MENOTTI

POEMETTI FOR THE PIANO

12 Pieces for Children

EDITED BY SYLVIA WATKINS RYAN

AN ALFRED MASTERWORK EDITION

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by Fernand Léger (French, 1881–1955)

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GIAN CARLO MENOTTI

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ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Gian Carlo Menotti (1911–2007) was born in Cadegliano, Italy. He is best remembered as an opera composer and founder of three international performing arts festivals. Menotti knew by the age of six that he wanted to be a composer, and he finished his first opera by age 11. After studying at the Milan Conservatory, he came to America in 1928 to attend the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. His studies in composition with Rosario Scalero (1870–1954) and piano with Vera Resnikoff (1899–1979) provided a lasting foundation for his future career. At Curtis, Menotti began a long friendship and collaboration with fellow composer Samuel Barber (1910–1981).

Menotti achieved early success in 1937 with the New York City premiere of his comic opera *Amelia Goes to the Ball*. His opera *The Old Maid and the Thief* was commissioned by NBC and first performed on the radio in 1939. In 1953, Menotti used a theme from this work as the basis for his most advanced solo piano piece: "Ricercare and Toccata on a Theme from 'The Old Maid and the Thief.'"

Menotti's opera *The Medium* and its companion piece *The Telephone* had a successful run on Broadway in 1947–48, as did *The Consul* in 1950. The composer's most popular work, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, was commissioned by NBC and televised on Christmas Eve, 1951. Since then, annual performances have kept this work alive. Menotti's arrangement of eight intermediate-level piano pieces drawn from the opera was published in 1951.

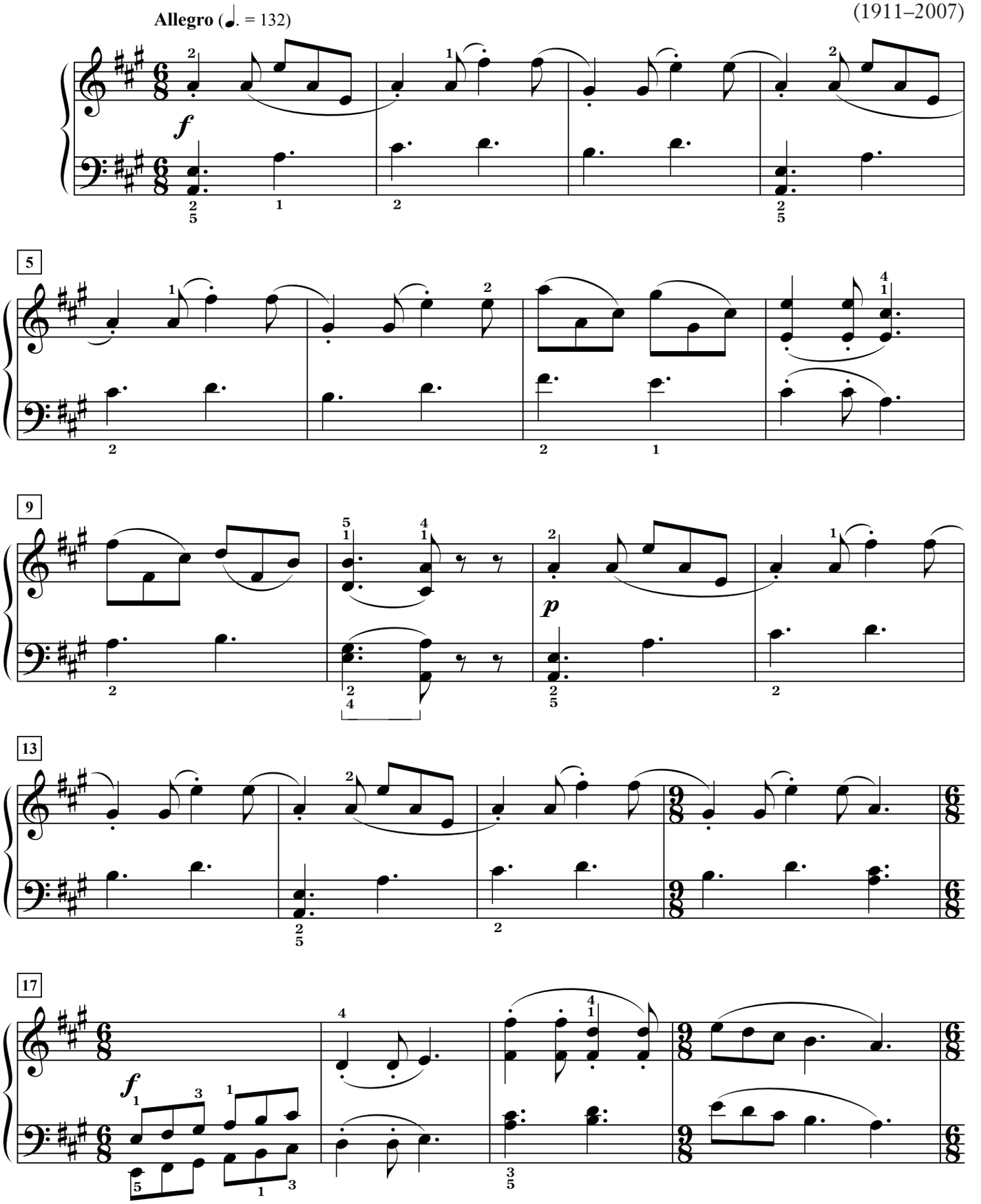
Menotti wrote 24 mature operas, numerous concert works, a piano concerto, and several librettos. He received two Pulitzer Prizes, a Drama Critics' Circle Award, and a Kennedy Center Honor for lifetime achievement in the arts. In 1991, Menotti was chosen as Musician of the Year by *Musical America*.

