A Portrait of a Musical Life: A Senior Recital

by

Ethan Maier

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for graduation with Honors in Music.

Whitman College
2013

Certificate of Approval

This is to certify that the accompanying thesis Ethan C. Miller has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with Honors in Music.

Doug Scarborough

Whitman College
May 9, 2013

WHITMAN COLLEGE
Department of Music presents

Senior Recital

Ethan Maier, piano

Nathan Radakovich, bass

Robby Seager, drums

Saturday — April 13, 2013 — 7:30 p.m.
Chism Recital Hall

Piano Sonatina No. 2	Grażyna Bacewicz
Oberek	1909-1969
Melodie	
Etude in A-flat "Aeolian Harp", Op. 25, No. 1	Frédéric Chopin 1810-1849
Reflections	Ethan Maier
Chick-Bird Scramble	
Yo Fui a Las Montañas Hoy	
Ahmad's Tune	
Looking Left	
The Sea: In Memorian ES	
Turmeric Bread	
Epilogue	

Please remember to turn off your cell phone. If you must leave before the end of the concert, please do so only during applause.

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts degree in Music. Mr. Maier is majoring in Music, Jazz Performance Emphasis, and in Biology. He is a Higley Music Scholar and a piano student of Jackie Wood.

Program Notes by the Composer

In writing these compositions I have attempted to explore the essence of several of my greatest musical influences. These pieces can be thought of as musical portraits of the artists who have been instrumental to my development.

Chick-Bird Scramble: I sat down to write a bop tune, and I came up with a musical scramble inspired by the sensibilities of Chick Corea and Charlie Parker. The harmonic backbone of this tune is a modified Parker blues. The melody combines bebop sonorities with Corea's harmonic language, attempting to meld two eras into sprightly cohesion. Finally, this piece is in the key of D major, an uncommon key for any blues. The bright, focused sound of this key contributes importantly to the mood of this tightly knit smorgasbord.

***Yo Fui a Las Montañas Hoy* (I went to the mountains today):** Known for lush harmony and frighteningly sharp rhythms, Astor Piazzolla stands among the great 20th century musical figures. I took inspiration from his Second Quintet (1978-88), with Pablo Ziegler on piano, which codified the genre of Nuevo Tango. In this quintet Piazzolla mixed jazz, classical, and Argentinian elements to create a new sound which varies from peaceful and reflective to harsh and violent. Hopefully we can represent these feelings here, under a title referring to a place of ever- changing emotion, but omnipresent inspiration.

Ahmad's Tune: Arguably the most symphonic jazz trio of the mid-20th century was Ahmad Jamal's trio of the late 50s with bassist Israel Crosby and drummer Vernel Fournier. With its 1958 album *But Not For Me: Live at the Pershing*, Jamal's trio introduced a new sound based on vamps and minimalism that was highly influential, functioning as inspiration for Mile Davis' *Kind of Blue* released the following year. Fifty-five years later, I too take inspiration from Jamal's style.

Looking Left: Being left-handed has always given me a subtle feeling of alienation; right-handed desks, scissors, even the layout of the piano keyboard (upper voices to the right) are designed for a different brain setup. Thus, it was to my delight that I learned Bill Evans, my greatest jazz influence, was left-handed. During his career Evans pioneered a completely new sound based on impressionistic harmonies and deliberate melodic improvisation, while teaching others to discover their art for themselves. This piece is written in honor of Evans and his philosophy of self-realization. He tended from the audience when he performed, presumably to limit extramusical stimulation. This in-the-moment dedication to his music inspired the title to this piece.

