Joseph Klein

Three Little Pieces

for bassoon and piano

(2000)

I. Barcarolle
II. Nightmusic
III. Waltz

— for Chloe, on her ninth birthday —

duration: c. 3'

Program Note

Composed in April of 2000, *Three Little Pieces* were commissioned by Doug Golden for his daughter Chloe's ninth birthday. Doug, an amateur bassoonist, was interested in a set of pieces he could play with Chloe, who recently began studying the piano; the resulting pieces are intended to be played for enjoyment, but also serve as exercises in basic piano skills and studies in compositional techniques.

The theme of the *Barcarolle* is based on the name of my son Gabriel, who also recently began studying the piano. The G-A-B-E motive is treated as the germinal cell in this piece, and is continuously varied throughout the movement. The term "barcarolle" was originally used to describe a Venetian boating song, though the term has since been applied to a number of instrumental and vocal compositions of similar character.

The melodic and harmonic motives in *Nightmusic* are derived from the names of the five members of the Golden family: the left hand of the piano plays on ostinato based on "Douglas" (D-G-A-Eb), while the bassoon plays motives based on "Chloe" (C-B-E) and "Golden" (G-D-E); the right hand of the piano interjects the names "Lisa" (Eb-A), "Nathan" (A-B-A), and "Sophia" (Eb-B-A). (The German spellings for 'Eb' and 'B' — 'S' and 'H', respectively — are applied here.) The final chord includes all of the pitches used in this movement.

The *Waltz* is a study in mixed scale patterns: the bassoon plays a single octatonic collection throughout, while the piano begins with a G major pentachord in the right hand and a pentatonic scale in the left; in the second half of the piece, the right hand plays a pentatonic scale while the left hand plays a D minor pentachord. In the closing figure, the piano plays two different whole-tone scales in contrary motion. (Incidentally, while eleven pitches of the chromatic scale are heard throughout the piece, the pitch 'F' occurs only once, in the final chord.)

