ANNOTATED EDITION

tonebase

SONATA IN C MAJOR, K. 545

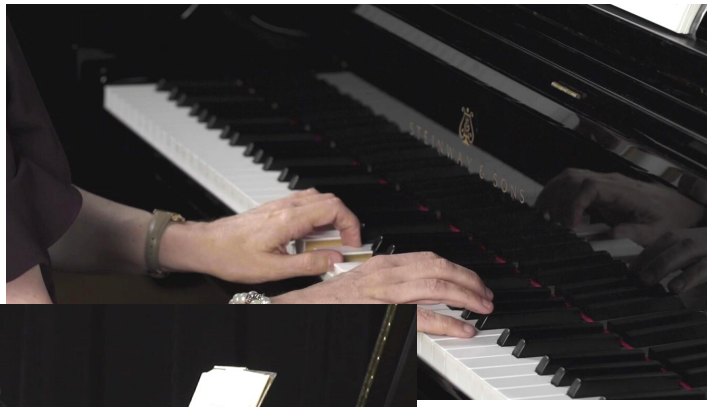
WATCH THE LESSON AT TONEBASE.CO

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

SARA DAVIS BUECHNER – INSTRUCTOR

"It takes great skill to convey the air of delight and simplicity this piece is meant to portray."

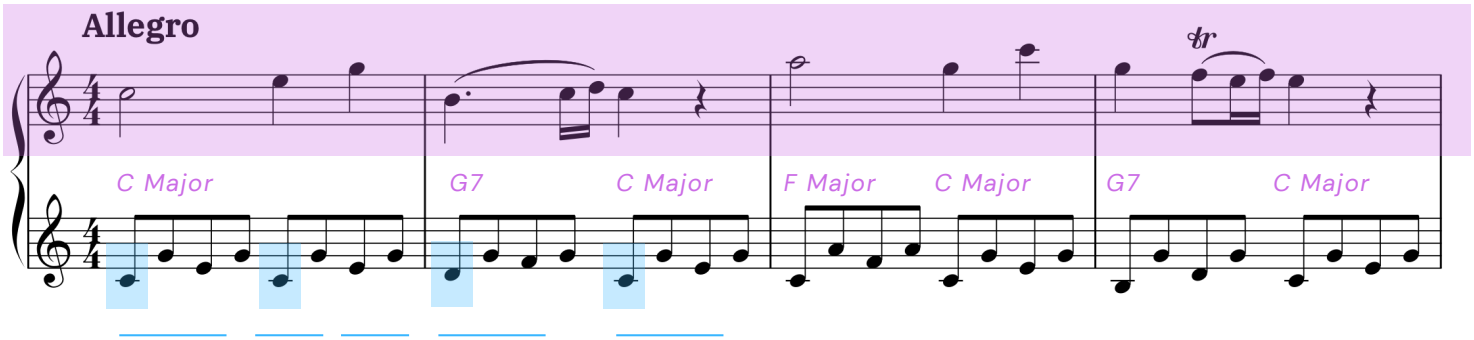
This sonata is one of the most well-known and beloved in all the keyboard repertoire. While the sonata appears simple, it is rather complicated to play. In this lesson, Sara David Buechner walks you through each movement of this famed piece, providing structural analysis as well as careful consideration of the finer technical passages. She shares some of her own fingerings, examples of embellishments, and many wise words on interpretation of Mozart's music. By the end of the lesson, you'll be well on your way to what is for many their first journey through a sonata on the piano.



SONATA IN C MAJOR | NO. 16, K. 545

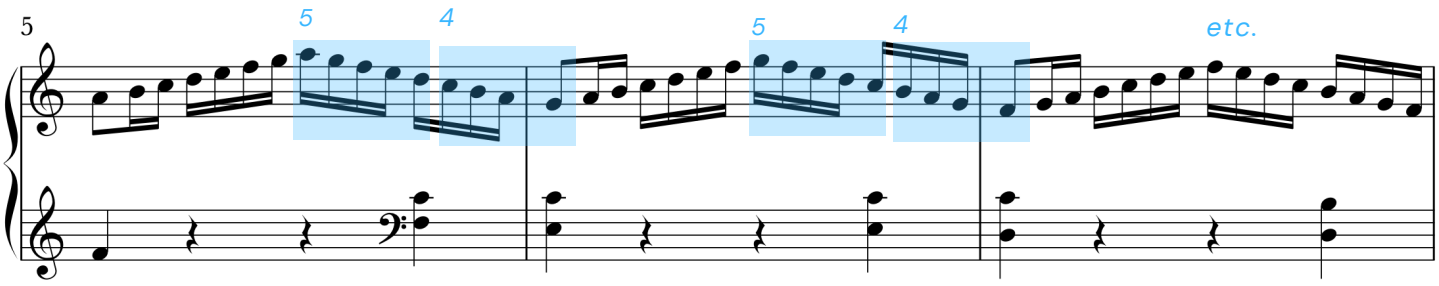
W. A. MOZART
(1756-1791)

Exposition: First Theme

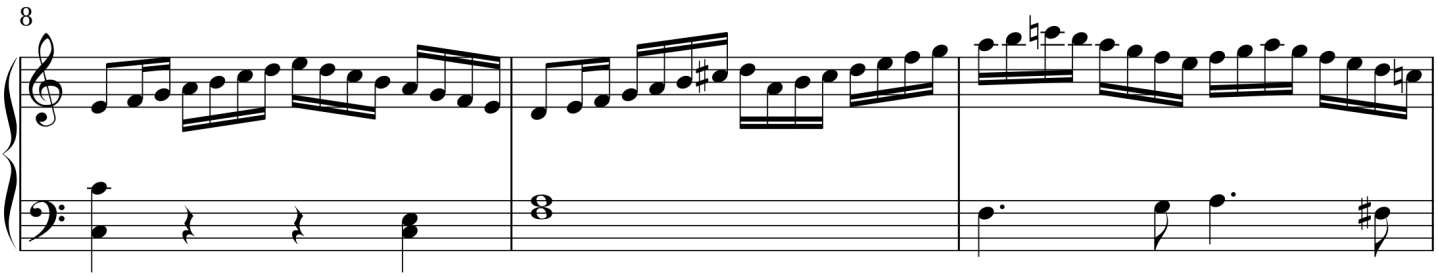


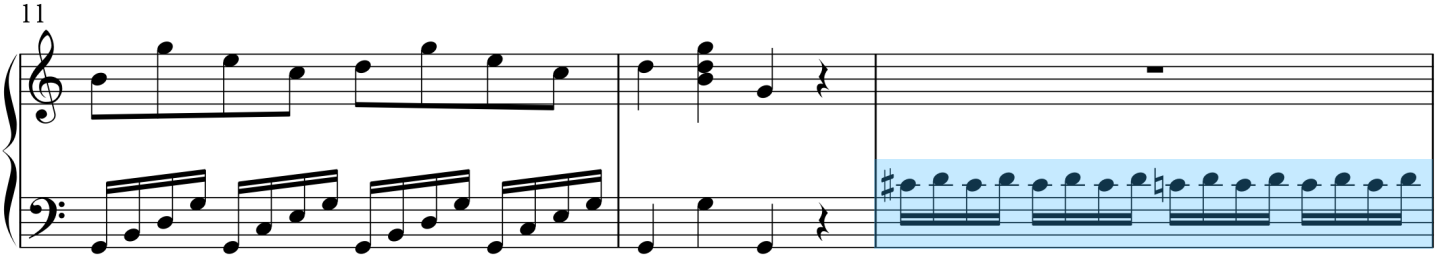
Overhold bass notes, light pedal that follows melody

