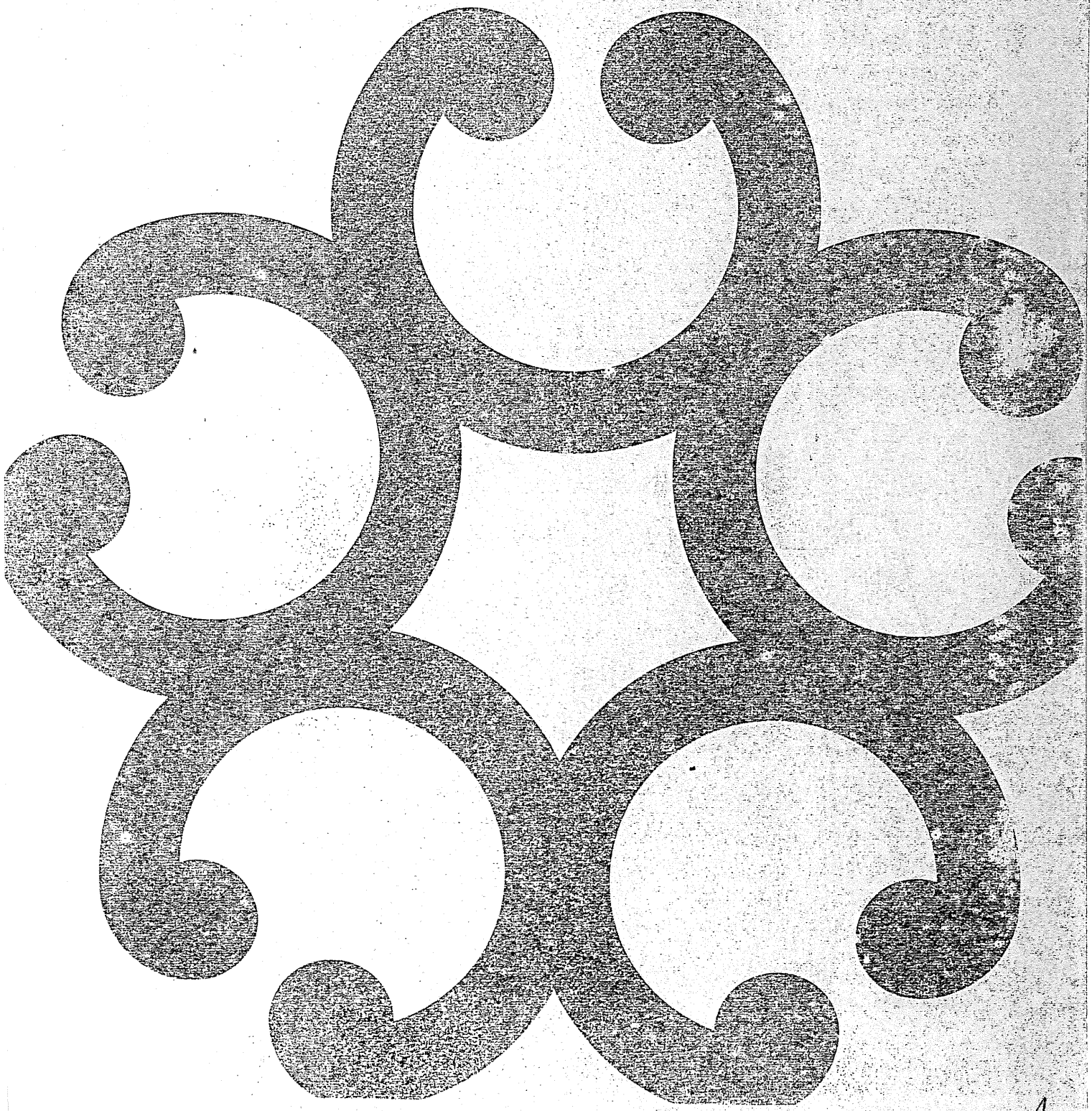
An Anthology of Piano Music

Volume I

The Baroque Period

A Repertory of Keyboard Works by Masters of the 17th and 18th Centuries

Selected and Edited by Denes Agay



An Anthology of Piano Music Volume I

The Baroque Period

Selected and Edited
by Denes Agay

With an Introduction
by Louis L. Crowder

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Yorktown Music Press: New York
Music Sales Limited: London

FOREWORD

The content of AN ANTHOLOGY OF PIANO MUSIC was selected from the keyboard literature of nearly four centuries. From the early Baroque to the present, through the works of 139 composers, all important musical idioms and modes of expression are represented. The material is divided into four volumes:

Volume I — THE BAROQUE PERIOD — from the end of the 16th century (late Renaissance) to the end of the 18th (Rococo).

Volume II — THE CLASSICAL PERIOD — the second half of the 18th and the early 19th centuries. (Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and their contemporaries.)

Volume III — THE ROMANTIC PERIOD — piano music of the 19th century.

Volume IV — THE TWENTIETH CENTURY — piano works by major composers of our time.

It is hardly necessary to point out that no rigid stylistic boundaries separate these volumes and that, inevitably, there is some chronological and idiomatic overlapping. The works of the sons of Johann Sebastian Bach, for instance, which conclude the baroque volume could have been placed as well at the beginning of the classical section. Fauré, Sibelius, Rachmaninoff and others, who wrote during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, could have been included in either the romantic or the contemporary volume, depending on whether we consider their modes of writing or their life-spans as a yardstick. It is better, then, to view this Anthology, and for that matter, the entire music literature, not as a succession of clearly separated and defined plateaus, but rather as a broad, ever-flowing stream with many branches and tributaries. This stream, the literature of keyboard music, is so vast that even the impressively sizable body of this Anthology, amounting to nearly one thousand pages, can represent but a small fraction of it.

This fact alone can give a hint of the difficult process involved in selecting the contents of these volumes and of the often thorny decisions the editor had to make. Which Preludes and Fugues of Bach's "48" should be chosen? Which Sonatas of Mozart and Beethoven should be included? Are the contributions to keyboard romanticism of an Heller or an Alkan substantial enough to warrant inclusion? Is the amount of space allocated to a certain composer in proper ratio to his importance? These and other similar questions had to be answered, always keeping in mind the main purpose of this Anthology and constantly trying to achieve a reasonable balance between the aesthetic, pedagogic, and historic considerations on the one hand and the dictates of space limitations, on the other.

The purpose of this Anthology is twofold: to present a comprehensive survey of the entire keyboard literature through works which are appealing and representative, without being too demanding from either a musical or technical point of view; and to furnish an academically sound and varied teaching and performing library. The grade level of the contents ranges from easy to advanced, with the bulk of the material falling well within the intermediate grades. We felt that this segment of the piano repertory can furnish the most suitable materials for our multi-purpose collections. For this

reason, works demanding utmost musical maturity and technical virtuosity, such as the late Sonatas of Beethoven, the lengthier concert pieces of Schumann, Chopin, Liszt, and others were not included.

