LONG TONE *duets*

For Trombones

Ralph Sauer Edition

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Preface

When David Vining asked me to record one of the parts to his Long Tone Duets, I immediately rejected the idea. How was I going to insure that every note would be perfectly in tune and in time? How would I be able to adjust various 3rds, 5ths, 7ths, etc. without hearing the other player? How could I blend?

However, the more I thought about his idea, the more I began to see great value in the whole concept. Perhaps it wasn't necessary to make an absolutely perfect recording. It is more beneficial to learn to play with other musicians (including their faults) not computers, and with a CD such as this, the student would be able to play along with a human partner, not a computer drone.

So with all this in mind, David reworked the duets to eliminate the problem of my part having to adjust harmonically. To help keep the two parts together, we decided to include metronome clicks throughout each piece. We also decided to tune to A=442, which is common in the United States today. A chromatic tuner was used at the beginning of each piece to check the general pitch level but was generally ignored while playing the piece. Any faults on this recording will have to be compensated for by the "play-along" partner.

We recorded in a medium sized hall with a fair amount of natural reverberation. If you are playing along with this CD in a dry room (with little or no reverb), you will probably have a difficult time matching the sound on this disc exactly. Just strive for the best possible blend; try to match my dynamics—especially on the duets without dynamic markings; and try to match intonation with a human who might not be perfectly in tune at all times.

Welcome to the real world.

Ralph Sauer
Flagstaff, Arizona
Elevation: 7000 feet

Author's Introduction

One of the best ways to grow as a musician is to emulate the great masters of your instrument. In this volume of *Long Tone Duets*, trombonists have the opportunity to improve by playing along with Ralph Sauer, long time principal trombonist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. As you play along with Mr. Sauer, strive to match all the wonderful features of his playing, including his tone quality, intonation and articulation.

In order to imitate Ralph Sauer's playing, it is essential to listen critically to your sound in order to compare it to Mr. Sauer's and to respond by making the appropriate adjustments so your sound matches his. Critical listening and the ability to change in response to a perceived shortcoming are learned skills – ones that must be cultivated carefully over time and used constantly. The development of these skills is a primary goal of this book because musical growth depends upon them.

Long Tone Duets – Ralph Sauer Edition is based upon the first volume in this series (simply called *Long Tone Duets*). Some of the duets in this book are versions of the originals from the first book and others have come about through my collaboration with Ralph. As a result, this book not only captures Ralph's sound on the CD but also includes some of his teaching ideas imbedded in the duets. Number 1, for example, reflects Mr. Sauer's time as a student of Emory Remington at the Eastman School of Music. Here is perhaps the most famous long tone pattern, played by one of Remington's most successful students in the way he was taught.

There are two types of duets in this book: unison based duets and harmonically based duets. The unison based duets are numbers 1, 3, 6, 10, 11, 13, 17 and 18. In these duets, you play the same pitch as Mr. Sauer in an overlapping fashion, handing the melody back and forth. In all the other duets, the long tones are harmonized in some way. In both cases, it is essential to blend your sound with Mr. Sauer's and to create a composite sound which is always pleasing and in tune. When the two parts are perfectly in tune, whether the duet is unison or harmonized, the resulting sound is "beatless".

Duet number 2 (*C major – pitch bends*) is designed to demonstrate the difference between in tune, beatless intonation and faulty intonation. As you move the pitch according to the arrows, the two sounds interact in such a way that the pitches clash and beats are created. These beats sound like a sort of "buzzing" in the air or a disturbance in the composite tone quality of the two players. In order to play in tune it is essential to cultivate sensitivity to how the two sounds are coming together. Are the pitches cooperating in a pleasing, restful sort of sound or is there a clash of sounds producing beats?

