Ultimate Latin Piano/Keyboard Riffs

by Carlos Campos & Andrew D. Gordon

Featuring Salsa, Mambo, Merengue, Cha Cha, Songo,

Bomba, Cumbia,Calypso styles

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A Message from the Authors

From Carlos Campos

My good friend and publisher, Andrew Gordon, came to my house over a year ago to show me some sketches from a book he was beginning to write.

The book consisted of numerous piano riffs in various Latin and Afro-Caribbean styles. When I first saw his music examples, I started to rewrite all of them. When Andrew saw this, he asked if I wanted to co-write the book with him, starting from scratch.

I really liked the concept behind the book, so I accepted right away. It took us more than a year to finish the book, with Andrew coming to my studio every Thursday afternoon for three or four hours. Andrew would write the chart for the song, I would change a few things, and then play and record the examples. After we were finished recording, I transcribed all the piano parts and notated the music examples.

It was a lot of work, but we had a lot of fun. I hope that you will enjoy learning from this book as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

From Andrew Gordon

I grew up in London, England during the 1960's, when most of the music that I listened to on the radio was pop music consisting of songs by The Beatles, Rolling Stones, and Beach Boys, etc., as well as classical music.

My first recollection of Latin music was listening to Santana's first album in the late 1960's. This album made a very big impression, especially with the driving Latin percussion instruments mixed with Carlos Santana's bluesy guitar solos. The only way I could hear the album, as well as other progressive rock music, was to listen to a pirate rock radio station from 12:00 am to 3:00 am on a Friday night, and with a transistor radio and a tape recorder I would try to tape the whole three hour show each week. The music played on this station greatly influenced my composing and piano/keyboard playing for many years, as I played with many progressive rock bands before I became heavily influenced by funk and jazz.

Moving to Los Angeles, California in 1979, I soon started to play with musicians from all over the globe, including musicians from Latin America; hence, my appreciation and understanding of Latin music developed.

I hope that the numerous examples in this book go a long way in helping musicians and students master the elements that make up Latin piano/keyboard styles.

About Latin Piano Riffs

This book contains 50 riffs of popular latin piano styles. Each riff has been recorded twice, once with piano, bass and percussion and then once with only bass and percussion, for study and practice. The 50 riffs cover a wide variety of latin styles such as:

Salsa: Salsa, which some historians say developed concurrently in New York, Cuba and Puerto Rico, uses mostly Son clave, and even though it is primarily known as a dance genre, it also has served as a musical vehicle for a lot of Latin Jazz exploration as well.

Mambo: Mambo was popularized by great band leaders in the 50's like Machito, Perez Prado, Tito Puente, Tito Rodriguez, etc. It uses mostly Son clave and is one of Salsa's predecessors.

Songo: "Changuito," drummer of the group "Los Van Van" has been credited with helping to create this rhythm, but two of Cuba's foremost fusion groups also deserve to be mentioned, Grupo Afrocuba and Irakere.

Cha Cha: The "Cha Cha" evolved from the Cuban danzón and mambo and its creation has been attributed to violinist Enrique Jorrin. Before it was called the "cha cha" it was referred as the "triple mambo." The triple step would make a scraping and shuffling noise on the floor that some would describe as "cha cha cha." Thus a new name was born.

Son: A late 19th century peasant style. The original instrumentation of the Son was the Bongos, Maracas, Clave, Guitar and Botija (jug) for bass and vocals. The verse and lyrics were based on the Spanish poetic form known as "Decima" which was followed by the "coro" or "estribillo". This would become the basic framework for Salsa music that survives to this day.

Bomba: This is the Puerto Rican equivalent of the Cuban Rumba - African based folkloric music that consists of percussion, vocals and couple dancing. Although the standard Bomba rhythmic pattern is a one bar phrase, and thus does not have clave in it, a Salsa arrangement of a bomba would still be written in "clave" and sound quite well.

Merengue: This is a rhythm from the Dominican Republic. Originally it was played with tambora, güira and accordion, and later on congas, piano and bass were added.

Cumbia: This rhythm comes from Colombia and combines Hispanic melodies with African rhythms along with Native American harmonic components. The original cumbia is characterized by the dancers' feet remaining directly one in front of the other practically all the time. Mostly in clubs today people dance cumbia using salsa steps.

Calypso: This is the national rhythm of Trinidad. It has enjoyed tremendous popularity world-wide, and probably was the dominant sound of the Caribbean for many years due to its association with the Steel Drums.

Samba Cruzado: A jazz influenced Samba form played with drum set. The Samba is best known for as the carnival rhythm from Rio de Janeiro. In its carnival form it is known as Samba Enredo or Batucada and it is played with a wide variety of percussion instruments with no drum set.

Partido Alto: This rhythm also comes from Brazil. it can be heard in big cities like Rio and Sao Paulo. It consists of different ways of playing the Samba by using elements from funk, jazz and rock. The percussion instrument called "Pandeiro" plays one of the most important parts in Partido. Electric bass uses slap technique and the drummer will use heavy accents on the snare.

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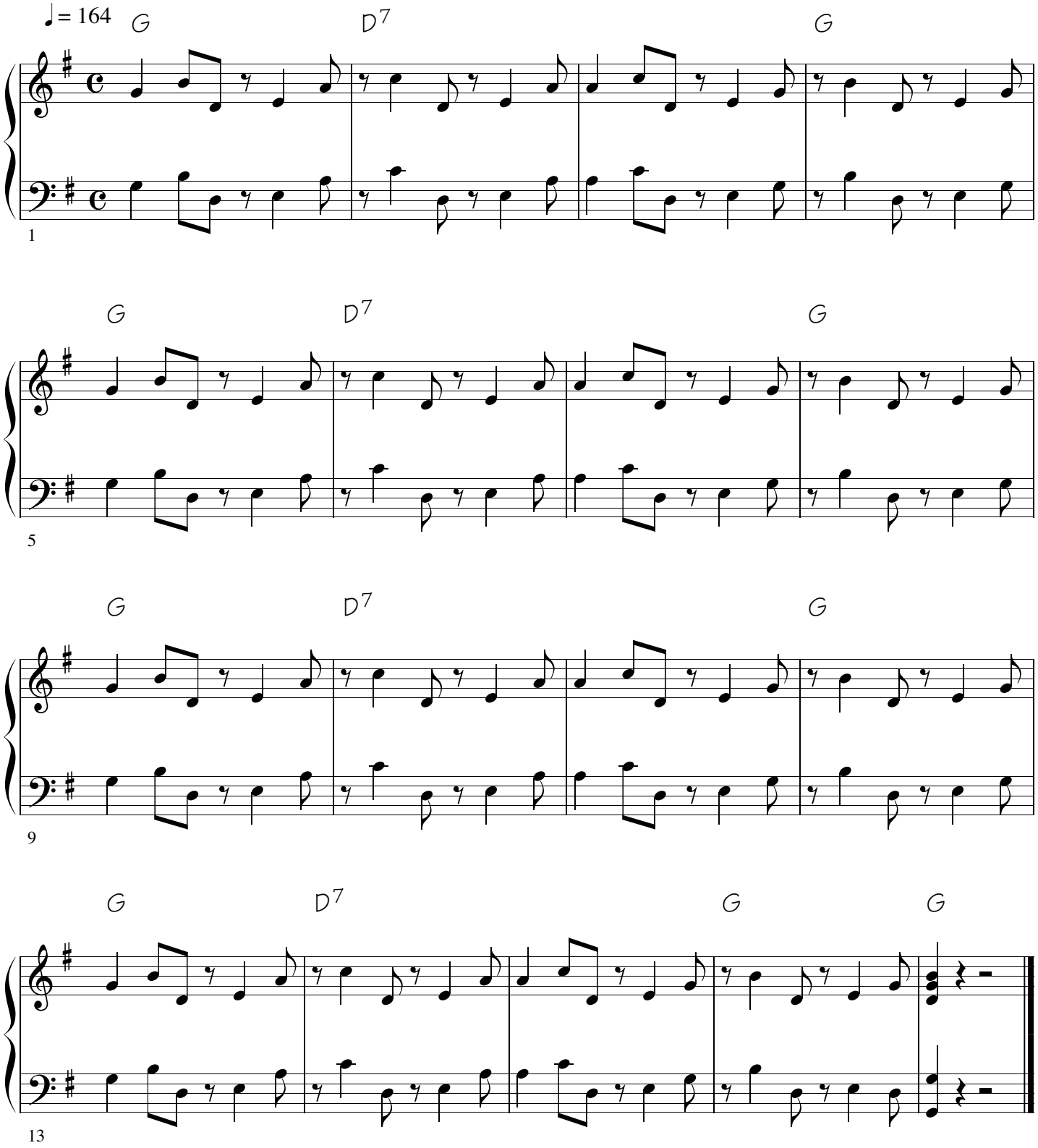
Latin Riff 1

