J. S. Bach

CONCERTO

for Viola & Orchestra

from the Keyboard Concerto
BWV1055

Keyboard Reduction

Transcribed into G major

ARCODORO
PUBLICATIONS

Preface

It is by now well accepted that many of Bach's harpsichord concerti had their genesis in concerti for the violin and the oboe, and in this case, possibly the oboe d'amore. Bärenreiter-Verlag has even published a reconstruction for this instrument which supports the idea that it was indeed originally written for the oboe d'amore (bearing in mind the range and the key).

Regardless of the veracity of hypothesis, and in the absence of any surviving manuscript, the Concerto BWV1055 in A major also lends itself admirably to the range and expressive abilities of the viola (and, as a matter of fact, the violin). Indeed, unlike the oboe d'amore model, it is capable of playing the most florid material (eg. the arpeggiated material in the ritornelli of the first movement) specifically accorded to the harpsichord. This possibility is further enhanced when the work is transposed into G major. This editor has no qualms about transposing the key, seeing as Bach did likewise for almost every one of his harpsichord concerti (not to mention dozens of other instances in his instrumental output). The key of G major suits the material admirably on the viola, and there are only two notes (in the slow movement) which drop out of range for the second violins.

Preparing a keyboard accompaniment from an orchestral score by Bach is notoriously fraught with problems, especially when the accompanying texures are so idiomatically conceived for strings. However the task is much easier when the viola takes the upper line in the ritornelli (just as the solo violin should in the violin concerti). Because of the range, this is possible without having to transpose to a lower octave.

When performing with string orchestra, I strongly recommend to perform the tuttis with full strings and the solo passages with solo string quartet. The lower register of the viola is easily masked. For this reason I have included a Violoncello Concertato part which was originally the left hand of the harpsichord part.

