st.62.1.9

sumtone

:

michael edwards

sonorities apart□
□
for organ□

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programme note

Sonorities Apart was written during the summer of 1992 at the request of Robert Bates, Stanford University's Assistant Organist. In keeping with some of the wonderful repertoire for the organ, it is a toccata-like piece that draws its energy and basic sound from an almost uninterrupted moto perpetuo type texture.

The title has two meanings: First, it is a comment on how I approached the composition of the piece: As composers we are so concerned nowadays with specifying and relying upon (for the delineation of the musical shape of a piece) the sonorities we are working with. Whilst this specification is possible with the organ, it is not very practical, given that not every organ sounds alike, even if they do have the same basic stops. As I wanted to write a piece that was performable on any three manual organ (with pedals) I had to eschew the usual compositional preoccupation with specific timbres, and concentrate instead on writing a piece that utilised generic organ sounds alone.

This leads to the second meaning of the title, which is closely connected to this fundamental problem of writing for the organ: When the piece was finished I realised that the notation was even closer to a kind of tablature than musical notation usually is, literally telling the player where to put his or her fingers, how long to keep them there for, and when to move on to the next note. No dynamics, no expression marks, and not even a completely faithful representation of pitch, given that registration effects octave transpositions (as well as sometimes creating other unnotated pitches). So, I had the feeling that in giving this piece to the organist I was in effect saying, "apart from the sonorities, here's the music". This is not something which I would be happy about when composing for any other instrument or ensemble, but with the organ it is almost a necessity that you leave these choices (or at least some of them) to the performer. Naturally, since finishing the piece I have worked more closely with Robert Bates and together we have arrived at a satisfactory and much more specific registration scheme. This scheme remains generic however, and so Sonorities Apart should be performable on any three manual instrument, as was my original intention.

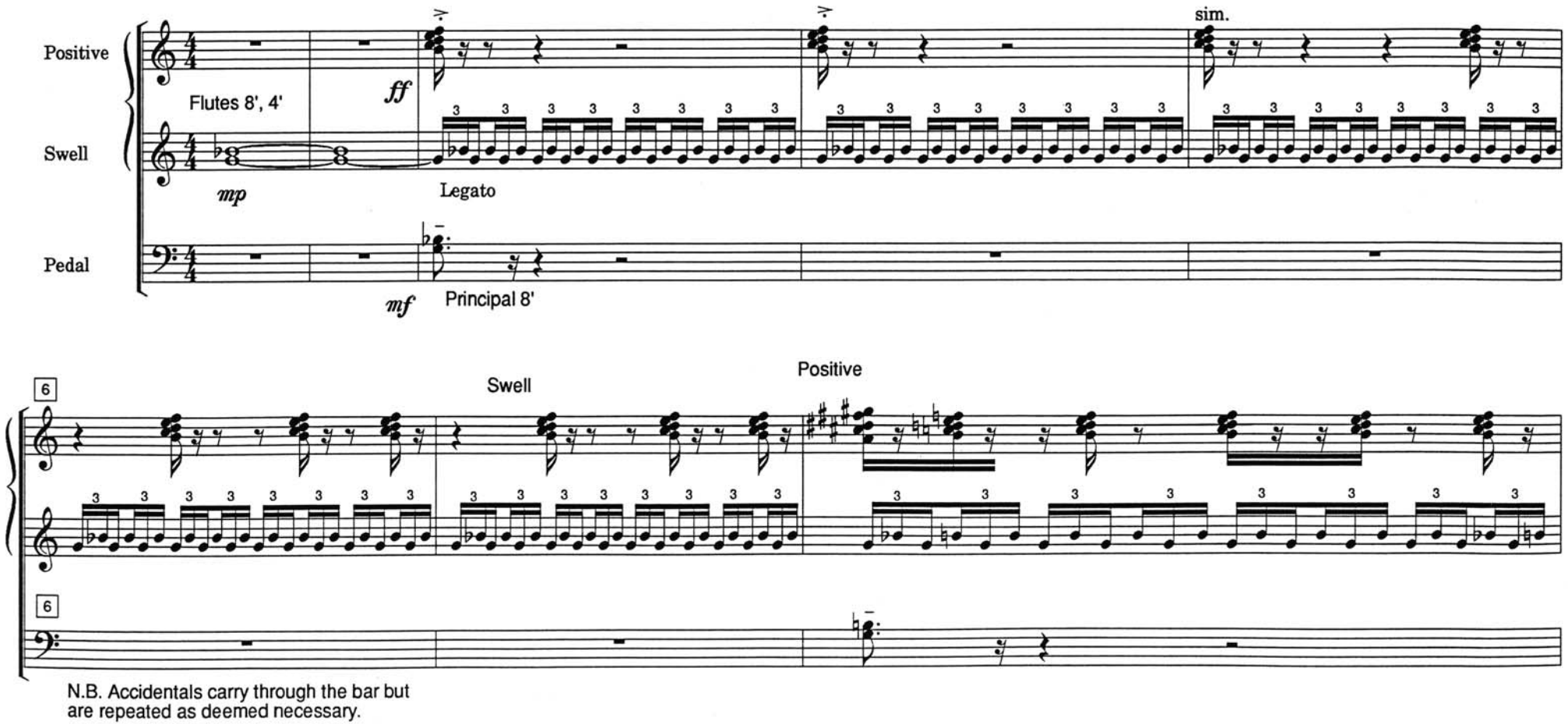
For Robert Bates

Sonorities Apart

Smoothly but with sharp interruptions (♩=72)

Cromorn 8'
(+ principal 4' sesquialtera II)

Michael Edwards 1992



N.B. Accidentals carry through the bar but are repeated as deemed necessary.

