Neil Buckland

# English Dance

for recorder trio (SAT)

or three flutes

bucklandmusic.com.au

The tune usually referred to as "English Dance" comes from a 13th century manuscript in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Douce 139). It is an estampie, a medieval dance form consisting of several sections repeated with different endings. In the manuscript it is untitled, no composer is named, and, as with other music from this period, all that is written down is the bare melody, with no indication of instrumentation, harmony, tempo or expression.

To bring the music to life, modern performers or arrangers must therefore decide on suitable instrumentation and tempo, and add accompaniment, expression, articulation and (if it seems appropriate) ornamentation – a process akin almost to composition. To do this in a completely "authentic" way, given how little we know about medieval performance practice, is impossible. In making this arrangement, and composing a slow introductory duet for two of the instruments, I have nevertheless tried to remain as much as possible in the original style and spirit of the piece.

## Performance Notes

Note that the top line sounds an octave higher than written when played on soprano recorder. When the piece is performed on 3 flutes, flute 1 must thus play its entire part an octave higher than written. Alternatively, this part could be played on a piccolo, with its solo in the Introduction taken (8va) by Flute 2.

The introductory duet is not part of the original tune and can be omitted if desired.

The modern practice, on flutes and other instruments, of playing with continuous vibrato is foreign to the style of this piece. It should be played with minimal vibrato, perhaps adding a little to certain notes for expressive purposes.

Crisp and alert articulation is important in giving vitality to the music, and the marked articulations should be observed closely. Note that I have used a non-standard sign in this score for portato (semi-staccato, slightly detached) articulations. These are normally indicated with a dash and dot over the note ( ). Unfortunately this sign is often taken to imply some accentuation of the note as well as some shortening, since the dash is commonly used on its own to indicate a slight accent. As a consequence, there is no commonly accepted, unambiguous way to indicate portato notes that should *not* be accented. To avoid ambiguity, therefore, in this score:

- a dash (–) over or under a note always indicates a slight accent
- a dash and dot together () indicate that the note should be played *both* portato *and* slightly accented
- the symbol ) indicates portato articulation only (i.e. the note before the ) is slightly shortened); a note marked thus is *un*accented, unless a full accent sign (>) is added.

Notes marked with a broken slur may either be slurred or (double-)tongued. The players should agree on a common approach.

indicates a short pause.

N.B.

**Duration**: approx. 3:30

# English Dance

for SAT recorders or 3 flutes

Anon. 13th Century,
arr. & intro. Neil Buckland

## Introduction

**Largo (♩ = 48)**

Soprano Recorder/ Flute 1*
Alto Recorder/ Flute 2
Tenor Recorder/ Flute 3

***mp*** *espress., quasi improvisando*

Sop./ Fl.1
Ten./ Fl.3

***mp*** *espress., quasi improvisando*

Sop./ Fl.1
Ten./ Fl.3

Ten./ Fl.3

**Allegro assai (♩ = 188)**

***p***

## 1 English Dance (estampie)

Sop./ Fl.1
Alto/ Fl.2
Ten./ Fl.3

***mf***

* N.B. Flute 1 plays the entire part 8va.

