Magnificat

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord...

for Choir and Orchestra

The C Major Project — For the Advancement of Composed Music

C. M. Bearer

Magnificat

Performance Notes

The Magnifcat text comes from the Gospel of Luke (1:46-55). Mary said these words upon visiting her cousin Elizabeth. In this setting, I have divided the text into three movements. The first represents Mary's (and our) praise of the Lord, but it also reflects the meekness of our humaness and our servitude toward Him. The second represents the power and marvel of God. The third, in contrast, represents his mery and justice. I hope you are able to hear these ideas come forth through the music.

Movement I

In the choir's opening chord, be sure of your note! The choir enters quickly after the first forte chord in the orchestra. It's important to keep the block chords moving crisply and together in all parts, with decisive and intentional consonant cut-offs. At rehearsal B, the soloist should use the ornamental grace notes throughout as a guide. They do not have to be followed precisely, as she may interpret them stylistically throughout the section and add or subtract from what is printed. The feel should be that of sanguine humility. This section is built on the pentatonic scale and so should have a universally folksy quality to it.

Movement II

This movement should evoke the awe and wonder of the Lord; Here the grace notes are sung as printed and always on the beat. Rehearsal sections E-H are probably the most challenging passages of the entire work, so great care should be taken in thoroughly learning this part. Keep in mind with the mixed meter that the eighth-note is always even throughout. This movement ends with a quieter section in which the theme returns in grand fashion at the very end of the work. Do not give it away here at the end of the second movement! Hold back with longing anticipation.

Movement III

This movement begins 'attacca' (without pause) from movement II. However, there should be some space between the diminuendo at the end of II as you move into the piano of III. The meaning of the attacca is that there should not be a clear break between: no extraneous movement, page turns etc. The conductor should keep his hands from dropping; but let the weight of the silence after the unresolved chord hang for a moment before the resolution comes at the choir's entrance at the beginning of III. The choir enters quietly unaccompanied, however, if needed, the organ can lightly double the voice parts. Rehearsal B marks the reprise of the subdued theme mentioned at the end of II. Here, it gradually builds into the final climax at the words 'in saecula, Amen'. Take it all the way to the penultimate 'Amen' and let that silent fermata linger in contemplation. The short coda is the peaceful, humble release of the energy that has come before. Let it be relaxed and calm. The last 'Amen' should fade to nothing.

I hope you enjoy learning and singing this piece.

C. M. Bearer

Commissioned for The St. Thomas More Parish School (2023-2024), Houston, Texas,
in thanksgiving for their dedicated faculty, staff, and students.

