How To Create Preludes & Postludes

04:39 in video

1) Choose an organ solo work from your repertoire.

For this step, begin with a piece that you are very comfortable performing. It should be a piece that you have mastered in the past.

2) Identify the melodic theme

Look for the theme that weaves its way through that piece. This theme could be a hymn tune but it does not have to be.

Whether or not it is a popular enough tune that you recognize, go through the score to see where the theme is used. Though it may not be based on any tune that is already known that is fine, as you go through the piece you will see where the theme surfaces throughout.

3) Examine the form and texture of the piece

Some questions to consider:

- Is the texture contrapuntal or chordal in nature?
- Is it in ABA form? Binary Form? Rondo? Through-composed?
- How does it modulate from section to section?
- What kind of accompaniment does the composer use underneath the melody?
- What kind of texture is used in sections where there is no melody?

All of these questions and more will help you to in examining the form and texture. By the time you finish this step, your score should be clearly marked showing the beginnings and endings of each section in the piece.

4) Choose a hymn upon which to base a prelude or postlude

As you get better at this, you can make up your own tune, but using a hymn to begin with will help you to make quicker decisions about harmonic progressions and overall structure.

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5) Create an introduction based on your chosen piece

Beginning with the first section (according to your form analysis that you did in step 3) create your own opening based on the character of the original.

The challenge here is to be able to base it on a particular piece of music without simply copying that piece of music outright…which of course would be plagiarism.

How would this help your week to week preparation if you could get to the point where this process does not just become very quick for you to implement, but you eventually find that with just a few notes in front of you to remind you of your harmonic progressions, you can pretty much improvise a new prelude or postlude. Just think of the time that saves you in the long run. Time that you can spend preparing and mastering new repertoire that helps take your abilities to the next level. Then you can continue this entire process at that new level and eventually, you are at the level of unconscious competence.

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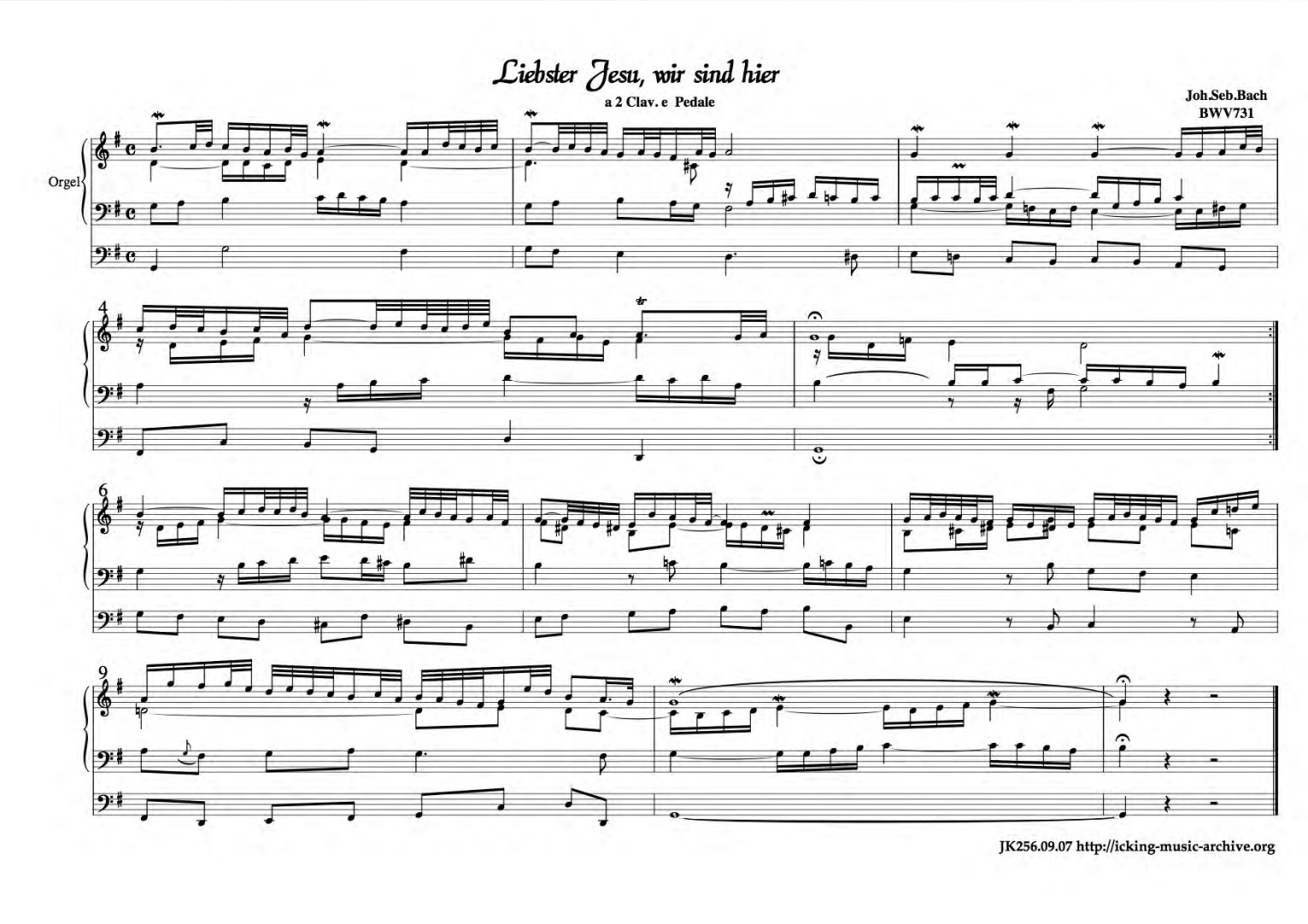
How To Create Preludes & Postludes

The Process in Action - Preludes

07:53 in video

1 - Choice of an organ work from my repertoire:
Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier, BWV 731 - J. S. Bach



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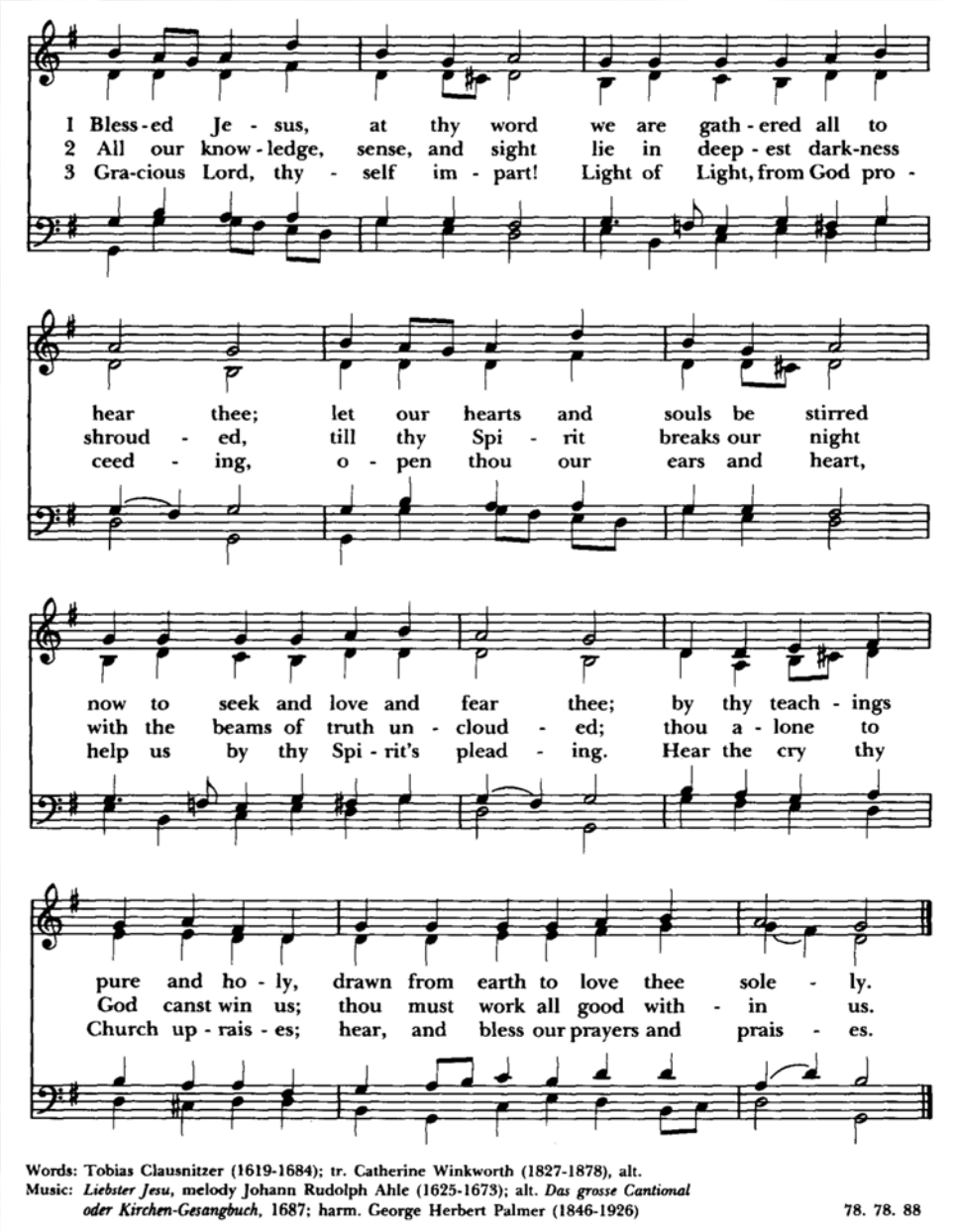
How To Create Preludes & Postludes

The Process in Action - Preludes

2 - Identify the melodic theme

In this case it is a straightforward step in that one can examine the chorale itself (the example below shows the hymn tune that the prelude is based on). Now it would be easier to see how Bach treats the theme in the prelude.



