# *Creative Harp*

## *Modes for Moods*

*and their use in beginning improvisation*

*The following pages accompany the Introduction*
*CREATIVE HARPING - Modes for Moods - #1 Intro to the Modes*

*There are 9 additional lessons in this series.*

*#2 Dorian Mode*
*#3 Aeolian Mode*
*#4 Mixolydian Mode*
*#5 Locrian Mode*
*#6 Ionian Mode*
*#7 "Angel" Mode (pentatonic)*
*#8 Middle Eastern Mode*
*#9 The tunings and improvisations for the Chinese 5 Elements*
*#10 Celtic Circle of Music and Modulating from Mode to Mode*

*We suggest that you assemble this Book with dividers for the sequential lessons that are to follow. When you order videos/dvds in the future, you will be given a code to download them off the internet (or you may contact us if you are unable to do so. We aim to conserve on trees - paper and s/h costs to you.*

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# MODES

## and Their Use in Improvisation for the Beginner

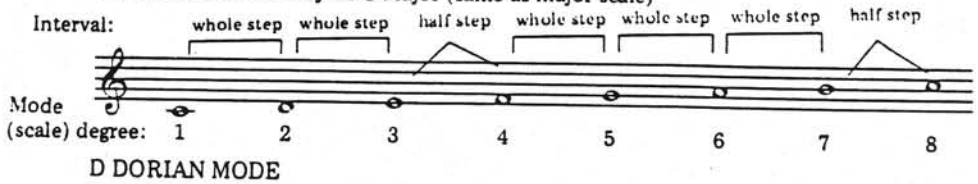
**Harp or Piano**

**WHY THIS BOOK?** This workbook is intended to introduce you to the modes and how to use them in a basic way. For further indepth study, any good music store should be able to provide you with Books on Modes. This book will give you suggested chords progressions for the key of C, meaning that if your harp is tuned in C, you can access the chord progressions for the 7 modes. There is also a transposition chart for each mode for the other keys. Examples of each mode are given.

**WHAT ARE MODES?** Modes are scales. (We refer to major mode, minor mode, pentatonic mode, whole tone mode, etc.) Modes refer to scales once used as the basis for medieval church music. It is these *diatonic church modes* that the contemporary musicians utilize. The principal diatonic modes employed are listed indicating the whole-step and half-step relationships between tones.

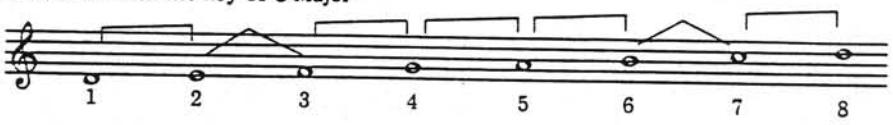
C IONIAN MODE

Ionian Mode in the key of C Major (same as major scale)



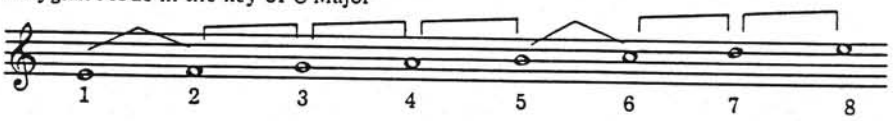

D DORIAN MODE

Dorian Mode in the key of C Major



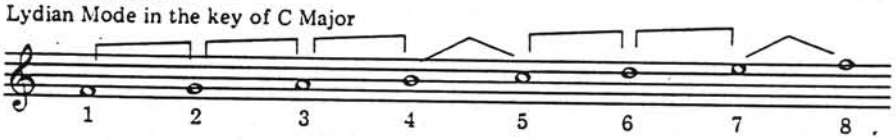

E PHRYGIAN MODE

Phrygian Mode in the key of C Major



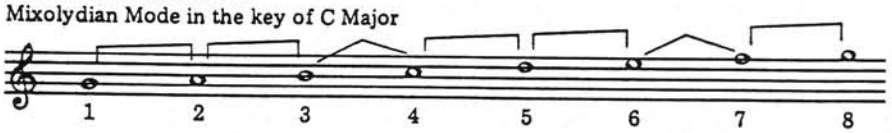

F LYDIAN MODE

Lydian Mode in the key of C Major



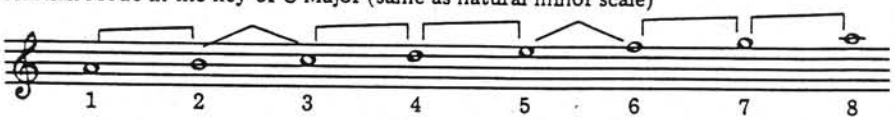

G MIXOLYDIAN MODE

Mixolydian Mode in the key of C Major



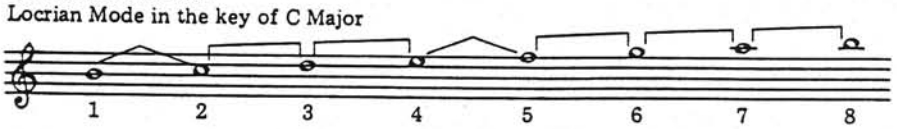

A AEOLIAN MODE

Aeolian Mode in the key of C Major (same as natural minor scale)




B LOCRIAN MODE

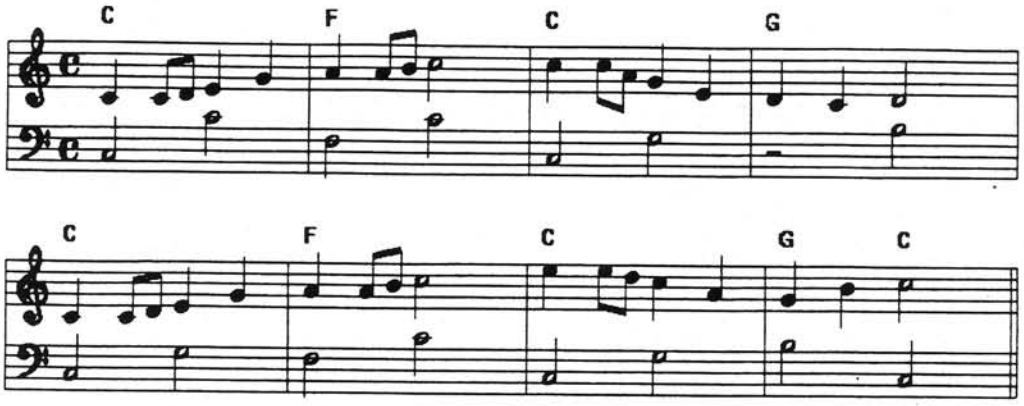
Locrian Mode in the key of C Major



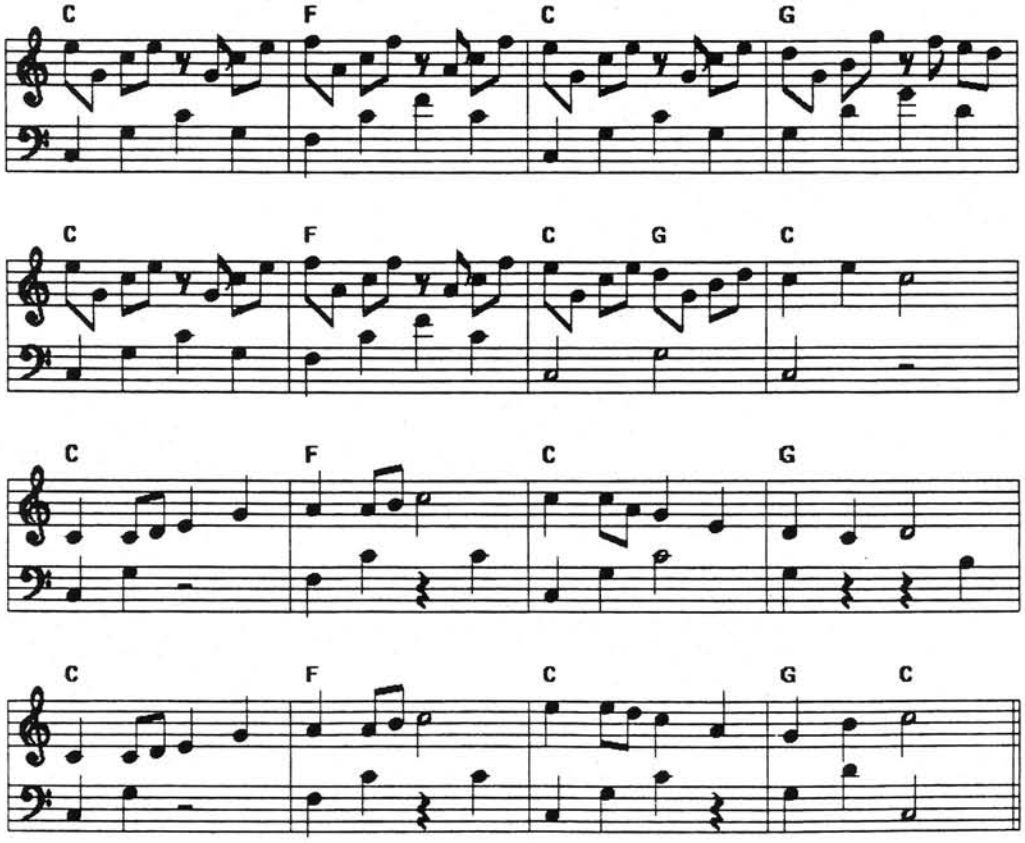
## IONIAN MODE

The Ionian Mode uses the same notes, and therefore the same key signature, as the major scale. The Ionian Mode in the key of C, begins on C and ends on C.

For improvisational purposes, the three chords C, F, and G are pretty basic.
Here is a piece in the Ionian mode with an improvisational pattern following.




Here is an improvisation pattern based on the C, F, and G chord with the melody re-entering.



**DORIAN MODE**

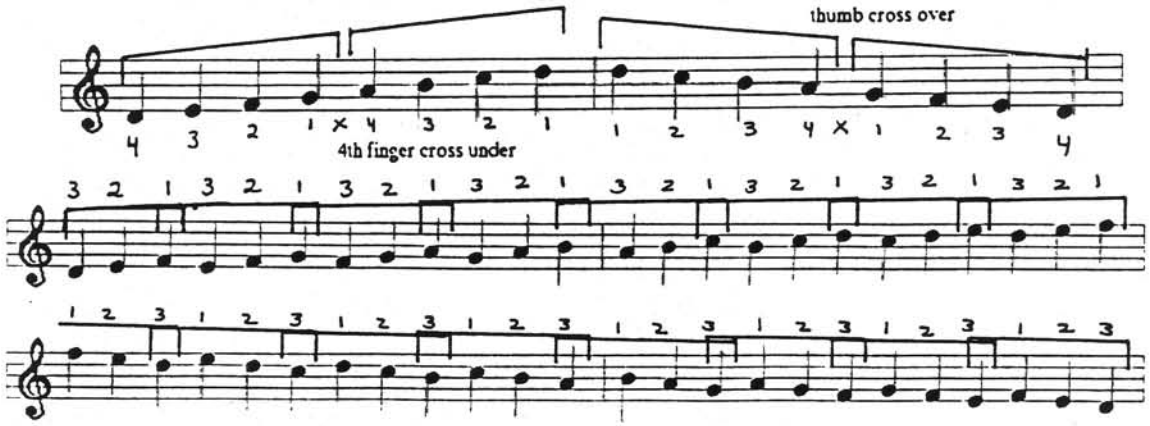
Since we are dealing with the key of C tuning in this book, the Dorian Mode uses the same notes and key signature of the C Major scale from D to D.) The Dorian Mode may also be heard as a natural minor scale with the 6th degree raised one-half step.

For improvisational purposes, play back and forth between the Dm and C chords. You may wish to add F, G and Am chords as a variation. Here are some patterns and a selection in the Dorian mode. I have included the five steps of the STAR PROGRAM. They are Technique, Repertoire, Improvisation, Arranging and Composition. You can apply the same techniques to the remainder of the modes in the this workbook.

# 1. TECHNIQUE/Exercises

For technique, start by practicing the scale in the Dorian mode. Be careful to effectively place the fingers, provide a good reach with the finger for the cross-over and cross-unders and follow through with a firm clean tone. Some tips I urge students to be aware of are:

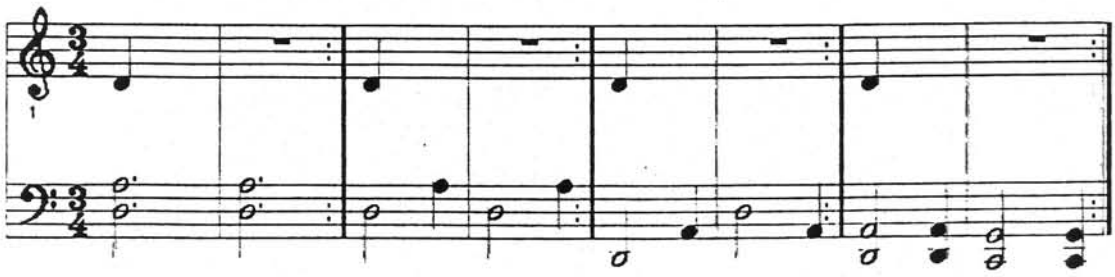
* Keep the air flowing between the thumb and the pointer finger. It should almost resemble and L shape.
* Point the finger to the outer edge of the opposite side of the soundboard.
* Keep the shoulder and elbow relaxed, not too high.




