Two Creatures

for quarter-tone accordion

by Kyle Gann

2015/18

Two Creatures for quarter-tone accordion

Reticent Behemoth (2015)
Affable Denizen (2017-18)

In 2015 Finnish accordionist Veli Kujala asked me to write a piece for his quarter-tone accordion, which I was surprised to learn existed. I had been composing in unequally-spaced just-intonation microtonal scales for decades, but had never written anything in quarter-tones. I enjoy quarter-tone music, but consider it a rather inherently atonal scale, and I am more comfortable in tonality, especially when using microtones. In any case, I consulted the essay "Some Quarter-Tone Impressions" (1925) by my hero Charles Ives for advice. Ives thought the way to begin was by combining perfect fifths from each of the quarter-tone scales. So I took him very literally, and moved slowly in perfect fifths in each hand, getting a feel for every possible combination, and then added a quarter-tone tune at the end over a droning accompaniment. My sense that it is quarter-tone music for people who don't usually like quarter-tones has been born out by audience comments.

I had tried at the time to write a second movement, but it failed to come to pass for awhile. I wanted it to suggest folk music. I've never heard a note of Finnish folk music, so I just imagined what I hoped its rhythmic style might be and wrote *Affable Denizen* in that.

Kyle Gann

Reticent Behemoth

for quarter-tone accordion

Kyle Gann
2015

Plodding and steady, but nuanced

♩ = 60

Accordion

mp

8

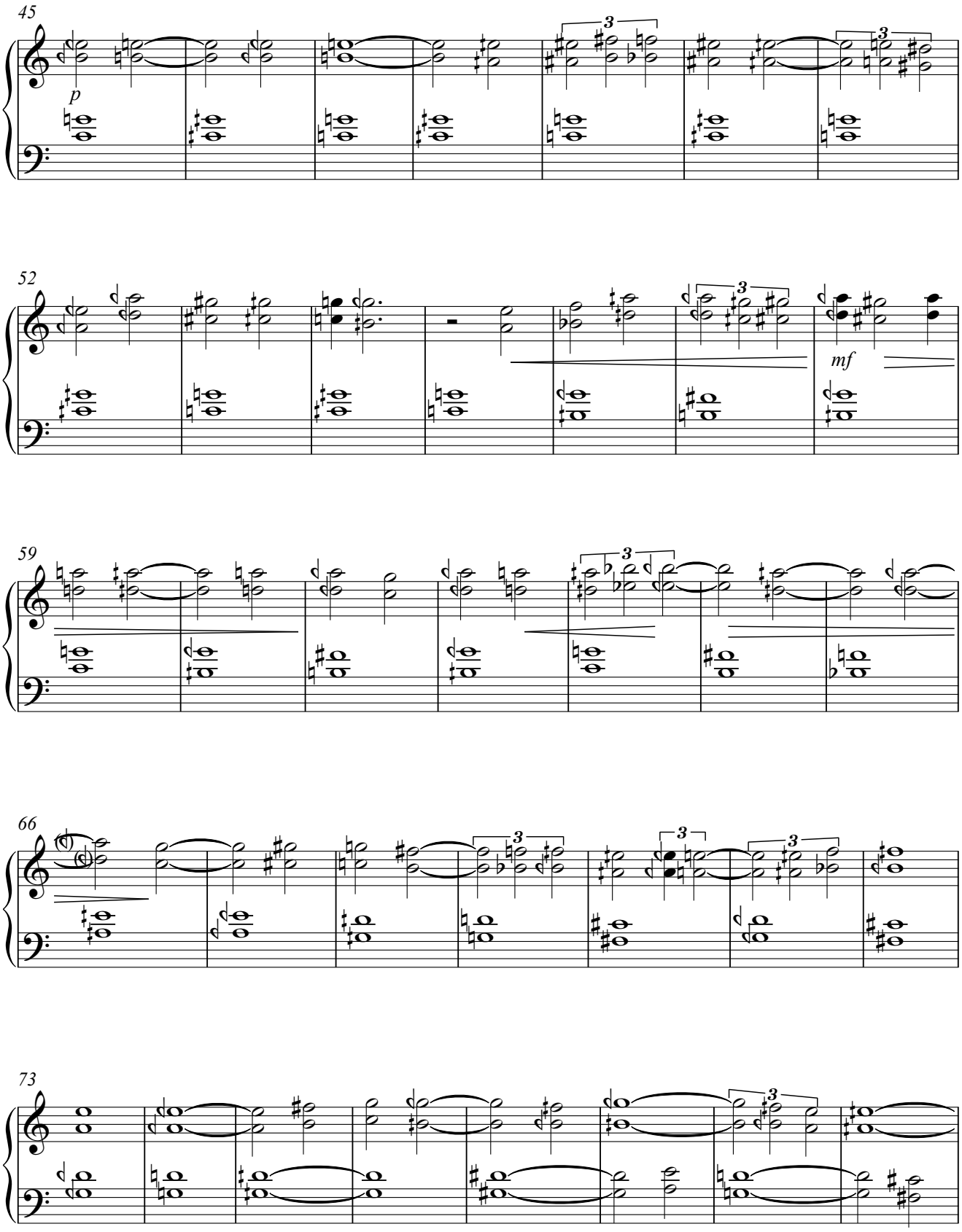
15

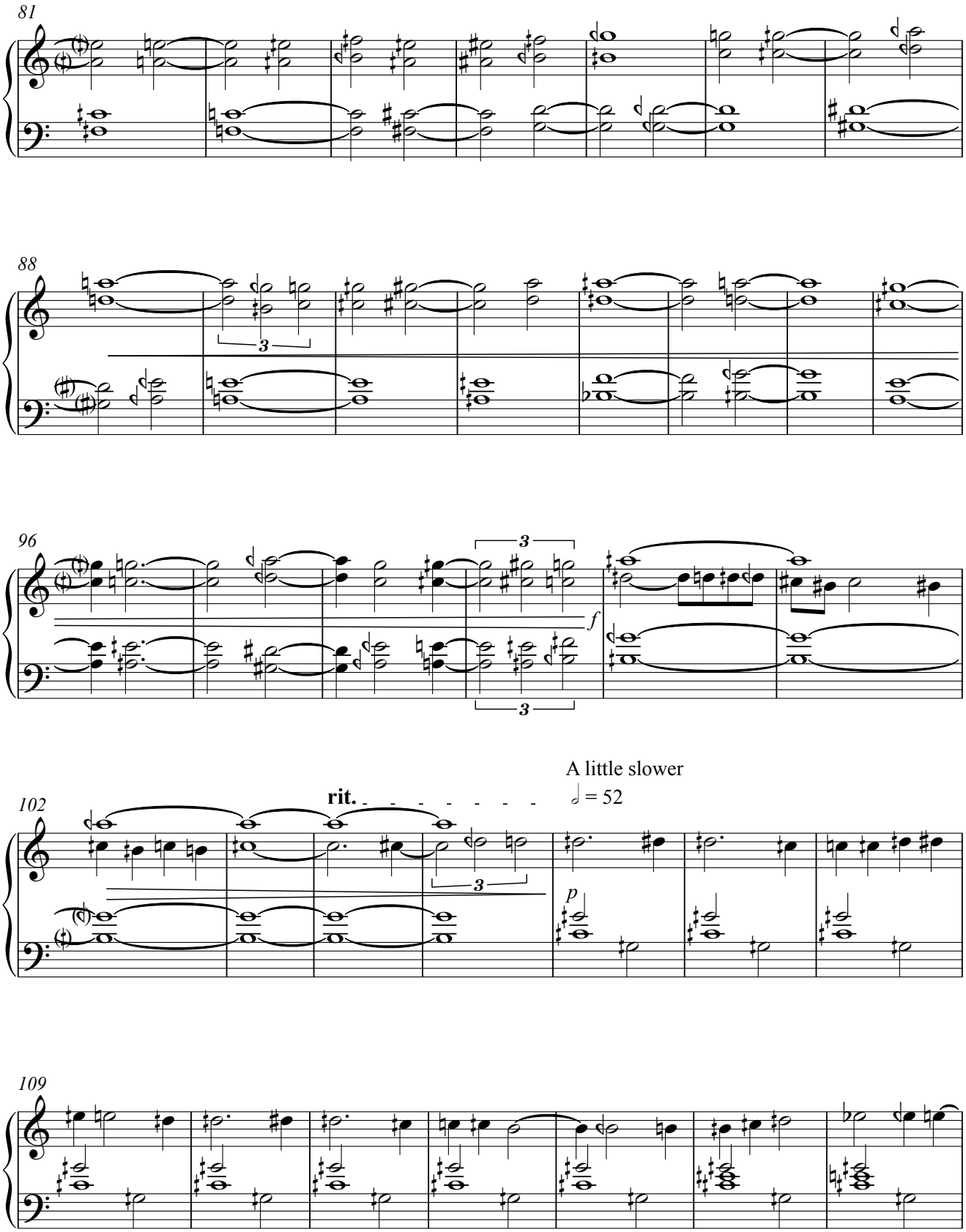
22

29

f

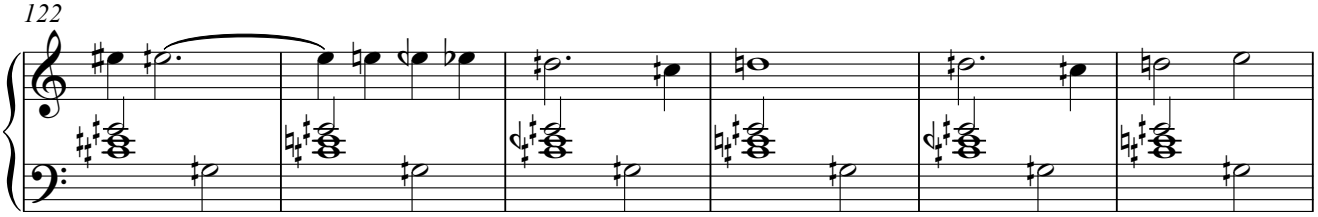
37


45
p
52