Alan Bonds
Perth, Western Australia
August 2009

Arranged & Edited by Alan Bonds

Concerto for Viola and Orchestra

BWV 1055

J. S. Bach

Allegro

Viola Concertato

Cembalo

f *spiccato*

5

9

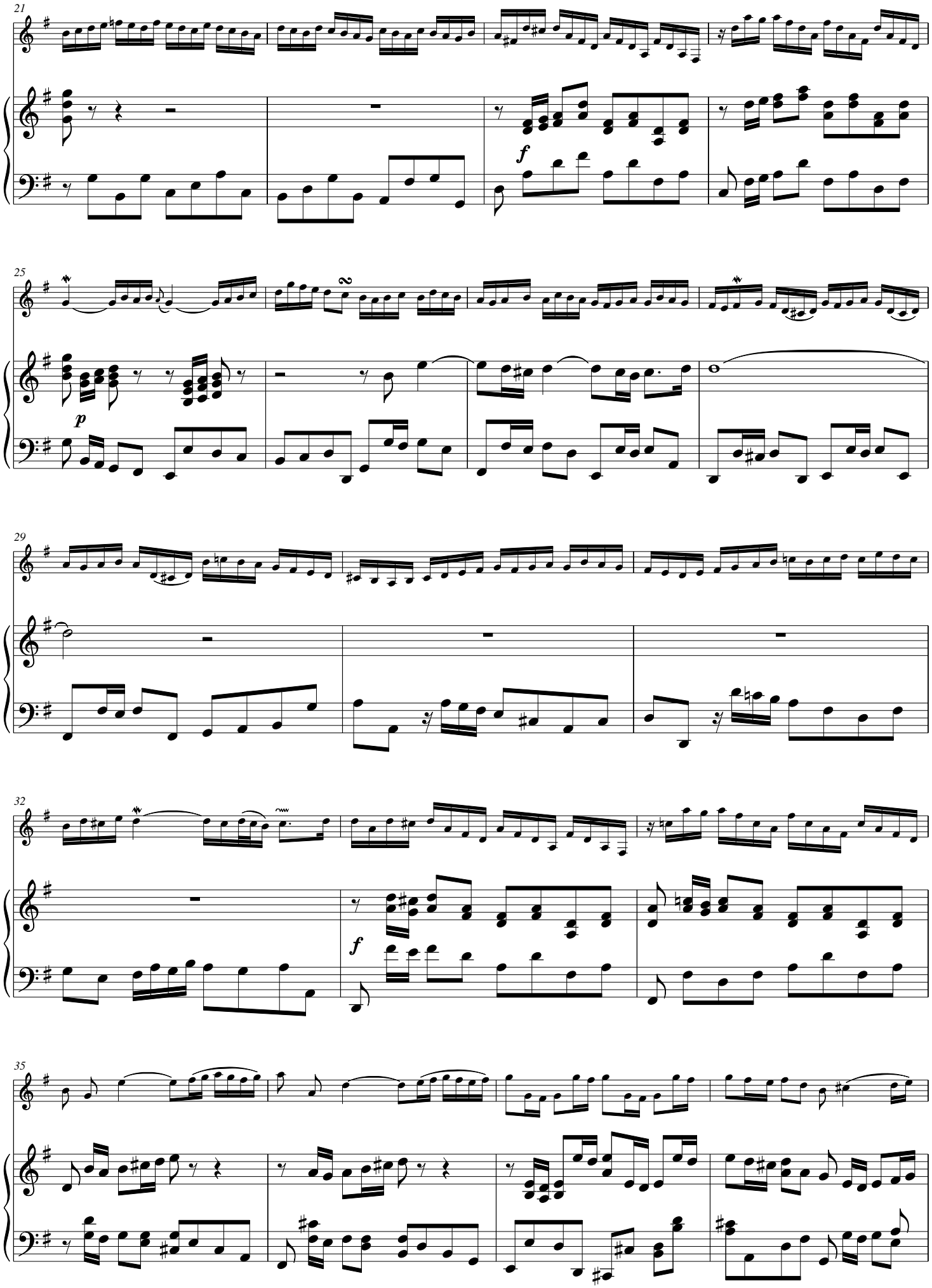
13

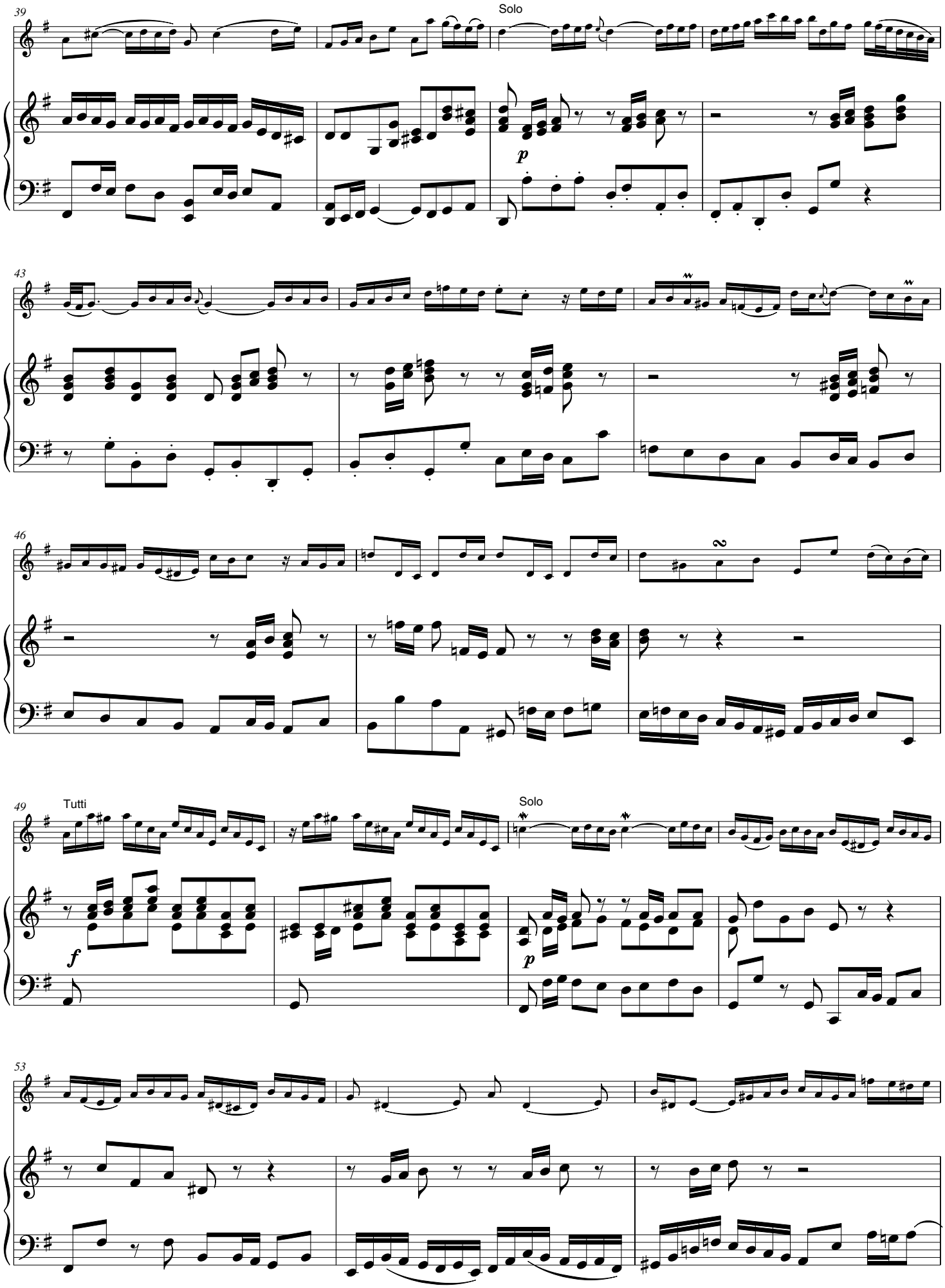
17

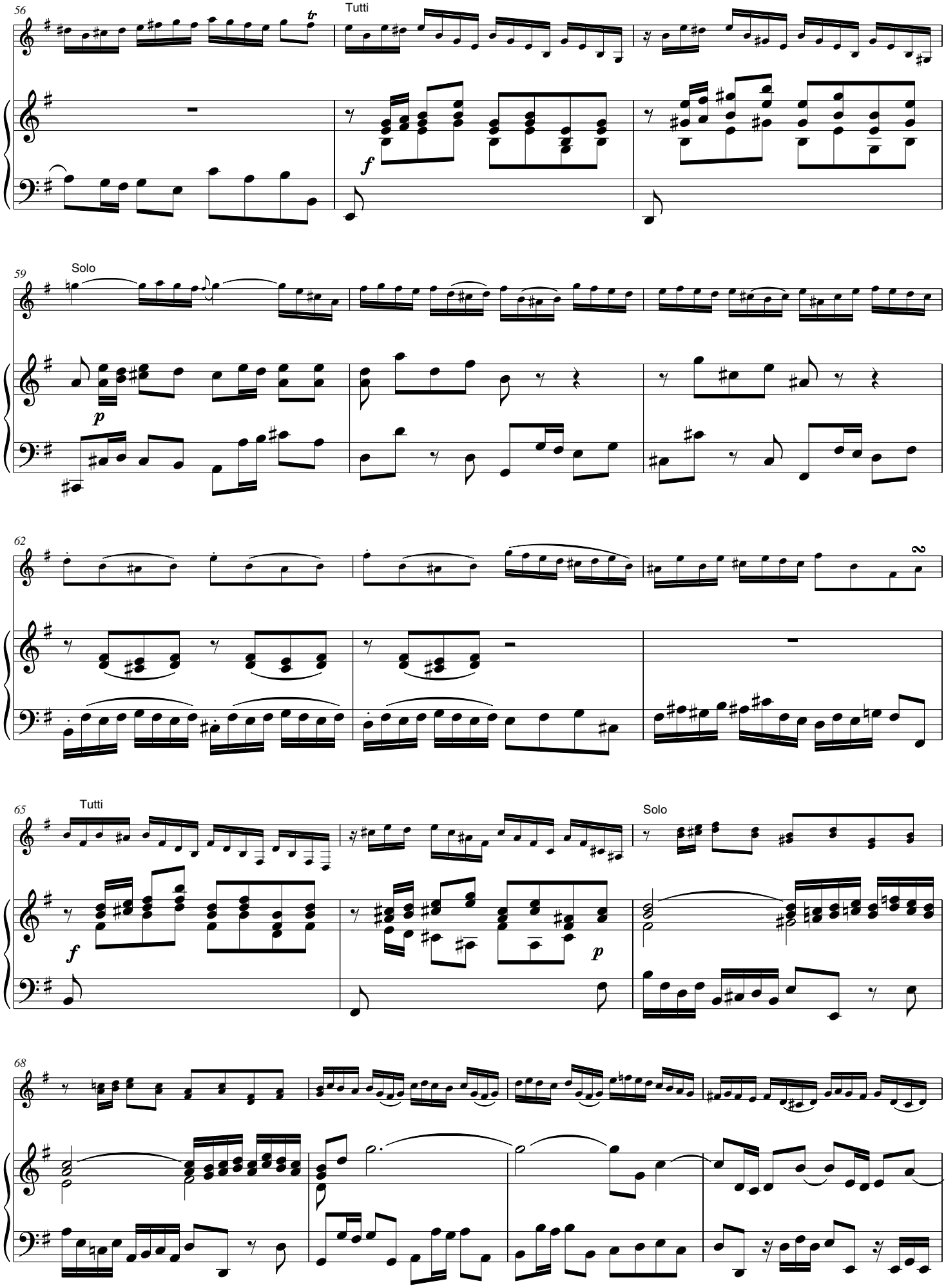
