ergo

for amplified piano

José del Avellanal Carreño

2025

Composer's note

"Ergo replentur loca vocibus abdita retro, omia quae circum fervunt sonituque cientur."

(And so places hidden far from sight are filled with voices; they are in a ferment all around, alive with sound.)

Lucretius, *De rerum natura* (Liber IV)

ergo was born out of my curiosity in experimenting with the possibilities of the piano not just as a sonic generator, but also as a unique resonant mechanism, building upon he monodic work O nobilissima viriditas by Hildegard von Bingen.

As suggested by its title, the piece revolves around the elemental notions of action and consequence, laying its focus on the mechanical and material dimensions of the piano and seeking to examine and interrogate them. As explosive impulses trigger sympathetic resonances, the work seeks to bring these hidden soundscapes to the foreground, immersing the audience in a meditative exploration of "the sound within the sound"

Performance notes

The left hand part is comprised in its entirety of diamond noteheads, that is, notes to be pressed silently with the aim of enabling sympathetic resonances in specific strings of the piano.

While the piece is very sustained and pointillistic, with a very narrow dynamic range for the performer to work with, it is important that there is an overall sense of phrasing and direction throughout the different sections of the work.

The indication "pedal slap" refers to a sudden release of the piano pedal, as audible as possible.

For the amplification of the instrument, the specifics will have to be adapted to each performance room, but the aim should ideally be an organic result, that gently boosts the internal resonances of the instrument and makes them audible to the listener, while avoiding making the attacks too loud or compressed. For the first performance of the work, the instrument was amplified through a setup of four microphones (two of them pointed at the center of the soundboard, the other two of them pointed at the back, all of them very close).

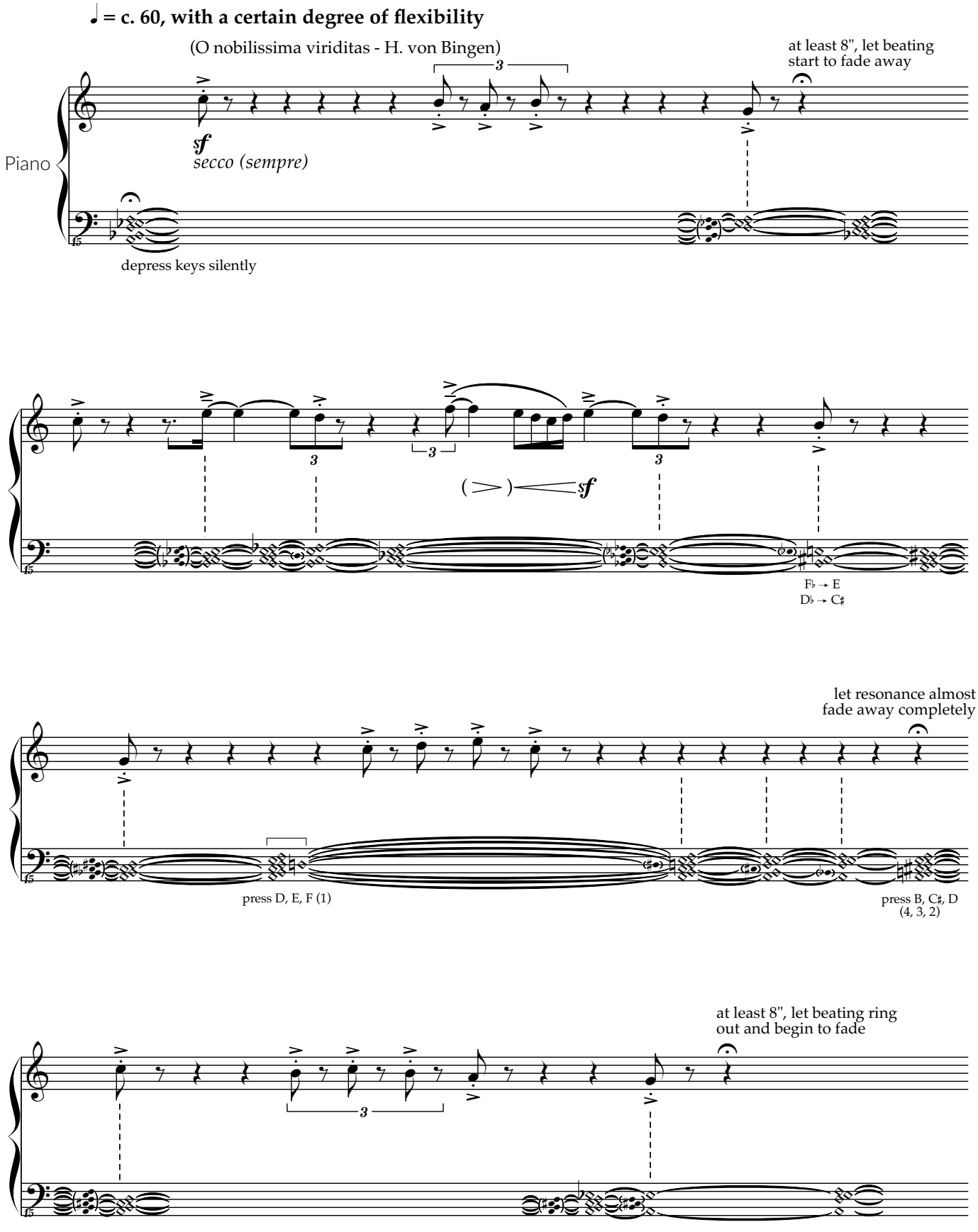
Written in 2025 for Francisco Morais Fernandes

