Ornamentation and the Guitar:
An Overview of Style and Technique

Christopher Davis

www.christopherguitar.net
www.classicalguitarblog.net

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Contents

1. Introduction

This paper is intended to serve as a review of existing literature on the subject of ornamentation in the lute and guitar music of the renaissance, baroque, and early nineteenth century.

Free ornamentation of renaissance lutenist John Dowland is of special interest to guitarists since his music is a well-established part of the modern guitar concert repertory. Dowland often provides written divisions in his solo lute music, but in cases where he does not the methods outlined in Christopher Simpson's *The Division Violist (1659)* can serve as a guide for creating divisions in high renaissance style. Simpson's book also provides a convenient framework for the analysis of Dowland's divisions. In section two of this paper, I summarize *The Division Violist* and examine John Dowland's divisions in this light.

The realization of standard baroque ornaments is an essential part of interpreting Bach's music as well as guitar composers such as Robert de Viseé and Santiago de Murcia whose music features extensive ornamentation. Section three focuses on the interpretation and realization of these ornaments and concludes with a brief discussion of free ornamentation.

The early nineteenth century was rich in virtuoso guitar composers, all of whom used a variety of written ornaments and graces. Section four focuses on standard ornaments and their realization in the early nineteenth century and discusses a few forms of improvisatory passagework.

Section five is a brief discussion of some of the technical considerations for realizing ornaments on the guitar; the issue of cross-string fingering is addressed with reference to historical texts as well as modern articles on the subject.

2. Renaissance Ornamentation

2.1 The Division Violist

Christopher Simpson published *The Division Violist* in 1659. The first section of the treatise presents practical instructions for the viol, a fretted, bowed predecessor of the modern cello. For the purpose of this paper, I will focus on the final section of the treatise in which Simpson outlines practical instructions for "breaking the ground," that is, making divisions on a melody. He begins with a general discussion of the techniques that relate to this.

In this style, a performer is free to break a long note into shorter note values of his or her choosing, provided the pitch remains the same or moves to another octave (Figure 1, Simpson 21). Simpson raises the issue of octave equivalency stating that, "you are to consider that a Seventh, or Sixth, Falling, is but the same with a Second, or Third, rising: and so all other distances the same with their opposite Octaves" (25).

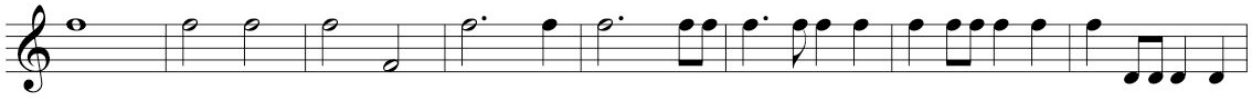


Figure 1 - Dividing a Whole Note in Various Rhythms and Octaves

A note may also be divided by using neighboring tones (figure 2). Simpson seems content to remain within a third. This method of division raises the issue of accidentals and their place in free ornamentation. Simpson discusses this later in his text, stating that, "the ear must be chief umpire" (27). He then proceeds to outline rules that govern the use of accidentals. Essentially, he describes what would today be considered a leading tone. Ascending motion within a chord demands a leading tone; descending motion does not. Dividing a cadential note, which will fall a fifth or rise a fourth to the next chord, does not require an accidental as this was not yet part of musical style.

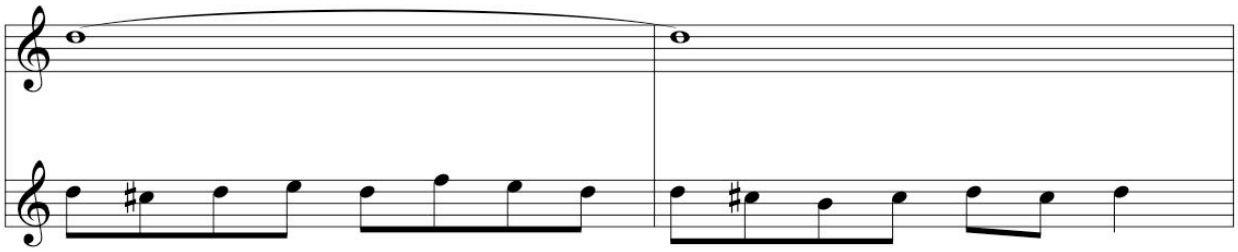


Figure 2 - Divisions with Neighbor Tones

Larger intervals can be filled with passing notes (figure 3). Most of these examples take the form of scales, but some are more complex (see Appendix A). Simpson goes on to explain that breaking a note into its, "concords," (or chord tones) can be done without restriction. This sort of division also includes octaves (figure 4). He goes on to explain that the final way to break a note is a, "gradual transition into some of the concords" (23). While skipping to chord tones, passing notes can be introduced between each chord tone. In this section, Simpson also mentions that this sort of division should use scalar motion to return to the original note or to pass on to the next tone.

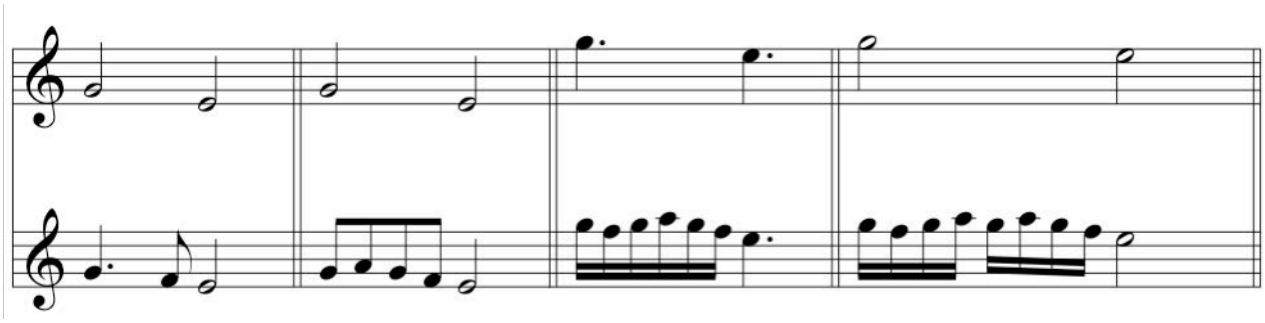


Figure 3 - Intervals filled with Passing Notes

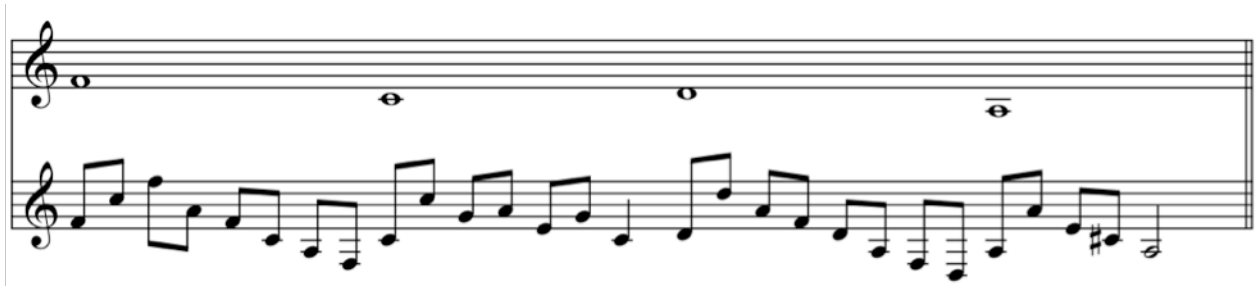


Figure 4 - Skipping to Chord Tones

In total, Simpson presents five methods for dividing a note: (1) dividing at the unison or octave with a variety of rhythms, (2) using neighbor tones, (3) filling in larger intervals with passing notes, (4) moving by skip into a chord tone, and (5) filling skips to chord tones with passing notes. A complete modern notation of the divisions presented in *The Division Violist* is provided at the end of this paper in Appendix A. In the following section of this paper, I will analyze the free ornamentation of John Dowland according to the five methods provided by Simpson.

2.2 The Ornamentation of John Dowland

John Dowland (1523-1626) was a prolific composer of lute songs and lute solos. His solo works contain both dance movements and free contrapuntal works. Since modern guitarists often perform this music, the study of Dowland's free ornamentation is quite relevant. In his dance movements, Dowland typically presents a short phrase of four to eight bars, which is repeated in an ornamented form. Following this ornamented version, a new phrase is presented, again followed by its ornamented version.

Study of these ornamented phrases reveals prototypical patterns that can be divided into three categories: cadential, post-cadential, and written-out trills. Dowland's divisions will be analyzed according to the methods outlined in Simpson's *The Division Violist* (see section 2.1).

2.2.1 Common Cadential Patterns

Cadential patterns occur when Dowland writes a dominant to tonic bass movement. These patterns are found both at the end of phrases as well as mid-phrase, depending on the harmonic progression.

The first pattern we'll examine is the cadential trill, which differs from other written trills (see figure 5). His trill centers on the third of the chord, and begins with a descending scale followed by a leap to the upper auxiliary and a few alternations with the main note. He terminates the trill with a turn. A few non-trill patterns are also used (see Appendix B).

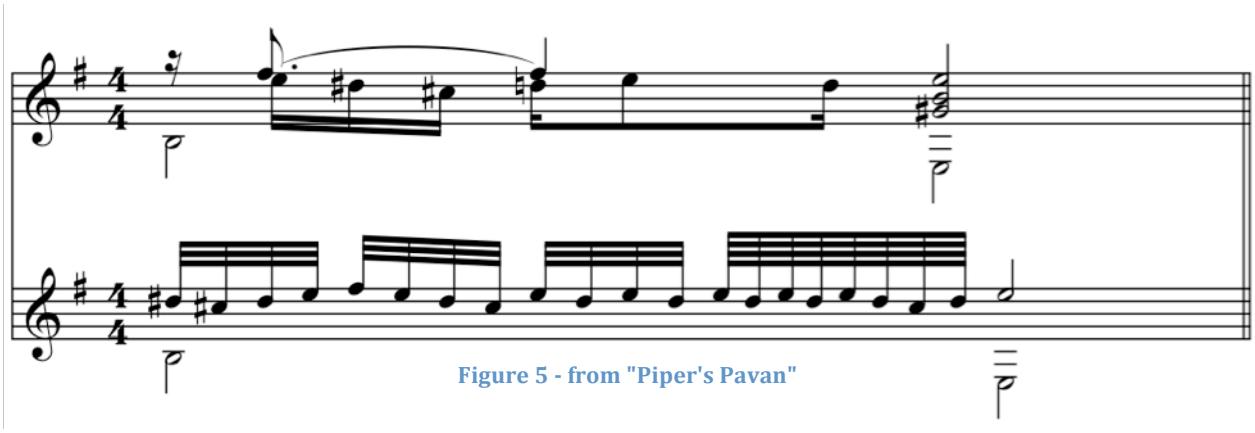


Figure 5 - from "Piper's Pavan"

2.2.2 Common Post-Cadential Patterns

Typical post-cadential patterns, for the most part, close a phrase, though they can sometimes be found mid-phrase. The primary features of post-cadential divisions are the use of a lowered-seventh scale degree and generally descending motion (see figure 6). This agrees with Simpon's advice concerning accidentals (see section 2.1). More examples of post-cadential divisions are povided in Appendix B.

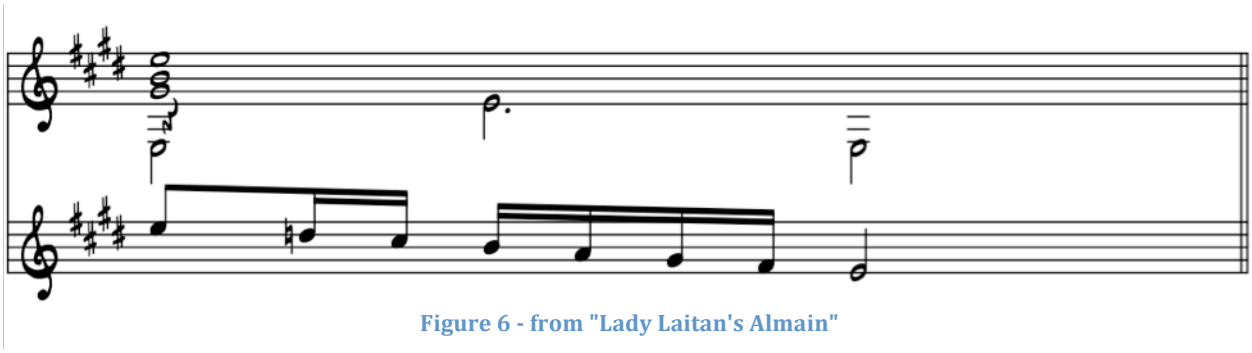


Figure 6 - from "Lady Laitan's Almain"

2.2.3 Written-Out Trills

Dowland begins each written-out trill with a slide followed by a few alternations between the main note and upper auxiliary, terminating each trill with a turn. Mid-phrase trills tend to feature the third of the chord as the main note. These trills begin with a slide to the upper

auxiliary, followed by a few alternations, and terminate with a turn (figure 7). Mid-phrase trills may move to another chord or remain on the same harmony.

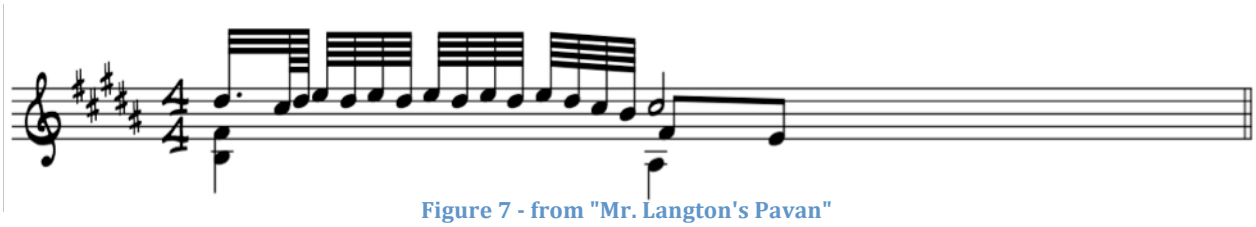


Figure 7 - from "Mr. Langton's Pavan"

Trills are also used post-cadentially, in which case they begin with a slide to the main note followed by a few alternations with the raised seventh scale degree (figure 8). Dowland then terminates the trill with a turn. All trills fit into Simpson's second method of dividing a note: the use of neighbor tones. For more examples of written-out trills, see Appendix B.