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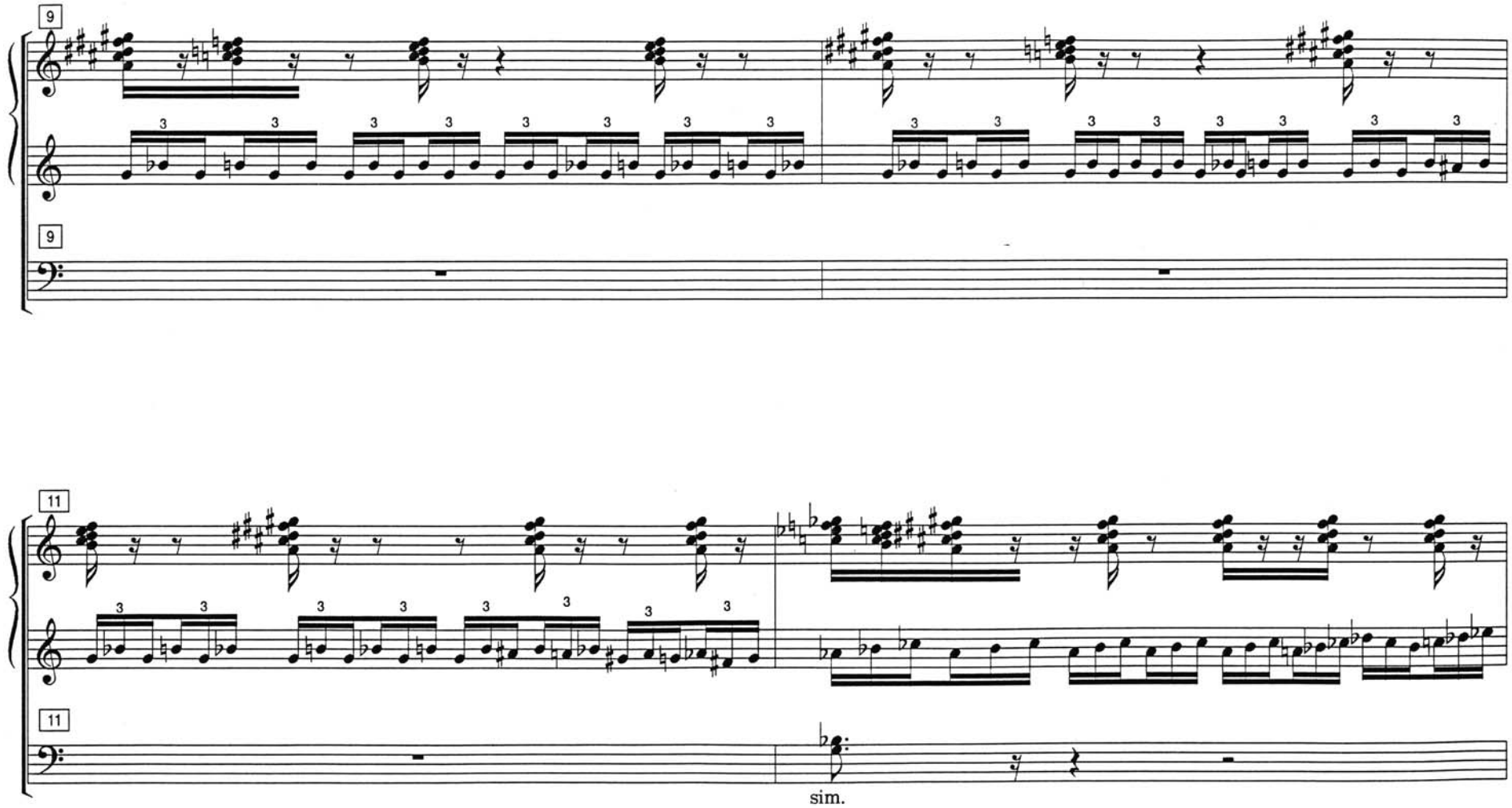
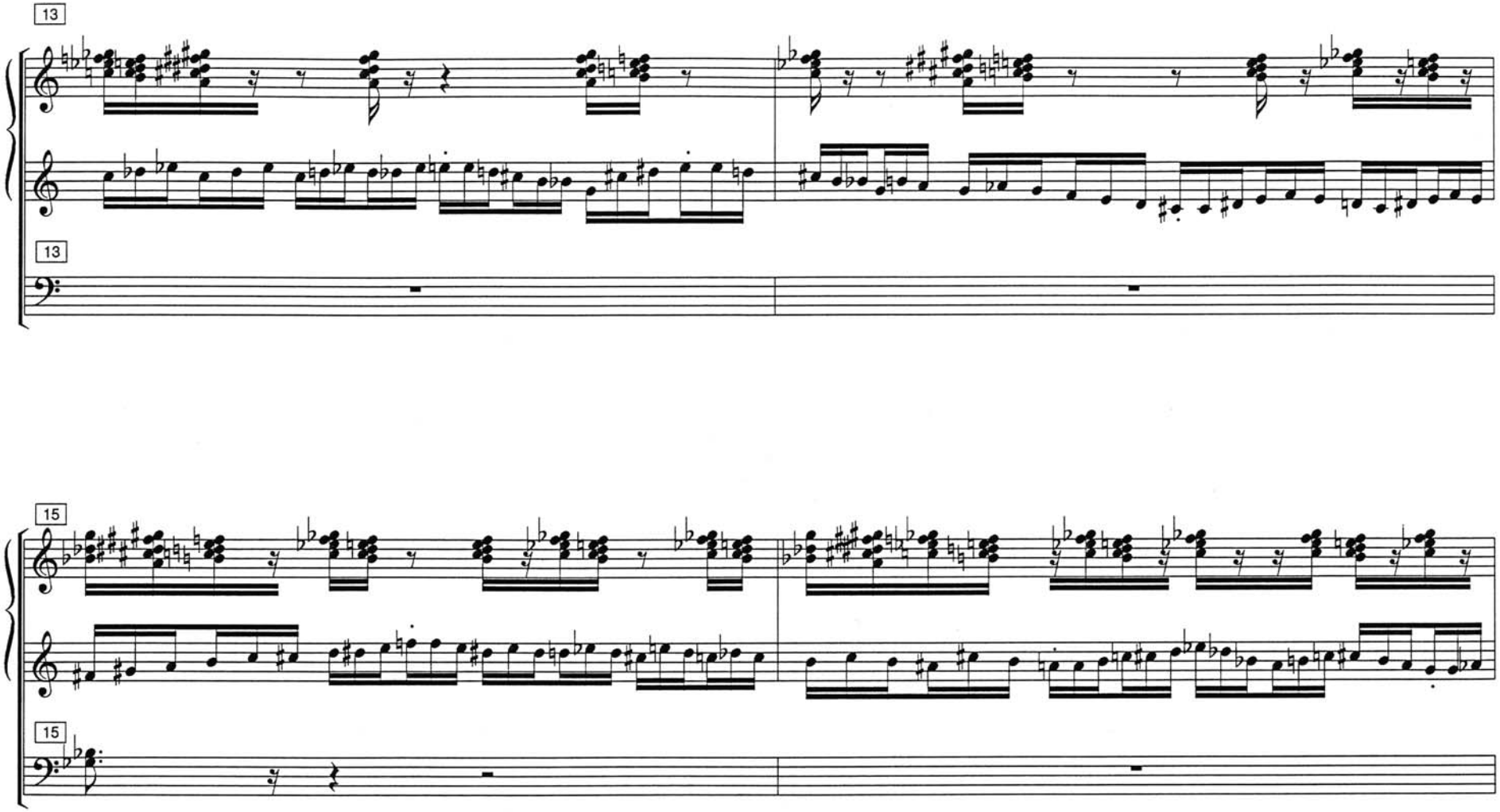
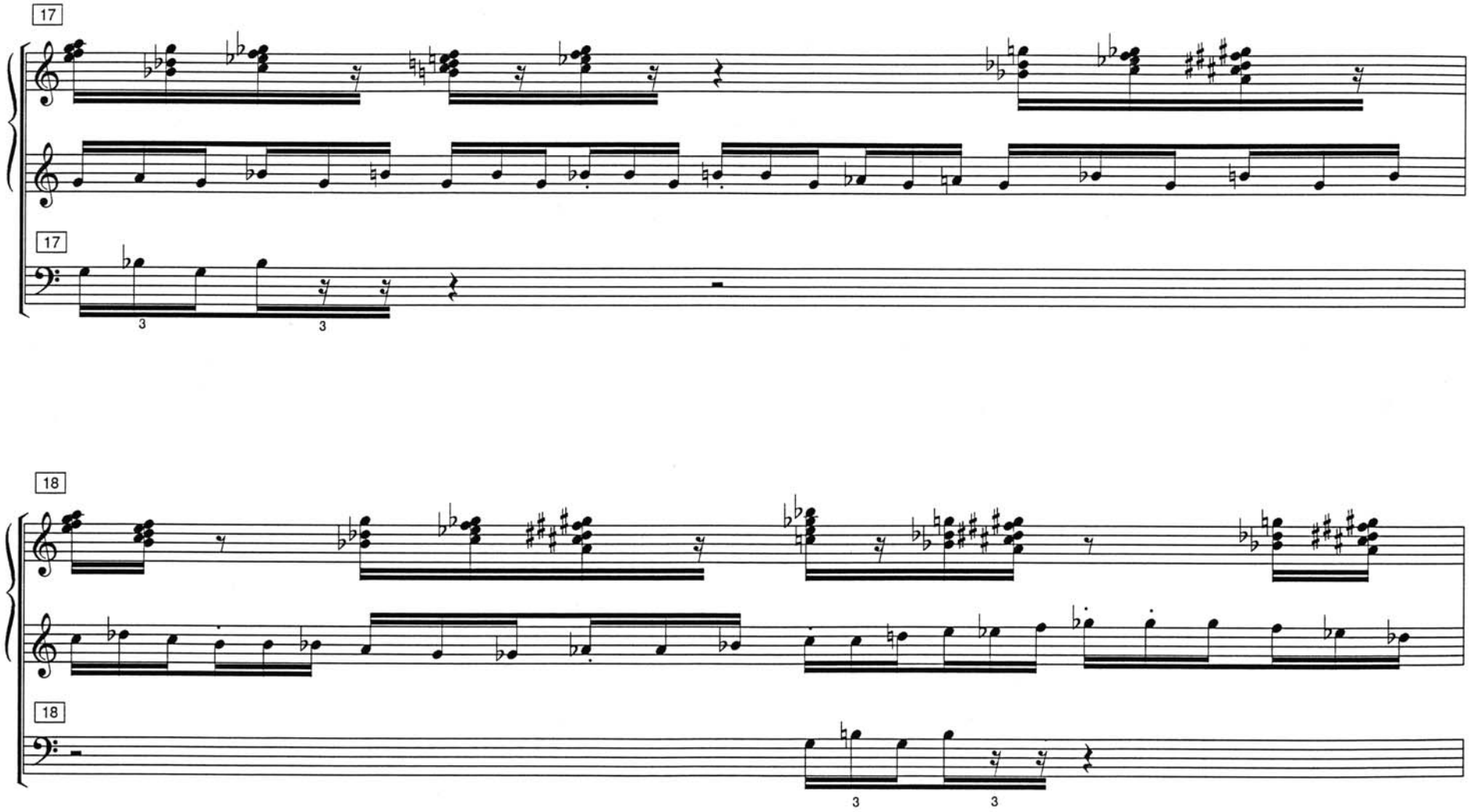
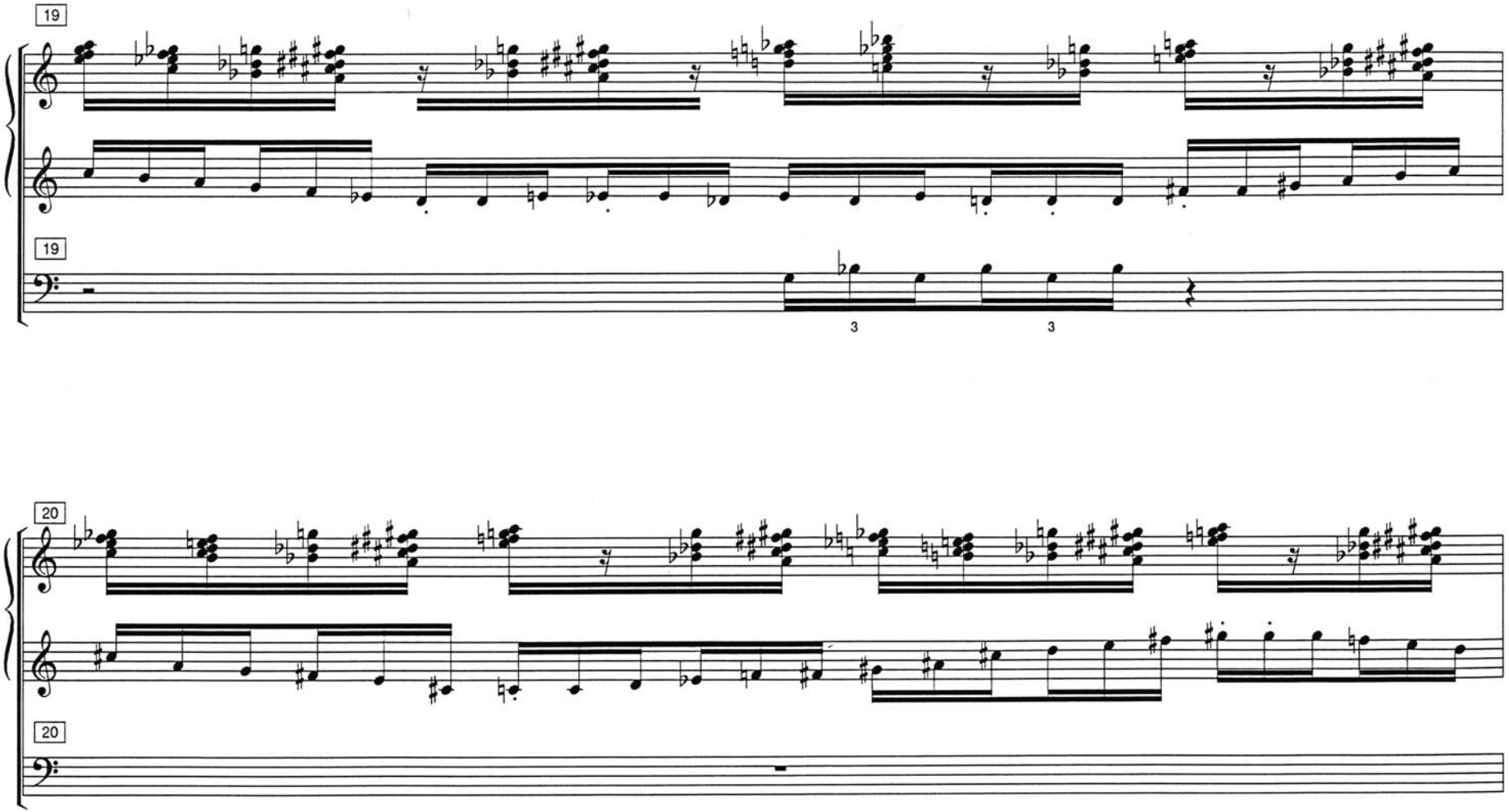
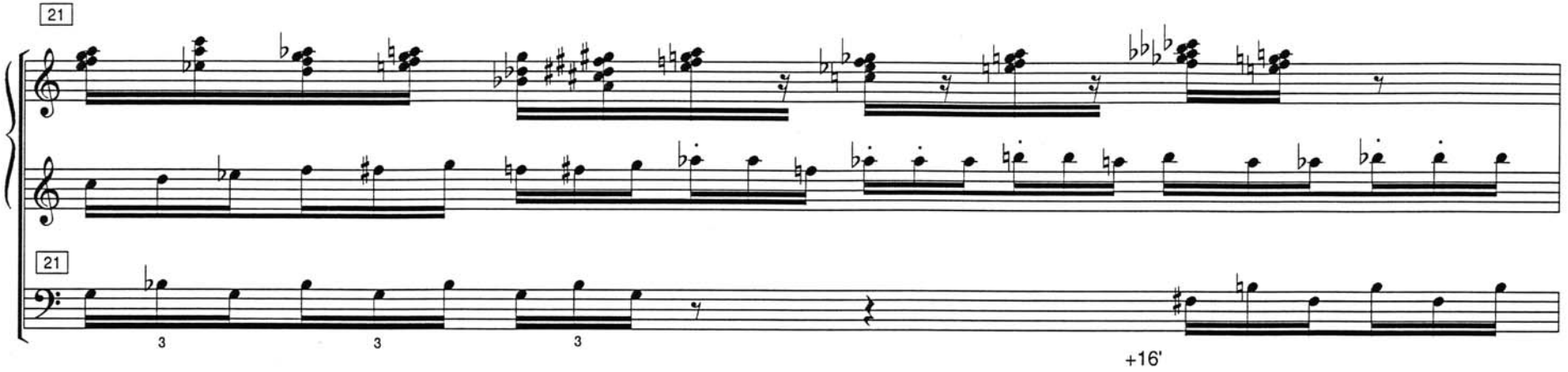

9
9
11
11
sim.

