

# Chapter 3: Introduction to Triads and Seventh Chords

MUS 112

January 29 - February 2, 2017

Mässig

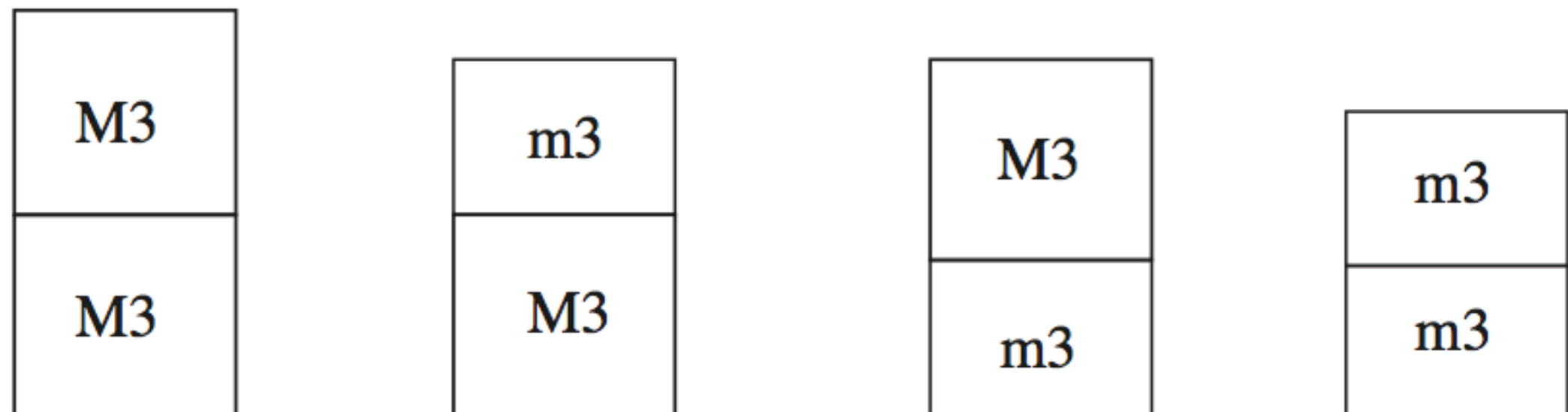
The image displays a musical score for a piano piece. The score is written for two staves: a treble clef staff (right hand) and a bass clef staff (left hand). The time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked "Mässig". The dynamics include a piano (*p*) marking and a crescendo hairpin. The melody in the right hand consists of eighth and quarter notes, often beamed together. The left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. The score is presented in a clean, black-and-white format.

# Introduction

- Chords are the basic vocabulary of tonal harmony

# Triads

- We will be building chords by stacking 3rds
  - Because tonal harmony is tertian (meaning built of 3rds)
- The fundamental tertian sonority is the triad.
- Triad is a three note chord
  - Triads in tonal harmony consist of a 5<sup>th</sup> divided by a third note to create two stacked thirds.
- There are four possible triads that can result from stacking major 3rds and/or minor 3rds.

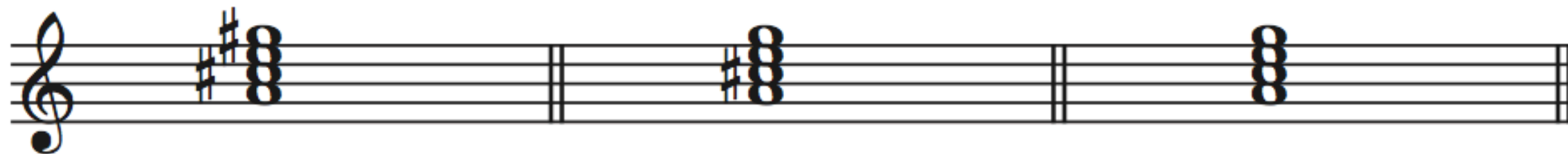


augmented (+)      major (M)      minor (m)      diminished (°)

Each member of the triad has a name: the root, the third, or the fifth

# Seventh Chords

- Let's extend a tertian triad by adding another 3rd on top of the 5th of the triad
  - We get a four-note chord.
- chords of this sort are called seventh chords because the interval between this added note and the root is some kind of 7th.
  - Major, minor, diminished, or augmented
- As you can imagine, there are many, many kinds of seventh chords. We will only need to know the five most common ones.