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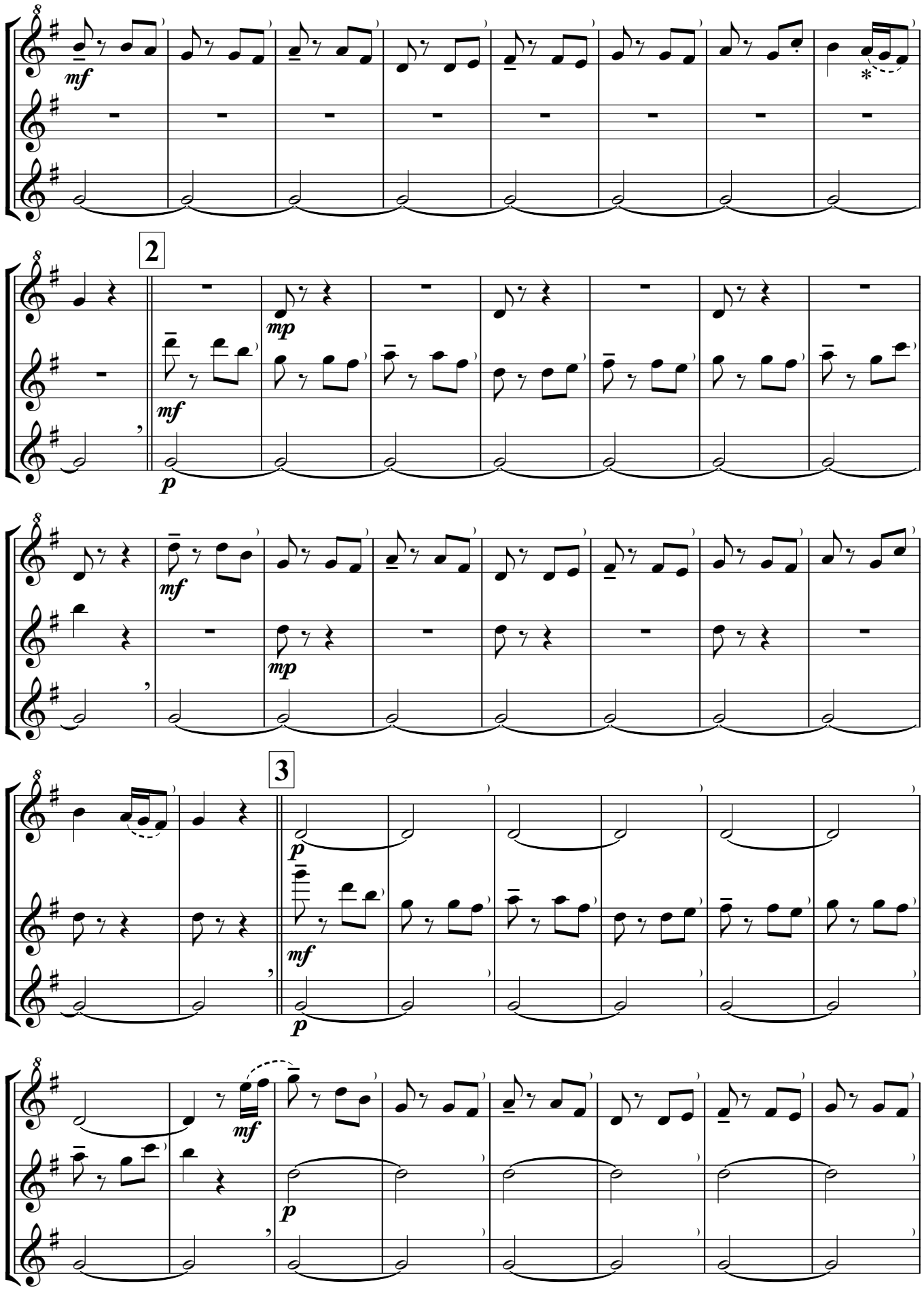