Menotti has left behind a lasting legacy of lyrical and accessible music. In a *Los Angeles Times* article he expressed his musical philosophy: "Great art must have what I call an *inevitability*…I am a neo-Platonist, I suppose. I believe there is a Platonic ideal of beauty, and artists are given a fleeting vision of that beauty. The rest is a process of remembering."[1]

[1] Tim Page, "MUSIC & DANCE: Menotti at Twilight: The Pulitzer-winning composer and founder of Spoleto Festival U.S.A. looks back on his six-decade career and ponders the future," *Los Angeles Times*, May 19, 1991.

Giga

Gian Carlo Menotti
(1911–2007)



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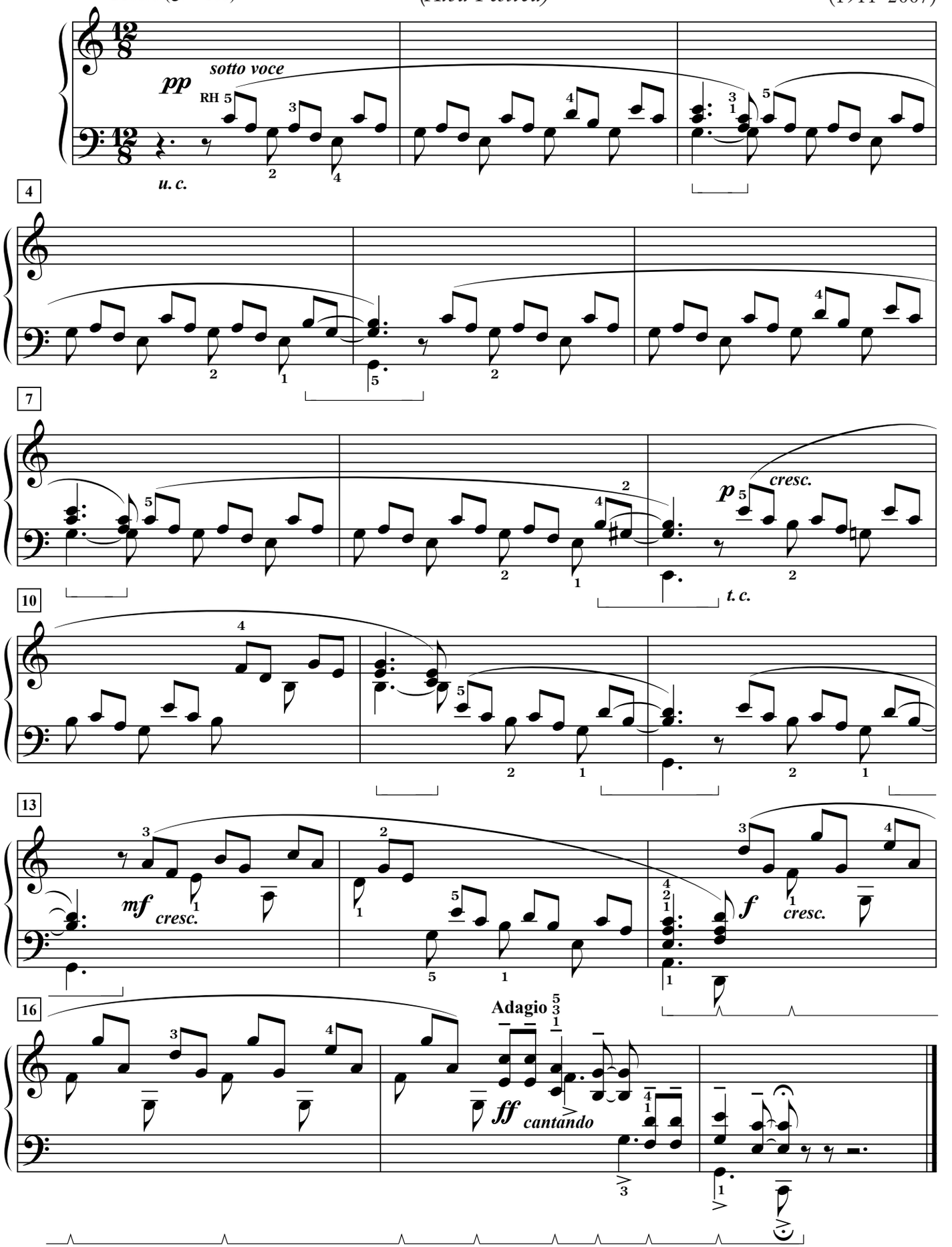
Bells at Dawn

(Alba Festiva)

Gian Carlo Menotti
(1911–2007)



