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ARABIAN DANCES

Brian Balmages

Instrumentation

1 - Conductor's Full Score
1 - Piccolo
4 - Flute 1
4 - Flute 2
1 - Oboe 1
1 - Oboe 2
1 - Bassoon 1
1 - Bassoon 2
4 - B♭ Clarinet 1
4 - B♭ Clarinet 2
4 - B♭ Clarinet 3
2 - B♭ Bass Clarinet
1 - E♭ Contra Alto Clarinet
2 - E♭ Alto Saxophone 1
2 - E♭ Alto Saxophone 2
2 - B♭ Tenor Saxophone
2 - E♭ Baritone Saxophone
3 - B♭ Trumpet 1
3 - B♭ Trumpet 2
3 - B♭ Trumpet 3
1 - F Horn 1
1 - F Horn 2
1 - F Horn 3
1 - F Horn 4
2 - Trombone 1
2 - Trombone 2
2 - Trombone 3
2 - Baritone/ Euphonium
2 - Baritone T.C.
4 - Tuba
2 - Timpani/Shaker
2 - Percussion 1
Marimba
Low Tom
Finger Cymbals
Suspended Cymbal
2 - Percussion 2
Suspended Cymbal
Frame Drum
Bongos
2 - Percussion 3
2 Darbukas
Wind Chimes
4 - Percussion 4
Crash Cymbals
Large Tam-tam
Finger Cymbals
Tambourine
Shekere

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As a result, all single page parts are collated before multiple page parts.

THE F·J·H MUSIC COMPANY INC.
Frank J. Hackinson

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The Composer

Brian Balmages (b. 1975) is an active composer, conductor, producer, and performer. He received his bachelor's degree in music from James Madison University and his master's degree from the University of Miami in Florida. Mr. Balmages's works for symphonic band, orchestra, and brass have been performed throughout the world, including the College Band Directors National and Regional Conferences, the Midwest Clinic, the International Tuba/Euphonium Conference, the International Trombone Festival, and the International Trumpet Guild Conference. His active schedule of commissions has included groups ranging from elementary schools to professional ensembles, including the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Miami Symphony Orchestra, the University of Miami Wind Ensemble, Dominion Brass, and others. He has also enjoyed world premieres in prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall.

As a conductor, Mr. Balmages enjoys engagements with numerous honor bands and orchestras, university groups, and professional ensembles throughout the country. Notable guest conducting appearances have included the Midwest Clinic, College Band Directors Regional Conference, Mid-Atlantic Wind Conductors Conference, the Atlantic Classical Orchestra Brass Ensemble, and Meyerhoff Symphony Hall in Baltimore. He has also served as an adjunct professor of instrumental conducting and acting director of the symphonic band at Towson University in Maryland.

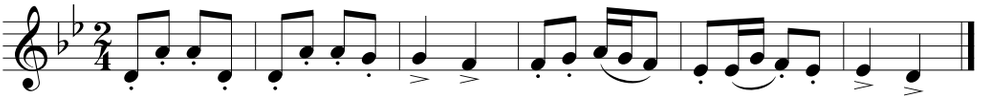
Currently, Mr. Balmages is the Director of Instrumental Publications for The FJH Music Company Inc. in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He resides in Baltimore with his wife, Lisa, and their sons, Jacob and Collin.

Program Notes

The Middle East is a source of amazing folk music that includes a great variety of instruments not commonly used in Western music. In researching Arabic folk music, I came across many folk tunes that were performed with traditional instruments. In such cases, it is quite common for there to be no harmony—strings and winds double the melody line while percussion makes up the entire accompaniment. However, Arabic music has evolved with contemporary artists infusing a mixture of traditional and commercial sounds into their music. This concept of traditional and contemporary sounds coexisting in a single work serves as the inspiration for *Arabian Dances.*

There are three themes that are used throughout the work. The first is a traditional Arabic song called *Ala Dal'ona.* While the song is originally a love ballad, it has had many new sets of lyrics to reflect loss of homeland, desire for freedom, and even a voice for women's rights. Thus, despite its simple melody, it has a very complex background. Excerpts of the song are used in the very beginning of the work, while the full tune with percussion accompaniment is presented at the *Allegro Moderato.* It is first presented in a more authentic form, with just melody and percussion. As the music develops, more contemporary sounds are added, including more extensive harmonies.

Theme 1: *Ala Dal'ona*



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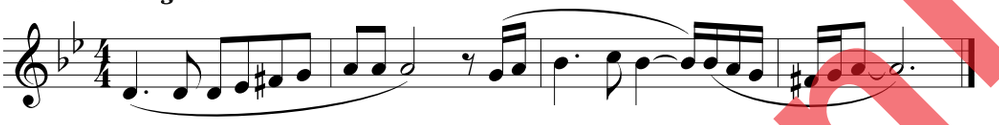
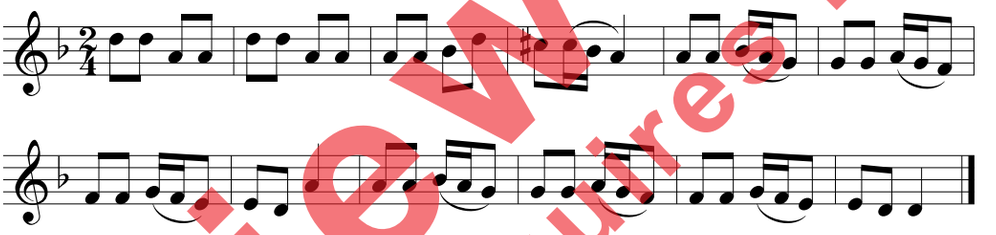
The second theme is an original that serves as a unifying device throughout the work. First presented at measure 17, this theme winds up being juxtaposed with both folk songs in the piece at various stages. As with the other songs, extensive ornamentation is used throughout the piece in an attempt to represent the unique characteristic of Middle Eastern music.

Theme 2: Original Theme



The third theme is *Tafta Hindi* ("Cloth from India"), a song that tells of an Arabic marketplace where merchants are calling out to potential customers. This theme is introduced at measure 148 and is first presented with only melody and percussion (as with *Ala Dal'ona*). Again, in an attempt to bridge traditional and contemporary sounds, the music continues to develop with added harmonies and the use of Western percussion instruments, such as timpani, suspended cymbal, crash cymbals, and tom-tom.

Theme 3: *Tafta Hindi*



The ending of the piece *(Vivace)* contains the most contemporary orchestration and rhythms. It comes the closest to representing traditional Western music before the final statement of the *Tafta Hindi* theme in the last four measures, which brings the work to a powerful and exciting conclusion.

An extensive percussion ensemble section in the middle of the work relies heavily on authentic rhythms and instruments. The darbuka is a type of goblet drum — a drum that essentially is shaped like a goblet or chalice. While there are many sounds these drums are capable of, there are two main techniques called for in this piece. The "doum" is typically a right-handed center strike, either with the fingers or palm, to create a low, clear tone. The "tek" and "ka" are strikes near the edge of the drum to produce a high tone. This is notated in the music with the "doum" as a lower pitch and the "tek" and "ka" (right- and left-handed strikes near the edge) as upper pitches. Optional alternatives are common hand drums, which can be found in many Orff classrooms. The shekere is typically made out of gourd (though there are fiberglass versions that are much less delicate) and is covered with beads that are woven into a net. Playing the instrument involves dropping it into the hand to create a tone and tossing it out as though you were tossing water out of it.

Percussion is set up to work with 8 players. If fewer players are available, it is recommended to omit the timpani/shaker and percussion 1 parts.

Timpani/Shaker — 1 player
Percussion 1 — 1 player
Percussion 2 — 2 players
Percussion 3 — 2 players
Percussion 4 — 2 players

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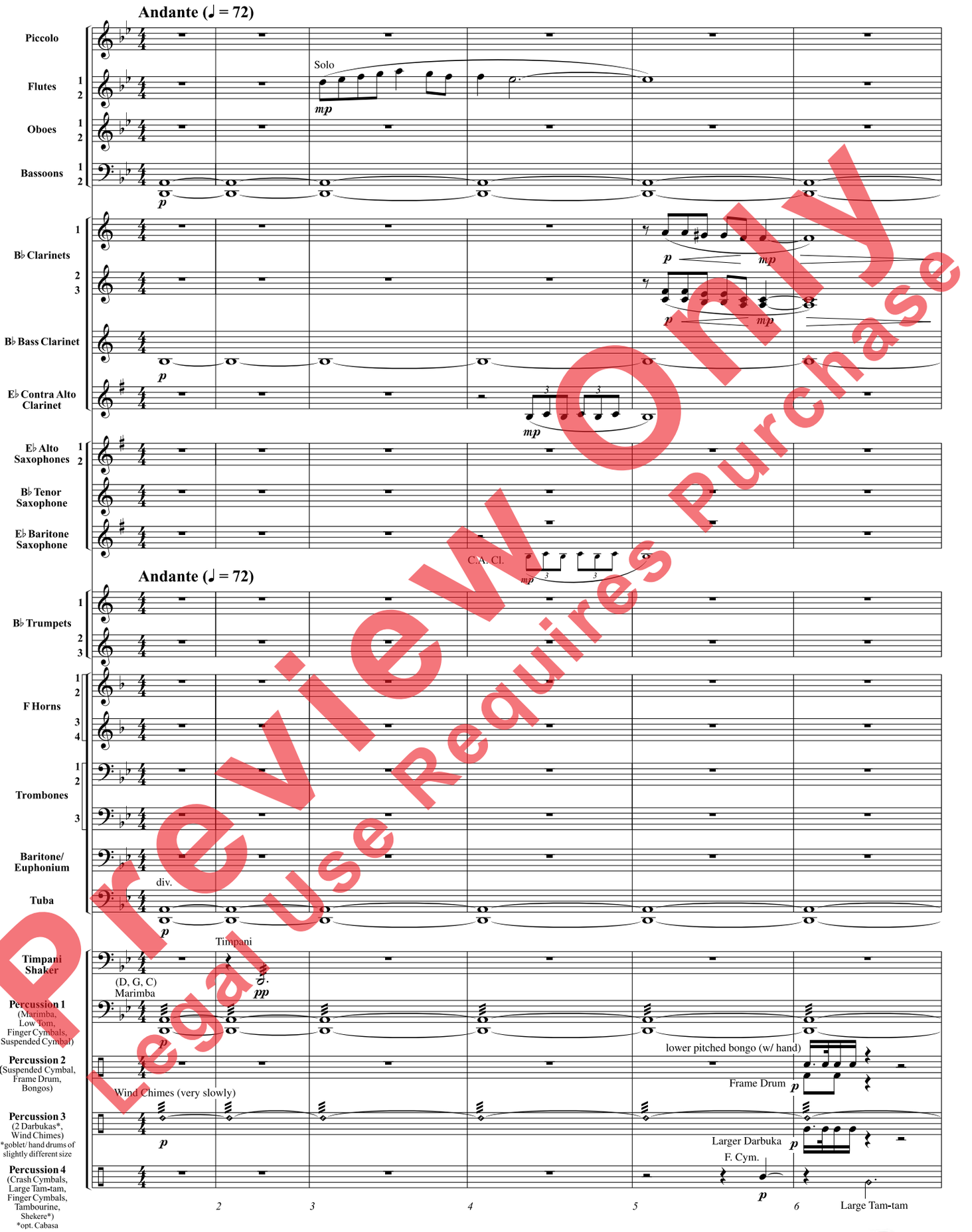
Duration: 6:30

commissioned by the South Carolina Band Directors Association for the All-State Clinic Band

ARABIAN DANCES

BRIAN BALMAGES
(ASCAP)



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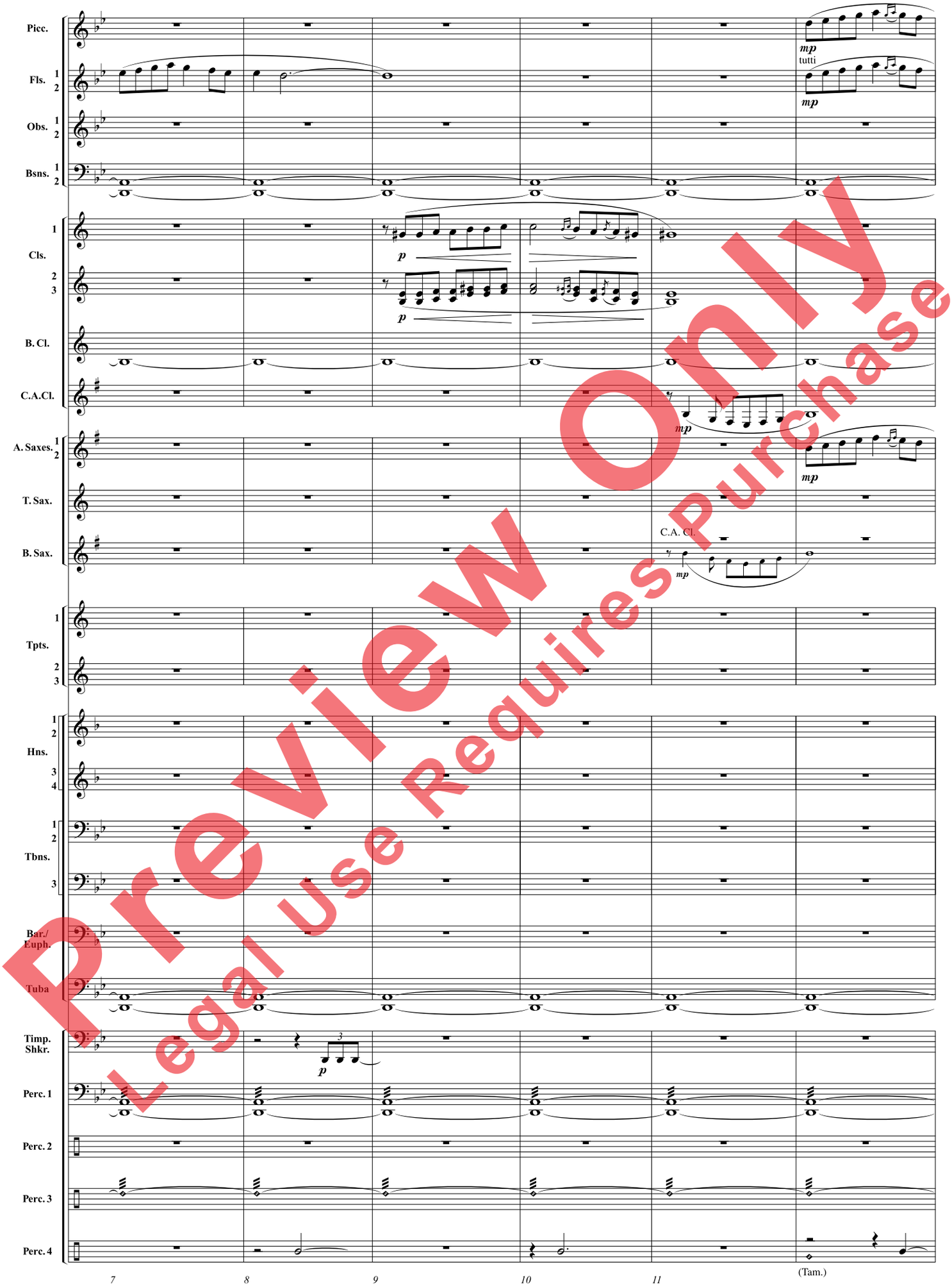