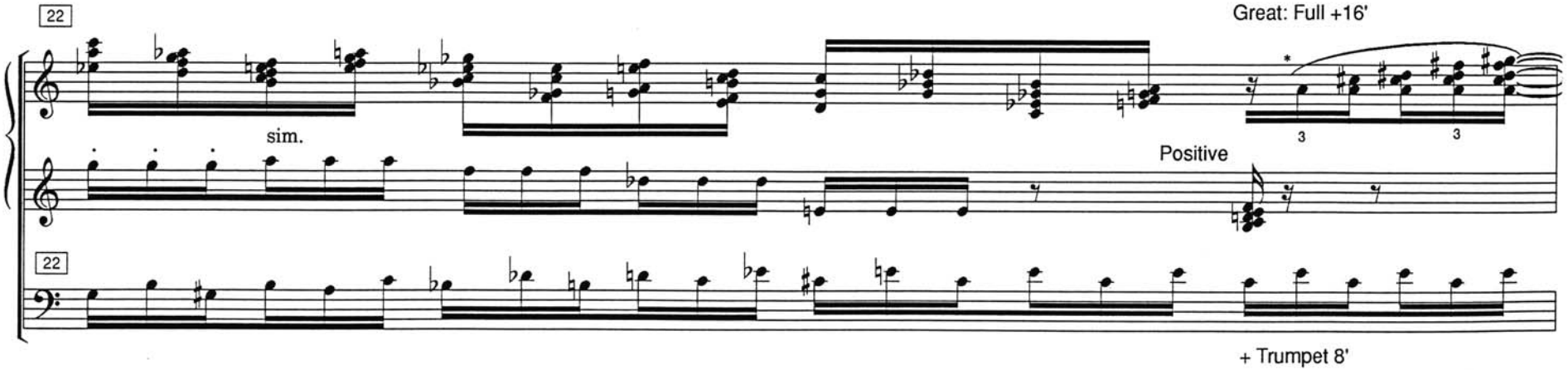

13
13
15
15


17
17
3
3
18
18
3
3

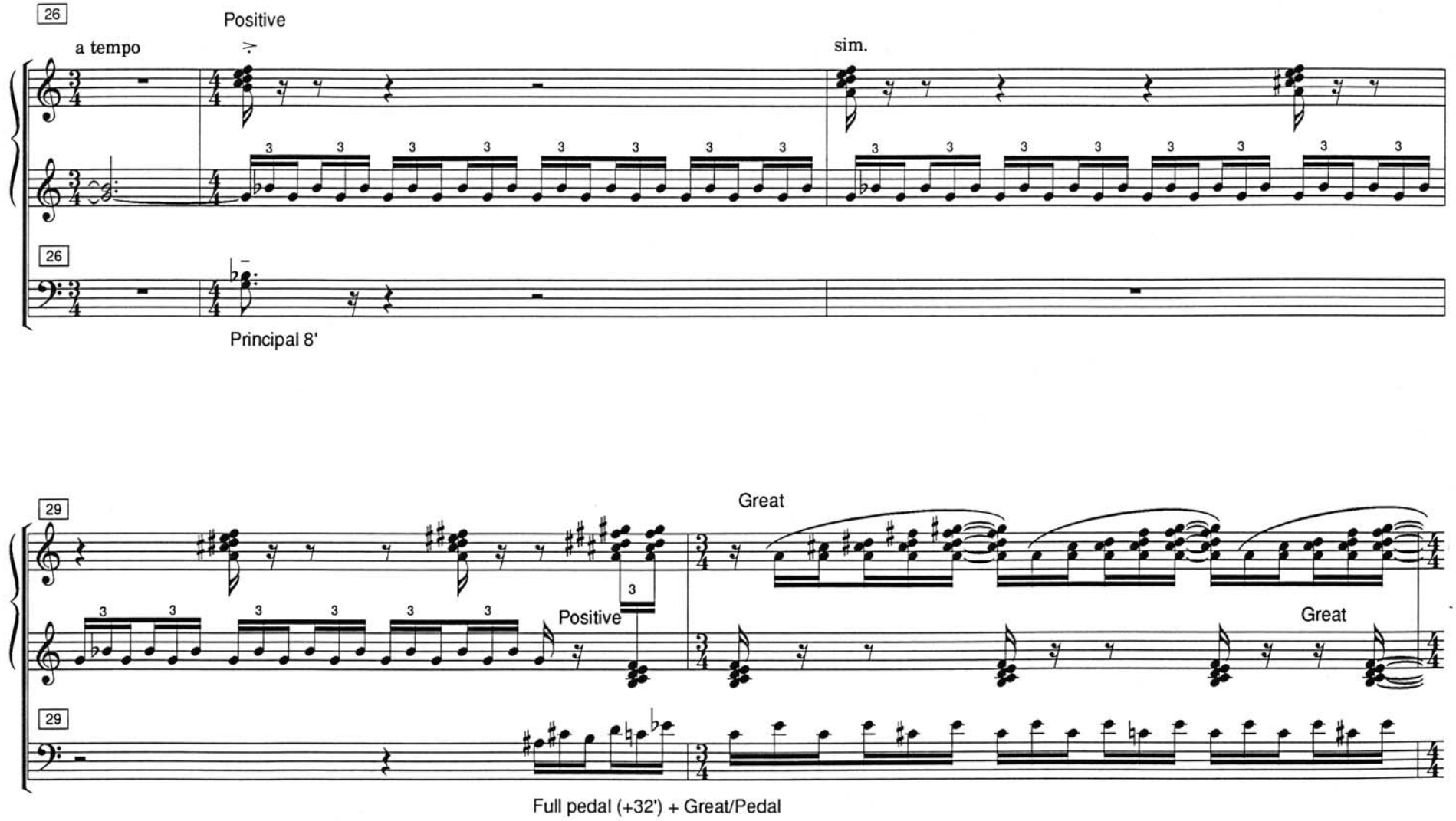

19
19
3
3
20
20

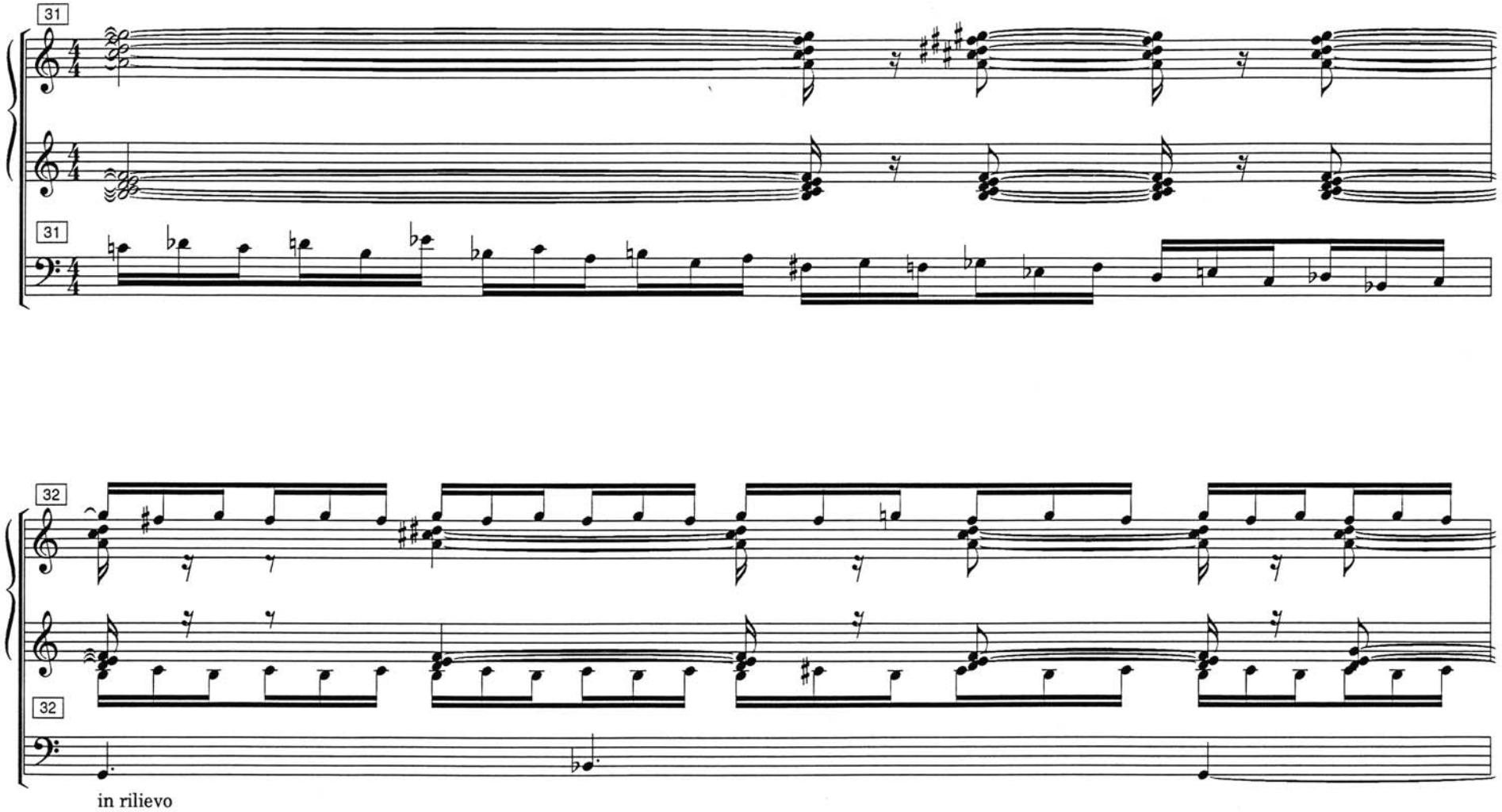


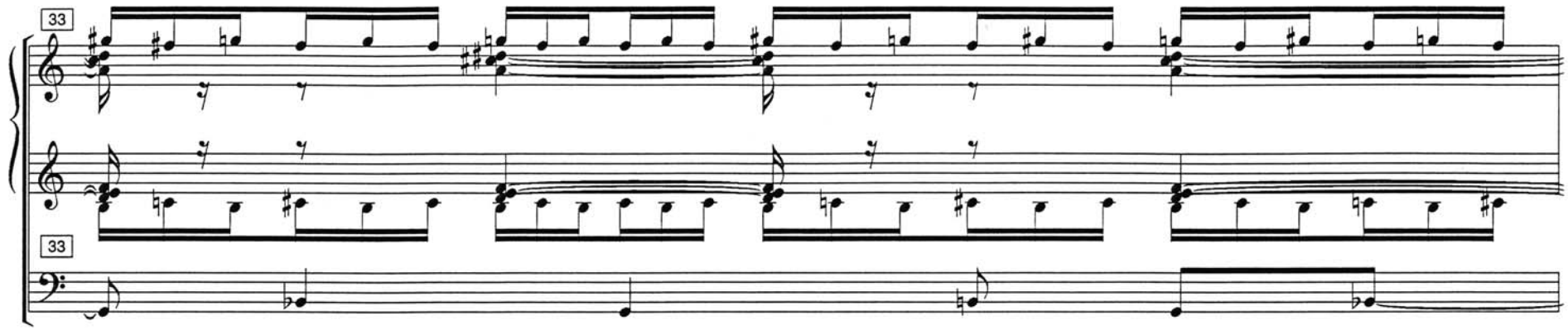
* Indicates a multiple tie, not a slur/phrase mark. Do not repeat each note, but rather hold it through into the chord at the end of the figure.

