CB **FJH CONCERT BAND**

Grade 3
B1735

AMERICAN BIG TOP

Brian Balmages

Instrumentation

1 - Conductor's Full Score
1 - Piccolo
4 - Flute 1
4 - Flute 2
2 - Oboe
2 - Bassoon
4 - B♭ Clarinet 1
4 - B♭ Clarinet 2
4 - B♭ Clarinet 3
2 - B♭ Bass Clarinet
1 - E♭ Contra Alto Clarinet
1 - B♭ Contrabass 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
2 - F Horn 1
2 - F Horn 2
2 - Trombone 1
2 - Trombone 2
2 - Trombone 3
2 - Baritone / Euphonium
2 - Baritone T.C.
4 - Tuba
1 - String Bass
1 - Timpani
1 - Xylophone
1 - Bells
2 - Percussion 1
Snare Drum
Bass Drum
2 - Percussion 2
Crash Cymbals
Wood Block
Triangle

FJH is now using a high-speed sorting system for parts.
As a result, all single page parts are collated before multiple page parts.

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

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The Composer

Brian Balmages (b. 1975) is an award-winning composer, conductor, producer, and performer. The music he has written for winds, brass, and orchestra has been performed throughout the world with commissions ranging from elementary schools to professional orchestras. World premieres include prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, and Meyerhoff Symphony Hall. His music was also performed as part of the 2013 Presidential Inaugural Prayer Service, which was attended by both President Obama and Vice President Biden. He received his bachelor's degree in music from James Madison University and his master's degree from the University of Miami in Florida. He is a recipient of the prestigious A. Austin Harding Award from the American School Band Directors Association and in 2016 was awarded the James Madison University Distinguished Alumni Award from the School of Visual and Performing Arts (the first year the award was given). In the same year, he was commissioned by his other alma mater, the University of Miami, to compose music for the inauguration of the institution's 6th president, Dr. Julio Frenk.

As a conductor, Mr. Balmages enjoys regular engagements with all-state and region bands and orchestras, as well as university and professional ensembles throughout the world. Notable guest conducting appearances have included the Midwest Clinic, Western International Band Clinic, College Band Directors Conference, American School Band Directors Association National Conference and others. Additional conducting appearances have included the Kennedy Center and Meyerhoff Symphony Hall as well as engagements in Australia, Canada and Italy. Currently, he is Director of Instrumental Publications for The FJH Music Company and Assistant Director of Bands and Orchestras at Towson University.

Program Notes

American Big Top can best be described as an American circus march that meets Charles Ives. Largely based on original material, the piece weaves in small anecdotal references to *The Stars and Stripes Forever, Take Me Out to the Ballgame*, *The Yankee Doodle Boy*, *Yankee Doodle*, *The Star-Spangled Banner*, and *The Entertainer*. The entire piece is based on the layering of melodies, harmonies, textures, and rhythms. As the piece develops, the layering becomes more and more complex, yet always with a splash of fun and humor. It is a highly energetic work that constantly throws a curve ball (no pun intended—well, maybe just a little) at the listener with just enough Americana thrown in to give it a homegrown feel without necessarily being categorized as a full-on patriotic work.

The piece was commissioned by the Artie Henry Middle School Honors Band (Cedar Park, Texas; Robert Herrings, conductor) on the occasion of their selection as the TMEA CCC Honor Band. Given that this was their third time being selected as honor band, the piece playfully uses the theme of "three" throughout, beginning immediately with groups of three that move through three different time signatures (including 3/8). In addition, *The Stars and Stripes Forever* reference only involves the trio section and the only part of *Take Me Out to the Ballgame* is "One! Two! Three strikes you're out!" (Of course, we then hear the sound of a ball being hit!)

American Big Top was premiered at the 2018 Texas Music Educators Association Convention by the Artie Henry Middle School Honors Band; Robert Herrings, conductor.

- Brian Balmages

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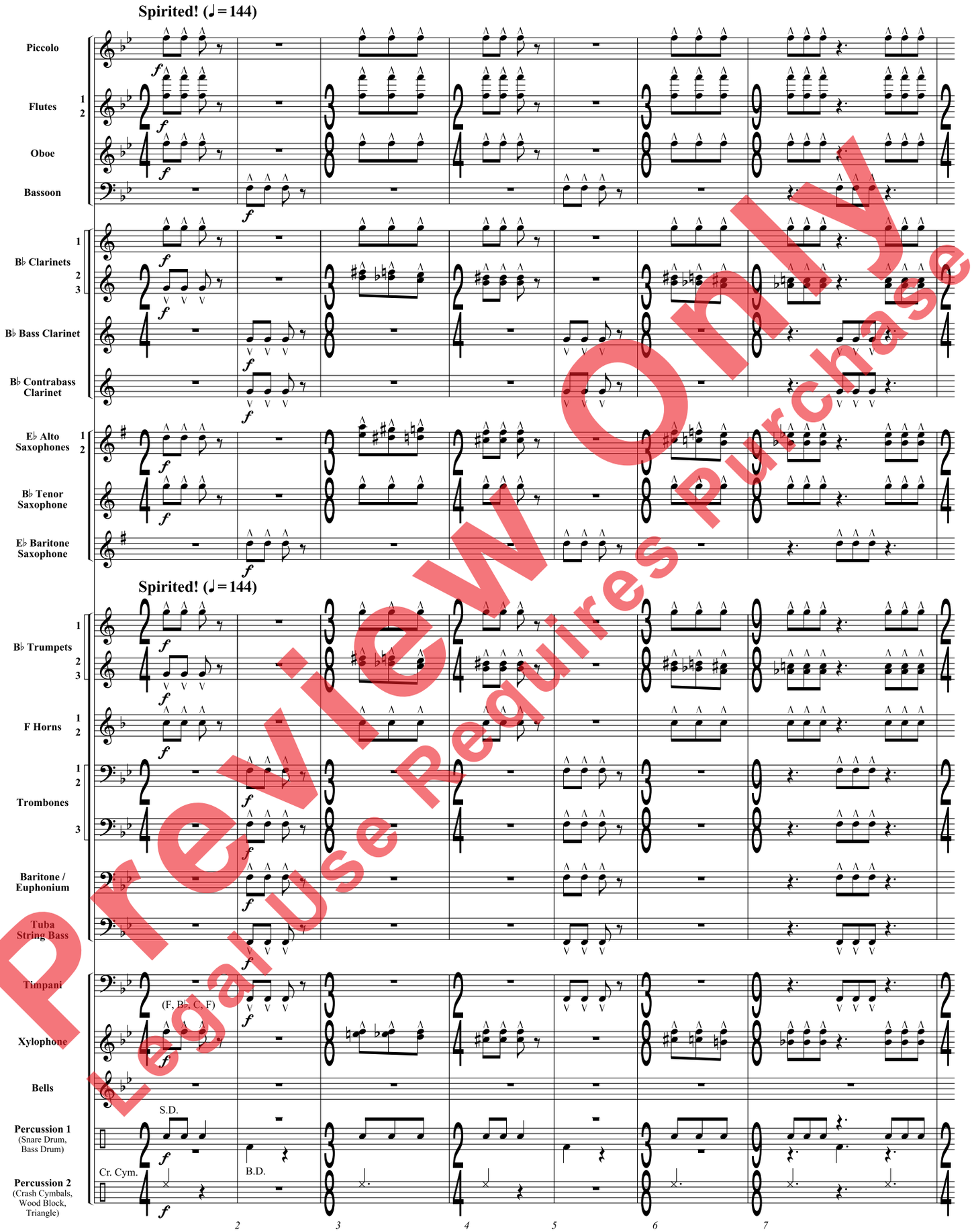
Duration: 2:45

commissioned by the Artie Henry Middle School Honors Band
Cedar Park, Texas; Robert Herrings, conductor

AMERICAN BIG TOP

BRIAN BALMAGES
(ASCAP)



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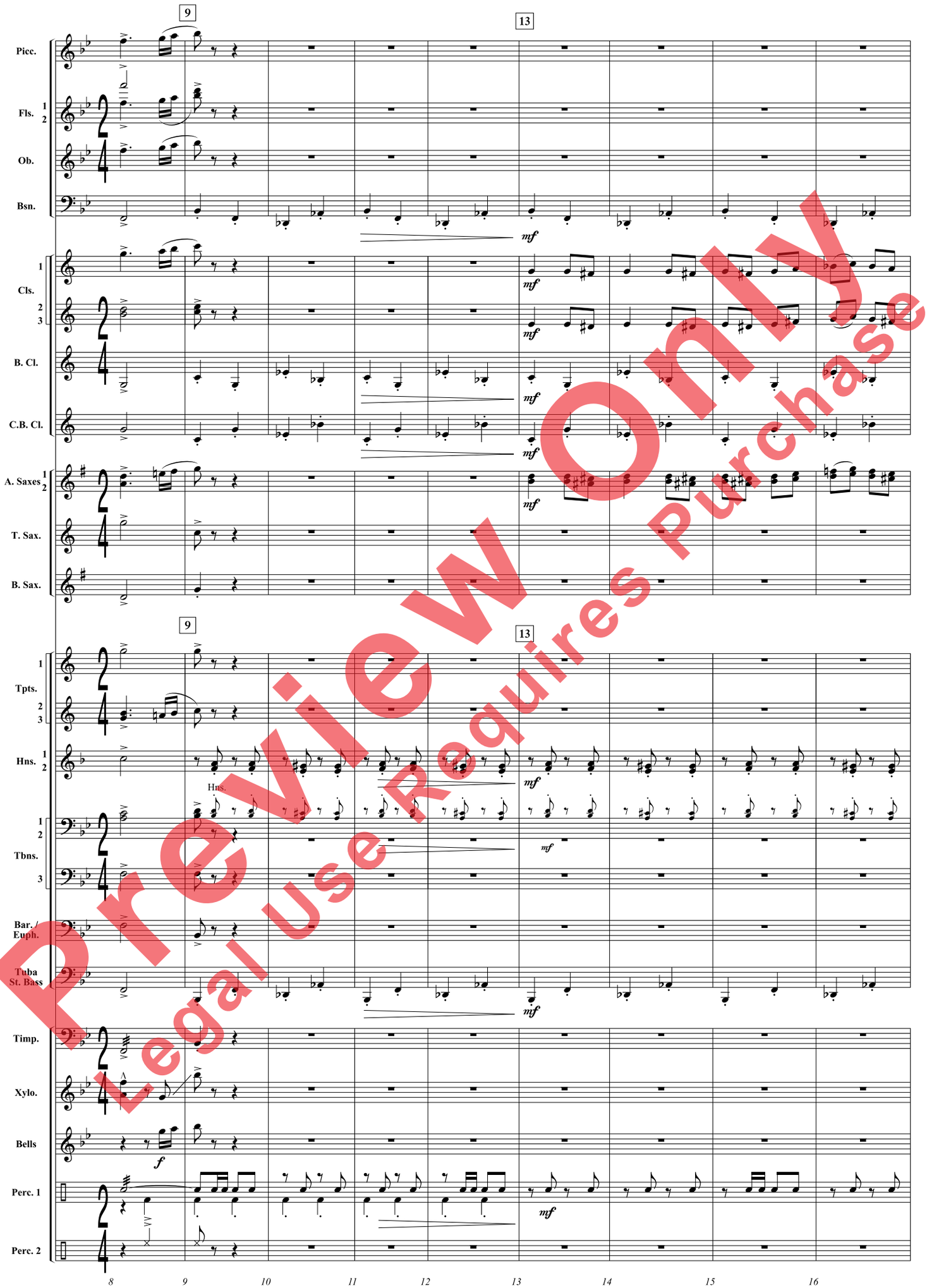