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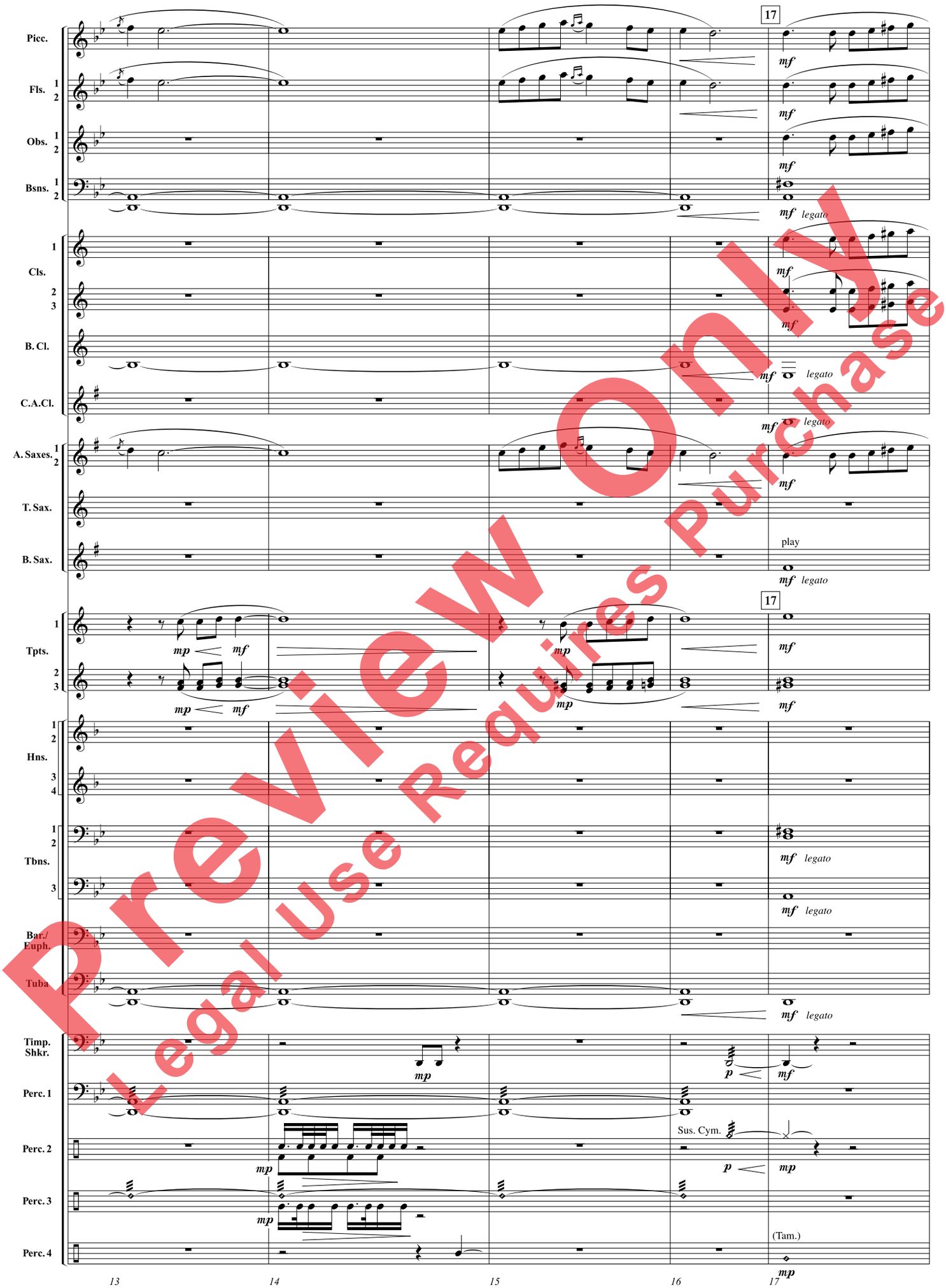

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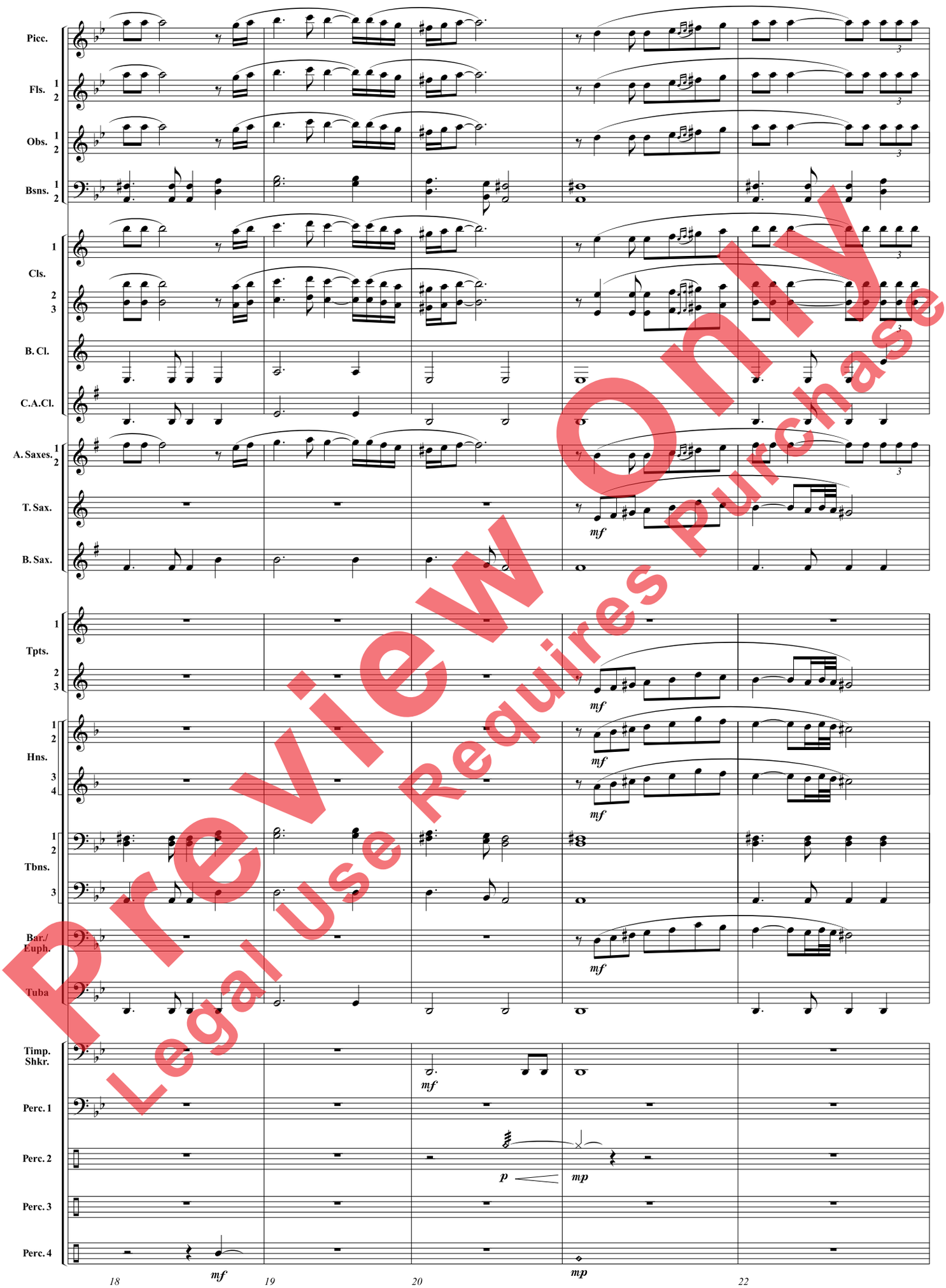

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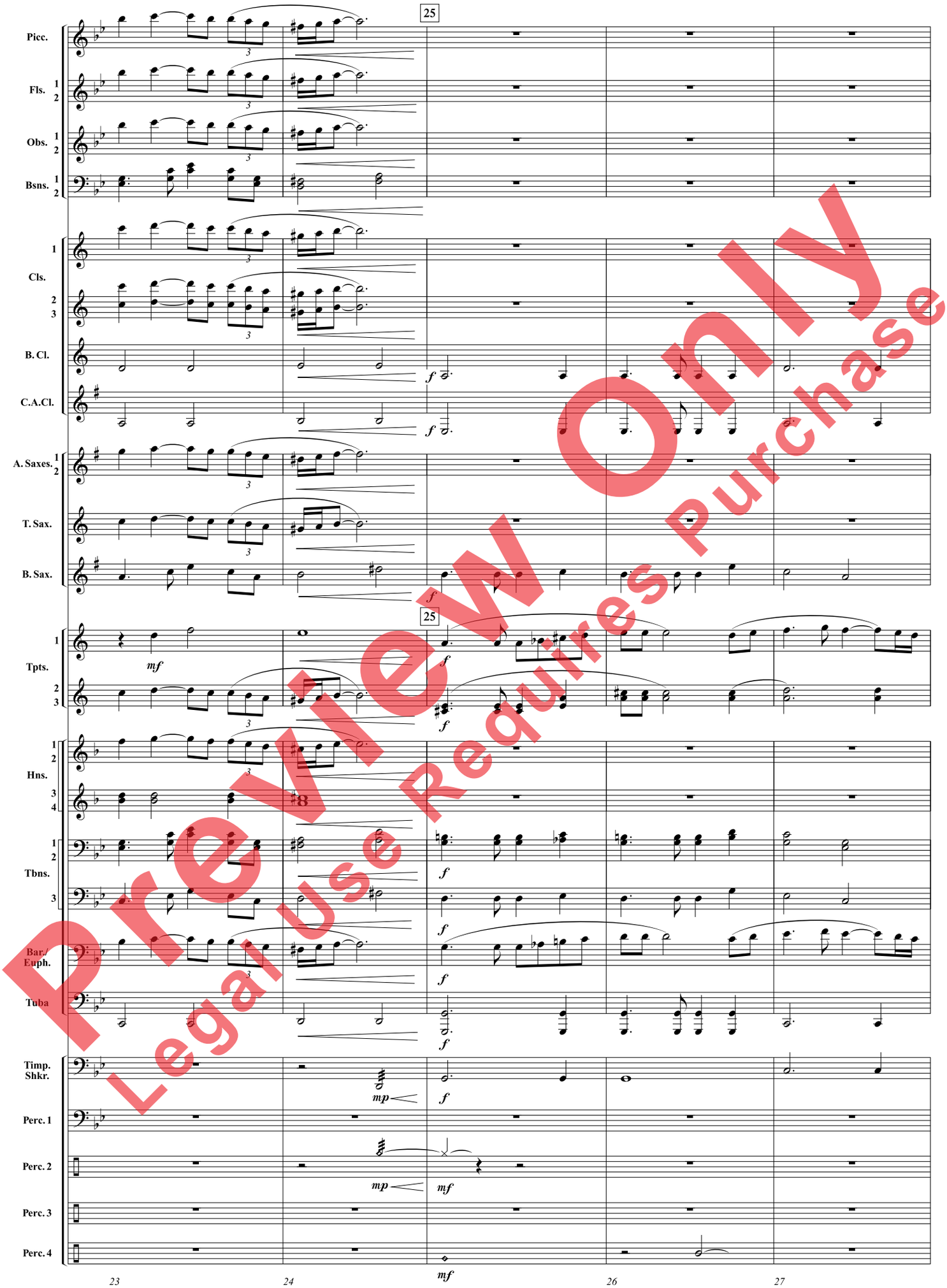

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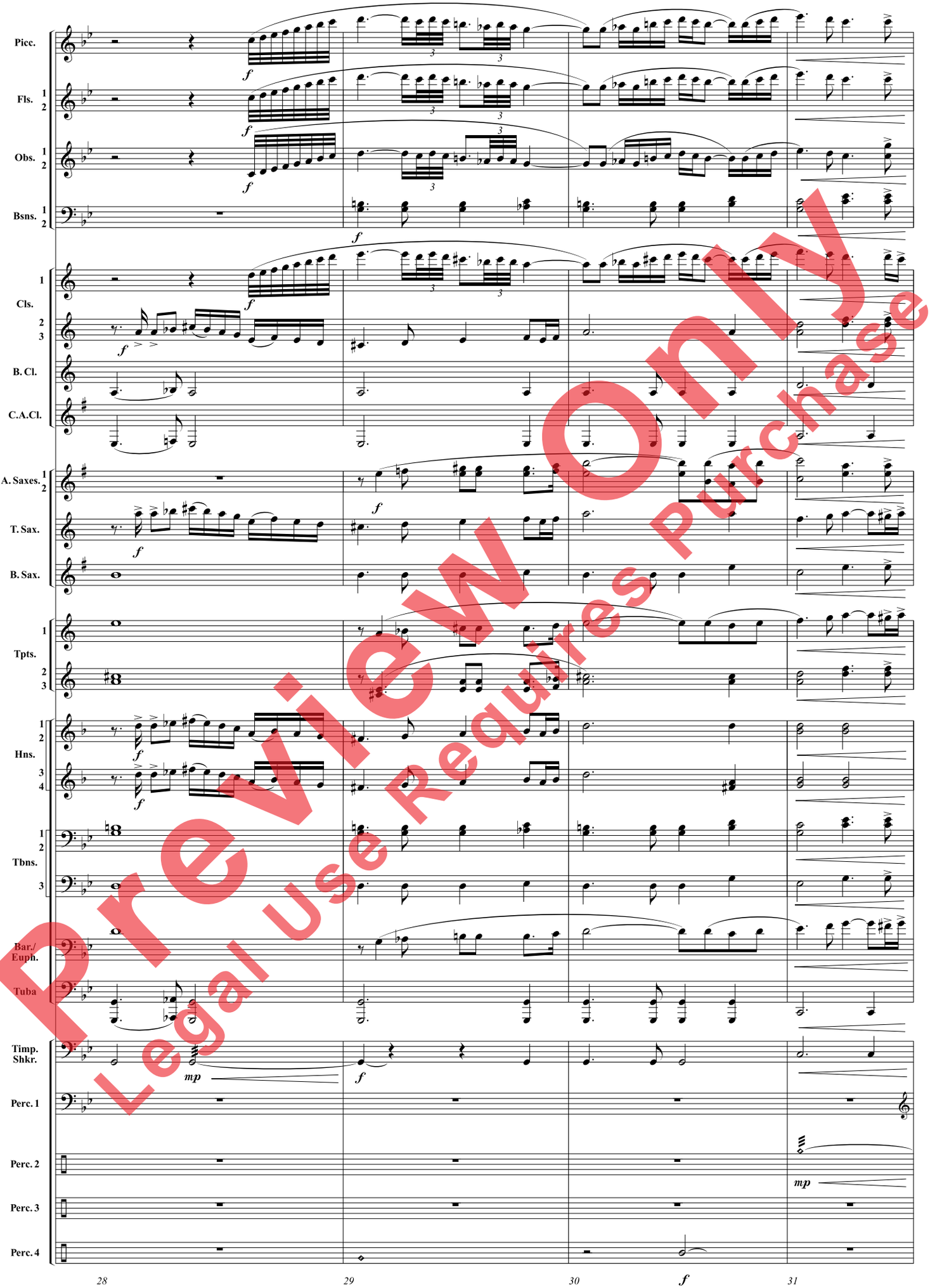

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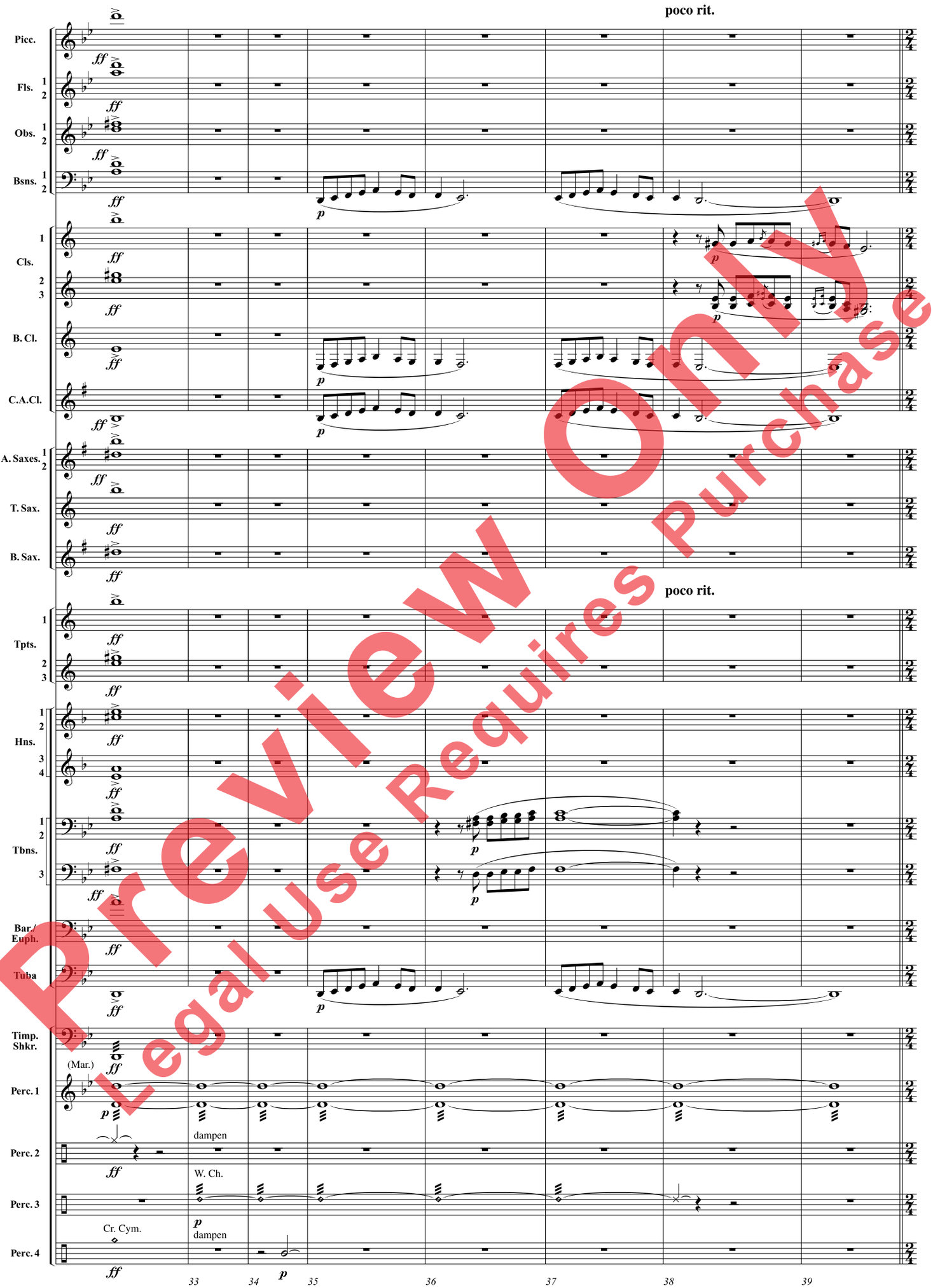

