First Suite in E Flat, Chaconne

Transposition Inquisition No. 62

Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

arr. Martorano

About the Composer:

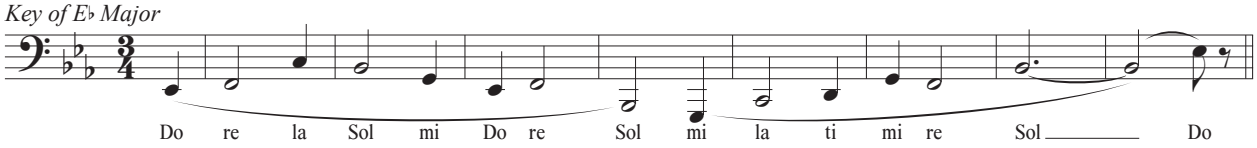
"*English composer. His prominent position among 20th-century English composers owes a great deal to the immense popularity of his orchestral work The Planets. The only pieces to have achieved comparable success are on a much smaller scale, yet equally idiosyncratic. His wholly individual blend of Hindu philosophy and English folksong set him on a path far from the mainstream of European tradition, although his early works reveal a thorough grounding in conventional forms."*

-Colin Matthews (Groves Music Dictonary)

About the Composition:

"*The First Suite in E ♭ for Military Band, Op. 28, No. 1, is considered one of the cornerstone masterworks in the concert band repertoire. Although completed in 1909, the suite didn't receive its official premiere until 11 years later on June 23rd, 1920, by an ensemble of 165 musicians at the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall. Along with the subsequent Second Suite in F for Military Band, written in 1911 and premiered in 1922, the First Suite convinced many other prominent composers that serious music could be written specifically for band.*

The Chaconne begins with a ground bass reminiscent of those written by Henry Purcell or William Byrd. It is performed by tuba, euphonium and string bass and is repeated throughout the ensemble sixteen full times as varying instrumental textures and variations of the theme are layered within it. Following a delicately scored chamber setting of the theme, the music steadily builds to a brilliant Eb Major chord that concludes the movement."



About the Excerpt:

Harvey, B. M. (2007). Essential Excerpts for Tuba from Original Works Written for Wind Ensemble (pp. 32-34).

