**Aural Skills Lecture**

*(topic: four-part singing, cadences, and phrases)*

## I. Introduction to Four-Part Singing: Warm-Ups & Canons (8 min.)

### A. Warm-Up

- Write scale degrees on the board:
  ^5 ^6 ^7 ^1 ^2 ^3 ^4 ^5 ^6 ^7 ^1
- Ask students to stand
- Play a cadential figure on the piano in D major
- Have students sing tonic, supertonic, dominant, and tonic triads of D major
- Ask students to sing back small strings of pitches while pointing to scale degrees on the board as improvised by the instructor

### B. Singing First Four-Part Canon

- Pass out *handout pg. 1*
- Have students sing together through *Four-Part Canon #1* using scale degrees while conducting in 3/4
- Have students form a circle with instructor as part of the circle
- Explain that we will be dividing into four vocal groups
- Consecutively assign each student a number from 1-4 such that each student is standing next to a student with a different number; pass out little slips of paper to each student with their number on it so they know which number they are
- Explain that like other canons that have been sung in class, the students will be coming in at staggered entrances, with the folks having number 1 starting first, those with number 2 next, and so on
- Explain that students should continue back to the beginning of the piece once they reach the end; students can choose to read from the single line melody or from the score which shows the entrances more clearly
- Explain that the entrances are separated by four measures each time
- Explain that you (the instructor) will hold up fingers in the left hand to denote the number of the part to come in and will motion for those students with that number to begin singing at the top of the piece
- Run through *Four-Part Canon #1* using scale degrees and separate parts
- Barring any problems, have students pass their part numbers (those written on the little slips of paper) one person to the left in the circle; part 1 should now be 2, 4 should be 1, etc.
- Run through *Four-Part Canon #1* with the new number assignments
- Remark that this piece was fairly straight-forward since most of the parts were singing the same rhythmic values; ask if anyone knows the name to describe this texture: homophonic

### C. Singing Second Four-Part Canon (if time is available)

- Point out that the rhythmic values in *Four-Part Canon #2* are more varied than the previous canon; ask if anyone knows the name to describe this texture: polyphonic
- Play a cadential figure on the piano in the key of G major
- Have students sing tonic, supertonic, dominant, and tonic triads of G major
- Have students sing together through *Four-Part Canon #2* using scale degrees
- Have students pass their part numbers one person to the left again; a new set of students should now be singing the leading voice

- Explain that the entrances in this canon will be just like the other, separated by four measures and that the instructor will again motion for parts to come in
- Run through *Four-Part Canon #2*
- Barring any problems, have students pass their parts numbers to the left one last time
- Run through *Four-Part Canon #2*

**II. More Four-Part Singing; Hearing Simple Phrases & Common Cadences (12 min.)**

**A. Preparation for Independent Four-Part Singing**

- Let students sit down
- Pass out *handout pg. 2*
- Play a cadential figure in G major again
- Have all students sing through the soprano line of the tune on scale degrees
- Have all students sing through the bass line of the tune on scale degrees
- Remark that it would be impossible to sing through the whole tune without taking a breath
- Remark that we are going to have to find natural places to breathe in this tune; Ask how the students can find good places to take breathes: answer is after cadences
- Ask students if, without hearing the other parts, they can sense any natural places for cadences in the melody
- Quickly move to having the class sing *Old Hundreth* in two-parts, with men singing the bass and women singing the soprano, still on scale degrees

**B. Four-Part Singing; Hearing Phrases and Cadences**

- Find the patterns of cadences with the students; the score has been specifically set up to make the cadences less obvious than if each system had an even number of measures
- Have students mark cadences in their parts (i.e. in the middle of mm. 3, 6, 9 and between mm. 11-12)
- Remark that each cadence has delineated a phrase of the tune
- Ask how many phrases are in the tune; answer is 4
- Divide men into two groups and women into two groups; reuse the paper numbers if necessary to have people recognize the part they are singing (papers could have 1/S for top part, 4/B for bass, etc.), with men taking tenor and bass and women singing alto and soprano
- Have singers find first notes of piece
- Sing through the first phrase of the piece
- Ask what type of cadence is in bar 3: IAC on the tonic; have students notate their scores
- Have singers start on the second half of bar 3 and sing the second phrase
- Ask what type of cadence is in bar 6: HC *in* the tonic (*on* the dominant); students mark scores
- Have singers start on the second half of bar 6 and sing the third phrase
- Ask what type of cadence is in bar 9: DEC *in* the tonic (*on* the submediant); students mark scores
- Have the students start on the second half of bar 9 and sing the final phrase
- Aks what type of cadence is in the final bar: PAC on the tonic; students mark scores
- Have men reverse parts (whomever was singing bass now sings tenor and vice versa) and the women reverse parts (soprano becomes alto and vice versa)
- Sing through the whole piece, taking breaths at the cadence points; students should see the markings they made of cadences in their scores and hear what they sound like again on this second reading

**III. Continuation of Four-Part Singing; Hearing Other Cadences (8 min.)**

**A. Hearing new Cadences**

- pass out *handout pg. 3*
- Recenter the students by playing another cadential figure in G major
- Have students keep the same parts as last time and find their starting pitches for this piece
- Ask the students to sing from the beginning (on scale degrees) and then stop once they feel they have reached a cadence point; this should be fairly easy since the tune is the same
- Ask students what the cadence was in bar 3 where they presumably stopped: it's a little trickier; PHRY cadence in the submediant; students mark their scores
- Have students switch parts (bass/tenor swap; alto/soprano swap) then sing from the beginning of the piece, through the first cadence, and then stop after they hear a second cadence
- Ask students what the cadence was in bar 6: PAC in supertonic; students mark scores
- Have students switch parts again, sing from the beginning of the piece again (since these parts are a little trickier), and then stop at the next cadence
- Students will probably stop in bar 9

