Seth Houston, choral composer

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O Vos Omnes

for chamber chorus
(SATB divisi)
a cappella

Seth Houston
www.sethhouston.com
2006

Notes

The text *O Vos Omnes* is attributed to the prophet Jeremiah, who uttered the words in reference to the desolation of Jerusalem and the Babylonian Captivity. The words are recorded in the first chapter of Lamentations, verse 12. Liturgically, the text is used in the liturgy of Holy Saturday (the night before Easter), and in other contexts. While the sorrow Jeremiah expresses is related to a particular historical event, the text is used to convey deep sorrow concerning a variety of themes.

My setting of *O Vos Omnes* was inspired, in part, by a performance by vocalist Dawn Upshaw and the chamber ensemble Eighth Blackbird. The soprano line, in particular, draws on the passionate gestures of Upshaw's performance. The piece should be performed expressively and with emotional intensity. Gb may be substituted for high Bb in measures 18 and 22 if necessary. The sopranos may shift registers, from the high Bb to mid-low Gb in measure 22. The piano reduction, to be used for rehearsal only, should be very legato.

O Vos Omnes was composed in San Francisco in 2006.

O vos omnes	O all you
qui transitis per viam	who pass along this way
attendite et videte	behold and see
si est dolor	if there is any sorrow
sicut dolor meus.	like unto my sorrow.

Translation courtesy of Ron Jeffers, *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire, vol. I: Sacred Latin Texts* (Corvallis, OR: Earthsongs, 1988), p. 182.

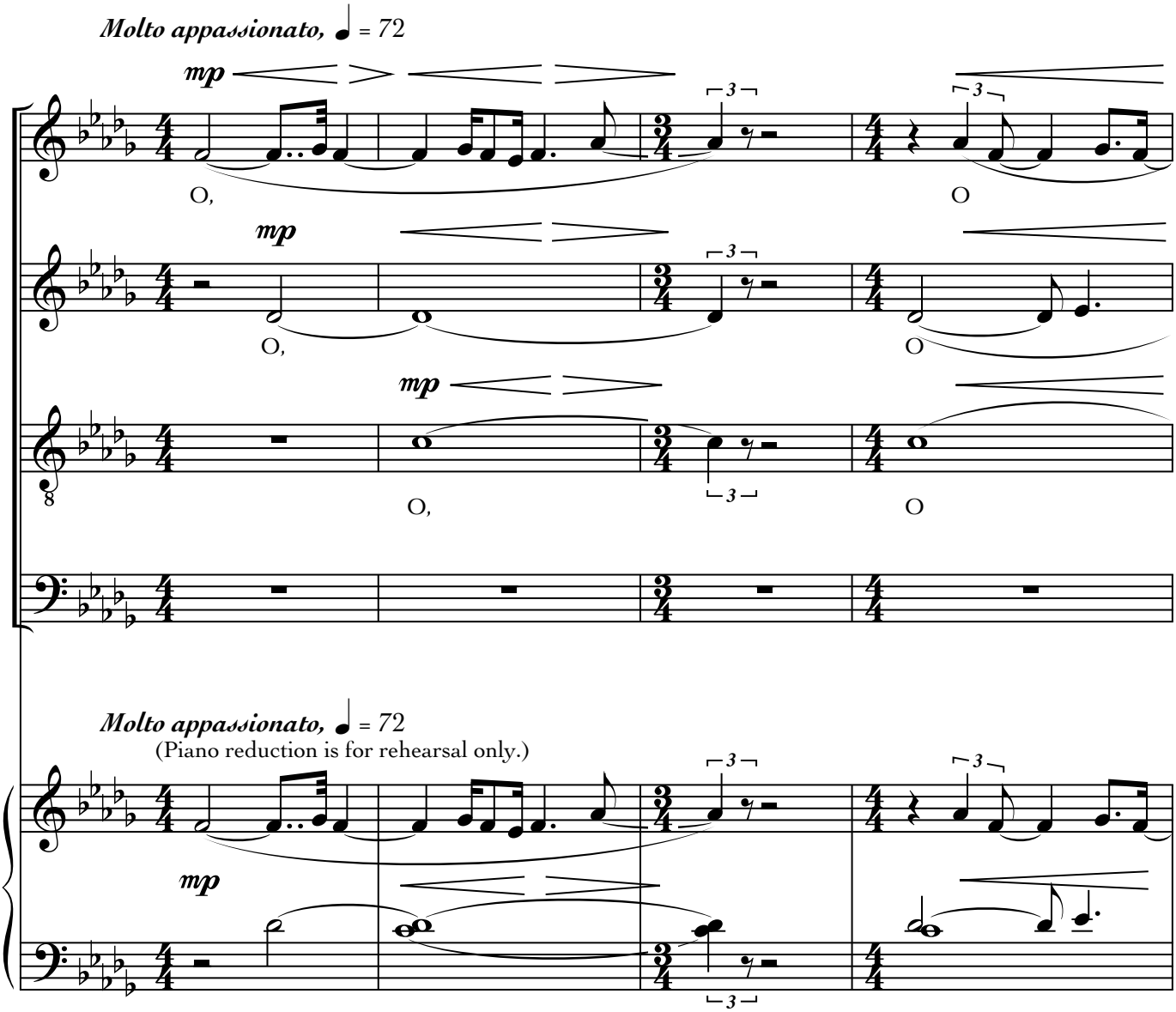
About the Composer

Seth Houston is a choral director, composer, and performer living in Boulder, Colorado. Currently completing a master's degree in choral conducting at the University of Colorado, Houston also holds degrees in composition and religion from Oberlin College. Houston has been teaching middle school and high school choirs in Waldorf schools since 2001, and also founded and directed the youth chorus *Big Sky*. Houston's choral compositions are widely performed and have been featured on *A Prairie Home Companion*, in *Sing Out!* magazine, and in the choral collection *Northern Harmony*.

