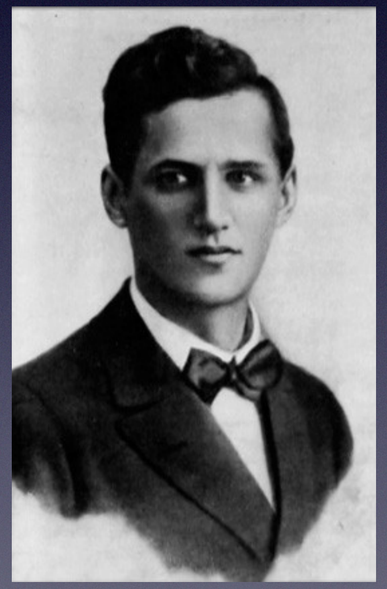
SHOSTAKOVICH

IN BLACK AND WHITE

THE PRODIGY

Leonid Nikolayev
1878-1942

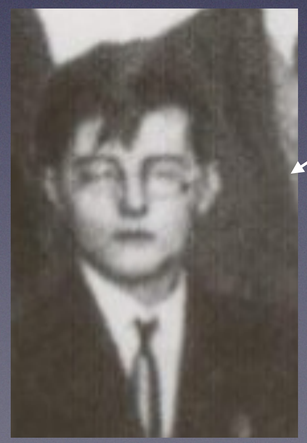
Mariya Yudina



Vladimir Sofronitsky

THE CHOPIN COMPETITION

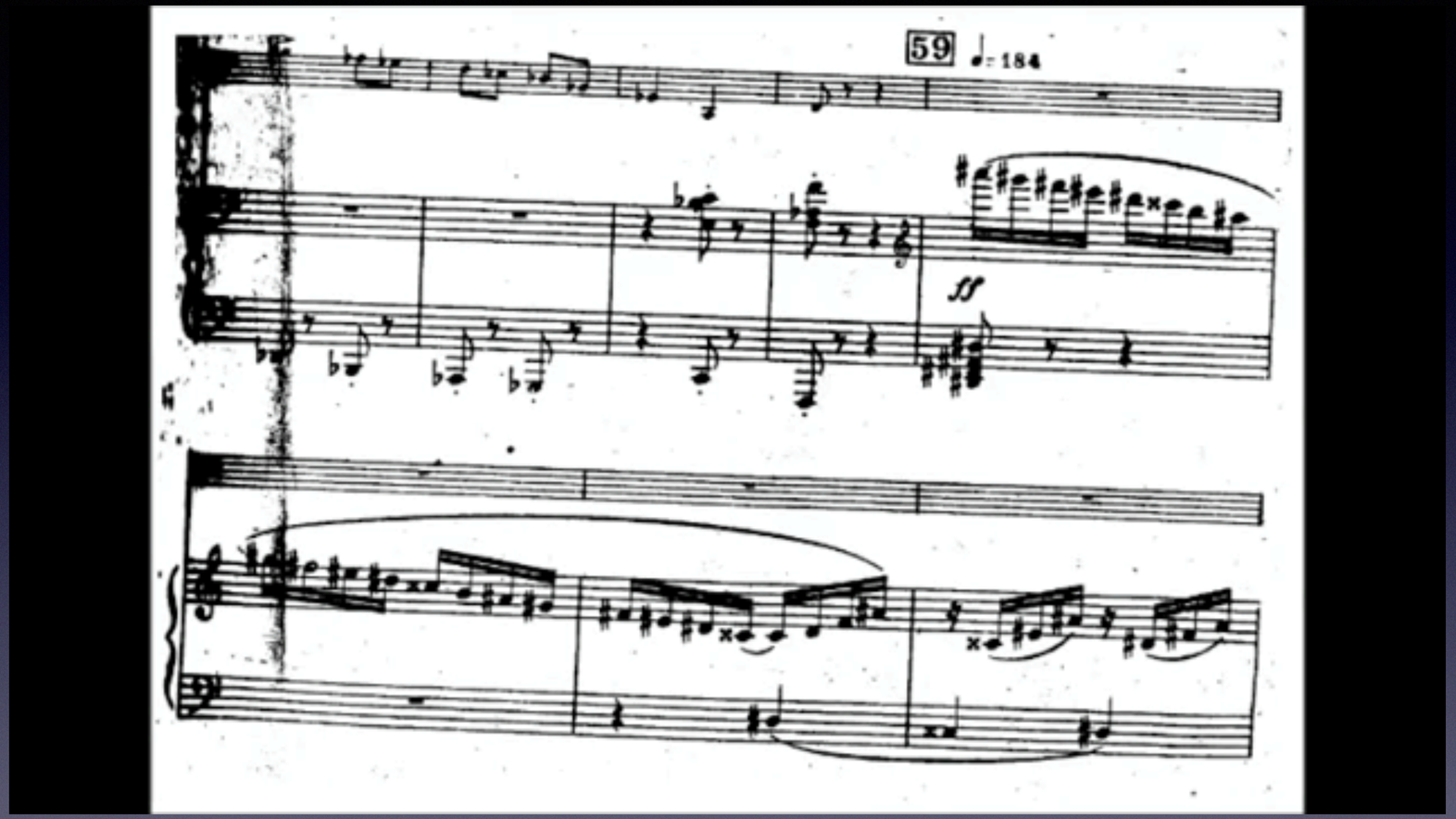
Uczestnicy i jurorzy I Konkursu (1927)
1st Competition participants and jurors (1927)



An acquaintance told me that Szpinalski (who played before me) took 51 seconds over the [B-flat minor] prelude. I played it in 47.

Shostakovich in a letter to Yavorsky

Yundi Li, winner of the 2000 Chopin Competition - 0’53’’



Shostakovich, Cello Sonata (finale), performed by Mstislav Rostropovich and the composer

… The Russian pianists appeared on stage looking like “proletarians”, with uncombed hair, ill-fitting collars, clumsy footwear and rumpled shirts. Even so, their performances of Chopin came across remarkably well…

(Warsaw newspaper)

I am deeply shaken by the death of Pyotr Voikov. I had become very attached to him while I was in Warsaw, and besides a general anger about the murder, I also feel a deep personal sadness. After my appendicitis in Warsaw, Voikov insisted that I should have dinner at his place every day so that I wouldn't run the risk of receiving poor-quality food in some restaurant. I also practised on the piano at his place, and after my fiasco, he treated me so well once again, and with such warmth – I will never forget that.

