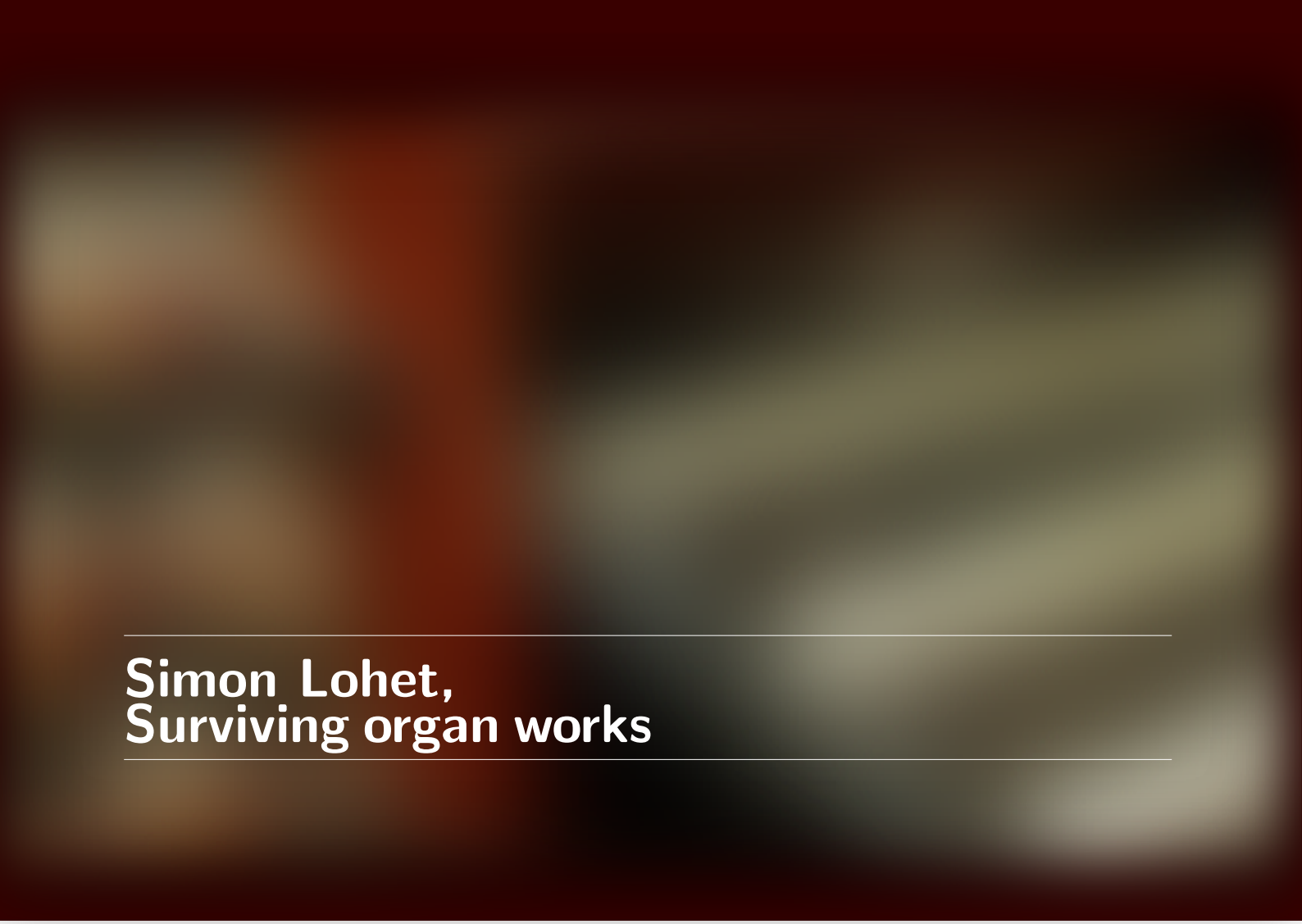

Simon Lohet, Surviving organ works

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)
2 Mus. pr. 64
Bayerische
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Partitura Organum

Fugas sequentes à Clarissimo Viro, Aulæ Wirtembergicæ quondam mihi non nulla intercessit familiaritas, olim comgratiosè inserviendo, hûc apponere placuit,

Fuga Prima.

51.

Fuga Secunda.

52.

Organœdo celeberrimo, Domino SIMONE LOHET, cum quo municatas, in honorificam ipsius memoriam, aliis quæ Musices amatori non displicebunt.

Simon Lohet,
Surviving organ works

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2016, Partitura Organum

Introduction

Simon Lohet (Loxhay) (c. 1550 – 1611) was a Flemish composer, possibly born in Maastricht. During his live he was mostly active in Germany. He was organist of the Württemberg court of count Louis VI. Lohet made several trips to the Low Countries in the 1570s and to Venice in 1581 to buy instruments and music. In 1601 he retired from his post. He remained in Stuttgart until his death in summer 1611.

All of Lohet's known works are contained in Johann Woltz's Nova musices organicae tabulatura (Basel, 1617). The bulk of his small surviving output consists of twenty keyboard fugues, which are also his most historically important works. Most of them are short, averaging 20-25 bars, and eight are monothematic, exploring a single subject in a single section. They frequently use stretto entries, diminution and other contrapuntal devices, characteristic for the classic fugue of the late Baroque. It seems almost unbelievable the fugues were written almost a 100 years before Bach was born. Bringing these fugues and the rest of Lohet's known output together in a freely available edition, hopefully contributes to a better and wider understanding of the historical importance of Lohet's work.

The source of these fugues is Johann Woltz's Nova musices organicae tabulatura (Basel, 1617). Woltz introduces the fugues with these words: "Fugas sequentes a Clarissimo Viro, Aulae Wirtembergicae quondam Organoedo celeberrimo, Domino Simone Lohet, cum quo mihi non nulla intercessit familiaritas, olim communicatas, in honorificam ipsius memoriam, aliis gratiose inserviendo, hic apponere placuit, que Musices amatori non displicebunt", which roughly translate as: "It is a pleasure to append hereto the following fugues, which music lovers will enjoy, communicated some time ago by the famous Mr. Simon Lohet, once the very celebrated court organist at Würtemberg, to honour his memory.". Woltz's edition is notated using German tablature. A characteristic of German organ tabulature is that voice crossings are very easy to notate. In our modern notation voice crossings quickly become messy. Where applicable, in this edition crossing voices cross staves as well. These crossings are indicated by small lines. That way the individual voices can still be followed, but the score is more easily playable. Another characteristic of Woltz's edition is that there is no indication whether the bass-part should be played on the pedals or not. In some of Lohet's pieces, however, the pedals can be used to great effect. To facilitate pedal playing, some of the pieces are edited using three staves. However, all pieces are available as manualiter as well.

Lohet's music is not only a foreshadowing of what was to come, it is firmly rooted in it's own time as well. The first fugue is undeniably a Renaissance keyboard work. It is more dance like than it is a fugue, with some surprising rythms. The harmonic progression in the second fugue sometimes sounds a bit strange to our 'modern' ears. A further

characteristics of these fugues is the frequent use of parallel fifths and octaves. The third, fourth and fifth fugue show allready several examples of this. In keyboard music they were probably not as 'forbidden' in Lohet's days as they were to become in the contrapuntal writing of the Baroque.

Lohet's Quinta Fuga (this edition follows the designation in the original Edition, instead of naming it Fuga Quinta) shows its Renaissance roots more than the previous three. It uses frequent repeated chords, a device we nowadays don't associate with the contrapuntal style of a fugue. And it uses (again) frequent parallel fifths and octaves. These are either a characteristic for the instrumental music of the period, or Lohet was (in this respect) a very bad composer. Interesting is also the e flat in the bass voice in bar 43 against the d in the alto voice. Perhaps an error in voice leading by Lohet, but it sure results in a colourfull harmony.

The sixth fugue, though short, uses contrapuntal devices as stretto and dimunition and combines them as well. In that respect it is more modern than the fifth fugue. The harmonic progression though is in places still quite 'old'.

Lohet's Septima Fuga is actually two small fugues in one piece. Two different (but related) themes each get an exposition and then the fugue is over. Yet it is a pleasant dance like piece, like most of these fugues from Lohet.

Fuga Octava is another dance-like fugue of Lohet. Apart from some unusual (to our 'modern' ears) harmonic progressions, this piece could have been written a 100 years later than it actually was.

Lohet's Nona fuga has a far more subdued character than most of the preceeding fugues. It can be played with use of the pedals. But this edition contains a manualiter version as well.

The tenth fugue is a lively piece. It's not exactly a mono thematic fugue, as there are four different segments discernable. Actually quite an achievement for a piece of only 46 bars.

Playing Undecima Fuga one wonders wether Bach knew the fugues of Lohet. The theme of the fugue BWV 878 is the same as the theme of Undecima Fuga. And Bach uses some of the same stretto constructions Lohet used in his fugue. Of course, Lohet's fugue is not nearly as elaborate as BWV 878, yet we can only admire the man who wrote this somewhere before 1600.

The twelfth fugue is a slow flowing piece. It's very reminisence of a Kyrie by da Palestrina: long lines intertwine gracefully with each other, in slowly changing harmonies.

The thirteenth fugue is more dance like than the preceeding fugue with its long lines. The fourteenth fugue is again a calm flowing piece. It makes extensive use of syncopation, which makes a nice 'wobly' effect in the flow of the music. In his fiftheenth fugue Lohet experiments with inversion. After the first statement of the first theme, it is immediately answered by its inversion. The third and fourth statement of the theme are respectively its inversion and rectus form in stretto. After that Lohet repeats the same proces with different point at which he starts the stretto. And that's just

the first theme. The second theme gets more or less the same treatment, with (partly) inversion and different points at which the stretto starts. All in all quite elaborate and dense contrapunt.

The sixteenth fugue has no less then three different themes. But they all do not get more than one exposition and then the fugue is over. Interesting is that in the first exposition Lohet emplois again inversion: the seond and fourth entrance of the theme, have the theme inverted. The 17th fugue is a mono thematic fugue and an intricate one. In it Lohet explores the different ways in which the theme and its inversion can be combined. The theme overlaps in different ways with itself, with its inversion and the inversion with the inversion. The voices in this fugue are quite far apart. Unless Lohet had really large hands, he must have used pedals to play this fugue.

The eighteenth fugue is again some dense contrapuntal writing. The first part of the fugue is setup as a mono thematic fugue. Somewhere around twothird of the piece it changes in a double fugue. In the original edition the alto and tenor voice play the second theme in unisono. This could be an editorial error. But since there is no other source, there is no way to know for sure. The nineteenth fugue is again a mono thematic fugue. There is hardly a measure where the theme is not present in one of the voices. In atmosphere it is very much like the seventheenth fugue. The twentieth and last fugue consists of two sections, each with a fugal treatment of a different theme. The first section is more strict then the second.

Apart from the 20 fugues, there are five more pieces. The first, Canzona is really a fugue in much the same style as most of his 20 fugues. Perhaps it is called canzona, because of it's sing-like character. Lohet's transcription of the motet "Media vita in morte" has the main melody in whole notes in the bass voice. Lohet's composition on the melody of psalm 9 ("De tout mon coeur") is a nice example of dense renaissance contrapuntal writing. Each stanza of the choral gets a fugual treatment, often in stretto. The harmony of the last beat of bar 16 sounds very modern, but it's really there in the original edition.

Lohet's compositions on the melody of psalm 51 and psalm 125 are not based on the melodies of those psalms as we know them. Rather, they are based on the melodies composed by Matthäus Greiter (1495 – 1550), the Kantor of the Strassburg cathedral. The compositions sound like they were originally written for voices. The composition on psalm 51 is a more simple composition than the composition on the melody of psalm 8. It has nevertheless some surprises: parallel octaves and quints appear frequently and there are some colourful dissonants that would have been hard to sing. So perhaps it's a pure instrumental composition after all. The last piece of Lohet is a four voice treatment of Psalm 125. The last chord of bar 22 is probably an error, as it is strangely dissonant. It is however not listed in the errata in the original publication of Woltz. Present edition features a more consonant chord, with a footnote indicating the original.

Most of the accidentals in this edition are in the source as well. In a few cases, where an accidental is probably implied by its use in one of the other voices, the accidental is added in brackets.

The works in present Edition upon material freely provided by the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in digital form:
http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/ db/0005/bsb00050860/images/.

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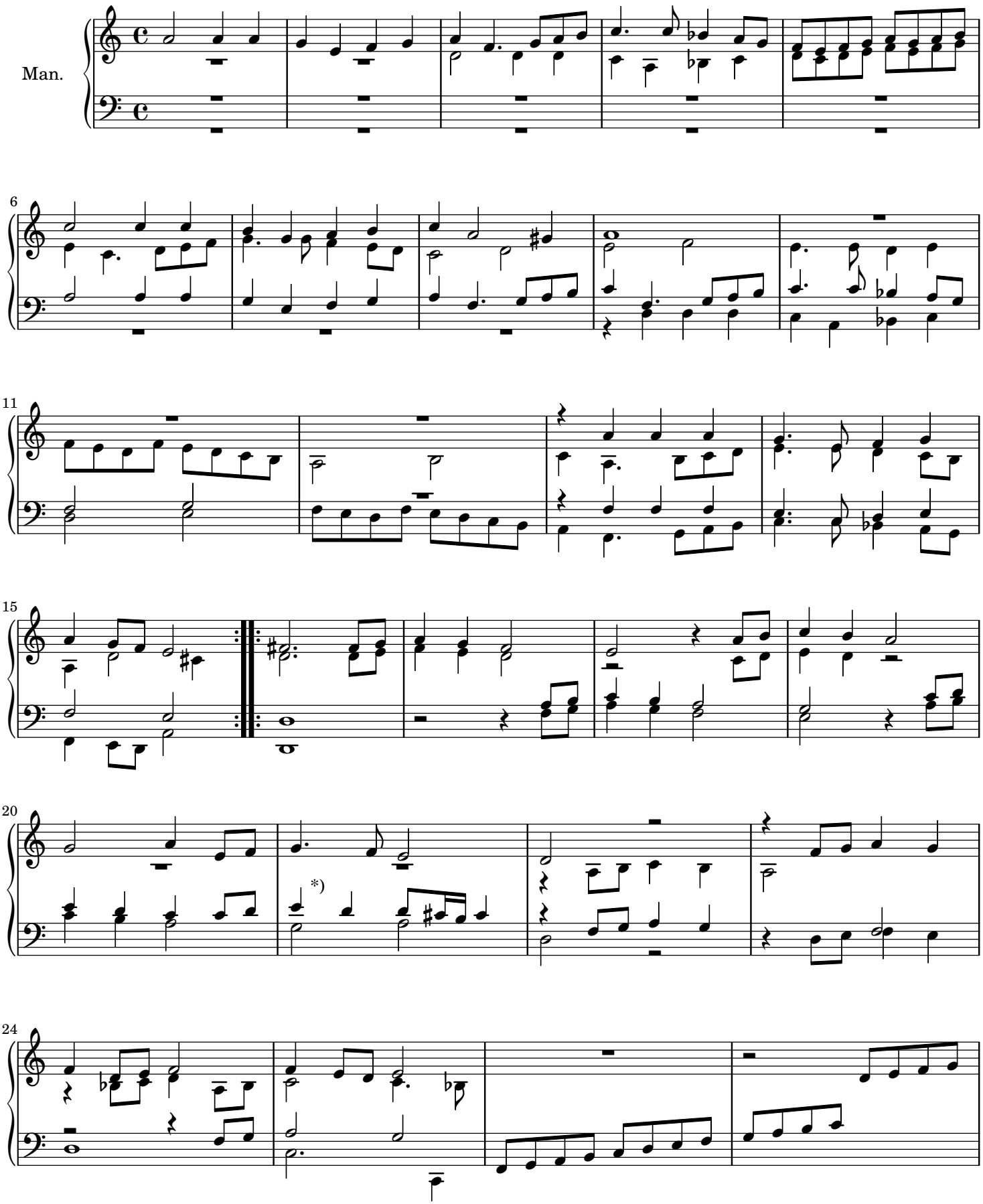
Fuga Prima

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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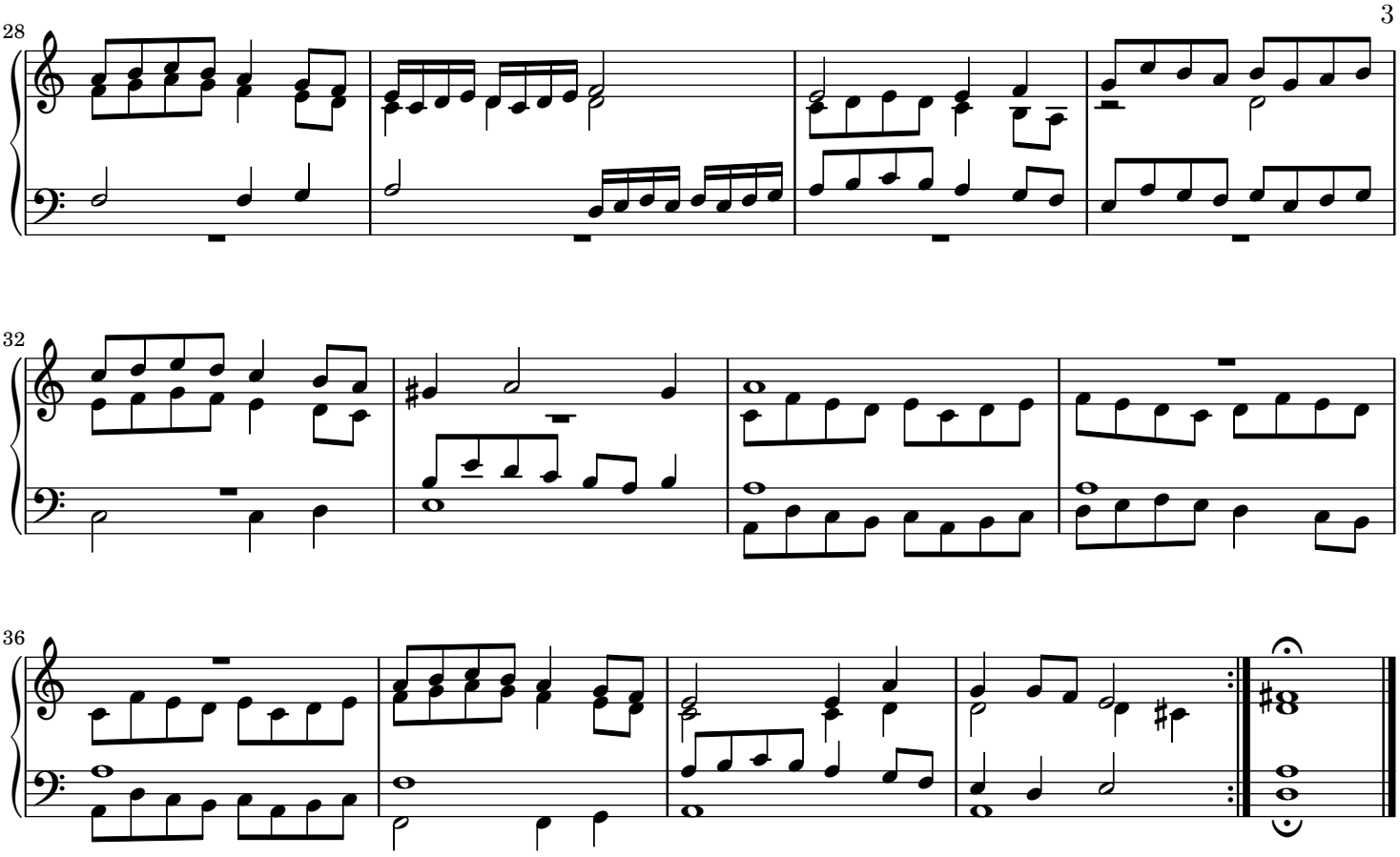

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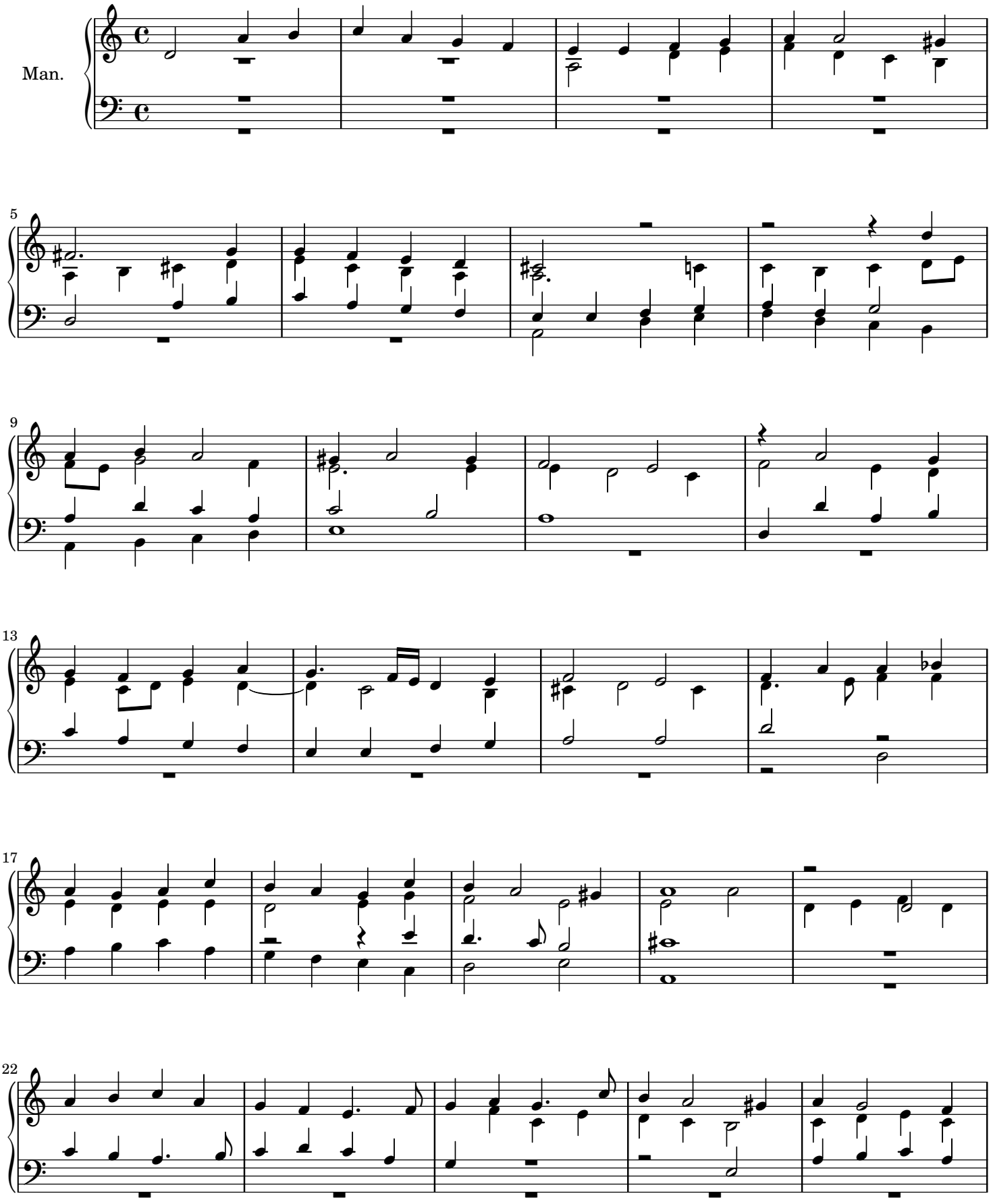
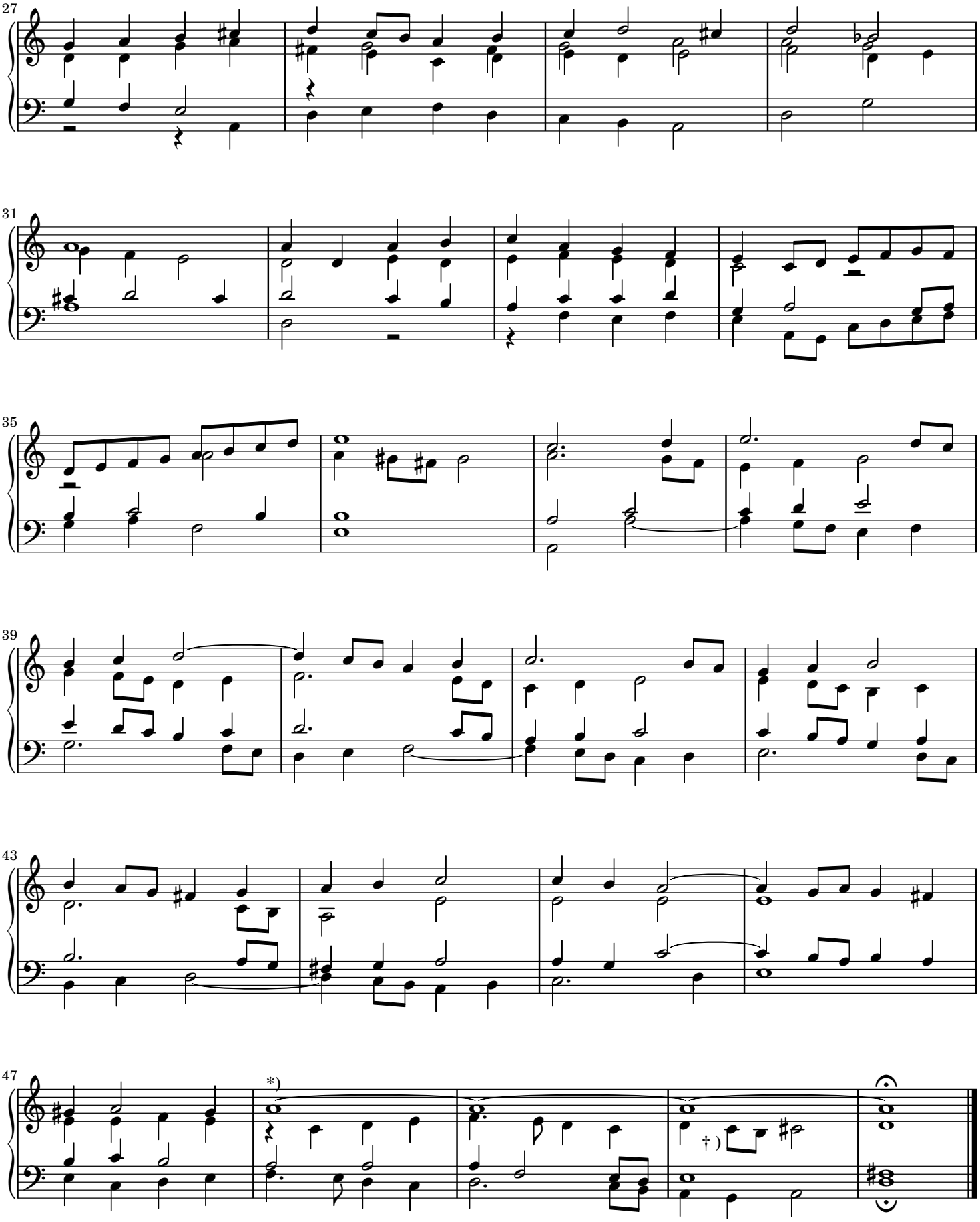
Fuga Secunda

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)





**) Not tied in source.*
†) Half note in source.

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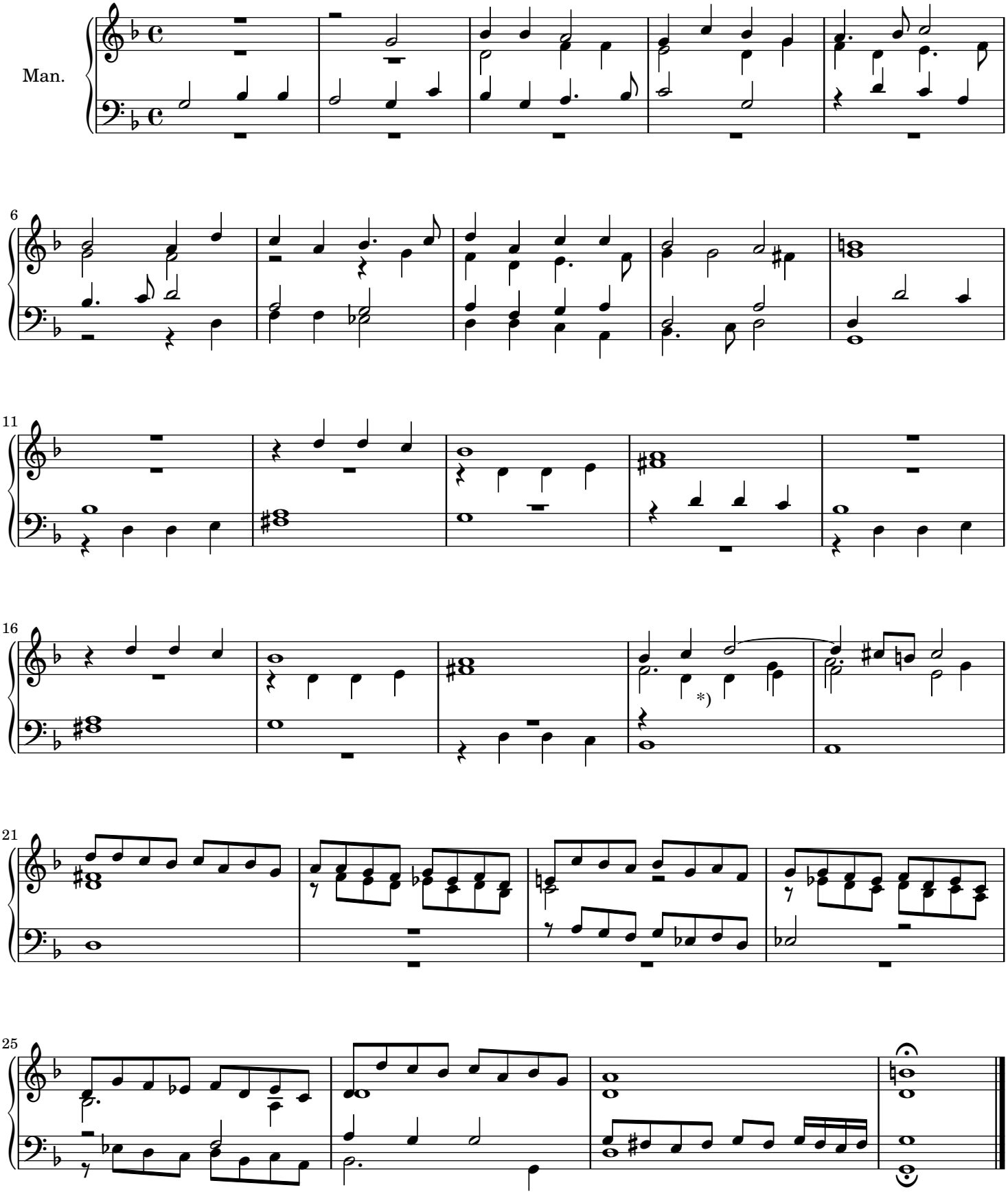
Fuga Tertia