Salsa

CD Tracks # 1 & 2

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



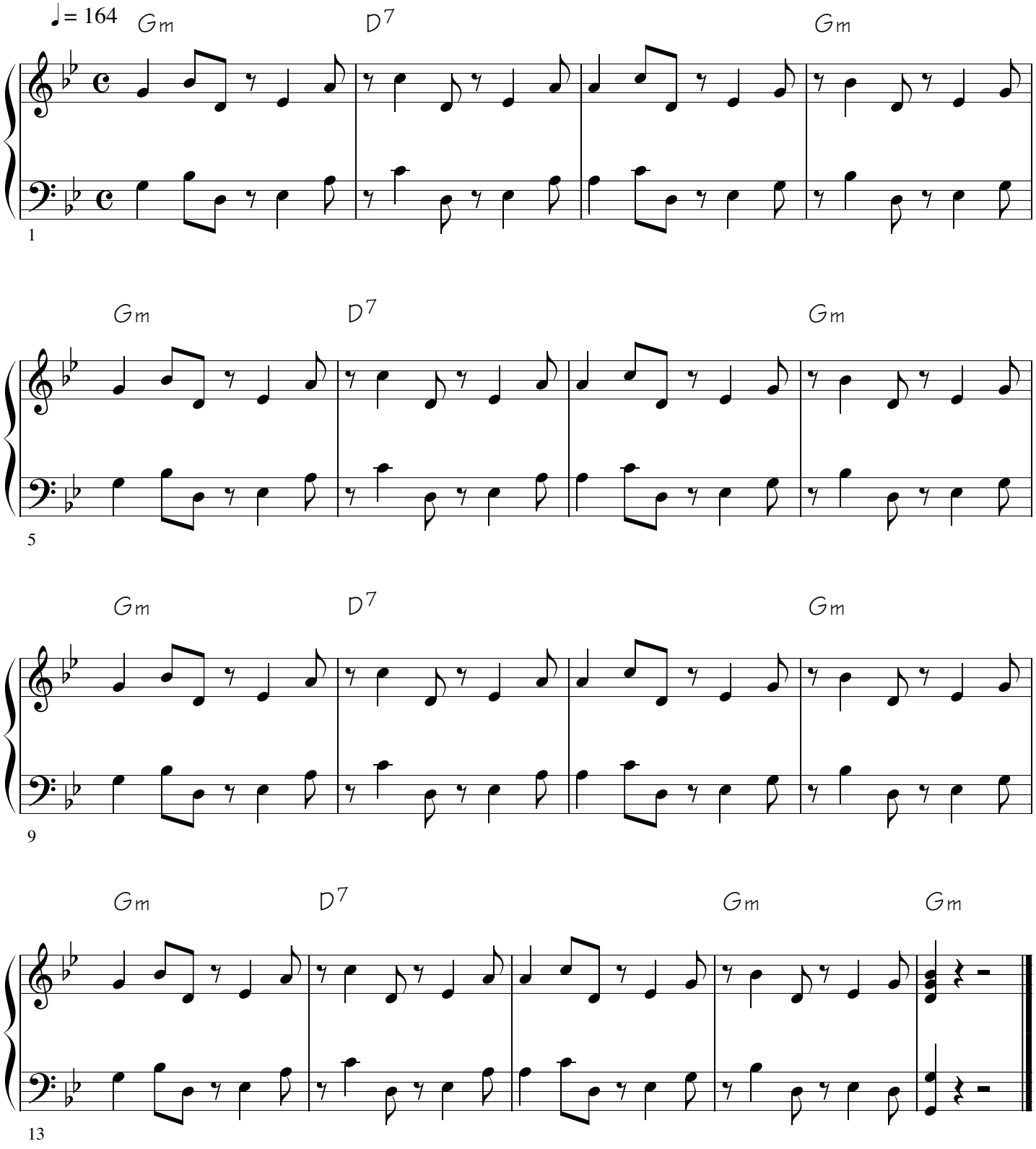
Latin Riff 2

Salsa

CD Tracks # 3 & 4

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



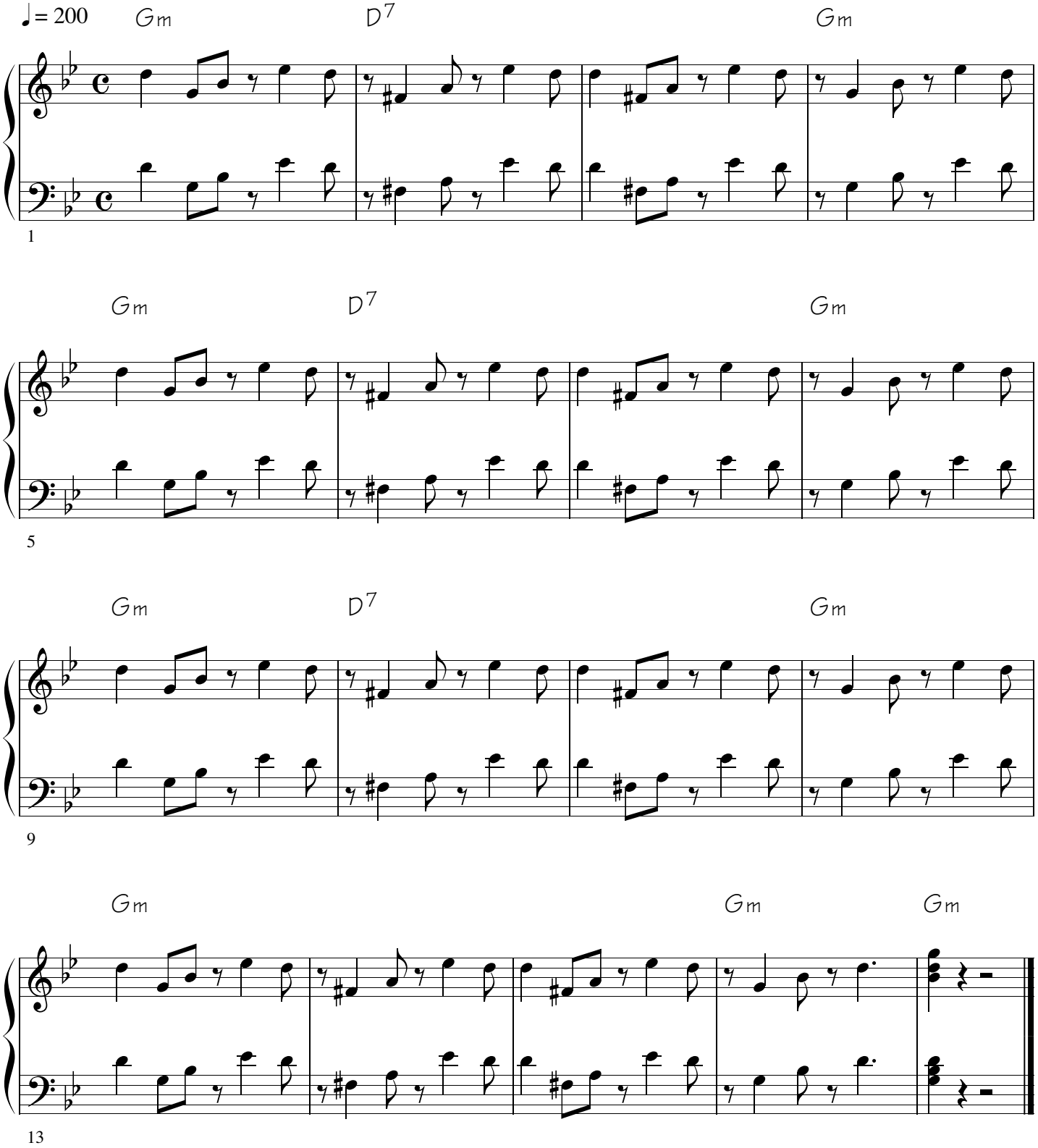
Latin Riff 3

Salsa

CD Tracks # 5 & 6

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



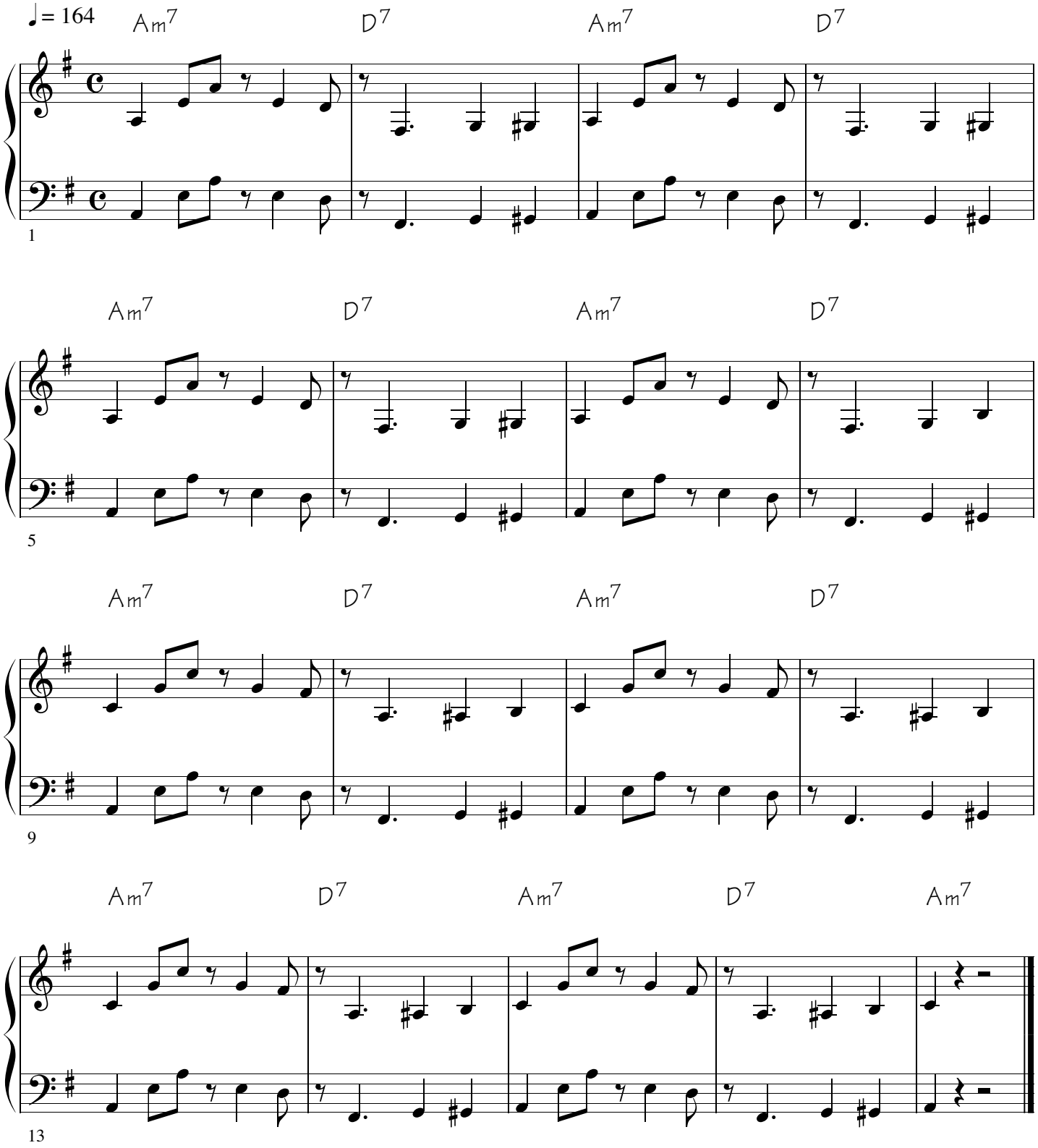
Latin Riff 4

Salsa

CD Tracks # 7 & 8

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



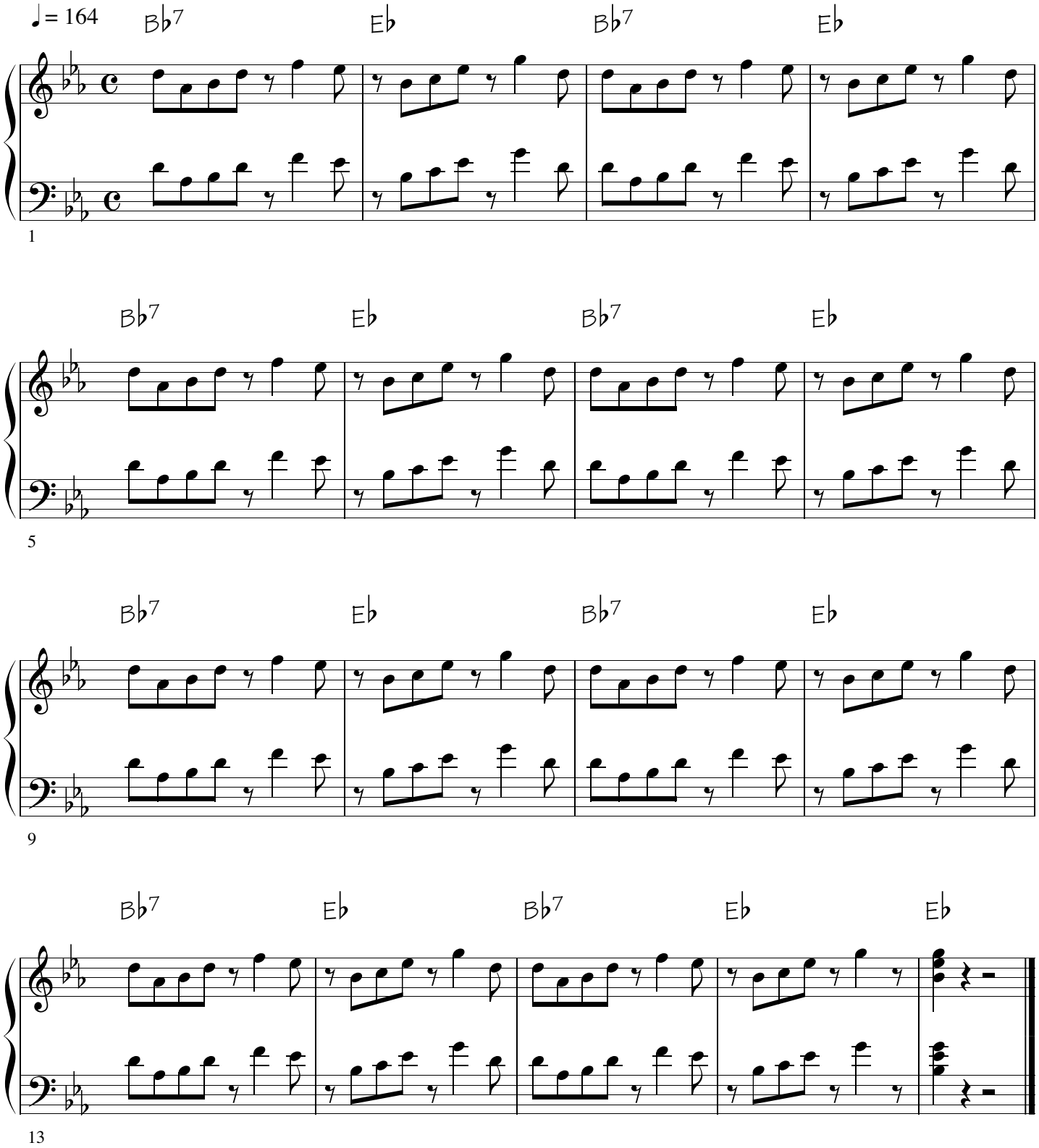
Latin Riff 5

Salsa

CD Tracks # 9 & 10

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



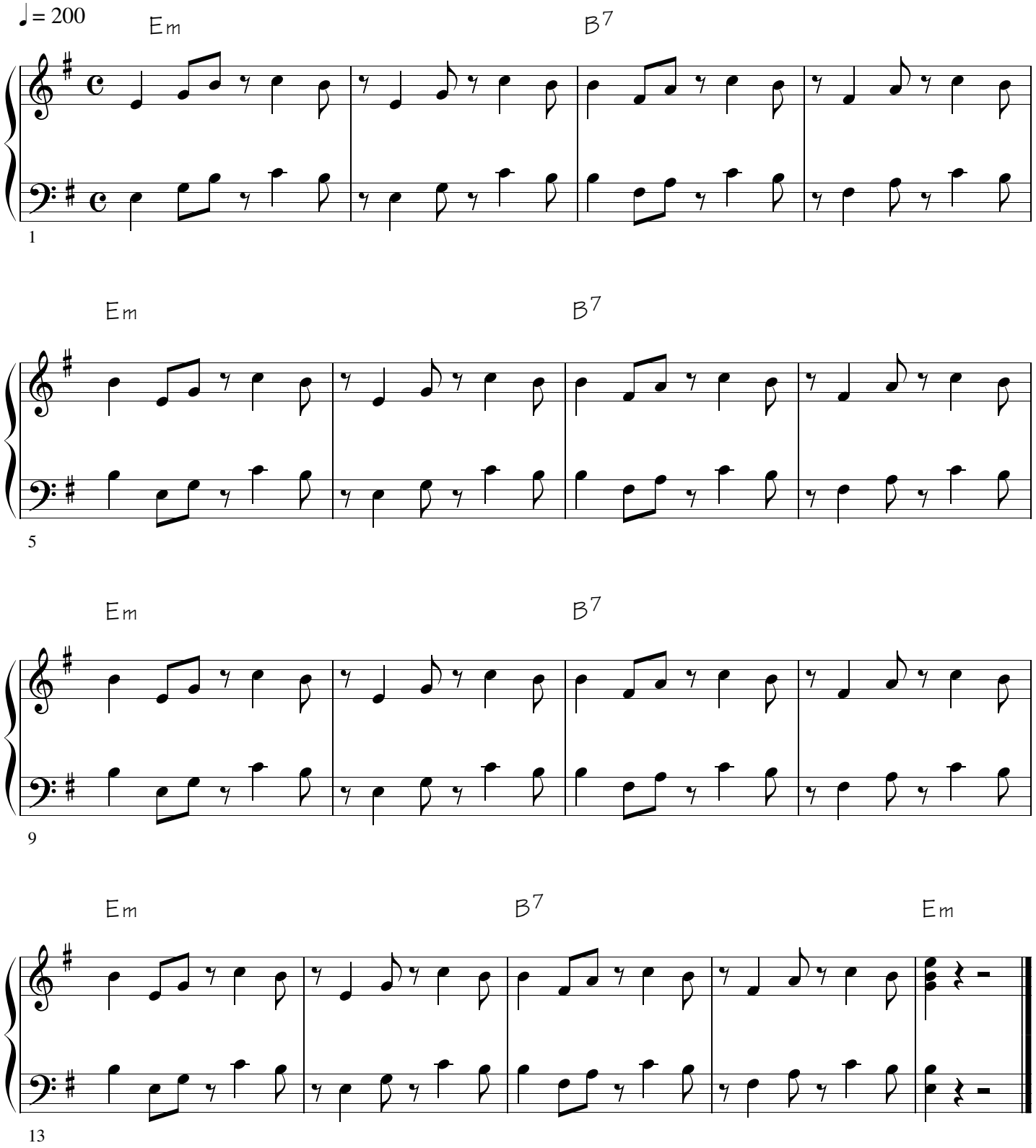
Latin Riff 6

Salsa

CD Tracks # 11 & 12

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



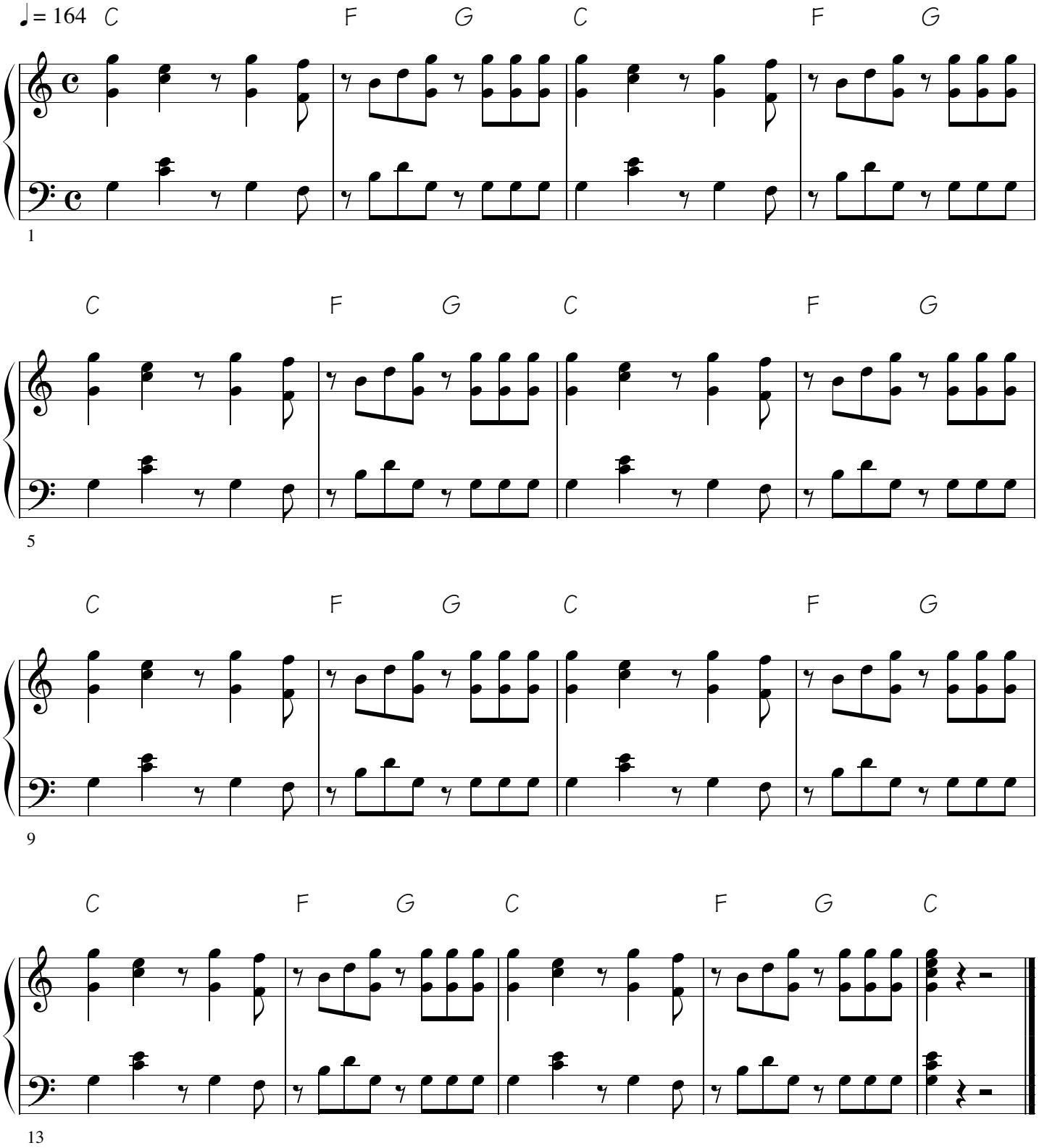
Latin Riff 7

Salsa

CD Tracks # 13 & 14

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



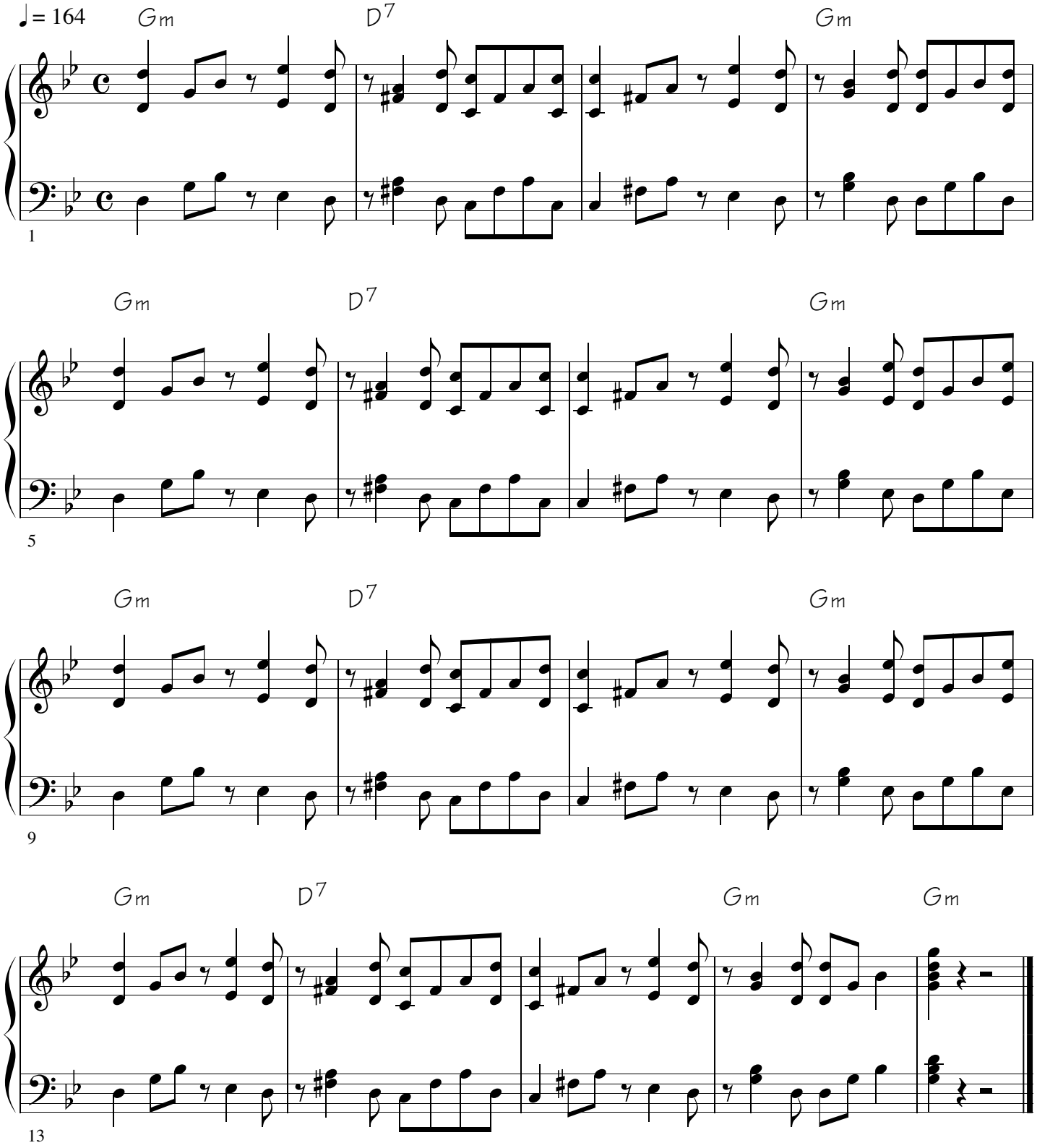
Latin Riff 8

Salsa

CD Tracks # 15 & 16

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



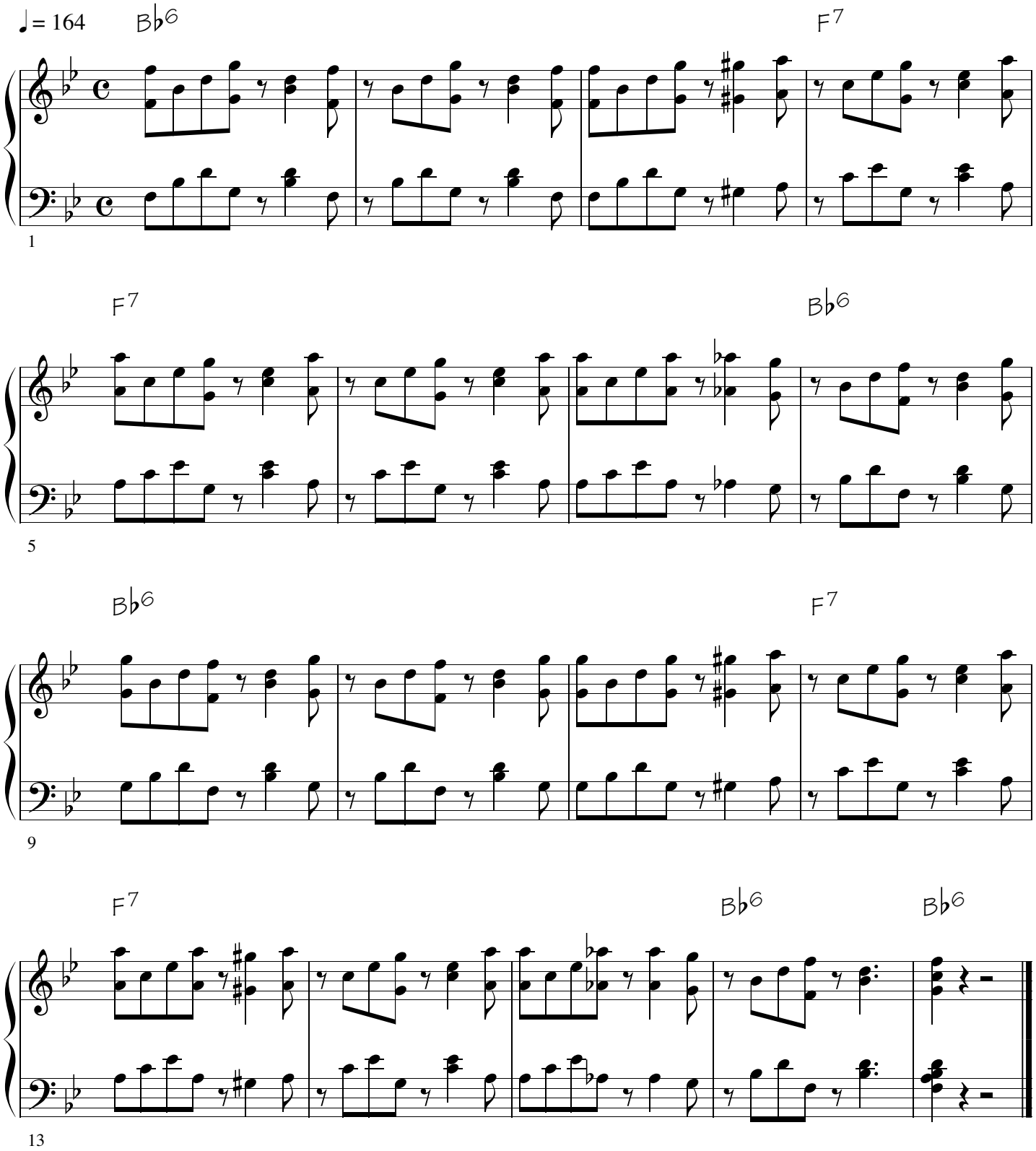
Latin Riff 9

Salsa

CD Tracks # 17 & 18

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



Latin Riff 10

Salsa

CD Tracks # 19 & 20

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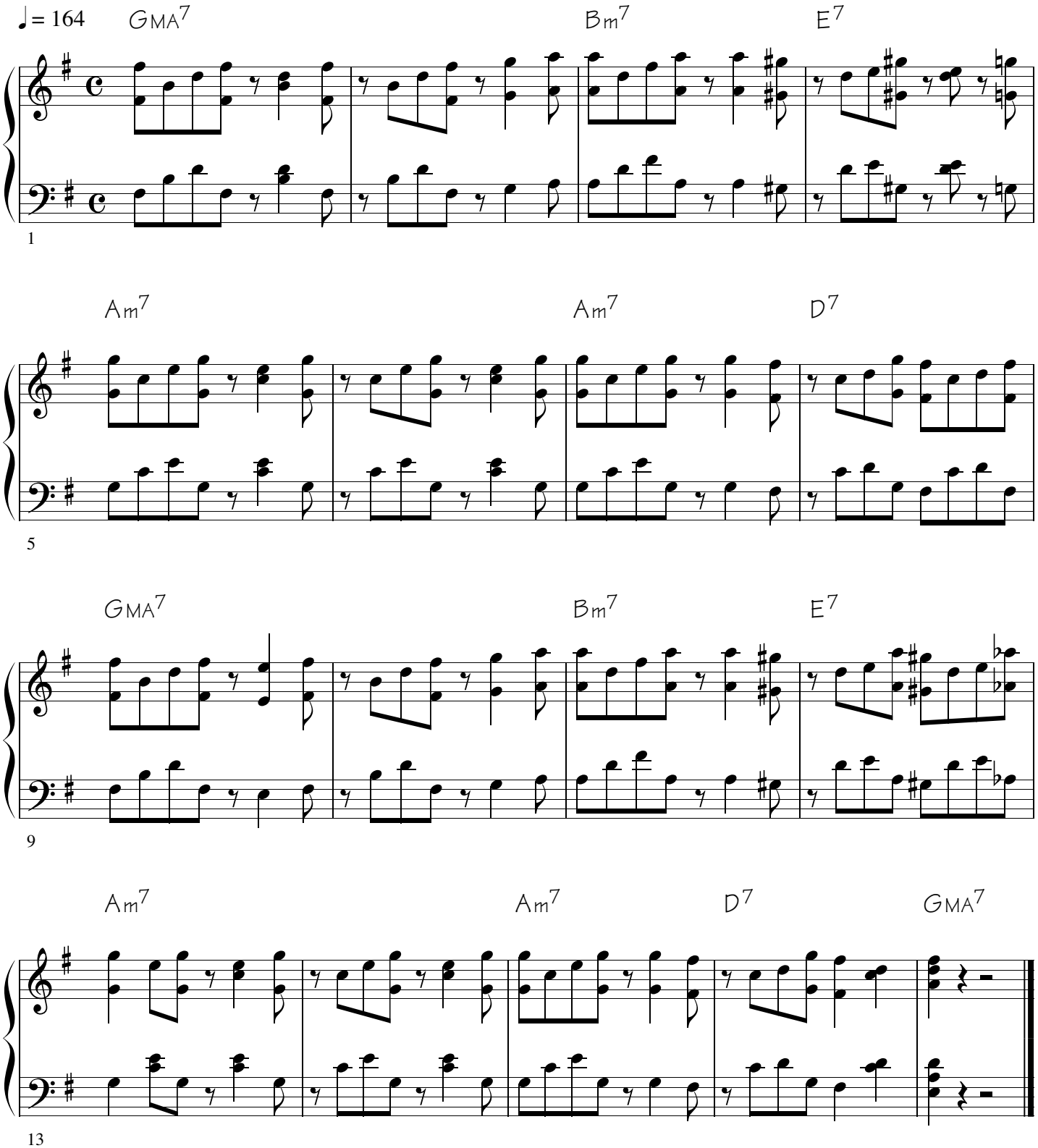
2/3 Clave



Latin Riff 11

Salsa

CD Tracks # 21 & 22

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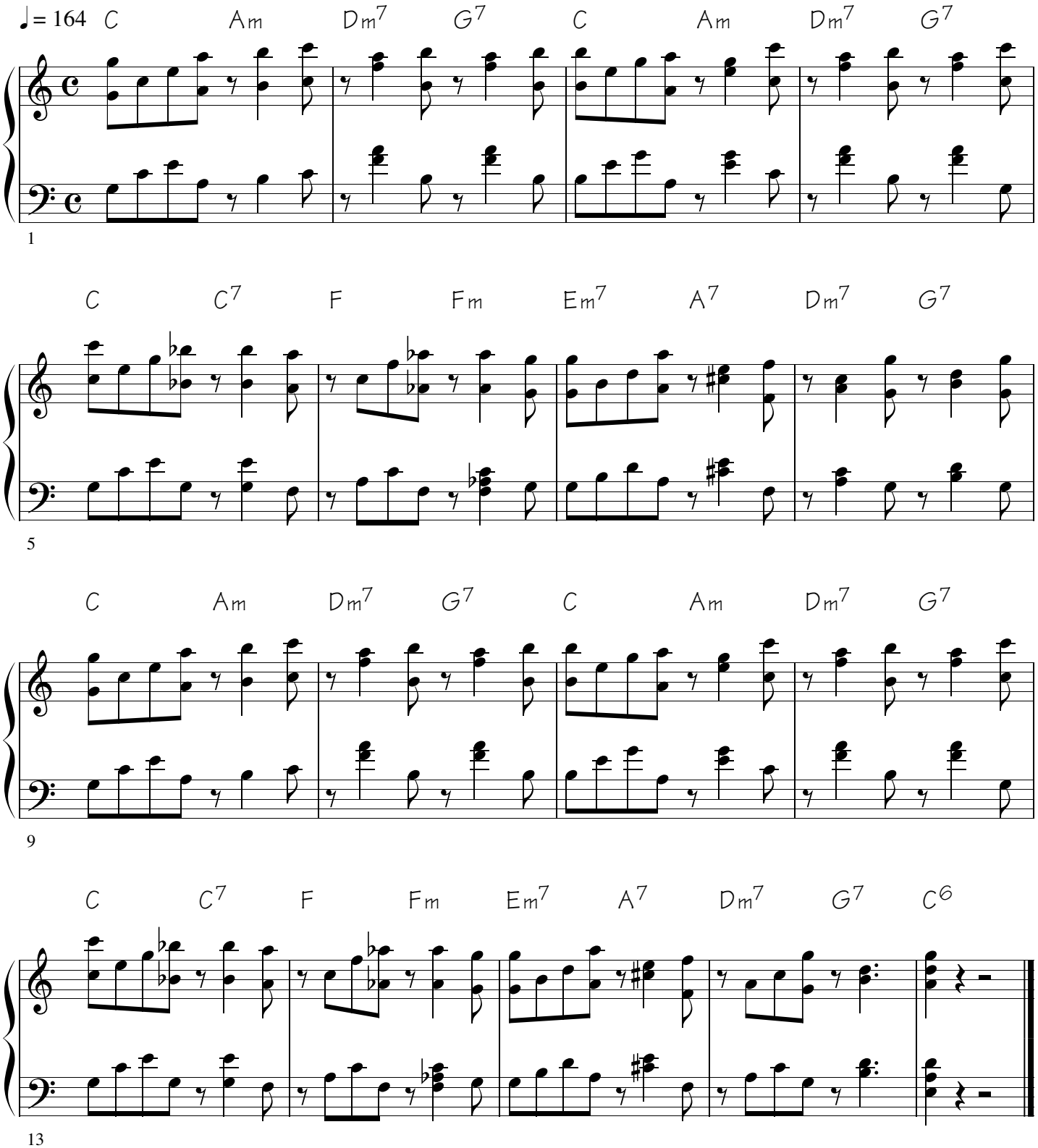
2/3 Clave