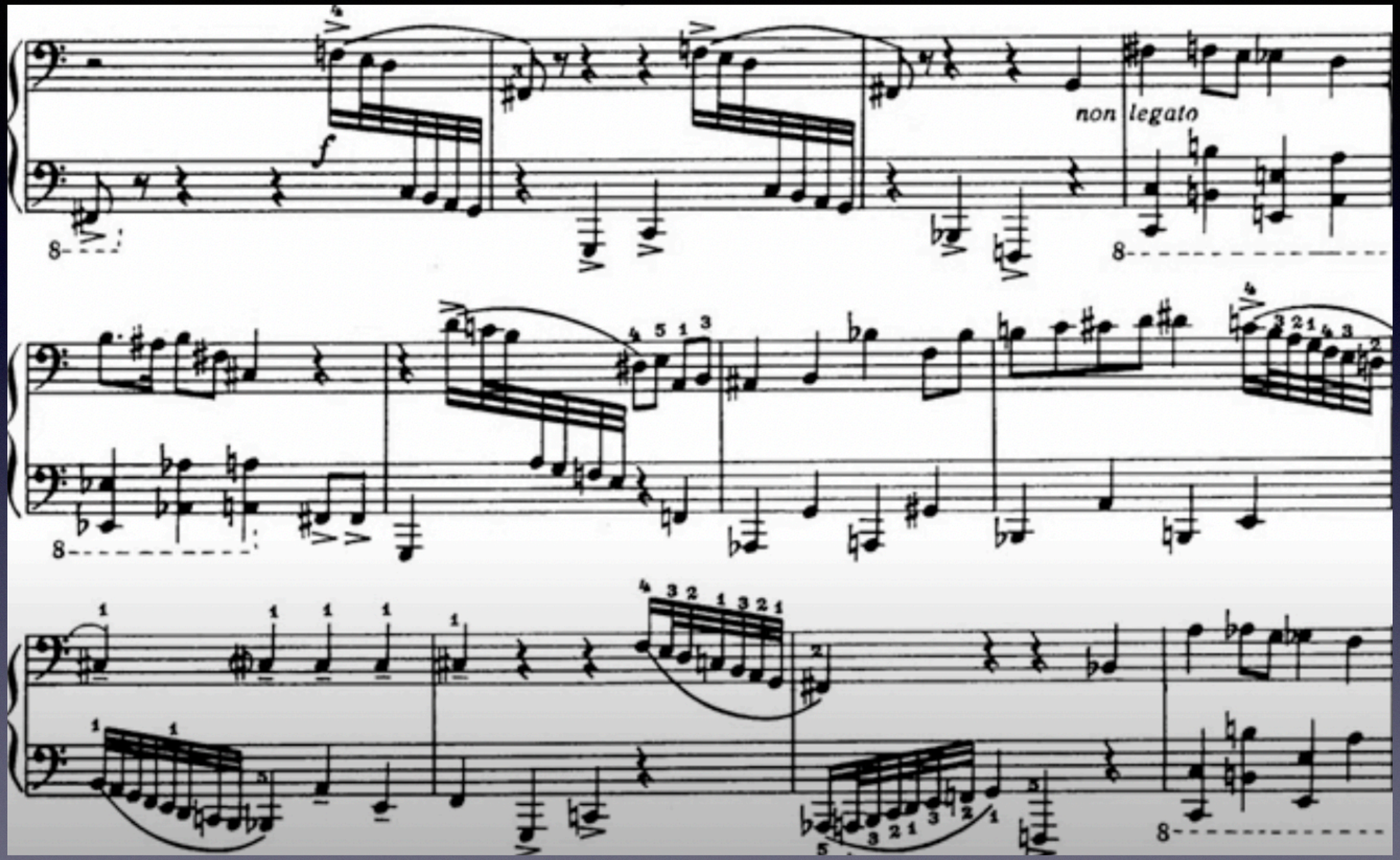
Shostakovich in a letter to Yavorsky

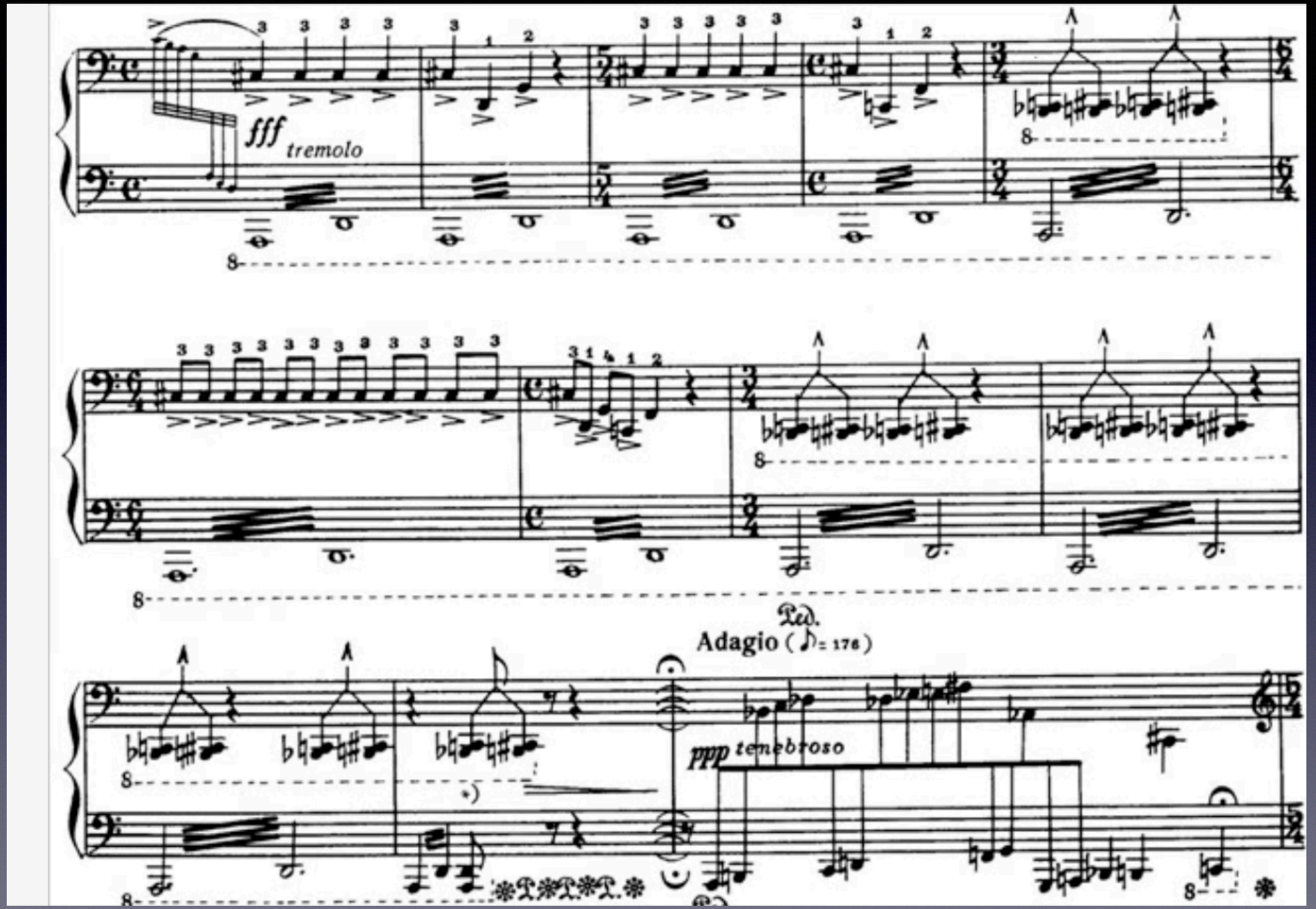
- Accuracy
- Clear articulation
- Not much pedal
- Dry, glassy character
- Anti-sentimental style with little rubato
- Lack of tone colours
- Amazing finger and octave technique
- Grasp of large-scale structure

- In performances of his own music:
- Always rushed as if ashamed of his own music
- Xylophone timbre in the top register

SONATA No. 1 (1926)

Pavel Filonov, Man in the World (1925)


non legato


fff tremolo
Ped.
Adagio (= 176)
ppp tenebroso

Prokofiev listened to the Sonata and asked me to play the beginning a little slower, because he didn't understand anything.

Shostakovich's letter to Yavorsky

Second up was Shostakovich, quite a young man, not only a composer but also a pianist. He played by heart and with panache, having passed me the score to peruse as I sat on the sofa. His Sonata opened with vigorous Bach-like two-voice counterpoint, and the second movement, which followed without a break, is written with supple harmonies surrounding an interior melody. It was pleasant, but diffuse and rather too long. The Andante leads into a quick-tempo finale, disproportionately short in relation to its predecessors. But it was altogether so much more lively and interesting than Schillinger's piece that I launched with joy into a paean of praise for Shostakovich. That amused Asafyev, who commented that the reason I had liked the first movement of the Sonata was because it showed my influence.

Prokofiev, Diary entry for 20 February 1927

The composer ignores the piano's range of timbral possibilities, and for this reason, it is difficult to listen to this Sonata.
The Leningrad Pravda, 1926

…as dry and tiresome as Czerny's études
Artistic Life, 1926

Maximilian Steinberg: There is nothing I have to say about such 'music'.

