FULL SCORE

O HOLY NIGHT
(Cantique de Noël)

Arranged by

Steven L. Rosenhaus

Developing String Orchestra Series

INSTRUMENTATION

2-Full Score
8-1st Violin
8-2nd Violin
5-Viola
5-Cello
5- Bass

Duration: Approx. 4 min. 30 sec.
Grade: 2 ½ (Medium-Easy)

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SO160105

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ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Adolphe Adam (1803–1856) was a Paris-born French composer who is now well-known for his operas and ballets, particularly for his ballet *Giselle* and his opera *Le Corsaire*. His father Jean-Luis Adam was also a composer and a professor the Paris Conservatoire. Adam *père*, however, was not fond of the idea of his son becoming a composer and only allowed Adolphe to attend the Conservatoire at the age of 17 after extracting a promise that music would not be a career.

Over the years Adam's output included some twenty-eight works for the theater. At one point he tried starting his own opera company in Paris, *Opéra National*, but it failed because of the 1848 revolution. The failure left him in debt, which he in part paid by turning to journalism as a music critic. From 1849 to his death, Adam taught at his *alma mater*, the Paris Conservatoire.

PROGRAM NOTES

In 1843 in Roquemaure, a small town in the southern part of France, the parrish priest asked the poet and wine merchant Placide Cappeau to write a Christmas poem to celebrate the renovation of the church organ. That Cappeau was anticlerical, not to mention an atheist apparently didn't matter to the merchant or the priest. The result, *Minuit, chrétiens* (*Midnight, Christians*), was lovely and proper for the occasion. Not long after the composer Adolphe Adam set the poem to music, but it wasn't premiered until 1847 in Roquemaure. The song became, and remains, quite popular, both in the original French and several translations.

Over the years *O Holy Night* has been sung and recorded by performers of all musical styles and genres from operatic (Luciano Pavorotti) to gospel (Mahalia Jackson) to pop (Hanson), just to name a very few.

In all versions of the text the song reflects on the birth of Jesus and the possibility of humanity's redemption. This arrangement is based on Adam's original version.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

The triplet figures permeating the music are to be played gently throughout, making sure to match in tone and intensity when they move from one section of the orchestra to another. All of the triplet figures begin down bow, and they are mostly in first position for all of the instruments.

Just as important is to make the rhythmic differences between the triplets and the dotted-eighth-and-sixteenth note figures in the melody distinct and clear.

The tempo should be steady throuhout as well. Care should be taken in maintaining the long line of the melody — such as in the Violin 1's entrance up to measure 6.

The occasional grace notes in the melody should be played before the beat.

The *tenuto/staccato* chords in the penultimate measure are to be played with successive down bows, lifting the bow between beats three and four, and between beat four and the down beat of the last bar.

ABOUT THE ARRANGER

Steven L. Rosenhaus is a composer, arranger, conductor, author, educator, and performer. His concert music has been called “clever, deftly constructed and likable” by *The New York Times*; the *Sächsiche Zeitung* (Dresden, Germany) declares it “expressive....It’s song-like melodic sequences and balladic aspects give it a lyrical beauty, within a newer soundworld.”

His original works and arrangements are performed by such musicians as the New York Philharmonic, pianist Laura Leon, violinist Florian Mayer, the Dresden Sinfonietta, the Sheboygan Symphony (WI), the New York Repertory Orchestra, the Meridian String Quartet, and several U.S. military ensembles including the U.S. Navy Band (Washington, DC), as well as educational ensembles across the U.S.

Dr. Rosenhaus holds a Ph.D. from New York University where he serves as Adjunct Assistant Professor of Composition. He has over 150 original works and arrangements in print with Print Music Source and other publishers. Dr. Rosenhaus is a frequent guest conductor of service, professional, community, and educational groups at all levels.

Steven L. Rosenhaus is the author of *The Concertgoer’s Guide to the Symphony Orchestra* (The Music Gifts Company) and co-author with Allen Cohen of *Writing Musical Theater* (Palgrave Macmillan).

