Preface

With this compilation, I offer the horn player - professional, teacher, and student alike - a complete resource of the Mozart Horn Concerti in their original notation in one volume. Mozart composed all of his works for horn between 1781 and 1786 for his friend Josef Ignaz Leutgeb, an acknowledged virtuoso and composer of horn concerti himself. While Leutgeb was employed as a hunting hornist in the Salzburg court, his numerous solo concerts included performances in Paris and Vienna.

The Allegro, K. 370 represents Mozart's first attempt at writing for the horn as a solo instrument, preceding even the K.407 Quintet for horn and strings. The version that exists today is the compilation of fragments that have been sewn together to recreate the Allegro that was purported to have been paired with the more well-known K. 371 Rondo (often referred to as the Concert Rondo). In 1856, upon the hundredth anniversary of W.A. Mozart's birth, his son Karl Thomas cut up the manuscript of K. 370 and gave away bits of the score to his friends as "Mozart mementos". The fragments currently reside in at least six different locations (including the Mozarteum in Salzburg, the Bibiliothèque Nationale in Paris, the Prague National Museum and with a private collector in Seattle) and have only been recently reassembled. Even the Rondo, K. 371 has been recently modified; in 1990, a sheet of music containing sixty bars of the Rondo was bought at an auction and reunited with the rest of the score. I have also included the two versions of the Rondo from the D Major Concerto. The first movement Allegro was sketched by Mozart in 1782 and finished in 1791. The Rondo usually paired with it was written in 1792 and was previously thought to have been by Mozart, but it has now been attributed to his contemporary, Franz Xaver Süßmayr. The version that Mozart sketched directly follows the Süßmayr version in this edition. There is also a small inconsistency in the third movement of K. 495 with the four bar segment which begins at measure 105. In some orchestrations, those four bars are repeated, but in others they are not.

Given the almost complete absence of instructions for the soloist in the original scores, any modern edition must take into consideration those few original markings and the notations Mozart made in the orchestral parts. Discrepancies between the solo horn part and identical material that appears in the tutti orchestral parts are numerous. In K. 412, for example, compare the multitude of slurs (or phrase markings) in the opening statement of the first violins to the single slur that is written in that same statement when played by the solo horn. Debates also arise when discussing the dynamic scheme. Given the wide spectrum of performance opportunities available today (natural horn, modern horn, large concert hall with symphony orchestra, smaller hall with chamber orchestra, horn and piano in recital, etc.), I encourage the performer to adapt and vary his or her performance to each particular situation. Articulations and dynamics that work well for the modern instrument in a 3000 seat concert hall would not translate well to a hand horn performing with a period instrument ensemble in a 300 seat theater. It also is worth remembering that the horn for which these concerti were written has changed drastically. Articulations, technique, and dynamic range that were standard for the hand horn of the day need to be reconsidered if one is to perform them on a modern instrument in a modern orchestral setting. As I believe that decisions with respect to articulations and dynamics are personal and should be left to the discretion of the performer, I have chosen to limit my editorial additions and have purposefully chosen not to 'over-mark' dynamics.

Whether performed on the natural horn or not, I strongly believe that these works should be studied in their original notation. When examining these concerti in their original 'Horn in Es' or 'Horn in D' notation, one is much more likely to consider the open/stopped timbre of the natural horn and the corresponding subtleties of color, dynamics and inflection that Mozart must surely have intended.

Performers of Mozart's day were expected to display both their technical prowess and improvisatory skills during their cadenzas. Each of us has the opportunity to make these concerti unique by composing original cadenzas. I have included my own cadenzas as possible options, but my hope is that each of you will want to showcase your skills and create your own personal statements.

The purpose of this edition is not to set forth my opinions and inclinations in ink and claim to reinvent the wheel. Instead, I offer you a relatively clean slate upon which you might draw and thus exercise your own musical and creative talents. Certainly no two performers will hear or perform these great works in an identical fashion, and hopefully that same spirit of individuality, experimentation and spontaneity will continue for as long as we are able to play these masterpieces of the horn literature. Happy music making!