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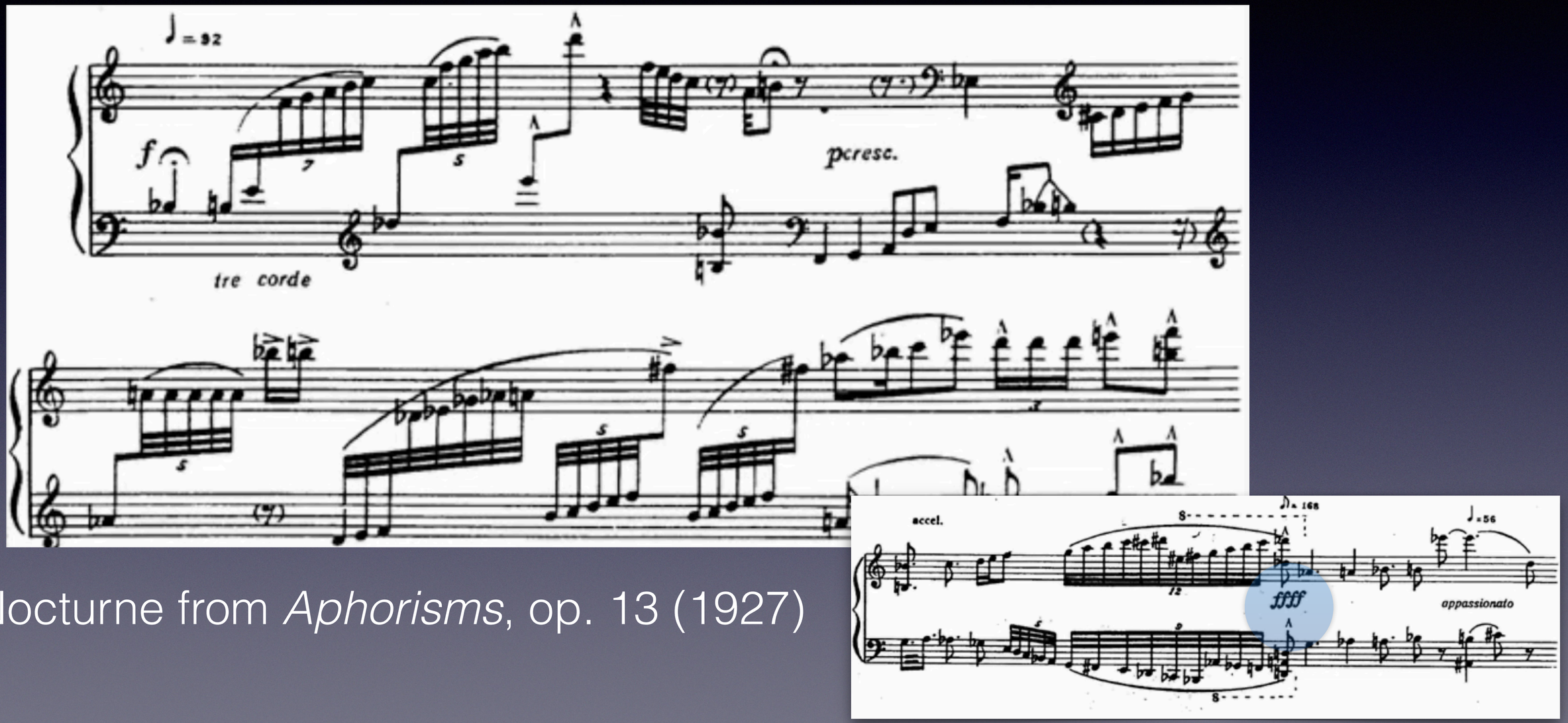
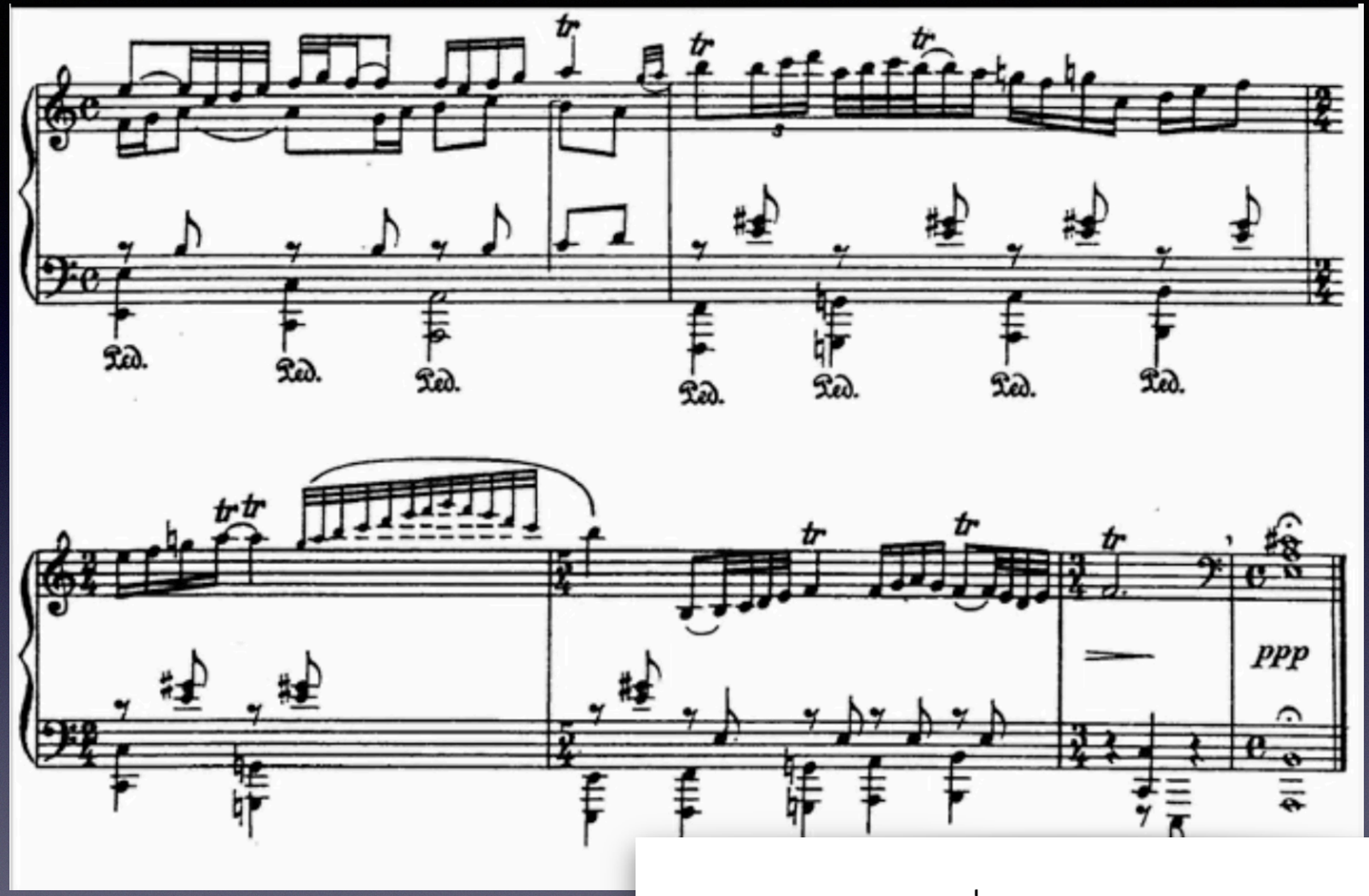
Her Temporary Husband, American comedy. At the piano D. Shostakovich

The Nocturne, despite only having one bar of music, is the longest of all. The shortest is the Recitative, 33 seconds.
Shostakovich to Yavorsky

