Wynton Marsalis, Managing and Artistic Director, Jazz at Lincoln Center

Hotter Than 'Ell

By Fletcher Henderson

Arranged by Horace Henderson
As performed by Fletcher Henderson and His Orchestra
Transcribed by Mark Lopeman for Jazz at Lincoln Center

Full Score

This transcription was made especially for Jazz at Lincoln Center's 2015–16
Twenty-First Annual *Essentially Ellington* High School Jazz Band Program.

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essentially
ELLINGTON

jazz

NOTES ON PLAYING ELLINGTON

At least 95% of modern-day large ensemble jazz playing comes out of three traditions: Count Basie's band, Duke Ellington's band, and the orchestrations of small groups. Those young players interested in jazz will be drawn to small groups for the opportunity to improvise and for practical reasons (it is much easier to organize 4 or 5 people than it is 15). Schools have taken over the task (formerly performed by dance bands) of training musicians to be ensemble players. Due to the Basie Band's popularity and its simplicity of style and emphasis on blues and swing, the better educators have almost exclusively adopted this tradition for teaching jazz ensemble playing. As wonderful as Count Basie's style is, it doesn't address many of the important styles developed under the great musical umbrella we call jazz. Duke Ellington's comprehensive and eclectic approach to music offers an alternative.

The stylistic richness of Ellington's music presents a great challenge to educators and performers alike. In Basie's music, the conventions are very nearly consistent. In Ellington's music there are many more exceptions to the rules. This calls for greater knowledge of the language of jazz. Clark Terry, who left Count Basie's band to join Duke Ellington, said, "Count Basie was college, but Duke Ellington was graduate school." Knowledge of Ellington's music prepares you to play any big band music.

The following is a list of performance conventions for the great majority of Ellington's music. Any deviations or additions will be spelled out in the individual performance notes which follow.

1. Listen carefully many times to the Ellington recording of these pieces. There are many subtleties that will elude even the most sophisticated listener at first. Although it was never Ellington's wish to have his recordings imitated, knowledge of these definitive versions will lead musicians to make more educated choices when creating new performances. Ellington's music, though written for specific individuals, is designed to inspire all musicians to express themselves. In addition, you will hear slight note differences in the recording and the transcriptions. This is intentional, as there are mistakes and alterations from the original intent of the music in the recording. You should have your players play what's in the score.

2. General use of swing phrasing. The triplet feel prevails except for ballads or where notations such as even eighths or Latin appear. In these cases, eighth notes are given equal value.

3. There is a chain of command in ensemble playing. The lead players in each section determine the phrasing and volume for their own section, and their section-mates must conform to the lead. When the saxes and/or trombones play with the trumpets, the lead trumpet is the boss. The lead alto and trombone must listen to the first trumpet and follow him. In turn, the other saxes and trombones must follow their lead players. When the clarinet leads the brass section, the brass should not overblow him. That means that the first trumpet is actually playing "second." If this is done effectively, there will be very little balancing work left for the conductor.

4. In Ellington's music, each player should express the individuality of his own line. He must find a musical balance of supporting and following the section leader and bringing out the character of the underpart. Each player should be encouraged to express his or her personality through the music. In this music, the underparts are played at the same volume and with the same conviction as the lead.

5. Blues inflection should permeate all parts at all times, not just when these opportunities occur in the lead.

6. Vibrato is used quite a bit to warm up the sound. Saxes (who most frequently represent the sensual side of things) usually employ vibrato on harmonized passages and no vibrato on unisons. The vibrato can be either heavy or light depending on the context. Occasionally saxes use a light vibrato on unisons. Trumpets (who very often are used for heat and power) use a little vibrato on harmonized passages and no vibrato on unisons. Trombones (who are usually noble) do not use slide vibrato. A little lip vibrato is good on harmonized passages at times. Try to match the speed of vibrato. In general unisons are played with no vibrato.

7. Crescendo as you ascend and diminuendo as you descend. The upper notes of phrases receive a natural accent and the lower notes are ghosted. Alto and tenor saxophones need to use sub-tone in the lower part of their range in order to blend properly with the rest of the section. This music was originally written with no dynamics. It pretty much follows the natural tendencies of the instruments; play loud in the loud part of the instrument and soft in the soft part of the instrument. For instance, a high C for a trumpet will be loud and a low C will be soft.

8. Quarter notes are generally played short unless otherwise notated. Long marks above or below a pitch indicate full value: not just long, but full value. Eighth notes are played full value except when followed by a rest or otherwise notated. All notes longer than a quarter note are played full value, which means if it is followed by a rest, release the note where the rest appears. For example, a half note occurring on beat one of a measure would be released on beat three.

9. Unless they are part of a legato background figure, long notes should be played somewhat fp (forte-piano); accent then diminish the volume. This is important so that the moving parts can be heard over the sustained notes. Don't just hold out the long notes, but give them life and personality: that is, vibrato, inflection, crescendo, or diminuendo. There is a great deal of inflection in this music, and much of this is highly interpretive. Straight or curved lines imply non-pitched glisses, and wavy lines mean scalar (chromatic or diatonic) glisses. In general, all rhythmic figures need to be accented. Accents give the music life and swing. This is very important.

10. Ellington's music is about individuality: one person per part—do not double up because you have extra players or need more strength. More than one on a part makes it sound more like a concert band and less like a jazz band.

11. This is acoustic music. Keep amplification to an absolute minimum; in the best halls, almost no amplification should be necessary. Everyone needs to develop a big sound. It is the conductor's job to balance the band. When a guitar is used, it should be a hollow-body, unamplified rhythm guitar. Simple three-note voicings should be used throughout. An acoustic string bass is a must. In mediocre or poorly designed halls, the bass and piano may need a bit of a boost. I recommend miking them and putting them through the house sound system. This should provide a much better tone than an amplifier. Keep in mind that the rhythm section's primary function is to accompany. The bass should not be as loud as a trumpet. That is unnatural and leads to over-amplification, bad tone, and limited dynamics. Stay away from monitors. They provide a false sense of balance.

12. Solos and rhythm section parts without chord changes should be played as is or with a little embellishment. Solos and rhythm section parts with chord changes should be improvised. However, written passages should be learned because they are an important part of our jazz heritage and help the player understand the function of his particular solo or accompaniment. Soloists should learn the chord changes. Solos should not be approached as opportunities to show off technique, range, or volume, but should be looked at as a great opportunity to further develop the interesting thematic material that Ellington has provided.

13. The notation of plungers for the brass means a rubber toilet plunger bought in a hardware store. Kirkhill is a very good brand (especially if you can find one of their old hard rubber ones, like the one I loaned Wynton and he lost). Trumpets use 5" diameter and trombones use 6" diameter. Where Plunger/Mute is notated, insert a pixie mute in the bell and use the plunger over the mute. Pixies are available from Humes & Berg in Chicago. Tricky Sam Nanton and his successors in the Ellington plunger trombone chair did not use pixies. Rather, each of them employed a Nonpareil (that's the brand name) trumpet straight mute. Nonpareil has gone out of business, but the Tom Crown Nonpareil trumpet straight mute is very close to the same thing. These mute/plunger combinations create a wonderful sound (very close to the human voice), but they also can create some intonation problems which must be corrected by the lip or by using alternate slide positions. It would be easier to move the tuning slide, but part of the sound is in the struggle to correct the pitch. If this proves too much, stick with the pixie—it's pretty close.

14. The drummer is the de facto leader of the band. He establishes the beat and controls the volume of the ensemble. For big band playing, the drummer needs to use a larger bass drum than he would for small group drumming. A 22" or 24" is preferred. The bass drum is played softly (nearly inaudible) on each beat. This is called feathering the bass drum. It provides a very important bottom to the band. The bass drum sound is not a boom and not a thud—it's in between. The larger size drum is necessary for the kicks; a smaller drum just won't be heard. The key to this style is to just keep time. A rim knock on two and four (chopping wood) is used to lock in the swing. When it comes to playing fills, the fewer, the better.

15. The horn players should stand for their solos and solis. Brass players should come down front for moderate to long solos, surrounding rests permitting. The same applies to the pep section (two trumpets and one trombone in plunger/mutes).

16. Horns should pay close attention to attacks and releases. Everyone should hit together and release together.

17. Above all, everyone's focus should remain at all times on the swing. As the great bassist Chuck Israels says, "The three most important things in jazz are rhythm, rhythm, and rhythm, in that order." Or as Bubber Miley (Ellington's first star trumpeter) said, "It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing."

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GLOSSARY

The following are terms which describe conventions of jazz performance, from traditional New Orleans to the present avant garde.

Break • within the context of an ongoing time feel, the rhythm section stops for one, two, or four bars. Very often a soloist will improvise during a break.

Call and response • repetitive pattern of contrasting exchanges (derived from the church procedure of the minister making a statement and the congregation answering with "amen"). Call-and-response patterns usually pit one group of instruments against another. Sometimes we call this "trading fours," "trading twos," etc., especially when it involves improvisation. The numbers denote the amount of measures each soloist or group plays. Another term frequently used is "swapping fours."

Coda • also known as the "outro." "Tags" or "tag endings" are outgrowths of vaudeville bows that are frequently used as codas. They most often use deceptive cadences that finally resolve to the tonic or they go from the sub-dominant and cycle back to the tonic.

Comp • improvise accompaniment (for piano or guitar).

Groove • the composite rhythm. This generally refers to the combined repetitive rhythmic patterns of the drums, bass, piano, and guitar, but may also include repetitive patterns in the horns. Some grooves are standard (i.e., swing, bossa nova, samba), while others are manufactured (original combinations of rhythms).

Head • melody chorus.

Interlude • a different form (of relatively short length) sandwiched between two chorus forms. Interludes that set up a key change are simply called modulations.

Intro • short for introduction.

Ride pattern • the most common repetitive figure played by the drummer's right hand on the ride cymbal or hi-hat.

Riff • a repeated melodic figure. Very often, riffs repeat verbatim or with slight alterations while the harmonies change underneath them.

Shout chorus • also known as the "out chorus," the "sock chorus," or sometimes shortened to just "the shout." It is the final ensemble passage of most big band charts and where the climax most often happens.

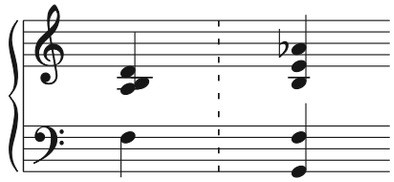
Soli • a harmonized passage for two or more instruments playing the same rhythm. It is customary for horn players to stand up or even move in front of the band when playing these passages. This is done so that the audience can hear them better and to provide the audience with some visual interest. A soli sound particular to Ellington's music combines two trumpets an trombone in plungers/mutes in triadic harmony. This is called the "pep section."

Stop time • a regular pattern of short breaks (usually filled in by a soloist).

Swing • the perfect confluence of rhythmic tension and relaxation in music creating a feeling euphoria and characterized by accented weak beats (a democratization of the beat) and eighth notes that are played as the first and third eighth notes of an eighth-note triplet. Duke Ellington's definition of swing: when the music feels like it is getting faster, but it isn't.

Vamp • a repeated two- or four-bar chord progression. Very often, there may be a riff or riffs played on the vamp.

Voicing • the specific spacing, inversion, and choice of notes that make up a chord. For instance, two voicings for G7 could be:



Note that the first voicing includes a 9th and the second voicing includes a 9th and a 13th. The addition of 9ths, 11ths, 13ths, and alterations are up to the discretion of the pianist and soloist.

THE FOUR ELEMENTS OF MUSIC

The following are placed in their order of importance in jazz. We should never lose perspective on this order of priority.

Rhythm • meter, tempo, groove, and form, including both melodic rhythm and harmonic rhythm (the speed and regularity of the chord changes).

Melody • a tune or series of pitches.

Harmony • chords and voicings.