Respectfully yours,

Eric Ruske

THE HORN CONCERTI
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

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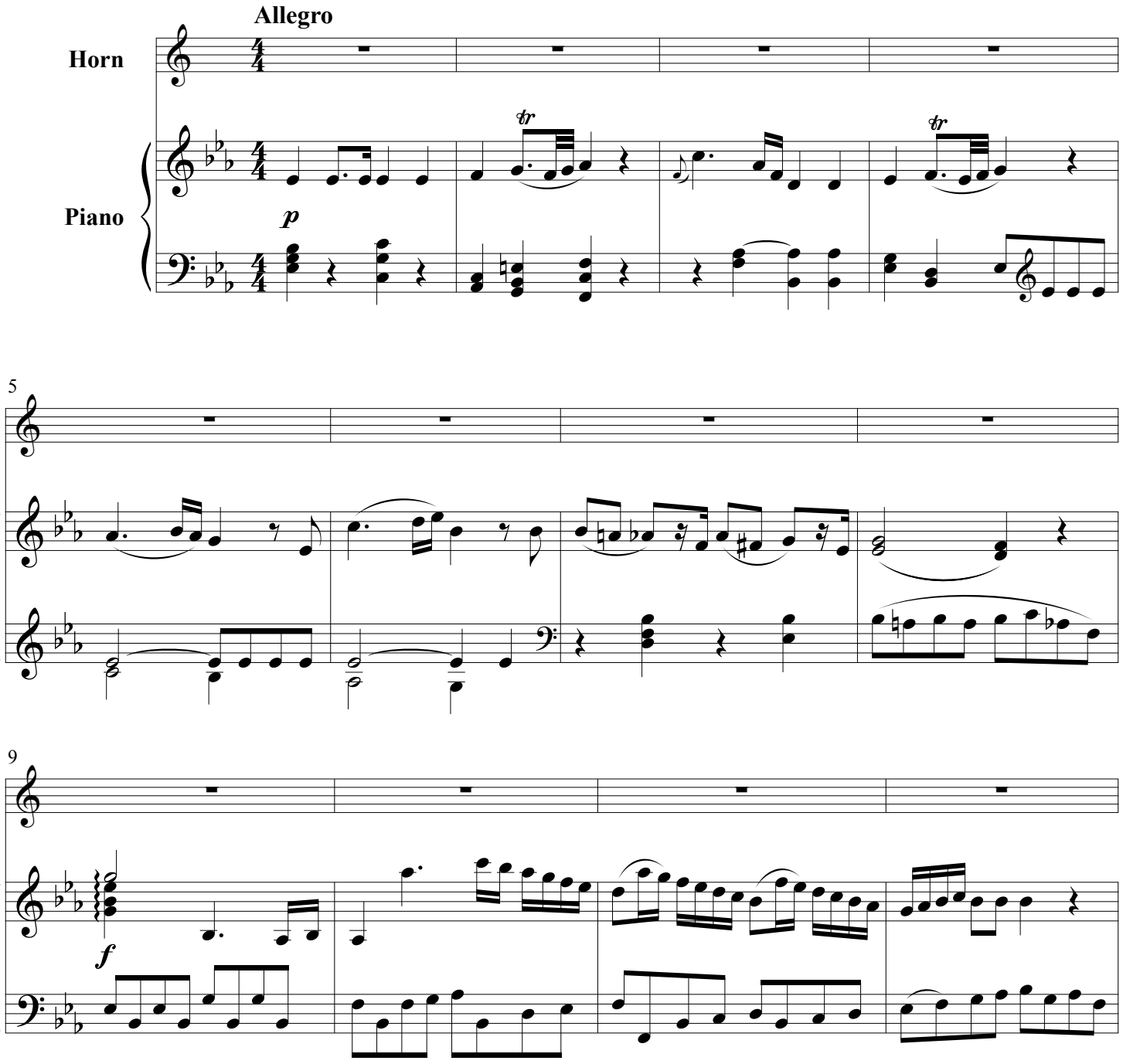
Score