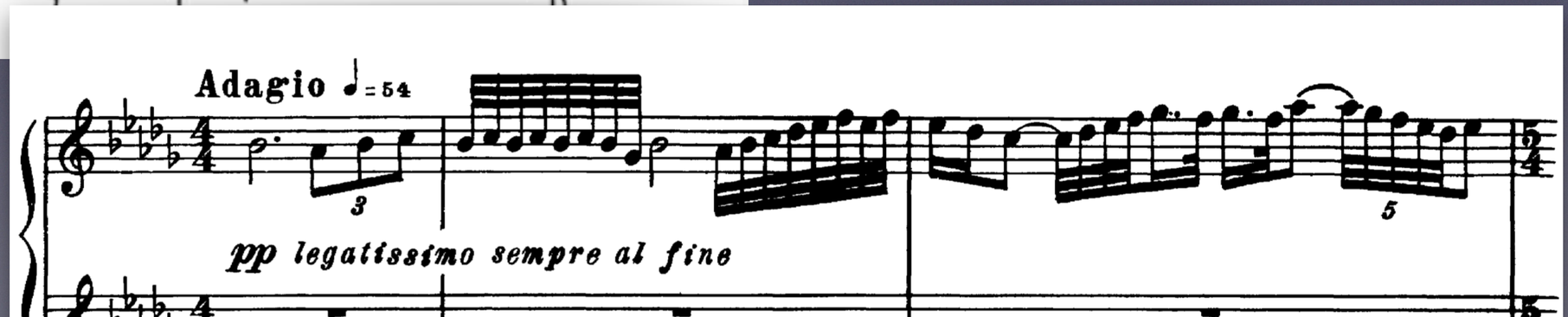


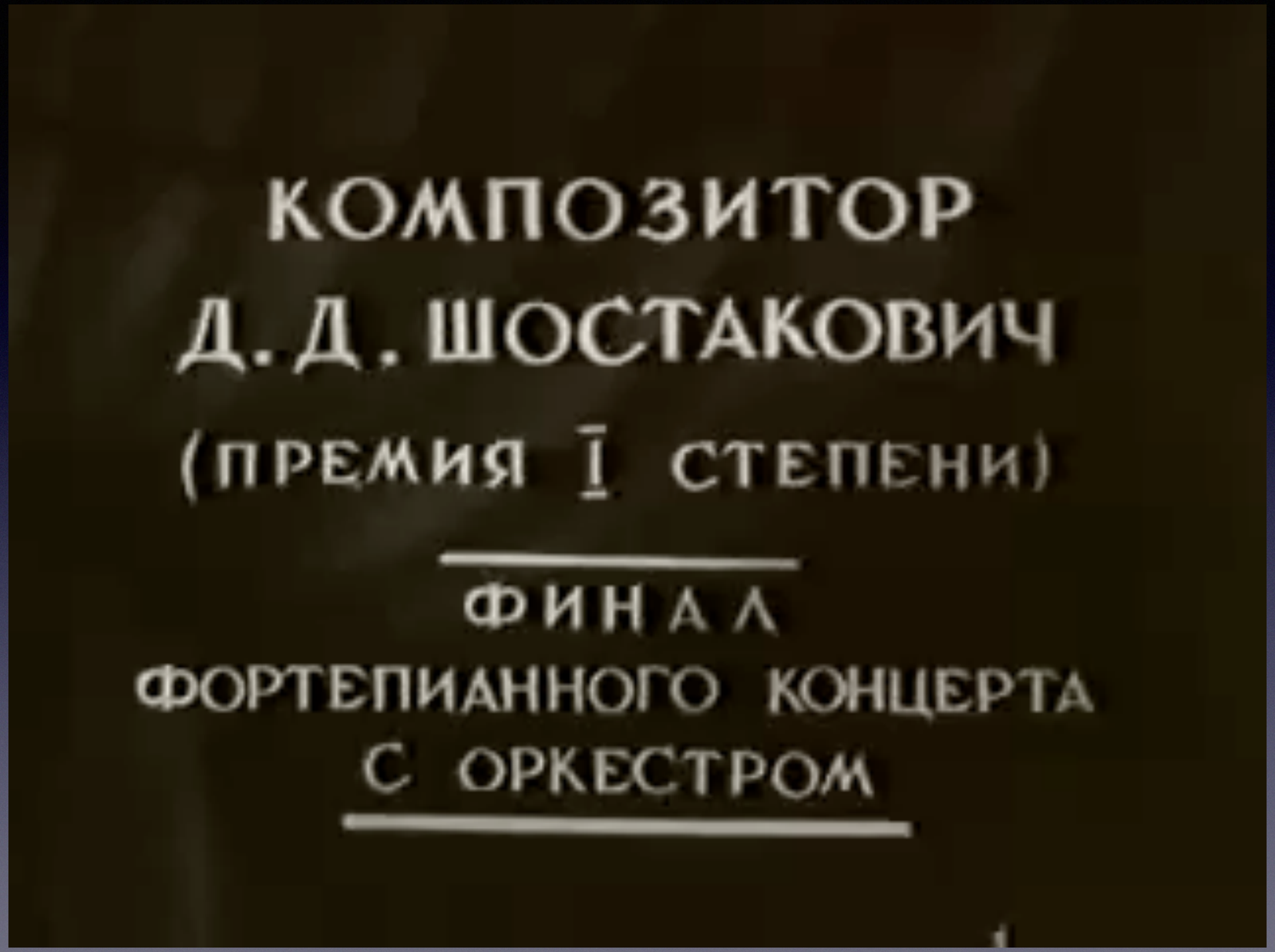
Nocturne from *Aphorisms*, op. 13 (1927)

Lullaby (the last piece in op. 13)



Fugue in Bb minor from op. 87





Shostakovich playing his own Piano Concerto No. 1

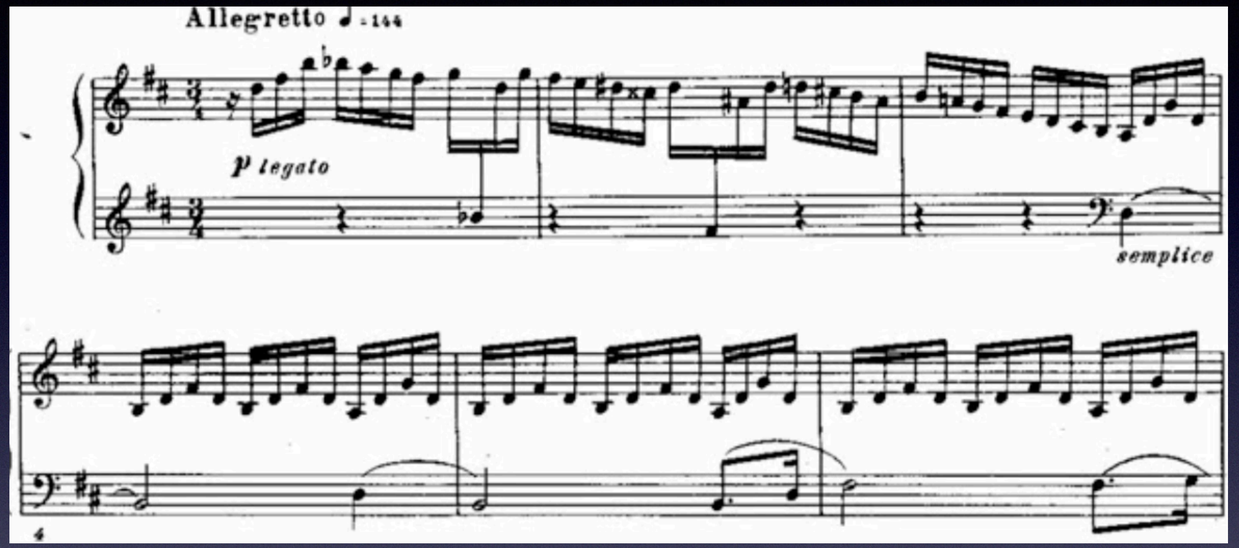
SONATA No. 2 (1943)

(Dedicated to the memory of Leonid Nikolayev)

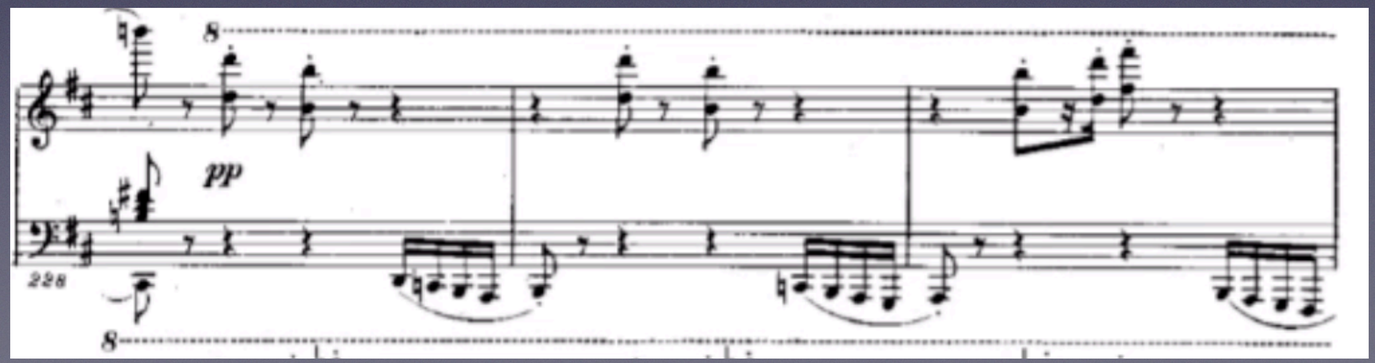
Pavel Filonov, Faces (1940)

