Sonata 4

'**Italia**' was originally written as a short composition entry for the Michelle Pittaluga competition. For the 2016 Pittaluga there were (unusually) two categories in the composing competition. I had no chance in the 'real' competition, but there was a smaller competition for a new 'motif' or 'theme tune' for the Pittaluga event itself (limited to 4 minutes). 'Italia' was my attempt at that category (– hence the pseudo-name). But despite the pseudo-name my miniature did not win; too many ideas burst out of its 4 min slot. So at the end of 2019 I re-visited it catchy themes, this time to create this three movement Sonatina. Little did I imagine as I started work that 2019 and 2020 in Italy would be marked by fruitless cruel lockdowns and that even for Italians Italy would become a vast prison. My Sonata is for the real Italy of sunlight, happiness, and open air.

Milan

I loved visiting Milan, it was such a happy place, the streets bright with warm Italian sunshine, smiling busy people and fast taxis that missed each other (and the smiling happy people) by inches. Too many of my business trips to Northern Europe where characterised by lonely and cold empty evenings with only cheerless smoked fish for solace; but not in Milan. Even though I visited repeatedly I never wore out my welcome. Every day one of my brilliant Italian colleagues would take me out to see the city sights. The Cathedral, of course was a favourite destination, so too were the shopping streets. Living in a small Welsh village (as I did) I've never seen such expensive leather handbags, nor so few items in a window display. Even more remarkably was the enormous queue to buy La Scalia tickets. My colleagues all (consistently) told me that rich opera aficionados would hire professional 'queue-ers' to do their ticket buying. I still believe them.

Rome

My father (a chemical engineer) visited Italy many times on business – he found many meetings were attended by two gentlemen in dark suits. They were never introduced and they never spoke. This memory came vividly back to me on my one-off trip to Rome. It was a sales trip and this time, of course, we were introduced, both to a smiling gentleman in a dark suit and his two equally-smiling and attractive lady assistants. Their office security was amazing, we were not going to leave the meeting accidentally. And yes: the smiling gentleman did drive a large black limousine with tinted windows – and yes: he did park it with impunity right across the pavement in central Rome. We only had the one meeting with our prospective customer. Our terrified salesman 'forgot' to arrange my subsequent visit to their development centre in Palermo. I don't know how this could be relevant but, if you listen carefully to my music, you may imagine a lifeless body floating face down in a river, rocking gently in the flow, an ivory-handled knife is clearly visible in its back. Its imprudent to put anything else in writing: we don't want similar sinister objects found floating in the *Ystywyth* or *Rheidol*.

The Alps (Flying North)

Leaving Rome I was not sure that even an aeroplane flies fast enough. After all, what if my new Sicilian friends were already on the plane with me? But as I've only ever visited two places in Italy the third movement had to be about something else - and what more Italian than the Alps! Flying over the Alps is lovely feature of visiting Italy. Those Alps are, of course, Italy's great defence against the rest of Europe, saving Italian culture on countless occasions. Seen distantly from the plains upwards those mountains are awe inspiring – when seen from the air even the most jaded jet traveller is forced to marvel at the wonders of God's creation. We are truly privileged to live in the age of flight, to see from the air what past generations could only imagine.

Sonata 4 - Italia All'aperto (I) 'Milano'

L'Academico Caliginoso detto Il Furioso
(Tony Eastwood)

Allegro Non Troppo (M.M. ♩ = c. 163)

brillantemente

cantabile *romantico* *lyrico* *espress.* *trist* *ritmico* *dolce* *sinistro*

L.V.