All selections are based on authentic sources and are in their original forms. Tempo, dynamic, and expression marks in small print or in parentheses are editorial additions and should be regarded as suggestions rather than rigid directions. In this, the baroque volume, it seemed advisable to present some very lengthy works, mostly those in variation forms, in judicially abbreviated versions. This does not necessarily violate the spirit of 17th and 18th century performance practices. Some masters of the period openly condone, indeed encourage such deletions if they are done with taste and a regard for the proper balance of tempo and mood between the sections of the composition; or, as Frescobaldi stipulates, "if you take care to fit the various sections to one another." In line with our aim to give the player an authentic as well as a practical edition, the less familiar ornamental signs, especially those of the English virginalists and the French clavecinists, were replaced by the equivalent and better known symbols of the German Baroque (J. S. Bach). There is a review of these ornamental signs and their execution on page 18 of our baroque volume. To aid the performer in avoiding the often puzzling problems involved in the recognition and correct interpretation of *long appoggiaturas,* these signs have been written out in conventional notation throughout the baroque and classical sections.

The main body of this Anthology is compiled from the music of the great masters. Included are not only their well-known repertory pieces, but also other of their representative works which are seldom found in similar collections. We have also included a number of relatively unknown, nonetheless delightful pieces by a few minor masters. These composers were perhaps not creative minds of the first magnitude but they did produce occasional works of striking beauty, especially in the smaller forms, and should be entitled to the measure of recognition offered by an anthology.

We hope to have succeeded in conveying the many factors, viewpoints and considerations which guided the selection of materials for these volumes. The final choices inevitably reflect, of course, the personal taste and didactic principles of the editor. It should be noted, however, that the process of compilation also included extensive consultations and discussions with many distinguished pianists and educators. To them, too numerous for individual mention, we express our heartfelt thanks and gratitude. In addition, we are deeply indebted to Mr. Eugene Weintraub, for his invaluable editorial help. to Mr. Herbert H. Wise, for his patience and wisdom in guiding this large publication project, and to Professor Louis L. Crowder, for his richly illuminating commentaries on the styles and performance practices of each period.

October 1970 DENES AGAY

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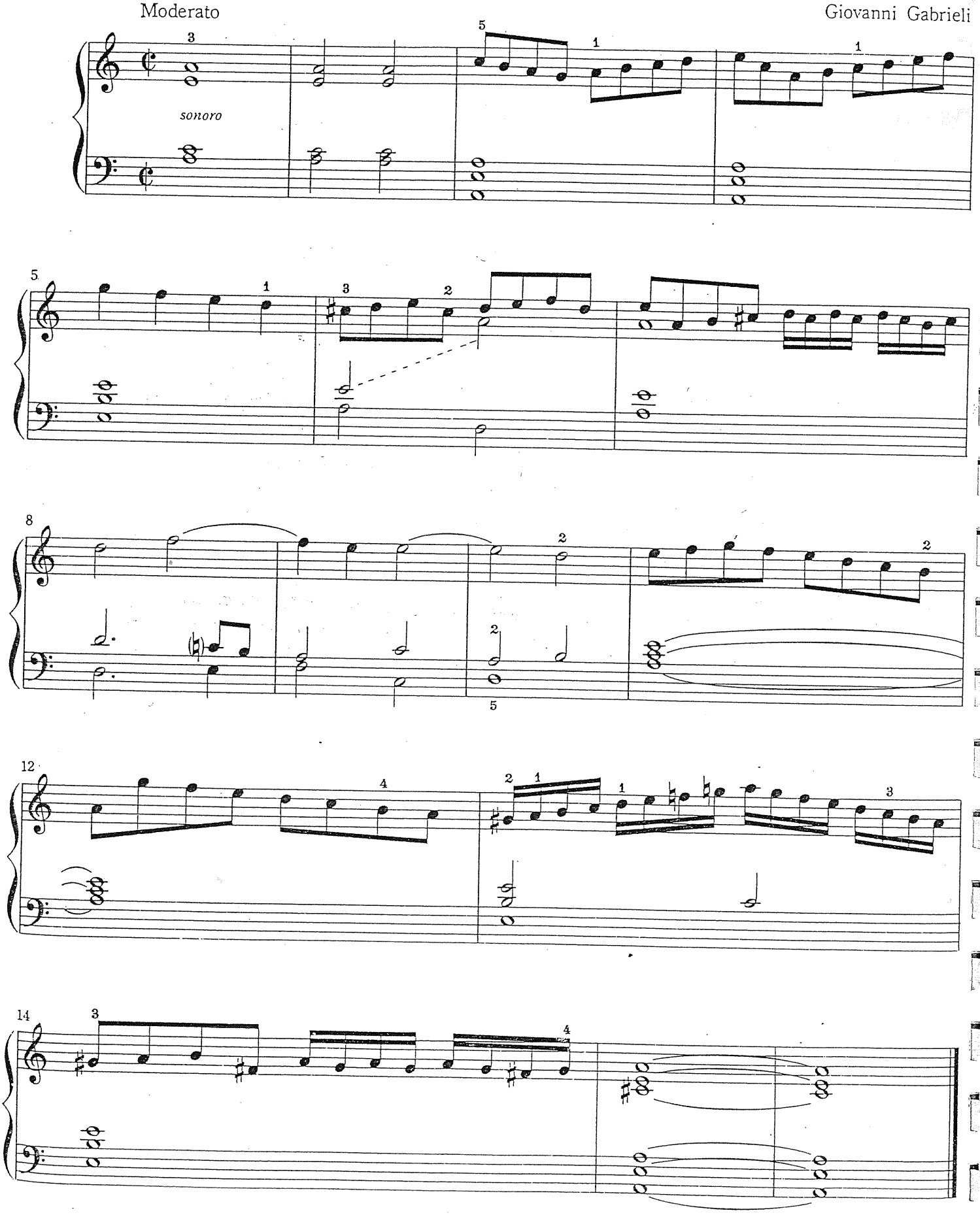
1.

