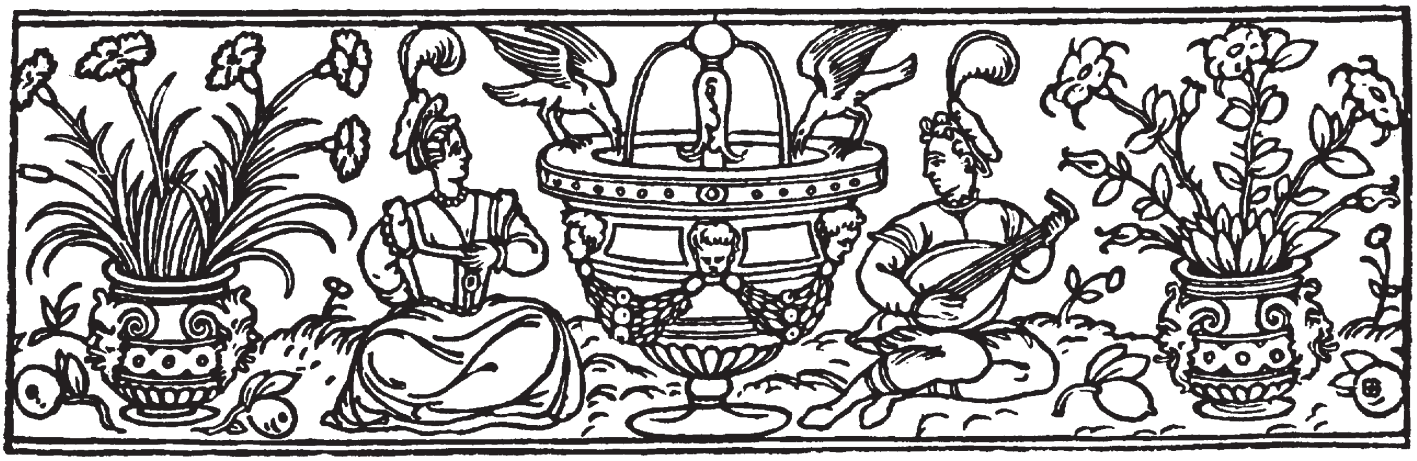

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Glen Shannon, Editor

## Kearney Smith, *arranger*

# Four Airs
## *from*
# "The Beggar's Opera"

## *for SATB Recorders*

Published as a supplement to *American Recorder*

# Four Airs from "The Beggar's Opera"

### Arranged By Kearney Smith

## PREFACE

*The present set of four of my favorite airs, of the over fifty that appear in the opera, were chosen because they have interesting bass lines which lie neatly in the range of the F bass. I have transcribed and in some cases transposed these airs and added inner voices while remaining faithful to the spirit of the original and not overwhelming its melody.*

*—Kearney Smith*

**Performed in England in 1728**, The Beggar's Opera was a satiric play spoofing class inequities in contemporary English society. Borne out of indignation among the English authors and actors who saw themselves being replaced by foreigners, the play took aim at the passionate interest of the upper classes in Italian opera — while simultaneously lampooning notable politicians and famous criminals.

The poet and playwright John Gay (1685–1732) assured the play's success by selecting popular tunes of the day to be sung with his lyrics. Because Johann Christoph Pepusch (1667–1752) composed an overture for the play, it is speculated but not certain that he also composed bass lines for the airs.

Kearney Smith is a native of North Carolina, served four years in the US Marines, earned a Masters Degree from UNC-Chapel Hill and a Ph.D. from University of Georgia. After retirement in 1997 from teaching at several small colleges, he organized the Green Mountain Recorder Consort. He stays busy playing in the ensemble and arranging music for it.

*—Glen Shannon*

**Performance notes:** The text of Gay's lyrics may suggest appropriate tempos although "Cease your funning" should probably be played faster than it would be sung. That air lends itself to a rapid jig performance. "Le printemps" is a melody for Polly's more heart-felt expression of love and should not be rushed. In the B section of this air, a good effect can be gained by having the soprano player linger slightly on the descending eighth-note runs.