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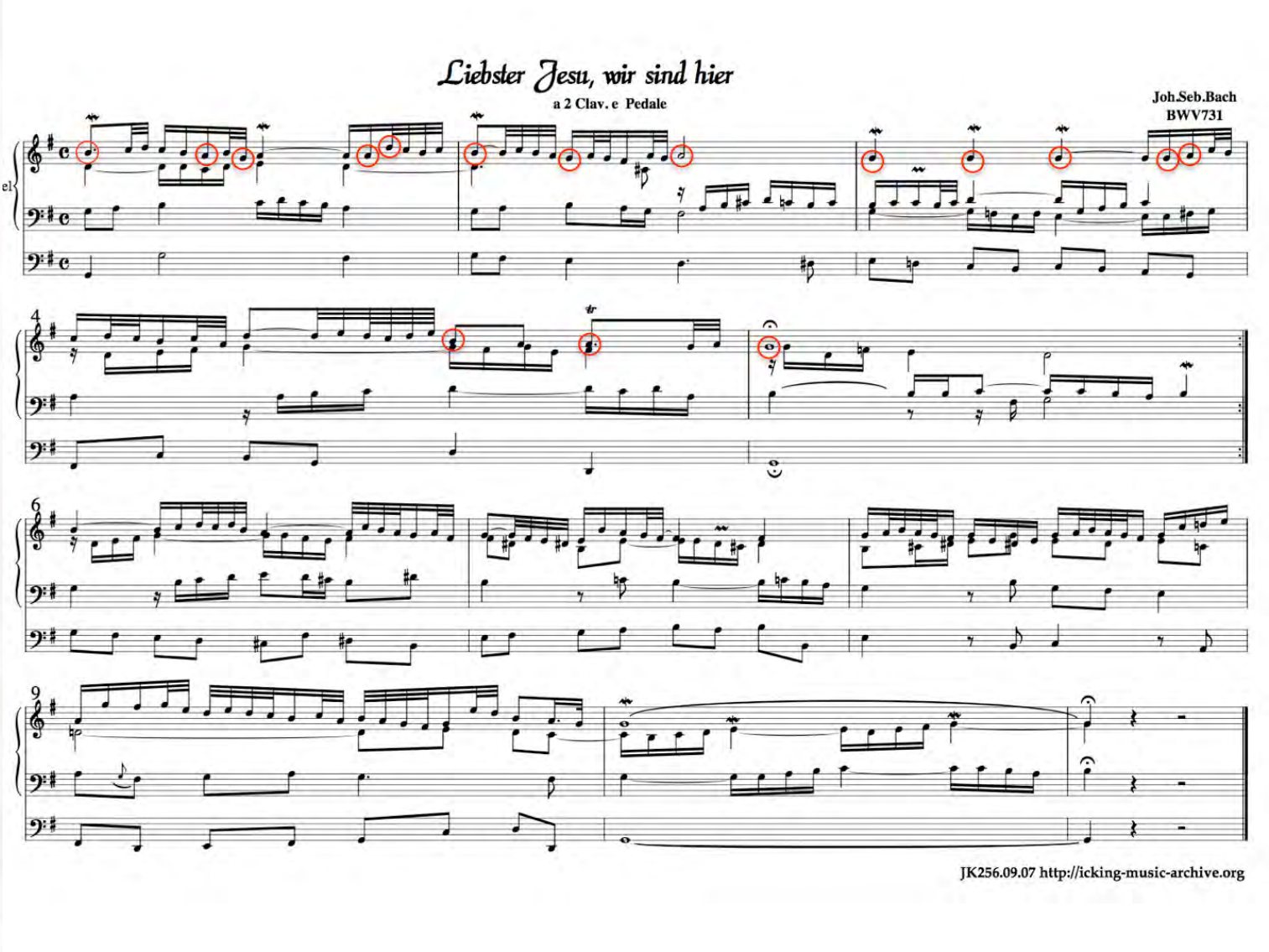
How To Create Preludes & Postludes

The Process in Action - Preludes

2 - Identify the melodic theme

You can see elements of the hymn theme coming through clearly in the first half of the chorale prelude. In the second half, however, it is not as obvious.

Remember, using the original score is meant to be a guide and does not have to be followed strictly. The form and textures could be very helpful in guiding you in your own efforts.



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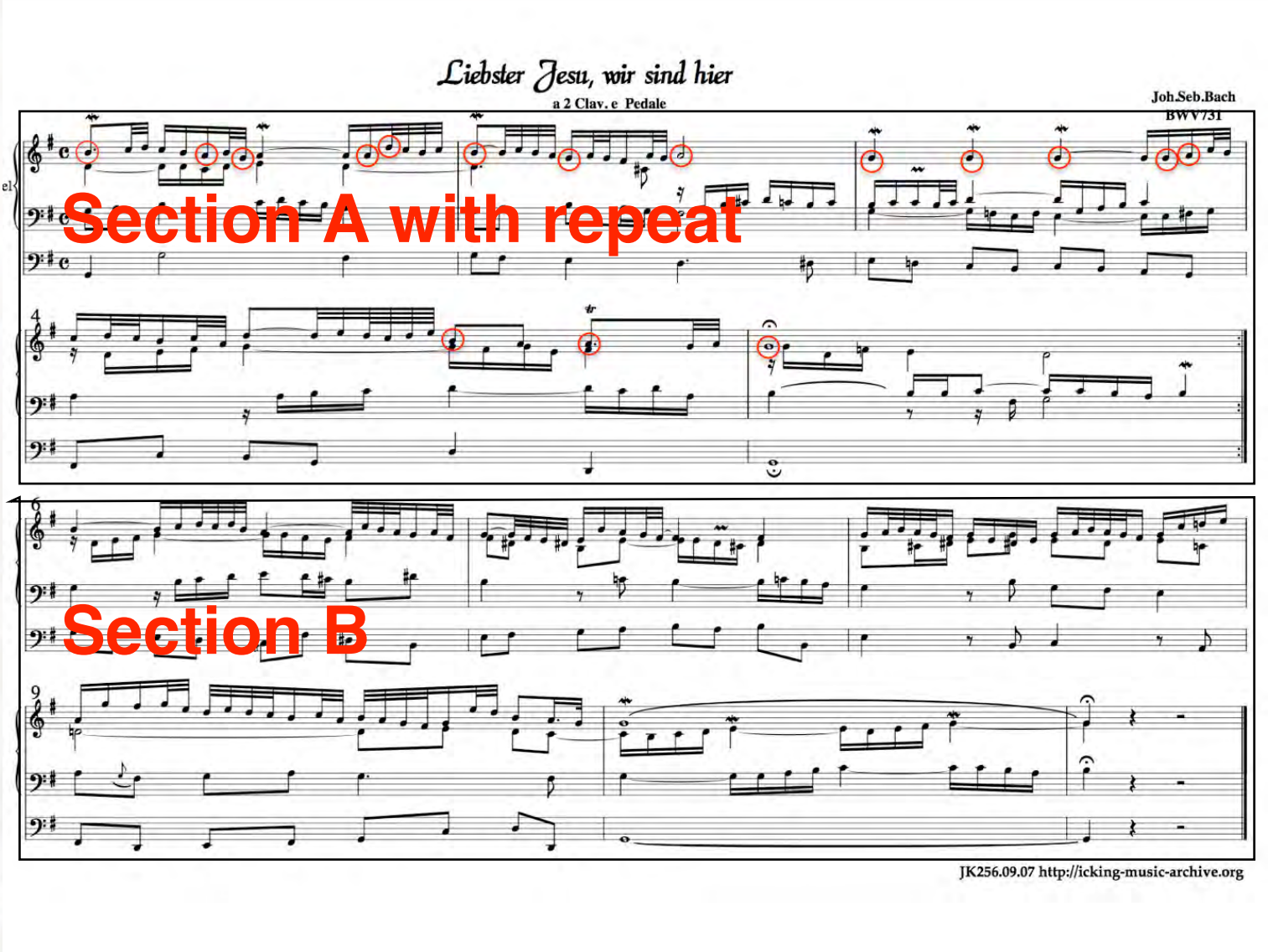
How To Create Preludes & Postludes

The Process in Action - Preludes

3 - Examine the form and texture of the piece

Here you can see that the form is AAB, that is, the first theme lasts for the first 5 measures and is repeated, then there is a new theme for the last 6 measures.
Notice how the form matches that of the hymn which repeats the opening 4 measures and then has a new melody from measures 9 to 12…AAB.
The texture is contrapuntal in nature. Though it is not in strict trio texture, it is definitely leaning towards a more sparse texture with few instaces of block chord use. This choice of texture will inform my arrangement.