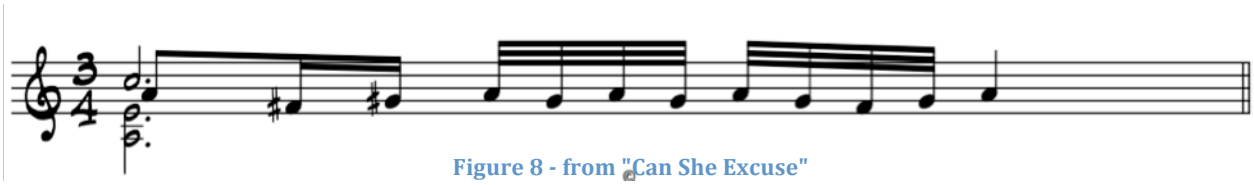


Figure 8 - from "Can She Excuse"

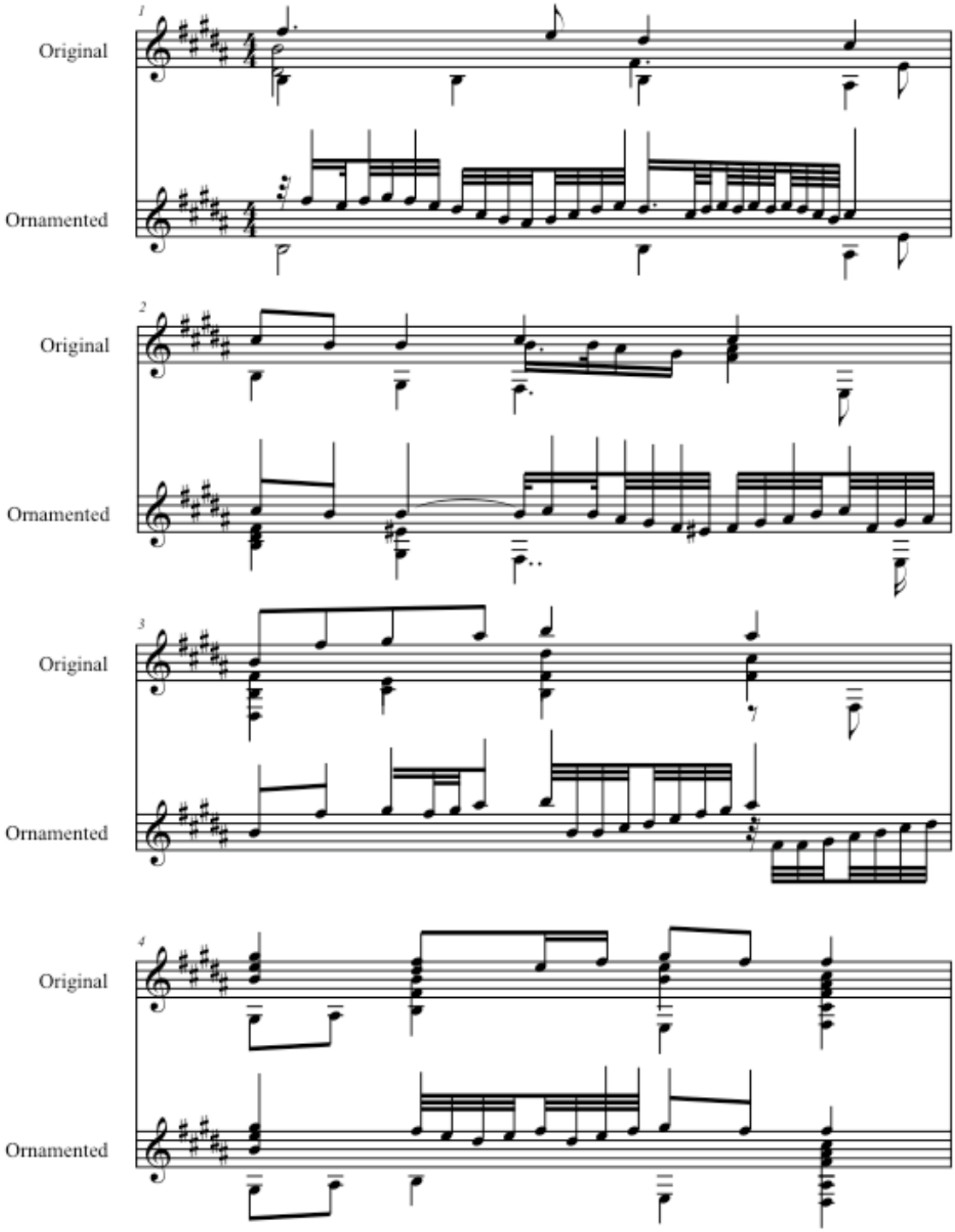
2.2.4 An Analysis of Mr. Langton's Pavan

In this section, I will analyze the divisions on the first phrase of *Mr. Langton's Pavan* according to the information just presented, the material concerning Dowland's cadential and post-cadential divisions and written trills. In addition, other free ornamentation will be analyzed according to the methods outlined in *The Division Violist*.

m. 1, beat 1:	Neighbor tones, method two from *The Division Violist*.
m. 1, beat 2:	Moving to chord tones (D# and B) with passing motion. Method five from *The Division Violist*.
m.1, beat 3:	Written trill (neighbor tones).
m. 1, beat 4:	Unornamented.
m. 2, beats 1 & 2:	Unornamented.
m. 2, beat 3:	Dowland eliminates the middle voice and incorporates it into the melody with a different rhythm. There's also a brief suspension at the beginning of the beat. This is basically method one from *The Division Violist*.
m. 2, beat 4:	The chord found in the unornamented version is broken across the beat. Passing motion is used between the chord tones (method five).
m. 3, beat 1:	Unornamented.
m. 3, beat 2:	Passing motion is used to move from G# to A# (method three).
m. 3, beat 3:	No accompaniment. The original accompanying chords are broken and filled in with passing motion (method five) creating a monophonic texture.
m. 3, beat 4:	Same as m. 3, beat 3.
m. 4, beat 1:	Unornamented.
m. 4, beat 2:	Neighbor tones (method twp) or it could be considered passing to the chord tone D# (method five).
m. 4, beats 3 & 4:	Unornamented.
m. 5, beat 1:	Passing to the chord tone G# (method five).

m. 5, beat 2:	Written cadential trill (neighbor tones, method two).
m. 5, beat 3:	Unornamented.
m. 5, beat 4:	Passing motion added to move from D# to E (method three). See m. 3, beat 2 for another example of the same formula.
m. 6, beat 1:	The middle voice is taken out; however, Dowland uses the beat to pass from the melody tone, F#, to the middle voice tone, B (method five).
m. 6, beat 2:	Neighbor tones (method two)/passing to a chord tone, D# (method five).
m.6, beats 3 & 4:	Unornamented.
m. 7, beat 1:	Unornamented.
m. 7, beats 2 & 3:	Middle and bass voices incorporated into an arpeggiation of the chord (method four).
m. 7, beat 4:	Common cadential pattern (neighbor tones, method two).
m. 8:	Dowland recomposes this measure. After starting on the same pitch as the original version, he abandons the original and instead incorporates the two features common to his post-cadential divisions: the lowered seventh scale degree and generally descending motion.

The piece is presented in full on the following pages. In the ornamented staff, the original melody notes are given longer stems.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Ornamented
2
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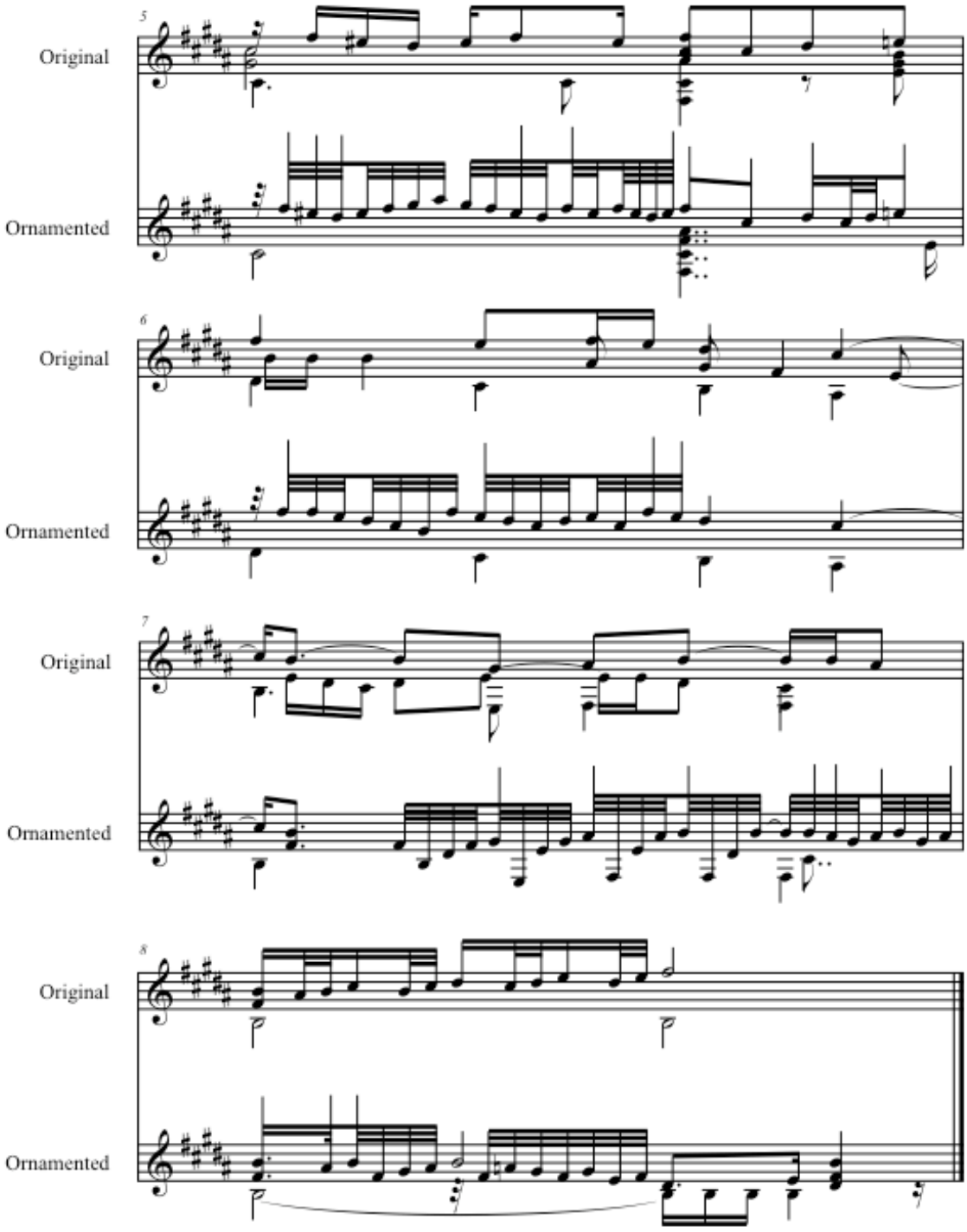
5
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Ornamented
6
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8
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3. Baroque Ornamentation

3.1 Standard Ornaments

3.1.1 The Appoggiatura

The appoggiatura is a displacement of a main note by it's upper or lower auxiliary. The auxiliary note can be a whole or half step away, and chromatic alteration may be used for a more intense effect.

Appoggiaturas come in two types: short and long. Long appoggiaturas (figure 9) are frequently found at cadences and are placed on the beat. They displace their main note by half (for un-dotted notes) or two thirds (for dotted notes) of its value (Donnington 111, Yates 166, Koonce X). Cadential appoggiaturas have a strong harmonic effect: they delay the arrival of a chord, creating a dissonance that requires resolution.

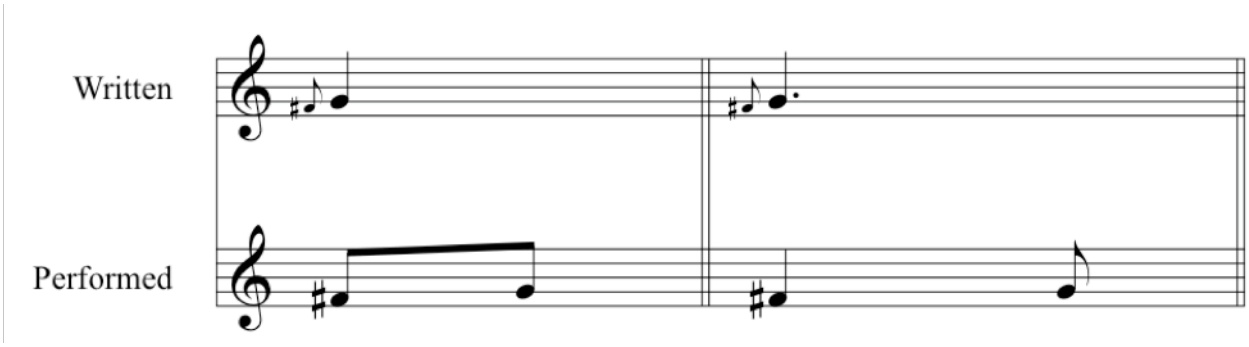


Figure 9 - Long or Cadential Appoggiatura

The long, or cadential, appoggiatura is frequently terminated with a mordent (figure 10).

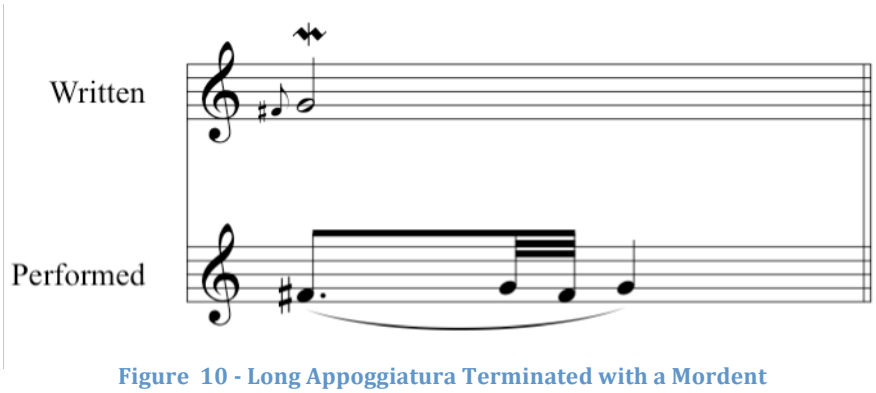


Figure 10 - Long Appoggiatura Terminated with a Mordent

Short appoggiaturas (figure 11) have less harmonic effect and act as melodic decoration. These can be placed on the beat, borrowing time from the main note. They may also be placed as an anticipation, borrowing time from the previous note, a "passing appoggiatura" (figure 12, Donnington 119).

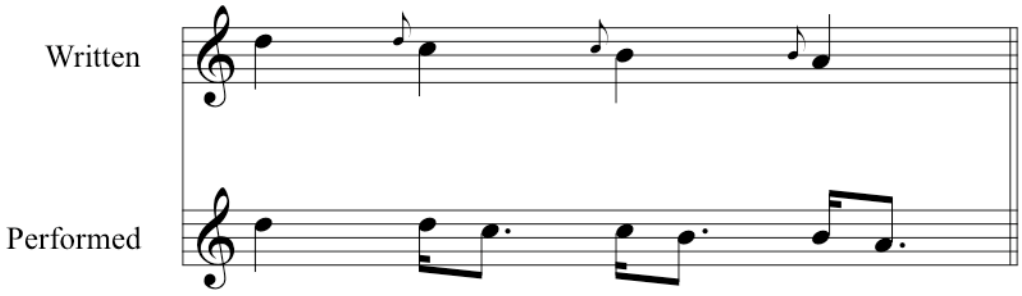


Figure 11 - Short Appoggiatura

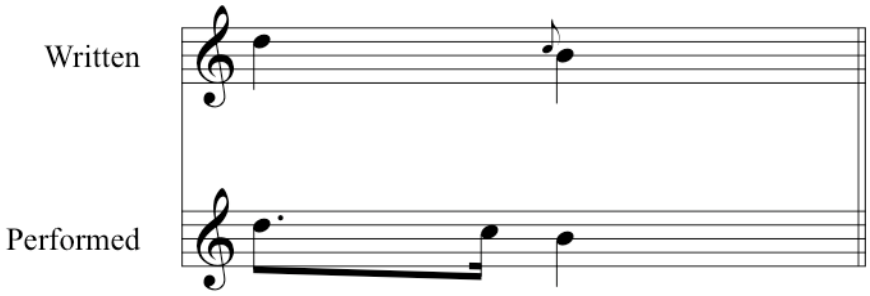


Figure 12 - Passing Appoggiatura

3.1.2 Double Appoggiatura

A double appoggiatura briefly replaces the main note with its upper and lower auxiliaries (Donnington 118). These are usually found between notes moving by step and serve the melodic function of ornamenting the line. However, they may also be found between notes moving by leap. Double appoggiatura prepared by a leap can use the main note's upper and lower

auxiliaries, or they may repeat the previous note before skipping to one of the main note's auxiliaries (figure 12, Yates 168).

