



THE VISION OF LIFE

A Symphonic Poem

Words and Music

by

C. Hubert H. Parry

Composed for the Cardiff Musical Festival - September 26, 1907

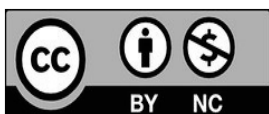
Revised for 1914 Norwich Festival which was cancelled due to start of World War I

VIOLONCELLO

Cover Image: "Spirit of the Summit" by Frederic Leighton, 1894



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The “renaissance” in English music is generally agreed to have started in the late Victorian period, beginning roughly in 1880. Public demand for major works in support of the annual choral festivals held throughout England at that time was considerable which led to the creation of many large scale works for orchestra with soloists and chorus.

Although a number of those works were engraved, printed and are regularly performed today, performance scores for a considerable number of compositions, both large-scale and more intimate works, are not available. These works were either never engraved or were engraved and printed but are no longer available in the publishers’ catalogues. While the existence of these works is documented in biographies of the composers, the ability to study and, most importantly, to perform these compositions is not possible.

Changes in the International copyright laws, coupled with changing musical tastes, played a pivotal role in creating this void. As a result, music publishers lost the ability to generate revenue from the sale/rental of such music. In 1964, holograph and copyist scores from both Novello and from publishers it represented were offered to the British Library and the Royal College of Music Library (see The RCM Novello Library – The Musical Times, Feb. 1983 by Jeremy Dibble).

These autograph full score manuscripts along with copies of engraved vocal scores, widely available through various online library sources, are now the only resources available for studying and performing these works.

The English Heritage Music Series has been created to ensure that these compositions are preserved, are accessible for scholarly research and, most importantly, are available for performance by future generations. Its mission is to:

- Source non-engraved/out-of-print English composer compositions that are in the U.S. public domain
- Preserve these compositions through the preparation of performance scores using notation software
- Provide open Internet access to the scores to facilitate study, performance and sharing of performance material (program notes, audio, reviews, etc.)

In preparing the English Heritage Music Series editions, every effort has been made to adhere strictly to the notation contained in the manuscripts. Because of the passage of time and its effect on the condition of the manuscript, the absence of clear information often times by the composer in notating divided instruments, and with emendations in the composer and other hands resulting from use of the manuscript in performance, there were numerous circumstances which required interpretation and decisions for notes, accidentals, dynamics, articulations and tempi. Should questions arise in the use of these editions, the composers’ autograph manuscripts and the Novello vocal scores should be consulted for clarification.

Matthew W. Mehaffey

Editor

Professor of Music

University of Minnesota - School of Music
Minneapolis, Minnesota USA

Source Information

Autograph Manuscript:

Royal College of Music Library MS 4213

Vocal Score:

Novello Original Octavo Edition No. 12565

Royal College of Music Library

Jonathan Frank, Ass’t. Librarian - jonathan.frank@rcm.ac.uk

Manuscript Transcription & Score Preparation

David Fielding - dhcfielding@charter.net

Reference Material and Software

Notation Software: Dorico Version 5.1.21.2225 (1-16-2025)

Audio Software: Note Performer 4

Graphic Software: Affinity Photo 2

Document Software: Affinity Publisher 2

Music Notation Reference: Behind Bars by Elaine Gould, Faber Music © 2011

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON PARRY AND “THE VISION OF LIFE”

Sir Edward Elgar (May 18, 1909)

“I hope you are well and that you are writing. I am so delighted we are to have *Job* in Hereford Cathedral. Your Cardiff ‘Vision’ was, I conclude, too strong for the Church, but I hope we may have it soon. It’s really strong bracing stuff, and, like your Odes, some of us love it and love you for giving us these things.”

Hubert Parry: His Life and Works by Charles L. Graves, Macmillan and Co., Ltd. © 1926, Vol. II, p. 66

“During the first half of this year (1914) he gave much time to the revision of the score of his Vision of Life with a view to its performance at Norwich—an expectation frustrated by the War.”

Hubert Parry: His Life and Works by Charles L. Graves, Macmillan and Co., Ltd. © 1926, Vol. II, pp. 157-158

“Hubert Parry’s ethical idealism was animated by a truly Christian spirit. The great aim of his later years was to impress on all people the need of enlarging their sphere of Religion; to consecrate his art to the service of humanity. ‘Religion,’ he wrote in one of his notebooks, ‘includes Art as well as definite devotional exercises,’ and again: ‘Art is a form of devotion. Everything that endeavours to beautify and make lovable the surroundings and the ideas of man is part of devotional religion. It is devotion to the beautiful aspect of things—the things which minister to spiritual well-being, to truth.’

