The Complete Marches of

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

VOL. 2 — NO. 22

TRANSIT OF VENUS

MARCH

(1883)

FULL SCORE

AS PERFORMED BY

"THE PRESIDENT'S OWN" UNITED STATES MARINE BAND

March, "Transit of Venus" (1883)

It is not known whether or not Sousa witnessed either of the two transits of Venus that occurred in his lifetime, but the phenomenon was the basis for the title of this march and also for one of his three novels.

The march received its première at a concert of the U.S. Marine Band on April 19, 1883, with Sousa conducting. The occasion was the unveiling of a statue of Joseph Henry, first secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, who had died in 1878. Henry, as president of the National Academy of Sciences, had been responsible for proper observation of the transit of Venus in 1874.

There is nothing in Sousa's or Henry's memoirs suggesting that the two were personally acquainted, but it is possible because they both lived in Washington at the same time. Inasmuch as several members of the National Academy of Sciences were present at the unveiling of Henry's statue, it is likely that the march was intended as a salute to both Henry and the Academy.

Paul E. Bierley, *The Works of John Philip Sousa* (Westerville, Ohio: Integrity Press, 1984), 90. Used by permission.

Editorial Notes

Throughout Sousa's career as a conductor, he often altered the performance of his marches in specific ways without marking or changing the printed music. These alterations were designed for concert performances and included varying dynamics and omitting certain instruments on repeated strains to expand the range of the musical textures, as well as adding unscripted percussion accents for dramatic emphasis at key points in the music. Although Sousa never documented his performance techniques himself, several players who worked extensively with Sousa provided directions for his frequently performed marches, most notably from cornetist Frank Simon. Many of the marches in Volume 2 of "The Complete Marches of John Philip Sousa" were staples in Sousa's regular concert repertoire and were included in the "Encore Books" used by the Sousa Band. A complete set of his Encore Books resides in the U.S. Marine Band Library and Archives and are referenced extensively by the Marine Band not only as a guide for some of Sousa's special performance practice, but also to ascertain the exact instrumentation he employed in his own performances of his marches.

"The Complete Marches of John Philip Sousa" appears in chronological order and is based on some of the earliest known sources for each composition. These newly edited full scores correct many mistakes and inconsistencies found in the parts of early publications; however, all remaining markings and the original scoring are preserved. Where instruments are added to the original orchestration, it is guided by the additional parts Sousa sanctioned in his Encore Books where applicable or based on these typical doublings. Additionally, the alterations traditionally employed by the United States Marine Band in performance are incorporated throughout; either those specifically documented by Sousa's musicians or changes modeled on the customary practices of "The March King."

The musical decisions included in these editions were influenced by the work of several outstanding Sousa scholars combined with many decades of Marine Band performance tradition. These editions would not be possible without the exceptional contributions to the study of Sousa's marches by Captain Frank Byrne (USMC, ret.), Jonathan Elkus, Colonel Timothy Foley (USMC, ret.), Loras Schissel, Dr. Patrick Warfield, and "The March King's" brilliant biographer, Paul Bierley.

Performance practices that deviate from the original printed indications are described below and appear in [brackets] *in the score. In many instances these indications appear side-by-side with the original markings. An open diamond marked with an accent in the cymbal part indicates that the cymbal player should let that accent ring for an additional beat before rejoining the bass drum part.*

Introduction and First Strain (m. 1-20): The cymbals should be choked after the crash in the first measure. The *piano* of the first strain is *subito* with quick crescendos to *forte* as indicated. The cymbal crash in m. 17 is also choked to maximize the effect of the percussion dropping out for two beats here. The pick-ups into the repeat are once again *subito piano*.

Second Strain (m. 21-37): The *fortissimo* ending the first strain is carried through to the second. Accents are added in the percussion in m. 24-25 to set up the *subito mezzo-piano* and swell dynamics in the following bars in all instruments except the trill in the flute/piccolo and E-flat clarinet. That change in dynamic should happen again at m. 34-36, even though it was not indicated in the original parts.

Trio (m. 38-70): This extended Trio starts *piano* and the piccolo, E-flat clarinet, cornets, and trombones can be *tacet* for the first part of this section. Sousa reduced the percussion section here to solo triangle. The articulation in the melodic figure starting in m. 44-45 was unclear in the original parts, generally occurring under one bar-long slur. For this edition, the decision was made to treat the two central quarter notes as tied, creating a "Scottish snap" effect that also appears in some of Sousa's other music. The harmonic center changes in m. 55 and so does the dynamic, growing to *mezzo-forte* after the two bass drum hits in m. 53-54. This shift is a good spot to bring the brass back in at *mezzo-forte* to reinforce the changes here. Snare drum comes back in with a roll in m. 62, bass drum joins with a roll in m. 67, and the cymbals join the bass drum in *crescendo* at m. 69 leading to the final strain.

Final Strain (m. 71-end): All instruments play *fortissim*o with good accents on the dotted quarter notes. The ties have once again been added to the melody starting in m. 76. Flute and piccolo should be sure to make the sixteenths heard at m. 75-77 and again at m. 83-85.

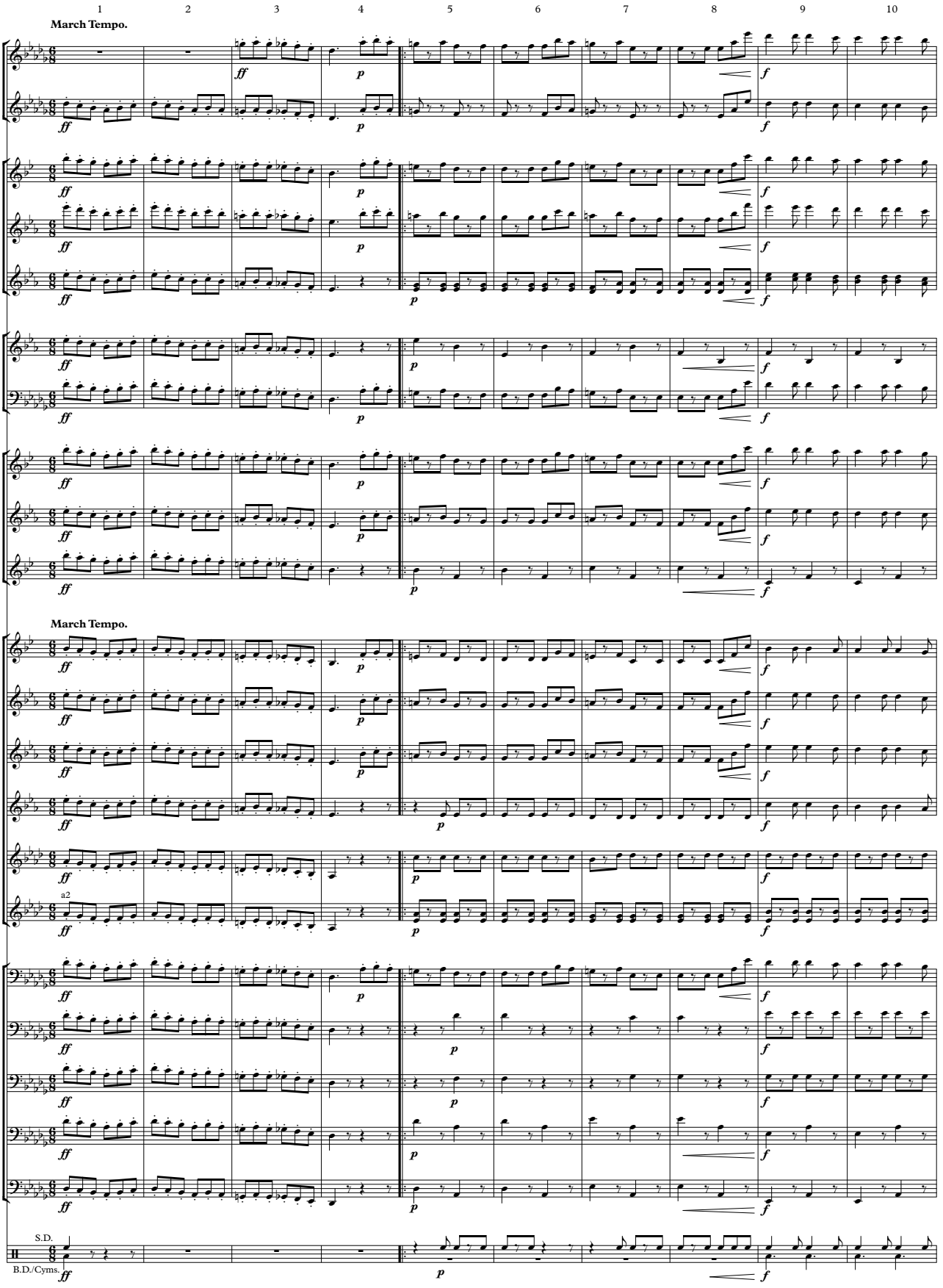
Full Score

March

TRANSIT OF VENUS

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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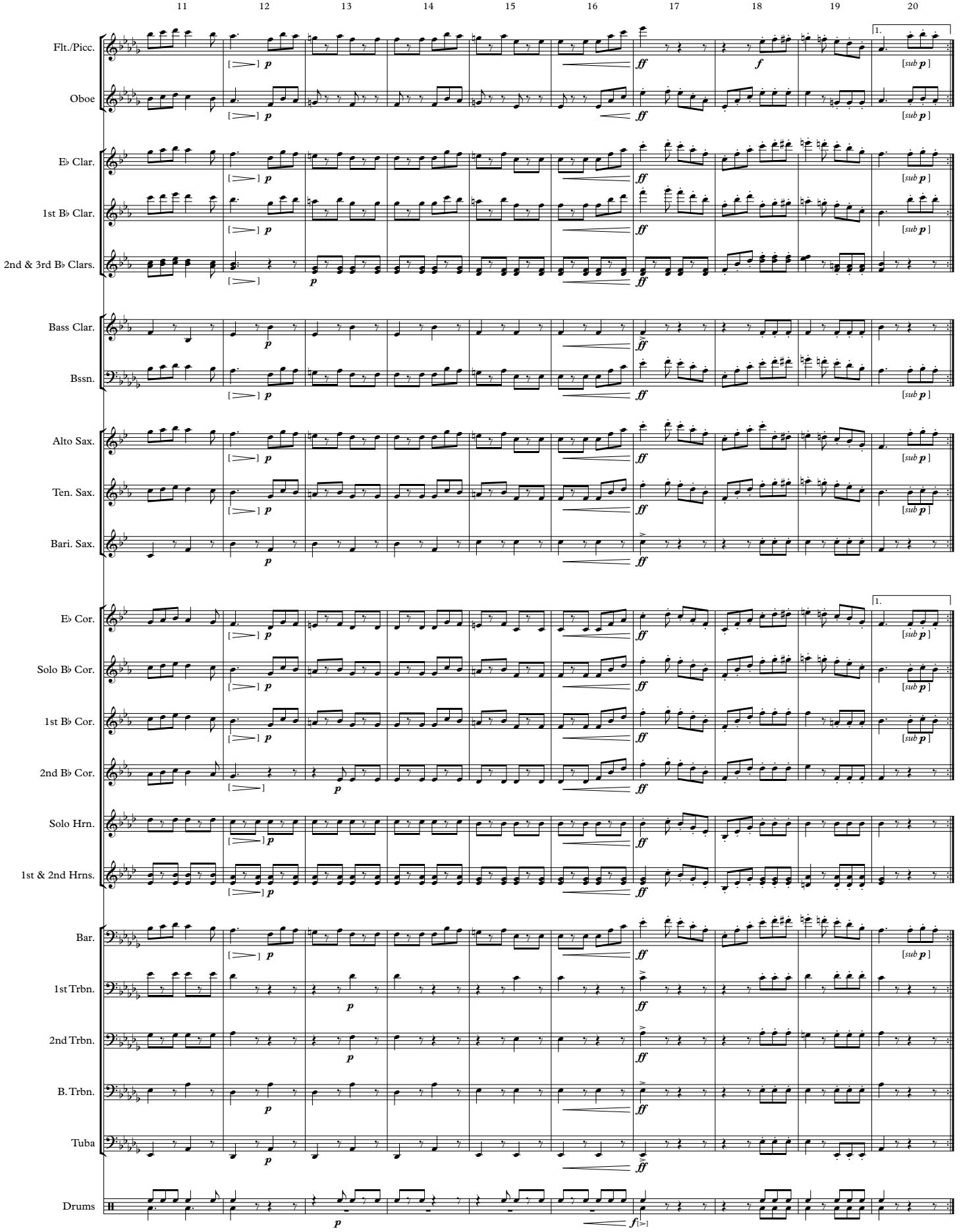
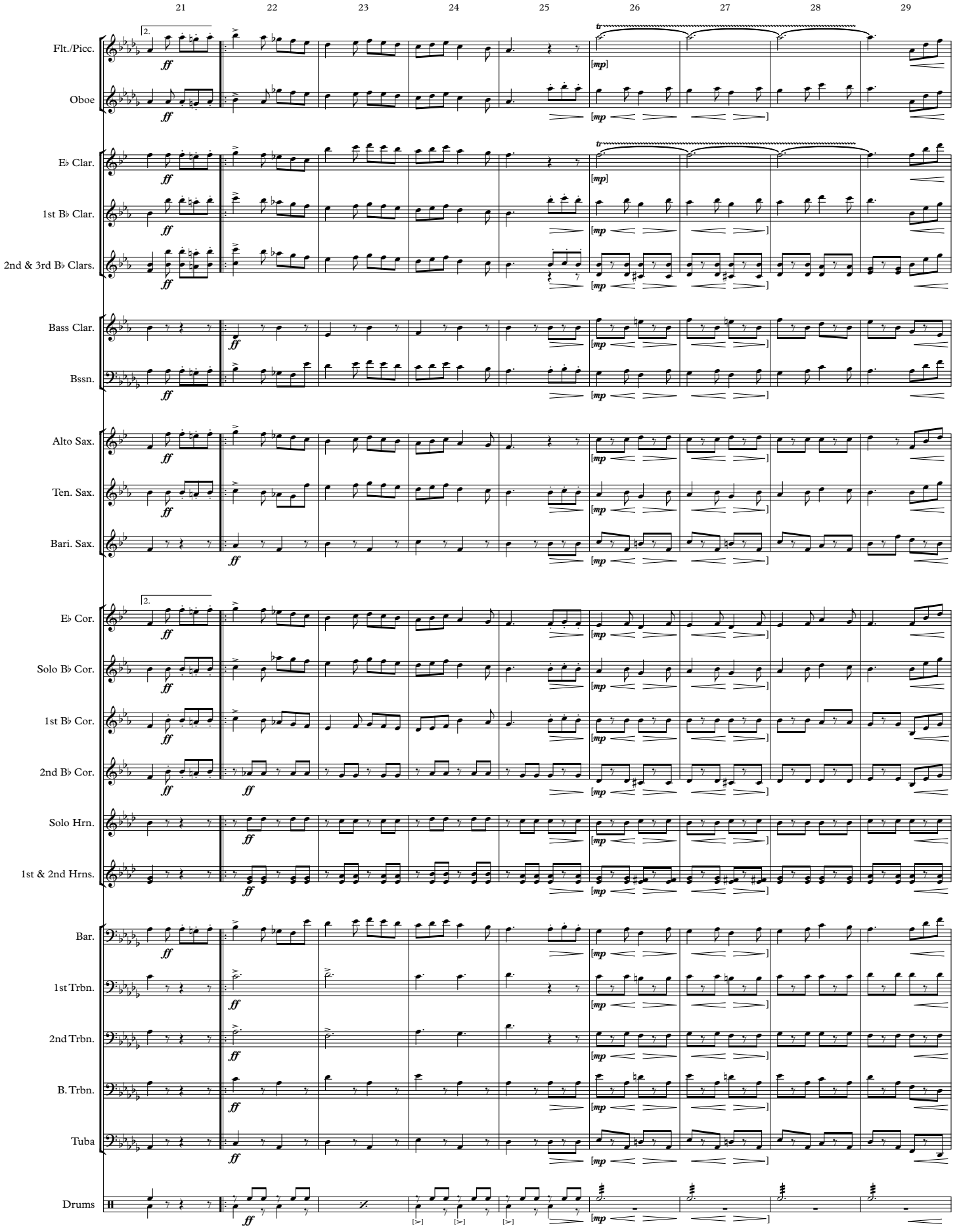
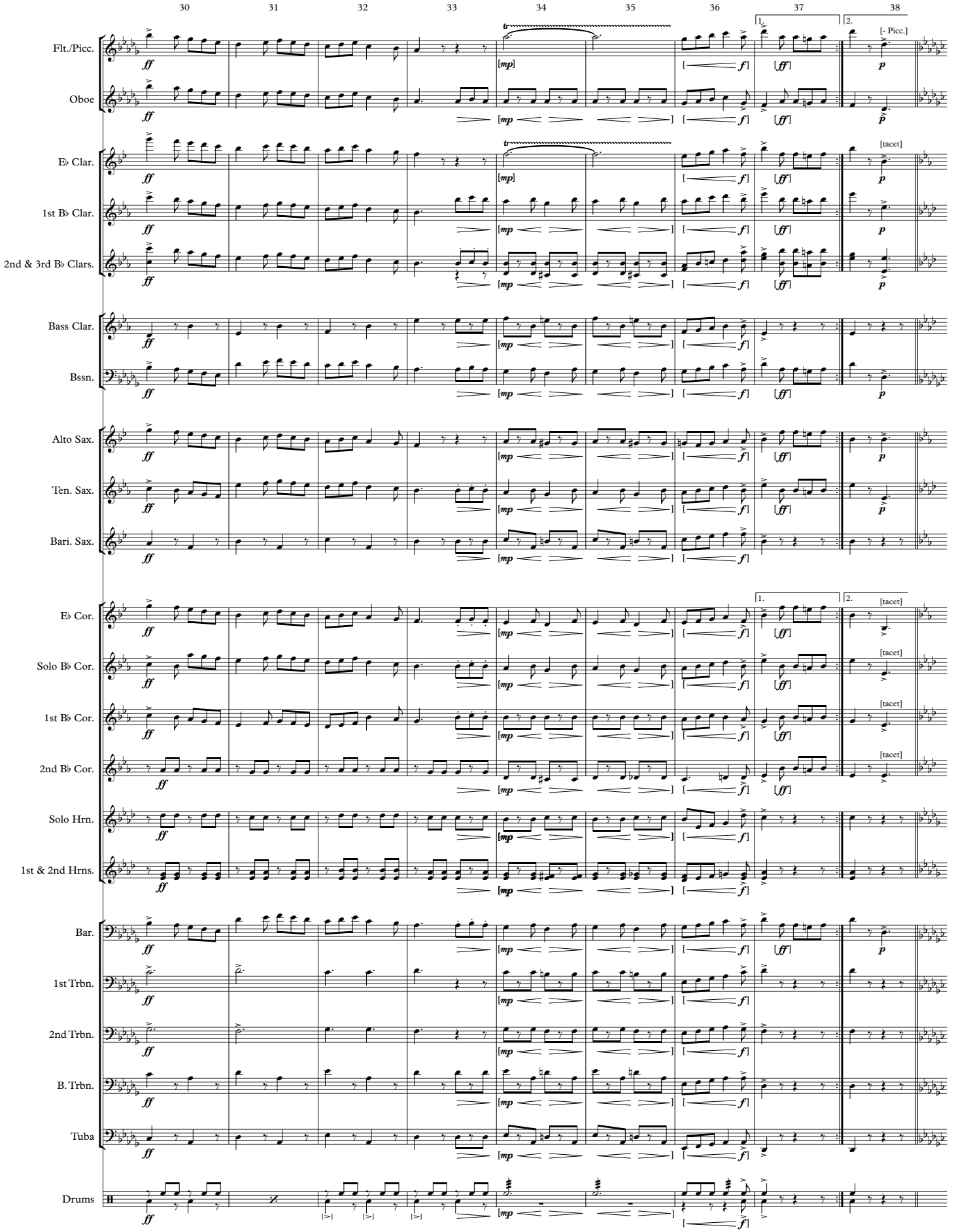
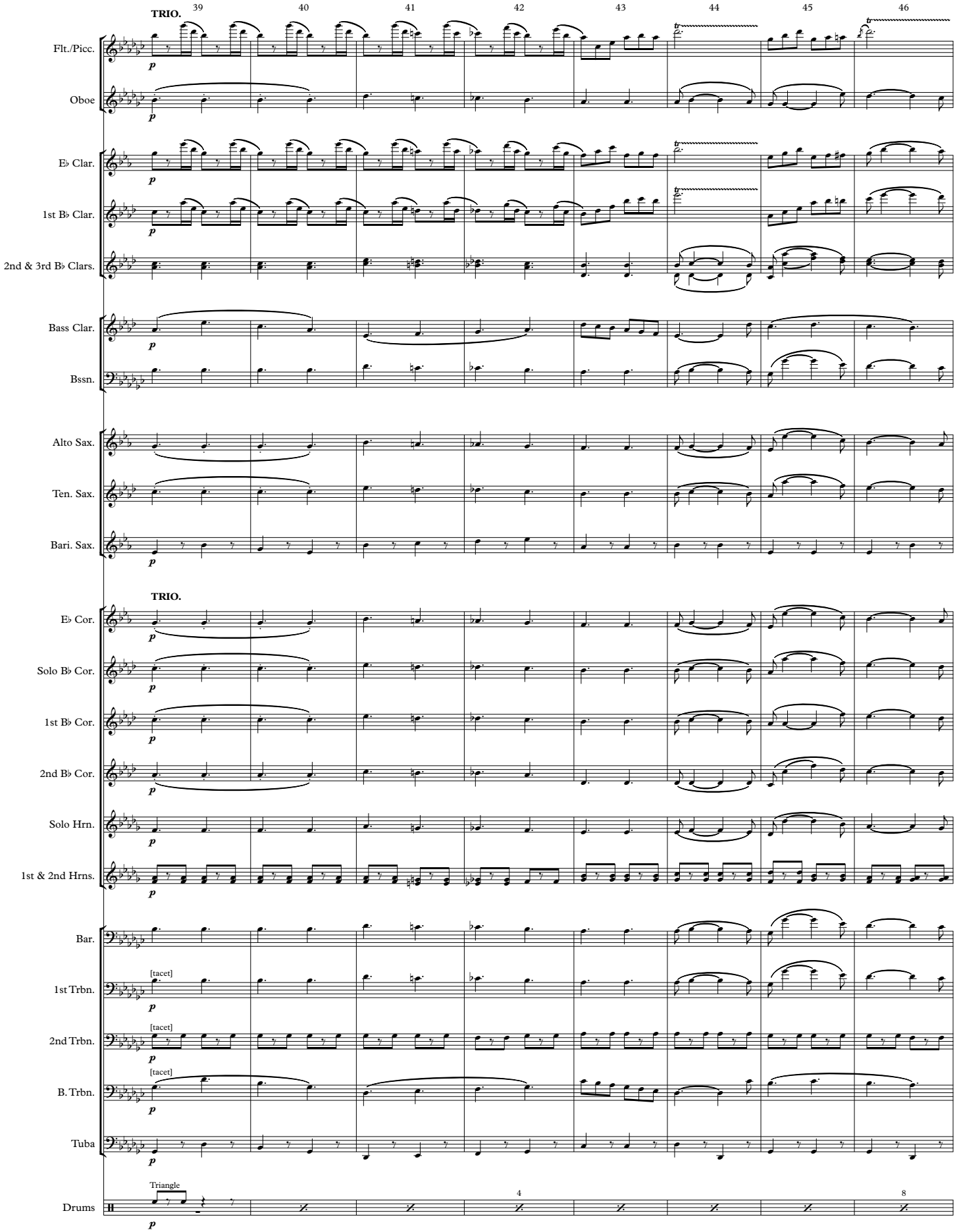