Orchestration • instrumentation and tone colors.

— David Berger

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HOTTER THAN 'ELL • INSTRUMENTATION

Reed 1 – Clarinet

Reed 2 - Alto Sax

Reed 3 – Alto Sax

Reed 4 - Tenor Sax

Bari Sax (optional)

Trumpet 1

Trumpet 2

Trumpet 3

Trombone 1

Trombone 2

Guitar

Piano

Bass

Drums

ORIGINAL RECORDING INFORMATION

Composer • Fletcher Henderson

Arranger • Horace Henderson

Recorded • September 25, 1934 in New York

Master # • 38723-A

Original Issue • Decca 342

Currently available on CD • Columbia/Legacy CK 61439 (*Best of Ken Burns Jazz*)

Currently available as digital download • Amazon, iTunes (Fletcher Henderson, *Tidal Wave*)

Personnel • Fletcher Henderson (leader); Russell Smith, Irving Randolph, Henry "Red" Allen (trumpet); Claude Jones, Keg Johnson (trombone); Buster Bailey (clarinet); Russell Procope, Hilton Jefferson (alto sax); Ben Webster (tenor sax); Horace Henderson (piano); Lawrence Lucie (guitar); Elmer James (bass); Walter Johnson (drums)

Soloists • Buster Bailey (clarinet); Henry "Red" Allen (trumpet); Ben Webster (tenor sax)

REHEARSAL NOTES

• Long before he began arranging music himself, Fletcher Henderson utilized three arranger/composers who set the style for which his band became famous during the 1920's. First there was Don Redman, who was then followed by Benny Carter. Their fresh and innovative orchestrations defined the Henderson band and gave them a readily identifiable sound from the other top bands of the era. Their contributions have been properly credited in subsequent years, but less attention has been paid to the equally important work of Fletcher's younger brother Horace. After leading his own bands in the mid-west, Horace joined his brother his New York and quickly created a new, more linear sound for the band. Horace was six years younger than Fletcher, which for jazz was an entirely different generation. In addition, Horace was a fine jazz pianist, whereas Fletcher's playing was already dated by 1930.

• **Hotter Than 'Ell** is itself a variation on a variation! There was a 1932 riff song called *Yeah, Man* which the Henderson band recorded in 1933, leaving out the melody and using their own riffs. **Hotter Than 'Ell** is a further development of those riffs.

• Ensemble unity and precision is the key to making this piece come to life. All of the music your band plays depends on these qualities, but there is a need for a kind of up-tempo "snap" that is unique to the style.

• The entire arrangement is written in Louis Armstrong-styled phrasing. It might help to have your band learn his *Swing That Music* solo and then play it in unison with the recording as a warm-up before playing this piece. That will help them get in the right rhythmic and phrasing state of mind.

• Rehearse this piece at a medium tempo at first and don't progress until each and every section and ensemble phrase swings and is played cleanly. If you start playing it fast, you'll more than likely "iron in" sloppy attacks that will be very difficult to correct later.

• The call and response phrases at the Intro and at **Q** must be done with extreme precision. The tendency may be to be loose with the attacks and duration, but they must be played with snap and unity, in tone, phrasing, and vibrato. Everyone should feel like they are Louis Armstrong! But at the same time, making sure that their note is balanced in their section and in the band as a whole. Rehearse these chords until each note of each chord is properly balanced and the band achieves a round, warm and singing sound. These bands never sounded edgy or brassy. Even the bright sonorities have a warmth and blend.

• It is important for the rhythm section and soloists to note the harmonic rhythm on the bridge for the first four measures. It is three measures on B7 and one measure on E7.

• Saxophone articulations at **A** are lightly tongued with the last notes being short. The trombone stabs and brass hot in the last two measures have to snap (you'll hear that phrase a lot here - it's the best one for this kind of attack). Try a *sfz* and < on measures. 7-8. Piano left hand and bass have to be in perfect unison as well. It's best to have the rhythm section rehearse with the recording to hear how lightly yet precisely this tempo can be played. Too many times, rhythm sections lose intensity when playing in "two".

• The background at **C** is *mf* but should still be in the background behind the solo – brass may want to play it in the stand.

• Each chorus should feel like a new chapter in a book. If the horns and rhythm section keep this in mind, they can come up with slight variations in intensity and sound that help define each successive chorus. Without this, things can get monotonous. The same goes for the soloists. Try and find something new to say that contrasts with what came before.

• Play reed articulations at **E** precisely as marked.

• Note the change in reed rhythms in first measure of **J**. Horns and rhythm can make a slight crescendo in the last four measures of **L** and then come down to *mp* at **M** for dynamic contrast and to give the sax solo a chance to start a new chapter. Brass at **M** may be better in stands or hats.

• Rhythm section and horns should create a new intensity for the two shout choruses. Play **Q** at *f* and make a concerted shift up in intensity and dynamics at **U**. Be sure not to let the ensemble sound get out of control or ragged, and the rhythm section should dig in deeper but with a sense of control and restraint.

• It is difficult but keep things under control at so that the busy figures in the last chorus are played as precisely as everything that precedes them. Don't let the tricky, fast notes be an excuse for sloppiness or imprecision.

-Loren Schoenberg

To listen to original recordings, view interactive videos of Wynton Marsalis leading the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra in rehearsals, and obtain rehearsal guides for the *Essentially Ellington* 2015-16 repertoire please visit jazz.org/EE.

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CONDUCTOR

Jazz at Lincoln Center Library - Essentially Ellington

HOTTER THAN 'ELL

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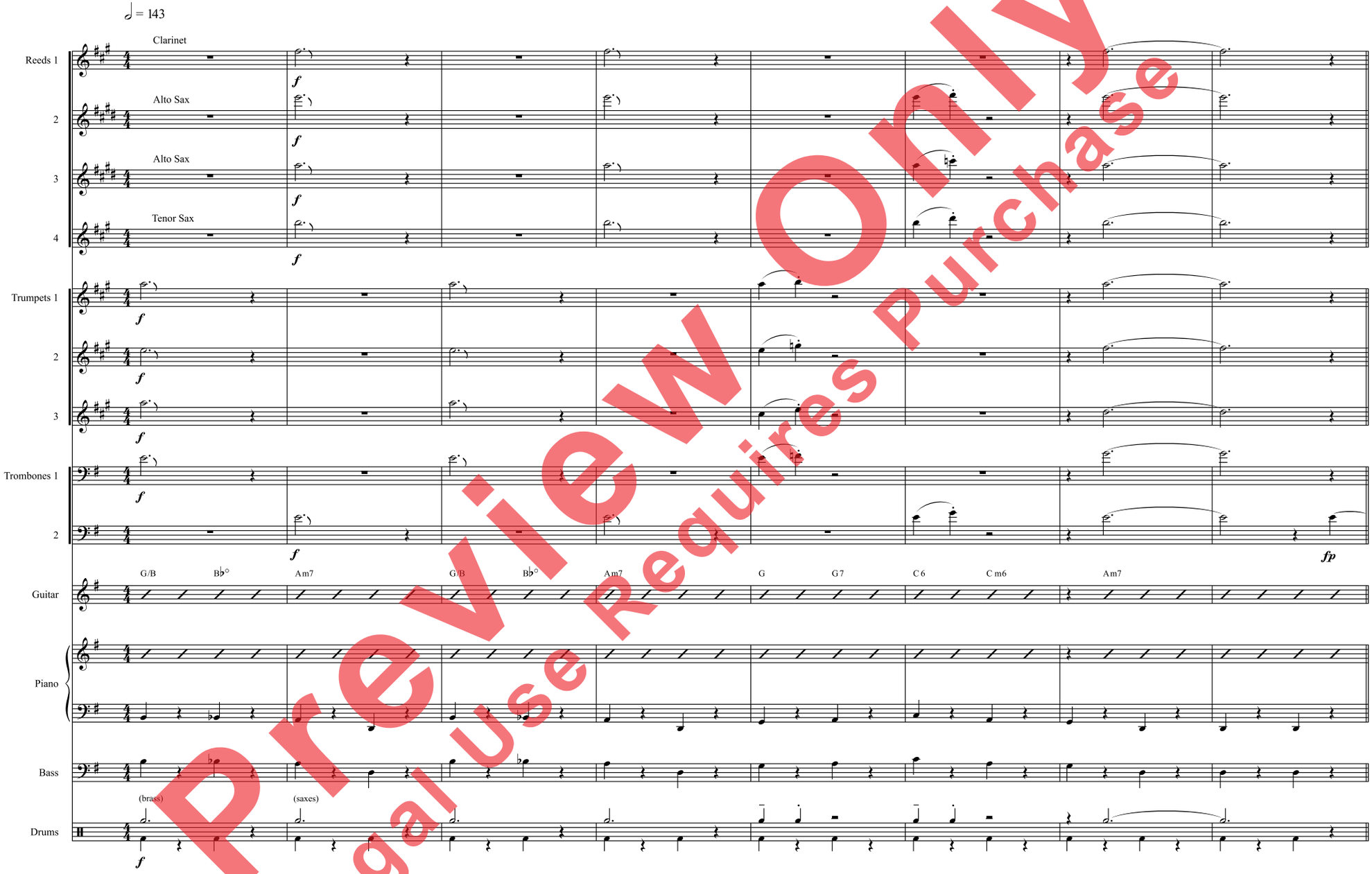

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A

Clar.
Alto
Alto
Tenor
Tpts. 1
2
3
Tbns. 1
2
Gtr.
Pno.
Bs.
Drs.

G/B B♭◇ Am7 G/B B♭◇ Am7 G G7 C6 Cm6 D7+5

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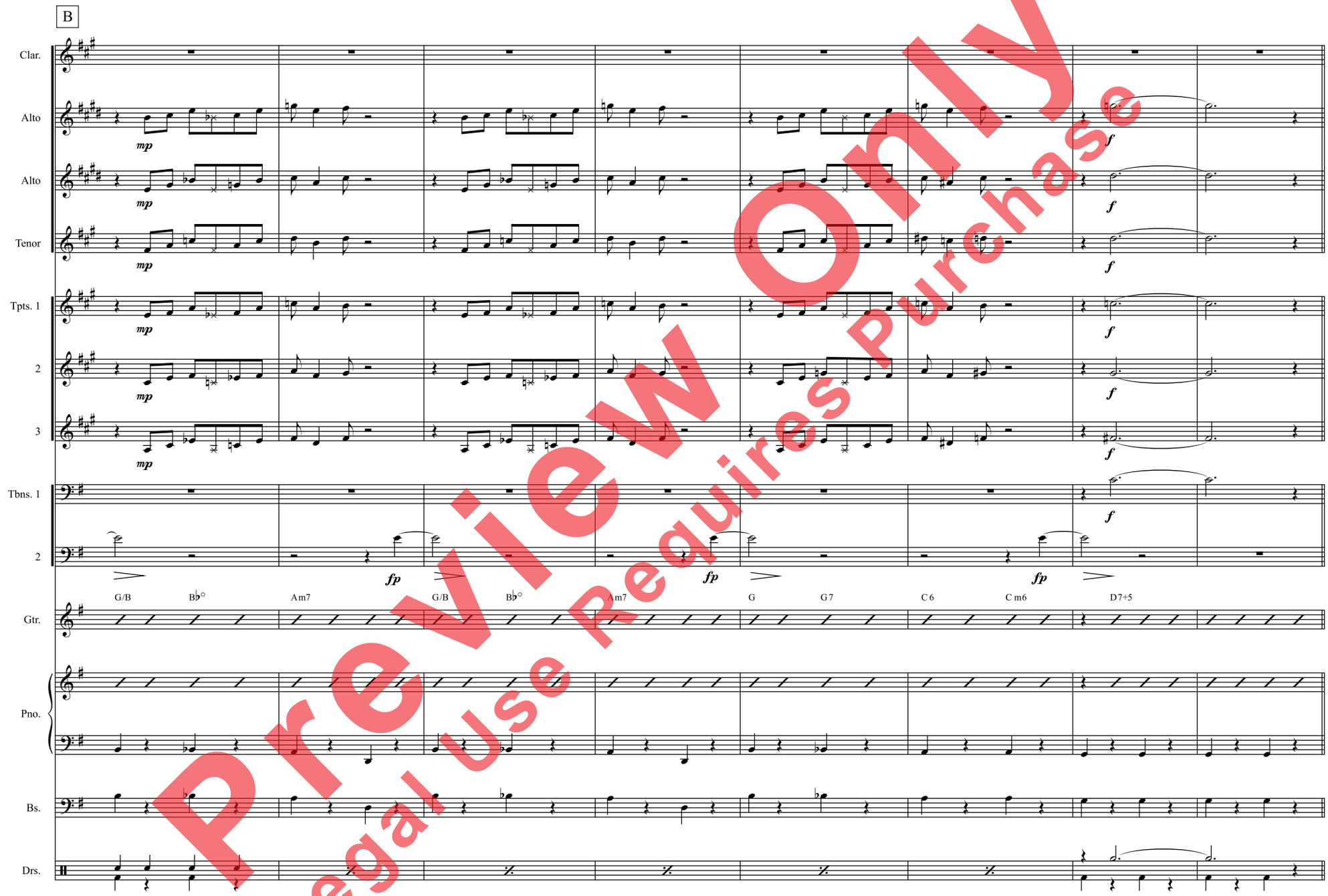