CONCERTO IN E♭ MAJOR
K. 370b and K. 371

W. A. Mozart
Edited by Eric Ruske



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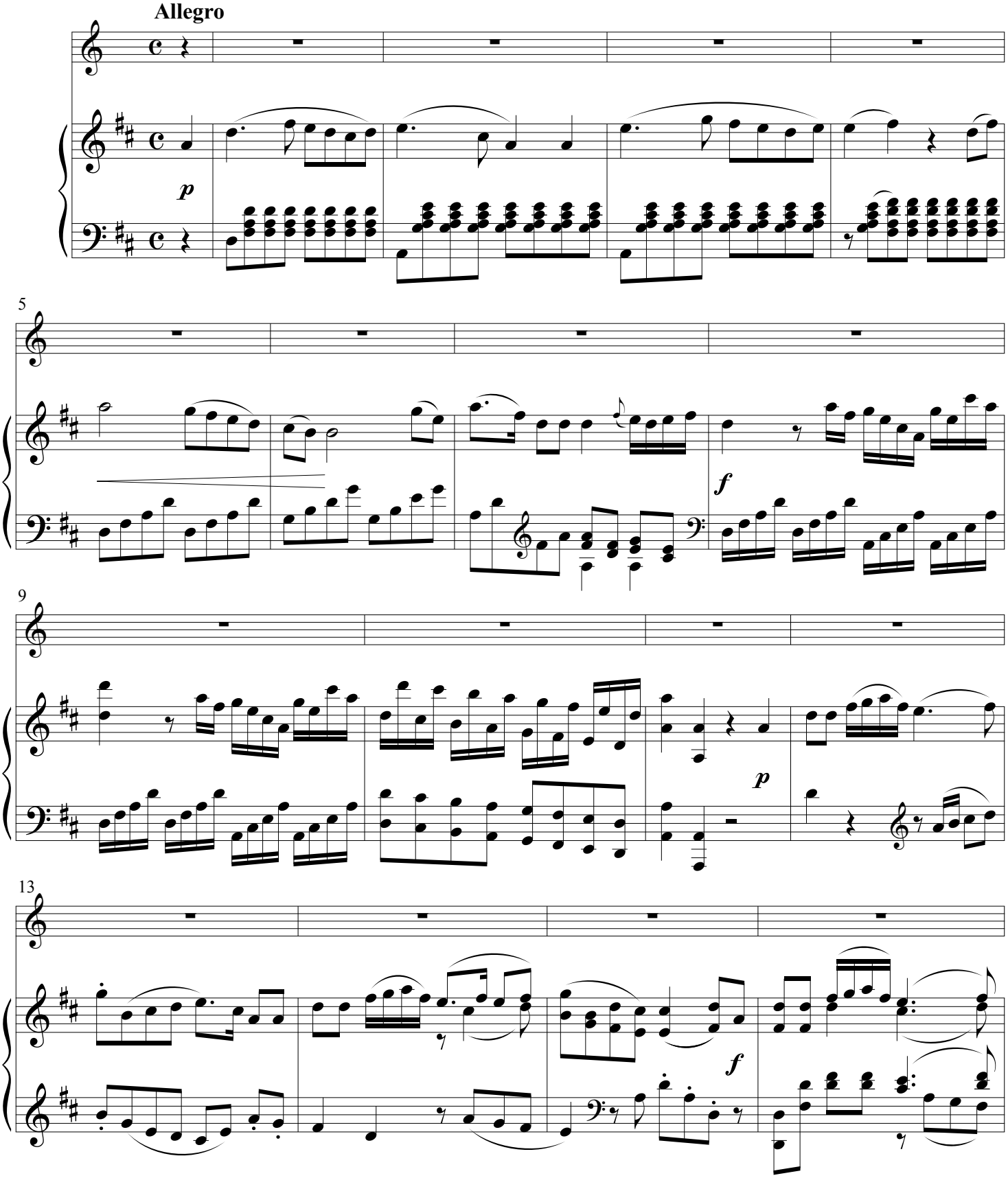

