UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

A COMPARISON OF RELATED PERFORMANCE PRACTICES OF LATE RENAISSANCE ITALIAN MADRIGALS AND TWENTIETH CENTURY CHORAL JAZZ BALLADS

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Doctor of Musical Arts

By

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A DOCUMENT APPROVED FOR THE
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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ABSTRACT

The case is made that the choral field suffers due to the lack of performance practice resources regarding late Renaissance Italian madrigals and twentieth-century choral jazz ballads. Musical-cultural contexts of both genres are reviewed, noting similarities and suggesting how a comparative study of these two performances practices can be mutually informative.

Primary sources that inform the performance practices of the late Renaissance Italian madrigal are presented. Recommendations are made for late Renaissance Italian performance practice. Recorded examples and scores (original and altered versions) are provided for three works: *Si, ch'io vorrei morire* by Claudio Monteverdi, *Io piango* by Luca Marenzio, and *Languisco e moro* by Carlo Gesualdo.

Primary sources that inform the performance practices of the jazz ballad, including recordings of solo artists, are presented. Recommendations are made for choral jazz ballad performance practice. Recorded examples and scores (original and altered versions) are provided for three works: *Come Sunday* by Duke Ellington, *My Funny Valentine* by Rogers and Hart, and *I'll Be Seeing You* by Irving Kahal and Sammy Fain.

In conclusion, a comparison of late Renaissance Italian madrigal and twentieth-century choral jazz ballad performance practices is presented with similarities highlighted. The argument is made that given such commonalities, a comparative study

is mutually informative and bridges classical and jazz musical environments to the benefit of the musical profession.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Music of the European classical tradition is primarily transmitted from composer to performer through *written* music; performers decipher, interpret, and recreate a composition based primarily on a musical score. Without direct access to the composer, performers constantly struggle with how much—or how little—personal influence is appropriate in the process of interpretation. In the mid and late twentieth century, the culture of European classical music discouraged interpretive variance from a given composition, deemphasized the use of improvisational gestures, and focused on literal translations of notation. Yet historically, musical-cultural contexts of European classical music placed a high value upon the performer's ability to employ improvisational tools such as embellishments and tempo fluctuations. In addition, traditions other than that of European classical music have been and are so focused on an improvisational approach that the written form of a composition can be hardly recognizable. For instance, jazz notational systems are simply inadequate in representing the music, so much so that jazz performers must understand the oral tradition in order to function. The deeper the understanding of jazz style, the more awareness there is of the vital role of oral tradition in capturing the art form. For this reason, the most helpful jazz scores are those with the least amount of detail, communicating only basic information in the simplest way.

As one strives for integrity in any tradition's musical performance, one must understand how much interpretive input and extemporaneous alteration is required or desired. A performer needs to be aware of specific interpretive parameters and must consider that employing oral traditions may be an essential step toward translating a score. Certain notated genres that rely heavily upon non-notated performance practices in order to complete the musical product—such as Italian madrigals of the late Renaissance and choral jazz ballads of the twentieth century—are especially vulnerable to misrepresentation by performers unaware of interpretative parameters, or by those who lack skills to interact with the music *ex tempore*. In regional and national professional conventions (such as those of the American Choral Directors Association and the International Association of Jazz Educators), and in concert or recorded performances of academic or professional choirs, a confusing array of interpretations of late Renaissance Italian madrigals and twentieth century choral jazz ballads abound. Few presentations fully reflect the performance practices revealed in primary source materials that call for the interpretive input of the performer with extemporaneous alteration of the written notation.

Performance practice resources that address the late Renaissance Italian madrigal and the twentieth century choral jazz ballad are limited and relatively inaccessible, so disseminating helpful information is difficult. What information is available is segregated within choral education, with classical and jazz choral issues explored separately and with unequal attention. In addition, the complementary nature of these two performance practices has not been considered for mutual benefit.

This study is motivated by the belief that exploring a contemporary musical culture, such as jazz, may bring an understanding to a comparable historical culture, such as the madrigal in the late Renaissance, in ways that would not be gleaned from musical artifacts alone.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to compile performance practice resources for both late Renaissance Italian madrigals and twentieth century choral jazz ballads that will inform the interpretation of each genre. The desired outcome is to illustrate how these performance practices are complimentary and mutually informative. In what follows, *performance practice* and *oral tradition* are briefly defined, each genre is considered within its musical-cultural context, and the similarities between these two choral genres are summarized.

Background Information

Performance Practice and Oral Tradition

Performance practice (also known as "performing practice," which is a more literal adaptation from the German *Aufführungspraxis*), can refer to a wide range of issues. The *New Harvard Dictionary of Music* has this to say:

> In the context of notated music, performance practice is usually thought to encompass everything about performance that is not unambiguously specified in notation. . . . Historically, the study of important performance practice has concentrated on periods and repertories in which the gap between what was notated and what was thought necessary for a performance (especially a

> historically authentic performance) was greatest. The recent history of this study has seen the extent and the importance of this gap recognized in repertories ever closer to the present. . . . Important topics of performance practice for most periods through the 19th century have been ornamentation and/or improvisation, the changing character of musical instruments, . . . tuning and temperament, the size and composition of the ensembles, tempo, articulation, dynamics and other performance marks, and the nature of vocal production and singing styles.[1]

Performance practice issues, especially since the 1960s, are of increasing importance when considering any style period or musical tradition, not merely early classical music, and not merely music that predates notation:

> All notation requires an informed reader for its realization, and thus all notation is fundamentally incomplete. In this respect, performance practice is equally important in written and oral musical traditions. The status of the concept of composition in Western art music has sometimes obscured this similarity among diverse musical cultures and thus among the methods of study appropriate to them.[2]

Just as performance practice is important to most types of music, oral tradition can play a crucial role in understanding performance practice:

> *Oral Tradition*: spoken and sung cultural history; a community's cultural and historical background preserved and passed on from one generation to the next in spoken stories and song, as distinct from being written down.[3]

Academia tends to use the terms "performance practice" and "oral tradition" exclusively: *oral tradition* appears in ethnomusicological discourse applied to non-notated music, and *performance practice* is usually discussed in literature regarding notated Western classical music. Yet, performance practice, "thought to encompass everything about performance that is not unambiguously specified in notation," must include awareness of oral tradition, and vice versa. Considered together, these concepts paint a more complete picture of the musical interpretative process. Therefore, this study uses these terms somewhat interchangeably, each thought to include the other. Resources compiled to inform performance practices and oral traditions will include contemporaneous letters, interviews, treatises, instructional and critical writings, manuscripts, and, when applicable, sound recordings.

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[1] Don Michael Randel, ed., *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Harvard University Press, 1986), *s*.v. "Performance Practice."

[2] Ibid.

[3] Anne Soukhanov, ed., Encarta World English Dictionary (New York: St. Martin's Press 1999), s.v. "Oral Tradition."

Late Renaissance Italian Madrigals

Historical Overview, Cultural Context, and Performance Practices

In the early Renaissance, artists were fascinated by ancient Greek culture and tradition, including philosophical writings on the persuasive power of oratory. With no extant samples of ancient Greek music to emulate, composers sought to reflect rhetorical values by considering how to set text to music in such a way as to maximize the persuasive power of words. Josquin des Prez and his contemporaries strove to musically underscore the oratorical rise and fall of a text phrase—a revolutionary concept given that text underlay had before been mostly left to the performer. From about 1530 on, Adrian Willaert forged a more intentional union of notes and syllables. Within polyphonic textures, each individual voice part employed oratorical text-setting techniques to greater and lesser degrees, increasingly utilizing points of imitation and contrasting chordal passages. Maximizing the musical-rhetorical power in all vocal forms remained a consuming issue among theorists, composers, the intellectual elite, and church leaders throughout the century, with the desire for clear enunciation of the text often placed at odds with the notion of melodic or textural complexity. Cipriano de Rore emerged at the forefront of the next generation of Italian composers with books of madrigals, widely reprinted for decades, that included madrigal cycles (e.g., *Vergine*) and distinctly individualistic forms. Rore's *Primo libro* featured *note nere* notation that widened the range of note value possibilities: smaller values allowed for quickly-pattered declamatory passages that could be contrasted with much longer notes used for expressive sighs and other effects.

As the century entered its last decades, choral text expression took a very different form in France. Chanson composers, such as Claude Le Jeune, devised techniques to create *musique mesurée à l'antique,* or *musique mesurée*, i.e., compositions that exactly followed the irregular, two- and three-beat patterns of *vers mesurés* (French verse reworked metrically to reflect a newly conceived application of ancient Greek and Latin poetic principles). *Musique mesurée* was predominantly homophonic with long note-values for accented syllables, and short note-values for unaccented syllables (e.g., Le Jeune's *Si le lien se voit deffait*). Meanwhile, Italian madrigals enjoyed continuing experimentation in compositional techniques. Composers Luca Marenzio and Carlo Gesualdo pursued a bold use of chromaticism to enliven and underscore the meaning of lyrics (e.g., Marenzio's *Io piango*), while Claudio Monteverdi focused on the variance of textures as a means to dramatically enunciate the text (e.g., *Si ch'io vorrei morrire*).

From such a flowering of choral experimentation, the late Renaissance Italian madrigal ultimately came to embody the *industry standard* for text expression in choral form. Madrigals were intended for use in intimate and private court gatherings of the social elite, or as incidental music in staged presentations. Within a cultural context that so appreciated and glorified text clarity and dramatization, madrigal performers were compelled to employ any number of interpretive devises *ex tempore* to further enliven the words. Although typically scored for voices only and composed for virtuoso singers performing one or two on a part, any number of instruments might be employed to augment a group *si placet*—as one pleased. Other freedoms in performance included raising or lowering the key, employing ornamentation, altering pitches in order to "fix" (*musica ficta*), or "rectify" (*musica recta*) the music, and fluctuating tempo or rhythms.

The Genre as Defined for the Purpose of this Study

Late Renaissance Italian madrigals include multi-voiced choral compositions written from approximately 1550-1620 with Italian text, secular or sacred in theme, which can be performed with or without instrumental accompaniment.

Twentieth-Century Choral Jazz Ballads

Historical Overview, Cultural Context, and Oral Tradition

The jazz ballad has its foundations in African- and Caribbean-American vocal forms (such as call-and-response, spirituals, and blues) and European AB and ABA song forms at the very beginning of the twentieth century. By the 1920s, recordings had captured the highly expressive and improvisatory vocal styles of two notable African-American blues singers, Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith. Their interpretive approach to blues revealed a dramatic flair akin to vaudeville.

> A separate tradition of blues singing was established by a group of women, who were the first to record the blues, in the early 1920s. . . . They sang with powerful

> emotion, full voices, and a wide range of expression, and are regarded as contributing important elements to the development of jazz singing style. They were usually accompanied by pianists or small groups.[4]

Early recordings of Louis Armstrong singing blues and slow vaudevillian songs reveal a delivery that is similarly theatrical, speech-like, text-sensitive, improvisatory, and distinctly individualistic. Billie Holiday, who often credited Louis Armstrong as a central influence, broadened the range of expression in a way that is often referred to as revolutionary. In her blues recordings, the vocal delivery is so convincingly personal that the listener often experiences a startling sense of poignancy and intimacy. As she developed her style, she was transforming the blues into a new, more artistically complex form, and as the century progressed, the blues solidified its own distinct formal and harmonic language, and the highly emotive, text-driven ballad became recognizable as a separate genre and style within the jazz tradition.

Other vocalists of the early twentieth century, such as Bing Crosby, contributed to the emergence of a ballad style. Crosby forged his own interpretive path by utilizing a more conventional tone quality with some of the text-driven and/or more playful improvisatory elements popularized by Louis Armstrong.

> Crosby's great accomplishment was the application of jazz to the music of Tin Pan Alley. The significance of "hot" music to ballads, in particular, had been a nut that no one had been able to crack, especially vocally. Certainly Crosby's assimilation of Armstrong's rhythmic advances gave him a major jump on the competition. . . . The twenties were great years for "naturalism," but their idea of natural differed drastically from any that has come since—and Crosby represents the line of demarcation. He was the one who came up with the kind of "natural" that "worked," . . . the perfect balance between conversational and purely

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[4] Barry Kernfield, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz* (New York: St. Marin's Press, 1994), s.v. "Singing Jazz: 3, The Influence of Blues" by Max Harrison.

> musical singing, the personality and the character. Crosby was the first singer to truly glorify and exalt the American popular melody.[5]

Crosby's style inspired generations of "crooners," singers who appeared to bask in the sound of their tone. As crooners idealized and romanticized the ballad, they contributed to its movement away from jazz tradition toward a mainstream, popular style. Some, such as Frank Sinatra, Mel Tormé, and Tony Bennet, successfully bridged pop and jazz idioms. They offered a wide range of ballad interpretations by limiting or expanding the use of improvisation.

Sarah Vaughan emerged as a dynamic force in ballad interpretation, employing great improvisational skill. With a full-bodied tone and a wide vocal range, she used an expanded harmonic vocabulary to create highly inventive phrases.

> Few vocalists in any genre have had the sheer range and expressive capabilities of Vaughan. Arriving on the scene a decade after Billie Holiday . . . her concept was a lush one, with the various shadings of her exquisite instrument taking precedence over the acting of the lyric.[6]

In the pantheon of jazz, Vaughan's place is secure largely due to her skills in improvisation and ballad interpretation. Ella Fitzgerald, also widely admired for her improvisational skills and vocal range, maintained a straight-forward and sometimes fanciful approach to ballad singing. While staying close to the melody, she also employed incidental use of rhythmic and melodic embellishment. The jazz ballad was further informed by an impressive line of instrumentalists, such as Miles Davis and George Shearing, who often created interpretive gestures that resembled speech-like, conversational qualities, as if to highlight lyrics unsung but present in the mind of the player. Generation to generation, and across idioms, a jazz ballad performance practice was established that featured an improvisatory approach to text expression and the development of a highly individualistic style. Each new generation strives to find its own voice, experimenting with a wide variety of expressive tools and widening the ballad's definition and stylistic parameters.

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[5] Will Fitzgerald, *Jazz Singers: America's Great Voices from Bessie Smith to Bebop* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1996), 32.

[6] Loren Schoenburg, *The NPR Curious Listener's Guide to Jazz* (New York: The Berkeley Publishing Group, Penguin Putnam, Inc., 2002), 155.

Like all jazz repertory, ballads are primarily learned and understood through oral transmission; slight variances in melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic elements become part of the tradition's richness. A score provides the most straightforward representation of melody, harmony, and form, but serves only as common ground from which performers might depart. Live performances and recordings (and to a lesser degree, interviews, writings, and photography) of recognized masters serve as primary sources not only for teaching and preserving musical compositions, but also for the performance practice of a particular style. Whether a student is a trombonist, guitarist, or singer, he or she is inevitably directed to recordings of Charlie Parker (saxophonist) and Dizzy Gillespie (trumpeter) to become acclimated to the improvisational approach of bebop style. In the case of ballad style, all students are directed to pivotal vocalists who demonstrate mastery in the genre, such as Billie Holiday and Sarah Vaughan.

Development of the Choral Jazz Ballad

It is difficult to highlight the development of any choral jazz genre apart from understanding choral jazz developments generally. Jazz choirs and their repertoire developed in a manner somewhat apart from the mainstream of jazz tradition. No jazz choirs *per se* flourished at the times and in the regions of the earliest formations of jazz styles; there were no great jazz choirs of New Orleans in the earliest decades of the twentieth century, in Harlem from the 1920s-1940s, or in Kansas City from the 1930s-1940s. The most significant emergence of choral jazz occurred in the 1970s as secondary and collegiate educational music programs sought to provide a means for vocal students to study jazz.

While jazz choirs are a fairly recent development, small vocal jazz ensembles, such as the vocal trio *The Boswell Sisters*, emerged fairly early in the jazz tradition, vocally imitating big band style. Big bands, also referred to as swing bands, commonly featured vocal soloists, duos, and trios. Vocalist Jon Hendricks, of the trio *Lambert, Hendricks, and Ross,* championed "vocal-ese," a new technique of adding lyrics to extant instrumental improvisations. Other groups such as the *HiLo's,* the *Modernaires,* and *Swingle Singers,* demonstrated beautiful blend and tone, and produced innovative vocal arrangements with highly musical results. Like many swing bands, most of these vocal ensembles moved easily between popular and jazz styles, sometimes within a single musical composition. While these groups may be masters of jazz choral techniques (producing highly admired tone, blend, tuning, and balance), since they did not develop within jazz tradition proper they are not primary sources of any jazz style, including the ballad. Just as jazz players tend to view many swing era big bands as being more pop than jazz in style, jazz choirs and their repertoire have struggled to secure solid footing within the jazz tradition. This struggle is exacerbated by choral jazz repertoire and performances that lean more or less toward pop style.

The choral jazz ballad emerged in the late 1960s, parallel to the emergence of the choral jazz medium. The genre consists of slow-tempo choral compositions or arrangements, accompanied or a cappella, that reflect jazz rhythmic and harmonic vocabularies. Many choral jazz ballads are based on professional vocal jazz recordings (e.g., *A Quiet Place,* arranged by Jerry Rubino, based on a recording by *Take Six.*[7]), or arranged by noted choral jazz educators (e.g., *I'll Be Seeing You* by jazz educator, Phil Mattson[8]).

The Culture of Jazz Composition and Arranging

Jazz culture holds as a central value that performances need be spontaneous and individualistic, such that the more duplicated a performance, the further removed it is from the essence of the tradition. Choral jazz composers and arrangers do not anticipate literal translation of their score and do not generally provide detailed directions regarding interpretation. Typically, expressive markings are limited to general terms such as "Freely," "Ad lib.," "Rubato," or "With Feeling." Understanding the oral and cultural traditions of jazz, the composer or arranger presumes a jazz musician will approach the score through varying degrees of interpretative alterations. Choral jazz ballads are written with the assumption that the performers will inflect, modify, and phrase the music to enliven the text and to bring to fruition individualistic interpretations.

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[7] Jerry Rubino, arr., *A Quiet Place*, words and music by Ralph Carmichael (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Jenson Publications, dist. Hal Leonard Publishing, n. d.).

[8] Phil Mattson, arr., *I'll Be Seeing You*, words and music by Irving Kahal and Sammy Fain (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Hal Leonard Publishing and Williamson Music, 1984).

The Genre as Defined for the Purpose of this Study

In this study, choral jazz ballads include multi-voiced choral arrangements with jazz harmonic language, intended to be sung at a slow tempo or with tempo rubato, which can be performed with or without instrumental accompaniment. The original melody can be from a myriad of style-sources (pop, theater, folk, etc.) as long as the arrangement transforms its musical language into the jazz idiom. Narrowing the genre in this way provides the maximum amount of flexibility for text-driven interpretation. The performance practices that inform a cappella choral jazz ballads also apply to accompanied choral jazz ballads and choral jazz works that are set in a slow, 12/8, blues style.

Rationale for the Study

Similarities of Late Italian Renaissance Madrigals and Choral Jazz Ballads

Late Renaissance Italian madrigals and choral jazz ballads are more similar than dissimilar, as both emerged from musical cultures that (1) emphasized the oratorical delivery of text in performance, (2) approached performance with a great deal of flexibility, (3) were reliant upon a strong oral tradition, and (4) placed high value in the performer’s extemporaneous contribution to the music. Given these shared musical-cultural sensibilities, it follows that many detailed aspects of their performance practices are alike. The late Renaissance madrigal flourished alongside text-expressive compositional developments. The jazz ballad style emerged as a highly flexible vehicle for text-expression. Both choral genres favor the clarity and persuasive delivery of lyrics over and above other musical considerations so that text expression governs the interpretation. Choral ensembles are expected to emphasize words, syllables, and phrases, and to modify the musical material *si placet* or *ad libitum*. Other musical liberties in performance encouraged by both genres include fluctuations of tempo and flexibilities of pitch and instrumentation. Composers and arrangers of both genres expected or expect performers to create individualistic, personalized, and unique interpretations.

Challenges Facing Choral and Jazz Professions

Overlooked and Misrepresented Genres

In addition to sharing interpretive principles, these two genres are overlooked and misrepresented in the field: they are often conspicuously absent from concert repertoire, and when they are performed, essential performance practices are absent. Such neglect and misrepresentation deprives musicians of the opportunity to fully experience the expressive power of these genres. While a few specialized madrigal ensembles and jazz choirs take great care to present informed performances, resources that would inform the mainstream of the choral profession remain convoluted, incomplete, and relatively inaccessible. Professional and non-professional vocal jazz ensembles are notorious for mixing pop, gospel, and jazz styles.

This study serves to clarify an approach to the choral jazz ballad that will emulate the performance practices established by jazz masters, assisting in the effort to better align the field of choral jazz with the greater jazz culture and tradition. It also strives to remedy the overall neglect of ballad interpretation in jazz education, generally:

> Over the past 30-45 years the number of jazz ballad interpreters has been in a slow decline. Very few modern players match the beautiful . . . singers Billie Holiday, Sarah Vaughn, and Ella Fitzgerald. The power of the ballad hasn't diminished, but it has become a rare event in recordings and performances, and many jazz musicians seem to have abandoned that aspect of the craft . . . or never had it in the first place. . . . Jazz educators aren't teaching much about ballads.[9]

The Call for Multi-Culturally Trained Musicians

The separateness of classical and jazz environments in higher education hinders all musicians in a pursuit to be fully-equipped for modern professional demands. Jazz, an ethnically diverse musical culture, integrates musical elements from European, African, South American, and Brazilian traditions, among others. The kind of comparative work that this study encourages—one that examines how music from different cultures can inform each other—is increasingly beneficial to music graduates now expected to have multi-cultural musical backgrounds. Most choral directors will likely be called upon to teach jazz choirs and perform choral jazz literature. Since the late 1960s, jazz choirs have become ever more prominent in American choral programs at the secondary level.

> In the Pacific Northwest, the Northwest Vocal jazz Festival was held for the 25th anniversary year at Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham, Oregon in May of 1992. Thought to be the oldest and largest festival of its kind in the nation, the initial festival in 1968 drew 12 choirs. The numbers doubled nearly every year . . . up to about 100 in 1992.[10]

Although there has been considerable growth and interest in choral jazz, most choral conducting programs in higher education still consider the teaching of jazz interpretation to be non-essential.

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[9] Jerry Coker, *The Jazz Ballad: Experience Ultimate Expression* (Germany: Advance Music, 2000), 7.

[10] Doug Anderson, *Jazz and Show Choir Handbook II* (Chapel Hill: Hinshaw Music, Inc., 1993), 6.

A Lack of Experience in Choral Improvisation

While jazz musicians are routinely trained to improvise and to vary musical material extemporaneously, such skills are mostly neglected in classical studies. As classicists explore early music, they are often poorly prepared for performance practices that require improvisation. This study explores an improvisational approach to the madrigal as a possible mechanism for classically trained choral directors and singers seeking to develop improvisational skills.

Desired Outcome of the Study

This study intends to provide primary sources that inform the interpretative performance practices of late Renaissance Italian madrigals and choral jazz ballads. These two performance practices are presented alongside each other to provide an awareness of their similarities, and to demonstrate how knowledge of their relationship is mutually informative. The desired outcome of this study is not only to inform performances of these genres, but also to encourage cross-cultural exchange between classical and jazz education for the benefit of the choral profession.

CHAPTER TWO

SELECTED PRIMARY SOURCES THAT INFORM LATE RENAISSANCE ITALIAN MADRIGAL PERFORMANCE PRACTICES

This chapter identifies principles and examples from primary sources that inform the interpretation and performance of late Renaissance Italian madrigals. The excerpts are organized under two broad categories: (1) sources that describe text-driven compositional practices, and (2) sources that describe text-driven performance practices. Within these categories, sources are organized chronologically with editorial sub-headings and comments in brackets that highlight recurring topics, such as: the importance of relaying emotion; text-driven, speech-like delivery; and favorable and expressive application of interpretive gestures (ornaments, dynamics, tempo fluctuation, and melodic or rhythmic alteration).

Sources Describing Text-Driven Compositional Practices

Thomas Morley: *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* (1597)

[*Importance of Relaying Emotion*]

[Morley directs madrigal composers to be “in that vein in which you compose”—i.e., to compositionally embody the character of the text moment by moment.]

> If therefore you will compose in this kind [madrigals], you must possess yourself of an amorous humor (for in no composition shall you prove admirable except you put on and possess yourself wholly with that vein wherein you compose), so that you must in your music be wavering like the wind, sometimes wanton, sometimes drooping, sometimes grave and staid, otherwhile effeminate;

> you may maintain points and revert them, use triples, and show the very uttermost of your variety, and the more variety you show the better shall you please.[1]

Guilio Cesare Monteverdi: *Declaration in the forward to Claudio Monteverdi's Il quinto libro de' madrigali* (1605)[2]

[*Text-Driven, Speech-Like Delivery*]

> My brother says that he does not compose his works haphazard because in this kind of music, it has been his intention to make the words the mistress of the harmony and not the servant, and because it is in this manner that his work is to be judged in the composition of the melody. Of this Plato speaks as follows: "The song is composed of three things: the words, the harmony, and the melody;" and a little further on: "And so of the apt and the unapt, if the rhythm and the melody follow the words, and not the words these." Then, to give greater force to the words, he continues: "Do not the manner of the diction and the words follow and conform to the disposition of the soul?" and then, "Indeed, all the rest follows and conforms to the diction."[3]

Agostino Agazzari: *Del sonare sopra il basso* (1607)

[*Text-Driven, Speech-Like Delivery*]

[Speech-like delivery and clarity of text become so prioritized that intricate imitation and multi-voiced textures are increasingly less favored.]

> Having treated thus far of playing upon a bass, it seems to me desirable to say something about the bass itself. . . . Since the recent discovery of the true style of expressing the words, namely, the imitation of speech itself in the best possible manner, something which succeeds best with a single voice or with a few voices, as in the modern airs of certain able men and is now much practiced at Rome in concerted music, it is no longer necessary to make a score or tablature, but, as we have said above, a bass with its signs suffices.[4]

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[1] Oliver Shrunk. *Source Readings in Music History,* New York: W. W. Norton, 1950, 274.

[2] Ibid., 405.

[3] Ibid., 407.

[4] Oliver Shrunk. *Source Readings in Music History,* Revised Edition, Leo Treitor, ed., New York and London: W. W. Norton and Co., 1998, 627.

Sources Describing Performance Practices

Herman Finck: *Practica musica* (1555)

[*Favorable Choral Embellishment*]

[This mid-century source affirms that the ornamentation of multi-voiced compositions was a long-established practice and helps depict the musical-cultural aesthetic of the Renaissance. It also gives insight into the kinds of variables involved as one decides how and when to employ choral embellishments.]

> The manner of adding embellishments depends on skill, natural suitability, and the singularity of the individual ornament. Each has it's own manner. There are many who are of the opinion that the bass should be embellished, others say the discantus; but in my opinion, embellishments both can and should be applied to all voices, but not throughout, only at indicated places; also, not in all voices alike, only on the proper degrees. And let them be done in their turn, in such a way that each embellishment can be clearly distinguished from the others, yet so that the entire work is uniform. . . .
>
> What those who preside over choruses and groups of singers must do, and in what sort of voice the singing should be, however, will be found in the next book. . . . In this place let it be enough to say that in a chorus *colloraturae* cannot be added without poor results for when one part is assigned to several to sing, the *colloraturae* will become very difficult, whence both the pleasantness and the nature of the sound are obscured.[5]

Giovanni Camillo Maffei: *Delle lettere del Signor Gio. Camillo Maffei da Solofra* (1562)

[Maffei provides rules regarding how singers can add embellishment to polyphonic madrigals without compromising the composition, vocal tone, text clarity, and ensemble cohesion.]

> But because the pupil will feel little satisfied, or not at all, if . . . he cannot apply the *passaggi* in madrigals or anything else he might sing, I have written out

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[5] Carol MacClintock, *Readings in the History of Music in Performance,* Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1979, 63-64.

this madrigal [*Lasciar il velo* by Jacques Acradelt] and will talk about the many rules which are necessary for this project. [See pages 21-25 for *Lasciar il velo*.]

I know that this madrigal is old, but I have given it only as an example so that the good singer, in everything that is set before him to sing, may observe the rules that are observed in it; and so that they may be more clearly understood, here they are written out by me.

The first rule, then, is that diminutions are made in no other place except in the cadences; since the harmony is coming to an end in the cadences one can ornament very pleasingly without disturbing the other singers. But one is not prohibited for this reason, before reaching the cadence, from passing from one note to another with some variation or decoration, as we see in the printed madrigal, where it can be tolerated and where it seems to be fitting.

The second rule is that in one madrigal you should not make more than four or five diminutions, so that the ear, enjoying the sweetness rarely, becomes evermore desirous of hearing it. This would not happen if you sing decorations continually, because the diminutions, instead of pleasing, would become tiresome when the ear is saturated in them. We see these every day because we see many people who, without observing semi-tones and accidentals and without expressing the words as they are written, attend to nothing except making *passaggi*, persuading themselves that the ear will be pleased in this way; hence they become annoying and are blamed by everyone.

The third rule is that the diminution should be made on the penultimate syllable so that the end of the word will be the end of the ornamentation.

The fourth is that the diminution should be made on the word and syllable where the vowel *O* occurs . . . because with it the voice is made rounder; and with the others, in addition to the fact that they do not unite so well with the breath, they make the diminutions sound like laughter. However, I do not insist upon this rule and trust to the good judgment of the singer.

The fifth rule is that when four or five people sing together, while they sing, one should yield to another; because if two or three should make diminutions at the same time the harmony would be disturbed. And how much is included in this rule is clearly exemplified in the madrigal I have given.[6]

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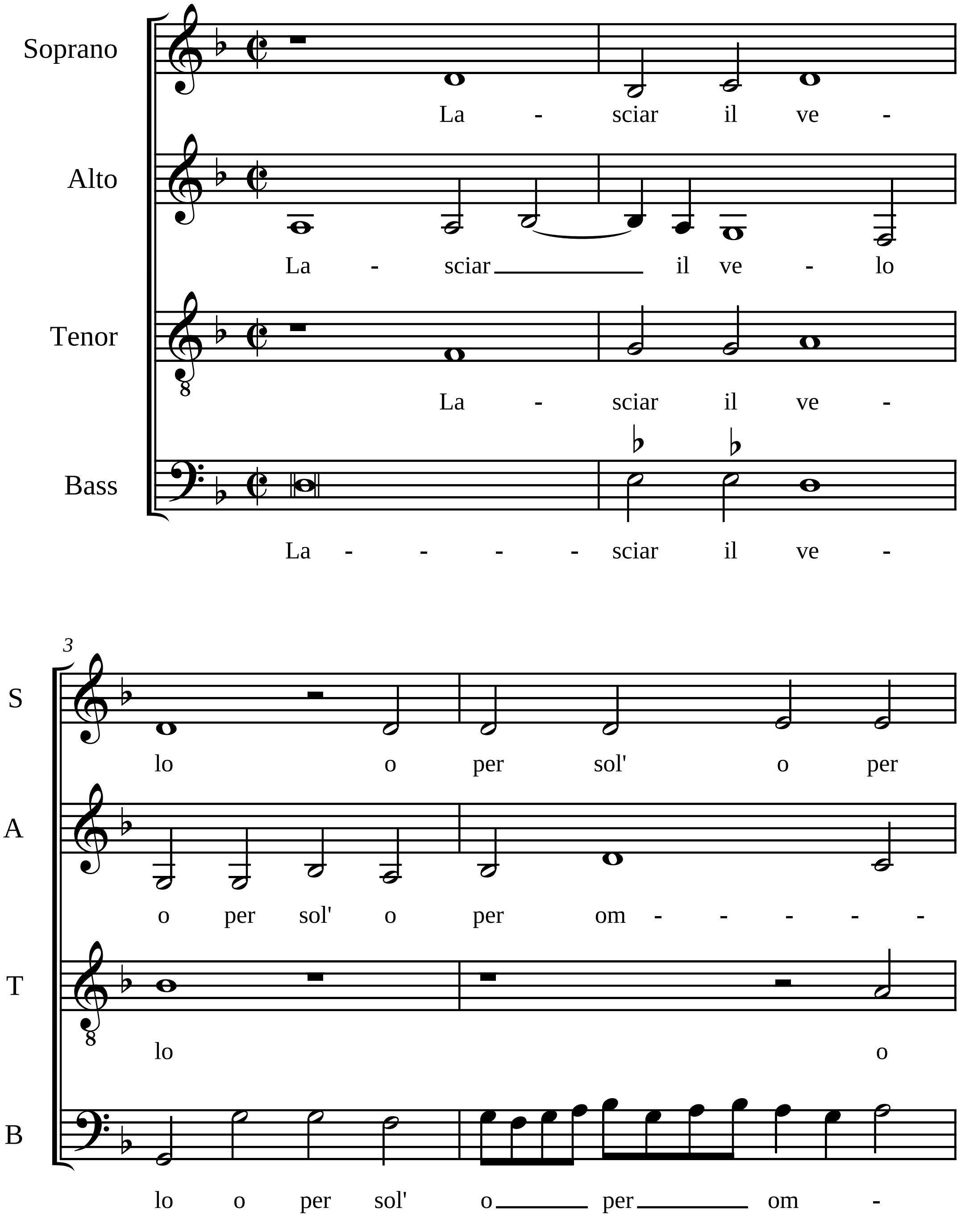
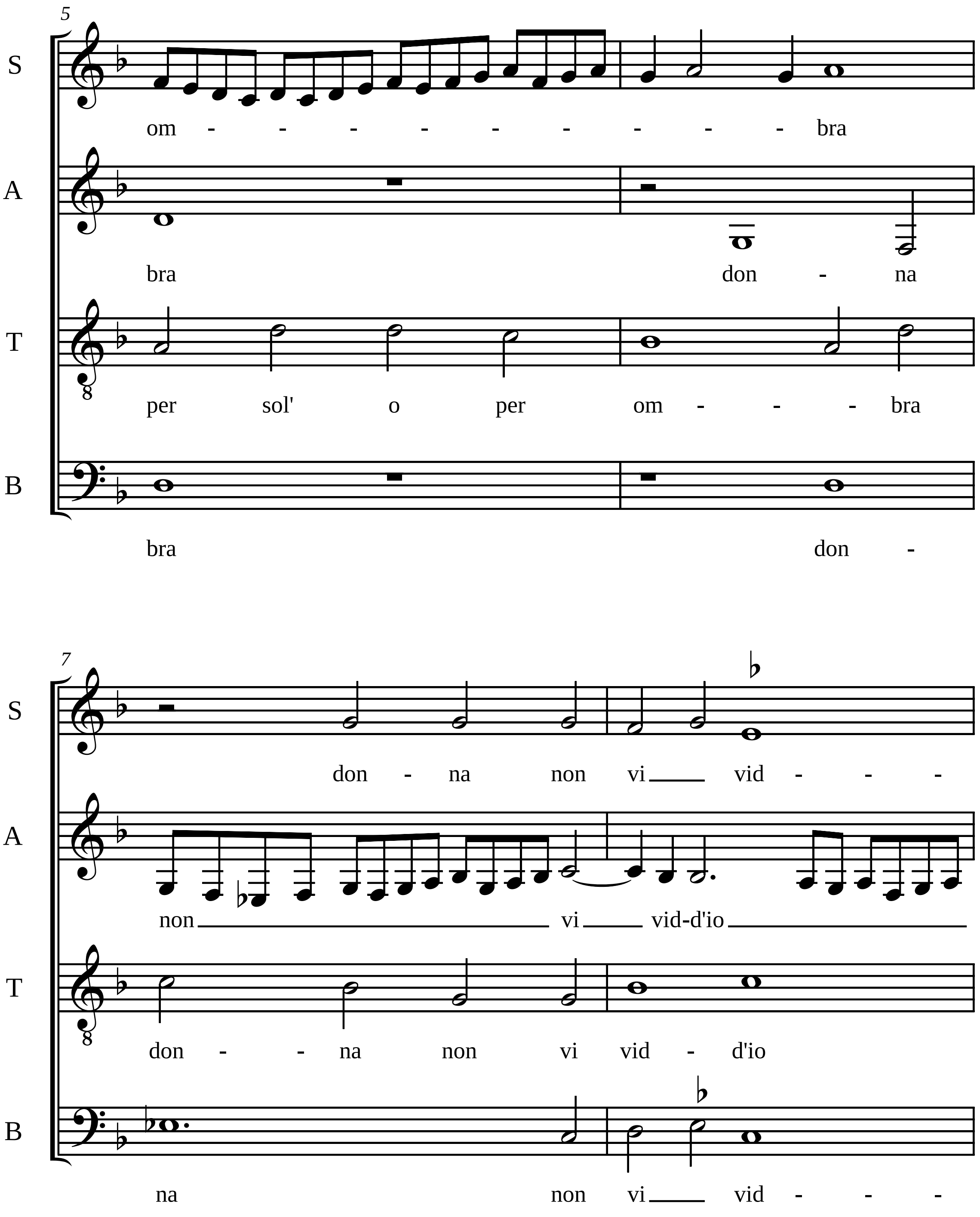
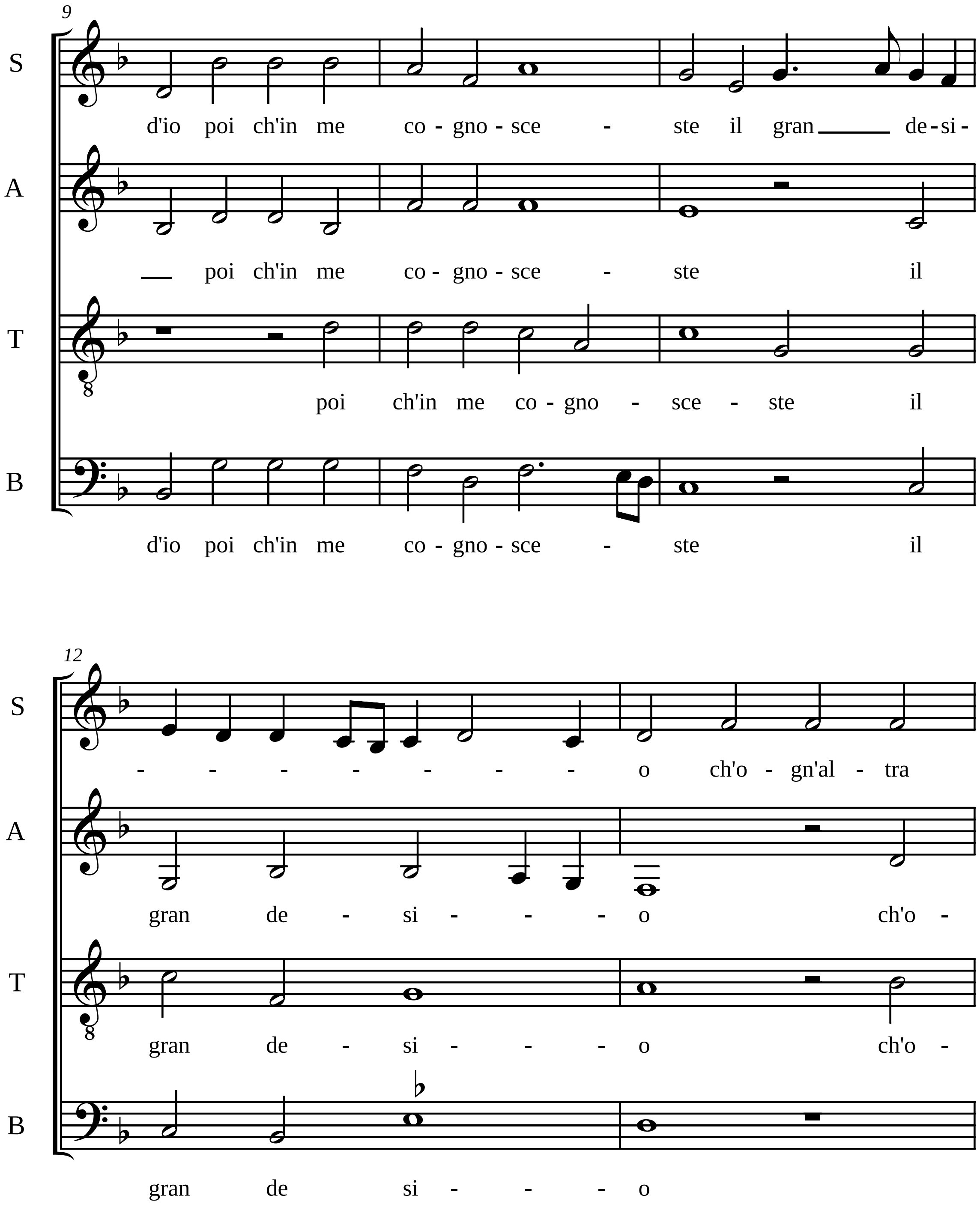
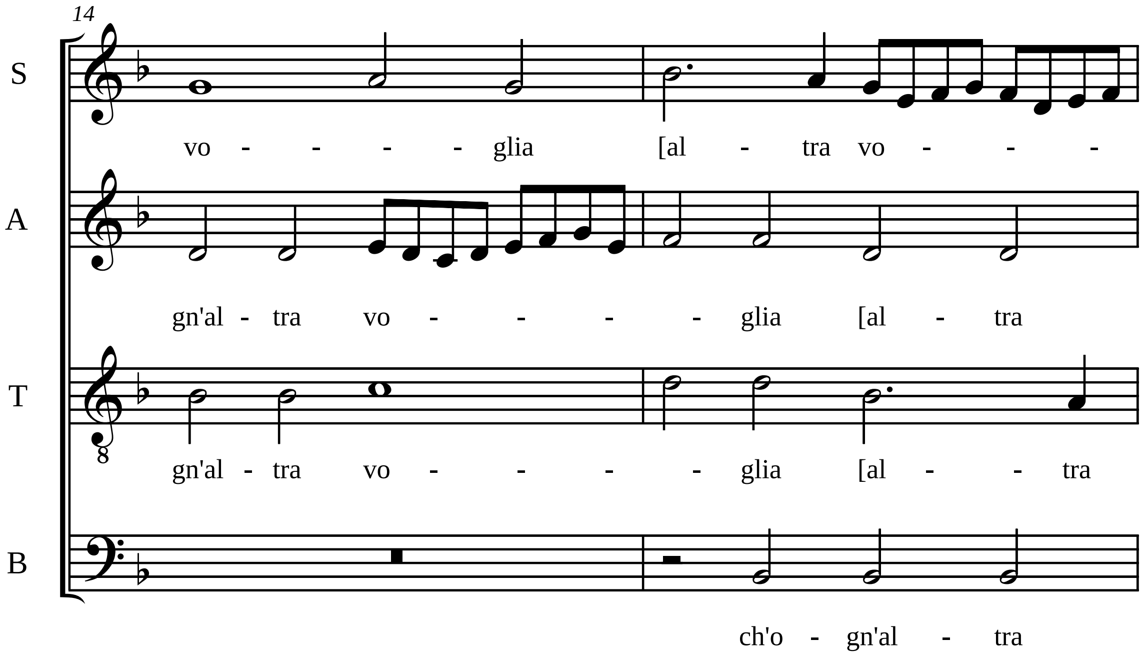
[6] Ibid., 47-53.

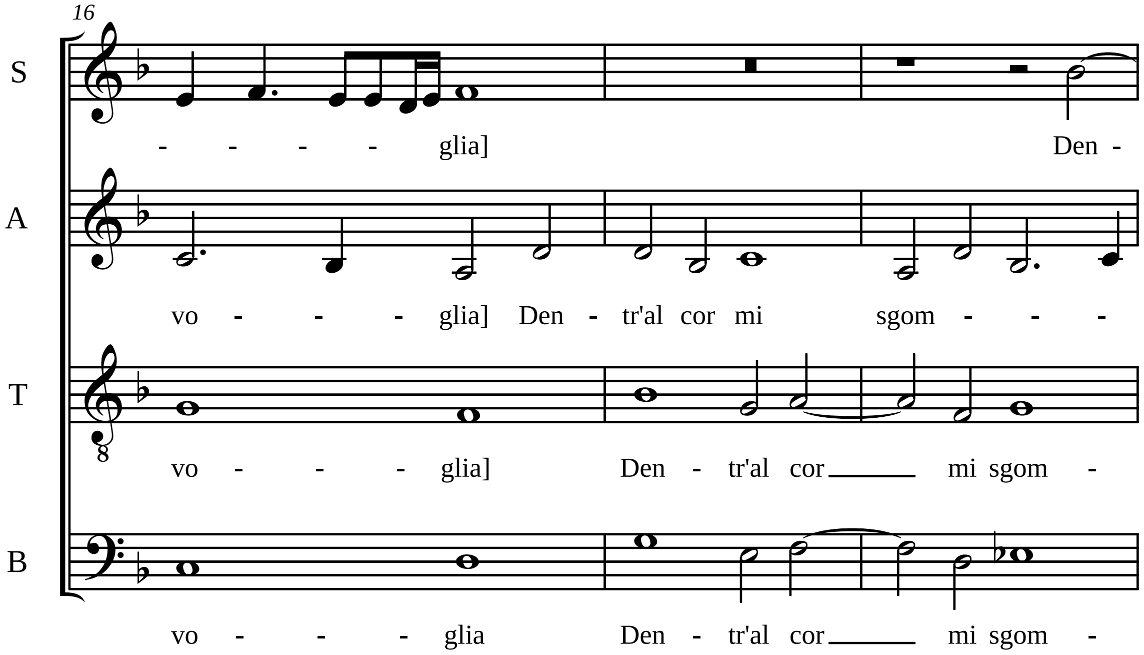
[*Lasciar il velo o sol'o per ombra* by Jacques Arcadelt]

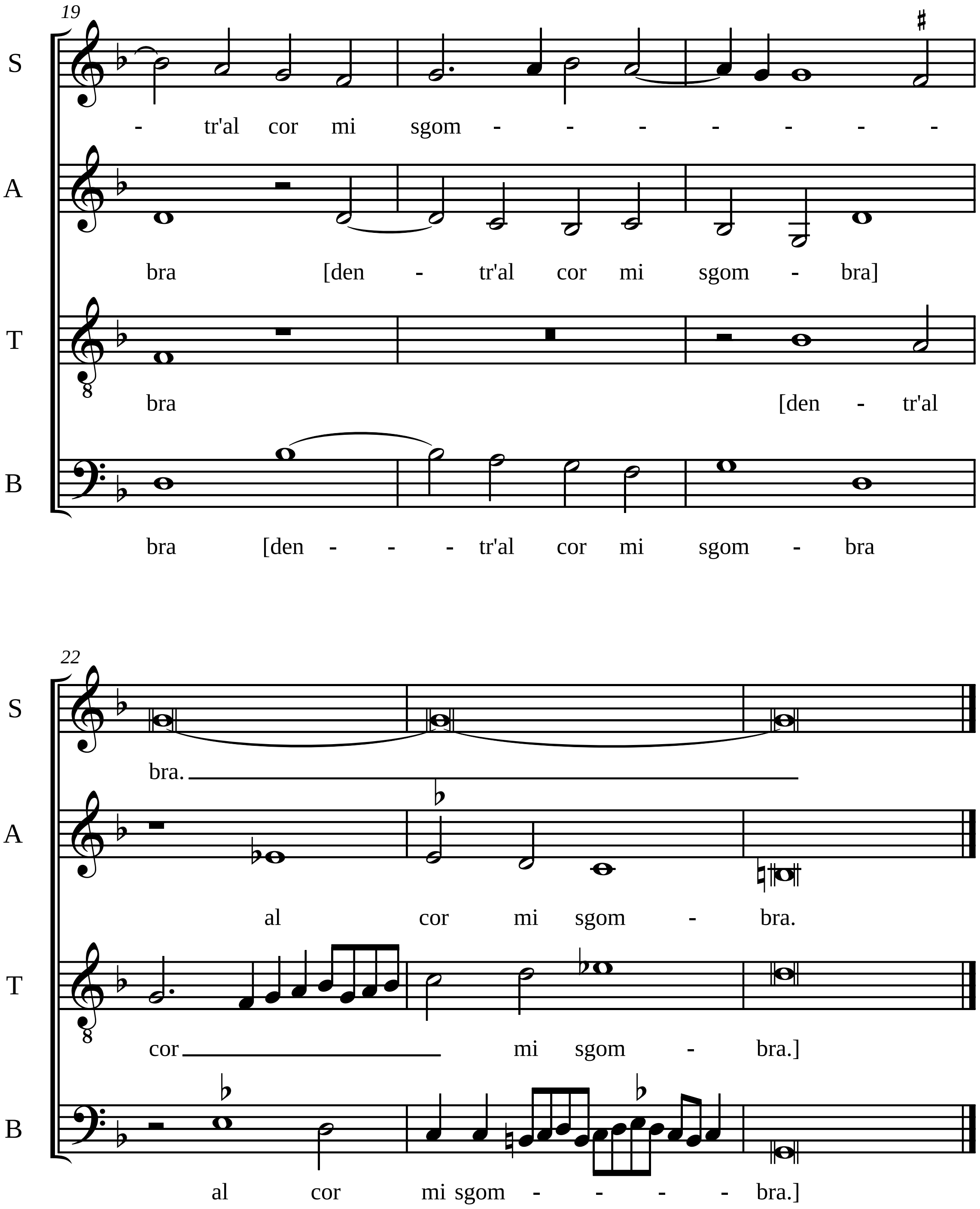

Soprano
La - sciar il ve -
Alto
La - sciar il ve - lo
Tenor
La - sciar il ve -
Bass
La - - - - sciar il ve -
3
S
lo o per sol' o per
A
o per sol' o per om - - - - -
T
lo o
B
lo o per sol' o per om -


5
S
om - - - - - - - - - bra
A
bra don - na
T
per sol' o per om - - - bra
B
bra don -
7
S
don - na non vi vid - - -
A
non vi vid-d'io
T
don - - na non vi vid - d'io
B
na non vi vid - - -


9
S
d'io poi ch'in me co - gno - sce - ste il gran de - si -
A
poi ch'in me co - gno - sce - ste il
T
poi ch'in me co - gno - sce - ste il
B
d'io poi ch'in me co - gno - sce - ste il
12
S
- - - - - - - o ch'o - gn'al - tra
A
gran de - si - - - o ch'o -
T
gran de - si - - - o ch'o -
B
gran de si - - - o


14
S
A
T
B
vo - - - - glia [al - tra vo - - -
gn'al - tra vo - - - - glia [al - tra
gn'al - tra vo - - - - glia [al - - tra
ch'o - gn'al - tra


16
S
A
T
B
- - - - glia] Den -
vo - - - glia] Den - tr'al cor mi sgom - - -
vo - - - glia] Den - tr'al cor mi sgom -
vo - - - glia Den - tr'al cor mi sgom -


19
S
- tr'al cor mi sgom - - - - - - -
A
bra [den - tr'al cor mi sgom - bra]
T
bra [den - tr'al
B
bra [den - - - tr'al cor mi sgom - bra
22
S
bra.
A
al cor mi sgom - bra.
T
cor mi sgom - bra.]
B
al cor mi sgom - - - - bra.]

Giovanni de Bardi: *Discorso mandato a Caccini sopra la musica antiqua e 'l cantar bene* (c. 1580)

[*Tempo & Rhythmic Flexibility*]

Taken altogether, these considerations show that practical music is a combination of words arranged by a poet into verses made up of various metres with respect to the long and the short, these being in their movement now fast and now slow, now low, now high, and now intermediate, approaching the sound of the words of the human voice, now sung by that voice alone, now accompanied by a musical instrument, which in turn should accompany the word with the long and the short, with fast and slow movement, and with the low, the high, and the intermediate.[7]

Ludovico Zacconi: from *Prattica di musica, The Manner to Be Observed in Making Diminutions and the Use of Modern Passages* (1596)

[*Favorable Nature of Embellishment, Grounded in Disciplined Study and Practice*]

However much the things that were embellished by artifice have become old-fashioned, those of today are just as much embellished by the detailed studies of many, because clever talents always find new ornaments. . . . Music has always been beautiful and becomes more so each hour because of the diligence and study by which singers enhance it; it is not renewed or changed because of the figures [i.e., notes], which are always of one kind, but by graces and ornaments it is made to appear always more beautiful.

The graces and accents are made by the breaking up of the notes each time that one adds, in a tactus or a half, a quantity of figures that are suitable to be uttered with velocity. These render such pleasure and delight . . . .

These persons, who have such quickness and ability to deliver a quantity of figures in tempo with such velocity, have so enhanced and made beautiful the songs that now whoever does not sing like those singers gives little pleasure to his hearers, and few such singers are held in esteem. This manner of singing and these ornaments are called by the common people *gorgia*; this is nothing other than an aggregation or collection of many eighths and sixteenths gathered in any one measure. . . .

This, then, [tempo and measure] is the most difficult thing about *gorgia*; and it needs study and diligence rather than mere desire to put so many figures together. That singer will always be praised who, with a few ornaments, makes them at the right moment, somewhat spaced out, rather than the one who waits very late or barely arrives in time. [8]

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[7] Shrunk, First Edition, 292.

[*Favorable Application of Embellishment in Ensembles: Sensitivity to Other Parts and Understatement*]

The beginning [of a piece], then, if not common and consecutive to all the parts, should always be delivered with simple and straightforward ornaments, so that the entrances of the other parts can be clearly heard; this is most delightful because unexpected, and even more so when they appear suddenly.

To explain better how unseemly it is to begin a part with *gorgia* when the other parts are silent, I say that everyone can make diminutions singing along; however the hearers do not receive from those ornaments all the pleasure they would if they were accompanied by the other parts. . . [*sic*][9] The beauty and difficulty consist in pleasing others without difficulty or dissonance; the player of any game is not praised for playing alone, but for playing well and getting along with others.

Further, that singer who at the beginning overshadows singers he does not know by his *gorgia* not only is worthy of reprimand, because of trying to make people believe that he knows something, but also brings shame and dishonor on himself.[10]

[*Apply Embellishments Intermittently Throughout a Piece, with a "Bold Heart," and without "Spoiling the Words"*]

The singer also should be careful at the end of any song not to do what many mediocre and inexperienced singers do in this profession; they make such copious ornamentations that they wish to display everything at the end, and have left the whole middle section empty and dull. Therefore, one who sings *gorgia* should show his valor not only at the end of a piece but also in the middle, where he must show his bold heart with audacity.

We must not omit the vice of those who, having made *gorgia* their friend, wish to do some little thing in each measure; and by singing them, even though the ornaments may be good, they spoil the syllables and words.[11]

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[8] MacClintock, 68-70.

[9] These ellipses occur in the text.

[10] Ibid., 70-71.

[11] Ibid., 71.

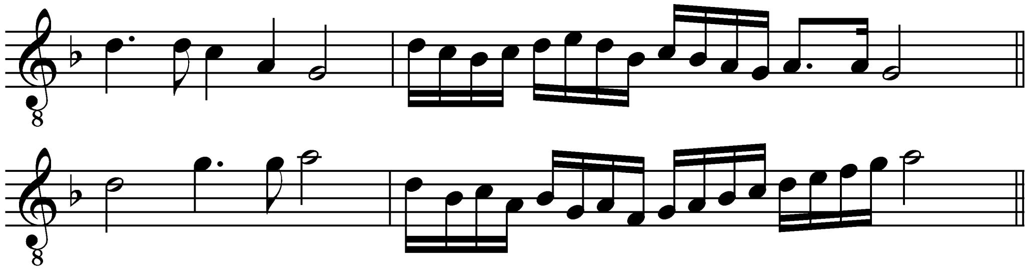
[*Circumstances that Lend Themselves to Application of Passagework, Diminutions, and Ornaments*]

Therefore to avoid many errors, . . . take care to do passagework on the semibreves, . . . accompanying a single syllable, you can ornament securely, for the effect of the passage will always be more beautiful. Diminutions in minims, being of lower values and somewhat slower, will make is easy to do whatever you want, providing the syllables or the words are not spoiled.

Likewise, if you find several minums together, the group can be ornamented, whenever it is convenient for the singer and the words are not spoiled. With semibreves and breves and other long notes, because they naturally require more time, many beauties can be put together to ornament them as one pleases; or one can use them in places where needed under a syllable or word. [12]

[*Applying Ornamentation to Cadences*]

The end of any ornamentation should be just and complete; the middle notes all equal and continual, so that one does not hear the beginning more than the middle and the end, . . . because each obscurations that one makes . . . takes away pleasure. . . . I have written these others [examples] that you see, to give him [he who has mastered previous examples] opportunity to ornament these simple ones and a few others that are longer.[13] [Two of Zacconi's three examples are below: the first measure of each line is ornamented in the second measure.]



The places that invite singers to make ornaments and passages are the cadences, which are of such a nature that if one does not do them well, one spoils them and takes away every beauty, and fills our ears with deformities. Therefore to show you some cadences, I have made the following examples.[14]

[Two of Zacconi's four examples follow: the first measure of each line is ornamented in the second measure.]

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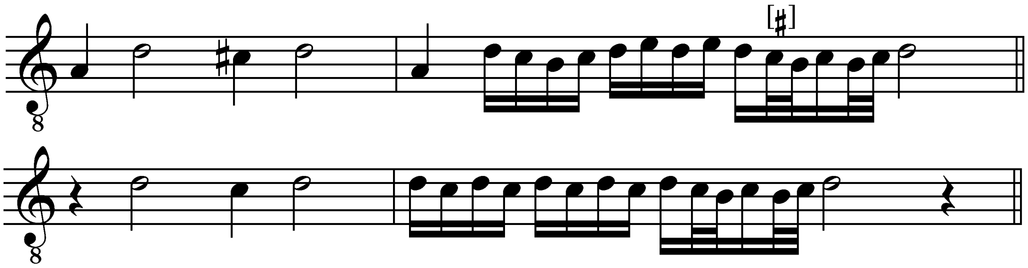
[12] Ibid., 71-72.
[13] Ibid., 73-74.
[14] Ibid., 74.



Guilio Caccini: Foreword to *Le nuove musiche* (1602)

[Caccini says that singers must conform all aspects of vocal delivery and ornamentation to underscore and compliment text expression. While he does not address polyphonic singing specifically, he does explain the character of various vocal ornamentations, how choices can be made to maximize text meaning, and, that such "exclamations may be used in all passionate musics." This source also serves to reiterate the greater musical-cultural ideals that informed interpretive decisions and the general commonality and breadth of vocal ornamentation.]

[*Expressive use of Dynamics, and the Importance of Mastering Musical Material*]

> It now remains to say why the increasing and abating [crescendo and decrescendo], of the voice, exclamations, trills, groups, and other effects above mentioned are used indifferently, for they are now said to be used indifferently whenever anyone uses them, whether in passionate compositions where they are most required, or in canzonets for dancing where the humor or conceit of the words is not minded.
>
> The original of which defect (if I deceive not myself) is hence occasioned because the musician doth not well possess and make himself master of that which he is to sing. For if he did so, undoubtedly he would not run into such errors . . . increasing and abating the voice, and in exclamations . . . [without] discerning whether the words require it; whereas those that well understand the conceit and meaning of the words, know our defects and can distinguish where the passion is more or less required.[15]

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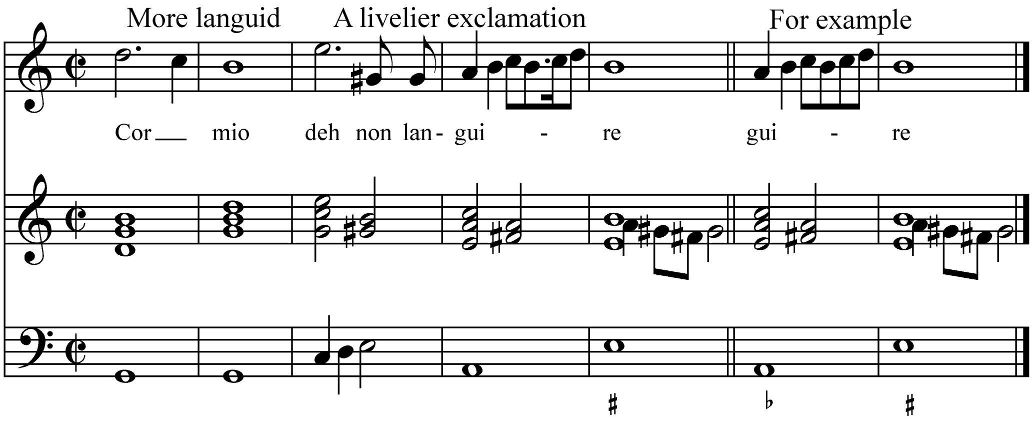
[15] Shrunk, First Edition, 381.

[*Expressive Choices, the Character of Ornamentation, and the Application of "Exclamation" to "All Passionate Music"*]

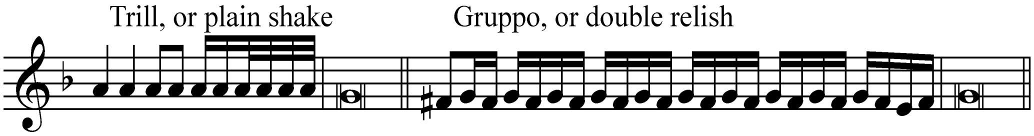


Of tuning, therefore, with more or less grace, and how it may be done in the aforesaid manner, trial may be made in the above-written notes, with the words under them "Cor mio, deh non languire." For in the first minim [half note] with the prick [dot], you may tune "Cor mio," diminishing it by little and little, and in the falling of the crotchet [quarter note] increase the voice with a little more spirit, and it will become an exclamation passionate enough, though in a note that falls but one degree. But much more sprightful will it appear in the word "deh," by holding of a note that falls not by one degree, as likewise it will become most sweet by the taking of the greater sixth that falls by a leap. Which thing I have observed, not only to show to others what a thing exclamation is and from whence it grows, but also that there may be two kinds of it, one more passionate than the other, as well by the manner in which they are described or tuned in the one way or other, as also by imitation of the word when it shall have a signification suitable to the conceit. Besides that, exclamations may be used in all passionate musics, by one general rule in all minims and crochets with a prick falling; and they shall be far more passionate by the following note, which runneth, than they can be in semibreves [whole notes], in which it will be fitter for increasing and diminishing the voice without using the exclamations.

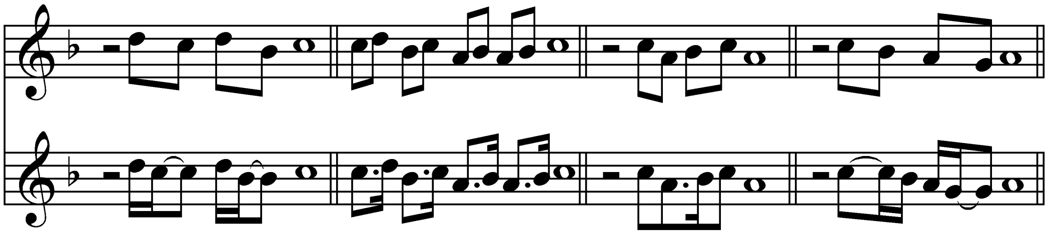
[*Importance of Relaying Emotion: Passion in Delivery Versus "Cheerful" Singing*]

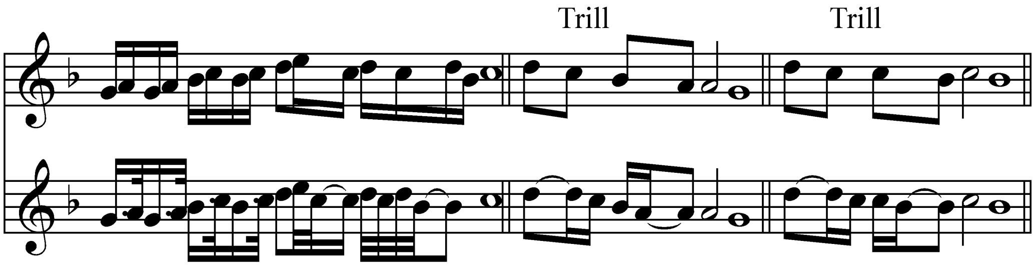
Yet by consequence understand that in airy musics or courantes to dance, instead of these passions, there is to be used only a lively, cheerful kind of singing which is carried and ruled by the air itself. In the which, though sometimes there may be place for some exclamation, that liveliness of singing is in that place to be omitted, and not any passion to be used which savoreth of languishment. Whereupon we see how necessary a certain judgment is for a musician, which sometimes useth to prevail above art. As also we may perceive by the foregoing notes how much greater grace the four first quavers have upon the second syllable of the word "languire" (being so stayed by the second quaver with a prick) than the four last equal quavers, so printed for example.

