Augmented Suite in E Minor

Michael Bemmels
2015

Notes from the Composer

Thank you for taking a look at my composition!

The Augmented Suite in E Minor, as the title suggests, features the prominent use of augmented triads. This chord can be thought of as a major triad with the 5th raised a semitone (eg. C - E - G#) and I often use it as a dominant function harmony (i.e. it is unstable and has to resolve to another chord). It is created through the interval cycle of major thirds, resulting in a symmetrical triad in which any of the three pitches can serve as the "root." The first movement, Prelude, explores the three different ways in which an E-augmented triad can be resolved. The main tonalities of the fourth movement, Rondo, outline an augmented triad: E minor, C major, and G# minor. There is certainly no shortage of augmented triads throughout the other movements as well!

The suite is written with the measure numbers continuing on from one movement into the next, suggesting that the movements are all connected and part of the same piece music. For instance, you will hear the main motive of the second movement, Canon, emerging already at the end of the Prelude (B-C#-D#-E). As another example, the short transitional gesture in the Rondo, (measure 203), serves as the opening bass-line for the third movement, Chorale. The figure in artificial harmonics at the end of the Canon reappears in the Chorale (C-B-A-B), can you find out where? The piece culminates with the B-theme of the Rondo (initially measure 153) in the melody, over-top of the Canon theme in the bass, within a chorale style texture, ending with a resolute alternation between the E-minor and E-augmented triad that was so pivotal to the opening Prelude.

Enough technical talk! I hope this piece is inspiring and moving for any listener. The Prelude has a feel of mystery and wonder. The Canon drives forward with perpetual machine-like momentum. The Chorale may open a soft-spot in your heart. The Rondo reminisces of the ups and downs of past adventures.

Performers of the work ought to pay special attention to the campanelas fingerings in the Rondo, this is very important. Most importantly, be yourself, be creative, and have fun!

Peace and Love,

Michael Bemmels
June, 2015
Vancouver, B.C., Canada

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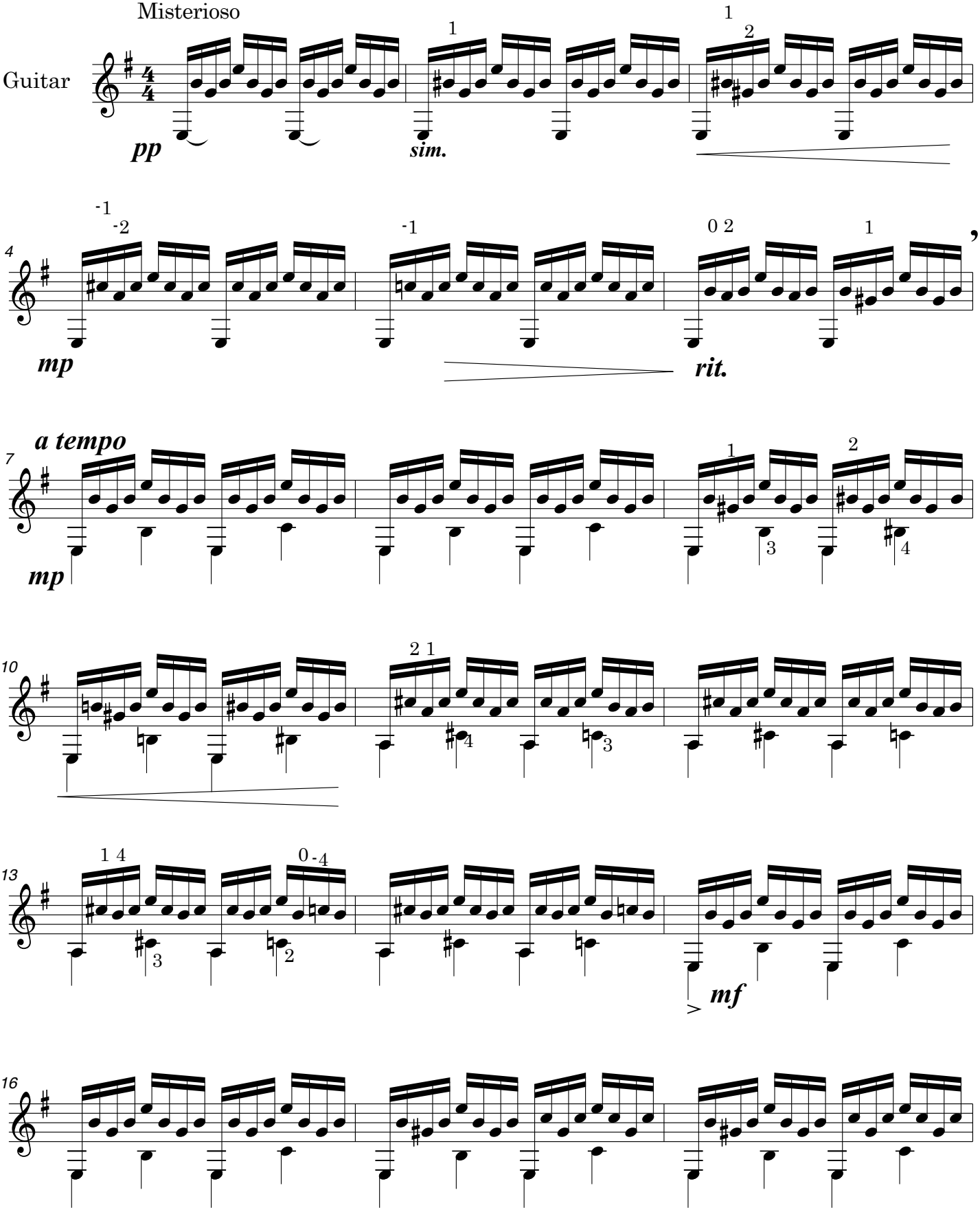
I - Prelude



