Etudes 1 & 2

for Solo Organ

Jeffrey D. McCune

Score

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ISMN: 979-0-706080-29-1 CP046

Program Note by the Composer:

Designed as a set of two contrasting works, the first Etude explores the Grand Organ in all its rafter-shaking glory. The second Etude is slower in style and explores layers of harmony that constantly change and subtly evolve over the course of the piece, ending in a soft, meditative coda.

Etude No. 1
Grand, majestic, aggressive and full-voiced, this Etude explores the power and intensity of the full organ. If being played on a tracker-style instrument, the keys being depressed as the bellows engage creates a remarkable series of grunts, sighs, sighs and wooshes as the beast roars to life. If being played on a pneumatic-electric style instrument, the first chord is suitably jarring. The harmonic vocabulary is tonally based, but includes instances of modal mixture, added tones, jazz and non-functional harmonic constructs. The Etude ends triumphantly in D major.

Etude No. 2
In contrast to the first Etude, the second etude strives to create and explore a fabric of subtly altering harmonic flow using slow arpeggiation and soft, gentle registration. Beginning from a higher set of pitch classes, the gradual and progressive flow of undulating harmony works its way lower through the registers until it reaches the bottom range of the keyboard. The undulating arpeggios tighten and eventually converge into two tones a major second apart; the tension then releases into a coda of soft sustained chords in non-functional and tonal harmony bringing the work to a gentle conclusion.

Duration: Etude No. 1 2:15; Etude No. 2 5:50

Composer Biography:

Edmonton composer Jeff McCune's works have been performed throughout Canada, the United States Europe, and east Asia. His works encompass the worlds of symphonic music, chamber works, art-song and opera and have been performed by such organizations as the Toronto Symphony, Edmonton Symphony, Calgary Symphony, Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, Arraymusic, the Hammerhead Consort, Pro Coro Concert Choir, and the Duo Majoya. Many of his concert works have also been recorded and broadcast internationally, including ***Red Hills and Blue Sky: Hommage to Georgia O'Keeffe***, the ***Painter Suite***, ***Crossing to Byzantium*** (organ and piano), and ***Overture Sauvage*** (orchestra). In May, 2005 he was one of the featured composers honored by the Edmonton Symphony at the Alberta Scene 100th Anniversary Celebrations in Ottawa. Jeff McCune was formerly the Artistic Administrator for Edmonton Opera and is an Associate Composer with the Canadian Music Centre.

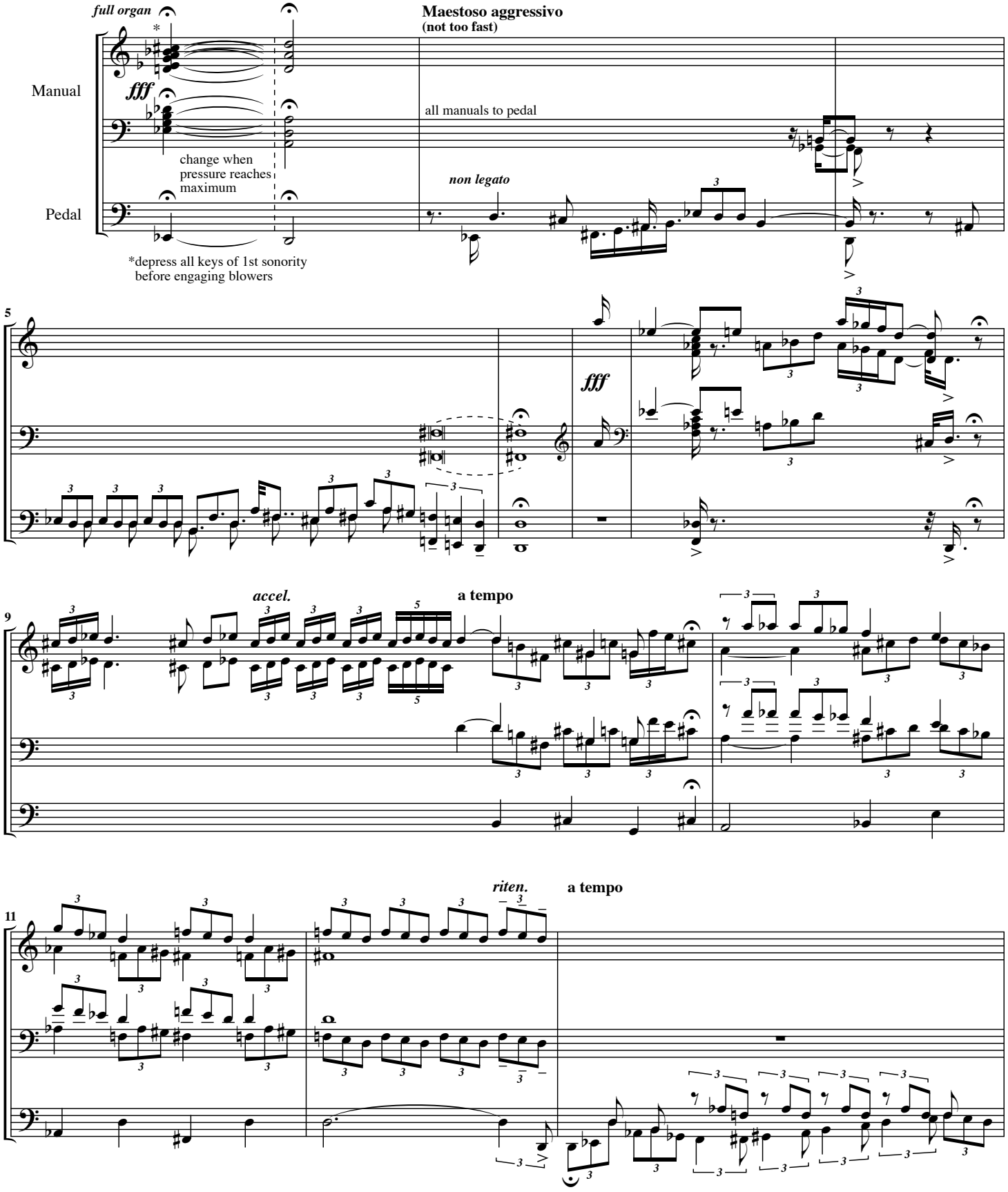
In addition to composition and administration, he has been a guest instructor at the University of Alberta's Faculty of Extension Edmonton Life Long Learners Association Series for the past 12 years and teaches regularly at Edmonton's Metro College for Continuing Education. He has also been a guest judge and adjudicator for Edmonton's Youth Talent Explosion, and is currently developing a presence as a visual artist.
To view his current works and portfolio, please visit https://www.jeffmccunefineart.com

