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An evaluation of piano literature written originally for four hands--one piano

Frederick Farnam Owens
University of the Pacific

AN EVALUATION OF PIANO LITERATURE WRITTEN ORIGINALLY FOR FOUR HANDS--ONE PIANO

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Frederick Farnam Owens

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to explore and analyze the wealth of intrinsic value that is to be found in compositions originally written for piano duet (two performers at one piano). Only compositions originally conceived for piano duet will be considered; transcriptions of works that were at first in the form of piano solo, string quartet, orchestra, or any such medium other than piano duet, will not be considered in this writing. Also excluded will be works for piano duet that are not of concert hall use; this paper is concerned with that literature for piano duet which is of a caliber transcending pure pedagogy. Another object of this thesis is to show what a remarkable amount of art has been cast in the form of piano duet literature.

CHAPTER II

THE PRECLASSIC ERA

I. NICHOLAS CARLETON AND THOMAS TOMKINS

From not only the historical standpoint but also the musical, the survey of originally composed piano duet literature starts with Nicholas Carleton (around 1550) and Thomas Tomkins (1573-1656). Nicholas Carleton was an English composer who lived in the forepart of the sixteenth century. He was known by his arrangements of some of his vocal compositions for organ or virginal. It is not known which works were originally conceived for keyboard and which works were originally conceived for voices and then transcribed for keyboard. But, owing to his composition of A Verse for Two to Play on One Virginall or Organe,[1] he becomes a most important historical figure for this writing, as this duet is one of the earliest specimens of four-hand music for a keyboard instrument. This particular piece has another historical significance: it ". . . is the only English cantus firmus composition for which a medium of performance is designated--and here we are given a choice of instruments!"[2]

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1 Appendix A, p. 95

2 Hugh M. Miller, "The Earliest Keyboard Duets," The Musical Quarterly, 29:440, October, 1943.

Whether Carleton or Thomas Tomkins has the distinction of composing the very first piano duet originally for four hands is impossible to conclude; it is not known exactly when Carleton lived or when Carleton's A Verse for Two to Play on One Virginall or Organe and Tomkins' A Fancy for Two to Play[3] were composed.

> In conclusion we need only say that, in addition to the historical interest of these earliest keyboard duets, their intrinsic musical interest and their quaint charm are factors that undeniably contribute to their artistic merits and that raise them well out of the class of mere curiosities. For these reasons they are quite acceptable music for concert performance.[4]

II. JOHANN CHRISTIAN BACH

According to Preston Ware Orem the oldest published original four-hand pieces are by Johann Christian Bach (1735-1782), whose works are direct precursors of Mozart's four-hand piano works. Others say that Burney's Four Sonatas or Duets for Two Performers on One Pianoforte or Harpsichord (1777) and Theodor Smith's Nine Sonatas (Berlin, 1780) are the earliest to be printed. It should not be stated dogmatically that one particular composition was the first to appear in print. The following information,

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3 Appendix A, p. 95

4 Miller, op. cit., p. 447

however, is considered authoritative:

> An eighteenth century difficulty in playing harpsichord duets is mentioned by Burney himself (Rees' Cyclopedia, s.v. 'Ravalement'). He says that 'the ladies at that time wearing hoops, which kept them at too great a distance from one another, had a harpsichord made by Merlin, expressly for duets, with six octaves,' and goes on to say that, such duets then being composed 'by all the great masters of Europe', the extended compass became general.[5]

A fascinating statement, if true!

Charles Stanford Terry in his book, John Christian Bach, has this to say about the composer of the oldest published four-hand pieces: "Of all Bach's [J. S.] sons, his youngest, the Benjamin of his old age, lived the most adventurous, in some respects the most successful career."[6]

The J. C. Bach Sonatas in C Major, A, and F foreshadow the Mozartian clarity of design and the freshness of his melodies and harmonies. Christian Bach and Joseph Haydn were the two best friends of Mozart, and so it is not surprising that in Mozart's admiration of Bach, Mozart inherited the ". . . fabulous imagination, the abundance of his [Bach's] melodic ideas and his somnambulistic awareness of balance and form . . ."[7] Thus, these J. C. Bach sonatas

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5 Percy A. Scholes, The Oxford Companion to Music, p. 721

6 Charles Stanford Terry, John Christian Bach, p. v

7 Hans Rosenwald, Handbook of Music History, p. 72

(also an adagio and allegretto--University edition 745) occupy a unique position in the field of piano duet; they are the earliest available published music of this species and also are the direct precursors of Mozart's four-hand compositions.

Since the affinity between Mozart and Bach has been mentioned, an examination of Bach's compositions will indicate a similar affinity between the works of these two masters. The three sonatas by Bach are superior to the sonatas in D Major (K.381) and B-flat Major (K.358) of Mozart because the latter sonatas can best be ". . . described as a reduction of an Italian symphony--a symphony in which individual groups of winds and strings, of tutti and soli are quite sharply distinguished."[8] Only the adagio of the K.358 exemplifies the great refinement of melody and voice leading in an accompaniment of which Mozart is capable. An analysis of Bach's scoring will prove that it is not a mere reduction of an orchestral score but, on the contrary, that it is unmistakably a duet for two performers of equal importance. In the C Major Sonata of Bach (first movement), it is evident that in measures 1 and 2 both players double each other for a strong announcement of the principal theme

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8 Alfred Einstein, Mozart, His Character, His Work, p. 271

of the movement.[9] Bars 5 and 6 of the *secondo* concern themselves with imitating at the octave bars 3 and 4 of the *primo*. The first eighteen bars consist of a double period (with a measure extension at the end of each period). Manual interferences such as occur at bars 21 and 107 indicate that Bach must have composed the sonata for a two-manual harpsichord.[10] Thus the performer must play the note that ends the phrase with the right hand and release the key in time for the left hand to play it again. In measure 19, as in measure 16, there is an example of the real monophony that Bach adopted as he turned his back on his venerable father's intricate polyphony. At measures 23 through 27, the two performers have a charming dialogue consisting of a half-measure figure which is in imitation.[11] So the London Bach (or Milanese Bach) could not completely escape the influence of his father's music. Christian once remarked that anyone could write polyphonic exercises if he put himself to it. Bars 28 and 29 consist of a duet between the right hands of both performers--the same figuration a major tenth apart. At measure 30 the music assumes a primarily polyphonic style of composition until measure 51, at

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9 Appendix B, p. 98, I

10 *Ibid.*, II

11 *Ibid.*, III

which point the *secondo* echoes measures 47-51 of the *primo*. From the end of this echo (measure 55) to measure 65 there is a closing section and a double bar. The first half of the binary form makes no reference, even as it closes, to any thematic material heard before. On the next page, however, the initial figure reappears--but in the key of G Major (dominant of C). Only two measures of this initial figure are heard, when at bar 68 in the *primo* a rhythmic derivation appears which is sequentially reproduced in measures 69 and 70. By the process of imitation, bars 69 and 70 in the *secondo* are similar to bars 68 and 69 in the *primo*. Suddenly, at measure 72 a figure appears which corresponds to a similar figure in measure 30. Measures 76-78 are reminiscent of measures 68-70. From the beginning of the second half of the movement to measure 104, there is a development-like section. Measures 105-114 are identical to bars 19-28 in part one. Two measures then lead to a passage (bars 117-127) which is of parallel construction to bars 45-55. A figure derived from measure 3 appears in measure 127; the third beat of measure 131 begins the repetition of the four preceding measures. A two and one half measure *codetta* ends the second half of the first movement. As at the end of the first part, a repeat mark is found at the conclusion of the movement.

The Bach *Sonata in C Major* is almost an unknown

work, but it has been analyzed for two important reasons: (1) it is one of the very first sonatas written and published for piano duet; (2) with its companions it forms the basis upon which Mozart erected his masterpieces, and these in turn became a model for later composers.

The second movement, a rondo, contains nothing that requires analysis.[12] The most significant fact concerning these two movements is that in the case of D. Scarlatti, a sonata contains but one movement; J. C. Bach's sonatas contain two movements; finally, in Mozart there are three and four movements.

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12 Ibid., p. 99, IV

CHAPTER III

THE CLASSIC ERA

I. WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

The fact that Mozart employed more than two movements in his sonatas is one of the distinguishing characteristics to identify his genius as surpassing that of J. C. Bach.

Other than the K.381 and K.358 which have been discussed, there are four sonatas known as: K.19d in C Major, K.357 in G Major (fragment), K.497 in F Major, and K.521 in C Major. Of the six sonatas that Mozart wrote, the F Major is considered as being ". . . one of the composer's finest works."[1] In this work the piano-reduction style is totally absent; there is the manifestation that this work was conceived for two performers of equal ability and importance. This is evident from the very beginning where both parts double one another at the octave, somewhat reminiscent of the parallelism in the C Major Bach duet which has been analyzed. In the Mozart, however, there is no filling-in by the other members of the chords which are suggested by the doubled melodic motives. In measure 6 of the twenty-nine-measure Adagio, the initial melodic motive is modified,

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1 C. B. Oldman, Esq., "Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 3rd edition, III, 561

which in turn is modified again an octave lower in measure 8. The *secondo* doubles the *primo* a tenth lower in each case. Mozart could have been influenced by the C Major Bach sonata, which in bars 7 and 29 of the first movement has a similar construction. The principal theme in the Mozart *Rondo in D Major*, K.485,[2] is a derivation of the second theme of J. C. Bach's *Quintet in D Major*, Op. 11 No. 6.[3] There are other similar occurrences wherein it can be seen that a kinship existed between the two composers, so much so that Mozart was moved to remark: "'I suppose you have heard that the English Bach is dead? What a loss to the musical world!'"[4]

At measure 10 in the Mozart sonata, a melodic figure appears which dictates the harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic structure of the remaining *Adagio*. It is a simple *arpeggio* consisting of the chord tones of the prevailing harmony of the respective measure. Beethoven had a keen rival when another composer employed a seemingly insignificant figure and turned it into such a striking beauty as this *Adagio*. But this was not unusual for Mozart; he had already achieved a similar result in the great *C Minor Fantasy* (K.475). An

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2 Appendix B, p. 99, V

3 *Ibid.*, VI

4 Alfred Einstein, *Mozart, His Character, His Work*, p. 117

examination of bars 1 through 15 of this Fantasy (especially 5-15) and bars 10 through 25 of the Adagio shows a remarkable resemblance between the two. Both excerpts are marked Adagio, and rhythmically the general outline is the same. (The Fantasy is in C meter, while the sonata is in 3/4.) In either case the harmonic boldness (Mozart's music was considered modern in his day) is both progressive and sublime. The dynamic pattern is similar in that a forte is called for on the first beat of the measure, while the remainder of the measure is marked piano. As of bars 21 through 24, there are no less than four second inversions in succession, one following at the heels of the other. If all the tones of measure 21 in the secondo were played simultaneously, and if bars 22 and 23 were to be played in the same fashion as a progression of three chords,[5] a glimpse would be caught of Debussy, who lived some hundred years later! Closing in a subdued style in measure 29 on the dominant, Mozart then used the very top note of the primo as a melodic elision. This elision, which is the final tone of the introductory Adagio, is then repeated and becomes the first tone of the next section--Allegro di molto. The first six measures of the main body of the movement belong to the primo entirely; this opening consists

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5 Appendix B, p. 100, VII

of four complete measures plus bar 31, which is an extension of the first measure of the Allegro, and measure 34, which is a modification of the thirty-second measure.[6] Then the equality of the two performers manifests itself, which is one of the features that raises this work above those of its companions and contemporaries alike. The secondo carries the bulk of the essential elements of the music which corresponds to the six foregoing measures that constituted an absolute solo for the primo. After three and one half measures of literal repetition, except for register, the secondo sequentially reproduces measure 38, rather than maintaining a literal adherence to that which had transpired in its upper neighbor. An even more salient observation is that, while the secondo is reproducing what the primo has stated, but in a varied manner, the primo comments on the entire proceedings with an eighth-note figuration, giving an atmosphere of boundless yet restrained gaiety and witticism to the total fabric. A three-measure extension leads to the second half of the principal theme, which firmly establishes the F Major tonality in which the movement is predestined to close.[7] Mozart attempted to deceive the listener into thinking he is hearing the beginning

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6 Ibid., VIII

7 Ibid., p. 101, IX

of the second section of the principal theme at measure 47 by introducing a figure in the right hand of the primo and imitating it a measure later in the secondo. But a close examination shows that the second section begins with the anacrusis of measure 46--not 47. This second part of the principal theme is made up of a phrase which is modified as it is repeated. A melodic figure derived from the repeated phrase makes its appearance in bar 53, and Mozart using this figure as a sequential modulatory vehicle, carries the listener to the dominant, the key in which the subordinate theme appears, having seemingly evolved organically from the transitional material. The second theme,[8] which begins on the anacrusis of measure 65, takes form as a period, predominately consisting of a number of phrase-members of two measures in length. The listener then hears a contrapuntal treatment of the phrase-member, the full import of which he can better assimilate by playing and studying the passage. The genius of Mozart was multitudinous; not restrained merely to melodic purity and freshness, it is manifest in every phase of composition. At measure 95 there is a faint reminder of the opening melodic figure which brought the Allegro di molto to life; an intervening closing section then forms a bridge that leads to a passing

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8 Ibid., X

reappearance of this faint reminder. At the end of the exposition the customary repeat mark is found. The two bars between the double bar and the development section constitute a momentary lull which gives the impression of quiet before a storm. Indeed, this impression is confirmed. A sudden *forte* leads the way into the development section. Except for the first measure of the development, the material in measures 122-138 is new.[9] The *primo* contains chords while the *secondo* embodies an eighth-note figuration from bars 122-129; the two parts are reversed, however, in bars 130-137. Measure 139, with its melodic anticipation, introduces familiar material which is a rhythmic derivation of the principal theme. This section (measures 139-155) is one of the high points of the movement. Within this section a two-measure motive is treated in imitation and acts as a modulatory sequence scheme, while an accompanying figure of eighth-notes in the *secondo* adds depth, harmonic emphasis, and drama to the resultant effect.[10] In measure 154 both parts consist of B-flat octaves which facilitate the progression from A Major to B-flat Minor. The following measure misleads the listener; he thinks he has arrived at the recapitulation, only to

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9 *Ibid.*, p. 102, XI

10 *Ibid.*, XII

find that Mozart has once again produced a so-called false recapitulation--a device he employed in his first really original Clavier Concerto, in D Major (K.175). The listener, however, is rewarded in the following measures by a dramatic polyphonic treatment of this false recapitulation. The remainder of the development is devoted to the material that occurred at the beginning of the working-out section, which leads so subtly and naturally into the restatement that the listener is quite unaware that he is actually in the third and final division, until approximately measure 209, at which point he is reasonably sure that he is not experiencing another false alarm! Measures 204-229, which form the beginning of the restatement, correspond exactly to bars 30-54, which make up the start of the exposition. To arrive at the second theme as of measure 228, Mozart used the same procedure in the recapitulation as in the exposition except of course that the material is transposed; thus the subordinate theme is found to be in the key in which the movement is to close. The rest of the movement continues on to a closing which is scintillating and most rewarding to performers and listeners alike. Mention need only be made of the repeat mark found at the demarcation line that lies between the end of the recapitulation and the coda. Not only is this sonata one of Mozart's best piano duet creations and one of his greatest

chamber works, but it ". . . is a veritable model for all other four-hand music and is pervaded by that atmosphere of sublimity which is felt in Mozart's greatest products."[11]

"The 'Sonata in C Major' (K.521) is also a vigorous work; stirring, imaginative, and rich in melodic beauty."[12] This sonata is generally rated inferior to its companion, the F Major. But this should not be taken to mean that it is one of Mozart's lesser works, as nothing could be further from the truth. Both sonatas are of such a caliber that pianists should not fail to know both thoroughly. In this brilliant C Major Sonata Mozart wrote on the autograph of the two parts, Cembalo primo and Cembalo secondo, for the work could only gain by being performed on two instruments. The powerful theme which appears at the beginning of the first movement is in unison and creates a very exhilerating effect.[13] The two parts are without Carl Maria von Weber's display of virtuosity, but the brilliance of the opening and closing movements foreshadows his works.

The two Fantasies in F Minor, although originally composed for another medium of expression, were later arranged by Mozart himself for piano duet, and so they are

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11 Ralph Berkowitz, "Original Music for Four Hands," Etude, 62:27, January, 1944

12 Loc. cit.

13 Appendix B, p. 103, XIII

eligible to appear in this writing. Altogether there are three such compositions known. One of them, an Andante in F Major (K.616), fur eine Walze in eine kleine Orgel (for a Little Clock-Work Organ) is not available (out of print). Another one is known as a Fantasy in F Minor (K.594) and was of little interest to Mozart, and it produces the same effect upon musicians of today. The third one (K.608) is an Orgelstück für eine Uhr (Organ Piece for a Clock) and is in the same key as K.594 but is of a great deal of interest. Both the K.594 with its shortcomings and the K.608 represent Mozart's triumph over the strict style. Particularly in the K.608, with its Allegro--Andante--Allegro scheme, may the evidence of the strict style be seen. After thirteen measures of introductory material the theme of a fugue appears; four measures later comes the response in the dominant. The response and its counter-subject are joined five measures later by the second announcement of the theme in the secondo. Precisely four measures later the fourth and last voice enters into the tonal fabric. With consummate skill, Mozart inverted the subject in bar 46, seemingly oblivious to the fact that the secondo was busily engaged with the subject in its first form. The fugue finally comes to rest in a reposeful and expressive Andante. But this is not destined to last, for after eighty-four measures the Allegro returns. In measure 172

the original fugue subject returns, accompanied by another subject, and a double fugue is the result.

> It is wholly understandable that the composer of the Marcia funebre in the 'Eroica' Symphony should have made a copy of this work, and many points of contact between Mozart and Beethoven may be found in it.[14]

Mozart's Variations in G Major (K.501) are of less importance than his other works, though they certainly surpass the variations Il maestro e lo scolare by Haydn, which in turn rise above his lesser known contemporaries.

II. LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Unfortunately, Johann Sebastian Bach did not augment the literature of piano duet music, as he failed to write any. Likewise, little can be said of Beethoven in this respect. He wrote a limited amount of piano duet music, none of which exemplifies the high degree of inspiration and workmanship found in his later works for other media. The Sonata in D Major, Op. 6, which was composed in the year 1796, is an early work. The first of the two movements has a principal theme[15] that is strikingly reminiscent of the Fate motive which is the basis of the beginning movement of the same composer's Fifth Symphony. Indeed, if

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14 Einstein, op. cit., p. 270

15 Appendix B, p. 103, XIV

the leap of a perfect fourth were diminished by a mere half step, the intervals would be identical in both works. In both instances the initial motive is transposed, making the relationship an even closer one. The sonata allegro form of Beethoven's only sonata for four hands is so terse that one might easily mistake it for a sonatina. The last movement is a second rondo form and thus typical of Beethoven's first period.

> Beethoven's four-hand works were all written in his early years. . . . They are Mozartean in a sense, but, as in much of Beethoven's early works, there are moments foreshadowing the Beethoven of later periods.[16]

The only possible exception might be the Marcia III from Op. 45, where the real Beethoven makes his appearance. Mention should be made of his No. 159, Variations on a Theme by Count Waldstein, written shortly after Beethoven met the Count, who later proved to be one of his patrons. No. 160, Lied with Six Variations on a melody to Goethe's Ich denke dein, is also included among the other works mentioned above and can be found published in an album distributed by International Music Company of New York City. Beethoven's finest work for piano duet could have been Op. 134 except that it is an arrangement (by Beethoven) of the "Grande Fugue" from the String Quartet, Op. 133, which is

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16 Berkowitz, loc. cit.

often heard in this, its original version. An even greater work probably would have emanated from the sketch books of the master had he lived longer. Both a sonata for piano duet and a quintet were in the process of creation just before he was confined to his death bed, and he possibly could have finished one or both works had he been allowed to compose after he had rallied from his initial condition. As it is, the works of Beethoven for piano duet are hardly an advancement over Mozart, and Beethoven can never enjoy the unique position as in his other phases of musical endeavor.

III. CONTEMPORARIES OF MOZART AND BEETHOVEN

> Joseph Haydn's only four-hand piece, Il maestro e lo scolare (Andante with Variations), composed in 1778, overshadowed all those of his contemporaries, namely, H. Wolff, Albrechtsberger (Preludes and fugues), F. W. Rust, Türk, Hoffmeister, and many others.[17]

Such high praise as this, however, does not prevent Il maestro e lo scolare from falling much lower when this work is compared to Mozart or even Beethoven. The thirty-bar theme and the variations that follow are very obviously patterned after the title. That is to say, the secondo is the maestro (which is so marked) and states a one or two-measure motive which is imitated note for note by the

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17 Joseph Beringer, "Piano Compositions for Four Hands," The Musician, 17:710, October, 1912

scolare in a different register (and sometimes on different scale steps). Except for cadences, in which case the maestro e lo scolare join forces, this rather primitive construction is adhered to tenaciously throughout the entire composition!

The opening four measures of Clementi's Sonata in C Major show a remarkable kinship to the corresponding measures in Mozart's sonata in the same key. Unfortunately the kinship virtually ceases after that point. Even so it is superior to those sonatas written by his predecessors. Except for measures 51-53 and the corresponding passage at measures 127-129, this sonata is quite successful and surpasses most of his solo piano works. The Kuhlau Sonatina in C Major suffers the fate of not being very distinguished. It is on a more consistent level of inspiration and craftsmanship, albeit somewhat lower than the Clementi, which starts out with great expectations only to prove surprisingly disappointing in the above-mentioned sections. According to P. W. Orem:

> W. J. Best, English organist made a transcription of Clementi's four sonatas for duet of uniform excellence, showing a fine feeling for color and sonority, particularly number three with its fine Minuet.[18]

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18 P. W. Orem, "All about Four Hand Music," Etude 56:75, February, 1938

Lastly, J. N. Hummel (1778-1837), a contemporary of Beethoven, should be mentioned. The slow movement of his Sonata in A-flat Major, delicately embroidered in the classic style, elevates this sonata to a rank that is higher than the two sonatas, Op. 47 and 112 by Moscheles, or the three sonatas, Op. 3, 79, and 80 by Kalkbrenner.

CHAPTER IV

THE ROMANTIC ERA

I. CARL MARIA VON WEBER

Carl Maria von Weber poses a rather enigmatic problem in the field of four-hand music. Although he composed six such pieces in Op. 3, a like number in Op. 10, and eight pieces in Op. 60, scarcely any of them are of truly great musical value or interest. His chief value lies in the fact that he was one of the first German opera composers to employ elements of Romanticism.

> We might well add here that in addition to Weber's contribution to operatic development, he was important as the forerunner of the Romantic composers of small piano pieces of independent form--the Klavierstücke, as the Germans call them. His use of this style led directly to the piano pieces of Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, Liszt, and a host of minor figures. He is considered also one of the pioneers in the writing of music for Mannergesangvereine (men's song societies).[1]

In short, the works of Weber for piano duet, as well as his operatic works, constitute a starting point and a foundation upon which later composers erected masterpieces according to their talent or genius.

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1 Howard D. McKinney and W. R. Anderson, Music in History, p. 622

II. FRANZ PETER SCHUBERT

One of these later composers did erect masterpieces on the humble beginnings of Weber, and as no other composer either before or after him has done. He did so not according to mere talent but to a monumental genius--his name is Franz Peter Schubert. Of all those who have essayed in the piano duet form, Schubert has thus far been the most prolific. His works number nearly five hundred pages in the four volumes of Peters' Edition. Completely unlike Ludwig van Beethoven, who wrote in this category only as a young artist, Schubert wrote in the form constantly, and consequently his compositions date from many periods of his short life. Just glance at his opus numbers and observe the great quantity of four-hand music: Op. 10, 27, 30, 35, 40, 51, 54, 55, 61, 63, 66, 75, 82, 103, 107, 121, 138, 140, 144, and 152. These opus numbers represent a very impressive list!

One of Schubert's most exquisite works is his Fantasie in F Minor, Op. 103.

The Fantasie in F, Op. 103 begins with a theme which is perhaps one of the most hauntingly beautiful in all the wealth of Schubertian melody.[2] The whole Fantasie

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2 Appendix B, p. 104, XV

is an intensely moving and dramatic work, rich in invention and beautifully scored for the instrument.[3]

Mr. Berkowitz has thus in all justice annotated a truth far from general cognizance. His statement concerning the melody is particularly significant, as Schubert's music is best observed in this than in any other aspect. "With Beethoven the opposite is true. Here [Schubert] melody is all. Even the harmony imagines itself a melody, a true sign of the Romantic."[4] The accompanying harmonies, however, do even more than that; they set the mood in a little more than a measure and a half, and in so doing they prepare the vehicle upon which the lovely theme is to glide. The theme itself betrays the predilection of its author for dotted rhythms, but this does not detract from the theme; on the contrary, it enhances it![5] At measure 23 the _secondo_ carries the melody, thereby dividing the task equally. But is it a task? Indeed not; it is a partnership and a true ensemble as of two instruments. Measures 3-8 (measures 1 and 2 consist of an introduction, while the three tones in the _primo_ in measure 2 assume the role of anacrusis) impart an aura of spontaneity because of the irregular phrase formation consisting of two

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3 Ralph Berkowitz, "Original Music for Four Hands," _Etude_, 62:27, January, 1944

4 Oscar Bie, _Schubert the Man_, p. 68

5 Appendix B, p. 104, XV

phrase-members of three measures each. Measures 9-12 comprise the consequent phrase of this first period and first half of the double period, which in turn is to form the A of the three-part song-form. The interlude embracing the last half of measure 12 and the first half of measure 13 presents an interesting use of melodic anticipation. The partner controlling the treble melodies is anxious to recommence the initial phrase, but his co-partner desires to dwell on the dominant harmony, and so the second period becomes reality a measure later than it might, had circumstances been otherwise. Measures 14-23 embody the same material as the preceding thirteen measures with unessential modification. At precisely the same beat in the measure that part A came into being in measure 2, part B in measure 23 appears very logically as an outgrowth of part A, being derived from the initial rhythmic pattern. The melodic responsibility now rests with the secondo, while the primo gives forth with little echo effects and an accompanying figure. Measures 26 and 27 are reproductions of measures 24 and 25 which are inverted and modified in measures 28-36; this procedure leads to the dominant of F Minor, in which key part A is expected to return. The anacrusis to measure 38 confirms the listeners' expectation. But the key signature is changed at the bar line, and while the melody in the primo remains intact, the mode

changes from F Minor to F Major. During measures 38-47 part A becomes shortened and varies a great deal from its first appearance. Very suddenly at measure 48 the second theme appears, and the tonality returns to its original mode from the temporary excursion into the major. In this way Schubert has avoided the monotony of too much material appearing in the same key and mode. The protracted beauty of these changes and the masterfulness with which they are accomplished may be gleaned only by the time-honored test of playing and acutely listening to the passage under scrutiny! The entire process seems so natural, as if the music could exist in no other fashion than in the manner in which it has been set down. It is truly a great Fantasie.

But now, back to the second theme.[6] The *seconde* again contains the theme endowed with a strong rhythmic scheme:  The *prime* adds to the texture with an equally virile rhythmic pattern, but with chords now as the chief constituent--acting as the violins and brass and woodwinds in the orchestra, while the celli and basses concern themselves with the bass melody. Measures 57-63 are a variation of measures 48-56, which have just been described. Measures 64 and 65 lead to a transient recurrence

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6 *Ibid.*, p. 105, XVI

of the theme in part A, but the function is of a transitional nature, and at measure 74 the second theme returns only in A Minor. After fourteen measures of the second theme two bars of the same description as bars 63 and 64 reappear. This time, however, part A makes its reappearance with more motion, since the accompanying figure is now triplet-eighth notes, whereas at the beginning two eighths to a beat sufficed. Measure 102 constitutes an elision of part A, and an altered version of the second theme appears. This altered version is treated canonically while the triplet rhythm is maintained for four bars in the primo;[7] however, the following measure sees the transference of this accompanying figure to the secondo. The canonic treatment is retained until bar 120, in which bar the accompanying figure in the secondo assumes the role of the leading tone of the tonality in which the Largo is to appear. On the second beat both primo and secondo move up a minor second to F-sharp Minor, thereby foretelling the key of the slow section as of measures 121-163 inclusive.

The first four measures of the Largo consist of a fortissimo statement of a majestic (almost Handelian) motive that is treated in an imitative fashion.[8] The following

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7 Ibid., XVII

8 Ibid., p. 106, XVIII

measures, 125-132, concern themselves with the object of reaching the dominant of F-sharp Minor and thence returning to the tonic of this second division. This introductory-like subdivision is largely made up of eighth-note triplets and triply-dotted quarter notes. It is in the pianissimo measure 134, with its preparatory accessory in the preceding bar, that a most sublime tune comes upon the scene;[9] it is second in beauty only to the principal melody found at the beginning of the Fantasie. The manner in which this melody grows from its unpretentious start and gradually accumulates, with the polyphonic imitation in the secondo until a climax is reached, represents an end result of effectiveness that only Schubert could have conceived. The sudden appearance in measure 147 of a pianissimo creates an interlude of quietness, and the reappearance (measure 149) of the Largo section is ushered in, but the dynamic marking is now pianissimo, not fortissimo. This somewhat modified reappearance works up to a climax with the aid of a brilliant figuration in the right hand of the primo. In measure 163 is found the dominant chord of the Largo; consequently, an F-sharp Minor chord is expected to follow. The expected becomes reality, for in measure 164 the tonic F-sharp Minor chord appears,

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9 Ibid., XIX

but now the tempo marking is Allegro vivace, and the listener is swept along by music of an almost Mozartian flavor.[10] In this song-form with "trio" the feeling again becomes manifest that this third division of the Fantasie proper could stand by itself as a separate entity. The first period of the Allegro vivace is regular in construction, while the eight following measures exhibit a very ingenious device. In short, the four measures (171-174) in the primo forecast exactly what is to occur in measures 175-178 in the secondo.[11] In measure 180, the melody appears in the secondo while the primo merely accompanies it in eighth-notes. The primo starts a short-lived canon of three measures (182-184 inclusive). The writer of this thesis is simply amazed at the great amount of polyphonic imitation that Schubert employed in this Fantasie! To be sure, Schubert was not primarily a contrapuntist, but rather a melodist par excellence. Even so, a close study of the composition under discussion discloses a great deal of polyphony and refutes the impression given by Schubert that he must study contrapuntal techniques--as if he had no knowledge of such devices! He made arrangements with Sechter to take lessons in counterpoint and fugue, as

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10 Ibid., p. 107, XX

11 Ibid., p. 108, XXI

Sechter was the greatest authority in Vienna on the subject.

> Kreissle, Grove and other biographers have declared that no lessons were given to Schubert by Sechter. But they were unaware of this letter [Schubert's letter to Luib] which sets all doubt upon the point at rest.[12]

And as if to substantiate further the statements made in the preceding paragraph, a canon in the octave starts in the primo at measure 190 with an auxiliary note. The secondo enters in imitation at measure 192 with an auxiliary note, and this process continues until measure 198. This bar marks the ending point of part A of the three-part song-form, which constitutes the principal song of the design in which this third division is molded. For part B,[13] Schubert selected a succession of triad outlines for a melody, just as often did Beethoven. It is interesting, however, to observe the diametrically opposed mode of treatment which the Romanticist and Classicist-Romanticist, respectively, embody. On the one hand, Schubert has beautifully arrayed his motive in the most arresting melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic garb that is possible. Hence, it was most difficult, and sometimes impossible, for him to develop an idea that had been initially endowed with such

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12 Newman Flower, Franz Schubert, the Man and His Circle, p. 268

13 Appendix B, p. 109, XXII

a wealth of splendor. This accounts for the failure of some of Schubert's, as well as other Romantic composers', large works that were written in classical forms. He wrote long, beautiful themes that are quite complete in themselves and require little or no development. A parallel simile is the following criterion of a good libretto: if a libretto is complete within itself, it should become a play; if, on the other hand, a proper amount of essential material and understanding is not present in a libretto and is capable of being supplied by a musical setting, then a very good opera is possible, all other factors being equal. Beethoven is the antithesis of Schubert. In his Fifth Symphony in C Minor, a four-note motive suffices for the principal theme, and is capable of a great deal of manipulation in the development section. This is the raison d'etre why Haydn wrote one hundred twenty-five symphonies, Mozart forty-nine, and Beethoven nine symphonies, because they were composers of an essentially classical heritage and environment. When the Romanticist filled classical forms with a basically different content, he did not write so voluminously as did his predecessors. Schubert wrote nine symphonies, Brahms and Schumann wrote four, and Chopin wrote none. Instead, the Romanticists, while not completely abandoning the larger forms, turned their attention to Impromptus, Moment Musicals, Waltzes, Mazurkas, and many

of the other smaller forms.

In the third division of the Schubert Fantasie, the primo carries the material of interest from measures 199 to 214. A canon at the octave, two measures distant, is encountered in the secondo from measures 215-229 while the primo oscillates a pedal point on the octave b^1-b^2 for four measures. In measure 219 in the primo, chromatic alterations appear, and the pedal becomes a^2-a^3. A contrapuntal mode of writing continues until at measure 249 the dominant-seventh chord of F-sharp Minor again comes to the fore, and measure 250 brings a return of part A, except that the secondo is not simply composed of chords but rather of a more interesting melodic style of accompaniment. One beat before measure 275, an entirely new motive is adopted,[14] thereby bringing part A of the "trio" (or subordinate song) to life. The motive, which consists of arpeggiated chords in eighth-notes, is treated in imitative fashion. The marking is pianissimo con delicatezza and offers a refreshing contrast to the gaiety of the principal song-form. The anacrusis to bar 289 is the beginning of a section that gives birth to a bright, robust, and bold idea which is also in eighth-notes.[15] This passage exemplifies just one

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14 Ibid., p. 110, XXIII

15 Ibid., XXIV

of the many varieties of shades and feelings of which Schubert was capable. It is of the utmost significance that a large composition of this length should contain an almost endless amount of variety in all the elements of music as well as the unmistakable imprint of the composer's freshness and originality. There must also be unity, as well as variety, which is true in any art form, whether it be music, painting, sculpture, architecture, or any of the other hybrid and miscellaneous forms in which art may be expressed. That Schubert has indubitably achieved this and much more may be readily seen in the over-all structure as well as the musical contents. Upon arriving at the end of this composition, the reader may readily see at a glance the artistic form inherent in this Fantasie, which although of a free construction, has not degenerated to flabby formlessness.

In bar 297 the return of part A, which is in the key of C Major instead of D Major as at bar 275, evolves to a cadence in D Major (bar 314), instead of the dominant of F-sharp Minor, and measure 315 contains the now-familiar principal theme of the middle division of the Fantasie. A complete recapitulation follows, so that measures 164-274 are heard restated in measures 315-423. The two-bar difference is due to the fact that none of the sections in the recurrence is repeated, whereas there are repeat marks the

first time that the three-part song-form is heard. Measure 423 completes the return of the principal theme of this song form and "trio." The following bar brings the tone C-sharp which is doubled in both parts and encompasses four octaves. These octaves are reiterated in measures 426 and 427, and by this time the almost inevitable resolution to a tonic F-sharp Minor triad is expected. The insistent octaves, however, now being heard at a fortissimo, refuse to submit, and instead acquire the enharmonic spelling of D-flat at bar 428, at which point the key signature changes from three sharps to four flats. The other tones that join the D-flats at bar 428 fulfill the implication of a German sixth chord, because after four measures of elaboration, this augmented sixth chord resolves in the expected fashion (F Minor second inversion tonic triad), which in turn resolves to a first inversion II^7 chord. A measure of silence is followed by a tutti dominant triad, which in turn is followed by a prolonged measure of rest, and then the stage is set to receive the principal theme of this Fantasie and thereby fulfill all formal responsibilities.

As for the Scherzo of this Fantasie:

> The glory of the piece is its characteristic and inimitable Scherzo. In a somber mood, we have heard Schubert declare that he knew of no merry (lustig)

> music. But here is one instance of how light, gay, and really lustig music can be, even in the minor: . . .[16]

Bars 440-449 are an exact reproduction of bars 1-10, while the measures between 449 and 475 correspond similarly to measures 21-47. Measure 476 is related to measure 48 only in so far as the cadence and the right hand of the _secondo_ are concerned. The second theme appears, expectedly, in the recapitulation, but now a melody in the _primo_ establishes a very close partnership with the _secondo_, and the result is a subject for a double fugue![17] The exposition occupies the measures intervening between 476-492. Therefore, it may be seen that the composite subject is of four bars in length and grows into a very strict cast. The first response is in the dominant (bar 480), the second entry of the subject is in the tonic (bar 484), and the second response is in the dominant again (bar 488). After these forceful and energetic announcements the subject appears in the key of the mediant, and this major feeling of tonality, together with the dynamic marking of _piano_, gives freedom of expression to the lyric, poetic, and sublime facets of Schubert's nature. Despite these

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16 Robert Haven Schauffler, _Franz Schubert: The Ariel of Music_, p. 293

17 Appendix B, p. 111, XXV

conditions the subject itself is but slightly modified, for bar 496 merely represents a sequential reproduction that is a step lower than the previous measure, which is the final measure of the subject. Immediately following this one-measure extension, the subject appears transposed a perfect fourth lower in the secondo. The figure in the secondo of measure 495 finds its way to the top of the tonal texture (measure 502), at which point the left hand of the primo echoes a modified version of this motive. In bars 506 and 507 of the secondo, this echo persists while the original figure in the primo inverts and modifies itself and continues somersaulting down to the root tone of the C Minor triad which is to end this reposeful and then gay section of the fugue. In bar 508 the fugue subject returns, but this time it is not alone, nor is it the same. The chromatic eighth-note triplet, which has constituted the contrapuntal associate since the close of the exposition, becomes an even more essential feature within the framework. The first three measures of the fugue subject become the basis for a working-out section. In measure 511 the left hand of the primo has a rhythmic derivation of the principal motive;[18] this becomes increasingly significant as one of the many high points of dramatic power in this

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18 Ibid., XXVI

work is reached. Four measures later there is a pedal point which, although at first performed by the right hand of the primo, is transferred at bar 520 to the left hand of the secondo. The total effect marks not just a high point in this particular work, but a high point in all piano duet literature.[19] Where else has a composer of Schubert's stature conceived a masterpiece of the proportions of this Fantasie, and not being satisfied by an inevitable return of a transposed second theme in a recapitulation, has erected a double fugue on a portion of such a majestic theme?

