ANDREA GABRIELI

?1532/3–1585

Canzon francese

deta "Pour ung plaisir"

for two Trumpets in C or B♭ and two Trombones

from Canzoni alla francese et ricercari ariosi … tabulate per sonar sopra istromenti da tasti
1605

Edited, with editorial dynamics, preface, and commentary,
by Christopher Delgado

SCORE

Performing edition. Musical text compared with the 1605 print through Pidoux's edition only.

TRUMPETOWN EDITION

Andrea Gabrieli, *Canzon francese deta Pour ung plaisir*, for keyboard, after the chanson by Thomas Crecquillon. From *Canzoni alla francese et ricercari ariosi, tabulate per sonar sopra istromenti da tasti … libro quinto* (Venice, 1605).

Performing edition. The musical text is a modern arrangement for brass quartet of a keyboard piece. It has been compared with the 1605 print only through Pierre Pidoux's edition, and only at the points named in the Preface and Commentary. The dynamics, which are all editorial and printed in square brackets, the identification of the piece, and the preface and commentary are the present editor's.

Editorial dynamics, preface, and commentary: © 2026 Christopher Delgado, released under CC BY-SA 4.0.

Facsimile plate reproduced from a public-domain scan of Giovanni Gabrieli's *Sacrae symphoniae* (1597) (IMSLP).

Parts available: Trumpet 1 and Trumpet 2, each in C and in B♭; Trombone; Bass Trombone.

TRUMPETOWN EDITION

TE-011

Arrangement after M. Rondeau, IMSLP (Werner Icking Music Collection), CC BY 3.0.

PREFACE

The source, the instruments, and the question of dynamics

The source

Andrea Gabrieli, the Venetian composer and organist who was the uncle and teacher of Giovanni Gabrieli, died in 1585. A Venetian print of 1605, *Canzoni alla francese et ricercari ariosi, tabulate per sonar sopra istromenti da tasti … libro quinto*, contains this canzona. Its canzonas are keyboard scores of French chansons: Pierre Pidoux, who edited the volume, observes that Gabrieli "adheres quite closely to the vocal settings" and adds only "sundry instrumental ornaments."[1] David Bryant's work-list in *Grove Music Online* names no model, but it is Thomas Crecquillon's four-voice chanson *Pour ung plaisir qui si peu dure*, printed by Tielman Susato in Antwerp in 1543: the opening of the arrangement agrees with the chanson note for note, in all four voices and at the same pitch.[2]

The arranger issued his version simply as a "Canzona Francese" by Andrea Gabrieli, without naming the piece or its source. The present editor has identified it by comparison with Pidoux's edition, where it is headed "Canzon Francese deta POUR UNG PLAISIR." The bass states the subject alone, the tenor answers at the fifth above a semibreve later, and the alto and soprano follow in the same order and at the same pitches in both texts, and both close with a repeated final section with first and second endings. The arranger's text is much plainer than Gabrieli's: the running quavers and semiquavers of the keyboard score are largely absent, so that it stands nearer to the four-voice chanson than to the tabulation.

The question of dynamics

Pidoux's edition, which marks its own additions, prints no dynamic indications, and the arrangement used for the musical text has none. Silence in a source of this period would not, in any case, be evidence that the music was played at one level. As Matthias Thiemel puts it in *Grove Music Online*, dynamic variation "can normally be assumed even when indications for it are mainly or even entirely absent from the notation," and already in the Renaissance "dynamic values were reflected in changes in the number of voices and their registers."[3] Andrea's nephew Giovanni is the best witness. In the *Sacrae symphoniae* of 1597 he printed the words *Pian* and *Forte* in the parts of the *Sonata pian e forte* (Plate 1), and the placement is systematic: a single choir sounding alone is marked *pian*, and the two choirs together are marked *forte*. Dynamic level follows the number of choirs sounding.

Michael Praetorius, writing in 1619 for German musicians learning the new Italian music, confirms the principle. The Italians, he reports, mark *forte* and *piano* in their parts "because of the changes in both voices and choirs," a practice he approves, provided it is used with moderation.[4] The instruments were equal to it. Girolamo Dalla Casa, the first director of instrumental music at San Marco, wrote in 1584 that the cornett "is played piano and forte and in every sort of key, just as the voice." Jamie Savan, who translates the passage, suggests that the two words described tone quality, soft and hard, as well as level.[5]

Every dynamic in this score is therefore editorial, every one is printed in square brackets, and each is justified in the Commentary. The edition follows the practice Thomas Hiebert singled out for praise, in which editorial suggestions are "clearly differentiated" from the source.[6] Players who prefer the bare text can ignore the brackets.

1 David Bryant, "Gabrieli, Andrea," *Grove Music Online* (2001; this version 25 February 2021), work-list, instrumental (RISM 1605[18], "Pour ung plaisir, PC i, 27"), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.40692. Pierre Pidoux, ed., *Andrea Gabrieli: Canzonen und Ricercari ariosi* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, [1952]), BA 1782, preface (signed Montreux-Territet, summer 1952) and 27–28. Pidoux describes his source as Vol. V of the original edition (1605), used in photographs supplied by the Stadtbibliothek Augsburg.

2 Thomas Crecquillon, *Pour ung plaisir qui si peu dure*, in *Premier livre des chansons a quatre parties* (Antwerp: Tielman Susato, 1543), no. 26; consulted in the edition by Daniel van Gilst, Polyphonies vocales de la Renaissance EN 255-6 (2015), 3 (IMSLP 399861).

3 Matthias Thiemel, "Dynamics," *Grove Music Online* (2001; bibliography updated 2013), §1, https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.08458. Thiemel cites Josquin's *Missa "Pange lingua"*, where paired imitation builds from two voices to four.

4 Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma musicum III* (Wolfenbüttel, 1619), trans. and ed. Jeffery T. Kite-Powell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); quoted from Hans Lampl, trans., "Praetorius on Performance: Excerpts from *Syntagma Musicum III*," selected with commentary by S. E. Plank, *Historic Brass Society Journal* 6 (1994): 244–68, at 248–49.