# 2. IMPROVISATION

The reason that I stress improvisation is because this is a place where one can develop strong rhythm and train the brain to focus on one thing while there are other parts going on at the same time. To explain, play a D in the left hand with a 5th above, A. In this lesson we will count in 3/4 time. While playing this chord on the first beat, let the right hand begin a a D just with the 2nd finger is fine and travel anywhere. The trick and secret is not to look at the right hand. Only focus your attention on the left hand chord and keep counting. Once you can improvise this, go on to breaking the chord so that you are playing a half note followed by a quarter. Begin your improvising again with you right hand on D. Try playing 2 or 3 notes together. Below, you will see some improve patterns in the Dorian mode. You may wish to shift down to the C with the G 5th on top for variation. Never look at the right hand though!

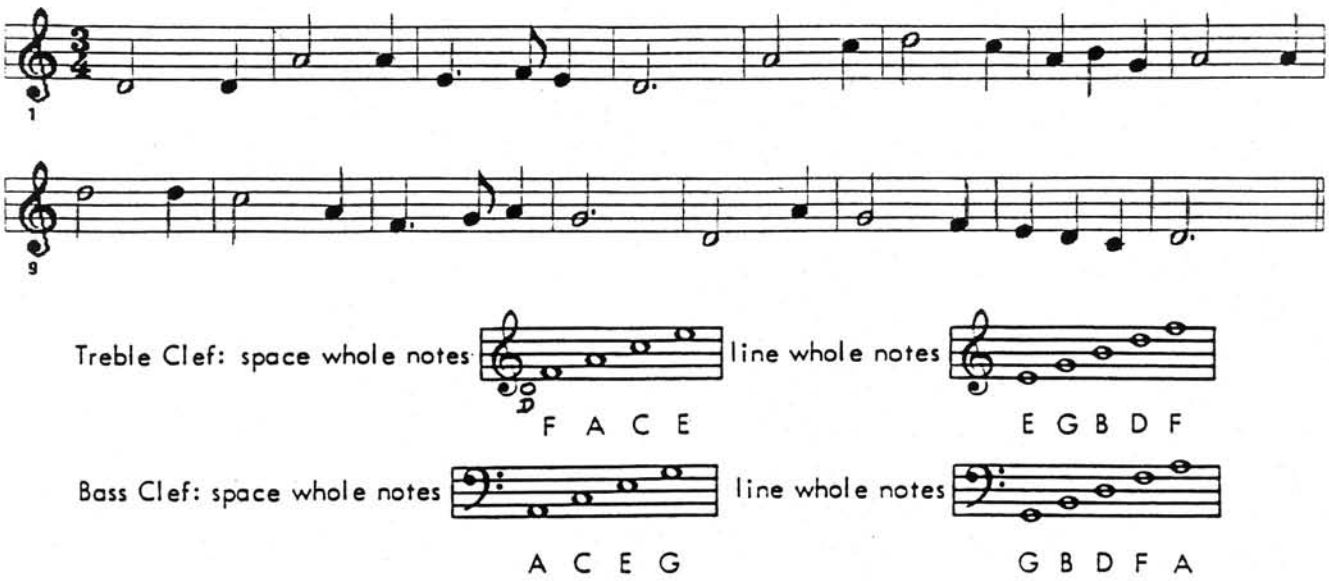
Improvisation patterns in the D Dorian Mode



# 3. NOTE-READING - Repertoire

The selection that I have chosen for the Dorian mode is the beautiful tune **Scarborough Fair.** If you have never read notes before, I have added a chart for you to figure out the notes and for now you may write the letter names under the notes. It will be a good idea for you to get some flash cards from you local music store and drill yourself on these. It's the same process we went through learning multiplication tables in school.

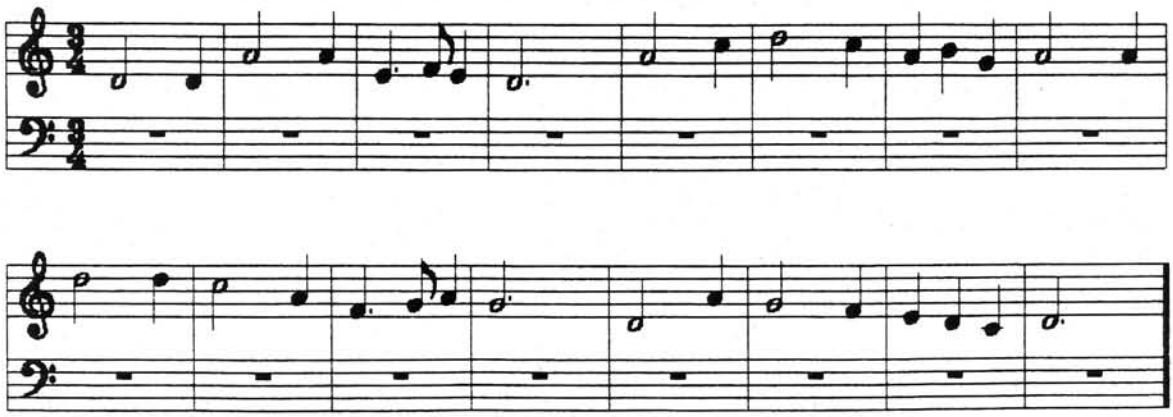
Note-reading will help us build our repertoire so it is full of interesting and diversified melodies. Each player will undoubtedly add their own touch to the melodies through their own arrangements but familiar tunes interspersed. with original compositions keeps the interest of an audience.



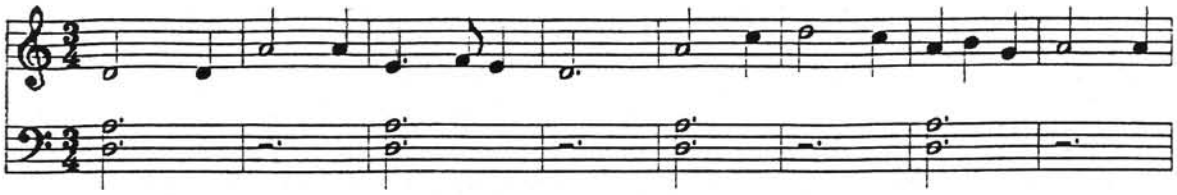

## 4. ARRANGING

Below you will find a blank bass clef for finding the sounds that harmonize with the Scarborough Fair melody. Use this as a worksheet. Make some copies and try not to go on to the next part until you have given yourself time to train your ear on finding complimentary notes to enhance the melody. Since it is in the Dorian mode, it pretty much tells you that your focus is going to be on the D chord. Keep the 3rd out it for now, (in other words, don't play a A F D, just the A D

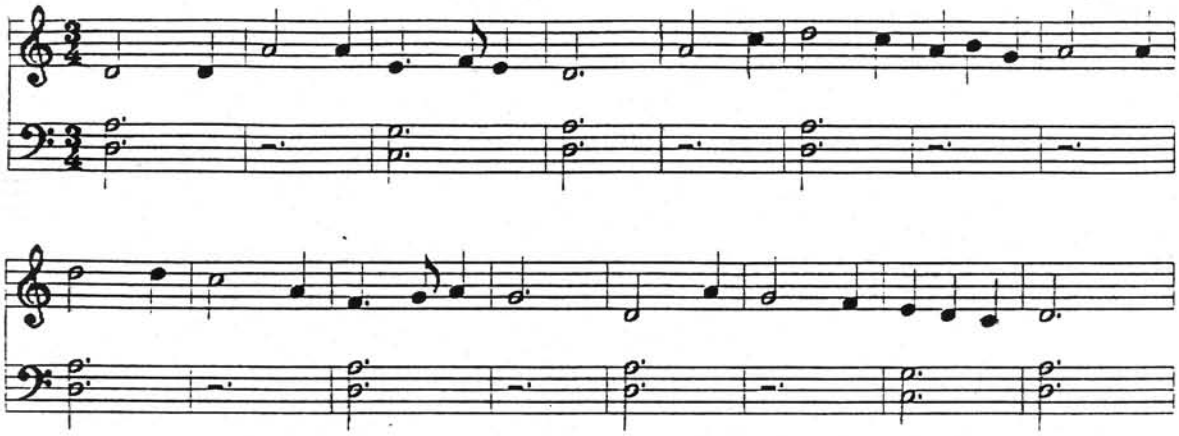
**Scarborough Fair**



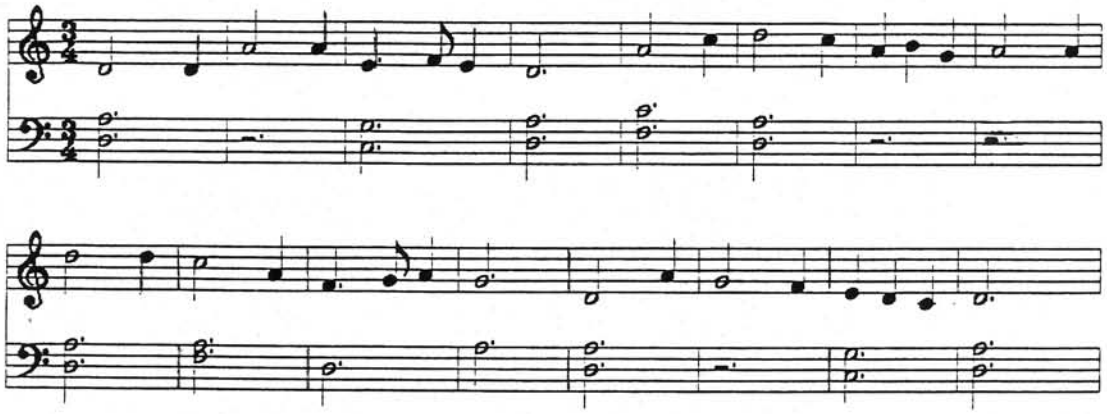
On the next couple of pages, you will see how we can take this melody and build it. Begin the piece first by playing it simply as a singular melody. Then just drone a D chord with the A 5th above to it.



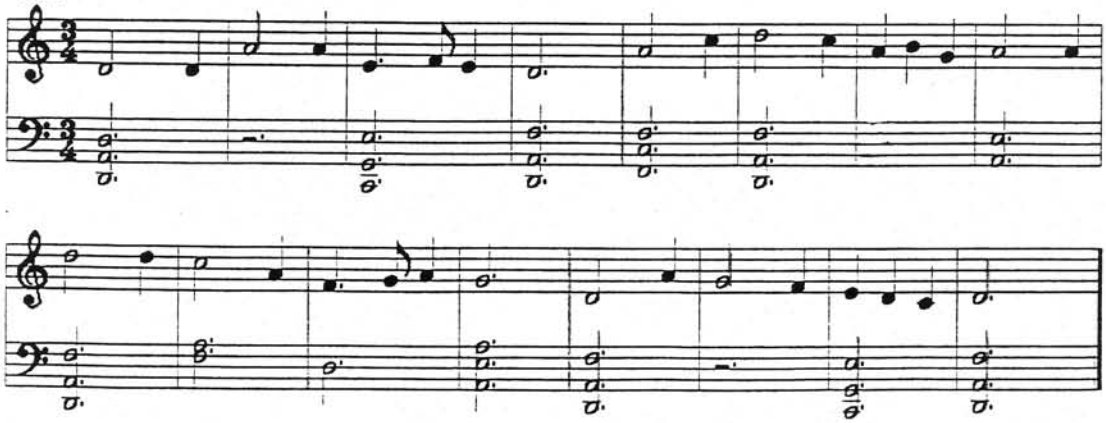
Now play it with the drone shifting down to the C with G 5th on top.



We can now play a very simple version with some alternate left hand chords.