O Vos Omnes

for chamber chorus

Seth Houston, 2006



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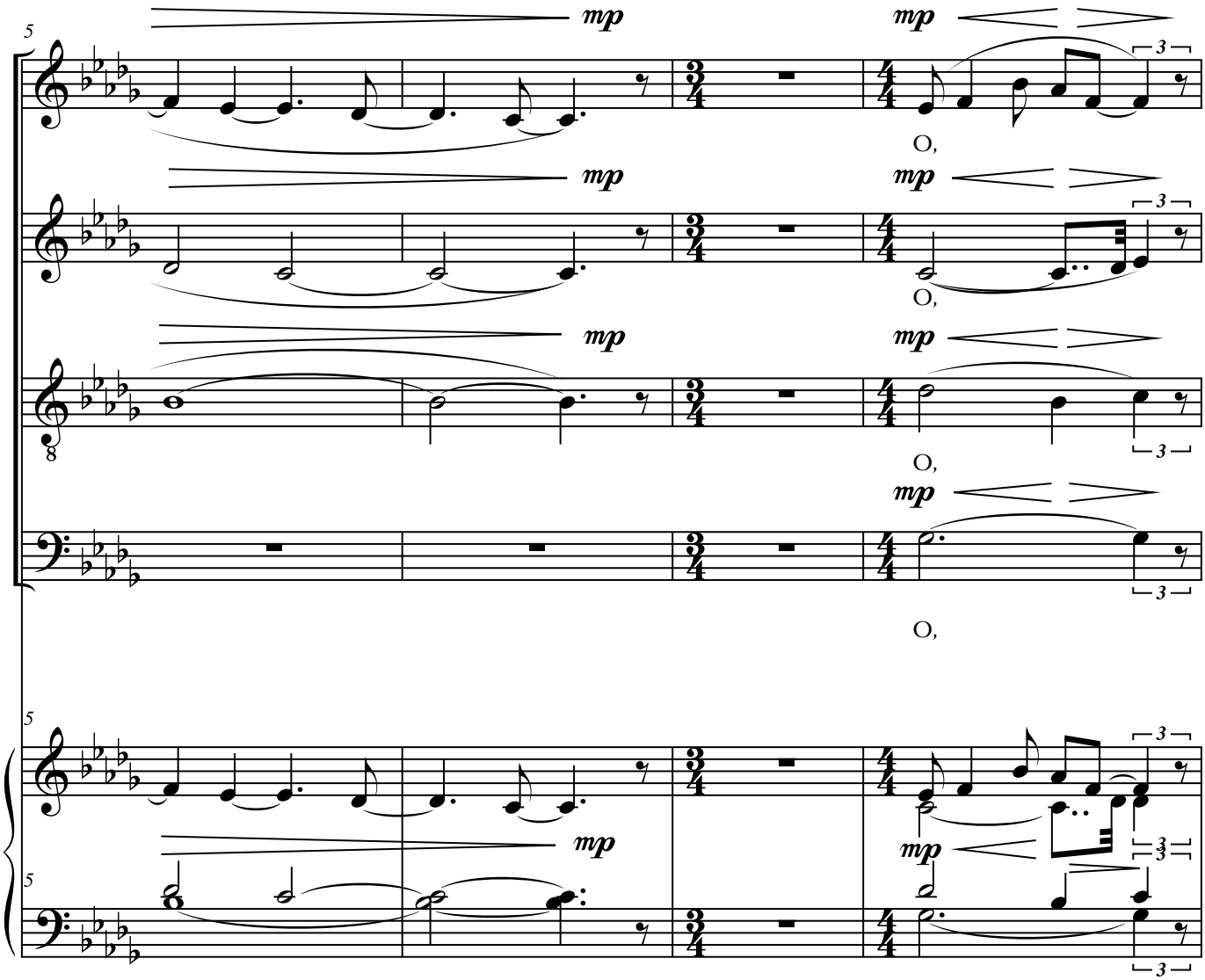
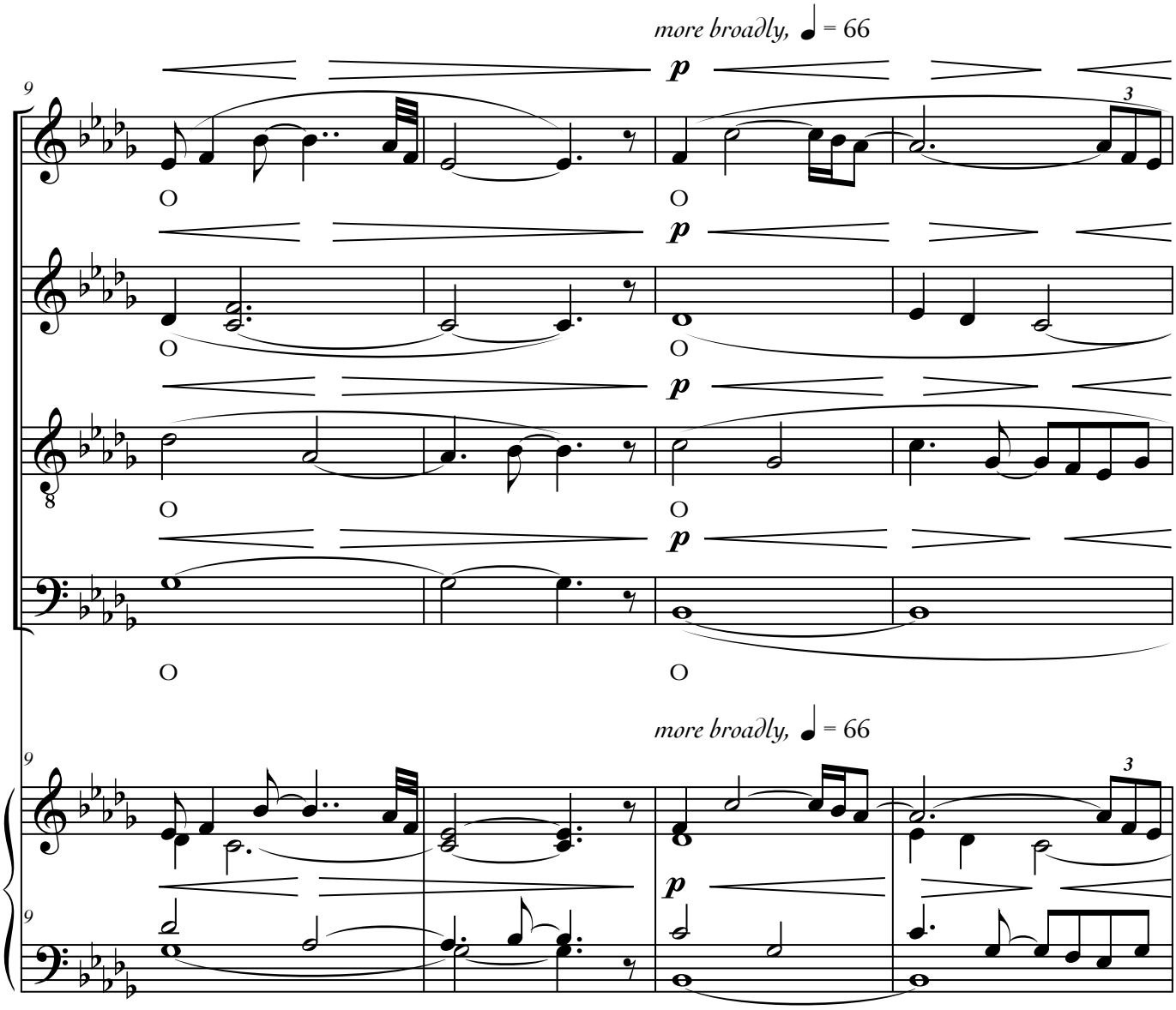