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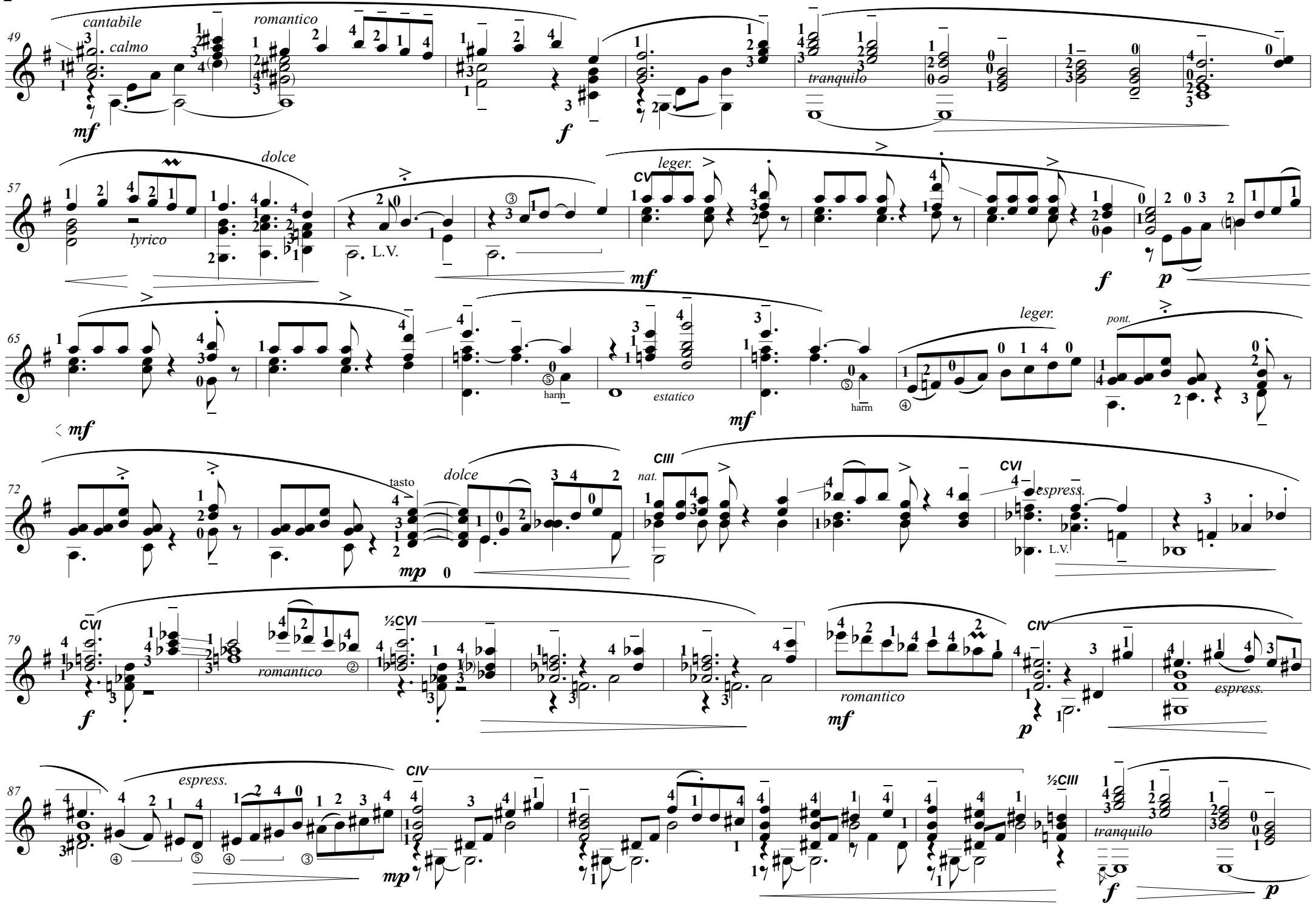