Thus it came about, as Mrs. Ponsonby writes, that ‘when he spoke of some remarkable human being or act, or of Bach, or the sea, or architecture, or the country, one felt that to him the sphere of Religion was indeed without bounds. The beliefs which informs the message that he endeavoured to give to the world in his later works, and especially in The Vision of Life, is best defined in his own words, quoted by Miss Daymond in the memorial number of the Royal College Magazine:

There is, as it were, a limitless, unflagging, living series of variations on a great subject—and that subject is the progress towards the highest good of the race . . . The highest optimism is the belief that as man has already succeeded in controlling his destiny, and the resources of the little corner of the world with which he is concerned, by slow degrees better and better, so he will go on doing it in the future. There is no hope of a comfortable easy-going Utopia, but a reality of constant effort towards the development of the consciousness that the guarantee of Life is the fruitful expenditure of energy.

Hubert Parry: His Life and Works by Charles L. Graves, Macmillan and Co., Ltd. © 1926, Vol. II, p. 224

“The Vision of Life, brought out in 1907 and revised in 1914, is notable as an exposition of his philosophy of life, as an expansion of the gospel of brotherhood and love . . . it also commands admiration by its dignity and felicity of phrase and the skill with which rhymed passages are introduced to lend emphasis to a scheme of free verse. Traces are not wanting in vocabulary of the influence exerted by his familiarity with the Bible, and in the metre and use of alliteration with the old chronicles and Sagas and the libretti of Wagner. But, as it has been said of his music, so may it be repeated of this his most ambitious poem, that there is scarcely a passage that is not plainly and unmistakably Parry.”

Hamilton Harty

“I have a personal theory—probably all wrong—that Parry was too broad and great a man to be a really first-rate genius as a musician. After all, to be a universally interested man, as he was, is better than to be a more or less narrow musician, and I can’t think of any great composer whose absorption in his art did not make him a little deaf and blind to the rest of the world and its problems.”

Other Sources

C. Hubert H. Parry—His Life and Music by Jeremy Dibble, Oxford University Press, © 1992, pp. 420-423

An Imperishable Heritage: British Choral Music from Parry to Dyson by Stephen Town, Ashgate Publishing Company, ©2012, pp. 1-36

Parry before Jerusalem—Studies of His Life and Music by Bernard Benoliel, Ashgate Publishing Company, © 1997

Violoncello

The Vision of Life

C. Hubert H. Parry

Moderato

pizz.

p *cresc.* *mf* *f*

7

p *p* *pp* *p* *arco*

8-9 12-18

20

dim. *f* *p* *pizz.*

1

25

cresc. *arco* *cresc.*

30

cresc. *marcato* *V.S.*

34 **2**

sempre cresc.

39

cresc.

43 **3**

48 *rit.* **2** *sostenuto*

p *sf* *p* *p*

56 **4** *divisi* *unis. con sordini* *divisi*

pp *pp*

60

63

66 **5**

ff *f* *sf* *p*

71 **6** *Lento* *pizz.*

p *p* *pp*

78

rit.. a tempo

arco pizz.

84

89

arco

Lento

7

pizz.

f

5

3

p

pp

93

98

pizz.