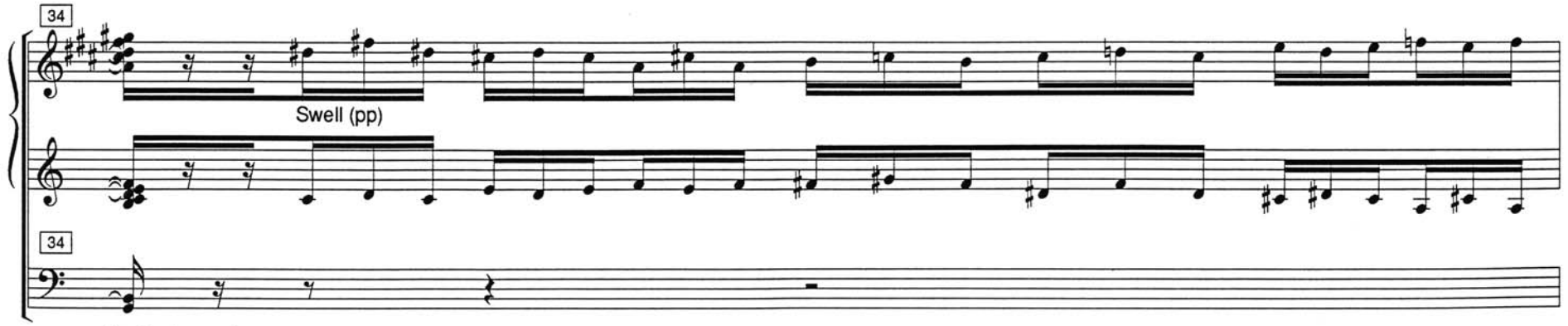


23
Great
Positive
3
3
23
Stringendo
24
Swell
24

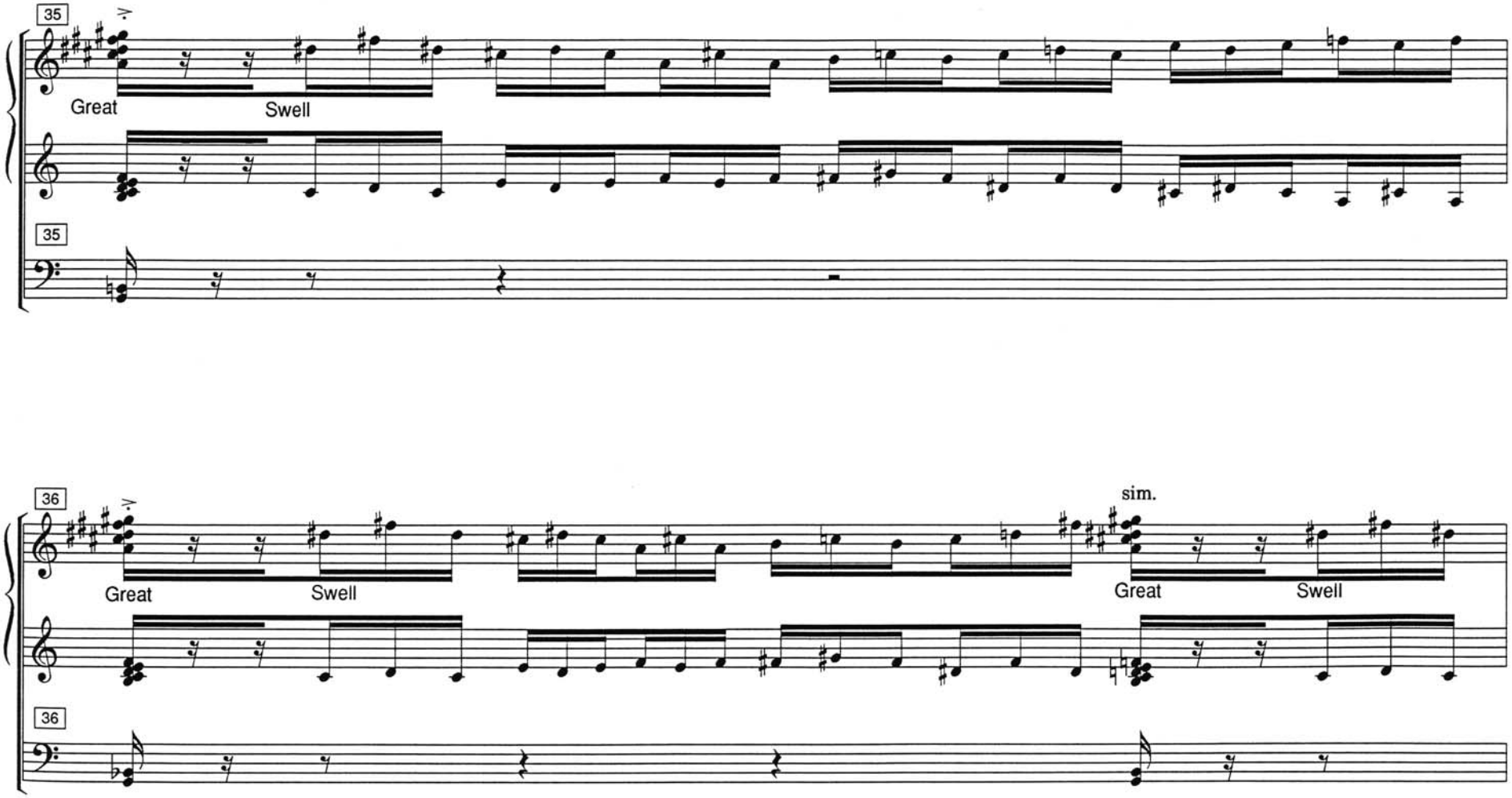

26
Positive
a tempo
sim.
26
Principal 8'
29
Great
Positive
Great
29
Full pedal (+32') + Great/Pedal

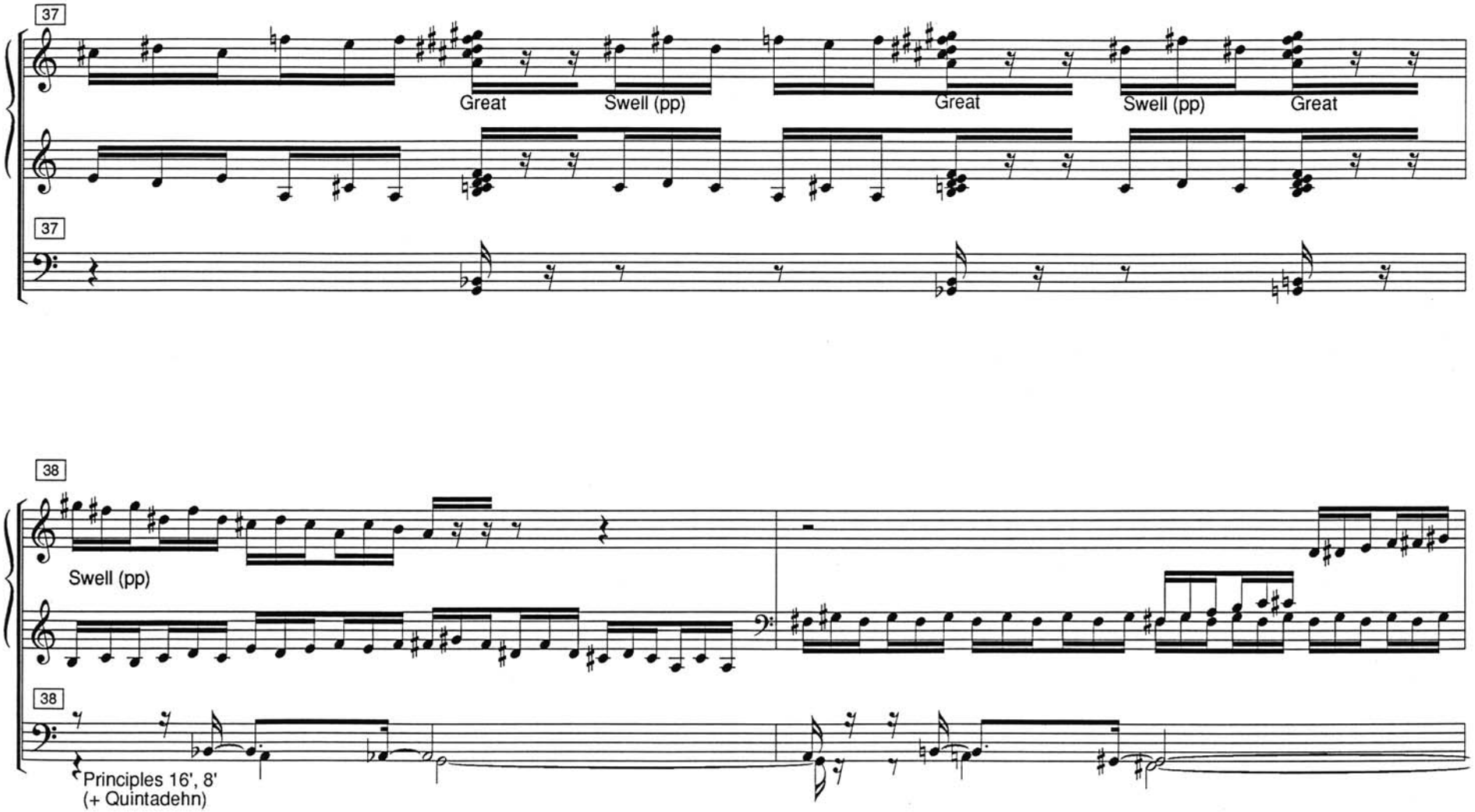

31
31
32
32
in rilievo

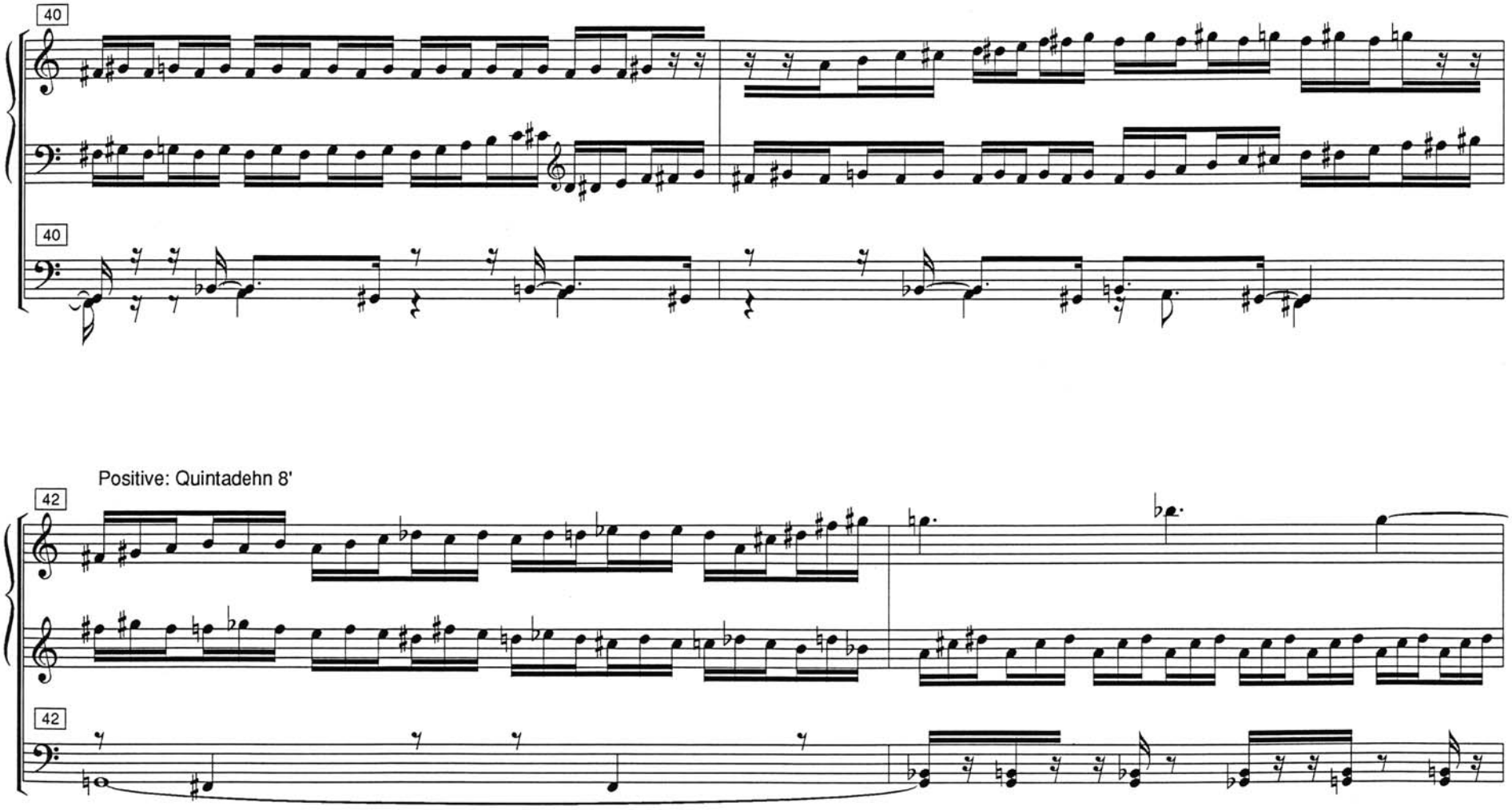




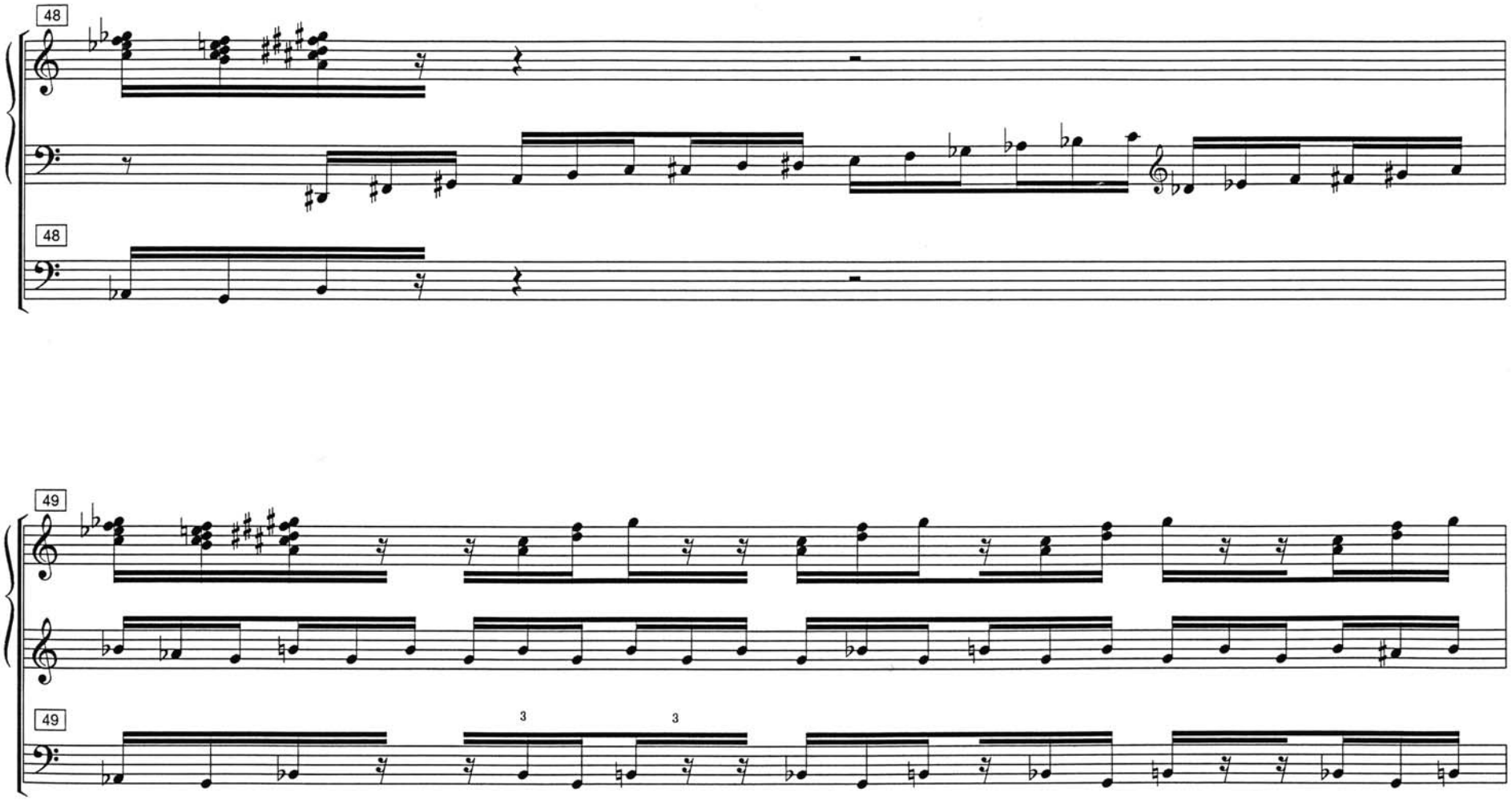
Stabbed; prominent.