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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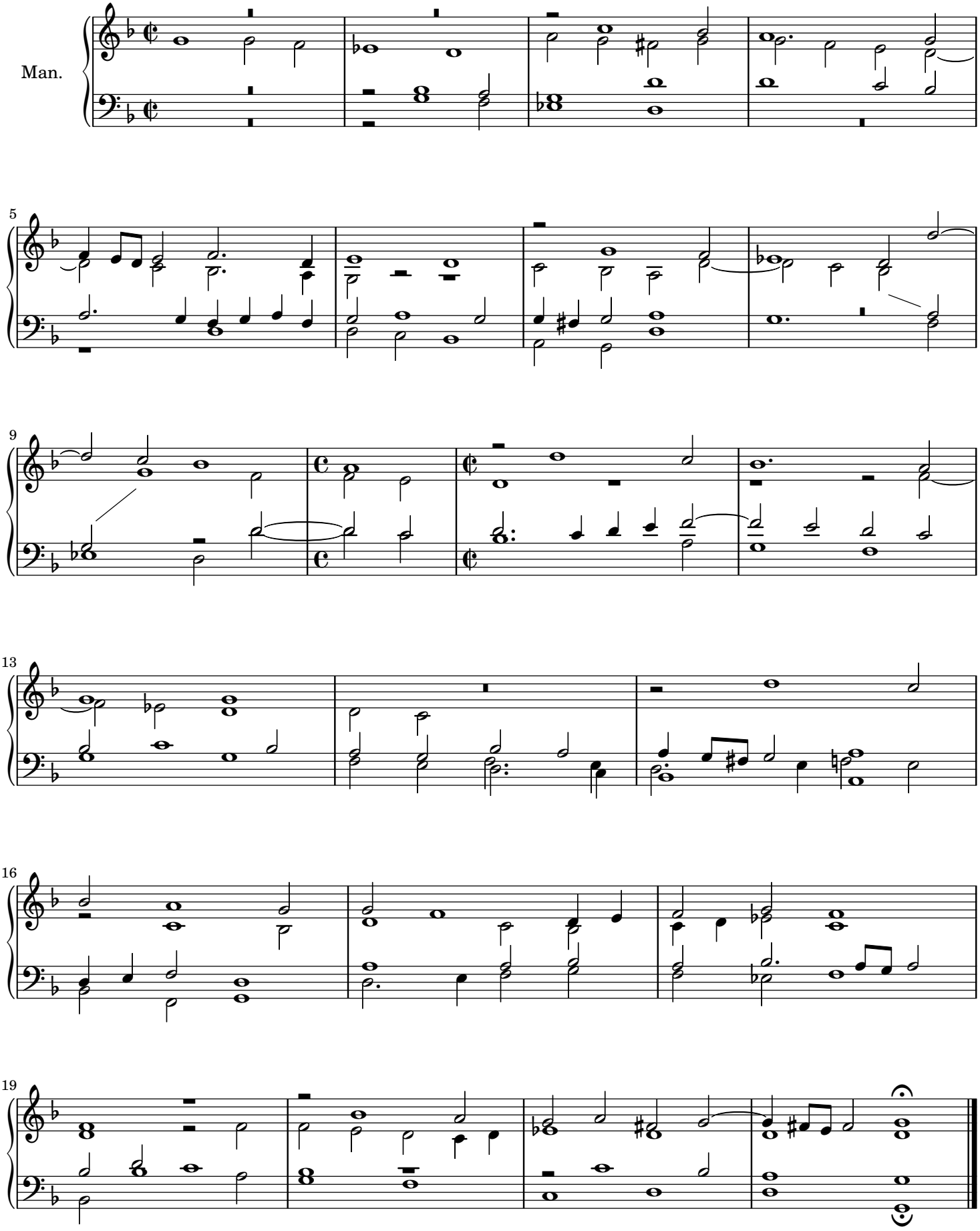
Quarta Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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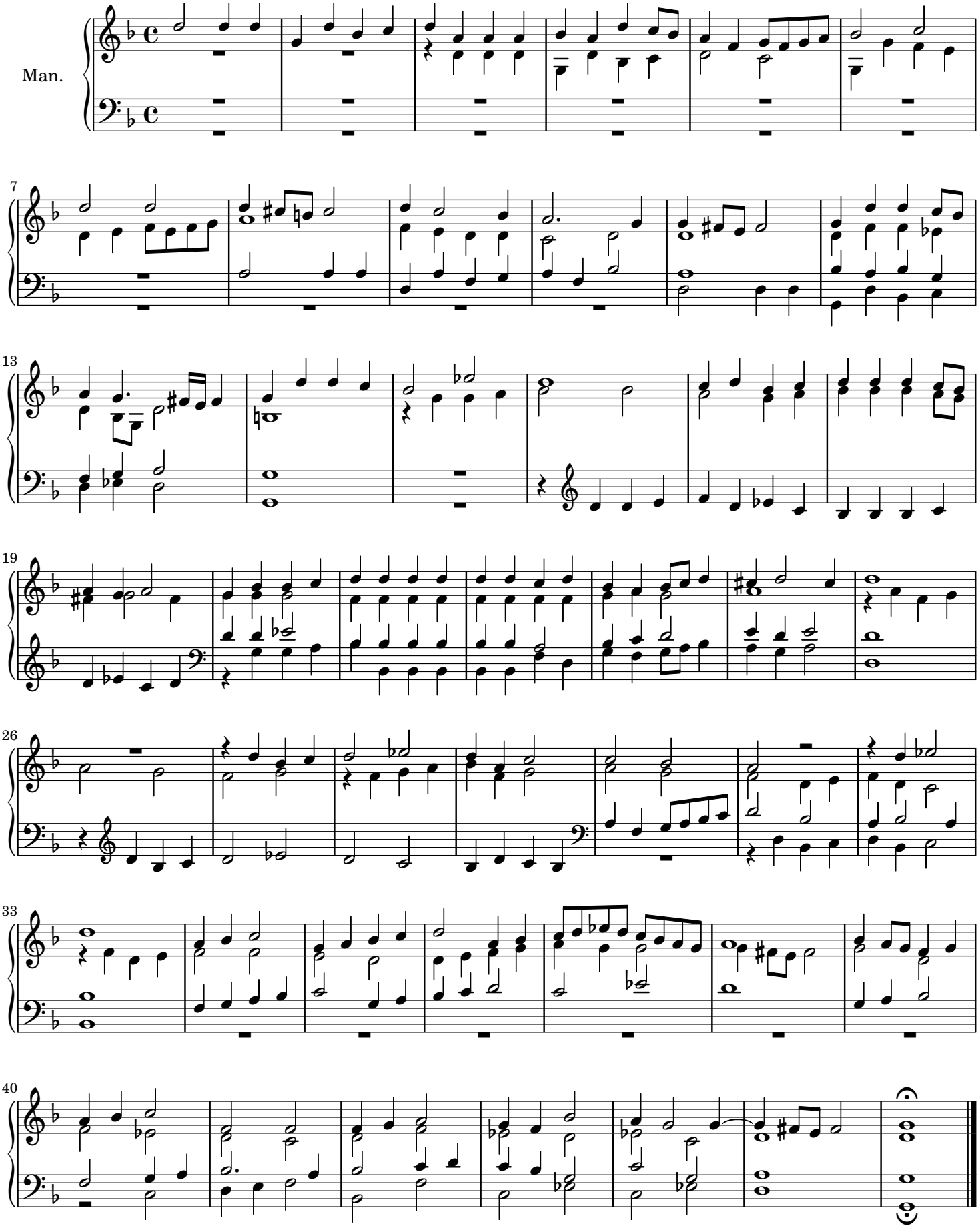
Quinta Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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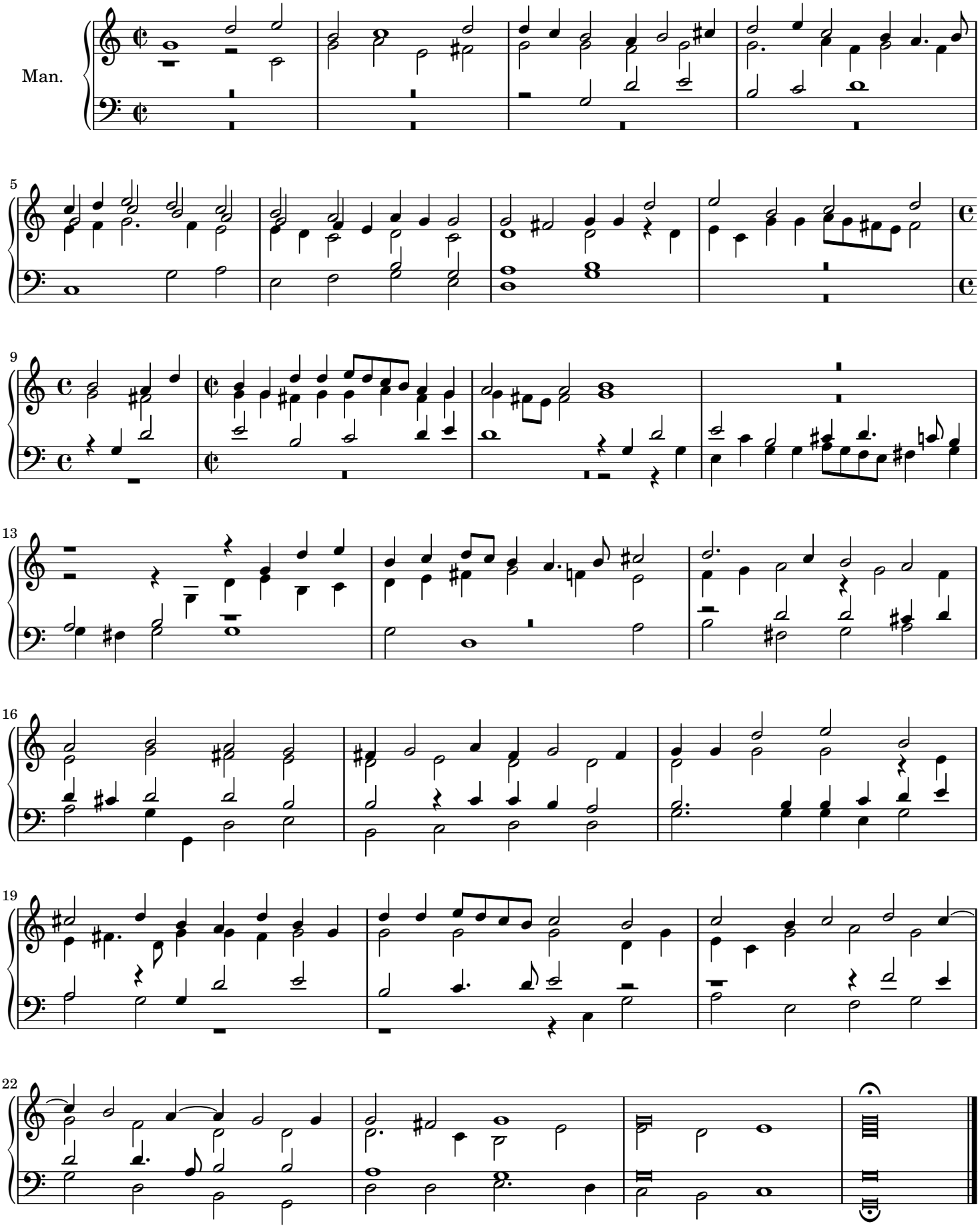
Sexta Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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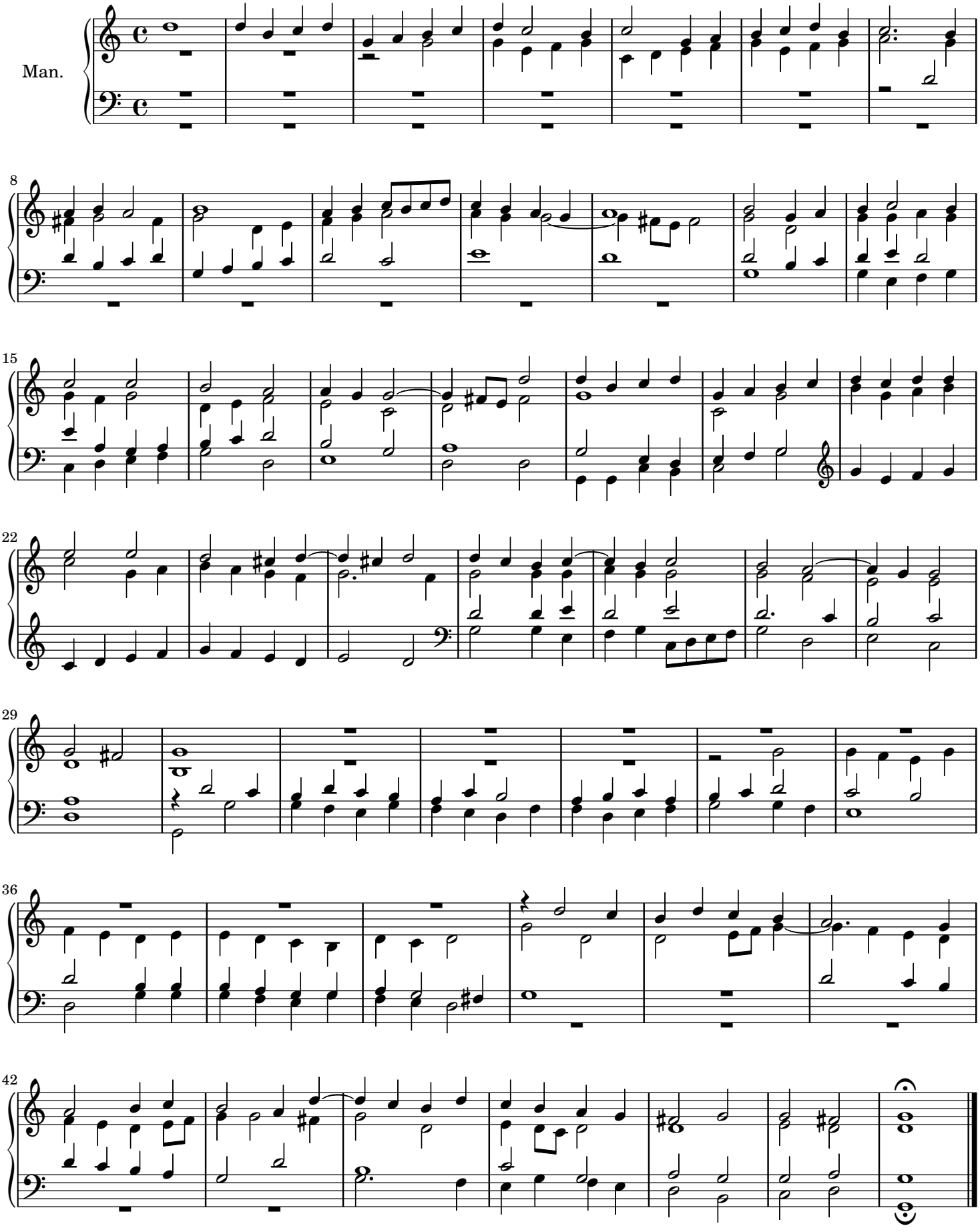
Septima Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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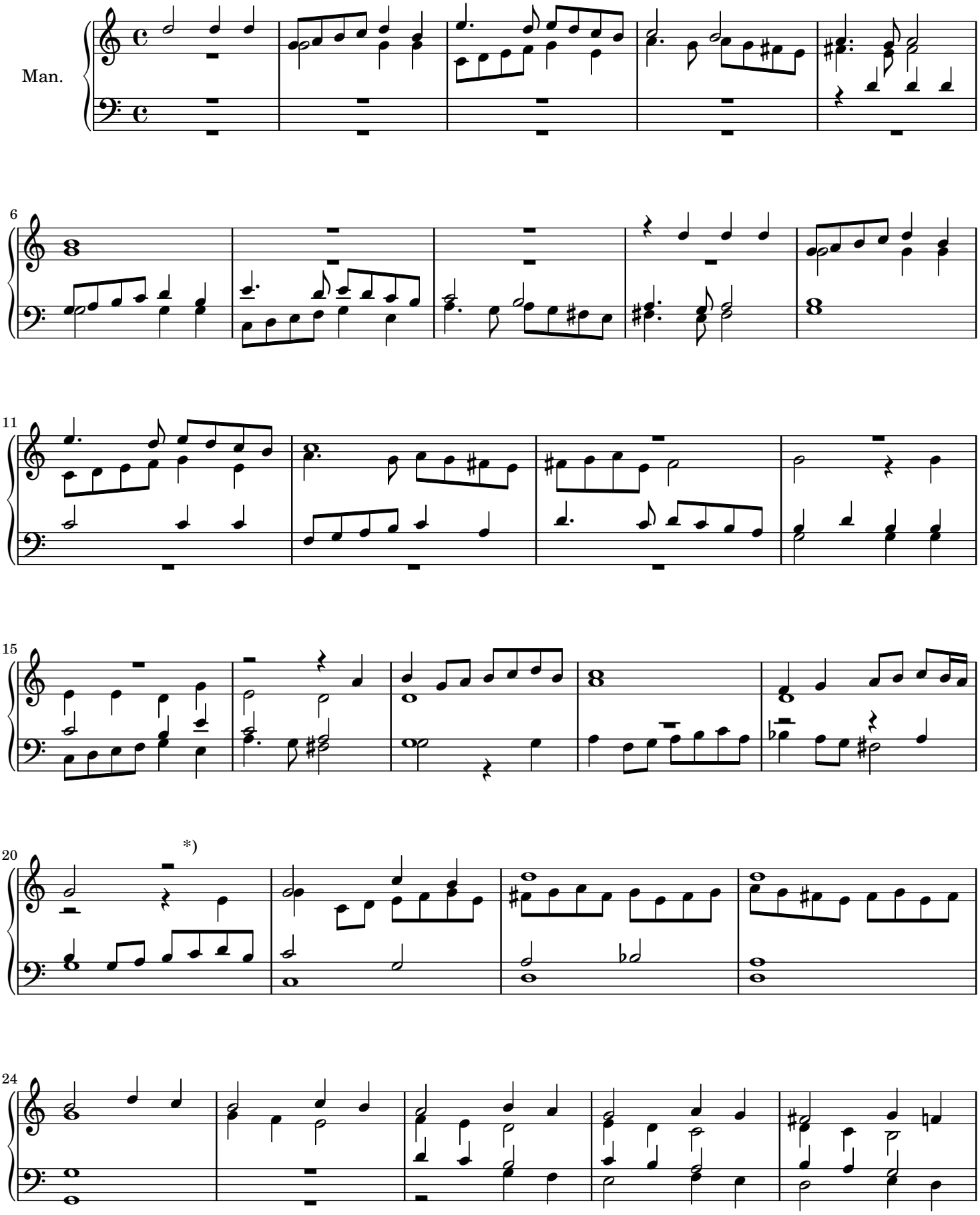
Octava Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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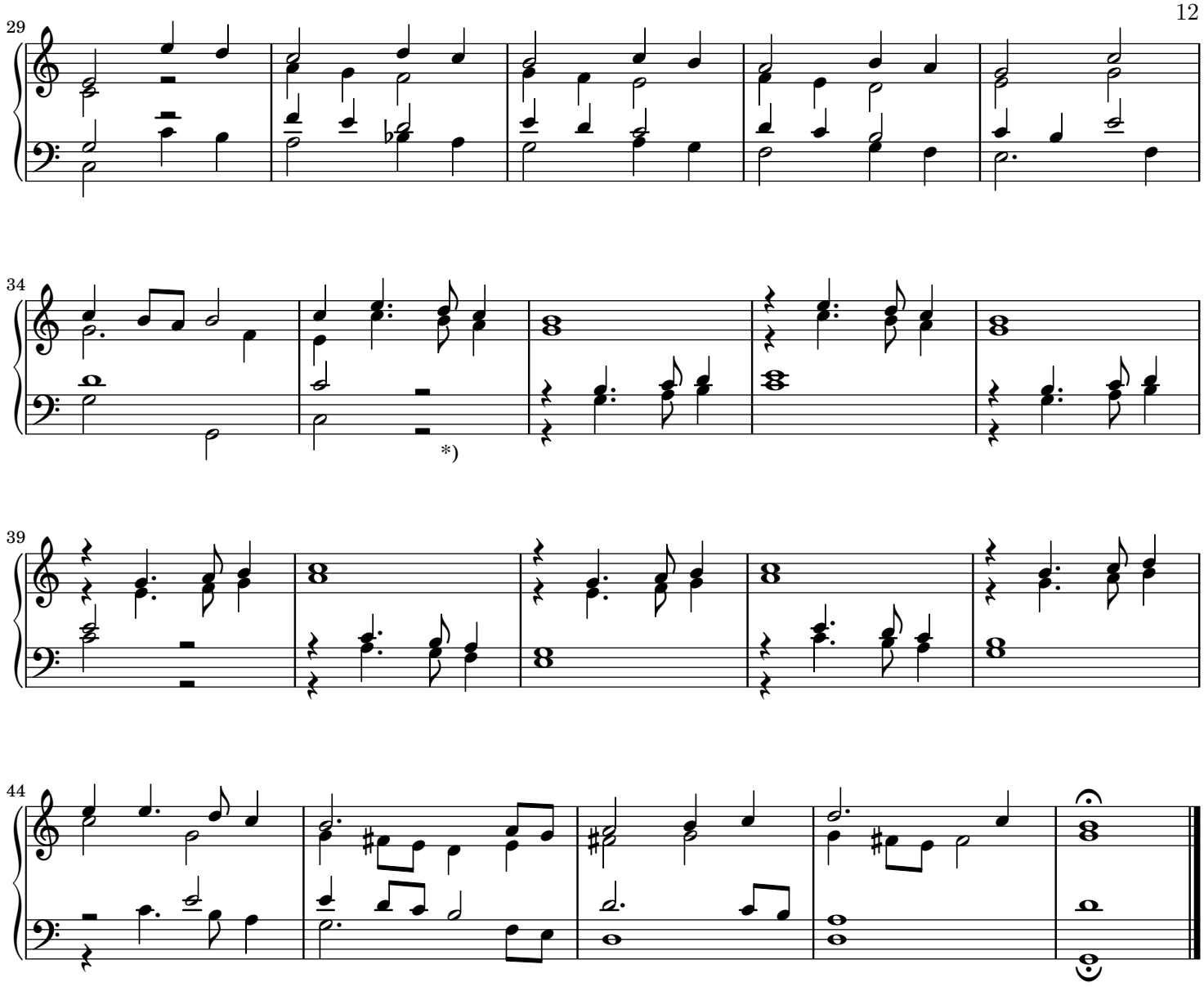

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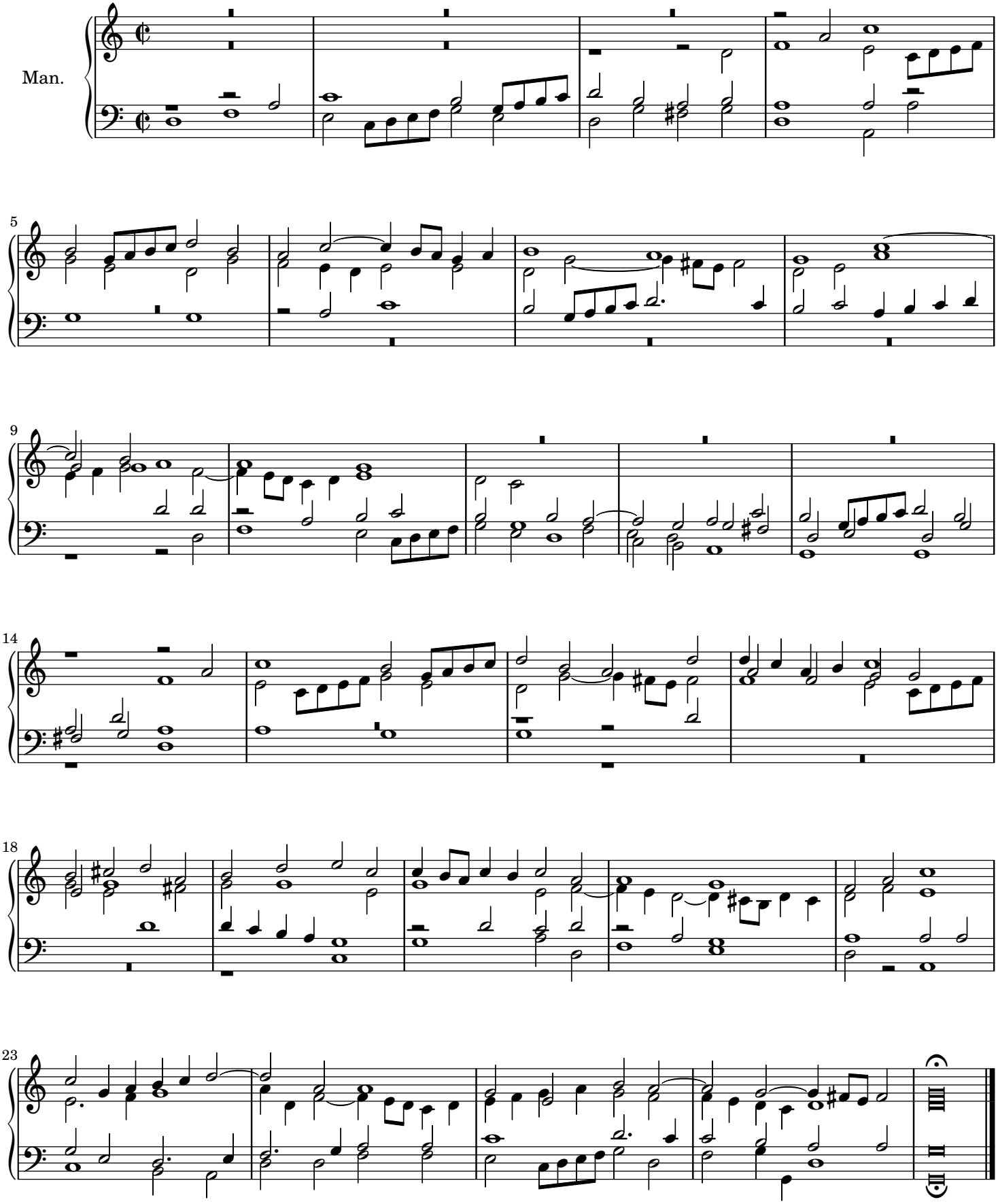
Nona Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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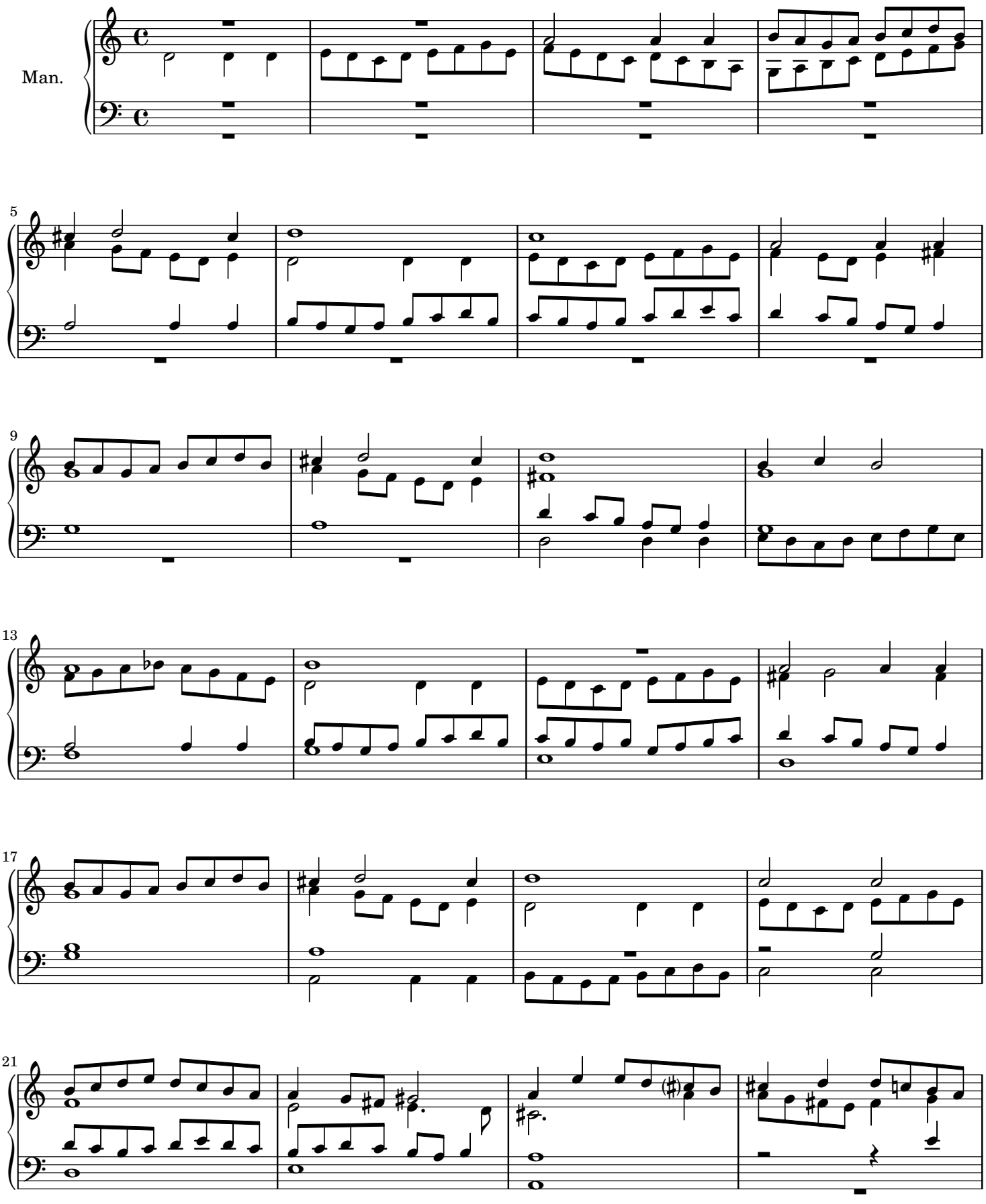
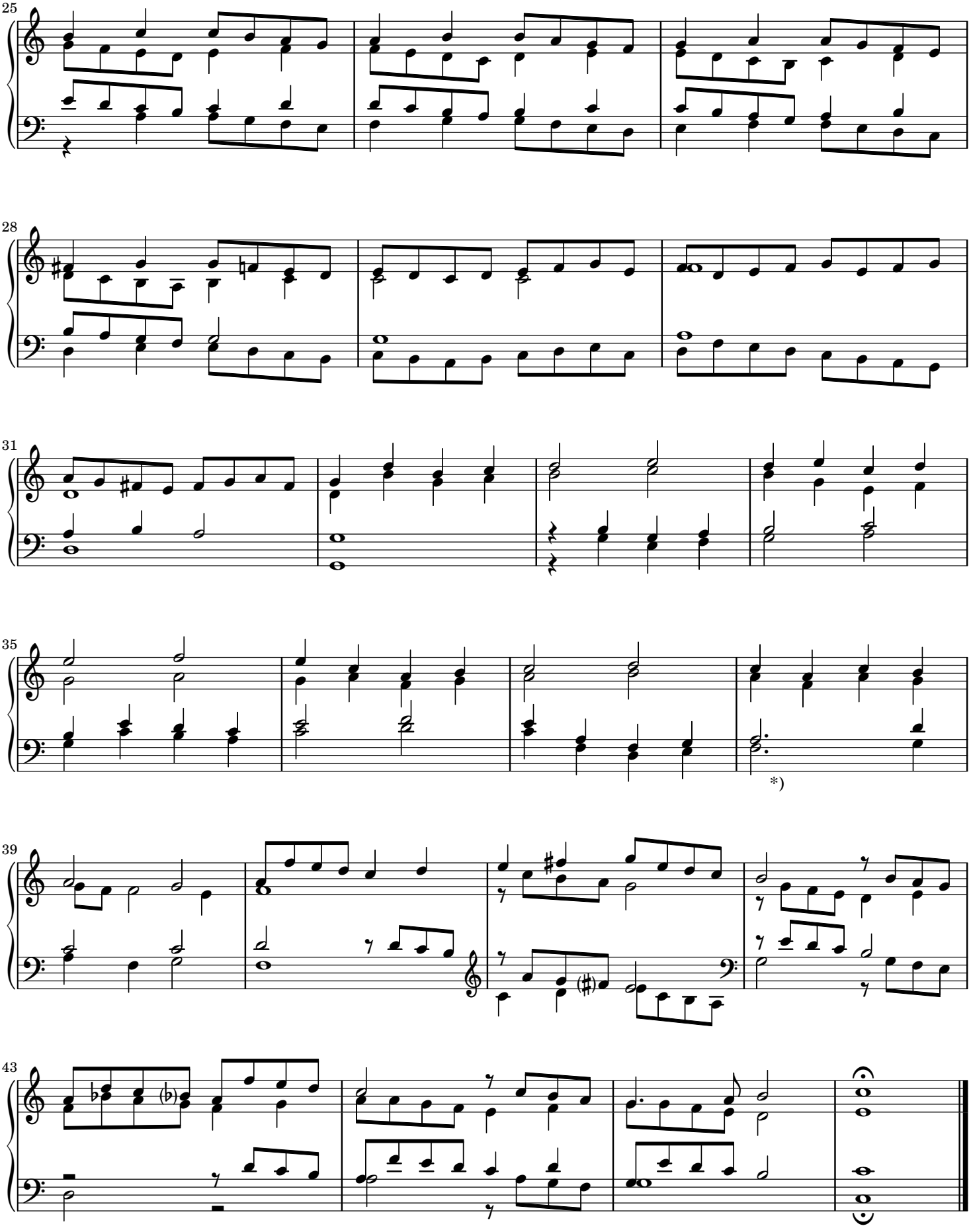
Decima Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)