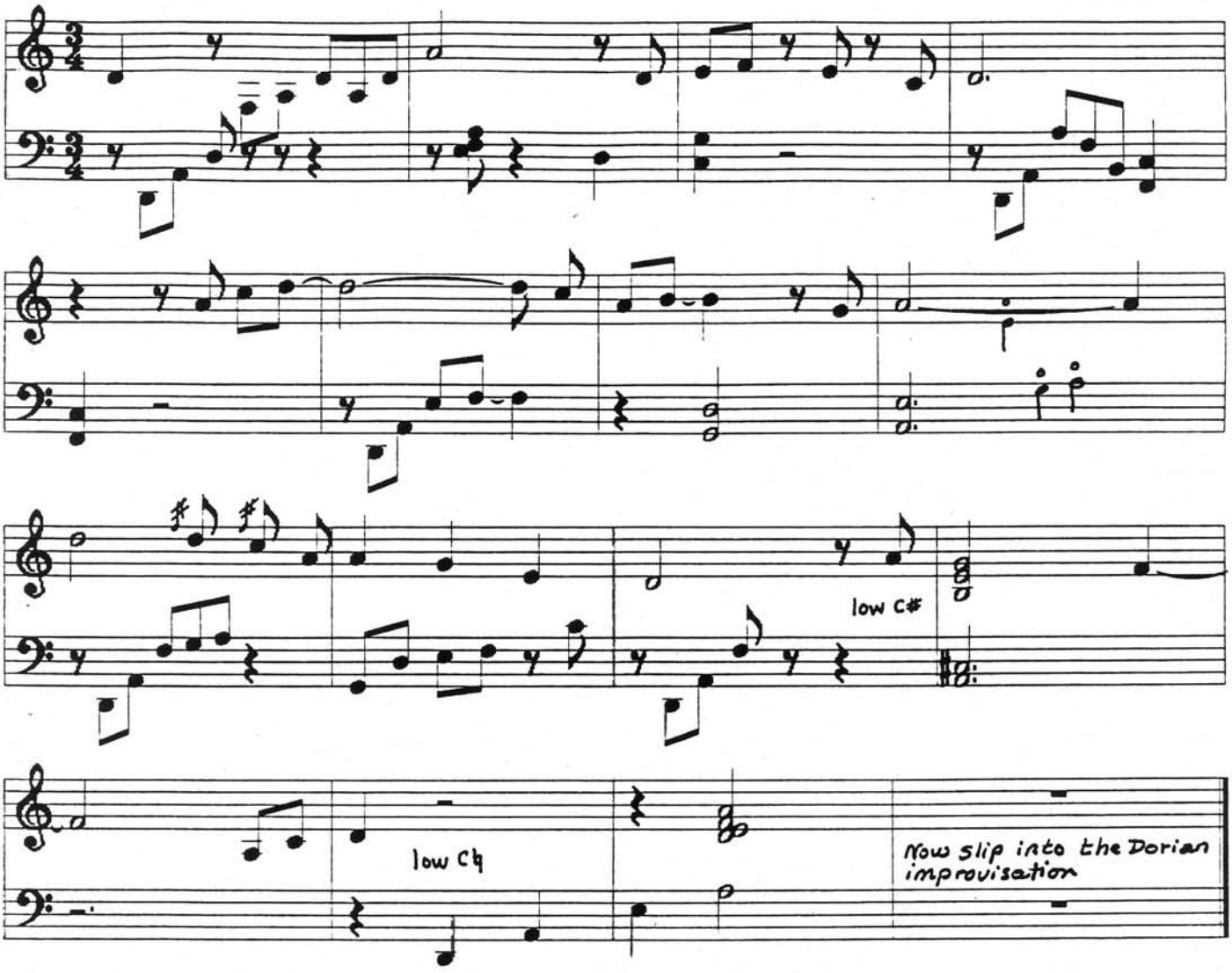


This time, we can add some thirds but place them on top of the octave. Alternate between octaves and the octave plus the third.



Here is a big jump. By breaking up the chords and throwing in some rhythms, this piece can be extended into a jazzy sounding Scarborough Fair. Notice how the C# adds flavor. When coming to the end, continue to drone the D chord and improvize until you feel ready to come in with the melody again.

## Scarborough Fair



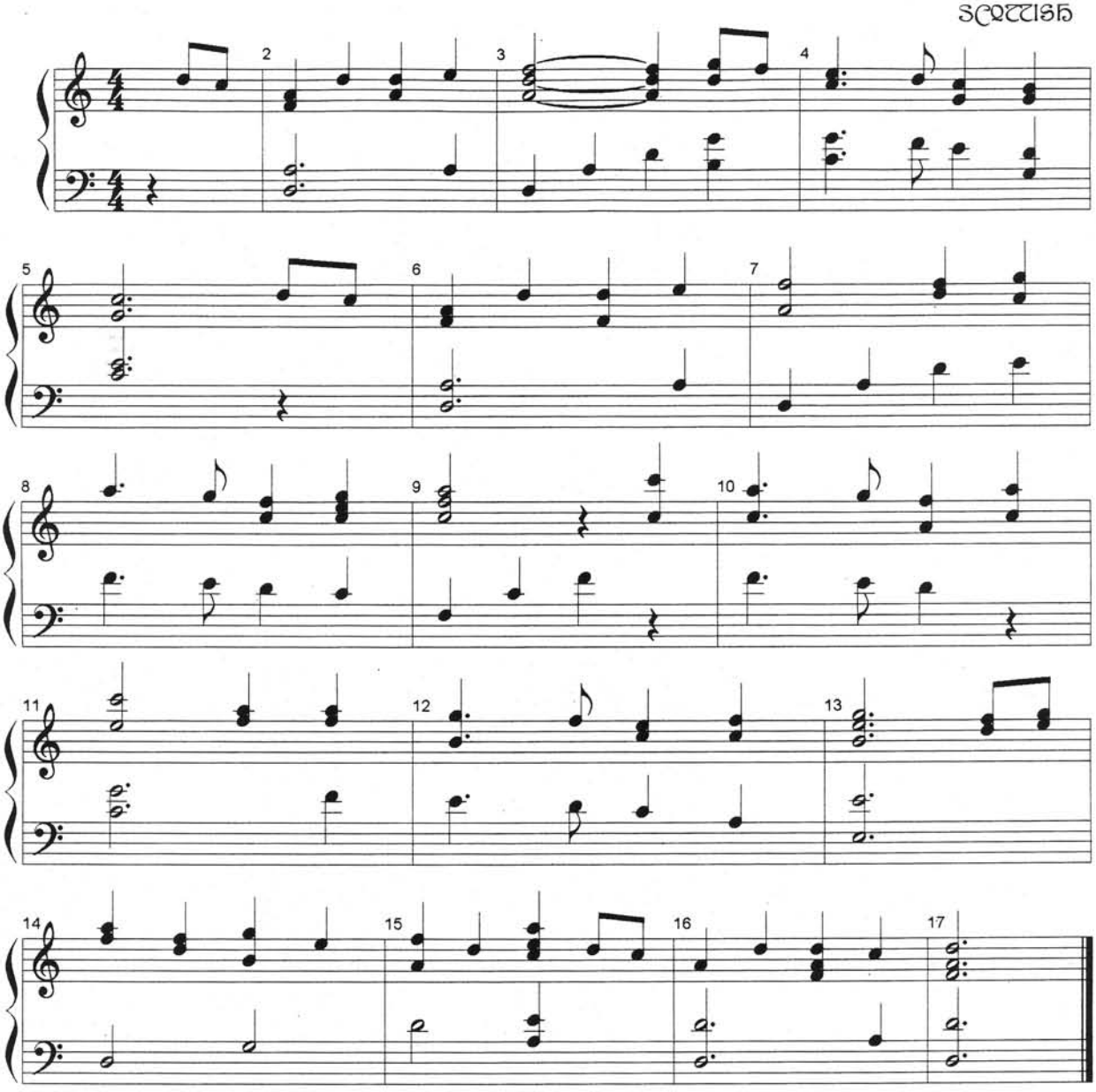

## 5. COMPOSITION/ Originality

Now that you have stretched out this melody by playing it as a single line, with various drones, simple chords, extended chords, breaking the chords, then improvising - there is one more step. Using the 3/4 rhythm and the Dorian mode you can now compose your own new melody. It's as simple as working with telephone numbers, birthdates, anything that spurs you on to a melodic pattern. After you have worked your composition, it can be inserted with this piece. What may have been just a minute long piece has now turned into a good 8 - 10 minute masterpiece!

Here are a couple of tunes in the Dorian Mode.

