Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685–1750)

Trio Sonata No. 4 in E Minor

BWV 528

for organ

Edited by
Christian Mondrup

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BWV 528

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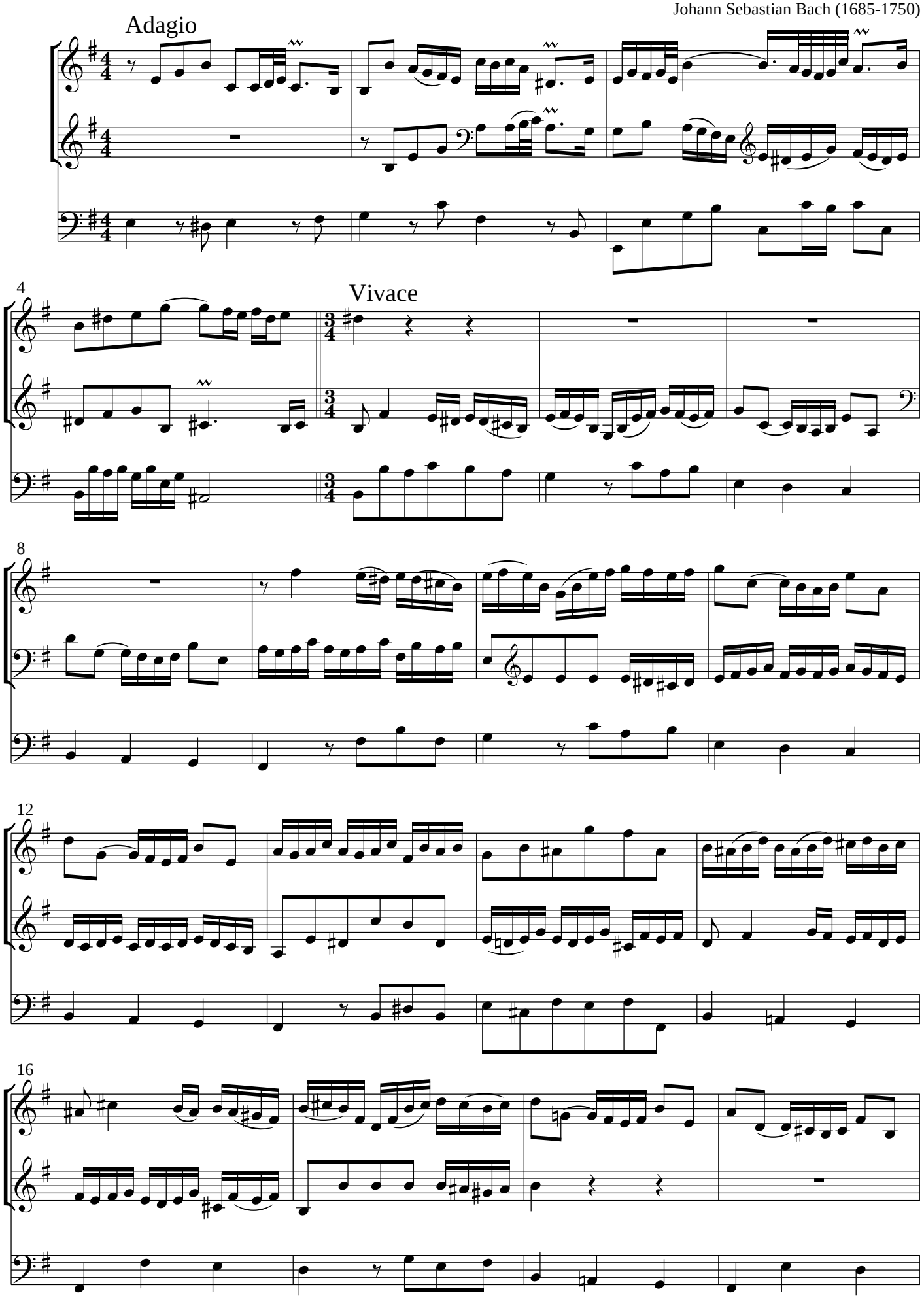