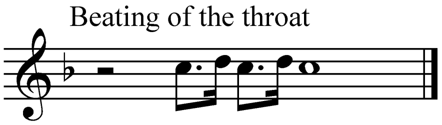
[*Descriptions of Ornamentation and How to How to Perform Them*]



The trill described by me is upon one note only. . . . I have observed no other rule than that of its description, both as trill and as group, that is to say, to begin with the first crotchet and to beat every note with the throat upon the vowel "a" unto the last breve [double whole note], as likewise the *gruppo*, or double relish. . . . I will show not only how they may be used, but also all the effects of them described in two manners with the same value of the notes.[16]







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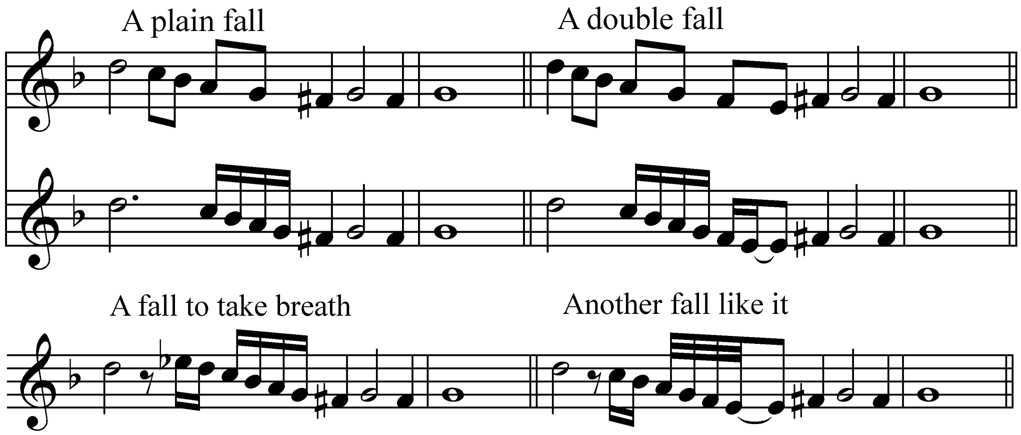
[16] Ibid., 384-385.



From the notes written above in two manners it is to be observed in these graces that the second hath more grace in it than the first. And for your better experience . . . you may exercise yourself in them and attain ever greater perfection in them.

[*Musical Example of Applying Embellishment and Tempo Rubato “According to the Conceit of the Words”*]

And because . . . in the madrigal “Deh. Dove son fuggiti,” there are contained the best passions that can be used in this noble manner of singing, I have therefore thought good to set them down; both to show where it is fit to increase and abate the voice, to make exclamations, trills, and groups, and in a word all the treasures of this art, as also not to have to demonstrate this again in all the works which will follow later, and that they may service for example, whereby men may take notice in the music of the places where they are most necessary according to the passions of the words; although I call that the noble manner of singing which is used without tying a man’s self to the ordinary measure of time, making many times the value of the notes less by half, and sometimes more, according to the conceit of the words, whence proceeds that excellent kind of singing with a graceful neglect, whereof I have spoken before.[17]

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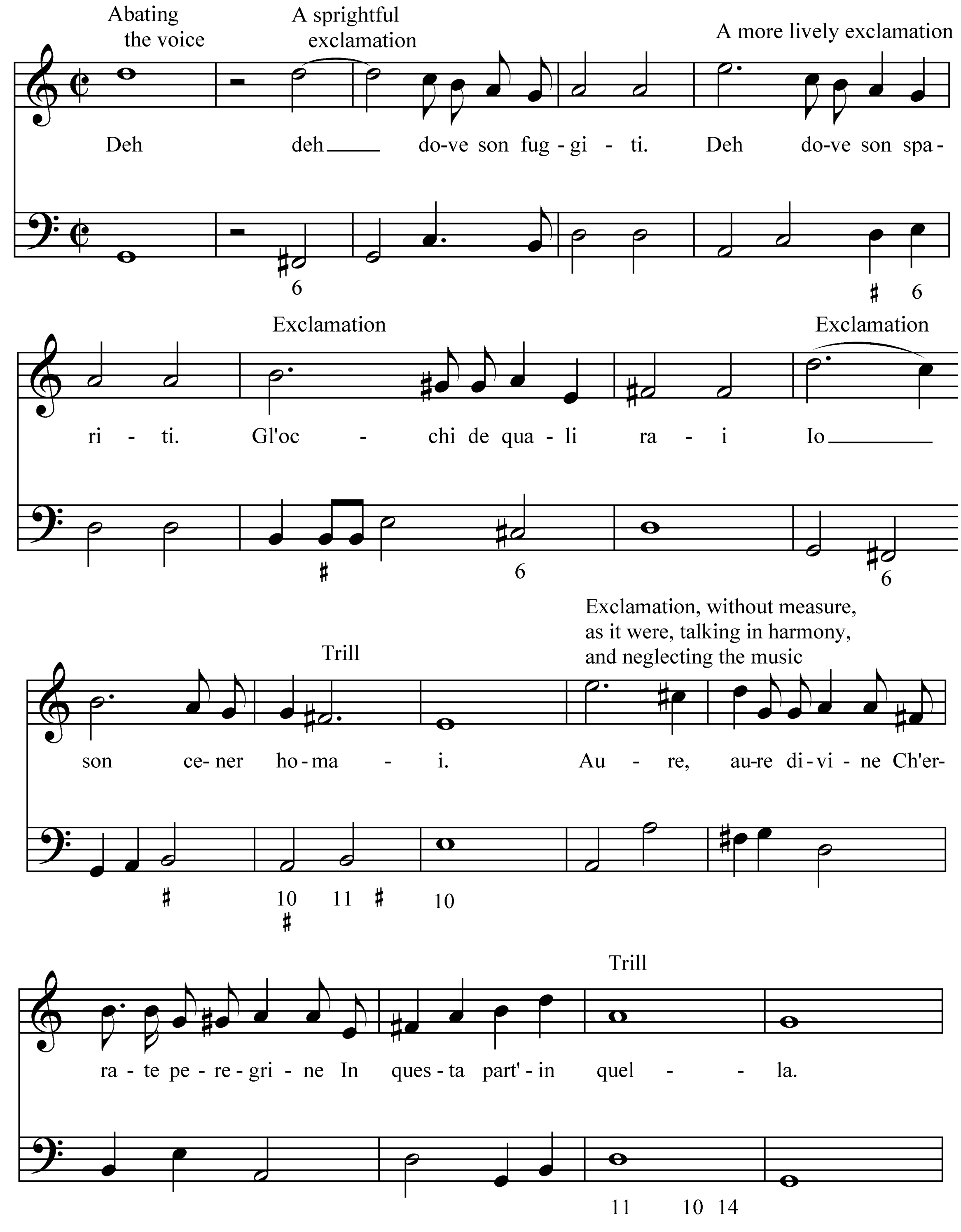
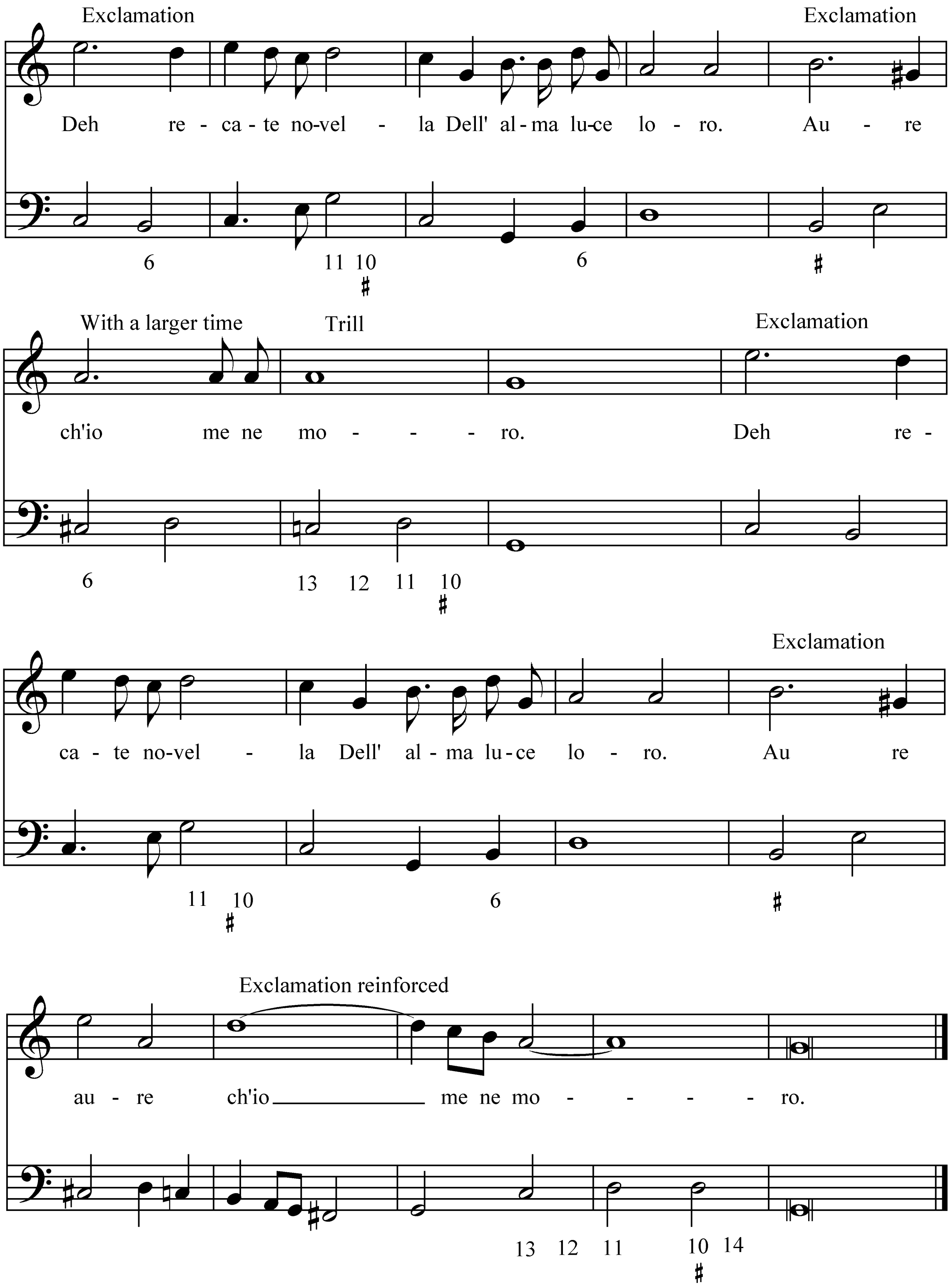
[17] Ibid., 385-92.

[*Deh, Dove son fugguti*]


Abating the voice
A sprightful exclamation
A more lively exclamation
Deh deh do-ve son fug - gi - ti. Deh do-ve son spa - ri - ti.
6
♯ 6
Exclamation
Exclamation
Gl'oc - chi de qua - li ra - i Io
♯ 6
6
Trill
Exclamation, without measure, as it were, talking in harmony, and neglecting the music
son ce- ner ho - ma - i. Au - re, au-re di - vi - ne Ch'er-
♯ 10 ♯ 11 ♯ 10
Trill
ra - te pe - re - gri - ne In ques - ta part' - in quel - - la.
11 10 14


Exclamation
Exclamation
Deh re - ca - te no-vel - la Dell' al - ma lu-ce lo - ro. Au - re
6
11 10
♯
6
♯
With a larger time
Trill
Exclamation
ch'io me ne mo - - - ro. Deh re -
6
13 12 11 10
♯
Exclamation
ca - te no-vel - la Dell' al - ma lu - ce lo - ro. Au re
11 10
♯
6
♯
Exclamation reinforced
au - re ch'io me ne mo - - - - ro.
13 12 11 10 14
♯

Girolamo Frescobaldi: *Preface to the Toccatas and Partite* (1614)

[*Tempo Flexibility*]

Realizing the great popularity of playing with songlike affects and a variety of passages, I decided to show my interest by publishing my slight contribution, presenting it in print with the following observation: I aver that I appreciate the discernment of others, and I shall be grateful to all who may approve of the affect with which I approach the studious and polite readers.

First, this manner of playing need not be subject to the beat [*battua*]. As in the case with modern madrigals, no matter how difficult they may be, they are made easy by means of the conductor's beat, sometimes slow, sometimes fast, or evenly sustained, according to the affect or sense of the words.[18]

Michael Praetorius: Excerpts from *Syntagma musicum* (1619)

How Variations and Changes Can Be Made in the Lowering and Raising of Voice and Tactus

Music should not be hastened. . . . The mensuration likewise is to be observed, so that the harmony may not be deformed or disturbed; for to sing without law and measure is to offend God himself. . . . Nevertheless, for reasons of the text, sometimes to use now a slower, now a faster, beat adds singular majesty and grace, and marvelously ornaments the melody.

Not a little charm is added to harmony and melody if the variation of human voices and instruments is sometimes lively, sometimes the singing voices relaxed.[19]

Introduction in the Modern Italian Manner for Boys with a Special Love and Desire to Sing

[*Expressing Emotion with Ornamentation and a Speech-like, Delivery*]

The domain of the orator is not only to decorate an oration with beautiful, pleasant, lively words and masterful figures, but also to articulate correctly and to move the affects. While he raises his voice or lets it fall, he speaks in a voice sometimes intense and soft, sometimes whole and full.

Likewise, a musician has to do more than sing, no matter how artistic and pleasant his singing may be, if he wants to reach the heart of the listener and to move the affects. And thus he creates and directs song toward trying to attain his goal. For a singer must acquire and attain a masterful voice not only from nature, but also from a good understanding and complete knowledge of music.[20]

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[18] Ruth Halle Rowen, *Music Through Sources and Documents*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1979, 170.

[19] MacClintock., 150.

[*Dynamic Shaping*]

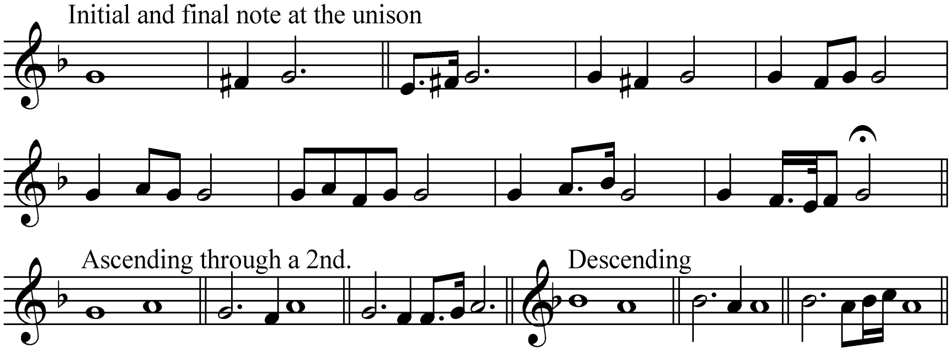
Exclamatio is the real means of moving the *affects*. It must coincide with a raising of the voice, and may be introduced and used on all half notes, as well as dotted quarter notes, in descending. And characteristically the following note moves forward somewhat more quickly, with more affect. The whole note, which in a rise or descent of the voice occurs more frequently without *exclamation*, also has more grace. . . .[21]

[*"Diminution" or Embellishments: Specific Types*]

2. Skill or Instruction. On the other hand, a singer must have real knowledge to form the diminutions (often in general called *coloraturas*) lovingly and appropriately.

Diminution is when a long note resolves and is broken into many other fast and smaller notes. These are of various types and kinds. Some of them are stepwise, like *accents, tremulo gruppi* and *tirata.*

Accents occur when notes like the following are produced in the throat:



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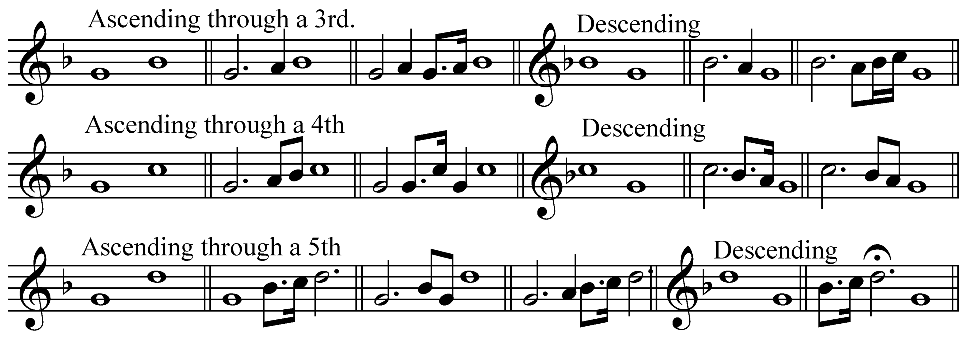
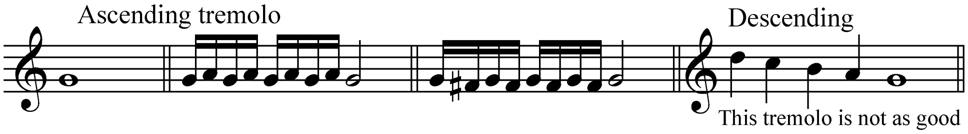
[20] Rowen, 143.
[21] Ibid.

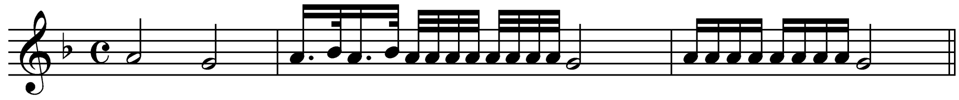

Ascending through a 3rd.
Descending
Ascending through a 4th
Descending
Ascending through a 5th
Descending

Tremolo, or *tremoletti* is nothing but a shaking of the voice on a note. The organists call it *Mordanten* or *Moderanten*.


Ascending tremolo
Descending

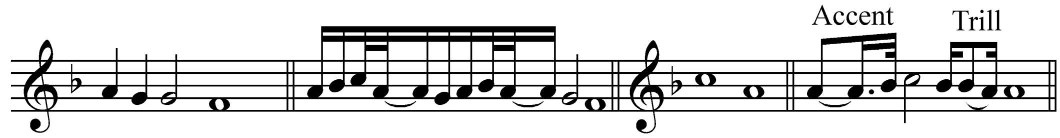
This tremolo is not as good as the ascending.

The diminutions which do not proceed by step are the trill and the passaggi. The trill is of two kinds. One is performed on a single note, whether it be on a line or in a space, with many fast notes repeated one after the other.



And this kind may be found in Claudio de Monteverdia.

The other kind of trill has many varieties. Indeed, it is impossible to learn how to perform a trill correctly from written instructions. It should be sung and performed live before a teacher. A person is shown how to do it by hearing it sung beforehand by someone else, just as one bird learns by imitating the other. Therefore, to this date I have still not seen these kinds of trill described by any Italian author with the exception of Giulio Caccini. When a trill is to be performed, all they do is to put a *t, tr,* or *tri* over the notes. Nevertheless, I have deemed it necessary to include some of the types here in passing, so that the uninformed beginner may explore and may come to know approximately what a trill means.


Accent
Trill

> *Passaggi* are fast runs which are composed and executed either by step or leap through all intervals, ascending as well as descending, on note with some time value.
>
> And they are of two kinds. Some are composed in longer note-values, such as, either half notes or quarter notes; or, with half notes and quarter notes at the same time. Some are broken into shorter values, such as eighth notes or sixteenth notes; or, eighth notes and sixteenth notes at the same time.
>
> But beginning students of this art should first start with the *passaggi* in longer note values, and then practice carefully and intensively those diminished with eighth notes, and finally they may get to those with sixteenth notes.[22]

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[22] Ibid., 144.

CHAPTER THREE

RECOMMENDED APPLICATIONS OF LATE RENAISSANCE ITALIAN MADRIGAL PERFORMANCE PRACTICES

Sources Revealing Compositional and Performance Practices that Promote Text-Driven Interpretation

An examination of primary sources that relate to the late Renaissance Italian madrigal reveal a heightened promotion of both composition and performance practices that maximize the declamatory delivery of text. Sources alude to a shift in the decades-long pursuit of realizing the ancient Greek ideal of music as a powerful rhetorical vehicle. Whereas composers earlier in the century conveyed this ideal by designing music to emulate oratorical delivery—contouring melodies that mimic the rise and fall of phrases, utilizing points of imitation to reiterate text-themes, and developing textural climaxes to simulate ebbs and flows of persuasion—many later musicians perceived that these earlier compositional practices actually obscure the text in service of musical craftmanship.

Compositional Practices

Primary sources, such as Morley’s *A Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music* (1597) and Monteverdi’s forward to *Il quinto libro de’ madrigali* (1605), describe developments in compositional practices aimed at creating music that is the mistress to the words, and not vice versa. Indeed, examination of late Renaissance compositions reveals a more declamatory approach. The expression of sentence fragments or individual words, rather than phrases, is emphasized, resulting in imitative passages based on motivic material (e.g., “Ahi, vita mia!”—“ah, my life!” in Monteverdi’s *Si ch’io vorrei morire,* measures 38-44). Word painting, text repetition, and ornamental decoration are abundant. Homophonic passages are employed for maximum text clarity. Some composers, such as Marenzio and Gesualdo, depart adventurously from traditional rules of composition to explore chromaticism and disjunct melodies as modes of expression. Mood and character shifts are depicted musically through varying textures, voicings, and major/minor modes (e.g., in measures 17 -20 of Gesualdo’s *Languisco e moro*, “Deh, per pietà”—“Ah, for pity!”—begins on a high note, resembling a cry, continues with an unsettling chromatic progression that is imitative, underscoring the plea for pity, and concludes with a soothing major triad, painting the word “consola,” which means “console me”). These methods are associated with what Monteverdi identified as a Second Practice of composition. Late Renaissance Italian madrigals, and the primary sources related to their composition, clearly reveal text declamation as a principal driving force.

Performance Practices

As compositional techniques changed throughout the century to invigorate text delivery, performers were compelled to conform embellishment, alteration, and expressive gestures (tempo and dynamic fluctuations) to promote text expression. Primary sources reveal that the embellishment and alteration of polyphonic vocal music was a well-established practice long before, and through, the late Renaissance. Giovanni

Camillo Maffei's *Letter on Singing* (1562)[1] explains that a student can "acquire the passaggi [ornamental passage work] in every sort of madrigal and motet" by learning his vocal technique, mastering supplied musical exercises, reviewing a fully ornamented madrigal that he provides, and adopting his rules of application. He encourages the intermittent passing "from one note to the other with some variation or decoration . . . where it can be tolerated and where it seems to be fitting." [2] Yet he also restricts diminutions to cadences only, with no more than four or five in a single madrigal "so that the ear, enjoying the sweetness rarely, becomes ever more desirous of hearing it."[3] He attends to text clarity by noting that *passaggi* should be articulated on the penultimate syllable of words, and promotes flexibility in performance by calling upon singers to "yield to the other" to avoid disturbing the harmony. In *Prattica di musica* (1596), Zacconi describes how singers should be sensitive to each other when applying ornamentation: singers should avoid complex diminutions in the beginning of a piece, which "should always be delivered with simple and straightforward ornaments so that the entrances of the other parts can be clearly heard." He cautions against those who "wish to do some little thing in each measure," or make choices that "spoil the syllables and words."[4]

Nicola Vicentino's *L'anitca musica* (1555) notes that the tempo, dynamics, and embellishments should parallel the "appropriate passions—now gay, now sad, sometimes sweet, sometimes harsh, and adhere to the pronunciation of the words" and the "ideas of the composer."[5] Caccini's *La nuove mische* (1602), [6] referring to solo singing, reiterates the importance of applying embellishments and alterations according to text meaning, supplying notated examples of embellishments with verbal commentary that describes fluctuations in dynamics and tempo that underscore the text. In *Syntagma musicum,* 1619, Praetorius declares that while musicians should observe mensuration, the tempo must reflect the meaning of the words: "For reasons of the text, sometimes to use now a slower, now a faster, beat adds singular majesty and grace, and marvelously ornaments the melody."[7]

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[1] Carol MacClintock. *Readings in the History of Music and Performance*. Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1979, 46-47.

[2] MacClintock, 52-53.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., 71

Collectively, sources reveal that a thorough analysis of text-music relationships, combined with a broad knowledge of embellishments, tempo alterations, and vocal articulations is foundational to creating a text-sensitive interpretation of the late-Renaissance Italian madrigal. Perfomers are tasked to engage music through an interpretive process that serves text expression, fluidly combining predetermined and improvisational alteration, embellishment, tempo fluctuation, and dynamic variation.

Realizing Text-Driven Ideals

To realize these ideals of text expression performers must closely analyze music and text relationships to identify inherent modes of text expression. In the process of this detailed analysis, the performer must keep in mind the wide variety of expressive tools that can be applied, including rhythmic and melodic alteration, embellishment, tempo fluctuation, and dynamic shaping. Inherent text-expressive characteristics need not only be highlighted, but also used as reference points to spawn further interpretive creativity. Ideas for creative interaction with the score include preconceived or improvisational ideas and are to be employed in ways that best serve the text and the size and skill of ensemble.

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[5] Ibid., 78

[6] Oliver Shrunk. *Source Readings in Music History,* New York: W. W. Norton, 1950, 377.

[7] MacClintock, 150.

For example, by taking an inventory of particular words highlighted by long note-values, a performer can follow the composer's lead by adding embellishments or alterations, particularly if expressive tools are chosen that can depict the meaning of the words. Such an opportunity occurs in the opening phrase of Marenzio's *Io piango*. The word "piango" ("weep") is sustained by two tied whole notes, and further emphasis occurs by a near-exact repetition of the text and its setting in the next phrase. To underscore this effect, the first phrase might include an ornamental turn at the end of the word, and in the second phrase, a more extended embellishment can simulate the character of weeping with a mournful, descending two-eighths pattern.

Whether to prearrange or extemporize variances from the score depends on the skill of performers, size of the ensemble, and the complexity of the alteration. If the piece is performed one voice per part, the embellishment can be assigned to a single performer who has the skill to realize it extemporaneously, and with each new performance, this embellishment can be manifested differently. If the piece will be performed by many singers per part, advanced composition allows an entire section to execute embellishments. Determining changes in advance is also beneficial when score alteration or ornamentation requires synchronization between voice parts. For example, in the opening chordal passages of Monteverdi's *Si ch'io vorrei morire*, if performers seek to create a speech-like delivery by lengthening and shortening note-values according to syllabic accents, cohesion is maximized if exact rhythmical alterations are predetermined. In Gesualdo's *Lanquisco e moro*, to create a sense of dramatic progression upon a whole-scale repeat of the second section, voice parts that are rhythmically aligned can be embellished with harmonized ornamentation. This requires arrangement beforehand.

Some variances can be executed with a combination of preconceived and improvised approaches. For example, in Marenzio's *Io piango*, the opening chordal passage is sustained and unadorned. If sung one on a part, a single voice can emerge soloistically to supply embellishments. The soloist can determine a complete or partial formula for his or her improvisation. For example, a soloist can work out a melodic outline, designing the introductory and concluding passages with the intent of improvising the middle section. By predetermining some parts of improvisation, the performer gains more confidence that the embellishment will not under or over serve text expression.

Fully improvised expressive gestures, including embellishments, rhythmical or melodic alterations, and ornaments, can also be executed in performance. In the sustained and chordal closing measures of Gesualdo's *Languisco e moro*, an ensemble can heighten a sense of conclusion by interjecting ornamentation. If sung one on a part, one or two voices can improvise embellishments, with the other voices in a supportive role. The ensemble needs only to coordinate how to be responsive to the improvisation, establishing how the two improvisers will interact and what gestures will cue a chordal progression.

Improvised alterations can also occur when voice parts are imitative if the ensemble is conditioned to notice and respond to cues for impromptu variance. For example, in measures 16-47 of Monteverdi's *Si ch'io vorrei morire,* those who sing the first entry on the "Ahi, care dolce lingua" ("ah, lovely and sweet tongue") can determine the dynamic level, articulation, ornamentation, and rhythmic alteration, with subsequent entrances potentially imitating these expressive variances. If sung with many people on each voice part, a finely-tuned ensemble can follow extemporaneous guidance from section leaders regarding variances such as tempo and phrasing. In homophonic passages, a crescendo or accelerando ex tempore can highlight text without compromising the cohesion. In Monteverdi's *Si chi'io vorrei morie,* measures 73-78, leadership by a designated singer can initiate an accelerando through facial expression and breath-energy, highlighting the excitement of the text "Ahi bocca, ahi bacci, ahi lingua torn'a dire"—"Ah, lips, kisses, tongue return to speak!"

When a composition's complexity leaves little room for extensive alteration, subtle alterations can be executed. For example, in quickly pattered passages, over-dotting just one or two words can provide text emphasis without unduly complicating an already texturally rich passage (e.g., in measure 26 of Gesualdo's *Languisco e moro,* one can over-dot "fin" in the phrase "fin del mio languire"—"finally, let me languish"). Spontaneity within complex textures can occur by exploring expressive tools that rely less upon score alteration. For example, performers can develop non-verbal communication to trigger impromptu dynamic and tempo fluctuations. If the ensemble has been trained to anticipate such changes, this can be accomplished on cue by designated singers or ensemble directors, especially at transitional moments, following extended rests, and at cadences. If a composition is sung one-on-a-part, vocalists attuned to how text-meaning can be accentuated can interject subtle turns and ornaments extemporaneously, especially at cadences or following a resolution from a suspension. For example, in Monteverdi's *Si ch'io vorrei morire* (measures 27-34), quickly articulated ornamental turns can be improvised to add a bit of sweetness to the intensity created by the cascading suspensions and underscoring of the text: "che di dol'cezzin questo mestingua"—"that the sweetness in this breast will extinguish me."

Overview of Italian Madrigal Score Study

Regardless of which expressive gestures are employed or the ensemble's size and skill, all interpretive decisions should be based on a thorough knowledge of the score. While score study varies according to personal interpretive priorities, performance goals, and a composition's idiosyncrasies, there are general approaches and techniques that facilitate both an understanding of the musical material and its relationship to the text.

First, the text must be translated (poetically and word for word) and analyzed apart from the score so the performer becomes entirely familiar with its structure and meaning. The form of the text is identified by considering punctuation, sentence structure, shifts in mood, and storyline development. Other aspects of the score, such as voice part designations and clef signs may need to be translated into modern terminology. Late sixteenth-century voice designations include, from highest to lowest:

Cantus, Discantus, Superius, or Medius; Altus or Contratenor; Tenor; and Bassus. When additional parts are included, the fifth voice is often labeled “Quintus,” and the sixth, “Sextus.” Modern voicing and clefs can be assigned after considering the tessituras of each voice part, and, if necessary, by raising or lowering the key of the composition (as was common practice in the Renaissance) to place parts within the range of contemporary singers.

With the text analyzed, voicings and clefs designated, and key established, musical structure is determined by identifying major sections, cadences, transitional passages, melodic and rhythmic character, modal progressions, and textural shifts. As with any score study, musical analysis includes reviewing all provided musical information. To fully investigate the text-music relationship, the composition is examined phrase by phrase, and often, word by word. Devices of particular interest include imitation, motivic development, repetition, decorative melismas, rhythmic elongation or diminution, homophonic passages, chromaticism, disjunct motion, episodic major/minor modal shifts, timbral contrasts, and changes in tessitura. In the process of detailed study, one should begin to consider how to expressively expand upon inherent tools of text expression. Also, one should identify opportunities for both improvisational and preconceived alteration (e.g., solo lines, homophonic textures, and cadences).

Thorough study of the score, combined with an awareness of performance practices, allows the performer to internalize the music, explore interpretive choices, and consider alterations and embellishments. The process of interpretative decision-making can include individual and/or group experimentation, and should remain fluid as performers spontaneously engage the music in performance. To demonstrate this process, recordings and interpretive analysis of three late Renaissance Italian madrigals are presented: (1) Claudio Monteverdi's *Si ch'io vorrei morire*; (2) Luca Marenzio's *Io piango*; and (3) Carlo Gesualdo's *Languisco e moro*. The recorded performances by *Without Measure*[8] present possible interpretations that reflect related performance practices. The interpretive processes that led to performance decisions are explained below with special emphasis given to the most complex composition, *Si ch'io vorrei morire*. The track numbers correspond to those on the compact disc provided in Appendix A. Complete scores representing the original versions and performed ("Altered") versions of the compositions are included in Appendix B.

Illustrative Recordings: Application of Late Renaissance Italian Madrigal Performance Practices

Track One: *Si ch'io vorrei morire* by Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Score Study

A helpful process for study is to consider the overall structure first, determining the major sections and their general characteristics, followed by a closer look at sub sections, phrases, and sub phrases. To identify the overarching structure, and to place the text of *Si ch'io vorrei morire* as a foundational point of reference, a word for word and poetic translation are considered apart from the score:

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[8] *Without Measure*, directed by Julie Ford, is a vocal sextet specializing in renaissance and jazz literature: Michelle Hawkins, soprano; Julie Ford, soprano; Juliet Green, mezzo soprano; Phil Kavanaugh, tenor; Andrew Smith, baritone; Paul Ford; bass. http://www.withoutmeasure.us.

Word for Word Translation

Line 1: Si ch’io vorrei morire
Yes, I wish to die

Line 2: Hora ch’io bacio amore la bella bocca del mio amato core
Now I kiss love the beautiful lips of my love heart

Line 3: Ahi car’ e dolce lingua datemi tant’ humore
Ah, dear and sweet tongue give to me such mood

che di dolcezz’ in questo sen m’estingua
that the sweetness in this breast me extinguish

Line 4: Ahi vita mia, a questo bianco seno
Ah, my life! by this white breast

Line 5: Deh stringetemi fin ch’io venga meno a questo bianco seno
Ah, press against me finally that I am (made) less by this white breast

Line 6: Ahi bocca, ahi bacci, ahi lingua, ahi lingua torn’a dire
Ah, lips, ah, kisses, ah tongue, ah tongue return to speak

Line 7: Si ch’io vorrei morire
Yes, I wish to die

Poetic Translation

Line 1: Si ch’io vorrei morire
Yes, I wish to die!

Line 2: Hora ch’io bacio amore la bella bocca del mio amato core
Now I lovingly kiss the beautiful lips of my heart’s desire

Line 3: Ahi car’ e dolce lingua datemi tant’ humore che di dolcezz’ in questo sen m’estingua
Ah, dear and sweet tongue, give me such passion that your sweet breast might quench my desire.

Lines 4-5: Ahi vita mia, a questo bianco seno deh stringetemi fin ch’io venga meno
Ah, my life! Press your ivory breast against me that my desire might be satisfied.

Line 6: Ahi bocca, ahi bacci, ahi lingua, ahi lingua torn'a dire
Ah, lips, ah, kisses, ah, tongue, give me your passion

Line 7: Si ch'io vorrei morire
Yes, I wish to die!

The text portrays a passionate love scene, beginning as one declares to the other a desire to unite—"morire" means "to die "—which is a poetic metaphor for experiencing sexual climax. The boldness of this statement merits a delivery that is infused with bravura and fervor. Because this proclamation occurs at the beginning and end of the piece, the overall interpretive concept strives to contrast these statements. The first statement might be delivered euphorically and seductively (exploring use of dynamics, articulation, and tempo rubato), and the second might portray a more gratified assuredness and a sense of resolution. As the text in lines 2-6 unfolds, every aspect of the beloved is admired, and this can be underscored with decorative embellishment. As the love scene plays out, dramatic action vacillates between tension and resolution, and this might be exploited through *messas di voce* and fluctuations in tempo. To plan how to underscore the text more specifically, closer examination of text-music relationship is necessary.

A foundational step in analyzing the music is a review of clefs and voice designations. In the edition examined for this study,[9] the original clefs have been indicated, but modern clefs are used. The canto ("soprano"), alto, tenore, and basso ranges are similar to those of their modern counterparts, but the quinto part is uncomfortably high for many tenors, and too low for altos. If the piece is pitched one-half step lower than written (from C major to B major), the basso's lowest pitch becomes an E-natural, which is low but reasonable, and it helpfully lowers the top of the quinto range to a G-sharp – high, but more reasonable for tenors. In the altered score used for performance, the quinto part is renamed "tenor," and the tenore part, "baritone."

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[9] Gian Francesco Malipiero, ed. *Claudio Monteverdi Madrigals, Books IV and* V, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1986.

Analysis begins with a text-music comparison, which reveals that the lines of text are delineated into separate sections of varying lengths, and these sections are musically defined by cadencial material. The sections can be identified as: Introduction, Section 1, Transition, Section 2, Retransition, and Coda (an exact repeat of the introduction). The Introduction and the Coda are only seven measures long. Sections 1 and 2 are close in length (31 and 29 measures respectively), contain sub phrases defined by changes in text and texture, and are preceded by transitional material. The Transition and Retransition emerge following cadences that are weakened: minor modality occurs before the Transition, and only two voices participate before the Retransition. The overall musical structure, including sub phrases, can be mapped as follows:

Introduction, measures 1-6 (7 mm.; text Line 1) *Si ch'io vorrei morire* (repeated)

- Homophonic, descending tessitura
- Modality moves from C to A
- Strong cadence: four-beats, major mode

Section 1, measures 7-37 (31 mm.; Line 2)

Sub phrase, 7-15 (9 mm.) *Hora ch'io bacio amore la bella bocca del mio amato core*

- Homophonic with an ascending tessitura and quickened harmonic rhythm that leads from A major to D minor mode.
- Weak cadence: two-beats long in minor mode

Sub phrase, 16-27 (12 mm.; Line 3)

Ahi car'e dolce lingua datemi tant'humore

- Text repeated with imitative string of suspensions; each entrance ascends in step-wise imitation leading from A minor to D major
- Quasi-cadence: in 1st inversion, brief, no pause

Sub phrase, 28-37 (10 mm.; Line 3 continued)

che di dolcezz' in questo sen m'estingua

- Longer note values, lower voices imitate soprano
- Modality moves from D major to A minor
- Stronger four-beat cadence, but in minor mode and in low tessitura

Transition, 38-48 (11 mm.; Line 4)

Ahi vita mia (repeats)

- Shift to high tessitura
- Imitative; Static harmonic motion in A minor

a questo bianco seno (repeats)

- Ends with a strong cadence: four-beats, four-voices, in C major

Section 2, measures 49-67 (19 mm.; Line 5)

Sub phrase, 49-57 (9 mm.)

Deh stringetemi fin ch'io venga meno

- Upper two voices only in a series of step-wise, imitative suspensions
- Modal progression moves from C to A minor

a questo bianco seno (repeats)

- Imitative, in C Major
- Weaker cadence: three voices cadence on two-beats as one voice jumps ahead one beat ahead making major/minor modality unclear

Sub phrase, 58-67 (10 mm)

Deh stringetemi fin ch'io venga meno
a questo bianco seno (repeats)

- Lower three voices only in A minor mode which ascend in step-wise motion; quinto out of alignment with lower voices
- Stronger cadence: four-beats in C major mode, but with only two voices

Retransition, measures 68-78: (11 mm.; Lines 5 & 6)

Sub phrase, 68-73 (three voices sing previous text with new text simultaneously)

Canto & Quinto*:* *Deh stringetemi* (repeated/extended) *fin ch'io venga meno*

Basso: *Ahi, bocca, ahi bacci, ahi lingua, ahi lingua* (basso rests)

- Modal progression and material in upper two voices is like the first sub phrase of Section 2 moving from C to A minor, but with a phrase extension
- Weaker, half-measure, cadence in A minor
- New text is unfinished leaving upper voices to complete their phrase extension unaccompanied

Sub phrase, 74-78 (all voices sing text of Line 6)

Ahi, bocca, ahi bacci, ahi lingua, ahi lingua torn'a dire

- Homophonic with one voice in imitation
- Moves from A minor to a strong, two-beat cadence in C major

Coda, measures 79-84 (6 mm.; Line 7)

Si ch'io vorrei morire (repeats)

- Exact copy of Introduction: begins in C, text repeats three times with a strong, four-beat cadence in A major mode

With the overall structure in mind, general approaches to interpretation emerge. More significant cadences should be highlighted in performance through expressive gestures and a drive to these cadences, underscored by dynamic level, tempo fluctuation, and ornamentation. Shifts in tessitura and voice groupings parallel changes in mood and character, and these shoud be reflected by expressive gestures (intensity of tone, tempo fluctuation, etc.). Textures, shaped and designed differently from phrase to phrase according to text, alternate between homophony (e.g., introduction, section 1, and coda) and imitative polyphony (e.g., Transition and Section 2), and these contrasts must be maximized through interpretation. Performance decisions need also reiterate the compositional effects of word painting, melodic contour, contrasts in tessitura, juxtaposed voice grouping, harmonic suspensions, speech-like rhythms, and imitative text repetition—all tools which enliven the text.

Given the variety and complexities of *Si ch'io vorrei morire*, a detailed examination of the composition in terms of its potential for embellishment is required. It is clear that homophonic and polyphonic passages will accommodate alterations somewhat differently. In homophonic sections, rhythmic alterations and ornamental turns can be employed fairly freely without obscuring the text or unduly complicating ensemble cohesion. In the imitative sections, rhythmic changes will require more restraint. Changes in one line may not be technically feasible in another part; each voice part presents varying degrees of opportunity for alterations. Cadences must be reviewed to determine which voice is best suited for ornaments.

Interpretative Decisions

All interpretive decisions integrate the text-music relationships on both large and smaller scales. To develop an over-arching interpretation, structural cadences are given a hierarchical order, with climactic areas identified and understood in relationship to each other:

- Measures 6-7 (somewhat jolting shift: move from A major triad to an unstable A diminished chord)
- Measures 37-38 (very jolting shift: material moves abruptly from low to high tessitura with an exclamatory text; ends Section 1, begins Transition)

- Measures 48-49 (somewhat notable: a demarcation point due to very clear cadence; ends Transition, begins Section 2)
- Measures 67-68 (somewhat notable: a demarcation point due to very clear cadence; ends Section 2, begins Retransition)
- Measures 78-79 (very dramatic, homophonic cadence: soprano has highest pitch of the entire piece; ends Retransition and new material, begins Coda)

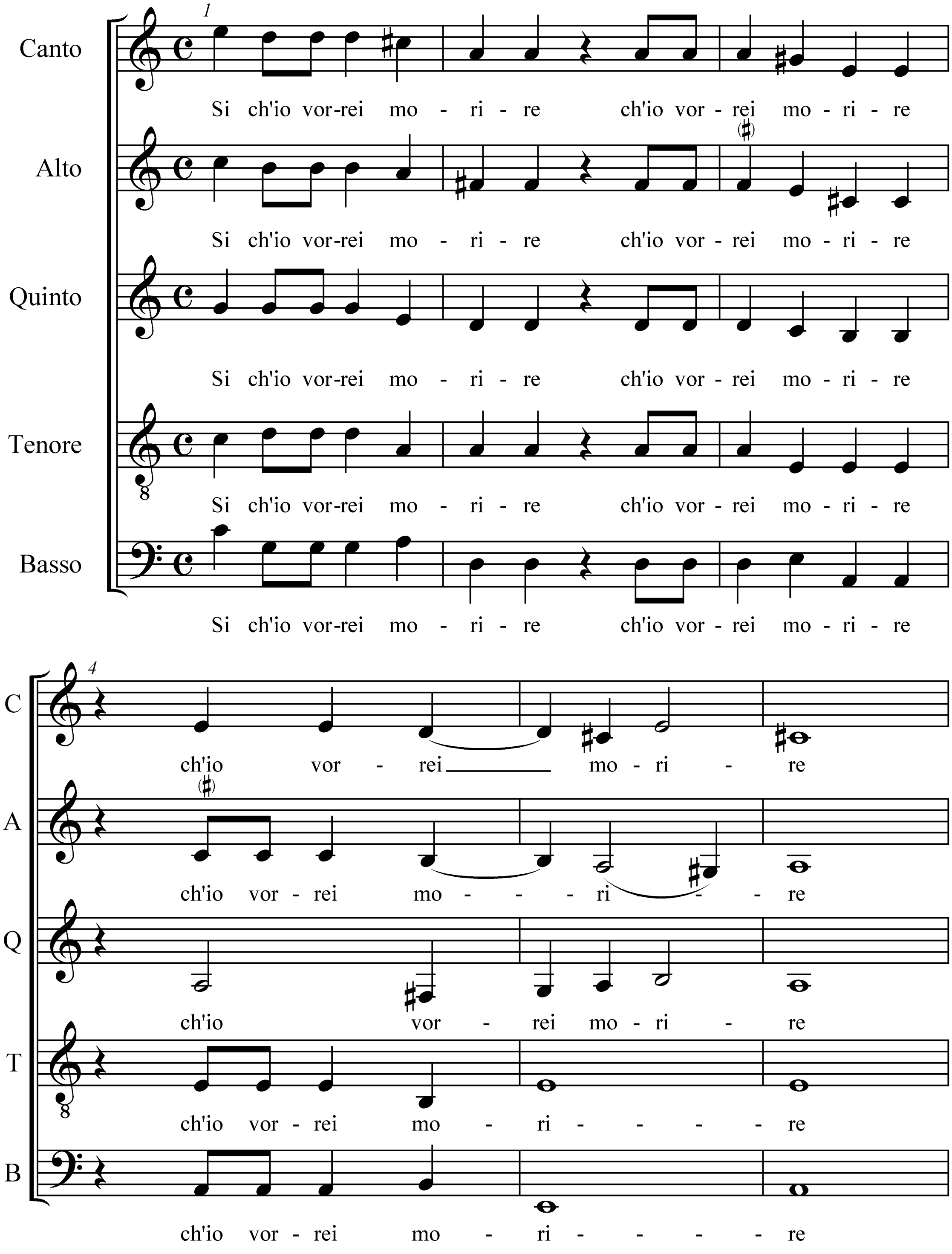
The most dramatic musical-structural shifts parallel events in the text that are highly climactic: measures 37-38 (“m’estingua” to “Ahi, vita mia”), is a major midway point, and measures 78-79 (“Ahi lingua torn’a dire” to “Si ch’io”), is the highest climactic moment. The other cadences are moderately highlighted, semi-climactically. How the overarching high points are created through a pacing of expression is an ongoing concern as smaller, micro interpretation is formulated. To highlight the process of decision-making on a micro level, text-music relationships and their interpretation are discussed in detail.

The Introduction

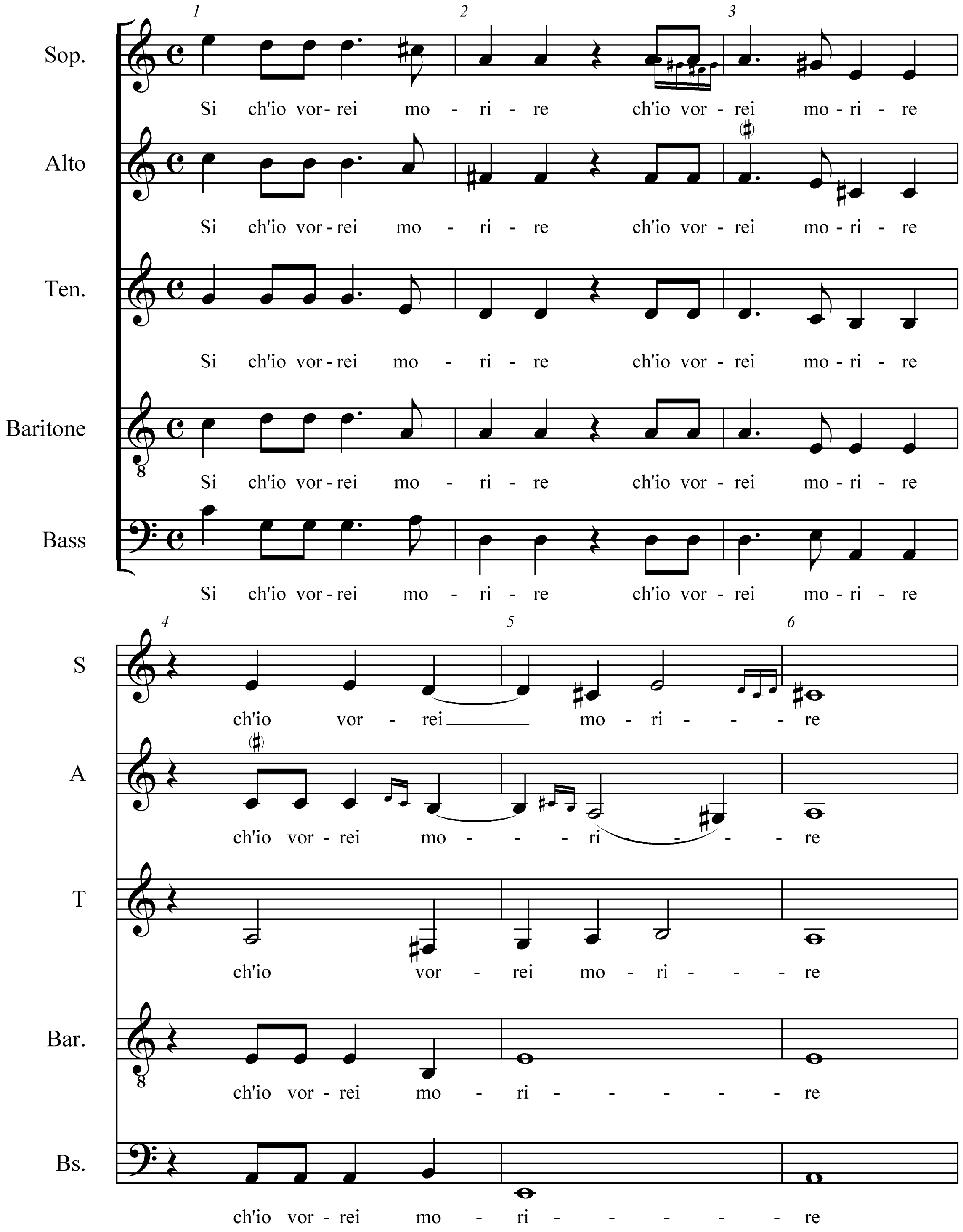
The exclamatory Introduction is punctuated by a high tessitura and speech-like, homophonic rhythms. This provides maximum opportunity for rhythmic flexibility to underscore the passionate emotion of the text, “Si ch’io vorrei morire.” Through the process of experimenting with embellishments—deemed necessary given the text repetition and bold V-I progressions—abruptness in the delivery becomes softened, and this discovery creates an adjustment from the original vision. With embellishment and corresponding elasticity of tempo, the opening phrase is performed with more seductive tenderness and less abrupt boldness than originally conceived. A quickly pattered, exclamatory delivery is achieved as “vorrei” and “morire” are rhythmically altered, and dynamic stresses are given to maximize syllabic accent (0:00-0:05). As the text-phrase repeats, it is set increasingly lower in tessitura. To maximize these qualities, and to create variety and a sense of progression with each repetition of the text, the delivery grows slower, lightens in intensity, and embellishments occur (see example 3.1; 0:05-0:23).

Example 3.1: Monteverdi, measures 1-6

Original Version


1
Canto
Si ch'io vor-rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
Alto
(♯)
Si ch'io vor-rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
Quinto
Si ch'io vor-rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
Tenore
Si ch'io vor-rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
Basso
Si ch'io vor-rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
4
C
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
A
(♯)
ch'io vor - rei mo - - - ri - - re
Q
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
T
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - - - - re
B
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - - - - re

Altered Version[10]


Sop.
Alto
Ten.
Baritone
Bass
Si ch'io vor-rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
S
A
T
Bar.
Bs.
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - - - re
ch'io vor - rei mo - - - ri - - - re
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - - - re
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - - - - - - re

---

[10] The "Altered Version" of the score represents the changes made in performance.

The ritardando and cadencial ornament in measure 6 sets apart the opening section. These gestures also soften the effect of the delivery, foreshadowing the eventual resolution of the scene, yet, reserving some expressive resources when this material returns as the Coda.

Section 1

Measures 7-15. In this phrase, the harmonic rhythm accelerates and the tessitura rises as the text becomes increasingly fervent. The inherent tension created by the diminished triad on the word “Hora” is energized with a crescendo and an ornamental turn in the tenore (0:24-0:27). The tender admiration of the words that follow is reflected by gentle articulation and a moderate tempo. To more closely model speech, “bella” is over-dotted (0:33-0:36). An accelerando and crescendo follow, emphasizing the rising tessitura and dramatizing the sentiment of “del mio amato core” (0:30-0:48). The rising intensity that is created by ascending lines and a quickened harmonic rhythm is paralleled in performance with an accelerando to an ornamented cadence that decorates “core.” Because the cadence resolves on a minor triad, an air of discontent occurs, as if to suggest the conflict of unrequited desire. The hollow character of this resolution is dramatized with a brief rest before the next phrase begins.

Section 2

Measures 16-37. As the piece continues, longer text-phrases are broken into smaller fragments for a more individualist treatment of the words. Through imitation and successive suspensions, the text fragment, “Ahi, car’ e dolce lingua,” is isolated and emphasized, creating the effect that time is suspended as the poetry admires every aspect of the beloved. To capture this mood, the stressed syllable of "dolce" is lengthened. Subtle ornaments are improvised in the tenore and quinto (e.g., turns are employed on "ahi" & "lingua," 0:49-0:54). An improvised, intermittent, and varied execution is preferred, rather than predetermined alterations, because it allows the singers maximum control in performance to avoid destabilizing the ensemble's cohesion.

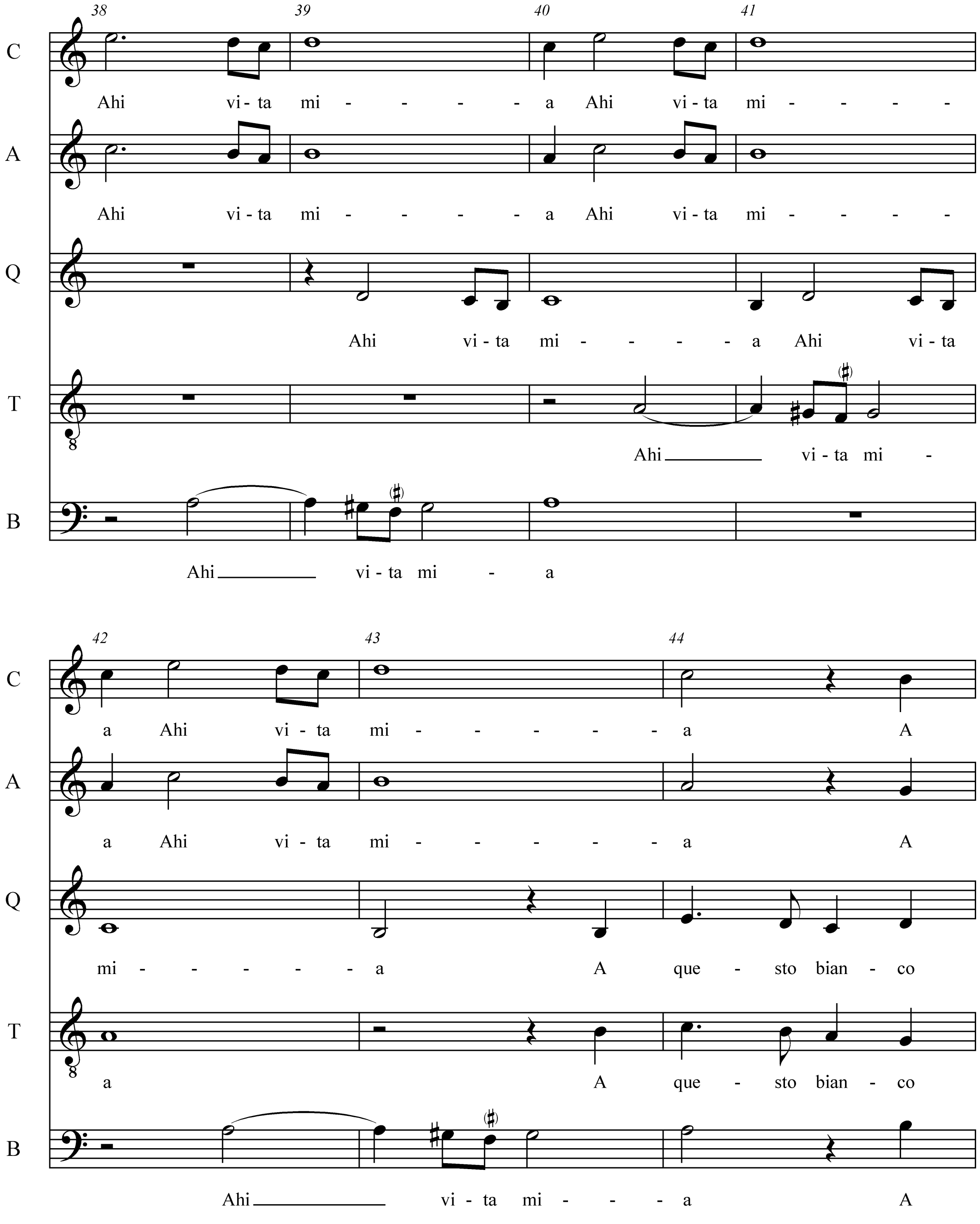
As the text's mood shifts to that of the plea "datemi tant' humore" the rising tessitura and shift to homophony drives toward a not fully realized cadence (it is brief and in first inversion). To underscore this, an accelerando and crescendo occurs (1:18-1:20), and the incidental cadence is mildly embellished in the soprano. This modification, along with a new text-character, spurs another shift in mood, highlighted with an increased tempo. Because the top voice is rhythmically set apart from the others, it is further distinguished by improvised ornamental turns that word-paint "dolcezz" (1:20-1:30). The inherent decrease in intensity (the increasingly lower tessitura and cadence on a minor chord), which serves to underscore "m'estingua," is emphasized with a decrescendo, a slight easing of tempo, and a light cadencial ornament in measure 36 (1:45-1:48). This soft dynamic also heightens contrast between "m'estingua" and "Ahi, vita mia," which conveys a climactic midpoint of the piece.

Transition

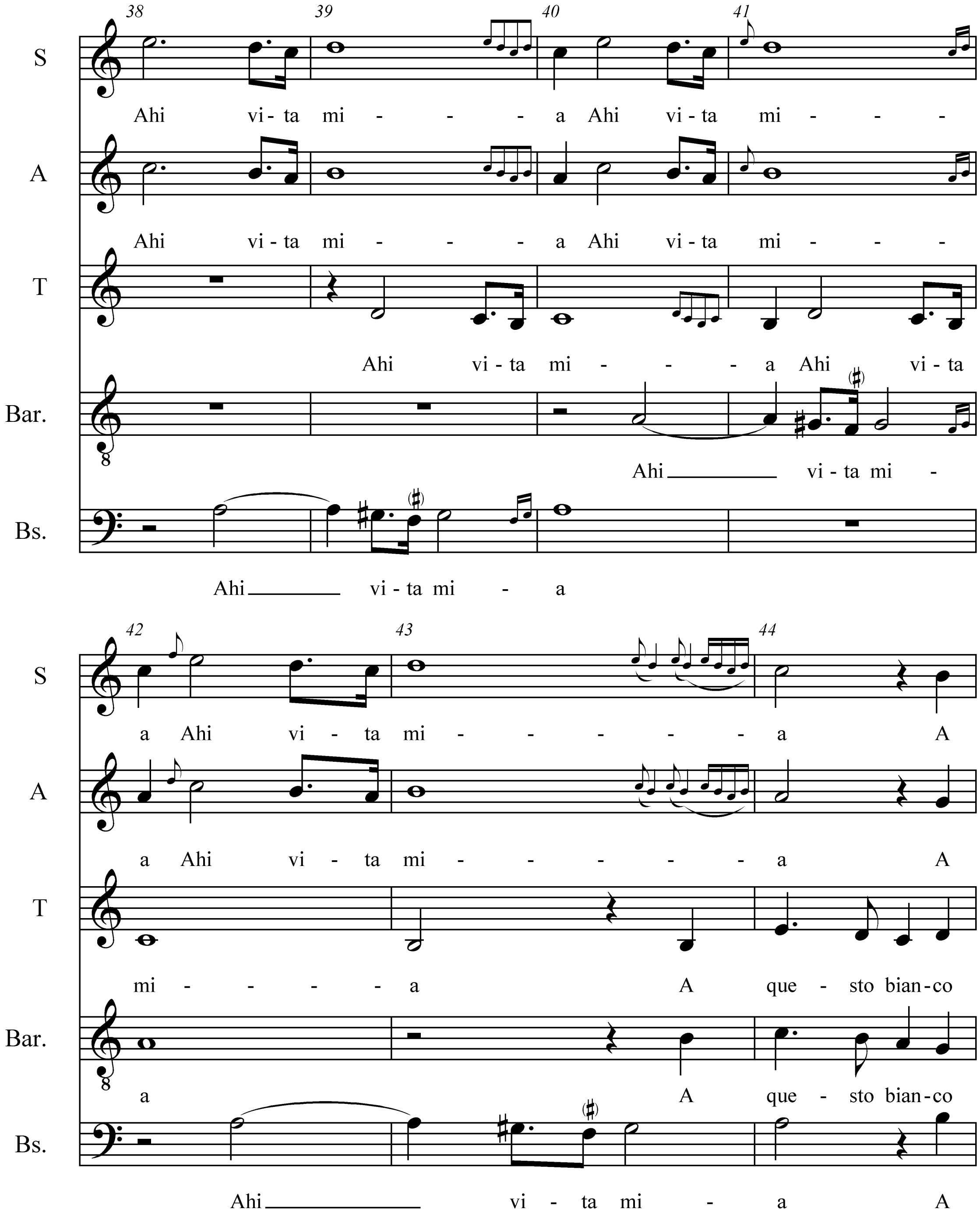
Measures 38-48. "Ahi, vita mia," sharply set apart by a jolting shift to a higher range, is ripe for extensive imitation. Anguish and disarray are reflected through a minor mode, and groupings of voices are contrasted (two upper, against three lower, voices). These qualities are accentuated with heightened dynamics, over-dotting (“vita”), and a considerable amount of predetermined ornamentation and alteration which intensify as they repeat (1:49-2:11). The duet-like, harmonically static upper two voices provide an opportunity to interject coordinated and harmonized ornamentation. The fact that this phrase envelopes a midpoint climax inspires the most elaborate ornamentation of the composition (see example 3.2).

Example 3.2: Monteverdi, measures 38-44

Original Version


38
39
40
41
C
Ahi vi-ta mi - - - - a Ahi vi-ta mi - - - -
A
Ahi vi-ta mi - - - - a Ahi vi-ta mi - - - -
Q
Ahi vi-ta mi - - - - a Ahi vi-ta
T
Ahi vi-ta mi -
B
Ahi vi-ta mi - a
42
43
44
C
a Ahi vi-ta mi - - - - - a A
A
a Ahi vi-ta mi - - - - - a A
Q
mi - - - - - a A que - sto bian - co
T
a A que - sto bian - co
B
Ahi vi-ta mi - - - a A

Altered Version


38
39
40
41
S
A
T
Bar.
Bs.
Ahi vi - ta mi - - - - a Ahi vi - ta mi - - - -
Ahi vi - ta mi - - - - a Ahi vi - ta mi - - - -
Ahi vi - ta mi - - - - a Ahi vi - ta
Ahi vi - ta mi -
Ahi vi - ta mi - a
42
43
44
a Ahi vi - ta mi - - - - - - a A
a Ahi vi - ta mi - - - - - - a A
mi - - - - a A que - sto bian - co
a A que - sto bian - co
Ahi vi - ta mi - a A

With the next phrase, “a questo bianco seno,” the change of mood to that of elated adoration is set apart compositionally by new musical material (which later returns in ritornello fashion) in a major modality. These qualities are highlighted by a quicker tempo and an ornamented cadence. The lower three voices, which are not aligned, have more random, improvised ornamental turns and over-dotting for syllabic accent (“vita”).