11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
Flt./Picc.
Oboe
E♭ Clar.
1st B♭ Clar.
2nd & 3rd B♭ Clars.
Bass Clar.
Bssn.
Alto Sax.
Ten. Sax.
Bari. Sax.
E♭ Cor.
Solo B♭ Cor.
1st B♭ Cor.
2nd B♭ Cor.
Solo Hrn.
1st & 2nd Hrns.
Bar.
1st Trbn.
2nd Trbn.
B. Trbn.
Tuba
Drums
1.
[sub p]

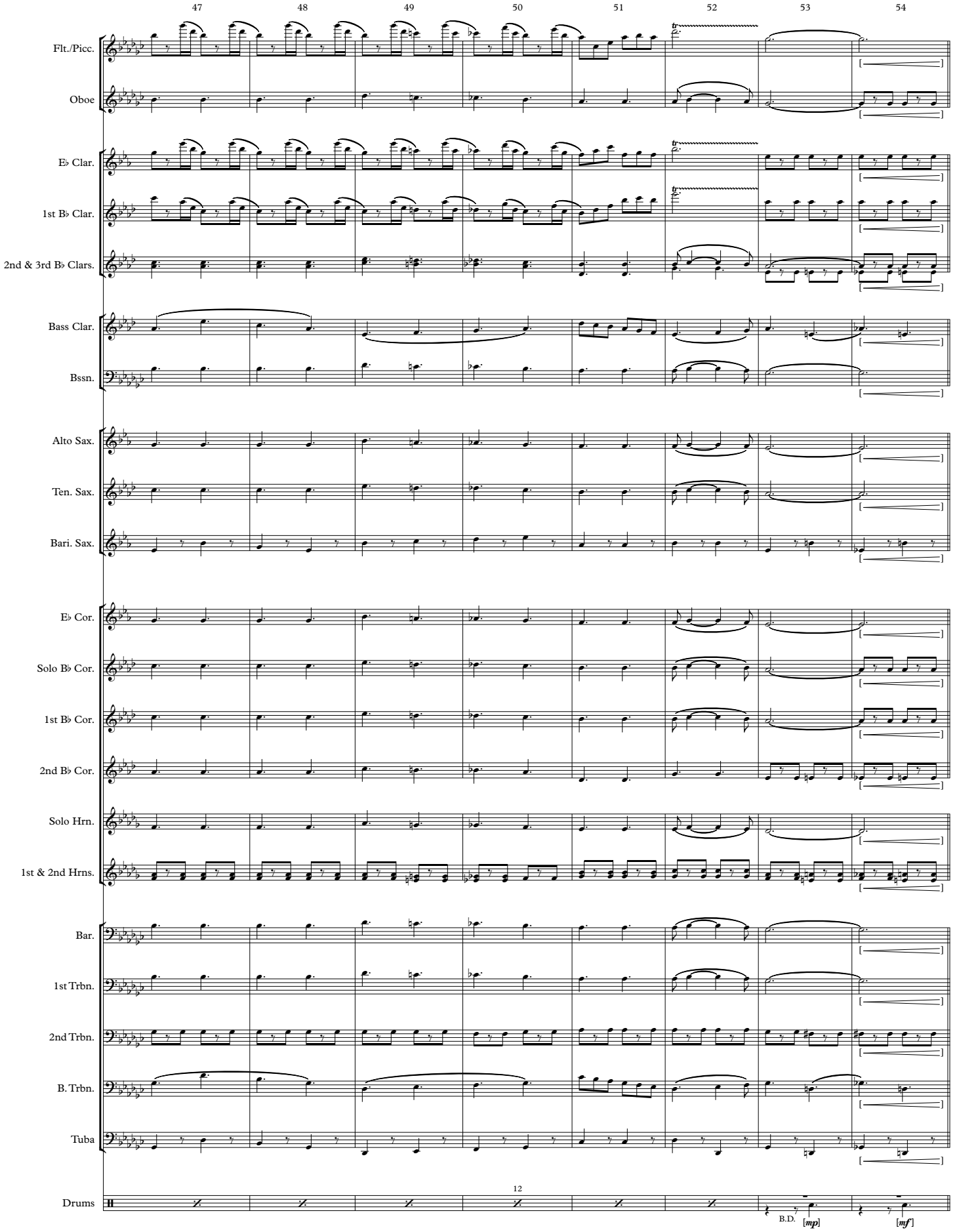
"TRANSIT OF VENUS"
Full Score



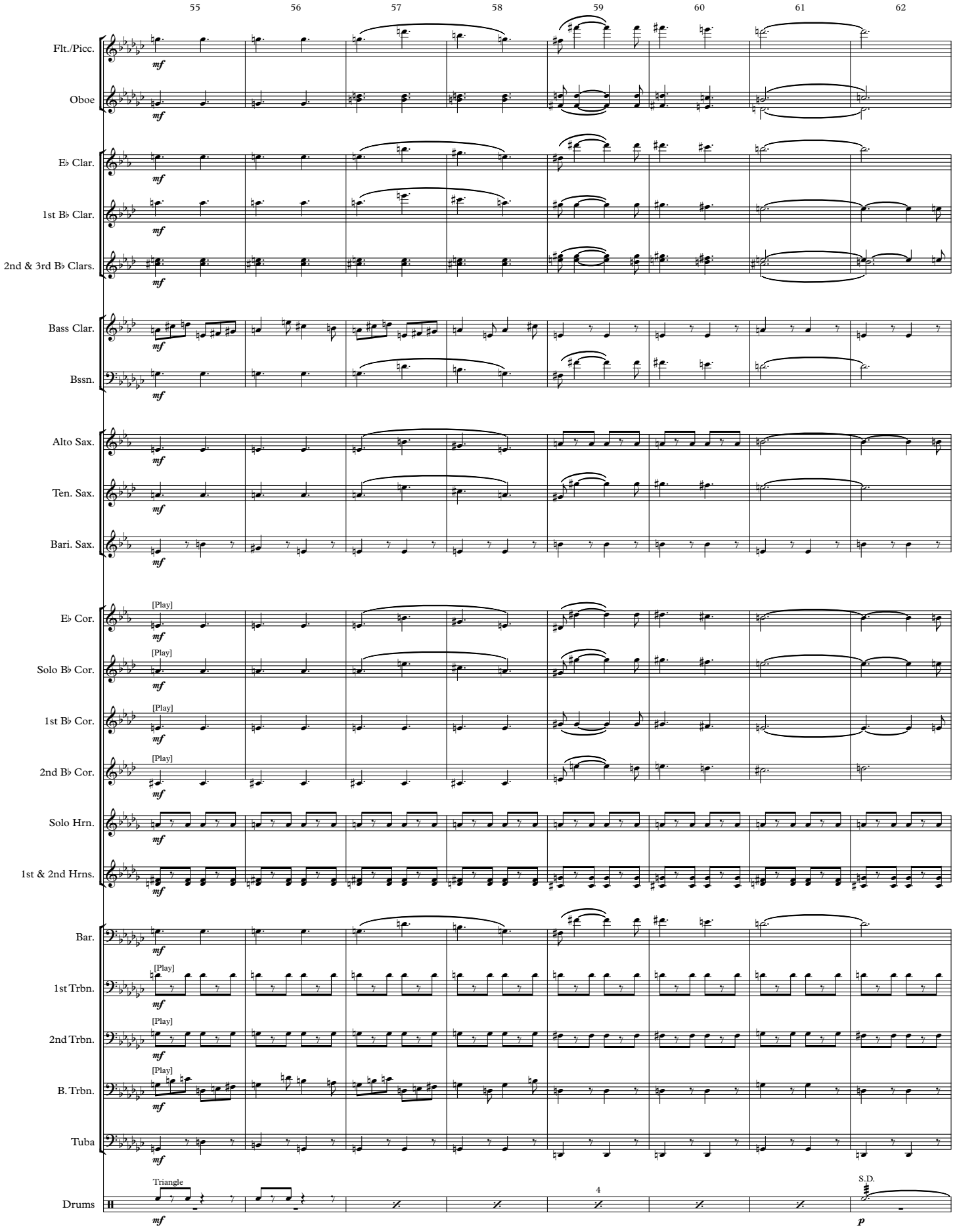

30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
Flt./Picc.
Oboe
E♭ Clar.
1st B♭ Clar.
2nd & 3rd B♭ Clars.
Bass Clar.
Bssn.
Alto Sax.
Ten. Sax.
Bari. Sax.
E♭ Cor.
Solo B♭ Cor.
1st B♭ Cor.
2nd B♭ Cor.
Solo Hrn.
1st & 2nd Hrns.
Bar.
1st Trbn.
2nd Trbn.
B. Trbn.
Tuba
Drums
[- Picc.]
[tacet]
1.
2.

