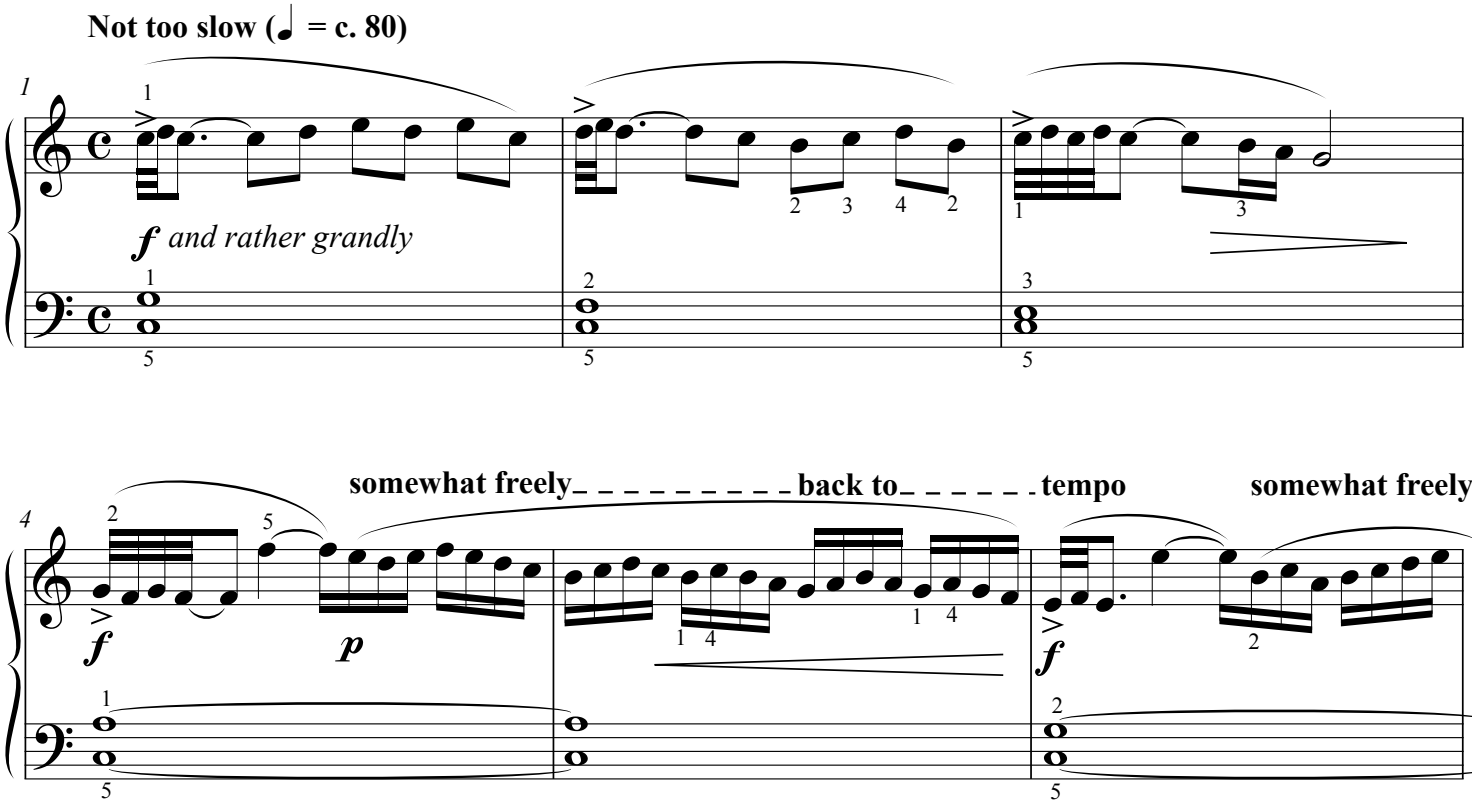
Andante con moto (rather free - keep it moving, but not too fast) (♩ = c. 100)