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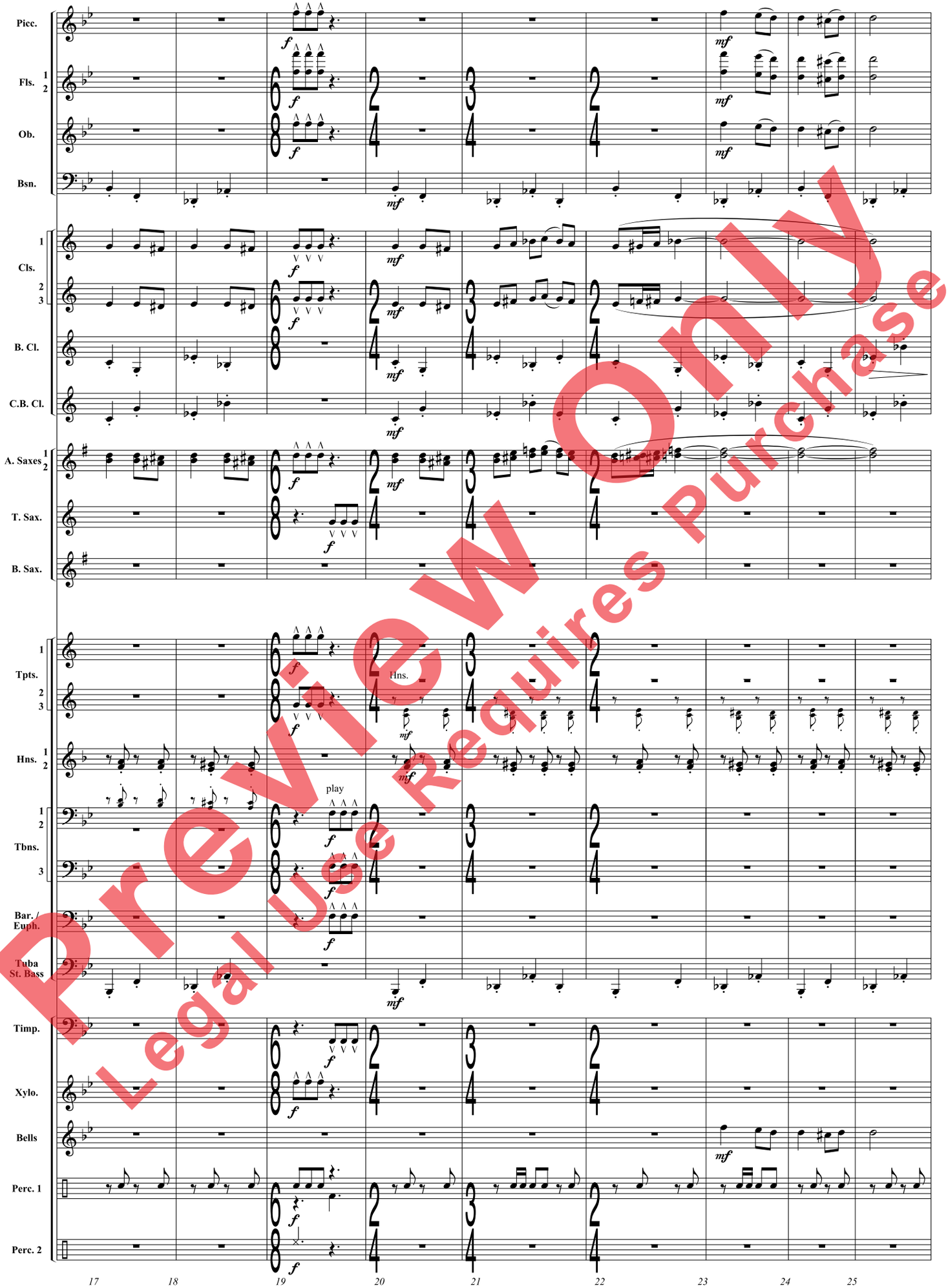

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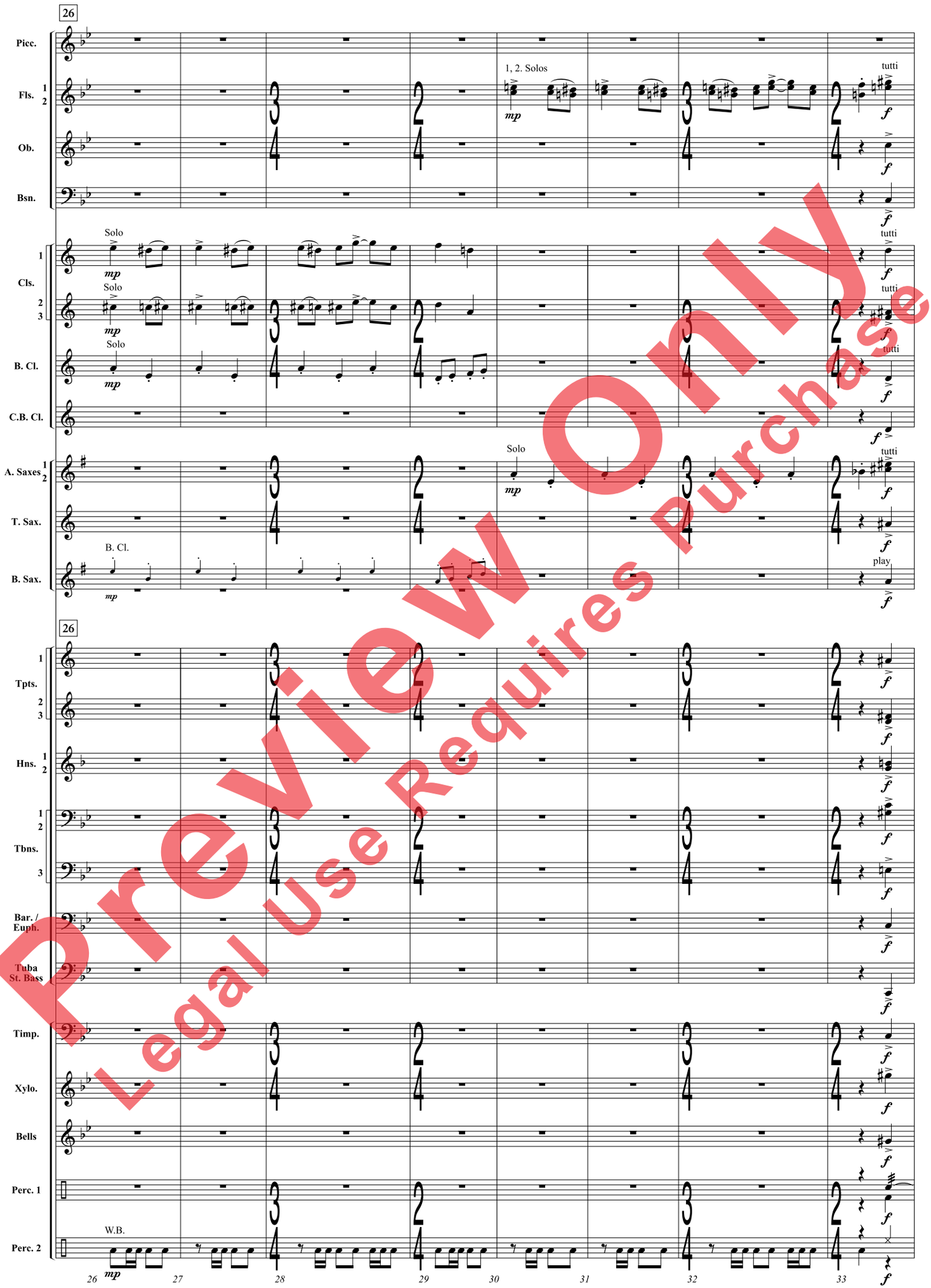