mf
59
66
73


81
88
96
102
109
rit.
A little slower
♩ = 52

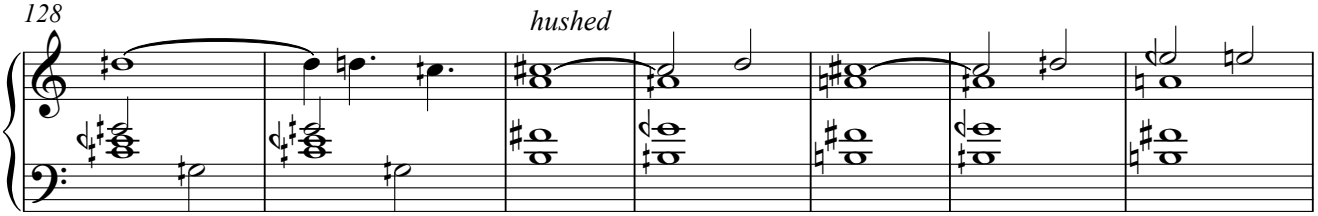
116

122

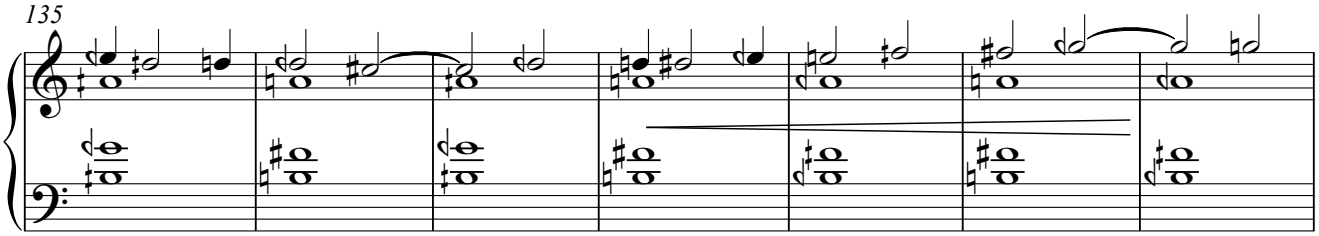


128

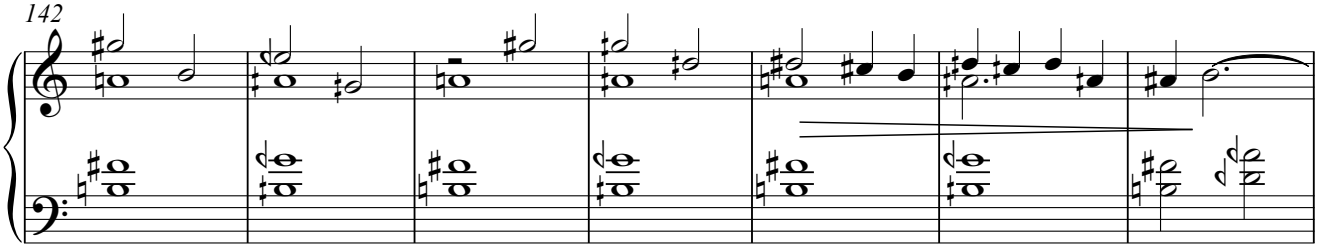
hushed



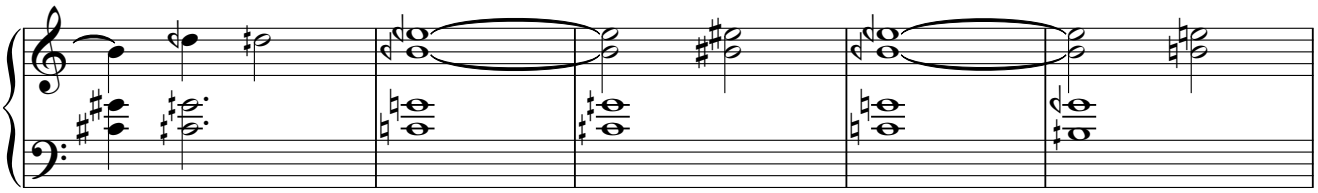
135



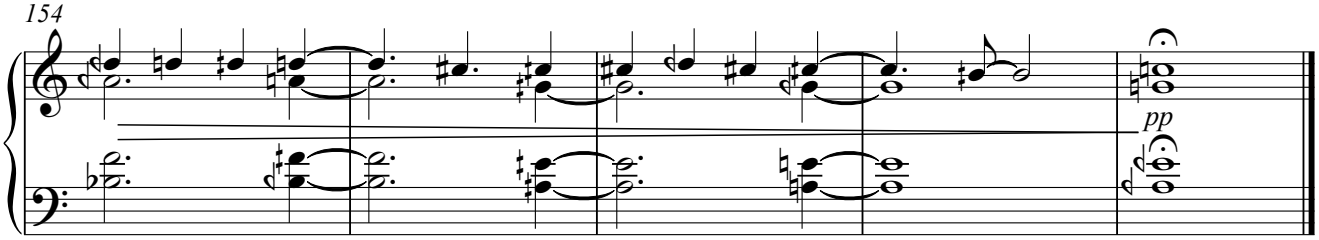
142



149



154