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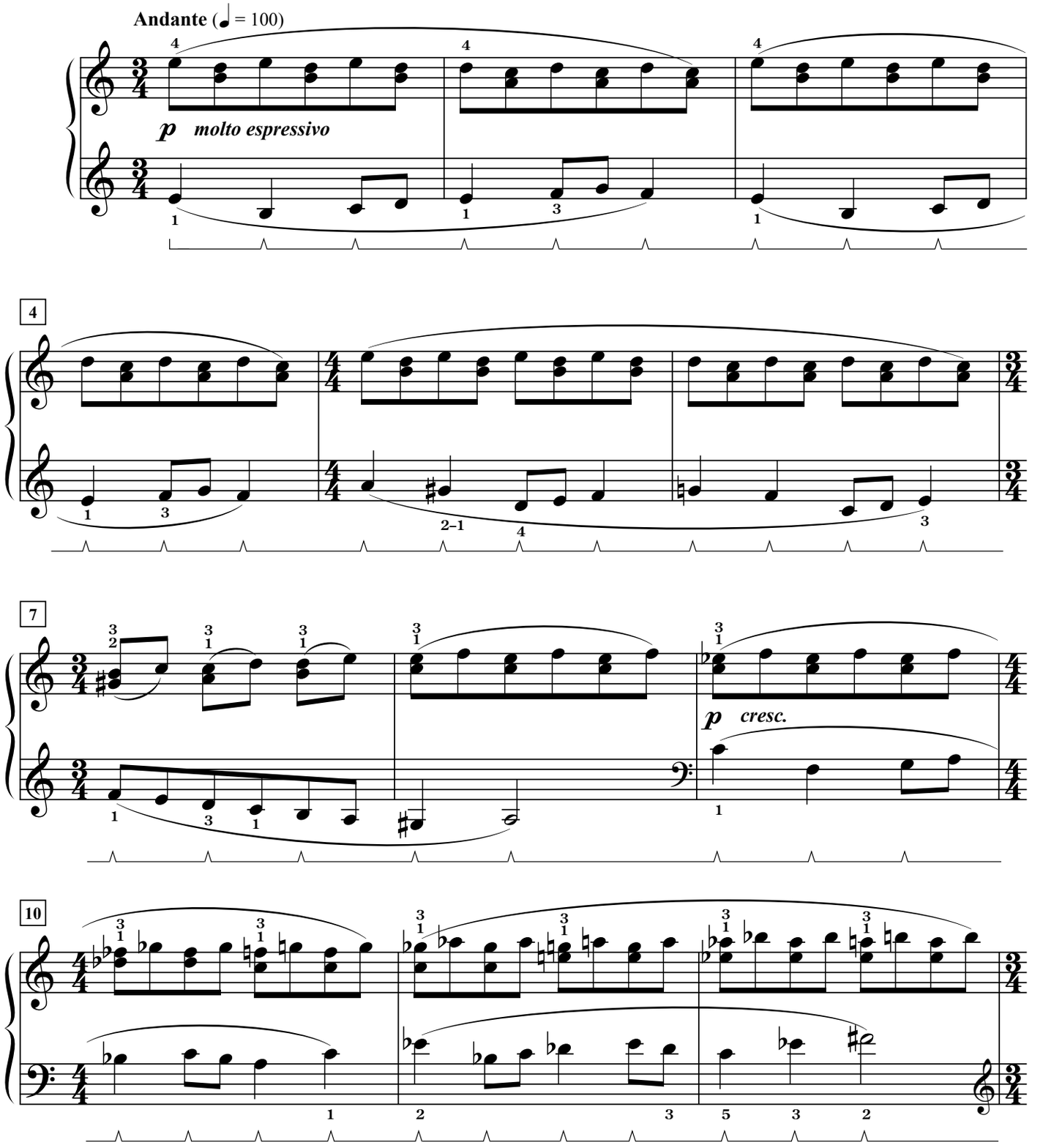
The Spinner

(La Filatrice)

Gian Carlo Menotti
(1911–2007)



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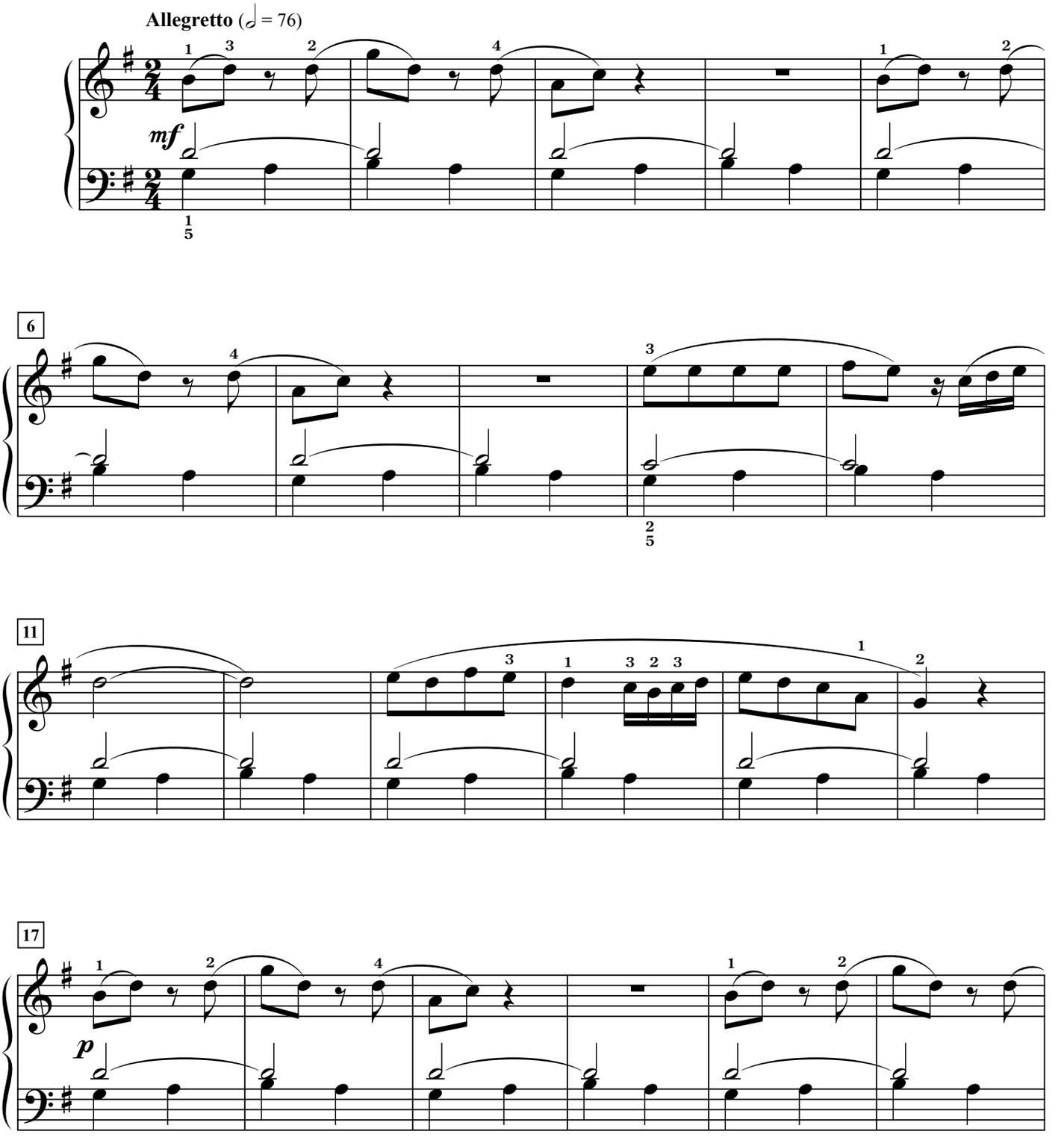
The Bagpipers