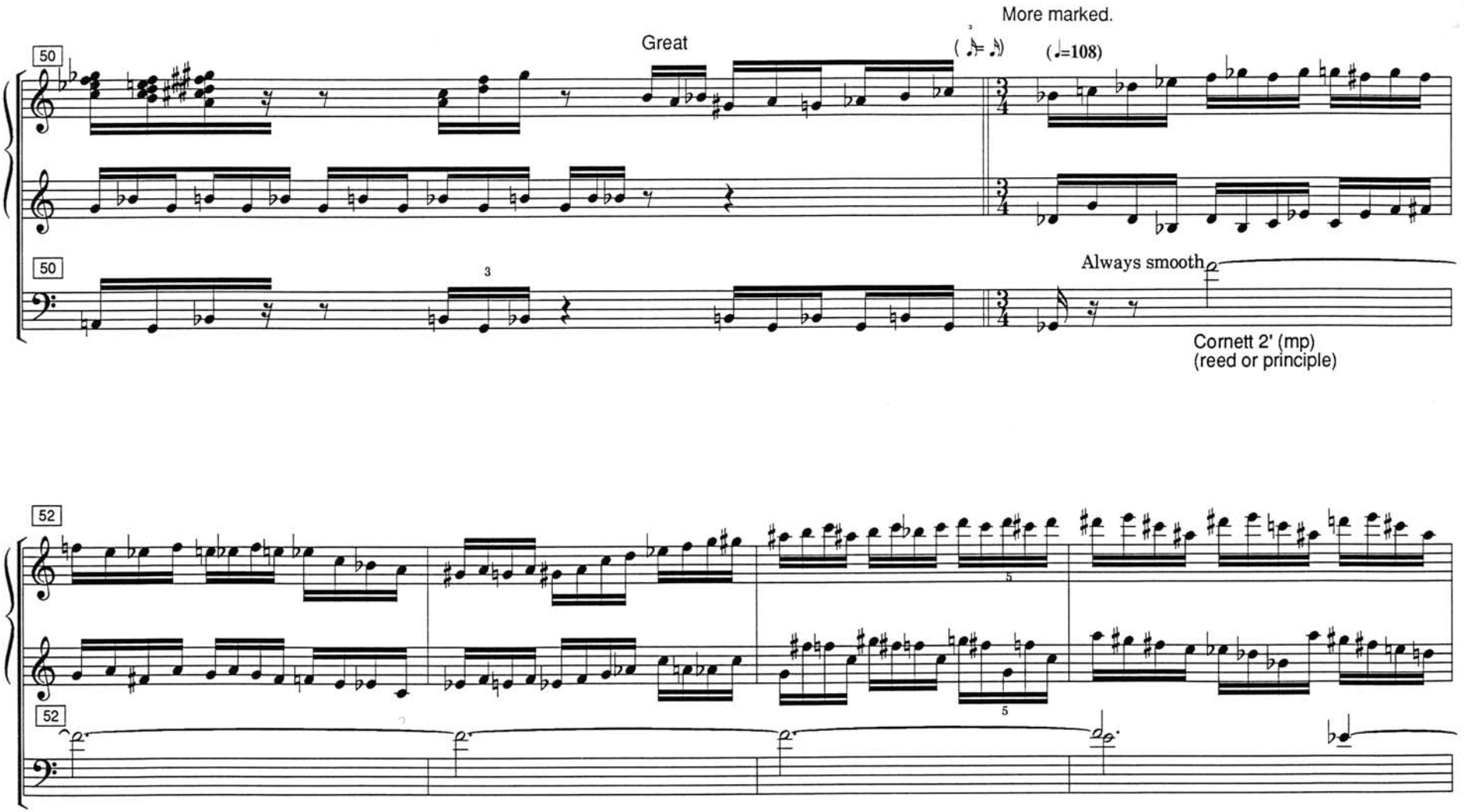

35
Great
Swell
35
36
Great
Swell
sim.
Great
Swell
36

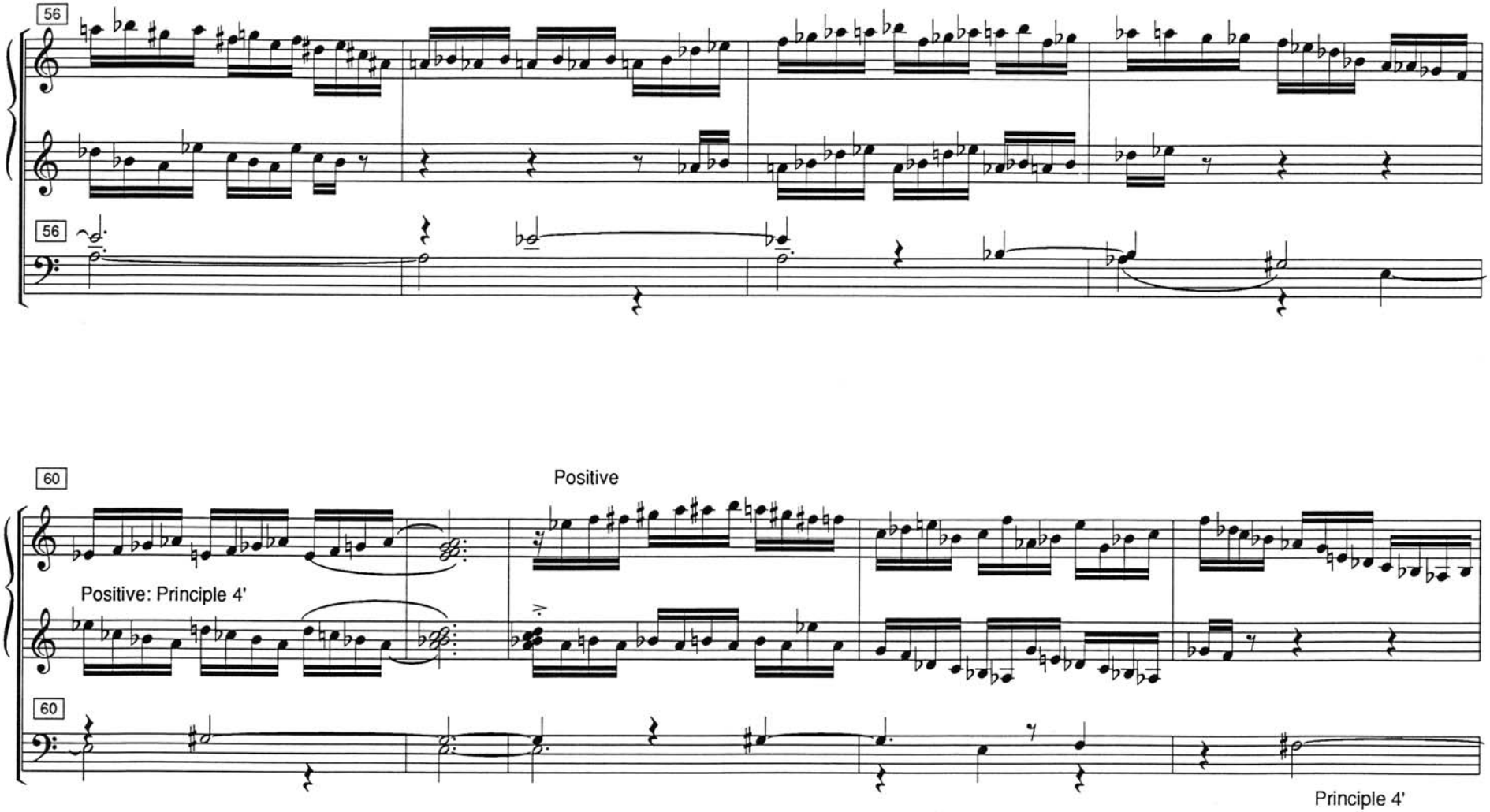

37
Great
Swell (pp)
Great
Swell (pp)
Great
37
38
Swell (pp)
38
Principles 16', 8'
(+ Quintadehn)


40
40
Positive: Quintadehn 8'
42
42

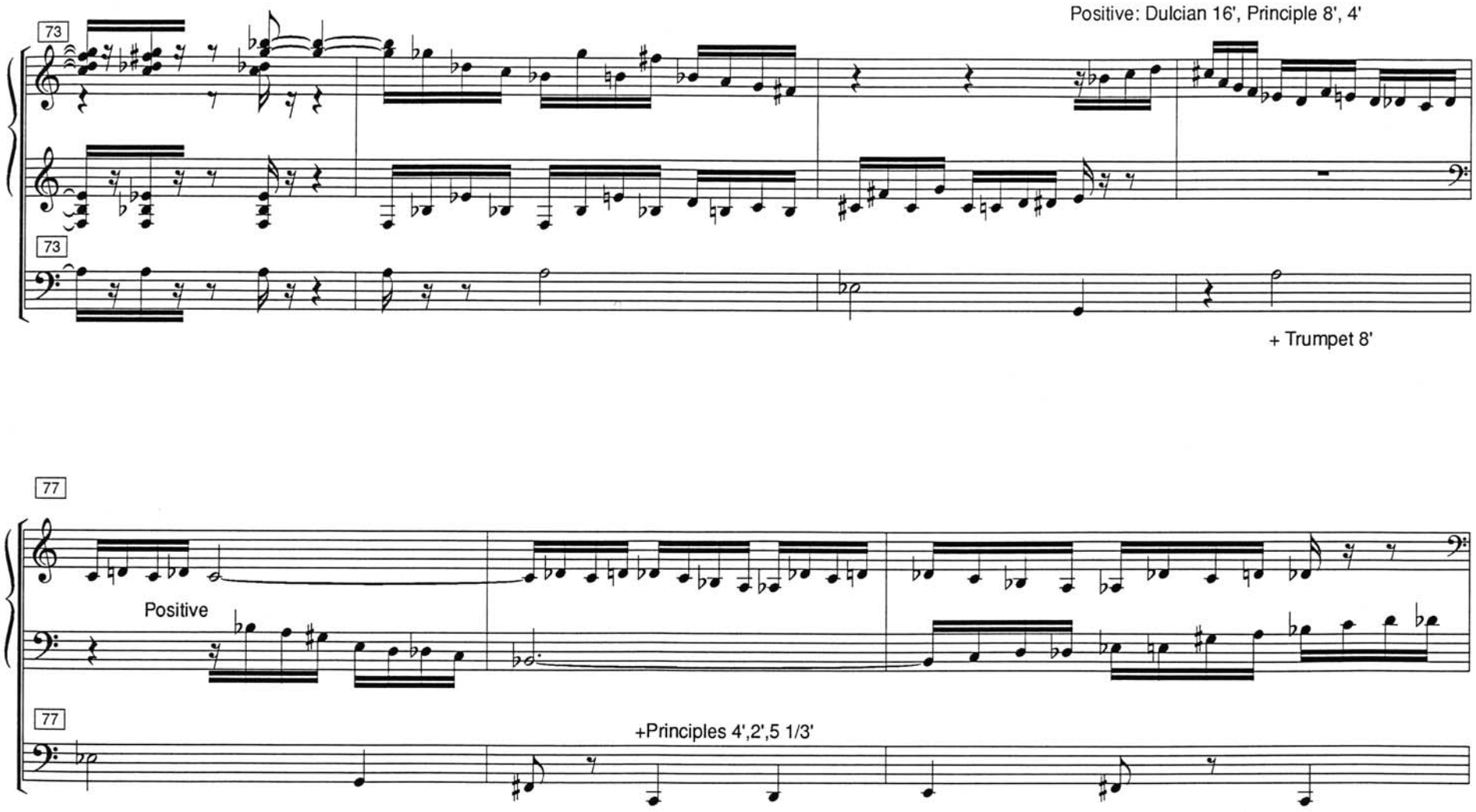
44
44
46
+ Cromone 8'
(+ principle 4', sesquialtera II)
Great: Principle 2' only
46

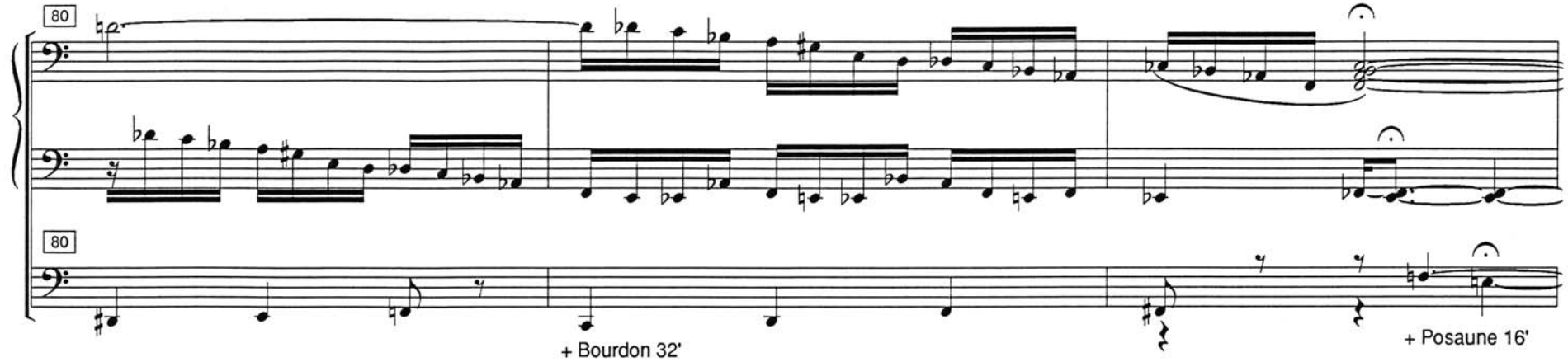

48
48
49
49
3
3

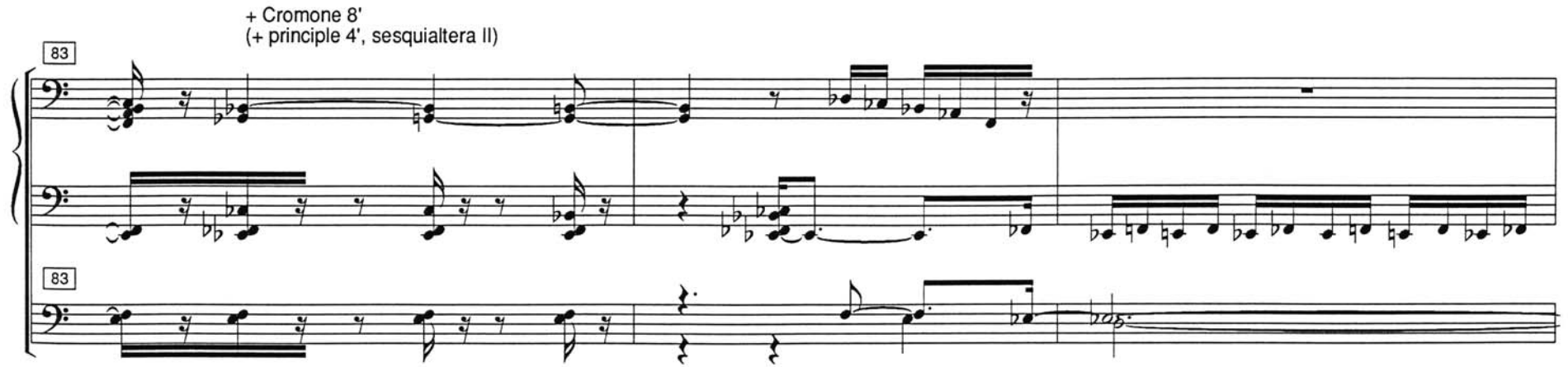

More marked.
Great
(♪= ♪)
(♩=108)
50
50
3
Always smooth
Cornett 2' (mp)
(reed or principle)
52
52
5
5