From measure 525 to the end in particular, it is quite obvious that Schubert had in mind orchestral colors. While listening to this work, one can almost hear the celli and basses doubled an octave apart (in the secondo), while the higher pitched strings, woodwinds, and brasses produce a massed effect in the primo. Small wonder then that a man such as Ernest von Dohnányi should orchestrate this work! And yet it may safely be said that an overwhelming majority of pianists have never played it!

Description of the music between bars 525-558 is virtually impossible;[20] the reader should surely play and

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19 Ibid., p. 112, XXVII

20 Ibid., p. 113, XXVIII

listen to it. Measure 558 reintroduces the now familiar and beloved haunting theme with which this Fantasie had its beginning. It rises to great power at bar 565, drops down to a piano at bar 568 only to regain its former power three bars from the end. The final chord is expected at the same dynamic level as the II^7 chord, but instead the last chord comes softly, and then all is quiet, just as at the start.

To sum up, the Fantasie ". . . is more consistently Schubertian than any of the solo sonatas, taken as a whole. . . . This most impressive composition is a treasure and should be heard far more often."[21] So it may easily be seen that this work, which was written in the year 1828 and dedicated to his young and attractive pupil, the Countess Caroline Esterhaze, is not only the very best of Schubert's works in the piano duet medium but even one of the finest in all the literature.

An entire book could be written on the four-hand music of Schubert alone. The piano duet literature, however, is of such an extensive nature that all the works therein cannot be discussed in as much detail as was done with the Schubert Fantasie.

The Op. 10 is a sixteen-bar theme with eight variations and a long coda. This work (composed in the summer

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21 Schauffler, op. cit., p. 292-293

of 1818) was published by Diabelli in April, 1822, and consists of four-hand variations for piano on a French song, Reposez-vous, bon chevalier. They were written and dedicated to Beethoven, thereby occasioning Schubert's first visit to his idol. There are two versions of this first visit to Beethoven. One account is that of Anton Schindler, who tells that Schubert went to the master's rooms to bring him the Bon Chevalier variations, only to be so abashed when Beethoven drew his attention to a fault in harmony that he promptly fled in confusion. The other version simply states that Schubert went to Beethoven's rooms and, finding him absent, merely left what was to be Op. 10 with a servant. (The opus numbers of Schubert's works have no bearing whatever on their chronological sequence, owing to irregularities of their publication.)

The variations adhere rather closely to the theme and, with the exception of variations IV and VI, sound more like figurations or arabesques upon the ever-present harmonic, rhythmic, and melodic basis. It is a work not lacking in Schubertian qualities, however, as is apparent fifty-seven measures from the end of the work. This is a most colorful passage[22] and one which the reader will want to play over several times before going on.

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22 Appendix B, p. 114, XXIX

In Op. 27 are three Grandes Marches Héroiques (1824) that are very fine--in so far as marches are concerned. If pianists are in need of marches, they definitely should use some of the many marches by Schubert rather than resort to transcriptions that abound in such mountainous heaps.

The Grande Sonata, Op. 30, composed in 1818, displays the influence of classicism upon Schubert. "The first movement [B-flat Major] starts with a pleasant reminder of Mozart and has interesting harmony in the development."[23] The second movement, marked Andante con moto, begins in the mediant key and concludes in the parallel major key (D Major) and represents the composer better than the other two movements. After its initial taste of the Viennese Mozart, the Finale, an allegretto, loses interest and ends the work with an anti-climax.

The Overture in F, Op. 34, published in 1825, probably represents Schubert's mockery of the then-popular Rossini. The reader may draw his own conclusions as to the resultant artistic worth of this work.

Op. 35 contains a theme, which is a three-part song-form of original vintage, and eight variations with coda. These variations, published in 1825, show a marked improvement in Schubert's technic of variation over their

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23 Schauffler, op. cit., p. 295

predecessor (Op. 10), which was published three years earlier. In the Op. 35 the composer did not feel the necessity to remind the listener incessantly of the theme's melodic contour; rather, he was concerned with the art of enhancing the musical potentialities in each succeeding variation. All in all this set is the very best of Schubert's variations for piano duet.

> The work as a whole is endowed with a particularly enchanting grace, but in some contemplative and grave passages, there are moments of harmonic boldness with which Schubert continues to surprise us after more than a century.[24]

Of the six Marches héroiques, Op. 40a and 40b, numbers one, two, and five are the best. It may be said again that these marches may and should be used for all occasions when a march is needed and a piano is available. These six marches, published in 1826, were dedicated to Schubert's friend, Bernhardt, Doctor of Medicine, as a token of gratitude.

Trois Marches militaires, Op. 51, contain the famous Marche Militaire in D Major which is usually heard in every version except the original. This march is so well known that it needs no elaboration. It is unfortunate that pianists seldom try over the other marches; the D Major is not the sole possessor of unique virtues! Chopin is said to

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24 Berkowitz, loc. cit.

have exclaimed on hearing these marches that he could ". . . see the passing by of the whole Austrian infantry, its bayonets garlanded with strings of sausages!"[25]

There are two stories as to how the Divertissement à la Hongroise, Op. 54, came into existence in 1824. One version is that while walking across the fields at Zselig with Baron von Schonstein, Schubert heard a cow-girl singing a folk song. The other version claims that this song came from the kitchen.

> Whatever the inspiration, a piece resulted that is full of rhapsodic color, capricious contrasts, national syncopations and cadences, and langorous lyrical outpourings jostled by rousing marches. Unfortunately the outer movements have all too many pages that sound as cheap as the cheaper Liszt Rhapsodies. The best part is the Marcia. It has a strong affinity with a more Teutonic piece, probably written a year earlier, the Ballet which is No. 9 of the Rosamunde music.[26]

Op. 55 Grande Marche funèbre was composed in memory of the Emperor of Russia. "What gave him [Schubert] his interest in the death of Alexander is not known, but the march is an extraordinary fine specimen."[27]

Except for the Op. 61, No. 1, which is ". . .

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25 P. W. Orem, "All about Four Hand Music," Etude, 56:75, February, 1938

26 Schauffler, op. cit., p. 298

27 Sir George Grove, "Franz Peter Schubert," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 3rd edition, IV, 607

remarkable for its piano orchestration . . .,"[28] the Six Polonaises, Op. 61, cannot claim a very high rung on Schubert's skyscraping ladder, for they will be hidden from view by the monument created by Chopin's compositions in the same form. They make excellent sight-reading material, however, for advanced players.

The Op. 63 Divertissement is far more interesting than its companion, the Op. 54 (Divertissement a la hongroise), for in the former the writing is pianistic, while in the latter the score is in need of orchestration.

The Marche héroique au sacre de Nicolas I, Op. 66, is very long for a march but is a well-sustained Schubertian work. Of particular note is the unusual rhythmic pattern to be found in the "trio." This work is one of his very best marches and is more than worthy of exploration.

The Op. 75 Polonaises are of the same caliber as those in Op. 61; nothing remains to be said.

One look at the first eight measures of the theme and the subsequent variations of Op. 82, No. 1, reveals why they fall below those variations on an original theme, Op. 35. The square-cut and block-like construction results in cubes of great weight which volley against the ear relentlessly.

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28 Orem, op. cit., p. 76

The set of variations, Op. 82, No. 2, fares better than its companion, Op. 82 No. 1. At least the former is graced with an introduction of which no other set of variations can boast. The finale, however, prevents this opus from reaching a high mark.

The Andantino varié, Op. 84 No. 1, in contrast to the previous sets of variations, measures almost as high as the Op. 35. It does not begin immediately upon the tonic but on the dominant-seventh. Only after two and one-half measures does the tonic appear. After four variations and a coda, the theme reappears in altered form; in no other set of four-hand variations by Schubert is this true.

The other half of Op. 84 contains a rather flashy and showy Rondo brillant. If duettists would like to show off their technical achievements, here is their chance! The length is such that cuts are advisable if not mandatory.

The next opus number is the F Minor Fantasie, Op. 103, already discussed.

On an equally high plane of inspiration and sustentation is the Grand Rondeau in A Major, Op. 107. The two themes which appear at the beginning of the Op. 103 and 107 are of such unusual beauty that it is small wonder that

Beethoven once said, "Truly a divine spark lives in Schubert."[29] There are five compositions for piano duet that every pianist should play some time or another in his lifetime: Mozart's F Major Sonata K.497 and C Major Sonata K.521, Schubert's Fantasie in F Minor Op. 103 and Grand Rondeau Op. 107, and the Brahms' Variations Op. 23. There is nothing more that the writer of this thesis can do to induce pianists to play these works, except to say that if they do not do so, they are denying themselves a most beautiful adventure.

Op. 121 Deux Marches caractéristiques are of little significance. They are less interesting than the marches previously discussed.

Although the Rondeau (Notre amitié est invariable), Op. 138, will always be dwarfed in comparison to its unique companion, the Op. 107, it is still one of Schubert's better works in this medium.

> The four-hand Sonata in C, Op. 140, known as the "Grand Duo," is less consistently sustained. Grove must have had a moment of aberration when he called it "that splendid work in which, with Beethoven in his eye, Schubert was never more himself." During most of the Andante, Beethoven was certainly in his eye; but the real Schubert gratifies us all too rarely. I find him neither in the excellent opening of the first movement, nor in the still finer second subject: . . . At the start of the Andante there is a strong suggestion

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29 Grove, op. cit., p. 611

> of him but the music grows progressively derivative, and comes to lean heavily but brilliantly upon the Larghetto of Beethoven's Second Symphony.
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> The Scherzo is a poor imitation of the deaf master, and it is unworthy of its composer. The finale brings good cheer. It starts with a long, unpianistic E that recalls the corresponding moment of the "Trout" Quintet. Then it launches into a perfectly delightful Schubertian gypsy tune, a little like that which starts the last movement of the B-flat Trio, but even more infectious: . . . This may have encouraged Brahms to begin the finale of his Piano Quintet. More than once we have noticed Schubert's mysterious talent for making ornaments significant and organic. Here the trills are very much so. Alas! the movement presently loses touch, not only with its composer, but even with the standards of first-class music.
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> The whole work sounds startingly orchestral. If, as Professor Deutsch and others suggest, this uneven composition is really a four-hand arrangement of the vanished "Gastein" Symphony, the disappearance of the orchestral score is no tragic loss.[30]

In the spring of 1828, half a year before his death, Schubert composed one of his better works, the Allegro in A Minor, Op. 144. Diabelli, the publisher, gave it the fancy title Lebenesstürme (Life's Storms). The work is rather well sustained and probably is of greater value than the Grand Duo.

> One is equally delighted by the headlong, fiery start, by the soft, lyrical melody that follows, . . . and by the ppp chorale-like theme two pages farther on, which presently returns with exquisite figurations.[31]

The Fugue in E Minor, Op. 152, is thought to be an attempt at counterpoint. Except for the limitations of the

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30 Schauffler, op. cit., pp. 293-5

31 Ibid., p. 296

subject and the left hand part of the secondo in the last measure, it is a well-written fugue.

The Grosse Sonata, published in 1814, is unique in construction. The four-bar Adagio introduction contains the self-same melody that is to appear as the fugue subject in the principal Allegro agitato section.[32] Very few composers incorporate a fugue for a first movement of a sonata. Another striking feature is the melodic nature of the subject itself. Within six measures the melody has progressed down chromatically a perfect fifth! Not even Cesar Franck was able to progress in a more chromatic fashion! For a closing cadence of the first movement, the sub-dominant triad (with the third of the chord raised) appears two bars before the end. In the final bar the tones f^2, e^2, and e-flat^2 appear in the primo on beats two, three, and four respectively. On the first beat in measure one of the second movement, the tone d^2 is found to be the fourth and last tone in the chromatic succession which has been in progress on the three beats immediately preceding. This d^2, instead of being the second scale step of C Minor, is the third scale step of B-flat Major, which is the tonality of the second movement. A similar inverted figure appears in the secondo. The tones are f, g, a, and b-flat.

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32 Appendix B, p. 115, XXX

These are just a few of the many interesting points that illustrate Schubert's departure from the stereotyped modes of treatment in use before his time.

The Vier Ländler and Kinder-Marsch are delightful little pieces that advanced pupils might play very well. It should not be assumed, however, that their use ends here; they would be perfectly fitting as encores, or to be played at the local women's club.

> Among the thousands of pieces for four hands written since Schubert's death, there is hardly one which even remotely reaches his works of this class in their genuine adaptation to the idiom of the pianoforte.[33]

The preceding statement should be qualified for two reasons: (1) because the opinion was recorded in 1907, necessarily excluding evaluation of works after that date and (2) the perspective of music written in the past is constantly in a state of flux.

Thus concludes the exploration of all of Schubert's four-hand works.

III. FELIX MENDELSSOHN

Mendelssohn has left piano duettists with one large work: Allegro Brillant, Op. 92. The other composition which is listed as original is the Andante and Variations,

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33 Richard Heuberger, quoted in "Four-Hand Piano Pieces," The Nation, 84:161, February 14, 1907

Op. 83a, which is nothing more than an arrangement for piano duet of the piano solo version, Op. 83 in B-flat. Here is a special case in regard to the validity of transcriptions. Unlike the Op. 134 of Beethoven, which is a transcription of the original string quartet to a piano duet, the Mendelssohn was originally a piano solo and consequently does not suffer by being recast by the composer for the piano duet medium. The difference in the case of the Mendelssohn and case of the Beethoven is now quite manifest. (The worst crime of all, of course, is to play in concert piano transcriptions of the Beethoven symphonies or of any other works not intended for the powers and limitations of the piano!)

The twenty-four bar theme[34] of the Andante and Variations, Op. 83a, is followed by eight variations. A coda follows the eighth variation and presently the theme reappears (much in the same manner as in his Serious Variations, Op. 54), after which another long coda materializes. While the variations follow the theme rather closely, they are still of enough independent interest to be appealing not only from a pianist's point of view but also from the listener's. All things considered, this piece ranks among the greatest and best of variations for duet.

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34 Appendix B, p. 116, XXXI

> One of the most attractive pieces in all the repertoire is Mendelssohn's scintillating Allegro Brillant, Op. 92. He composed this strikingly effective work for a performance with Clara Schumann.[35]

As might be suspected, Mendelssohn, in writing a show piece, succeeded more than Schubert, at least when the latter wrote his Rondo Brillant, Op. 84 No. 2. The fact that the Allegro Brillant ". . . requires deft and refined treatment in performance"[36] should challenge duettists to play this work.[37]

IV. ROBERT SCHUMANN

Opus numbers 66, 85, 109, and 130 comprise the complete works of Schumann for piano duet.

> . . . his Pictures from the East, Op. 66 and the twelve piano pieces for little and large children, Op. 85, belong to the best creations of Schumann, while his Ball Scenes, Op. 109, and the Kinderball, Op. 130, like all his later works, show a noticeable decrease of his powers.[38]

A pianist learning to play the Bilder aus Osten (Sechs Impromptus) Op. 66, would probably become very fond of numbers four and six.

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35 Berkowitz, loc. cit.

36 Orem, op. cit., p. 76

37 Appendix B, p. 116, XXXII

38 Joseph Beringer, "Piano Compositions for Four Hands," The Musician, 17:710, October, 1912

> In addition to their richness of coloring, both are noteworthy as examples of modern part-writing (free counterpoint) as applied to the several registers of the piano.[39]

The second impromptu is also very representative of Mr. Orem's statement. From the first measure to the thirteenth (which is part A of a three-part song-form with coda) the basic building block is a one-measure motive that is treated in a contrapuntal style.[40] Indeed, the removal of the accompanying harmonies would lay bare a fugue-like structure. Yet Schumann maneuvered the entire passage in such a manner as to give the listener the impression of hearing not a polyphonic composition, as a fugue, but rather a free, fantasy-like, improvisatory type of composition that is almost extemporaneous--in short, an impromptu.

In measure 13 a second idea[41] (part B) appears, also treated contrapuntally. In measure 19 of the *secondo*, the motive that appeared in the first bar returns and is treated as a chain-phrase. The *primo* consists of a series of dotted quarter notes. The passage just described proves to be a retransition, for at bar 23 part A, as well as the tonic harmony of D-flat, recapitulates. In the second ending

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39 Orem, *loc. cit.*

40 Appendix B, p. 117, XXXIII

41 *Ibid.*, p. 118, XXXIV

(measure 34) the subordinate theme, which appeared in bar 13, recurs except it is now in the *secondo* rather than the *primo*. At this point the coda starts. The first motive returns again in measure 42 in the *secondo* and is immediately imitated in the *primo*. The material contained in the final seven bars is above the tonic pedal-point, and the two-note figure in the fifth and fourth bars from the end,[42] lead to the final tonic harmonies which create an atmosphere of complete tranquility.

The fourth impromptu is a most effective mood setting. A mixture of sadness and gladness, the mood is indescribably beautiful. The impromptu may be played through only once or twice and a part of its great potentialities becomes apparent.

The form and content of this little masterpiece are similar in nature to its much larger companion, the first movement of the *Piano Concerto in A Minor*, Op. 54. The parallel rests upon the utilization of a single theme as the basis of the entire composition. The phrase dominating the impromptu is a mere four measures in all.[43] Many times it appears telescoped, becoming a motive of one or two measures.

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42 *Ibid.*, XXXV

43 *Ibid.*, p. 119, XXXVI

Last but by no means the least of the Six Impromptus of Op. 85, is the final work that completes the set. Its almost Brahmsian harmonies are overcome by the Schumannesque spirit which leaves an imprint so deep that it marks a work that only Schumann could have composed.

The over-all design is tripartite. It is interesting that the theme which appeared in the fourth impromptu reappears fifteen and one-half measures before the end of the last impromptu. Unification of the whole is achieved in this bare hint of the cyclic. Schumann employed this device in other compositions: Papillons, Op. 2, and the Carnaval, Op. 9.

To the discussion of the music itself: the first four-measure phrase[44] is repeated in a modified manner at measure 5. This repetition is extended. The anacrusis of bar 13 (right hand of the primo) precedes a melodic motive that is a perfect fourth lower than its derivitive which is present in bar 2. This passage terminates when the original phrase, found at the very beginning, reappears. At measure 23 the music begins to gain momentum, and in the following measure new material appears. By bar 42 the mighty surge has arrived, and the listener is carried to great heights in the ensuing dramatic power of the music.

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44 Ibid., XXXVII

In most masterful fashion the storm calms in measure 50 and deposits the listener on the safe shores that he knew from which he departed. The calm lasts for only eleven bars, nine of which reproduce the first nine measures found at the very beginning of this piece. The two remaining bars are cadential and prepare for the sudden release of dynamic energy in the following measure. This resurgence dies down as suddenly as it came, and in measure 75 the recurrence of the chief theme of the fourth impromptu appears, reference to which has already been made. Measure 82 marks a fragmentary reappearance of the primary phrase found at the commencement of this piece. Slowly and softly this phrase dissolves while an ominous tonic pedal-point rumbles in the bass.

Of the odd-numbered impromptus the first and the fifth are probably the best. The third one suffers from a rather commonplace coda. Other than that, its harmonies are attractive in that they still sound novel to the ears of musicians today.

Opus 85 is entitled: Zwölf vierhändige Klavier-Stücke für kleine und grosse Kinder.

Every one of theme is a delicious morsel, showing not only expert craftsmanship in miniature but also

an imagination rarely alive and delicate even in the Imaginative School of composers.[45]

"Geburtstagsmarsch" does not measure up as highly as the rest of the pieces. The Schubert marches on the whole are better than this one.

The "Bärentanz" is a pleasant piece for performers and listeners who enjoy music that is gay, yet refined. It is rather difficult to make this piece sound just as it should. Particular care in regard to the rhythm and phrasing is essential for a proper performance.

Third in sequence is the beautiful "Gartenmelodie." One can see the flowers wet with dew in the early morning sun. This composition is one of the better pieces of the entire set, perhaps the best. The opening melody[46] establishes for Schumann a kinship with that master of melody, Schubert.

"Beim Kranzewinden" is a delightful little piece that rushes along and refuses to stop until the last chord is reached. It is very effective.

The fast "Kroatenmarsch" gives a feeling of militarism. The music depicts a scene of marching men, so impulsive is its measured rhythm.

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45 Ernest Brennecke, Jr., "The Amenities of Duet-Playing," The Musical Quarterly, 12:547, October, 1926

46 Appendix B, p. 120, XXXVIII

From the exultant feelings resulting from the march, the listener is plunged into the bottom of the abyss of sadness. That is precisely the title of the sixth piece--"Trauer."[47] It is a sweet sadness, though, of the venerable type. It is as though a man had grown old, and having experienced the hurts inflicted upon him as a youth, and suffering again as a result, endures fresh wounds with a smile. He is able to do this because in his struggle with life he has learned that to feel bitterness toward the offender is to deepen his own wound. But to receive disappointments with a smile, a reticent understanding, is a triumph over those forces that would tend to destroy him. That is the kind of sadness this piece depicts--not abject gloom, but abject gloom with a smile. What a treasure house there is in the works of Schumann!

Although the "Turniermarsch" does not reach the heights of the "Kroatenmarsch," it is still better than any transcription.

"Reigen" or "Round Dance" is an effective and delightful member of Op. 85. The canonic device from bars 17-23 in the primo and the pedal-point that occupies the last twenty-two measures of the piece tend to enhance the total artistic effect.

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47 Ibid., XXXIX

Number nine is entitled "Am Springbrunnen." It is patterned after the perpetual motion type of composition. To play this piece as a violinist would play Novacek's Perpetual Motion, however, would be pure folly. It must be played poetically, not as a tour de force. For this reason, it is quite difficult, but in the end the time is well spent.

"Versteckens" is one of the most ingratiating of the entire set. This piece, with its jolly exuberance, is infectious and very much worth learning to play. Both the modulation from C Major to D-flat Major (bar93) and the three-note sequential figure in the secondo, at the end, distinguish this gem as a precious one indeed.

Number eleven is entitled "Geskenstermärchen" (Ghost Stories). And how vividly are the stories told! Only a genius of Schumann's stature could compose such descriptive miniatures filled to the brim with so live an imagination.

The concluding piece of the set is the well-known "Abendlied." This work actually requires the use of only three staves instead of the usual four. The primo has a melody for the right hand,[48] and nothing is written for the left hand to play. This piece, of course, is so well known that it has been arranged for nearly everything, and as a

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48 Ibid., p. 121, XL

result practically no one knows its original medium.

The Ball-Scenen, which contains nine characteristic pieces, is the 109th published work of Schumann. The work begins rightfully with a "Préambule." With all the excitement, it cannot, unfortunately, begin to compare with the much earlier work with the same title, the "Préambule" found in the Carnaval, Op. 9. In the duet work, scope and breadth of expression are necessarily limited because of its compactness and short length. Despite its shortcomings as compared to the solo piano work of the same name, the piano duet work retains its superiority over some of the other works in the Op. 109. Although this "Préambule" begins in the key of G Major, it ends on the dominant-seventh chord of D Major, which resolves in the customary fashion, and a "Polonaise" emerges.

If Schubert and Schumann could have lived for a year or two in the present century and realized the undisputed first-rank artistry of Chopin's works, especially the Polonaises and Mazurkas, they probably would have written just about half the number of works in this form that they did--if that many. A musician of today, for this reason, chancing upon a dance form of these species, is psychologically prejudiced more often than not against the work in question, and rightly so in almost all cases. Of course the best way to decide the intrinsic merit of any music is hard study of

its aesthetic, musical, structural, and all other pertinent qualities. The criterion of time is also a necessary and important factor, inasmuch as the formation of perspective gives the layman and scholar alike a strong basis upon which to stand and make noteworthy observations.

Number three, "Walzer," is indicative of the devices and forms of polyphony of which Schumann made use in his later years. The end result is interesting even though the polyphony is sometimes employed in works of no great significance.

Number four, which is entitled "Ungarisch," is an unsuccessful attempt to capture the Hungarian spirit. Schubert's venture into this realm was more satisfactory regarding color, even though suffering from over-extension. Such is the disaster when a Romanticist attempts to elongate and stretch thinly his beautiful melodies upon the broad, massive and symmetrical contours of the classical forms.

"Française" is a charming and gay little piece. It typifies the relative sub-standard rank of the total set of pieces. Not all of them, to be sure, are as unsuccessful as this particular one, but even the best of the set cannot compare favorably with those in Op. 66 and 85.

The sixth composition is a "Mazurka." Only Chopin could endow the Polonaise and the Mazurka with the all important autonomous flavor which is so necessary!

Of the three remaining compositions there is not much to be said. They are: "Ecossoise," "Walzer," and "Promenade." They are of little significance.

The last work of Schumann for piano duet is the Kinderball, Op. 130. Of these six easy dances, the "Walzer," "Ecossaise," and "Ringelreibe" are the best. The "Polonaise," "Menuett," and "Française" simply are not of sufficient interest to warrant any discussion. The second, fourth, and sixth, on the other hand, while not his best works by any means, are of better quality.

Everything considered, Schumann wrote some first-class literature for piano duet, and as such his works claim a very definite place in the repertoire of piano duettists. Opus 66 and 85, therefore, form a part of the basic foundation of piano duet literature, and impoverishment certainly would be the result if they had not come into existence and occupied such a fundamental relationship to all the other literature.

V. JOHANNES BRAHMS

The duet music of Johannes Brahms dates from the year that he presented his miniatures, such as the Liebeslieder Waltzes and especially the Hungarian Dances, to an astonished and delighted world.

> The latter at once attained to an unexampled popularity throughout Central Europe, a popularity that was in fact almost vexing, since it affected his other works unfavourably.
>
> He remained for a long time exclusively the composer of the Hungarian Dances, which he had not composed at all, but merely arranged from national melodies.[49]

The Hungarian Dances are so well known by all that further discussion is not necessary.

The Waltzes, Op. 39, originally written for piano four-hands, are inimitable in their delicate, caressing grace and possess a charm which perhaps exceeds that of any known examples of their kind.

> They represent his first essay in handling the most popular musical idiom of Vienna. With hidden irony Brahms dedicated the little pieces to Edward Hanslick, as a subtle indication of what he considered the basic frivolity of that Grand Panjandrum's musical taste.[50]

A set of waltzes for piano four hands, with charming parts ad libitum for vocal quartet, constitute the Liebeslieder Waltzes, Op. 52.

> Brahms caught here the gay, teasing, exhilirated, and often voluptuous spirit of popular Viennese music even more fully than in the instrumental Waltzes, opus 39. The colouring is laid on with an unerring brush; and the impersonal, subordinate use of the voice lends this experiment a unique quality.[51]

The Brahms Variations on a Theme of Robert Schumann,

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49 Richard Specht, Johannes Brahms, p. 161

50 Robert Haven Schauffler, The Unknown Brahms, His Life, Character and Works, p. 366

51 Ibid., p. 334

Op. 23, are among the most beautiful of his many fine achievements, ". . . and present for admiration conspicuous qualities of their own arising from the opportunities offered by their composition in duet form."[52] The story of how the theme came into existence is quite well known. According to Schumann, the theme was brought to him by the spirits of Schubert and Mendelssohn who had bidden him to vary it. Inasmuch as this occurred three weeks before his malady reached its crisis, Schumann was in the midst of the fourth variation when he cast away his pen and rushed to hurl himself into the Rhine.

> This theme, with all its tragic connotations, was actually the one which the tactless Johannes innocently chose as the basis for music which should bring joy and consolation to the dead master's dear ones. The labour of love was carried out in a spirit of reverential piety. In these elegiac pages we find none of Brahms' bearish, contrary, caustic, or defiant side. One hears a tenderness akin to Schumann's, and a gentle sweetness as of Mendelssohn; but the heavy-hearted canon of the fourth variation and the free dead-march of the close are moving tributes to tragedy, worthy of Schumann's protégé.[53]

The structure of the theme is a two-part song-form design. The first part is a double-period in predominately parallel construction. It has been said that in simplicity lies beauty. This theme is certainly a personification of

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52 Florence May, The Life of Johannes Brahms, Vol. 1, p. 279

53 Schauffler, op. cit., p. 362

this adage. The first four measures[54] of the secondo merely maintain the tonic pedal-point, while the primo is engaged in stating the initial two-bar phrase-member, which is immediately reproduced sequentially a major second lower. All of this could have been realized by a child as far as the formal principles involved are concerned. Yet, because a genius organized the elements of music in this particular fashion, the result is a most profound expression. The consequent phrase takes on a contrasting contour, the rhythm, harmony, and melody forming a new shape. The bass line also changes, for in measure 5 it moves to the submediant tone and progresses stepwise downward to the tonic. The only point of contact, or the only principle of unity between the two phrases is the descending motion of the melodic material. As a matter of fact, this observation holds true of the entire theme, and one wonders if this downward seeking of the melodic material and the relatively static motion of the bass do not have elegiac connotations. Whether this speculation is right or wrong, the fact remains that Brahms must have sensed the inherent qualities of the Schumann theme, for in the variations the atmosphere of the theme exercises a very definite influence.

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54 Appendix B, p. 122, XL1

The second half of the theme (bar 17) is similar in construction to the first, in that a four measure phrase is sequentially reproduced, except that in this case the reproduction is a major third higher, while in the first part, a phrase-member (half of a phrase) is sequentially treated a step lower. An evasion of the tonic cadence in measure 25 results in a four-measure extension. If the repeat is taken as marked at the end of the second part, there will be sixteen measures in part I, and twenty-four measures in part II.

Variation I[55] represents the theme as Brahms saw it through a pair of rose-colored glasses. This must not be mistaken to mean that this variation is simply a figuration and, as such, superfluous. Nothing could be further from the truth. Anyone who has studied a building of the Romanesque era and then one of the Gothic or Rococo will see the relationship between the Schumann theme and the first variation. It should be noted that Brahms invalidated the repeat mark in this variation, and in variations four and five, by writing out the repeated portion.

The second variation is based on a new motive of five sixteenth-notes[56] and its modifications. Within the

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55 Ibid., p. 123, XLII

56 Ibid., XLIII

last five measures[57] there is a most sublime harmonic change that in itself would endear the variation, and the work as a whole, to anyone.

In the third variation[58] Brahms exhibits his predilection for thirds and sixths, as well as for cross-rhythmic effects.

In the E-flat Minor variation[59] nearly all contact with the theme is forsaken. The only similarity between variation and theme, other than the equal number of measures, is the use of the pedal-point. The principal device used in this variation is the hollow sounding canon which gives a funereal aura throughout the variation.

The fifth variation[60] is in the key of B Major, one of the most distantly related keys to E-flat Major. However it fits into the scheme of the variations very well, as this bright key of five sharps counteracts the otherwise all too somber E-flat Major and E-flat Minor tonality. Despite the fact that this variation is in such a remotely related key, the B Major tonality is not a shock to the ear, as the enharmonic tones C-flat and E-flat appear three

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57 Appendix B, loc. cit.

58 Ibid., p. 124, XLIV

59 Ibid., XLV

60 Ibid., p. 125, XLVI

bars before the end of the preceding variation, and the elegiac tinge that is present in the theme is retained.

E-flat Major returns in the sixth variation,[61] ushering in a more joyful mood. The joyfulness is quite momentary, and even at those fleeting and transient passages, a certain amount of restraint is present which prevents any bombast or over-exuberance from coming to the fore.

The seventh variation[62] is quite difficult to make sound well because of the similarity of the rhythm in both parts. In short, it requires a great deal of artistry and sensitivity to produce the desired result.

The eighth variation[63] presents the same attributes as the third variation; namely, the use of thirds and sixths and a bi-rhythmical scheme. An unusual property of the eighth variation is that it is neither in a major key nor in the E-flat tonality of the theme, but in the key of G Minor.

One of the rare occasions during which the music becomes truly energetic in purpose is the ninth variation[64] in C Minor. Composed of thirty-second-note scale runs,

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61 Ibid., XLVII

62 Ibid., p. 126, XLVIII

63 Ibid., XLIX

64 Ibid., p. 127, L

triplets, and dotted eighth-note and sixteenth-note rhythms, it rises to great heights of dramatic power.

This tremendous surge is short-lived, for it soon succumbs to a funeral march in the tenth and last variation.[65] On one page and two staves, Brahms pours forth every vestige from every facet of his genius so that all may see and hear his utter sorrow for the passing of his prophet and dearest colleague. Proof of his success is seen in a letter to Joachim, to whom he expressed the feeling that Clara Schumann ". . . had something against the work."[66] Undoubtedly the work aroused in the lady memories too poignant for tears.

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65 Ibid., LI

66 Schauffler, op. cit., p. 362

CHAPTER V

THE MODERN ERA

I. CLAUDE DEBUSSY

The first important piano duet of Claude Debussy is his Petite Suite, which was published by A. Durand et Fils in the year 1904. The four pieces are entitled: "En Bateau," "Cortège," "Menuet," and "Ballet." A comparison between the Petite Suite and the "Engulfed Cathedral" reveals the two primary and essential styles of writing employed by Debussy. The former and earlier work is almost conventional in harmonic structure, although the whole tone scale is used and parallel fifths occur, but not to the extent as in "Voiles" (the second prelude in Book One) or the "Engulfed Cathedral." Many music lovers are prone to be under the delusion that Debussy is personified by one style of writing only--that of L'après-midi d'une faune. The misconception is largely due to this work and to its popularity, which block recognition and endearment of his other works of art.

The formal and melodic craftsmanship of "En Bateau" shows delineation worthy of Mozart. This should not be taken to insinuate that Debussy was attempting to improve on Mozart. In the first place this would be impossible;

in the second place only a genius of Debussy's temperament could have conceived the particular phrase-structure of the first three bars.[1] These qualities--beauty of melody, attractive rhythms, and engaging harmonies--merely hint at the great wealth inherent in this gem.

The "Cortège" is a processional that is at first somber and majestic, only to become playful during the second section before resolving to a recapitulation of the first section. Major and minor thirds dominate the role of the primo, giving a somewhat Brahmsian flavor to the total effect.

Third in succession is the "Menuet." It was observed in the "Cortège" that major and minor thirds assumed an important place in the texture. The same tendency is true in the "Menuet," except that sixths are used instead of thirds, and their use is not protracted to such great lengths.

Completing the suite of four pieces is the "Ballet." As might be expected, the rhythmic virility is very pronounced--in fact, it is almost intoxicating. In measure 18[2] a dominant pedal-point of sixteen measures begins. In the left hand of the secondo measures 68-75 reveal the bass

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1 Appendix B, p. 128, LII

2 Ibid., LIII

moving chromatically up an entire octave. These isolated points of construction will indicate that Debussy did not abandon devices which had been used in the works of other composers, some of whom were his antagonists. Pianists who sight-read this "Ballet," or any of the other members of the suite, will be pleased at the great amount of enjoyment that may be derived from such a pastime. But only by studying the work and presenting it as a performance and an experience for others will the full measure of satisfaction be gained.

Debussy's Six épigraphes antiques, or Ancient Tomb-Inscriptions, were published in the year of his death.

> They represent his art at its ripest and deal with a subject, for him, of uncanny suitability. In them he has at last achieved complete independence from the rococo remnant of nineteenth-century sentimentality or Schwärmerei; in them he is perfectly cool, perfectly clear-minded, perfectly detached.[3]

In this significant work for four hands, Debussy discarded the medievalism of his Pélléas and Mélisande, the neo-classic style of his L'après-midi d'une faune, and the troubled modern hysteria of his L'Isle Joyeuse. Instead he turned for inspiration to the calm, subtle beauties of the Anthologia Lyrica and the elegiac fragments of the Dorians and Aeolians of the sixth and seventh centuries,

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3 Ernest Brennecks, Jr., "The Amenities of Duet-Playing," The Musical Quarterly, 12:552, October, 1926

B.C.

According to a further statement by Ernest Brennecke, Jr., concerning Debussy:

> His colors are flat, delicately composed; his harmonies are thin, his rhythms pointed and trenchant, his melodies brightly polished. In a word, his mood is the mood of the earliest Greek antiquity: an eager and ready and wide-open-eyed reveling in a balanced ecstasy of life, untroubled by heart-burnings or by insoluble puzzles in eschatology.[4]

The first piece of the set is entitled "Pour invoquer Pan, dieu du vent d'été."[5] Debussy's employment of modal scales, which evolved from antiquity, is very appropriate for invoking Pan, the ancient god of the wind of summer.