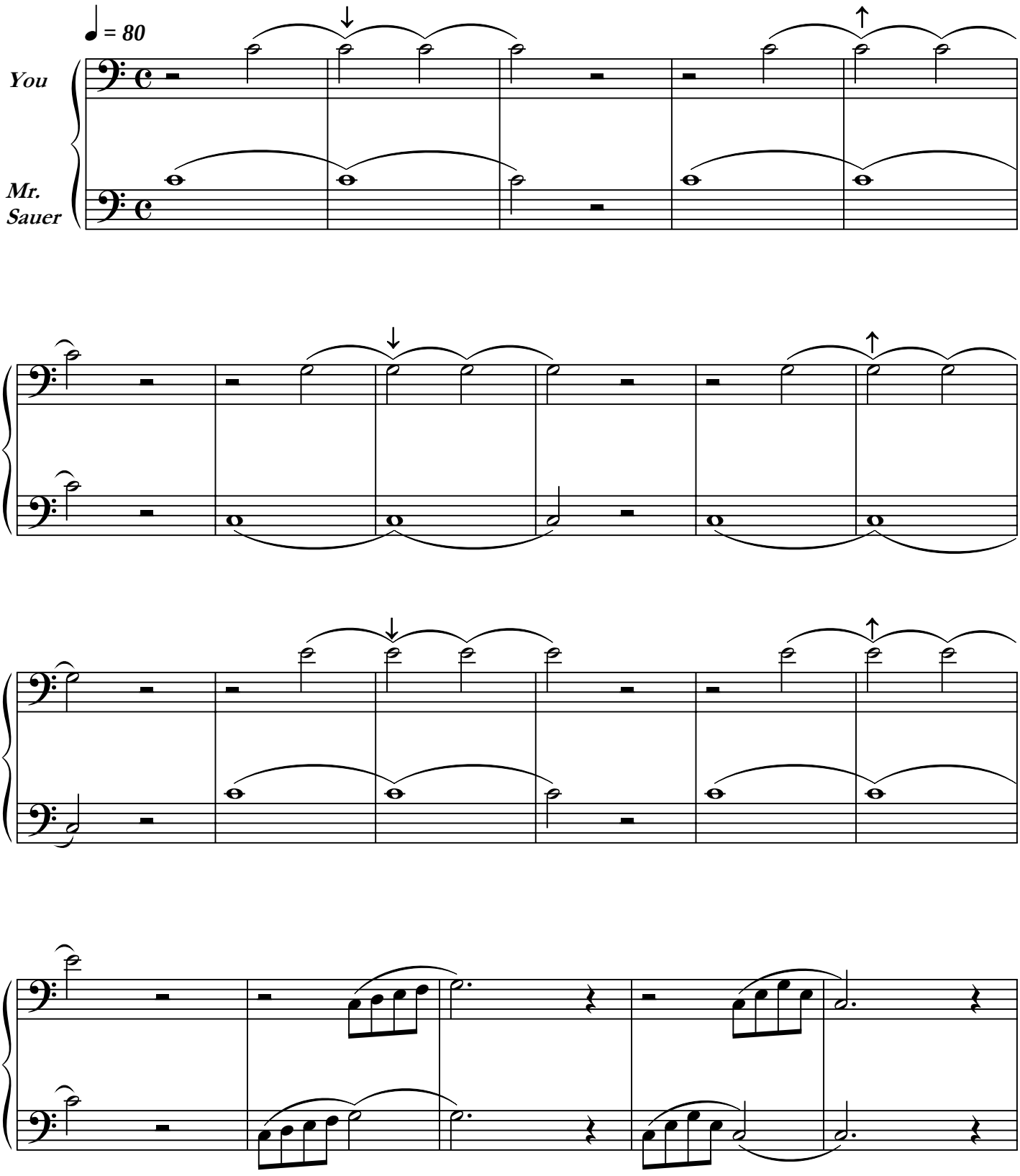
In the unison duets, it is relatively obvious how to create beatless intonation; simply play exactly the same pitch as Mr. Sauer and if there are beats, move the slide until they disappear. The harmonized duets, however, require the player to understand the harmonic function of their note and change the pitch of the note accordingly in order to produce beatless intonation. When playing the third of a major chord, adjust the note downward to produce beatless intonation. Perfect fifths must come up slightly and minor thirds must be moved upward as well. Of course, in order to incorporate these principles of intonation, it is necessary to have a basic knowledge of music theory and to integrate this knowledge as you play.