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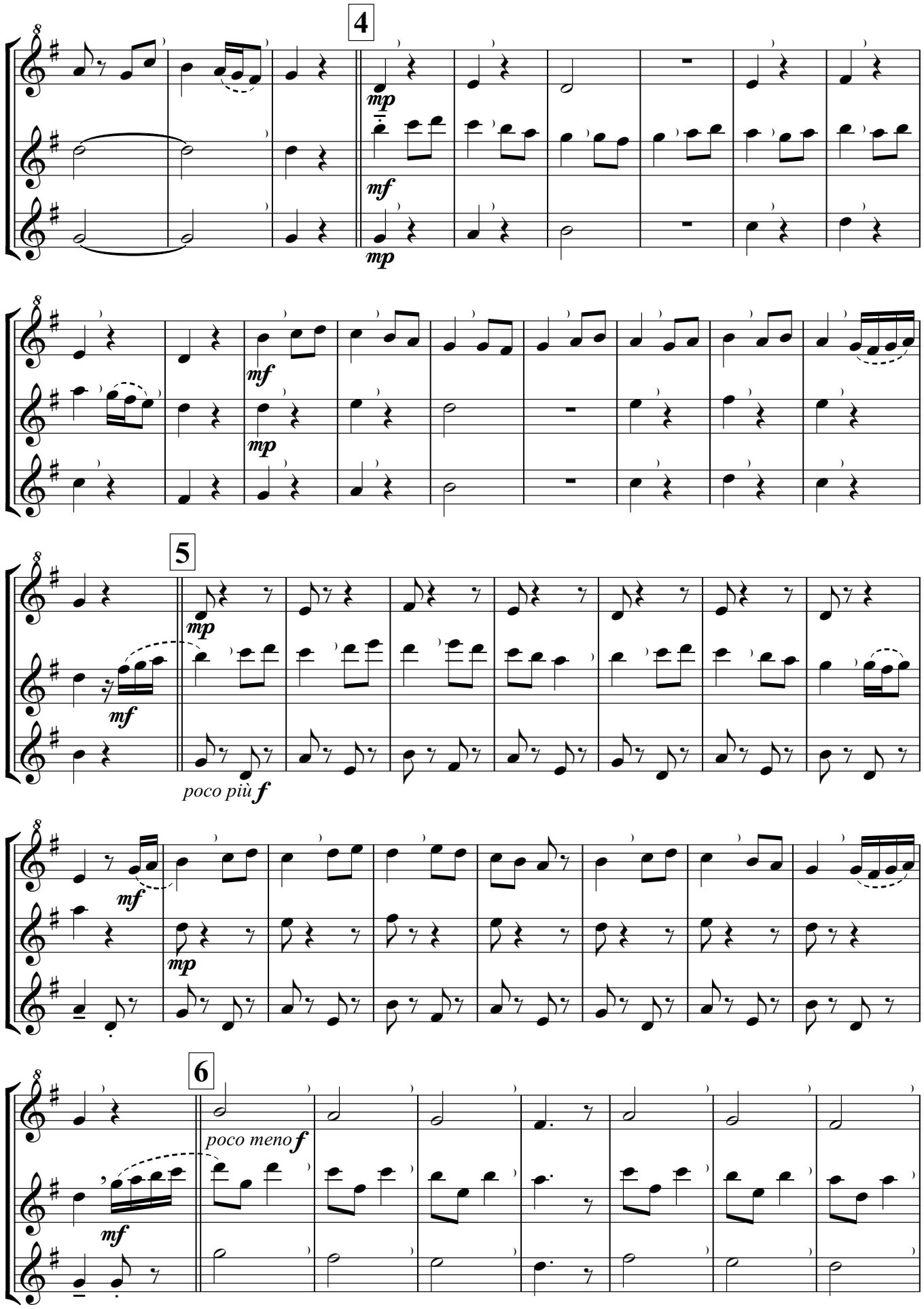