Type of chord: major seventh

major-minor seventh

minor seventh

Symbol: M7

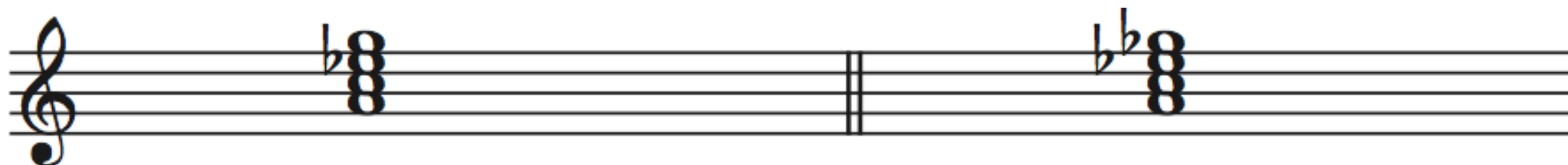
Mm7

m7

Construction: major triad  
major 7th

major triad  
minor 7th

minor triad  
minor 7th



Type of chord: half-diminished seventh

(fully) diminished seventh

Symbol: ø7

°7

Construction: diminished triad  
minor 7th

diminished triad  
diminished 7th

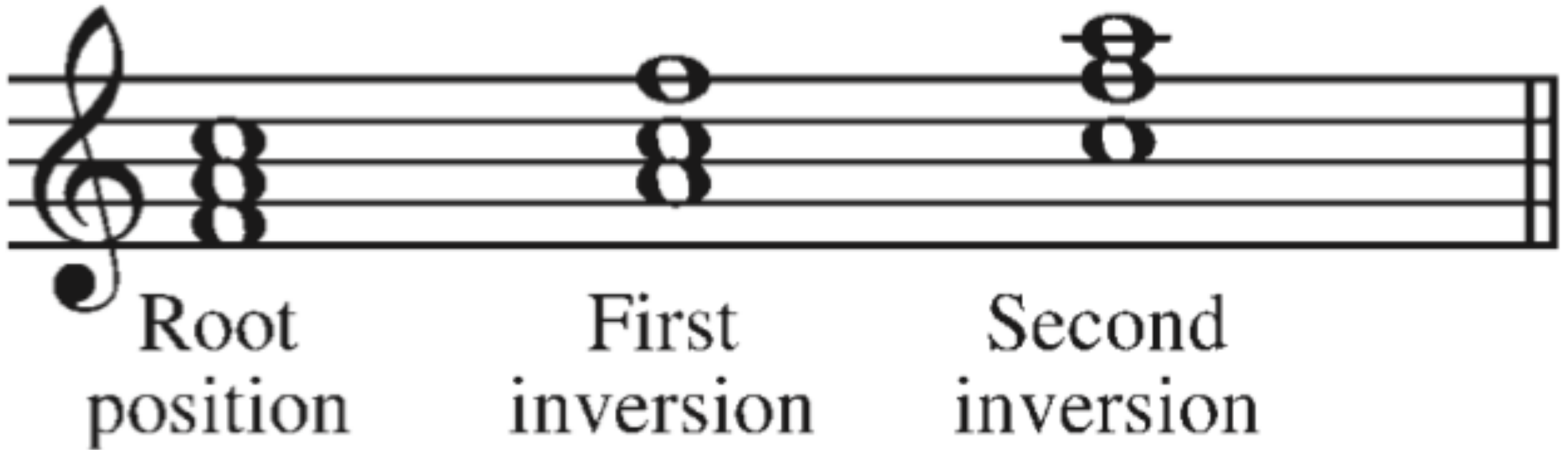
- *Quick note: We won't be doing any writing or composing with seventh chords for quite awhile, so they won't be referenced much in the text until Chapter 13*
  - *However, we will still need to know them for analyzing music.*

# Inversion of Chords

- Up to now, we have been notating all chords with the root as the lowest tone.
- However, any member of the chord can appear as the lowest
- There are three bass positions:
  - Root position: the root is the lowest tone
  - First Inversion: the third is the lowest tone
  - Second Inversion: the fifth is the lowest tone