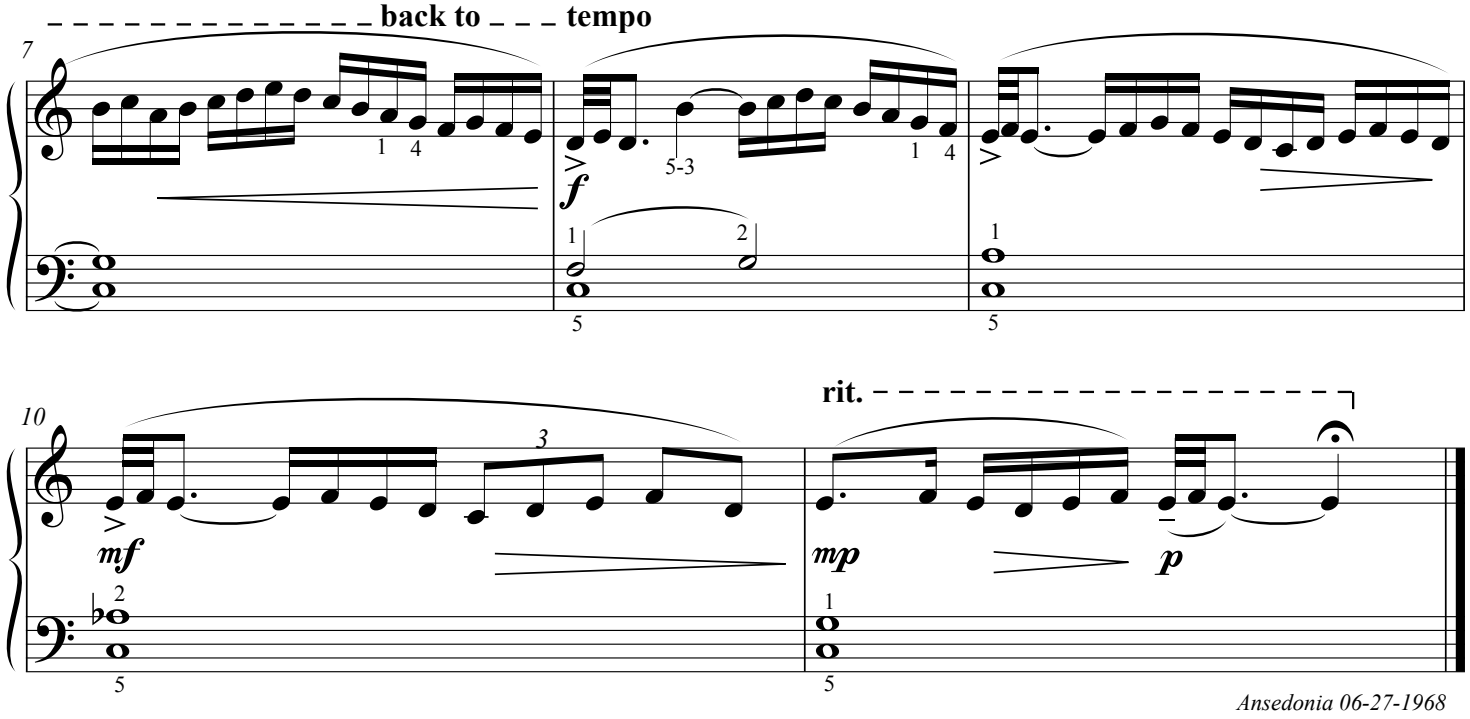



7
mp
13
(meno)
19
poco rit.
p
(poco)
mp
24
a tempo
poco rit.
mf
mp
p

5. Siena

With each passing minute on the streets of Siena, the present drops further away - our aggressive little car, our sunglasses and our casual clothes seem more and more out of place amid all this classic dignity. And by the time we the reach the breathtaking amphitheatre that serves for a main piazza, there would be no surprise in discovering that we had inadvertently stumbled into a full Renaissance reception for a visiting Medici.

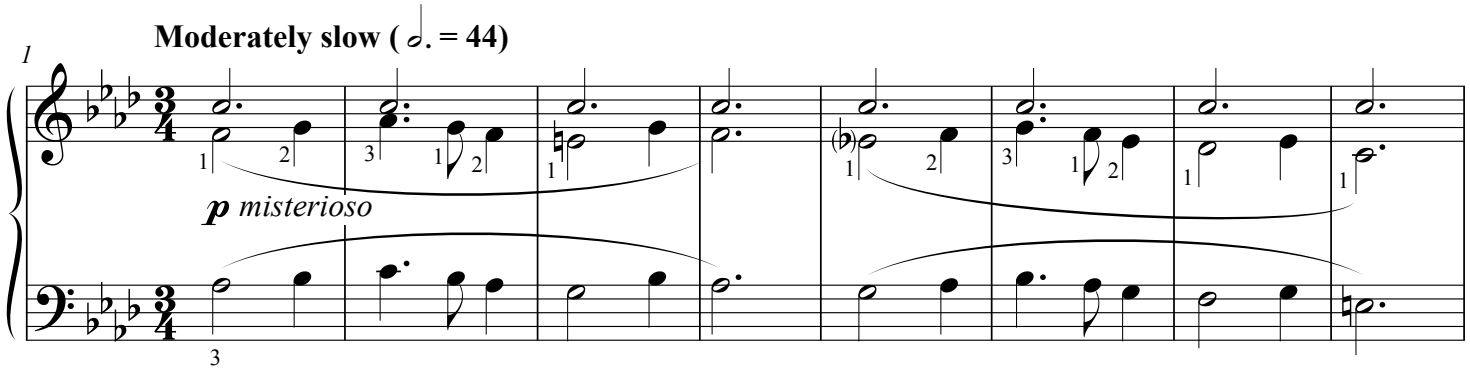




Ansedonia 06-27-1968

6. Ansedonia

In this miniscule seaside village stands the ancient and venerable Torre Senese di San Biagio, or the Siennese Watchtower of St. Blaise - our home for the summer. There are times, though, when this old house of ours seems to retreat into melancholy because of our non-military intrusion, for the ramparts, now, only guard us as we sunbathe (or serve as a refuge from La Signora during her regular and higly vocal Tuscan rampages, directed at her newest mortal enemy - the stove) and the windows, behind the piano, stare out to sea and await a foe the never comes.



9

mp dolce

18

poco rit. **a tempo**

p

26

poco rit.