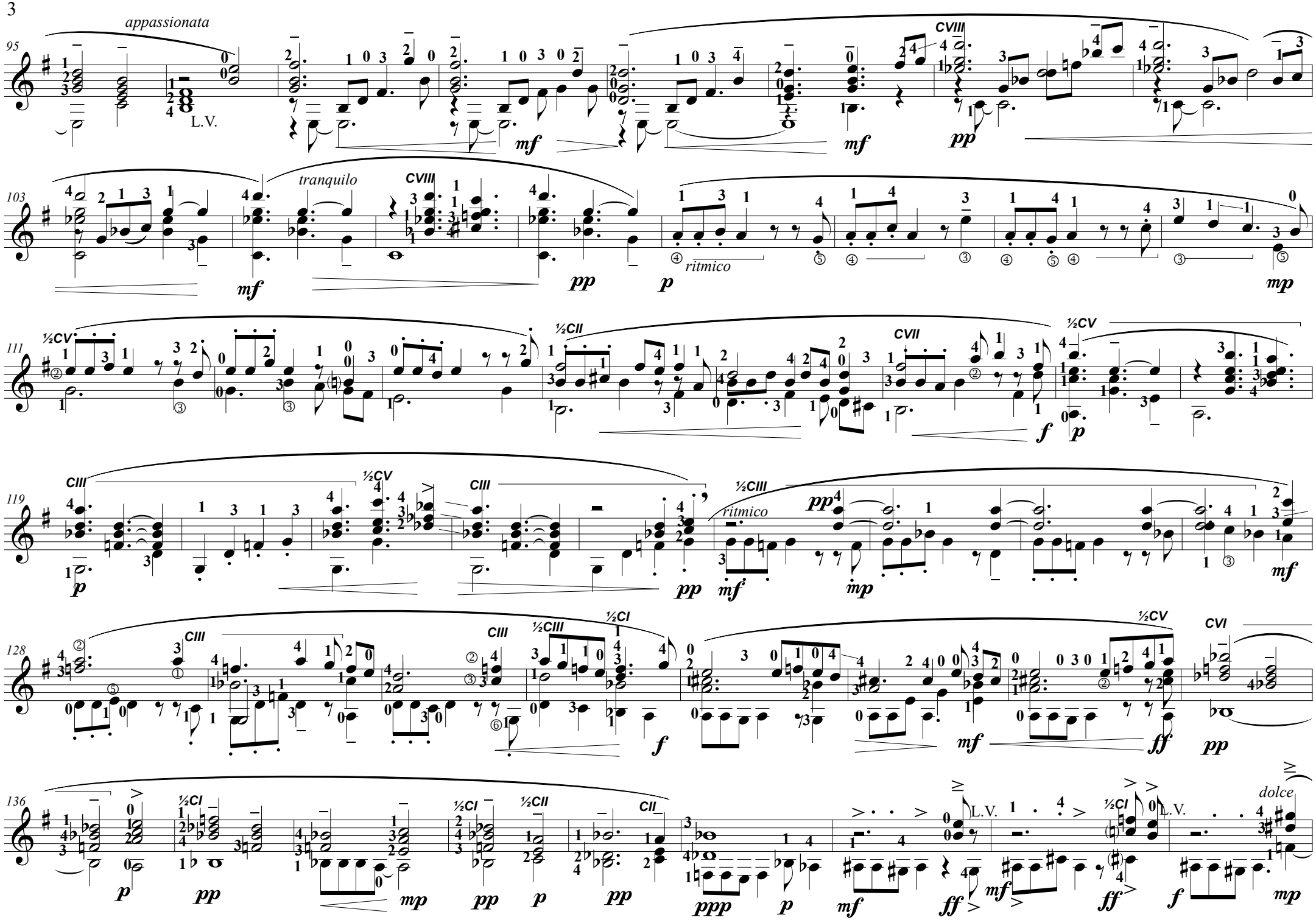
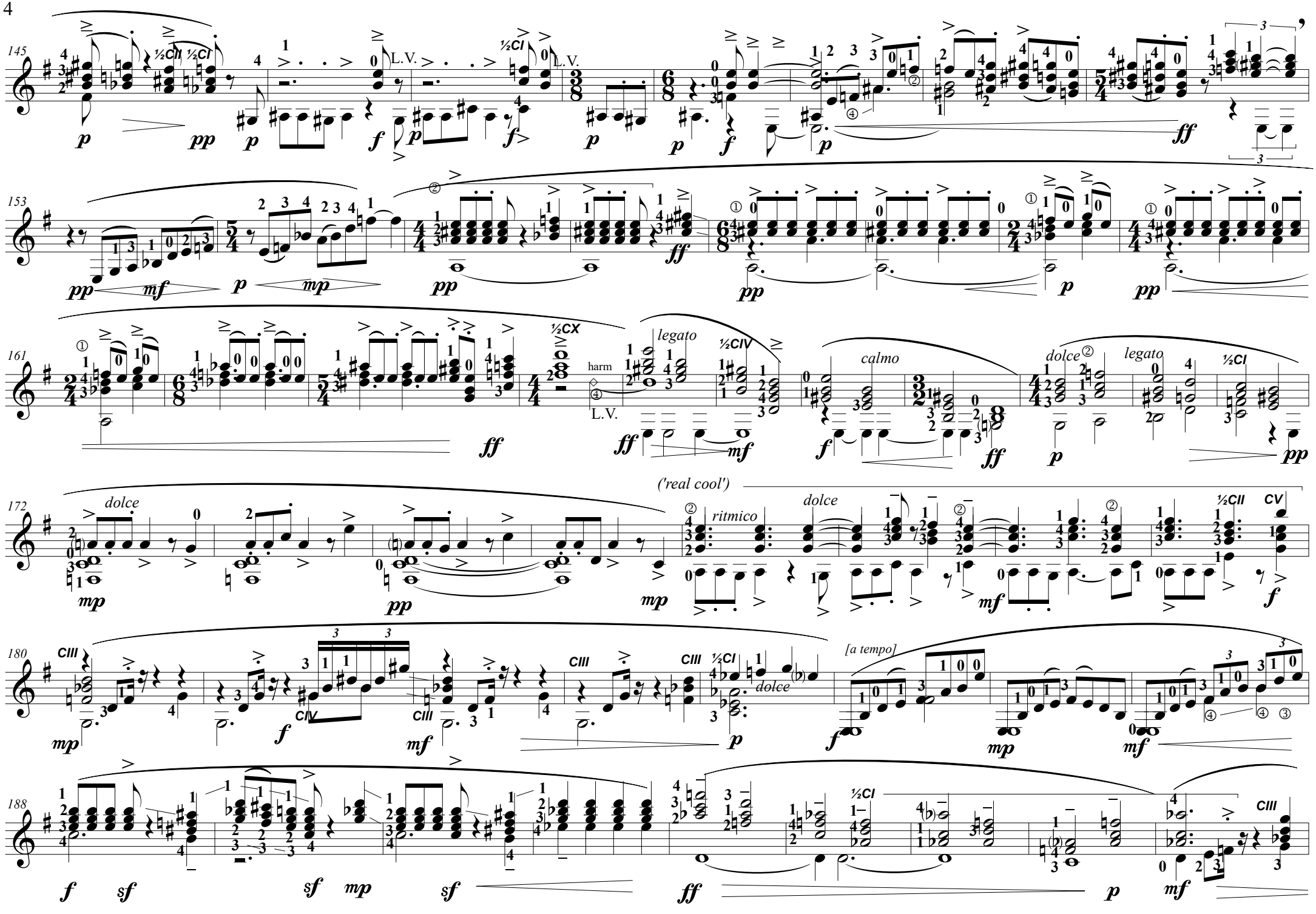
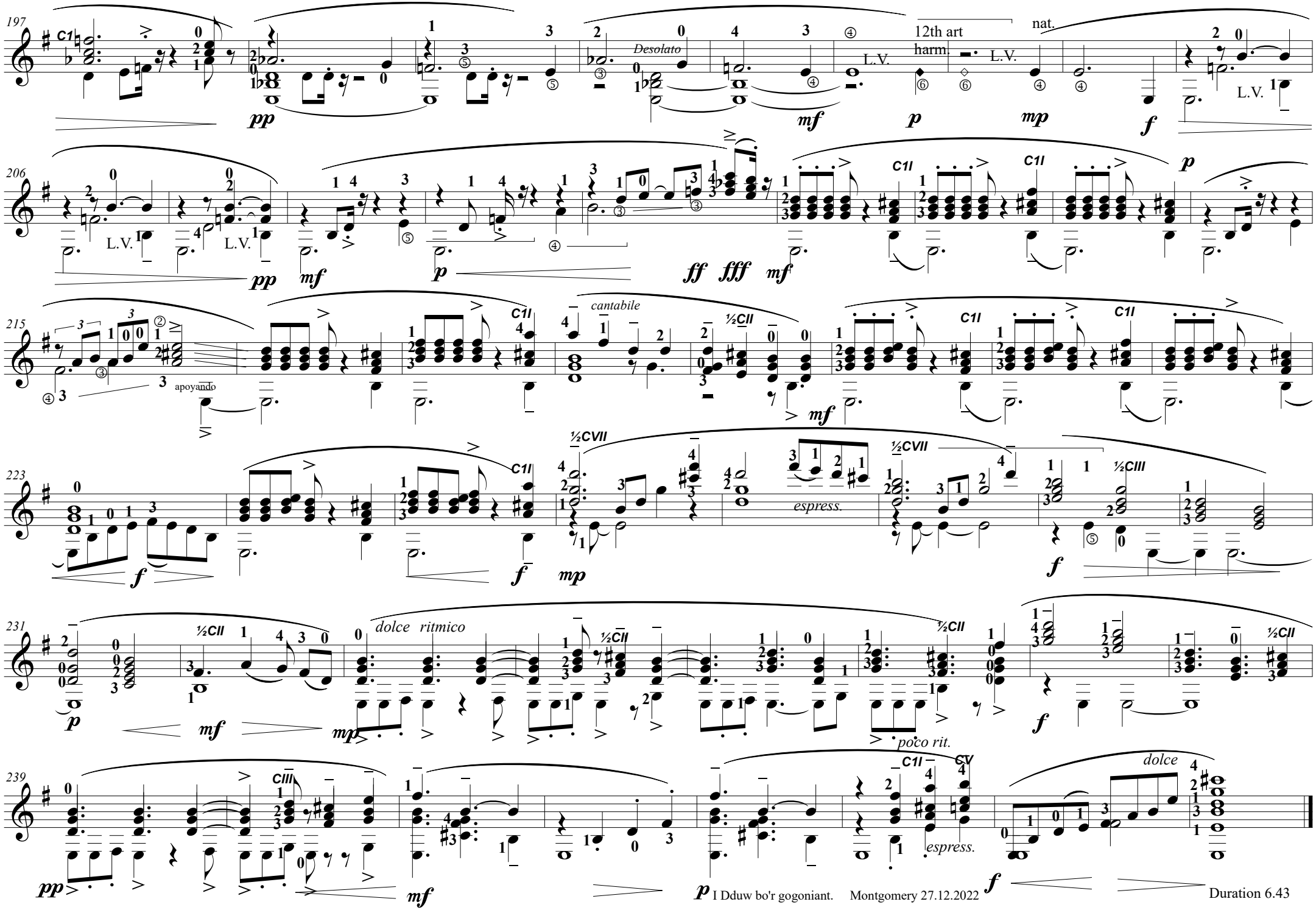