**B. Interaction of Cadence and Phrase**

- Ask students what the cadence was in bar 9; students will not have an answer
- Explain that the cadence in bar 9 has been evaded and there is really no true phrase
- Explain how the same tune can have expectations drawn and phrasing changed based on the harmonies that support the melody
- Ask students to switch parts one last time (by now students have gone back and forth between the two different parts, but that's OK as far as I am concerned since it hopefully keeps them a bit on their toes) and then sing the whole piece through until the end
- Ask the students what happened at the end of the piece this time; was there a full PAC as occurred in the last arrangment?
- Show how a plagal cadence has been inserted

**IV. Melodic Dictation; Identifying Cadences by ear (10 min. or less)**

**A. Pure Melodic Dictation**

- Ask students to get out staff paper (or do the instructor's supply this?)
- Let students know they will be doing some melodic dictation from Bach; first example is in G major and 4/4 time
- Play cadential figure in G major
- Count off beats and play melody only from Chorale 125/249 (see *melodic dictation* examples)
- Students should be able to notate it fairly quickly

**B. Melodic Dictation with Cadence**

- Play Chorale 125 in a four-voice texture and ask students to notate the type of cadence heard
- Ask for a volunteer to label the cadence; help students out as they may have problems
- Play Chorale 249 in a four-voice texture and ask students to notate the type of cadence heard
- Remark that the melody was the same as they transcribed earlier but with a new cadence (similar to how the cadences were changed in the four-part singing they did)

**C. Further Drills on Dictation with Cadences**

- Continue the process described in parts **A** & **B** above for each pair of chorale tunes for which Bach uses different cadences (see supplied handout); the exercises are graded from easy to more difficult

- Get through as many examples as possible, calling on different students to help identify the cadences; play the bass lines separately or just two voice textures if necessary to help the students hear the parts
- Work together with the students in identifying basic qualities of the cadences to help categorize them, combining that knowledge with the notes of the melody to help narrow down choices and to help figure out what the supporting harmony is
- Stop this exercise about 12 minutes before the end of class to allow time for the final topic

**V. Using Cadences to Hear Phrases in Literature (12 min.)**

**A. Introduction to Hearing Phrases in Literature**

- Have the students stand up and gather around the piano
- Play from the beginning of the first movement from Clementi's Sonatina Op. 36 no. 4 up until the downbeat of m. 9
- Ask the students how many phrases were in those eight bars (may have to play again)
- Some students may say two phrases; if not, ask students why there are not two phrases in these bars, even though the slurs in the piano part seem to divide the eight bars into two parts
- Ask students where the first phrase in this opening ends: discuss difference between choosing m. 8 versus m. 9 as the end of the phrase, preferring m. 8
- Ask students to identify the type of cadence in m. 8: half cadence
- Play from the downbeat of m. 9 of the piece up through the downbeat of m. 18
- Ask students how many phrases exist in this passage just played
- Ask students where the phrase ends in this second phrase
- Remark on the difference between how the first phrase ended (in m. 8, at the end of hypermeter) versus how the second phrase ends (in m. 18, at the beginning of hypermeter); avoid getting into a long discussion of hypermeter at this point
- Ask students what kind of cadence occurs between mm. 17-18 and why they made the choice
- Play from the downbeat of m. 18 through until the double bar (perhaps mention the word "Exposition" but don't get into questions of form)
- Ask students how many phrases were in this closing area; remark that it's perhaps tricky because it seems like cadences are happening all over
- Show how phrases can have little tagged on endings (suffixes) such as mm. 28-30

**B. Continuation of Phrases in Literature**

- Depending on available time, continue with the same format of looking at phrases and cadences in the first movement of the Clementi; most of the Recapitulation is mostly the same, however, and the Development might provide difficult examples for the students
- Bars 31-33 provide a good example of a prefix, though, so it might be worth talking about how these measures interact with the longer phrase to follow; the development seems like one long phrase up until the long dominant on mm. 43-46

**C. Final Look at Phrases in Literature**

- Use second movement of Clementi's Sonatina (*Andante con espressione*) to continue work on using cadences to identify phrases
- Get students to help recognize the similarity in phrase structure between the first 16 bars of this slow movement and the first 18 bars of the first movement
- Continue with this movement using the rest of the time left in class (probably not much)