Alberti Bass

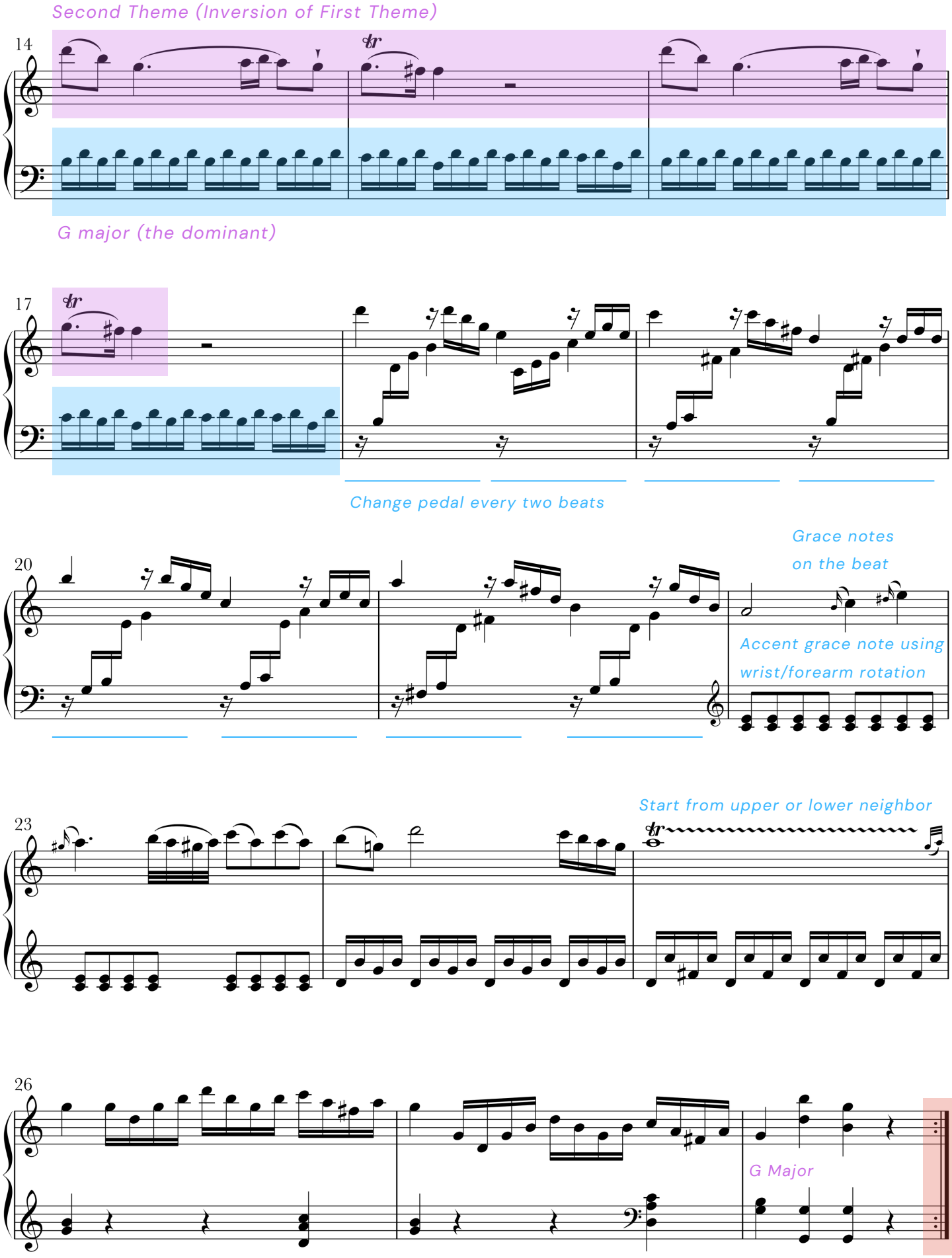


C Major fingering for all the ascending scales



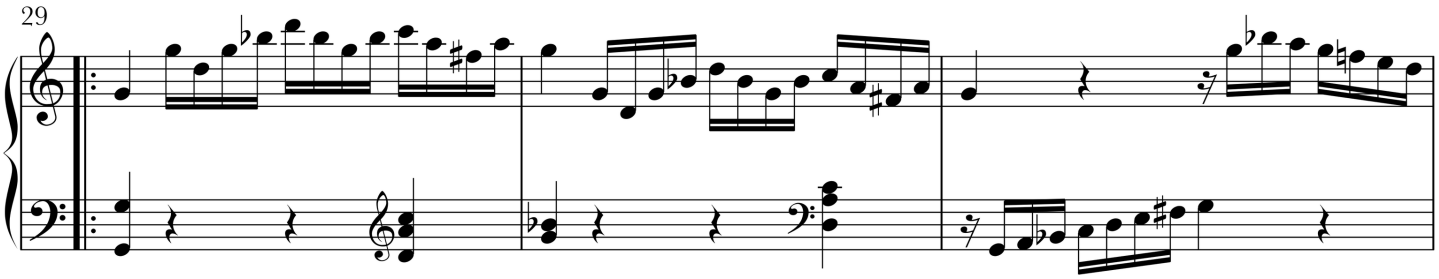


Practice playing all the Ds in the right hand, and all the lower notes in the left hand


Second Theme (Inversion of First Theme)
14
G major (the dominant)
17
Change pedal every two beats
Grace notes
on the beat
20
Accent grace note using
wrist/forearm rotation
Start from upper or lower neighbor
23
26
G Major

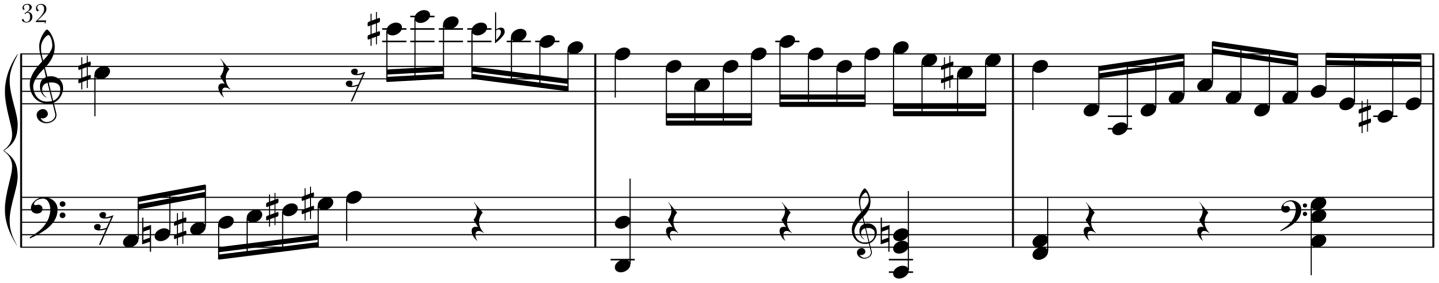
Development

29



G minor

32



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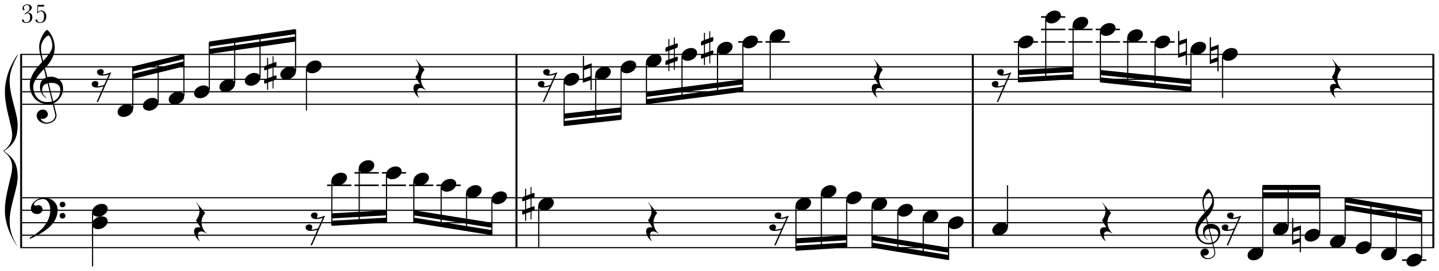

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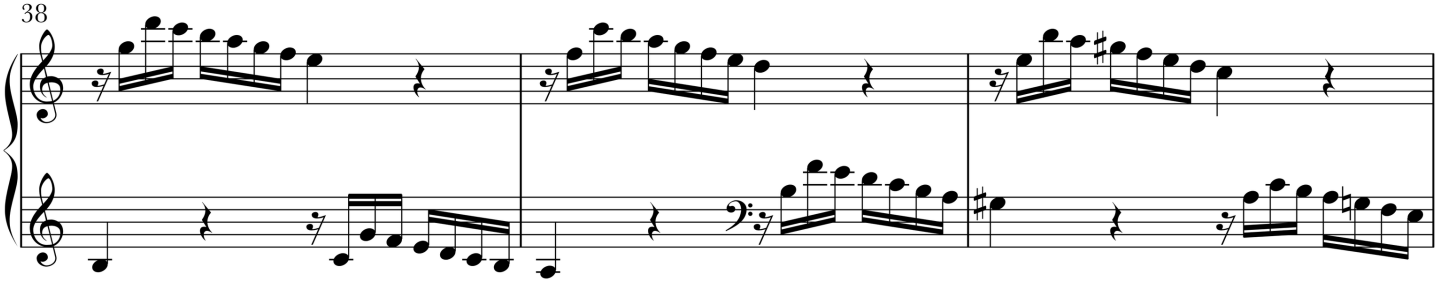
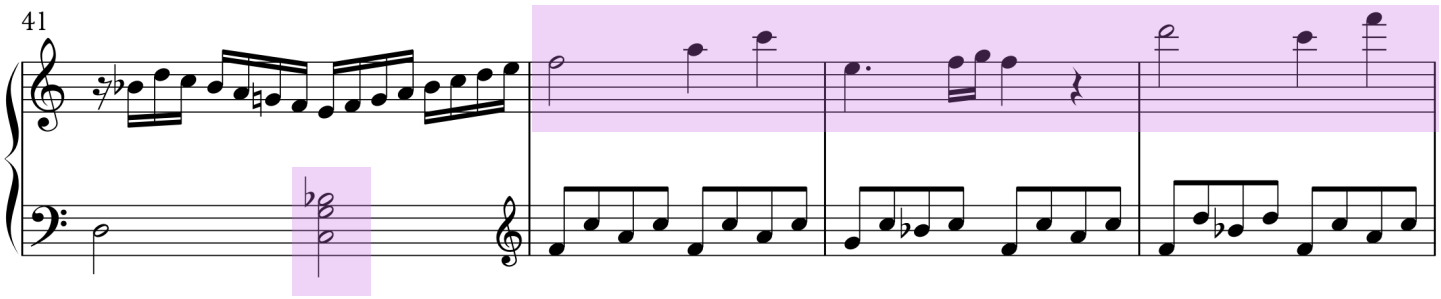