49
cantabile
calmo
mf
romantico
f
tranquilo
57
dolce
lyrico
L.V.
mf
leger.
CV
f
p
65
mf
harm
estatico
mf
harm
leger.
pont.
72
tasto
dolce
mp
CIII
nat.
CVI
espress.
L.V.
79
CVI
f
romantico
½CVI
romantico
mf
CIV
espress.
p
87
espress.
CIV
mp
½CIII
tranquilo
f
p

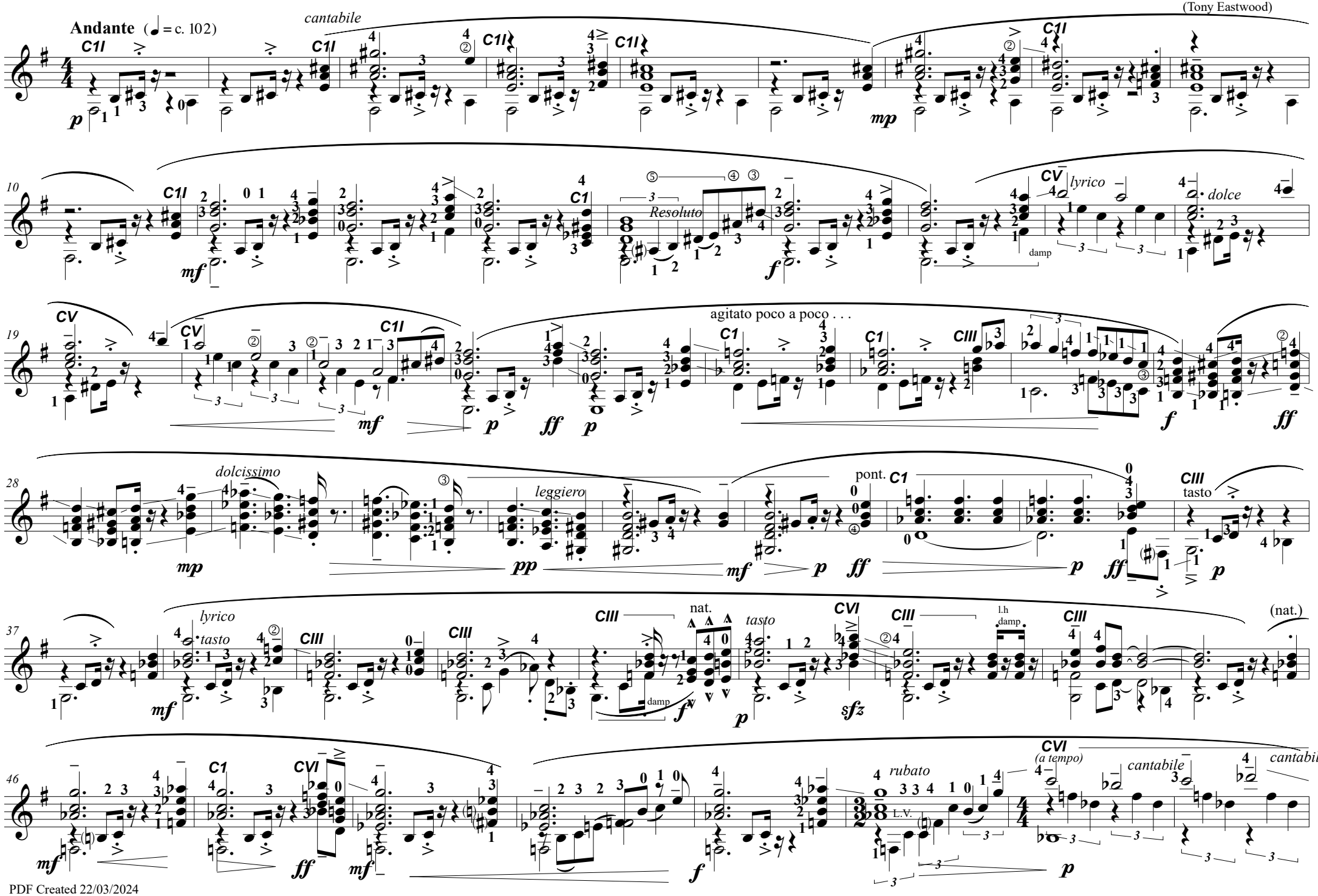

appassionata
95
L.V.
mf
mf
CVIII
pp
tranquilo
103
CVIII
mf
pp
p
ritmico
mp
½CV
111
½CII
CVII
½CV
f
p
CIII
119
½CV
CIII
p
pp
½CIII
ritmico
pp
mf'
mp
mf
128
CIII
CIII
½CIII
½CI
f
½CV
CVI
mf
ff
pp
136
p
½CI
pp
mp
½CI
½CII
pp
p
CII
pp
ppp
p
mf
ff
L.V.
mf
½CI
ff
L.V.
dolce
f
mp


145
½CII ½CI
L.V.
L.V.
½CI
153
161
½CX
harm
L.V.
legato
½CIV
calmo
dolce
legato
½CI
172
dolce
('real cool')
ritmico
dolce
½CII
CV
180
CIII
CIV
CIII
CIII
CIII
½CI
dolce
[a tempo]
188
½CI
CIII


197
206
215
223
231
239
Desolato
12th art harm.
nat.
L.V.
cantabile
apoyando
espress.
dolce ritmico
poco rit.
dolce
pp
mf
p
mp
f
ff
fff
I Dduw bo'r gogoniant. Montgomery 27.12.2022
Duration 6.43

Sonata 4 - Italia All'aperto (II) 'Roma'

L'Academico Caliginoso detto Il Furioso
(Tony Eastwood)