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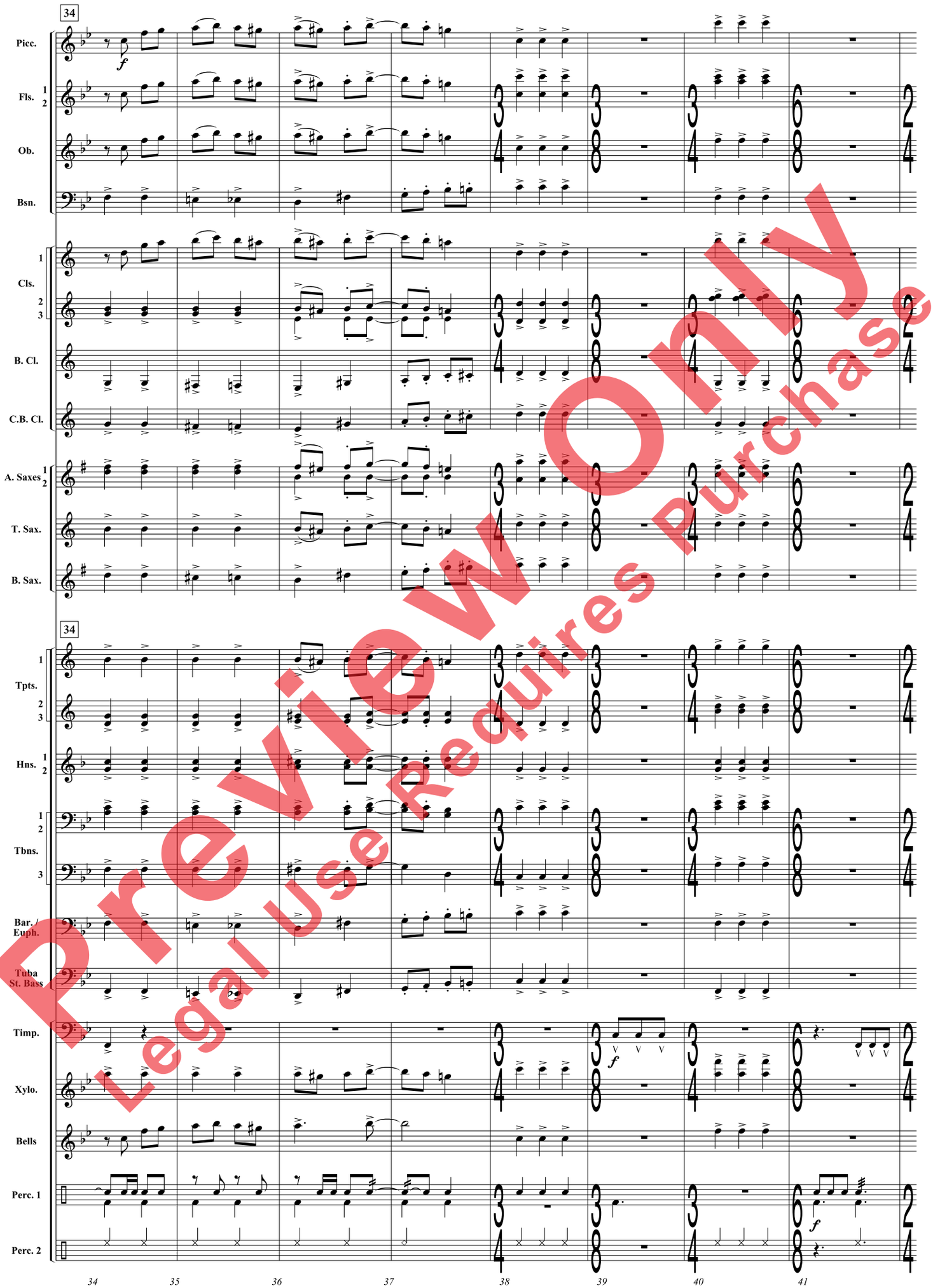

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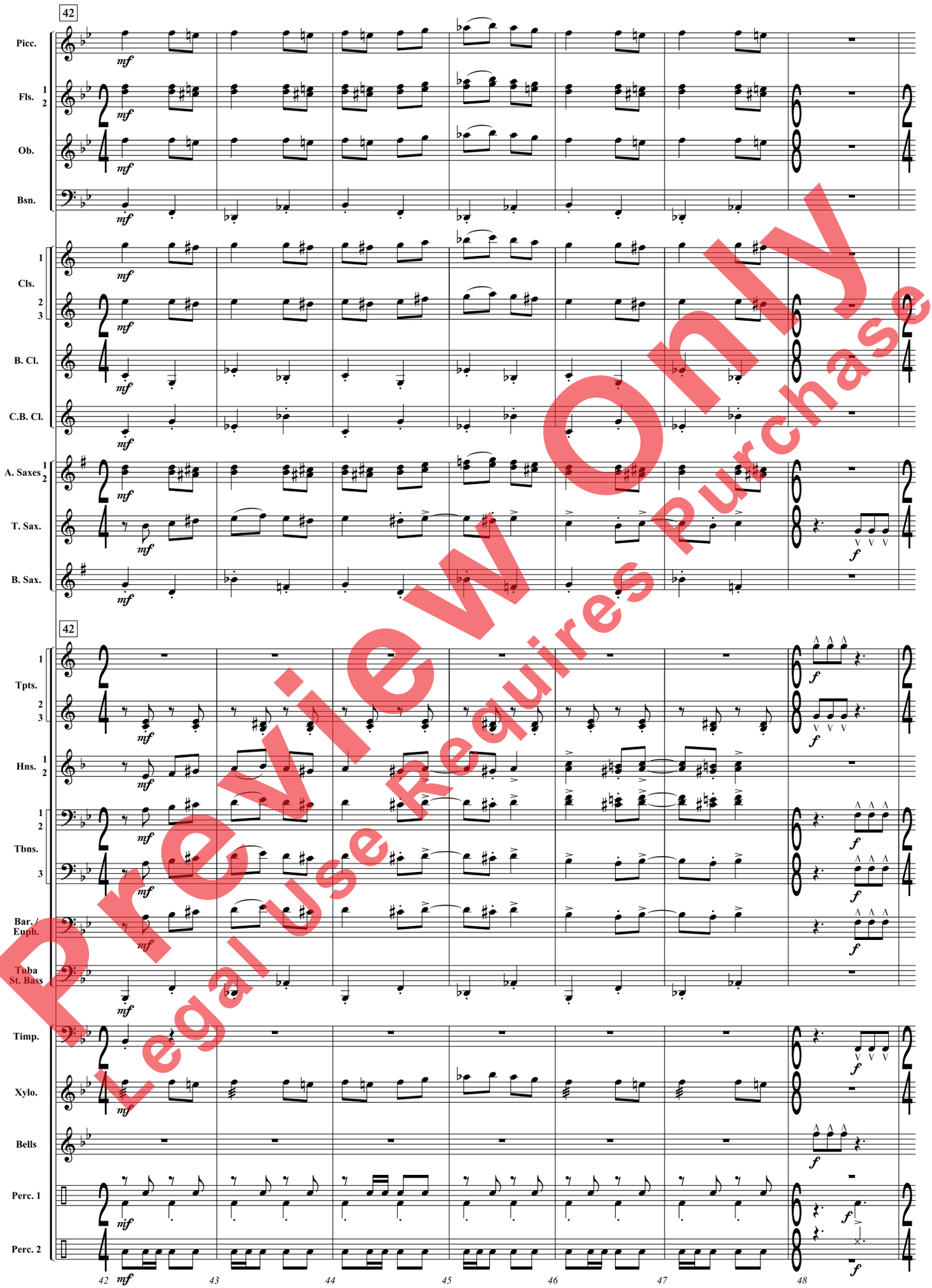

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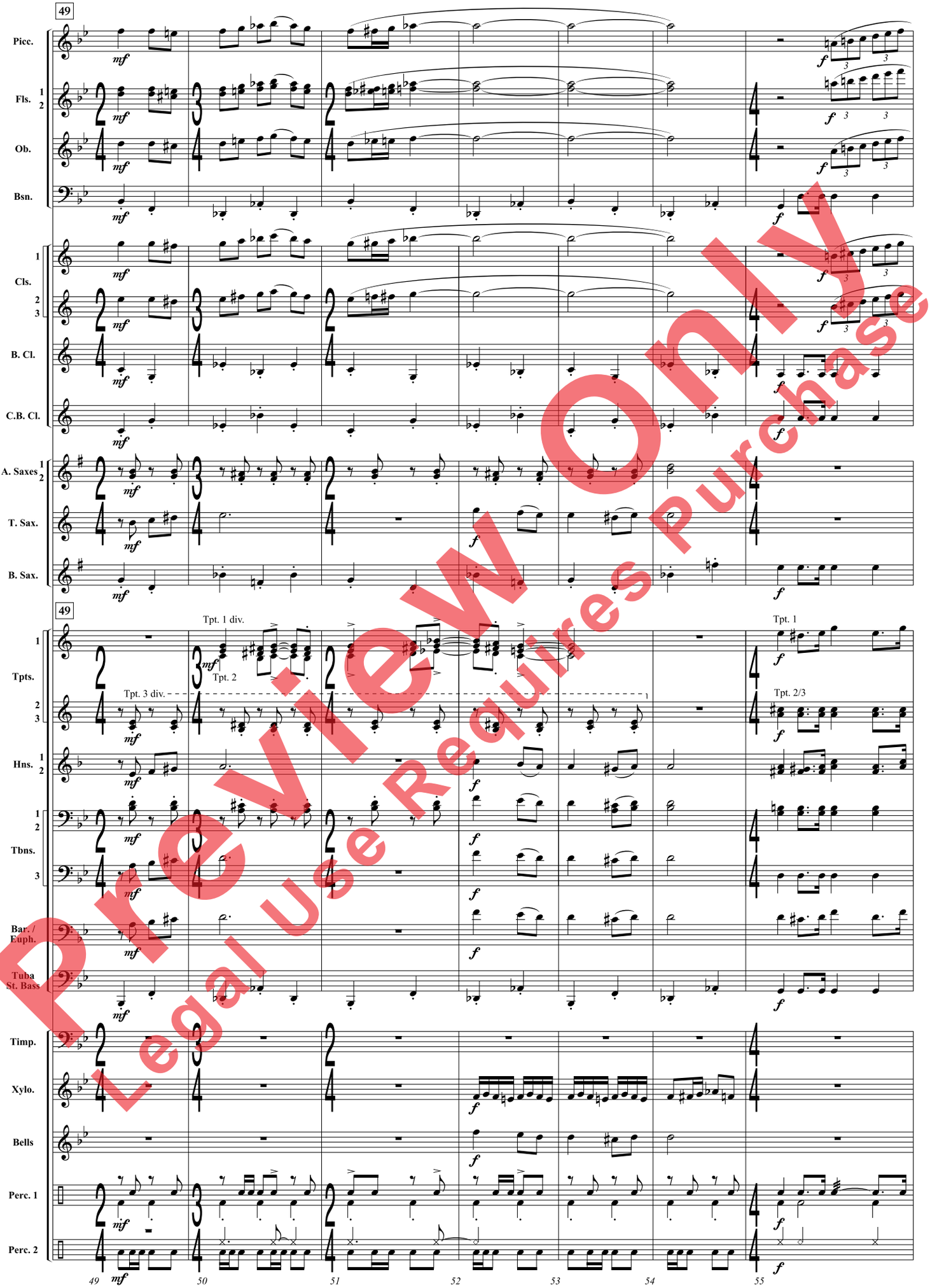