Measures 49-78. “Deh stringetemi” is set to a cascade of descending suspensions in the upper voices and then to an ascending pattern in the lower voices. To word-paint “press against,” the tension of the suspensions is maximized through *messas di voce* (2:24-2:36). A decrescendo at the end of the phrase underscores the meaning of “fin ch’io venga meno.” *Messas di voce* are used as the text is repeated in the three lower voices with a cadencial ornament added to highlight a sense of conclusion on the word “meno” (2:48-3:02). As “a questo bianco seno” is restated, ornaments in the word “seno” are progressively more elaborate to build speech-like, climactic variation (3:02-3:13).

Retransition

Measures 68-73. These six measures closely resemble measures 49-52 except that the phrase is extended by two measures and a new text and bass line are interjected. Given this repetition, ornaments are improvised to make each statement of “Deh stringetemi” more climactic and to emphasize the awe and passion of the bass text “ahi bocca, ahi bacci, ahi lingua.” Because the bass does not complete the text phrase, dynamics decrease, tone dissipates, and a brief rest occurs as the phrase ends.

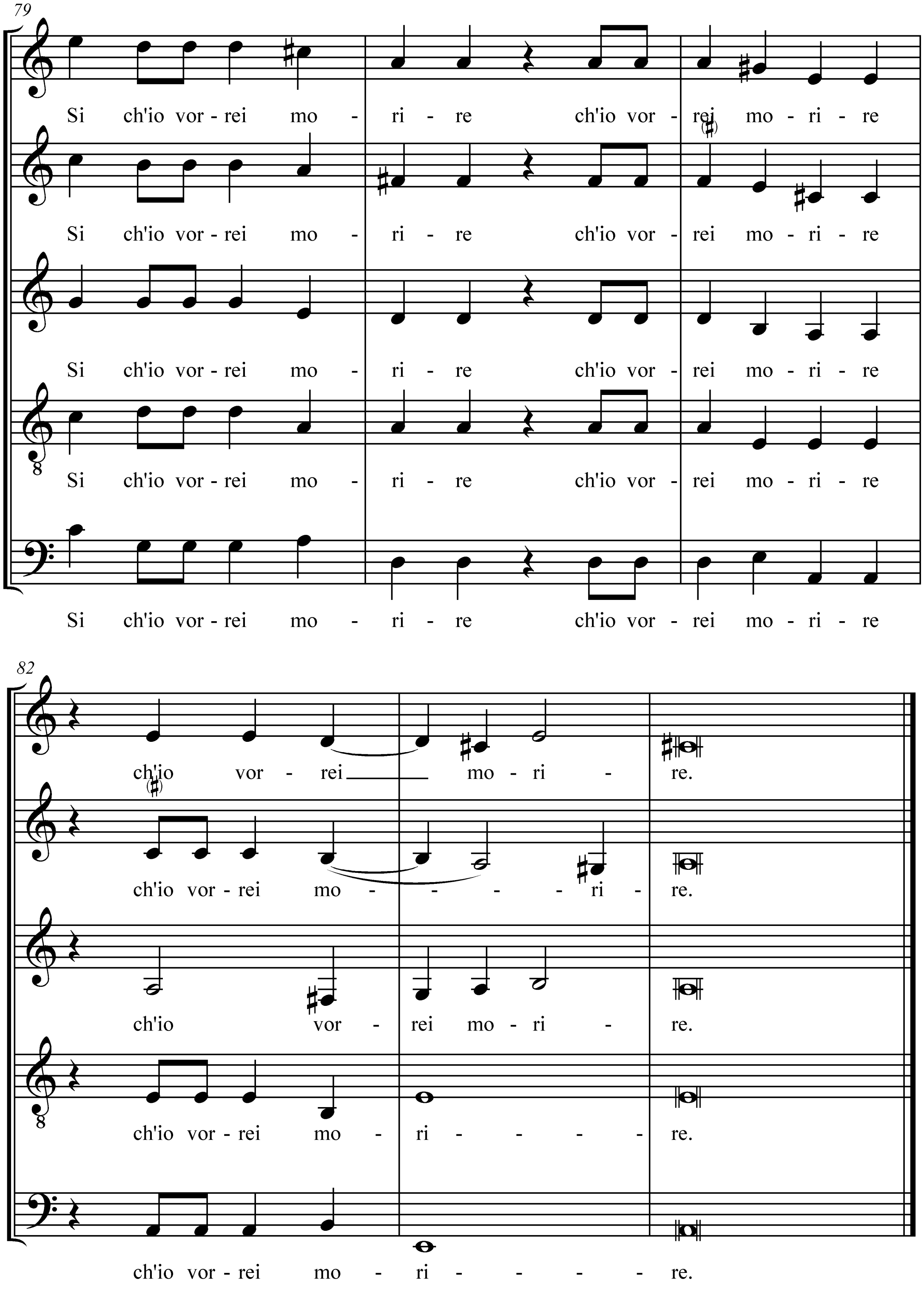
Measures 74-84. Because all voices participate in the text “ahi bocca, ahi bacci, ahi lingua,” text clarity is emphasized through the exaggeration of syllabic accents. The tenor part, already separated from the other voices, is further highlighted through improvised melodic embellishment (3:30-3:45). The highest pitch in the score occurs in the last fragment of new text and music, “torn’a dire.” This text is set homophonically, finally aligning voice parts for the first time since the midway climax in measure 37. Seen as the final and highest climactic moment of the piece, the ensemble ritards, delivers its fullest and broadest tone yet, provides a highly decorated ornament on the cadence, and sustains the final syllable of the phrase.

Coda

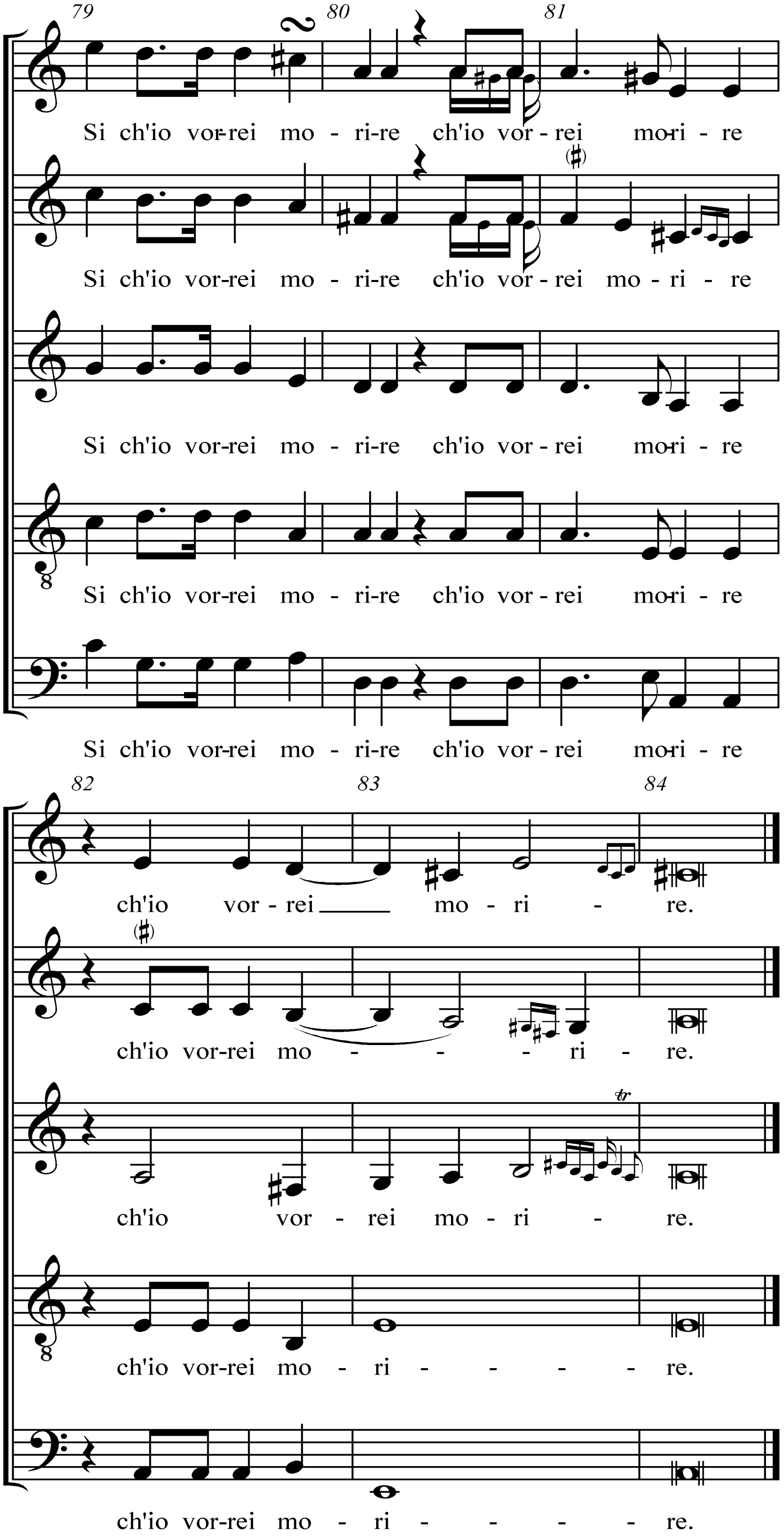
Since the final six measures are identical to the first six measures, care is taken to create a contrast. The performers strive for a stronger, triumphant, and more confident delivery through sharp articulation, over-dotting the two-eighths on “ch’io,” a wider range of rubato (stretching text accents), and the improvised interjection of the most elaborate cadencial ornaments yet employed (3:45-4:18; see example 3.3). This combination sets up a heightened sense of resolution as the last chord finally arrives.

Example 3.3: Monteverdi, measures 79-84 (Coda)

Original Version


79
C
A
Q
T
B
Si ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
(♯)
82
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re.
ch'io vor - rei mo - - - - ri - re.
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re.
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - - - - - re.

Altered Version


79
80
81
Si ch'io vor-rei mo - ri-re ch'io vor - rei mo-ri - re
(♯)
Si ch'io vor-rei mo - ri-re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
Si ch'io vor-rei mo - ri-re ch'io vor - rei mo-ri - re
Si ch'io vor-rei mo - ri-re ch'io vor - rei mo-ri - re
Si ch'io vor-rei mo - ri-re ch'io vor - rei mo-ri - re
82
83
84
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re.
(♯)
ch'io vor-rei mo - - - ri - re.
tr
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re.
ch'io vor-rei mo - ri - - - - - re.
ch'io vor-rei mo - ri - - - - - re.

Track Two: *Io piango* by Luca Marenzio (c1554-1599)

Score Study

First, to identify the overarching structure, and to place the text of *Io piango* as a foundational point of reference, a word for word and poetic translation is considered closely and apart from the score:

Word for Word Translation

Line 1: Io piango et ella il volto con le sue man m’asciuga
I weep and she, my face with her hand wipes dry

Line 2: et poi sospira dolcemente
And then she sighs sweetly

et s’adira con parole ch’i sassi romper ponno
and becomes angry with words that would break rocks

Line 3: et dopo questo si part’ella e’l sonno
And after that she goes to sleep

Poetic Translation

Line 1: Io piango et ella il volto con le sue man m’asciuga
I weep and she wipes my face dry with her hand,

Line 2: et poi sospira dolcemente et s’adira con parole ch’i sassi romper ponno
Then, she sweetly sighs, and angrily uses words so searing that they would break rocks

Line 3: et dopo questo si part’ella e’l sonno
And after that she falls asleep.

Because the text ends with one of the subjects falling asleep, it can be extrapolated that the interchange presented here is intimate and perhaps between bedfellows. Line one reveals that as one person weeps, the other responds with widely varying emotional shifts, moving from wiping away tears, to sweetly sighing, to speaking hurtful words, to falling asleep. To determine how the score serves and shapes the text, the score will be examined to identify significant and minor structural elements.

Score examination reveals that dramatic events directly guide musical contrasts in the melodic contour, rhythmic density, texture, modality, and voice grouping. The text-music phrases overlap: new text is introduced in one voice at cadencial points before the other voices have fully concluded stating the previous text. Cadences are also made obscure by shortening or weakening the resolution. The over-arching shape of the piece can be charted as follows:

Section 1, measures 1-17 (18 mm.)

Subphrase, 1-8 — *Io piango et ella il volto con le sue man m'asciuga.*

- Moves from G to A

Subphrase, 8-17 — *Io piango et ella il volto con le sue man m'asciuga et poi*

- Begins in G
- Phrase is extended and broken simultaneously with the text "et poi;" which begins a new phrase
- Perfect cadence in A major

Transition, measures 17-27 (11 mm.)

Subphrase, 17-23 — *sospira, et poi sospira* (repeated) *dolcemente*

- "Sospira" is interjected by the tenor to complete the sentence of the previous section, and to begin the new section
- Harmonic rhythm quickened, and progression occurs through startling use of chromaticism
- Plagal cadence in F over five beats; two voices immediately move away from resolution on beat six; the tenor ascends chromatically, destabilizing the cadence's resolution.

Phrase extended, 23-27 (5 mm.)

et s'adira con parole ch'i sassi

- No text repetition
- Strong perfect cadence in G, set-up by suspension, all voices participate and remain in G for 8 beats

Section 2, 27-48 (22 mm.)

Sub phrase, 27-34 (8 mm.)

romper ponno, ch'i sassi romper ponno

- Plagal cadence in G, only 3 participate

Sub phrase, 35-48 (14 mm.)

et dopo questo (repeated)
si part'ella e'l sonno (repeated)

Coda, 45-48, (4 mm.)

si part'ella e'l sonno

Only two cadences are strong, and they occur before each new section. These moments will command emphasis to capture the overall structure in the interpretation. The highly imitative and most rhythmically dense passage begins Section 2, and this will serve as the most climactic portion of the composition. To add subtle clarity to the blurred cadences, use of small ornamental turns and slight fluctuations will serve to mark, but not exaggerate, these moments. When phrases are extended (e.g., end of Section 1 and beginning of transition), expressive gestures will be employed to highlight forward motion.

In addition to large-scale connections between dramatic and musical contrasts, important music-text connections are evident on a smaller scale. Marenzio employs distinct compositional tools for word painting (e.g., in measures 17-20, "Sospira" is tossed breathlessly between the tenor and other voices; in measures 21-22, "dolcemente" is handled gently through rhythmic elongation and a homophonic setting). Rhythmic density varies to shape levels of intensity according to the mood of the text (e.g., “Io piango” is weighted down by tied whole notes compared to “romper ponno,” made playful by dotted-quarter and eighth notes).

Interpretative Decisions

The overall approach to interpretation recognizes the need to contrast repeated material and to underscore the dramatic mood and textural shifts to promote the effect of an episodic, evolving story line. As the first two musical phrases are similar, an increase in intensity is created through a use of wider crescendo and ornamentation; the tenor one interjects a turn, and the soprano improvises mournful appoggiaturas (0:26-0:37). As the phrase continues, the homophony is articulated with syllabic emphasis. An accelerando, crescendo, and ornamental turn creates momentum toward the cadence and the next phrase (measure 16, 0:47-0:50). As the tenor introduces the next phrase, he utilizes rhythmic and melodic embellishments and dotted rhythms to word-paint “sospira.” An ascending sixteenth-note run is improvised by the tenor on “et poi” (“and then”) to portray a sense of dramatic storytelling. An improvised ornament and a ritardando sweetly and gently decorate the word “dolcemente” (1:05-1:14).

A new phrase introduces another change in mood: “s’adira con parole ch’i sassi romper ponno” (“she becomes angry with words that would break rocks”). To facilitate this character shift and to portray mounting anger, the singers increase volume and broaden their tone while the alto improvises a climactic cadencial turn (1:15-1:27).

The climactic passages that follow set the text, “romper pono,” and this is expressively emulated with an accelerando and crisp, staccato-marcato articulation

(1:28-1:47). An ornament on beat four of measure 34, and a brief moment of rest after the downbeat in measure 35, ease into the cadence (1:44-1:47) and facilitate the transition to another mood shift in the next phrase: “Et dopo questo si part’ella e’l sonno”—“And after that she goes to sleep.” A dotted-rhythm is created for “dopo” to facilitate syllabic accent. To portray sleepiness, the phrase is increasingly slowed down and an eighth-note sigh-motif is added to the words “part’ella e’l sonno (1:55-2:05). As this phrase is restated, additional ornaments assist the ritardando to heighten the sense of the impending moment of slumber (2:19-2:50).

Track Three: *Languisco e moro* by Carlos Gesualdo (c1561-1613)

Score Study

The two-part musical form of Gesualdo’s *Languisco e moro* is quite clearly delineated in the score. The translation of the words is also straightforward, facilitating study that integrates examination of both text and music simultaneously:

Section 1, measures 1-15

	Languisco e moro, ahi, cruda!
Word for word	*I languish and die, oh cruelty!*
Poetic	I languish and die—with such cruelty!
	Ma tu, fera cagion de la mia sorte
Word for word	*But you, injury cause of my fate*
Poetic	But you cause my injury, my fate

Section 2, measures 16-32 (repeated)

	Deh, per pietà, consola si dolorosa morte
Word for word	*Ah, for pity, console me of such painful death*
Poetic	Ah, have mercy, save me from this painful death
	d'una lagrima sola, onde dica per fin del mio languire
Word for word	*of one tear alone, once say it's the end of my languish*
Poetic	as I cry alone, say just once that you'll end my anguish
	'or che pietosa sei dolce e'l morire
Word for word	*now that you have mercy, it is sweet to die.*
Poetic	Now that you show mercy, it is sweet to find release.

The words tell a story of unrequited passion. The forlorn lover calls out to the person who is causing injury and begs for pity and reciprocal affection to end the anguish. A turn toward resolution occurs once the beloved shows mercy, "'or che pietosa," and pain turns to a sweet resolution. Whether the dramatic plea is born from unrequited love on a physical or emotional level, the anguish itself—and then relief from it—is the clear focus of the text, with a mournful depth that can be compared to a Shakespearean tragedy (e.g., *Romeo and Juliet*). This perspective is strengthened when, upon score study, it is clear that tension permeates this musical setting achieved through use of chromaticism (e.g., measures 1-8), unresolved harmonic progressions (e.g., measure 3: the soprano never resolves from 'f-sharp' to a 'g'), and several series of suspensions (e.g., measures 1-10 and measures 30-32). Each syllable is ensured clarity by the omission of any melismas. Relief from discord occurs rarely through brief use of homophony and moments of major tonality (e.g., measure 19, "consola," and measure 27, "'or che pietosa"). Different textures and rhythmic densities are employed to contrast each line of text. For example, the opening phrase is imitative and polyphonic, with half notes and tied half notes. The second phrase groups the upper voices and then the lower voices and utilizes mostly eighth notes and quarter notes.

The textural and musical climax occurs at the beginning of Section 2, “Deh, per pieta,” underscored by a wide jump to a higher tessitura, and the unprecedented alignment of four voices on the same text. Since this section is repeated, and warrants the biggest climactic moment, expressive gestures need to be reserved to insure a dramatic contrast. Given that Gesualdo’s treatment of the text is so deliberate, tightly woven, and both melodically and harmonically complex, interpretative decisions focus upon maximizing and elaborating inherent qualities rather than adding undue distraction.

Interpretive Decisions

Section 1

Within Section 1, material includes small-scale repetition, consequently care is taken to create contrasts on a micro level. The highly chromatic and densely imitative fabric creates a fragile environment in which ornamentation or alterations might compromise cohesion. Instead, the dramatic use of suspensions and descending wide leaps are highlighted in performance through abundant *messas di voce* (0:00-0:25). Improvised ornamental turns are added for progressive variety at the ends of subphrases (soprano, measure 3) or when intervallic motion is less chromatic (0:30-0:39). In measure 11, the sudden textural change for “ma tu, fera cagion” is underscored with a crescendo and accelerando (0:47-0:51). A ritardando is employed as the tessitura peaks and descends, assisted by a cadencial turn on the word “sorte” (0:52-0:59). When “sorte” is repeated, a lengthier, more elaborate ornament is employed to extend this brief moment of resolution and to maximize structural clarity (1:08-1:15).

Section 2

The repeat of Section 2 becomes the climax of the piece (specifically, measure 18, as the tessitura peaks), so effort is made to create a clear contrast between the first and second delivery of these passages. Section 2 opens with a homophonic and chromatic exclamation, “Deh, per pietà,” and this text is repeated with staggered syncopated entrances. To maximize the sharp contrast to Section 1, the singers employ a crescendo, syllabic accents, and *messas di voce* (1:17-1:31). With the word “consola,” the sudden consonance inspires an ornamental turn to give added beauty and contentment (1:31-1:37). “Si dolorosa morte” is sung with tenuto articulation on each syllable to depict a laboring, aching mood (1:37-1:47). The next phrase, “d’una lagrima sola,” is sung simply and plainly to convey the lonely, introspective sadness of “one tear only” (1:47-1:57). The homophonic exclamation “Onde dica per fin del mio languire” motivates an emphasis on text clarity as the singers accelerate to express the text’s urgent plea (1:57-2:09). The subsequent statement of more hopeful anticipation, “‘or che pietosa sei,” is strikingly consonant, inspiring an air of gentility in the tone and a decorative turn in the alto (2:11-2:18). Although progressing toward a “dolce” resolution, the concluding phrase contains a series of dissonant suspensions on the word “morire.” Since this is the first delivery of the last line, underlying tension is maximized with *messas di voce* on the word “morire,” resisting the conveyance of a fully “dolce” resolution (2:18-2:34).

When Section 2 is repeated (2:34), much more ornamentation is used throughout, and there is a lessened grip on ensemble cohesion generally, in service of rendering a more impassioned delivery. Highlights include the harmonized appoggiaturas on the word “pietà,” (2:40-2:42 and 2:47-2:50), the harmonized ornamental turn decorating “consola” (2:51-2:57), the extended use of the sigh-motif in all voices to portray an even more painstaking delivery of the word “dolorosa” (2:58-3:10), and, finally, an extended improvised embellishment in the soprano and alto just before the final cadence to portray a sense of complete resolution (3:54-4:08).

CHAPTER FOUR

SELECTED PRIMARY SOURCES THAT INFORM JAZZ BALLAD PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

This chapter identifies principles and examples from primary sources that can guide the interpretation and performance of jazz ballads. The primary source material proceeds in three steps: first, a review of quotes from jazz performers and others to distill four general interpretive principles; second, a review of in-depth interviews with two recognized jazz balladeers to see how these principles inform their interpretations and performances; and third, the identification and brief analysis of jazz ballad performances informed by these principles.

Quotations as Primary Sources

Excerpts from the Radio Program, *Jazz Singers*[1]

The following quotations are taken from *Jazz Singers,* a thirteen-part series broadcast on National Public Radio,[2] hosted by jazz singer, Al Jarreau. In several of the following excerpts, emotive ballad singing is referred to as "singing the blues"—a common reference in jazz discource, especially when the text of a ballad is tragic in character. Quotations are of jazz singers (unless otherwise noted) and are organized under four recurring topics: (1) relaying emotion as a primary goal; (2) text-driven, conversational interpretation; (3) individualistic interpretation; and (4) score alteration and improvisation.

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[1] Lex Gillespie and Jacque Gales Webb, producers. *Jazz Singers,* National Public Radio program, unpublished transcript, Smithsonian Productions, 2001.

[2] The actual National Public Radio series and sound clips are the property of Smithsonian Productions and are unavailable for review. Quotations are as they appear in the program's unpublished transcript, including the punctuation, text formatting, and interjected parenthetical descriptions (noting "laughter," "singing," etc.)

Relaying Emotion as a Primary Goal

Billie Holiday

> The blues to me is like being pretty sad, pretty sick. Going to church. Being very happy. There are two kinds of blues. There's happy blues and there's sad blues. I don't think I ever sing the same way twice. I don't think I ever sing the same tempo. One night it's slower, next night it's a little bit brighter, it's according to how I feel. I don't know, the blues is sort of a mixed up thing, you just have to feel it.[3]

Annie Ross

> When people say to me, "what‘s your favorite Billie Holiday album?" And I always say "*Lady in Satin*," because there's a whole life in the way she sings. And she may not have had the most beautiful instrument. But, it didn't matter, because she's got the heart. . . .
>
> It was her [Ella Fitzgerald's] musicality that was phenomenal. But still she managed to convey, with that young, girlish voice, a depth of emotion.[4]

Will Friedwald (writer)

> And when he [Mark Murphy] does a ballad it's very heartfelt, it's very, you know, all the drama is in there, all the heart is in there, all the emotion is there.[5]

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[3] Ibid., program 1, page 10.

[4] Ibid., 6:3.

[5] Ibid., 4:11.

Ernestine Anderson

> I sing what I'm feeling inside. That's what I hope comes across. I don't just sit out and say, "Well I'm gonna do this, this way. I'm gonna do it slow." You know, all the technicalities, forget all that. It's about feeling; it's what you feel that's important. . . .[6]
>
> She [Etta Jones] sang that [a song entitled, *Jim*,] one time when I was in the "Blue Note," they were playing there. She sang that song and I cried. I don't know why I was crying, but it just did something, it just reached down, and, you tweaked something inside me. And, I found myself sitting there just crying, at this song, you know. But that [*sic*] what she does, she can move you with a lyric. Now there's somebody that you can believe what she is saying. You can believe the lyric because she tells the story, but it comes from the heart. It's just, a beautiful experience, to hear this woman sing.[7]

Andy Bey

> This is what jazz MUSIC is about. It ain't about how pretty you sing, or how clever you sing. It's about the blues really. It's about the blues which is the feeling of the music. [8]

Al Jarreau

> It's not so much the ability to improvise or even a beautiful voice that makes a great ballad singer. What matters is how well he or she can convey the underlying meaning of a ballad; how well they can touch our emotional memories and make us respond. That's just what Rebecca Parris does in this lovely ballad [*My Foolish Heart*]. . . .[9]
>
> Master balladeers get into the skin of the main character of a song. Their emotions become real. That's what made Frank Sinatra such a great singer; he sang with such sincerity that you believed him completely.[10]

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[6] Ibid., 4:14.

[7] Ibid., 6:11-12.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid., 6:13. Jarreau's comments may or may not have been scripted as they were made while in his role as the narrator of the *Jazz Singers* radio program.

[10] Ibid., 6:12.

Frank Sinatra

> You begin to learn to use the lyrics of the song as a script, as a scene in other words. So I try to transpose my thoughts about the song into a person, who might at that moment be saying that to somebody else.[11]

Text-Driven, Conversational Interpretation

Madeline Eastman

> She [Carmen McRae] could really communicate a thought, with a musician's background. She understood how to take what she felt, and translate it to the audience. And that's a rare gift, you know, it's a very rare gift.[12]

Annie Ross

> Ohh [*sic*] phrasing is so important. It's knowing how to sing as if you were having a conversation with somebody else. A lot of singers take breaths in inappropriate places, so it breaks a thought. . . .[13]
>
> I've always thought that Carmen McRae would've been a great actress. Because when she sings a ballad, she tells a story. She doesn't over-dramatize, but you can feel the pain and the hurt and the rejection, or whatever. Because she had a great understanding of lyrics, lyrics were very important to Carmen.[14]

Vanessa Reuben

> She [Carmen McRae] had this unique ability to read a lyric like no one I have ever heard. And she had a way to make words very tangible. Words that would actually come off the album, or CD. And it was very, as a matter of fact, very in your face, very raw.[15]

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[11] Ibid., 6:12.
[12] Ibid., 6:5.
[13] Ibid., 4:6-7.
[14] Ibid., 6:5.
[15] Ibid., 4:7.

Rebecca Parris

> As far as phrasing goes, Carmen McRae has touched more of me than any other human, with lyric content. The graphics in her lyrics, it's like you have a painting in front of you. You don't have to imagine anything, it's right there, painted in front of you. In terms of graphically describing how the feel is in this tune, or what I'm trying to say—whether it's, it's conversational—conversation is very important within the confines of the music, because it's the thing that individualizes you. . . .[16]
>
> You're sharing yourself at a great deal of risk. We get an opportunity to tell who we are, and somebody in the audience invariably comes up and says, "Wow it felt like you were singing my life, or, if you were singing it to me." If I make one of those connections during the course of a day, than I think I've done my job well. And it's someone saying you're not alone.[17]

Al Jarreau

> Carmen's great strength was her phrasing of the lyric. The most important thing to her was getting across the story.[18]

Carmen McRae

> I love words, so consequently if I don't have really good words, I really can't say too much to you that means anything. So consequently when I'm looking at a song, or for maybe the first time, I will check the lyric out. Because I feel that that's primarily what I have to work with. Now the melody might not be the greatest, but, being a, improvisational person, I can change the melody, if I choose, you know.[19]

Dianne Reeves

> Billie Holiday, who, really, really, was not only a storyteller, but was able to weave life, into her lyrics. I mean, you hear dimensions, and when she sings, you hear stories and colors. And it's all in just the phrasing, and the way that she'll say a certain word.[20]

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[16] Ibid., 4:7-8.
[17] Ibid., 6:14.
[18] Ibid., 4:8.
[19] Ibid., 6:5.
[20] Ibid., 6:3.

Etta Jones

> She [Billie Holiday] could deliver a song and make you understand. If the moon was green, you could see the green moon (laughing). . . .[21]
>
> I always say that singing is a lot like talking. If you talk with expression, you don't talk like, "da, da, da, da, da, da," you know. You say, "You know what," you know when you want to, (laughs), when you want to get something across you say, "Let me tell you something!" You know, I mean (laughs), some people sing ballads, and they just sings [*sic*] words, and they don't emphasize "here" or "there," or whatever. If you were gonna sing it just like singing the words, and no nothing in it, you'd say, "Jim-doesn't-ever-bring-me-pretty-flowers-Jim-never-tries-to-cheer-my-lonely-hours." You know, now if you're gonna sing it with emotion, you say, *"Jim doesn't ever bring me pretty flowers, and Jim, never tries to cheer my lonely hours."*[22]

Individualistic Interpretation

Al Jarreau

> Bluesy or cool, dramatic or subtle, jazz singers come in a variety of flavors. But what they have in common is the desire to put their own stamp on a song. Improvising, swinging, bending notes; these are all techniques with one objective: to make a song personal.[23]

Lorez Alexandria

> Jazz is the purest expression of self that you can ever get. . . . It is pure expression, of what you are actually feeling at that precise moment. Because you will do that thing again, and you will feel something different, and you will do it differently. This is the license that jazz artists have that other people don't have.[24]

Andy Bey

> When Billie Holiday said my man has left me, you know that her man is gone, (laughing), and he ain't coming back. But when Ella Fitzgerald says it, he

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[21] Ibid., 6:2.
[22] Ibid., 6:11.
[23] Ibid., 4:13.
[24] Ibid., 4:13.

> just went around the corner to get a loaf of bread. (Laughing) Because that's what it is, it's the essence of a certain kind of feeling.[25]

Greg Murai (jazz choral arranger and director)

> Lately, I've been having my private vocal students sing only jazz ballads. I do this because as a mode of expression there is nothing that is as rich in possibilities for the jazz singer. In other words, I not only have my students memorize the lyric but I also have them create a subtext. So along with their lyric sheet is another sheet that expresses the text in their own words. Then we establish an overall vision for the tune, this is usually arrived at after exploring the answer to the question, "Why did you decide to pick this song?" In my experience, whenever a singer makes an interpretive choice, if it is informed by the overall vision, it will usually be a good choice. Bad choices happen when the singer is not aware that he or she *has* a choice and sings the phrase as written or as he or she has "always heard it."[26]

Score Alteration and Improvisation

Andy Bey

> We [the *Andy Bey Singers*] went after the music like a solo singer. Not that anybody could be like Sarah Vaughan, but it was our idea to sing like Sarah Vaughan. (Laughter) Or to sing like a Louis Armstrong or to sing what Miles Davis did. But it was always our idea to get like, (sings) "Everybody Loves My Baby." Like a singer, a solo singer would sing like that. But like a, maybe a group they might say (sings) "e-ver-y-bo-dy loves my ba-by." But a solo singer couldn't do that, wouldn't do that because they would take away from the lyric. Singers have lyrics to deal with. And you have to tell a story and this is what we try to do. We try to makes [*sic*] group singing a little more, storytelling, a little more conversational.[27]

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[25] Ibid., 6:2.

[26] Greg Murai directs and arranges vocal ensembles at *TheJazzSchool* in Berkeley, California. This is the response he provided for this study when asked "How do you approach teaching jazz ballad interpretation?"

[27] Ibid., 5:11

Alvin Chea

> It's definitely a lot of fun [singing bass in *Take Six*], and it's very educational because you learn that there are some rules that, that have to be adhered to. And there are some rules that can be broken, you know, and there's [*sic*] exceptions. And the bottom line is as you sing it comes out jazz.[28]

Cedric Dent (choral arranger and singer)

> The arrangements [for the choral jazz ensemble *Take Six*] are very set, except for say, the lead. I mean the lead is given free reign, when there is a lead, and we're not all singing together. I do approach it [arranging] much like a big band, in that the trombone part is the trombone part. The trumpets have their parts. But in that approach, after the lead, the bass has more freedom, just like in a big band.[29]

Greg Murai (jazz choral arranger and director)

> The way my choral students and I enter a ballad is through the lyric. One can spend a lot of time simply studying one's approach to singing the ballad. We work the song phrase by phrase supporting the overall vision. In singing the phrases, I ask of my students that they are clear and sound authentic; it is important for the listener to believe every word the singer delivers. In the phrasing is where the multiple musical choices come into play; choices in dynamics (loud and soft), pitch, rhythm, register, timbre and tempo. A choir arrangement is full of choices, and these choices might include slight or considerable moments of improvisation. It is soon apparent that many different choices can be made to support a single vision. The experienced singer will never sing the same song the same way twice, and an experienced ensemble will discover ways to keep varying their performances. A variety of influences come into play through the lyric, and the results of "giving in" and communicating those influences makes for a compelling performance.[30]

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[28] Ibid., 5:4

[29] Ibid.

30 Greg Murai response when asked "How do you approach teaching jazz ballad interpretation?"

Will Friedwald

> And this was a group [*The Boswell Sisters*] that did everything. They would do call and response with the other instruments. They would completely rewrite melodies. They would take a tune and really twist is around so that the composer wouldn't recognize it. I mean their records are also celebrated because they had wonderful accompanists, which is the best soloist that they could get. It's a classic body of work.[31]

Excerpts from an Interview with Rhiannon

The following excerpts are from an interview conducted as part of this study with the performer/educator and master balladeer, Rhiannon. Excerpts are organized under the four recurring principles of jazz ballad performance practices: (1) relaying emotion as a primary goal; (2) text-driven, conversational interpretation; (3) individualistic interpretation; and (4) score alteration and improvisation. For clarification, some excepts are prefaced by a brief summary of the questions posed.

Relating Emotion as a Primary Goal

> I think a lot of singers are drawn to ballads because it's expressive . . . there's a kind of expression that comes through the voice that's unlike anything else. The humanity of it. So then to have beautiful words written, ah, it's just an incredible gift. You get to walk into this play, this piece of theater. That's how I relate to it. I have a bunch of theater training . . . for me, a ballad is going into a character in a play. . . .
>
> If you find someone who's written their own music, then right away, you know they're going to mean it. . . . I think that's why I like Betty [Carter], the things that she wrote on her own. And then there's Abbey Lincoln . . . who writes a lot of her own stuff, and her own stuff is the stuff—just, wow! [When people sing music they've written] . . . it's coming right from their heart.

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[31] *Jazz Singers*, 5:6

Text-driven, Conversational Interpretation

[Question: How do you go about learning a new tune?]

Well, . . . I get the chart. . . . I start playing it, and just start singing it, and I start to see if I'm interested in it after the tenth or fifteenth time through . . . what I'm looking for is, "Where's the doorway?" And I would say sometimes, the very singing of the song is so strong for me that I feel like I get it right away. That there's something about it that's so true to my experience, that I feel it's going to unfold over time and that I feel that I just need to sing the song. That I need to not take it apart and redo it. As many of my teachers have said to me, "Just sing." And let the beauty of it unfold, and pay tribute to all the singers before you who've sung it. Don't try to be fabulously different, just sing it. And hire great people to play with you and you'll find a way. So then the other thing is sometimes I'll sing a song and I'll think, "There's something in here, but it needs to be, really needs to be found in the fabric of the song." So then I sometimes take it to my pianist, Frank Martin, and we play it together, and he'll suggest a different time signature . . . or a way of altering the chord or something. . . .

[Question: How important are text considerations in this process?]

Very. Always, always, always! Like I do a version of Joni Mitchell's *Case of You*, and we took it completely apart, and slowed it down and changed the framework of the song . . . I felt like I could get to the heart of the lyric that way.

Individualistic Interpretation

[Question: Various performers offer very different interpretations of the same ballad?]

Yeah, and that is what got me interested in music again . . . I was listening to jazz while I was being an actor. I thought, "Oh my God! Look what they're doing!" Each person that sings this makes a promise to themselves. This is my impression. They make a promise to themselves that they will do this song like nobody else. . . . [Question: Do you think jazz ballads provide ideal contexts for keeping such a promise?] I do. Well, you are taking time, things slow down. . . . you're really dealing with the words, and that's why I say to my student, "don't ever choose a ballad that you can't believe in 100%, don't do it," because you'll be standing there singing a lie. . . .

For example, Carmen McRae, you know, she was so tough and she was with women and she was with men, and she had really a lot of attitude in a time when it wasn’t so easy for her to have this attitude. So I can remember her singing something like [singing] “Oh my man I love him so.” She would like take it to the tenth power. Instead of doing it in a regular way, which would make me look at her and go, “Oh come on, Carmen, that’s not you,” she used to be so extreme with it, I’d think, “Well, yow, hey!” So I think that was a way for her to feel in a time when the standard seemed [to demand discretion]. . . .

Betty Carter, who is really kind of an odd ballad singer—she’d usually do them five times as slow as anyone else . . . and I could look at the interior of the song from her point of view, like really extending the phrase out, or just quickening a certain part. . . . and her own stuff was so—just so belonged to her. No one else would have written it. . . .

And then I’m thinking Nina Simone. She would take songs, like the church-style that she did . . . the Kurt Weill one. [Singing] “And the ship, the black freighter” —it’s exquisite. It’s about the ship comes in and all the sailors get off and there’s these encounters with the women . . . and Kurt Weill’s meaning was probably very different. But when she sings it, it’s about the women slaves and how they will . . . do away with these men that are so cruel. The slave masters and freedom of the slaves, that’s what it—a lot of her stuff ends up being that. She’s such a singer, and for her, lyrics were often a vehicle for politics. . . .

Rickie Lee Jones has sometimes put some really beautiful jazz songs . . . and does it in her own kinda whiney, strange voice that’s so evocative. . . .

And one of the beautiful things about Abbey [Lincoln] is that she’s not afraid to distort her voice in order to get the expression across. Like at the end of *Caged Bird* . . . she’s singing about—literally about—a bird that lives in cages, but again, it’s a symbol of freedom. At the end of the song, she starts squawking like a caged bird, and it’s not pretty, it’s like [bird sound] “Ahh, ahh!” Like that. I remember when I first heard it, it just sent chills up and down my spine, partly because it was so evocative of needing freedom, and partly because she was willing to do that, to express that she wasn’t feeling the necessity to be a pretty-voiced singer.

Score Alteration and Improvisation

Then there’s Mark Murphy . . . he’s really able to deal with ballads in this quirky kind of way. He will slow them down sometimes . . . he’ll take a couple of songs and put them together. He’ll slide from one song into the other and then back to the first one . . . Maybe one will be a contemporary song and one will be a lot older, and he’ll find the connecting point between them. . . .

I think as time has gone on, the jazz singers have said, “whoa, wait a minute, I’m a poet.” And Betty [Carter] sang a lot of standards and she would always sprinkle in there her own things. . . .

[Question: The “crooner,” i.e. one who delivers the melody directly and with a clear priority of maintaining a beautiful tone—is this a sub-set of ballad interpretation?]

> I think for some singers, to put it in the pocket [to sing a tune in its original, most basic version] is primary. . . for some singers like me, I have had to develop a stronger sense of ‘the pocket’ because when I sing a ballad, my teachers have been ones who go way outside. . . . So I have actually learned a lot from listening to Natalie Cole. “Oh, listen to how she’s got it back on the one,” in this way that makes me feel so safe and so secure, that whatever she’s singing about, it’s going to be on the one, and my foot is going to keep tapping while I feel. . . . it’s not my way, but I’ve learned a lot from them. . . .
>
> Well, like Diana Krall. That’s her deal. People love it because it’s something so . . . like what they remember. . . . She doesn’t mess with it [the original version] very much. And it’s really pretty. I must say, sometimes I find it really soothing to listen to. And . . . Natalie Cole. That old song that she does with her dad is so beautiful in that way because it’s kind of simple, it runs through you like clear water. And whereas my training and my theater tradition and my understanding of what jazz singers got to do leans more toward Betty Carter, Abbey Lincoln, Nina Simone—the singers who said, “My way! I’ve got to do it my way!”

Excerpts from an Interview with Sheila Jordan

The following excerpts are from an interview with the performer/educator, Sheila Jordan, whose skills in ballad interpretation are widely admired. Excerpts are organized under the four recurring principles of jazz ballad performance practice. For clarification, some excepts are prefaced by a brief summary of the questions posed.

Relaying Emotion as a Primary Goal

> Basically, where I get most of my feedback is my ballad singing, which is strange. I come out of a bebop era, and I’ve been scatting for years but my favorite way to sing is ballads. I love ballads, the more beautiful and depressing, the better [laughter]. I can really feel them. You know, I’ve lived a pretty hard life—not that other people haven’t—but I can really somehow—my experience is that strength and hope lie in the ballad. . . .

> I've learned very early in life that when I sing ballads—that was one way I could sing about the pain and life of others, I knew that's where most of it lies in ballad singing.
>
> [Question: Who influenced your approach?]
>
> Billie Holiday. . . .You never doubted that she didn't mean every word she sang. . . . She made it sound so natural. . . . *Lady in Satin* is one of my favorite Billie Holiday recordings ever because she was at the bottom of her life, she was like broke. It was heavy; she was probably at the heaviest point of her life before she died. Even though her voice was gone, the emotion was so strong; it was like nothing I'd ever heard from a singer. . . .
>
> Sarah [Vaughan] and Ella [Fitzgerald], but nobody struck me like Billie. The only person that comes close to me now today, . . . is probably Abbey Lincoln. I really feel that she's a real storyteller. . . . And I love the way Mark Murphy sings a ballad. And I love the way Andy Bey sings a ballad. There's a lot out there. So I would say Abbey Lincoln . . . her own compositions . . . that wonderful song that she wrote called *Throw It Away,* and then *Bird Alone*. . . . I can feel what she's doing because she's coming from the Billie Holiday bag in the sense of emotion. . . .
>
> Miles Davis, it's like him singing those lyrics [when he plays] . . . they're so beautiful, so tasty and so spaced out—unbelievable, Miles Davis. . . . I mean, Bird [Charlie Parker] played great ballads too, but there's an intensity in Miles when he plays ballads. Bird's my idol, but nobody played a ballad like Miles to me—nobody!

[Question: As a teacher, how do you direct your students to approach ballad interpretation?]

> Learn it [a tune] the way it's written then learn the chord changes. I always have the melody in my head, but most importantly in my heart. And that's it. And I tell them don't try to do too much. Don't deliberately think that you have to sing everything. Learn it, sing it pure. I can tell when it [spontaneous emotive changes] happens organically and when they've planned it. . . .
>
> [Question: And if they've planned it, how do you respond?]
>
> I tell them—I ask them, "Did you really *mean* that? Did you do that because you wanted to change it or did you actually *feel* the change?" And I'll be honest. "How did you know?" they'll ask. "Because I know—'cause I was young once!" [Laughter]

Text-driven, Conversational Interpretation

[Question: How do you choose which ballad to sing, and how do you prepare your interpretation?]

> When I hear beautiful melodies, in any song but ballads in particular, those melodies are so gorgeous. And so even if the lyrics aren't very good—they usually are though, they usually complement one another—but even if they aren't, I can change the lyrics a little bit so that they make more sense to me . . . to something that's closer to me. . . . I can give you something that I did. [Singing] "I see your face before me, clouding my every dream. There's your face before me, part of my every—It doesn't matter where you are, I can see how." See, I sang this for my daughter and my daughter's brown-skinned, and so I can't sing [singing] "I can see how fair you are." So I change the lyric to, [singing] "I can feel how near you are, I open my eyes and there you are." So I never have to deal with that word fair. . . . I like the song but not necessarily—there might be a word or two that I don't feel. . . . So how am I going to sing this song and get the message across? I have to make them [the words] all meaningful for me. I can't sing something that I'm not familiar with or that I have no identity with or that I haven't lived through, or I can't connect with. . . .
>
> I recorded *Bird Alone* and that is a beautiful ballad and she [composer, Abbey Lincoln] sings it beautifully . . . I can identify with a 'bird alone.' That's what we are; she's a bird alone, I'm a bird alone. And hey, I'm 75, so I'm a bird alone; I don't have a man in my life, and probably won't. So it's songs like that that I can identify [with] . . .

Individualistic Interpretation

> Betty Carter made her own way of singing a ballad even though she was a bebopper originally like me. She made her own sound, her own feelings. Listen, if you can take a song and make it your own, that's what it's all about. . . .
>
> Any ballad that I hear that I like, I'll find a way to do it my way, whether it's out of time, a slow bossa, or I make it into a waltz, or just a straight ahead 4/4 ballad. . . . I will hear it, and sometimes I don't hear it like other people, I'll hear it in a different way. I deliberately go out there and look for obscure ballads, that's what I do. But even if I took a ballad that's been repeated 100 times, 1000 times, if I love it, I'll find a way to sing it, I'll find a way to do it so that it'll become mine. That's what it's all about, making the music your own, whether it's accepted in commercial circles or whether it isn't. . . . Whatever that ballad does for me, I'm gonna do it. . . .

[Question: What if a ballad performance does not seem to reflect a personal emotion, and/or does not feel spontaneous?]

> Oh, well then I'm not feeling it. Some singers take like *Round Midnight* and they try to change it all around. Don't forget, I teach a lot of young singers, and I'll say, "Why are you doing that to that tune?" And they'll say, "Well, it's boring." And I'll say, "You know what? You're boring me." [Laughter] . . . when you're singing a beautiful ballad and . . . you're so into it . . . it's almost like an out-of-body experience. . . . you're not forcing it and you're not planning it . . . you're feeling it and something happens and it goes somewhere and you have no control over it. . . . when these beautiful little gifts—musical gifts—happen . . . and you have no control over it . . . it will come out okay. It's only when we plan stuff . . . we get up there and try to show off [that's when] you go nowhere. I don't think jazz music is changing everything around. I never entered it [jazz singing] changing it around. I entered it 'cause I love the freedom of it, and I don't deliberately change stuff around just to change it.

Score Alteration and Improvisation

[Question: In a ballad interpretation, what motivates you to make a change?]

> What motivates me? I will never know. All I know is I love it, I love the melody, I love the lyrics, I get into it, and for some reason this whole magical whatever someone is playing underneath me or whoever I'm singing with we become one sound when it's really happening. I mean, I get into ballads because I like ballads. I love ballads and I don't deliberately set out to change them. I don't sit at the piano and go, "Here, I should go here, maybe I should do this," or practice what I'm going to put in there, I like it to happen. I like it to come without a warning. And then all of a sudden it happens and it's like, "Whoa! Where'd that come from?" That's when you're totally absorbed in what that ballad is about, lyrically and musically. . . . Listen, I did *You Are My Sunshine,* alone with George Russell who wrote an arrangement that was a killer on *You Are My Sunshine,* for the coalminers of Pennsylvania cause that's where I grew up, and that was the song they use to sing when they got drunk. And there's a twelve minute documentary which is on Riverside Records on *You Are My Sunshine,* and it's very slow, and nothing was planned. The first chorus I sang alone, and then he brings in all these unbelievable sounds behind me. And that had a reason because I grew up with the coalminers. I saw them get killed in mines. I saw them get drunk on Saturday night. I heard them singing. I knew their despair. I knew the poverty, all of us living in poverty, my family going into the coal mines. . . . I knew all that.

> One of the ballads that I like to sing now is *Autumn in New York*, and more so after 9/11, and I even changed the lyrics in that one. “I hate and adore” are the lyrics. I don’t sing that anymore, I sing, “Love and adore,” I can’t hate New York after what those New Yorkers have been through. . . . Kenny Dorham . . . wrote a beautiful song, a ballad called *Fair-Weather*, about people getting together. I can identify with that, because I’ve been beat up on the street by white people who saw me on the street with black musicians, in Detroit and in New York City even. . . . If somebody just hears it and doesn’t really dig into the tune, they have no clue that that’s what Kenny Dorham wrote about. He wrote about the racism in the world, in the states. That’s why he wrote this, brothers getting together, people sticking together and “there’ll be fair weather.” Those lyrics I would never even think about touching. I would think about touching something like “I hate and adore” because I can’t say I hate New York City, I don’t. It gave me everything.

Recordings as Primary Sources

Since jazz performance practices are also transmitted through a disciplined and thorough study of recordings, a compact disc of rubato ballad performances accompanies this study. Tracks 4 through 12, organized chronologically according to the date of the recording, present solo performers recognized in the vocal jazz field for their skill in ballad singing, many of whom are cited as primary sources above. Careful study of these examples shows how master balladeers utilize key principles of the jazz ballad tradition, i.e., how a variety of interpretive gestures can be used to relay highly emotive, text-driven, and individualistic interpretations with varying degrees of score alteration and improvisation. Tracks 13-15 are recordings of vocal jazz ensembles, organized chronologically, that demonstrate how key principles from the solo jazz tradition can be applied to a cappella choral jazz ballad arrangements. Each example is discussed below, identified by track number with references to specific minutes and seconds (“0:00”).

Track Four, Recorded in 1948: Billie Holiday Sings *My Man (Mon Homme)*
by Maurice Yvain, Albert Williametz, and Jaques Charles;
English lyrics by Channing Pollock[32]

Holiday's conversational delivery is achieved by employing tempo rubato with recitative-style accompaniment and breaking long phrases into fragments. Rhythmic alteration highlights certain parts of each phrase: "tired you bet" (0:30) is sung with three eighth notes; "I'll soon forget" (0:36) is sung with three quarter notes. To accentuate the words, "I love," Holiday slurs the pitches (0:56). In the repeated phrase, "he's my man," each statement is differently poignant: Holiday first emphasizes the word "man" (0:18), and on repeat, the word "my" (0:22).

Track Five, Date Unknown (ca. 1970): Ella Fitzgerald Sings
I Concentrate on You by Cole Porter[33]

In this live recording (date unknown), Fitzgerald's use of tempo rubato allows for an expressive shaping of the text. Beginning a cappella, her phrases are speech-like through fragmented, intermittent rests. To highlight text, she creatively contrasts simple statements with embellished ones (e.g., the melody with the text "and trouble begins to brew" (0:13), is simply stated compared to the decorative delivery of the word "on" in the clause "I concentrate on you" (0:29)). Fitzgerald masterfully alters the melody with a wide interval leap ad lib to highlight the word "people" (0:42). She creates a dramatic climax by connecting two phrases together ("and so," 1:45-49). She also segues into another standard, Y*ou Go to My Head*, by Haven Gillespie and J. Fred Coots (2:40-3:19), which supplements and expands the mood before returning to the original tune.

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[32] Billie Holiday, "My Man," *Billie Holiday's Greatest Hits*, Decca GRD-653.

[33] Ella Fitzgerald. "I Concentrate on You," *Essential Jazz Ballads.* Laserlight Jazz, vol. I, Delta Music, Inc. 17142.

Track Six, Recorded in 1973: Sarah Vaughan Sings *The Nearness of You* by Hoagy Carmichael[34]

Vaughan artfully utilizes tempo rubato to provide the flexibility for text-driven phrasing. She creates a speech-like quality by shortening or lenthening phrases and employing rhythmic and melodic alteration. For example, the second phrase, “my heart’s in a dither dear,” is staccato and accelerated (0:55), while the next phrase, “when you’re at a distance” (1:00), is legato and rhythmically augmented. The word, “oh” (1:19) is highlighted by playful embellishment and elongation.

Track Seven, Recorded in 1982: Mel Tormé Sings *It Might as Well Be Spring* by Richard Rogers and Oscar Hammerstein II[35]

To illustrate the extent to which Tormé renders a personalized interpretation, compare the recording to this basic original representation of the first 16 measures:

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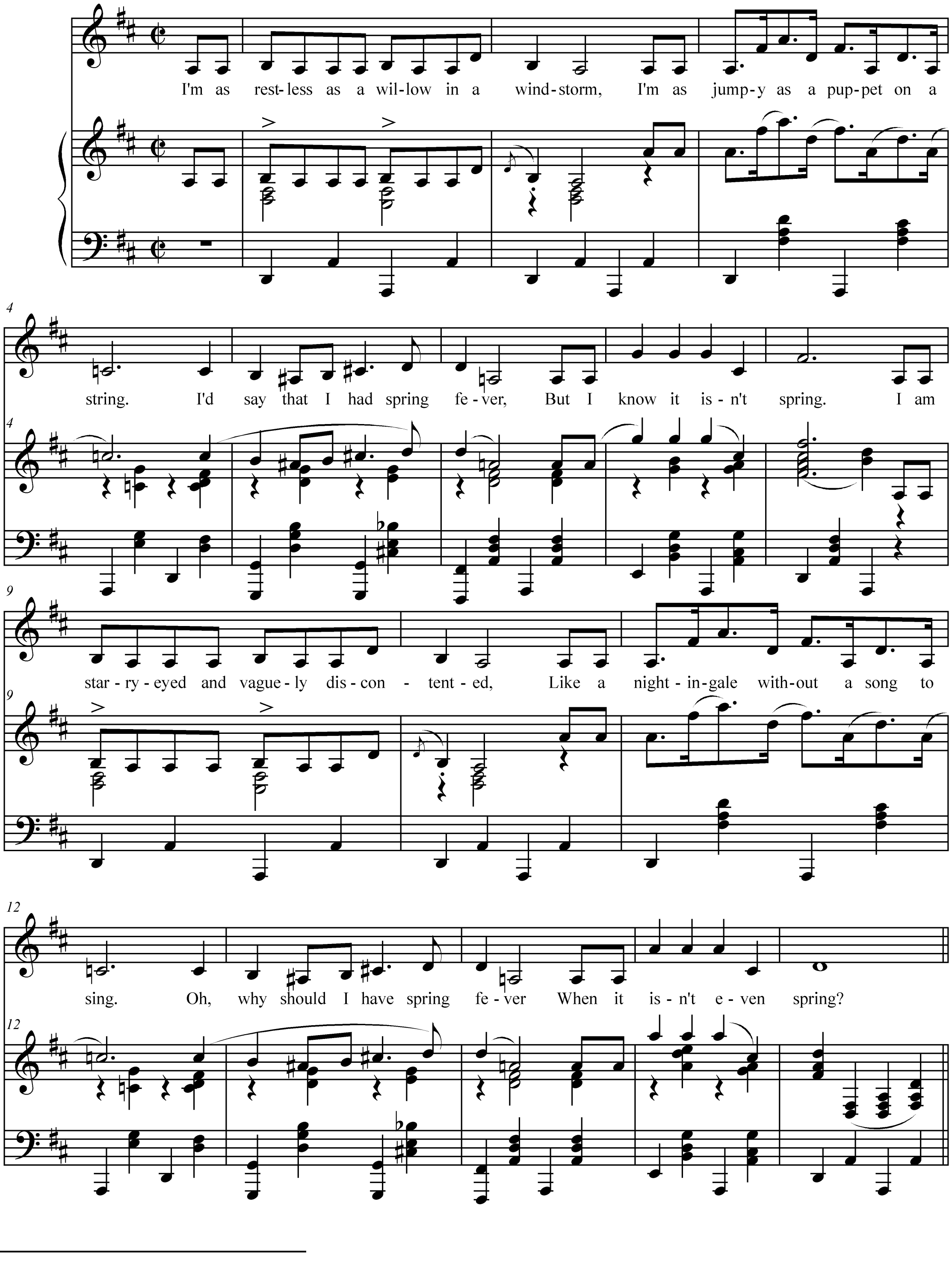
[34] Sarah Vaughan, “The Nearness of You,” *Sarah Vaughan: Ken Burns Jazz*. The Verve Music Group, 314 549 088-2.

[35] Mel Tormé, “It Might as Well Be Spring,” *An Evening with George Shearing and Mel Tormé*, Concord Records, CCD-4190, 1982.

It Might as Well Be Spring[36]


I'm as rest-less as a wil-low in a wind-storm, I'm as jump-y as a pup-pet on a
4
string. I'd say that I had spring fe-ver, But I know it is-n't spring. I am
9
star-ry-eyed and vague-ly dis-con-tent-ed, Like a night-in-gale with-out a song to
12
sing. Oh, why should I have spring fe-ver When it is-n't e-ven spring?

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[36] Extracted from *It Might as Well Be Spring* by Richard Rogers and Oscar Hammerstein II, from Famous Music, Inc., http//www.musicnotes.com.

Performing live with George Shearing, Tormé demonstrates extemporaneously how rhythmic dexterity and technical control can work together to express a very personal version, even while leaning toward a style some would define as "crooning." In the opening phrase, Tormé creates a speech-like delivery through altering melodic rhythms and the use of space: "I'm as restless," "as a willow," and "in a windstorm" are sung as sixteenth notes and are separated by moments of rest (0:40-0:47). Articles of a phrase that are less important are also speedily pattered along: "but I know it" (1:05-1:09). Tormé isolates words to create expressive emphasis: "spring fever" (1:01-1:03) is highlighted by utilizing space before and after, and "spring" (1:09-1:13) is emphasized as it is lengthened. Word-painting brings alive the text character: "strange," is given an odd phrasing (1:57-1:58), "baby on a swing" is slurred with slight pulling back of the tempo (2:50-2:55), and "be spring" is sung with a bouncy rhythmical embellishment (3:34-3:36), which is further enhanced by a similar idea echoed in the accompaniment.

Track Eight, Recorded in 1983: Al Jarreau Sings
Not Like This by Jeremy Lubbock[37]

Jarreau uses rests and tempo fluctuation to create a conversational quality. For example, the first phrase is slow and broken into two clauses. "Not like this" (0:26-0:33) is separated from "without a single tear" (0:34-0:39), while the second phrase, "We can't just walk away as if it never happened" (0:40-0:48), stays connected and is sung with a slight accelerando. He also uses a crescendo to highlight the ascending melody and text "well not in me" which is then linked to the next phrase, creating a climatic highpoint, underlining the anguish in the meaning of the text "'cause I still feel you in my soul" (1:42-1:48). Jarreau employs dynamics for text painting: "and go out loud" is delivered with a crescendo (1:08-1:14), the word "tenderly" is sung very softly (2:03), followed by a more poignant articulation of the word "bitterly" (2:10). Climatic emphasis, creating a sense of completing a thought, is created at the song's end by use of embellishment with a crescendo then decrescendo on the final word "this" (2:25-2:29).

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[37] Al Jarreau. "Not Like This," *Jarreau.* Warner Brothers Records, Inc., 23801-2.

Track Nine, Recorded in 1989: Abbey Lincoln Sings *Gloomy Sunday* by Rezsô Seress, László Jávor, and Sam M. Lewis[38]

After suffering sixty years of wide-spread press that his song, *Gloomy Sunday*, inspired suicidal tendencies, the composer, Rezsô Seress, committed suicide. This recording by Abbey Lincoln pays tribute to Billie Holiday who recorded *Gloomy Sunday* in 1939. The ominous reputation of this tune is evoked by use of raw timbres exemplified in the harsh articulation of the double-bass, Lincoln's somewhat forced chest tone, and punctuating hits from the tom of the drum-set (e.g., 0:39 and 3:25). The despair of the text becomes theatrical in Lincoln's speech-like, tempo rubato phrasing, with the feeling of chaos created by intermittent interjections from the piano (2:15-2:40) and the instrumental free-form improvisation which concludes the performance. Sadness and loneliness are conveyed by the use of silence (2:50) and other soft moments.

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[38] Abbey Lincoln. "Gloomy Sunday," *Abbey sings Billie: A Tribute to Billie Holiday*. Enja Records Horst Weber GMBH, CD 6012.

Track Ten, Recorded in 1990: Carmen McRae Sings *I Will Say Goodbye* by Alan Bergman, Marilyn Bergman, and Michel Legrand[39]

Accompanied by another great jazz singer and pianist, Shirley Horn, this performance displays McRae's trademark speech-like delivery, achieved by isolating and rhythmically manipulating phrases, words, and syllables. Dynamics and articulation vary between two extremes—loud and terse versus soft and tender—according to the meaning of the moment. Such exaggeration implies a bigger story behind the text, and this implication makes her interpretation appear very personal. For example, her use of tenuto-staccato (e.g., "you are not my love," (1:31)) creates a very direct, conversational effect, as if she is speaking to a real person. By underlining the word "close" in "I will close the door" she helps the listener connect the metaphor to a real sense of finality (1:58).

Track Eleven, Re-Released in 1996[40]: Irene Kral Sings *Where is Love* by Lionel Bart[41]

Because it is widely known that Irene Kral recorded this album after being diagnosed with terminal cancer, many listeners perceive an underlying mood of resignation and melancholy. In her tempo rubato delivery, Kral employs several expressive gestures: slurs, which produce a lilting quality on the texts "dreaming of" (0:48-0:58) and "something to" (2:23-2:28), and a straight-tone followed by vibrato effect, producing tension and release in the phrase "must I travel *far* and *wide*" (1:55-

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[39] Carmen McRae. "I Will Say Goodbye," *Sarah—Dedicated to You*. Bluebird Jazz, 82876-52441-2.

[40] The original vinal recording was made in 1974 but it is no longer available in that format.

[41] Irene Kral. "Where is Love," *Where is Love.* Candid Productions Ltd., LC 0585, 1996.

2:05) and on the word “love” (3:55-4:07). Lighter, more hopeful expression also occurs, such as the melodic variation on the text “he may hide” (3:00-3:07) and embellishment on the words “far and wide” (3:13). This is contrasted by ornamentation that infers a deep longing at the song’s end when she sings the word “where” (3:43-3:53).

Track Twelve, Recorded in 2001: Rebecca Parris Sings *My Foolish Heart* by Jay Livingston and Johnny Mercer[42]

Parris creates fragments from longer phrases and treats each clause of a sentence with unique expression and melodic pacing. The use of tempo rubato brings a rhythmic flexibility that is driven by the intensity of thought conveyed by the lyrics. In some phrases, single words are clearly detached from others for dramatic emphasis, such as “beware” (0:40) and “take care” (1:01-1:02). Word-painting is also apparent: on the word “lost” there is a fall from the pitch (1:50). Some words are highlighted by being lengthened and embellished (e.g., “kiss,” (1:56-2:03)).