pp

Ansedonia 07-02-1968

7. Spoleto

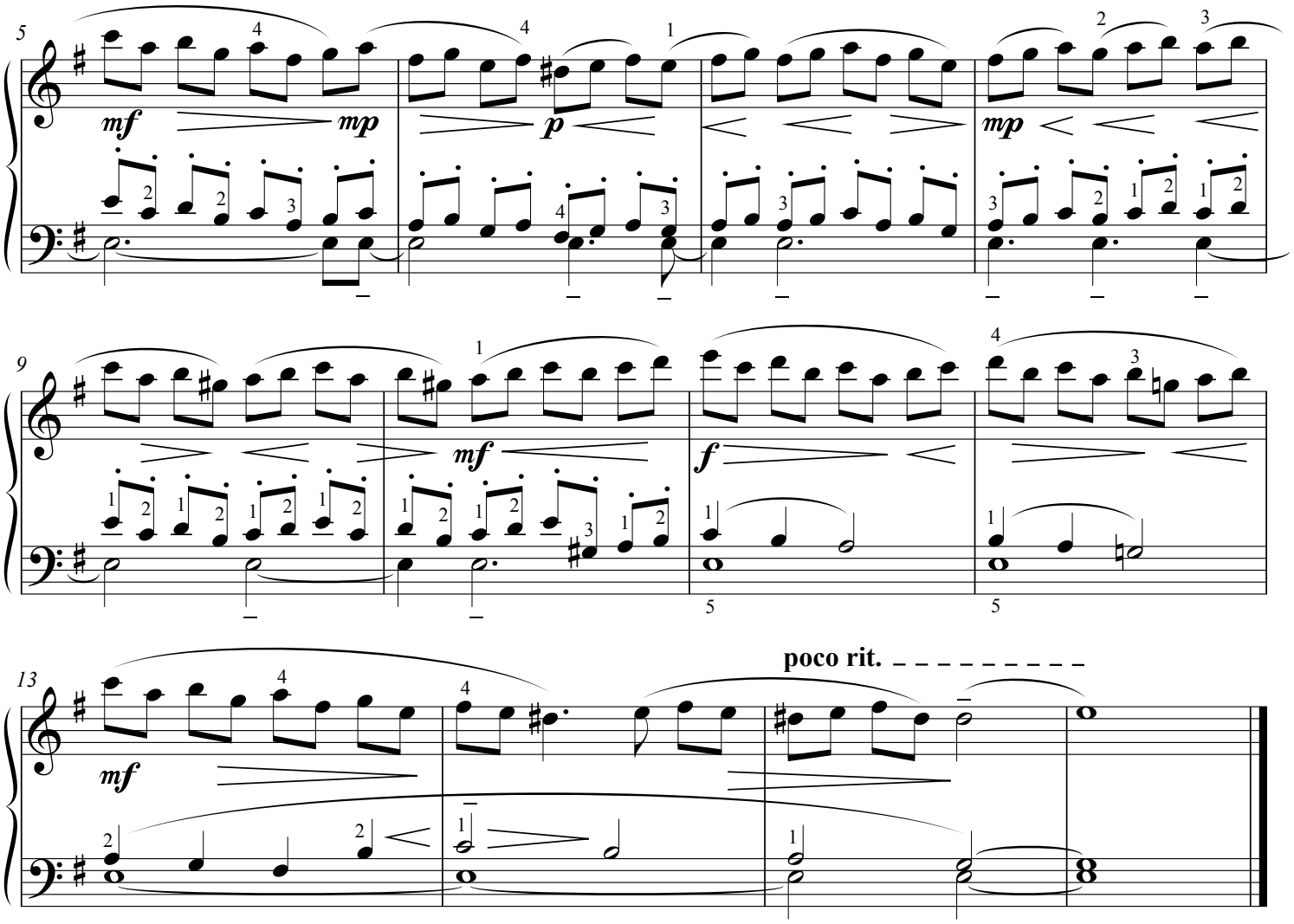
A formal opening night at the Menotti Festival and off we set in black tie and patent-leather, as unsteadily as the dowagers and debutantes teetering on their treacherous high heels, risking life, limb and dignity for the cause of art. Spoleto was built for sure-footed mountain folk and their goats and every inch of its charming little streets and inviting by-ways is a cobble-stoned booby-trap. Our appearance and behavior must baffle the indulgent Spoletini - or do they wisely dismiss us as half-witted peacocks?

At a moderately fast pace, crisply and precisely (♩ = 132)