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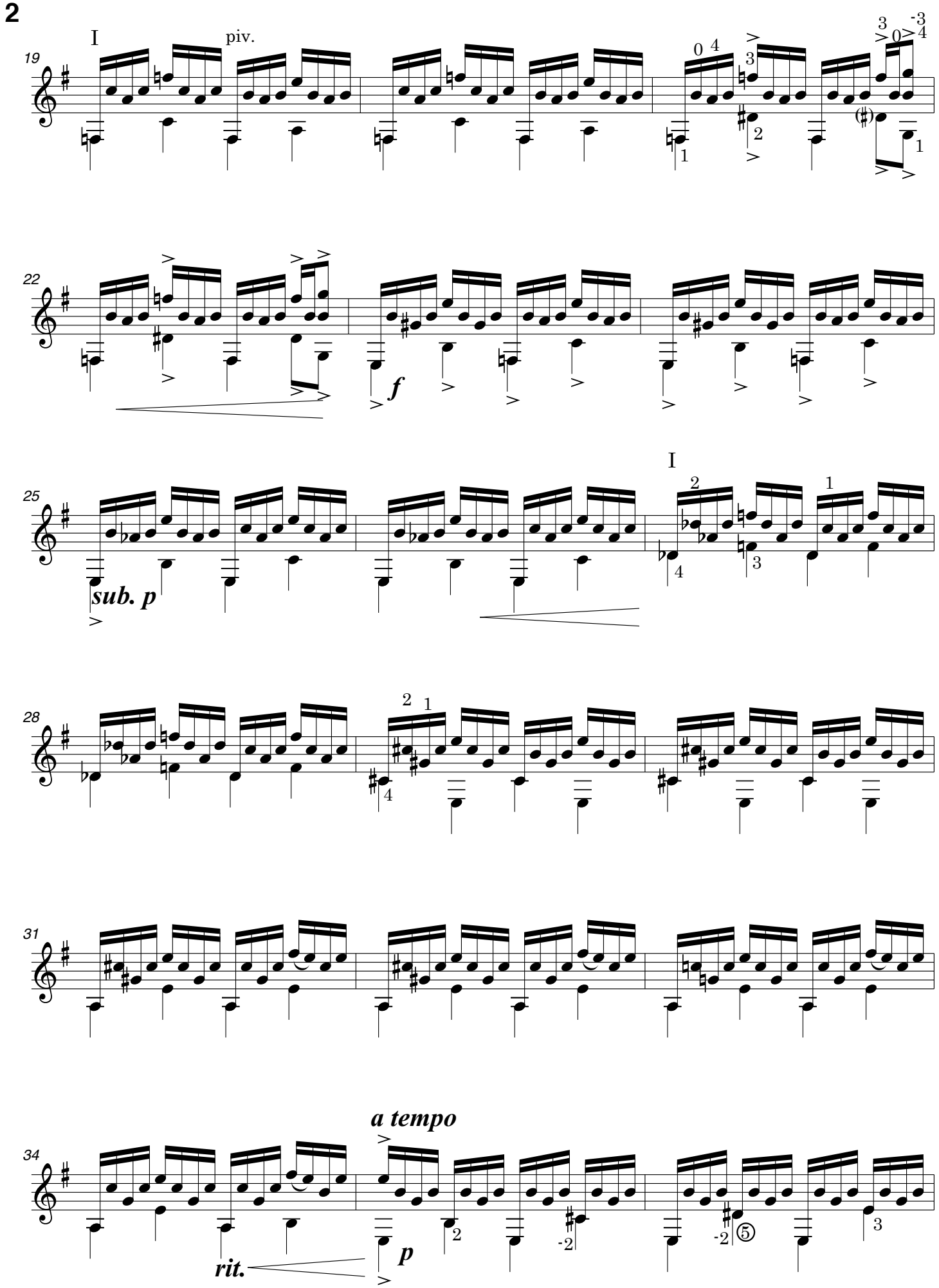
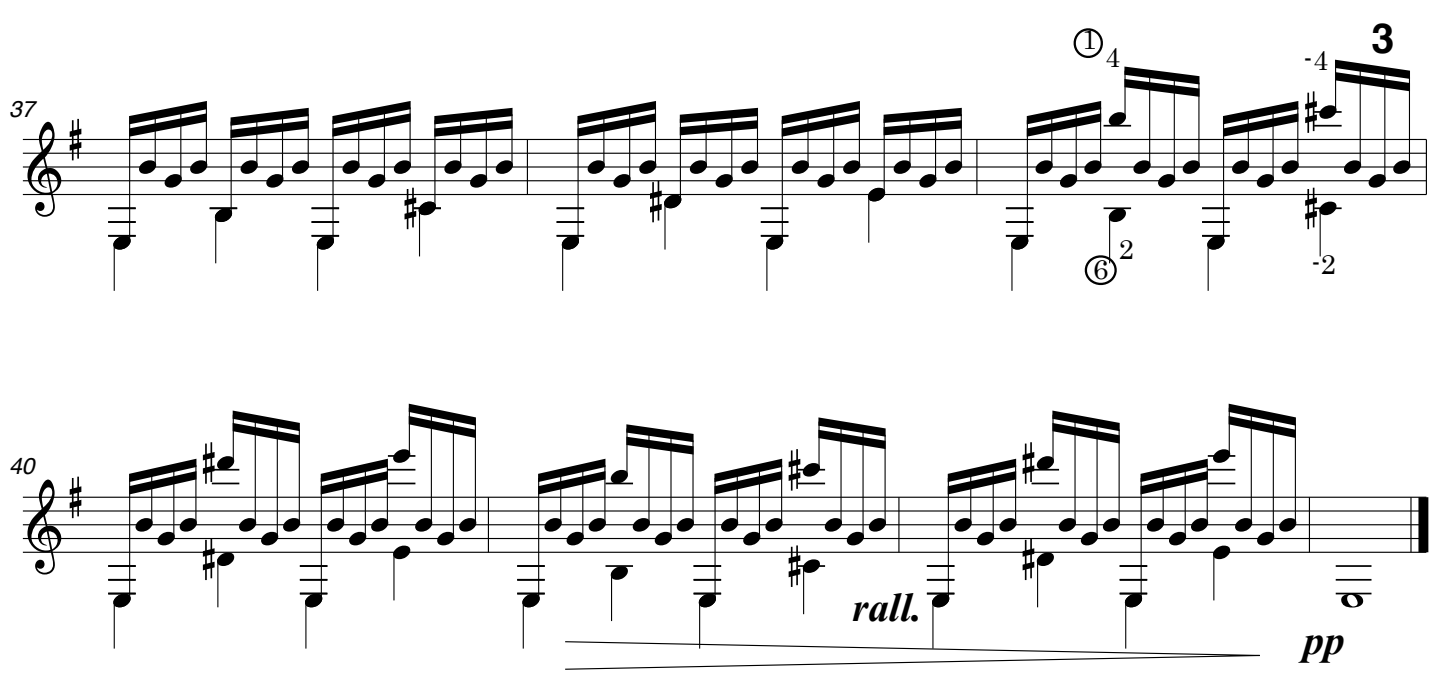