Track Thirteen, Recorded in 1983: *Rare Silk* Sings *Lush Life* by Billy Strayhorn, Arranger Unknown[43]

Rare Silk’s recording of *Lush Life* is quite like a Carmen McRae interpretation in that it employs space in the middle of phrases, separating out individual words even syllables (e.g., “cocktails,” 0:23-0:26). An ebb and flow of tempo along with a crescendo and decrescendo highlights the word “feel” in the phrase, “feel of life” (0:15-0:20), with word-painting on the word “jazz” (0:20-0:26). Dramatic inflection is created on “oh, yes” (1:27-1:30) through the use of a smear and a fall between the notes.

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[42] Rebecca Parris. “My Foolish Heart,” *My Foolish Heart*. Koch Jazz, KOC-CD-7887.

[43] *Rare Silk*, “Lush Life” from *New Weave,* Polydor, 810028-2.

Track Fourteen, Recorded in 1996: *The Real Group* Sings *There Will Never Be Another You* by Harry Warden and Mack Gordon, Arranged by Anders Edenroth[44]

The Real Group uses several expressive elements that reflect a connection to the solo jazz ballad tradition. Tempo fluctuation and use of space serve to highlight parts of phrases, such as “like this“(0:05-0:15), and to create a speech-like pattering of text (e.g., “there’ll never be another you” (0:47-0:51)). A dynamic surge and diminuendo on the text “there maybe other songs to sing” (0:27-0:35) mimics the dramatic rise and fall of speech. A blues note is interjected by the soprano to underscore the word “another” (0:37-0:42).

Track Fifteen, Recorded in 2002: *+4db* sings *I Wish You Love*, by Albert A. Beach and Charles I. Trenet, Arranged by *+4db*[45]

+4db aligns itself with jazz ballad tradition by rendering a text-driven and emotive interpretation of *I Wish You Love*. In the opening phrase, tempo rubato is used to direct energy toward the word “bluebirds” and to patter through the clause “in the spring.” A word painting effect occurs with a decrescendo on “to cool you in the shade” (0:38-0:45) and with smooth articulation combined with a sustained final “m” in the phrase “a cozy fire to keep you warm” (0:39-0:50).

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[44] *The Real Group*. “There Will Never Be Another You,” *Live in Stockholm*. Passport, Town Crier Recordings, TCD 522.

[45] *+4db*, “I Wish You Love” from *PlusFourDb*, PLUS4DB-1.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDED APPLICATIONS OF JAZZ BALLAD PERFORMANCE PRACTICES

Realizing the Principles of Jazz Ballad Oral Tradition in a Choral Context

Primary sources reveal a tradition of jazz ballad performance that celebrates an emotive, text-driven, and personalized approach to interpretation, realized by way of alterations to a score through improvisational delivery. While interpretive decisions are often formulated as a musician prepares a piece, this process continues in performance through extemporaneous use of various expressive tools, such as tempo fluctuation, embellishments, thematic and rhythmic alterations, pitch variance, nuanced sound production, and inventive phrasing. Improvisation is an ever-present possibility, and the informed balladeer seizes every opportunity for spontaneity in performance.

Choral singers seeking to embrace this tradition must likewise be emotive in their delivery, driven by their understanding of the text, and committed to an individualistic interpretation. Like a soloist, an ensemble is compelled to find its own “voice.” For a vocal ensemble or choir to be unified in its approach, the individual singers should agree on a single macro interpretation. They should also be mutually aware of the opportunities that exist for micro alterations in performance. Improvisational gestures can be particularly challenging with compositions or arrangements that are so tightly constructed that spontaneous alteration might compromise ensemble cohesion. However, as is true with virtually any style of music, ensembles can become fluent in the grammar and syntax of the genre and can thus reach a degree of performance practice understanding. In addition, ensembles can maximize their interpretive flexibility in performance in a number of ways.

For example, one singer can be a designated leader, guiding the ensemble's phrasing by initiating variances in tempo and dynamics (as is the practice with lead trumpet players in jazz bands). Ensembles can develop skills in non-verbal communication to trigger spontaneous changes, especially at what is commonly referred to as "the corners" of a tune. Corners are moments of transition or structural shifts, such as breaks, pauses, extended rests, and cadences; they are musical edges that hold a piece together. The corners often create opportunities for improvisational gestures (e.g., melodic embellishments or harmonic flourishes, such as "fills"). Ensembles can also employ a director to cue and make changes through conducting gestures.

Some arrangements lend themselves easily to improvisation in performance. For example, a passage with a solo line that is rhythmically independent of the accompanying material allows the soloist a great deal of freedom to be improvisational. If an arrangment is sung one-on-a-part, any solo line can be an opportunity for improvisation. Homophonic textures can easily accommodate the impromtu addition of embellishments and passing-tones in any voice part.

Through experimentation and improvisation in rehearsal, ensemble performers can discover ways to create their own personalized *version* of an arrangement by making adjustments to musical elements (melody, rhythm, harmony, text, texture, and form).

Even after an arrangement has been altered, the ensemble can still explore spontaneity in performance, guided primarily by text considerations.

Overview of General Choral Jazz Score Study

To engage an arrangement improvisationally in rehearsal or performance, the performer must first have a thorough understanding of the musical material. While score study varies according to personal interpretive priorities, performance goals, and a composition's idiosyncrasies, it is possible to outline general approaches to choral jazz score study. Choral jazz works are arrangements, new compositions, or a combination of the two. When learning an arrangement, a jazz musician often becomes familiar with the original version of the tune that is the basis for the arrangement, i.e., "a lead sheet" which presents the most basic rendering of the melody, harmony, and form. This is achieved by finding a chart when possible, and through comparative listening to various recordings to gain exposure to a multitude of interpretive possibilities. It is also customary to transcribe and/or memorize a tune and its chord changes in order to discover relationships between various elements. After understanding the nature of the original tune, the analysis of the arrangement (or composition) includes reviewing the melodic and harmonic material, variances in texture, rhythmic complexities, overall form (jazz standards typically follow an ABA song form), and deciphering all musical information. The text of the piece should be analyzed closely and apart from the score. Jazz tradition encourages individuals to develop their own, subjective interpretation of lyrics, and then, paying particular attention to the relationship between the music and the text, to determine how their interpretation can be delivered musically.

After score study, a performer strives to internalize the music, considering what elements to emphasize, de-emphasize, or interject to convey his or her interpretation. The course to such discovery may include individual and/or group experimentation and improvisation. Decisions regarding interpretation remain fluid as performers anticipate engaging the music improvisationally in performance. To demonstrate how this process can work in a choral jazz context, recordings of three a cappella ballads, performed by *Moodswing*,[1] are presented: (1) *Come Sunday* by Duke Ellington, arranged by Greg Murai; (2) *My Funny Valentine* by Rogers and Hart, arranged by Dave Barduhn; and (3) *I'll Be Seeing You* by Irving Kahal and Sammy Fain, arranged by Phil Mattson. The interpretive processes that led to these interpretations are explained below with special emphasis given to the most complex arrangement, *Come Sunday*. The track numbers correspond to those on the compact disc provided in Appendix A. Original and altered versions of the arrangements are included in Appendix C.

Illustrative Recordings: Jazz Ballad Performance Practices Applied to A Cappella Choral Jazz Ballads

Track Sixteen: *Come Sunday* by Duke Ellington, Arranged by Greg Murai[2]

Score Study

To ground interpretive decisions in a thorough consideration of the text, lyrics are considered closely and apart from the score:

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[1] Julie Ford, Director. *Moodswing* is a professional jazz quartet from the San Francisco Bay Area: Julie Ford, Soprano; Juliet Green, Mezzo Soprano; Dave Duran, Tenor; Paul Ford, Bass (http://www.moodswing.us).

[2] Duke Ellington, *Come Sunday,* Greg Murai, arr. (California: Village Well Music, 1999).

Line 1: *Lord, dear Lord above, God Almighty, God of Love,*
please look down and see your people through

Line 2: text is repeated with new text simultaneously
Lord, dear Lord above, God Almighty, God of Love,
(Holy, Holy, Holy), *(Lord, God, Almighty),*

please look down and see your people through

Line 3: *I believe that God put sun and moon up in the sky*

Line 4: *I don't mind the grey skies 'cause they're just clouds*
passing by

Line 5: *Lord, dear Lord above, God Almighty, God of Love,*
please look down and see your people through

Line 6 *Deep in my heart I do believe* (quote from the traditional
spiritual, *We Shall Overcome*)

Line 7: *Sunday, oh come Sunday, that's the day*

The text is a prayer that asks God to care for and strengthen those who are oppressed. The original Ellington text asks God to see "my people through," with "my" referring to African-Americans. Murai opts for a more inclusive version, with "your" representing all God's people. Yet, Murai also inserts text from the traditional spiritual, *We Shall Overcome*, which is strongly associated with the American Civil Rights movement. Murai also interjects text from the traditional hymn *Holy, Holy, Holy*.[3] Given the profound sacred and historical undertones, this text will be delivered with a tone of impassioned reverence.

Murai's composition can be divided into an Introduction plus five sections: A^1, A^2, B, A^1, and C. Section C closes with a brief Coda loosely based on A material:

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[3] *Holy, Holy, Holy* by Reginald Heber and John Bacchus Dykes.

Introduction, measures 1-4	(no text)
A^1, measures 5-12 (8 mm.)	*Lord, Dear Lord above, God Almighty, God of Love, please look down and see your people through* - Cadence in B-flat, 1st inversion
A^2, measures 13-20 (8 mm.)	*Lord, Dear Lord above, (Holy, Holy, Holy), God Almighty, God of Love (Lord, God, Almighty) please look down and see your people through.* - Cadence in B-flat, 2nd inversion
B, measures 21-28 (8 mm.)	
Subphrase, 21-24	*I believe that God put sun and moon up in the sky.*
Subphrase, 25-28	*I don't mind the grey skies 'cause they're just clouds passing by.* - Cadence in B-flat, 2nd inversion
A^1, measures 29-35 (7 mm.)	*Lord, Dear Lord above, God Almighty, God of Love, please look down and see your people through.* - Melody and harmony based upon opening A material - Phrase begins with a pedal-tone - Strong Plagal Cadence in B-flat
C, measures 36-46 (11 mm.)	
Subphrase, 36-41	(No text) - Highest tessitura in the composition - Concludes toward a cadence from F dominant 7, 3rd inversion
Subphrase, 42-46	*Deep in my heart I do believe* (quote from the traditional spiritual *We Shall Overcome*) - Begins as a cadence resolves weakly on B-flat, 1st inversion for only two-beats - Unexpected entrance of text-music borrowed from *We Shall Overcome*
Coda, 47-50	*Sunday, O come Sunday, that's the day* - Melody is similar to that which concludes the A material - Strong v/V, V-I progression

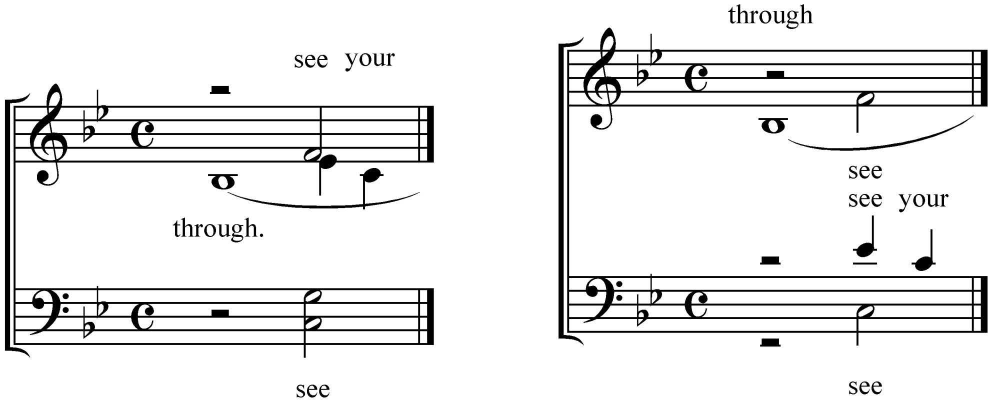
The cadences are weakened until just before Section C. Here Murai creates the most climatic passage by employing high tessitura, consonant, triadic material, and straightforward rhythms. These create a bright, hopeful effect, leading to the optimistic text, “Deep in my heart, I do believe.” The only other strong cadence occurs in the Coda.

Interpretive Decisions

The borrowed musical material—a quote from a spiritual associated with the 1960s American Civil Rights movement and a traditional hymn—sets this prayer text within broader historical and sacred contexts, inspiring an interpretive approach with a wide range of tone qualities and dynamics. The chiefly homophonic texture provides ample opportunity for rhythmic alteration and use of tempo rubato in service of a speech-like delivery, to underscore the intimate nature of praying.

This particular performance is presented by a vocal quartet, requiring a reduction of the original six-part version. In measures 13-14, the text in the upper voices is replaced by neutral syllables to insure that in this one-on-a-part rendering, the bass part, which is now a solo, can be more prevalent. Five- or six-part writing is reduced to four parts by eliminating “non-essential” notes (example 5.2) and re-voicing and chords (example 5.3).

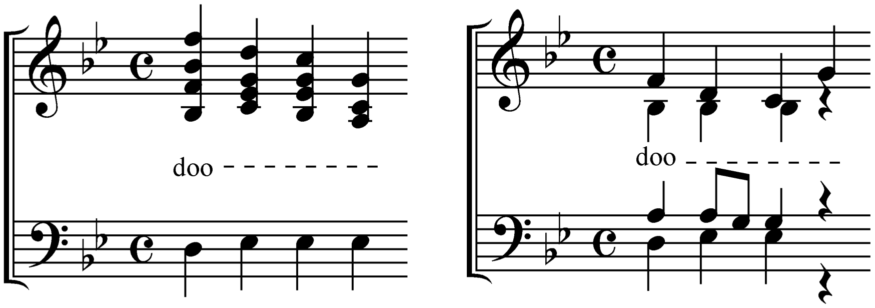
Example 5.2, *Come Sunday*, m. 11


Original Version

Altered Version

see your
through.
see
through
see
see your
see

Example 5.3, *Come Sunday*, m. 2:

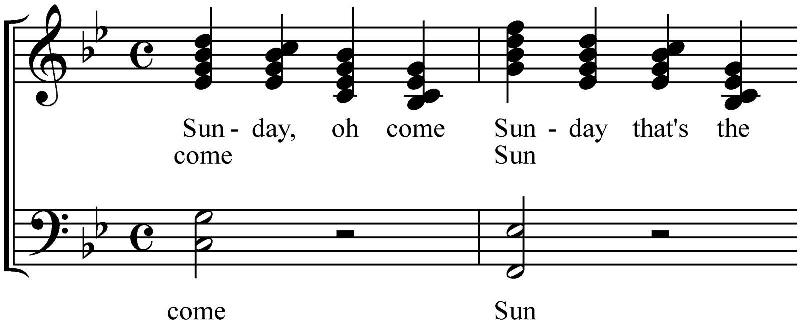

Original Version

Altered Version

Since the simplification and re-voicing of chords dramatically changes the character of the original version, new elements of musical expression are added to compensate, such as the solo lines in measures 47-48 (see example 5.4).

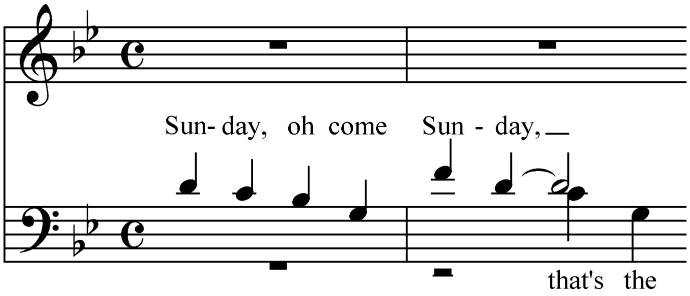
Example 5.4, *Come Sunday*, measures 47-48

Original Version



Sun - day, oh come Sun - day that's the
come Sun
come Sun

Altered Version



Sun- day, oh come Sun - day,
that's the

Introduction and Section A^1

To establish a reverent mood, the first five measures are slow with a marked tempo and heavier articulation. As the prayer text begins in measure 5, it is delivered softly and unmetered. Interpreting the text fragment “God of Love” as a faith-statement, confidence is created with a broadening of tempo and a crescendo, which quickly softens to evoke tenderness on the word “Love.” For more poignancy and a sense of intimacy, the soprano alone sings the text and delivers the phrase soloistically, with improvised tempo fluctuation, phrasing, and rhythmic alteration.

Section A^2

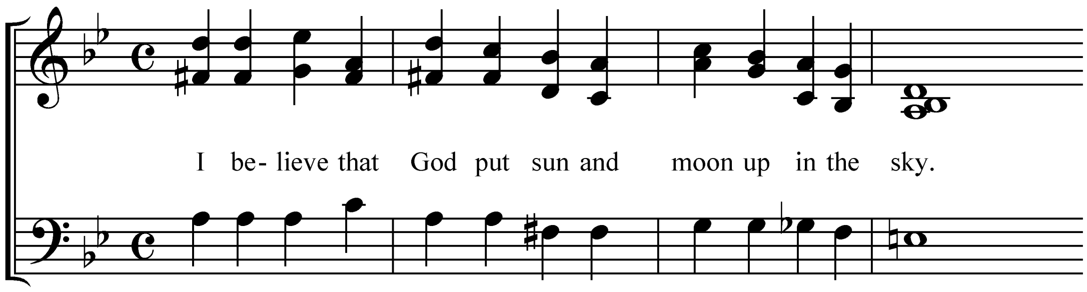
Because the A^2 section repeats text and melodic material from A^1, steps are taken to provide expressive contrasts. The tempo is more metrical, dynamics are increased, and text is omitted in the upper voices to highlight the melody in the bass part. The section continues with much forward motion to add a fervent and urgent quality to the prayer.

Section B

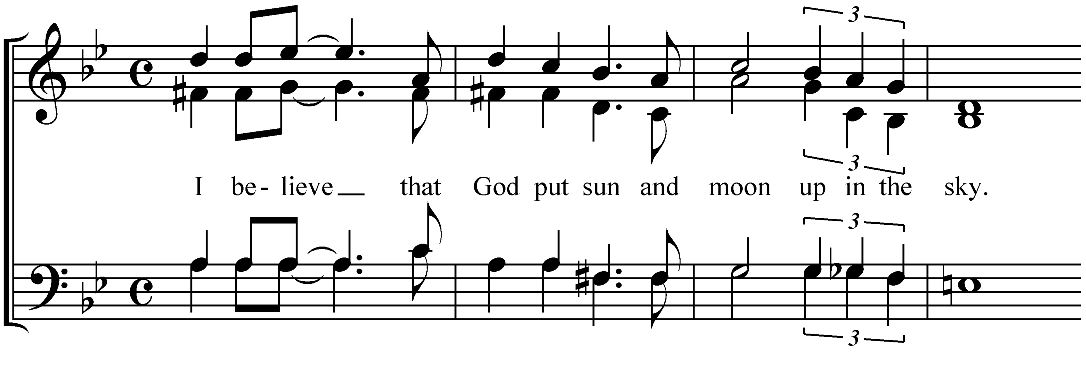
In measure 21, the text resembles a faith-statement, and this confidence is portrayed by a fuller dynamic and faster tempo. Rhythms are altered to emulate speech and syllabic stress (see Example 5:1).

Example 5.1, *Come Sunday*, measures 21-24

Original Version


I be- lieve that God put sun and moon up in the sky.

Altered Version

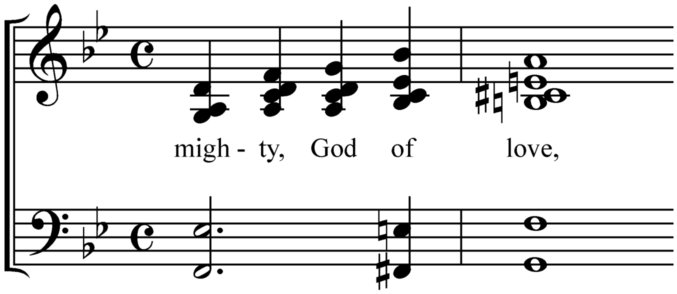

3
I be- lieve__ that God put sun and moon up in the sky.
3

Section A^1

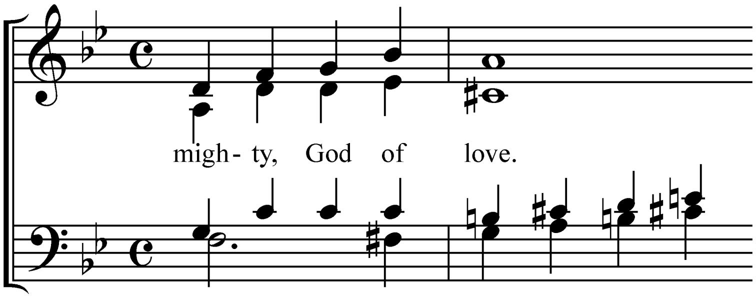
The pedal tone's inherent intensity is maximized to assist in contrasting the third statement of A material. To accomplish this, tempo is increased, and the resolution of the pedal tone is embellished with a harmonized ascending melody. As the bass assumes the melody and text, he incorporates rhythmic alteration and an accelerando for dramatic effect. All these variations to the score help to counteract the compositional interest that was lost when the original rich, six-part chords were reduced to four voices (see examples 5.5).

Example 5.5, *Come Sunday*, measures 31-32

Original Version



Altered Version



Section C

The neutral syllables in Section C (measures 35-42) convey that the prayer has moved beyond words, creating a dramatic climax. This parallels a structural highpoint, created by a preceding V-I cadence, and the passage's high tessitura. The range and long note values necessitate the use of a fuller, broader dynamic; this is facilitated by a preceding crescendo. A hopeful and glorious effect is created with a full-bodied, pure, Renaissance-like tone, recalling imagery of the historical church.

The positive and affirming text in the last phrase, "Deep in my heart, I do believe" (measures 43-46), is delivered softly to make it feel intimate and personal. Hopefulness is projected with a crescendo and a slight accelerando on the final words "Come Sunday" (measures 49-50).

For further illustration, compare the original score (in Appendix C) while listening to the recording. Note additional interpretive gestures, such as pauses and fermatas (e.g., measure 7, beat 2), and improvised melodic alteration (e.g., grace note in soprano, measure 45, beat 4 through measure 46, beat 1).

Track Seventeen: *I'll Be Seeing You* by Irving Kahal and Sammy Fain, Arranged by Phil Mattson[4]

Score Study

The text of this piece contains four phrases. The first and third begin with "I'll be seeing you," and follow with references to general moments and times. The second phrase simply lists specific locations that are treasured, and the last phrase begins with "I'll find you" and evokes images of the passing of every day:

Line 1:	*I'll be seeing you in all the old familiar places that this heart of mine embraces all day through*

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[4] Irving Kahal and Sammy Fain, *I'll Be Seeing You,* Phil Mattson, arr. (Williamson Music Co., 1984).

Line 2:	*… in that small café, the park across the way,* *the children’s carousel, the chestnut tree, a wishing well*
Line 3:	*I’ll be seeing you in ev’ry lovely summer’s day,* *in ev’ry thing that’s light and gay,* *I’ll always think of you that way*
Line 4:	*I’ll find you in the morning sun and when the night is new,* *I’ll be looking at the moon,* *but I’ll be seeing you*

The text could be viewed as merely melancholy or sentimental, but given that it comes from the World War II era—a time when millions of people experienced great trauma and personal loss—it seems to command an interpretation that reflects a deeper sense of pain. This inspires a slower, softer rendition that will strive to highlight specific words and text fragments in compelling ways. For example, the reference to the children’s carousel can be thought of as a reference to children who will never be born—generations lost. Recalling a lover in lighter, happier times seems more poignant if the person is lost at war.

The form of the arrangement corresponds with that of the text: it is in a common song form: A^1 B A^2 C.

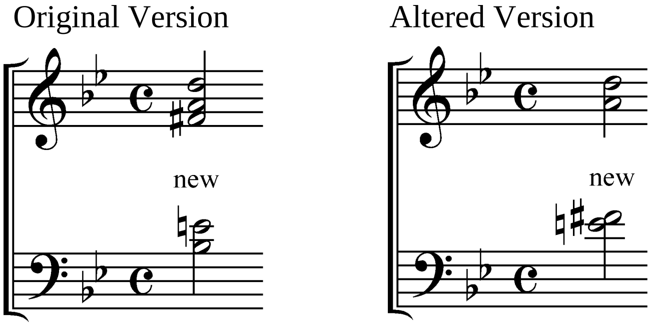
A^1, measures 1-8	*I’ll be seeing you in all the old familiar places* *that this heart of mine embraces all day through*
B, measures 9-16	*In that small café, the park across the way, the children’s carousel, the chestnut tree, a wishing well*
A^2, measures 17-24	*I’ll be seeing you in ev’ry lovely summer’s day,* *in ev’ry thing that’s light and gay,* *I’ll always think of you that way*
C, measures 25-32	*I’ll find you in the morning sun and when the night is new,* *I’ll be looking at the moon, but I’ll be seeing you*

Interpretive Decisions

Because the arranger, Phil Mattson, is a widely celebrated choral jazz arranger, one is less likely to make significant changes without due caution. The harmonic vocabulary and the voice-leading are particularly challenging, requiring a high level of ensemble cohesion. Given these factors, one strives to find ways to deliver a unique and individualistic interpretation without making substantive compositional alterations.

To capture a sense of trauma and the intimacy of personal loss, the opening dynamic level is soft. Speech-like rhythms are employed to the opening unison lines to establish a conversational quality. Attention is given to individual words, such as "small" in the phrase "in that small café" (measures 9-10), as if to imply a memory of a real place and time. To personalize the interpretation, the melody is moved to different voice parts without disturbing the essence of the vocal arranging (e.g., the tenor can sing the melody in measure 15, "the chestnut tree," and the bass in measure 30, "but I'll be seeing you"). To modify this for a quartet (rather than a quintet) the single five-part chord in the arrangement (measure 28, beat 1) is reduced.

Example 5.6, I'll Be Seeing You, m. 28:



To further project the text, the upper voices sing neutral syllables in measures 17-20 when the melody resides in the tenor part. The homophonic passage in measures 25-26 ("I'll find you in the morning sun") is brought to life by rhythmic alterations to simulate long and short syllabic emphasis. Throughout the piece the use of tempo rubato allows for rhythmic flexibility inspired by the text meaning and emotion the performers are compelled to convey.

Track Eighteen: *My Funny Valentine* by Richard Rogers and Lorenz Hart, Arranged by Dave Barduhn,[5]

Score Study

My Funny Valentine is a well-known jazz standard. The text presents one person's admiration of another:

Line 1:	*My funny Valentine, sweet comic Valentine* *you make me smile with my heart*
Line 2:	*Your looks are laughable, un-photographable* *yet you're my fav'rite work of art*
Line 3:	*Is your figure less than Greek, is your mouth a little weak* *when you open it to speak are you smart?*
Line 4:	*But don't change a hair for me, not if you care for me,* *stay, little Valentine, stay—Oh, please stay!* ("Oh, please stay" is not in the original version of this song)
Line 5:	*Each day is Valentine's Day*

The admirer finds charm in the beloved's comical qualities and compels him/her to admire them, as well. Jazz tradition compels interpreters to find a personalized view-point that might convey the music in ways not before conceived. In this light, while this could be delivered as a straight-forward love song, it might also be extrapolated that sentiments are being expressed in a Valentine card and not directly spoken—and if so, why not? Is the admirer lacking courage to share true feelings? The minor key of the piece could be perceived as indicating this kind of anguish. Each day, as Valentine's Day, could mean that the admirer had gone through this exercise repeatedly, but the card (the message) has never been delivered.

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[5] Richard Rogers and Lorenz Hart, *My Funny Valentine,* Dave Barduhn, arr. (Creative World Music Publications, no date).

My Funny Valentine is a well-known jazz standard, and Barduhn's arrangement stays true to the original A^1, A^2, B, A^3 form:

Section A^1, measures 1-8 (9 mm.)

My funny Valentine, sweet comic Valentine
you make me smile with my heart

- soloist sings first half
- concludes with strong half cadence on G major (V/i)

Section A^2, measures 9-16 (8 mm.)

Your looks are laughable, un-photographable
yet, you're my fav'rite work of art

- soloist sings second half
- concludes with a strong half cadence on B-flat dominant (V/III)

Section B, measures 17-24 (8 mm.)

Is your figure less than Greek, is your mouth a little week
when you open it to speak are you smart?

- In E major until last few measures
- Half-cadence on G major (V/i), weakened by 1st inversion

Section A^3, measures 17-24 (8 mm.)

But don't change a hair for me, not if you care for me,
stay, little Valentine, stay—Oh please stay!
Each day is Valentine's Day.

- Second ending contains highest pitch of the piece added text, "Oh, please stay"
- Dissonant ½ step-motion on cadence: E major to E-flat major

Sections A^1 & A^2 begin with identical material and end with contrasting material. The ending of A^2 modulates to introduce Section B in an E-flat major tonality. The move to major, and the introduction of new melodic material, provides an energizing lift, yet this passage ends with a cadence that recalls C minor. A^3 begins like the other A sections, but soon evolves differently as harmonic and melodic highpoints are created. The last phrase leads to a chromatic cadence (E to E-flat major), providing a bit of unease with the resolution of the piece.

Interpretive Decisions

Originally scored for double SATB choirs, soloist, and rhythm section (keyboard/guitar, drums, and bass), the homophonic texture presents the opportunity for improvisatory employment of tempo rubato, led by the soprano. Several characteristics make it feasible to be performed a cappella: the fullness of the vocal harmonization is sustainable without accompaniment; there are no conspicuous instrumental passages with voices tacet; and the homophonic texture facilitates text-driven rhythmic alteration. Harmonizations can be chosen from any desired combination of Choir 1 and Choir 2. To sustain this as an a cappella work in a slow tempo rubato, the first ending and repeat are omitted.

Section A^1- A^2

The first two phrases and the beginning of Section C feature a solo line set against whole notes; this provides the opportunity for the solos to be freely phrased and for use of tempo rubato. A fermata is placed on each chord and the voices progress through the chord at the soloist's pace. For contrast, different timbres are employed: the soprano solo is sung first by a bass and then by an alto, and then, in Section C, by a soprano.

Section B

This new passage is energized through a more metrical approach, and through a word-painting ornament: an ascending eighth note is added to the word "open" in the soprano. To create a speech-like text delivery, the homophonic rhythms are elongated or shortened to underscore syllabic accents. The most climactic moment occurs with the highest tessitura of the piece, on the second ending of Section C, "Oh, please stay." To underscore this, a ritardando and crescendo are employed, and a brief pause occurs before the next phrase.

Section A^3

The other voices sing a neutral syllable, rather than the words, and the first soloist re-enters to deliver "each day is Valentine's Day." To add a sense of finality to the arrangement, the word "day" is sung unaccompanied with the other voices adding their harmony following a beat of rest.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

A Comparison of Late Renaissance Italian Madrigal and Twentieth-Century Choral Jazz Ballad Performance Practices

Primary sources relating to the late Renaissance Italian madrigal and the twentieth-century choral jazz ballad reveal performance practices that are grounded in complimentary principles and realized through similar techniques. Late Renaissance Italian madrigal performance practices fundamentally require *all* interpretive decisions, including improvisatory gestures, to be in service of emotive text delivery, speech-like in character. Expressive tools available to the performer include embellishments, melodic alteration, rhythmic alteration, tuning adjustments, and fluctuations of tempo. Primary sources not only provide comprehensive instruction for improvisatory gestures, but also reiterate their essential role in performance. To exclude *ex tempore* expression when performing late Renaissance Italian madrigals is to present this literature incompletely.

Twentieth-century choral jazz ballad performance practices parallel those of their late Renaissance Italian counterpart: all interpretive decisions, including improvisatory gestures, must be in service of speech-like and emotive text delivery. Expressive tools include embellishments, melodic alteration, rhythmic alteration, bending pitches (using “blues notes”), and variation of tempo. Oral tradition not only provides comprehensive instruction for utilizing improvisatory gestures, but also explicitly mandates their essentiality in jazz ballad performance. Therefore, performing choral jazz ballads without such spontaneous expression weakens their link to jazz heritage.

Also comparable is the process of applying the performance practices to these two genres. Late Renaissance Italian madrigal interpretation requires score study that identifies inherent compositional tools to facilitate text expression. The performer can then consider ways to exploit and expand these through his or her interpretive approach, including making predetermined or improvisatory alterations. Primary sources caution against employing so much embellishment that the clarity of text is compromised. Similarly, choral jazz ballad performance practices are informed by a careful review of inherent expressive components of a given composition. These can be maximized through one’s general interpretation, changes to the arrangement, and spontaneous invention in performance—all toward the goal of highly emotive text delivery. Jazz ballad oral tradition frowns upon making changes just for change’s sake, discouraging musical elaboration that obscures the meaning or comprehensibility of the text.

When comparing these two genres, there is little that is dissimilar. Both genres are well served when performed by small ensembles (particularly, one voice per part) to afford the greatest flexibility in performance. Both are based upon modal harmonic languages and non-metrical orientation, and both have strong connections to theatrical environments (jazz ballads are rooted in vaudeville and madrigals developed in conjunction with insipient forms of opera). The most obvious difference between the late Renaissance Italian madrigal and the twentieth century choral jazz ballad is that one represents an historical practice while the other exists in a contemporary musical environment. This study concludes that madrigal performers, striving to develop skills for an historical genre, gain invaluable insights when given the opportunity to operate within a living musical culture that cultivates parallel techniques. Likewise, given that western European choral music history represents centuries of development concerning text expression and vocal ensemble techniques, choral jazz balladeers benefit from exploring madrigal literature and performance.

The Benefits of Comparative Study to both Classical and Jazz Musical Environments

The demand for teachers who can direct choral jazz has increased dramatically over the past thirty years. Many educators responding to this demand have some, but not all, of the related skills, experience, or training; often they are jazz instrumentalists who lack experience working with vocal music and ensembles, or they are classical choral directors who lack familiarity with jazz tradition. While classically trained choral directors are expected to have a basic fluency in major style periods, most collegiate choral programs fall short in addressing improvisational aspects of both early choral music and twentieth century choral jazz. Given their great similarities, a comparative study of the performance practices of late Renaissance Italian madrigals and twentieth-century choral jazz ballads provides an opportunity to address needs in both jazz and classical environments.

The classical choral director lacking experience in improvisational skills may find the exploration of improvisation and score alteration within a jazz context to be uniquely informative not only because these practices permeate the style tradition, but also because its musical culture is contemporary (rather than historical). Sound recordings and living experts serve as invaluable instructional tools and embody an unbroken lineage of performance practice tradition. The jazz director/performer/arranger seeking to broaden skills and understanding of choral text expression benefits greatly from close study of Italian madrigals from the late Renaissance wherein mastery of text expression is a central goal. In the process, jazzists will discover common ground in the exploration of score alteration and improvisation of madrigals. Additionally, instrumentalists wishing to develop choral skills will gain insight into vocal ensemble techniques, such as diction, blend, balance, and tone production, when given the opportunity to discover and perform classical chamber choral works.

Given their great similarities, a comparative study of the late Renaissance Italian madrigal and twentieth-century choral jazz ballad performance practices creates a powerful bridge between classical and jazz idioms. For example, it is notable that the singers of *Moodswing*, who recorded the choral jazz ballads for this study, responded easily to applying text-driven interpretation to the choral jazz ballads. Because the individual singers have extensive experience singing in classical choral ensembles, they are pliable vocalists, having honed their skills in choral blend, tuning, tone, and ensemble cohesion.

Likewise, the individuals in the ensemble, *Without Measure*, who recorded the madrigals for this study, have extensive experience in both jazz improvisation and in singing early choral music, but are only now exploring improvisational embellishment in madrigals. In preparation for this study, they received a brief overview of the kinds of ornaments and alterations described in primary sources, were shown musical illustrations from Caccini's and Praetorius's primary sources, and were instructed that improvisational elements are applied in order to enliven the text and to simulate speech-like delivery. The greatest amount of work went into clarifying word for word translations, Italian pronunciation, and tuning. As each piece was examined, the ensemble had no hesitancy to experiment improvisationally. Opportunities for improvisational and pre-planned alterations were identified and explored. Occasionally, the singers discovered alterations that could be coordinated in other voice-parts. These singers, highly experienced in jazz improvisation techniques, required very little detailed encouragement or explanation regarding particular ornaments and embellishments. This experience immediately affirmed that concepts of improvisation learned in a jazz context were easily applicable to the Renaissance madrigal.

The conclusion of this study is that a broader and richer understanding of musical interpretation is gained through a comparative, cross-cultural study of musical genres, such as the late Renaissance Italian madrigal and twentieth century choral jazz ballad. Their performance practice similarities affirm the effectiveness of expressive concepts outlined in primary sources from both style-periods and invite the consideration that there are universal concepts regarding text expression that might be applicable to numerous style periods. By drawing upon primary sources in both fields, the student avoids extraneous musical-cultural prejudices that might obscure similarities. This study facilitates this approach by providing a centralized collection of both jazz and

Renaissance primary sources (generally inaccessible elsewhere), and by presenting examples of how represented performance practices might be applied.

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APPENDIX A

ILLUSTRATIVE RECORDINGS

Track 1	*Without Measure,* Claudio Monteverdi's *Si ch'io vorrei morire*
Track 2	*Without Measure,* Luca Marenzio's *Io piango*
Track 3	*Without Measure,* Carlos Gesualdo's *Languisco e moro*
Track 4	Billie Holiday, "My Man," *Billie Holiday's Greatest Hits,* Decca GRD-653.
Track 5	Ella Fitzgerald, "I Concentrate on You," *Essential Jazz Ballads*, Laserlight Jazz, vol. I, Delta Music, Inc. 17142.
Track 6	Sarah Vaughan, "The Nearness of You," *Sarah Vaughan: Ken Burns Jazz*. The Verve Music Group, 314 549 088-2.
Track 7	Mel Tormé, "It Might as Well Be Spring," *An Evening with George Shearing and Mel Tormé*, Concord Records, CCD-4190.
Track 8	Al Jarreau, "Not like This," *Jarreau,* Warner Brothers Records, Inc., 23801-2.
Track 9	Abbey Lincoln, "Gloomy Sunday," *Abbey sings Billie: A Tribute to Billie Holiday.* Enja Records Horst Weber GMBH, CD 6012.
Track 10	Carmen McRae, "I Will Say Goodbye," *Sarah—Dedicated to You*. Bluebird Jazz, 82876-52441-2.
Track 11	Irene Kral, "Where is Love," *Where is Love.* Candid Productions Ltd., LC 05851974.
Track 12	Rebecca Parris, "My Foolish Heart,"*My Foolish Heart*. Koch Jazz, KOC-CD-7887.
Track 13	*Rare Silk*, excerpt from "Lush Life," *New Weave*, Polydor 810028-2.

Track 14	*The Real Group*, excerpt from “There Will Never Be Another You,” *Live in Stockholm*. Passport, Town Crier Recordings, TCD 522.
Track 15	*+4db*, “I Wish You Love,” *PlusFourDb*, PFDB-1.
Track 16	*Moodswing*, Greg Murai’s arrangement of Duke Ellington’s *Come Sunday*.
Track 17	*Moodswing*, Phil Mattson’s arrangement of Irving Kahal and Sammy Fain’s *I’ll Be Seeing You.*
Track 18	*Moodswing*, Dave Barduhn’s arrangement of Richard Rogers and Lorenz Hart’s *My Funny Valentine.*

APPENDIX B

MADRIGAL SCORES

I. *Si ch'io vorrei morire* by Claudio Monteverdi

Original Version 136

Altered Version 148

II. *Io piango* by Luca Marenzio

Original Version 163

Altered Version 169

III. *Languisco e moro* by Carlos Gesualdo

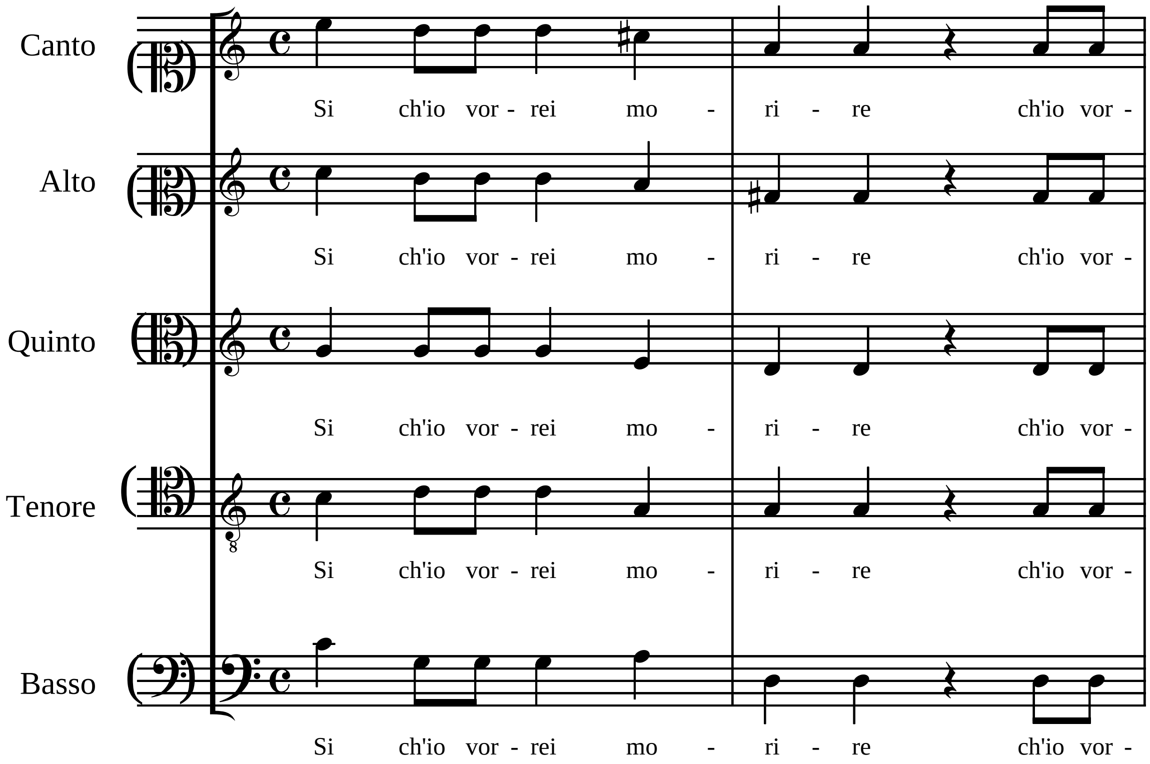
Original Version 175

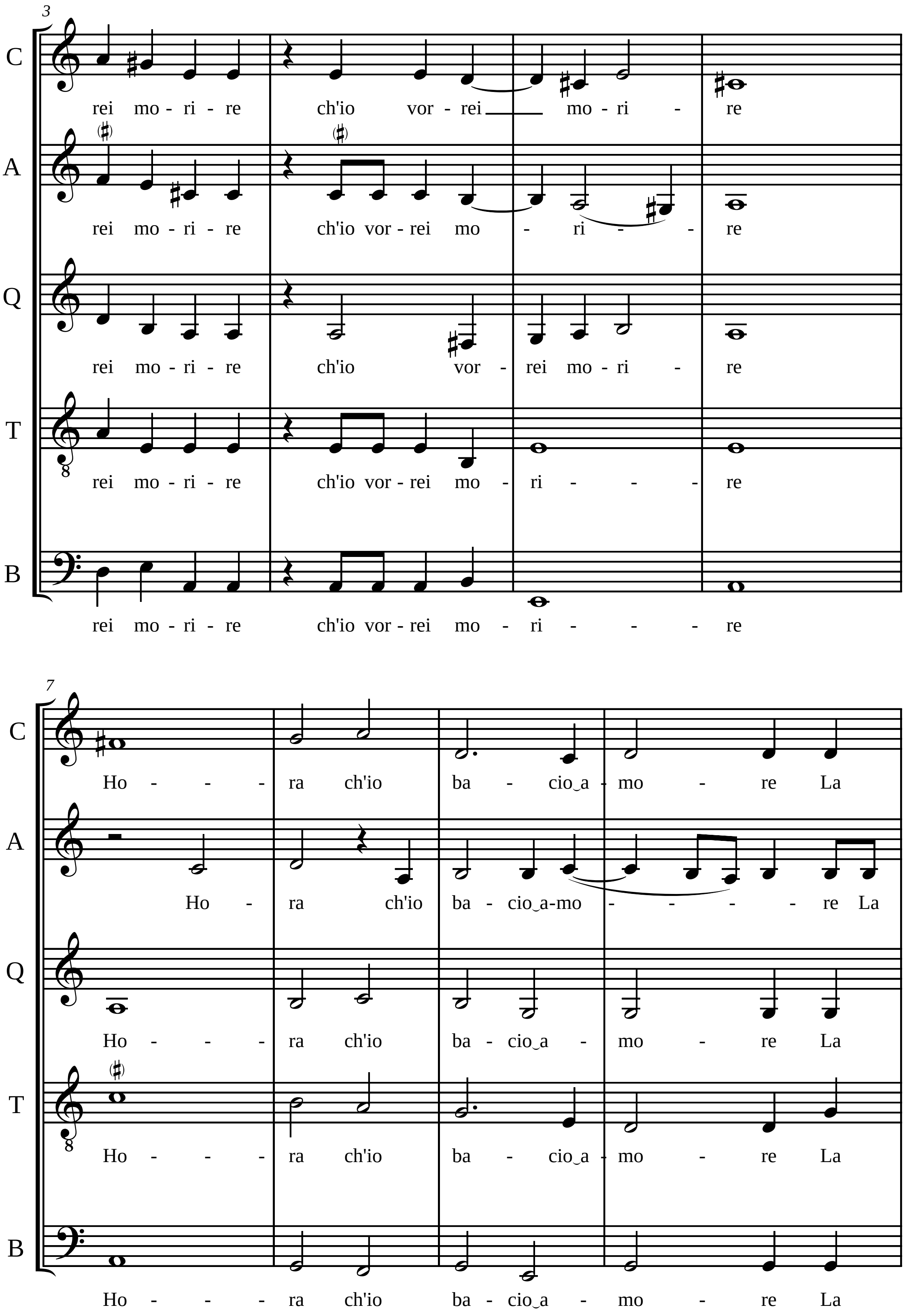
Altered Version 180

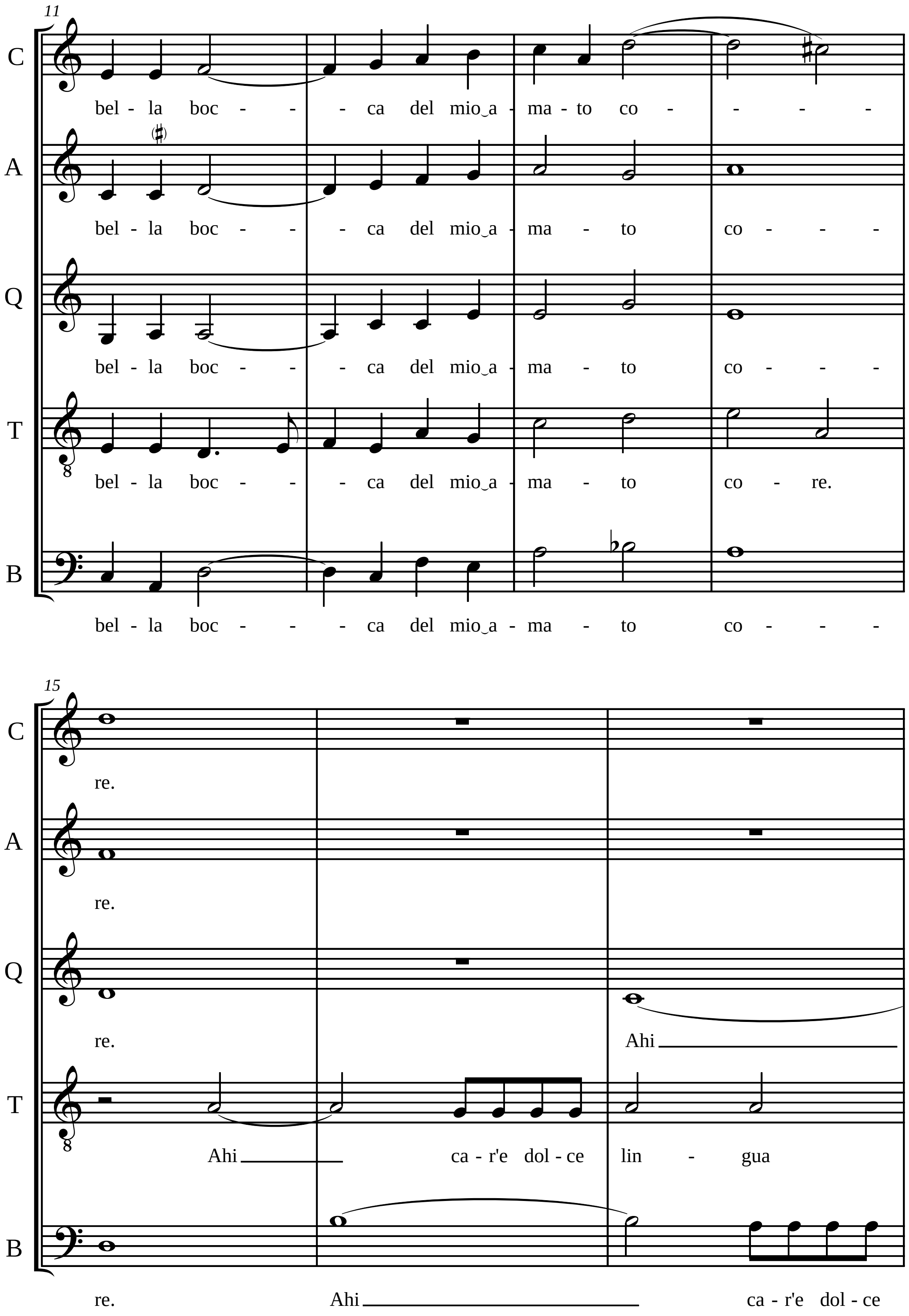
Sí ch'io vorrei morire

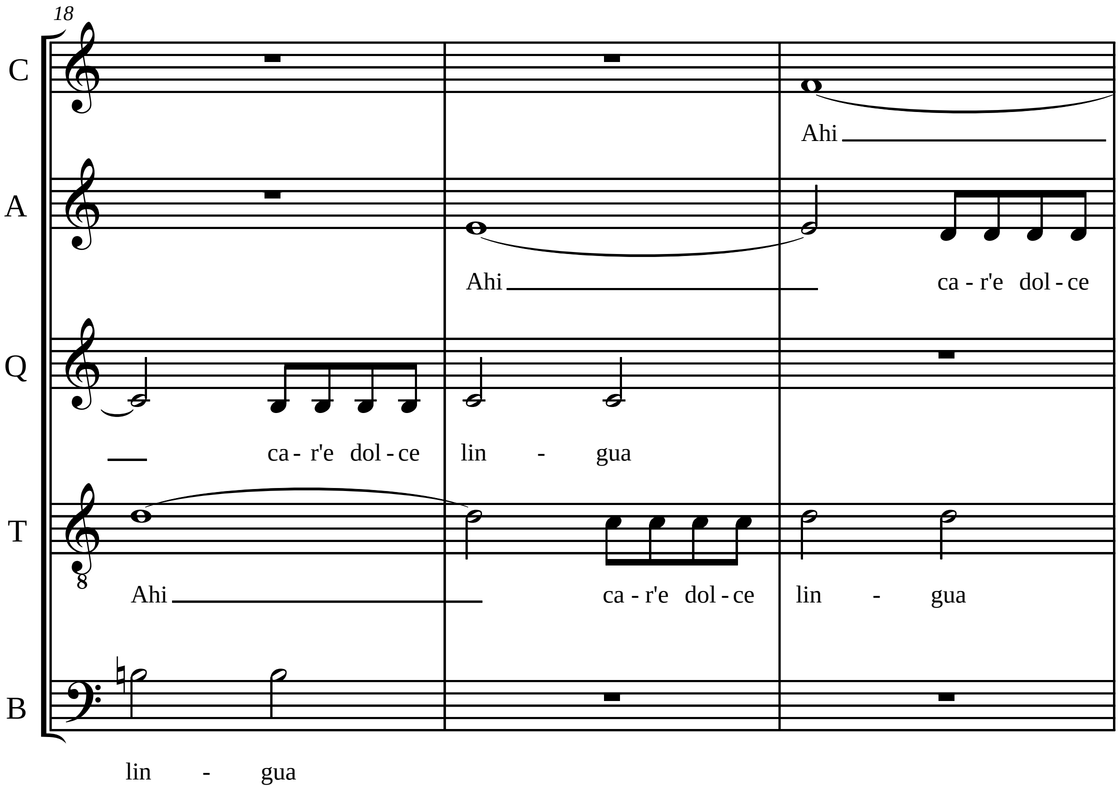
(Original Version)

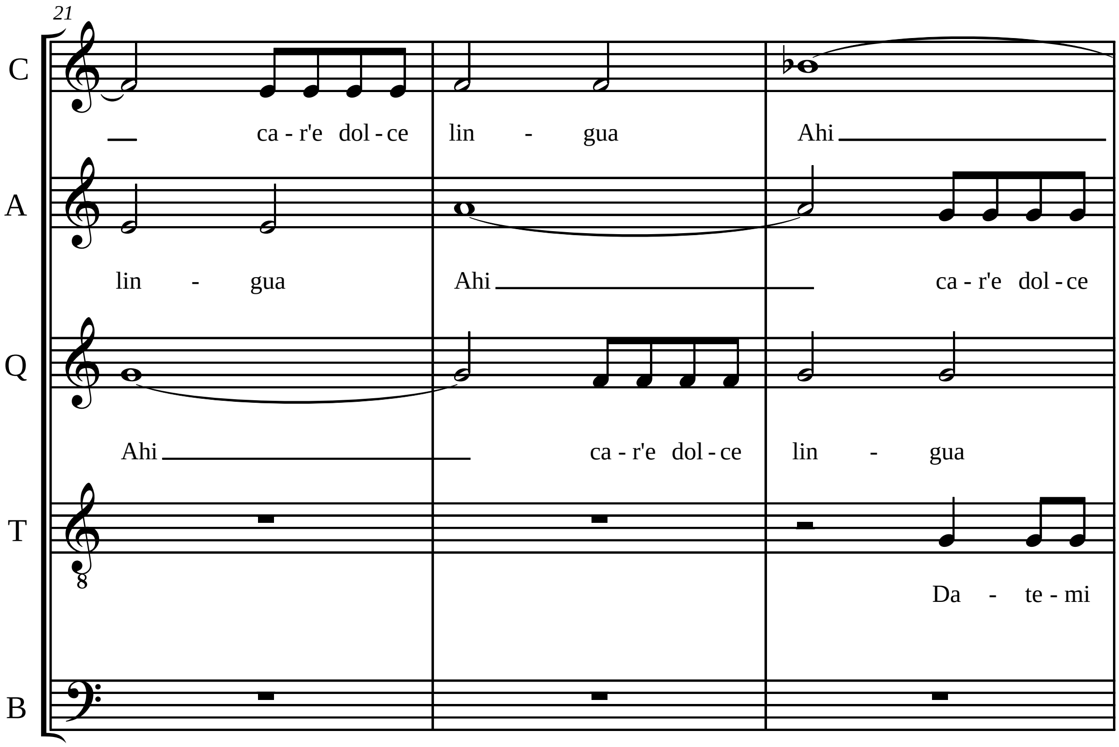
Claudio Monteverdi

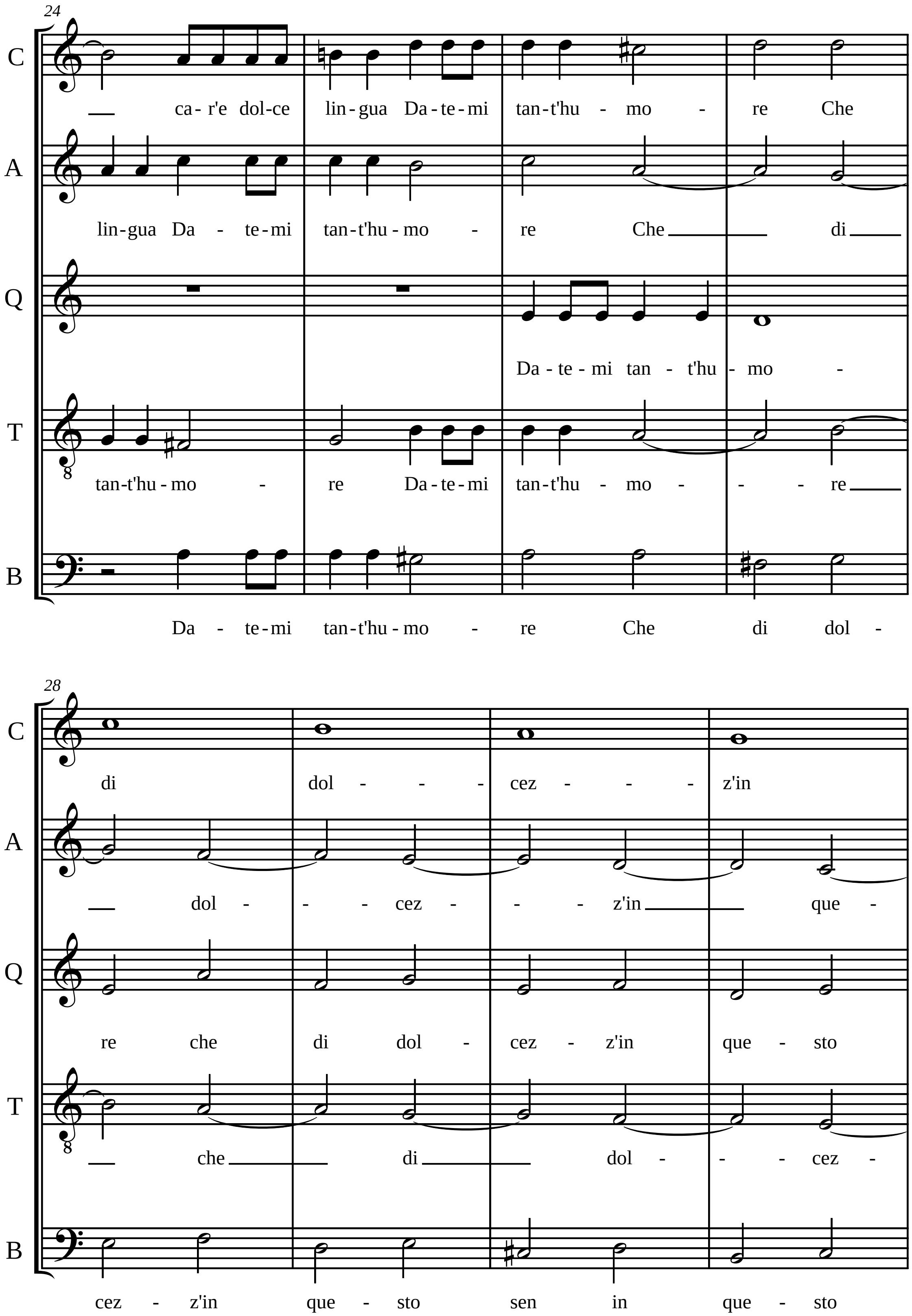

Canto
Alto
Quinto
Tenore
Basso
Si ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor -

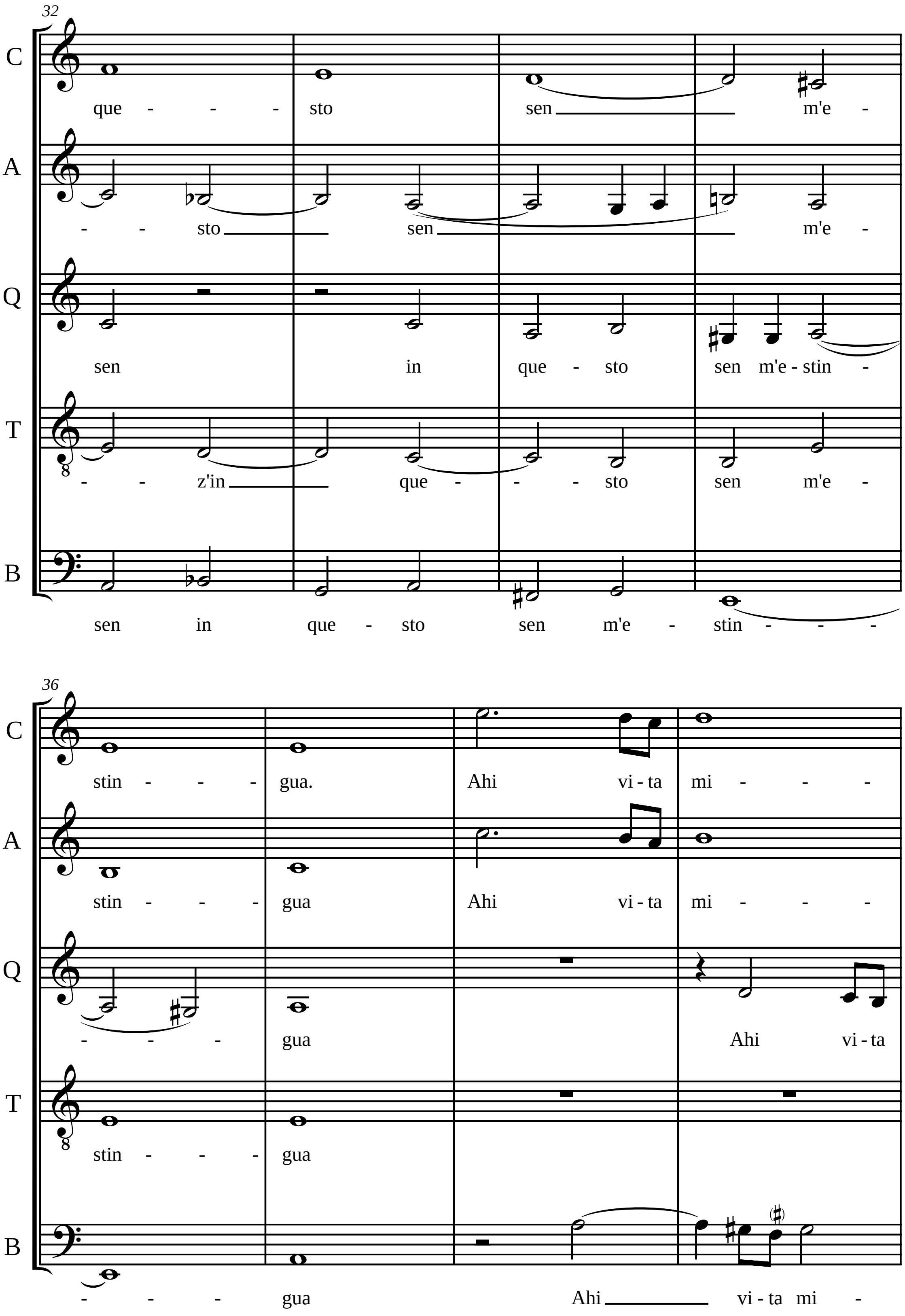

3
C
rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
A
rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - - re
Q
rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
T
rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - - - re
B
rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - - - re
7
C
Ho - - - ra ch'io ba - cio‿a - mo - re La
A
Ho - ra ch'io ba - cio‿a-mo - - - - re La
Q
Ho - - - ra ch'io ba - cio‿a - mo - re La
T
Ho - - - ra ch'io ba - cio‿a - mo - re La
B
Ho - - - ra ch'io ba - cio‿a - mo - re La

