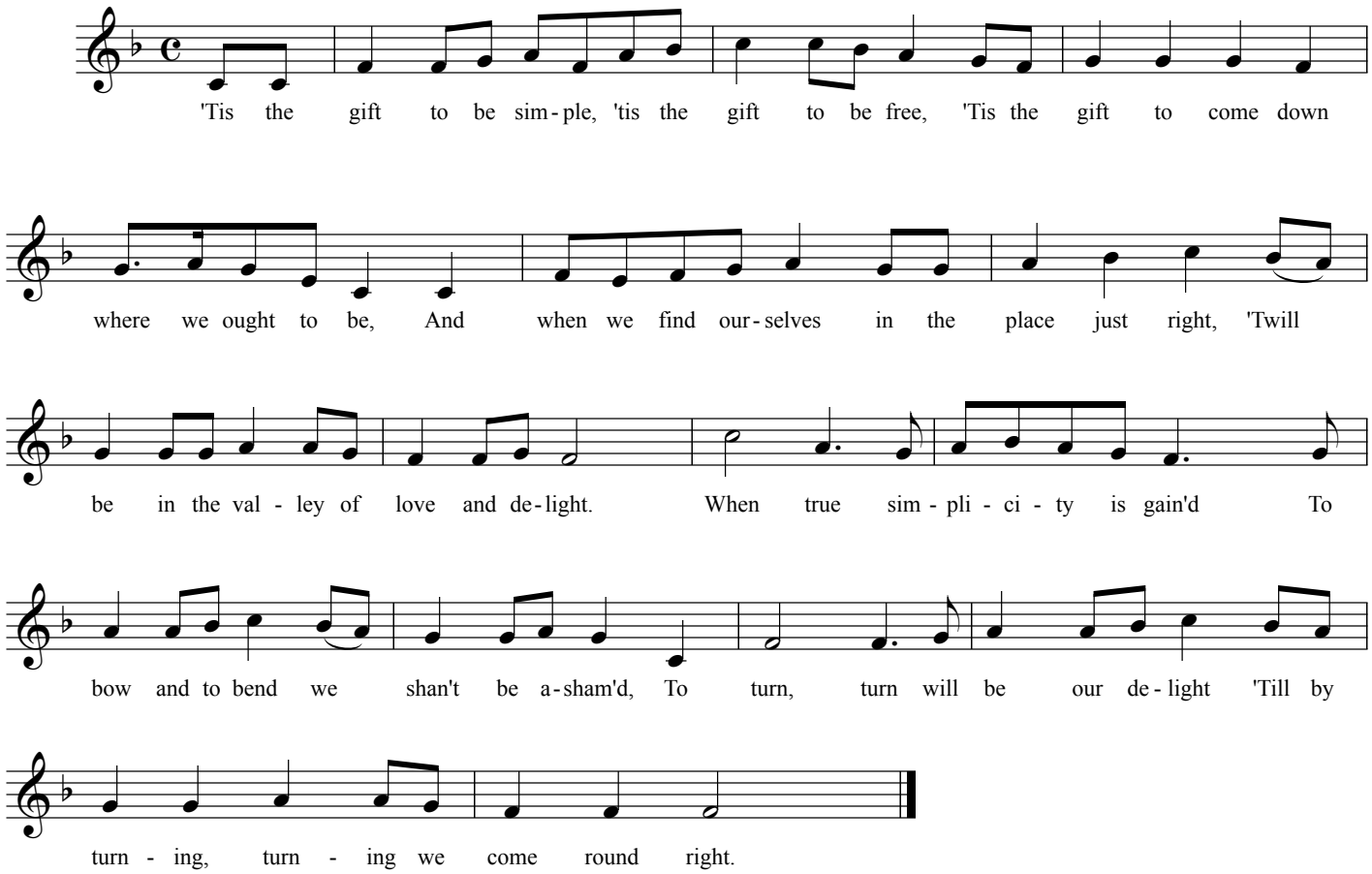
Violin 2

Simple Gifts Fugue

Melody by Joseph Brackett
Arranged by Matthew Naughtin

Simple Gifts



The Shakers, the oldest surviving religious communal society in the United States, arrived in America on August 6, 1774. The first Shaker settlement was located at Niskayuna (later Watervliet), New York in 1776. Their first organized community was at New Lebanon (later called Mt. Lebanon), New York in 1787. Today, the Shakers are known primarily for their simple and beautiful furniture, but music played a much more important role in Shaker history. The earliest known Shaker songs in America were composed during the 1780s and were mostly without words and sung to syllables, as in "Mother Ann's Song". Early dance songs were also without words, such as "Square Order Shuffle" and "Quick Step Manner". By about 1805, hymns began to appear and often had many stanzas of text. One of the most popular was the early revival hymn, "The Happy Journey." Probably the greatest early Shaker spiritual was Elder Richard McNemar's powerful religious ballad, "Mother." Around 1815, a third type of Shaker music was introduced—the anthem, a longer piece of unrhymed music. One prominent early example was "Mount Zion," by Issachar Bates, who had been a fifer in the American Revolution.