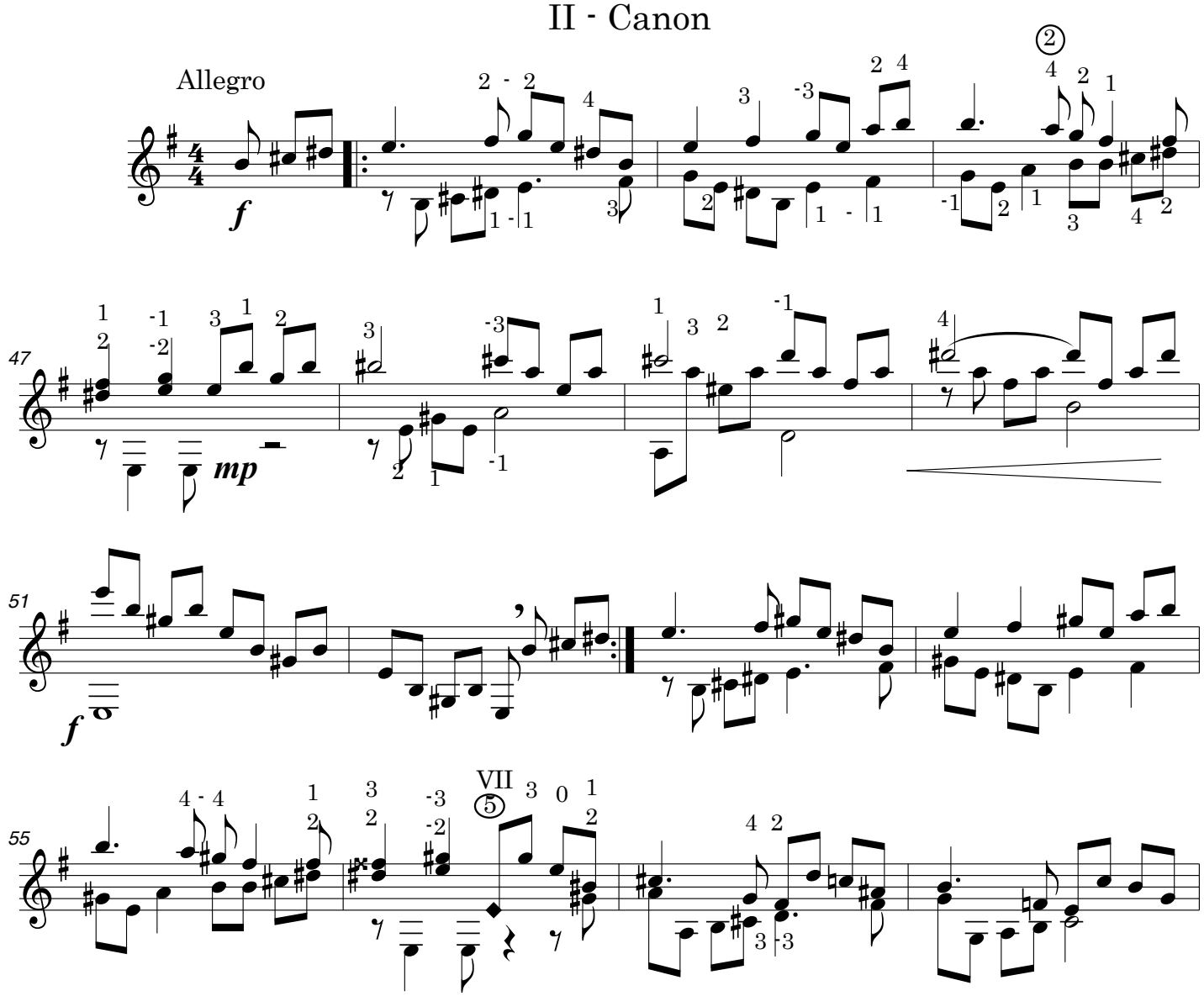
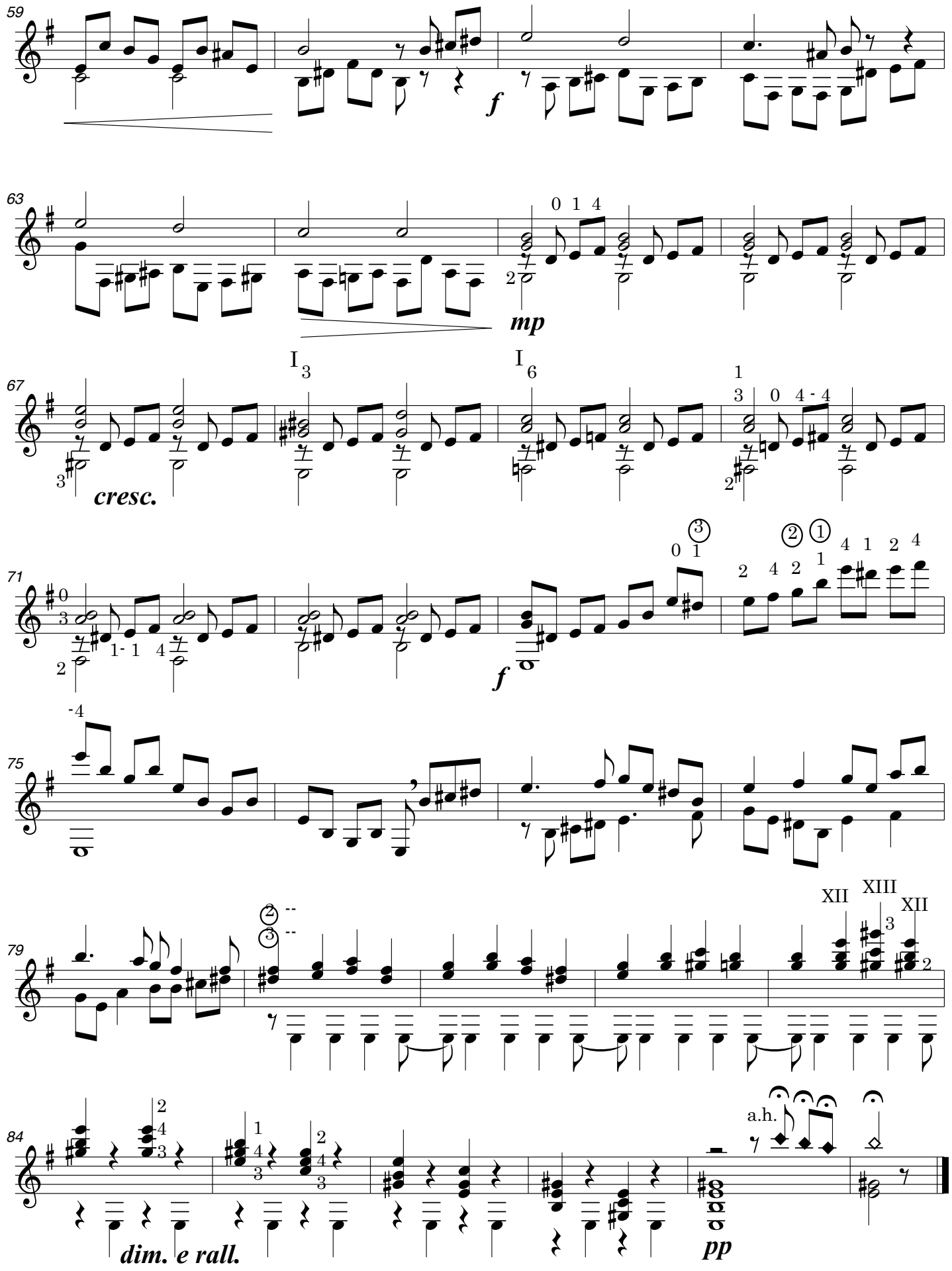