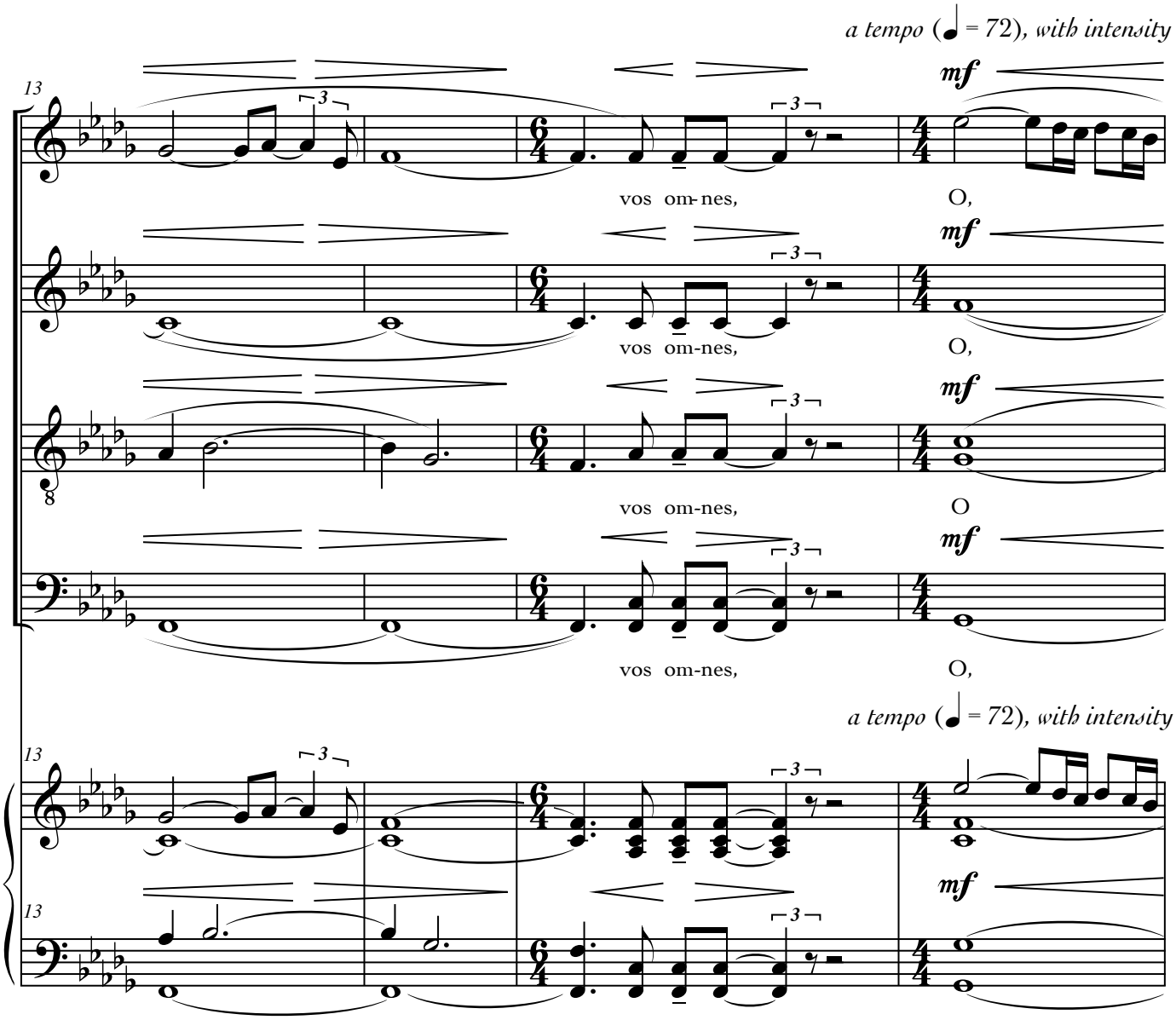
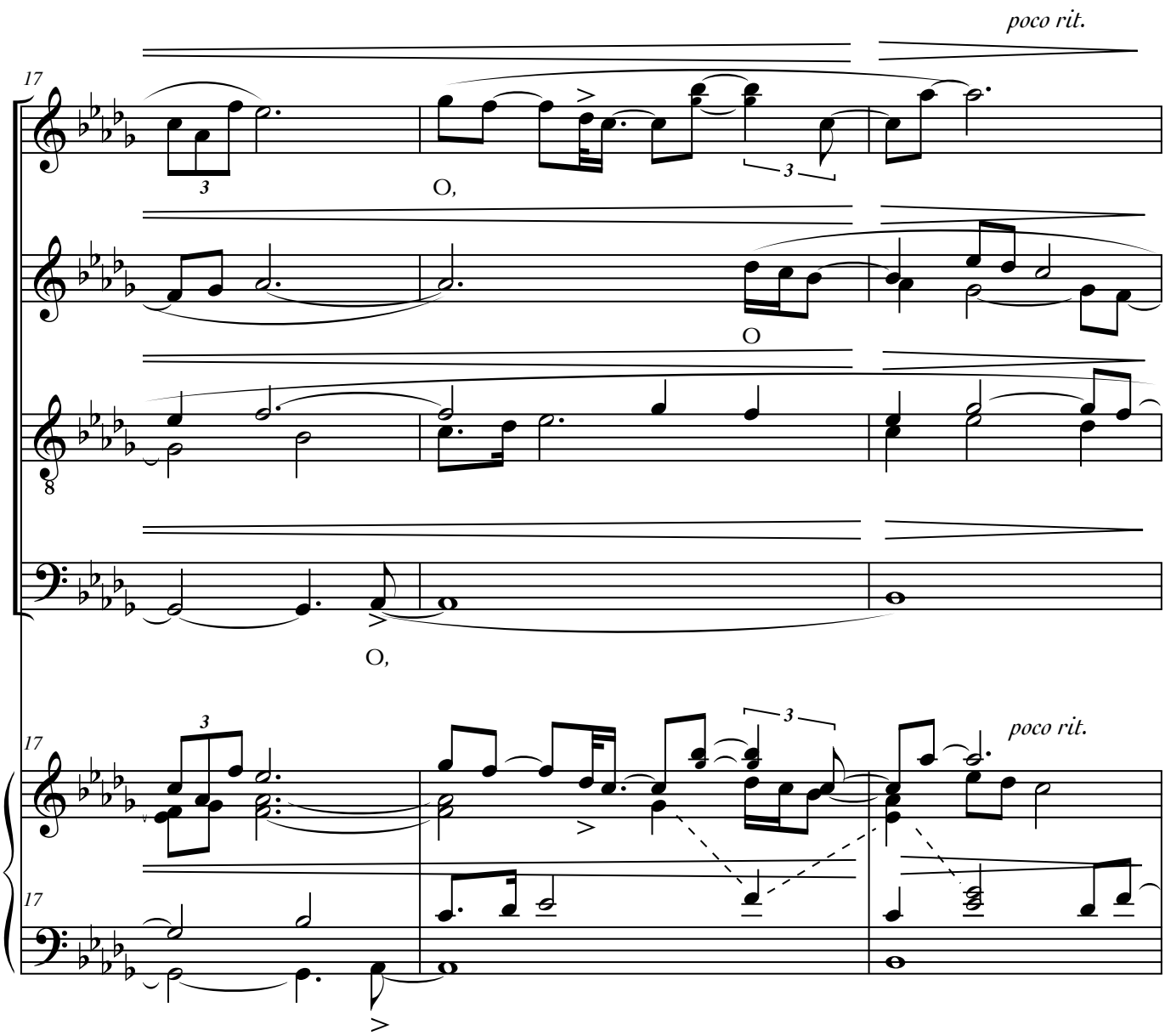
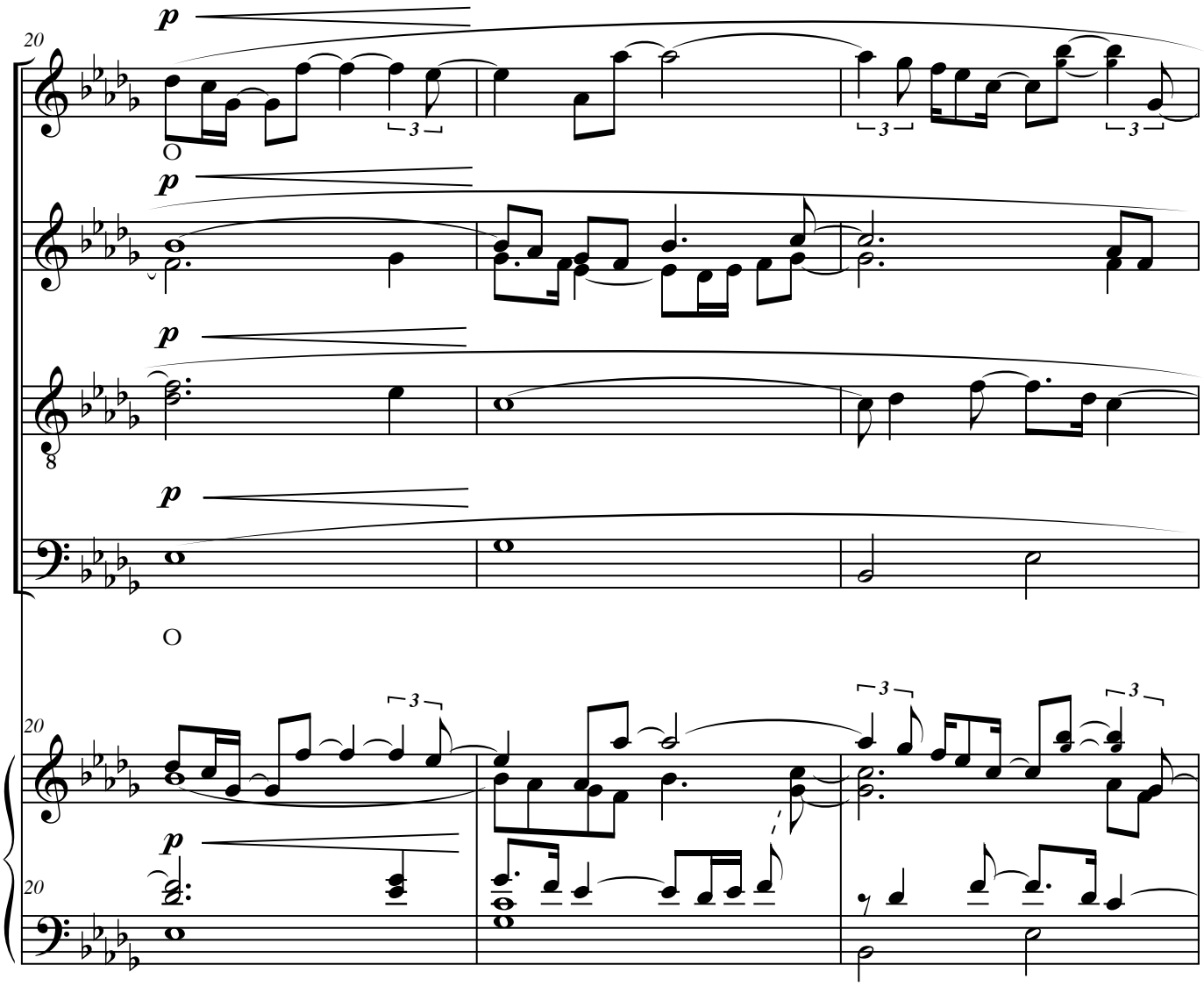