cresc. molto

p

103

Allegro moderato

arco

mp

3

3

3

3

3

3

107

mf

3

3

3

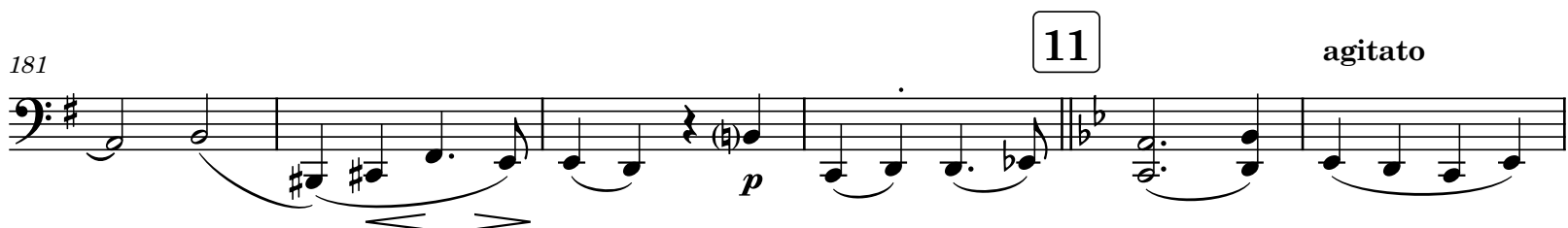
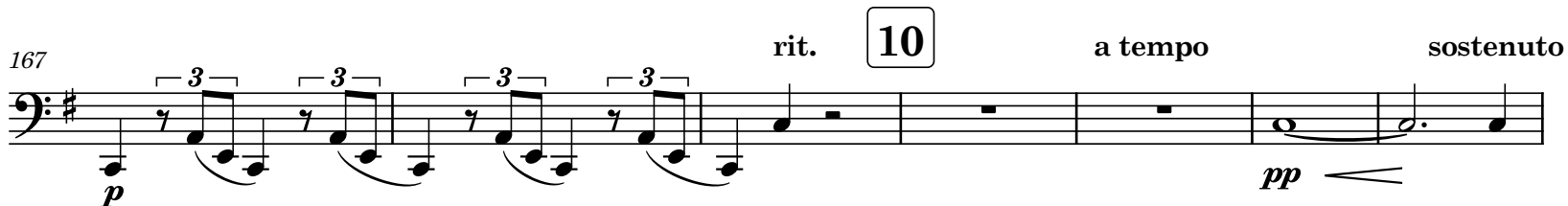
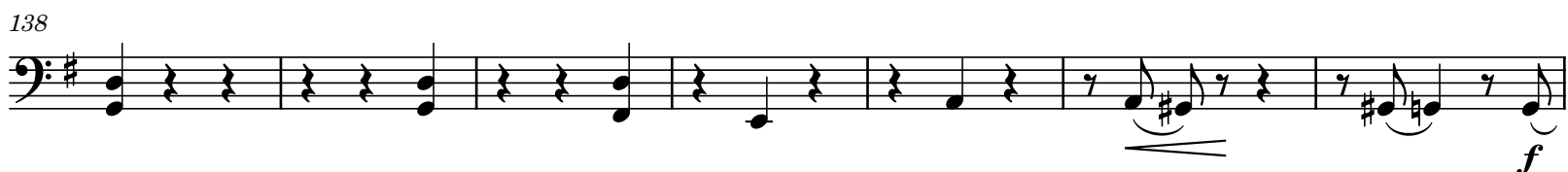
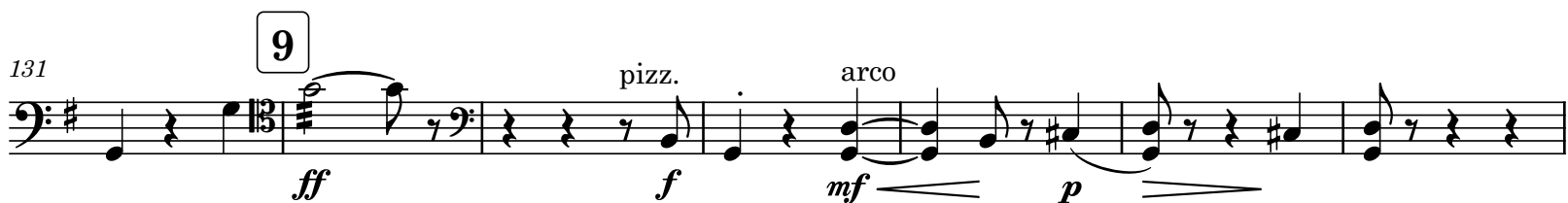
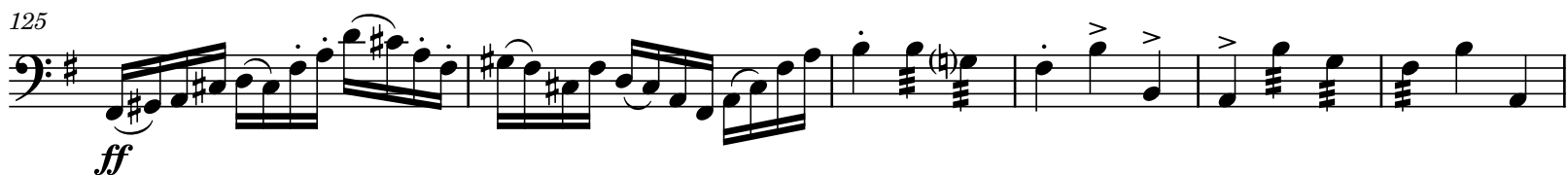
111