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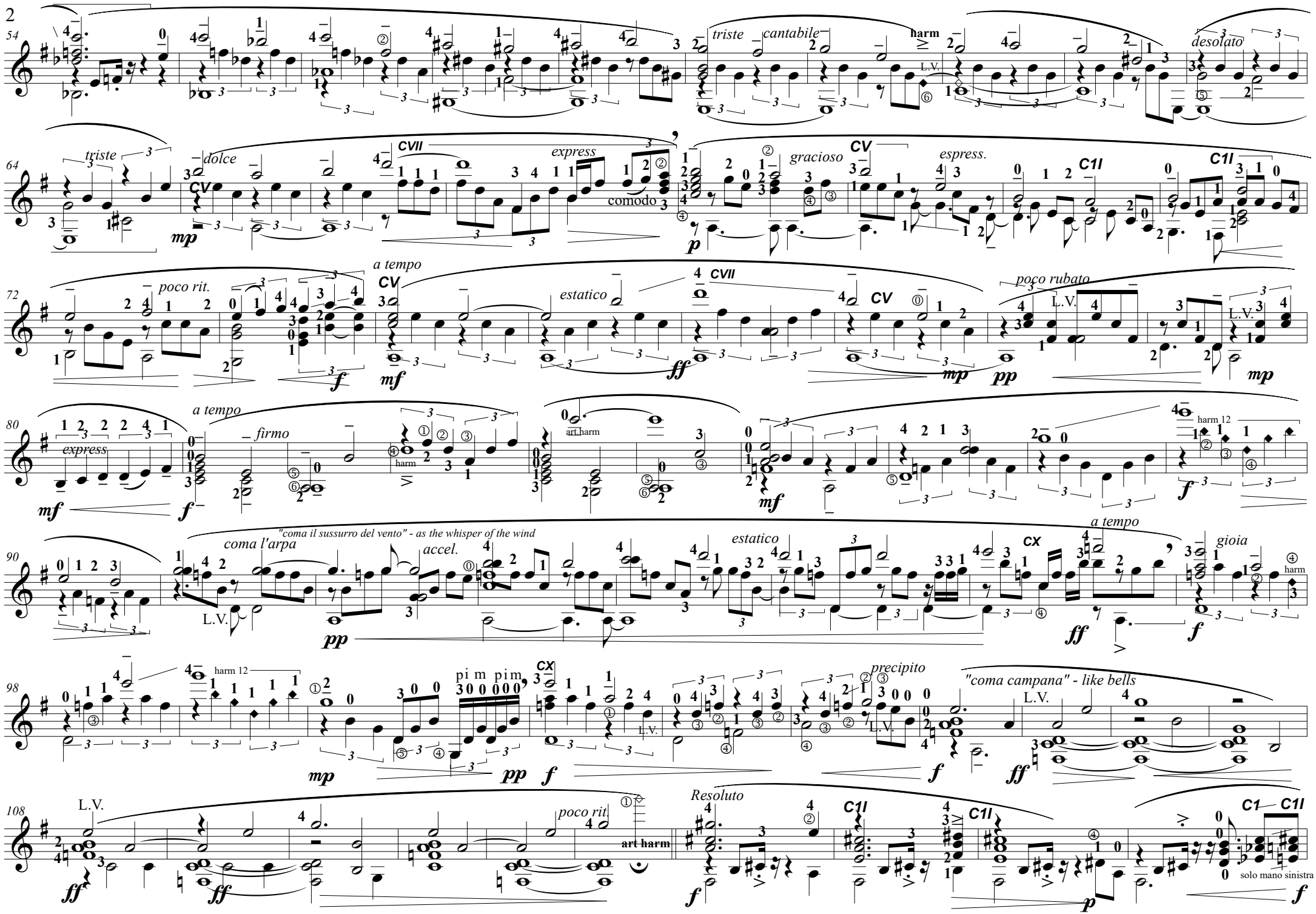
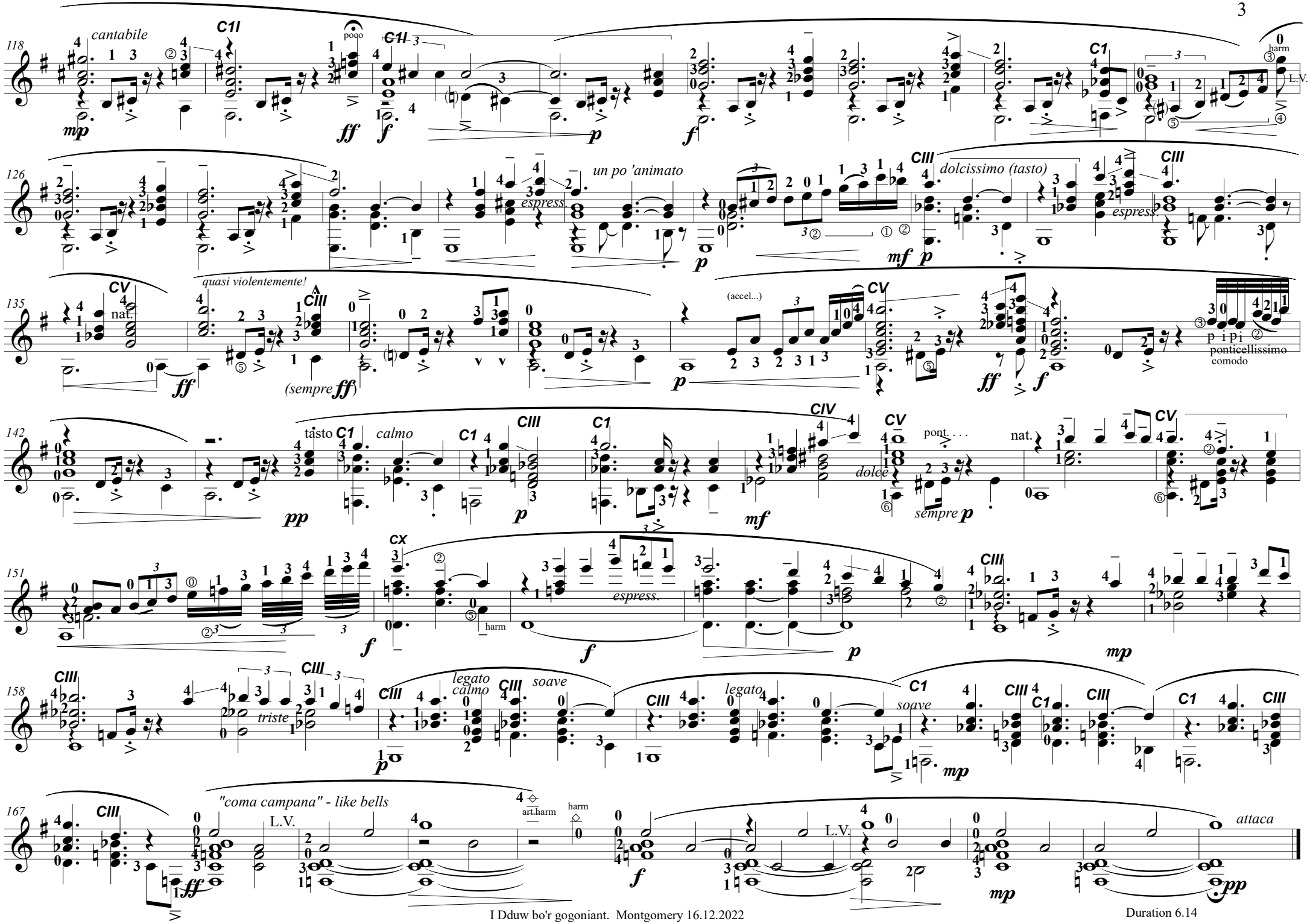

54
triste
cantabile
harm
L.V.
desolato
64
triste
dolce
CV
CVII
express
comodo
gracioso
CV
espress.
C1I
C1I
72
poco rit.
a tempo
CV
estatico
CVII
CV
poco rubato
L.V.
L.V.
80
a tempo
express
firmo
harm
art.harm
harm 12
90
"coma il sussurro del vento" - as the whisper of the wind
coma l'arpa
accel.
estatico
CX
a tempo
gioia
harm
L.V.
98
harm 12
pi m pim
CX
precipito
"coma campana" - like bells
L.V.
L.V.
L.V.
108
L.V.
poco rit.
art harm
Resoluto
C1I
C1I
C1
C1I
solo mano sinistra