Score
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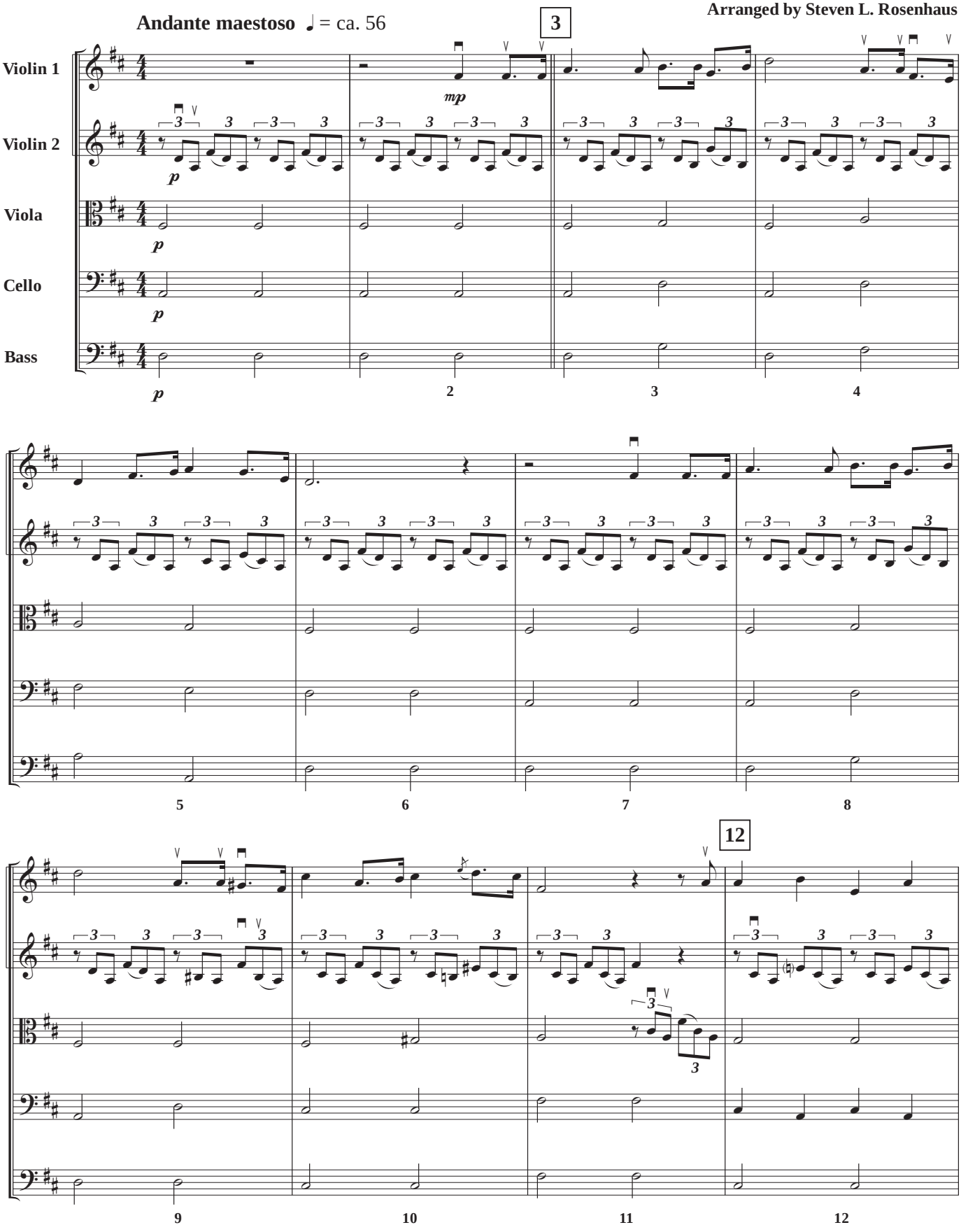
O HOLY NIGHT