1

p

mp

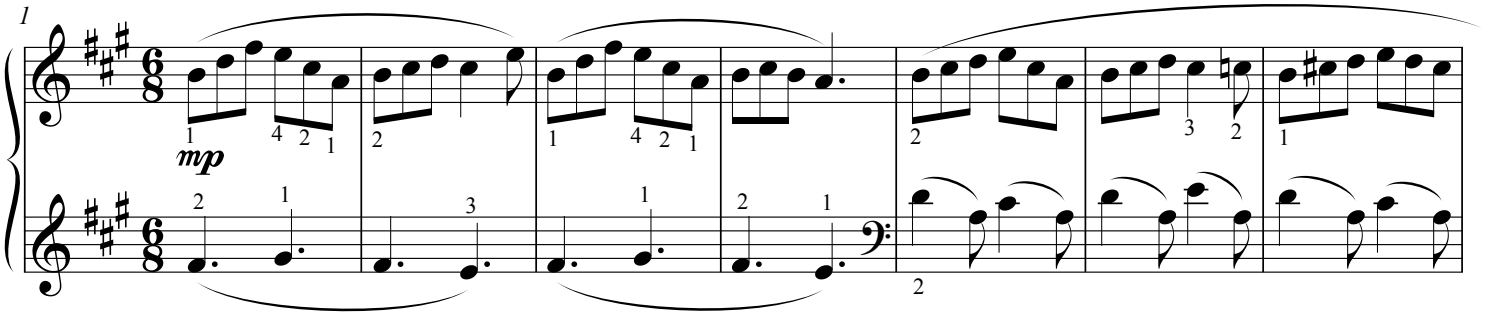


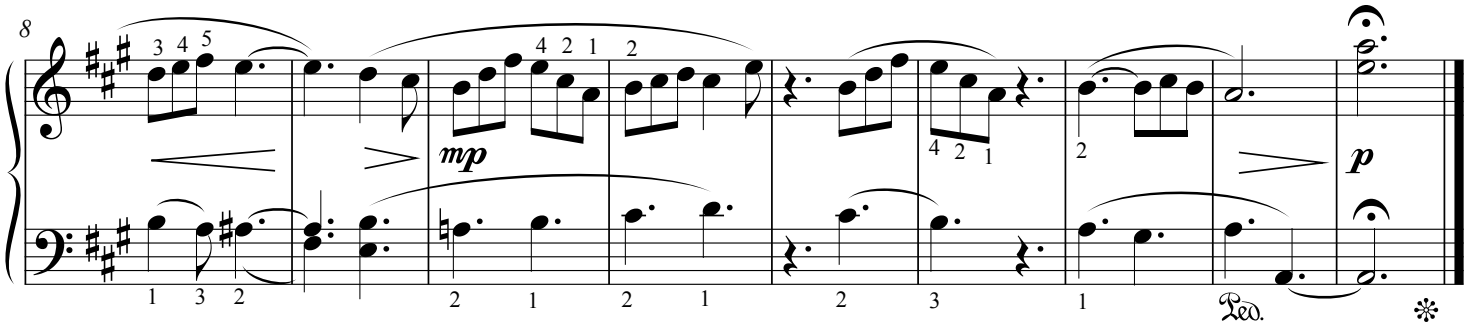
Ansedonia 07-01-1968

8. Orvieto

Recipe for contentment on a summer afternoon - bread, cheese, a roast chicken, a bottle of the wonderful local white wine, a shade tree on a hillside and that ancient and arrogantly walled town in the distance. Oh, yes - add the faintest hint of a shepherd's pipe.

Pastorale - moving along (♩. = 92)