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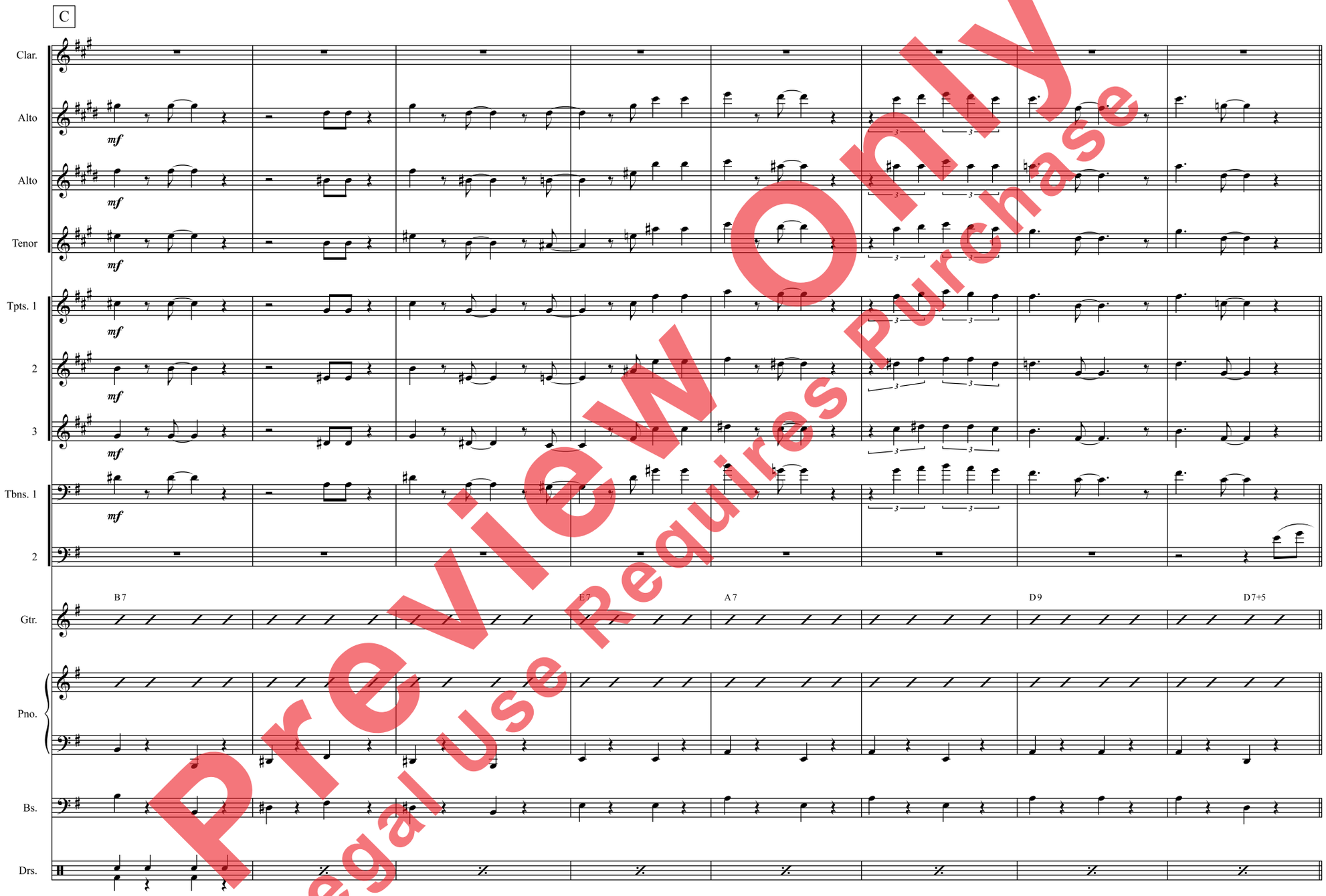

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D

Clar.
Alto
Alto
Tenor
Tpts. 1
2
3
Tbns. 1
2
Gtr.
Pno.
Bs.
Drs.

unis.
mp
mf
f

G/B B♭° Am7 G/B B♭° Am7 G G7 C6 Cm6 D7+5

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Hotter Than 'Ell

Clarinet Solo

E

Clar.

solo

Alto

Alto

Tenor

Tpts. 1

mf

2

mf

3

mf

Tbns. 1

mf

2

Gtr.

G/B B♭° Am7 D7 G/B B♭° Am7 D7 G G7 C6 Cm6 G

Pno.

Bs.

Drs.

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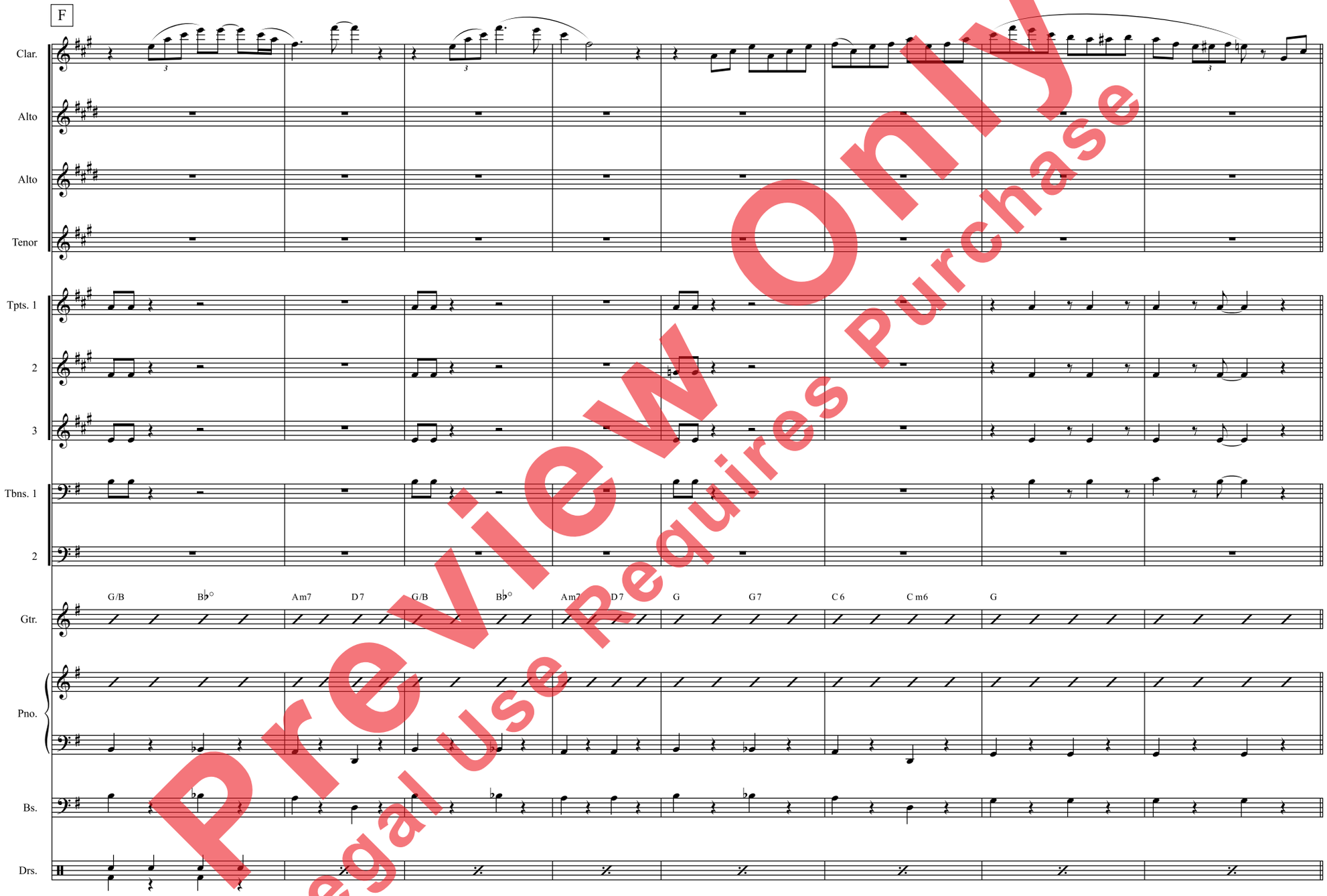

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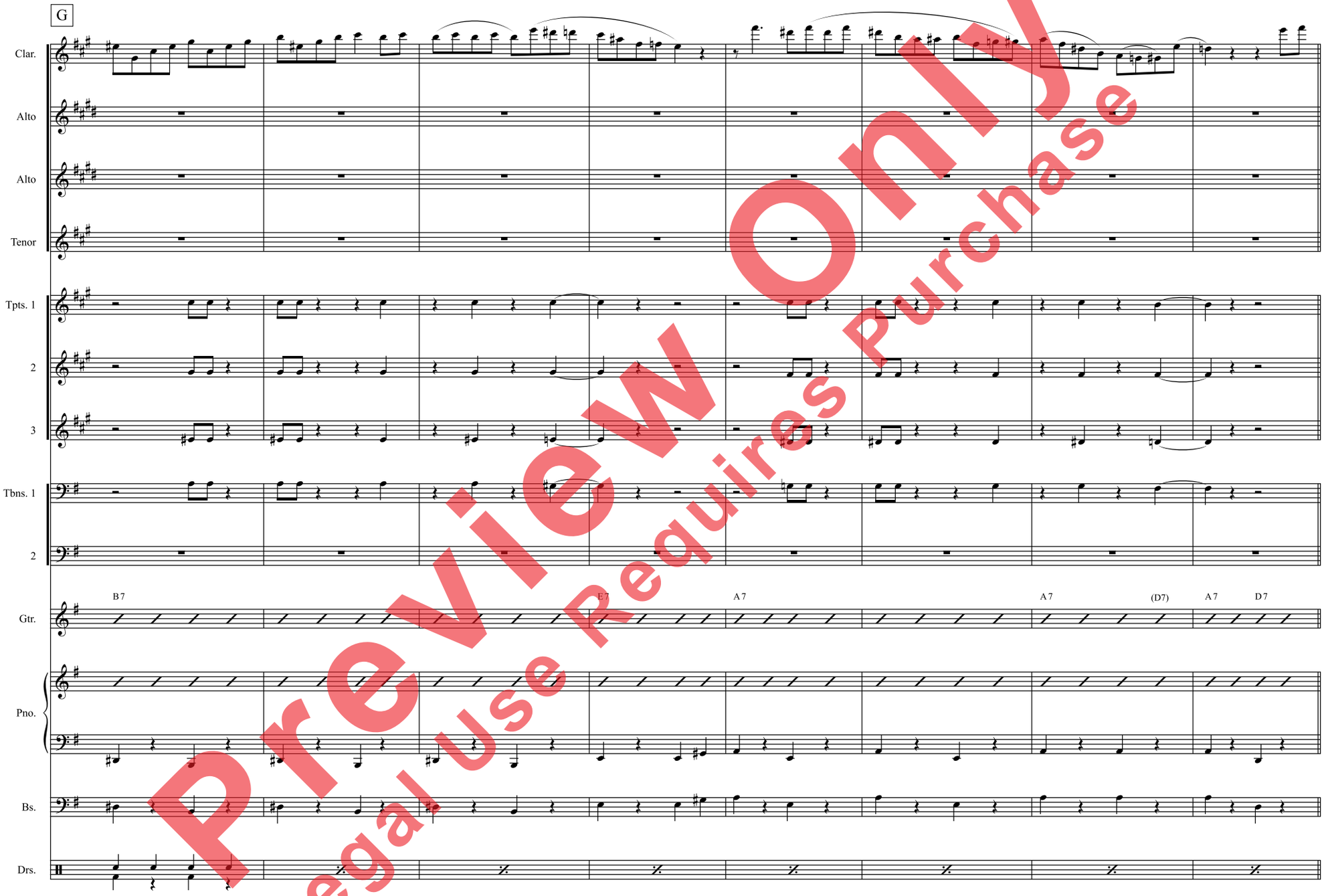