Cantique de Noël

Adolphe Adam (1803–1856)
Arranged by Steven L. Rosenhaus

Andante maestoso ♩ = ca. 56



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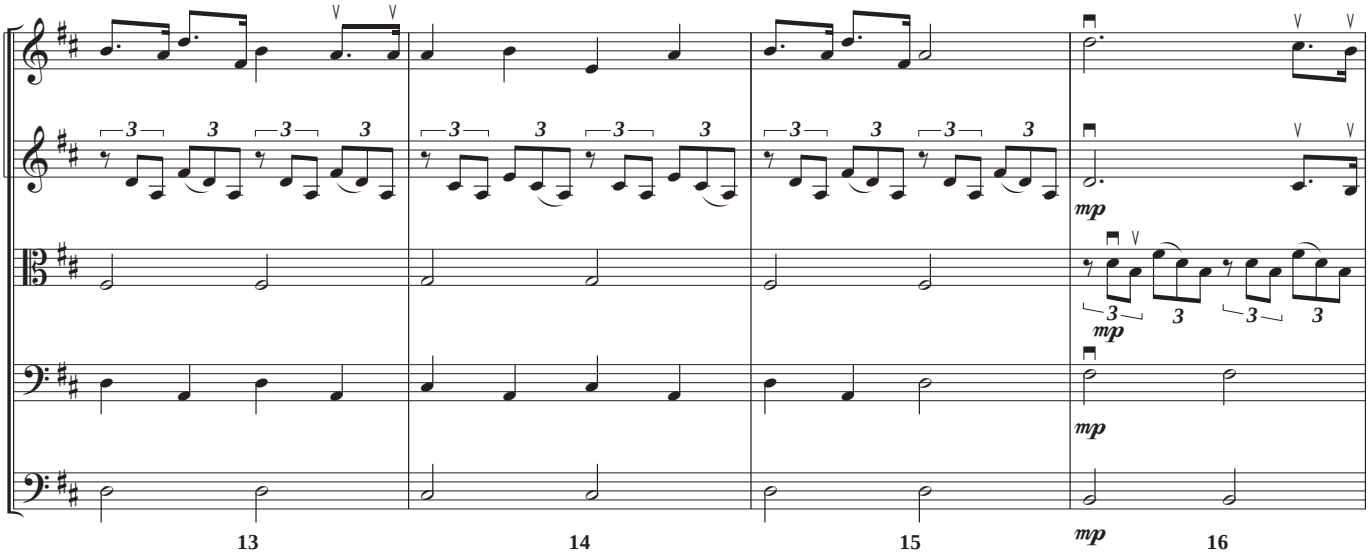
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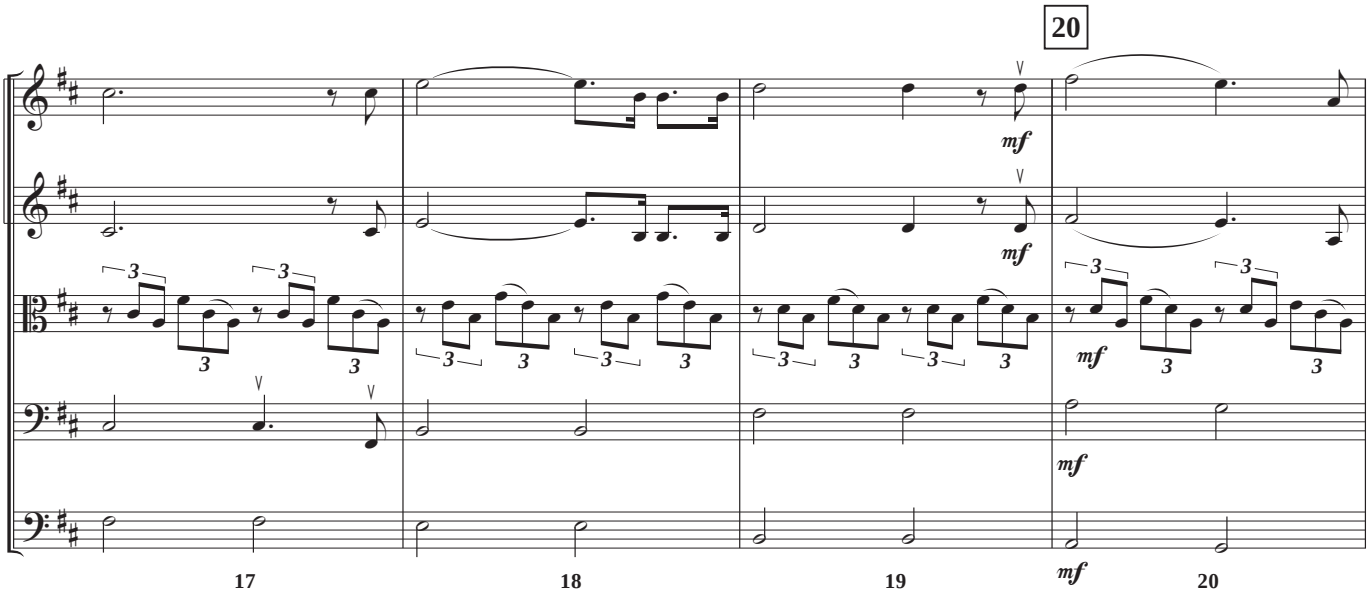