Neoclassicism

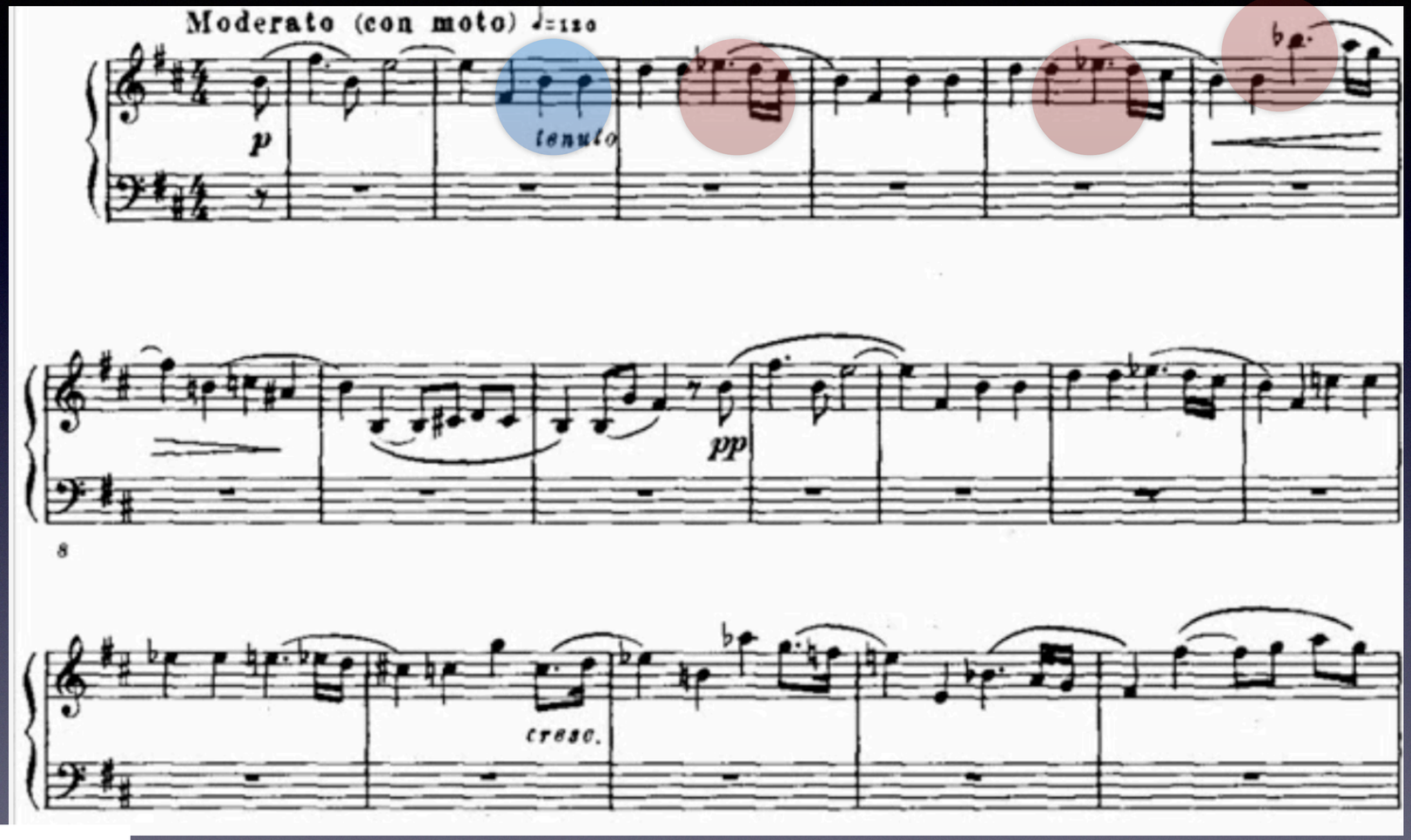
linearity, two-part textures

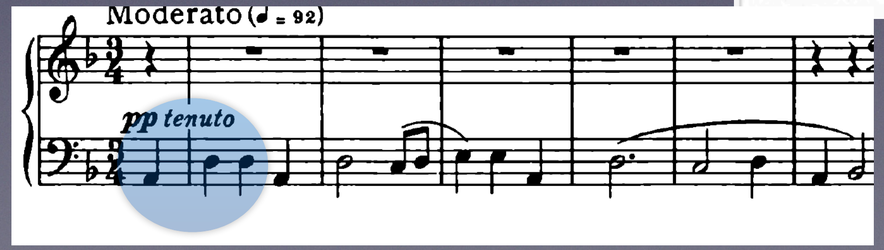


extreme registers



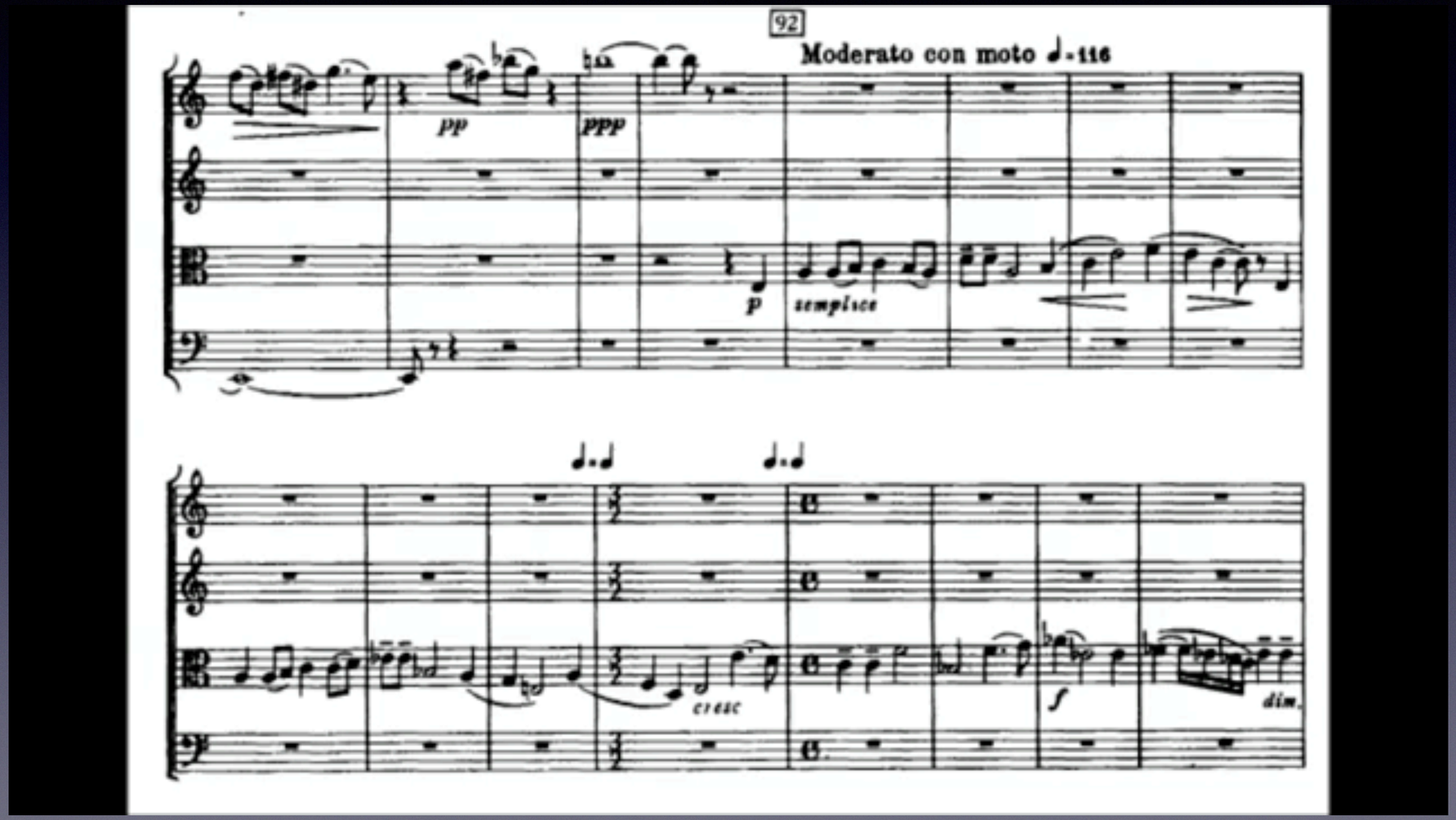
Finale: Theme and variations





D-minor fugue

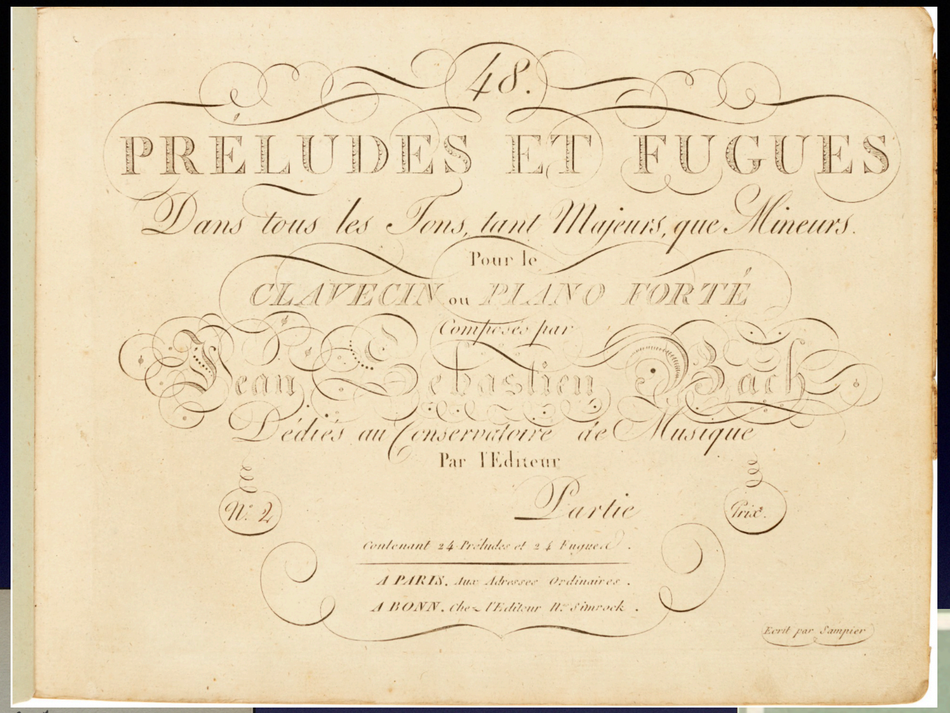
Quartet No. 2, Finale: theme and variations



PRELUDES AND FUGUES (1950-51)

Pavel Filonov, Shostakovich's First Symphony