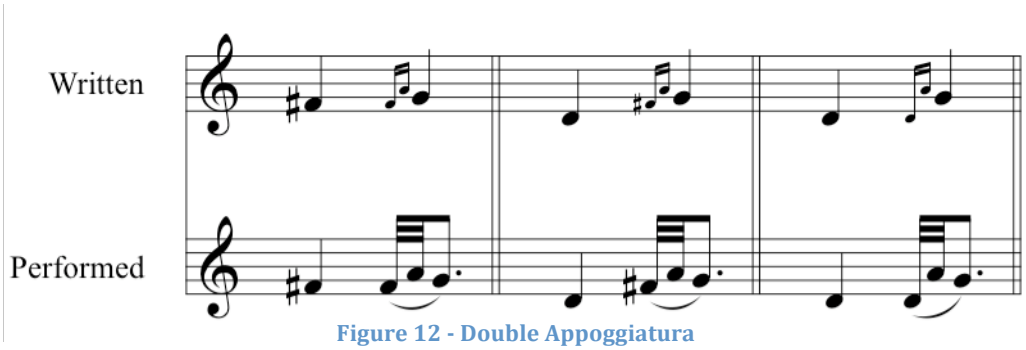


Figure 12 - Double Appoggiatura

3.1.3 The Trill

The standard baroque trill is a rapid alternation of a main note with its upper auxiliary. Trills, like long appoggiaturas, are usually found at cadences, and serve largely the same function: to delay arrival of the final harmony. Cadential trills begin with the upper note, which is usually slightly longer than the other alternations (Donnington 132). On guitar a few alternations of the upper auxilliary/main note pair is usually enough (the *half-trill* or *pralltriller*, Yates 164).

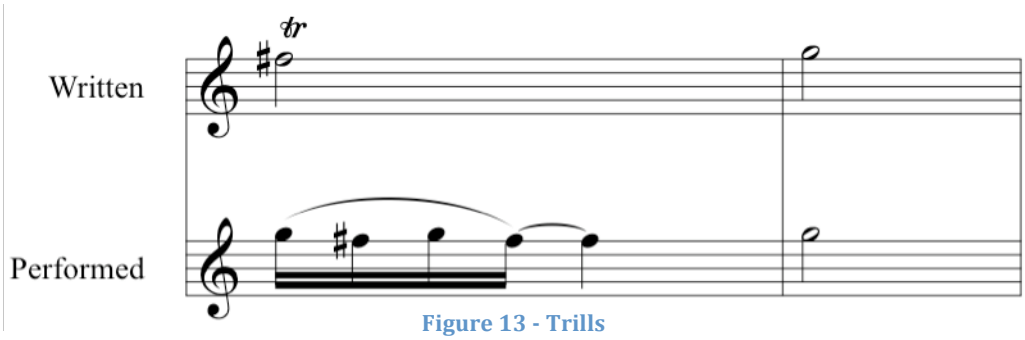


Figure 13 - Trills

Mid-phrase trills, when time is limited, are not required to begin with the upper auxiliary. A quick alternation of the main note with its upper auxiliary (a reverse mordent) is

effective in these cases. Such mid-phrase trills lack the harmonic function of their longer, cadential counterparts, and serve as melodic decoration.

Most baroque trills require a specific termination. A turn may be used in these cases (figure 14). Another possibility, which is frequently notated in Bach, is an anticipation of the following note (figure 15, Donnington 132).

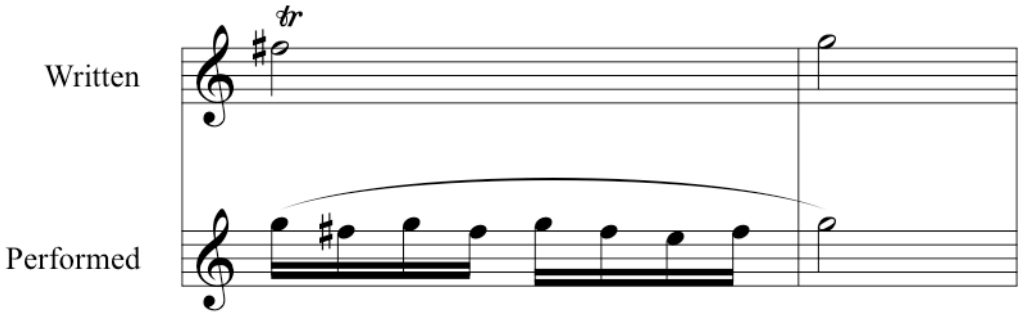


Figure 14 - Trill Terminated with a Turn

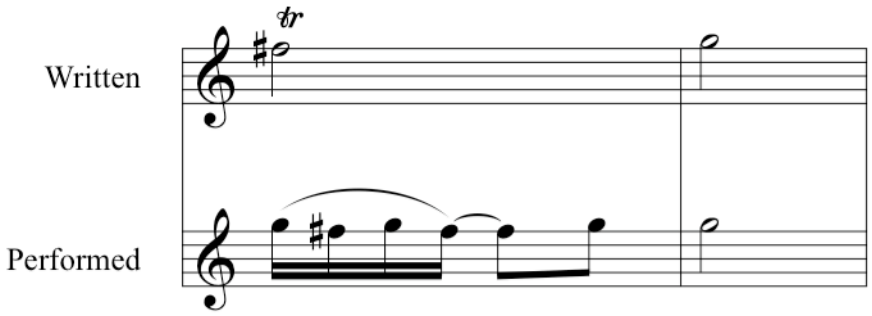


Figure 15 - Trill with an Anticipation

3.1.4 The Mordent

The *mordent* is a quick, single alternation of a main note with is lower auxiliary, starting on the beat. Mordents serve the melodic function of accenting a note, and are usually found on the second note of a melodic leap (Yates 166, Donnington 134).

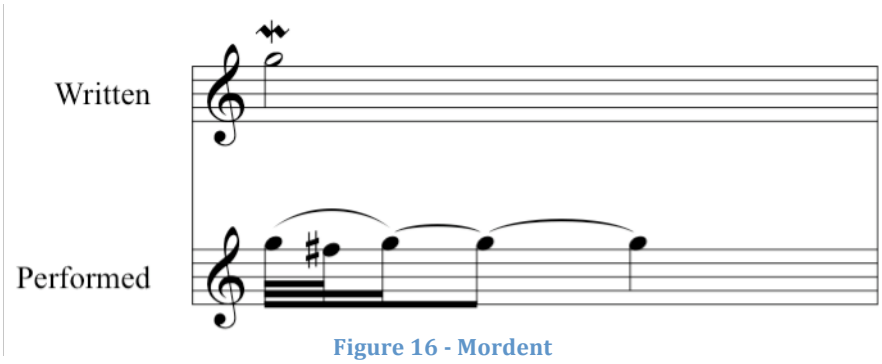


Figure 16 - Mordent

3.1.5 The Turn

A turn surrounds a main note with its upper and lower auxiliaries, and usually begins with the upper auxiliary. Turns may be performed on the beat, in which case they have a harmonic function similar to an appoggiatura, but are also found between beats (Donnington 142).

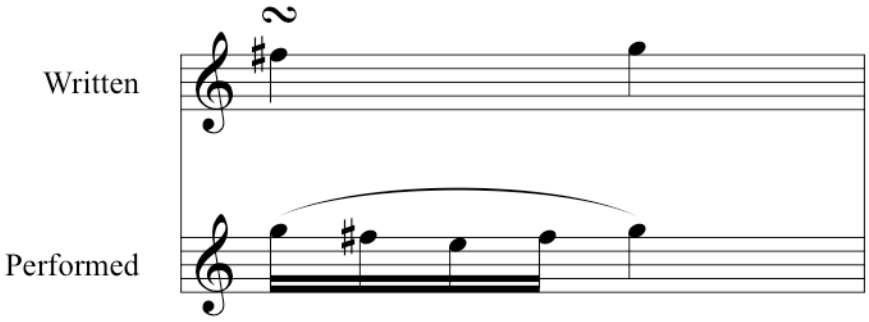


Figure 17 - A Turn

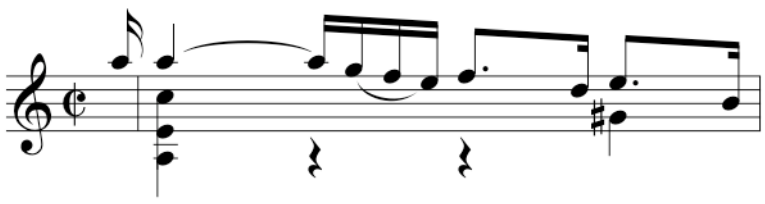


Figure 18 - AWritten Out Turn from Allemande, BWV 995

3.1.6 The Acciaccatura

Acciaccaturas, like mordents, serve to accent a note. They are performed on the beat, and may be sounded together with the main note, then quickly released. They may also be placed as an short, accented passing note (Donnington 123).

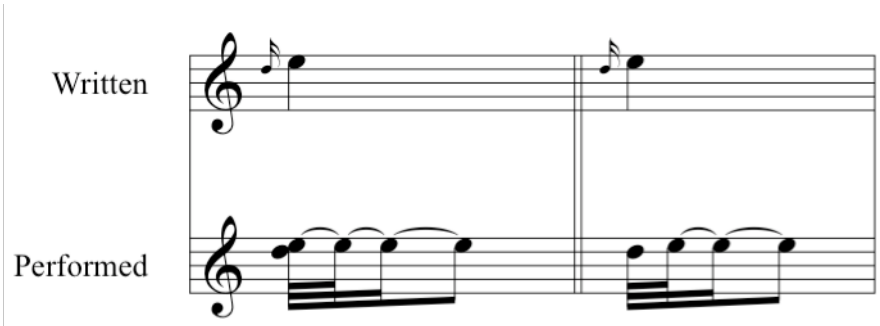


Figure 19 - Acciaccaturas

3.1.7 The Slide

The slide is a short, usually ascending, scale to a main note. It may be placed on the beat or between beats, and may be played with equal or dotted rhythms (Donnington 121).

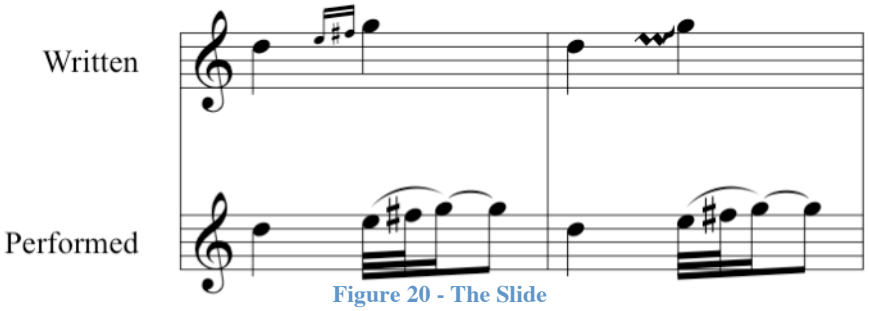


Figure 20 - The Slide

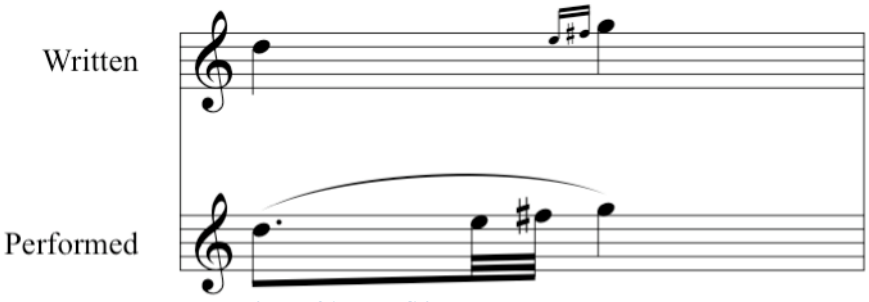


Figure 21 - The Slide, placed between beats

3.1.7 The Springer

The *springer* is a short anticipation usually found between notes that move by step (Yates 168).

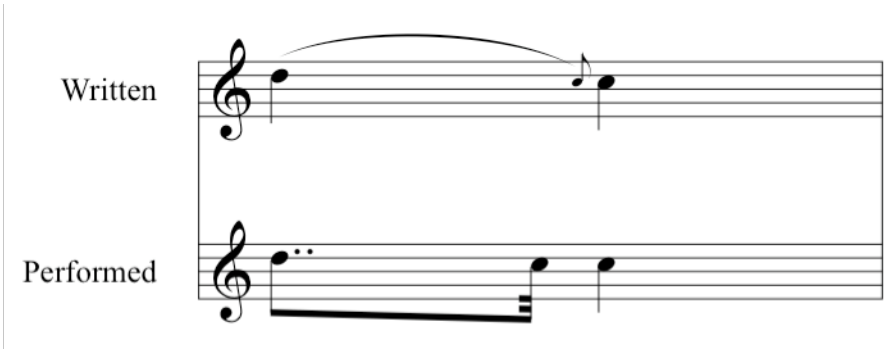


Figure 22 - The Springer

3.2 Free Baroque Ornamentation

Free baroque ornamentation is not indicated in the score with symbols or grace notes. As with renaissance music, longer notes can be broken into shorter values, and larger intervals can be filled. In fact, most of the advice from *The Division Violist* is equally applicable to baroque music (see section 2.1). A closer examination of Bach's music, especially faster movements with extended passages of short notes, reveals that he does indeed employ some of the figures discussed earlier. Divisions, or free ornamentation, can be added to any voice. Faster movements, however, may not permit much, if any, ornamentation. Koonce states that, "Bach generally wrote-out all the notes required in his pieces..." (xiv). However, it is the player's prerogative to add any additional free ornamentation she sees fit, as stated in numerous treatises from the period.

4. Nineteenth-Century Ornamentation

4.1 Standard Ornaments

Many of the standard ornaments from the Baroque era are applicable to nineteenth-century music, with a few specific considerations.

4.1.1 Appoggiatura

Nineteenth-century appoggiaturas can be interpreted much the same way as the Baroque appoggiatura, and are written using the same small-note symbols. However, literature from the time suggests that appoggiatura were always placed on the beat. For example, Aguado states, "The appoggiatura is a little note, the brief value of which is taken out of the following note" (37). Carulli includes ornamentation tables in his guitar method and states, "The small note is a note of ornamentation...which takes half the value of the note which follows it" (142). Glise in his Sonata book confirms these statements (6).

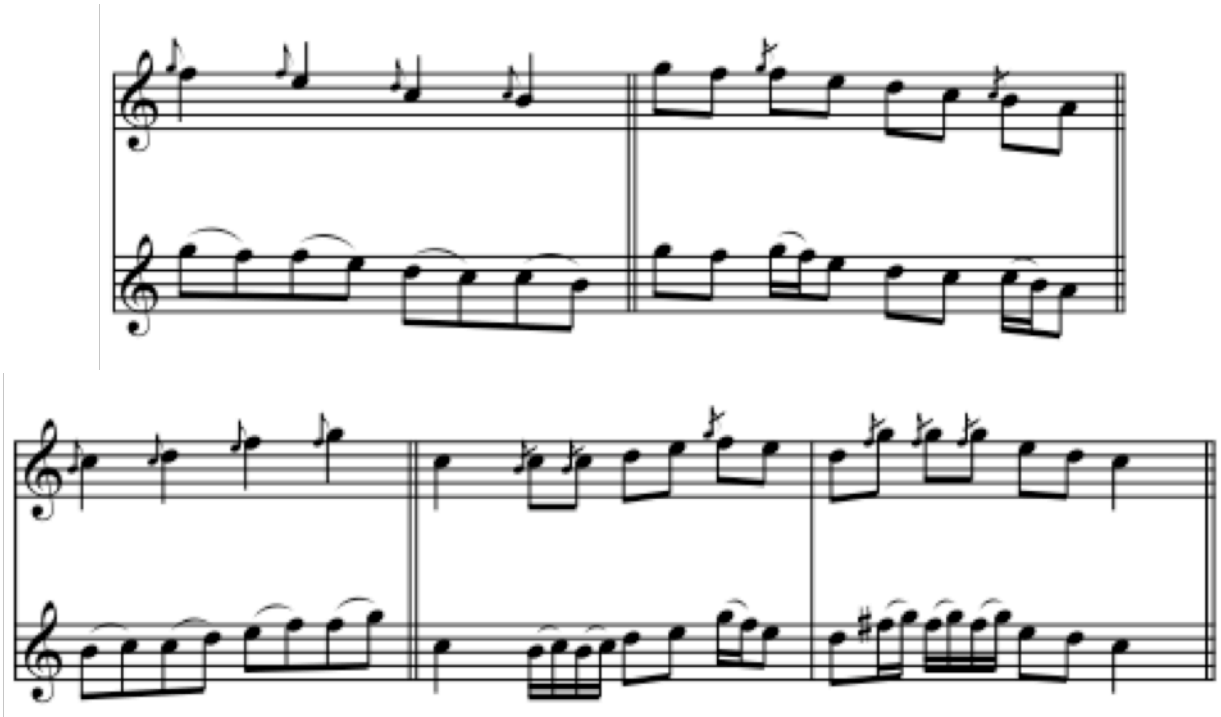


Figure 23 - Carulli's Examples of Appoggiaturas

It seems unlikely that single grace-notes are to be placed anywhere but on the beat, resulting in the older passing appoggiatura being stylistically inappropriate for nineteenth-century music.