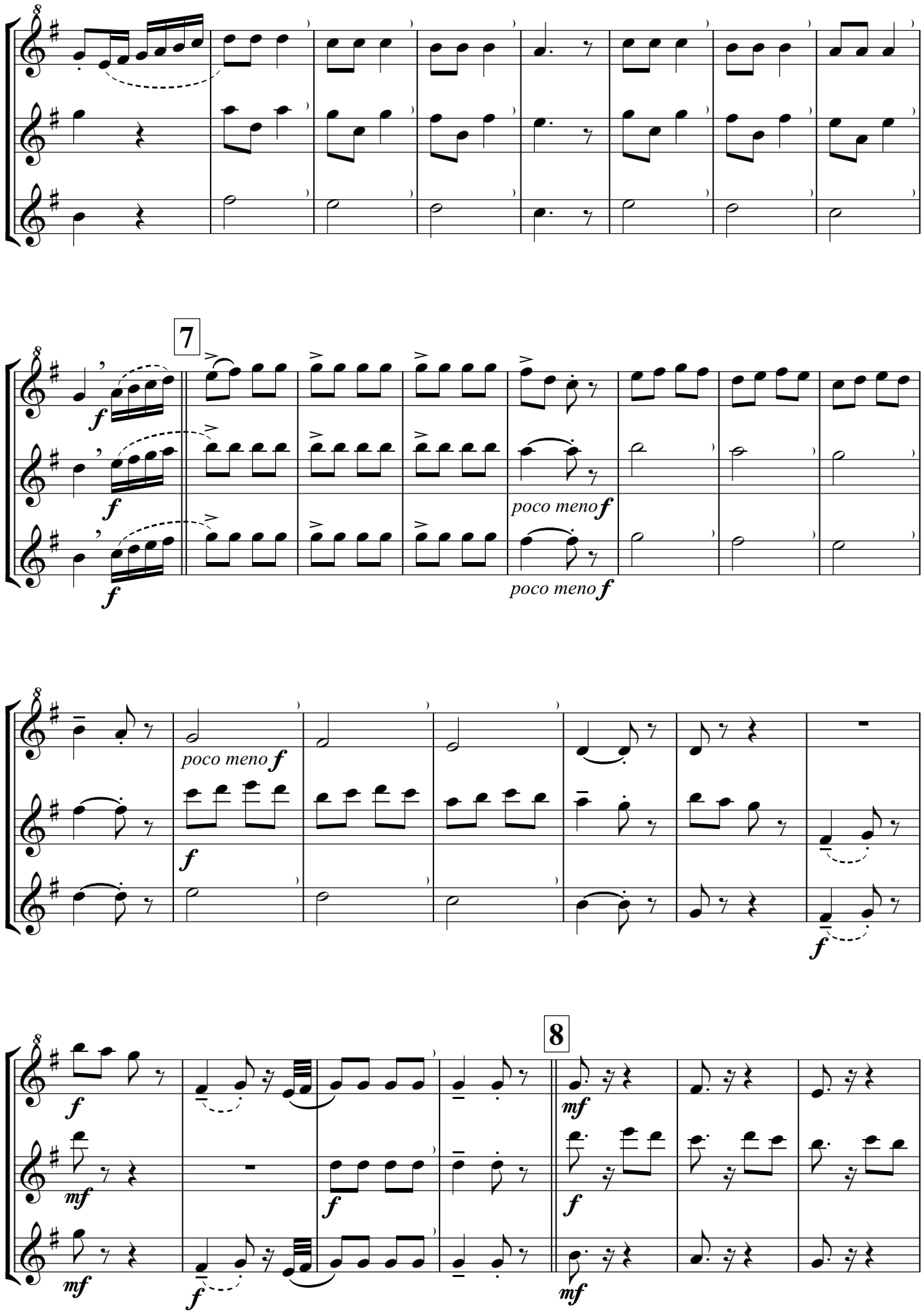