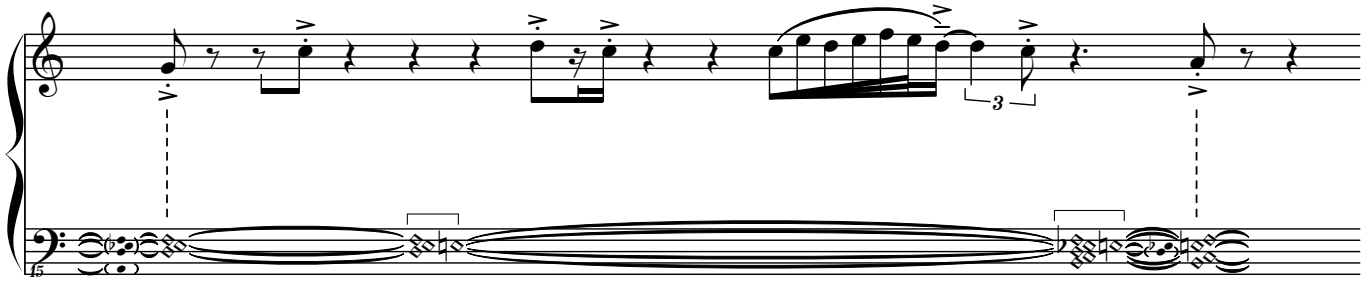
Duration: c. 12'