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Anthony St. Pierre, *S-O-S* (SATB)
Colin Sterne, *Slow Dance with Doubles* (2 x SATB)
Thomas E. Van Dahm, arr., *Two Brahms Lieder* (SATB)
Timothy R. Walsh, *Little Girl Skipping* and *Alouette et al* (SATBCb)

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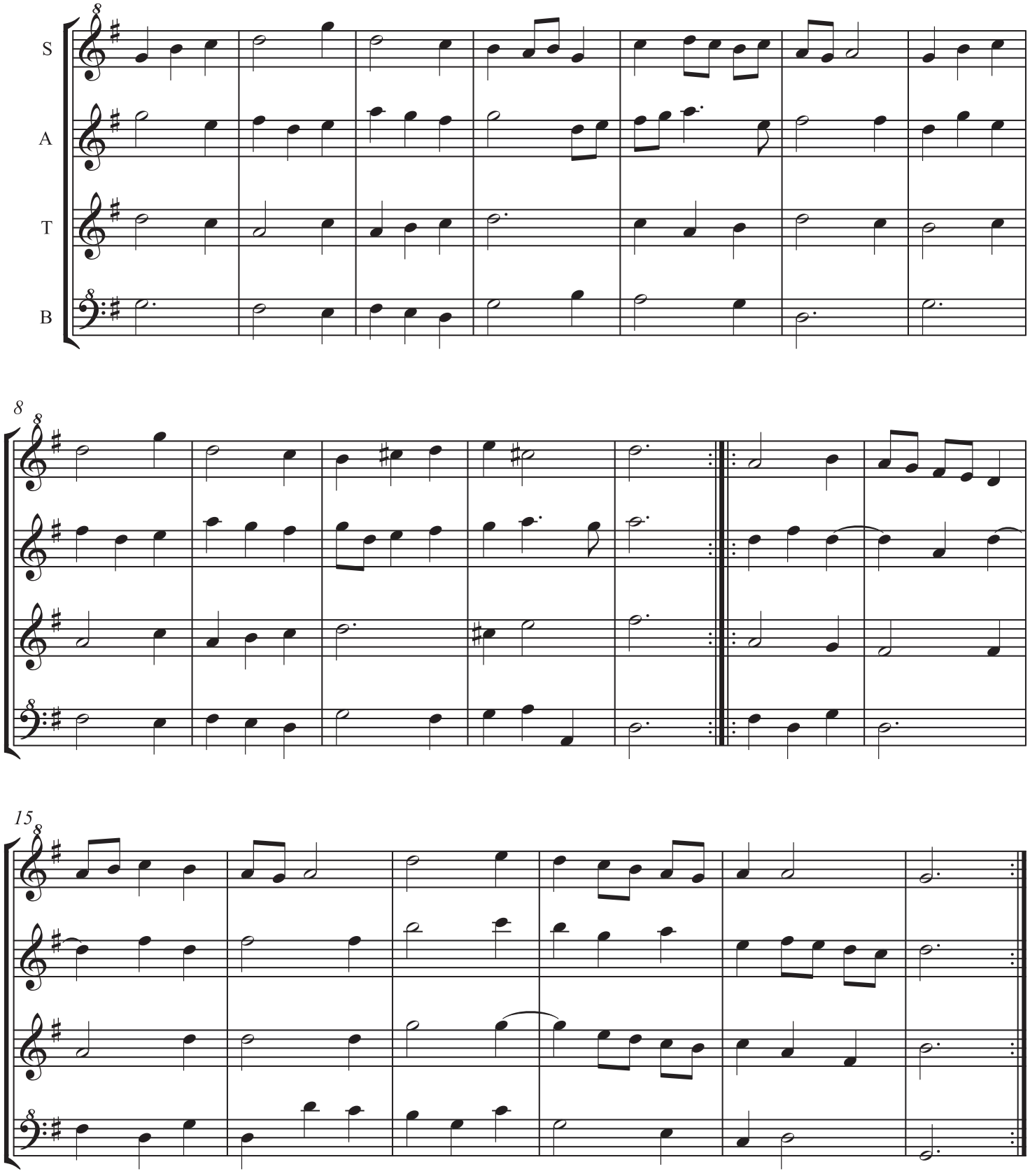
**AIRS FROM "THE BEGGAR'S OPERA"**