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H

Clar.
Alto
Alto
Tenor
Tpts. 1
2
3
solo
Tbns. 1
2
Gtr.
G/B B♭° Am7 D7 G/B B♭° Am7 D7 G G7 C6 Cm6 G
Pno.
Bs.
Drs.

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I Trumpet Solo

Clar.

Alto *mf*

Alto *mf*

Tenor *mf*

Tpts. 1

2

3

Tbns. 1

2

Gtr. G/B B♭◇ Am7 D7 G/B B♭◇ Am7 D7 G G7 C6 Cm6 G Am7 B♭◇ Am7

Pno.

Bs.

Drs.

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J

Clar.
Alto
Alto
Tenor
Tpts. 1
2
3
Tbns. 1
2
Gtr.
Pno.
Bs.
Drs.

G/B B♭° Am7 D7 G/B B♭° Am7 D7 G G7 C6 Cm6 G Am7 B♭° Am7

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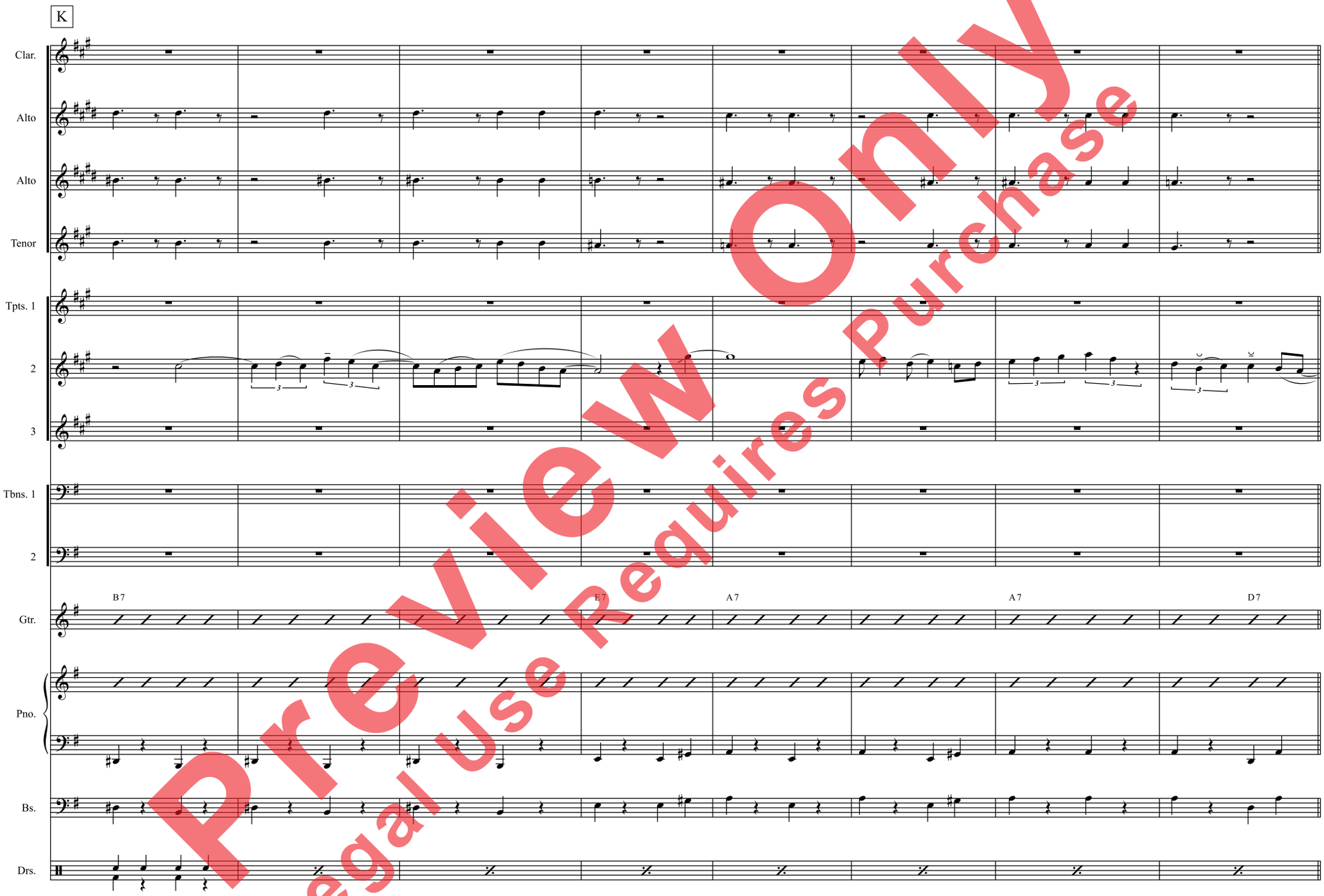

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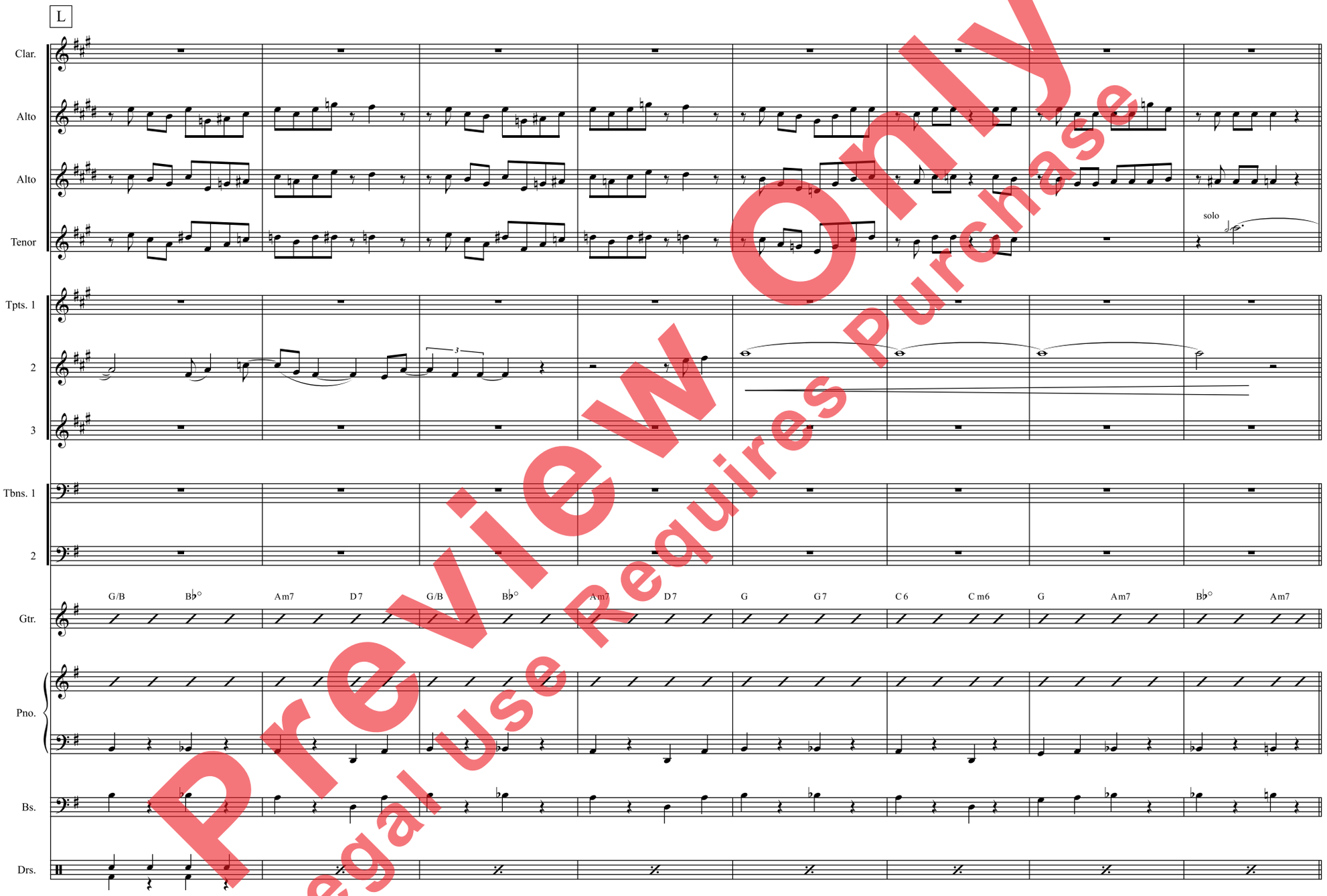