Tatyana Nikolayeva (1924-93)



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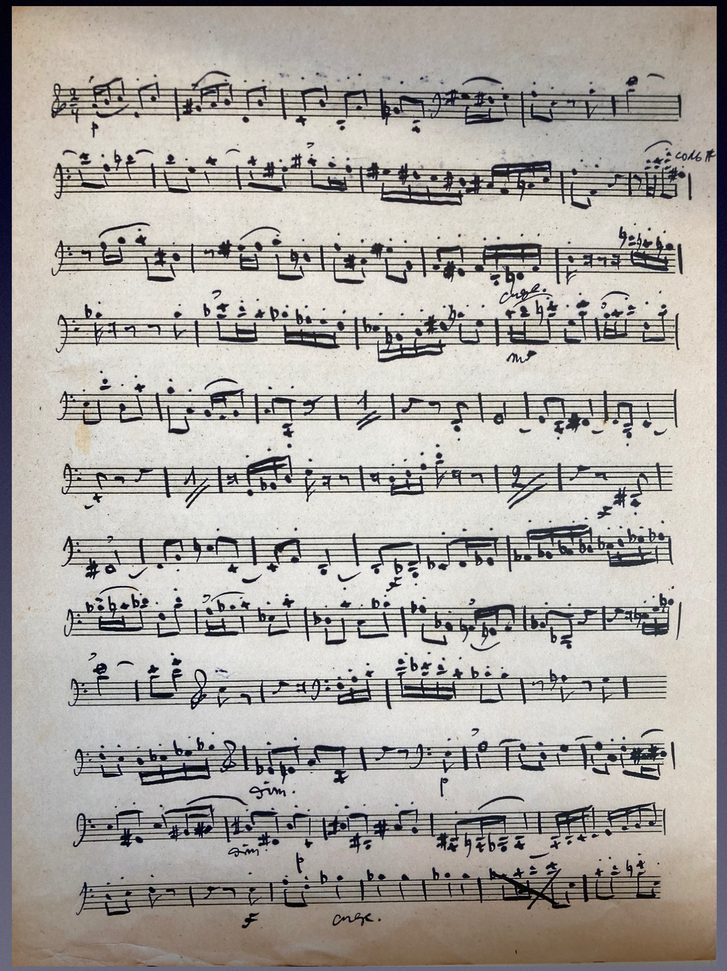
ДВАДЦАТЬ ЧЕТЫРЕ ПРЕЛЮДИИ И ФУГИ

ДЛЯ ФОРТЕПИАНО

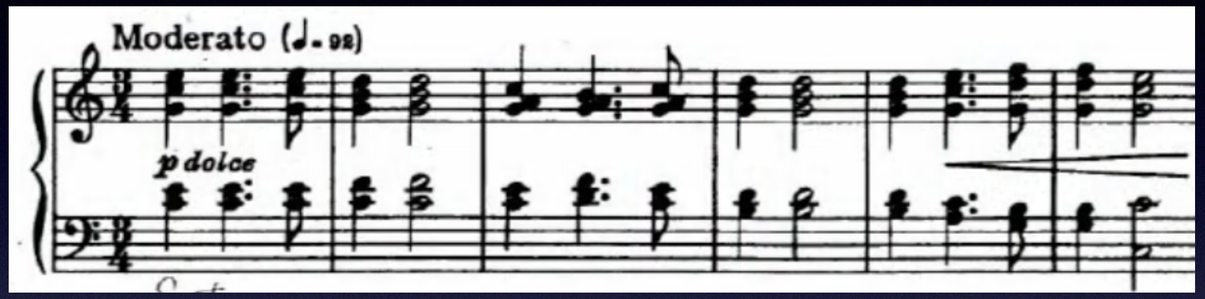
ЧАСТЬ ПЕРВАЯ
(I–XII)

I’ve decided to start working, so as not to lose my skills. I will be writing a prelude and fugue a day, just like J.S. Ba
(Yuri Levitin’s memoir)