*) f: Whole note in source

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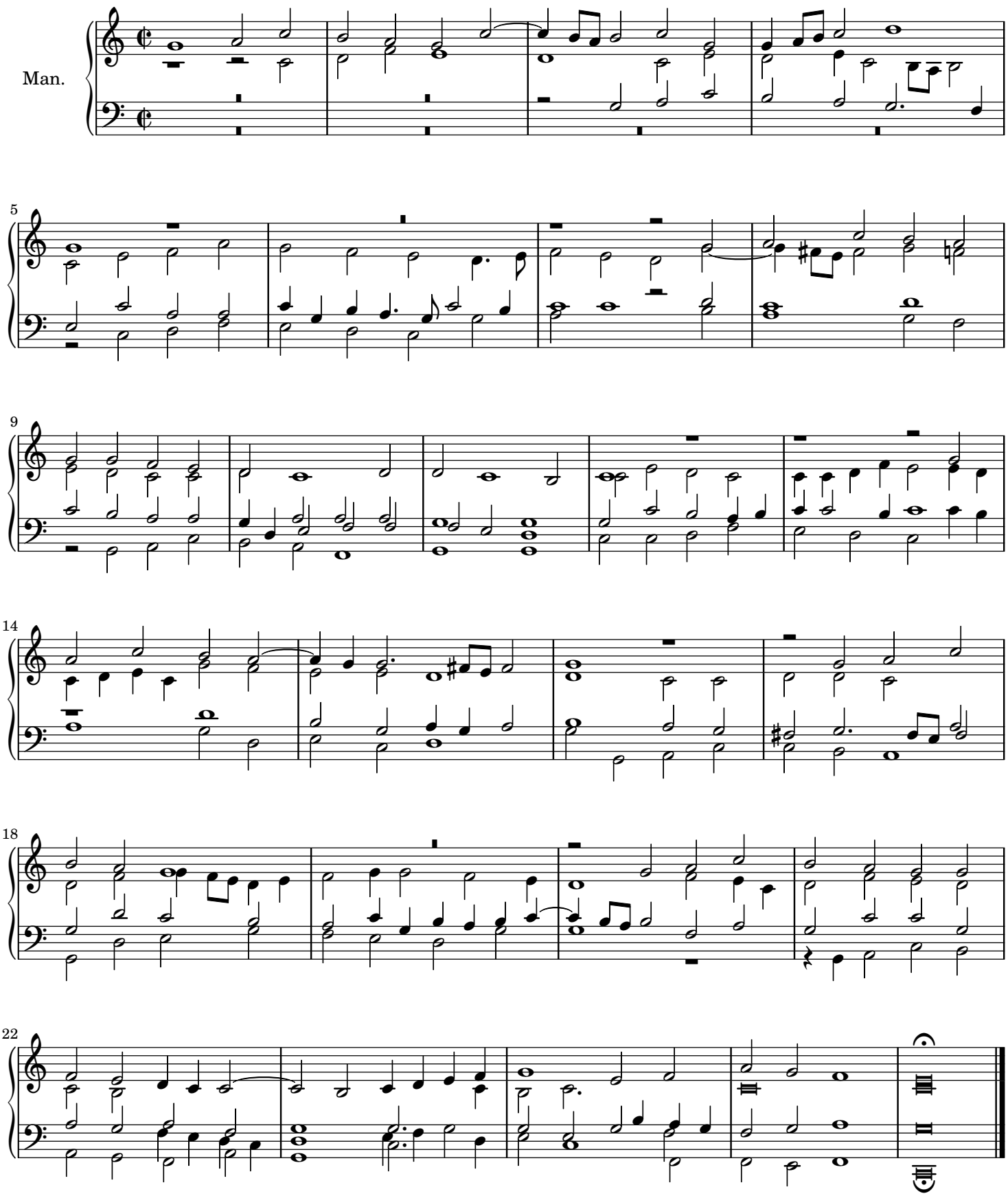
Undecima Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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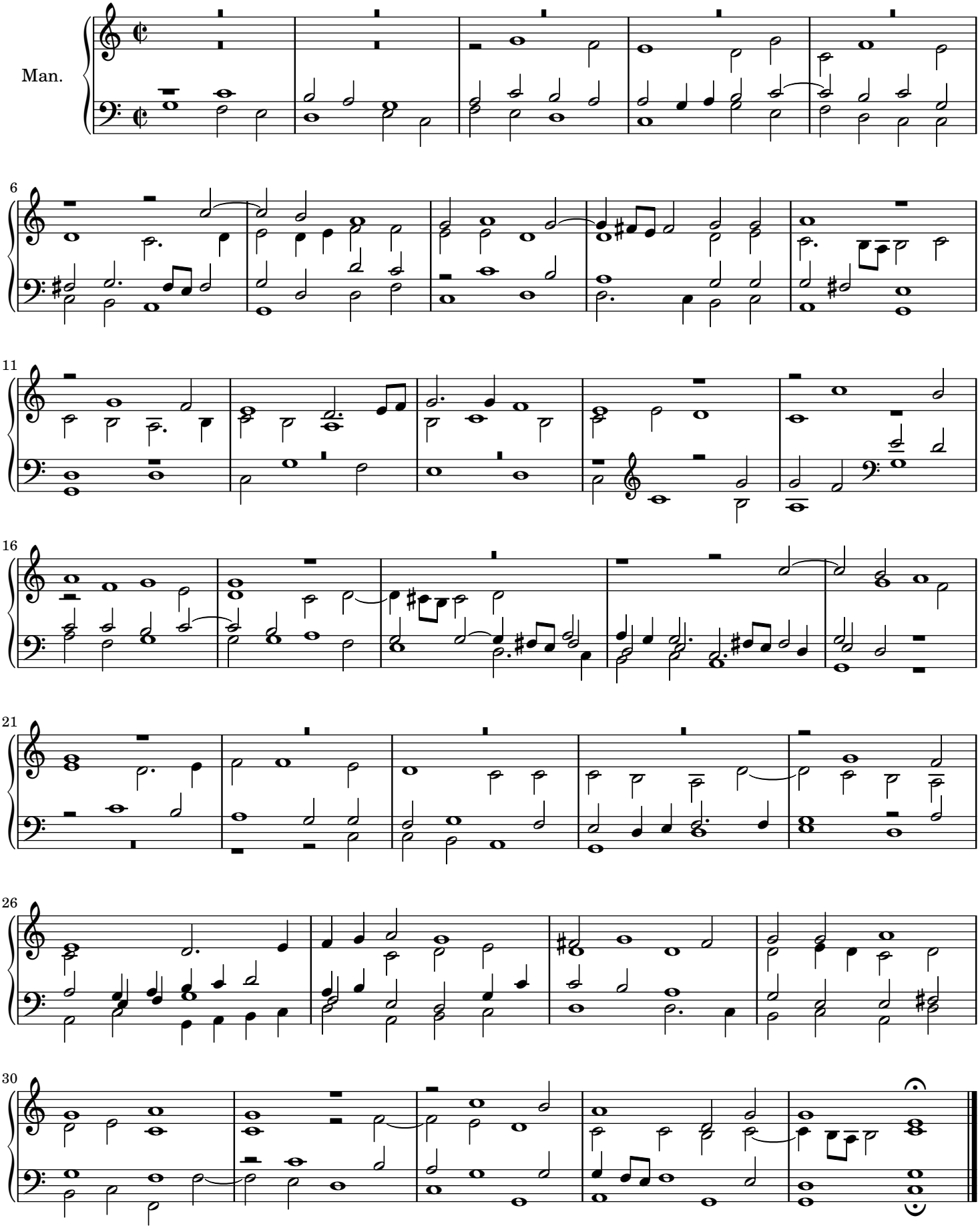
Duodecima Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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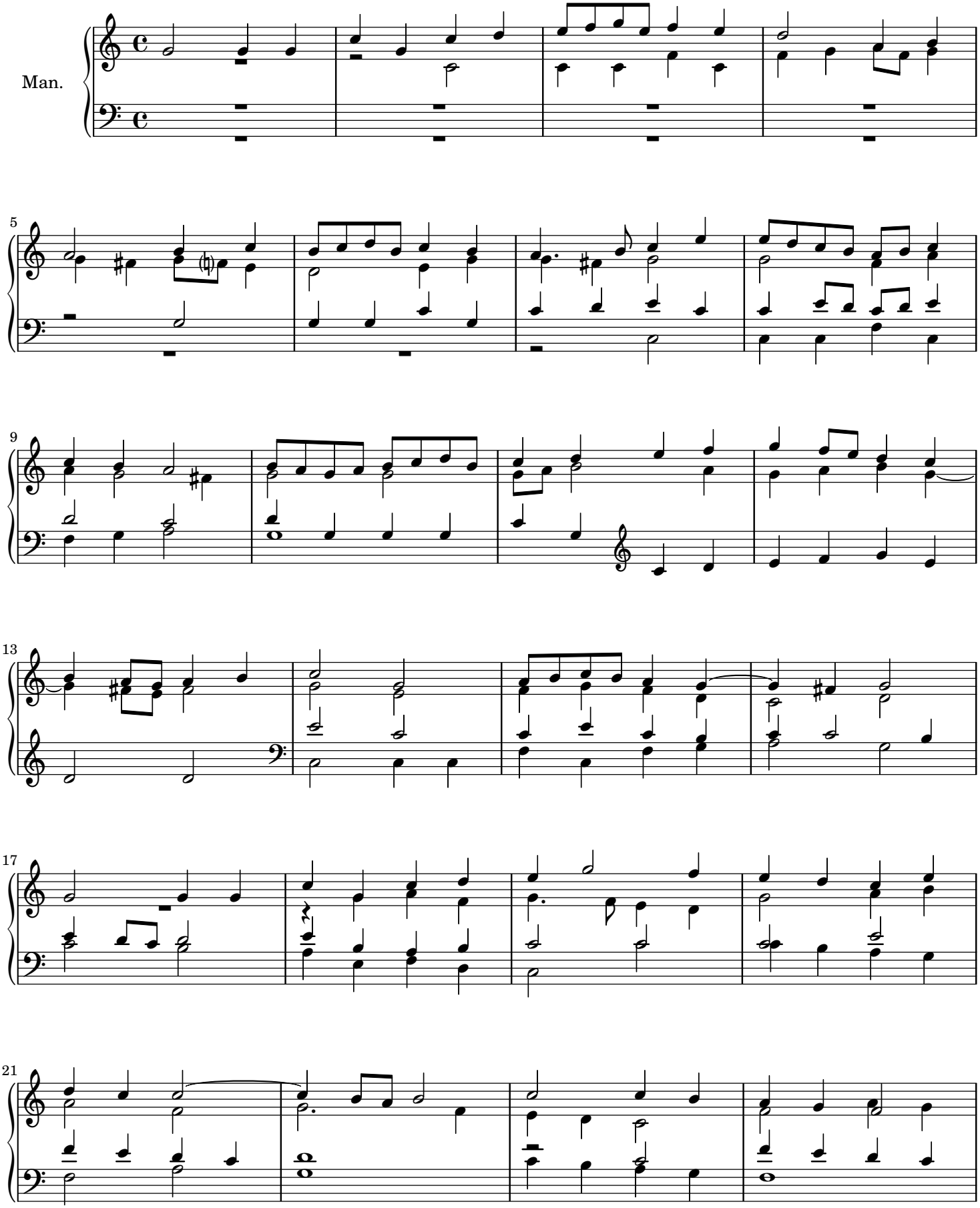
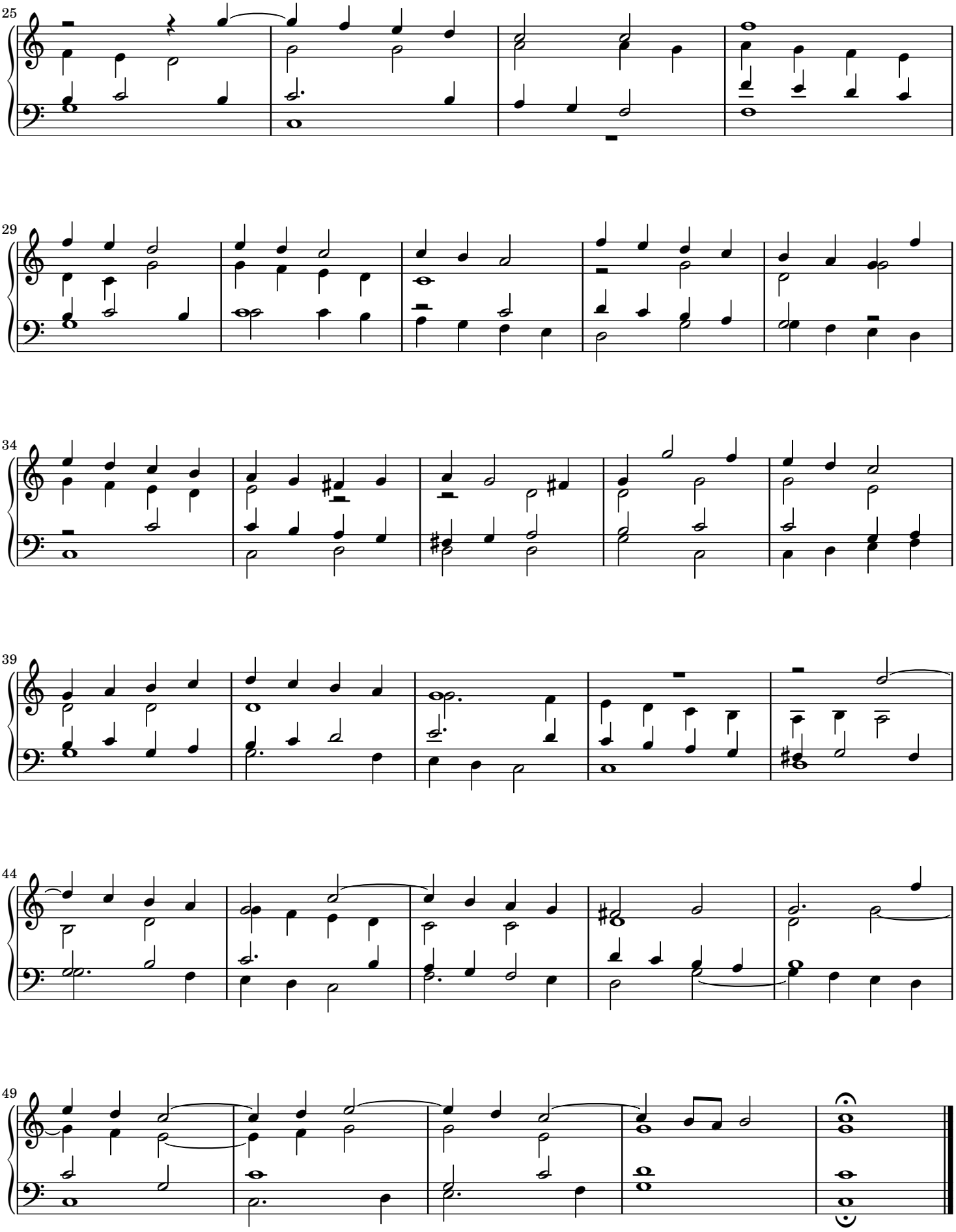
Decima tertia Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)





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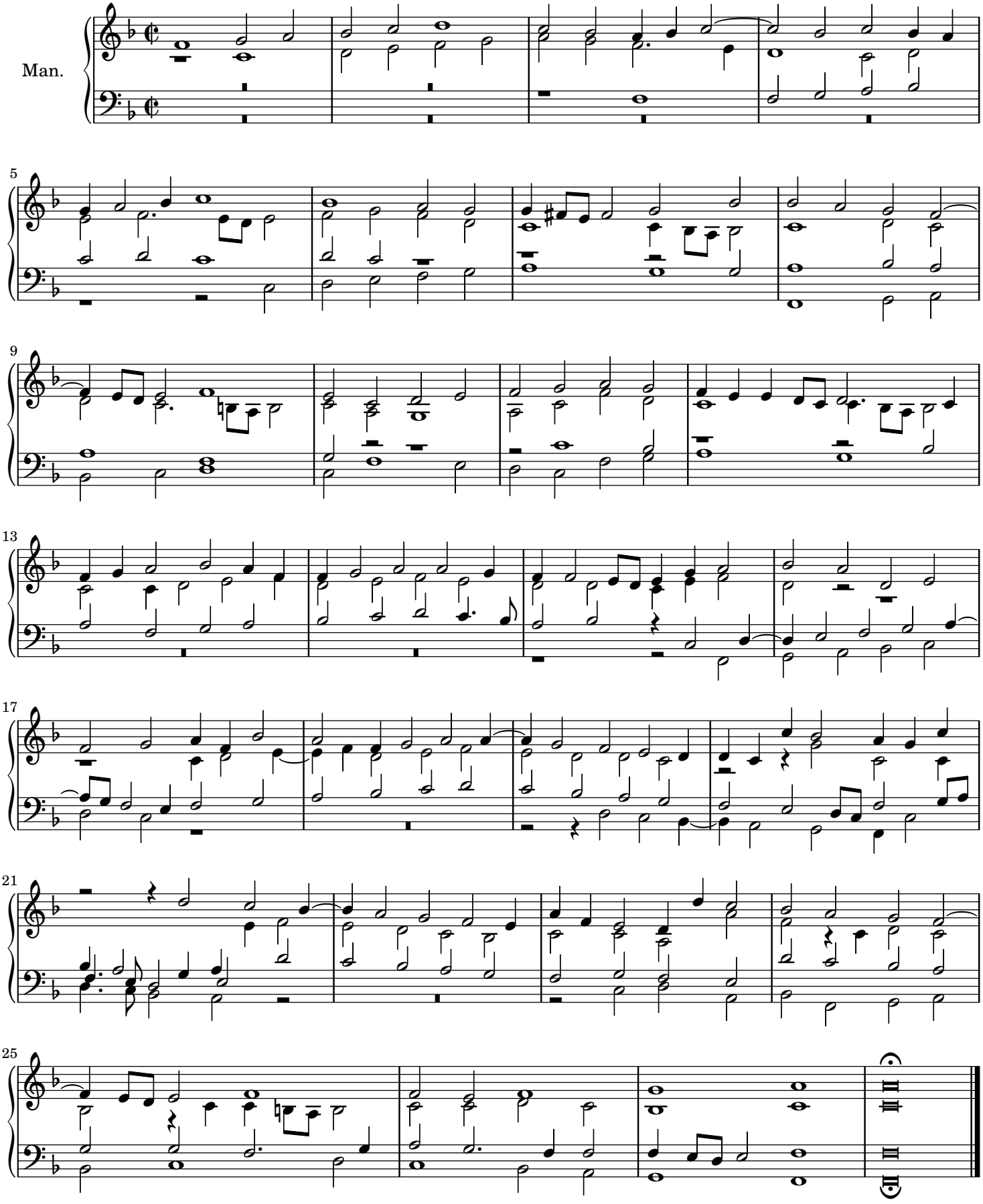
Fuga 14

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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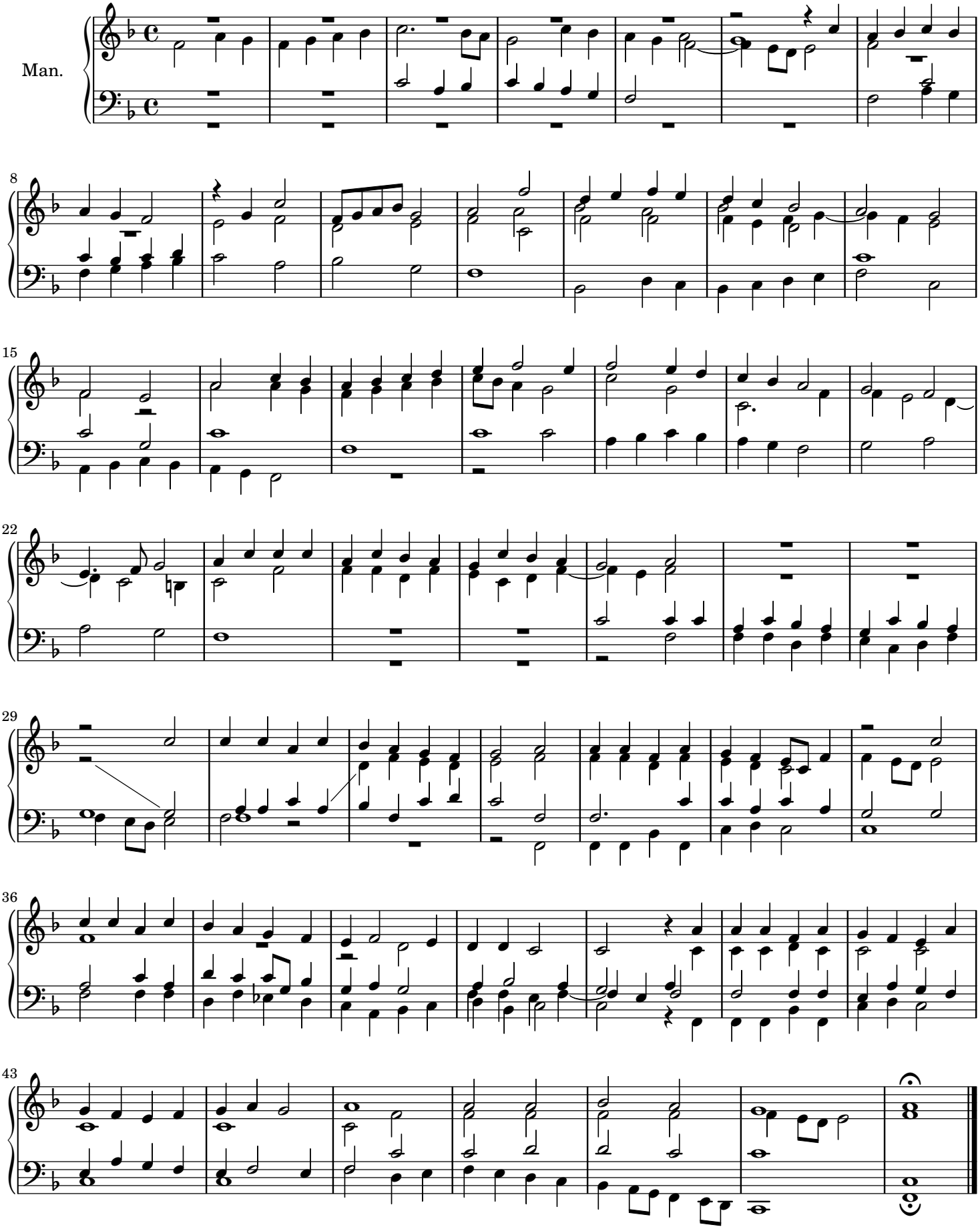
Fuga 15

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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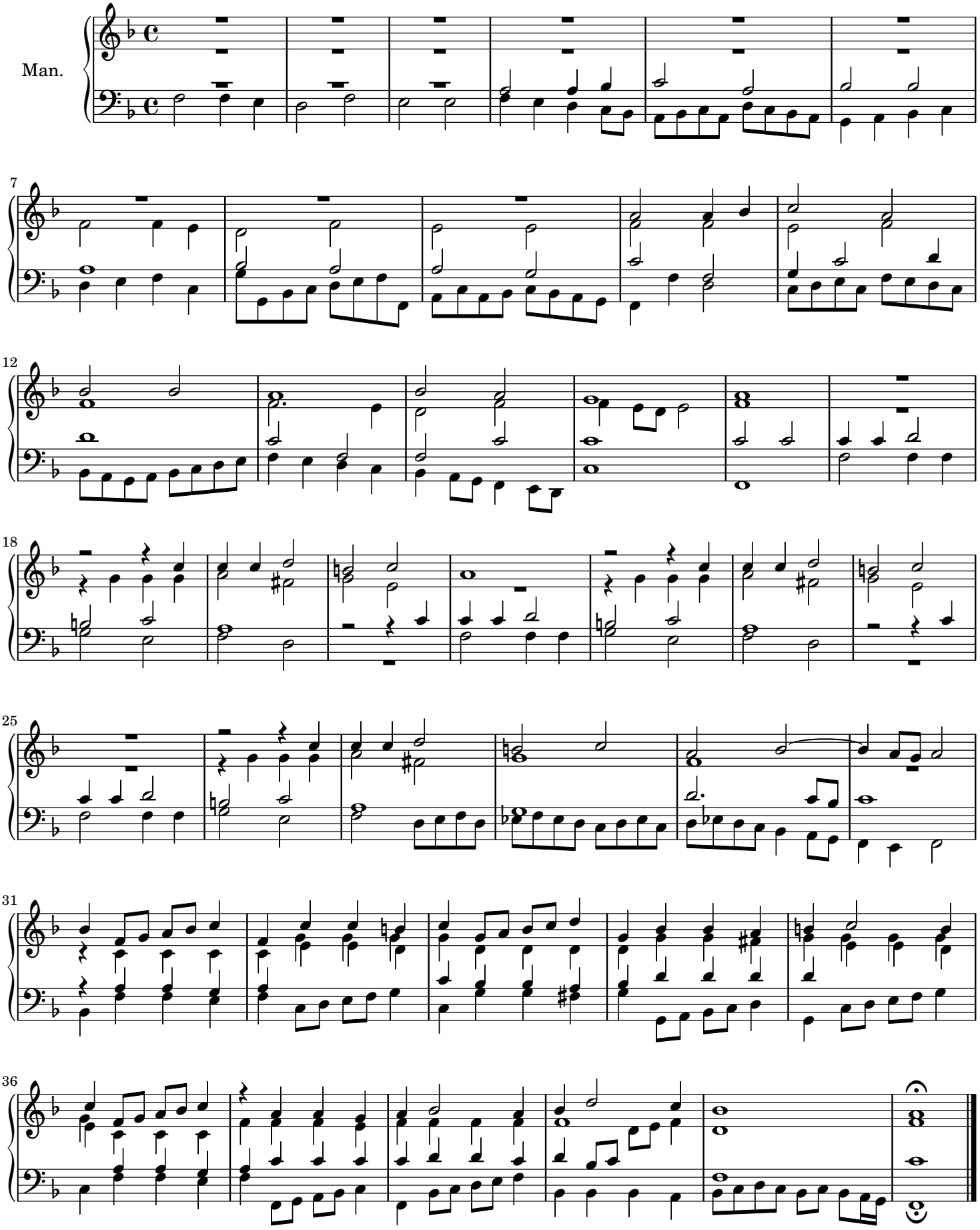
Fuga 16

