Aron Frank

Kentuckiana

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(2012-13)

for solo violin

Aron Frank

Program Note

'Kentuckiana', for violin solo, is a sonic portrait of the beautiful landscapes of Kentucky and Indiana; the two states in which I was raised. Throughout the two-movement work, common folksongs are weaved into the compositional fabric of the piece. These include 'Blue Moon of Kentucky', 'My Old Kentucky Home', and 'The Wayfaring Stranger'. Further, the sounds of Bluegrass music and violin fiddling influenced the work as a whole, which borders between classical and folk.

The first movement, 'Blue Moon of Kentucky', began as a free improvisation. Upon further reflection, the many musical ideas I had developed by ear demanded a deeper structure. The movement features a lyrical folksong at the outset, and later becomes a lively fiddle dance before concluding in a calm and restful state.

The second movement begins in and sustains this feeling of reflection throughout.
Just as the landscapes of Kentucky and Indiana are unending, I imagined something beyond the sounds themselves, resonating in time and space. The movement ends as a lonely voice in the distance with the classic folksong 'The Wayfaring Stranger'.

Movements:

I. *Blue Moon of Kentucky* [6'00"]
II. *The Wayfaring Stranger* [5'20"]

Approximate Duration: 11'20"

Performance Instructions

A video was made to accompany the musical score of 'Kentuckiana'. It features footage of the natural landscapes of Kentucky and Indiana, and was created by the composer and Mitchell Parks. The composition may be performed with or without its accompanying video, according to the desire of the performer.

If the performer wishes to perform the piece with the video, he or she should study the YouTube link below. It is an accurate representation of the music and video together, and all timing and coordination concerns should be based on the video below. Further, a live performance version of the video will be sent to the performer upon request.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIwQpEwMmsg

An optional poem may also be read before or after the performance of the work. The poem is attached on the following page. 'Folksong Triptych', a poem in three parts, was written by the composer, and is similarly inspired by the landscapes of Kentucky and Indiana.

Folksong Triptych

An ill fate of time/
My ride escaped me down this lonesome path/
Here stranded in the wilderness/

Forever blossoms this ageless landscape of unending scope/
Formless in its ways/
Resonating a frozen tundra in silence/

The bells roar and the tractors are a-blazin'/
Way out in country land/
This moment for me/

I survive on as a spirit in the wind/
A true test of enduring strength kept deep within/
To reflect and form new memories/

A destination all too familiar/
My ride escaped me on this lonesome path/
Here stranded in the wilderness/

Revealing the naked truth/
Footsteps are my story/
Pacing a righteous journey/

Lies there no end to this twisted highway?/
Gauging my thoughts broken and bare/
Towards the hopeful light/

Flickering in the tranquil night/
Days drift by from morning 'til sunset/
Unchanged in the afternoon's heat/

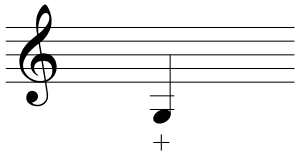
To the dear farmers coarse and grey/
Living for grist to the mill/
Salutations to my childhood of rambling green hills/

Stretching beyond the purple-lit horizon/
Above fogs of misty memory/
Hovers the sensuous summer sky/

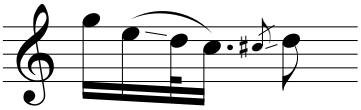
Within an echo of time's labyrinth/
Beautiful and pristine/
Gently it ripples in my soul/

Transparent and clear/
I know this place/
My old Kentucky home/

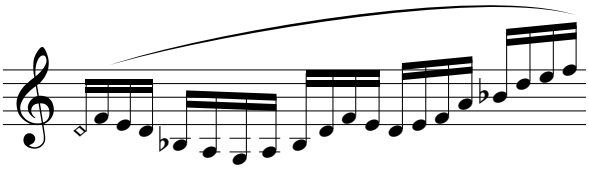
Performance Instructions



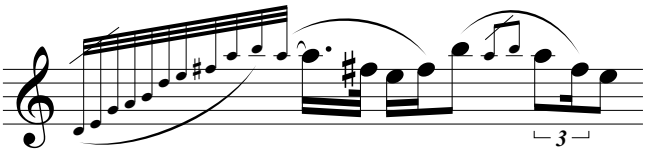
Left hand pizzicato is indicated by the + sign placed under the note.



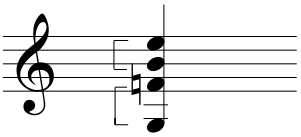
A slanted line between two notes indicates a glissando, or audible slide.



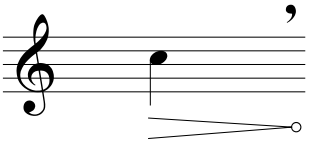
Noteheads of reduced size are performed rapidly with no sense of meter, unless otherwise specified. Notice that these differ from grace notes, specified below.



Grace notes, indicated with a slash, are performed rapidly, before the beat they precede.

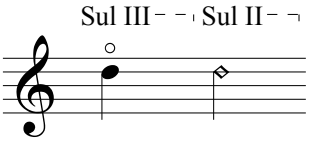


Brackets indicate the division of the notes contained within a chord.

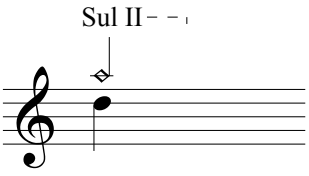


indicates a slight pause in the music.