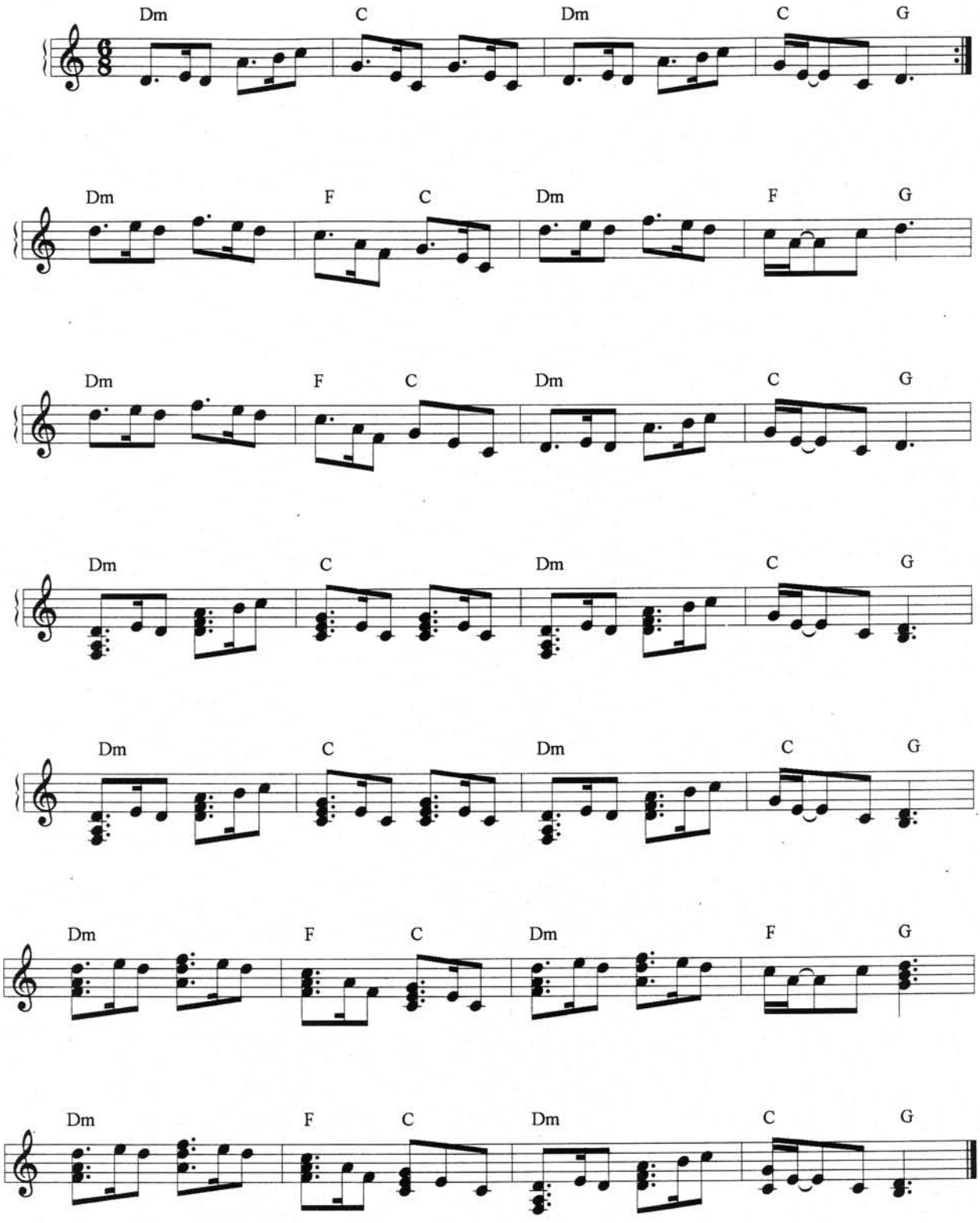
## John Anderson, my Jo

Scottish



# ARRAN BOAT SONG

SCOTLAND



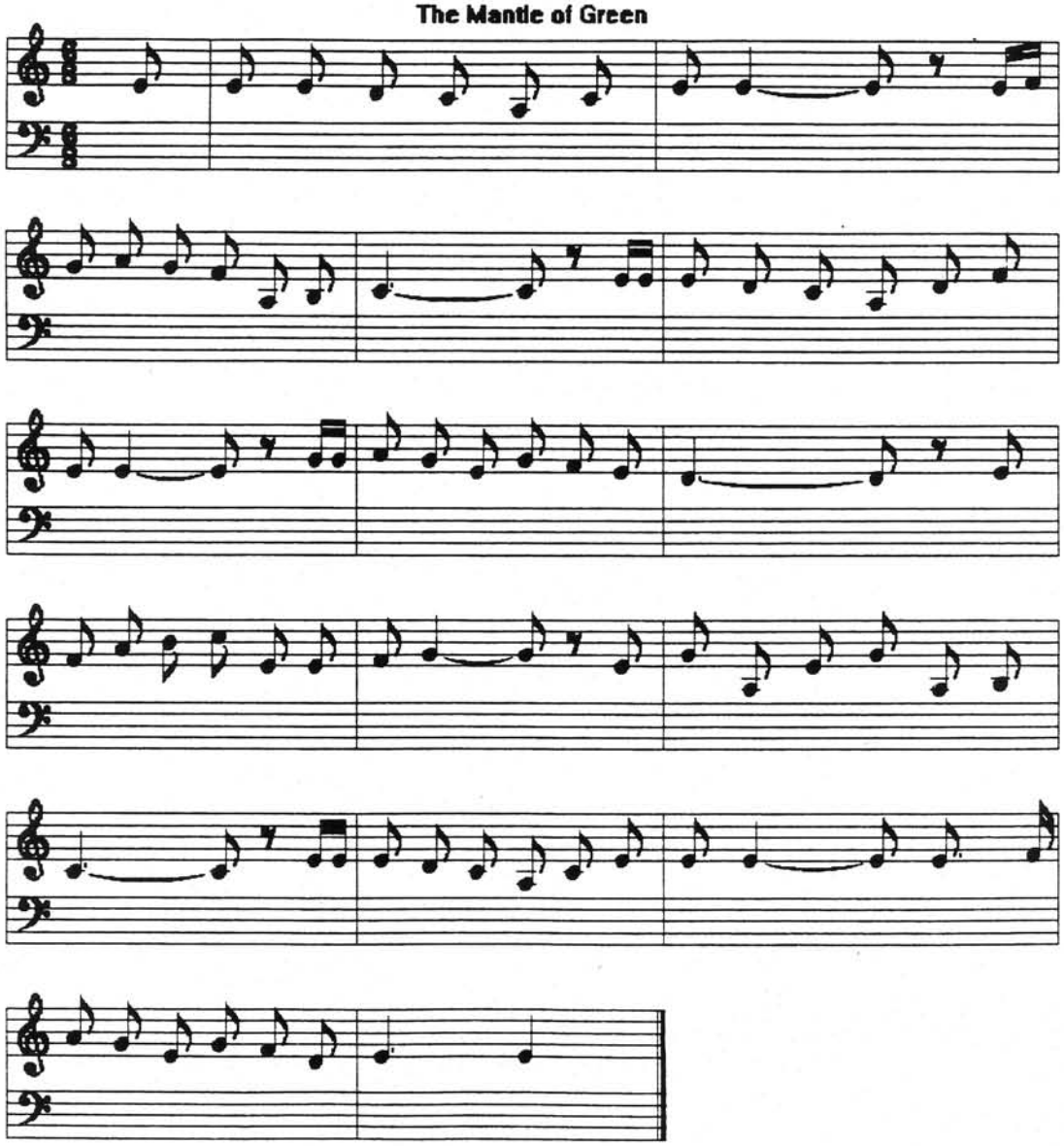
## PHRYGIAN MODE

In the key of C tuning, the Phrygian Mode uses the same notes and key signature of the C Major scale from E to E.) The Phrygian Mode may also be heard as a natural minor scale with the 2nd degree lowered one-half step. Although the triad built on the fundamental mode tone is minor EGB, a great deal of phrygian music (Spanish Flamenco and certain types of jewish music) ends in major.

For improvisational purposes, play back and forth between the Em and F chords. You may wish to add Am and G chords for variation.

Here is a piece in the Phrygian mode. Try applying the 5 steps of the Dorian mode to this piece. A blank bass clef has been provided for you to work.

**The Mantle of Green**

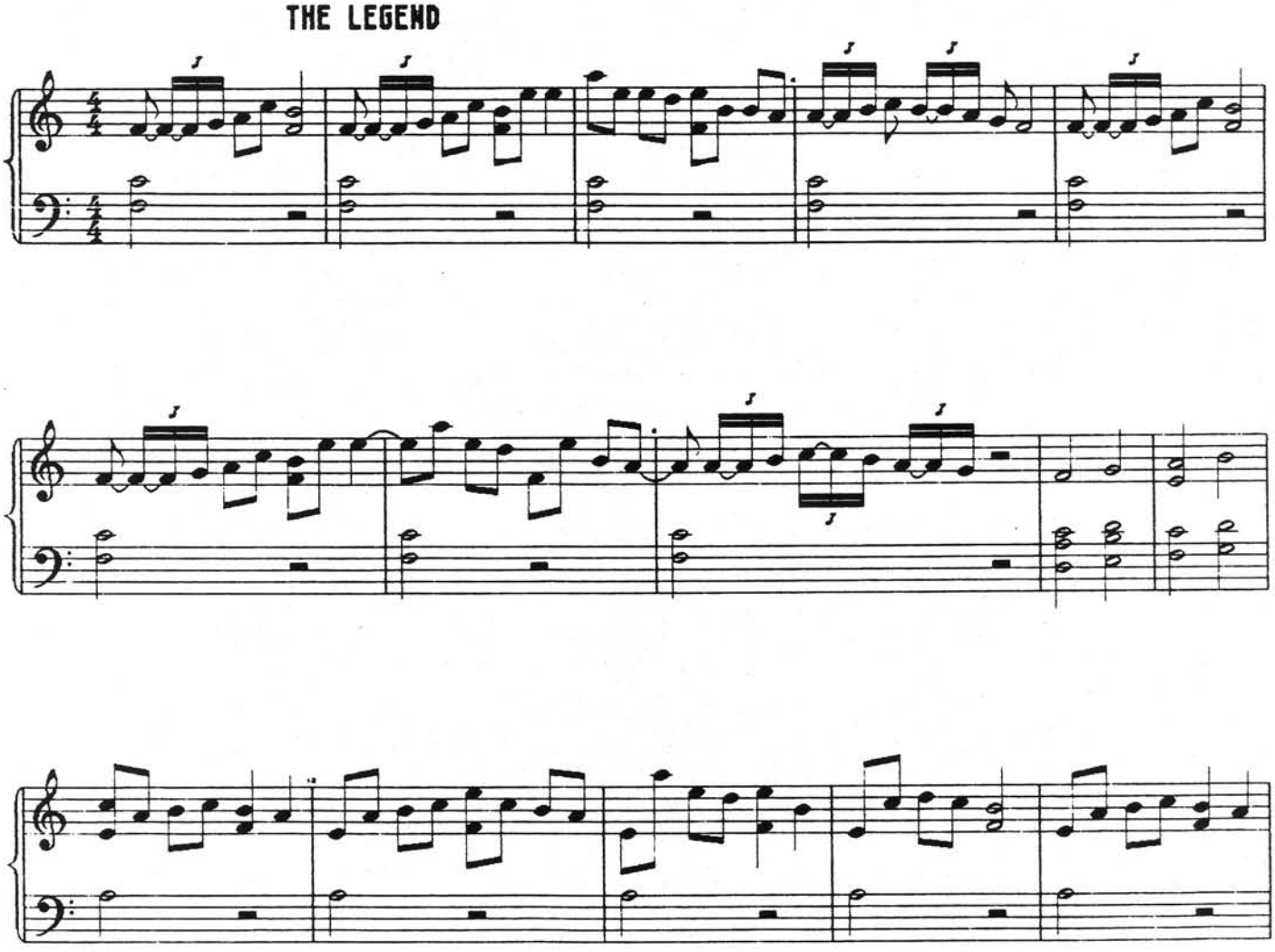


## LYDIAN MODE

In the key of C tuning, the Lydian Mode uses the same notes and key signature of the C Major scale from F to F.) The Lydian Mode may also be heard as a major scale with the 4th degree raised one-half step (b♮ in this key).

For improvisational purposes, play back and forth between the F and G chords. You may wish to change between Dm and Em for variation.

Here is a piece in the Lydian mode by Sylvia Woods. It acturally appears in G Lydian in her book but for here I have put into C Lydian. You may order the full arrangement from her from her *Harp of Brandiswhere* book. After playing the basic melody, try the improvisation above, then go back into the melody again and elaborate.



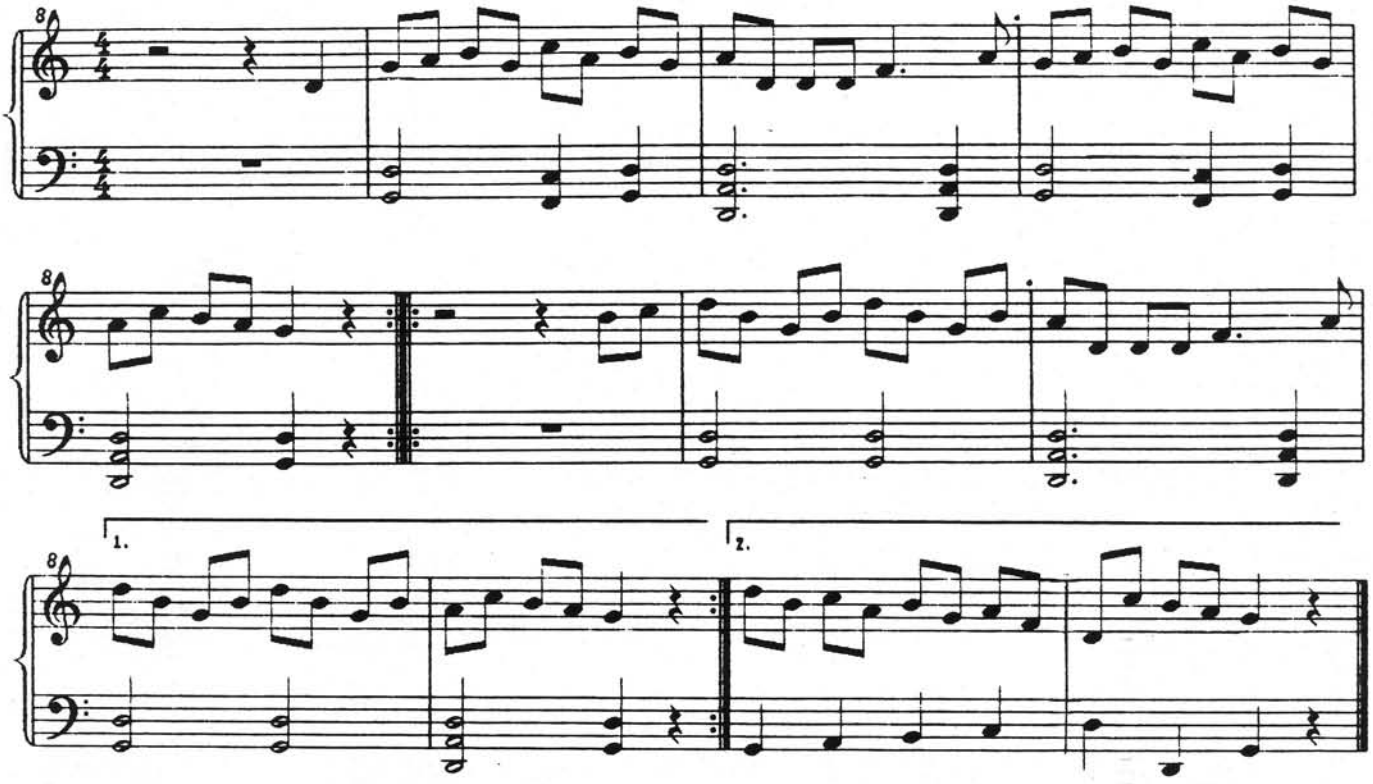
## MIXOLYDIAN MODE

In the key of C tuning, the Mixolydian Mode uses the same notes and key signature of the C Major scale from G to G.) The Mixolydian Mode may also be heard as a major scale with the 7th degree (leading tone) lowered one-half step ($F_{\flat}$ in this key).

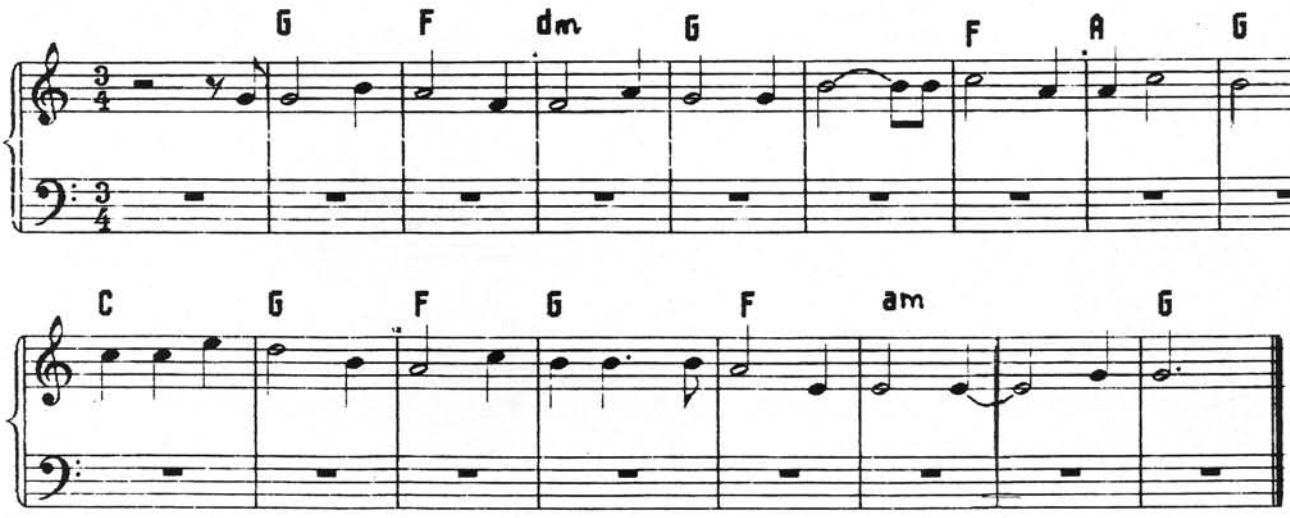
For improvisational purposes, play back and forth between the G and F chords adding an occasional C chord.