His musical works are available on the Clef and Arktos recording labels and are published by Counterpoint Music Library Services.

Cover: Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument Arizona by Jon Manjeot

Etude I

Jeffrey D. McCune



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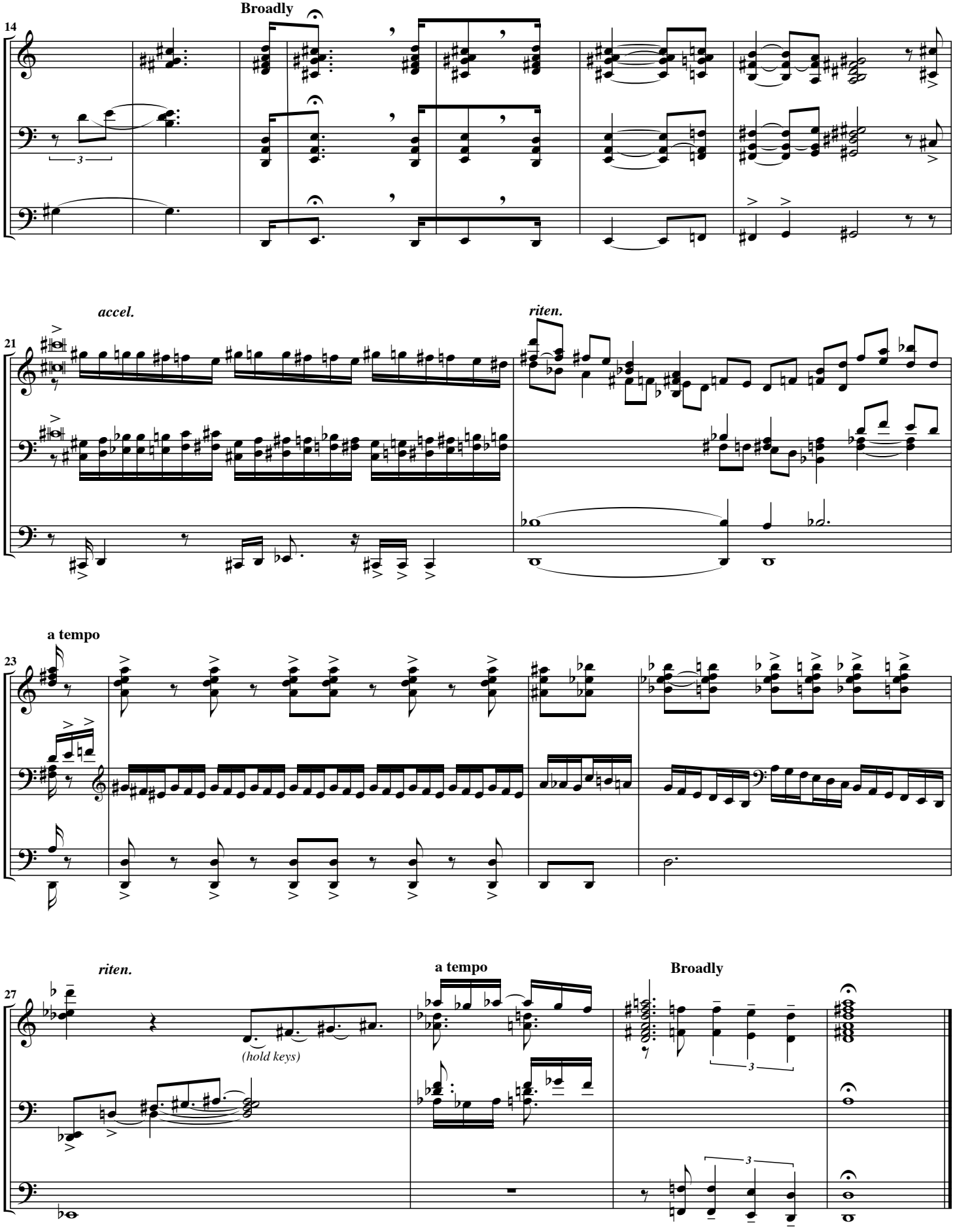
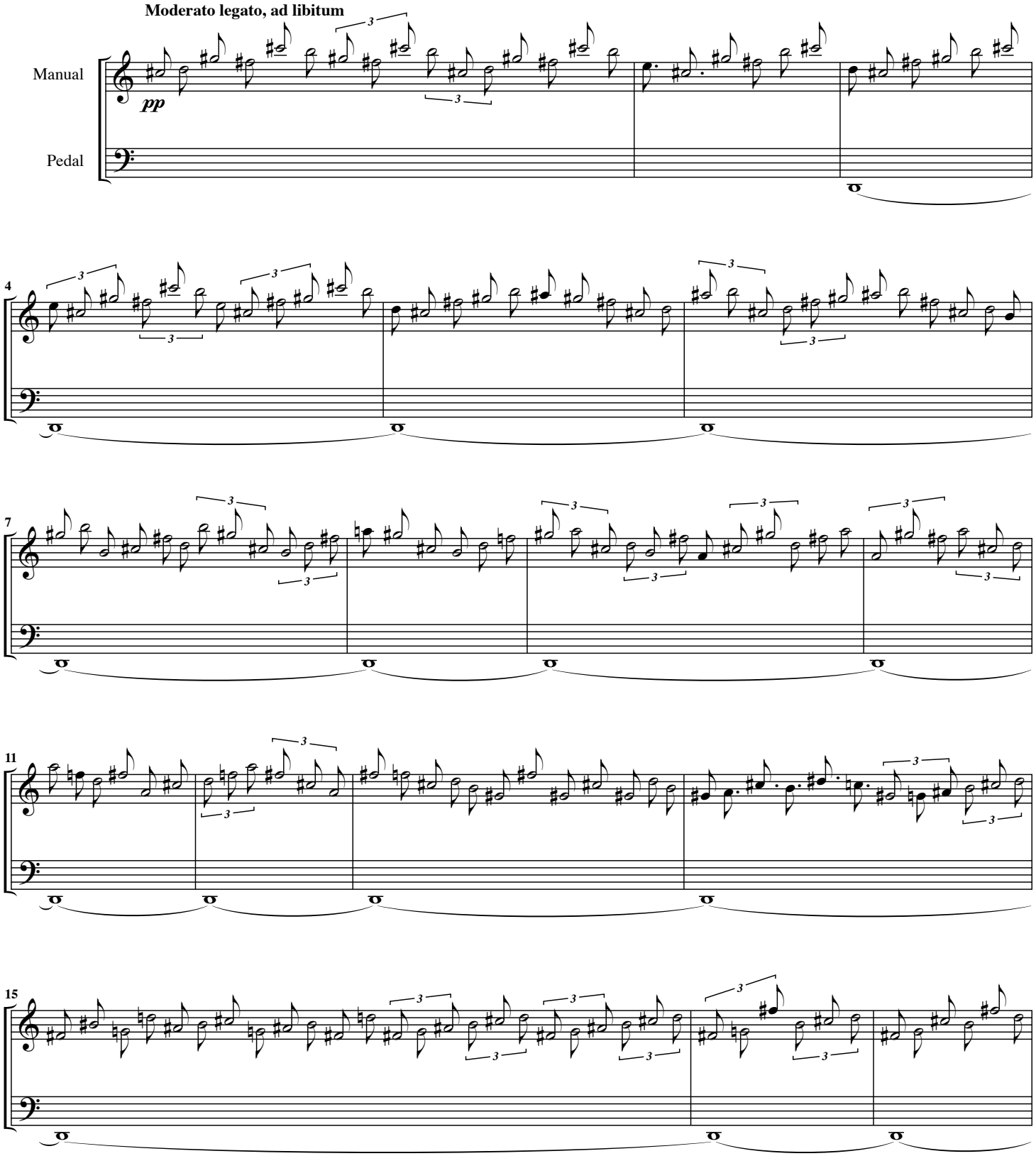

