Jay C. Batzner

as if to each other...

(2011)

for piano and fixed media

UNSAFE BULL MUSIC

Program Notes:

I composed this work in February 2011 as part of the RPM Challenge which requires musicians to compose and record either 10 tracks or 35 minutes of music during the shortest month of the year. My goal was to write a single 35 minute long composition for piano and electronics but something that would be sectional and modular; something which could be broken out into several smaller pieces. While the work ended up 10 minutes short of my goal and, other than the first five minutes, was not terribly modular, I was extremely happy with what I had created.

The title *as if to each other* is extracted from the poem "Person, Place, Gesture, Thing" found in Kathleen Peirce's *The Oval Hour*. "Person, Place, Gesture, Thing" is in three parts: the first two poems contain two stanzas of four lines each and a third poem of four stanzas with four lines each. The third poem is a reordering of the lines of the two proceeding poems making the longer poem a recontextualized synthesis of the first two. I've always admired the simple imagery of the poem and how my attention on the person, place, gesture, or thing present in each line refocuses based on the order of the individual lines.

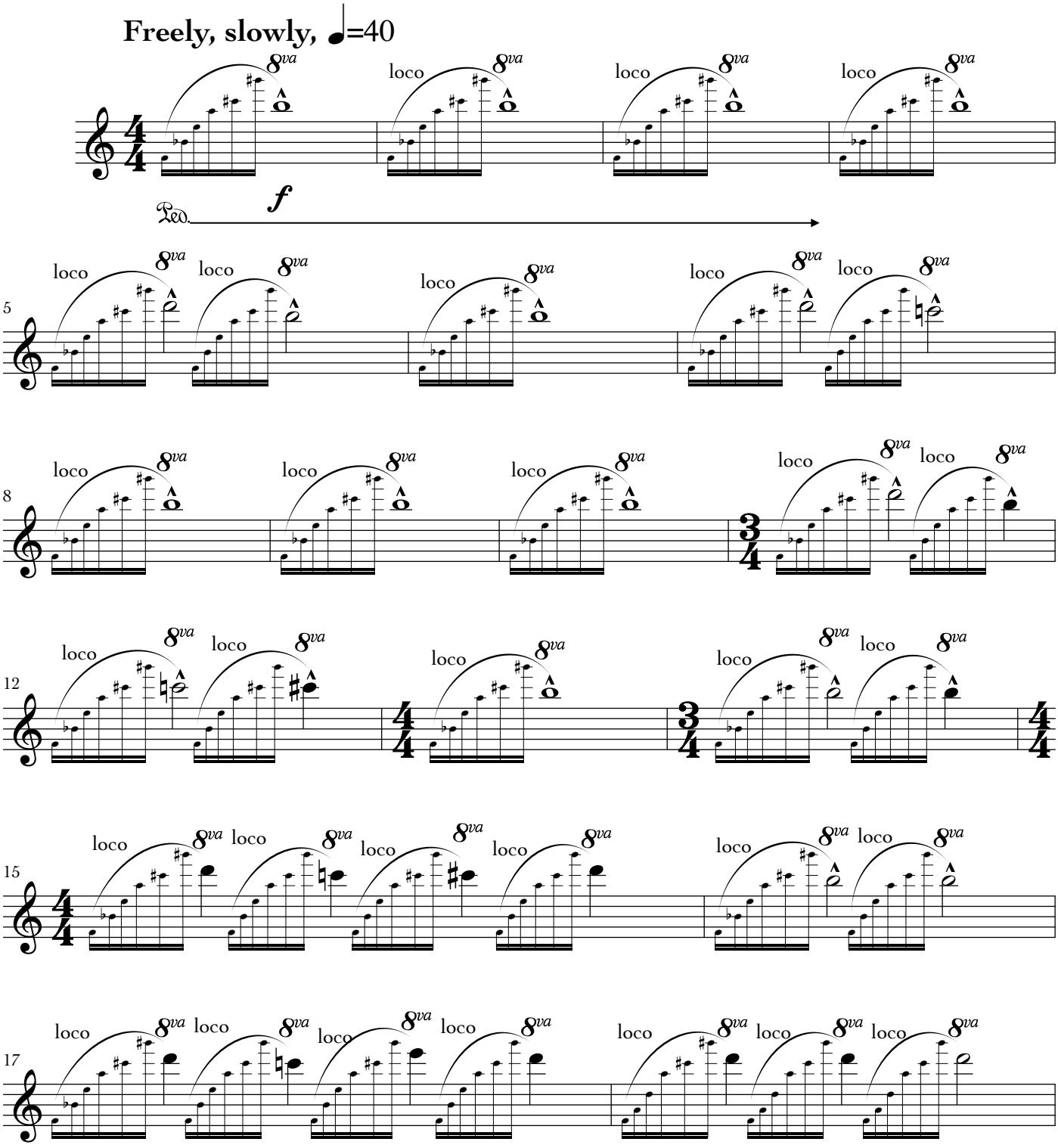
In all honesty, I'm not sure why I include that detail about the title. It seems important even though I didn't consciously pattern my piece after Peirce's poem. Honestly, I sat down at the piano, struck the first arpeggio, and went from there. The single note descending line was taken from a previously unused sketch and the chorale was added because the piece needed it. All of the electronics were generated through manipulations of the piano material, creating a sort of audio kaleidoscope which bends and warps what was previously heard.