**FINI**

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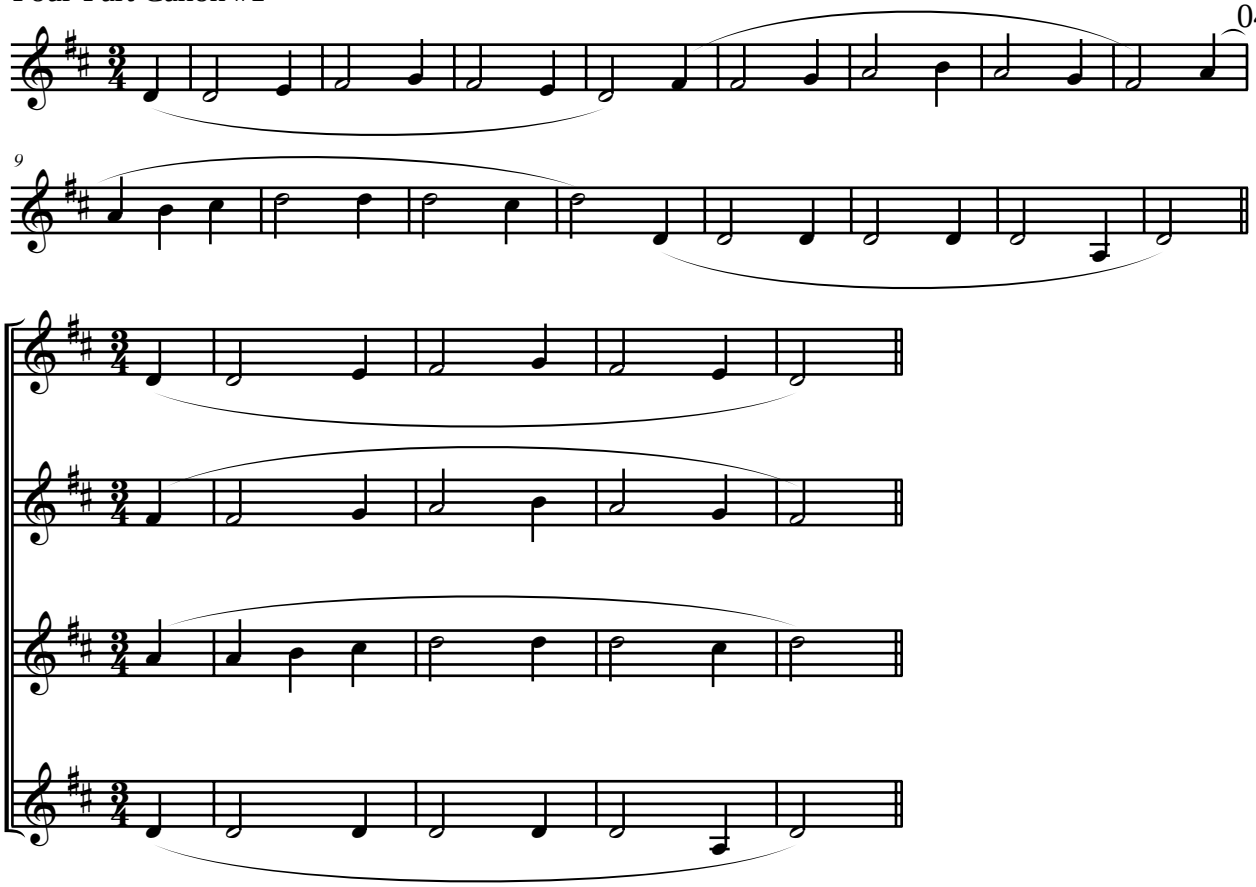
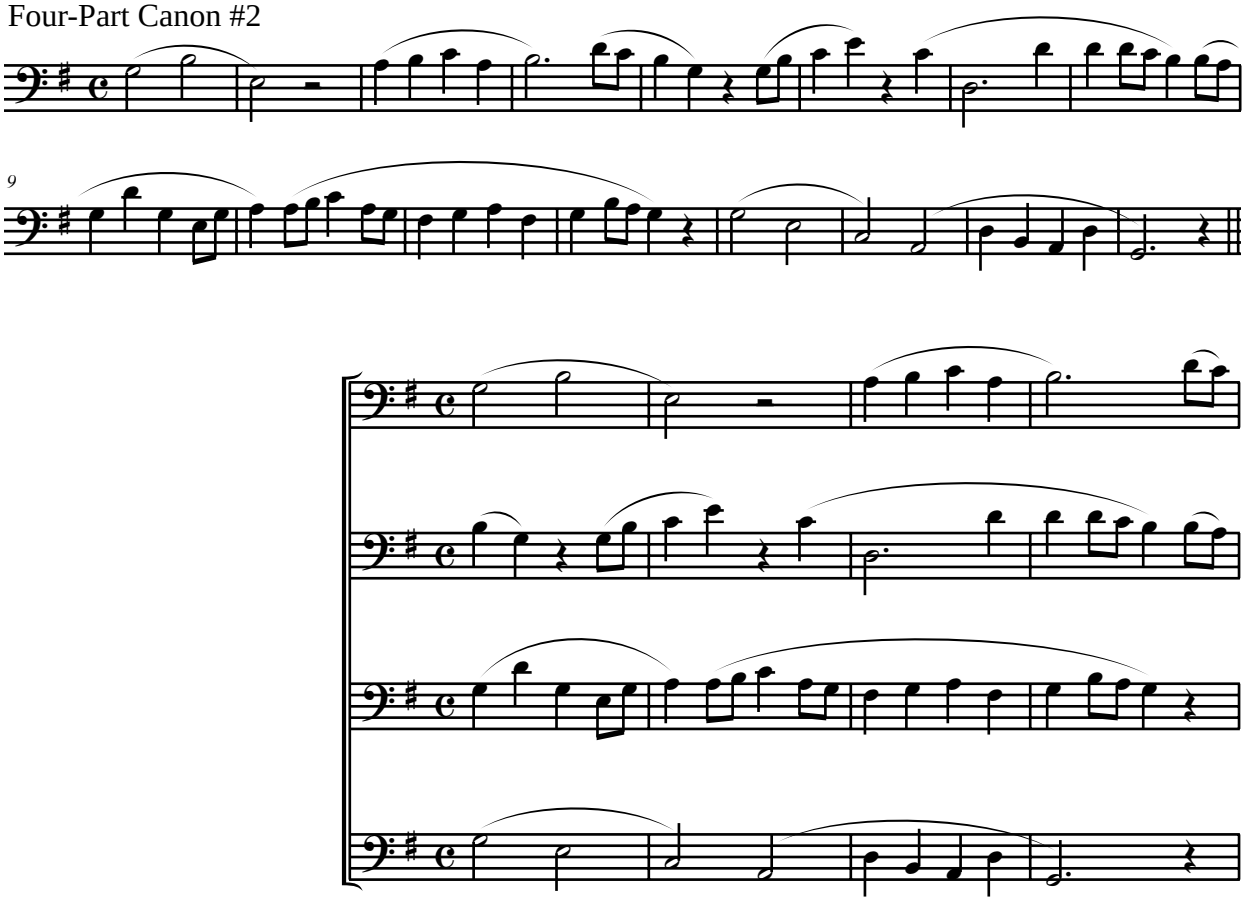
Four-Part Canon #1



Four-Part Canon #2



Old Hundreth (normal)

