Sonata Violino Solo.

G. Muffat

Praga July

1677.

Georg Muffat's *Sonata Violino Solo* is his first dated composition known in our days, and it is his only sonata for violin solo known today. It is handed down to us by a manuscript to be found in the library of the archbishop's castle at Kroměřiži [1]. Since 1992 this source is available in a facsimile edition [2]. The first printed edition dates to 1977 [3]. The manuscript is written very clearly and accurately. Figuring of the thoroughbass is placed very exactly. Music, title and the signature at the end of the piece have been written by the same hand. Thus, although there is no real proof, we can be quite confident that the author of the manuscript is Muffat himself. Nothing is known about Muffat's occasion of writing the sonata. After two periods of apprenticeship in Rome and Paris he looked for a position. On his way he spent some time in Prague where he wrote the sonata. However, the slow middle part of the sonata with its outstanding enharmonic harmonies may remember us of those experimental harpsichords with 24 and more keys per octave having been constructed in order to solve the problem how to find a suitable tuning for keyboard instruments. Maybe, Muffat had access to one of those instruments existing in Prague at that time?

Since the manuscript is still in a well readable state, only few things had to be revised. Grouping of beamed notes sometimes clearly intends a certain articulation, whereas sometimes it does clearly not. Therefore decision was made towards unchanged beaming. The reader may draw her/his own conclusions. Ornaments were placed only where they are to be found in the manuscript. Accidentals are always placed in front of the note head, according to modern type setting rules. But the rule applied in the manuscript that an accidental is only valid for the note it stands in front of, was kept. Instead of the modern natural sign a ♮ is used as in the manuscript. Bar lines are drawn as in the original. A realisation of the basso continuo is deliberately not given here since only an improvised continuo can account for the various different situations due to different instruments, accoustics etc. However, it seems to be a worthwhile stylistic exercise to work out a realisation entirely based on rules and examples from Muffat's treatise *Regulae Concentuum Partiturae*.

bar 75, last note in violin voice: editorial accident (see [3]).
bar 91, in bass voice: signature change is introduced already before the last note of this bar. In the violin voice signature does not change before the next line break after bar 92. Apparently think Muffat wants to assign the new tonality to the continuo player early enough without loosing space in the violin voice, which is very crowded in this line. The entire signatur change was put at start of bar 92.
bar 95 Figuring ♯4 indicates that a 4-3 should not be played here.
bar 128 The manuscript shows a figuring ♯4 at 3/8. Obviously position 2/4 is ment. But a sharped 4 instead of a normal 4 over cis seems to indicate that c flat (i.e. modern c natural) is intended here as bass note.
bar 139 and 141 No accidental (c natural) in the mansucript.
bar 159 editorial accidental.

Typesetting of the music was done with MusiXTEX and `PMX`. The author gratefully acknowledges the great work of all contributors to the MusiXTEX-project.

This edition is dedicated to the memory of *Werner Icking*. The MusiXTEX community was shocked by his sudden, unexpected dead in February 2001. Although the TEX music typesetting projects and the related archive of sheet music is the outcome of many people's contribution, without Werner it would never have reached what it is now. His friendly and humorous way of suggesting enhancements drew many of us at some point to go further than we initially intended. With his endless patience in answering beginner's questions and working out sophisticated solutions for enhanced problems, with his gentle way of commenting technical, musical, computational problems he gave many of us the impression of a personal friendship without ever having met personally.
His beautiful edition of Bach's sonats for violin solo tells us how he must have loved his instrument. Still at his lifetime, his edition inspired me to the first (unpublished) version of the present edition. I don't know if Werner knew Muffat's sonata. But I'm sure he would have loved it as I do.

Lausanne, January 2002

[1] Arcibskupstvf v Kroměřiži – Knihovna olom, signatures B IV 118 and A 562.
[2] Facsimile edition by Jiří Sehnal, edited by the Institut für Musikwissenschaft der Universität Salzburg, Comes Verlag, Bad Reichenhall, 1992.
[3] Nikolaus Harnoncourt and Herbert Tachezi, in *Doblingers Reihe alter Musik – Diletto musicale Nr. 474*, Wien 1977.

