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FJH STRING ORCHESTRA

Grade 3

VOICES IN THE SHADOWS

Brian Balmages

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
1 - Piano

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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

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Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33317-7424
www.fjhmusic.com

The Composer

Brian Balmages (b. 1975) is an award-winning composer, conductor, producer, and performer. He holds a bachelor's degree in music from James Madison University and a master's degree from the University of Miami in Florida. His compositions have been performed worldwide at the state, national and international level. His active schedule of commissions and premieres has incorporated groups ranging from elementary schools to professional ensembles, including the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Miami Symphony Orchestra, University of Miami Wind Ensemble, Boston Brass, and the Dominion Brass Ensemble. In 2012, Mr. Balmages received the prestigious Albert Austin Harding Award from the American School Band Directors Association. He is also a 2010 winner of the Harvey G. Phillips Award for Compositional Excellence, presented by the International Tuba-Euphonium Association.

As a conductor, Mr. Balmages enjoys engagements with numerous all-state and regional honor bands and orchestras along with university and professional groups. Notable guest conducting appearances have included the Midwest Clinic, Western International Band Clinic, National Association for Music Educators, American School Band Directors Association, CBDNA, the Kennedy Center, and Meyerhoff Symphony Hall. He has also served as an Adjunct Professor of Instrumental Conducting and Acting Symphonic Band Director 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 two sons.

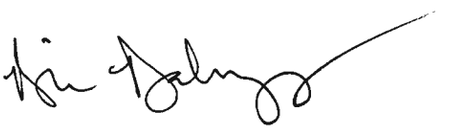
About the Music

I have always been intrigued with the idea of voices that seemingly come from nowhere. This overlaps with moments when I "think I hear something" but cannot identify where, what, who or even how. *Voices in the Shadows* explores the idea of a single pitch (G) that sounds for the entire work (literally sustained from the first note until the final release) and takes on various roles throughout. At times, it is the focus of the work. At other moments, it is obscured in a series of complex harmonies; however, even in these cases, it still plays a vital harmonic role. An entire analysis of the piece takes the pitch through the following tonalities: G minor - G Major - C Major - G Major - (E♭ Major) - C Major. Obviously, G is common to all of these tonalities and enables the note to sound throughout, even when the harmonies are altered and shifted.

The first presence of the main melodic material occurs at measure 24 and is developed throughout the rest of the work. Transitional material provides a moment of unrest (marked *agitato*) as the harmonies slowly shift upward in half steps before a broad and powerful statement of the melody pulls the piece into the key of C Major for the first time. This tonality is short-lived, as the piece quickly moves back to G Major and continues to exist there until a brief flirtation with E♭, and ultimately coming to rest back in the key of C.

At measure 45, members of the orchestra are asked to sing a G on the syllable "ahh" in their middle / upper register (it does not have to be in the same octave, but should not be in a low octave). They continue to do this even while playing. During the penultimate chord, they should subtly switch to a hum so it is much more ethereal. The concept is that they enter the chord on "ahh" but then the chord is released, and the audience is left with only the sound of soft humming. The humming then gradually fades out before the final release.

Voices in the Shadows was commissioned by the Bridle Path / Montgomery Elementary School Select String Ensemble in Landsdale, Pennsylvania. It was premiered at the 2013 Midwest Clinic under the baton of their conductor, Ralph Jackson.



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String Editing: Carrie Lane Gruselle

Duration: 4:30

commissioned by the Bridle Path / Montgomery Elementary School Select String Ensemble
Landsdale, Pennsylvania; Ralph Jackson, Director

VOICES IN THE SHADOWS

BRIAN BALMAGES
(ASCAP)

Distant (♩ = 54)

stagger bow

Violin 1
Violin 2
Violin 3 (Viola T.C.)
Viola
Violoncello
Double Bass
Piano

pp *p* *mp* *mf*

div.