Recapitulation

41

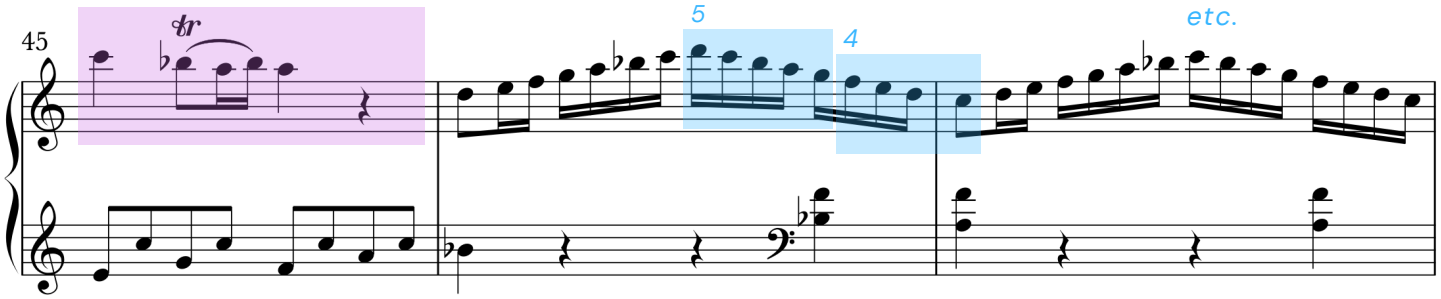


C7

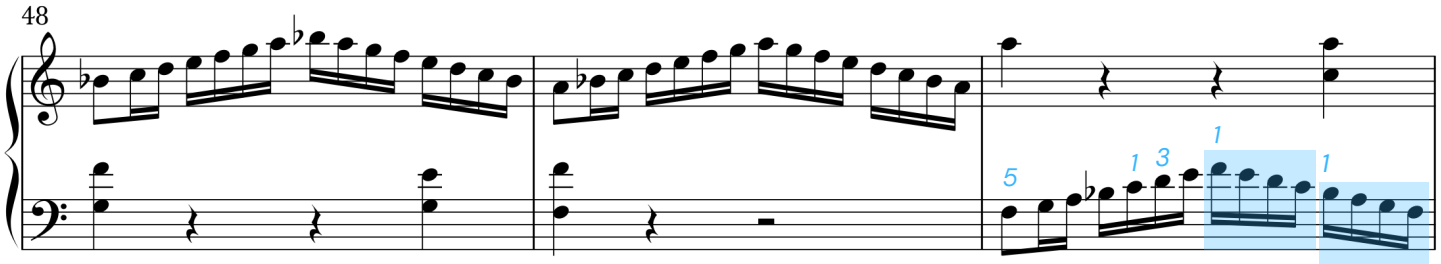
F Major

Unexpected: the recapitulation is normally in the original key

45



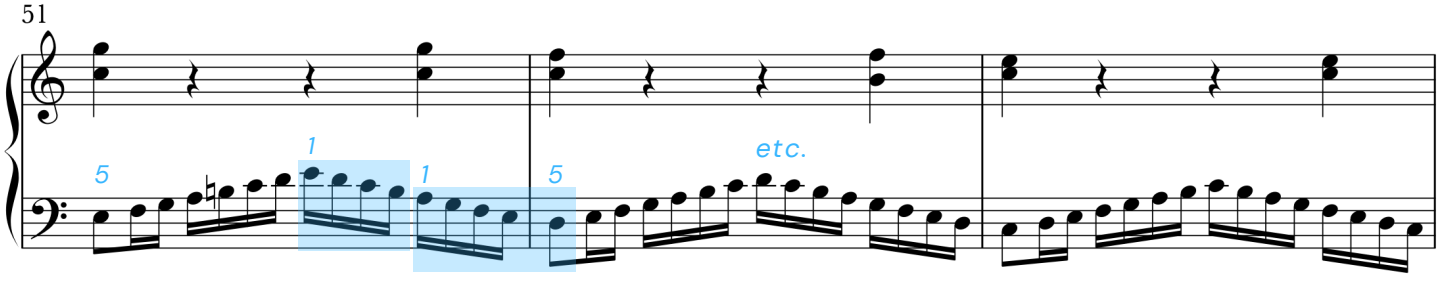
48

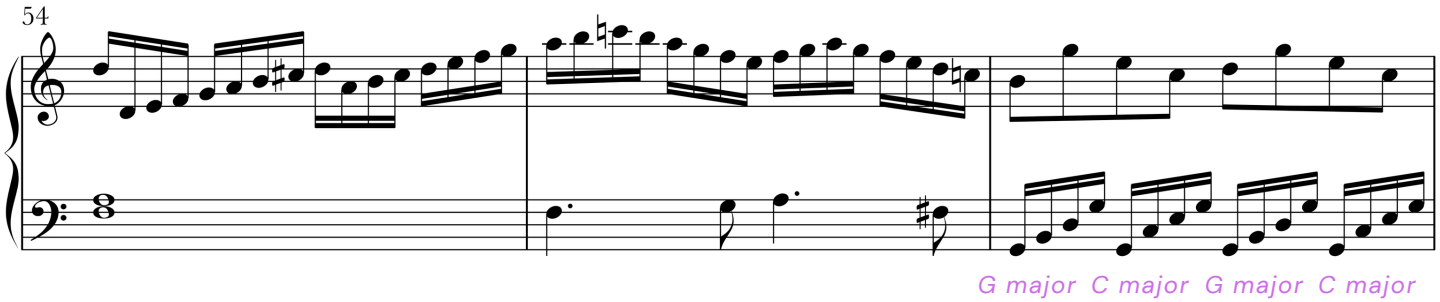


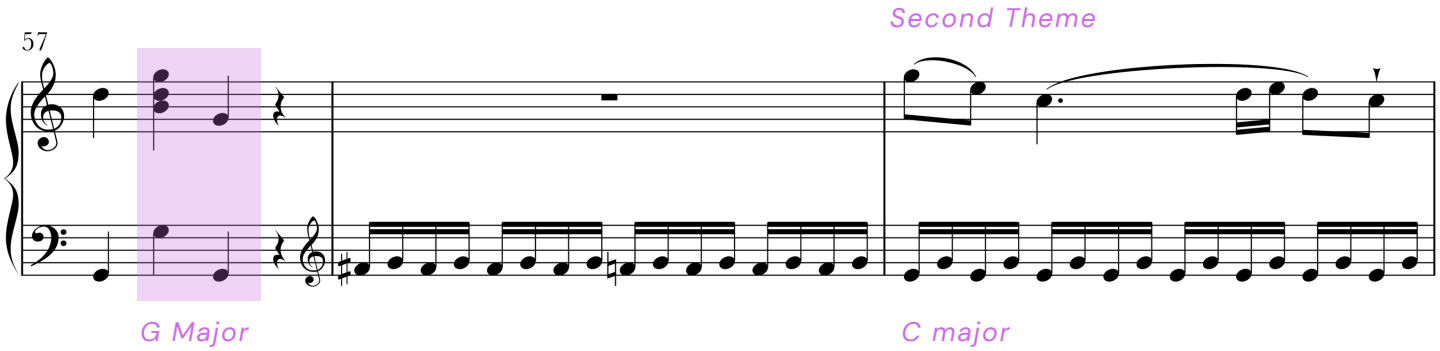
The scales are passed off to the left hand

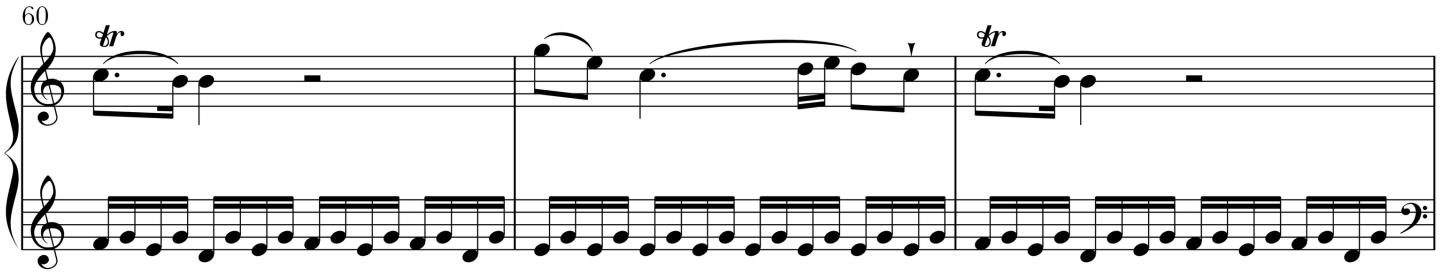
Thumb on black key!

51




54
G major C major G major C major


57
Second Theme
G Major
C major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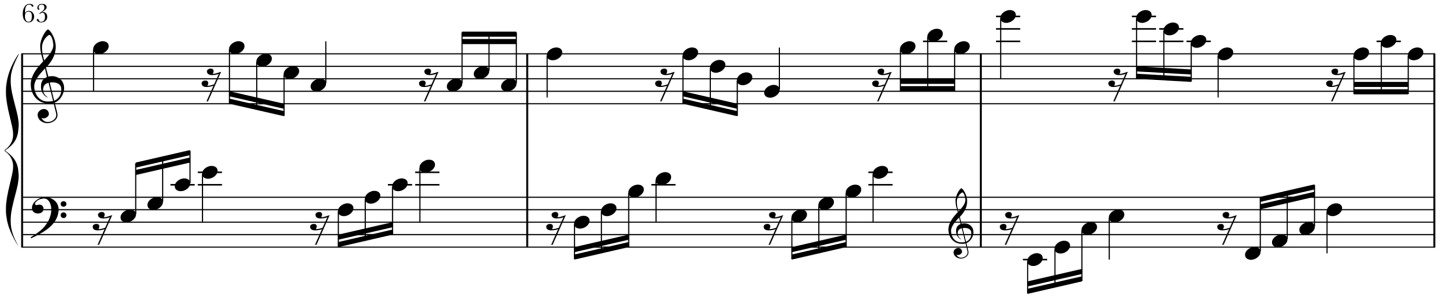
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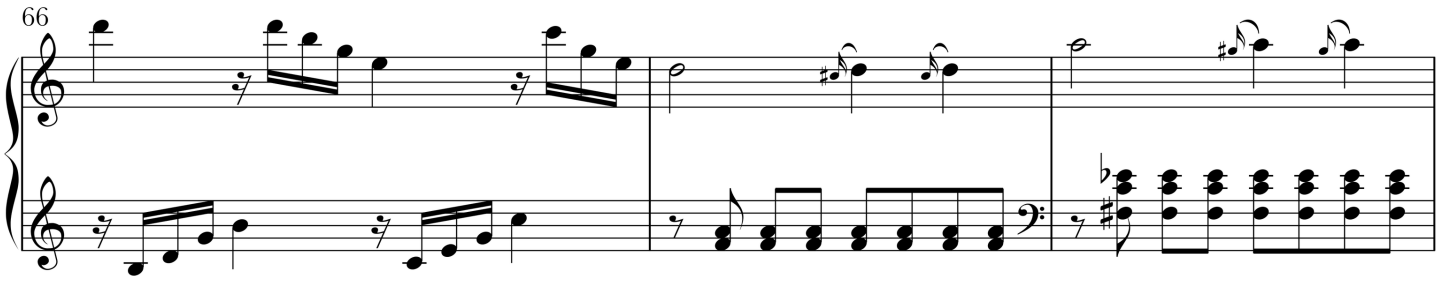
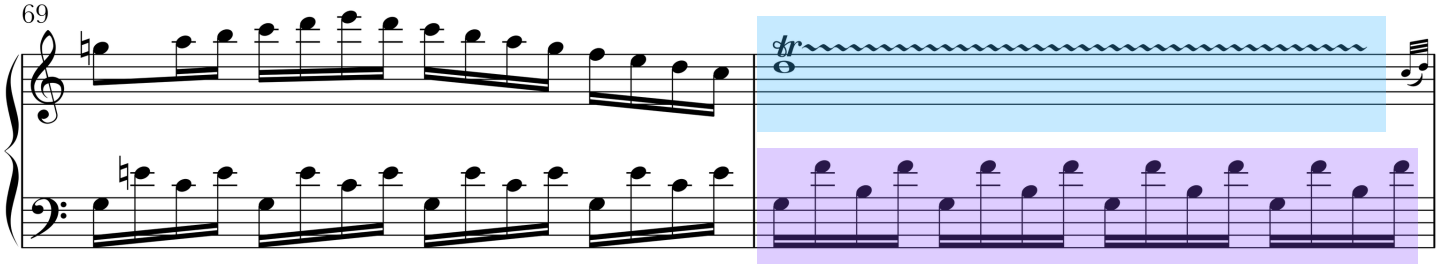