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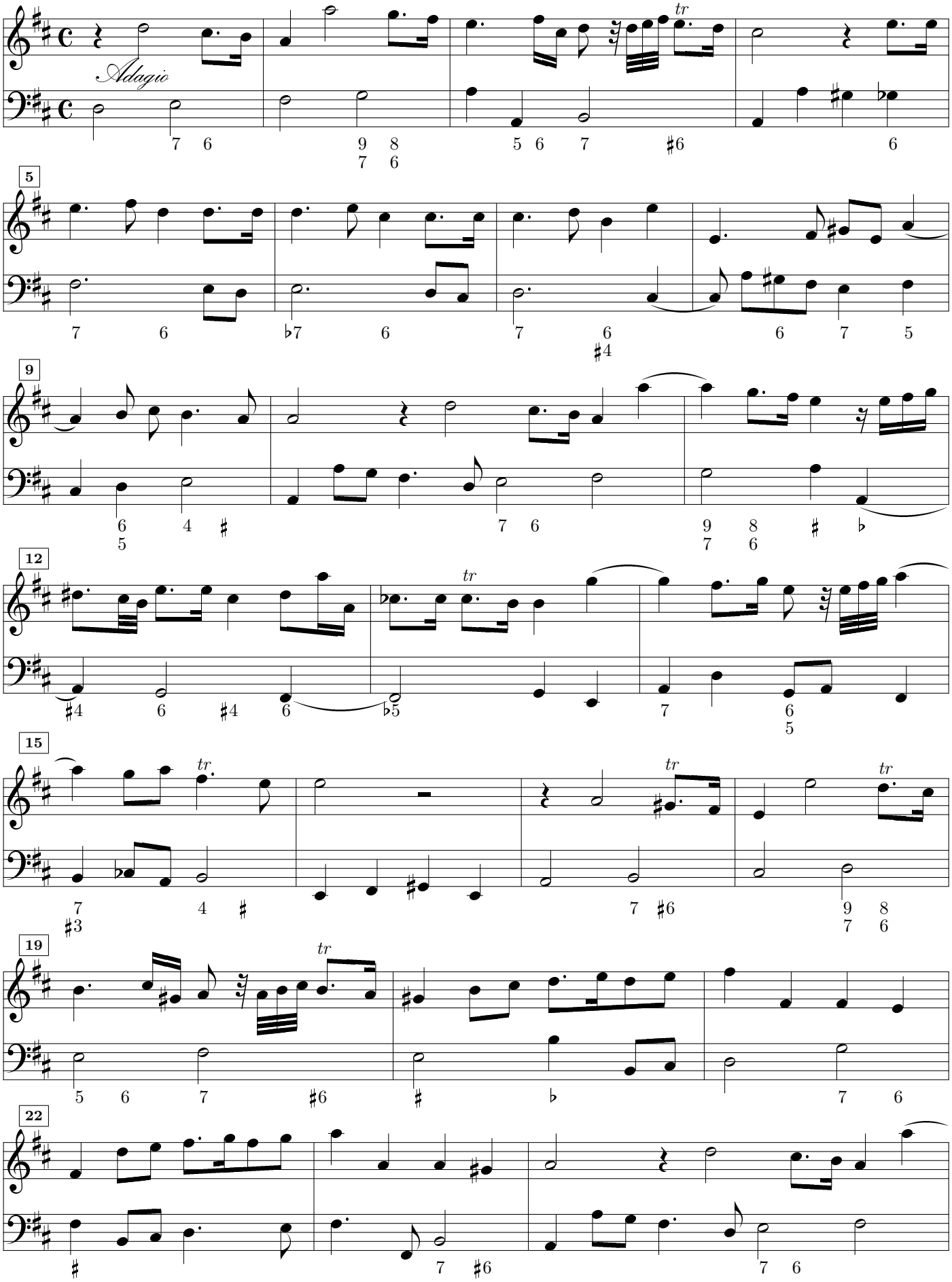
