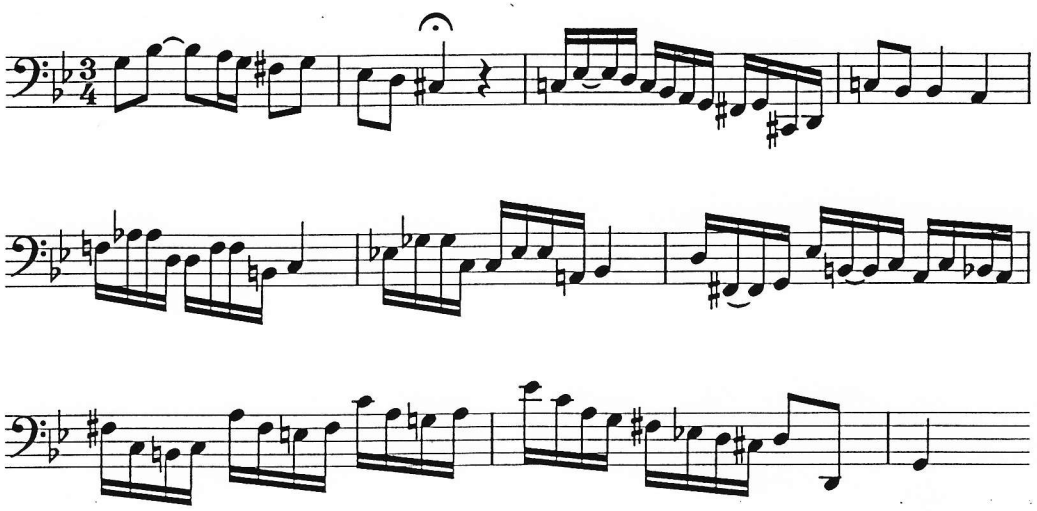
About the DEPARTURE POINT series...

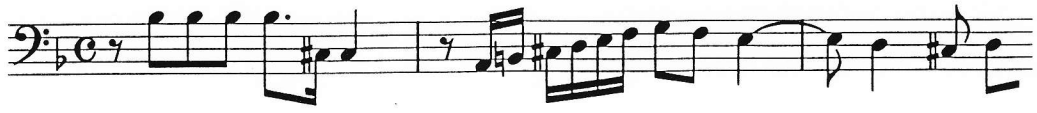
The three pieces that make up ***Departure Point*** are all based on fragments that have been borrowed from other composers. In all cases these fragments were left incomplete or unused at the time of the composer's death. The first piece, "Prelude," is based on the following unharmonized base line that is found in the *Klavierbüchlein* that J.S. Bach wrote for his son, Wilhelm Friedmann Bach.

J. S. Bach



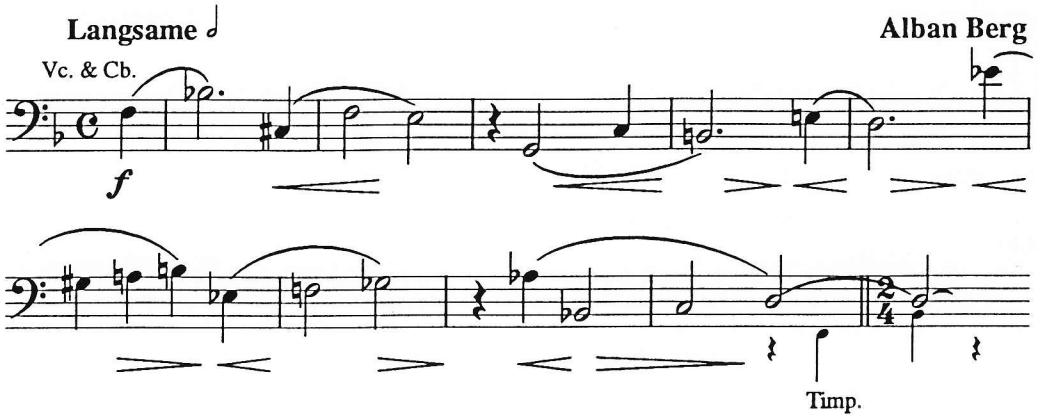
No. II, "Fugal Fantasia," works through a fugal subject that Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart chose not to use in his d minor String Quartet, K.421.

W. A. Mozart



The fantasy elements of Burge's treatment of this fugue subject are most notable in the large-scale sequential passages that alternate with the statements of Mozart's subject.