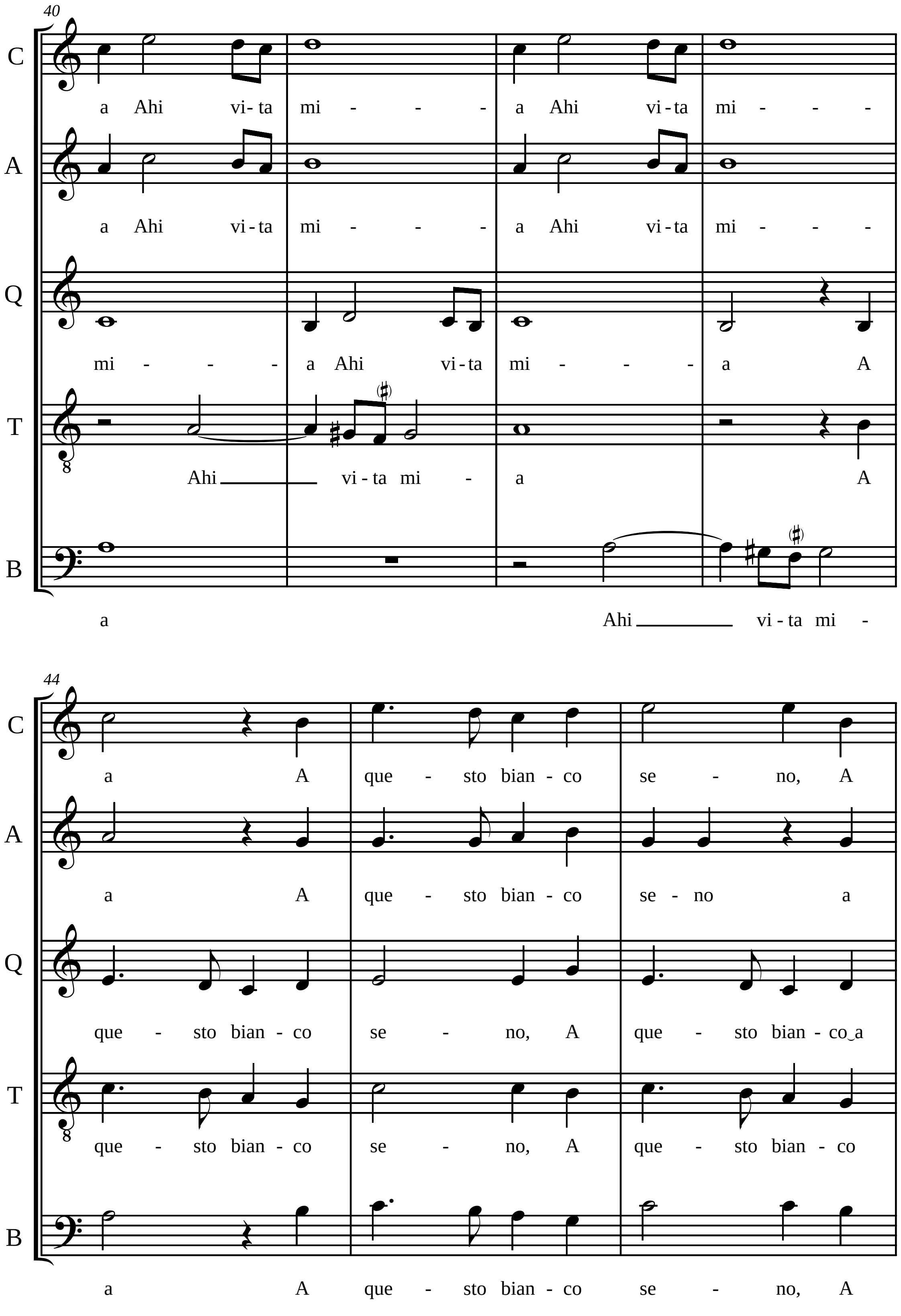

11
C
bel - la boc - - - ca del mio‿a - ma - to co - - - -
A
(♯)
bel - la boc - - - ca del mio‿a - ma - to co - - -
Q
bel - la boc - - - ca del mio‿a - ma - to co - - -
T
bel - la boc - - - ca del mio‿a - ma - to co - re.
B
bel - la boc - - - ca del mio‿a - ma - to co - - -
15
C
re.
A
re.
Q
re.
Ahi
T
Ahi
ca - r'e dol - ce lin - gua
B
re.
Ahi
ca - r'e dol - ce

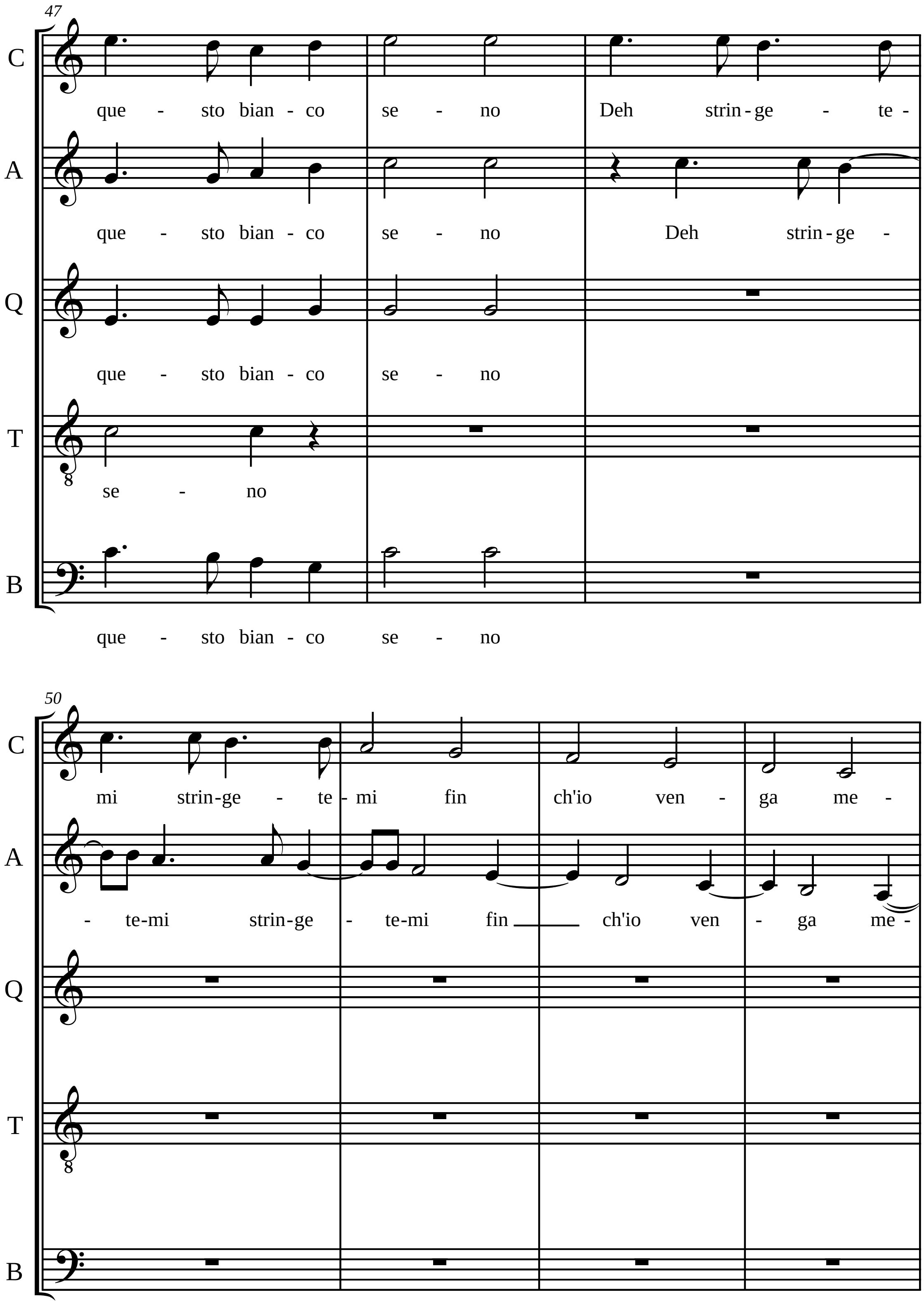

18
C
A
Q
T
B
Ahi
Ahi
ca - r'e dol - ce
ca - r'e dol - ce lin - gua
Ahi
ca - r'e dol - ce lin - gua
lin - gua

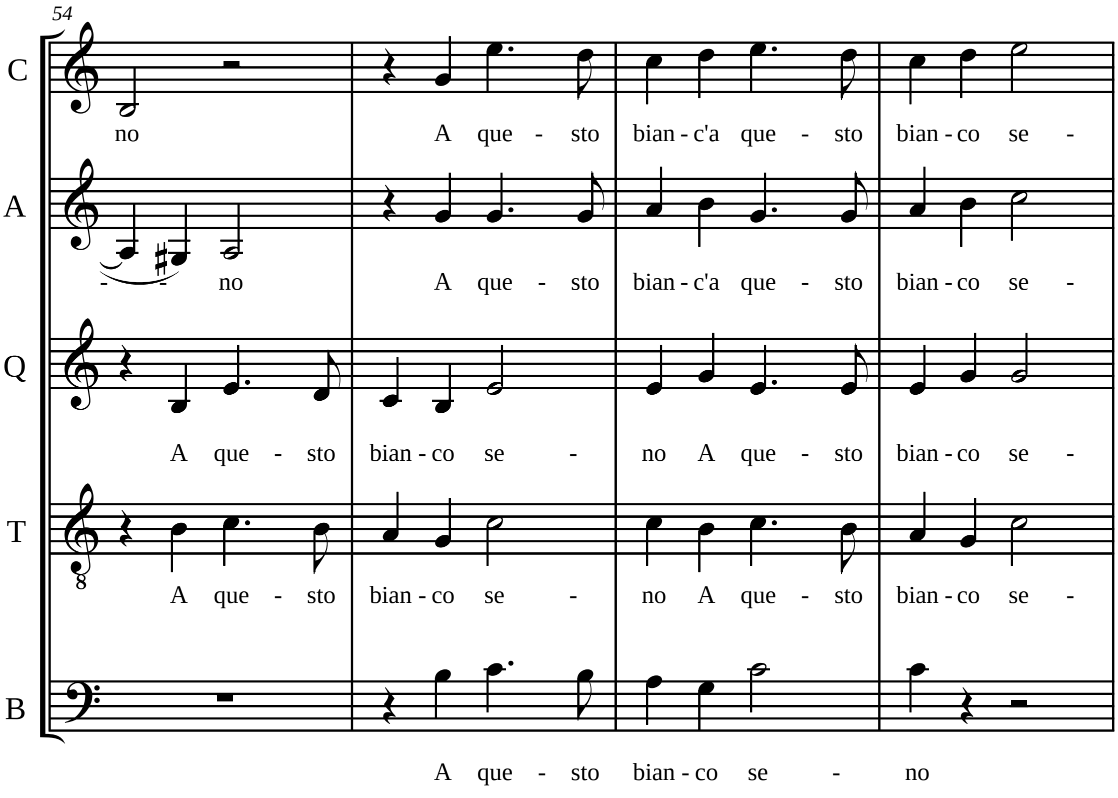

21
C
A
Q
T
B
ca - r'e dol - ce lin - gua
Ahi
lin - gua
Ahi
ca - r'e dol - ce
Ahi
ca - r'e dol - ce lin - gua
Da - te - mi

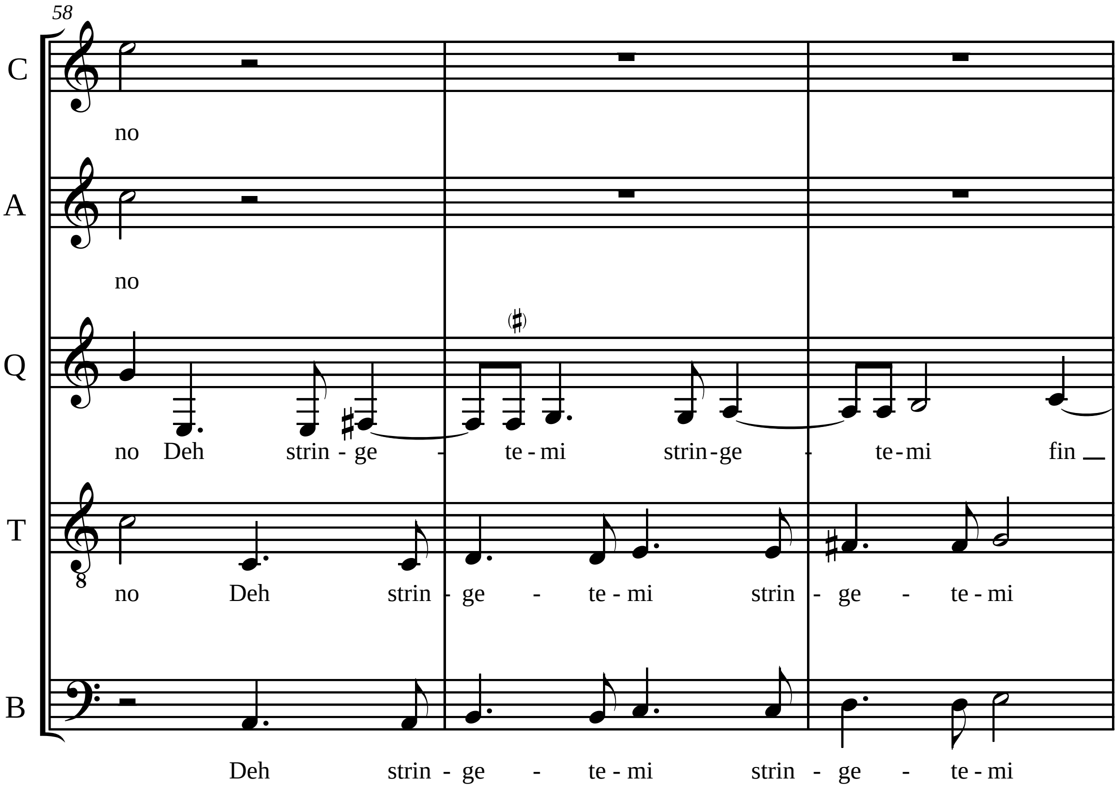

24
C
— ca - r'e dol - ce lin - gua Da - te - mi tan - t'hu - mo - re Che
A
lin - gua Da - te - mi tan - t'hu - mo - re Che — di —
Q
Da - te - mi tan - t'hu - mo -
T
tan - t'hu - mo - re Da - te - mi tan - t'hu - mo - - - re —
B
Da - te - mi tan - t'hu - mo - re Che di dol -
28
C
di dol - - - cez - - - z'in
A
— dol - - - cez - - - z'in — que -
Q
re che di dol - cez - z'in que - sto
T
— che — di — dol - - - cez -
B
cez - z'in que - sto sen in que - sto

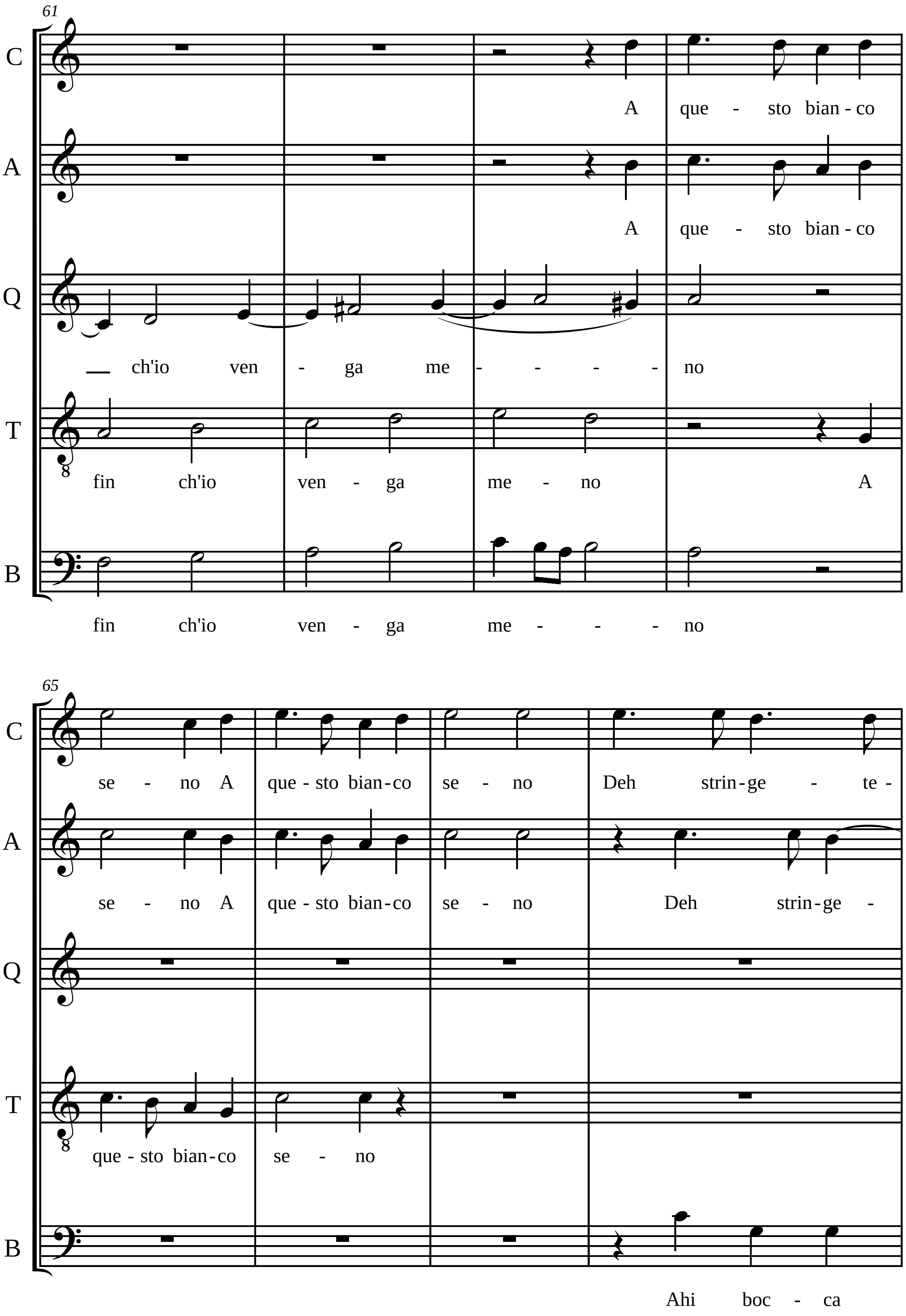

32
C
que - - - sto sen m'e -
A
- - sto sen m'e -
Q
sen in que - sto sen m'e - stin -
T
- - z'in que - - - sto sen m'e -
B
sen in que - sto sen m'e - stin - - -
36
C
stin - - - gua. Ahi vi - ta mi - - -
A
stin - - - gua Ahi vi - ta mi - - -
Q
- - - gua Ahi vi - ta
T
stin - - - gua
B
- - - gua Ahi vi - ta mi -

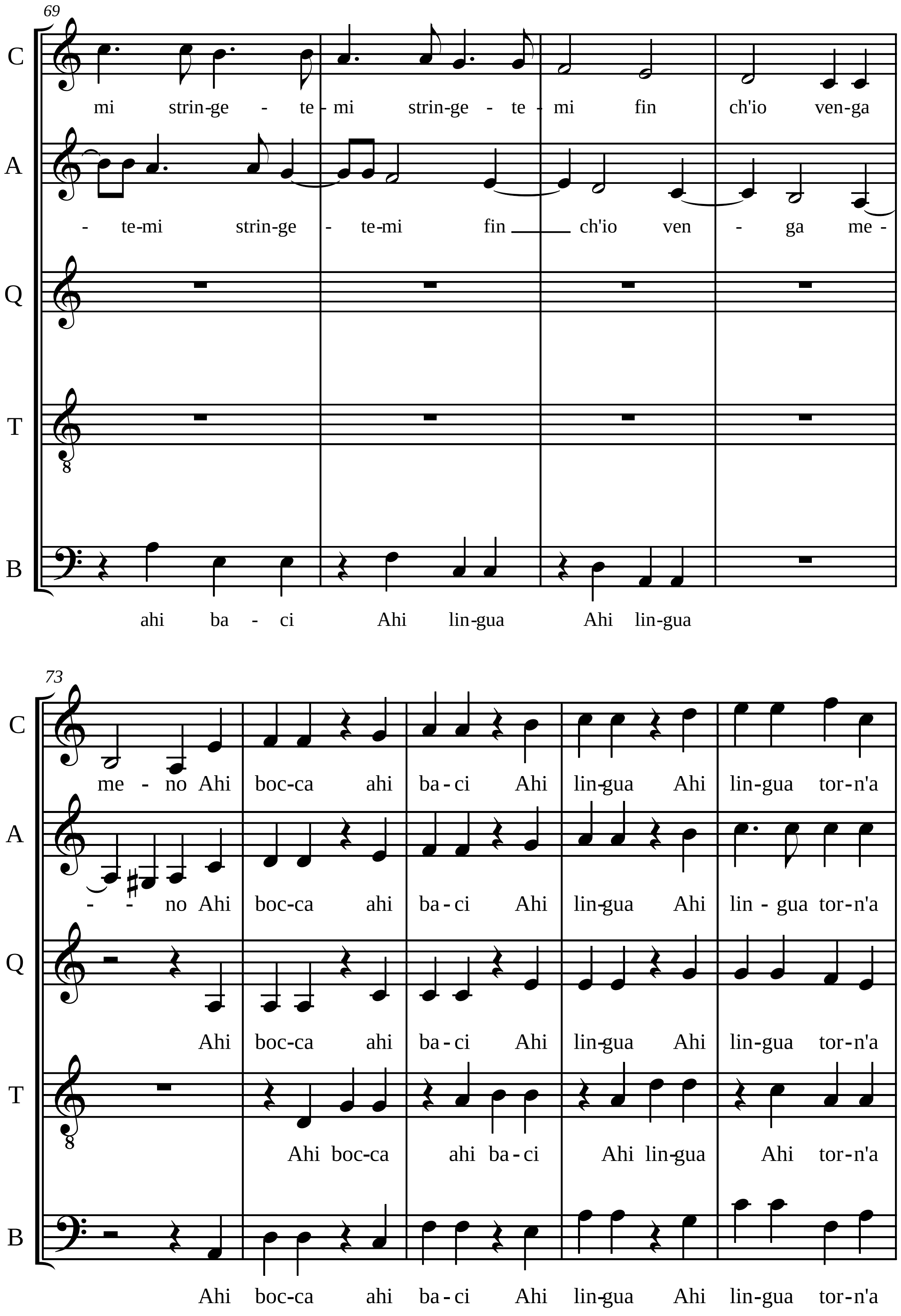

40
C
a Ahi vi-ta mi - - - a Ahi vi-ta mi - - -
A
a Ahi vi-ta mi - - - a Ahi vi-ta mi - - -
Q
mi - - - a Ahi vi-ta mi - - - a A
T
Ahi vi-ta mi - a A
B
a Ahi vi-ta mi -
44
C
a A que - sto bian-co se - no, A
A
a A que - sto bian-co se-no a
Q
que - sto bian-co se - no, A que - sto bian-co‿a
T
que - sto bian-co se - no, A que - sto bian-co
B
a A que - sto bian-co se - no, A

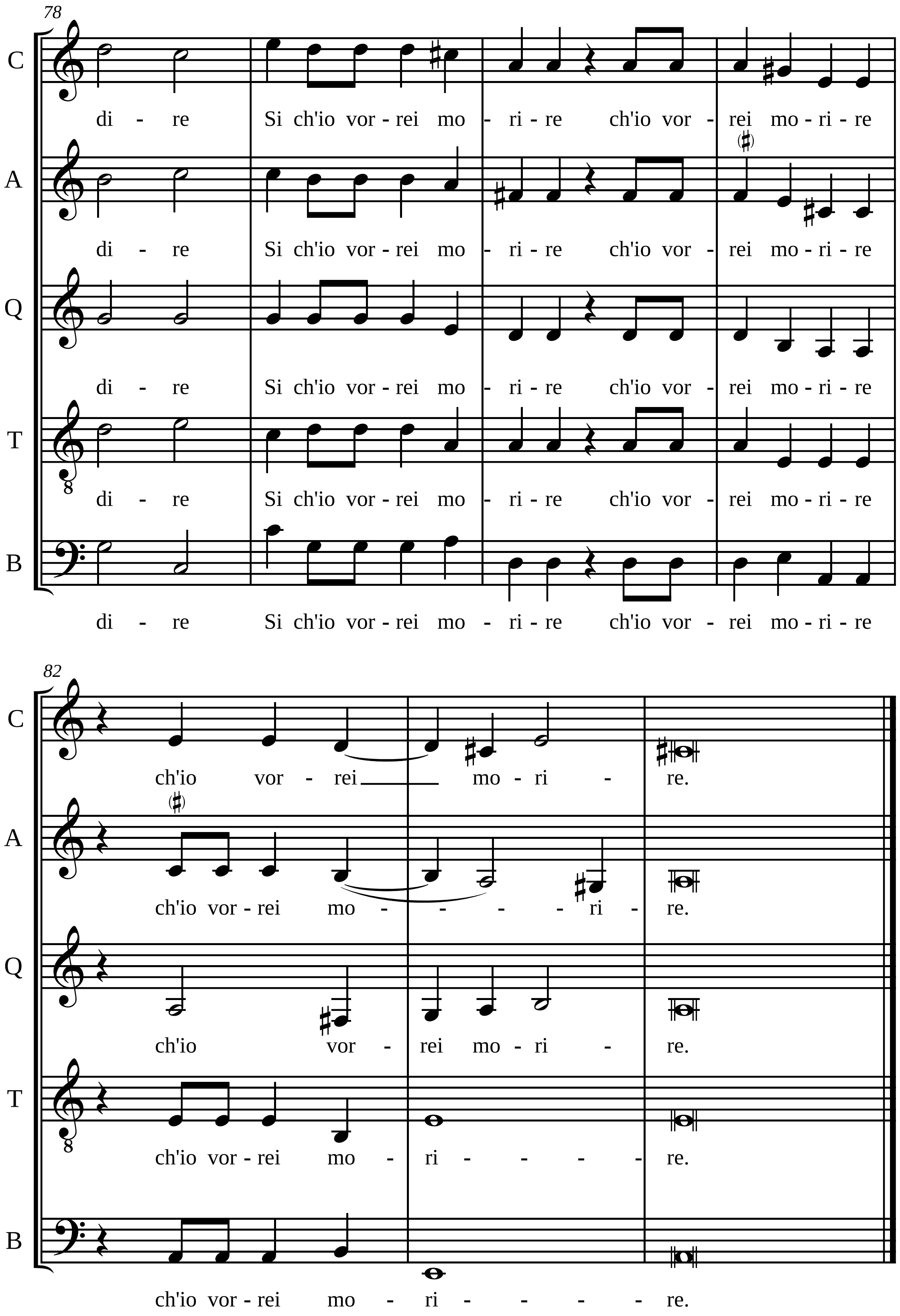

47
C
que - sto bian - co se - no Deh strin - ge - te -
A
que - sto bian - co se - no Deh strin - ge -
Q
que - sto bian - co se - no
T
se - no
B
que - sto bian - co se - no
50
C
mi strin - ge - te - mi fin ch'io ven - ga me -
A
- te-mi strin - ge - te-mi fin ch'io ven - ga me -
Q
T
B


54
C
A
Q
T
B
no A que - sto bian - c'a que - sto bian - co se -
- - no A que - sto bian - c'a que - sto bian - co se -
A que - sto bian - co se - no A que - sto bian - co se -
A que - sto bian - co se - no A que - sto bian - co se -
A que - sto bian - co se - no


58
C
A
Q
T
B
no
no
(♯)
no Deh strin - ge - te - mi strin - ge - te - mi fin
no Deh strin - ge - te - mi strin - ge - te - mi
Deh strin - ge - te - mi strin - ge - te - mi


61
C
A que - sto bian - co
A
A que - sto bian - co
Q
ch'io ven - ga me - - - - no
T
fin ch'io ven - ga me - no A
B
fin ch'io ven - ga me - - - no
65
C
se - no A que - sto bian - co se - no Deh strin - ge - te -
A
se - no A que - sto bian - co se - no Deh strin - ge -
Q
T
que - sto bian - co se - no
B
Ahi boc - ca


69
C
mi strin-ge - te - mi strin-ge - te - mi fin ch'io ven-ga
A
- te-mi strin-ge - te-mi fin ch'io ven - ga me -
Q
T
B
ahi ba - ci Ahi lin-gua Ahi lin-gua
73
C
me - no Ahi boc-ca ahi ba - ci Ahi lin-gua Ahi lin-gua tor-n'a
A
- - no Ahi boc-ca ahi ba - ci Ahi lin-gua Ahi lin - gua tor-n'a
Q
Ahi boc-ca ahi ba - ci Ahi lin-gua Ahi lin-gua tor-n'a
T
Ahi boc-ca ahi ba - ci Ahi lin-gua Ahi tor-n'a
B
Ahi boc-ca ahi ba - ci Ahi lin-gua Ahi lin-gua tor-n'a

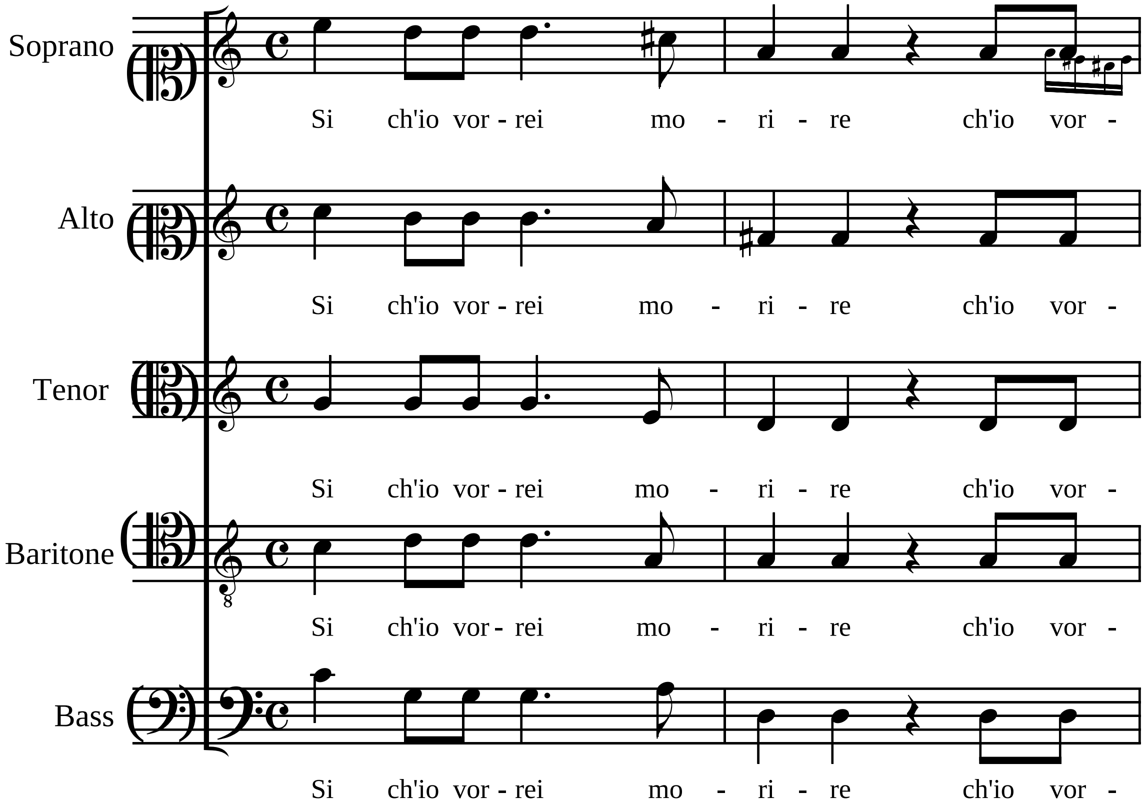

78
C
di - re Si ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
A
(♯)
di - re Si ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
Q
di - re Si ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
T
8
di - re Si ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
B
di - re Si ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re
82
C
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re.
A
(♯)
ch'io vor - rei mo - - - - ri - re.
Q
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re.
T
8
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - - - - re.
B
ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - - - - re.

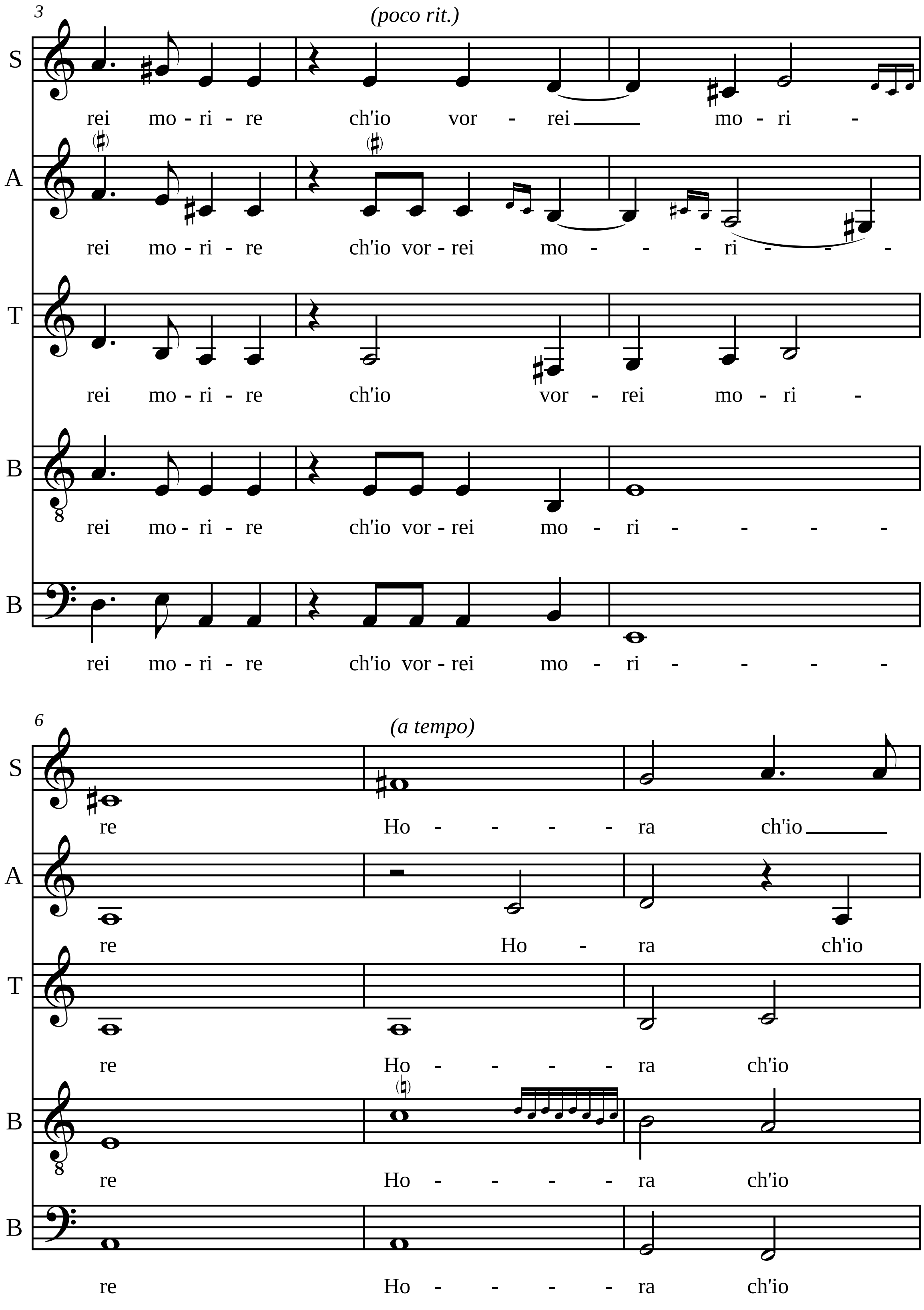
Sí ch'io vorrei morire

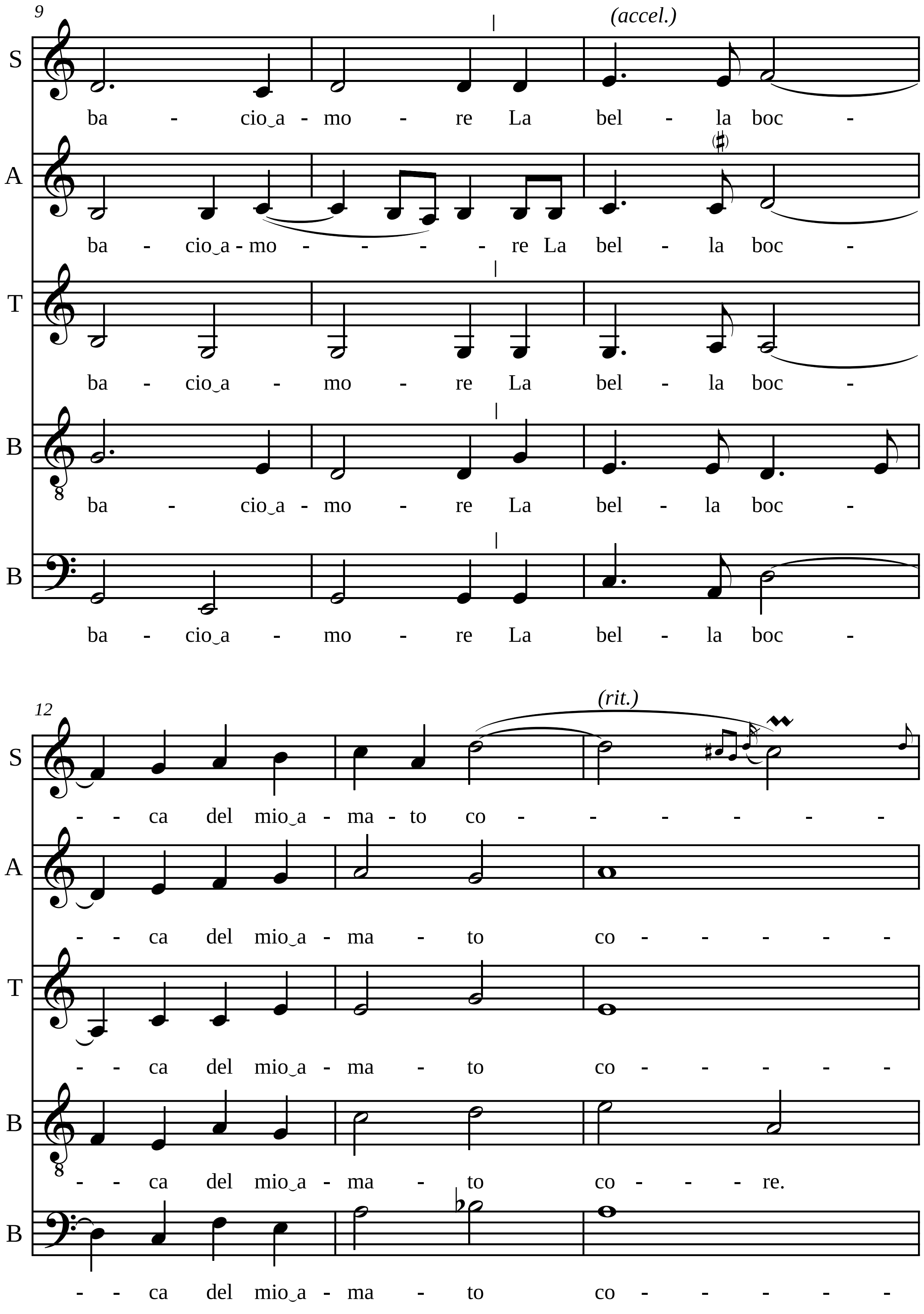
(Altered Version)

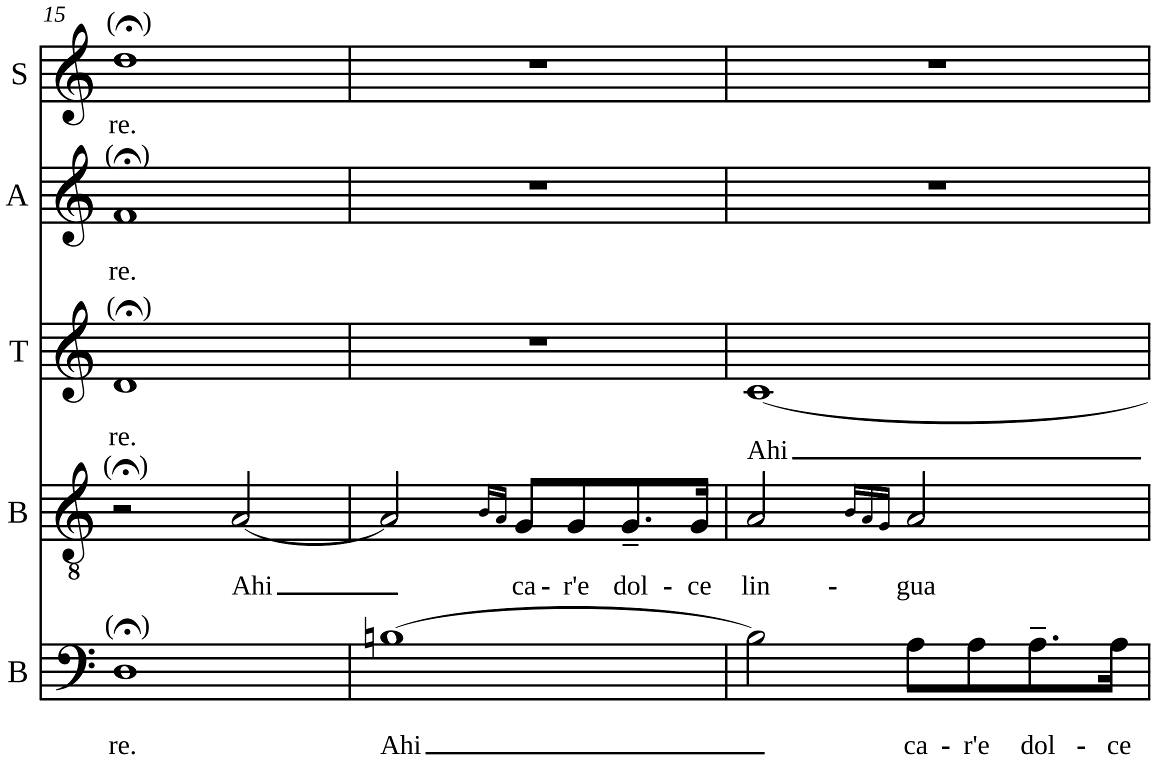
Claudio Monteverdi

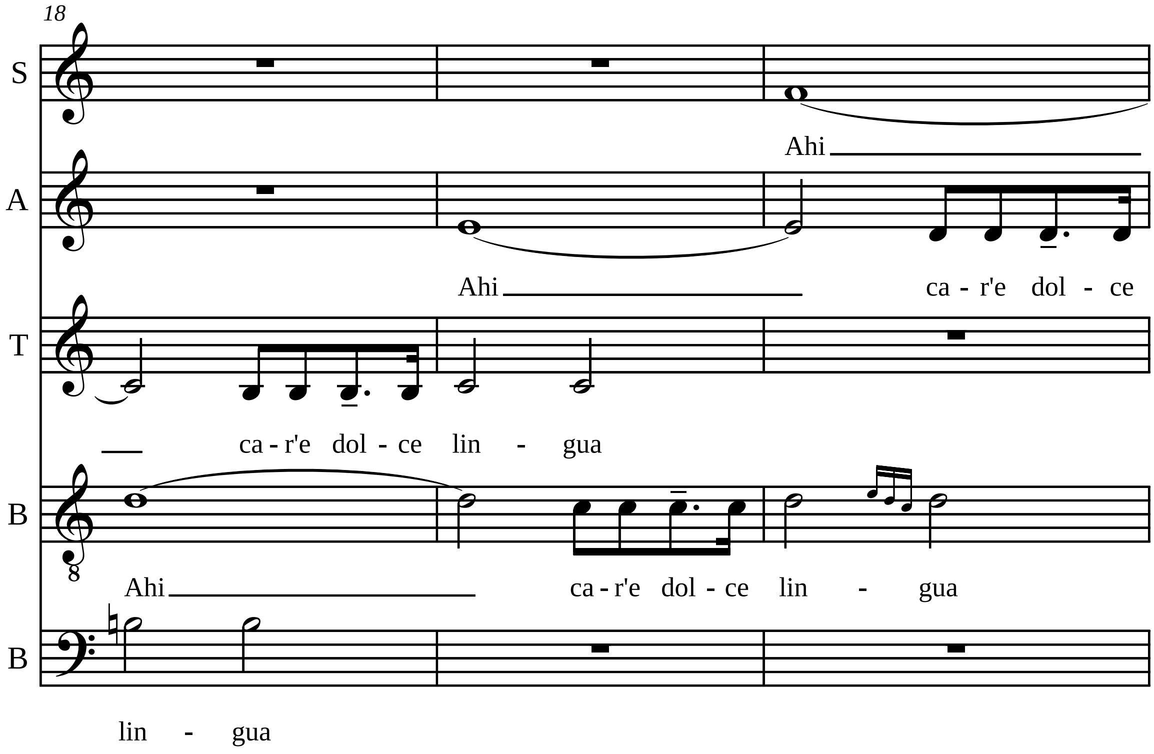
(Performed one half-step lower)

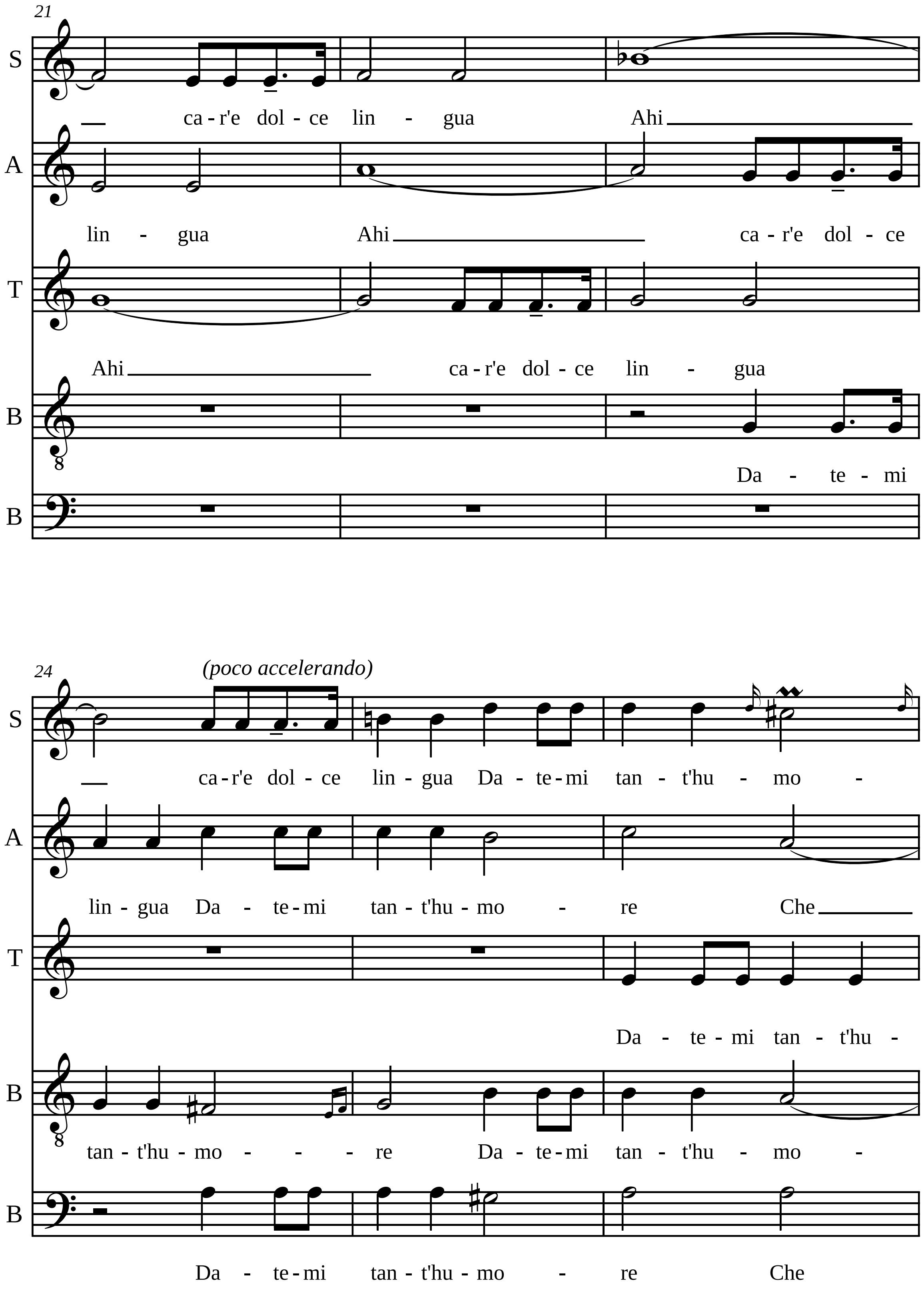

Soprano
Alto
Tenor
Baritone
Bass
Si ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor -

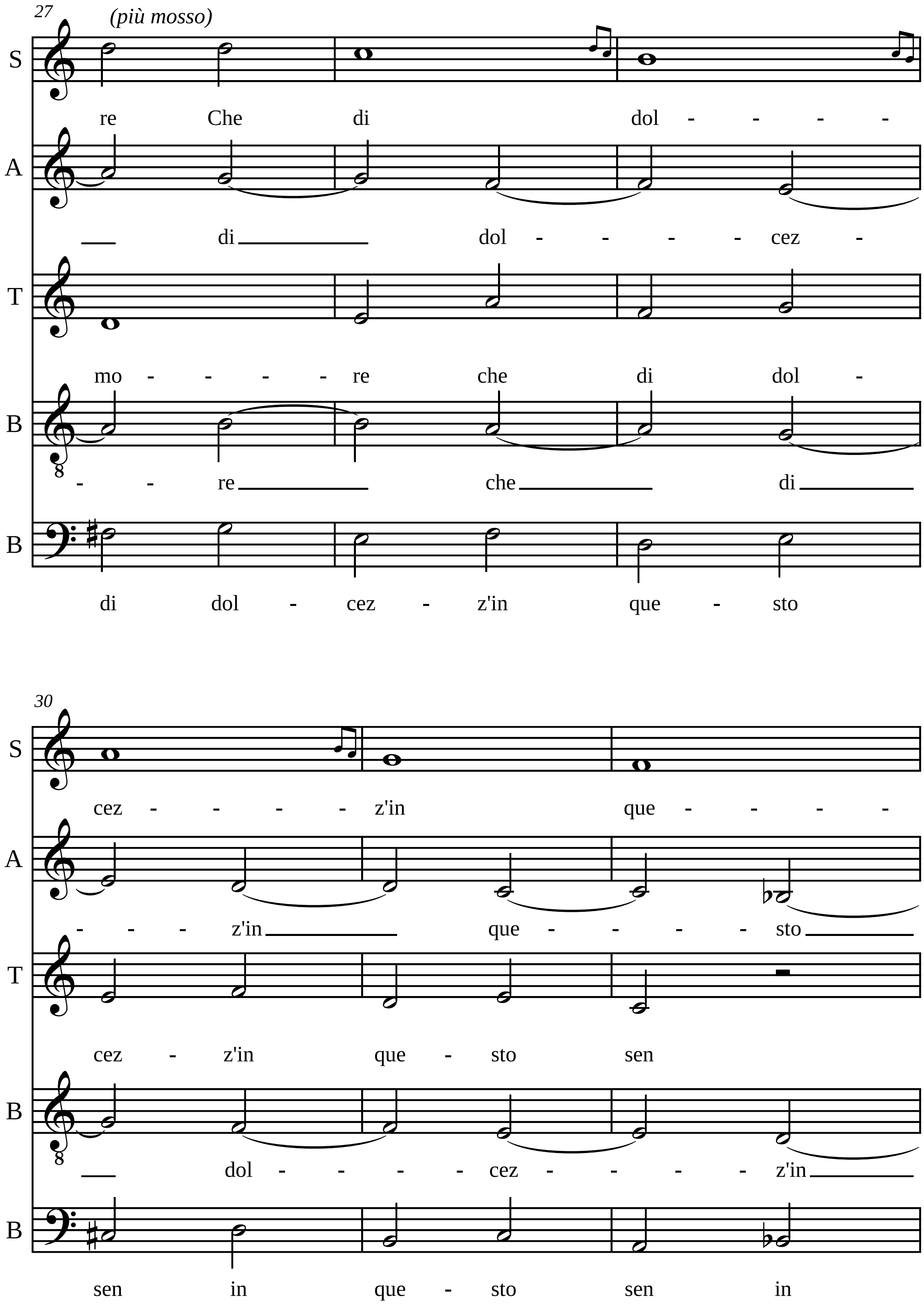

3
(poco rit.)
S
rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri -
A
rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - - - ri - - -
T
rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri -
B
rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - - - -
B
rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - - - -
6
(a tempo)
S
re Ho - - - - ra ch'io
A
re Ho - ra ch'io
T
re Ho - - - - ra ch'io
B
re Ho - - - - ra ch'io
B
re Ho - - - - ra ch'io

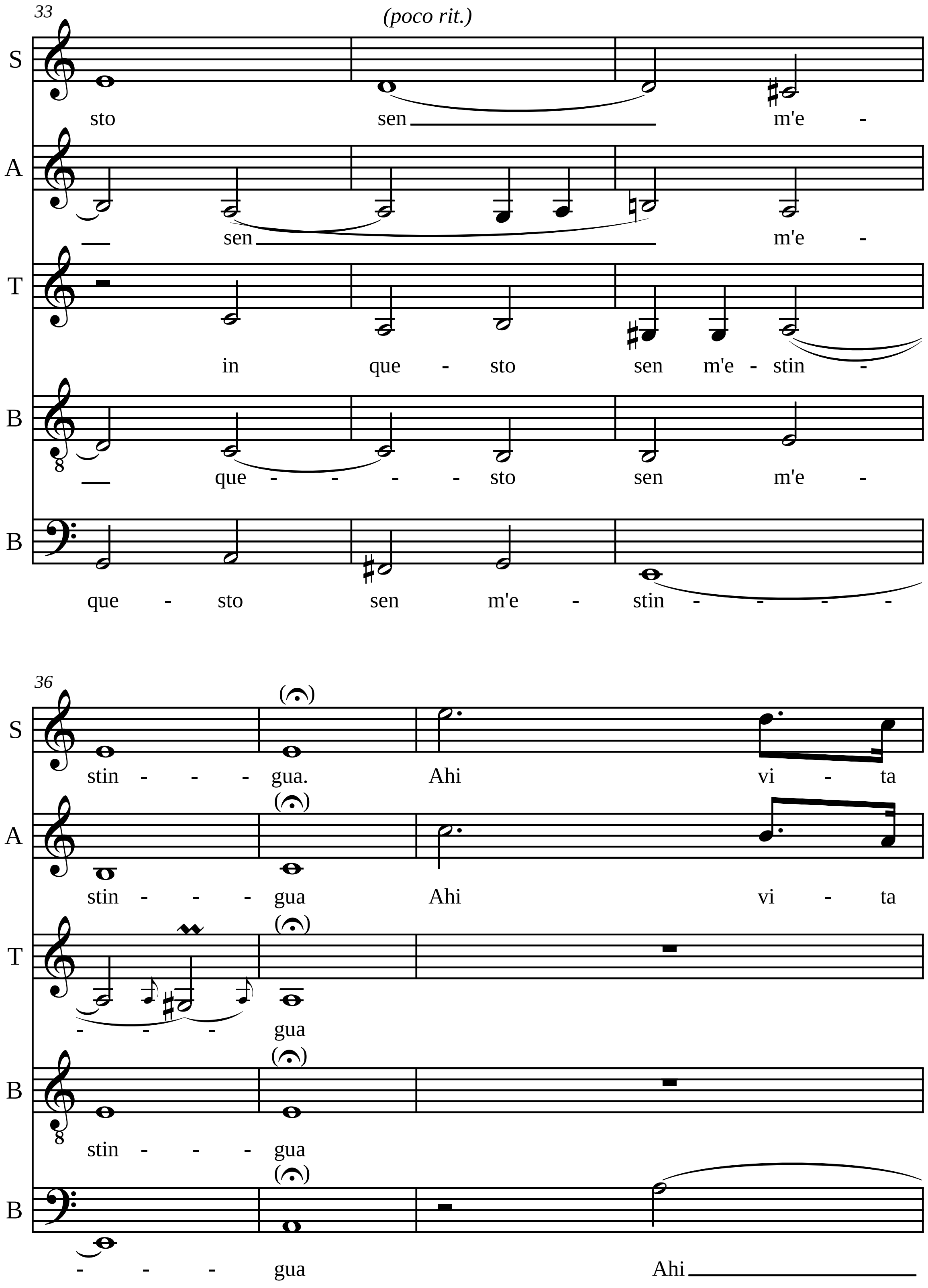

9
(accel.)
S
ba - cio‿a - mo - re La bel - la boc -
A
ba - cio‿a - mo - - - - re La bel - la boc -
T
ba - cio‿a - mo - re La bel - la boc -
B
ba - cio‿a - mo - re La bel - la boc -
B
ba - cio‿a - mo - re La bel - la boc -
12
(rit.)
S
- - ca del mio‿a - ma - to co - - - - - -
A
- - ca del mio‿a - ma - to co - - - - -
T
- - ca del mio‿a - ma - to co - - - - -
B
- - ca del mio‿a - ma - to co - - - re.
B
- - ca del mio‿a - ma - to co - - - - -

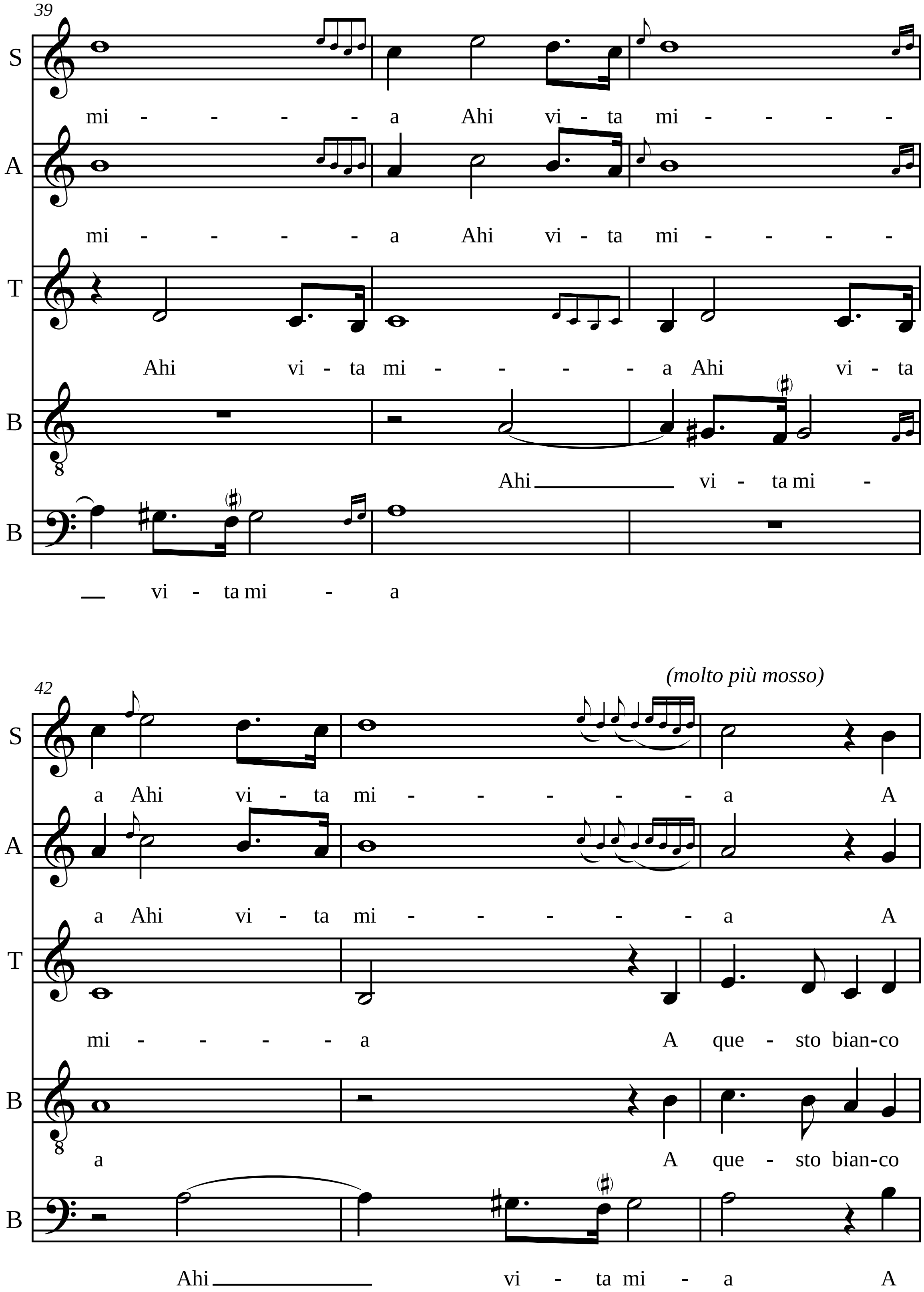

15
S
A
T
B
B
re.
re.
re.
Ahi
Ahi ca - r'e dol - ce lin - gua
re. Ahi ca - r'e dol - ce

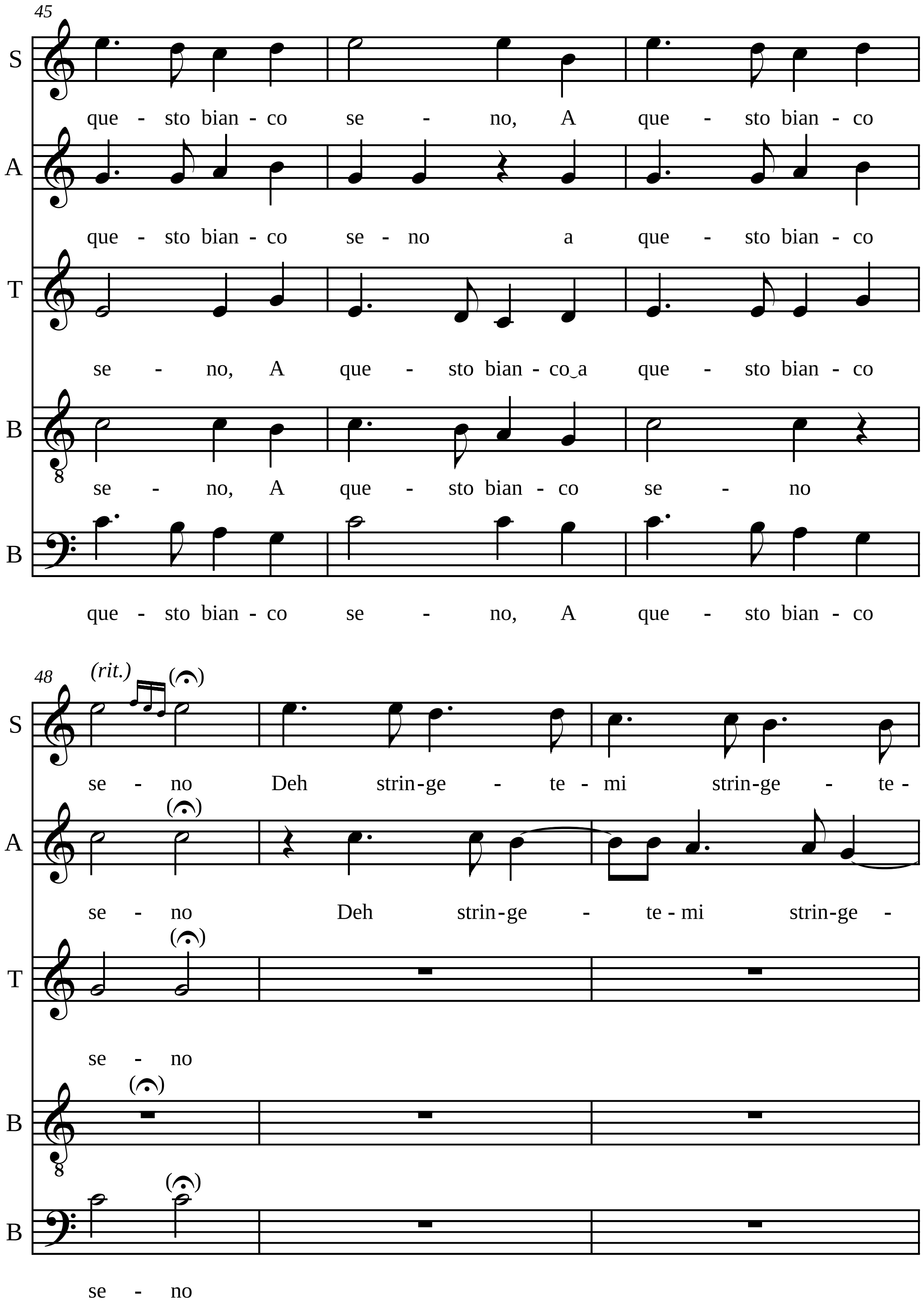

18
S
A
T
B
B
Ahi
Ahi ca - r'e dol - ce
ca - r'e dol - ce lin - gua
Ahi ca - r'e dol - ce lin - gua
lin - gua

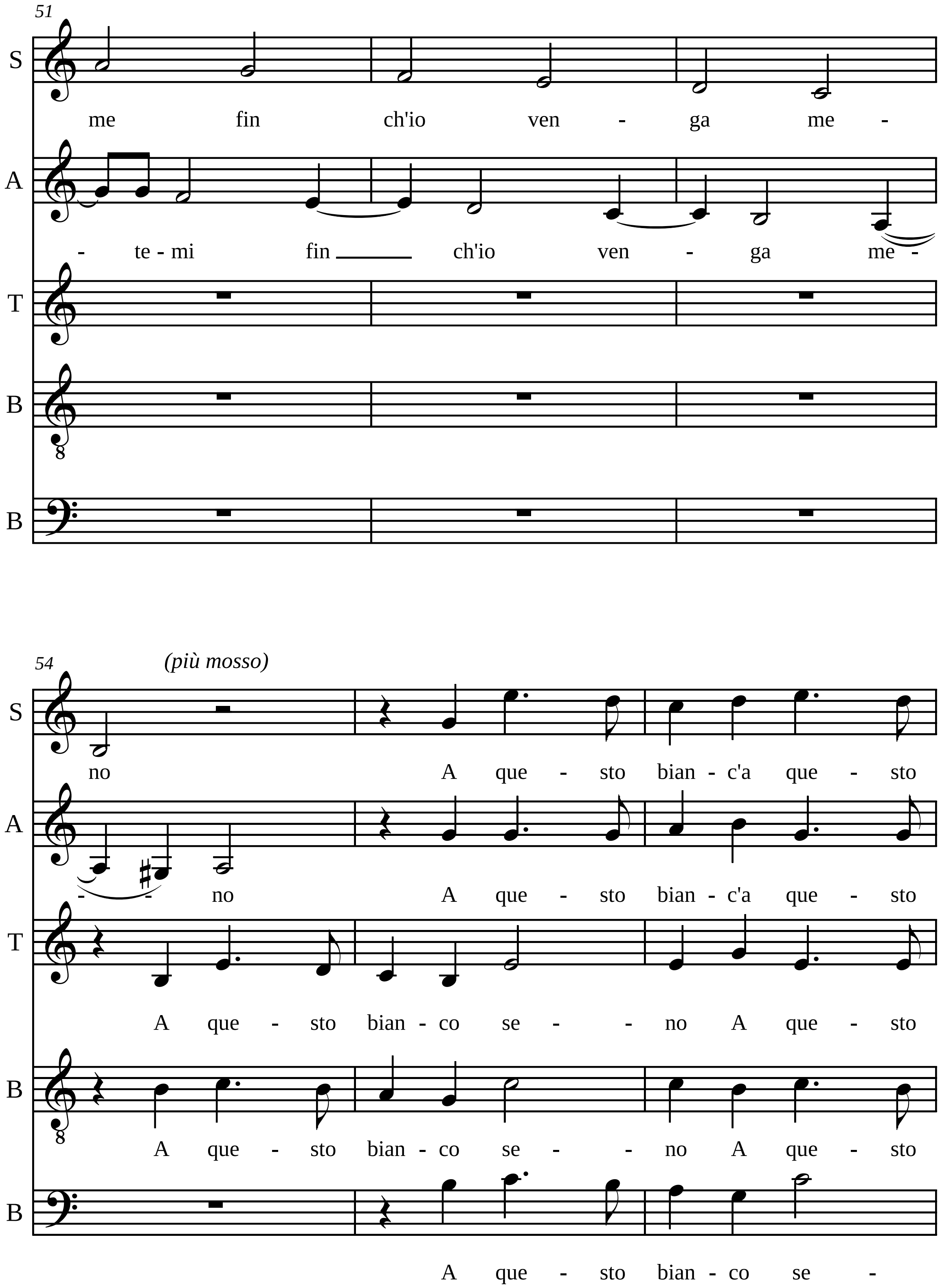

21
S
ca - r'e dol - ce lin - gua Ahi
A
lin - gua Ahi ca - r'e dol - ce
T
Ahi ca - r'e dol - ce lin - gua
B
Da - te - mi
B
24
(poco accelerando)
S
ca - r'e dol - ce lin - gua Da - te - mi tan - t'hu - mo -
A
lin - gua Da - te - mi tan - t'hu - mo - re Che
T
Da - te - mi tan - t'hu -
B
tan - t'hu - mo - - - re Da - te - mi tan - t'hu - mo -
B
Da - te - mi tan - t'hu - mo - re Che