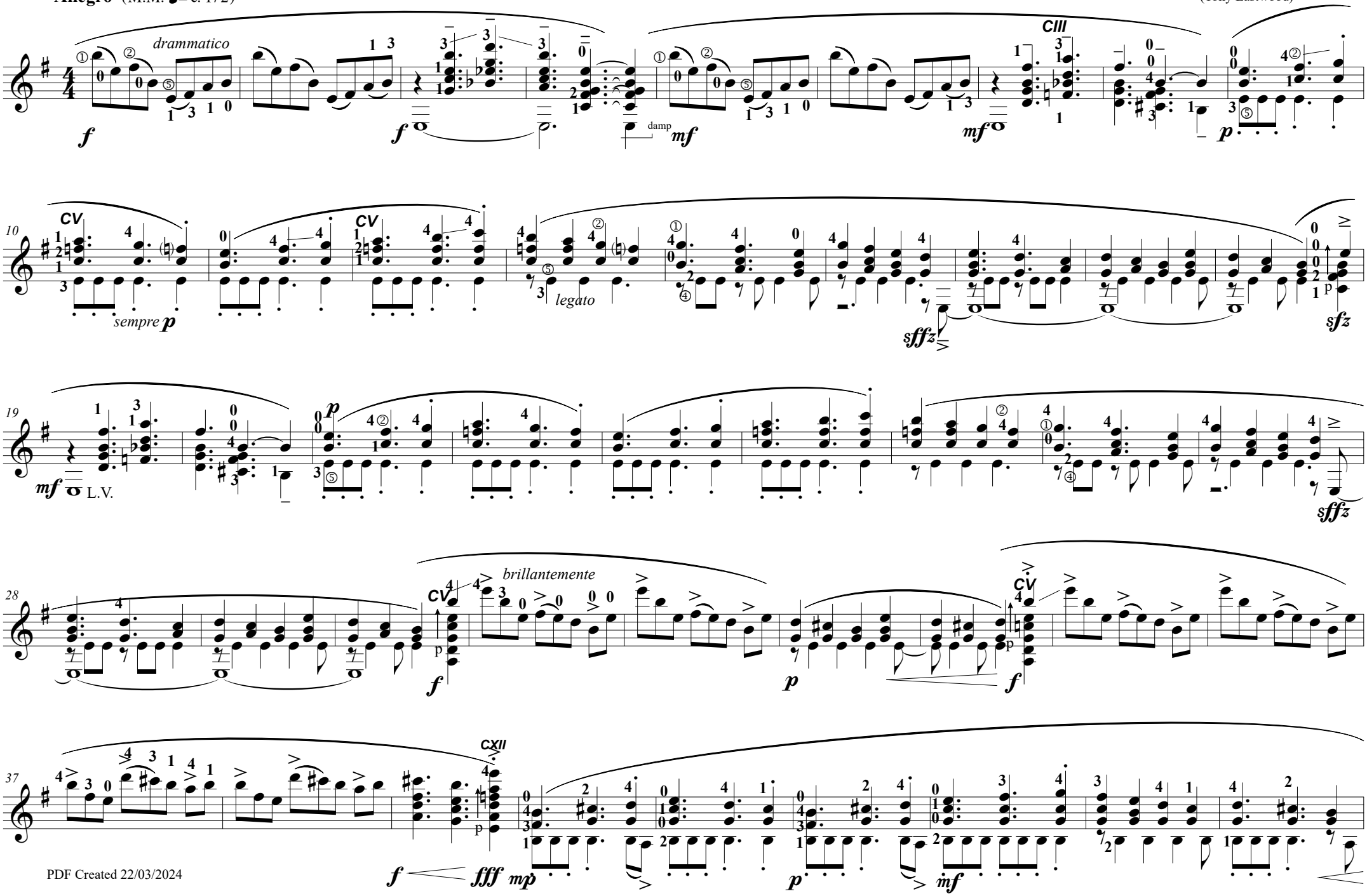

118
cantabile
C1I
poco
mp
ff
f
p
f
C1
harm
L.V.
126
un po 'animato
espress.
p
CIII
dolcissimo (tasto)
espress.
mf
p
135
CV
nat.
quasi violentemente!
CIII
(sempre ff)
ff
(accel...)
CV
p
ff
f
p i pi
ponticellissimo
comodo
142
tasto
C1
calmo
pp
CIII
p
C1
CIV
mf
CV
dolce
pont. . . .
sempre p
nat.
CV
151
CX
f
harm
espress.
f
p
CIII
mp
158
CIII
triste
p
legato
calmo
CIII
soave
CIII
legato
C1
soave
mp
CIII
C1
CIII
C1
CIII
167
CIII
"coma campana" - like bells
ff
L.V.
art.harm
harm
f
L.V.
mp
attaca
pp

Sonata 4 - Italia All'aperto (III) 'le Alpi - volare a nord'

L'Academico Caliginoso detto Il Furioso

(Tony Eastwood)

Allegro (M.M. ♩= c. 172)



