Piece 3: 'Valse viennoise' or breaking lines

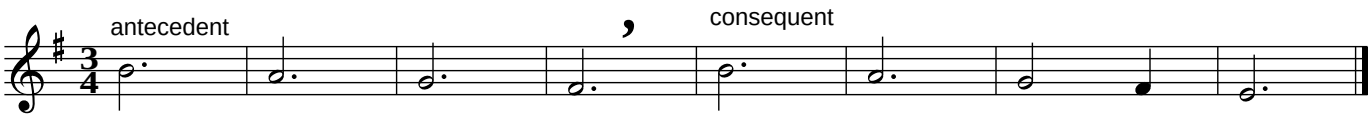
As we saw in Piece 2 from 'Fantasia' of Oscar van Hemel (1892−1981), clausulae as the tenor clausula define a point of melodic rest (a musical period or comma), i.e. the finalis or −so to say− the 'tonic' of a key. The tenorclausula as a short descending line (from the third tone via the second tone to the first tone of a key) can easily be expanded to a descending line from the fifth tone smoothly moving into the first tone of a key.

Piece 3, 'Valse viennoise' shows another way of expanding a line, that makes the musical meaning of register quite clear. First we will recompose Section A of the ternary A−B−A.

1. A 16 bar period based on the extended tenorclausula.

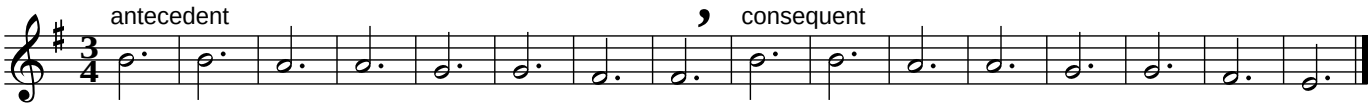
The next example shows the extended tenorclausula B−A−G−F#−E (key: E minor). The antecedent ends on the second tone, the consequent on the tonic.

Example 1: 8 bar period



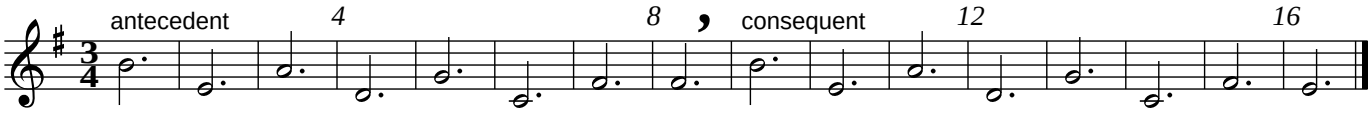
Of course, this 8 bar period can be expanded to a 16 bar period, e.g. by repeating the main tones.

Example 2: 16 bar period



Van Hemel's expansion is more interesting: expansion via a sequence (motive: falling fifth). In theory, the 16 bar period could be as in the following example.

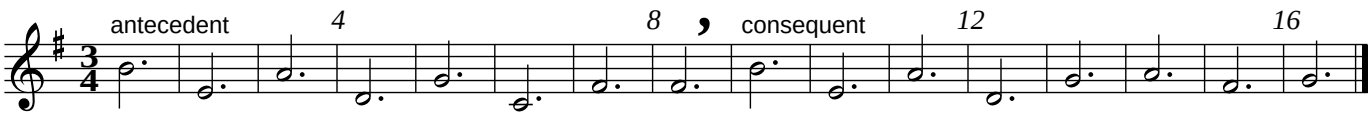
Example 3: 16 bar period



2. A modulating 16 bar period.

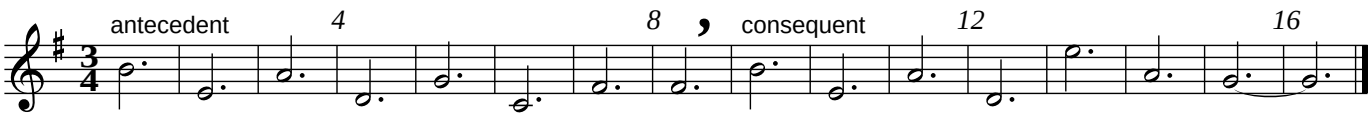
Van Hemel discerns this period form other periods in 'Fantasia' by modulating from E minro to G major. The modulation technique is quite easy: replace in example 3 the C of bar 14 by A and the final tone by a G. One could say: the G of bar 13 is a pivot tone: the third tone in E minor = the first tone in G major.