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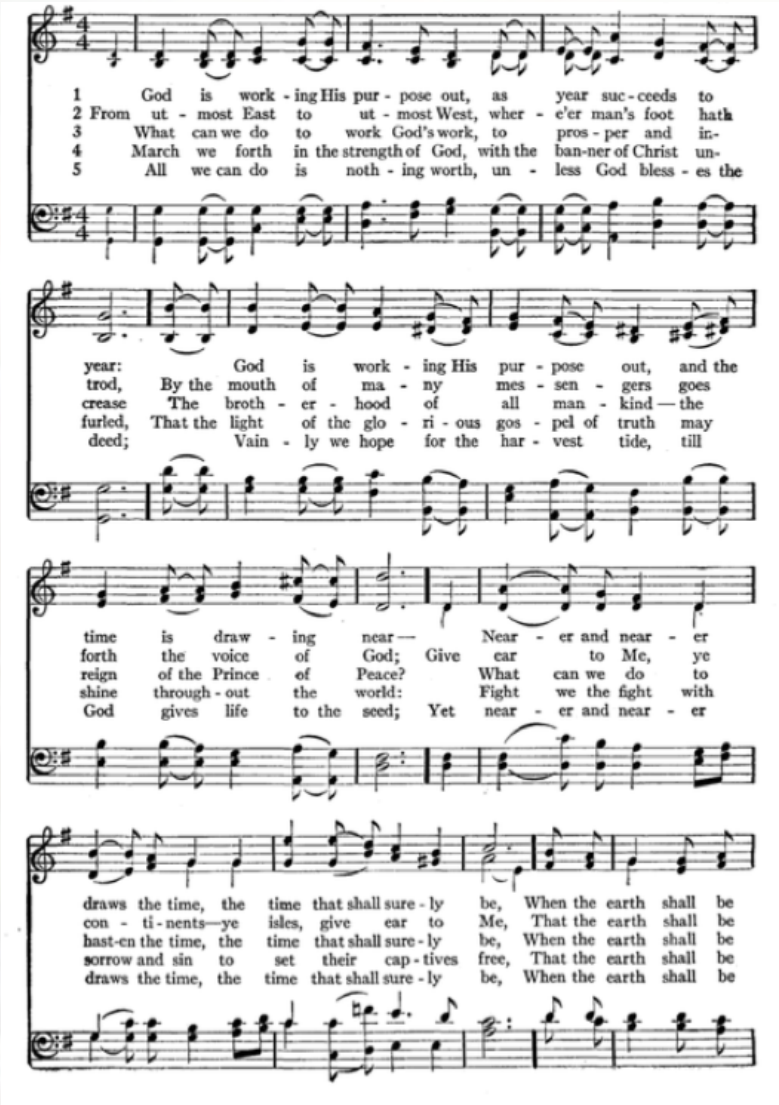
How To Create Preludes & Postludes

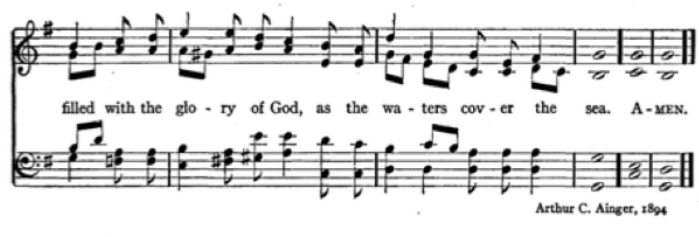
The Process in Action - Preludes

10:34 in video

4 - Choose a hymn upon which to base a prelude or postlude

When taking this step, the main thing to bear in mind is that if your hymn theme is too different in length from the theme of the template work, you may need to resort to using elements of the hymn you have chosen rather than the entire melody.
The best method would be to find a hymn that more closely matches the form of the chorale or theme of the template piece.
In this case, I have chosen a hymn tune that is somewhat close in length though not quite the same form - BENSON.





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The Process in Action - Preludes

11:42 in video

5 - Create an introduction based on your chosen piece

Using Bach's Chorale Prelude as a template, I have woven the hymn tune Benson into a new arrangement suitable for a prelude.

Follow along in the video to examine the choices made in this example:

11:42 - 12:19 in video

Here I cover the first 4 measures of the hymn tune. Notice the similarity in terms of the interaction between the manuals.
As you listen you can spot areas where I use certain motifs straight from Bach's ideas. This should be done in moderation as you challenge yourself to create your own.

12:20 - 12:57 in video

Now measures 5 through 8 of the hymn tune bring the first half of the chorale prelude to a close. The main difference here is that Bach's prelude has the same ending for each half, however, because I need to return to chord 1 for the repeat, my first half will need different endings. Note the new ending at 13:08.

13:17 - 14:28 in video

This section corresponds with the 2nd half of the hymn tune. Note that in order to keep the form similar to the original, I repeated the first half of the hymn tune which is not actually done in the hymn.
This goes to show that you can be creative with matching hymn choices with the works of the greats. Yes, it would be most efficient to find a hymn tune that has a true AAB form in this case, but this example shows that one can make some changes to allow for your own choice of hymn tune to fit.
That being said, try not to drift too far from the form of the original especially when first starting out with this exercise.
Note that I also added a short coda to end the piece **14:28 - 14:45 in video**

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How To Create Preludes & Postludes

A quick note about Step 5.

The reason I encourage you to create an introduction is because taking the first section and focusing on getting it right will serve as motivation for completing your arrangement altogether.
So put some effort into the opening of your arrangment and I truly believe that you will be encouraged to see your creation through to the end!

The Process in Action, Part II - Postludes

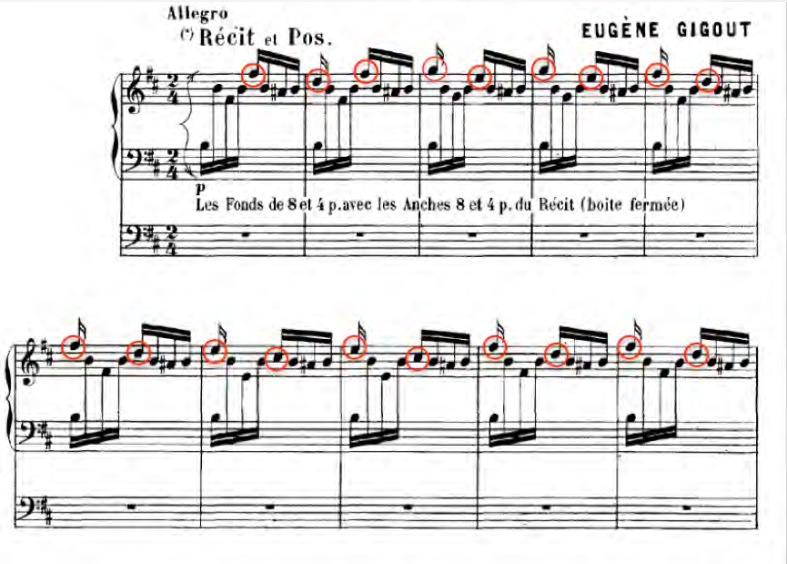
15:16 in video

1 - Choice of an organ work from my repertoire:
Toccata in B minor - Eugène Gigout

Again, this choice falls in to the category of a work that I am very familiar with and that has been mastered. If you do not choose a piece that you can already play well, you are less likely to follow through on this process with enthusiasm.

2 - Identify the melodic theme

This work is not already based on a hymn tune, as in the Chorale Prelude, and the theme is more an example of developing a motif. In this case, the motif is a falling 3rd highlighted below:



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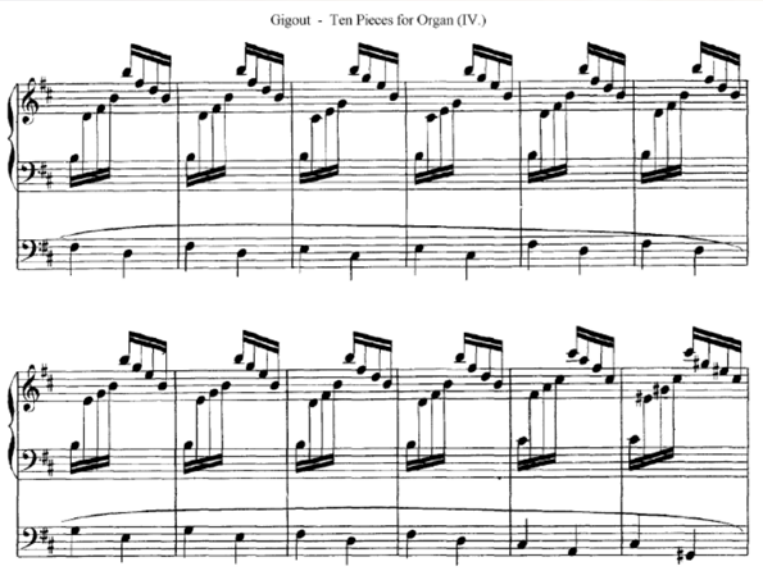
The Process in Action, Part II - Postludes

2 - Identify the melodic theme

Notice how Gigout brings that same idea into the pedals later in the piece:



3 - Examine the form and texture of the piece

This piece has three main sections which can be further broken down into sub sections.