5 Girolamo Dalla Casa, *Il vero modo di diminuir* (Venice: Angelo Gardano, 1584): "Questo stromento si adopera piano, & forte, & in ogni sorte di Tuono, si come fa la voce"; trans. Jamie Savan, "Unlocking the Mysteries of the Venetian Cornett: *ad imitar piu la voce humana*," *Historic Brass Society Journal* 28 (2016): 31–56, at 50. On Dalla Casa's post see Selfridge-Field, "Bassano and the Orchestra," 153.

6 Thomas Hiebert, review of *Salzburger Hornduette*, ed. Johannes Brand, *Historic Brass Society Newsletter* 10 (1997): 38.

Principles of the editorial dynamics

Giovanni Gabrieli's *Sonata pian e forte* is written for two choirs; this canzona is a keyboard score of a four-voice chanson. The edition extends the principle of the sonata to a single four-voice texture by analogy, and states openly that it does so. The rules are those of the first volume of this series (TE-001), applied to a canzona built from sharply contrasted sections.

Texture determines level. Where voices drop out and a new point of imitation is entered by single voices, the level is [*p*] or [*mf*]. Where all four parts join in rhythmically unified writing, it is [*f*]. Where the scoring alone produces the increase, as in the opening exposition, no marking is printed; [*f*] appears only where the voices also move together.

Changes of level fall at the seams. Changes of level fall at cadences and at the start of new points of imitation, not in the middle of a phrase. Where a voice runs on across a cadence, its marking is placed at the start of its next phrase. This is not a claim that the music was played in flat blocks of sound. Thiemel calls the twentieth-century idea of "terrace dynamics" erroneous, and the period sources describe the swelling and fading of the voice and of wind instruments: Caccini's *crescere e scemare della voce*, and Fantini's instruction of 1638 that long notes on the trumpet be held "in a singing fashion," swelling to the middle of the note and fading again.[7] The brackets mark only the level from which such shaping starts. No hairpins are printed; the shaping is left to the players.

The opening. The subject enters in pairs, as in the chanson: bass trombone (bar 1) and trombone (bar 1, beat 3), then second trumpet (bar 3) and first trumpet (bar 3, beat 3). Each entry is [*mf*]; the growth from two parts to four is written into the scoring, and nothing further is marked before the repeated section.

The repeated section. It opens with the three upper parts alone, the bass trombone silent (bars 26–27): [*p*]. All four return to [*mf*] with the new point at bar 28, beat 3. The repeat is not an echo; the markings are the same both times.

The close. From bar 31 the four parts move largely together, in minims and repeated notes, to the final cadence: [*f*].

Balance on modern instruments

The trumpet and trombone of today are louder and more brilliant than the cornett and sackbut, and the cornett in particular was prized for its likeness to the human voice. The bracketed dynamics should therefore be read as relationships, not as absolute levels. A bracketed [*f*] in this music is the full, rounded sound of a cornett and sackbut ensemble, not a modern orchestral forte. Period-instrument players have argued for more range, not less: the cornettist Jean Tubéry, recalling "what Dalla Casa says about playing loud and softly," suggested that players "can go further in that direction."[8] Modern players should explore the full range between [*p*] and [*f*] while keeping the relationships between the parts.

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7 Thiemel, "Dynamics," §§1–3; Giulio Caccini, *Le nuove musiche* (Florence, 1602), preface, ed. H. Wiley Hitchcock (Madison: A-R Editions, 1970; 2nd ed., Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2009); Girolamo Fantini, *Modo per imparare a sonare di tromba* (Frankfurt, 1638), 3, as translated in Steven E. Plank, "Trumpet and Horn," in *A Performer's Guide to Seventeenth-Century Music*, ed. Stewart Carter, rev. and expanded by Jeffery Kite-Powell, 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 143–44. A sign for the swell and decay of a single note appears in print only later, in Domenico Mazzocchi's madrigals of 1638.

8 Susan Smith, "A Cacophony of Cornettists," *Historic Brass Society Newsletter* 9 (1996): 26–32, at 28. Conversation with Michael Collver, Bruce Dickey, Stephen Escher, Douglas Kirk, Jean Tubéry, and Jeremy West.

Dynamics in the hands of players

Musicians of Giovanni Gabrieli's generation added dynamics to his music where the print had none. In a score book begun in 1599, the Augsburg composer and teacher Adam Gumpelzhaimer copied Gabrieli's ten-voice motet *Domine exaudi orationem meam* from the *Sacrae symphoniae* of 1597. The book names its players, on instruments that include cornetts, trombones, and a bassoon, and Gumpelzhaimer supplied dynamic indications throughout, alternating *Pian* and *Forte*. Richard Charteris, who describes the source, reads it as "a record of how the instrumentalists treated this work."[9] Bruce Dickey notes that *piano* and *forte* in music of the period usually mark echo effects or the contrast of tutti and solo sections, and Gary Towne writes that dynamic markings of the period "merely signal to players the size of the ensemble playing at any given moment," and warns against over-interpreting them.[10]

The instruments and their model

In their practical guide of 1975 to Giovanni Gabrieli's instrumental music, Clifford Bartlett and Peter Holman observe that he and his contemporaries treated the cornett and the violin as alternatives, and conclude that it is "far better to replace them with violins than with anachronistic oboes or trumpets."[11] This edition answers the objection in how the trumpets are played. Dickey, writing for players of the cornett and sackbut, names the human voice as "the principal model (and not the modern trumpet or trombone!)" for tone, articulation, and dynamic range.[12]

Bartlett and Holman call the organ "the obvious accompanying instrument" in church music of the period.[13] For a canzona printed for keyboard, an organ doubling the bass line joins the brass to the kind of instrument it was printed for.

Articulation

Dickey identifies articulation as the area in which modern and historical playing differ most. Wind players of the period used pairs of unequal syllables, *te che*, *te re*, and *le re*, in a kind of double tonguing whose aim was not evenness but inequality: metrically strong, consonant "good" notes slightly stressed, weak and passing "bad" notes unstressed. Dickey recommends a compound tonguing for "all notes of the speed of eighth notes or faster," with repeated and leaping notes single-tongued; for *re* he suggests the soft *t* of a relaxed American "water."[14] Here the arranger keeps the note values of Pidoux's edition, so Dickey's eighth notes are the quavers of this score.

