James MATHESON

Windows

for Piano

THEODORE PRESSER COMPANY

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sample

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In 1954, the Rockefeller family asked Henri Matisse to create a stained glass Rose Window for the Union Church of Pocantico Hills, New York as a memorial to Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, the great art patroness and a founder of the Museum of Modern Art. It was to be the artist's last work.

A few years later, Mrs. Rockefeller's youngest son, David, acting on behalf of the family, commissioned Marc Chagall to create an entire series of stained glass windows to fill the rest of the small church resulting in the large, majestic "Good Samaritan" window and eight sublime smaller windows, each depicting a biblical figure or scene. In 2015, Premiere Commission commissioned James Matheson to compose WINDOWS to celebrate the centennial of the Union Church of Pocantico Hills and the 100th birthday of David Rockefeller.

This deeply touching, epic cycle distills into music the intimate, often heart-rending, visions of Chagall as well as the powerful simplicity of Matisse's modern design which utilizes the striking collage forms he employed in his final years. Matheson's work also reflects the influence of Olivier Messiaen's own theologically-inspired music. Like the French master, Matheson utilizes large-scale blocks of harmonies with organ-like sonorities to support and shift the music's kaleidoscopic planes of color and set into relief the work's piercing motifs and intricate patterns. The universal themes of love and sacrifice ("Jeremiah" and "Isaiah"), loss and altruism ("Crucifixion" and "The Good Samaritan") and the jubilant celebration of life and nature ("The Rose") are memorably portrayed in this poignant tribute to the human spirit.

—Bruce Levingston

WINDOWS was premiered at Carnegie Hall on April 4, 2016 by Bruce Levingston. It appears on his album *Windows* (DSL 92218) released by Sono Luminus.