115

118

8


3



194 *poco animando* 12



202 *animato* *allargando* *rit..*



209 *Allegro*



215 *animato* 13



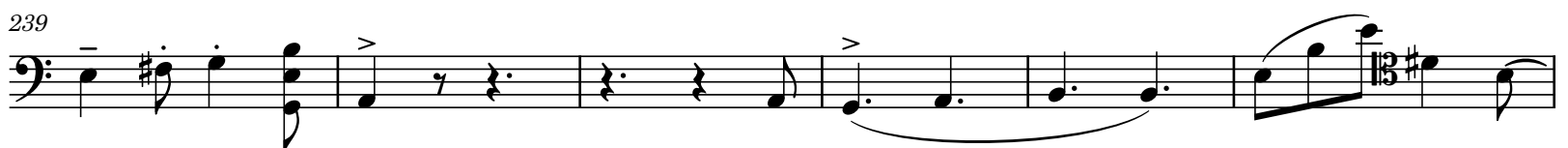
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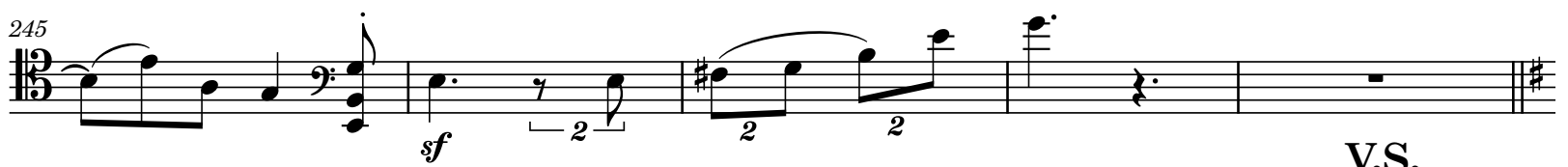
231 14 *f cresc.*



239



245 *sf* *V.S.*



250

cresc. molto

256

cresc.

260

poco rit.

264

Poco meno mosso

Poco meno mosso

270

15

15

278

16

16

284

mf

292

17

17

301

cresc. molto

309

18

18

316

320-321

f *ff*

2

Detailed description: This musical staff covers measures 316 to 321. It begins with a melodic line in the bass clef, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. A repeat sign is placed over measures 320 and 321, which are also marked with fortissimo (*ff*). A section number '2' is written above the staff.

326

Detailed description: This musical staff covers measures 326 to 334. It continues the melodic line from the previous staff, featuring various note values and rests.

335

poco rit.

19 a tempo

f

Detailed description: This musical staff covers measures 335 to 343. It starts with a 'poco rit.' (poco ritardando) instruction, followed by a boxed section number '19' and 'a tempo'. The staff contains a series of notes with a forte (*f*) dynamic.

344

f cresc. *dim.*

Detailed description: This musical staff covers measures 344 to 352. It features a crescendo (*f cresc.*) followed by a decrescendo (*dim.*) marked with a hairpin symbol.

353

mf *p* *cresc.* *f*

Detailed description: This musical staff covers measures 353 to 360. It begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic, followed by a piano (*p*) dynamic, then a crescendo (*cresc.*), and ends with a forte (*f*) dynamic.

361

20

dim. e rit.

4

368-371

Detailed description: This musical staff covers measures 361 to 371. It starts with a decrescendo and ritardando (*dim. e rit.*) instruction, followed by a boxed section number '20' and a final measure with a decrescendo and ritardando instruction. A section number '4' is written above the staff. The staff ends with a repeat sign over measures 368-371.

372 *con sordini* **2** **Moderato**

373-374 *p* *pp*

380

387 **Lentissimo** *Solo* *pizz.* *p*

396 **Più mosso** *arco* *sf*

Meno mosso **2** **a tempo, moderato**

407-408 *mf* *molto cresc.* *pp* *mf* *cresc. molto*

414 **Allegro** *mf* *f*

419 **21** *cresc.*

423

427

431

435



439

22



444

23



449

animando



453

allargando

*mf cresc.*

457



462

24

Con fuoco



V.S.

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502

rit.

V.S.

The musical score for '502' is written on a single staff in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piece begins with a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together. Above the staff, there are several dots indicating fingerings. The music concludes with a double bar line, followed by a key signature change to one sharp (F#) and the instruction 'V.S.' (Vincenzo Scacchi) below the staff. The tempo marking 'rit.' (ritardando) is placed above the staff towards the end.

507 **Lento teneramente**
divisi
p *cresc.*

513 **26** *p* *f* pizz. arco *p cresc.*

519 *f* rit.

526 **27** molto rit. **Lento**
pp *pp*

534 *p* *cresc.*

28 animato
divisi
539 *p* unis.

544 poco agitato
p *cresc.*

551 **Colla voce** rit. molto rit.
p

558 **29** a tempo, tranquillo rit.
dim.

