The Melancholy Clown

A Frippery in Three Flaps

for woodwind trio or three clarinets

Malcolm Forsyth

Score

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The Melancholy Clown
A Frippery in Three Flaps

for woodwind trio or three clarinets
flute or Eb clarinet, Bb clarinet and bassoon or Bb bass clarinet

Malcolm Forsyth

Several images spring to mind as I listen to these three little episodes of mine. One is of Petrushka, and indeed it was after seeing Stravinsky's ballet for the first time that these were written. Another is that of Picasso's clown, whose ludicrously jolly make-up only half succeeds in masking a deeply tragic countenance; it is sometimes only such a picture that gives any perspective to the charade of living. A third image is that of Marcel Marceau, the supreme mime artist, whose depth of humanity is unfathomable. I think my three pieces were inspired by something akin to that which moves him and they seem to invite choreographic treatment.

Notes by the composer

Total Duration 4' 50"
1. Warm-up 1' 35"
2. Onstage 2'
3. Reflections 1' 15"

Composer Biography:

Canadian composer Malcolm Forsyth (1936-2011) enjoyed a distinguished international career as one of Canada's major composers, having written a wide variety of works including three symphonies, as well as much other orchestral music, chamber music (especially for brass and strings), vocal, instrumental and choral music.

He was named "Canadian Composer of the Year" by the Canadian Music Council in 1989, and received many other awards, including three JUNOs for "Best Classical Composition" -- 1987, 1994 and 1998, and several JUNO nominations. Since his arrival in Canada from his native South Africa in 1968 to take up his post as Professor at the University of Alberta, his career included creating works for many distinguished performers. Those performers included contralto Maureen Forrester, conductor Charles Dutoit, mezzo-soprano Judith Forst who premiered many of his works, as well as orchestras such as the Edmonton Symphony the National Arts Centre, the Montreal Symphony and Calgary Philharmonic. His 1995 work, *Electra Rising*, a cello concerto written for his daughter Amanda Forsyth, a gifted and distinguished cellist, was premiered with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Mario Bernardi. This piece went on to win a JUNO award. A 60th birthday celebratory CD of *Electra Rising*, his saxophone concerto, *Tre Vie*, and *Valley of a Thousand Hills*, for chamber orchestra, released in 1997, was his last JUNO award-winning disc. His *Concerto for Eight* (2003) received rave reviews after its many performances in March 2003. *Double Concerto*, for viola, cello & orchestra was commissioned for violist Rivka Golani and cellist Tanya Prochaska, received its world première in October 2004.

Dr. Forsyth's last major work was *A Ballad of Canada*, for mixed chorus and orchestra, a joint commission by the National Arts Centre Orchestra and the Edmonton Symphony, Orchestra received its premiere June 9, 2011 to much acclaim, a month before his death. His work was influenced by both the country of his birth and the country he adopted. Since his death, his works continue to be appreciated and performed across Canada and around the world. Many of his former students have made distinguished careers for themselves as composers and performers in orchestras in Canada and around the world.

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To The Cape Pro-Arte: Eva, Harold and Toni

