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

CLARINET 2

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

IN THE UNITED STATES

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ENGLISH HERITAGE
MUSIC SERIES

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.

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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 . . . . Th e 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. Th is 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

Clarinet (B♭) 2 & Clarinet (A) 2

The Vision of Life

C. Hubert H. Parry

Moderato

Cl. in B♭

7

1–7

pp

dim.

8

11–18

1

19

arco
Vc.

p

26

mf cresc.

cresc.

30

f

cresc.

2

34

39

3

43

48

rit.

mf

4

49–52

sostenuto

3

53–55

4

pp

7

58–64

65

5

f

ff

f

5

68–72

f

p

75

6 Lento

5

77–81

rit. a tempo

8

83–90

Lento

7

Cl. 1

93

2

95–96

101

3

3

p

Allegro moderato

cresc.

107

3

3

cresc.

f

3

3

mf *cresc.*

3

113

3

3

cresc.

8

ff

119

f

f

126

9

3

sf

133

mf *dim.* *p*

140

sempre dim.

6

147–152

f

153

largamente Lento

8

155–162

B. Cl. 8ba

167

rit. 10 a tempo sostenuto Più mosso

2

171–172

p

175

tranquillo

4

177–180

p

11

185

agitato rit. molto rit.

p *pp*

191

a tempo poco animando

4

192–195

p

201

12

animato allargando rit...

3

203–205

f

V.S.

210 **Allegro** **animato**

mf *f* *f*

218 **13**

226

234 **14**

tr

cresc.

241

f *mf*

249

p *cresc.*

255

260 **poco rit.** **Poco meno mosso**

265 **15**

f

272 **16**

279

287

17

293–299

300

p

308

18

316

317–323

ff

330

poco rit.

339

19 a tempo

346

354

f

363

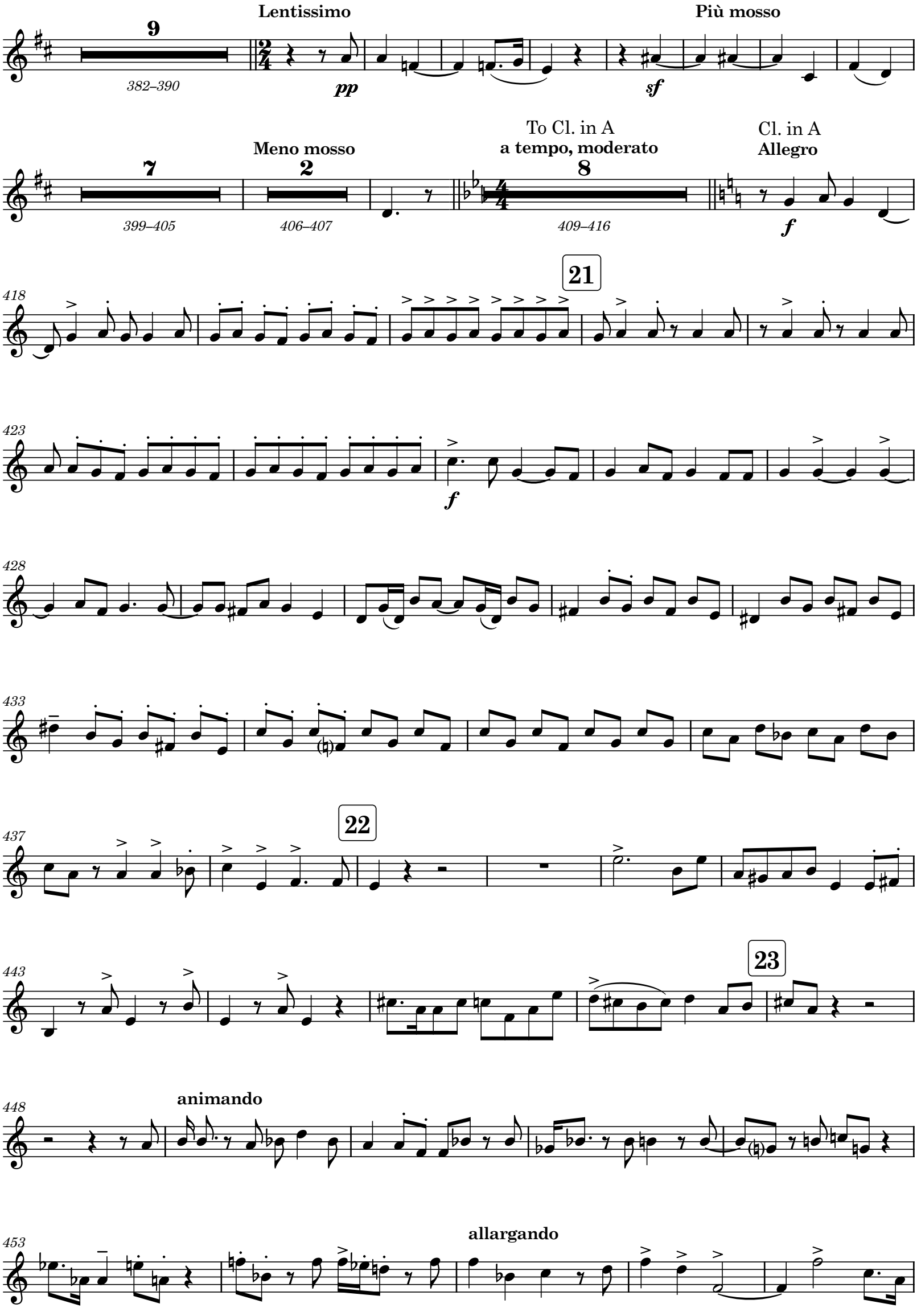
20

dim. e rit.

