First Masterworks for the Classical Guitar

arranged by

Richard and Kevin McChesney

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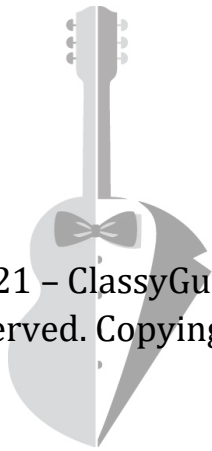

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First Masterworks for the Classical Guitar

Foreword by Kevin McChesney (2021)

My father, Richard McChesney (1934-2020), was a lifelong classical guitar enthusiast and an expert in music history, compositional style, performance practice, and classical literature. He brought his extensive experience as researcher, critic, and knowledgeable teacher to his arrangements, writing almost exclusively for guitar and for guitar with other instruments, notably flute and recorder.

His work went largely unpublished in his lifetime, though when my brother, Darrell, and I were growing up we performed many of his works in small recitals given by our family. However, **First Masterworks for the Classical Guitar** was published in 1978 and provided fine material for classical guitar students in their first and second year.

This excellent collection is here offered with the few changes to the original being some small matters of updated notation and technical considerations. The selections are generally in order of difficulty, easiest to most difficult. All are in the easy to early intermediate range.

These arrangements reflect my father's strict attention to stylistic authenticity as well as musical and technical clarity. They also show his energetic devotion to making beautiful and fulfilling music available to players at all levels of experience.

The comments in his Foreword as well as the superb quality of the arrangements show my father in the role he loved most: that of educating and inspiring people to enjoy the wonders of classical music. The Afterword reveals his light-hearted side.

Whatever successes I may have had in music are largely due to the unflagging enthusiasm and generous teachings of this man. I hope he will continue to broaden the musical lives of players and listeners through this collection and his other works.

Thanks, Dad.

Kevin McChesney

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First Masterworks for the Classical Guitar

Foreword by Richard McChesney (1978)

This collection is intended primarily for the classical guitarist who is in the first year to year-and-a-half of study, but the more advanced guitarist will find it very useful for sight-reading practice.

It seems a shame that little music by well-known composers is available to beginning guitarists except in a few commendable but expensive foreign publications and endless watered-down arrangements of familiar symphonic themes which are mostly quite unsuitable to the instrument. This little volume attempts to point the way to an improved standard of beginning guitar repertoire by master composers.

The music has been selected primarily from keyboard and vocal works by some of the foremost composers of the Western world. Although few of the pieces are really well-known, great care has been taken to choose pieces which are both suitable to the guitar and reasonably typical of their composers.

The word "transcription," presumably intended to imply a more literal rendering of the original music than an "arrangement," is considerably overworked in the guitar literature. The composer's music, after all, would have been quite different anyway had he himself written it for the guitar instead of the piano or harpsichord. Accordingly, since none of the pieces in this album were originally intended for the guitar, no apology is made for describing all of them as "arranged." One item is actually an arrangement of an arrangement: Brahms' folk-song settings are among his most charming output and most of his other works, unfortunately, are too pianistic to be performed convincingly on the guitar at an elementary technical level.

In accordance with the prevailing practice in guitar arrangements of pre-20th century music, no tempo indications are given. Few dynamic markings are provided and these are purely editorial. Such directions that have come down to us through the years are largely untrustworthy as they are seldom the composer's own. A little experimentation will reveal the speed and general dynamic level at which each piece seems most effective.

Left-hand fingerings are given except where they are obvious from what has gone before or when there are multiple solutions that allow ease of execution. Since the right hand has only minimal technical problems, right-hand fingerings are largely self-evident and so have been omitted in the interest of improved legibility.

RICHARD MCCHESNEY

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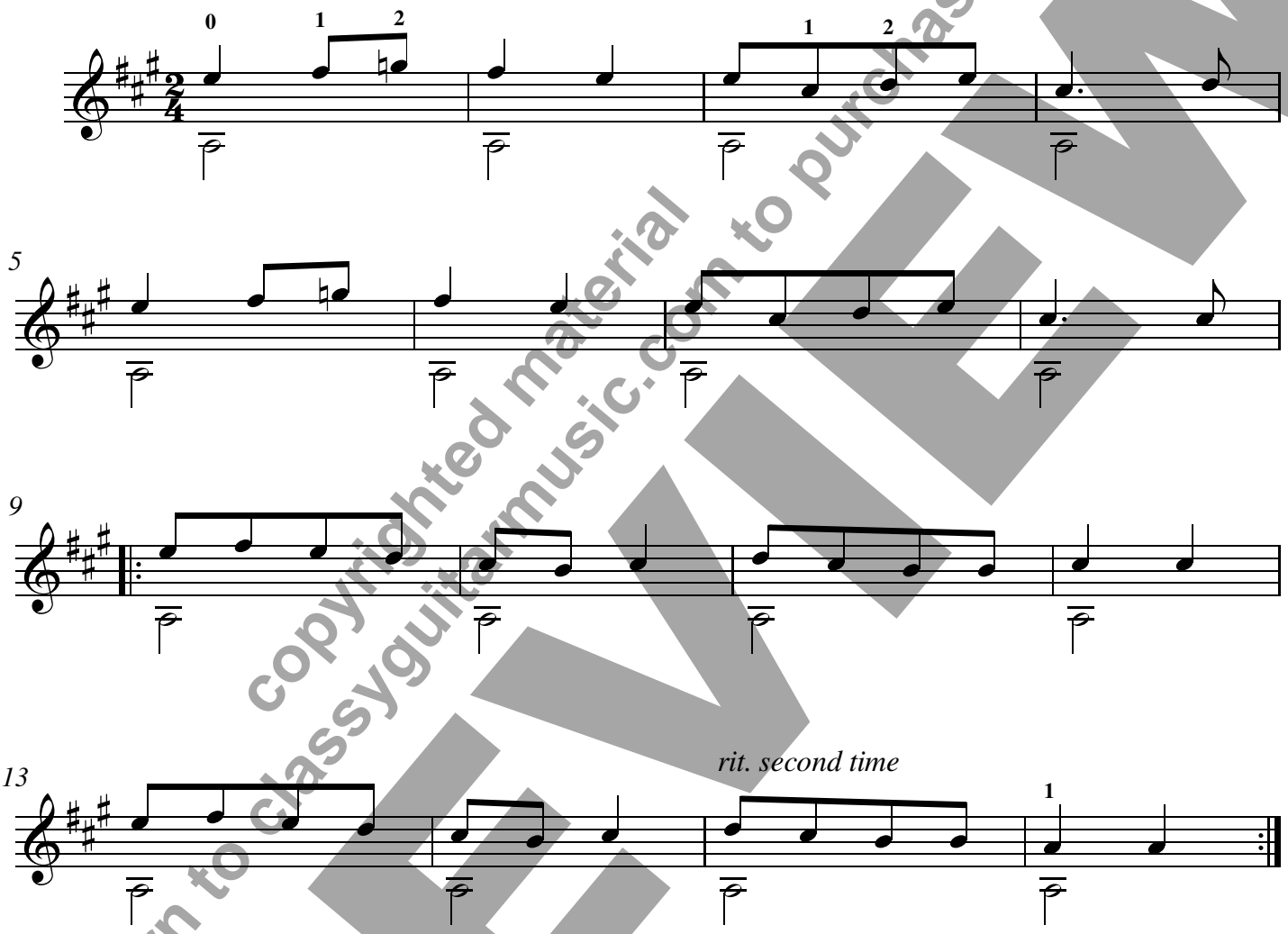
Musette

Anon., 17th Century Serbian
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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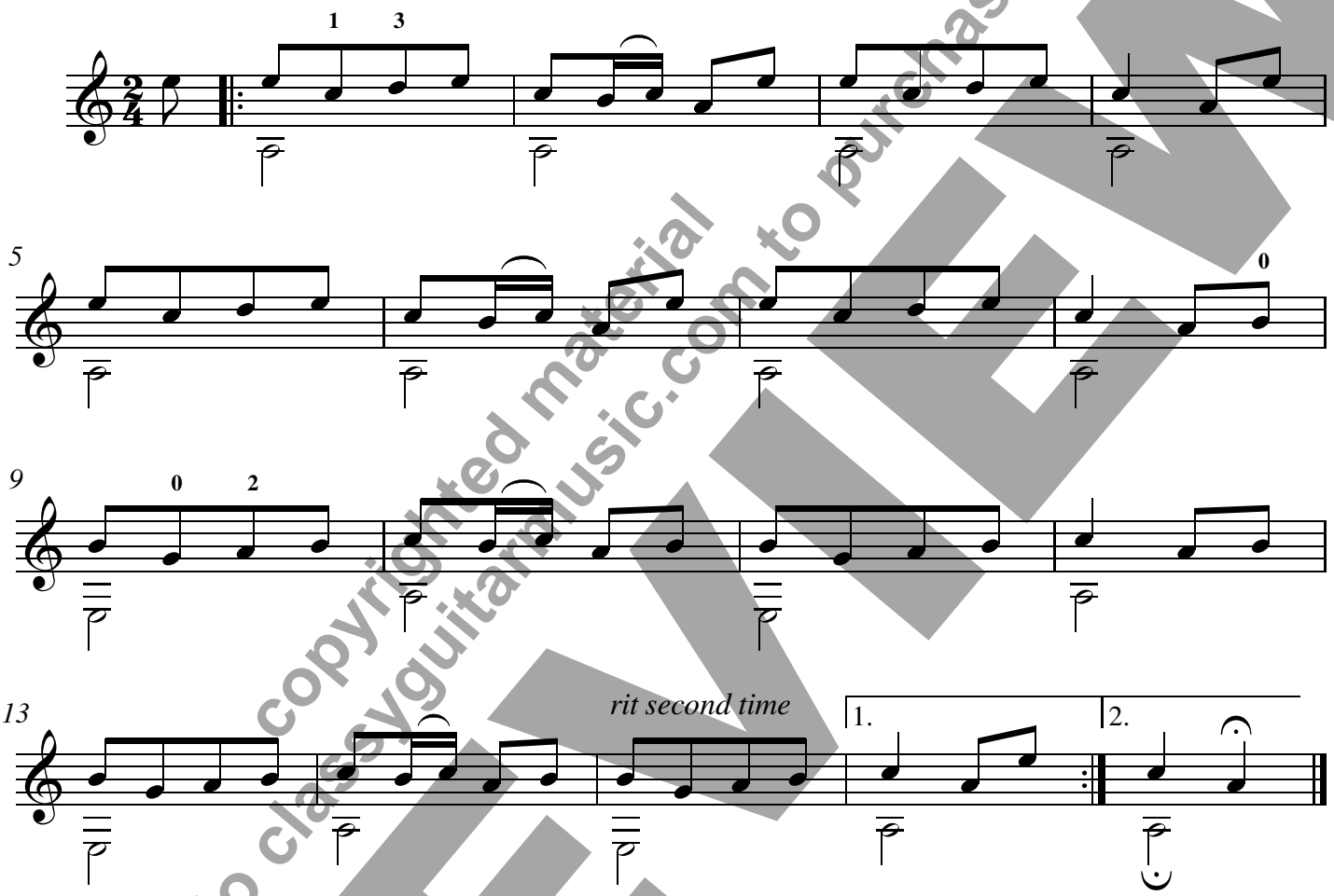
Nonesuch