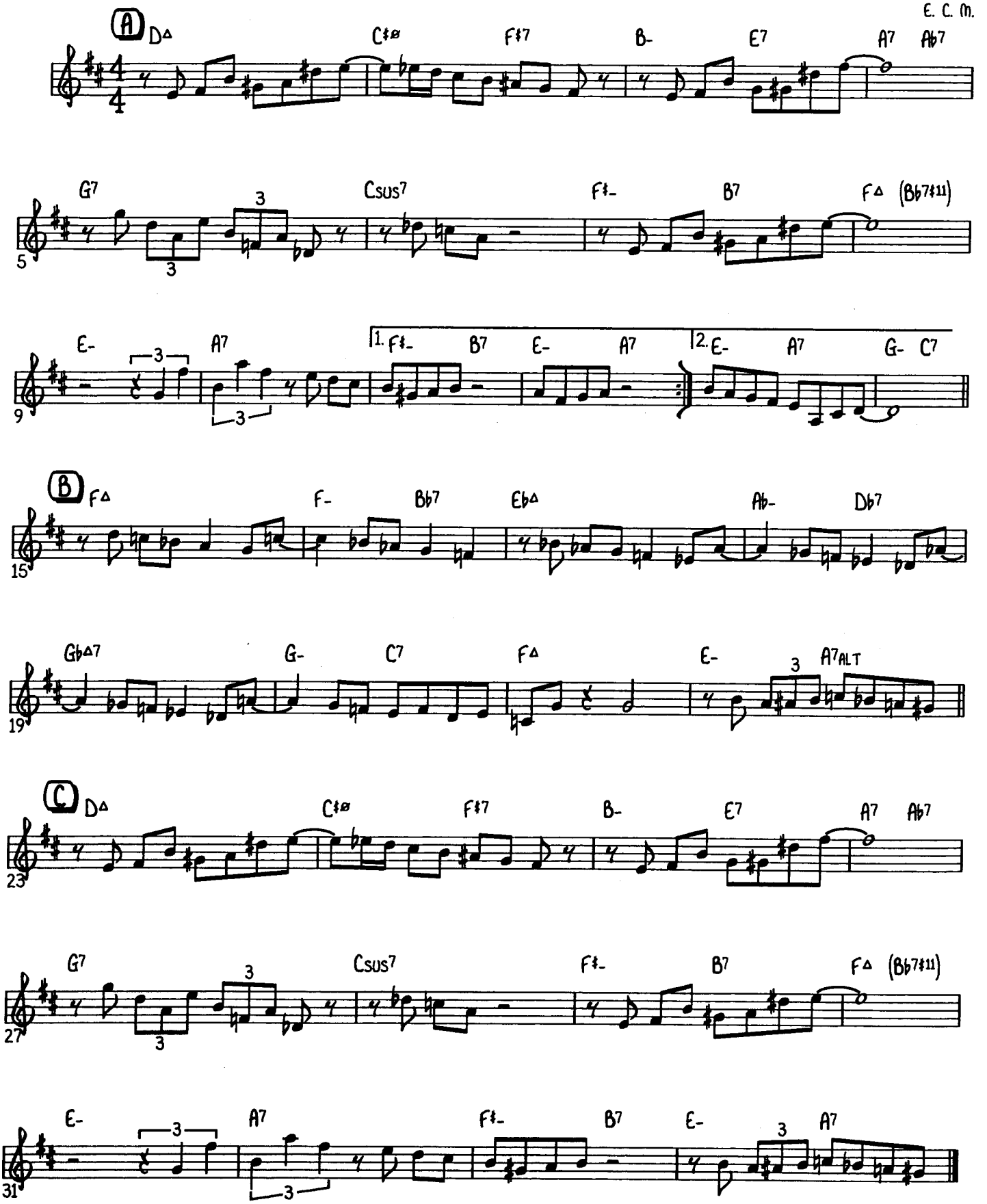
The Sea: in memoriam ES: The Esbjörn Svensson Trio, known as EST, was a Swedish jazz piano trio led by pianist Esbjörn Svensson from 1993 until his death in 2008 while scuba diving. The trio's sound seamlessly melded classical, rock, and jazz elements into sublimely captivating works. This piece is a postlude to Svensson's beautifully rich and creative life.

Turmeric Bread: Tasty, crispy and beautifully colored, turmeric bread is what a baker might place behind a busy street-side window to attract attention. The young Armenian jazz pianist Tigran Hamasyan, undoubtedly familiar with this kind of bread, plays music that is equally colorful and stimulating: intentional, rhythmic, beautifully constructed, and full of that Eastern European melancholy that somehow never ceases to enchant. With this music fresh in my ear, I present my own take on Eastern European music. Take it like you would a slice of bright yellow and aromatic bread... hopefully with gusto.

Epilogue, a reflection on it all...: This is just me.