19
I
piv.
22
f
25
sub. p
I
28
31
34
a tempo
rit.
p



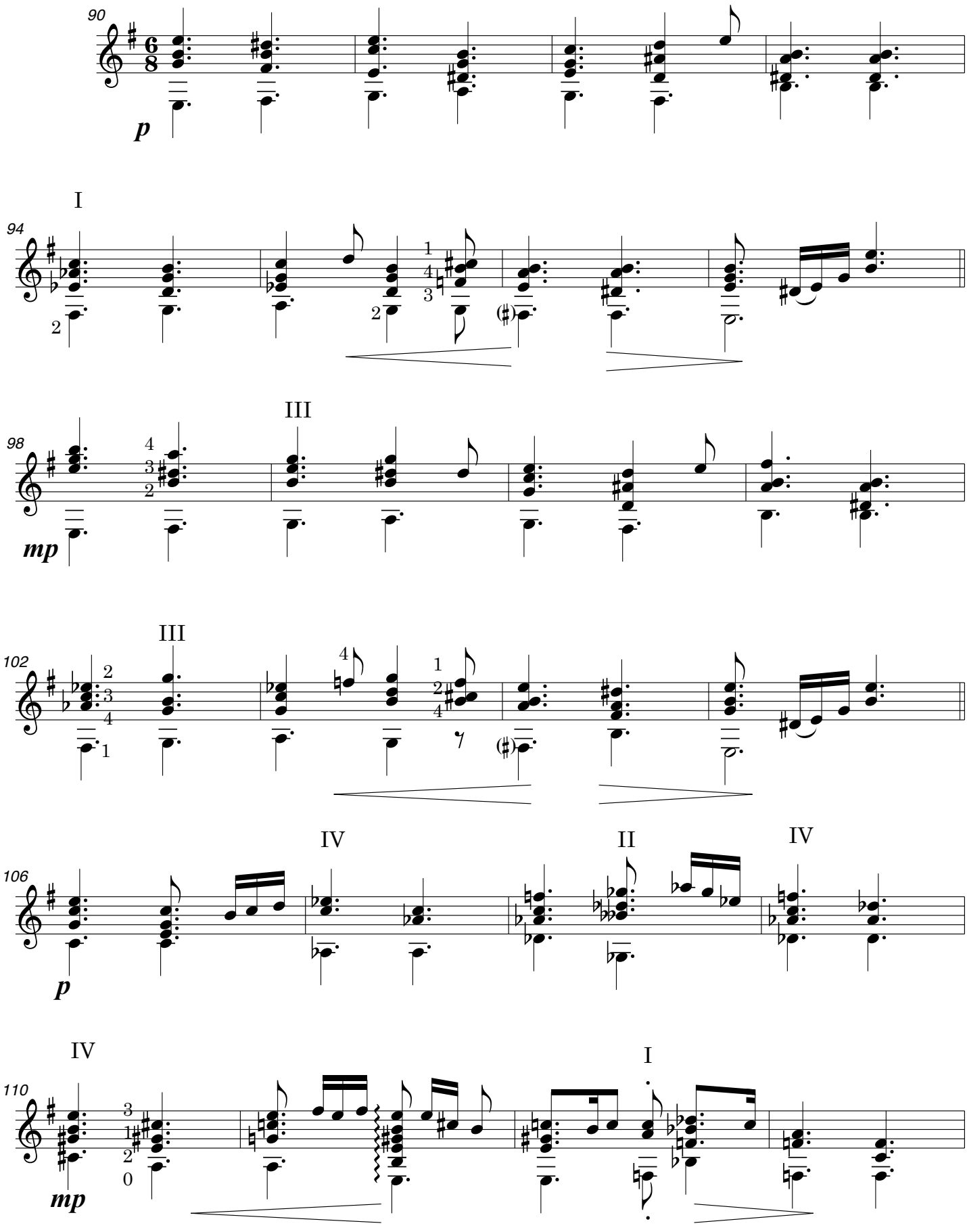
II - Canon

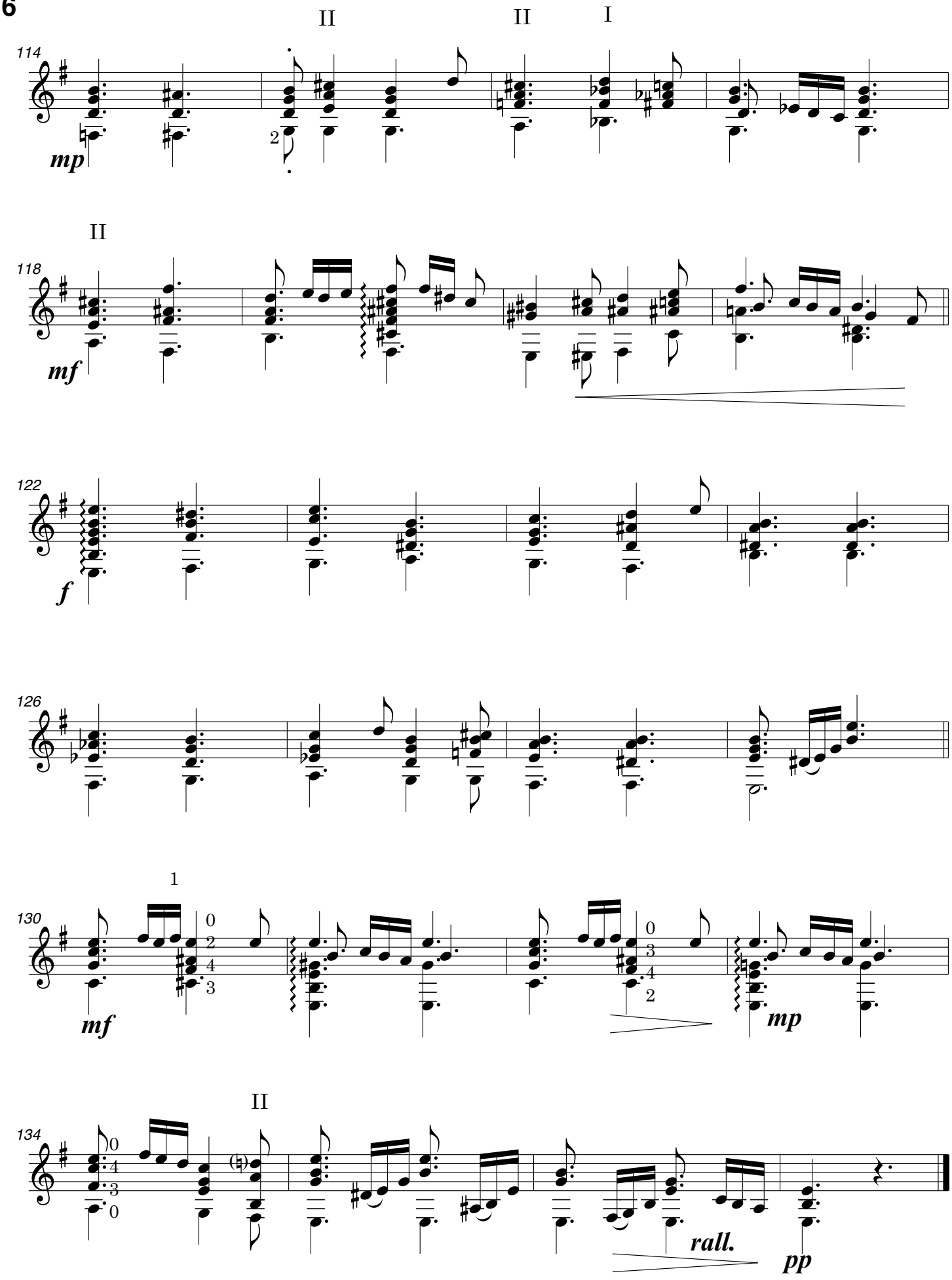



59
f
63
mp
67
cresc.
71
f