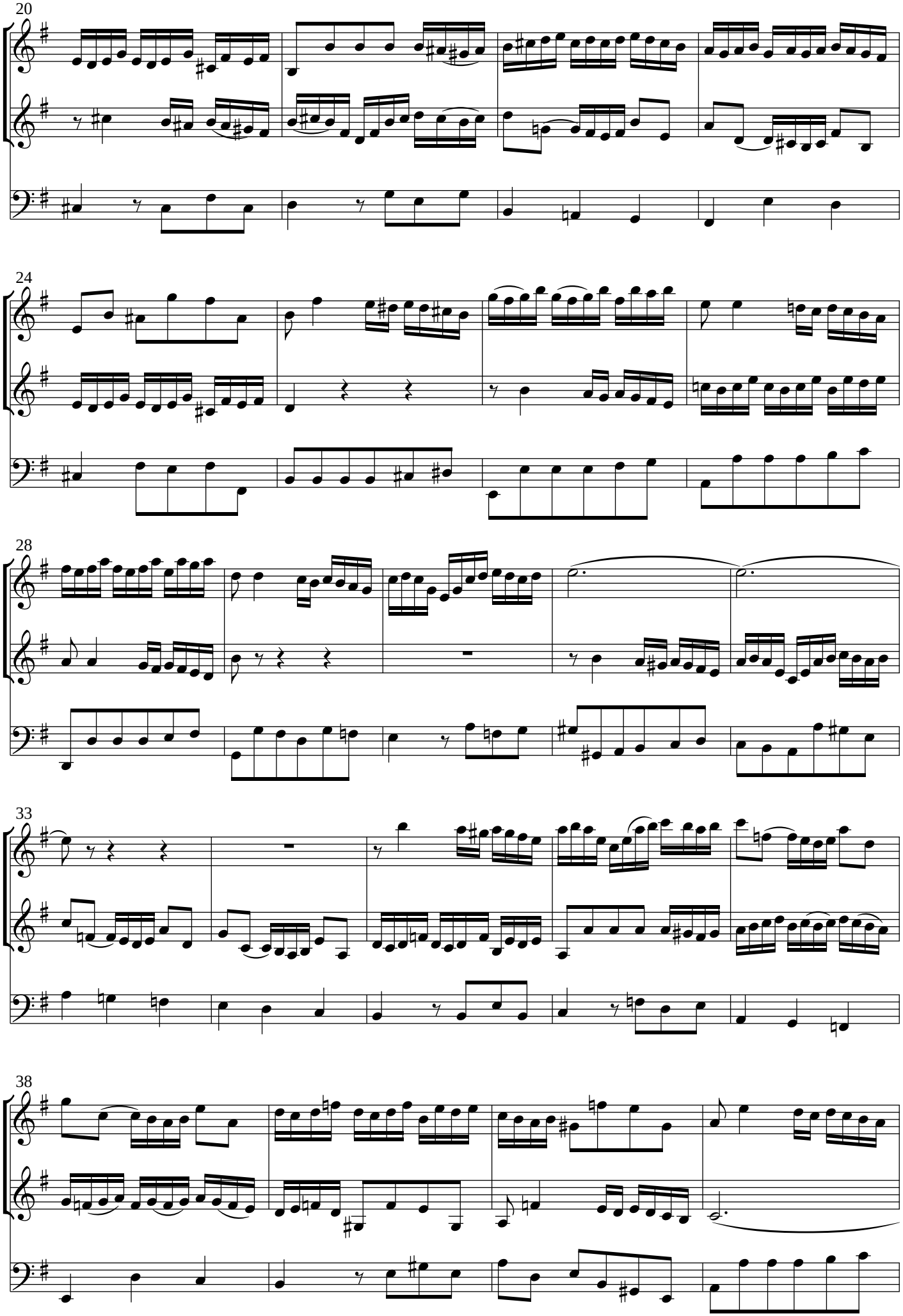
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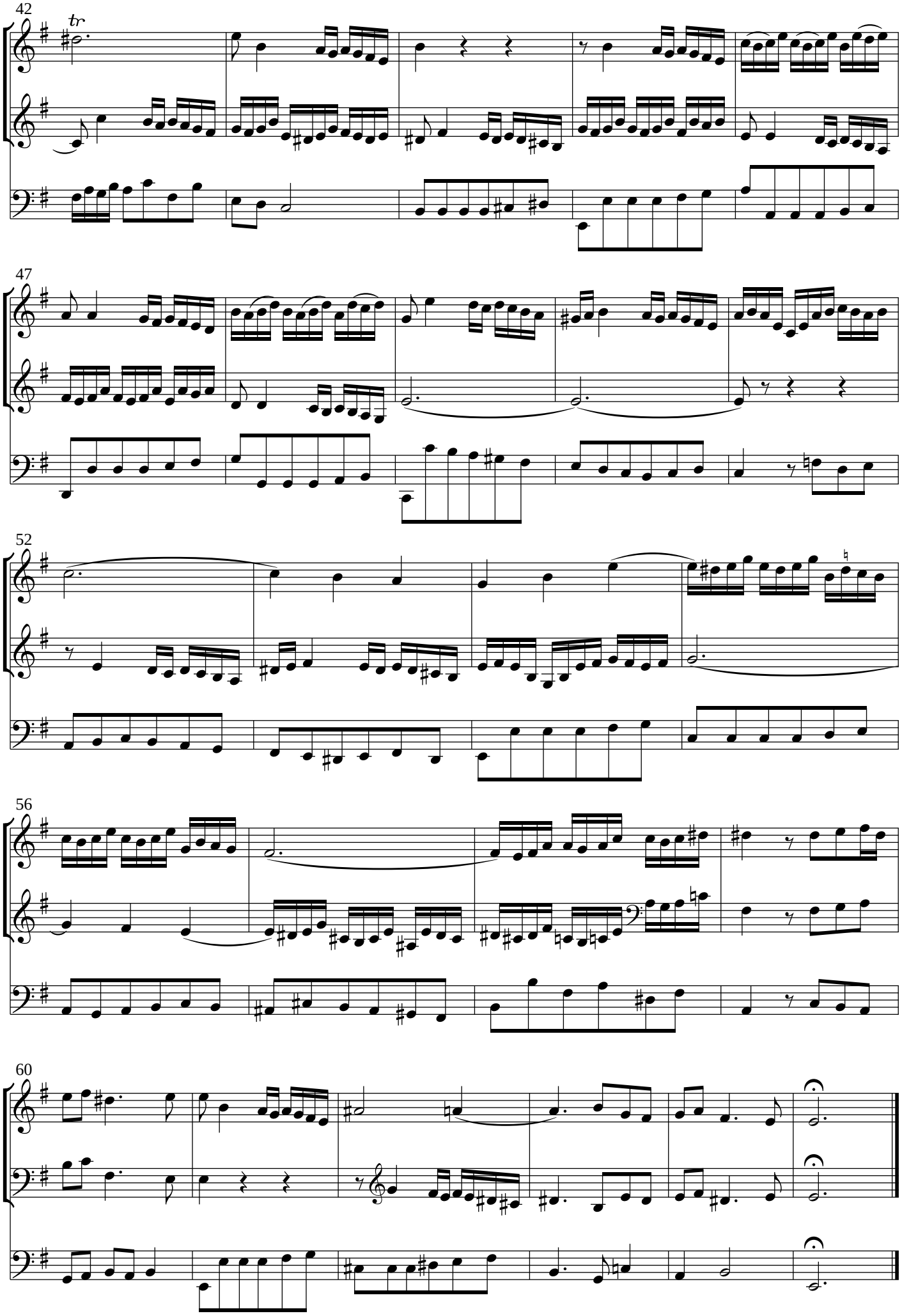