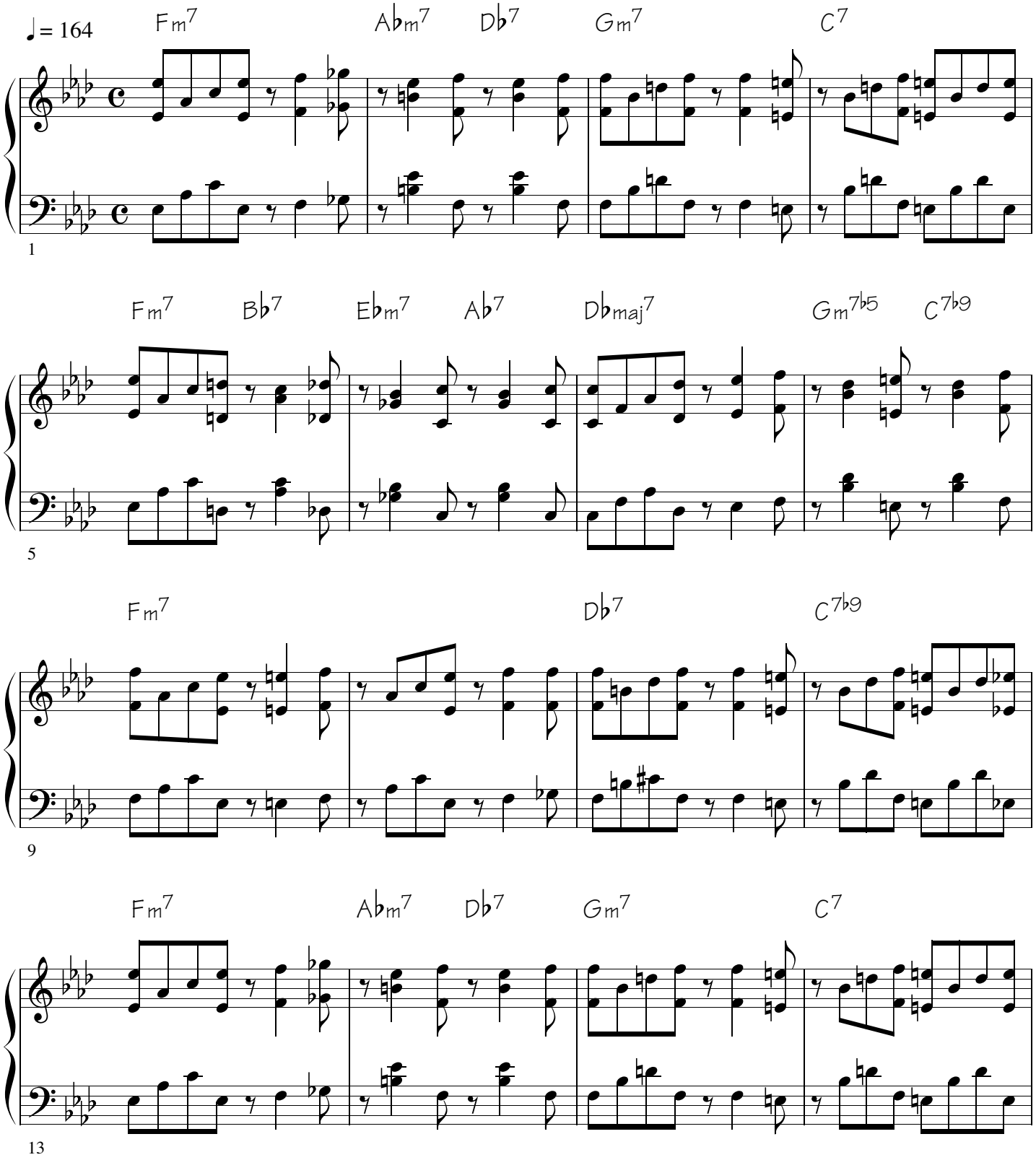
Latin Riff 12

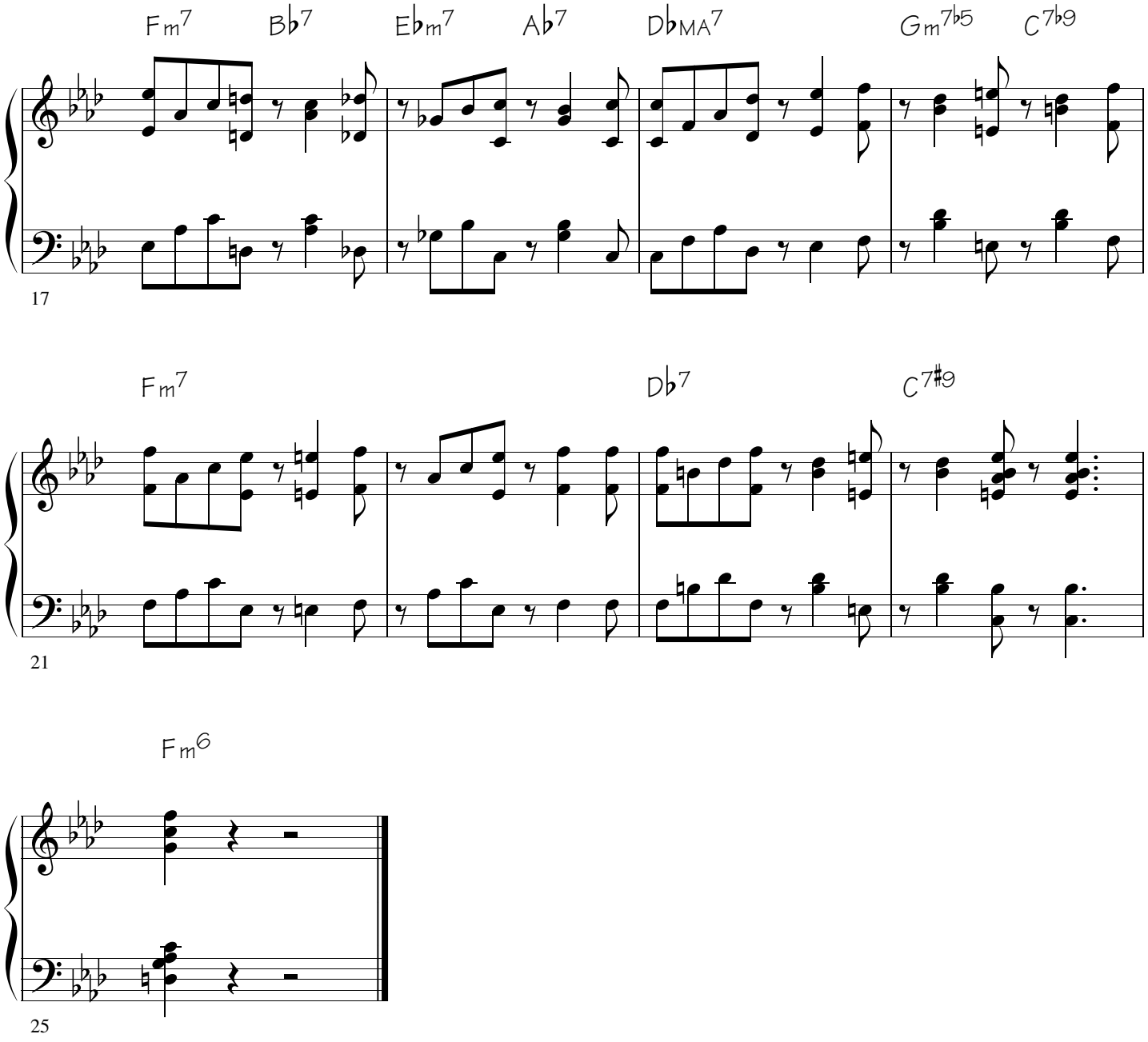
Salsa

CD Tracks # 23 & 24

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave




Fm7
Bb7
Ebm7
Ab7
DbMA7
Gm7b5
C7b9
17
Fm7
Db7
C7#9
21
Fm6
25

Latin Riff 13

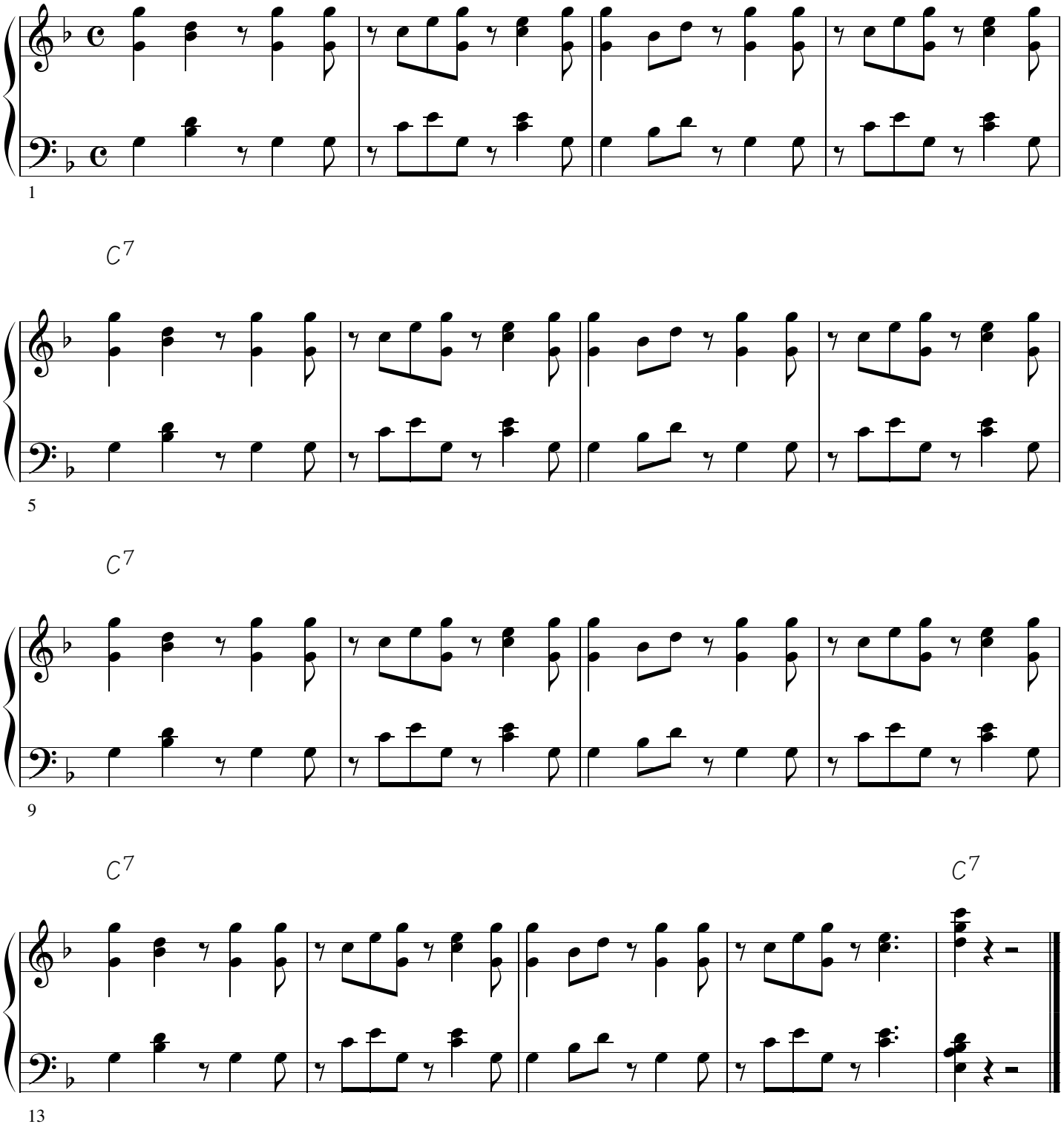
Salsa

CD Tracks # 25 & 26

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave

♩= 200 C^7



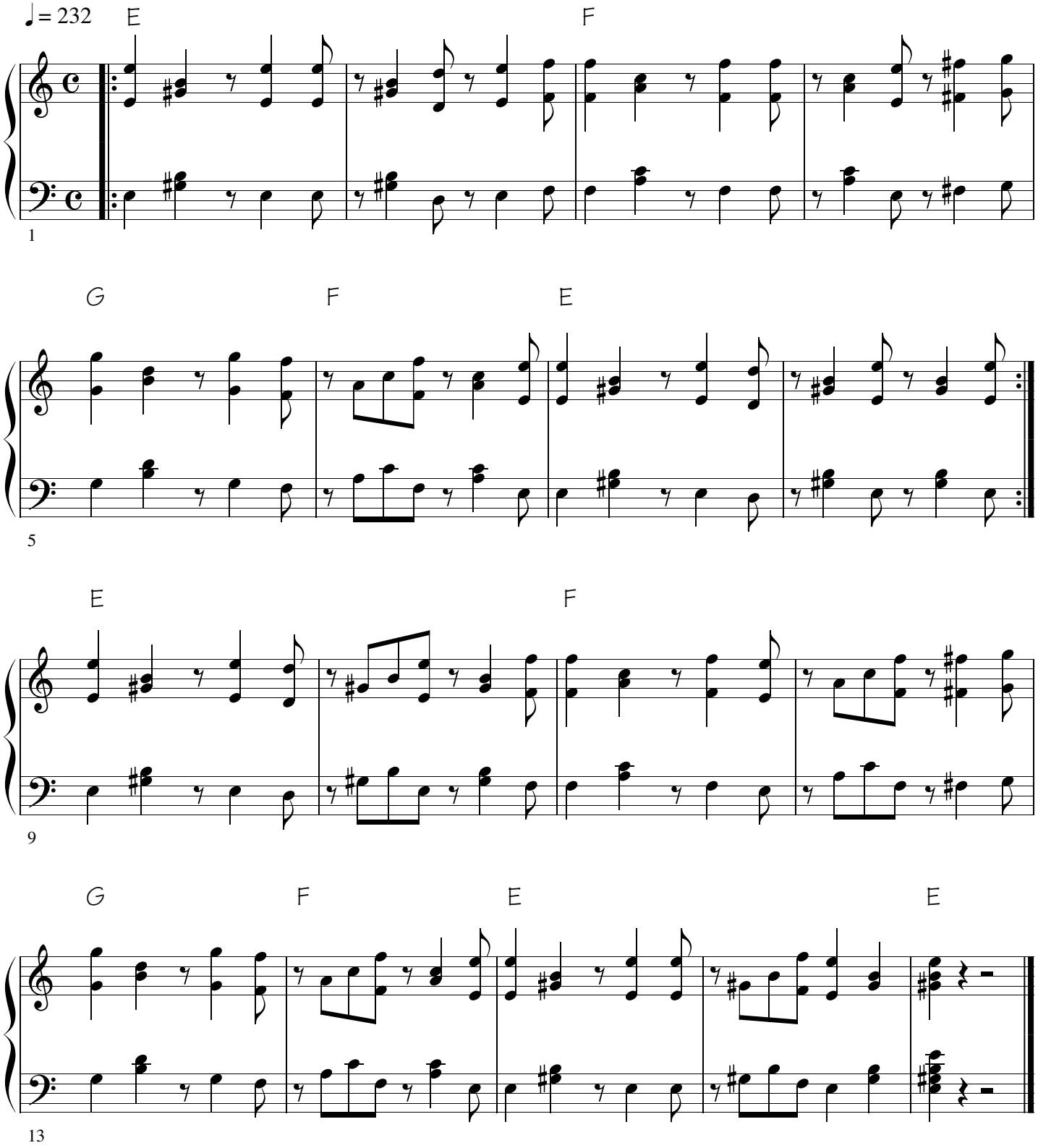
Latin Riff 14

Salsa

CD Tracks # 27 & 28

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



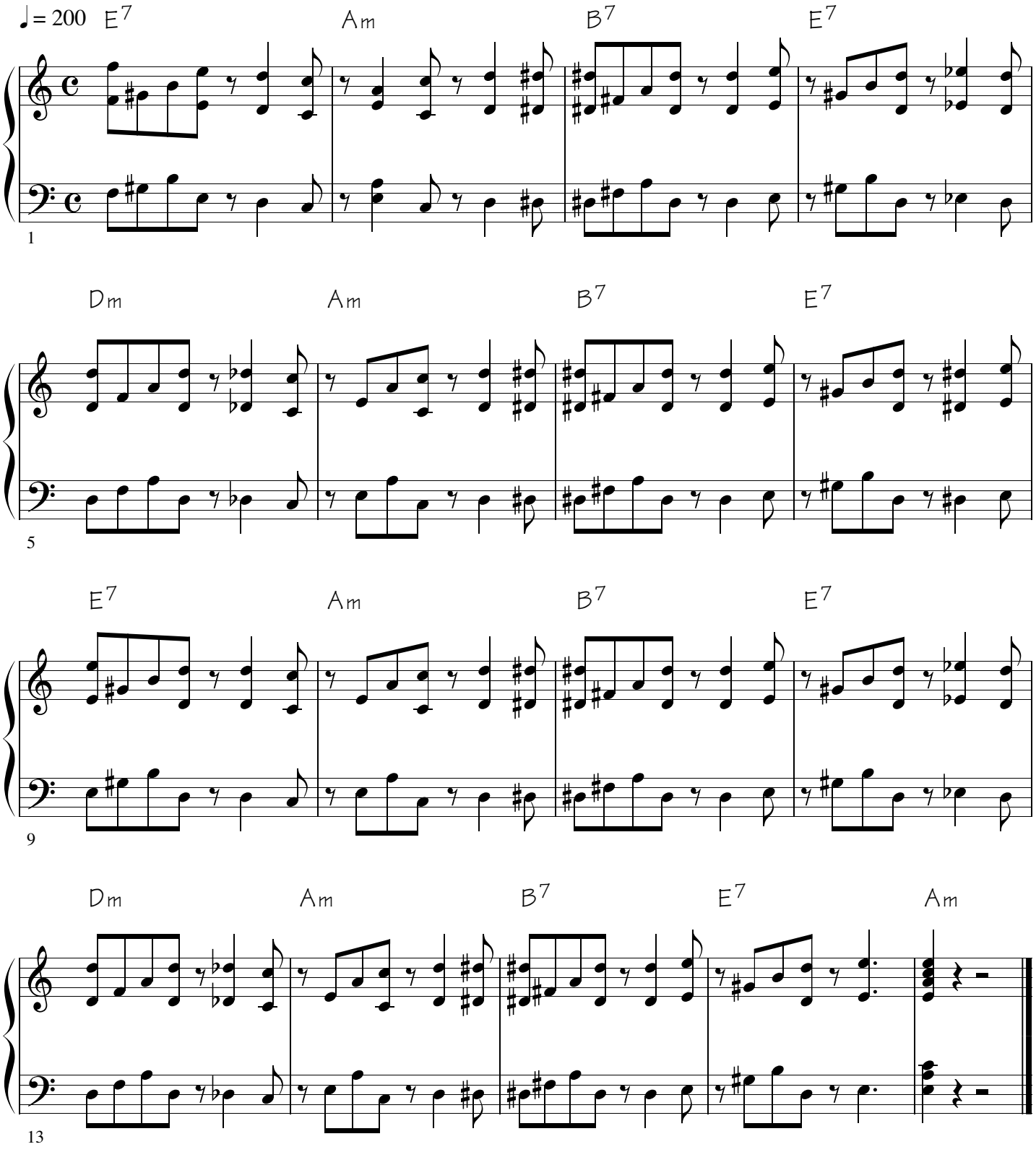
Latin Riff 15

Salsa

CD Tracks # 29 & 30

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



Latin Riff 16

Salsa

CD Tracks # 31 & 32

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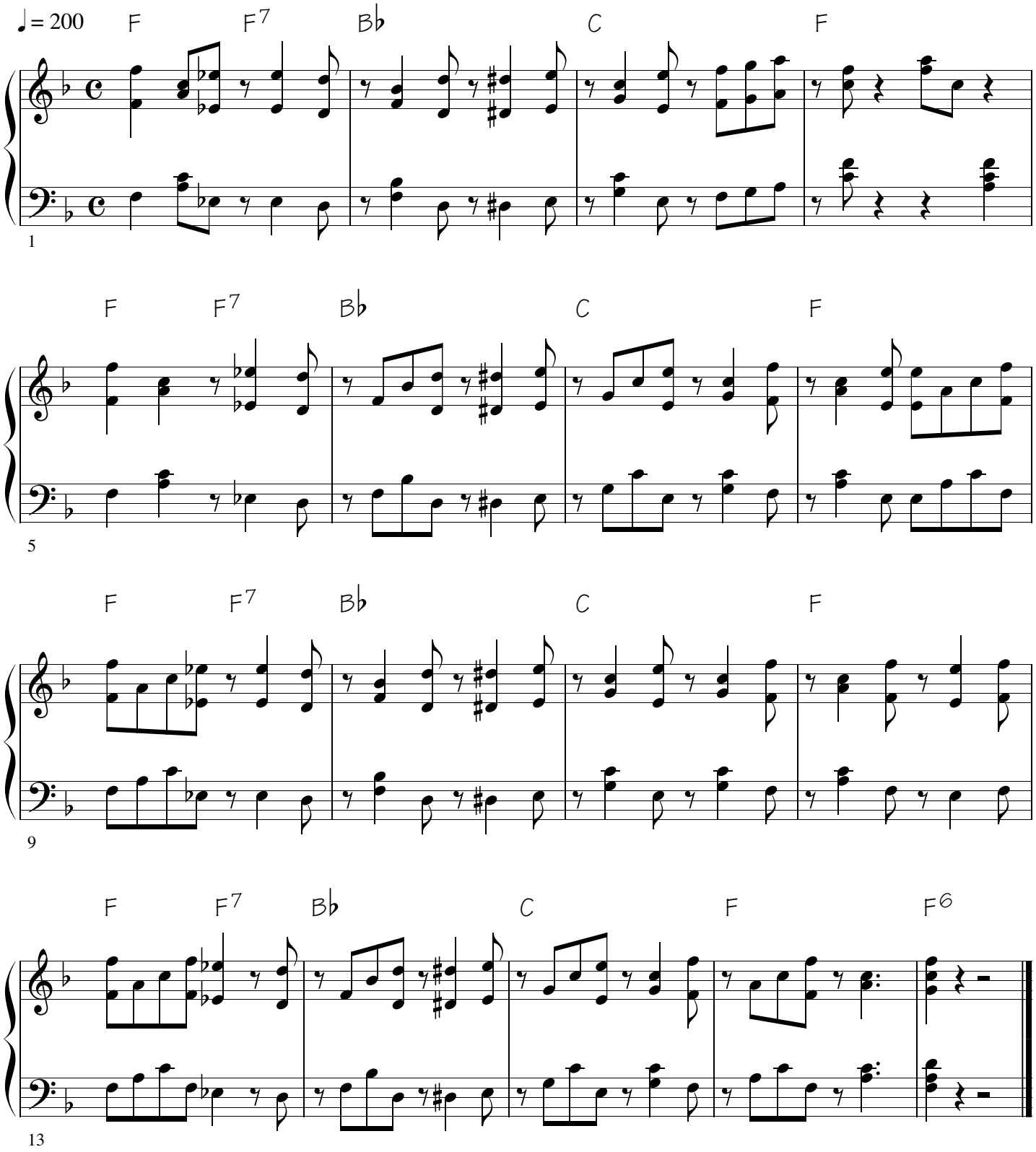
2/3 Clave