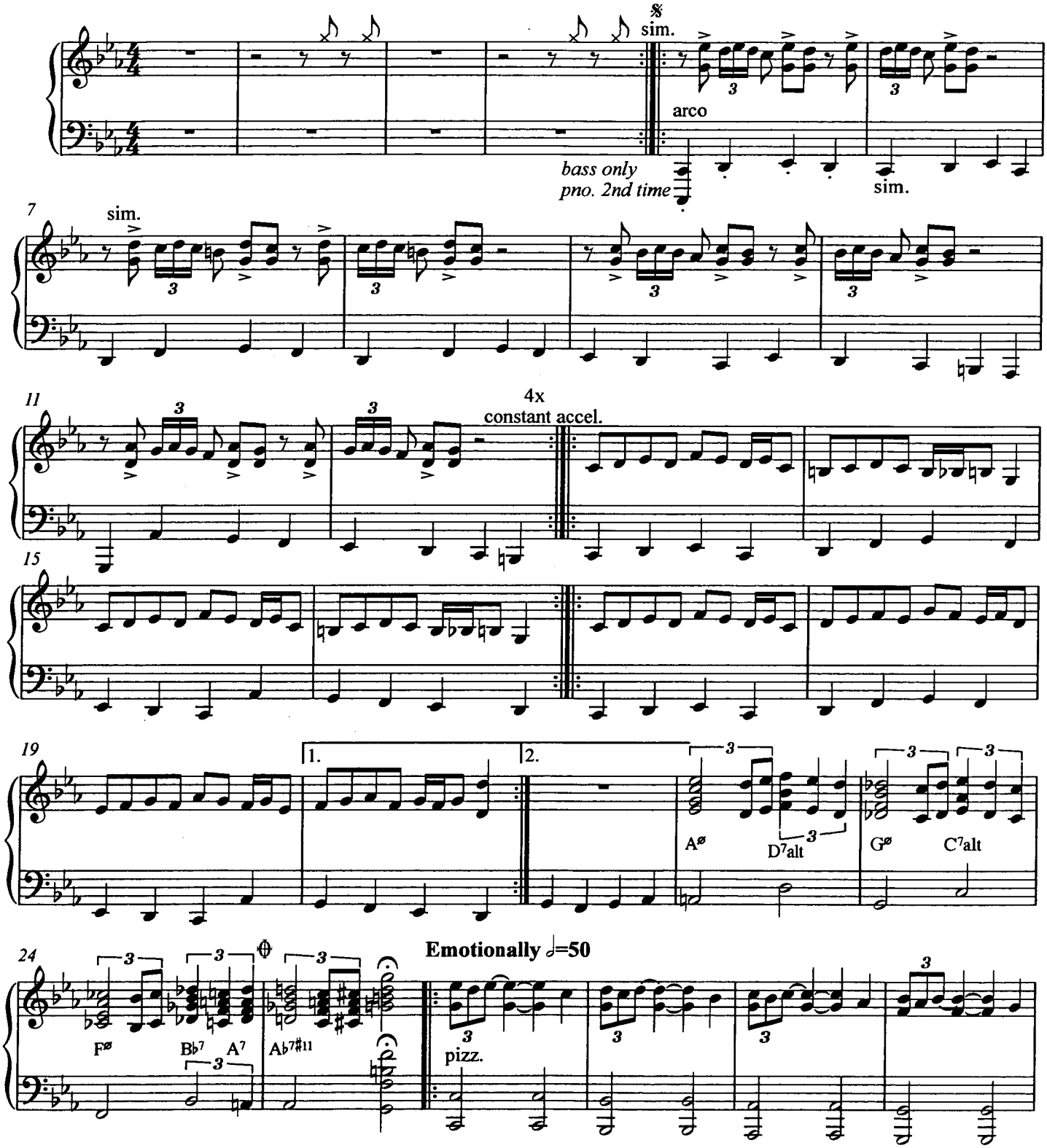
CHICK-BIRD SCRAMBLE

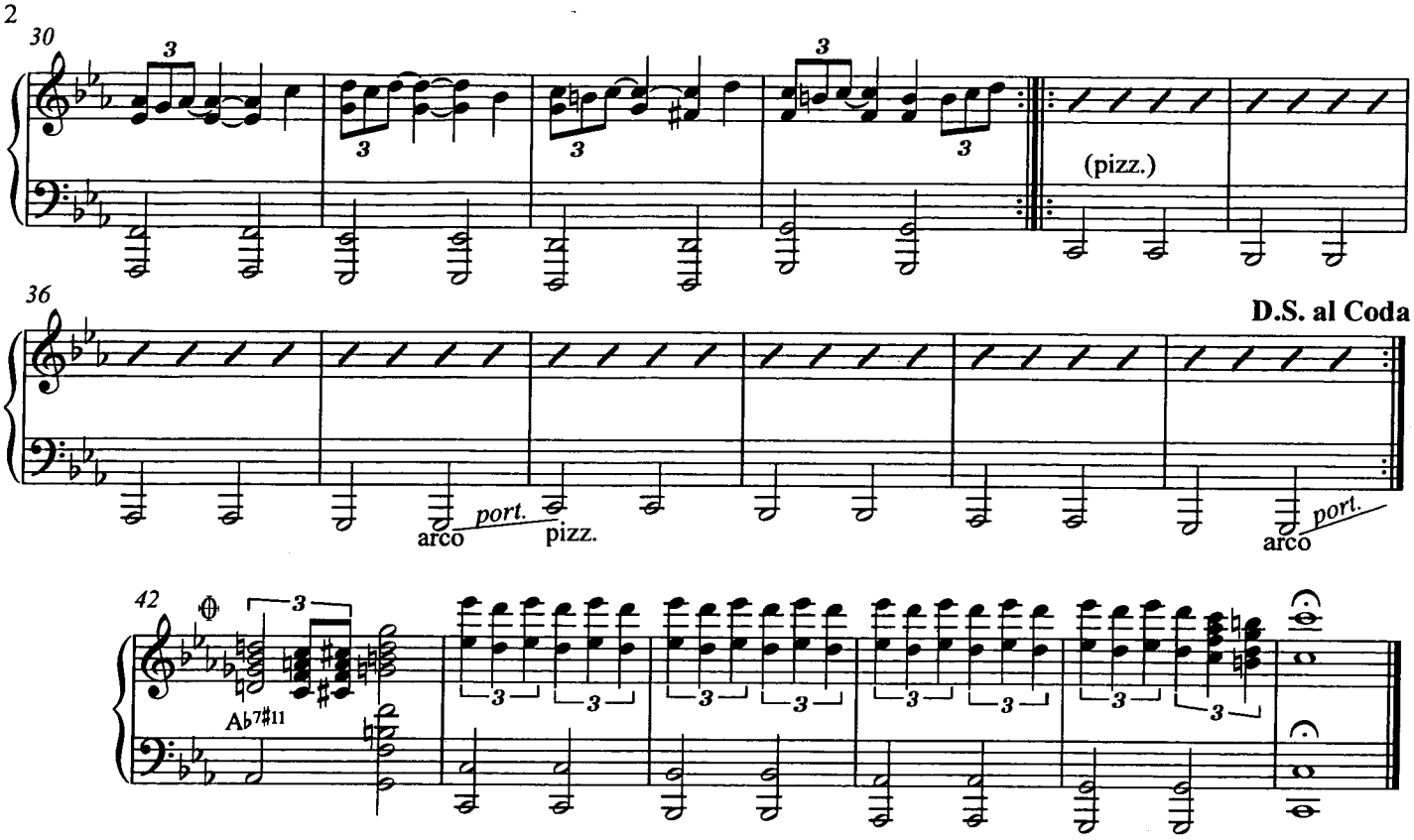
E. C. M.