(I Zampognari)

Gian Carlo Menotti
(1911–2007)



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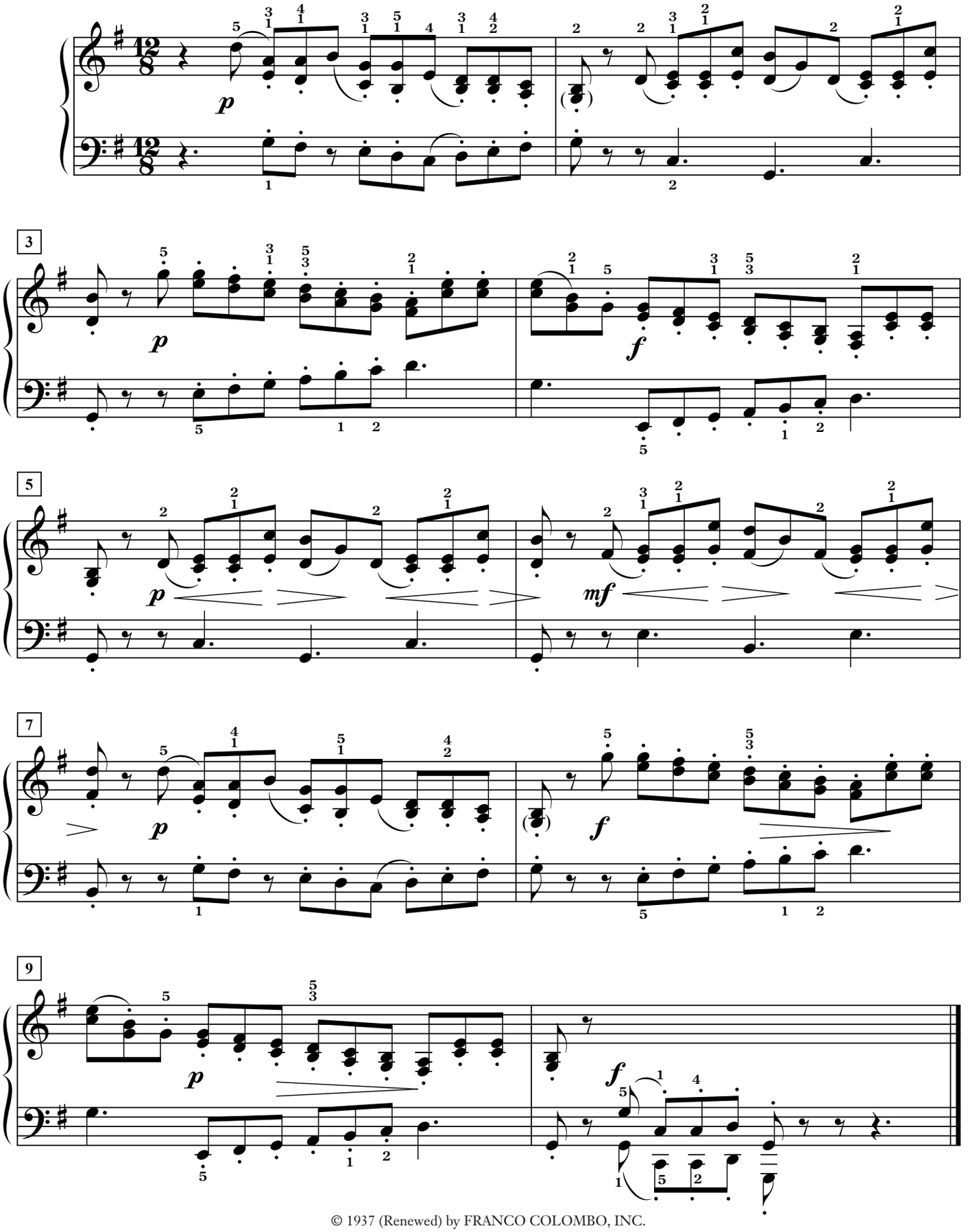
The Brook

(Il Ruscello)

Gian Carlo Menotti
(1911–2007)

Allegro con grazia (♩. = 88)