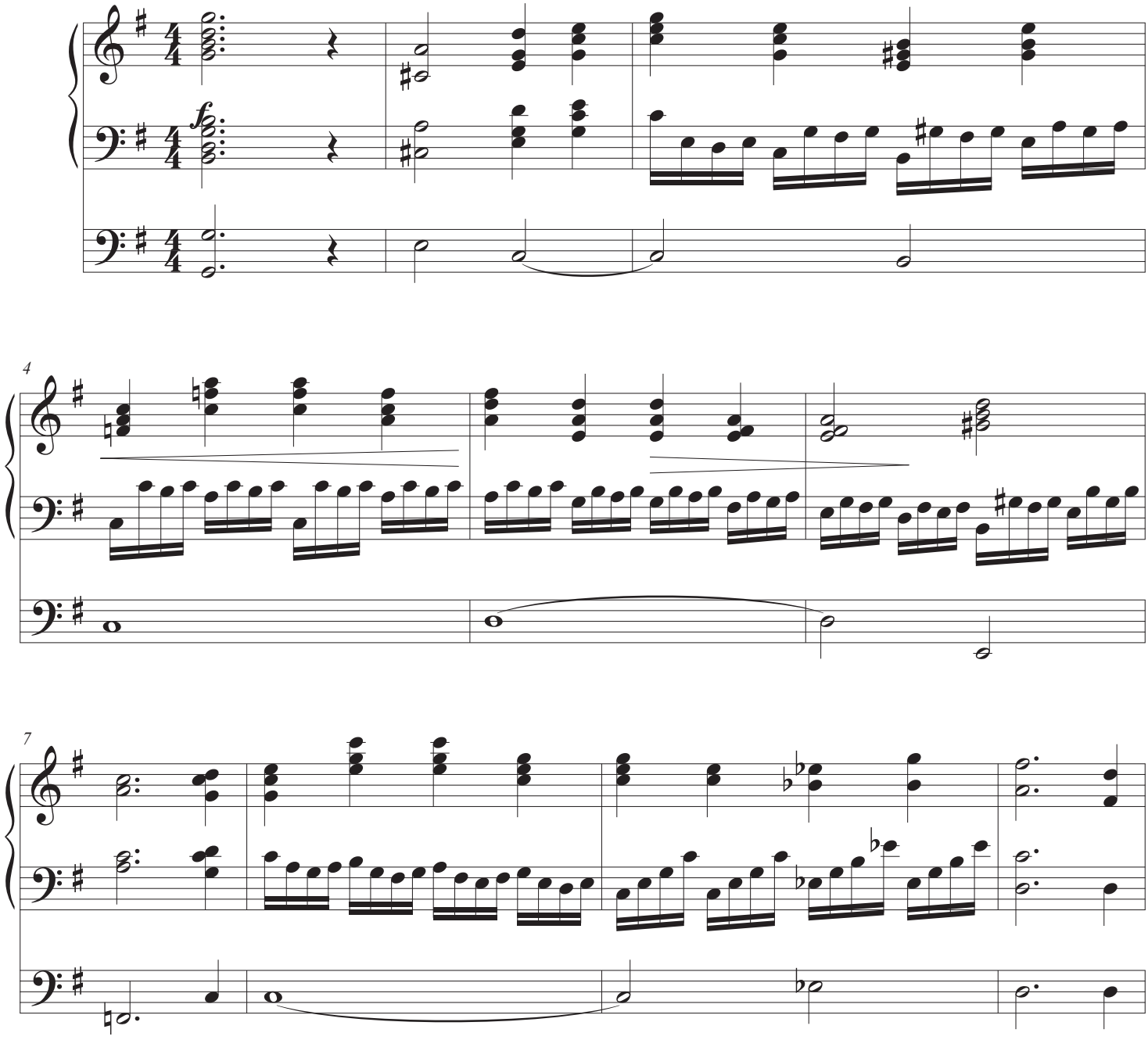
Magnificat

Organ

I.

C. M. Bearer

Andante Maestoso



Performance time about 16 minutes.

