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FJH STRING ORCHESTRA

Grade 3

LA SORTIJA

Michael S. O'Brien

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Instrumentation

1 - Conductor's Full Score
8 - Violin 1
8 - Violin 2
5 - Violin 3 (Viola T.C.)
5 - Viola
5 - Violoncello
5 - Double Bass

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

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

2525 Davie Road, Suite 360
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33317-7424
www.fjhmusic.com

The Composer

Michael S. O'Brien is an ethnomusicologist, composer, teacher and performer who specializes in the popular and folk music styles of Argentina. His compositions for string ensembles have been performed by school, university, and professional ensembles in the United States, Haiti, Argentina, and the United Kingdom, and have been selected for All-State Honors Orchestra festivals in Ohio and Florida. He has created commissioned works for middle and high school orchestras in the Burnsville (Minnesota), Appleton and Verona (Wisconsin) School Districts, the Lawrence University cello ensemble, and the Wisconsin Cello Society. O'Brien has also taught middle and high school orchestra and served as a clinician and presenter for the University of Texas String Project, the Wisconsin Music Educator's Association, and at public schools throughout the Midwest.

As an ethnomusicologist, Michael O'Brien has done extensive field research in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on folk and popular music styles including tango, milonga, murga, and folk music styles. He has published and presented research at ethnomusicology and popular music studies conferences in the U.S., Mexico, and Argentina, and has served as assistant editor of the *Latin American Music Review.*

Michael O'Brien holds a Ph.D. and master's degree in ethnomusicology from the University of Texas at Austin, and bachelor's degrees in English and instrumental music education from Lawrence University. He is currently an ACM-Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Ethnomusicology at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, where he teaches courses in world music and music history.

About the Music

La sortija is a *milonga,* a lively couple's dance from the cities on both sides of the River Plate: Buenos Aires, Argentina and Montevideo, Uruguay. This piece was inspired by the *corrida de sortija,* a traditional game played by *gauchos,* or Argentine cowboys. Competitors race full-speed atop galloping horses, holding a pen-sized quill or stick, which they try to thread through a small metal ring suspended about ten feet in the air. In order to win, gauchos have to be fast, poised, and accurate — just like musicians attempting to play a *milonga!*

Aspects of traditional *milonga* style in this piece include the dotted rhythm played throughout the piece by the basses (you may recognize it as a faster version of the *habanera,* the Cuban dance made famous in Bizet's opera *Carmen*), the two-part structure in parallel keys (D Major and D minor), and the short percussive rhythm, using the basses and cellos like drums, that ends the piece.

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String Editing: Carrie Lane Gruselle