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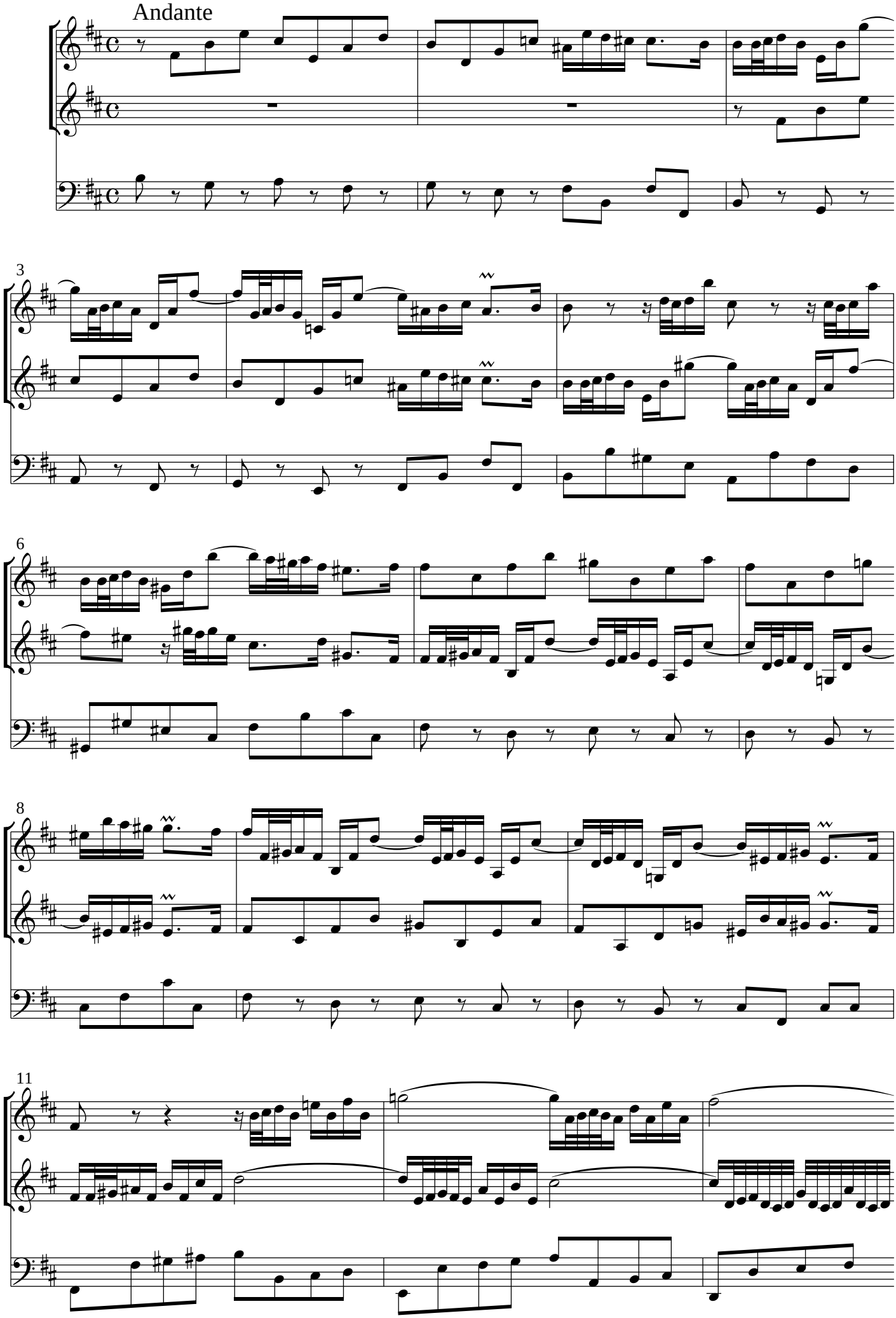
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