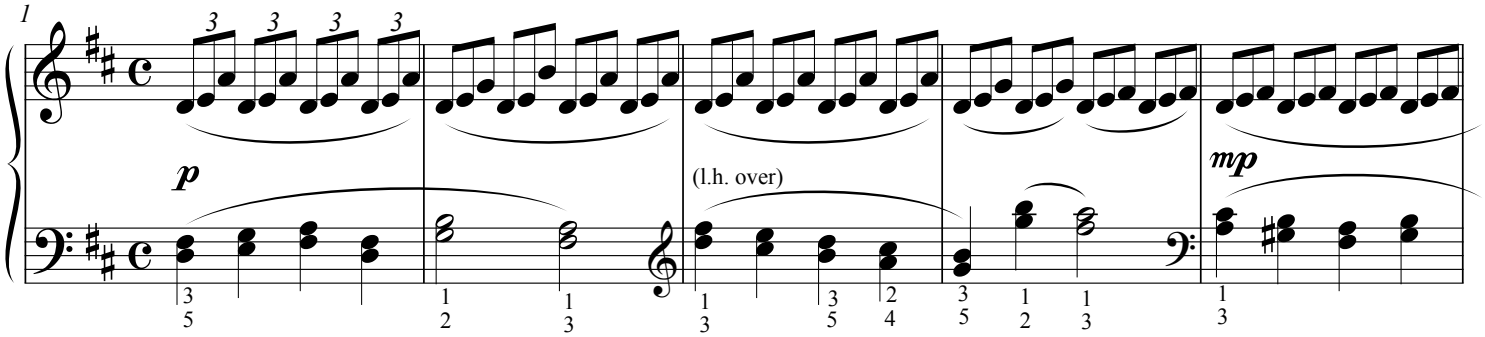


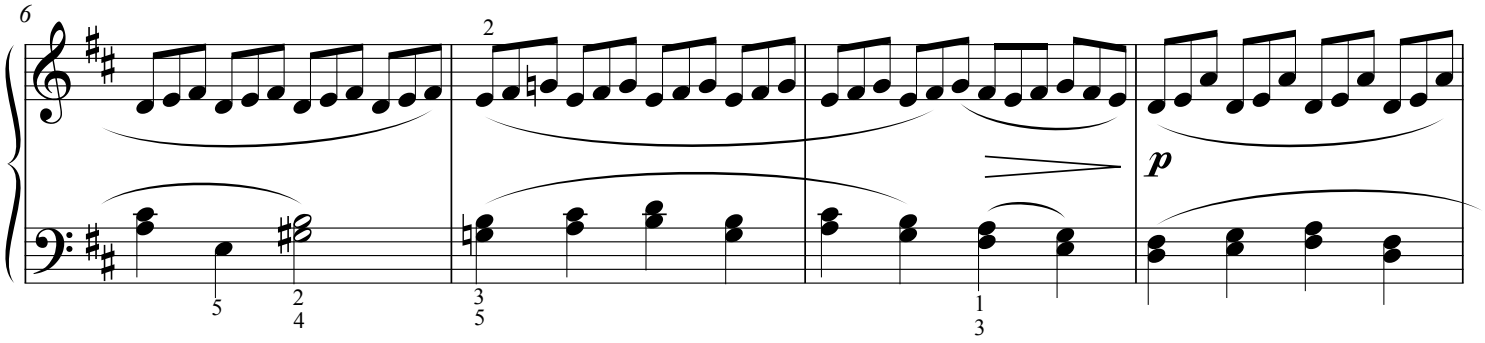
Ansedonia 06-26-1968

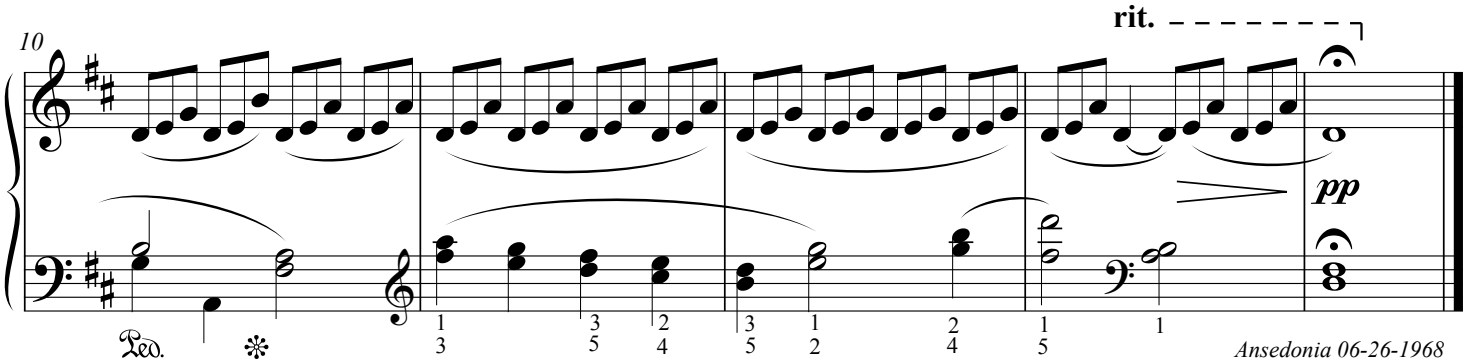
9. Sori

Since Caesar's legions first marched through here, this little suburb of Genoa has heard the tramping feet of armies through the centuries - Italian, Napoleonic, Austrian, German, British, American. Yet, on this summer night, as I stood by the ruins of a Roman bridge, not one of their ghosts dared to disturb the timeless and enchanting games the moon was playing endlessly with the waves.

Very calm and tranquil (= c. 80)