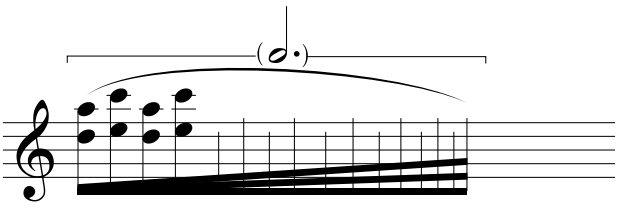
indicates a descrescendo to silence.



Natural harmonics are indicated in two ways: by a small "o" written above the note to be lightly touched, and by a small diamond shape at a specific point on the string where the finger should be lightly placed.



Artificial harmonics are produced by firmly pressing the first finger down, and then lightly touching the fourth finger above the notated pitch.

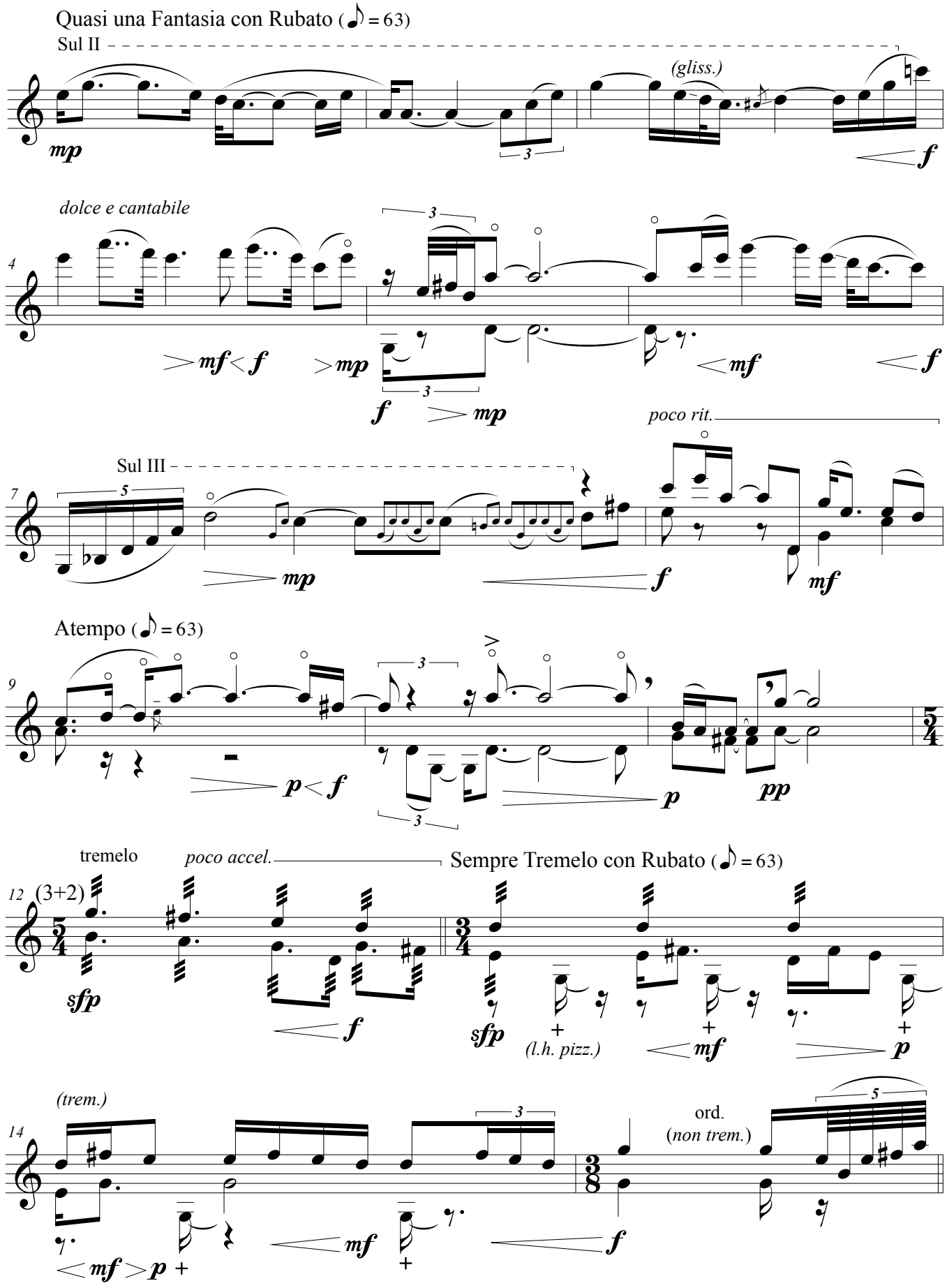


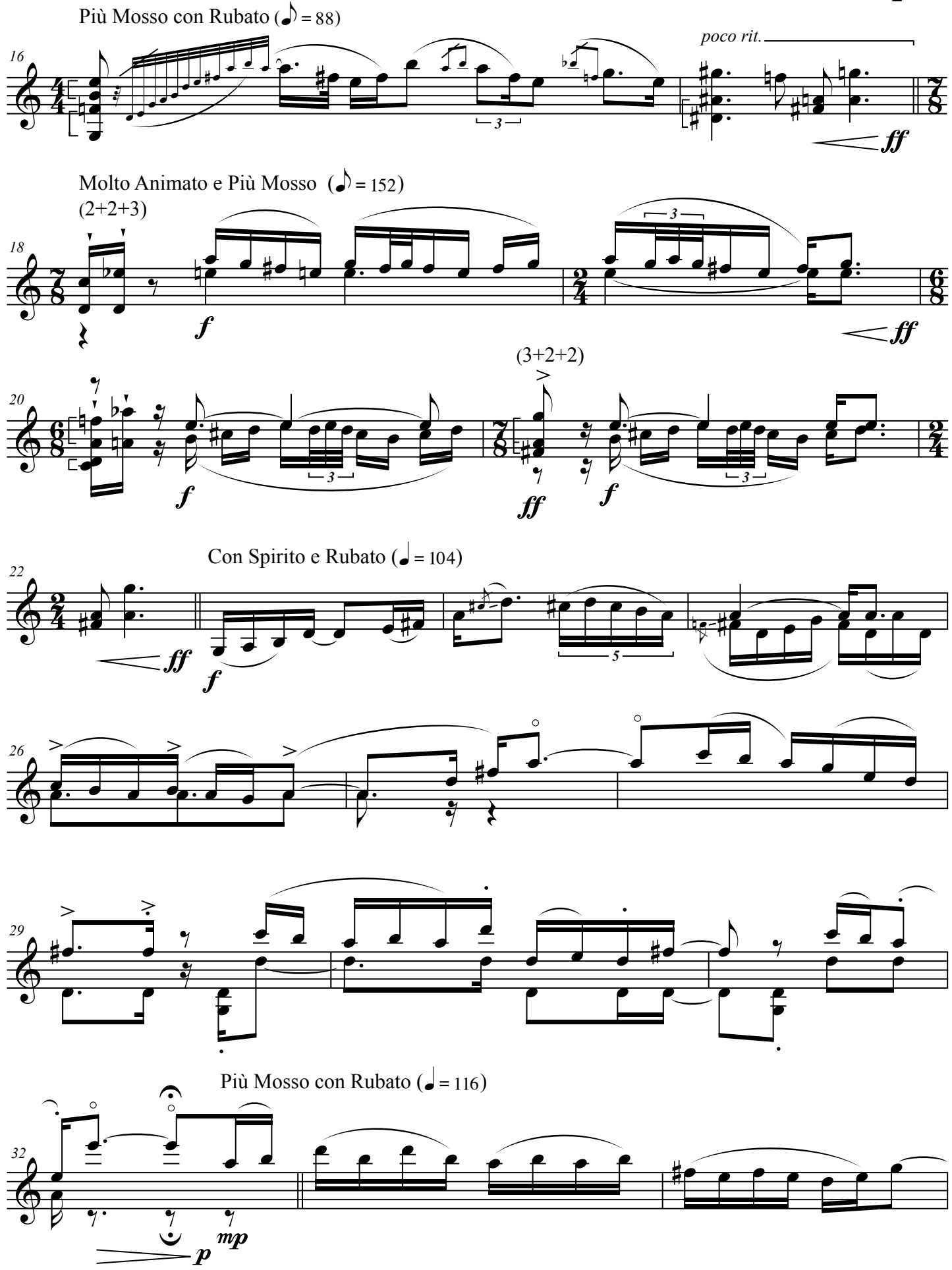
Feathered Beaming shows a gradual acceleration of the indicated notes, lasting for the specified duration.

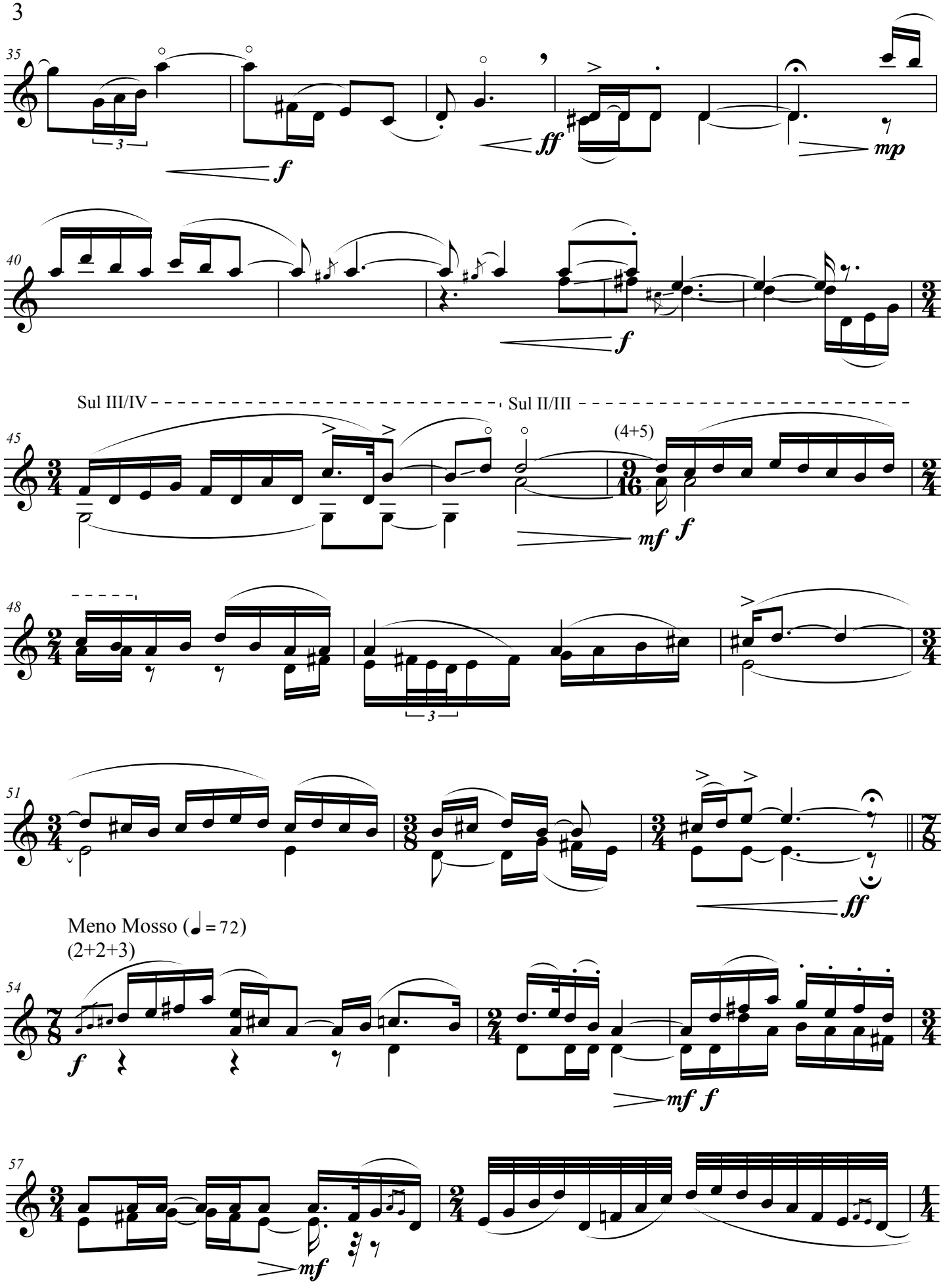
Note: Accidentals apply within the measure and octave in which they appear, unless canceled by another accidental sign, or tied into a following measure.