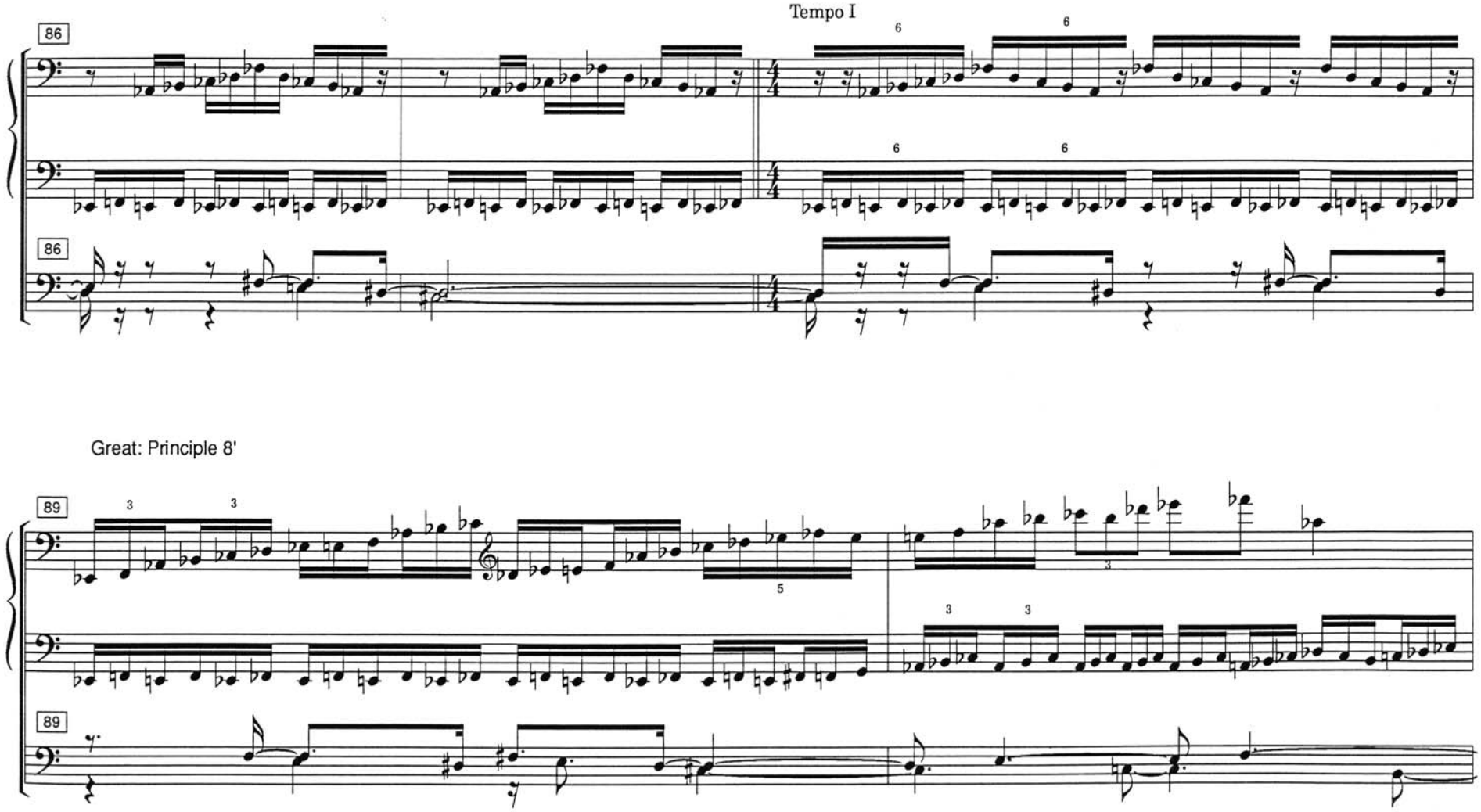

56
56
60
Positive
Positive: Principle 4'
60
Principle 4'

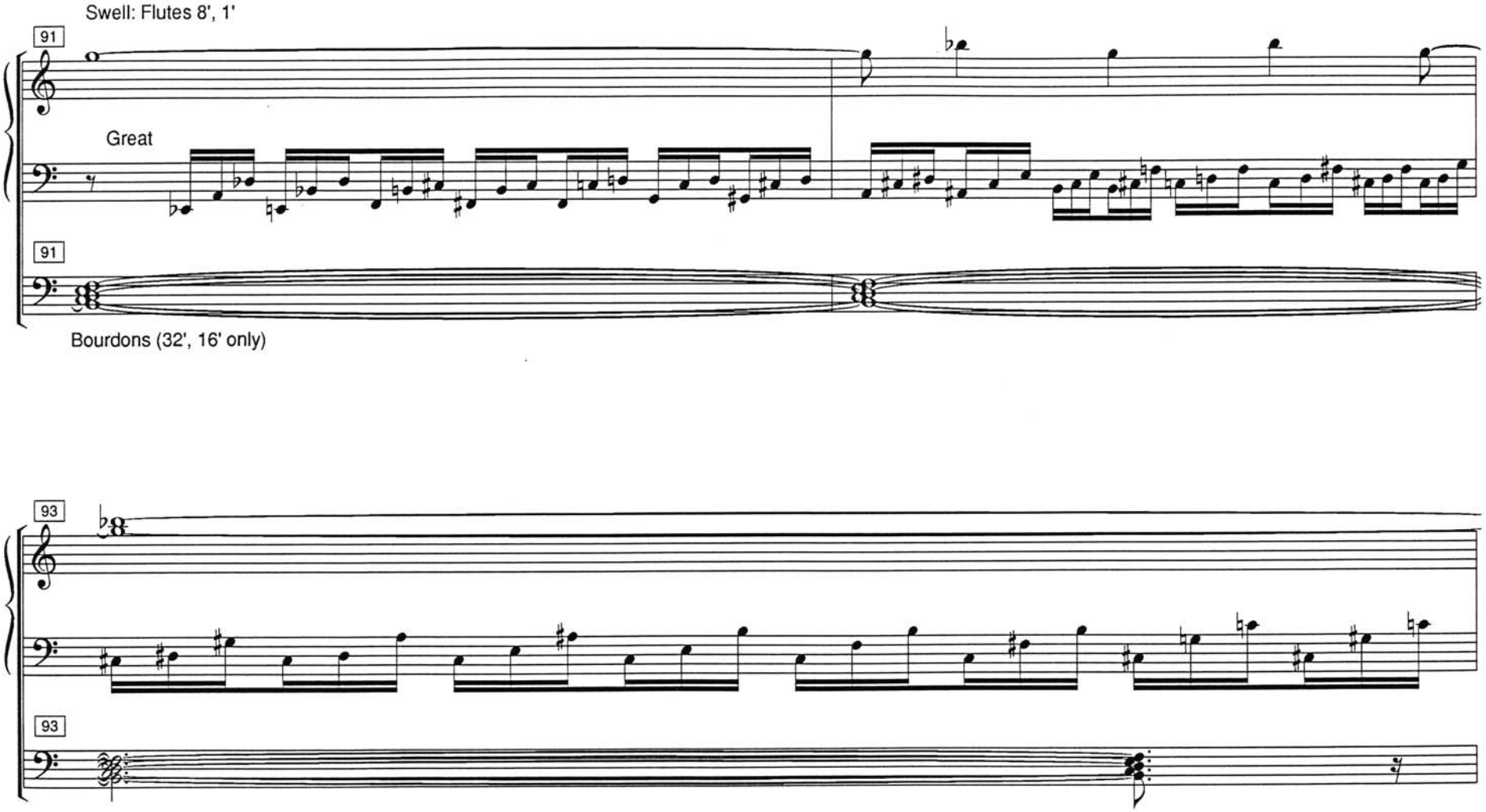
Great
65
Great: Principle 8'
65
Principle 8'
(Or Great/Pedal only)
69
69
+ Principle 16', Bourdon 16'