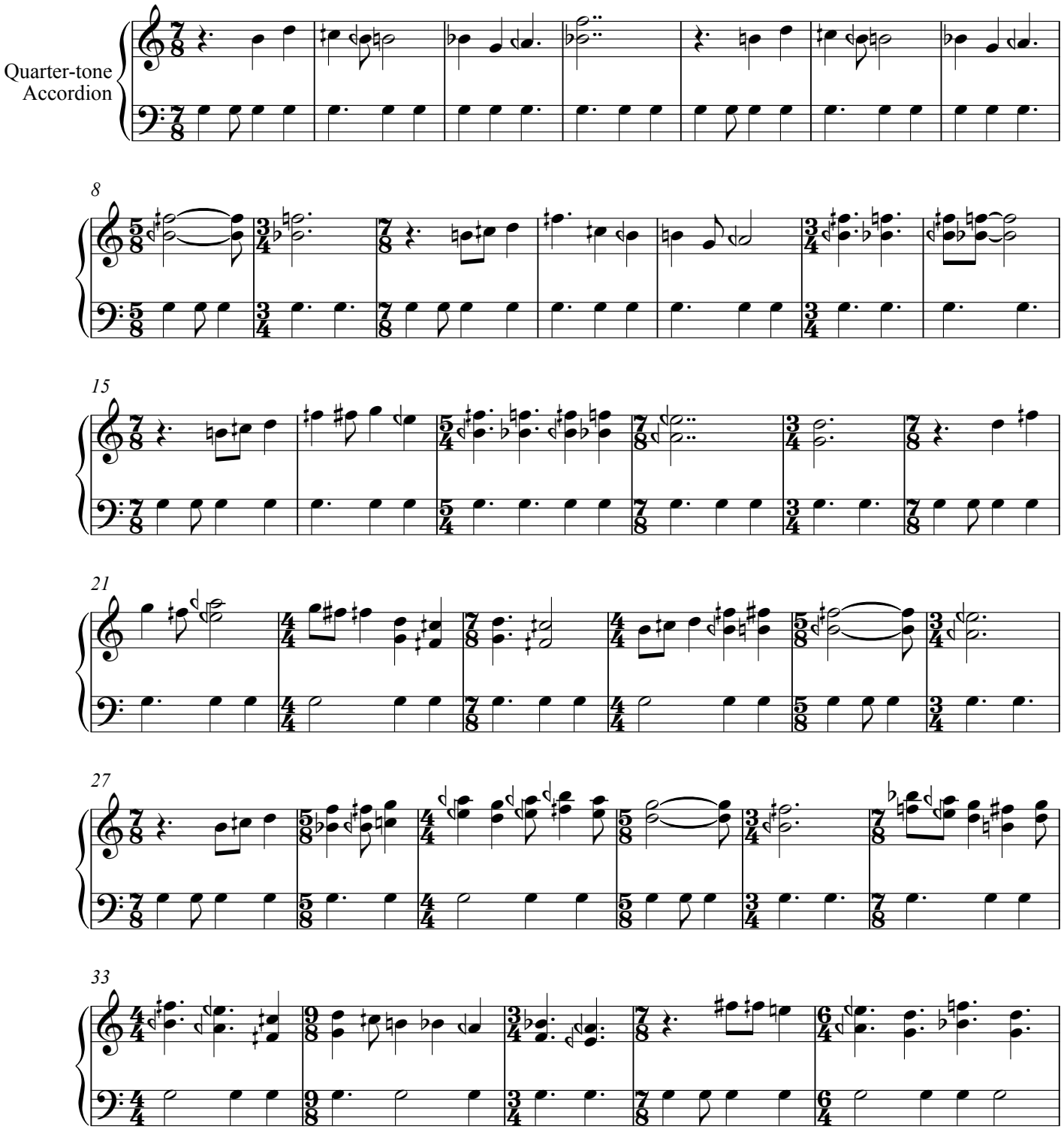
Affable Denizen

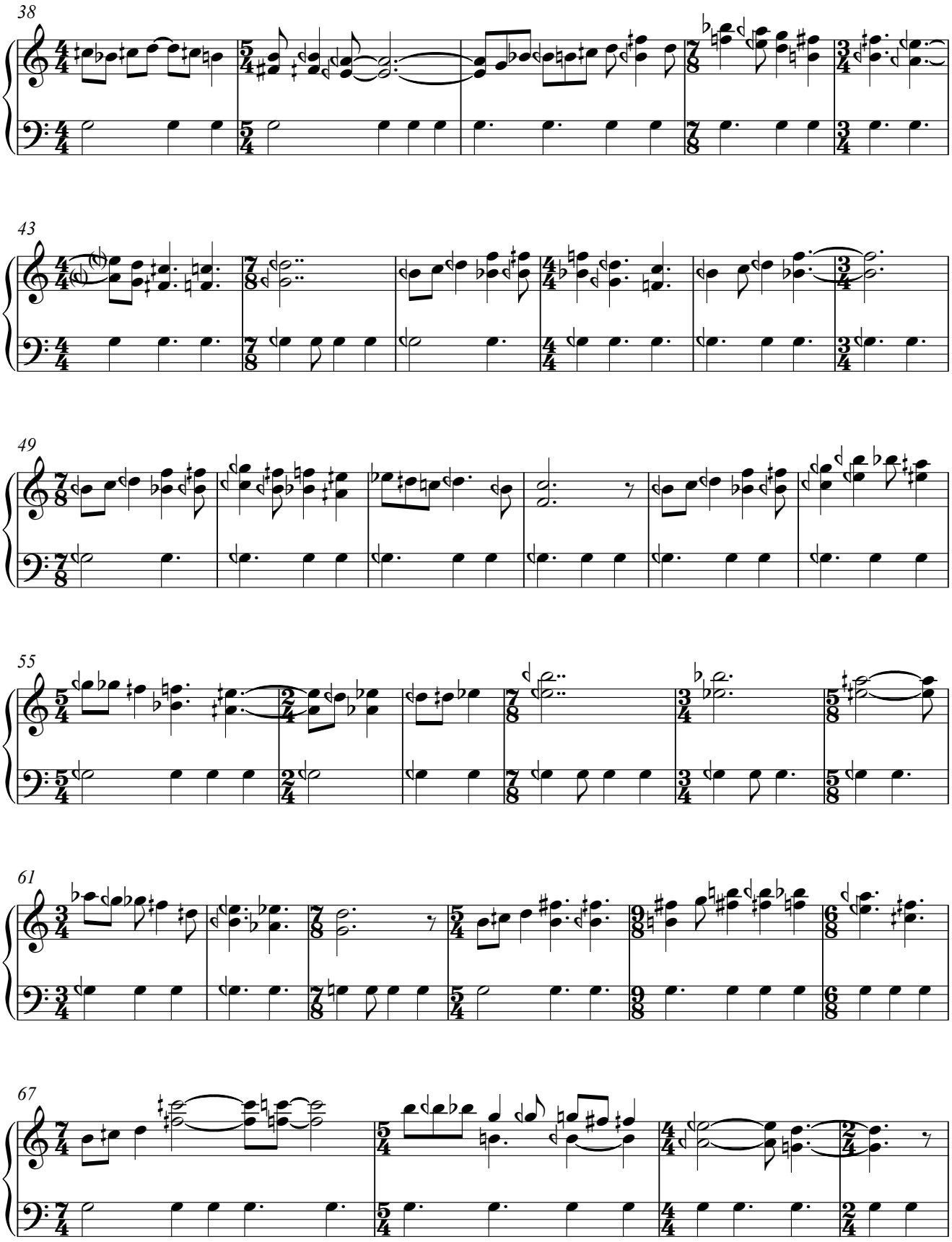
Kyle Gann
2017-18

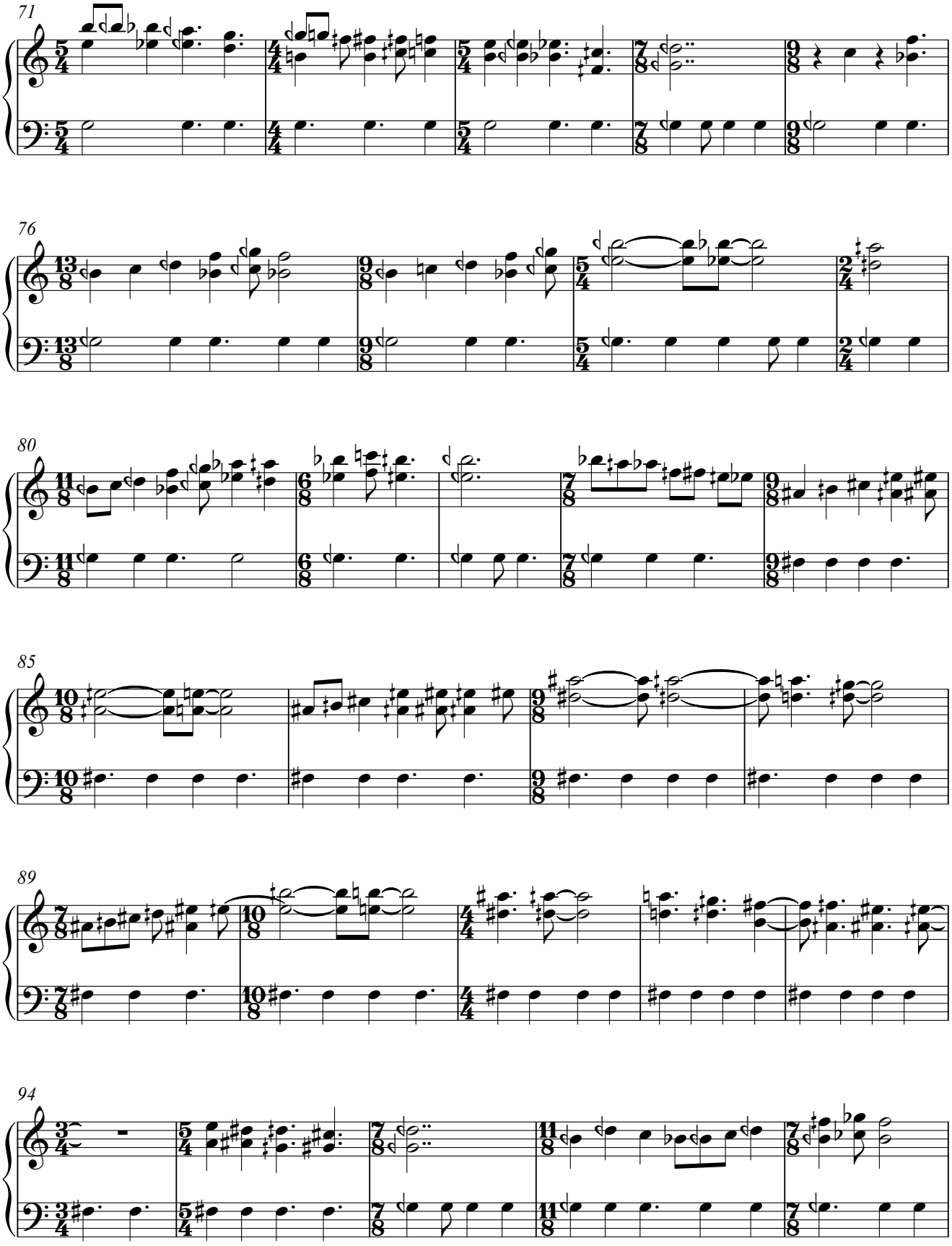
Exuberantly fast

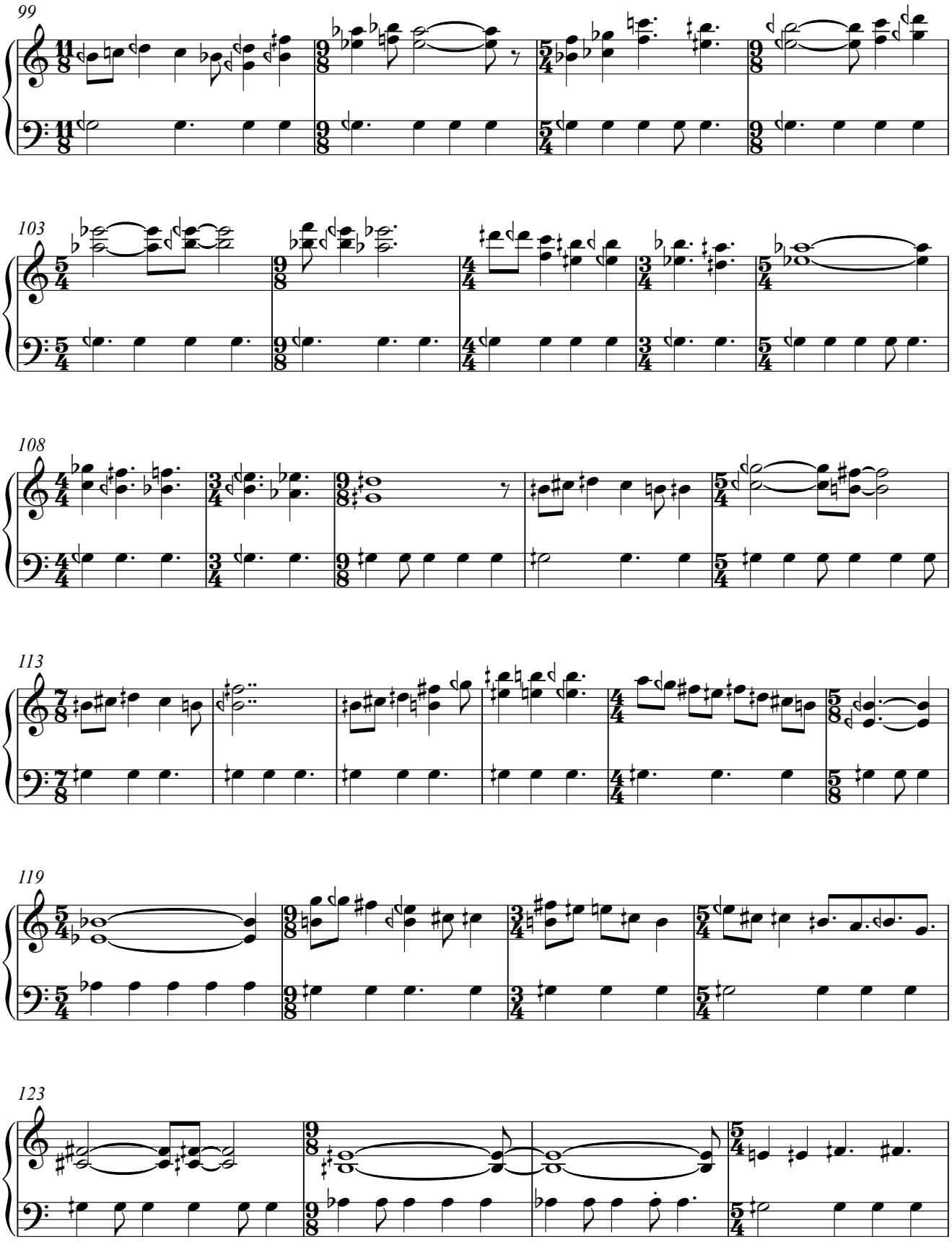
♩ = 200

Quarter-tone Accordion

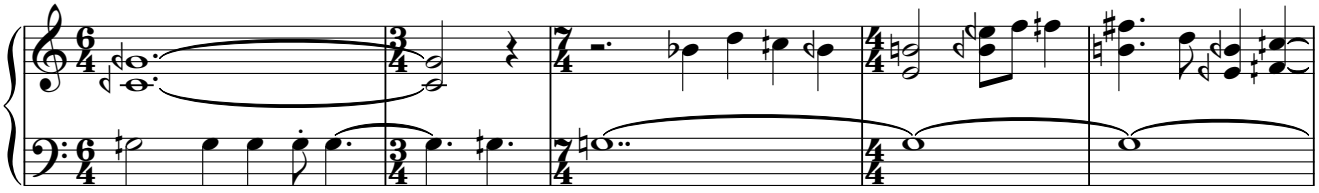



38
43
49
55
61
67

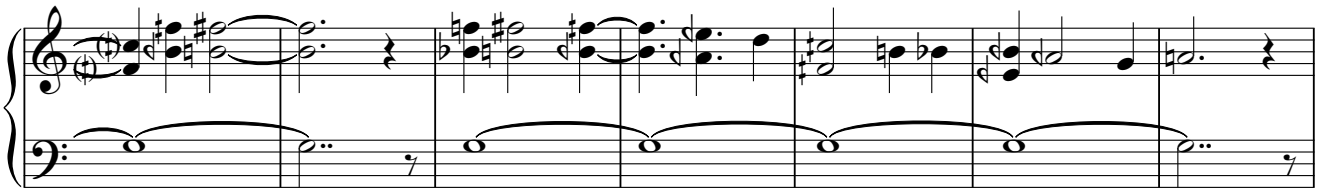