566 **Lento maestoso**
mf

570 30

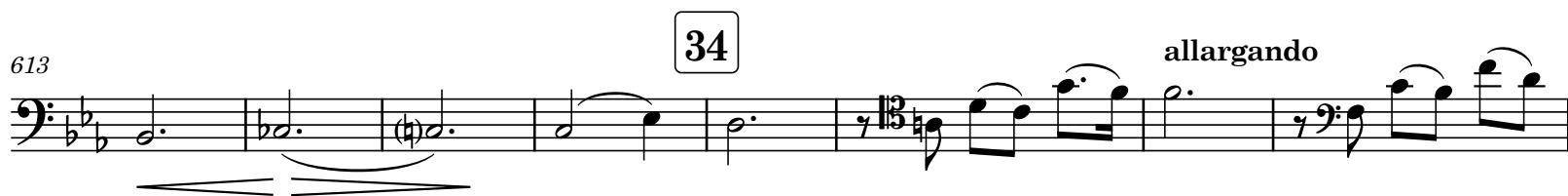
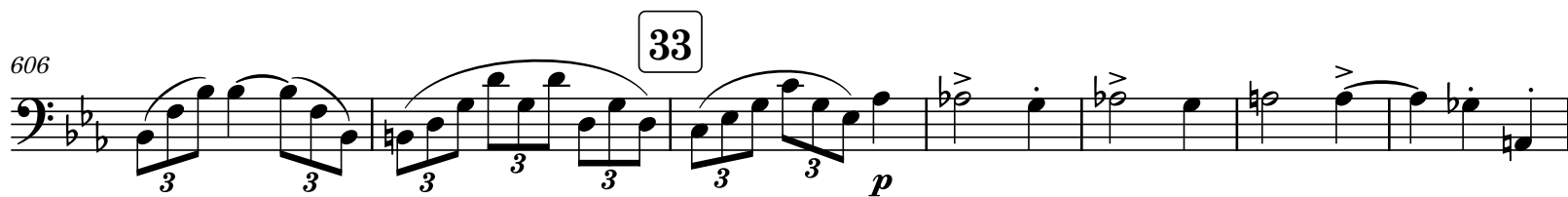
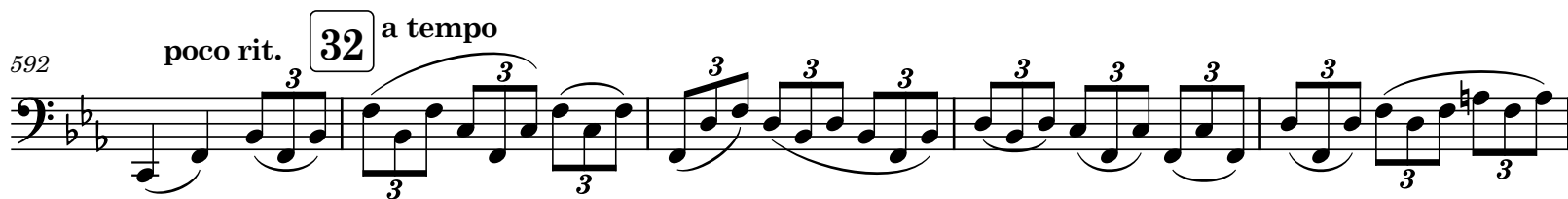
cresc. molto

574

578 31 allargando

ff *sf* *p* *sf* *p* V.S.