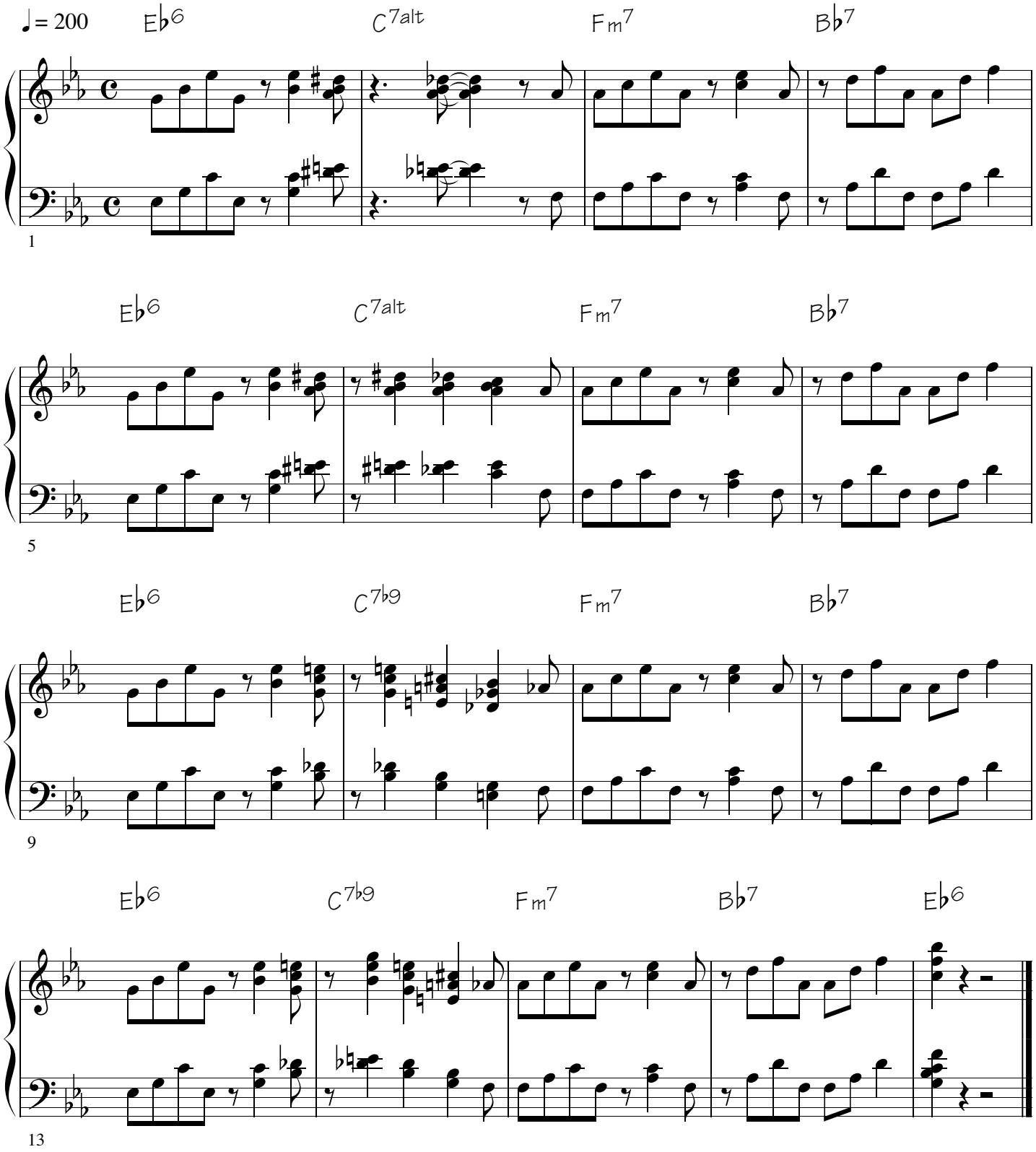
Latin Riff 17

Salsa

CD Tracks # 33 & 34

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



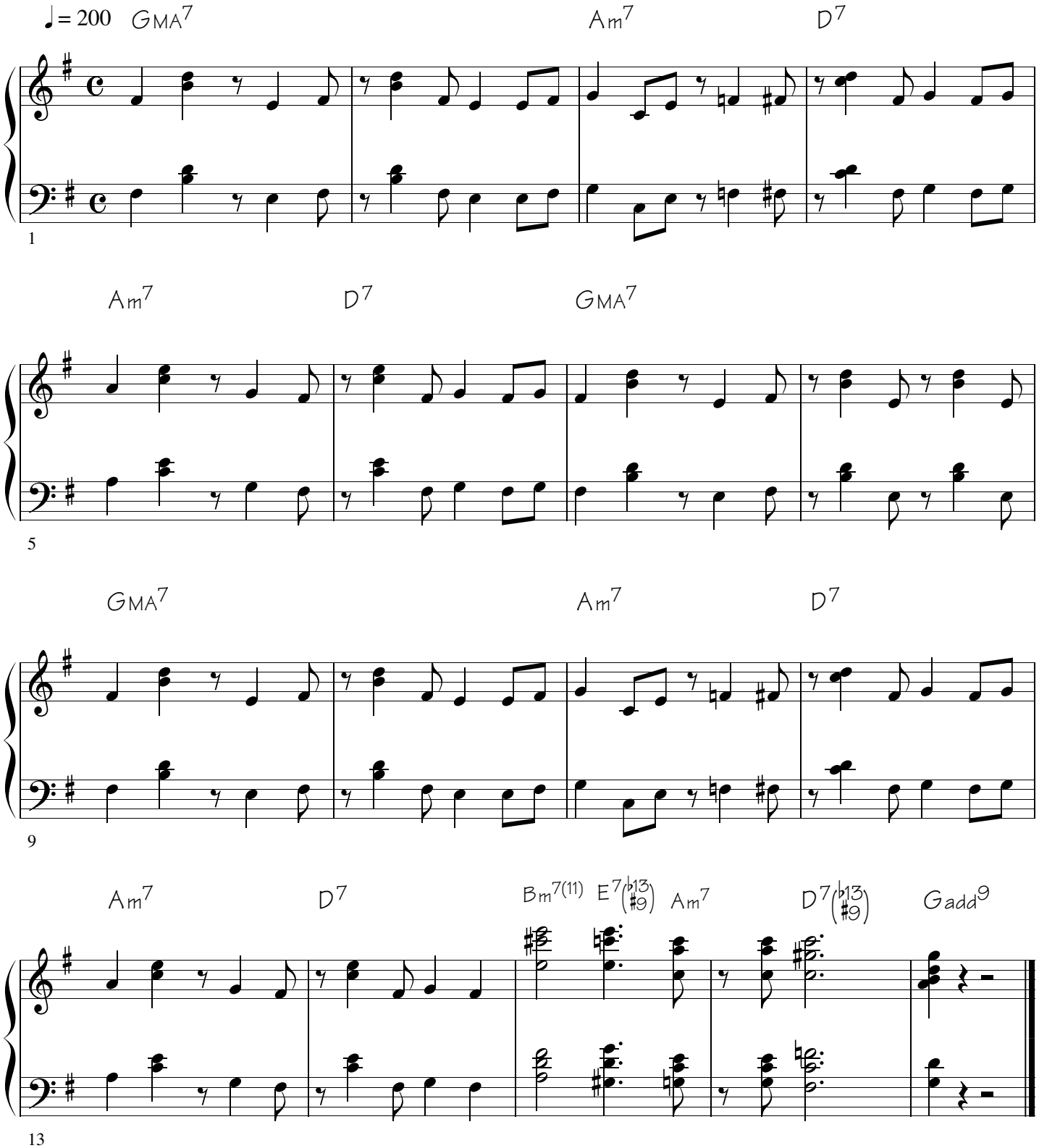
Latin Riff 18

Mambo

CD Tracks # 35 & 36

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



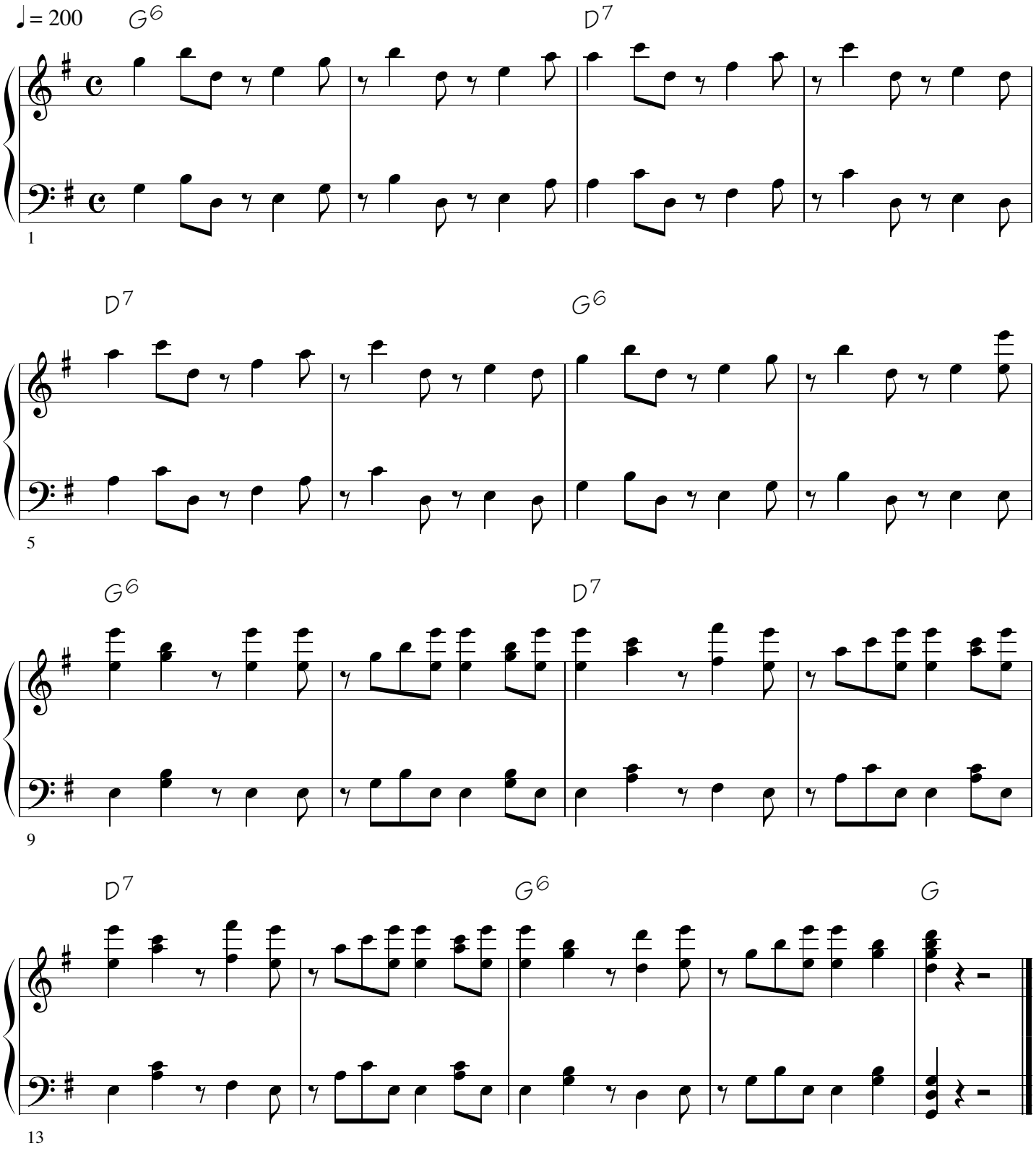
Latin Riff 19

Mambo

CD Tracks # 37 & 38

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



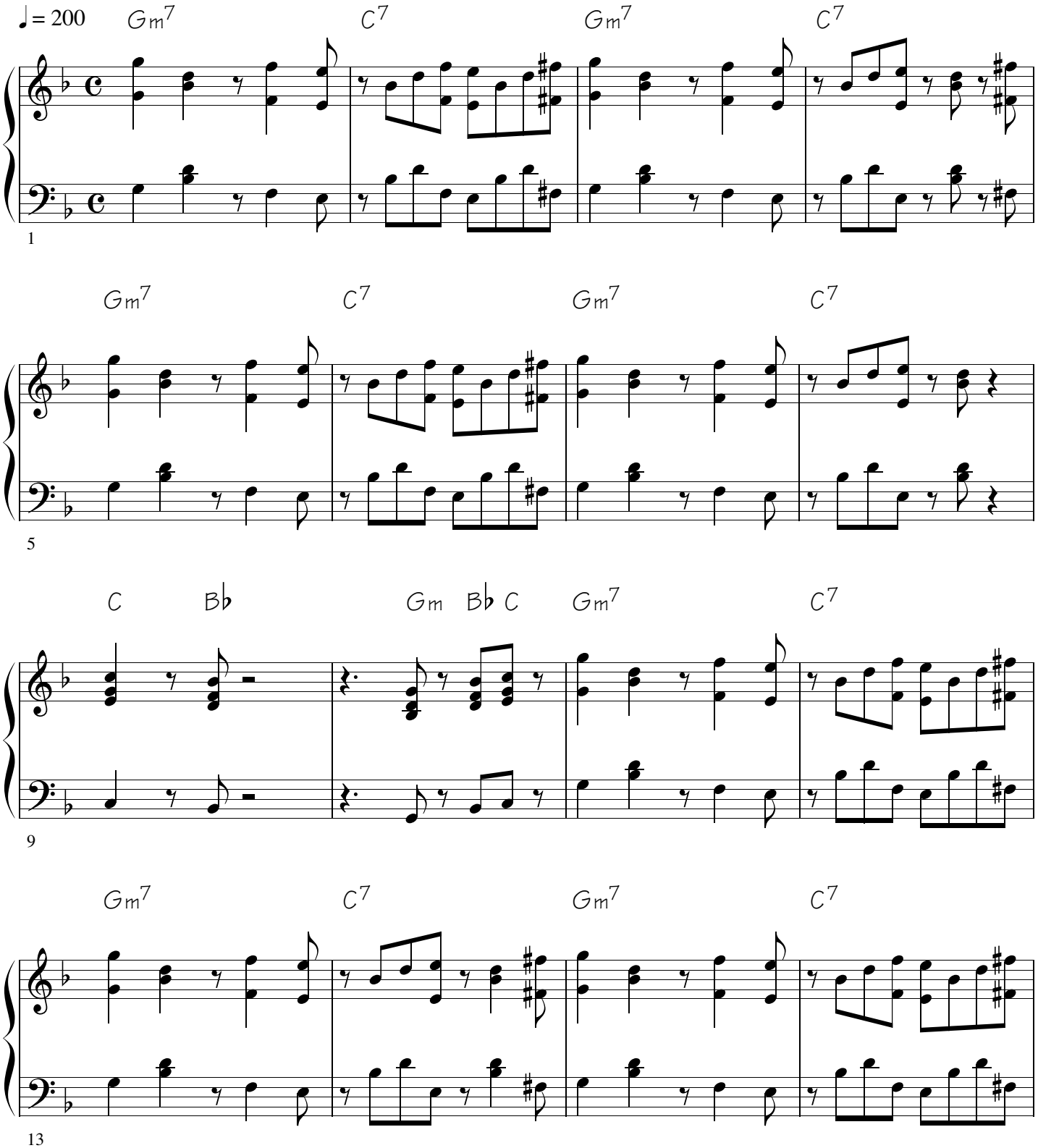
Latin Riff 20

Mambo

CD Tracks # 39 & 40

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



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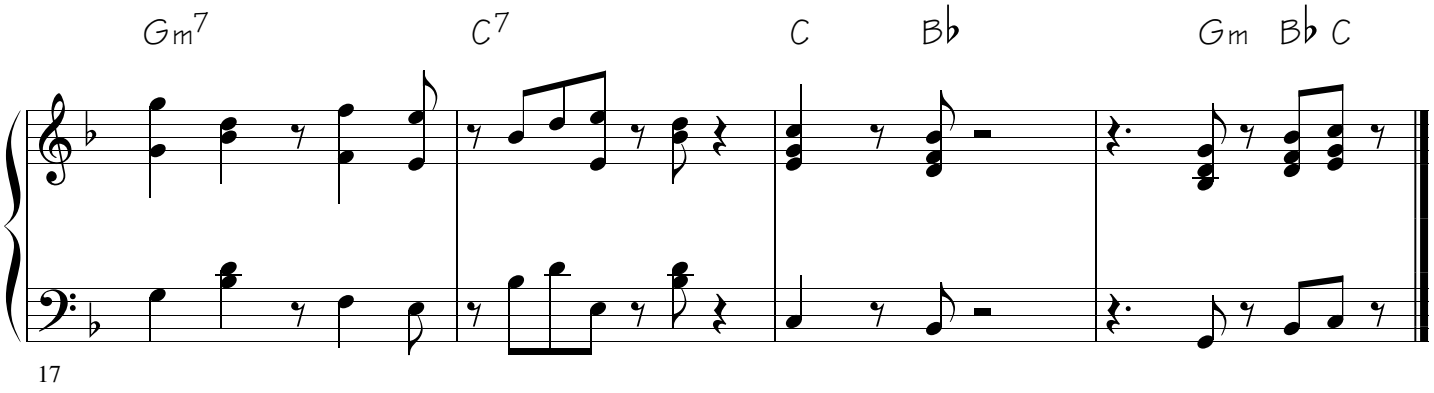


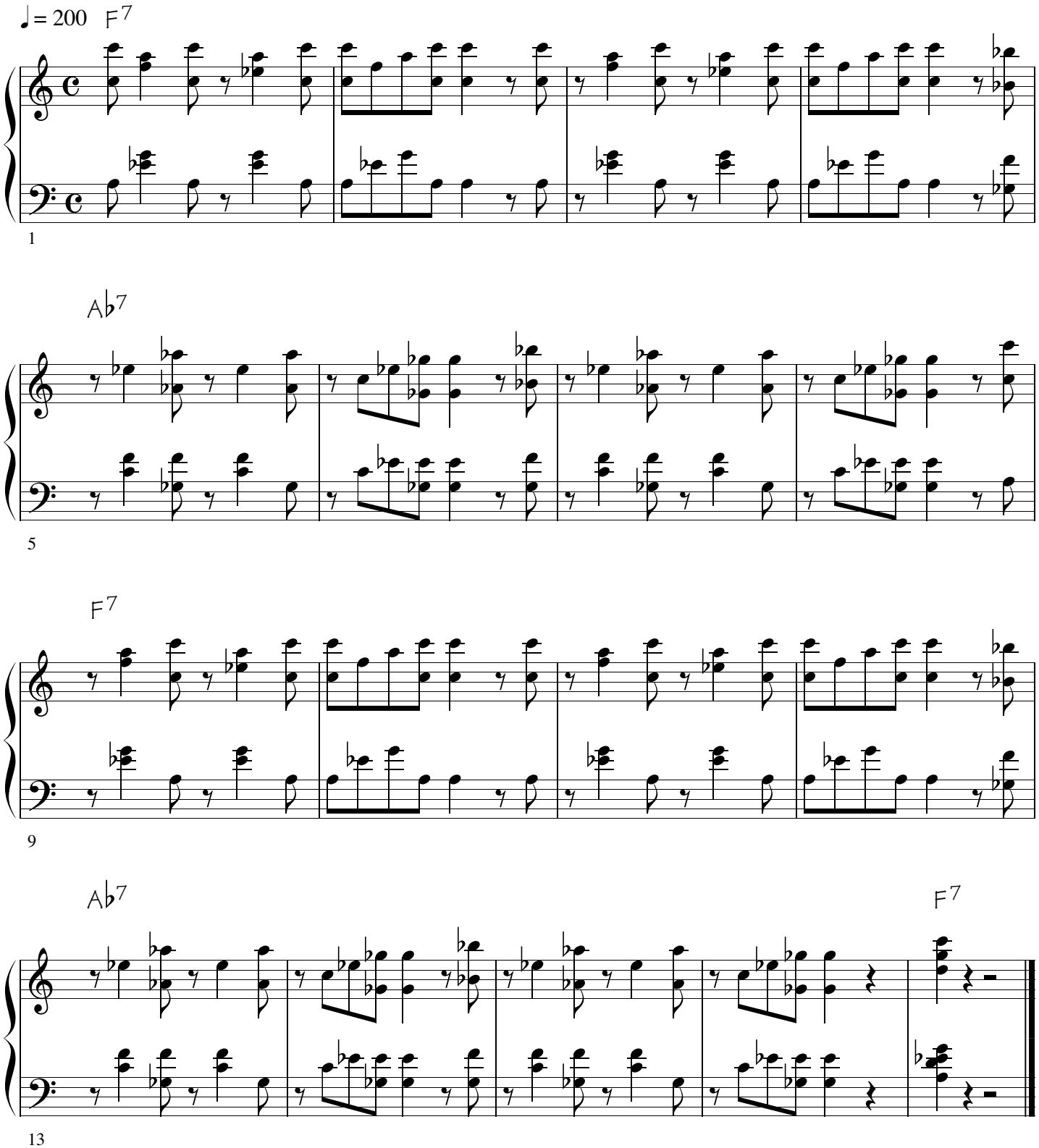
Latin Riff 21

Songo

CD Tracks # 41 & 42

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

3/2 Clave



Latin Riff 22

Songo

CD Tracks # 43 & 44

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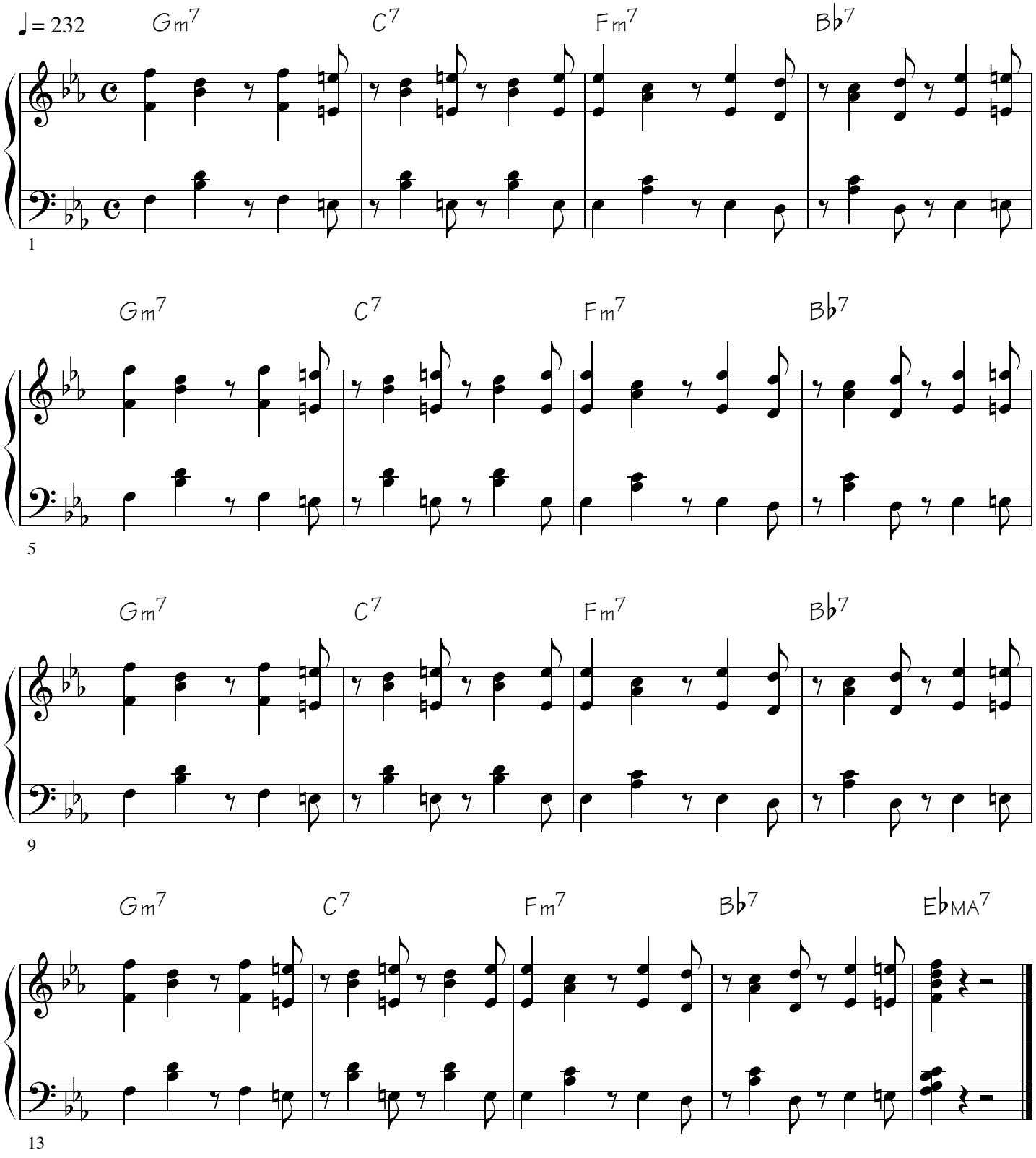
2/3 Clave