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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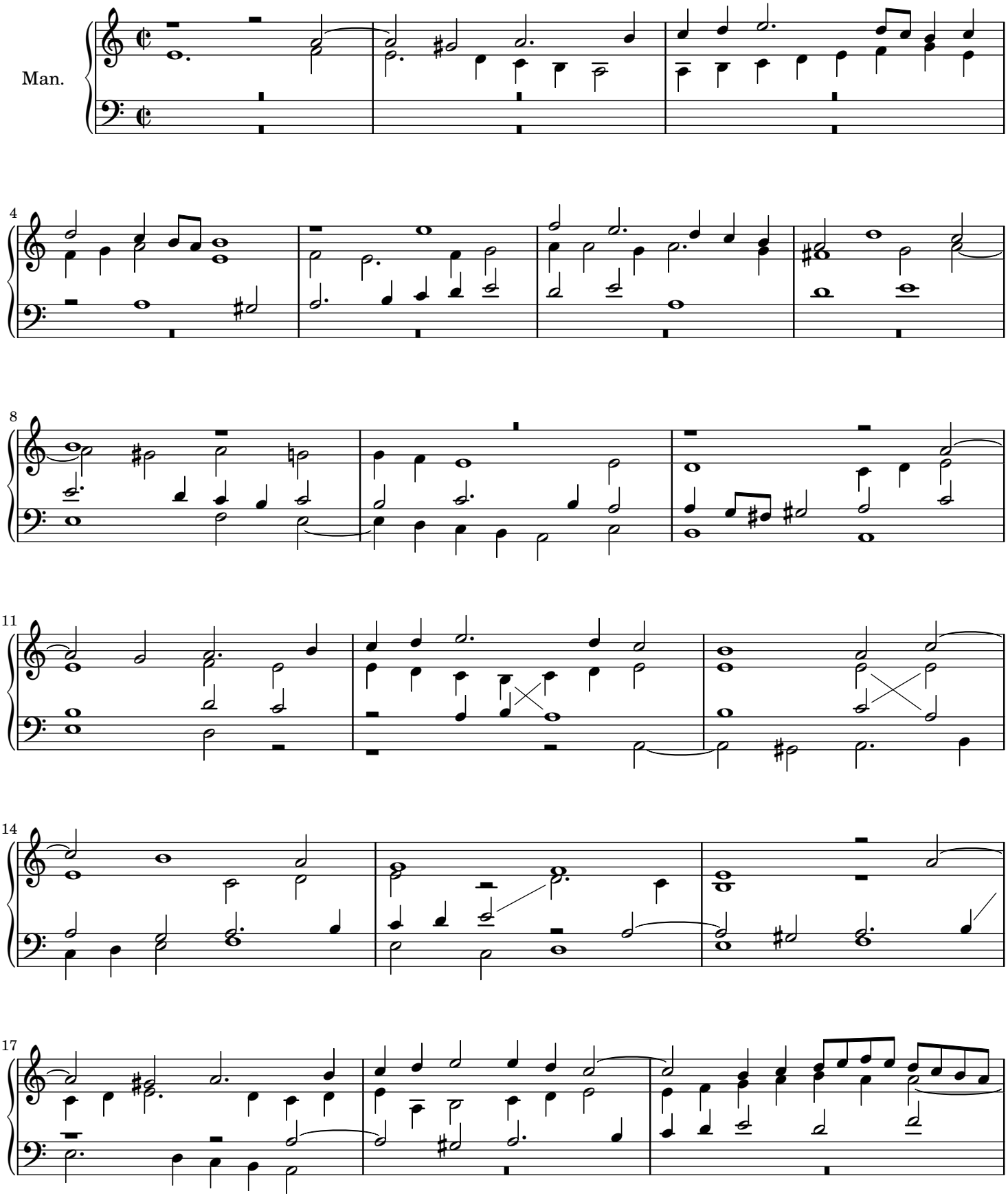
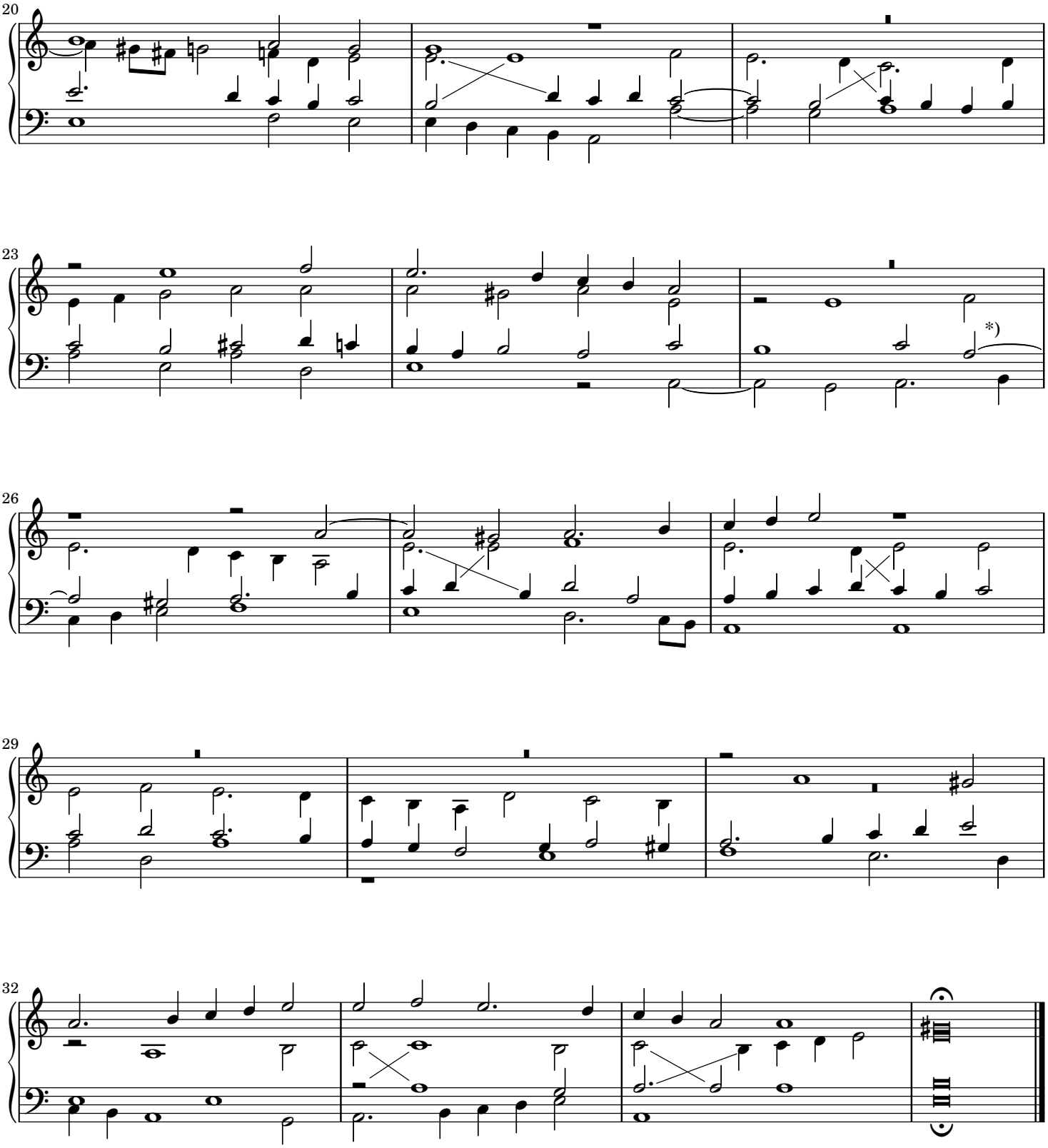
Fuga 17

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)





*) a: Not tied in source .

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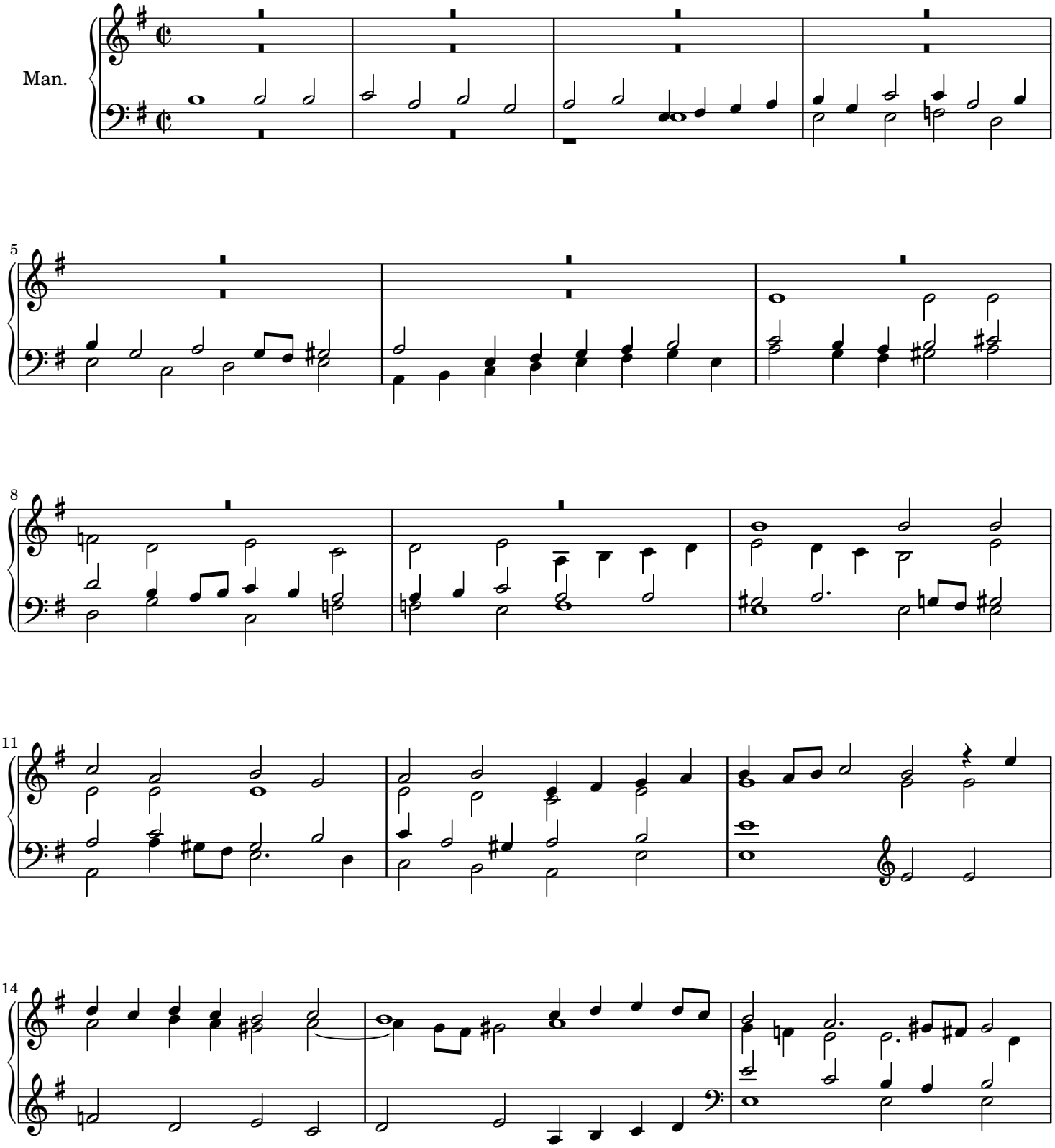
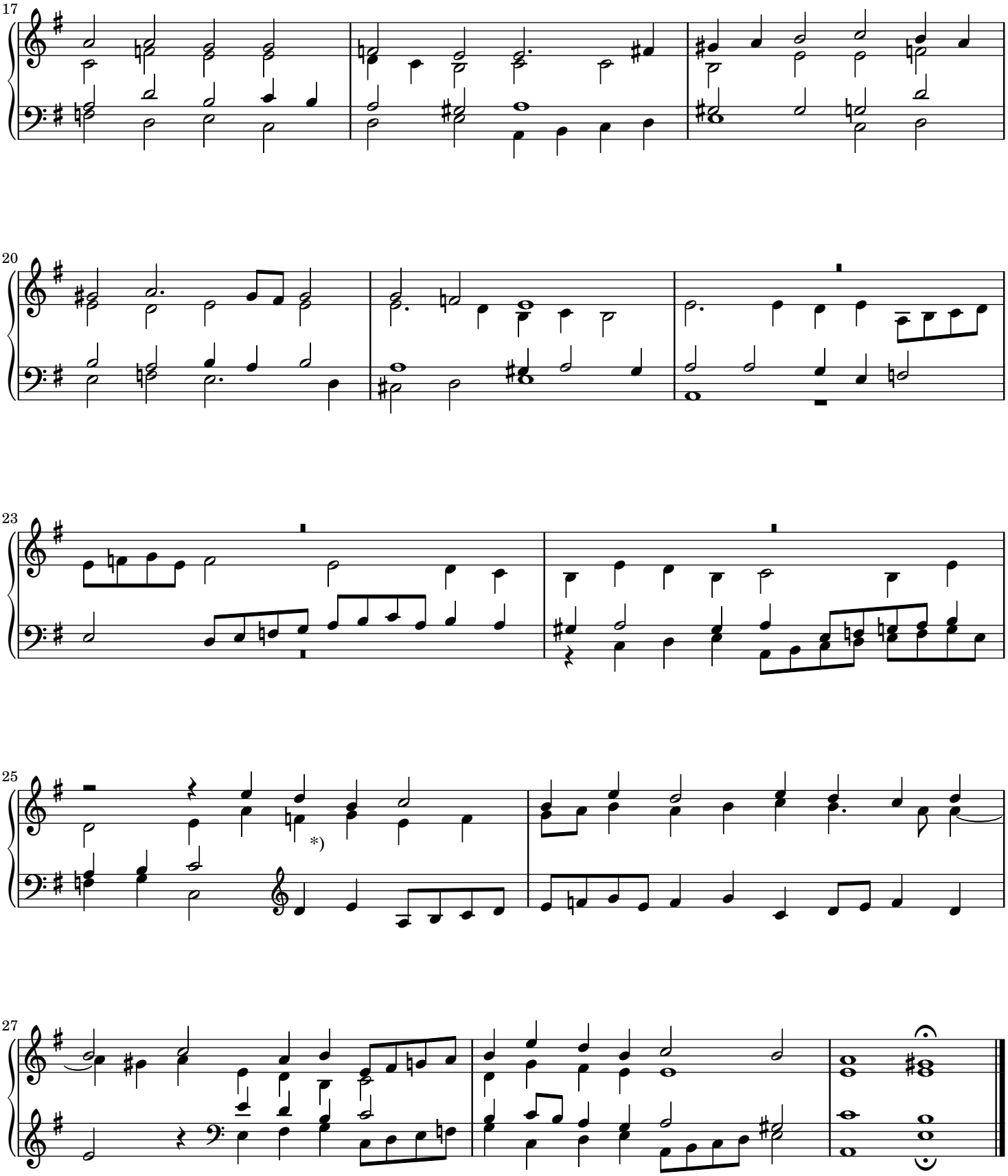
Fuga Decima Octava

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)





*) f g: g a in manuscript

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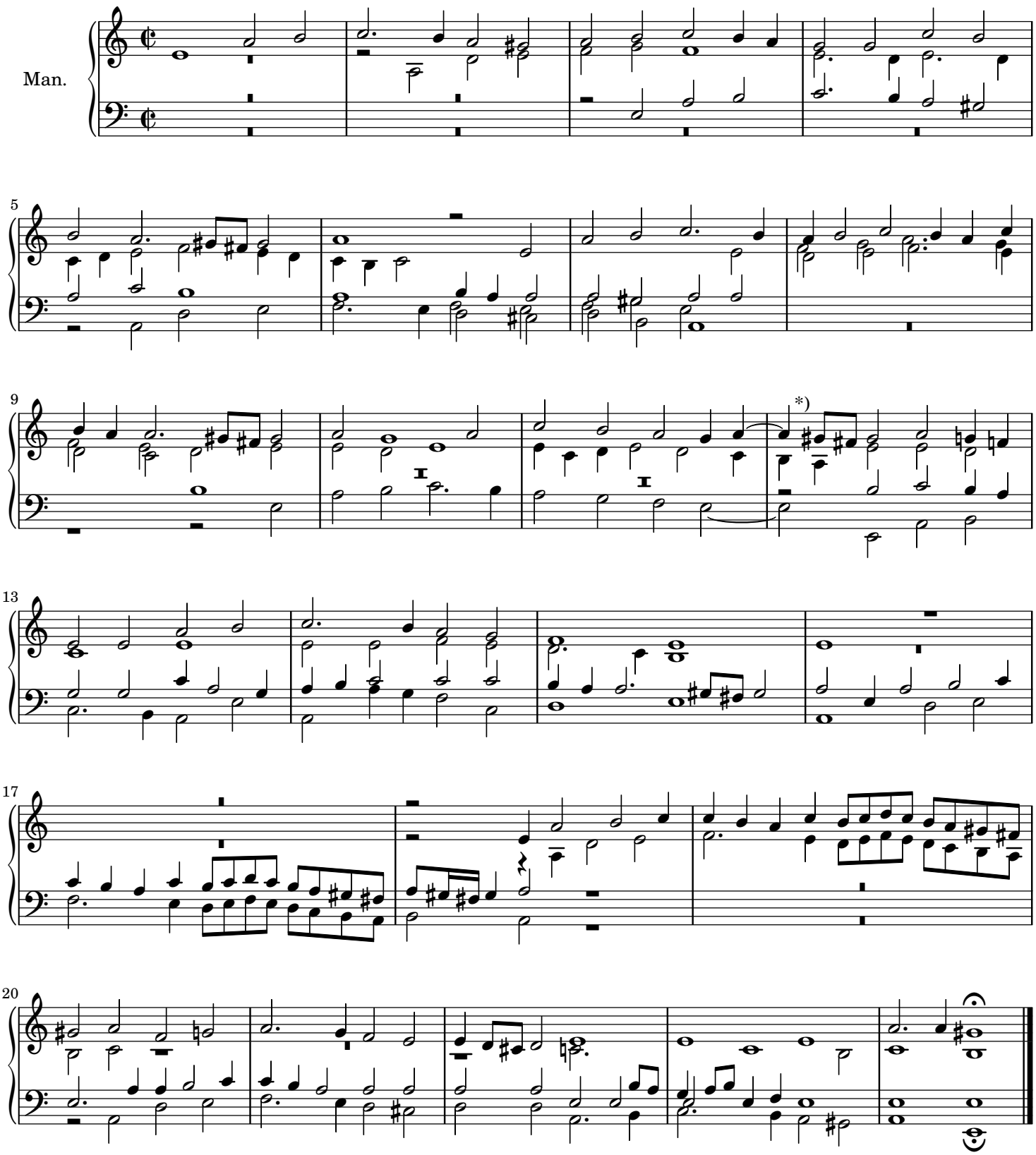
Fuga Decima Nova

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



*) a: half note in source.

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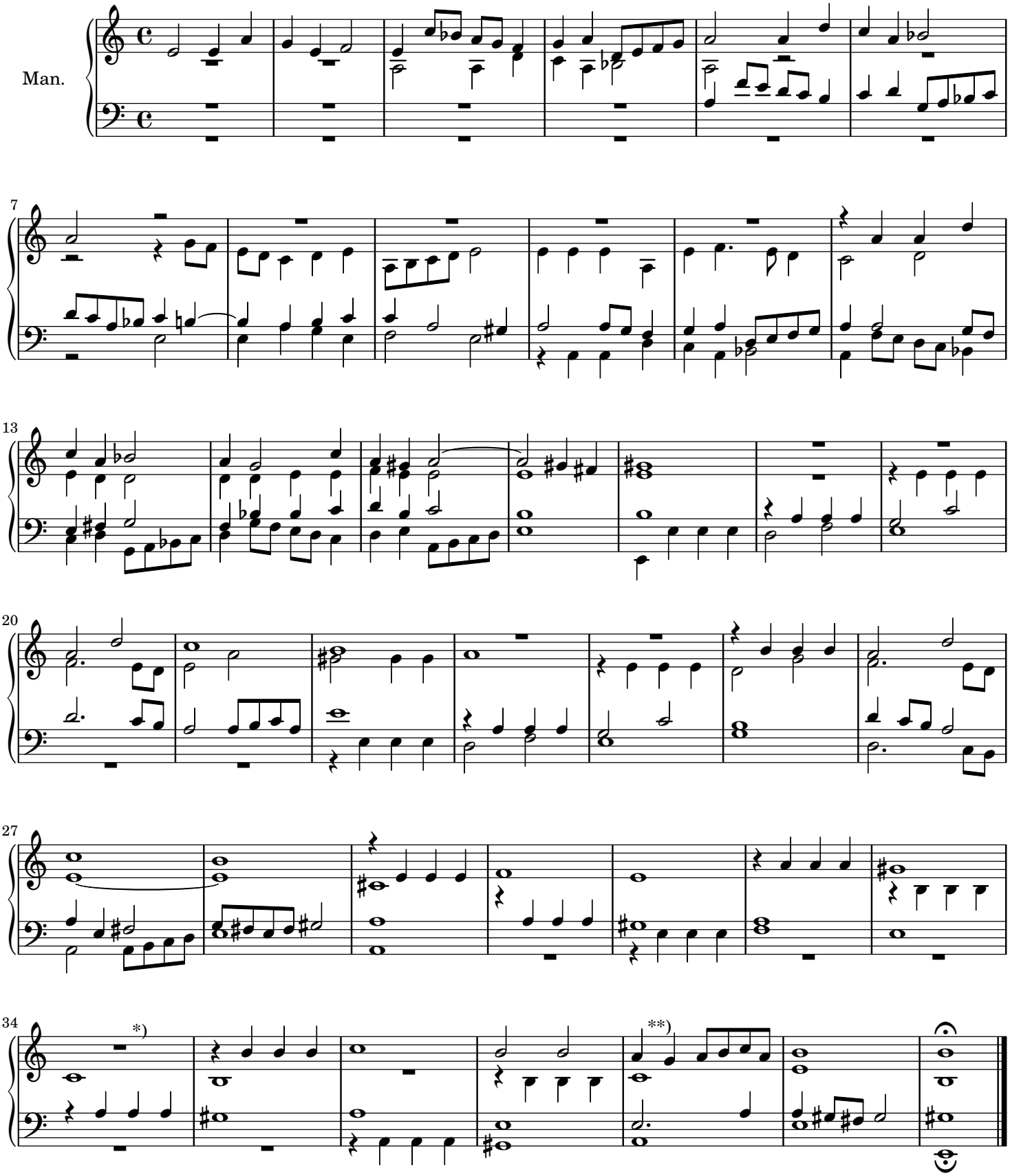
Fuga Vigesima

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



**) Whole measure rest not indicated in source.*
***) a g: eight notes in source.*

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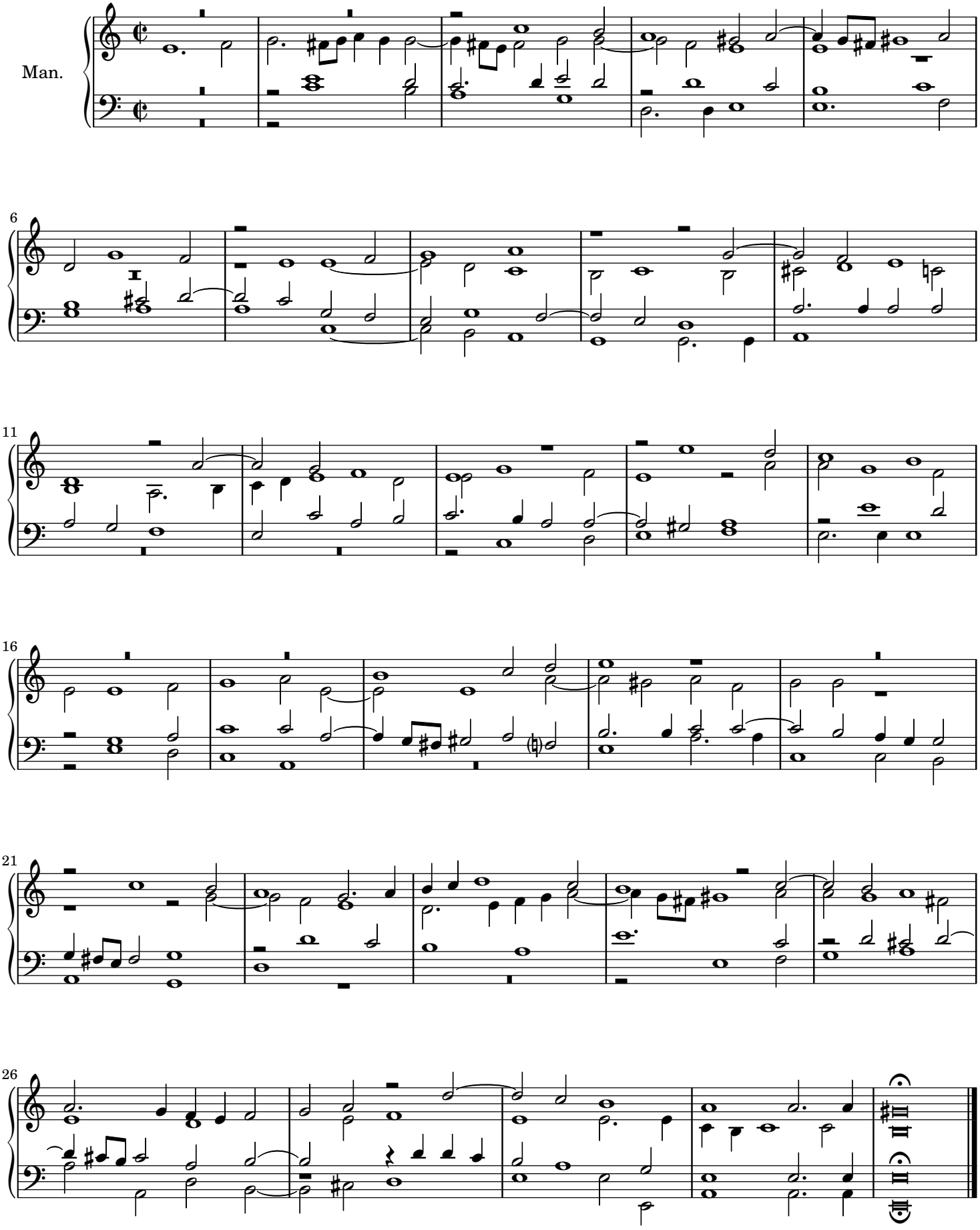
Canzona

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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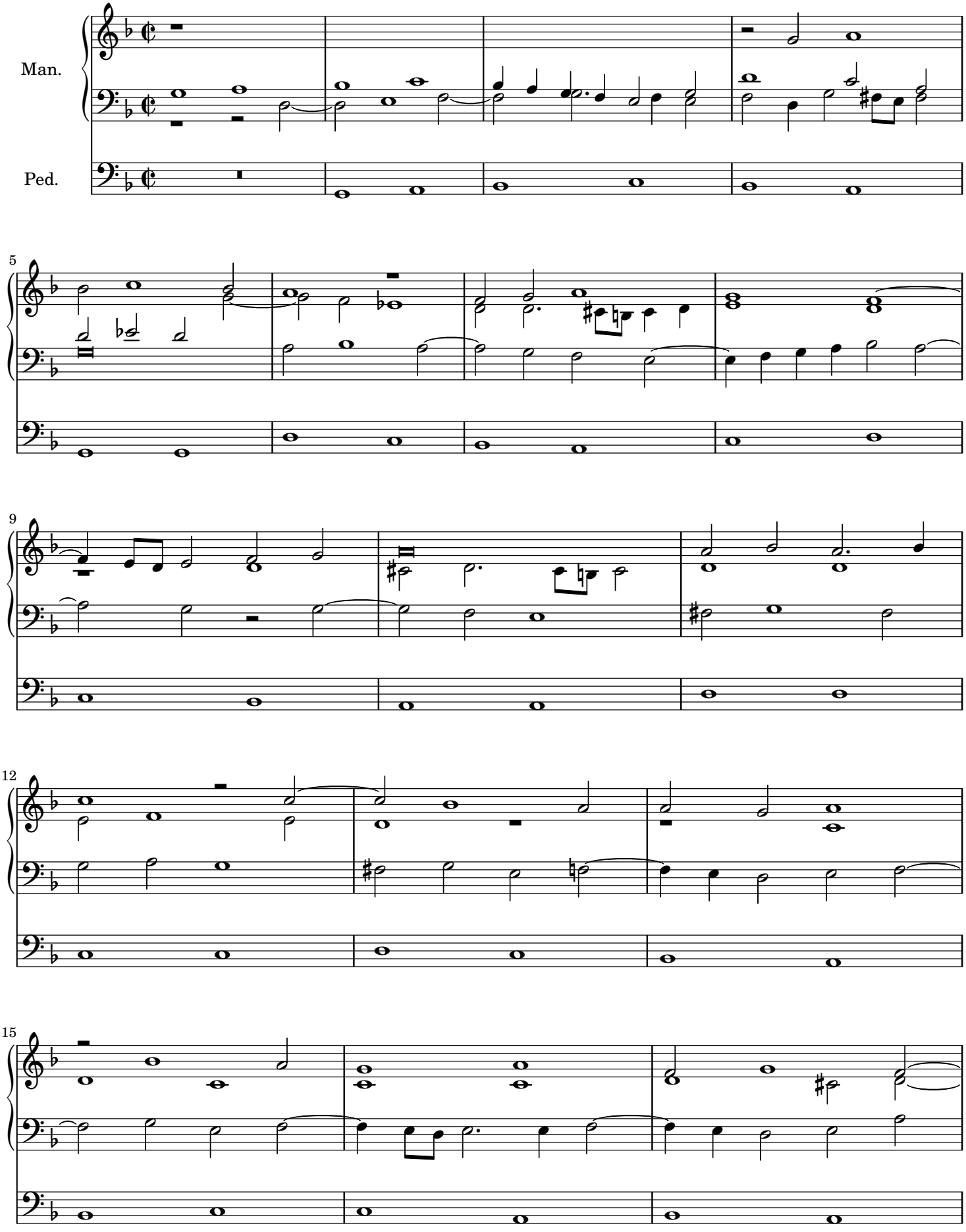
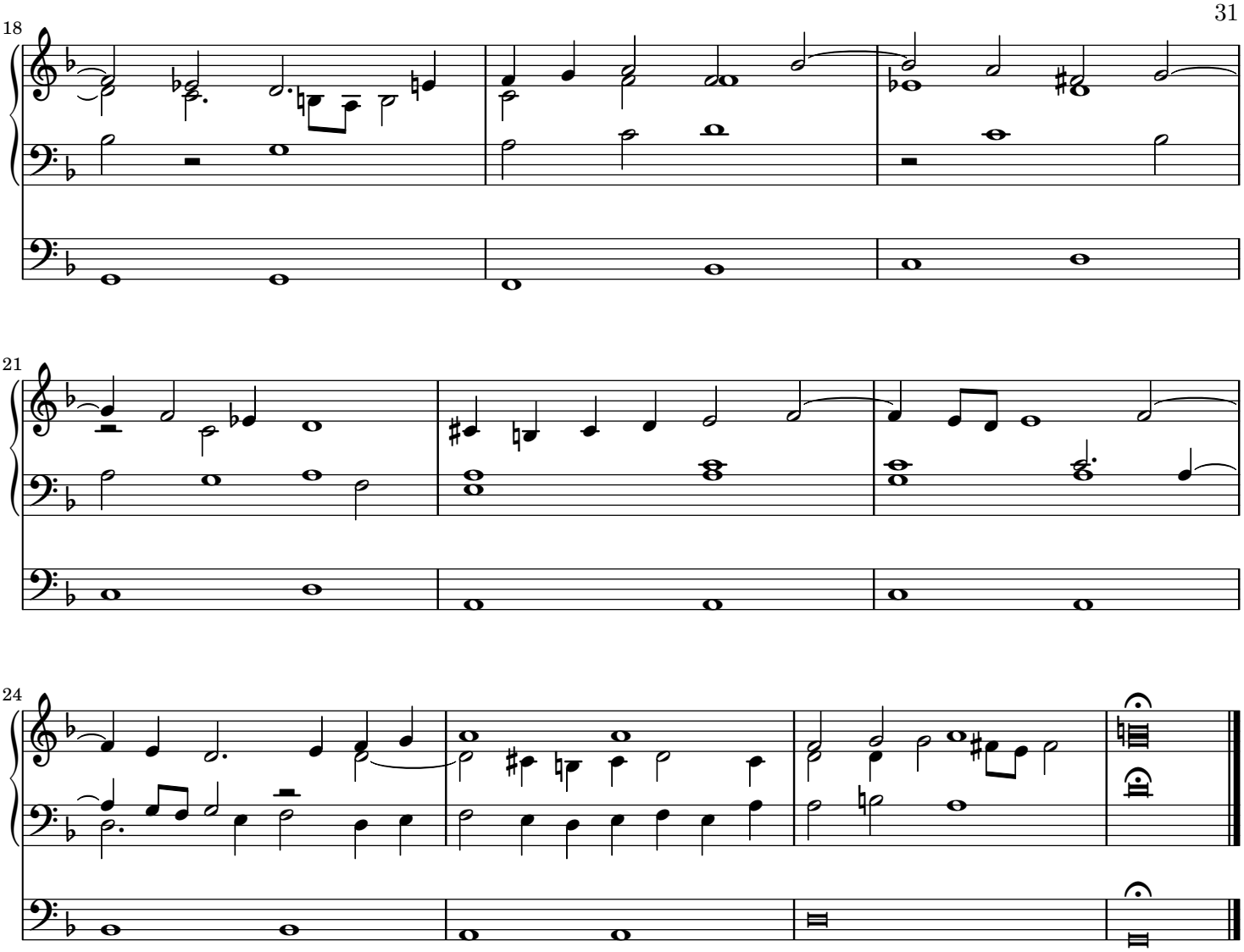
Motet “Media vita in morte”