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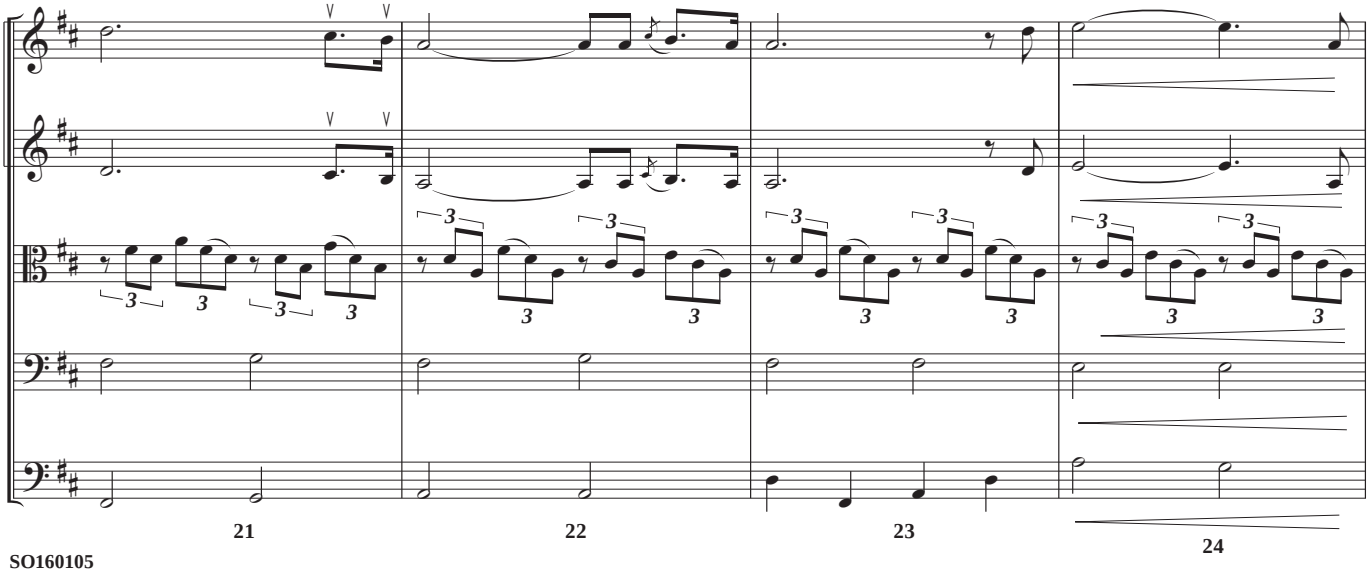
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