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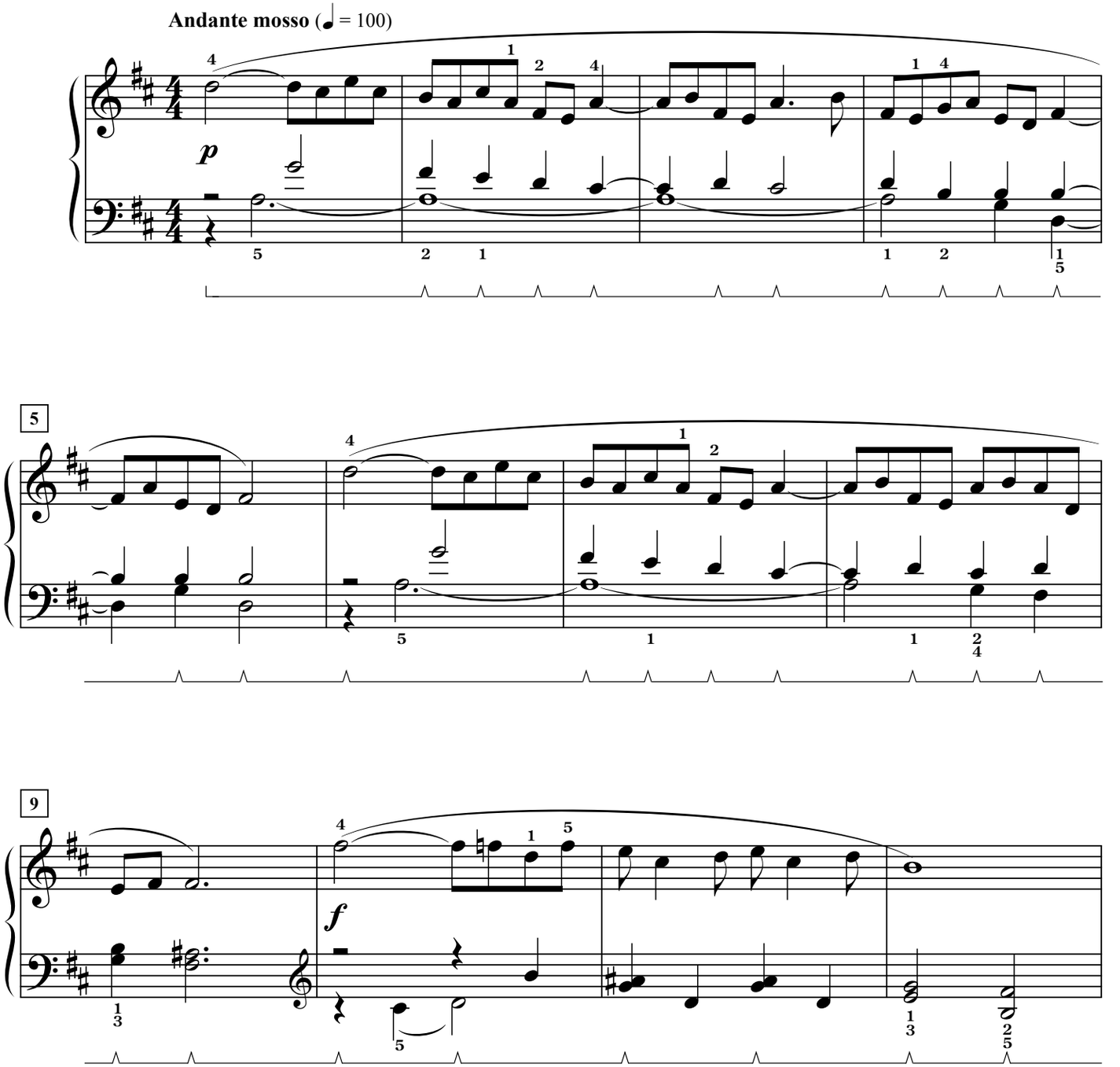
The Shepherd

(Il Pastore)

Gian Carlo Menotti
(1911–2007)



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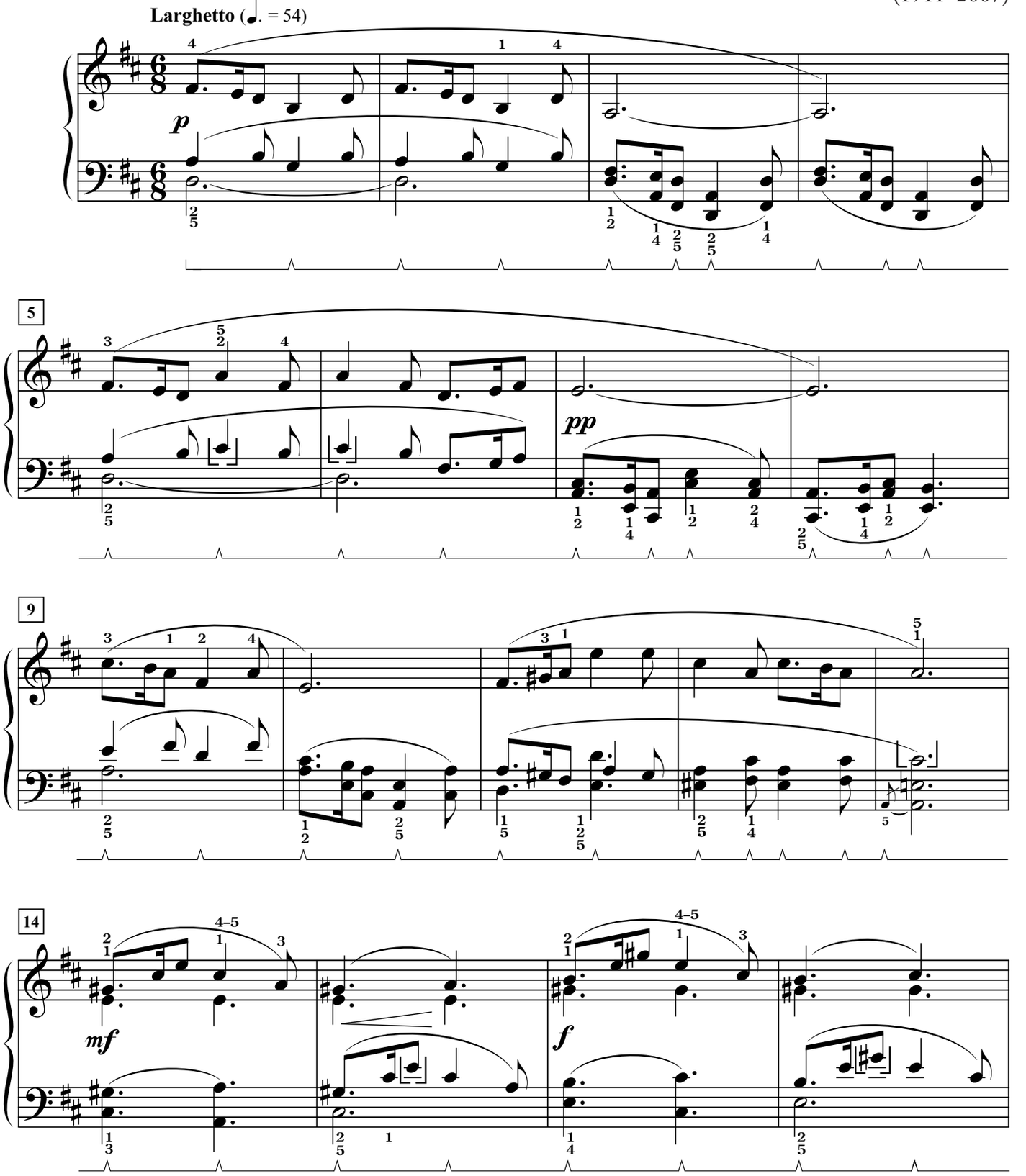
Nocturne