368–374

Moderato

375–380


Lentissimo
Più mosso
9
382–390
pp
sf
Meno mosso
To Cl. in A
a tempo, moderato
Cl. in A
Allegro
7
2
8
399–405
406–407
409–416
f
21
418
423
f
428
433
22
437
23
443
animando
448
allargando
453

458

461

24

Con fuoco

466

ff

471

25

477

ff

2

482–483

Lento

Meno mosso **rit.**

486

3

489–491

Lento

p

495

cresc.

mf

Slower **rit.**

5

500–504

p

Lento teneramente

26

8

508–515

4

516–519

2

520–521

mf *cresc.*

To Cl. in B♭ **rit.**

527 Bsn 1 Solo molto rit. 27 Lento Cl. in B♭ pp

533 28 animato poco agitato 3 10 536–538 539–548 C. A.

550 Colla voce rit. pp

29 molto rit. a tempo, tranquillo

557 p

563 rit. espress. Lento maestoso

569 30 3 572–574 f

577 31 allargando Tranquillo sf pp mf pp dim.

poco rit. 32 a tempo 8 4 584–591 593–596 p pp

601 33 f cresc. mf

609

617 **34** **allargando**

626 **rit.** **a tempo** To Cl. in A **5** *630–634* **Lento** **4** *635–638*

639 Cl. in A

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

652 **allargando** **rit.**

659 **a tempo** **36** **2** *660–661* **poco agitato**

667 **37** **3** **4** **a tempo** *668–670* *671–674*

676 To Cl. in B♭ **animando** **9** *680–688*

animando

Cl. in B♭

2

689–690

38

f ***sf***

698

Più mosso, allegro feroce

705

713

39

f ***sf*** ***ff***

722

731

40

sf

739

Vivacissimo

748

allargando…

a tempo

756

764

41

772

780

788 Allargando a tempo

sf

796 rit. [Silent] Lento

3 8

801–803 805–812

813 Puì mosso

p p

822 animando

829 42 agitato animando Allegro

f

840 43 Allegro

f ff

848

855 animato

3 2

856–858 863–864

rit. 2 Moderato

865–866

873 sempre cresc. rit. a tempo animato

sf

883 44 allargando 8 agitato

885–892

f mf

896 animando

f

Allegro
poco allargando poco rit. rit.

901–902

mf

910 45 Agitato dolente

mf

916 poco animando

cresc.

920 molto rit.

mf dim.

Lento

926 Più lento Moderato Moderato con anima

pp 2 7

931–932 933–939

940 *cresc.*

948 46 rit. a tempo largamente

956 rit.