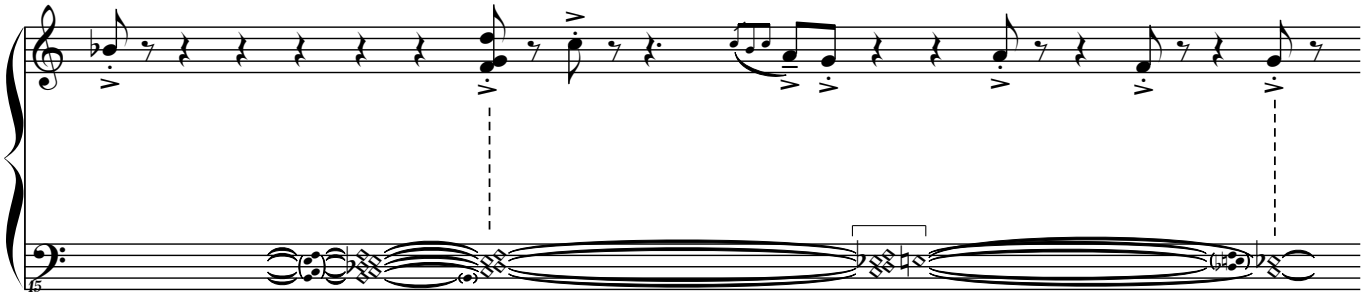
for Francisco Morais Fernandes

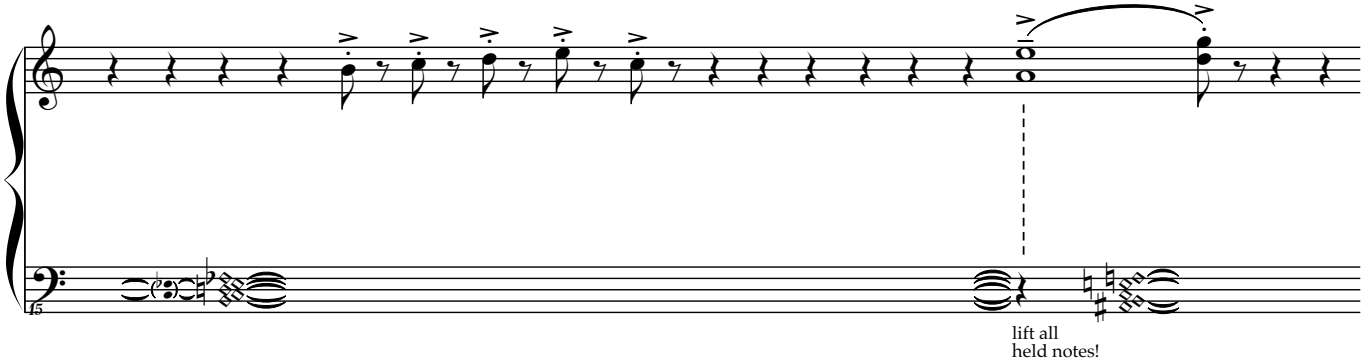
ergo

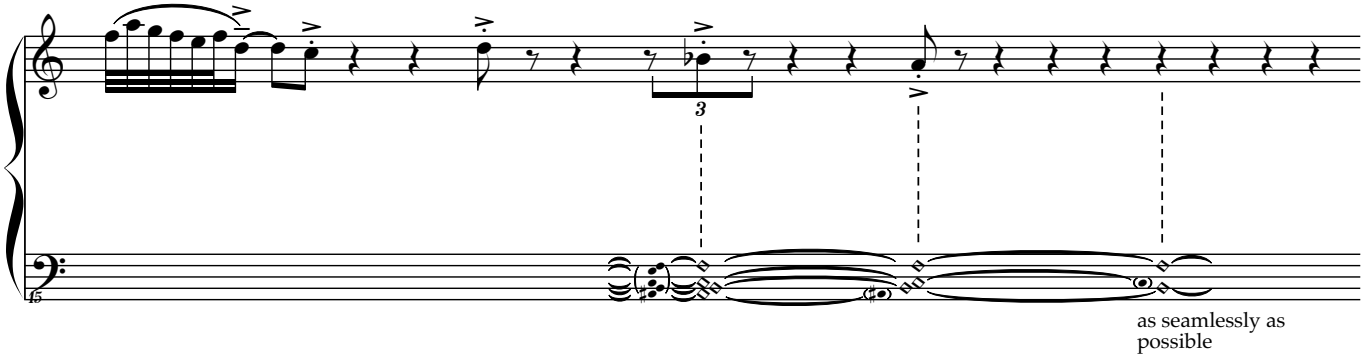
José del Avellanal Carreño








lift all