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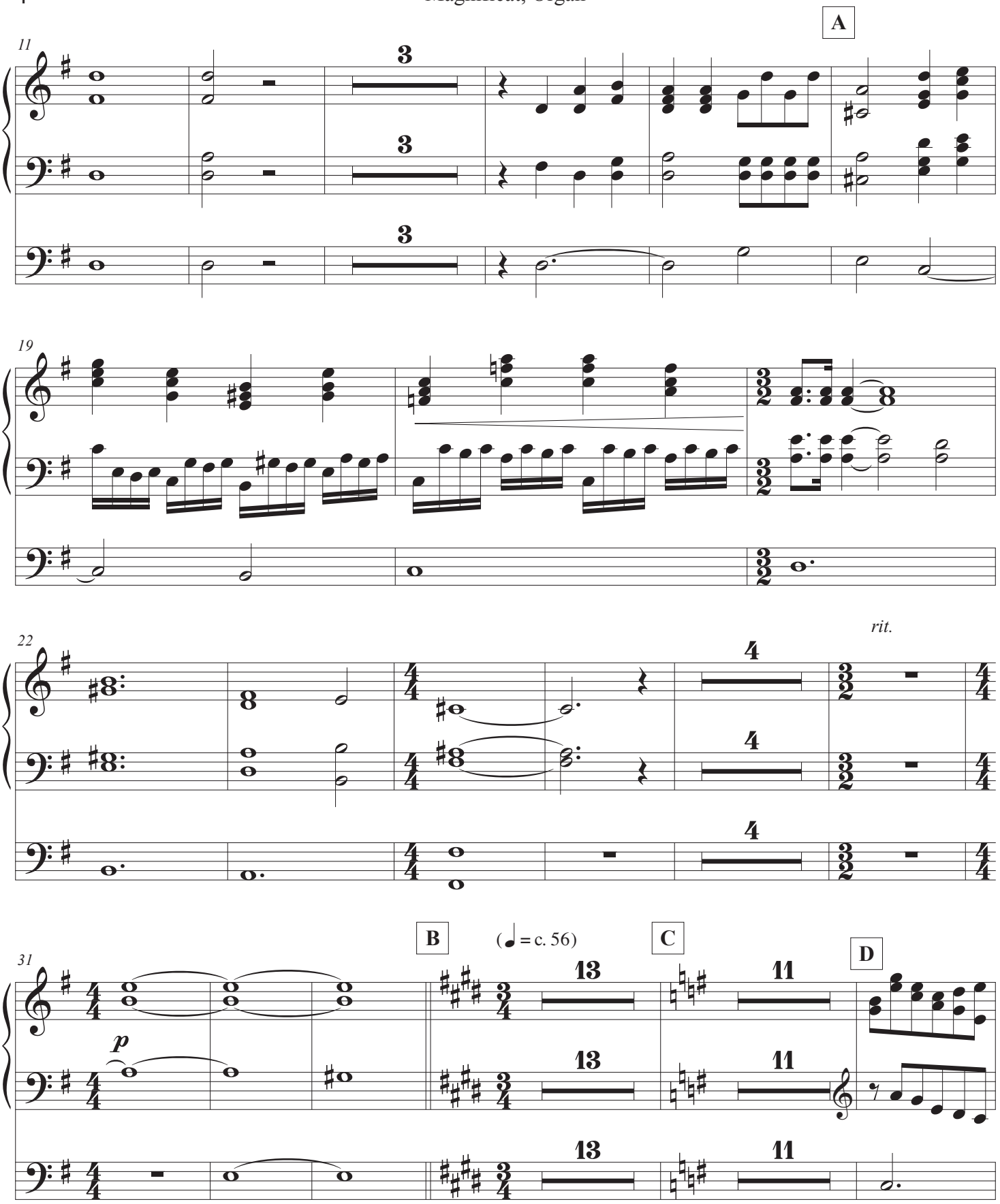
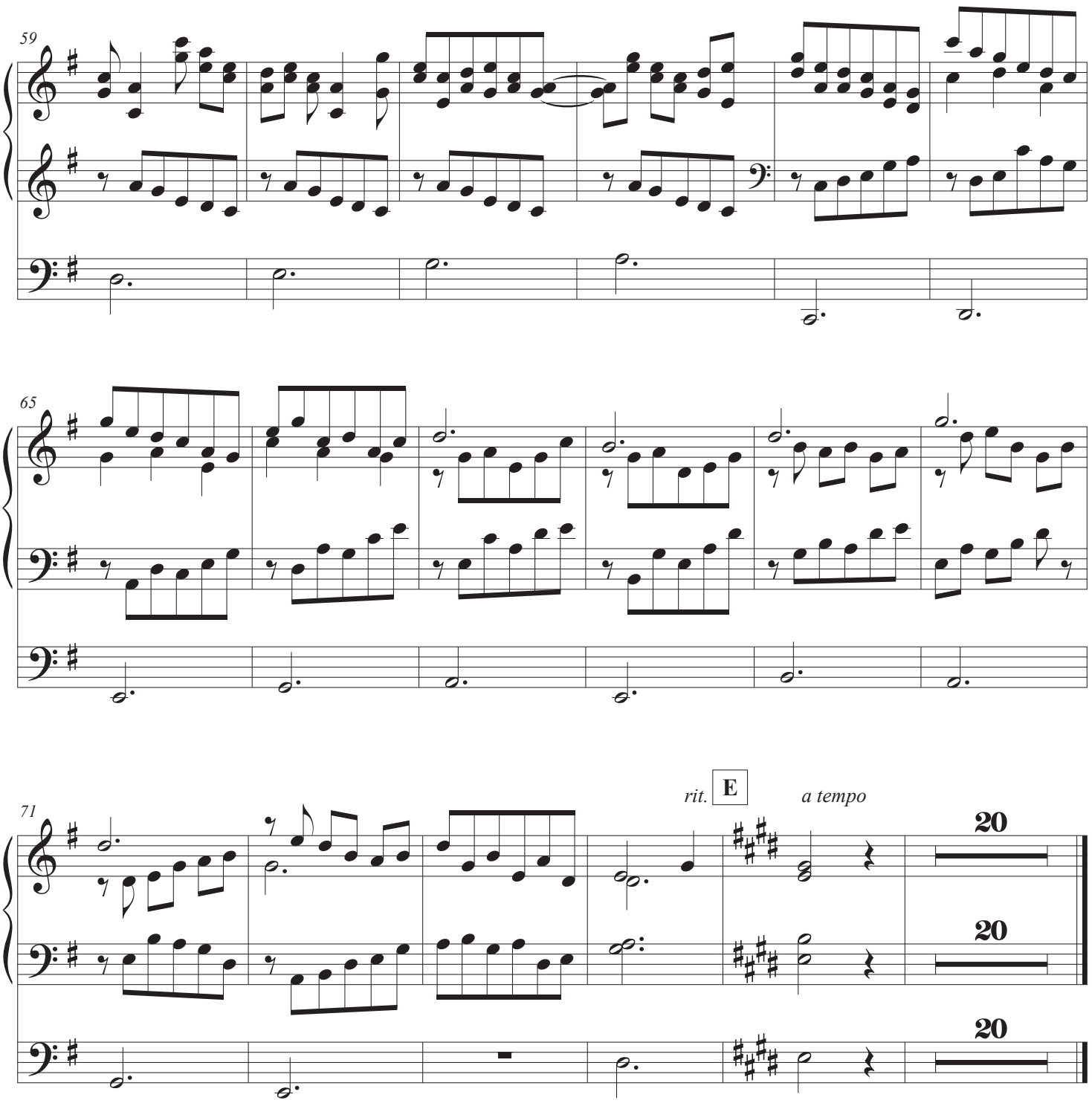