(Notturno)

Gian Carlo Menotti
(1911–2007)



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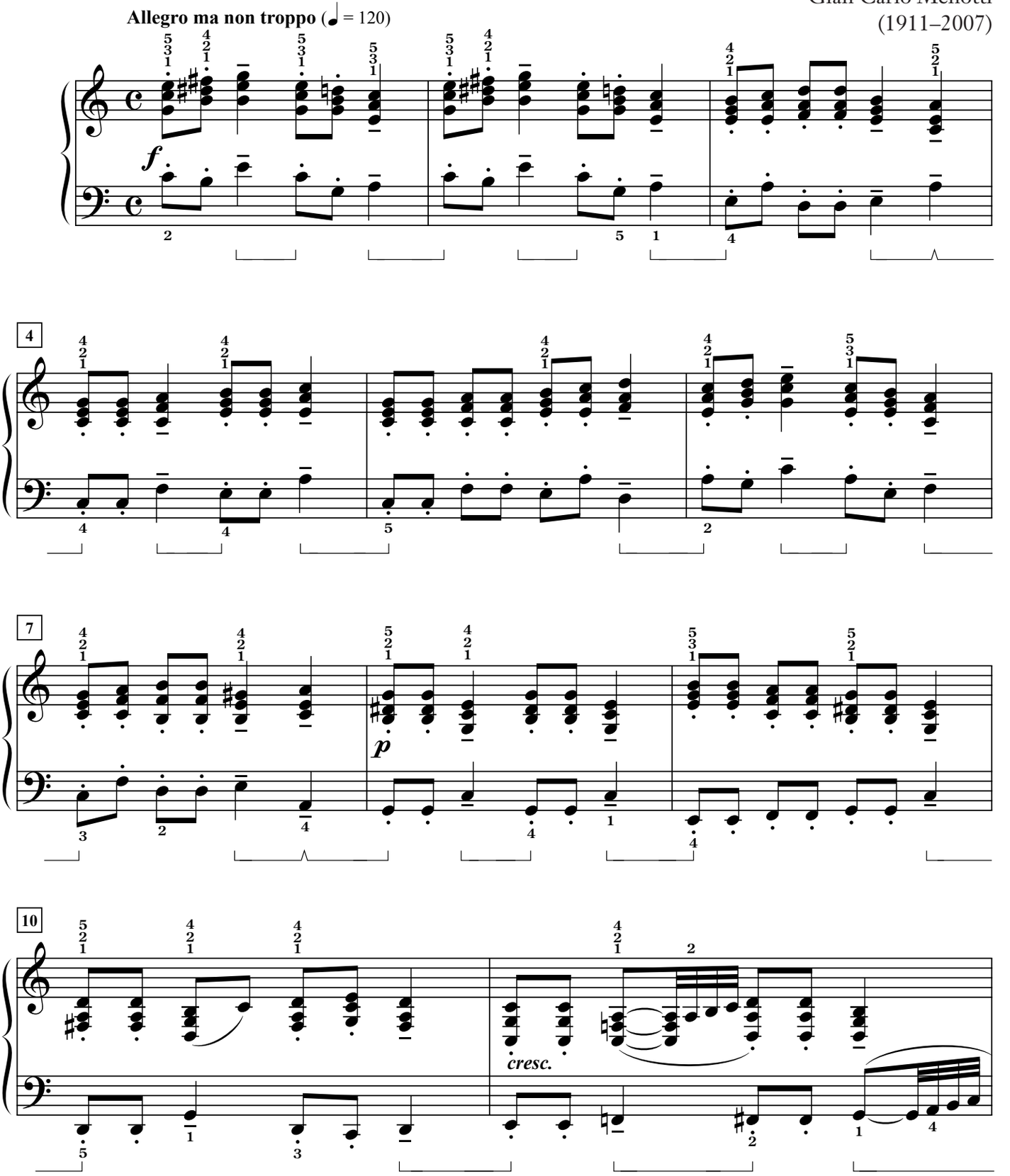
The Stranger's Dance

(Danza dello Straniero)

Gian Carlo Menotti
(1911–2007)