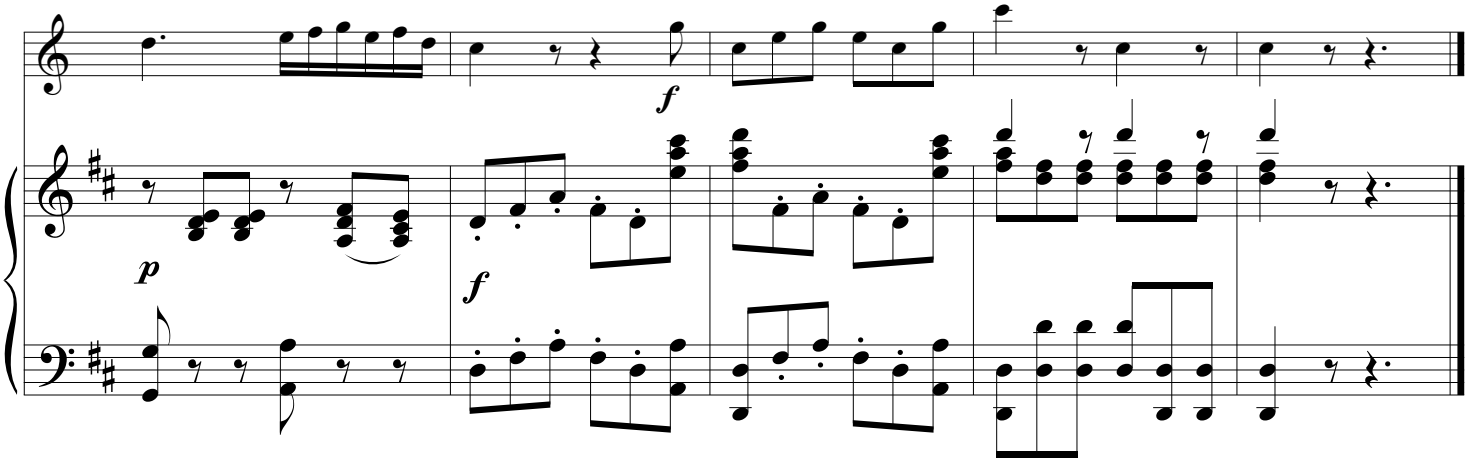

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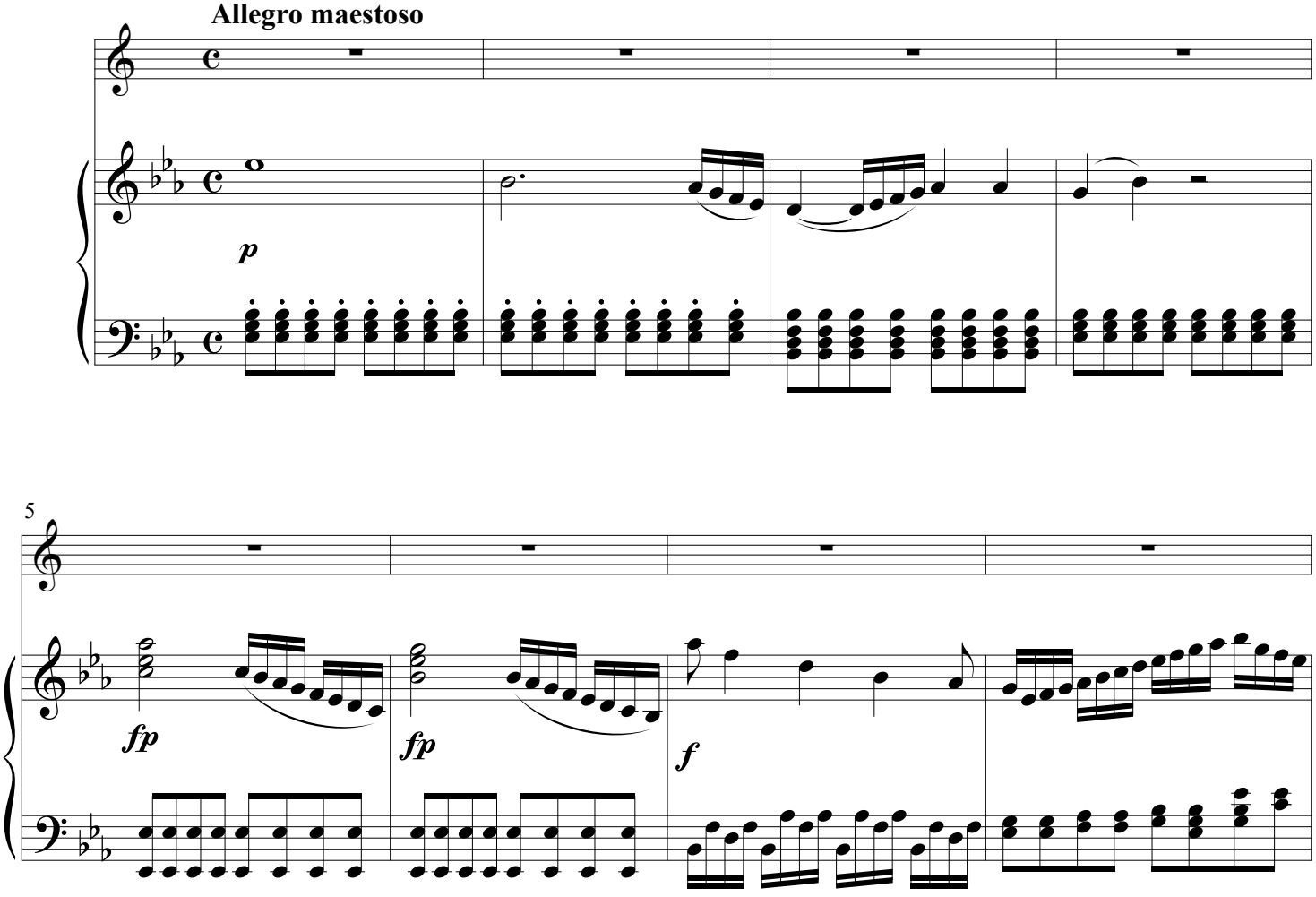