The final piece of this set is a "Passacaglia" that is built upon a base line composed by Alban Berg. Berg himself had constructed this passage with an orchestral passacaglia treatment of it in mind and even left behind a fairly extensive preliminary pencil sketch of the work he hoped to write.



The Burge "Passacaglia" begins with a loud introductory section that places richly-coloured chords above two statements of the Berg bass line (the second of which is actually played in reverse). This introduction gradually fades into the first of 24 variations. The piece's overall focus is of a constantly increasing intensity that is directed towards the two returns of the chordal introduction's material that occurs at variation 13 and 24.

JB/94

About the composer...

John Burge was born in Dryden, Ontario, in 1961. He holds degrees from the University of Toronto and the University of British Columbia where his composition professors included John Beckwith, Walter Buczynski, Stephen Chatman, John Hawkins and Derek Holman. Since 1987 he has been teaching at the School of Music, Queen's University.

Burge's composition output is marked by a number of major choral works including ***Mass for Prisoners of Conscience,*** a seventy-five minute work for three soloists, choir and chamber orchestra, ***Thank You God***, an eight-movement prayer cycle for children's choir and chamber orchestra and a setting of Margaret Avison's anti-war poem, ***That we may not Lose Loss***, for solo soprano, choir and symphony orchestra. His instrumental music is quite often also characterized by the same lyrical quality that is found in his choral music. While Burge has written many choral works that include organ accompaniments and his published output includes the short organ work, ***Dance***, ***Departure Point*** is his first major composition for the organ.