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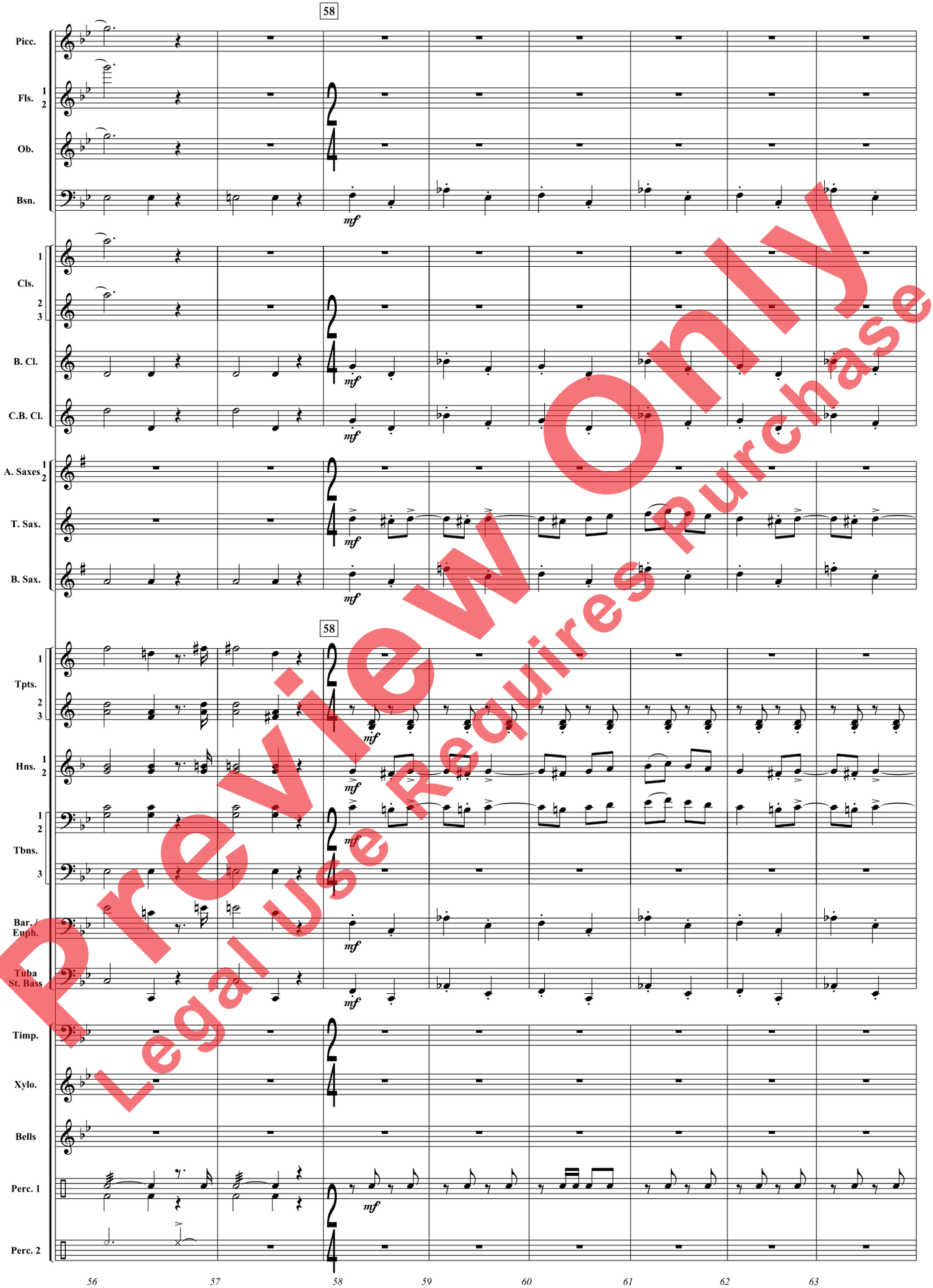

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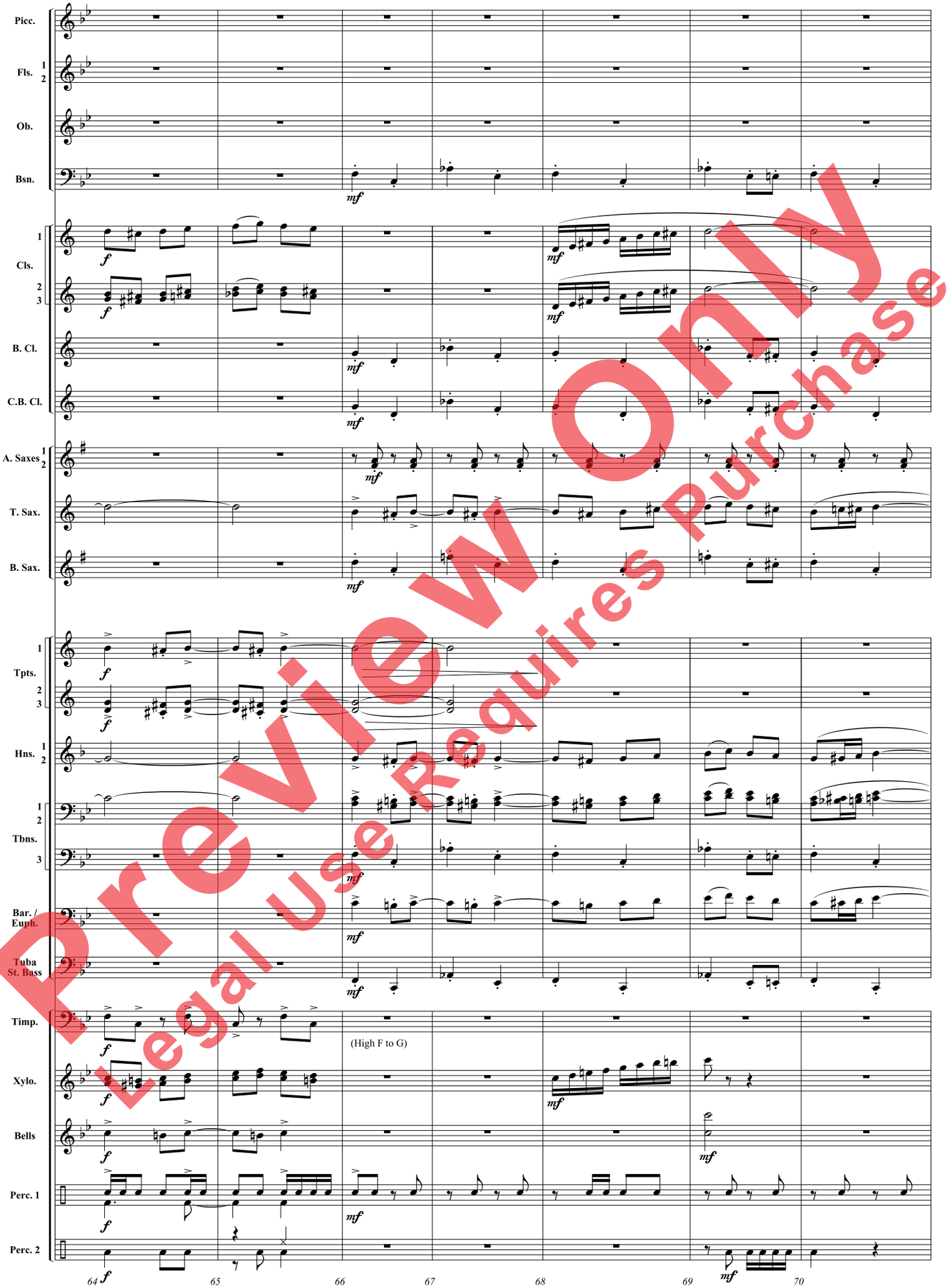

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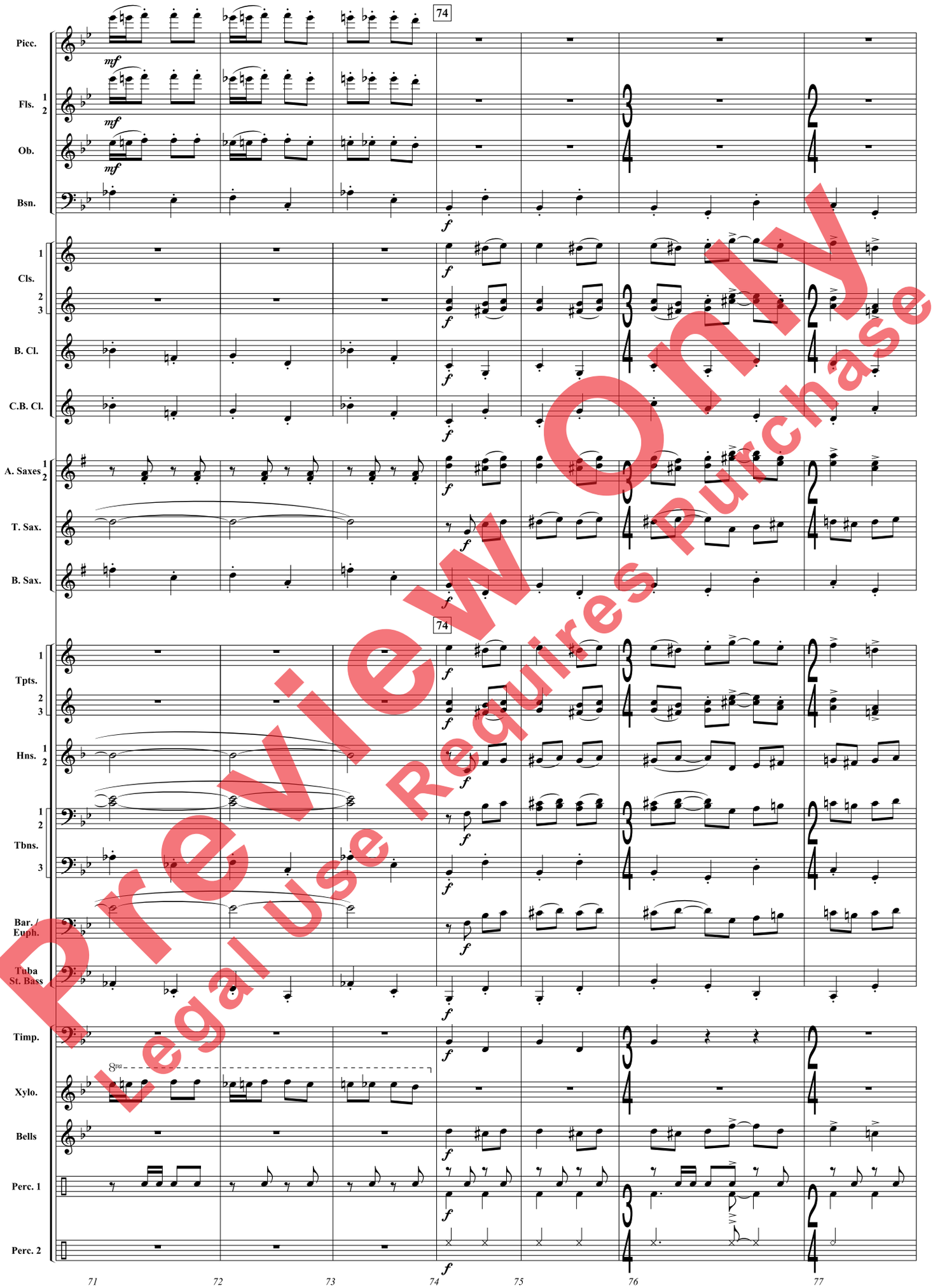