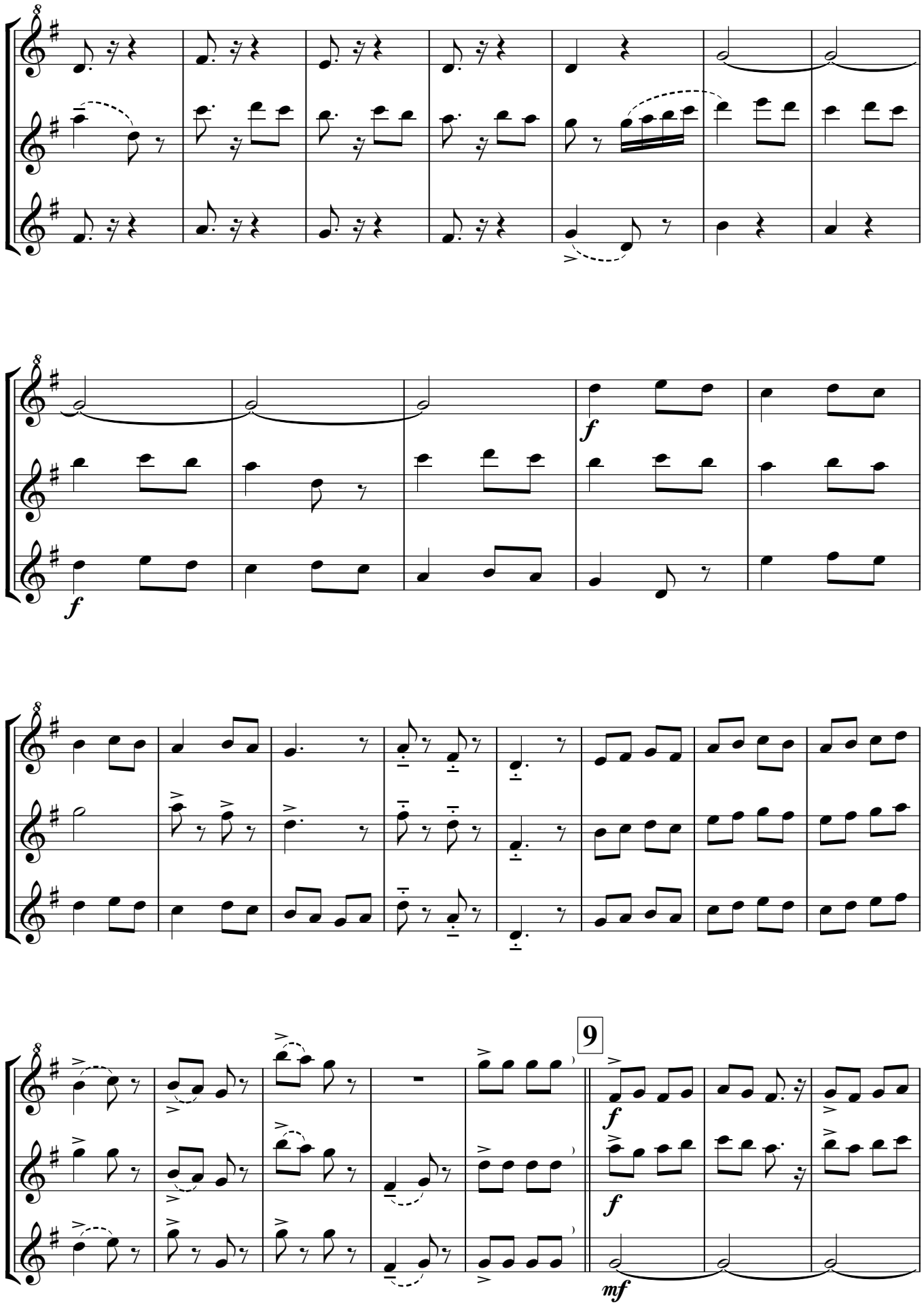
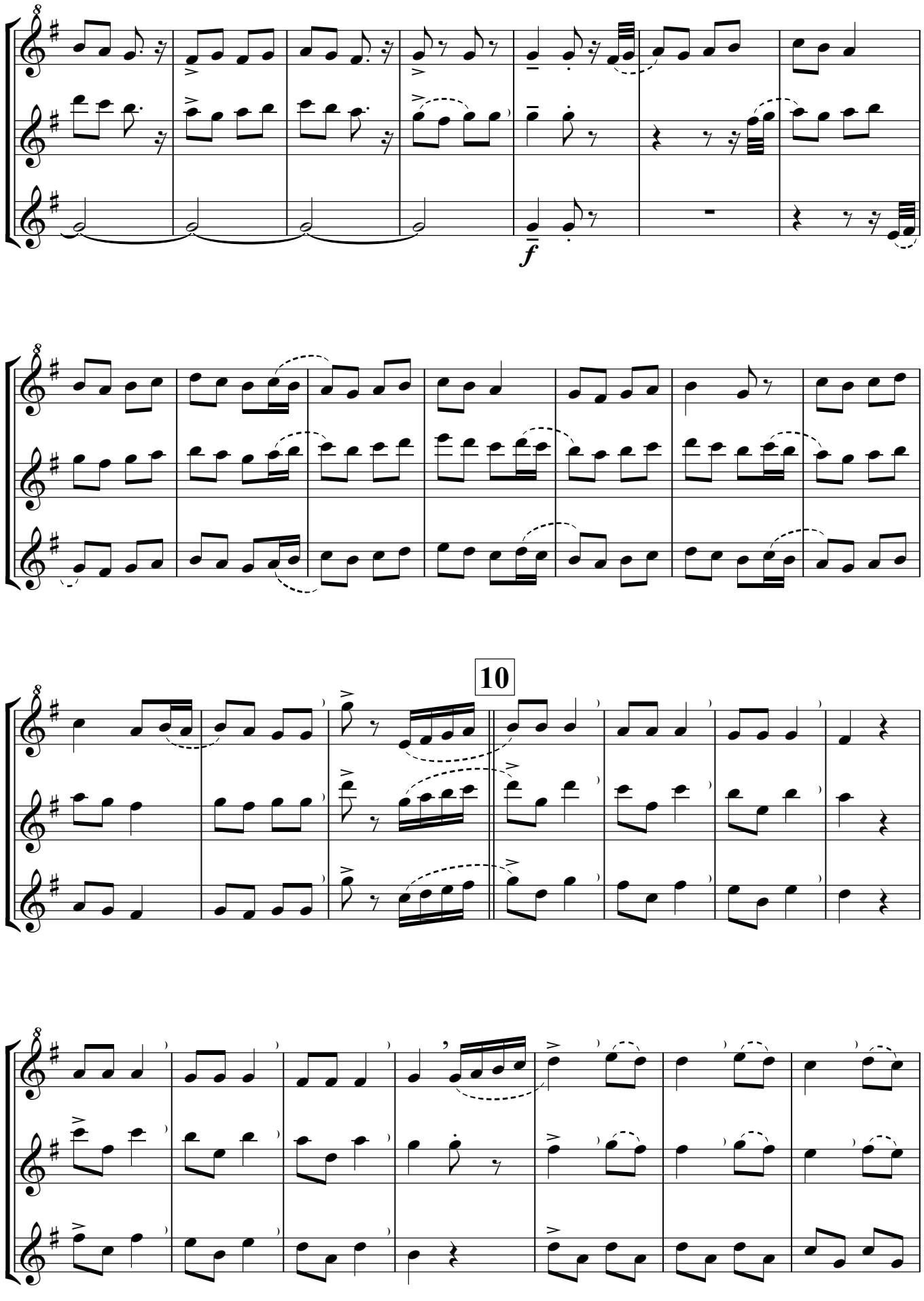