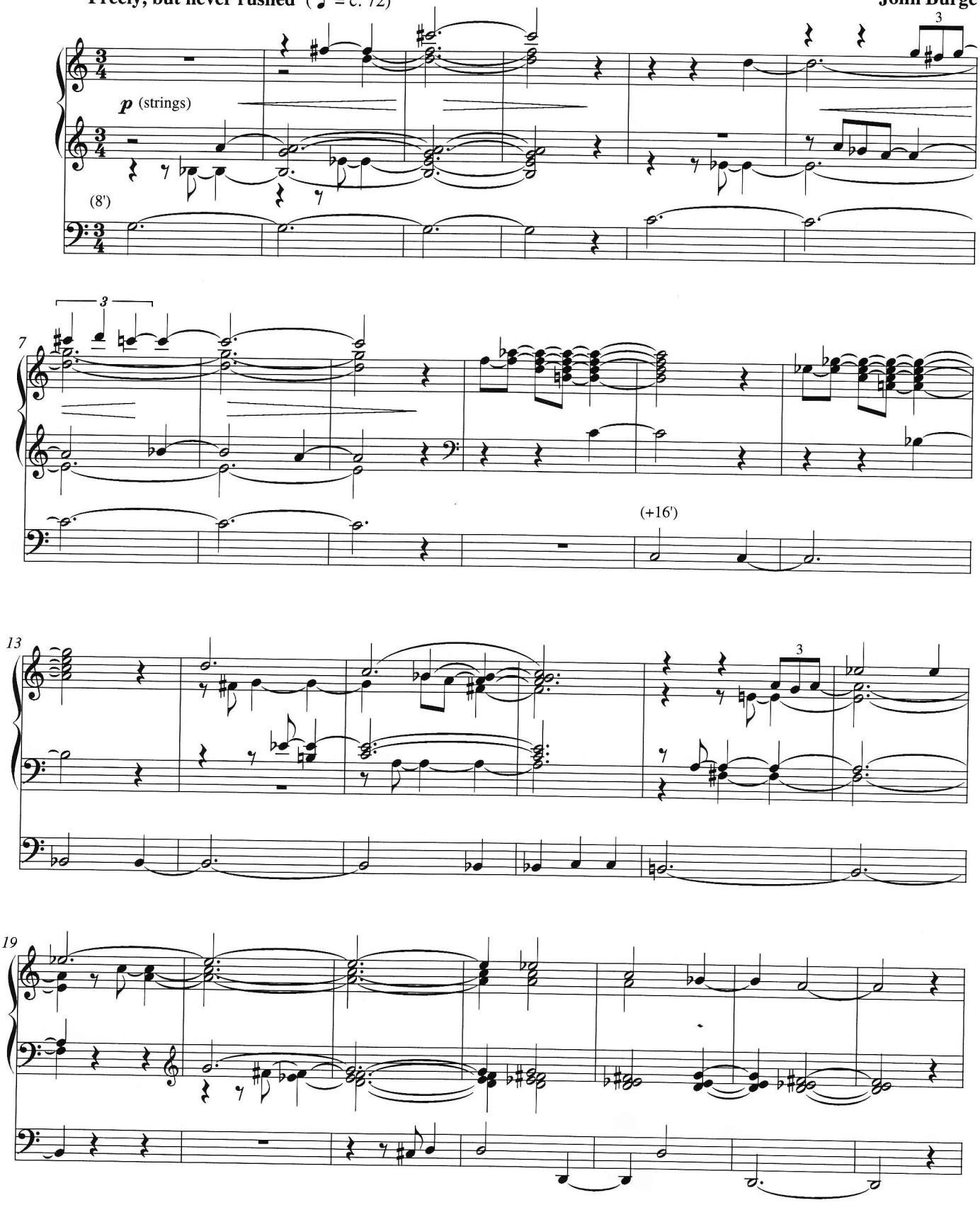
DEPARTURE POINT

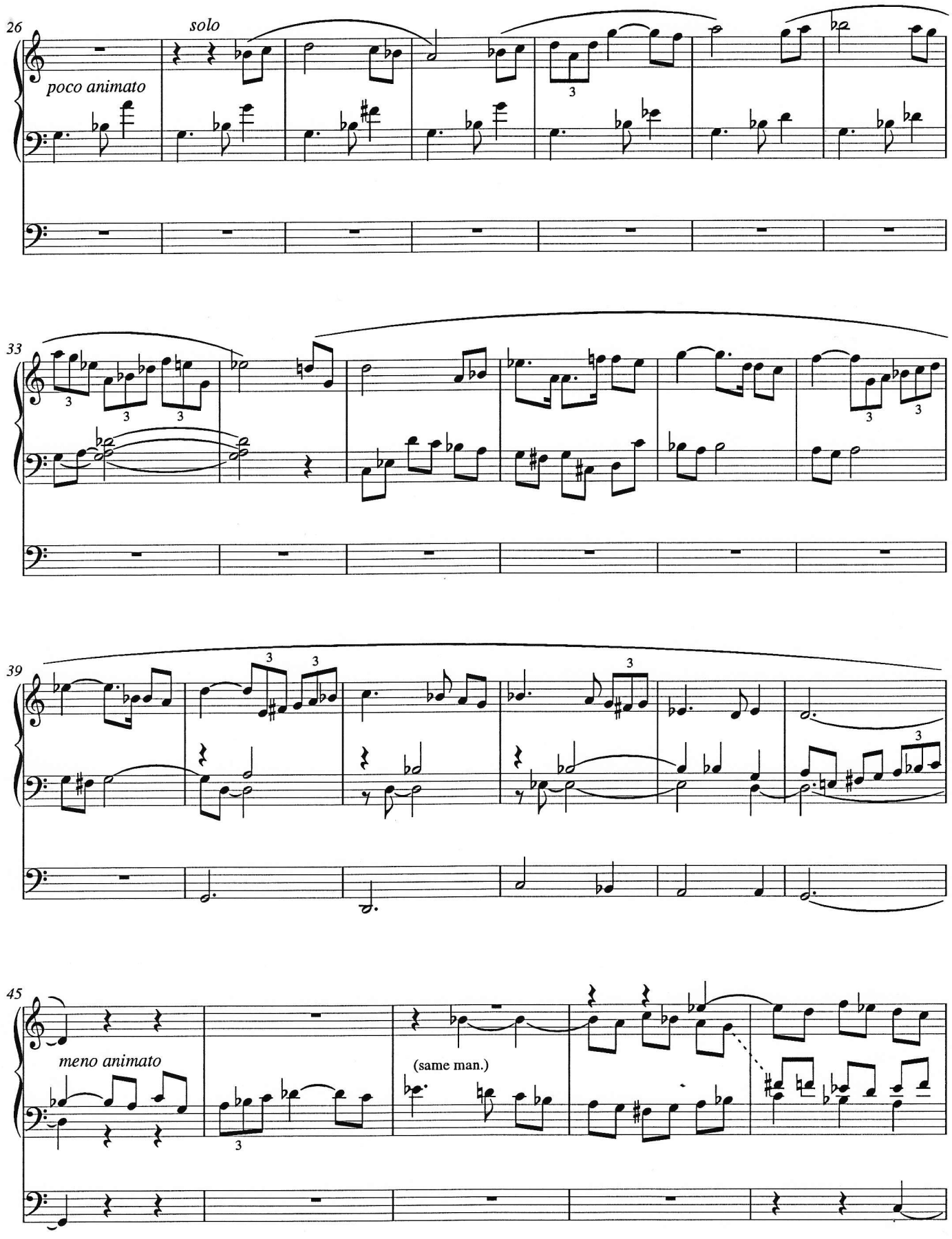
I. PRELUDE

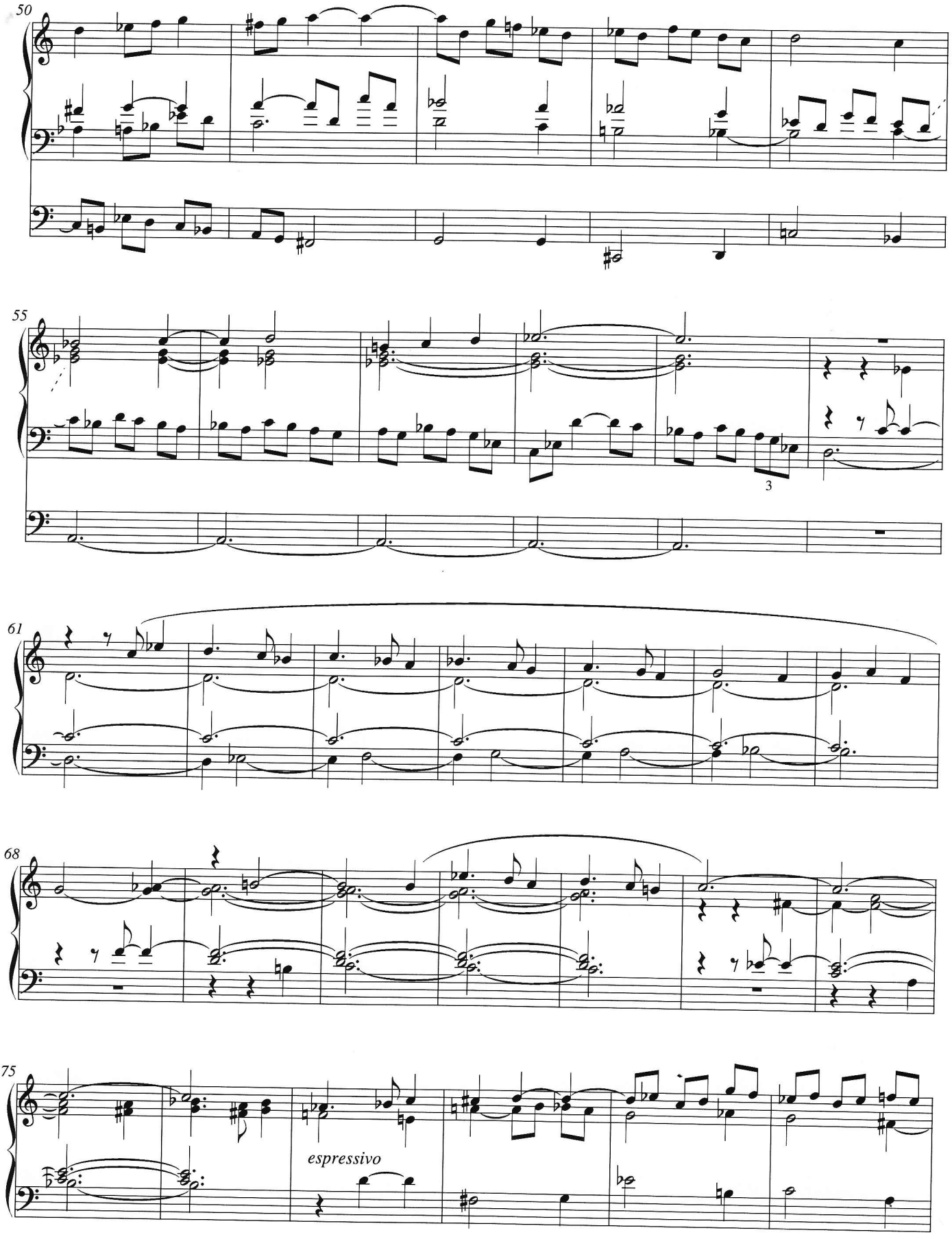
Based on a Manuscript Fragment Composed by J. S. Bach

Freely, but never rushed (♩ = c. 72)

John Burge




26
solo
poco animato
33
39
45
meno animato
(same man.)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