Rather than follow the length of each section rigidly, I am taking the main elements of each section into account and applying them to the new arrangement.
So I adopt the arpeggiated movement with an ongoing 16th note rhythm, however the main difference is that I highlight the melody of the theme I have chosen from the beginning but holding the melody notes across the moving 16ths.

The beauty of arranging in this manner is that one can take liberties like this without having to worry too much about "breaking" anything. The aim of this exercise is to maintain the general stylistic elements of the original and use it as a template to guide your form and texture.

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How To Create Preludes & Postludes

The Process in Action, Part II - Postludes

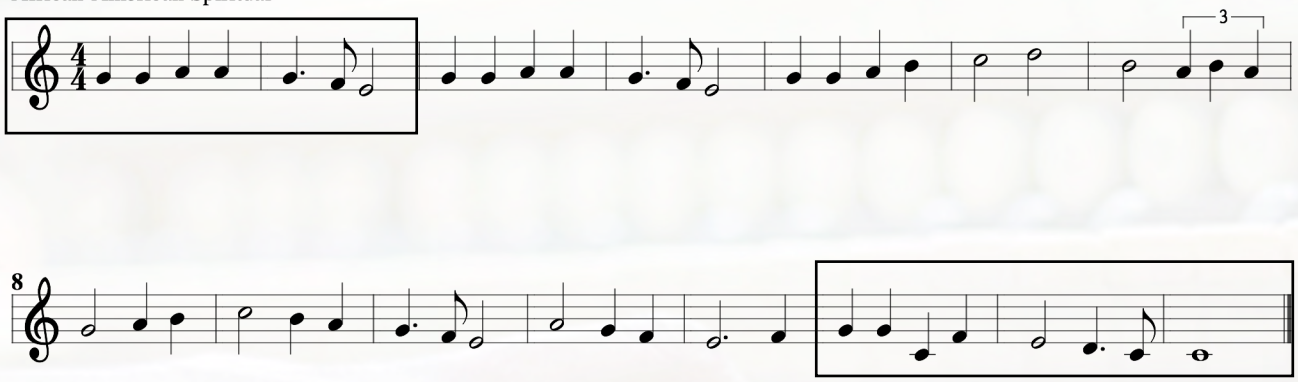
4 - Choose a hymn upon which to base the postlude

I have chosen "We Shall Overcome". Though it bears no striking resemblance to the Gigout theme, the first and final few notes of this tune can be used as motifs in different parts of the arrangement.

16:35 - 17:10 in video

We shall overcome

African-American Spiritual



We shall overcome,(x2)
We shall overcome someday.

Refrain

Oh, deep in my heart
I do believe that
we shall overcome some-day!

We'll walk hand in hand, (x2)
We'll walk hand in hand someday.

Refrain

We shall all be free, (x2)
We shall all be free someday.

Refrain.

We shall live in peace, (x2)
We shall live in peace someday.

Refrain

God will see us through, (x2)
God will see us through someday.

Refrain

African-American Spiritual

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The Process in Action, Part II - Postludes

5 - Create an introduction based on your chosen piece

17:11 in video

The first section of this arrangement lasts for 64 measures, assuming a time signature of 2/4. This section has two sub sections of 32 measures each. Like Gigout, I chose to introduce the pedals at the beginning of the 2nd sub section (at 17:35).

18:01 in video

The second section introduces the idea of more movement in the pedals. The manuals shift to the Great division as well. This section lasts for 32 measures and at the tail end, uses a similar run to introduce the final section (18:25).

The final section is where I have branched away from symmetrical sections. It is 47 measures in length with a few sub sections.

The first sub section at 18:25 in video is 24 measures in length. Then two measures of a rising chordal motif connects us to another sub section of 8 measures (18:25 in video).

The final subsection has similar cascading chords as Gigout uses. The difference here is that I am using more movement in the pedals with the final notes of "We Shall Overcome" which I also use to introduce this very final section. (18:57 in video).

So this example shows you that you can create an arrangement with a similar style to one of your favorites without necessarily mirroring the same length. There are quite a few elements of Gigout's structure that I did not use but the end result is still a short arrangement of "We Shall Overcome" that may be used as a postlude.

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REHARMONIZE
The Big Picture

Segments:

Chord Substitution

- Triads
- 7th chords
- Cadential Points

Hymn Intros and Interludes

- Developing 8 measure passages
- Use of varying styles
- Developing long-form interludes

Preludes and Postludes

- How to examine the original score
- Choosing alternative themes
- Developing arrangements

The course will involve one-on-one sessions as well as weekly group webinars over a period of 8 weeks. The materials will be released gradually to alleviate information overload. They will include video tutorials and exercises.

The next video will describe the course in more detail as well as introduce the bonus features included in this first edition of REHARMONIZE.

If you are interested in being a part of the first class, be sure to sign up at https://blog.seanjacksonmusic.com/reharmonize-course-launch-video-1/reharmonize-course-optin-page/

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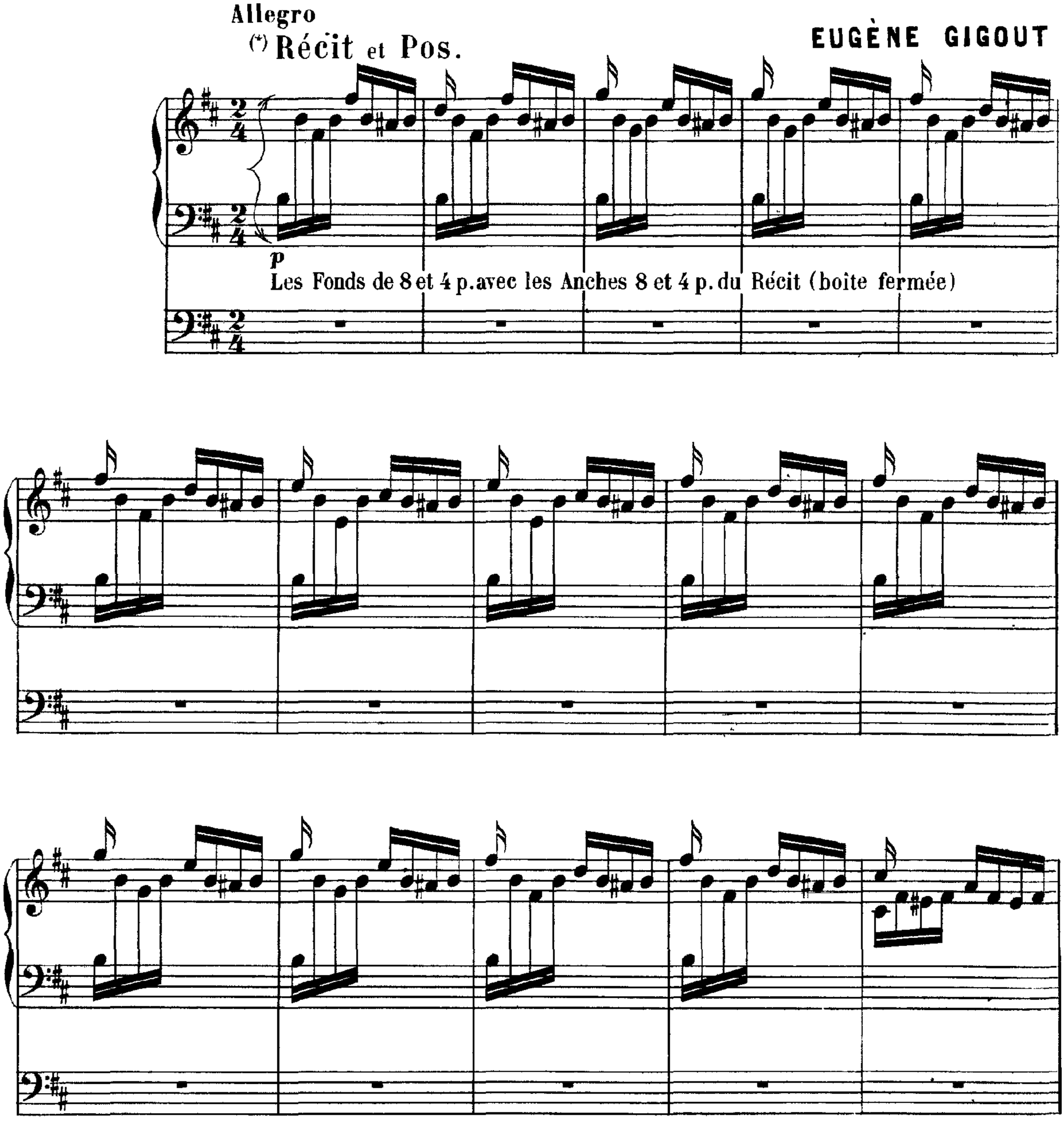
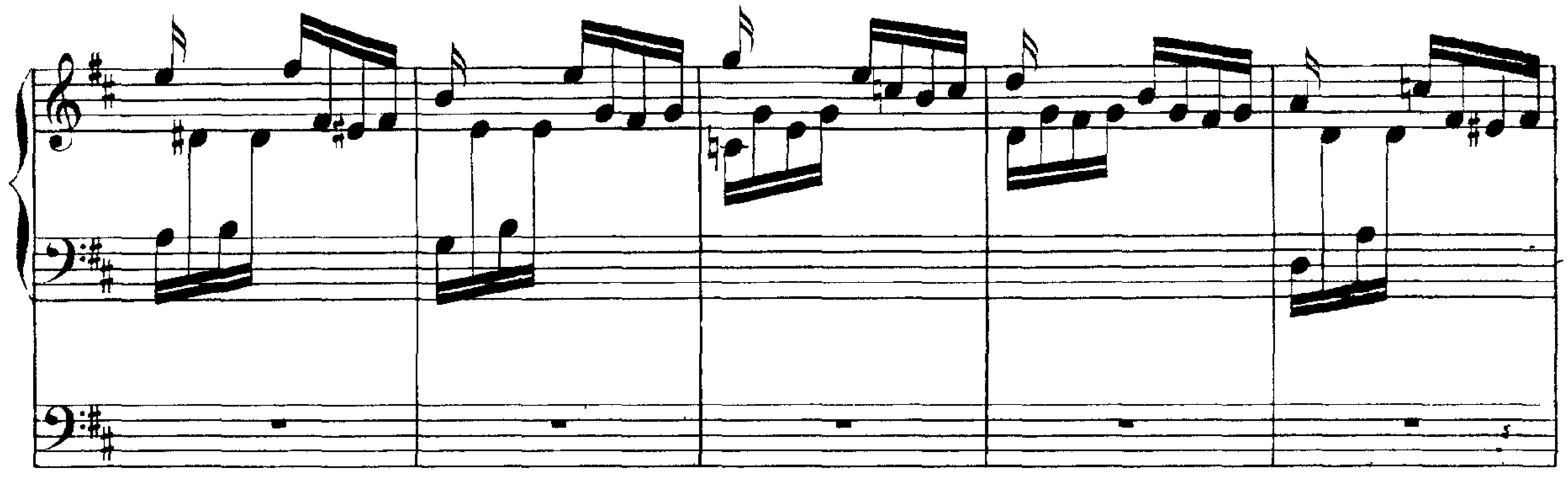
Ten Pieces for Organ