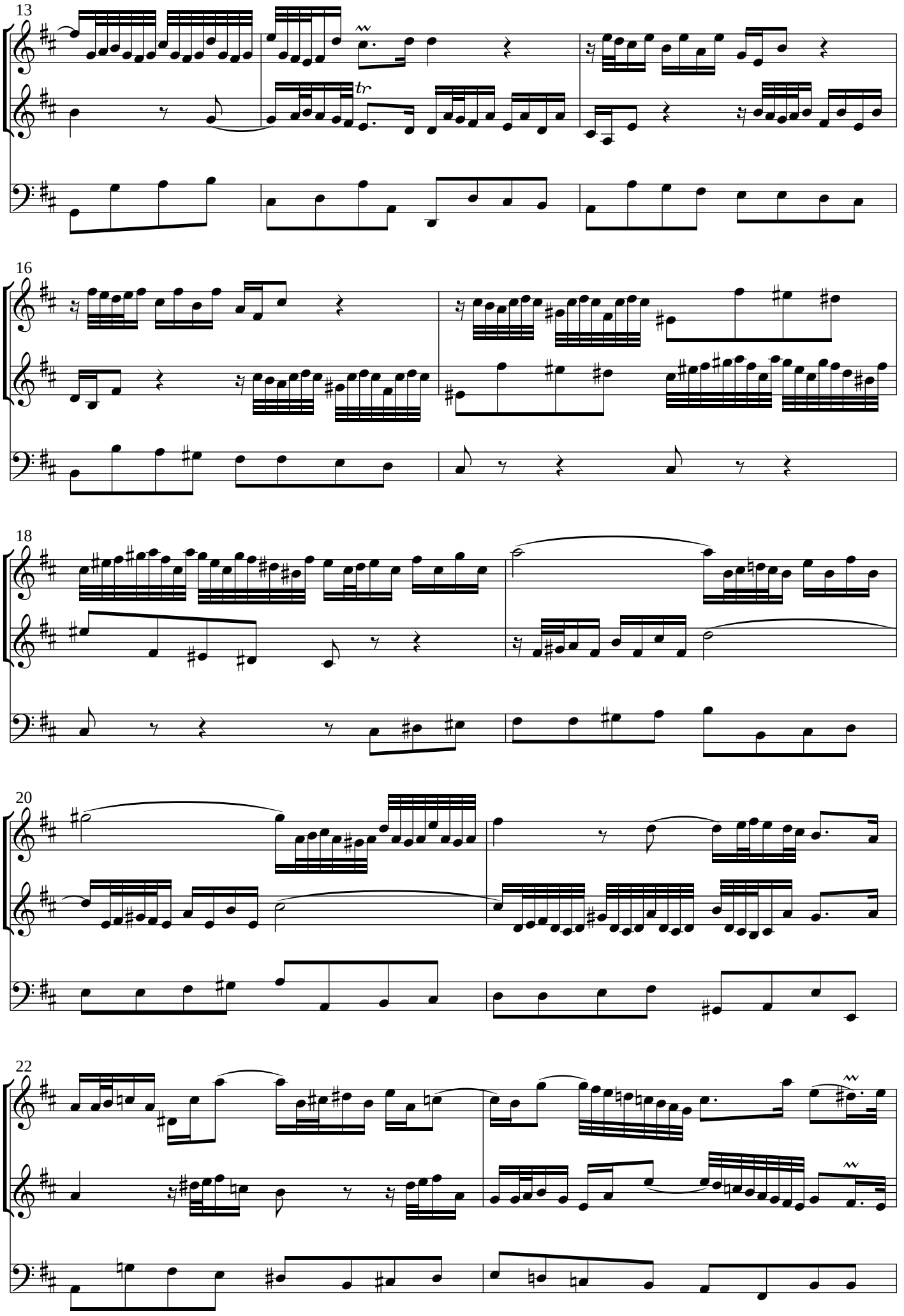
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