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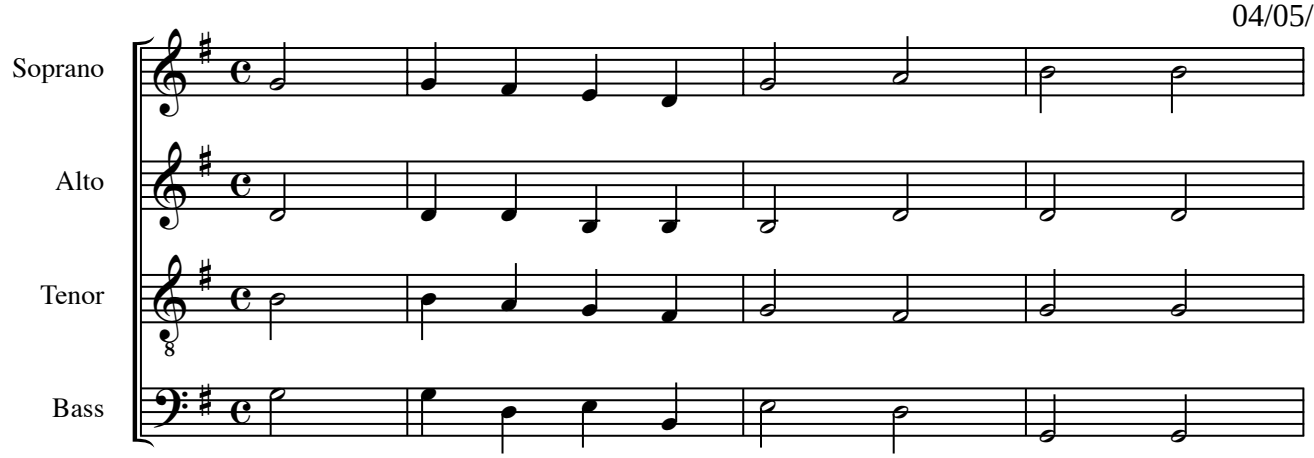