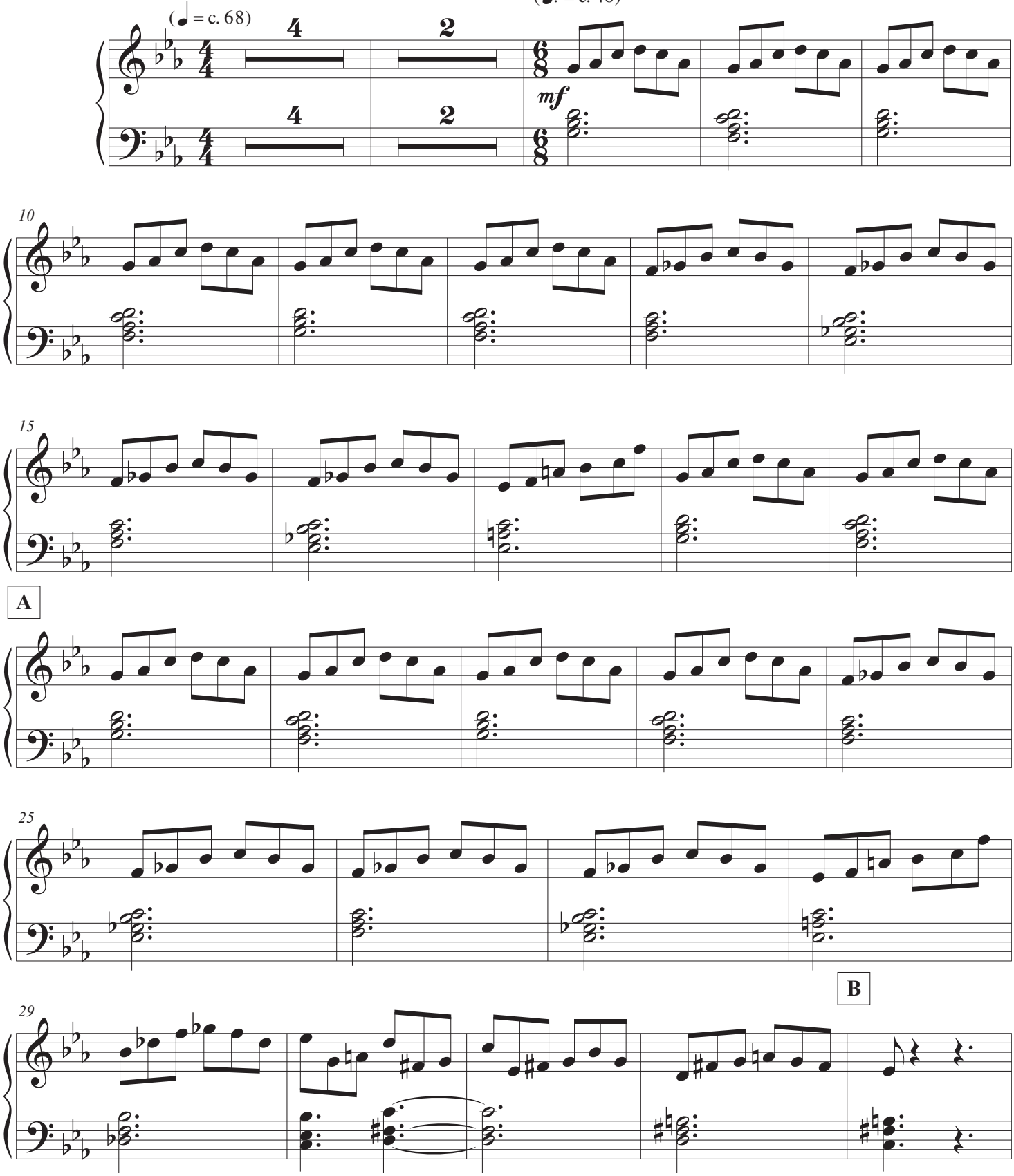