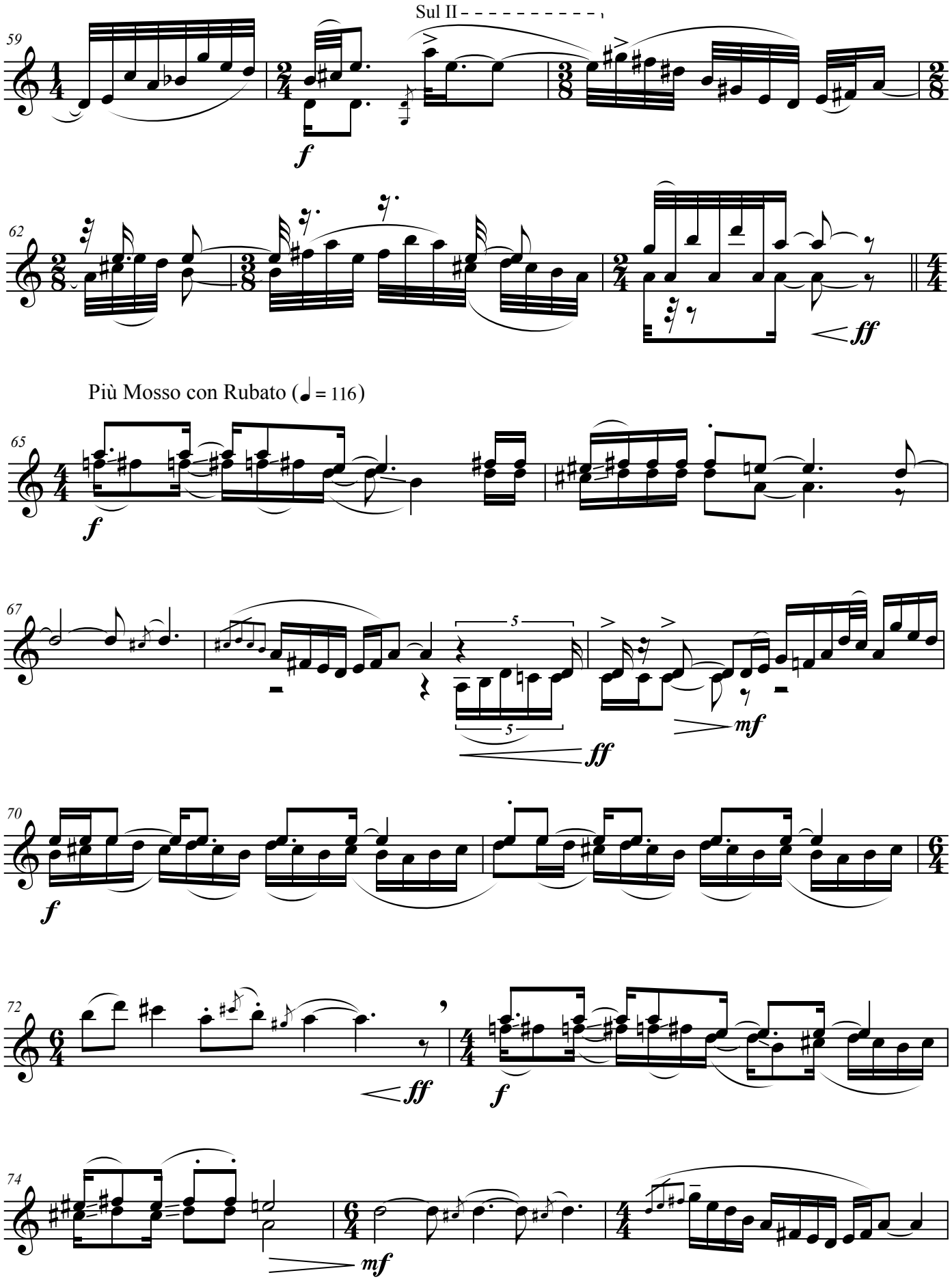
Kentuckiana

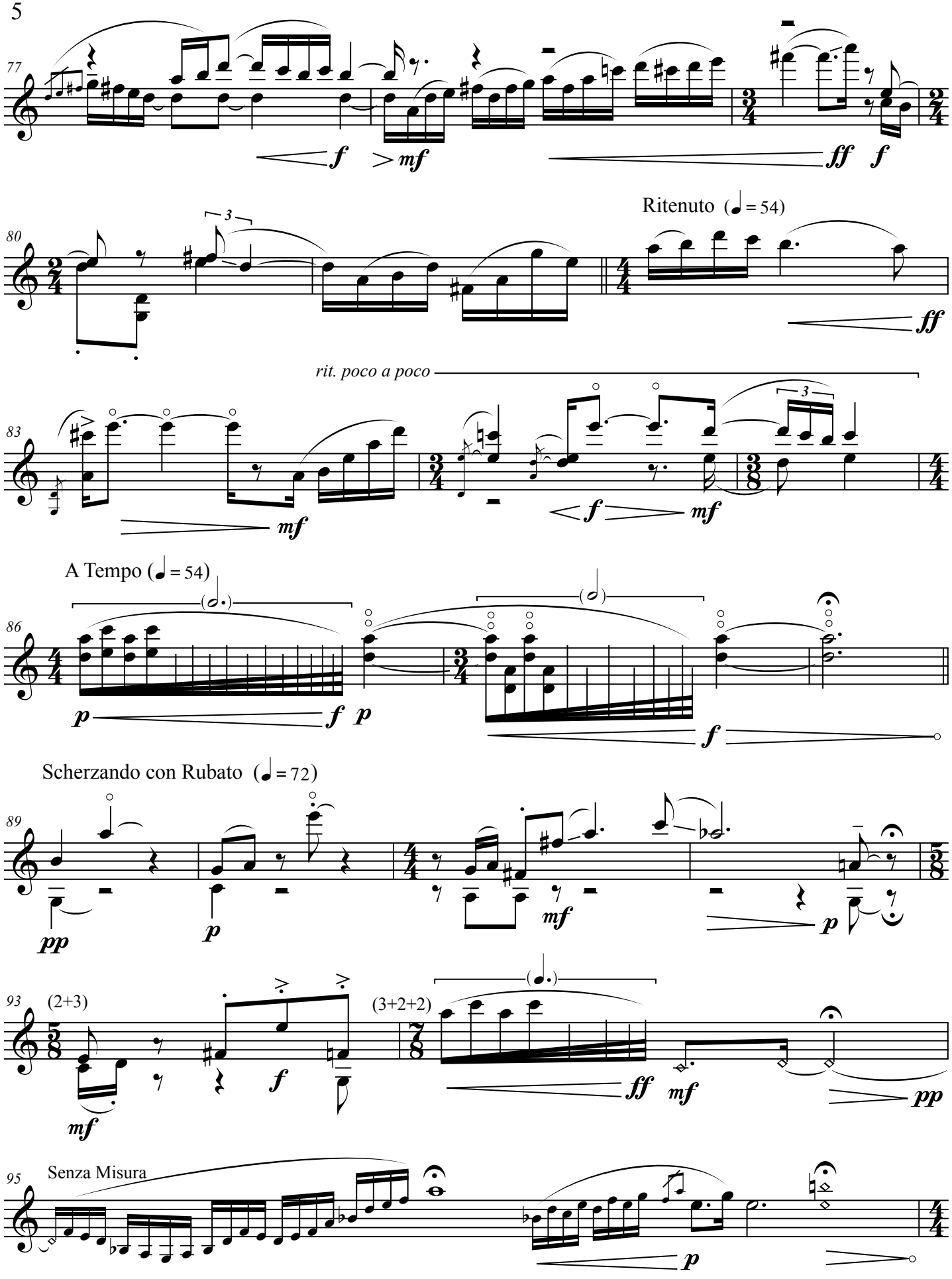
I. Blue Moon of Kentucky

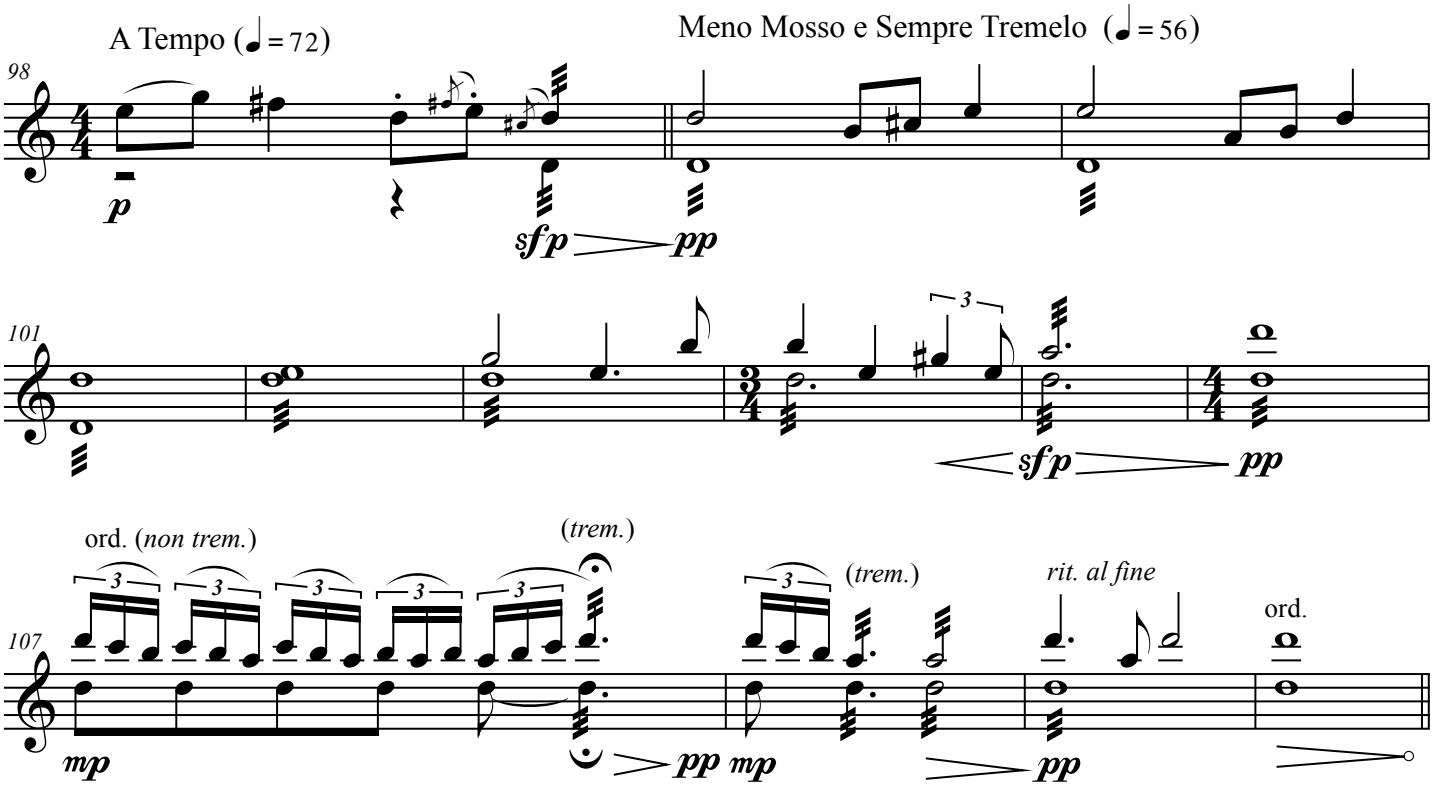



Più Mosso con Rubato (♪ = 88)
poco rit.
ff
Molto Animato e Più Mosso (♪ = 152)
(2+2+3)
f
ff
(3+2+2)
Con Spirito e Rubato (♩ = 104)
Più Mosso con Rubato (♩ = 116)
mp
p