"Simple Gifts," the most famous Shaker song, was composed by Elder Joseph Brackett at Alfred, Maine in 1848. It has only one verse and refers to dance movements ("to turn, turn will be our delight"). Rather than call it a Shaker hymn, as most writers do, it should be classified instead as a Shaker dance song. Elder Joseph Brackett was born on May 6, 1797 in Cumberland, Maine and died on July 4, 1882 at New Gloucester. His portrait still hangs today in the music room at the last remaining Shaker community in Sabbathday Lake, Maine.

Violin II

Simple Gifts

Fugue

Melody by Joseph Brackett
Arranged by Matt Naughtin

Andante commodo (♩ = 84)

Cello 6 *Viola*

12 5

mf *serenely, cantabile*

21

26

mp

31

f

36

43

pp

49

Con anima (♩ = 104)

f

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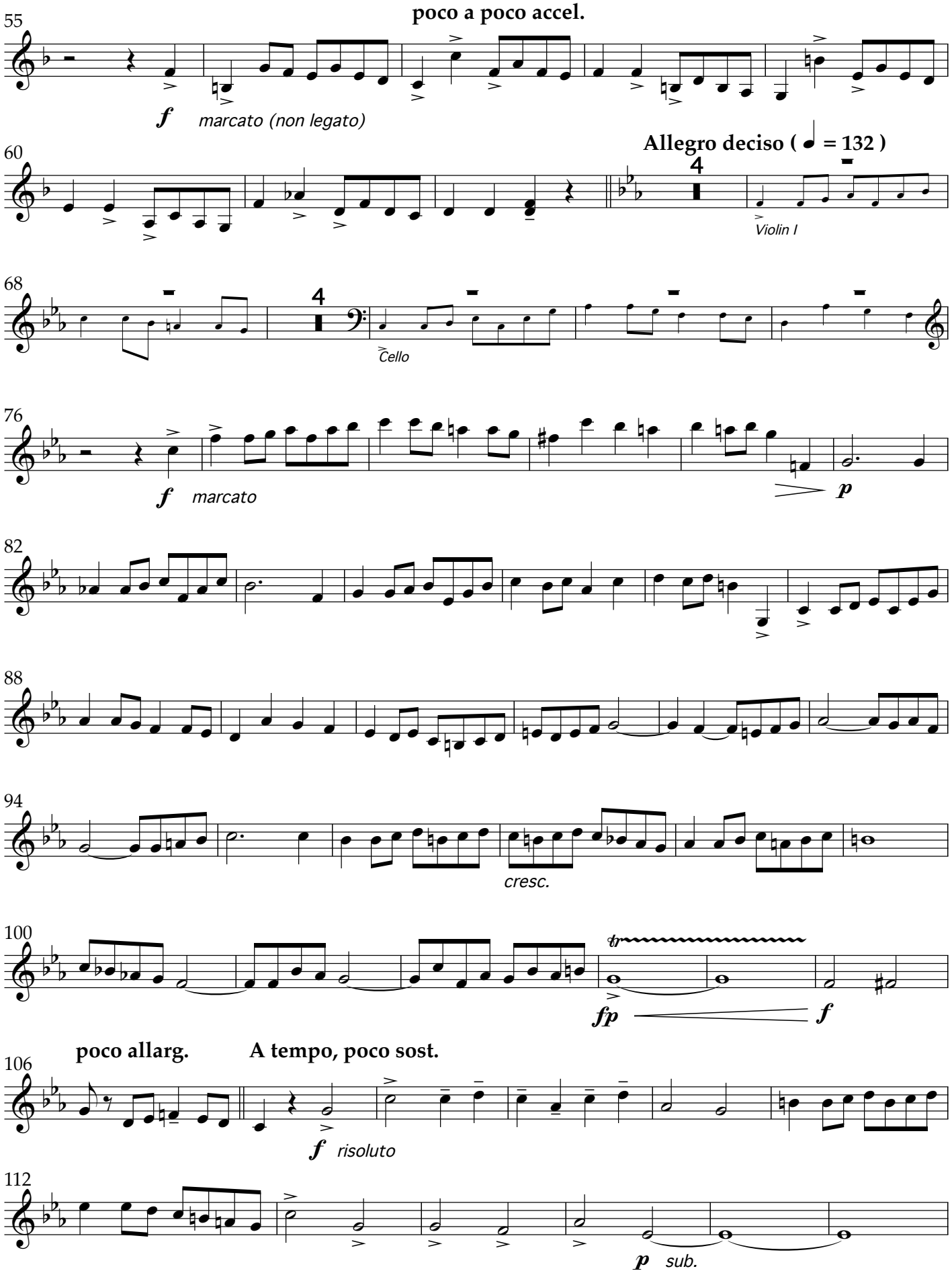
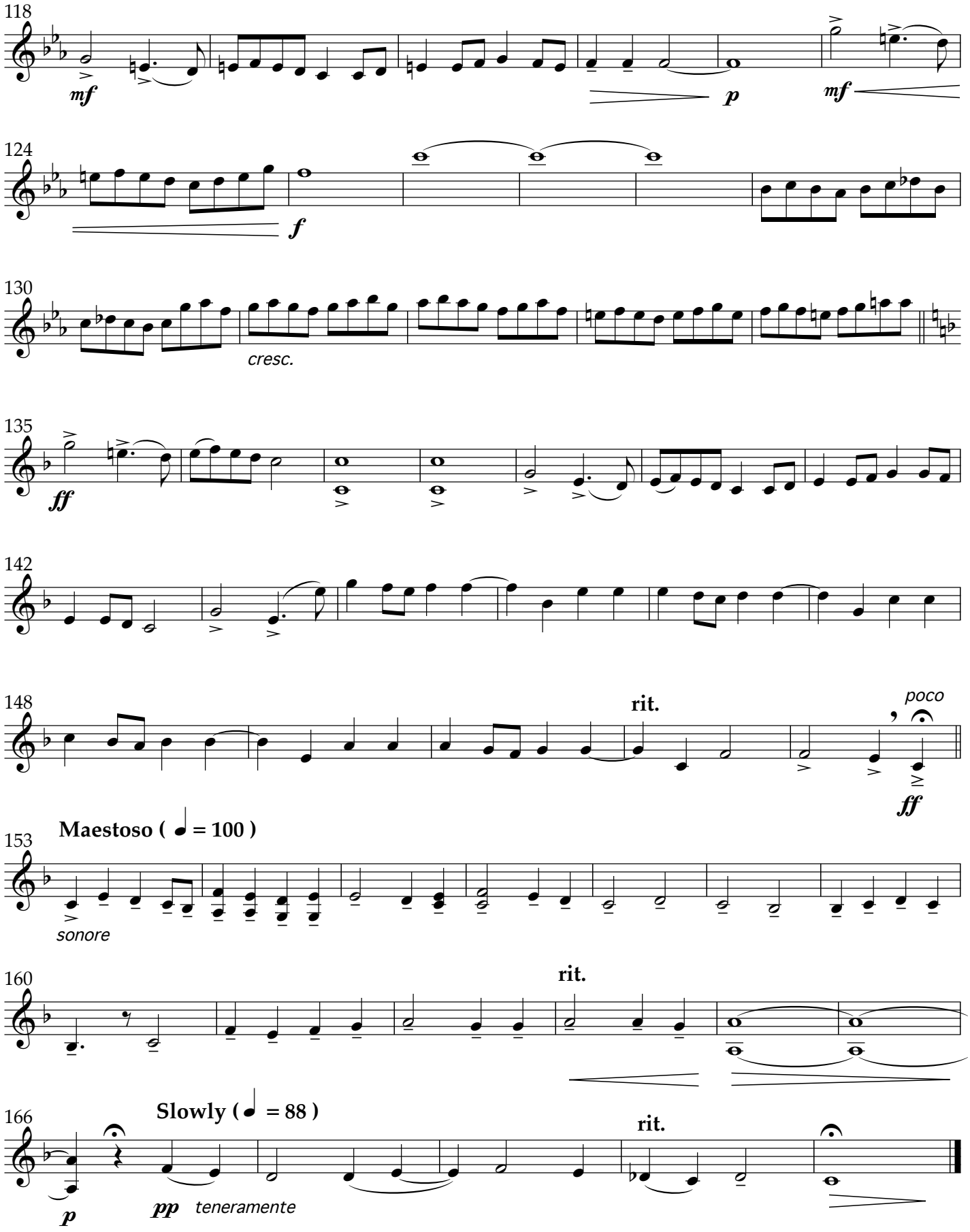
Music engraving by Mariusz Flis: maag@post.pl


poco a poco accel.
55
f marcato (non legato)
Allegro deciso (♩ = 132)
60
4
Violin I
68
4
Cello
76
f marcato
p
82
88
94
cresc.
100
fp
f
poco allarg.
A tempo, poco sost.
106
f risoluto
112
p sub.


118
mf
p
mf
124
f
130
cresc.
135
ff
142
148
rit.
poco
ff
Maestoso (♩ = 100)
153
sonore
160
rit.
166
Slowly (♩ = 88)
rit.
p
pp
teneramente