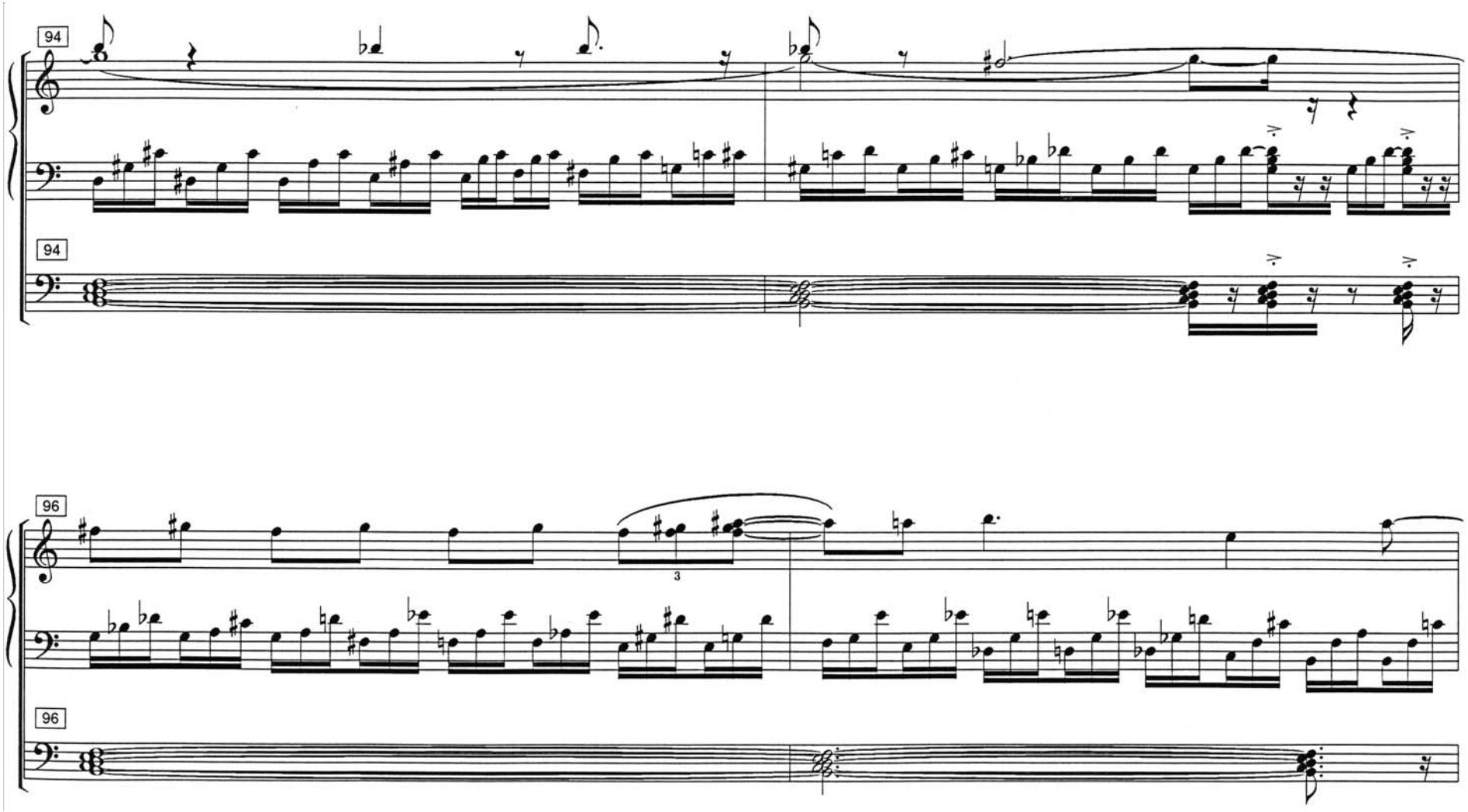

73
Positive: Dulcian 16', Principle 8', 4'
73
+ Trumpet 8'
77
Positive
77
+Principles 4',2',5 1/3'

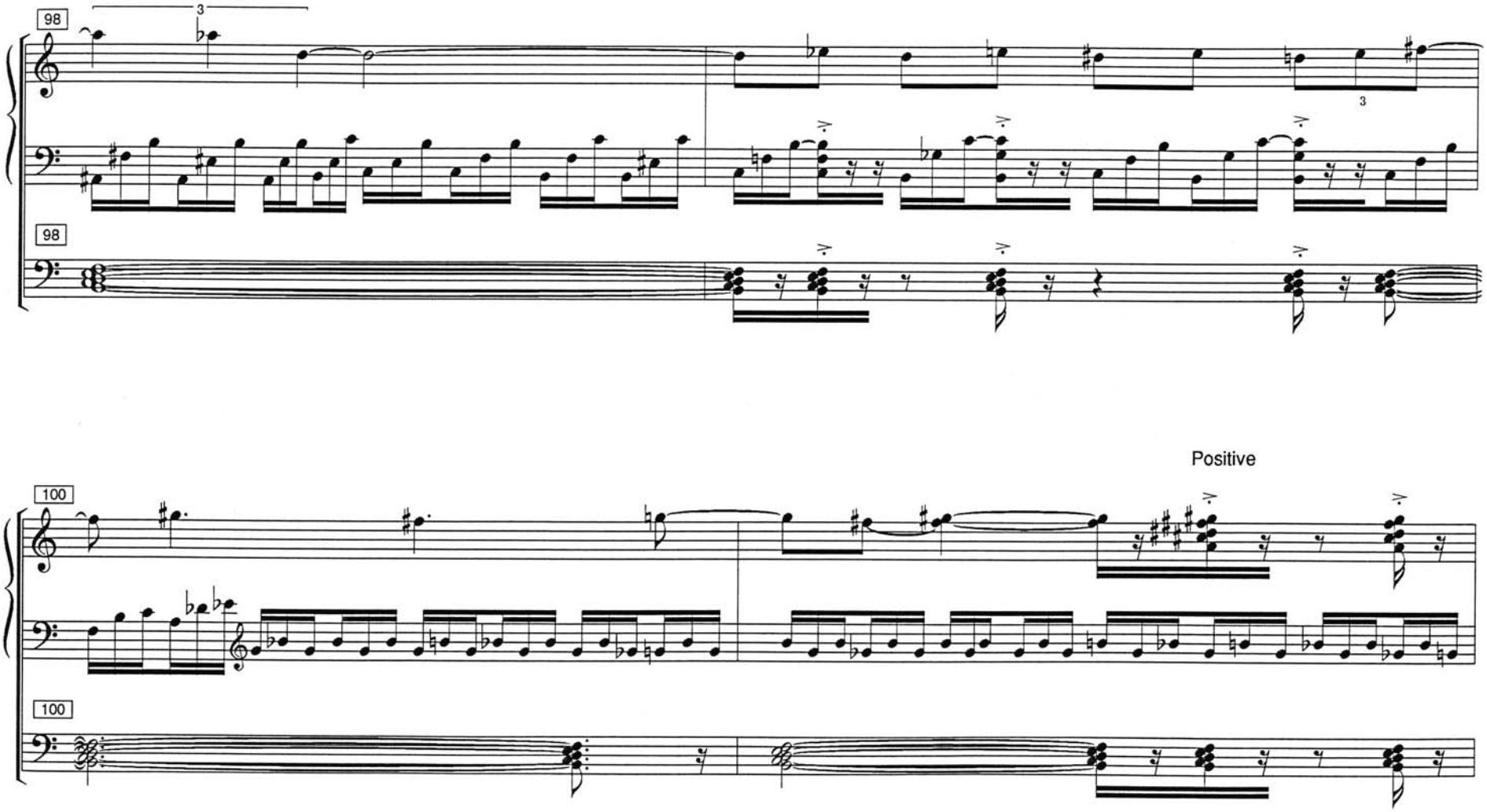

80
80
+ Bourdon 32'
+ Posaune 16'