Anon., Playford Collection, 17th Century English
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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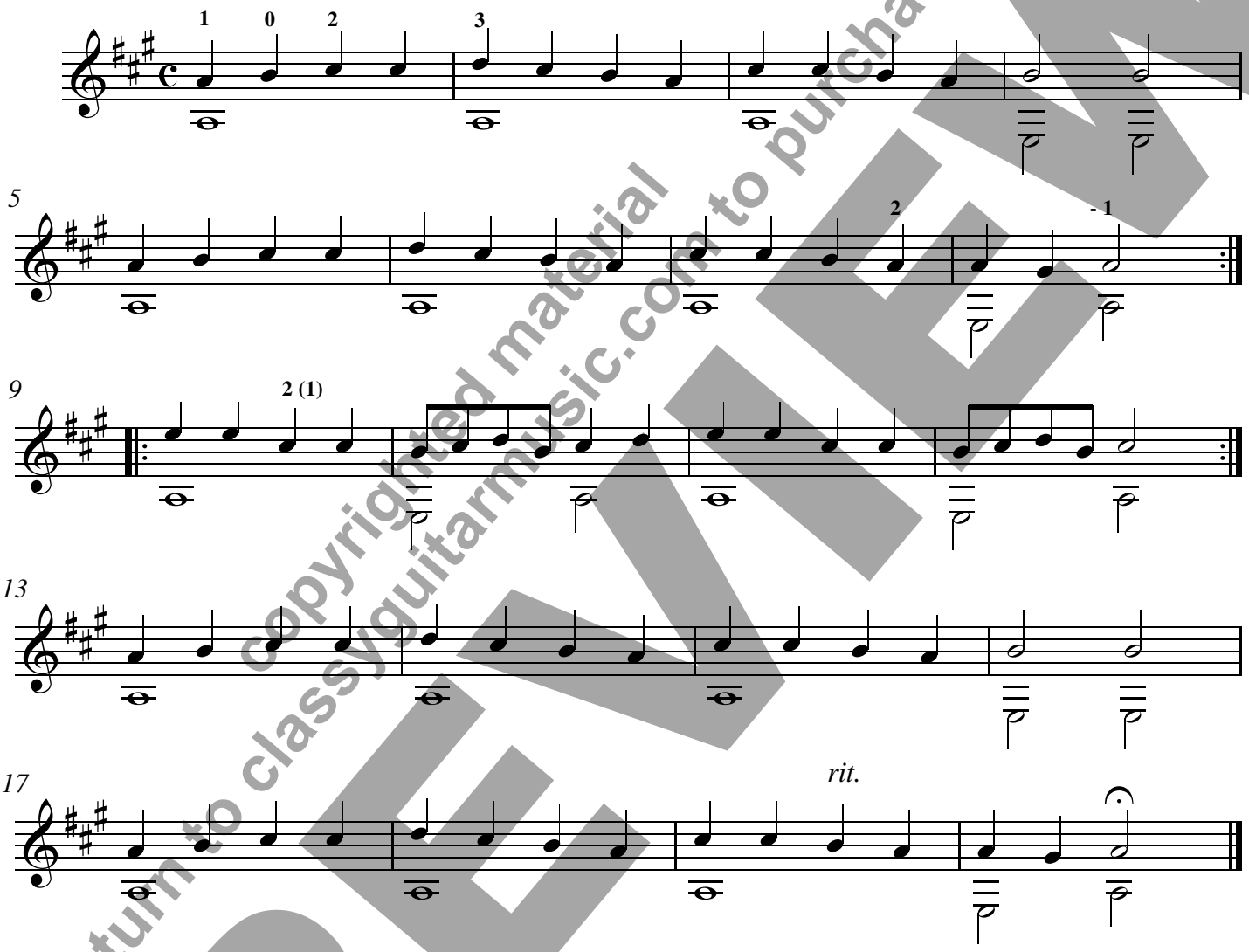
Branle

Claude Gervaise
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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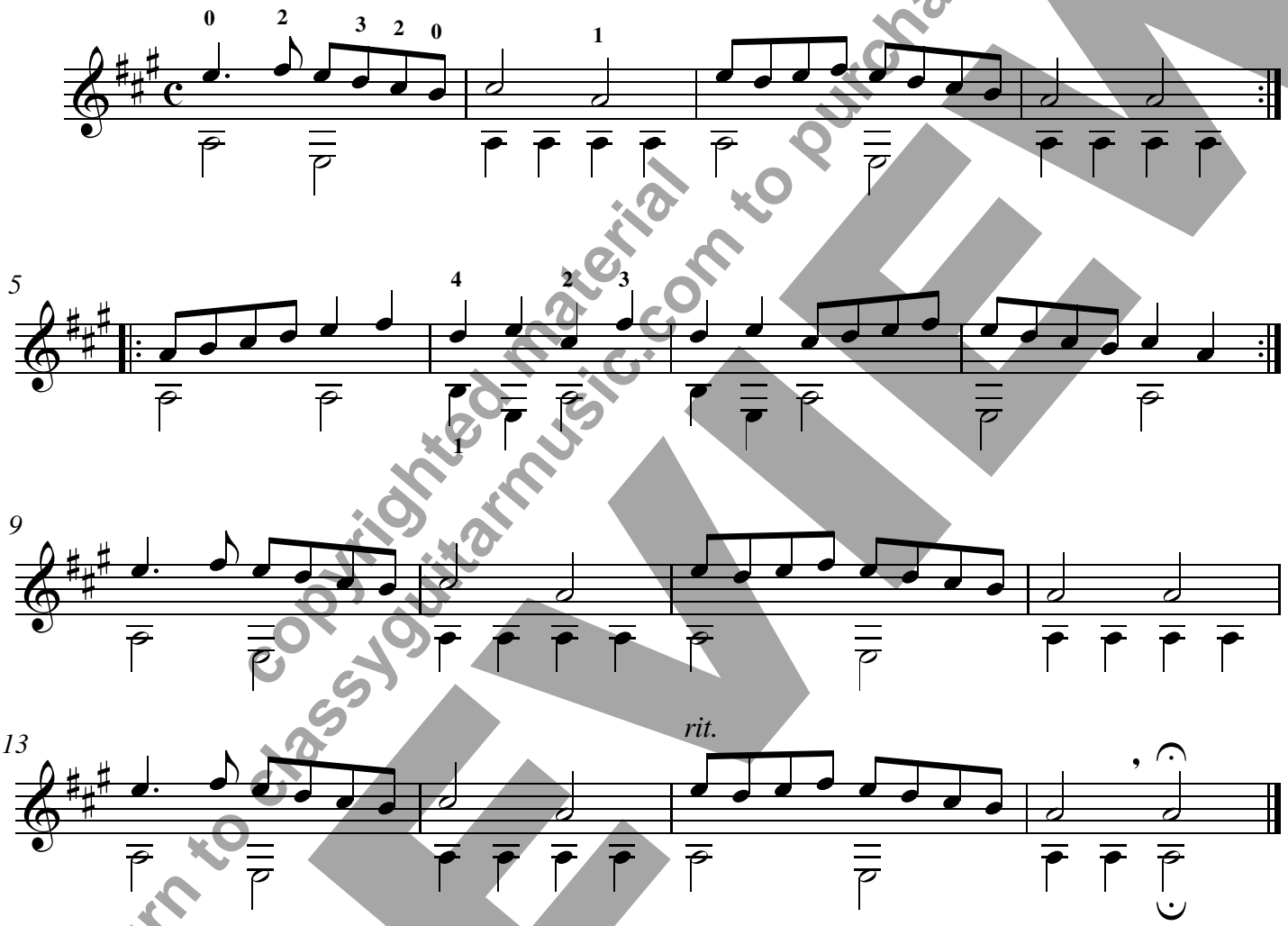
Allemande

Claude Gervaise
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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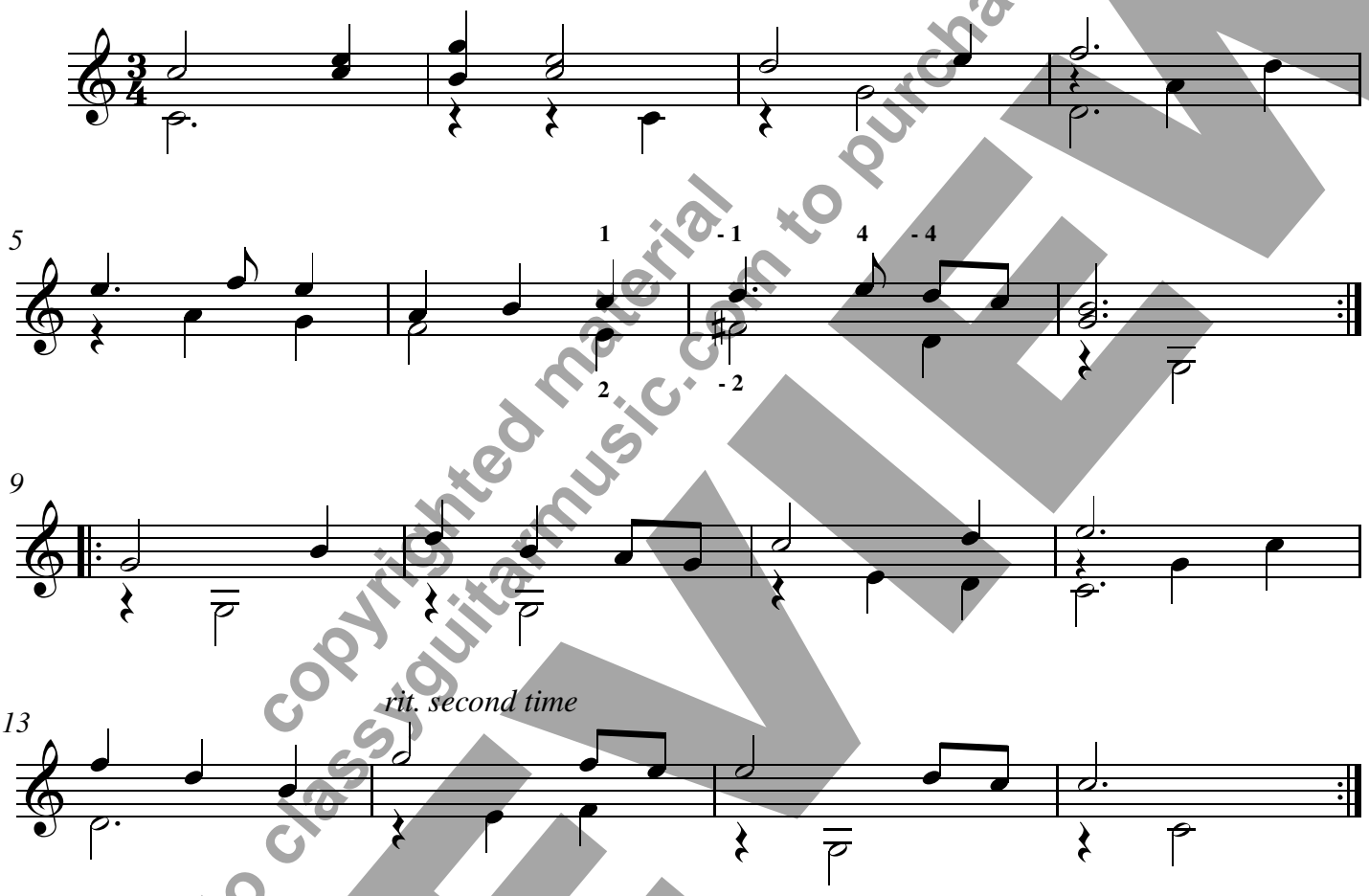
Song Tune

Henry Purcell
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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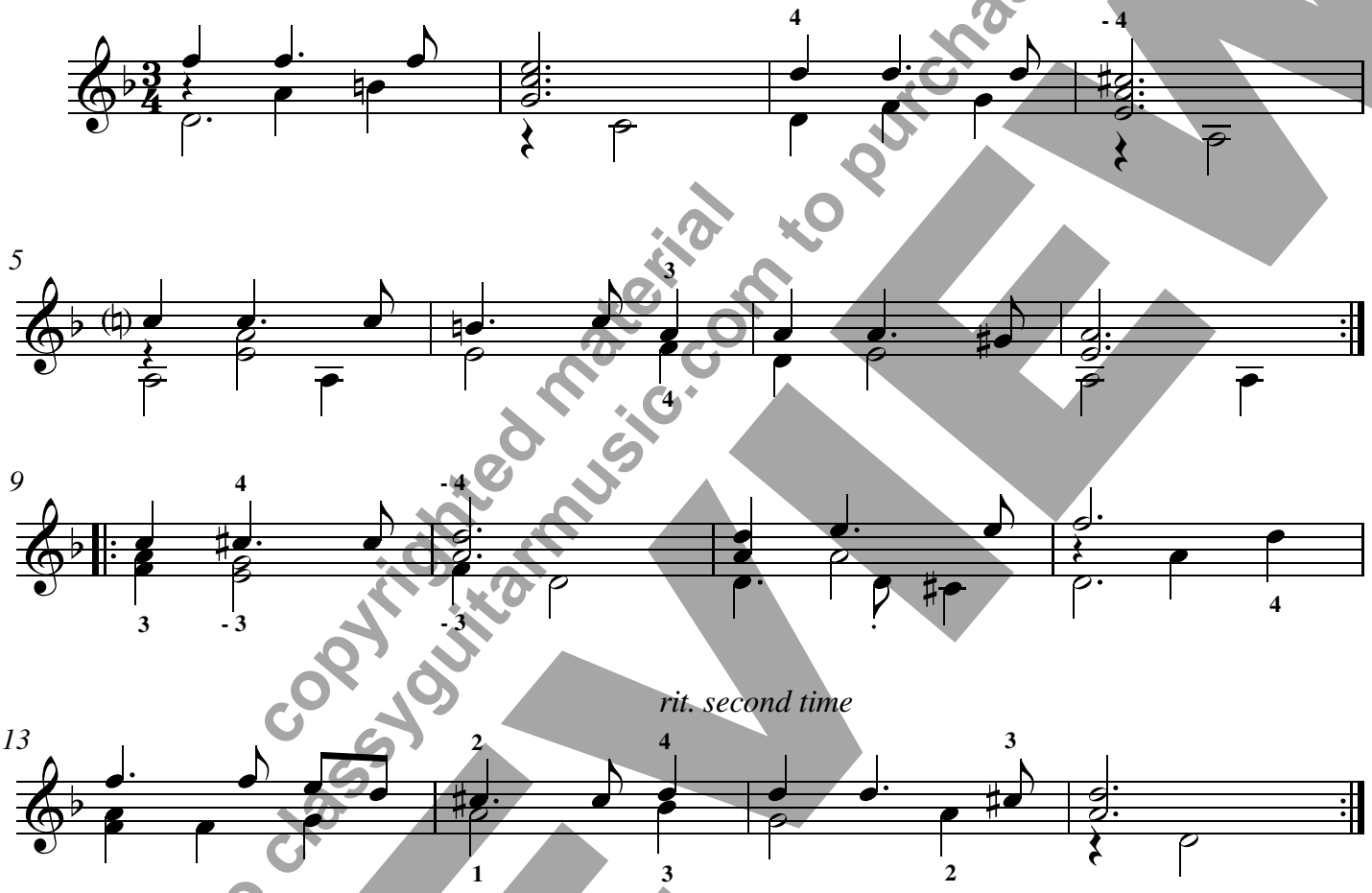
Sarabande