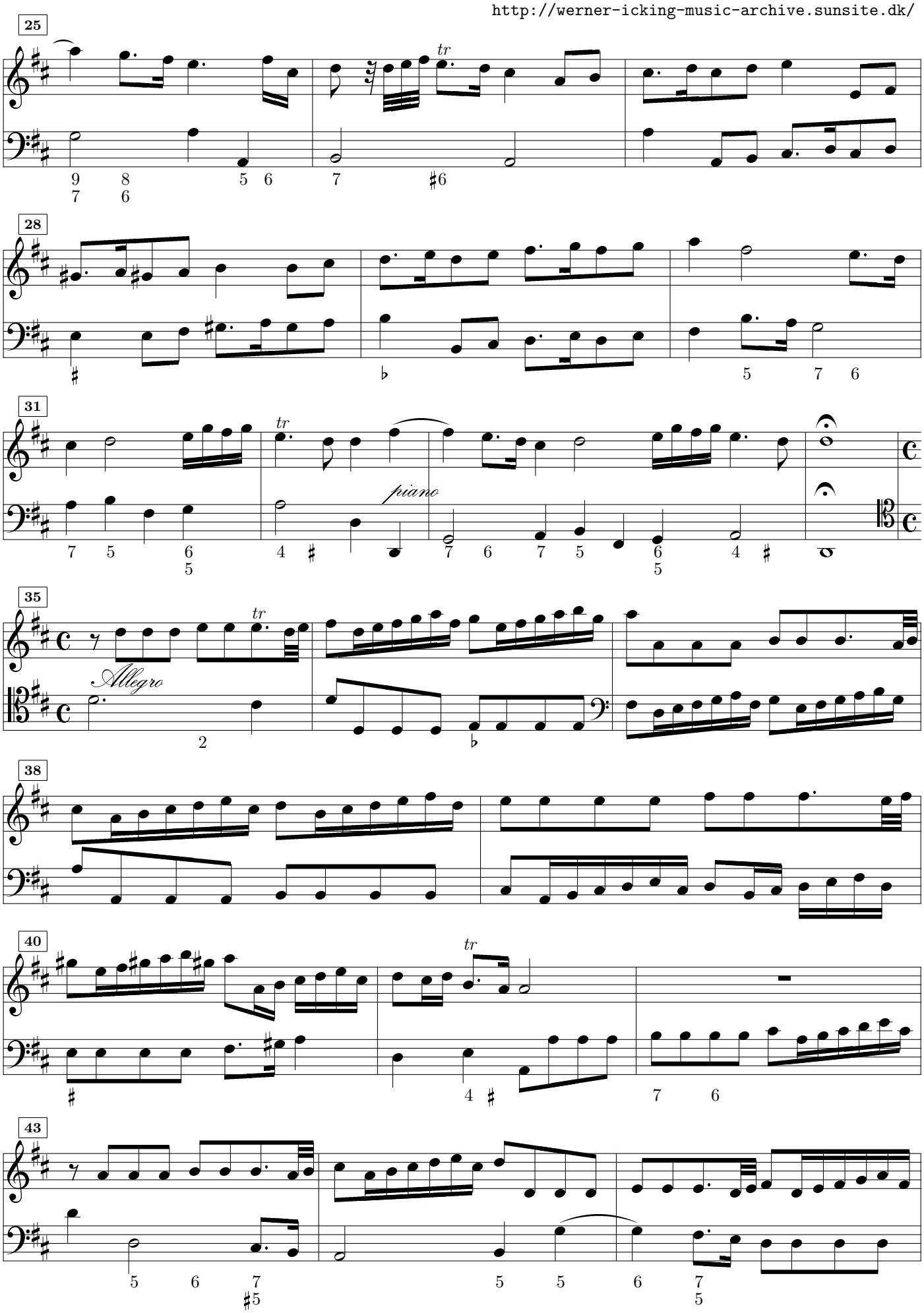
Sonata Violino Solo.