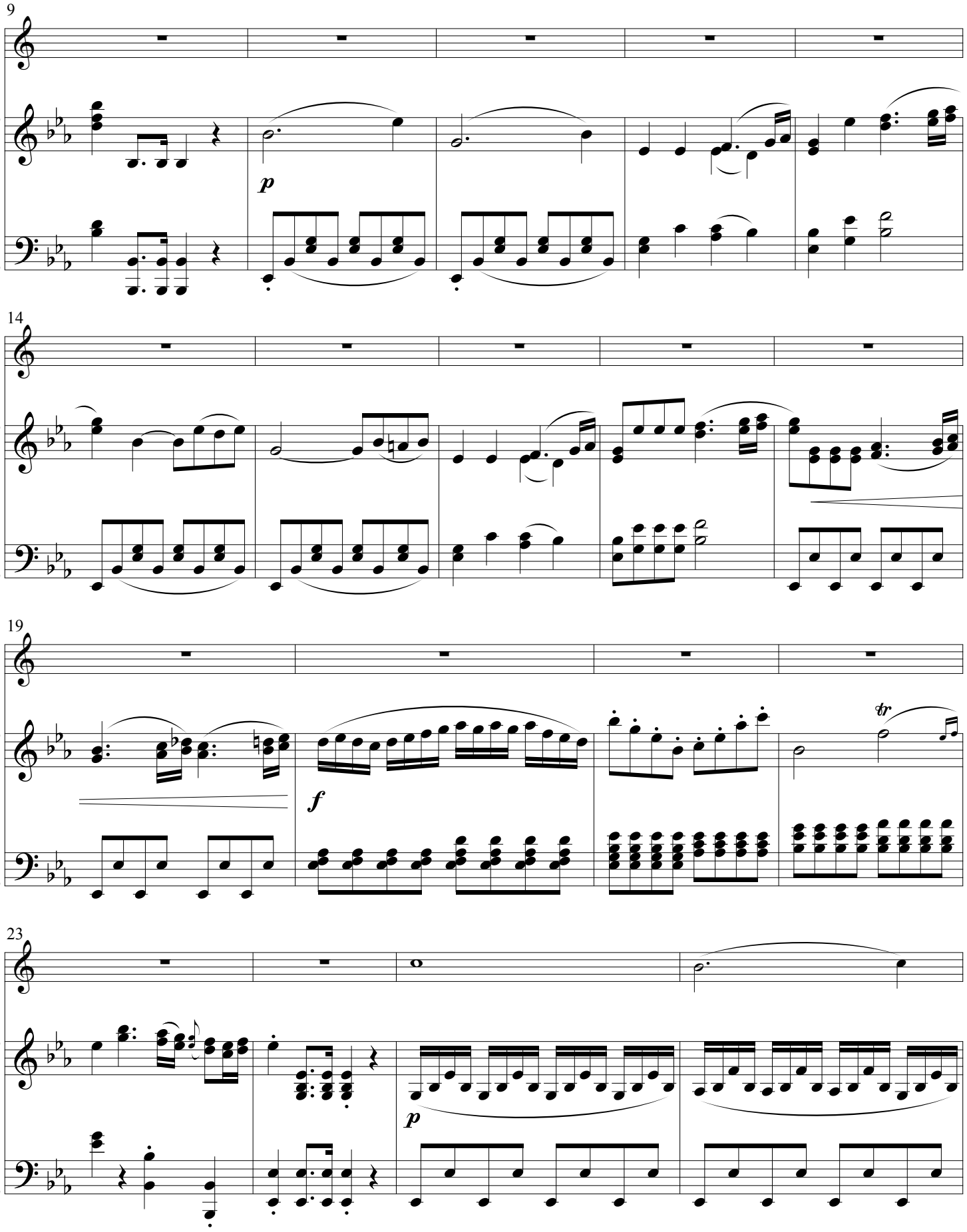
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