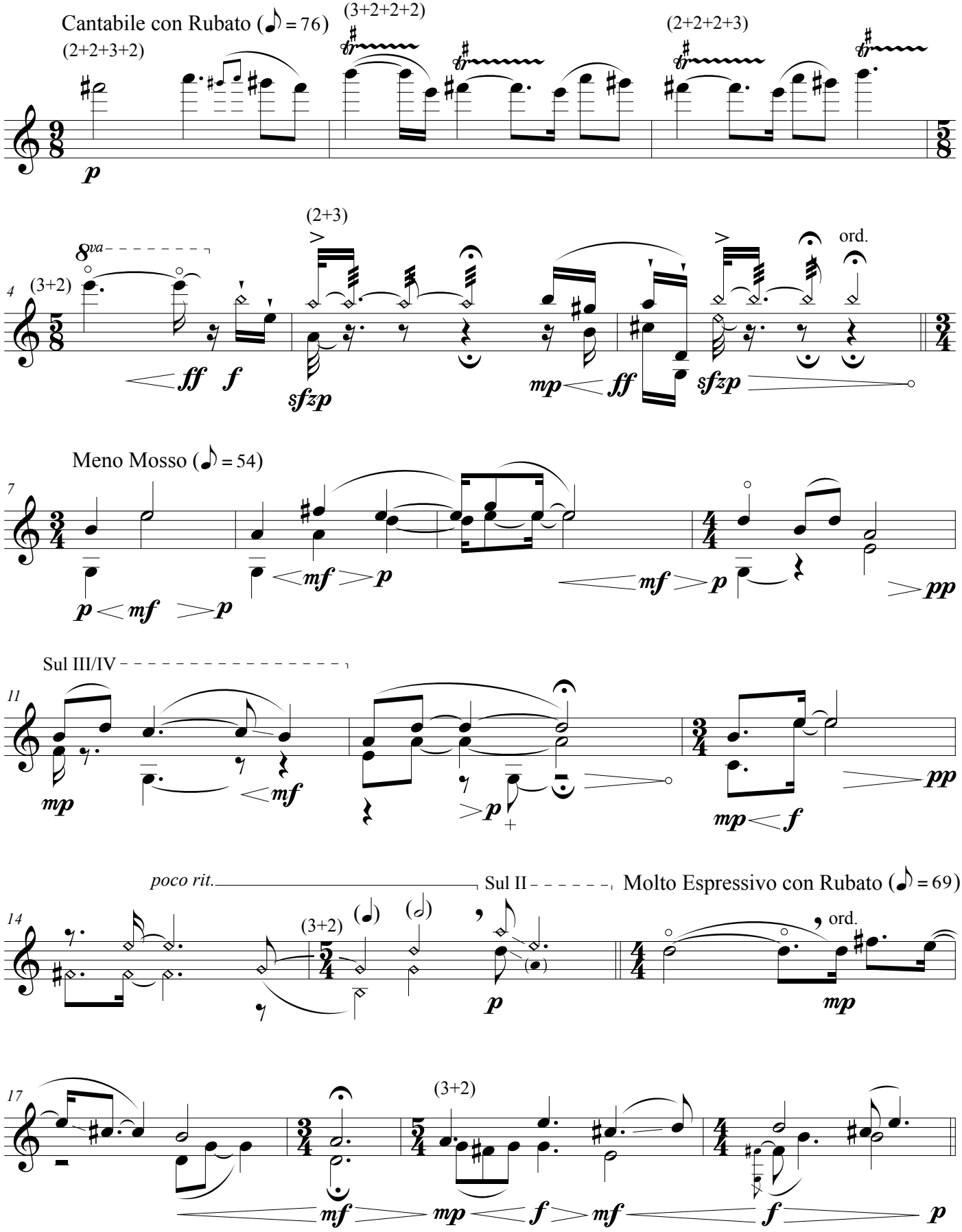

35
40
Sul III/IV
Sul II/III
45
(4+5)
48
51
Meno Mosso (♩= 72)
(2+2+3)
54
57