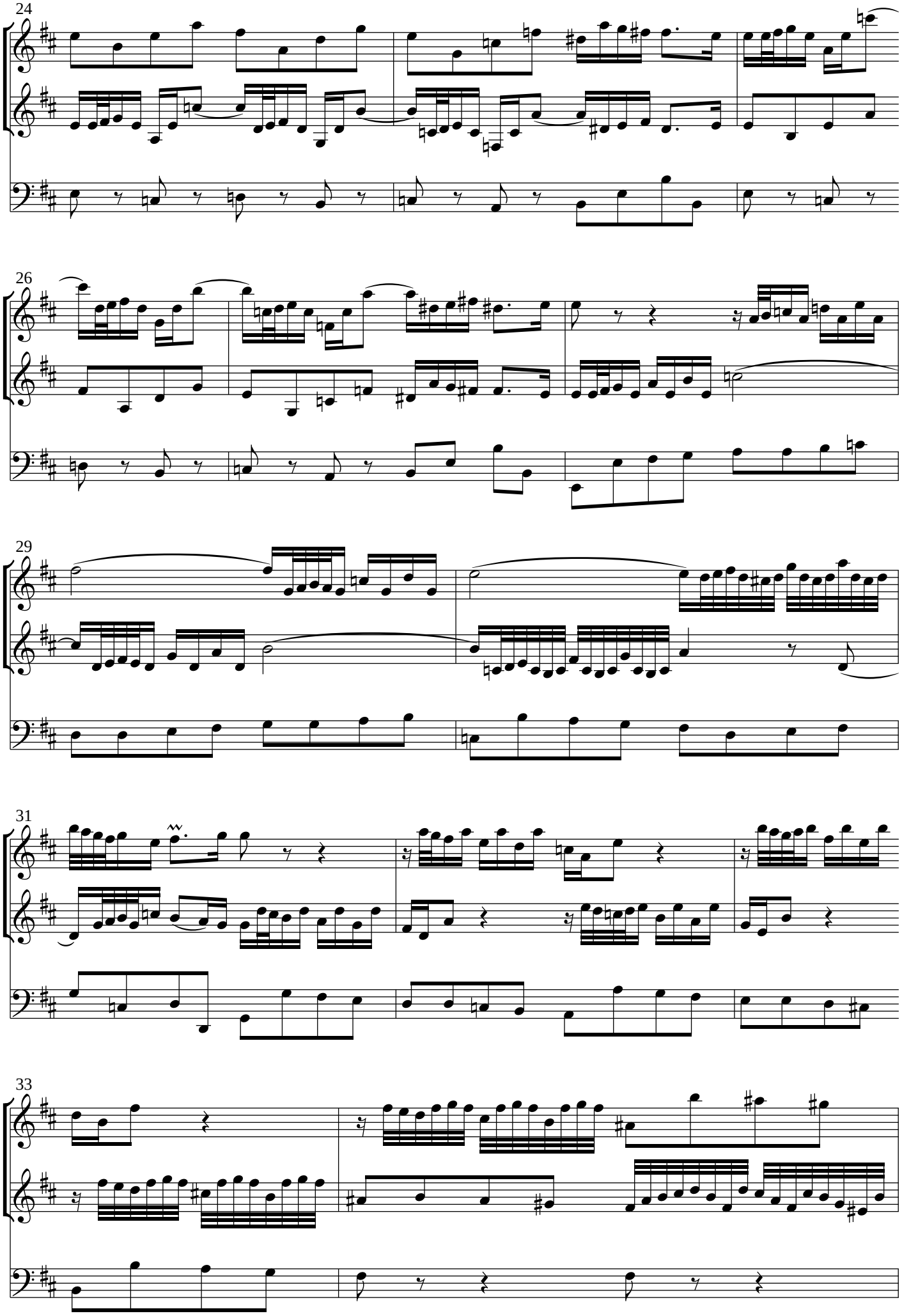
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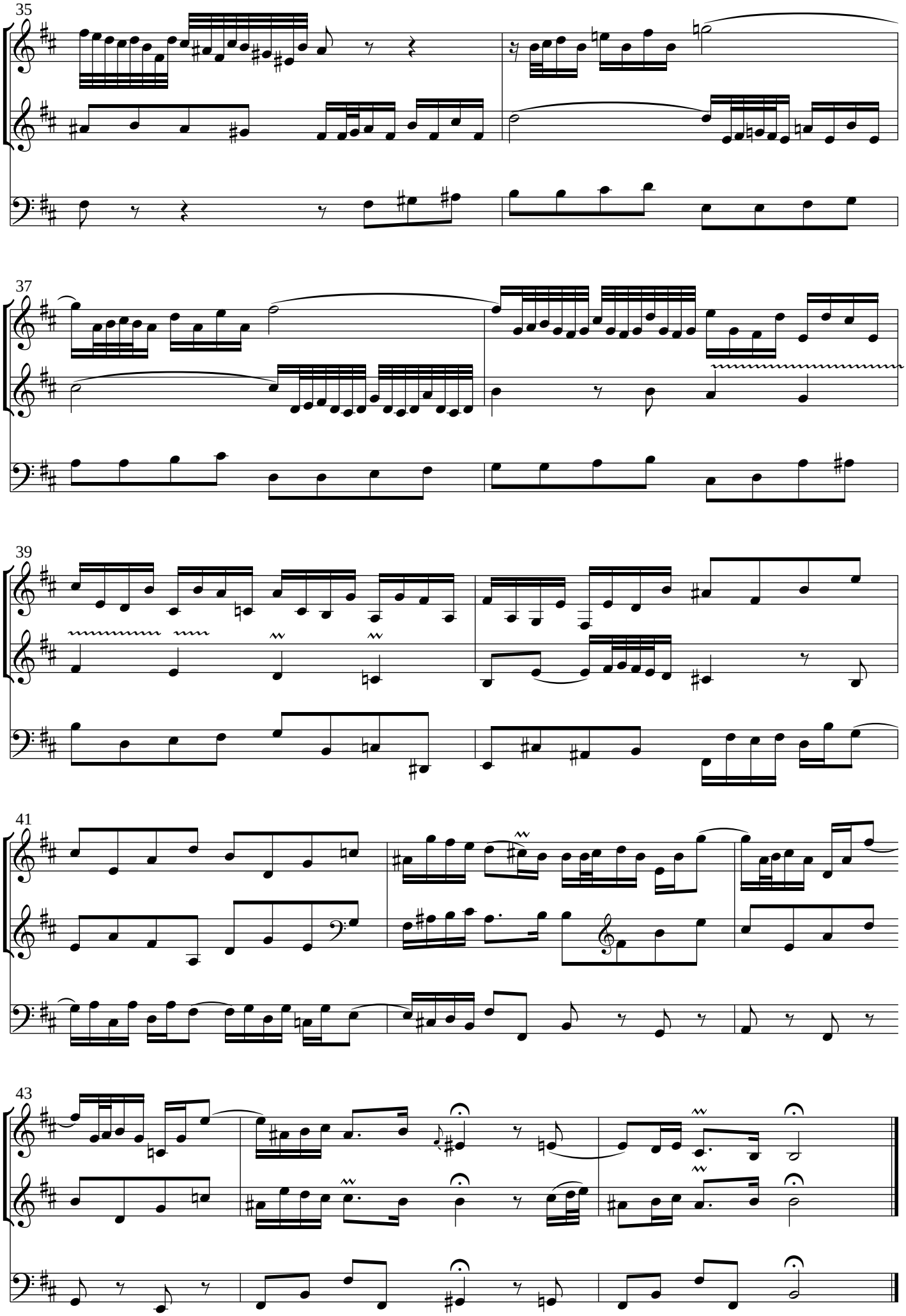