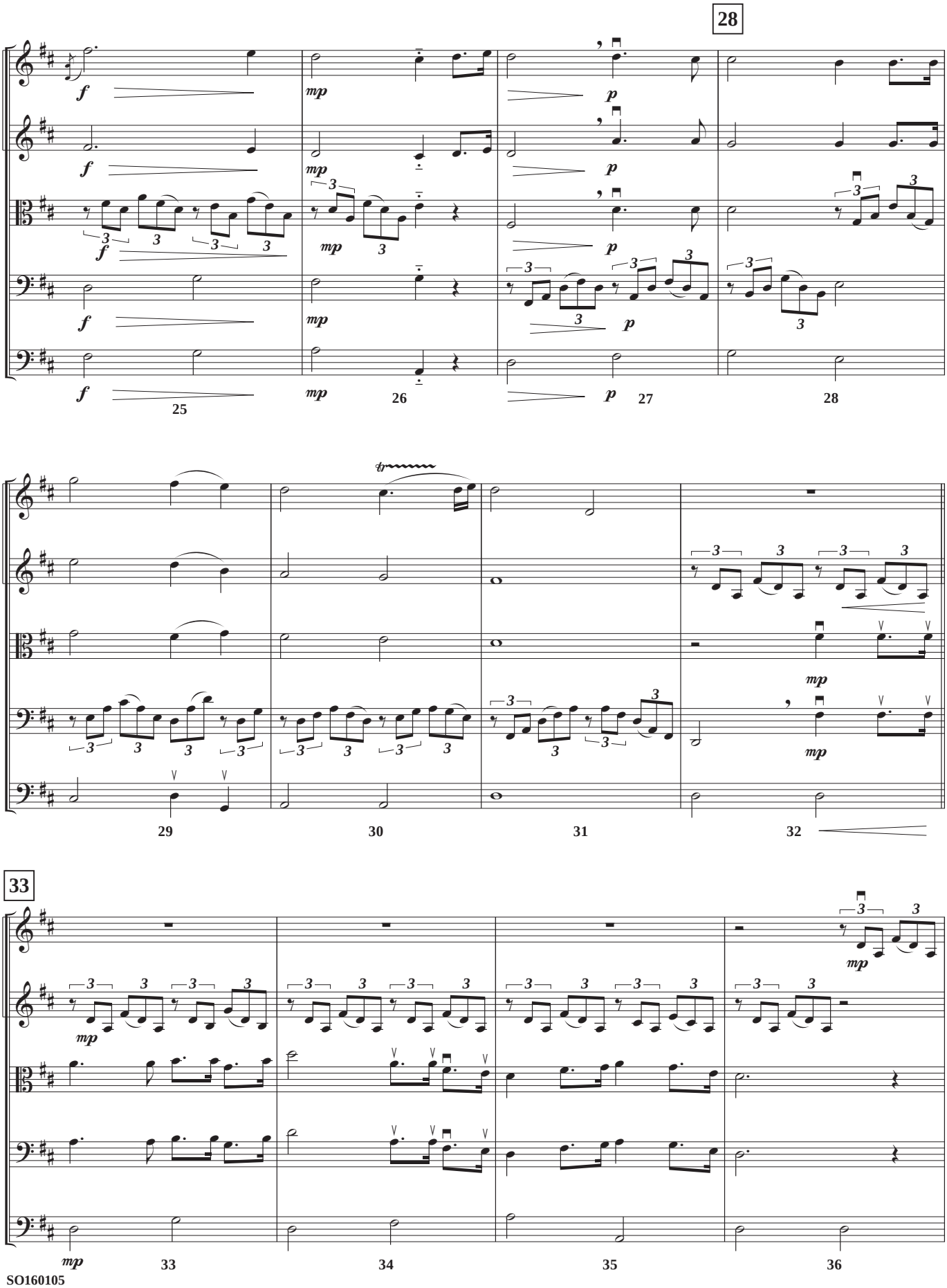
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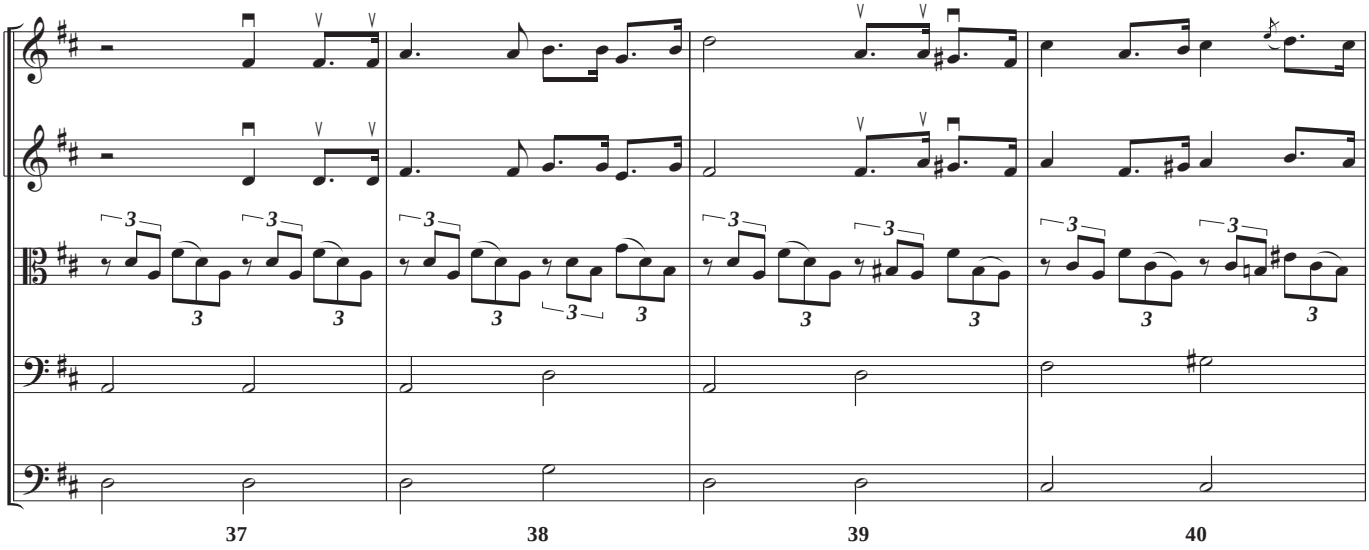
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