Eighth Note Publications

Three Chorale Preludes
Volume II

Various

Arranged by John McNally

In the Baroque period, chorale preludes were organ compositions based on hymn tunes, or chorales. During a German Protestant worship service, the organist would play the chorale prelude just before the singing of the chorale itself. The form reached a high level of development and artistic expression in the works of J.S. Bach (1685-1750).

Quite understandably, the vast majority of the chorales and chorale preludes carry German titles. Puer Natus in Bethlehem (A boy is born in Bethlehem) is one of the few titles from the period in the Latin language. Bach includes a harmonization of this chorale in Cantata No. 65 and a chorale prelude in the Orgelbüchlein.

A common technique was to state the chorale tune in long notes and construct faster moving contrapuntal lines underneath. With the melodic and rhythmic interest diverted away from the original chorale, the chorale often becomes indistinguishable and the other voices, having attained increased prominence, move to the forefront. In this brass trio version of Puer Natus in Bethlehem, the trumpet plays the chorale tune, which serves as a background to the interplay between the horn and trombone.

O Sacred Head is a text commonly sung to a chorale melody written by Hans Leo Hassler (1564-1612). This brass arrangement is essentially a horn/trombone duet which keeps the chorale tune quite conspicuous while the trumpet provides fanfare-like comments.

PREVIEW ONLY

A tune by Louis Bourgeois (ca. 1510-1561) came to be known as Old Hundredth because it was, and still is, often sung with words taken from Psalm 100. In this piece for brass, the chorale tune in the trombone supports a rising and falling trumpet line which employs a triplet feel. The horn part produces an "out of kilter" impression by creating a two-against-three effect with the trumpet rhythm.

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Brass Trio

THREE CHORALE PRELUDES
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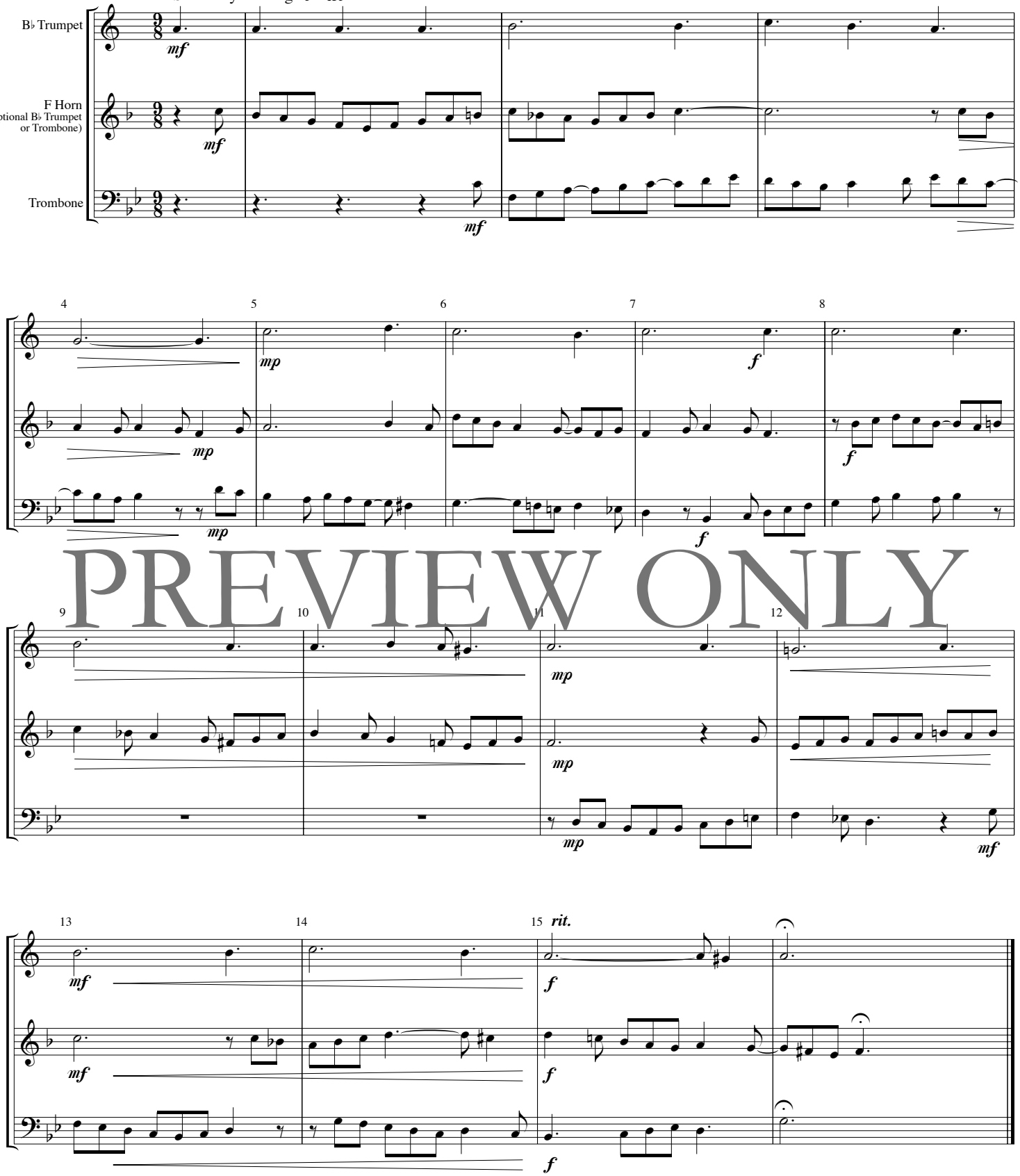
PUER NATUS IN BETHLEHEM