Tempo

Pidoux's edition prints the canzona under the sign ¢ in breve bars, with semiminims and fusae in the running passages. George Houle explains that music in "canzona style," notated in small values, was beaten with the tactus on the semibreve, taken slower than music notated in long values, "so as not to rush the fast notes"; he cites Marin Mersenne's normative tactus of 1636, "about MM 60."[15] The arranger keeps Pidoux's values and bars in semibreves, so one bar of this score is one tactus, and his *Moderato*, minim = c. 70, puts the tactus at about 35 a minute, well below Mersenne's norm. The figure is the arranger's. Even the slower canzona tactus need not be so broad, and players may prefer a minim of about 100 to 120.

9 Richard Charteris, "The Performance of Giovanni Gabrieli's Vocal Works: Indications in the Early Sources," *Music & Letters* 71, no. 3 (1990): 336–51, at 342. The score book is Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Mus. ms. 40028.

10 Bruce Dickey, "Ornamentation in Early Seventeenth-Century Italian Music," in *A Performer's Guide to Seventeenth-Century Music*, ed. Stewart Carter, rev. and expanded by Jeffery Kite-Powell, 2nd ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 308; Gary Towne, "Choral Music in Italy and the Germanic Lands," ibid., 63.

11 Clifford Bartlett and Peter Holman, "Giovanni Gabrieli: A Guide to the Performance of His Instrumental Music," *Early Music* 3, no. 1 (1975): 25–32, at 27.

12 Bruce Dickey, "Cornett and Sackbut," in *A Performer's Guide to Seventeenth-Century Music*, 109.

13 Bartlett and Holman, "Giovanni Gabrieli," 27.

14 Dickey, "Cornett and Sackbut," 111–12.

15 George Houle, "Meter and Tempo," in *A Performer's Guide to Seventeenth-Century Music*, 353.

Christopher Delgado
New Jersey, November 2026

COMMENTARY

The editorial dynamics, bar by bar

Sources. *P* = *Canzoni alla francese et ricercari ariosi, tabulate per sonar sopra istromenti da tasti … libro quinto* (Venice, 1605), the keyboard source, consulted only in Pidoux's edition (see Preface, n. 1). *SS* = Giovanni Gabrieli, *Sacrae symphoniae* (Venice: Angelo Gardano, 1597), *Sonata pian e forte*, cited as the model for texture-based dynamics. *T* = the modern arrangement used for the musical text (see imprint).
Abbreviations. Tpt 1, Tpt 2 = Trumpets (parts in C and in B♭); Tbn = Trombone; B Tbn = Bass Trombone (in the score: Tpt. in C 1, Tpt. in C 2, Tbn., B. Tbn.); all = all four parts. Bar numbers follow *T*.

Bar	Part	Marking and rationale
1, 3	B Tbn, Tbn, Tpt 2, Tpt 1	[*mf*] at each entry of the subject (B Tbn bar 1, Tbn bar 1 beat 3, Tpt 2 bar 3, Tpt 1 bar 3 beat 3). The texture grows from two parts to four; nothing further is marked before bar 26.
26	Tpt 1, Tpt 2, Tbn	[*p*]. The three upper parts alone at the start of the repeated section, B Tbn silent until bar 28 (*SS*: one choir alone = *pian*). The marking applies on the repeat as well.
28	all	[*mf*] at the new point, bar 28 beat 3, where B Tbn enters.
31	all	[*f*]. Tpt 2, Tbn, and B Tbn bar 31 beat 3, Tpt 1 bar 31 beat 4, after its rest. The four parts move largely together to the final cadence (*SS*: both choirs together = *forte*). The second-time bar keeps this level.

Markings deliberately not added

No hairpins (see Preface). No echo for the repeat of bars 26–38 (see Preface). No dynamic for the final fermata. No articulation has been added to *T*.

Editorial method

This is a performing edition. The musical text is a modern arrangement for brass quartet (see the imprint page) of a keyboard piece. Its distribution of the keyboard texture into four parts, its omission of most of the keyboard diminutions, barring (semibreve bars for the breve bars of Pidoux's edition), tempo indication (*Moderato*, minim = c. 70), and breath marks belong to the arrangement. At the opening its pitch level and note values agree with Pidoux's edition. The text has not been collated with the 1605 print; it agrees with Crecquillon's chanson at the opening and has not been collated with it further. The present editor's contribution is confined to the identification of the piece, the bracketed dynamics, the preface, and the commentary.