4.1.2 Slides and Multi-Note Appoggiaturas

Slides are also placed on the beat, as Carulli's ornamentation examples show. Multi-note appoggiaturas, such as the Double Appoggiatura (see above) are also placed on the beat.

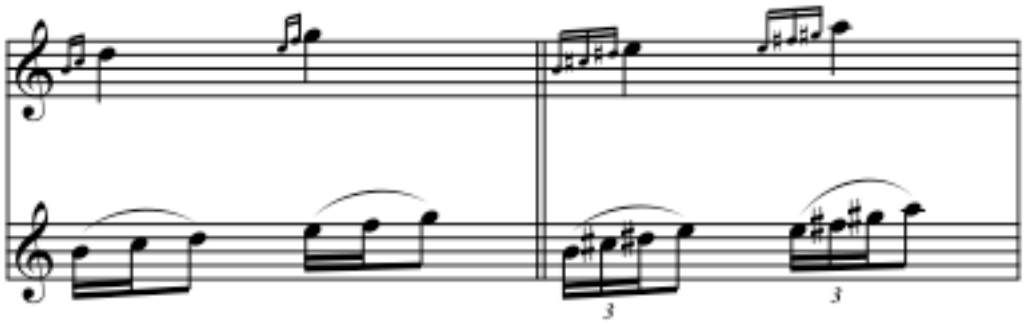


Figure 24 - Carulli's Examples of Slides

4.1.3 The Trill

The nineteenth-century trill may begin with the main note rather than the upper auxiliary as in Baroque music. Aguado's and Carulli's ornamentation tables provide several examples of trills.

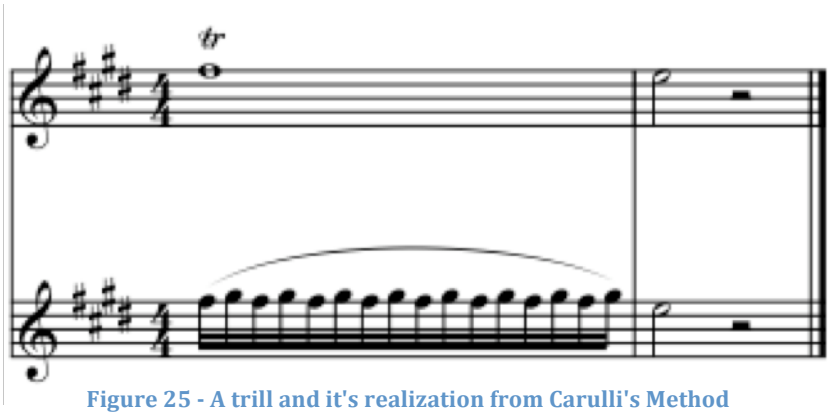


Figure 25 - A trill and it's realization from Carulli's Method

4.1.4 The Turn

A turn surrounds a main note with its upper and lower auxiliaries. It may be written out in small-notes or indicated with a symbol. Turns may be accented, placed on the beat, or unaccented, placed between beats.

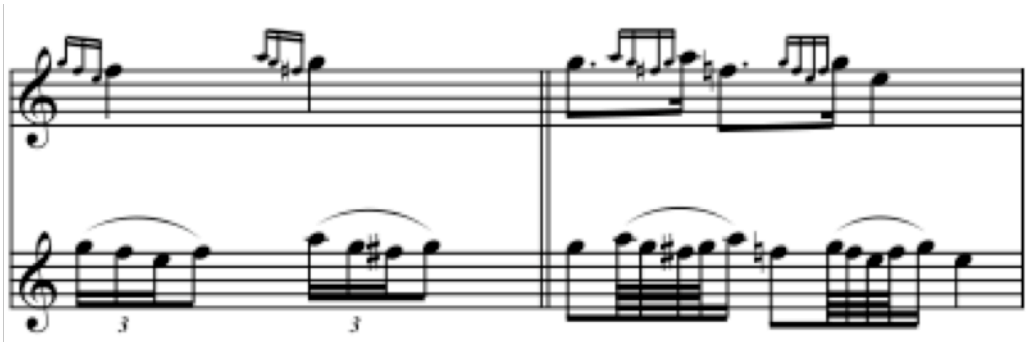


Figure 26 - Turns from Carulli's Method: accented and unaccented

The placement of the turn symbol can indicate whether the turn is to be placed on the beat or between beats (Glise 29). Aguado refers to written turns as "mordents" and includes the ambiguous text "the [turn] is made up of three little notes added to a main note," perhaps indicating that the turn should be placed on the beat (39). Like Carulli, Aguado uses small notes rather than the turn symbol, the statement above indicates that the time for those written graces is to be taken from the main note which follows them.

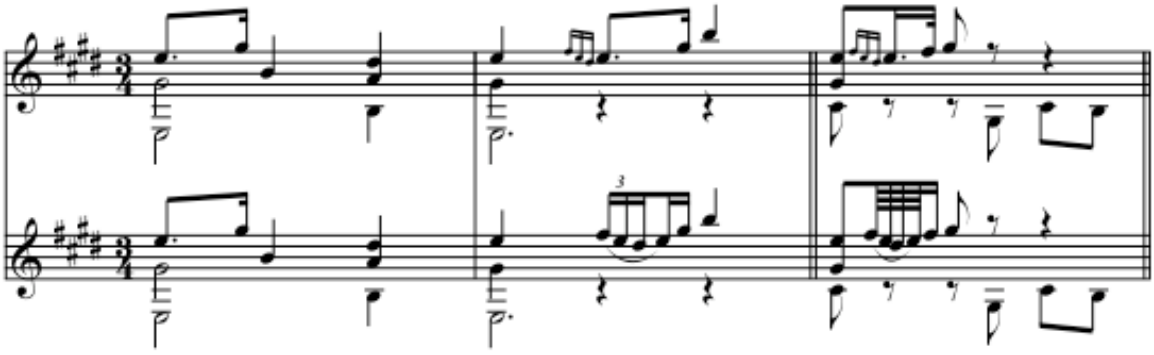


Figure 27 - Turns from Aguado's Method and Possible Realizations; taken from Lesson 31

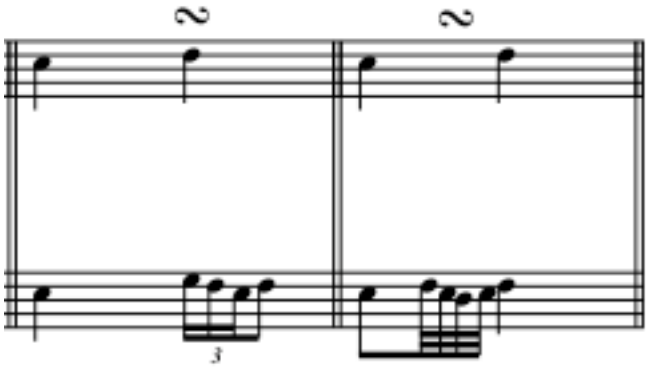


Figure 28 - Placement of the turn symbol may indicate whether the turn is accented or unaccented

4.2 Improvisatory Passages

4.2.1 *Eingang* and Short Cadenzas

An *eingang* is an unmeasured, small-note lead-in that serves to connect two sections of a piece. For instance, an eingang could be placed between the development and recapitulation of a sonata or between sections in a rondo. *Eingänge* (pl.) do not modulate or use thematic material from the piece. Instead they are simply passagework on a dominant harmony leading into the next section (Badura-Skoda, Glise 14, Swain 30). An eingang could be inserted at any articulation point of the form; sometimes a fermata may be an indication that an eingang is required.

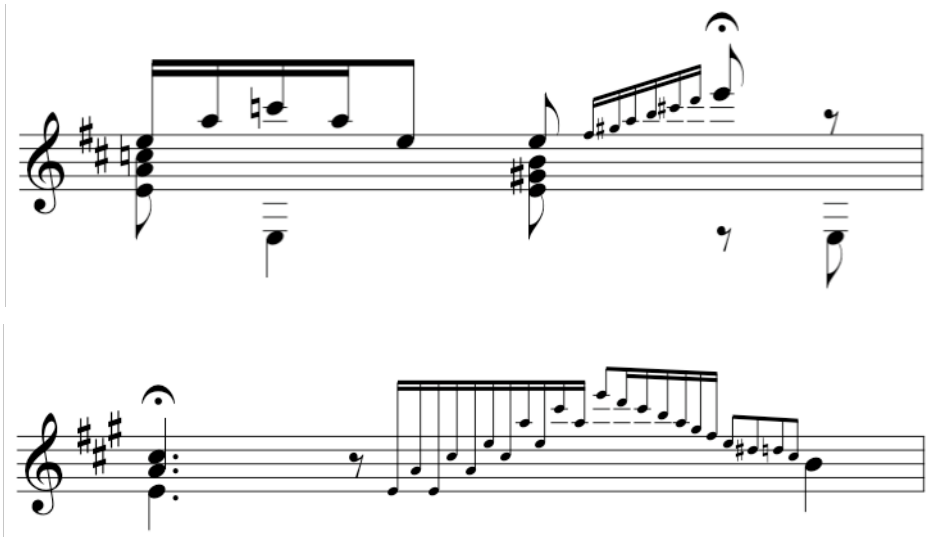
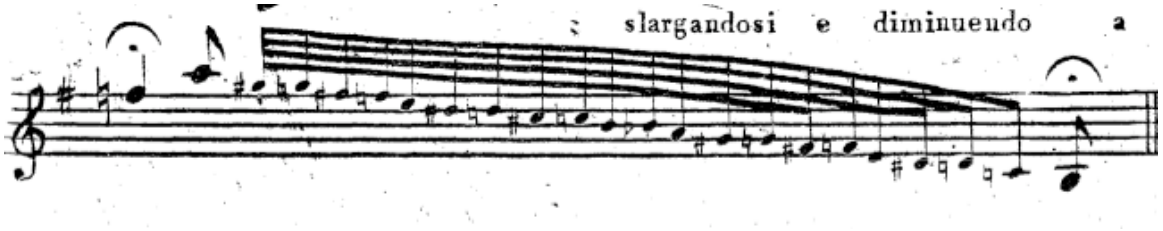


Figure 29 - Eingänge in Rondo from Sonata No. 2, Op. 29 by Anton Diabelli, measures 73 and 173

Giuliani's *Rossienne* are filled with examples of eingänge.



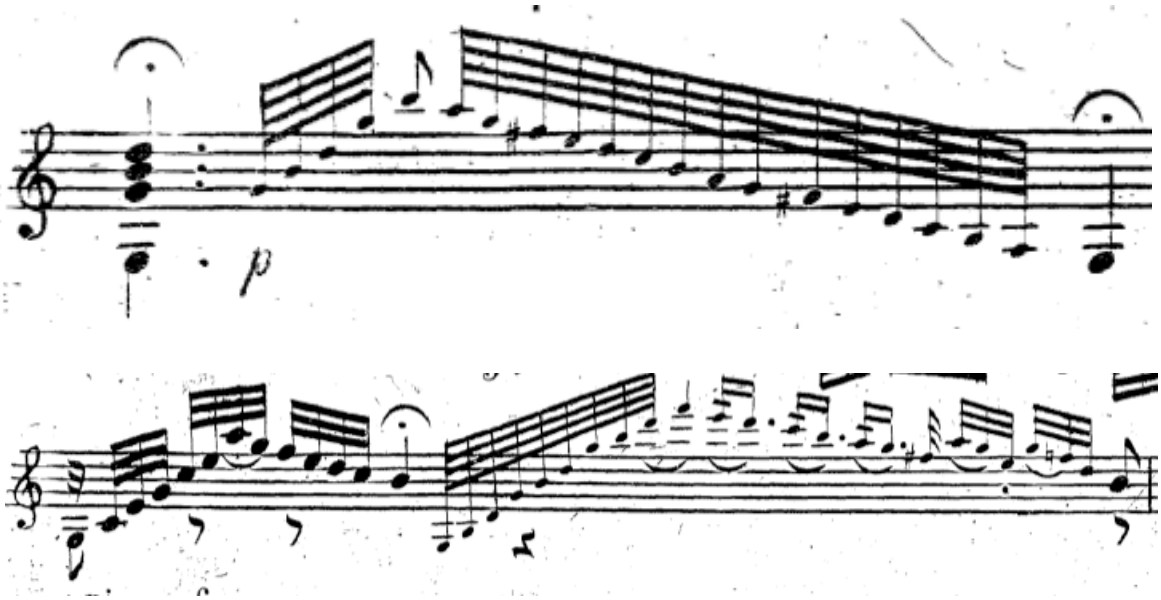


Figure 30 - Short Cadenzas from Giuliani's *Rossiniane*, Op. 119

The small notes in the examples may be changed as the performer sees fit. The normal notes that end short cadenzas and eingänge, however, are to be left intact since they are the anacrusis to the next section (MacKillop 6).

4.2.2 Long Cadenzas

A cadenza is a virtuosic, improvisatory passage inserted near the end of a concerto or aria. By the nineteenth-century, cadenzas were often written out. In addition, cadenza-like passages found their way into many longer works, such as Giuliani's *Rossienne*, mentioned above. Generally speaking, the role of a cadenza is to resolve an inconclusive harmony, such as a dominant six-four chord. Cadenzas may be free of meter or written out with a time signature. In his 1789 treatise, *Clavierschule,* Türk provided ten rules for creating effective cadenza (quoted in Badura-Skoda):

1. The cadenza should reinforce the impression made by the composition by providing a brief summary of it; this may be achieved by weaving some of the important ideas from the piece into the cadenza.
2. The cadenza should not be difficult for its own sake, but rather contain thoughts that are suited to the main character of the composition.
3. The cadenza should not be too long, especially in sad compositions.
4. Modulations should be avoided or used only in passing, and should never stray beyond the main keys established in the piece.
5. The cadenza, in addition to expressing a unified sentiment, must have some musical variety to maintain the listener's interest.
6. Ideas should not be repeated, either in the same key or in different keys.
7. Dissonances, even in single-voiced cadenzas, must be properly resolved.
8. A cadenza need not be learnt, but should show 'novelty, wit and an abundance of ideas'.
9. In a cadenza the performer should not stay in one tempo or meter too long, but should give the impression of 'ordered disorder'. A cadenza may be usefully compared to a dream, in which events that have been compressed into the space of a few minutes make an impression, yet lack coherence and clear consciousness.
10. A cadenza should be performed as though it had just occurred to the performer. Nevertheless, it is risky to improvise a cadenza on the spot, and much safer to write it down or at least sketch it in advance.