Trill should be faster than 16th notes

Practice with different fingerings: 23, 24, 1323, 35

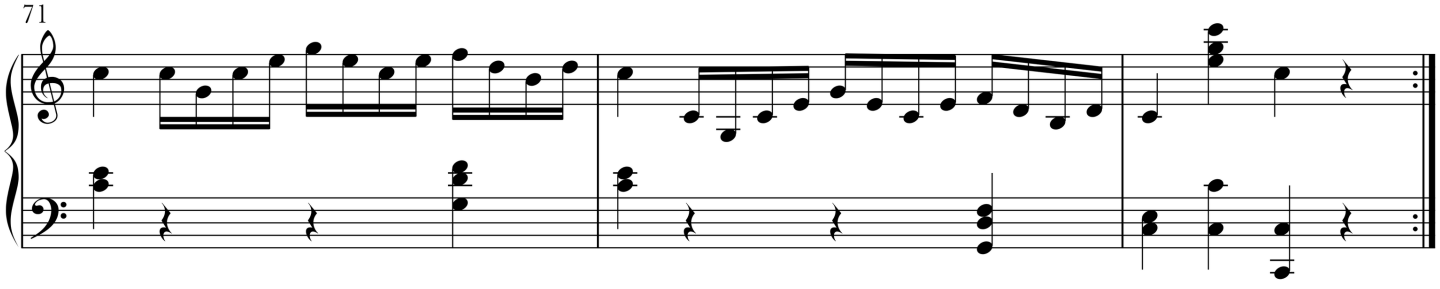
Trills involve wrist/forearm rotation



Steady left hand

Start by adding block chords under trill

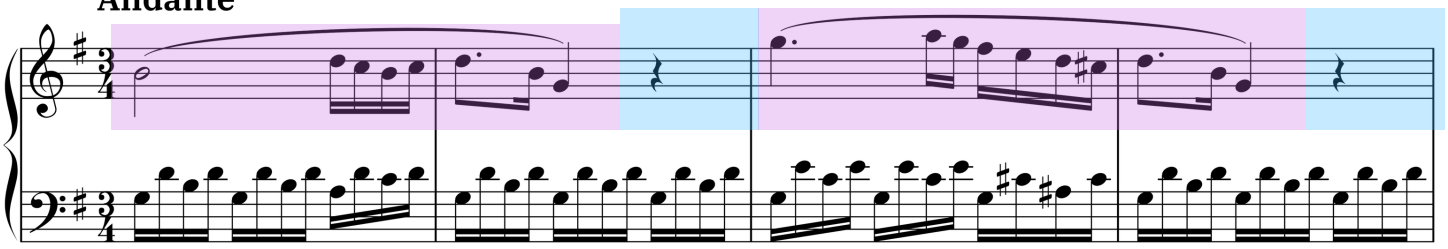
(try both quarter notes and eighth notes)



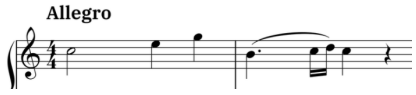
Second Movement: G Major

Andante

Pause and breathe during the rests

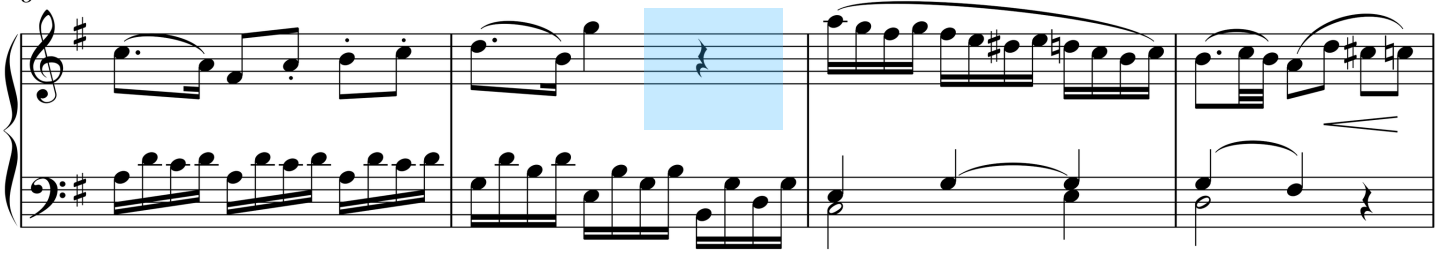


Related to First Theme from 1st Mvt: inverted, similar rhythm



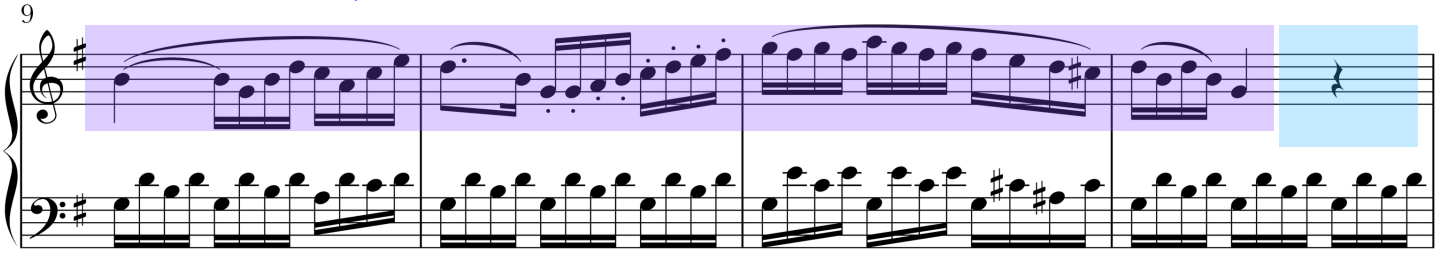
5

free rubato



Variation I, in tempo

9



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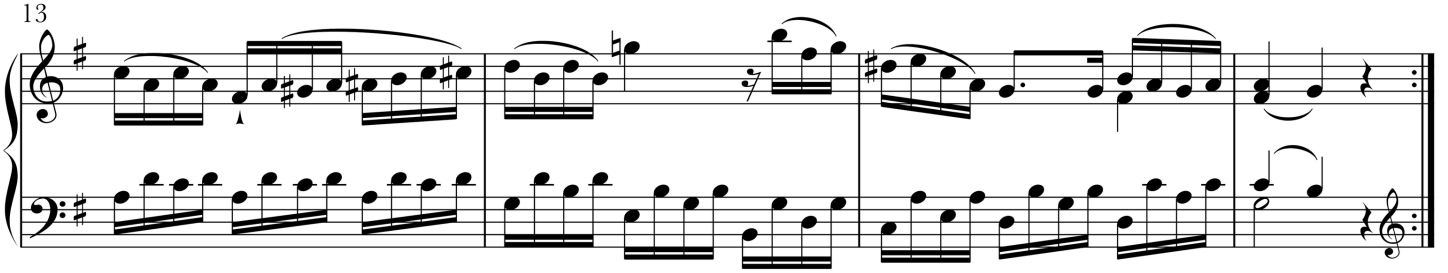
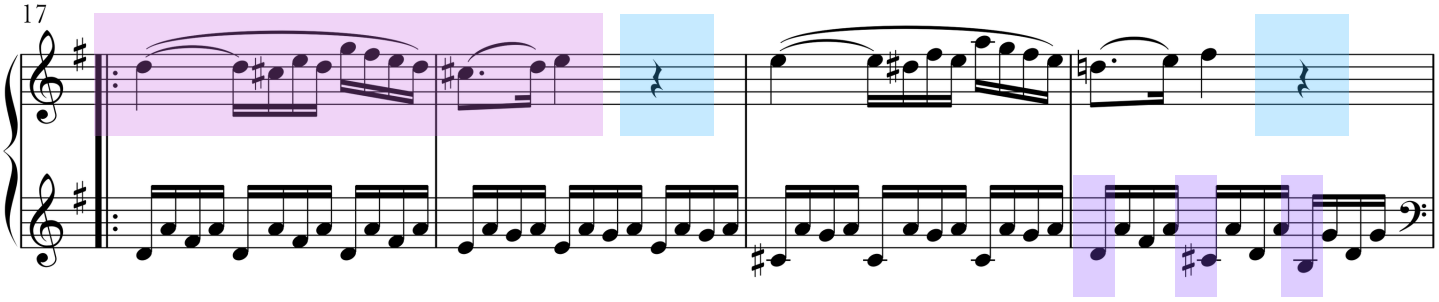