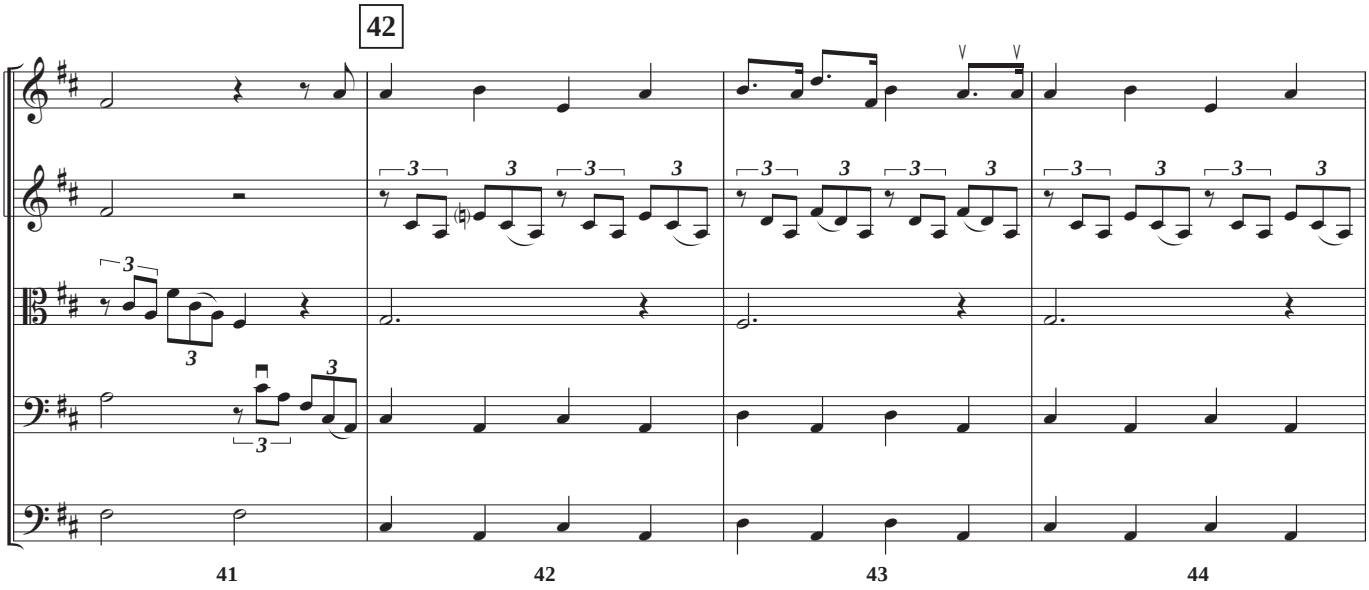
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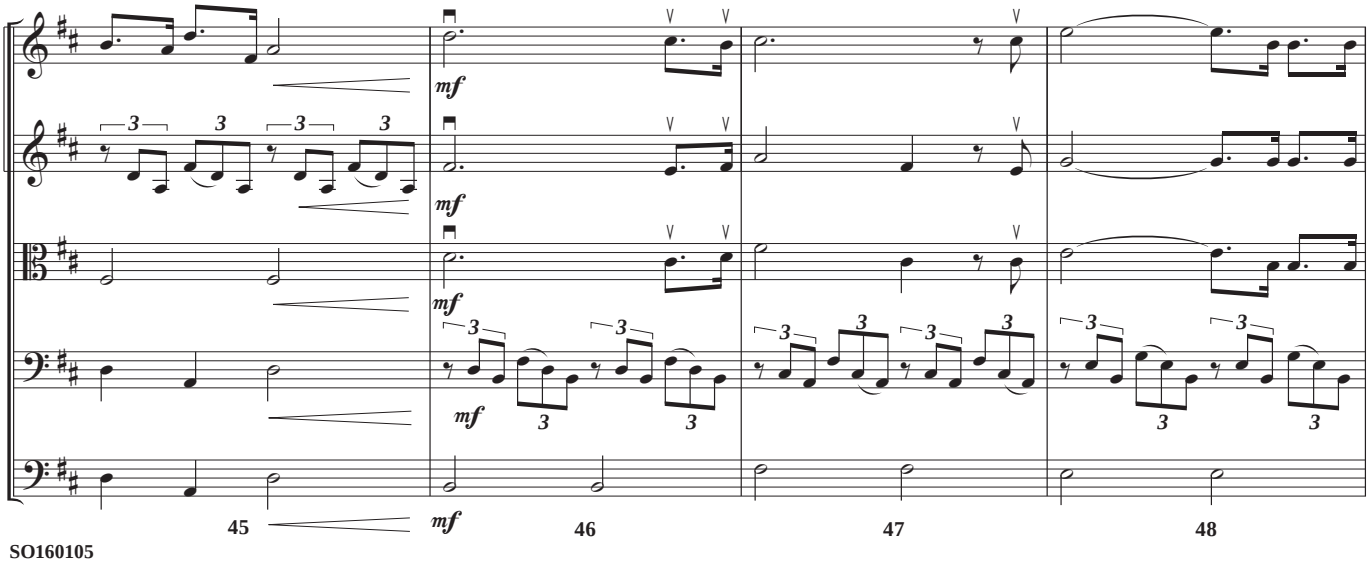