Johann Jakob Froberger
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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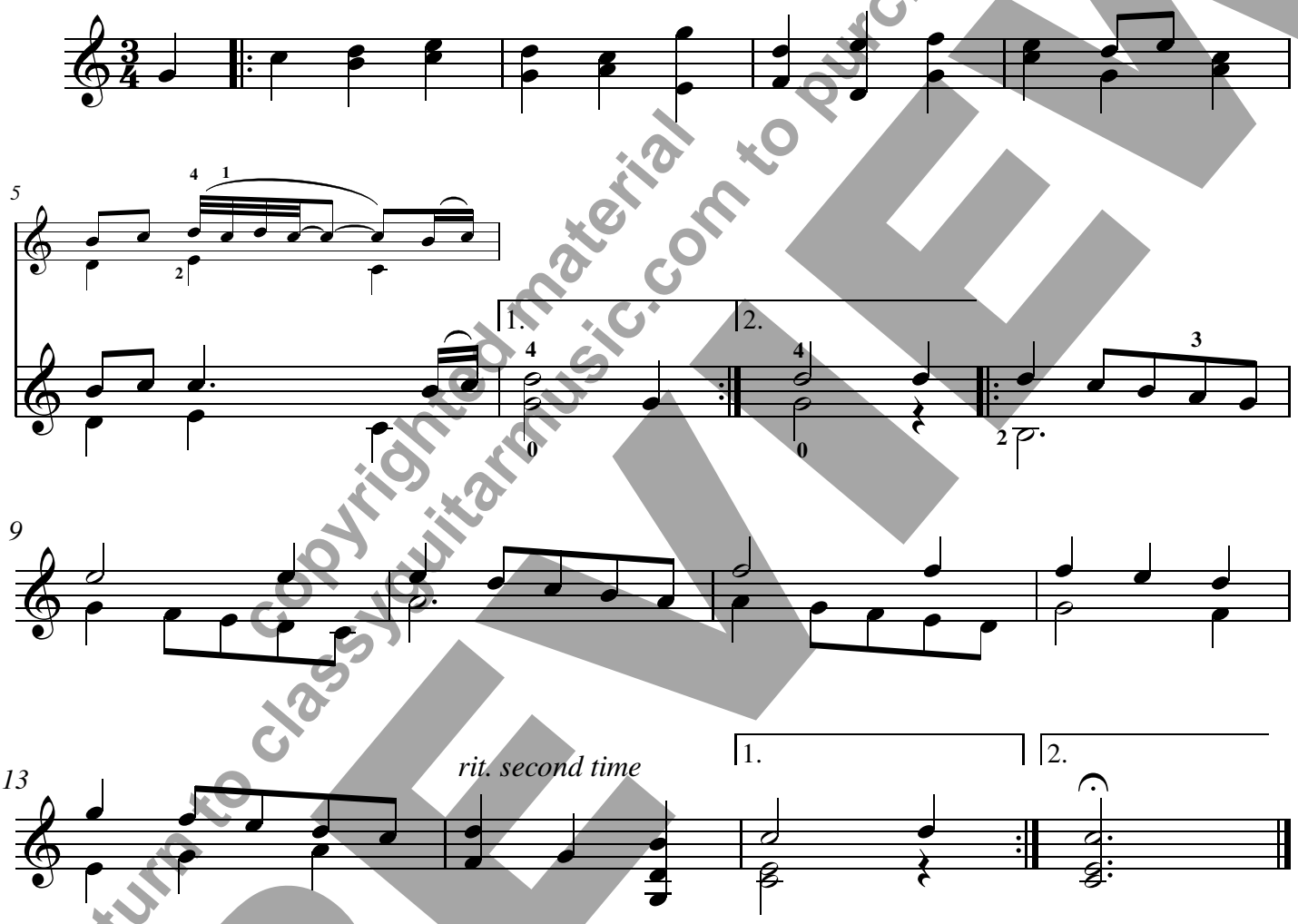
Passepied

George Frederic Handel
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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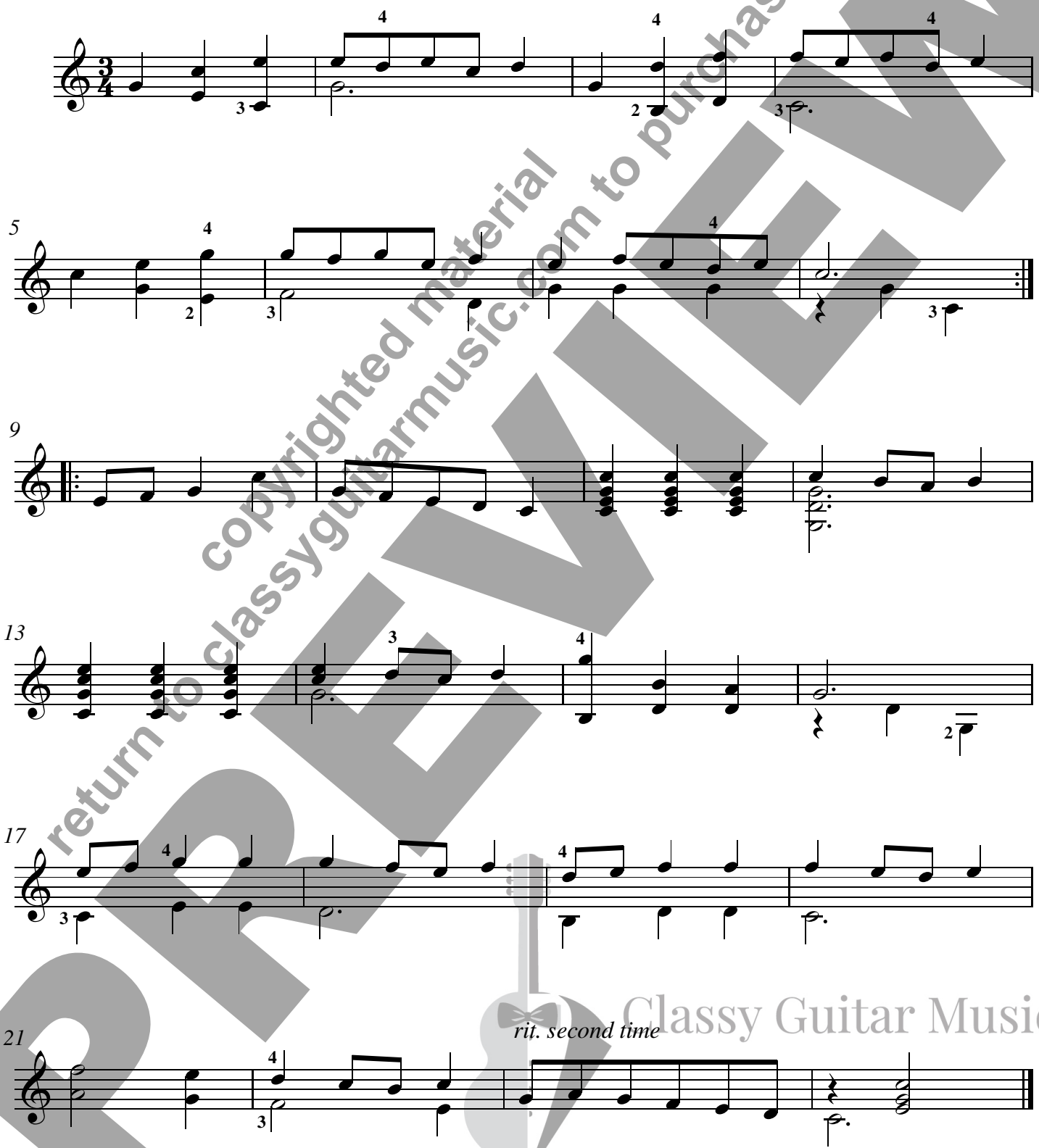
Minuet

Anon., 18th Century German
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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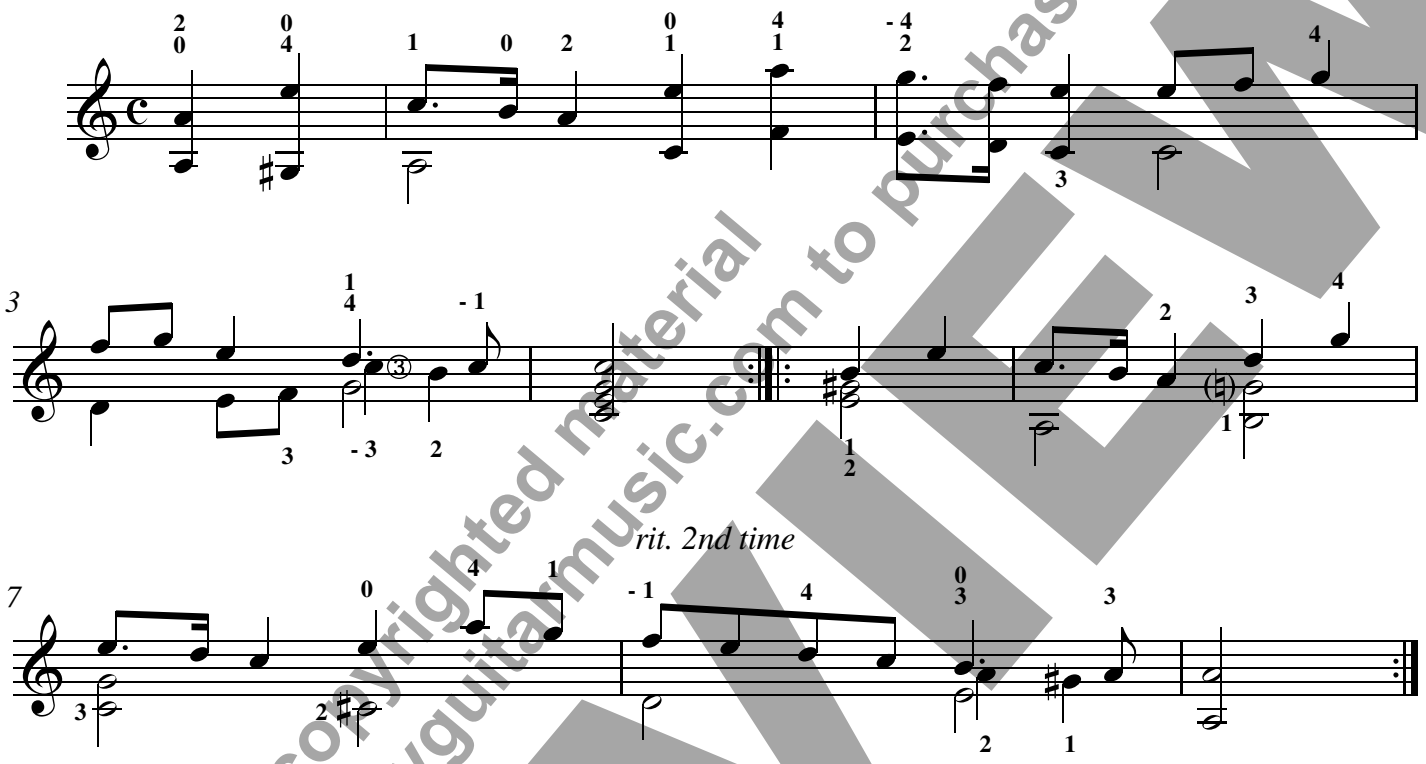
Gavotte