Intonazione

Moderato

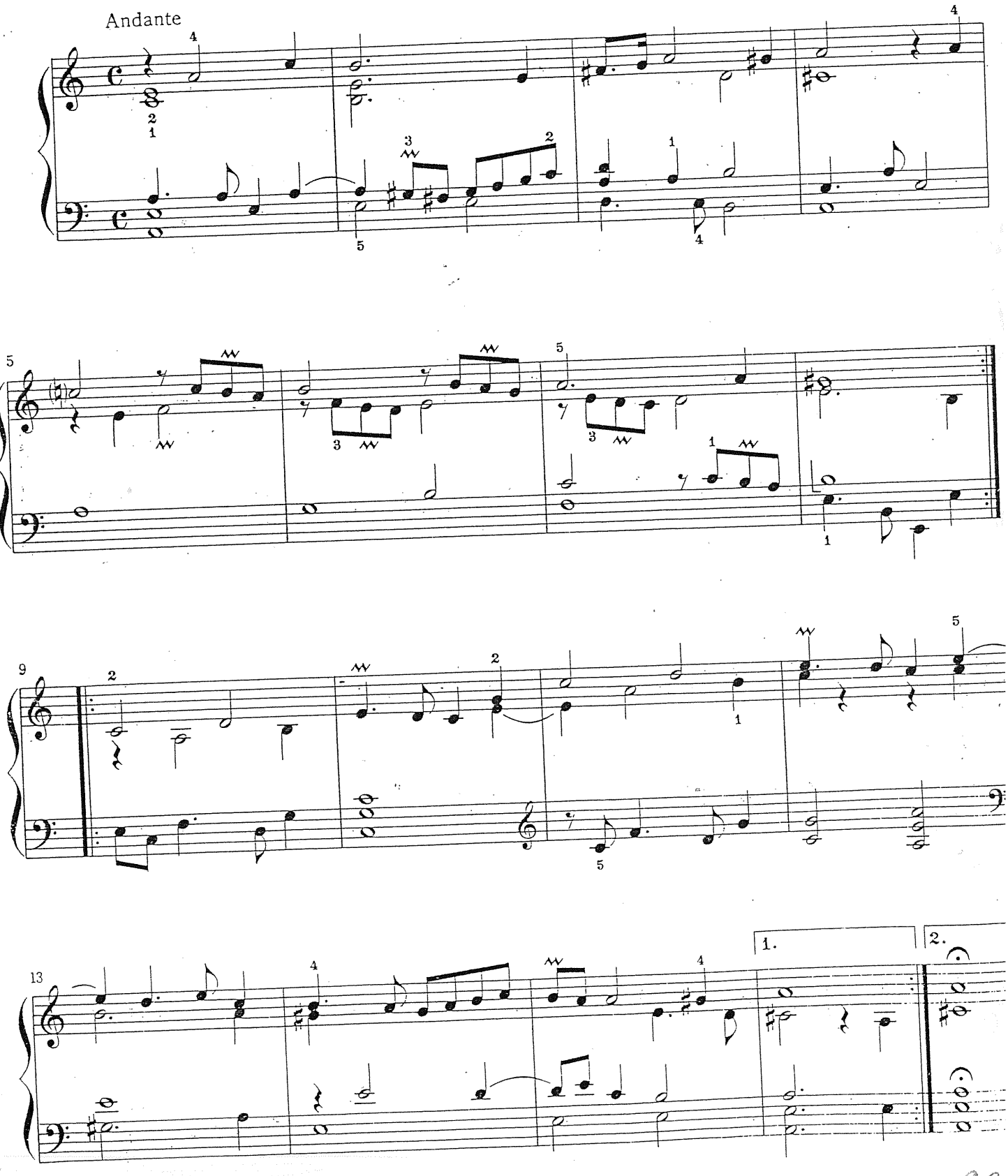
Giovanni Gabrieli



Pavana

The Earle of Salisbury

William Byrd

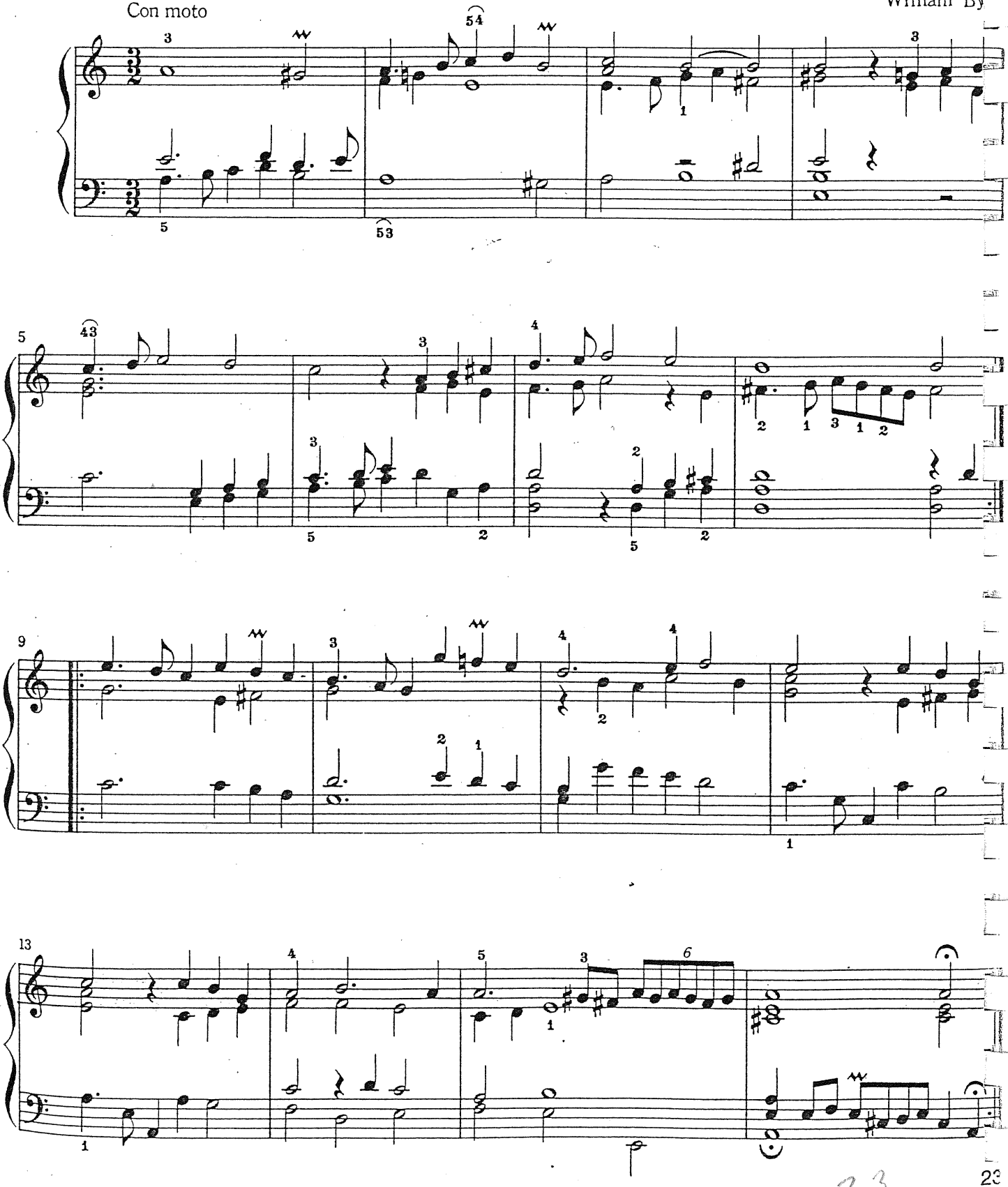