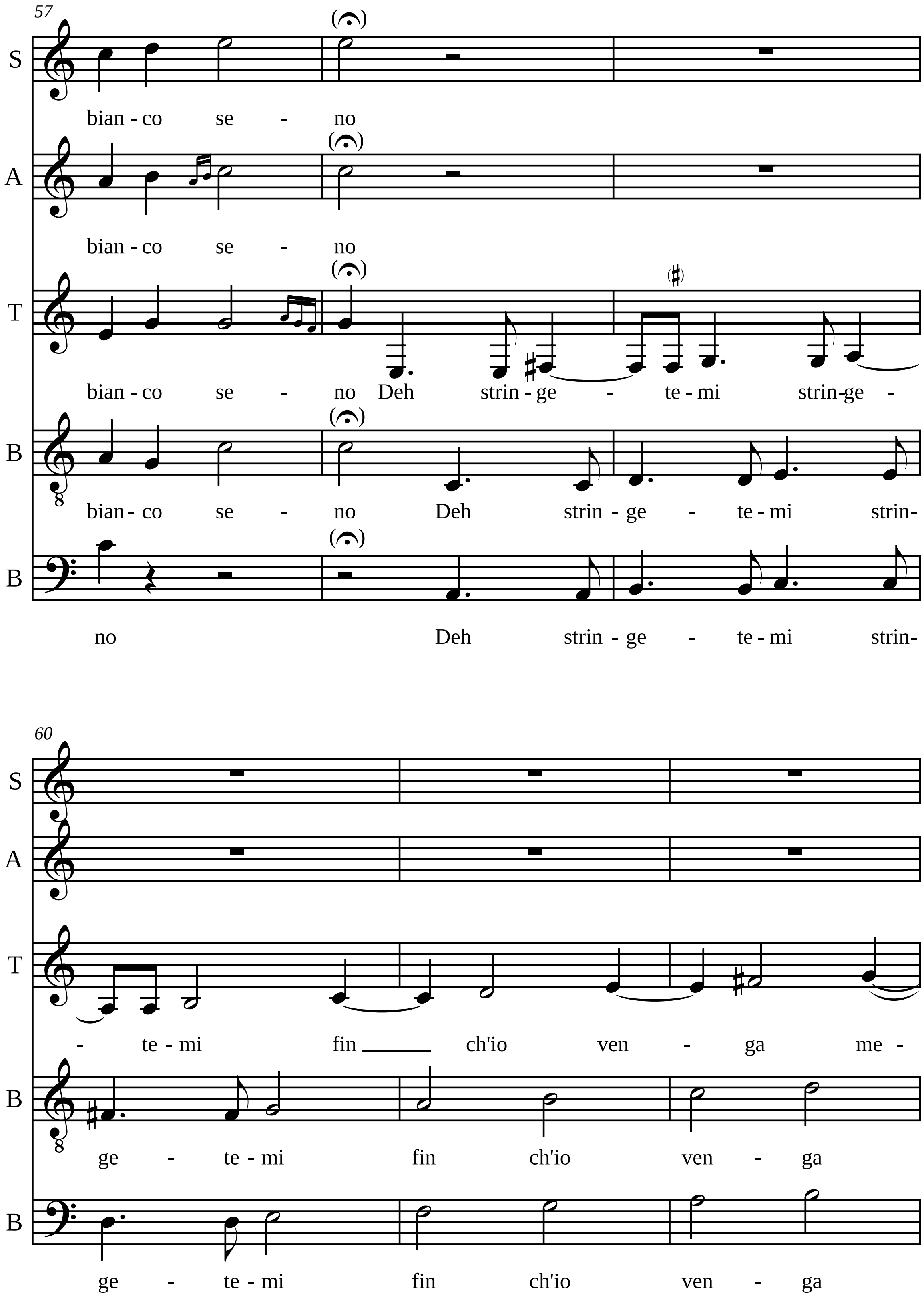

27
(più mosso)
S
re Che di dol - - - -
A
di dol - - - - cez -
T
mo - - - - re che di dol -
B
- - re che di
B
di dol - cez - z'in que - sto
30
S
cez - - - - z'in que - - - -
A
- - - z'in que - - - - sto
T
cez - z'in que - sto sen
B
dol - - - - cez - - - - z'in
B
sen in que - sto sen in

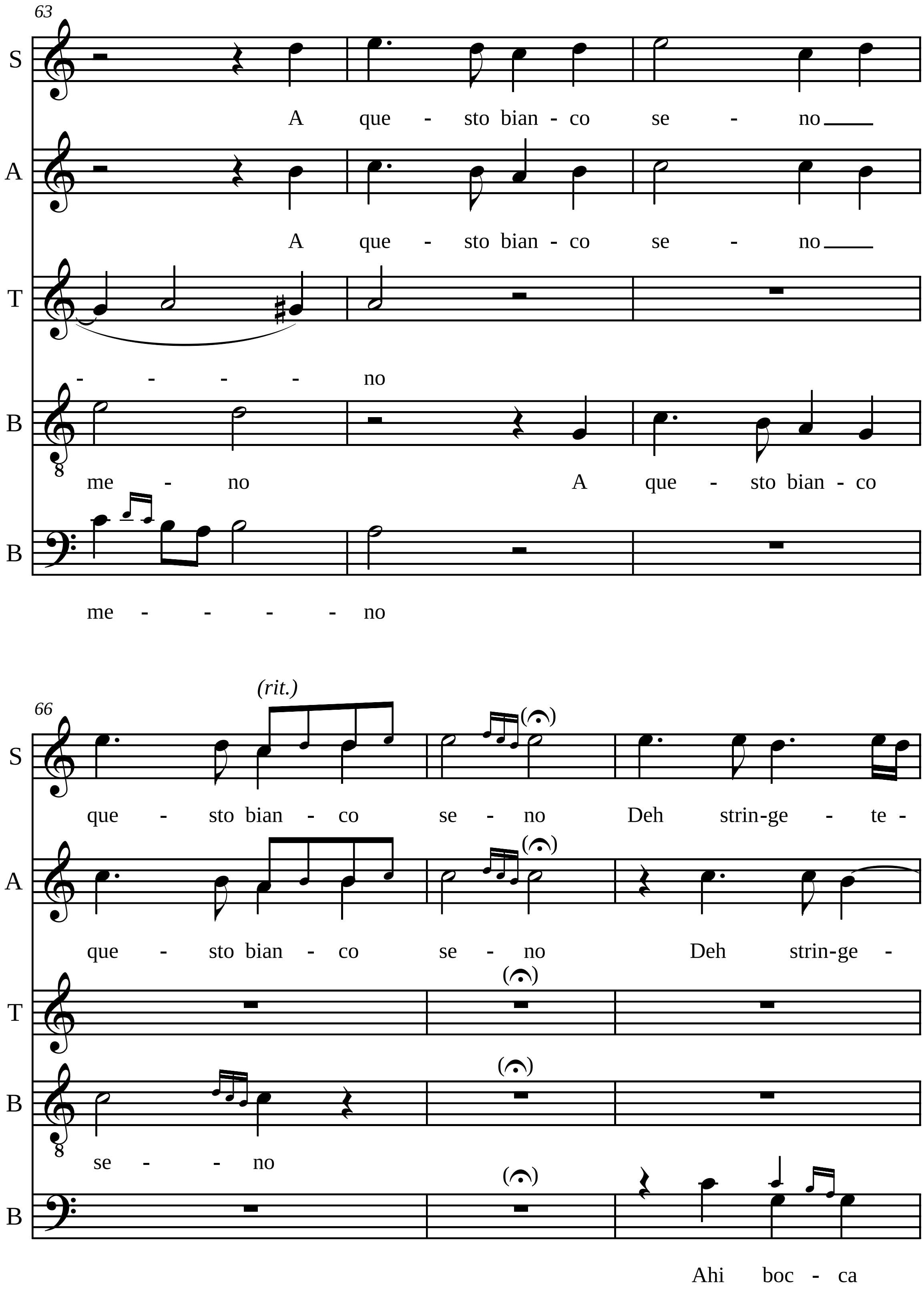

33
(poco rit.)
S
sto sen m'e -
A
sen m'e -
T
in que - sto sen m'e - stin -
B
que - - - - sto sen m'e -
B
que - sto sen m'e - stin - - - -
36
(𝄐)
S
stin - - - gua. Ahi vi - ta
A
stin - - - gua Ahi vi - ta
T
- - - gua
B
stin - - - gua
B
- - - gua Ahi

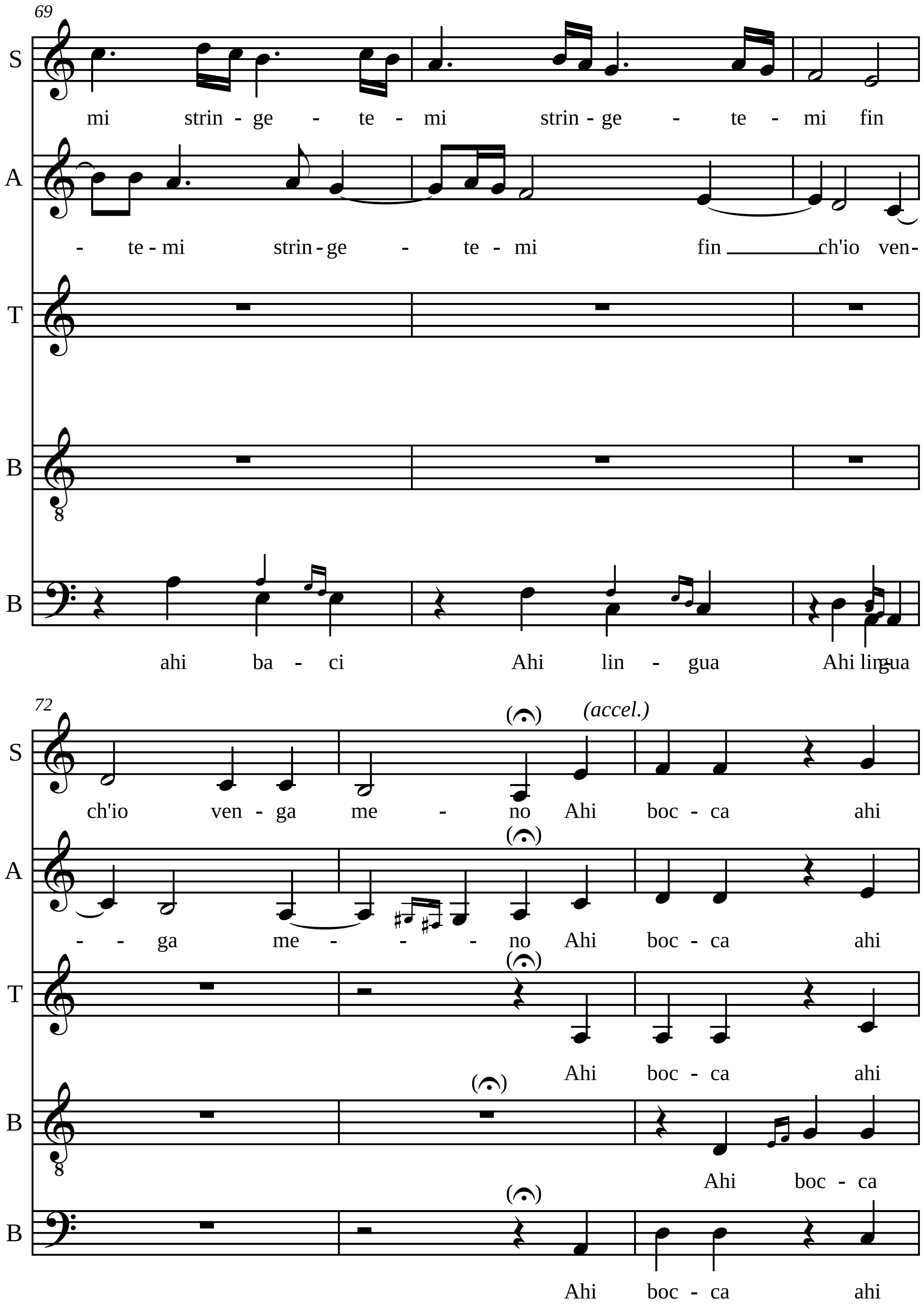

39
S
A
T
B
B
mi - - - - - a Ahi vi - ta mi - - - - -
mi - - - - - a Ahi vi - ta mi - - - - -
Ahi vi - ta mi - - - - a Ahi vi - ta
Ahi vi - ta mi -
vi - ta mi - a
42
(molto più mosso)
a Ahi vi - ta mi - - - - - a A
a Ahi vi - ta mi - - - - - a A
mi - - - - a A que - sto bian-co
a A que - sto bian-co
Ahi vi - ta mi - a A

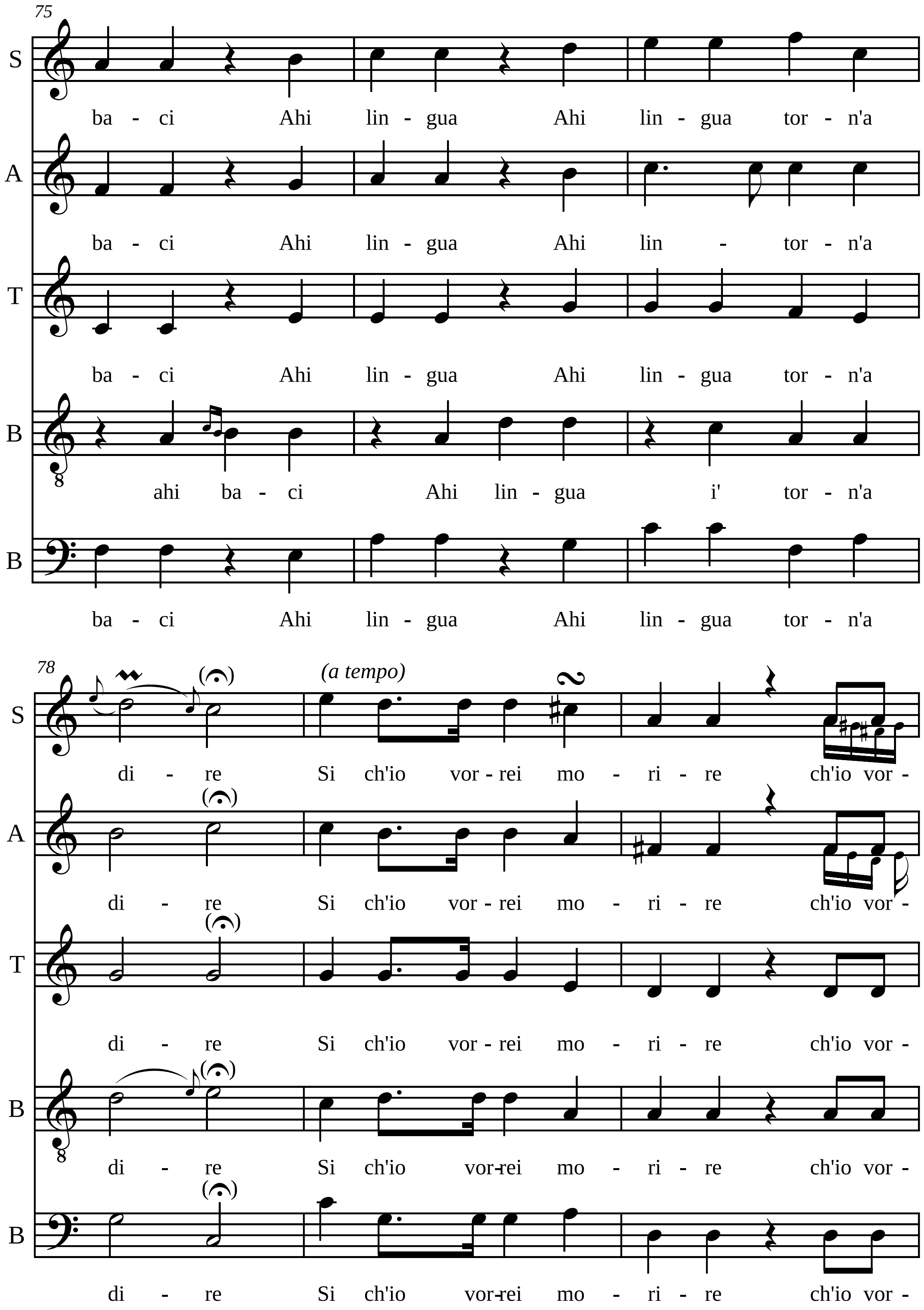
45
S
que - sto bian - co se - no, A que - sto bian - co
A
que - sto bian - co se - no a que - sto bian - co
T
se - no, A que - sto bian - co‿a que - sto bian - co
B
8
se - no, A que - sto bian - co se - no
B
que - sto bian - co se - no, A que - sto bian - co
48
(rit.)
S
se - no Deh strin-ge - te - mi strin-ge - te -
A
se - no Deh strin-ge - te - mi strin-ge -
T
se - no
B
8
B
se - no

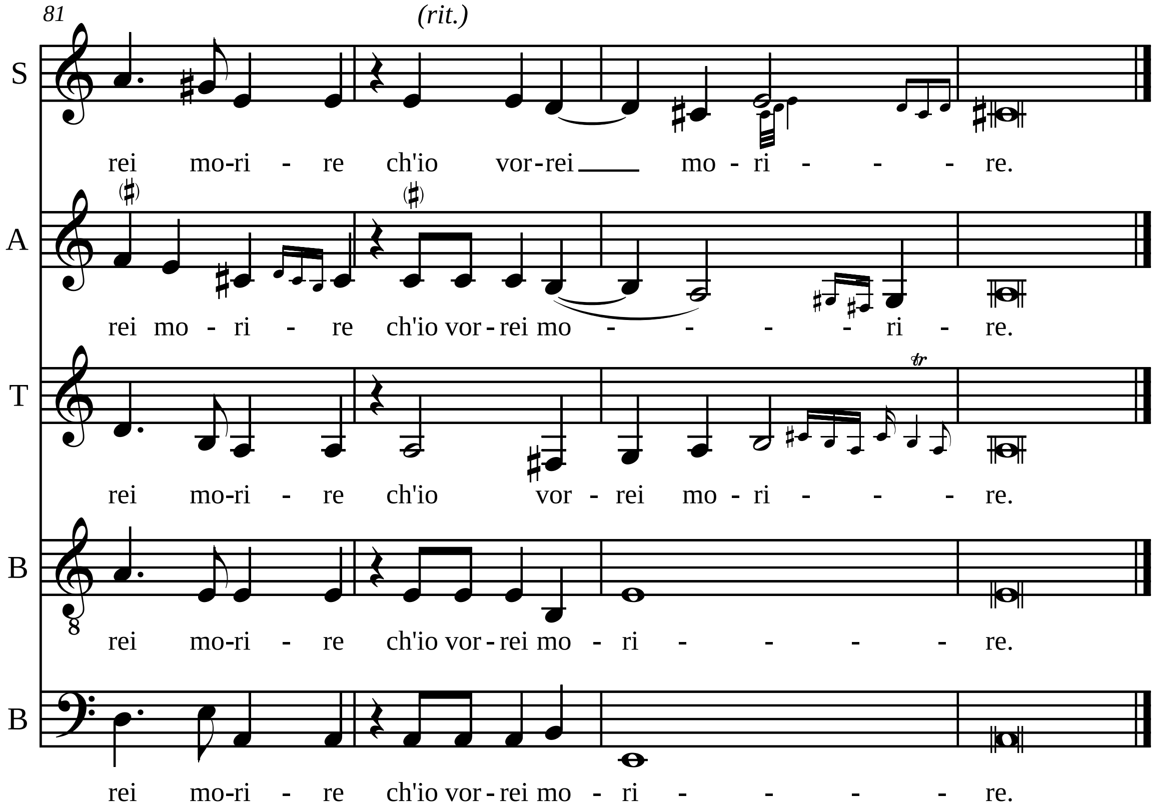

51
S
me fin ch'io ven - ga me -
A
- te - mi fin ch'io ven - ga me -
T
B
8
B
54
(più mosso)
S
no A que - sto bian - c'a que - sto
A
- - no A que - sto bian - c'a que - sto
T
A que - sto bian - co se - - no A que - sto
B
8
A que - sto bian - co se - - no A que - sto
B
A que - sto bian - co se -


57
S
A
T
B
B
bian - co se - no
bian - co se - no
bian - co se - no Deh strin - ge - te - mi strin - ge -
bian - co se - no Deh strin - ge - te - mi strin-
no Deh strin - ge - te - mi strin-
60
- te - mi fin ch'io ven - ga me -
ge - te - mi fin ch'io ven - ga
ge - te - mi fin ch'io ven - ga


63
S
A que - sto bian - co se - no
A
A que - sto bian - co se - no
T
- - - - no
B
me - no A que - sto bian - co
B
me - - - - no
66
(rit.)
S
que - sto bian - co se - no Deh strin-ge - te -
A
que - sto bian - co se - no Deh strin-ge -
T
B
se - - no
B
Ahi boc - ca


69
S
mi strin - ge - te - mi strin - ge - te - mi fin
A
- te - mi strin - ge - te - mi fin ch'io ven-
T
B
8
B
ahi ba - ci Ahi lin - gua Ahi lingua
72
(accel.)
S
ch'io ven - ga me - no Ahi boc - ca ahi
A
- - ga me - - no Ahi boc - ca ahi
T
Ahi boc - ca ahi
B
8
Ahi boc - ca
B
Ahi boc - ca ahi

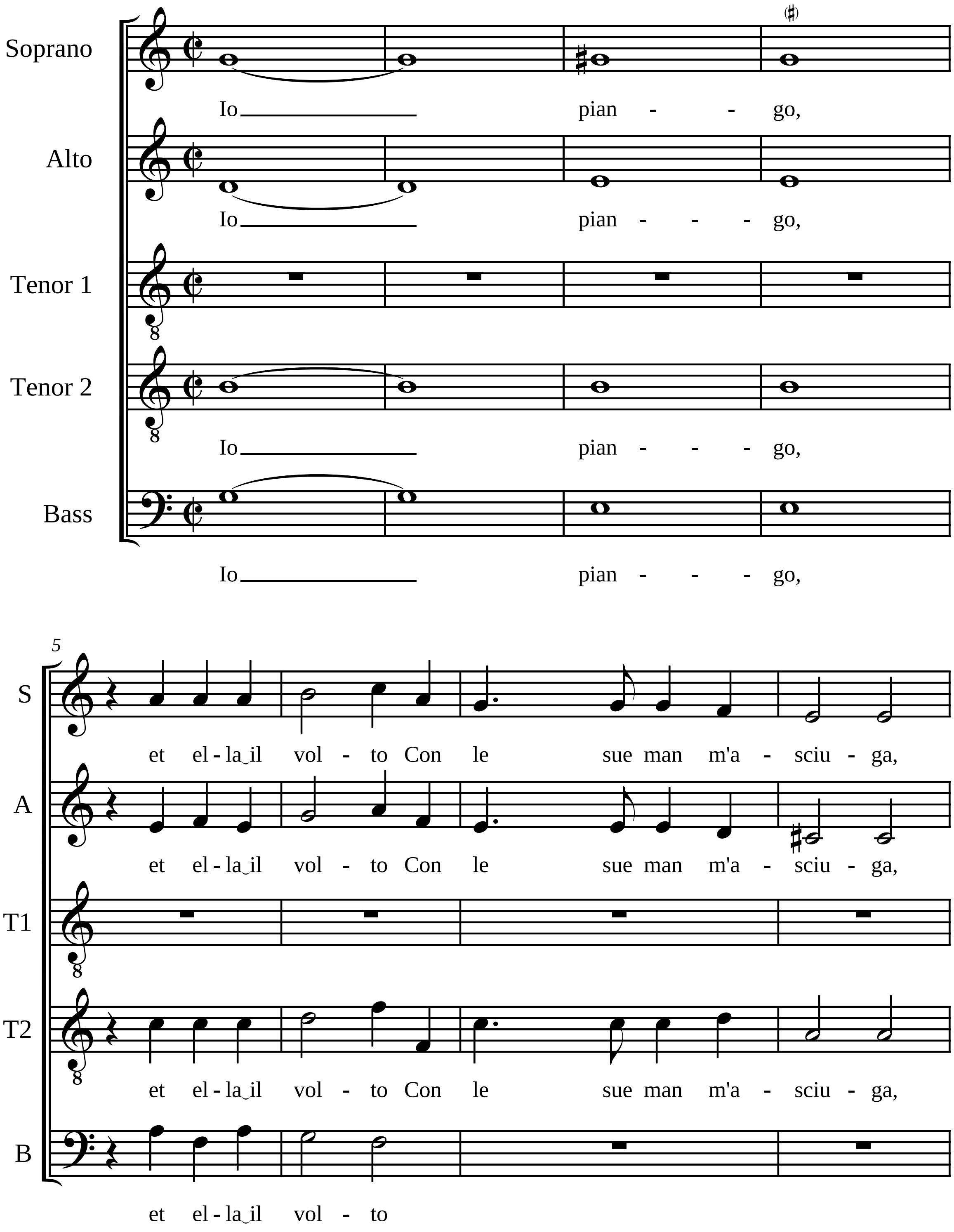

75
S
ba - ci Ahi lin - gua Ahi lin - gua tor - n'a
A
ba - ci Ahi lin - gua Ahi lin - tor - n'a
T
ba - ci Ahi lin - gua Ahi lin - gua tor - n'a
B
ahi ba - ci Ahi lin - gua i' tor - n'a
B
ba - ci Ahi lin - gua Ahi lin - gua tor - n'a
78
(a tempo)
S
di - re Si ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor -
A
di - re Si ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor -
T
di - re Si ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor -
B
di - re Si ch'io vor-rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor -
B
di - re Si ch'io vor-rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor -

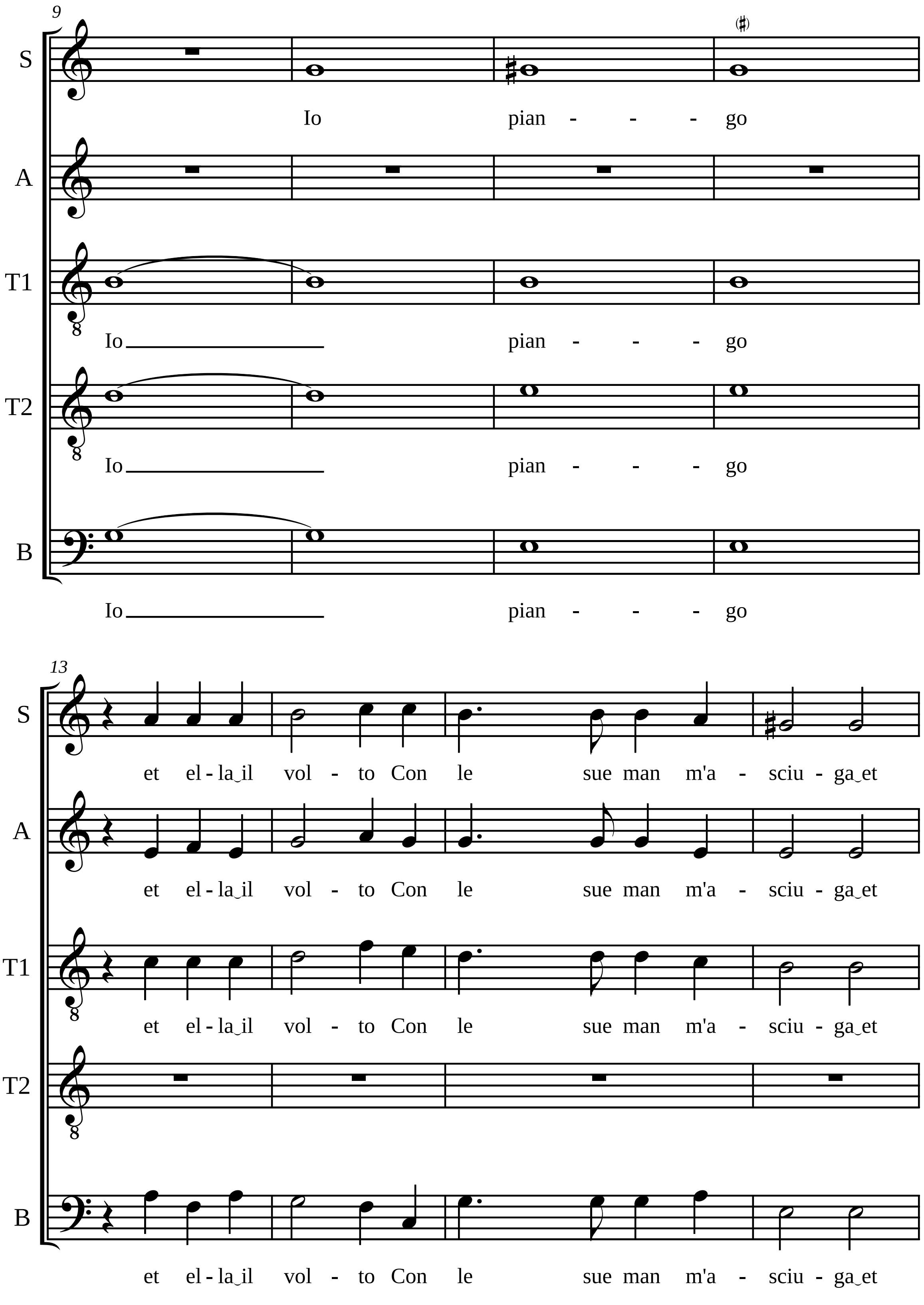

81
(rit.)
S
rei mo-ri - re ch'io vor-rei mo - ri - - - re.
A
(♯)
(♯)
rei mo - ri - re ch'io vor-rei mo - - - - ri - re.
T
tr
rei mo-ri - re ch'io vor - rei mo - ri - - - re.
B
8
rei mo-ri - re ch'io vor-rei mo - ri - - - - re.
B
rei mo-ri - re ch'io vor-rei mo - ri - - - - re.

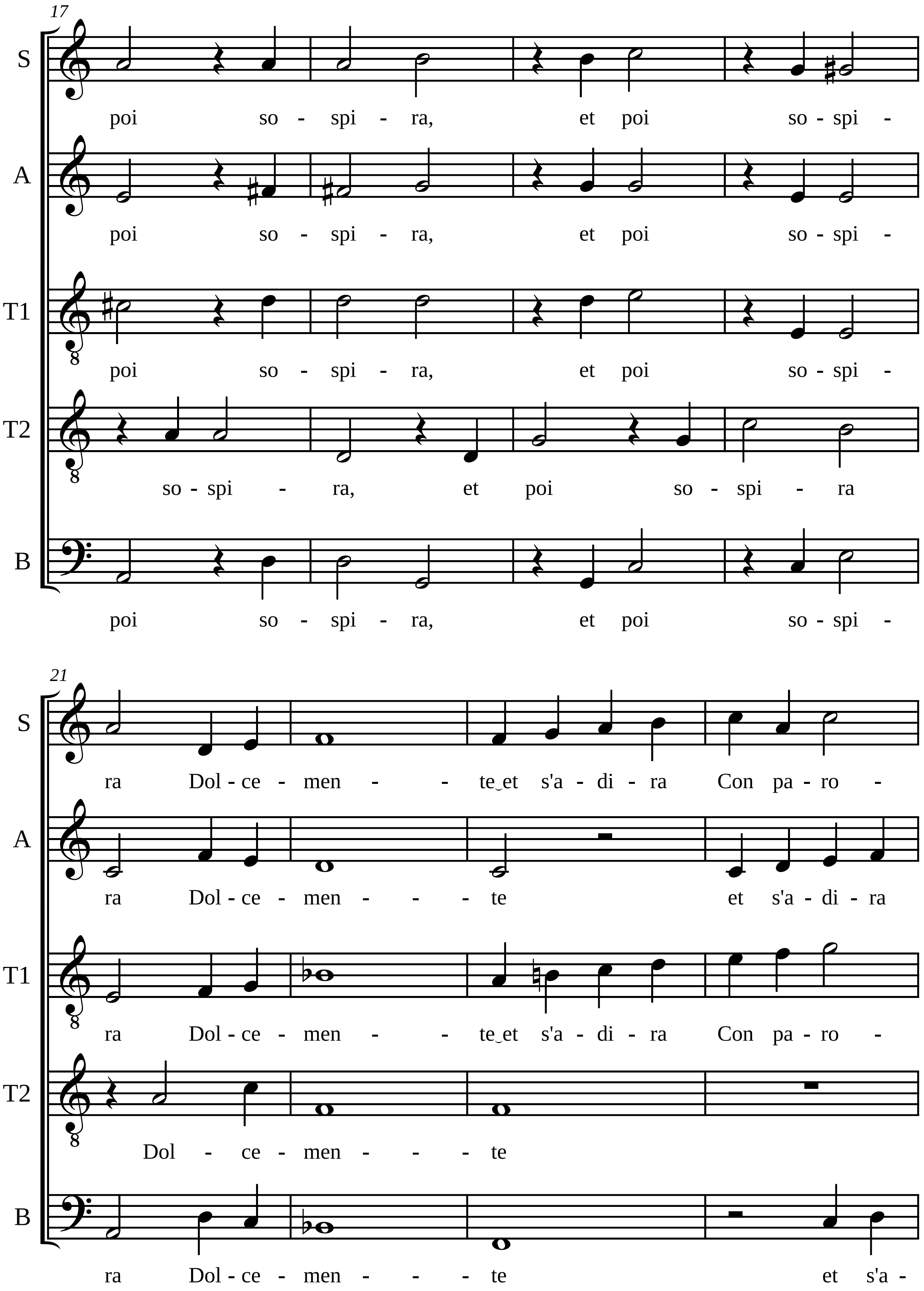
Io piango

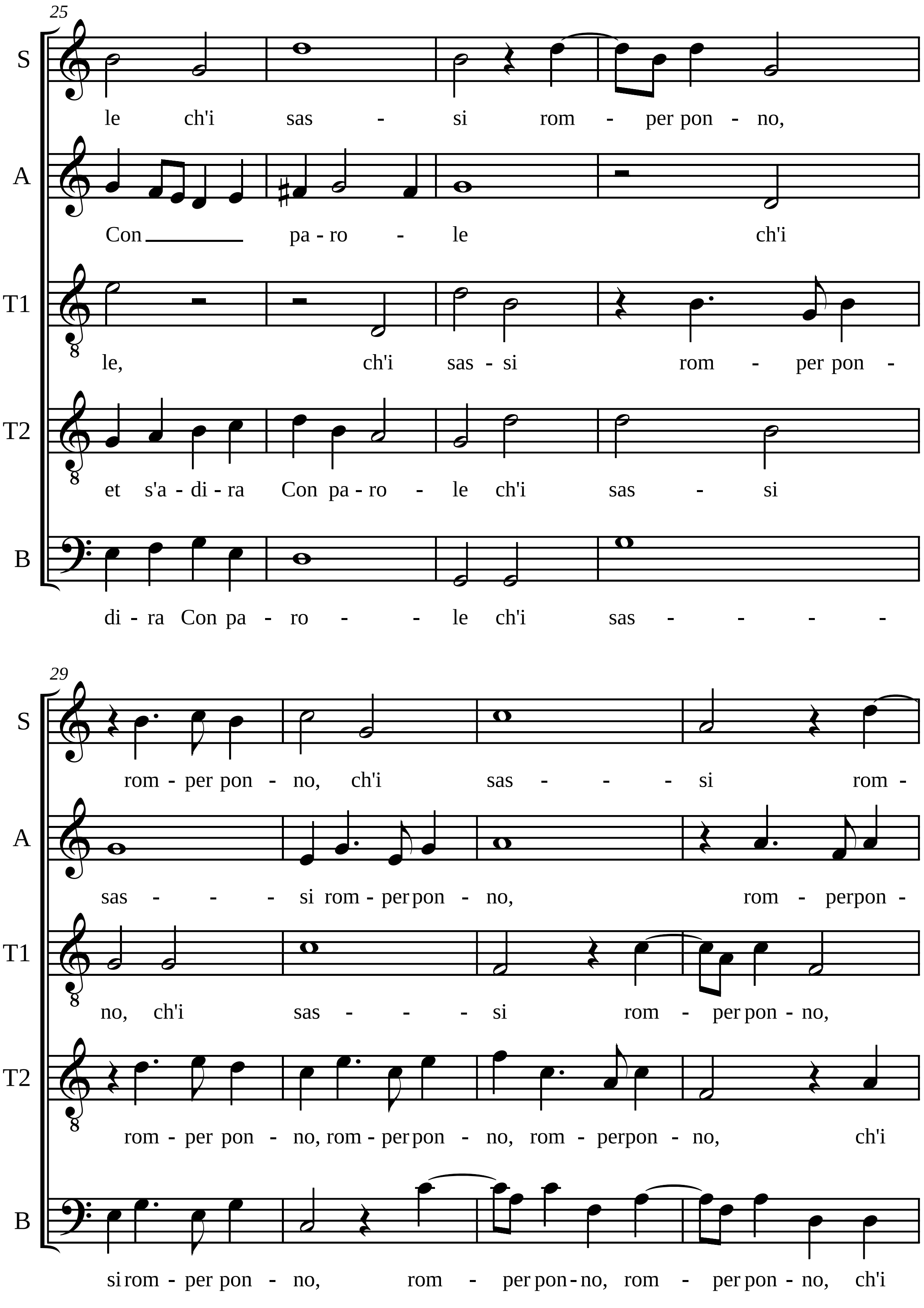
(Original Version)

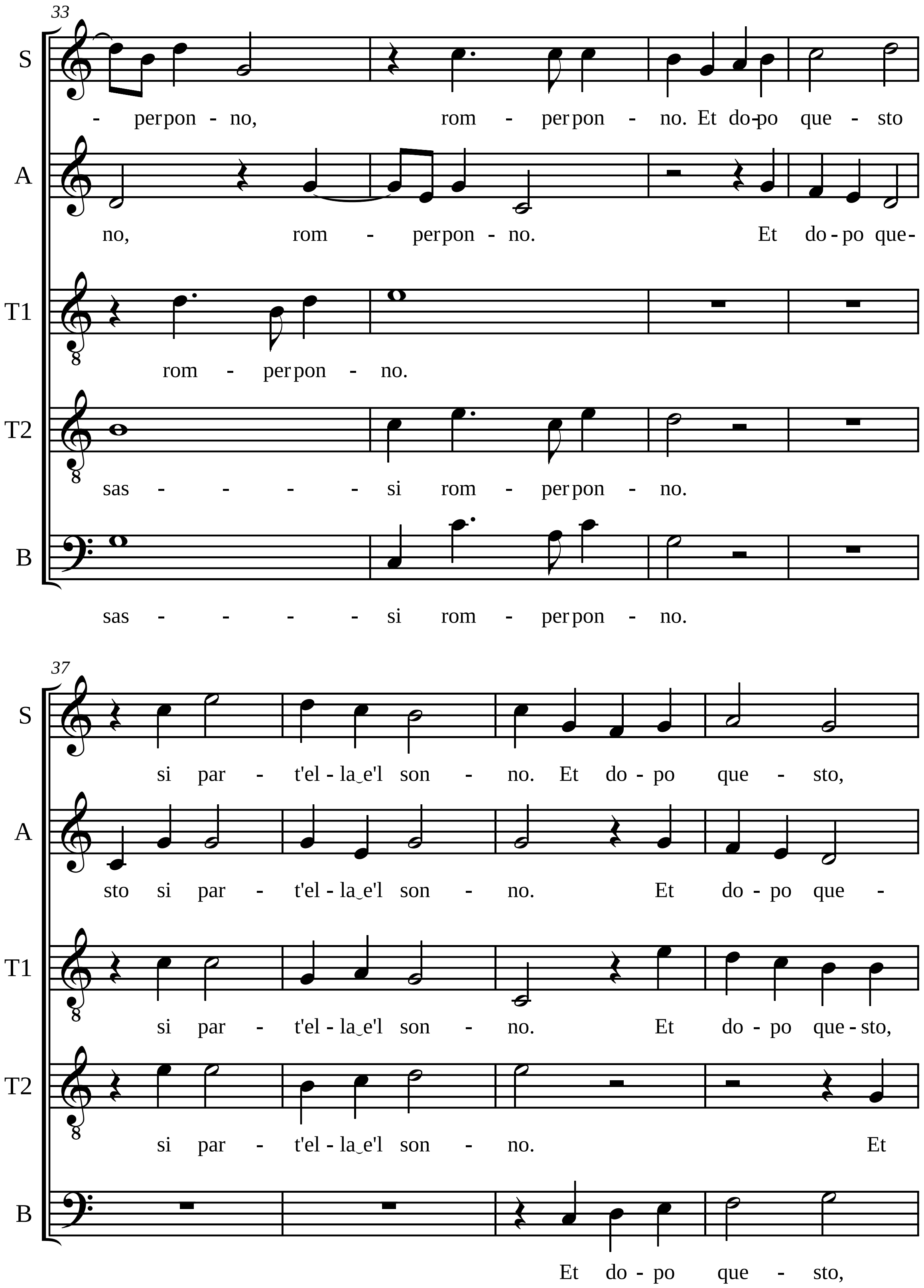
Luca Marenzio

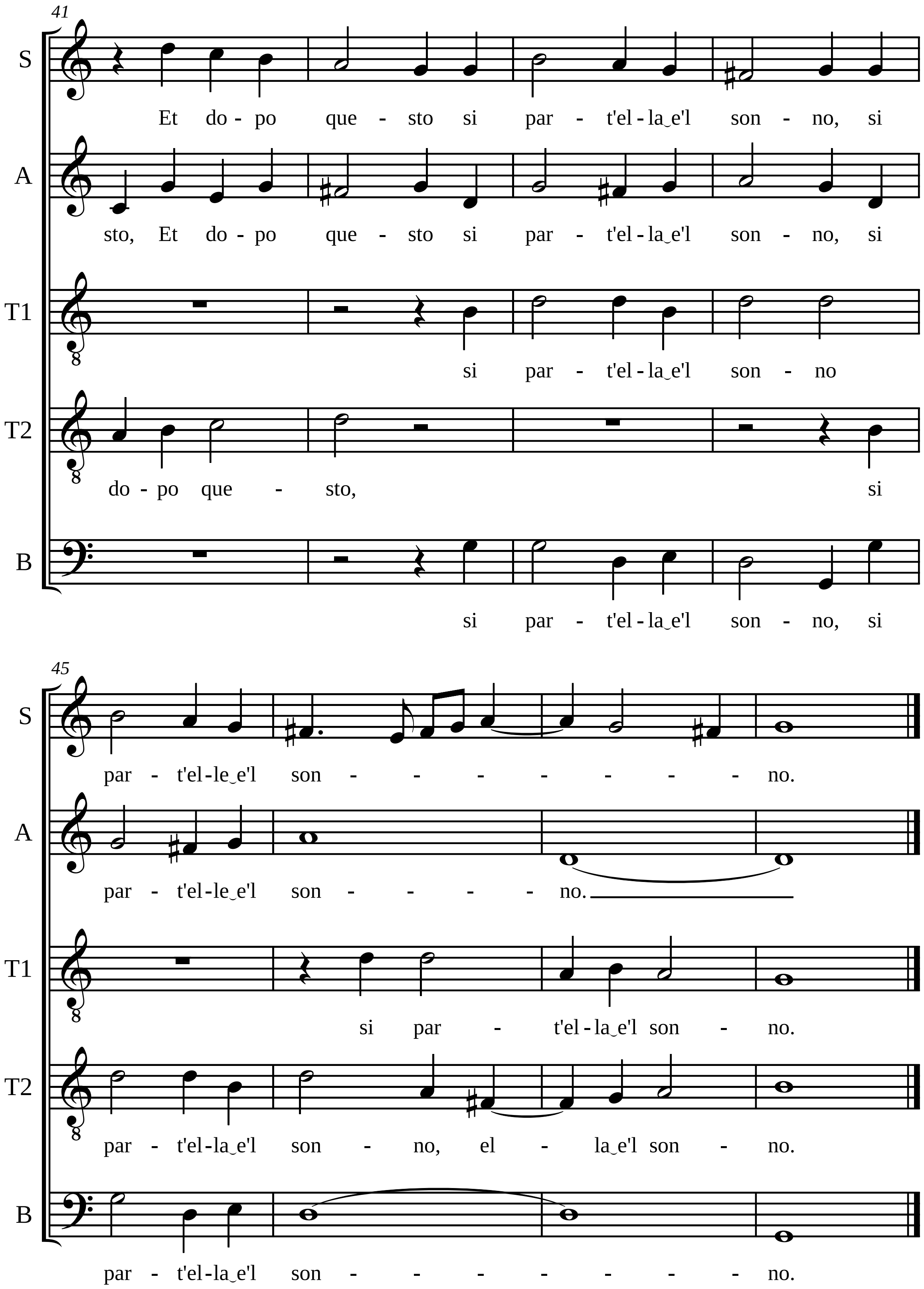

Soprano
Alto
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Bass
Io pian - - go,
Io pian - - - go,
Io pian - - - go,
Io pian - - - go,
5
S
A
T1
T2
B
et el - la il vol - to Con le sue man m'a - sciu - ga,
et el - la il vol - to Con le sue man m'a - sciu - ga,
et el - la il vol - to Con le sue man m'a - sciu - ga,
et el - la il vol - to

9
S
A
T1
T2
B
Io
pian - - - go
Io
pian - - - go
Io
pian - - - go
Io
pian - - - go
13
et el - la il vol - to Con le sue man m'a - sciu - ga et
et el - la il vol - to Con le sue man m'a - sciu - ga et
et el - la il vol - to Con le sue man m'a - sciu - ga et
et el - la il vol - to Con le sue man m'a - sciu - ga et


17
S
poi so - spi - ra, et poi so - spi -
A
poi so - spi - ra, et poi so - spi -
T1
poi so - spi - ra, et poi so - spi -
T2
so - spi - ra, et poi so - spi - ra
B
poi so - spi - ra, et poi so - spi -
21
S
ra Dol - ce - men - - te‿et s'a - di - ra Con pa - ro -
A
ra Dol - ce - men - - - te et s'a - di - ra
T1
ra Dol - ce - men - - te‿et s'a - di - ra Con pa - ro -
T2
Dol - ce - men - - - te
B
ra Dol - ce - men - - - te et s'a -


25
S
le ch'i sas - si rom - per pon - no,
A
Con pa - ro - le ch'i
T1
le, ch'i sas - si rom - per pon -
T2
et s'a - di - ra Con pa - ro - le ch'i sas - si
B
di - ra Con pa - ro - - le ch'i sas - - - -
29
S
rom - per pon - no, ch'i sas - - - si rom -
A
sas - - - si rom - per pon - no, rom - per pon -
T1
no, ch'i sas - - - si rom - per pon - no,
T2
rom - per pon - no, rom - per pon - no, rom - per pon - no, ch'i
B
si rom - per pon - no, rom - per pon - no, rom - per pon - no, ch'i

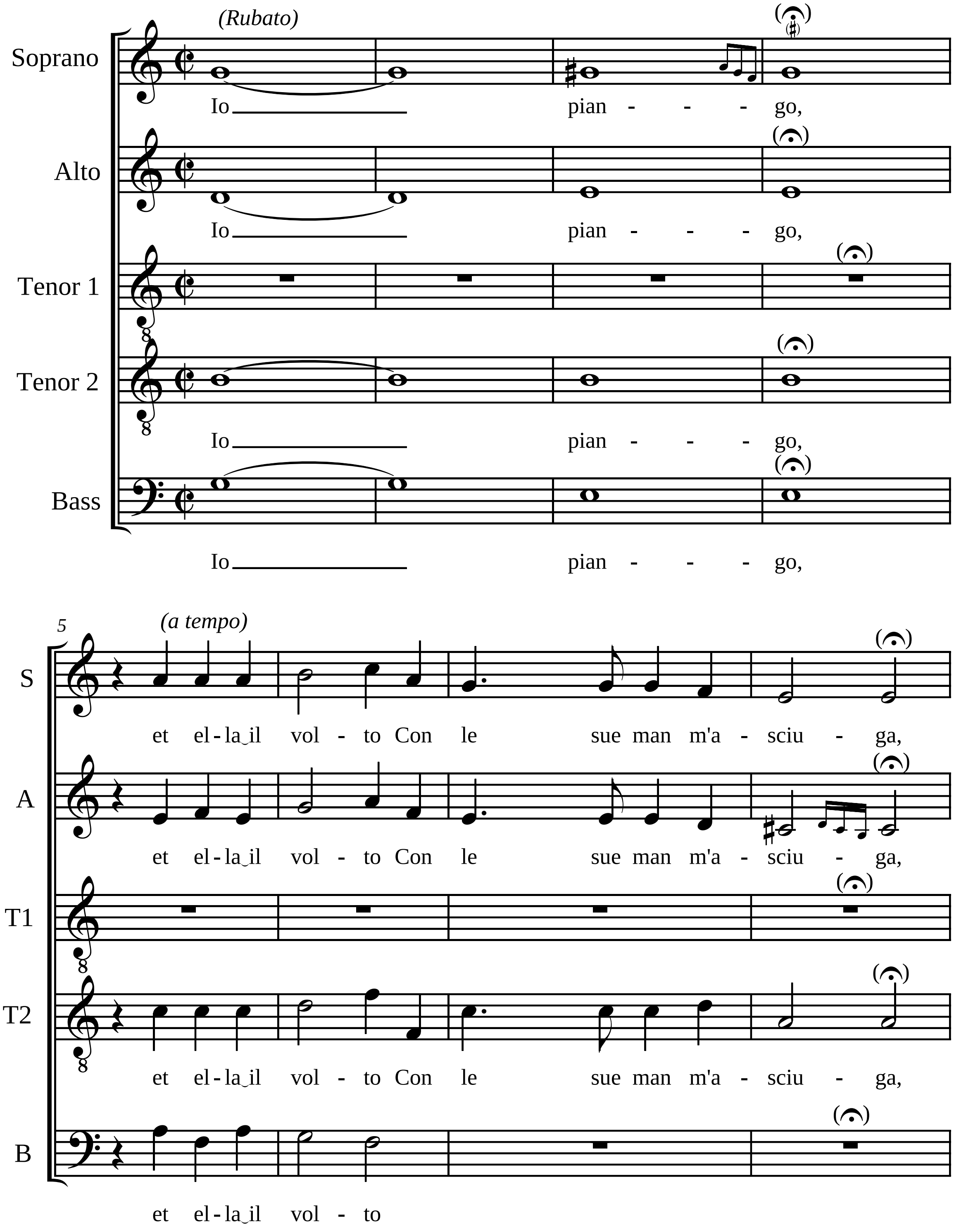

33
S
- per pon - no, rom - per pon - no. Et do-po que - sto
A
no, rom - per pon - no. Et do - po que-
T1
rom - per pon - no.
T2
sas - - - - si rom - per pon - no.
B
sas - - - - si rom - per pon - no.
37
S
si par - t'el - la‿e'l son - no. Et do - po que - sto,
A
sto si par - t'el - la‿e'l son - no. Et do - po que -
T1
si par - t'el - la‿e'l son - no. Et do - po que - sto,
T2
si par - t'el - la‿e'l son - no. Et
B
Et do - po que - sto,


41
S
Et do - po que - sto si par - t'el - la‿e'l son - no, si
A
sto, Et do - po que - sto si par - t'el - la‿e'l son - no, si
T1
si par - t'el - la‿e'l son - no
T2
do - po que - sto, si
B
si par - t'el - la‿e'l son - no, si
45
S
par - t'el - le‿e'l son - - - - - - - no.
A
par - t'el - le‿e'l son - - - - no.
T1
si par - t'el - la‿e'l son - no.
T2
par - t'el - la‿e'l son - no, el - la‿e'l son - no.
B
par - t'el - la‿e'l son - - - - - - - no.