583 Tranquillo



644 *dim. e rit.* **35** a tempo

650 *tutti* *cresc.* *Solo* *mp*

656 *allargando* *rit.* a tempo *tutti* **36** *p* *cresc.*

662 *poco agitato* *cresc.*

667 **37** *molto cresc.* *dim.*

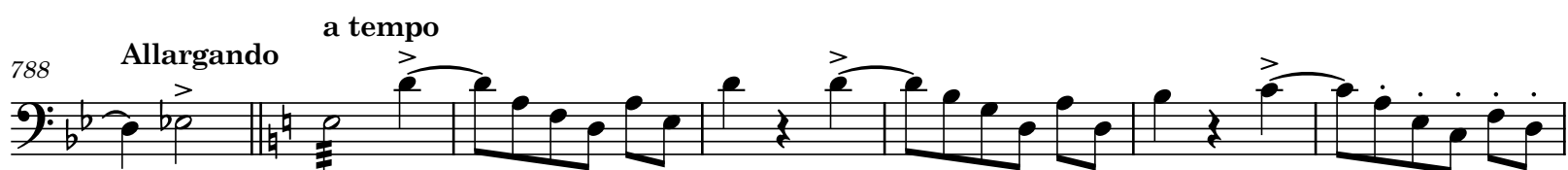
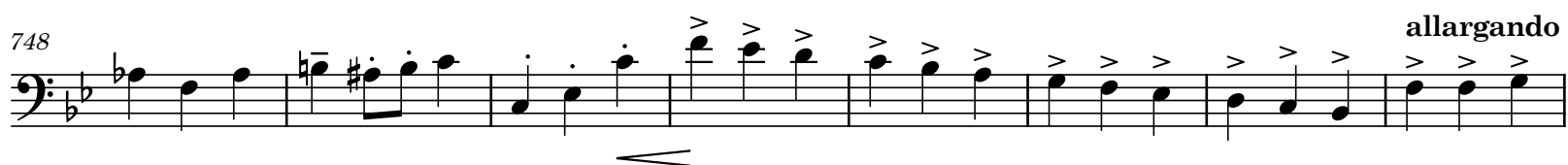
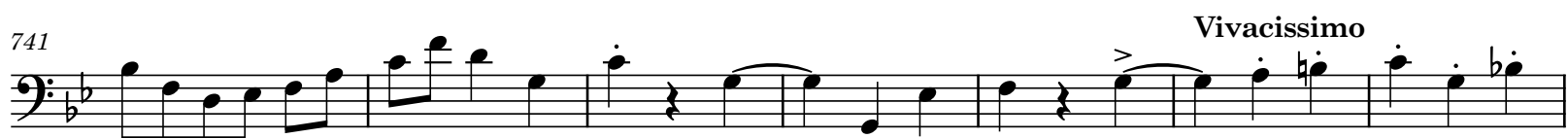
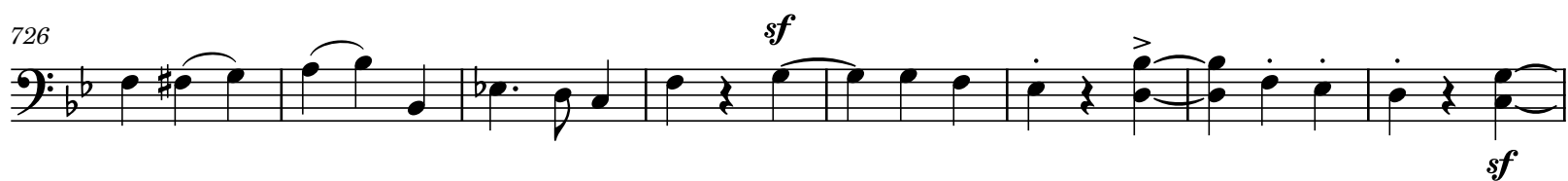
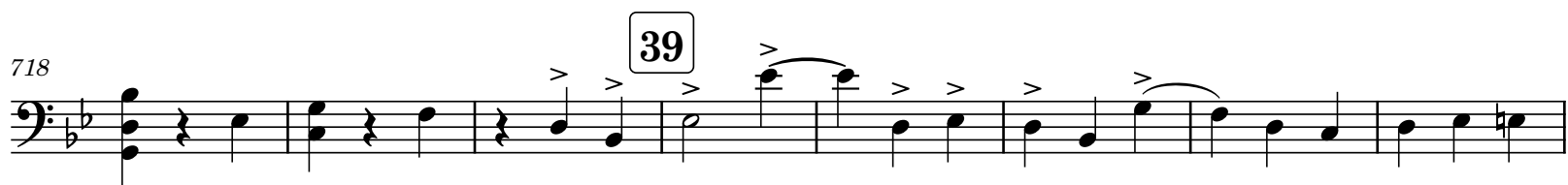
672 a tempo *pp* animando *dim.*

681 animando *cresc.* *cresc.* *cresc. sempre*

693 **38** *sf* *sf* *sf*

702 *Più mosso, allegro feroce*

710



795 *rit.* *sf*

804 [Silent] Lento 12 2 *Puì mosso* B. Solo *rit.*

805-816 817-818 The path - way lost, Men cry to one an - oth - er in the dark,

824 *animando* 42 Solo *agitato* *cresc.*

This way, and that way,

832 *tutti animando* *cresc.*

838 *Allegro* *f* *sf* *sf*

845 43 *Allegro* *sf* *sf* *ff*

854 *animato*

864 *rit.....* *Moderato* *f* *sf*

869 *sempre cresc.* 5

873-877

943 46

poco cresc.

951 rit. a tempo largamente

f *cresc.*

959 rit.