Galiardo

Byrd

William By

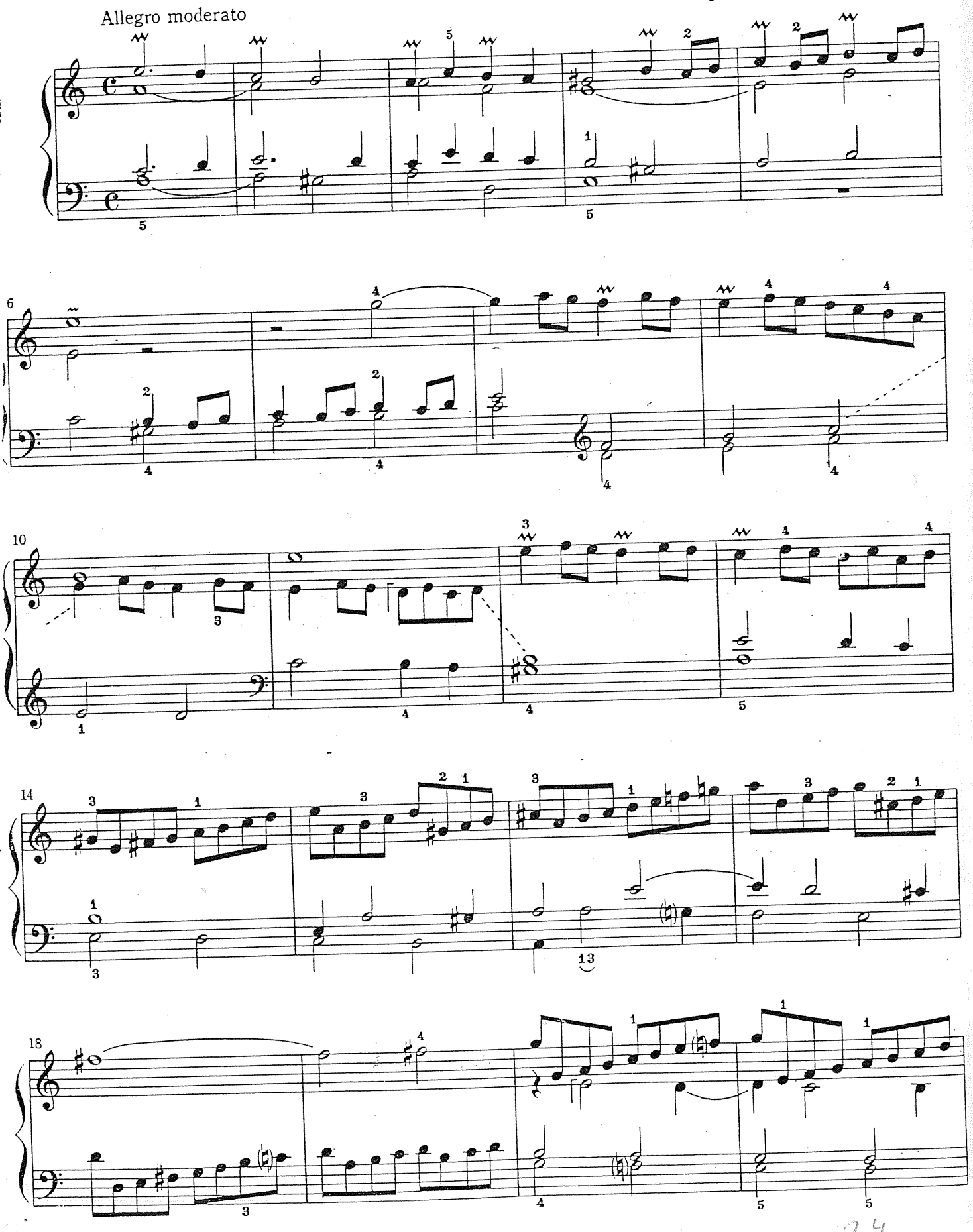
Con moto

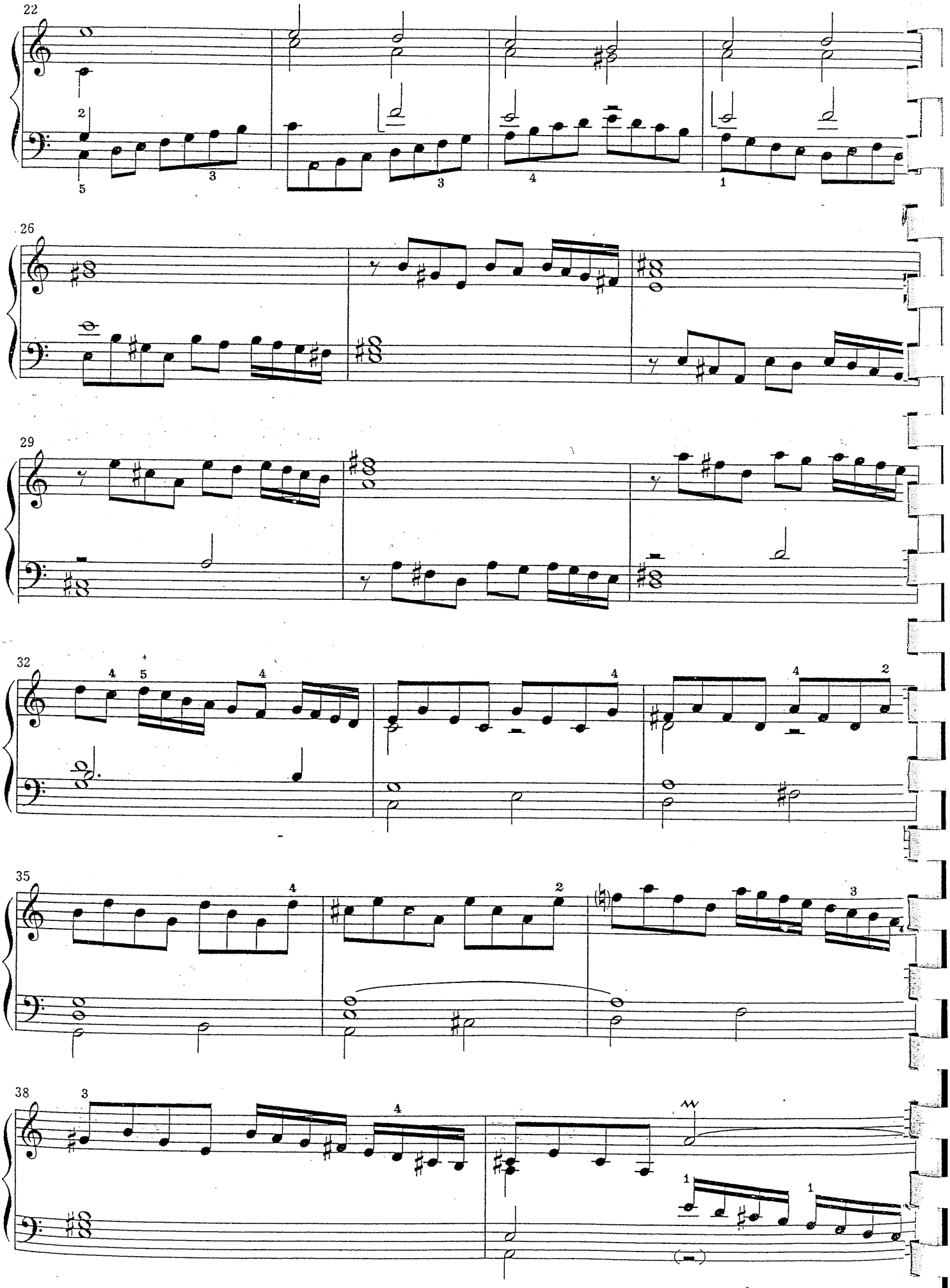


Toccata

Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck

Allegro moderato

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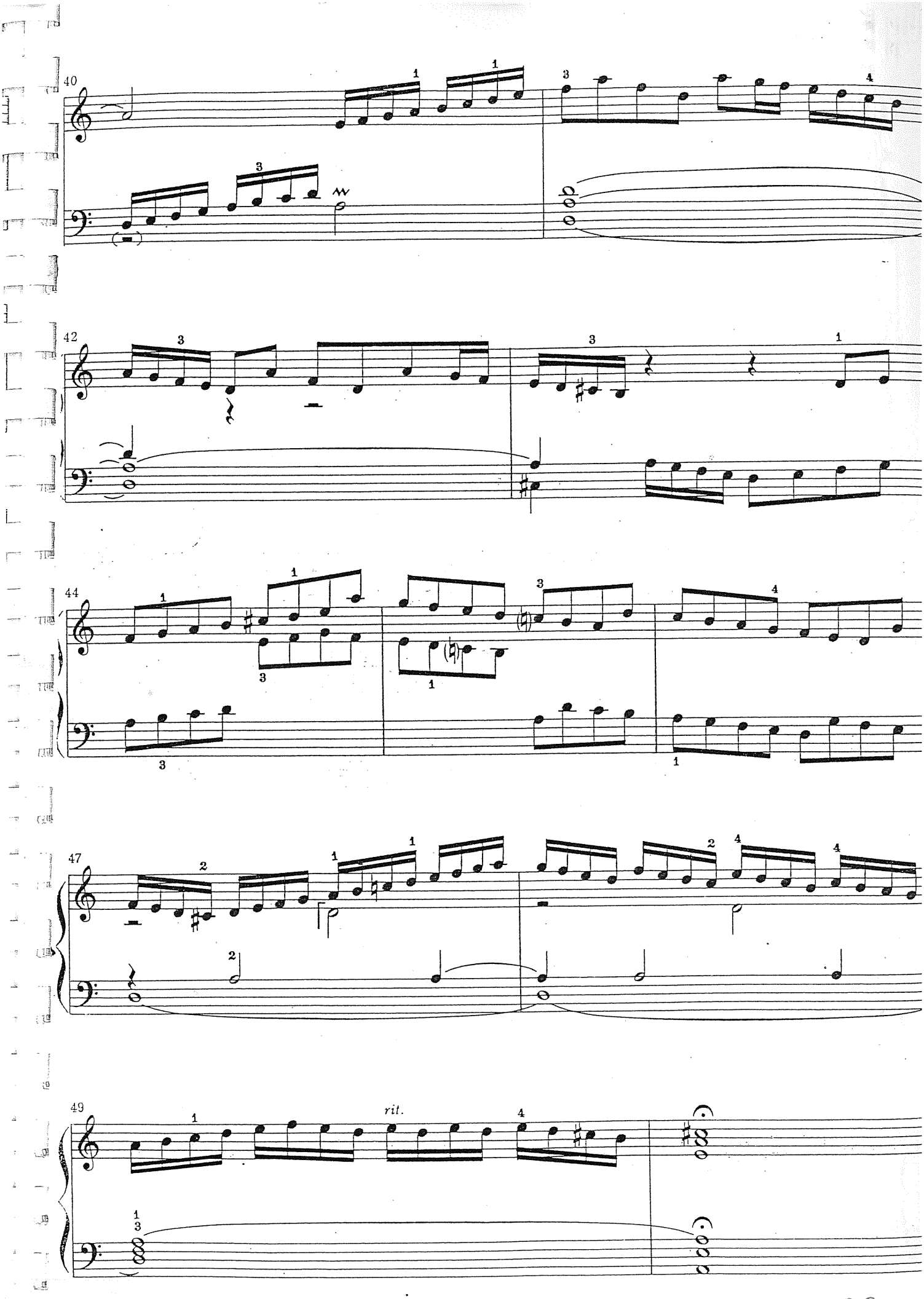