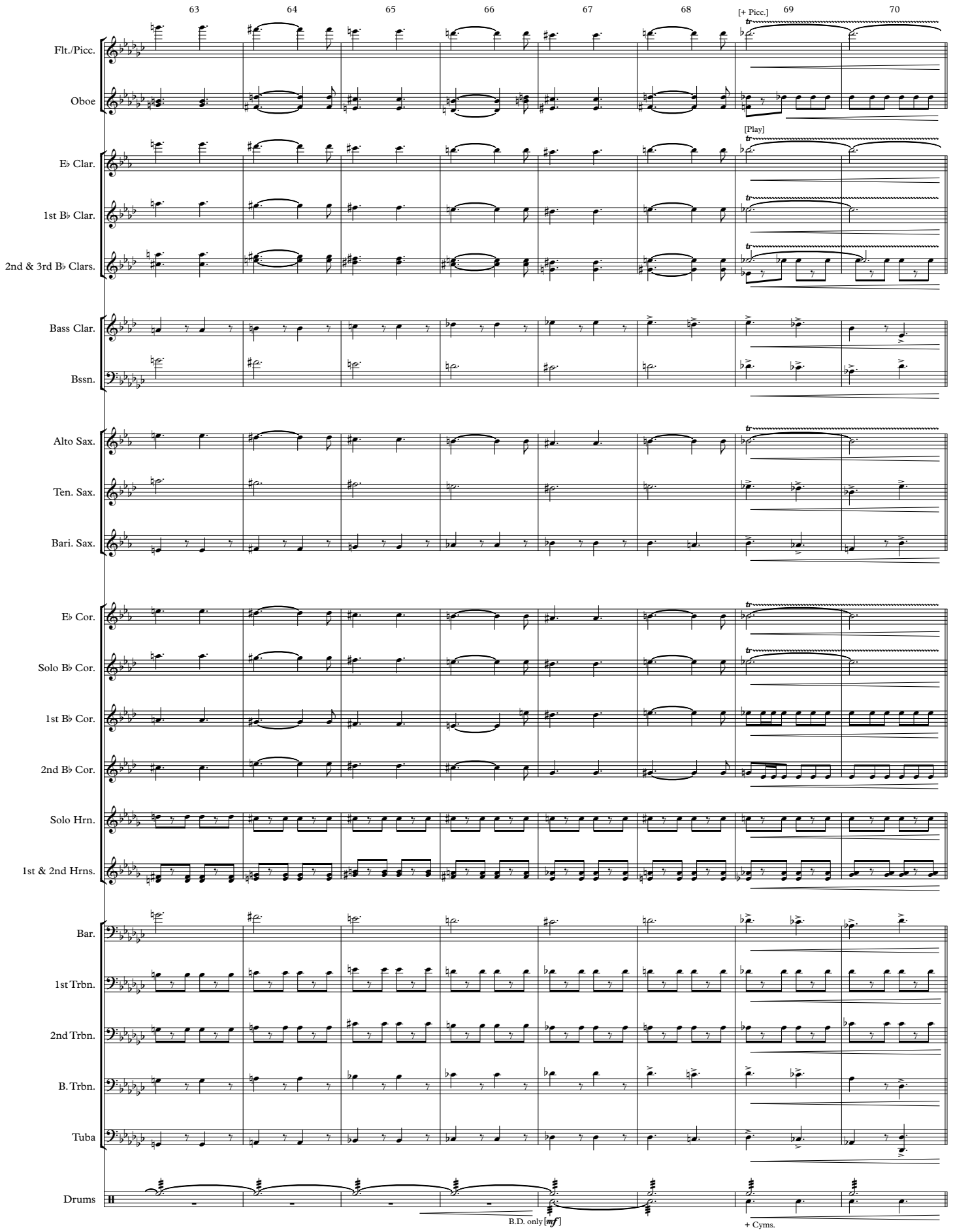
"TRANSIT OF VENUS"
Full Score



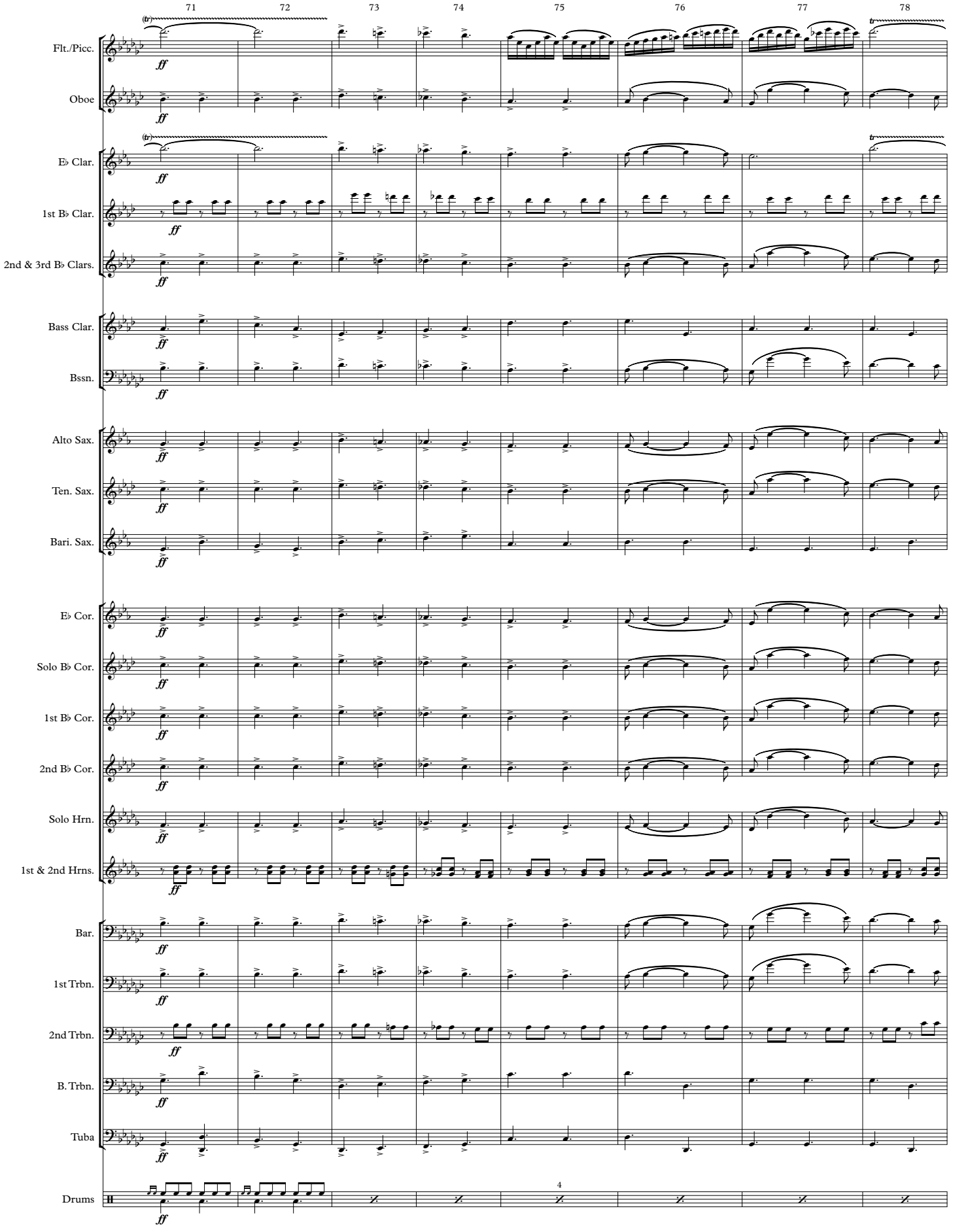

47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
Flt./Picc.
Oboe
E♭ Clar.
1st B♭ Clar.
2nd & 3rd B♭ Clars.
Bass Clar.
Bssn.
Alto Sax.
Ten. Sax.
Bari. Sax.
E♭ Cor.
Solo B♭ Cor.
1st B♭ Cor.
2nd B♭ Cor.
Solo Hrn.
1st & 2nd Hrns.
Bar.
1st Trbn.
2nd Trbn.
B. Trbn.
Tuba
Drums
12
B.D.
[mp]
[mf]

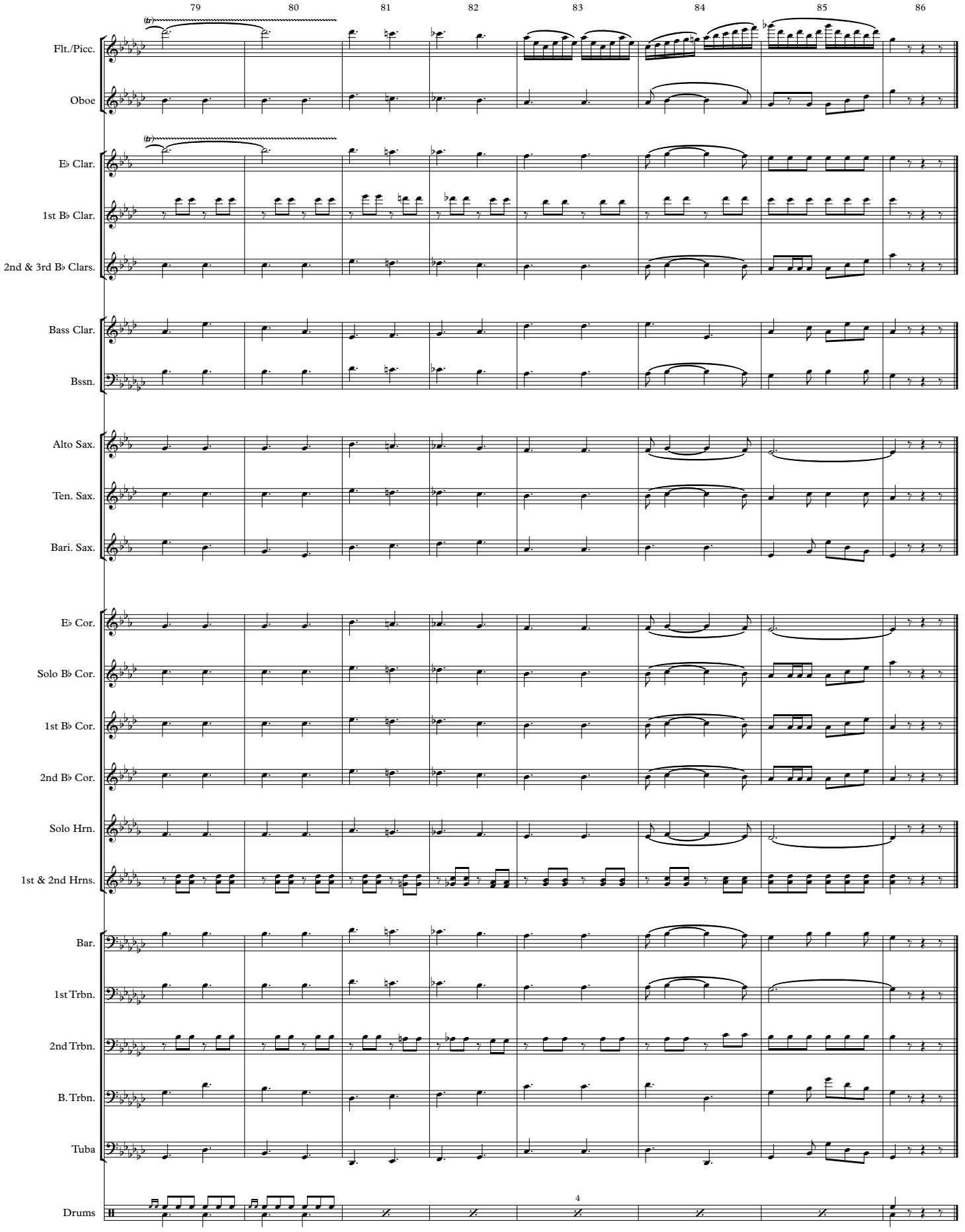
"TRANSIT OF VENUS"
Full Score




63
64
65
66
67
68
[+ Picc.]
69
70
Flt./Picc.
Oboe
[Play]
E♭ Clar.
1st B♭ Clar.
2nd & 3rd B♭ Clars.
Bass Clar.
Bssn.
Alto Sax.
Ten. Sax.
Bari. Sax.
E♭ Cor.
Solo B♭ Cor.
1st B♭ Cor.
2nd B♭ Cor.
Solo Hrn.
1st & 2nd Hrns.
Bar.
1st Trbn.
2nd Trbn.
B. Trbn.
Tuba
Drums
B.D. only [mf]
+ Cyms.

"TRANSIT OF VENUS"
Full Score




79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
Flt./Picc.
Oboe
E♭ Clar.
1st B♭ Clar.
2nd & 3rd B♭ Clars.
Bass Clar.
Bssn.
Alto Sax.
Ten. Sax.
Bari. Sax.
E♭ Cor.
Solo B♭ Cor.
1st B♭ Cor.
2nd B♭ Cor.
Solo Hrn.
1st & 2nd Hrns.
Bar.
1st Trbn.
2nd Trbn.
B. Trbn.
Tuba
Drums
4

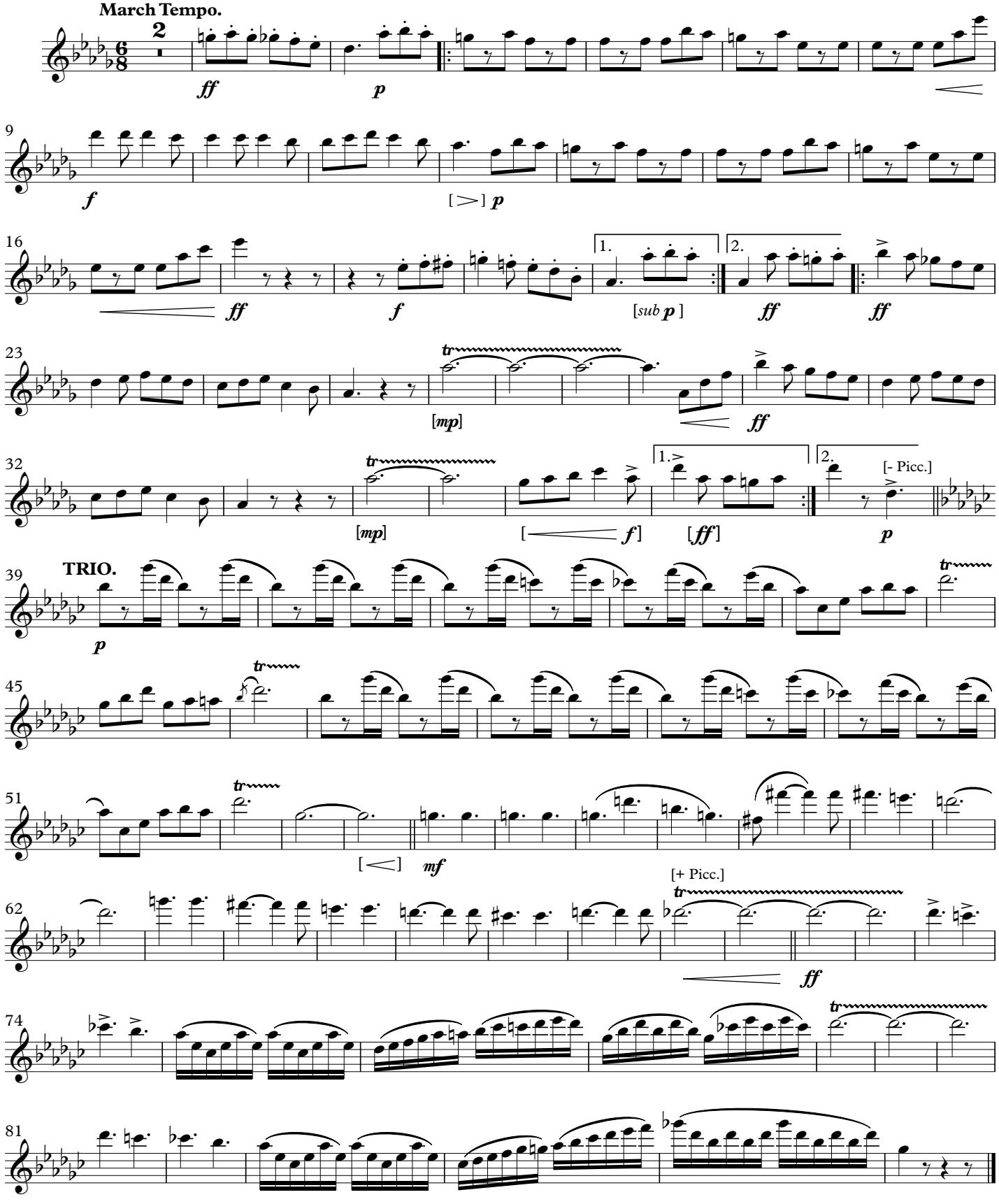
March

TRANSIT OF VENUS

Flute/Piccolo

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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March

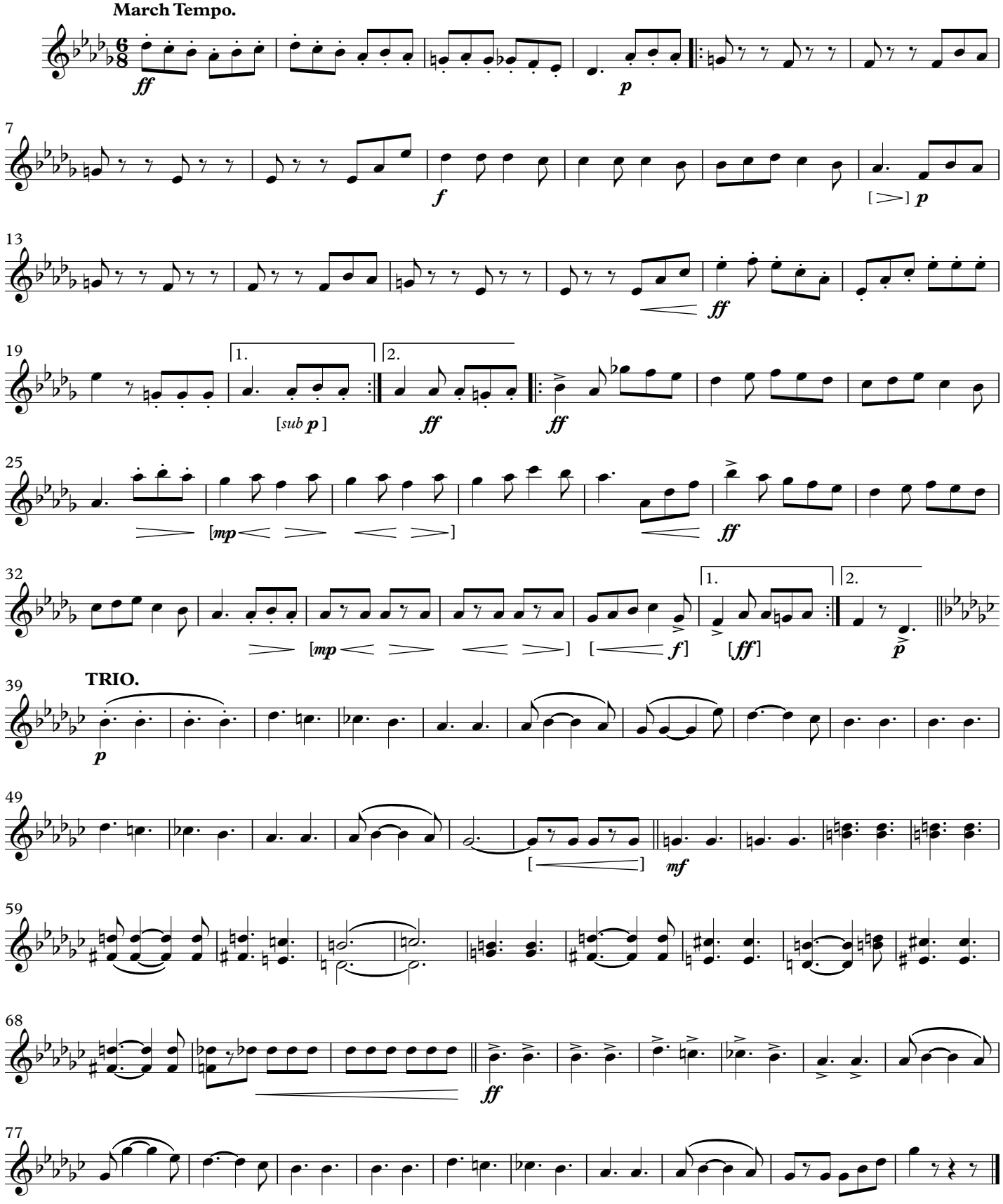
TRANSIT OF VENUS

Oboe

[optional part added by Gay Corrie]