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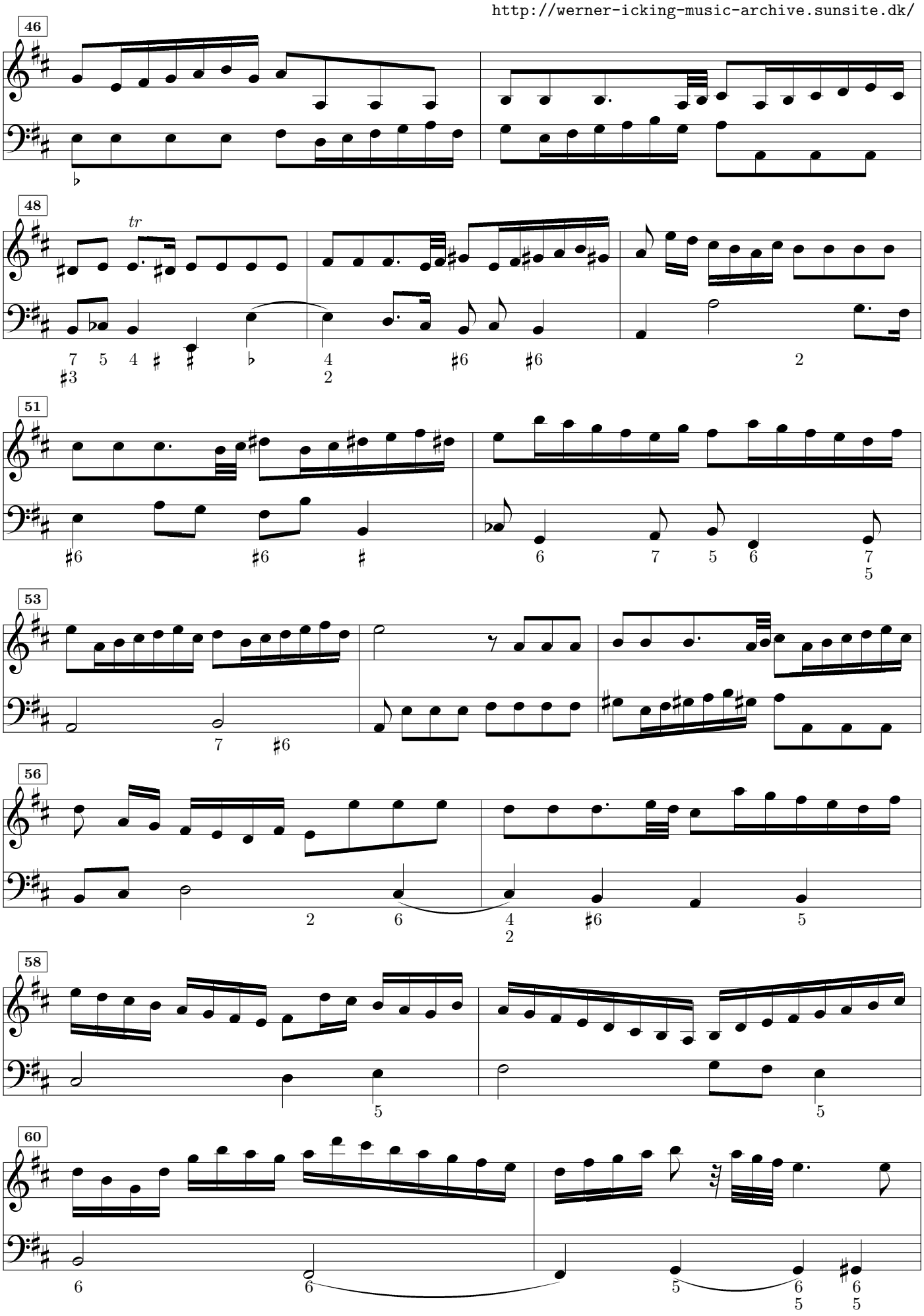
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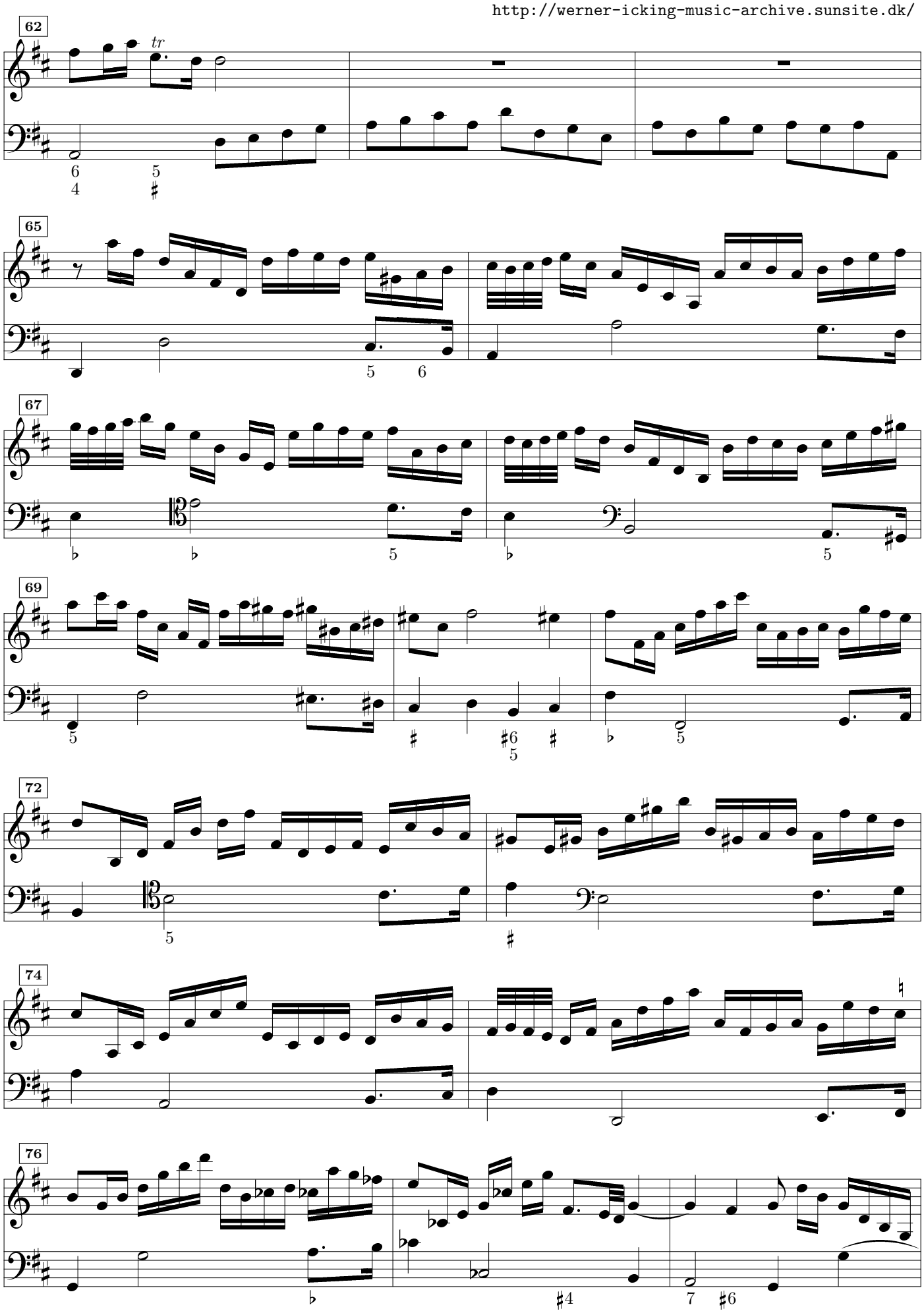