I composed the piece for absolutely no practical reason. I figured it would never be publicly performed and the scratch recording I made in my office would be the only proof of the work's existence. I am equally honored and shocked that R. Andrew Lee has taken up the piece and is recording it and releasing it on the Irritable Hedgehog label. It is always encouraging when your music connects with others. I am tempted to write another work of this scope again and see what happens...

as if to each other...

composed for the 2011 RPM Challenge

Jay C. Batzner



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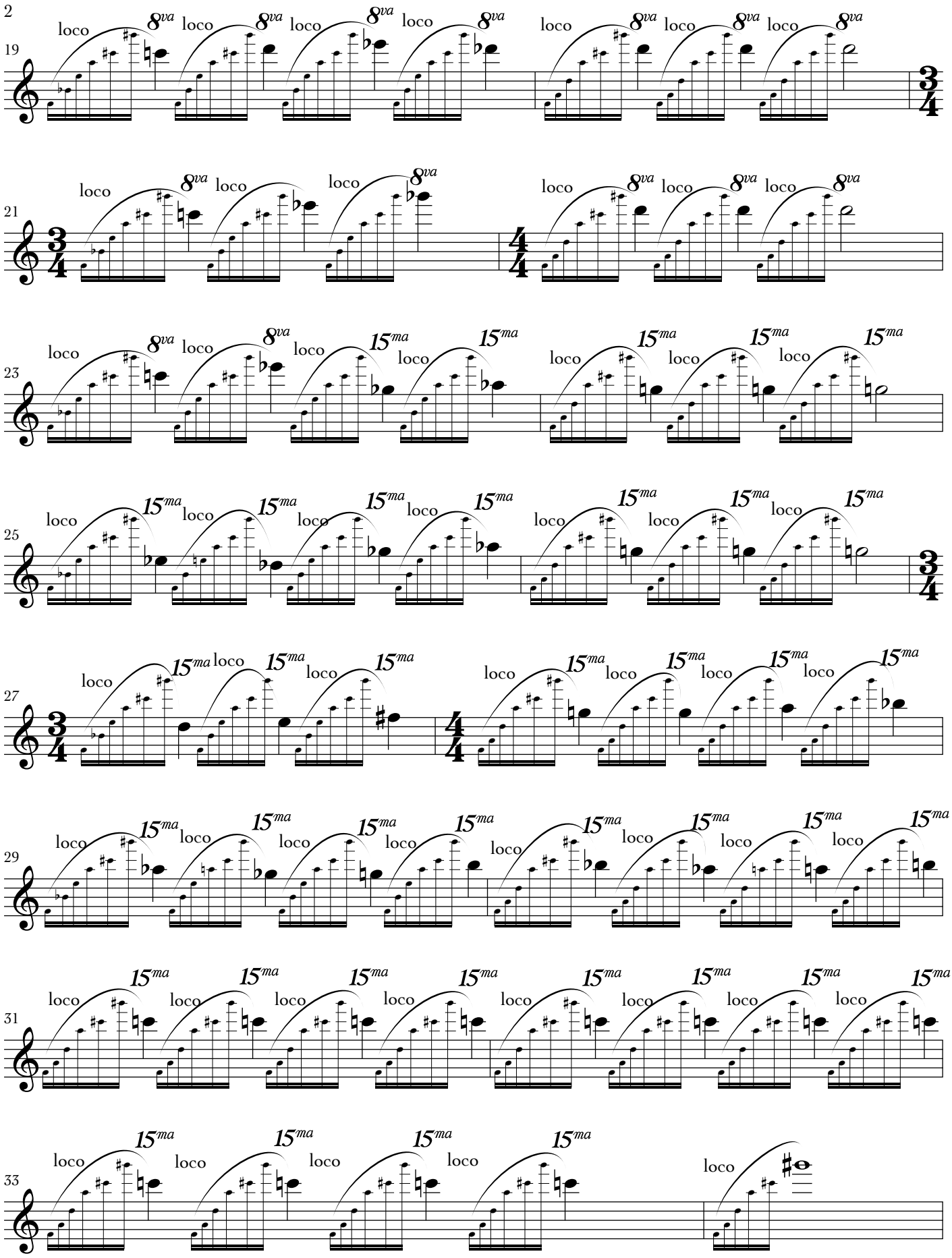
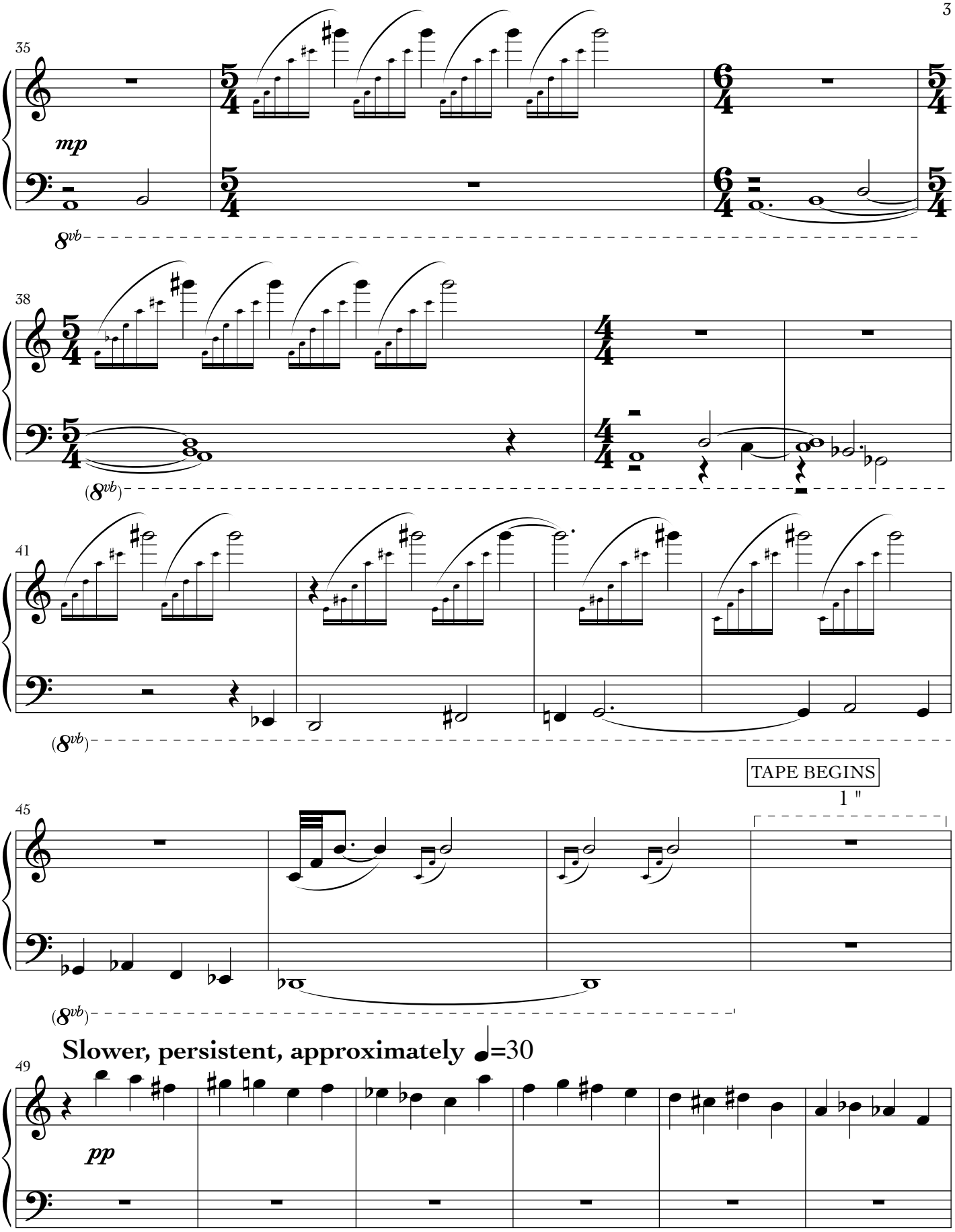