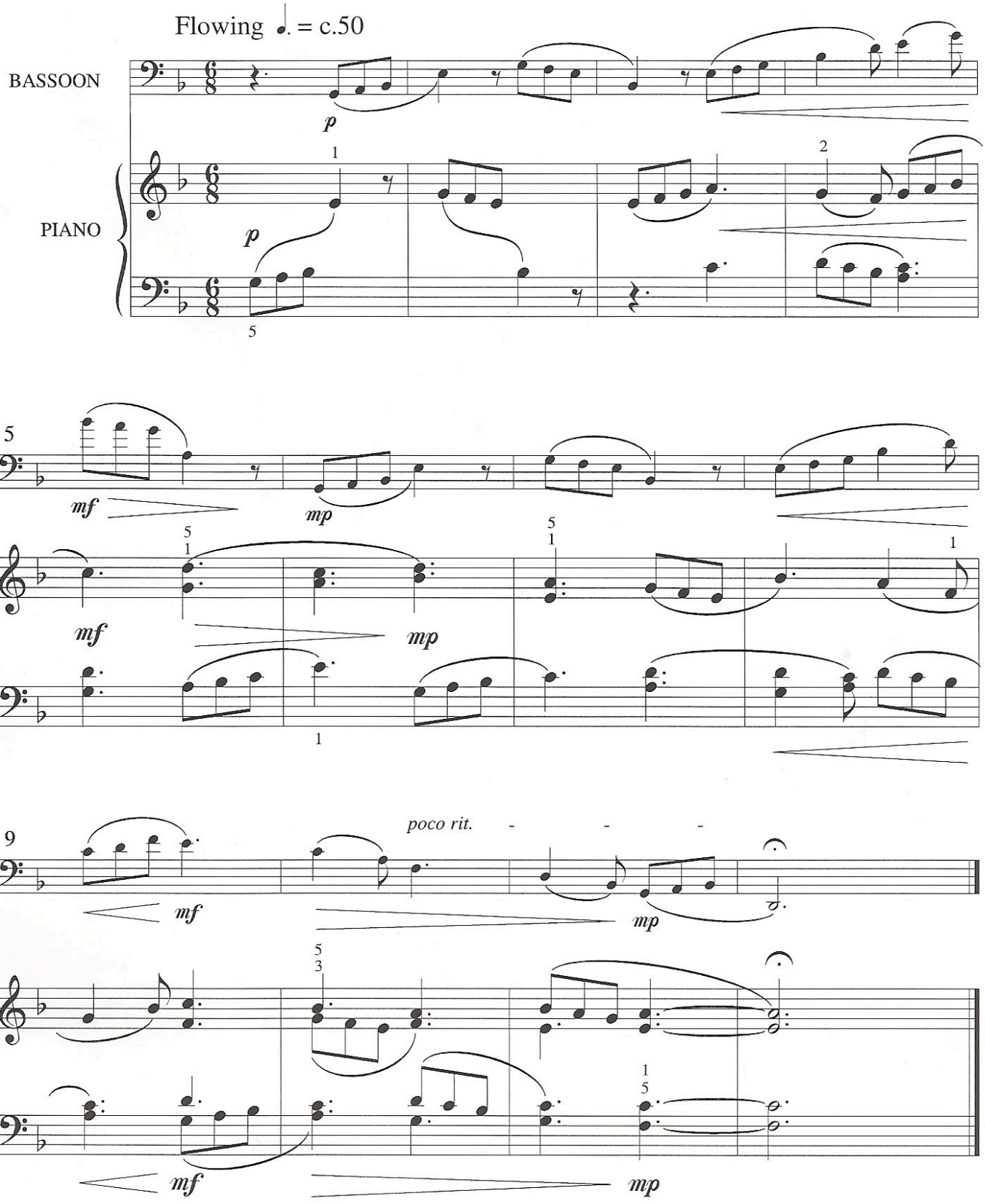
— J. Klein

Three Little Pieces

for bassoon and piano

I. Barcarolle

Joseph Klein
(2000)