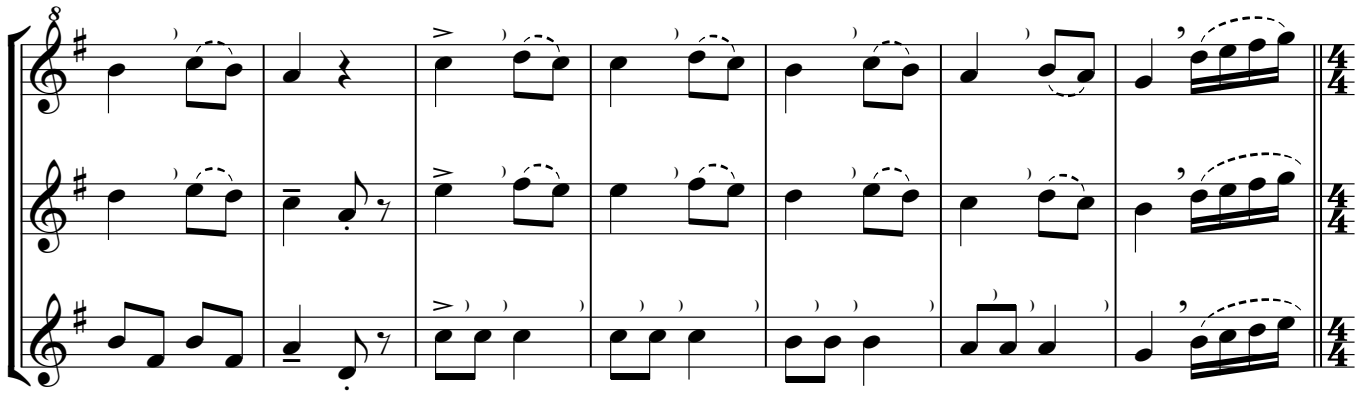
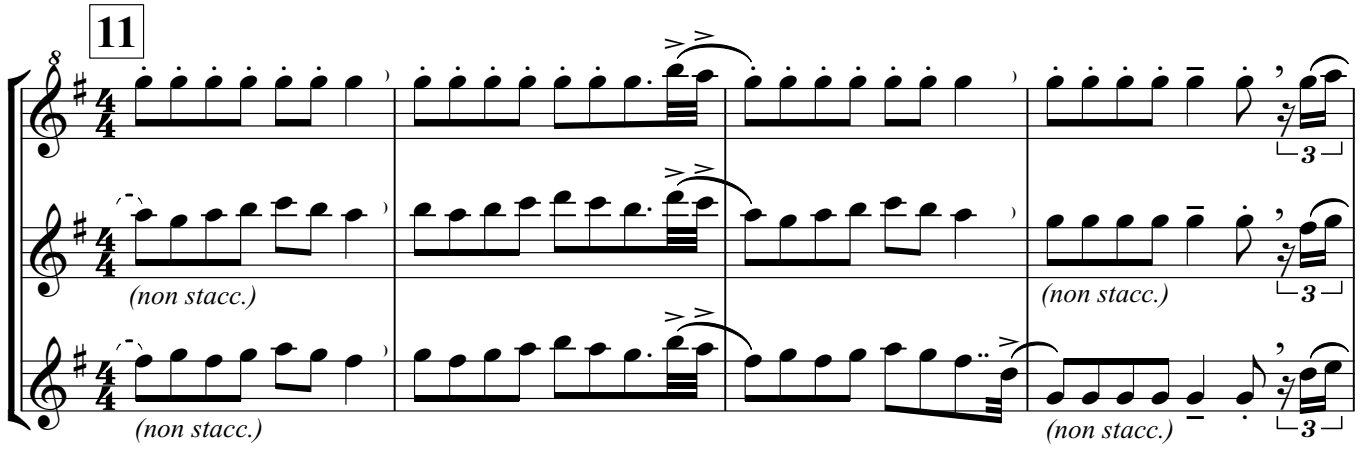