Calles de los Ongos (Fui a Las Montañas Hoy)

Ethan Maier

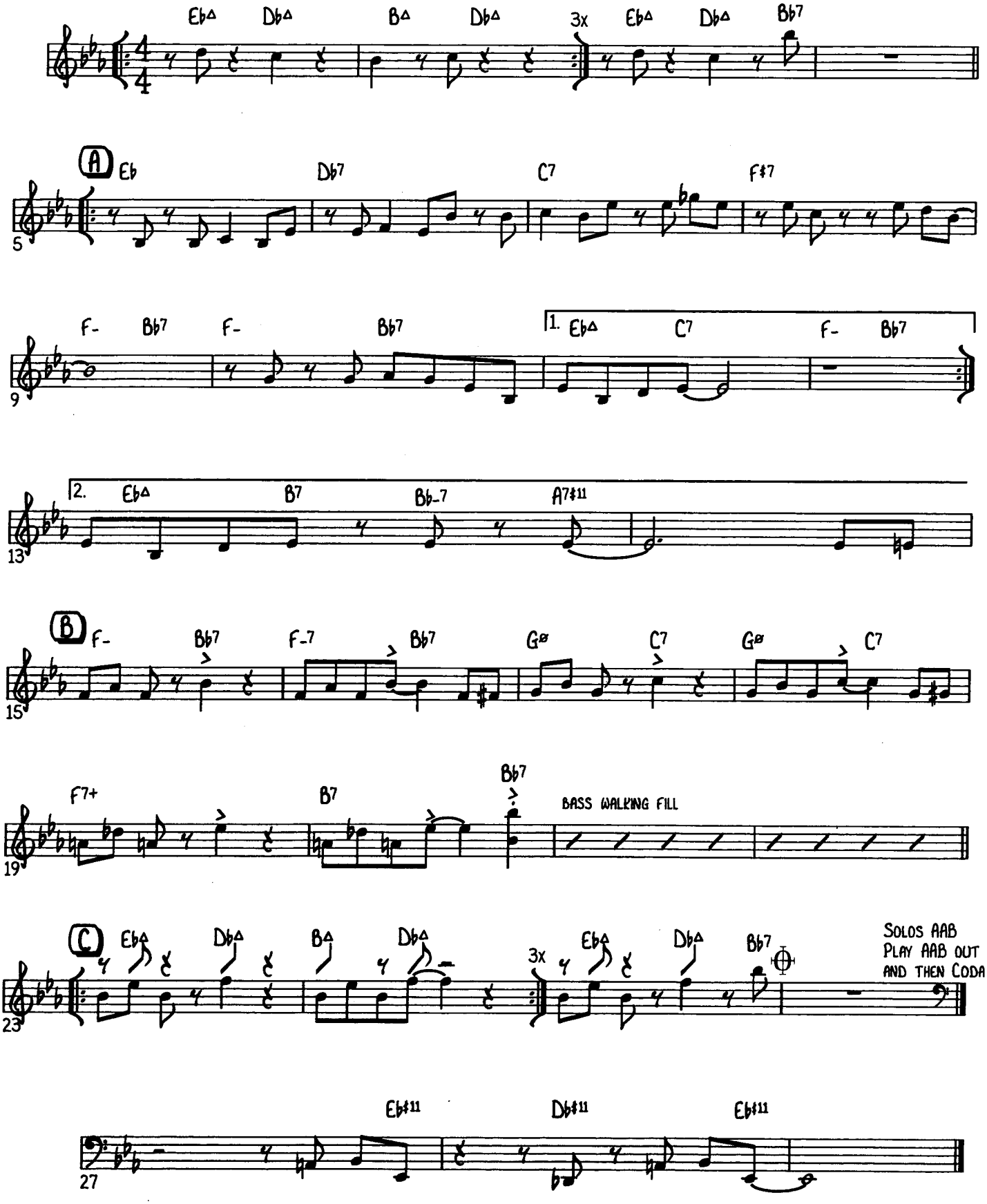



30
(pizz.)
36
D.S. al Coda
arco
port.
pizz.
arco
port.