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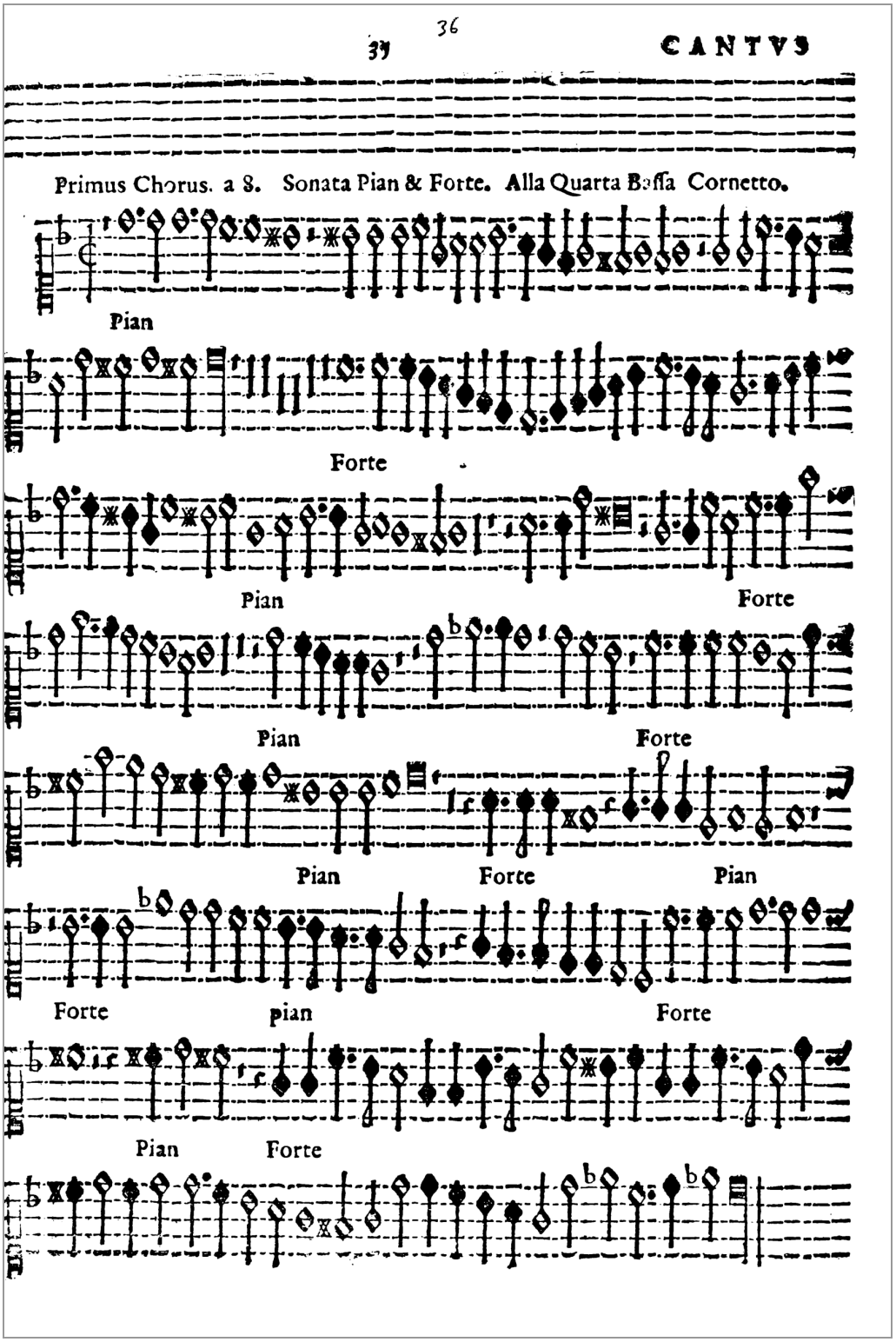
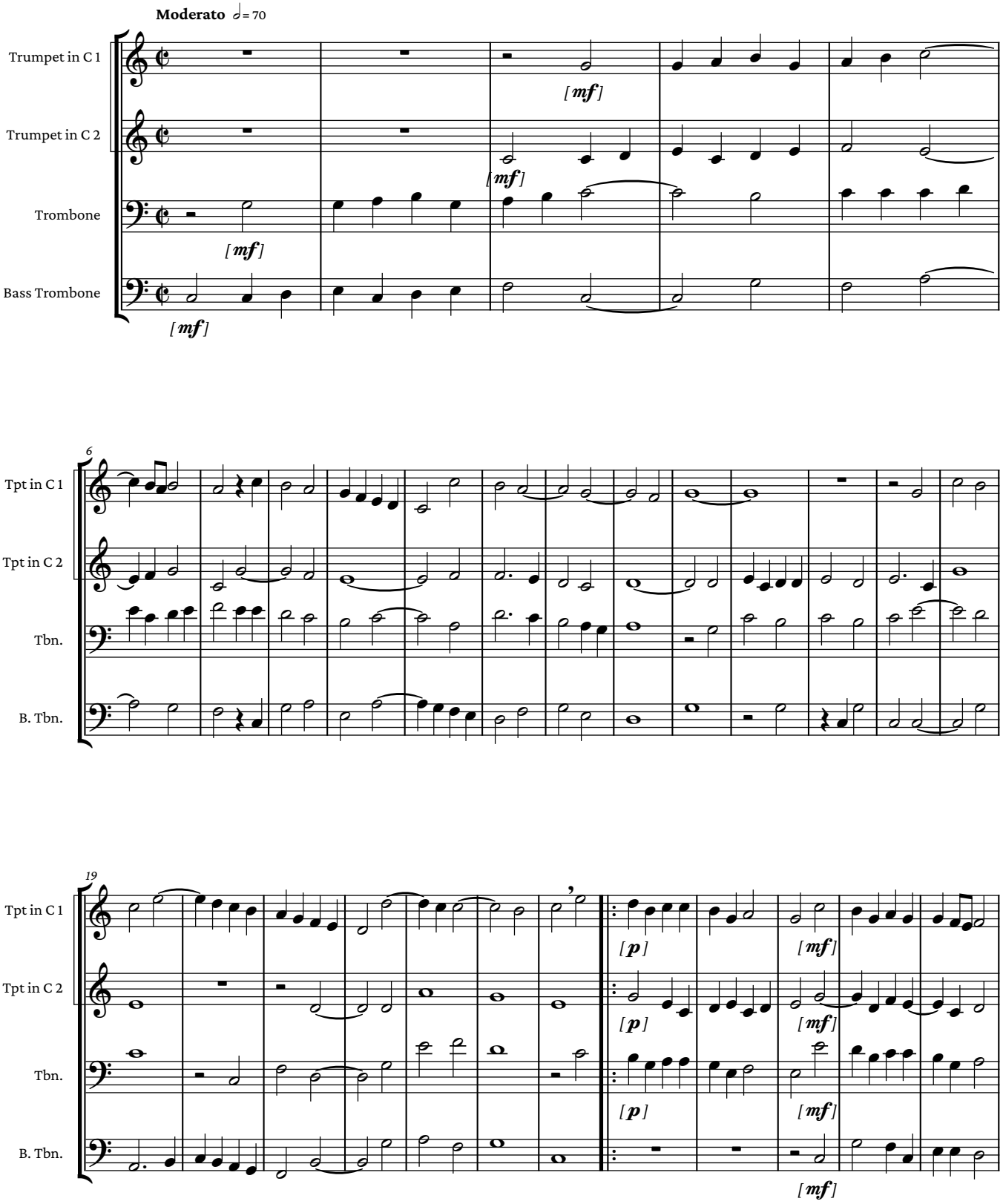