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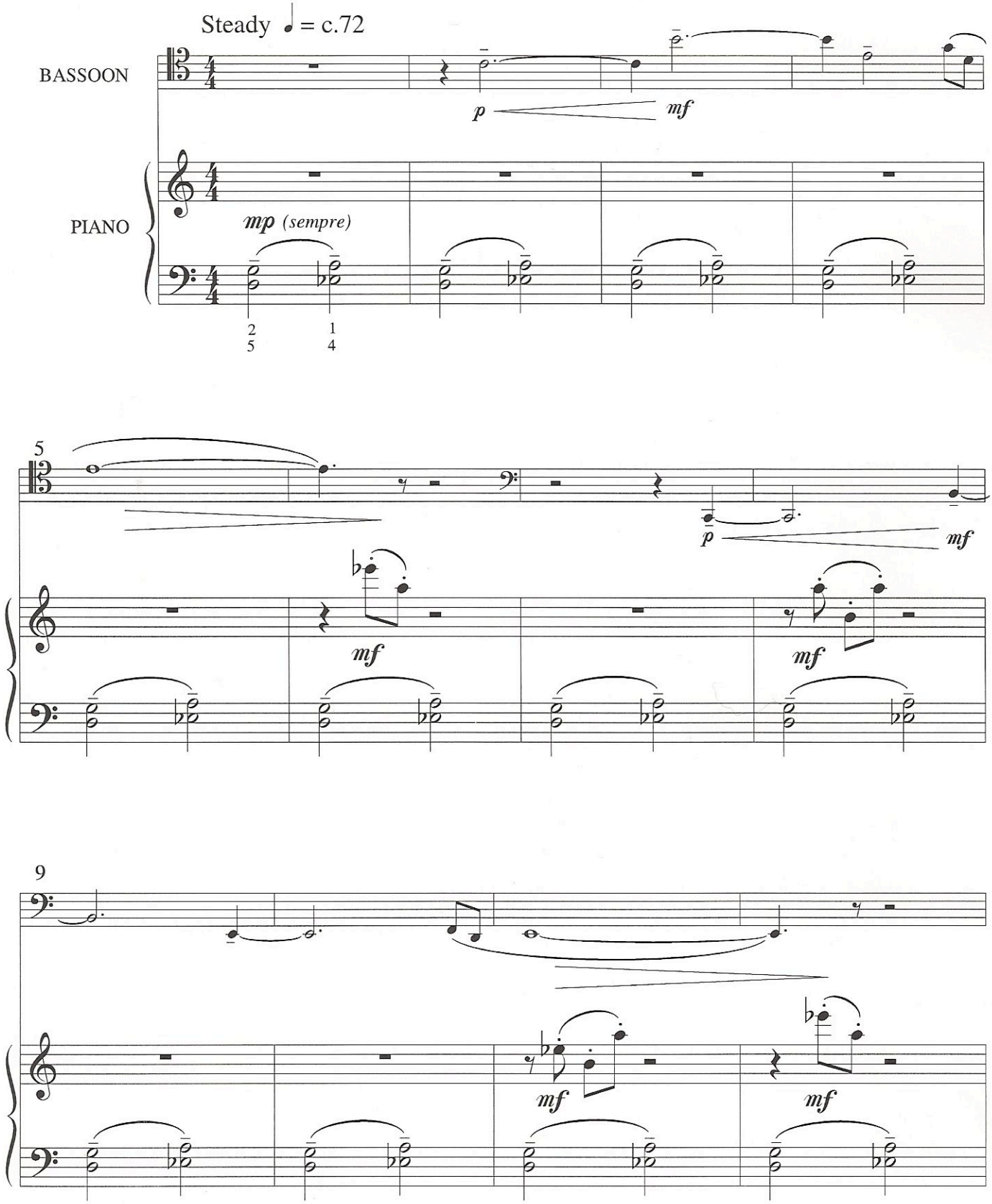
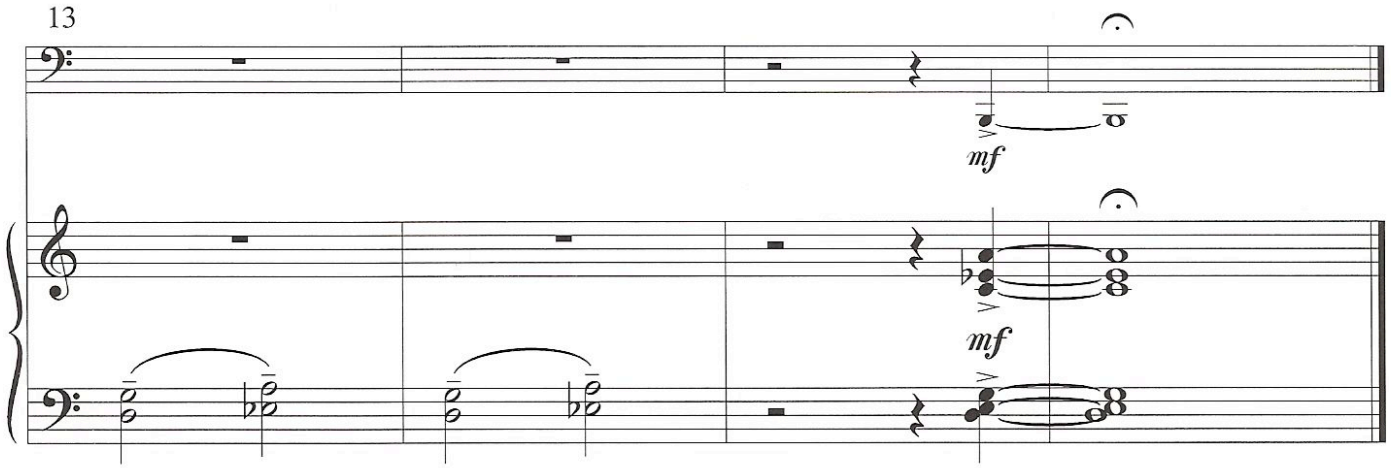
II. Nightmusic