964 a tempo allargando 47 a tempo

972 rit a tempo - tranquillo

dim. 4 979-982

983 *poco rit.*

f *mf* *cresc.* *dim.*

48 a tempo - tranquillo

990

994

998

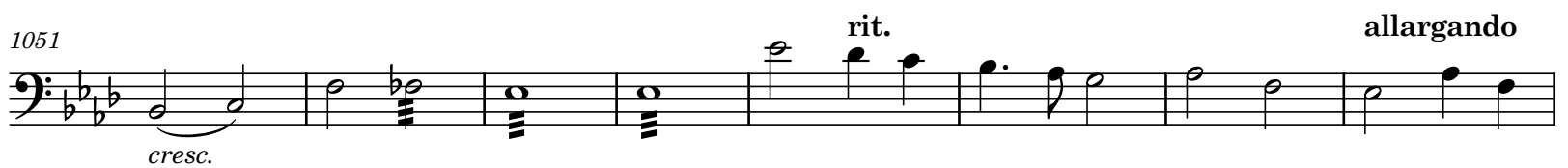
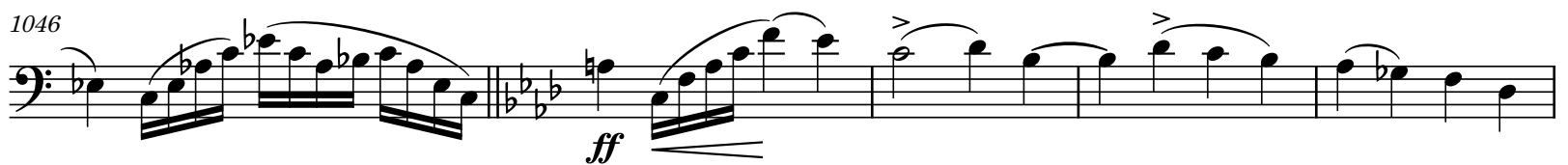
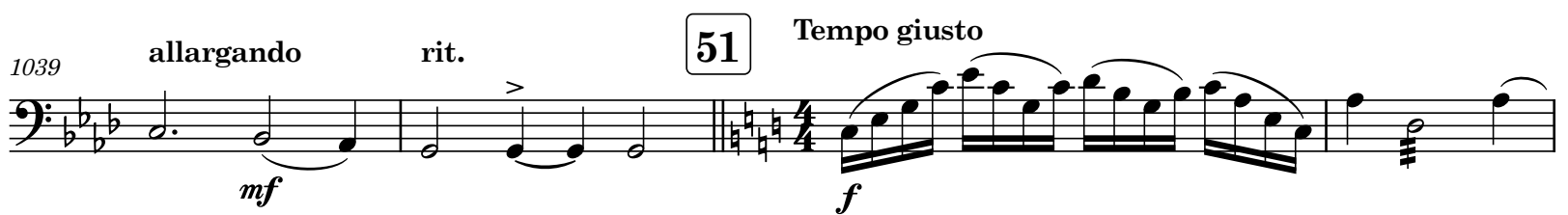
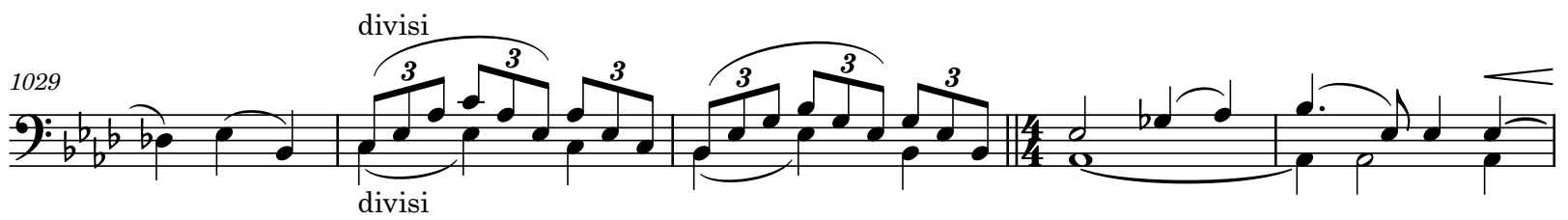
1002 **49**

1006

1010 *poco animando*

1014

1018 **50**



V.S.

Allegro divisi

1069 *pp*

poco agitato

1072 *f* *p*

meno mosso *pp* **poco animando** *cresc.*

1076

rit. Lento 3

1084 *cresc. f* 1087-1089 *pp* *sf*

53 **più mosso** **Allegro agitato** **agitato accelerando** 4

1094 *sff* 1097-1100 *mf molto cresc.* *f*

1104 **Più lento (colla voce)** **54** **a tempo** *p* *pp* *p* **rit. divisi**

1110 **Andante** *rit.*

55 **a tempo - tranquillo**

1118

allargando..... animando

1124 *cresc.* *f* *cresc.*

1132 56 animando
divisi

1139 a2 allargando 57 a tempo cresc.

1146 dim.

1151 58 Moderato tranquillo pp

1158 poco rit. cresc.

1166 a tempo dolce

1172 59 p cresc.

1177 allargando Poco meno mosso f

1182 pizz. f p V.S.