Smoothly flowing ♪ = 138



PREVIEW ONLY

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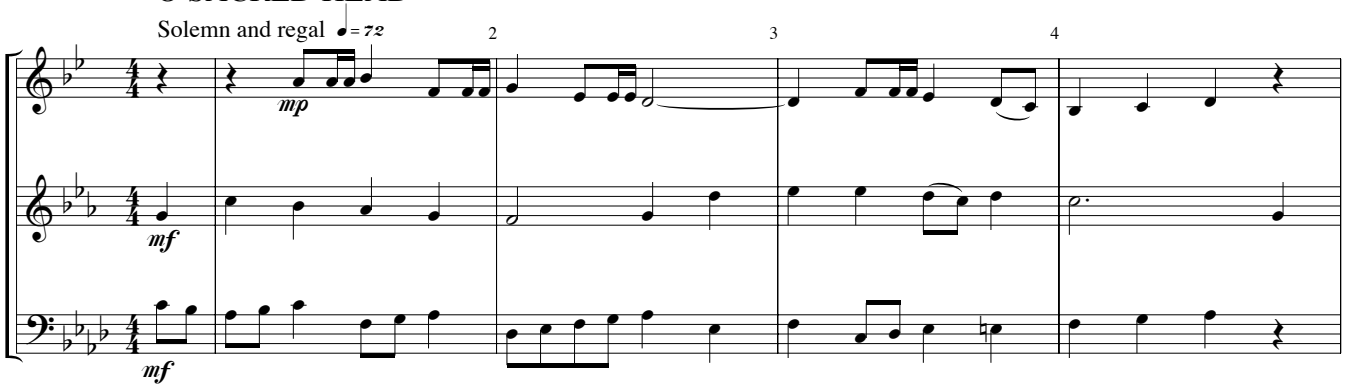
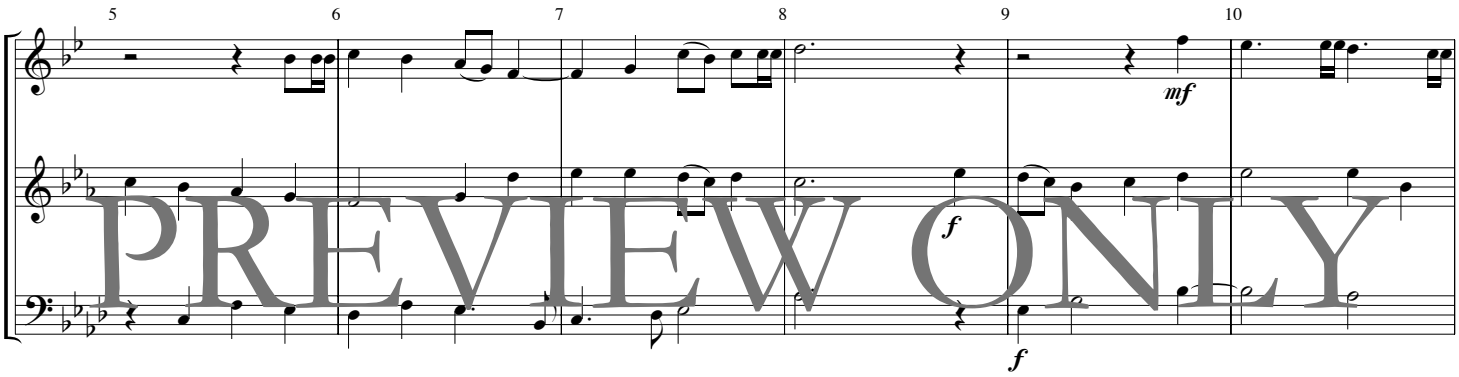
O SACRED HEAD