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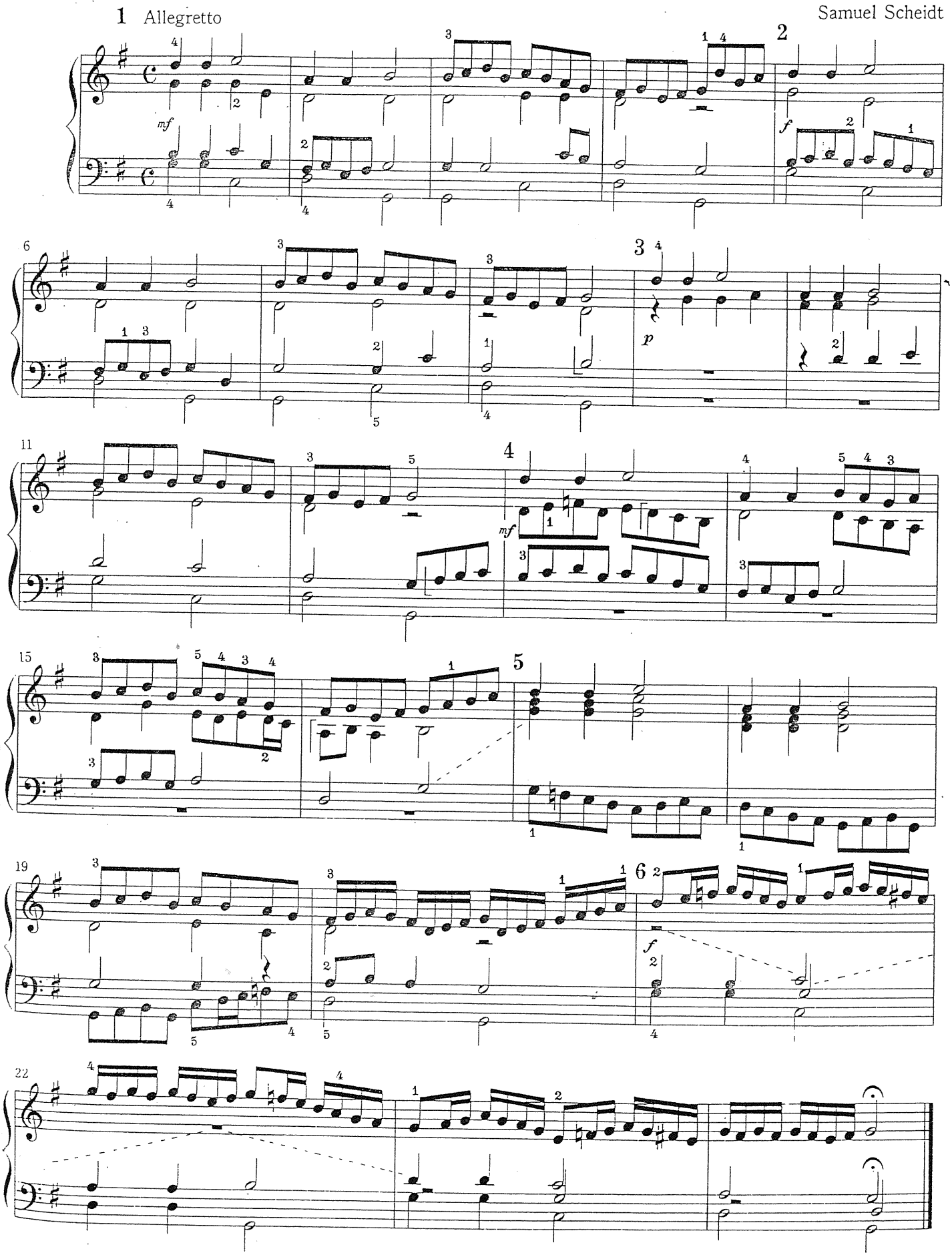
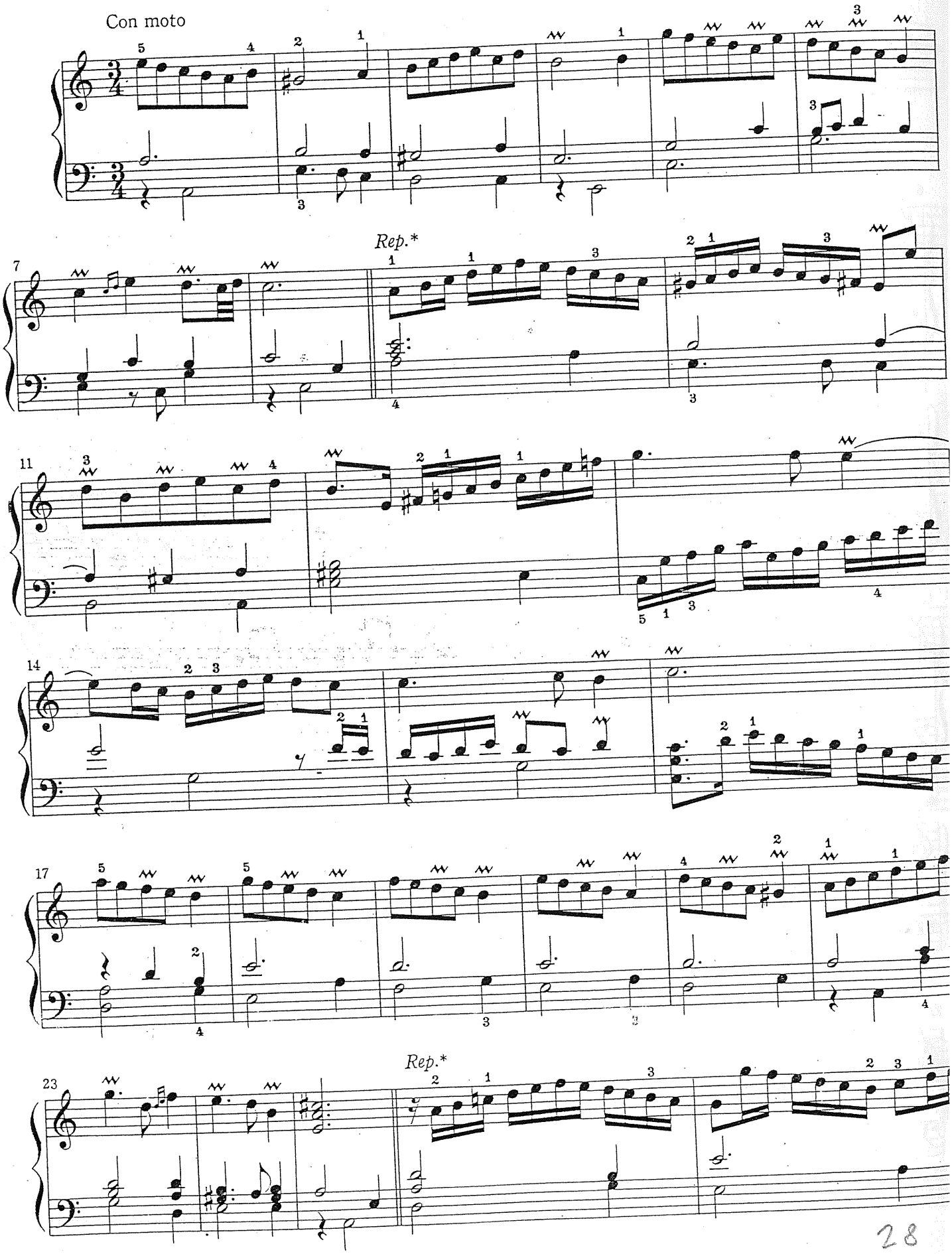
Bergamasca