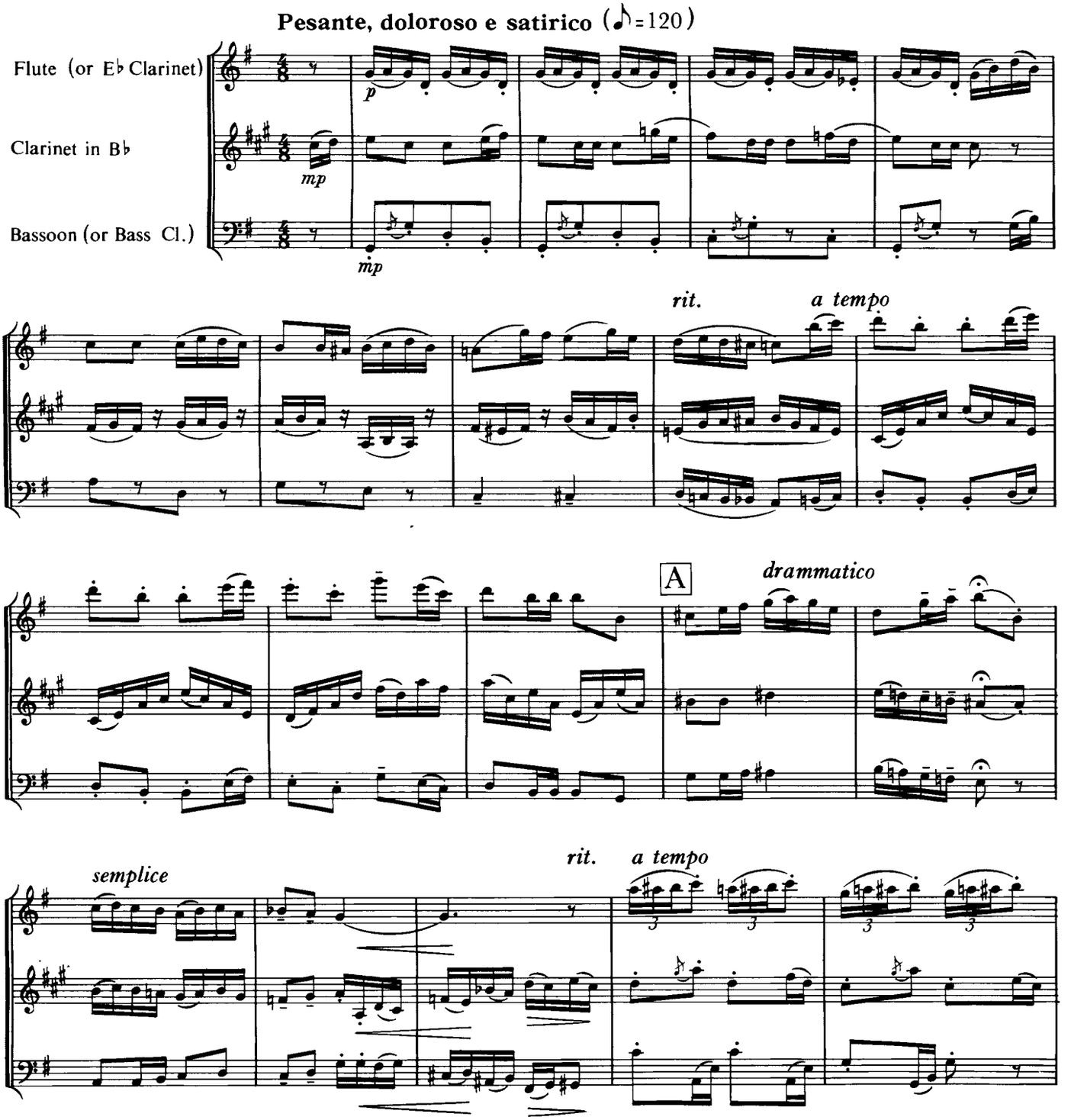
THE MELANCHOLY CLOWN

A Frippery in Three Flaps for Woodwind Trio or Three Clarinets

Bagatelle en trois volets