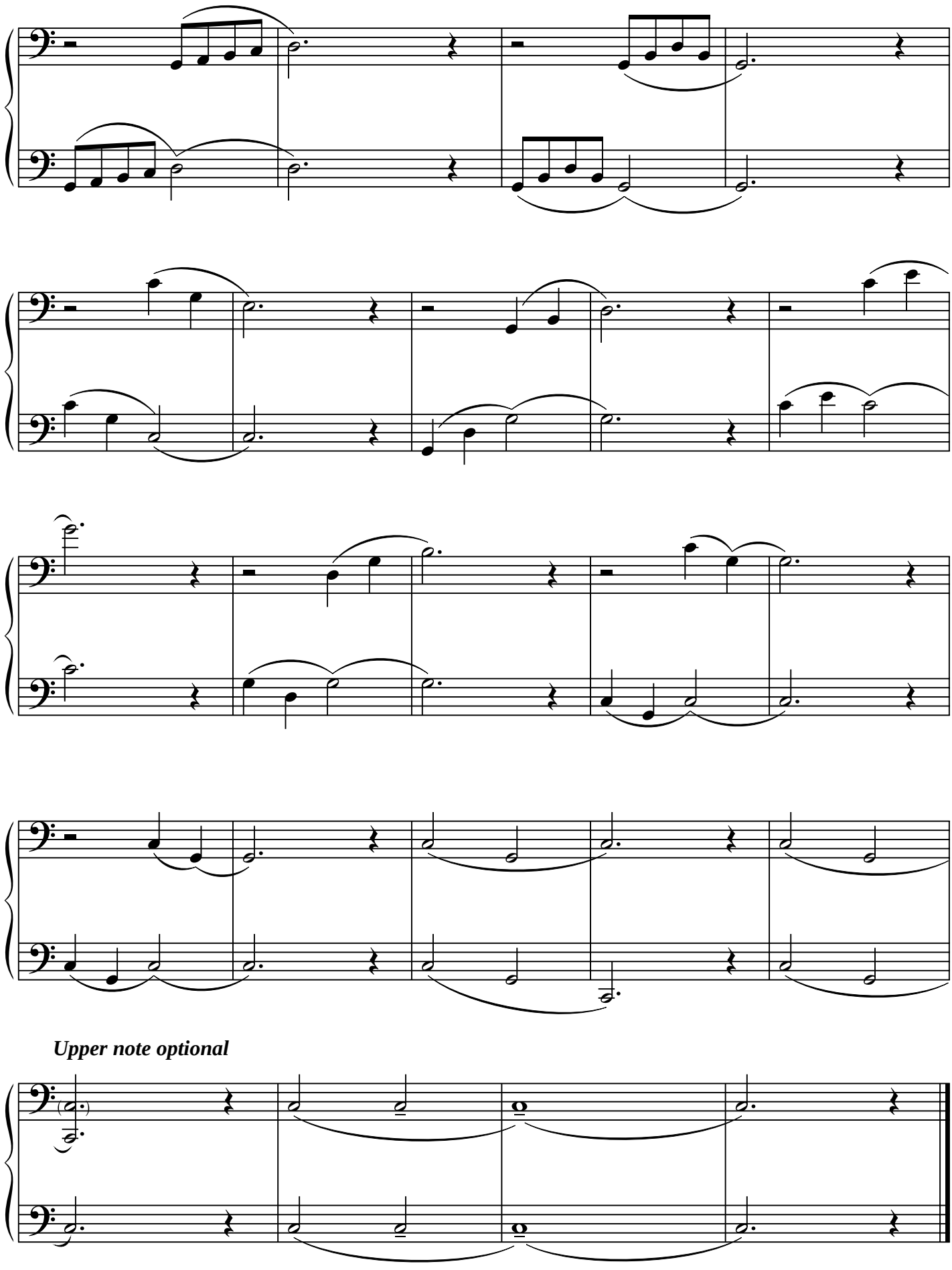
Ultimately, let your ear be your guide and always strive for a purity of sound between the two parts. If you strive to match Ralph Sauer's tone, intonation and articulation you will gain maximum benefit from this book.