held notes!

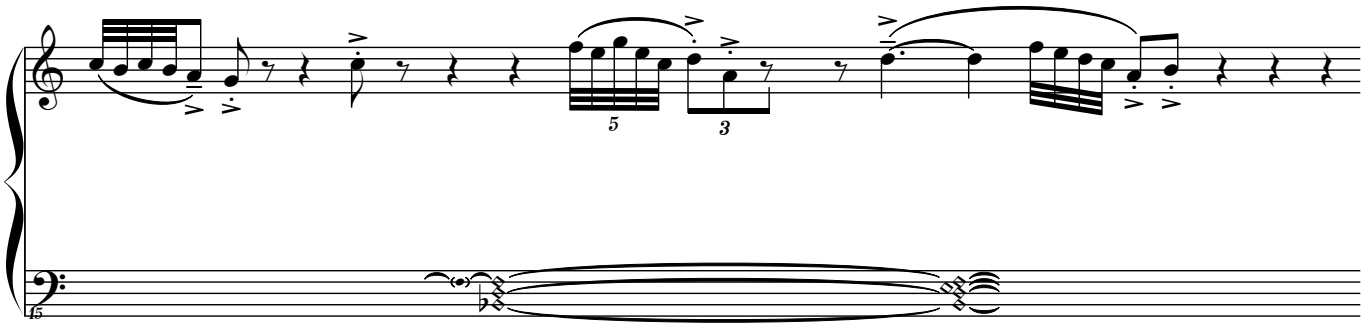

as seamlessly as
possible

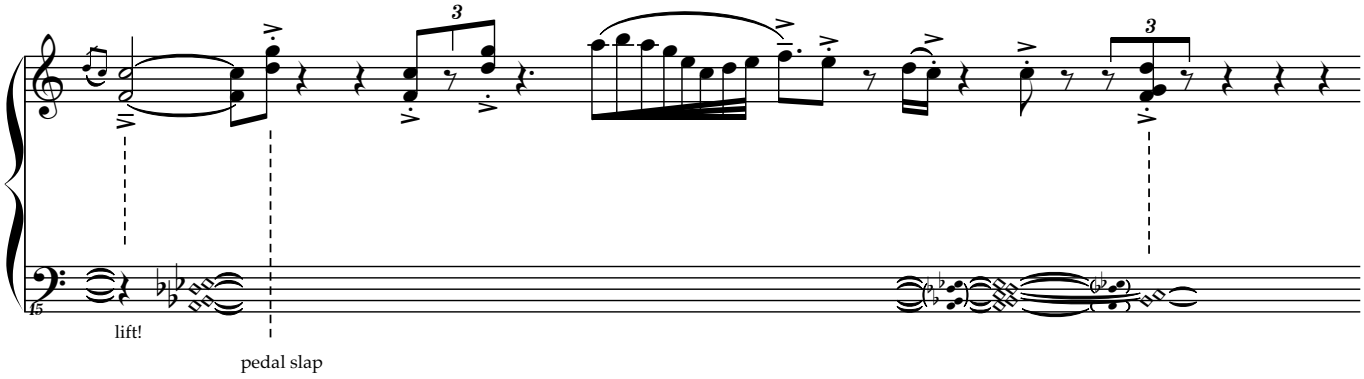
let faint A resonance hold for
as long as possible, move on
as it begins to die away