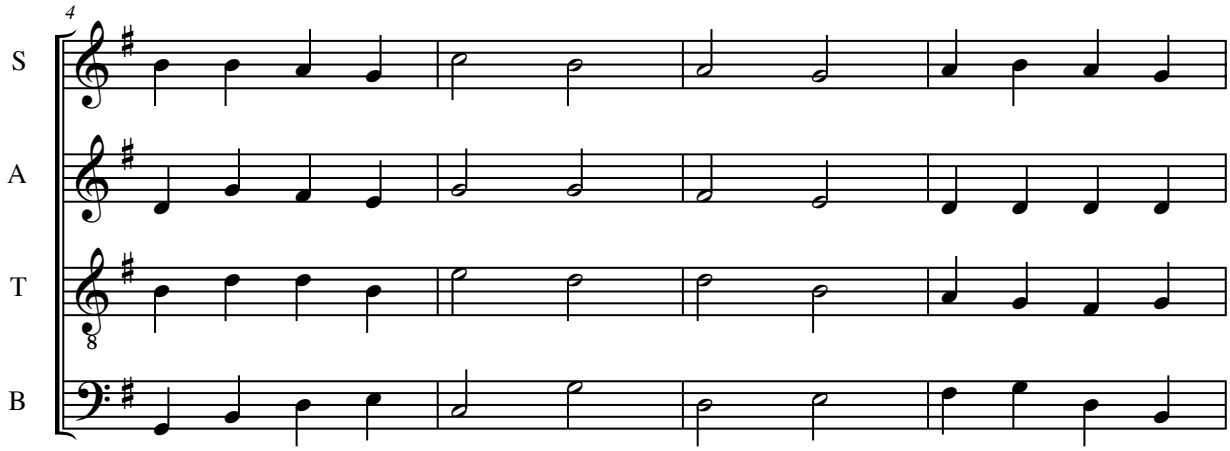


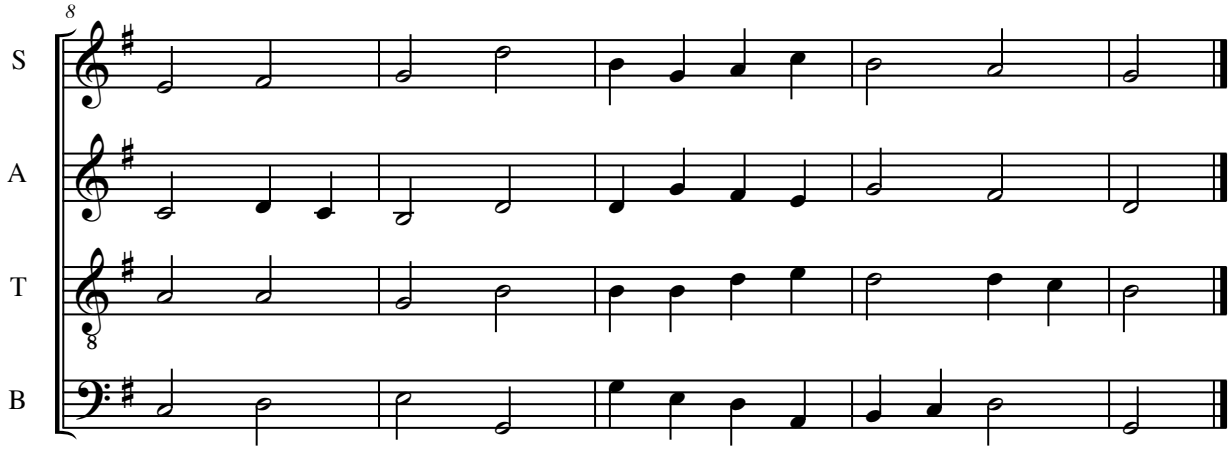

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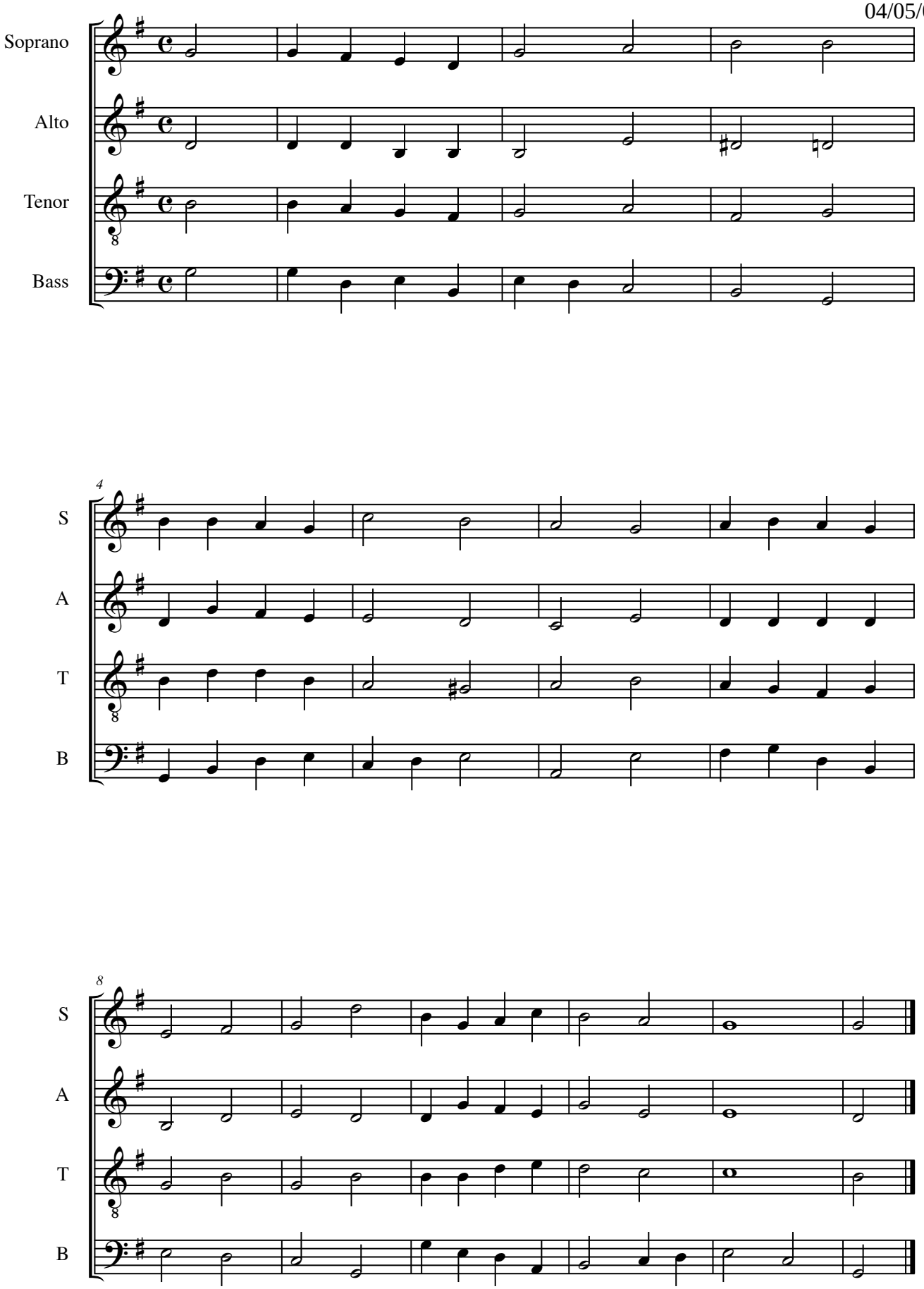
Old Hundreth (modified)



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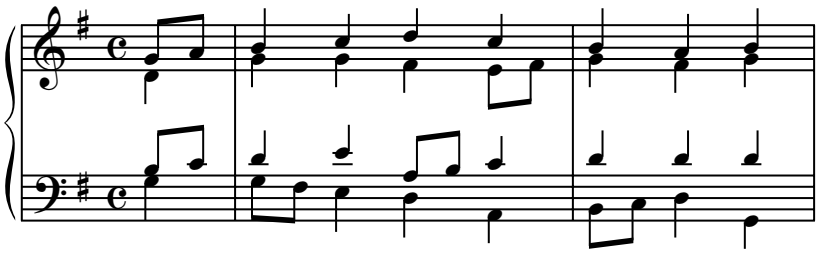
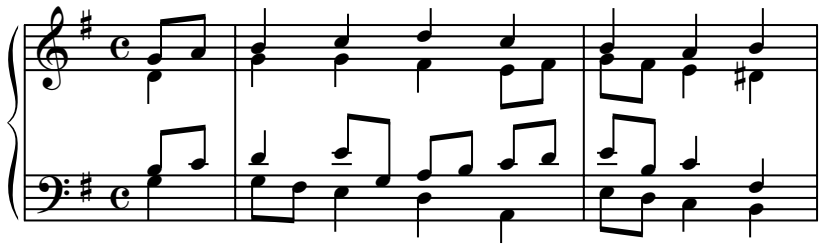
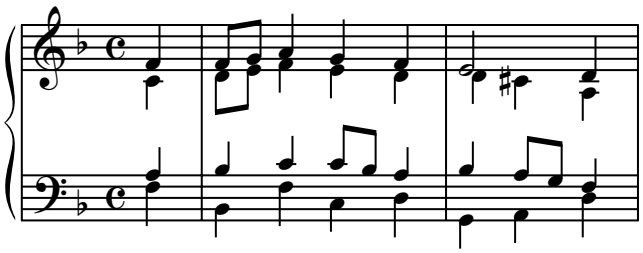
Chorale 125 (IAC in I)



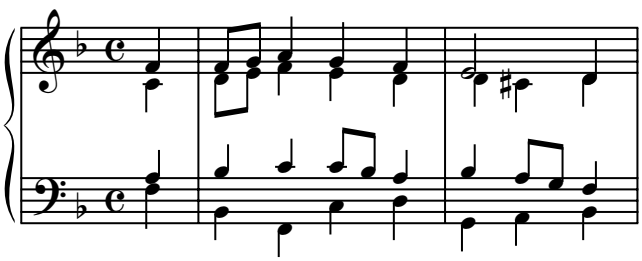
Chorale 249 (PHRY in vi)