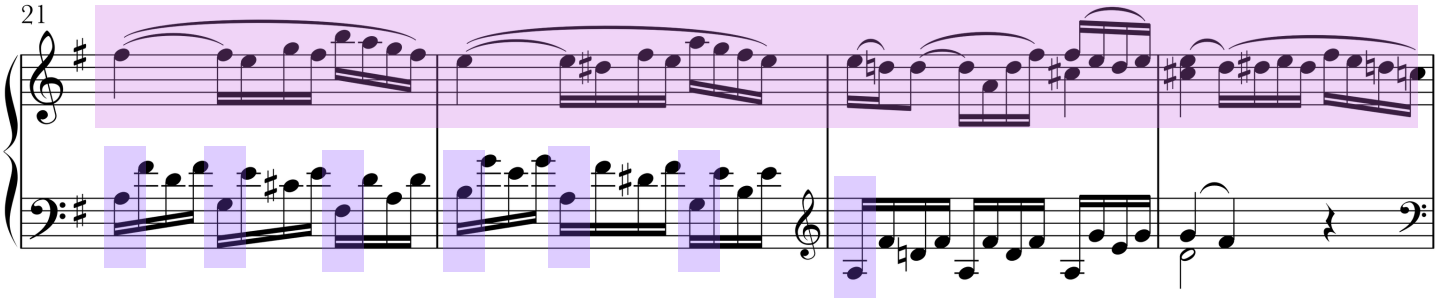
Variation II: Similar Melody in D Major

17



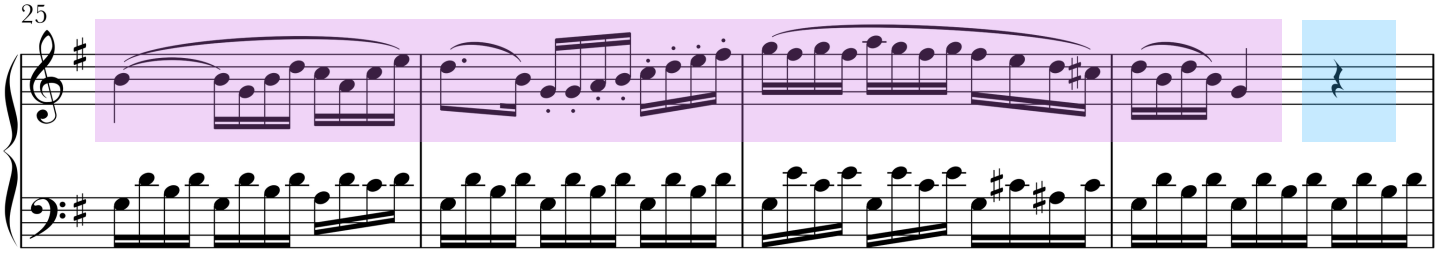
Accent and add taps of pedal to show left-hand countermelody

21



Opening Theme: Variation 1

25



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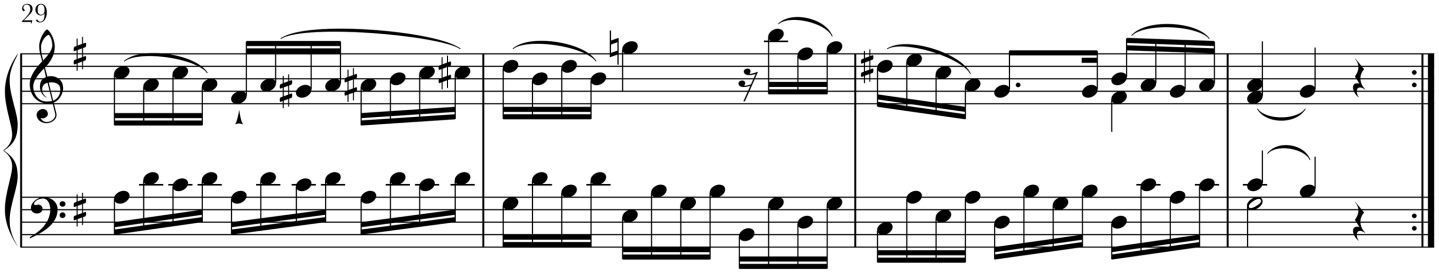
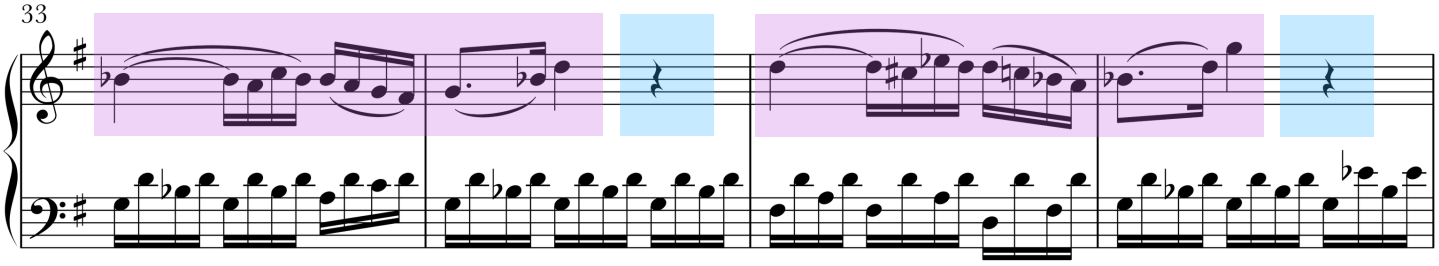


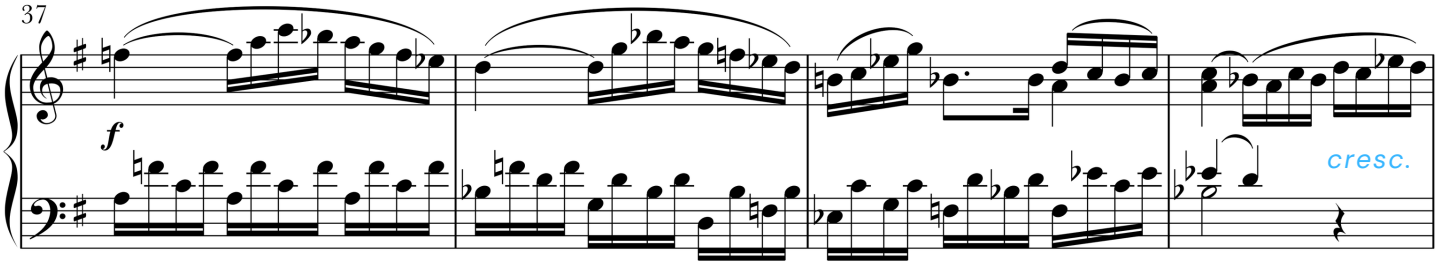
Variation III: G Minor

33



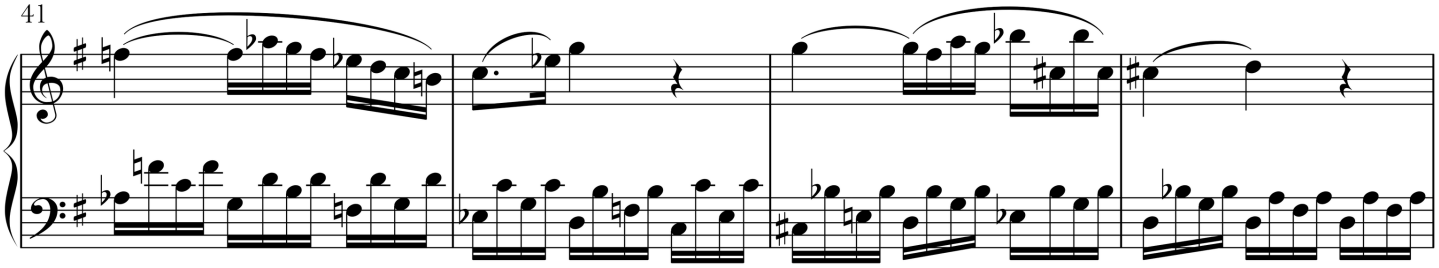
Slightly "overhold"/overlap melody notes
to enhance legato and expressivity

37



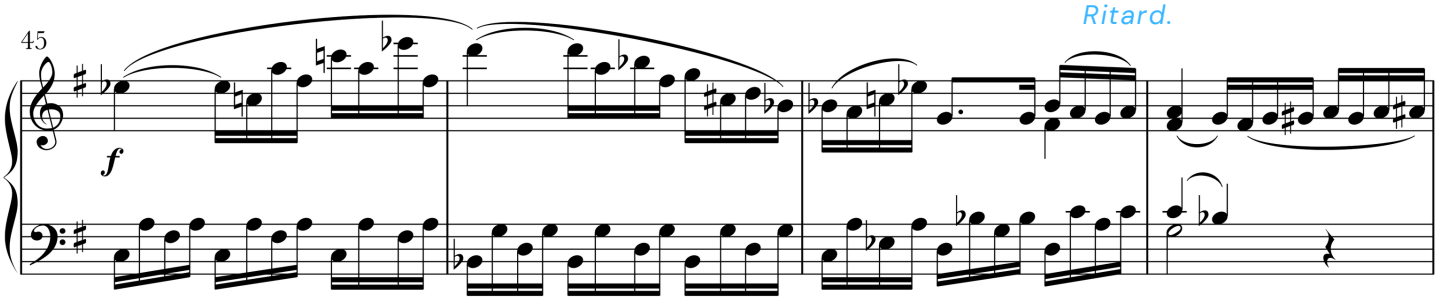
Greater intensity here

41



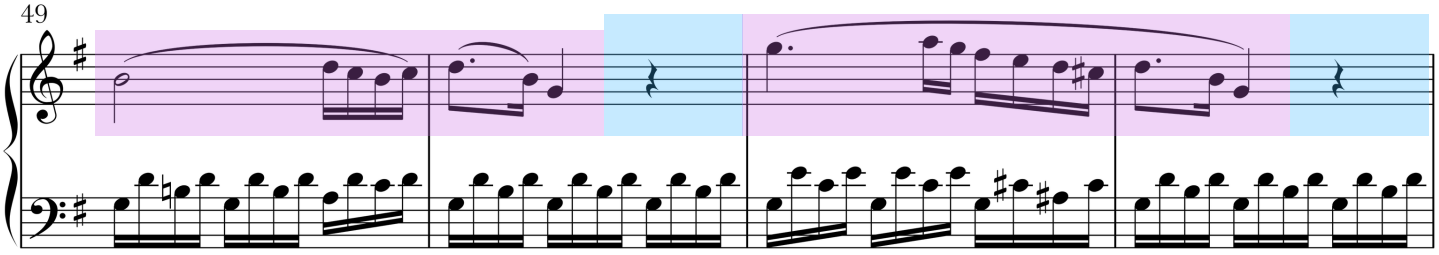
Ritard.