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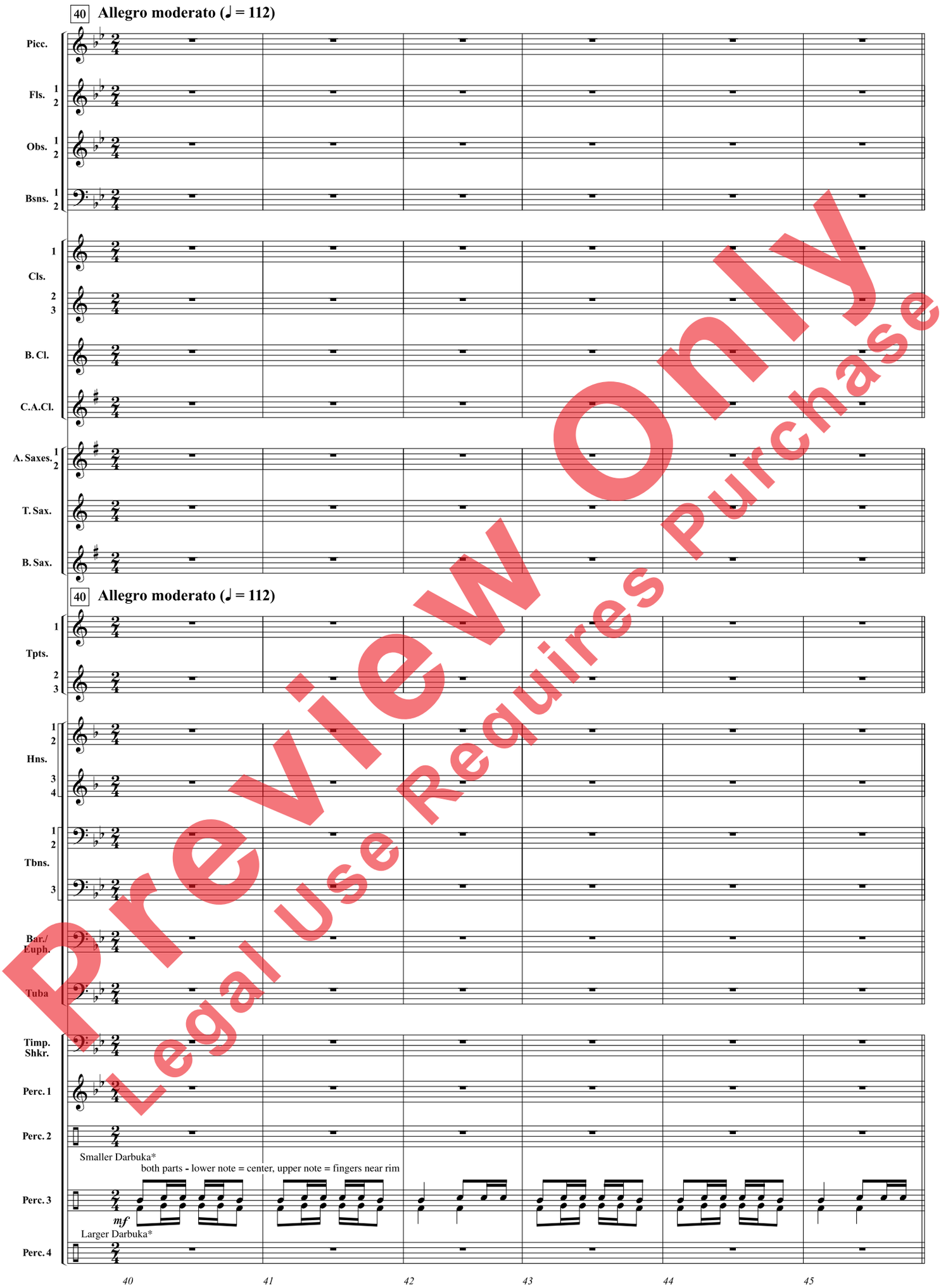

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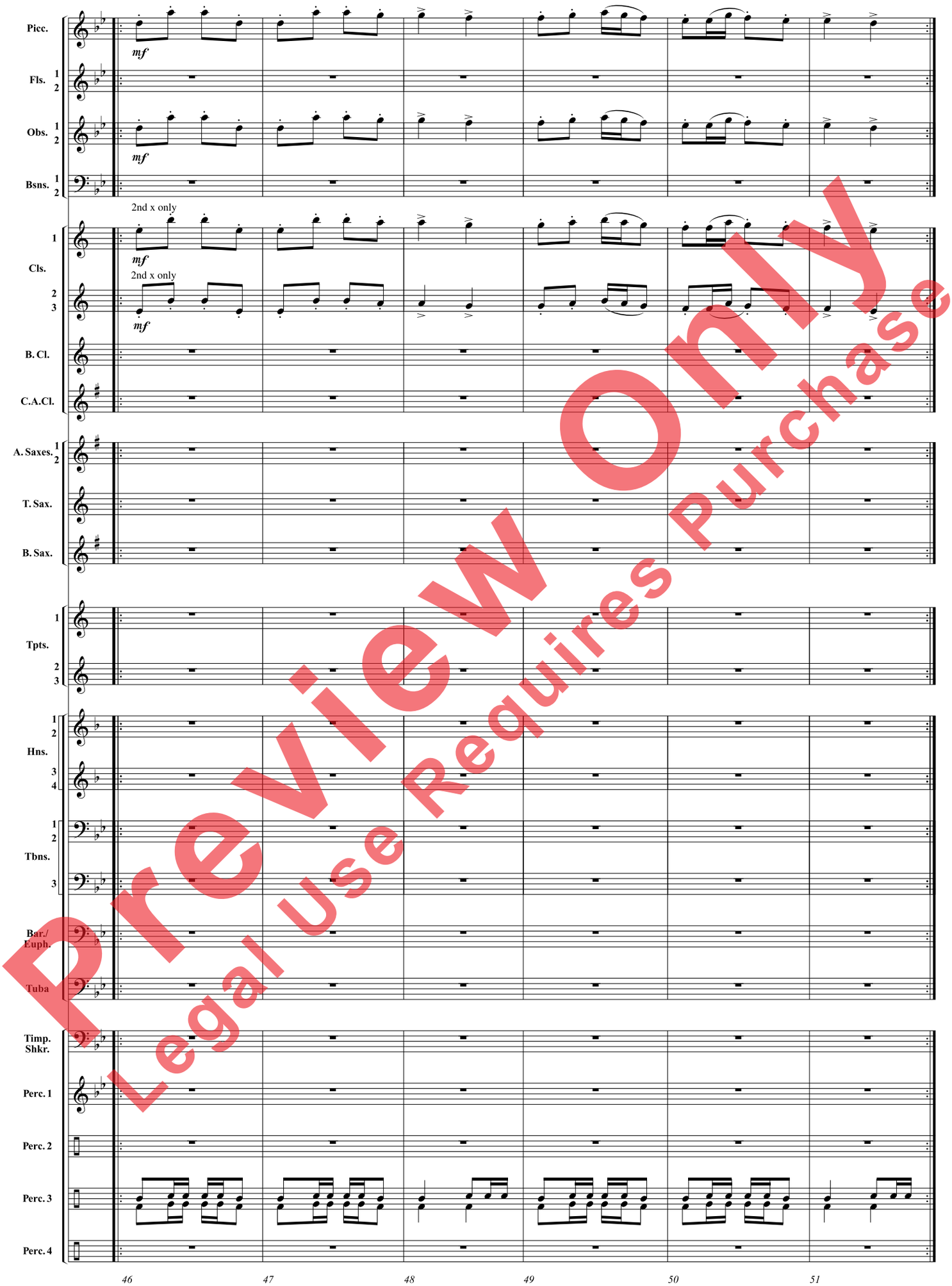

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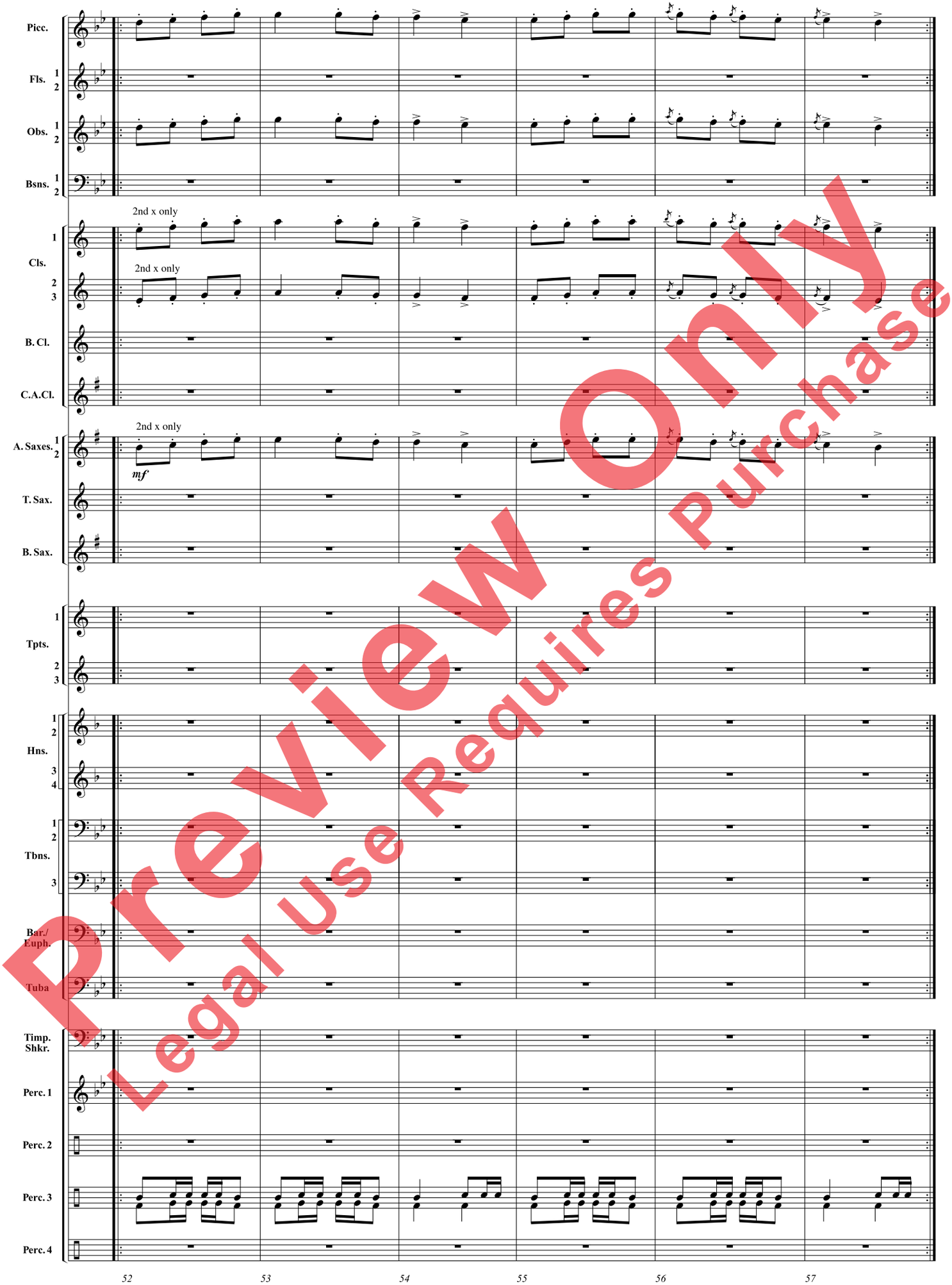

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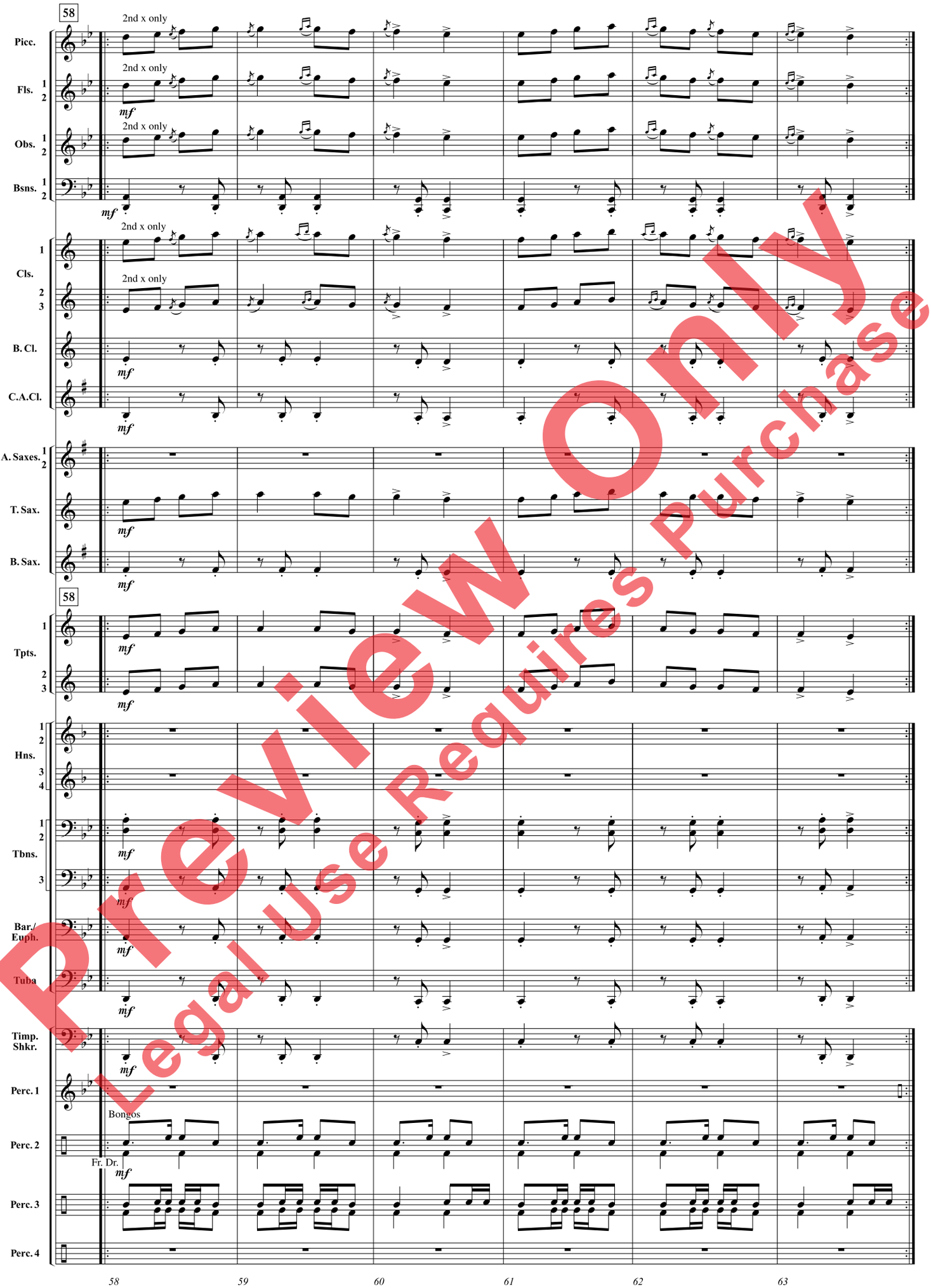