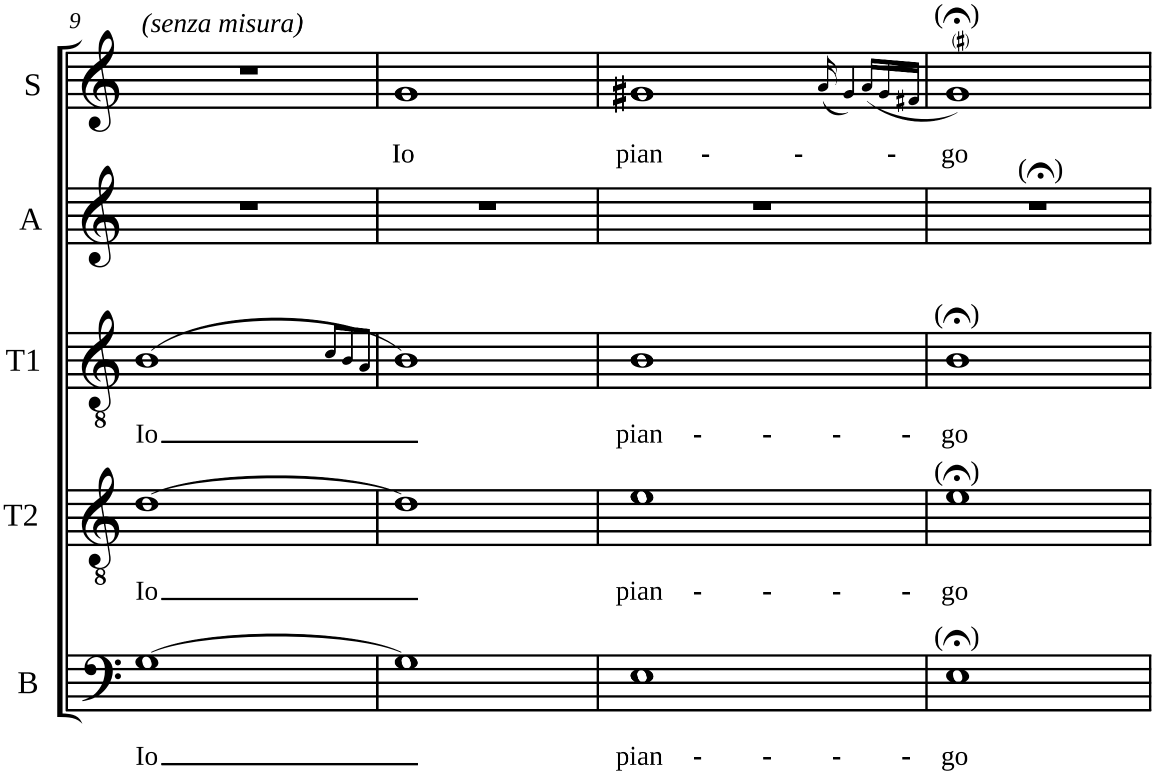
Io piango

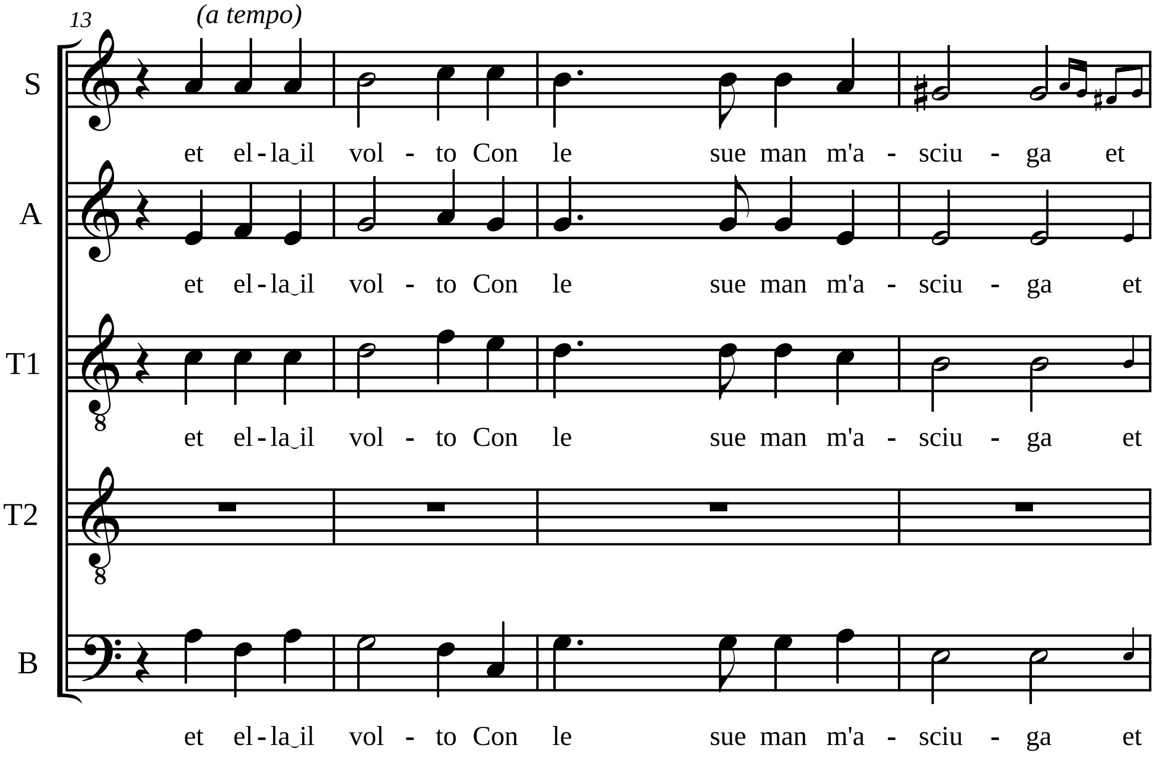
(Altered Version)

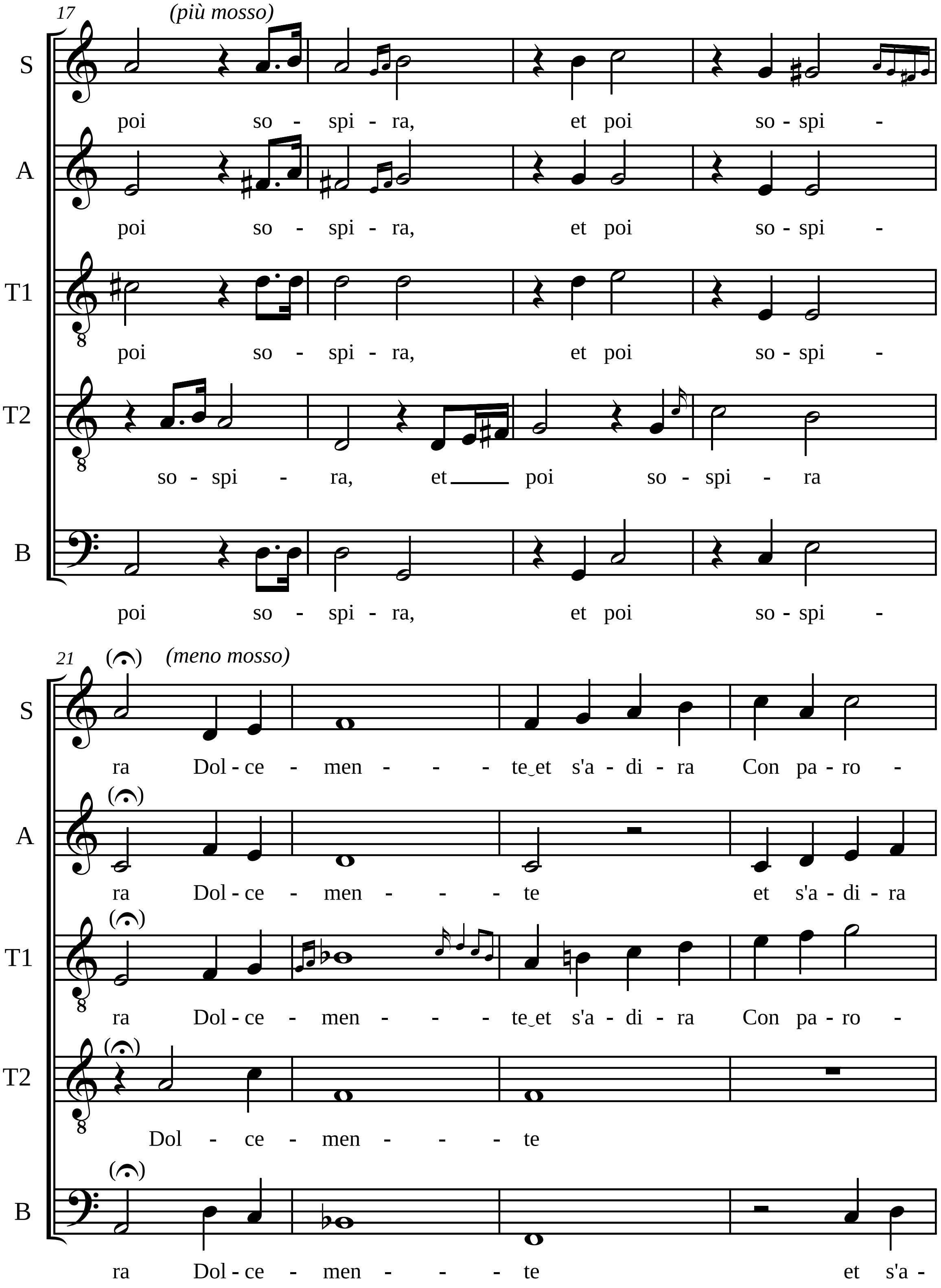
Luca Marenzio

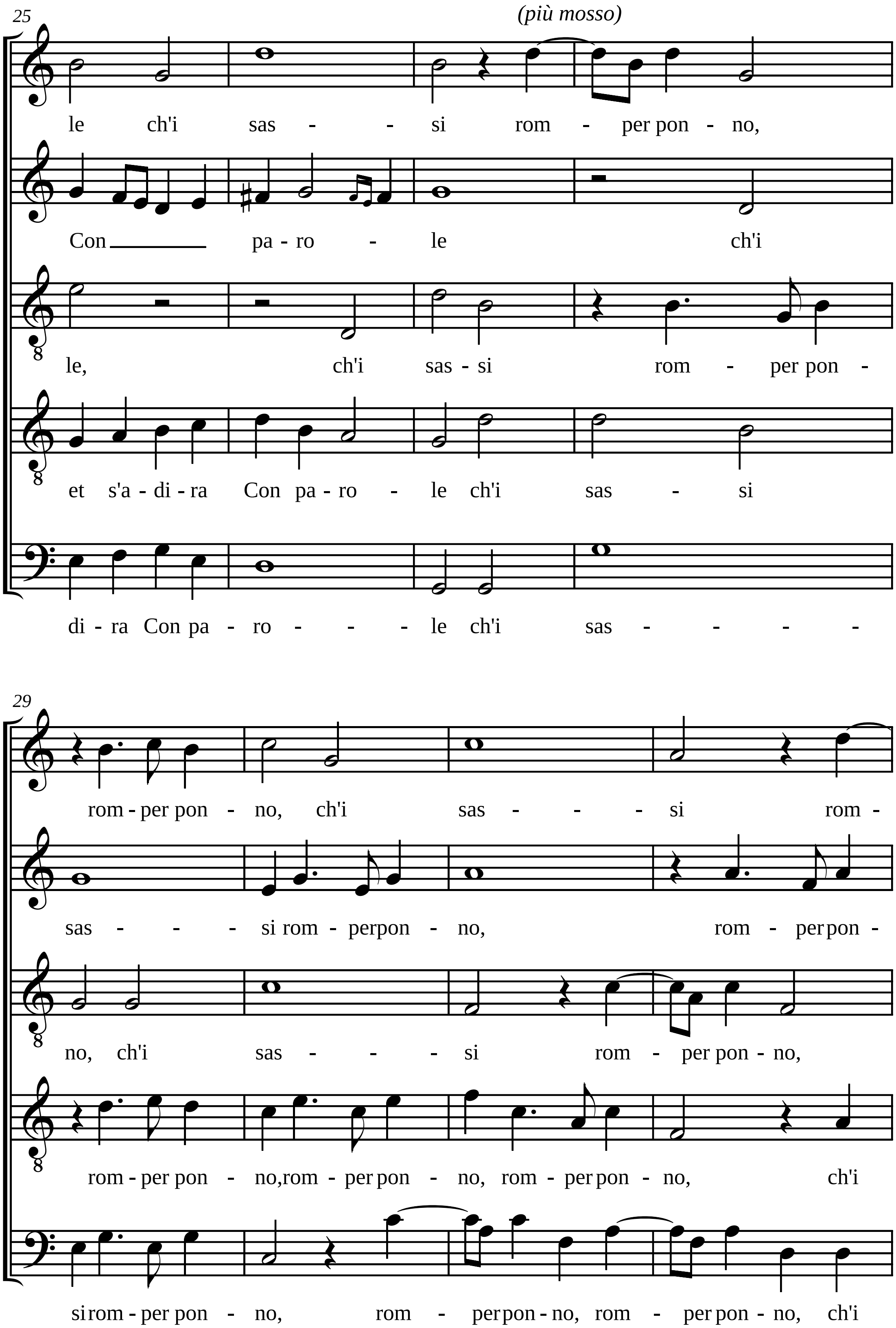


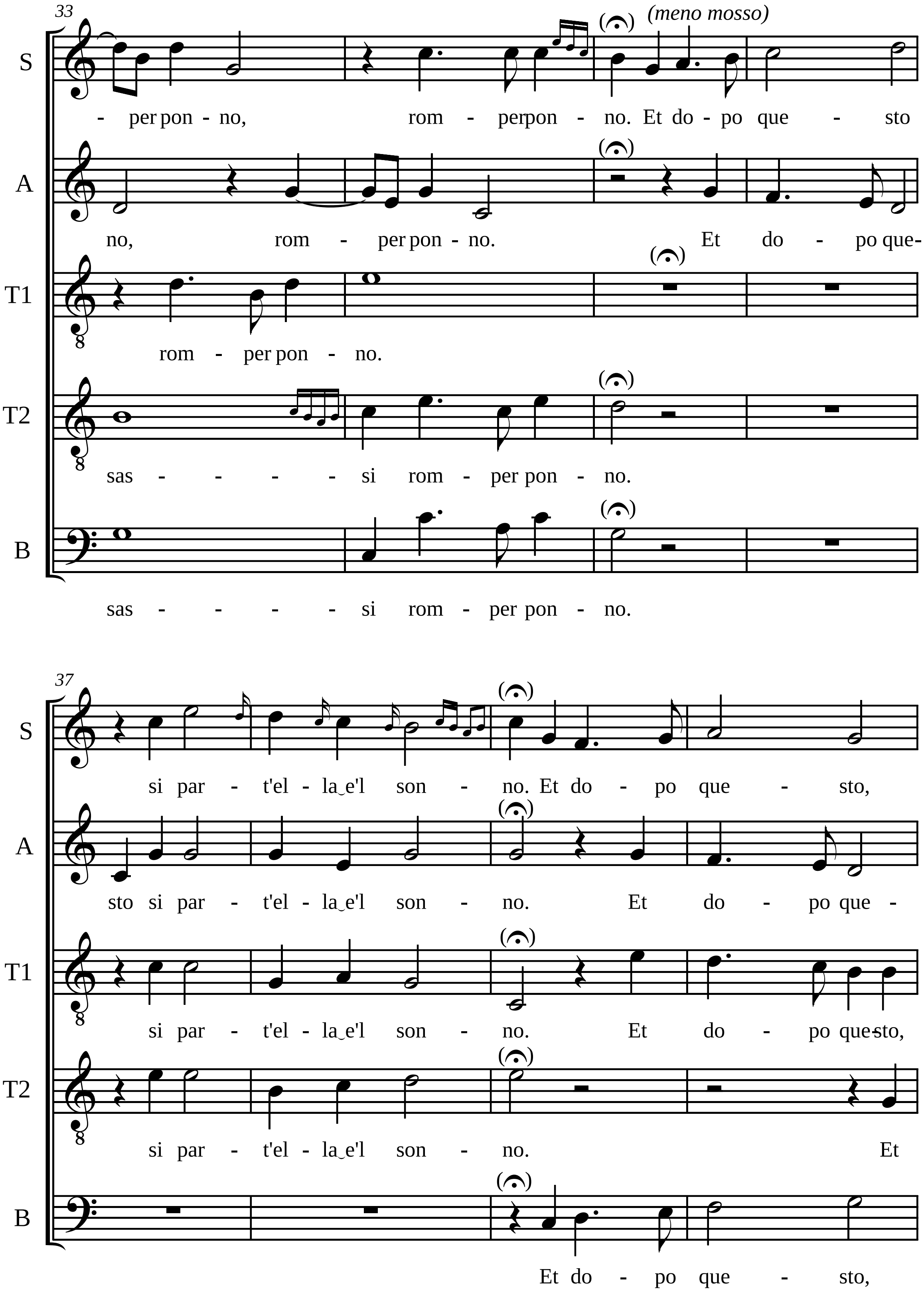
(Rubato)
Soprano
Alto
Tenor 1
Tenor 2
Bass
Io pian - - - go,
5
(a tempo)
S
A
T1
T2
B
et el-la il vol - to Con le sue man m'a - sciu - ga,

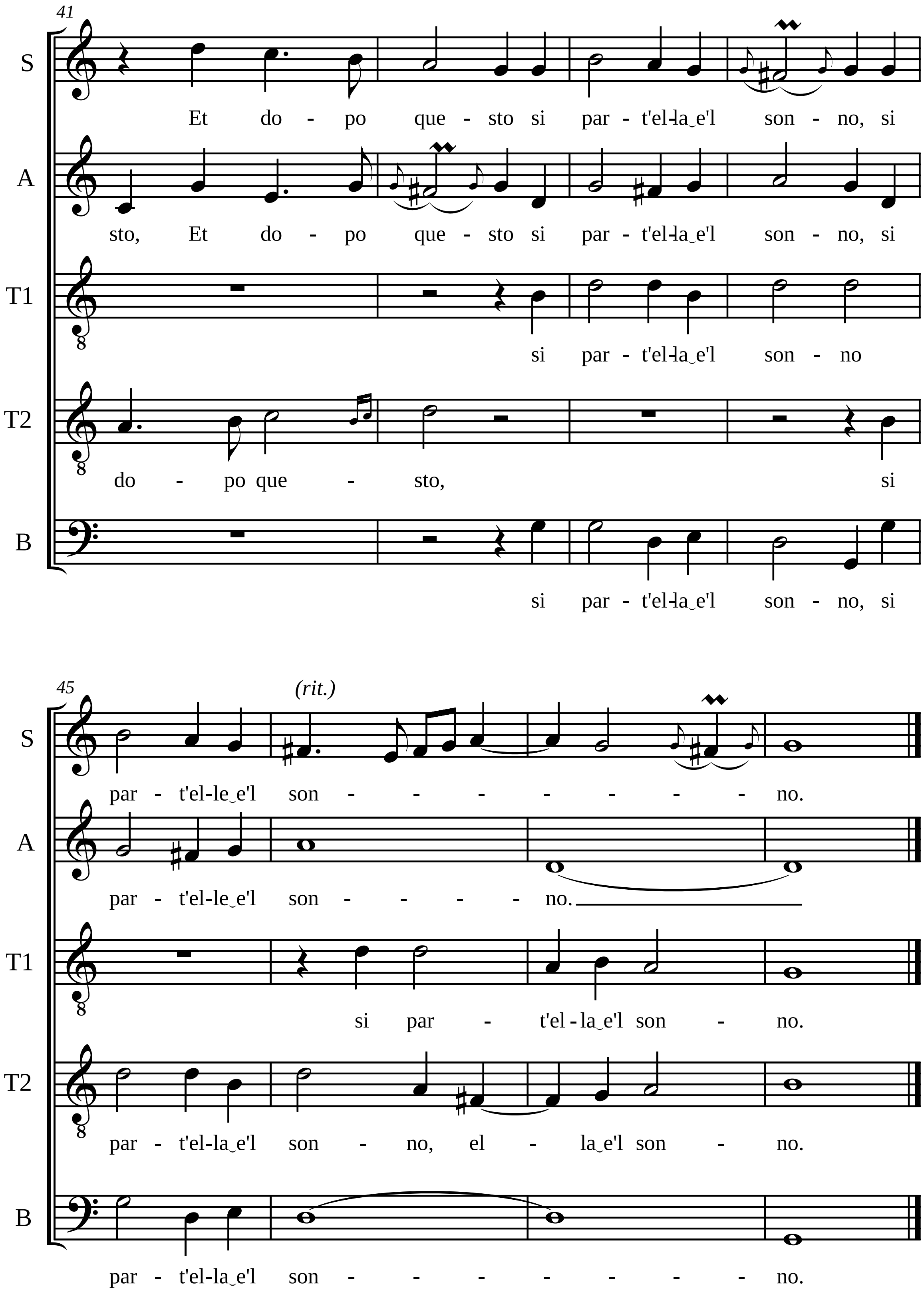

9
(senza misura)
S
A
T1
T2
B
Io pian - - - go
Io pian - - - - go
Io pian - - - - go
Io pian - - - - go


13
(a tempo)
S
A
T1
T2
B
et el - la il vol - to Con le sue man m'a - sciu - ga et
et el - la il vol - to Con le sue man m'a - sciu - ga et
et el - la il vol - to Con le sue man m'a - sciu - ga et
et el - la il vol - to Con le sue man m'a - sciu - ga et


17
(più mosso)
S
poi so - spi - ra, et poi so - spi -
A
poi so - spi - ra, et poi so - spi -
T1
poi so - spi - ra, et poi so - spi -
T2
so - spi - ra, et poi so - spi - ra
B
poi so - spi - ra, et poi so - spi -
21
(meno mosso)
S
ra Dol - ce - men - - - te et s'a - di - ra Con pa - ro -
A
ra Dol - ce - men - - - te et s'a - di - ra
T1
ra Dol - ce - men - - - te et s'a - di - ra Con pa - ro -
T2
Dol - ce - men - - - te
B
ra Dol - ce - men - - - te et s'a -


(più mosso)
25
S
A
T1
T2
B
le ch'i sas - - si rom - per pon - no,
Con pa - ro - le ch'i
le, ch'i sas - si rom - per pon -
et s'a - di - ra Con pa - ro - le ch'i sas - si
di - ra Con pa - ro - - - le ch'i sas - - - -
29
rom - per pon - no, ch'i sas - - - si rom -
sas - - - si rom - per pon - no, rom - per pon -
no, ch'i sas - - - si rom - per pon - no,
rom - per pon - no, rom - per pon - no, rom - per pon - no, ch'i
si rom - per pon - no, rom - per pon - no, rom - per pon - no, ch'i

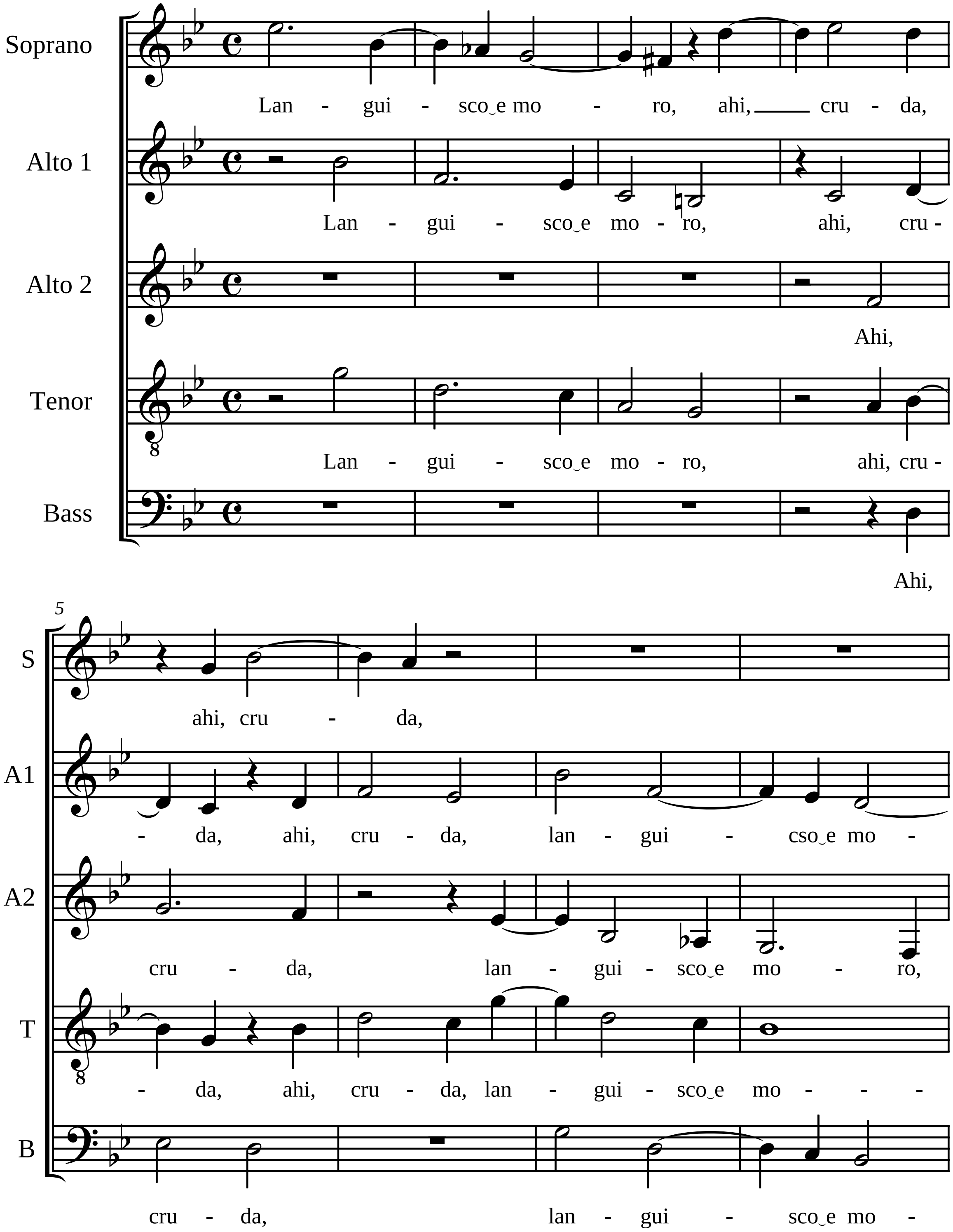
33
(meno mosso)
S
- per pon - no, rom - per pon - no. Et do - po que - sto
A
no, rom - per pon - no. Et do - po que-
T1
rom - per pon - no.
T2
sas - - - - si rom - per pon - no.
B
sas - - - - si rom - per pon - no.
37
S
si par - t'el - la e'l son - no. Et do - po que - sto,
A
sto si par - t'el - la e'l son - no. Et do - po que -
T1
si par - t'el - la e'l son - no. Et do - po que - sto,
T2
si par - t'el - la e'l son - no. Et
B
Et do - po que - sto,

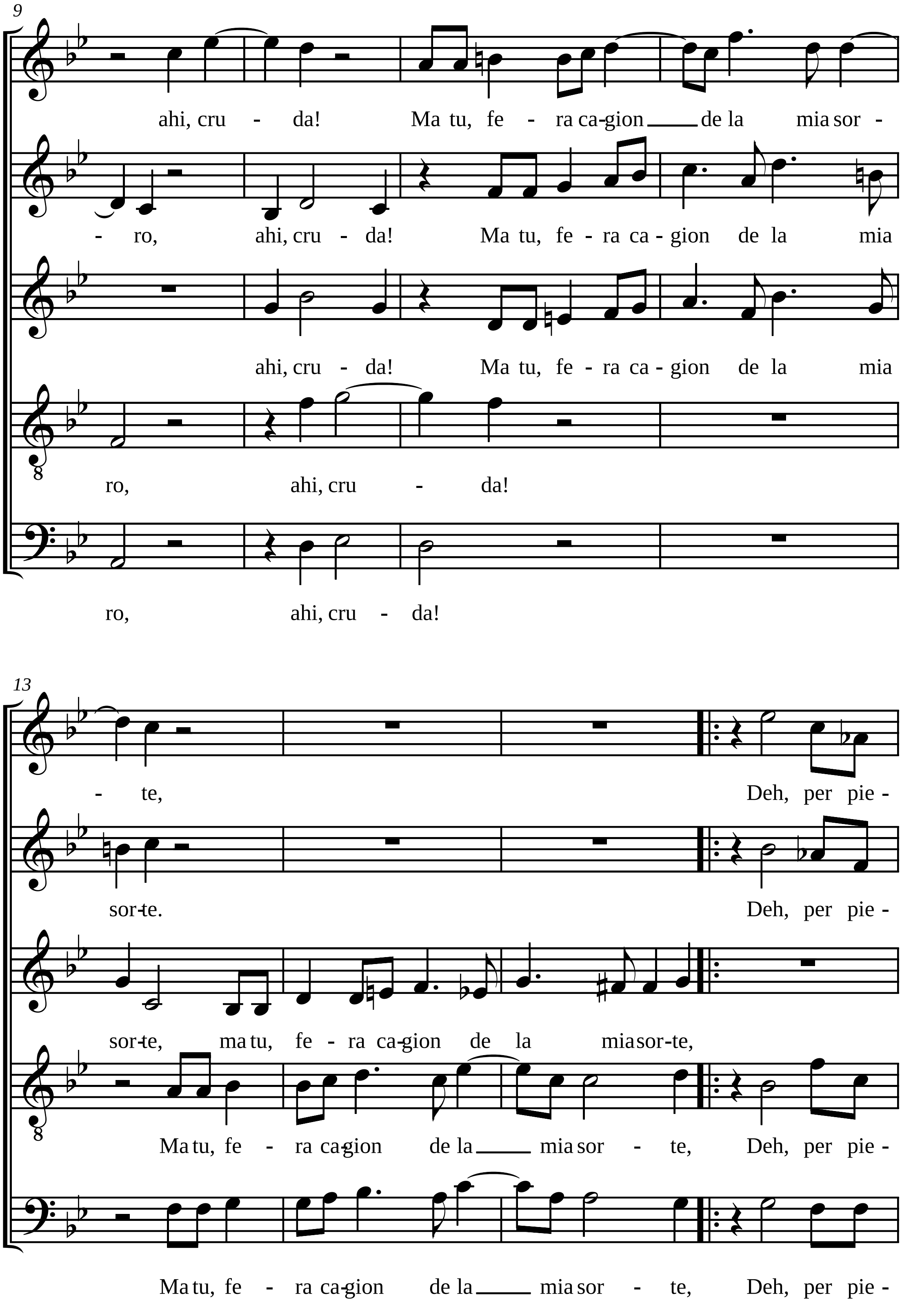

41
S
Et do - po que - sto si par - t'el-la e'l son - no, si
A
sto, Et do - po que - sto si par - t'el-la e'l son - no, si
T1
si par - t'el-la e'l son - no
T2
do - po que - sto, si
B
si par - t'el-la e'l son - no, si
45
(rit.)
S
par - t'el-le e'l son - - - - - - - no.
A
par - t'el-le e'l son - - - - no.
T1
si par - t'el - la e'l son - no.
T2
par - t'el-la e'l son - no, el - la e'l son - no.
B
par - t'el-la e'l son - - - - - - - no.

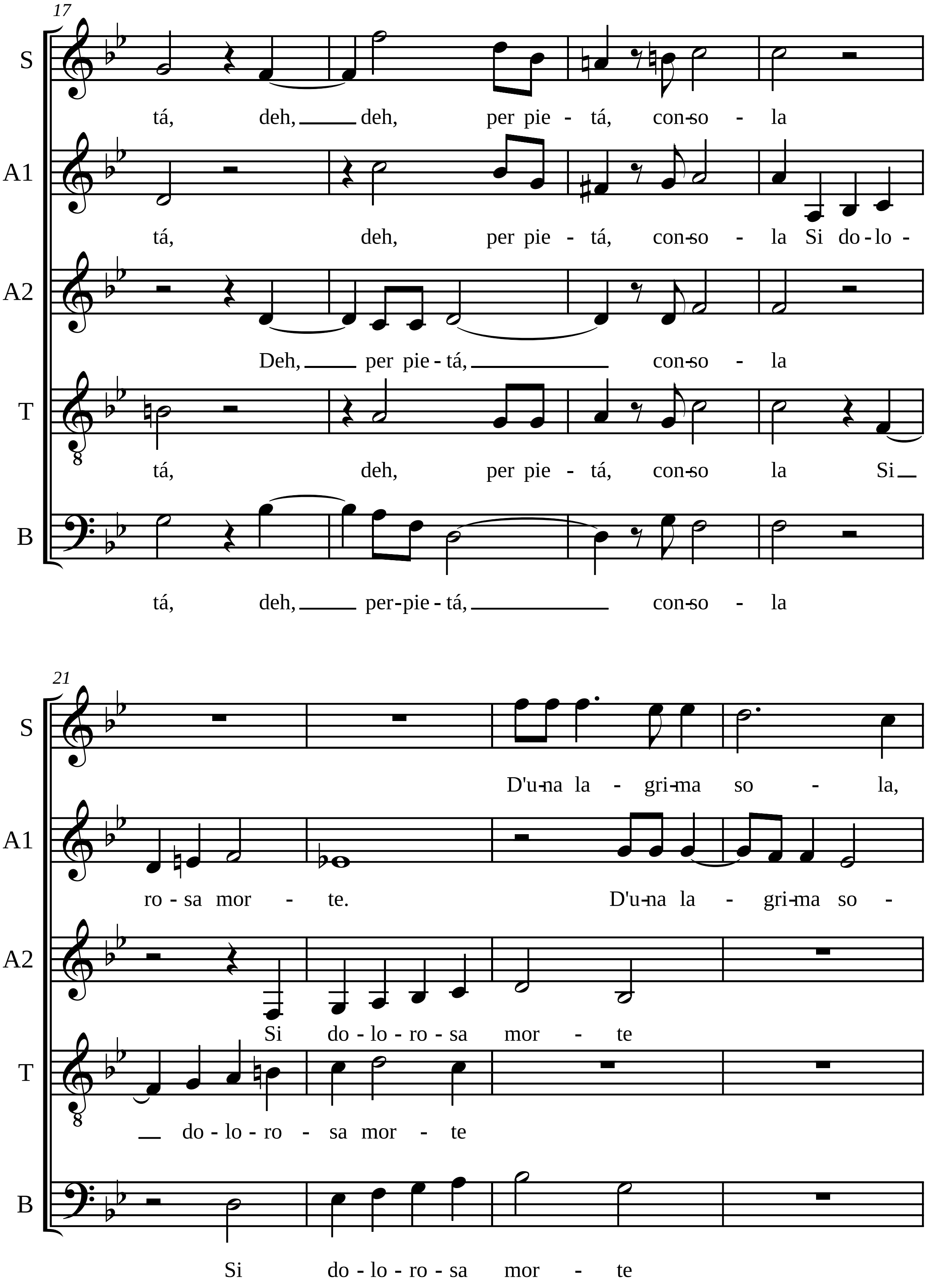
Languisco e moro

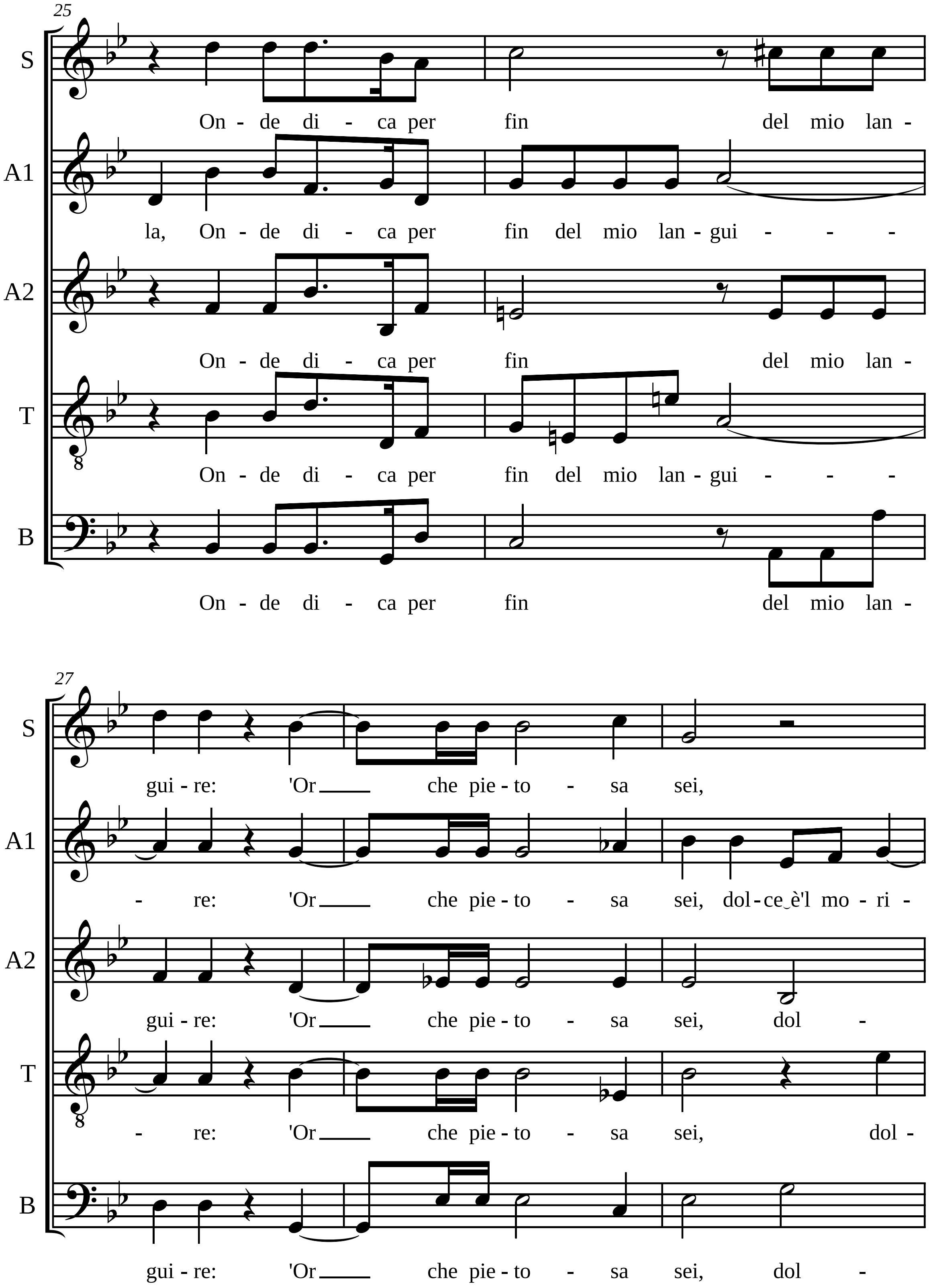
(Original Version)

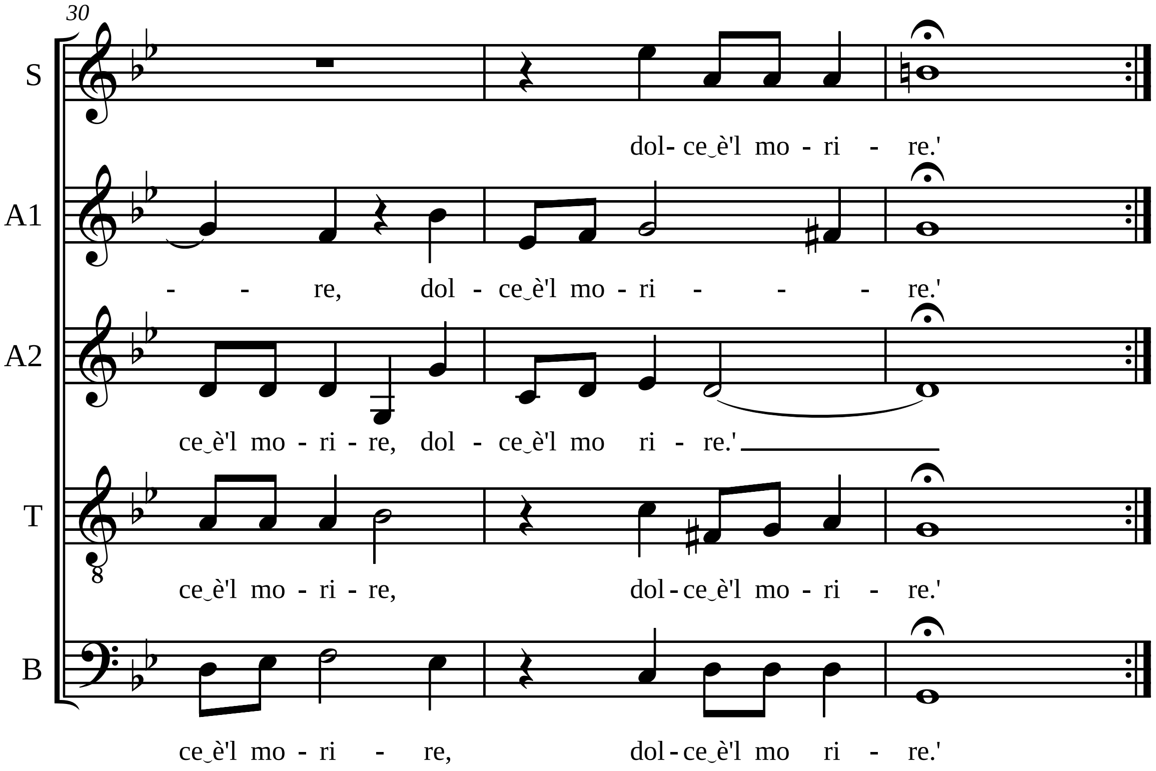
Gesualdo


Soprano
Lan - gui - sco‿e mo - ro, ahi, cru - da,
Alto 1
Lan - gui - sco‿e mo - ro, ahi, cru -
Alto 2
Ahi,
Tenor
Lan - gui - sco‿e mo - ro, ahi, cru -
Bass
Ahi,
5
S
ahi, cru - da,
A1
- da, ahi, cru - da, lan - gui - cso‿e mo -
A2
cru - da, lan - gui - sco‿e mo - ro,
T
- da, ahi, cru - da, lan - gui - sco‿e mo - - -
B
cru - da, lan - gui - sco‿e mo -


9
S
A1
A2
T
B
ahi, cru - da! Ma tu, fe - ra ca-gion de la mia sor -
- ro, ahi, cru - da! Ma tu, fe - ra ca - gion de la mia
ahi, cru - da! Ma tu, fe - ra ca - gion de la mia
ro, ahi, cru - da!
ro, ahi, cru - da!
13
- te, Deh, per pie -
sor-te. Deh, per pie -
sor-te, ma tu, fe - ra ca-gion de la mia sor-te,
Ma tu, fe - ra ca-gion de la mia sor - te, Deh, per pie -
Ma tu, fe - ra ca-gion de la mia sor - te, Deh, per pie -


17
S
tá, deh, deh, per pie - tá, con-so - la
A1
tá, deh, per pie - tá, con-so - la Si do-lo -
A2
Deh, per pie - tá, con-so - la
T
tá, deh, per pie - tá, con-so la Si
B
tá, deh, per-pie - tá, con-so - la
21
S
D'u-na la - gri-ma so - la,
A1
ro - sa mor - te. D'u-na la - gri-ma so -
A2
Si do - lo - ro - sa mor - te
T
do - lo - ro - sa mor - te
B
Si do - lo - ro - sa mor - te

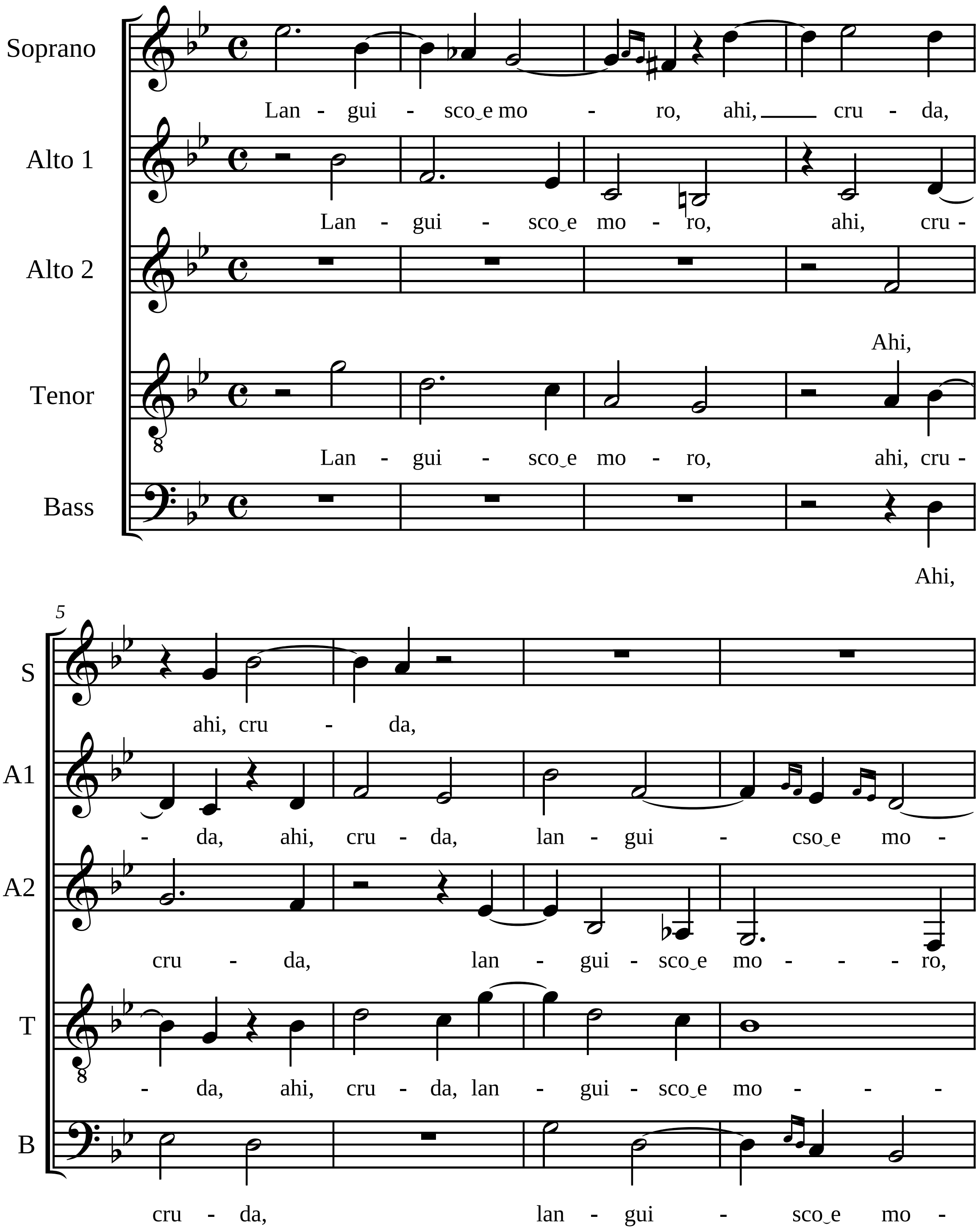
25
S
On - de di - ca per fin del mio lan -
A1
la, On - de di - ca per fin del mio lan - gui - - -
A2
On - de di - ca per fin del mio lan -
T
8
On - de di - ca per fin del mio lan - gui - - -
B
On - de di - ca per fin del mio lan -
27
S
gui - re: 'Or che pie - to - sa sei,
A1
- re: 'Or che pie - to - sa sei, dol - ce‿è'l mo - ri -
A2
gui - re: 'Or che pie - to - sa sei, dol -
T
8
- re: 'Or che pie - to - sa sei, dol -
B
gui - re: 'Or che pie - to - sa sei, dol -


30
S
A1
A2
T
B
dol- ce‿è'l mo - ri - re.'
- - re, dol - ce‿è'l mo - ri - - - re.'
ce‿è'l mo - ri - re, dol - ce‿è'l mo ri - re.'
ce‿è'l mo - ri - re, dol - ce‿è'l mo - ri - re.'
ce‿è'l mo - ri - re, dol - ce‿è'l mo ri - re.'

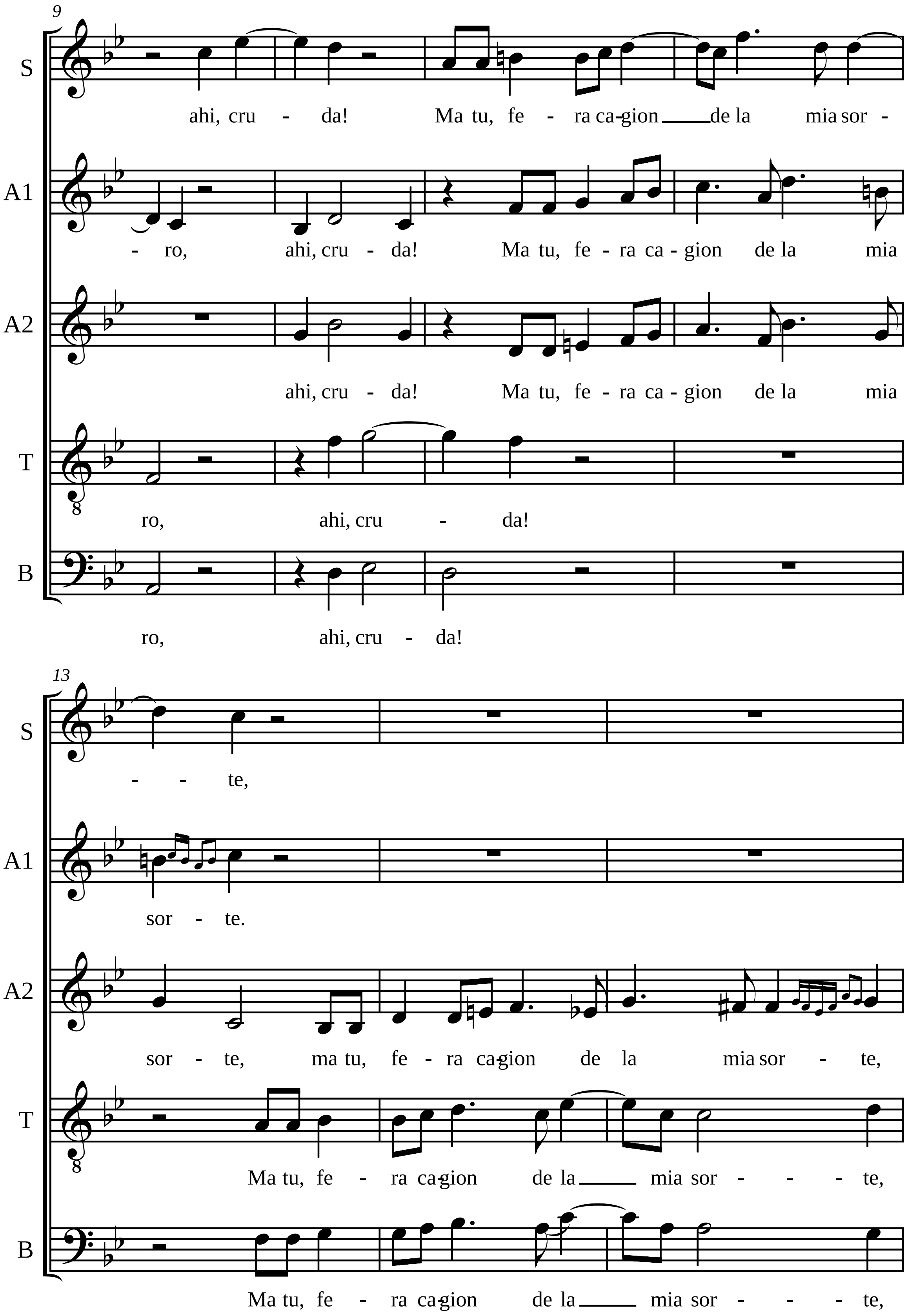
Languisco e moro

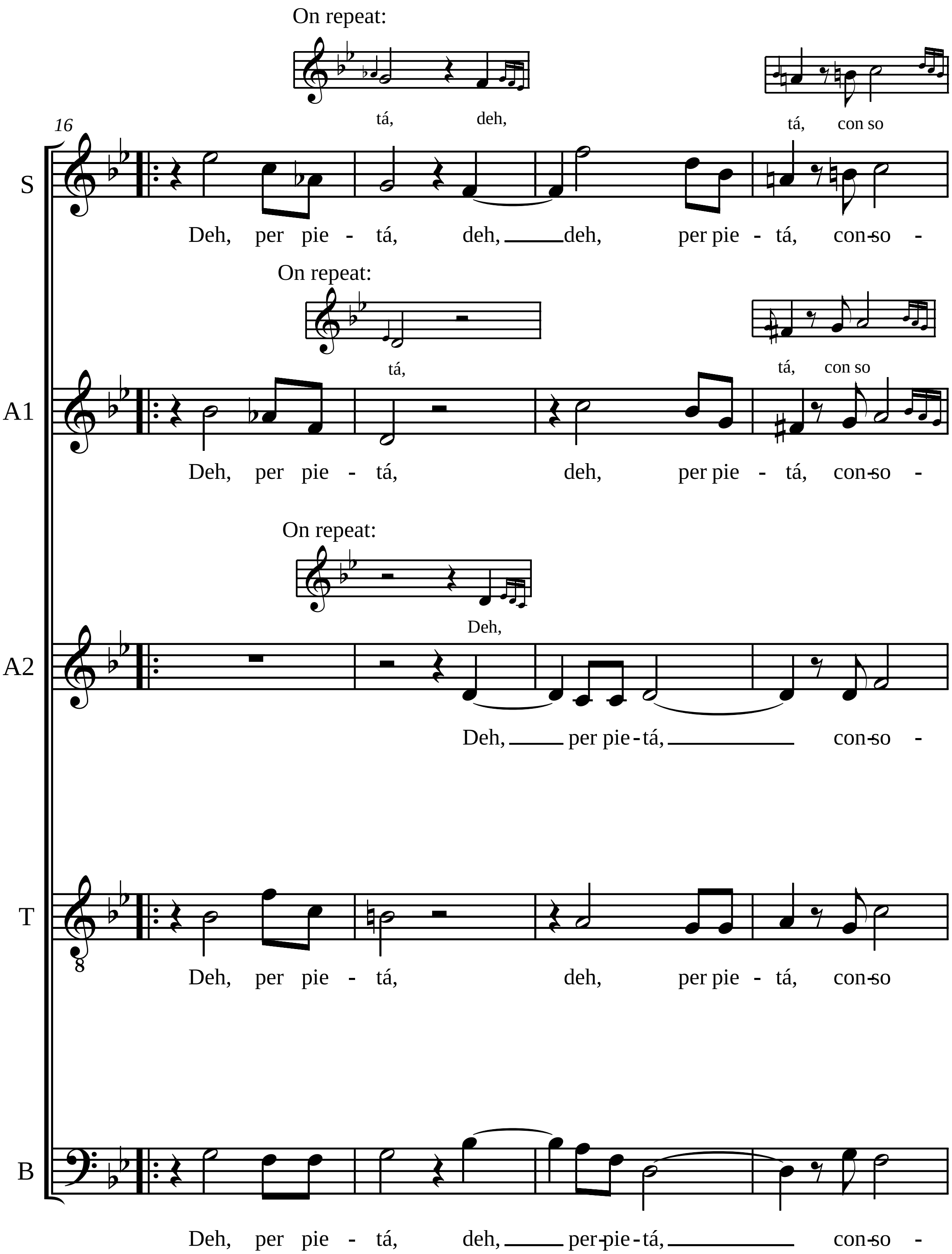
(Altered Version)

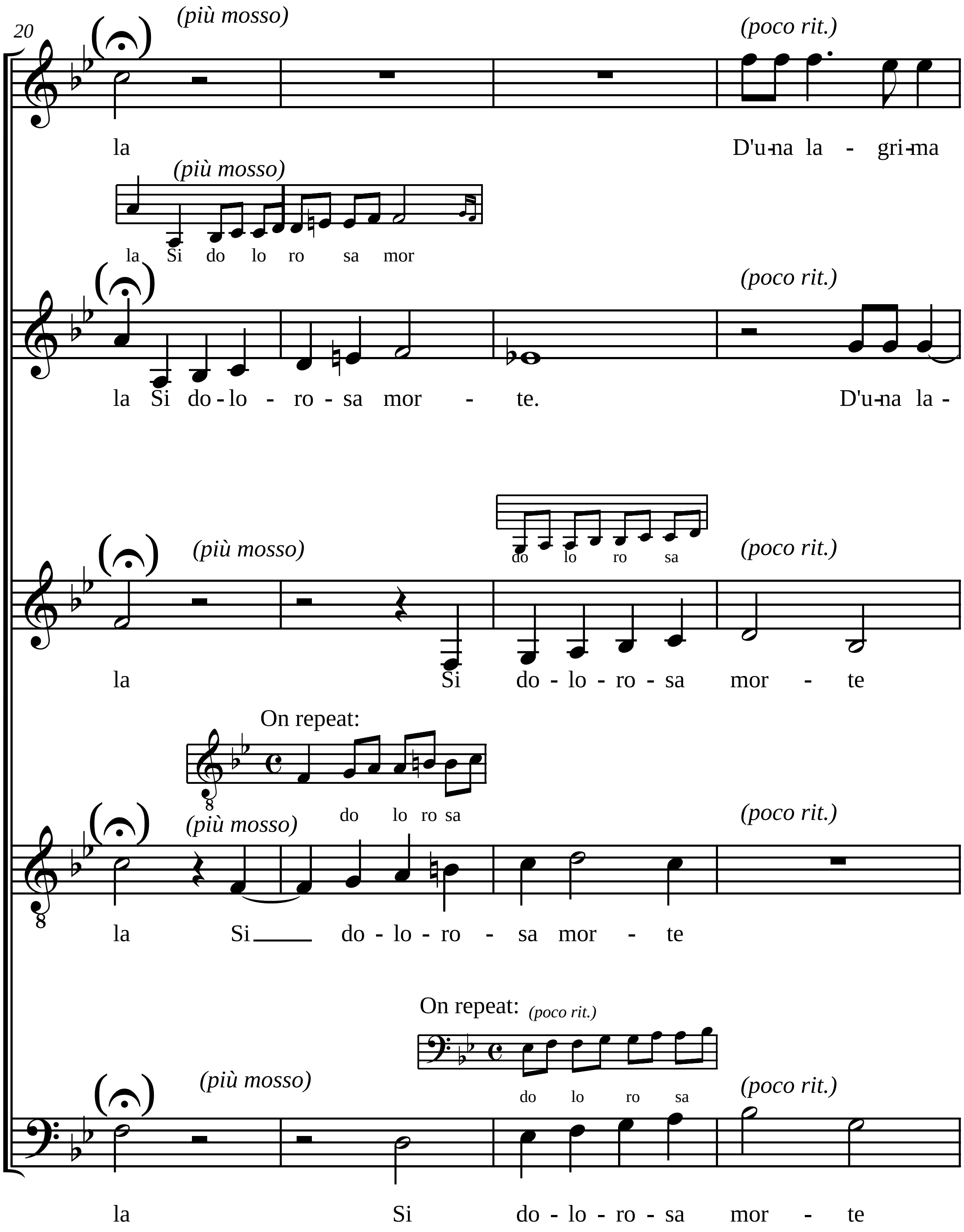
Gesualdo

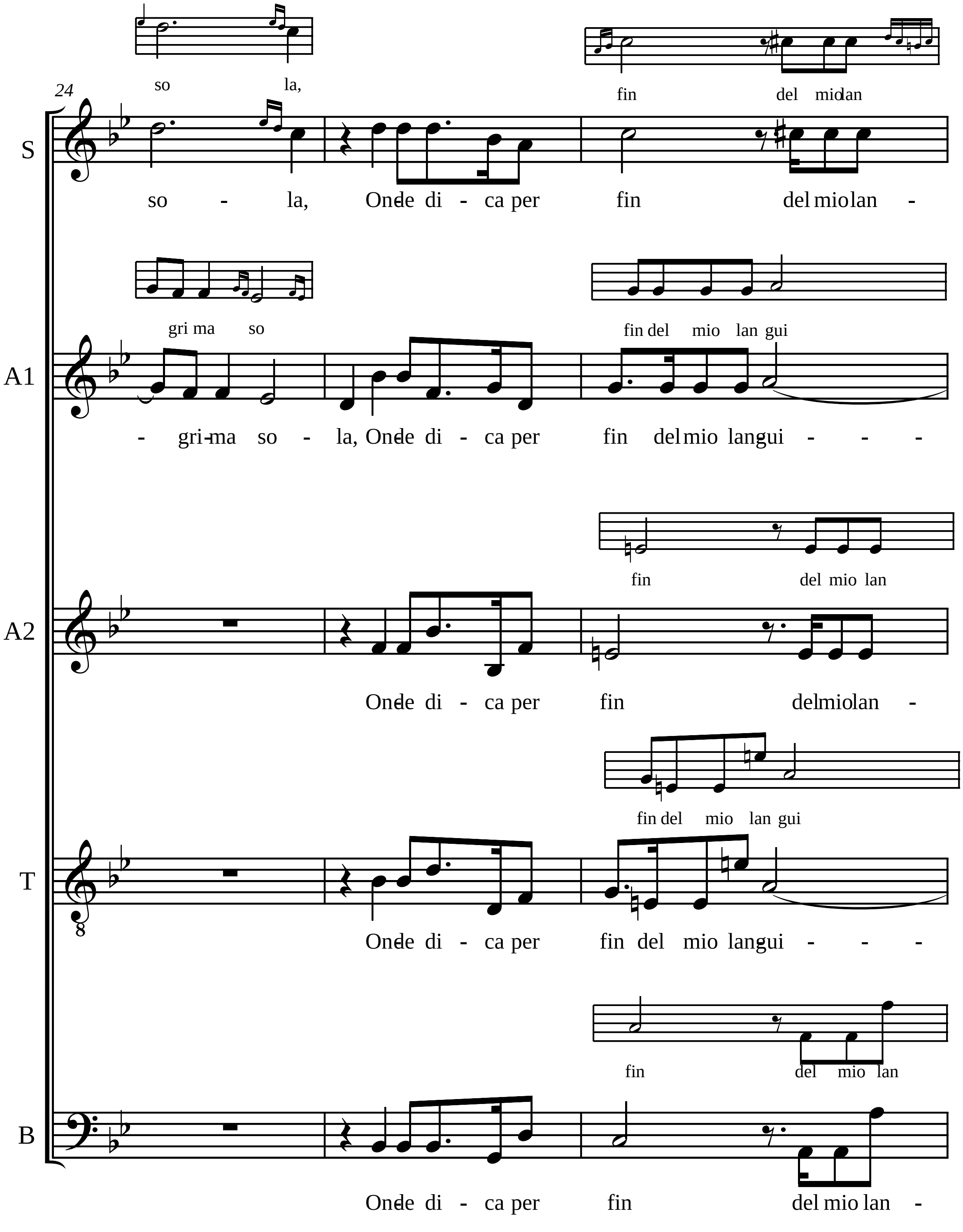


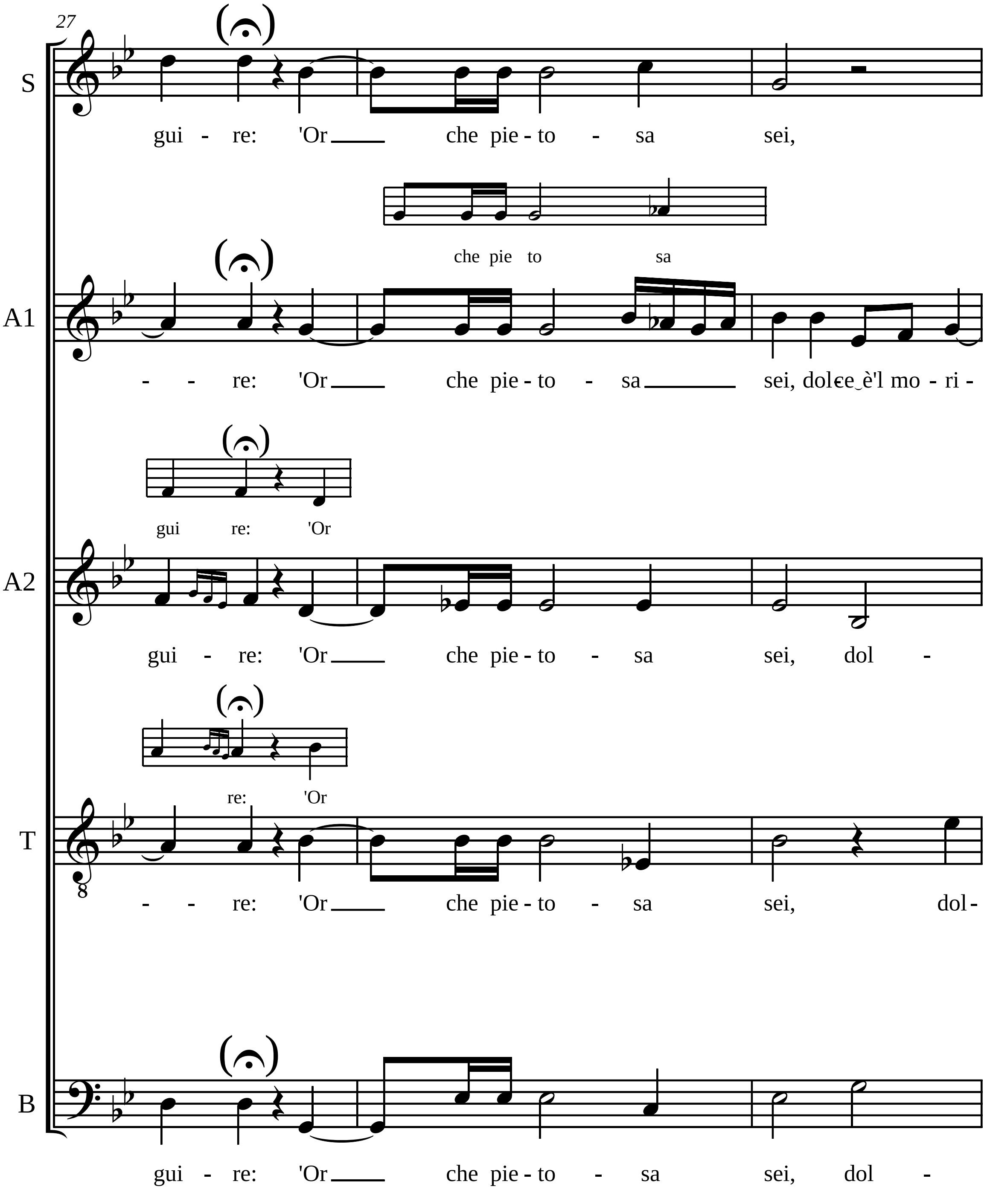
Soprano
Alto 1
Alto 2
Tenor
Bass
Lan - gui - sco‿e mo - ro, ahi, cru - da,
Lan - gui - sco‿e mo - ro, ahi, cru -
Ahi,
Lan - gui - sco‿e mo - ro, ahi, cru -
Ahi,
5
S
A1
A2
T
B
ahi, cru - da,
- da, ahi, cru - da, lan - gui - cso‿e mo -
cru - da, lan - gui - sco‿e mo - - - ro,
- da, ahi, cru - da, lan - gui - sco‿e mo - - -
cru - da, lan - gui - sco‿e mo -

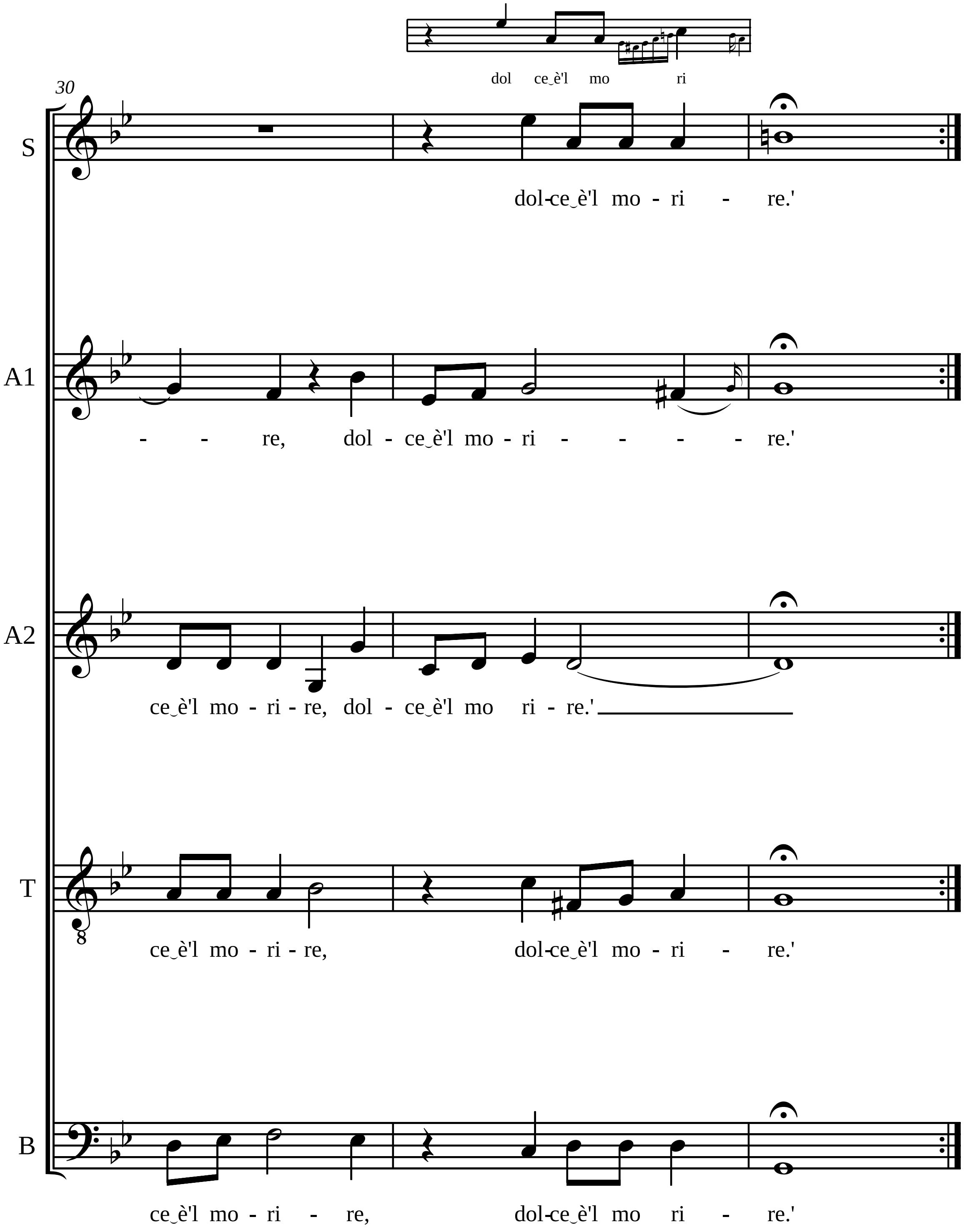

9
S
ahi, cru - da! Ma tu, fe - ra ca-gion de la mia sor -
A1
- ro, ahi, cru - da! Ma tu, fe - ra ca - gion de la mia
A2
ahi, cru - da! Ma tu, fe - ra ca - gion de la mia
T
ro, ahi, cru - da!
B
ro, ahi, cru - da!
13
S
- - te,
A1
sor - te.
A2
sor - te, ma tu, fe - ra ca-gion de la mia sor - te,
T
Ma tu, fe - ra ca-gion de la mia sor - - - te,
B
Ma tu, fe - ra ca-gion de la mia sor - - - te,


On repeat:
tá, deh,
tá, con so
16
S
Deh, per pie - tá, deh, deh, per pie - tá, con - so -
On repeat:
tá,
tá, con so
A1
Deh, per pie - tá, deh, per pie - tá, con - so -
On repeat:
Deh,
A2
Deh, per pie - tá, con - so -
T
Deh, per pie - tá, deh, per pie - tá, con - so
B
Deh, per pie - tá, deh, per - pie - tá, con - so -


20
(più mosso)
(poco rit.)
S
la
D'u-na la - gri-ma
(più mosso)
la Si do lo ro sa mor
(poco rit.)
A1
la Si do-lo - ro - sa mor - te.
D'u-na la -
do lo ro sa
(più mosso)
(poco rit.)
A2
la
Si do - lo - ro - sa mor - te
On repeat:
do lo ro sa
(più mosso)
(poco rit.)
T
la Si do - lo - ro - sa mor - te
On repeat: (poco rit.)
do lo ro sa
(più mosso)
(poco rit.)
B
la Si do - lo - ro - sa mor - te


24
S
so la,
fin del mio lan
so - la, Onde di - ca per fin del mio lan -
A1
gri ma so
fin del mio lan gui
- gri - ma so - la, Onde di - ca per fin del mio langui - - -
A2
fin del mio lan
Onde di - ca per fin del mio lan -
T
fin del mio lan gui
Onde di - ca per fin del mio langui - - -
B
fin del mio lan
Onde di - ca per fin del mio lan -


27
S
A1
A2
T
B
gui - re: 'Or che pie - to - sa sei,
che pie to sa
- - re: 'Or che pie - to - sa sei, dolce è'l mo - ri -
gui re: 'Or
gui - re: 'Or che pie - to - sa sei, dol -
re: 'Or
- - re: 'Or che pie - to - sa sei, dol-
gui - re: 'Or che pie - to - sa sei, dol -


dol ce_è'l mo ri
30
S
dol-ce_è'l mo - ri - re.'
A1
- - re, dol - ce_è'l mo - ri - - - - re.'
A2
ce_è'l mo - ri - re, dol - ce_è'l mo ri - re.'
T
ce_è'l mo - ri - re, dol-ce_è'l mo - ri - re.'
B
ce_è'l mo - ri - re, dol-ce_è'l mo ri - re.'