mp
O,
3

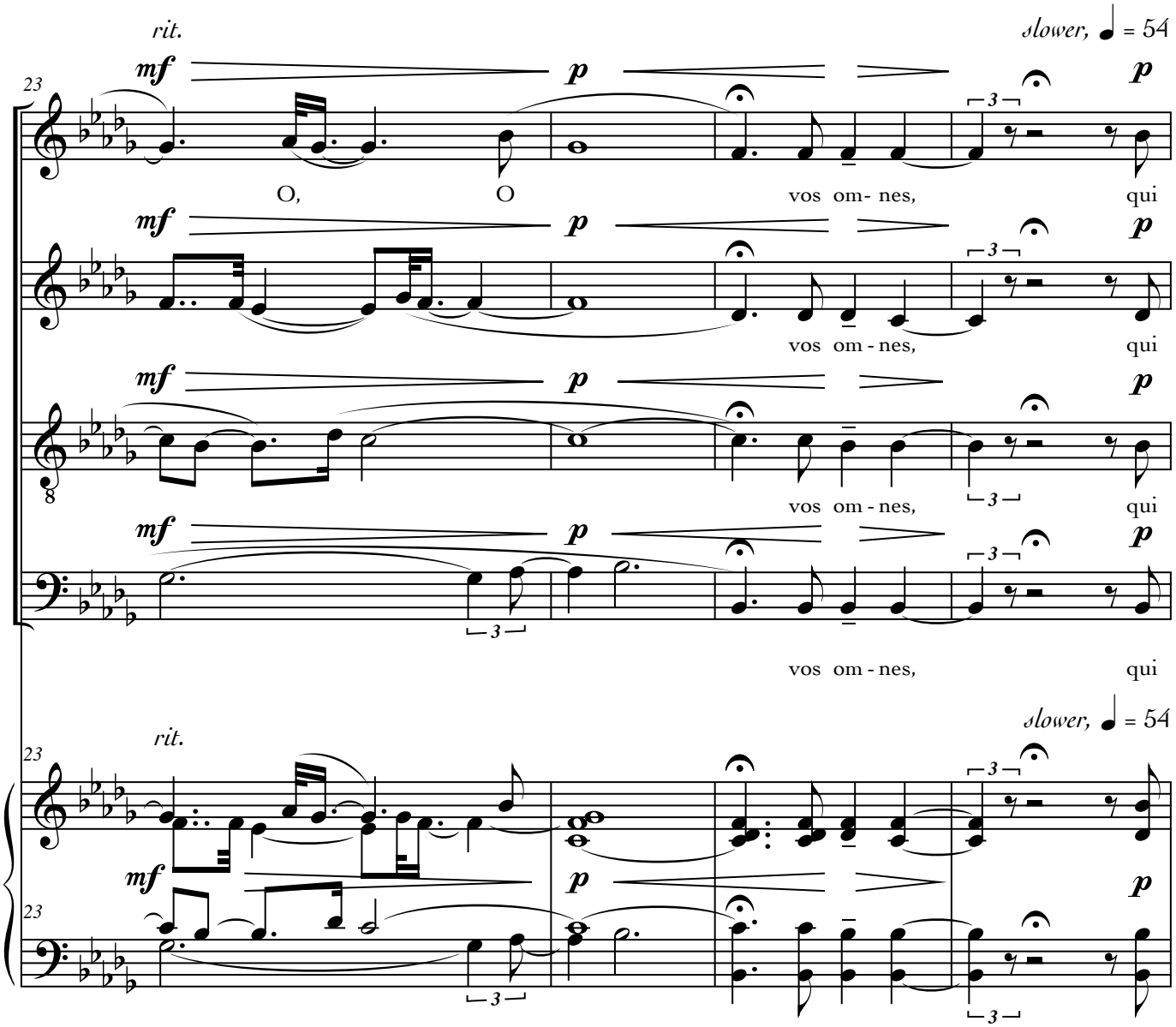

more broadly, ♩ = 66
p
O
more broadly, ♩ = 66
p

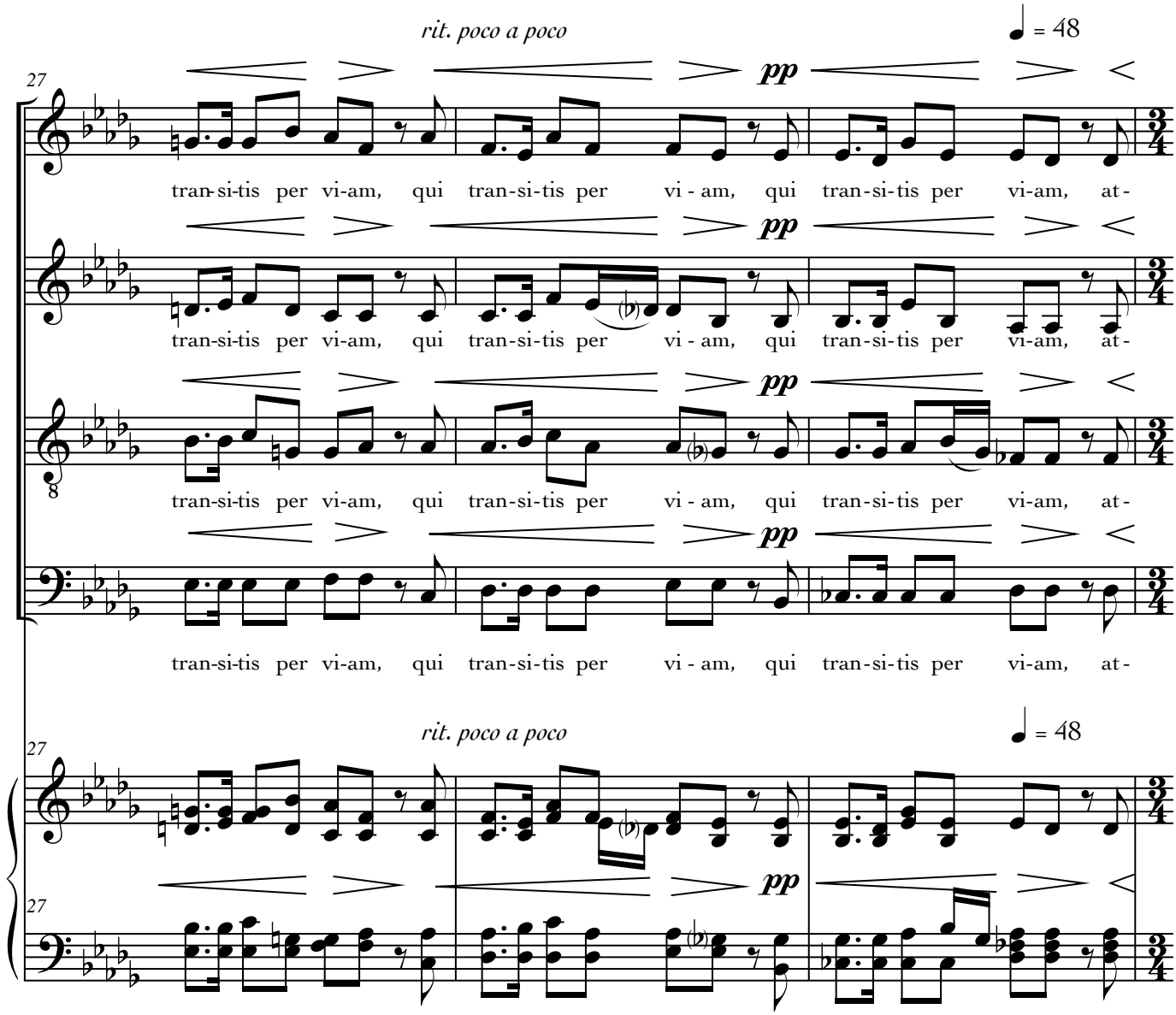
O Vos Omnes