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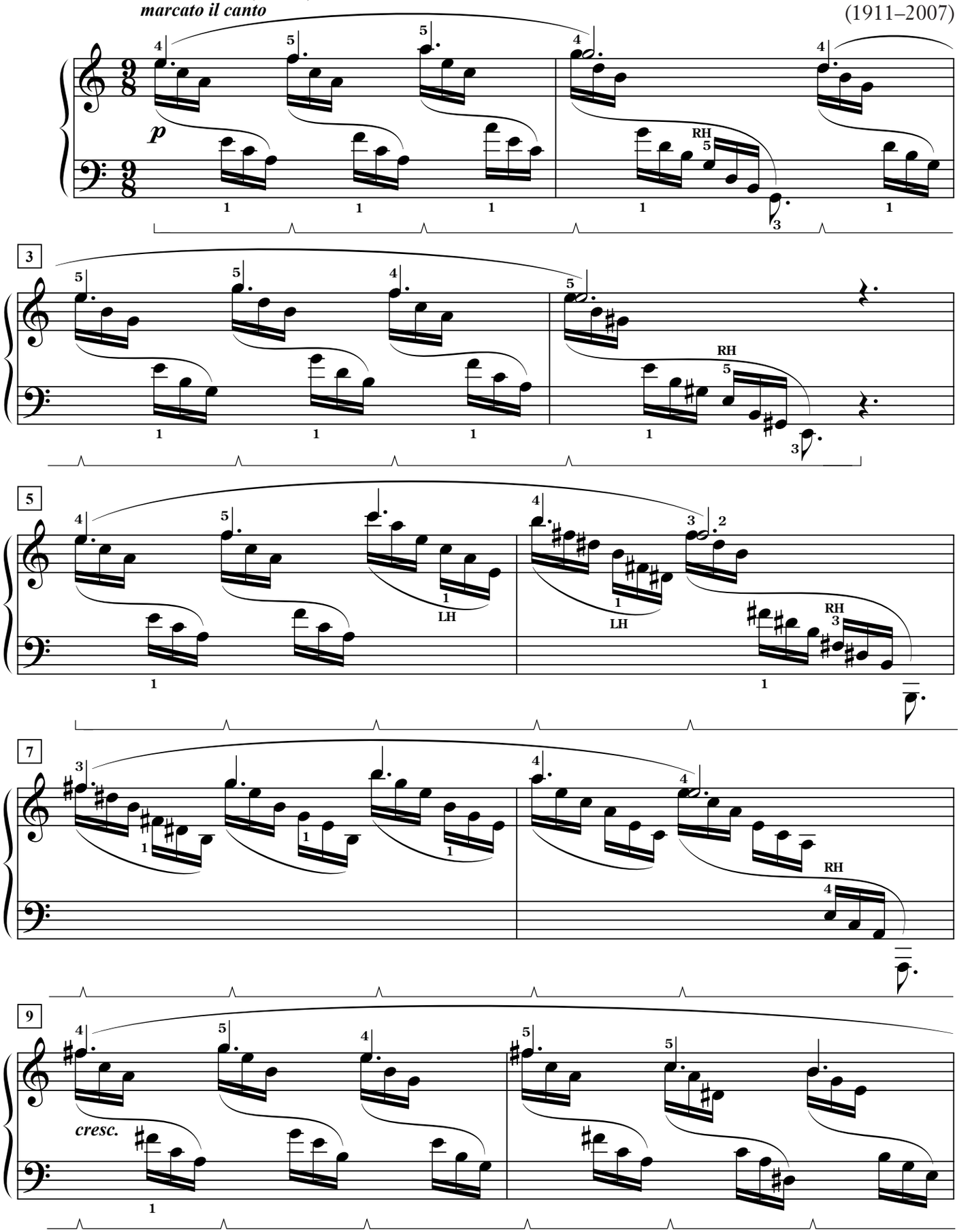
Winter Wind

(Vento Invernale)

Gian Carlo Menotti
(1911–2007)

Andante mosso (♩. = 76)
marcato il canto



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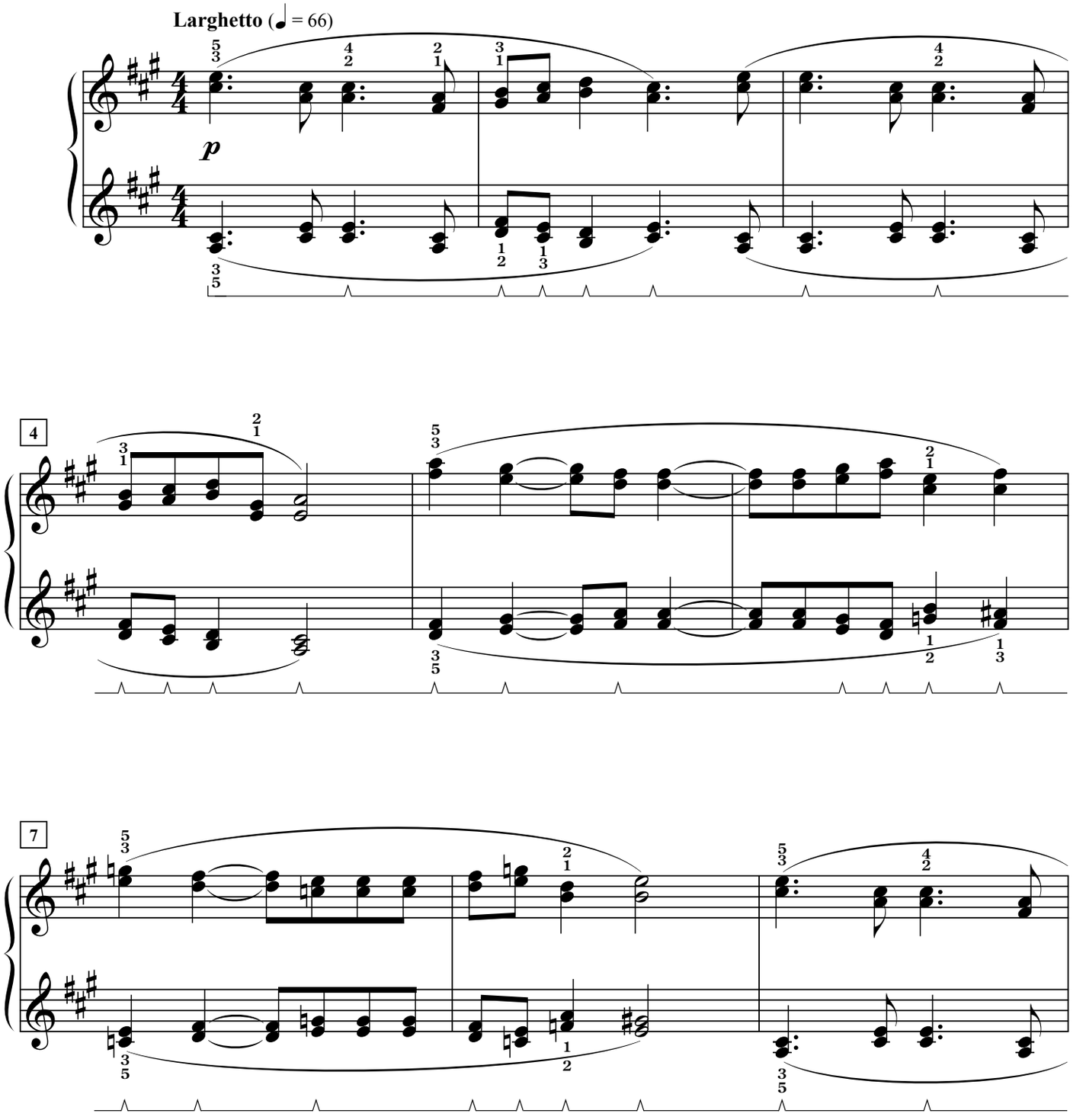
The Manger