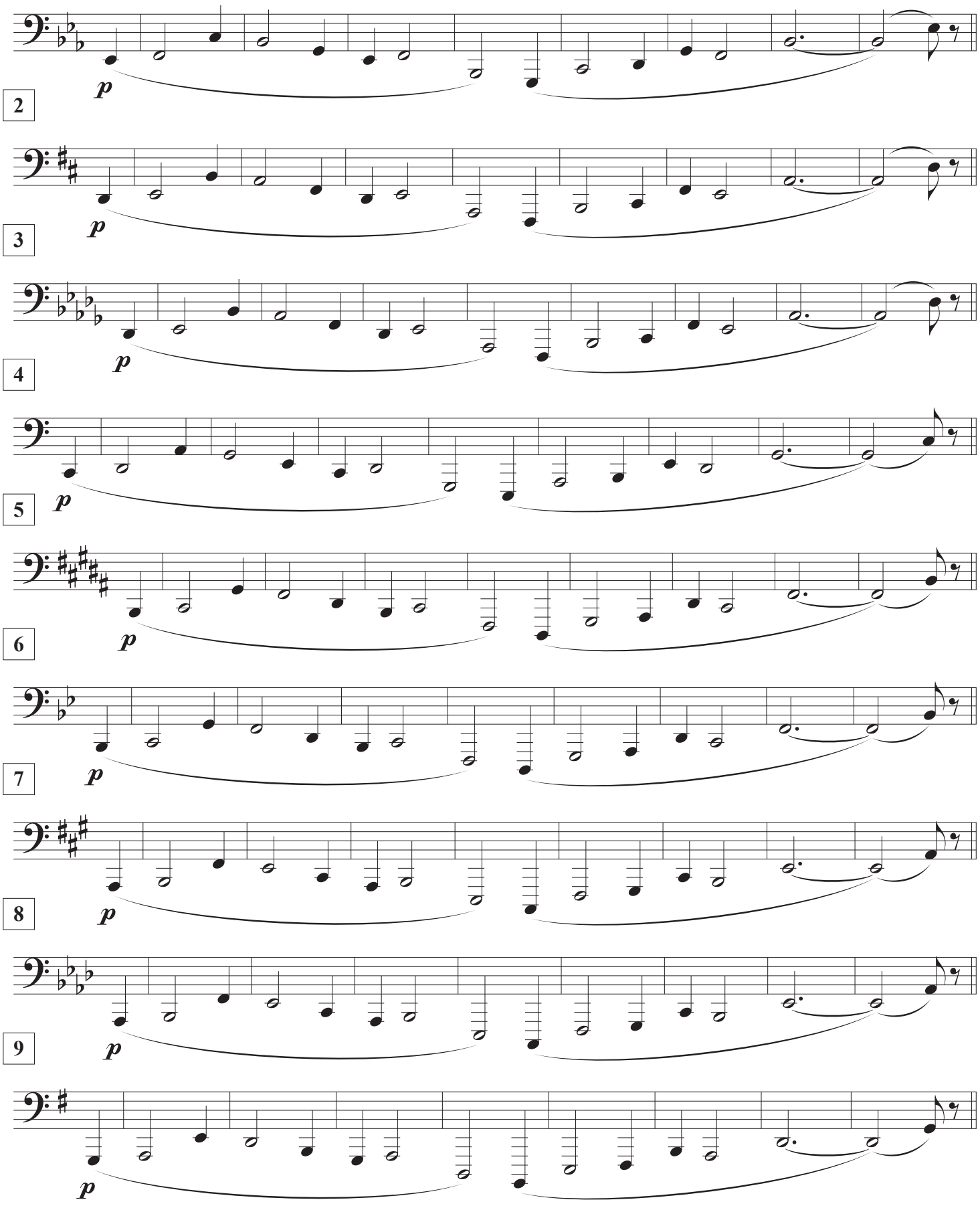
"*A work frequently required on many of military band auditions for tuba is the First Suite in Eb for Military Band by Gustav Holst. The soli section in the first eight bars of movement I, "Chaconne," is deceptively difficult. An extremely soft dynamic while moving between each interval in seamless and smooth manner is necessary. The tempo is fixed, the musical line is always connected, and exact intonation is critical when performing this excerpt. The end of this passage for tuba is often challenging because the Bb to Eb perfect fourth interval requires a gentle and effortless approach when the melody is passed on to the trombones and trumpets. The key of this eight-measure excerpt is Eb Major. The tempo is marked "Allegro moderato," and the notes within the two four-bar phases, into which this excerpt is divided, are intended to be played legato.*

Notes for the Arranger:

"The challenge of this excerpt is not of extraordinary technique, but in a solid foundation of fundamentals. The excerpt is to be played soft and full-bodied over a lengthier phrase. Like drawing a perfect circle in the middle of a white canvas, the task is simple, yet requires great precision. Here are some suggested studies/techniques to help you prepare for performance:

- *Flexibility/Flow Studies- Both lip slurs and slurred scalar patterns are key to building lip/mental percussion. With studies like these, I recommend singing, buzzing (or half valving), and THEN playing. Hear the pitch in your mind before it leaves the bell. The process of regular flexibility/flow study will lead to control.*
- *Dynamic Studies- In all dynamic studies, but especially the soft range, tone production is job number one. Not that you shouldn't occasionally test the boundaries, rather reinforcing uncharacteristic sounds is counterproductive. Strive to make beautiful sounds always.*
- *Phrasing Studies- I have found that with great tonal/pitch accuracy comes a great deal of breath efficiency. The basic idea is the avoidance of "Kacks", while playing to the horn's resonant frequency (buzzing where the horn wants to vibrate) will yield a purer, richer sound, without extra force or overblowing. Doing this on one note is simple, but over an extended phrase, pushing the limits of your lung capacity and focus, takes time and training.*
- *Recommended Studies: Clarke's Technical studies for the Cornet; Studies 2 and 3.*
  Bowman's Daily Warm-Ups; Flexibilities
  Transposition Inquisition No. 62; All keys