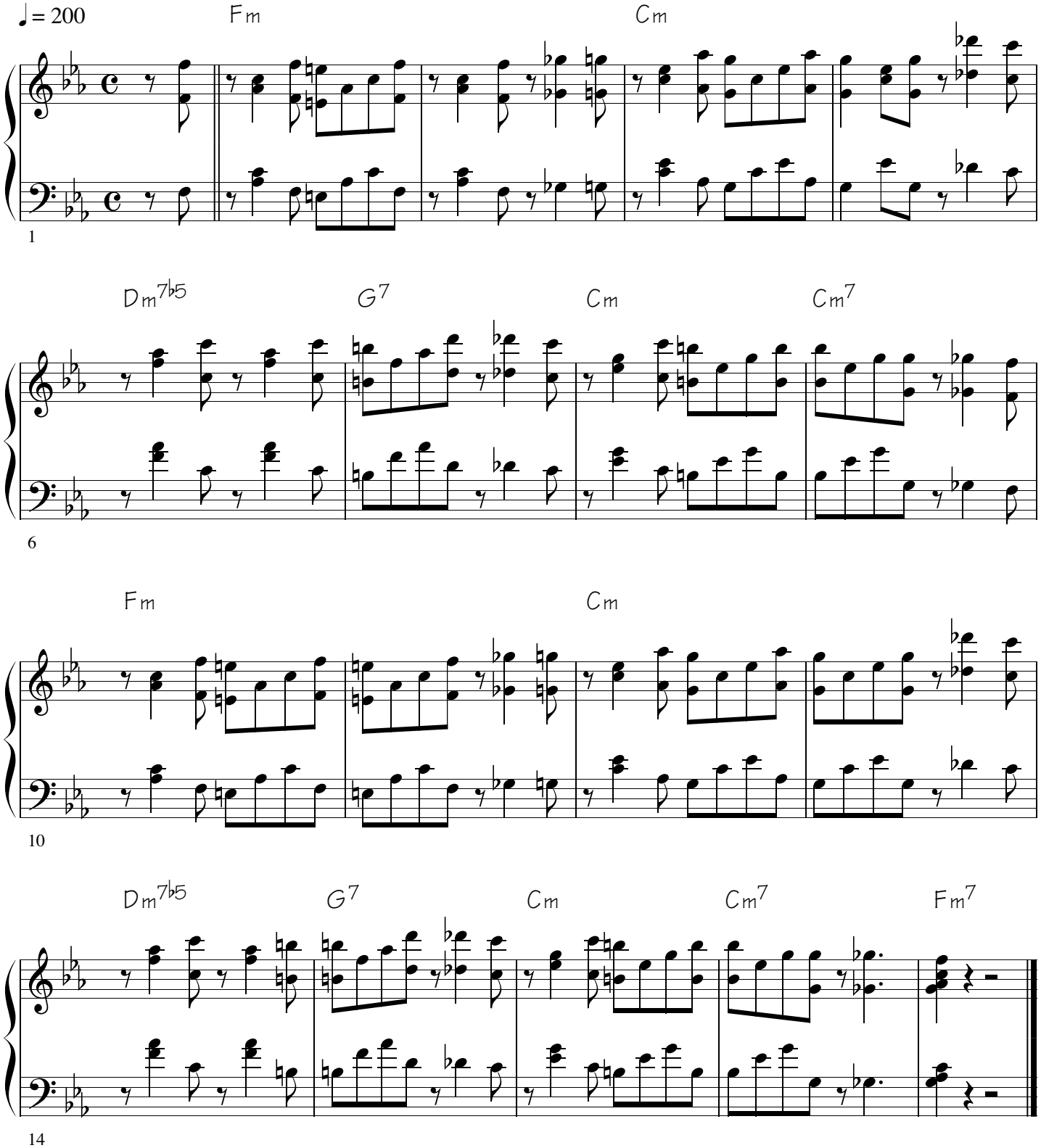
Latin Riff 23

Songo

CD Tracks # 45 & 46

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

3/2 Clave



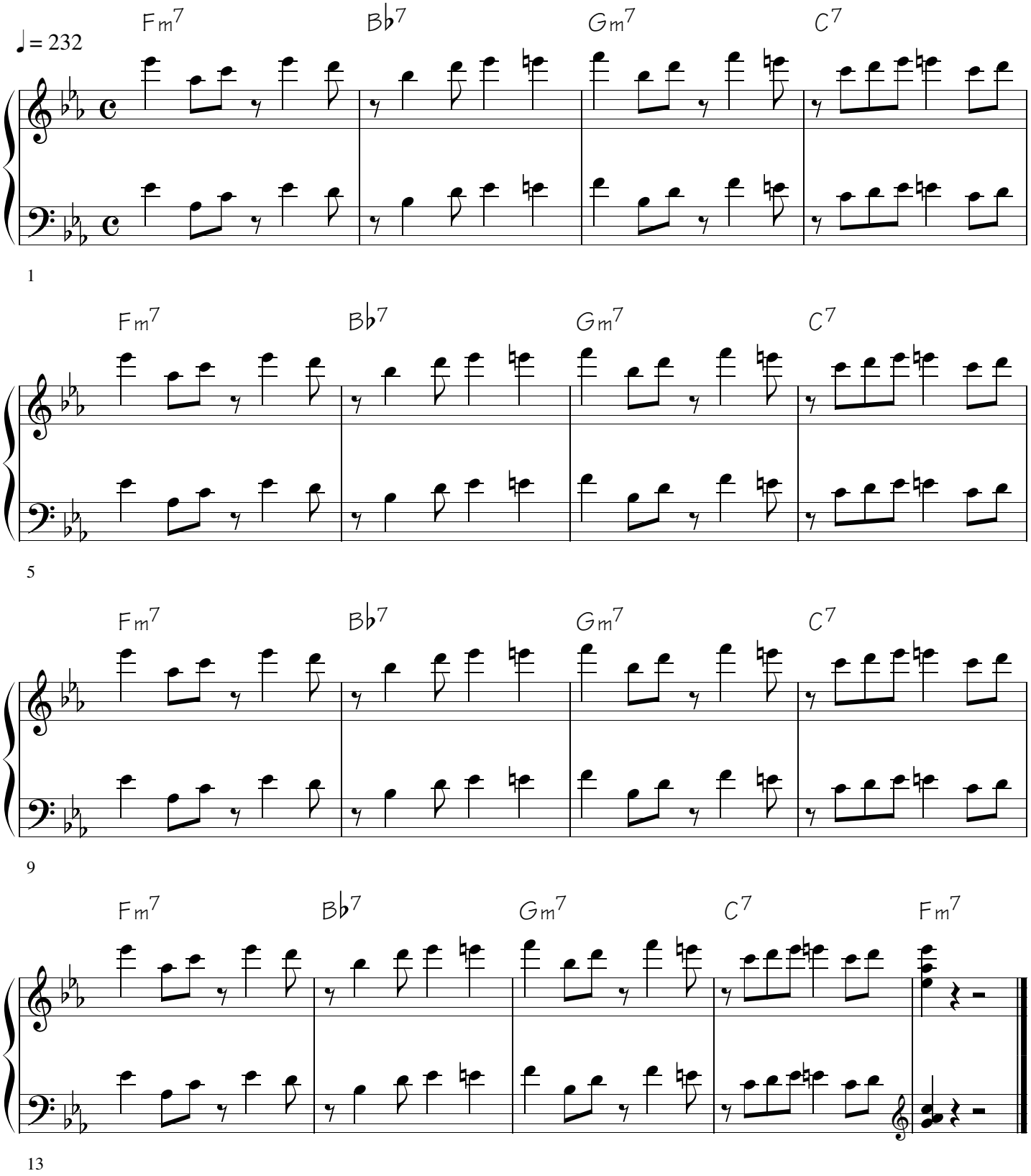
Latin Riff 24

Songo

CD Tracks # 47 & 48

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave

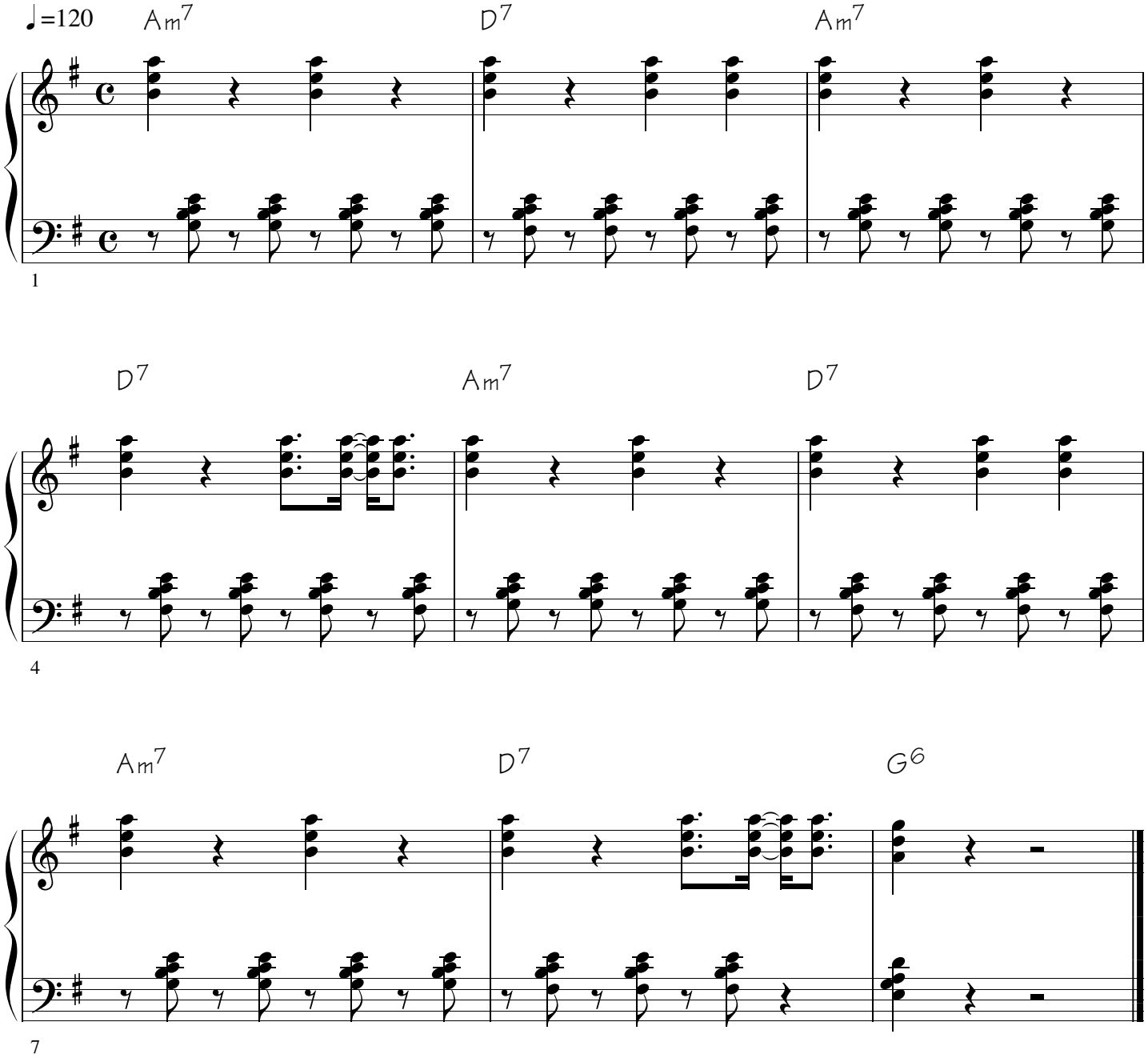


Latin Riff 25

Cha Cha

CD Tracks # 49 & 50

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

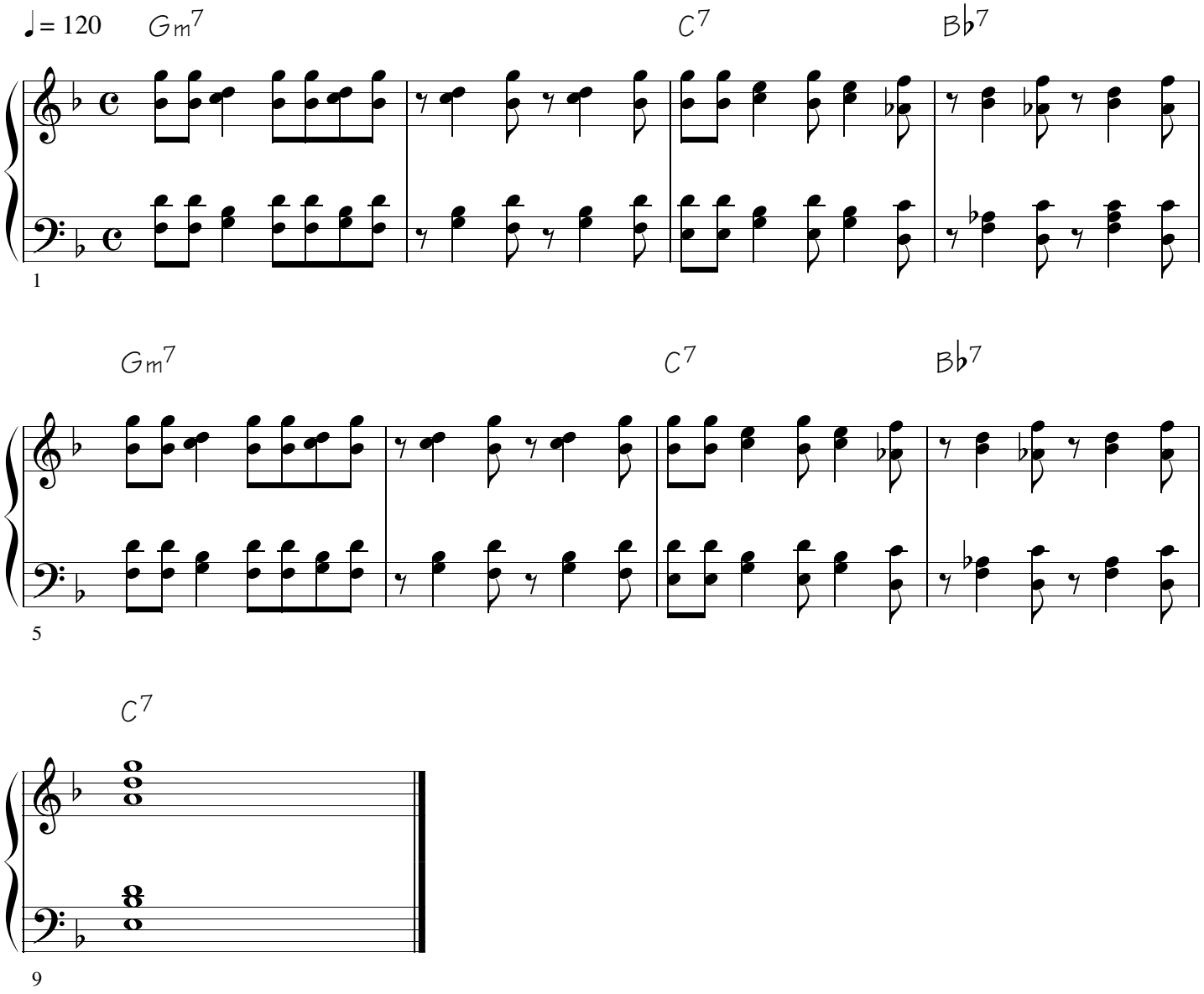


Latin Riff 26

CD Tracks # 51 & 52

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

Cha Cha



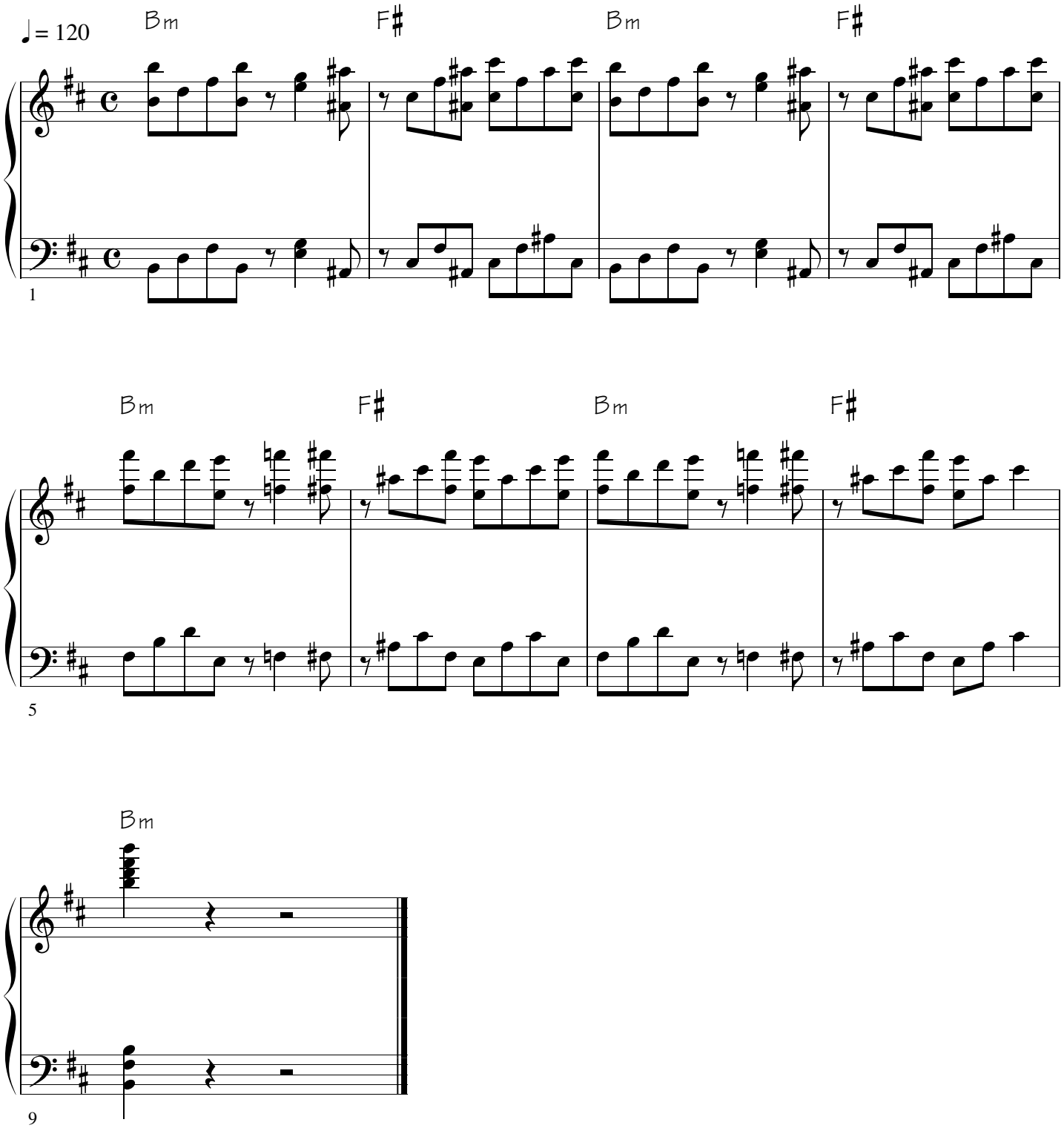
Latin Riff 27

Cha-Cha

CD Tracks # 53 & 54

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



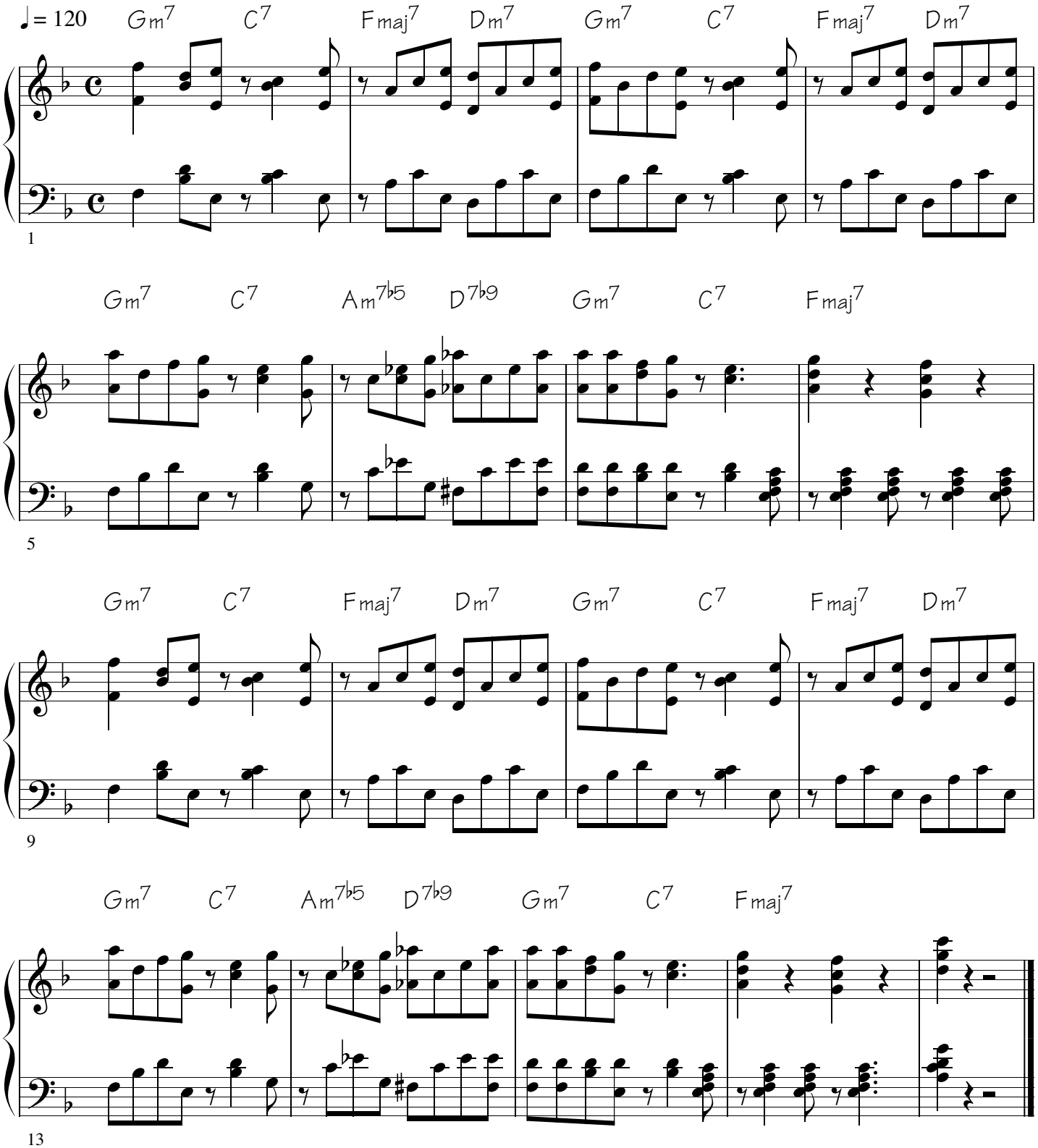
Latin Riff 28

Cha-Cha

CD Tracks # 55 & 56

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



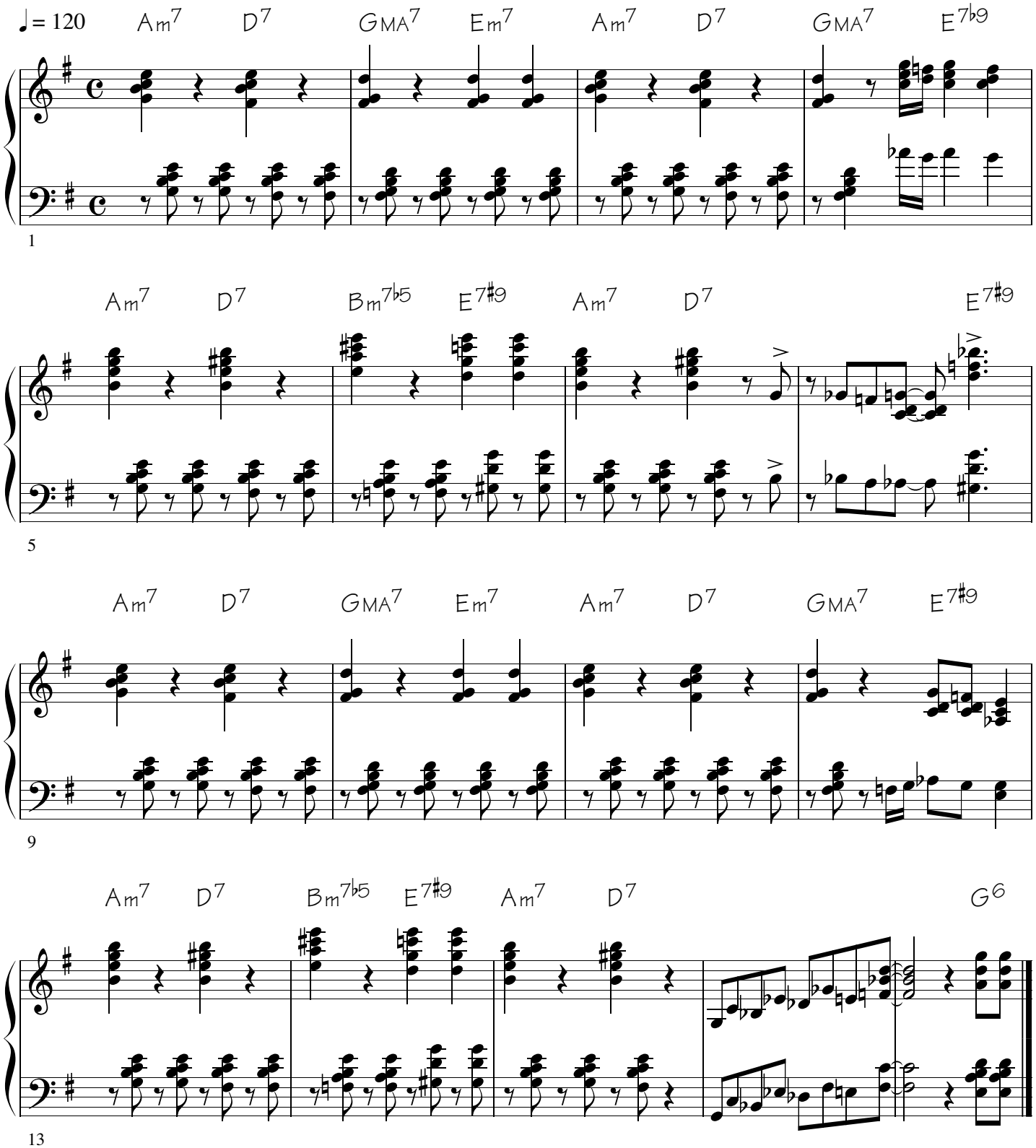
Latin Riff 29

Cha Cha

CD Tracks # 57 & 58

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave



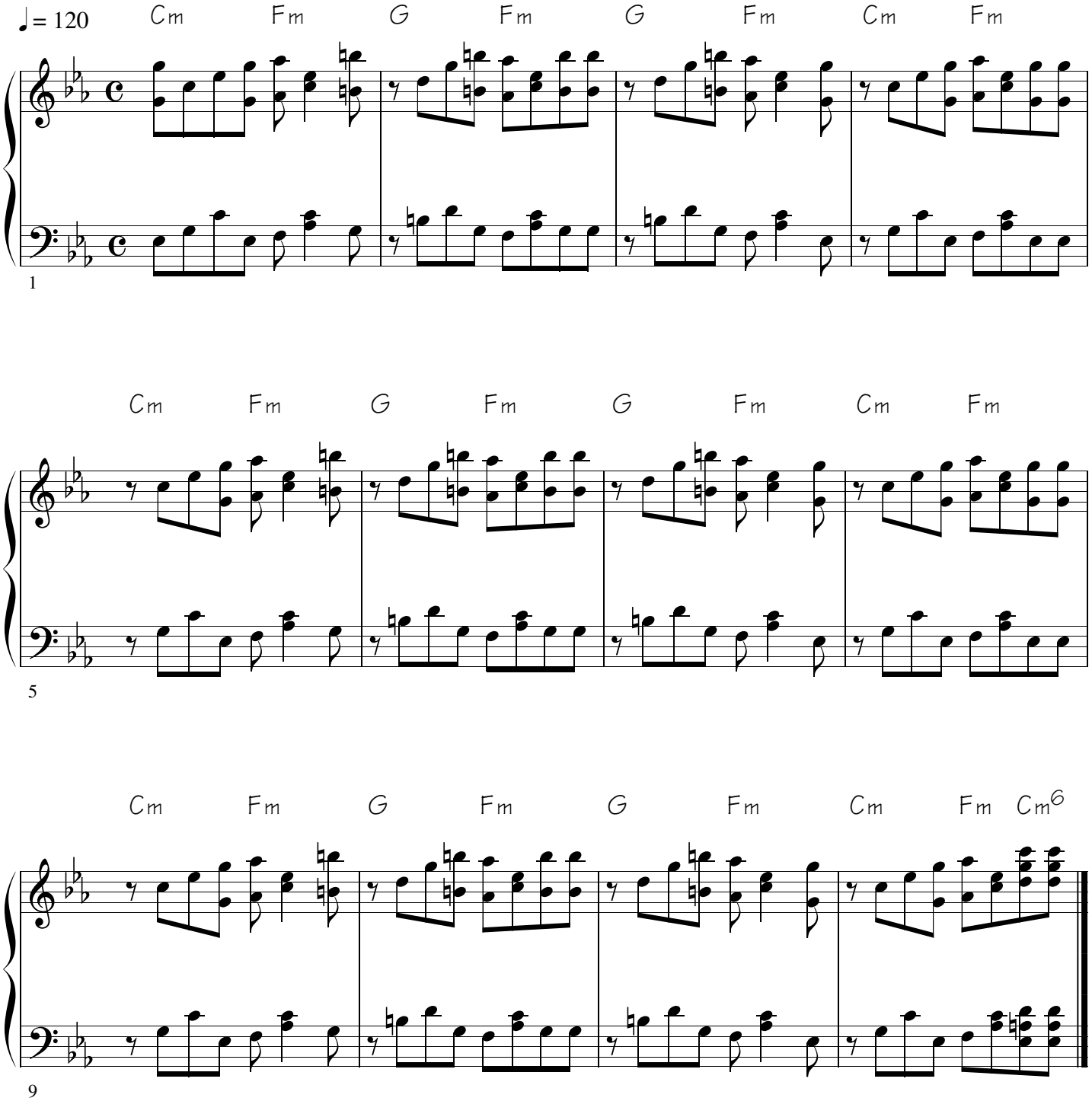
Latin Riff 30

Son

CD Tracks # 29 & 60

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

2/3 Clave

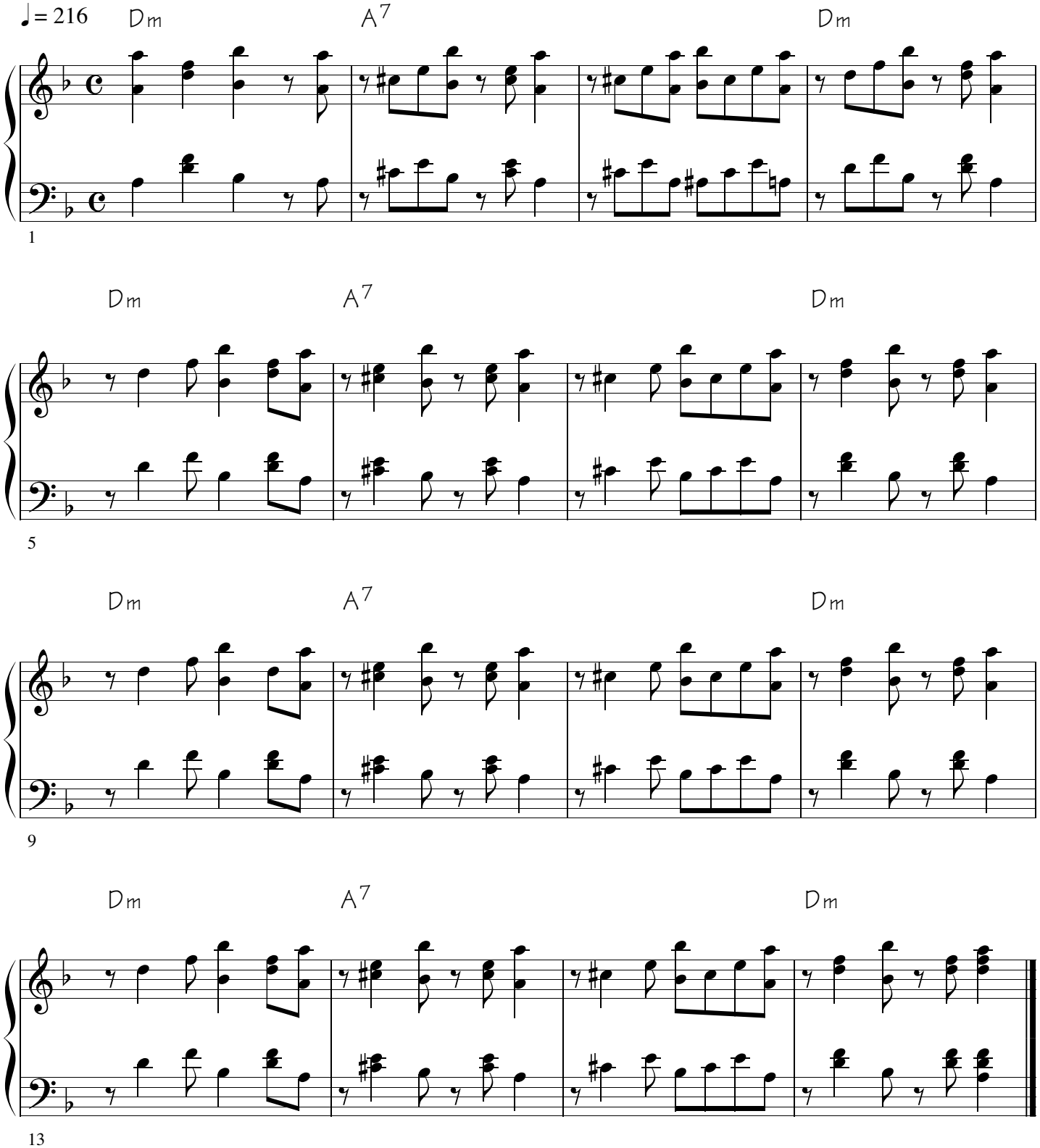


Latin Riff 31

Bomba

CD Tracks # 61 & 62

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

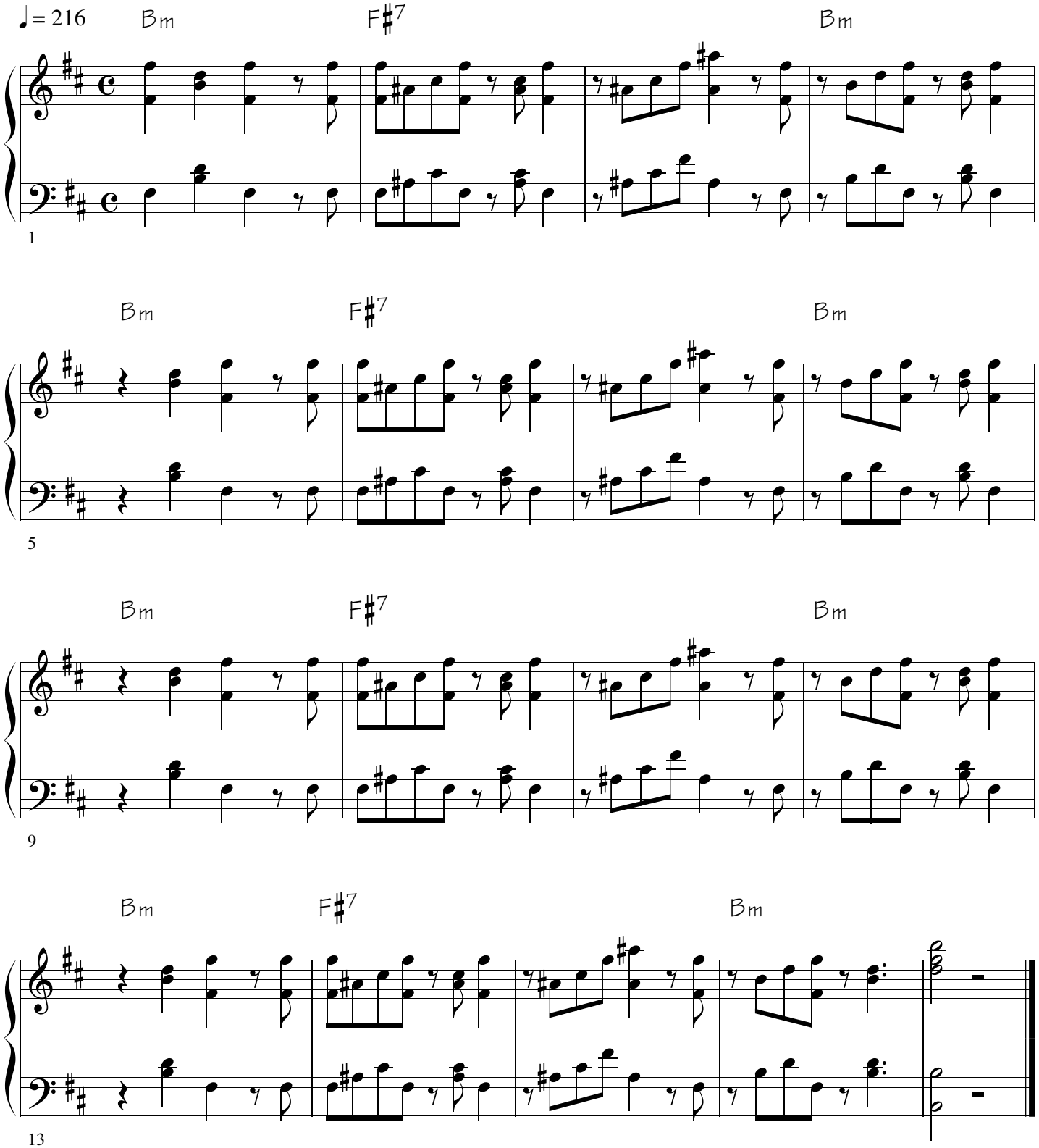


Latin Riff 32

Bomba

CD Tracks # 63 & 64

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

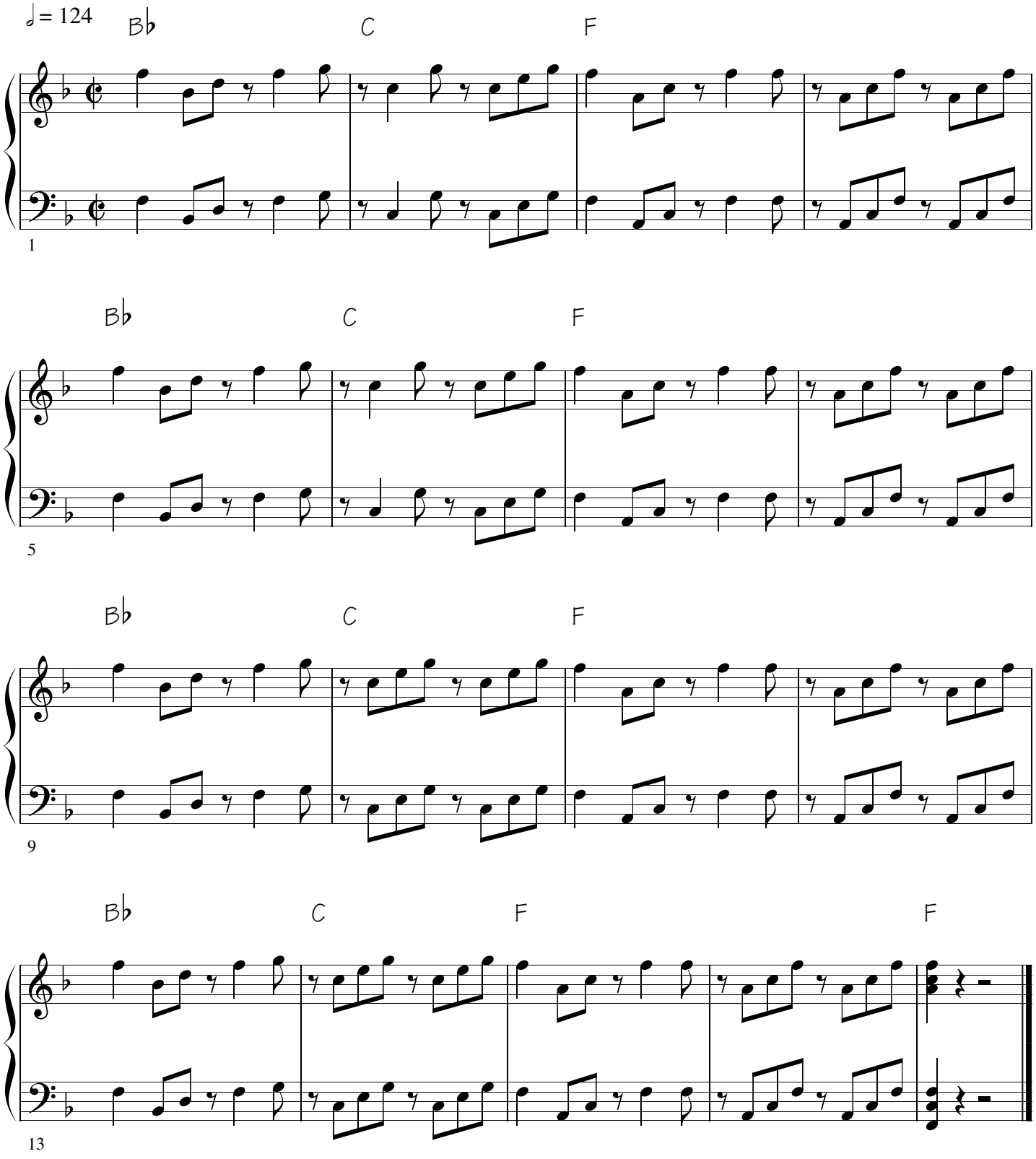


Latin Riff 33

CD Tracks # 65 & 66

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

Merengue

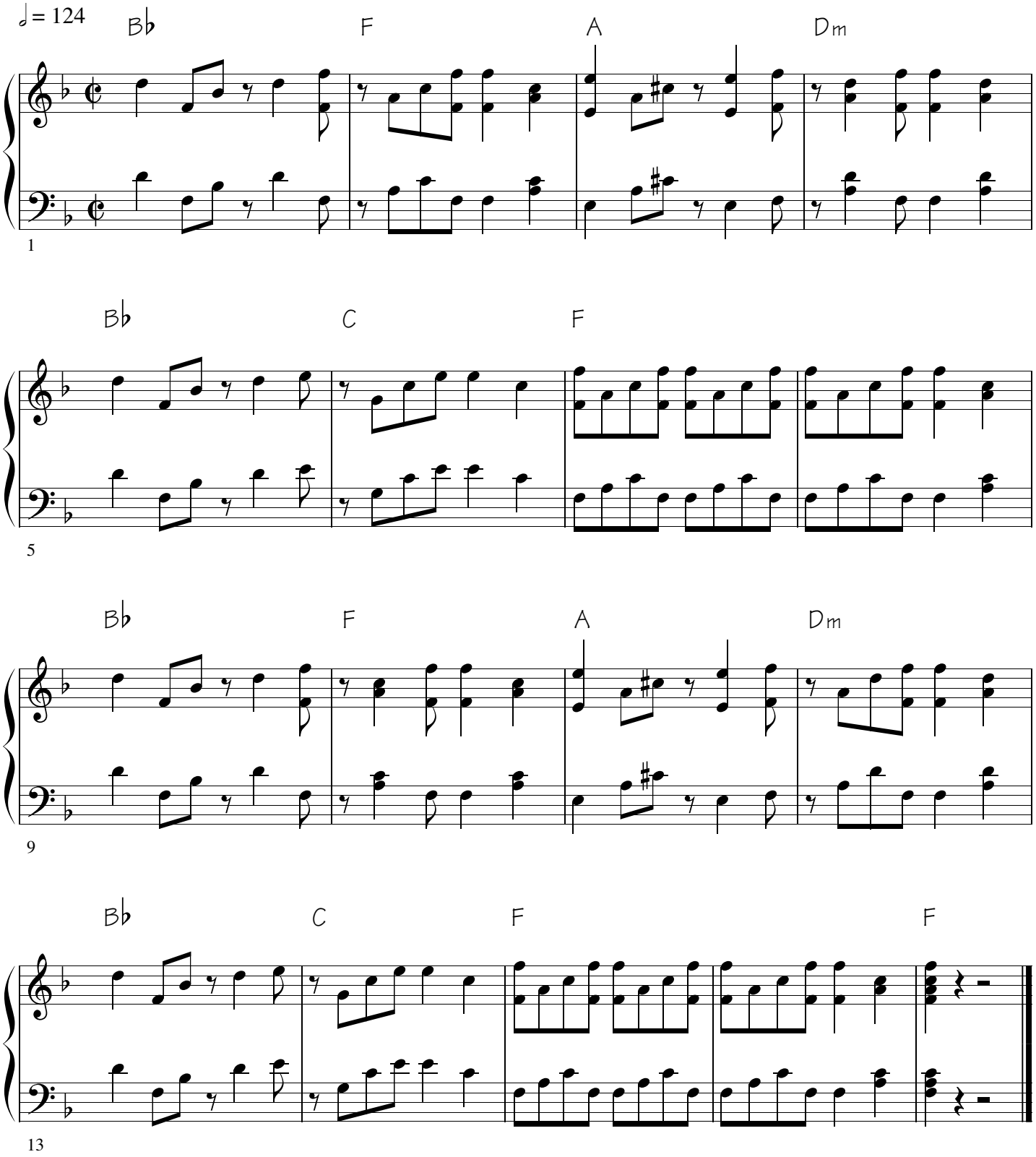


Latin Riff 34

Merengue

CD Tracks # 67 & 68

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