964 a tempo allargando 47 a tempo

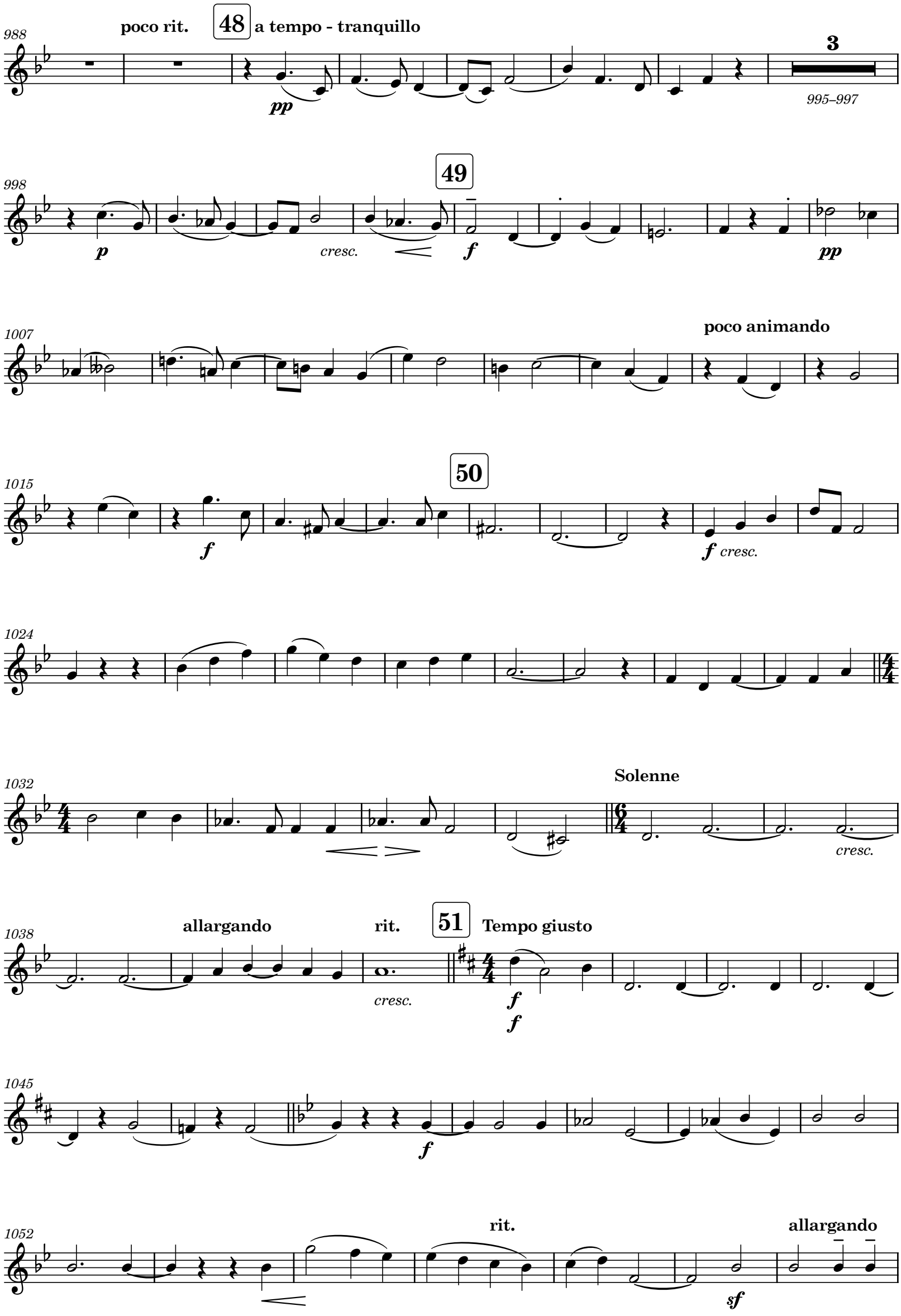
f

972 rit a tempo - tranquillo

p

979 2

f *dim.* 986–987


988
poco rit.
48
a tempo - tranquillo
pp
3
995–997
998
49
p
cresc.
f
pp
1007
poco animando
1015
50
f
f cresc.
1024
1032
Solenne
cresc.
1038
allargando
rit.
51
Tempo giusto
cresc.
f
f
1045
f
1052
rit.
allargando
sf

1059

52

meno mosso

dim.

2

1064–1065

3

1066–1068

Allegro

2

1069–1070

poco agitato

Cl. 1

3

meno mosso

3

1075–1077

pp

poco animando

1084

rit. **Lento**

pp

53 **più mosso**

4

1090–1093

f

mf

Allegro agitato **agitato accelerando**

4

1097–1100

3

1101–1103

54

1104

Più lento (colla voce) a tempo

p

3

1106–1108

rit.

Andante

7

1110–1116

rit.

55 **a tempo - tranquillo**

1118

pp

1122

mf *cresc.*

allargando.....

To Cl. in A

1127

2

1129–1130

animando

3

1131–1133

56

2

1135–1136

animando 4 — allargando 2 — Cl. in A — 57 a tempo

1137–1140 — 1141–1142 — *mf*

1148 — *f* — *p* — *pp*

58 Moderato tranquillo

1153 — *p*

1159 — *cresc.*

1165 poco rit. — a tempo — dolce 2 — 3

p — 1167–1168 — *p* — 1172–1174

59 — 2 — allargando — Poco meno mosso

1175–1176

1181 — *mf*

1187 Tranquillo — 8 — poco rit. — Allegro - animando

p — 1189–1196 — *p cresc.*

1200 cresc. sempre — 60 — *f*

1208 — *f* — allaargando — a tempo — *ff*

1215

61

To Cl. in B♭

2

Tpt 1

1218–1219

1223

Cl. in B♭

sf

1232

62

1239

f

63

1246

agitato, vivace

cresc. molto

lunga

Lento tranquillo

sf

pp

1255

molto rit.

64

p *dim.*

p

1262

pp

p

1267

poco rit.

a tempo

V.S.

1273 **65**

p *p*

1279 **rit.** **66** **poco animando** **poco rit.** **Poco animando, espressivo**

cresc. *f* *dim.* *mp* *cresc.*

1286 **67**

p *mf*

1292 **animando**

f

1299 **68** **69**

1305 **70**

1312

To Cl. in A **71** **animato** Cl. in A **animando**

2 **2** **3**

1319–1320 *1321–1322* *1323–1325*

1329 **sempre cresc. ed animando**

72

1335

73

2

1342–1343

f

f

1350

cresc.

1356

rit.

cresc.

1361

cresc.

1367

p

1373

poco rit.

cresc.

p

1380

rit.

a tempo

rit.

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