1 **Allegro Moderato**



10

11

12

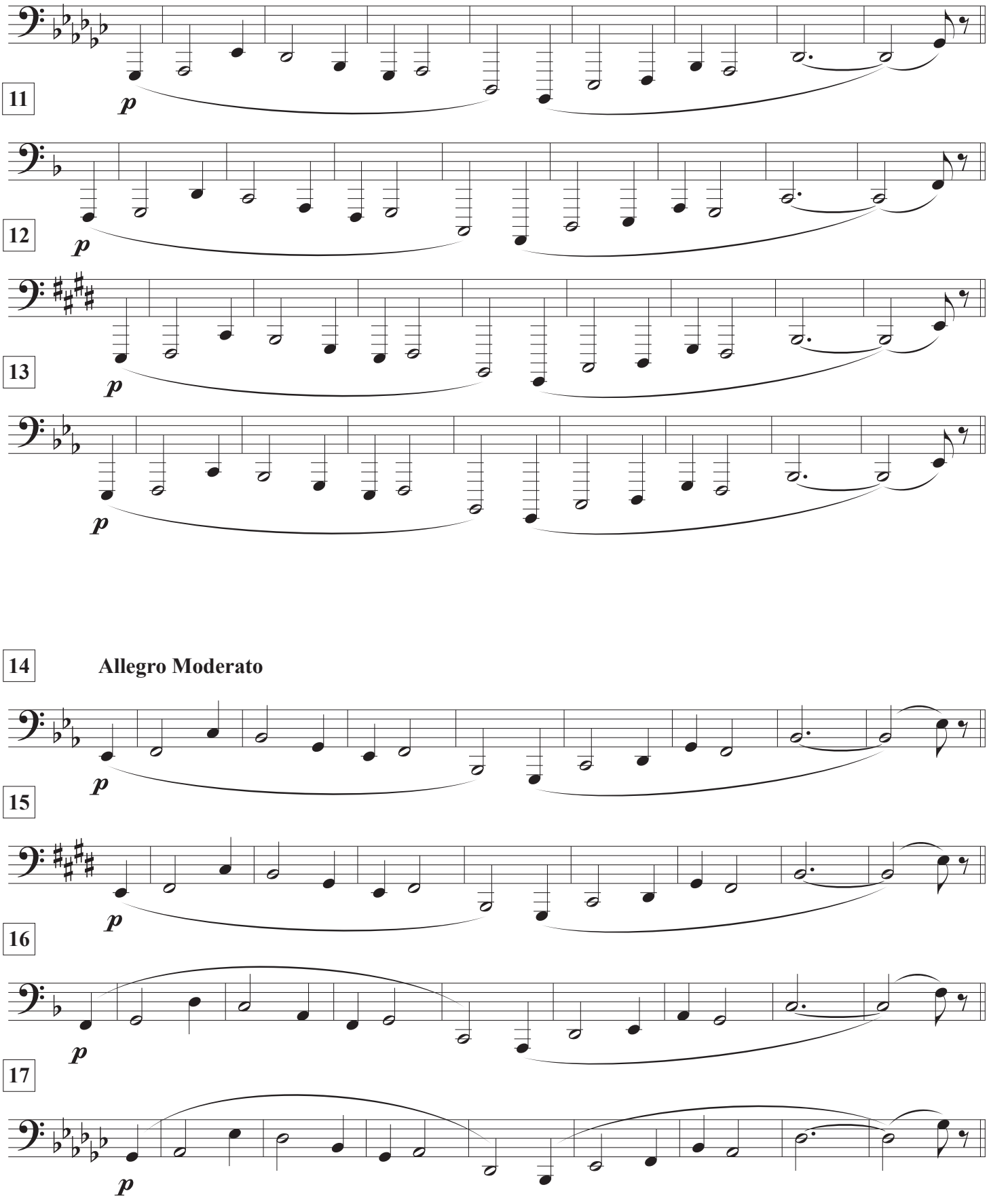
13

14 **Allegro Moderato**

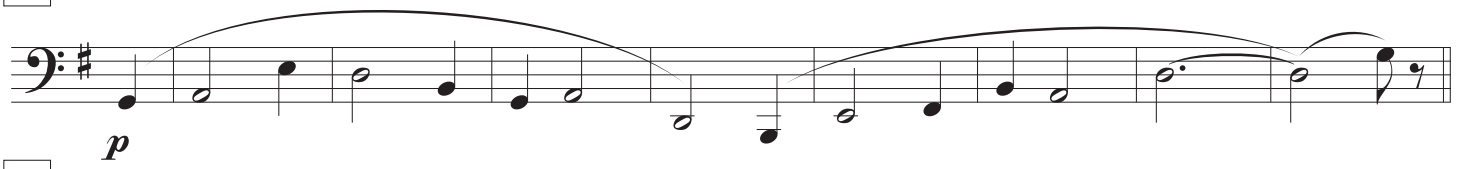
15

16

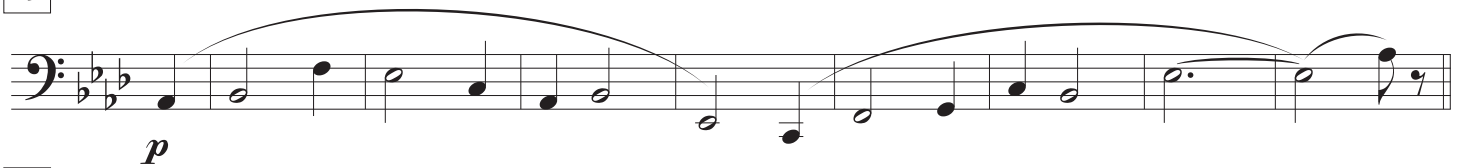
