TIPITINA

From the Dr. John album *Gumbo*

By Henry Roeland Byrd
Recorded in 1972

There are many variations on the 12-bar blues. "Tipitina" is an 8-bar blues. This piece is played with an underlying funky feel, with the eighth notes played straight and not swung.

Figure 18 – Intro

Note that the left-hand pattern is similar to the slow blues pattern of "Blueberry Hill," except that here the eighth notes are played straight.

Fig. 18

33 Full Band
34 Slow Demo

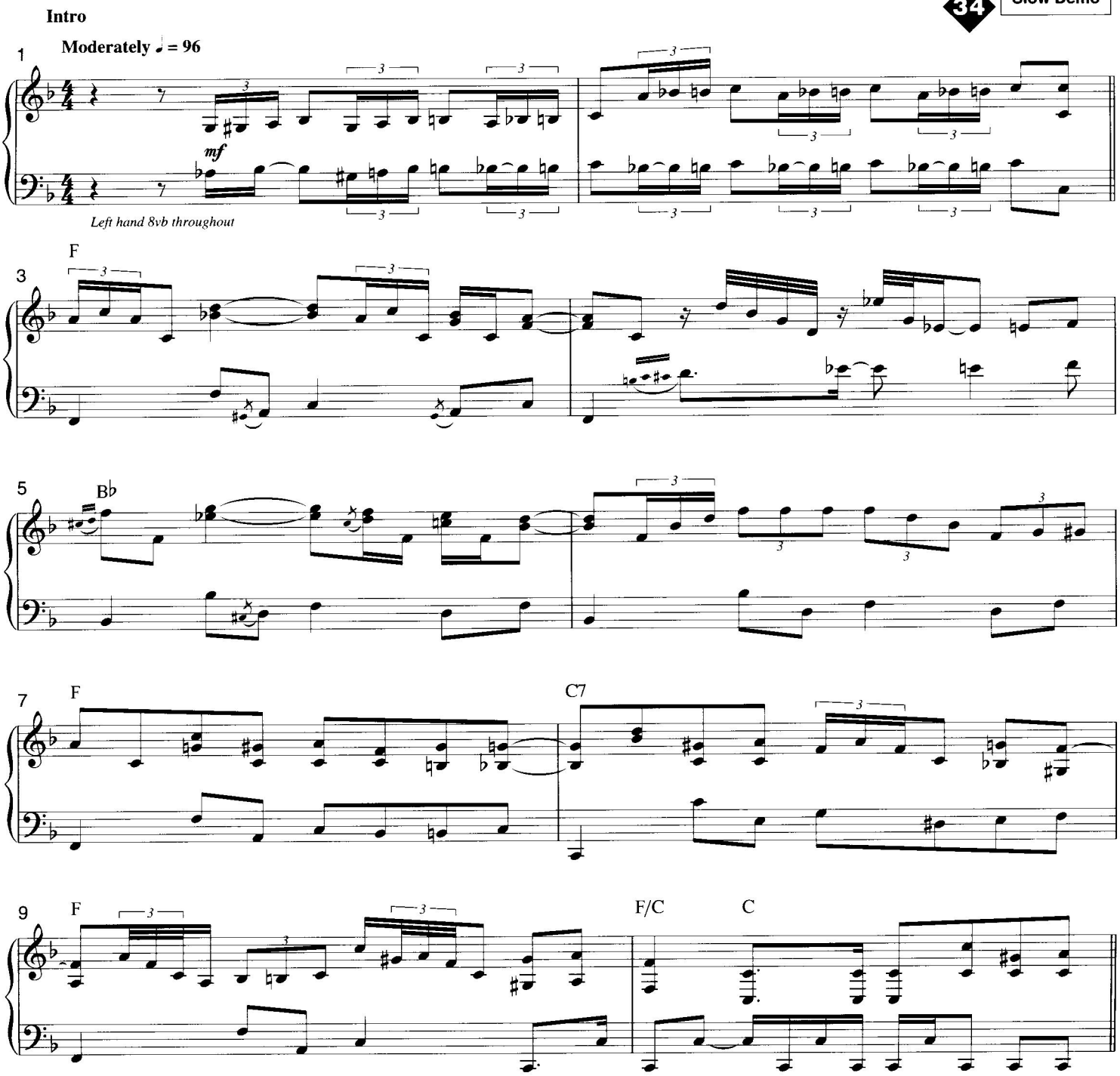

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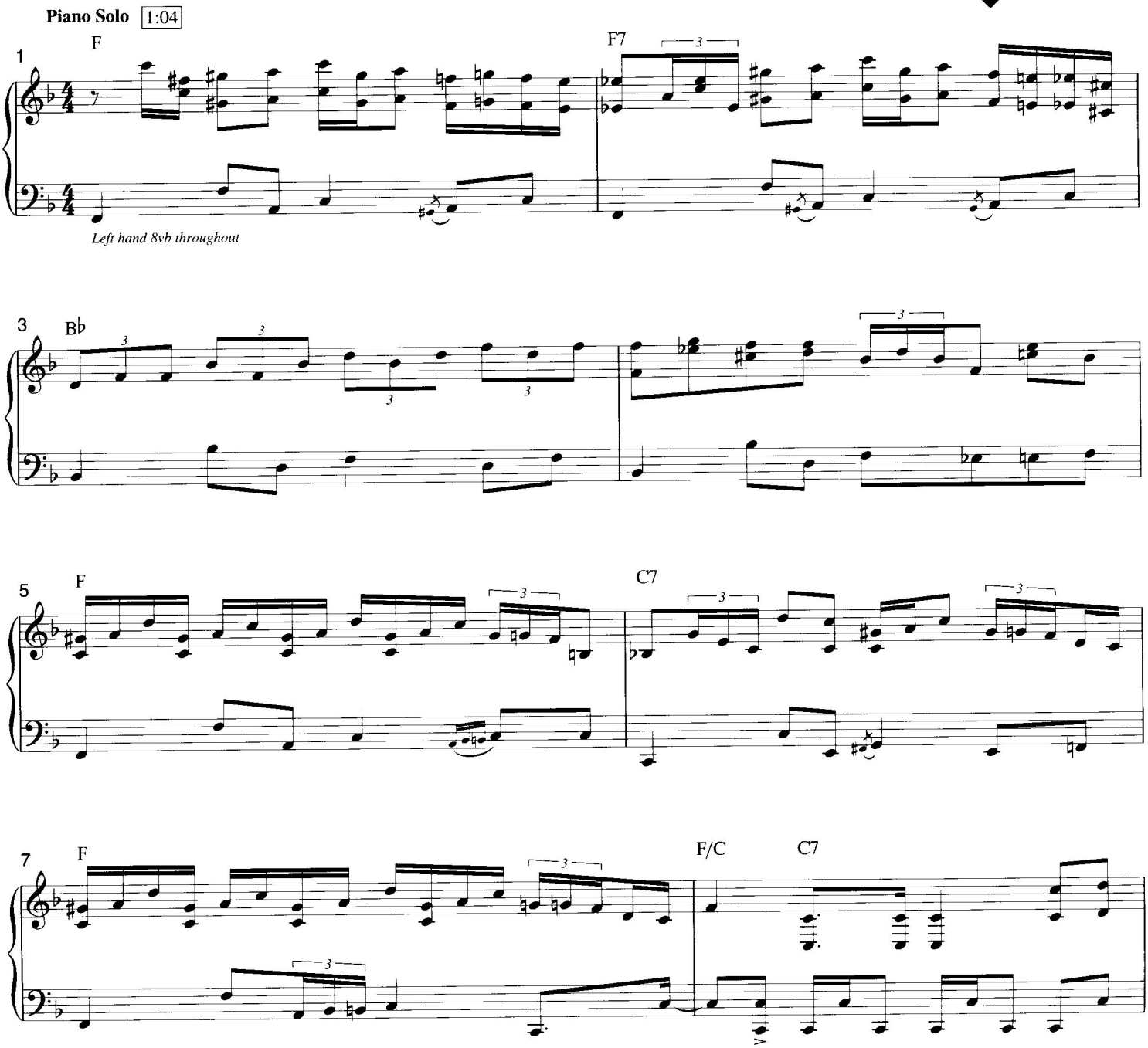
Figure 19 – Piano Solo