"Pour un tombeau sans nom"[6] is the title of the second composition in this set. Again Debussy has succeeded in garbing very adroitly the connotations of the title. The parallel lies in the fact that the whole-tone scale is a scale without a name, inasmuch as none of the tones assumes the identity of a tonic, just as the tomb in the title is unidentified. In short, the wandering whole-tone scale does not establish a single tonality that can be named. Likewise the tomb, despite the fact that it has

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4 Brennecke, loc. cit.

5 Appendix B, p. 129, LIV

6 Ibid., LV

been standing for thousands of years, cannot establish the identity of the incumbency.

Ernest Brennecke, Jr., has this to say about the "Pour que la nuit": ". . . the night is full of erotic promise, its delights are anticipated with the eagerness of a tempered avidity."[7]

The author of the quotation does not give any clue as to how he came to such a conception of this piece. At any rate the composer has surely created the atmosphere which the title has suggested.

The fourth composition of this suite is the epigraph, "Pour la danseuse aux crotales."[8] If one can recall the Spanish flavor of Debussy's "Interrupted Serenade," then the similar atmosphere in the fourth epigraph does not come as an unprecedented and unwarranted effort in this direction. In both instances has he captured the essence of the Iberian spirit without resorting to the stereotyped patterns of rhythmic design that are so often encountered in works by lesser lights.

If Maurice Ravel accomplished a difficult feat in his Bolero, then Debussy must be given due credit for his artistic treatment of a similar device--the pedal-point,

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7 Brennecke, loc. cit.

8 Appendix B, p. 130, LVI

which he used in his epigraph, "Pour L'Egyptienne."[9] Except for bars 35-42 inclusive, what is known in conventional harmony as a double pedal-point is present for the entire fifty measures. In the hands of Debussy the pedal-point loses its classification as a device and becomes instead a means to an end, resulting in an effect that is perfectly enchanting.

The last epigraph, "Pour remercier la pluie au matin,"[10] is very reminiscent of "Fireworks," which completes the second book of Debussy's Préludes for piano. One significant difference: in the duet the effect of rain is the impressionistic goal, not something approaching a French Bastille Day celebration. The music is not meant to result in cloyingness. On the contrary, it is a tingling, vibrant, and happy toccata which leaves listener and performer gently smarting from its ingenious harmonies and breath-taking pace. A modal and slow moving postlude[11] leaves one feeling greatly rewarded for the listening experience--except for the few Philistines who would find fault with the $V^{7}_{\flat 2}$ (f-natural) of C Major progressing to a tonic chord in G! Thanks to men of Debussy's caliber,

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9 Ibid., LVII

10 Ibid., p. 131, LVIII

11 Ibid., p. 132, LIX

musicians no longer heed those musical savants who point out that Bach did not go beyond the dominant ninth chord; instead, composers explore, exploit and create masterworks anew that impatiently await their consummation on the horizon and the beyond.

Finally, one's attention is drawn to the opinion of an internationally celebrated musician. The distinguished French pianist, Alfred Cortôt, entertains the highest of opinions of the piano duet works of Claude Debussy. The following is taken from his La Musique Française de Piano:

> Il convient d'y ajouter quelques pièces à quarte mains, comme the savoureuse Marche écossaise des Comtes de Ross, écrite en 1891, orchestrée vers 1908, la populaire et charmante Petite Suite, éditée (sic) en 1894, dont une adaptation orchestrale existe également, mais non de la main de Debussy, et Six Epigraphes antiques, parues en 1915, parentes mineures de certains des Préludes.[12]

II. MAURICE RAVEL

The Mother Goose Suite by Ravel consists of five little pieces that were originally written for four hands at the piano. At the first performance of the work in Paris, 1910, it was played by two children, one six and the other ten years of age. In 1911 Ravel arranged and orchestrated the music as a ballet and it was produced in that form in Paris in 1912. The music from this ballet arranged as a Suite then appeared.

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12 Alfred Cortôt, La Musique Française de Piano, Vol. I, p. 50

Although not in the strictest sense taken from the book of old Mother Goose, these stories are all musical portrayals of old fairy tales.

No. I Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty. This is a very short movement, only twenty measures long, . . .

No. II Hop o' My Thumb. Ravel quotes from the old Perrault tale: "He believed that he would easily be able to find his way, by means of the bread which he had scattered wherever he passed, but was surprised to discover not a single crumb; the birds had come and eaten it all." . . .

No. III Laideronnette, Empress of the Pagodas. This story is from the "Green Serpent," in the collection of Fairy Tales by Mme, d'Aulnoys, who lived in the seventeenth century.

Laideronnette was a princess cursed in her cradle by a wicked fairy, and as she grew into womanhood she became more and more hideous. Her parents gave her a distant castle in the wilderness where she might live in solitude. In the forest outside her palace Laideronnette met a green serpent, who told her not to fear him as he was a prince in disguise. She had many adventures. Embarking in a small boat she was carried out to sea but was saved from shipwreck by the serpent, who carried her to the land of the Pagodas. These strange creatures were dwarfs whose bodies were made of precious stones. They played sweet music on tiny instruments made of walnut and almond shells. They made Laideronnette their princess. Then it is discovered that the green serpent is their Emperor. The spell of the wicked fairy who has enchanted them both is set aside, and as Prince and Princess they rule their kingdom, known throughout the world as the most beautiful rulers to be found.

The movement is in march time. . . .

No. IV The Conversation of Beauty and the Beast. This is, of course, the old fairy tale that we all know so well, told in music in the form of a waltz. . . .

No. V Fairy Garden. This charming short number, which closes the work, opens with a theme in the strings [orchestral version], Lent et grave in C major. The entire movement is developed from this one theme.[13]

Although the "Pavane de la Belle au bois dormant"[14] is only twenty measures in length, this three-part song-form ranks with any of the Chopin Preludes in intensity and concentration of expressiveness. The modality of the harmonic and melodic material sounds a note of appropriateness in respect to the title which assures this gem of a place among the immortals.

The second piece in the set is a closely knit work and is developed essentially from the two ideas in bars 4 and 12.[15] The manner in which the consonant thirds are employed in a dissonant framework, thereby claiming a new identity, is most ingenious. Coupled with this mark of distinction are the use of pedal-points and the tierce de Picardie at the end, which rank this movement far above the average.

The story of the third piece, "Laideronnette, Impératrice des Pagodes," has been described above by Anne Shaw Faulkner. There is, however, more to say regarding

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13 Anne Shaw Faulkner, What We Hear in Music, pp. 550-51

14 Appendix B, p. 132, LX

15 Ibid., p. 133, LXI

the music itself. "Ravel . . . used the exotic Chinese mood successfully in his "Laideronette, Impératrice des Pagodes . . ."[16] Also of interest is the process of development of the two-note motive in the secondo at the beginning.[17] The sudden dynamic changes from measure to measure, which appear in bars 24-28,[18] are a Beethovenesque trait. Of the five occasions in the entire suite when the dynamic marking is greater than forte, "Laideronette, Impératrice des Pagodes" contains the first appearance of a fortissimo, which occurs in bar 63.

"Les entretiens de la Belle et de la Bête" is the penultimate piece in the set. The transmutation of this work from the old tales has given rise to the use of two leit-motives,[19] both of which become modified during the course of the composition. In short, Ravel has not only succeeded with characterization but has also created in the process a work of inestimable worth.

The concluding movement is "Le jardin féerique." Here, Ravel demonstrates his sense of the dramatic. The work is of just the right proportion and length, thereby

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16 Marion Bauer, Twentieth Century Music, p. 147

17 Appendix B, p. 134, LXII

18 Ibid., p. 135, LXIII

19 Ibid., LXIV

denying the need for a toccata or any other similar device. Anyone who has heard the exhilirating glissandos in the primo, while the secondo adds great force with its heavily accented rhythmic figure,[20] will not leave the performance with the somewhat pessimistic reaction to the title of these pieces that he might have experienced before the performance. Each and every movement in the Ma mère l'Oye suite is perfectly satisfying in its way. The music is not of great profundity, but the fact that the suite is a success is evidence enough that Ravel has been victorious in his effort to compose music which has had a juvenile generating force. Probably the only other composer who has been able to achieve a similar result is Debussy with his Children's Corner.

III. IGOR STRAVINSKY

If the reader will recall the remarks concerning the "Abendlied" in Schumann's Op. 85, No. 12, he will see a point of contact existing between that work and Igor Stravinsky's Three Easy Pieces. This similarity, which is the use of three staves instead of the usual four, should not puzzle the reader, however, for here ends any correlation that may be found. The "Marche," "Valse," and

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20 Ibid., p. 136, LXV

the "Polka" are all written on three staves, and the *secondo* is simplicity itself. Because of this lack of complexity in the bass, the *primo*, of course, has to make compensations. If the treble player does not mind crossing his hands--particularly in the "Marche"--the satisfaction gained will be well worth the effort. Though neither profound nor characteristic of Stravinsky, these pieces and one other set (*Five Easy Pieces*), will have to be the only representatives of Stravinsky in the duettist's repertoire.

In contrast to its role in the *Three Easy Pieces*, the *secondo* becomes the more difficult part in the *Five Easy Pieces*, while the *primo* consists of a simple melody. However, the simplicity of this melodic line presents a challenge to the performer, for it is often difficult to make a simple tune sound convincing and expressive. The *Five Easy Pieces* are titled: "*Andante*," "*Espagñola*," "*Napolitana*," "*Balalaika*," and "*Galop*."

> Here is a splendid opportunity for the elementary piano student to perform ensemble music of distinction with an advanced partner.
>
> The *prima* (first part) is comparatively simple, although the *seconda* (second part) makes some demands on the advanced player. Both participants will, however, gain considerably from the team-work, because of the rhythmic problems posed, as well as the musical considerations inherent in these exceptional pieces.
>
> In order to realize the effect of a balalaika in the 3rd piece, the *seconda* player must pay particular attention to the alternating changes from *forte* to *piano*.

> The accented portion of each pair of eighth-notes must be followed by a sudden hushed and detached note. The fingering provided, if carefully observed, will greatly aid in obtaining the desired result.[21]

Anyone who has heard two professional pianists play the Stravinsky works will probably agree that in addition to their great value for teaching purposes, as evaluated by Mr. Alphenaar, these pieces truly deserve their rightful place in the duettist's modern repertoire. It is to be hoped most earnestly that more four-hand works will be forthcoming from this outstanding composer. At any rate, at least two of Stravinsky's contemporaries have enriched this needy literature; they are Paul Hindemith and Francis Poulenc.

IV. PAUL HINDEMITH

Probably the most important work for piano duet of current vintage is the Sonata by Hindemith, written in 1938. This three-movement composition represents his sole contribution to four-hand literature, except for the "Tanze," Op. 20.

The first movement starts with the interval of an octave sounded in the secondo.[22] The composer chooses such

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21 Gerard Alphenaar (Editor), Igor Stravinsky, Five Easy Pieces, p. 1

22 Appendix B, p. 137, LXVI

a consonance so that he may better employ the more dissonant and higher tension intervals and chords in later dramatic passages. Those readers familiar with Hindemith's Craft of Musical Composition will fully understand the relationship among the intervals, according to how distant they are from the perfect octave and fifth.

Study of the right hand in the secondo reveals a scalewise descent, while the left hand sustains the tonic pedal-point. It is not long (bars 5-6) until a most fresh and original color becomes manifest. The principal theme[23] develops and is treated canonically and finally reappears in measure 21 with added textural ingredients. Measure 7 (beat one) through 11 (beat 1), inclusive, represent an interesting rhythmic shift involving the primo and secondo. Specifically, the material contained between bars 7 (beat one) and 9 (beat three), inclusive, is congruent to that which appears between measures 9 (beat two) through 11 (beat one).[24] Precisely the same procedure is found to exist in bars 29 (beat two) through 32 (beat one). As of measure 32 (beat three) to and including beat one of measure 39, a melodic phrase-member of two bars length is sequentially treated. The subordinate theme appears in the

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23 Appendix B, loc. cit.

24 Ibid., LXVII

primo at bars 39-45.[25] The secondo immediately repeats in octaves the second theme as announced by the primo in bars 45-51. A transitional section appears at measure 51, and at measure 58 the second theme reappears in the primo. An examination of the bass line in the secondo discloses the often-thought and time-worn movement of tonic, subdominant, dominant, and then back to tonic. (This fundamental progression and its repetition may be found between bars 58-64 inclusive.) However, the second theme, with all its striking harmonic and rhythmic energy, reveals the latent potentialities of this kind of bass movement. If Richard Strauss had recognized the pregnant merits of this and other works of Hindemith, he would not be noted for his supposed remark, "Why do you write atonally? You do not have to, you have talent!"[26] Of course the piano duet is not atonal music, for it has a tonal center--E Major.

Subsiding, the second theme dissolves into a pedal-point on the three lowest B's of the piano. New material, of which the augmented fifth is the most salient feature, appears in the primo and is superimposed at bar 68[27] atop the pedal-point, and so begins the development section. In

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25 Ibid., p. 138, LXVIII

26 Bauer, op. cit., p. 256

27 Appendix B, p. 138, LXIX

the *secondo* the first three bars of the second theme appear at measure 84 and are sequentially reproduced three bars later. The initial figure from the beginning portion of the second theme begins to undergo extended treatment until dramatic power of great force is attained. The music then becomes subdued and, just as the *secondo* regains the tonic pedal-point, the principal theme is ushered in, and thus the recapitulation arrives. Though the recapitulation is abbreviated, no disappointment is in store, for the principal theme is beautifully treated, while the second theme is then treated polyphonically.

Although the other two movements will not be discussed, they are in no way inferior to the first movement. These three movements are of great artistic value, so much so that the sonata becomes one of the finest and most important works in the literature of piano duet music.

V. FRANCIS POULENC

The Francis Poulenc *Sonata*, 1918, holds a unique place in the literature of piano duet music, for it is the only known duet which may be played on either one instrument or two. The cover of the music (J. & W. Chester, Ltd.) specifies Piano Four Hands (or Two Pianos Four Hands). The Mozart *Sonata in C Major* (K.521) might be placed in this same category except that the markings *cembalo primo* and

cembalo secondo appear only on the autograph and not on the published copy.

The first four bars[28] of the Poulenc composition consist of a dramatic, virile, rhythmic pattern which utilizes exclusively the tonic minor triad with the added second and seventh and omitted fifth. The half beat before measure 5[29] marks the entrance of the principal melodic material of the first movement which is entitled "Prelude." Bar 10 reveals the conclusion of the principal theme and the return of the introductory measures 1, 2, and 3. The seventeenth bar discloses a preview of the second theme which is to appear nine measures later. The primo prevails to the complete exclusion of the secondo between bars 26 through 36.[30] This device, which is far too uncommon, was used in the Sonata in F Major by Mozart. Of special interest in the Poulenc Sonata is the left hand of the primo; the same one-bar figure is present in measures 26-33 inclusive. In measure 49 the principal theme returns and the movement ends Presto strident on the same harmony as found in the first four bars. After becoming familiar with the

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28 Ibid., p. 139, LXX

29 Loc. cit.

30 Ibid., p. 140, LXXI

material in the first movement, the reader will undoubtedly be prompted to investigate the second and third movements which are titled "Rustique" and "Final." Although the Poulenc Sonata is not as profound a work as the Hindemith Sonata, it will always claim an important role in the repertoire of duettists.

VI. MARY BOWLING

The final composer to be considered is Mary Bowling, member of the College of the Pacific faculty--teacher of piano and composition. The following is her own description of her Theme, Arabesques and Toccata for piano duet:

> Based upon a lyrical theme,[31] revolving around the tonality of C-sharp minor, the eight arabesques are treated as free variations, the second an elaboration of the first, the fifth an elaboration of the fourth. The eighth variation is considerably extended, leading to a restatement of the theme in its original form. The mood of the whole is quiet but intense--based harmonically upon simple and broad treatment of dissonances, with occasional polychordal sections.
>
> The Toccata which follows is swift and brilliant, with considerably freer use of dissonant combinations. Written in sonata-allegro form, both subjects are somewhat chromatic in character. The mood as a whole is one of sustained intensity.[32]

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31 Ibid., p. 141, LXXII

32 Mary Bowling, unpublished comment on Theme, Arabesques and Toccata, College of the Pacific, Stockton, California, March 21, 1951

Only those who have heard this penetrating and musicianly score can appreciate its considerable significance. The Theme, Arabesques and Toccata truly deserves a rank comparable to those works previously discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

I. SUMMARY

To summarize: an attempt should be made to evaluate the relative importance of the many works in the literature for piano duet. Certain elements of subjective judgment on the part of the writer of this thesis must necessarily influence this present evaluation. It is hoped, however, that this thesis will be an aid in selecting that music presumably of the most rewarding nature to the person interested.

Although the Nicholas Carleton and Thomas Tomkins duets are useful for recital, they fall short of the three Sonatas of J. C. Bach which, in turn, are somewhat dwarfed by the Mozart works. The compositions of Beethoven also are shy of the mark made by Mozart. Hence the entire Preclassic and Classic Eras of piano duet music are dominated by the figure of Mozart, the giant in whose shadow rest the works of the other masters.

The task of summarizing the music of the Romantic Era is not quite as simple as in the case of those eras preceding. Except for the works of Weber and Mendelssohn--reasons having been given for their limitations--there are

several of the Romantic composers who have contributed compositions of notable rank to the piano duettist's repertoire. The most prolific of these contributors was Schubert. Although not all of his works are of the same sustentation, two claim a very high mark in their own particular way. Of the four compositions for piano duet by Schumann, the Op. 66 and Op. 85 are undoubtedly the best. Among compositions in variation form, one must look to Brahms before the Classic composers. In addition to the Op. 23 Variations, one cannot overlook the Op. 39 Waltzes, which are unsurpassable.

In the Modern Era, Debussy, Ravel, Hindemith, and Poulenc have contributed the most important works for four hands.

II. CONCLUSIONS

To conclude: it might well be advanced that the Mozart Sonatas in B-flat Major (K.358), F Major (K.497), and C Major (K.521) are the most important works to appear in the Classic Era. For the Romantic Era the following probably comprise the most important works: Schubert's F Minor Fantasie, Op. 103 and the Grand Rondeau, Op. 107; Schumann's Pictures from the East, Op. 66 and the Twelve Piano Pieces for Little and Large Children, Op. 85; and finally the Brahms Variations on a Theme of Schumann,

Op. 23.

The Modern Era has produced the four following works which are probably the most outstanding: Debussy's Antique Epigraphs, Ravel's Mother Goose Suite, Hindemith's Sonata, and the Poulenc Sonata.

It is to be hoped that the reader, after extensive study of the literature, will be thoroughly convinced that music for piano duet is of considerable scope and importance; and it is to be hoped that the existence of professional duet teams will be encouraged. In very recent years performing artists have become aware of the worth of the extensive literature for four hands. "For a truly rewarding experience pianists should, of course, play and study this type of ensemble music for themselves,"[1] so writes Ralph Berkowitz, accompanist for and ensemble player with Gregor Piatigorsky.

If this trend should continue until pianists, professional and amateur alike, rediscover the immense amount of beauty and mutual enjoyment to be had from performing or just playing over these works, then the writer will know that the aim and purpose of this thesis will have been more than justified.

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1 Ralph Berkowitz, "Original Music for Four Hands," Etude, 62:27, January, 1944

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APPENDIX A

THE EARLIEST KEYBOARD DUETS

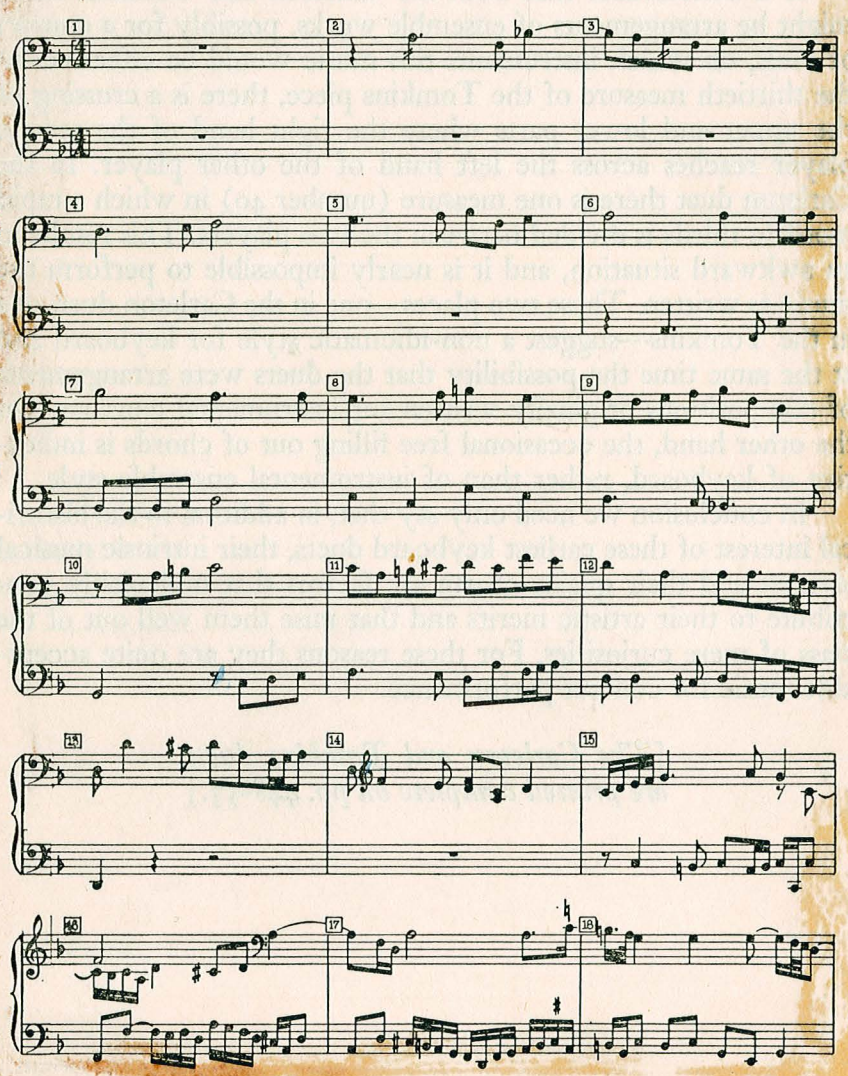
Verse for Two to Play on One Virginall or Organe

Nicholas Carleton

B.M. Add. 29996 f196b
Reduction of note values: 𝅗𝅥 : 𝅝 , 𝅗𝅥 : 𝅗𝅥 .

♩ = 80

The base & lowest part

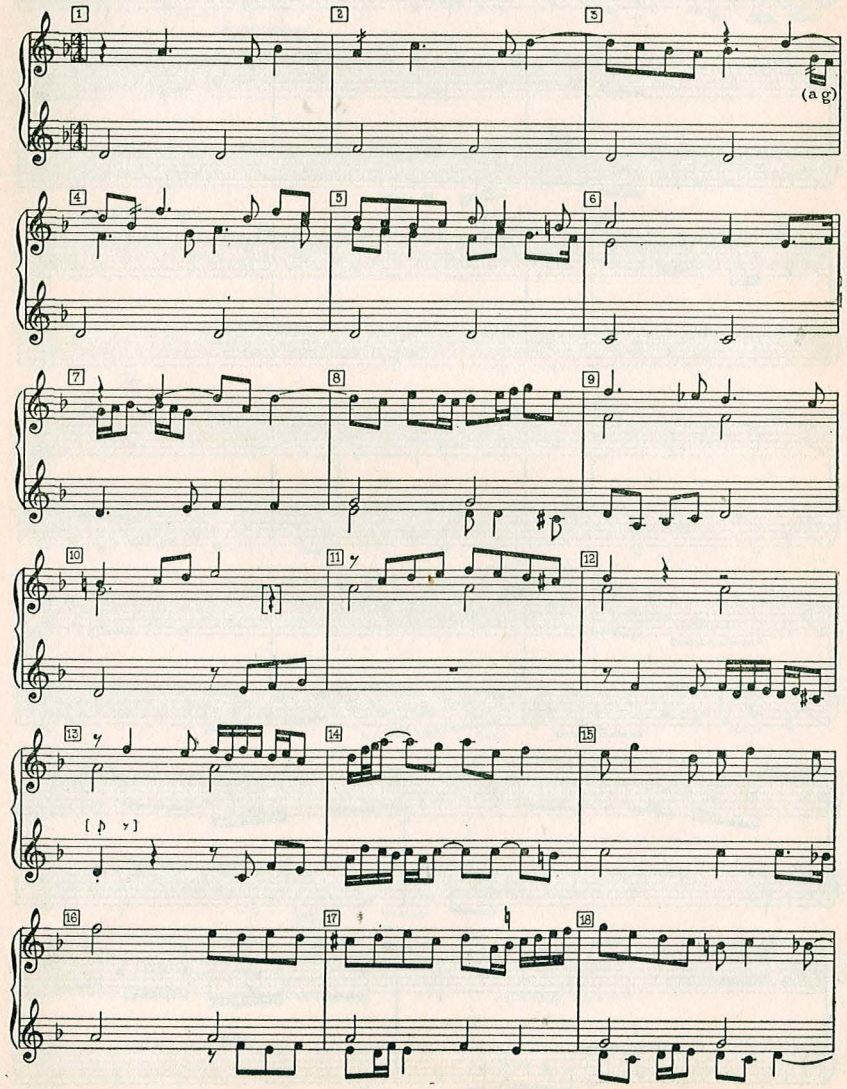


Verse for Two to Play on One Virginall or Organe

Nicholas Carleton

♩ = 80

The treble & highest part



Verse for Two to Play on One Virginall or Organe

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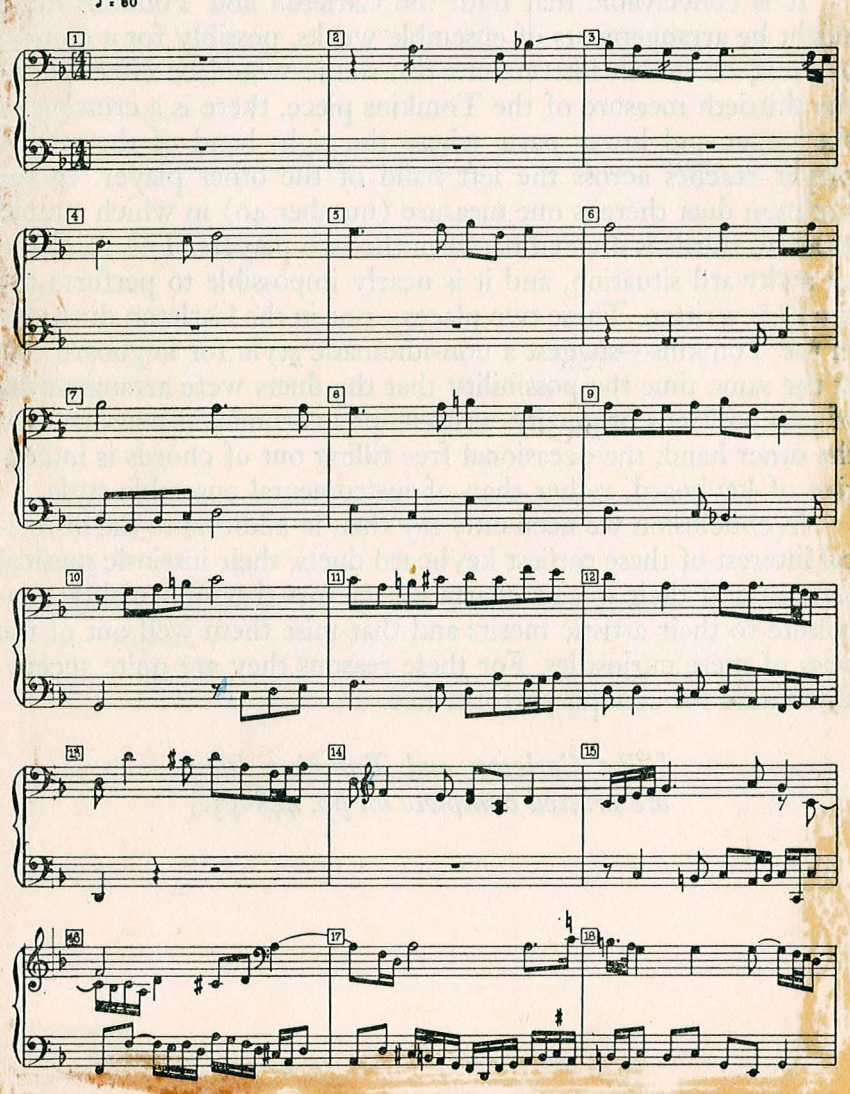
♩ = 80

The base & lowest part



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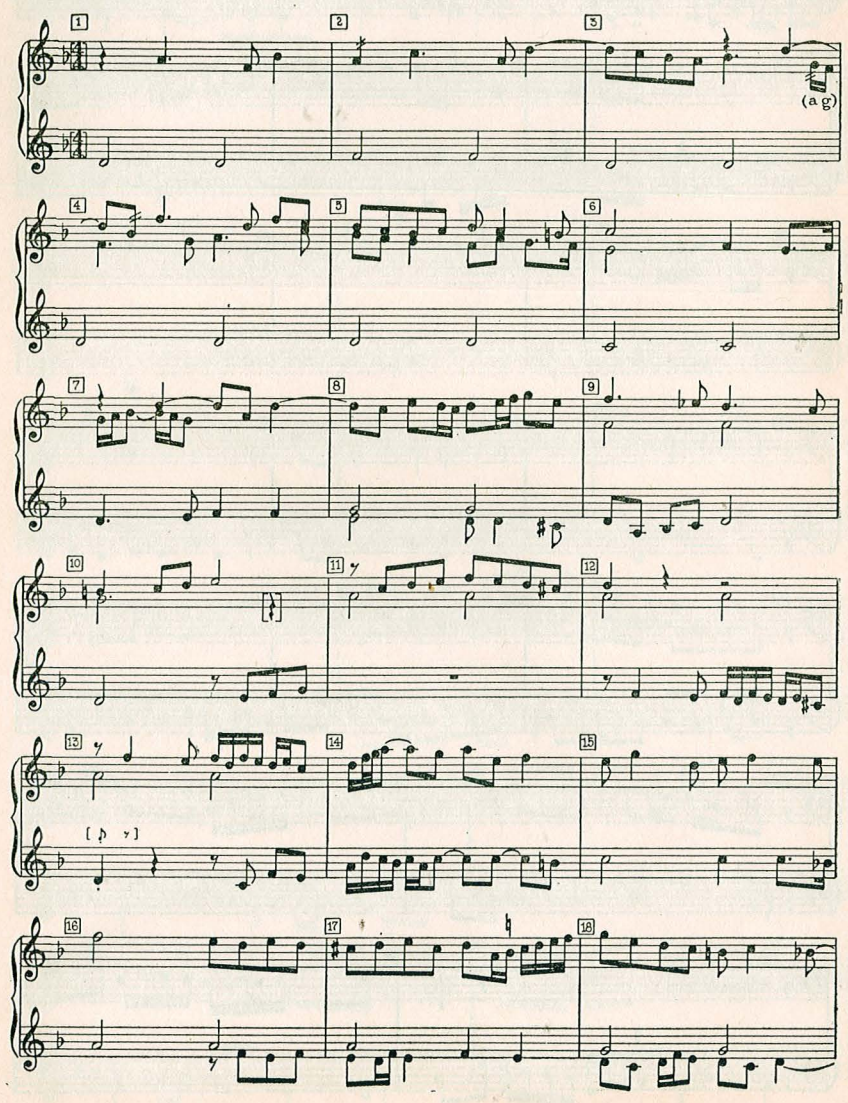
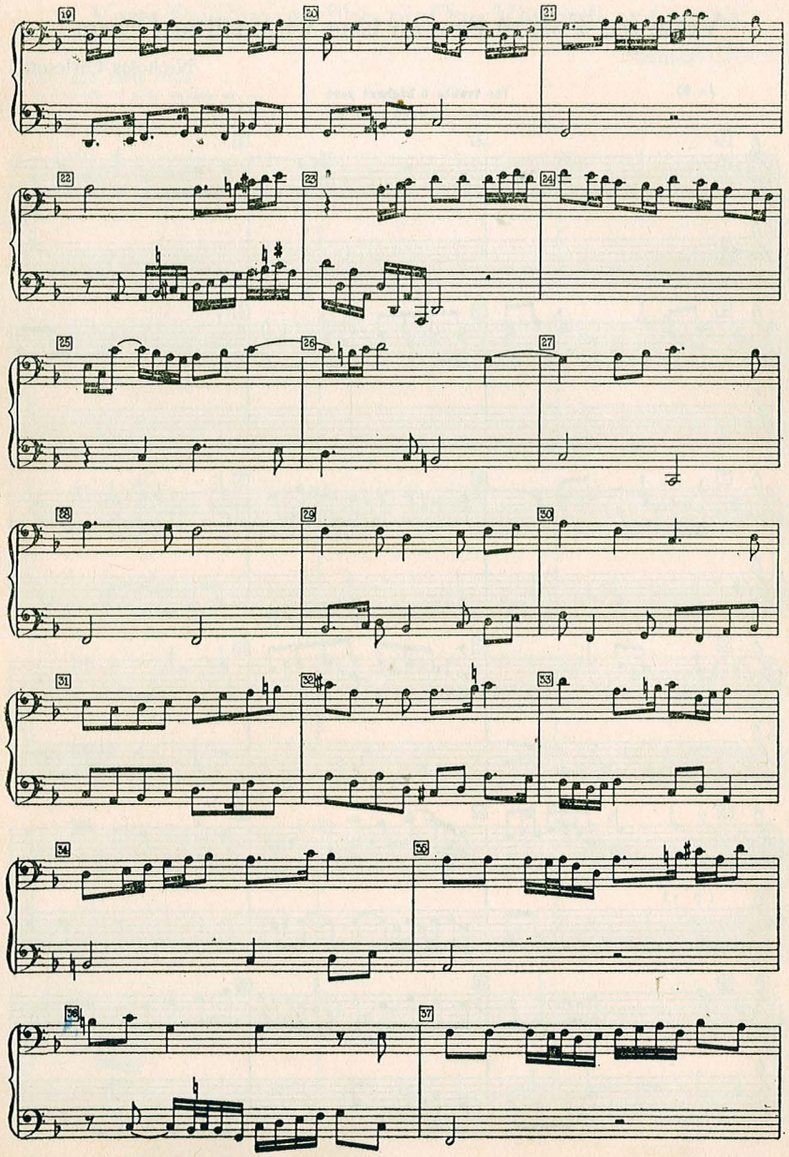
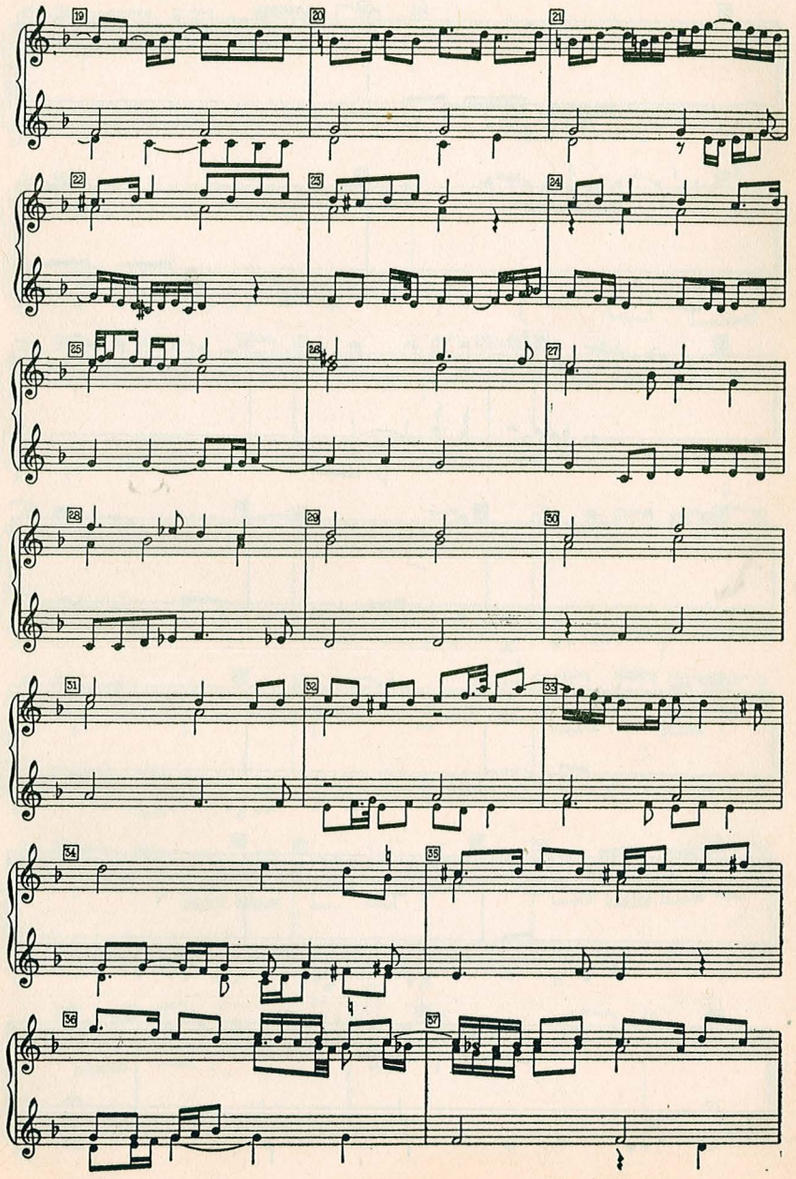
Nicholas Carleton