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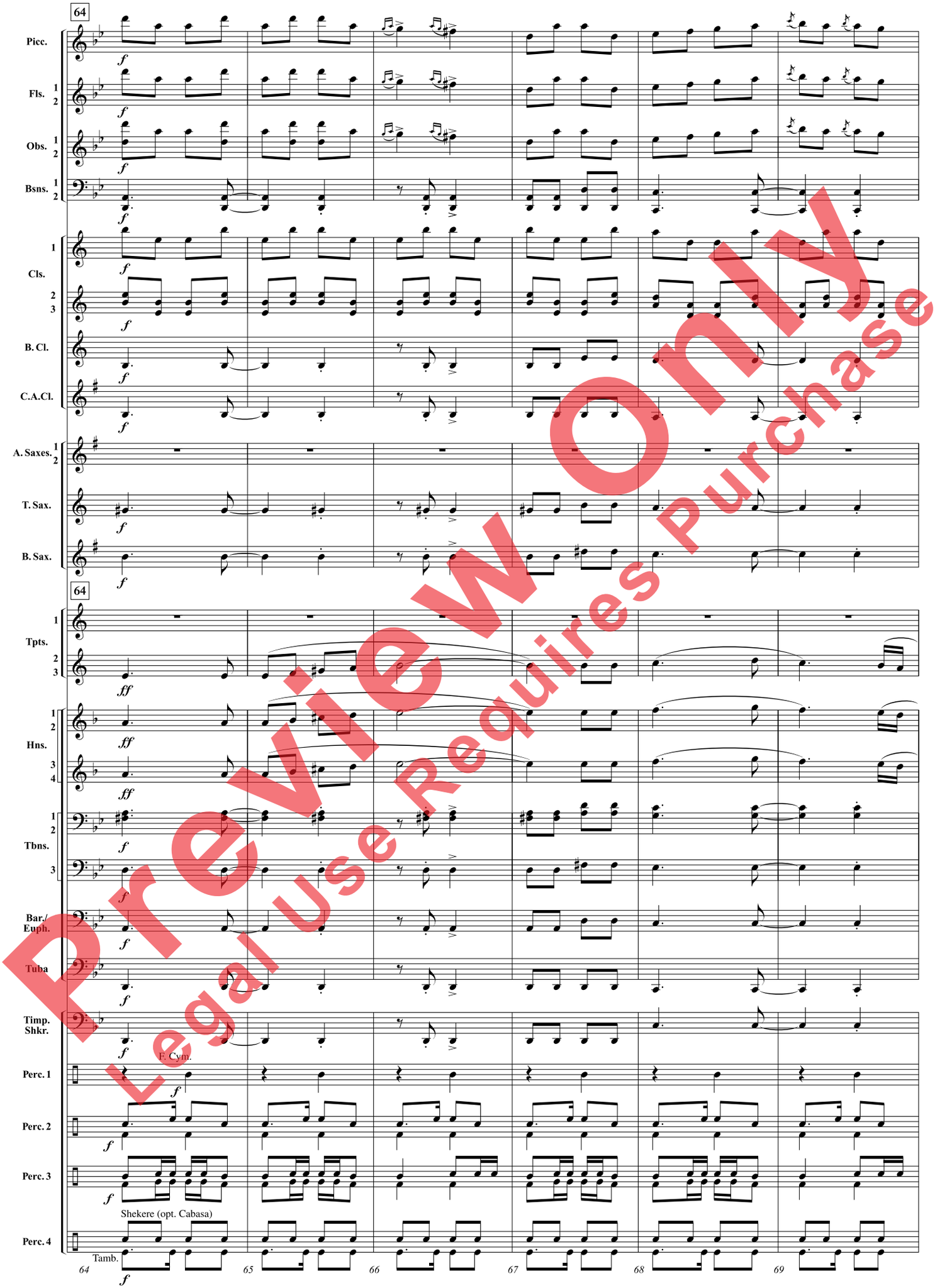

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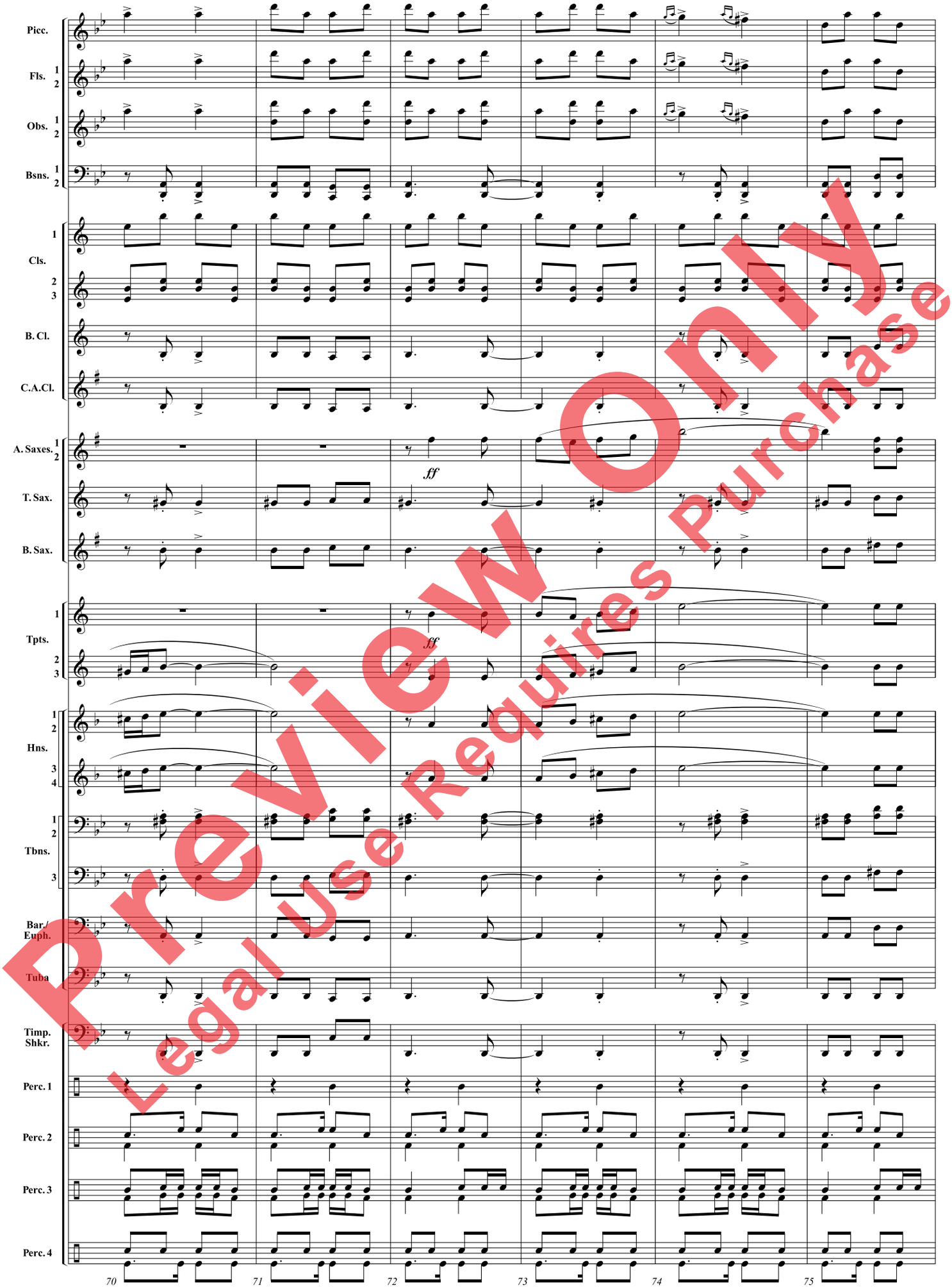

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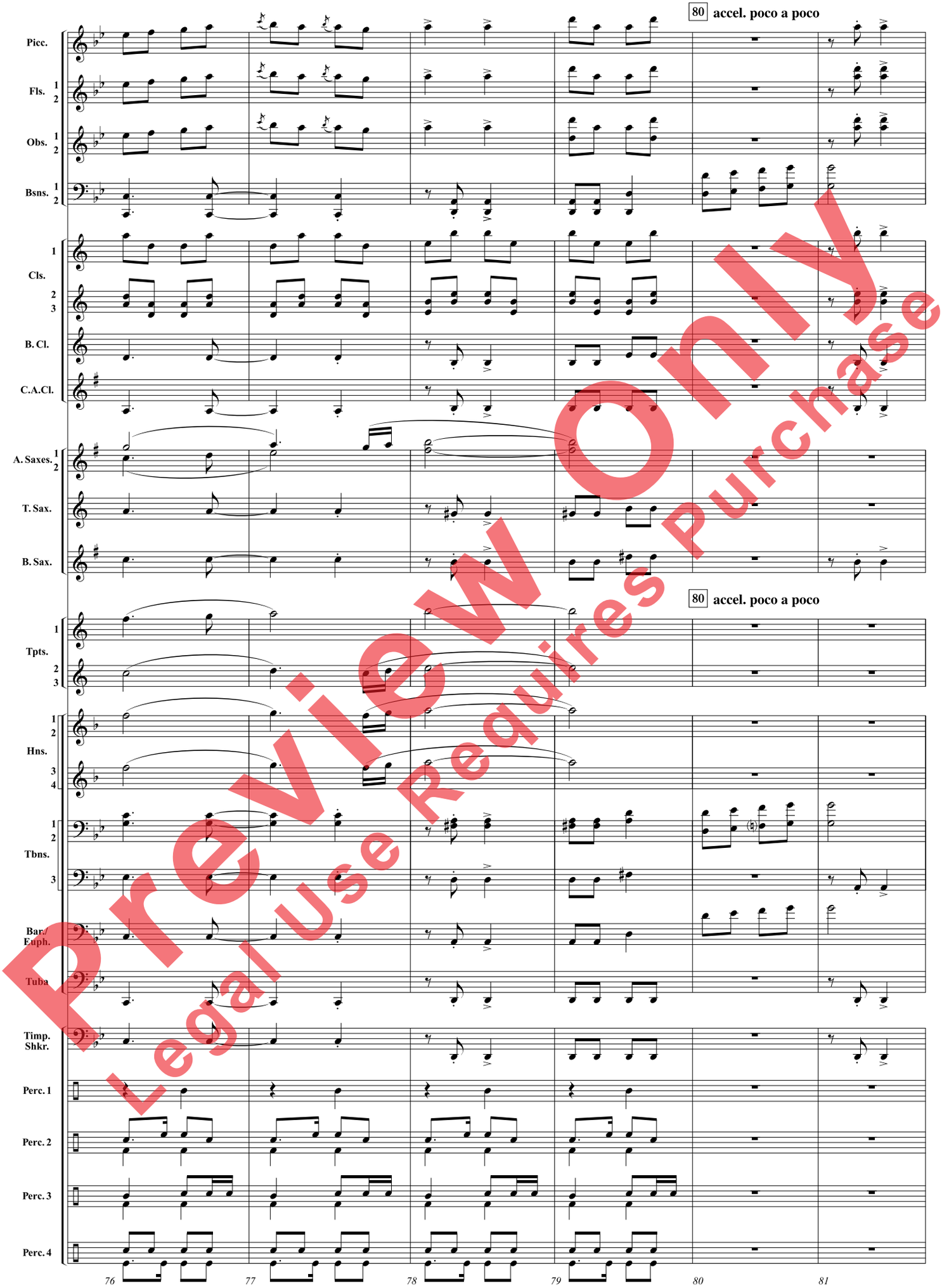

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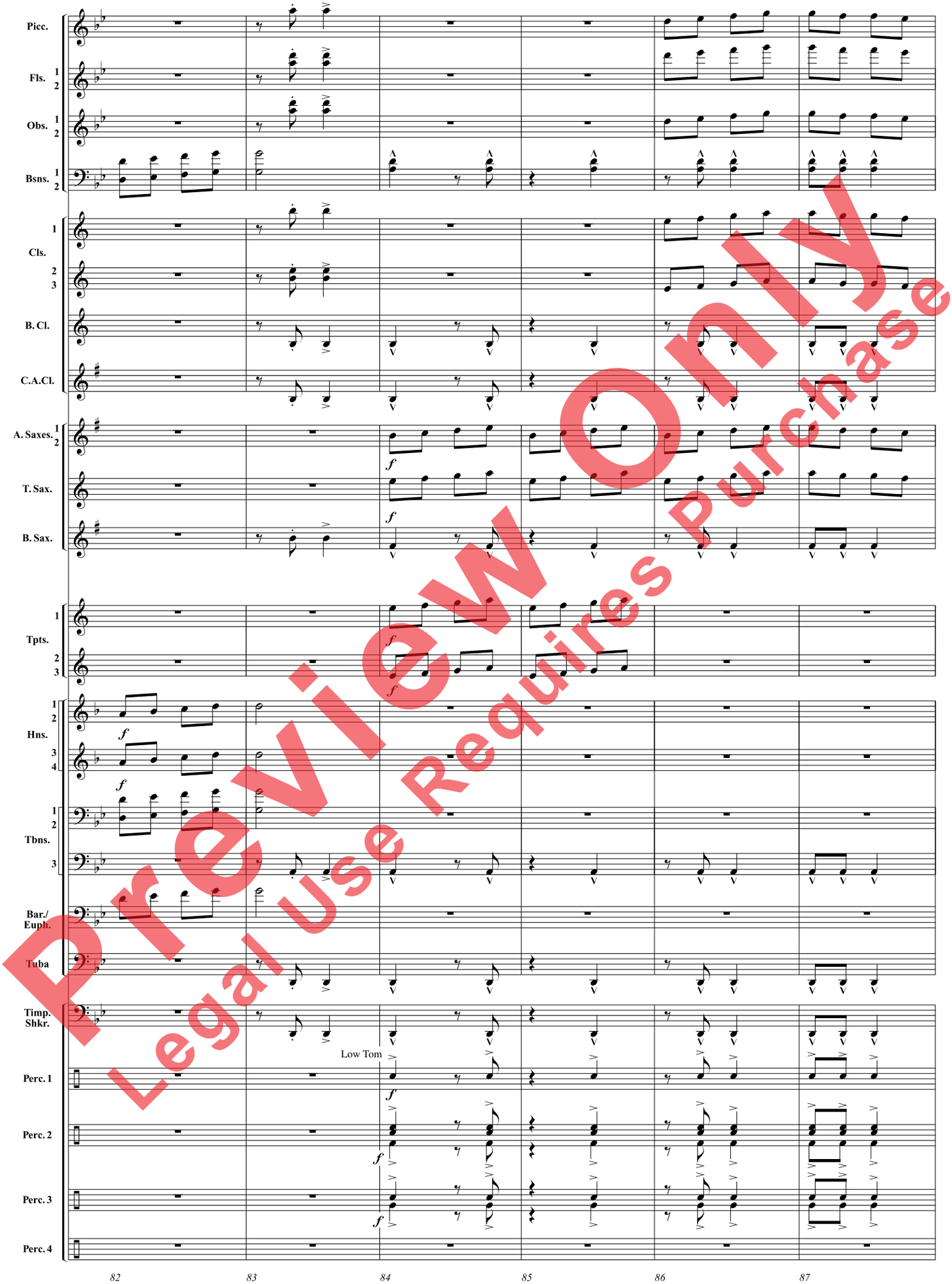