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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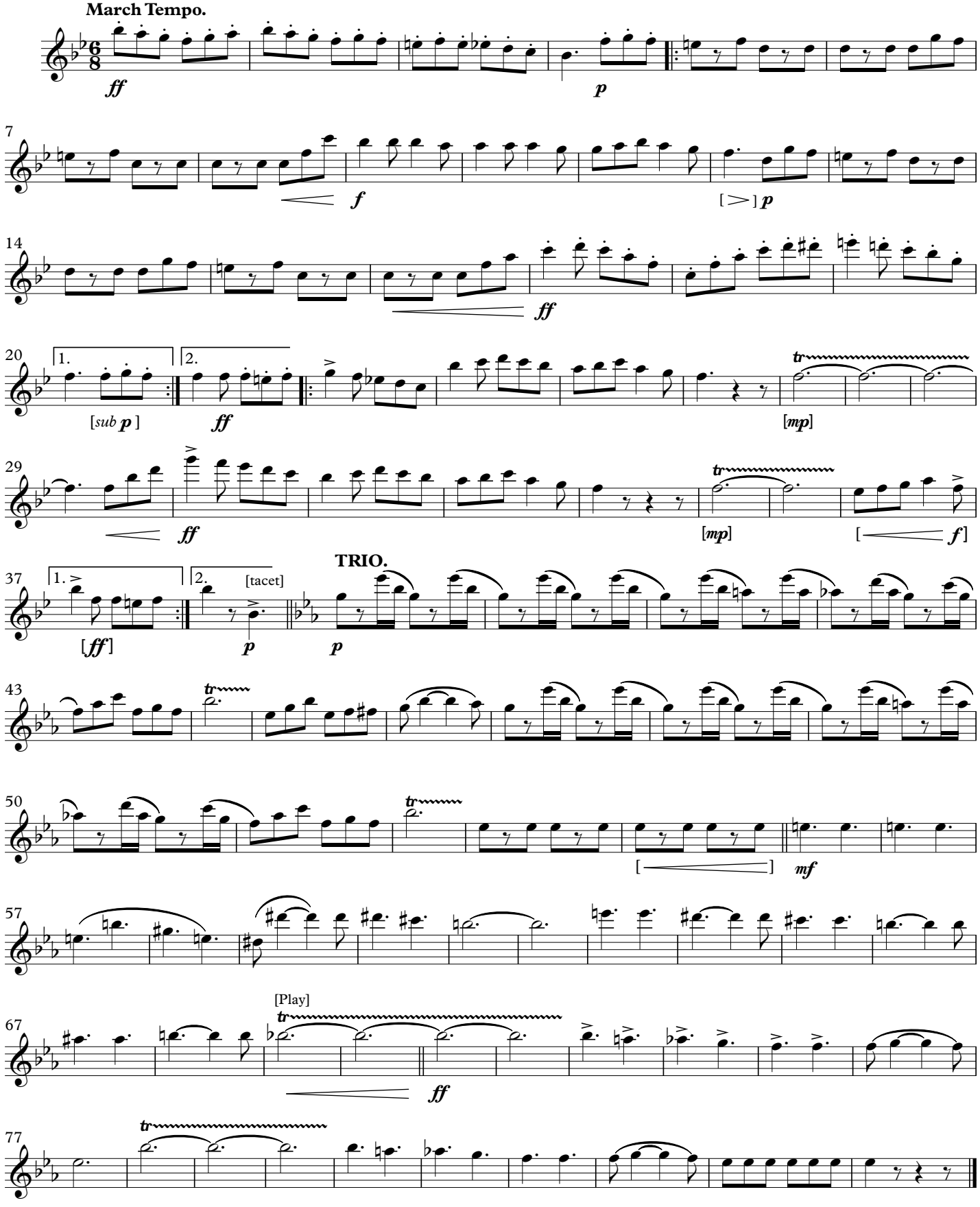
March

TRANSIT OF VENUS

E♭ Clarinet

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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March

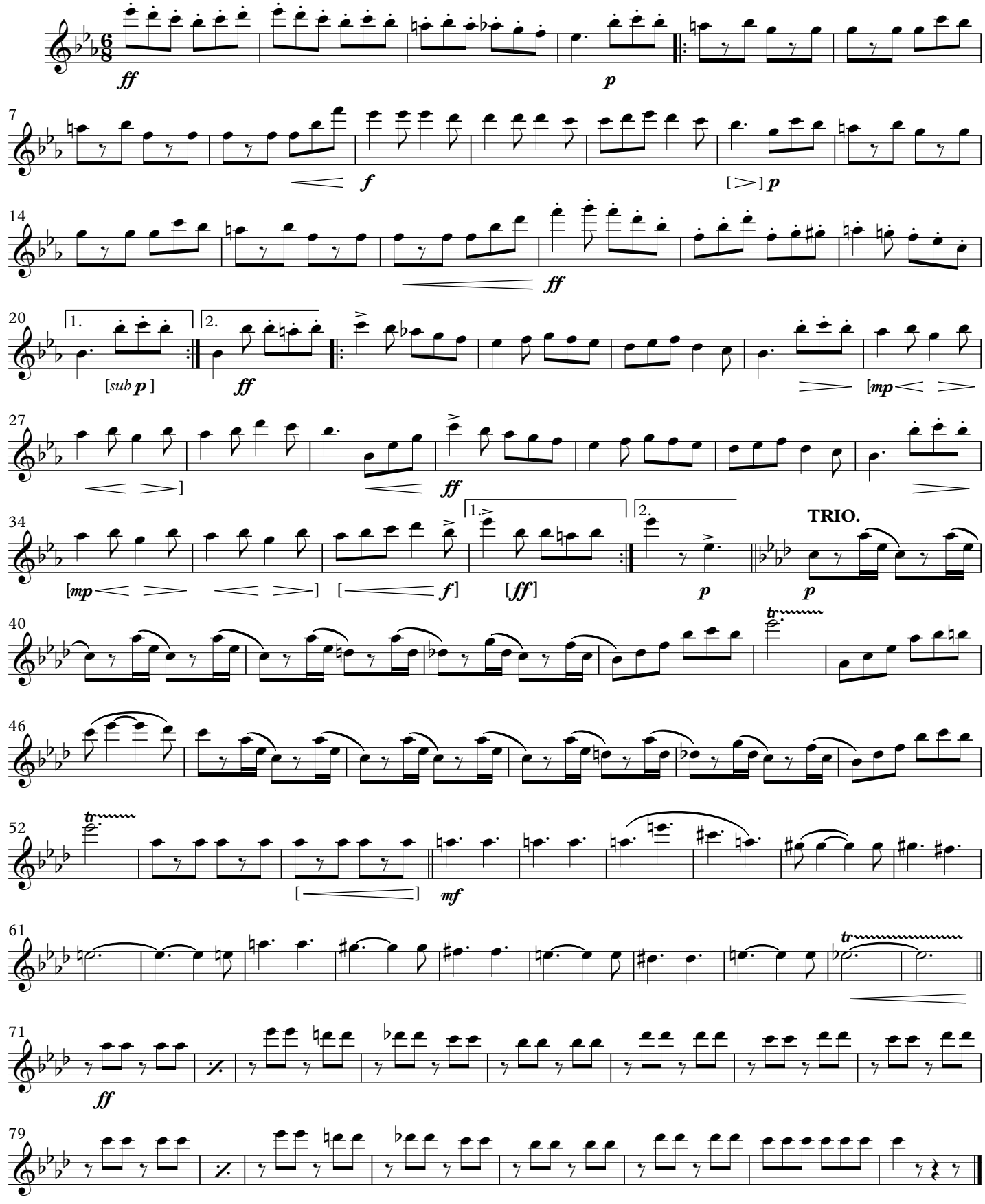
TRANSIT OF VENUS

1st B♭ Clarinet

March Tempo.

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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March

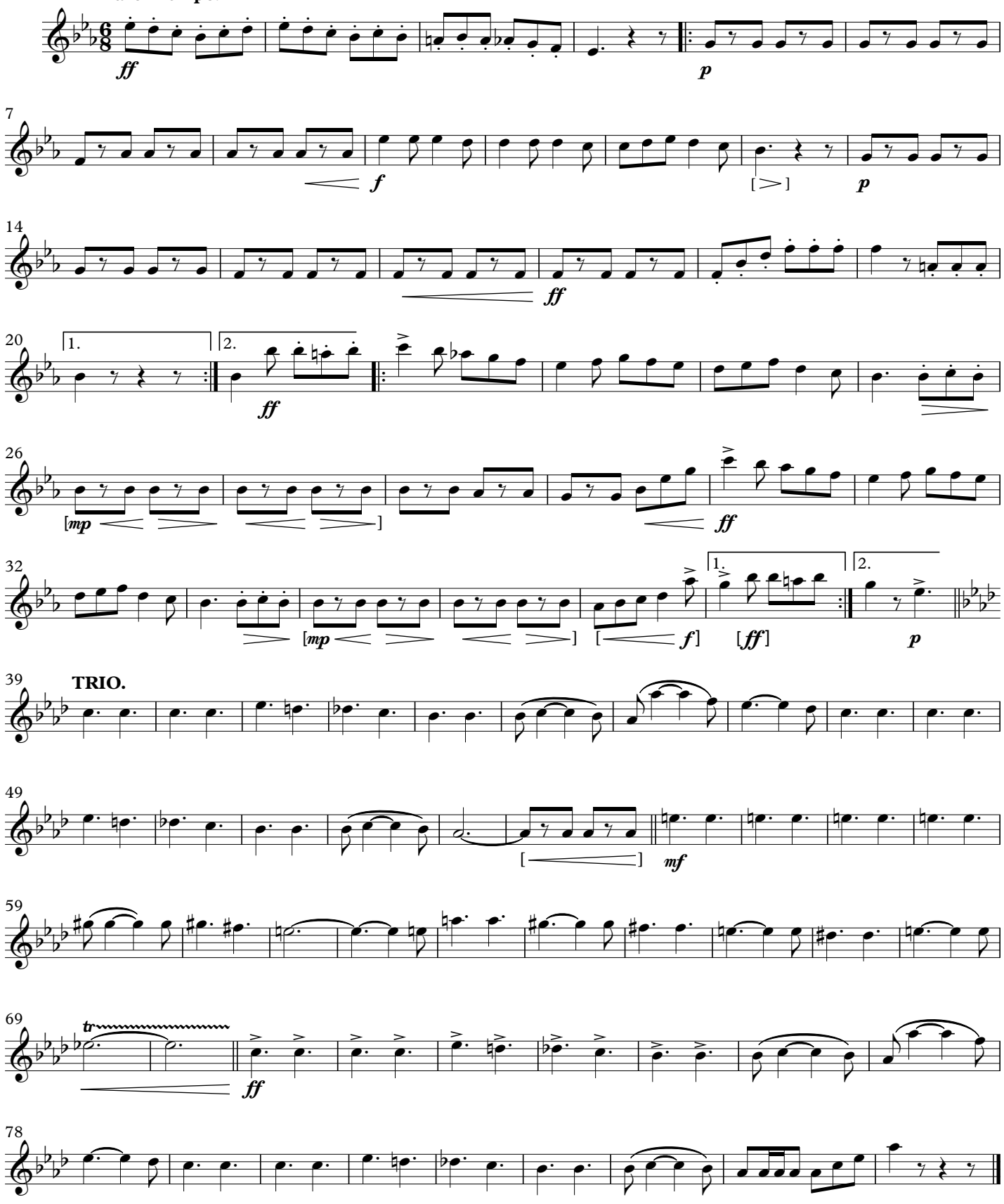
TRANSIT OF VENUS

2nd B♭ Clarinet
[optional part added by Gay Corrie]

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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March

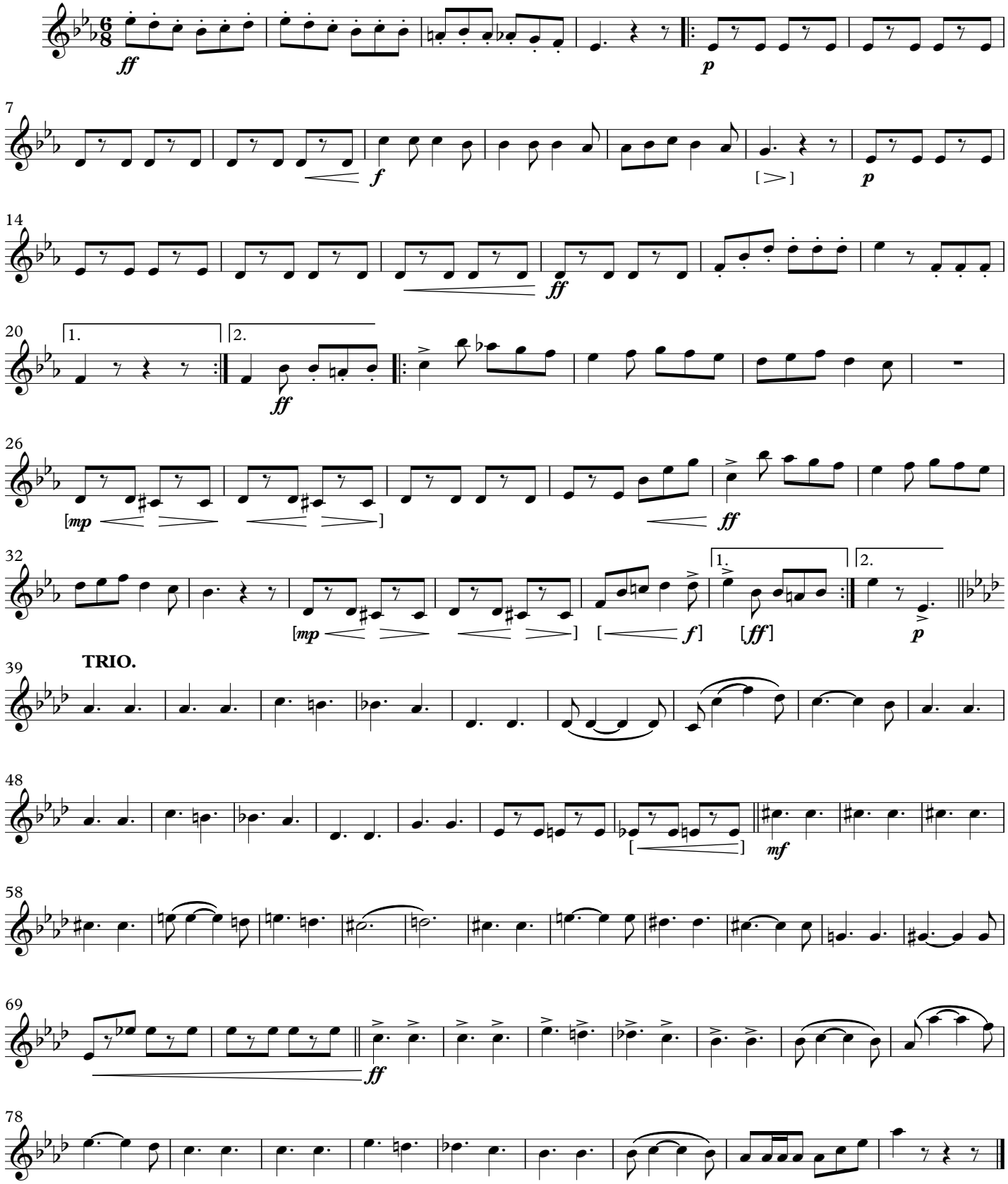
TRANSIT OF VENUS

3rd B♭ Clarinet
[optional part added by Gay Corrie]

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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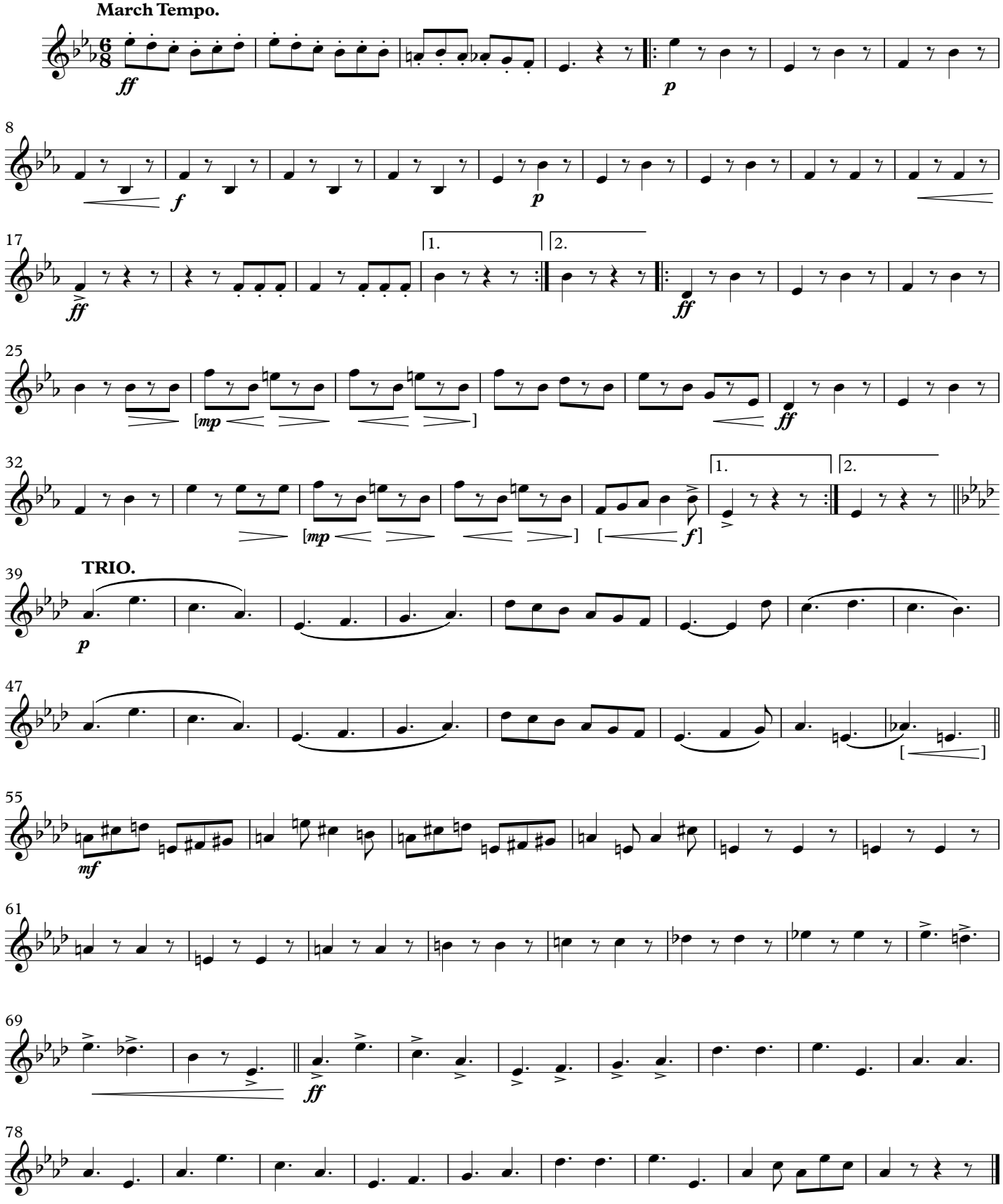
March