Here are some pieces in the Mixolydian mode.

### PEASE STRAY

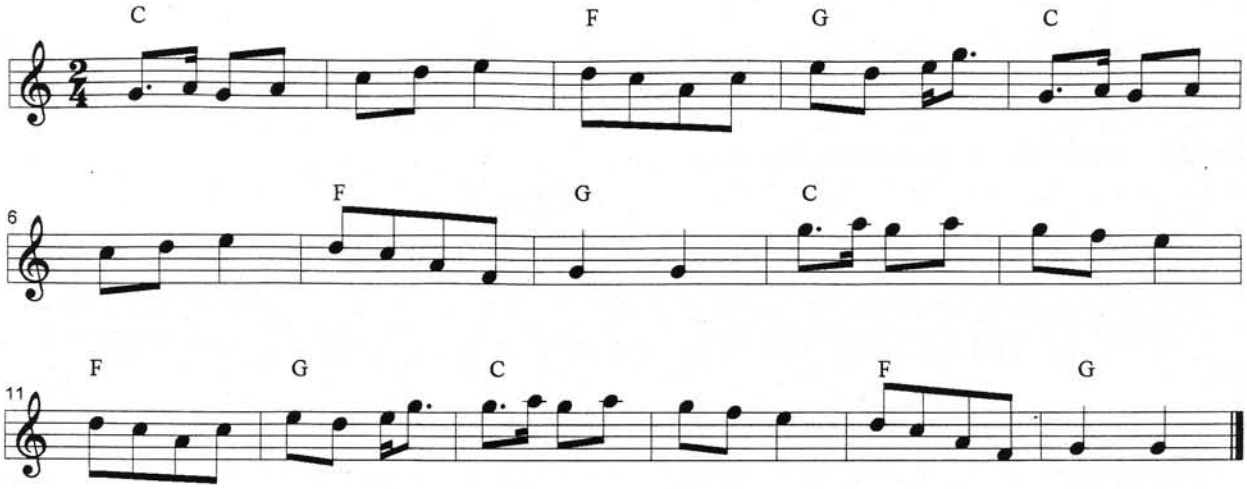


### THE SILKIE

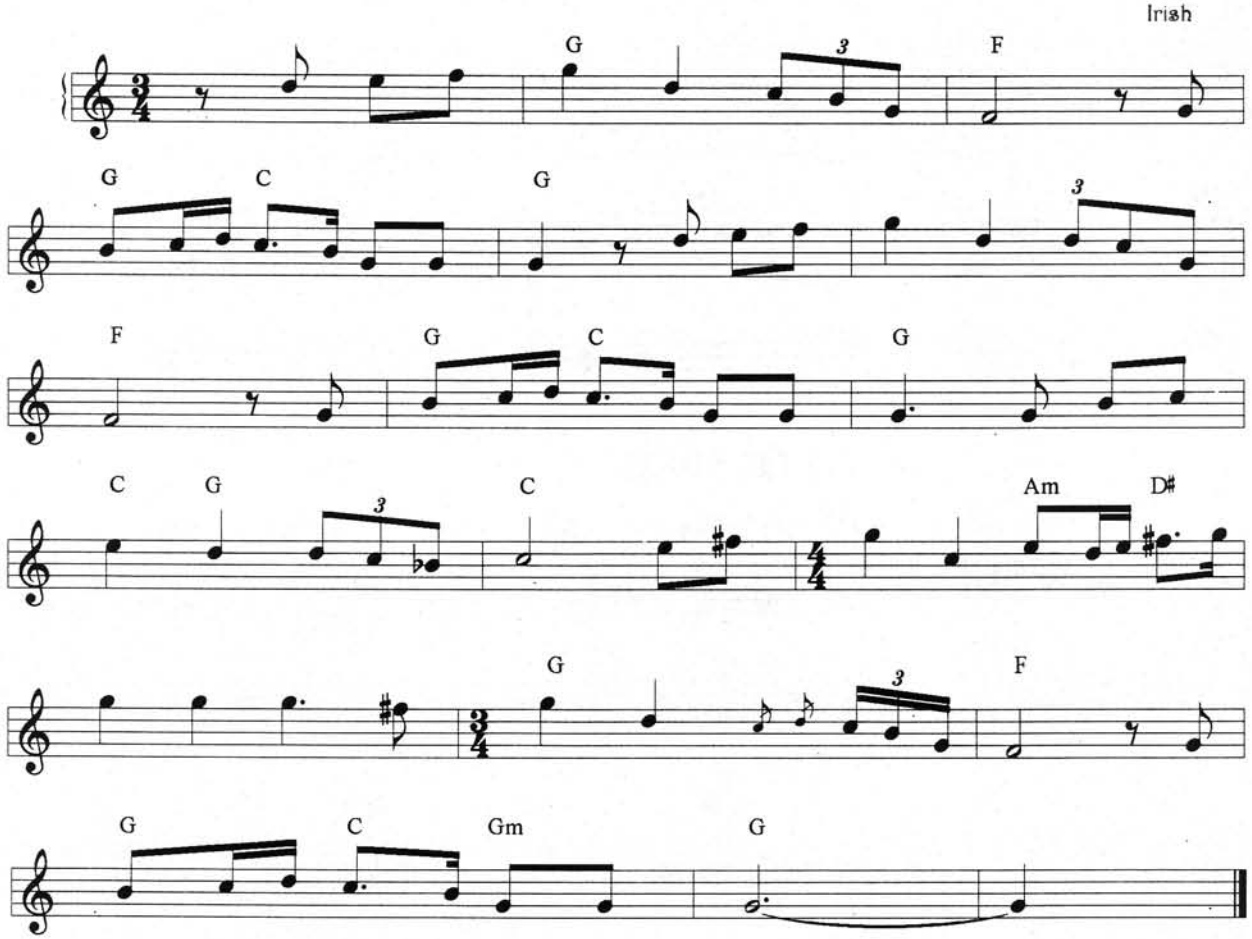


Here are some tunes in the Mixolydian Mode

## Mairi's Wedding

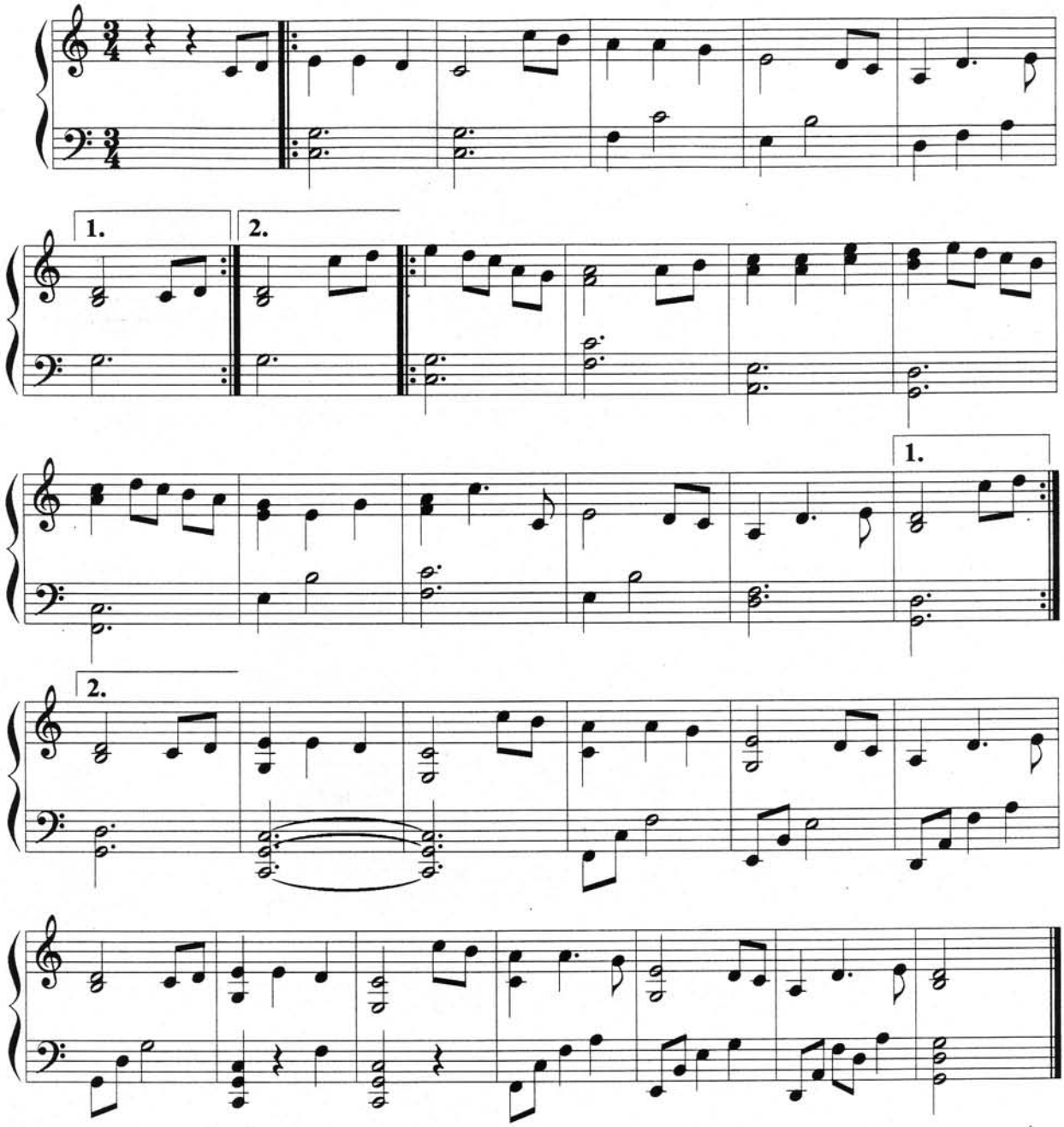



## My Lagan Love



# Eleanor Plunkett

'Carolan

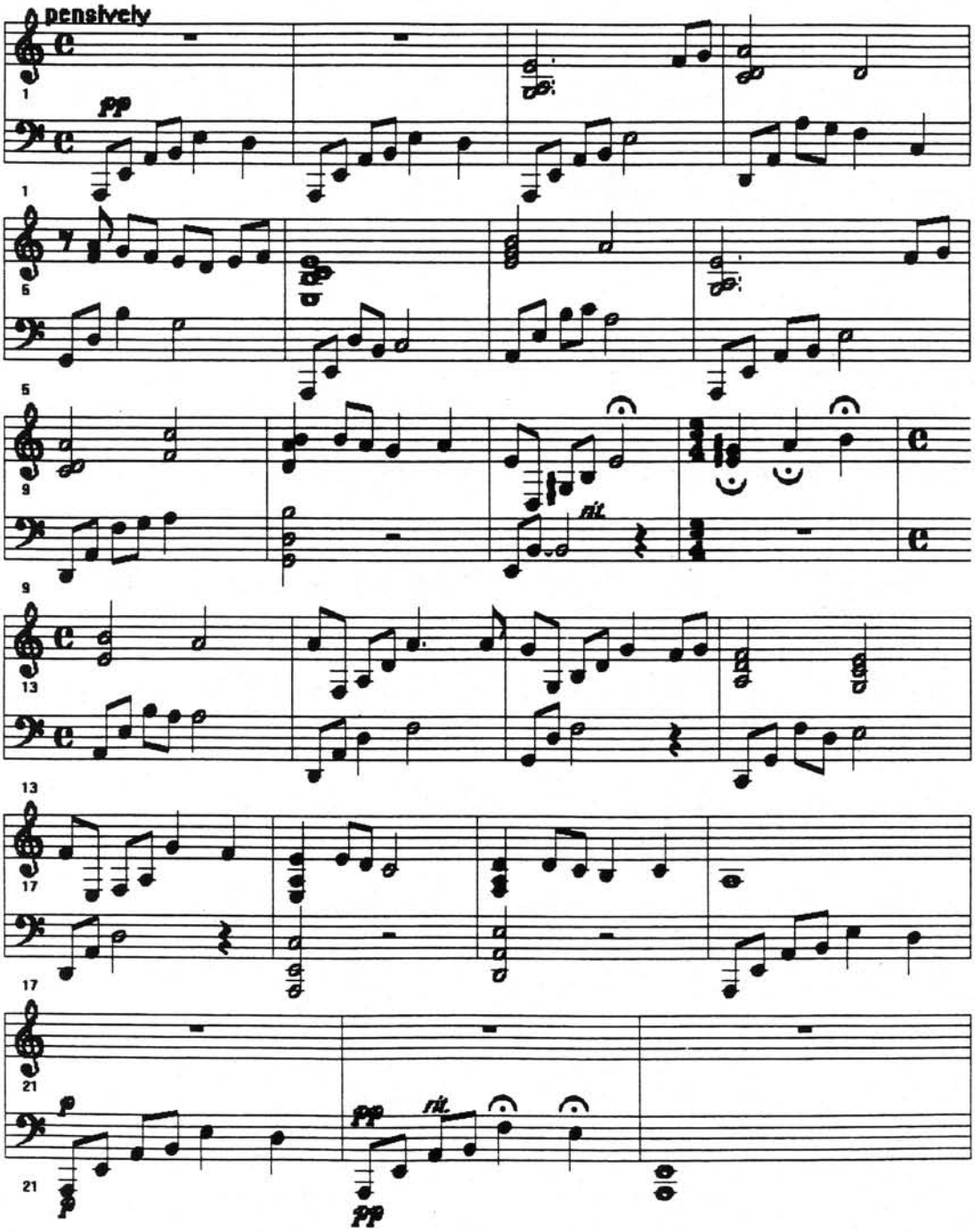


## AEOLIAN MODE

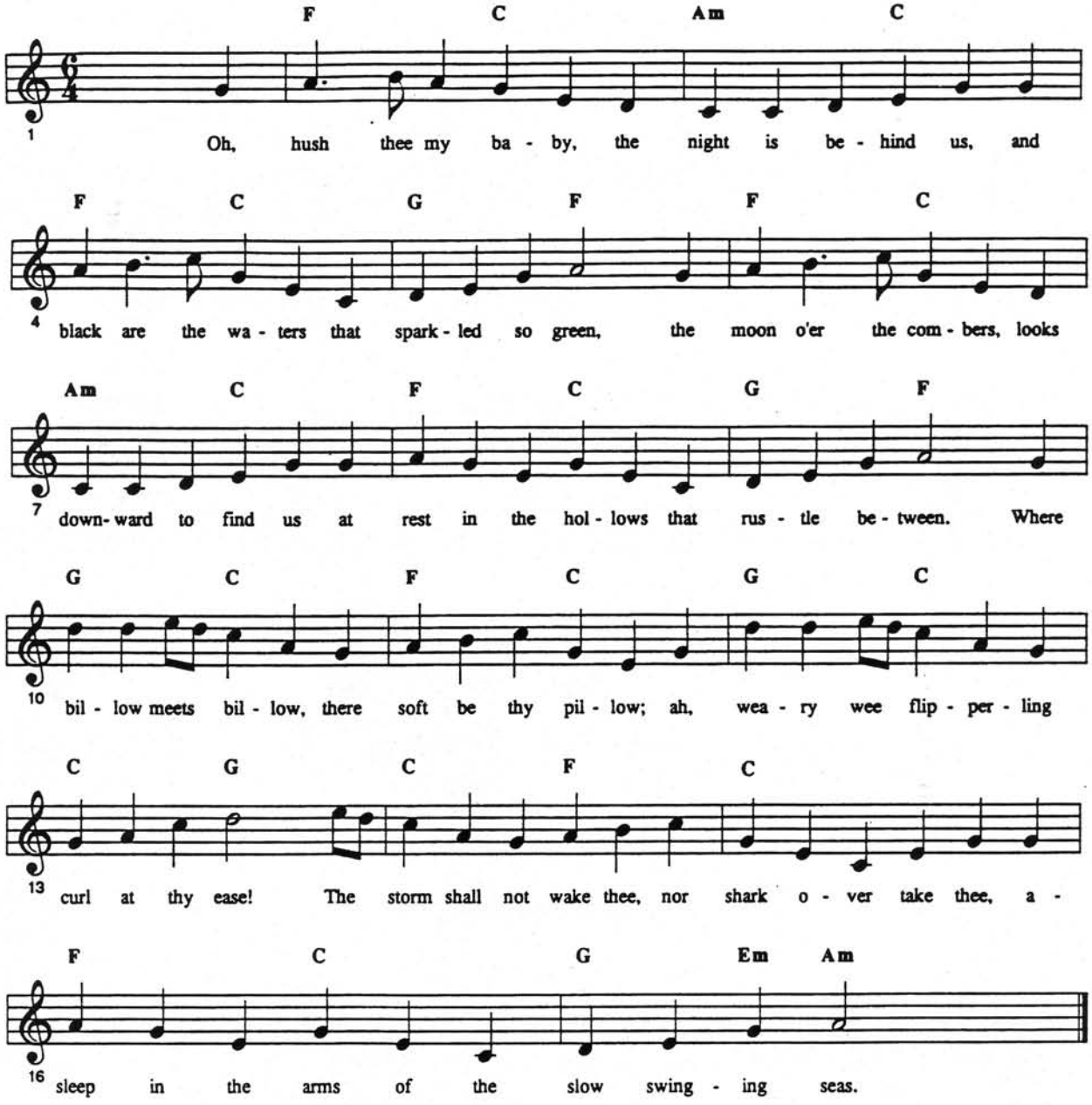
In the key of C tuning, the Aeolian Mode uses the same notes and key signature of the C Major scale from Ato A.) The Aeolian Mode may also be viewed as a natural minor scale.

For improvisational purposes, Am and Dm chords work well for improvisation.