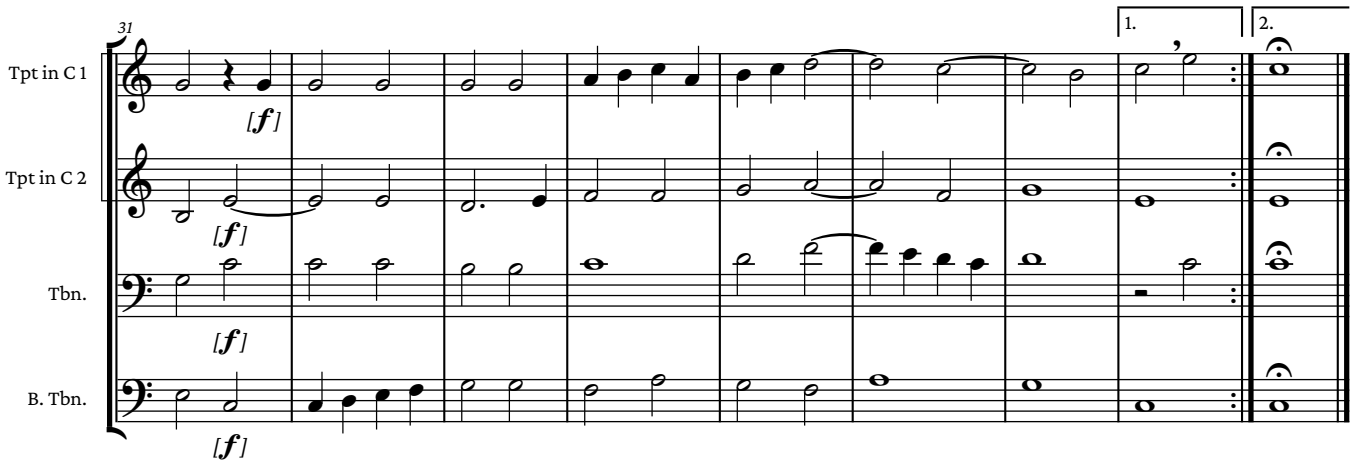
Plate 1. *Gabrieli, Sacrae symphoniae (Venice, 1597), Cantus partbook, Sonata pian & forte, Choir I cornetto part: the printed Pian and Forte mark where this choir plays alone and where both choirs sound. Vienna, ÖNB.*

Canzon francese deta Pour ung plaisir

Andrea Gabrieli (?1532/3–1585)
Edited by Christopher Delgado



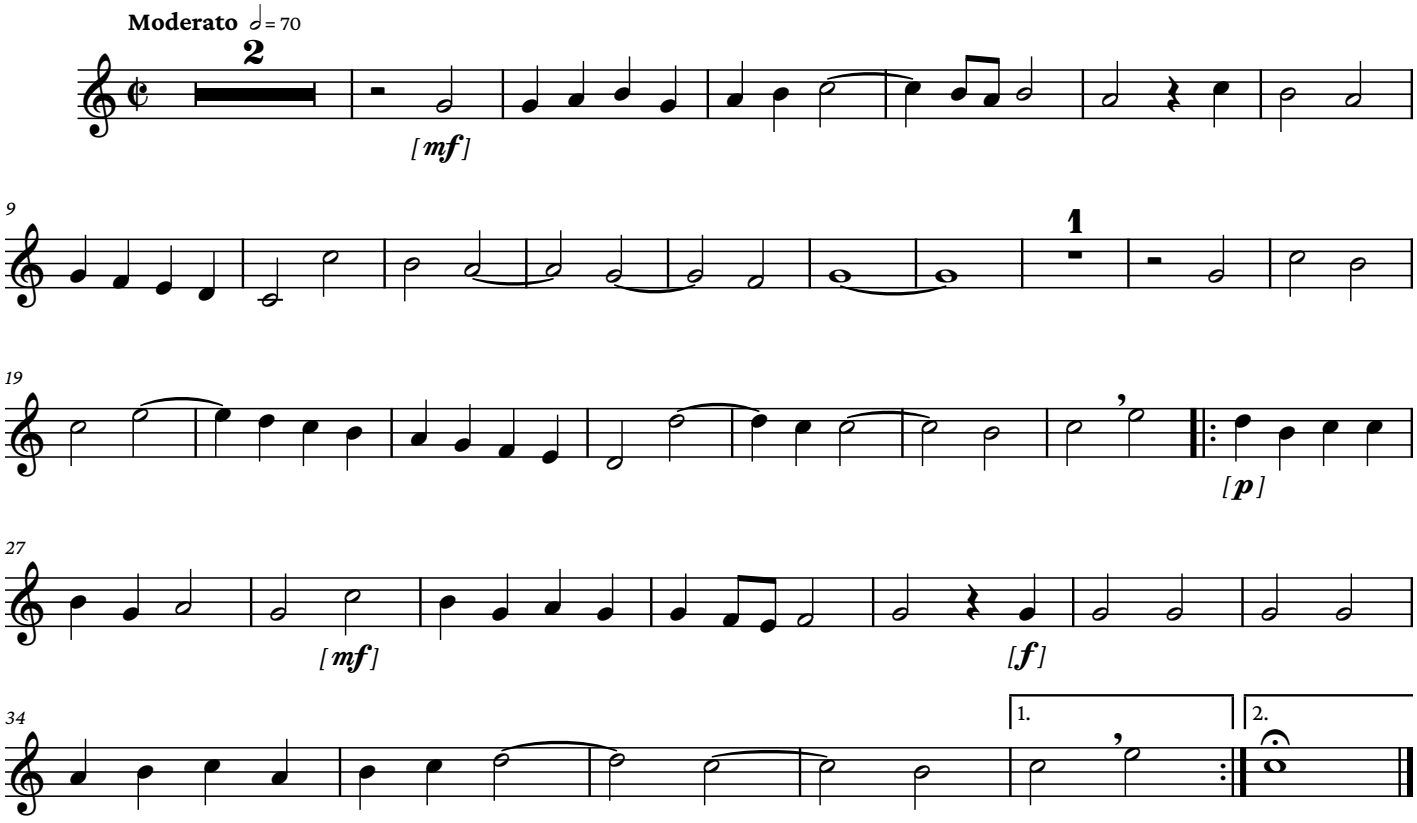
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31
Tpt in C 1
Tpt in C 2
Tbn.
B. Tbn.
[f]
[f]
[f]
[f]
1.
2.