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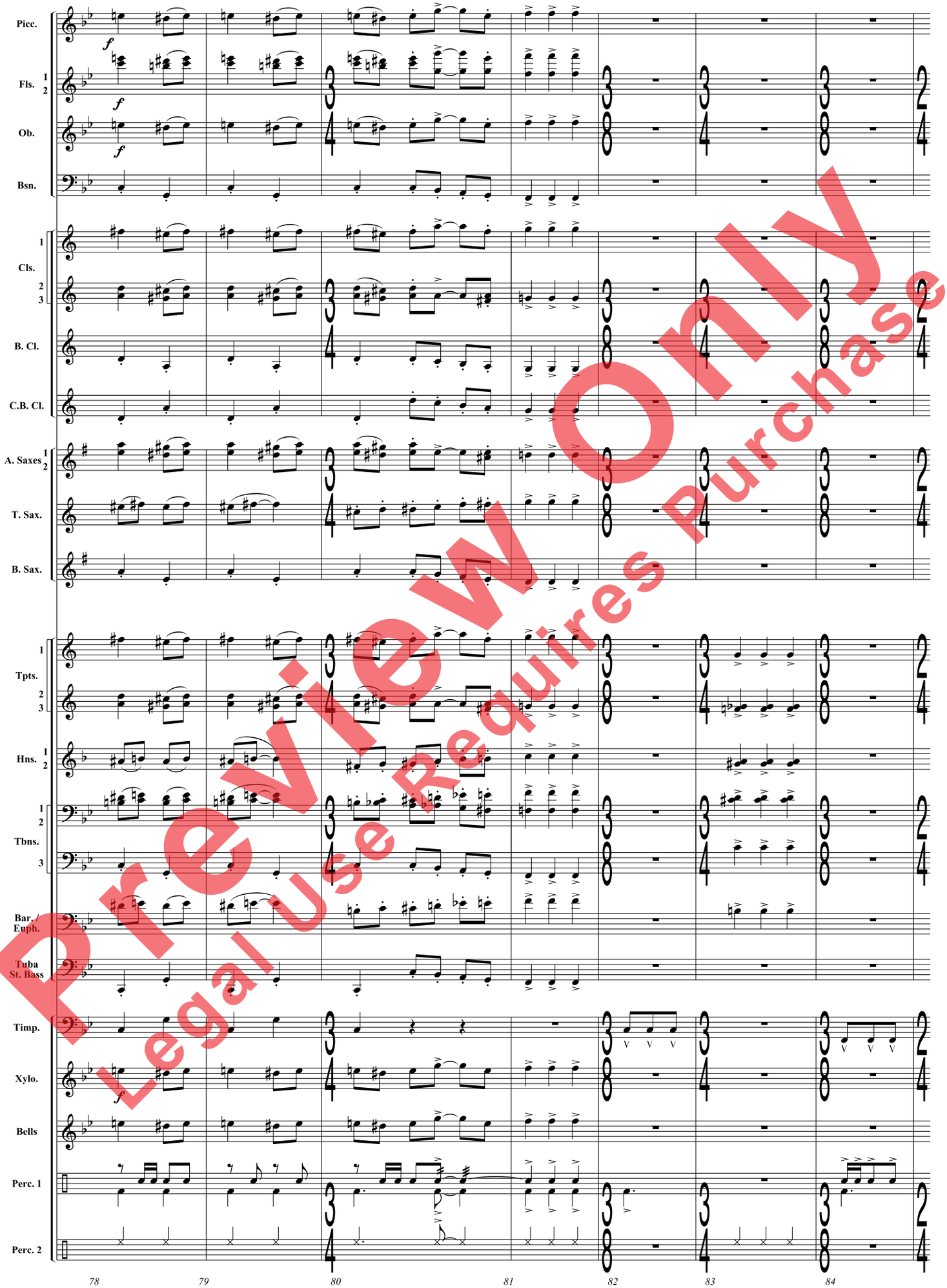

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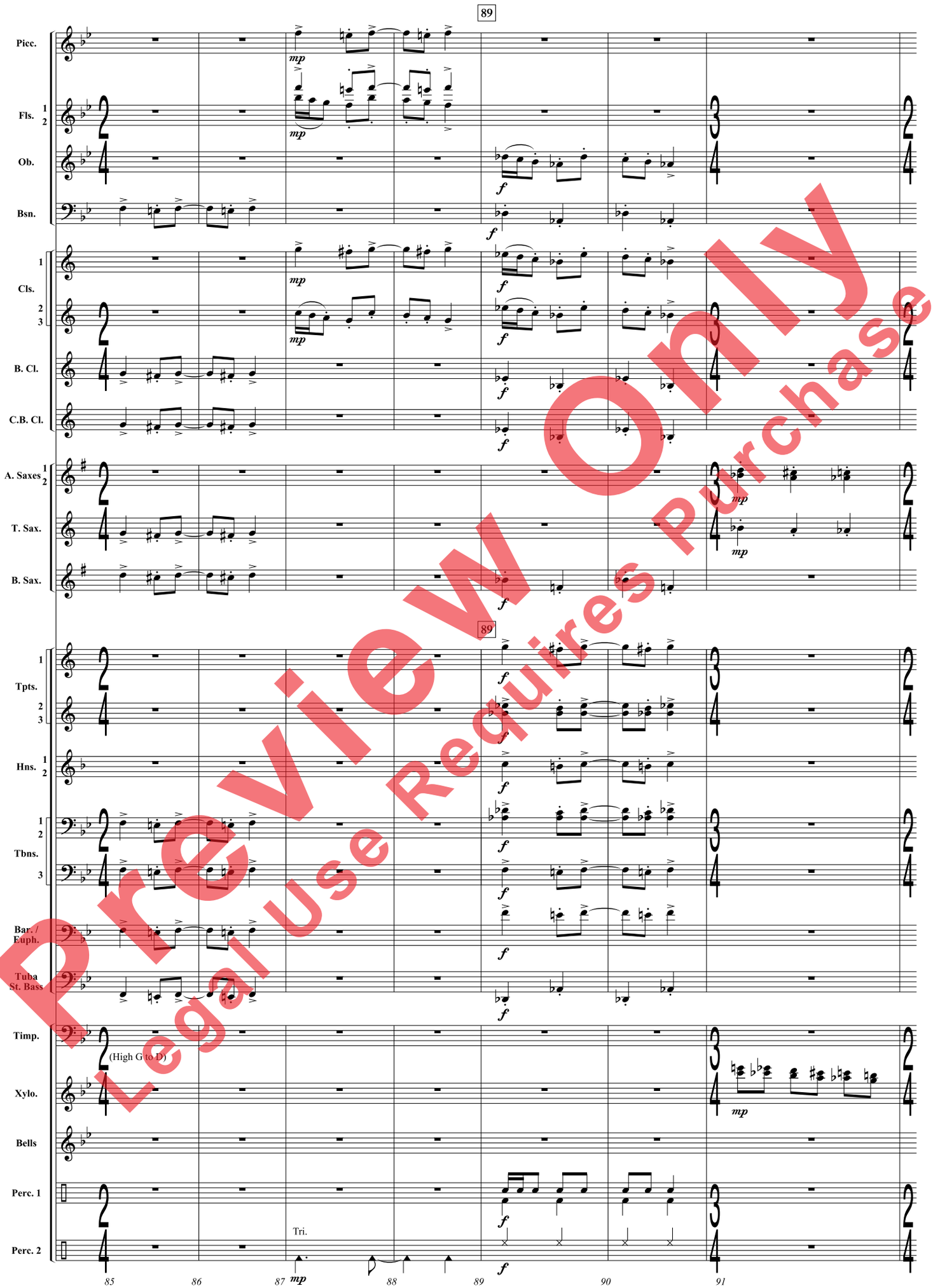

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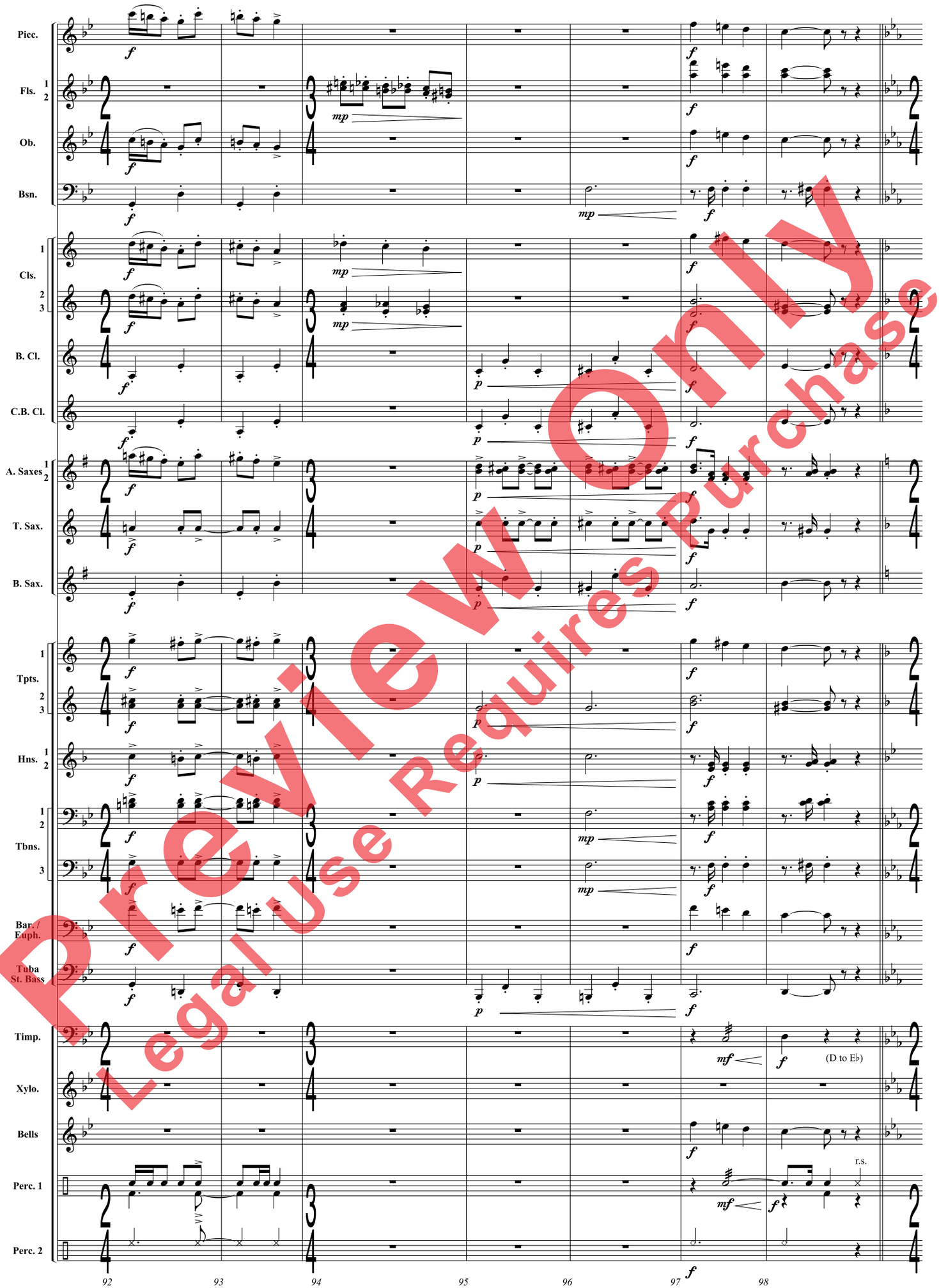