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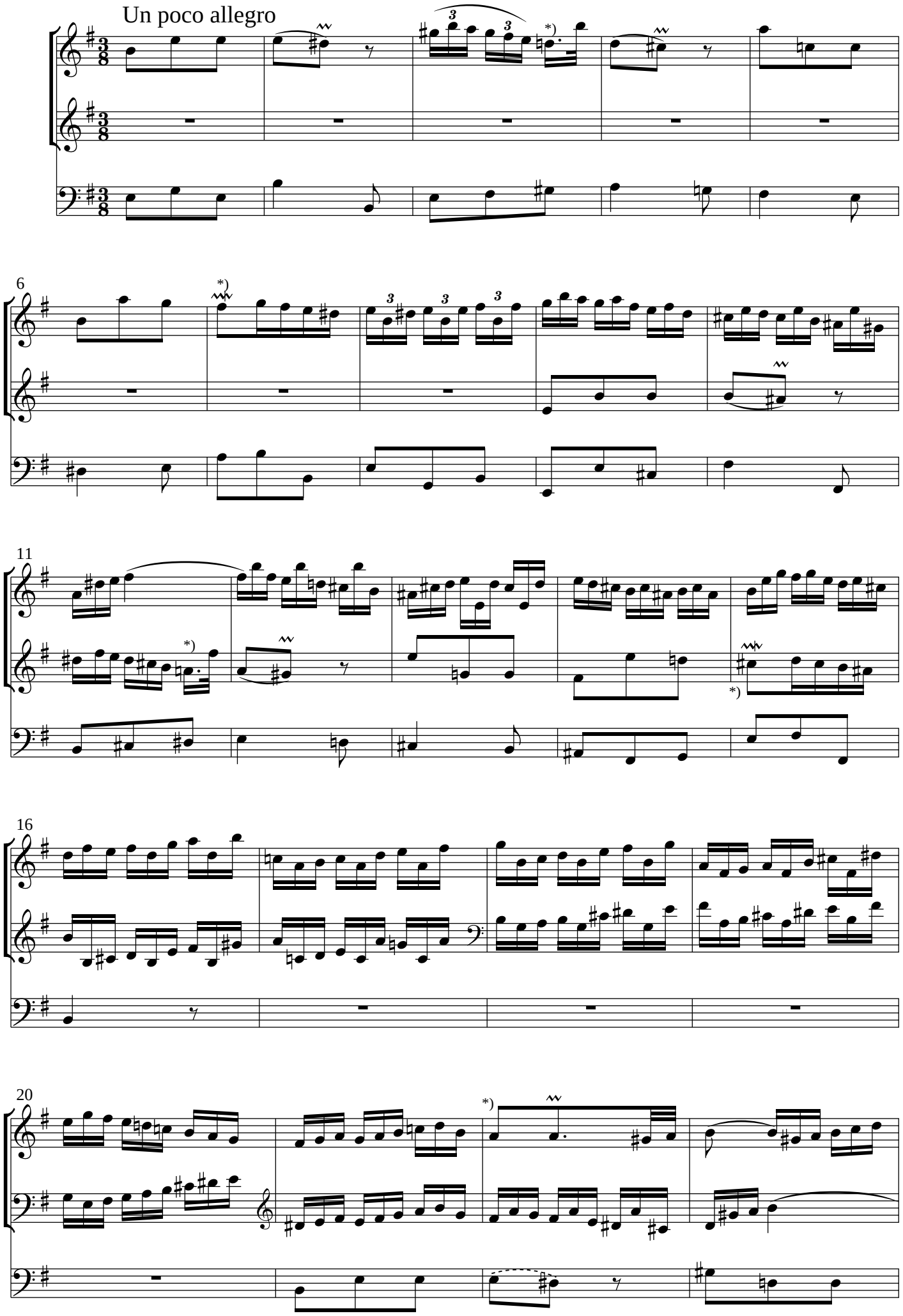
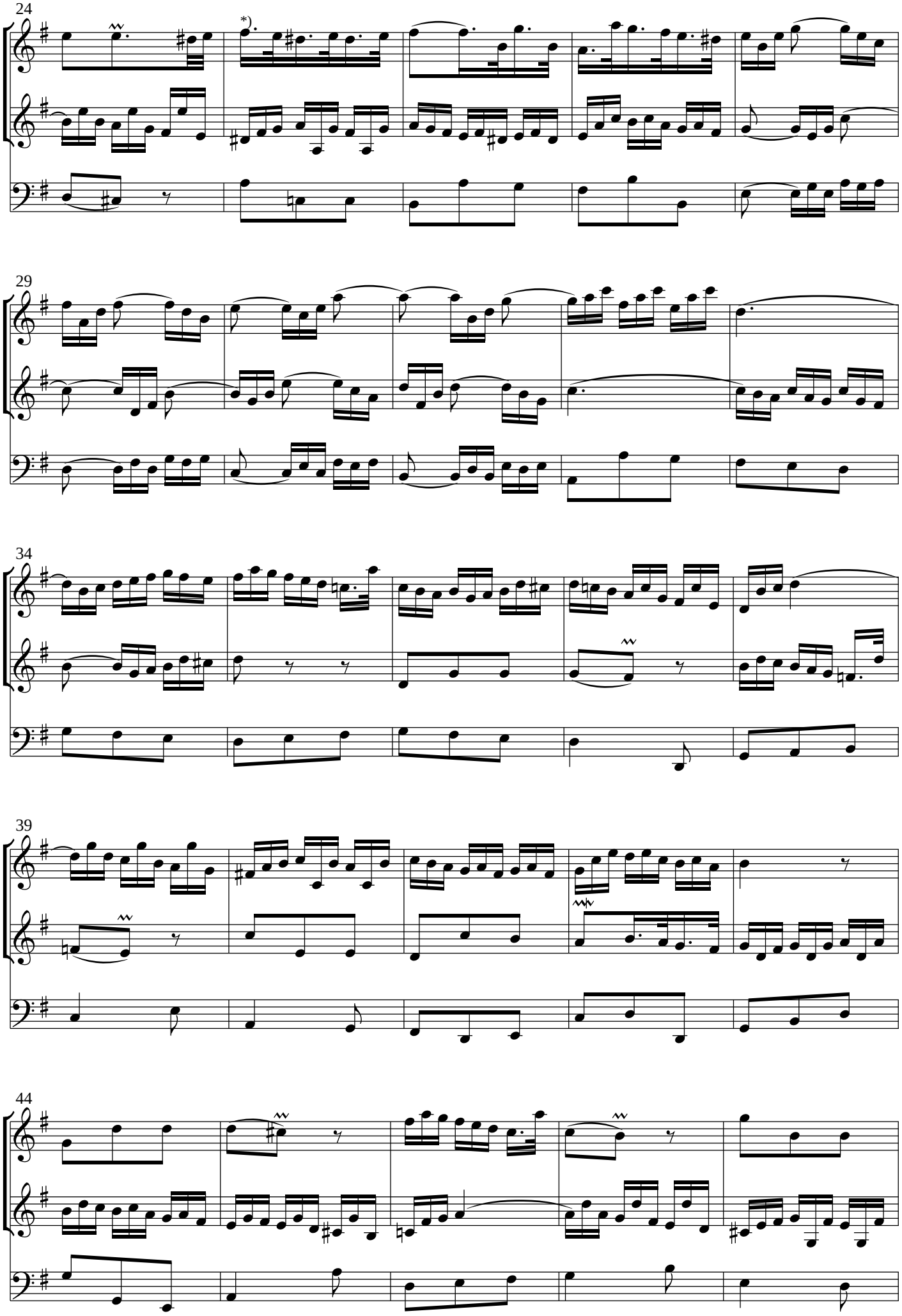