APPENDIX C:

A CAPPELLA CHORAL JAZZ SCORES

I. *Come Sunday* by Duke Ellington, Arranged by Greg Murai

Original Version 188

Altered Version 192

II. *I'll Be Seeing You* by Irving Kahal and Sammy Fain, Arranged by Phil Mattson (Original Version) 197

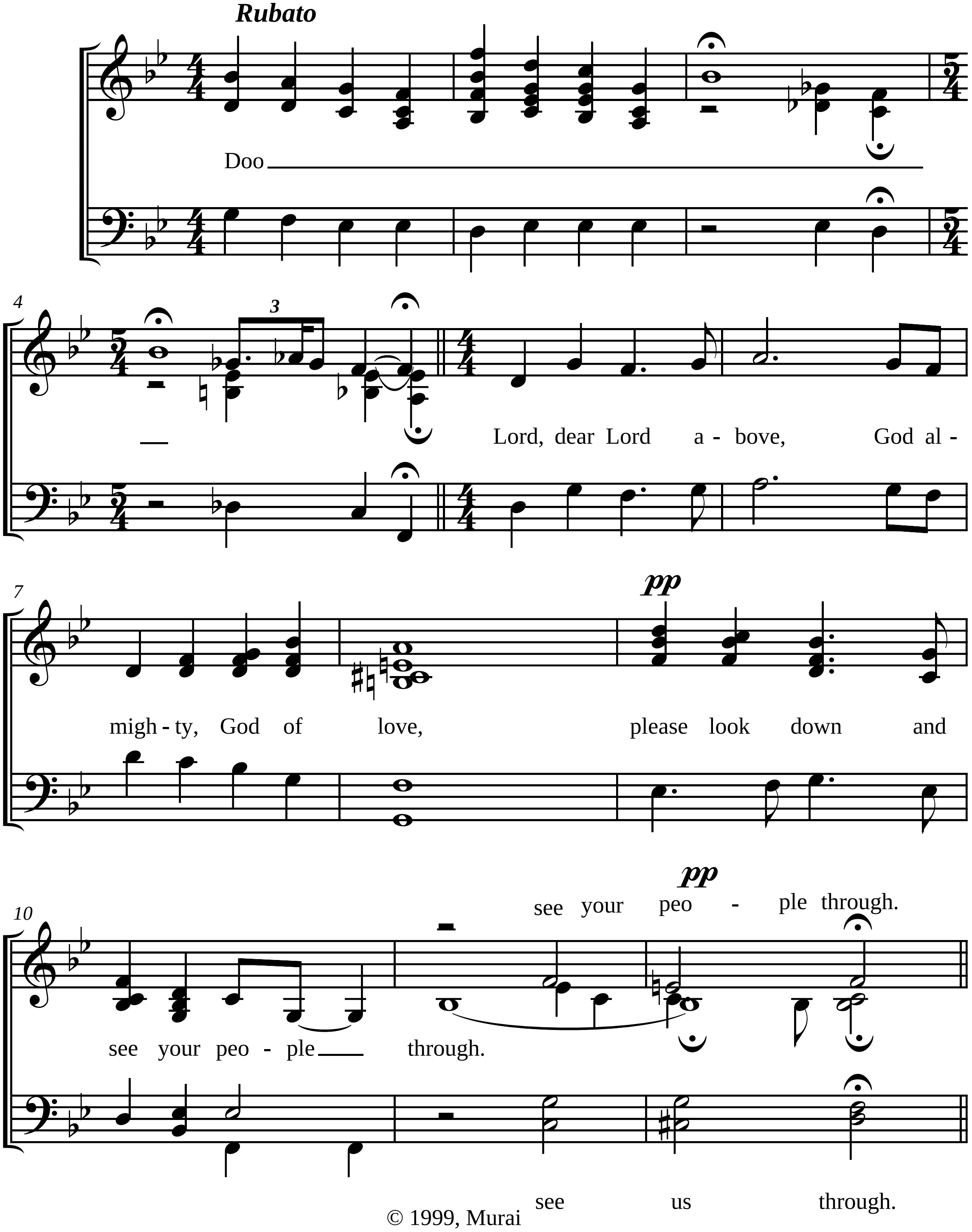
III. *My Funny Valentine* by Richard Rogers and Lorenz Hart, Arranged by Dave Barduhn (Original Version) 199

Come Sunday

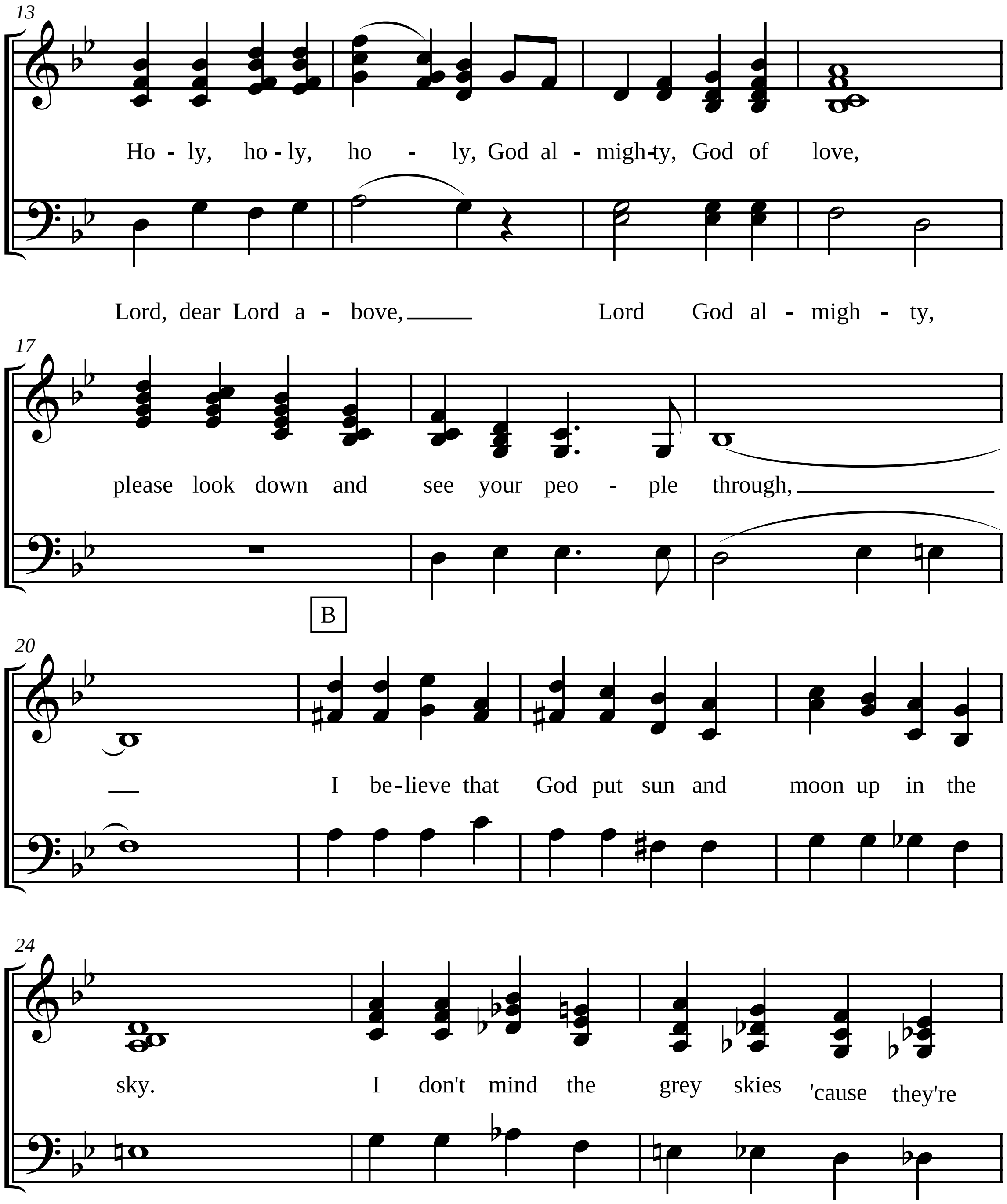
(Original Version)

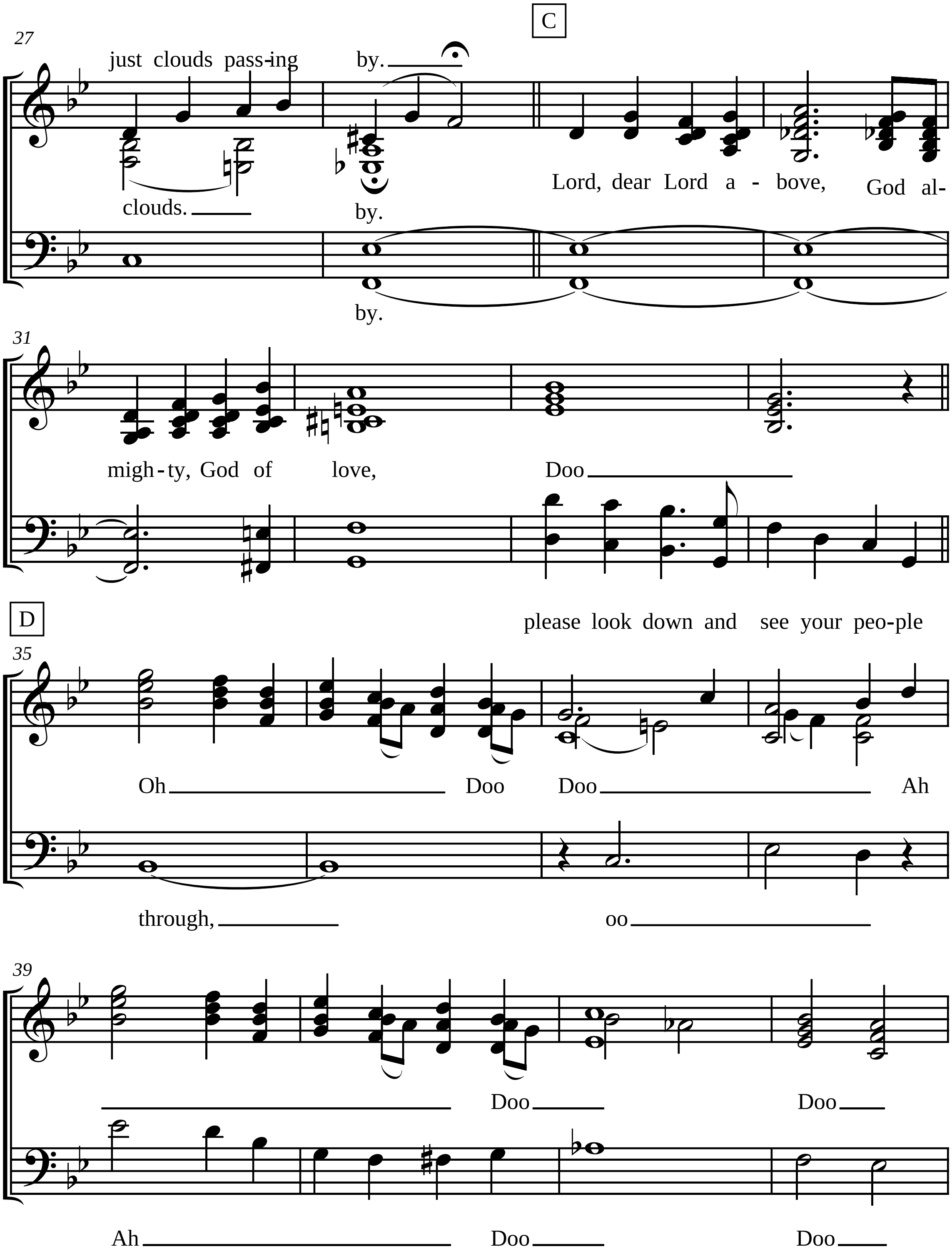
A cappella

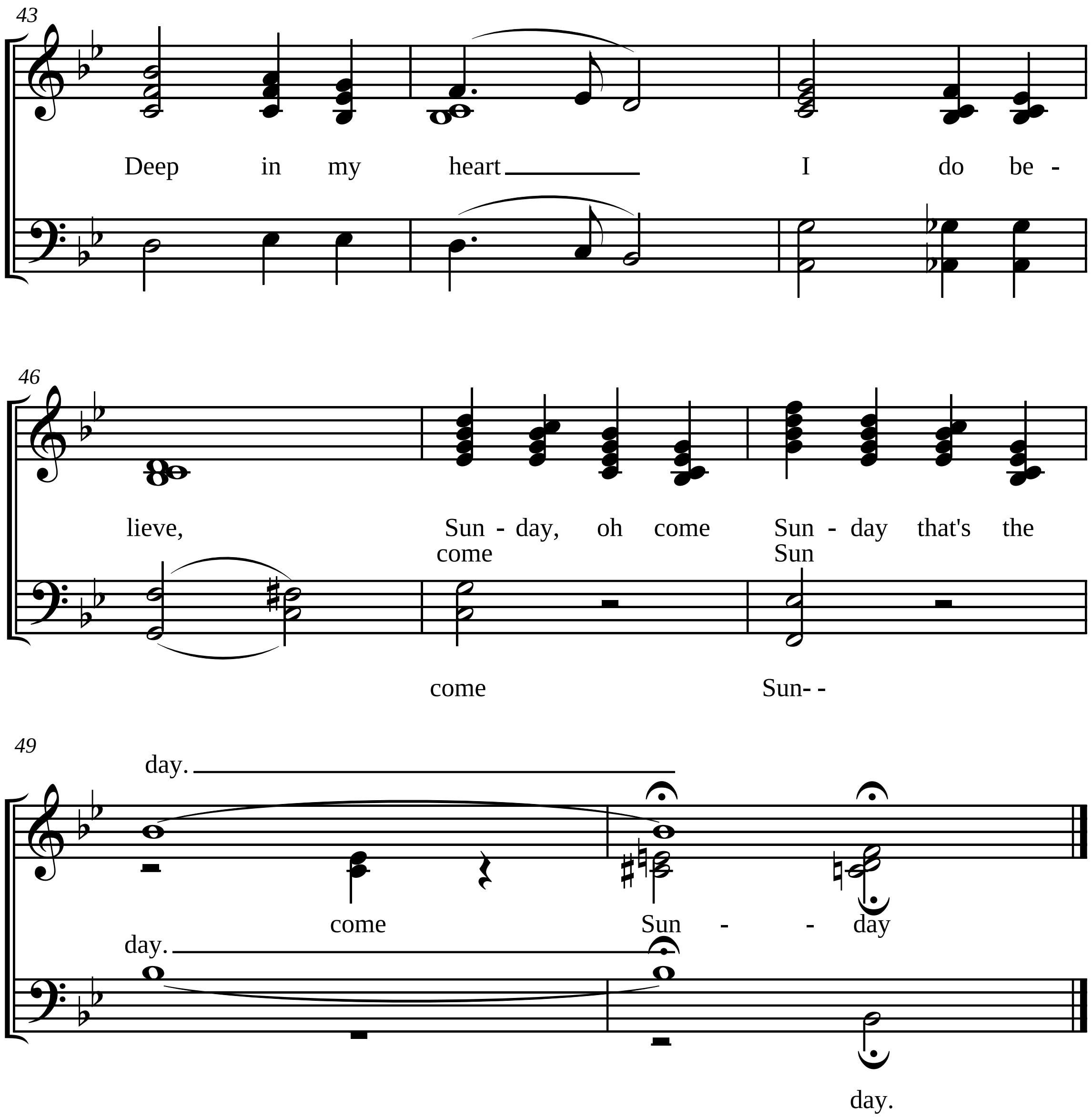
Duke Ellington, arr. Greg Murai


Rubato
Doo
4
3
Lord, dear Lord a - bove, God al -
7
pp
migh - ty, God of love, please look down and
10
pp
see your peo - ple through.
see your peo - ple through.
see us through.

© 1999, Murai


13
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, God al - migh - ty, God of love,
Lord, dear Lord a - bove, Lord God al - migh - ty,
17
please look down and see your peo - ple through,
B
20
I be - lieve that God put sun and moon up in the
24
sky. I don't mind the grey skies 'cause they're

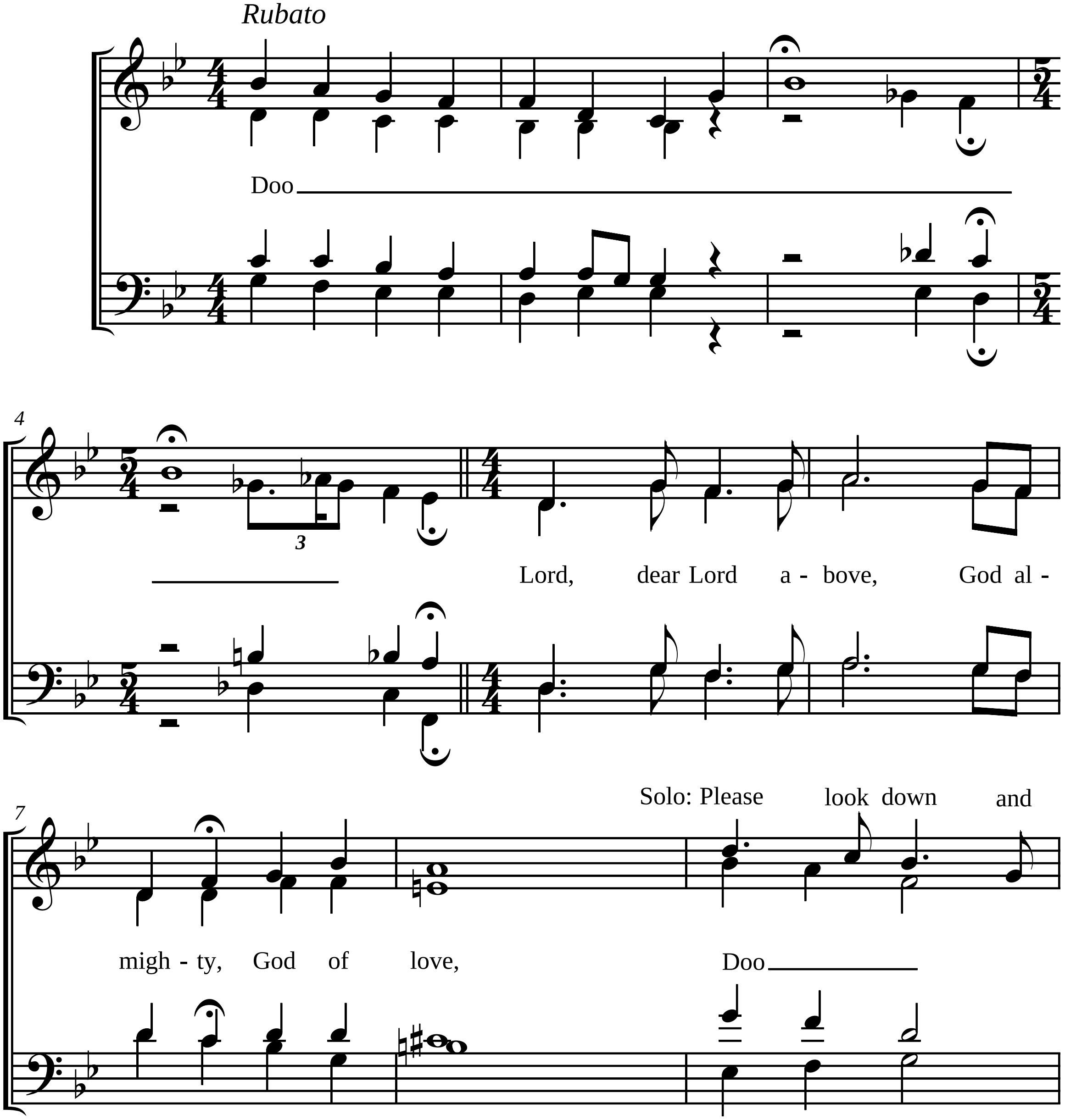

C
27
just clouds pass-ing by.
clouds.
by.
Lord, dear Lord a - bove, God al-
by.
31
migh - ty, God of love,
Doo
D
35
please look down and see your peo-ple
Oh
Doo
Doo
Ah
through,
oo
39
Doo
Doo
Ah
Doo
Doo

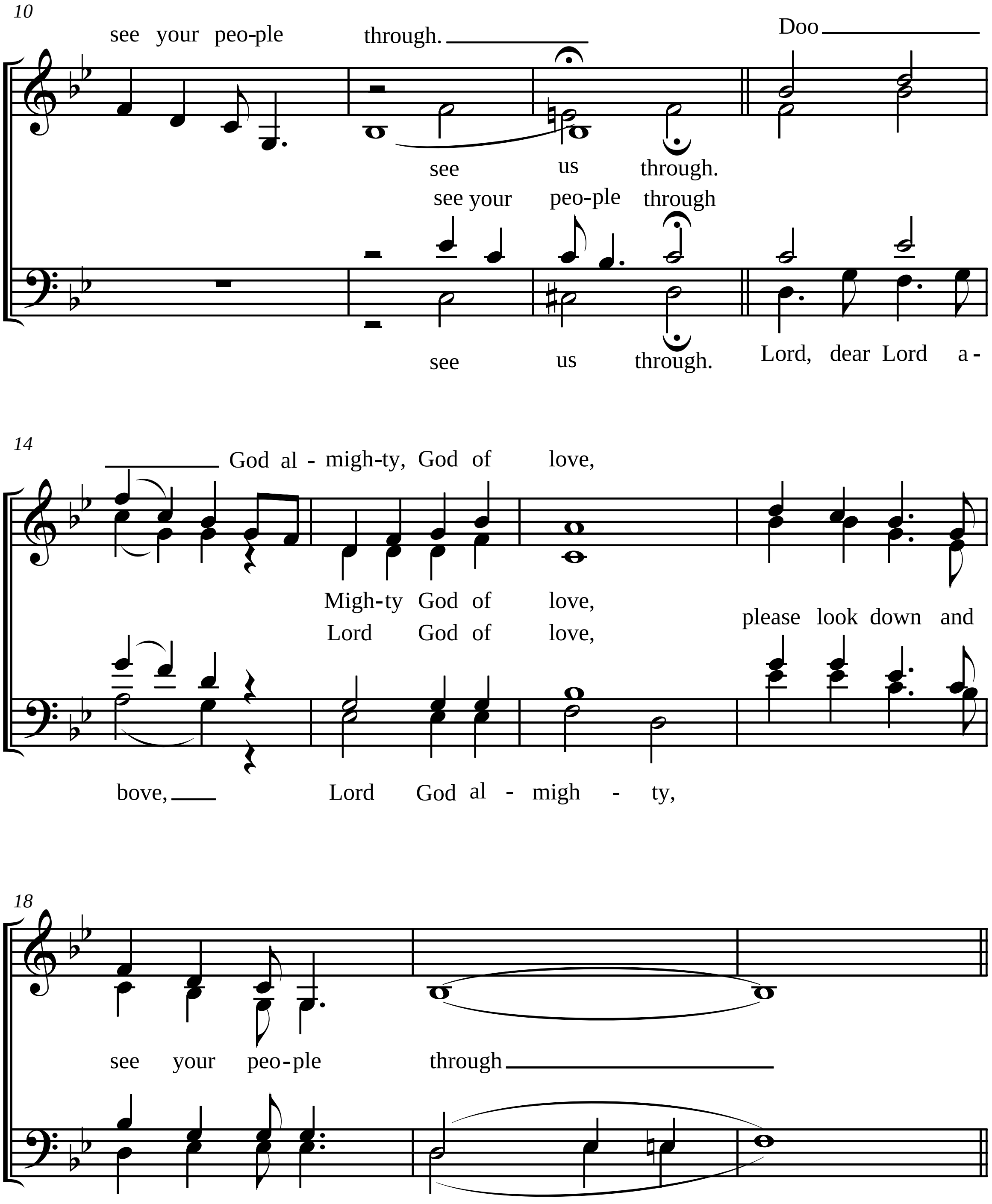

43
Deep in my heart I do be-
46
lieve,
Sun - day, oh come
Sun - day that's the
come
Sun
come
Sun- -
49
day.
come
Sun - - day
day.
day.

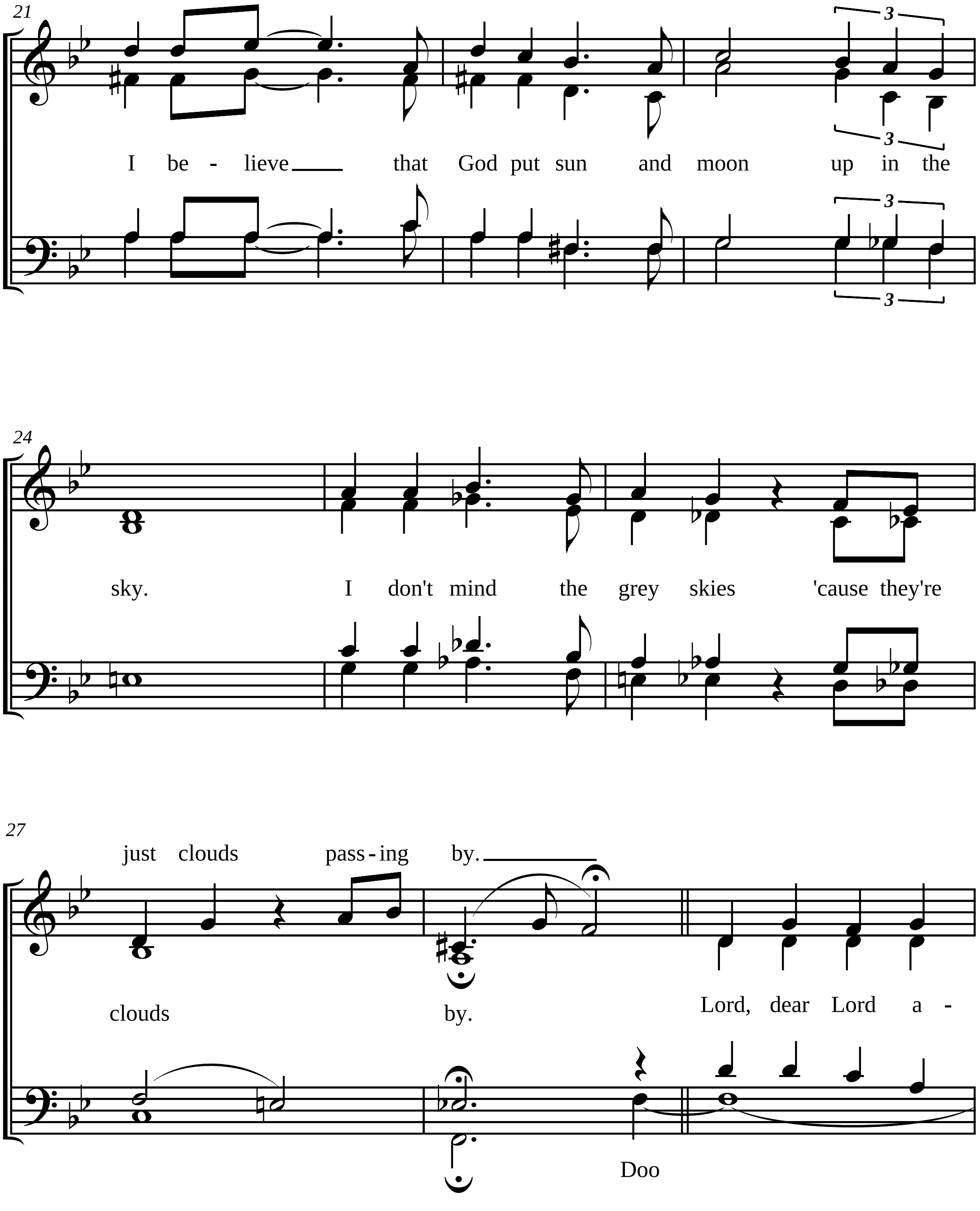
Come Sunday

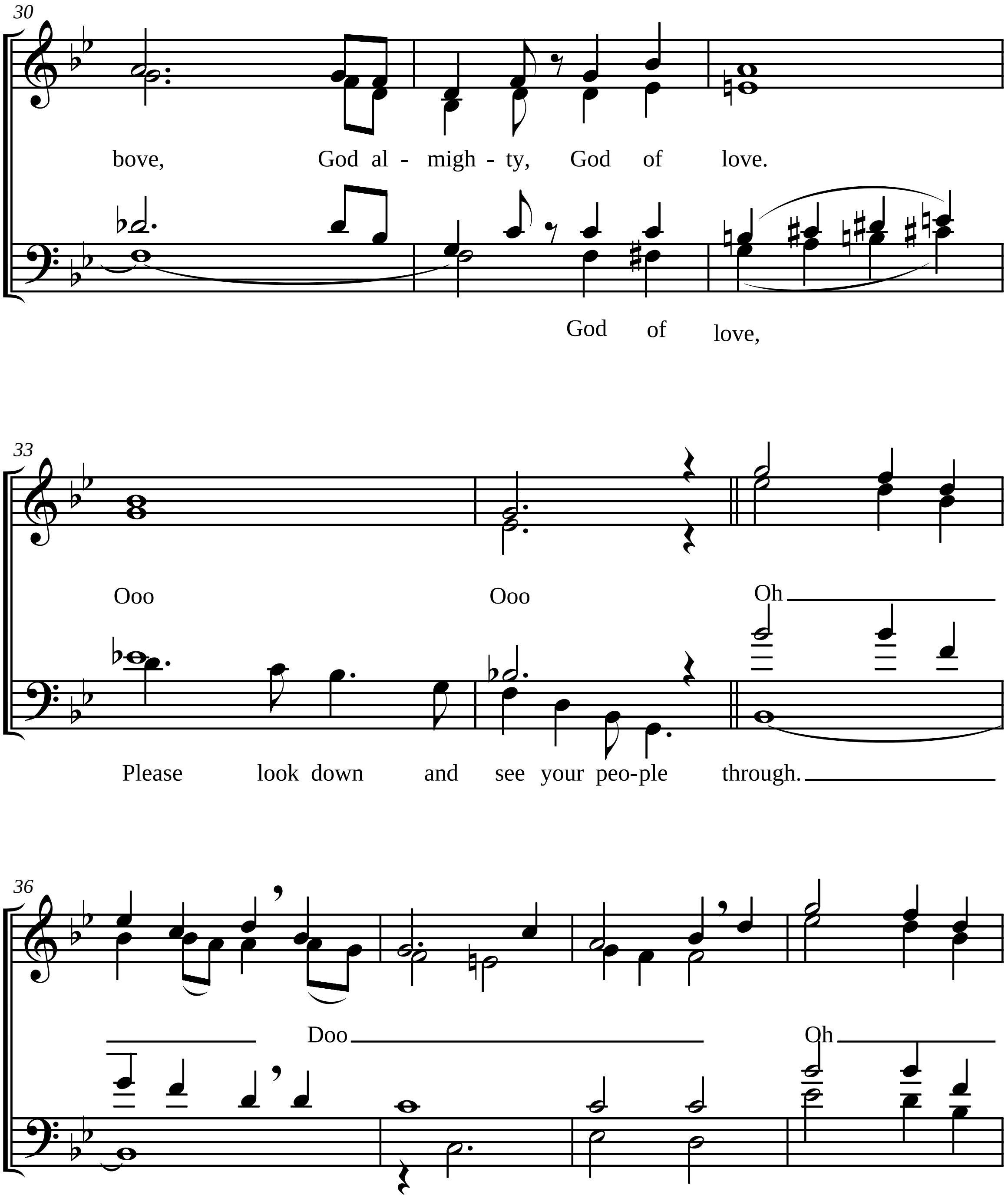
(Altered Version)

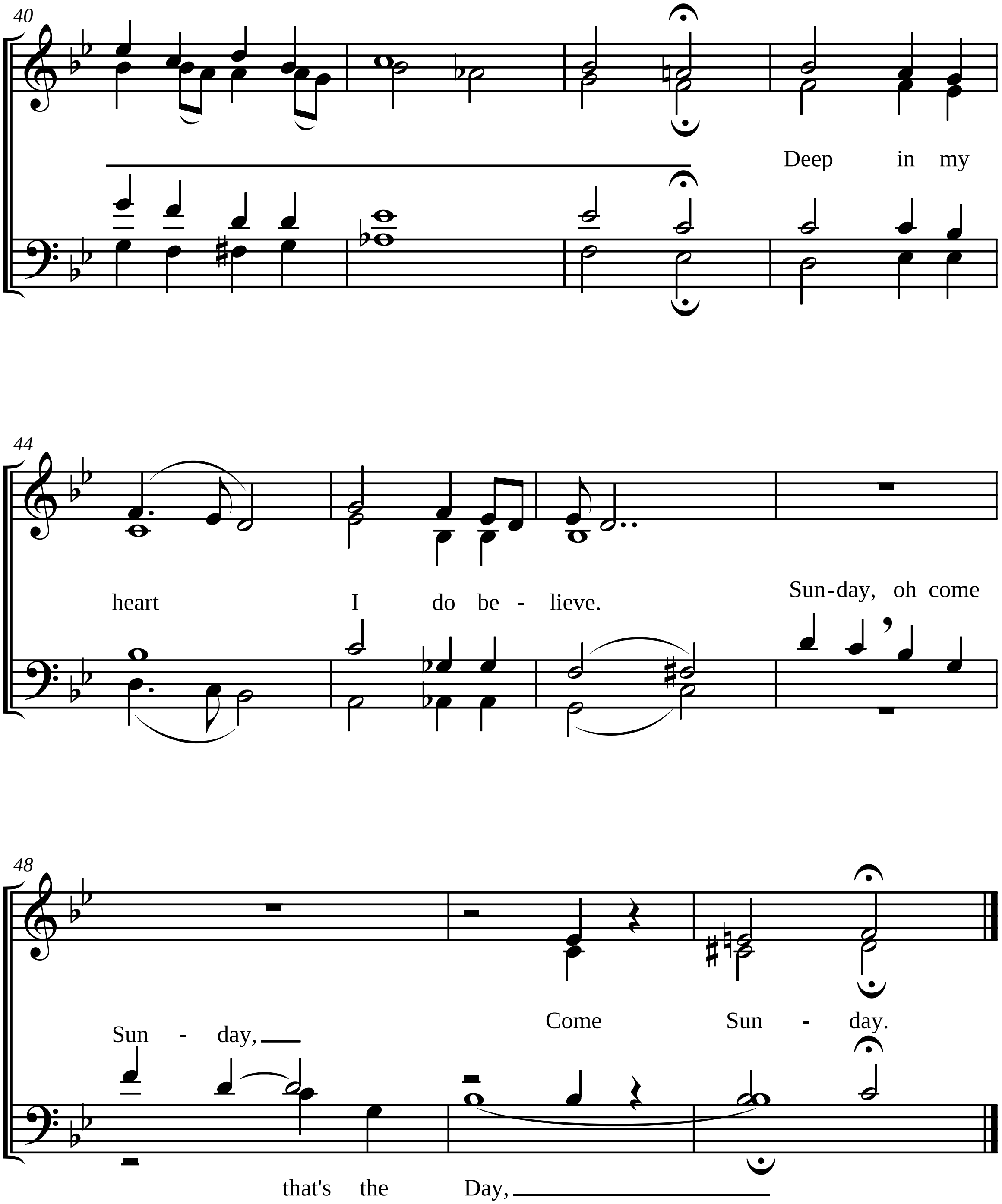
Duke Ellington, arr. Greg Murai


Rubato
Doo
4
Lord, dear Lord a - bove, God al -
Solo: Please look down and
7
migh - ty, God of love,
Doo
3


10
see your peo-ple through.
Doo
see us through.
see your peo-ple through
Lord, dear Lord a-
14
God al - migh-ty, God of love,
Migh-ty God of love,
please look down and
Lord God of love,
bove,
Lord God al - migh - ty,
18
see your peo-ple through


21
I be - lieve that God put sun and moon up in the
24
sky. I don't mind the grey skies 'cause they're
27
just clouds pass - ing by.
clouds by.
Lord, dear Lord a -
Doo


30
bove, God al - migh - ty, God of love.
God of love,
33
Ooo Ooo Oh
Please look down and see your peo-ple through.
36
Doo
Oh

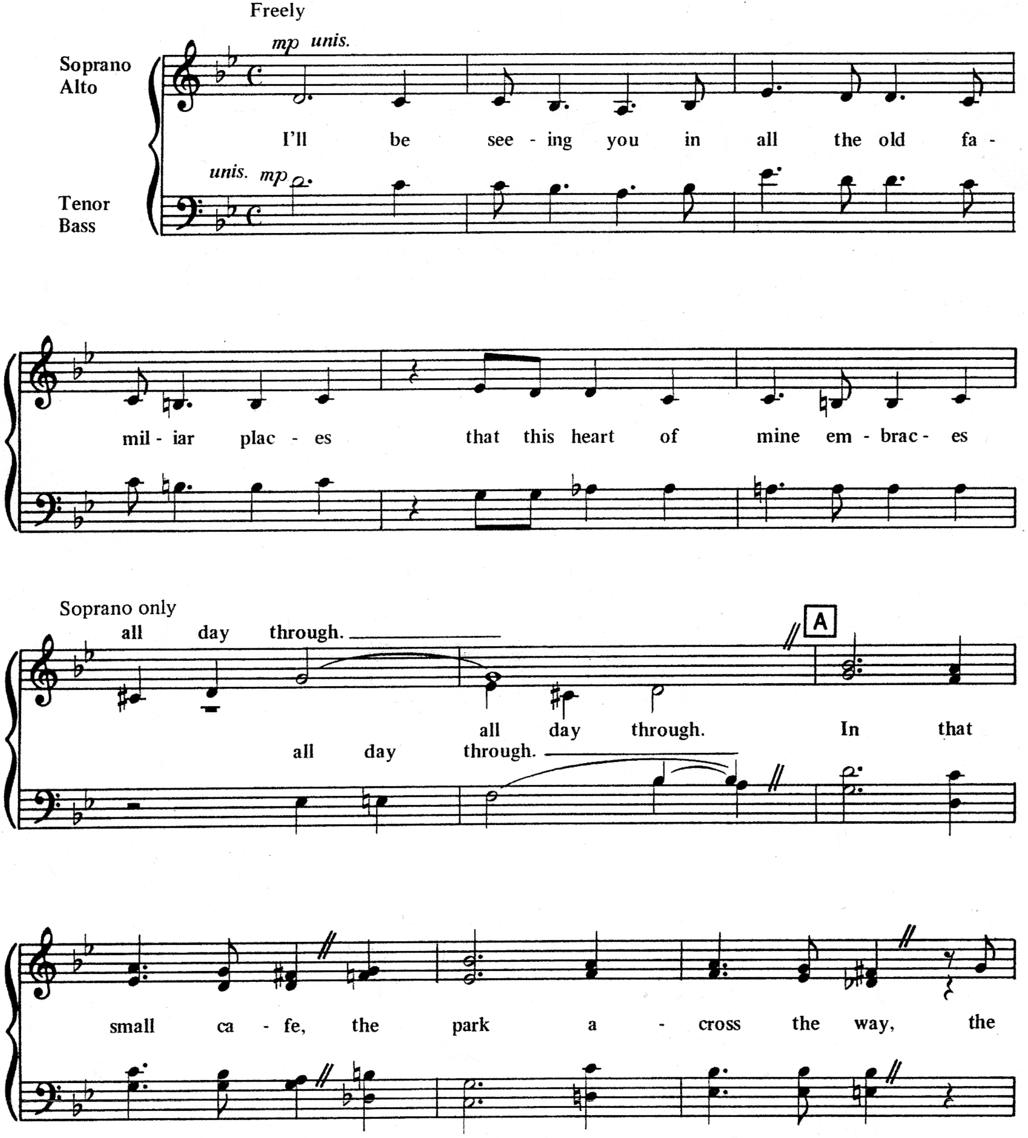

40
Deep in my
44
heart I do be - lieve.
Sun-day, oh come
48
Sun - day,
Come Sun - day.
that's the Day,

I'll Be Seeing You

SATB Acapella

To The Magee Secondary School Choirs
John Trepp, Director

Words and Music by
IRVING KAHAL and SAMMY FAIN
Arr. by PHIL MATTSON


Freely
mp unis.
Soprano
Alto
I'll be see - ing you in all the old fa -
unis. mp
Tenor
Bass
mil - iar plac - es that this heart of mine em - brac - es
Soprano only
all day through.
all day through.
all day through.
A
In that
small ca - fe, the park a - cross the way, the

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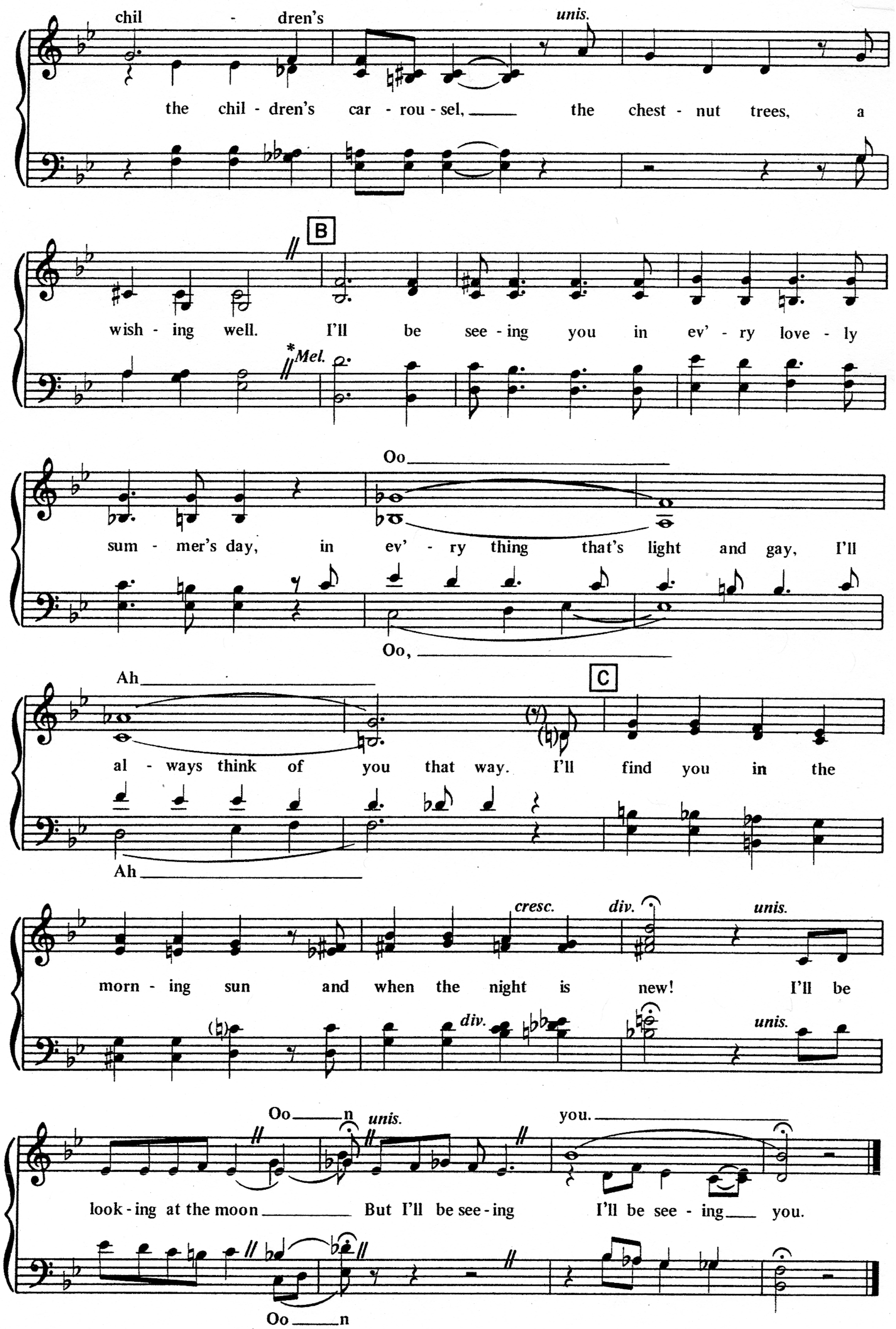
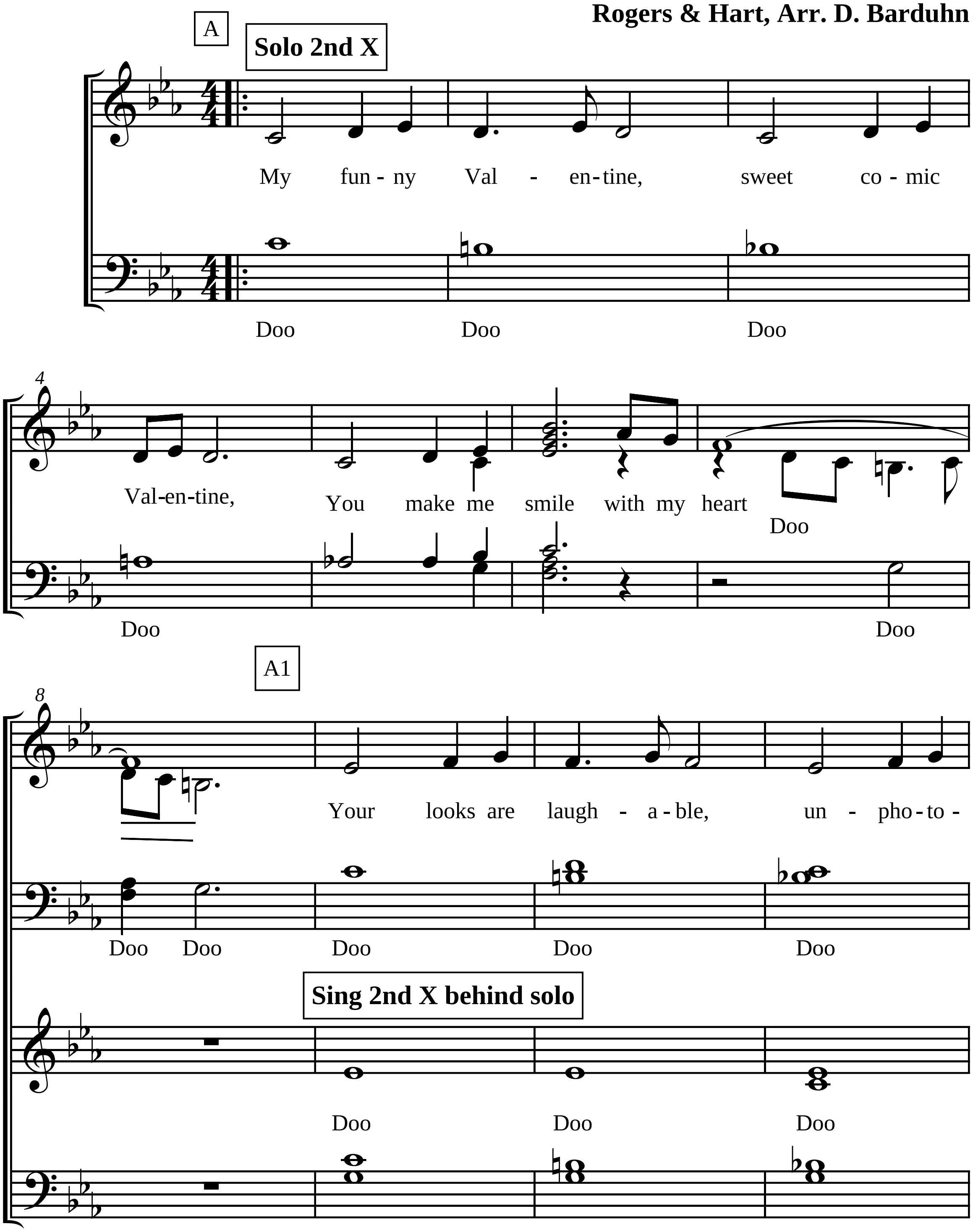

chil - dren's
unis.
the chil - dren's car - rou - sel, the chest - nut trees, a
B
*Mel.
wish - ing well. I'll be see - ing you in ev' - ry love - ly
Oo
sum - mer's day, in ev' - ry thing that's light and gay, I'll
Oo,
Ah
C
al - ways think of you that way. I'll find you in the
Ah
cresc.
div.
unis.
morn - ing sun and when the night is new! I'll be
div.
unis.
Oo n
unis.
you.
look - ing at the moon But I'll be see - ing I'll be see - ing you.
Oo n

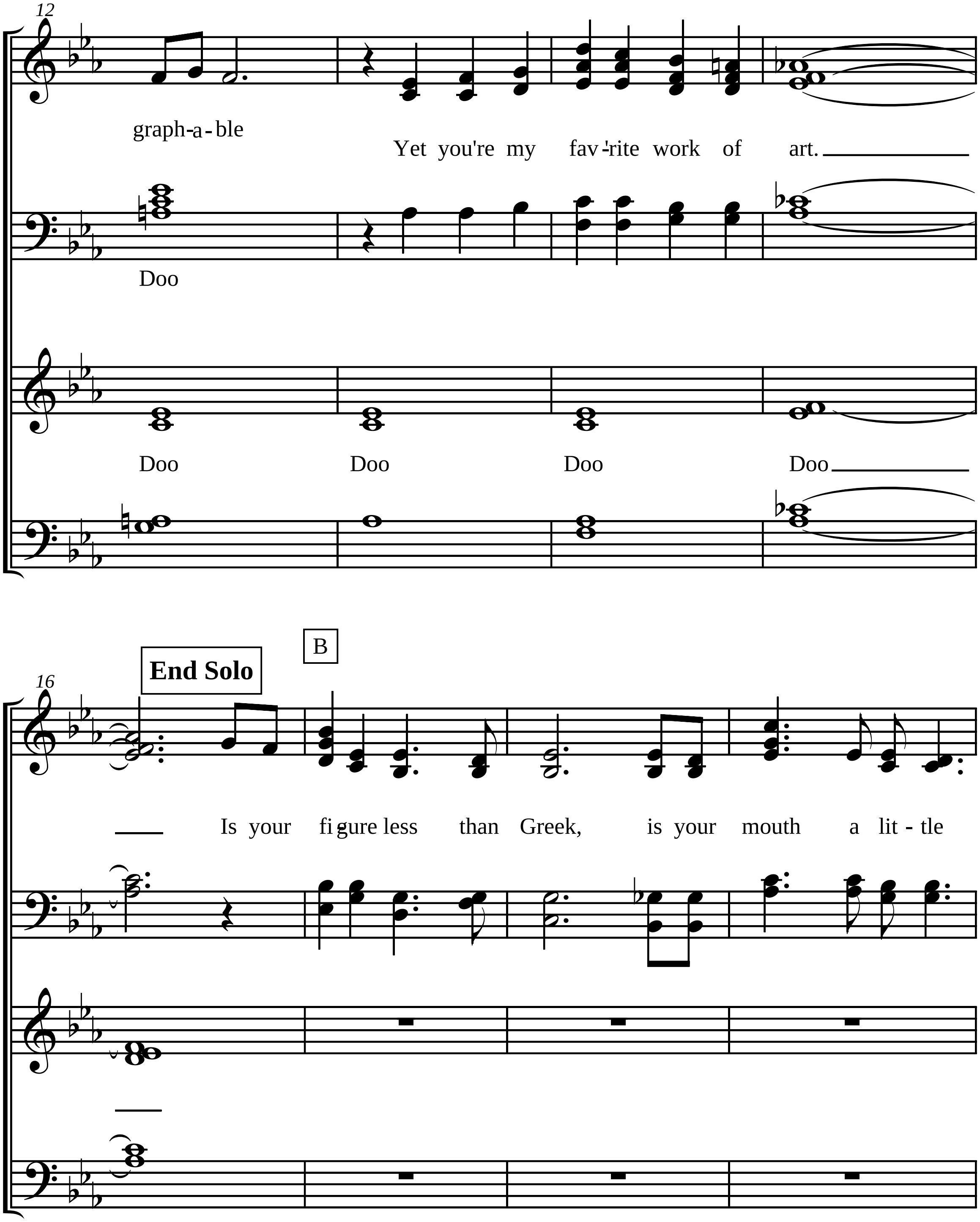
*Make certain the internal melody is predominant.

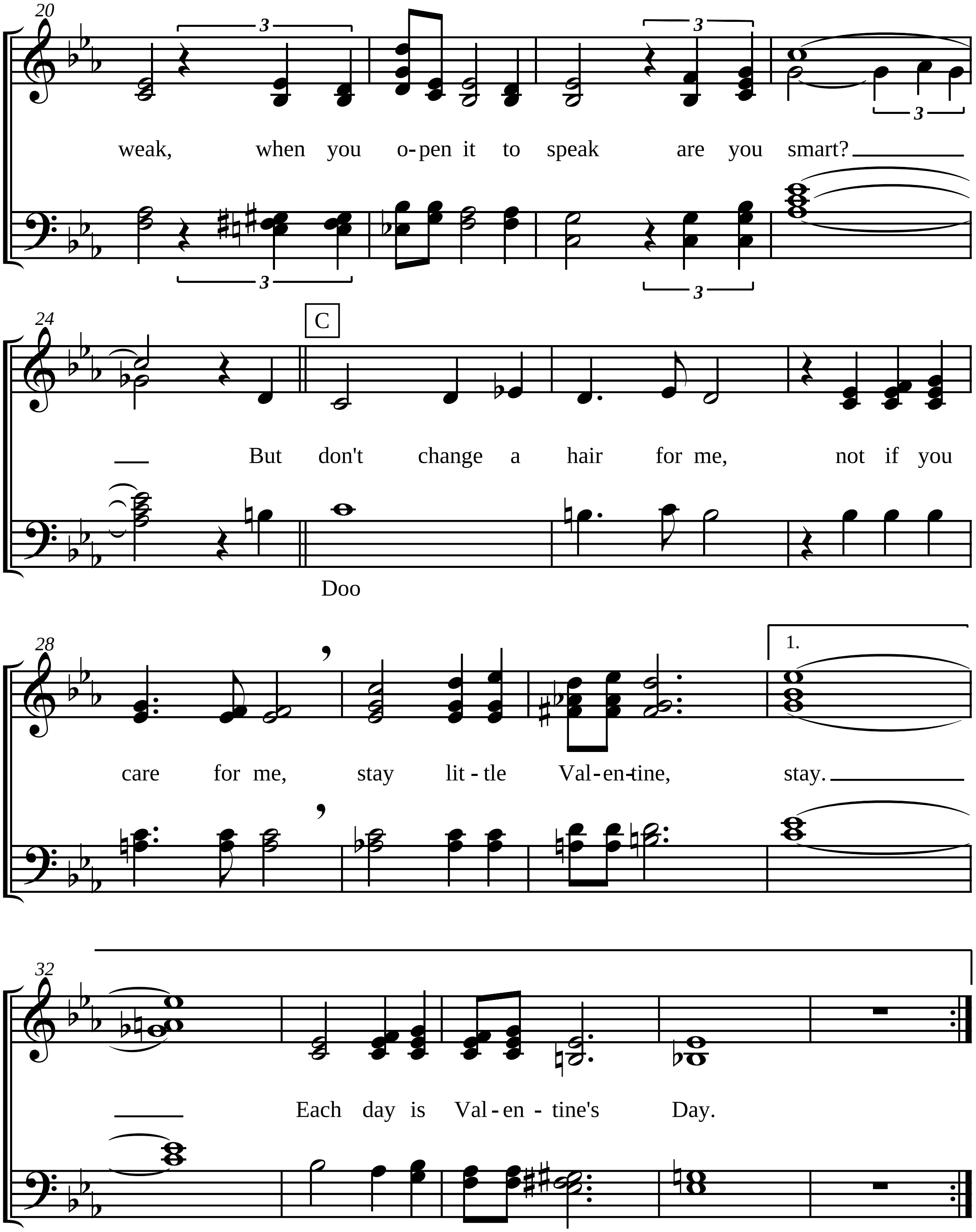
My Funny Valentine

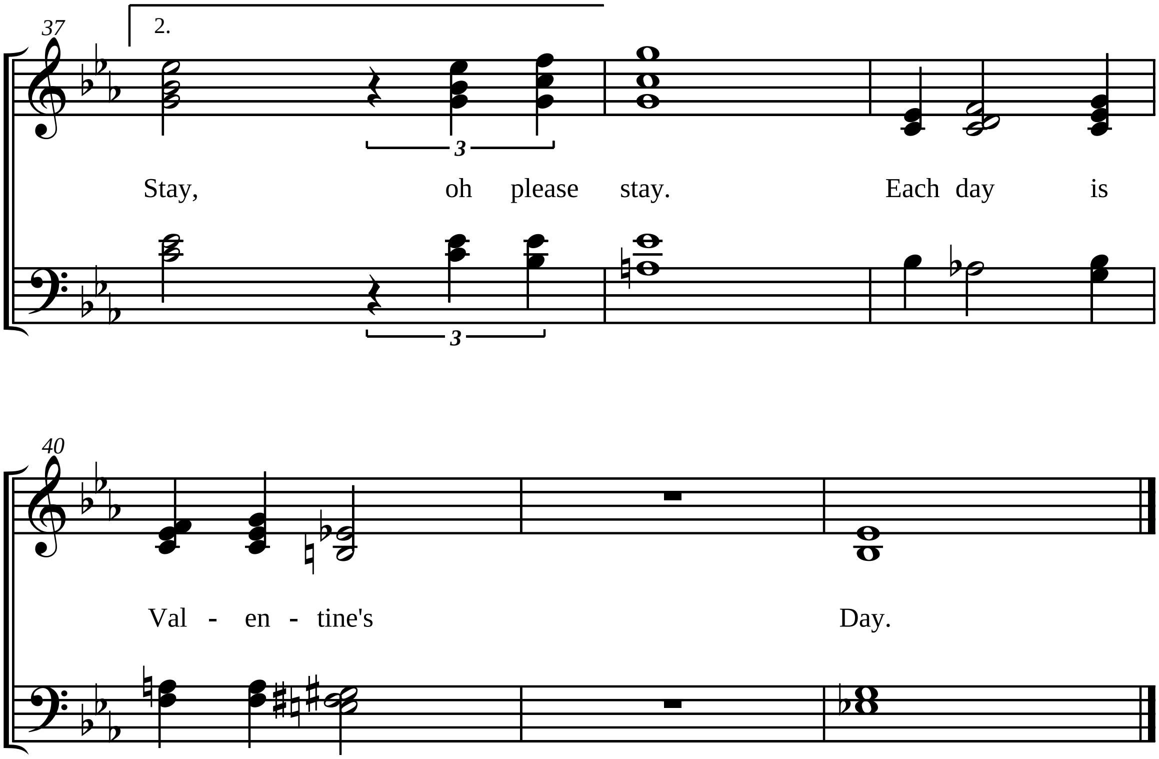
(Original Version)

Rogers & Hart, Arr. D. Barduhn


A
Solo 2nd X
My fun-ny Val-en-tine, sweet co-mic
Doo Doo Doo
4
Val-en-tine, You make me smile with my heart
Doo
Doo Doo
A1
8
Your looks are laugh-a-ble, un-pho-to-
Doo Doo Doo Doo Doo
Sing 2nd X behind solo
Doo Doo Doo


12
graph-a-ble
Yet you're my fav-rite work of art.
Doo
Doo Doo Doo Doo
16
End Solo
B
Is your fi-gure less than Greek, is your mouth a lit-tle


20
3
weak, when you o - pen it to speak are you smart?
24
C
But don't change a hair for me, not if you
Doo
28
1.
care for me, stay lit - tle Val - en - tine, stay.
32
Each day is Val - en - tine's Day.


37
2.
Stay, oh please stay. Each day is
3
3
40
Val - en - tine's Day.