Solo

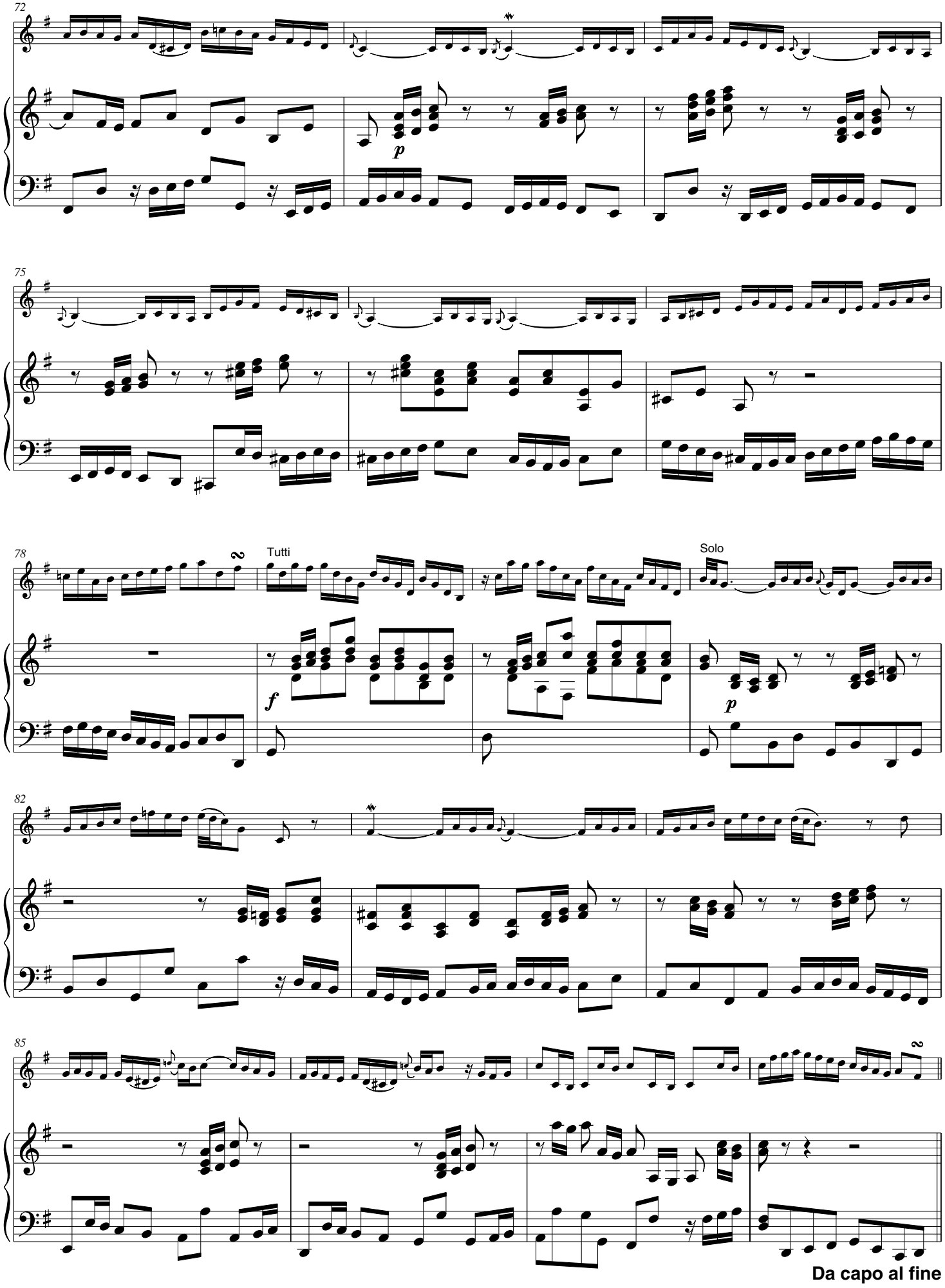
p

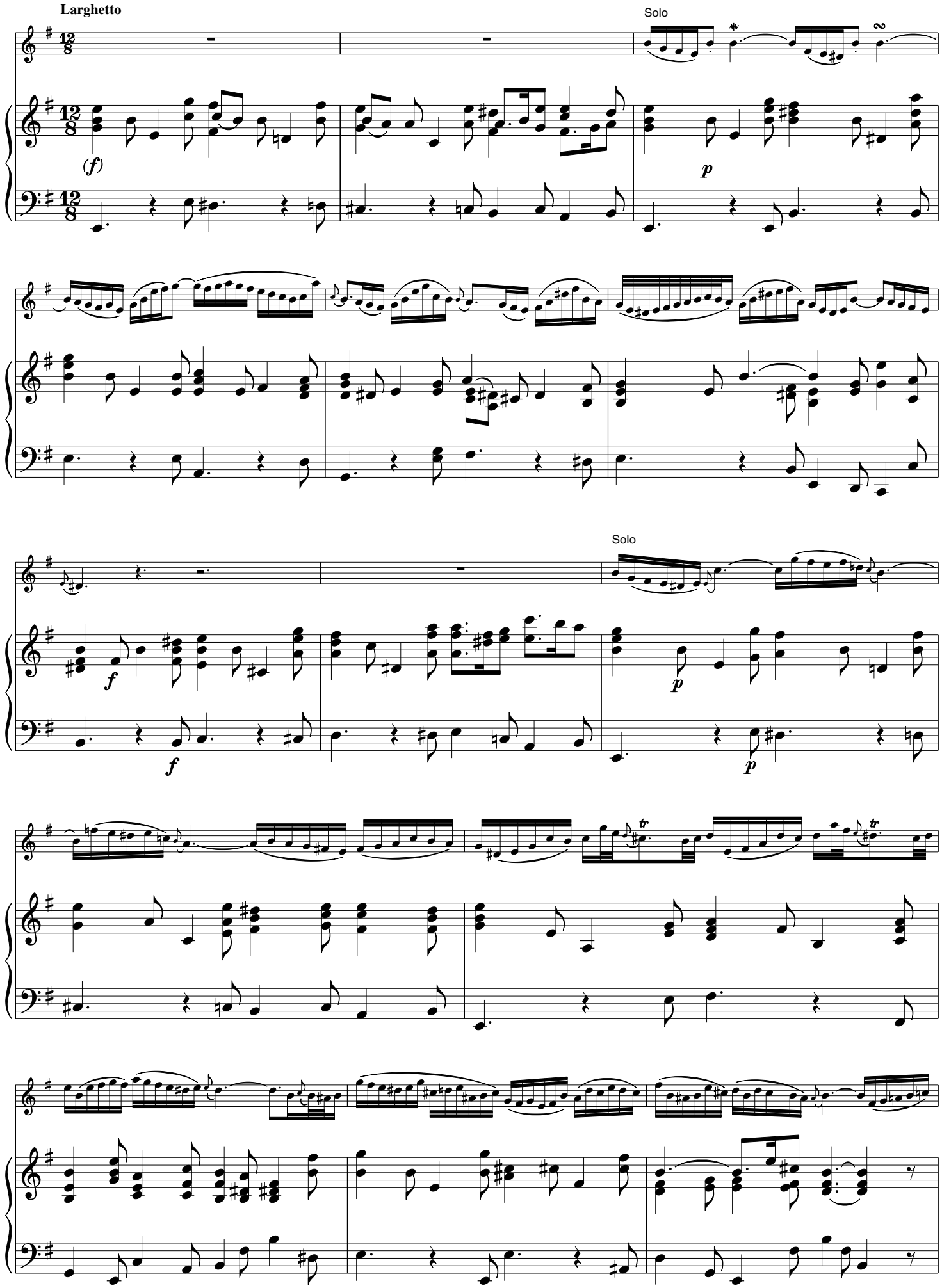
Fine

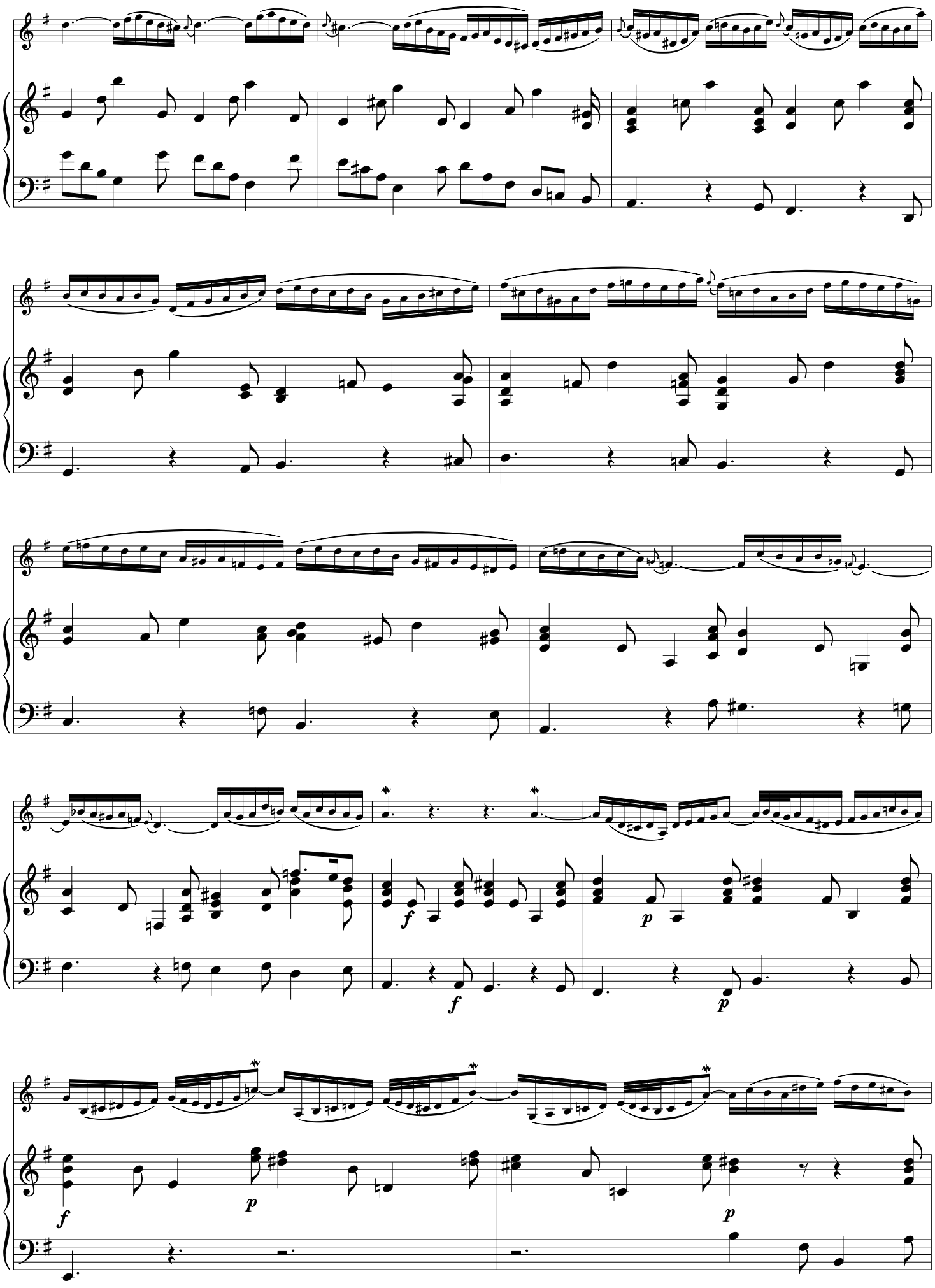

21
f