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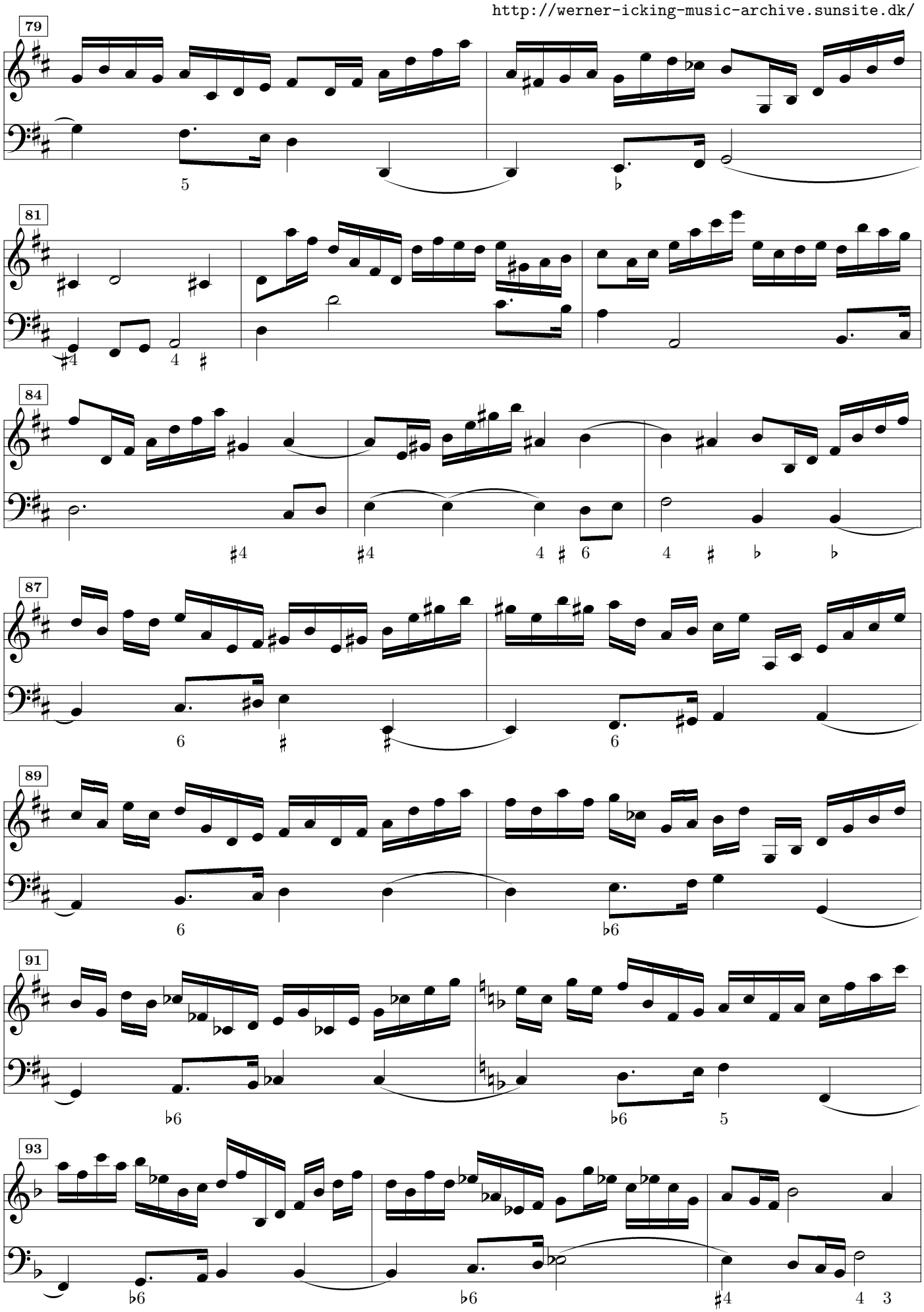
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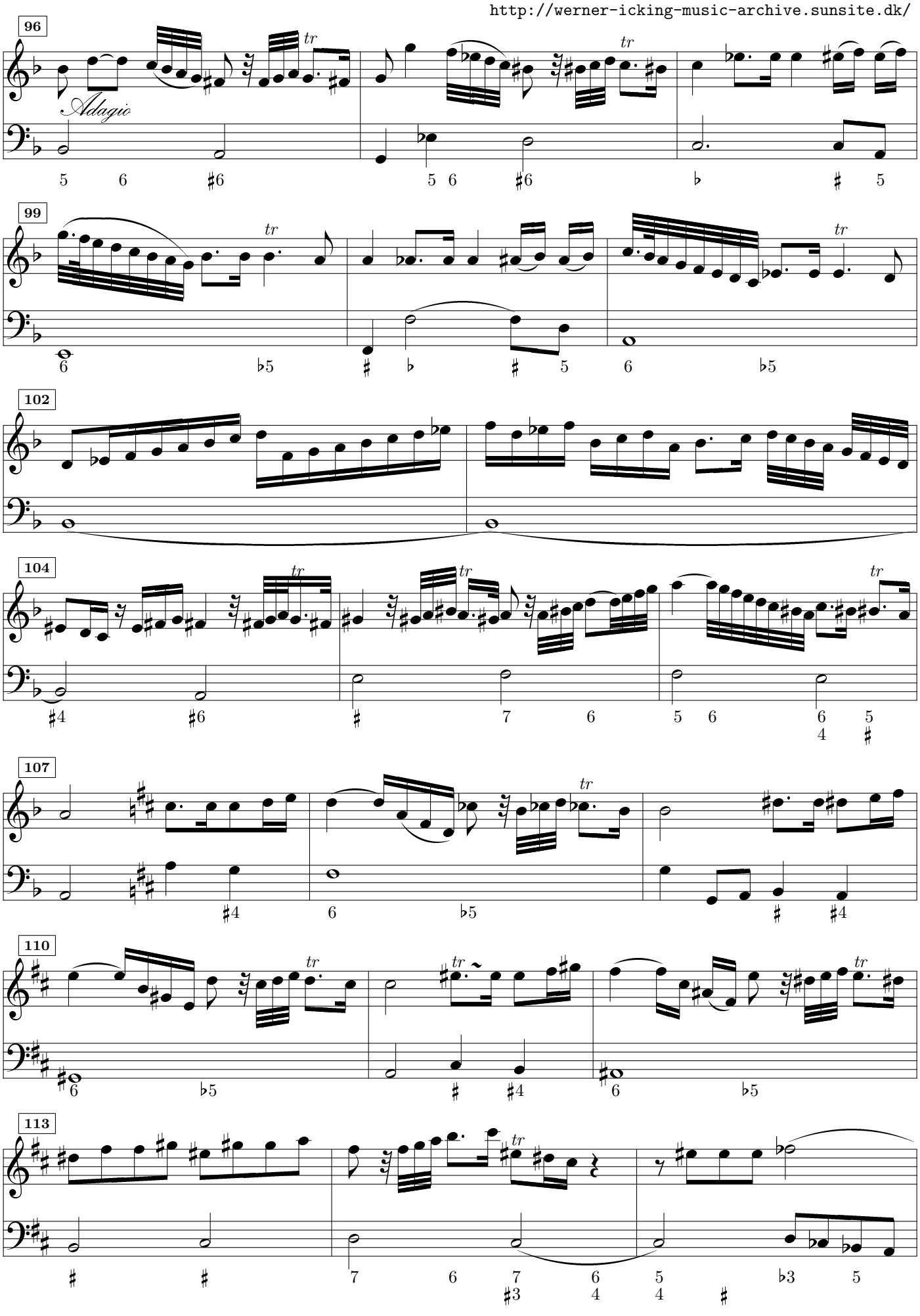