Trumpet 1 in C

Canzon francese deta Pour ung plaisir

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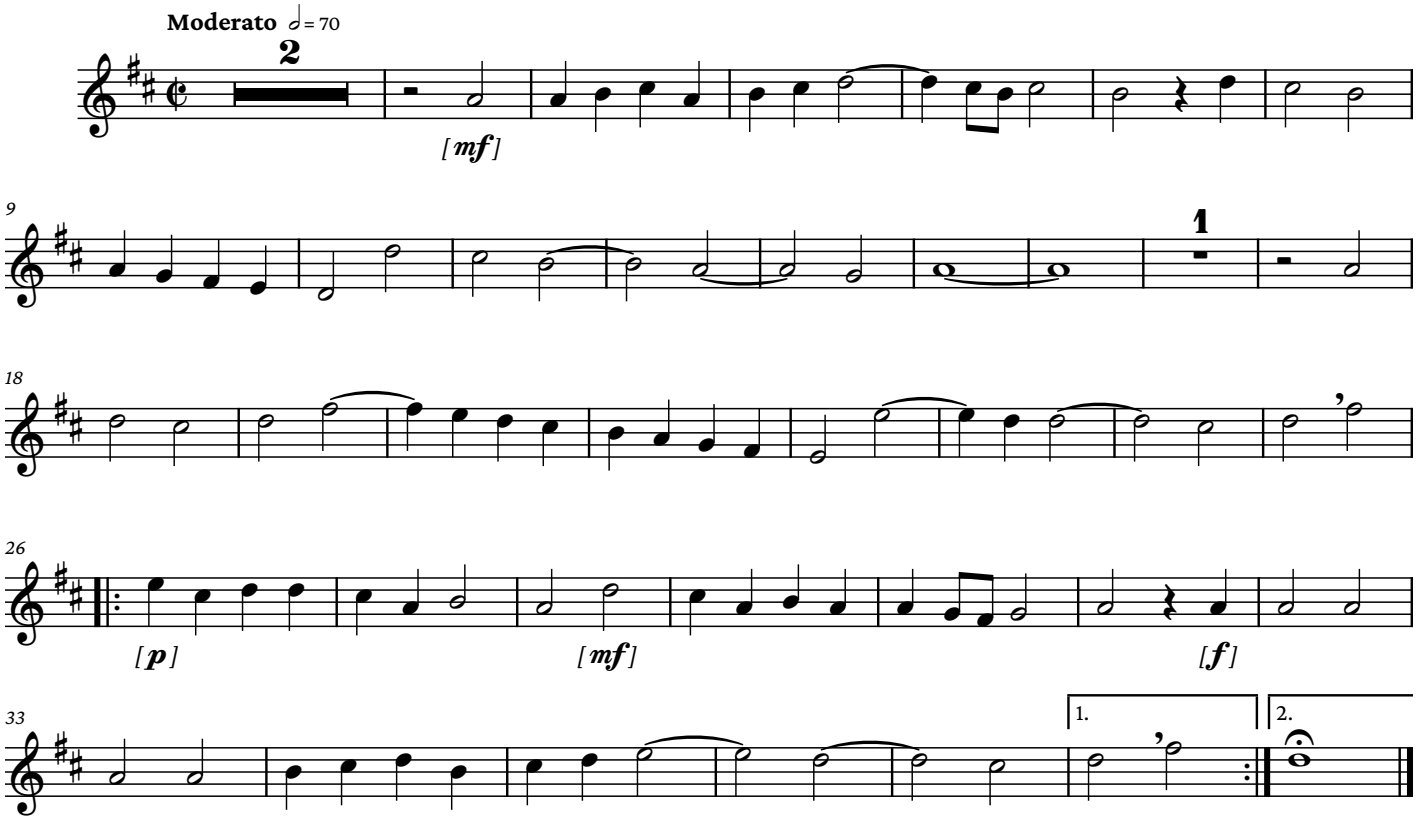


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Trumpet 1 in B ♭

Canzon francese deta Pour ung plaisir

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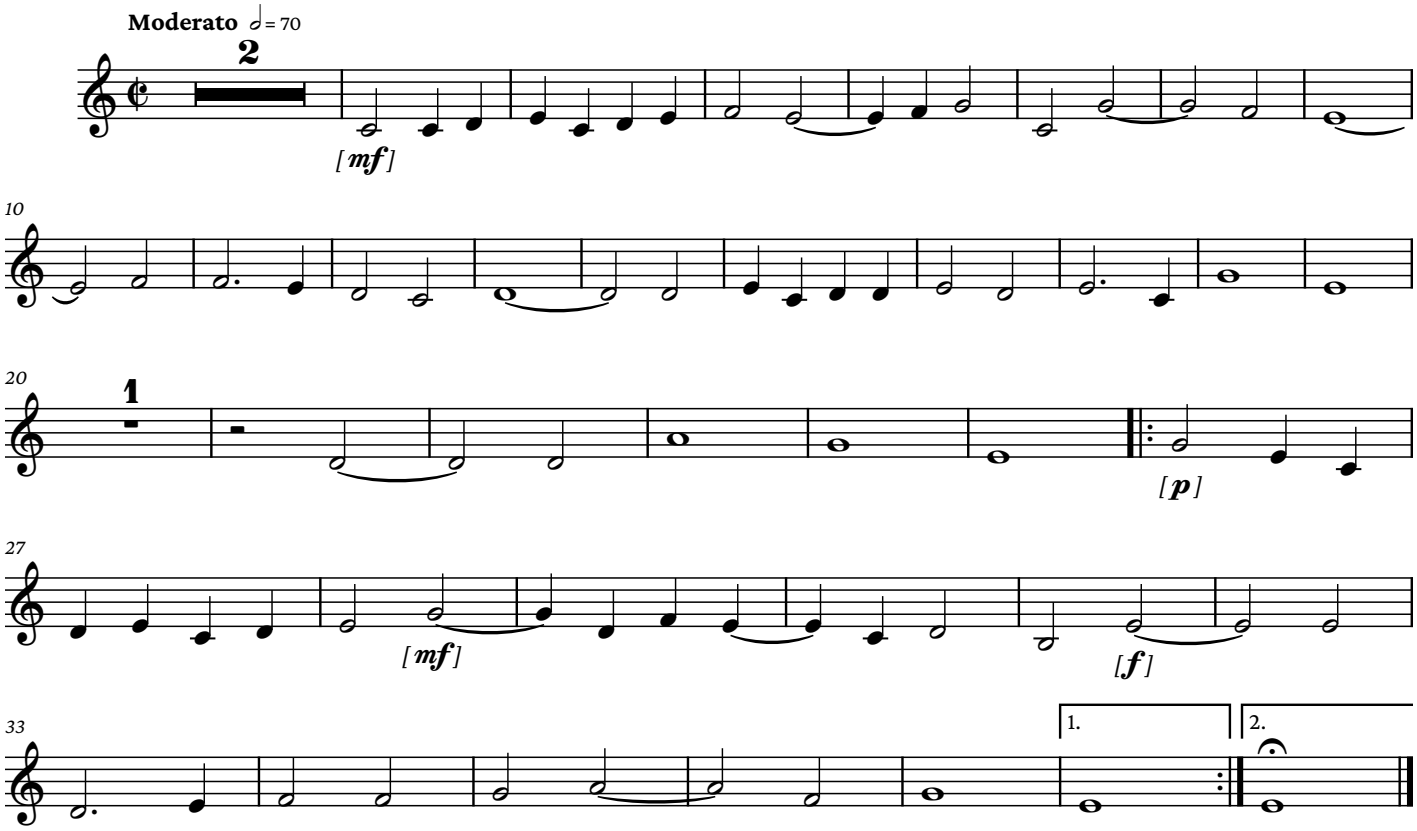