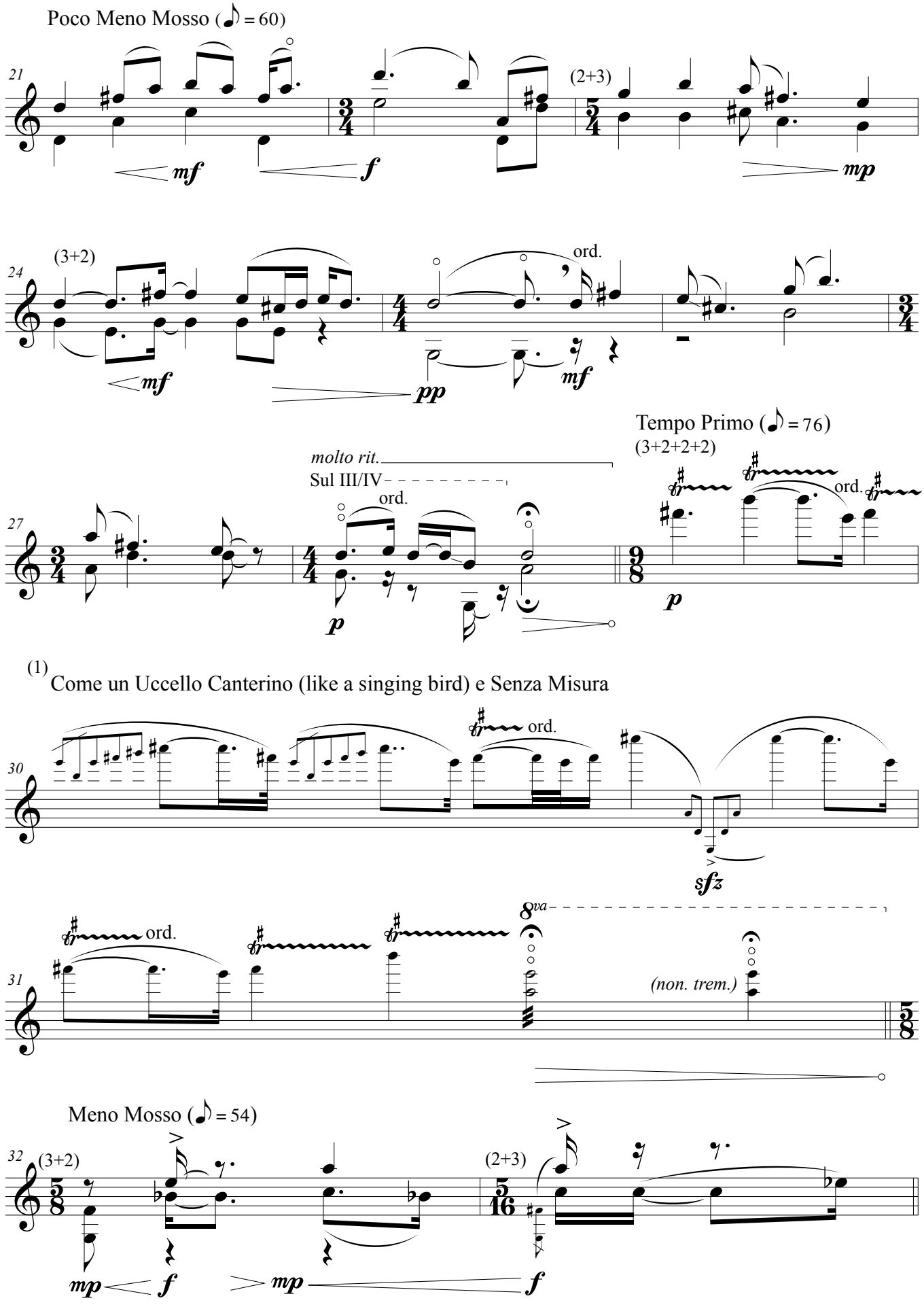

Sul II
59
f
62
ff
Più Mosso con Rubato (♩ = 116)
65
f
67
5
5
ff
mf
70
f
72
ff
f
74
mf