2
19
loco
8va
3/4
21
4/4
23
15ma
25
27
29
31
33


35
mp
8vb
38
(8vb)
41
(8vb)
TAPE BEGINS
1 "
45
(8vb)
Slower, persistent, approximately ♩=30
49
pp

55

62 *pressing forward*

mf

67

TAPE FADES ON BEAT 3

72

8va

ff

10 "

♩=30-35

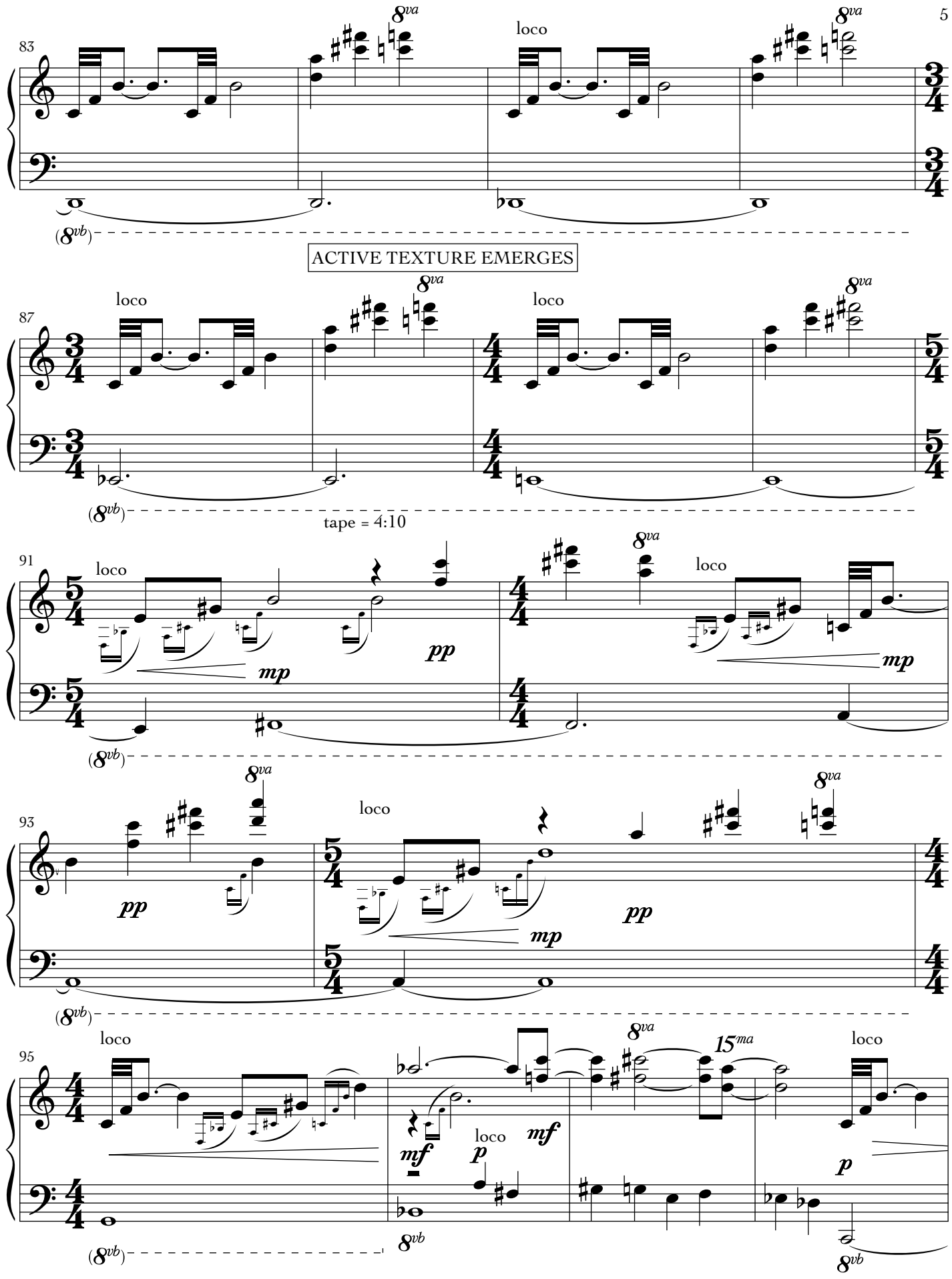