75
79
XII
XIII
XII
84
dim. e rall.
a.h.
pp

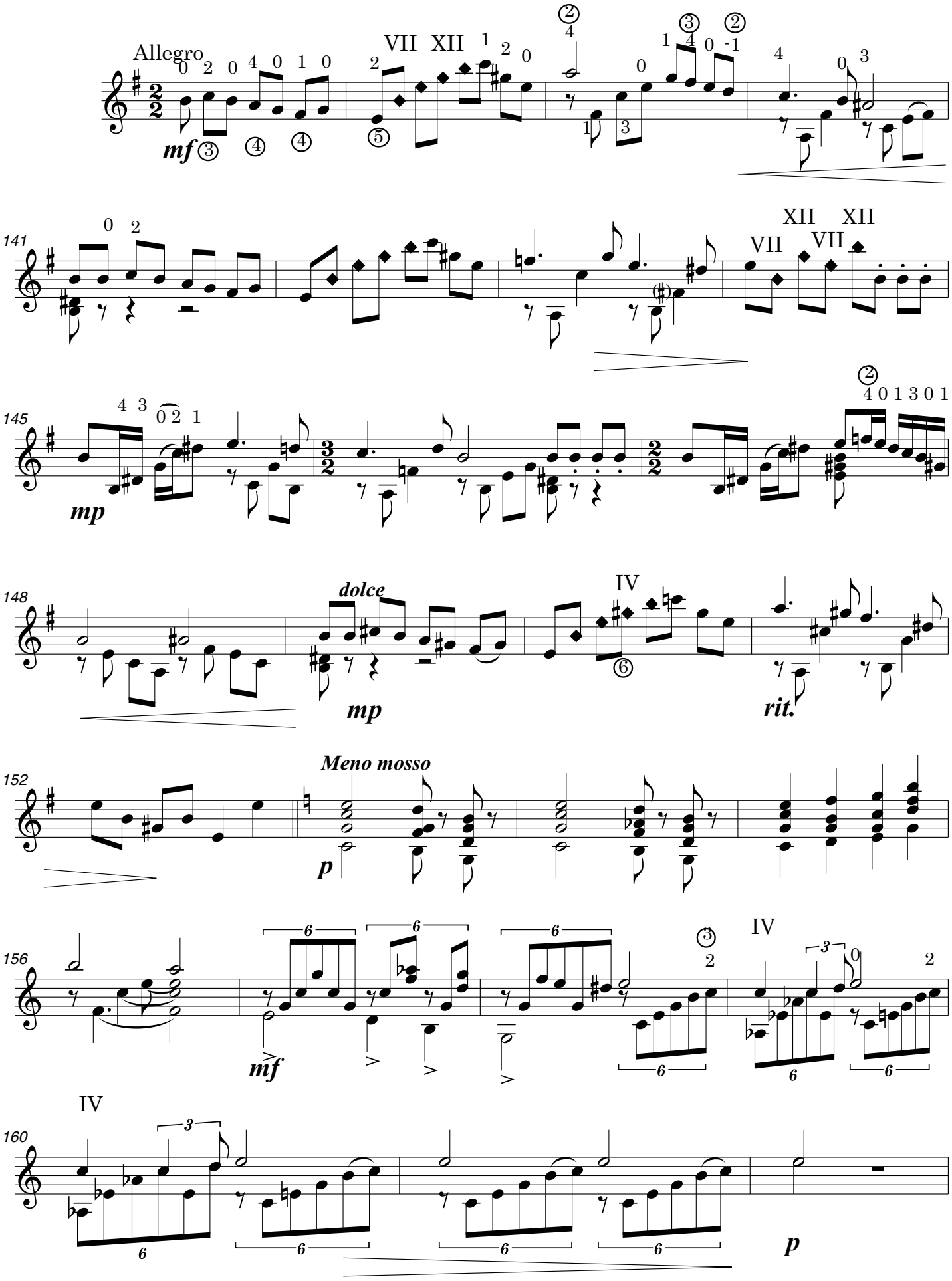
III - Chorale

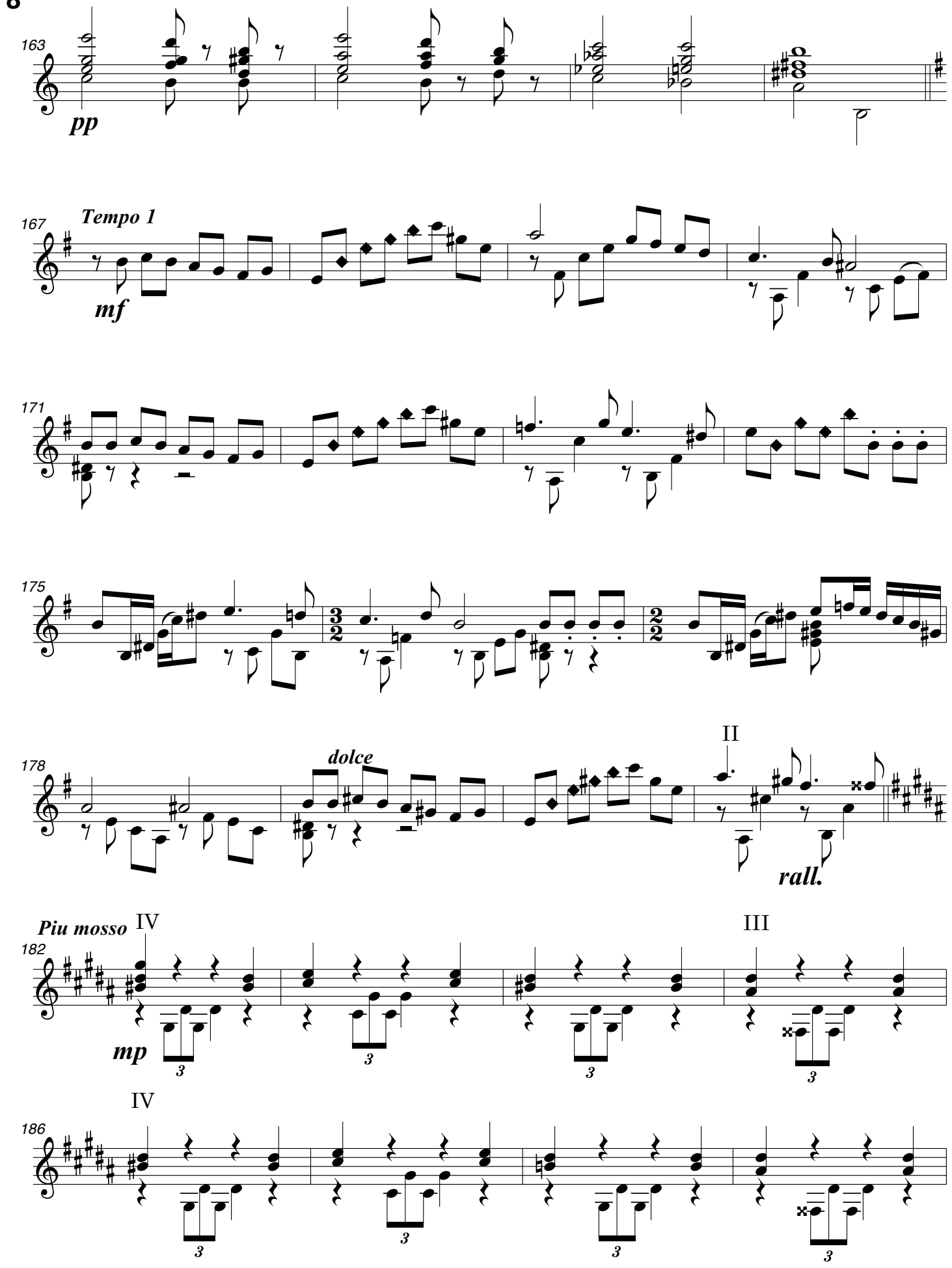
Larghetto

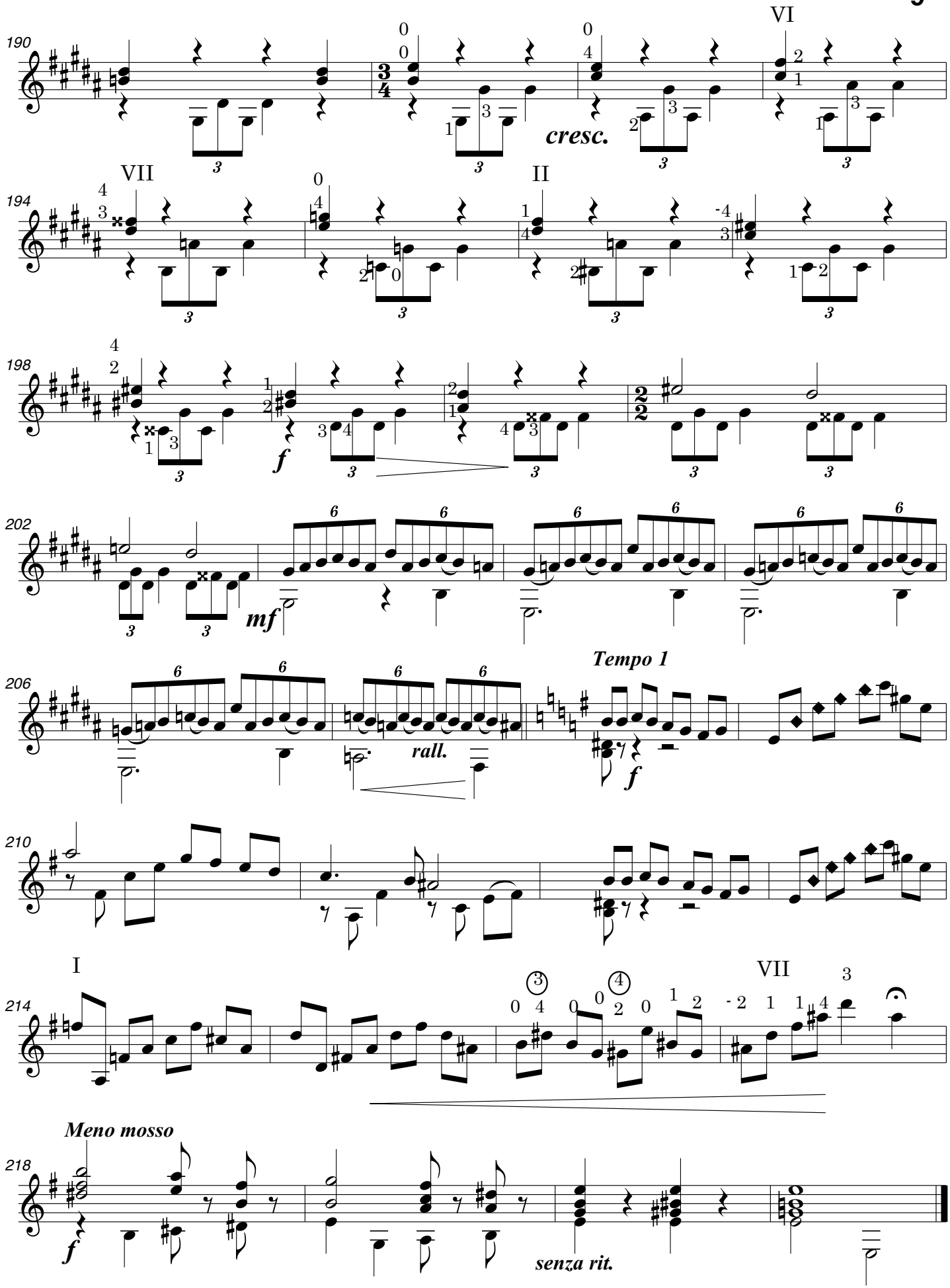



114
II
II
I
mp
118
II
mf
122
f
126
130
1
mf
mp
134
II
rall.
pp

IV - Rondo


Allegro
mf
141
mp
145
dolce
mp
148
IV
rit.
Meno mosso
p
152
mf
156
IV
IV
p
160


163
pp
167
Tempo 1
mf
171
175
178
dolce
II
rall.
Piu mosso
182
IV
mp
III
IV
186


190
VI
cresc.
194
VII
II
198
f
202
mf
206
rall.
Tempo 1
f
210
214
I
VII
Meno mosso
218
f
senza rit.