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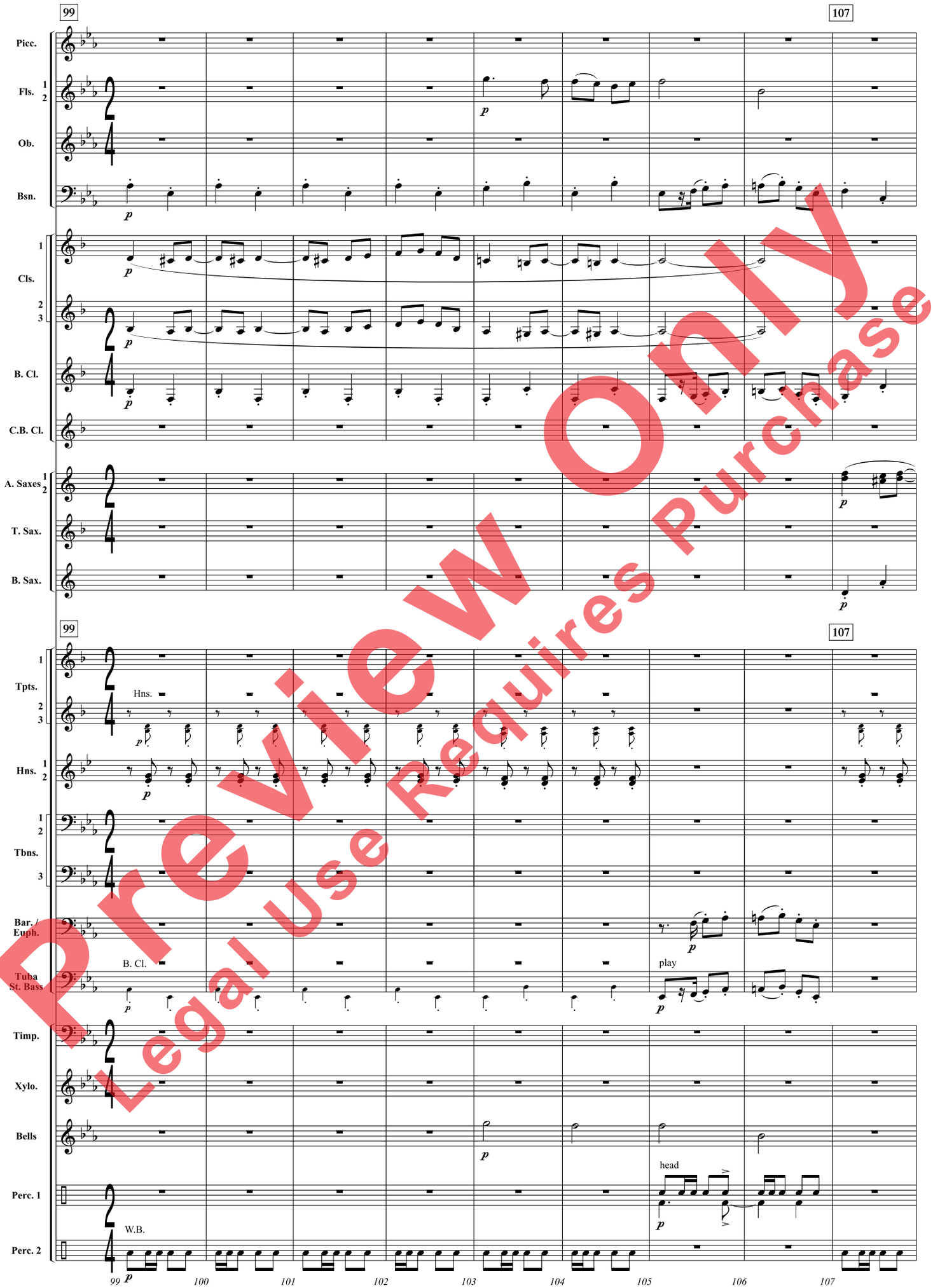

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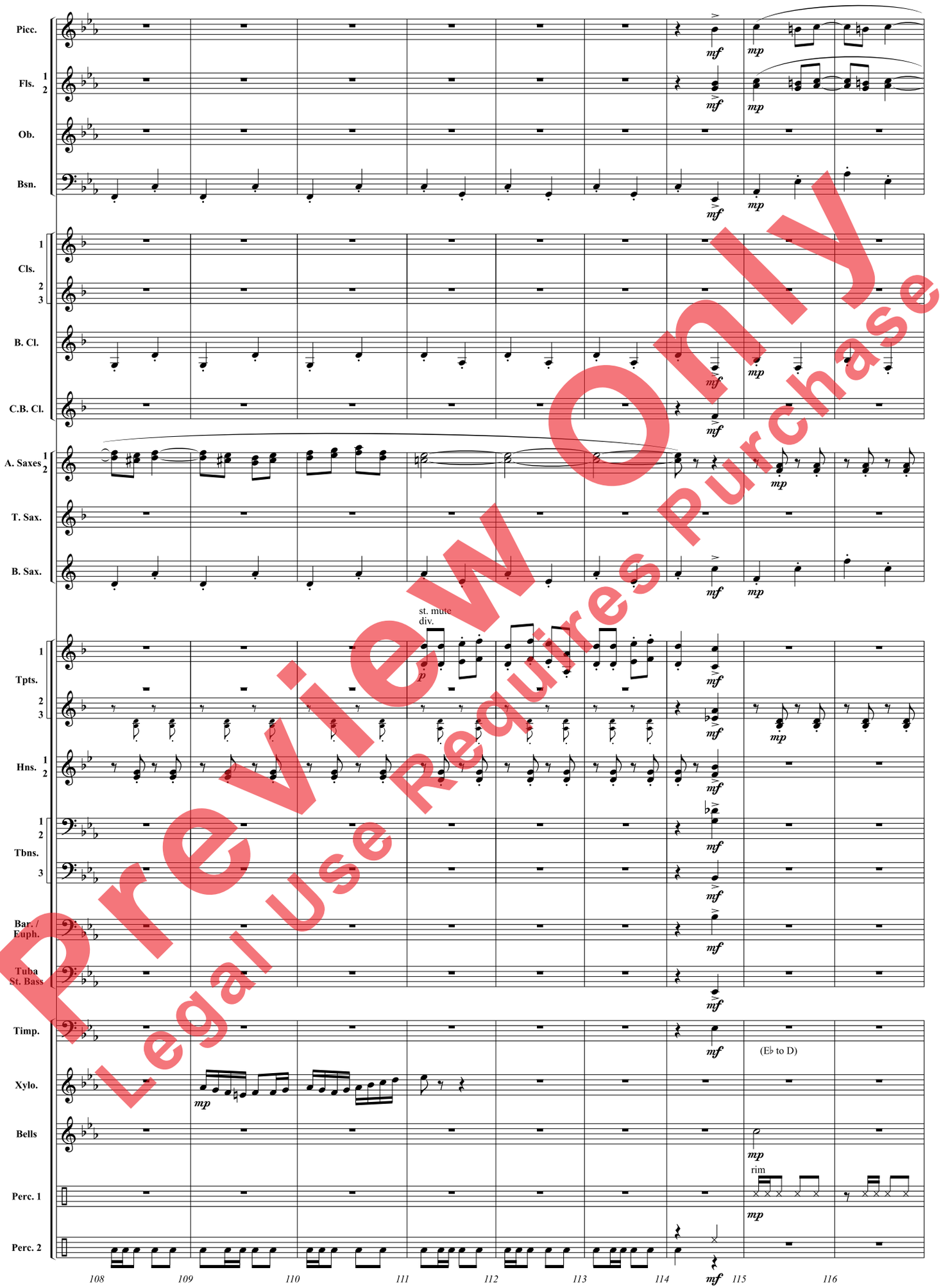