Johann Pachelbel
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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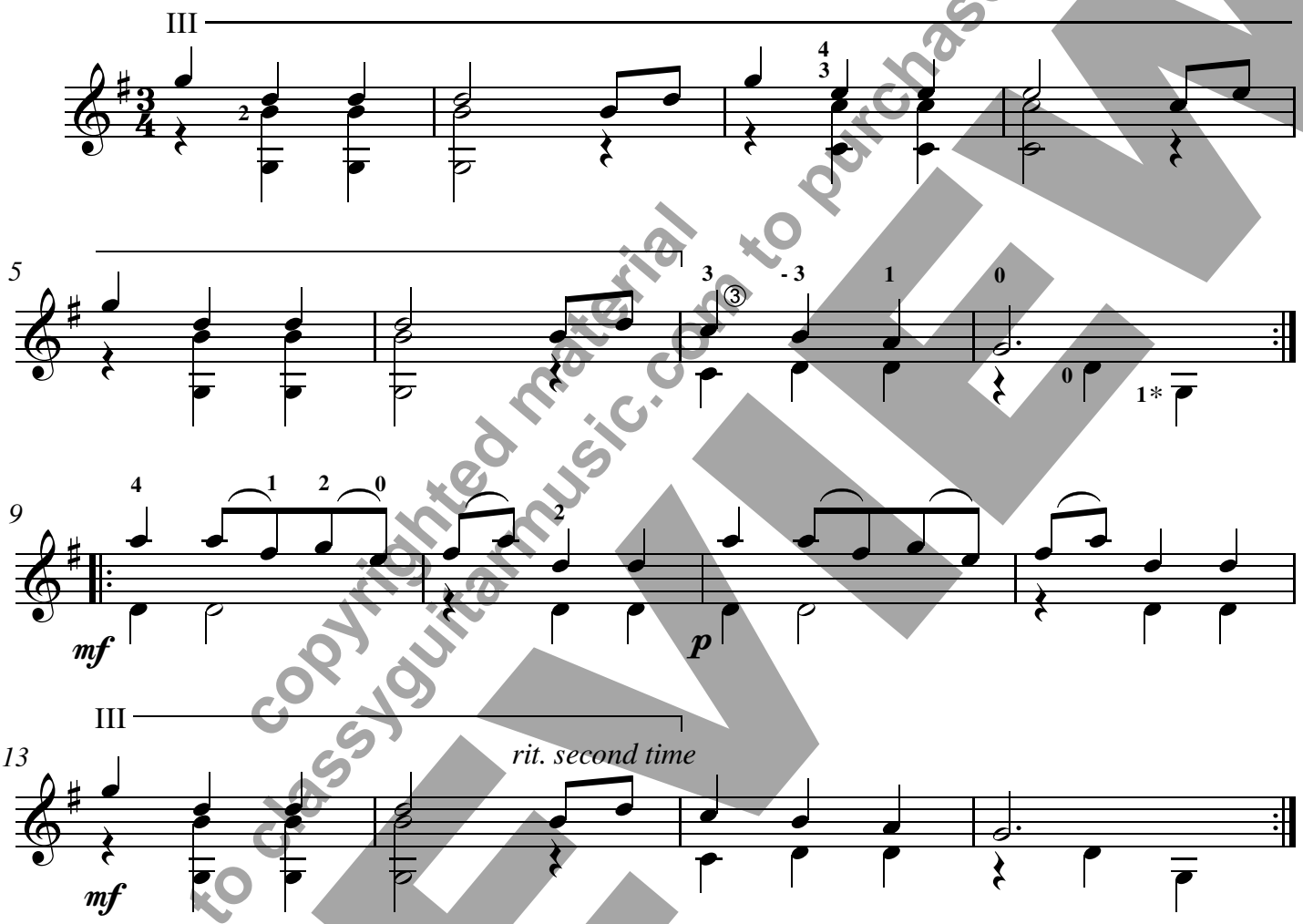
Minuet

Leopold Mozart
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



*On repeat, first finger may be used to "hinge" into the full bar.

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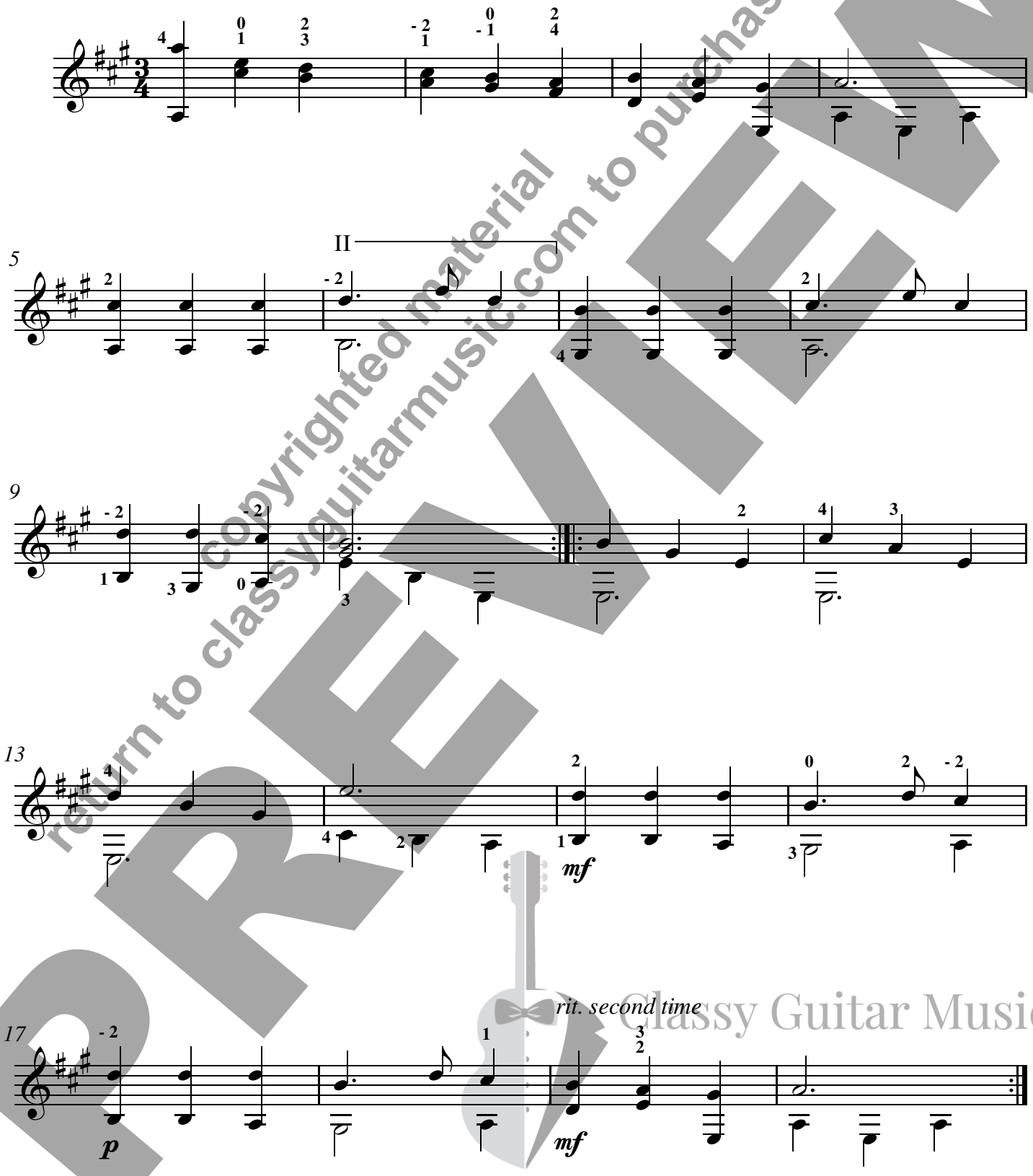
Minuet

Leopold Mozart
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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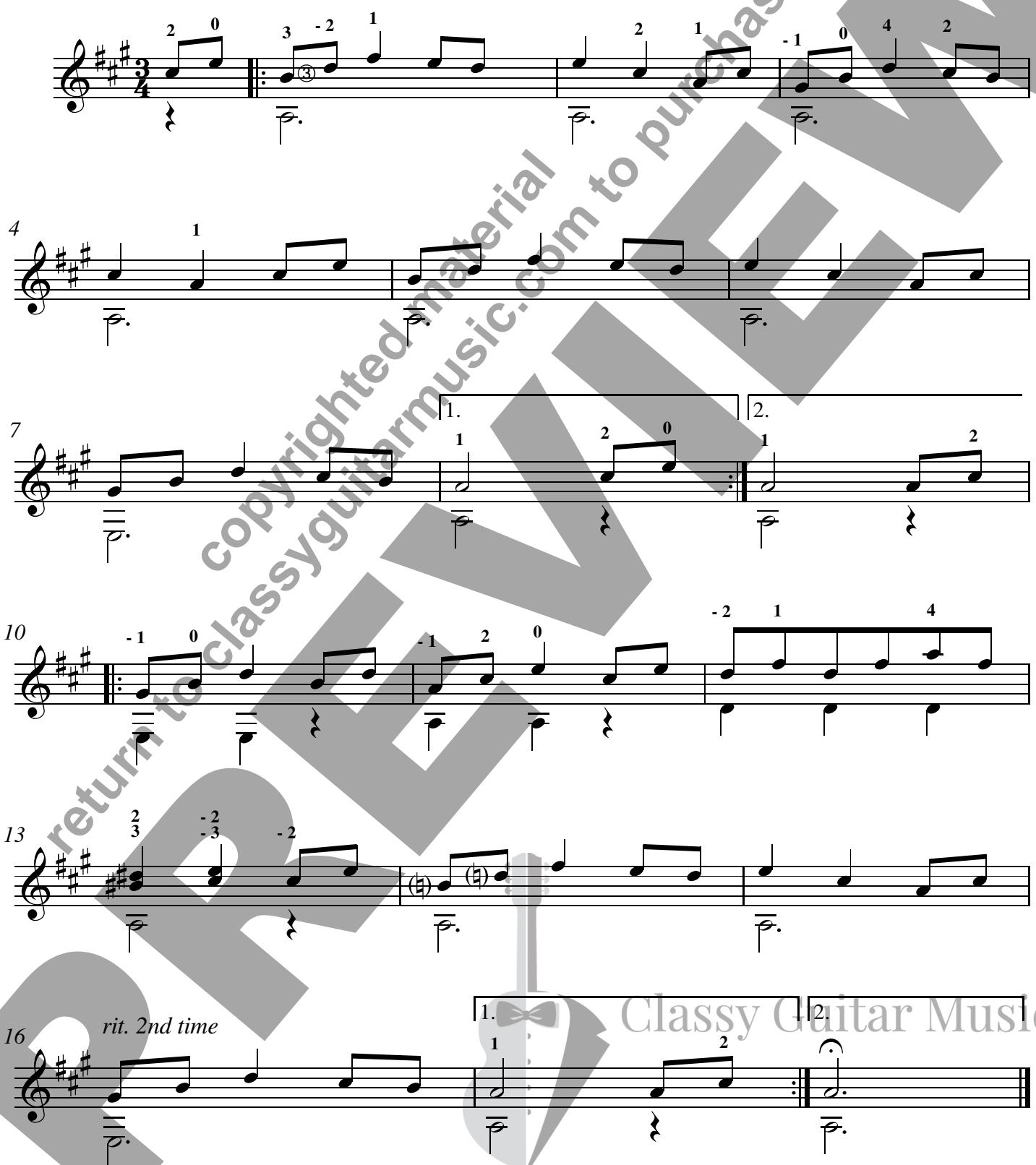
German Dance