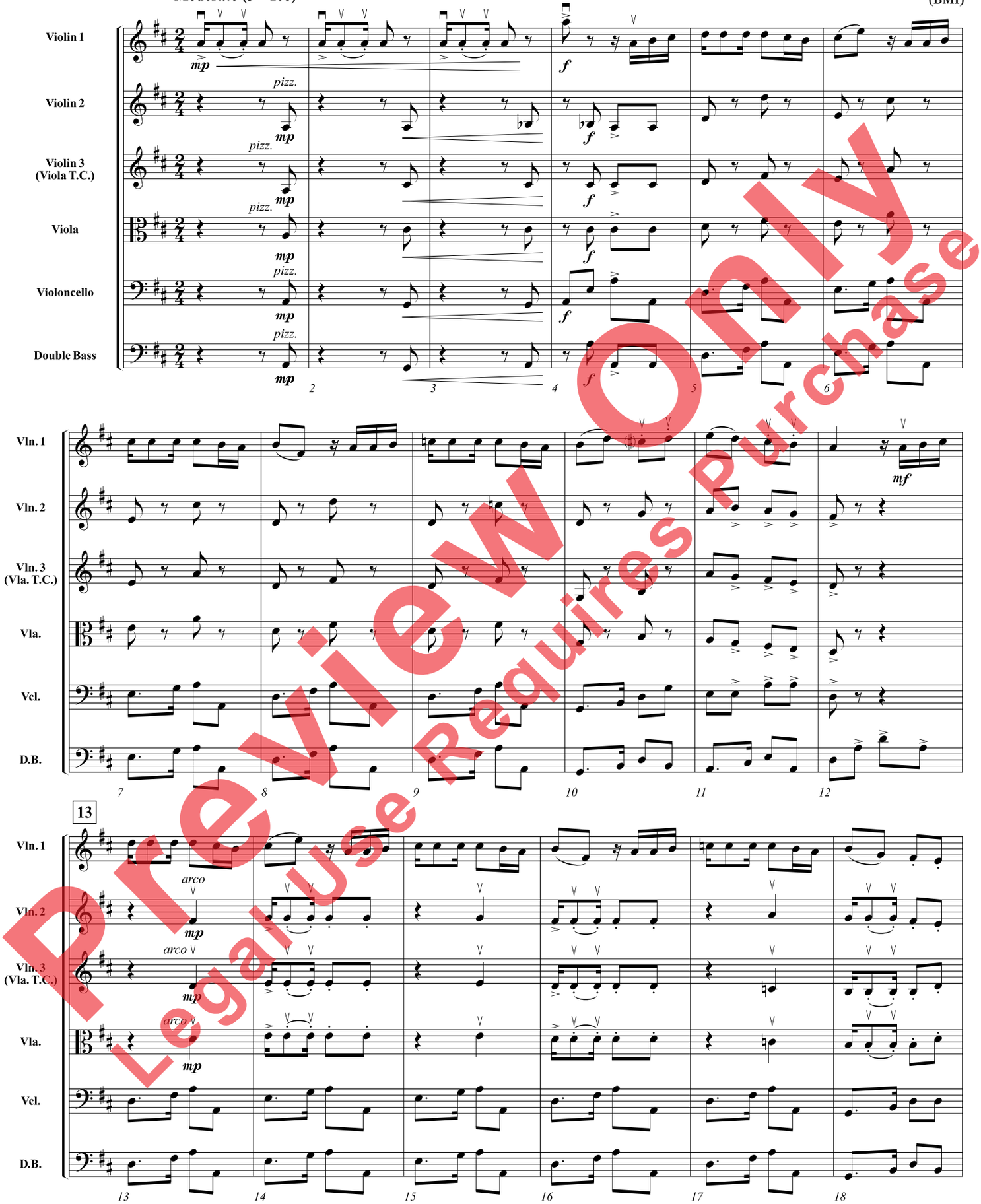
Duration: 1:45

commissioned by the Savanna Oaks and Badger Ridge Middle School Orchestras
Verona, Wisconsin; Therese Josephson, Director

LA SORTIJA

MICHAEL S. O'BRIEN
(BMI)

Moderato (♩ = 108)



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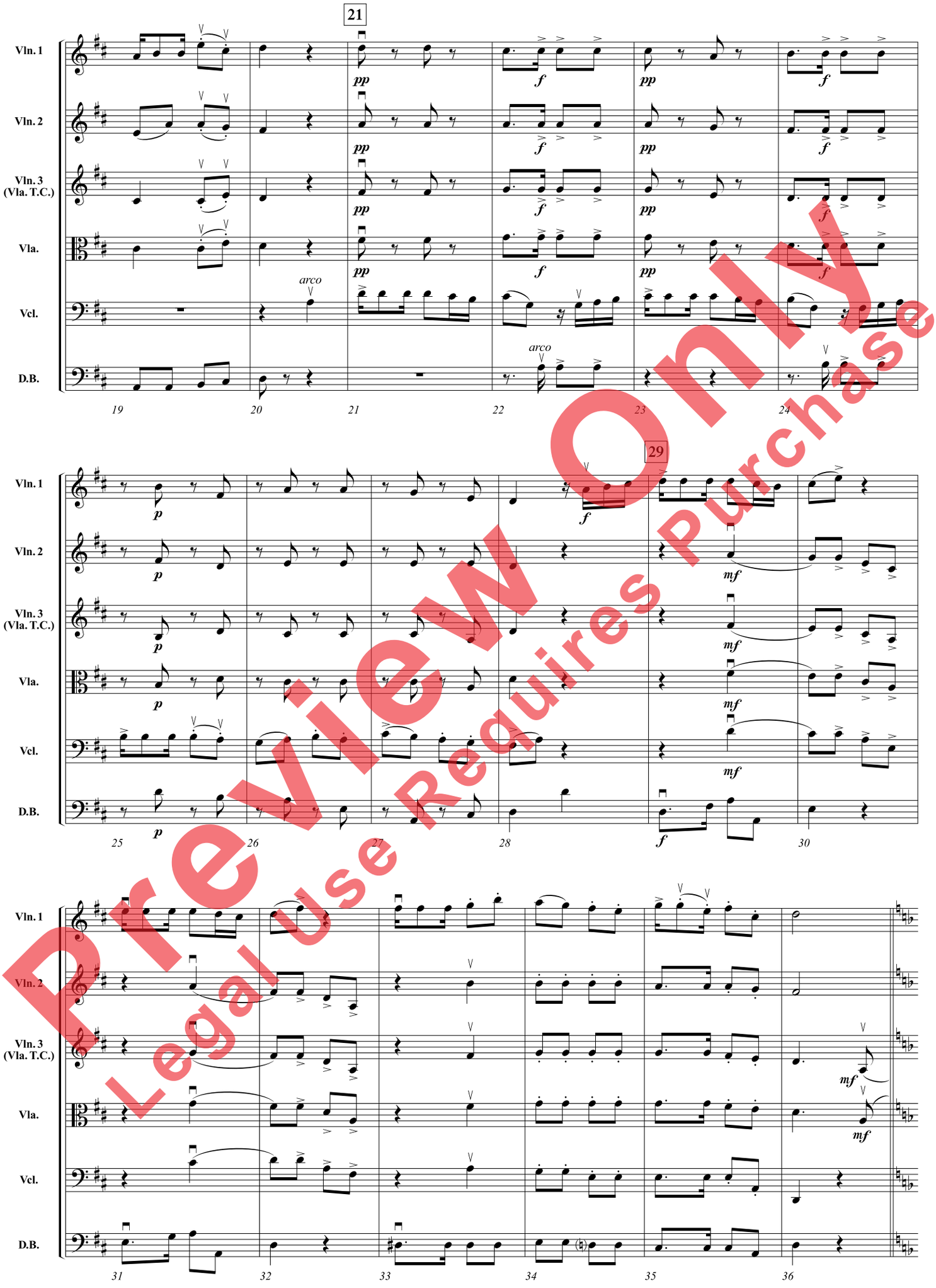