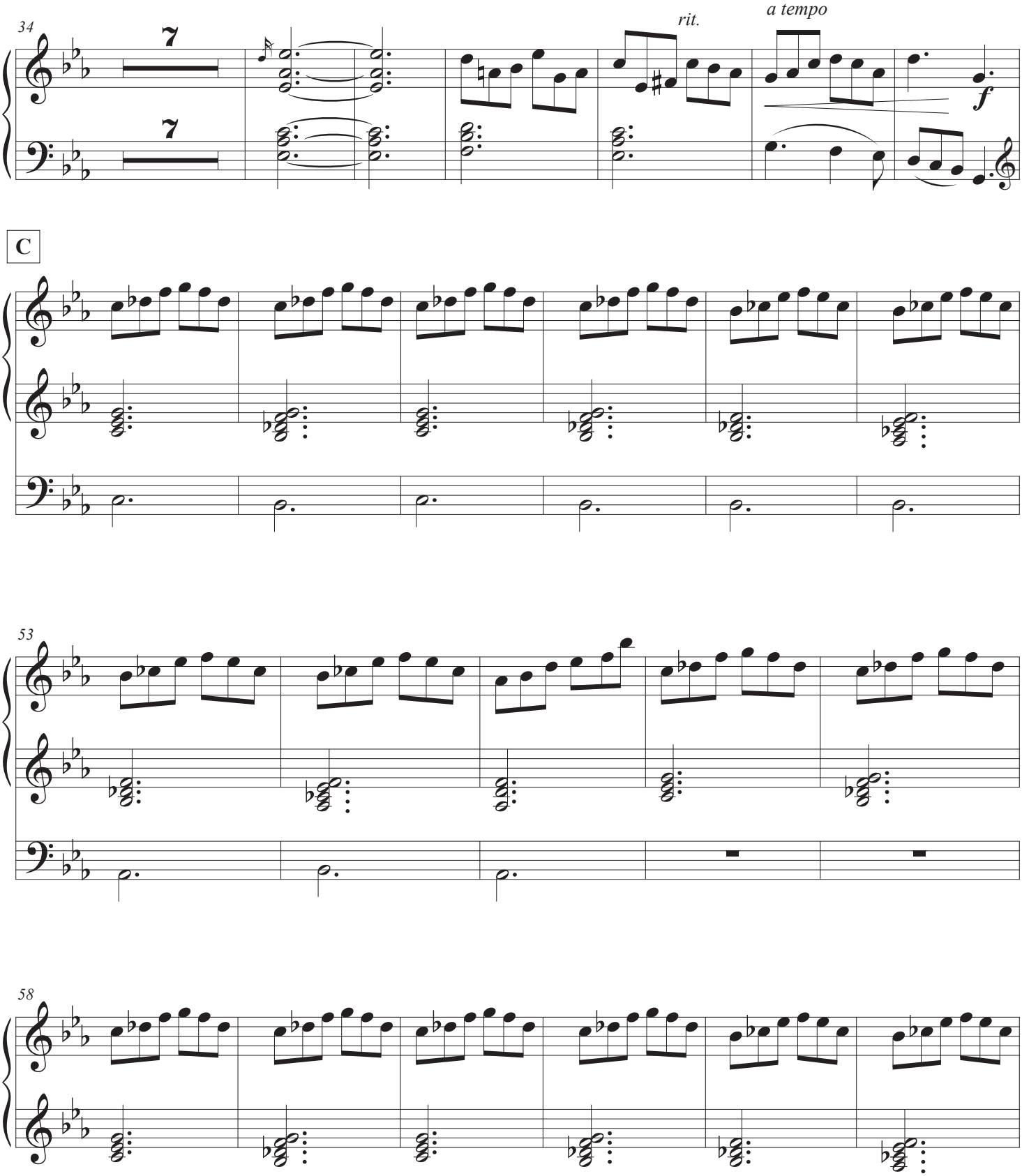
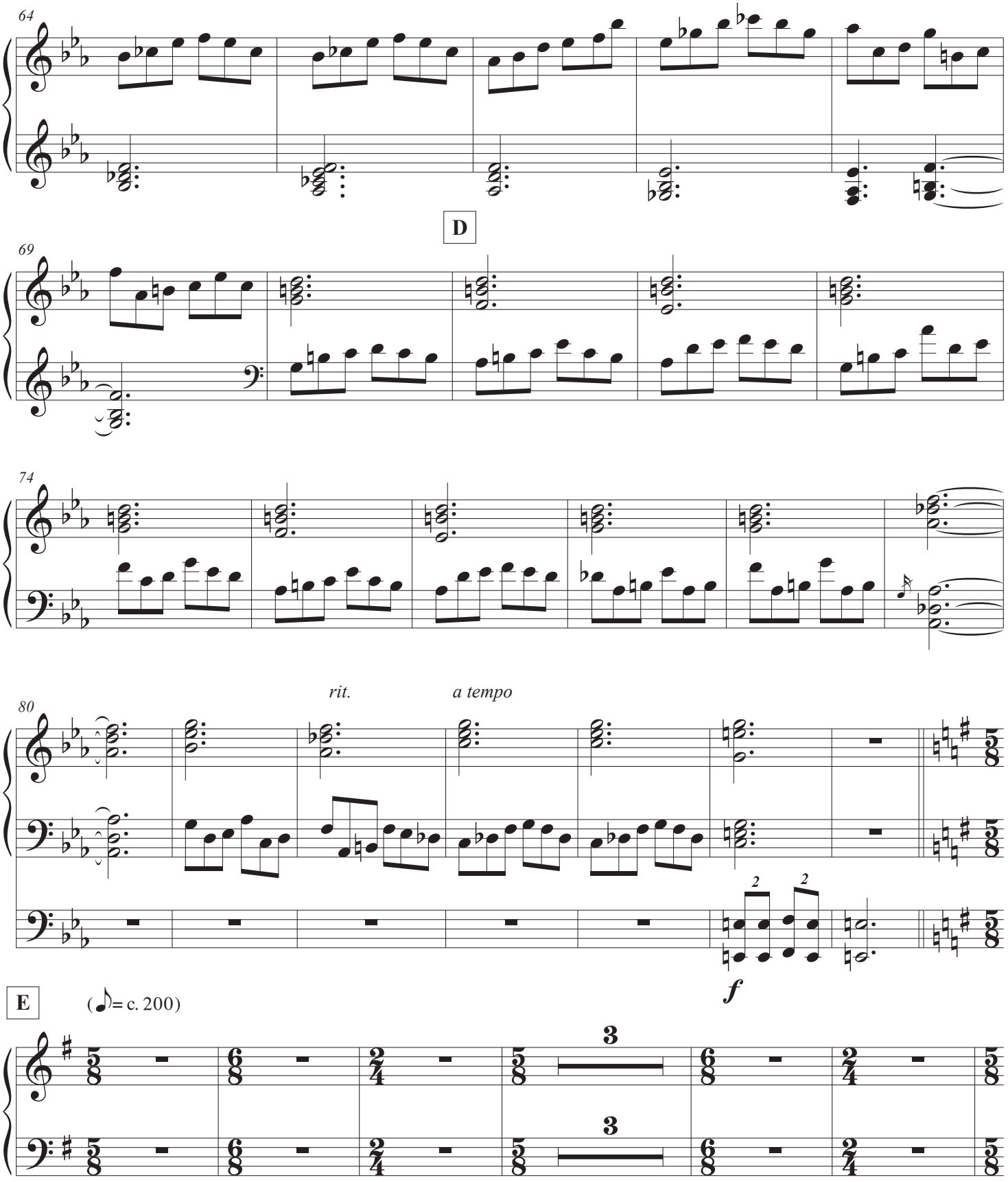