25
p
29
32
f
35

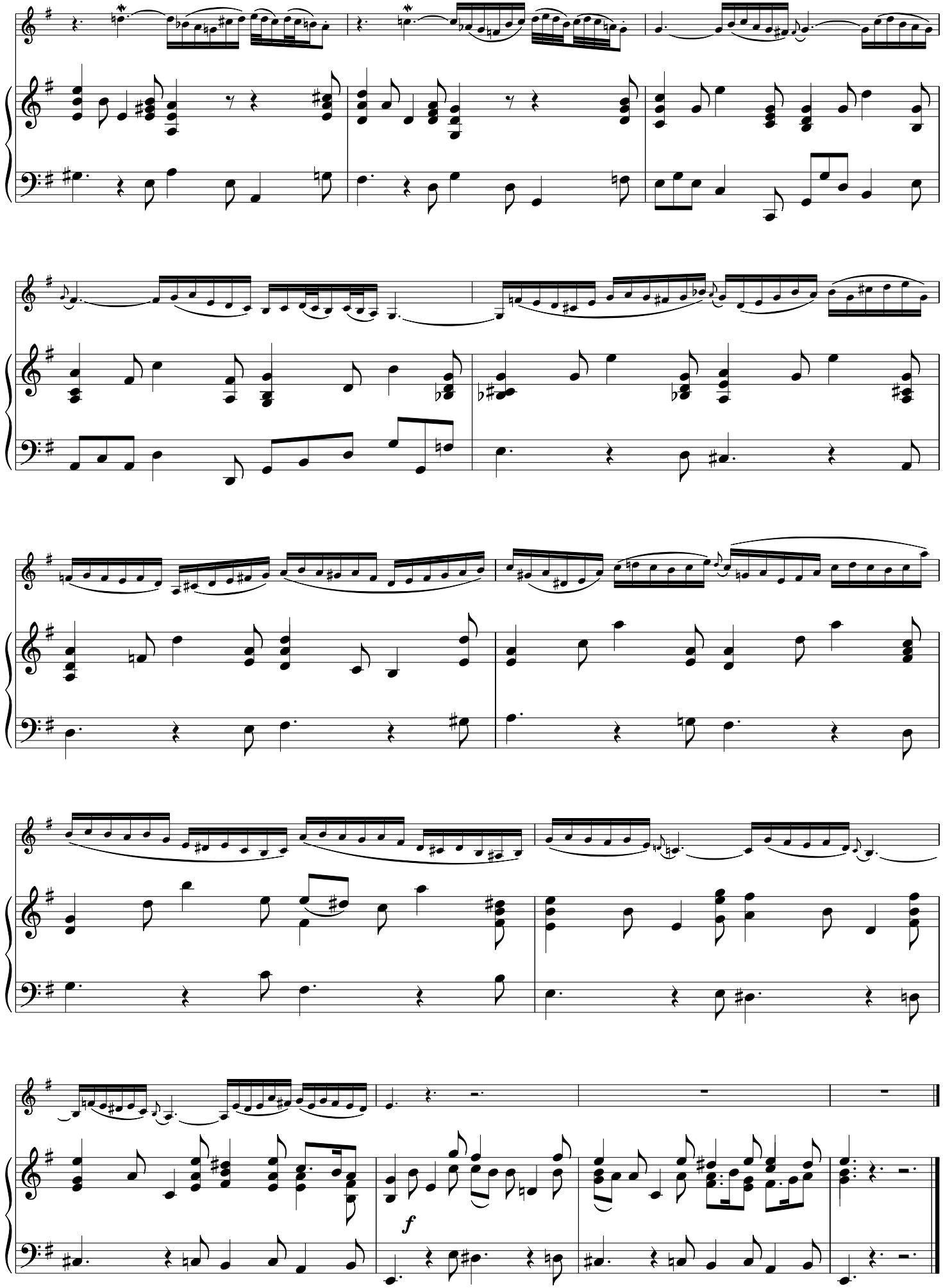

39
Solo
p
43
46
49
Tutti
Solo
f
p
53


56
Tutti
59
Solo
62
65
Tutti
Solo
68

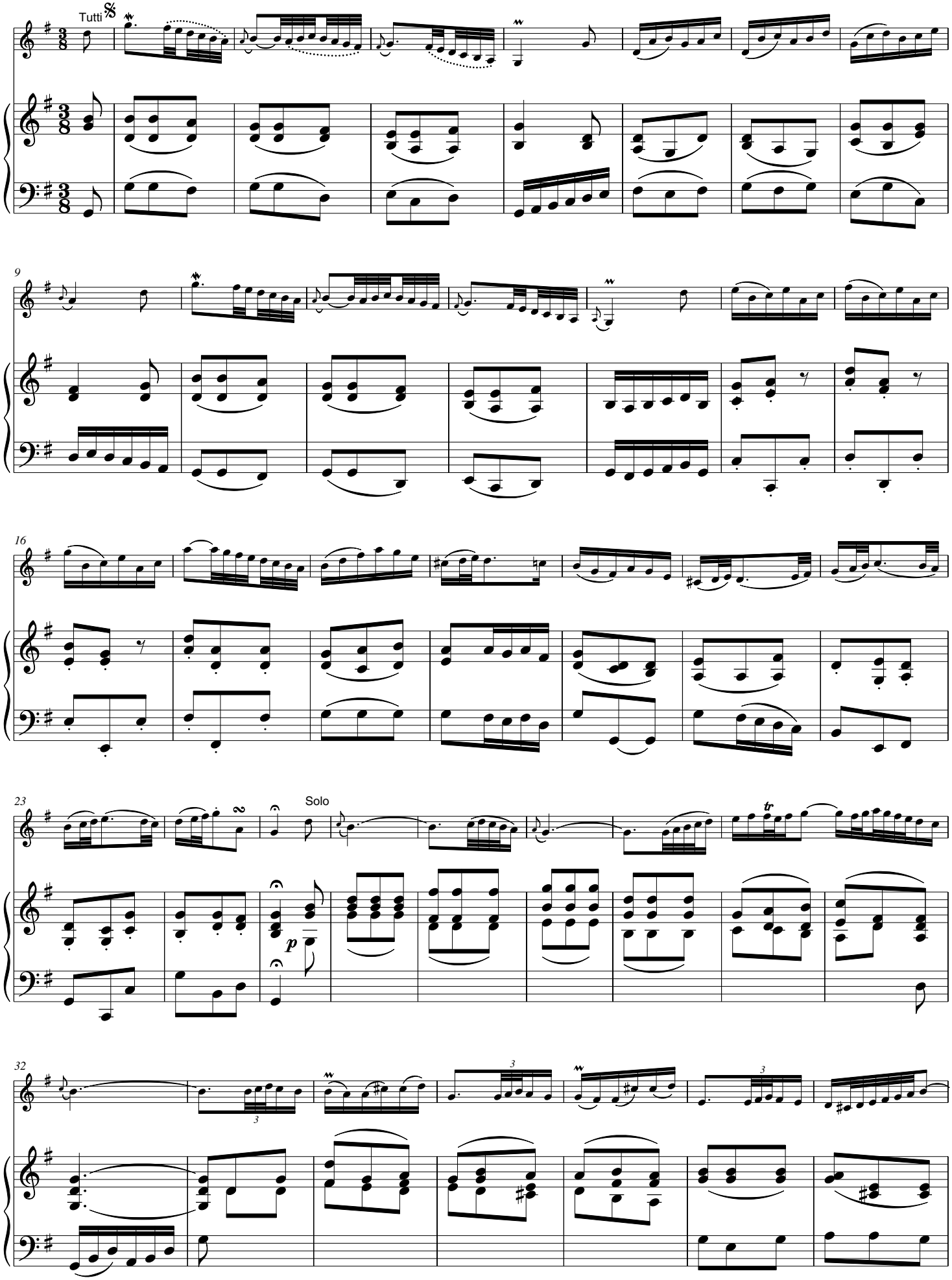