# Reflections



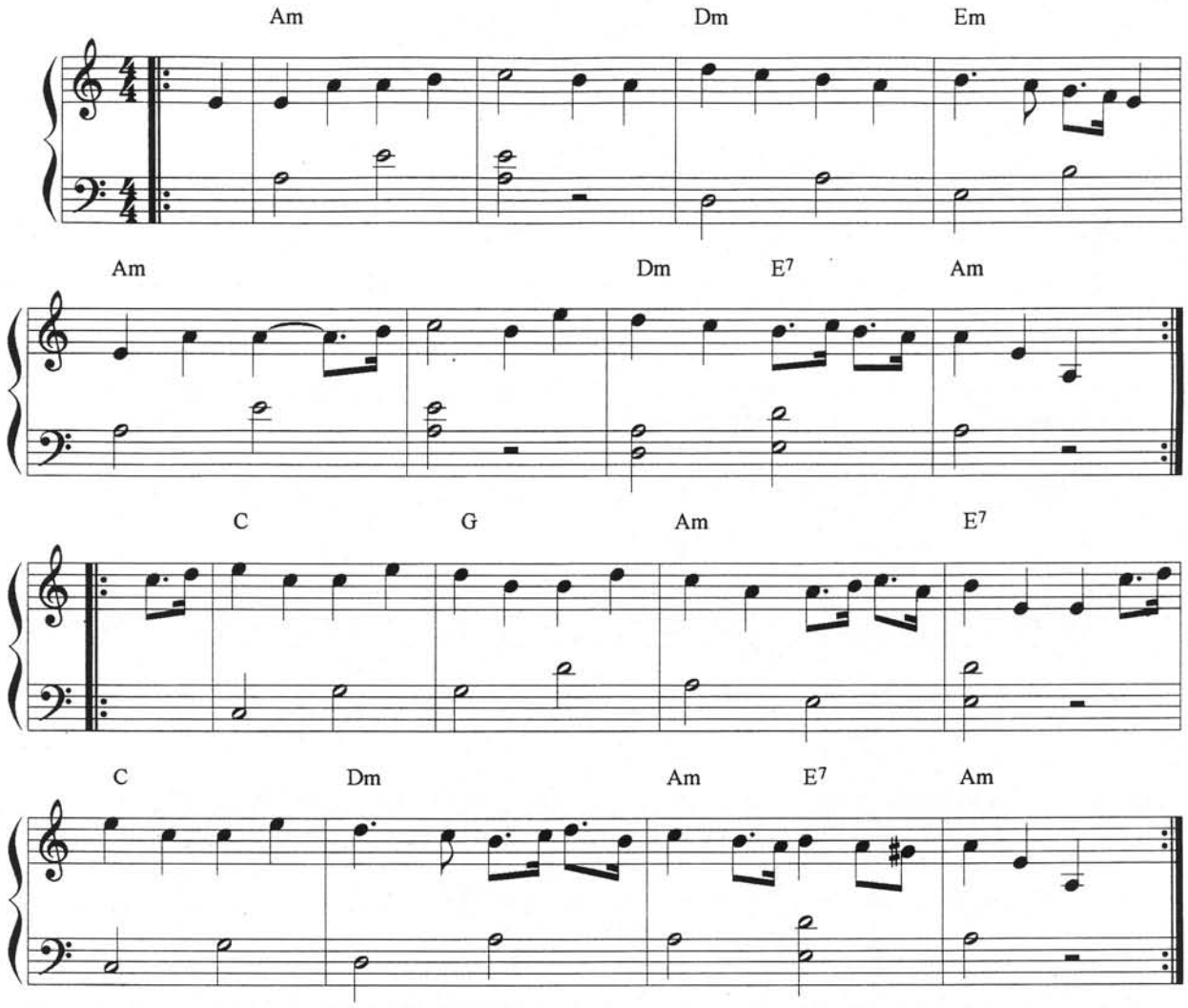
# Seal Lullaby



Aeolian Mode

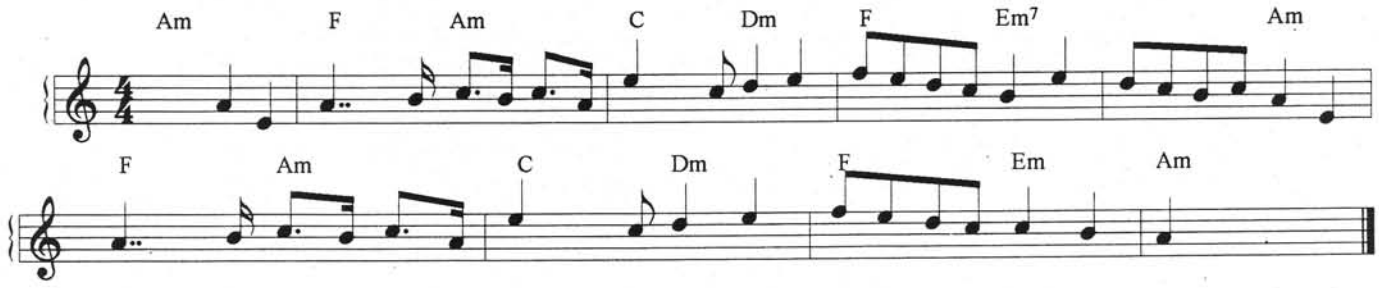
# Childgrove

Traditional Celtic

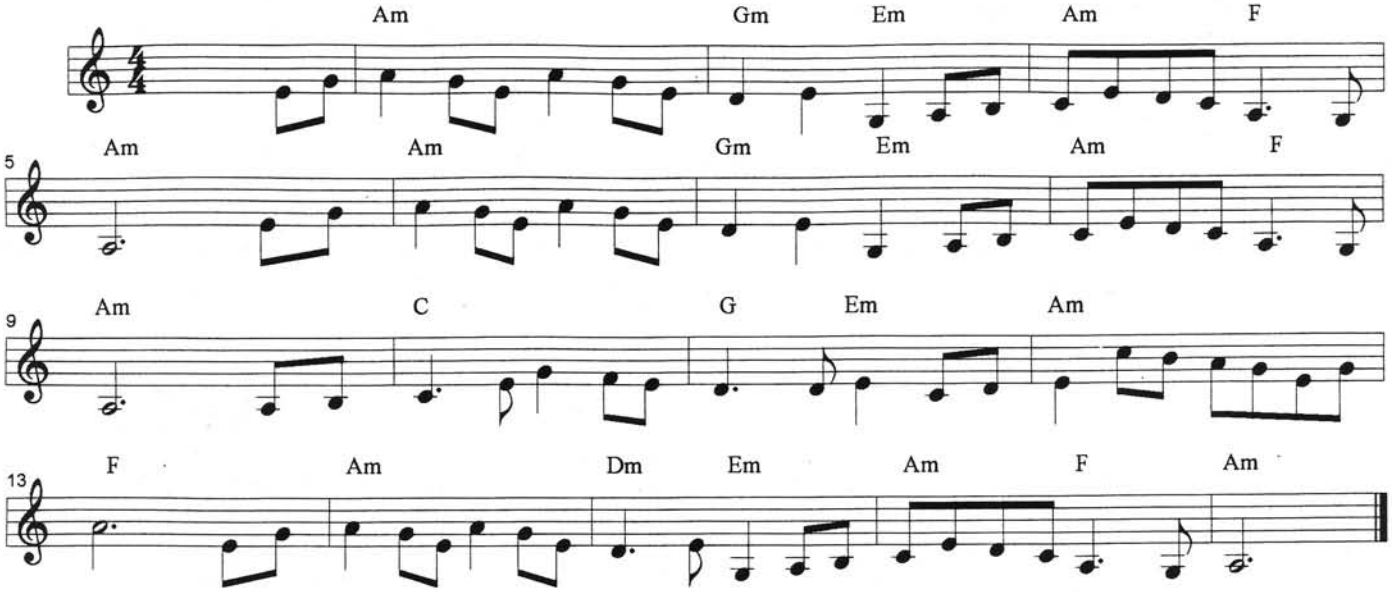



# Farandole

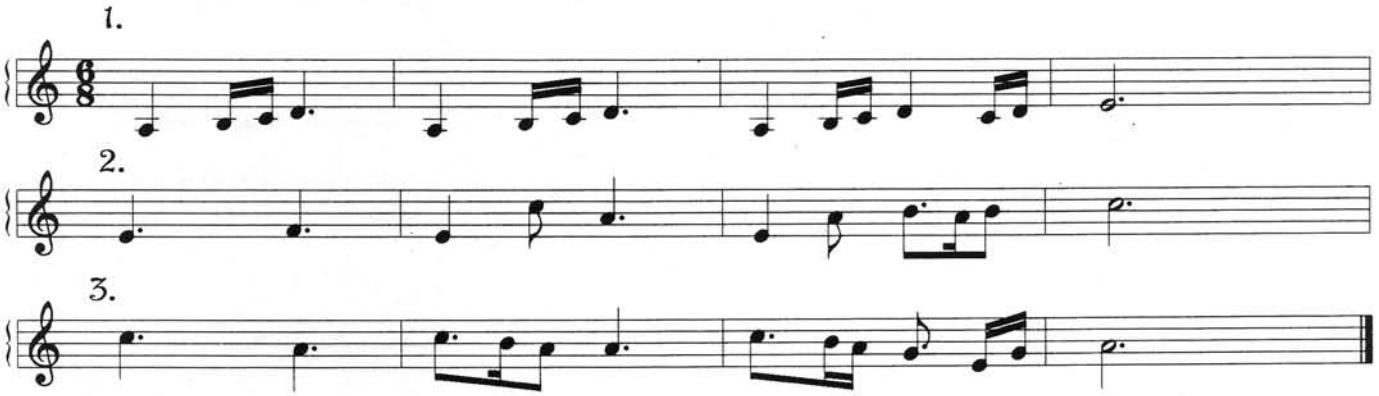
Georges Bizet



# The Foggy Dew




# Hashiveinu



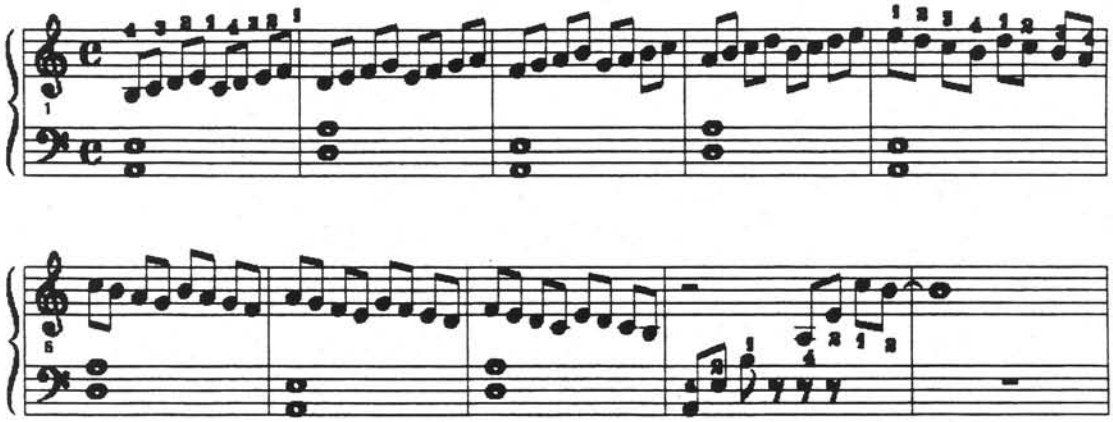
## LOCRIAN MODE

In the key of C tuning, theLocrian Mode uses the same notes and key signature of the C Major scale from Bto B.) The fundamental tone of the Locrian mode is the leading tone (7th degree) of the major scale whose key signature is being used. (A in the key of C)

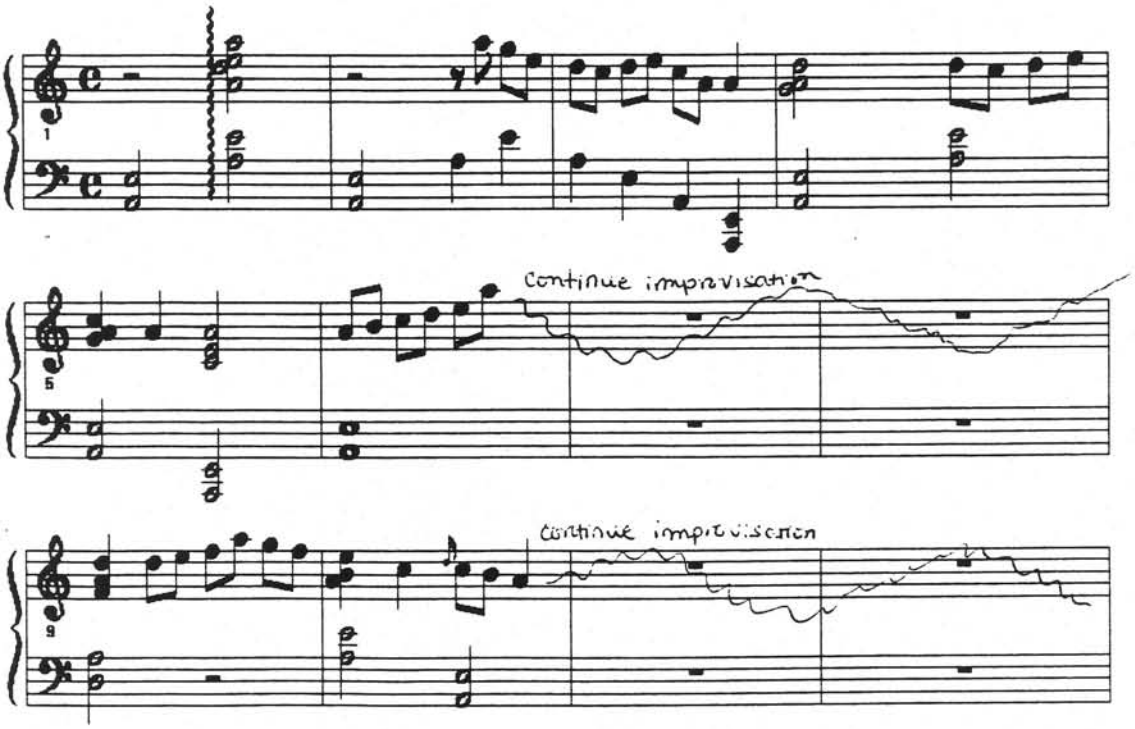
For improvisational purposes, I tend to focus on the fundamental tone (A) and create the tension with using the B in my right hand sometimes alternating to the D chord.

Here is a piece in the Locrian mode. After playing the basic melody, try the improvisation above, then go back into the melody again and elaborate.

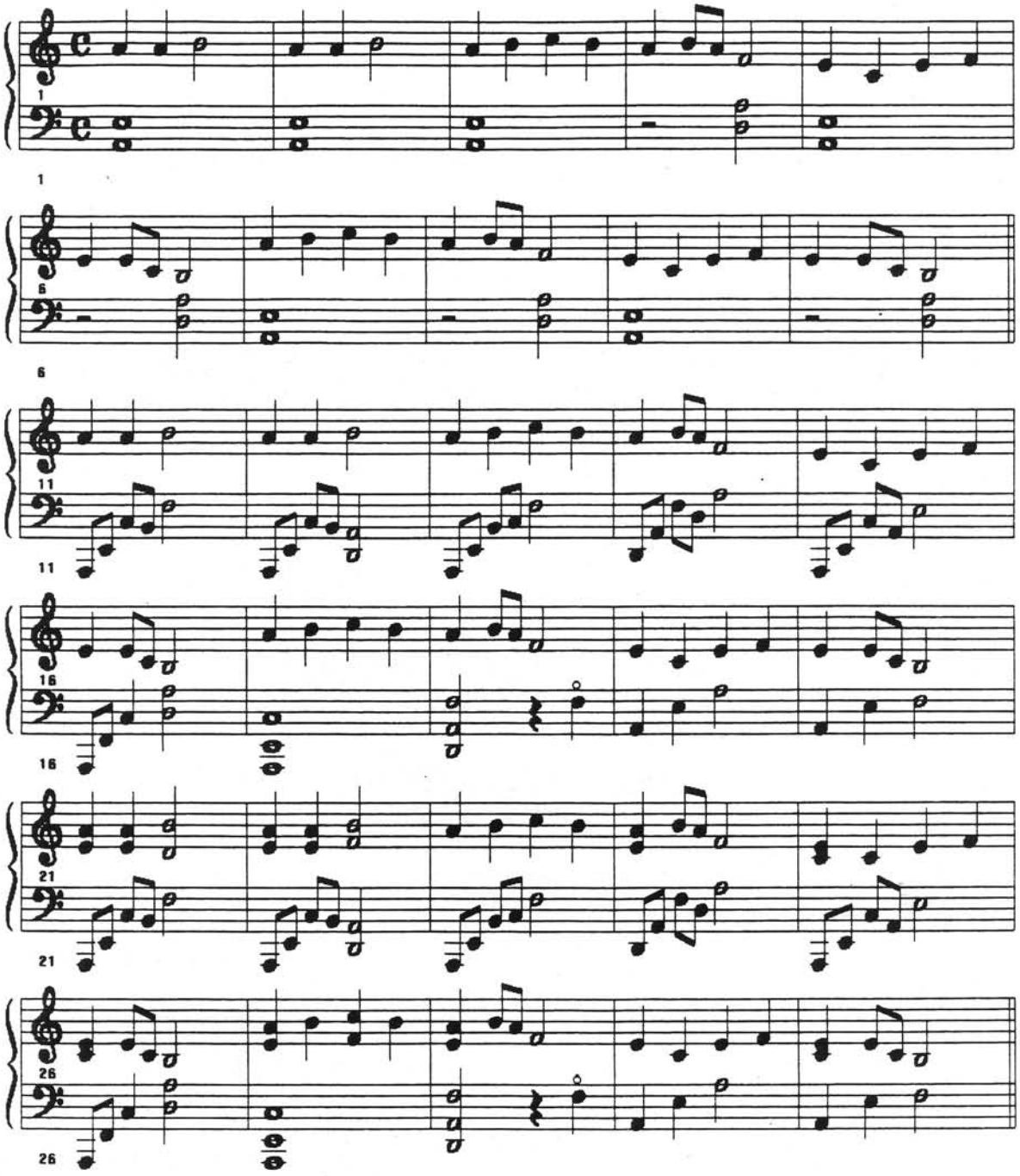