*) See Notes.



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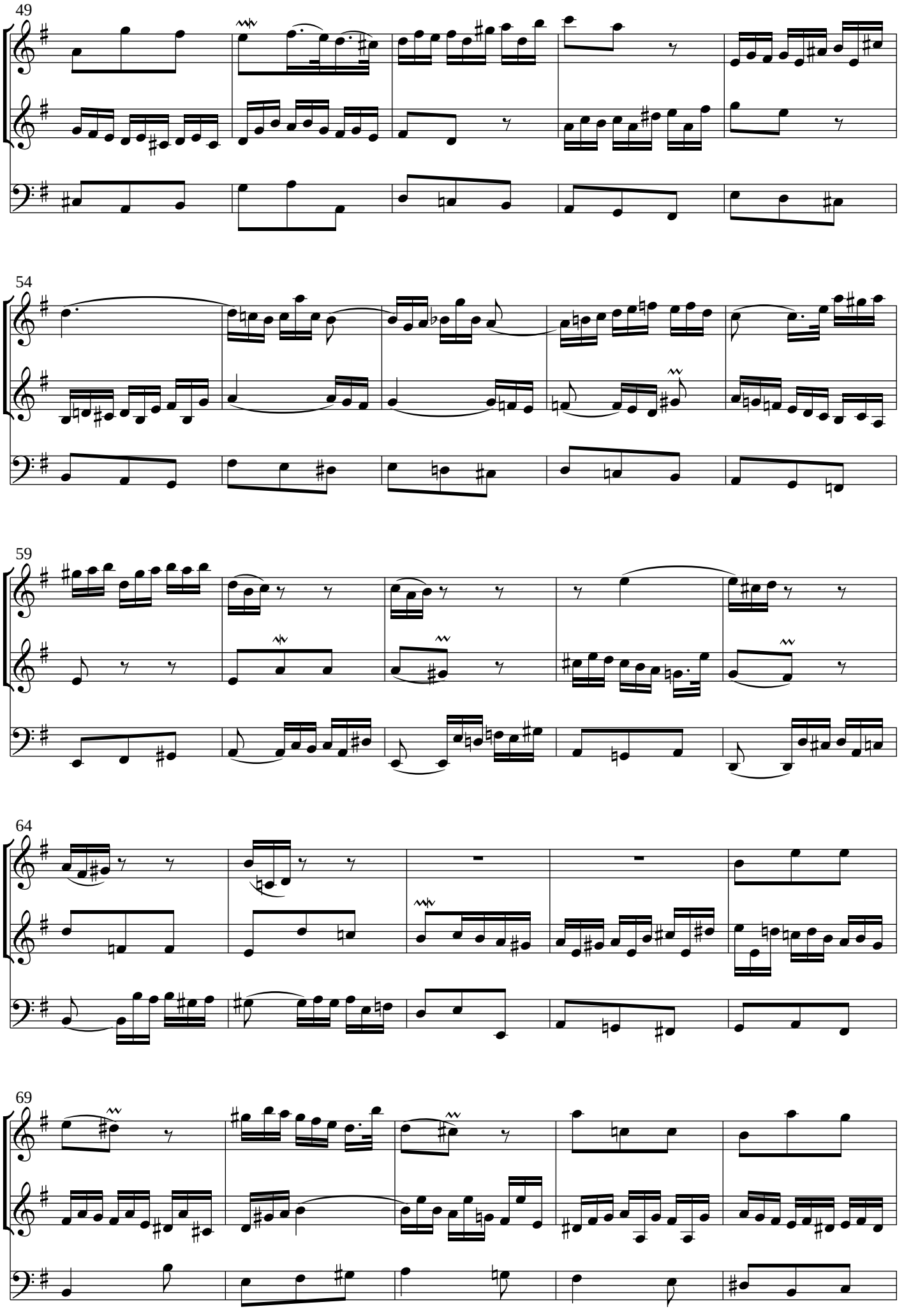
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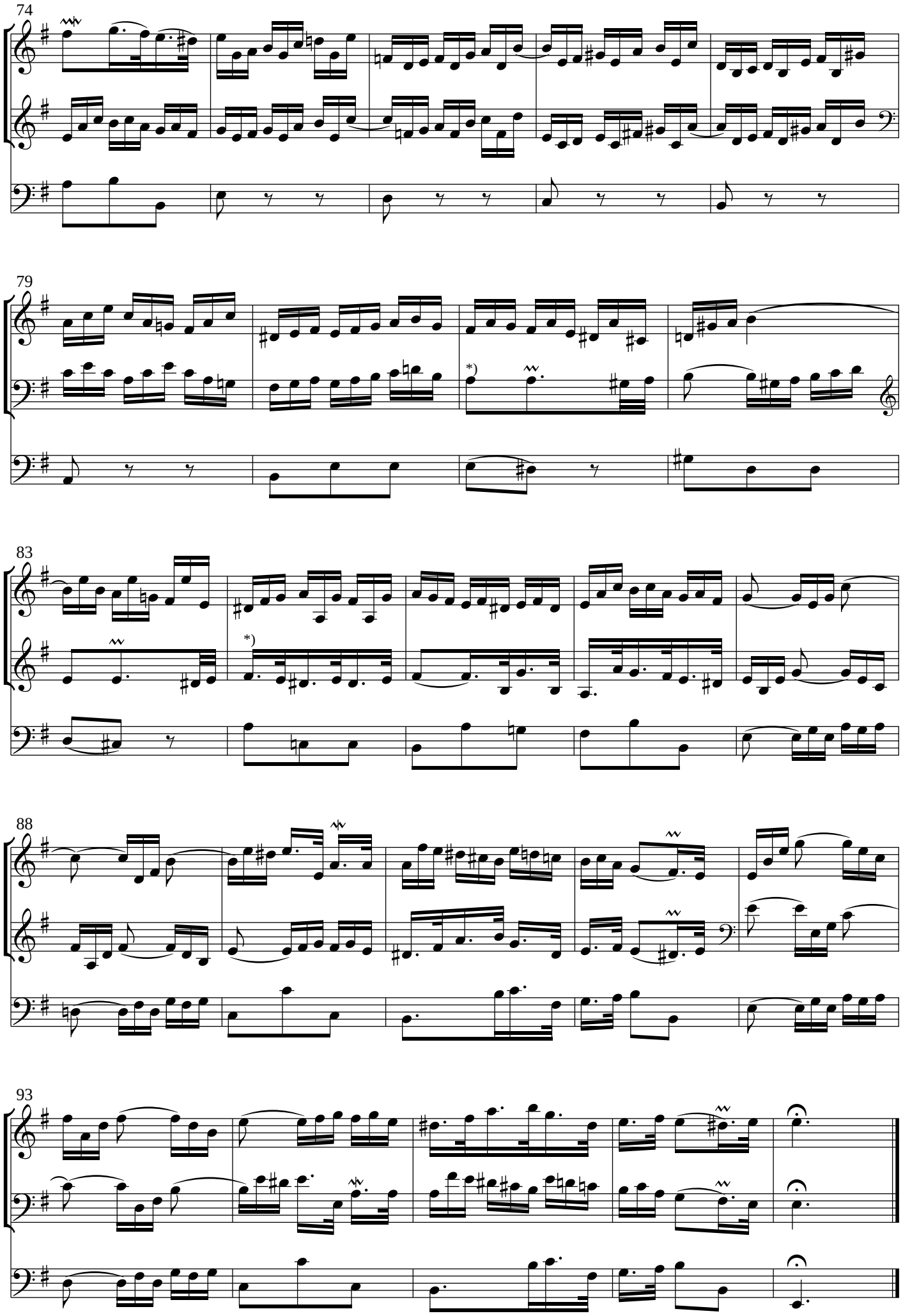
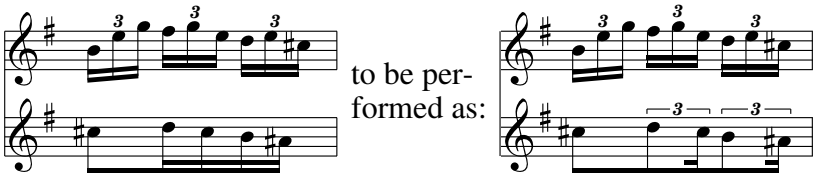