Ludwig van Beethoven
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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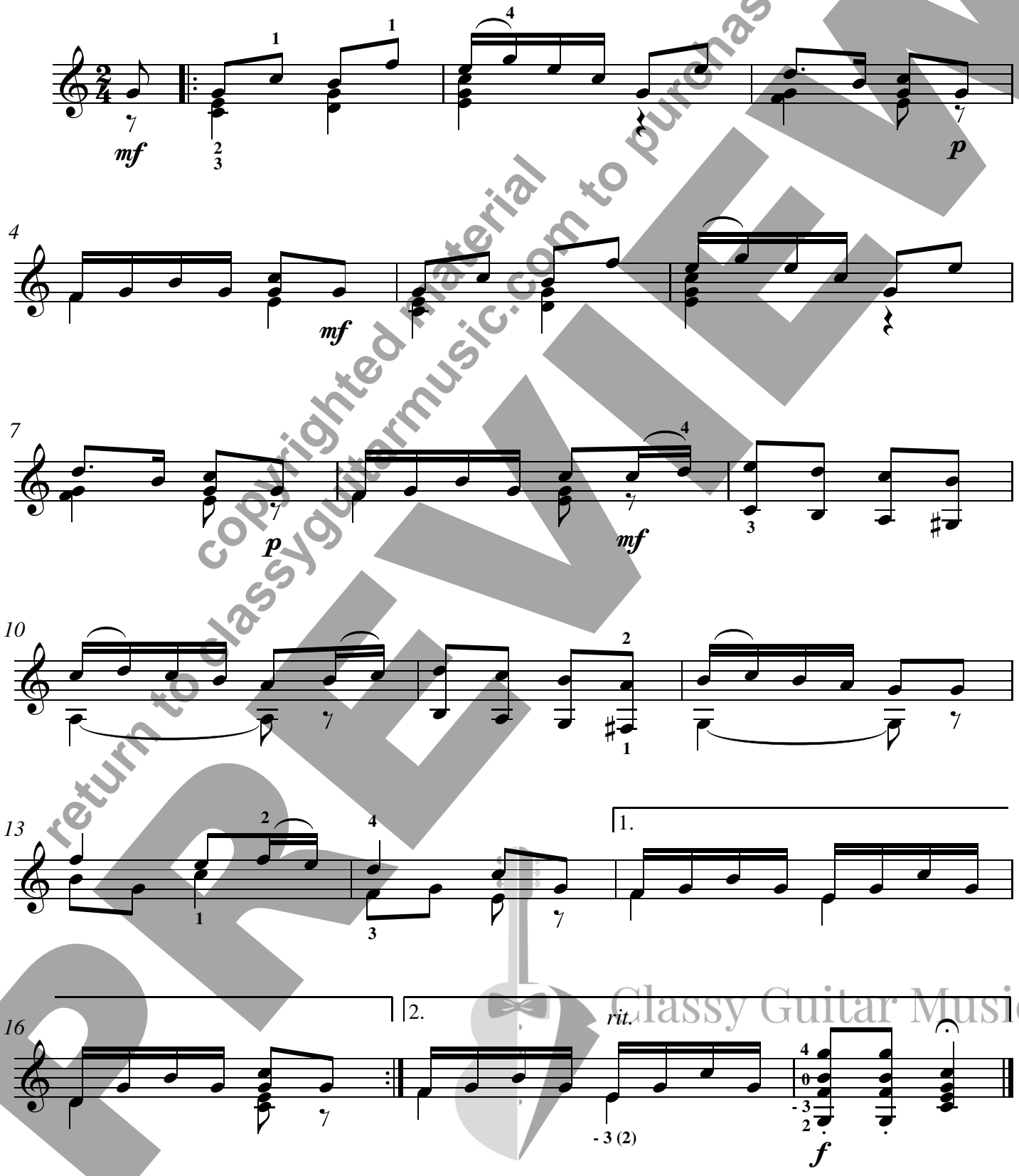
Das Wandern

(Wandering)

from a song by Franz Schubert
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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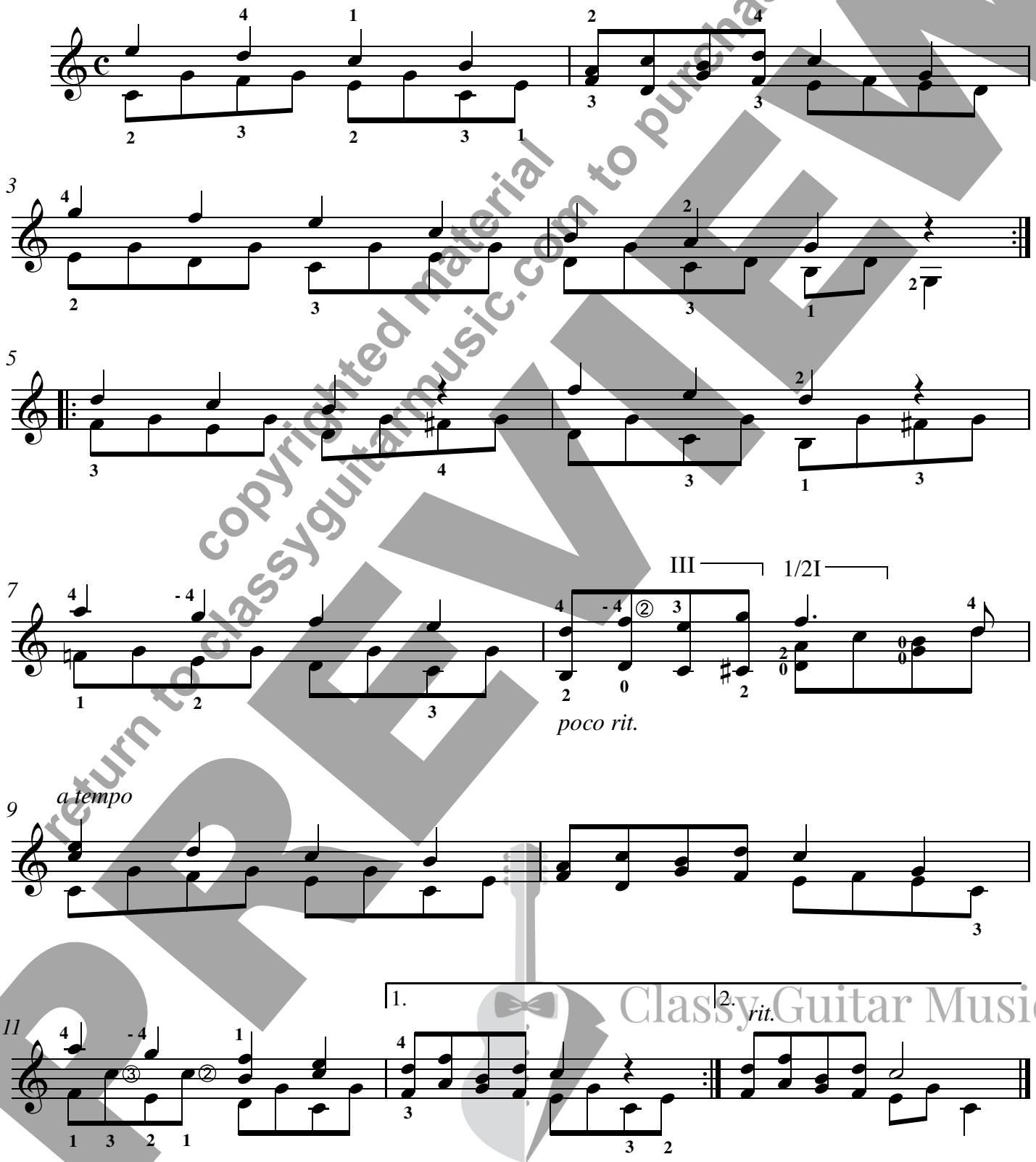
Melody

Robert Schumann
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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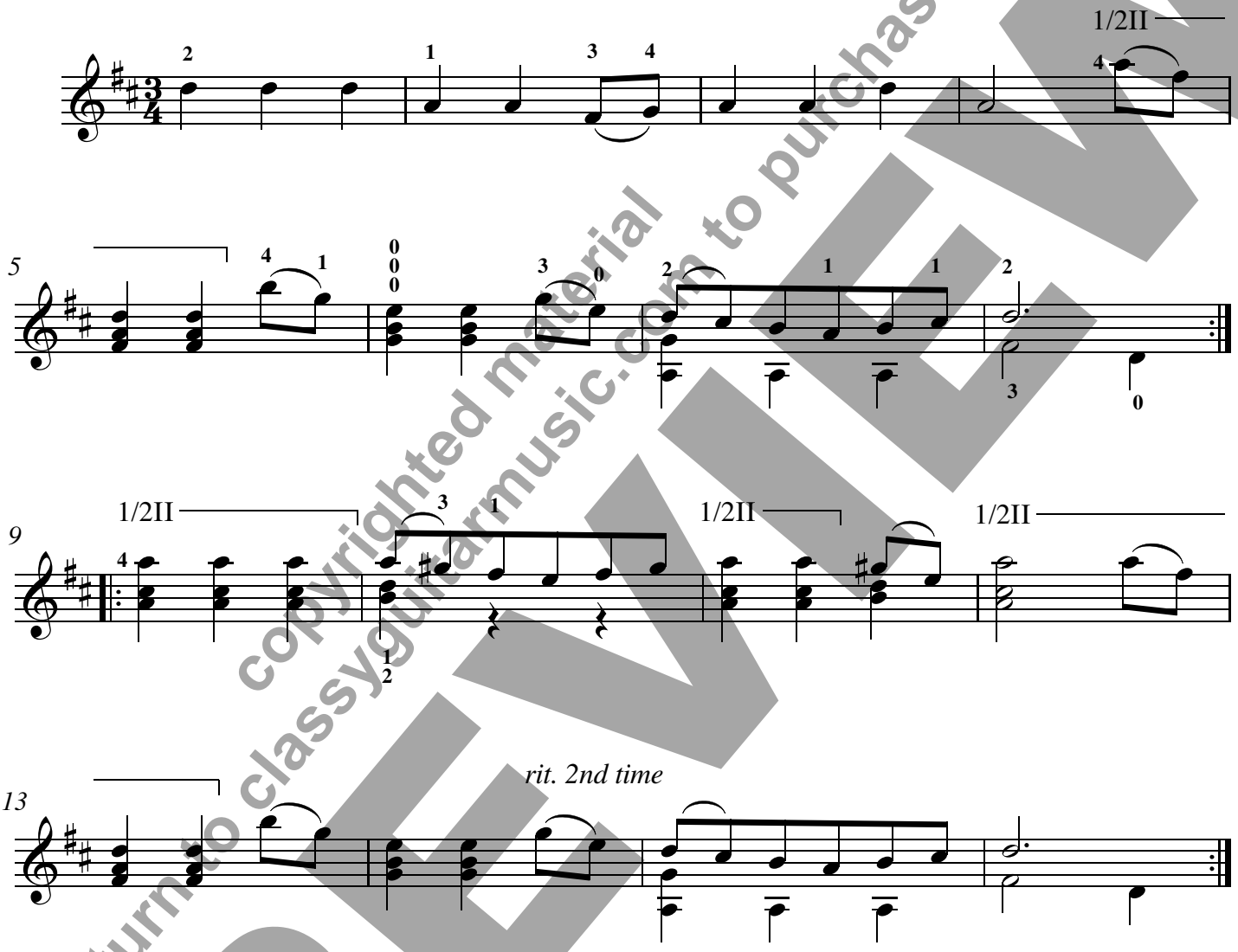
German Dance