Other treatise by such post-baroque writers as CPE Bach and Johann Joachim Quantz largely confirms what Türk outlines (Swain 28-35).

4.2.3 Preludes

Inserting a prelude before a large work was a recognized part of nineteenth-century performance practice. The prelude is intended to prepare the audience by introducing the key in which the work that follows will be played. Preludes generally are without meter and can vary considerably in length; they usually end on the tonic or dominant of the key of the piece that follows. Improvised preludes should only be added when a piece lacks a written introduction (Glise 11). Aguado provides several examples of preludes in his method, and notes, "the meter is not strictly observed" (110-12).

5. Technical Considerations for the Guitar

The quickness with which standard ornaments such as the trill and mordent must be executed demands the use of left-hand slurs. Aguado, Carulli and Giuliani are all very explicit about the use of slurs for appoggiaturas and other standard ornaments. As guitarists, we can also apply this advice to baroque music as well.

Nineteenth-century guitar methods and writings, however, present another possibility: the use of cross-string fingerings. This is especially evident in long trills, of which there are numerous examples of cross string fingerings in the literature. Giuliani writes that the trill on two strings, "gives a greater continuity of sound and preferable [to a trill on one string]," and provides the following example (Giuliani 43).

Figure 30 - Cross-string Trill Example, taken from Giuliani's Opus 1

Another Viennese guitarist Simon Molitor also writes on cross-string trills in the performance notes for his Grand Sonata, Op. 7

> "It would be desirable to abandon entirely the method of trilling on one string employed up to now, and instead of that to take up trilling on two strings, as on the harp. In this way the trill can not only be sustained for a long time, but can also be produced more clearly and powerfully" (Adagio - Agitato).

Molitor also provides several fingering possibilities for cross-string trills.

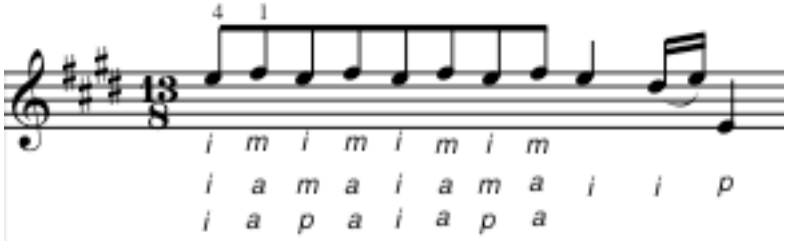


Figure 31 - Molitor's suggestions for cross-string trills

Carulli includes several methods for executing trills, including cross string trilling.

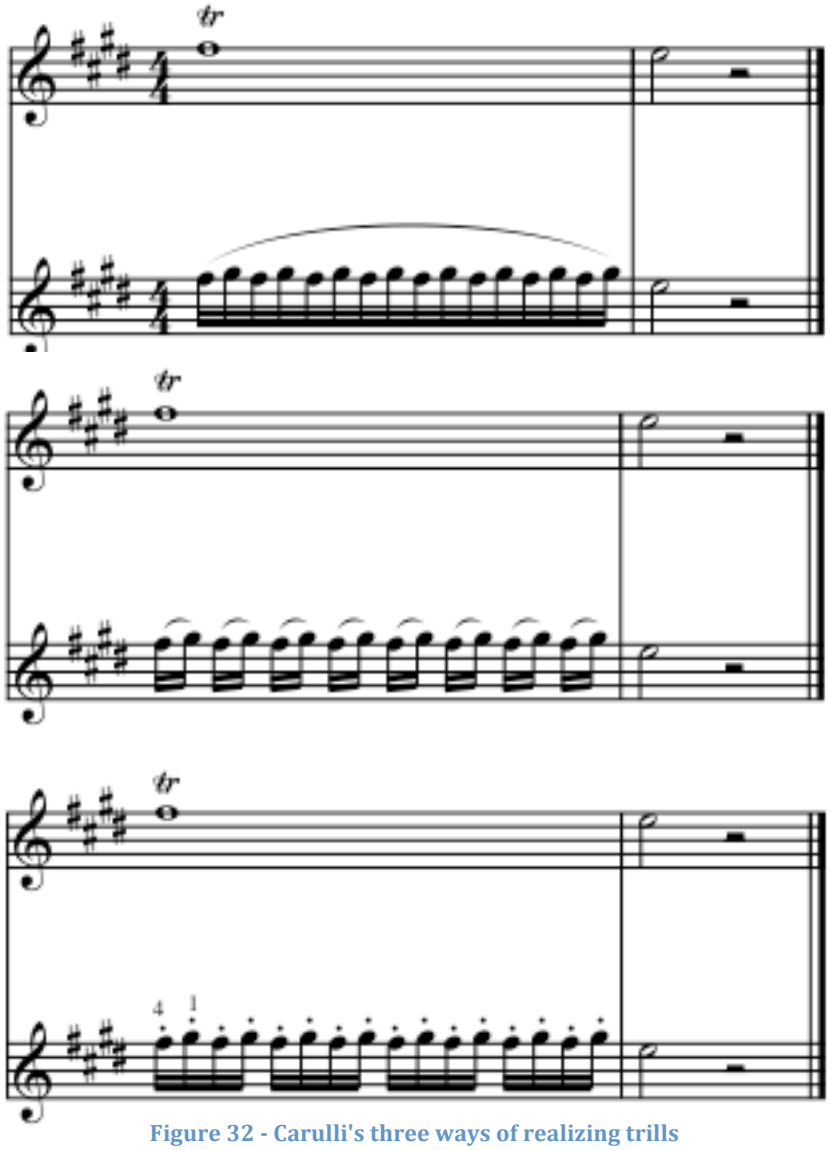


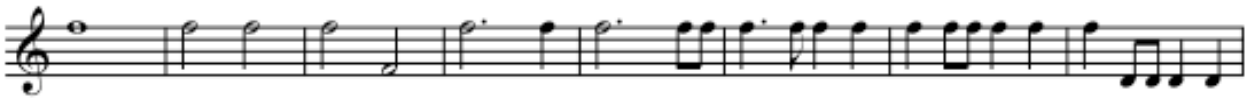
Figure 32 - Carulli's three ways of realizing trills

An overwhelming amount of historical evidence suggests that cross-string ornamentation is indeed an appropriate solution for guitarists today, whether they are performing renaissance, baroque, nineteenth-century music. Several modern performers have suggested alternate fingerings for cross-string trills. Yates recommends *m i a m*; David Russell recommends *a i m p*. Cross-string fingering may also be used for other ornaments if the situation permits.