4
mp
mf
mp
mf
mp
5
mp
mf
poco più f
mf
mp
6
poco meno f
mf

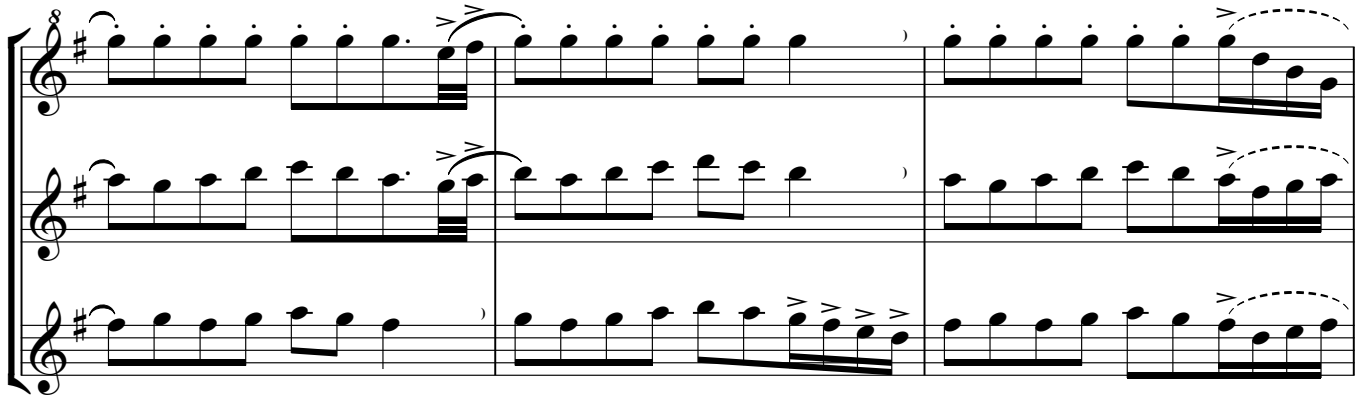

7
poco meno f
poco meno f
poco meno f
8

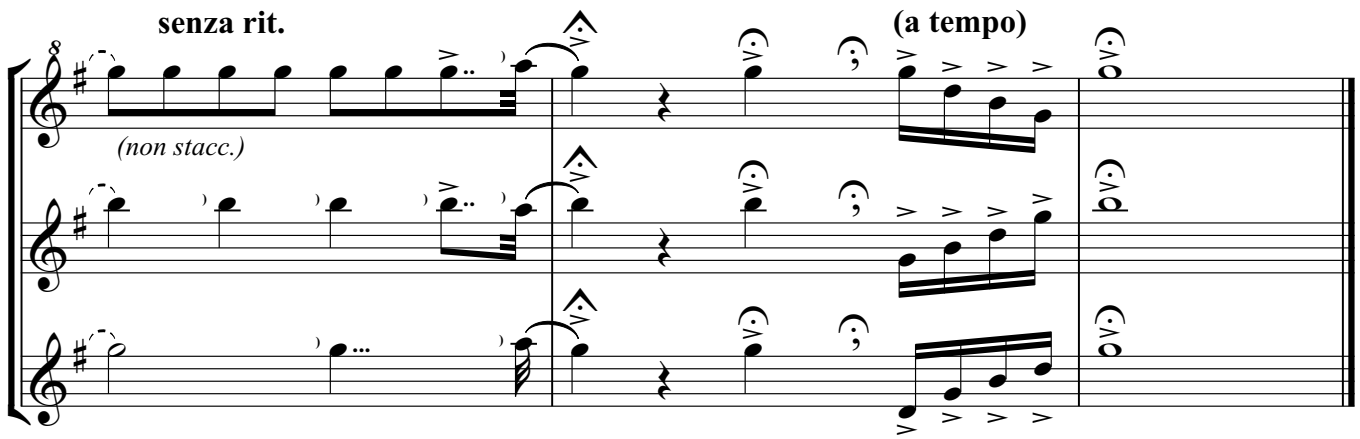

f
f
9
f
f
mf


f
10




11
(non stacc.)
(non stacc.)
(non stacc.)
(non stacc.)




senza rit.
(non stacc.)
(a tempo)