Franz Joseph Haydn
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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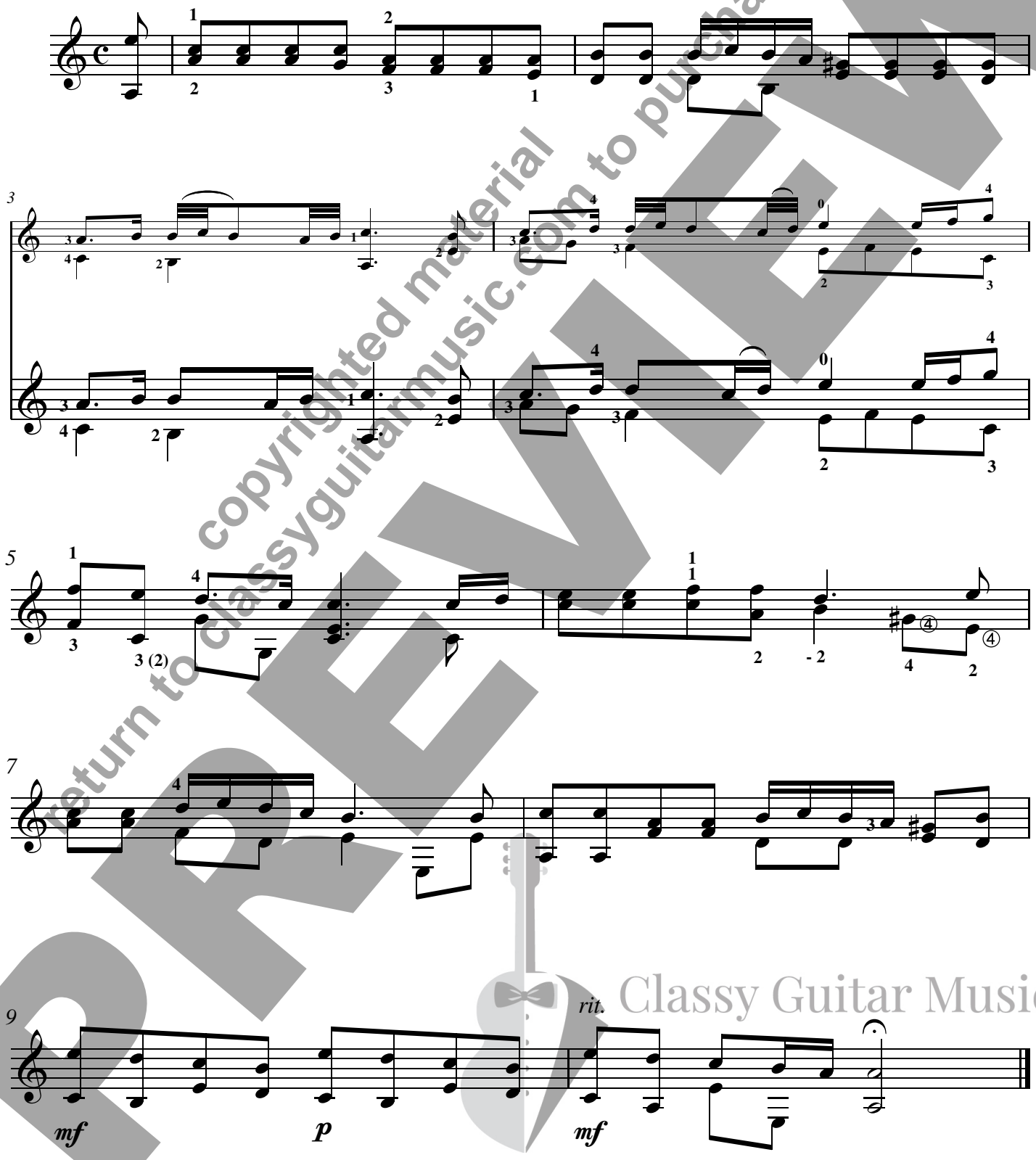
Andante

Henry Purcell
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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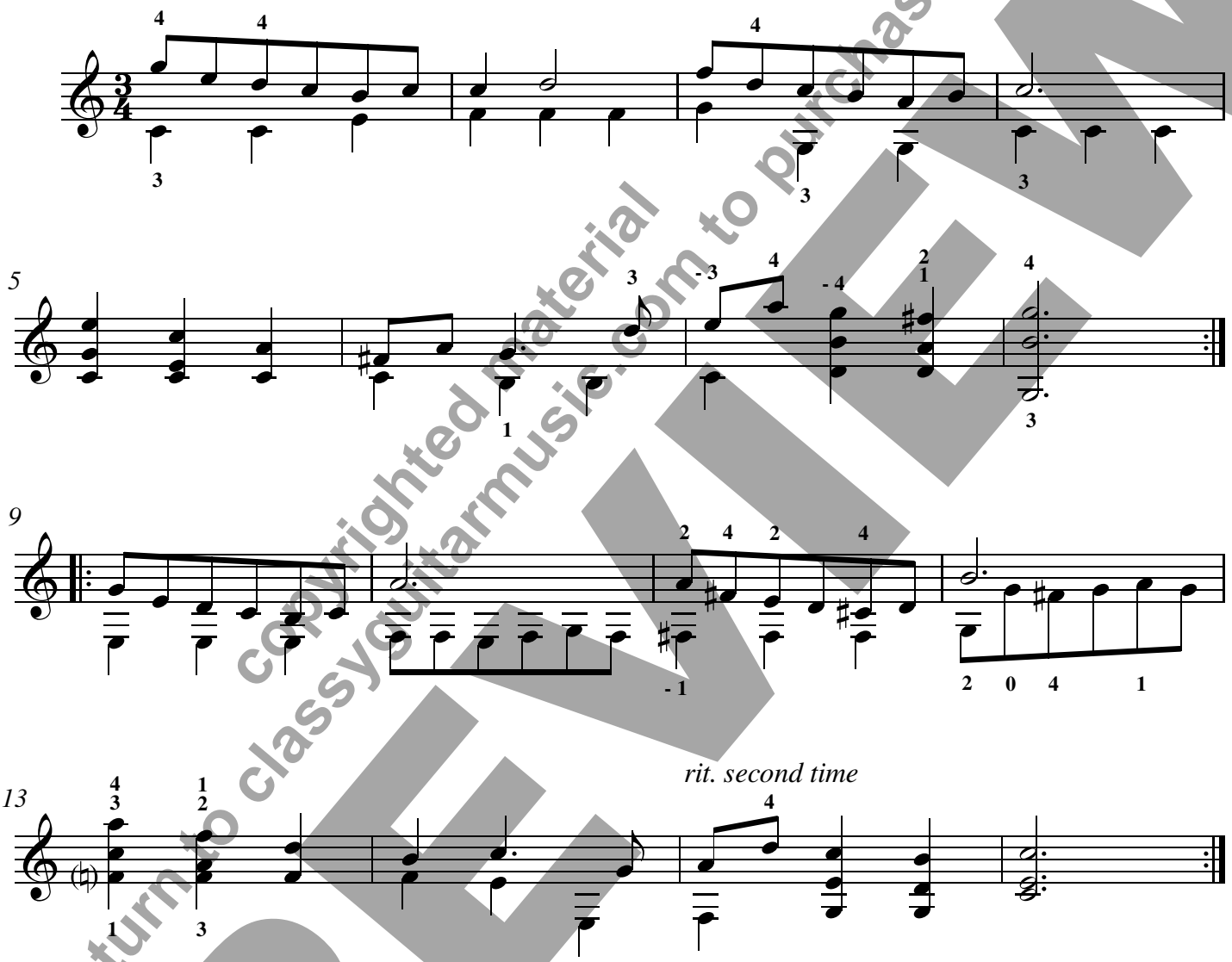
Aria

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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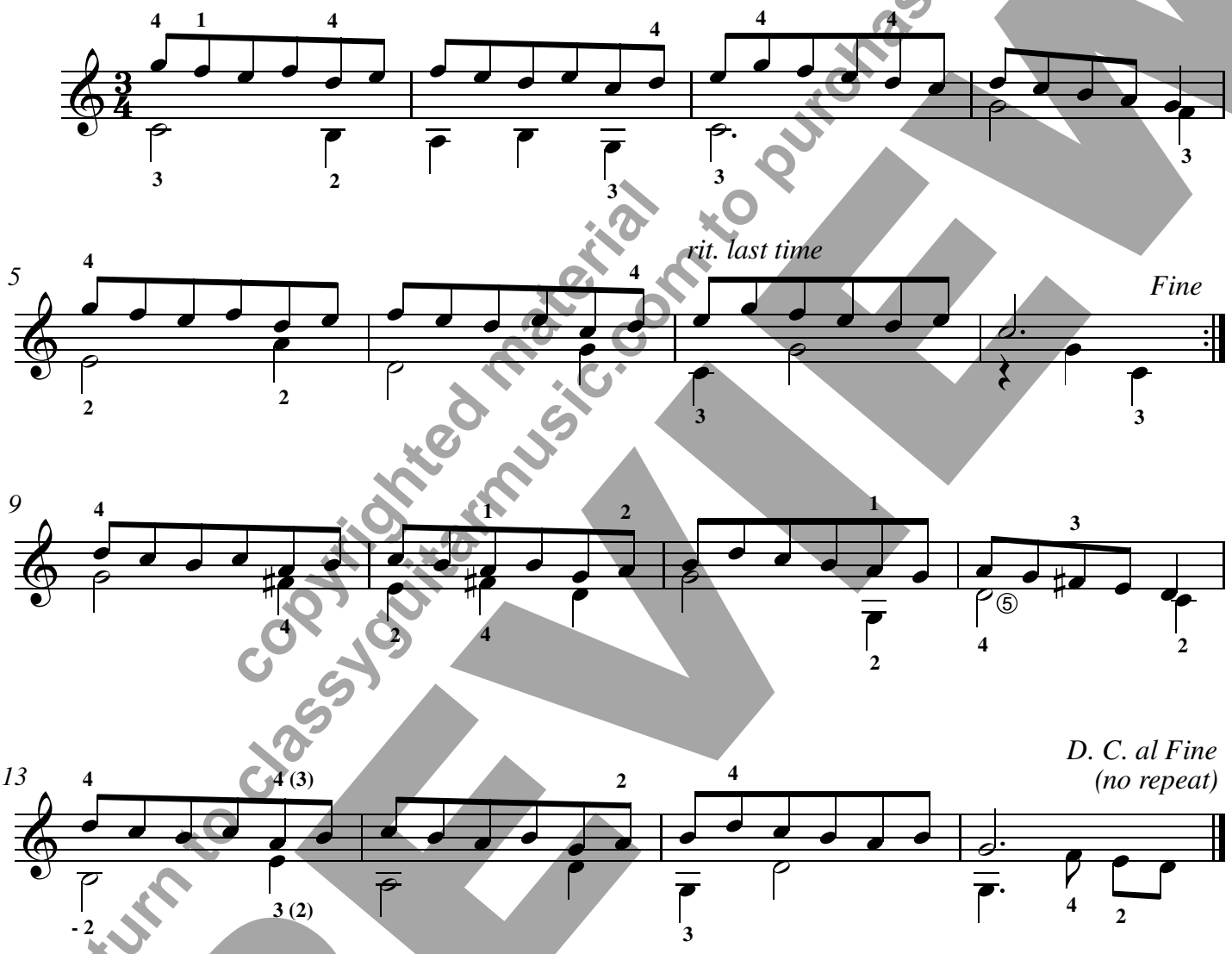
Minuet

Jean-Phillipe Rameau
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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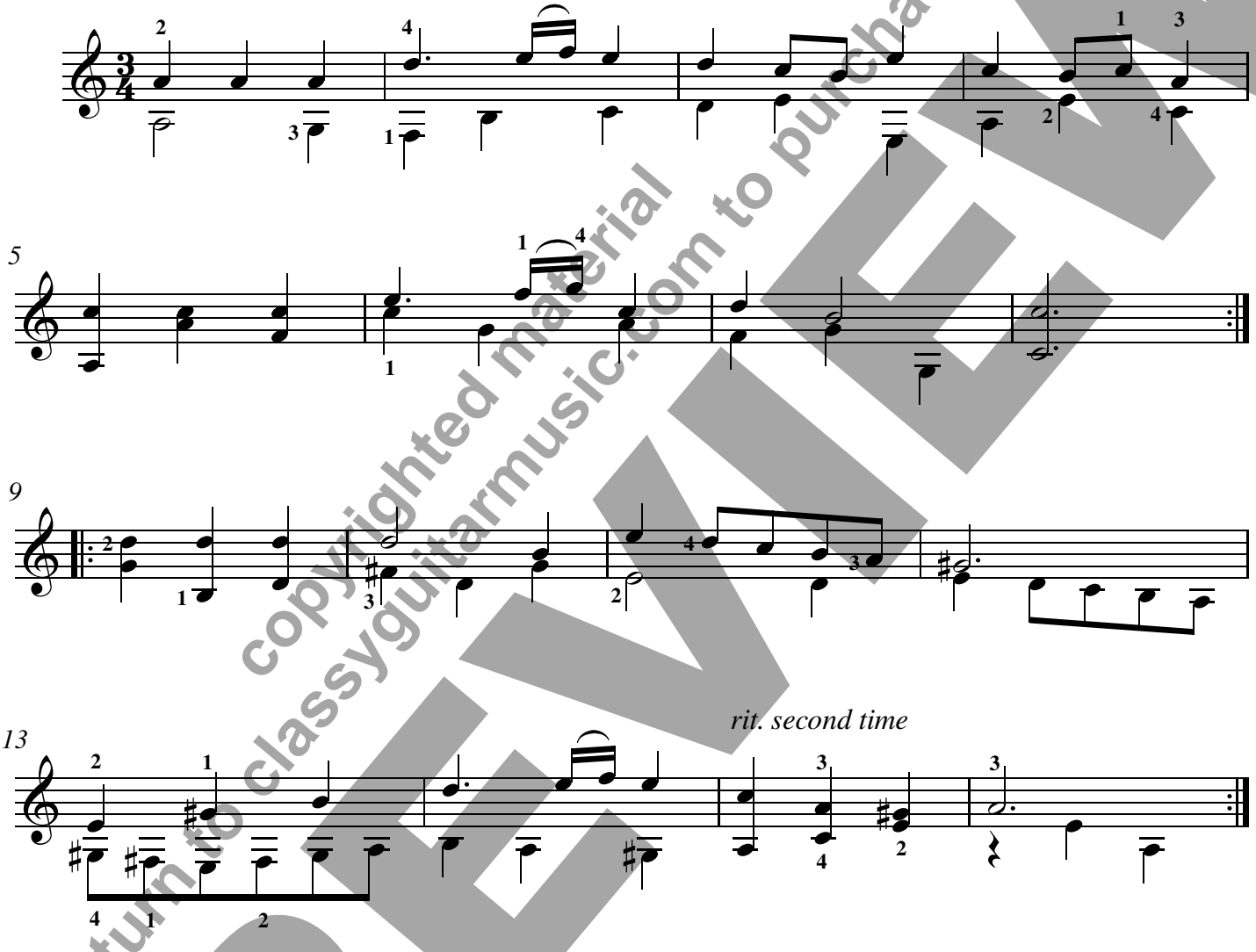
Aria