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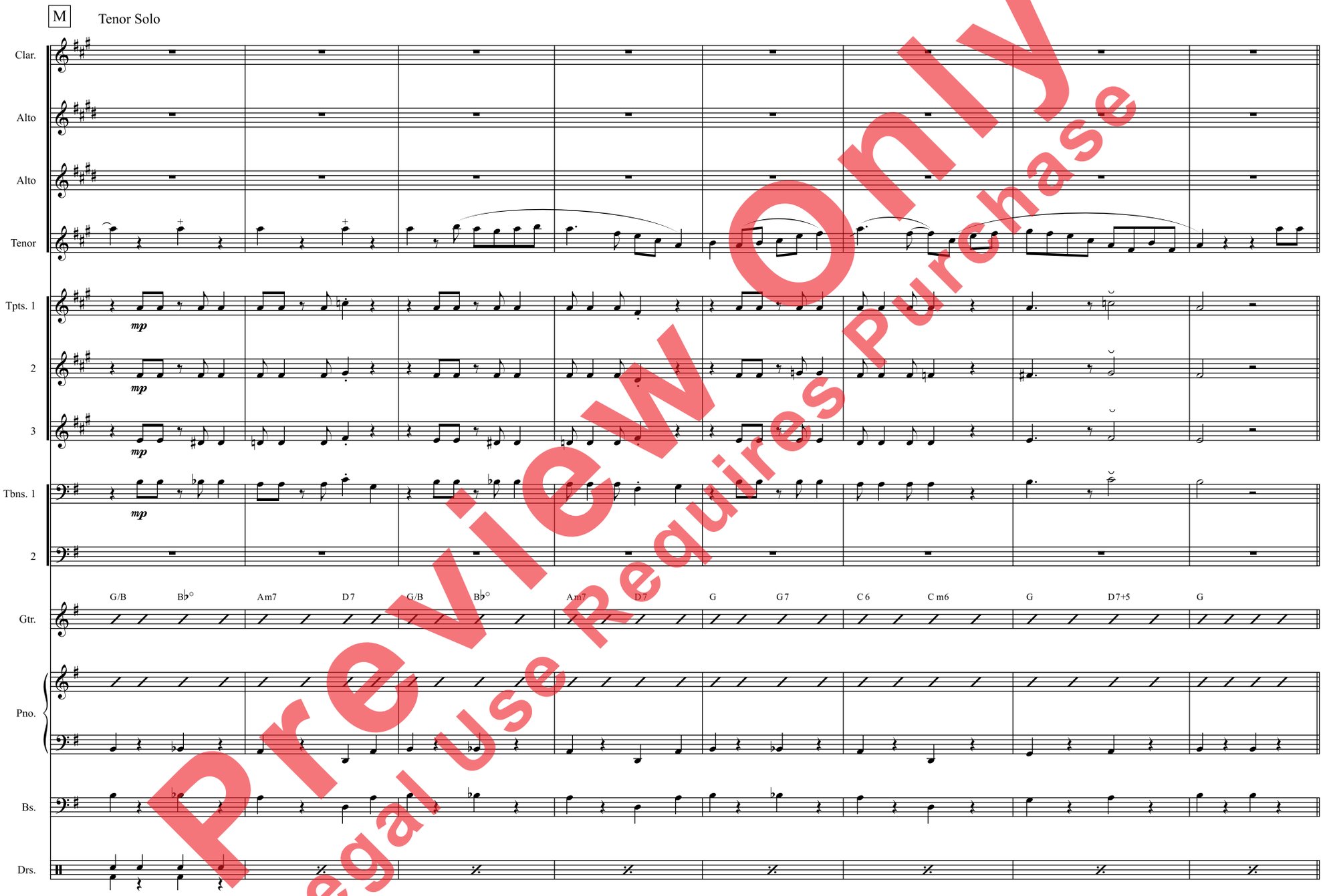

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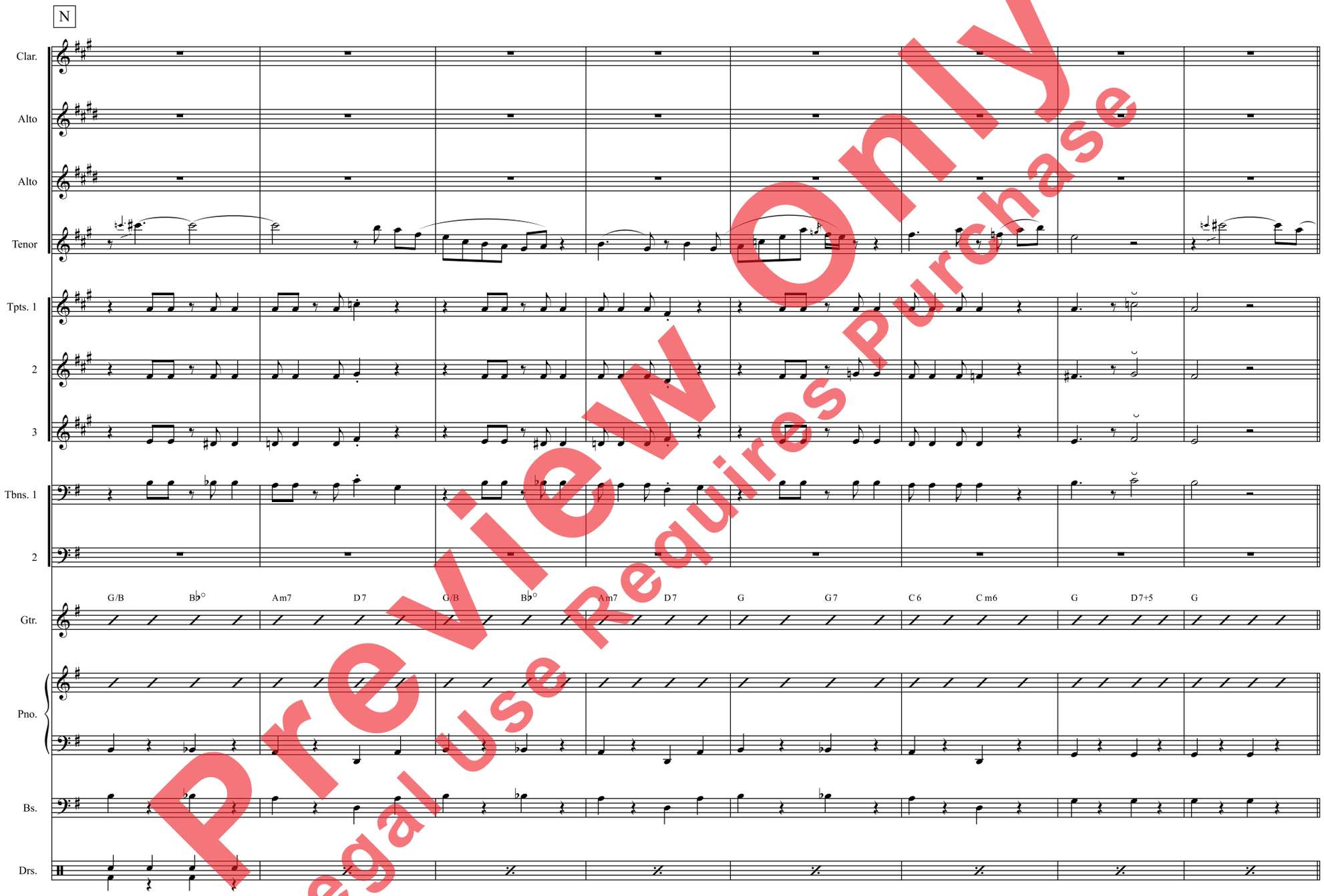

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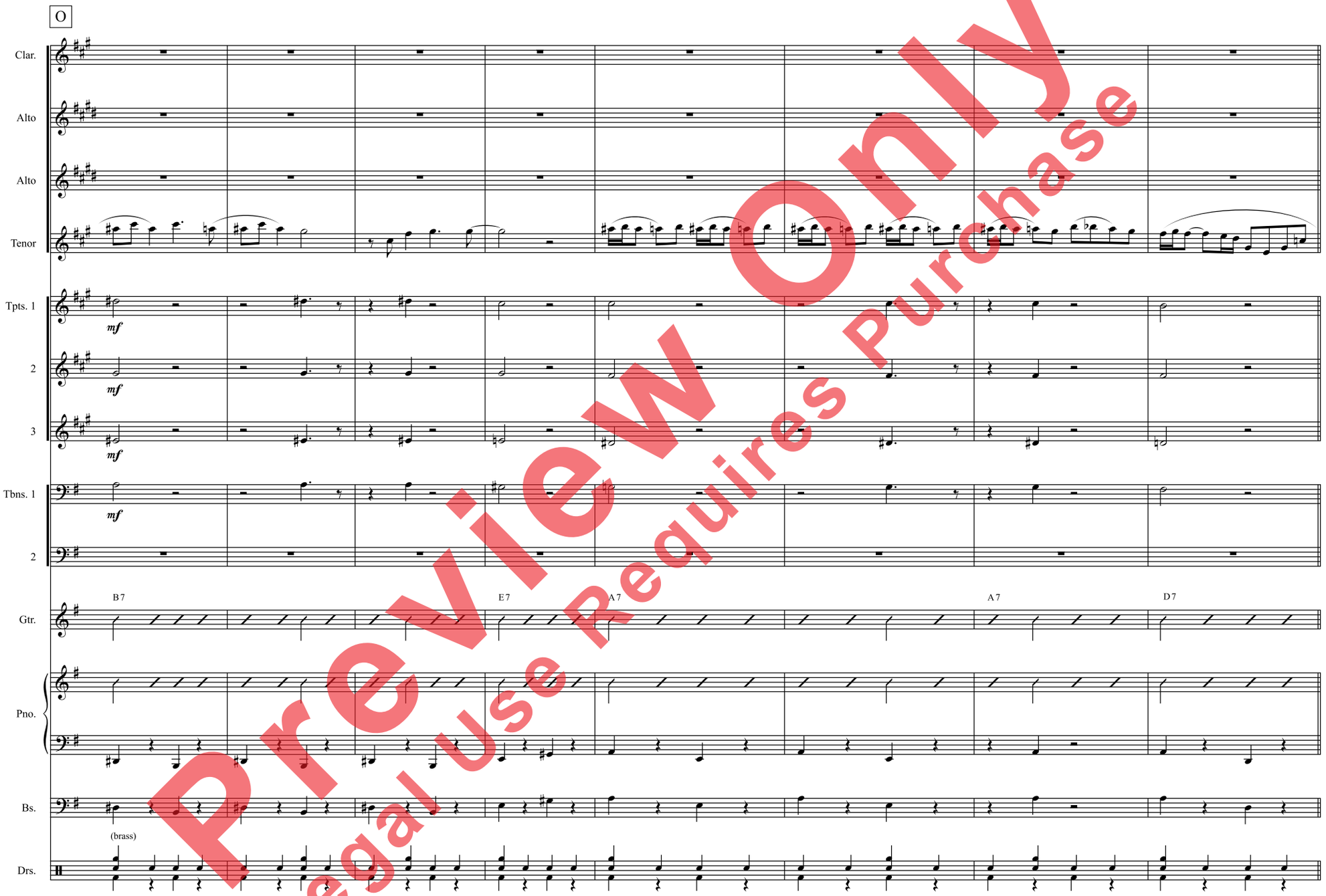

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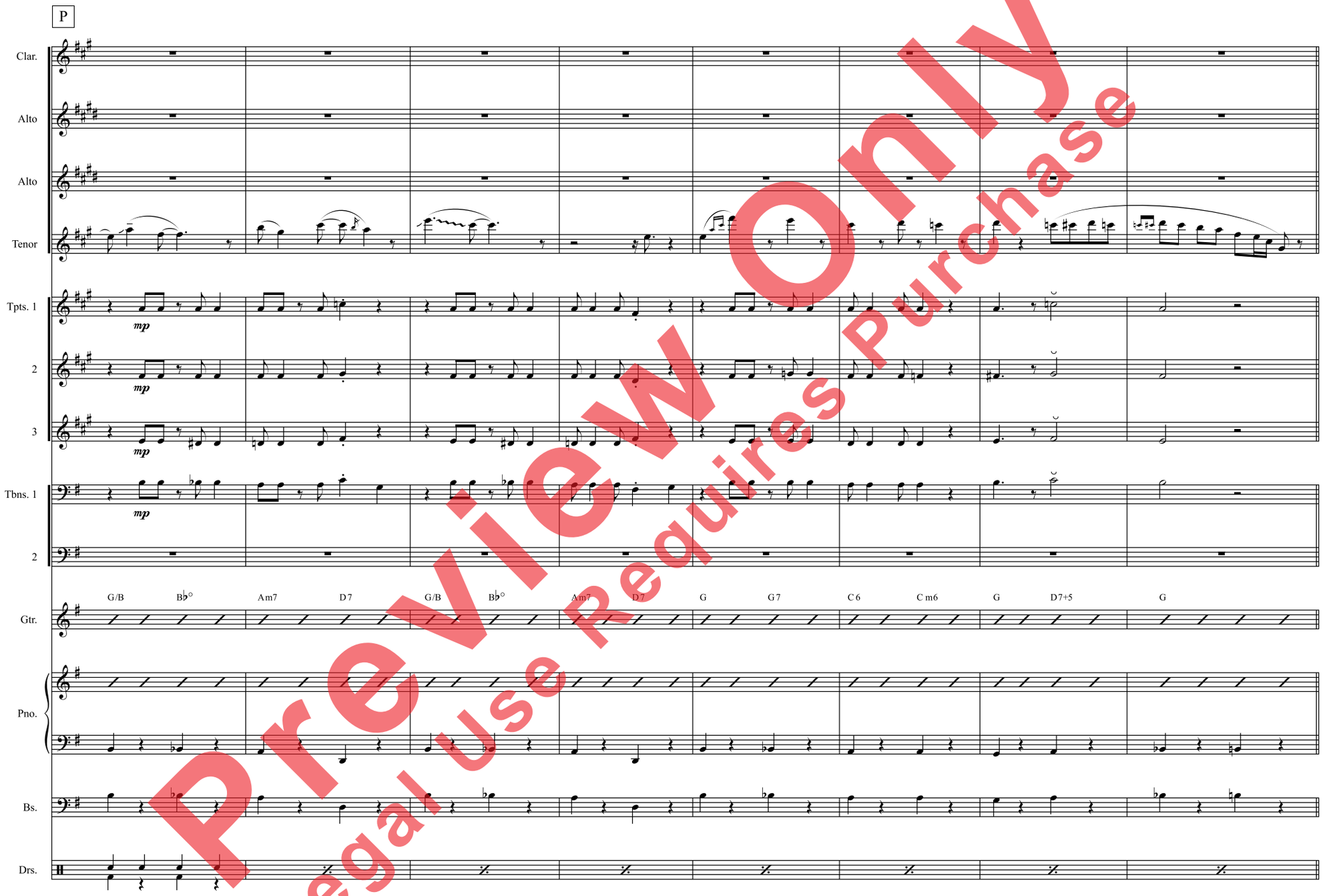