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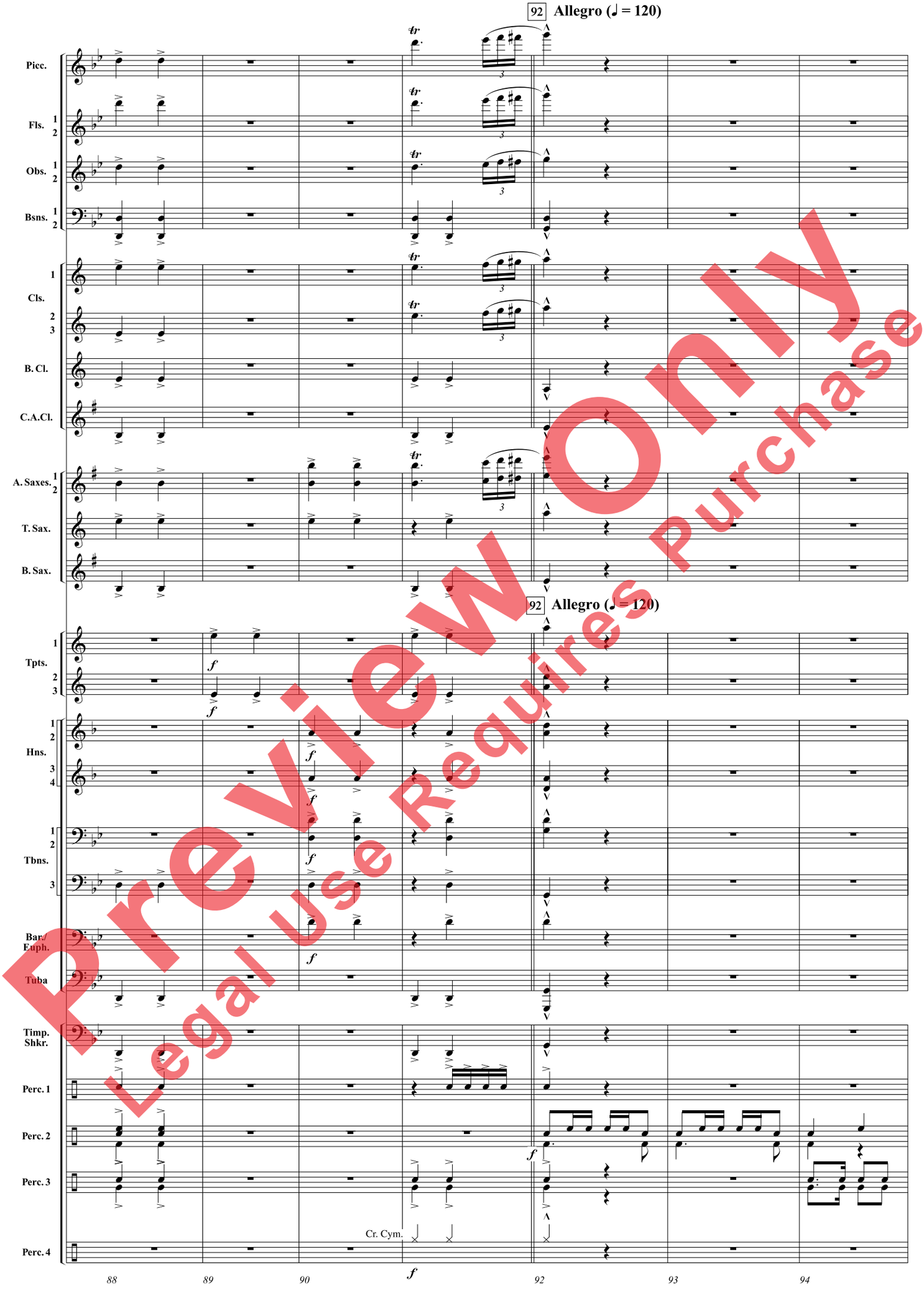

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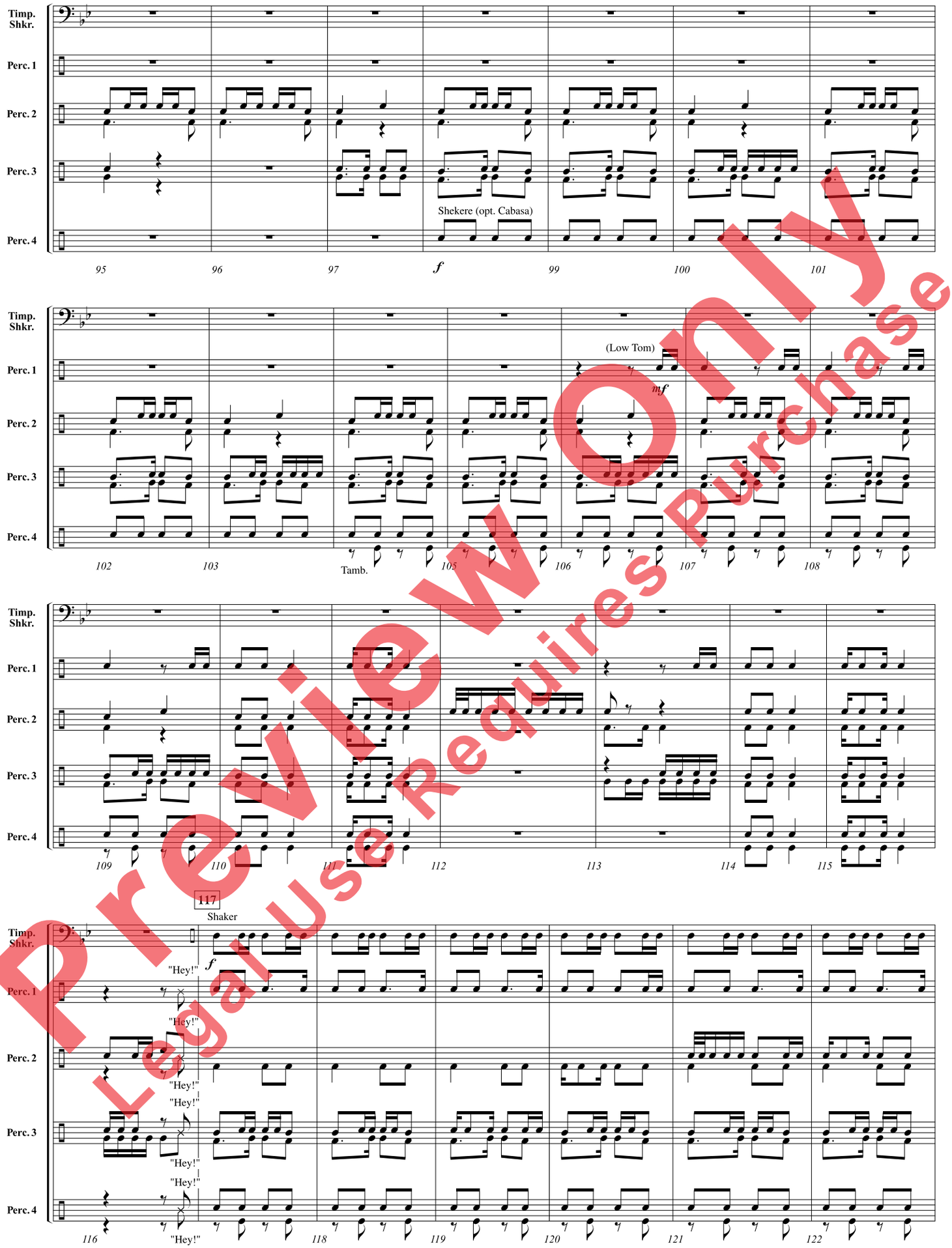

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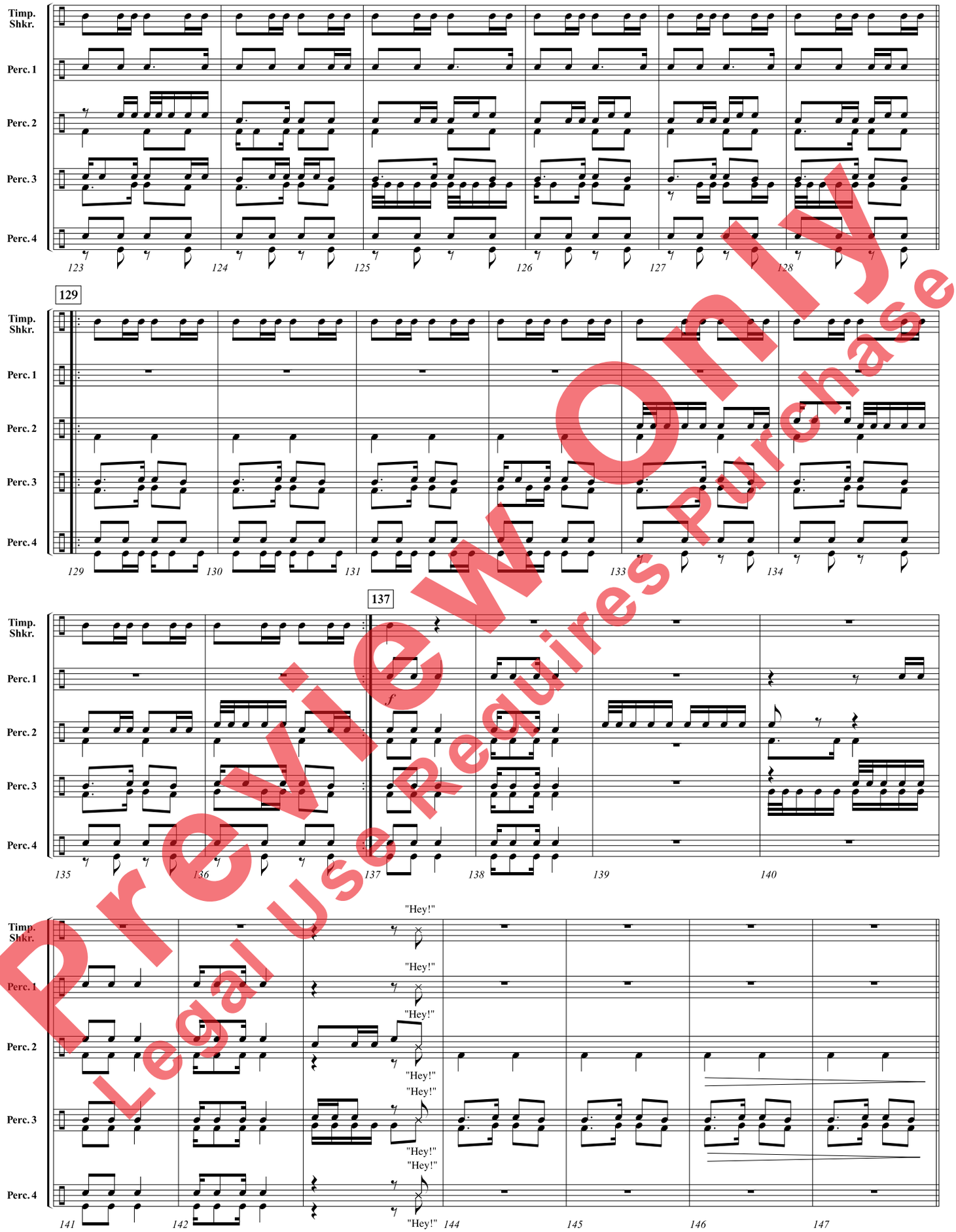

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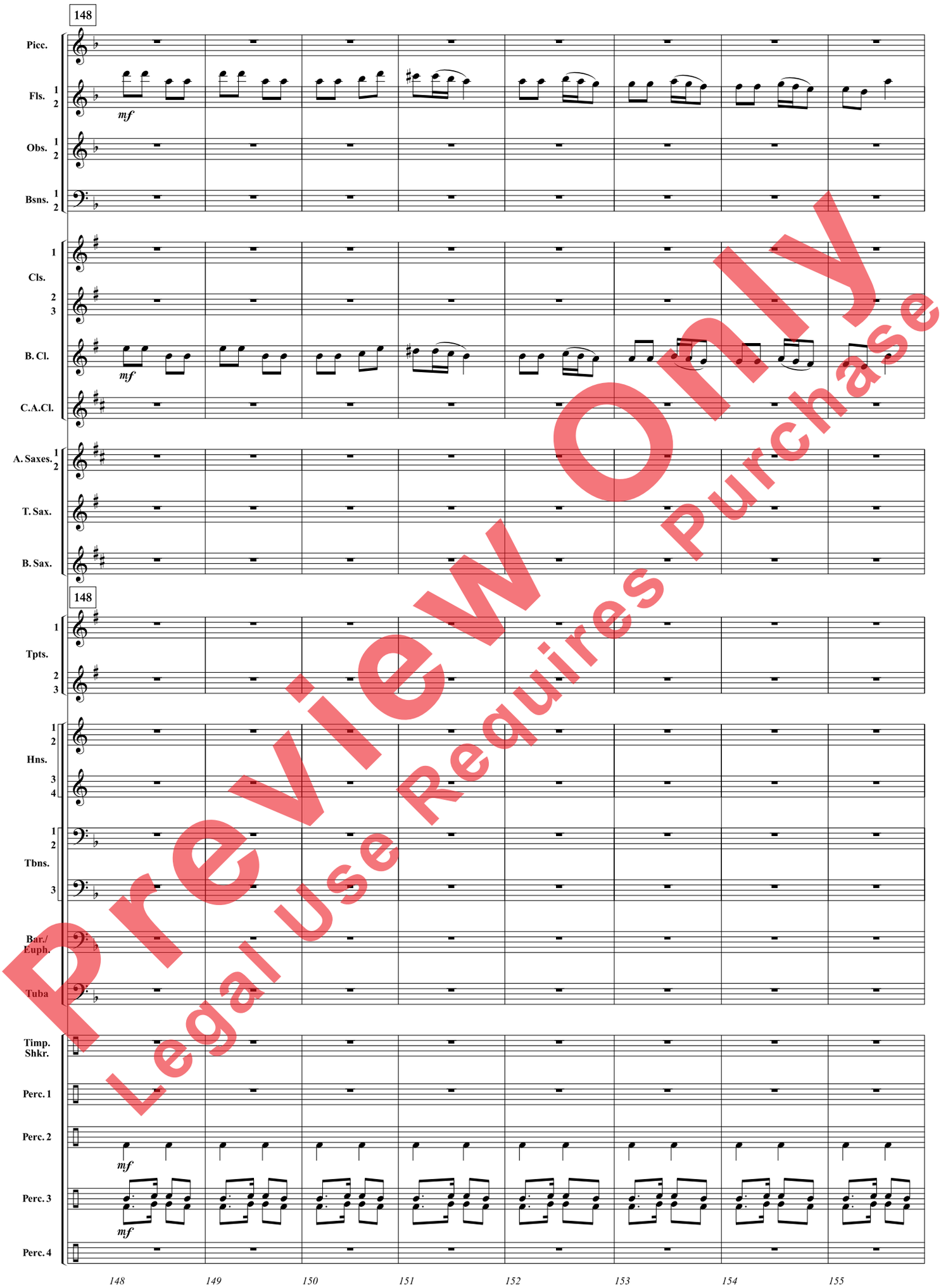

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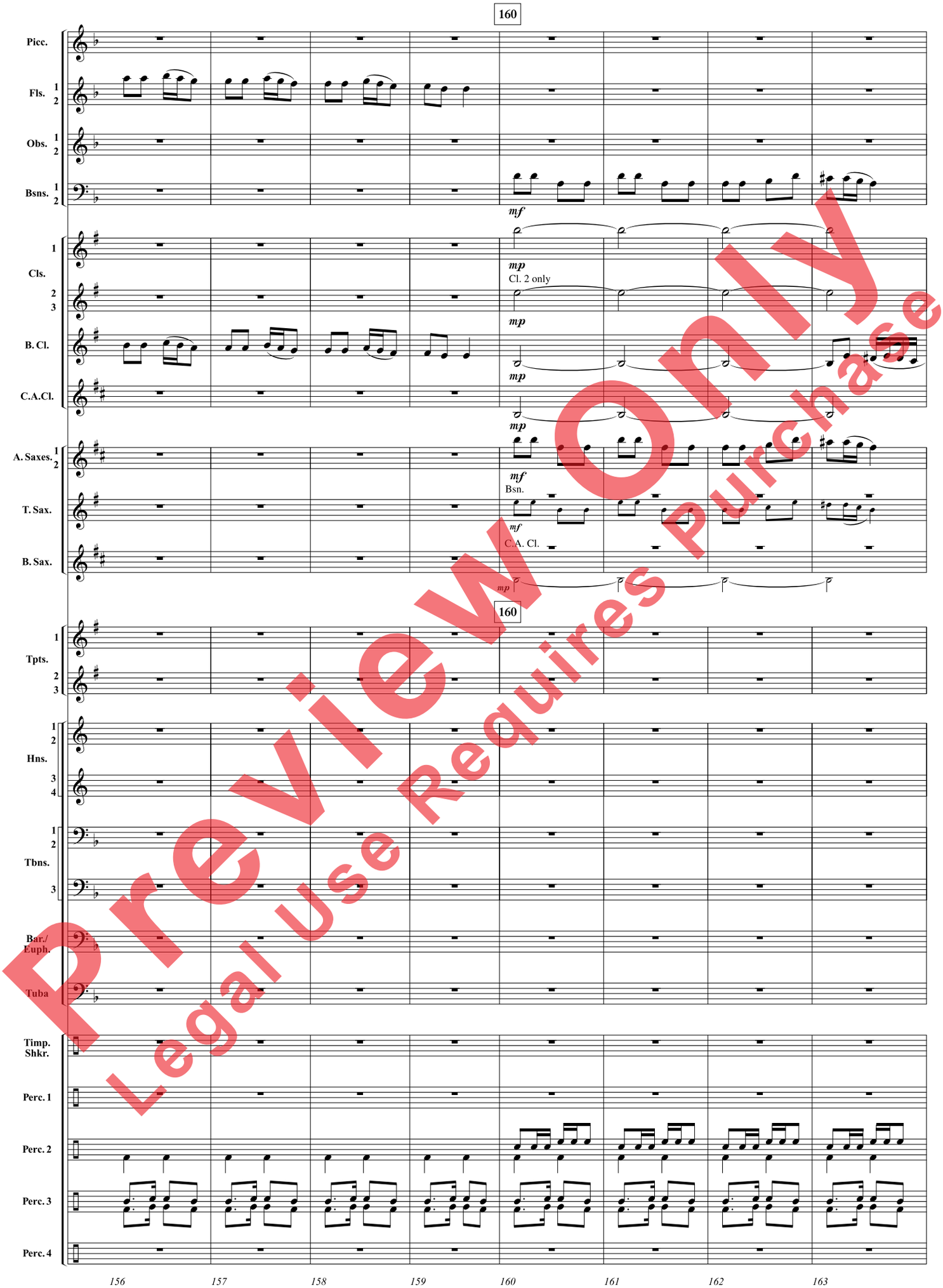