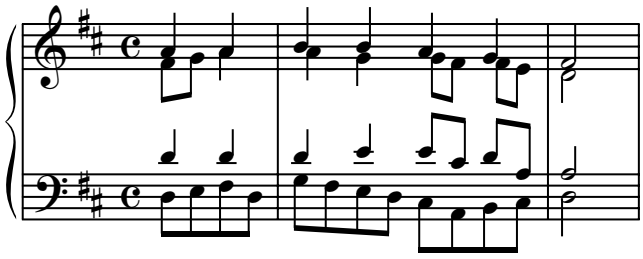
Chorale 303 (PAC in vi)



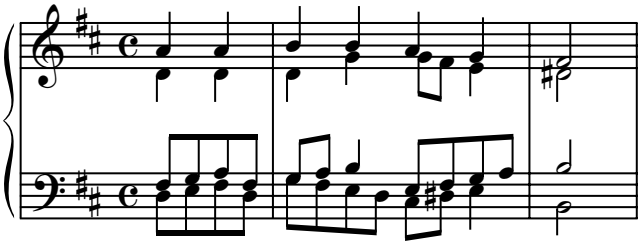
Chorale 101 (DEC in vi)



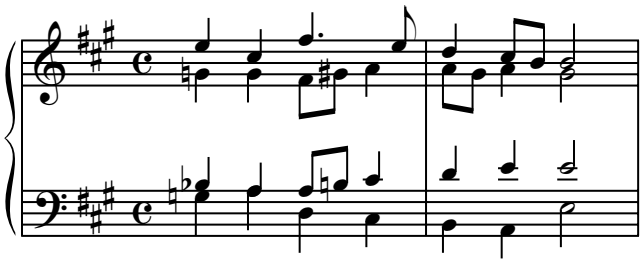
Chorale 152 (IAC in I)



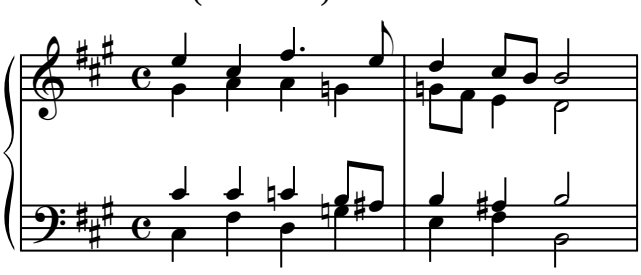
Chorale 299 (HC in ii)



Chorale 106 (HC in V)



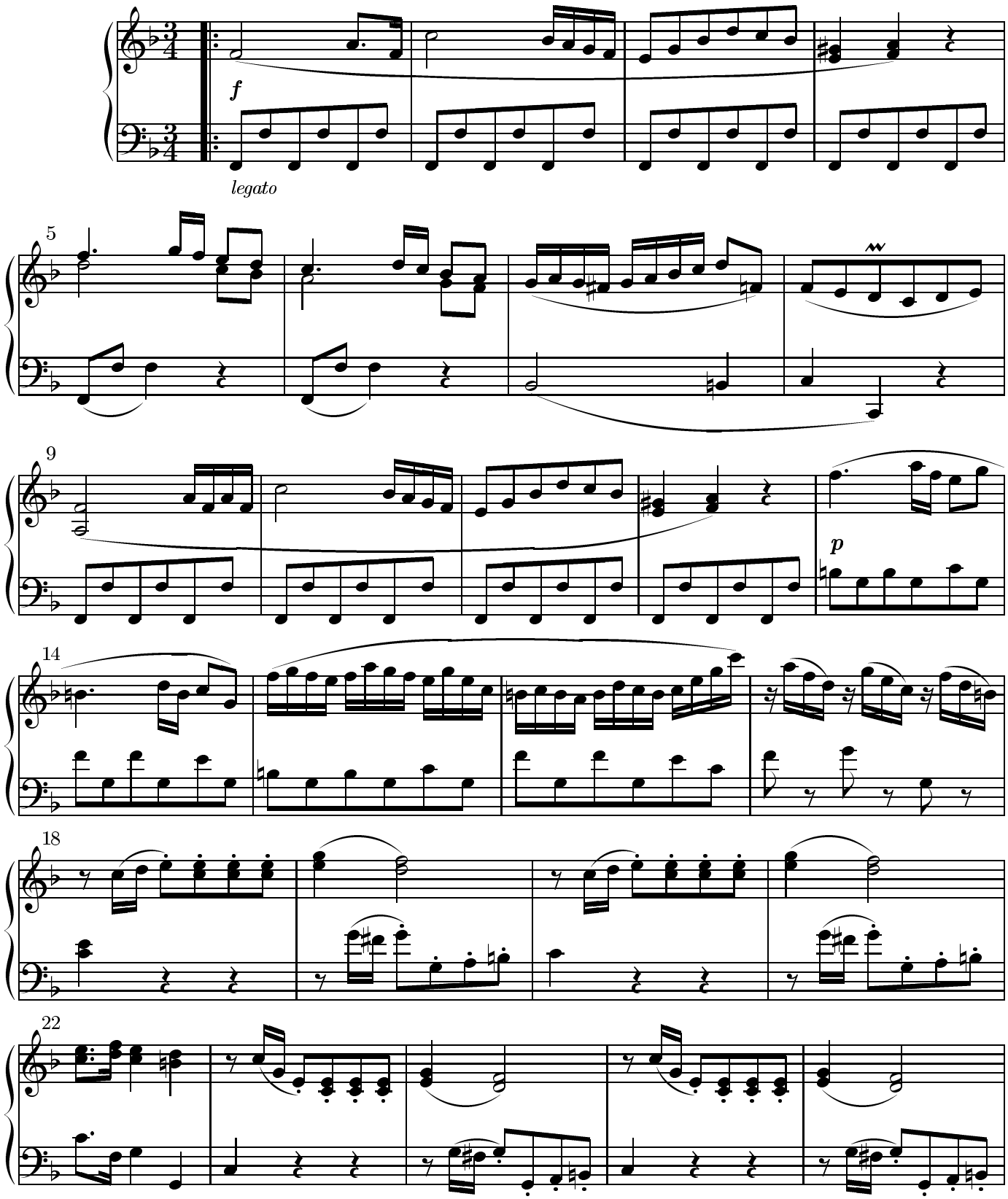
Chorale 83 (PAC in ii)