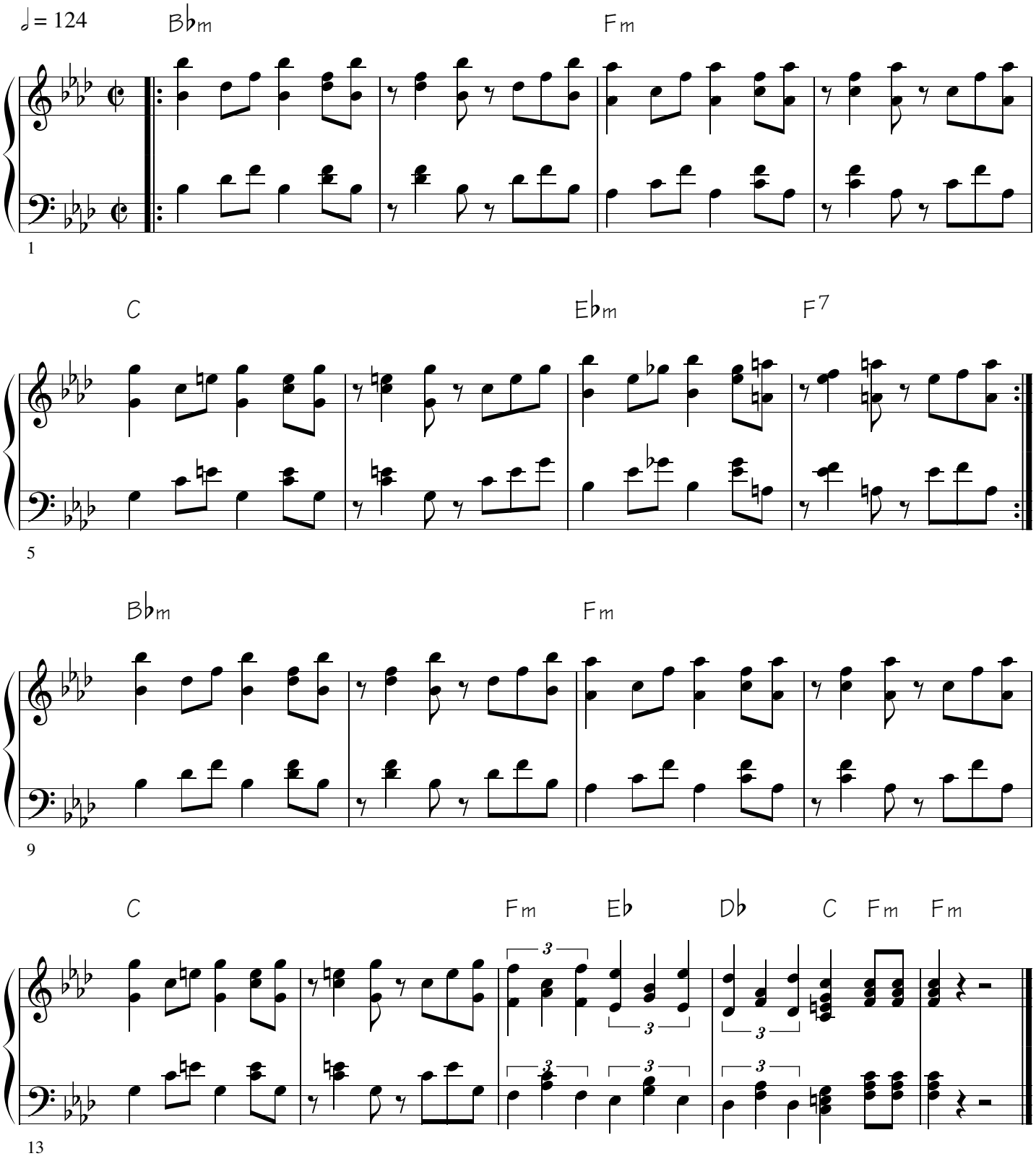


Latin Riff 35

Merengue

CD Tracks # 69 & 70

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

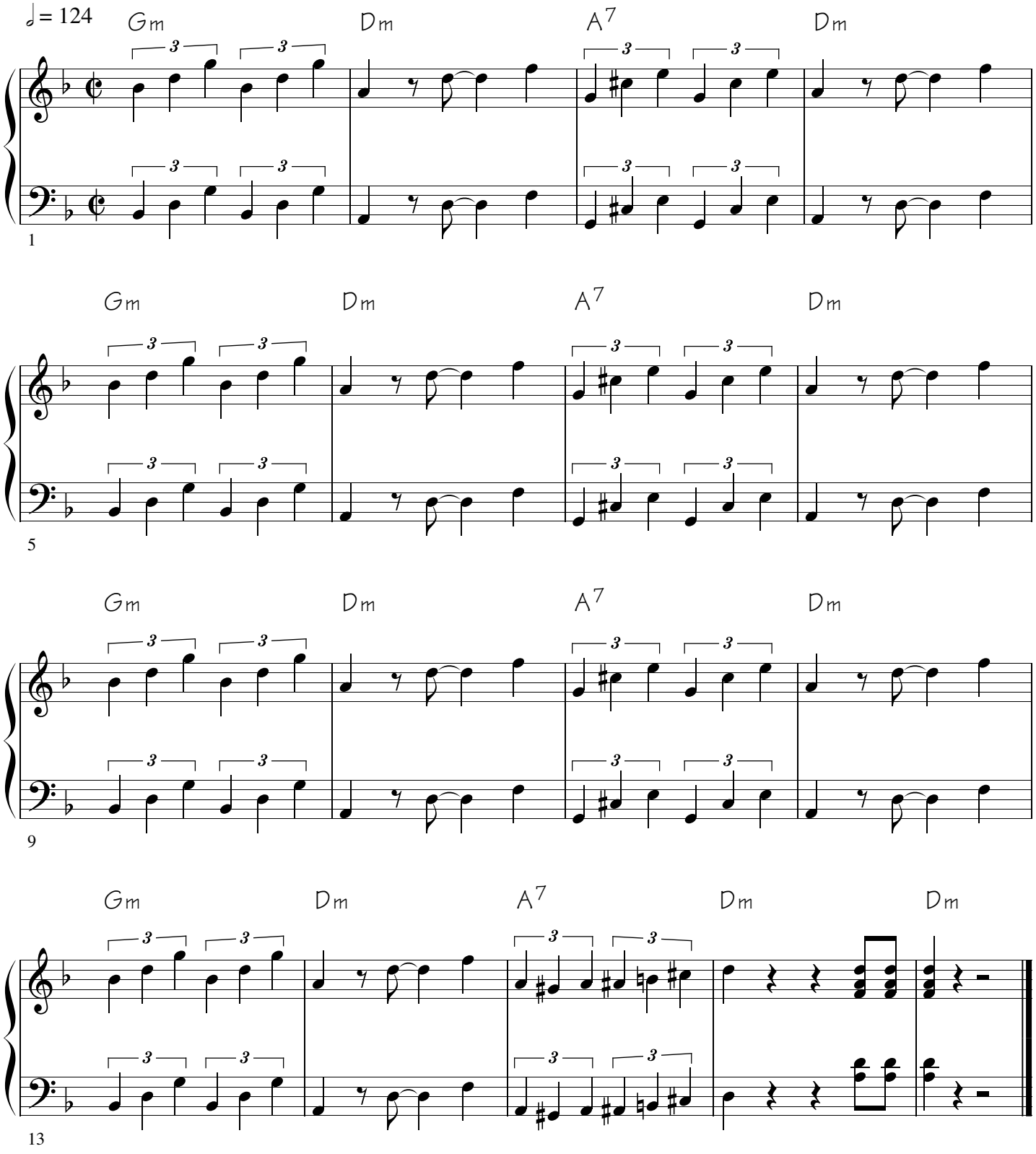


Latin Riff 36

Merengue

CD Tracks # 71 & 72

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

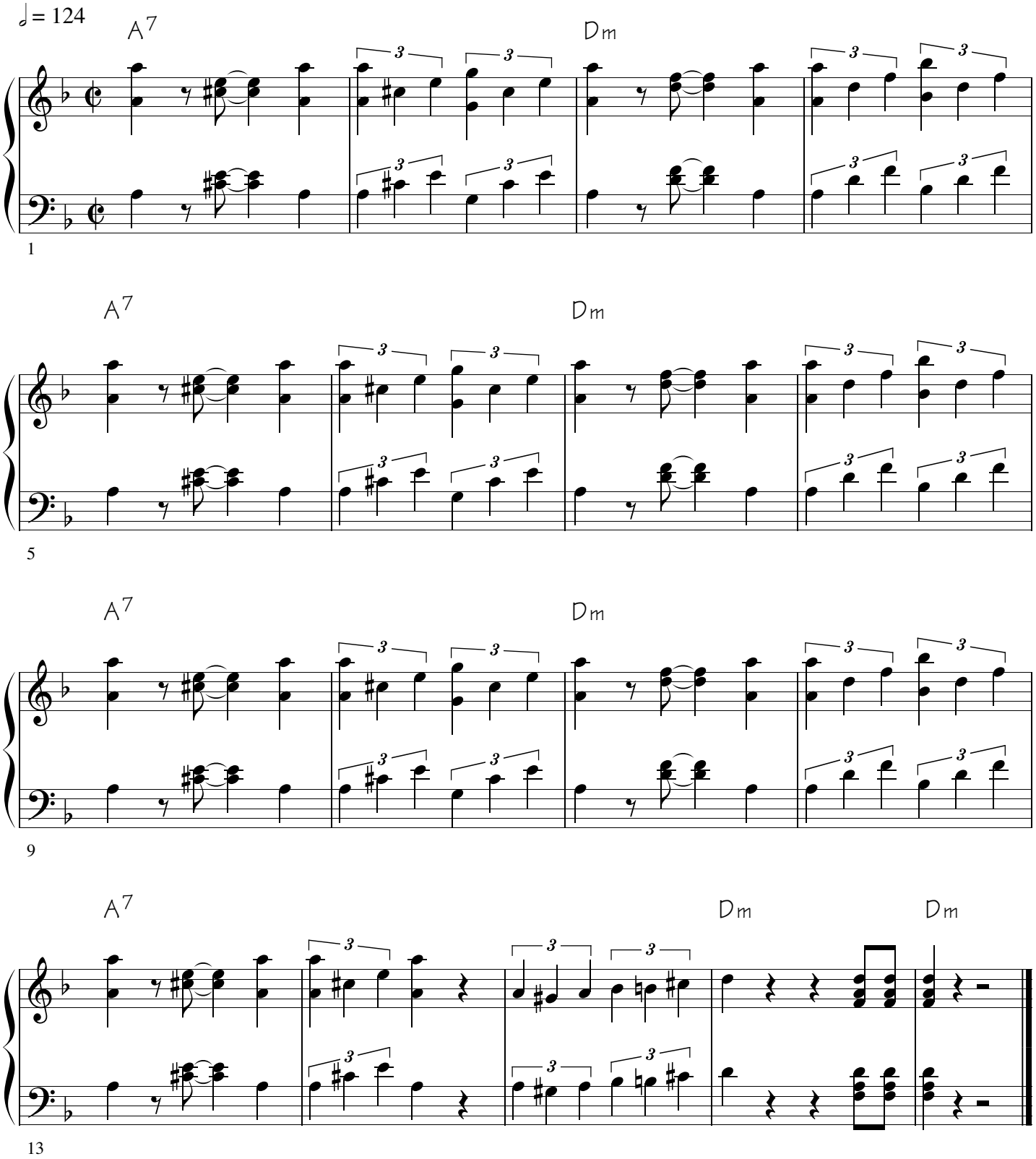


Latin Riff 37

Merengue

CD Tracks # 73 & 74

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

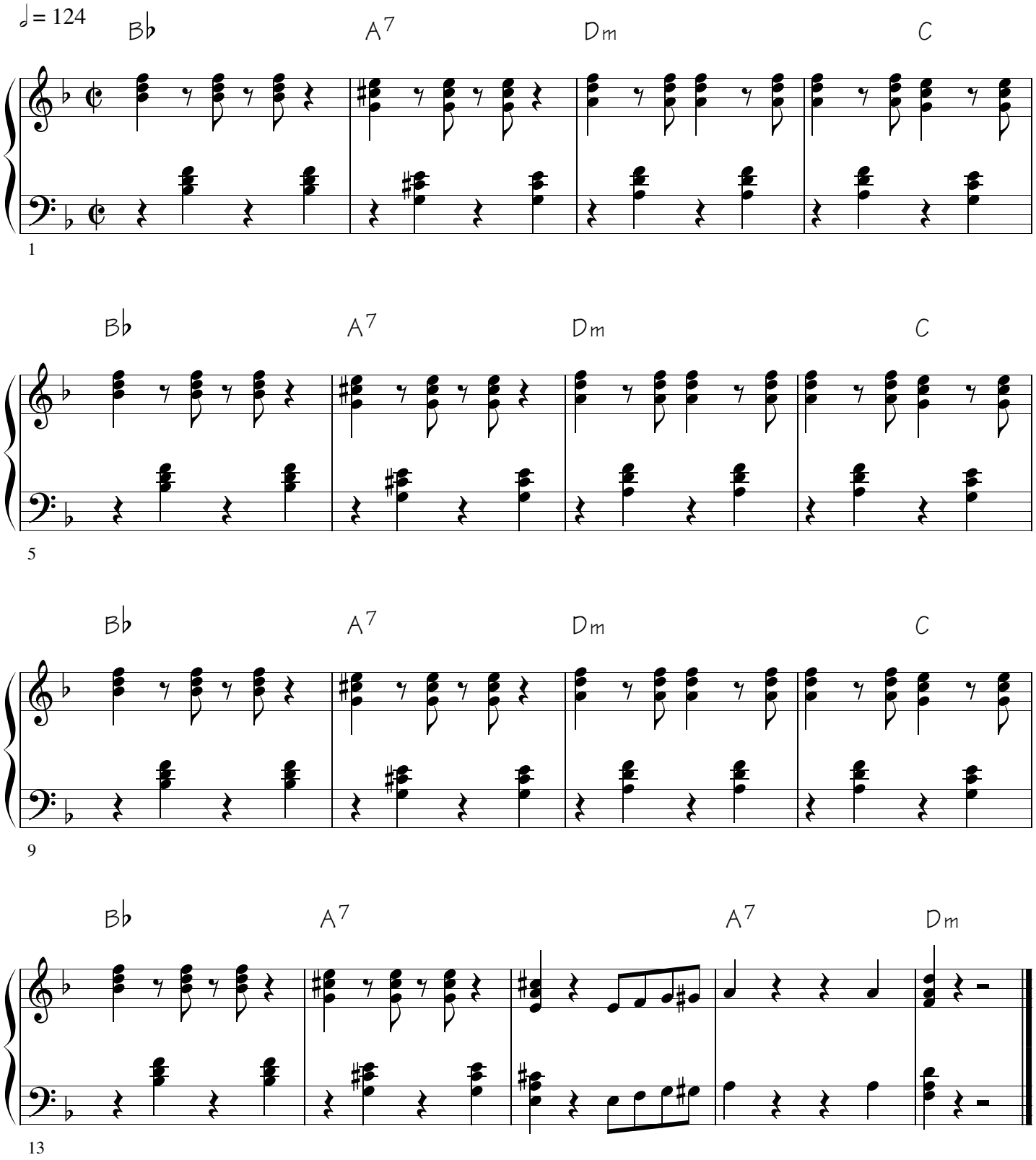


Latin Riff 38

Merengue

CD Tracks # 75 & 76

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

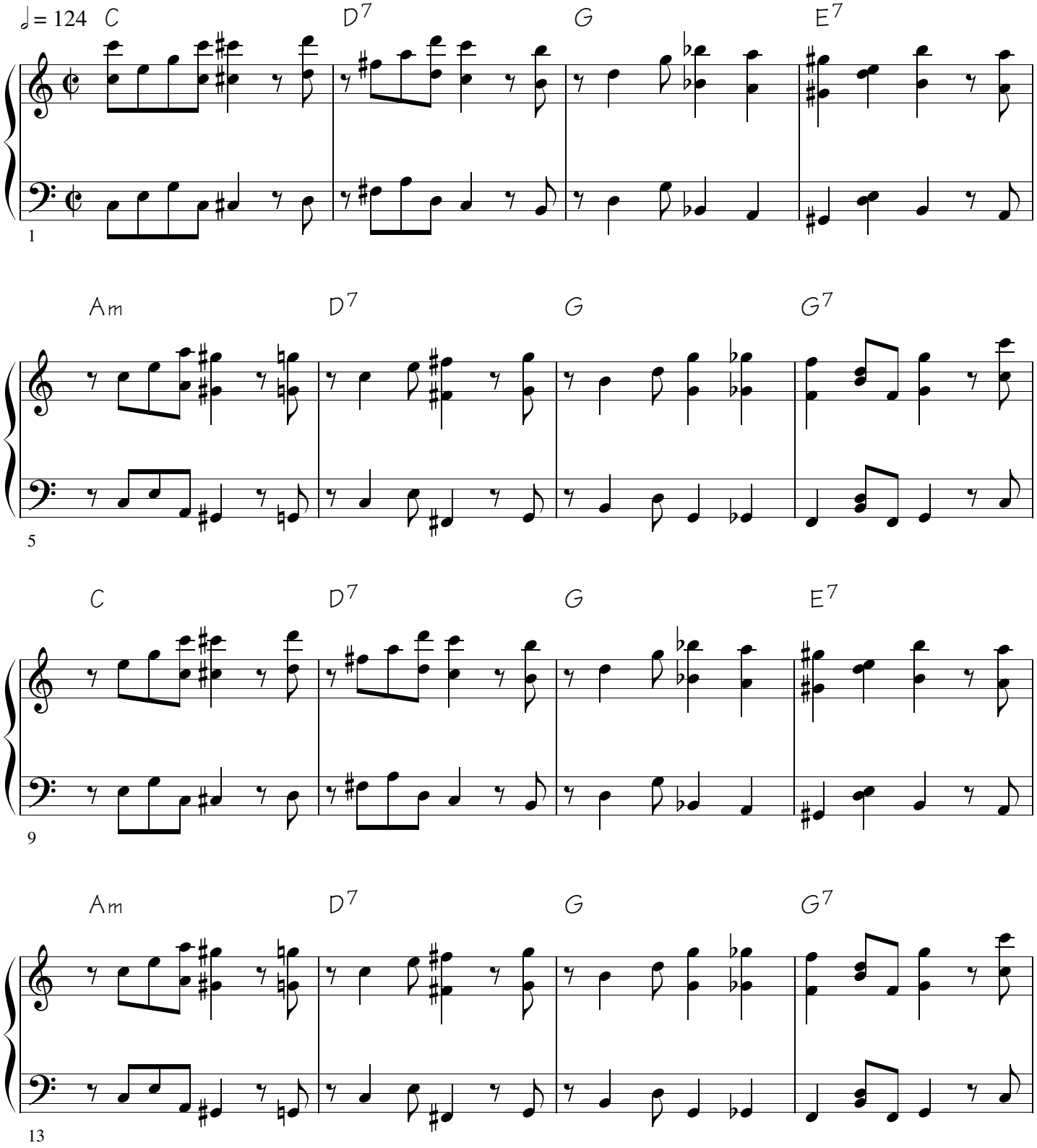


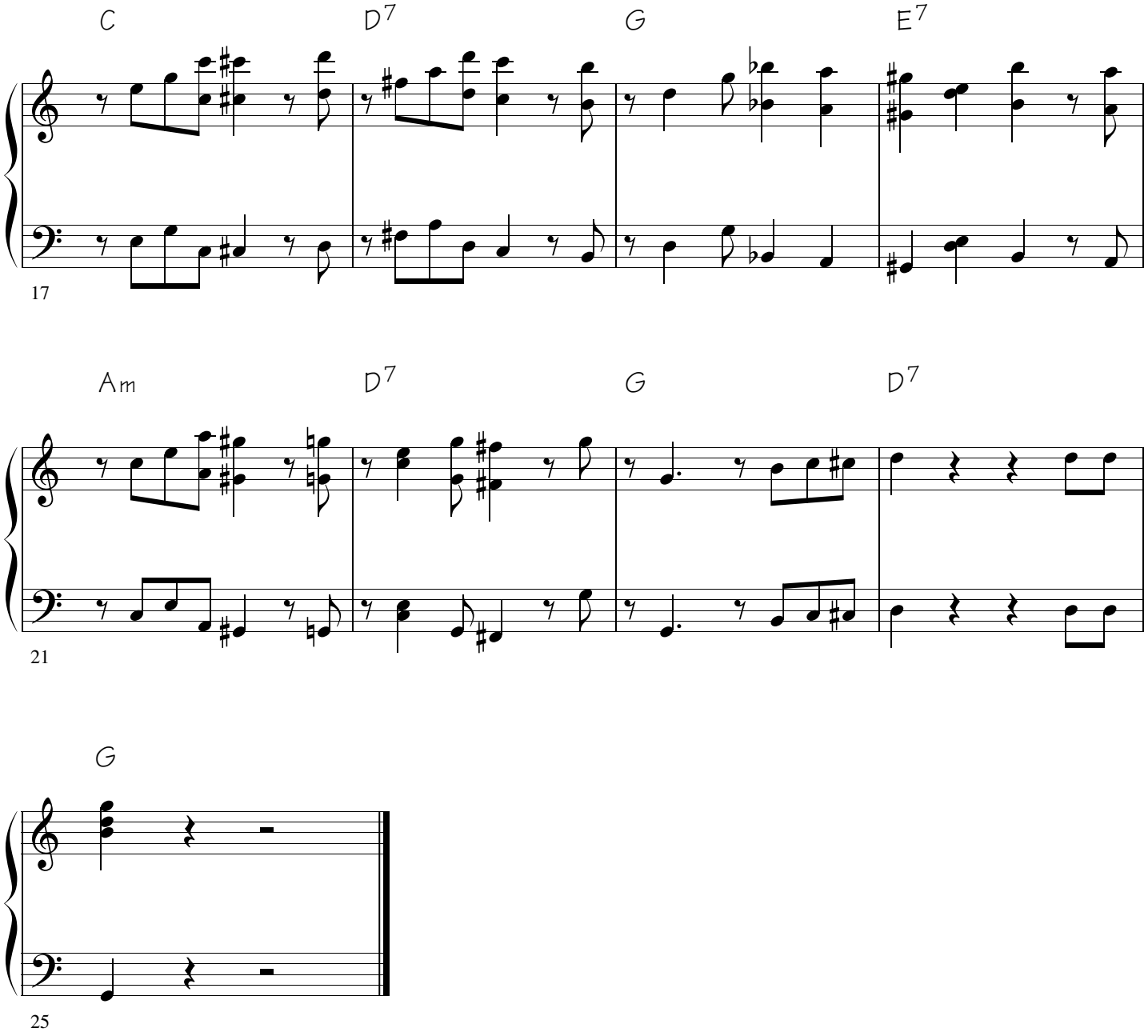
Latin Riff 39

CD Tracks # 77 & 78

Merengue

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon



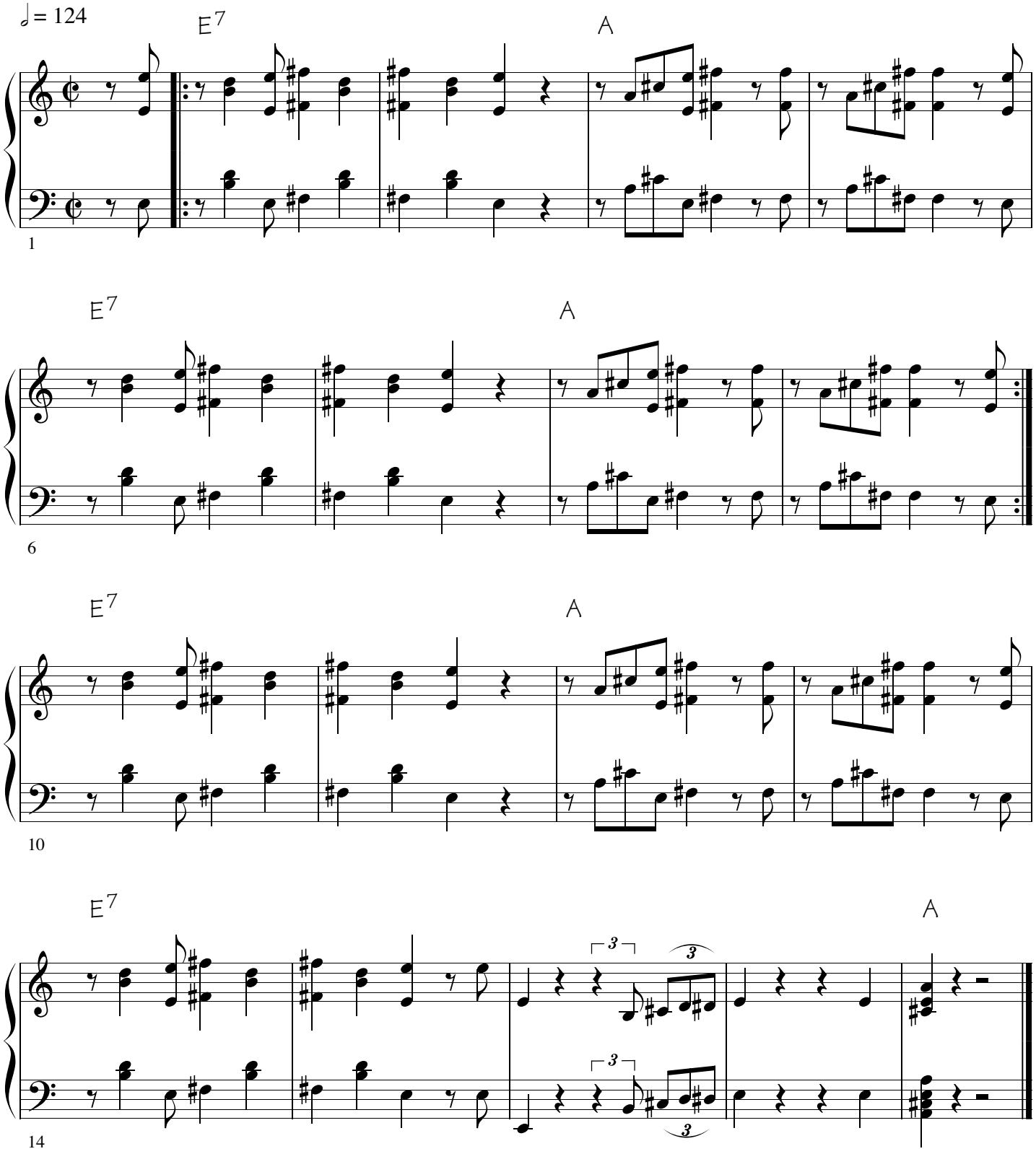

C
D7
G
E7
17
Am
D7
G
D7
21
G
25

Latin Riff 40

Merengue

CD Tracks # 79 & 80

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon



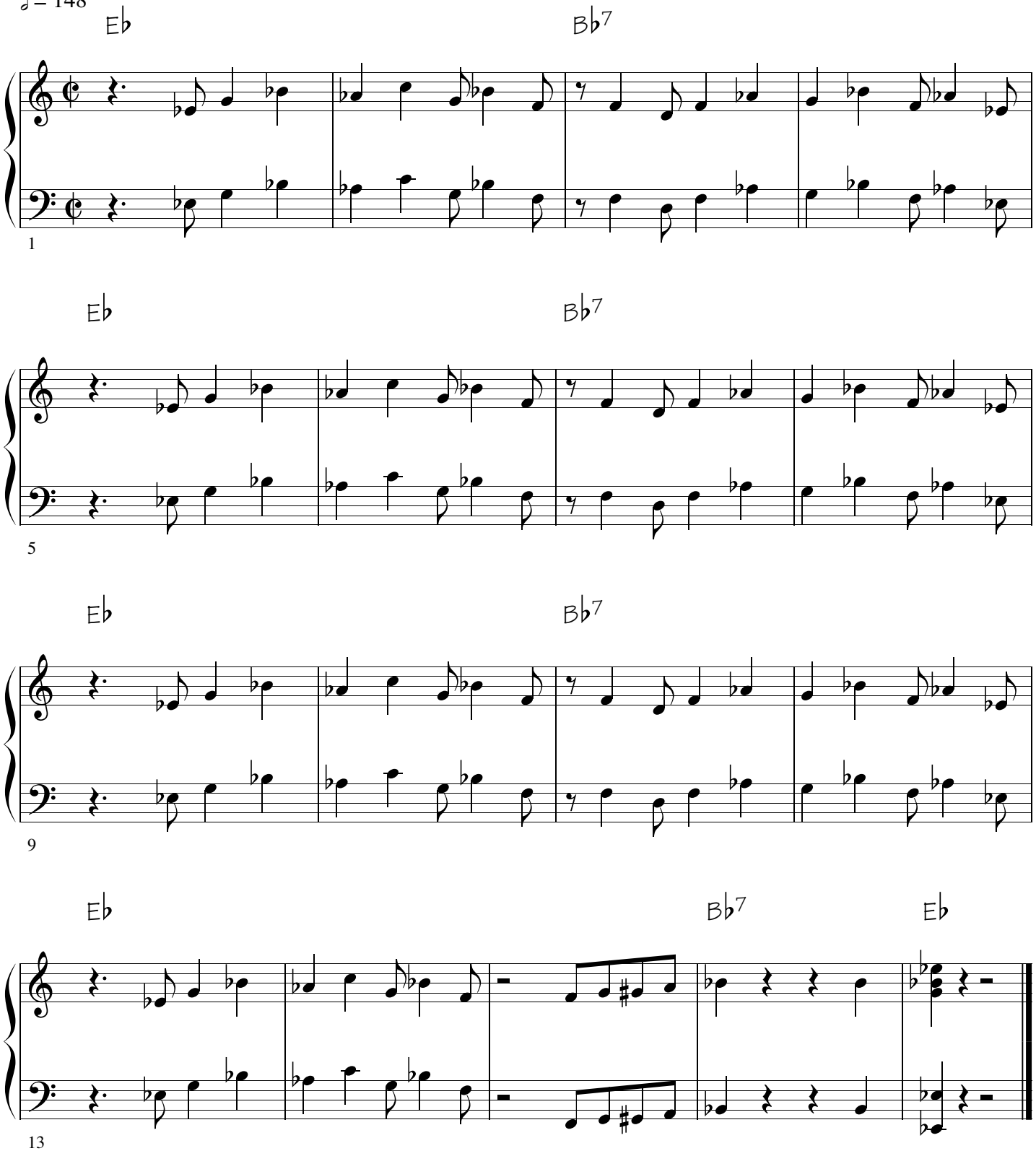
Latin Riff 41

Merengue

CD Tracks # 81 & 82

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

♩= 148

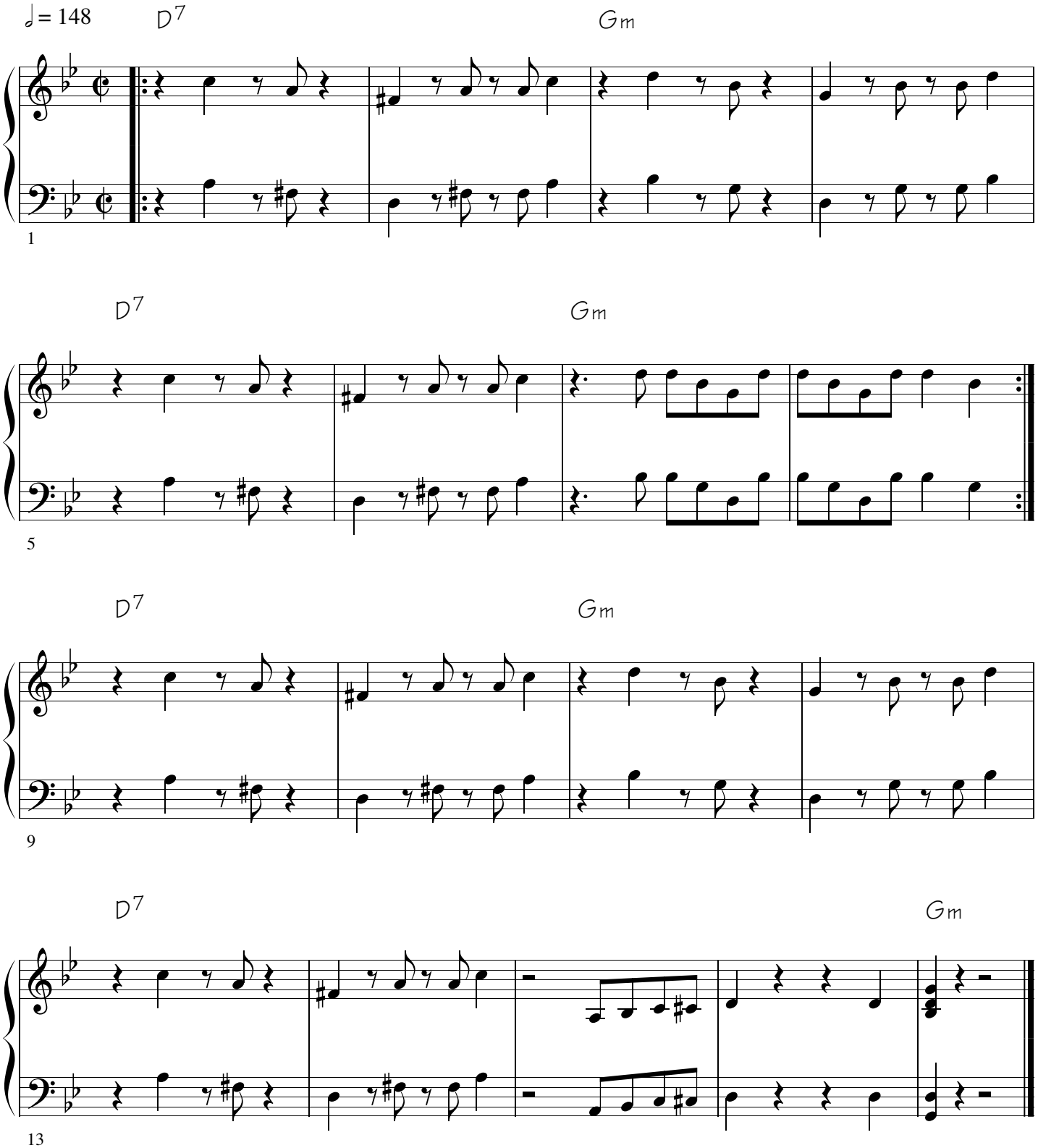


Latin Riff 42

Merengue

CD Tracks # 83 & 84

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

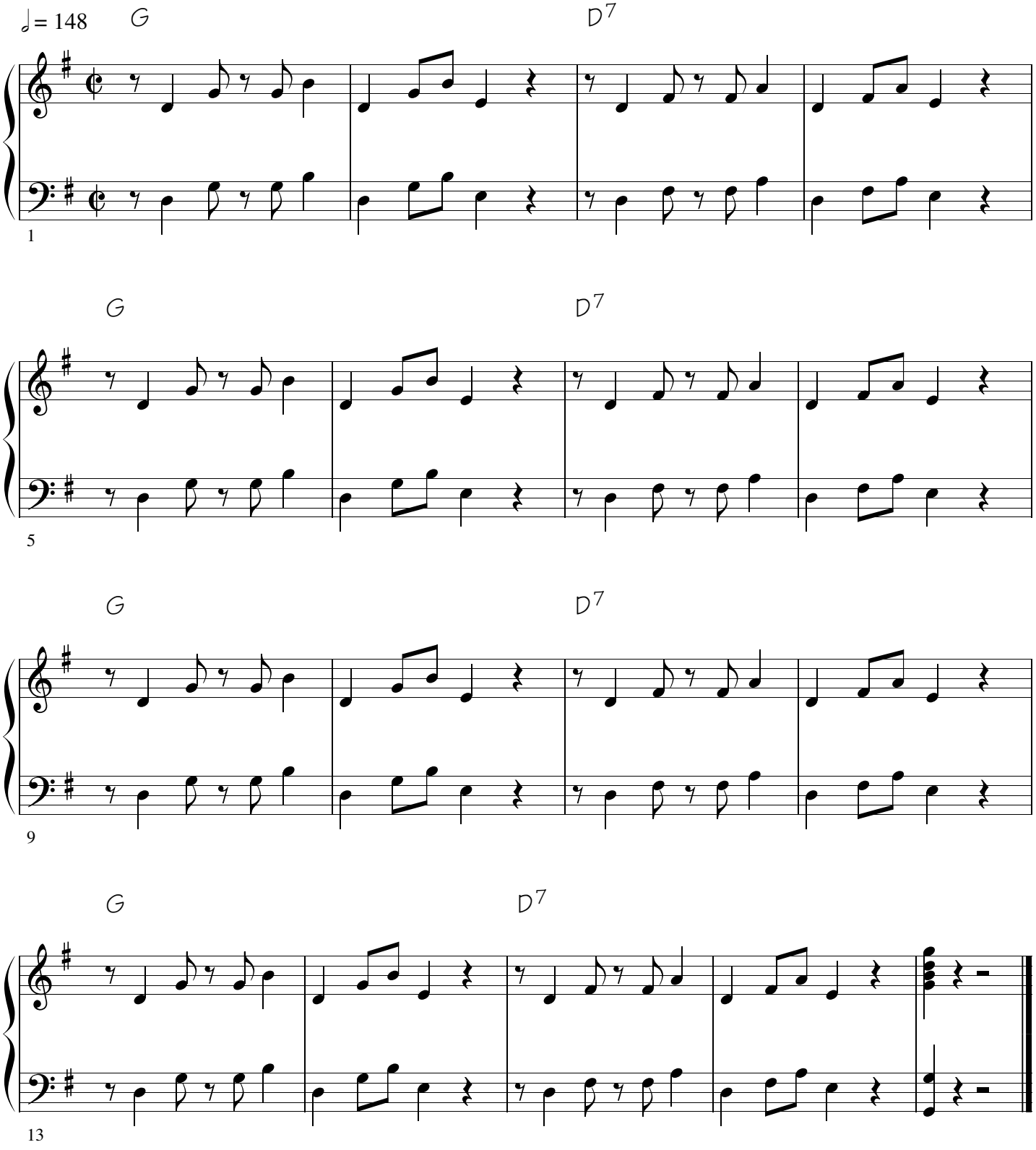


Latin Riff 43

Merengue

CD Tracks # 85 & 86

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

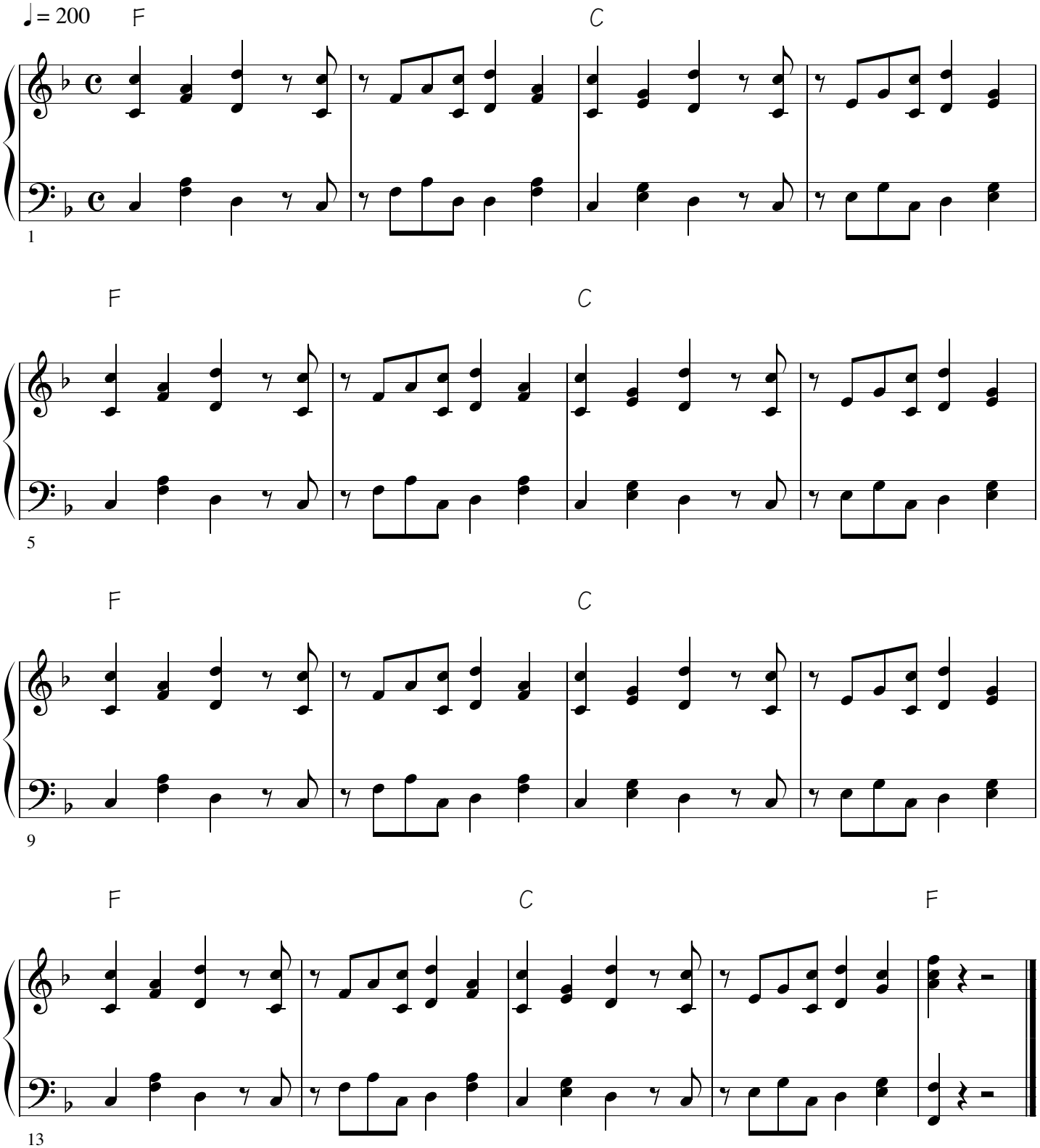


Latin Riff 44

Cumbia

CD Tracks # 87 & 88

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

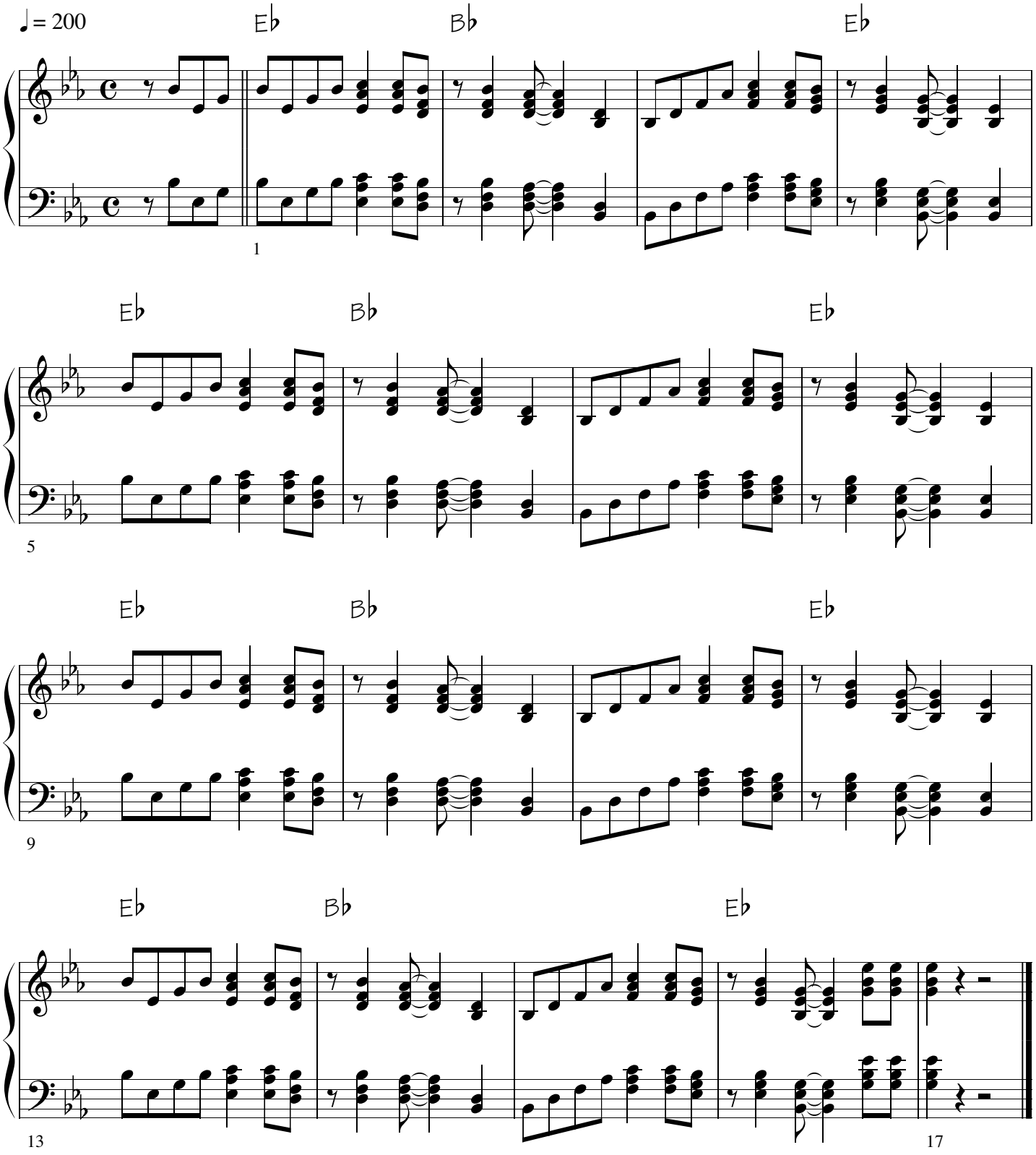


Latin Riff 45

CD Tracks # 89 & 90

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

Cumbia

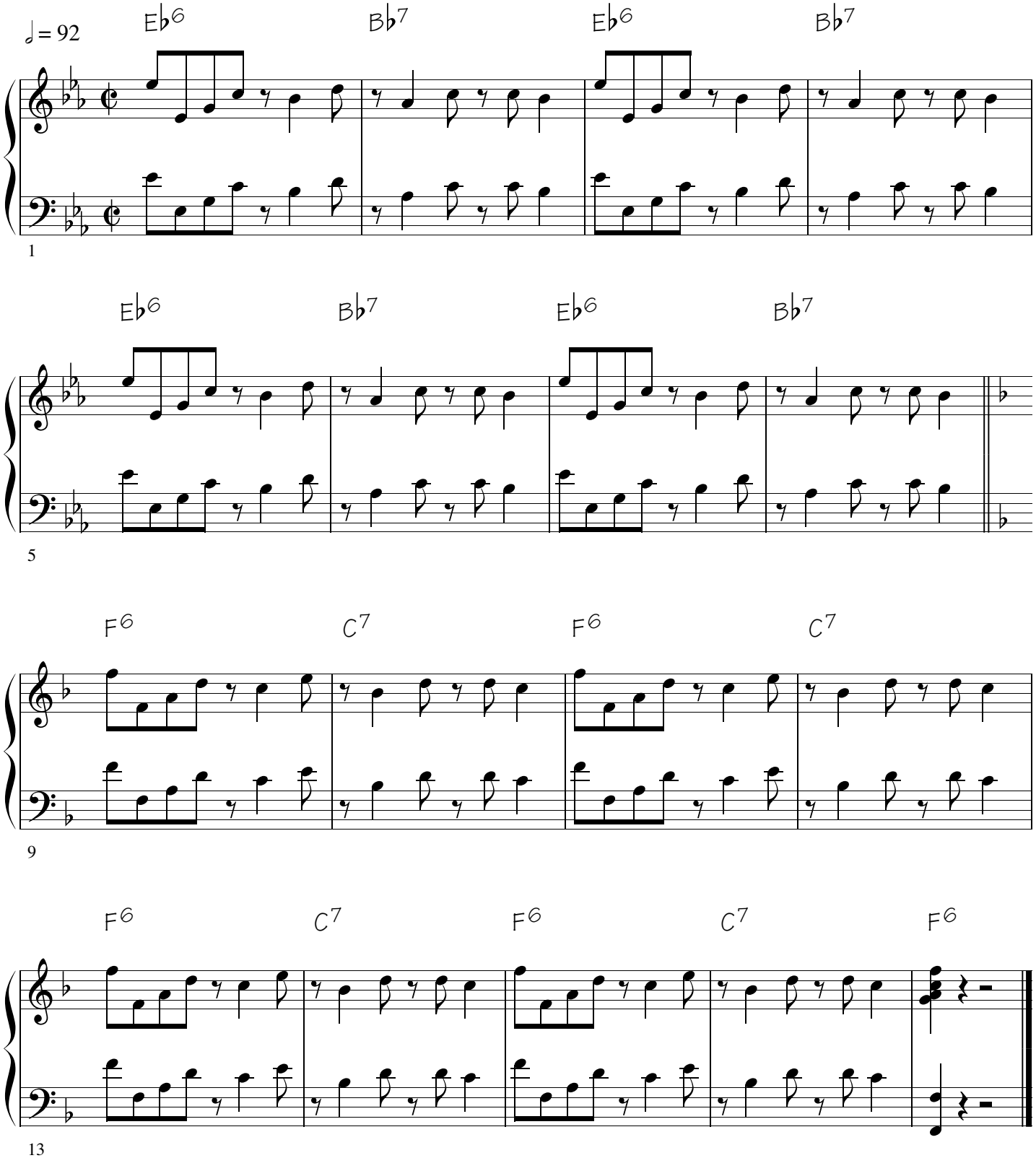