17



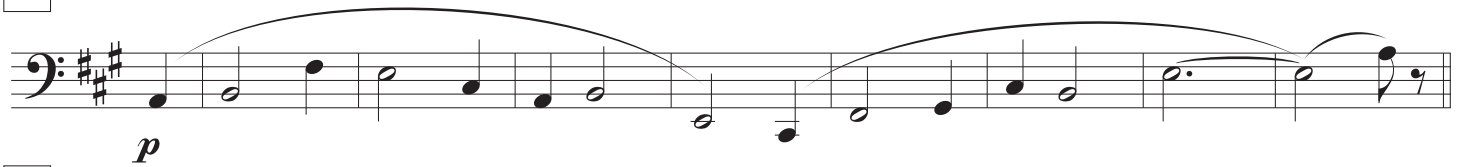
18



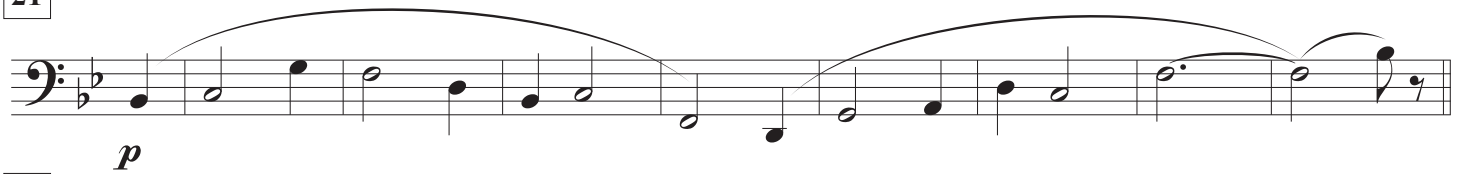
19



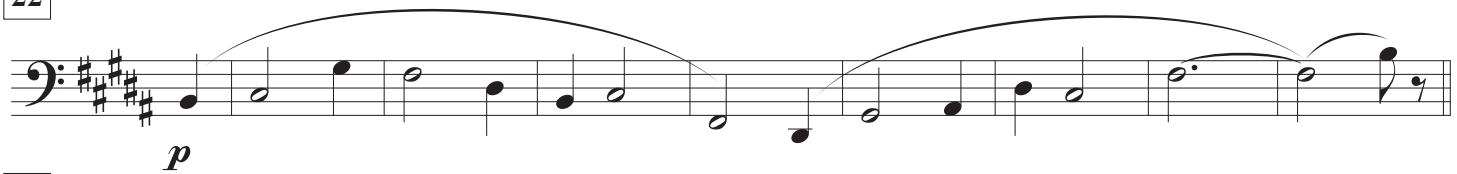
20