Total Duration: c. 25 minutes

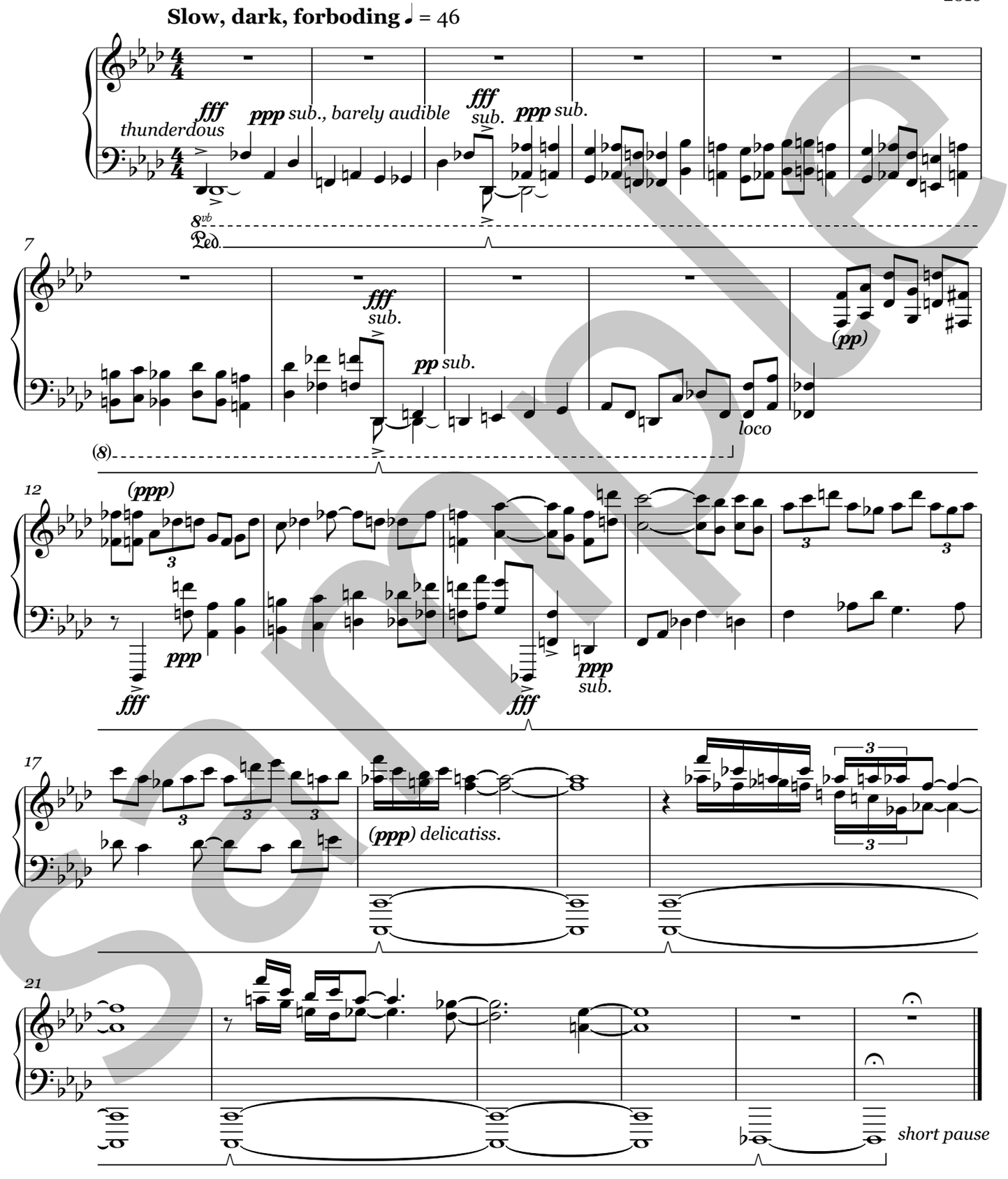
sample

Commissioned by Premiere Commission, Inc.
written for Bruce Levingston

Windows

1. Jeremiah