loco

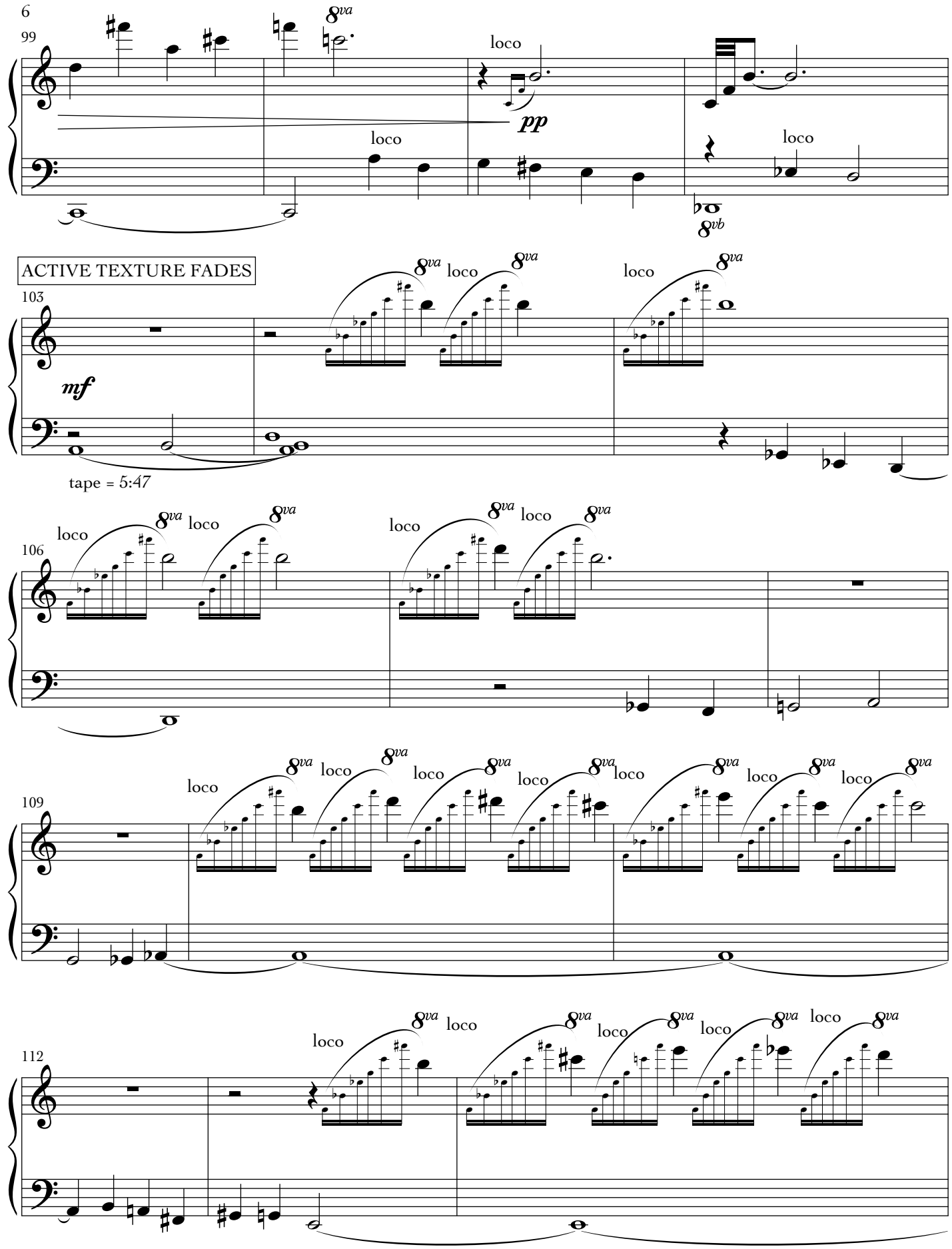
pp

tape = 2:47

78

8vb


83
8va
loco
8va
(8vb)
ACTIVE TEXTURE EMERGES
87
loco
8va
loco
8va
(8vb)
tape = 4:10
91
loco
mp
pp
8va
loco
mp
(8vb)
93
8va
pp
loco
mp
pp
8va
(8vb)
95
loco
mf
loco
p
8va
15ma
mf
loco
p
8vb
8vb