## Exercise in Locrian Mode



## Beginning of an improvisation passage



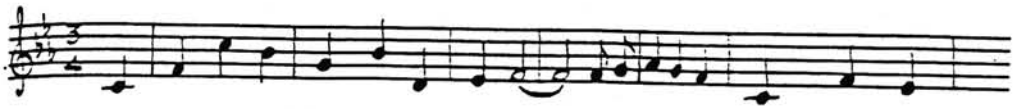
# Various Arrangements - SAKURA



**HOW TO DETERMINE THE MODE** Usually the final melody tone of the work (or passage) is the fundamental tone of the mode. Thus the mode (scale should begin and end on the final melody tone of the work or passage. It is also important to look at the notes of the scale. By constructing an ascending scale of the melody notes, you will be able to see the pattern of whole steps and half steps. If there is continually an accidental on a given note, this will alter what the mode appears to be according to the ending tone, therefore just looking at the ending note will not be enough.

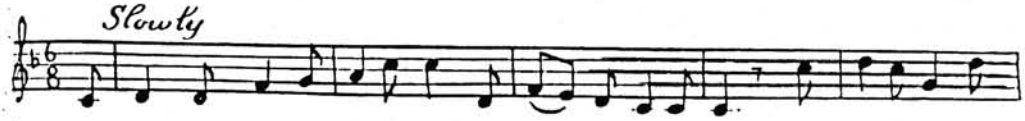
Take a look at the beginning and endings of the following exerpts and determine which mode the piece is in. Answers in the back of the book.

1.
Beg.

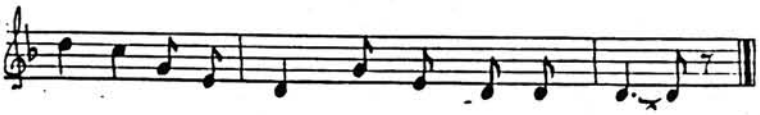


End.

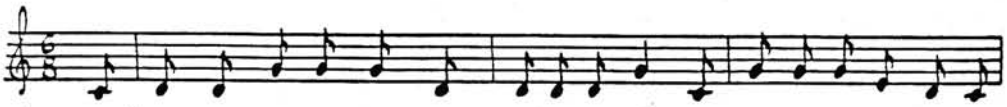
2.
Beg.



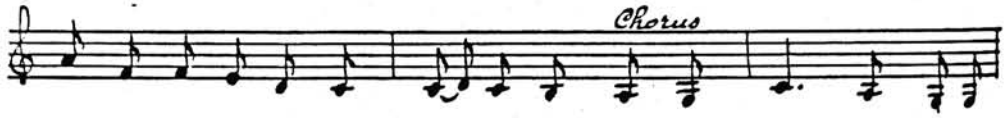

End.