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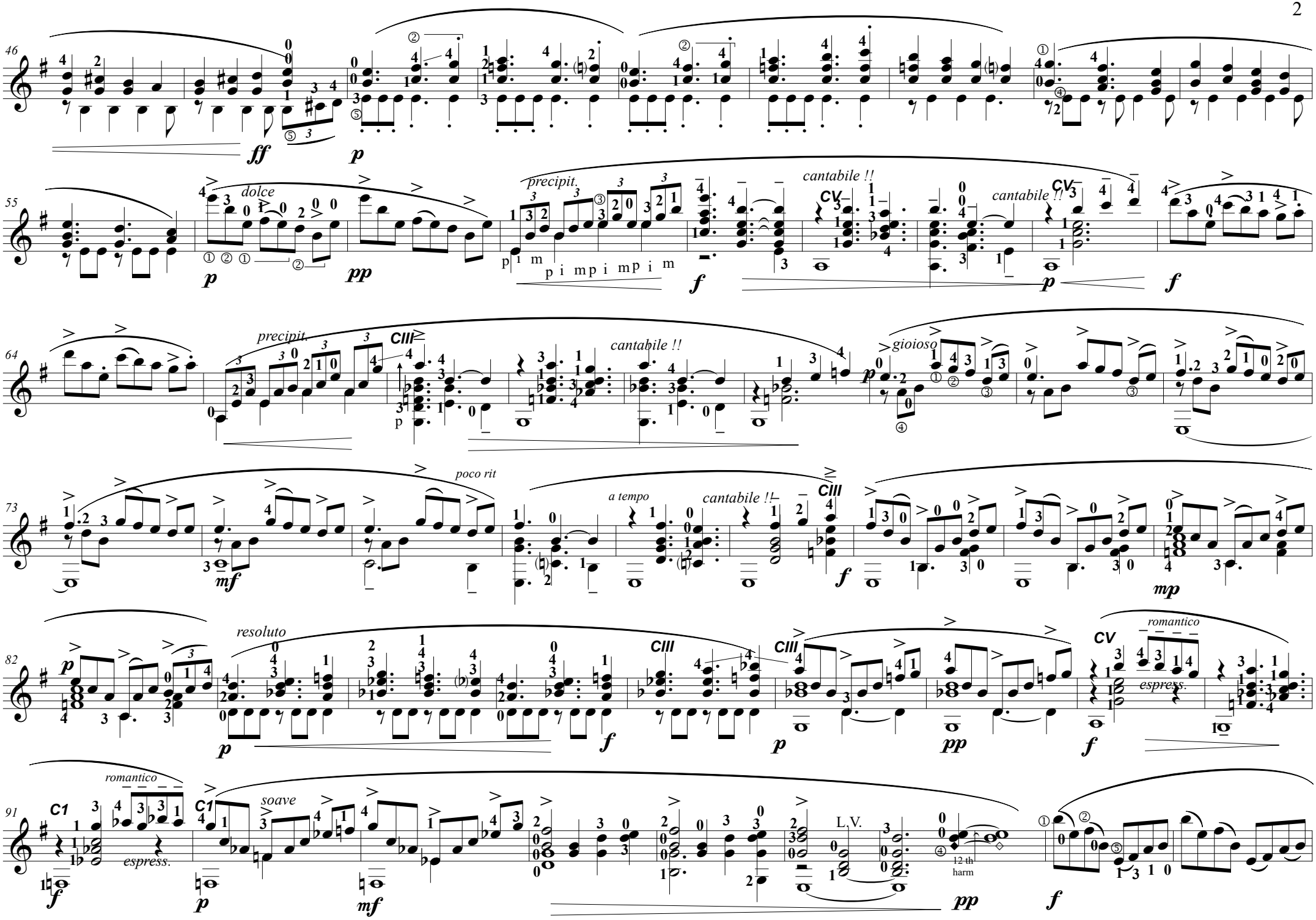
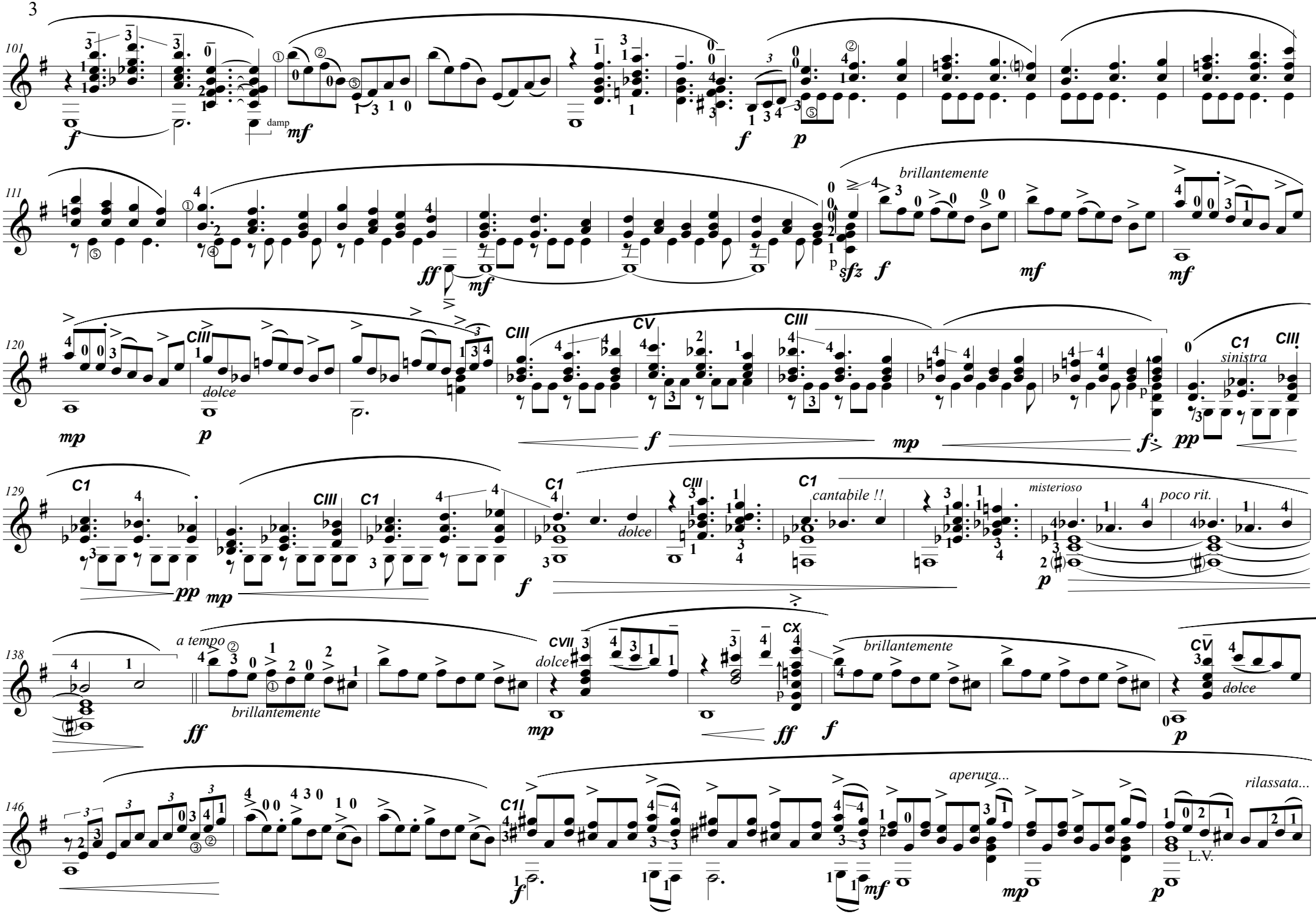
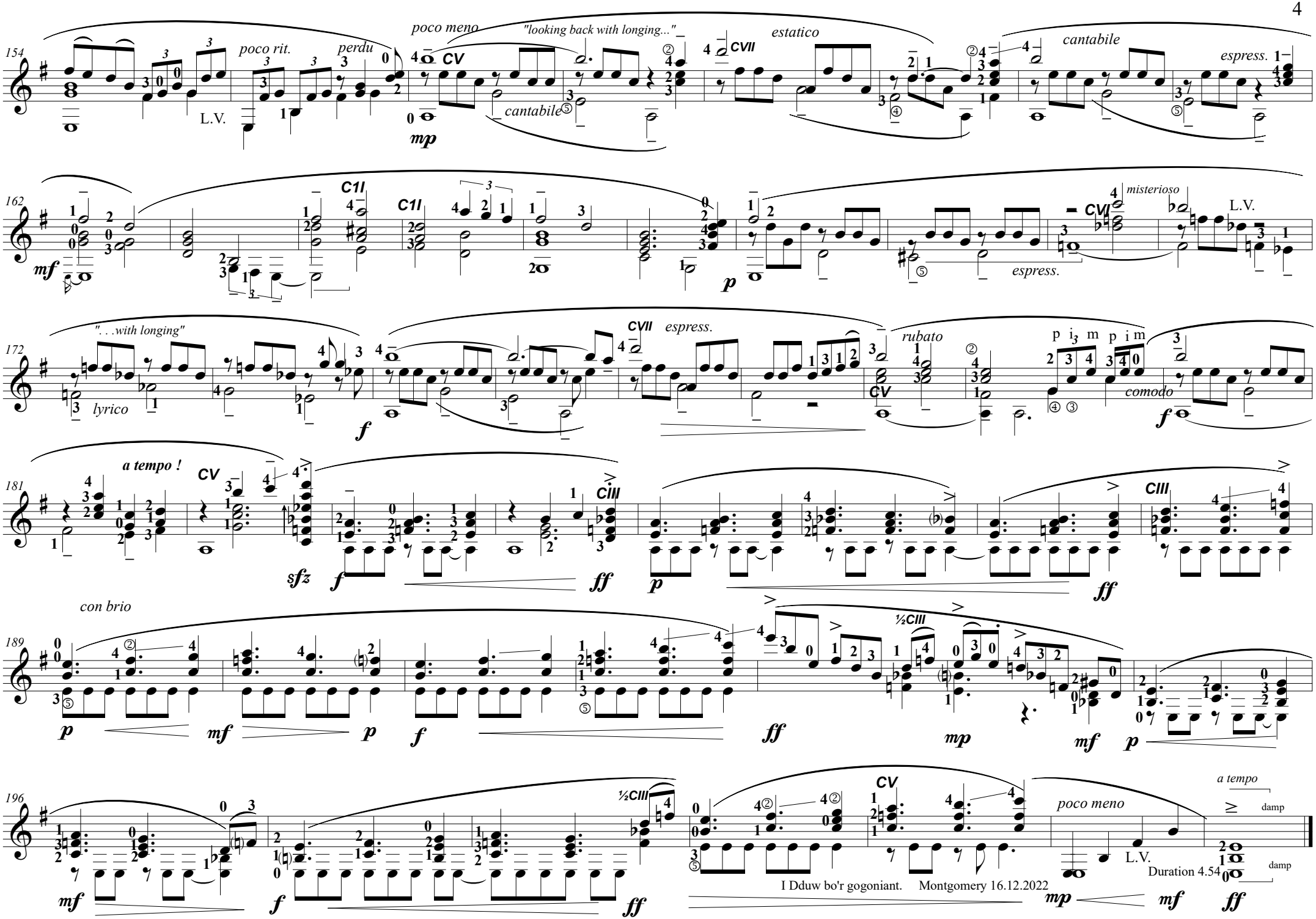