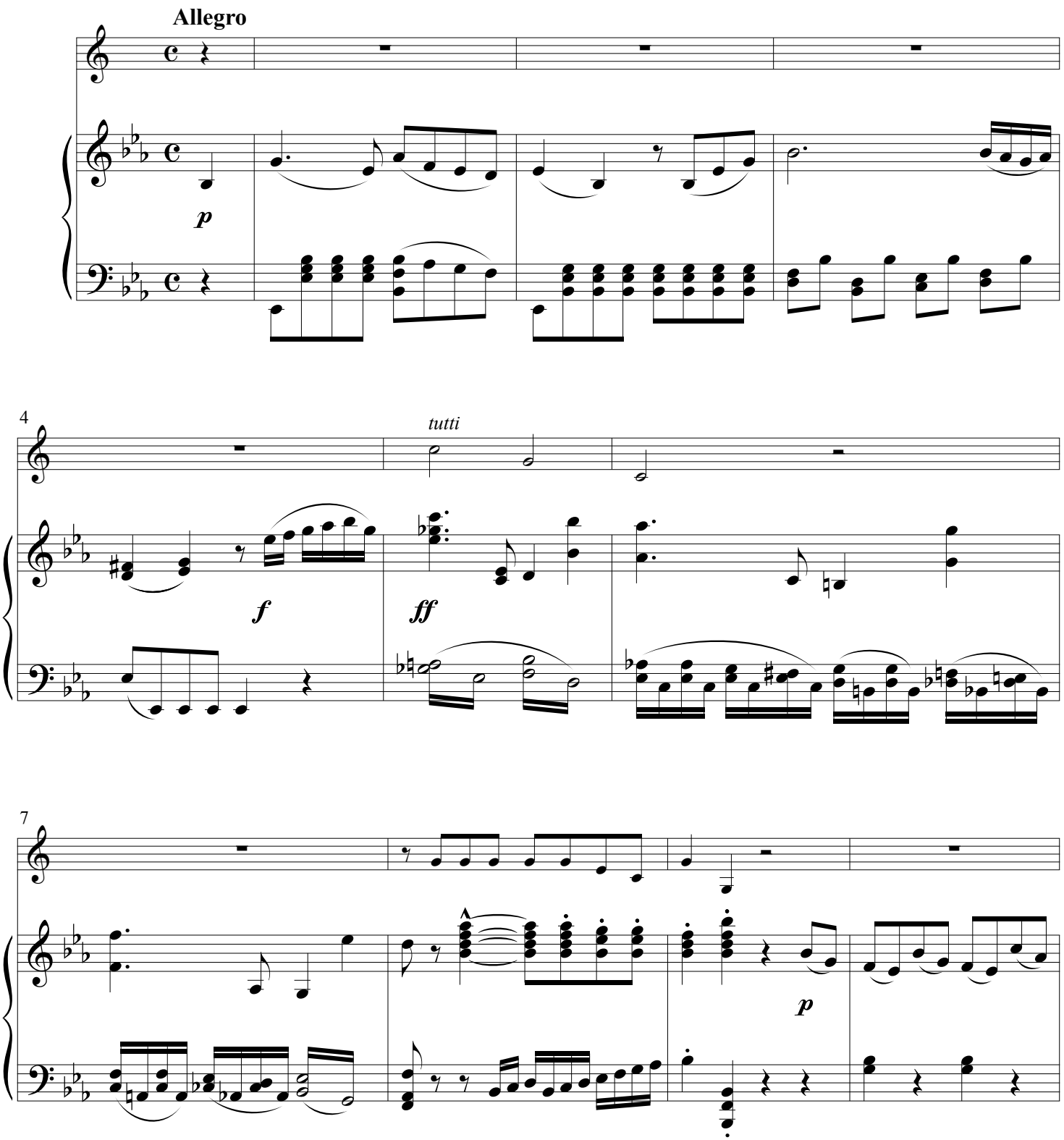