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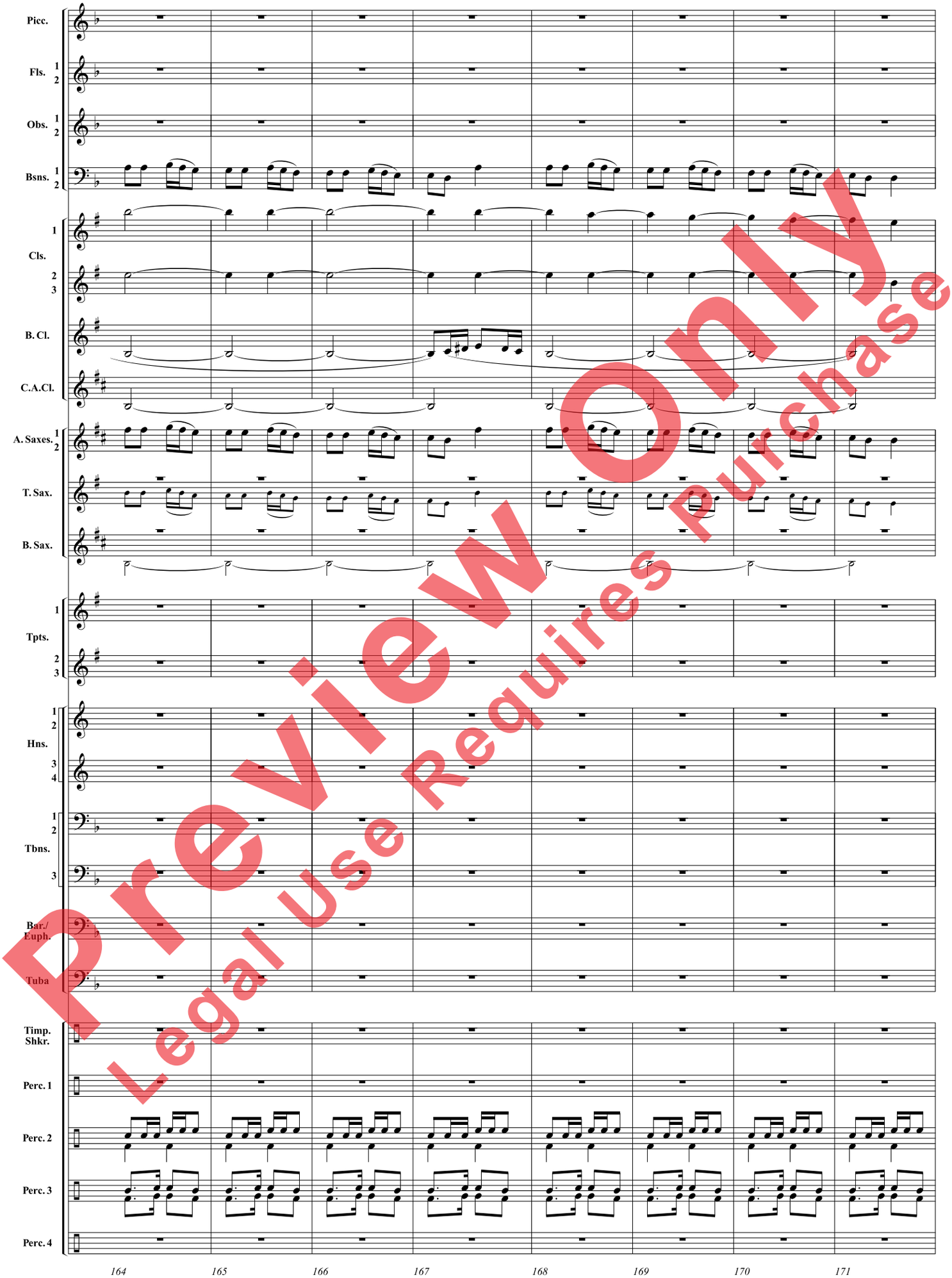

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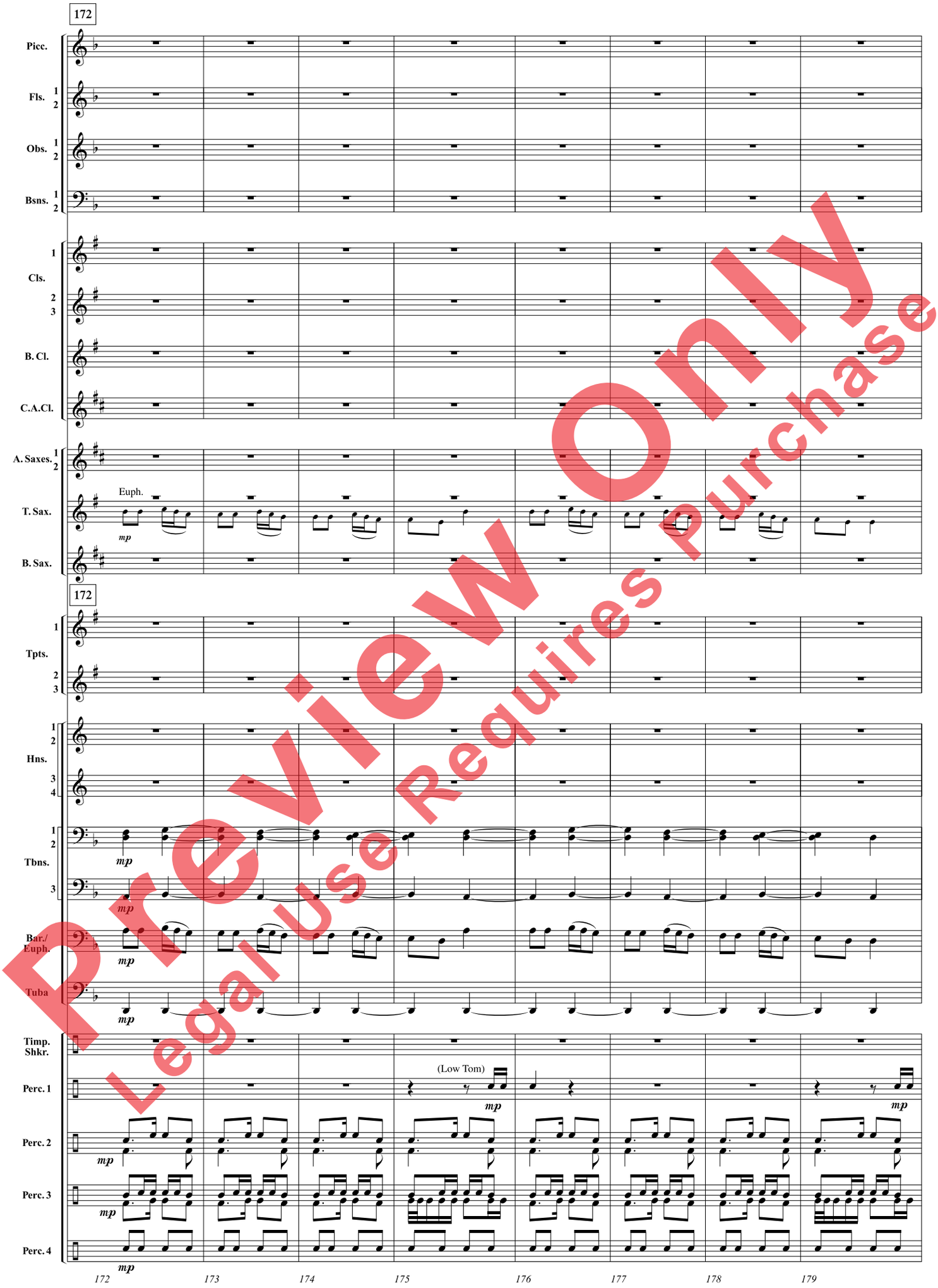

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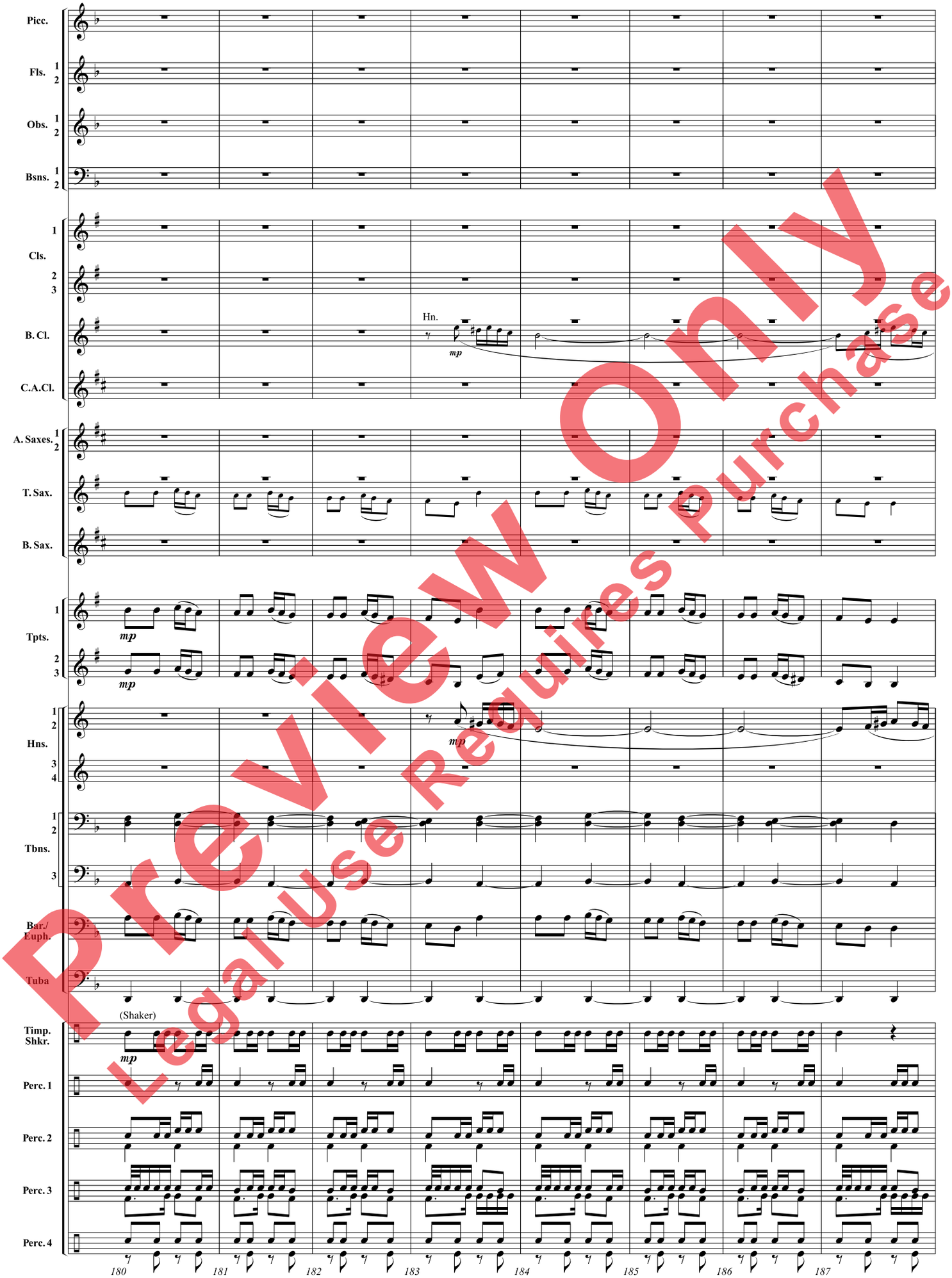

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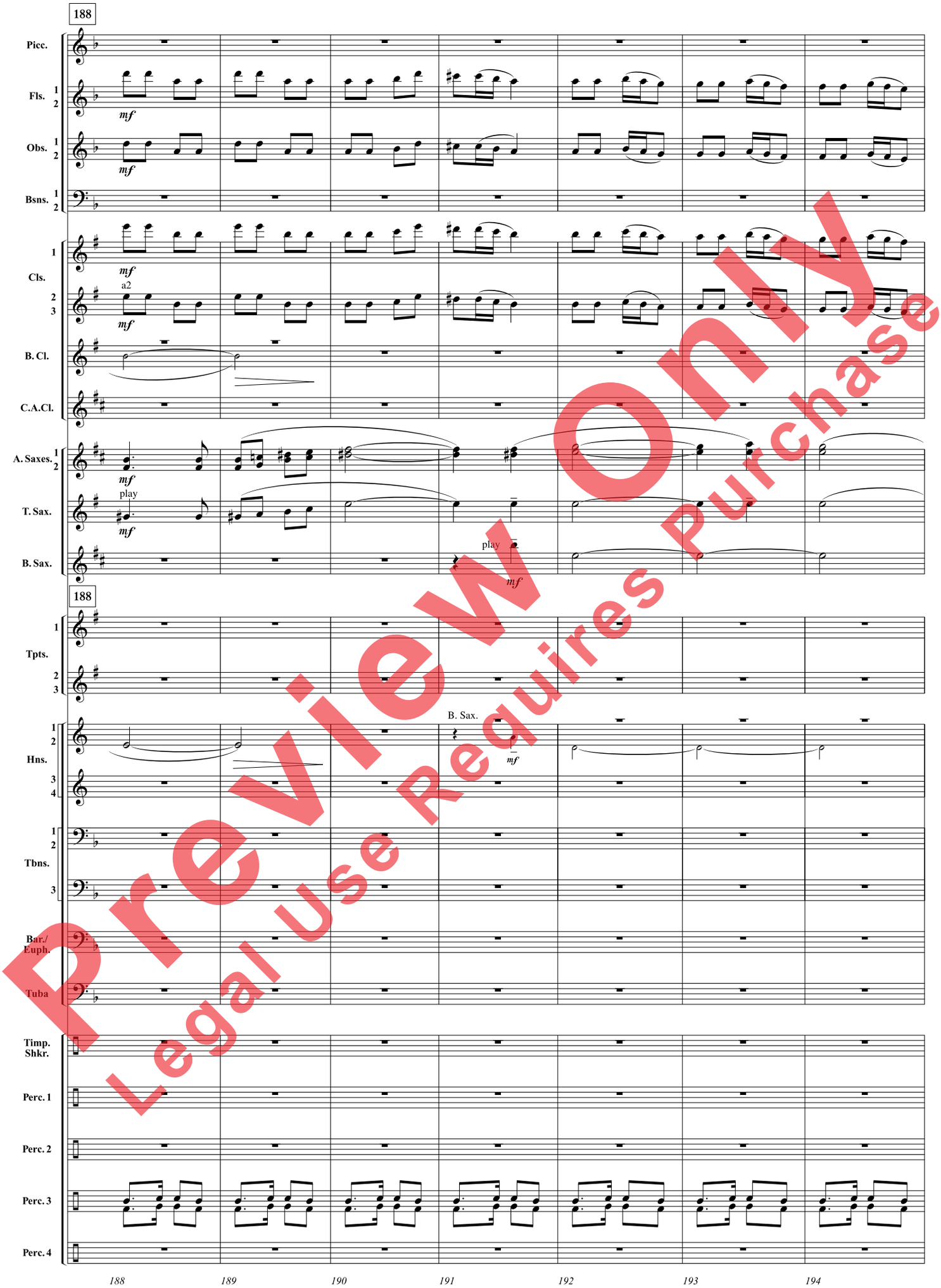