TRANSIT OF VENUS

(1883)

B♭ Bass Clarinet
[optional part added by Gay Corrie]

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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March

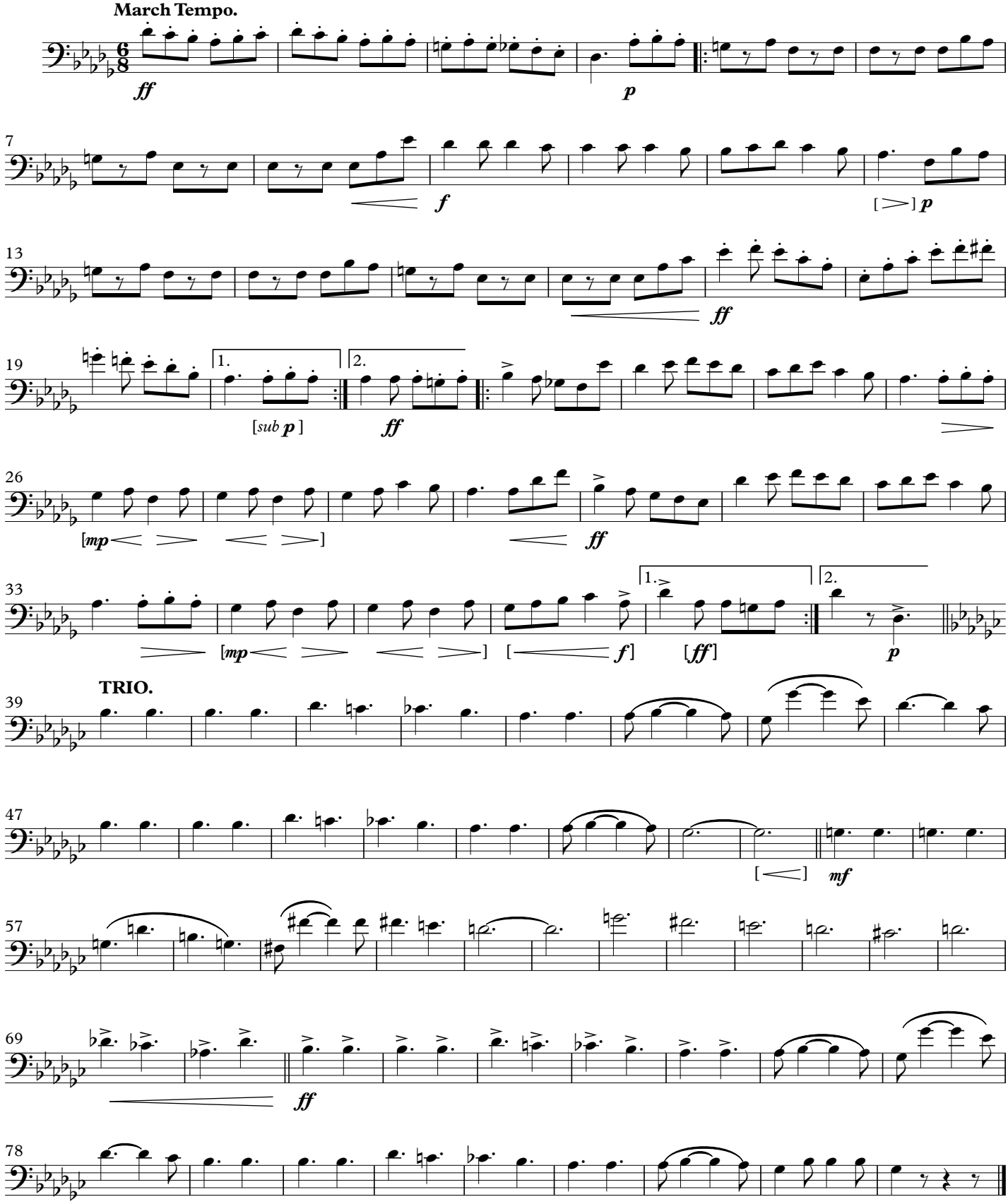
TRANSIT OF VENUS

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

Bassoon
[optional]

March Tempo.



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March

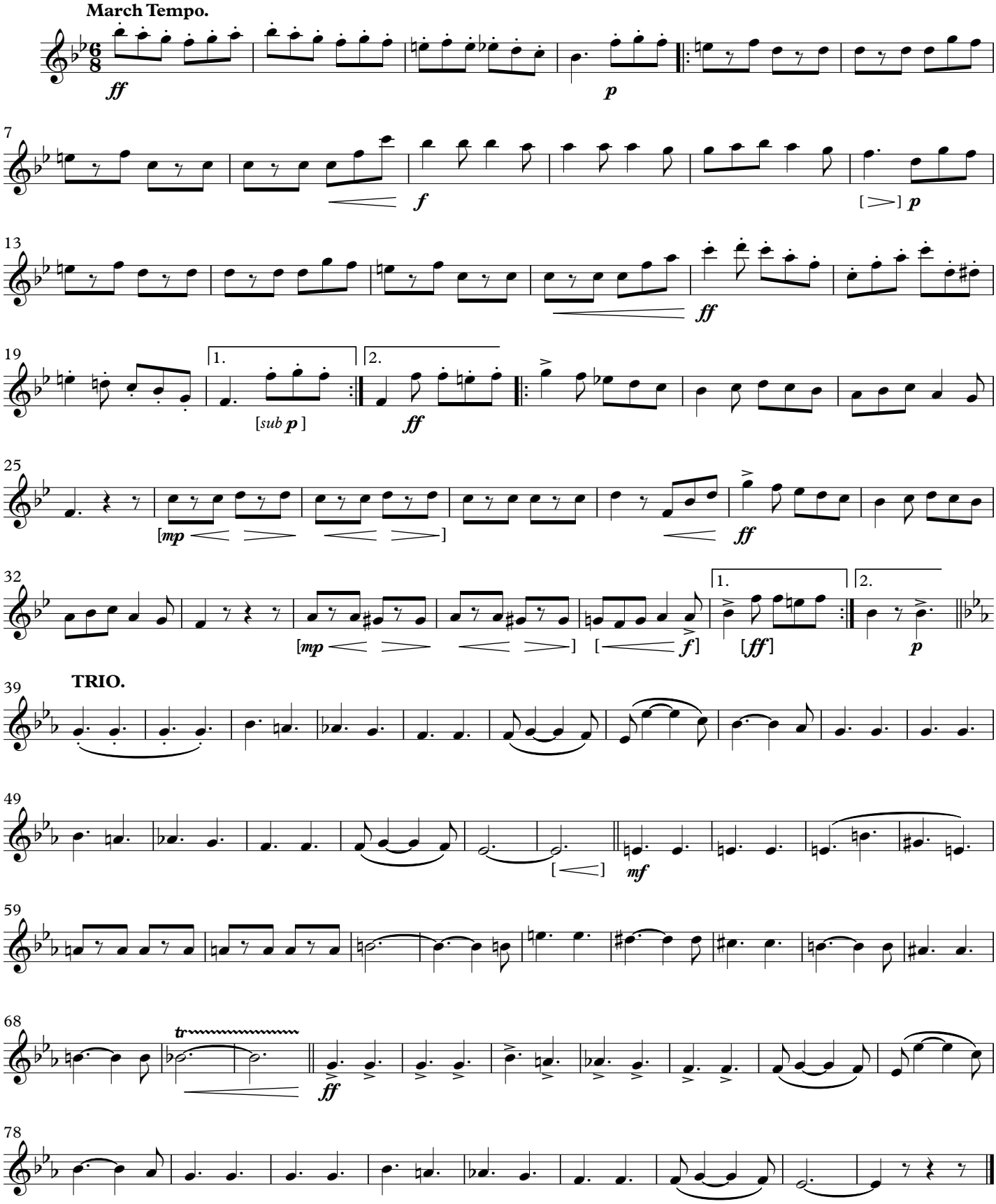
TRANSIT OF VENUS

E♭ Alto Saxophone

[optional part added by Gay Corrie]

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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March

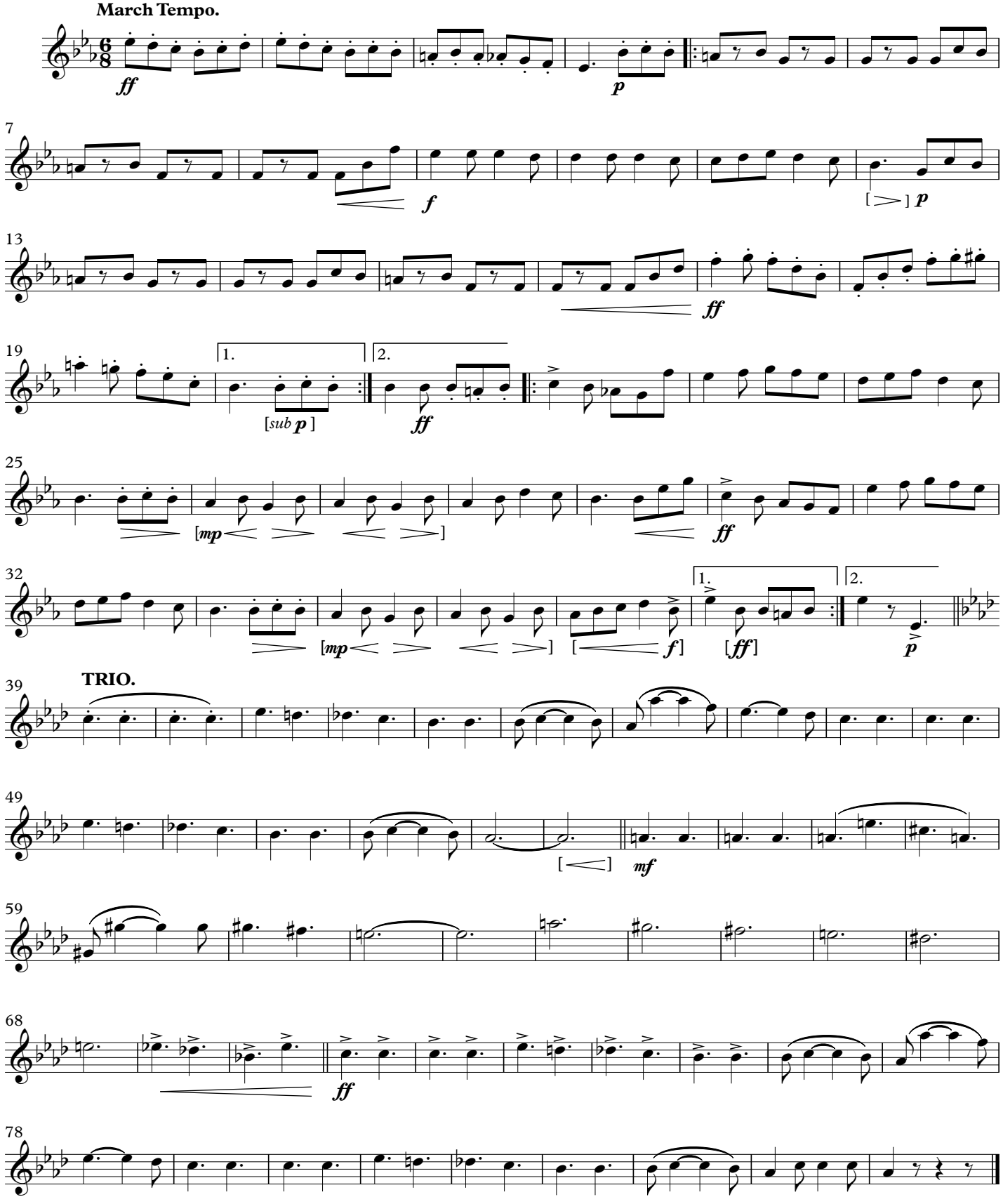
TRANSIT OF VENUS

(1883)

B♭ Tenor Saxophone

[optional part added by Gay Corrie]

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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March

TRANSIT OF VENUS

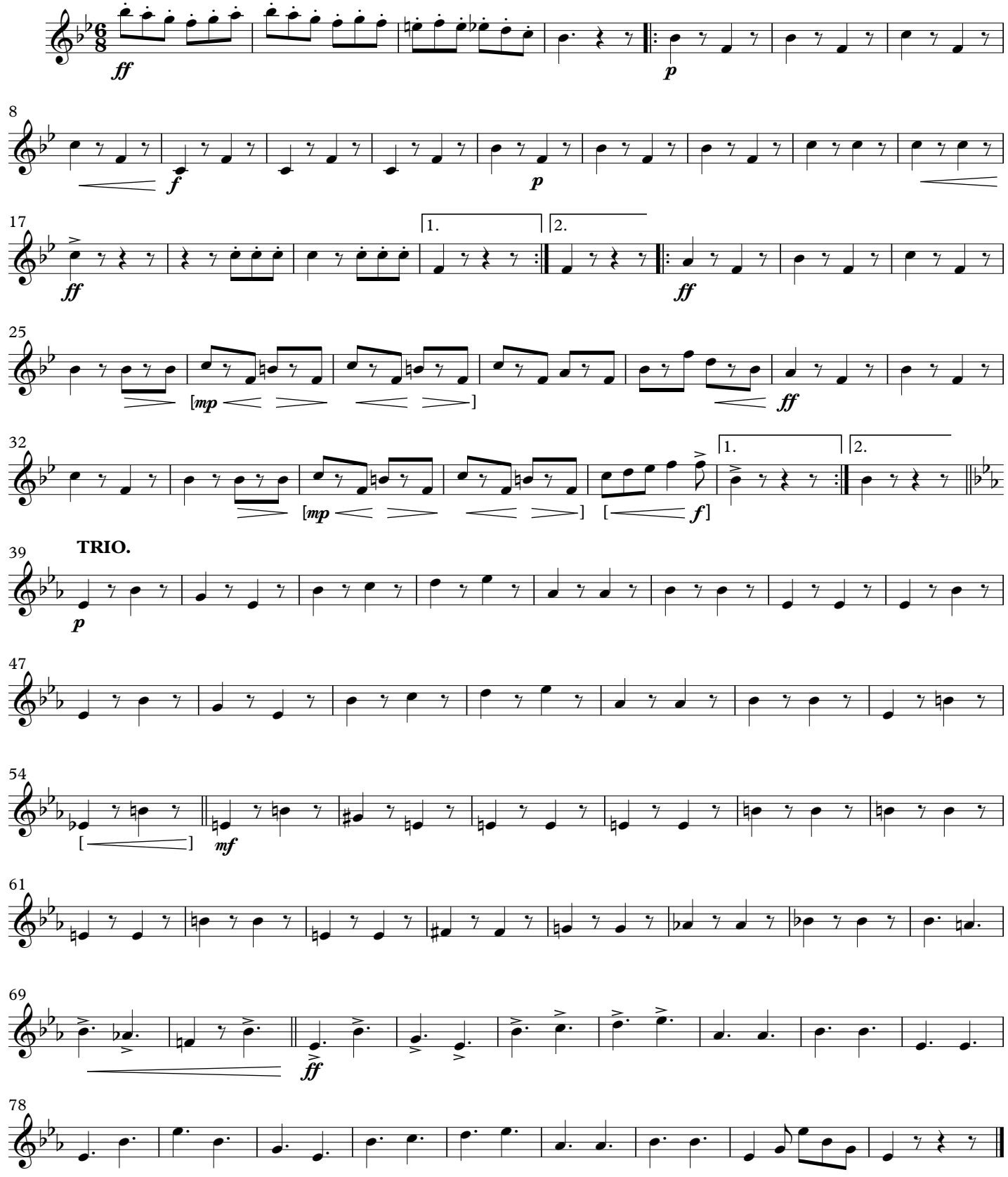
E♭ Baritone Saxophone

(1883)

[optional part added by Gay Corrie]

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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March