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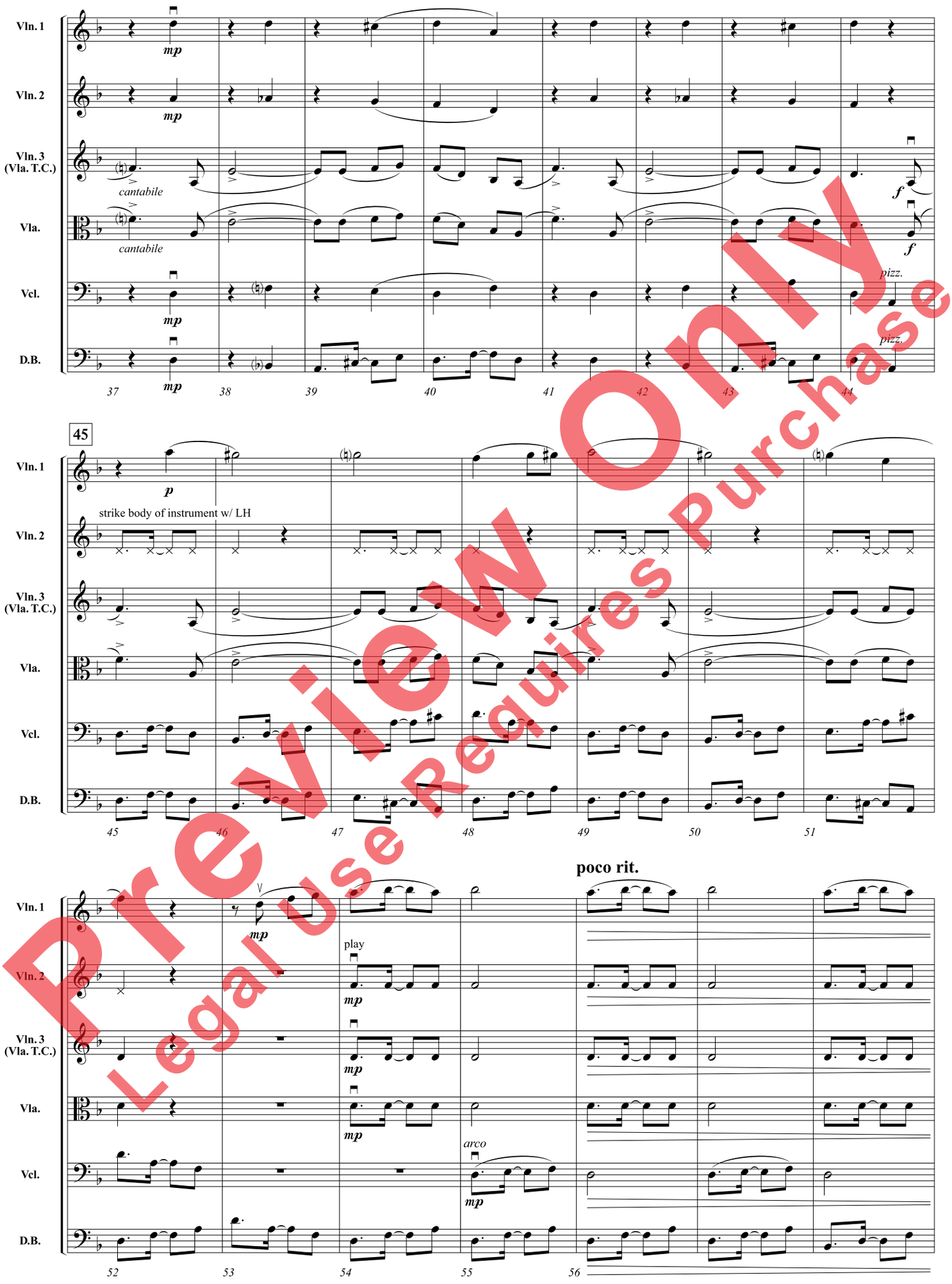