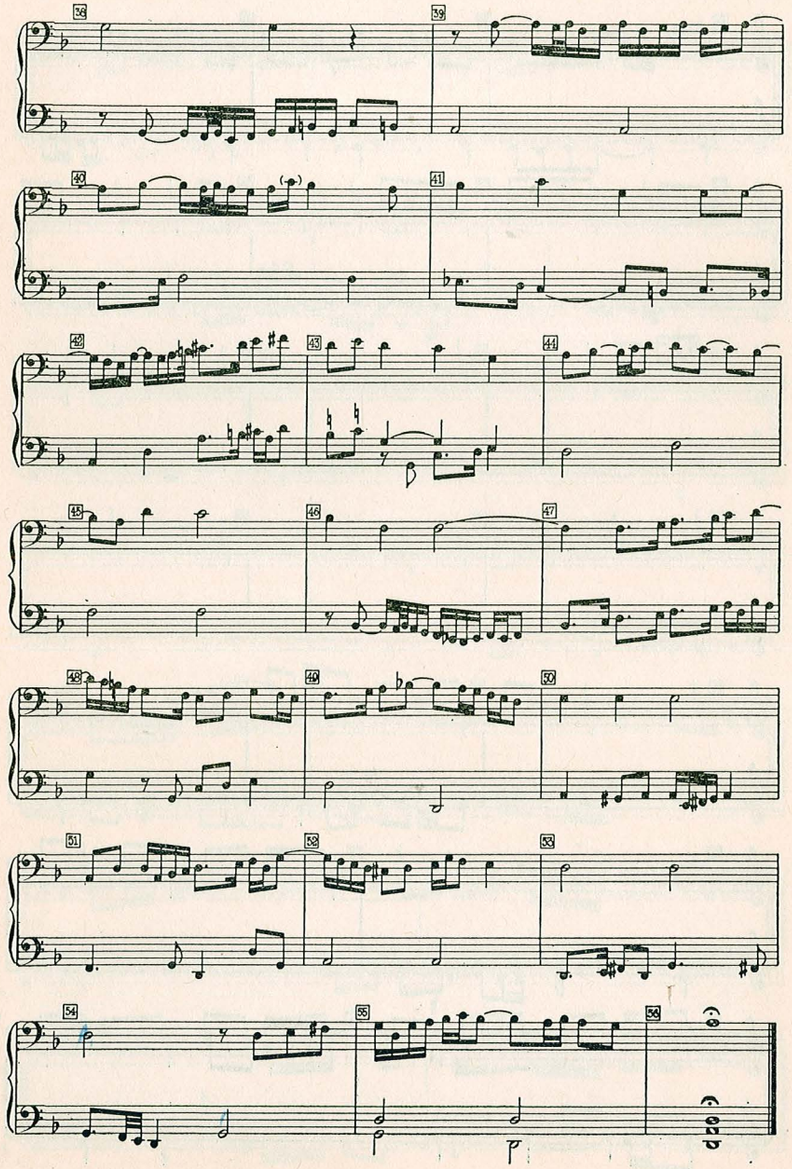
♩ = 80

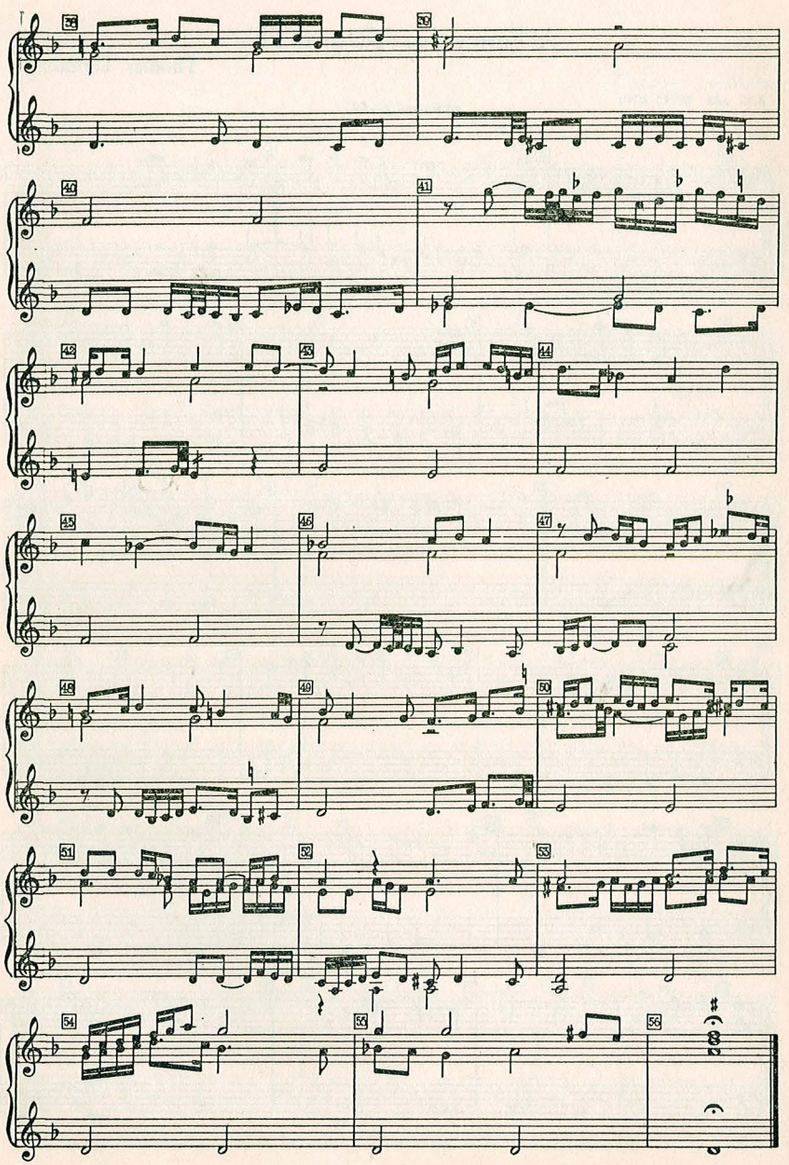
The treble & highest part









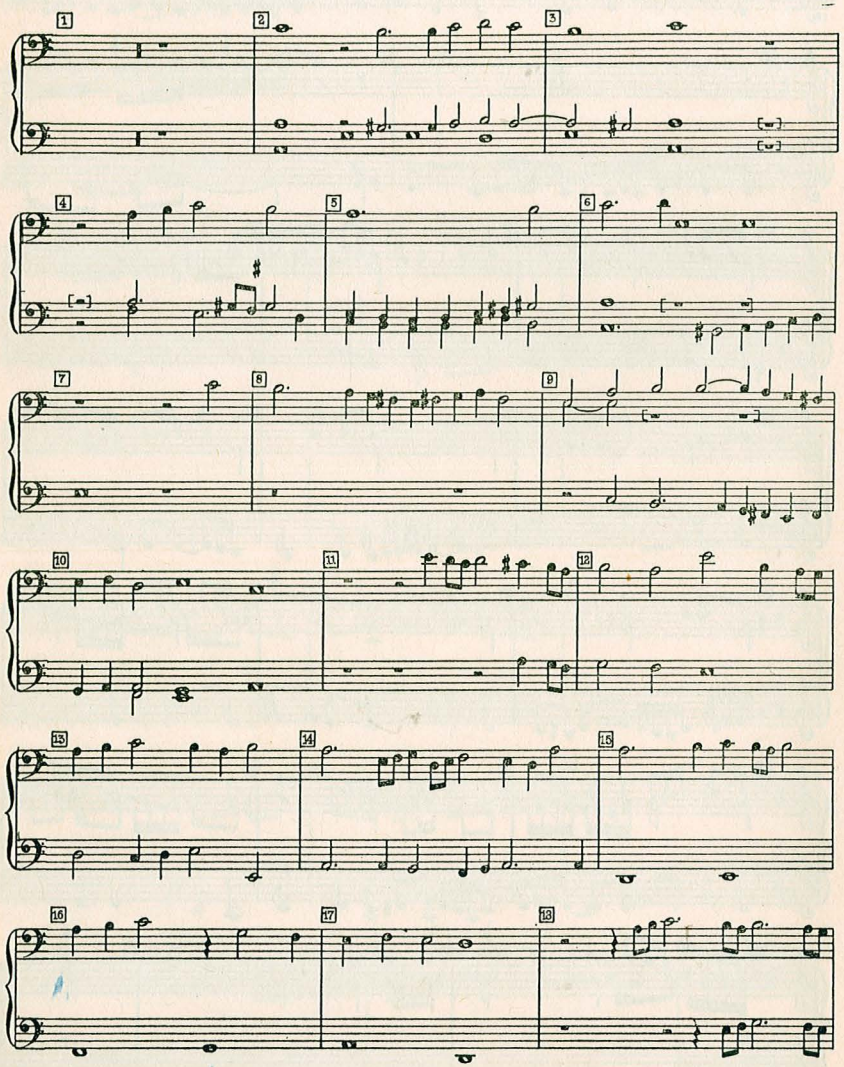


A Fancy for Two to Play

Thomas Tomkins

B.M. Add. 29996 204b

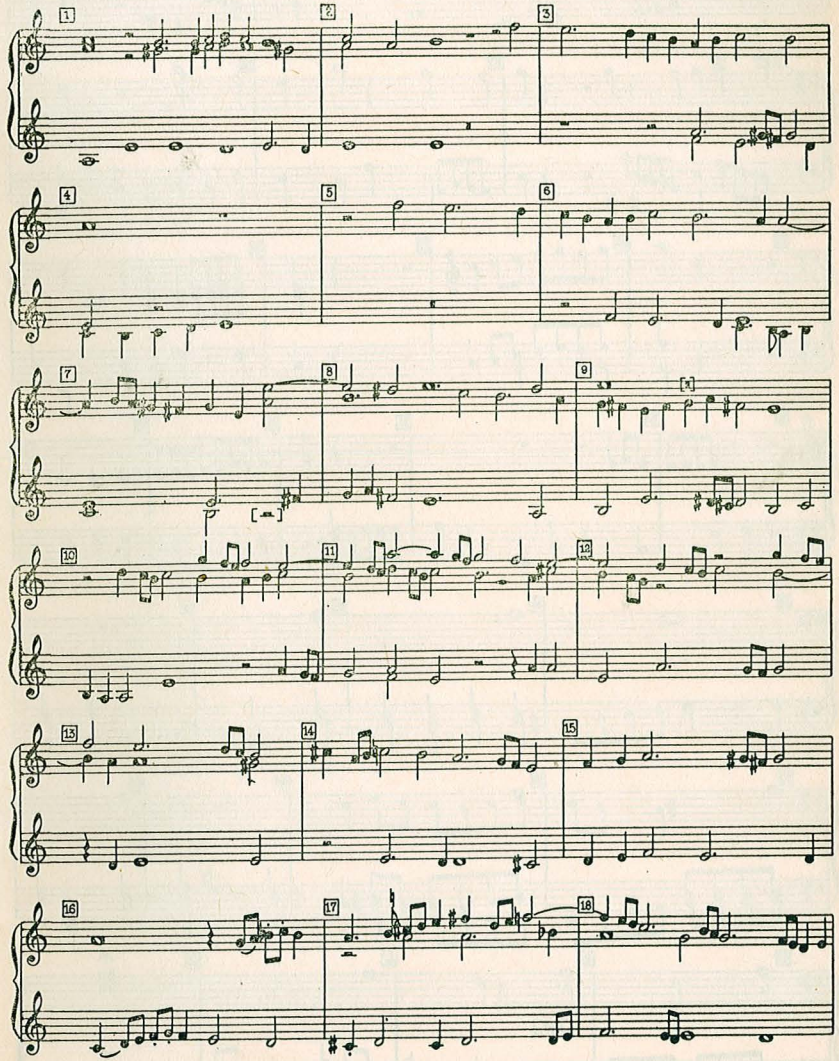
The base parts

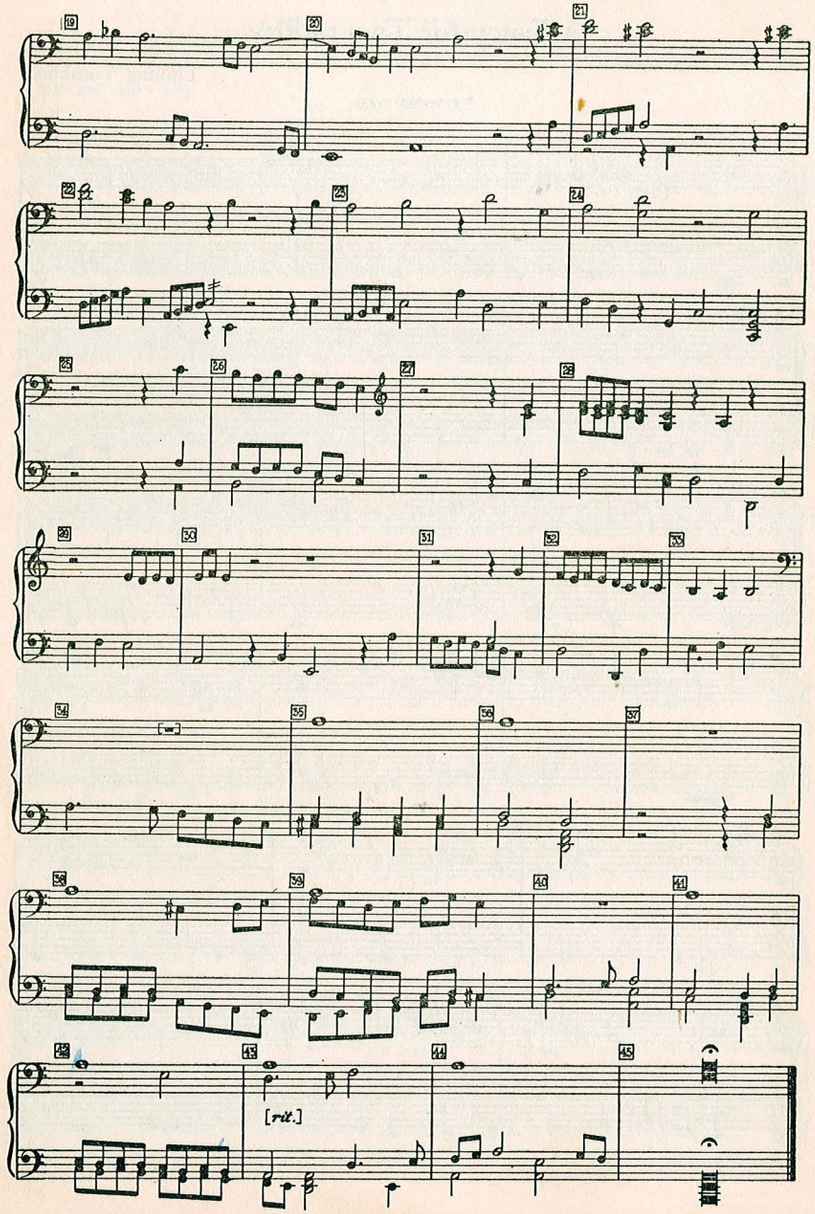


A Fancy for Two to Play

Thomas Tomkins

The treble parts

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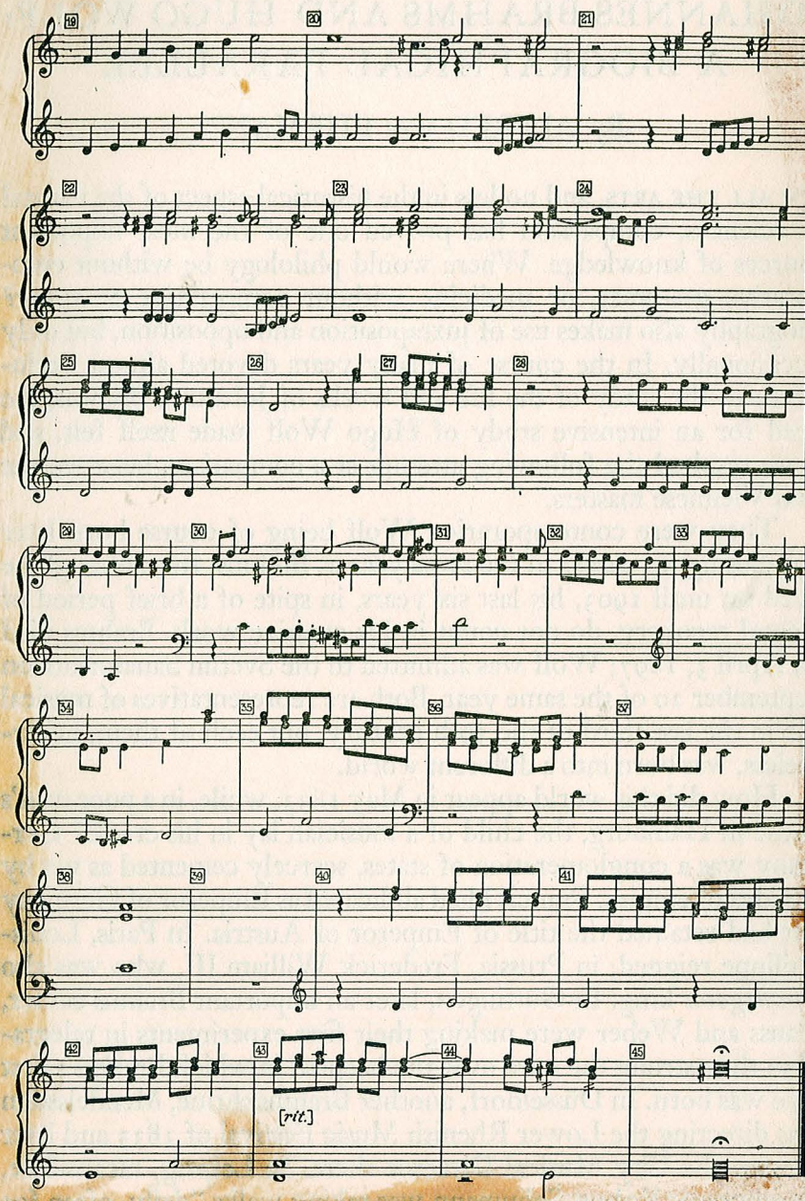
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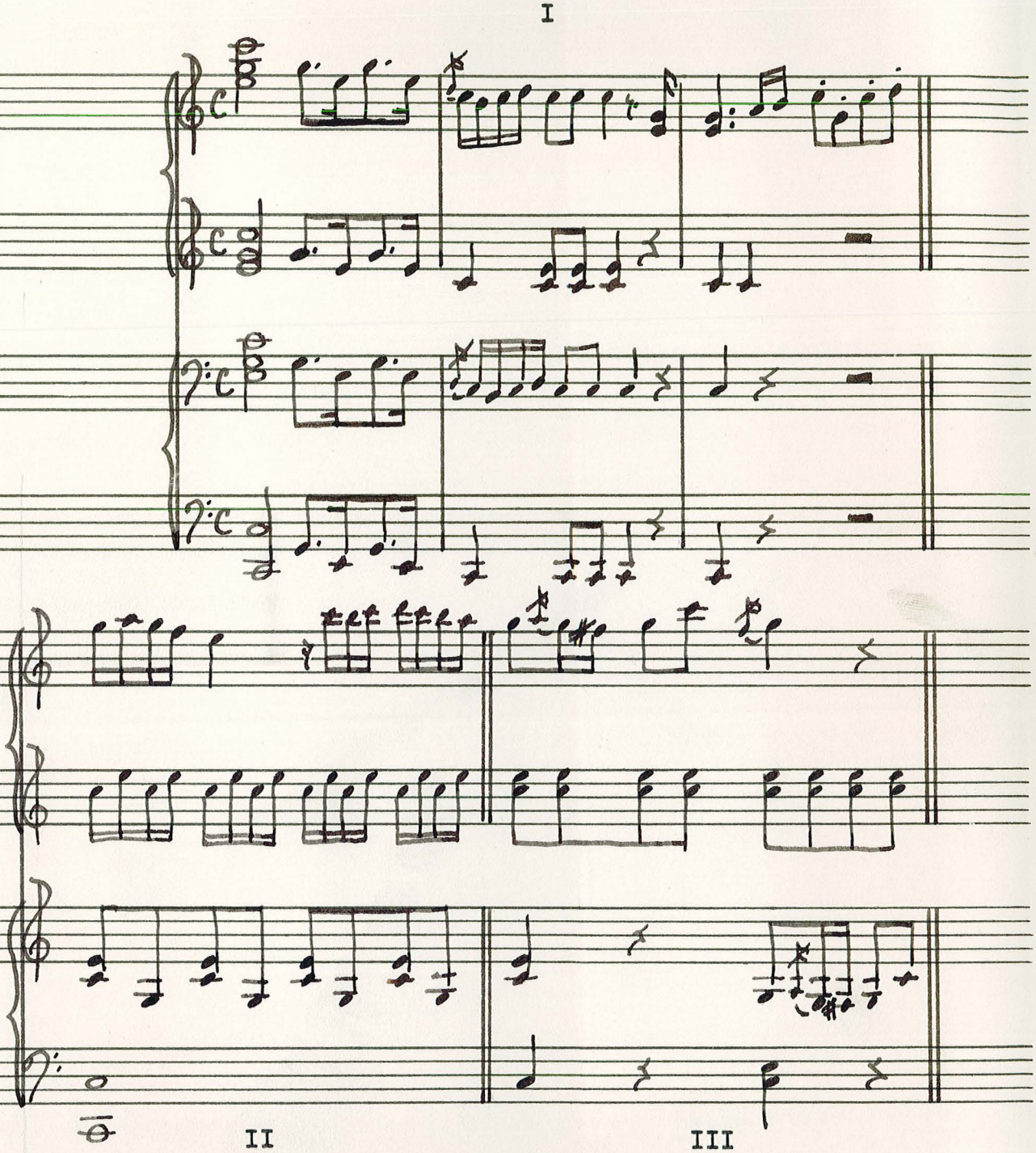
APPENDIX B

MUSICAL EXAMPLES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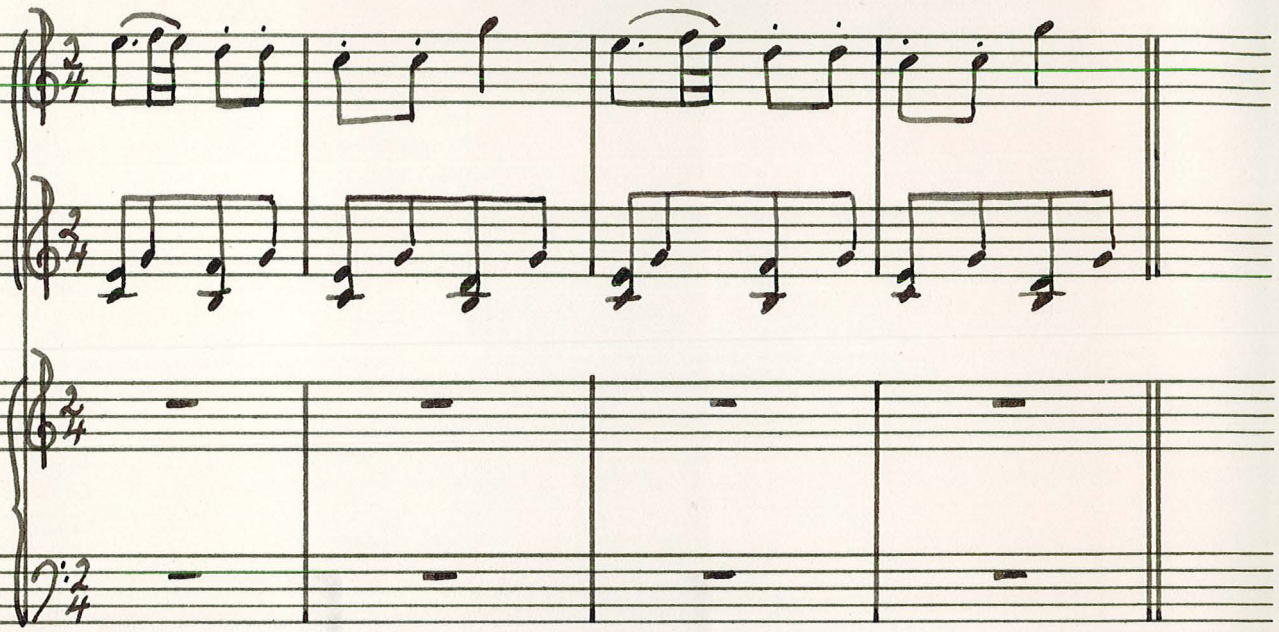

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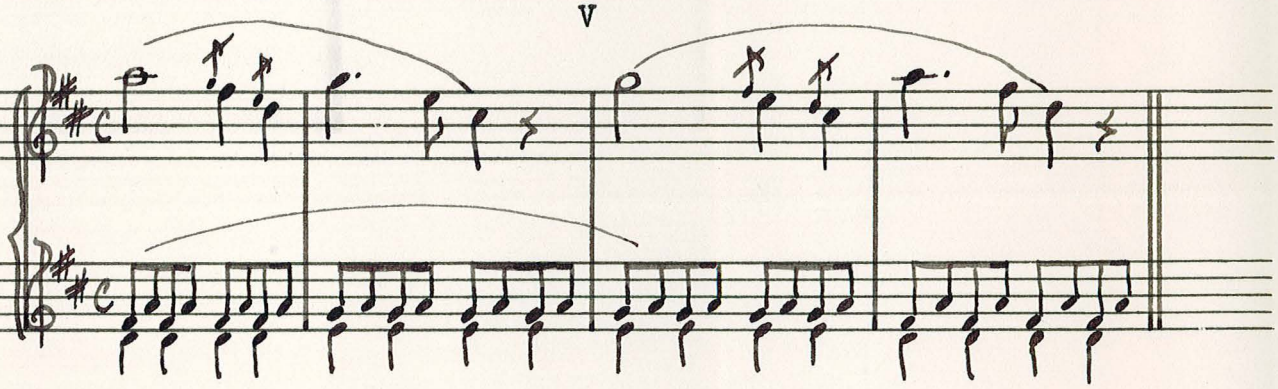

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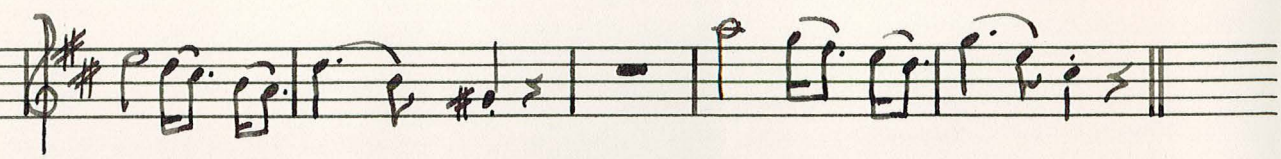

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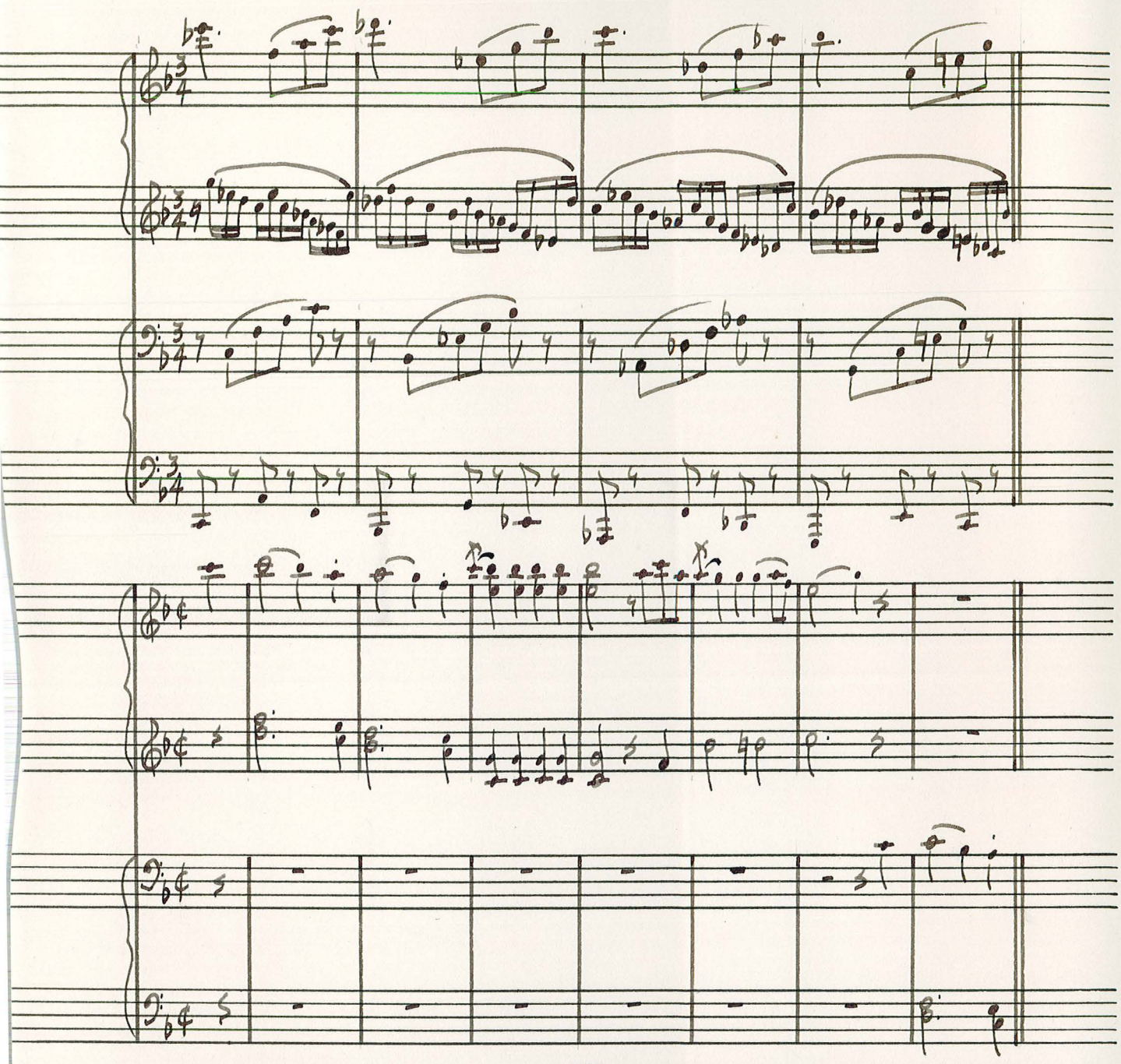

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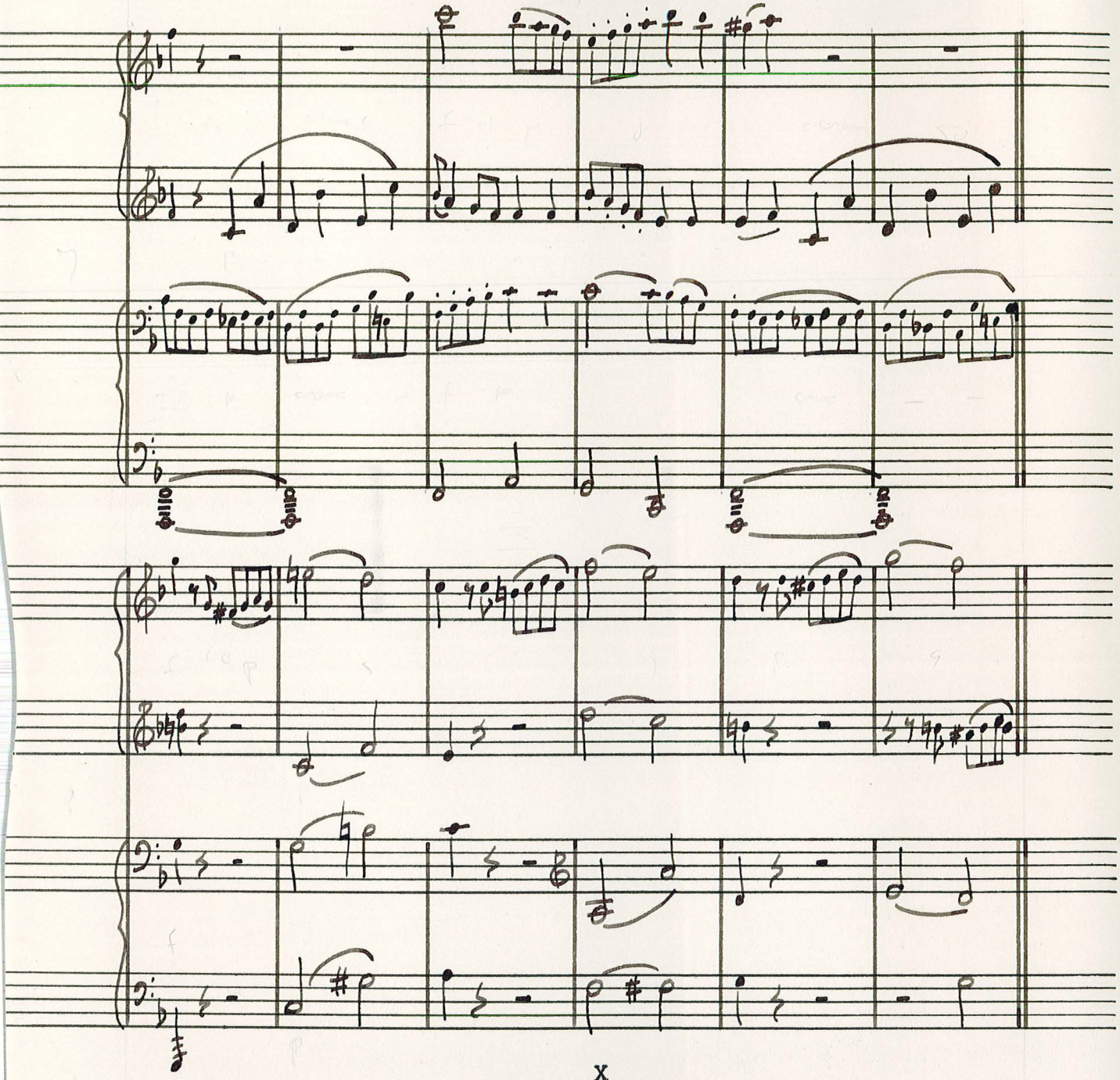

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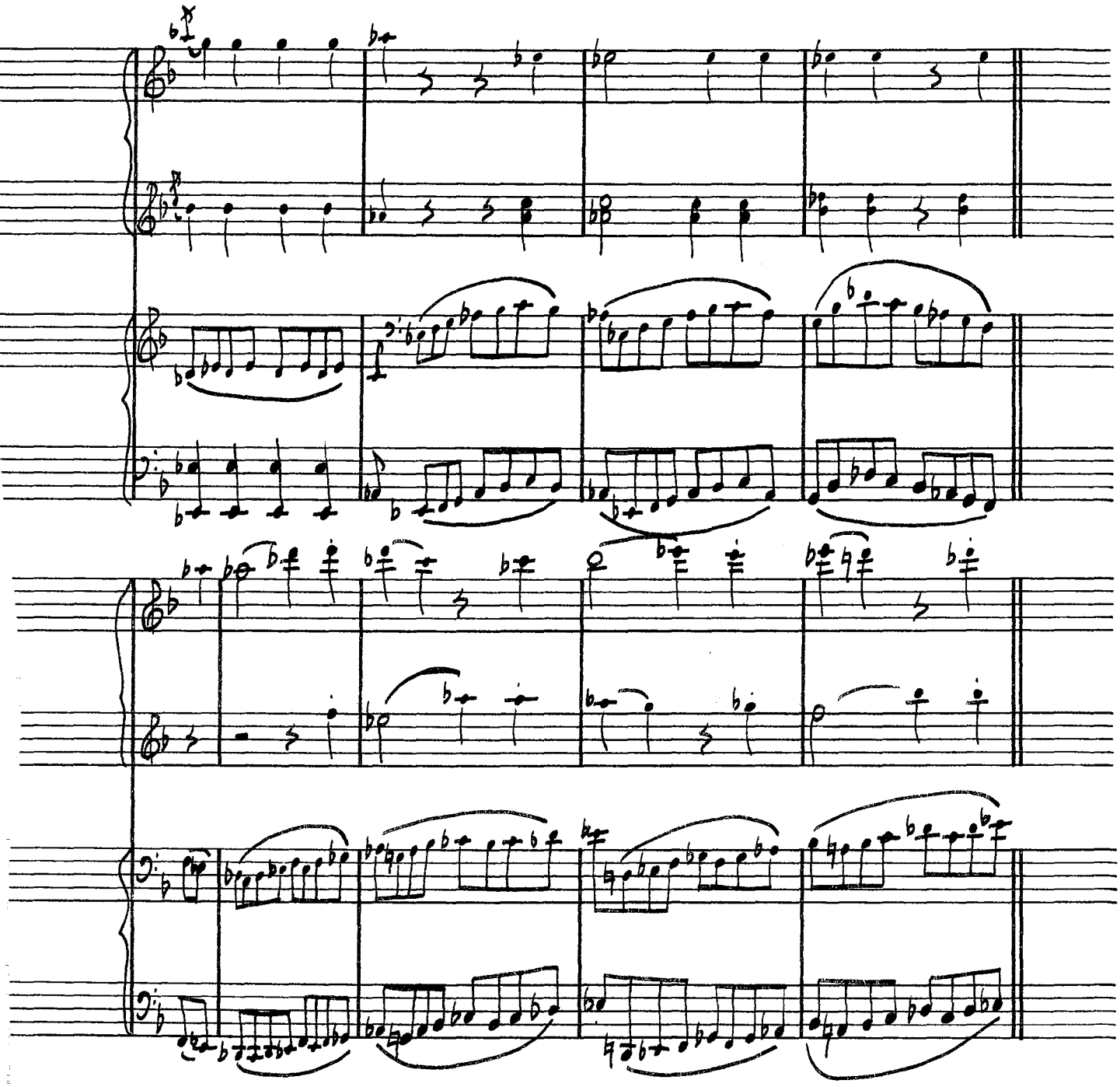