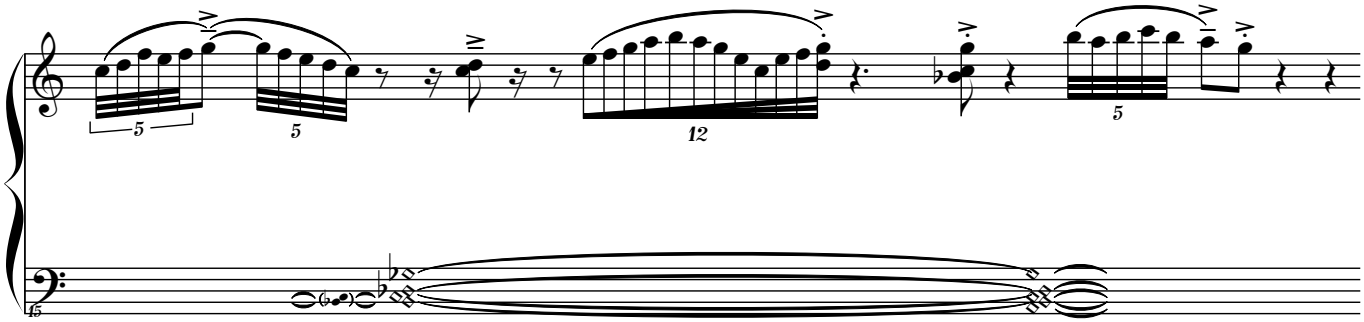
as seamlessly as
possible

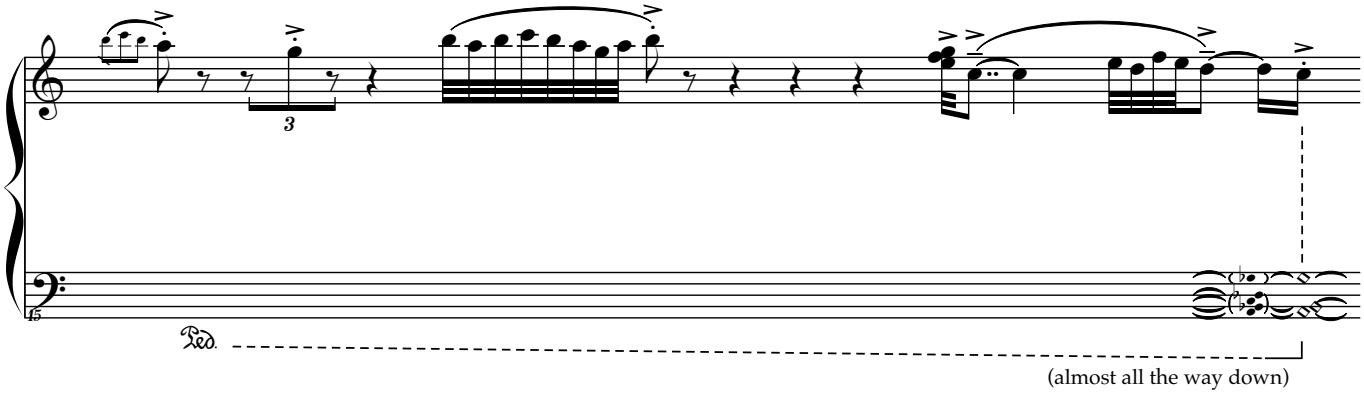
C♯ → D♭

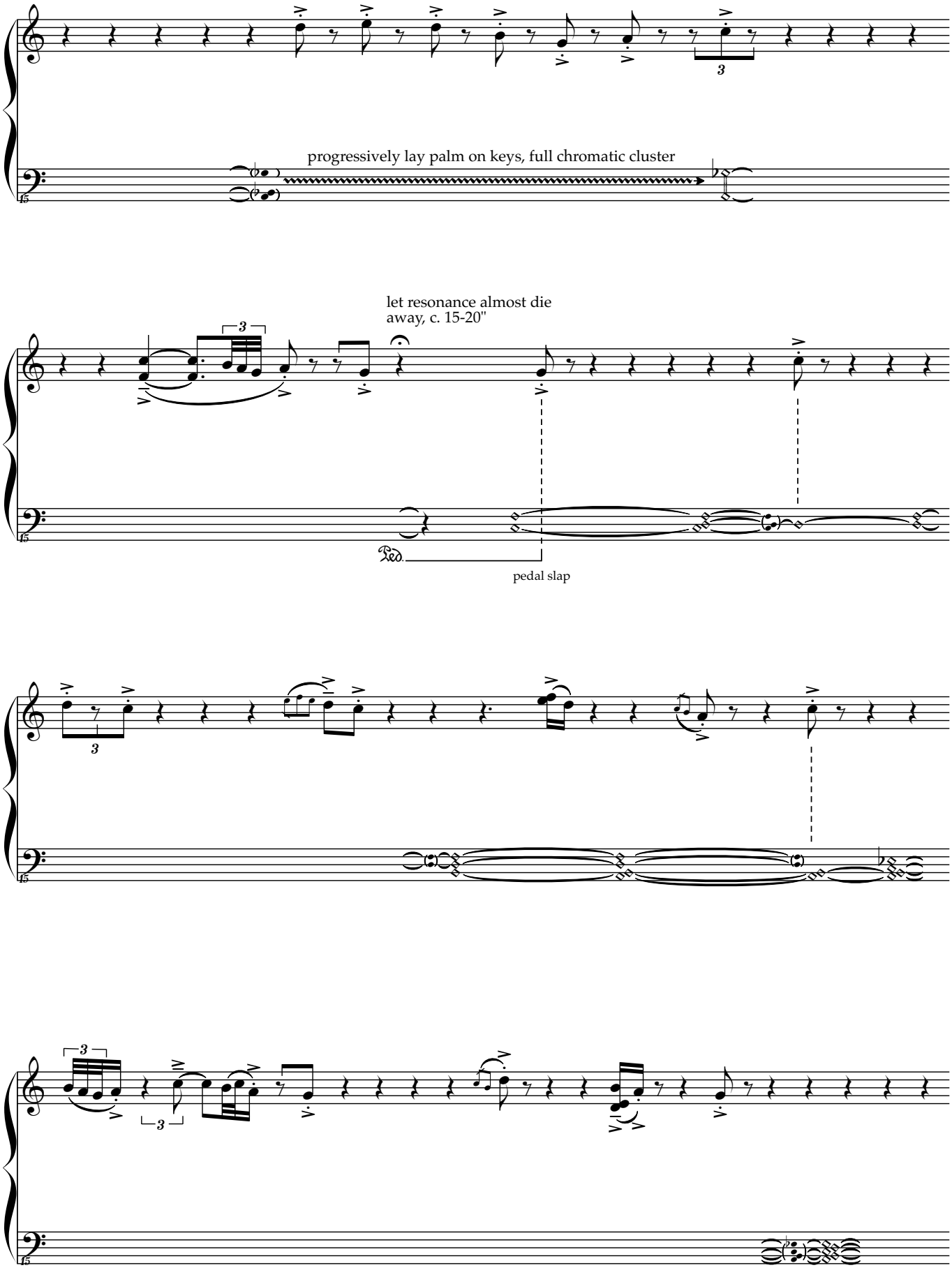
Ped.