A
11
3
3
3
19
22
rit.
4
4
4
B
(♩ = c. 56)
C
D
31
p
13
13
13
11
11
11

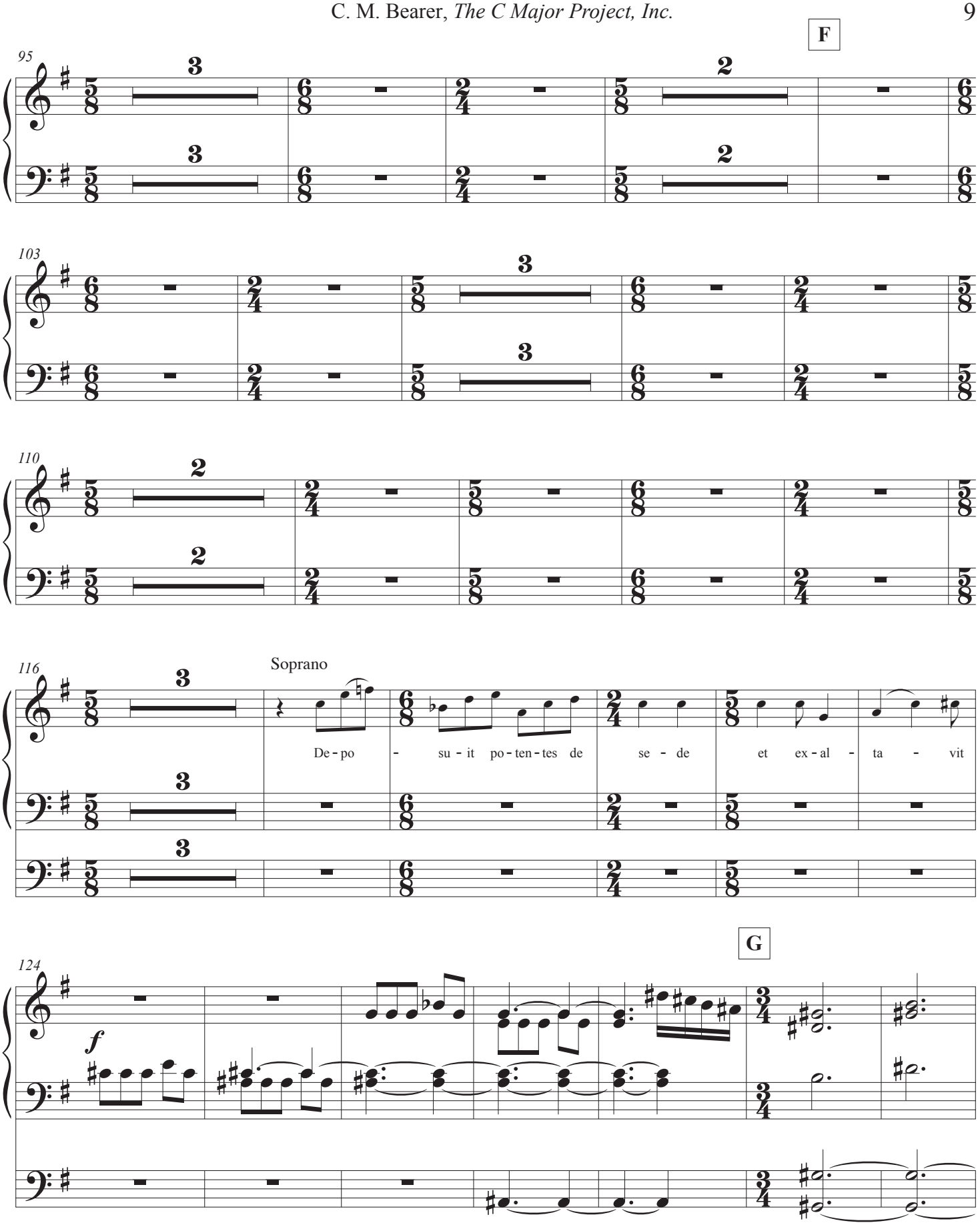

59
65
71
rit.
E
a tempo
20
20
20

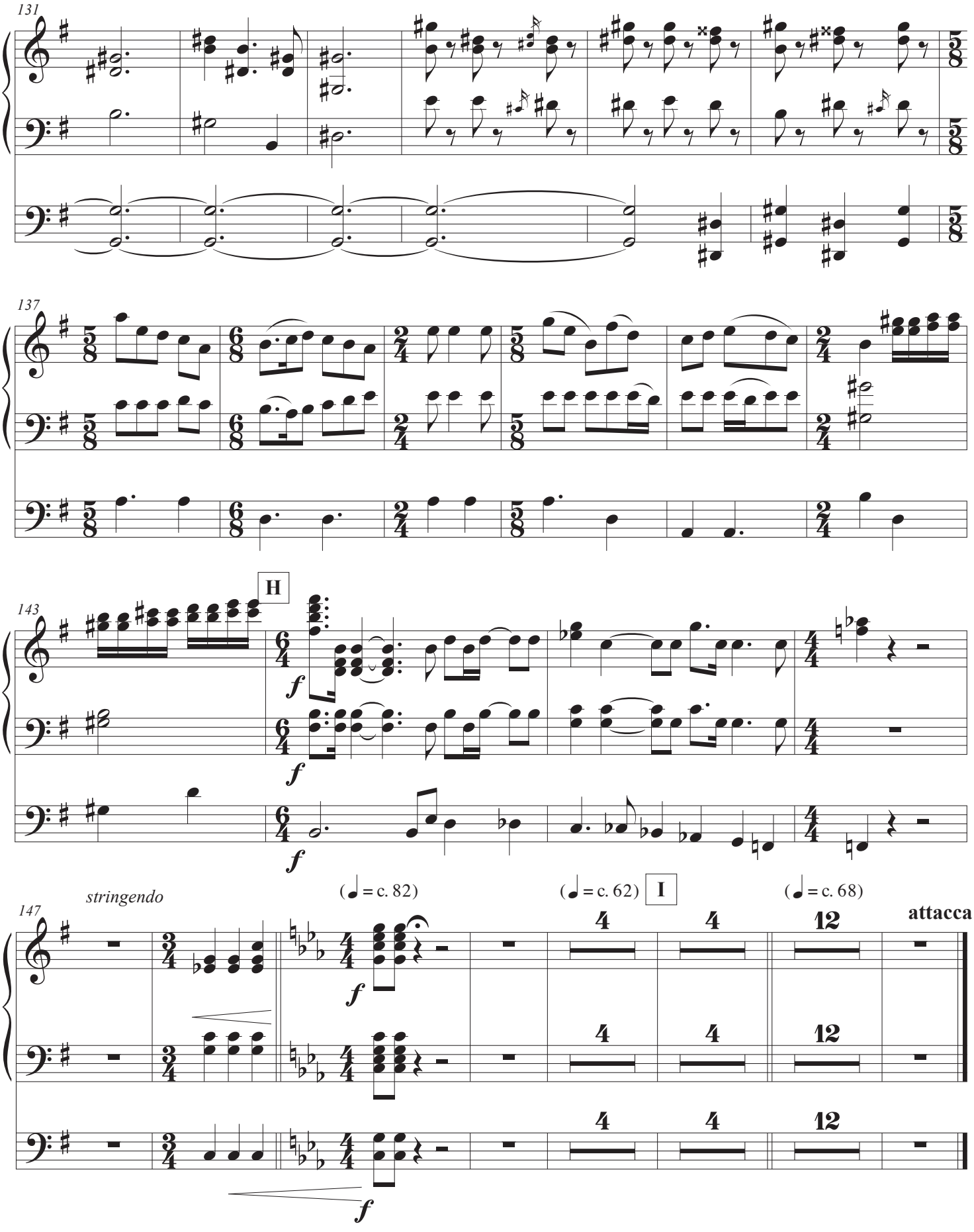
II.