Choral in Basso

Simon Lohet

(1550 - 1611)





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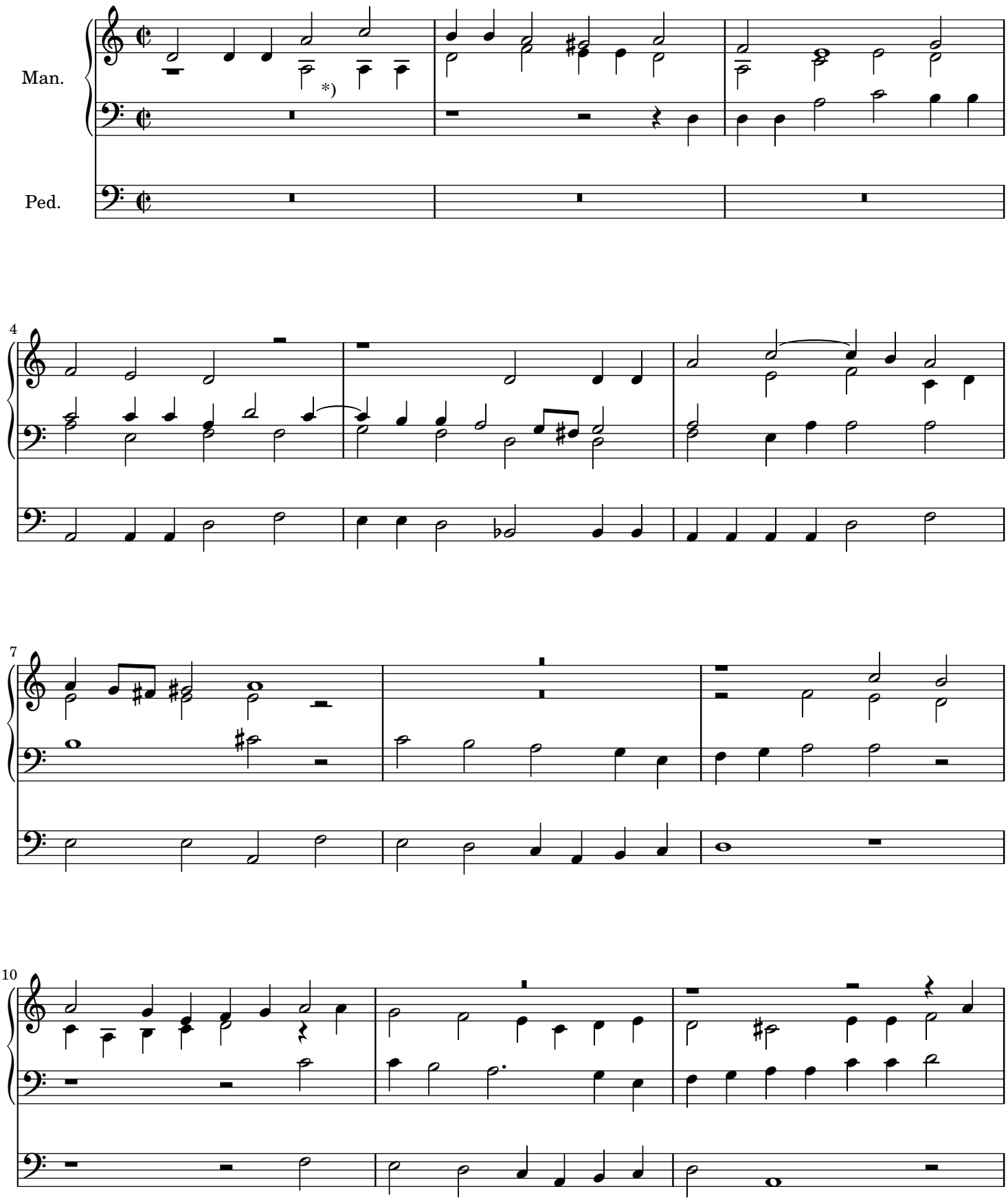
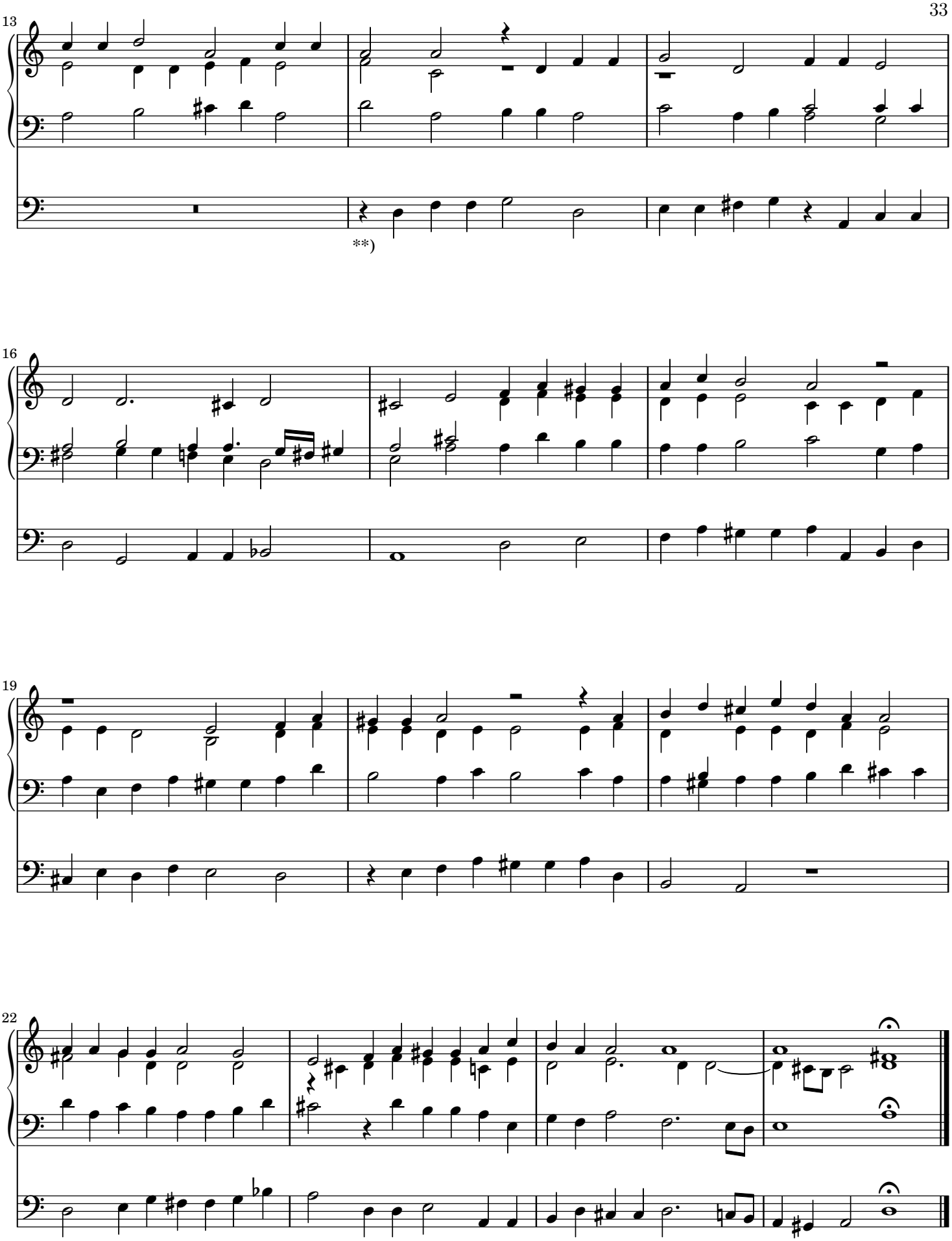
Compositio super Coral Psalm 9

“De tout mon coeur”

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



**) a a a: notated one octave higher in source*



***) half note rest in source*

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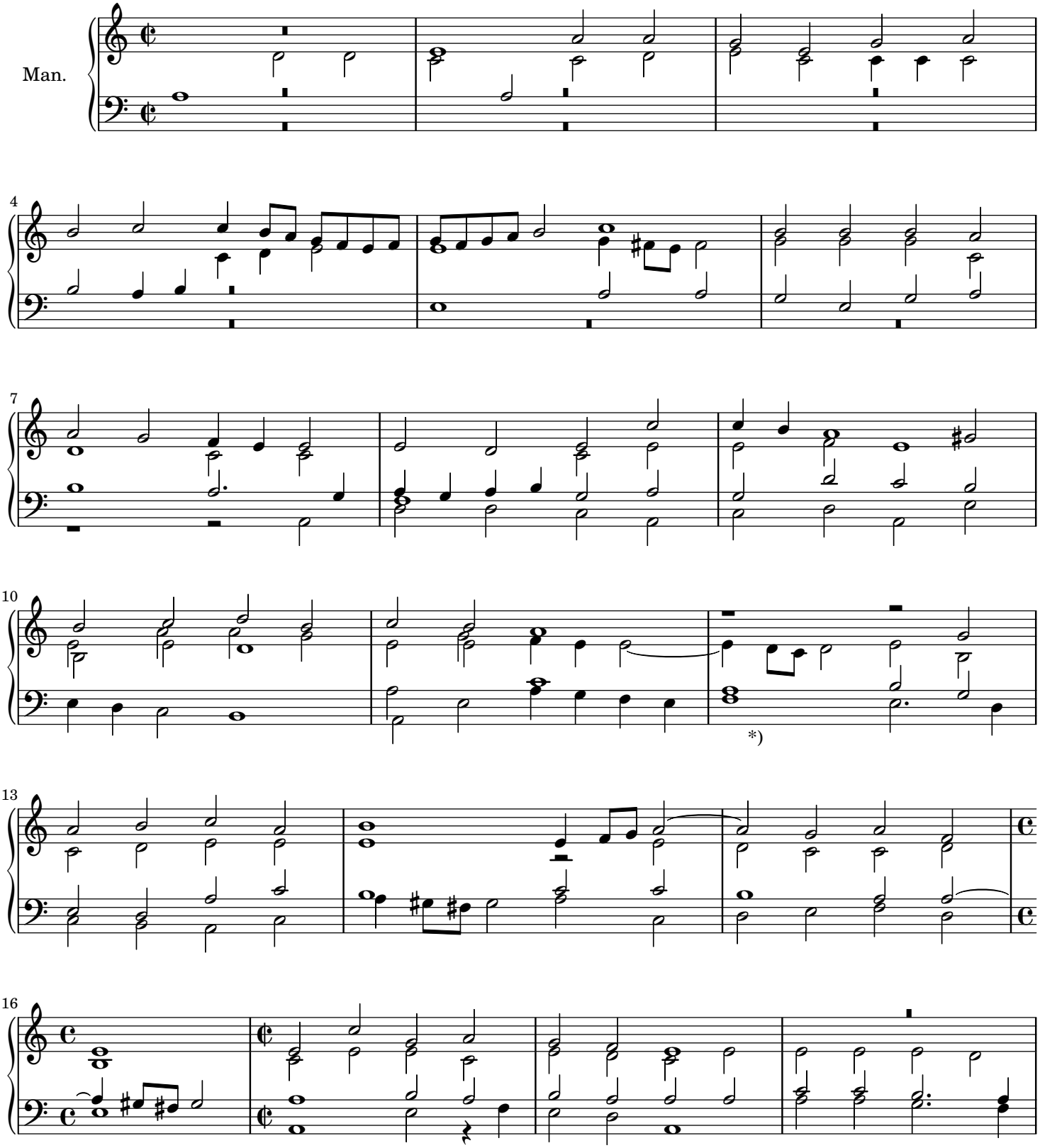
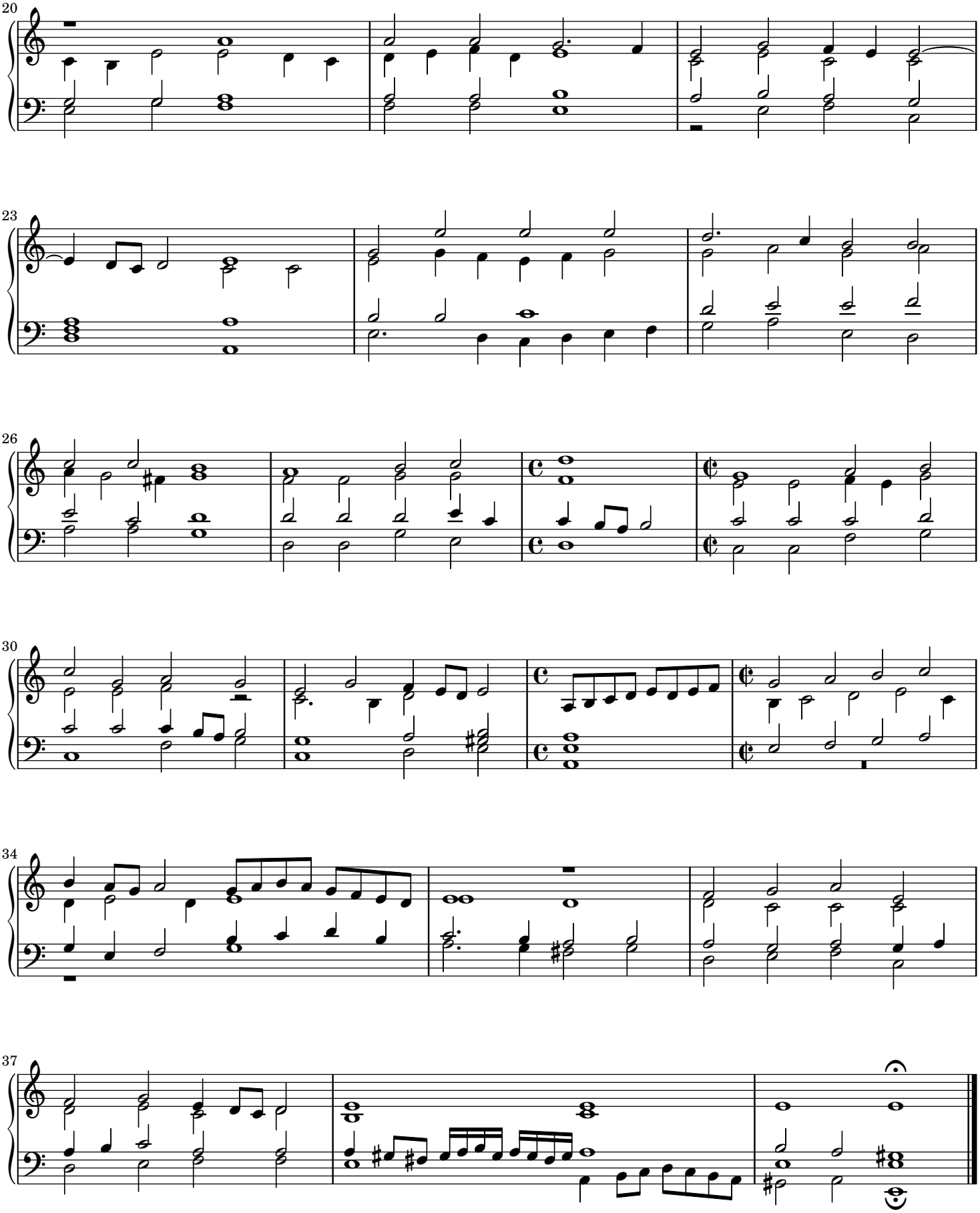
Erbarm dich mein, o Herre Gott

Psalm 51

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



*) f: half note in manuscript



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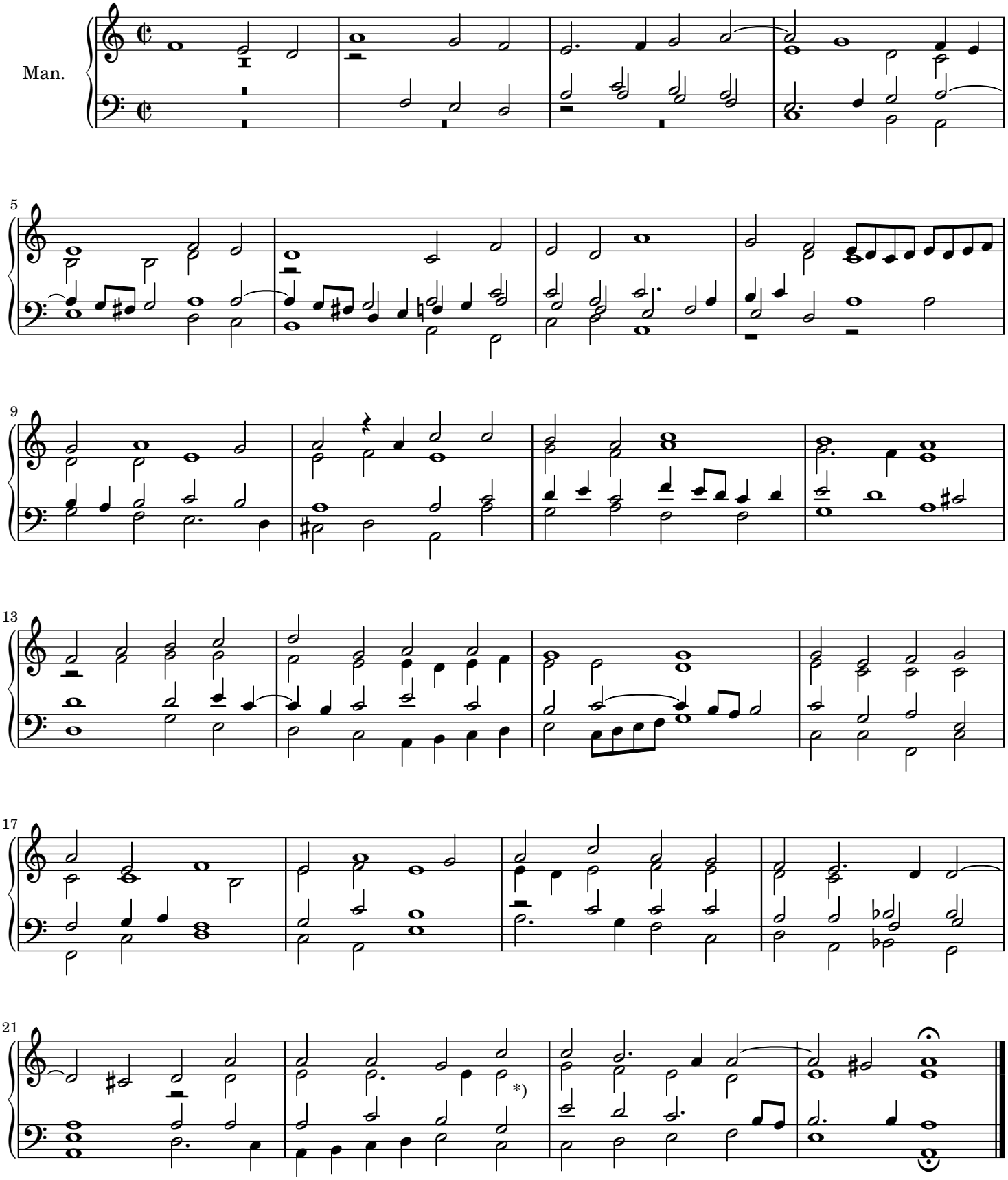
Nun welche hie ihr Hoffnung gar

Psalm 125

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)

Man.



*) e: f in source

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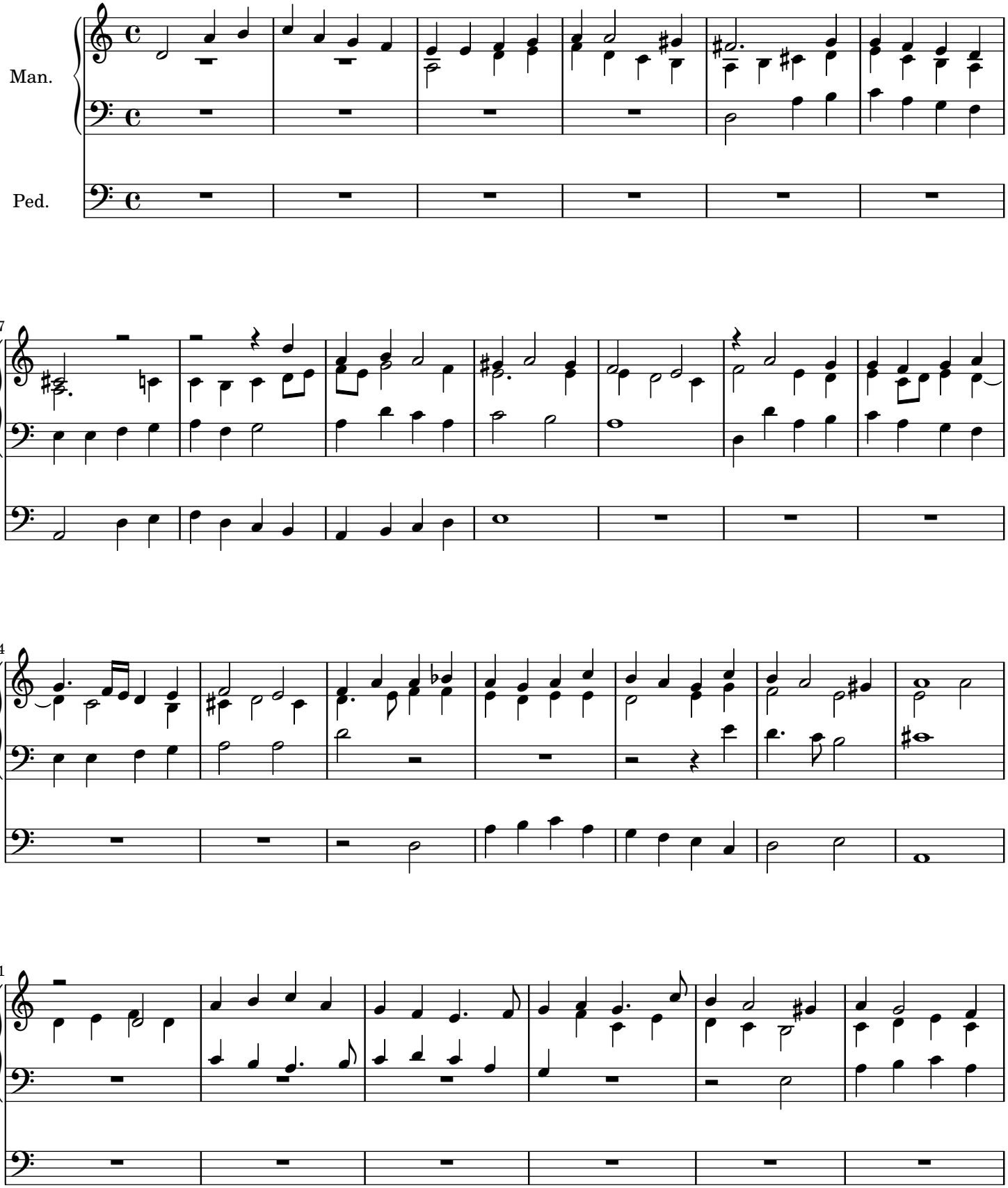
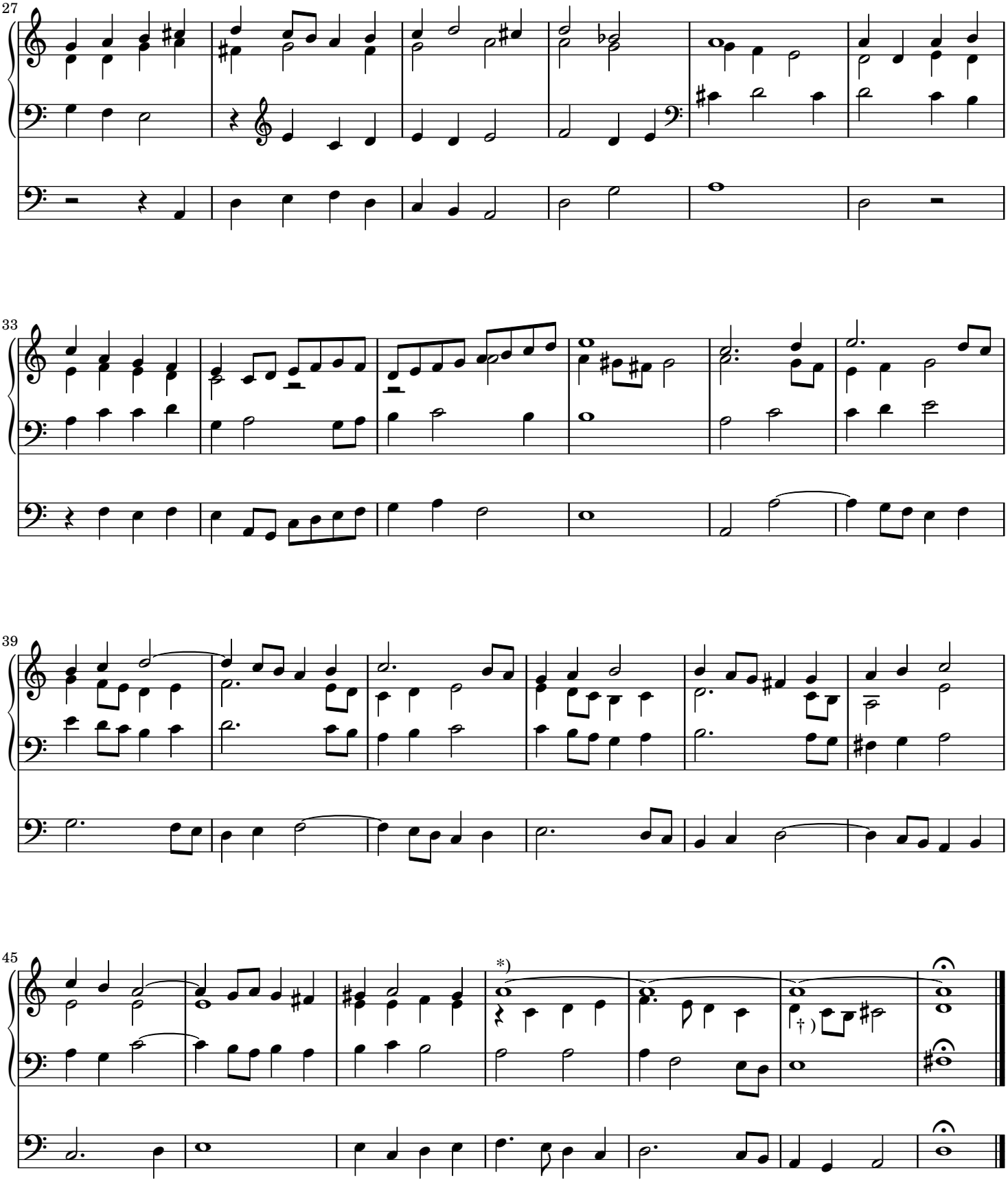
Fuga Secunda *)

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



*) *The source gives no indication about wether the bass-part should be played on the pedals or not. The choice to notate it as such is entirely editorial*