James Matheson
2016



Sample

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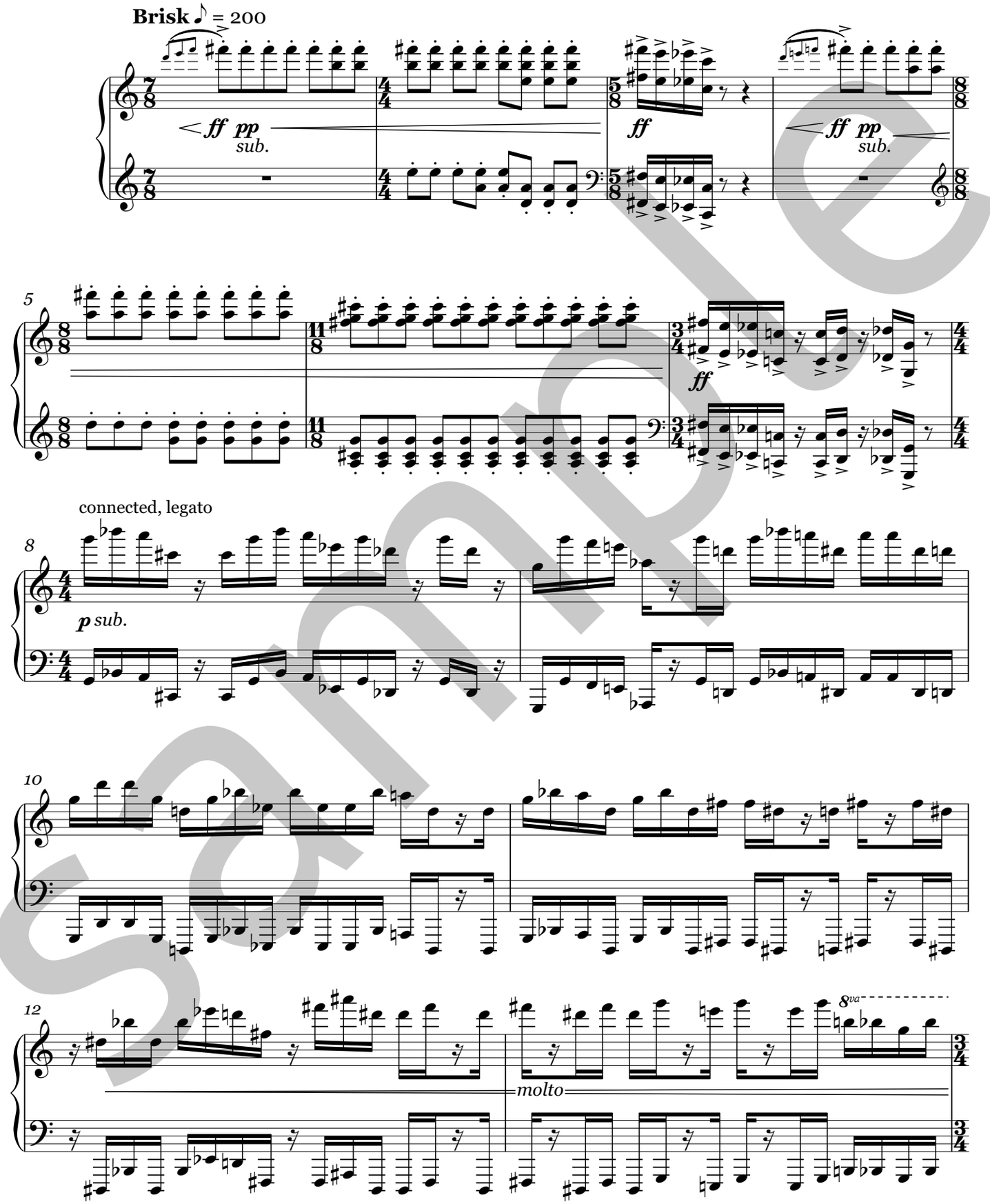
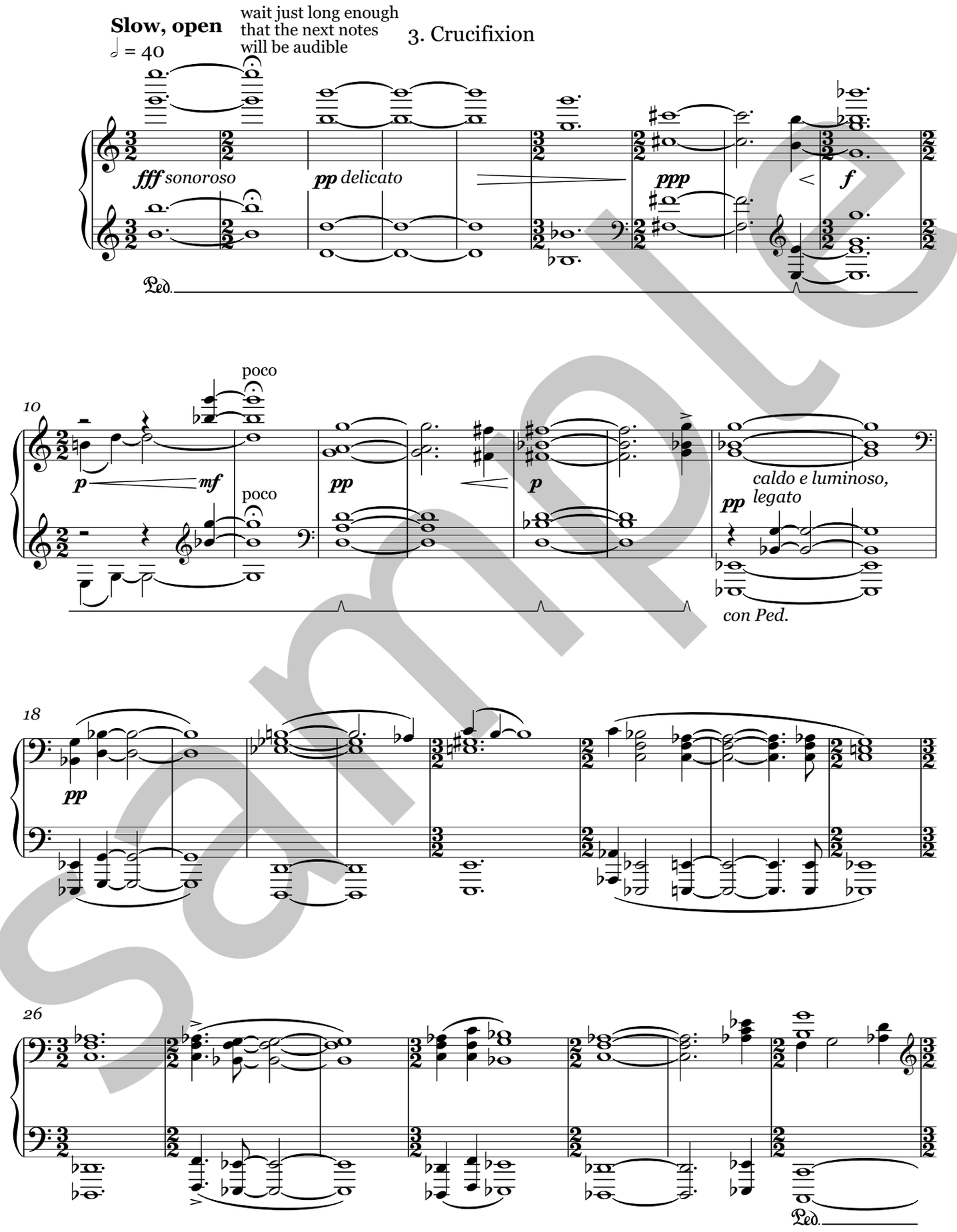
2. Isaiah