# Le printemps rappelle aux armes

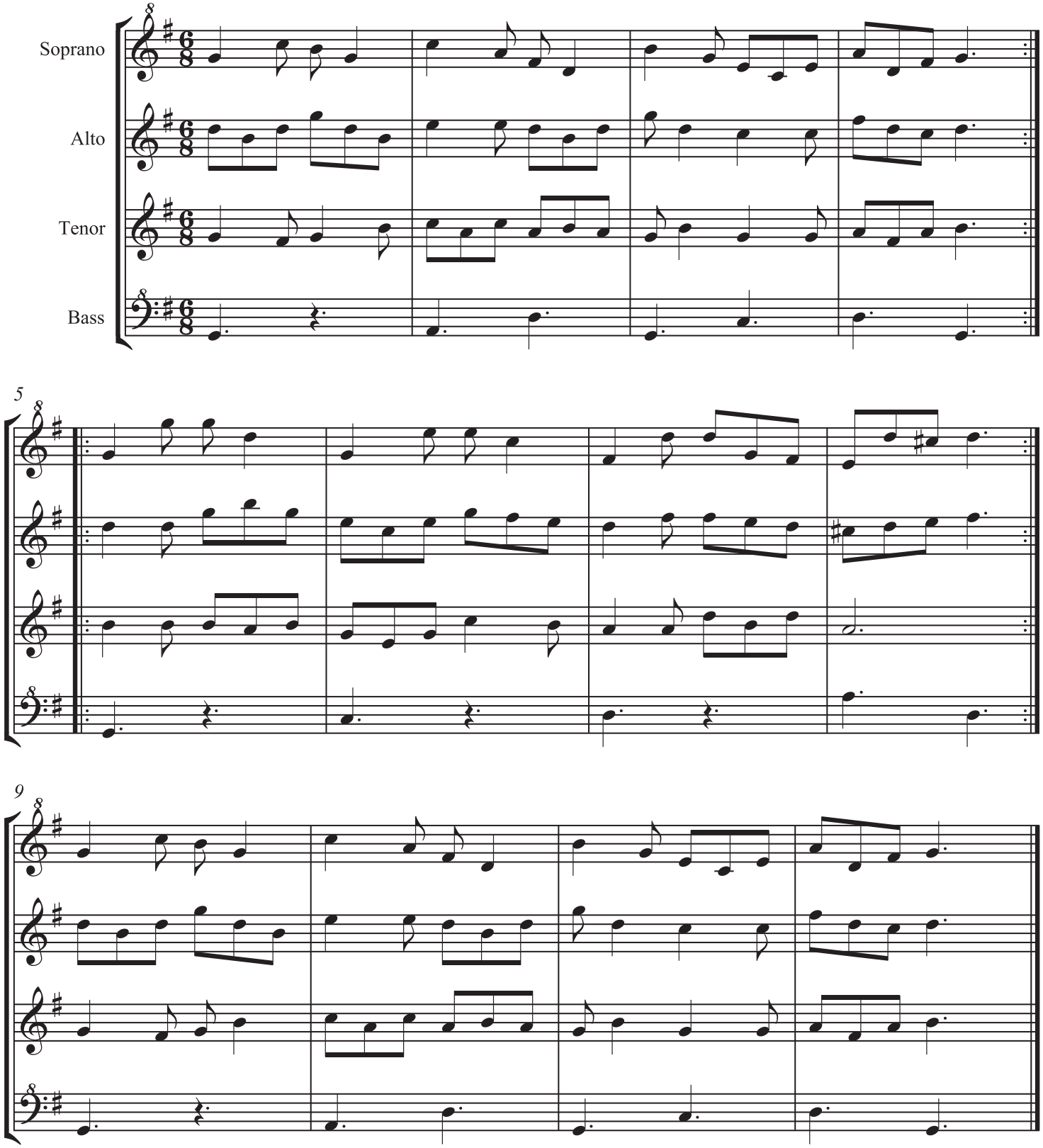
Johann Christoph Pepusch? (1667–1752)
Kearney Smith, arr. (2003)