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Trumpet 2 in C

Canzon francese deta Pour ung plaisir

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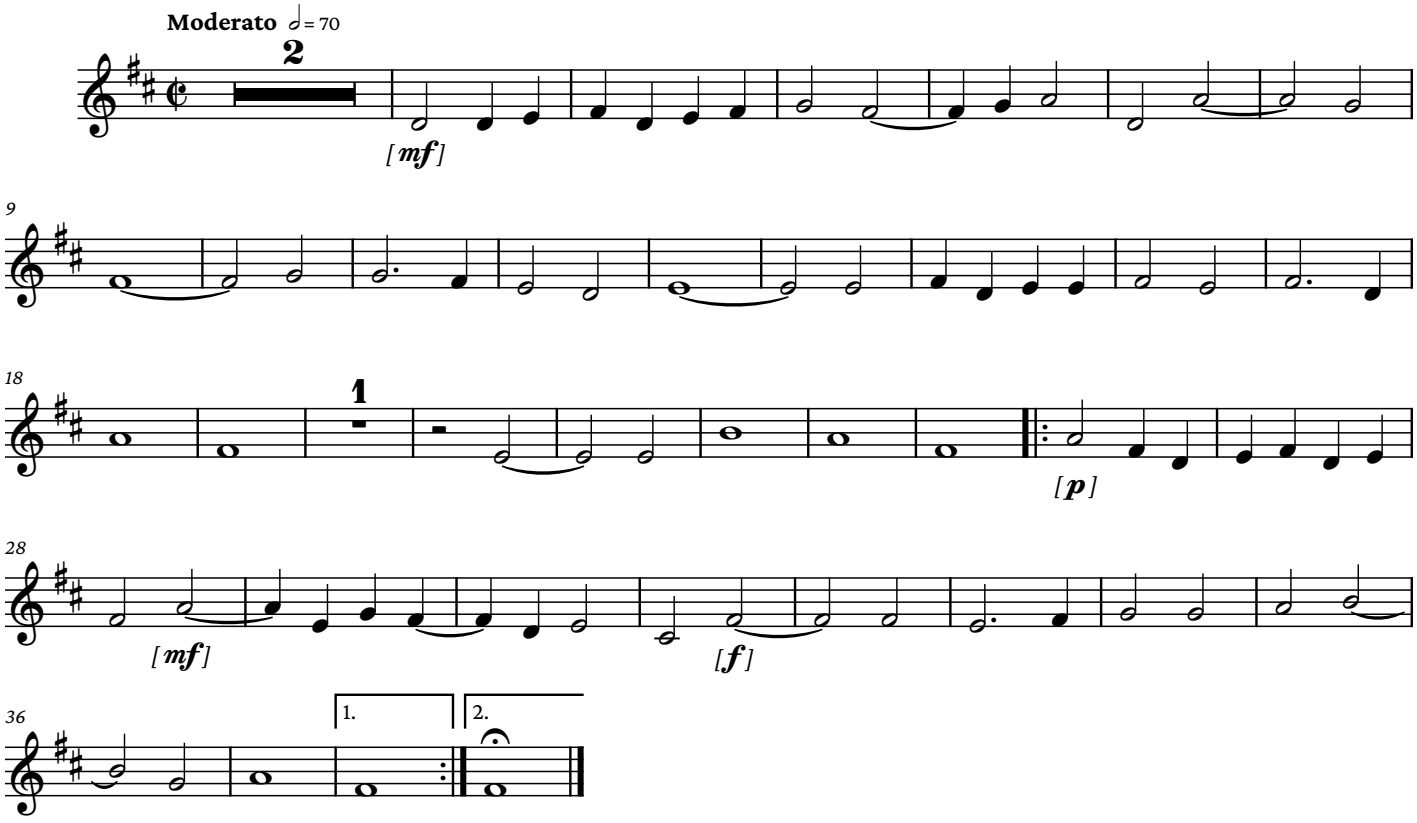