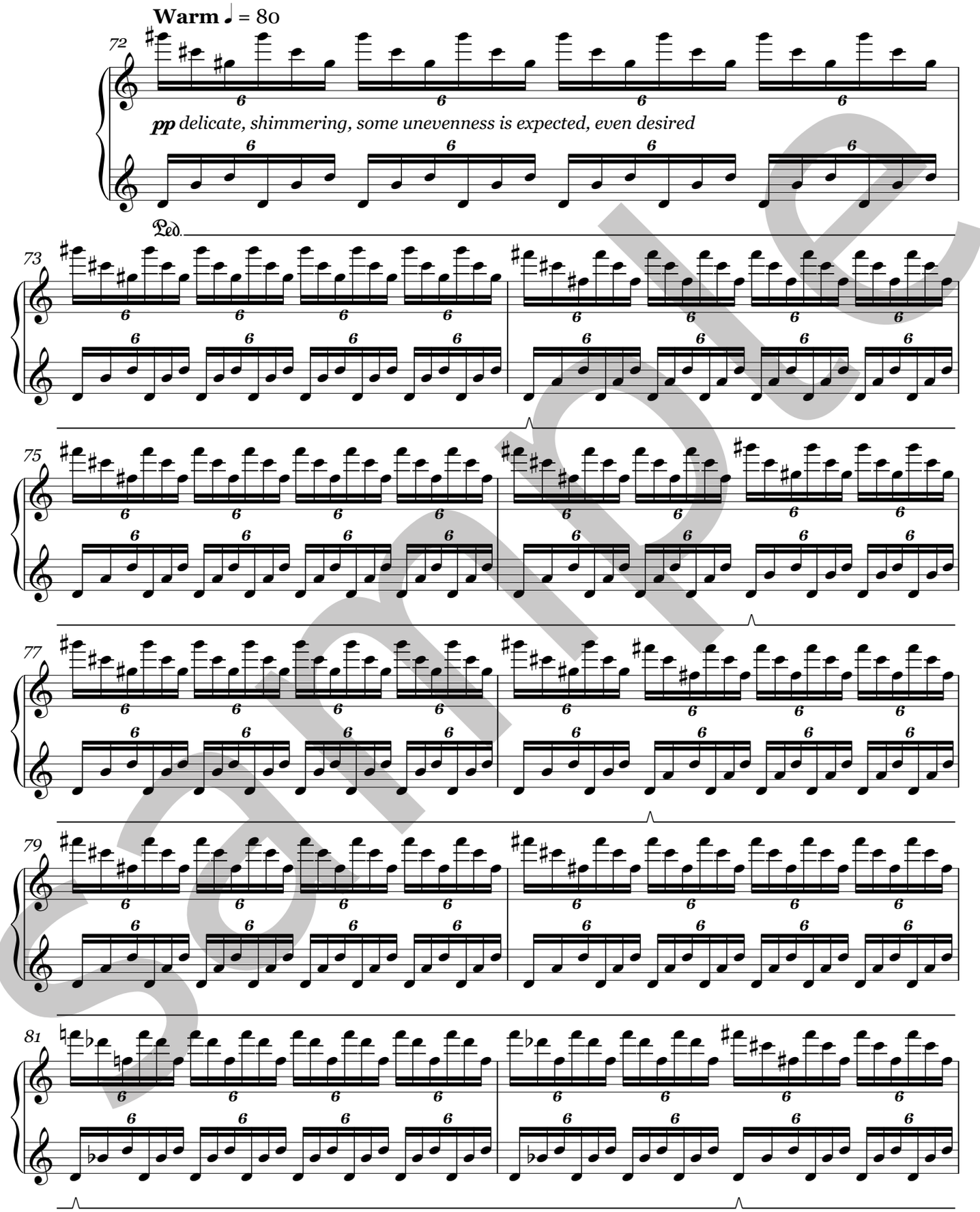
sample

3. Crucifixion



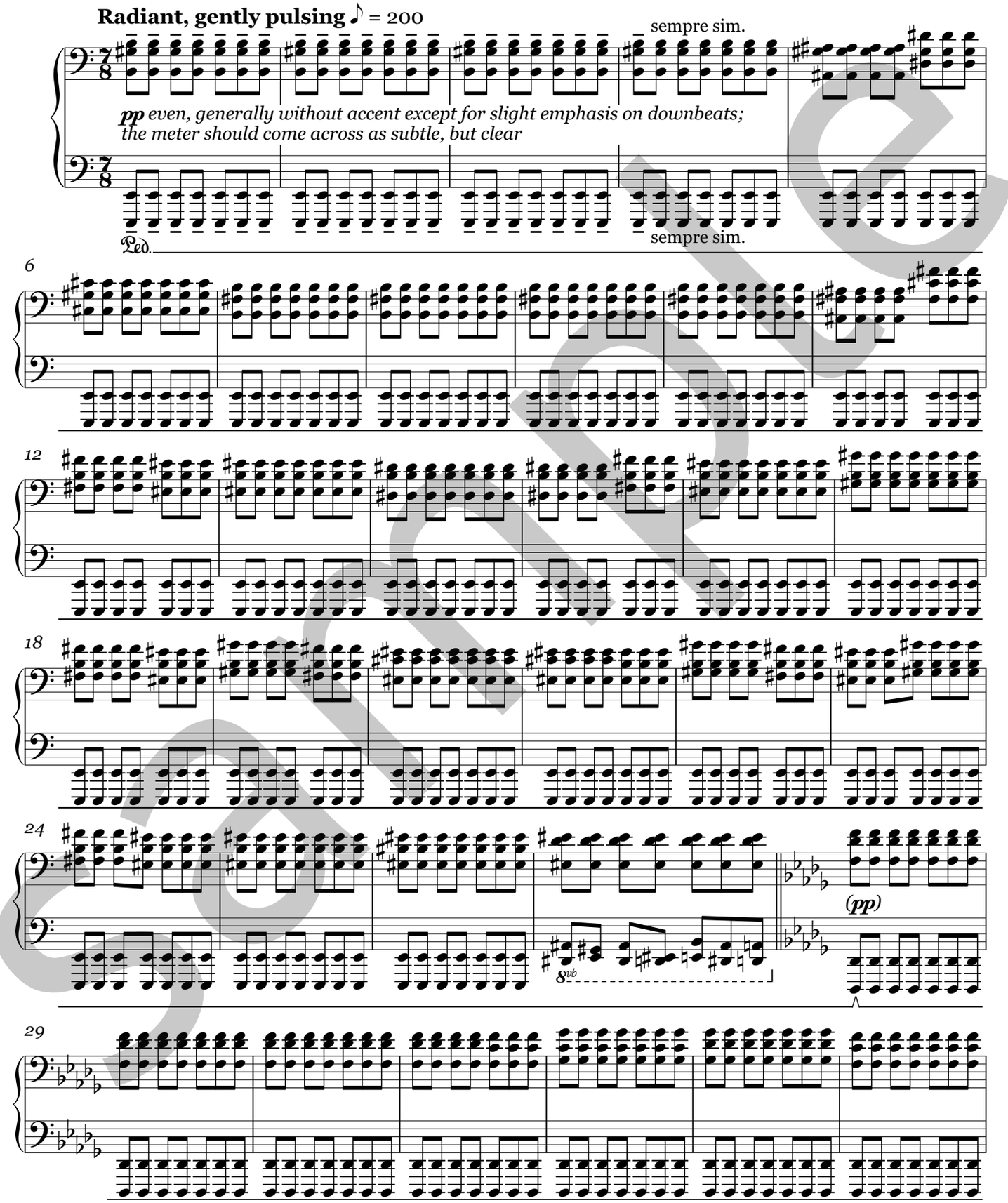
Sample

4. The Good Samaritan



sample

5. The Rose



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