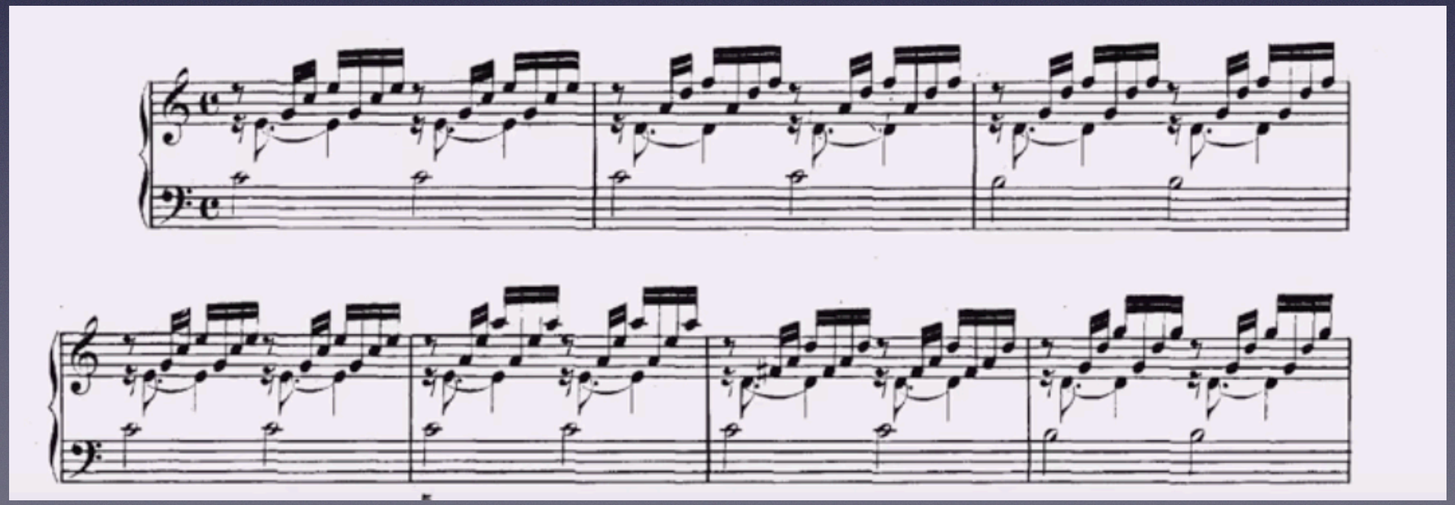


Separate copy of one of the voices
(Fugue in A minor)
in Shostakovich’s hand

PRELUDES AND FUGUES

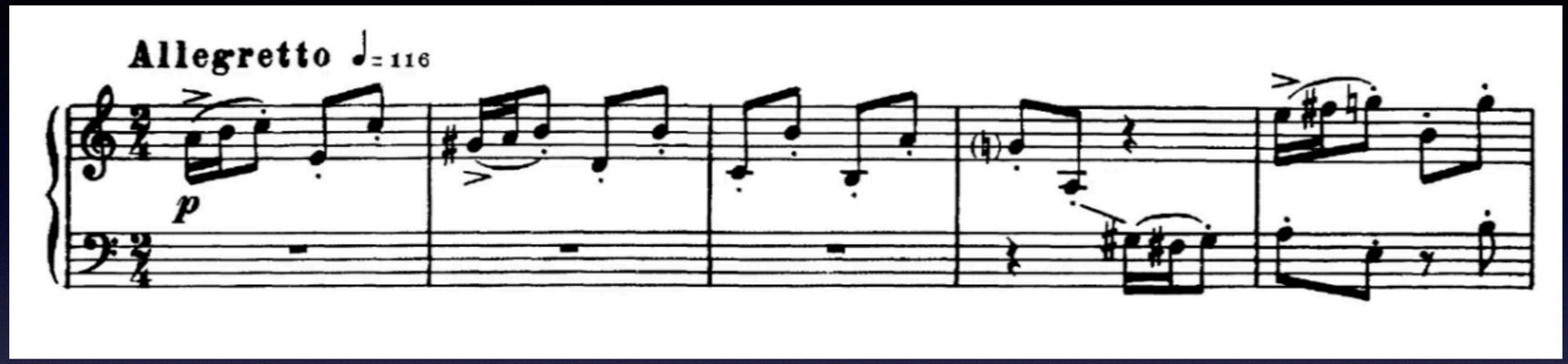


Shostakovich Prelude I (C major)

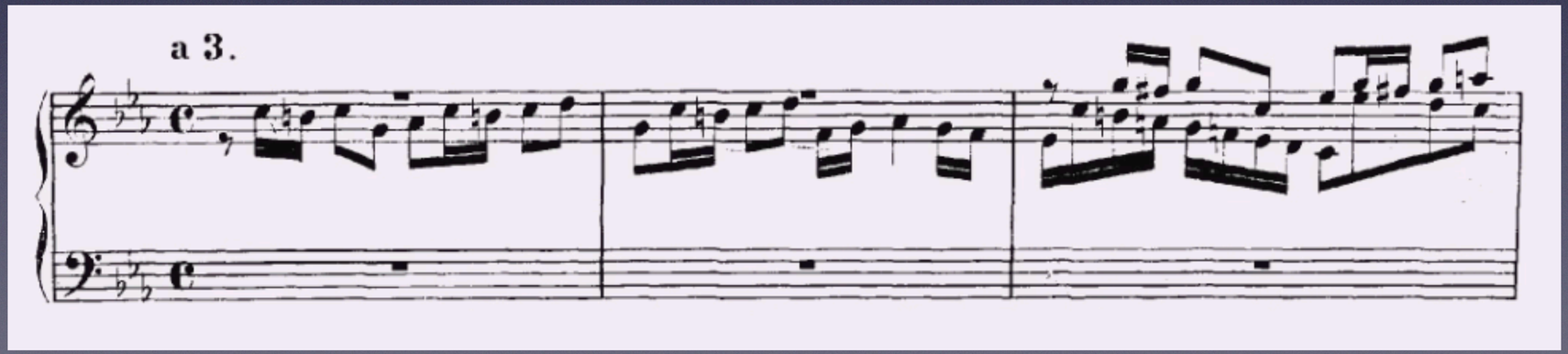


Bach Prelude I (C major)

PRELUDES AND FUGUES

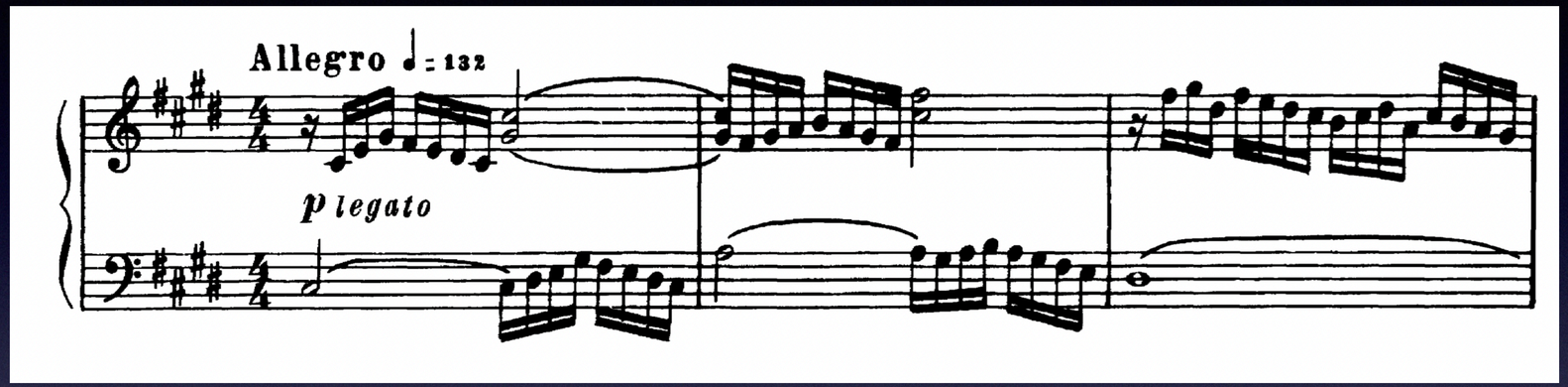


Shostakovich Fugue II (A minor)

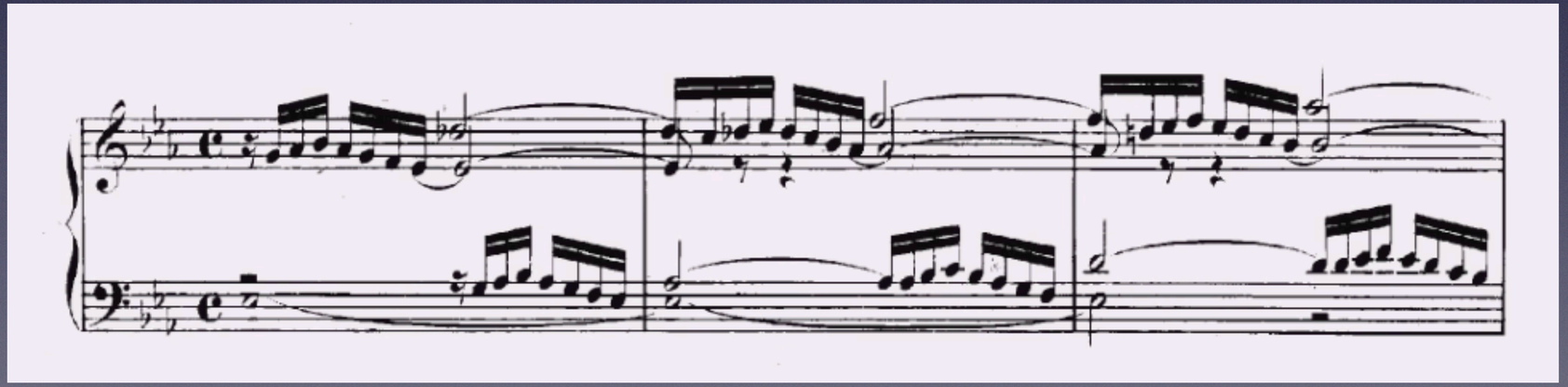


Bach Fugue II (C minor)

PRELUDES AND FUGUES



Shostakovich Prelude X (C# minor)