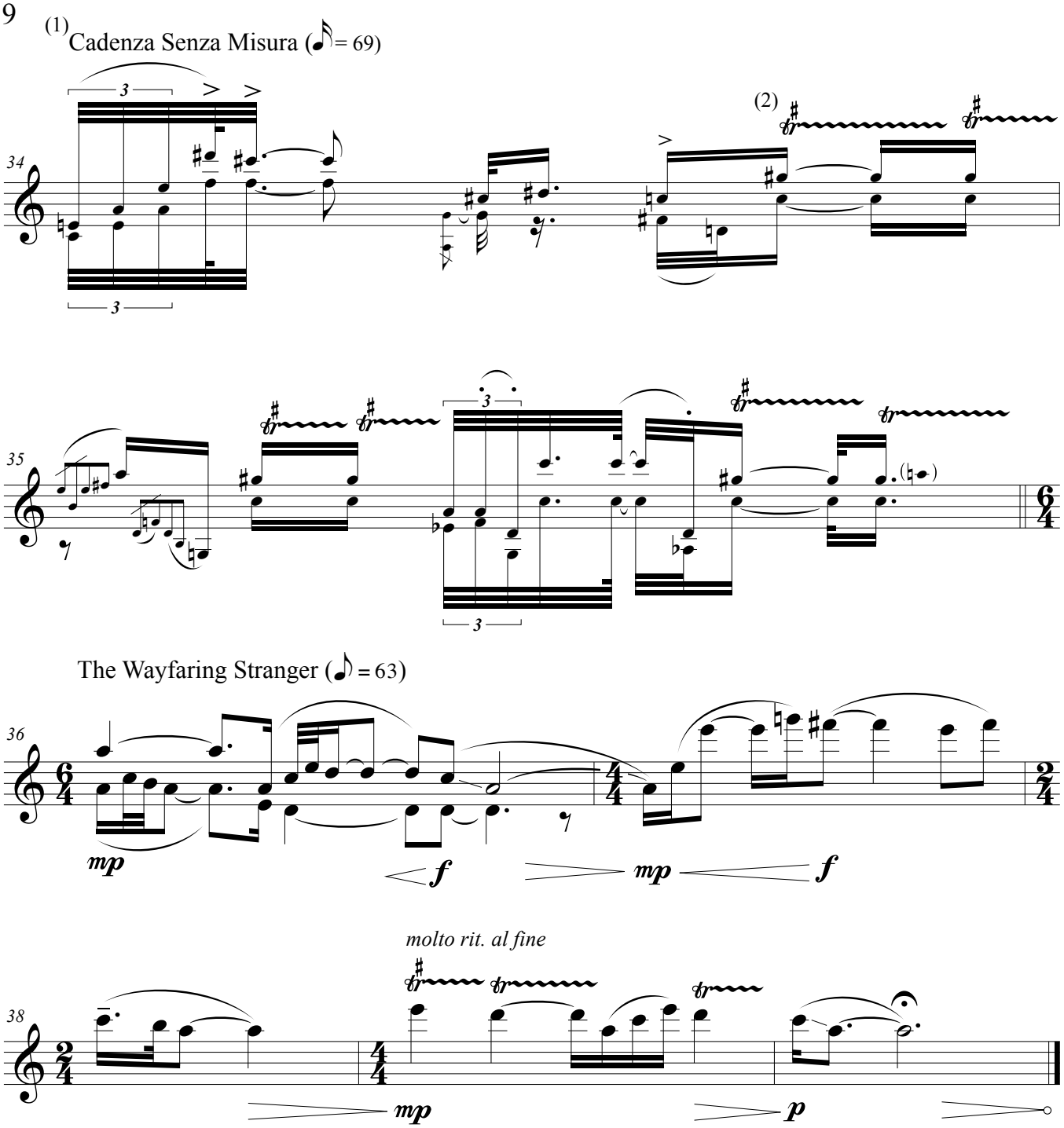

77
f
mf
ff
f
80
3
Ritenuto (♩ = 54)
ff
rit. poco a poco
83
3
mf
f
mf
A Tempo (♩ = 54)
86
p
f
p
f
Scherzando con Rubato (♩ = 72)
89
pp
p
mf
p
93
(2+3)
mf
f
(3+2+2)
ff
mf
pp
95
Senza Misura
p


A Tempo (♩= 72)
Meno Mosso e Sempre Tremelo (♩= 56)
98
p
sfp
pp
101
3
sfp
pp
ord. (non trem.)
(trem.)
(trem.)
rit. al fine
ord.
107
mp
pp
mp
pp

II. The Wayfaring Stranger




Poco Meno Mosso (♪ = 60)
21
mf
f
(2+3)
mp
24
(3+2)
mf
pp
ord.
mf
Tempo Primo (♪ = 76)
(3+2+2+2)
molto rit.
Sul III/IV
ord.
27
p
ord.
p
(1)
Come un Uccello Canterino (like a singing bird) e Senza Misura
30
ord.
sfz
31
ord.
8va
(non. trem.)
Meno Mosso (♪ = 54)
32
(3+2)
mp
f
mp
(2+3)
f



(1) mm.30-31 and mm.34-35 should be performed freely with no sense of meter. The noteheads of reduced size indicate that the rhythms notated are merely one possible interpretation.

(2) The trills apply only to the top notes mm.34-35.