45



Original Melody

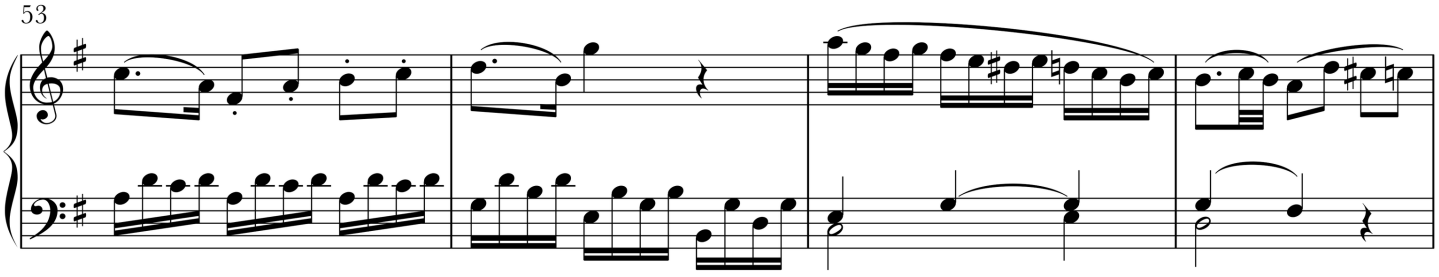
49



Less overlapping

Brighter sound/lighter texture

53



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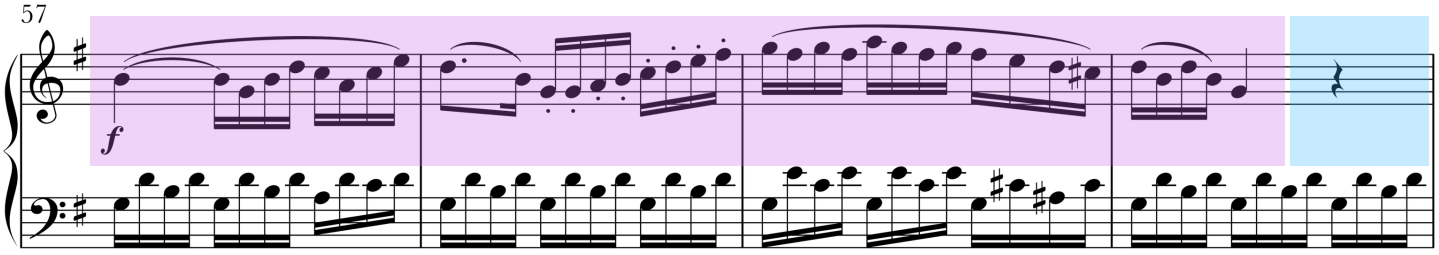
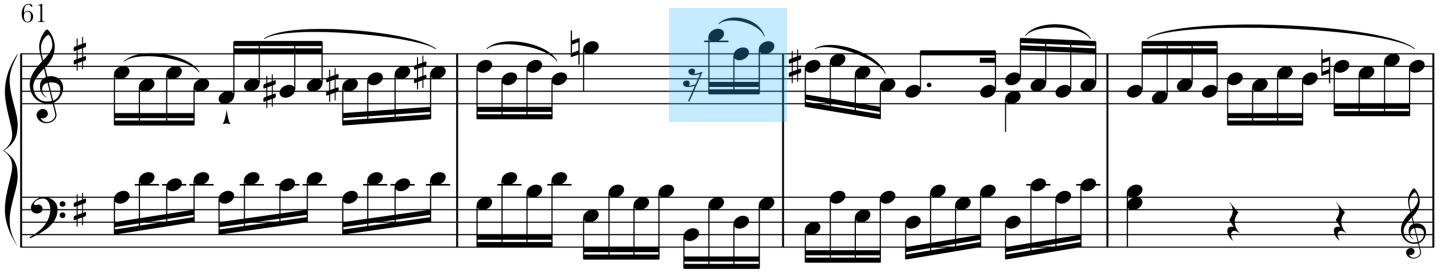


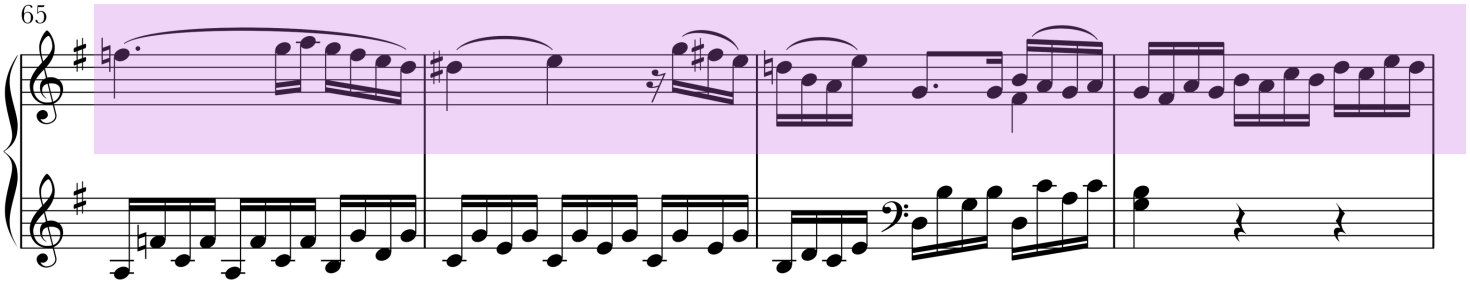
You can add embellishment here if desired

61



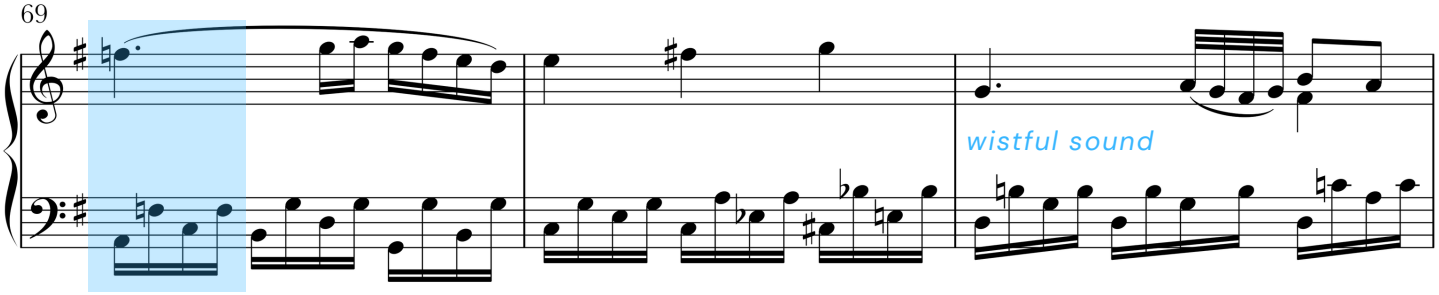
Coda

65



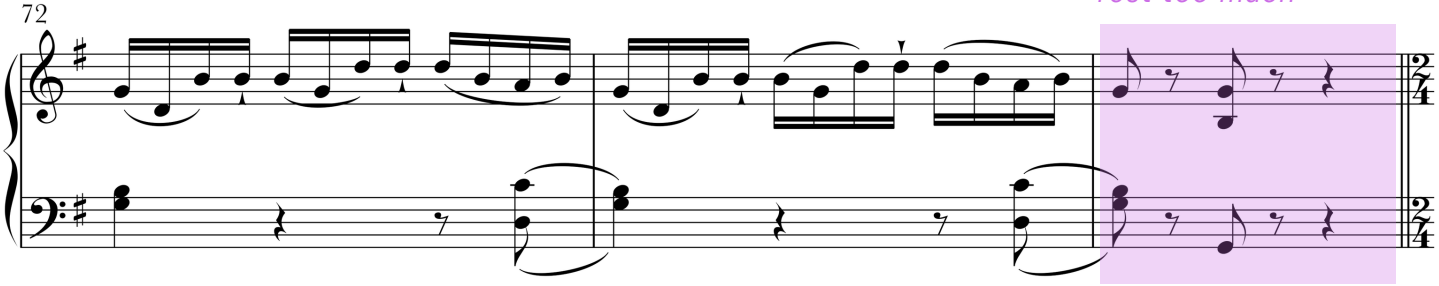
Una corda pedal

69



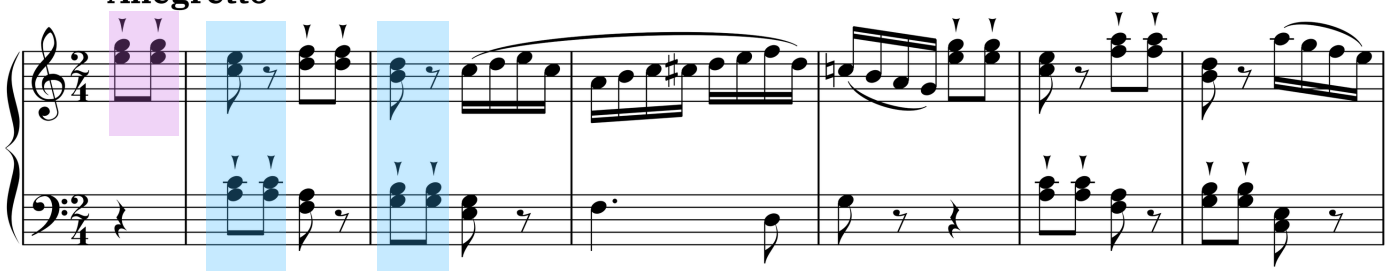
Link to final movement: don't lengthen the last rest too much