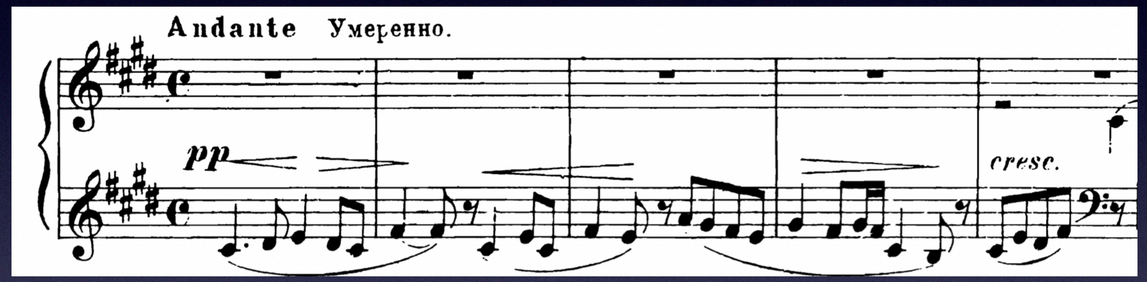
Bach Prelude VII (Eb major)

	PRELUDES	FUGUES
1 C major	sarabande, based on Bach I 1	“strict”, completely diatonic
2 A minor	moto perpetuo	based on Bach I-2 (C minor) but mutating into a Shostakovich scherzo
3 G major	chant + recitation	gigue
4 E minor	chorale prelude	double, “strict” second theme Russian
5 D Major	pastoral minuet	buffa (Mozart)
6 B Minor	“French overture”	2-element theme: strict and lively
7 A major	pastorale 12/8	glass harmonica
8 F-sharp minor	scherzo (Schubert, Prokofiev) Jewish elements	Incantation/cantillation
9 E major	folksong antiphony (male - female)	back to Bach scherzo-like virtuosic fugue (compare Bach I-3)
10 C# minor	2-part invention+ chorale	Russian *protyazhnaya* song
11 B major	musette	moto perpetuo fugue
12 G# minor	passacaglia (10 statements of the bass theme)	declamatory theme in 5/4

13 F# major	pastoral siciliano	5-part fugue on a simple theme, Bach is a model
14 Eb minor	dramatic tremolo and cantillation/chanting	Russian lyrical song
15 Db major	minuet/scherzo with a trio (compare Symphony No. 5)	chromatic “crazy” fugue
16 Bb minor	Russian folk or popular song; “strict” ornamental variations	highly ornamented “Baroque” piece in 5/4
17 Ab major	Russian popular song/ “bubliki”	Russian ditty/dance 5/4
18 F minor	aria *lamento*	Russian folk song
19 Eb major	chorale with contrasting “speech” interludes	strange mode and 5/4 a “bizarrerie”
20 C minor	austere chant vs recitative	chant-like theme with Russian song elements
21 Bb major	super-fast moto perpetuo	fast triple-time, close to gigue
22 G minor	moto perpetuo based on a sigh motif	Russian song-like theme
23 F major	pavane	Russian melodic elements
24 D minor	sarabande with declamatory moments, then anticipation of the fugue	double fugue/ grand finale; first theme with Russian song elements, second theme with sigh motifs

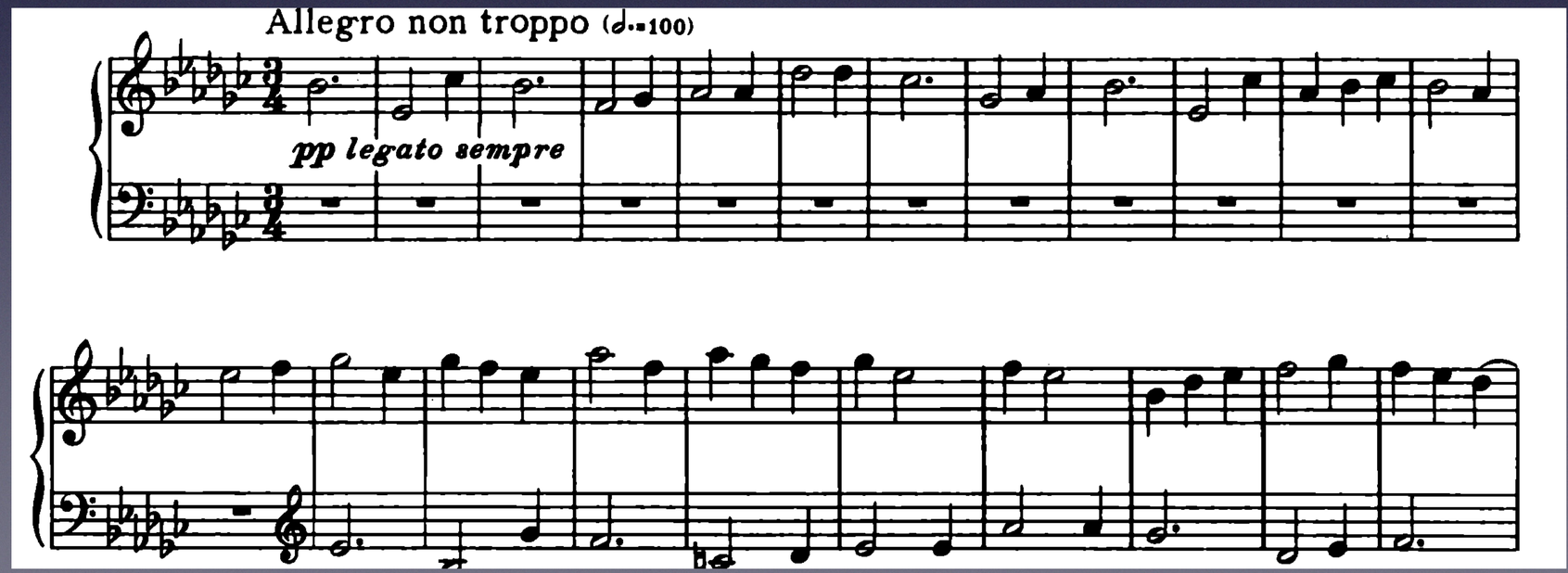
“Russian” elements

Musorgsky, *Boris Godunov*

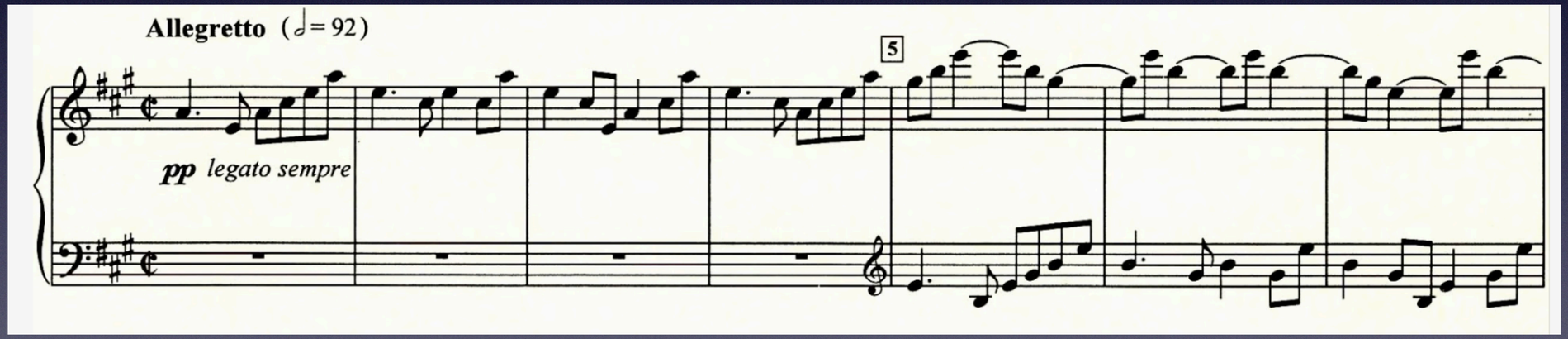


Bach’s “Russian” fugue theme

Shostakovich
Fugue XIV
(Eb minor)



Fugue in A major



D minor Prelude and Fugue

- monumental finale of the cycle
- the prelude begins as a sarabande
- the prelude contains a section anticipating the fugue
- the fugue has two themes which are initially presented separately
- theme 1 is related to Russian song, theme 2 is based on a “sigh motif”
- Slow burning and an ascent towards the final symphonic climax