99
8va
loco
pp
loco
loco
8vb
ACTIVE TEXTURE FADES
103
8va
loco
8va
loco
8va
mf
tape = 5:47
106
loco
8va
loco
8va
loco
8va
loco
8va
109
loco
8va
loco
8va
loco
8va
loco
8va
loco
8va
loco
8va
loco
8va
112
loco
8va
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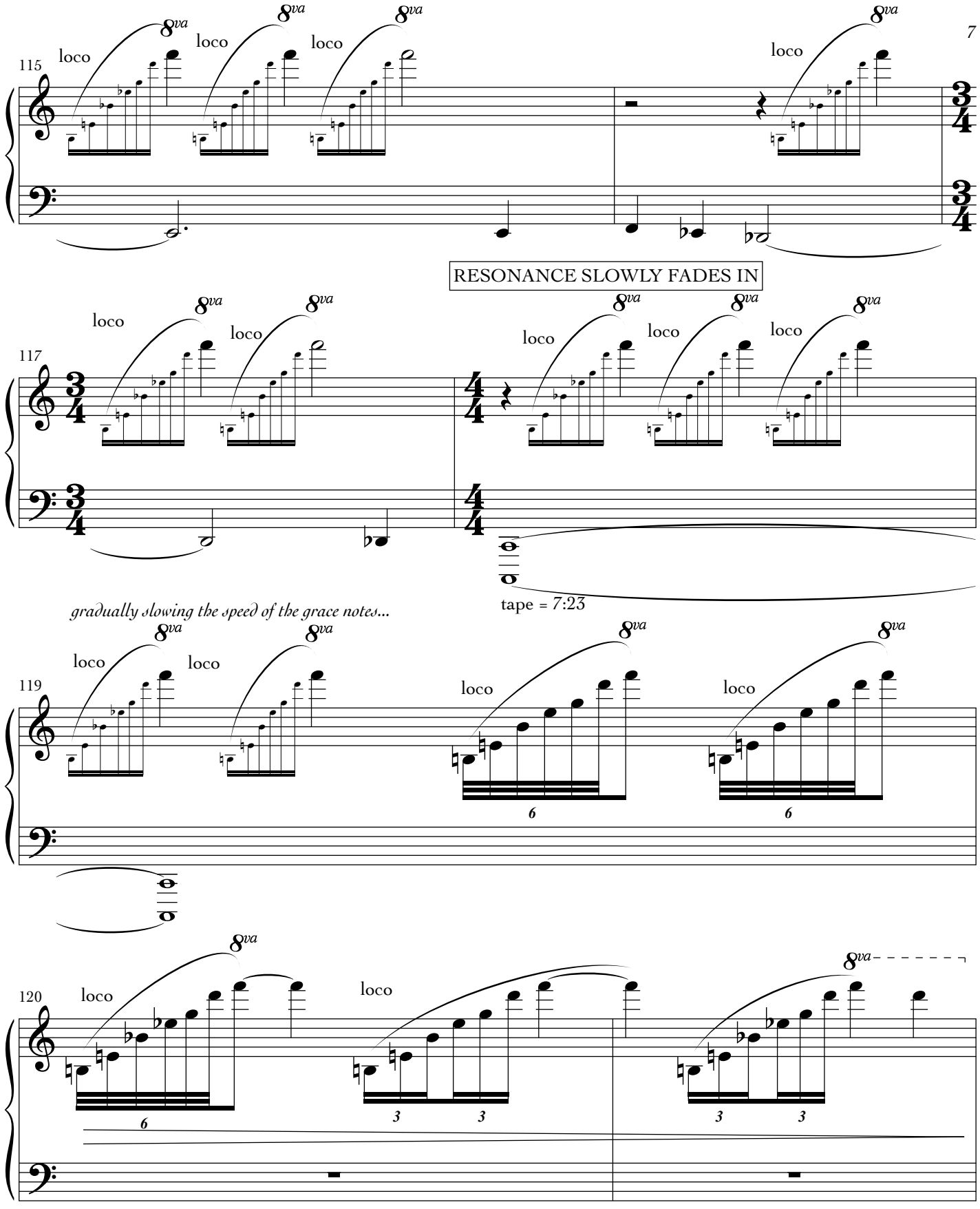
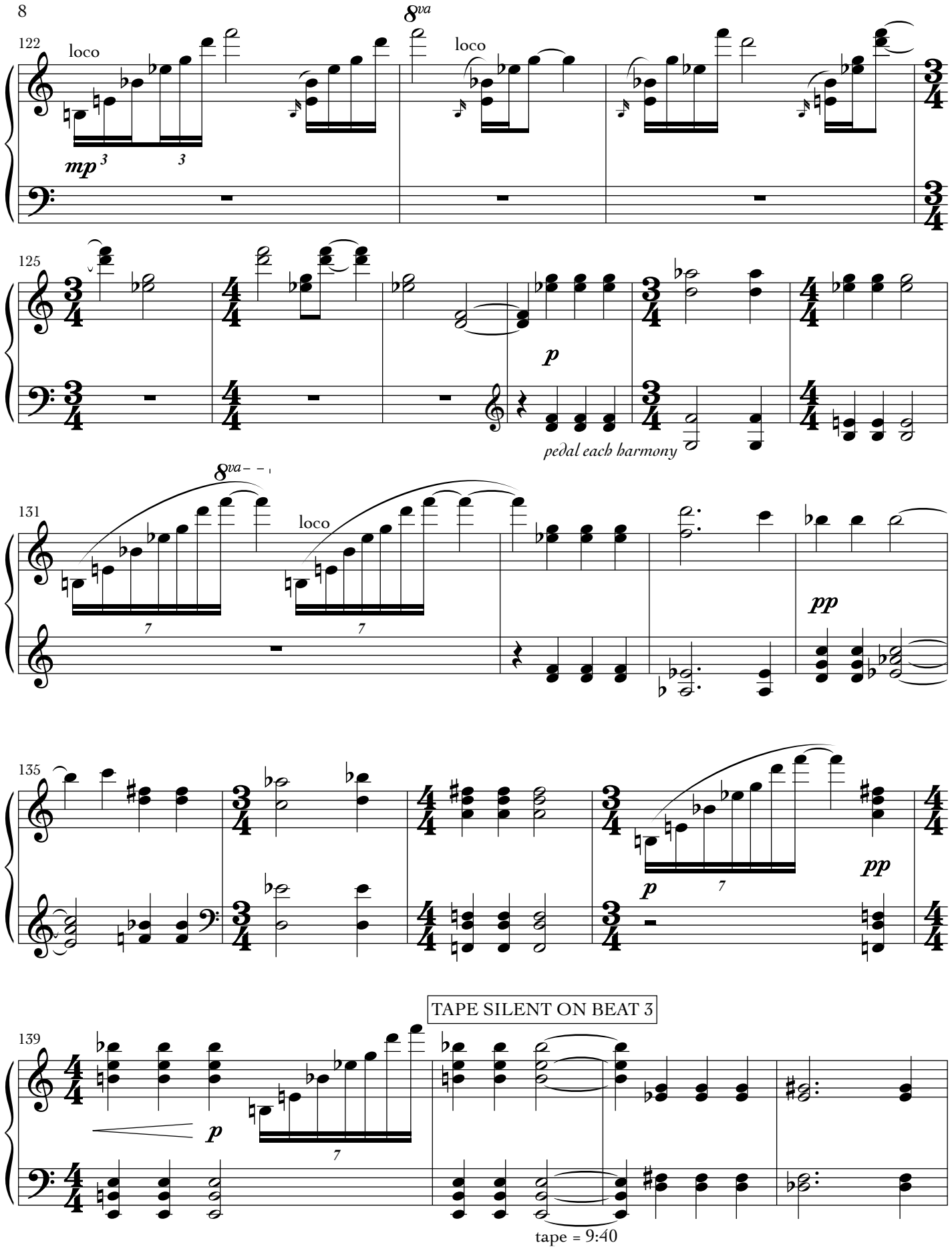
8va
loco
8va
loco
8va
loco
8va