Coranto

A Toy

Orlando Gibbons



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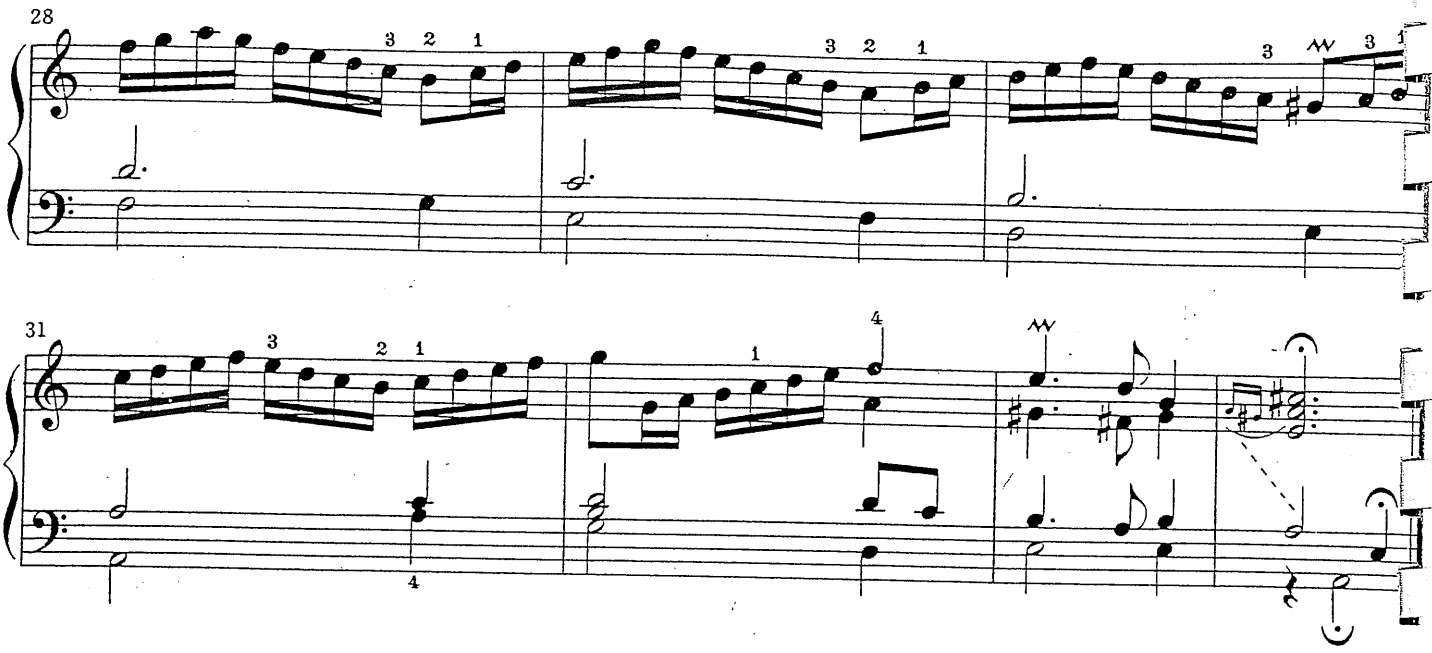
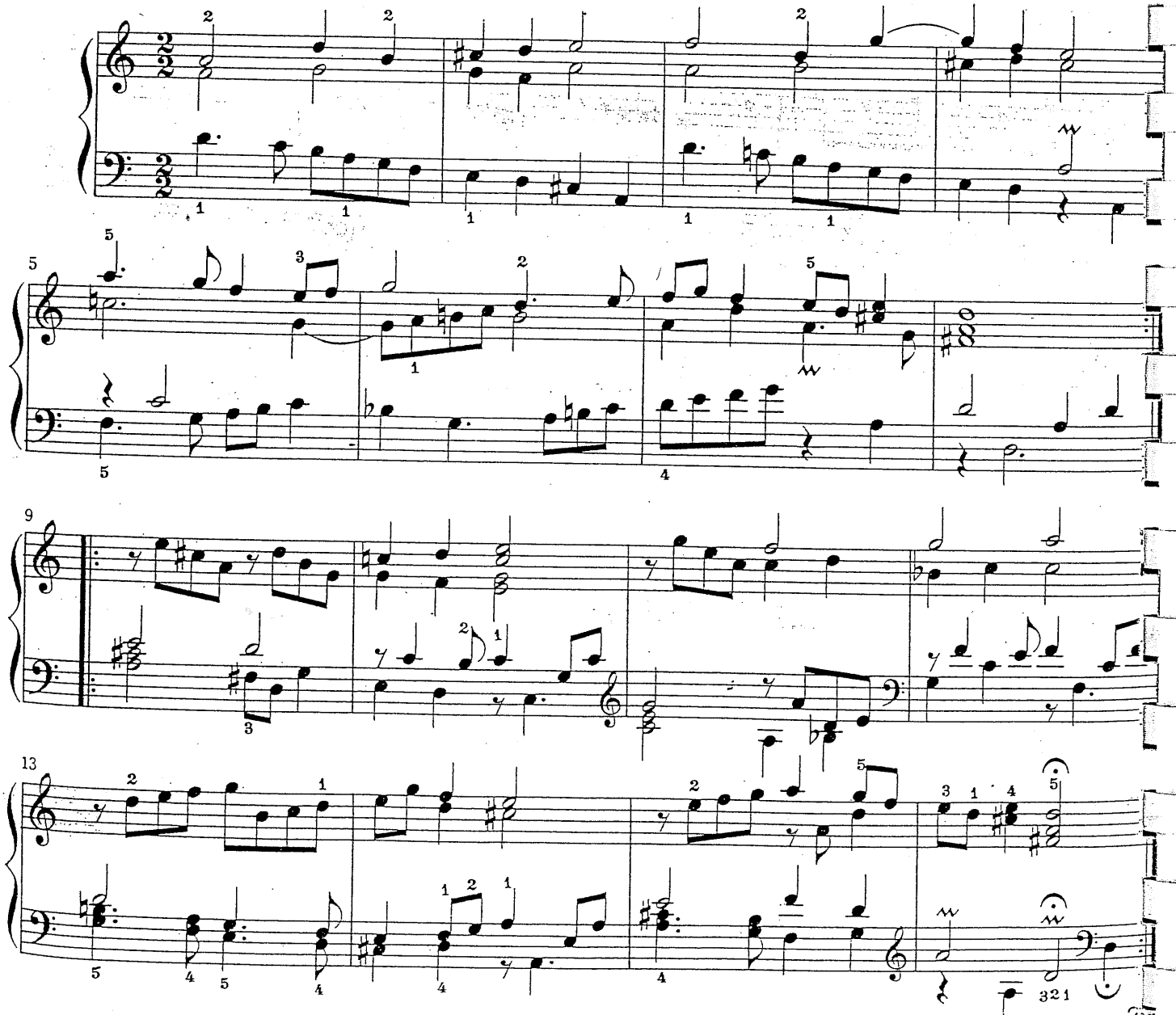
* Varied repetition of the preceding section.