(Il Presepio)

Gian Carlo Menotti
(1911–2007)



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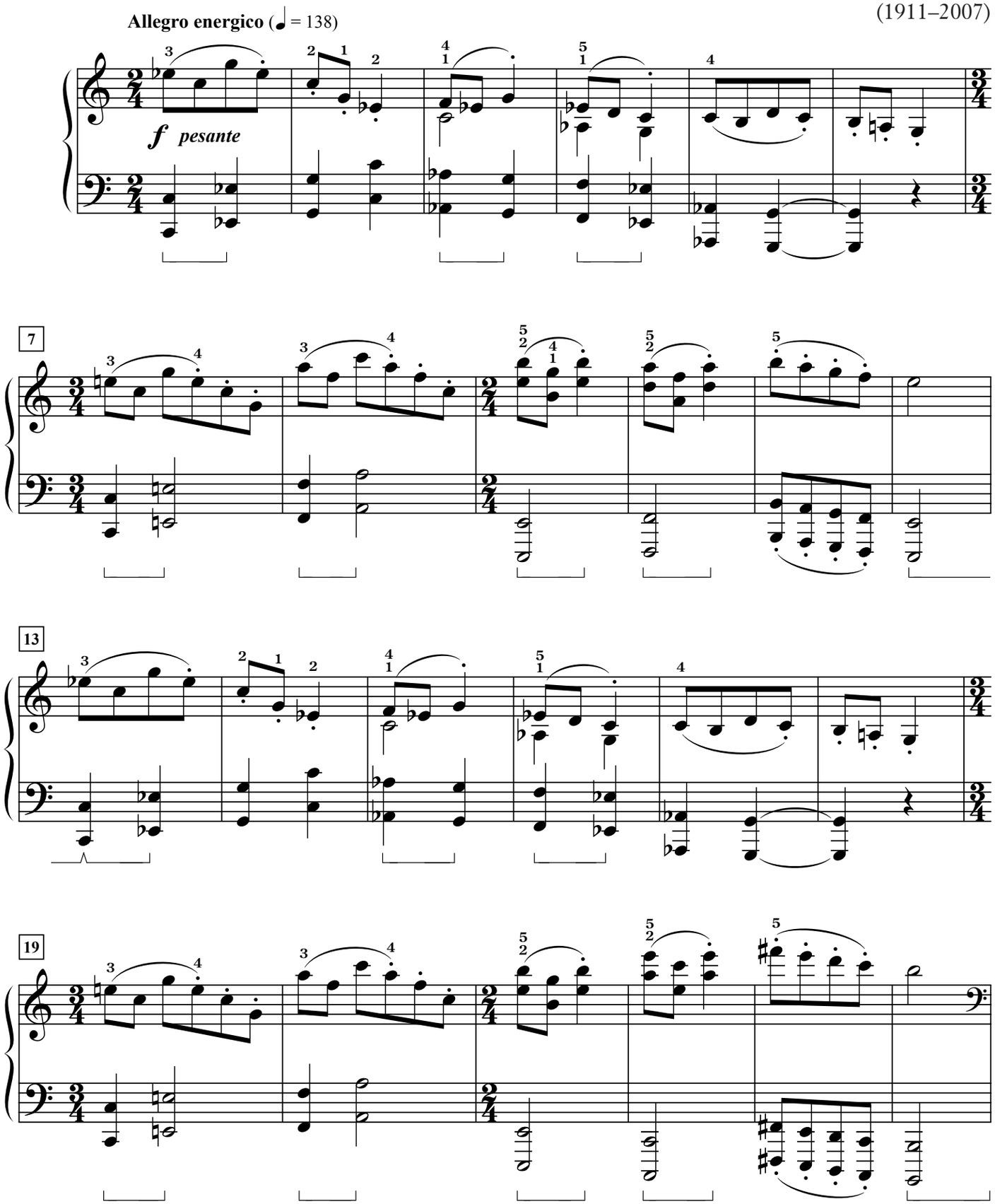
War Song

(Canzone Guerresca)

Gian Carlo Menotti
(1911–2007)



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