115
loco
8va
117
RESONANCE SLOWLY FADES IN
tape = 7:23
gradually slowing the speed of the grace notes...
119
120
6
3


122
loco
8va
loco
mp
125
p
pedal each harmony
131
8va
loco
pp
135
p
pp
TAPE SILENT ON BEAT 3
139
p
tape = 9:40

143

7

TAPE RESUMES ON BEAT 3

147

tape = 10:25

CRACKLE EMERGES ON BEAT 2

152

7

a little faster, agitato

p

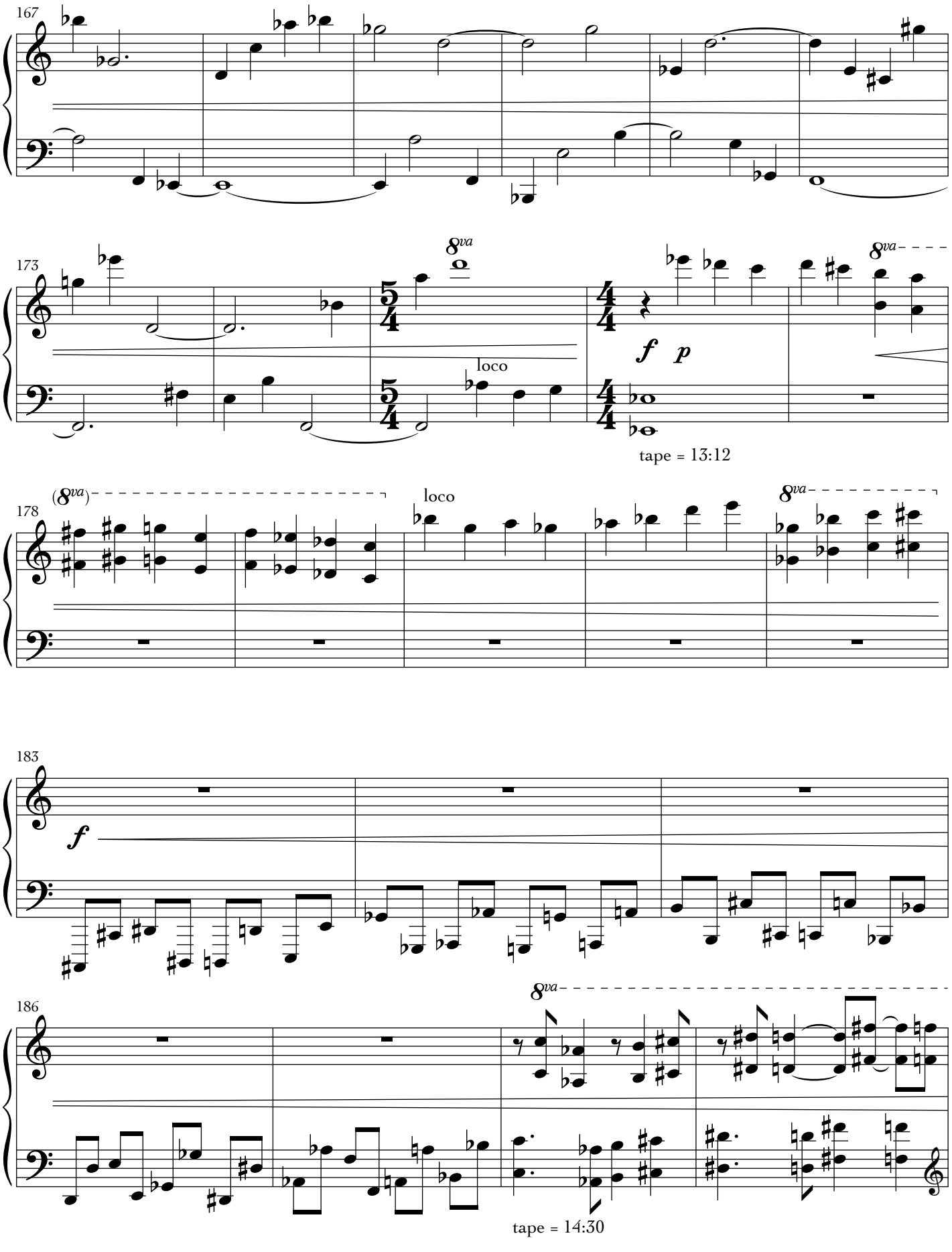