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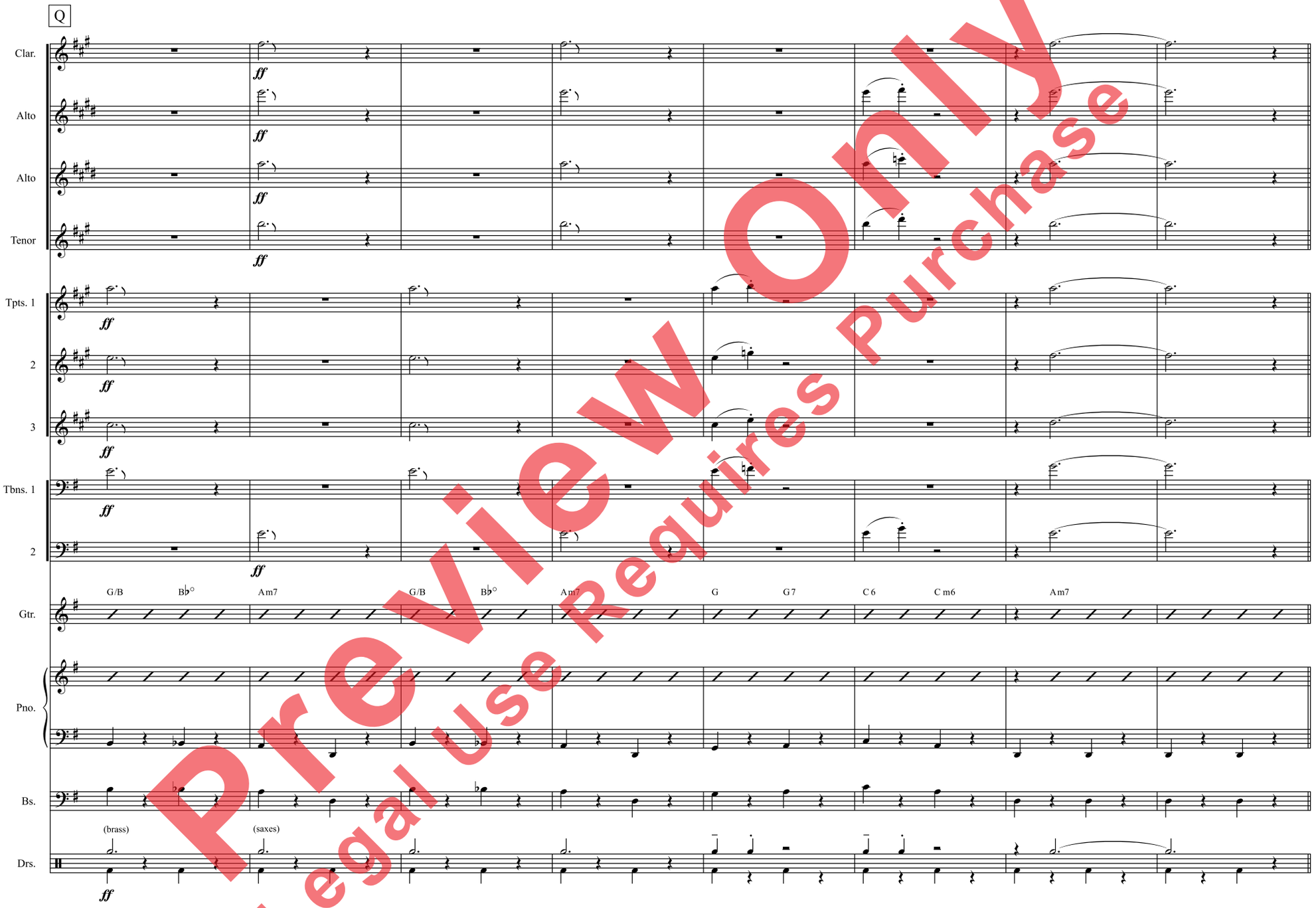

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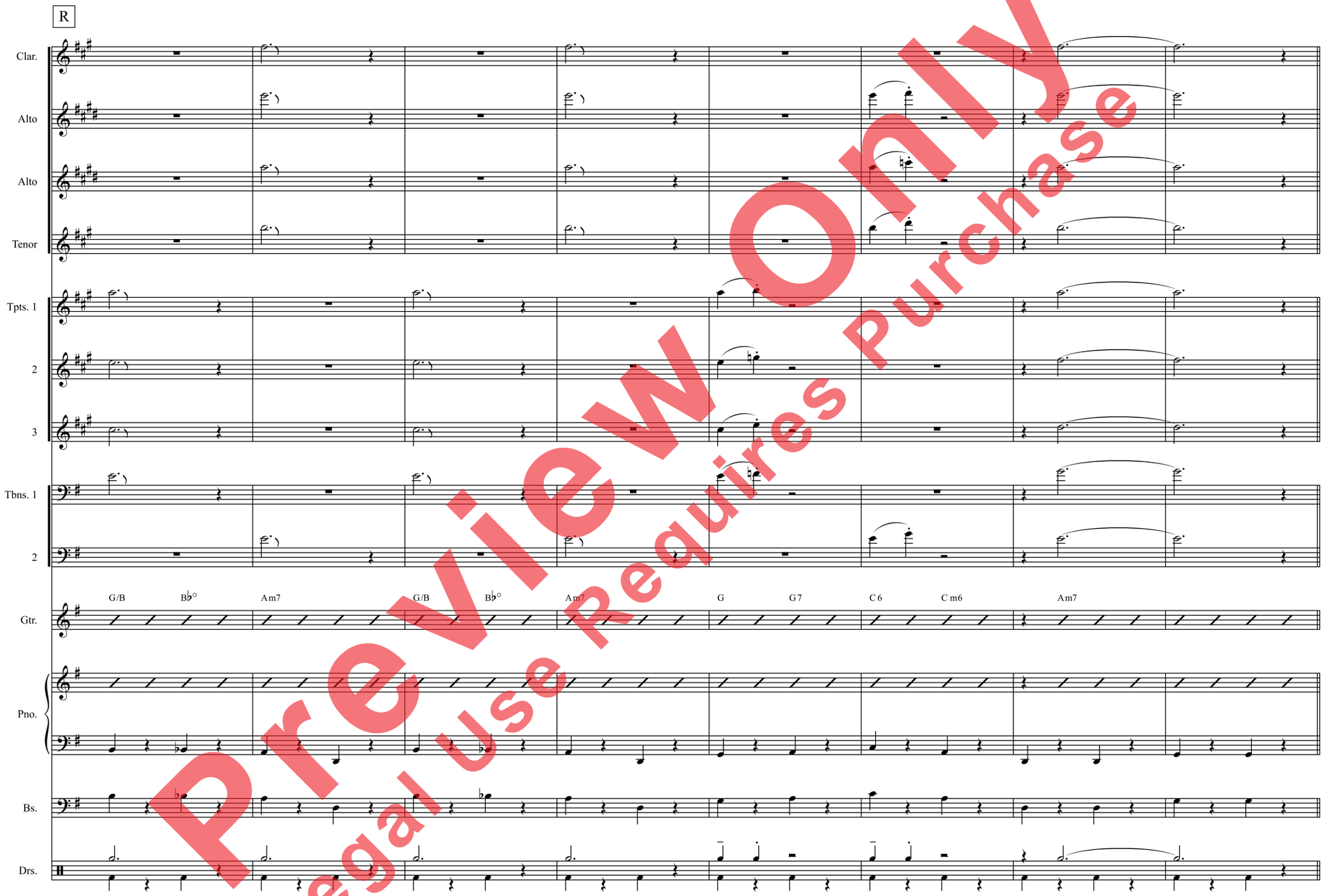

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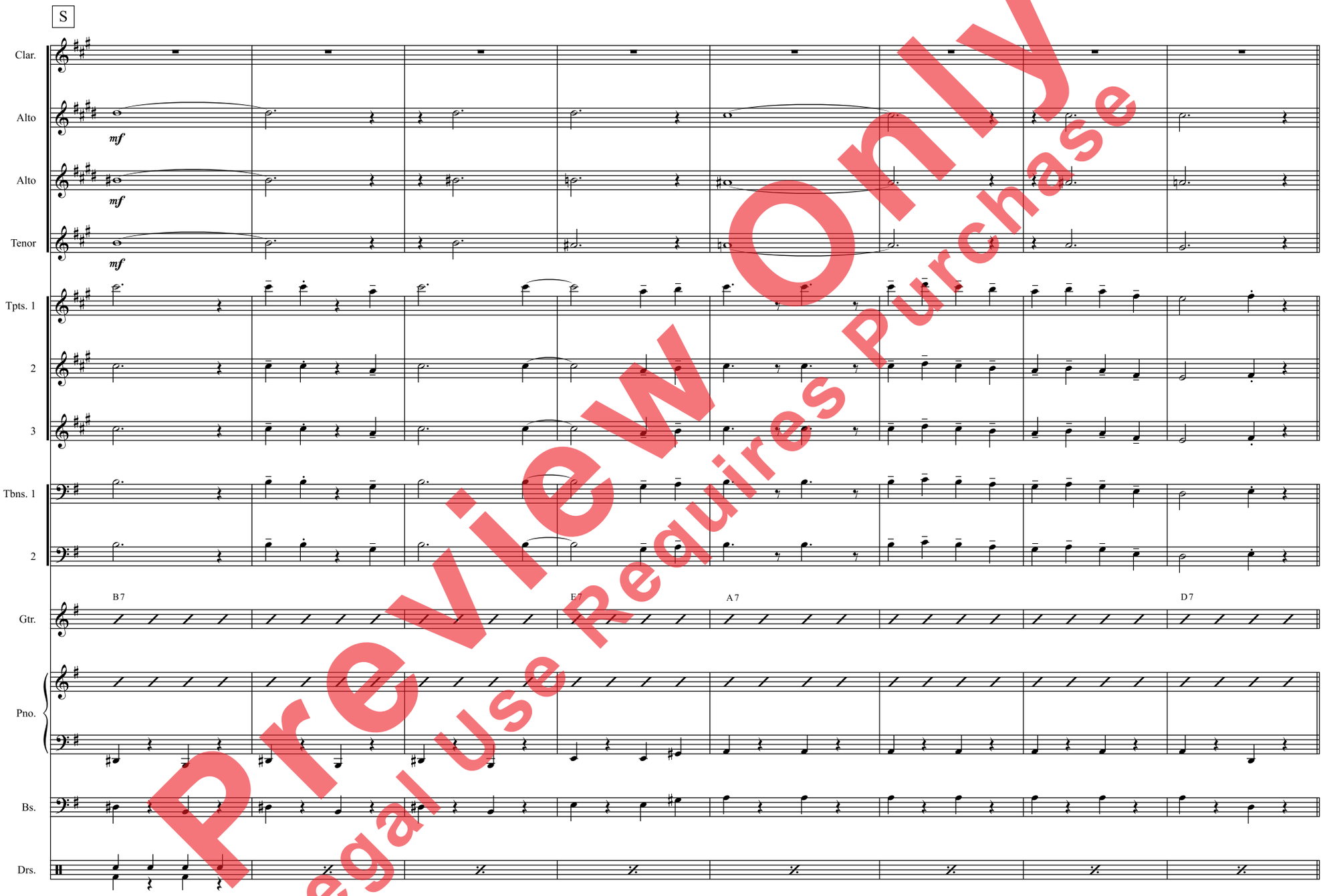