Example 4: 16 bar period



Van Hemel's final version has a nice feature in bar 13: the tone G is replace by to E, inserting his falling fifth motive and making the modulation in a way surprising.

Example 5: 16 bar period

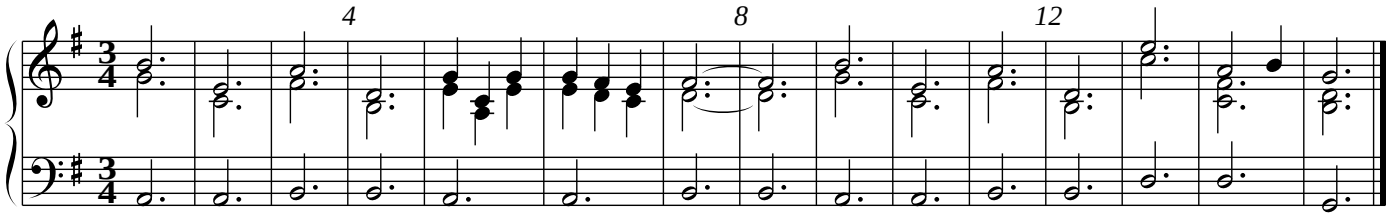


3. A three part version of the 16 bar period.

To make a two part version is quite easy: we use a melody in parallel thirds, which is associated with typical waltz procedures. While anticipating on Van Hemel's version, we elaborate bar 5 and 6 and compose the end of the antecedent with a two bar triad B (effect: the falling fifth's get some unexpected motion).

For the three part version of Van Hemel we add the pedal point A (slightly elaborated with tone B). In the consequent, these bass tones A and B are in a predictable way connected to the dominant and tonic of G major.

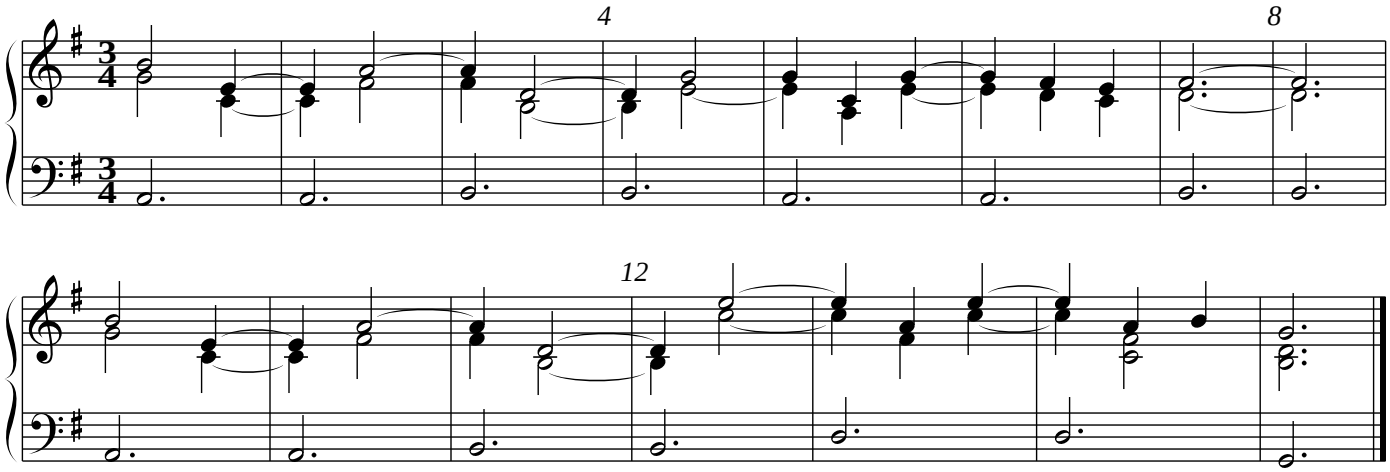
Example 6: three part version of the 16 bar period