3.
Beg.



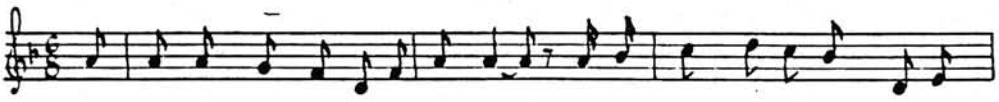
End



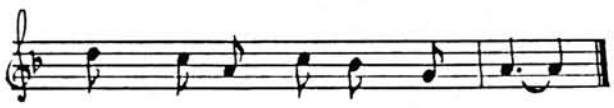

4.
Beg.

End

5.
Beg.

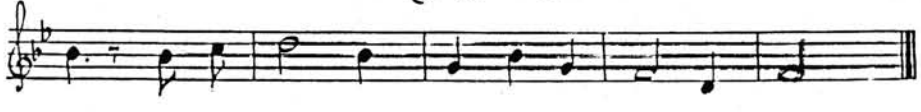


End



6.
Beg.

End



Answers: 1. Dorian 2. Aeolian 3. Mixolydian 4. Ionian 5. Phrygian 6. Mixolydian

## A CHART OF TRANSPOSED CHORDS TO USE FOR IMPROVISATIONS IN OTHER KEYS

**(the eight most common keys played on the harp)**

### Key of C

| | |
|---|---|
| IONIAN | C, F, G |
| DORIAN | Dm, C, F, G, Am |
| PHRYGIAN | Em, F, Am, G |
| LYDIAN | F, G, Dm, Em |
| MIXOLYDIAN | G, F, Dm, G |
| AEOLIAN | Am, G, F, Em, Dm (for a variance sharp the G when playing the Em chord, thus E) |
| LOCRIAN | Am, Dm, Right hand focus on B |

### Key of G

| | |
|---|---|
| IONIAN | G, C, D |
| DORIAN | Am, G, C, D, Em |
| PHRYGIAN | Bm, C, Em, D |
| LYDIAN | C, D, Am, B |
| MIXOLYDIAN | D, C, Am, D |
| AEOLIAN | Em, D, C, Bm, Am (for a variance sharp the D in the Bm chord, thus a B chord) |
| LOCRIAN | Em, Am, Right hand focus on F# |

### Key of D

| | |
|---|---|
| IONIAN | D, G, A |
| DORIAN | Em, D, G, A, Bm |
| PHRYGIAN | F#m, G, Bm, A |
| LYDIAN | G, A, Em, F#m |
| MIXOLYDIAN | A, G, Em, A |
| AEOLIAN | Bm, A, G, F#m, Em (for a variance sharp the A(Bb on harps), when playing the F#m chord |
| LOCRIAN | Bm, Em, Right hand focus on C# |

### Key of A♭

| | |
|---|---|
| IONIAN | Ab, Db, Eb |
| DORIAN | Bbm, Ab, Db, Eb, Fm |
| PHRYGIAN | Cm, Db, Fm, Eb |
| LYDIAN | Db, Eb, Bbm, Cm |
| MIXOLYDIAN | Eb, Db, Bbm, Eb |
| AEOLIAN | Fm, Eb, Db, Cm, Bbm (for a variance ,play an E natural on the Cm chord) |
| LOCRIAN | Fm, Bbm, Right hand focus on G |

### Key of E♭

| | |
|---|---|
| IONIAN | Eb, Ab, Bb |
| DORIAN | Fm, Eb, Ab, Bb, Cm |
| PHRYGIAN | Gm, Ab, Cm, Bb |
| LYDIAN | Ab, B, Fm, Gm |
| MIXOLYDIAN | Bb, Ab, Fm, Bb |
| AEOLIAN | Cm, Bb, Abm, Gm, Fm (for a variance, play a B natural in the Gm chord, thus a G chord) |
| LOCRIAN | Cm, Fm, Right hand focus on D |

### Key of A

| | |
|---|---|
| IONIAN | A, D, E |
| DORIAN | Bm, A, D, E, F#m |
| PHRYGIAN | C#m, D, F#m, E |
| LYDIAN | D, E, Bm, C#m |
| MIXOLYDIAN | E, D, Bm, E |
| AEOLIAN | F#m, E, Dm, C#m, Bm for a variance sharp theE, F natural on the harp), during the C#m chord |
| LOCRIAN | F#m, Bm, Right hand focus on G# |

### Key of F

| | |
|---|---|
| IONIAN | F, Bb, C |
| DORIAN | Gm, F, Bb, C, Dm |
| PHRYGIAN | Am, Bb, Dm, C |
| LYDIAN | Bb, C, Gm, Am |
| MIXOLYDIAN | C, Bb, Gm, C |
| AEOLIAN | Dm, C, Bbm, Am, Gm (for a variance sharp the C in the Am Chord, thus an A chord) |
| LOCRIAN | Dm, Gm, Right hand focus on E |

### Key of B♭

| | |
|---|---|
| IONIAN | Bb, Eb, F |
| DORIAN | Cm, Bb, Eb, F, Gm |
| PHRYGIAN | Dm, Eb, Gm, F |
| LYDIAN | Eb, F, Cm, Dm |
| MIXOLYDIAN | F, Eb, Cm, F |
| AEOLIAN | Gm, F, Ebm, Dm, Cm (for a variance sharp the F during the Dm chord, thus D chord) |
| LOCRIAN | Gm, Cm, Right hand focus on A |

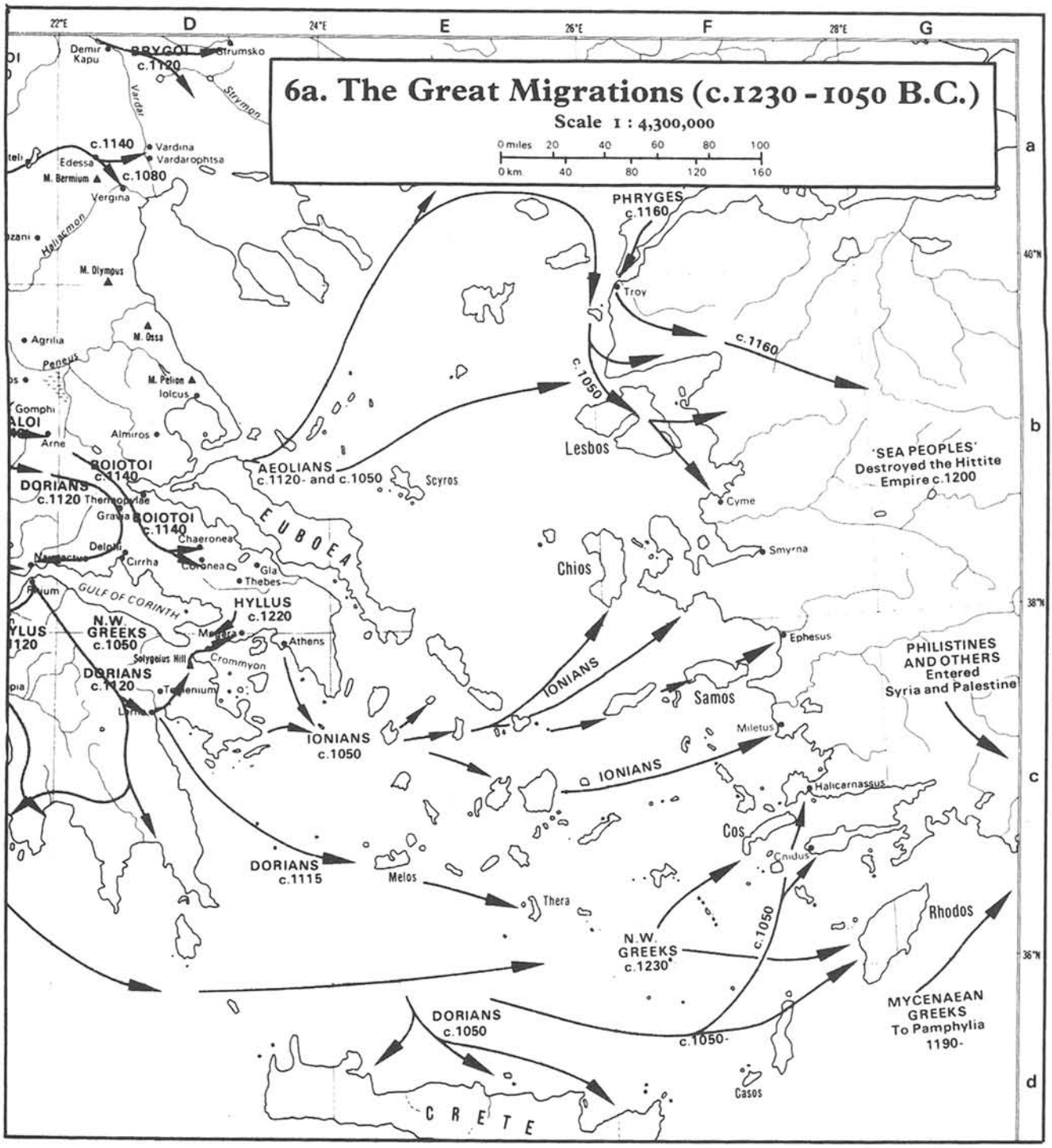
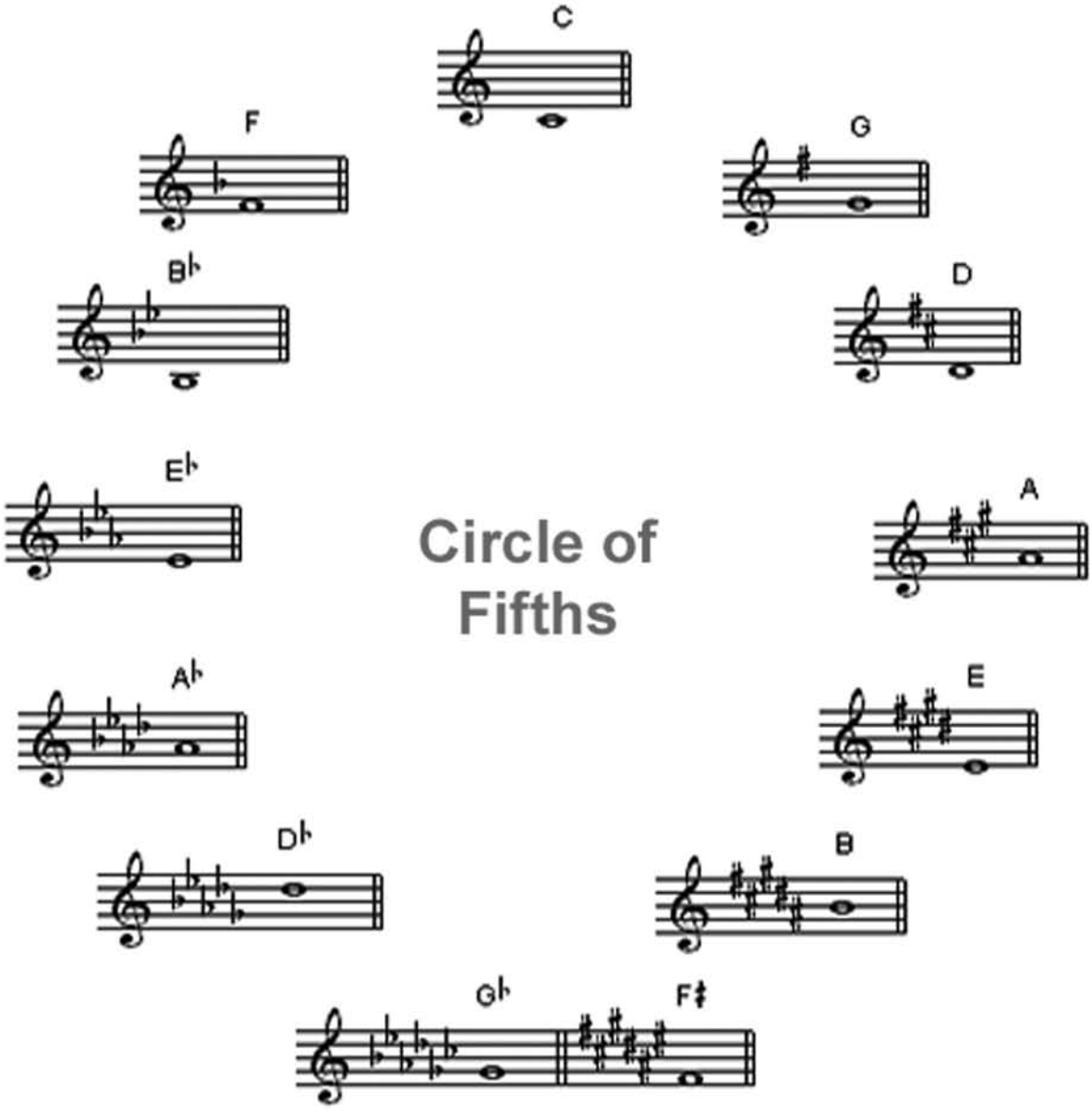



*Figure 6-2 Map of ancient Greek migrations*

# Circle of Fifths