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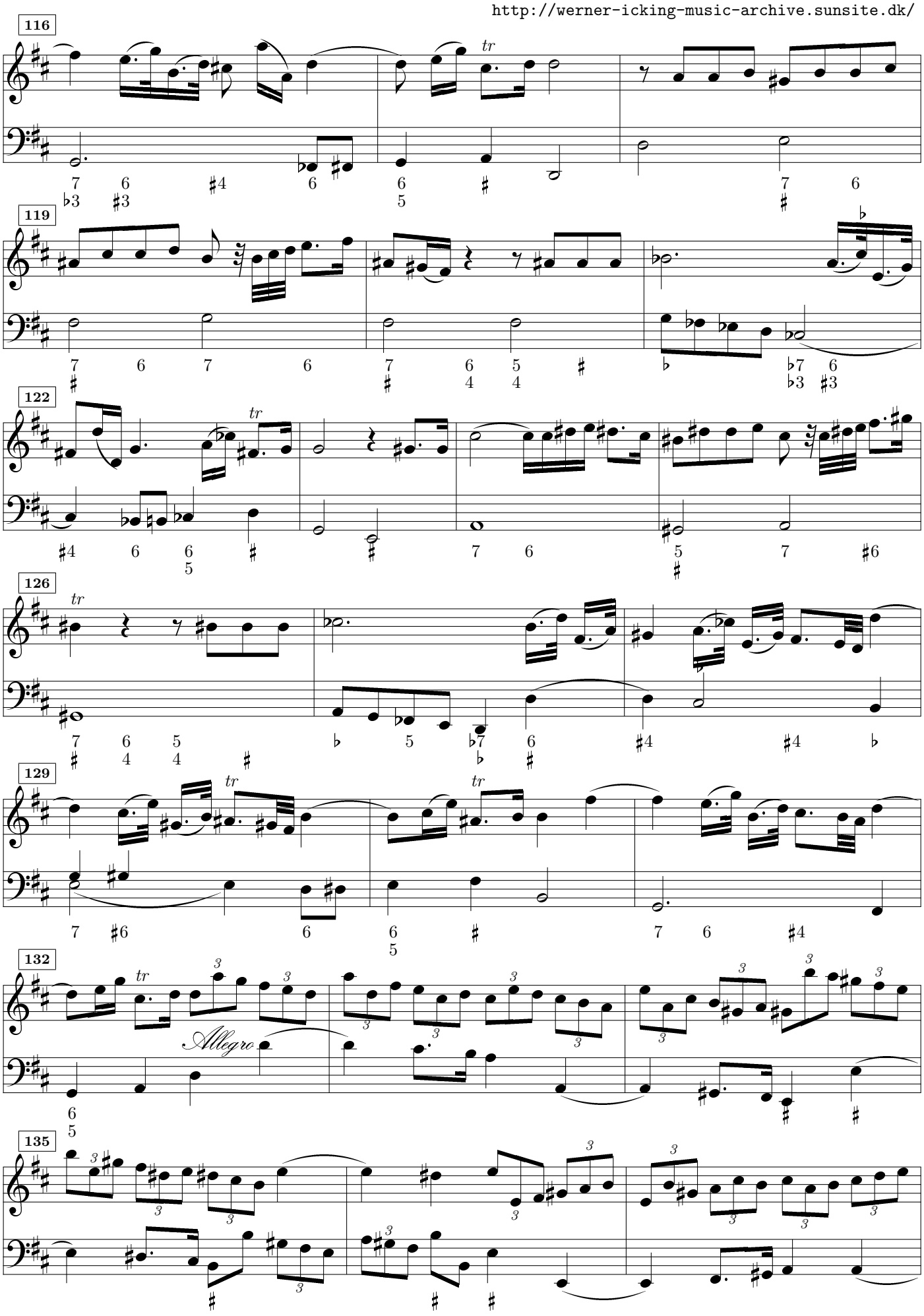
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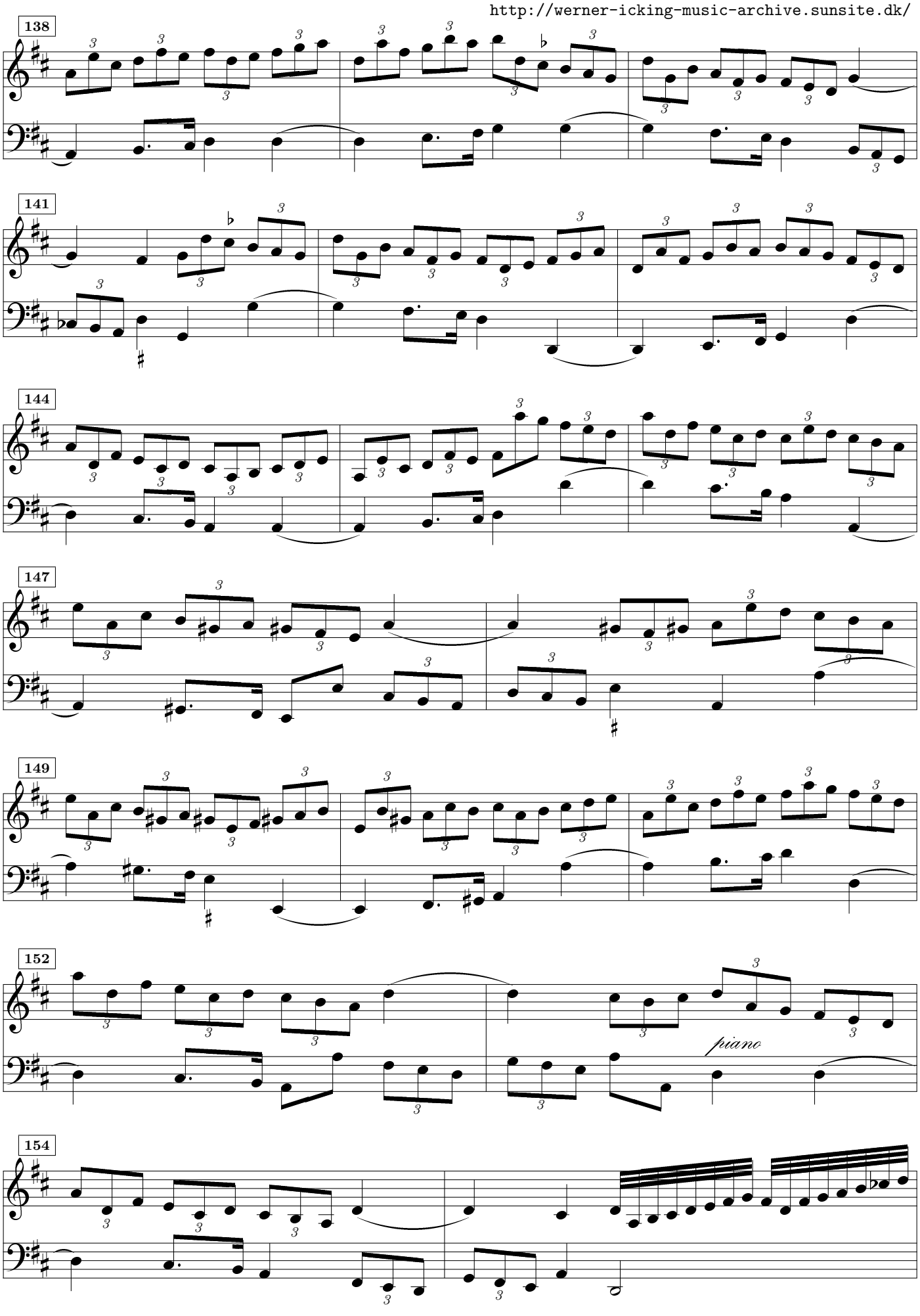