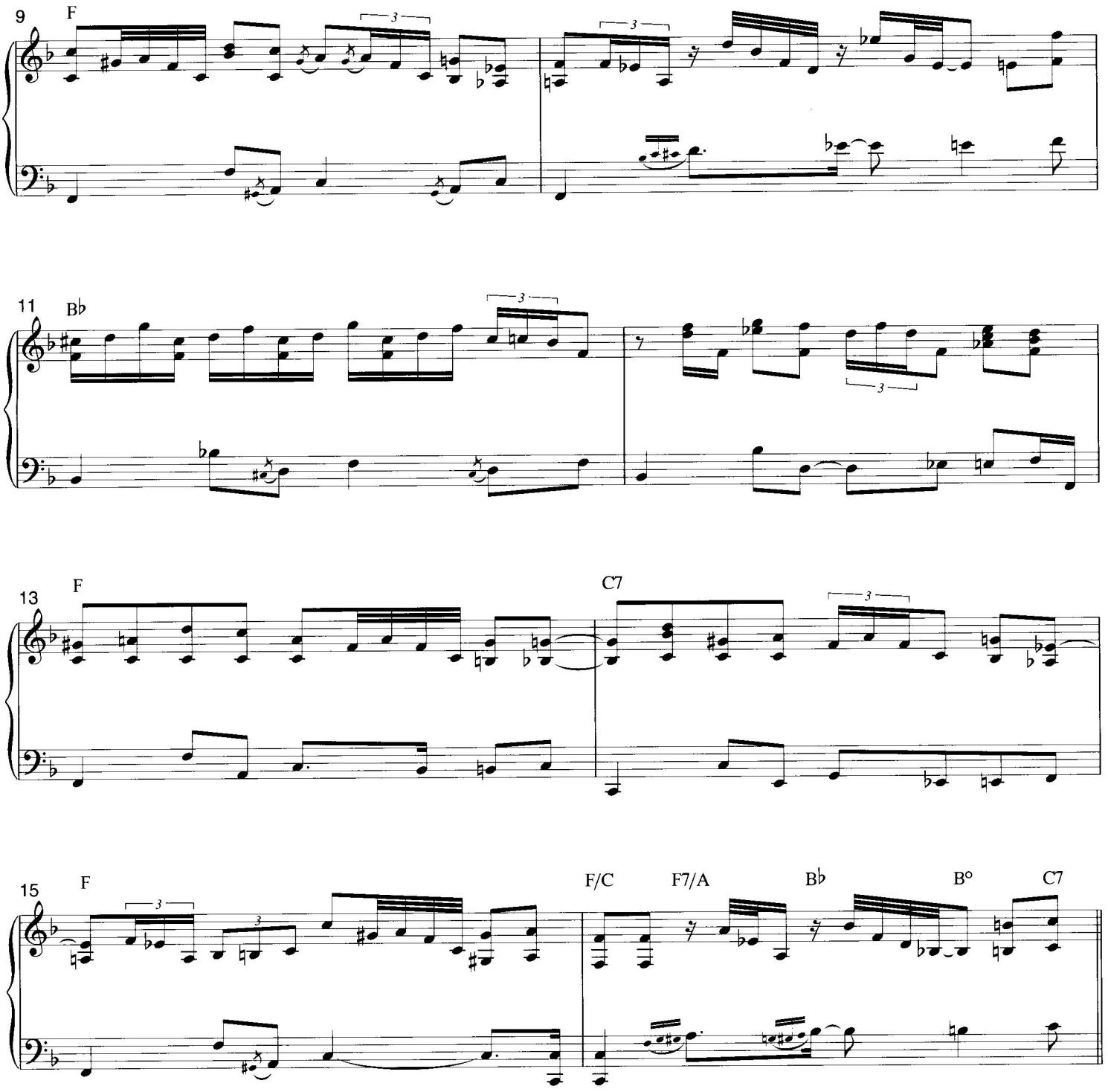
The piano solo represents two 8-bar choruses. The left hand keeps up its broken chord pattern, enlivened by the use of occasional grace-note slides, such as the ones in measures 2, 5, and 16. The right hand makes use of octaves in measures 1–2 and broken-chord figures in 3. Measures 5 and 7 feature a three-note melodic lick (G♯–A–D alternating with G♯–A–C) played in a syncopated rhythm—the three notes are played four times in the span of three beats. Dr. John plays the same lick at measure 11 over the B♭ chord. The short lick on the fourth beat of both measures 6 and 7 is based on the "major" F blues scale (F–G–G♯–A–C–D).

Throughout the entire excerpt Dr. John alternates G♯ (or A♭), which is the minor 3rd of the tonic F chord, with A, the major 3rd. For example, measure 9 contains three separate instances of G♯ sliding into A.

Fig. 19

35 Full Band
36 Slow Demo




9
F
11
B♭
13
F
C7
15
F
F/C
F7/A
B♭
B°
C7