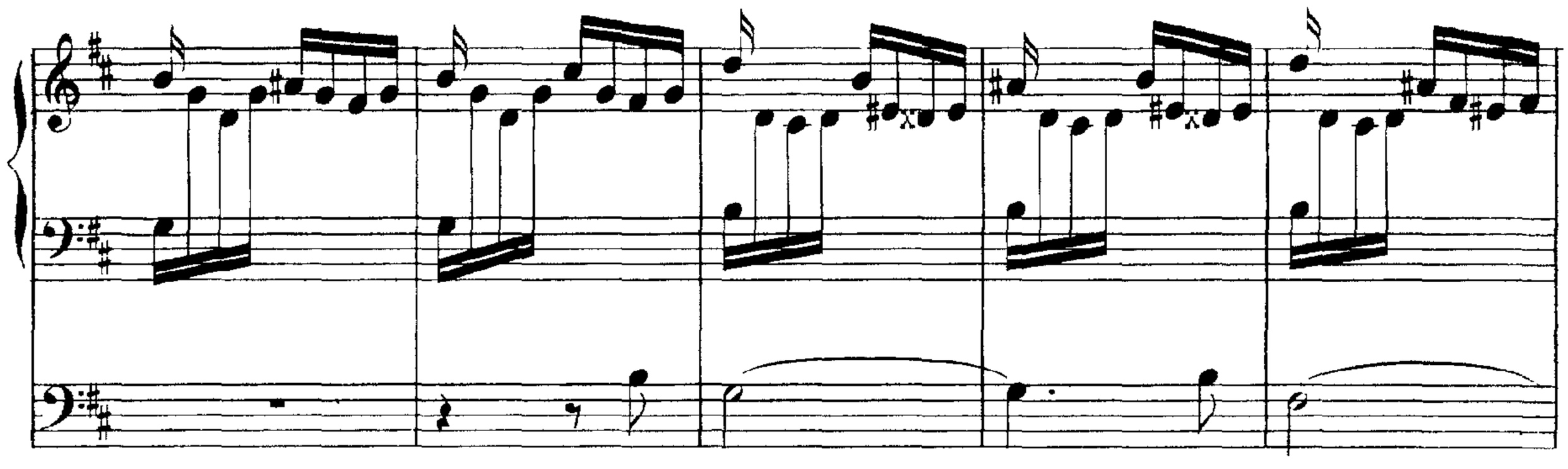
4. Toccata

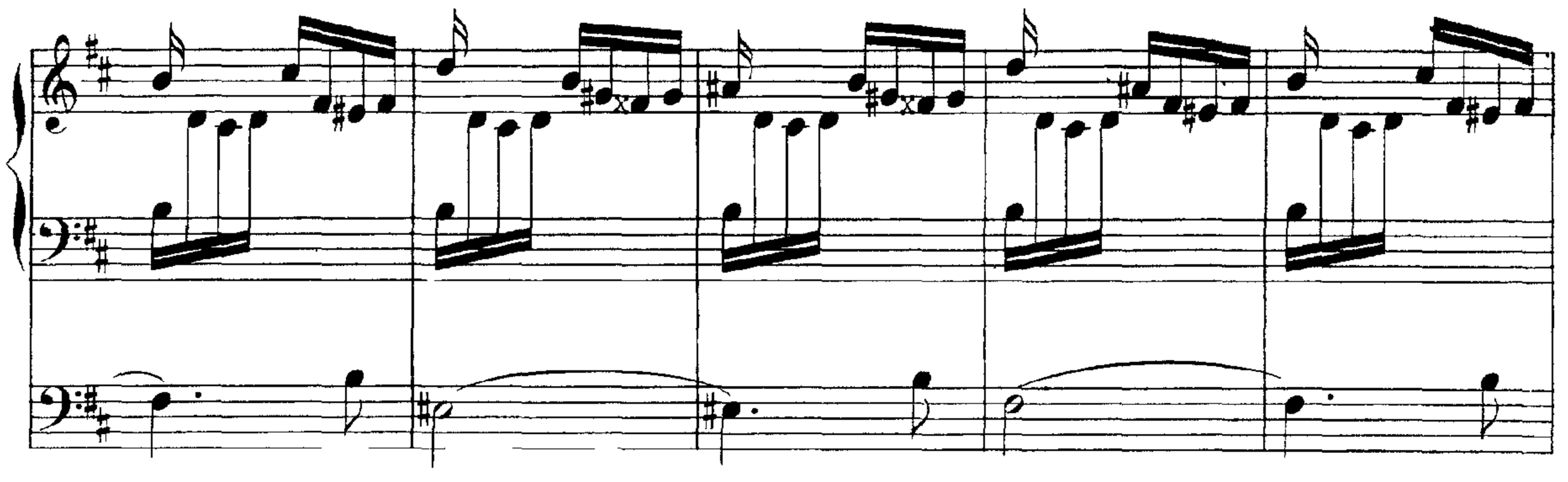
Au G^d Orgue et au **Positif** les Fonds de 8 et 4 p. (puis les Anches de 8 et 4 p.)
Au **Récit,** les Fonds et les Anches de 8 et 4 p.
A la **Pédale,** les Fonds de 16, 8, 4 p. (puis les Anches de 16, 8, 4 p.)