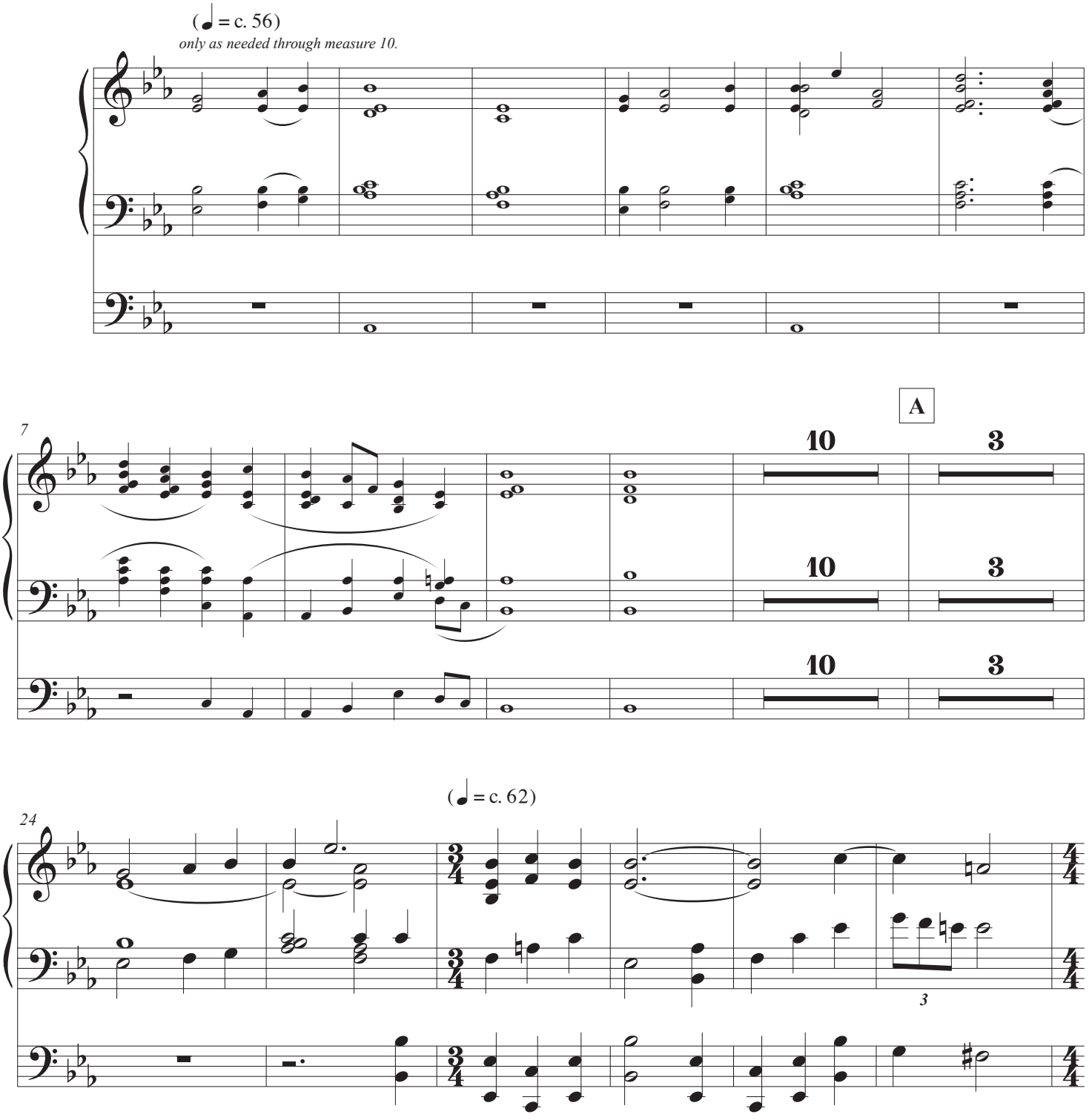

34
7
7
rit.
a tempo
f
C
53
58

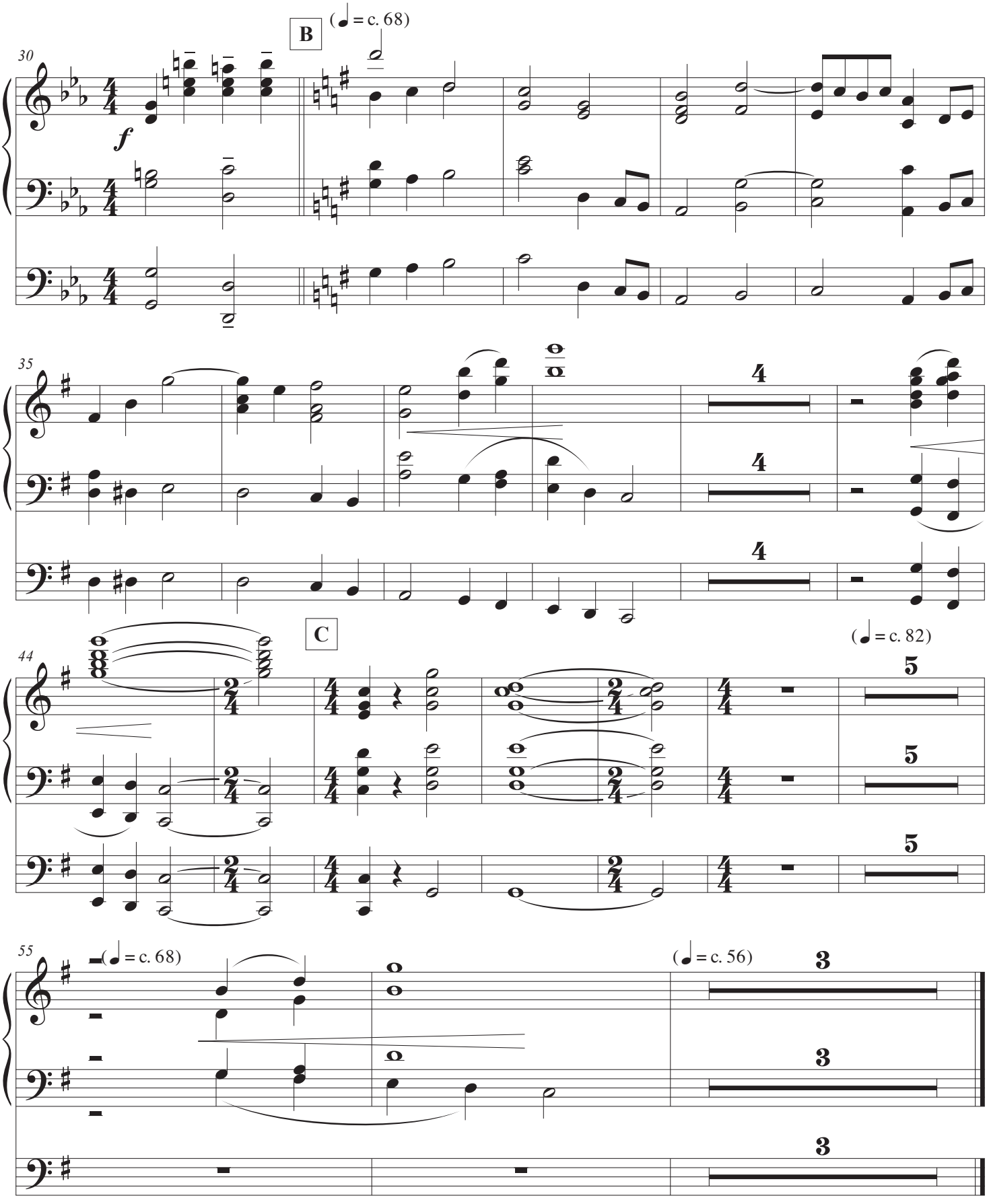

64
D
69
74
rit.
a tempo
80
f
E
(♪= c. 200)


F
95
3
3
2
2
103
3
3
110
2
2
116
Soprano
3
3
3
De - po - su - it po - ten - tes de se - de et ex - al - ta - vit
G
124
f


131
137
143
H
f
147
stringendo
(♩ = c. 82)
(♩ = c. 62)
I
(♩ = c. 68)
attacca
4
12

III.




B
(♩ = c. 68)
30
f
35
4
4
4
C
44
(♩ = c. 82)
5
5
5
55
(♩ = c. 68)
(♩ = c. 56)
3
3
3