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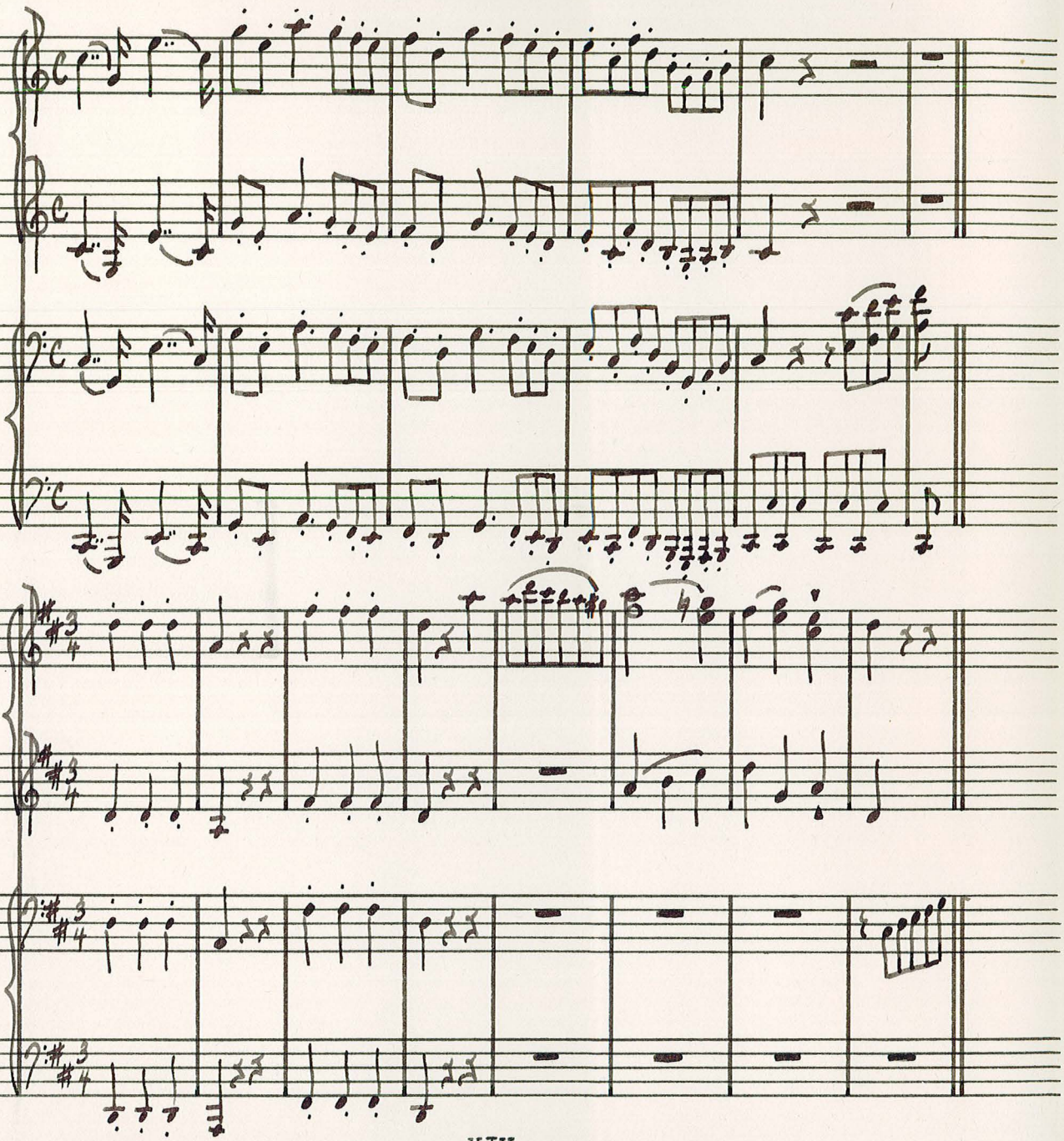

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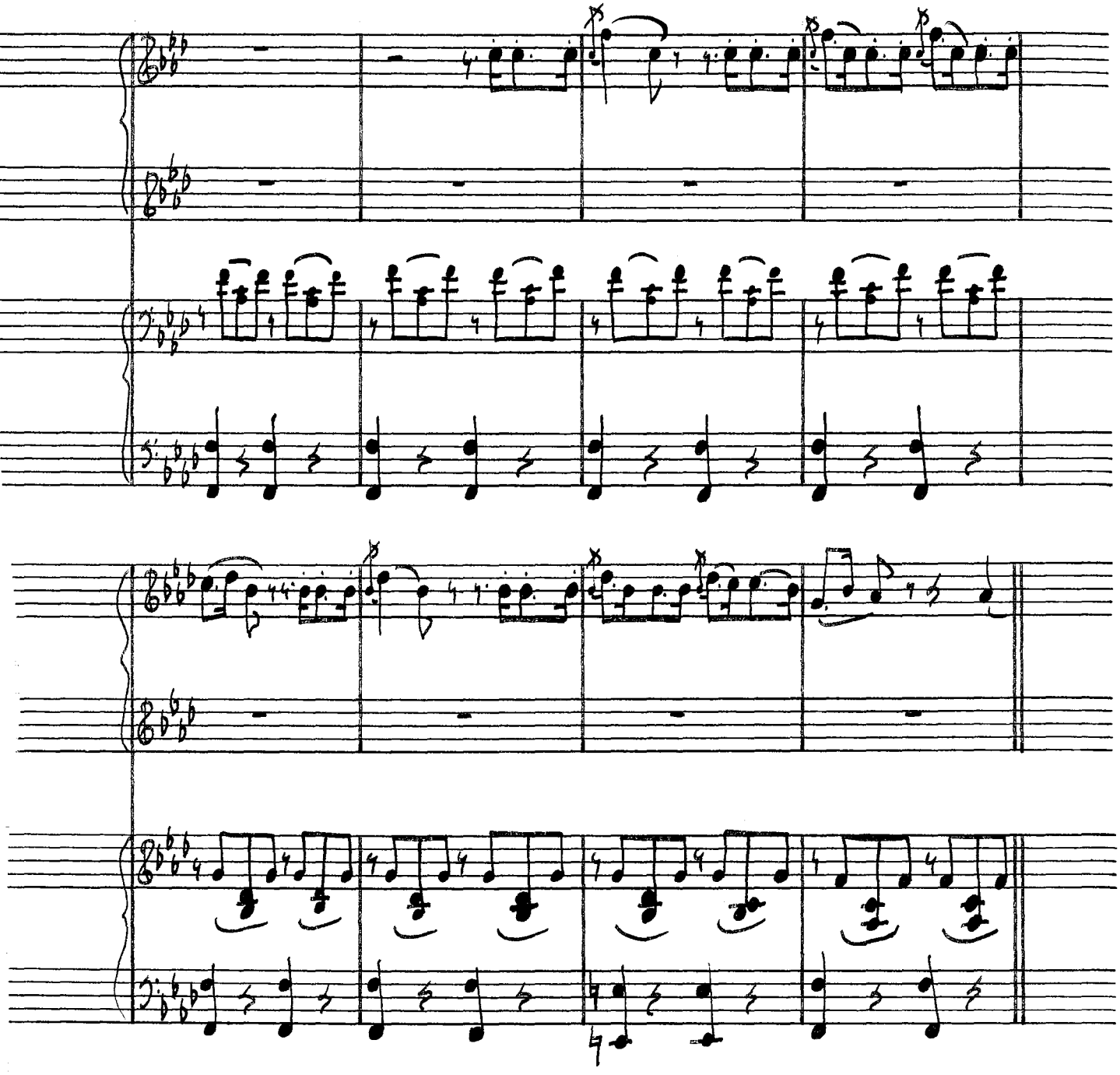

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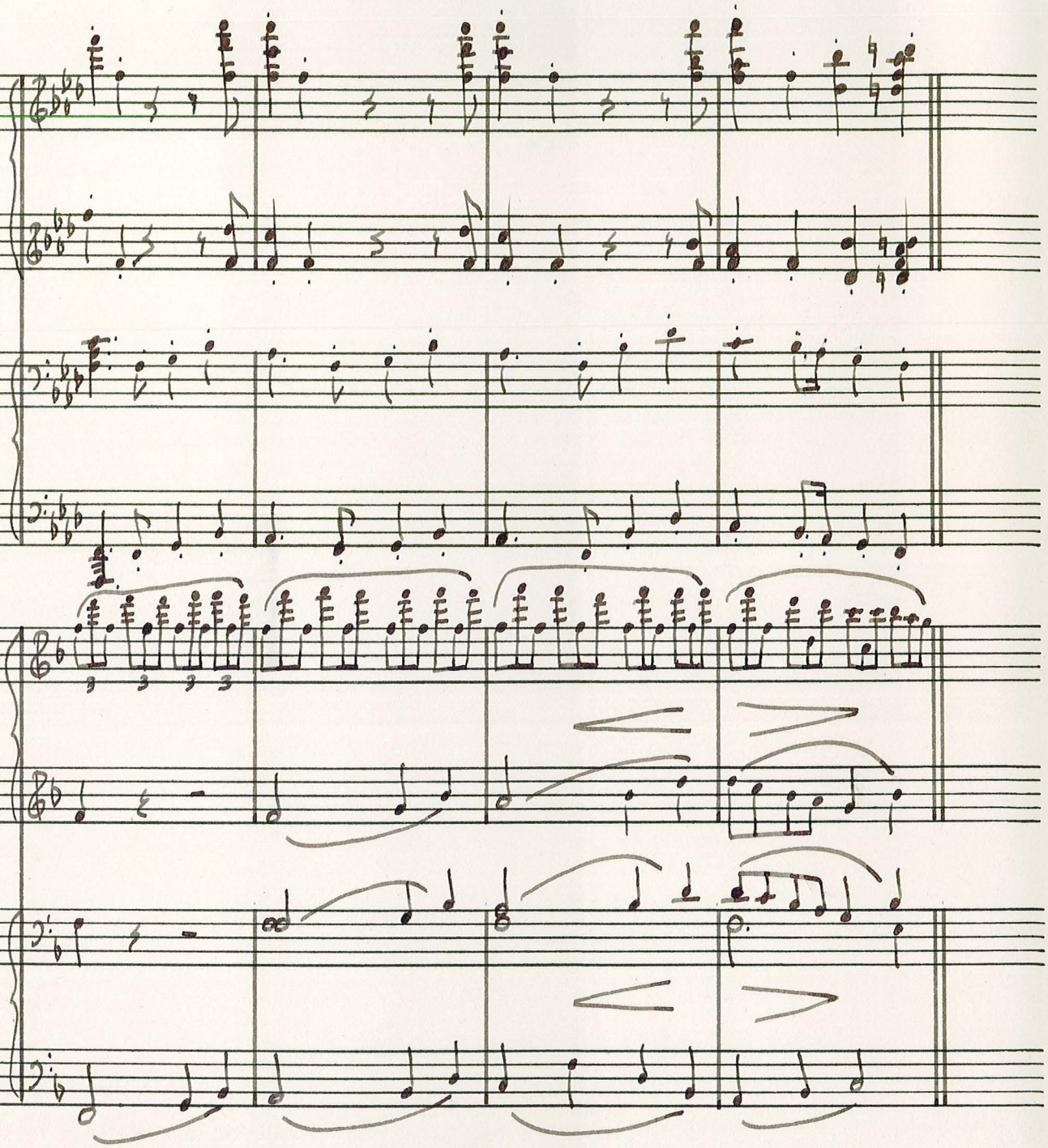

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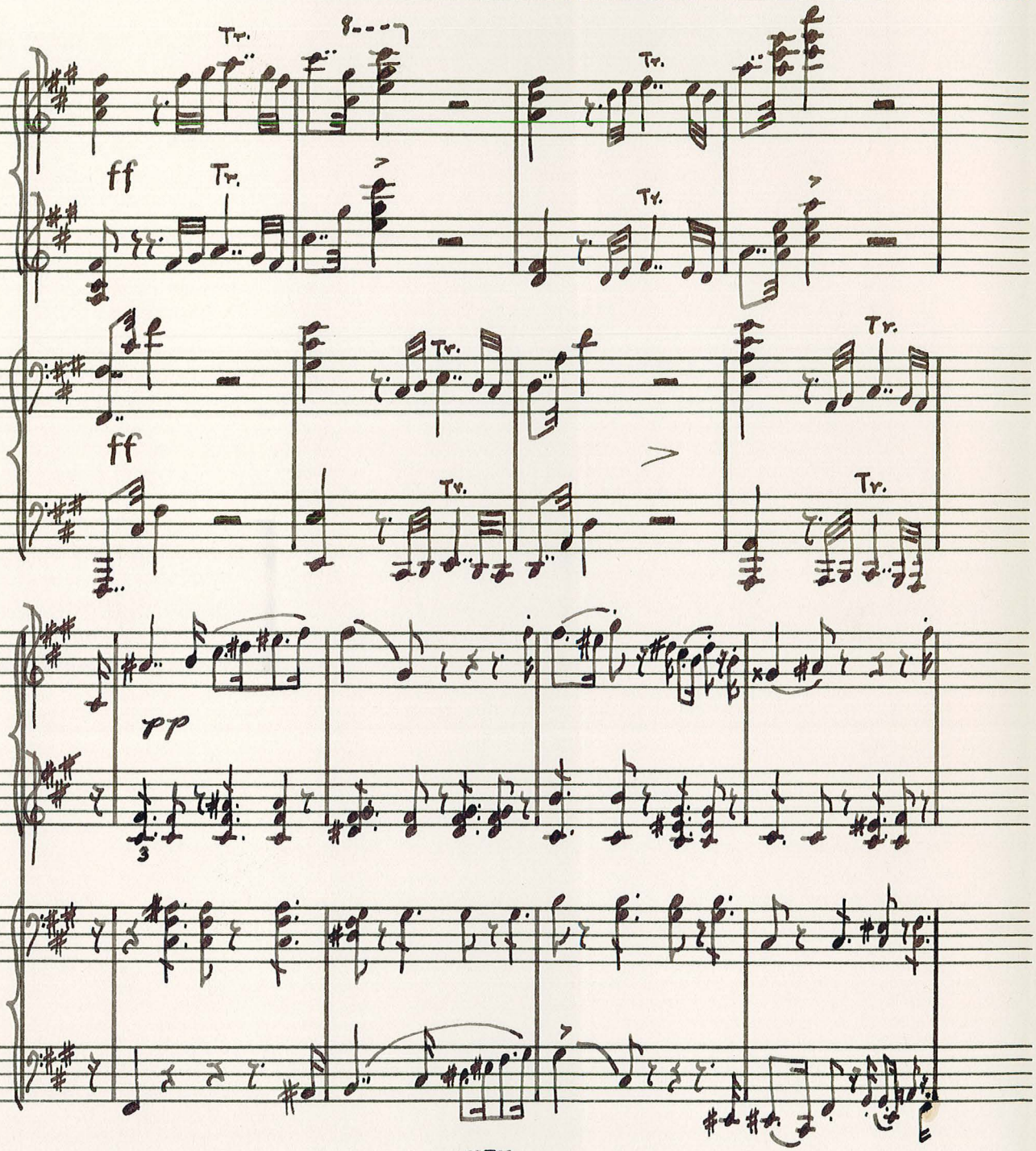

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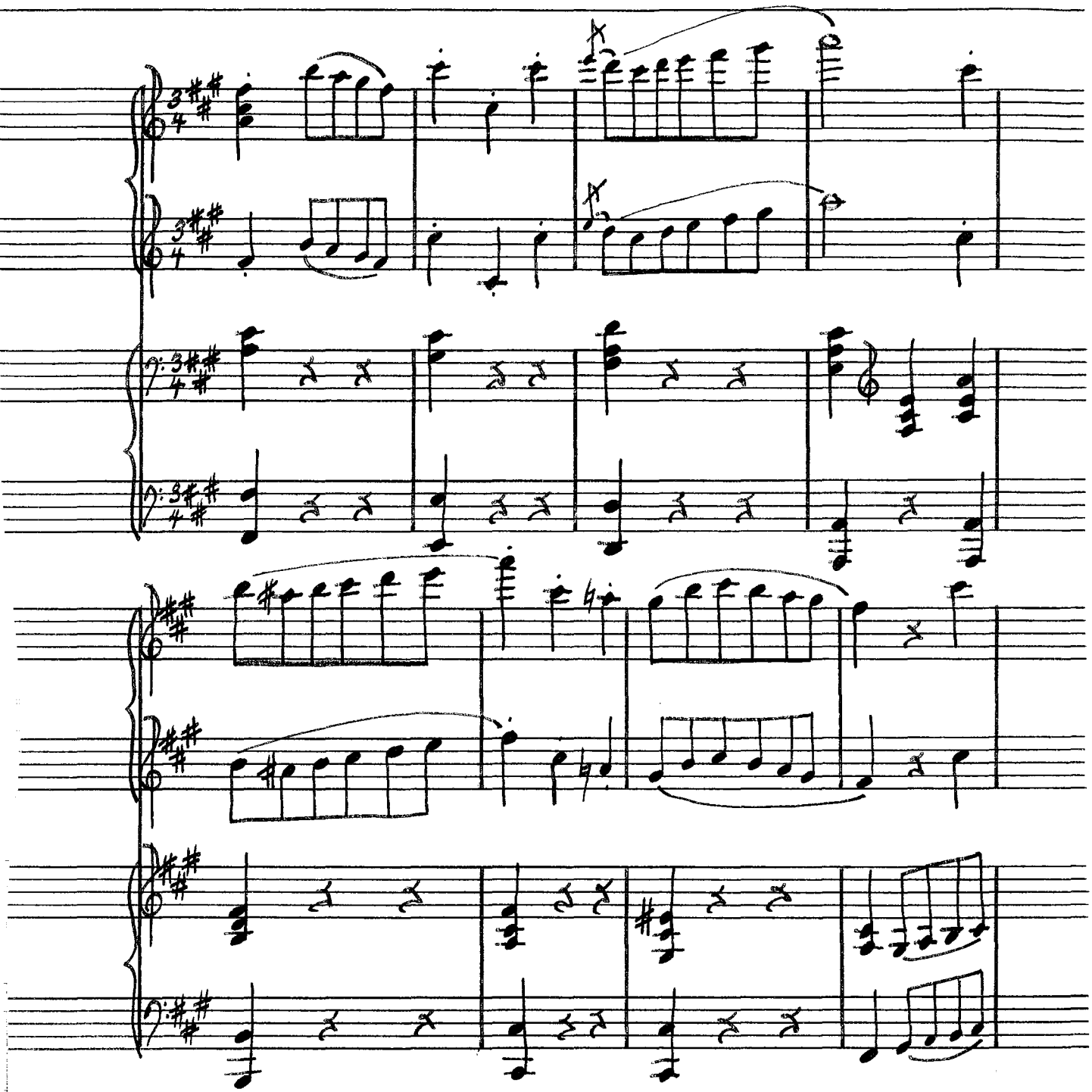

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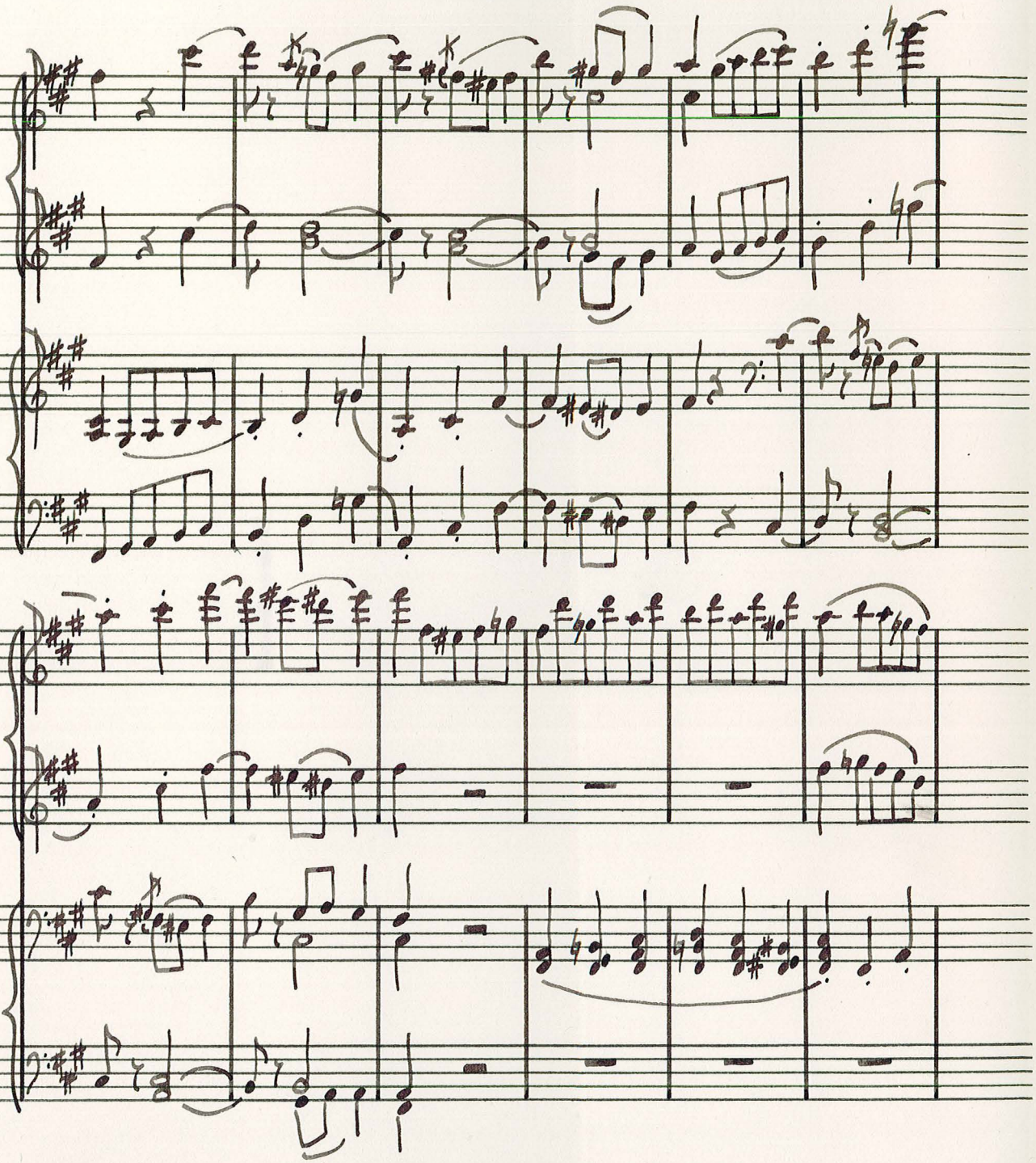

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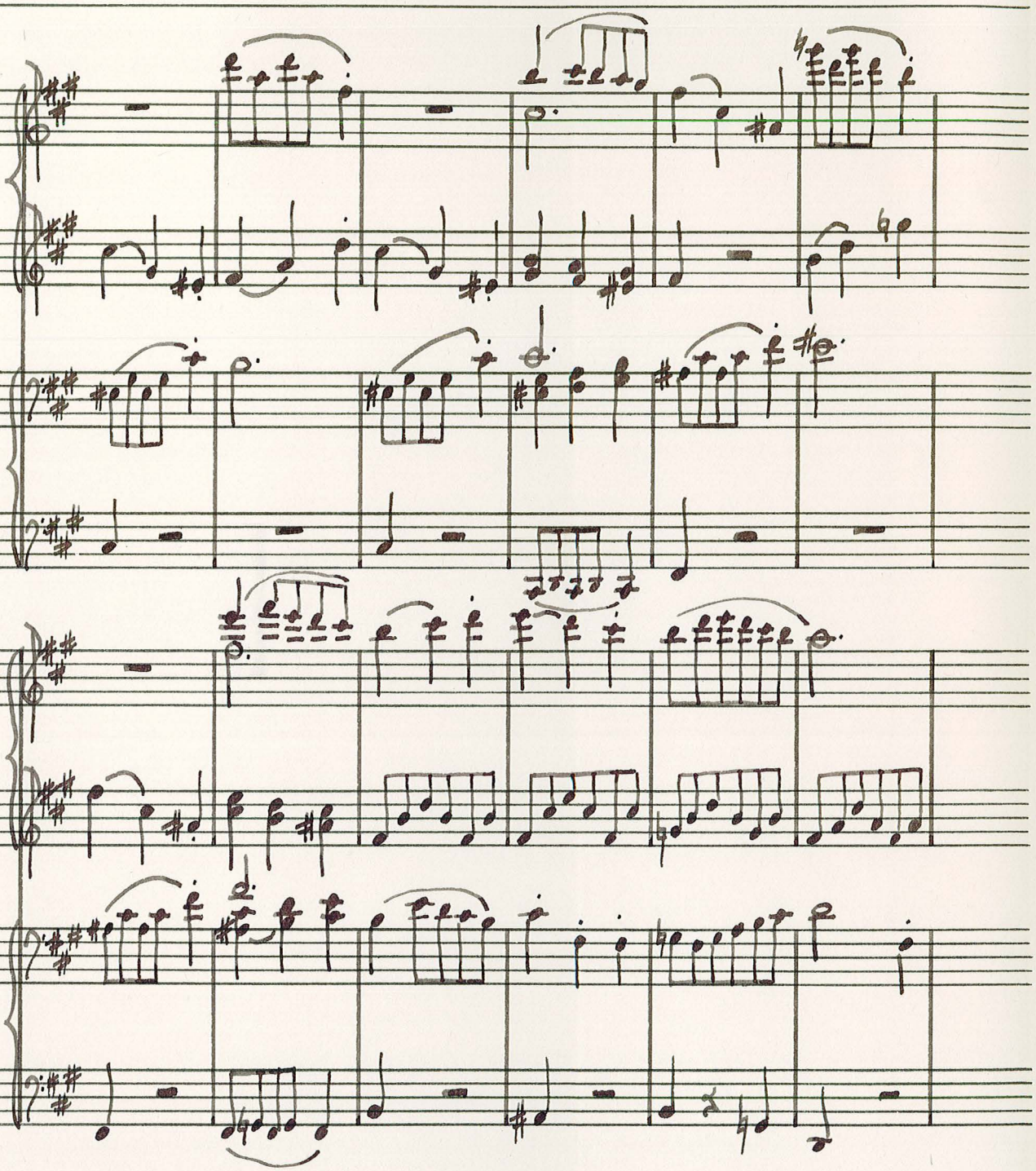

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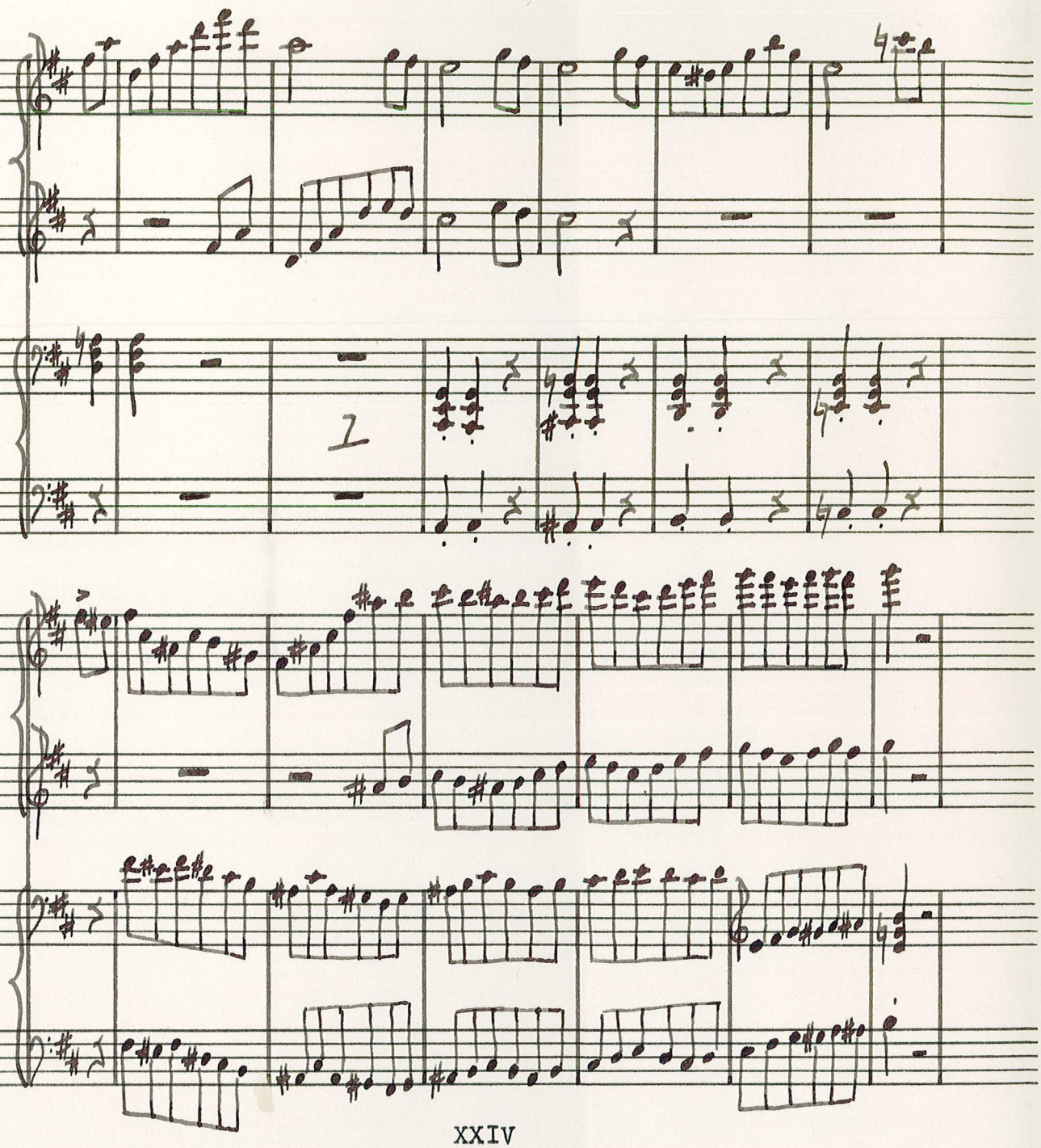

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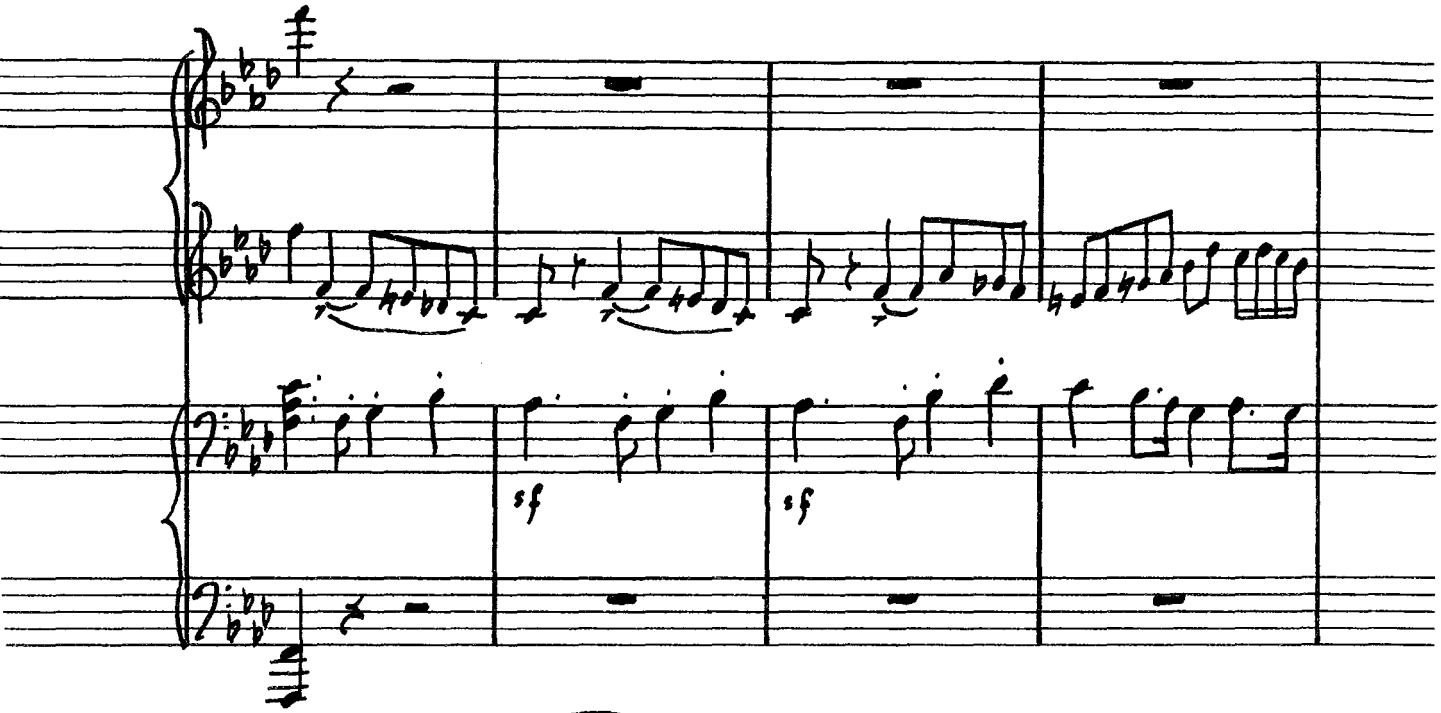