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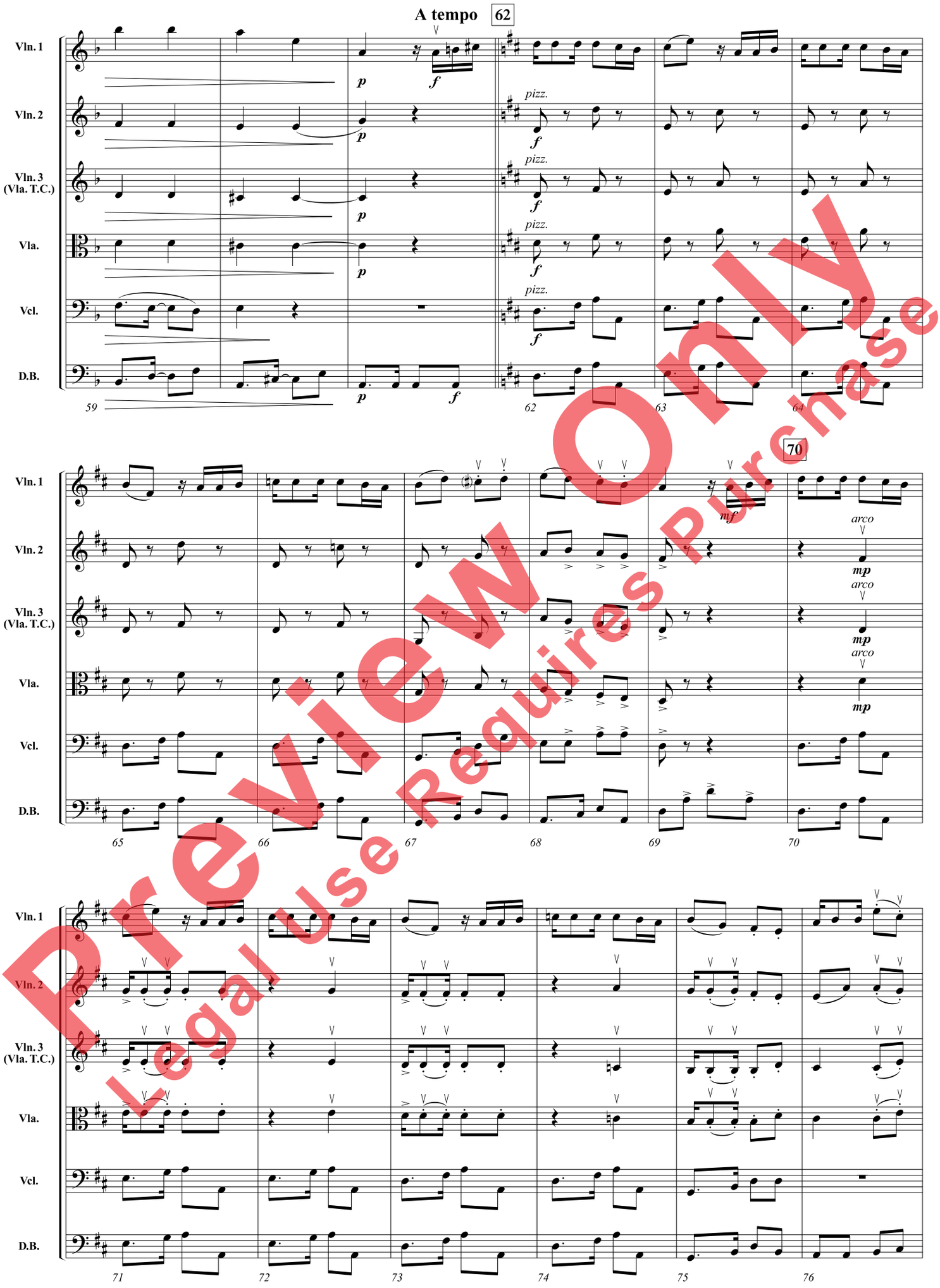