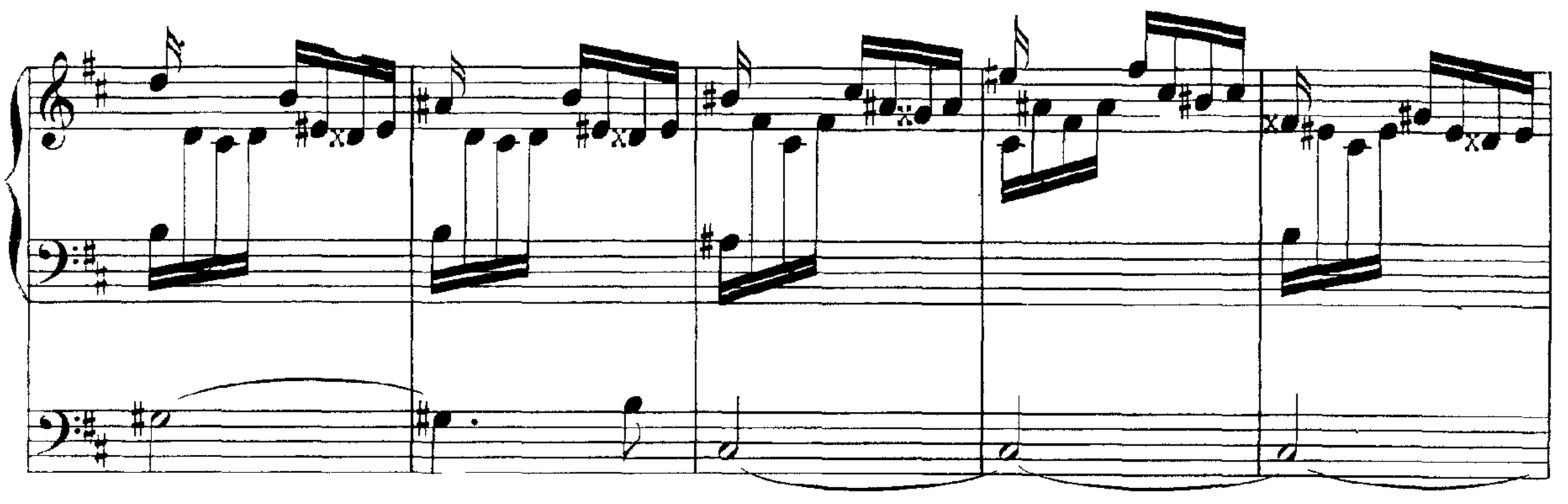


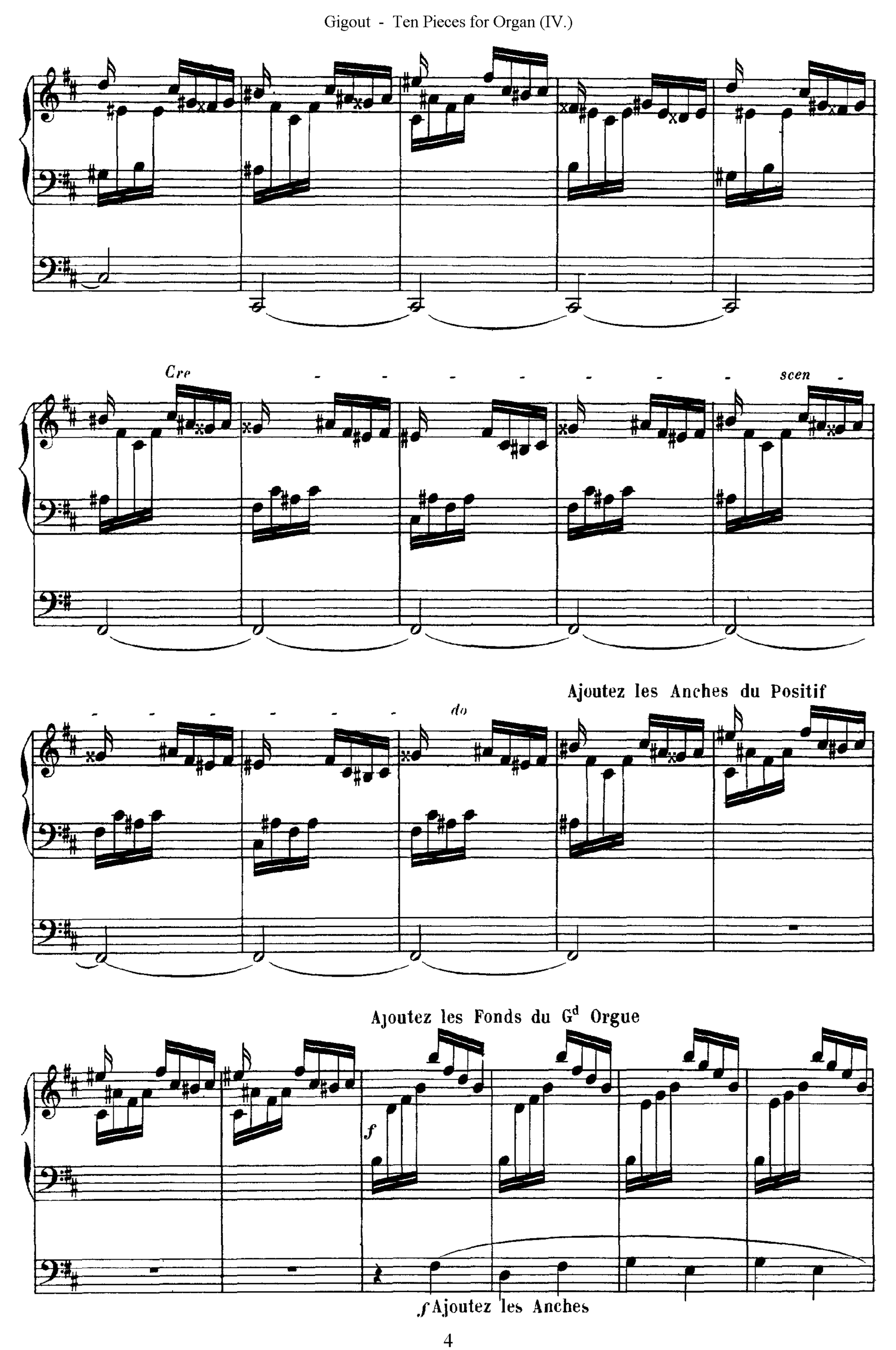
p Les Fonds

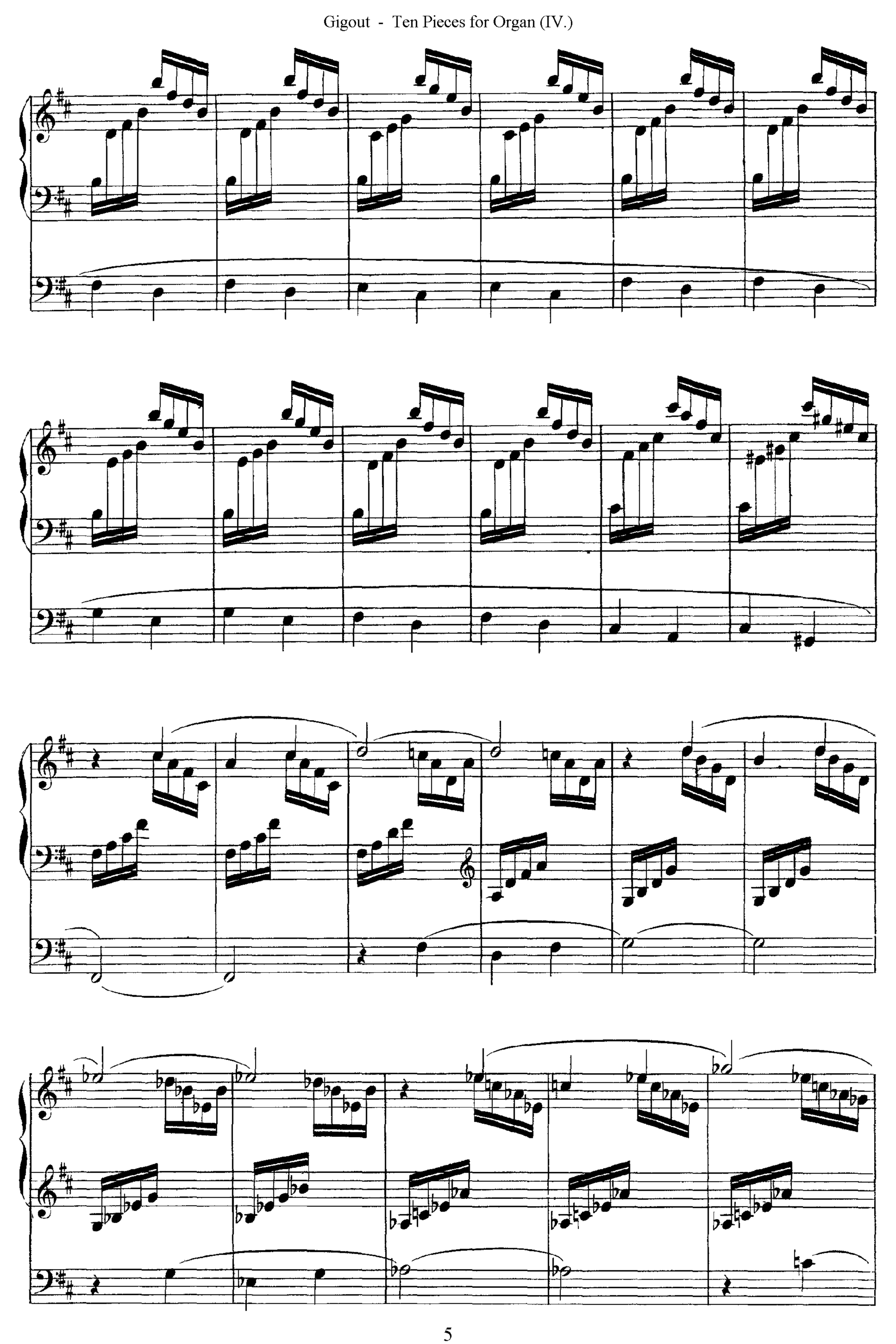


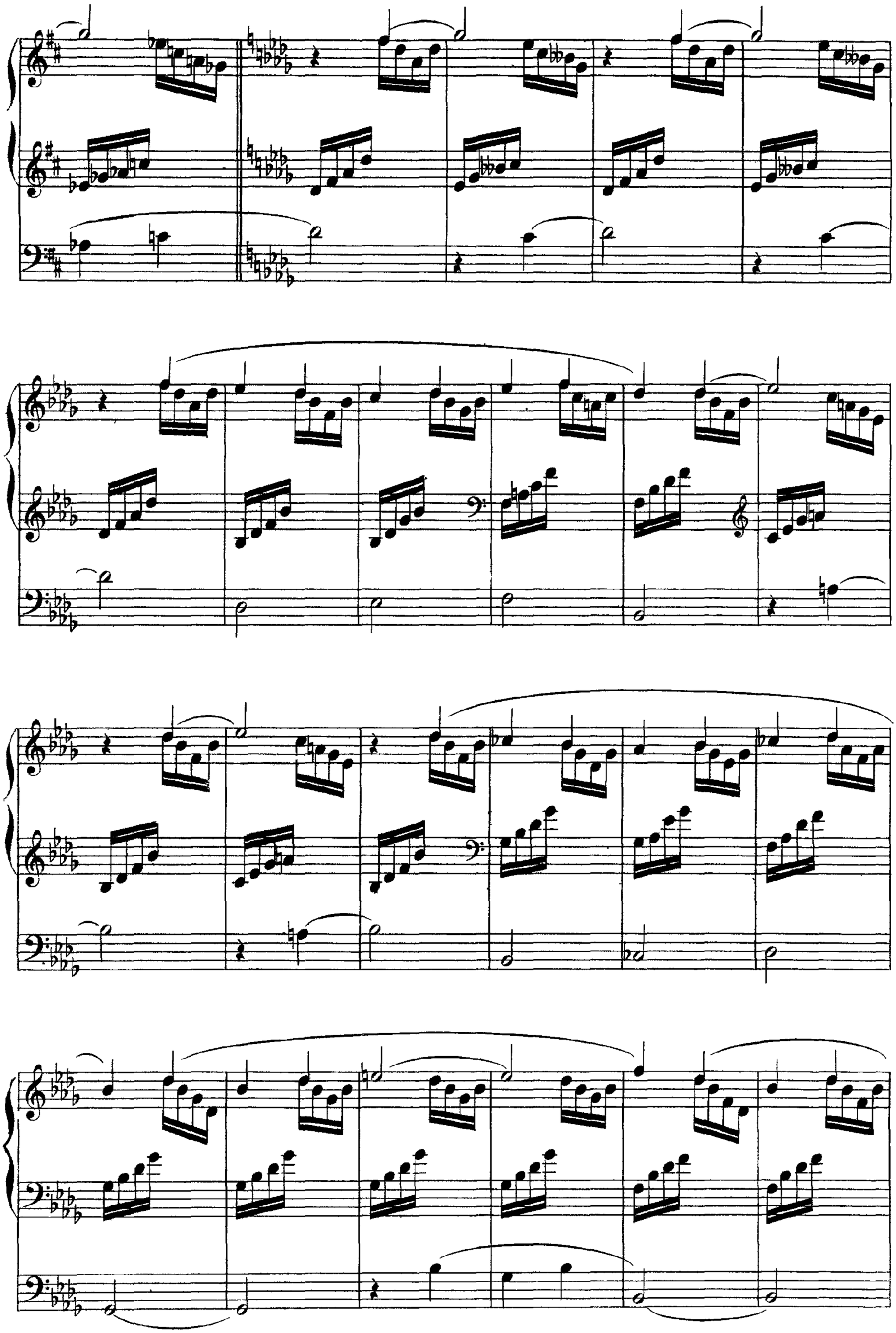