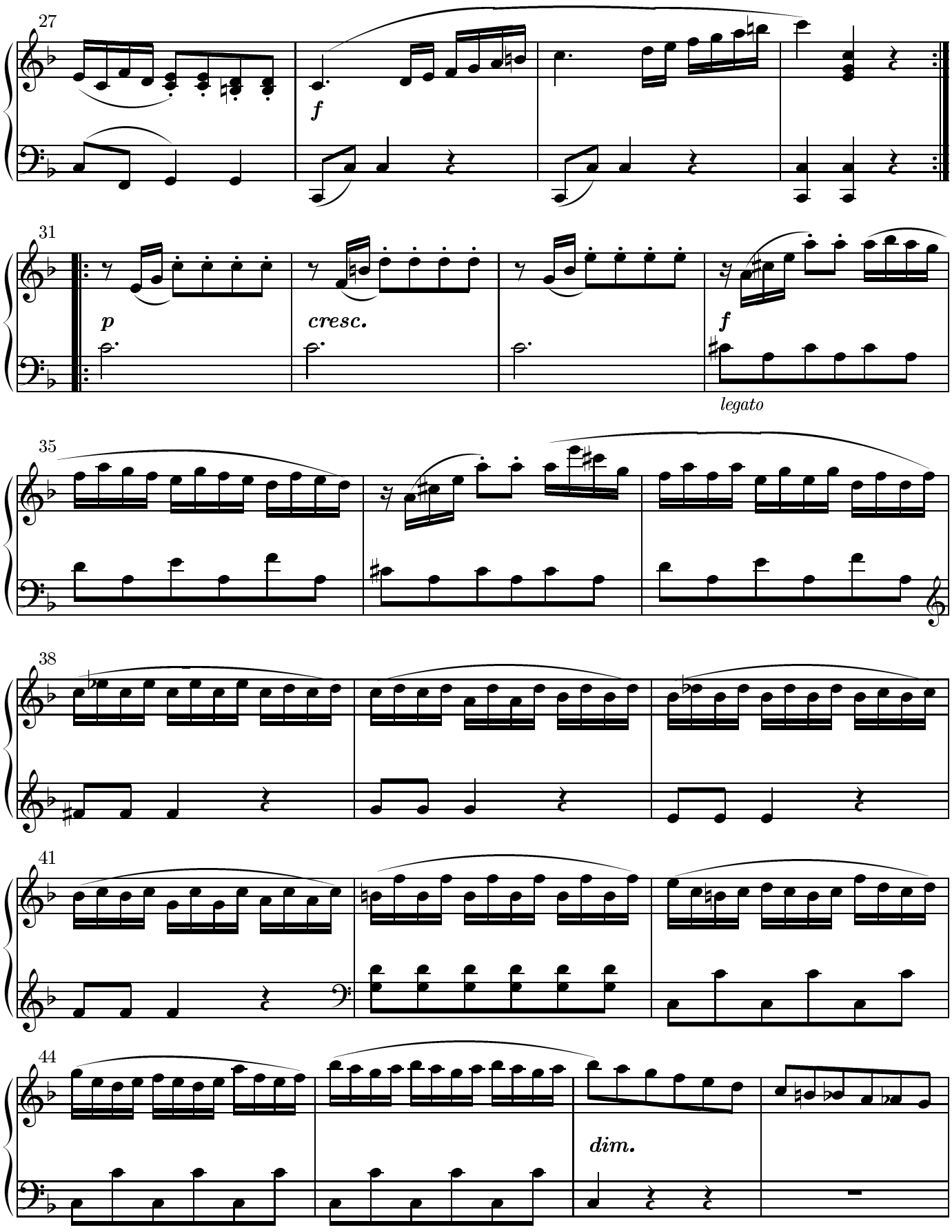


# Sonatina Op. 36 n. 4

Muzio Clementi (1752–1832)