42
Ab7#11

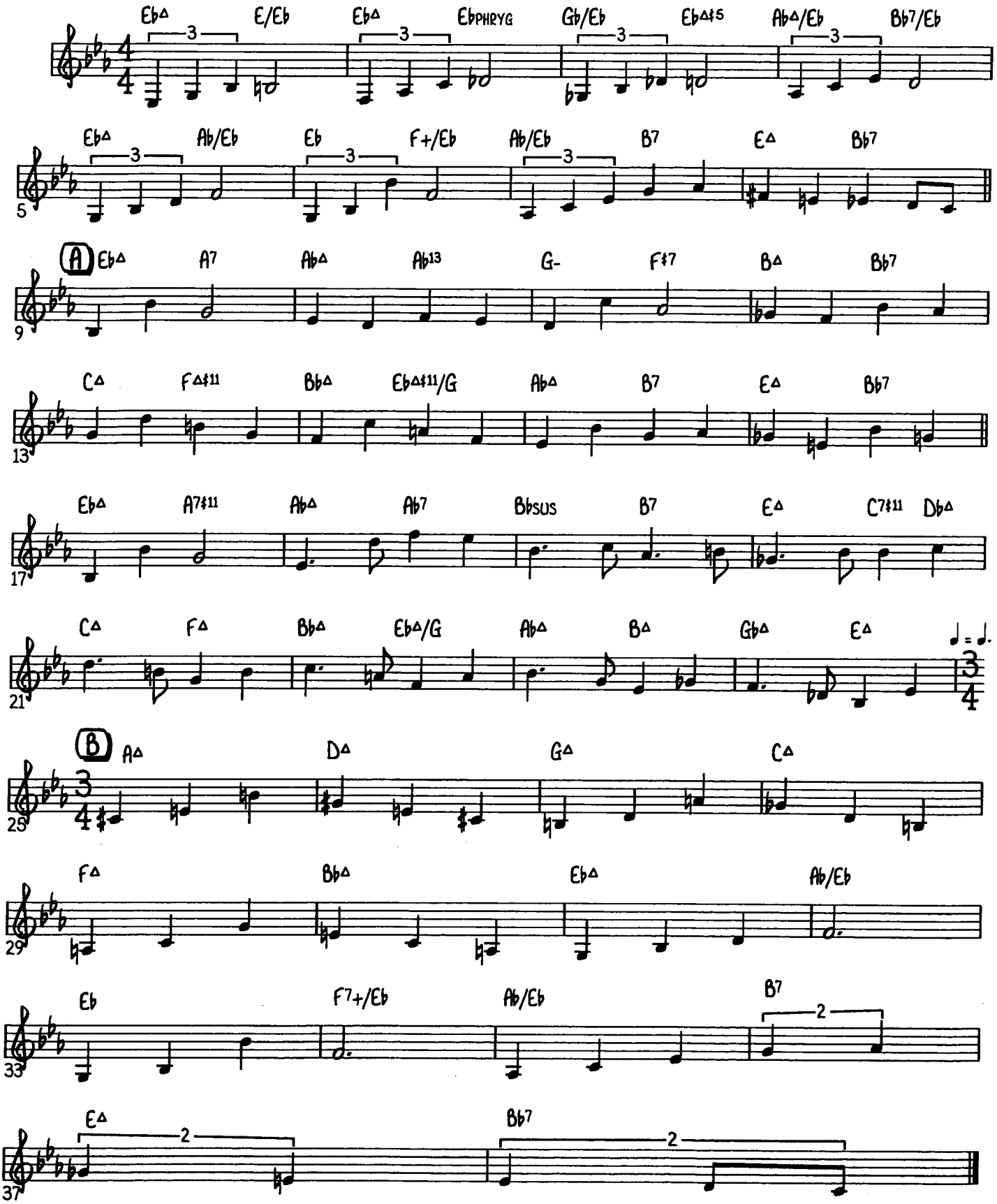
AMHAD'S TUNE

E. MAIER



LOOKING LEFT

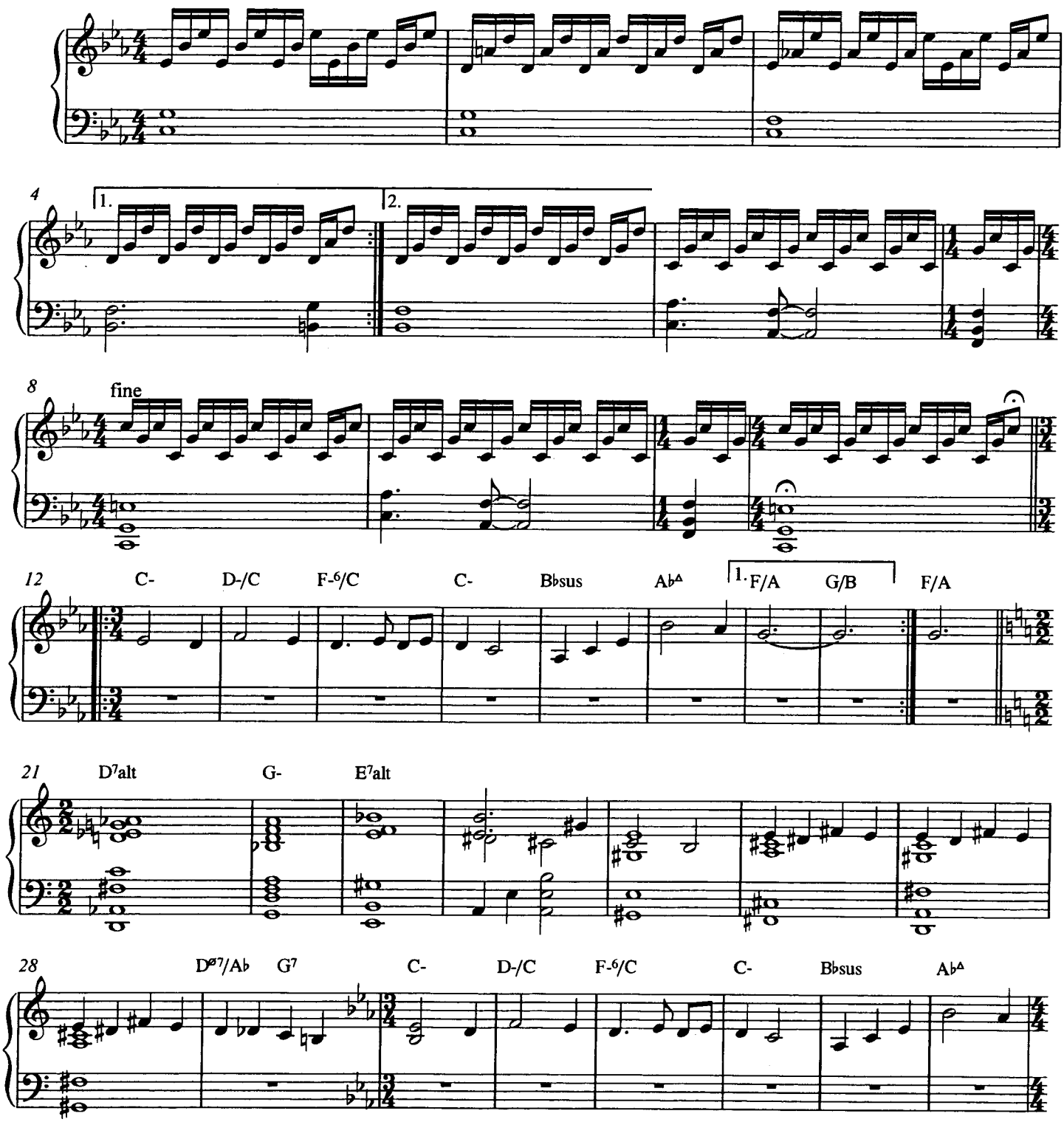
ETHAN

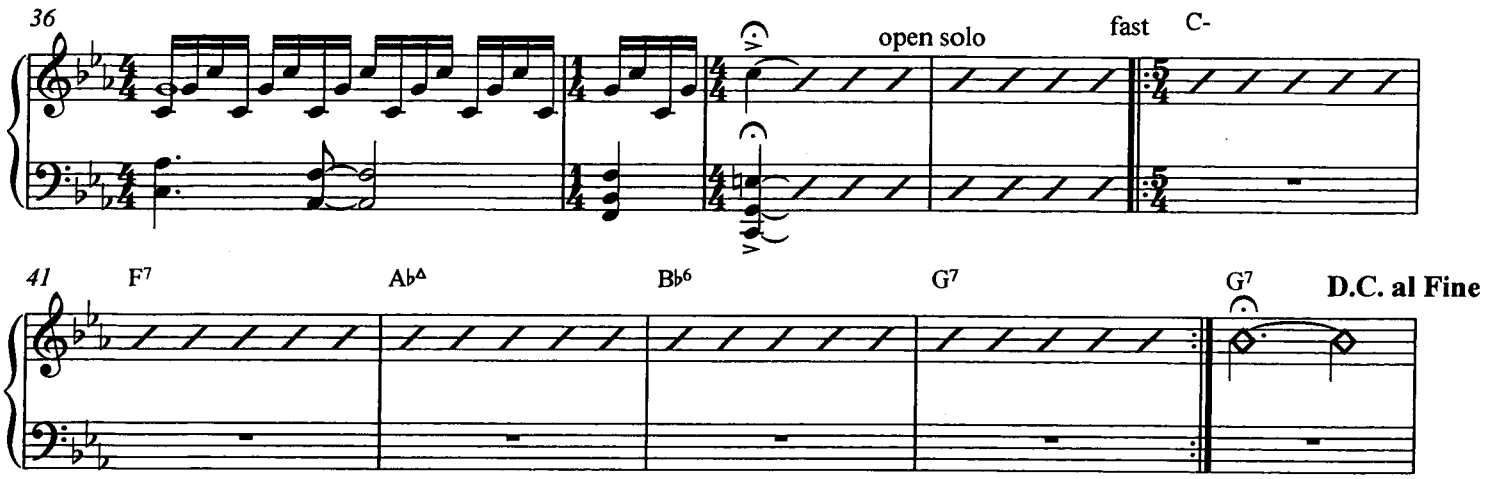