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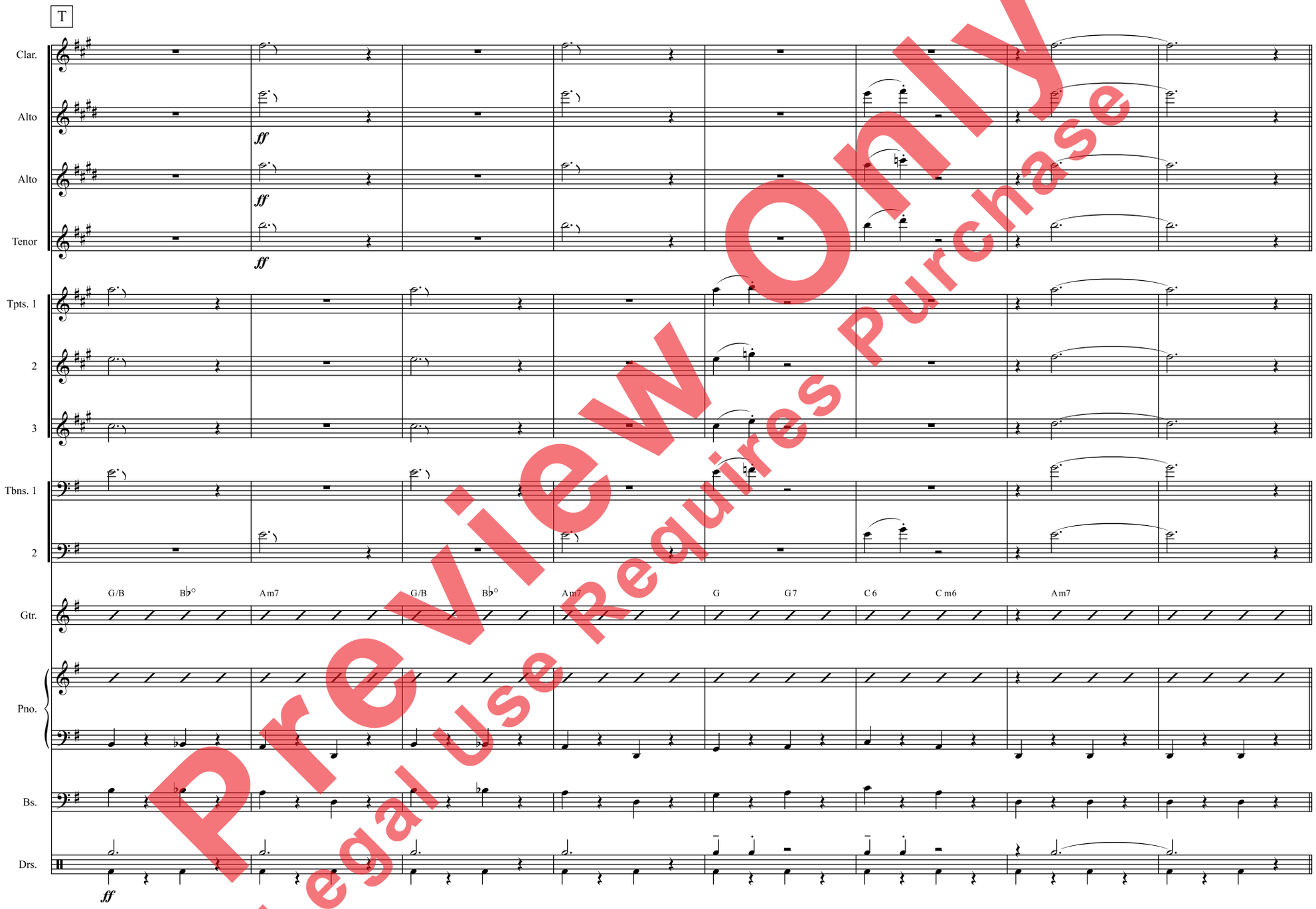

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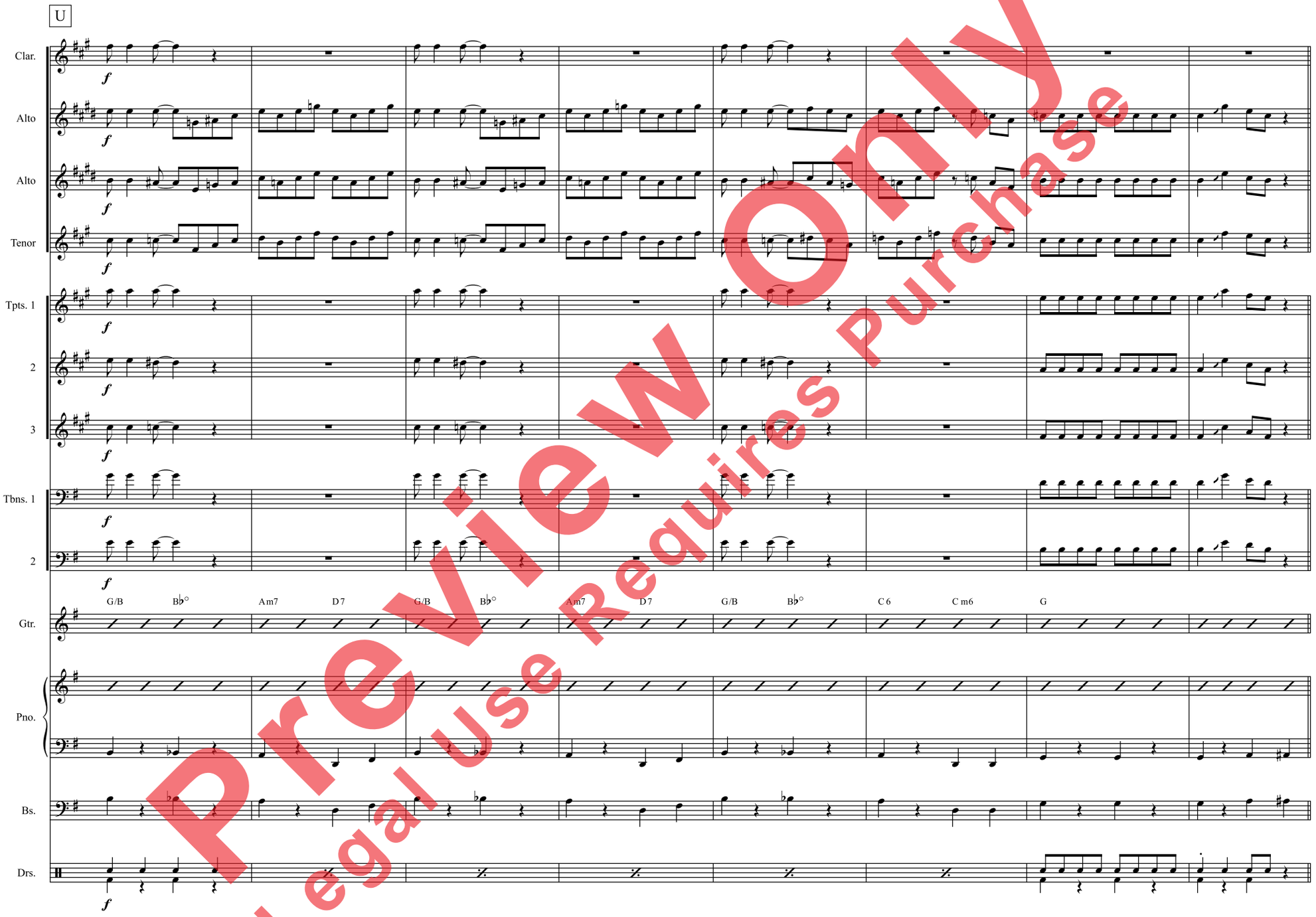

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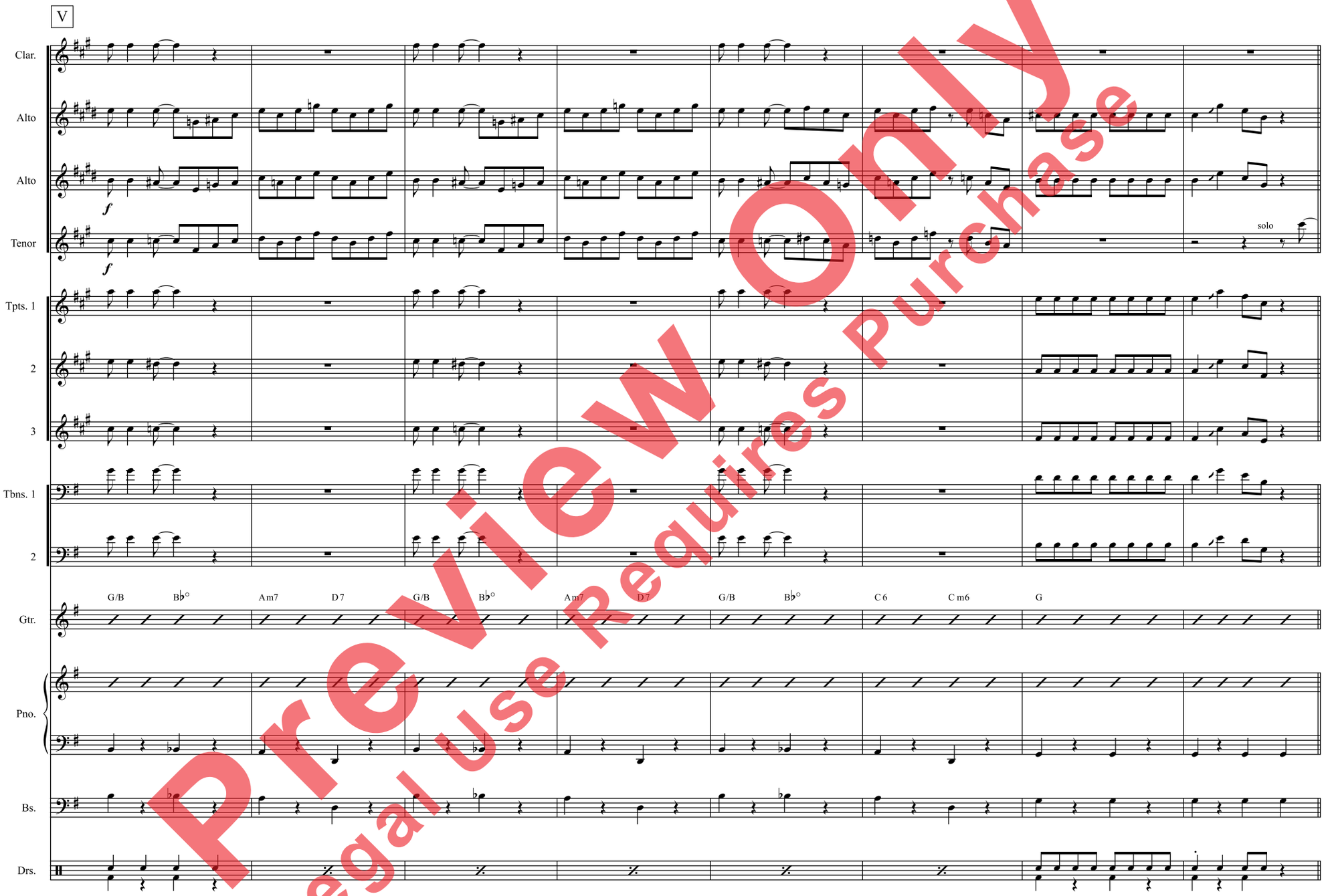