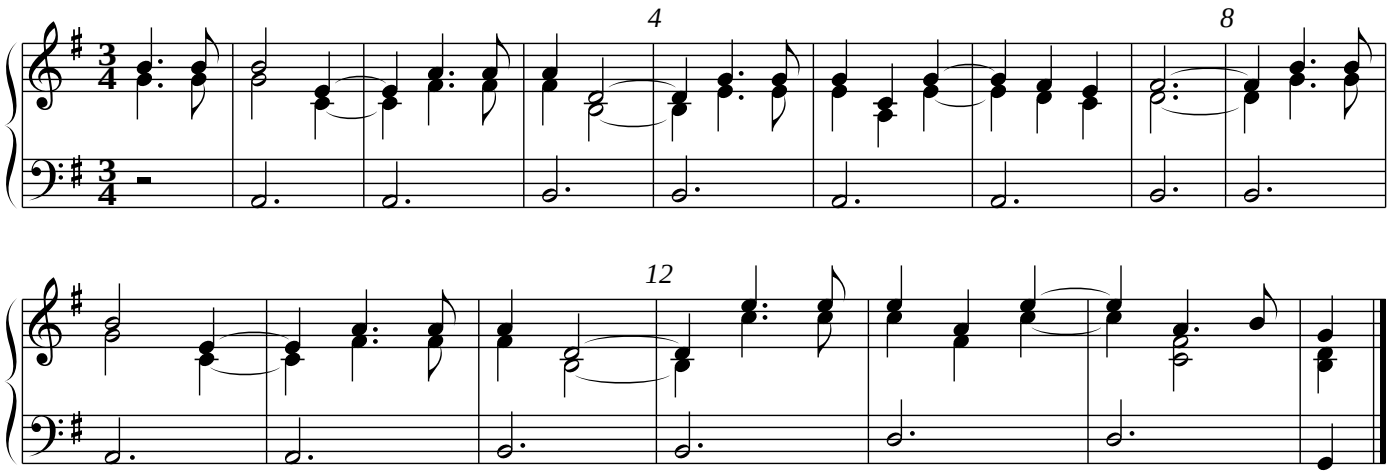
4. The final version of the 16 bar period (section A)

In a few steps with only some slight annotations, we recompose Van Hemel's version of section A, based on the three part model of example 6.

Step 1: anticipations (> syncopations)

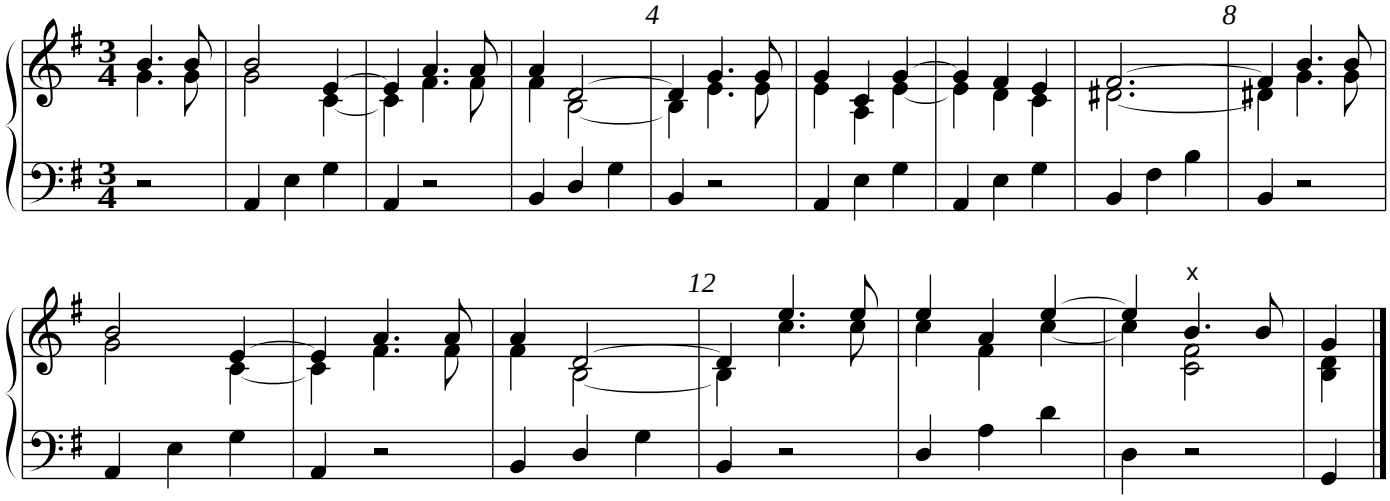


Step 2: dotted waltz rhythm and anacrusis



Step 3: embellishing the bass (idea: broken chord)

We adjust D to D# when part of a dominant seventh. Note the marked change in bar 15 (cf. beginning)!