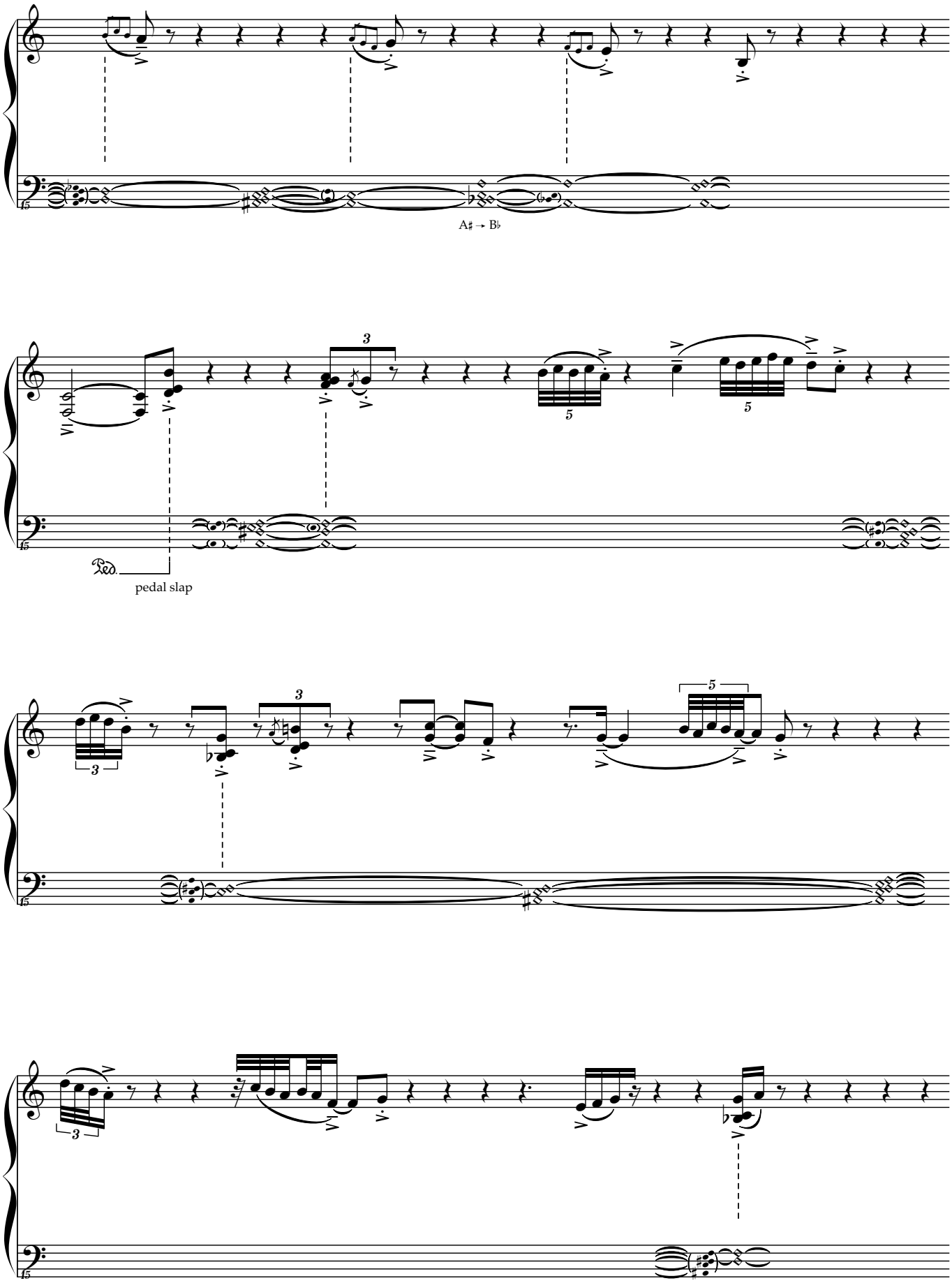


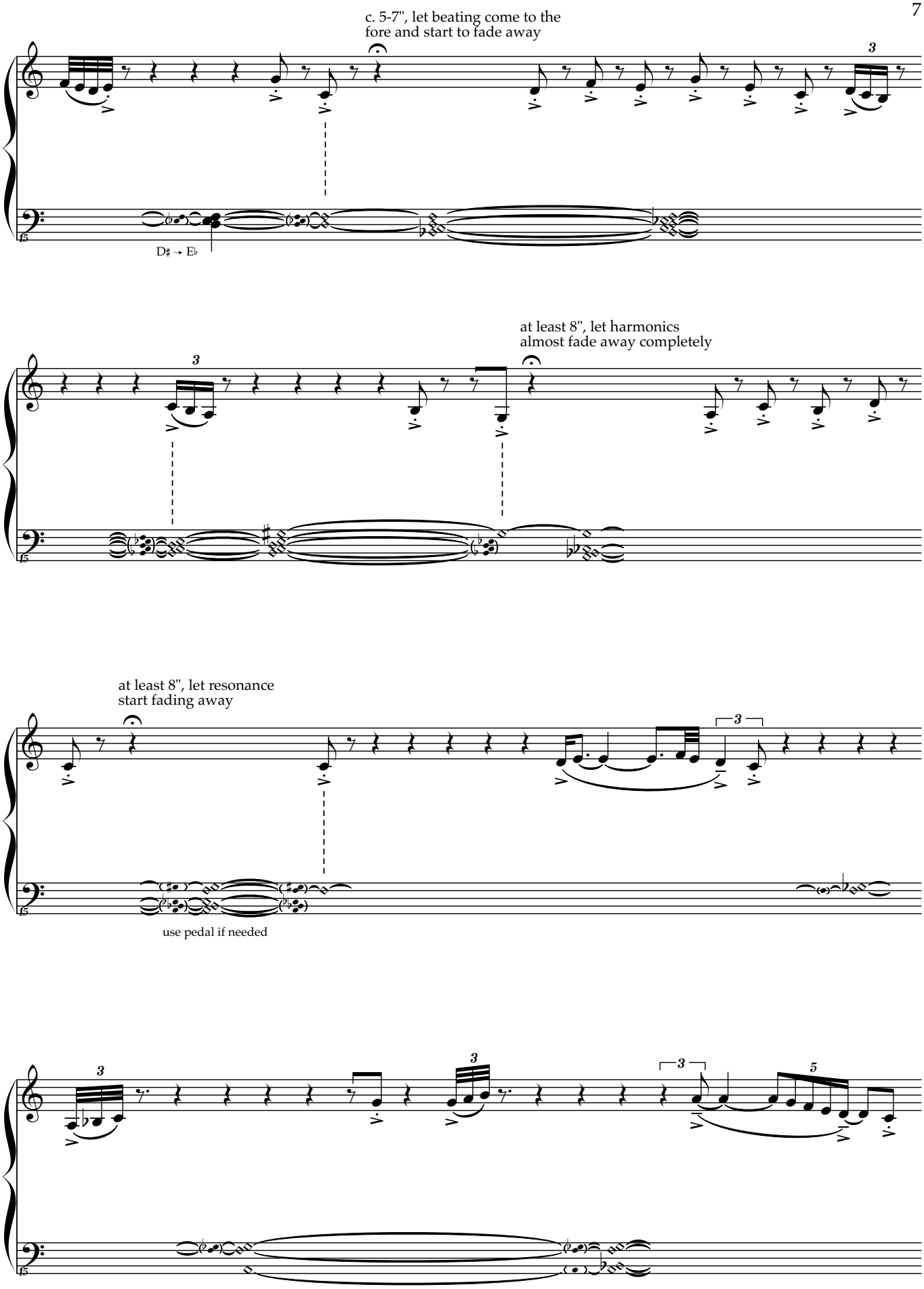

lift!
pedal slap

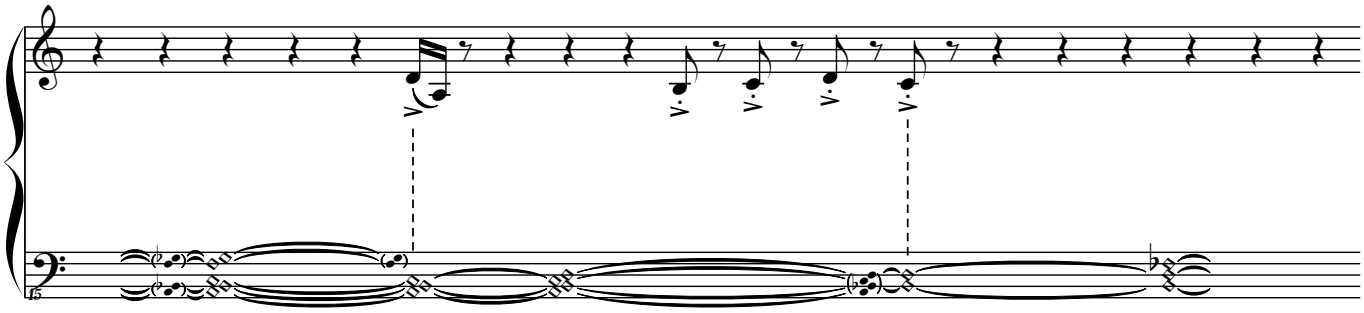


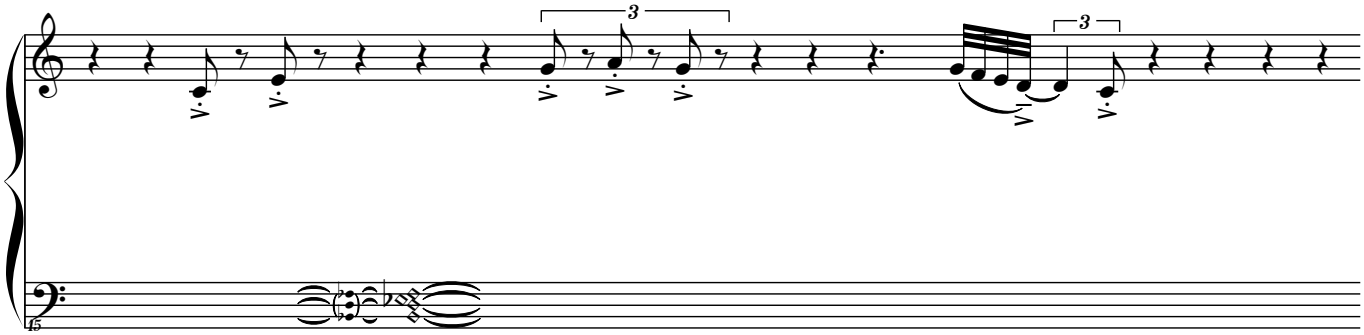