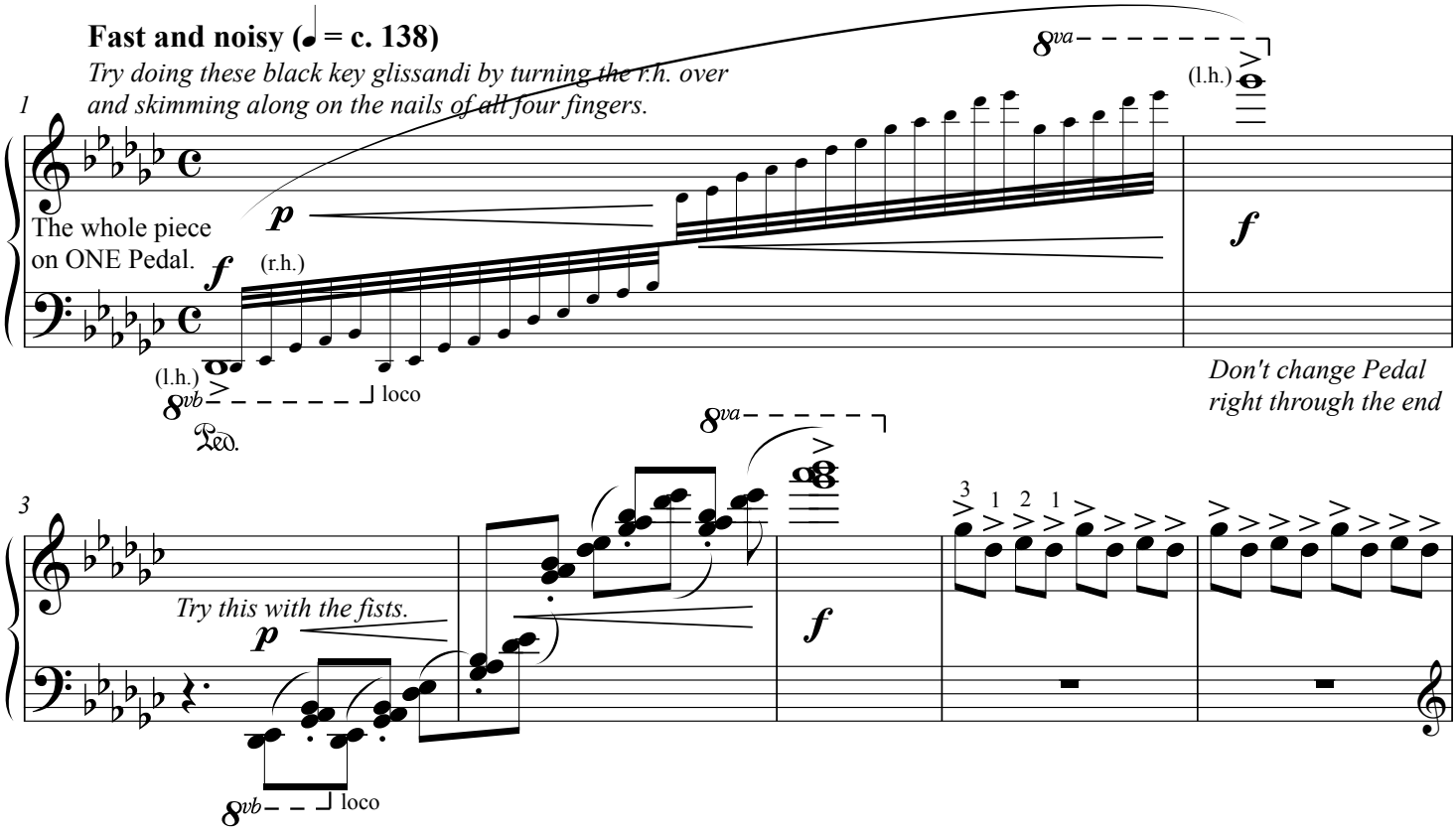


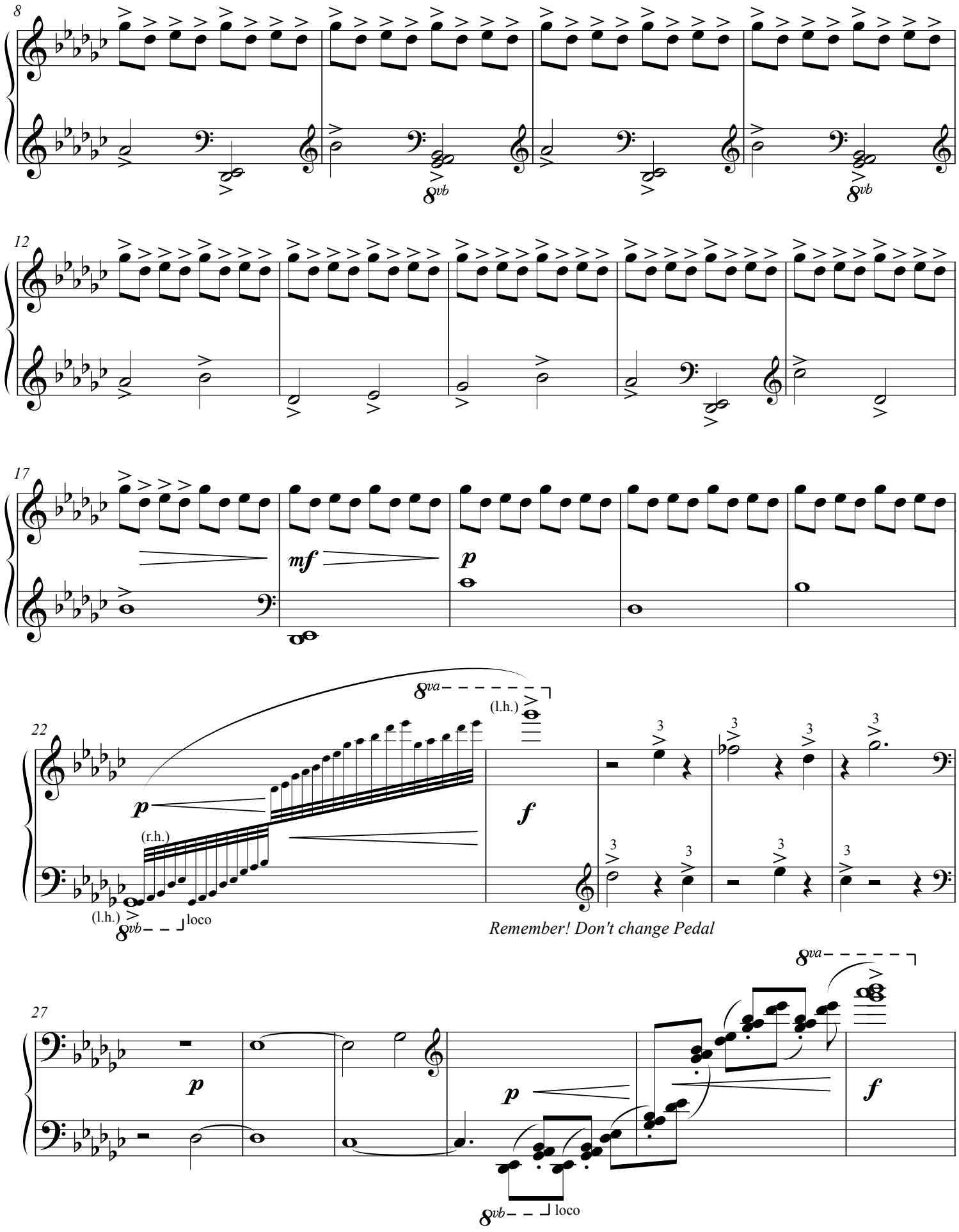




10. Roma

Open your windows in Rome on a Sunday morning and it's the third act of TOSCA; bells, bells, bells, bells, BELLS....banging, clanging, jingling, janging, calling, answering, ringing, tintinabulating from every corner of the city - the air is alive and quivering with the sounds of bells.




8
8vb
8vb
12
17
mf
p
22
8va
(l.h.)
p
(r.h.)
(l.h.)
8vb
loco
f
Remember! Don't change Pedal
27
8va
p
p
f
8vb
loco

33

f *slightly detached*

37

(poco) *sfz*

p *dying away*

pp

❊*Pedal OFF*

Ansedonia 07-02-1968

11. Tarquinia

Driving south to Rome on that most ancient of highways, the Via Amelia, the awesome sight of Tarquinia sweeps into view. The citadel atop that sheer cliff seems impregnable, yet its Etruscan defenders are long gone as are the Roman invaders and we, too, soon pass our way, leaving behind only the spectral echoes of those ignorant armies that clash by night.

1 **Adagio (♩ = c. 56)**

f

pp

pp

(hold on one Ped.)

Ped.

7

(pp)