**) Not tied in source.*
†) Half note in source.

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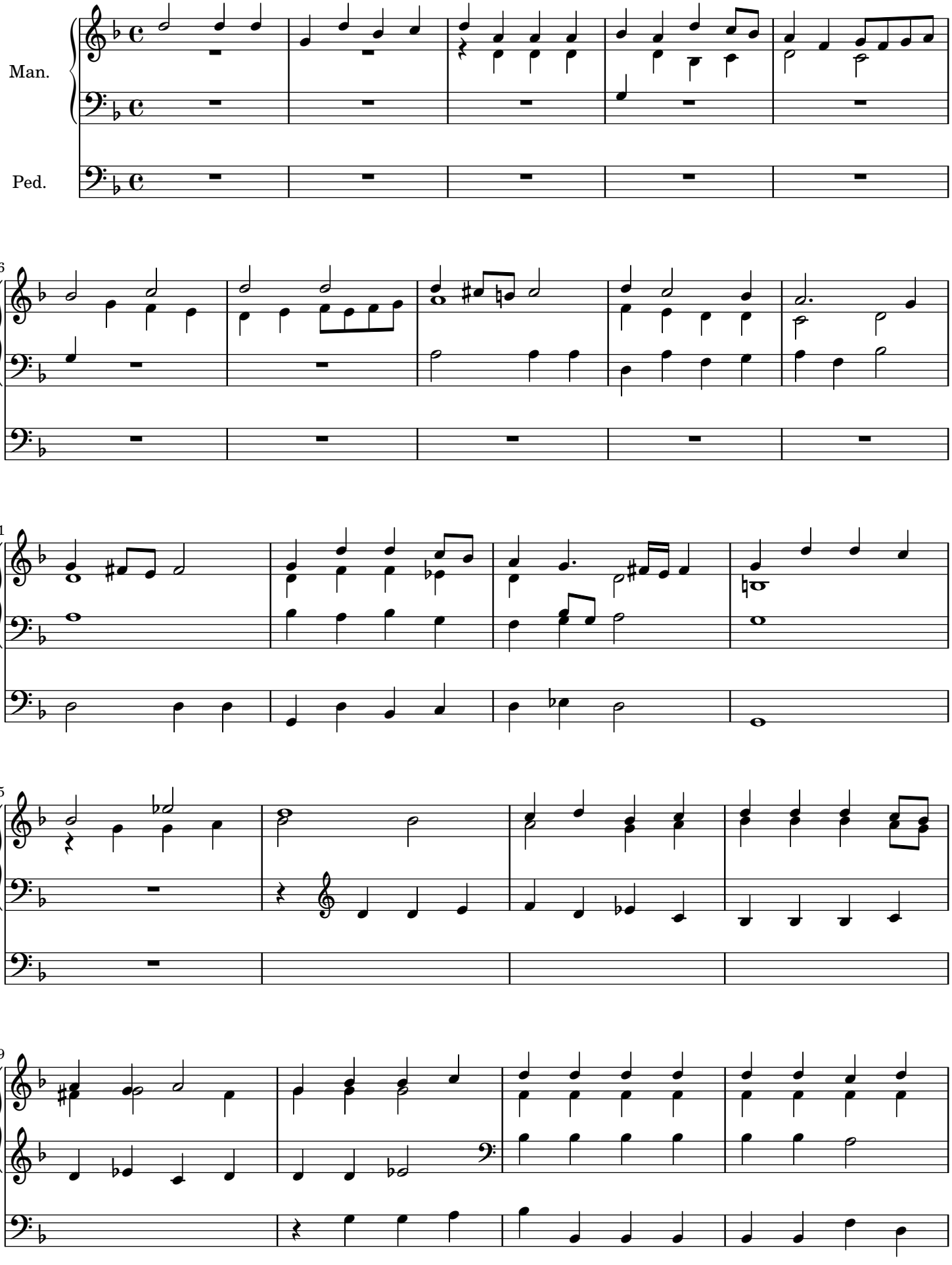
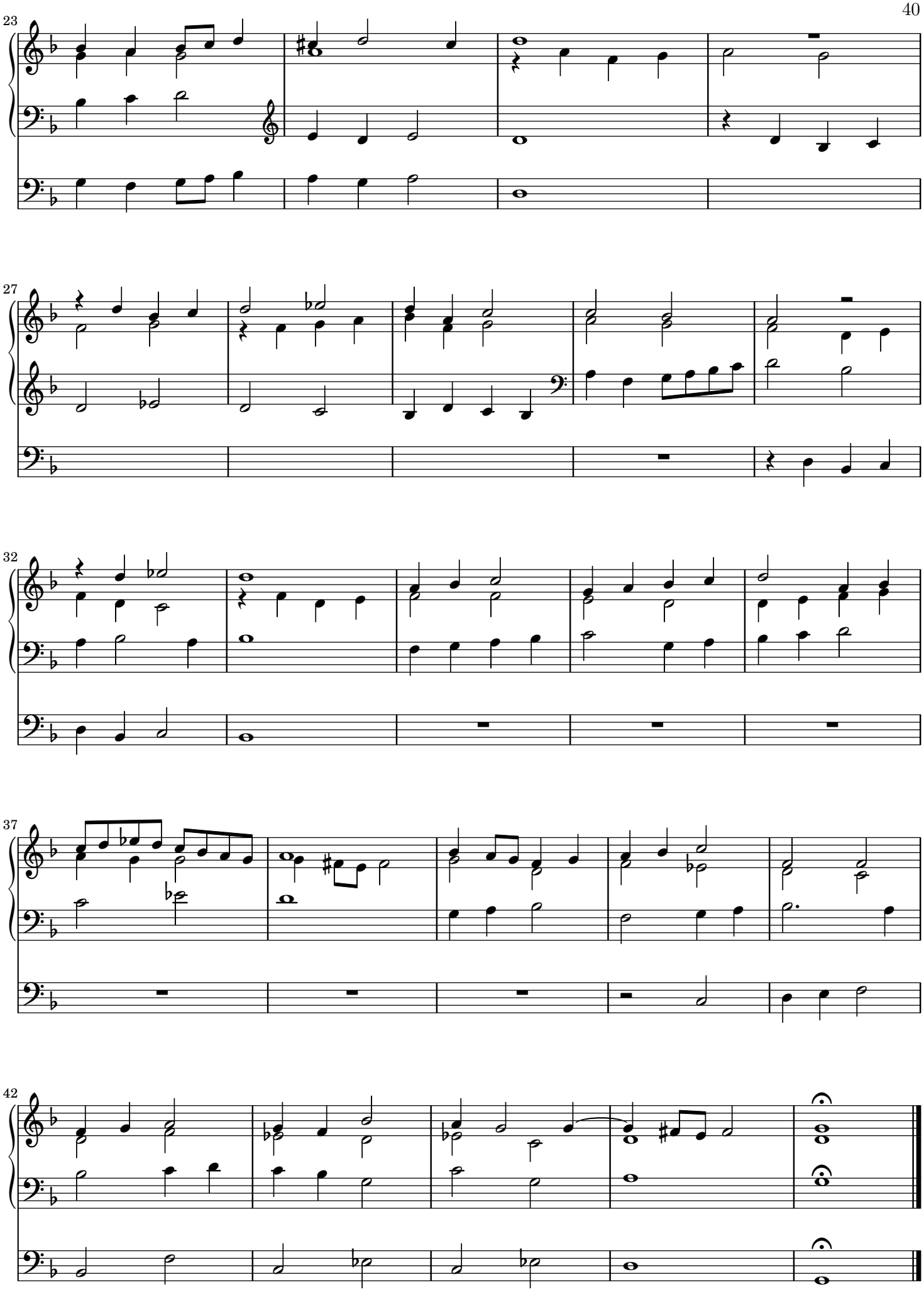
Quinta Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)





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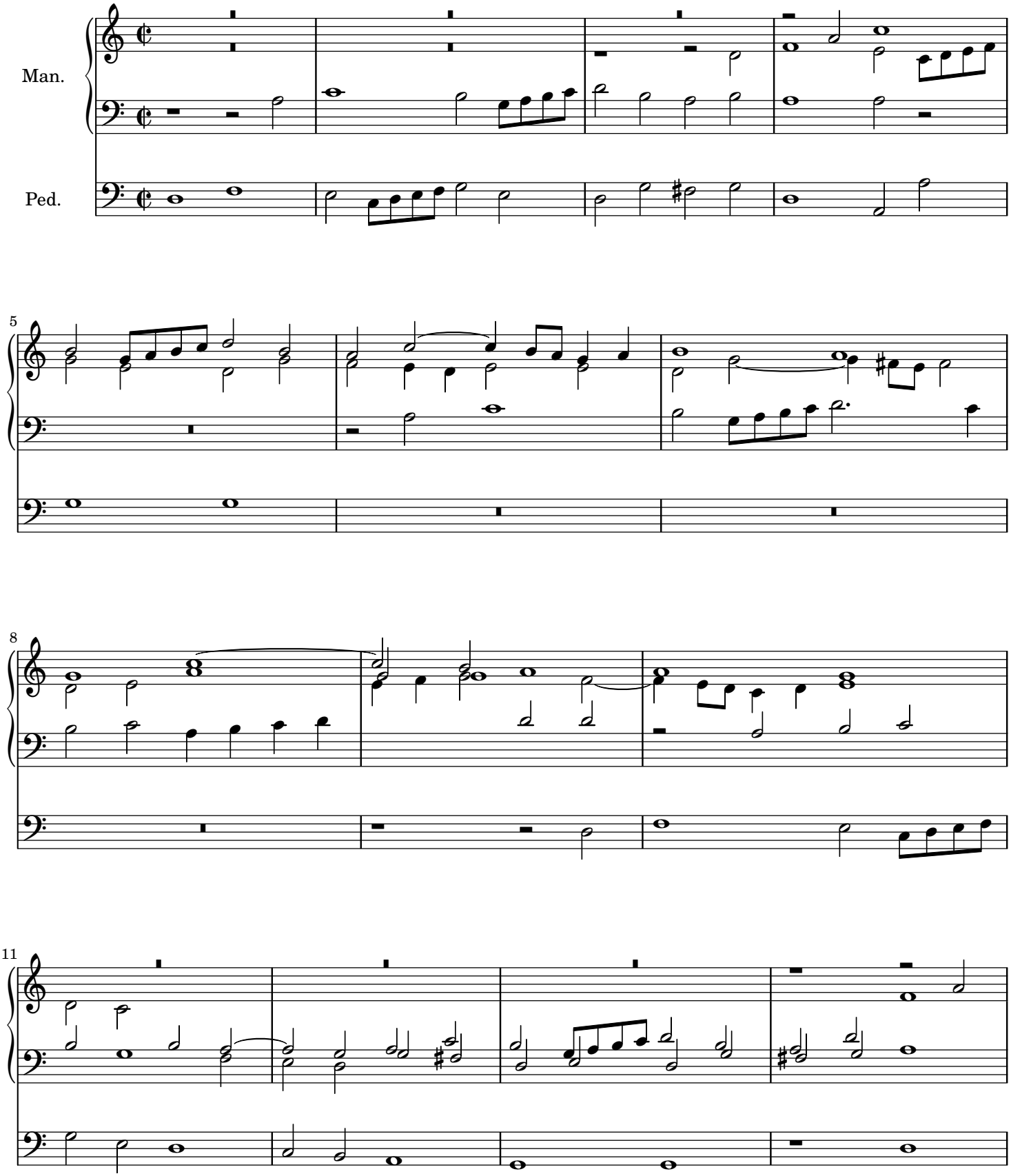
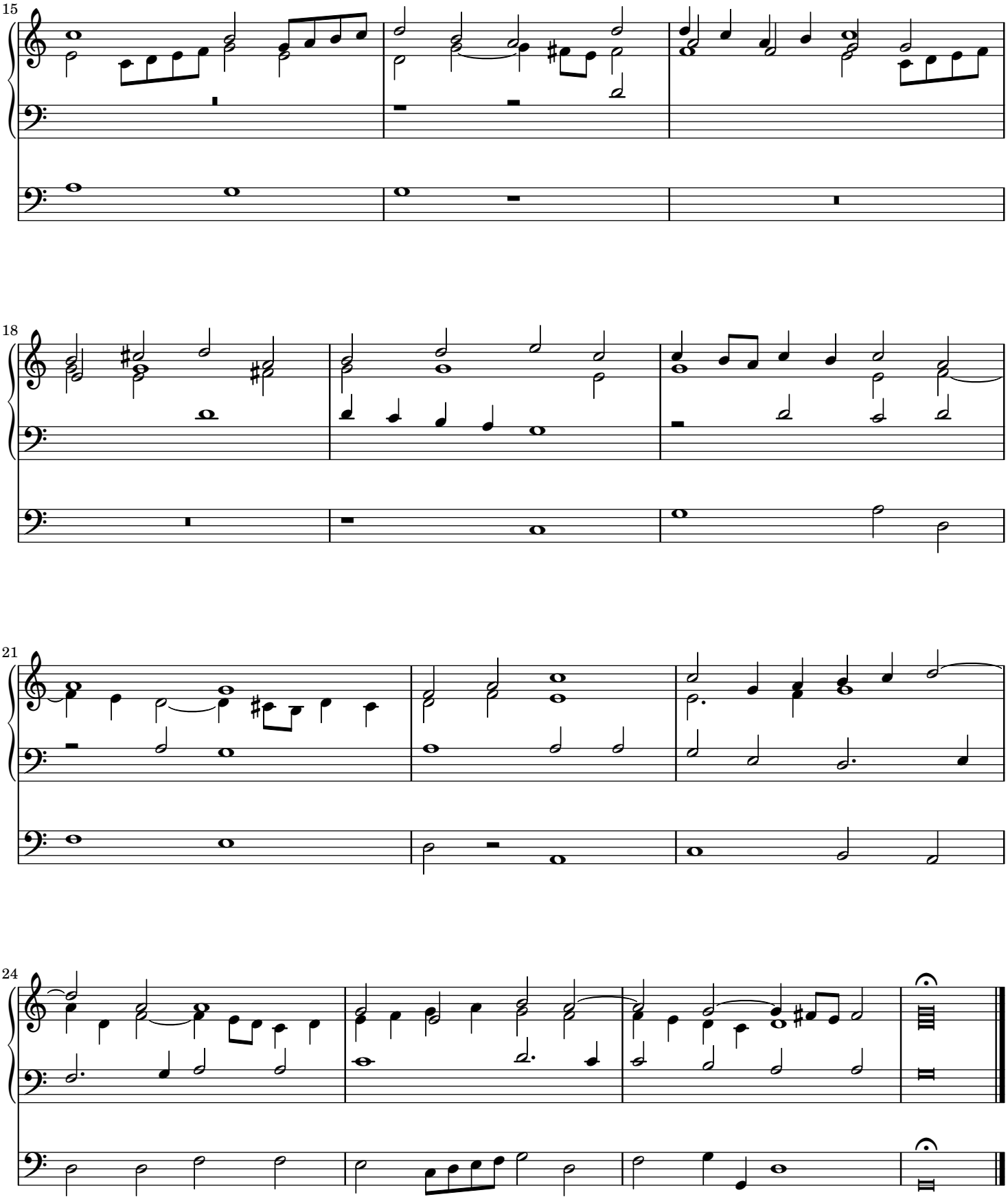
Nona Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)

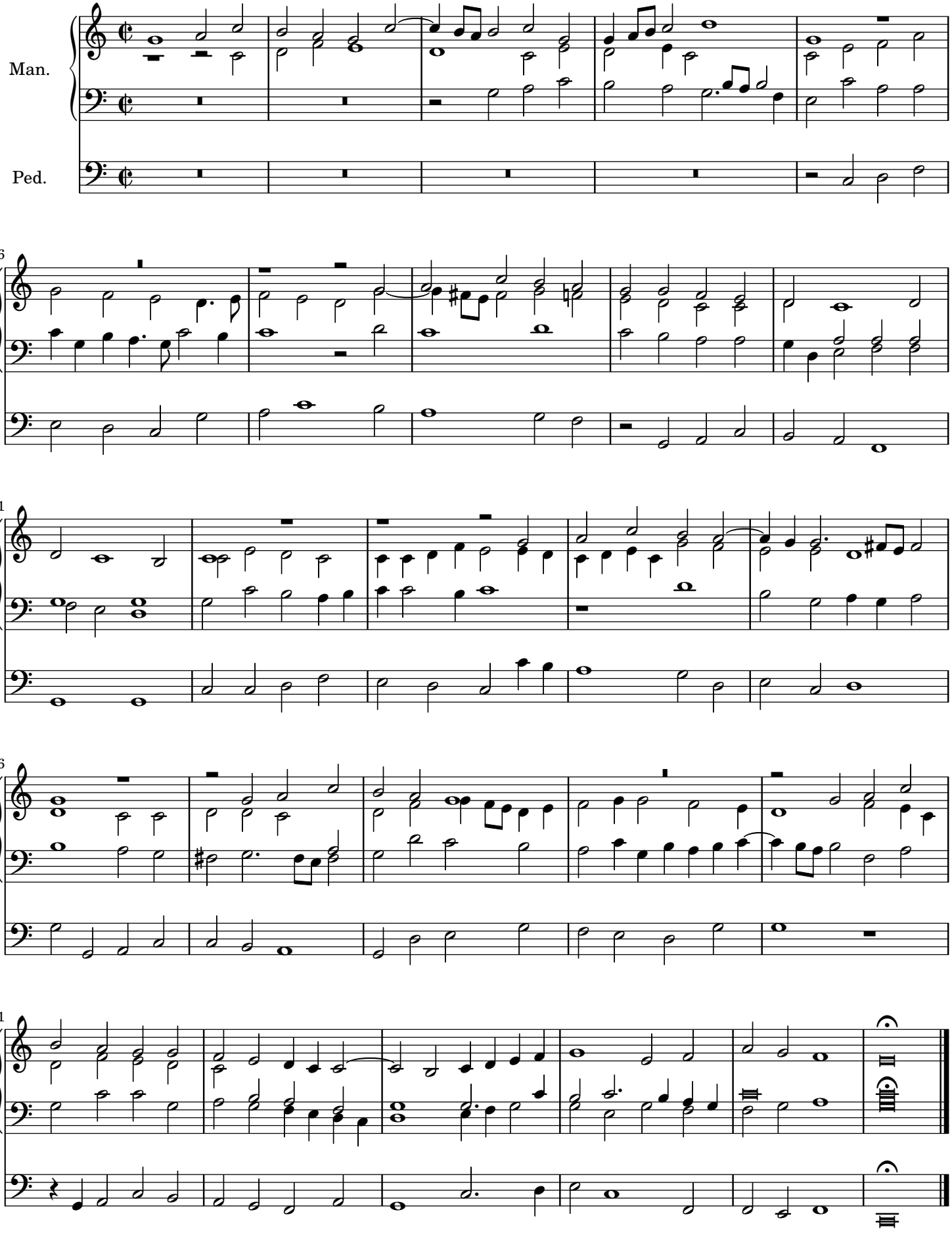




Edition Partitura Organum - 2016 (www.partitura.org)

Undecima Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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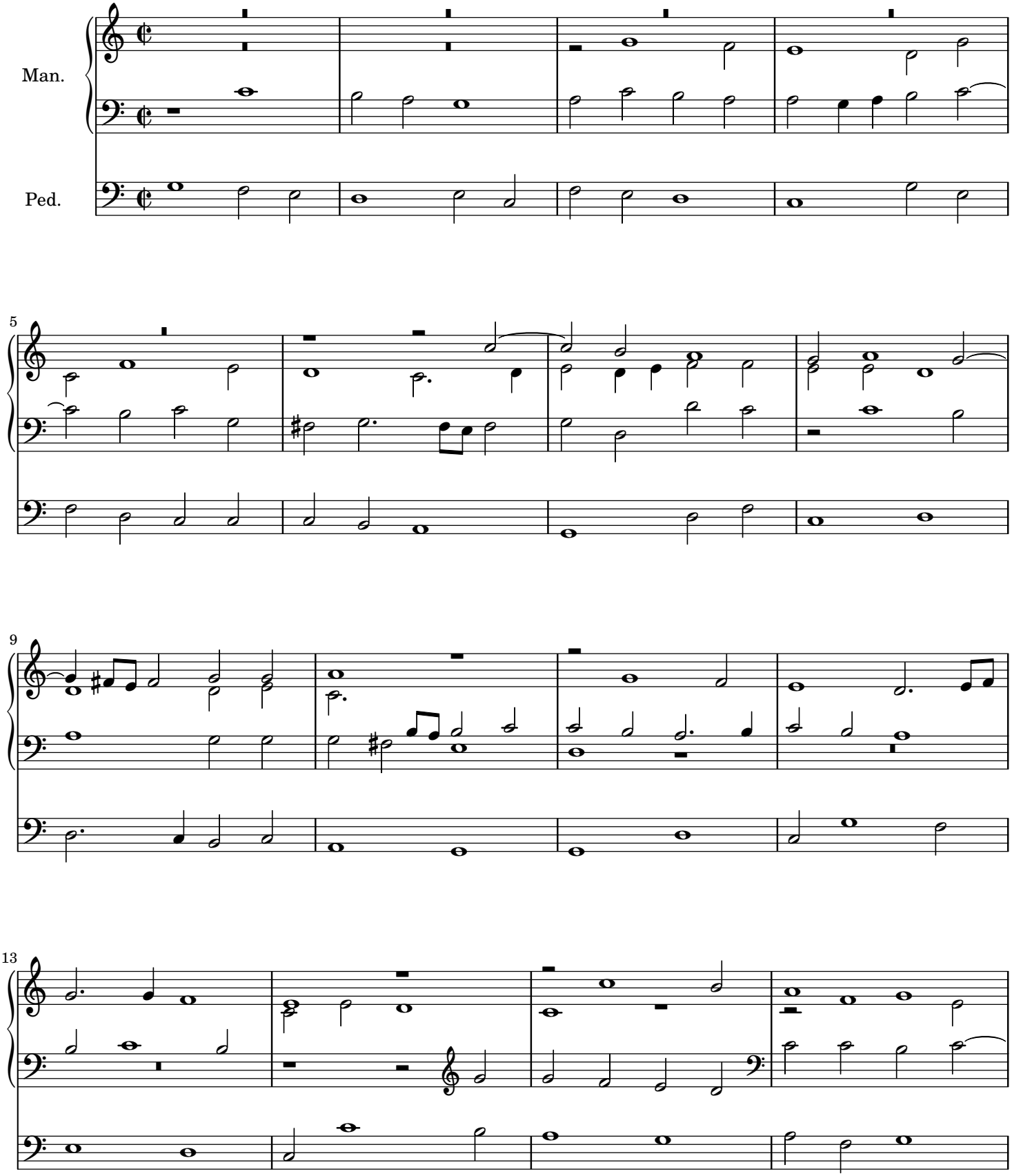
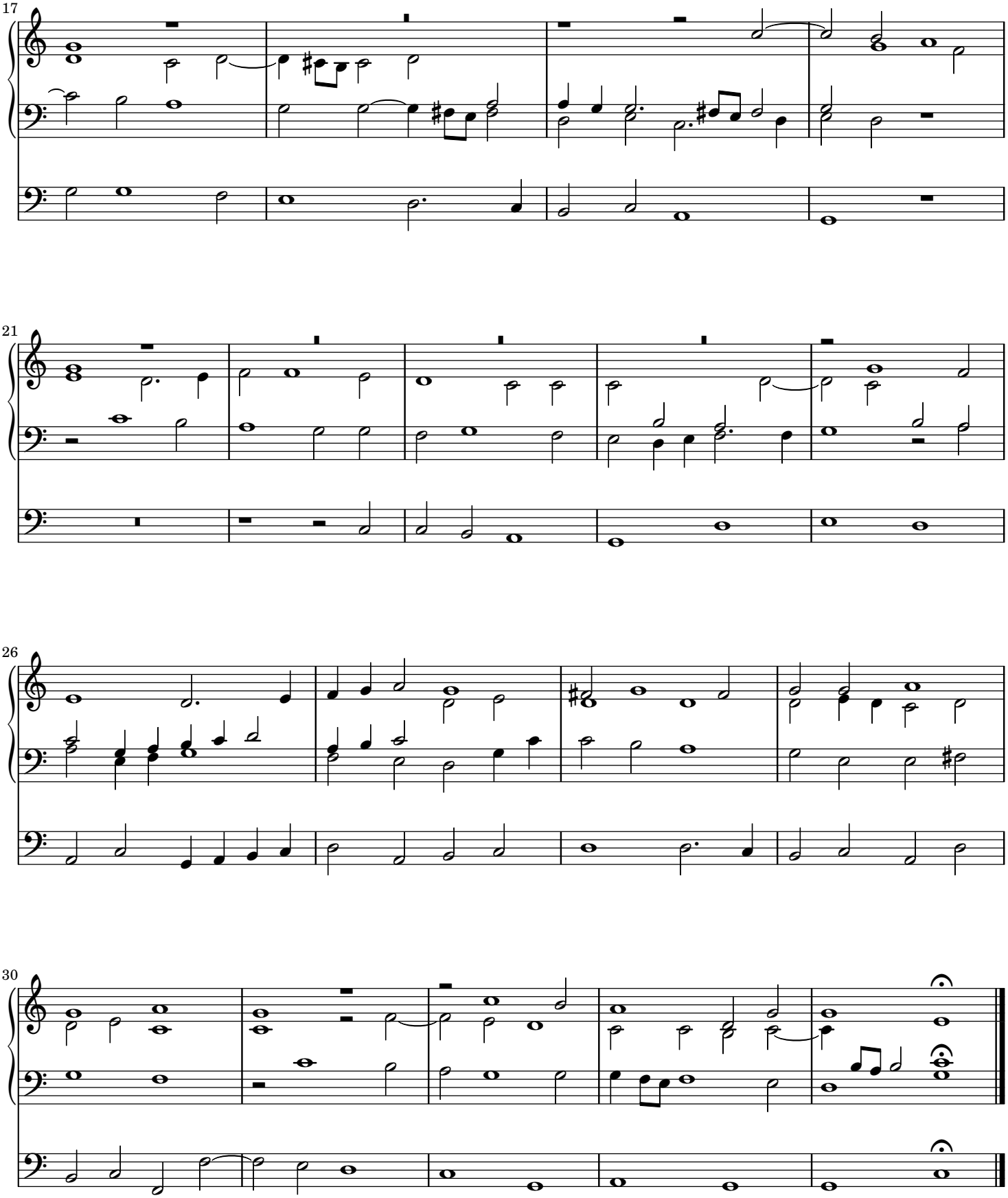
Duodecima Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)

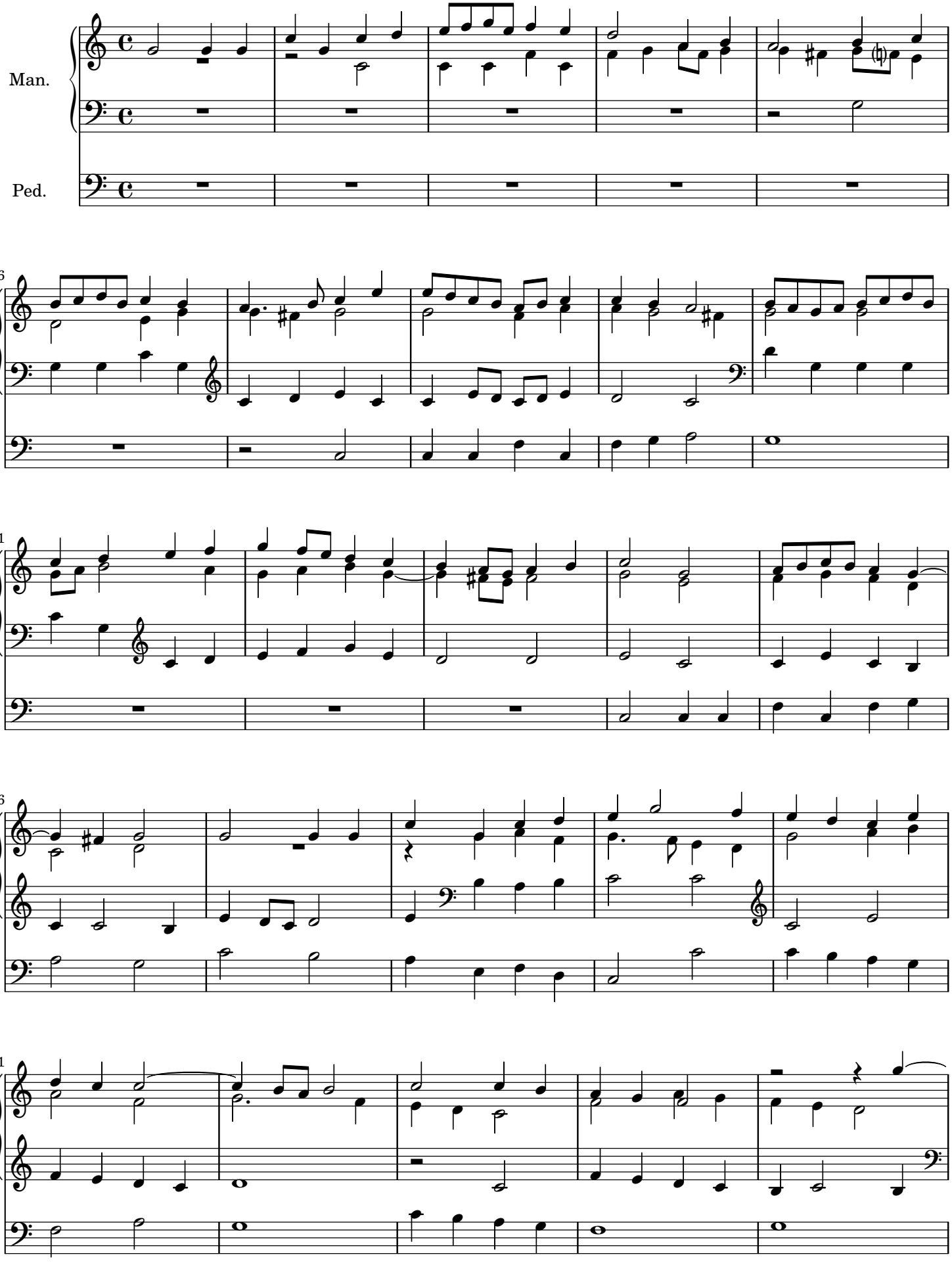


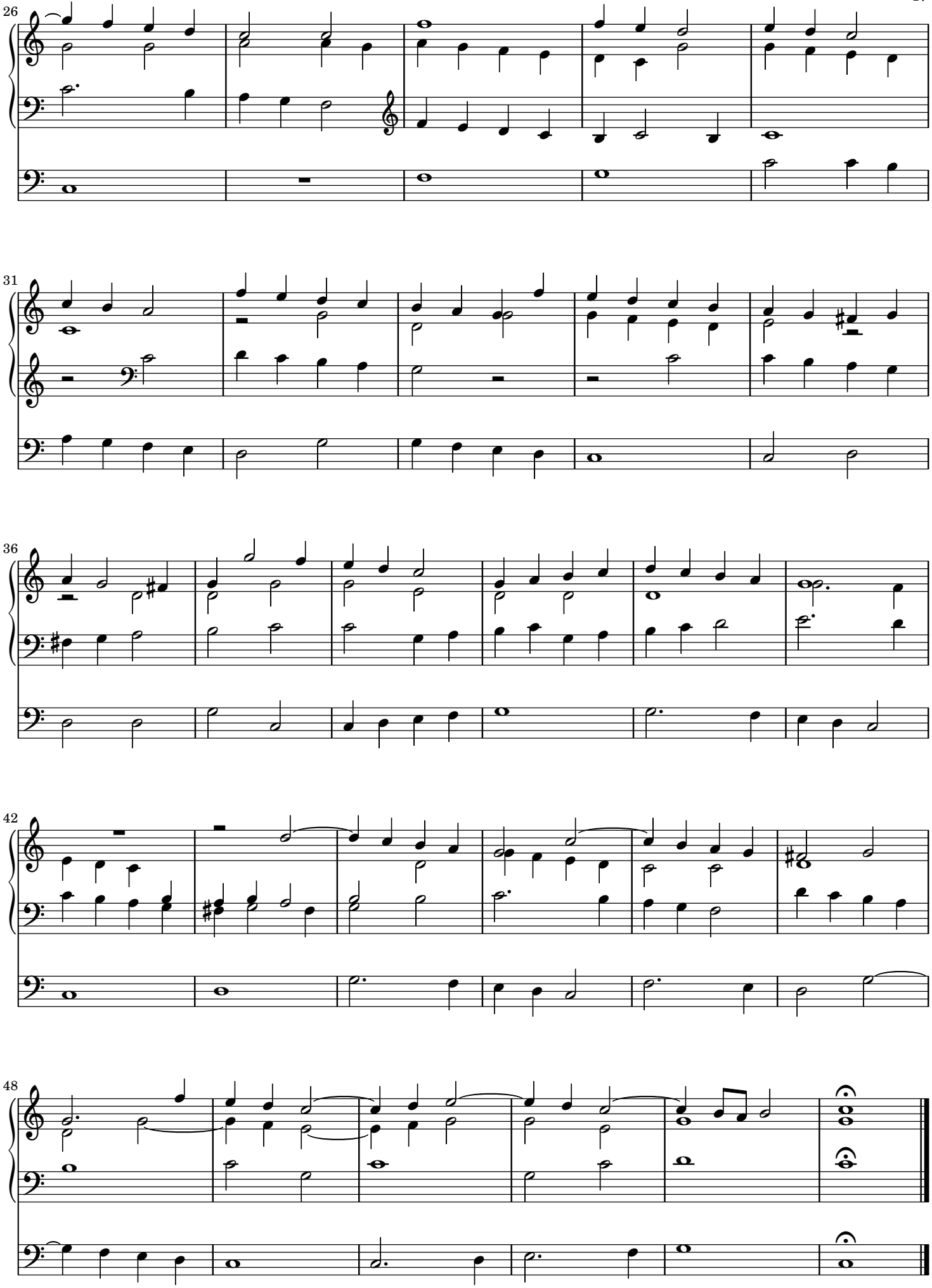


Edition Partitura Organum - 2016 (www.partitura.org)