72



Rondo
Allegretto

Third Movement

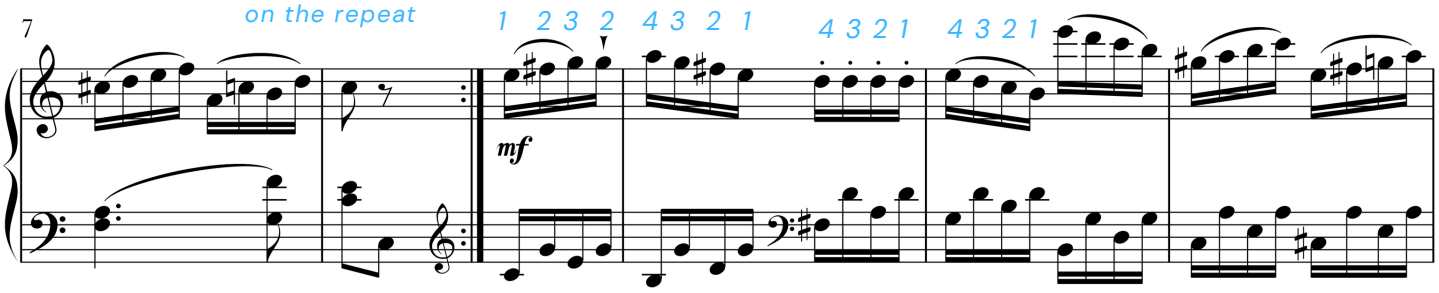


Keep hand stable to strike the double notes simultaneously

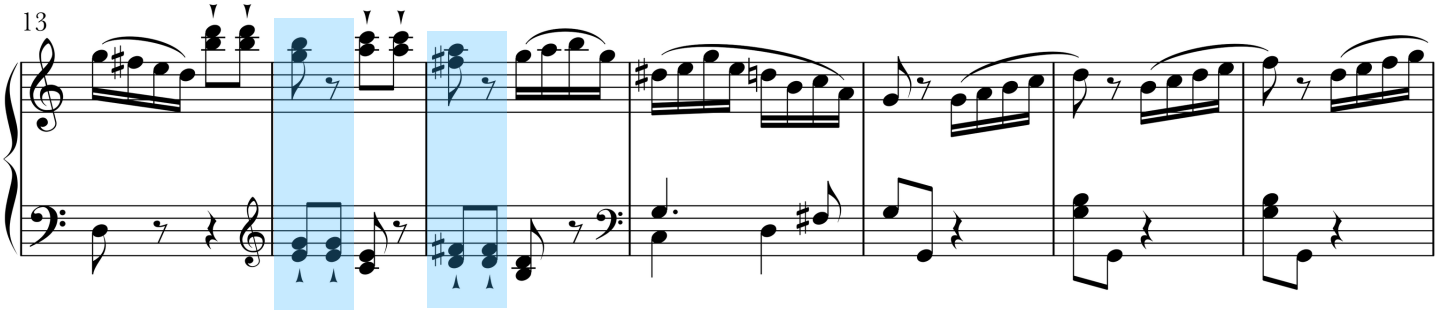
Accent these downbeats in left hand (less so in right hand)

Watch video for exercise to practice repeated notes

No embellishment on the repeat

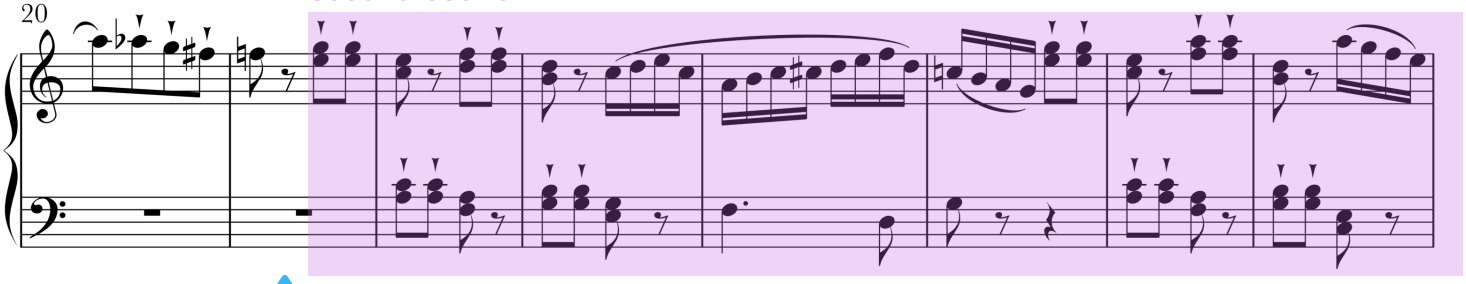


Accent downbeats, like before



poco ritard.

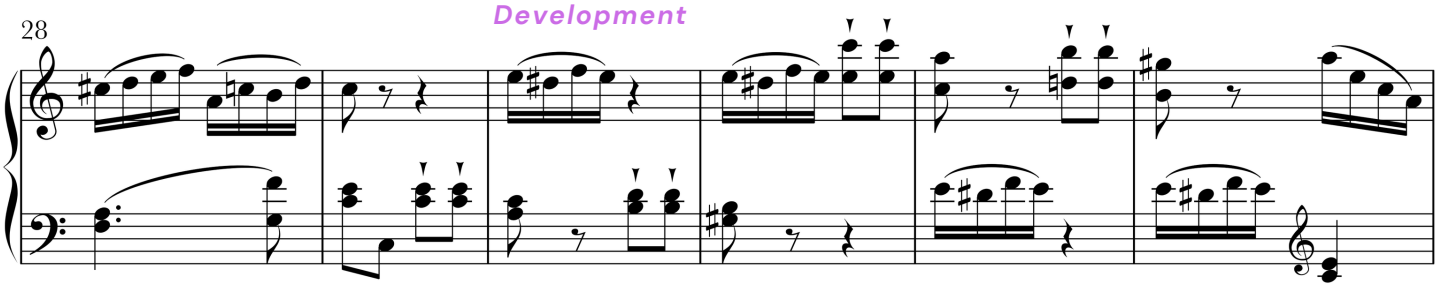
Second Section



optional embellishment passage here

28

Development

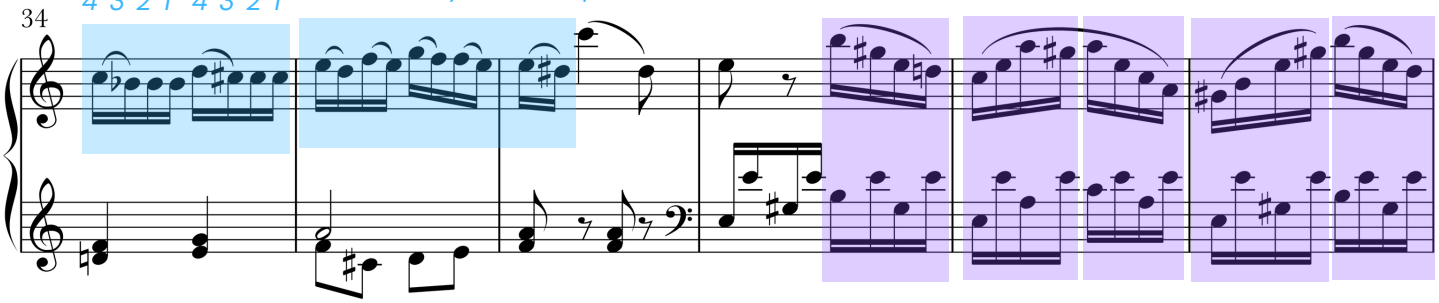


34

For these two groups of 4,
"down-up short short"
4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1

"down up"
for every slurred pair

Practice by blocking
arpeggios as chords



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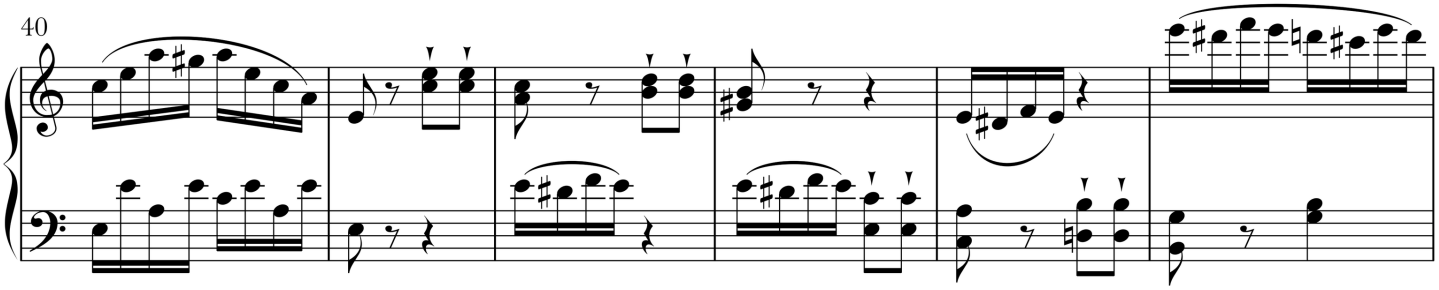