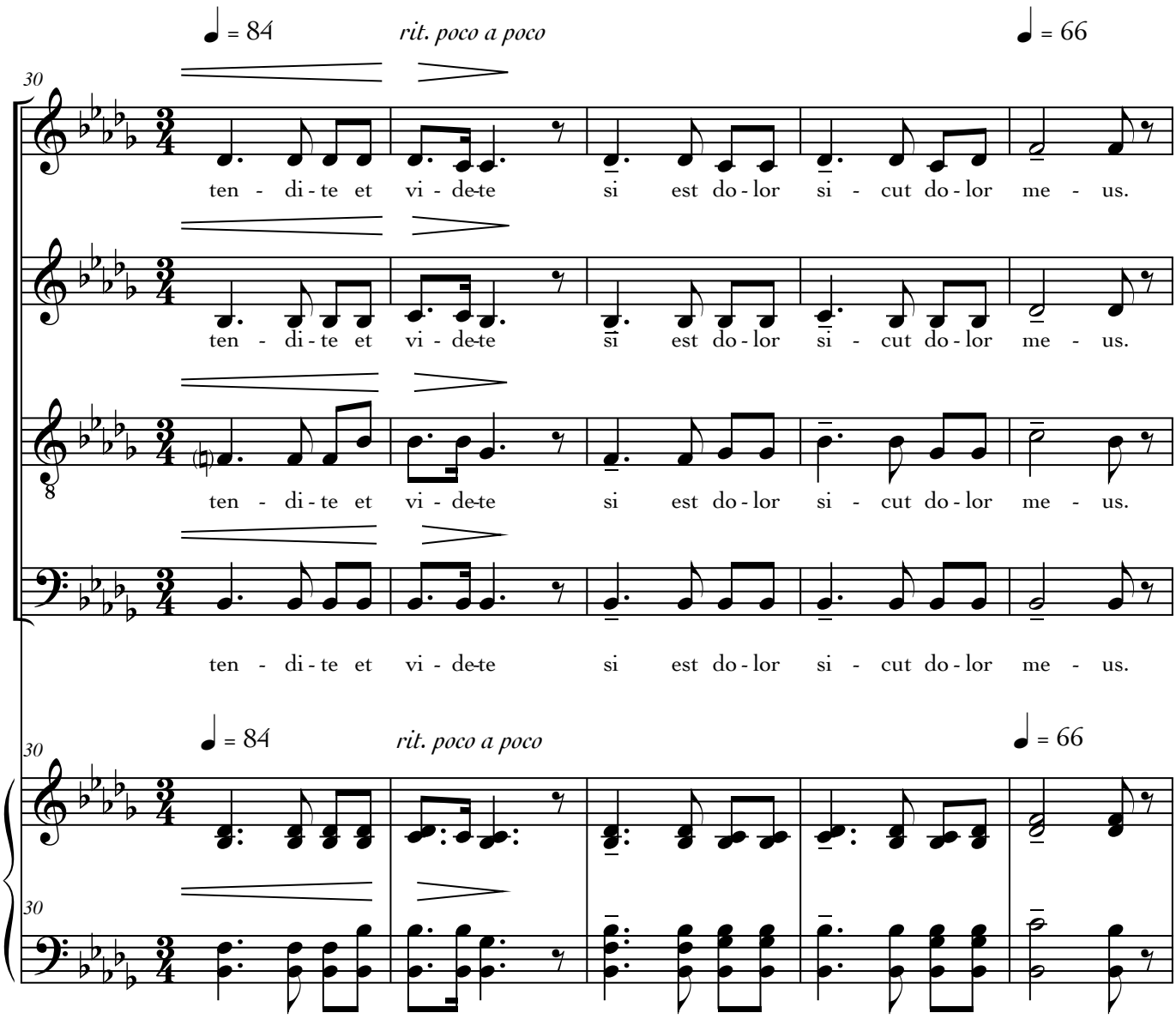

a tempo (♩ = 72), with intensity
mf
vos om-nes,
O,
vos om-nes,
O,
vos om-nes,
O
vos om-nes,
O,
a tempo (♩ = 72), with intensity
mf