Alman

Moderato

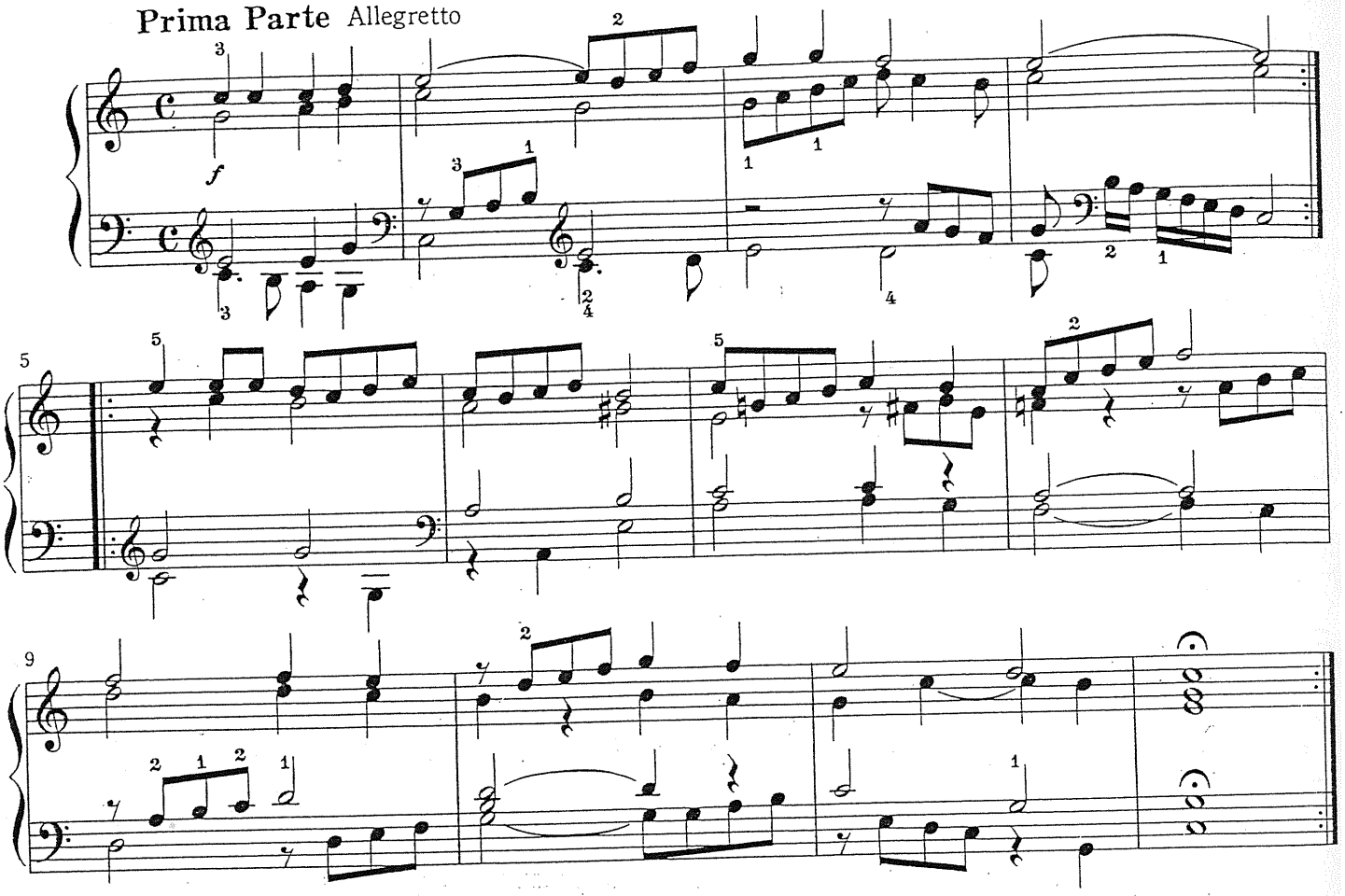
Orlando Gibbons



Aria detto Balletto

Girolamo Frescobaldi

Prima Parte Allegretto



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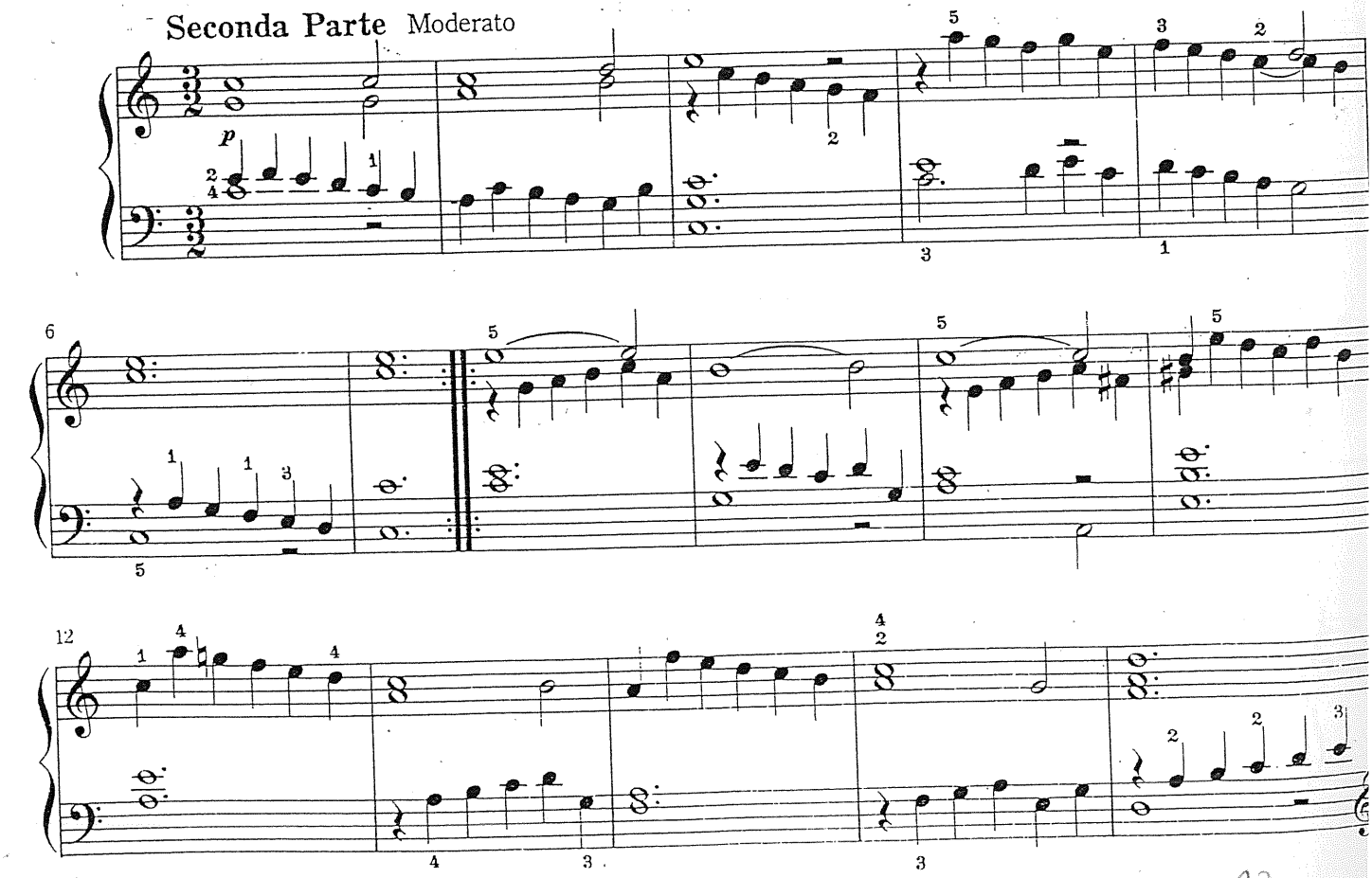

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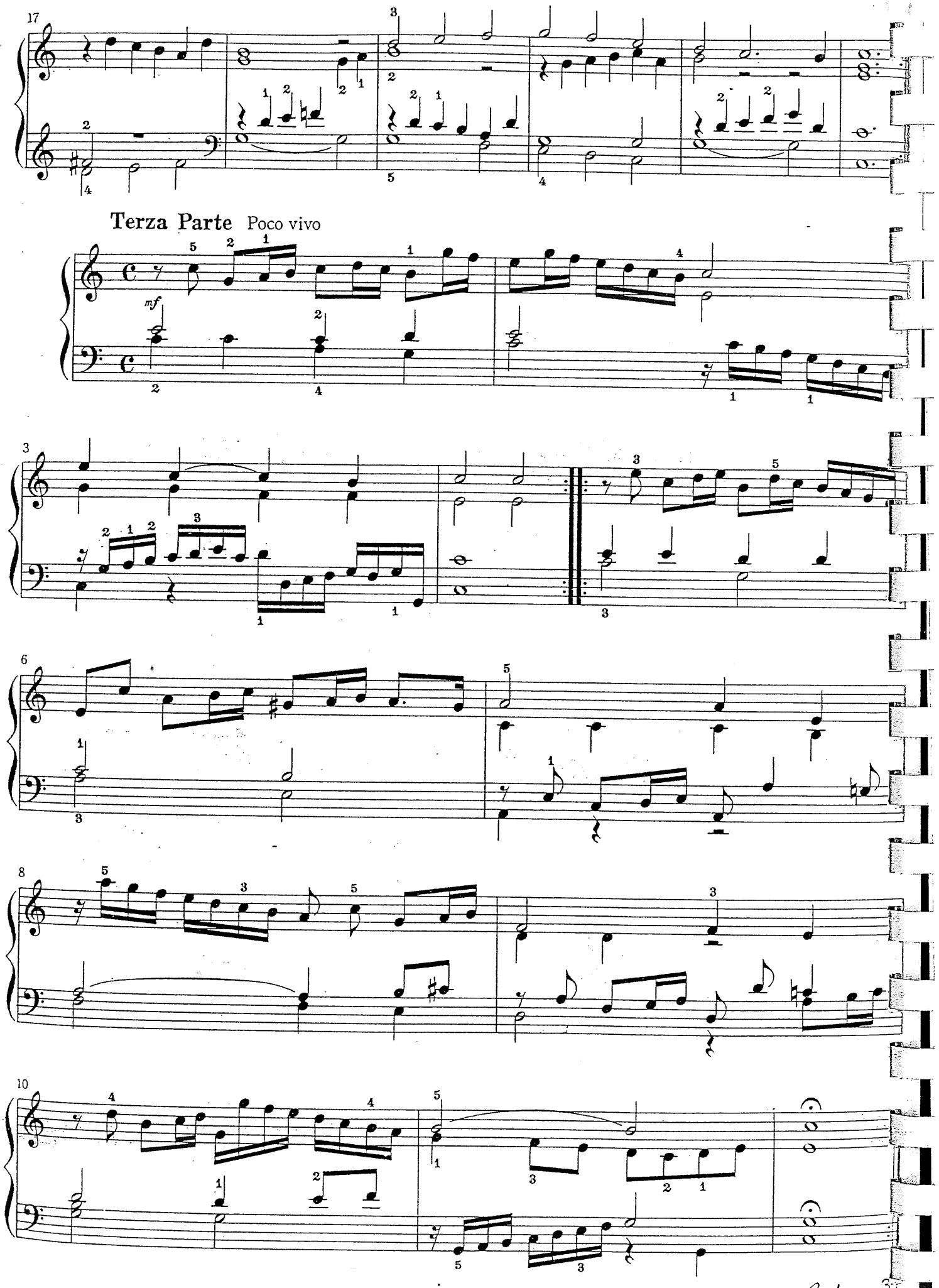
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Terza Parte Poco vivo
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