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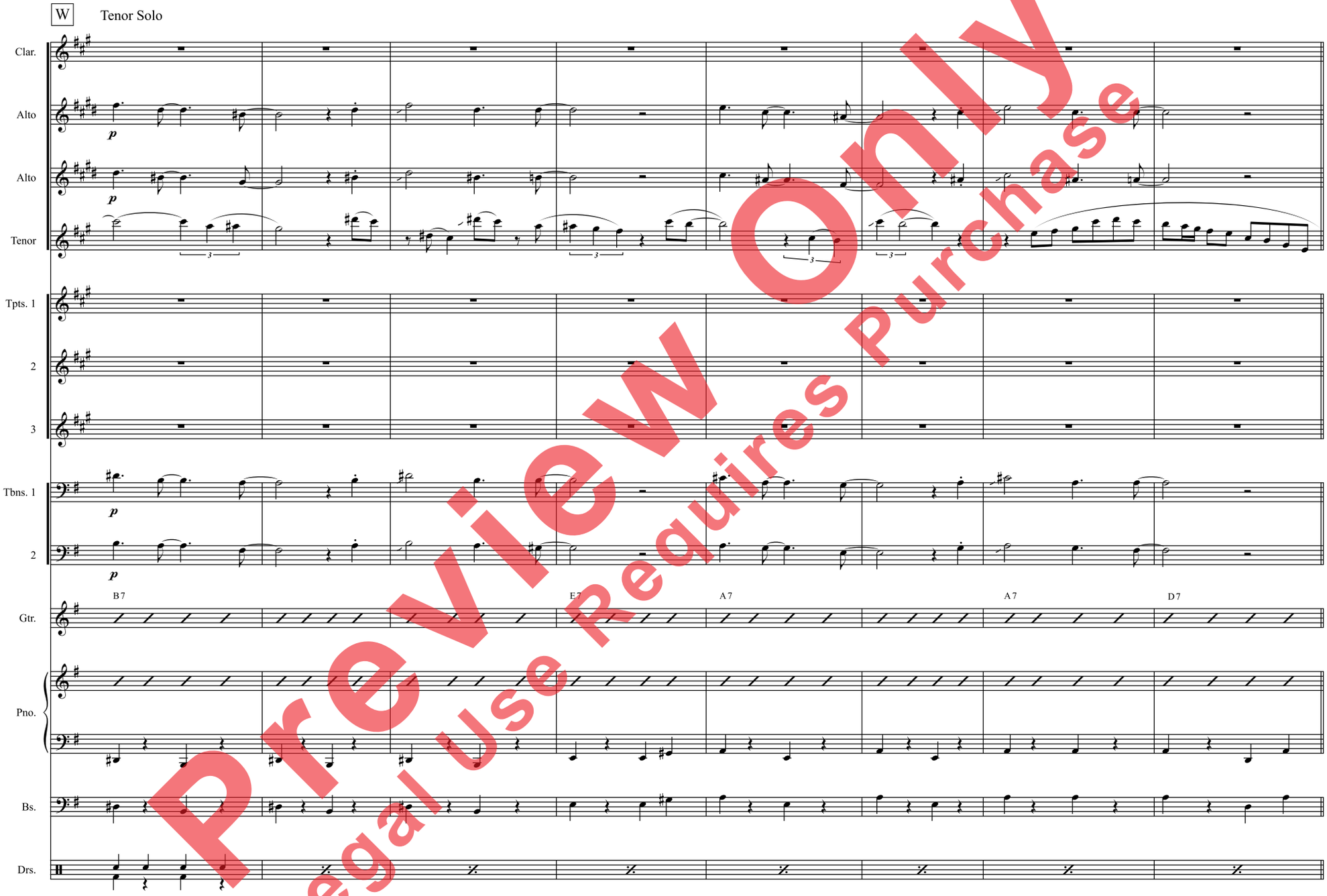

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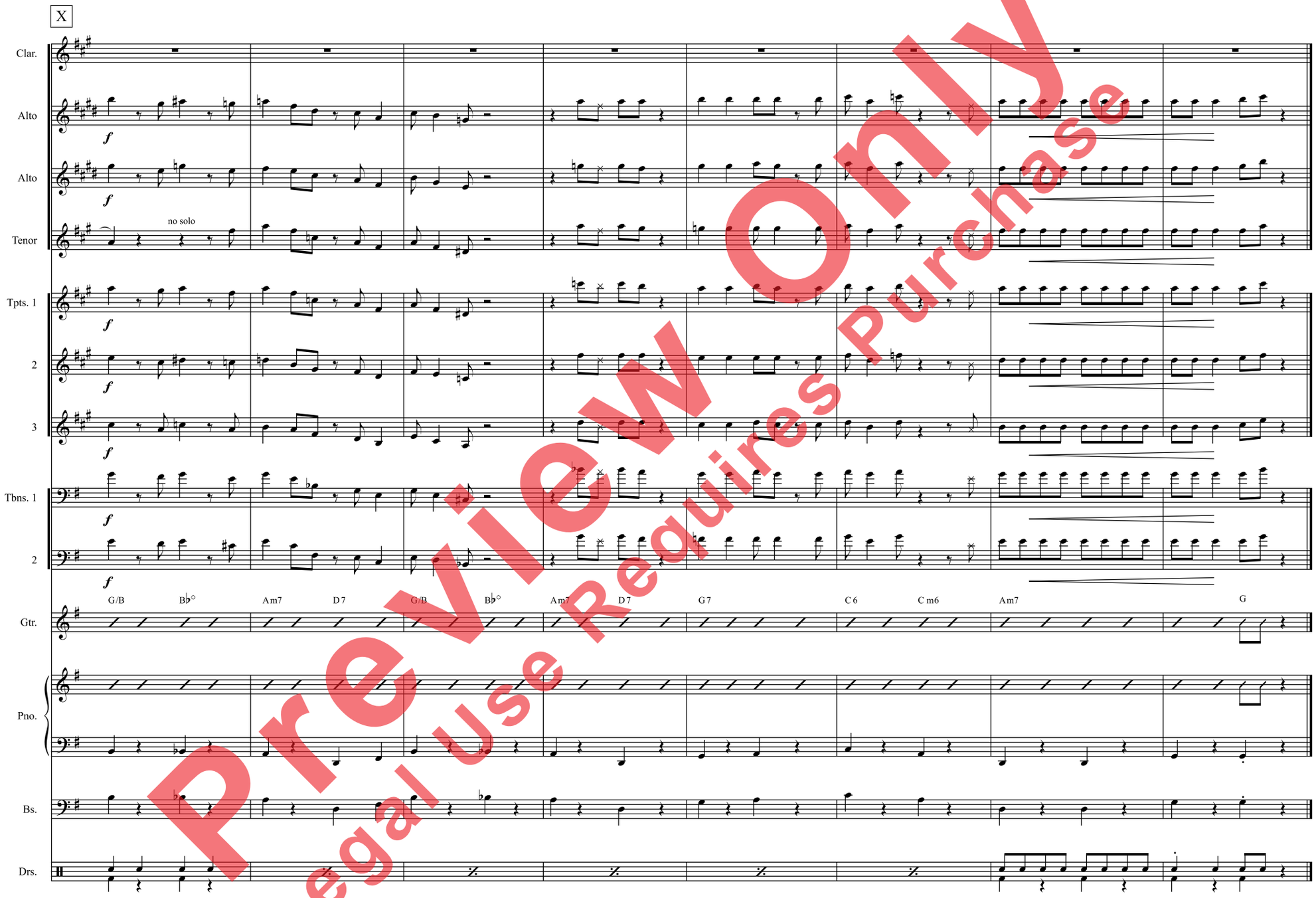

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essentially ellington

The *Essentially Ellington* High School Jazz Band Program (*EE*) is one of the most unique curriculum resources for high school jazz bands in the United States, Canada, and American schools abroad. *EE* extends the legacy of Duke Ellington and other seminal big band composers and arrangers by widely disseminating music, in its original arrangements, to high school musicians for study and performance. Utilizing this music challenges students to increase their musical proficiency and knowledge of the jazz language. *EE* consists of the following initiatives and services:

Supplying the Music
Each year Jazz at Lincoln Center (JALC) transcribes, publishes, and distributes original transcriptions and arrangements, along with additional educational materials including recordings and teaching guides, to high school bands in the U.S., Canada, and American schools abroad.

Talking about the Music
Throughout the school year, band directors and students correspond with professional clinicians who answer questions regarding the *EE* music. *EE* strives to foster mentoring relationships through email correspondence, various conference presentations, and the festival weekend.

Professional Feedback
Bands are invited to submit a recording of their performance of the charts either for entry in the competition or for comments only. Every submission receives a thorough written assessment. Bands are also invited to attend *EE* Regional Festivals for an opportunity to perform and receive a workshop.

Finalists and In-School Workshops
Fifteen bands are selected from competition entries to attend the annual Competition & Festival in New York City. To prepare, each finalist band receives an in-school workshop led by a professional musician. Local *EE* members are also invited to attend these workshops.

Competition & Festival
The *EE* year culminates in a three-day festival at Jazz at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall. Students, teachers, and musicians participate in workshops, rehearsals, and performances. The festival concludes with an evening concert that features the three top-placing bands, joining the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis in concert previewing next year's *EE* repertoire.

Jazz at Lincoln Center Band Director Academy
This professional development session for band directors is designed to enhance their ability to teach and conduct the music of Duke Ellington and other big band composers. Led by prominent jazz educators each summer, this companion program to *EE* integrates performance, history, pedagogy, and discussion into an intensive educational experience for band directors at all levels.

As of May 2015, *EE* has distributed scores to more than 4,200 schools in all 50 states, Canadian provinces, and American schools abroad.

Since 1995, over 567,000 students have been exposed to Duke Ellington's music through the *Essentially Ellington* Program.

JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER is dedicated to inspiring and growing audiences for jazz. With the world-renowned Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra and a comprehensive array of guest artists, Jazz at Lincoln Center advances a unique vision for the continued development of the art of jazz by producing a year-round schedule of performance, education and broadcast events for audiences of all ages. These productions include concerts, national and international tours, residencies, yearly hall of fame inductions, weekly national radio and television programs, recordings, publications, an annual high school jazz band competition and festival, a band director academy, jazz appreciation curricula for students, music publishing, children's concerts, lectures, adult education courses, student and educator workshops and interactive websites. Under the leadership of Managing and Artistic Director Wynton Marsalis, Chairman Robert J. Appel and Executive Director Greg Scholl, Jazz at Lincoln Center produces thousands of events each season in its home in New York City, Frederick P. Rose Hall, and around the world. For more information, visit jazz.org.

Jazz at Lincoln Center Education
3 Columbus Circle, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10019

Phone: 212-258-9810
Fax: 212-258-9900
E-mail: ee@jazz.org

jazz.org/EE

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