72
p
75
78
Tutti
f
Solo
p
82
85
Da capo al fine

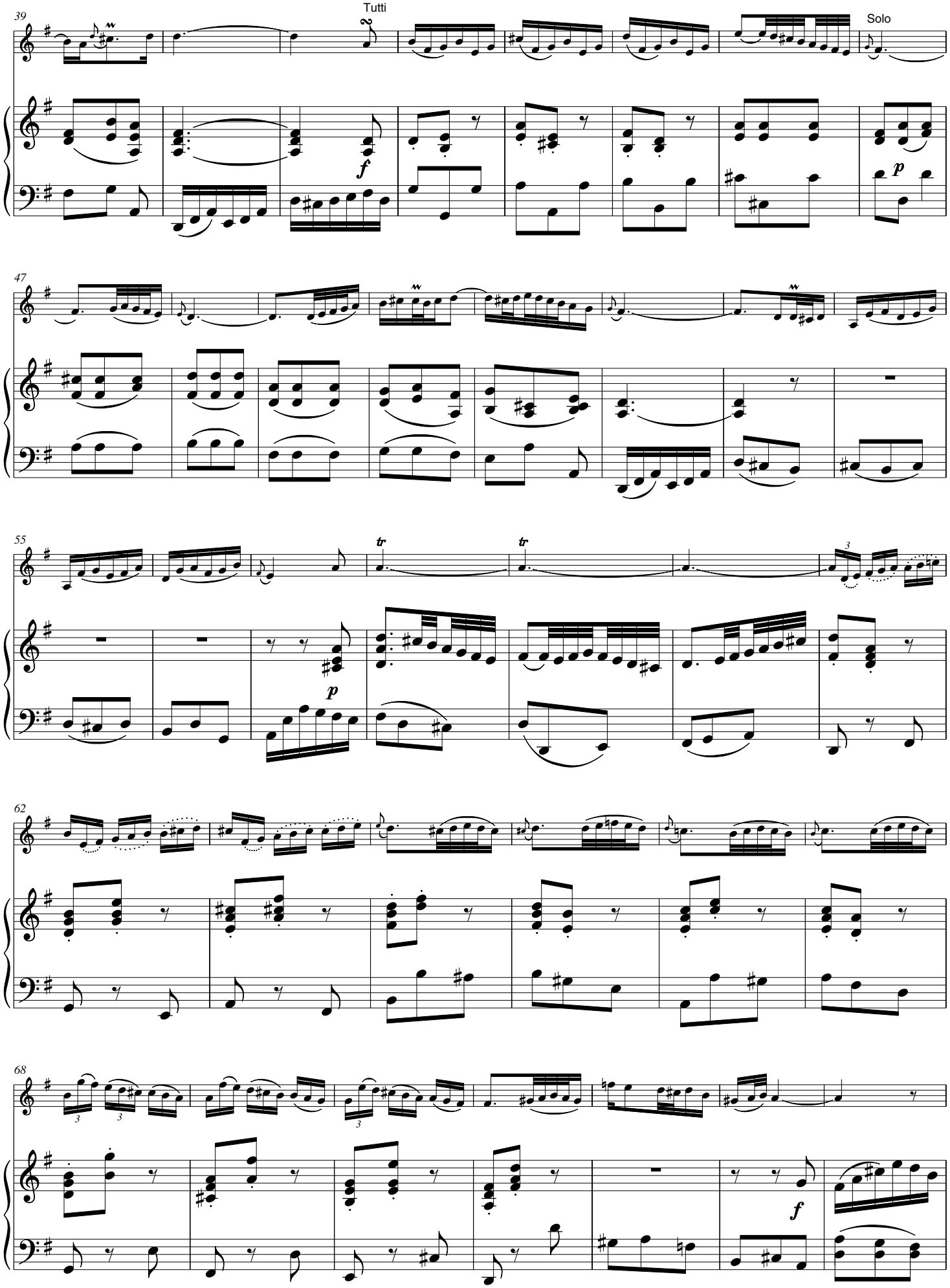

Larghetto
Solo
(f)
p
Solo
f
f
p
p