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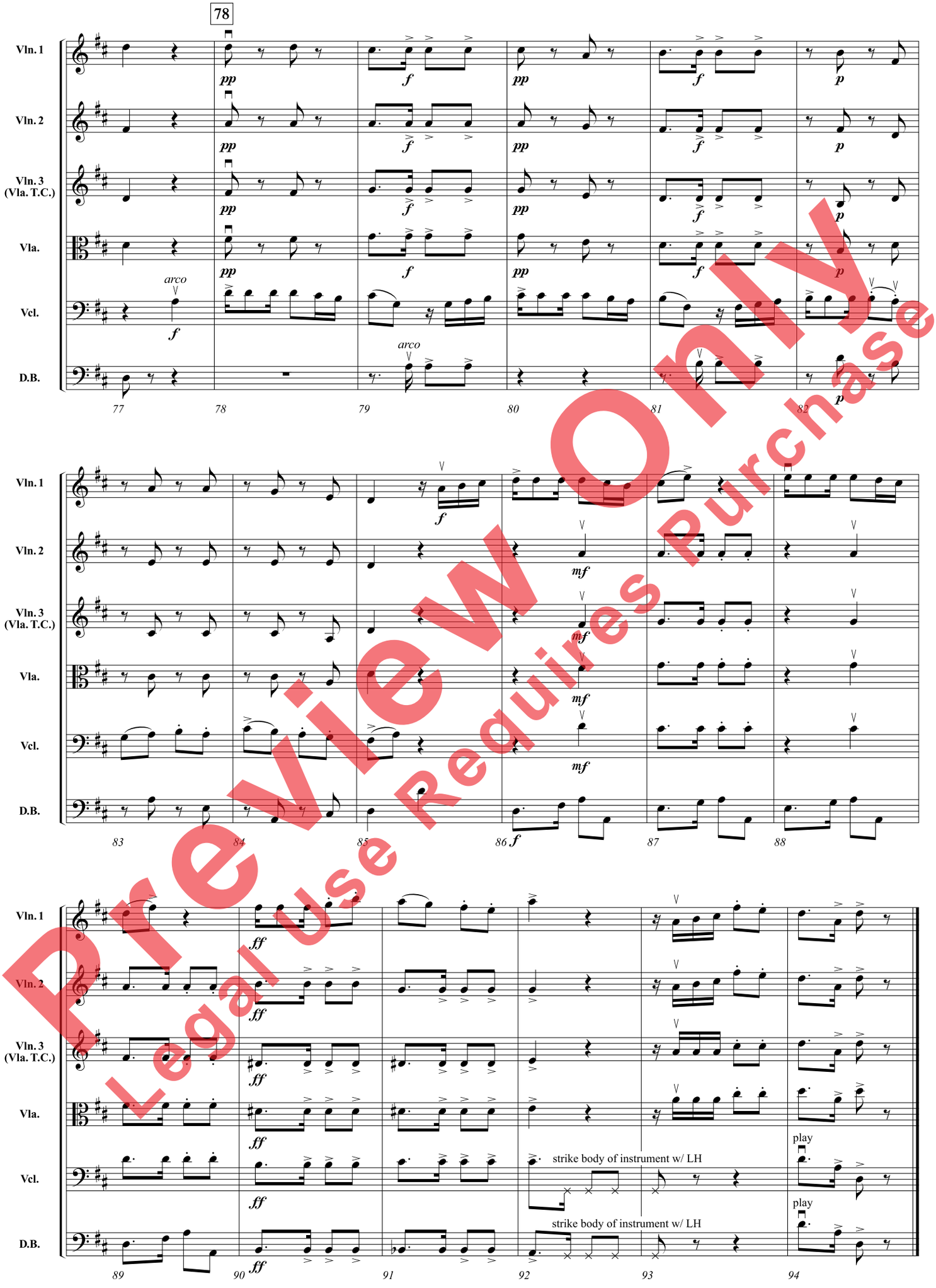

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