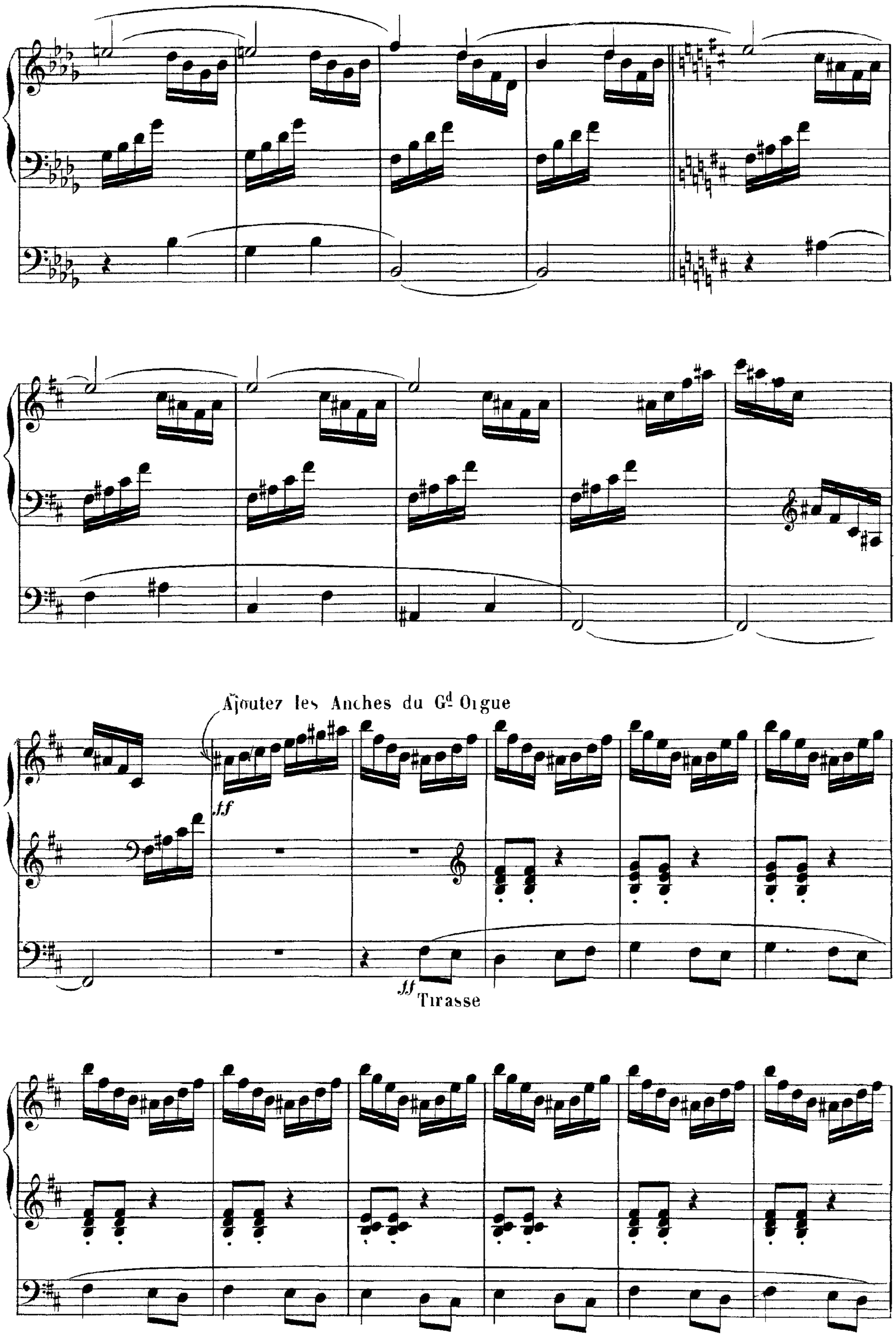


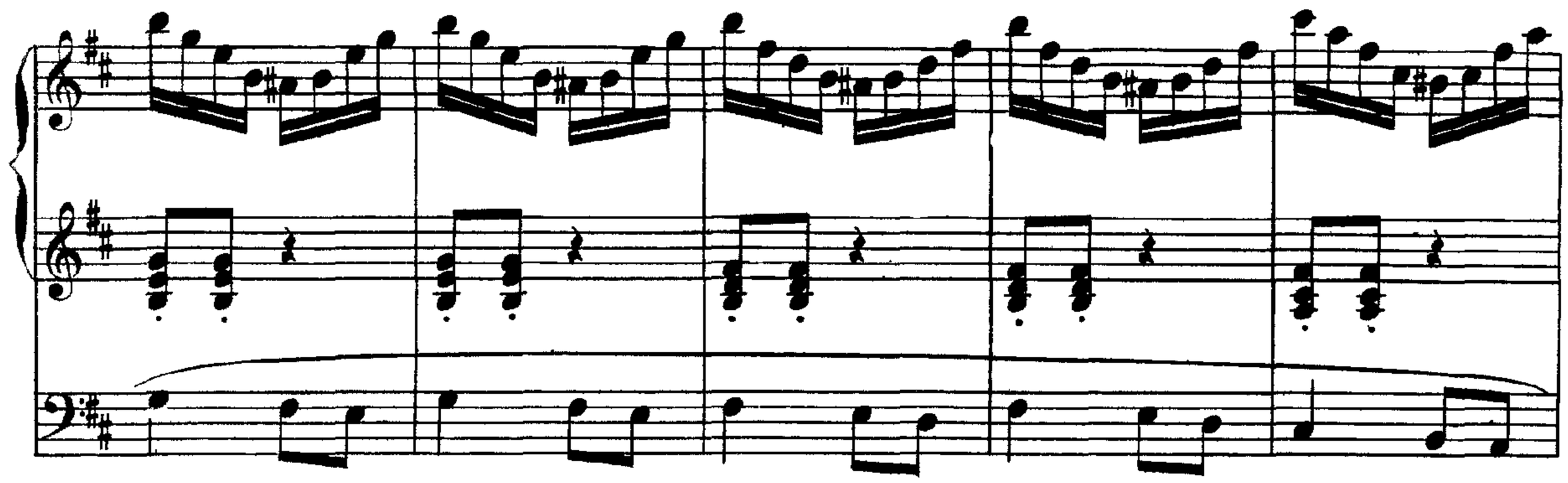


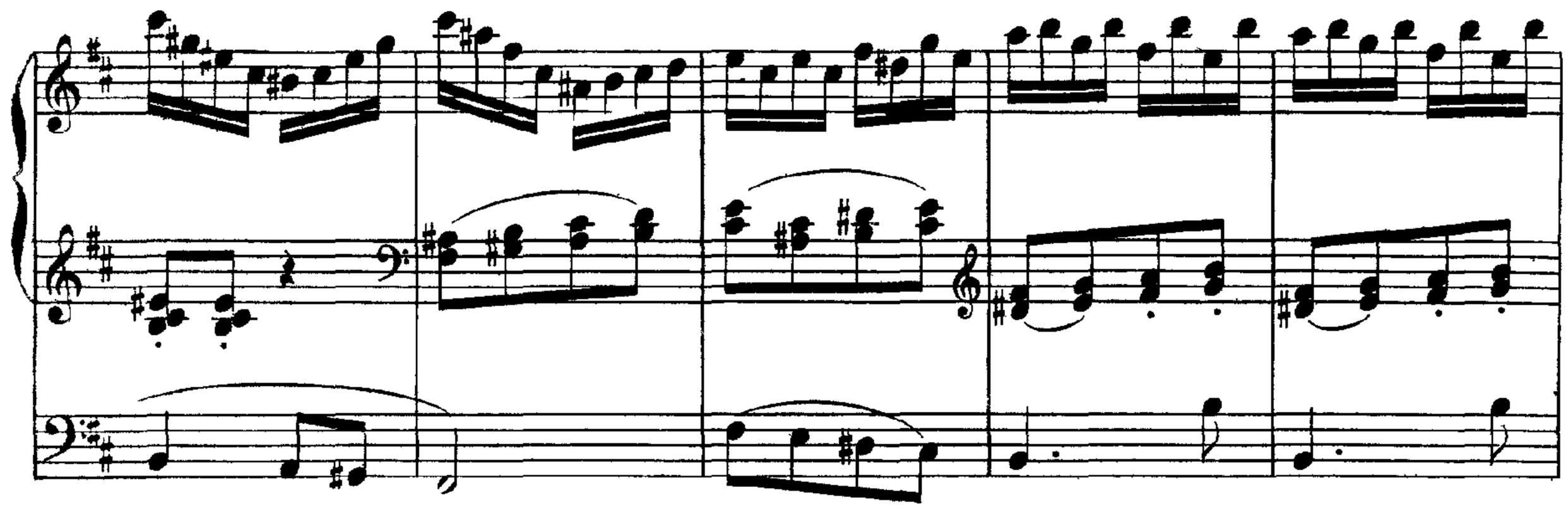

Cre - - - - - - - scen -
Ajoutez les Anches du Positif
do
Ajoutez les Fonds du Gd Orgue