mp

mf

p

pp

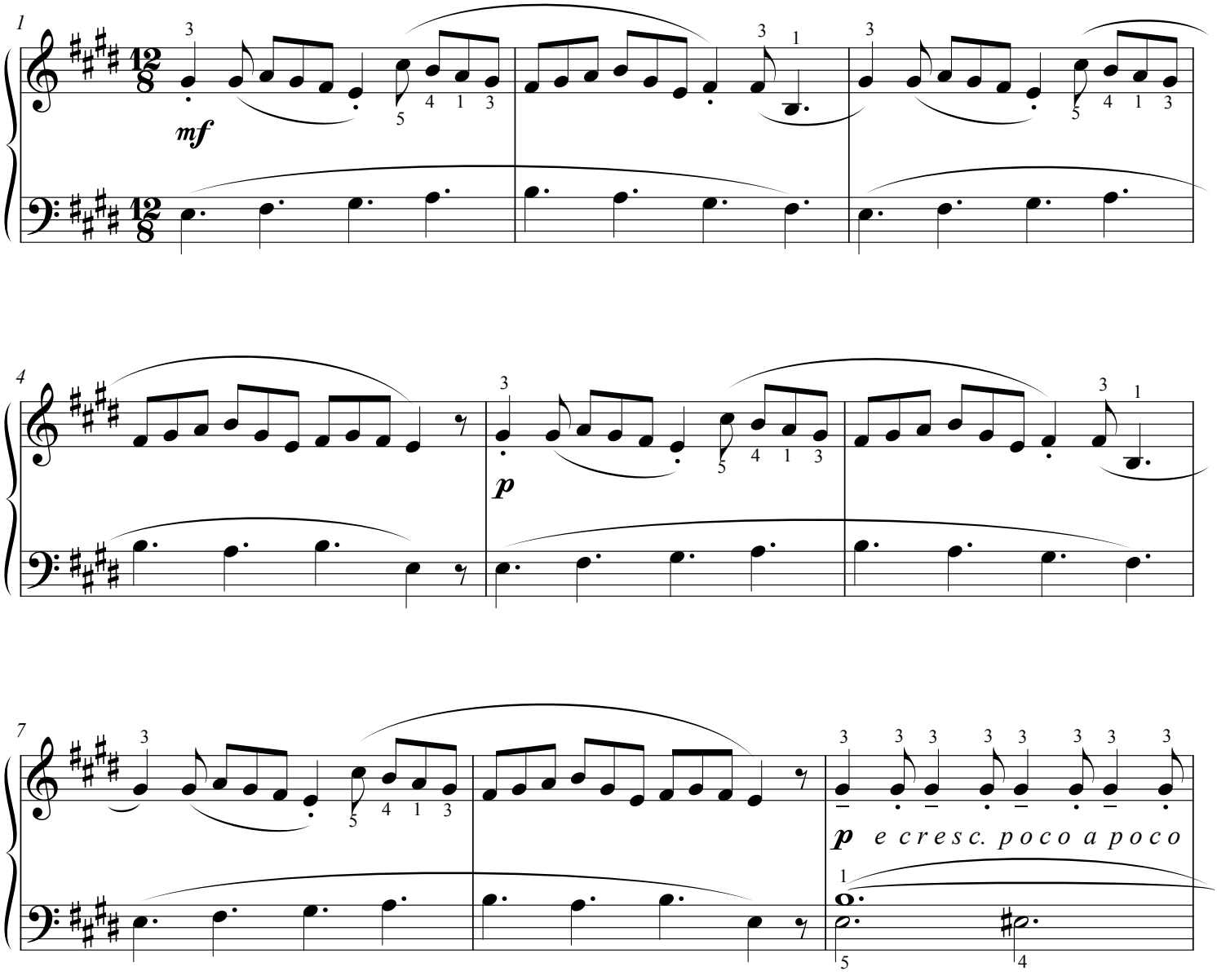
f

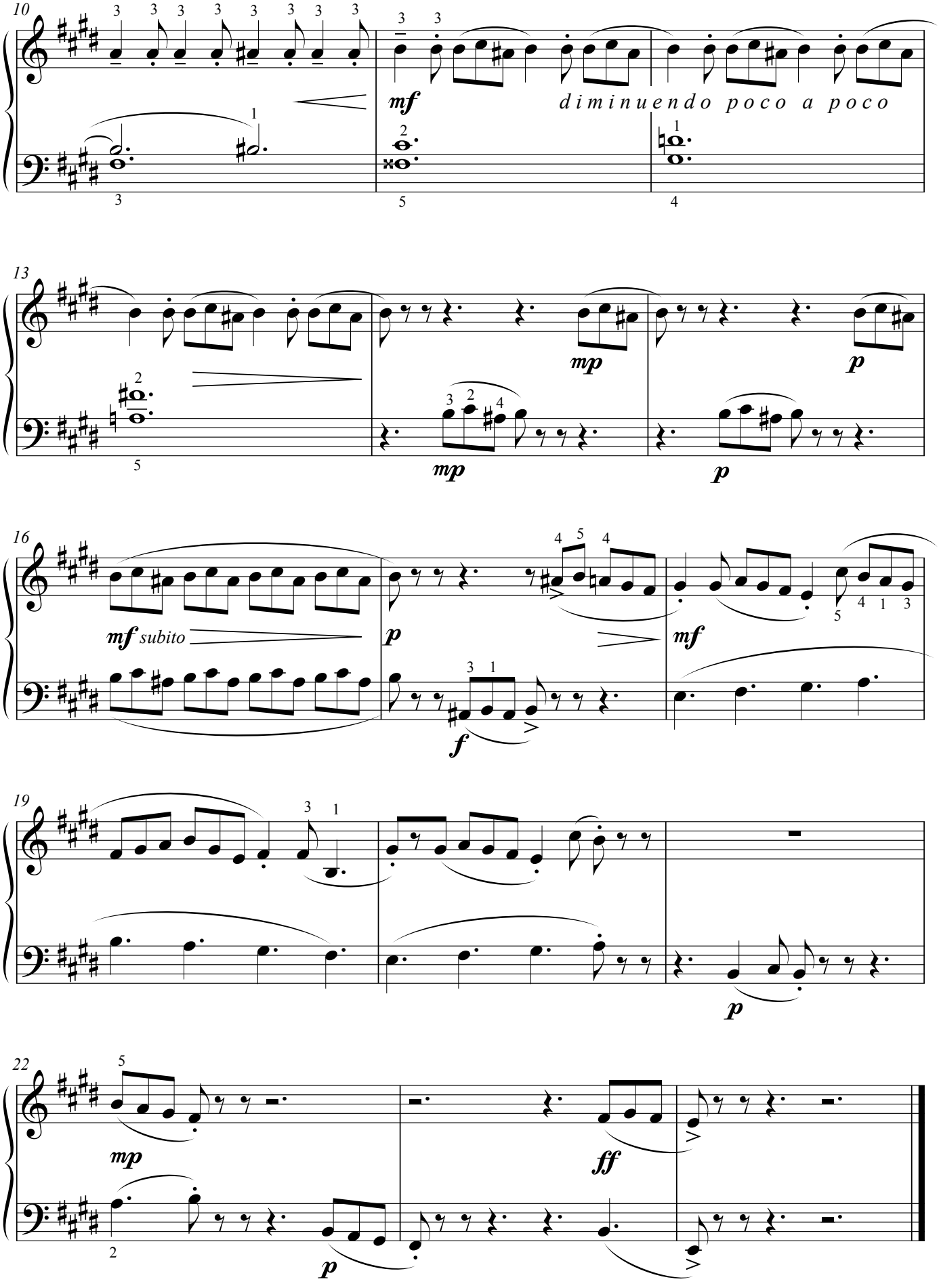
Ansedonia 06-27-1968

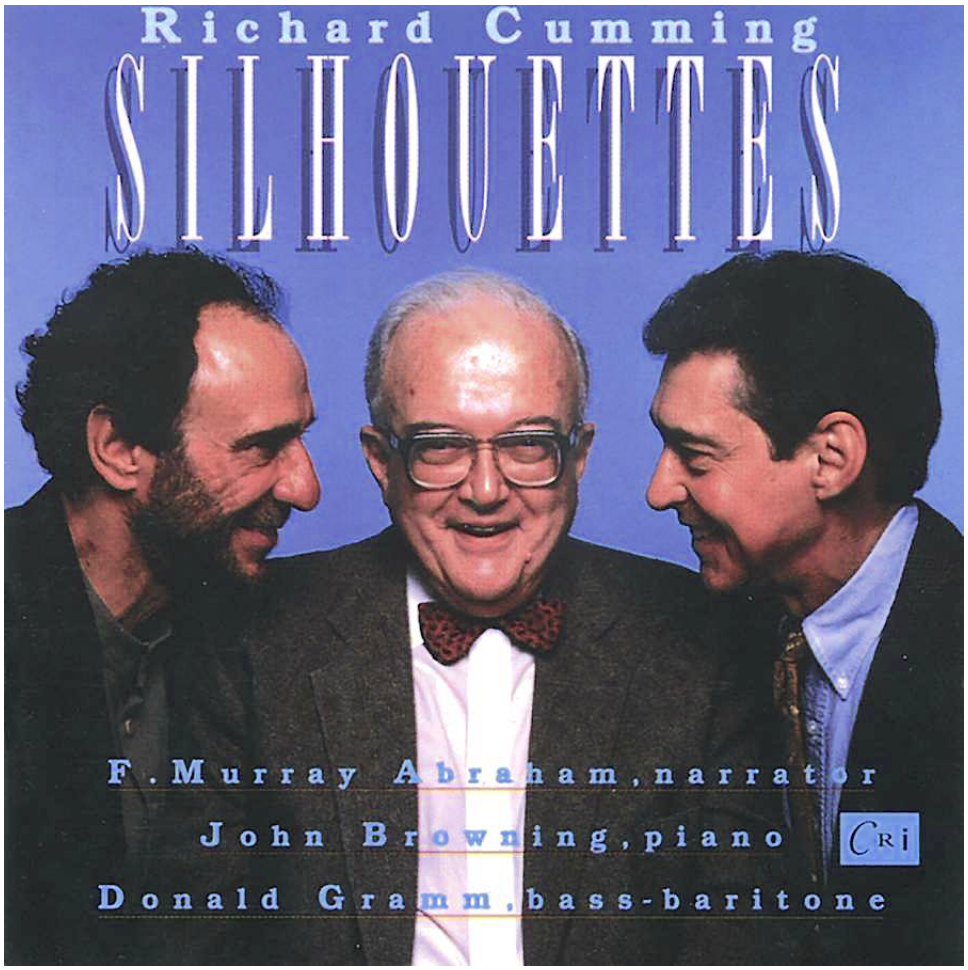
12. Positano

This is the skippingest town in the world - and maybe the most delicious, too. With every good intention, you start out sober-minded and well-behaved for a quiet stroll, but, from somewhere comes a smile, a tune, a joke, a song, a giggle and suddenly the night is filled with laughter and music and the alleys and lanes are running higgledy-piggeledy downdowndown to the sea and before you can stop yourself you're skippinglaughingdancingsingingrunningdowndown down to the sea and when you get there - well, when you get there, you realize that this is where you mislaid your heart.

Fast and gay and whoop-de-do (♩. = c. 152)




10
mf
diminuendo poco a poco
13
mp
p
mp
p
16
mf subito
p
mf
f
19
p
22
mp
ff
p



Silhouettes - Five Pieces for Piano (1993)
John Browning, Piano

Postcards from Italy ("Cartoline") (1968)
F. Murray Abraham, narrator; Richard Cumming, piano

Holidays - Five Pieces for Piano Four-hands (1961)
John Browning and Richard Cumming, piano

The Knight's Page - for Recitation and Piano (1953)
F. Murray Abraham, narrator; Richard Cumming, piano

We Happy Few - Ten Songs for Voice and Piano (1963)
Donald Gramm, bass-baritone; Richard Cumming, piano

CD AVAILABLE ONLINE via the INTERNET:

https://www.discogs.com/ja/Richard-Cumming-F-Murray-Abraham-John-Browning-2-Donald-Gramm-Silhouettes/release/13900634

https://www.amazon.com/Richard-Cumming-Silhouettes-Postcards-four-hands/dp/B000005TZ7

https://www.prestomusic.com/classical/products/8065413--richard-cumming-silhouettes

https://open.spotify.com/album/7zCZb2u3OK0YpmIZrRElFZ

http://www.dramonline.org/albums/richard-cumming-silhouettes

https://www.worldcat.org/title/silhouettes/oclc/37915499 (for Library searches)