2. C Major - Pitch Bends

↑ or ↓ = raise or lower the pitch slightly with the hand slide. If there is no arrow, play in tune.
When the note is in tune, the sound is "beatless"... The pitch bends will help the player hear how subtle variations in the pitch create "beats" in the sound.

Four clicks up front

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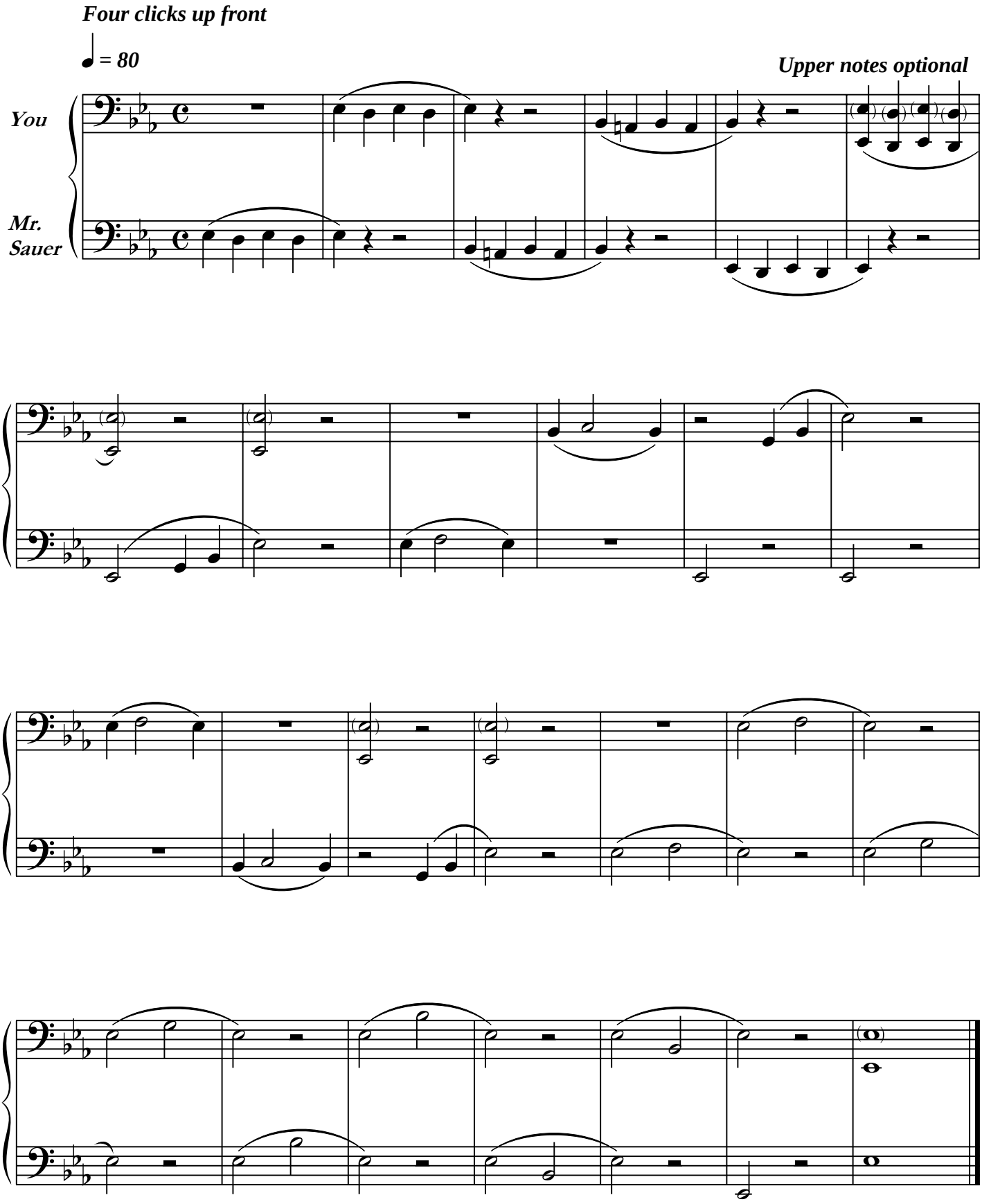
3. E-flat Major - Follow the Leader