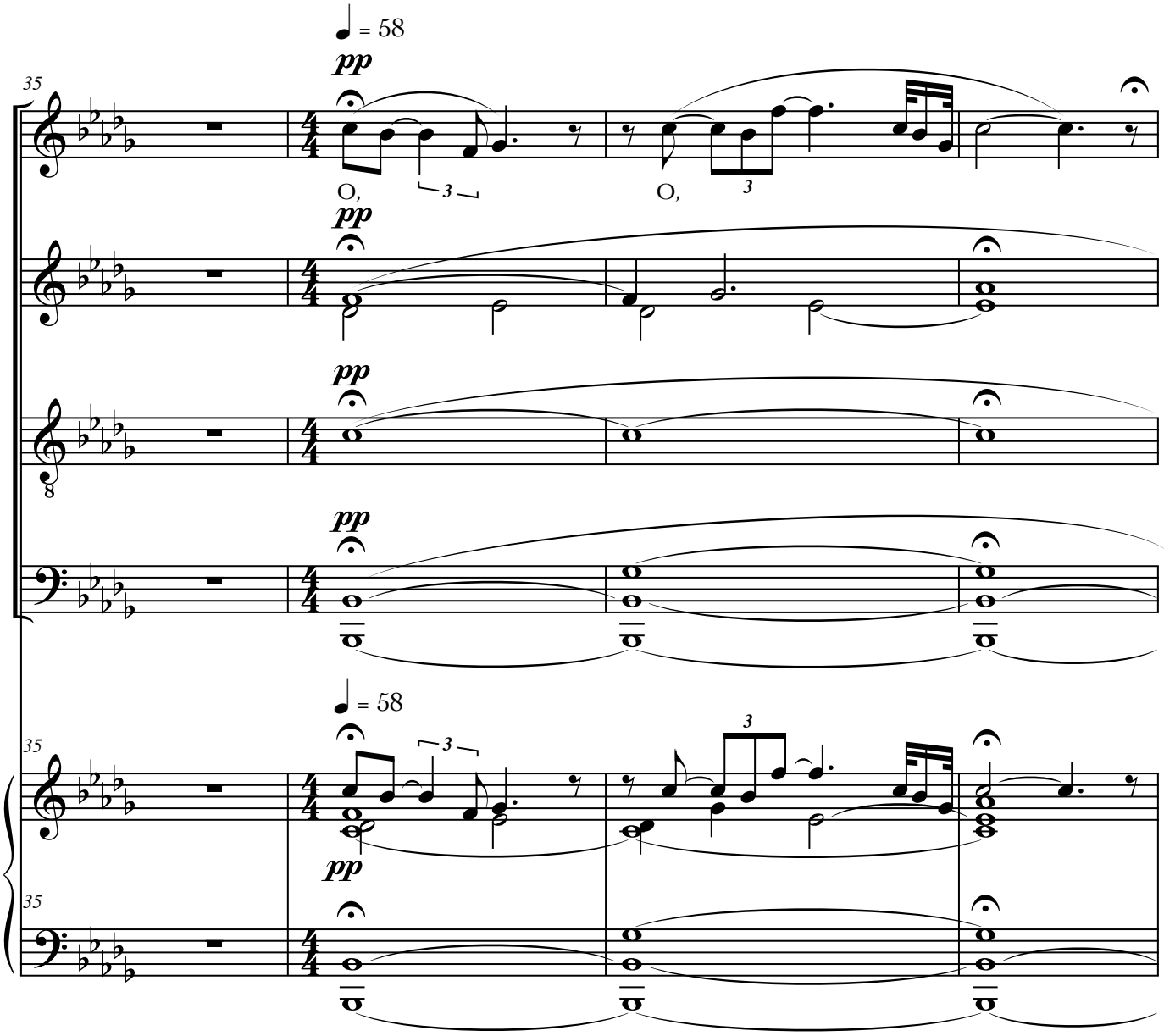

poco rit.
17
O,
O
O,
poco rit.
17
17

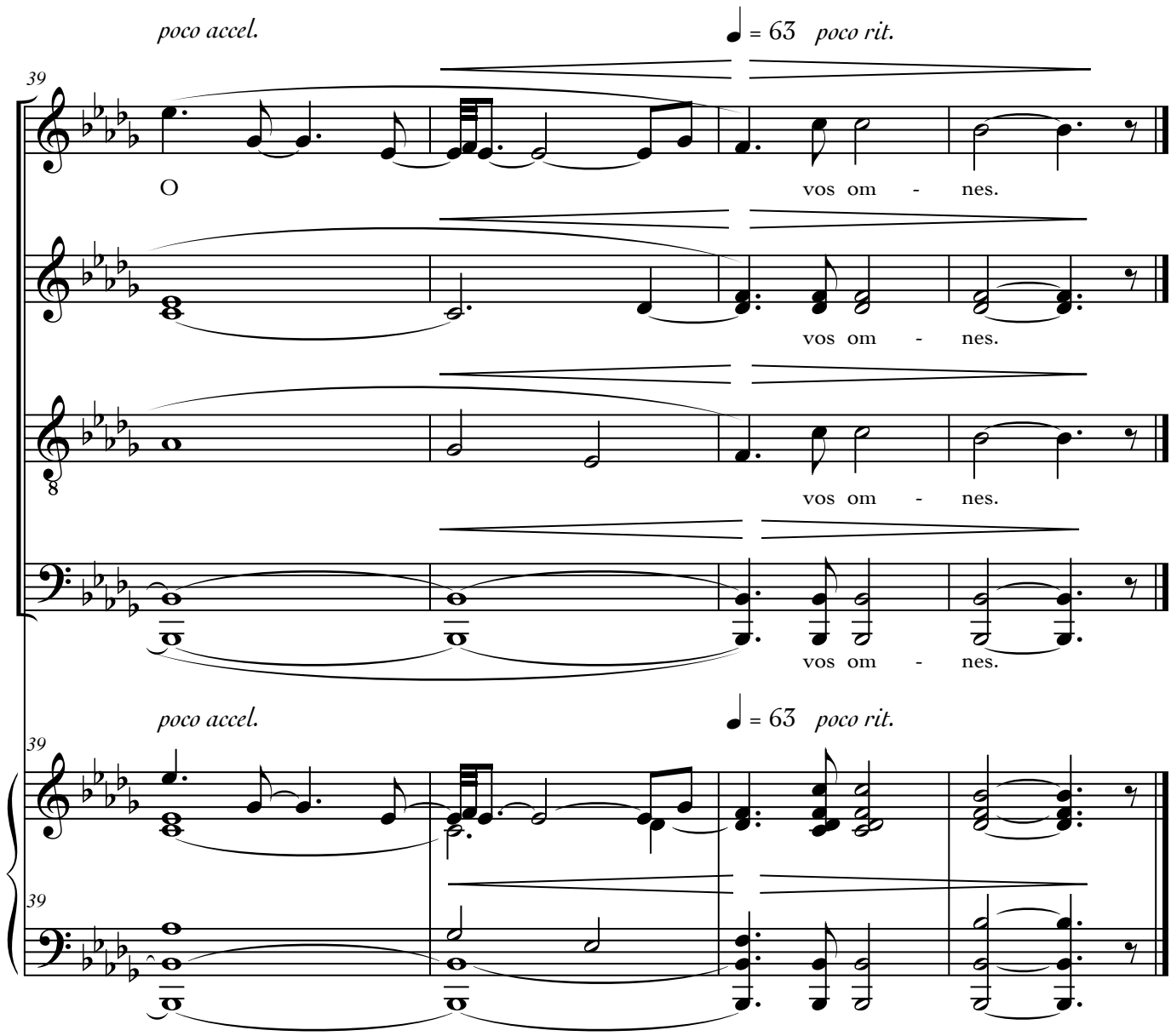

20
p
O
p
p
8
p
O
20
p
20


rit.
slower, ♩ = 54
23
mf
p
O,
O
vos om- nes,
qui
vos om - nes,
vos om - nes,
vos om - nes,
3


rit. poco a poco
♩ = 48
27
pp
tran-si-tis per vi-am, qui tran-si-tis per vi - am, qui tran-si-tis per vi-am, at-
tran-si-tis per vi-am, qui tran-si-tis per vi - am, qui tran-si-tis per vi-am, at-
tran-si-tis per vi-am, qui tran-si-tis per vi - am, qui tran-si-tis per vi-am, at-
tran-si-tis per vi-am, qui tran-si-tis per vi - am, qui tran-si-tis per vi-am, at-
rit. poco a poco
♩ = 48
27
27
pp


♩ = 84
rit. poco a poco
♩ = 66
30
ten - di - te et vi - de-te si est do - lor si - cut do - lor me - us.
ten - di - te et vi - de-te si est do - lor si - cut do - lor me - us.
ten - di - te et vi - de-te si est do - lor si - cut do - lor me - us.
ten - di - te et vi - de-te si est do - lor si - cut do - lor me - us.
♩ = 84
rit. poco a poco
♩ = 66
30
30


♩ = 58
pp
35
O,
O,
3
8
♩ = 58
pp
35
35


poco accel.
♩ = 63 poco rit.
39
O
vos om - nes.
vos om - nes.
vos om - nes.
vos om - nes.
poco accel.
♩ = 63 poco rit.
39
39