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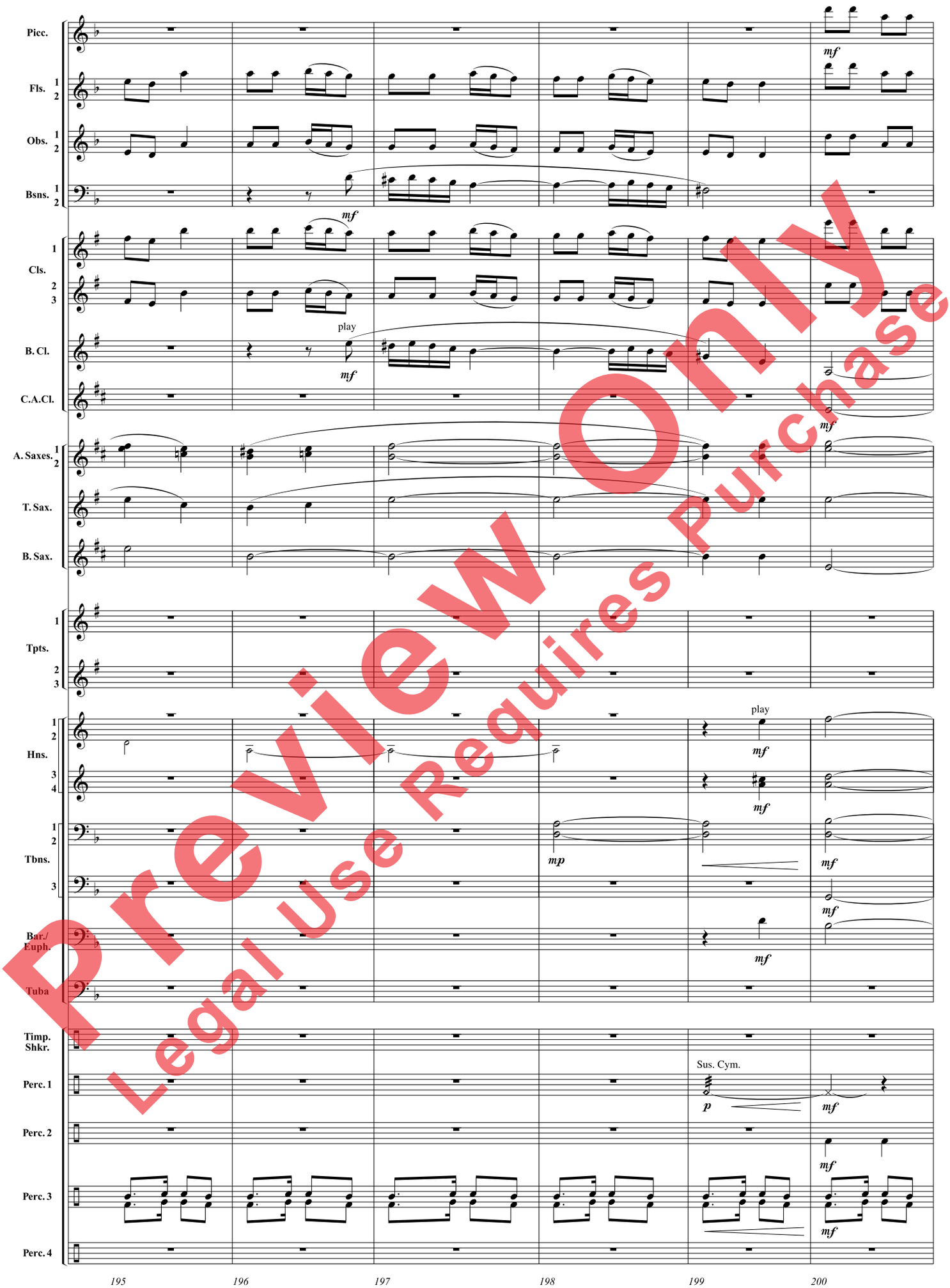

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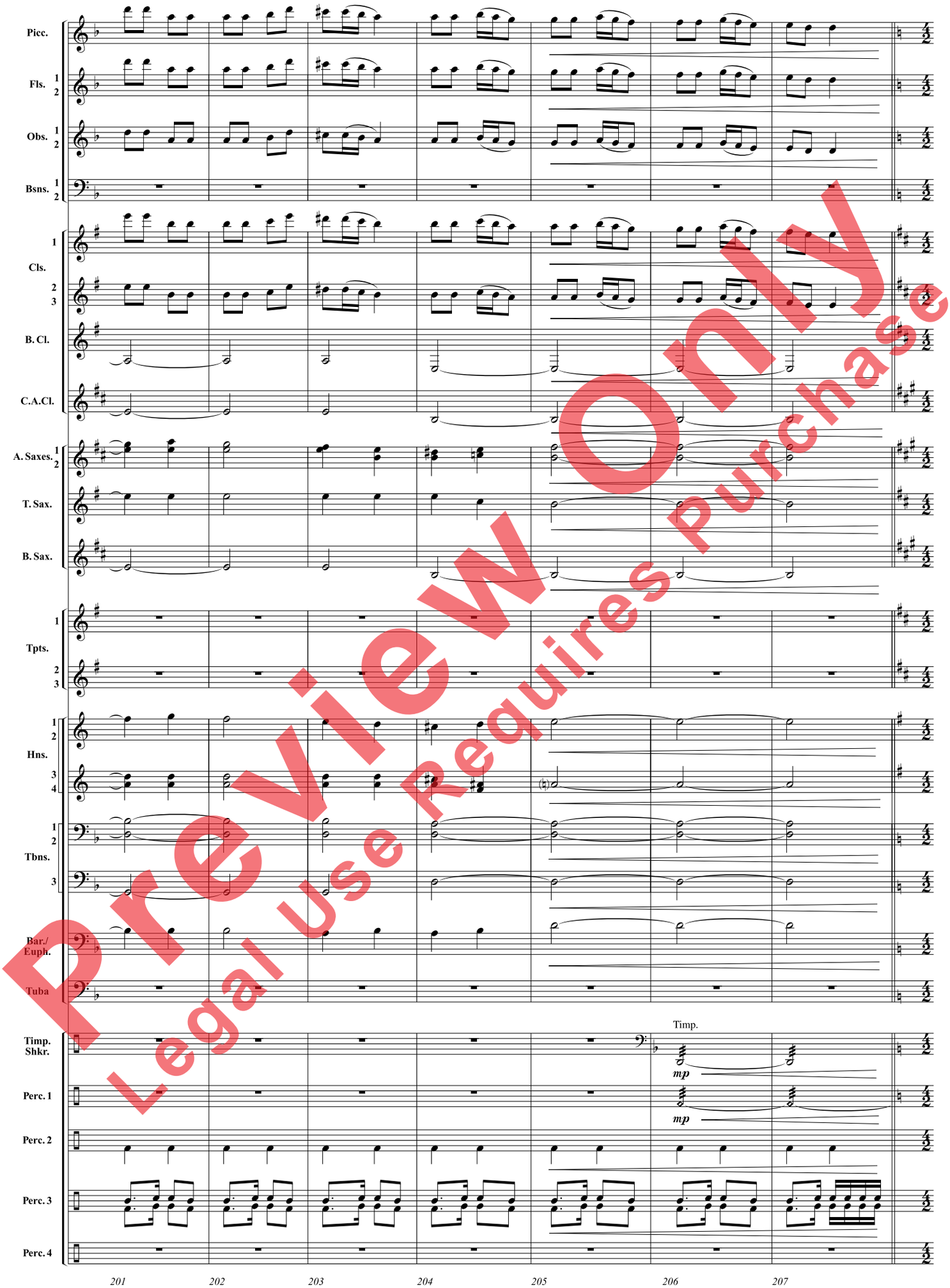

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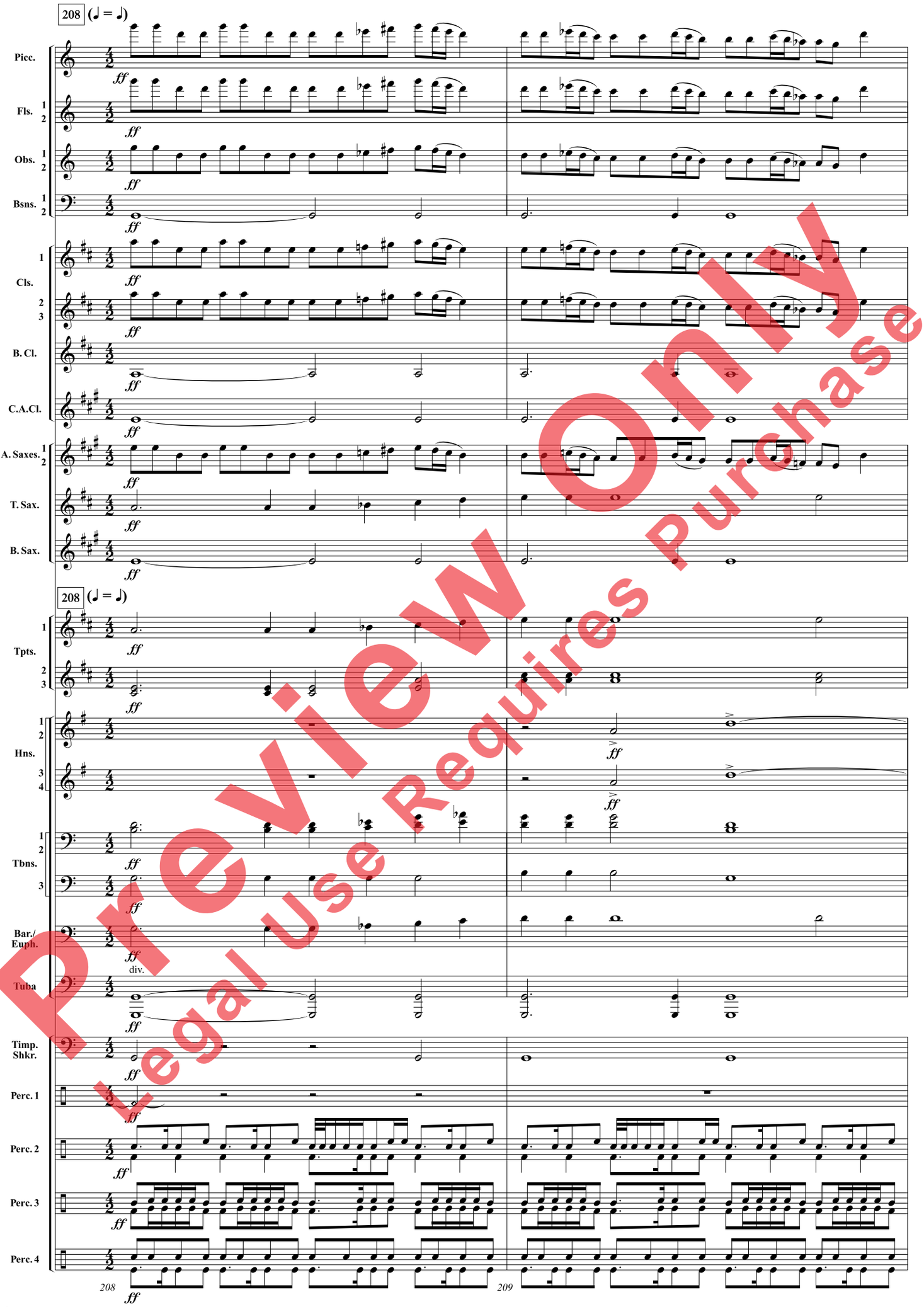

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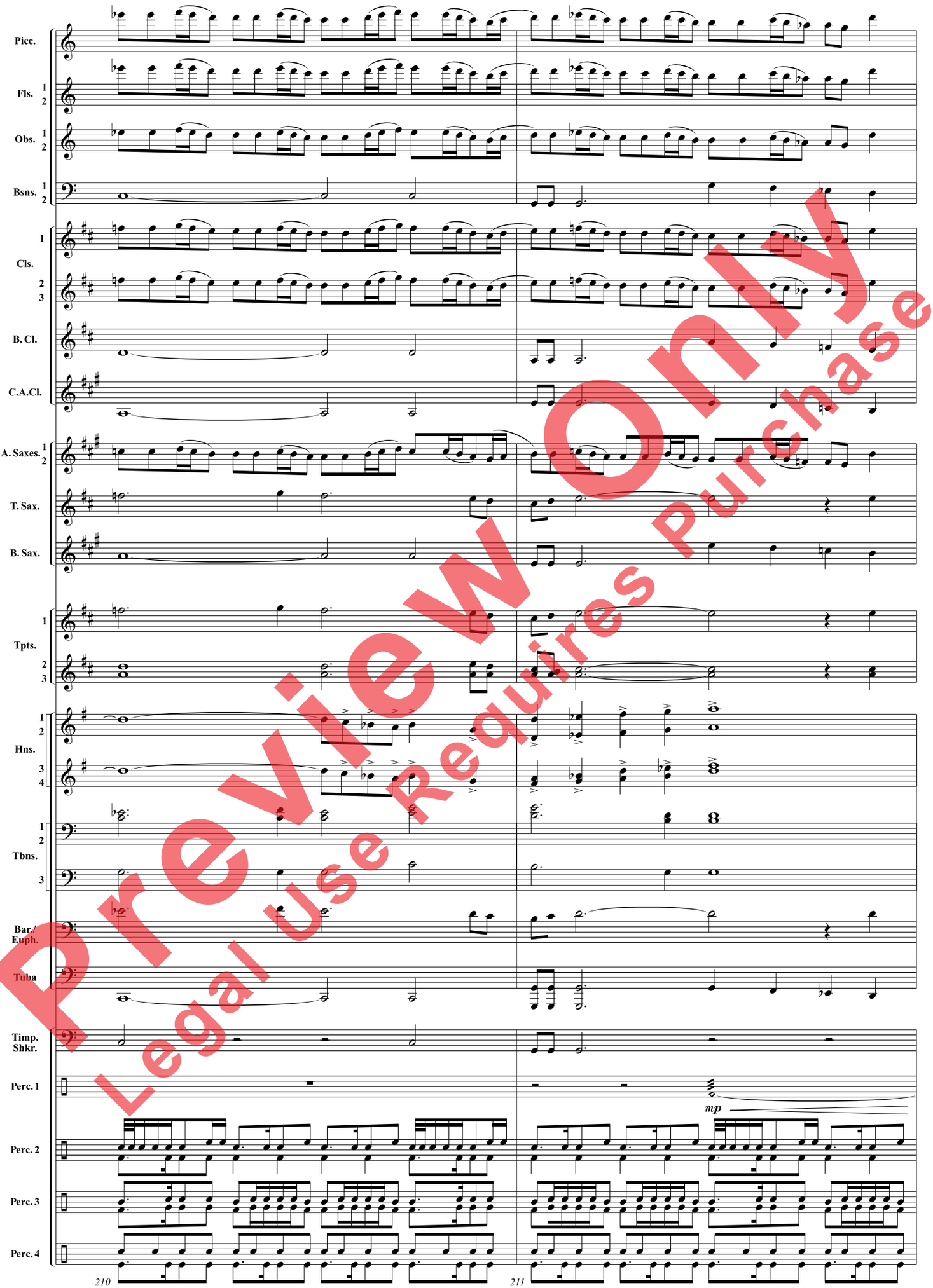

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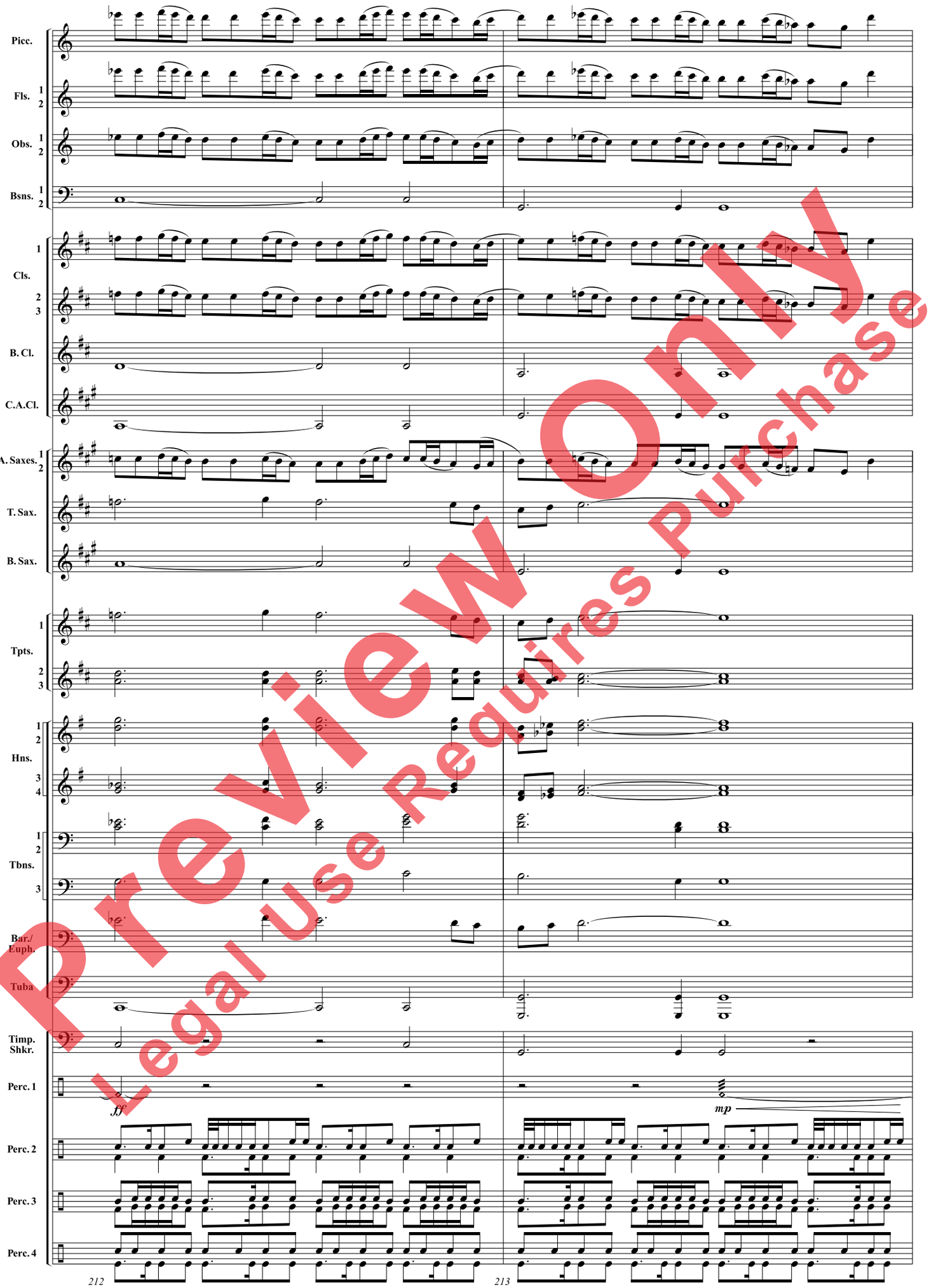