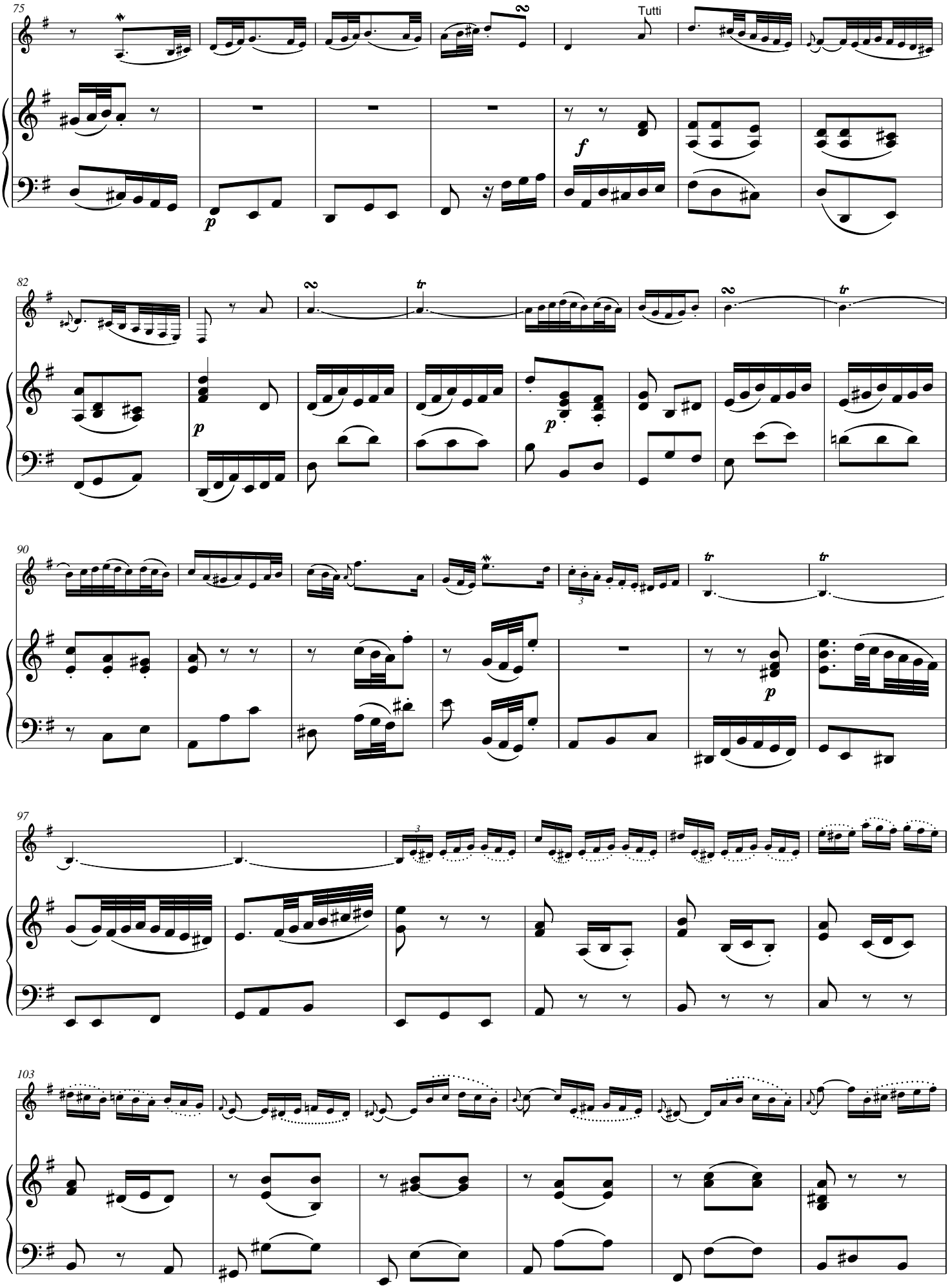

f
p
f
p
f
p

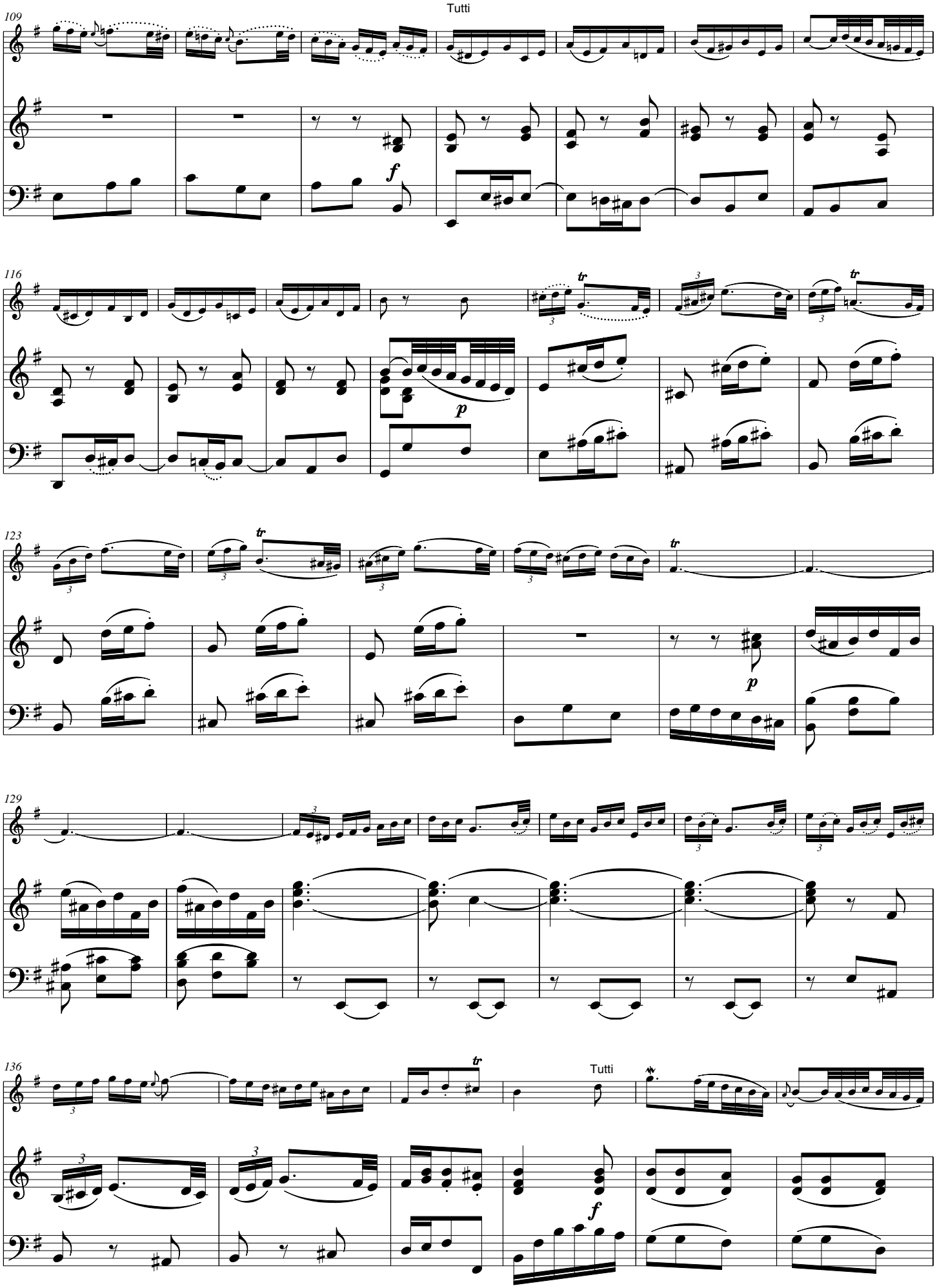

f

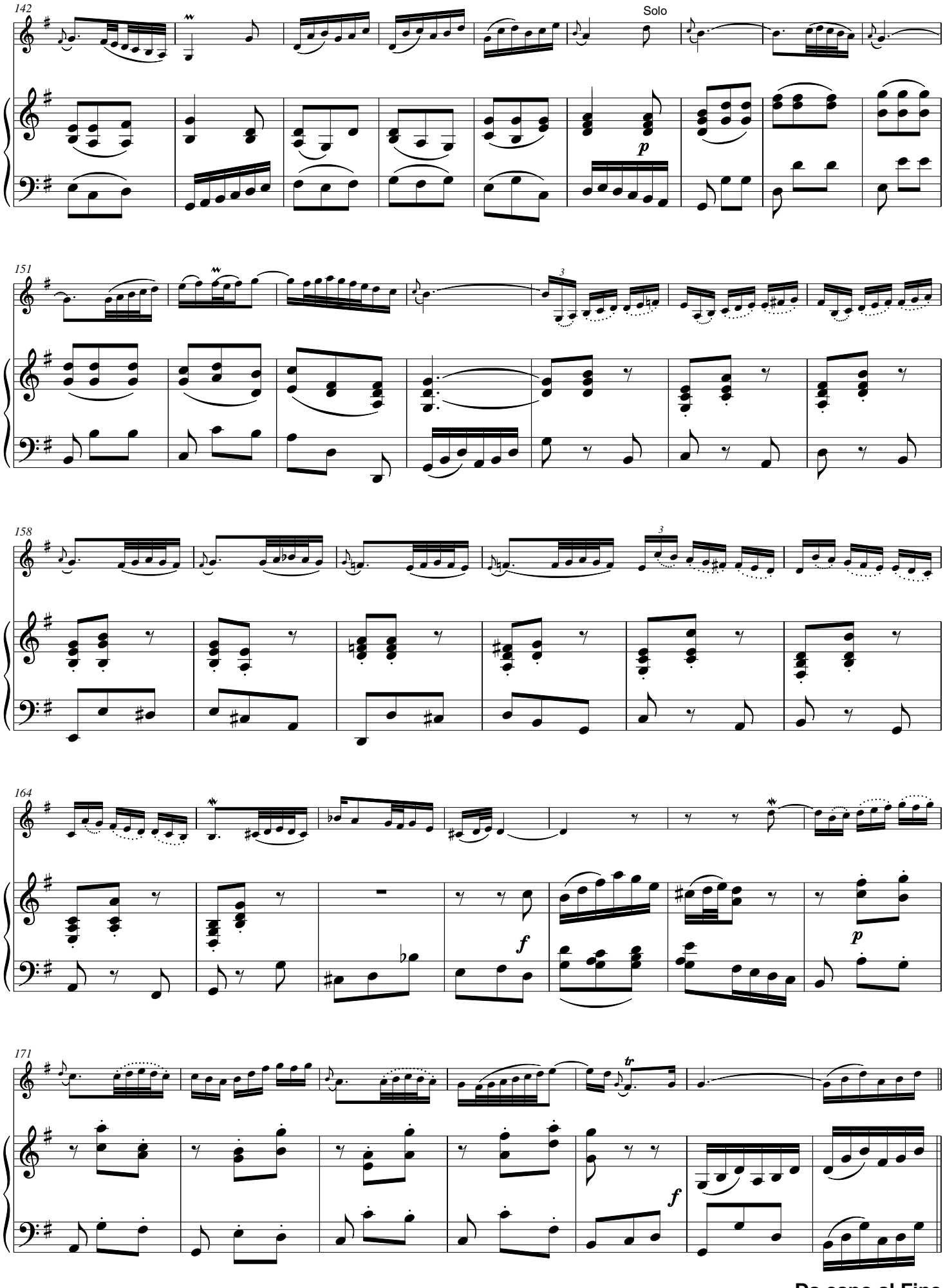
Allegro ma non tanto




39
Tutti
Solo
47
55
62
68


75
Tutti
82
90
97
103


109
Tutti
f
116
tr
p
123
tr
p
129
136
tr
Tutti
f


142
Solo
p
151
3
158
3
164
f
p
171
tr
f
Da capo al Fine