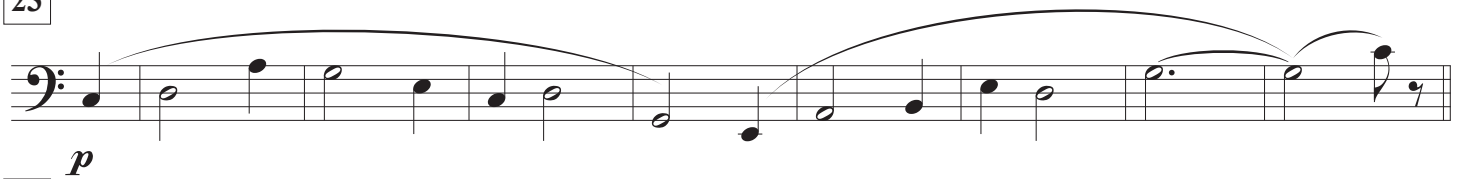
21



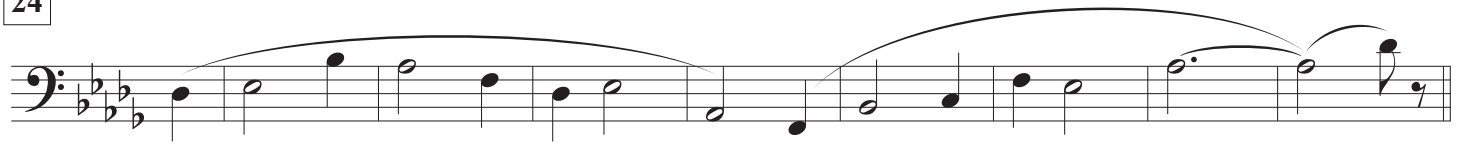
22



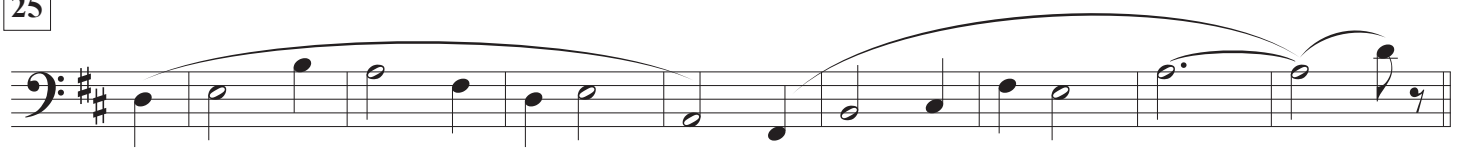
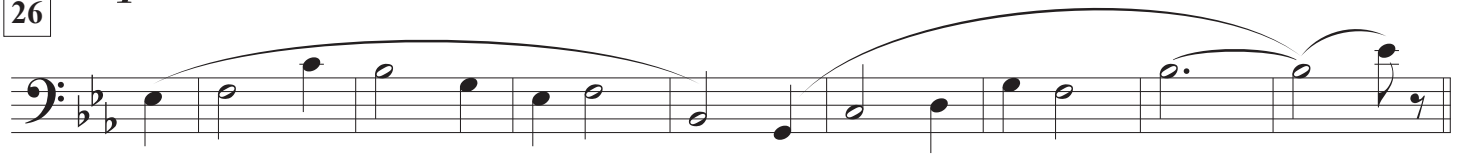
23



24



25



26