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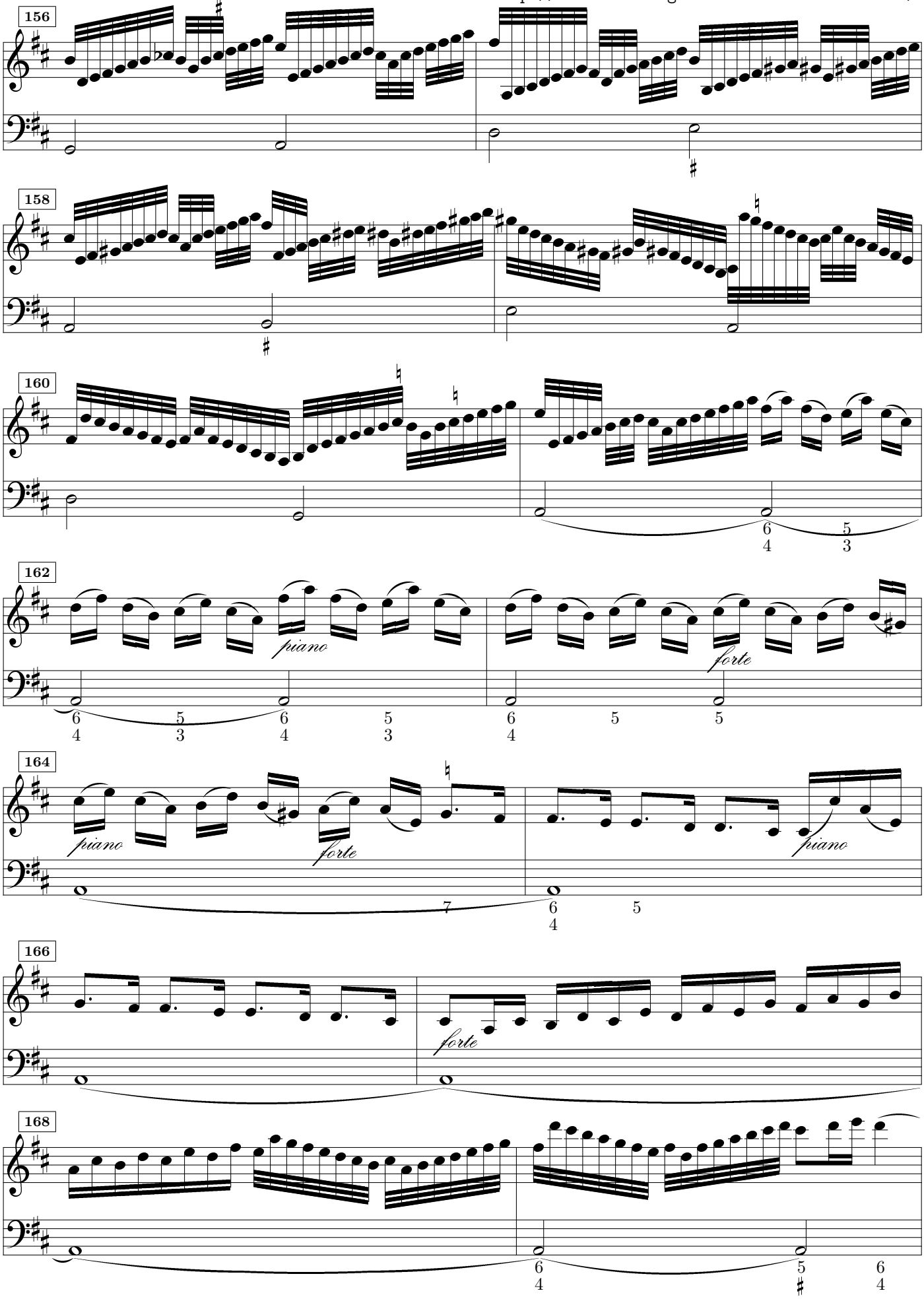
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