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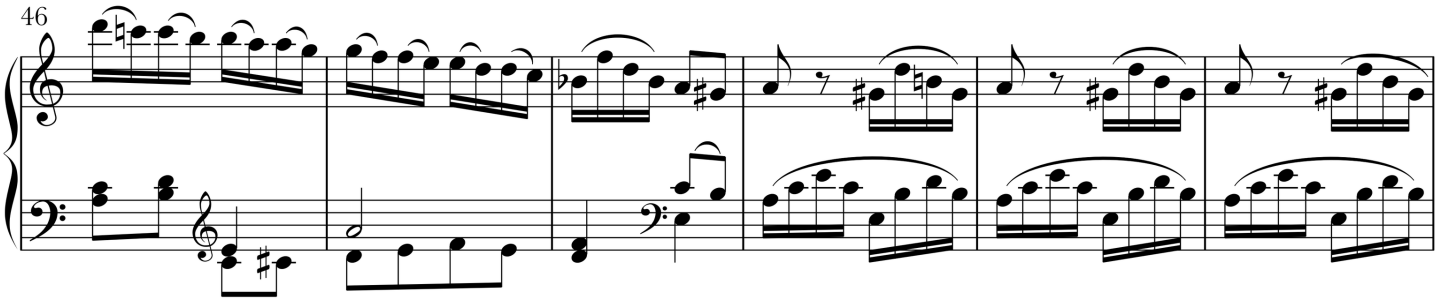
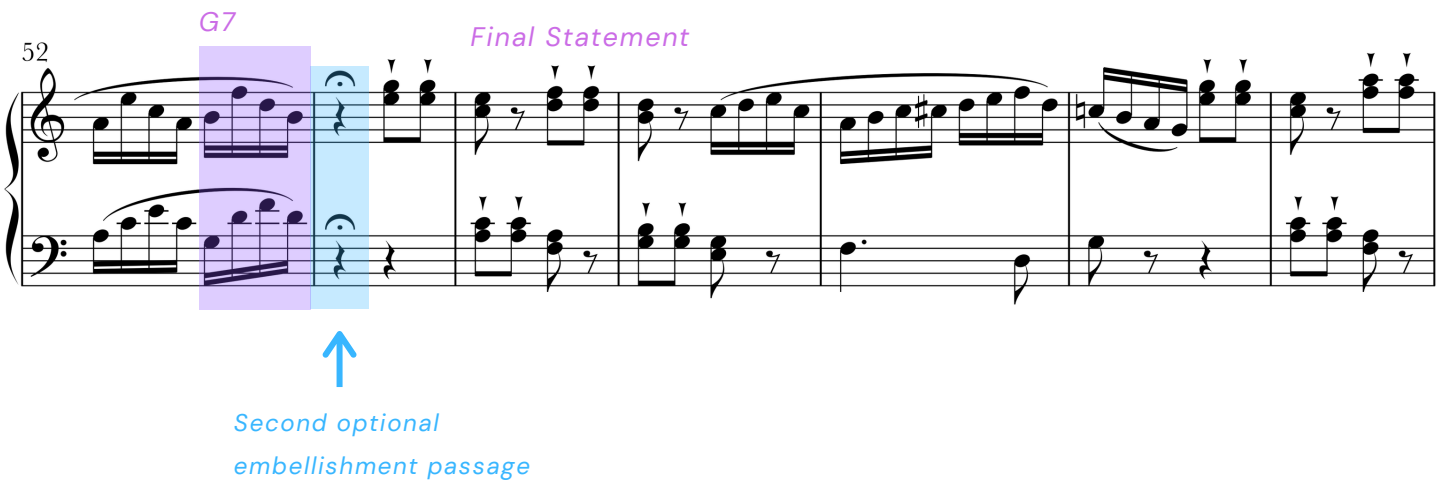
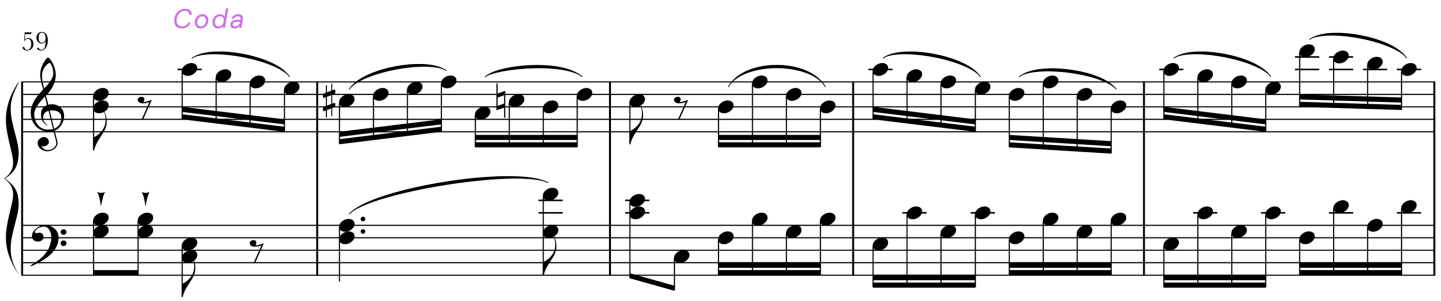
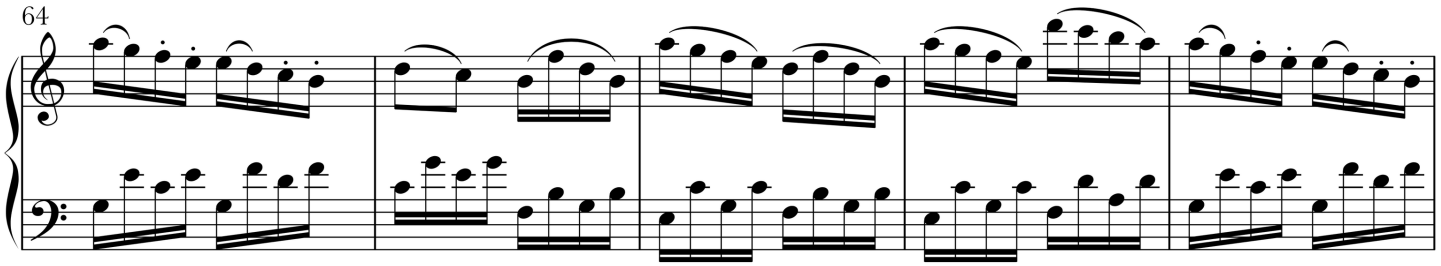
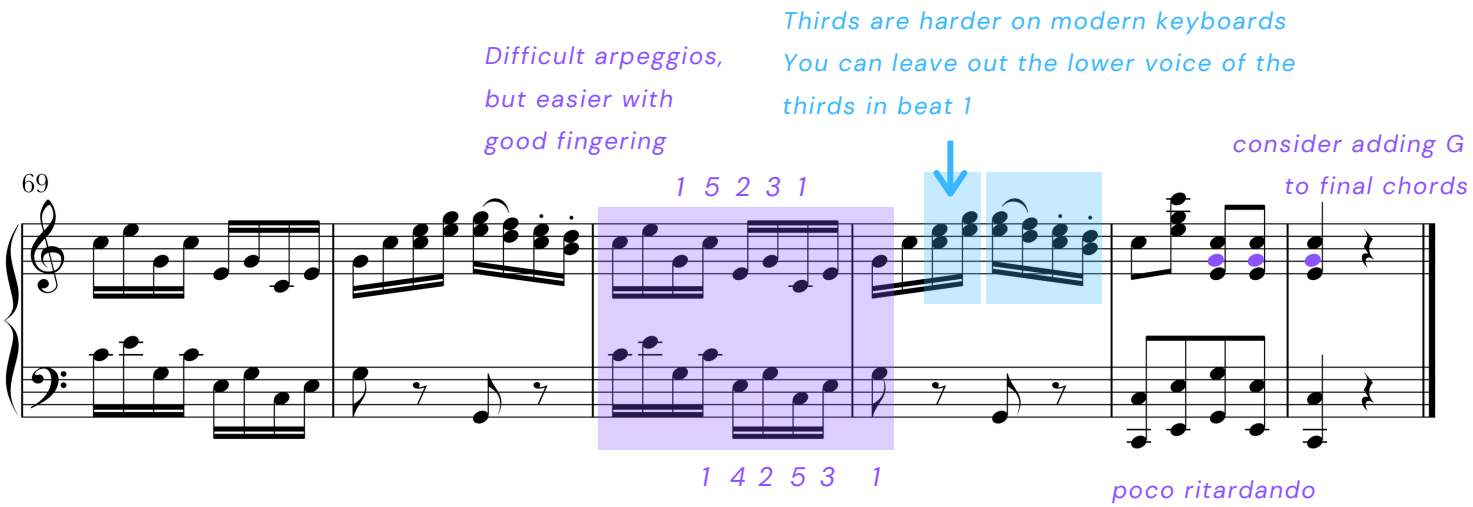



52
G7
Final Statement
Second optional
embellishment passage


59
Coda


64


69
Difficult arpeggios,
but easier with
good fingering
1 5 2 3 1
1 4 2 5 3 1
Thirds are harder on modern keyboards
You can leave out the lower voice of the
thirds in beat 1
consider adding G
to final chords
poco ritardando
(slow down slightly)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Mozart K. 545 appears simple, but it is deceptively challenging.
- This sonatina travels to some unexpected keys, but Mozart always brilliantly weaves his way back.
- Practice the scale runs slowly and with a metronome before you play this piece at a normal tempo.
- The rests in the second movement are crucial to the melody. Mozart would say "One must play the rests!"
- Beautiful sound and legato should be your primary concerns.
- Be very tasteful with any embellishment. Ask yourself "Am I making Mozart sound better?"
- Rubato is a yin/yang. If you speed up, you must later slow down. And anytime you slow down, you must later speed up.

Noted for her musical command, cosmopolitan artistry, and visionary independence, Sara Davis Buechner is one of the most original concert pianists of our time. She was a Bronze Medalist of the 1986 Tschaikowsky Competition in Moscow and the Gold Medalist of the 1984 Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition. Ms. Buechner has performed as a recitalist and chamber musician with some of the world's premiere orchestras worldwide, comissioned and performed important contemporary works, and joined the faculty at the Temple University's Boyer College of Music in 2016.