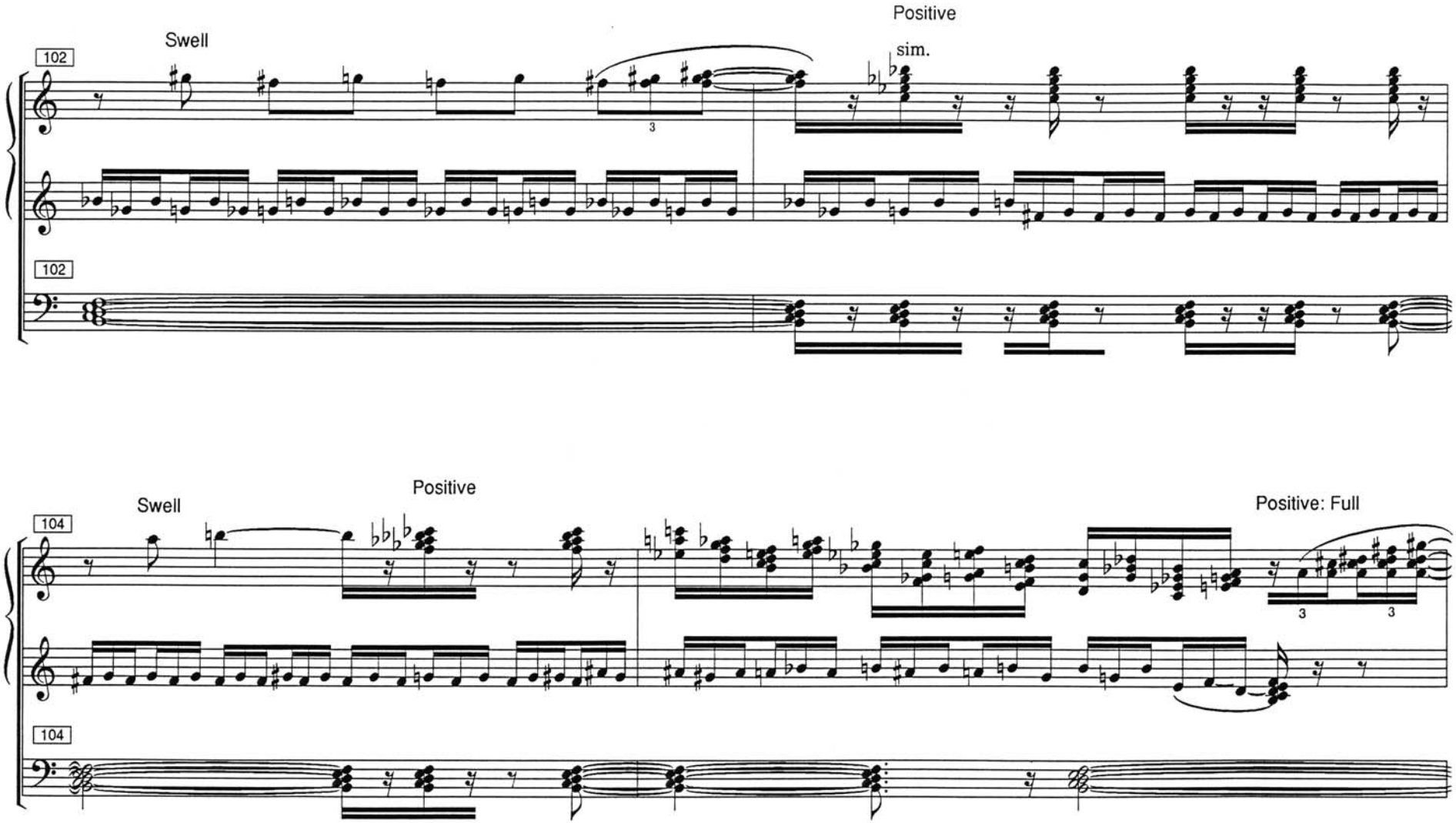

+ Cromone 8'
(+ principle 4', sesquialtera II)
83
83

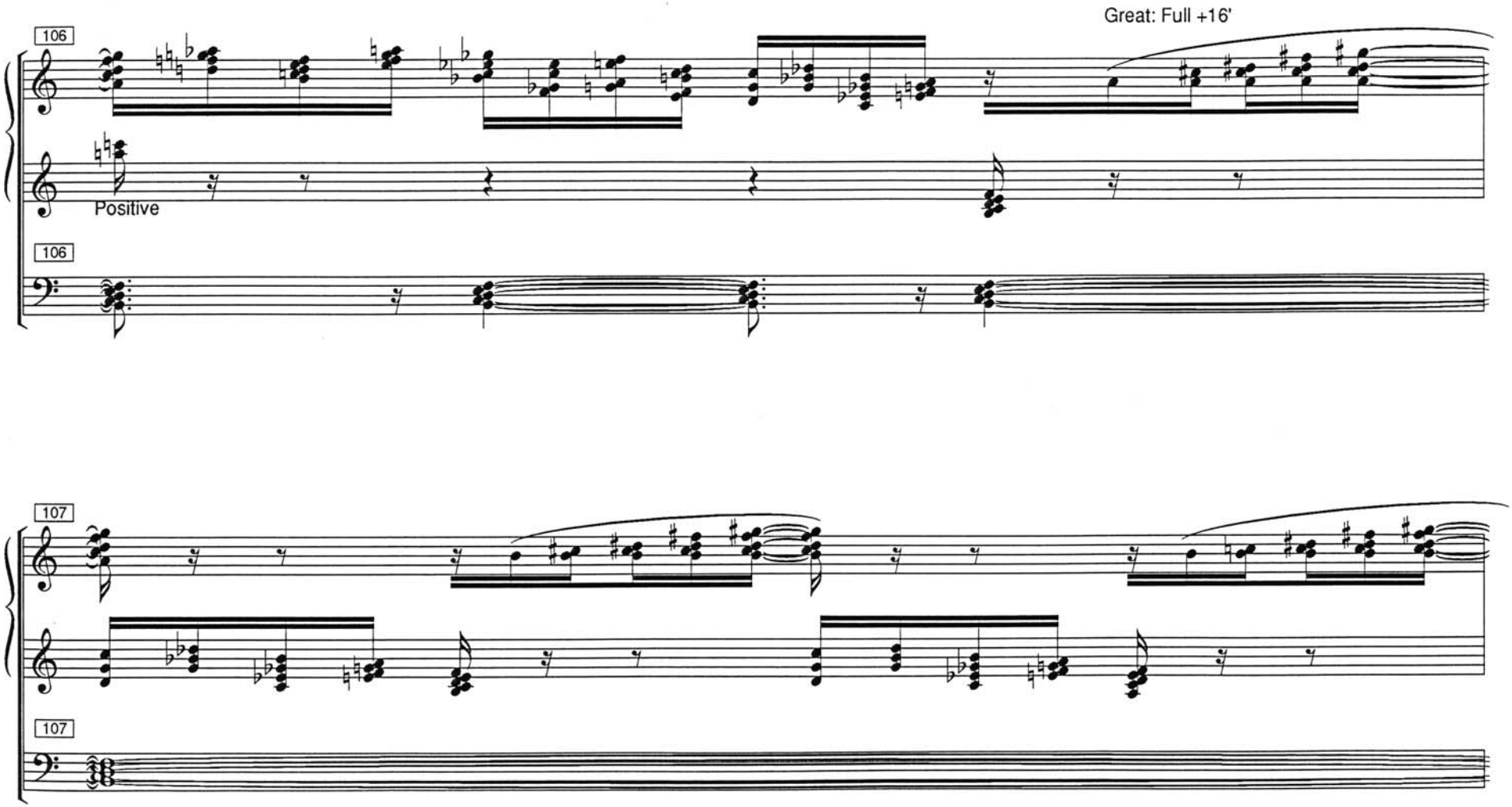

Tempo I
86
86
Great: Principle 8'
89
89

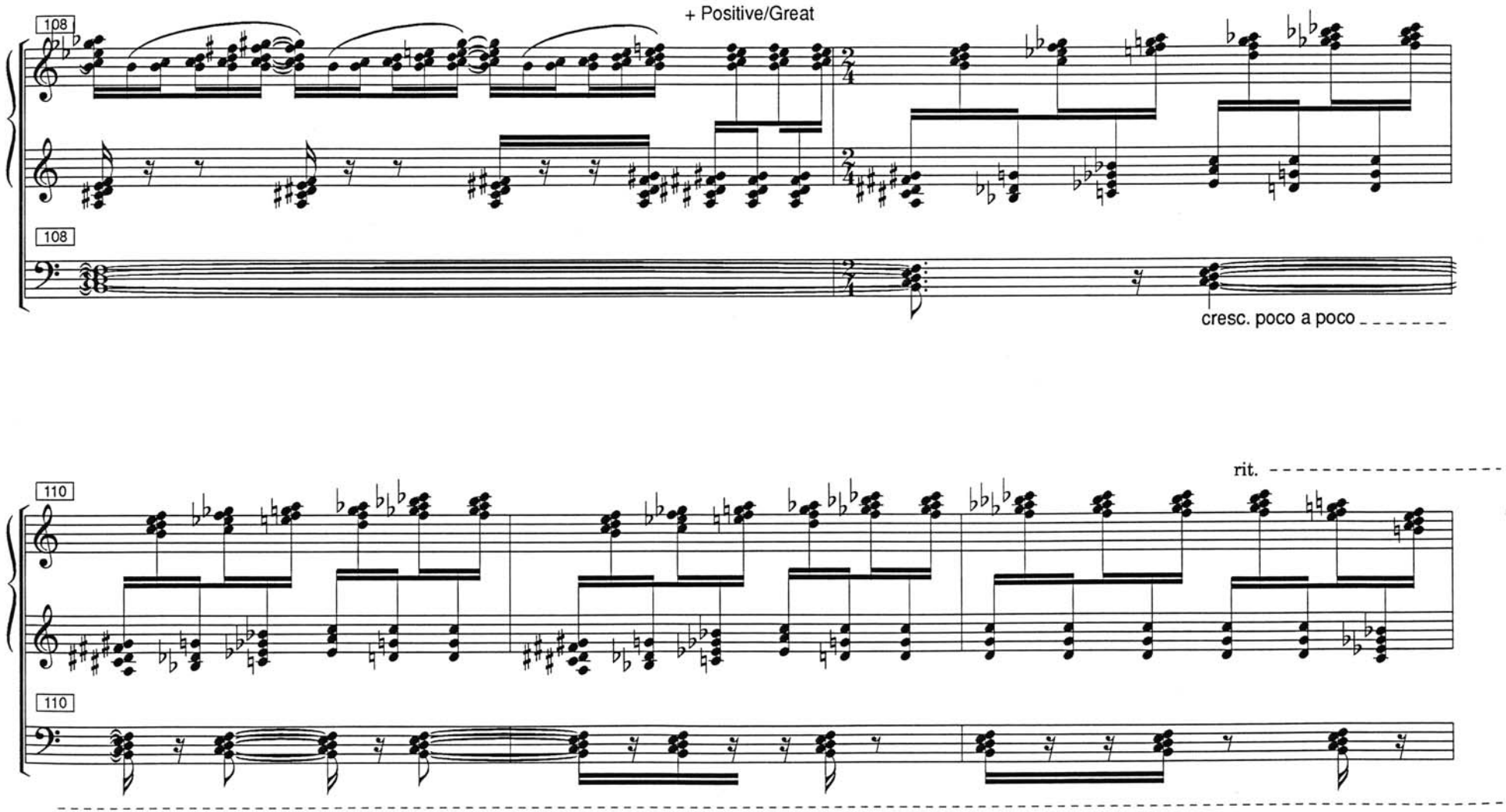

Swell: Flutes 8', 1'
91
Great
91
Bourdons (32', 16' only)
93
93

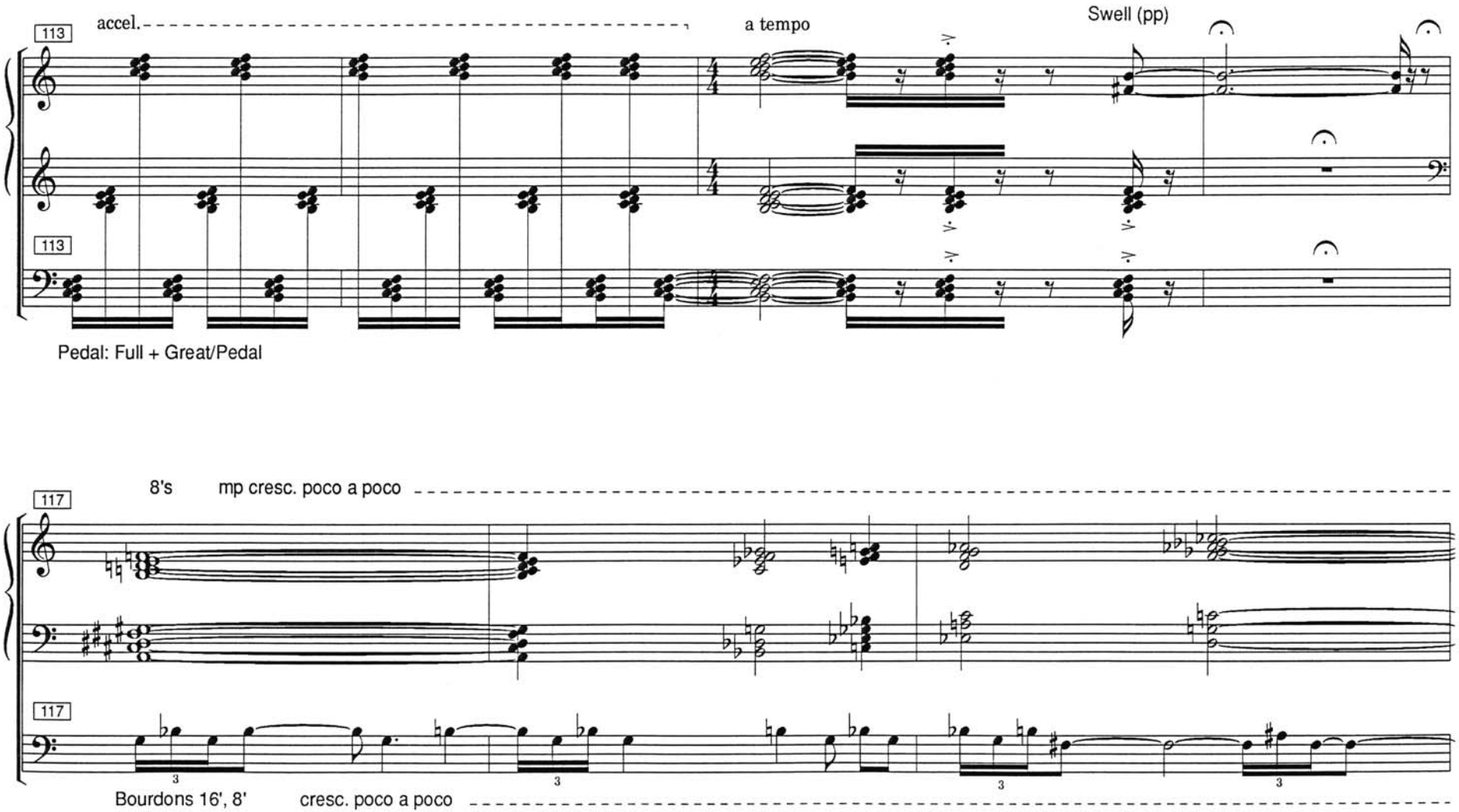

94
94
96
96
3

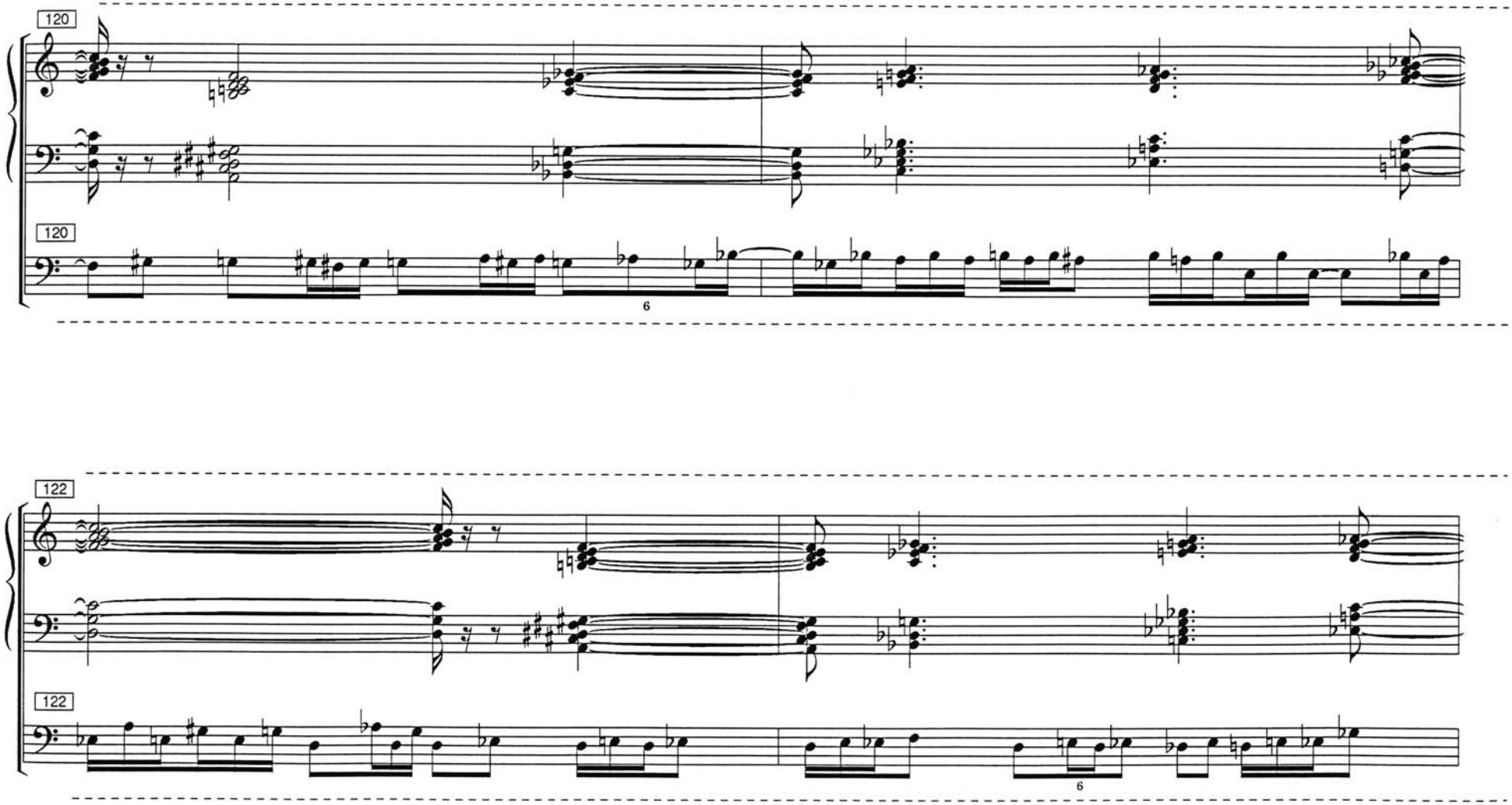

98
3
3
98
100
Positive
100


Swell
Positive
sim.
102
102
Swell
Positive
Positive: Full
104
104

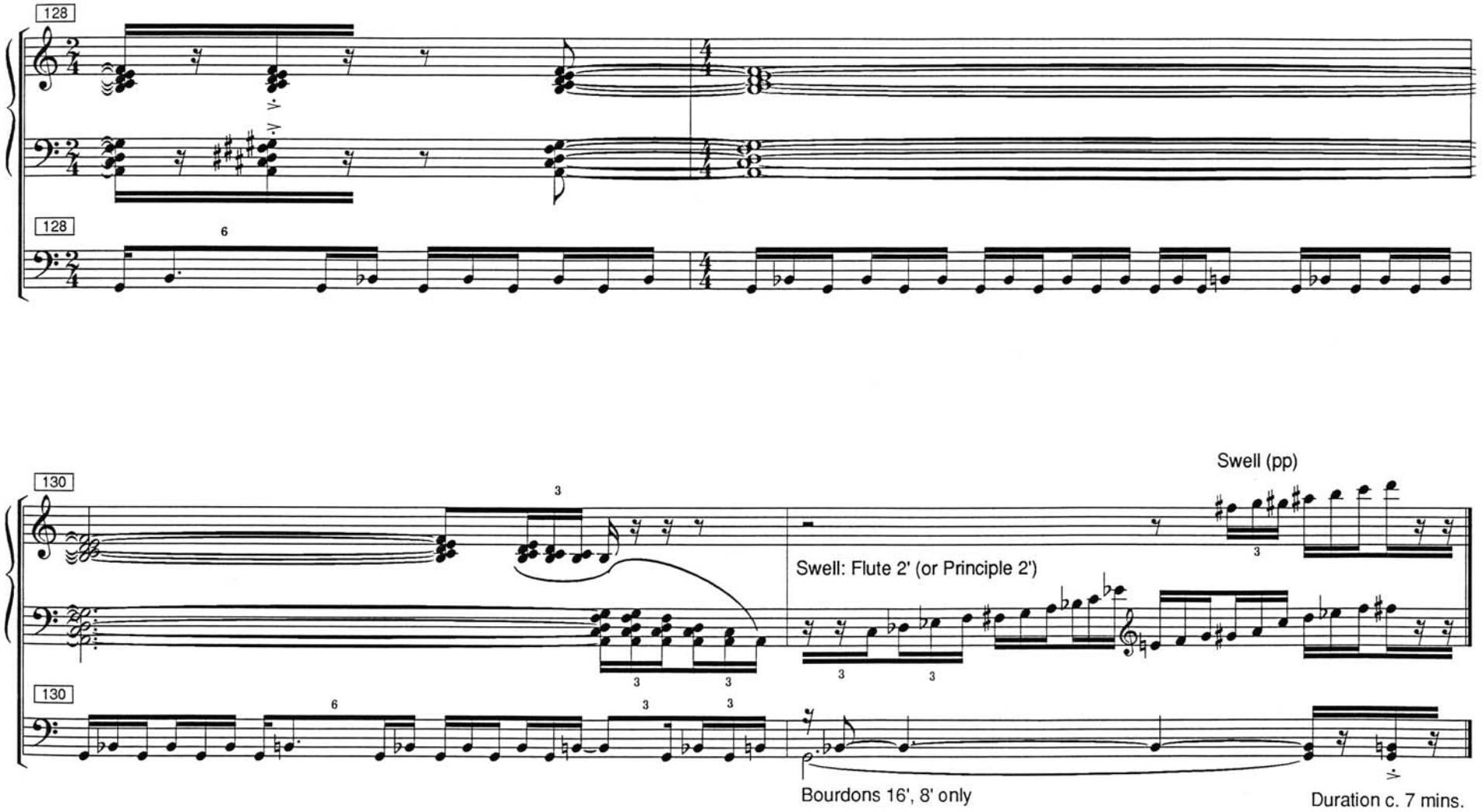

106
Great: Full +16'
Positive
106
107
107


108
+ Positive/Great
108
cresc. poco a poco
110
rit.
110


113
accel.
a tempo
Swell (pp)
113
Pedal: Full + Great/Pedal
117
8's
mp cresc. poco a poco
117
Bourdons 16', 8'
cresc. poco a poco


120
120
6
122
122
6

124
124
6
Full Organ
fff
126
126
fff


128
128
6
130
130
3
6
3
3
3
3
3
3
Swell (pp)
Swell: Flute 2' (or Principle 2')
Bourdons 16', 8' only
Duration c. 7 mins.