Solemn and regal ♩= 72





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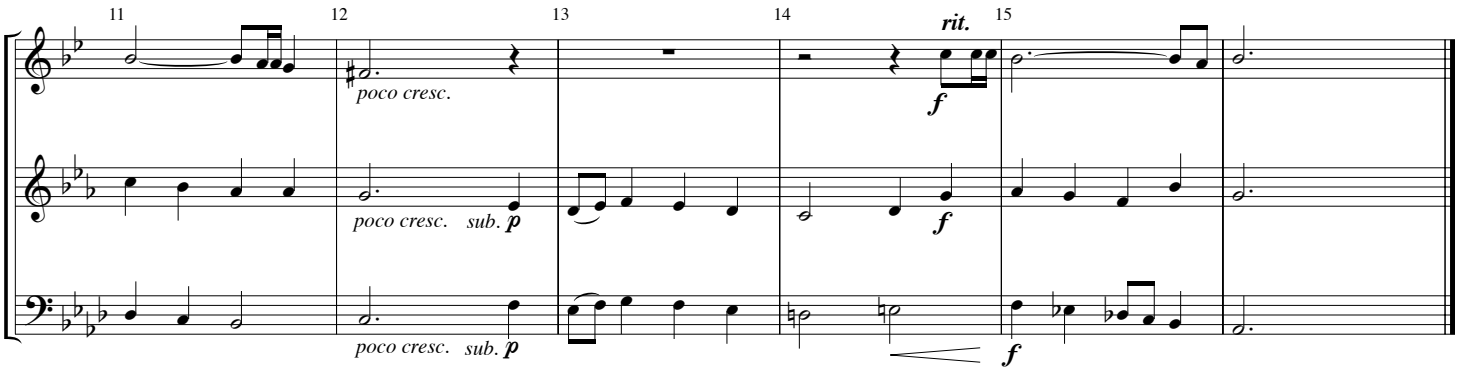
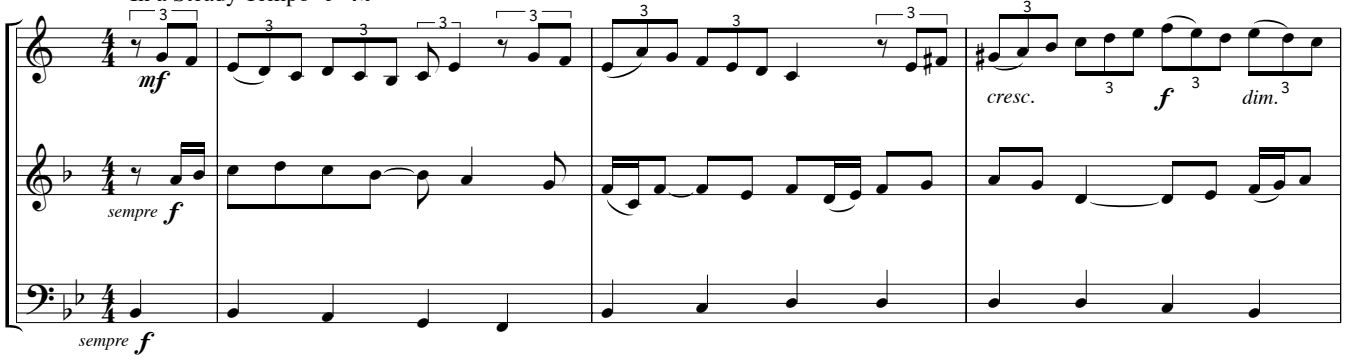
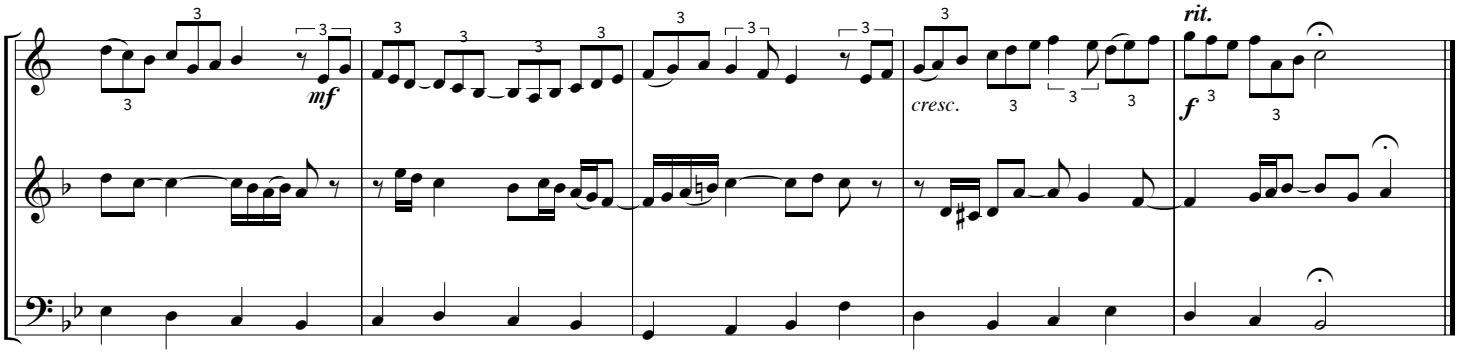


OLD HUNDREDTH

In a Steady Tempo ♩= 72





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