pour trio de bois ou trois clarinets

MALCOM FORSYTH

1. Warm-up



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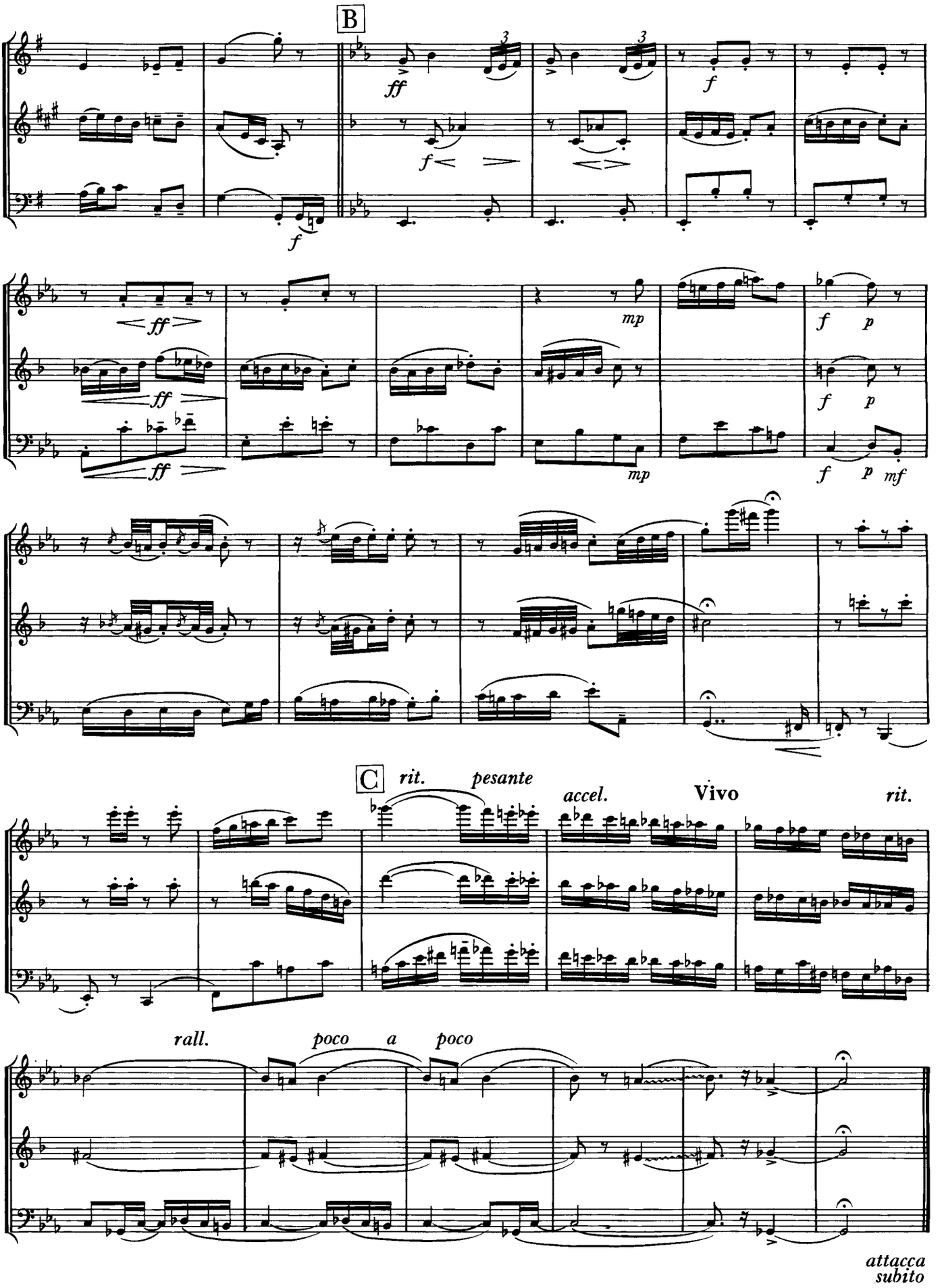