f
f Ajoutez les Anches

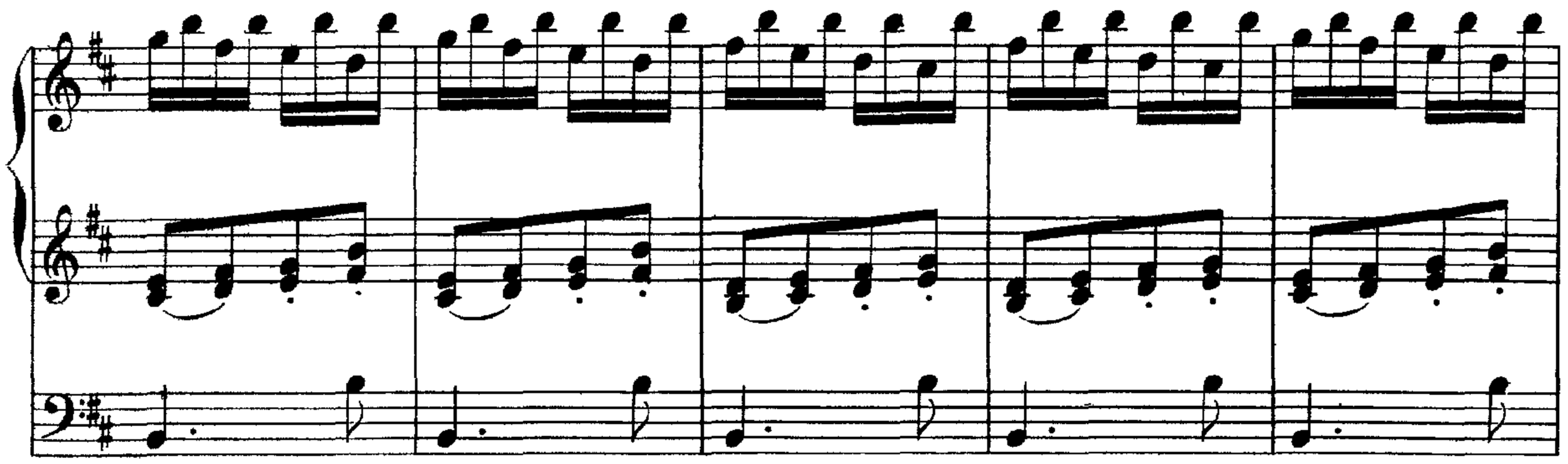


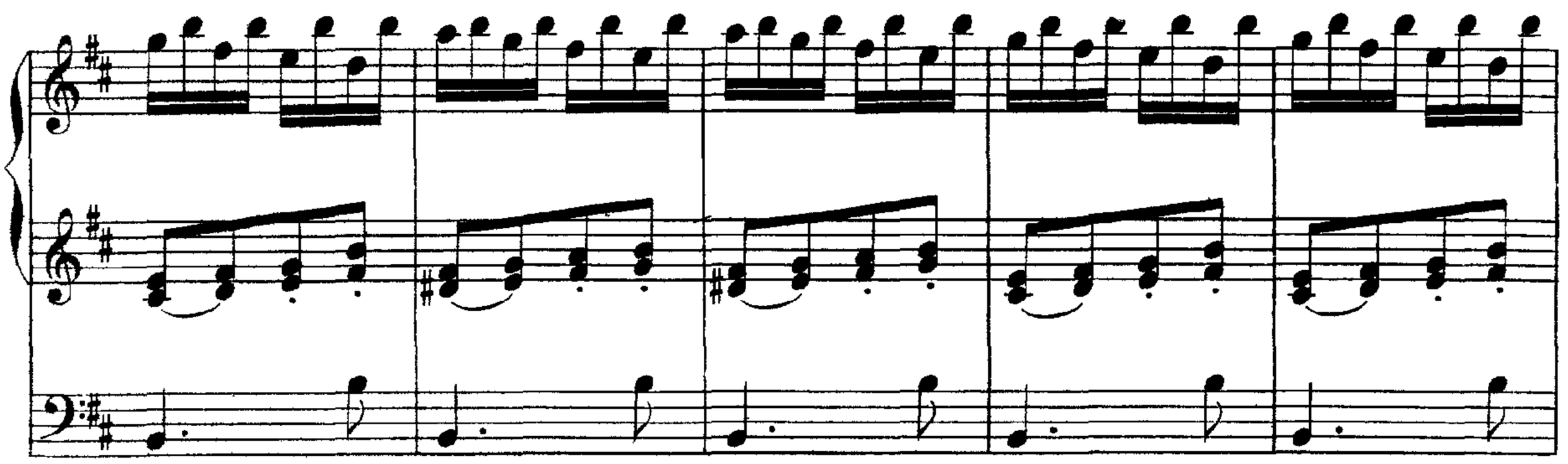



Ajoutez les Anches du Gd Orgue
ff
ff
Tirasse









Allargando

Alt

Ajoutez les 16 p.