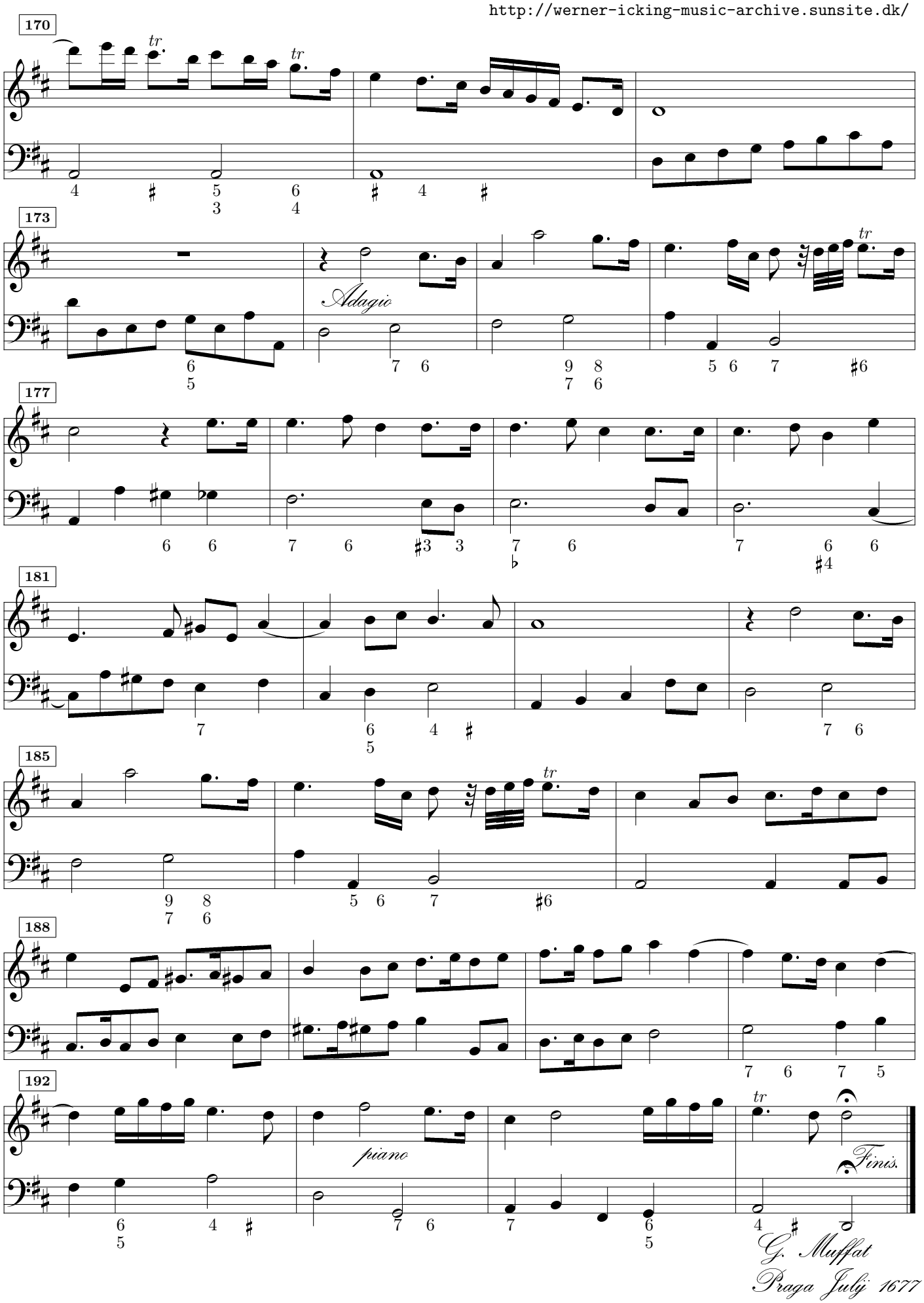

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