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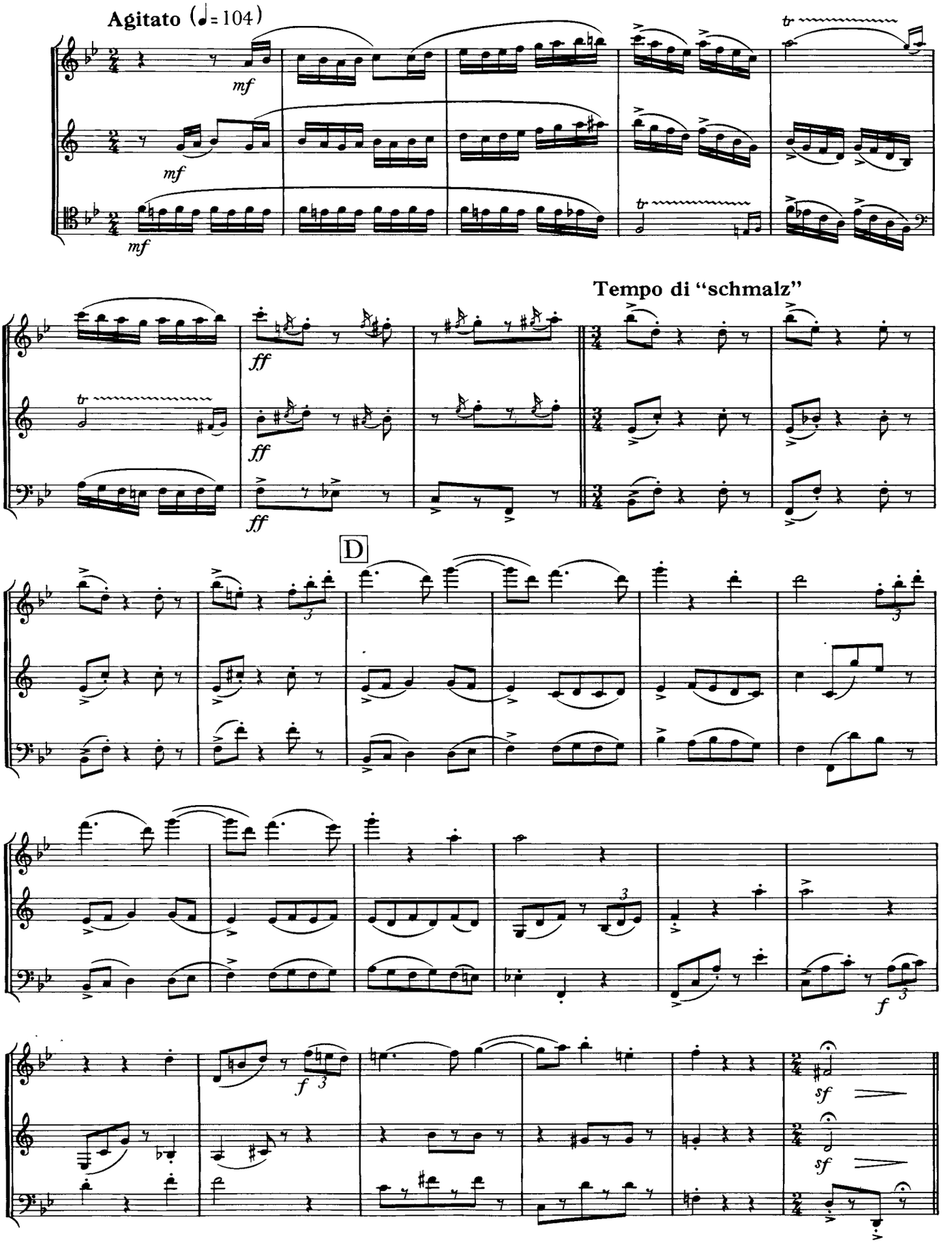
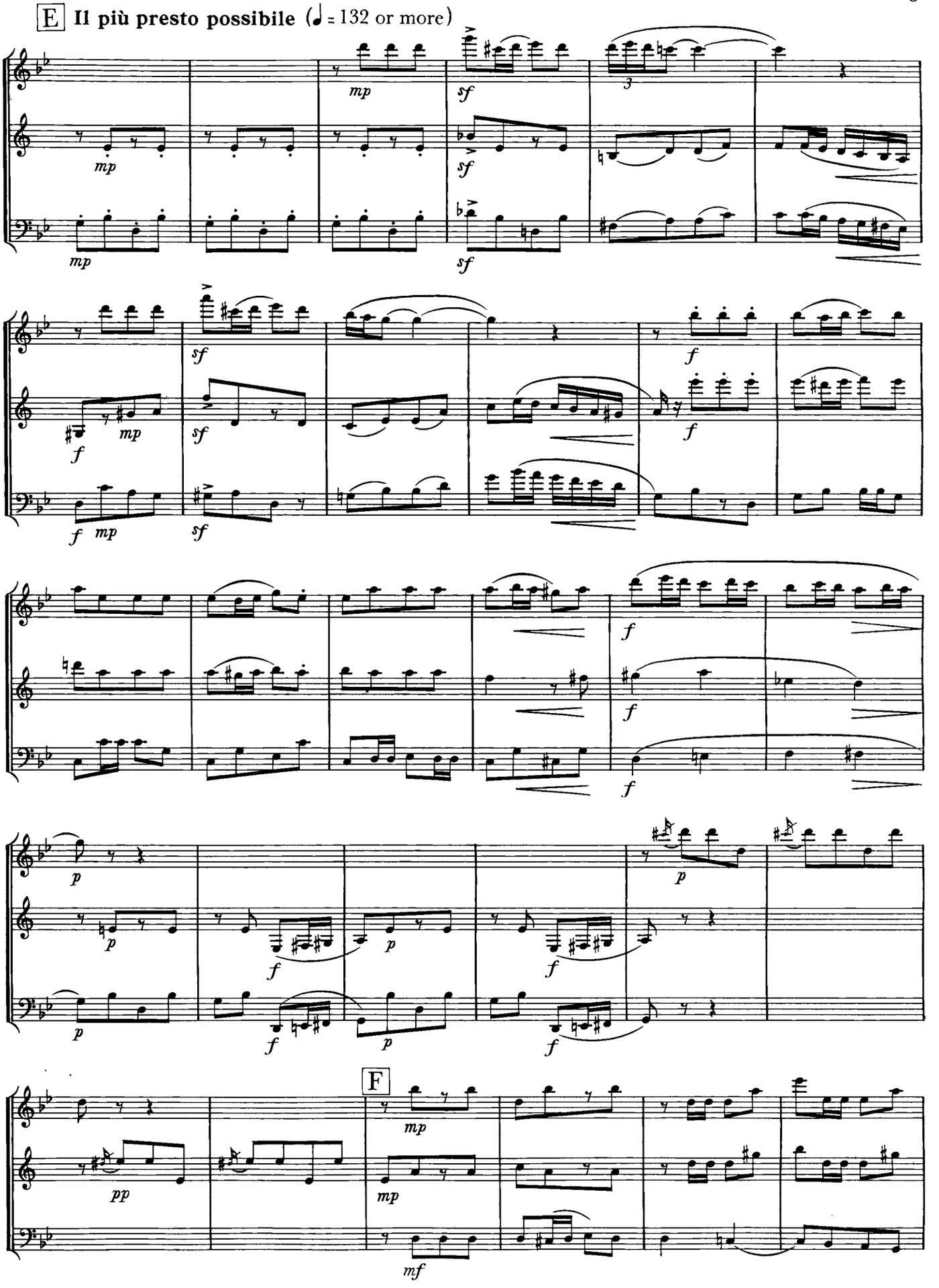
2. Onstage