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Trumpet 2 in B ♭

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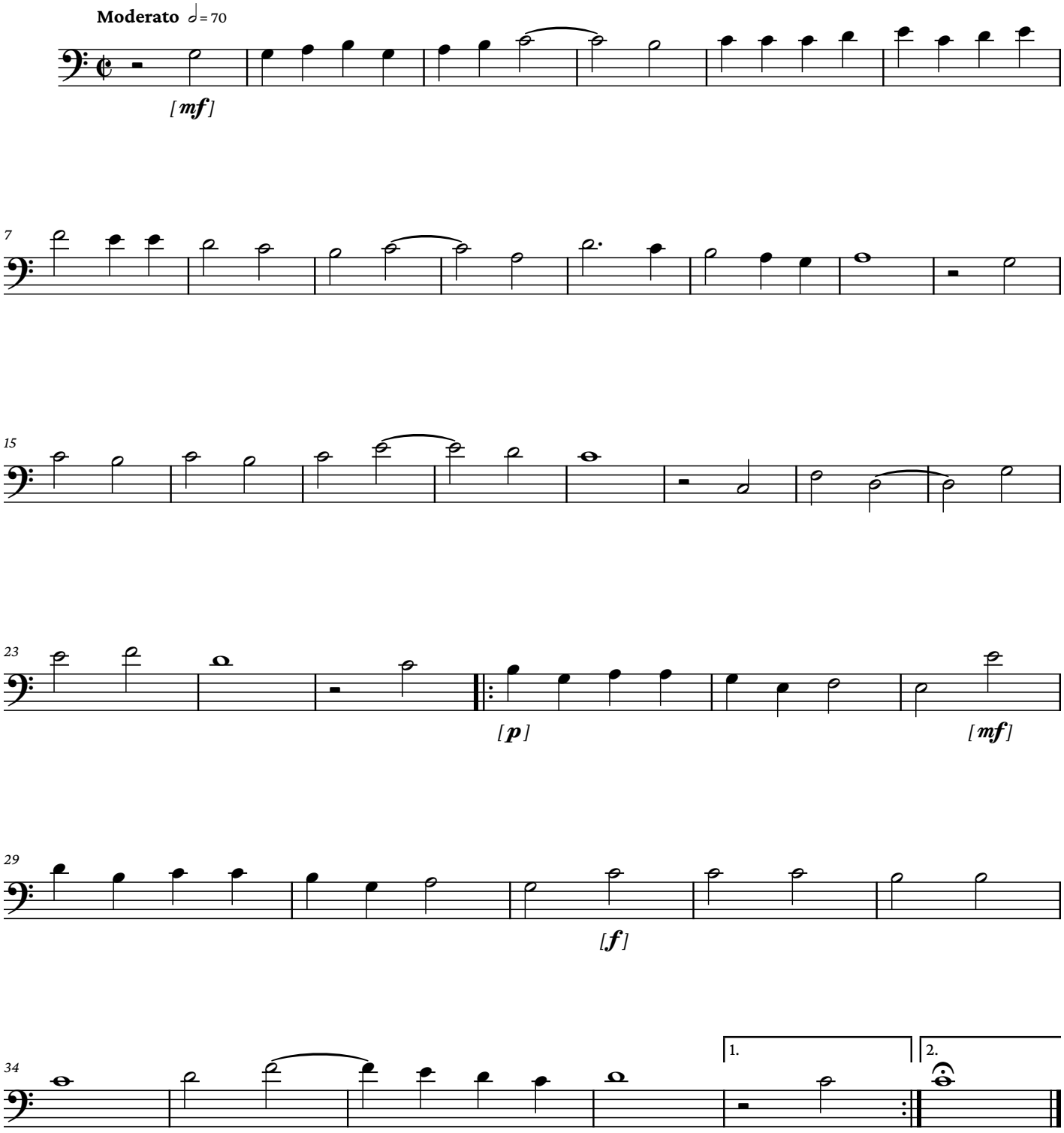


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Trombone

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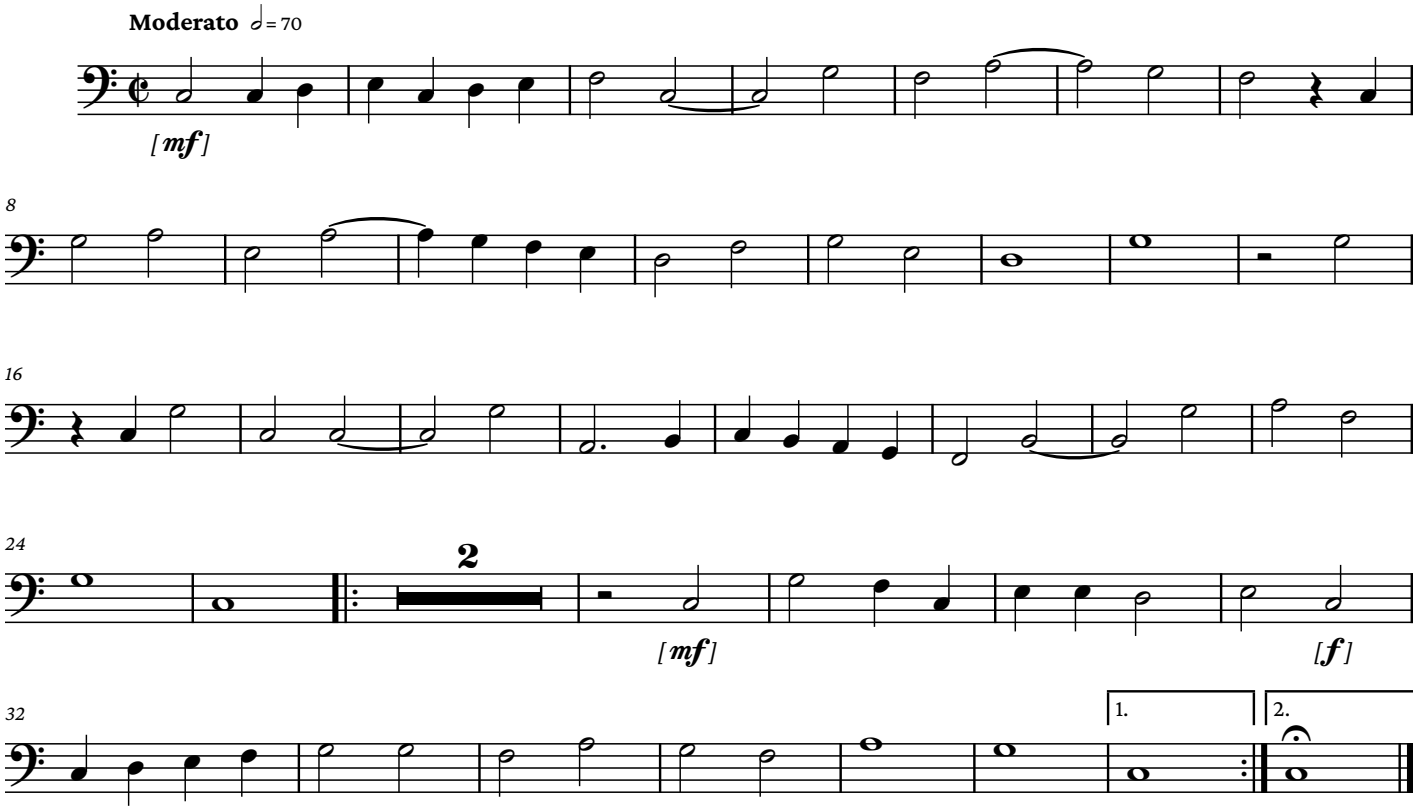


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Bass Trombone

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