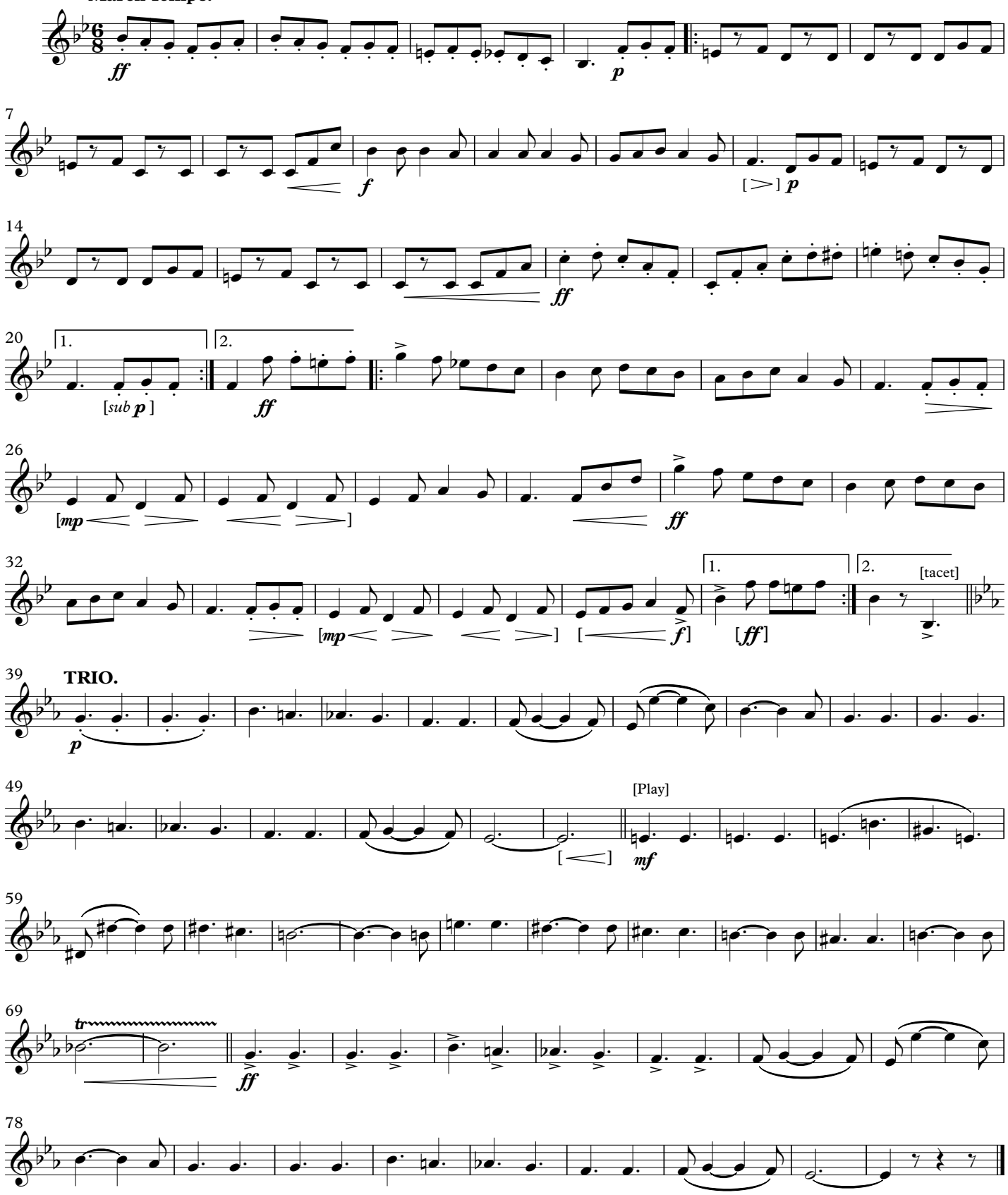
TRANSIT OF VENUS

E♭ Cornet

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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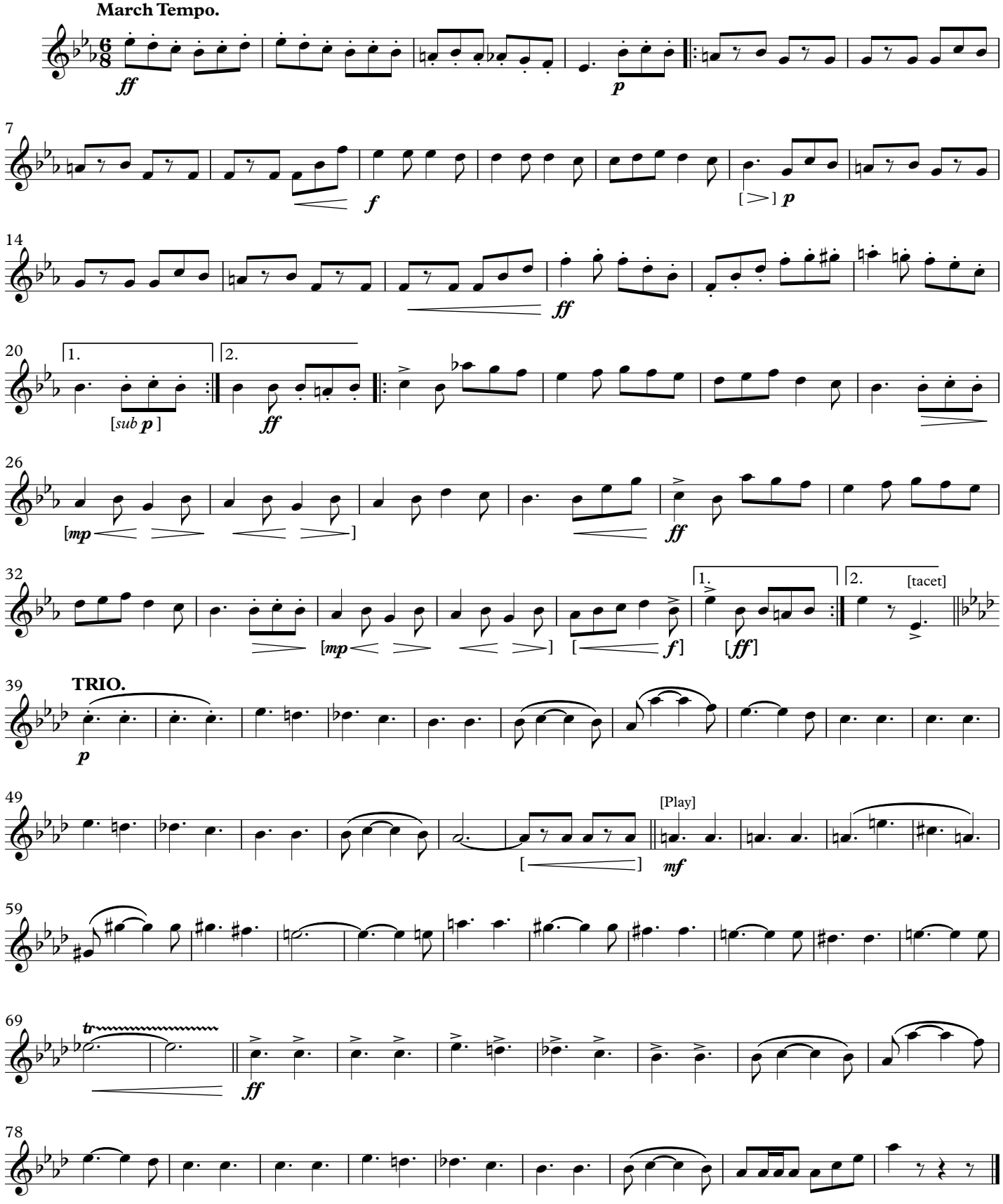
March

TRANSIT OF VENUS

Solo B♭ Cornet

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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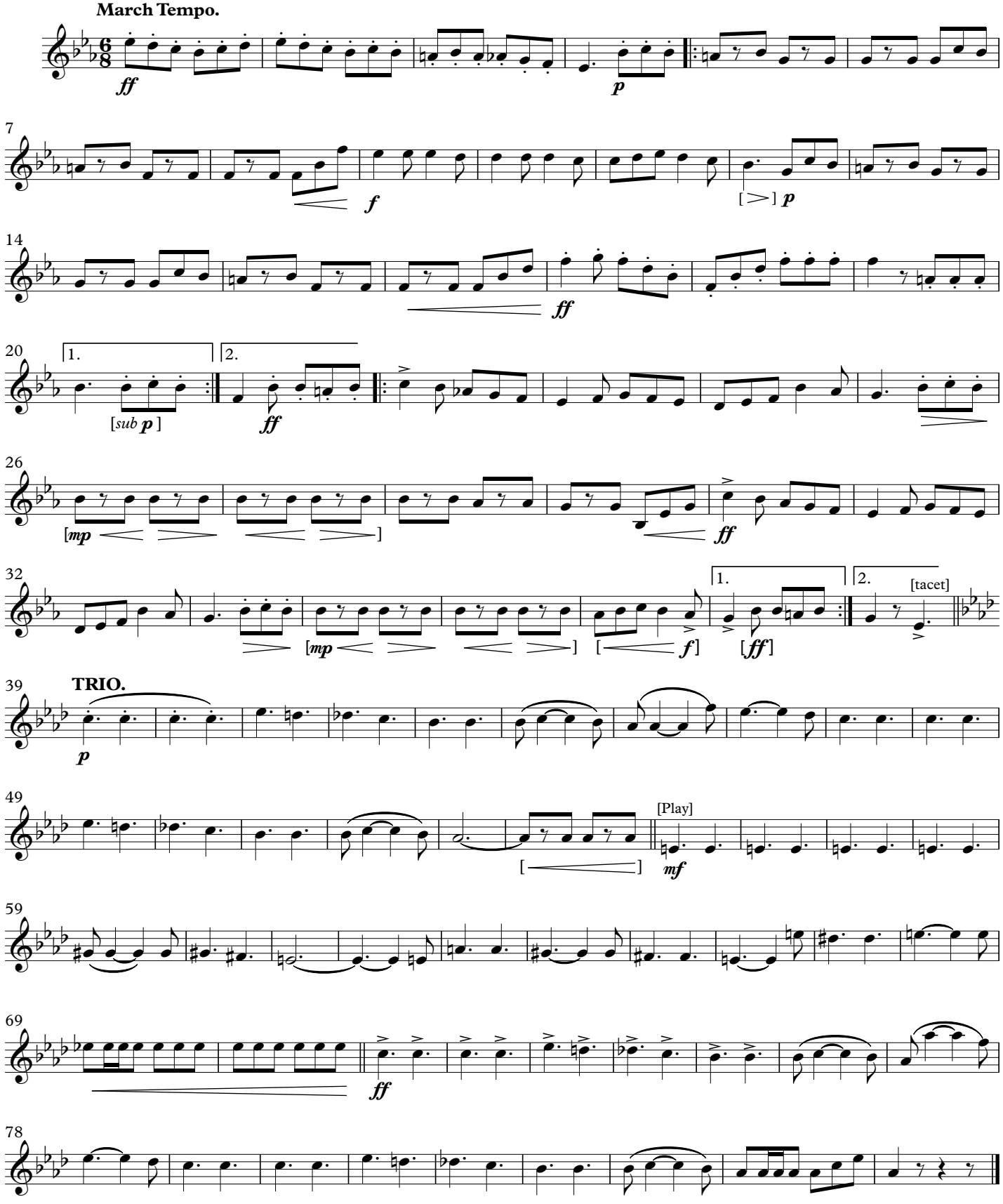
March

TRANSIT OF VENUS

1st B♭ Cornet

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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March

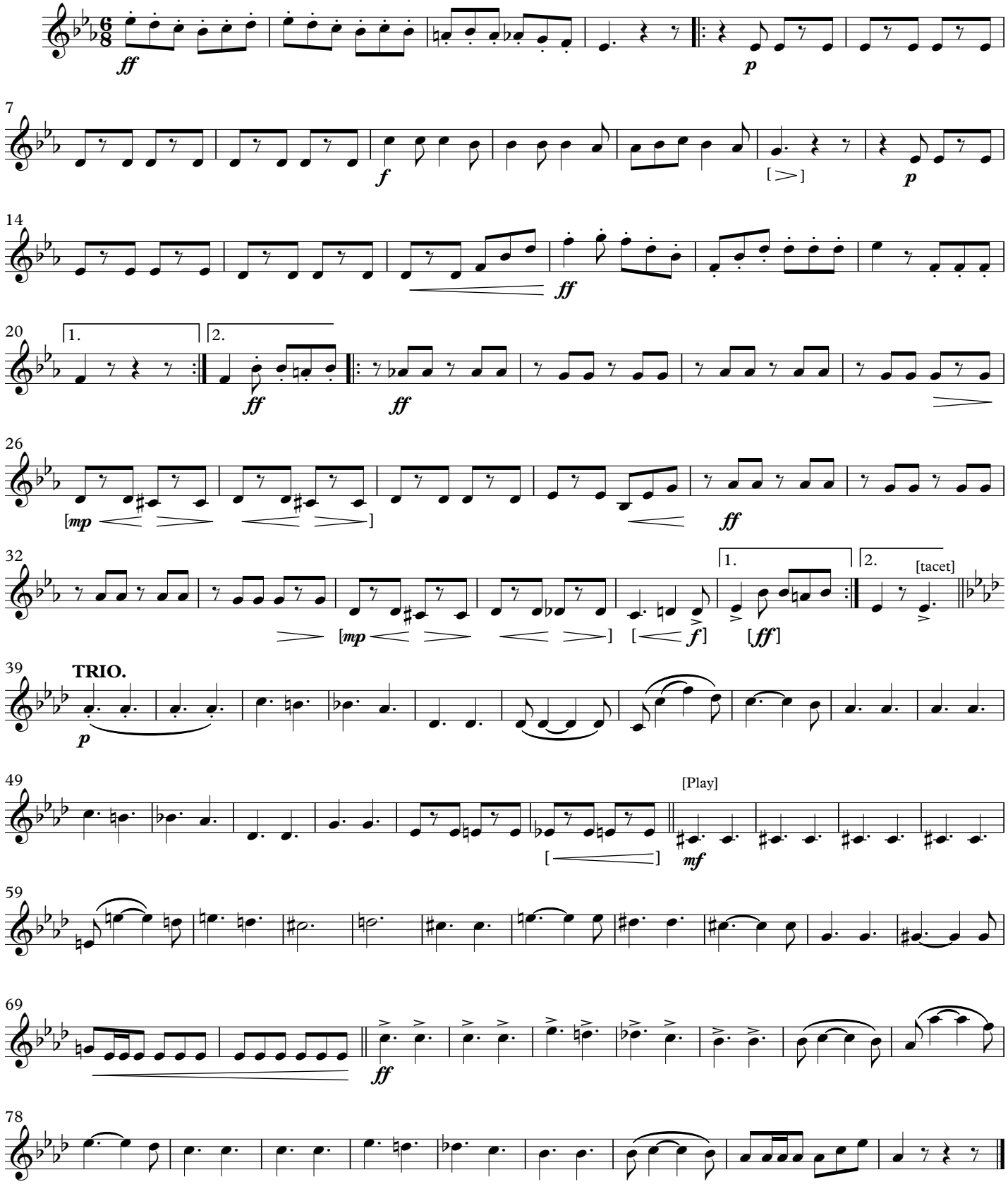
TRANSIT OF VENUS

2nd B♭ Cornet

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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March

TRANSIT OF VENUS

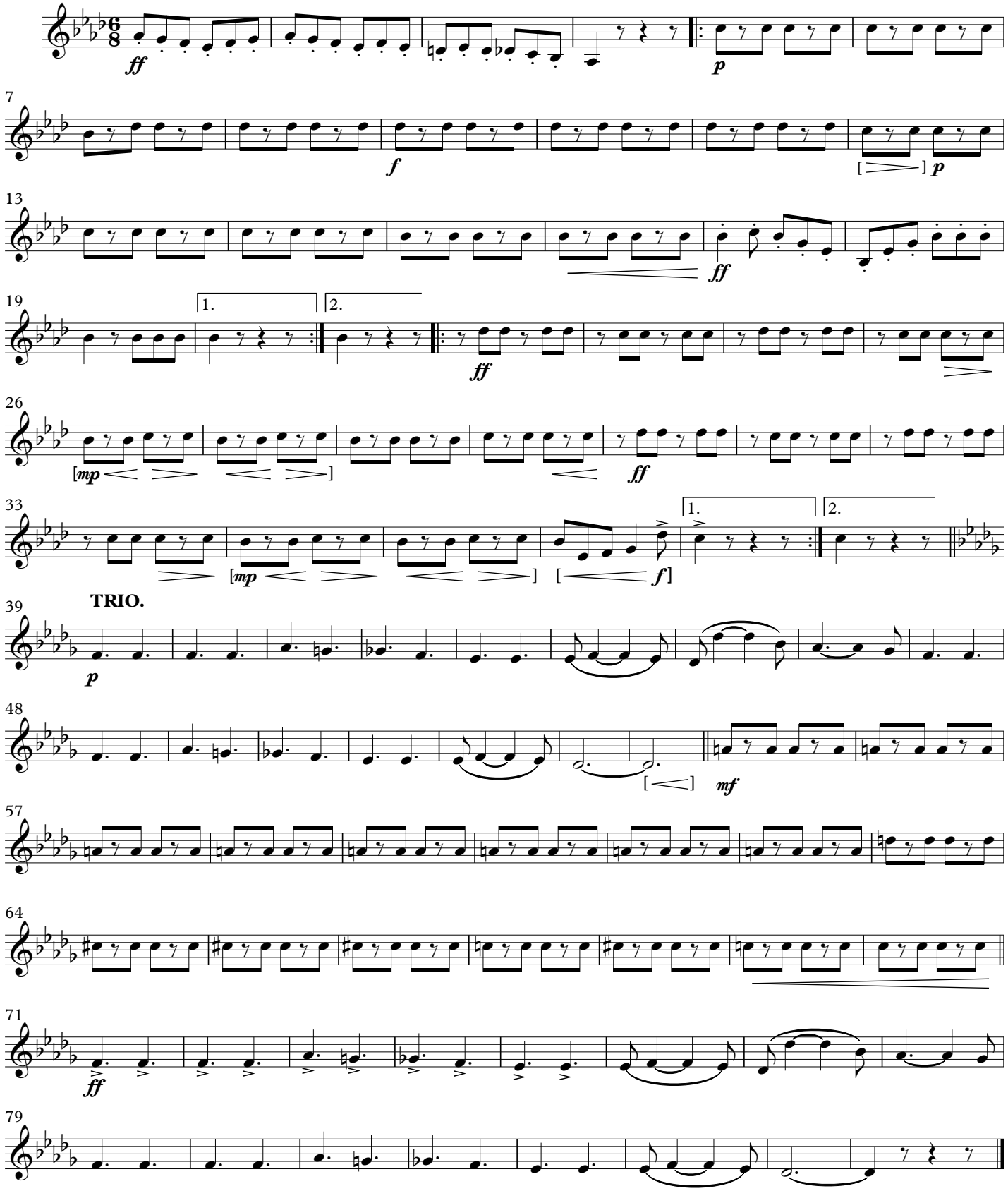
(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

Solo F Horn

[originally E♭ alto]

March Tempo.