1188 **Tranquillo**

1188 **Tranquillo**

p

1191

1194

1197 **poco rit.** **Allegro - animando** **cresc. sempre**

p *molto cresc.*

1203 **60**

1210 **allaargando** **a tempo**

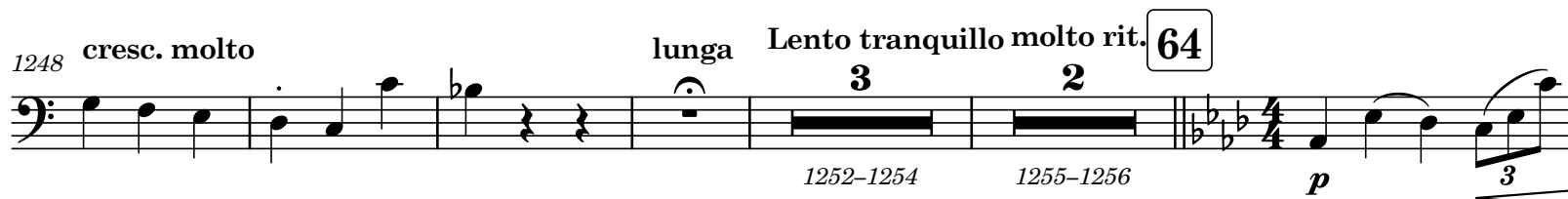
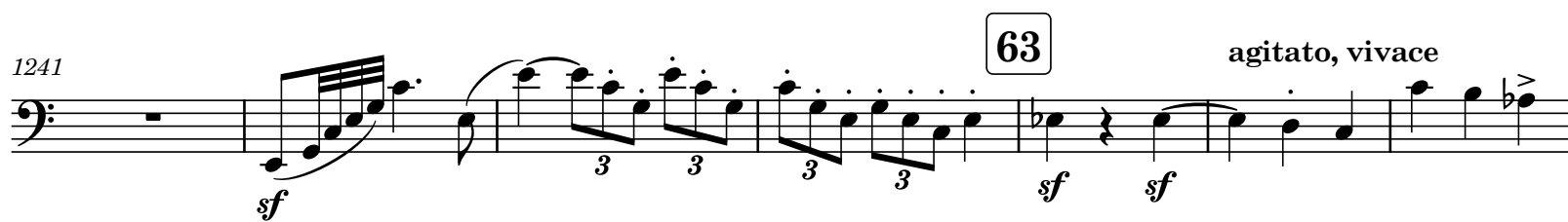
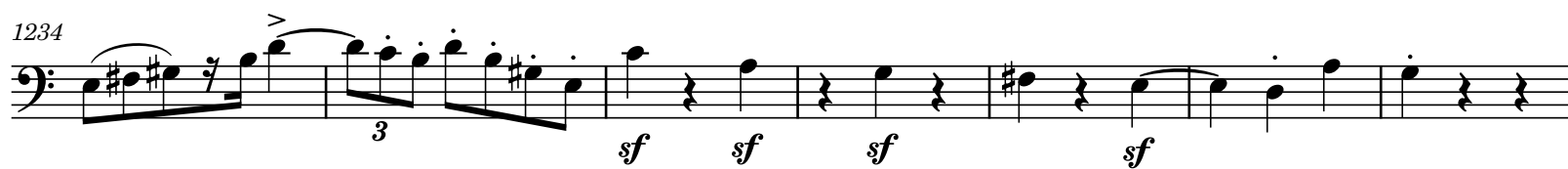
f *cresc.* *ff*

1215 **61**

3 *3* *3* *3* *3* *3*

1221

1228 **62**



Poco animando, espressivo

1285 divisi a2 **67** *p* *cresc.*

1290 *p cresc.* *cresc.* animando

1297 **68**

1302 **69** marcato *mf* *cresc.*

1307 **70** *mf* *mf*

1313 divisi

1319 a2 **71** *cresc.* animato

1324 *animando*

1329 *sempre cresc. ed animando*

72

1335



73

1341



1347



1353



1360



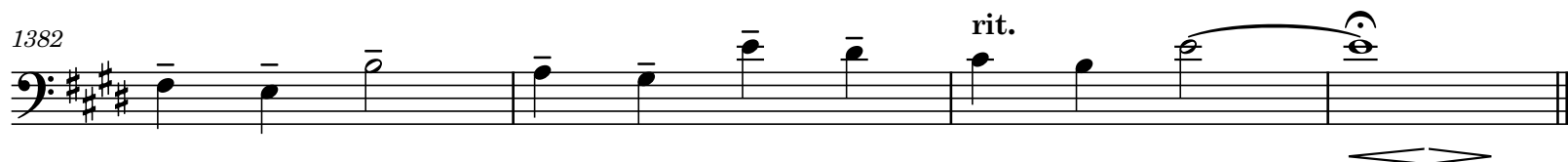
1367



1375



1382





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