Latin Riff 46

CD Tracks # 91 & 92

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

Calypso

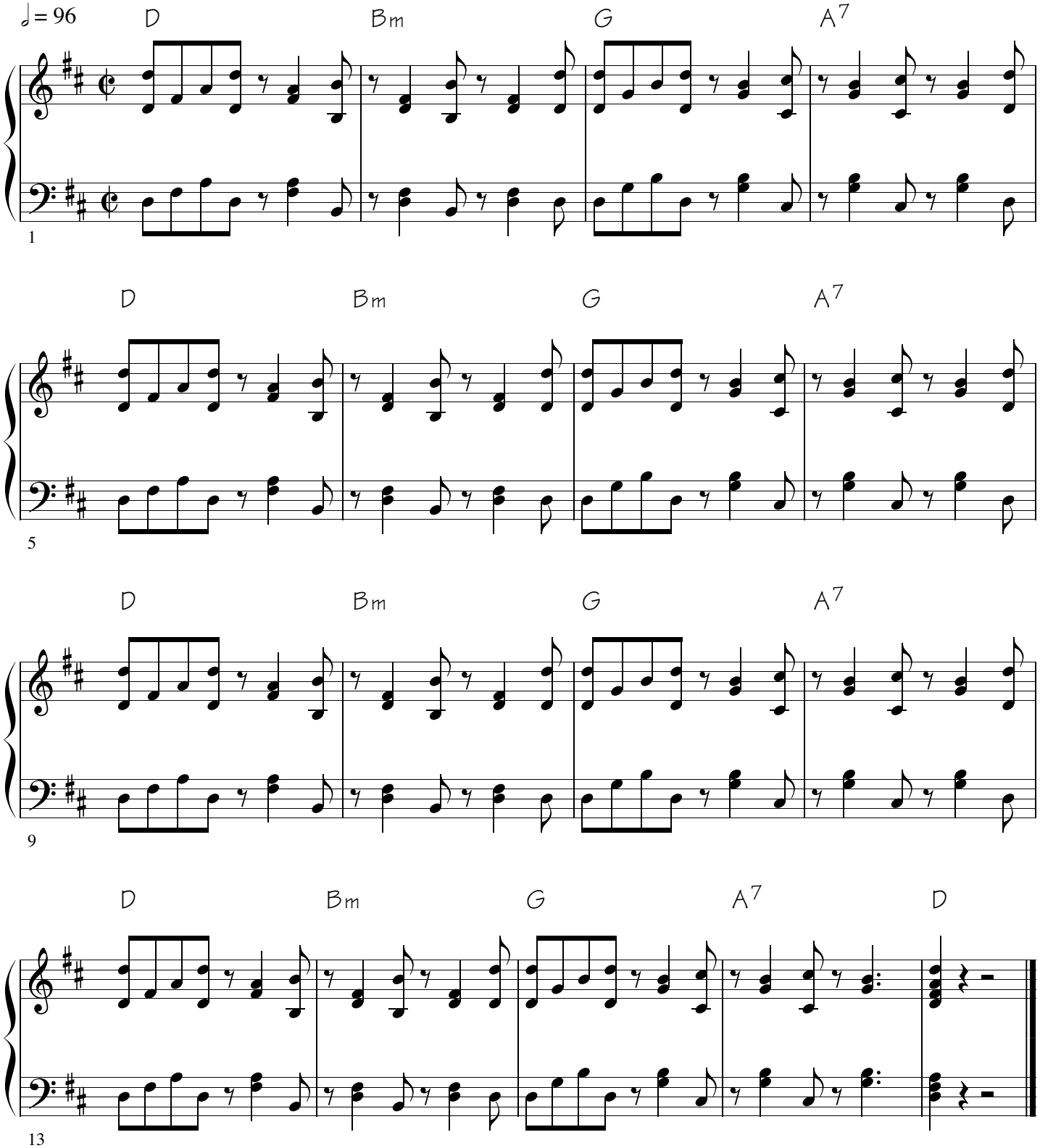


Latin Riff 47

CD Tracks # 93 & 94

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

Calypso

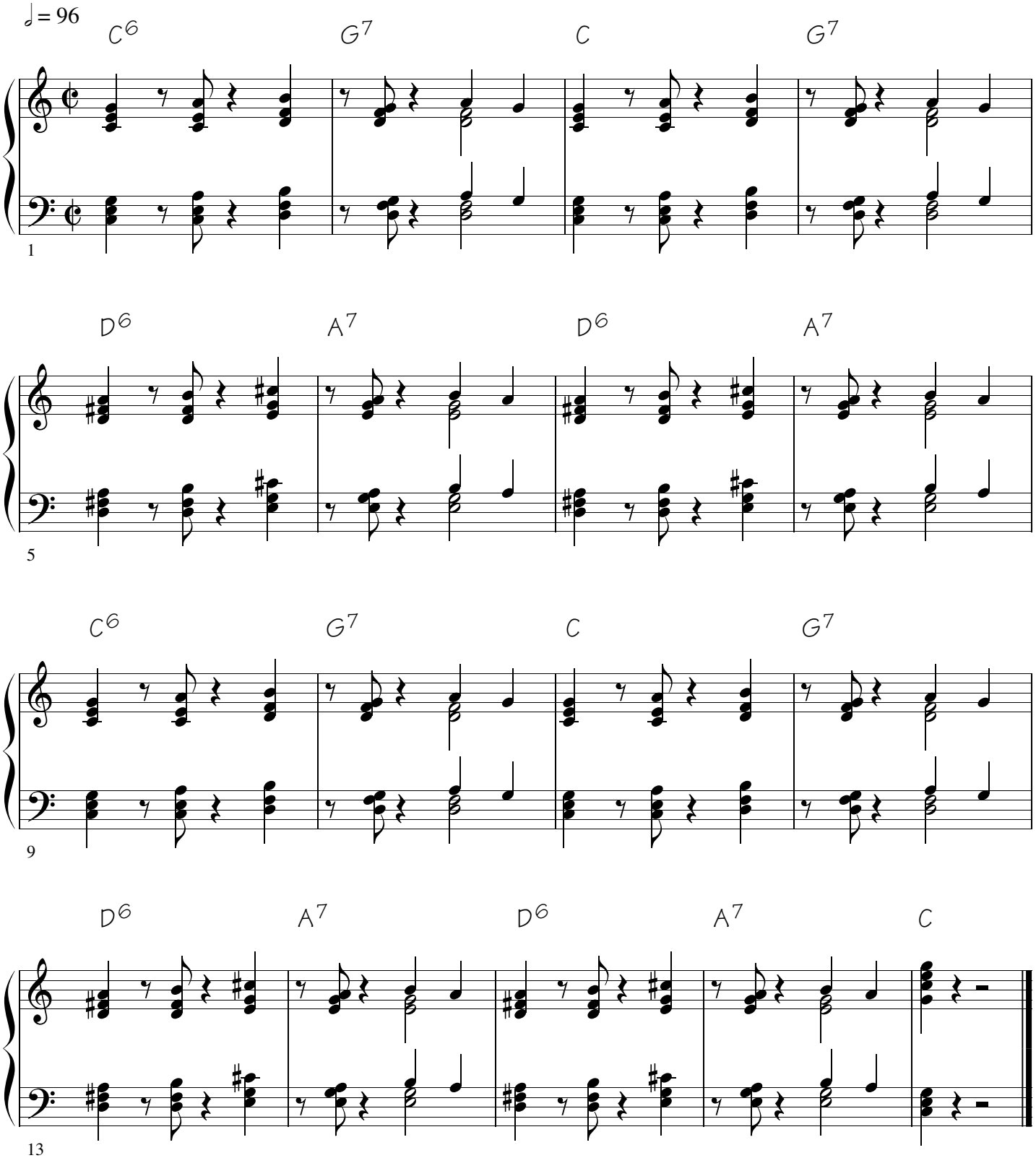


Latin Riff 48

Calypso

CD Tracks # 95 & 96

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

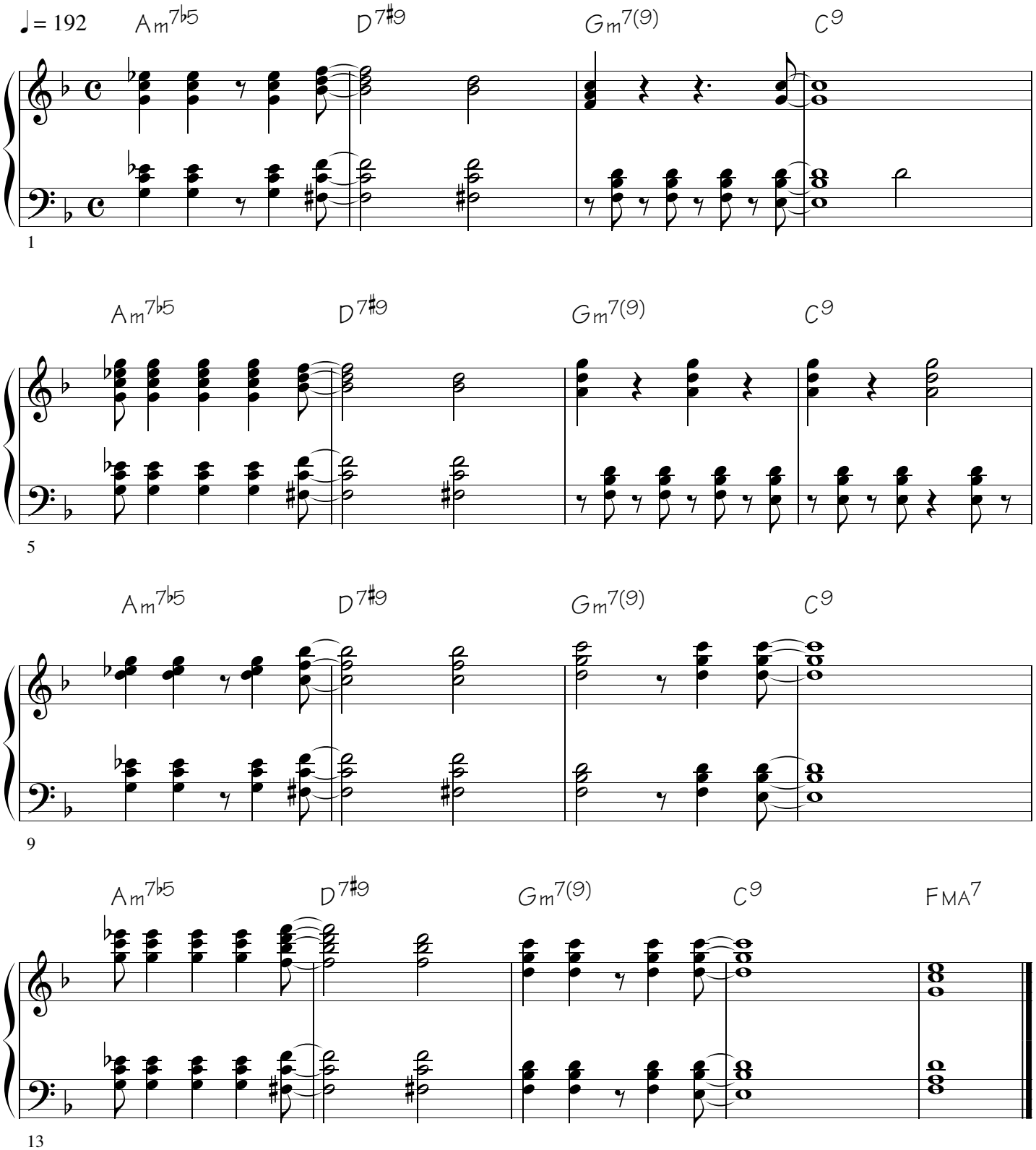


Latin Riff 49

Samba Cruzado

CD Tracks # 97 & 98

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

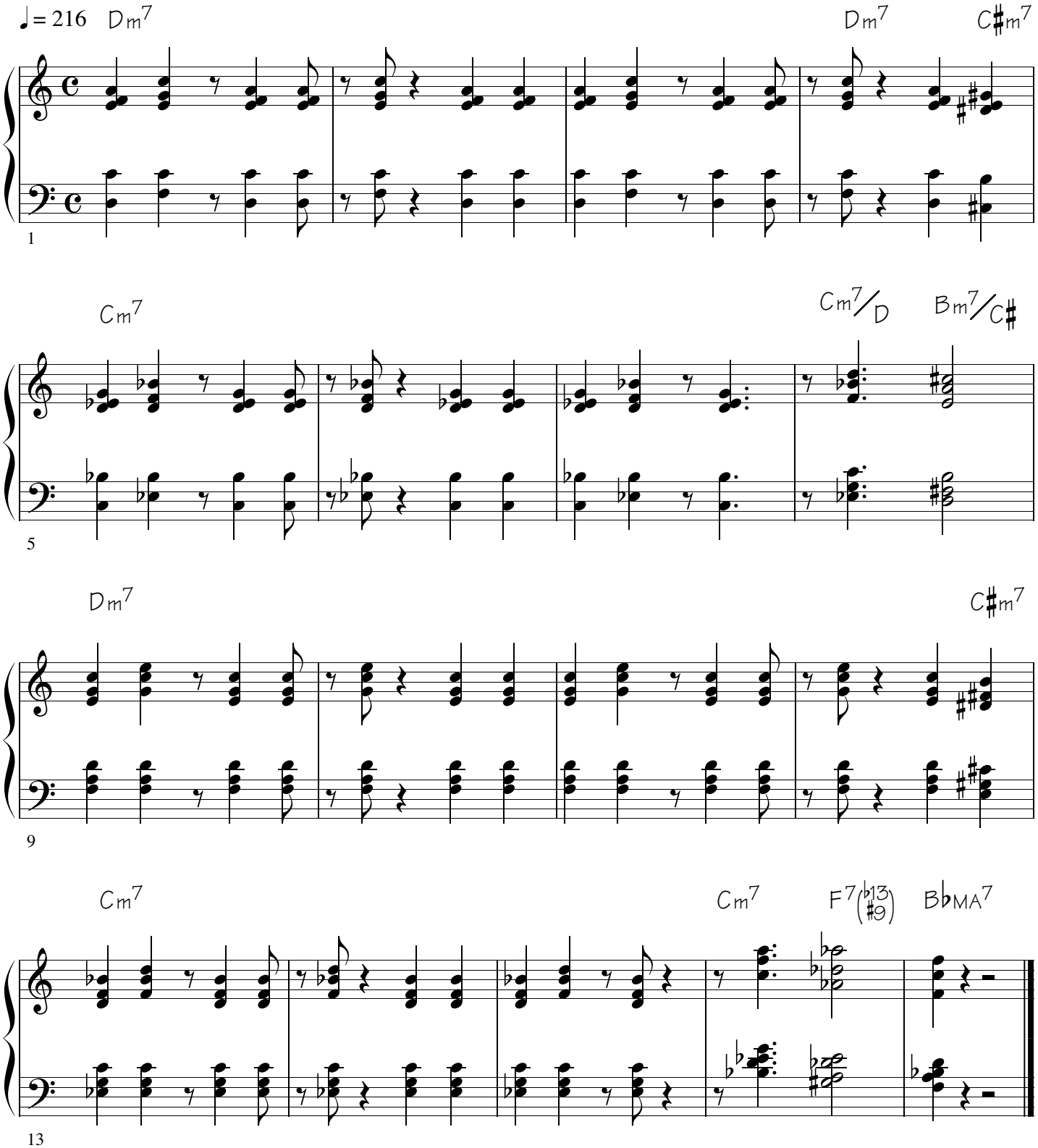


Latin Riff 50

CD Tracks # 99

Arranged by: Carlos Campos and Andrew Gordon

Partido Alto



Suggested Listening

Salsa:
Eddie Palmieri, Sonora Ponceña, Ray Barretto, Ruben Blades, Willie Colón, Celia Cruz, El Gran Combo, Andy Montañez, Conjunto Libre, Hector Lavoe, Luis Perico Ortiz, Willie Rosario, Fania All Stars, etc.

Mambo:
Tito Puente, Machito, Tito Rodriguez, Perez Prado, Beny Moré, Mario Bauza, Noro Morales, Chico O' Farrill, Miguelito Valdes, etc.

Songo:
Los Van Van, Batacumbele, Changuito, Grupo Afro Cuba, Iraquere, etc.

Cha Cha:
Orquesta Aragón, Conjunto Casino, Israel "Cachao" Lopez, Joe Cuba, Enrique Jorrin, Xavier Cugat, Babarito Diez, Richard Egües, Belisario Lopez, Beny Moré, Perez Prado, Orquesta Riverside, Tito Rodriguez, etc.

Son:
Miguel Matamoros, Sexteto Nacional, Sexteto Habanero, Arsenio Rodriguez, Ignacio Piñeiro, Trio Matamoros, Adalberto Alvarez y Su Son, etc.

Bomba:
Atabal, Ballet Folklorico Hermanos Ayala, Modesto Cepeda, William Cepeda, Cortijo y su Combo, etc.

Merengue:
Damiron, Luis Kalaff, Angel Viloria, Joseito Mateo, Juan Luis Guerra, Fernando Villalona, Oro Negro, Sergio Vargas, Jossie Esteban, Los Hermanos Rosario, Caña Brava, Bonny Cepeda, Cocoband, Wilfrido Vargas, Milly y los Vecinos, Johnny Ventura, Zona Roja, etc.

Cumbia:
Aníbal Velásquez, Armando Hernández, Alfredo Gutiérrez, Alfredo de Jesús Gutiérrez Vital, La Sonora Dinamita, Lisandro Meza, Los Corraleros de Majagual, Adolfo Pacheco, Los Cumbiamberos de Pacheco, etc.

Calypso:
Sparrow, The Jolly Boys, George Symonette, Roaring Lion, Keskidee Trio, Arrow, Lord Kitchner, Calypso Rose, Trnidad Bill, Shadow, etc.

Samba:
Noel Rosa, Wilson Batista, Sinho, Cartola, Beth Carvalho, Jamelao, Paulinho da Viola, Moreira da Silva, Ary Barroso, Dorival Caymmi, Nelson Cavaquinho, Clara Nunes, João Nogueira, etc.

Partido Alto:
Azymuth "Outubro", Airto Moreira, etc.

Ultimate Latin Riffs for Piano/Keyboards is a book written by the combined talents of internationally renowned authors/educators Carlos Campos and Andrew D. Gordon. This book provides an extensive study into the various piano/keyboard Latin styles including: ***Salsa, Mambo, Merengue, Calypso, Cha Cha*** etc.

These exciting 50 examples will have you spending many enjoyable hours learning the intricacies of Latin piano/keyboard playing. The book is transcribed note for note from the superbly recorded audio CD. Each example is recorded twice, the first version with piano, bass and drums and the second version with just bass and drums so that the pianist/keyboardist can practice along with the rhythm section.

MIDI files for all the examples are available separately from ADG Productions.

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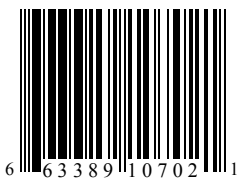
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