Johann Sebastian Bach
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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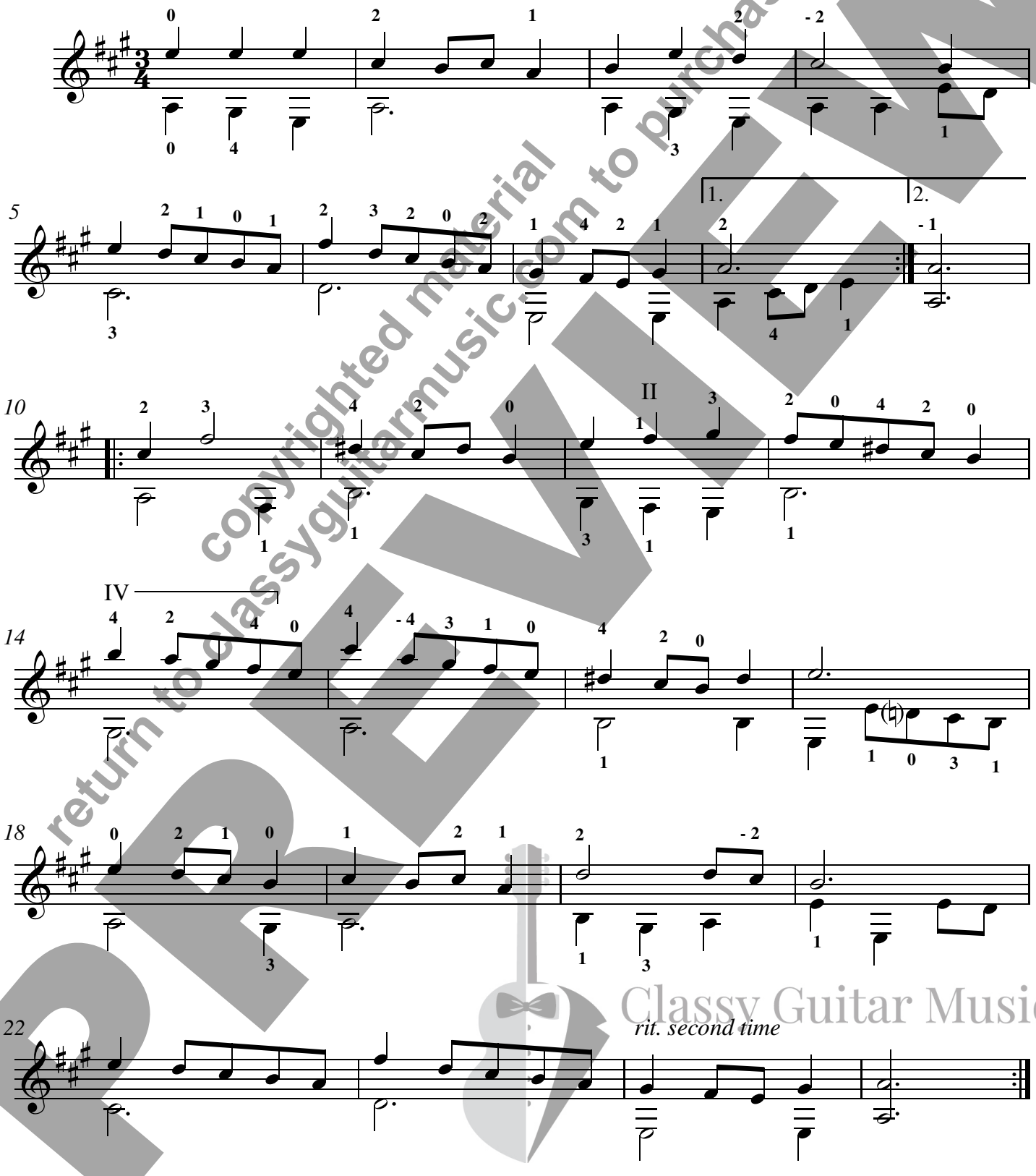
Minuet

Johann Sebastian Bach
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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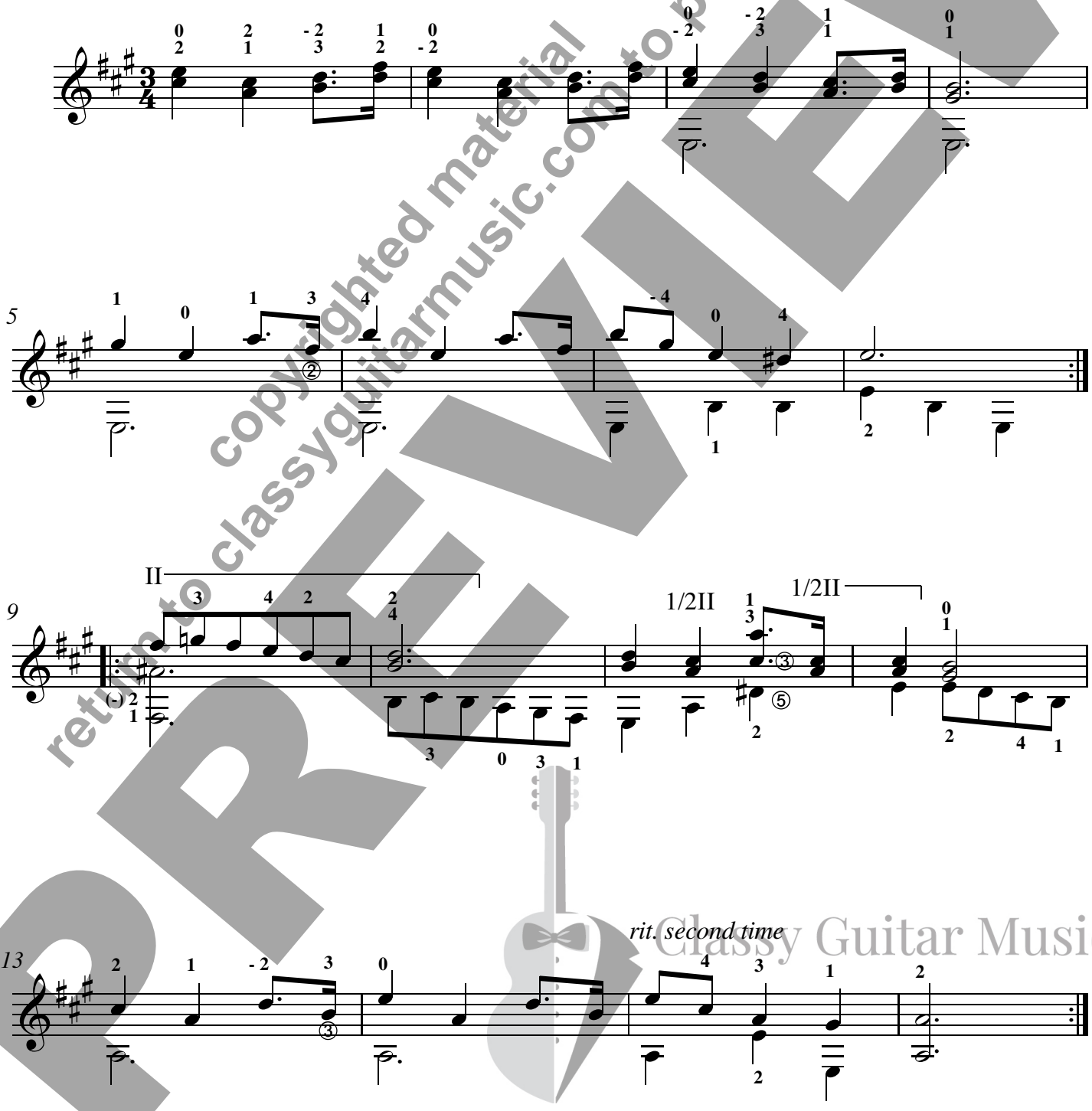
Aria

Woflgang Amadeus Mozart
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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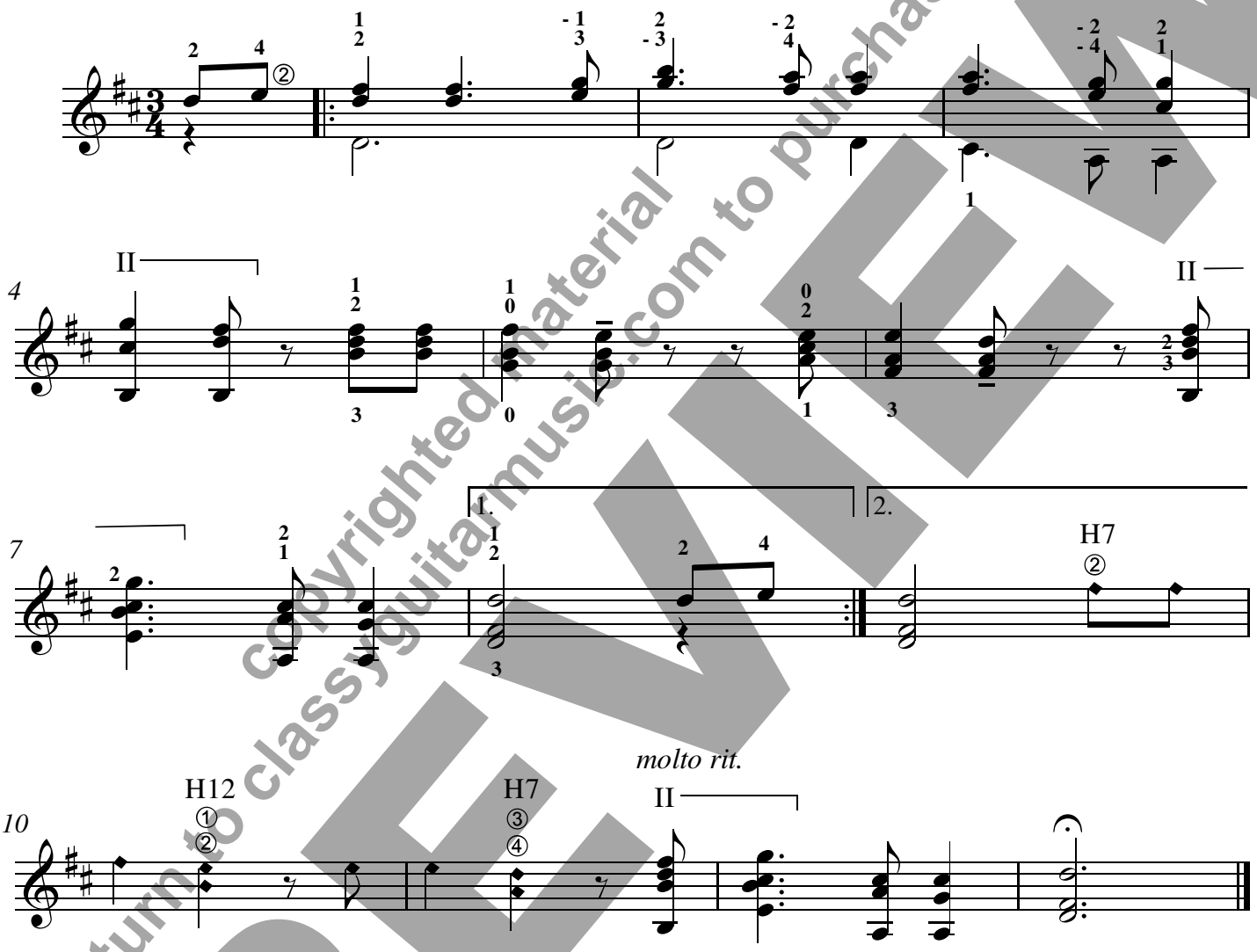
German Folk Song