46
ff
p
55
dolce
p
pp
precipit.
p i m
p i m p i m p i m
f
cantabile !!
CV
p
cantabile !!
CV
f
64
precipit.
CIII
p
cantabile !!
gioioso
p
73
poco rit
mf
a tempo
cantabile !!
CIII
f
mp
82
resoluto
p
f
CIII
CIII
p
pp
CV
romantico
espress.
f
91
C1
romantico
espress.
f
C1
soave
p
mf
L.V.
12 th
harm
pp
f


101
damp
111
brillantemente
120
dolce
sinistra
129
cantabile !!
misterioso
poco rit.
138
a tempo
brillantemente
dolce
146
aperura...
rilassata...
L.V.


154
poco rit.
perdu
poco meno
"looking back with longing..."
estatico
cantabile
espress.
L.V.
mp
162
misterioso
espress.
mf
p
172
". . .with longing"
lyrico
espress.
rubato
comodo
f
181
a tempo !
sfz
ff
p
189
con brio
mf
mp
196
poco meno
a tempo
damp
Duration 4.54
I Dduw bo'r gogoniant. Montgomery 16.12.2022

Sonata 4 'Italia' : Notes to the player:

Except where noted below, this should be a bright snappy piece with a very clear crisp execution - think sunlight and open-air.

Milan

Main theme [bar1] - follow the accents carefully. In the varied version (e.g bar 10) the open 'e's must sound out as though you intended to play them and they were not hit accidentally. Bar 18 – 24 should be quite romantic. At bar 25 onwards rhythm dominates, but that could be a "tasto" sound – the repeat of the pattern at 176 is mandatory tasto. This figure also appears near the end of the piece (e.g. 233) - there it is very important that the bass notes are clearly articulated and emphasised (even in a 'p-pp' context).
Bar 72 - the tasto chord should be most noticeable after the ponticello. Bar 79 onwards is very lyrical – take care over the last chord of 79 – it must ring like a bell, as should the following chord. In bars103-106, let it really float – the listener has no clue a fugato is coming, they probably expect something more lyrical. In bar 114-6, as we can only have 'up-tail' and 'down tail' notes available it tricky to indicate the three voices without confusion. When you play this there will be a note on every quaver, but if you can articulate the three themes that's great.
Bar 124 – 127 - the high voice d and g notes are little quiet bells(all 'pp') – while the fugal idea is quite independent, pretend you are a duet. Bar10 – that last fff chord is a kind of high brass-chord you might hear in incidental music before some dramatic event. The next movement has similar chord ending bar 119.

Rome

This is much about contrast: gangsters in close-up, sophisticated polite; and yet ready to put a knife in your back. In the music there is a continuous linear contrast between the articulated bass part and the smooth flowing top line (E.g bars 1-17). But occasionally the contrast is in the time dimension – for example chords at 41 and 47 – those should be as bright and almost raucous as the remainder is smooth and smoochy. Bars 65, 74, 97 (and other places) demand absolutely faultless execution of the melody notes, eg the first [e,a ,d] chord must sound like a bright alpine sky in contrast with a previous muddy flurry of lower notes. Bar 104 - I canoe – I know what it feels like to be floating gently rocking side to side (in a boat, not dead!) – if you haven't you need to at least hire a boat on the park lake. That rocking is the experience we want to capture in music. Bar 133- last chord is to be well accented – from here onwards the music really becomes a lot more violent and energetic; you can take liberties with the tempo to support the violence. Then, at bar 142, you need to rapidly cool it down for something a bit more smoochy – bars 152 and153 should feel quite ecstatic.

The Alps (Flying North)

Much simpler in structure and easy to follow for the listener – it's basically a quick Rondo with a flashback to the slow movement. Apart from the 'flashback' section (bar 156-181) it must feel fast – but that doesn't mean just a quick tempo; too fast and some nuances will be lost. The figure in the first two bars doesn't need to be so loud that it's raucous (loud pull off's are easily raucous). In general much of this piece is quite quiet – against that background the louder bits – especially the sudden strummed chords will sound quite spectacular. Bar 89 and 91 - it really is molto-rubutato, you can slow those melody notes down as much as you want. By bar 138 the music is really wound down – smooth and gentle. But the figure in 139 should be very bright and very loud. Bar 139-140 and 143-144 remain very loud – but bars 141-142 and 145 should have quite a different tonal quality. Bar 156-181 – ensure the high notes ring full length. From bar 182 you should be racing for the end – as far as the listener is concerned 'the end' started on the last chord of bar 182.