Decima tertia Fuga

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)

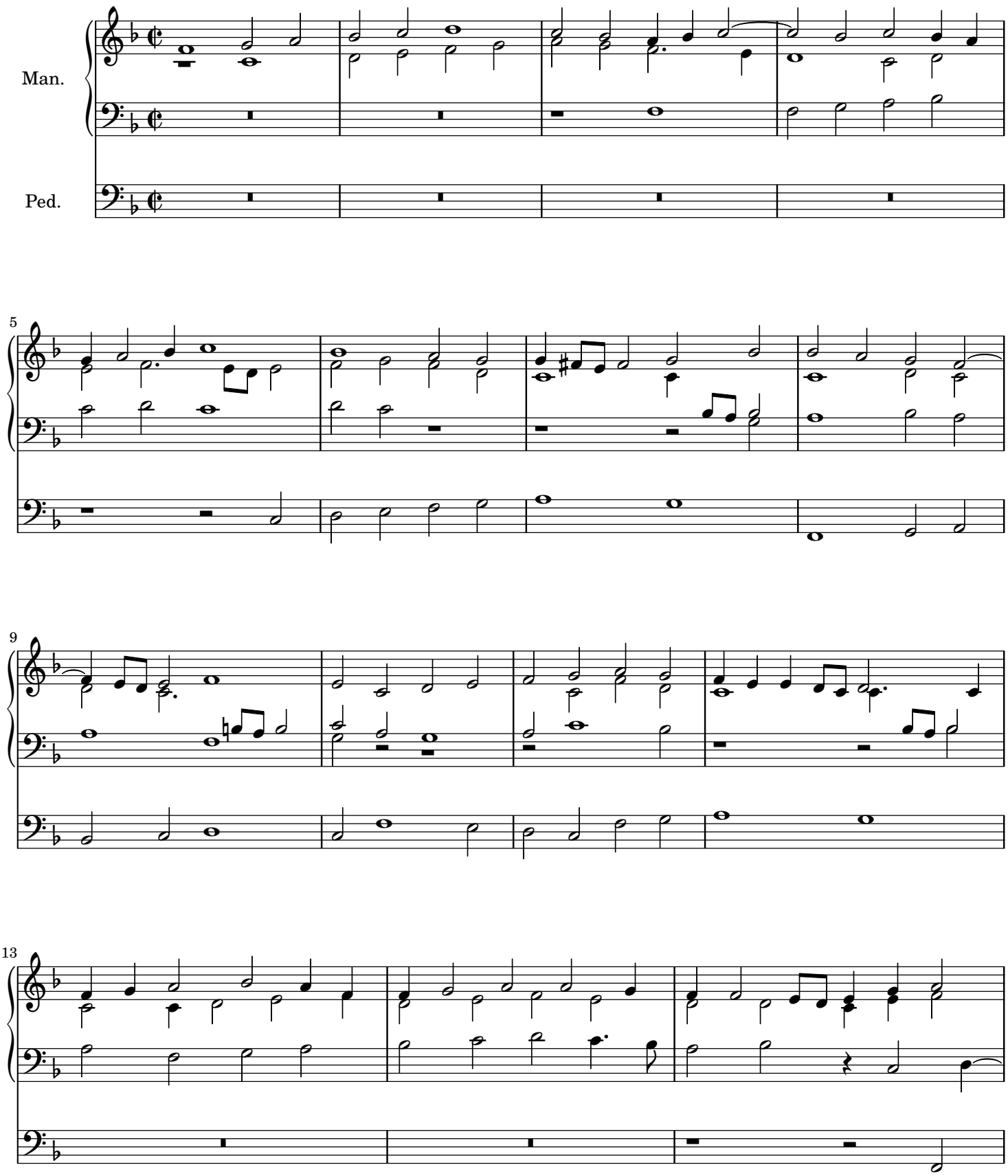


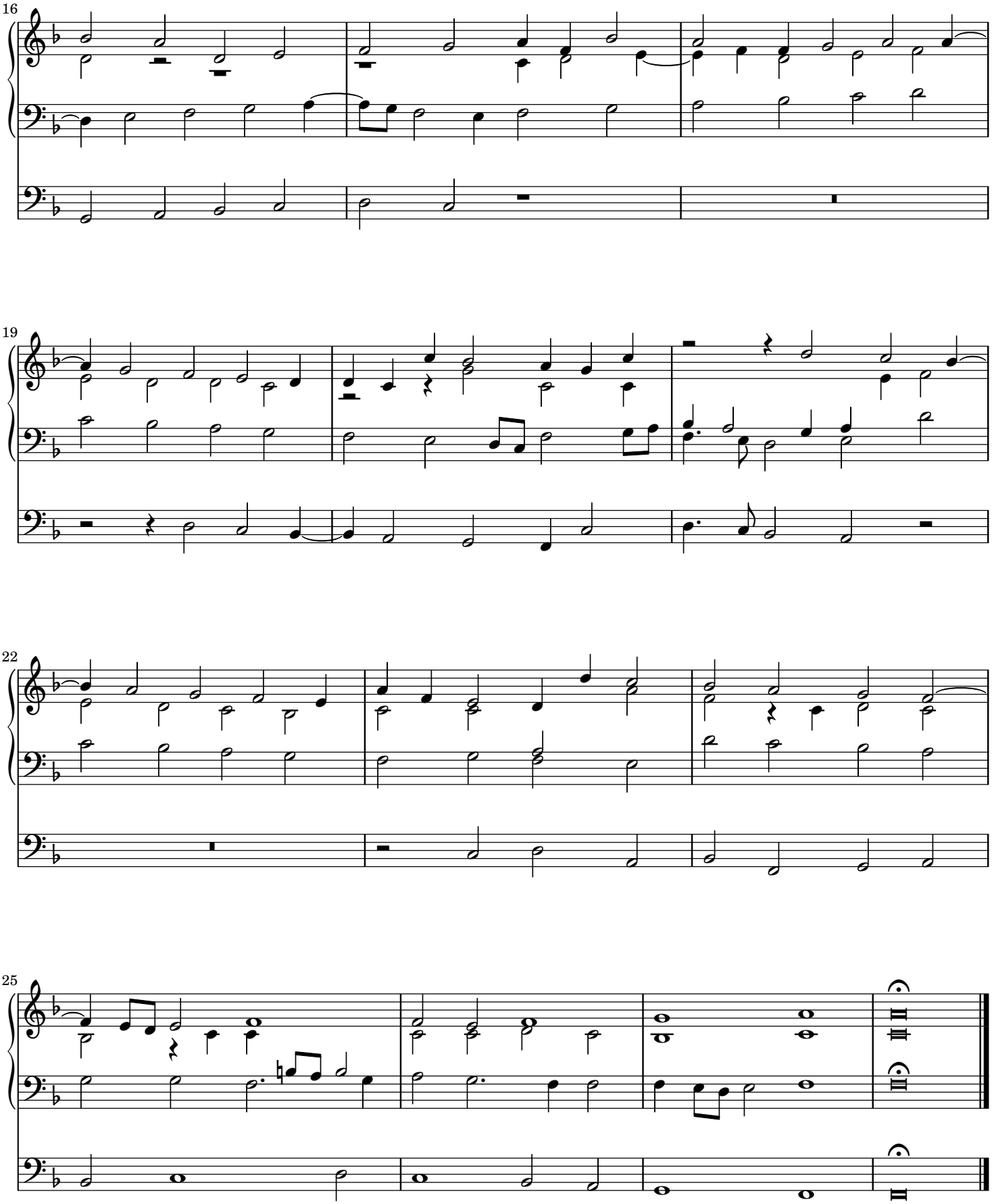


Edition Partitura Organum - 2016 (www.partitura.org)

Fuga 14

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)

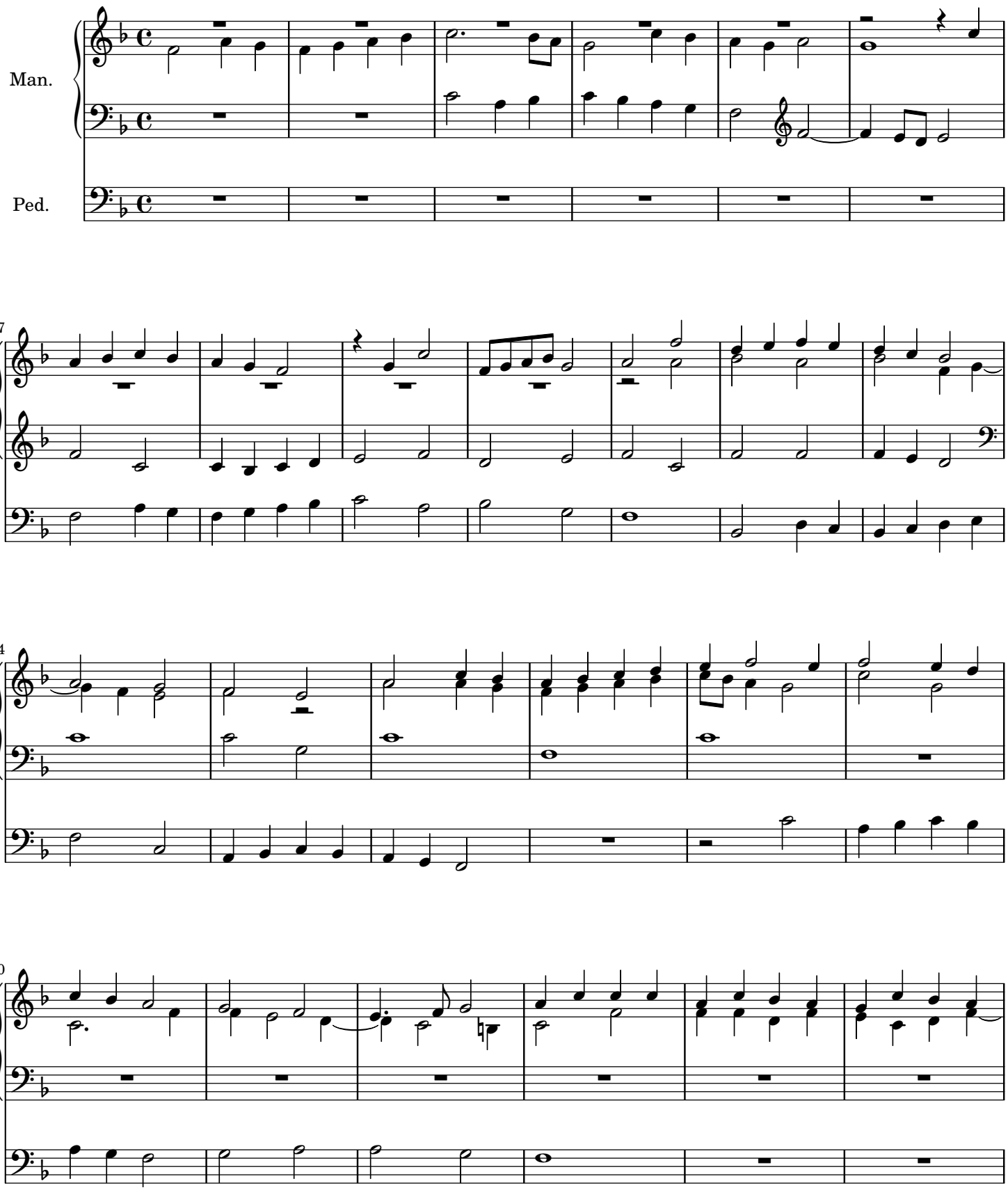


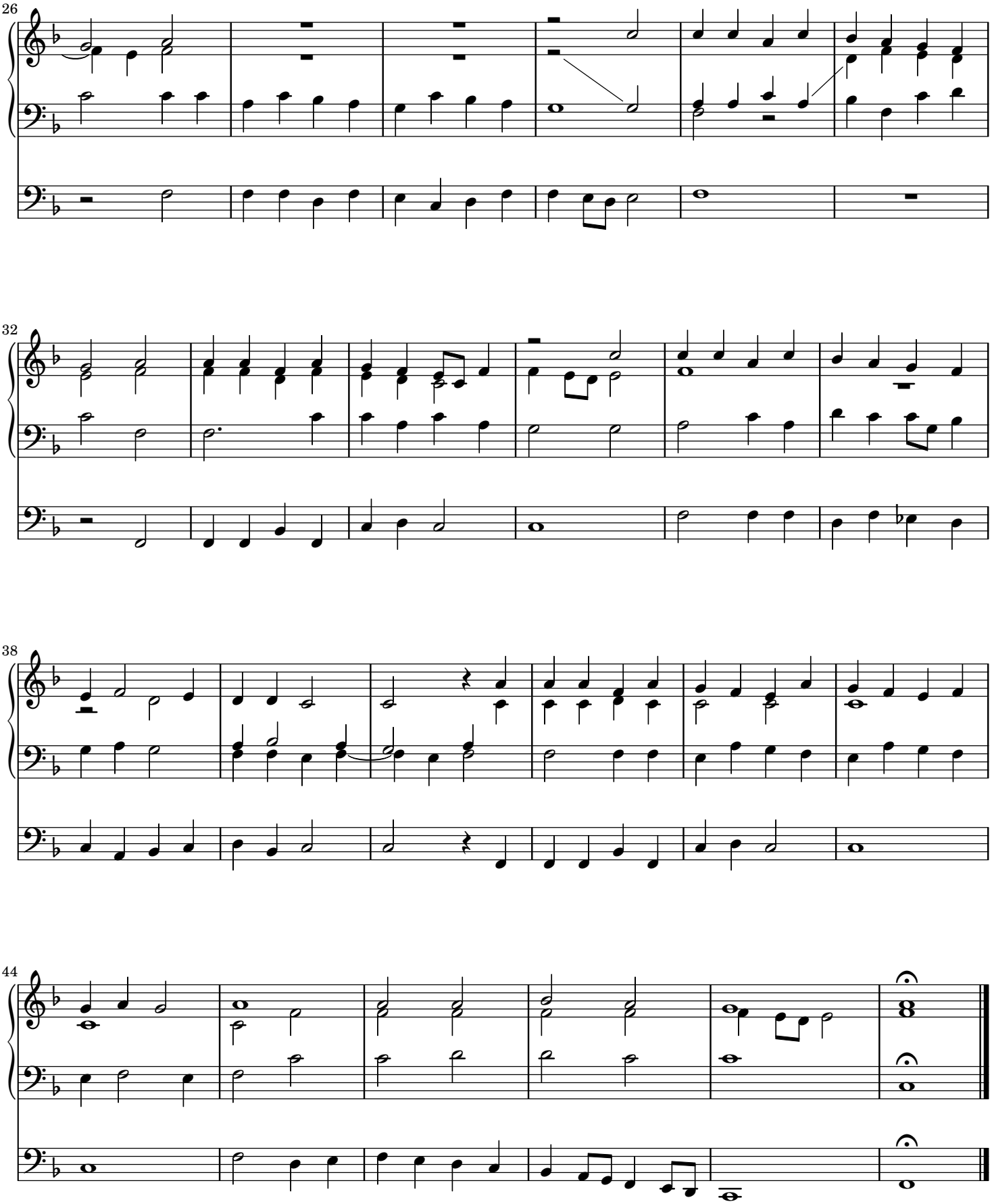


Edition Partitura Organum - 2016 (www.partitura.org)

Fuga 15

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)

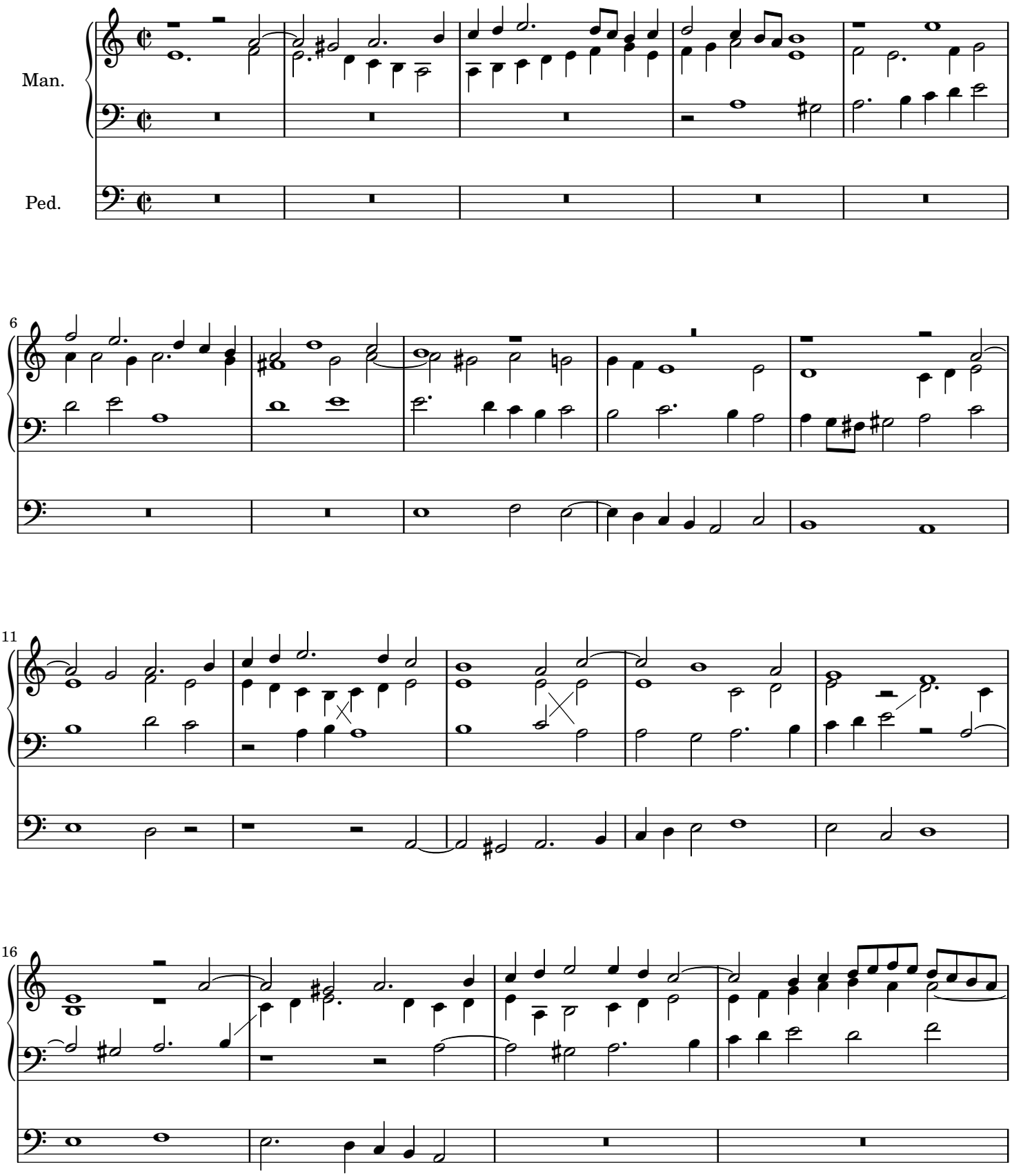


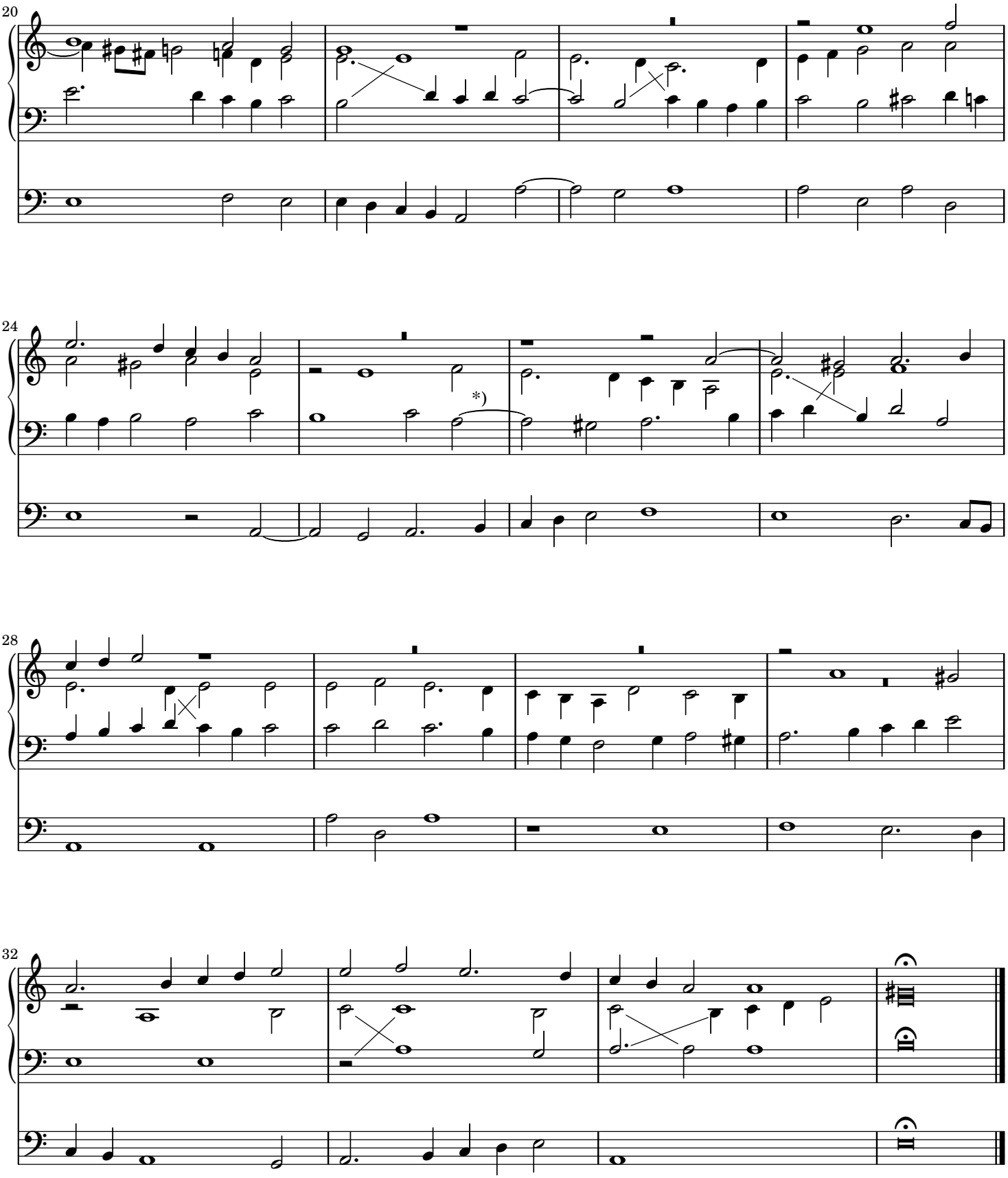


Edition Partitura Organum - 2016 (www.partitura.org)

Fuga 17

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



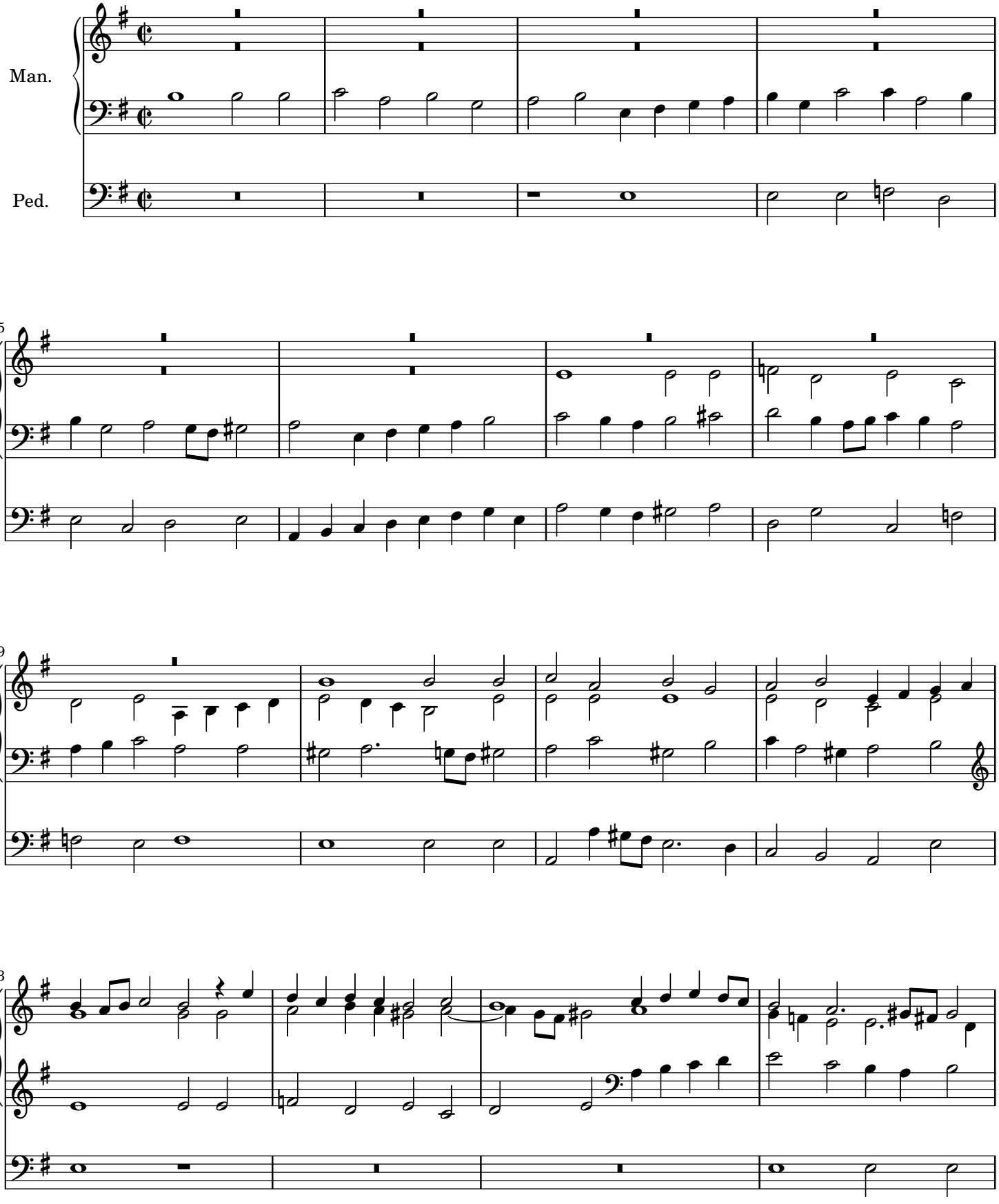


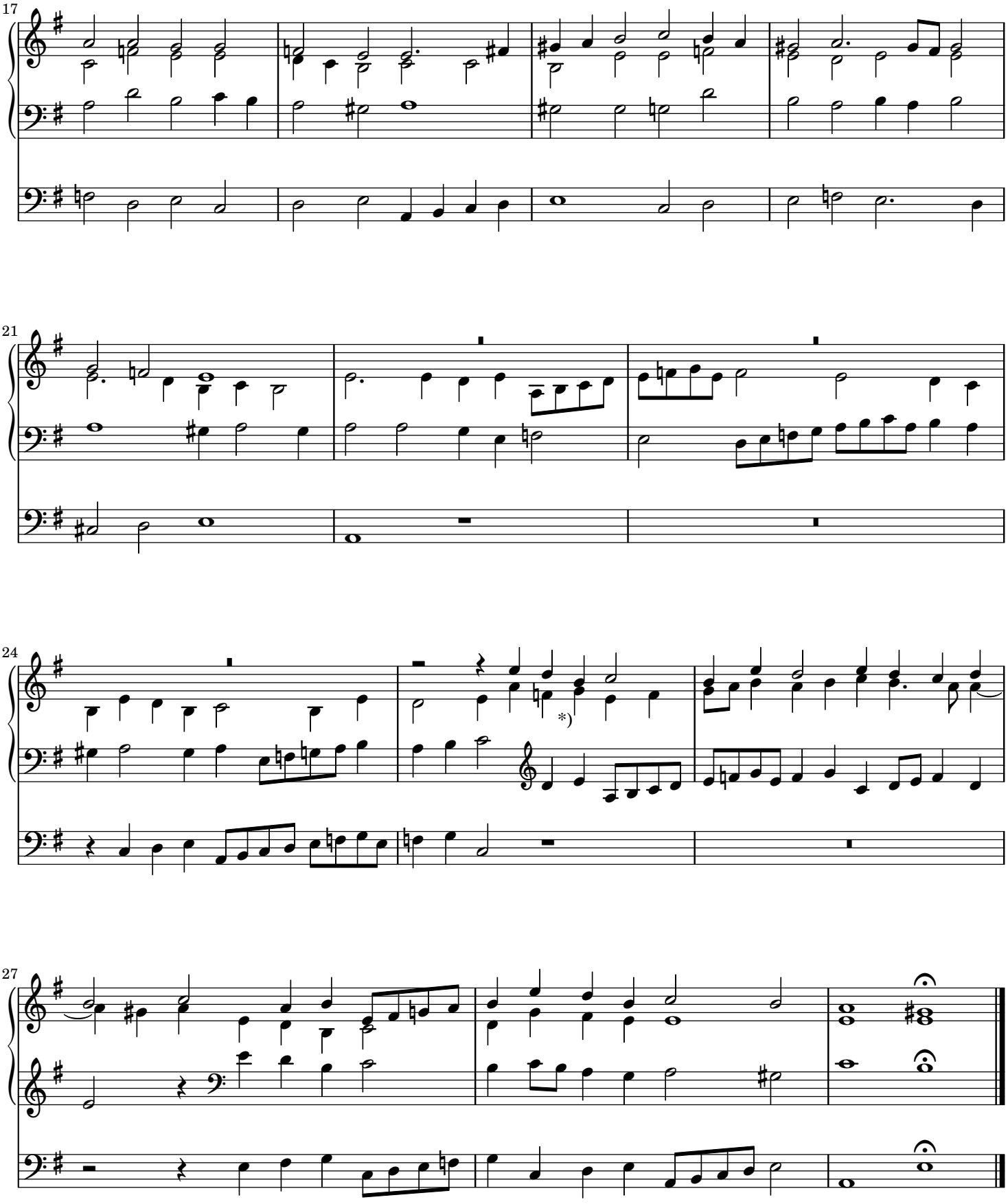
*) a: Not tied in source .