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March

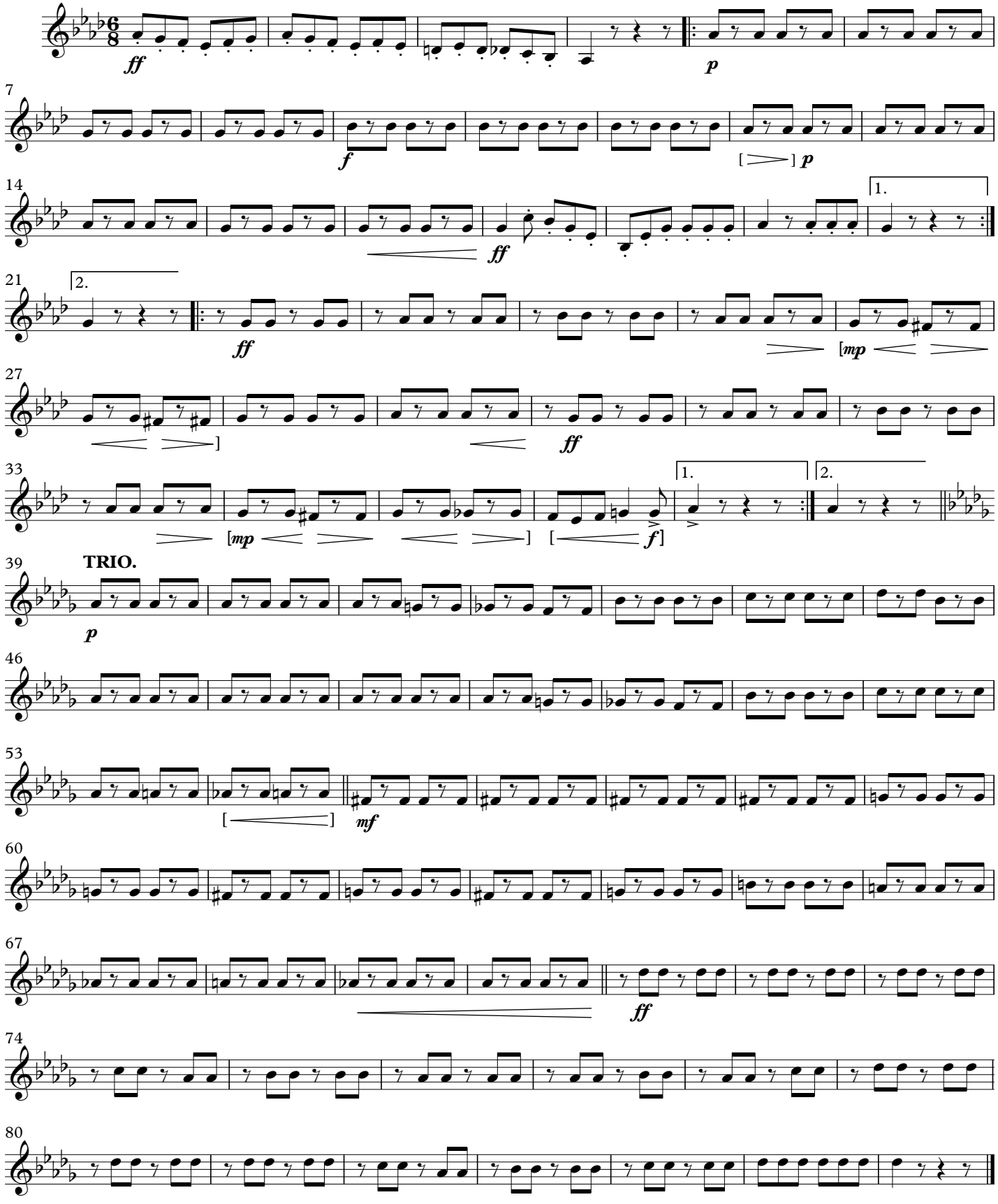
TRANSIT OF VENUS

1st F Horn
[originally E♭ alto]

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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March

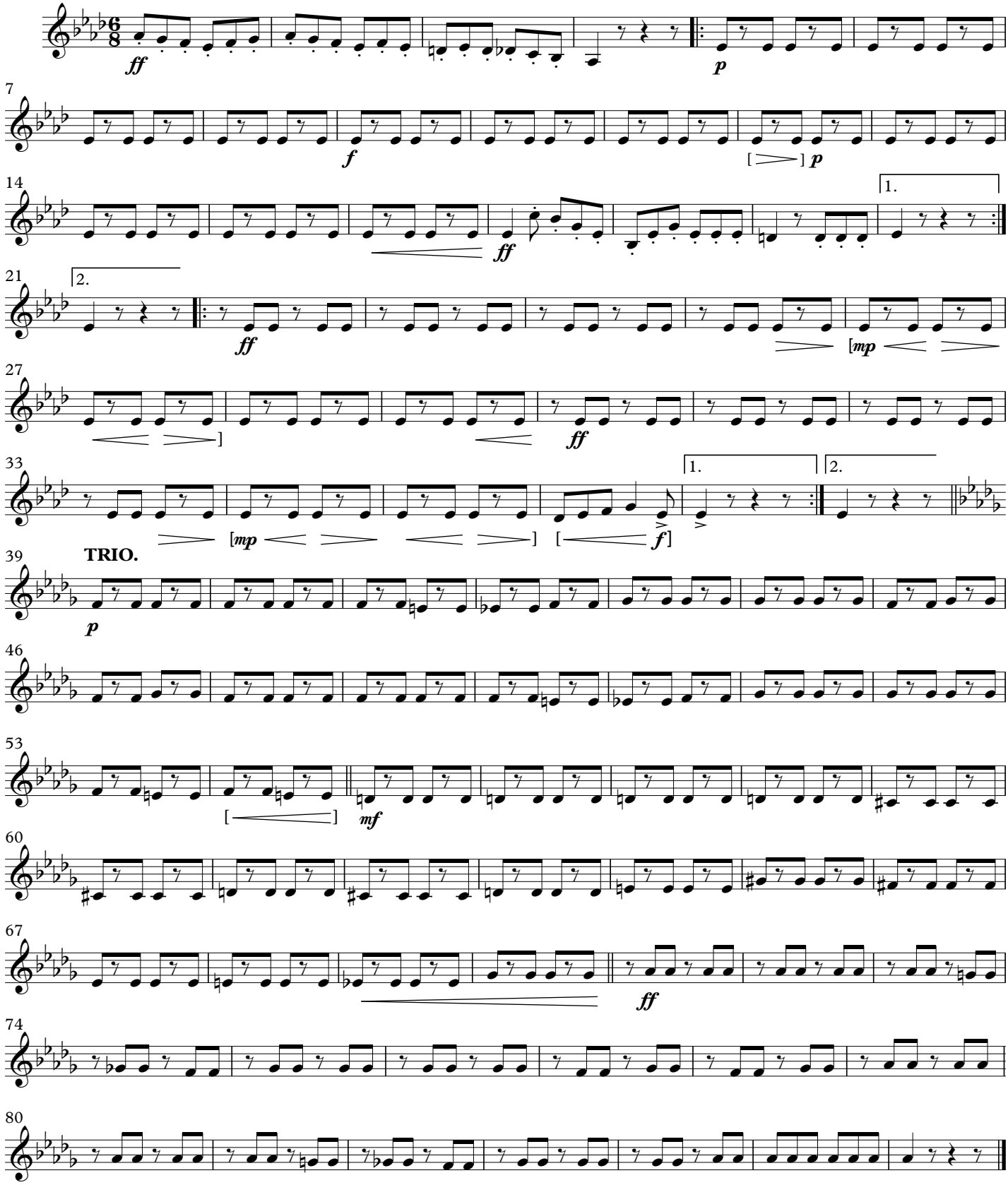
TRANSIT OF VENUS

(1883)

2nd F Horn
[originally E♭ alto]

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

March Tempo.



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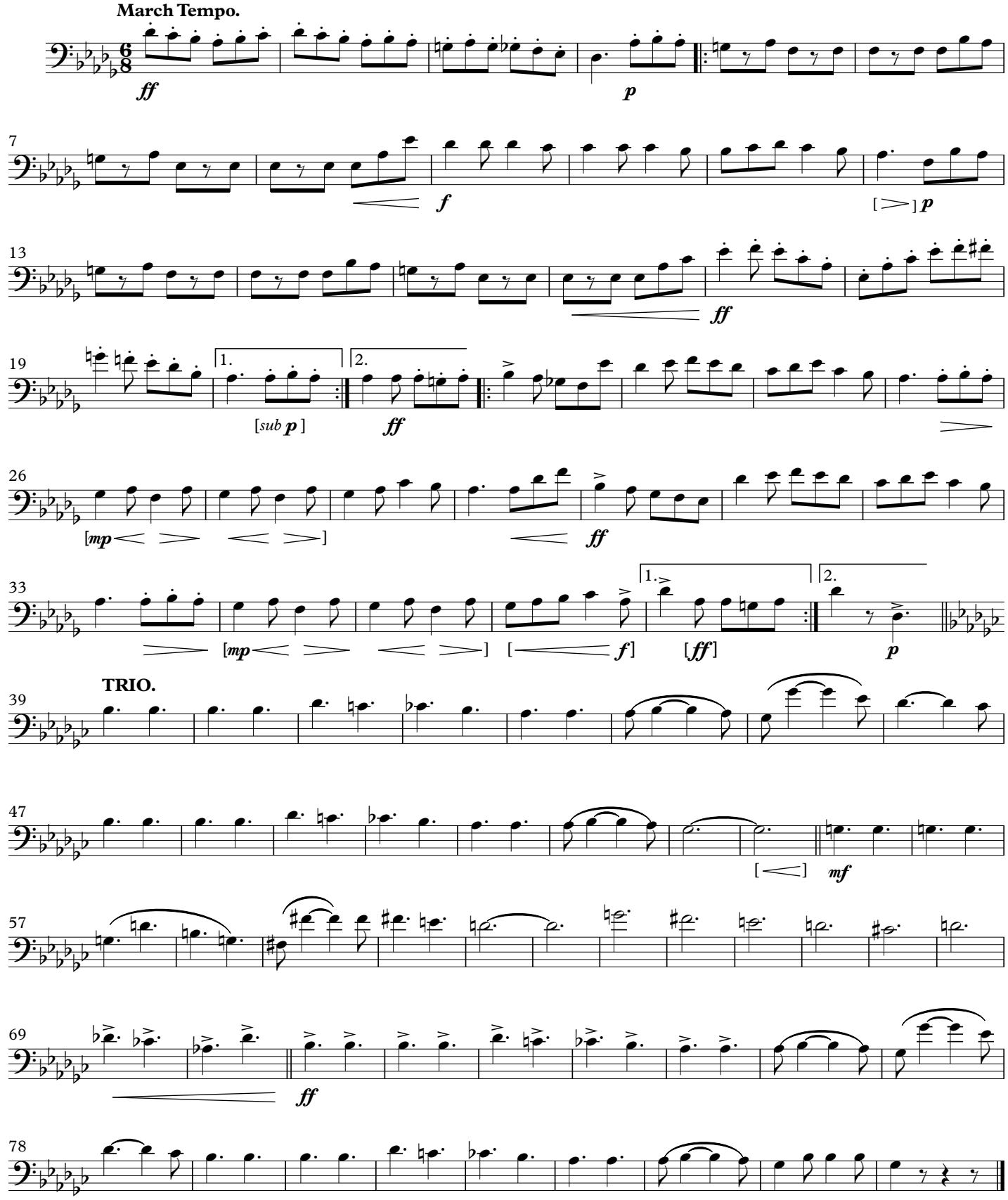
March

TRANSIT OF VENUS

(1883)

Baritone

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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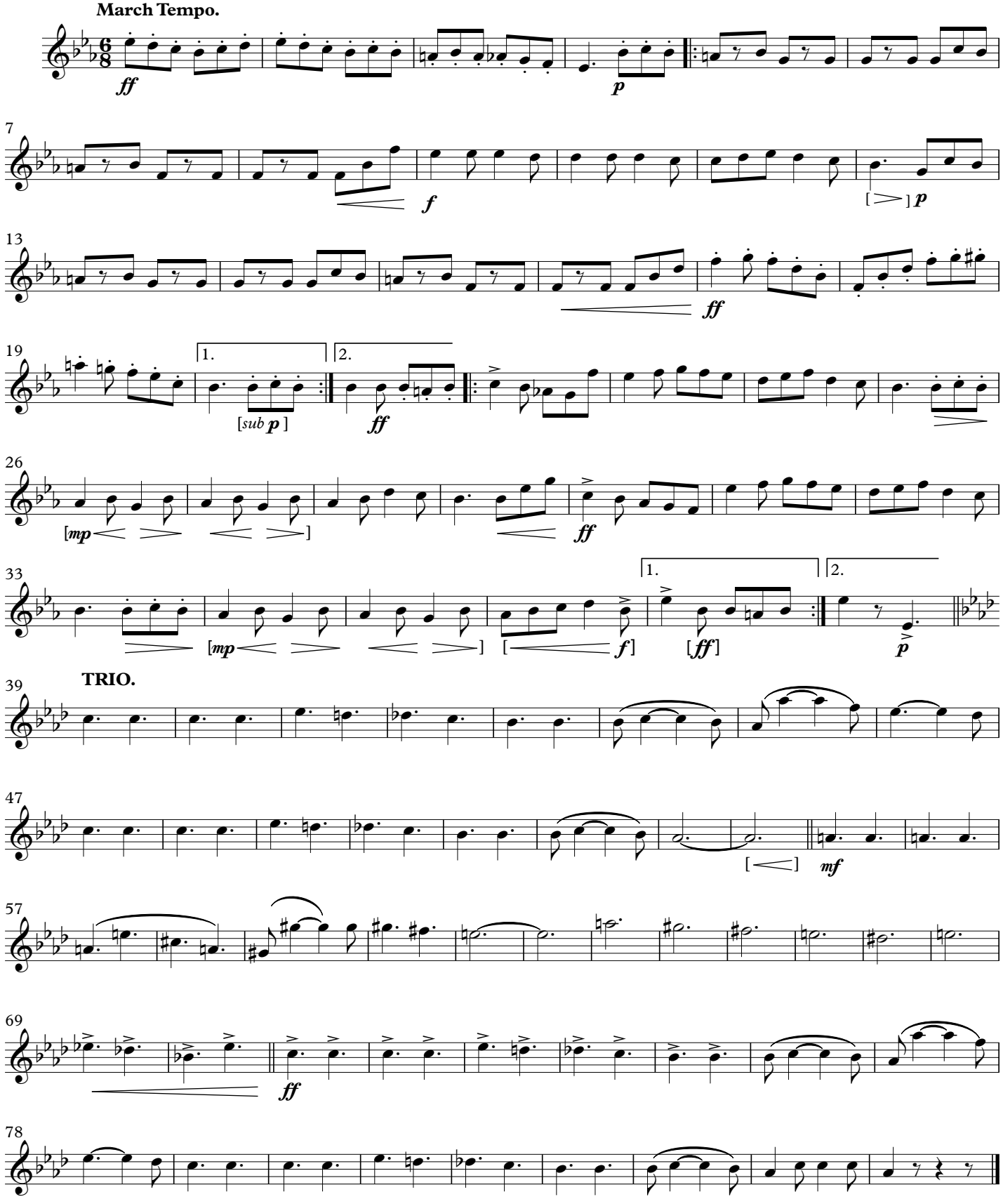
March

TRANSIT OF VENUS

Baritone, T.C.