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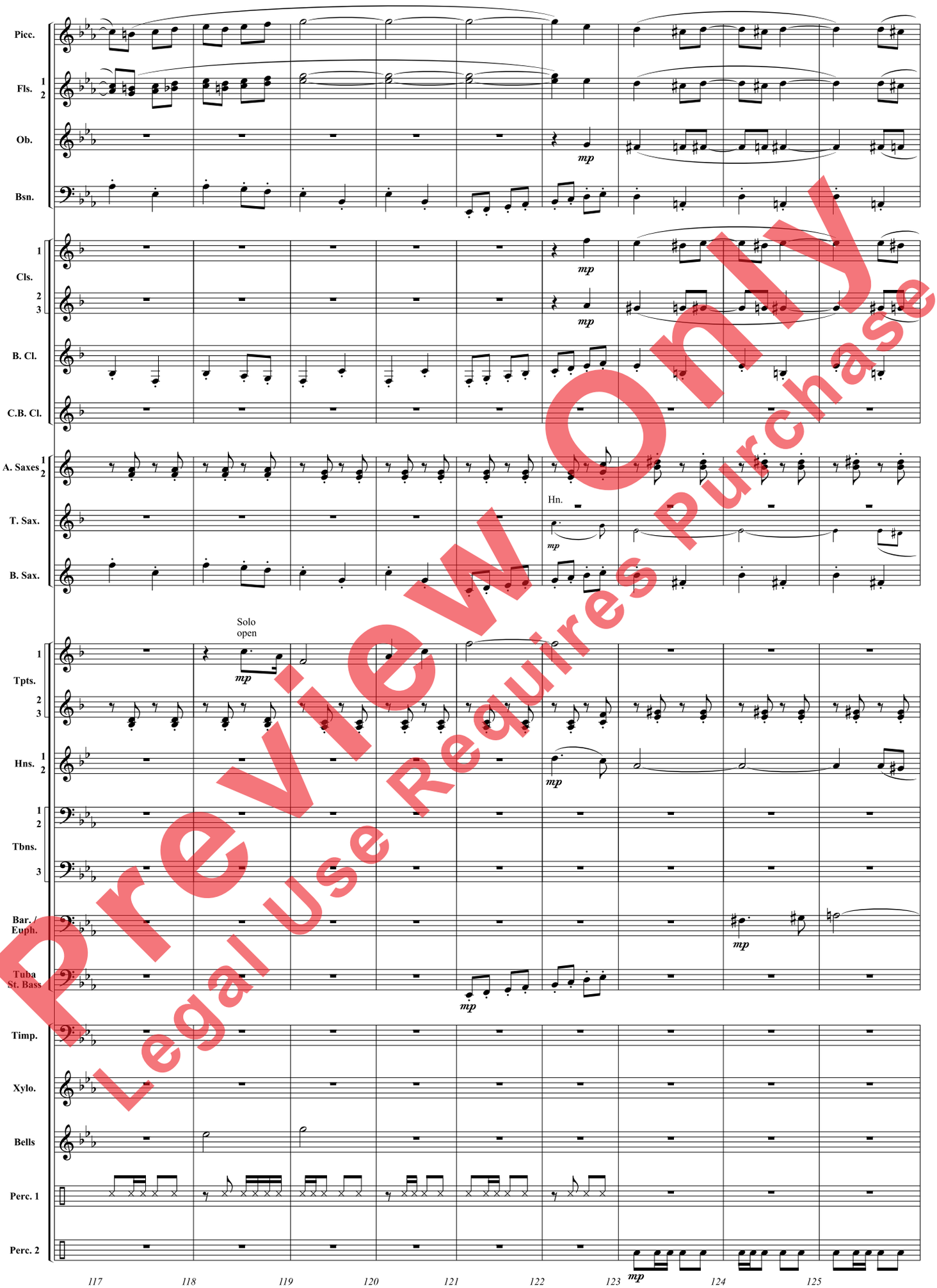

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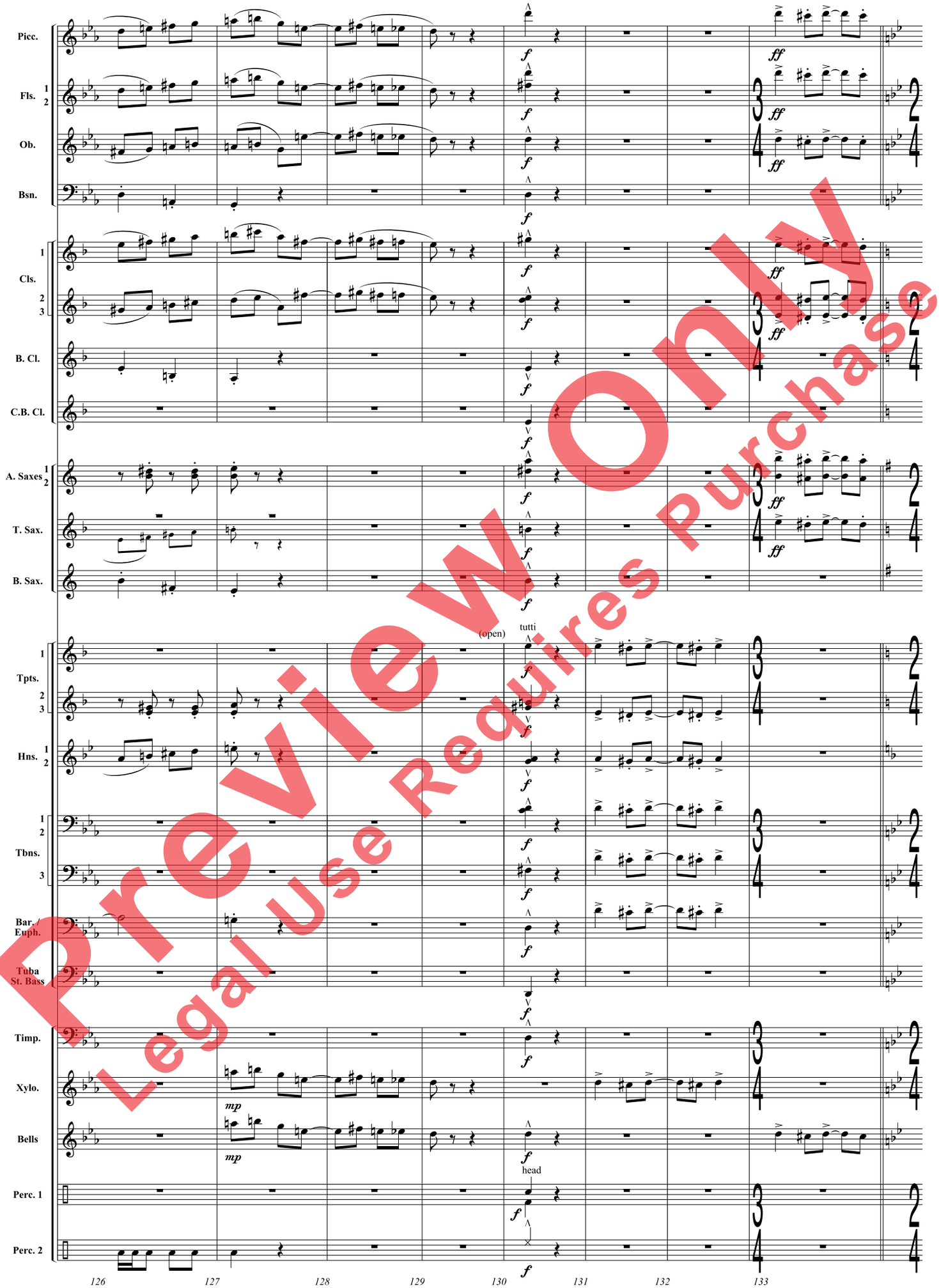

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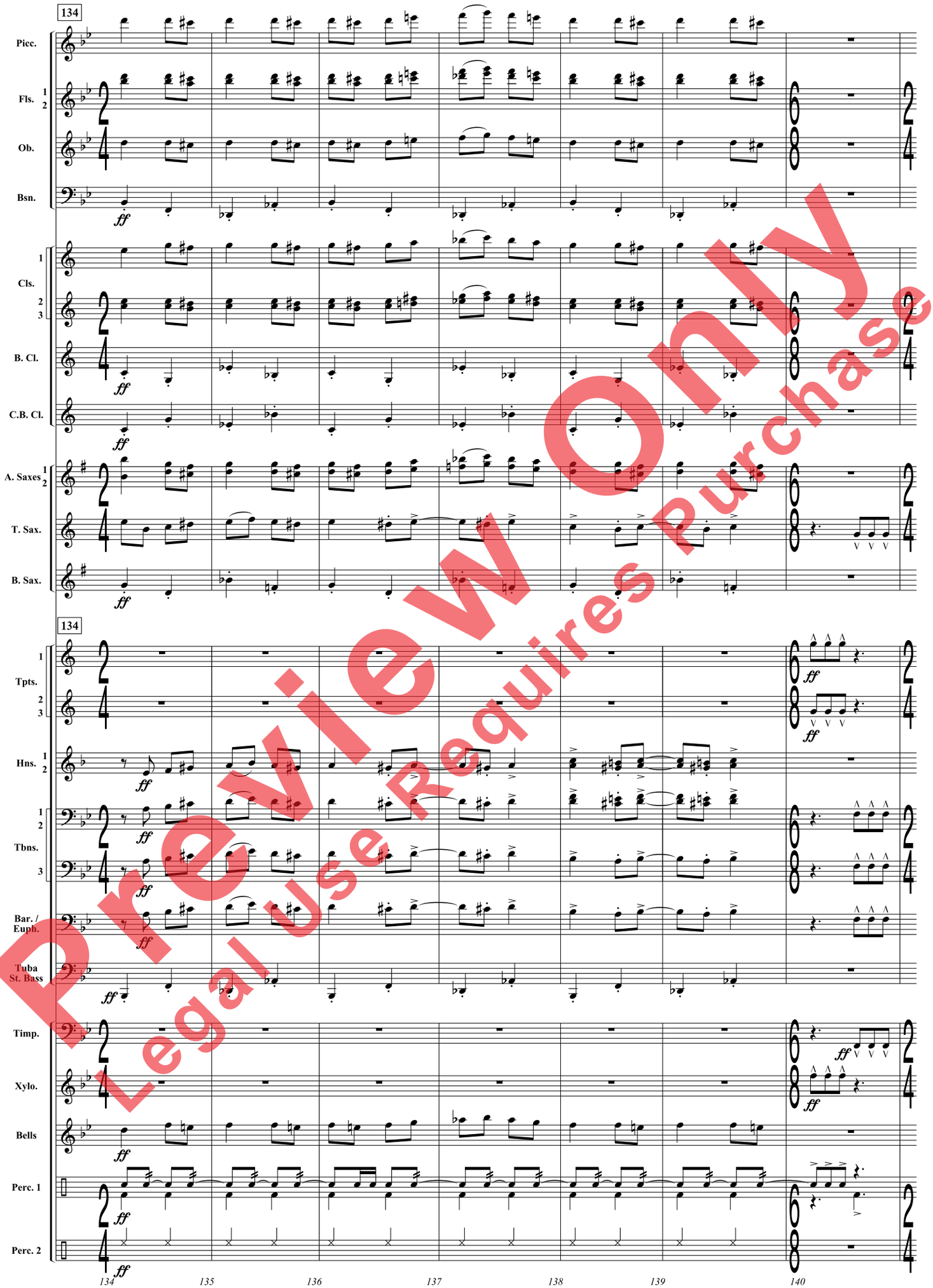