## AIRS FROM "THE BEGGAR'S OPERA"

# Cease your funning

Johann Christoph Pepusch? (1667–1752)
Kearney Smith, arr. (2003)

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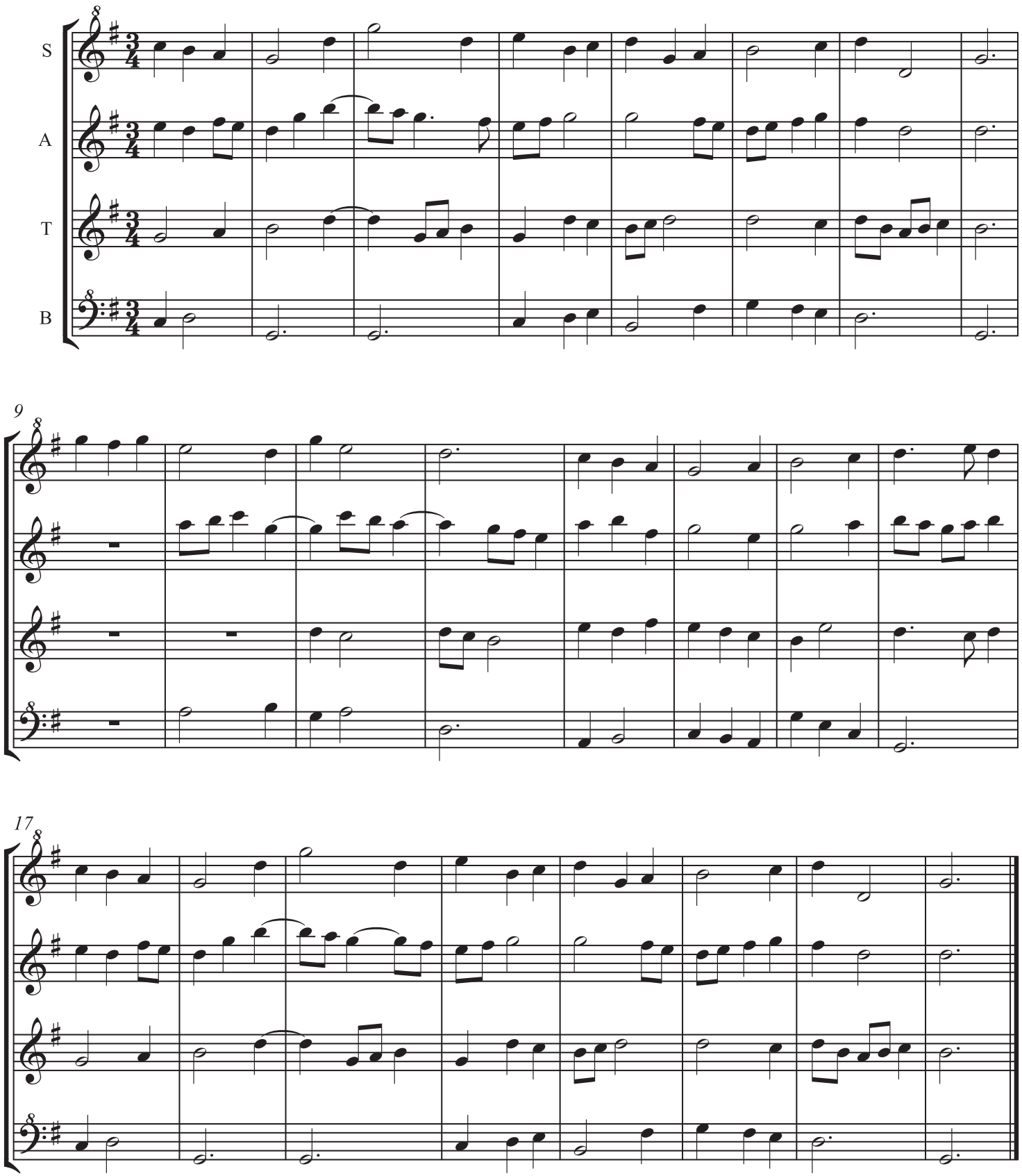
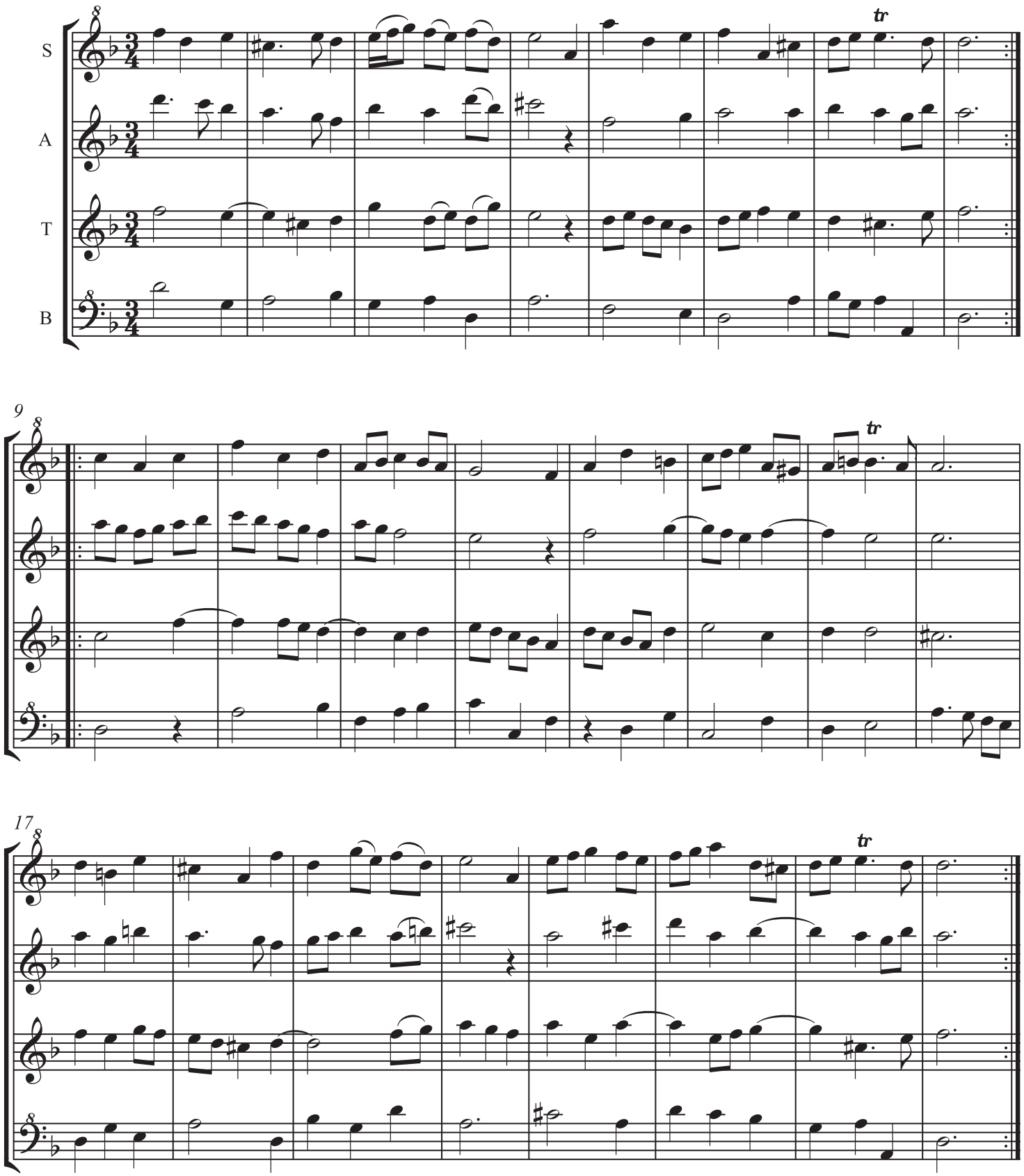
**AIRS FROM "THE BEGGAR'S OPERA"**

# Fill ev'ry glass

Johann Christoph Pepusch? (1667–1752)
Kearney Smith, arr. (2003)



**AIRS FROM "THE BEGGAR'S OPERA"**

# What shall I do to shew how much I love her?

Johann Christoph Pepusch? (1667–1752)
Kearney Smith, arr. (2003)