Con spirito

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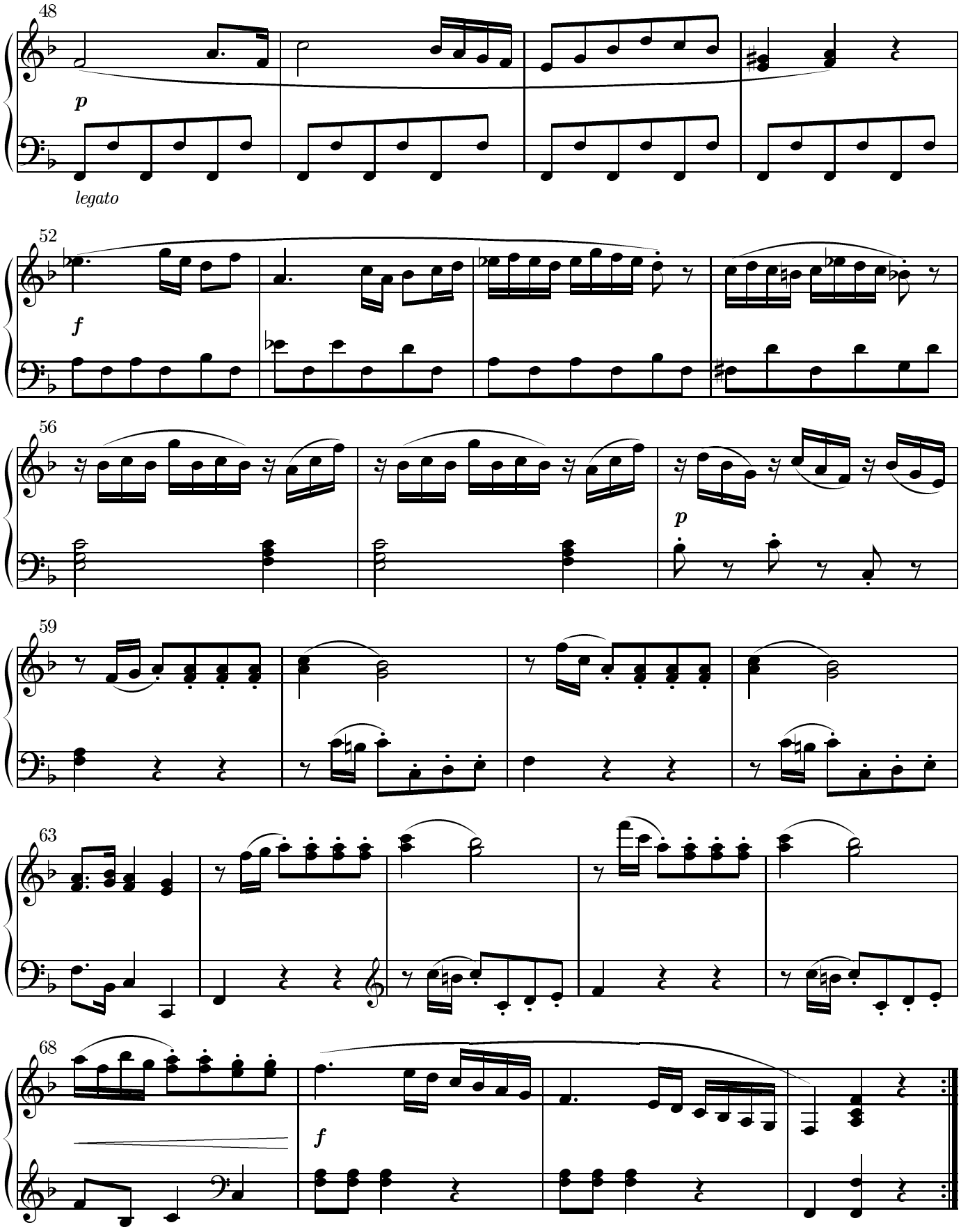
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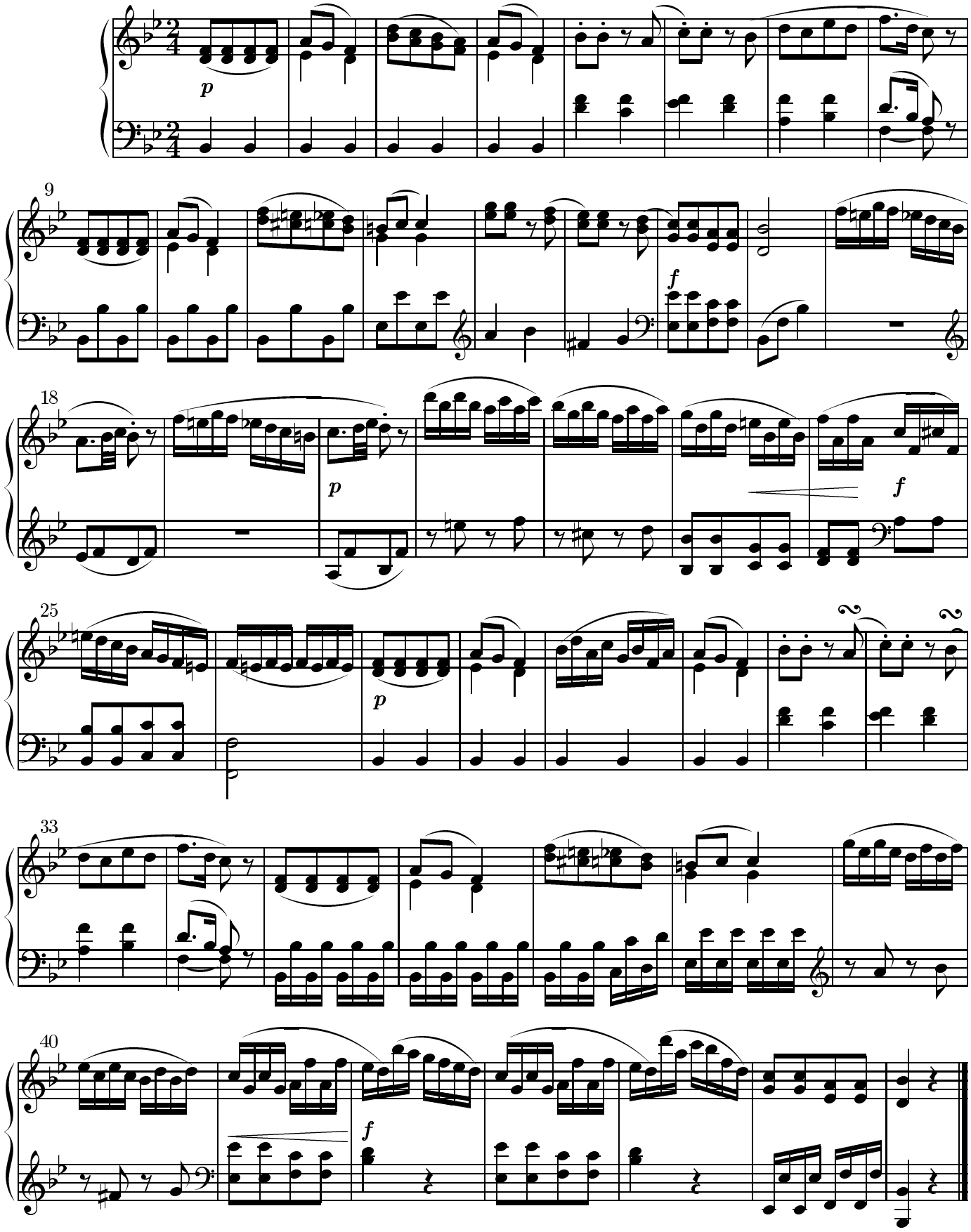
Andante con espressione