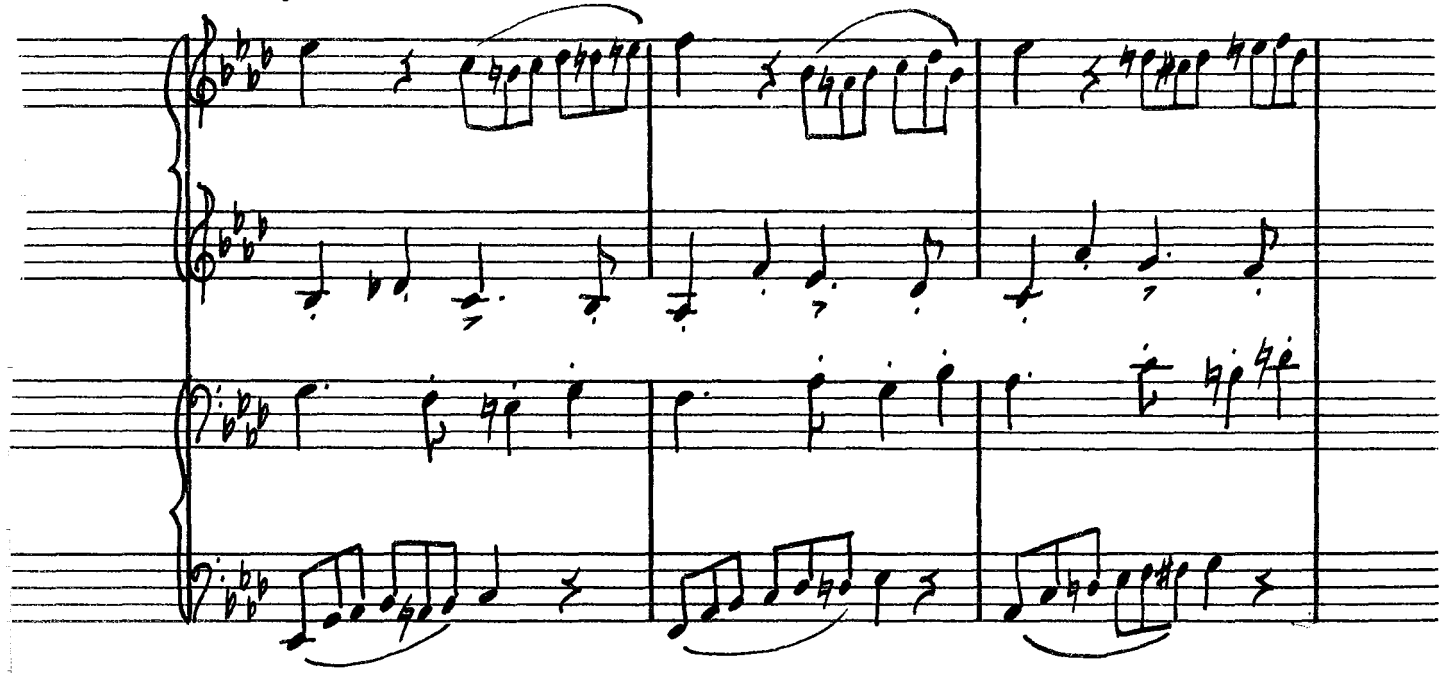

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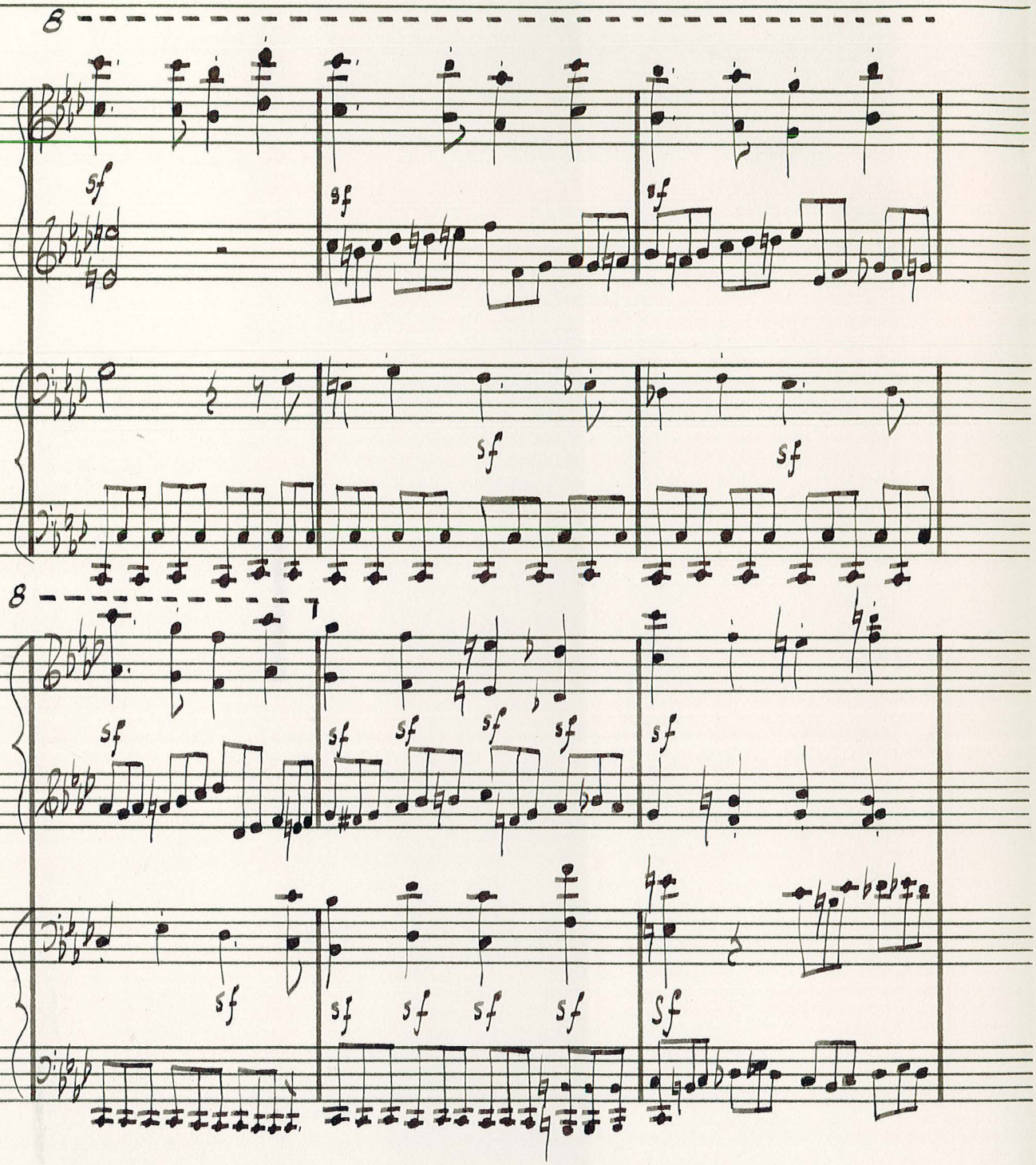

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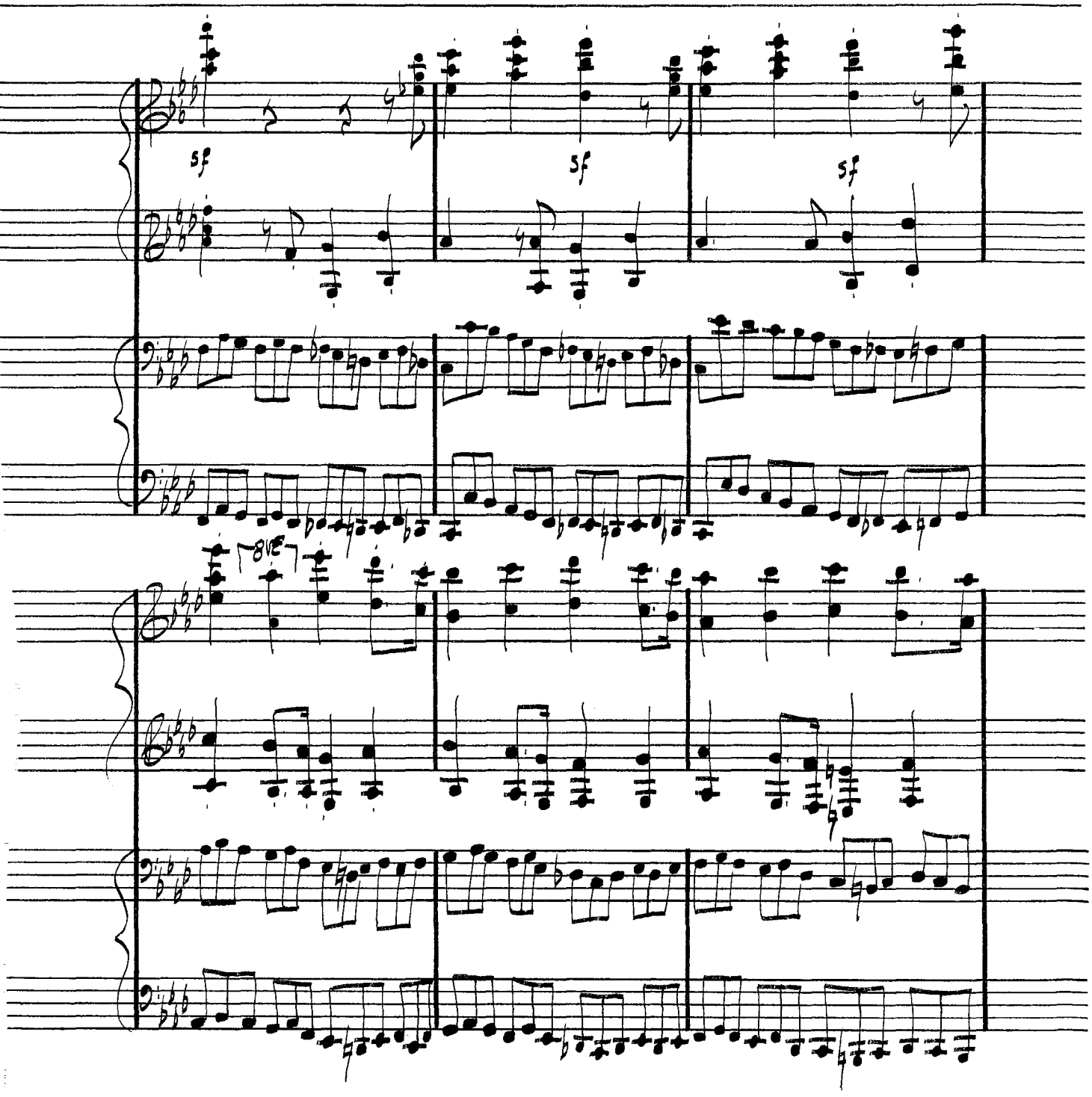

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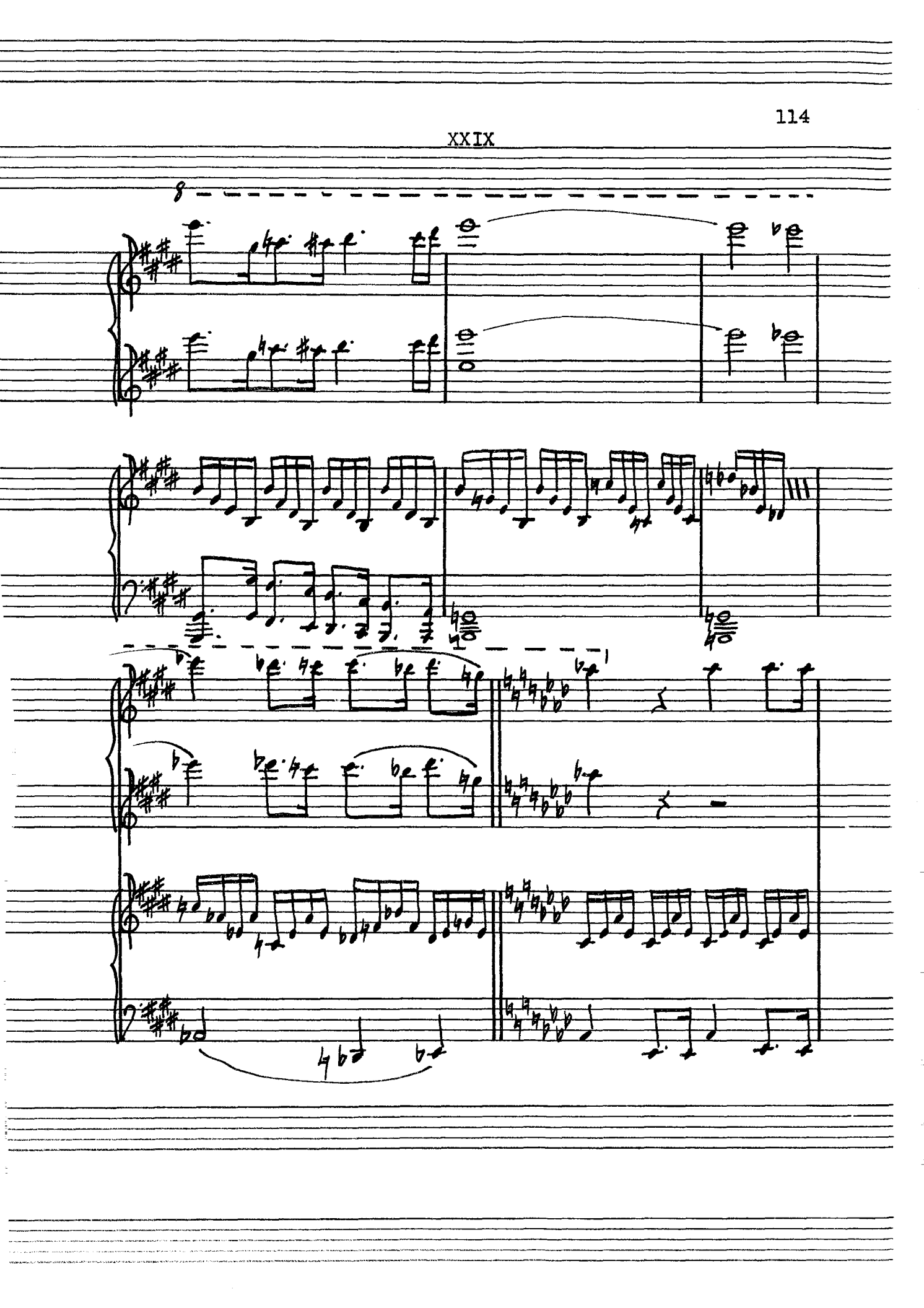

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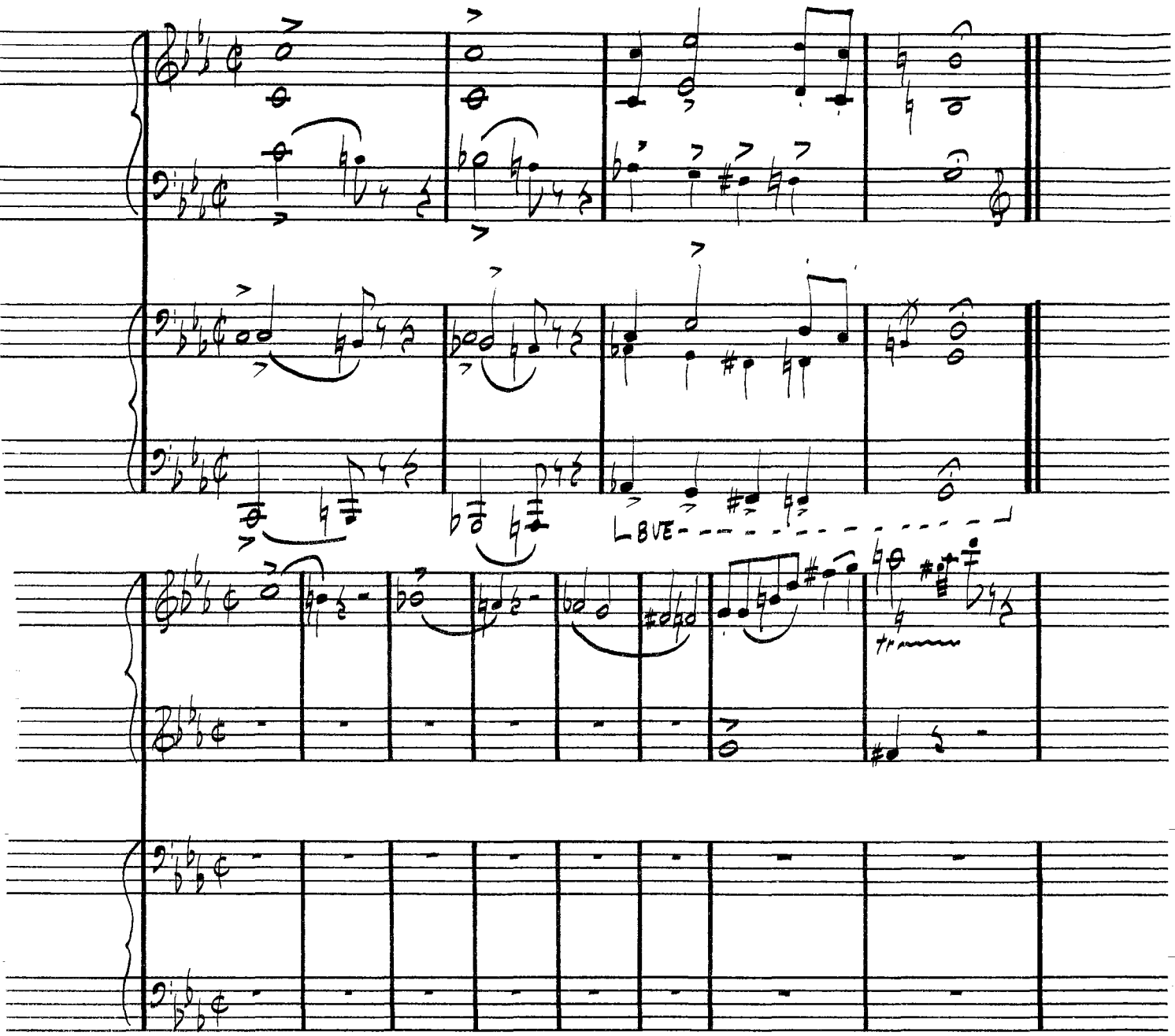

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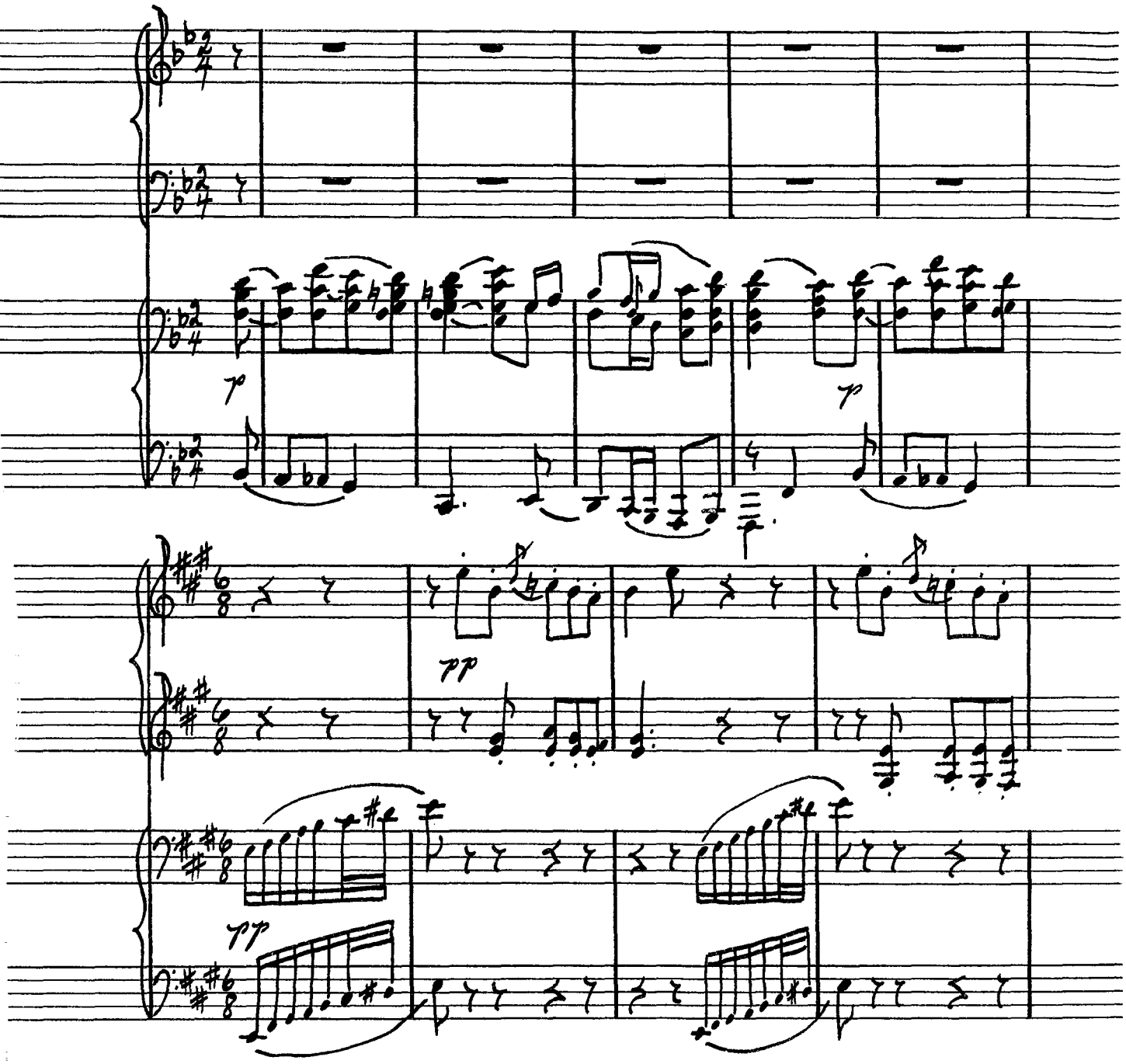

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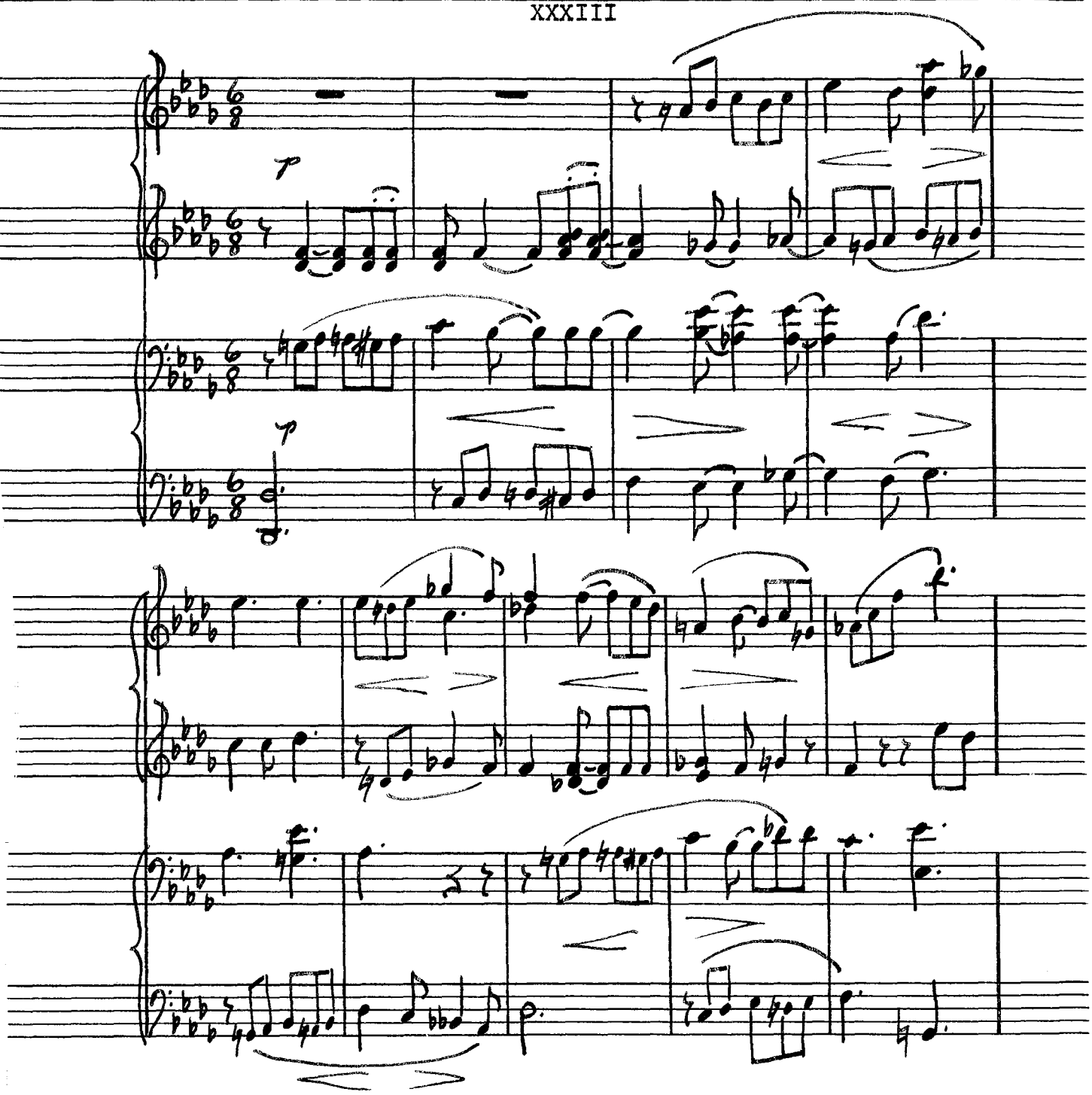

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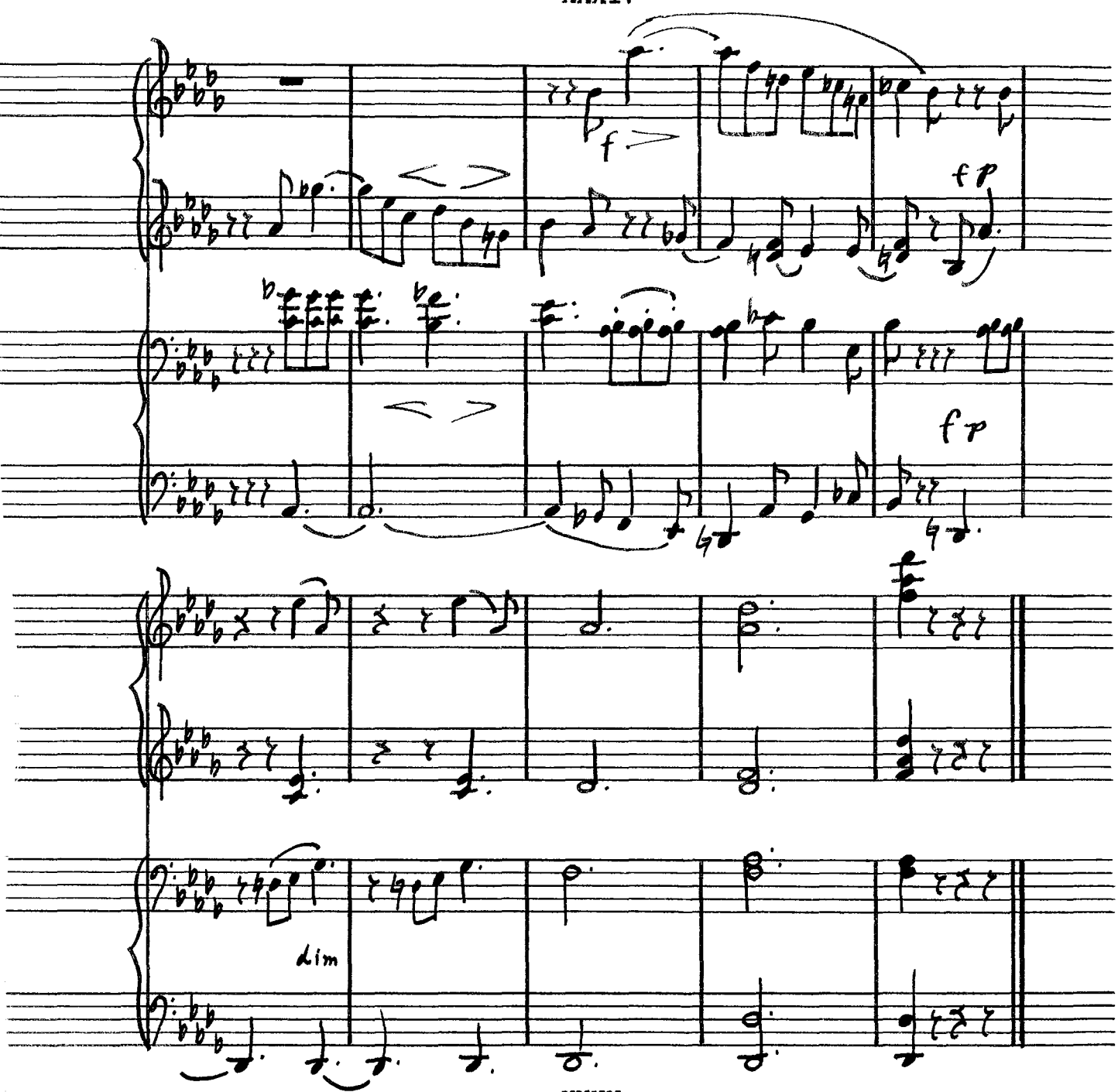

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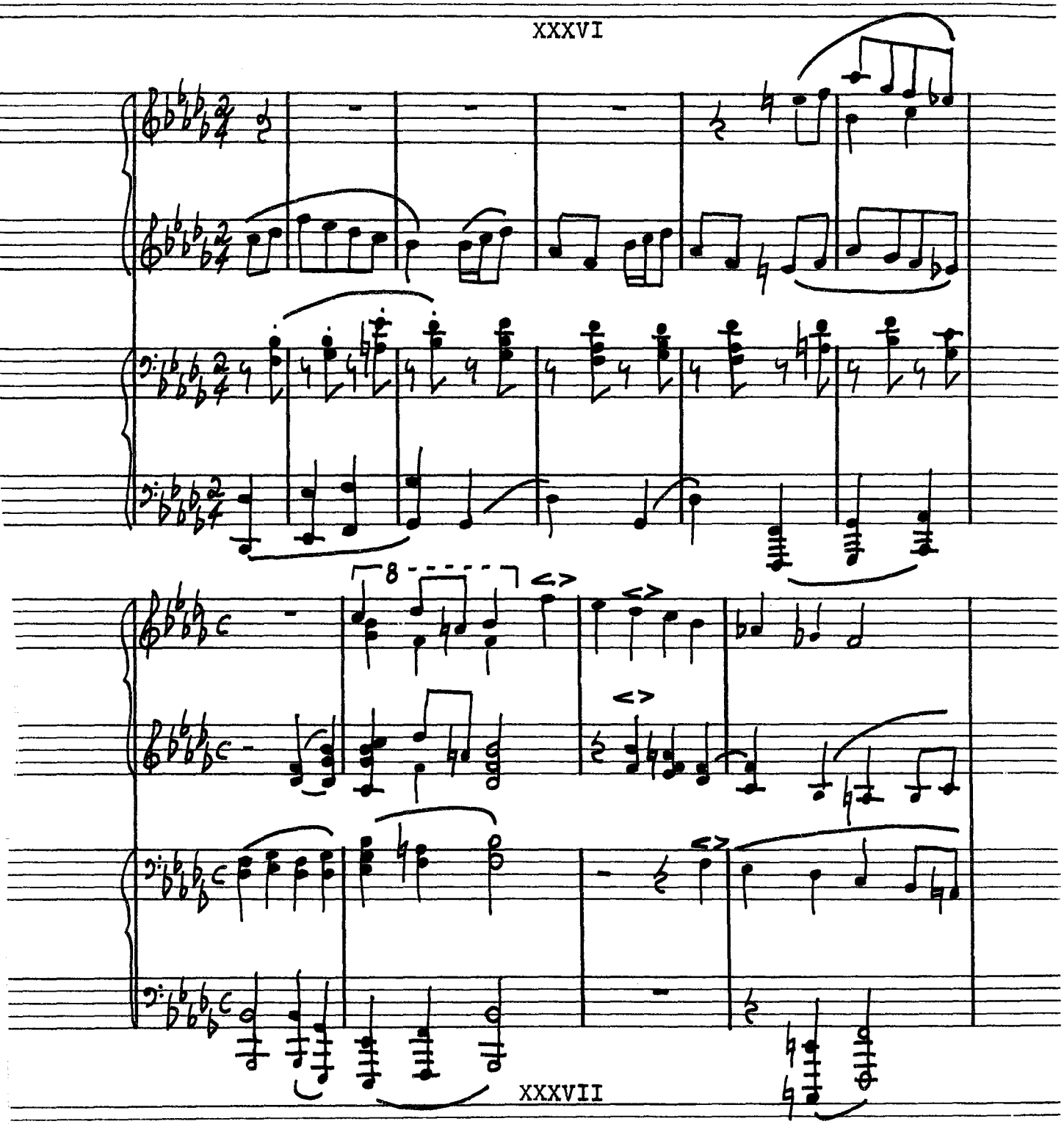

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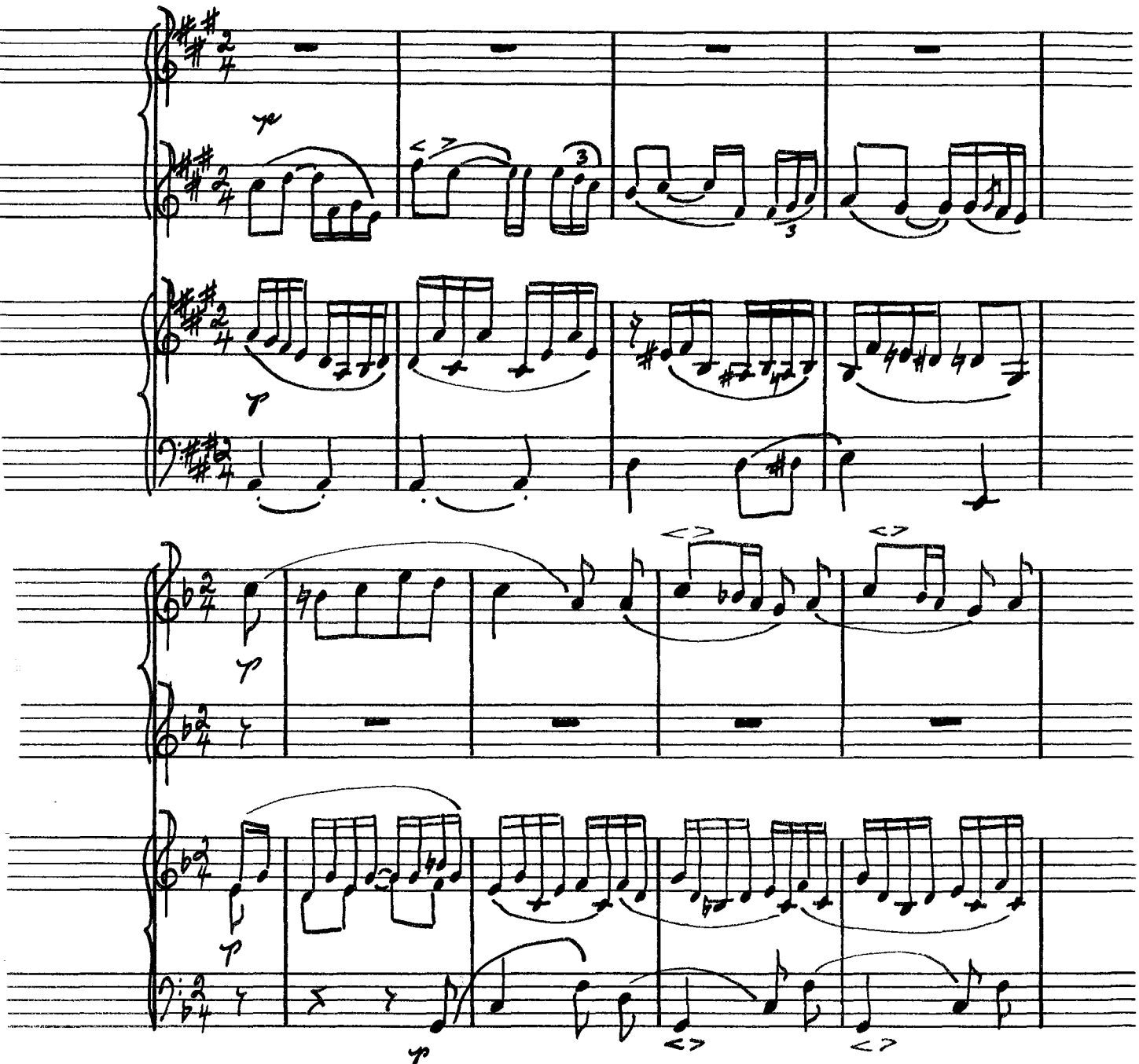

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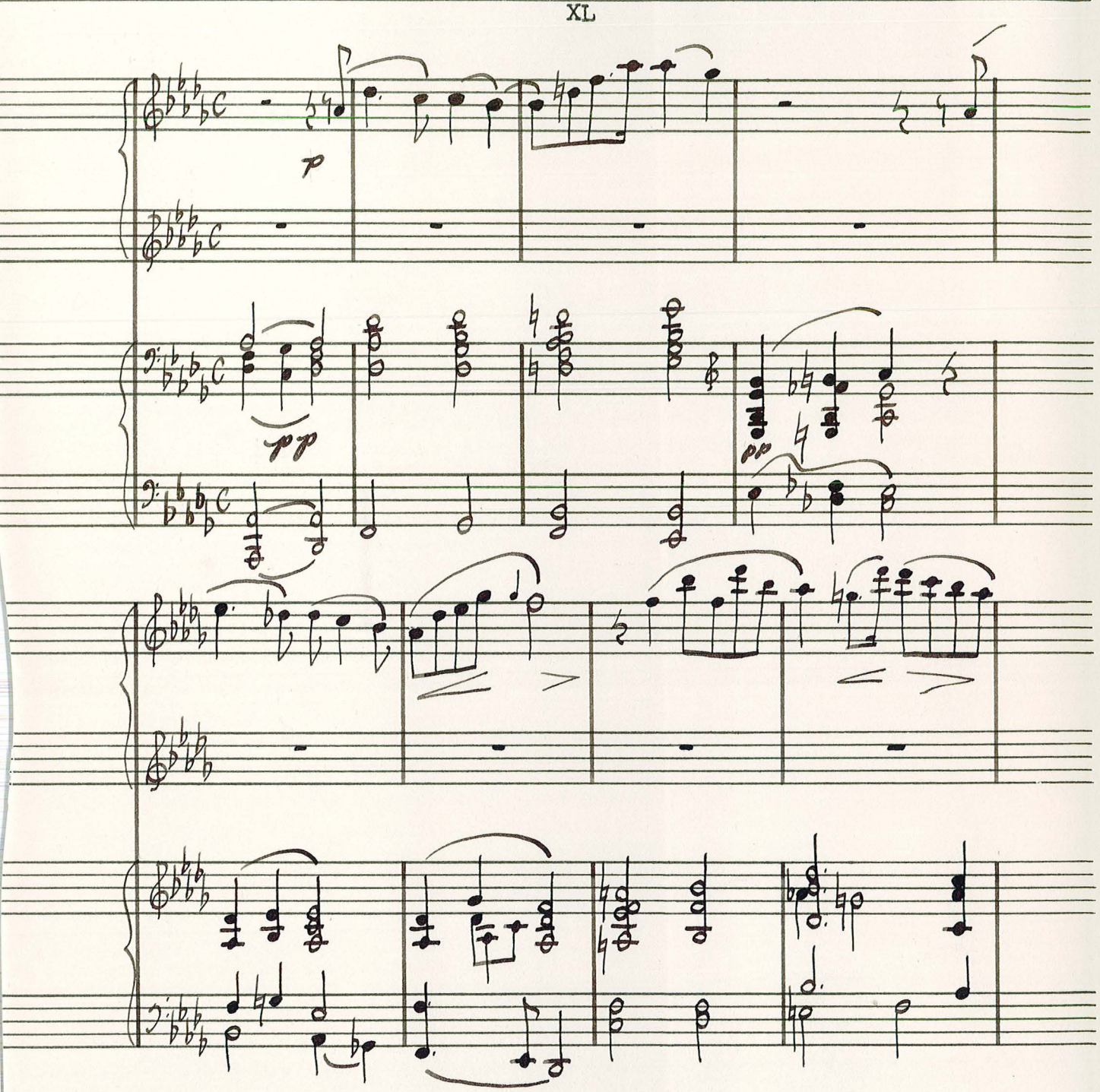