14
Broadly
21
accel.
riten.
23
a tempo
27
riten.
(hold keys)
a tempo
Broadly

Etude II

Jeffrey D. McCune



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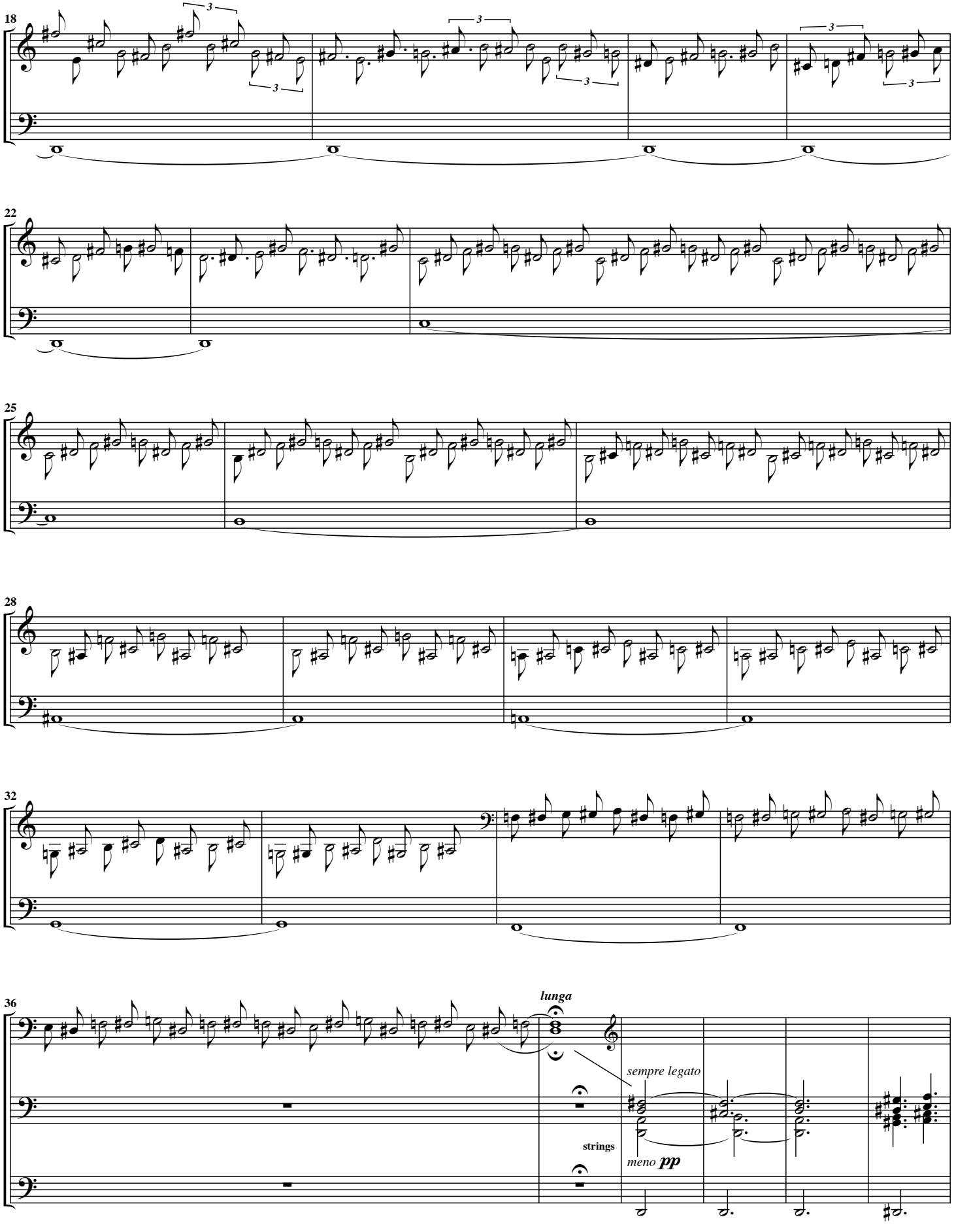
18
22
25
28
32
36
lunga
sempre legato
strings
meno pp