Ped.
(almost all the way down)

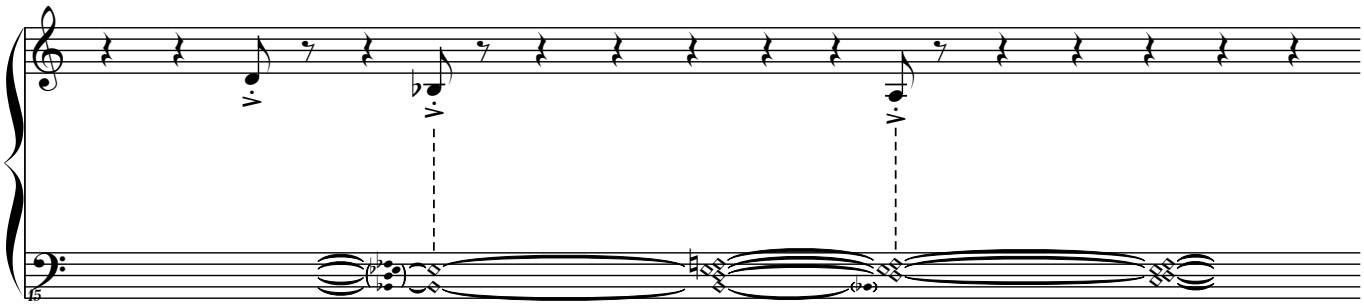

progressively lay palm on keys, full chromatic cluster
let resonance almost die
away, c. 15-20"
pedal slap