Arranged by Johannes Brahms
Adapted by Richard and Kevin McChesney



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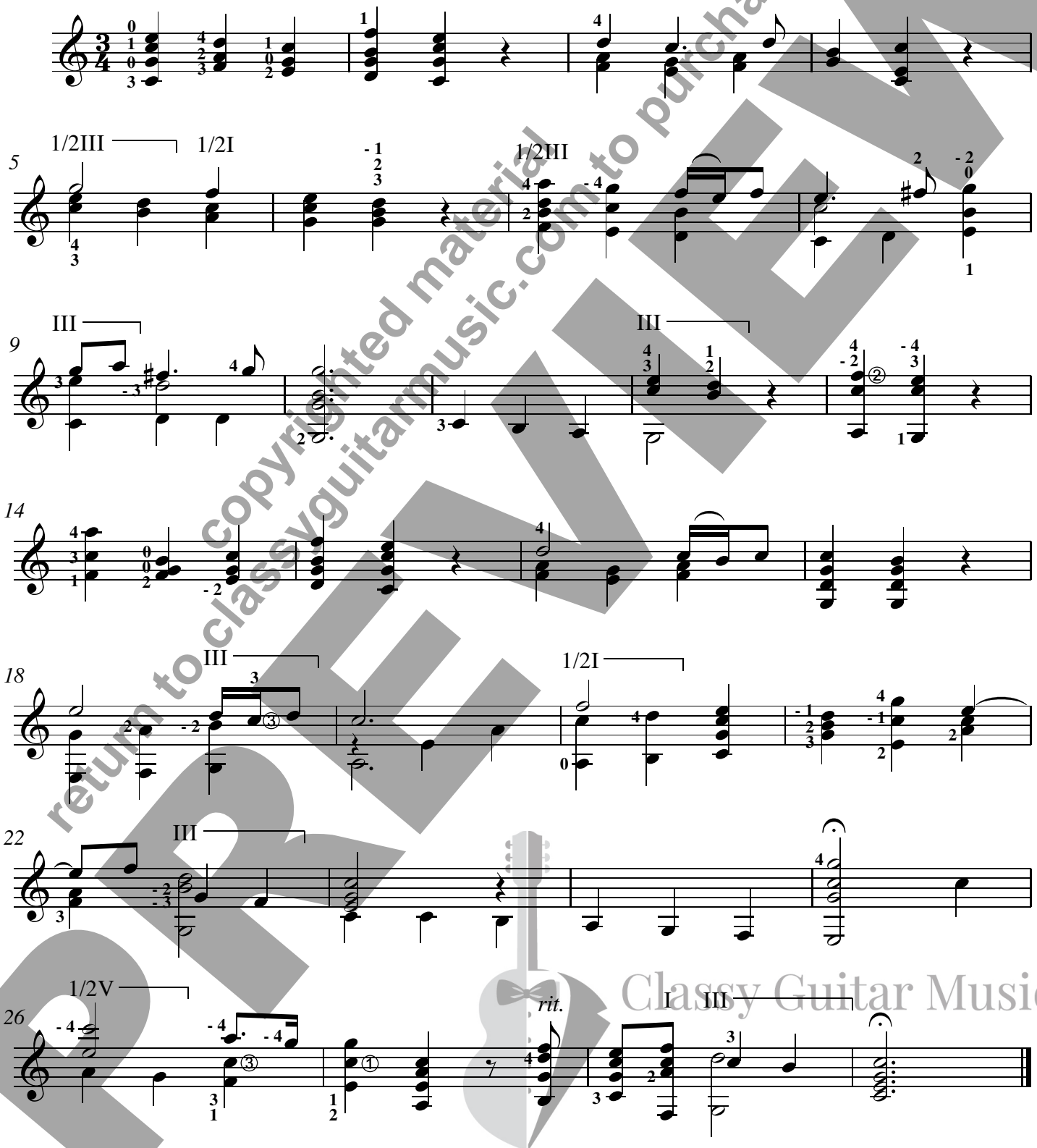
Dove Sei?

(Where Art Thou?)

from the opera "Rodelinda"
by George Frederic Handel
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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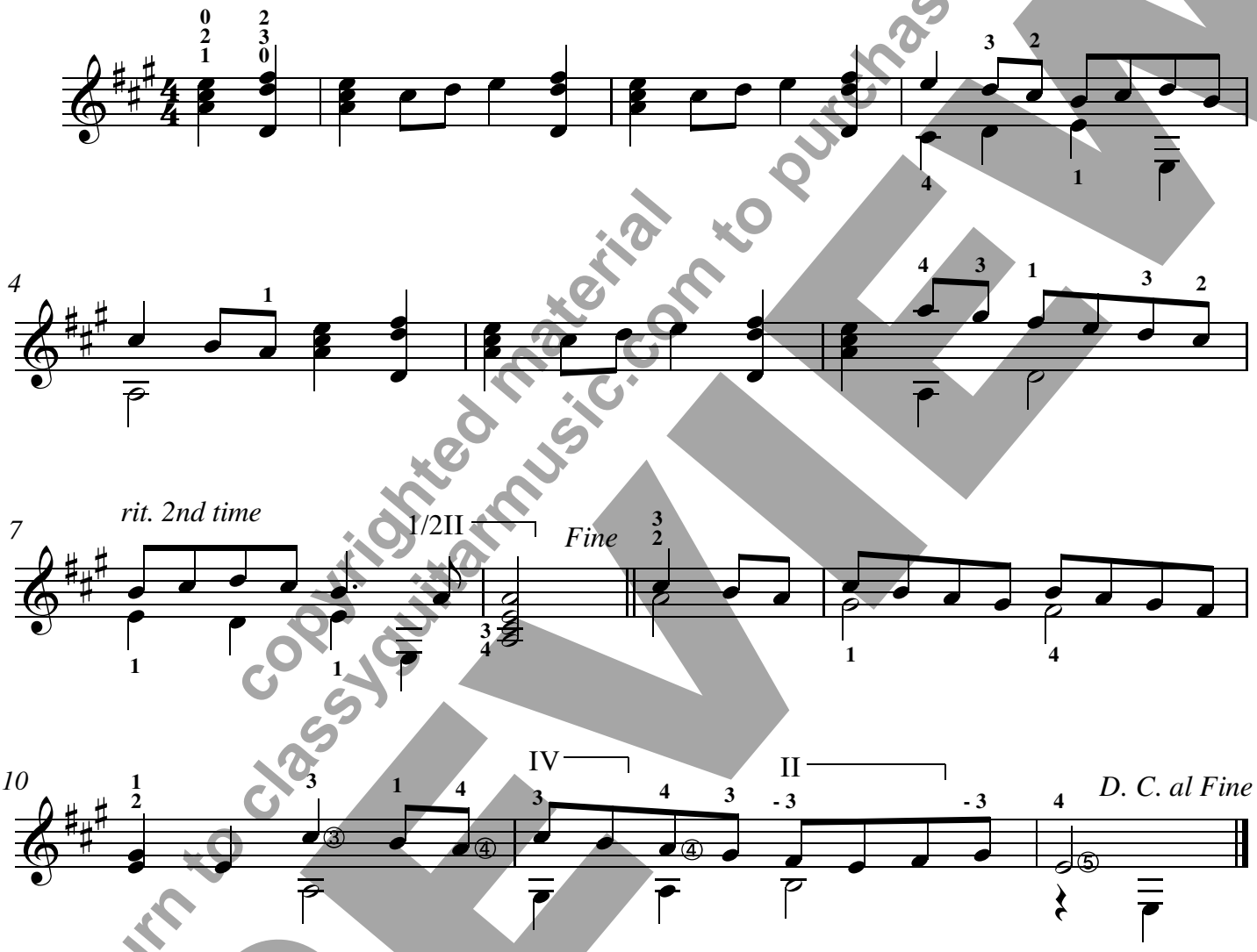
Gavotte

Francois Couperin
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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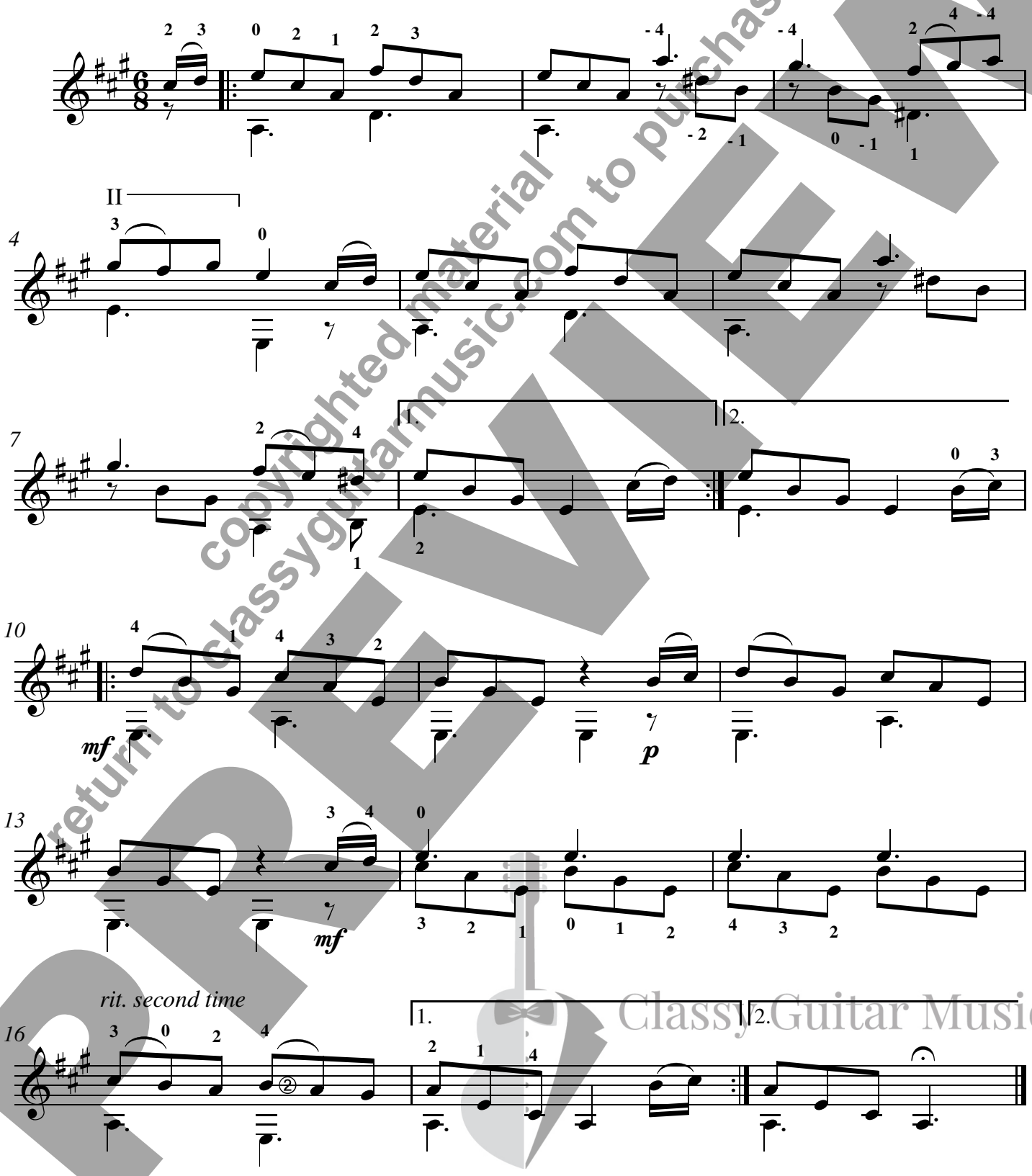
Gigue

Georg Phillipp Telemann
Arr. Richard and Kevin McChesney



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A NOTE ON THE ORIGINS AND HISTORY OF THE GUITAR

Of many theories concerning the origin of the guitar as we know it today, the following is perhaps the most charming:

> In the Argentine pampas (plains) long ago, a lonely gaucho (cowboy) sought relief from his lack of female companionship. He carved a piece of wood into the shape of a woman and strung it with sinews from the animals he killed for food. Thus, as he sang his songs of love, he could accompany himself while holding the woman's body and caressing her long, graceful neck.

Those interested in less romantic – and more authoritative – points of view on the history of the guitar are referred to these excellent books:

> Bellow, Alexander: The Illustrated History of the Guitar (Franco Colombo Publications, a division of Belwin/Mills)
>
> Turnbull, Harvey: The Guitar from the Renaissance to the Present Day (1974 by Charles Scribner's Sons; 1991 by The Bold Strummer, Ltd.)

RICHARD MCCHESNEY

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