Edition Partitura Organum - 2016 (www.partitura.org)

Fuga Decima Octava

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



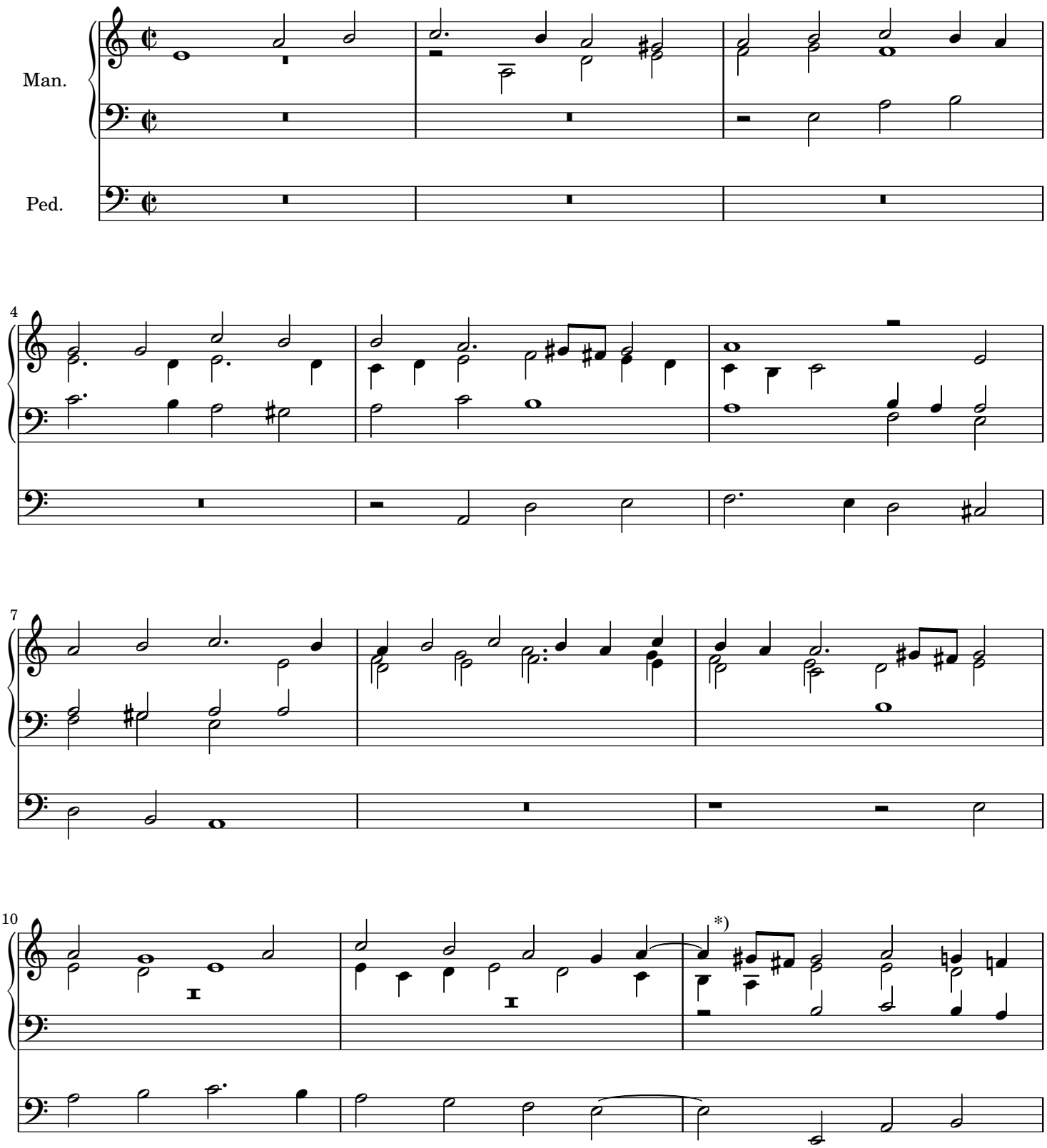


*) f g: g a in manuscript

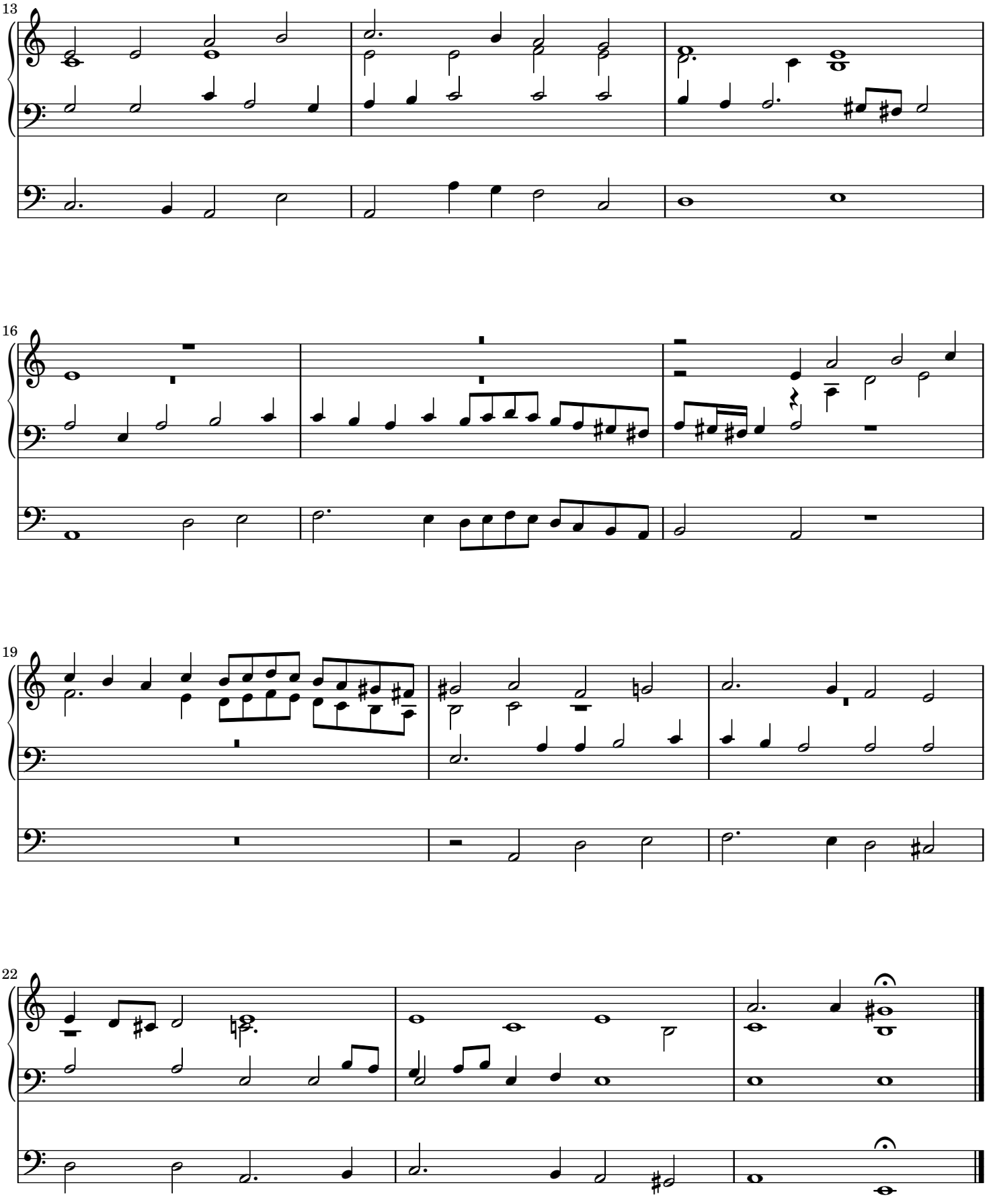
Edition Partitura Organum - 2016 (www.partitura.org)

Fuga Decima Nova

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



**) a: half note in source.*



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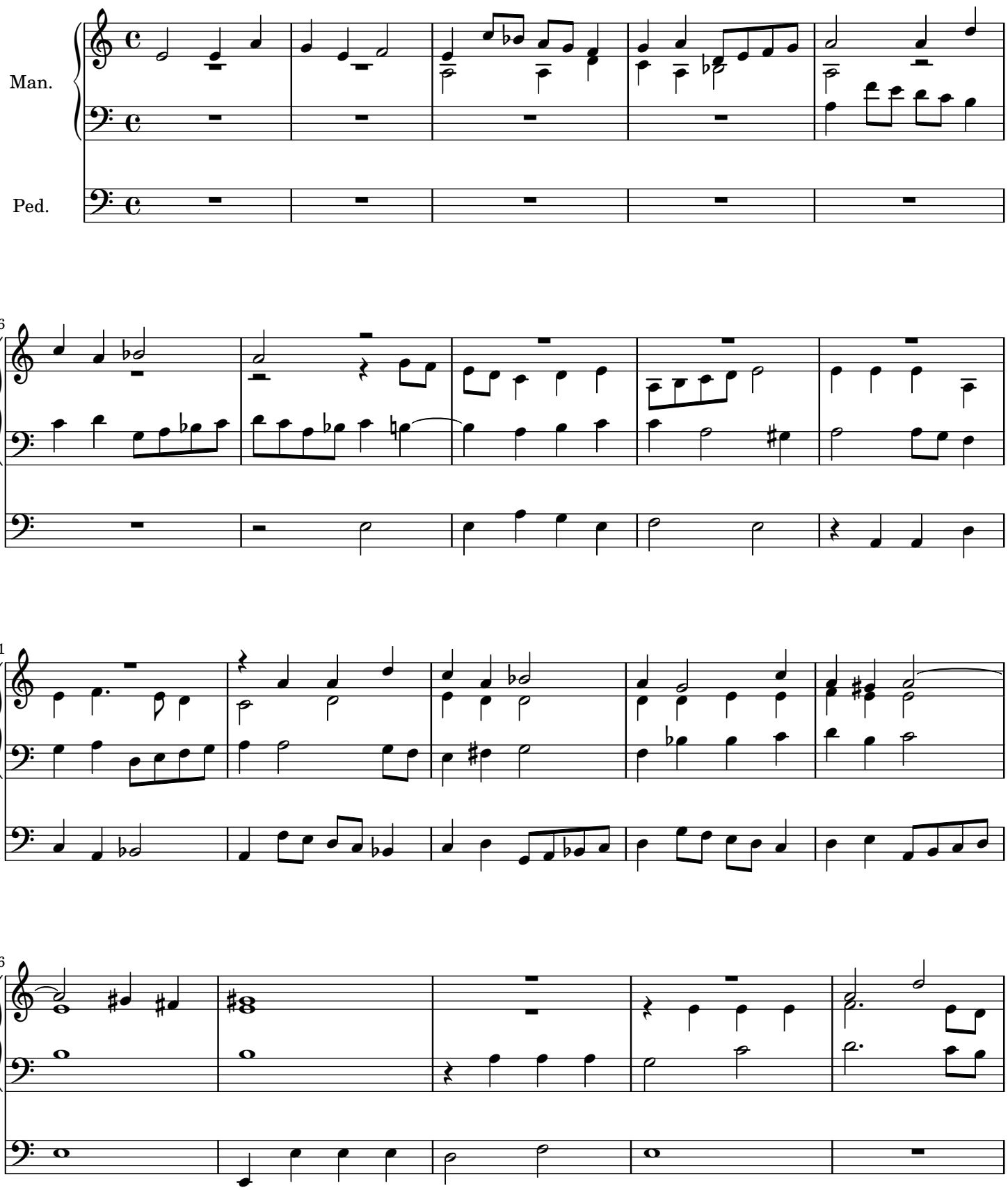
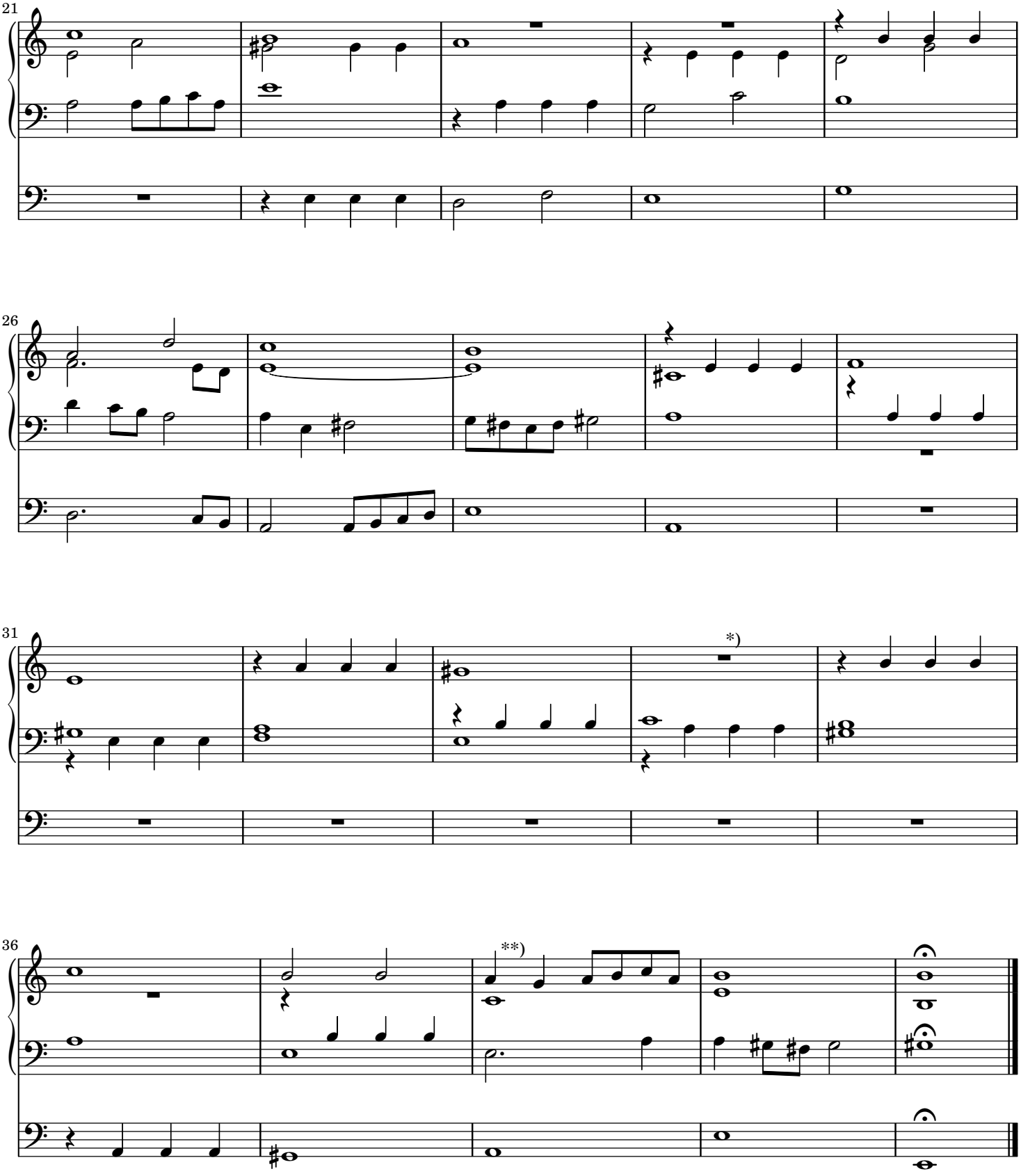
Fuga Vigesima

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)





**) Whole measure rest not indicated in source.*
***) a g: eight notes in source.*

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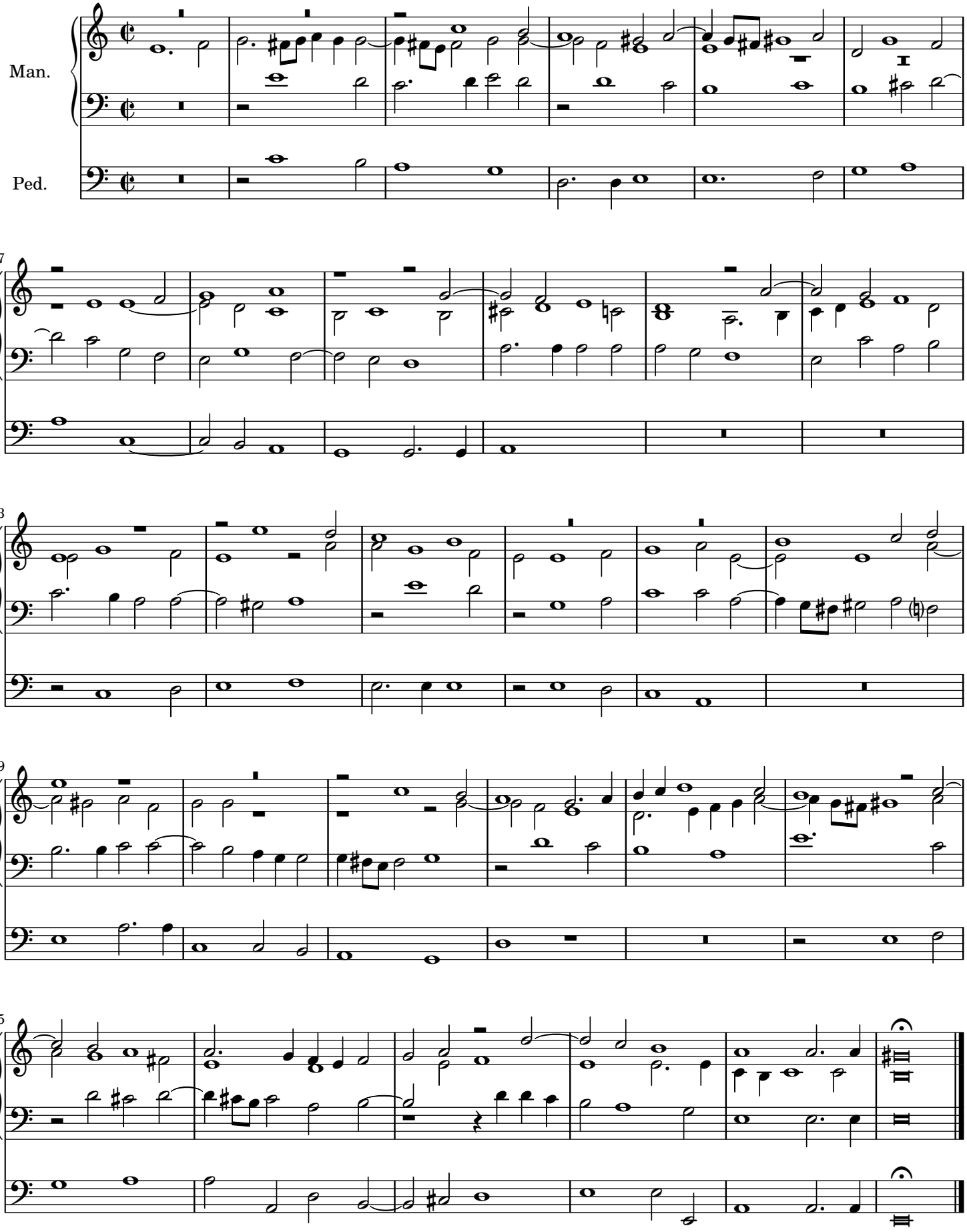
Canzona

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



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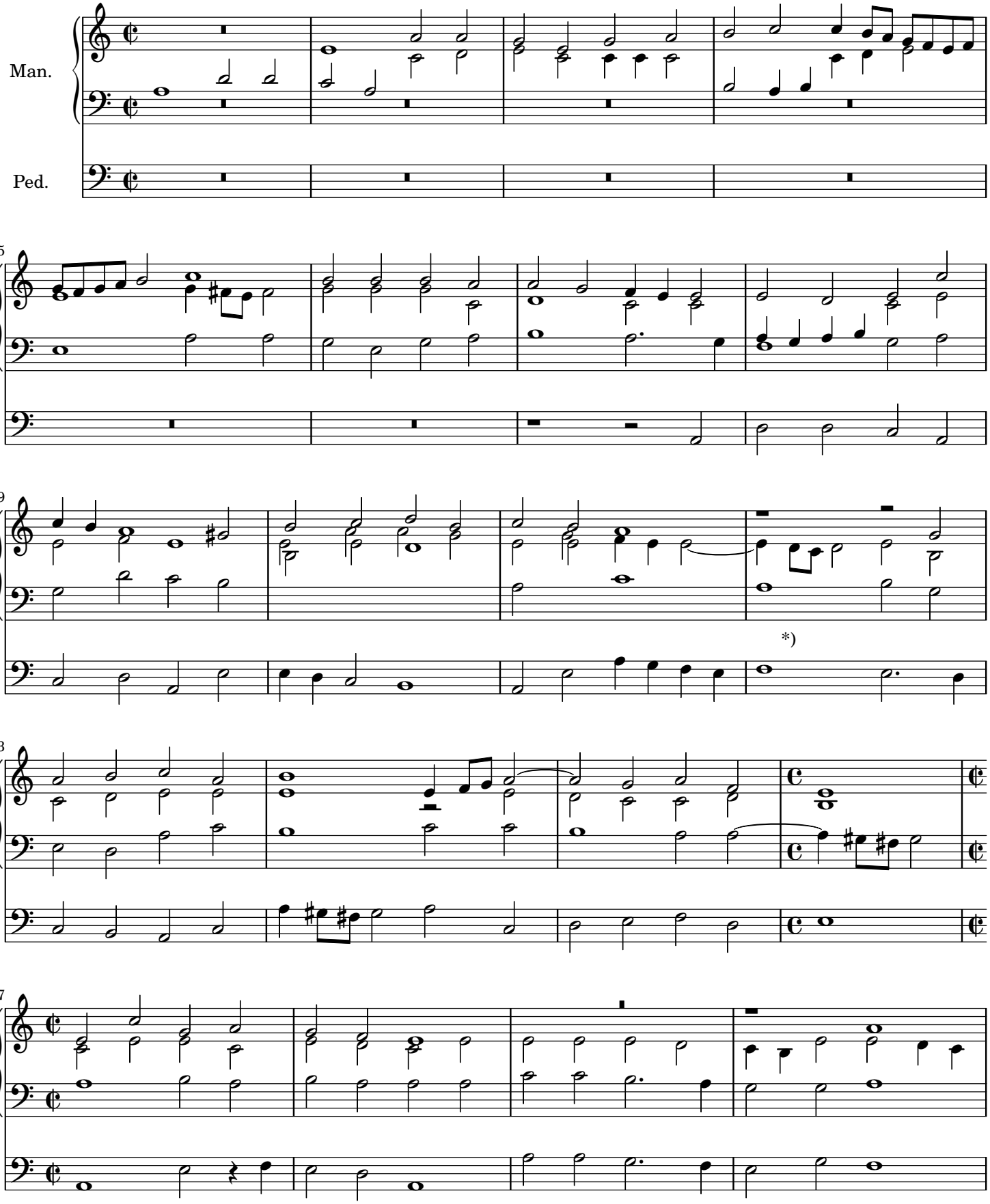
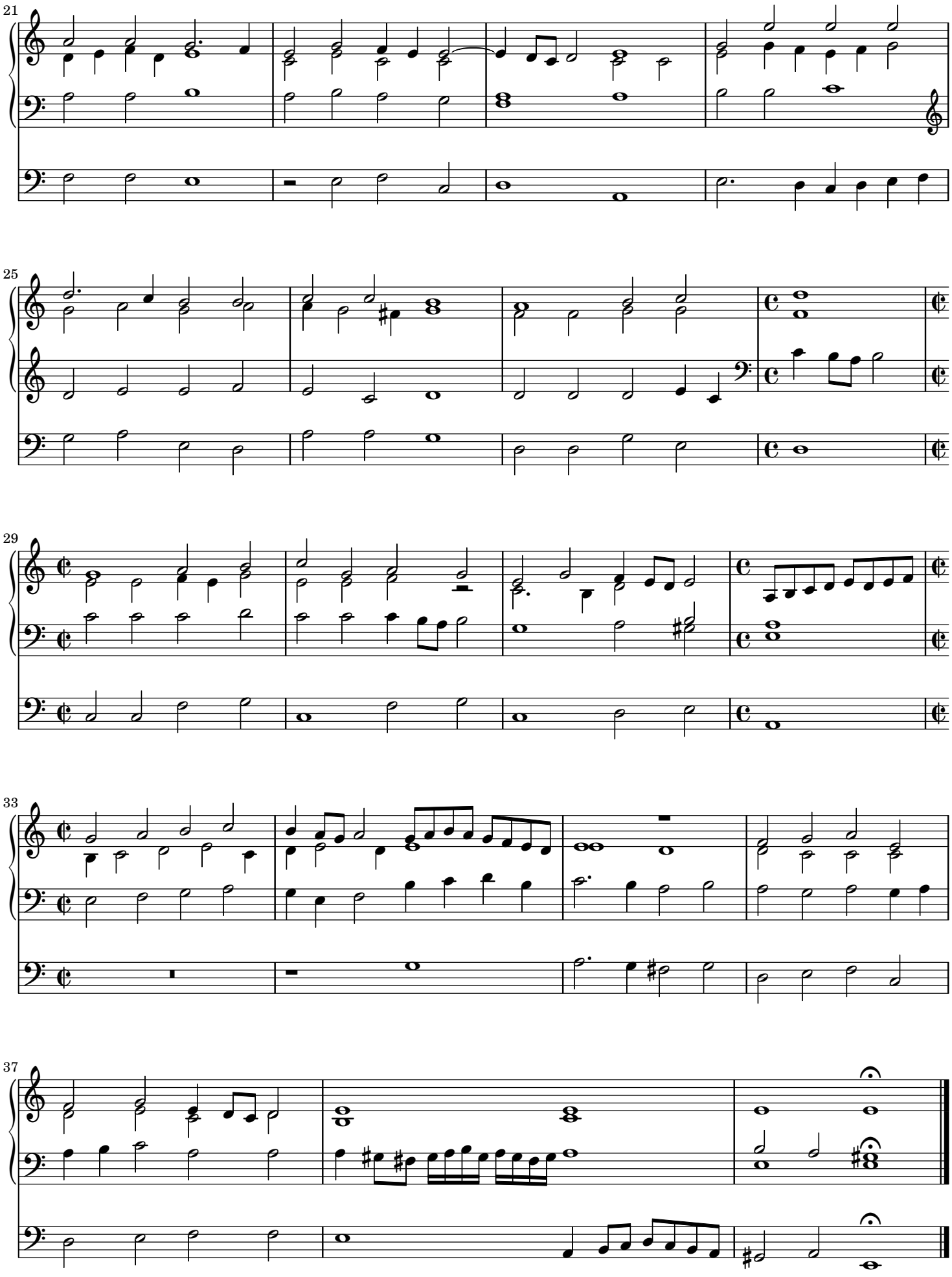
Erbarm dich mein, o Herre Gott

Psalm 51

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



*) *f: half note in manuscript*



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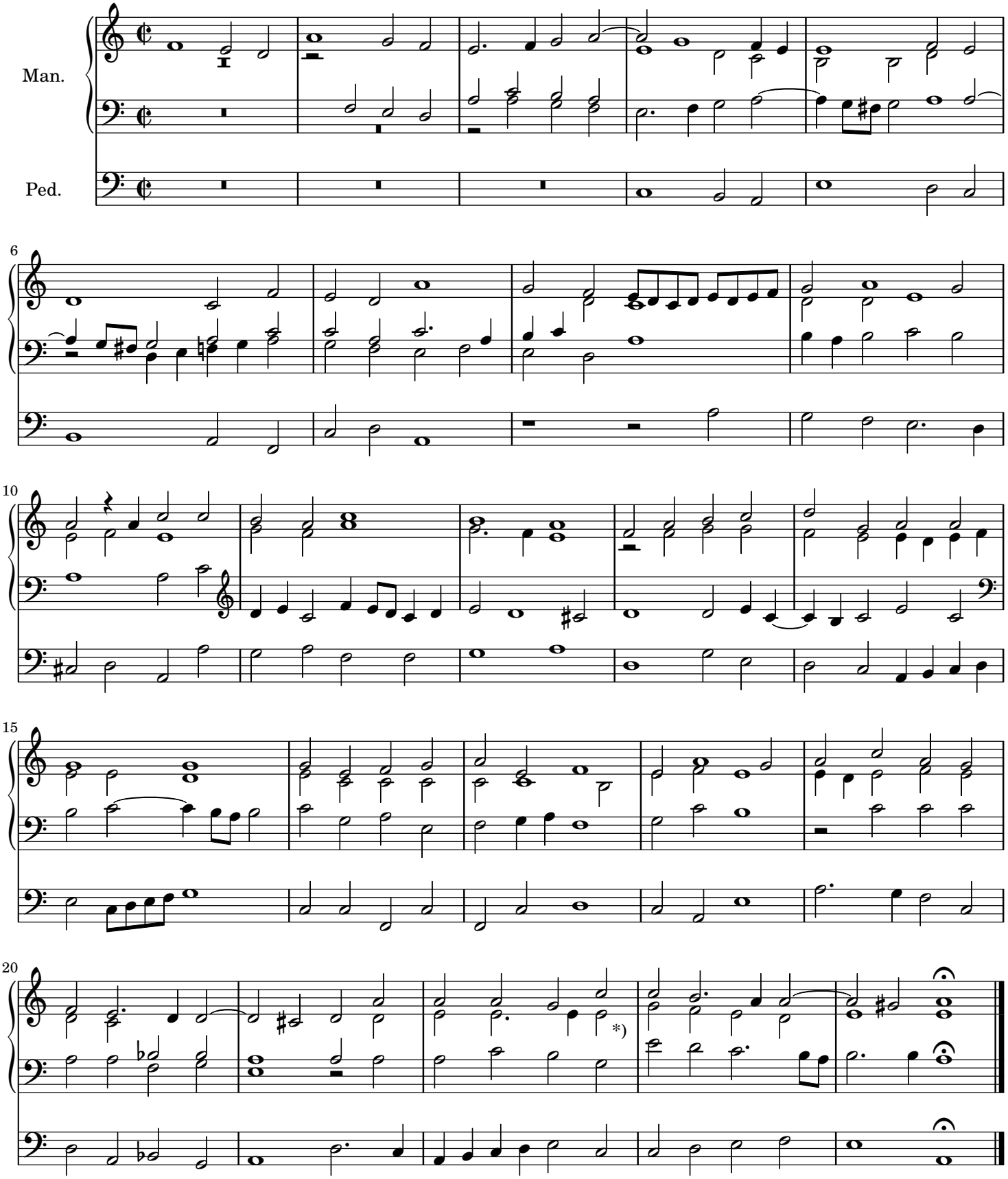
Nun welche hie ihr Hoffnung gar

Psalm 125

Simon Lohet
(1550 - 1611)



*) e: f in source

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