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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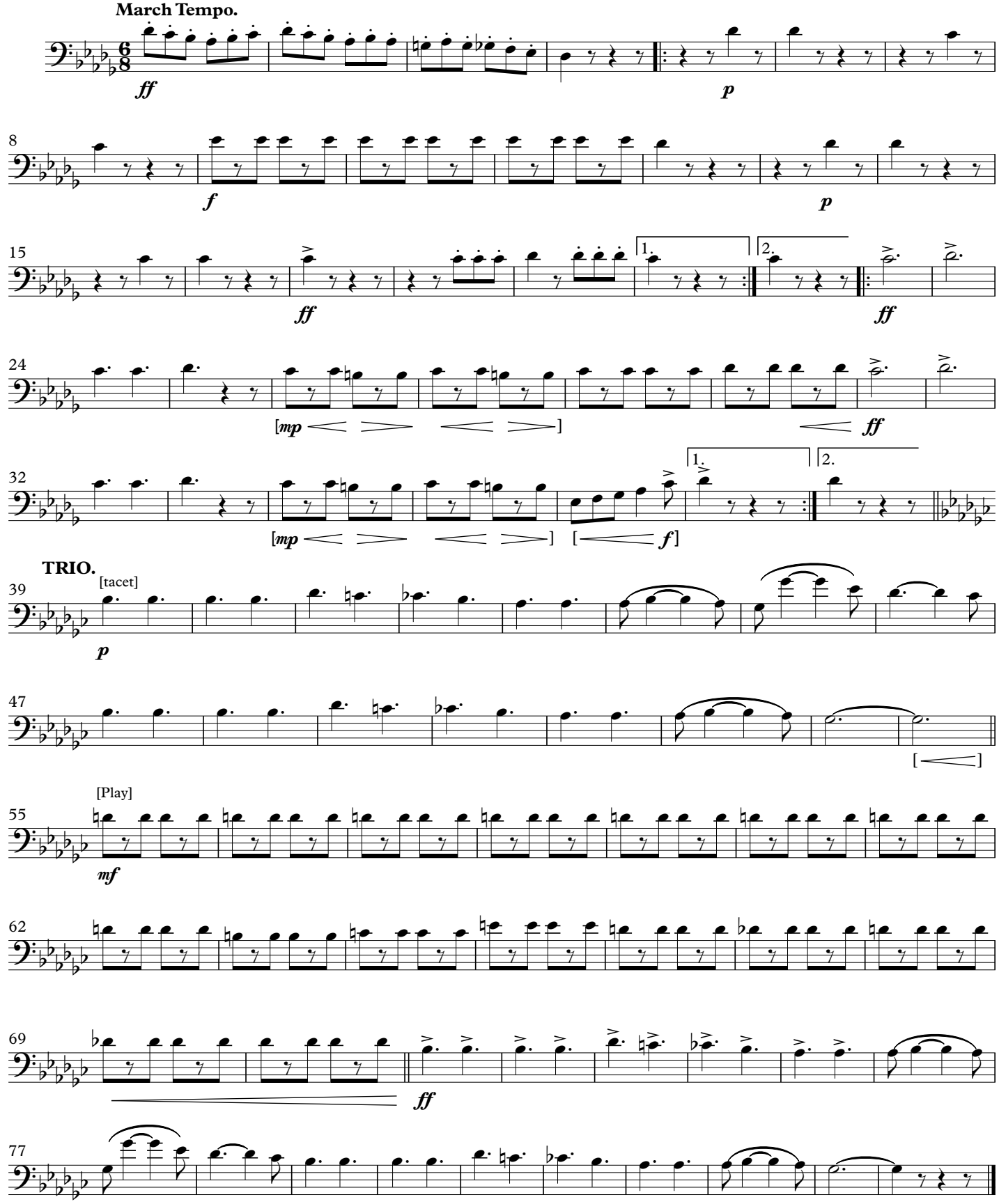
March

TRANSIT OF VENUS

1st Trombone

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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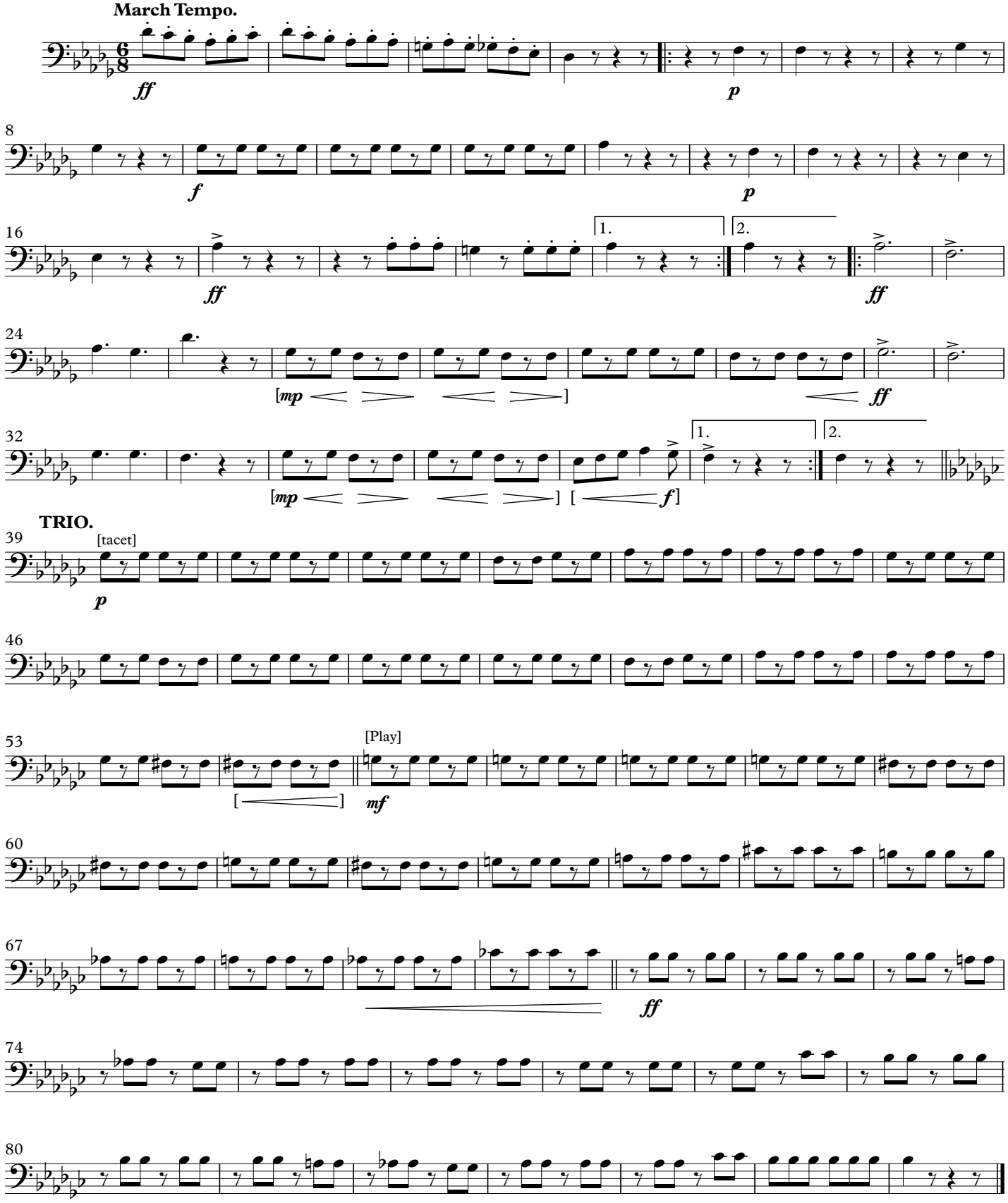
March

TRANSIT OF VENUS

2nd Trombone

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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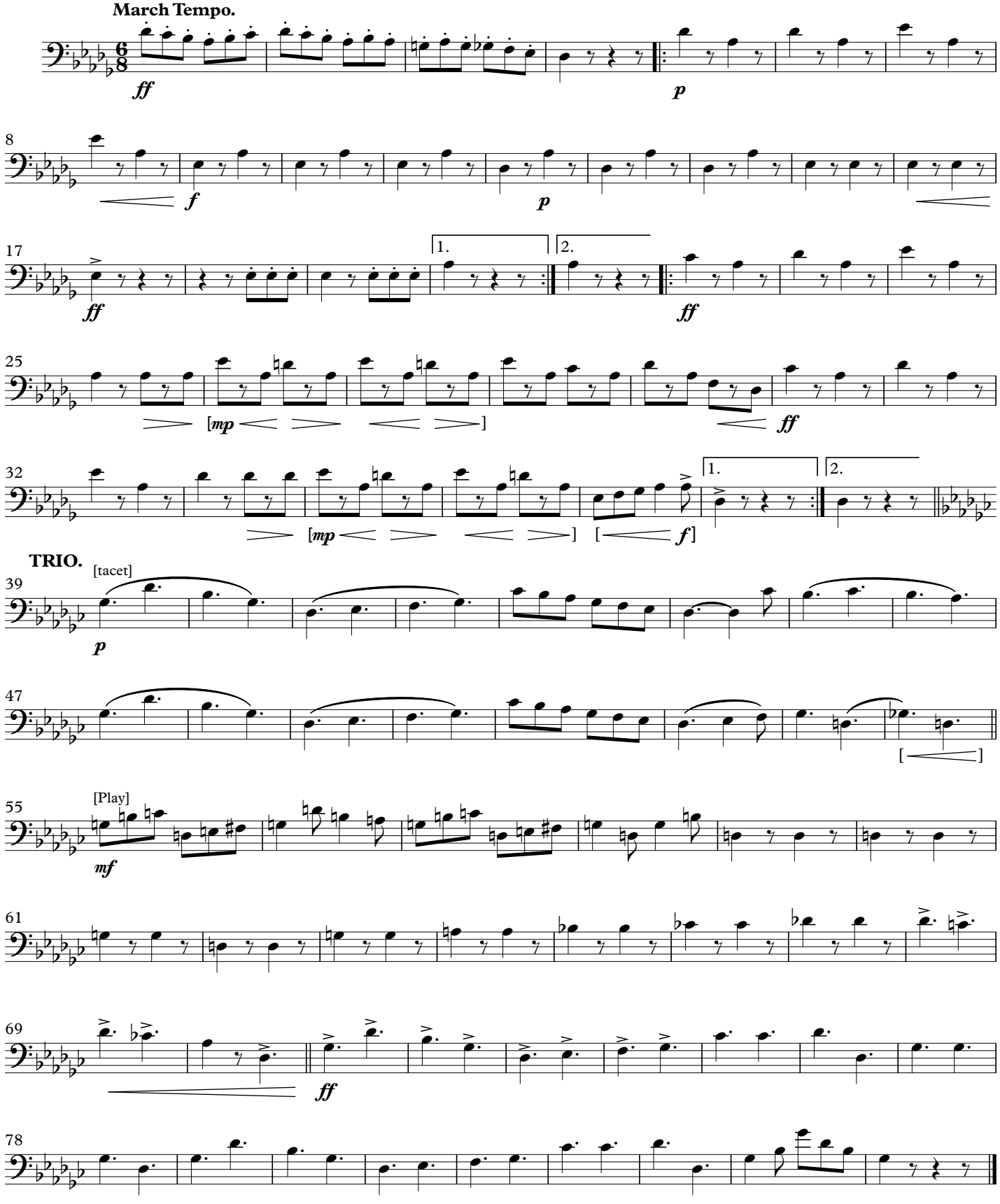
March

TRANSIT OF VENUS

Bass Trombone

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA



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March

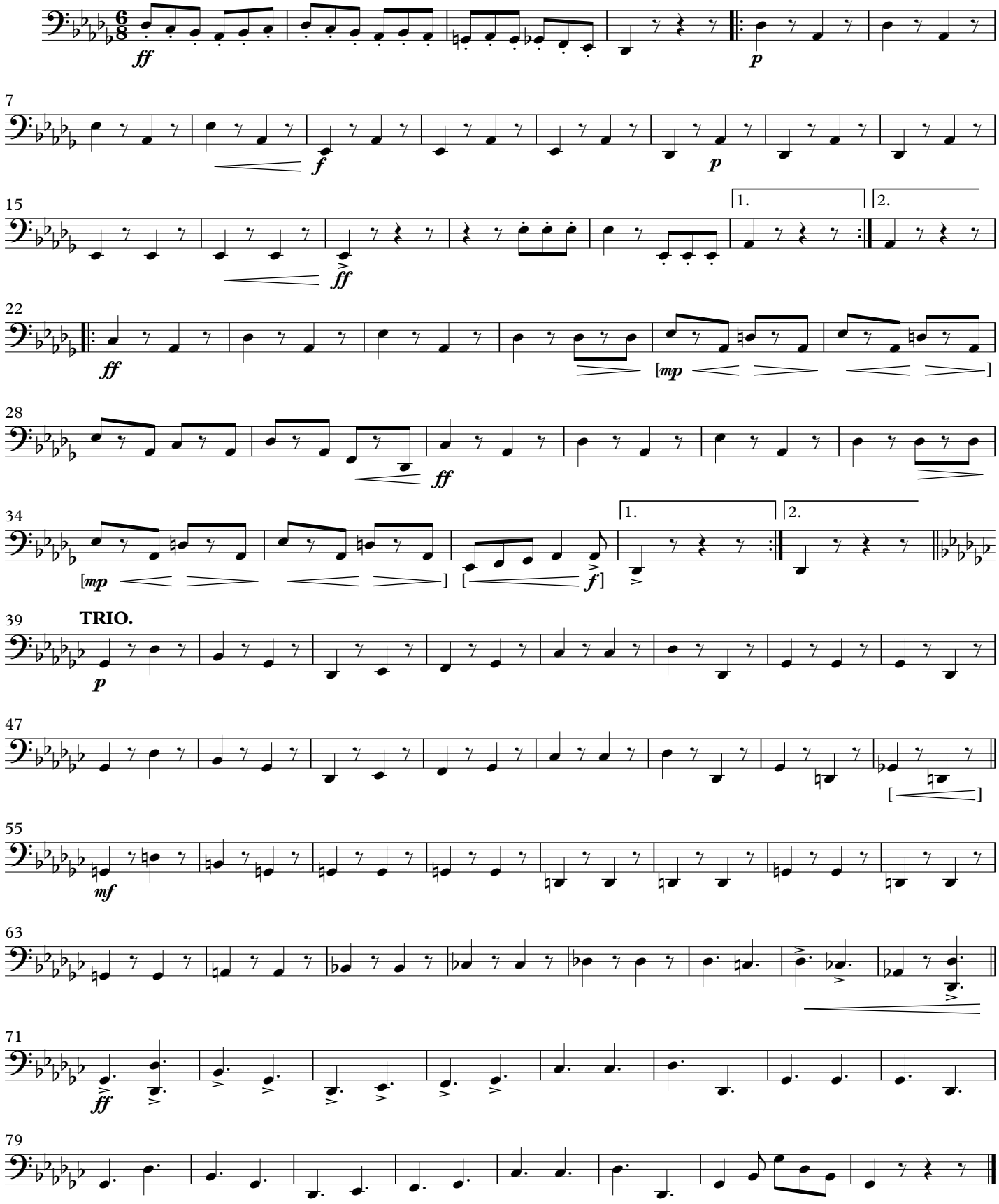
TRANSIT OF VENUS

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

Tuba

March Tempo.



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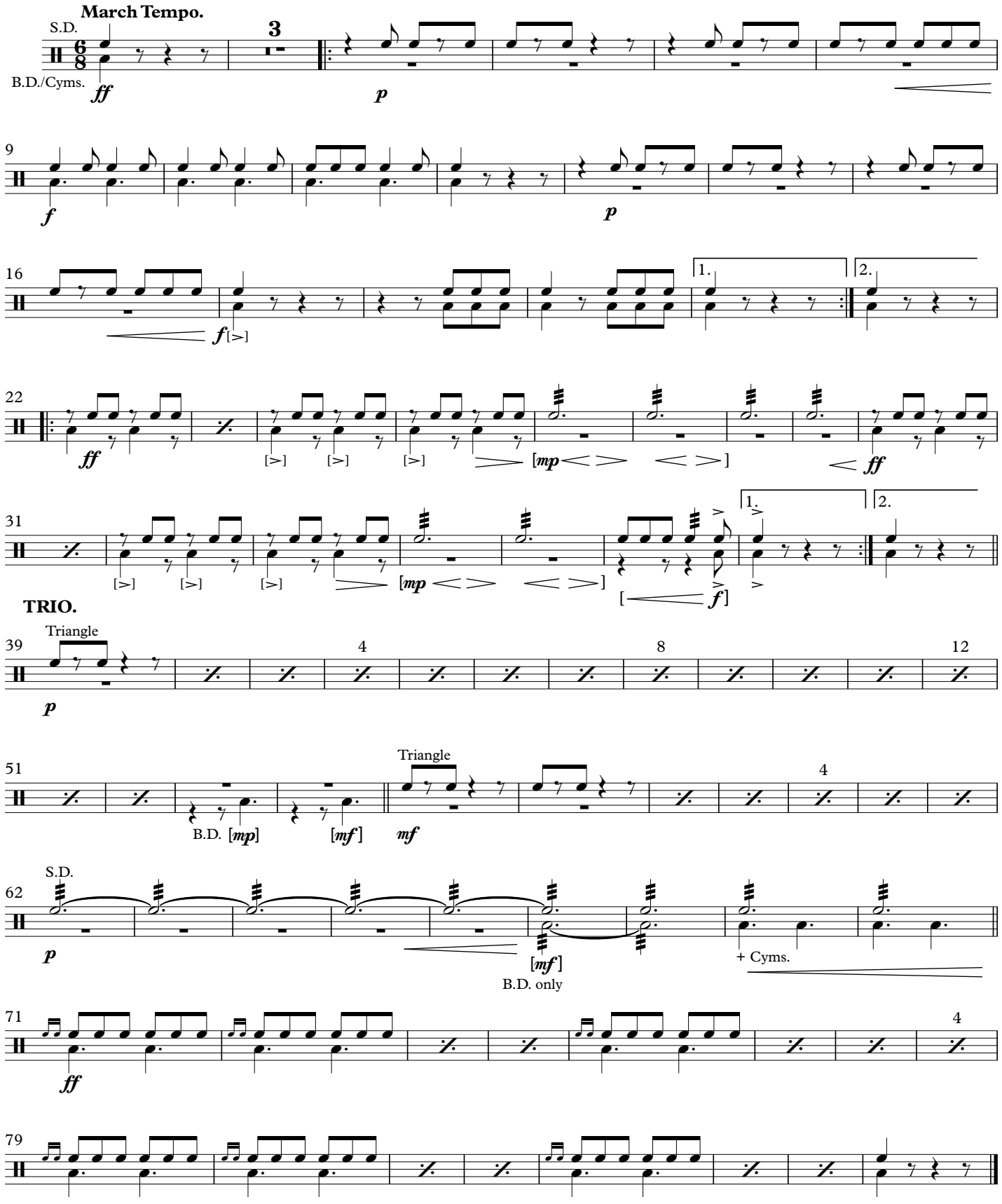
March

TRANSIT OF VENUS

(1883)

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

Drums
+Triangle



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