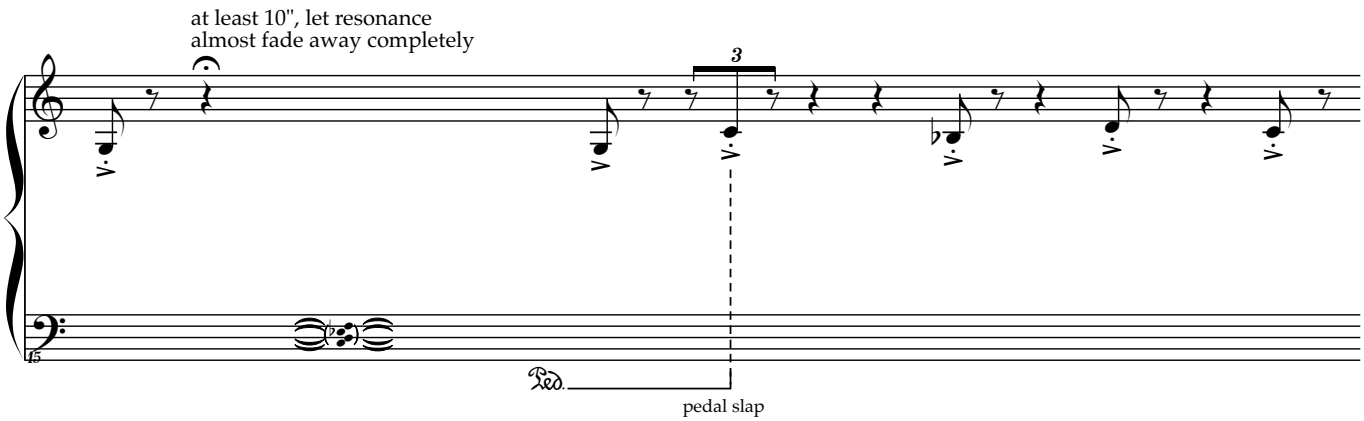

A♯ → B♭
pedal slap

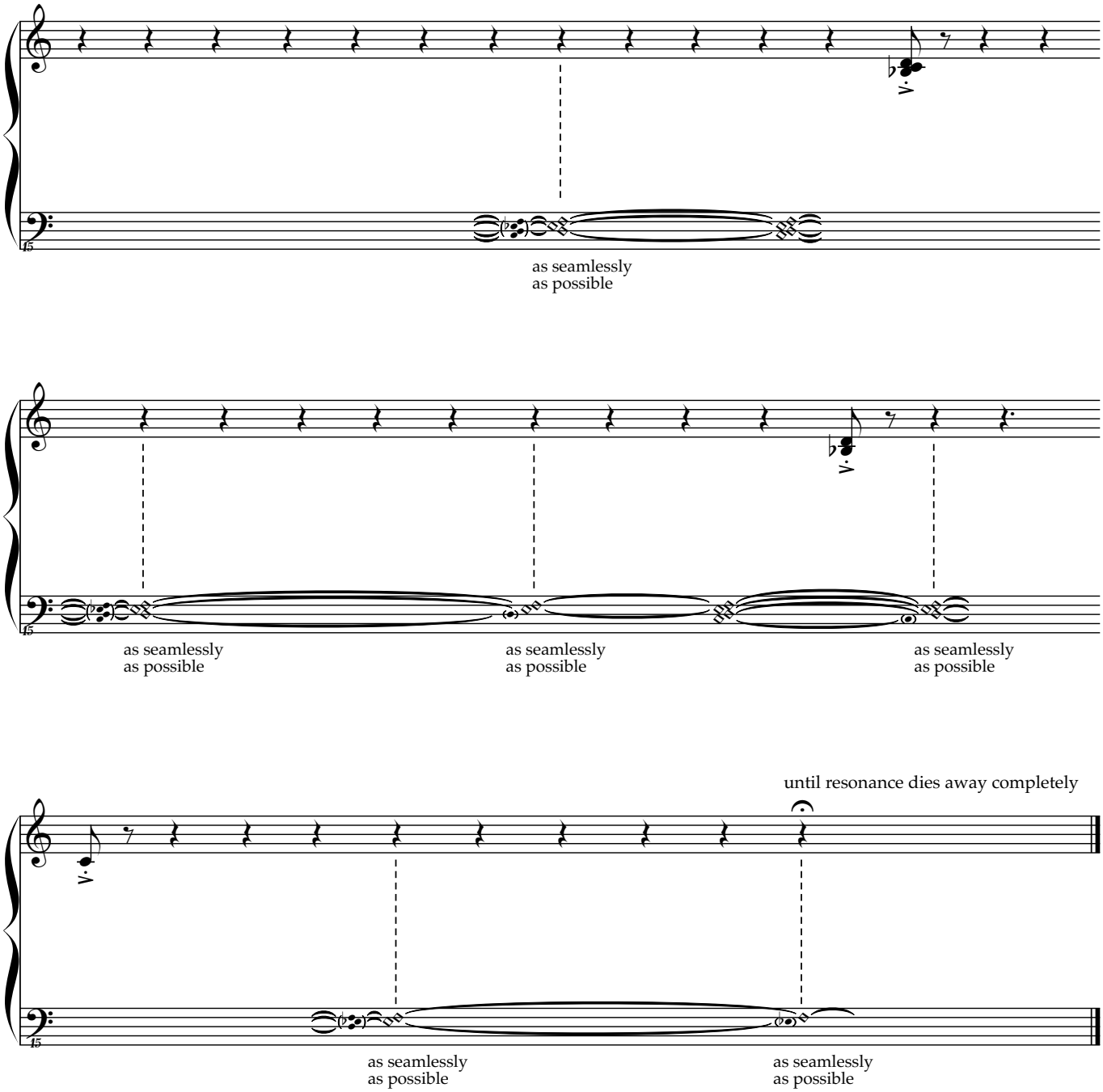

c. 5-7", let beating come to the
fore and start to fade away
D♯ → E♭
at least 8", let harmonics
almost fade away completely
at least 8", let resonance
start fading away
use pedal if needed








at least 10", let resonance
almost fade away completely
Ped.
pedal slap


as seamlessly
as possible
as seamlessly
as possible
as seamlessly
as possible
as seamlessly
as possible
until resonance dies away completely
as seamlessly
as possible
as seamlessly
as possible