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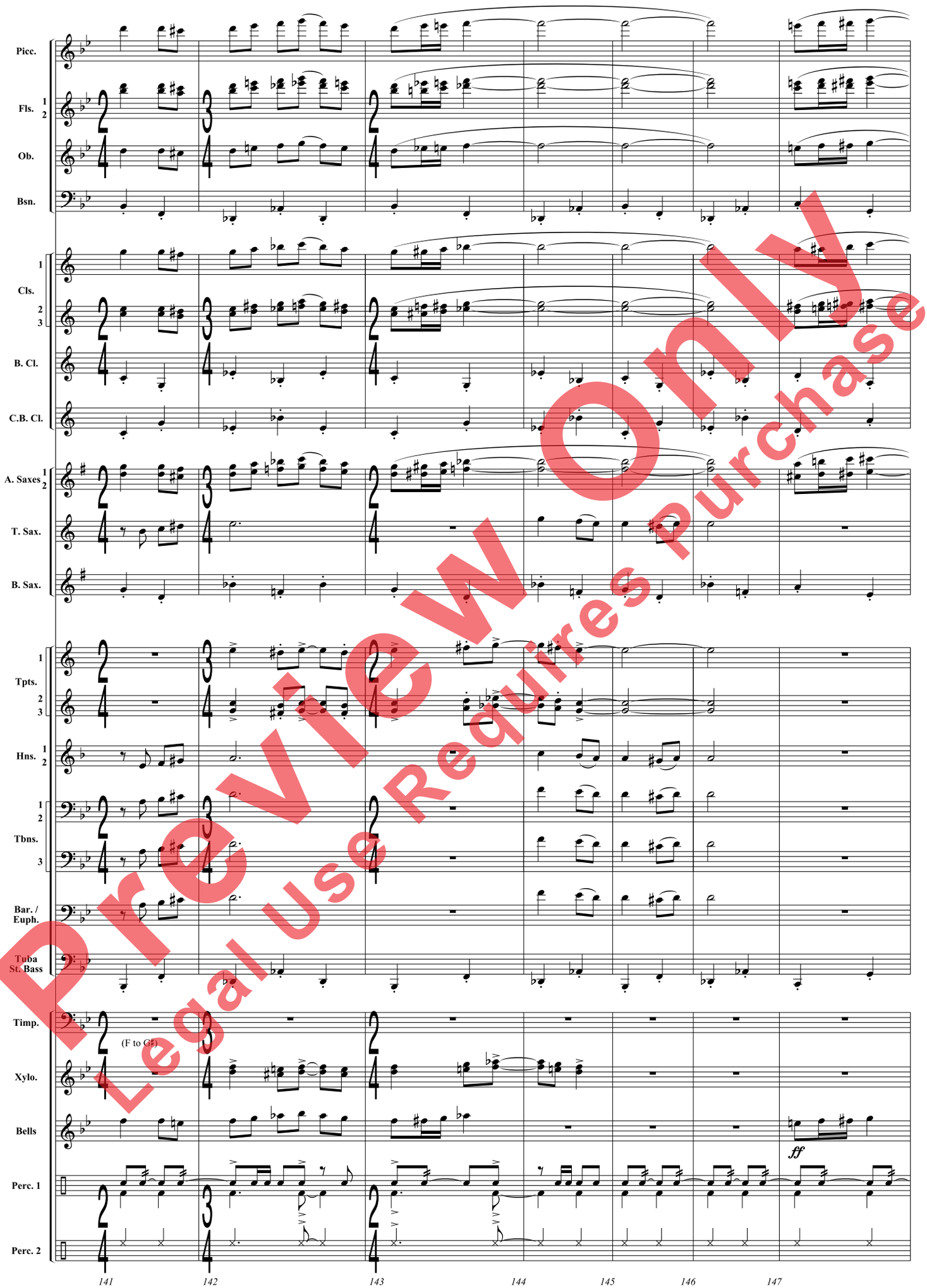

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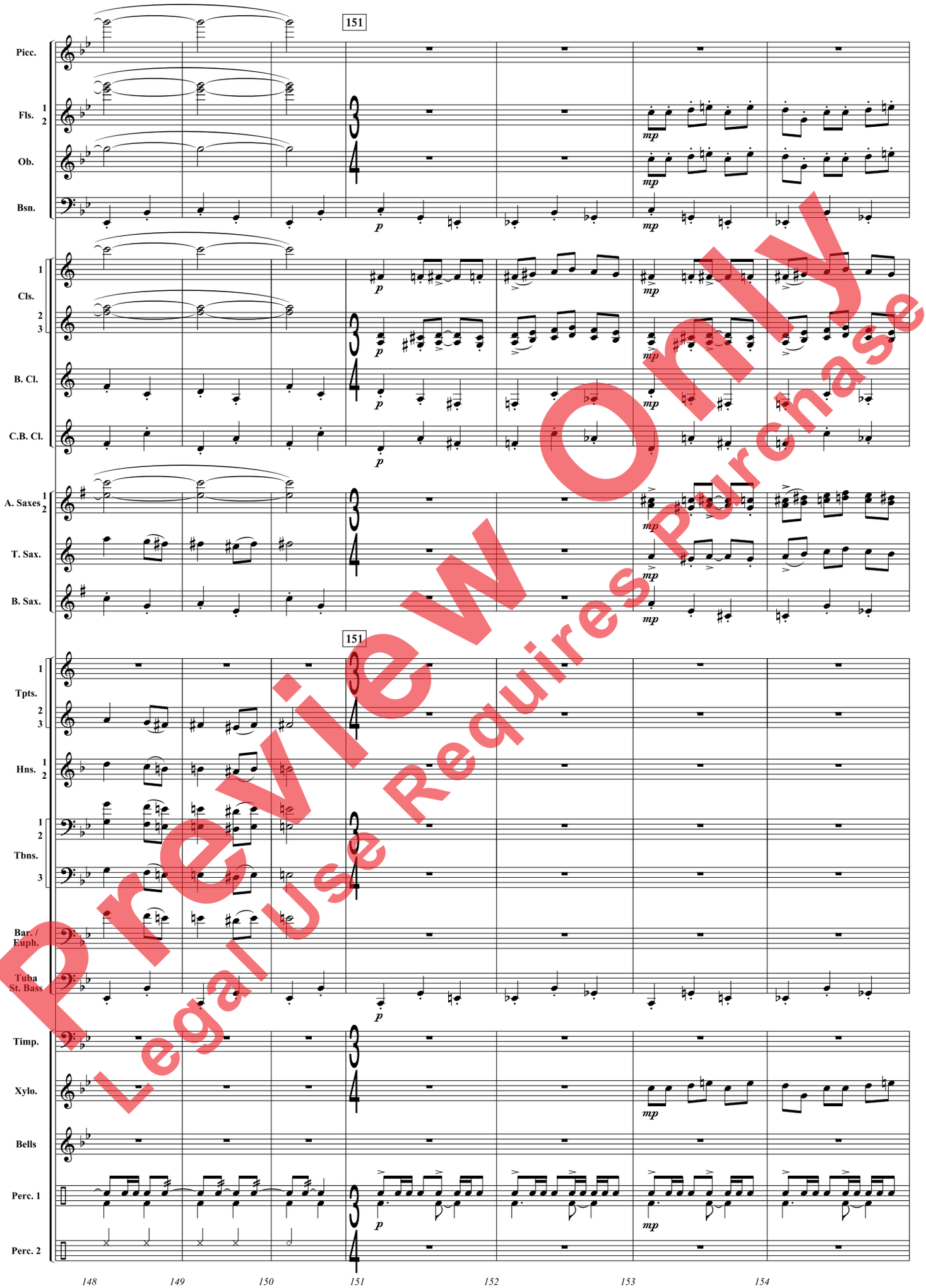

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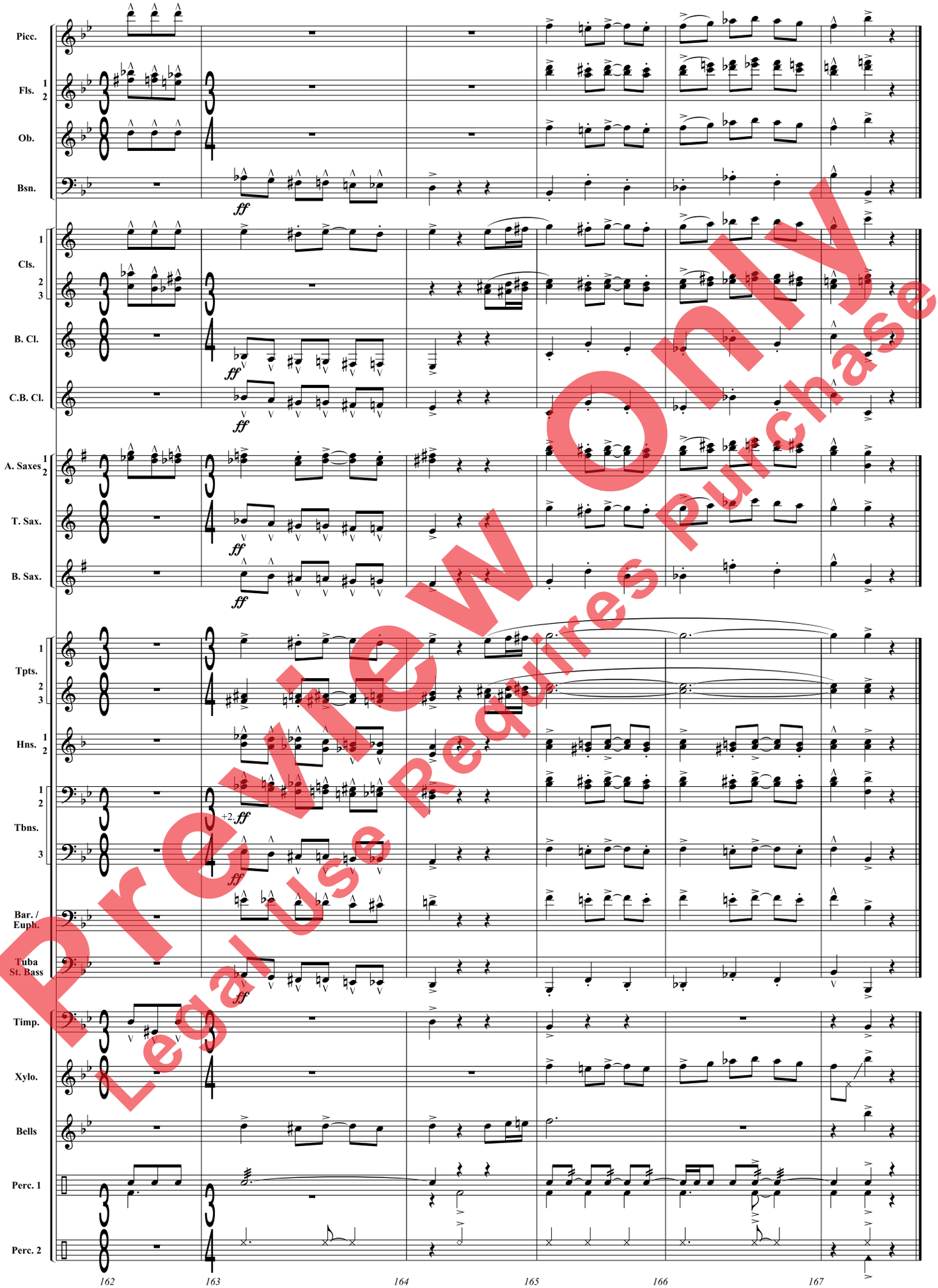

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