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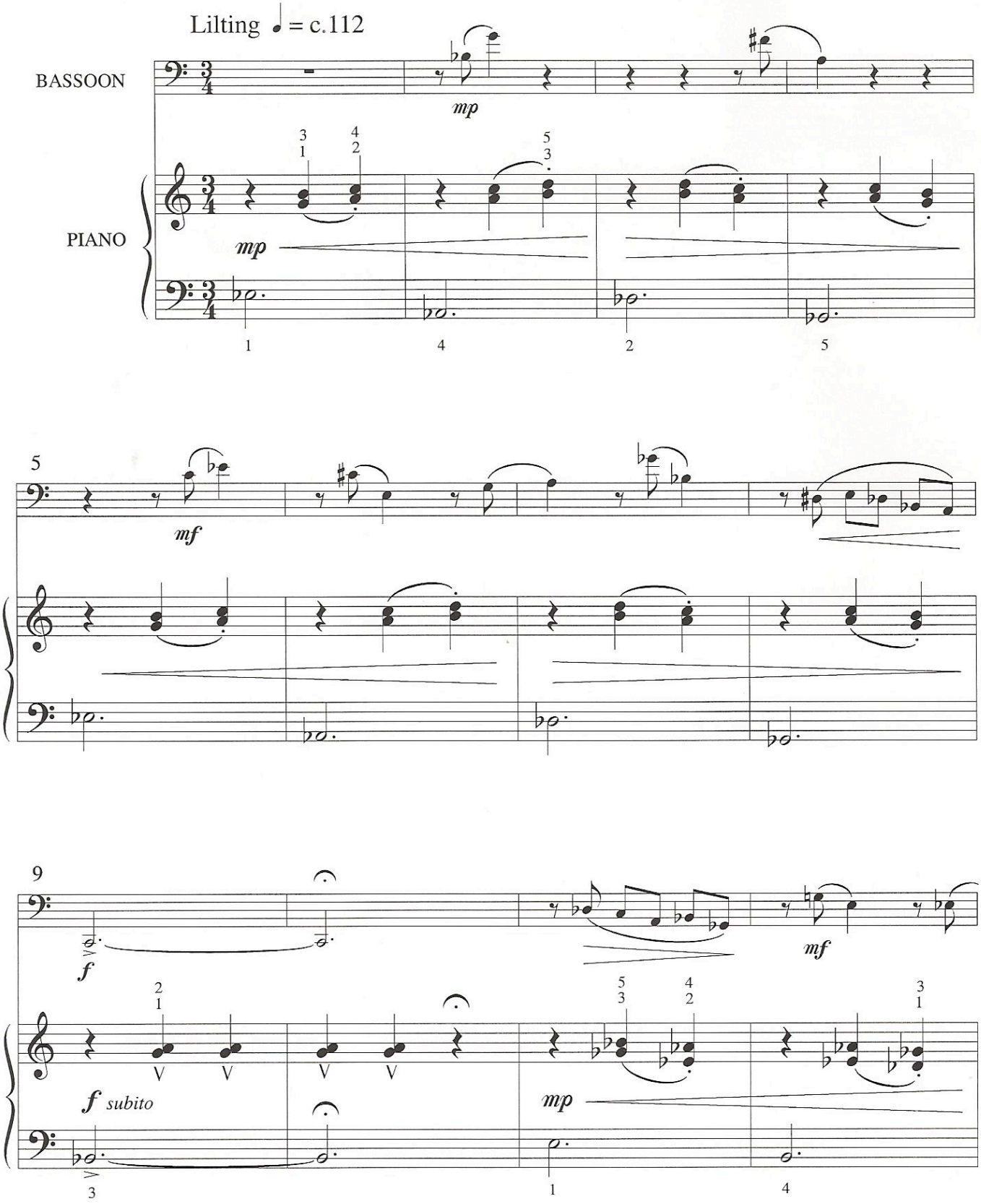