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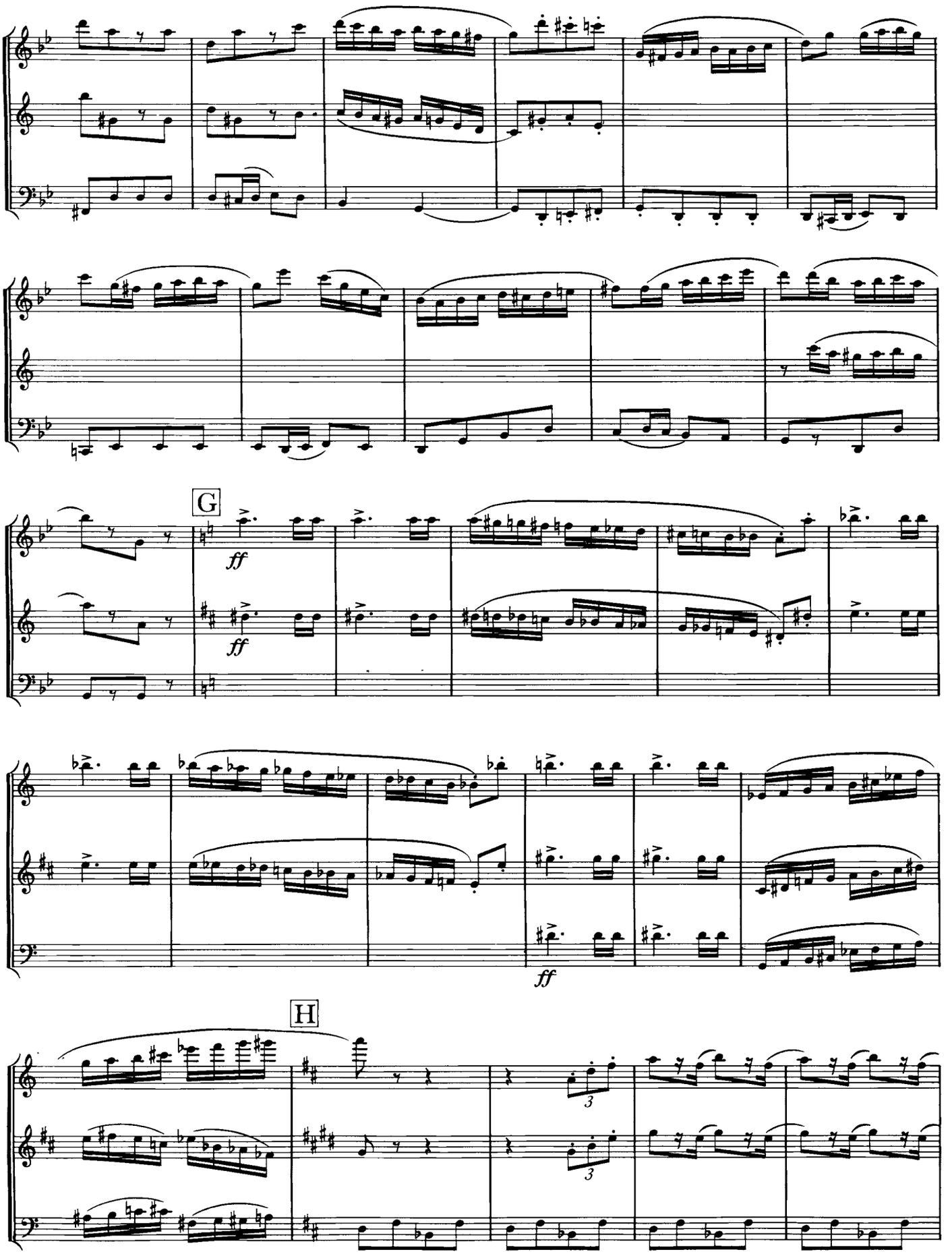
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