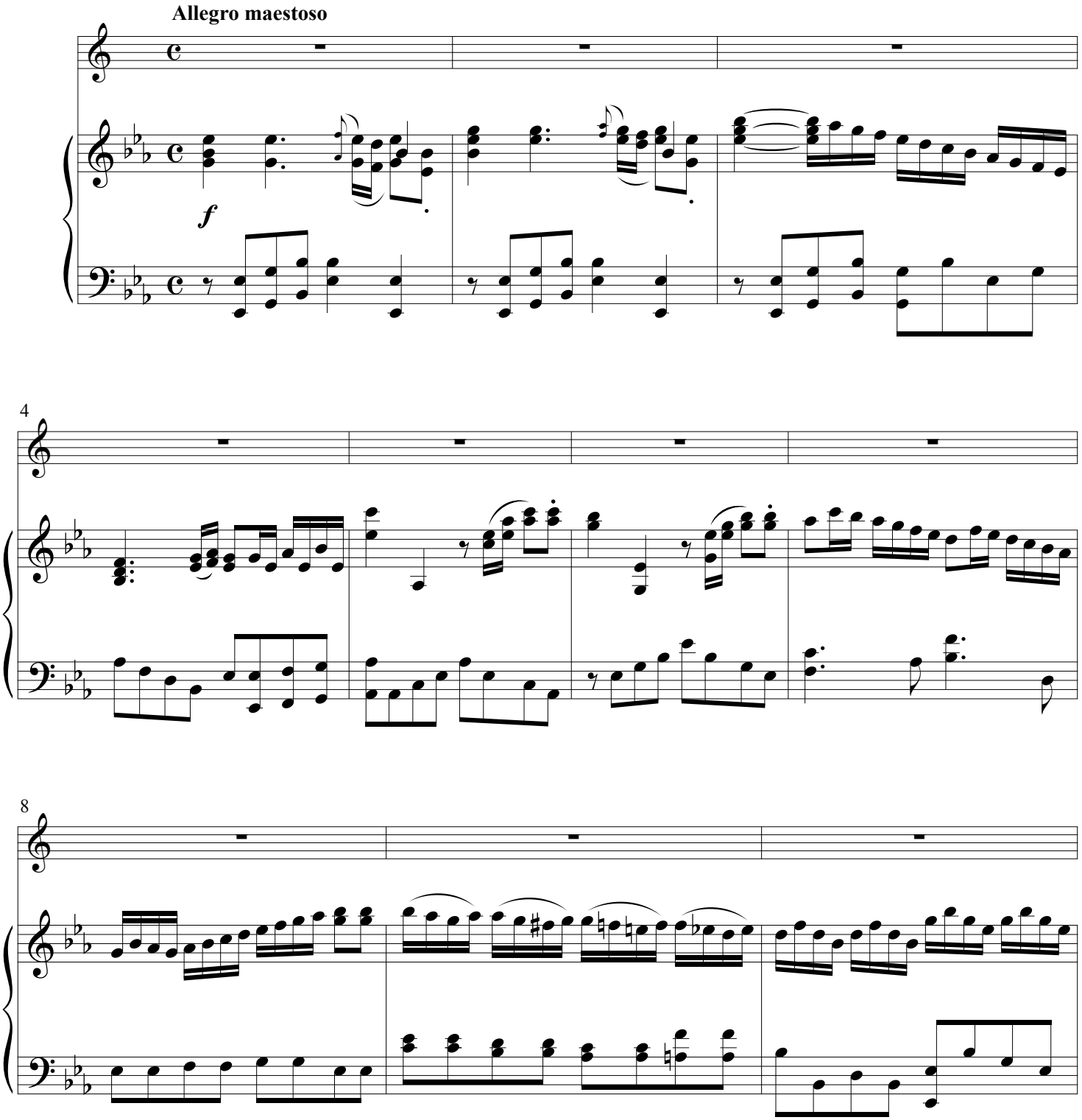
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