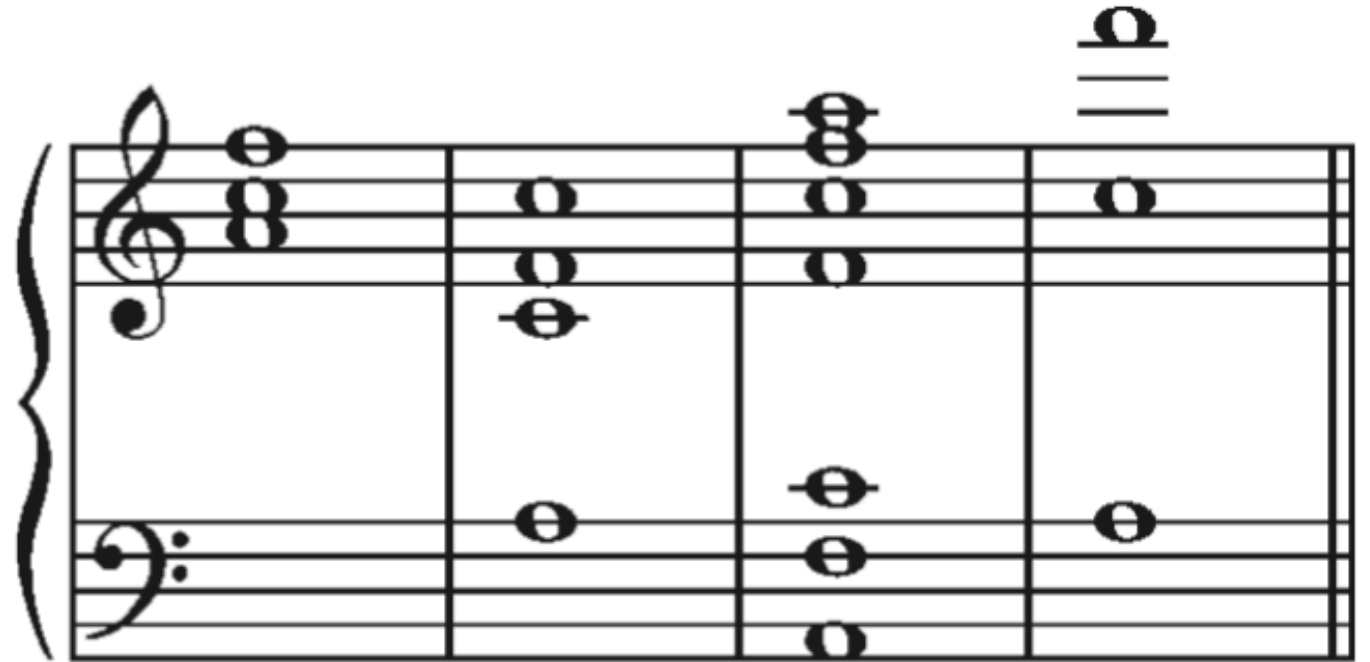


# F major chord (all sorts of ways)



# Doubling

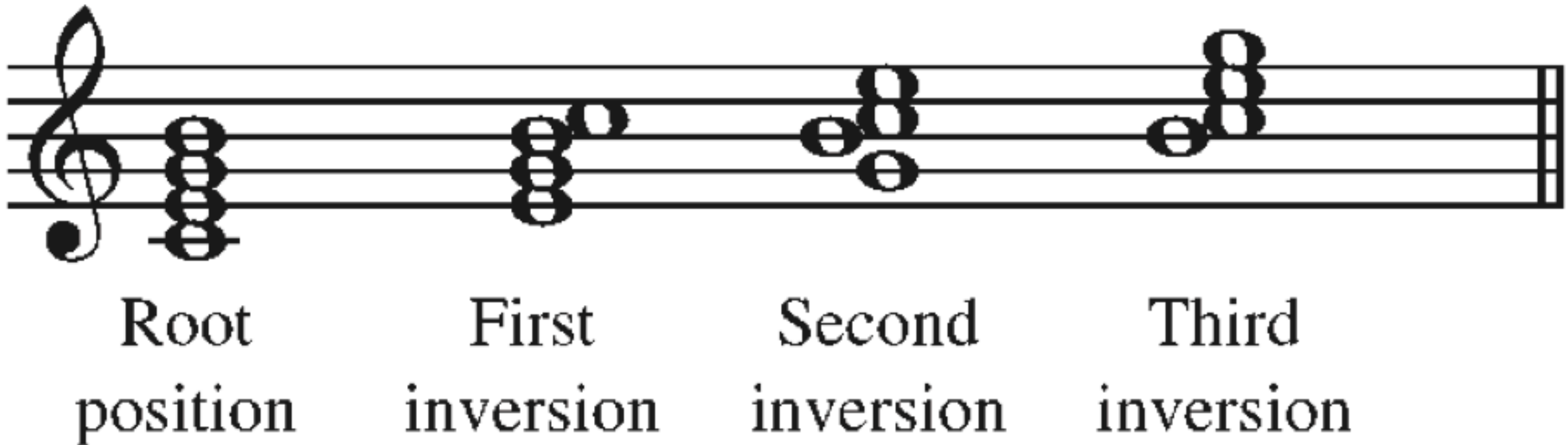
- Any notes of a triad can be duplicated, or doubled, in different octaves
- F major:



(All are in first inversion)

# Inversion of Seventh Chords







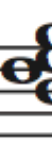
- Since there is an additional note in seventh chords, there is an additional inversion.