*) See Notes.

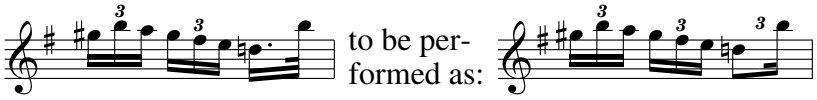
Notes

As notated in the score many phrases in movement no. 3 (*Un poco allegro*) of Triosonata no. 4 may seem 'polyrhythms' (triplets over duplets or quadruplets over triplets) to the eyes of a contemporary musician. However, even if mid 18th century music treatises are not unanimous they tend to advise against polyrhythm like putting 'two notes against three' (Giannantonio Banner, *Compendio Musico*, 1745)[1] Polyrhythm was indeed part of the musical expression in the music of the 'classic' era (Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven), but most likely not in baroque music as composed by J.S.Bach.[2]

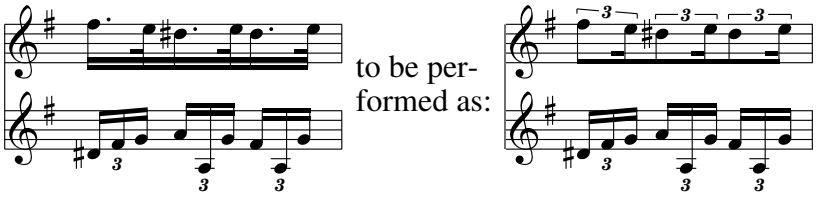
In triple context, like in this movement, duplets should be performed *inégales*, ie. in uneven note values, measure 15:



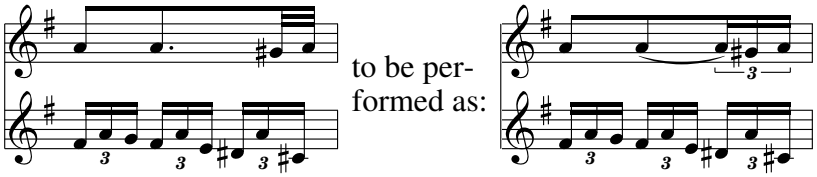
Many 18th century treatises emphasize that dotted notes in triplet context should be read as a shortcut triplet notation,[3] measure 3:



Measure 25:



Measure 22:



[1] Michael Collins, The Performance of Triplets in the 17th and 18th Centuries, Journal of the American Musicological Society, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Autumn, 1966), p. 314 (`https://www.jstor.org/stable/830422`).

[2] Collins, *op.cit.* p. 326

[3] *ibid.* p. 319ff