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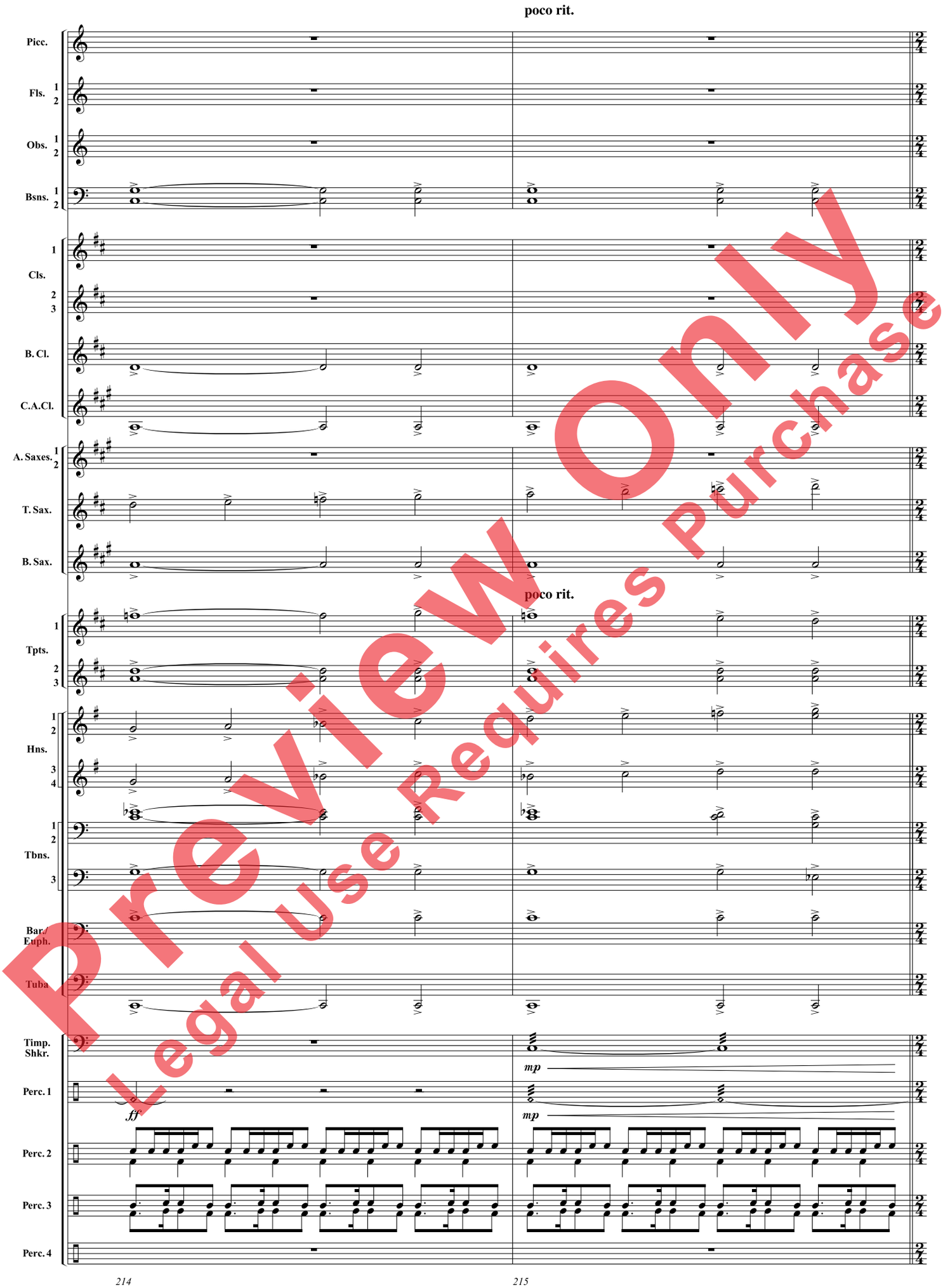

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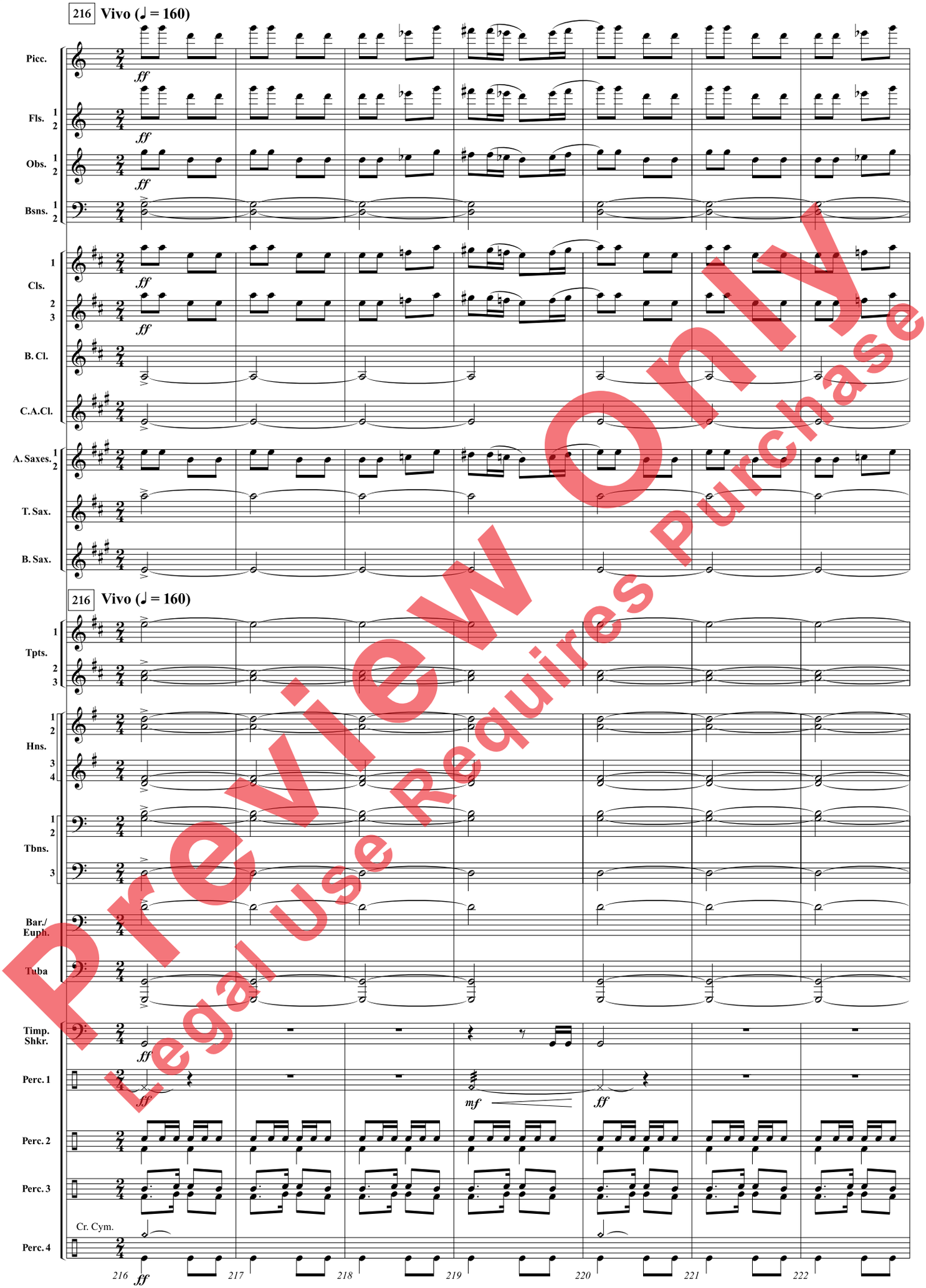

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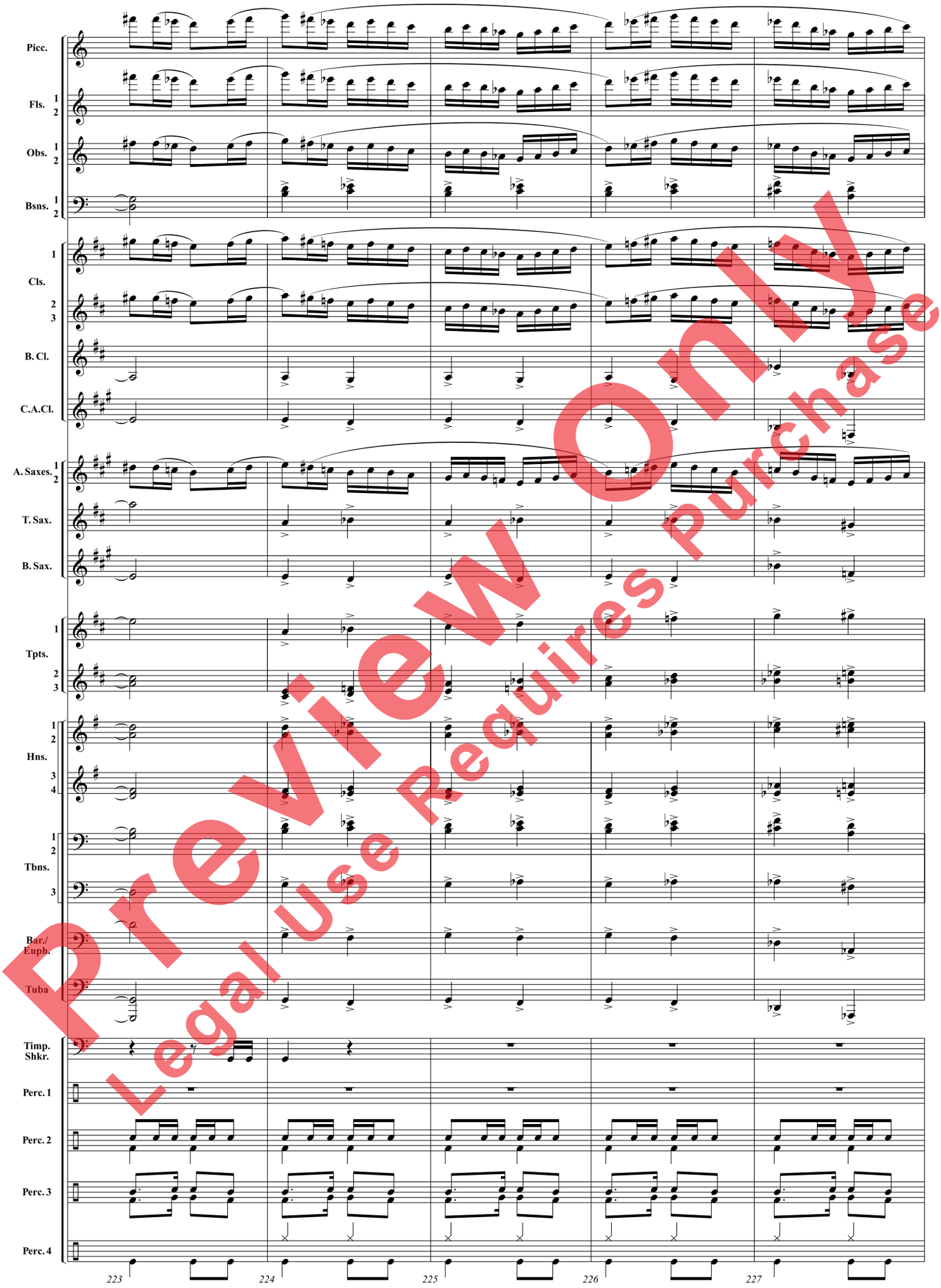

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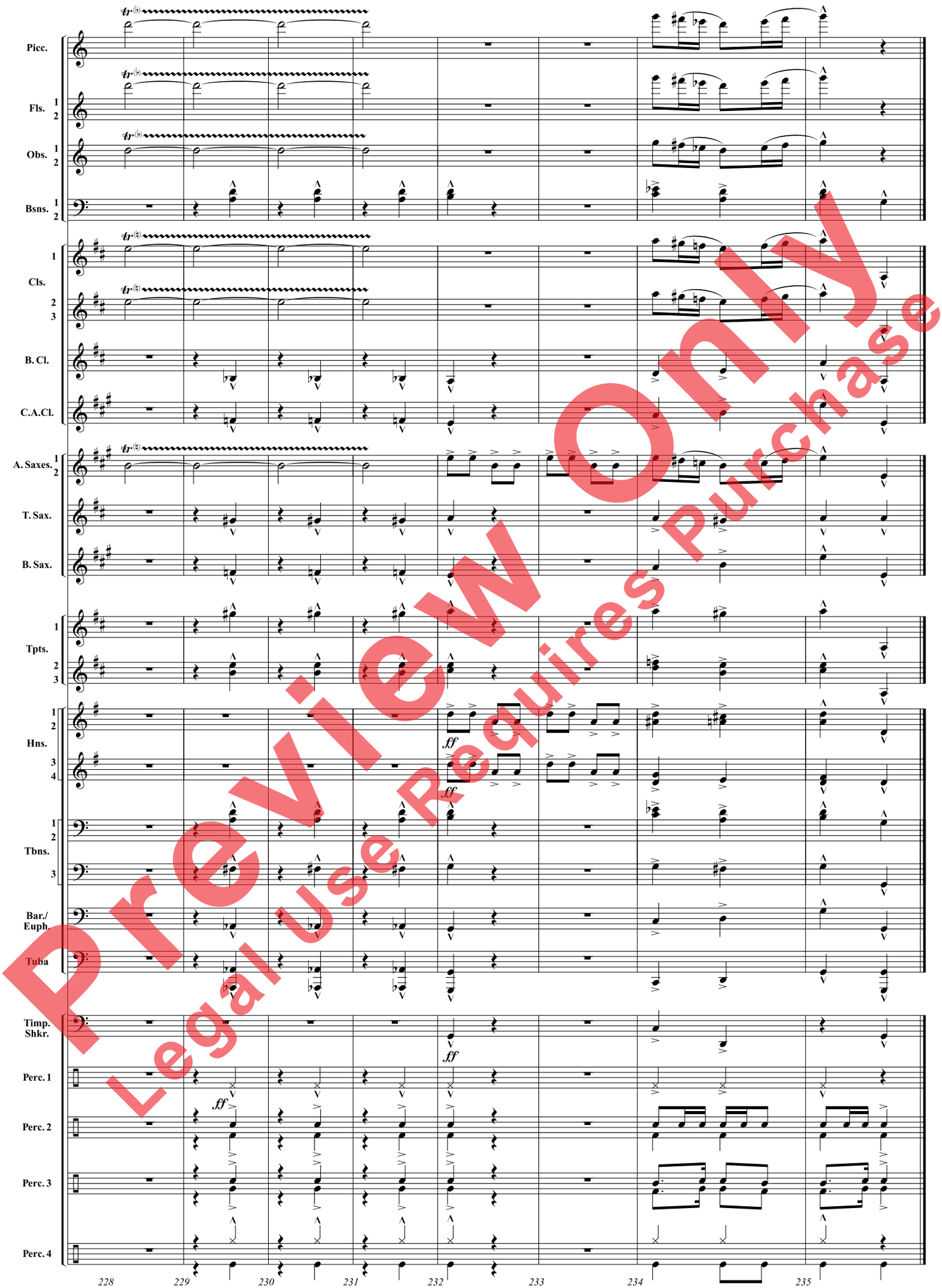

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