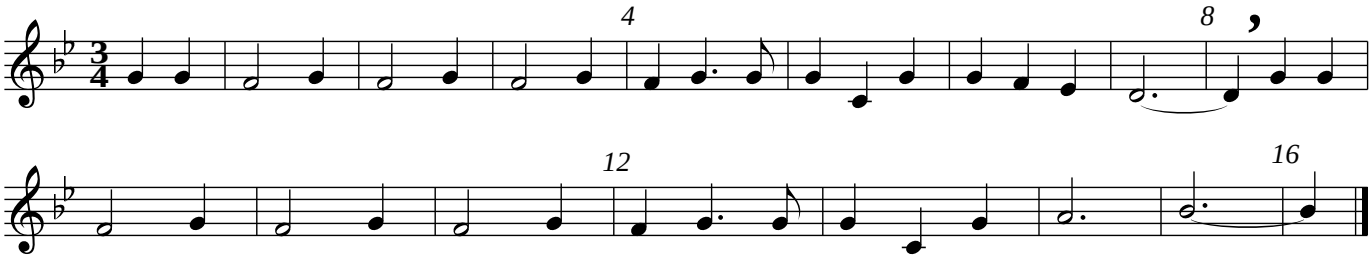
Van Hemel's final version show another way of notating, reflecting the performance he want: see the complete score at the end of this document.

5. Recomposing section B

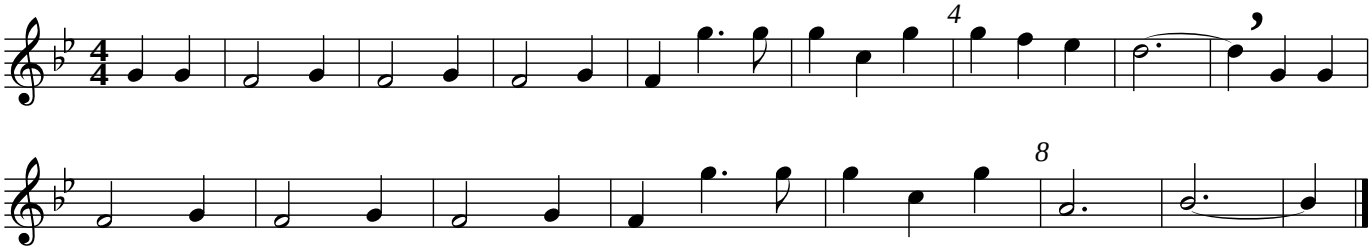
Section B contains a 16 bar period (8+8) in Bb major (although the concluding part of the antecedent makes a 'flirt' with G minor). In section B, Van Hemel refers to the bars 5 and 6 of section A and sometimes to the broken chord idea of the bass in section A.
The melody is an easy play with main tone F (dominant tone of Bb major).
Section B can harmonically described by tonic and dominant chords of Bb major (exception: the 'flirt'with G minor).

In a few steps with only slight annotations, we recompose Van Hemel's version of section B.