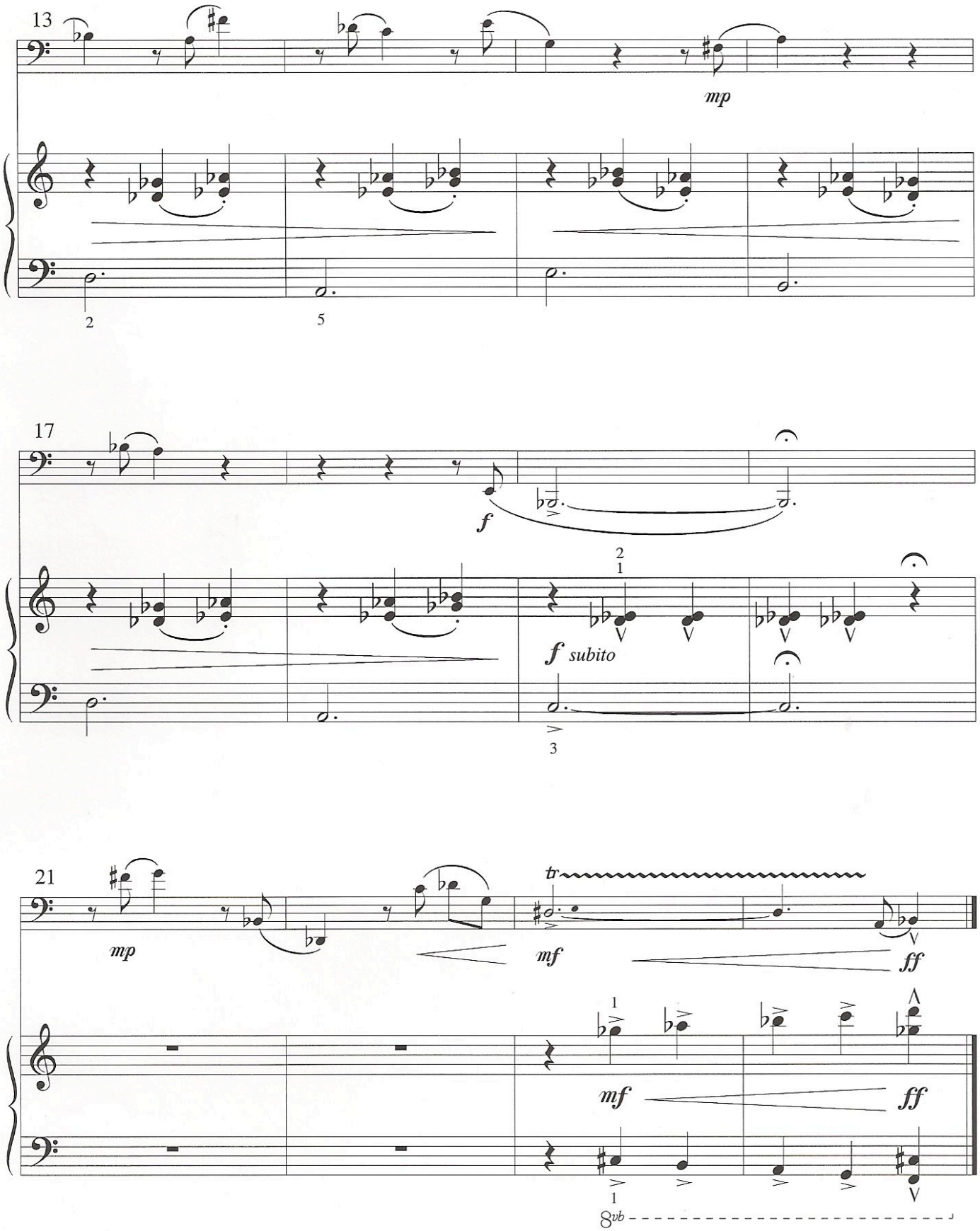
mf
mf

III. Waltz




13
mp
2
5
17
f
f subito
3
21
mp
mf
tr
ff
mf
ff
8vb