# Figured Bass

- Figured Bass: as system derived in the Baroque era (ca. 1600-1750) to allow a keyboard player to realize chords from a single note base line.
  - The player would receive a part with a bass line and symbols by the notes that would indicate which harmonies to improvise over the bass line.
    - It was also the responsibility of the player to fit in stylistically.
  - The symbols basically show which intervals over the bass to play.
- We have adapted this system to show the bass position of chords.

# Figured Bass for a G Mm 7

Sonority desired							
Complete figured bass symbol		$\begin{smallmatrix} 5 \\ 3 \end{smallmatrix}$	$\begin{smallmatrix} 6 \\ 3 \end{smallmatrix}$	$\begin{smallmatrix} 6 \\ 4 \end{smallmatrix}$	$\begin{smallmatrix} 7 \\ 5 \\ 3 \end{smallmatrix}$	$\begin{smallmatrix} 6 \\ 5 \\ 3 \end{smallmatrix}$	$\begin{smallmatrix} 6 \\ 4 \\ 2 \end{smallmatrix}$
Symbol most often used			6	$\begin{smallmatrix} 6 \\ 4 \end{smallmatrix}$	7	$\begin{smallmatrix} 6 \\ 5 \end{smallmatrix}$	$\begin{smallmatrix} 4 \\ 2 \end{smallmatrix}$
How to find the root		Bass note	6th above bass	4th above bass	Bass note	6th above bass	4th above bass

- This will be combined with Roman Numerals in Chapter 4

## Bass position

## Triad symbol

## Seventh chord symbol

Root position

(none)

7

Root position

6

$\frac{6}{5}$

Second inversion

$\frac{6}{4}$

$\frac{4}{3}$

Third inversion

(none)

$\frac{4}{2}$  (or 2)

# Bruckner: Tantum Ergo no. 4



Langsam

Choir

1

*p*

*cresc.*

*dim.*

*p*

Beethoven, Symphony no. 5 in c minor, op. 67, mvt. 1, mm. 6-15



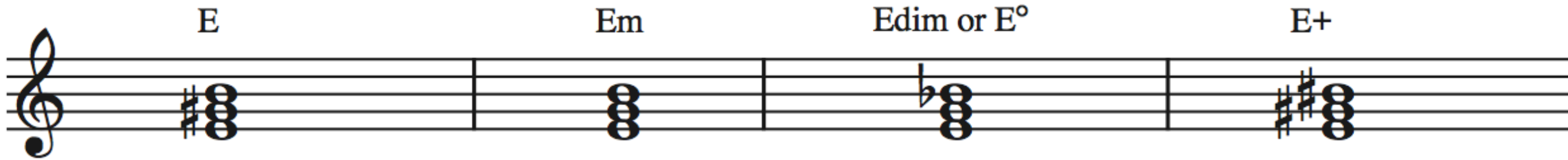
Allegro con brio

Orch. *p*



# Lead Sheet Symbols

- There are nine basic lead-sheet symbols you need to know
  - Triads:
    - Major, minor, diminished, augmented
  - Seventh Chords:
    - Major 7<sup>th</sup>, Major-minor 7<sup>th</sup> (dominant), minor 7<sup>th</sup>, half-diminished 7<sup>th</sup>, (fully) diminished 7<sup>th</sup>.



# Lead Sheet Symbols & Inversions

- To indicate an inversion with a lead sheet symbol, we write the lowest sounding note under the chord symbol (if it is not the root)
- For example, an Em chord with a G in the bass is in what inversion?
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Inversion
  - So we would write Em/G

26.

APRIL IN PARIS

- VERNON DUKE



Handwritten musical score for "April in Paris" by Vernon Duke. The score is written on four staves in 4/4 time, featuring various chords and melodic lines.

**Staff 1:**

- Chord:  $G7b9(4\#4)$
- Chord:  $Cmaj7$
- Chord:  $D-7b5$
- Chord:  $G7$

**Staff 2:**

- Chord:  $Cmaj7$
- Chord:  $G-7$
- Chord:  $C7$

**Staff 3:**

- Chord:  $Fmaj7$
- Chord:  $B-7b5$
- Chord:  $E7$
- Chord:  $A-$
- Chord:  $A7/G$

**Staff 4:**

- Chord:  $F\#-7b5$
- Chord:  $B7b9$
- Chord:  $B-7$
- Chord:  $E7$
- Chord:  $E-7b5$
- Chord:  $A7b9$