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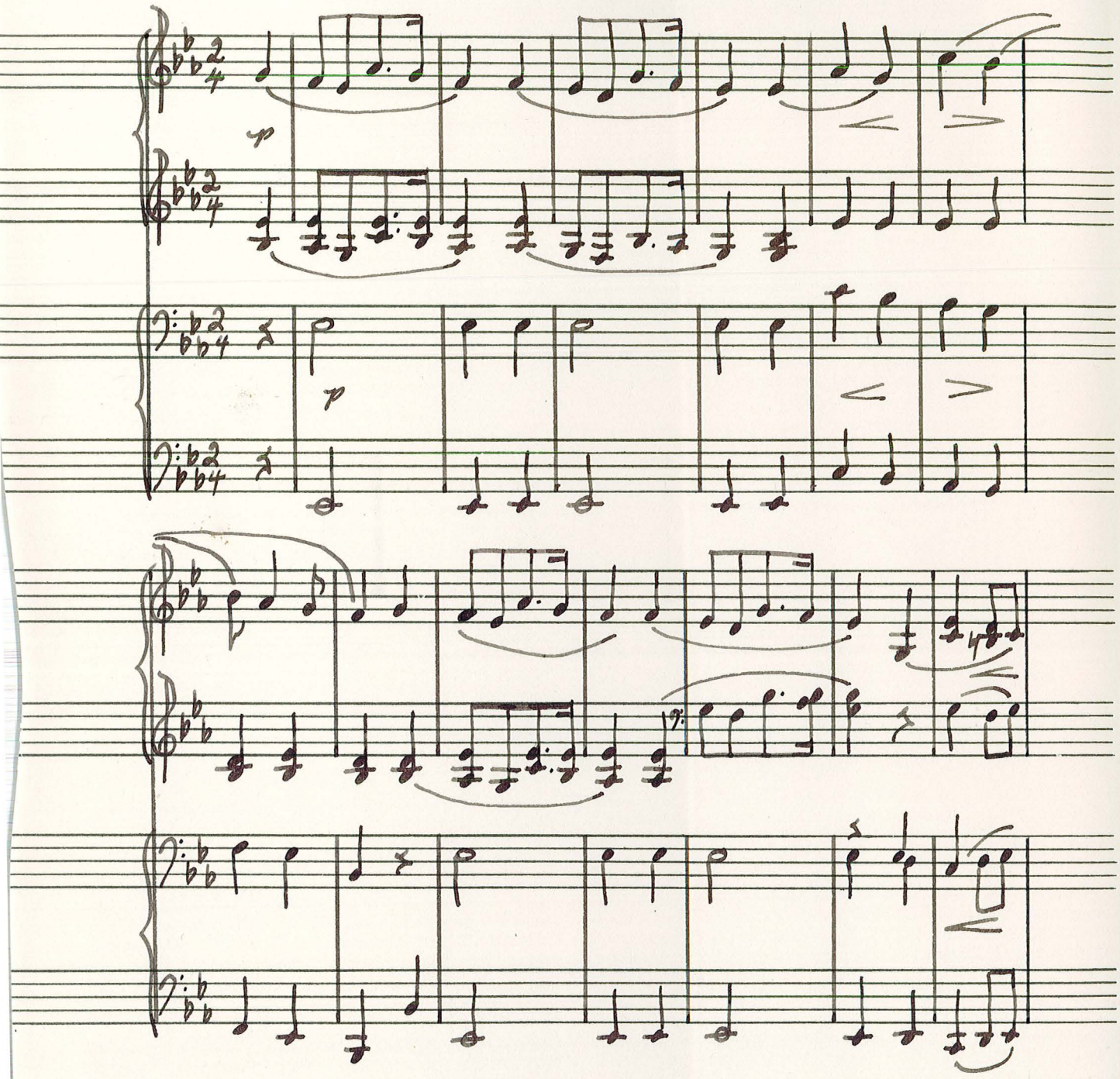

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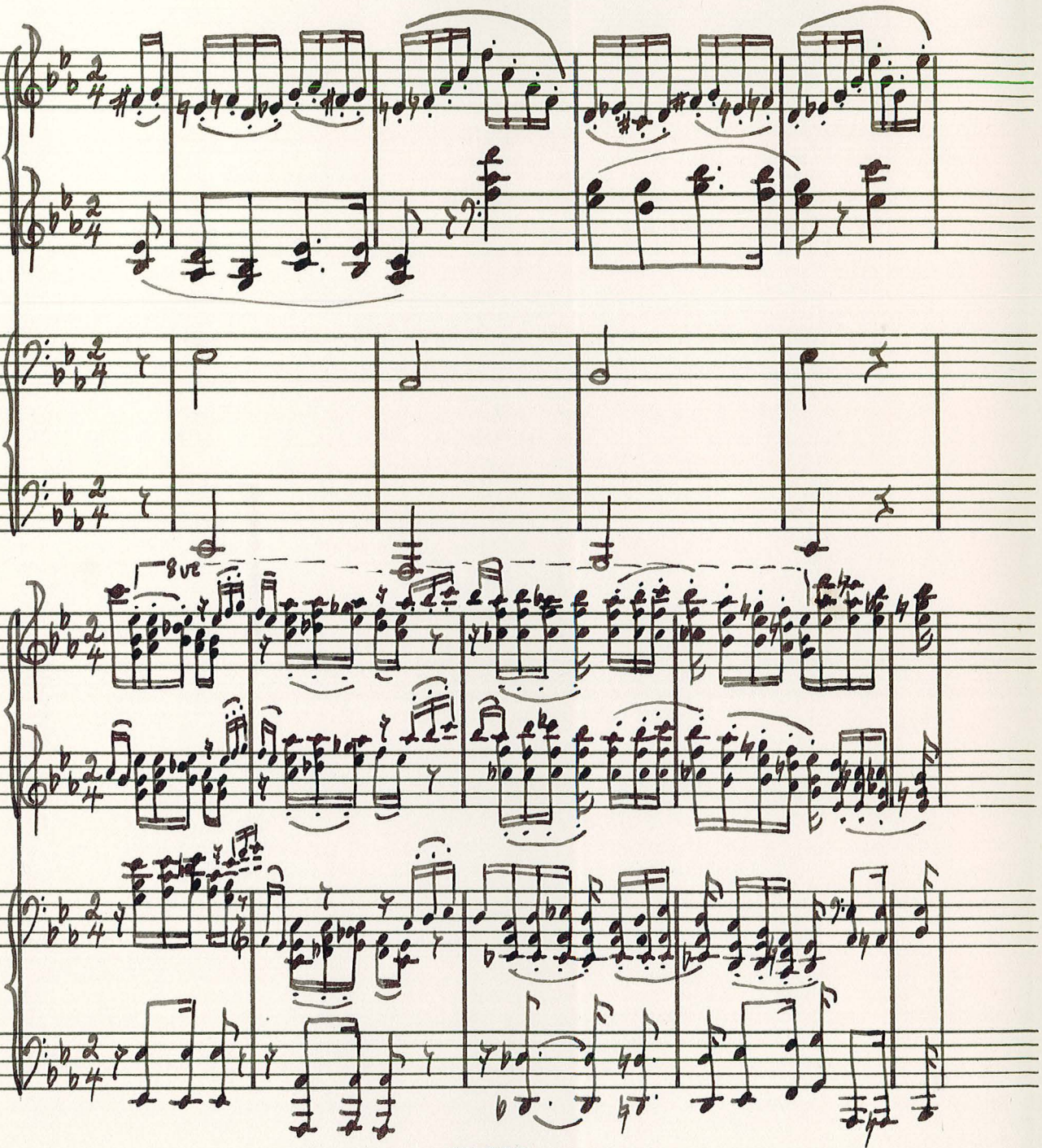

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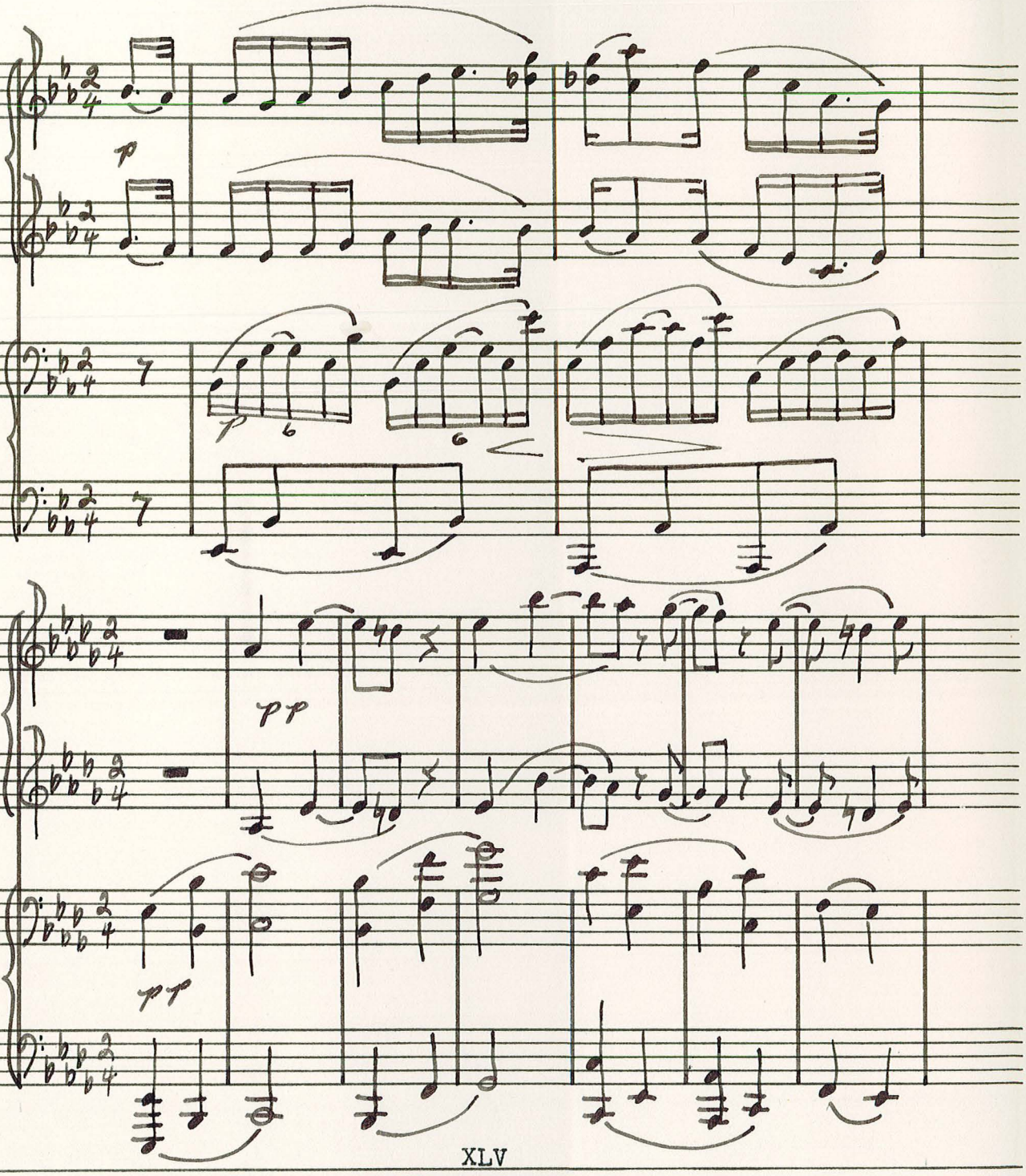

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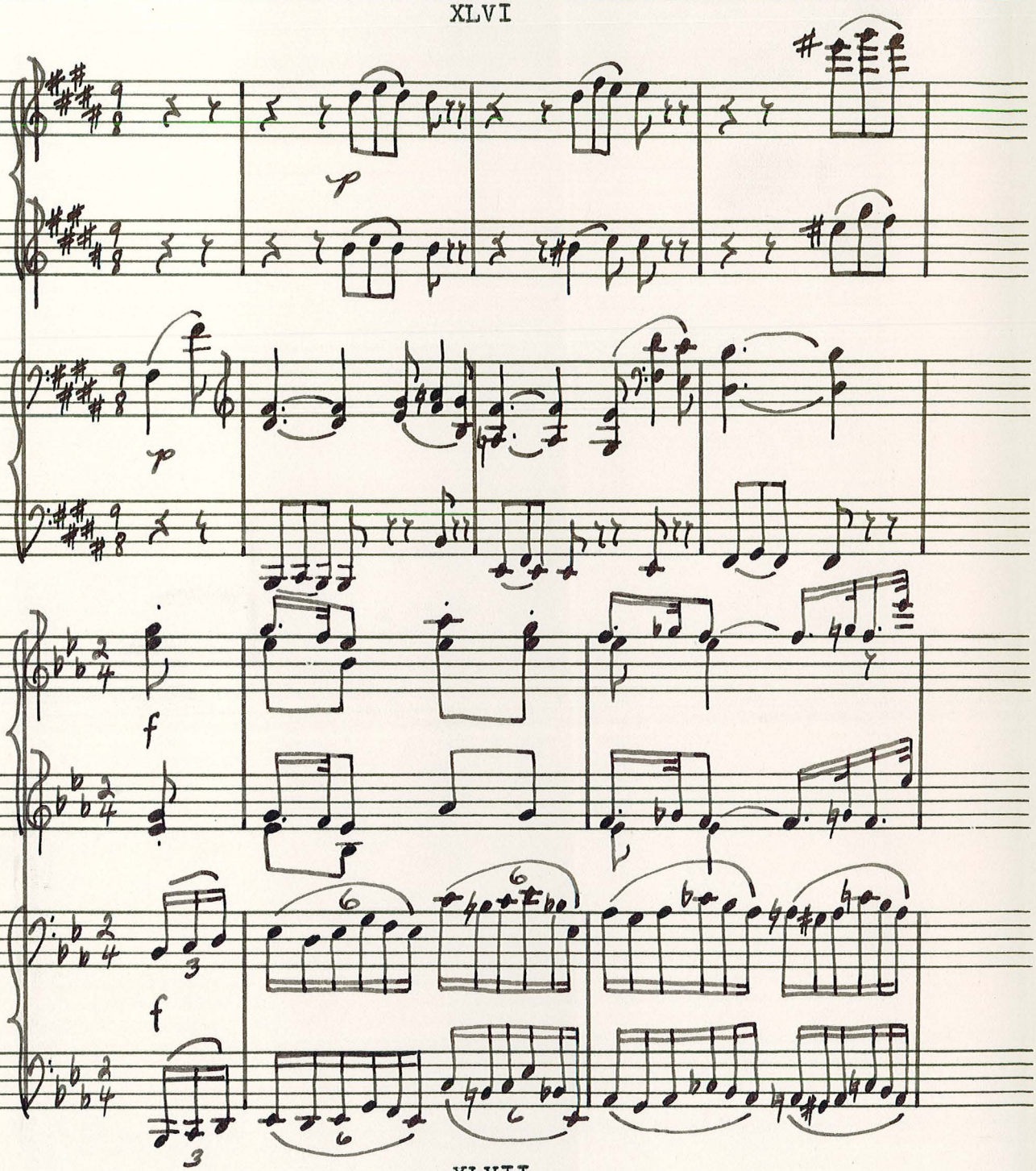

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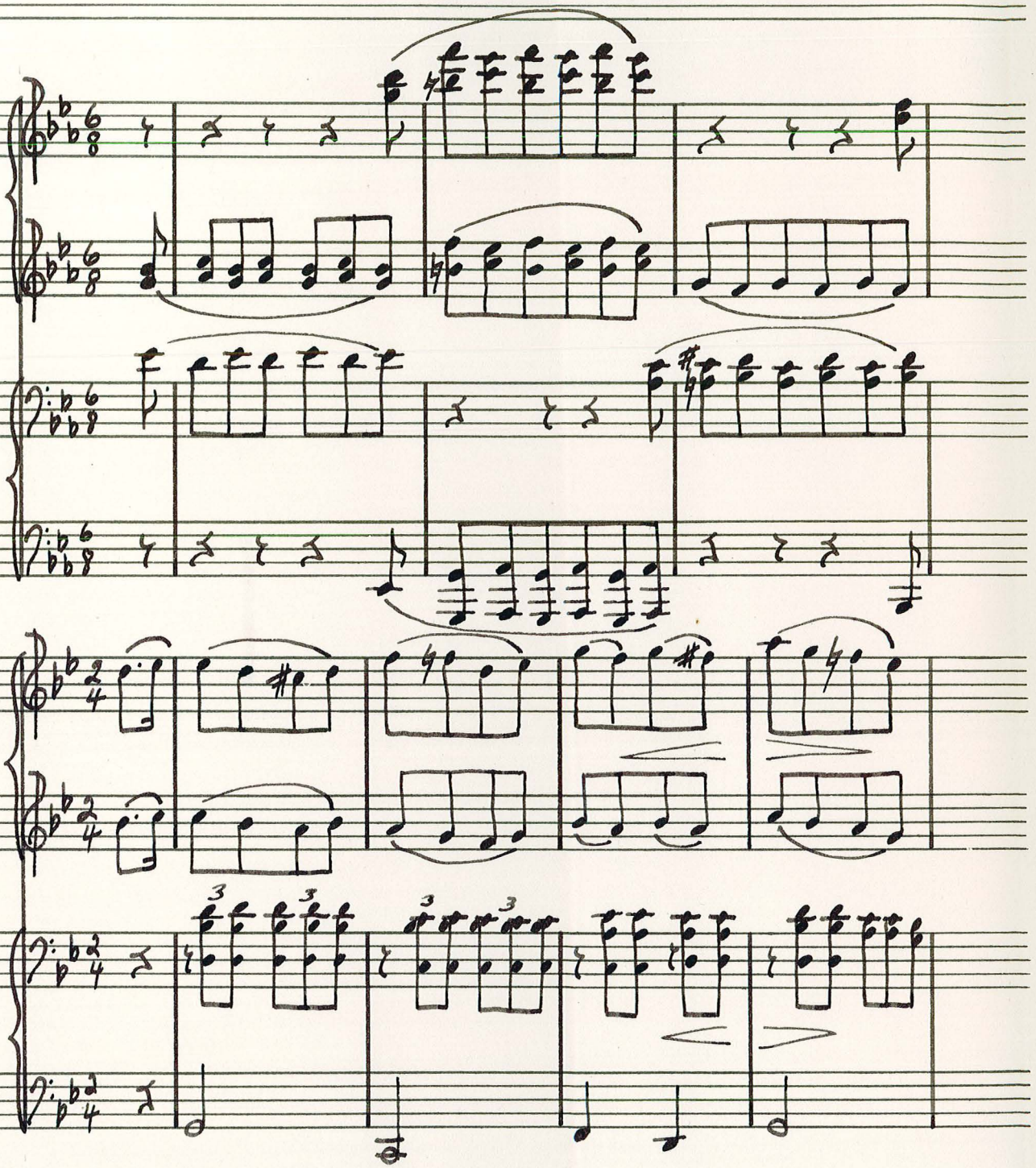

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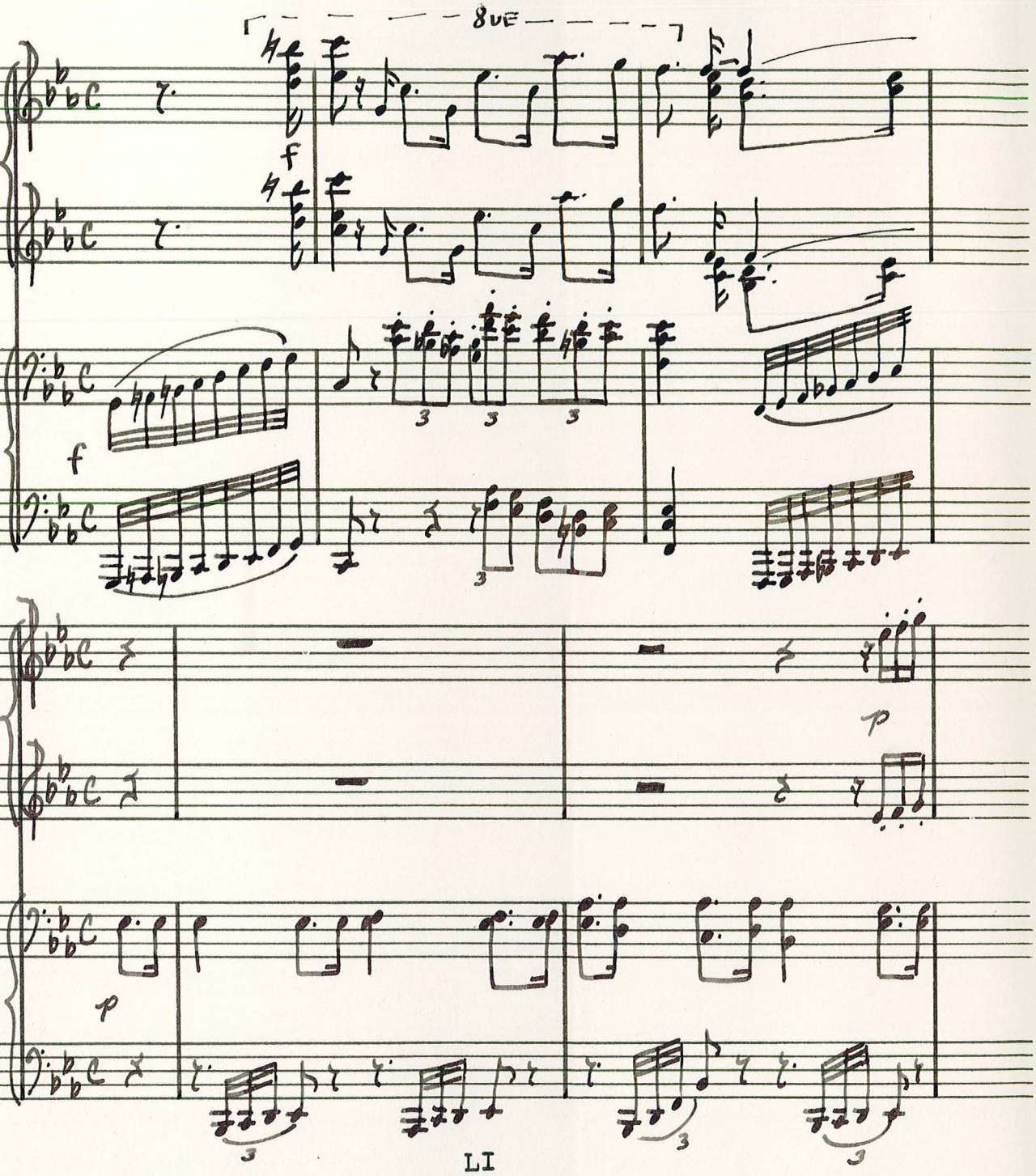

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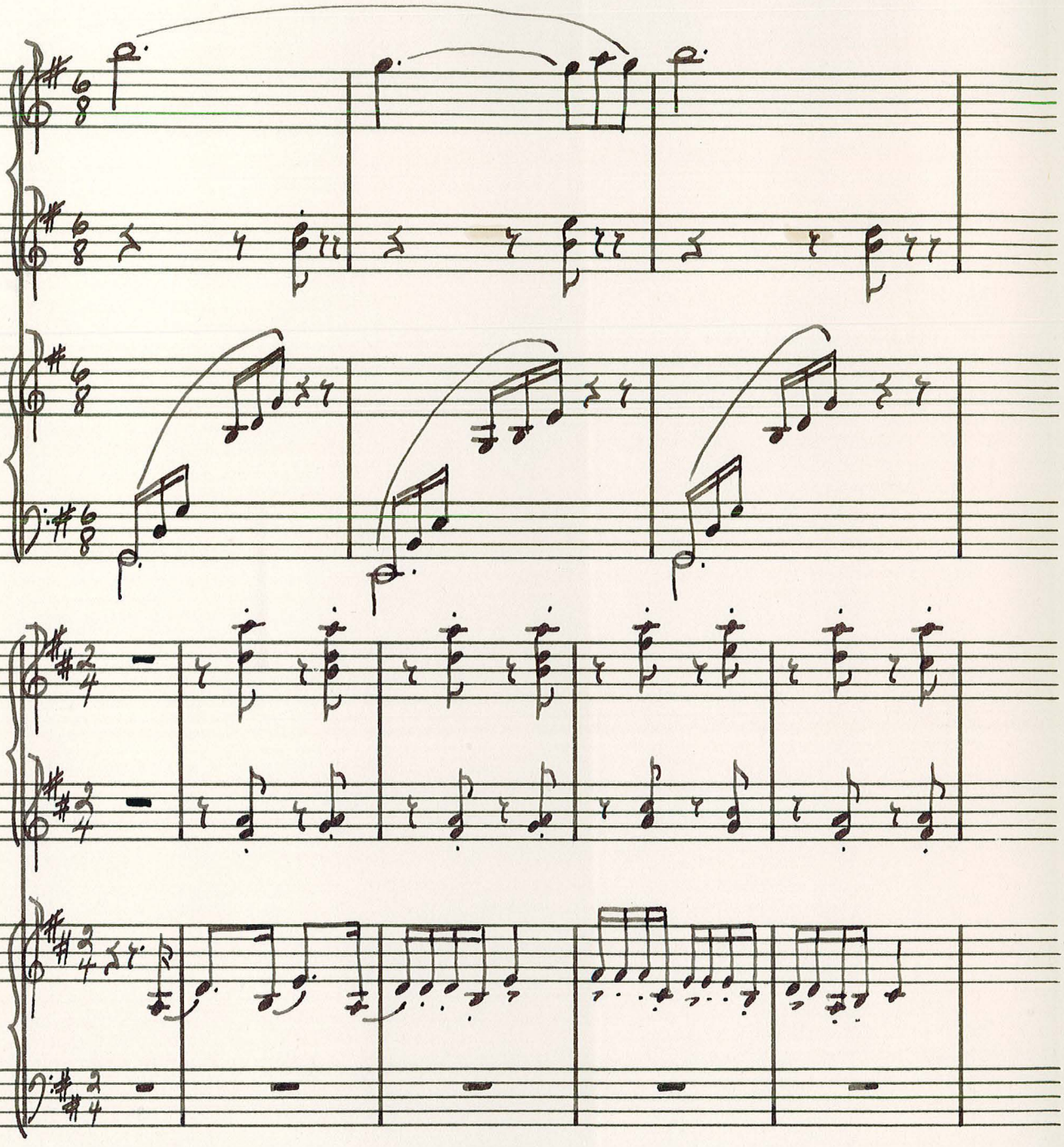

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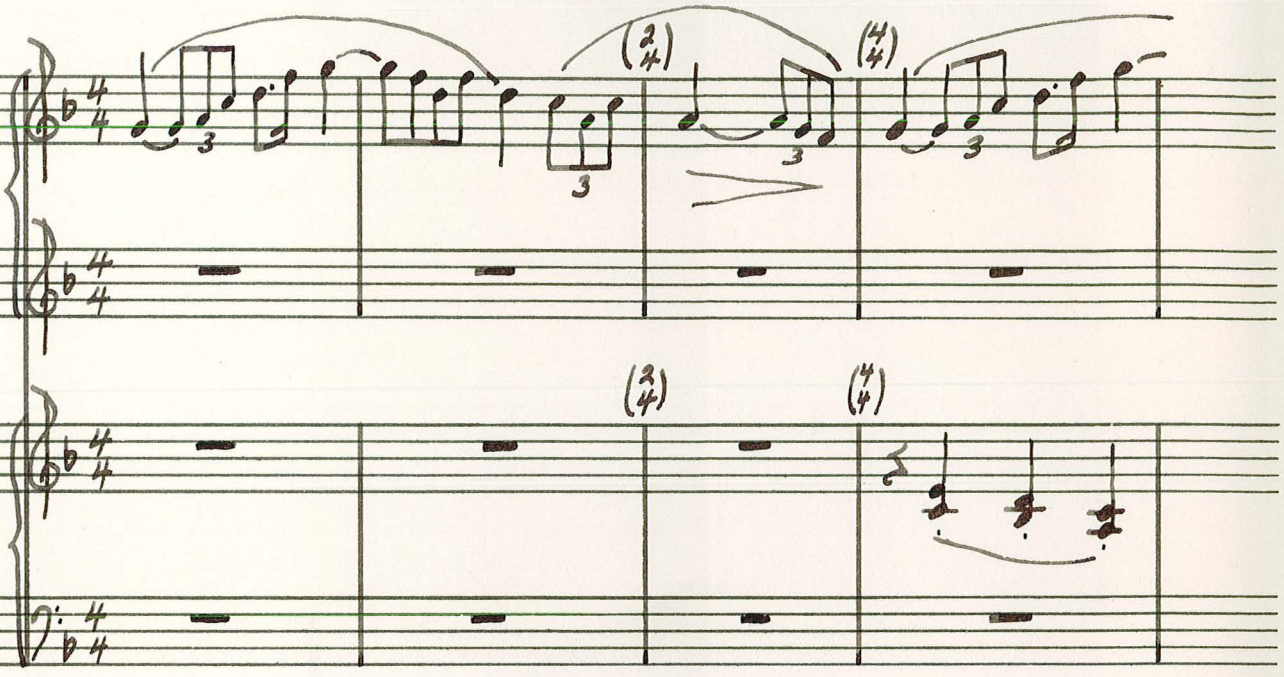

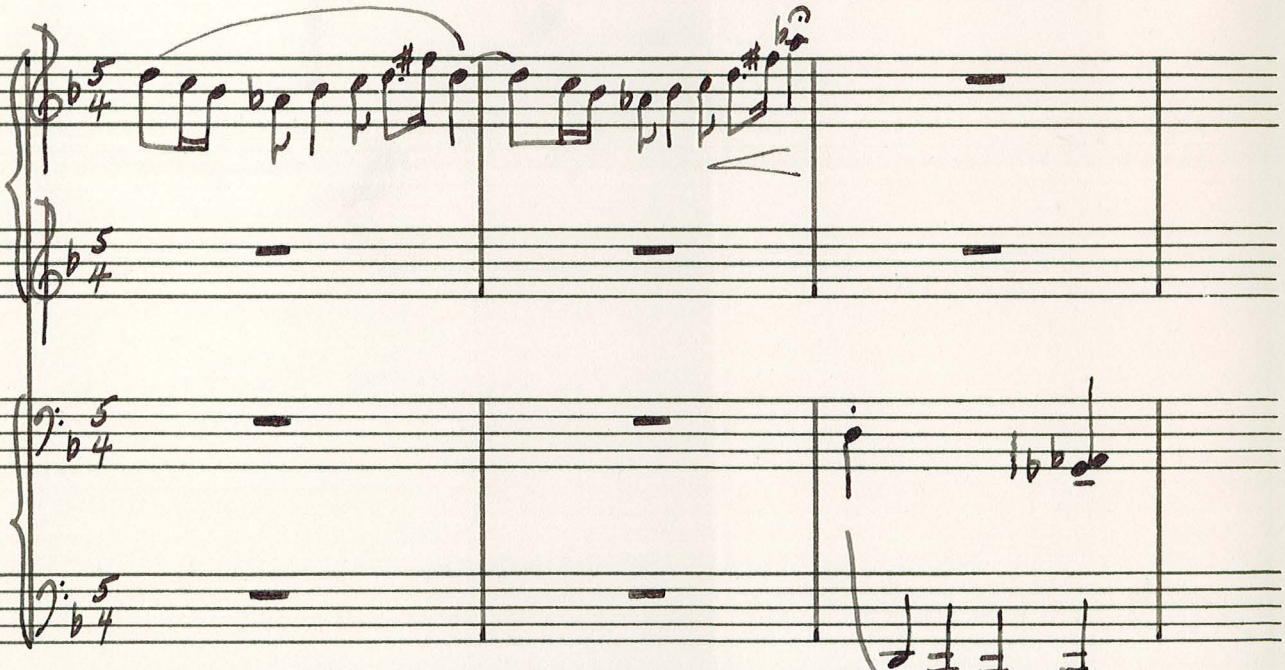

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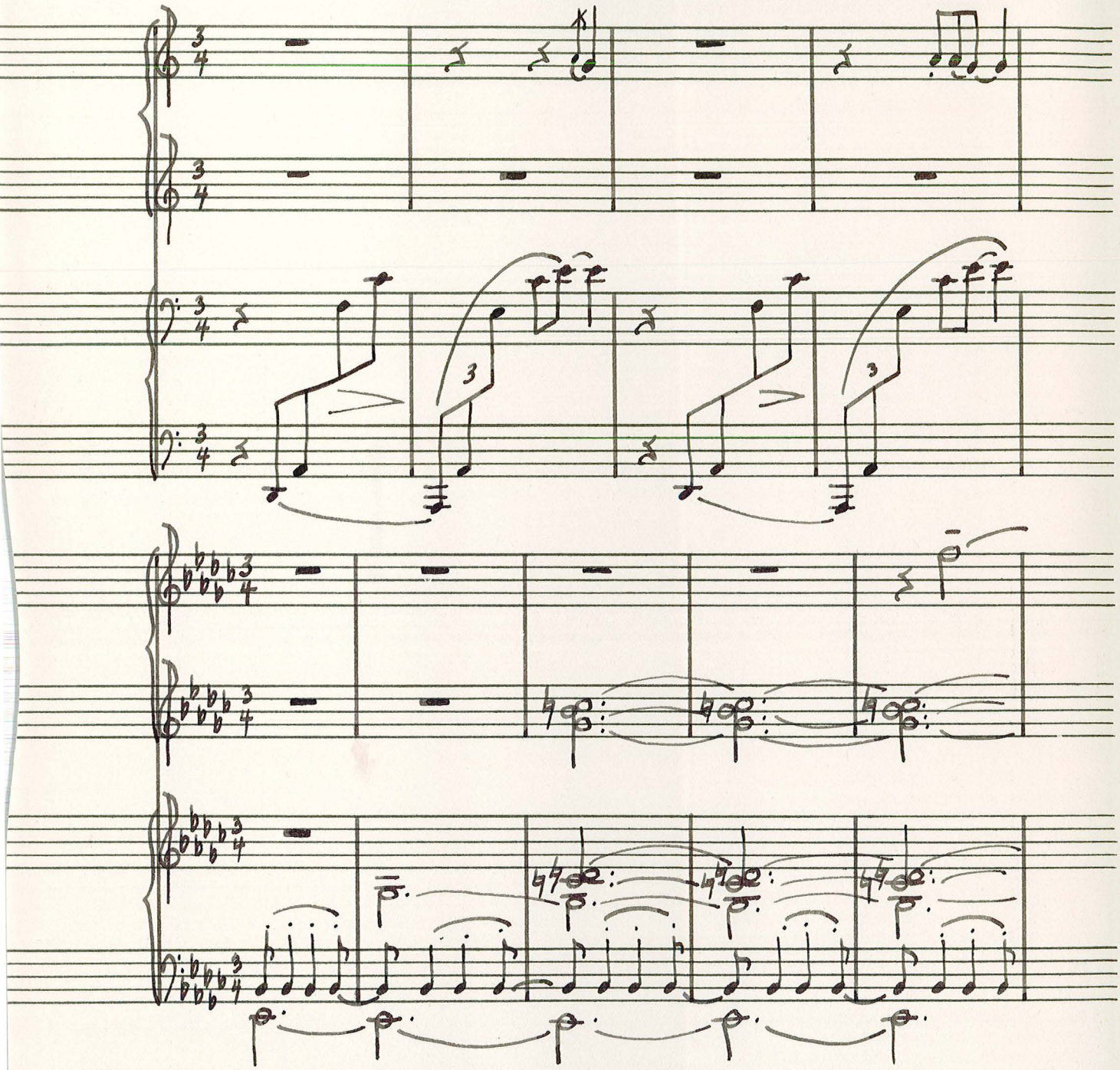