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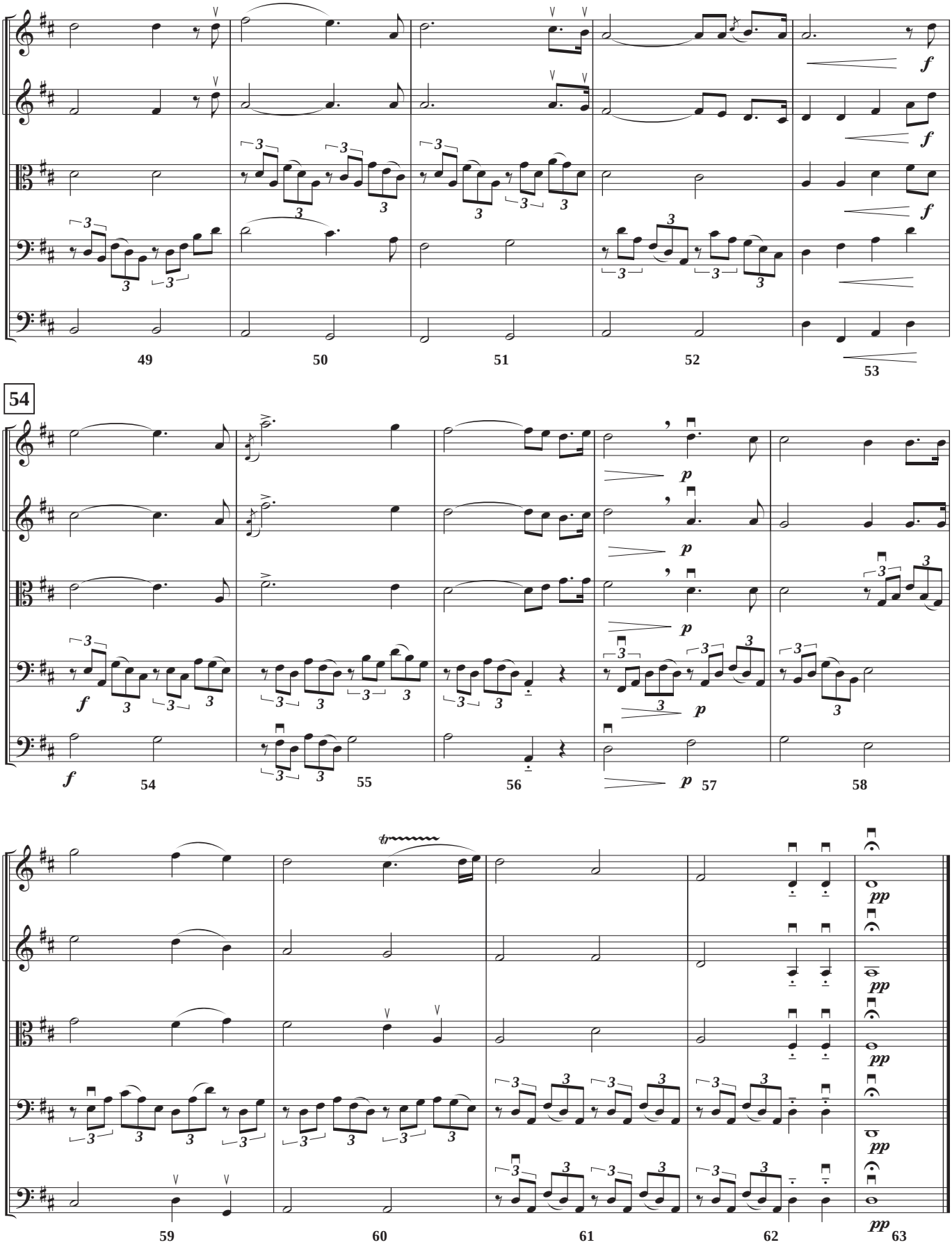
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