The Sea

in memoriam: EST

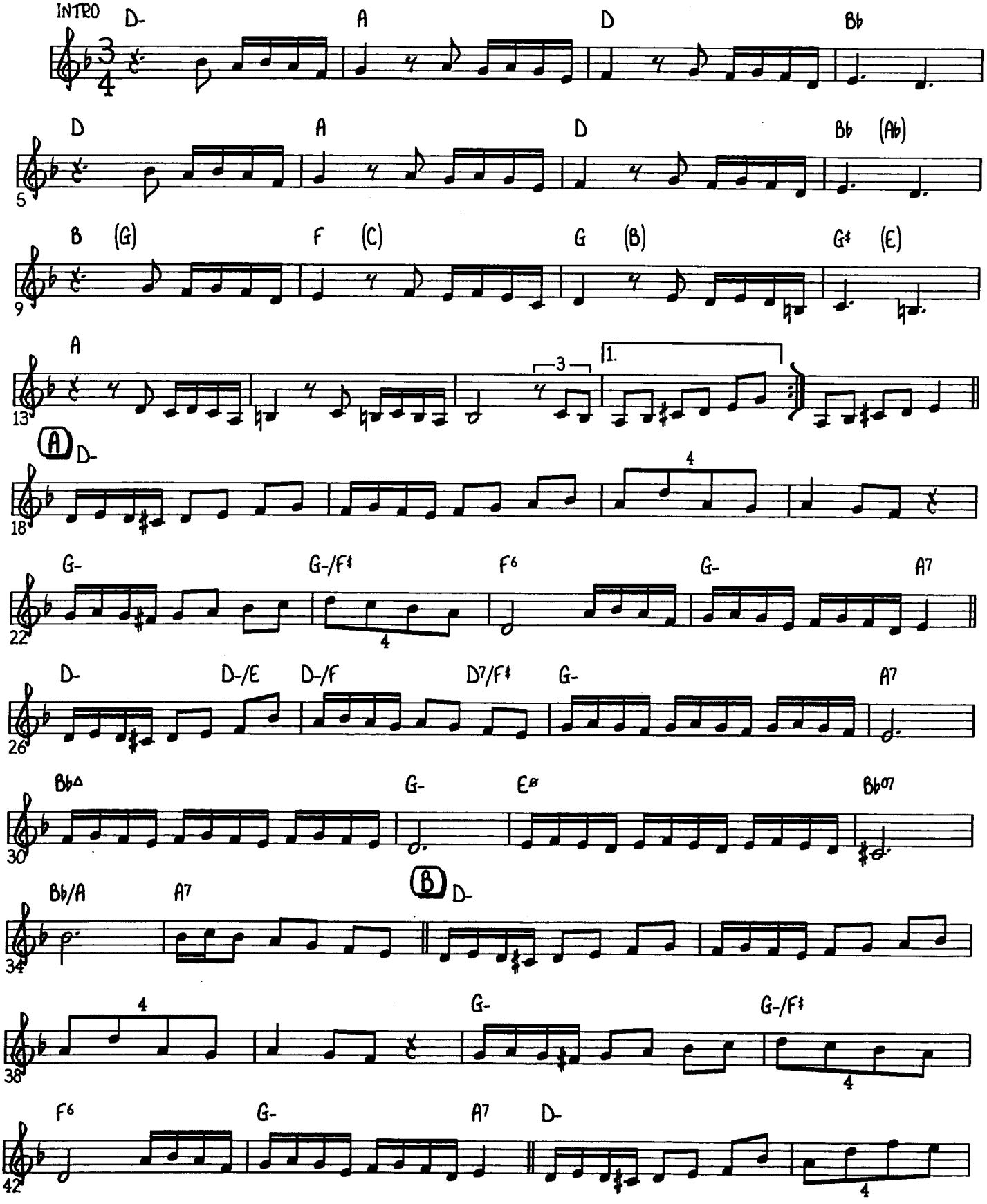
ECM

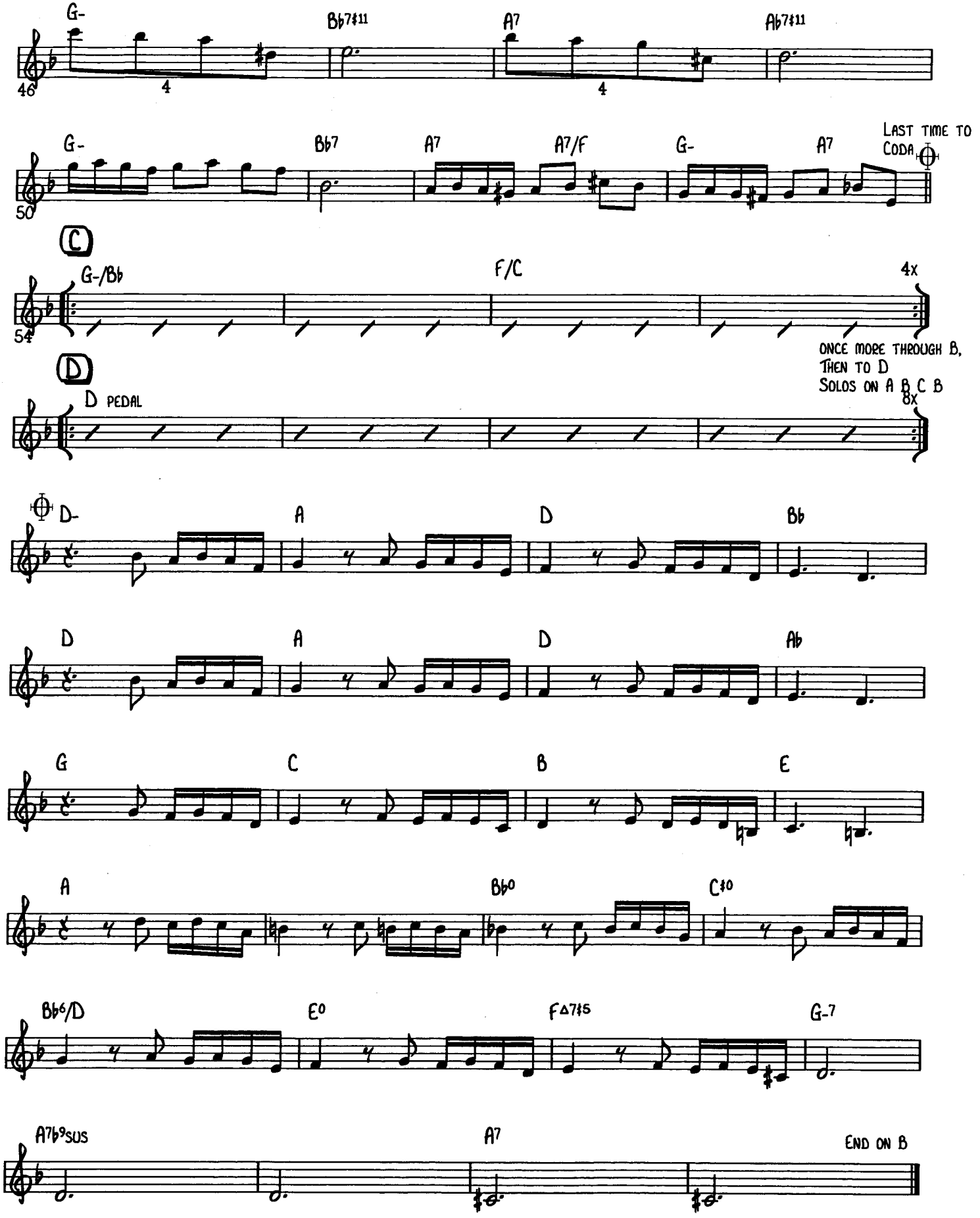


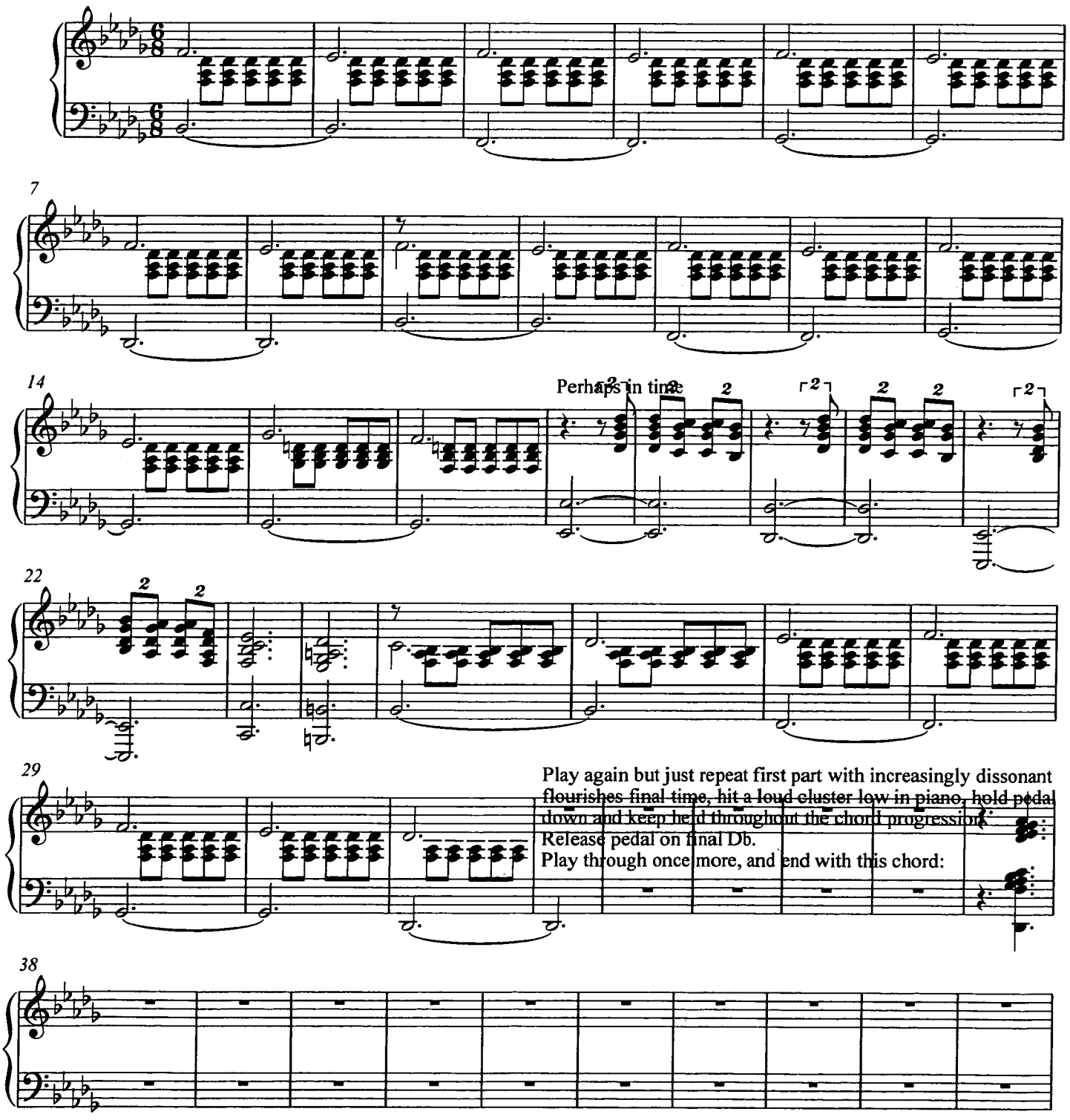

36
open solo
fast
C-
41
F7
A♭Δ
B♭6
G7
G7
D.C. al Fine

TURMERIC BREAD

BOY




G-
Bb7#11
A7
Ab7#11
46
4
4
G-
Bb7
A7
A7/F
G-
A7
LAST TIME TO CODA
50
C
G-/Bb
F/C
4x
54
D
D PEDAL
ONCE MORE THROUGH B, THEN TO D
SOLOS ON A B C B
8x
D-
A
D
Bb
D
A
D
Ab
G
C
B
E
A
Bb°
C#°
Bb6/D
E°
F△7#5
G-7
A7b9sus
A7
END ON B

Epilogue

Ethan M.