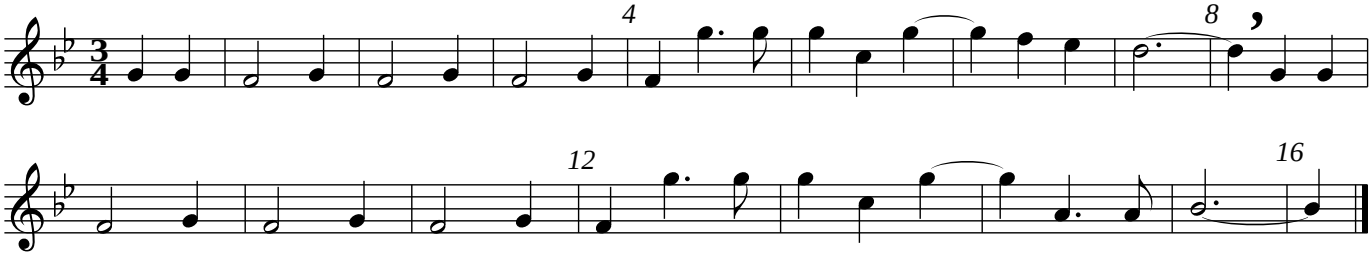
Step 1: 16 bar period section B: main tones



Step 2: register change main tones

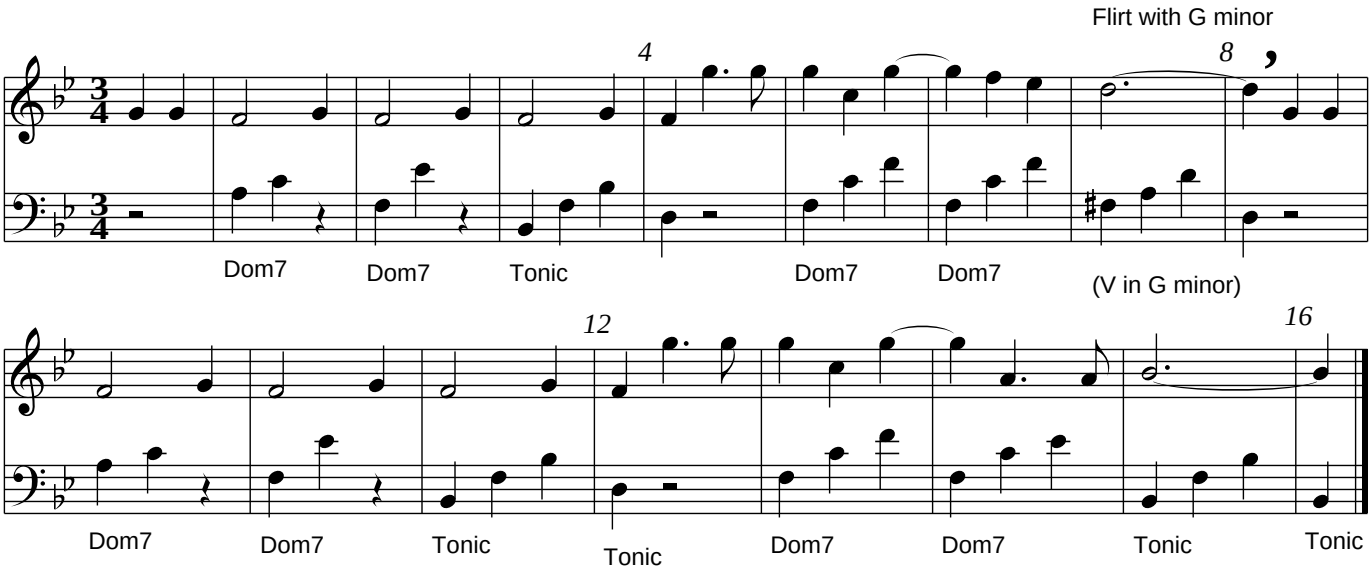


Step 3: syncopations like section A

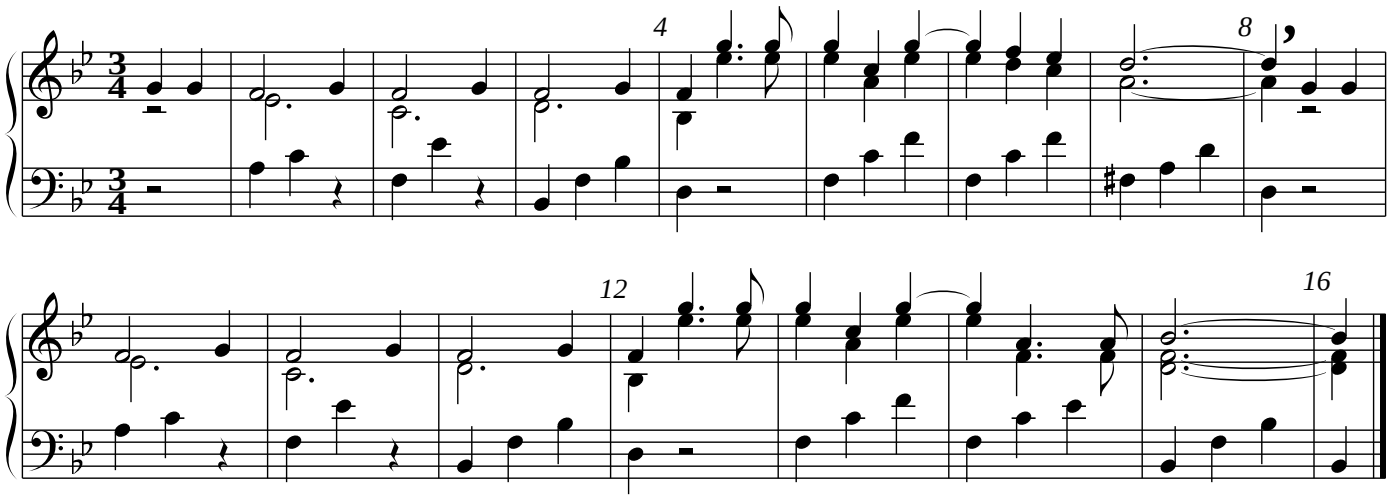


Step 4: basic harmony

Note that in bar 7 and 8 the tonic Bb could have been written without any problems.
However, an open ending of the antecedent is now nicely done.



Step 5: three part version of step 4



Again, Van Hemel's final version shows another way of notating, reflecting the performance he want:
in the next chapter this will be shown.