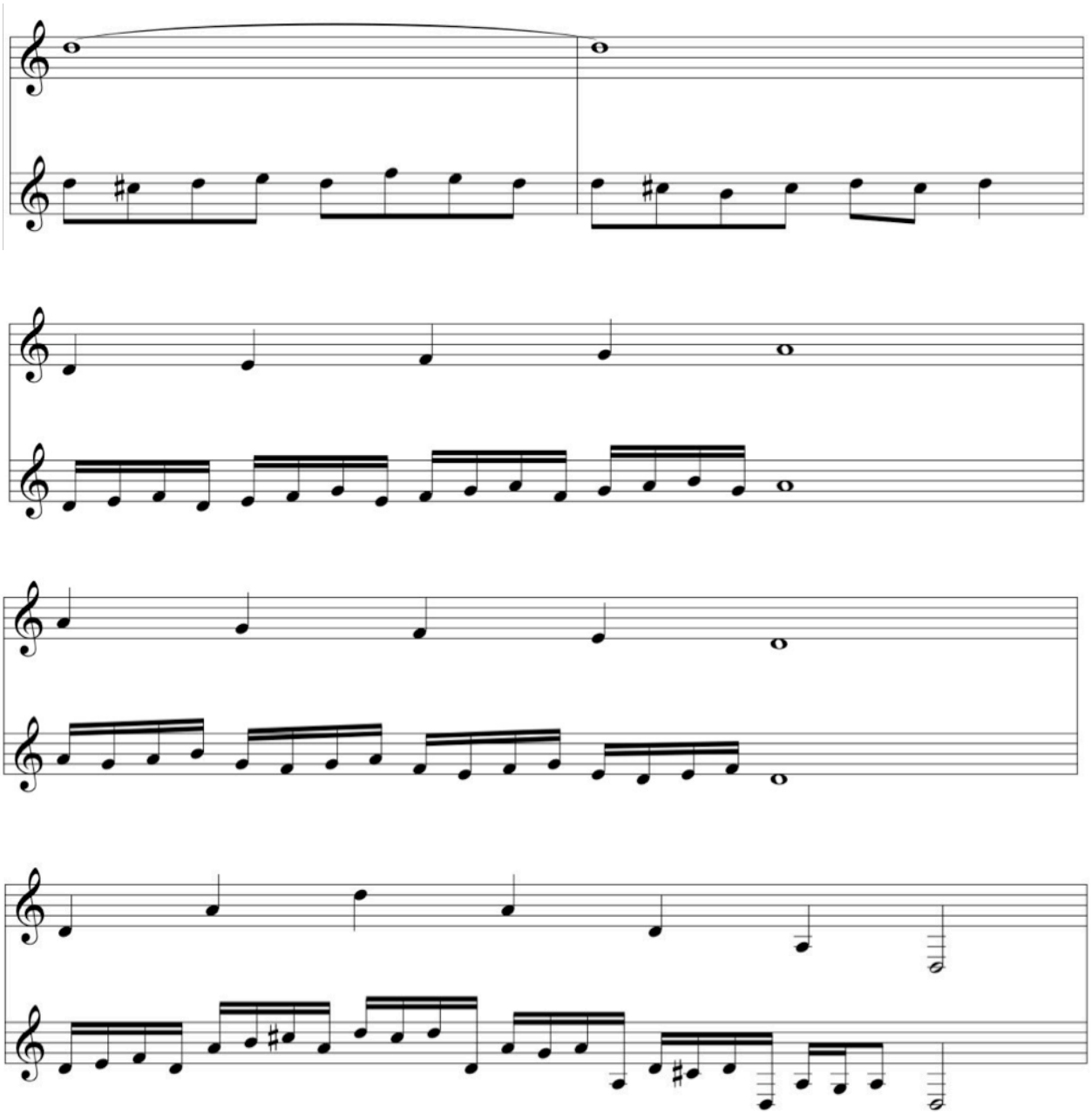
Appendix A

Musical Examples from *The Division Violist*

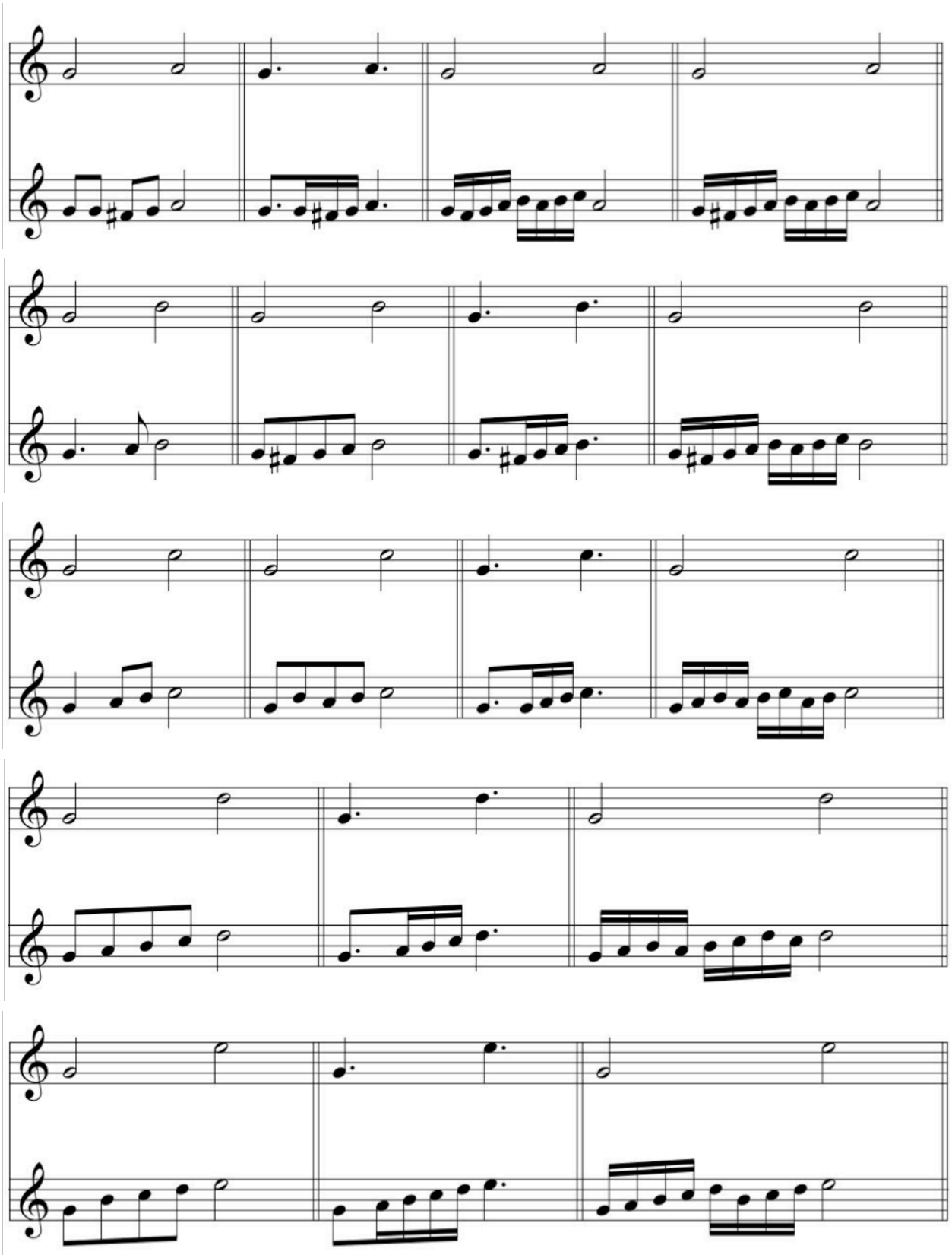
Method One: Rhythmic Alteration

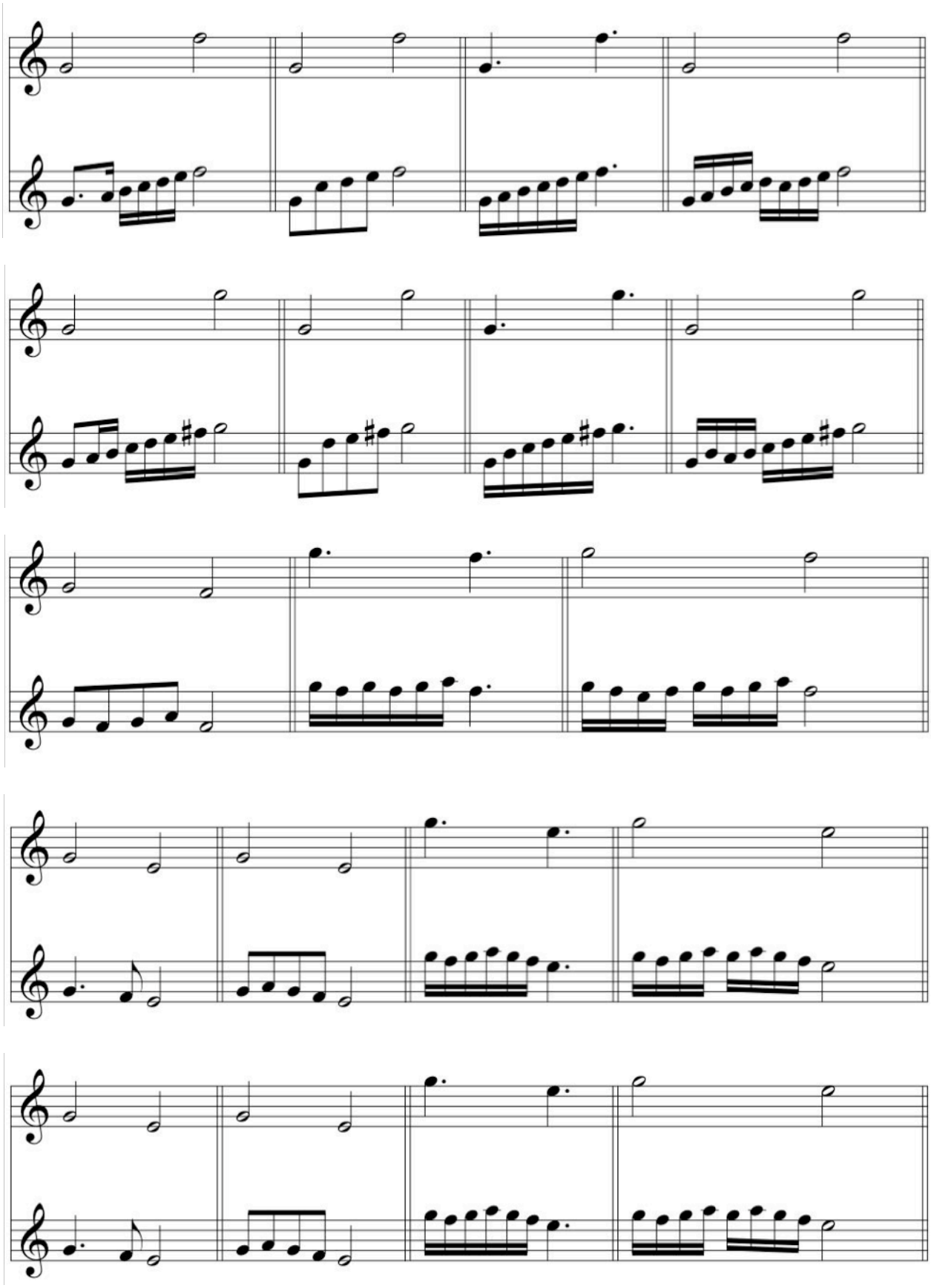


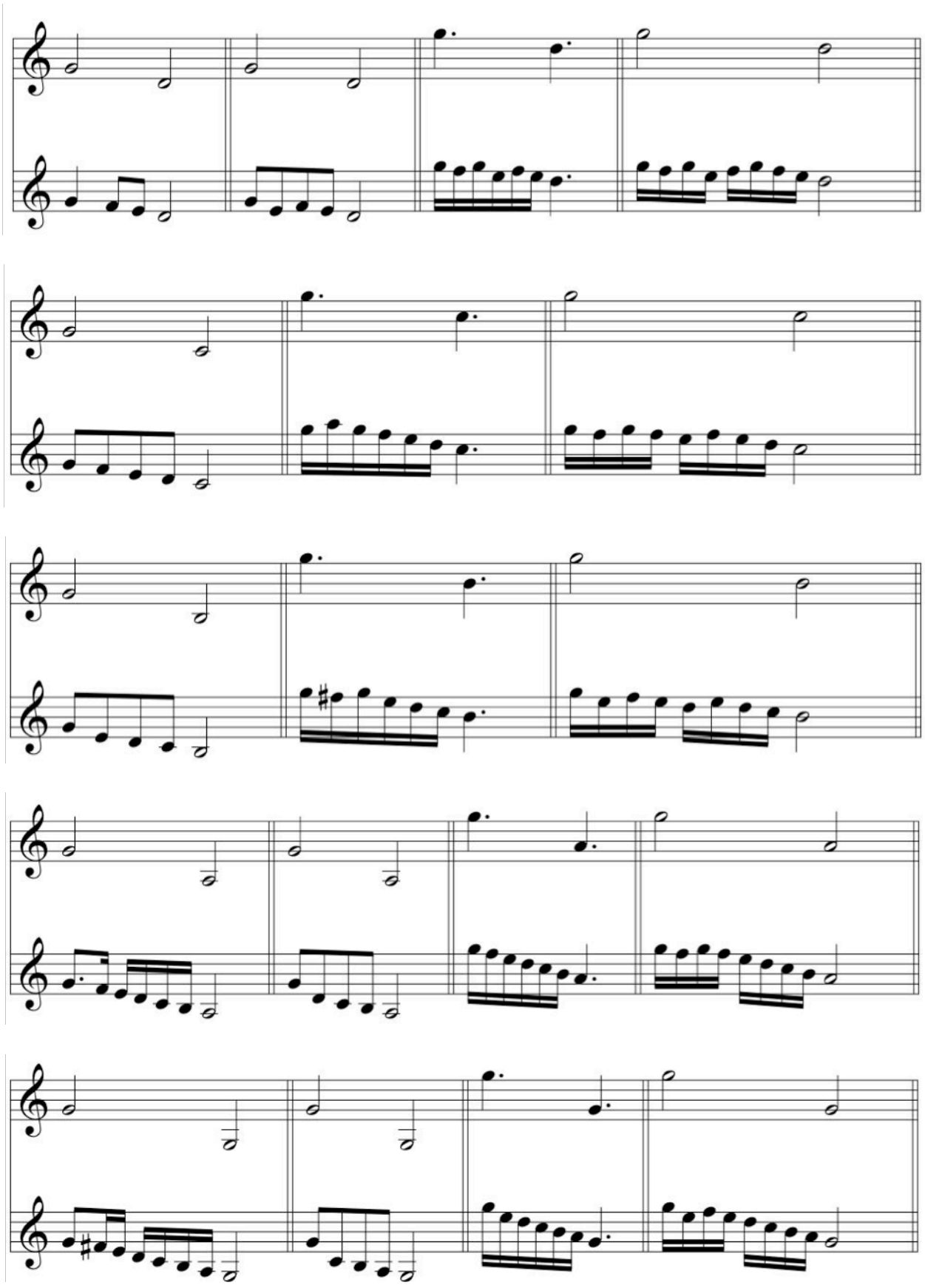
Method Two: Neighbor Tones



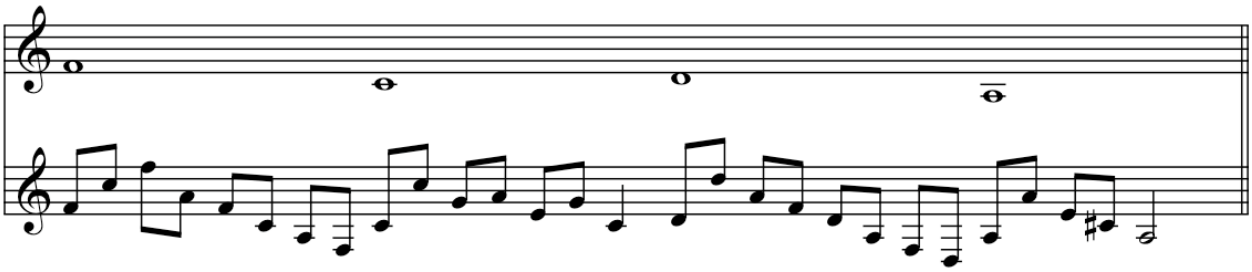
Method Four: Passing Motion



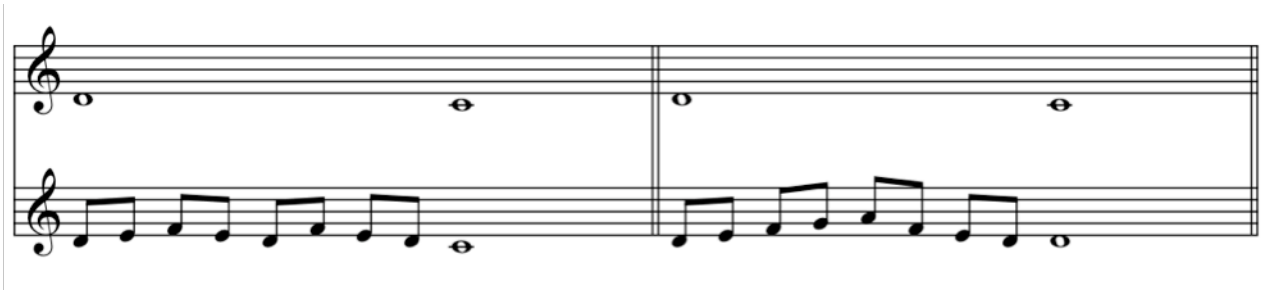


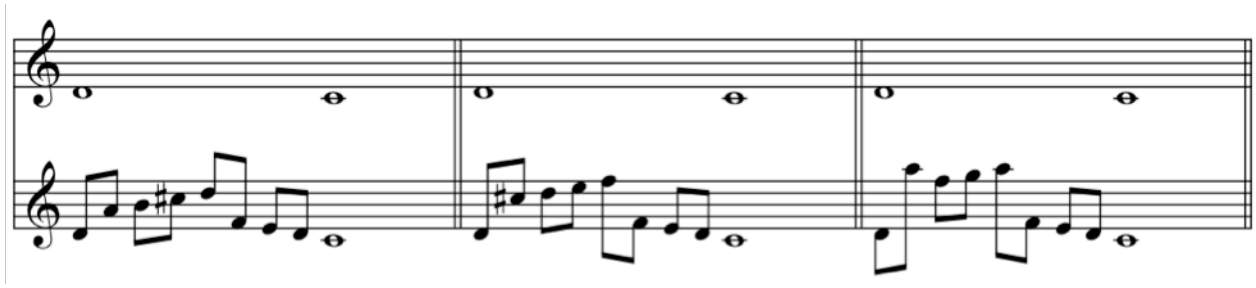


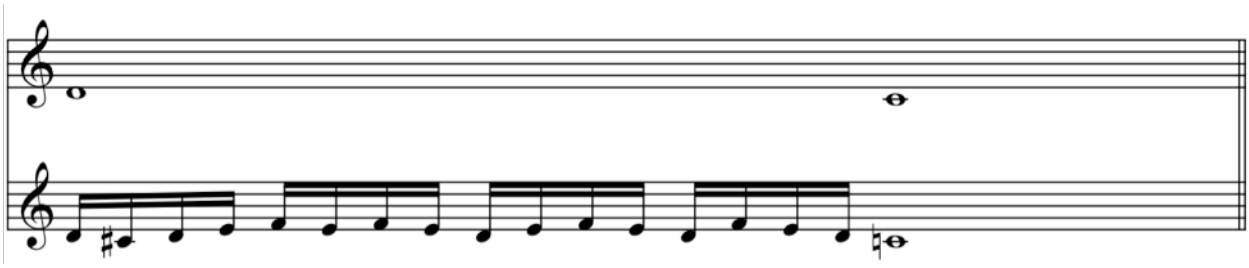
Method Four: Skipping to Chord Tones

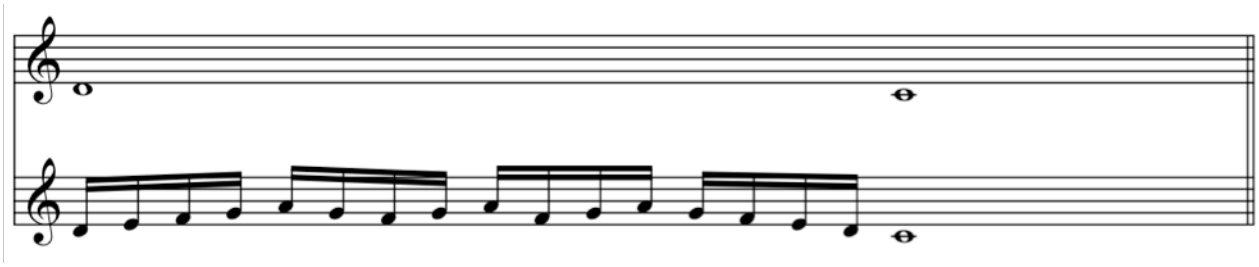


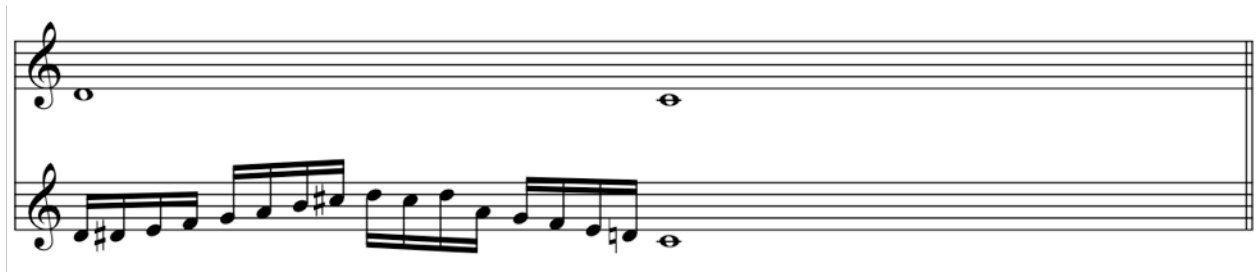
Method Five: Filling in Chord Tone Skips with Passing Motion:

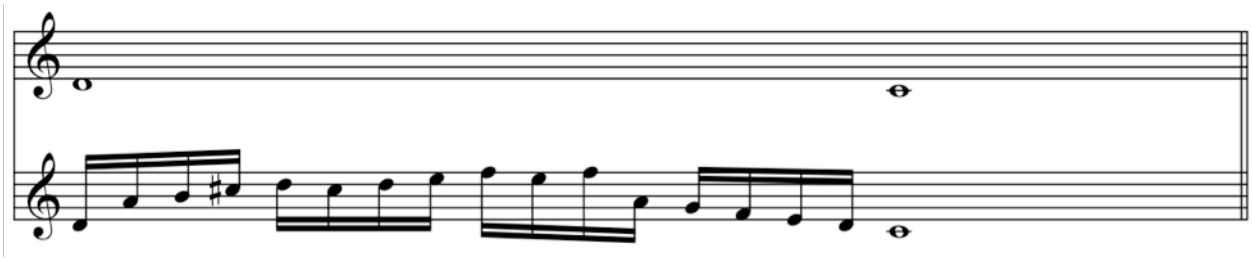


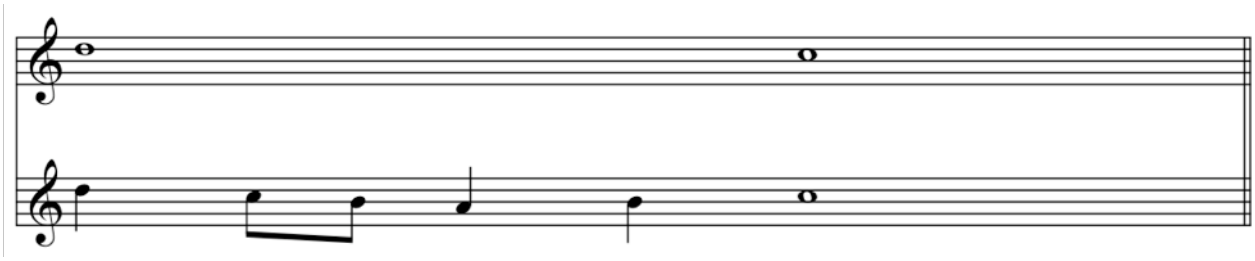


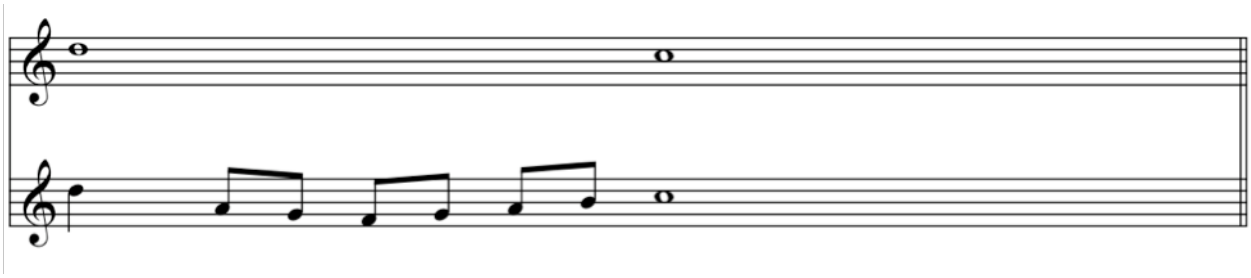


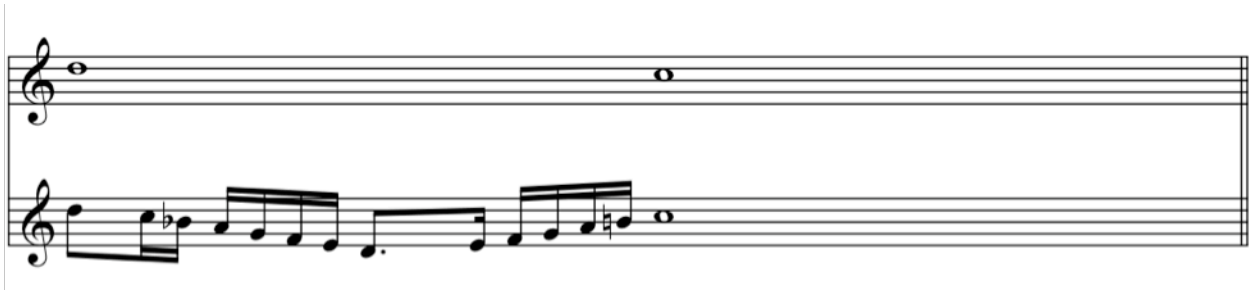








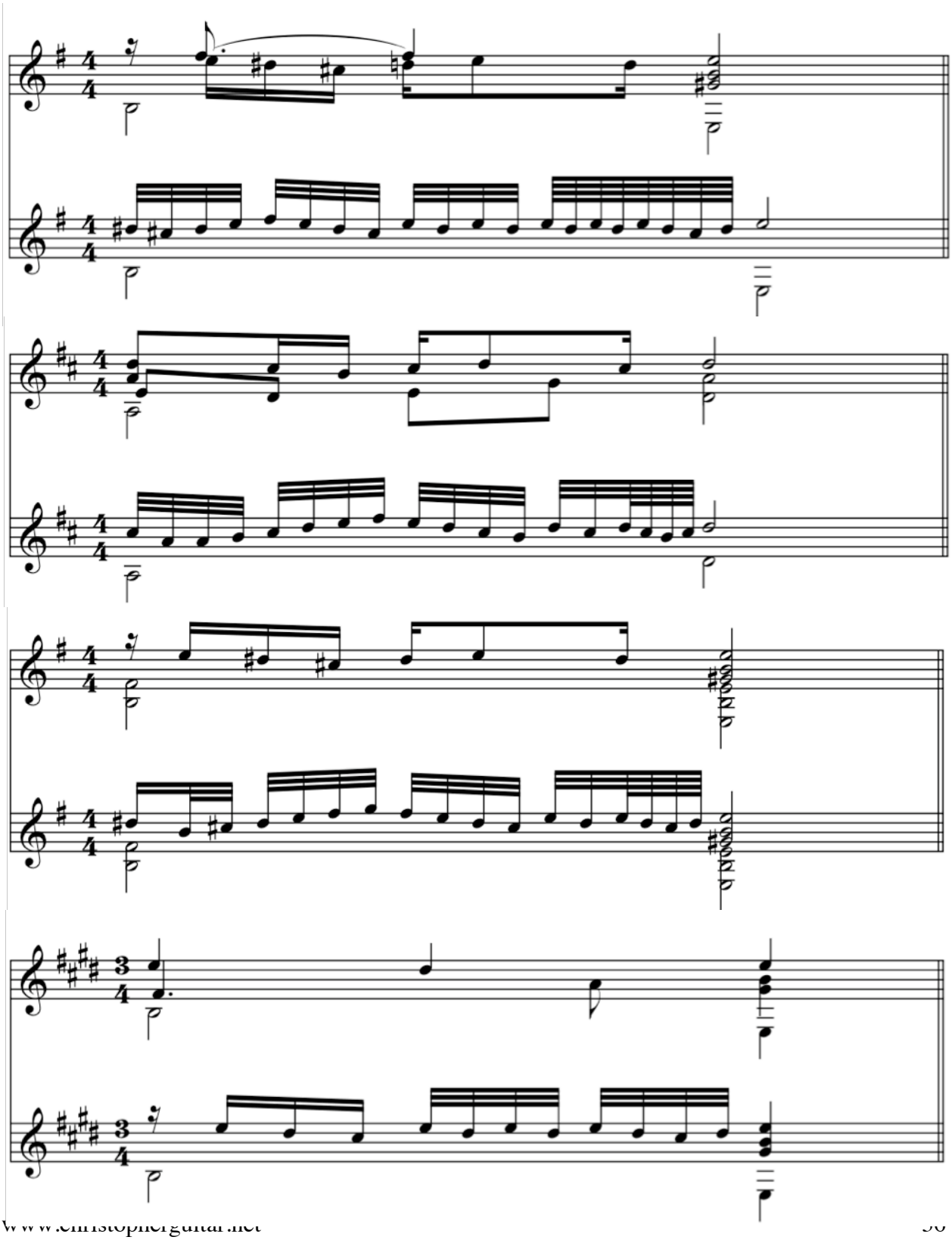




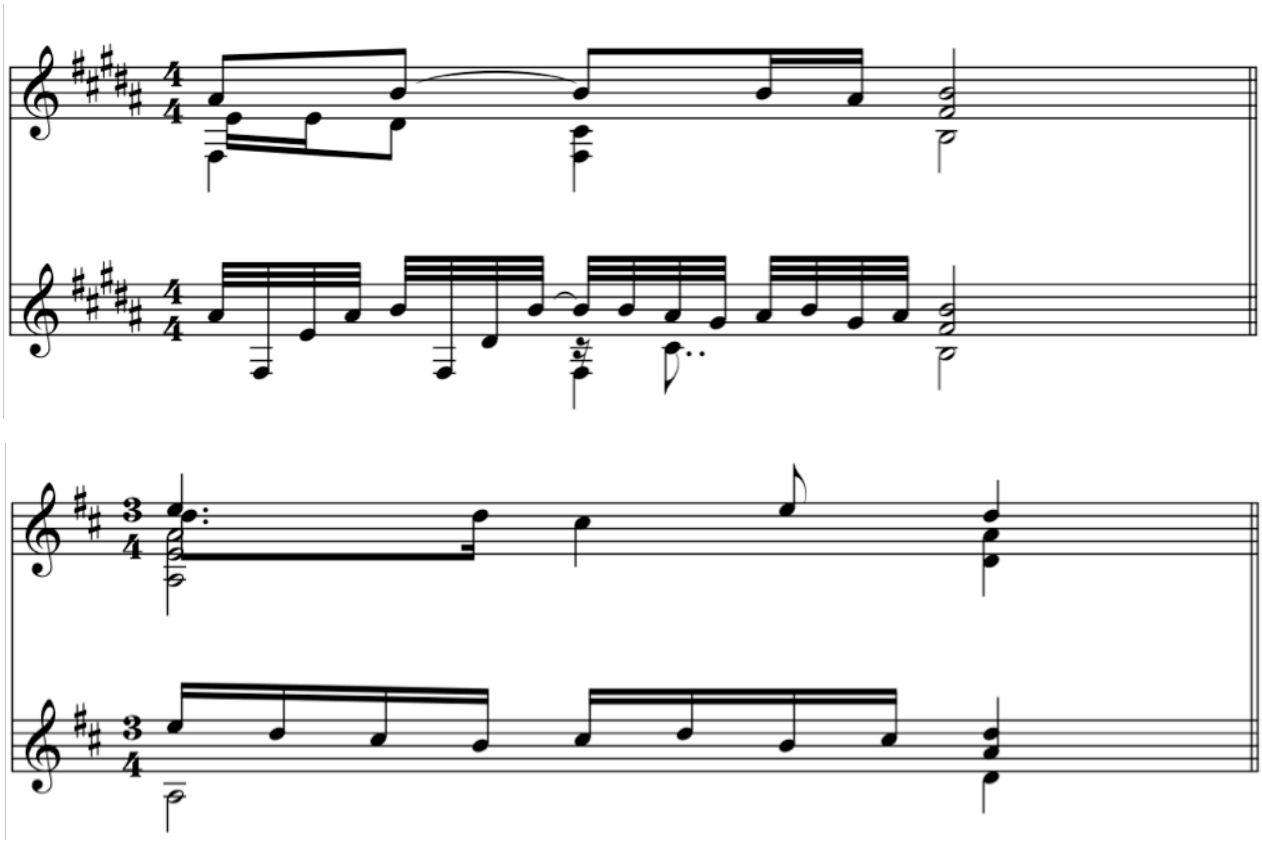
Appendix B

Common Patterns John Dowland's Free Ornamentation

Cadential Divisions - Trills

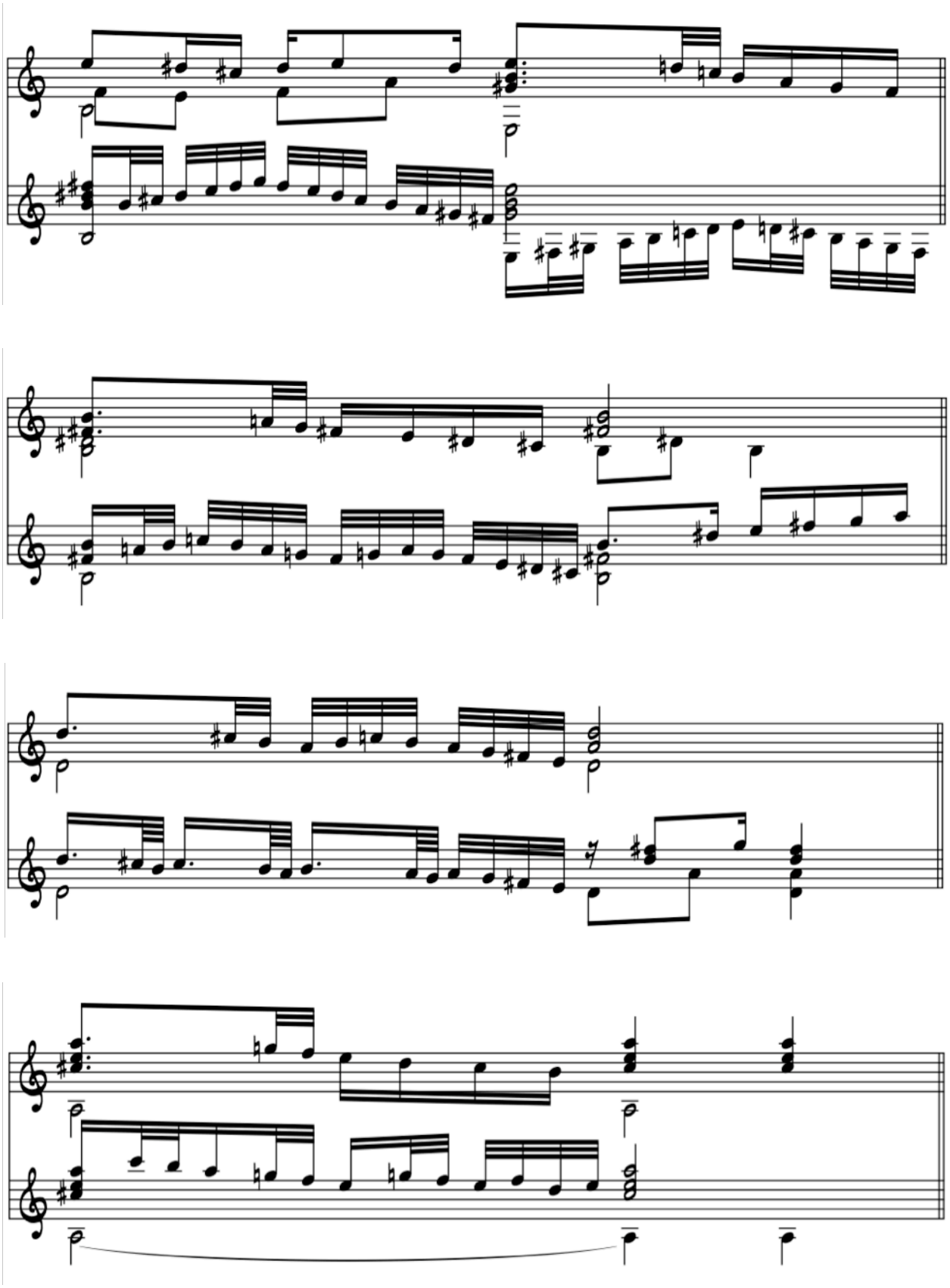


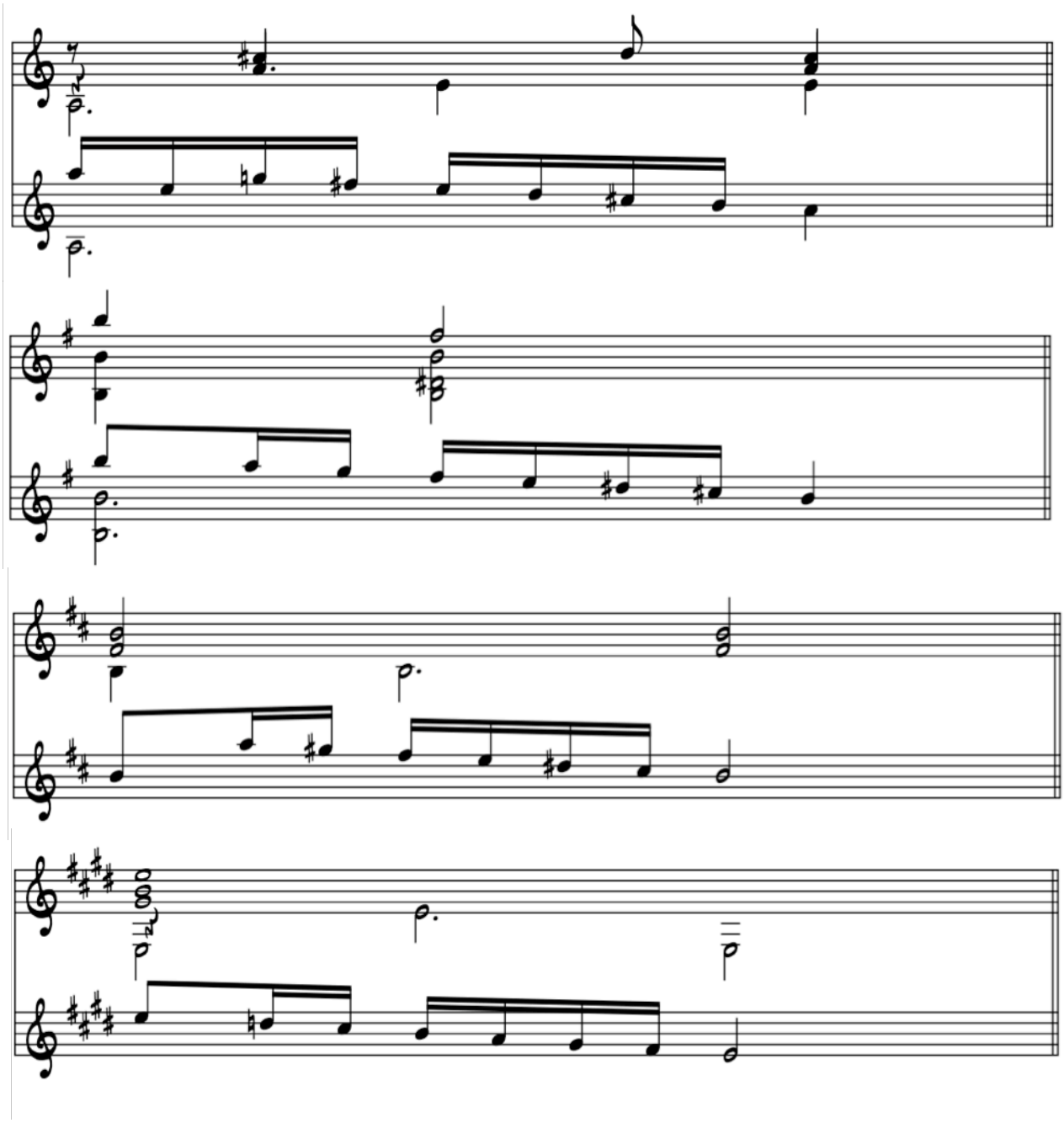
Cadential Divisions - other patterns



Examples taken from:

- Piper's Pavan, m. 42 and m. 50
- Solus Cum Sola (Pavan), m. 7 and m. 15
- Lachrimae Pavan, m. 7 and m. 15
- Earl of Derby's Galliard, m.7 and m. 18
- Mr Langton's Pavan, m. 7 and m. 15
- King of Denmark's Galliard ("The Battle Galliard"), m. 11 and m. 15

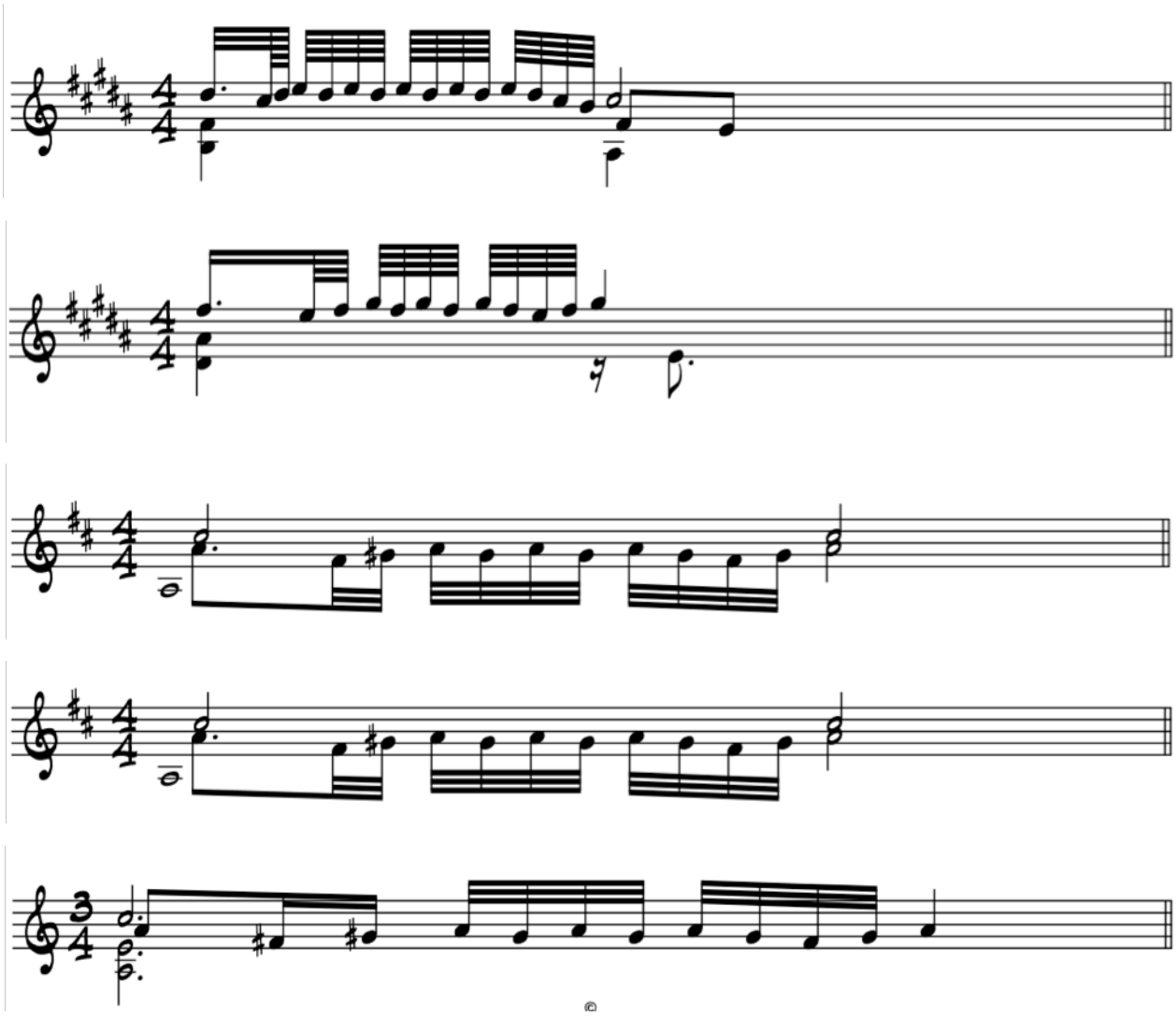




Examples taken from:

- Pipers Pavan
- Solus Cum Sola (Pavan)
- Mrs. Brigade Heethwood's Pavan
- Can She Excuse (Galliard)
- Dowlan's First Galliard
- Symthes Almayne
- Lady Laitan's Almain

Written Trills



Examples taken from:

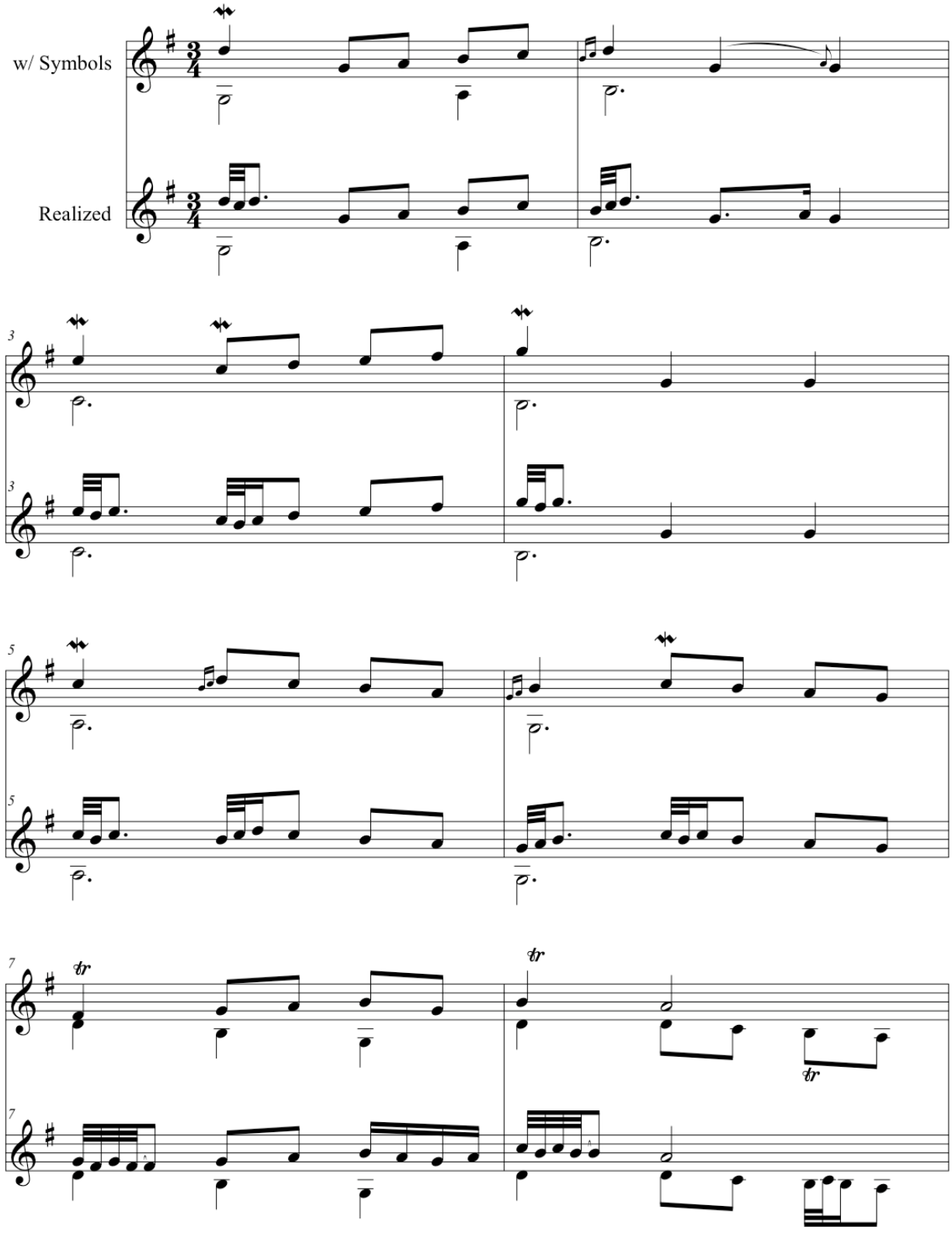
- Sir John Langton's Pavan, m. 9
- Sir John Langton's Pavan, m. 47
- Solas Cum Sola (Pavan), m. 24
- A Galliard on a Galliard by Daniel Batchelor, m. 9
- Can She Excuse (Galliard), m. 48

Appendix C

Bach's Minuet in G with Ornamentation

Explanative text

m. 1, beat 1:	Mordent for accent
m. 2, beat 2:	Forward movement/accent
m. 2, beat 2:	Springer to give some forward movement
m. 3, beat 1:	Motivic Unity, this measure is the as the first, accent first beat with a mordent
m. 3, beat 2:	Mordent placed after a melodic leap, placed for accent
m. 4, beat 1:	Accent the first beat for motivic unity (see m. 2, beat 1)
m. 5, beat 1:	Motivic unity (see m. 1, beat 1)
m. 5, beat 2:	Slide placed for forward movement and accent, adds variety to step-wise movement
m. 6, beat 1:	Mordent for accent and motivic unity (see m. 5, beat 1)
m. 6, beat 2:	Accent and motivic unity (see m. 5, beat 2), use of the slide instead of a mordent adds some variety
m. 7, beat 1:	Mid-phrase trill used for melodic decoration, and hints at the cadential trill to come
m. 7, beat 3:	Divisions added to fill intervals and add forward movement leading to the cadence
m. 8, beat 1:	Cadential trill delays the arrival of the harmony
m. 8, beat 3:	Mid-phrase trill added to lend forward movement, due to a lack of time it is performed as a reverse mordent
m. 9, beat 1:	See m. 1
m. 10, beat 1:	See m. 2
m. 10, beat 2:	Short appoggiatura accents the second beat; also provides motivic unity (see the second beat accent in mm. 3, 5 and 6)
m. 11, beat 1:	See m. 3
m. 12, beat 1:	Slide placed for accent, forward movement and motivic unity (see m. 4)
m. 12, beat 2:	Accent and motivic unity with the second beat accent, however, the bass voice is ornamented instead of the melody which adds variety
m. 13, beat 1:	Mordent for accent and motivic unity (see m. 5, beat 1)
m. 13, beat 2:	Motivic unity (see m. 5, beat 2)
m. 13, beat 3:	Cadential movement (V6/5 to I) is decorated with a mid-phrase trill which delays the arrival of the harmony
m. 14, beat 1:	Mordent for accent and motivic unity (see m. 13, beat 1)
m. 14, beat 2:	Slide added for motivic unity (see m. 13, beat 2)
m. 15, beat 1:	Mordent for accent and motivic unity (see m. 13, beat 1 and m. 14, beat 1)
m. 15, beat 2:	Trill for accent, motivic unity (second beat accent), and variety
m. 15, beat 3:	Cadential trill w/ an anticipatory termination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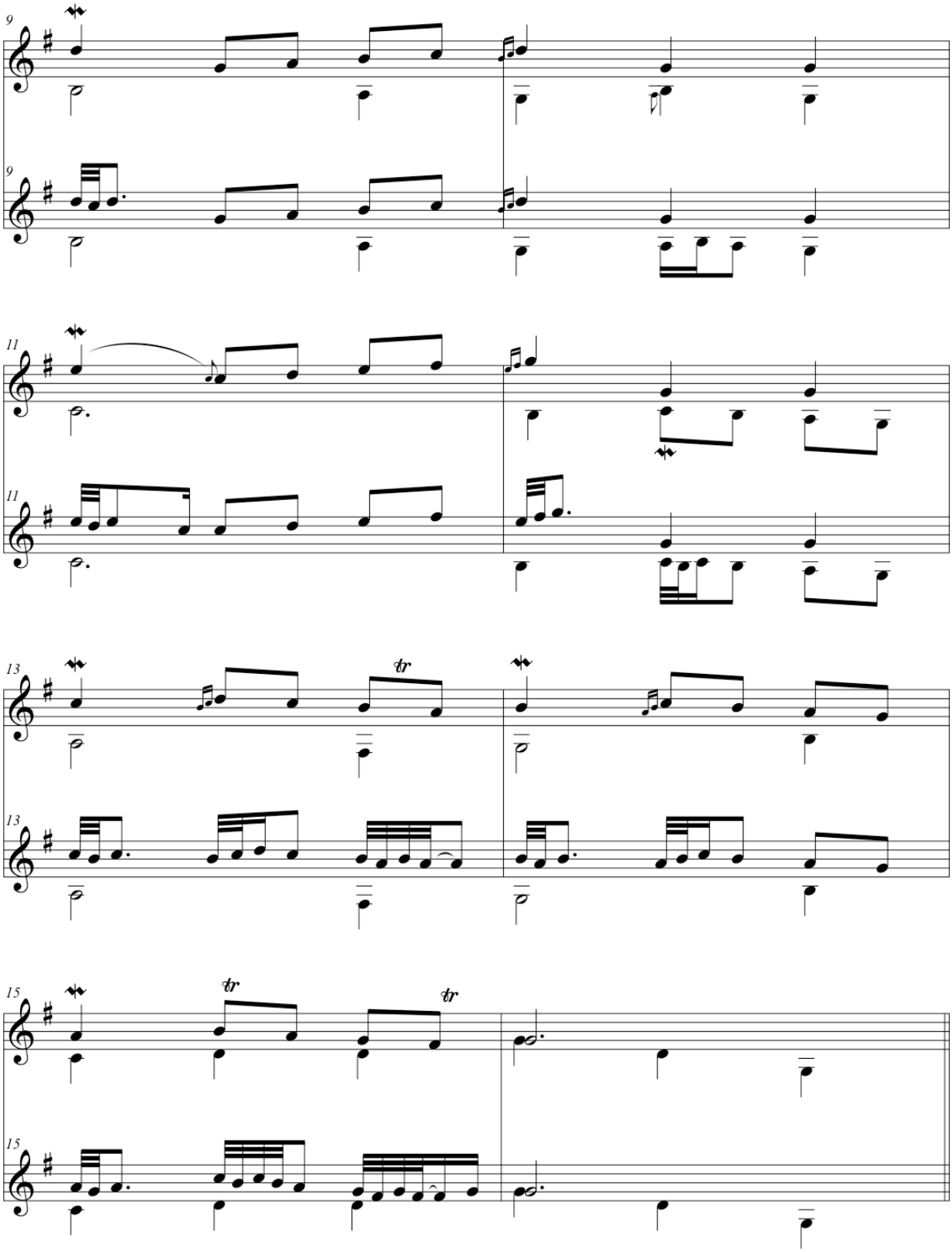
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