71
76
80
85
89
94


99
103
108
113
119
123

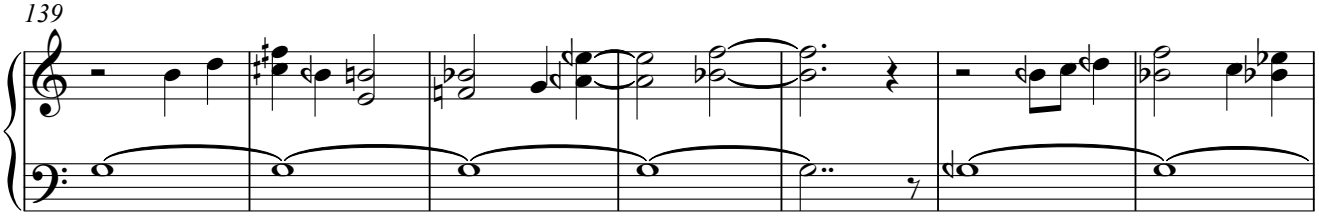
127



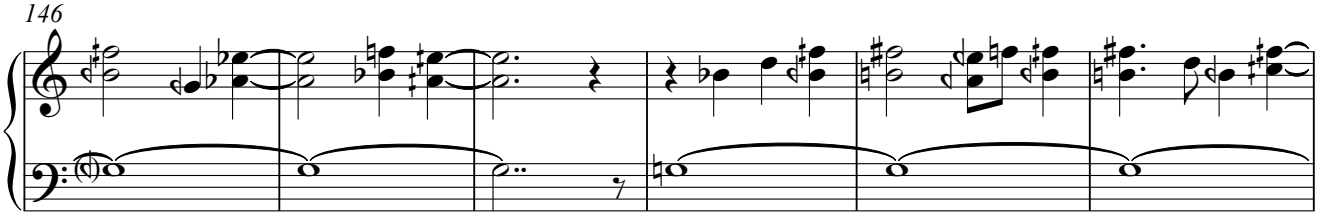
132



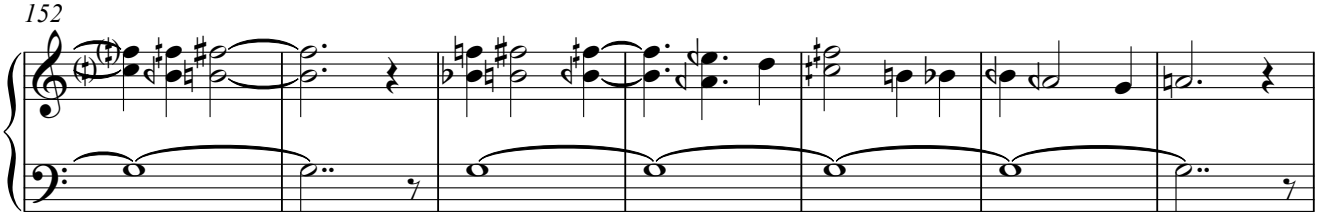
139



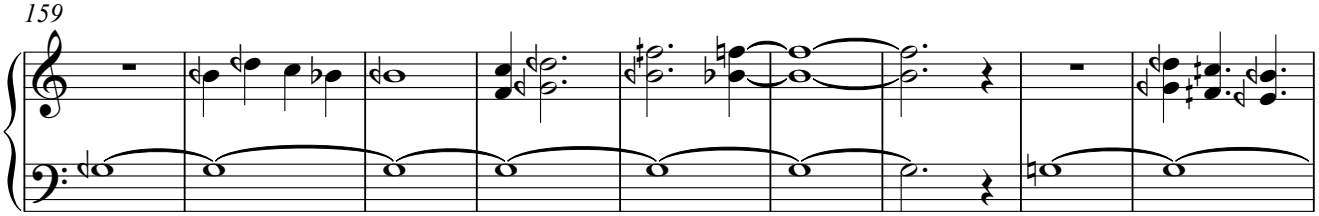
146

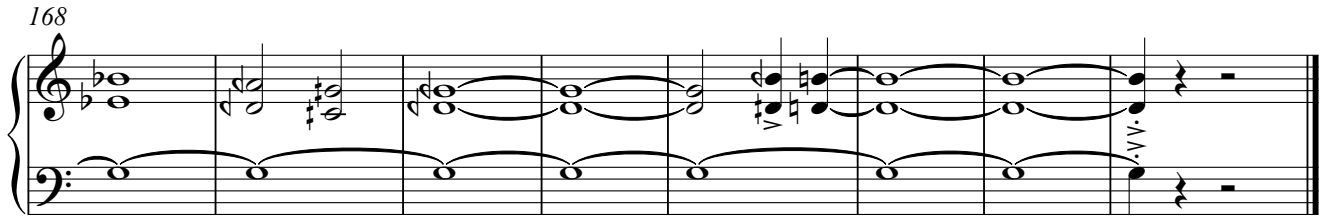


152



159





Oct. 22, 2017 - May 29, 2018
Germantown, NY