tape = 10:58

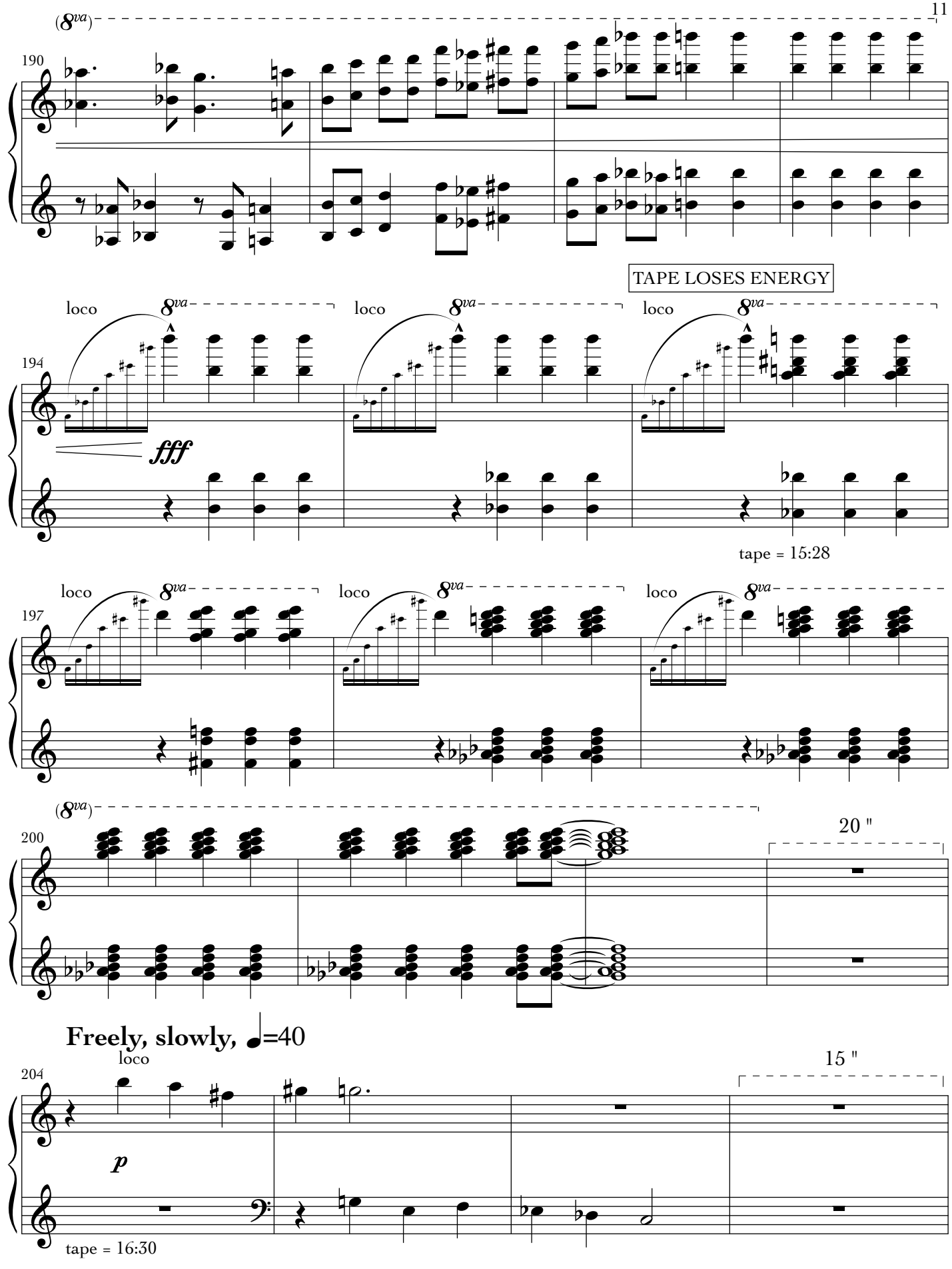
156

♩=40

161

tape = 11:55


167
173
8va
loco
f
p
8va
tape = 13:12
(8va)
178
loco
8va
183
f
186
8va
tape = 14:30


(8va)
190
194
loco
8va
fff
TAPE LOSES ENERGY
tape = 15:28
197
200
20 "
Freely, slowly, ♩=40
204
15 "
p
tape = 16:30

208

TAPE FADES OUT/ENDS

p

213

15ma

loco *8va*

loco *8va*

p

Ped.

219

loco *8va*

loco *8va*

loco *8va*