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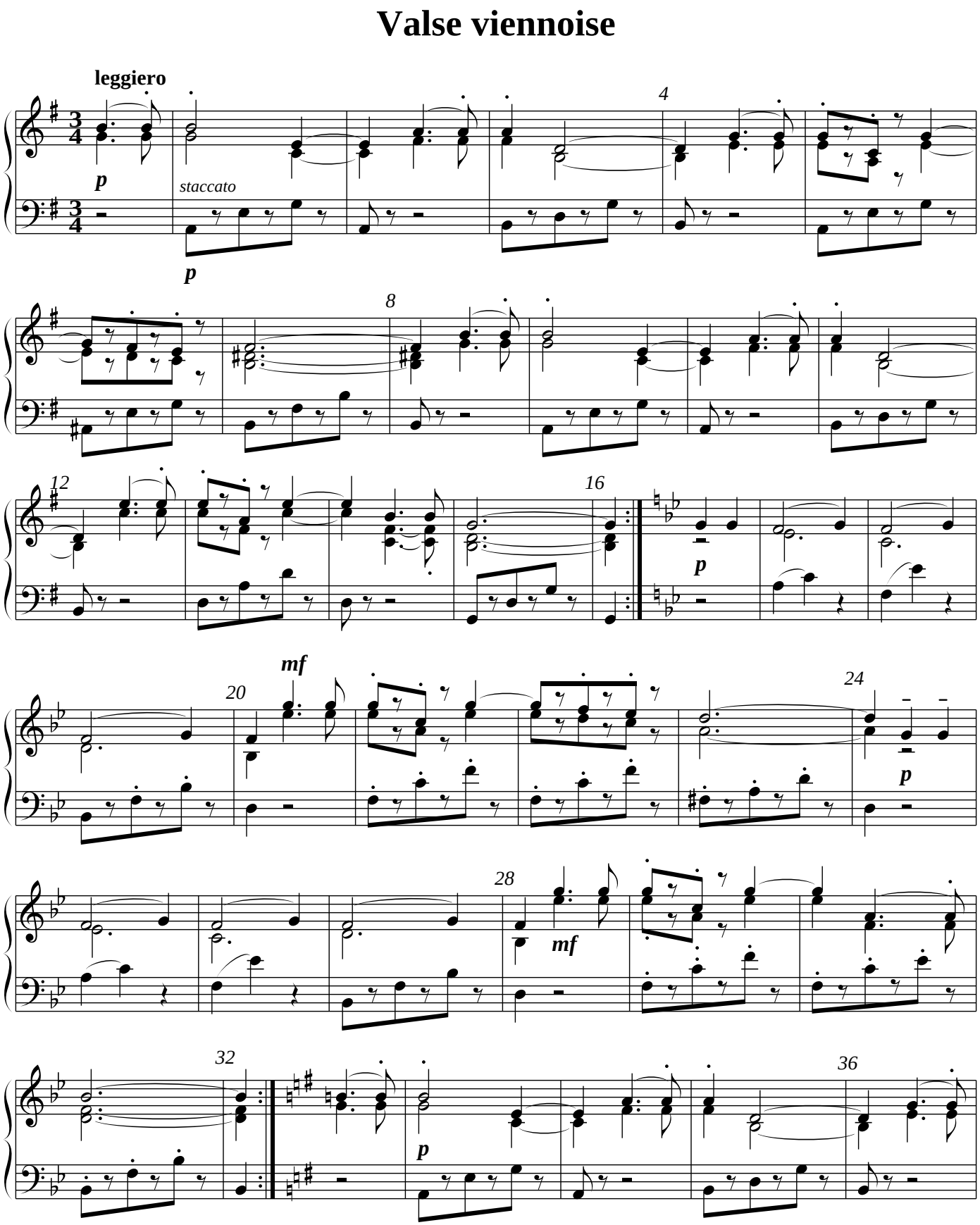
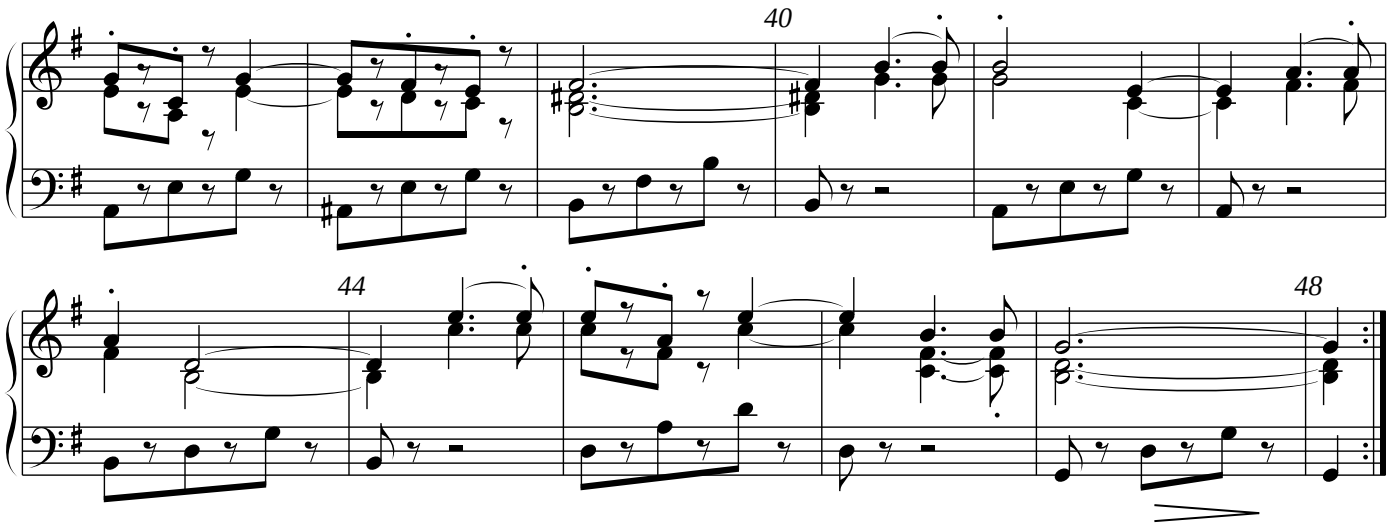
3. Final version A−B−A





About the author:

Reinier Maliepaard, psychologist, software engineer, organist and teacher at the ArtEZ Conservatorium Netherlands (music writing, music theory and music history). Maliepaard is the developer and maintainer of www.bestmusicteacher.com, that has three objectives education − information − inspiration

This article has been typeset with his free/open source music notation program MC Musiceditor 8.1.1, that can be downloaded at www.mcmusiceditor.com.