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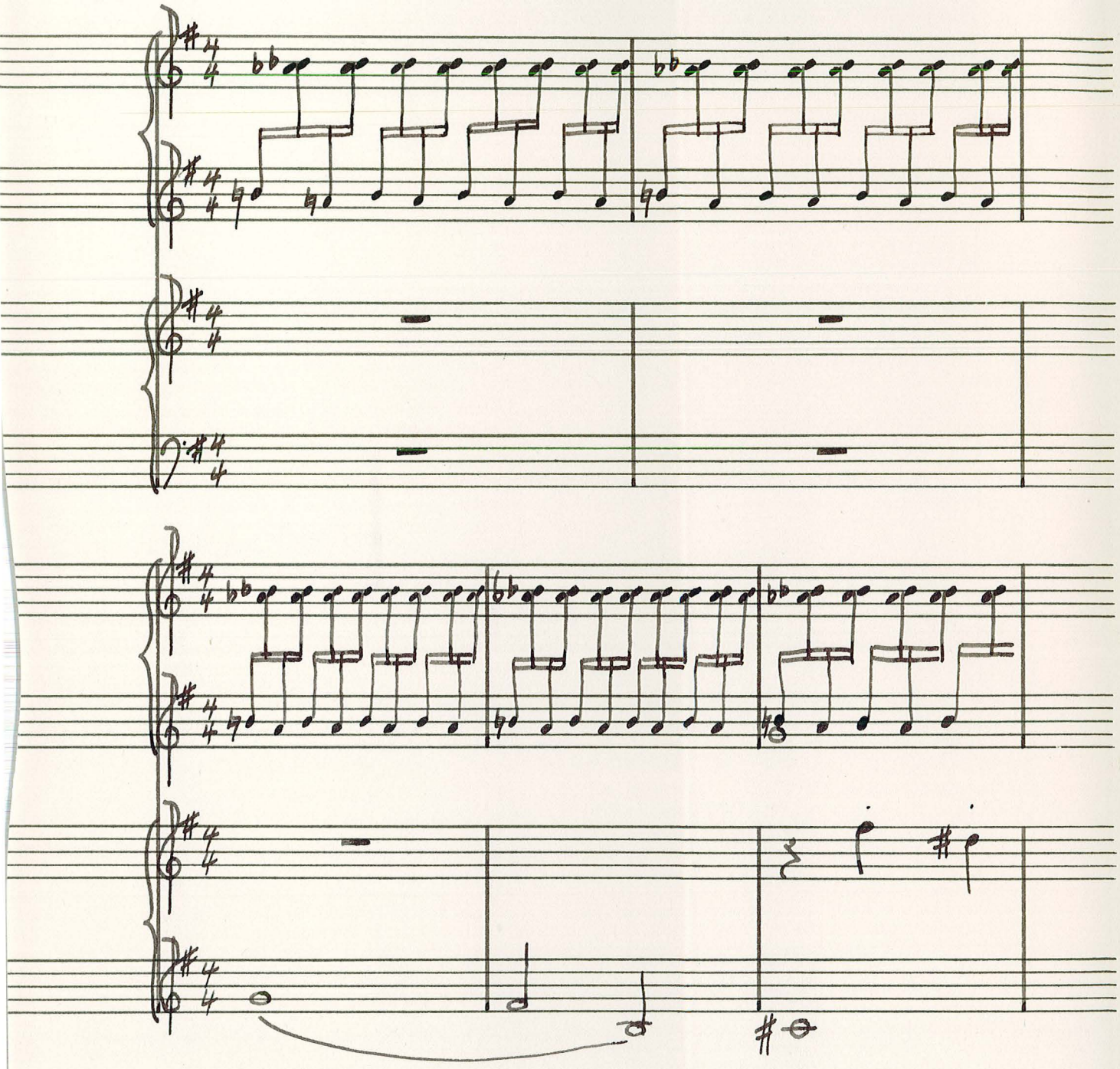

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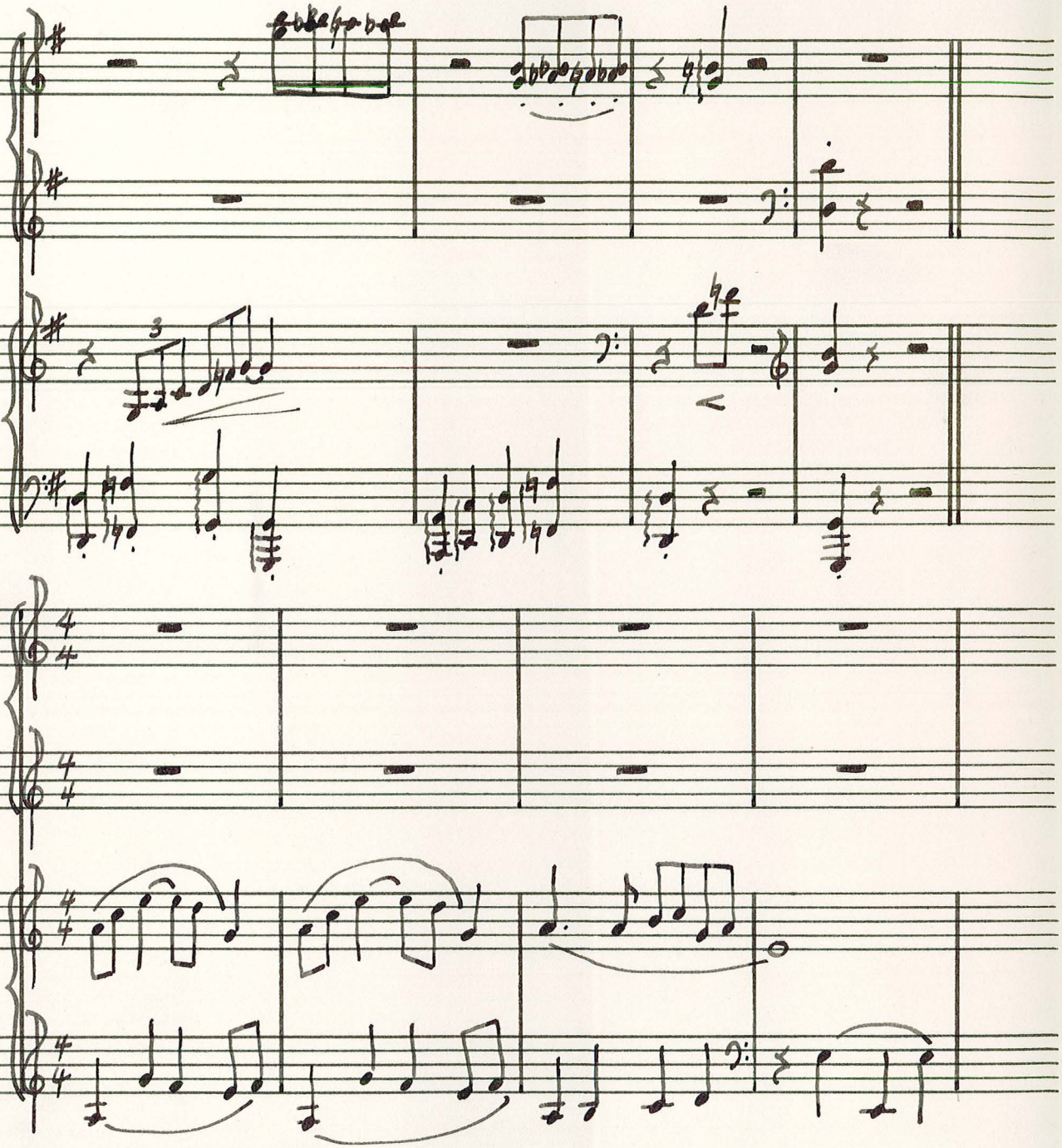

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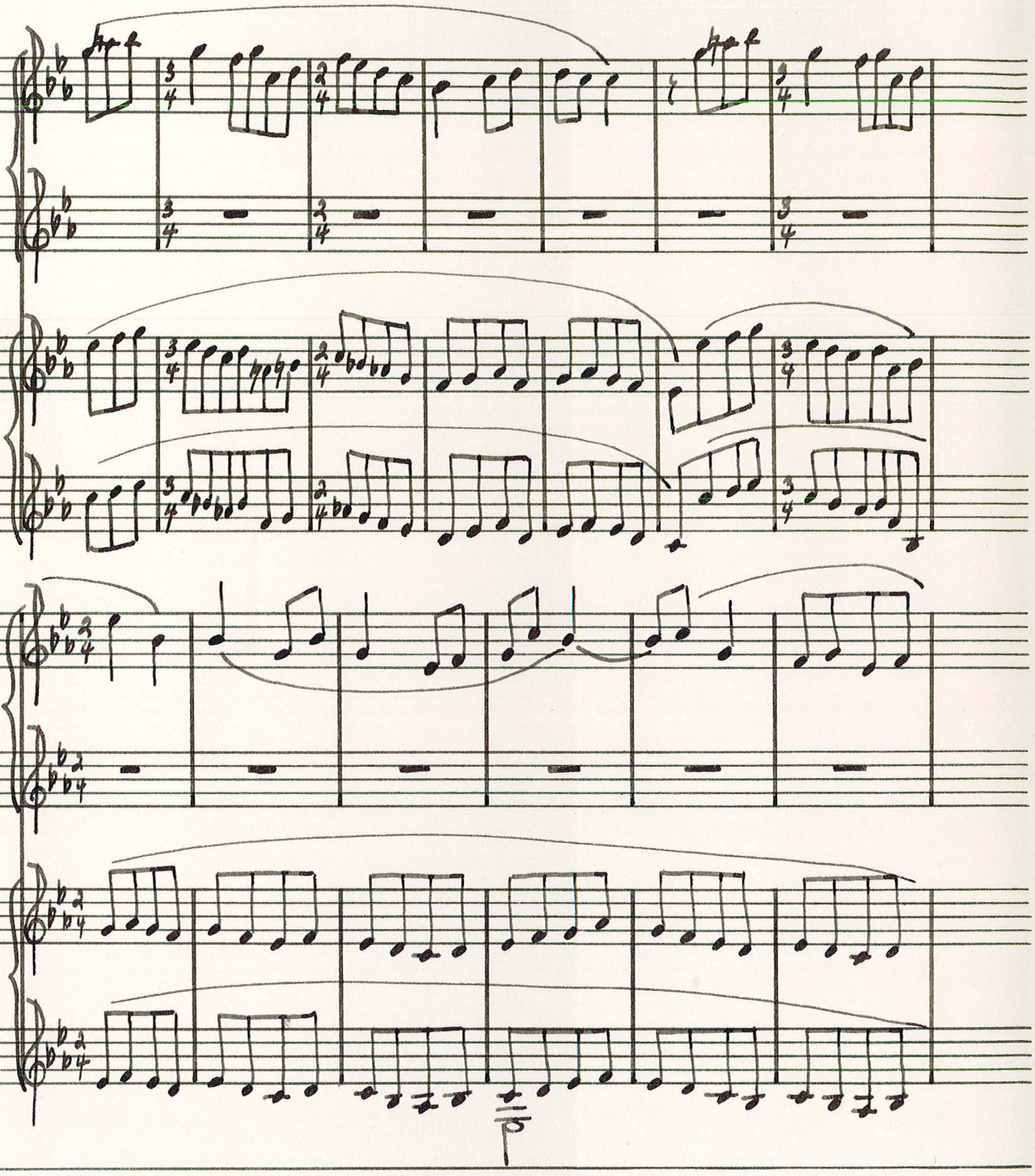

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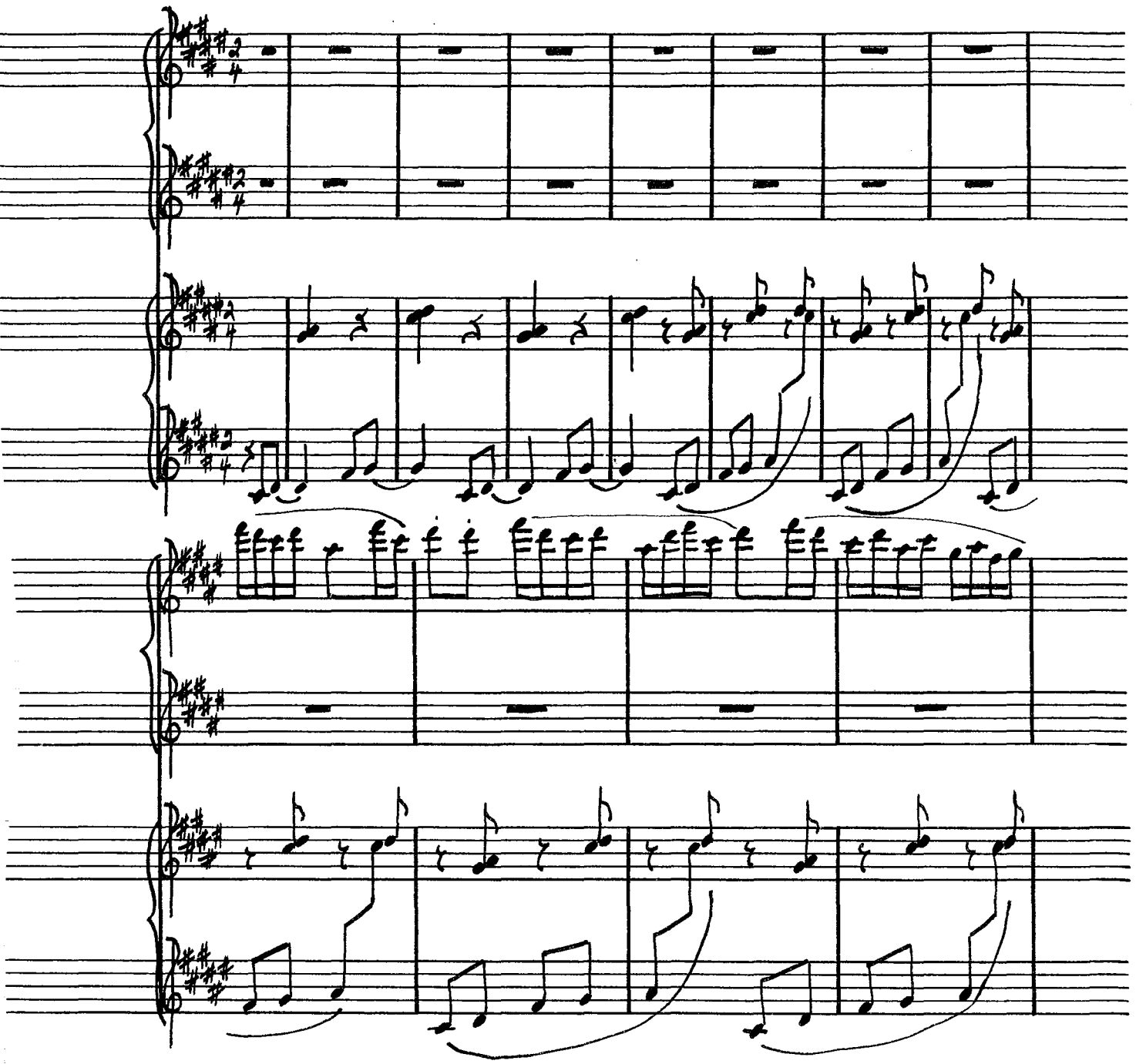

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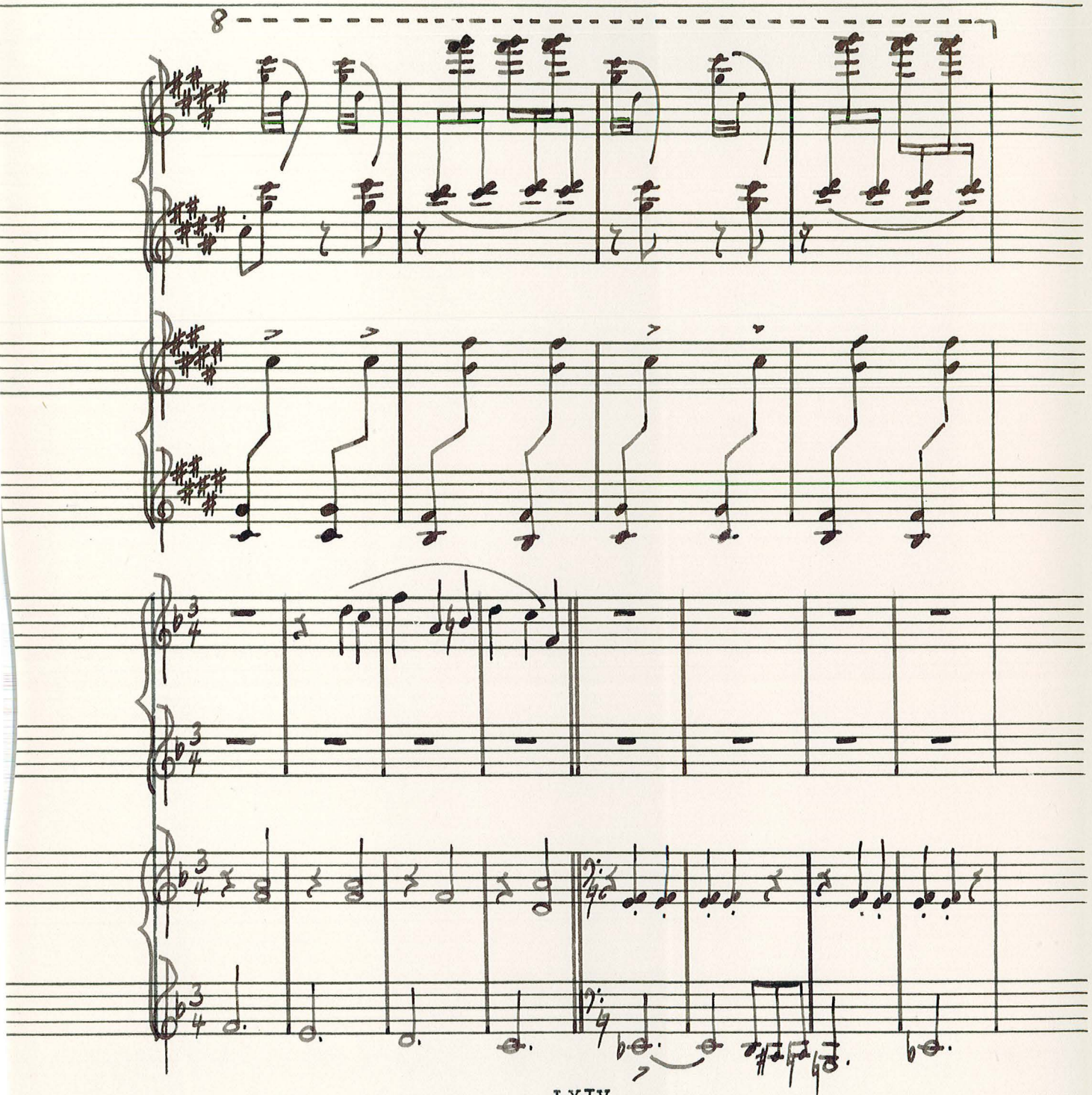

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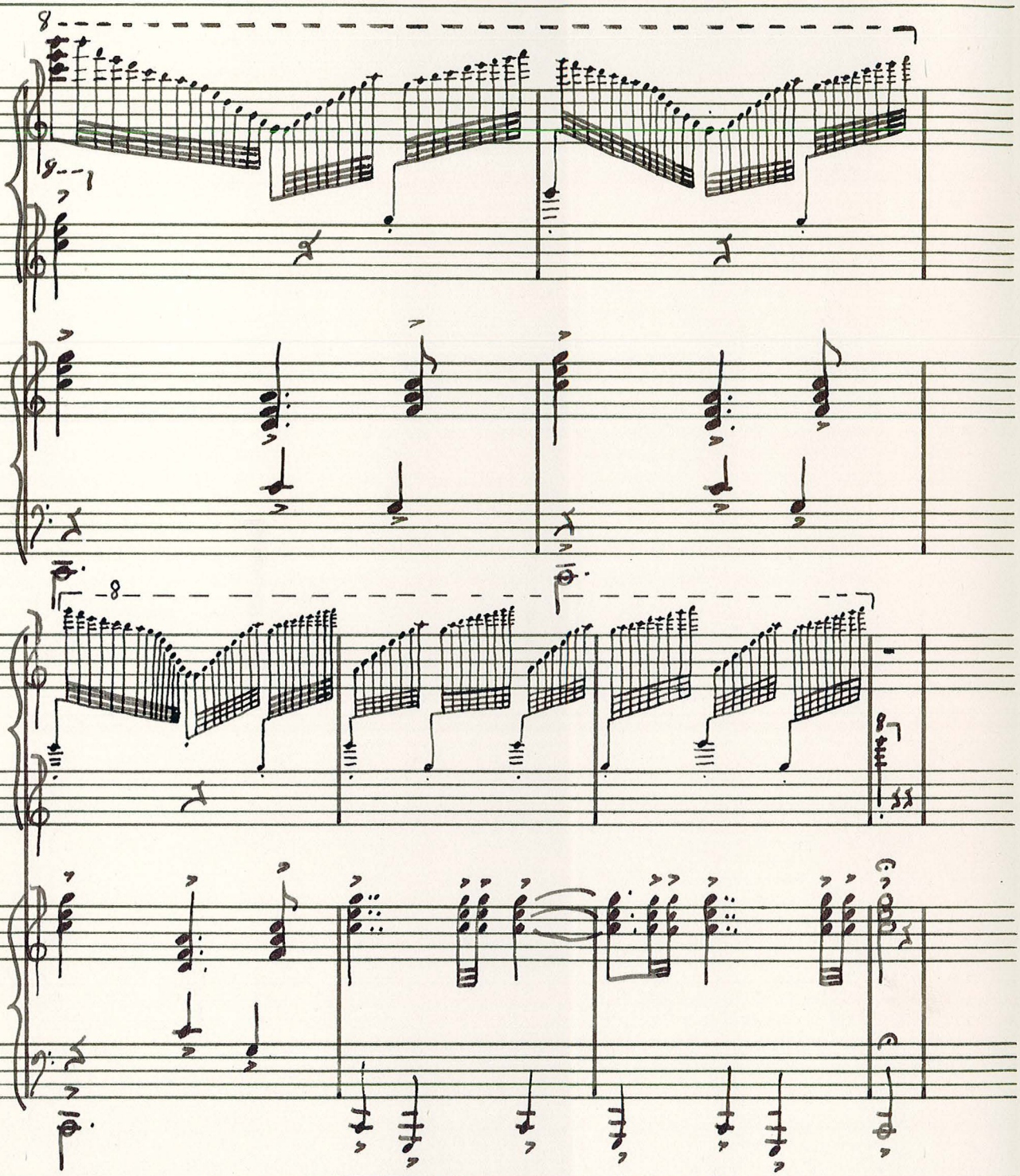

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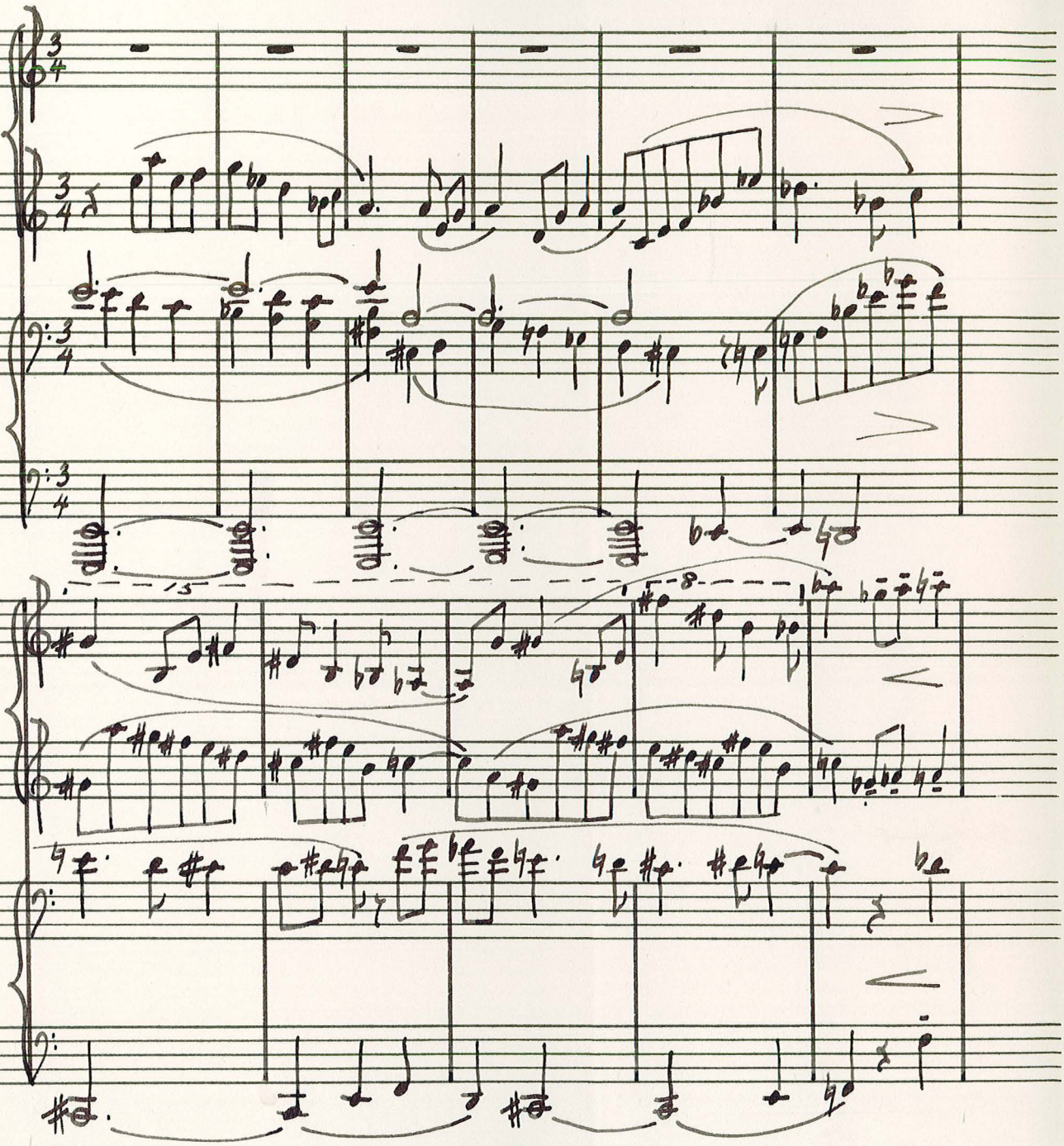

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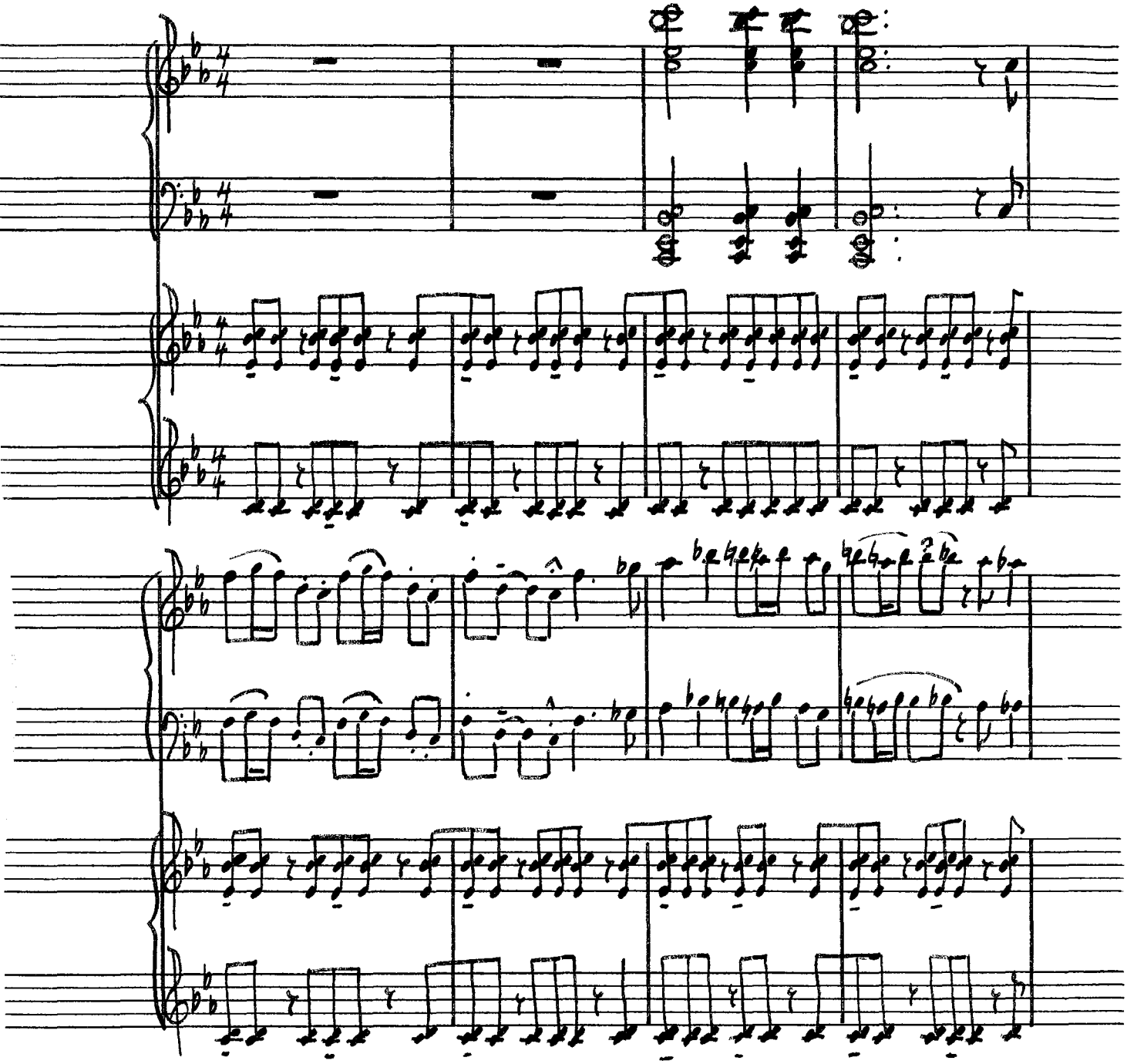

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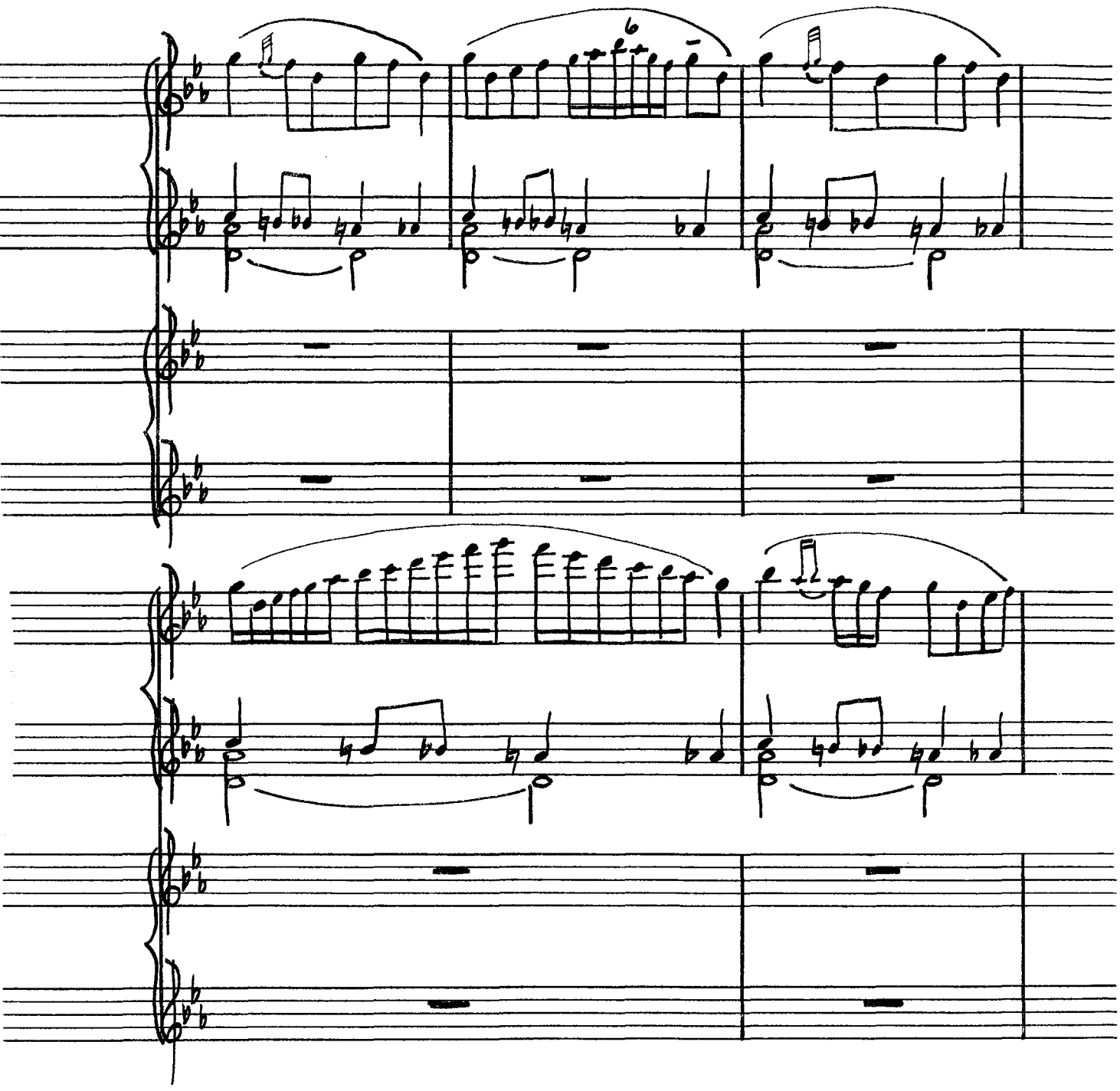

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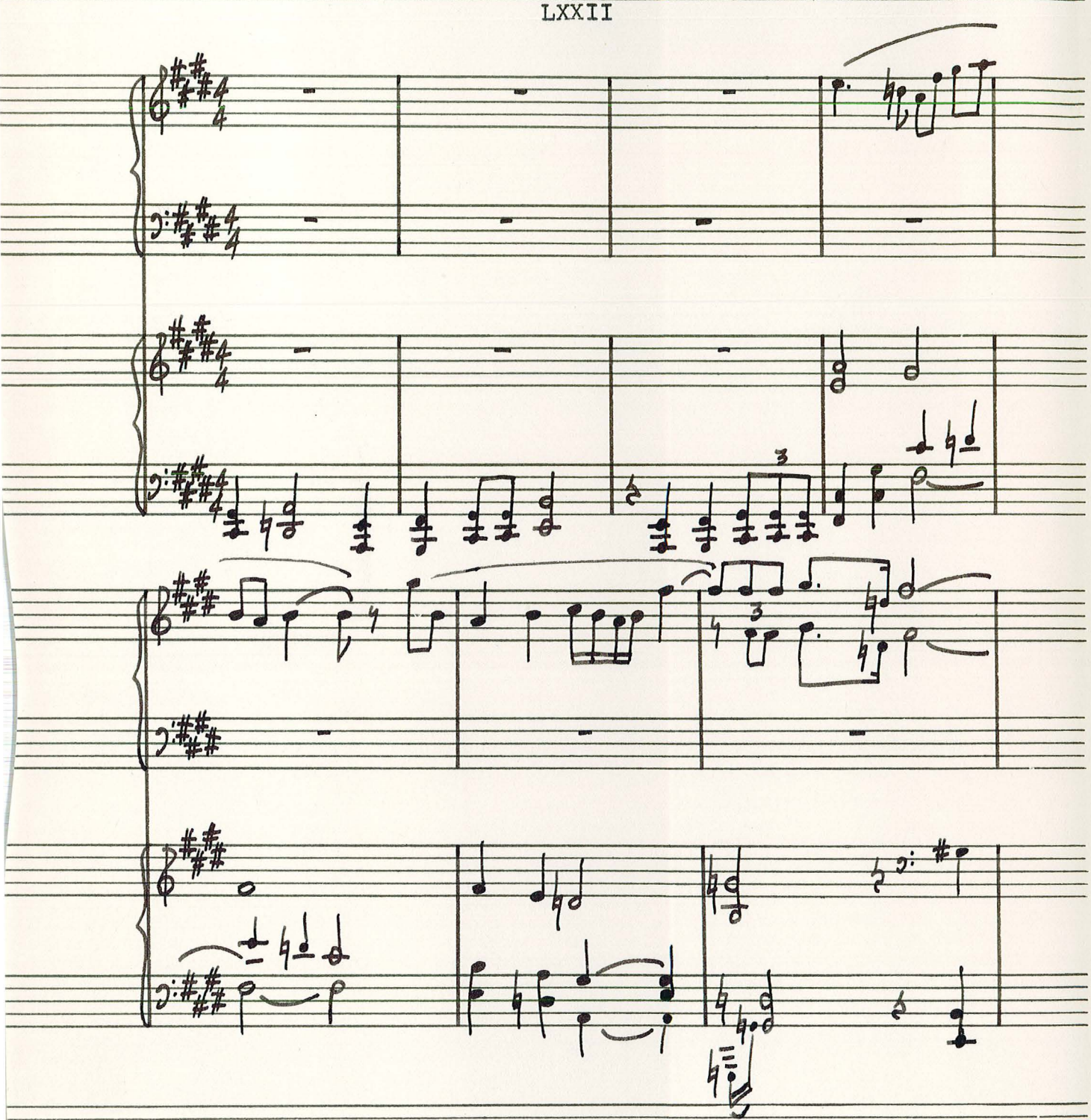

APPENDIX C

ADDITIONAL PIANO DUET WORKS NOT INCLUDED IN BIBLIOGRAPHY

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