div. as needed

Ped. *always*

12

Vln. 1
Vln. 2
Vln. 3 (Vla. T.C.)
Vla.
Vcl.
D.B.
Piano

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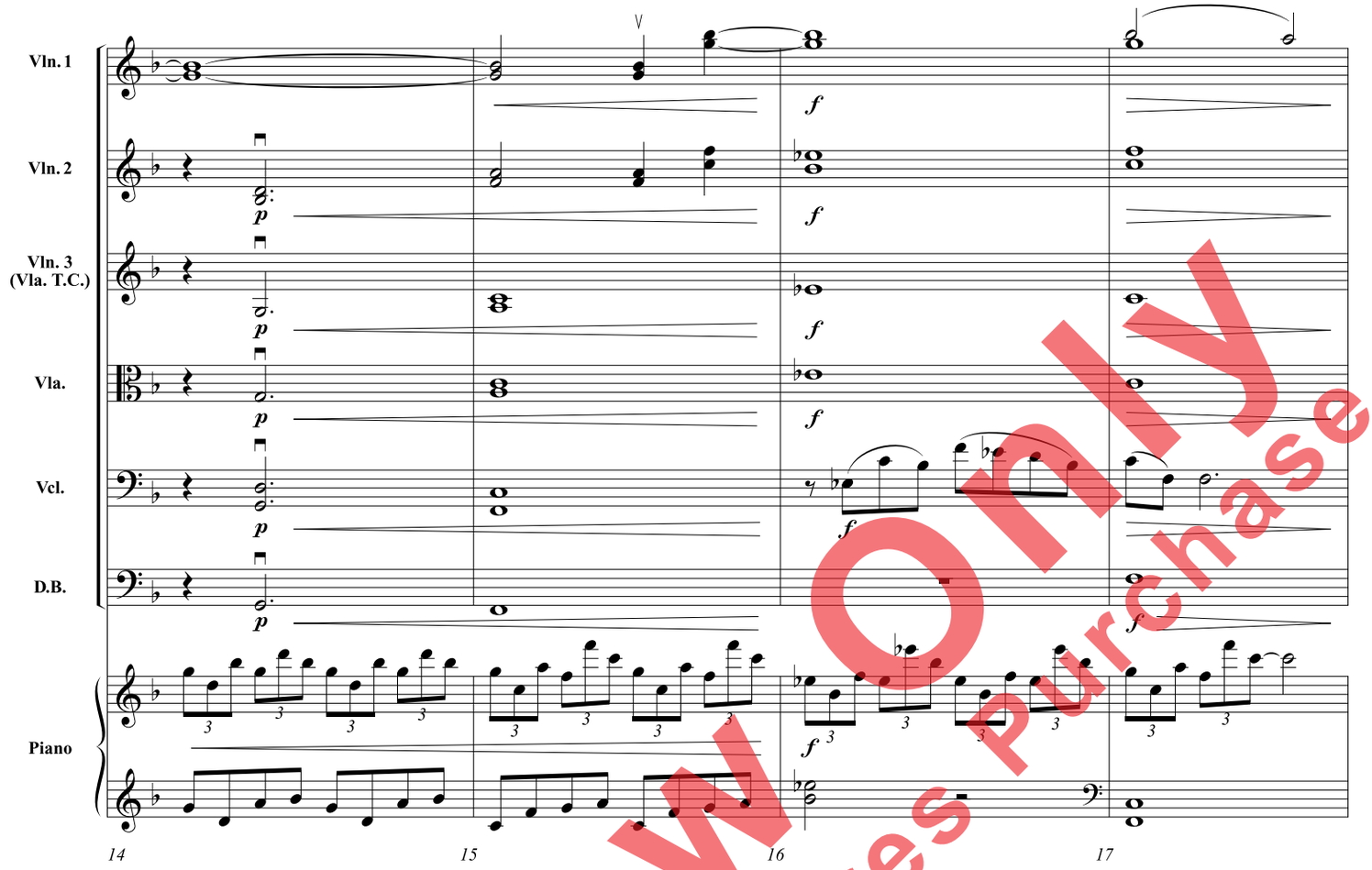

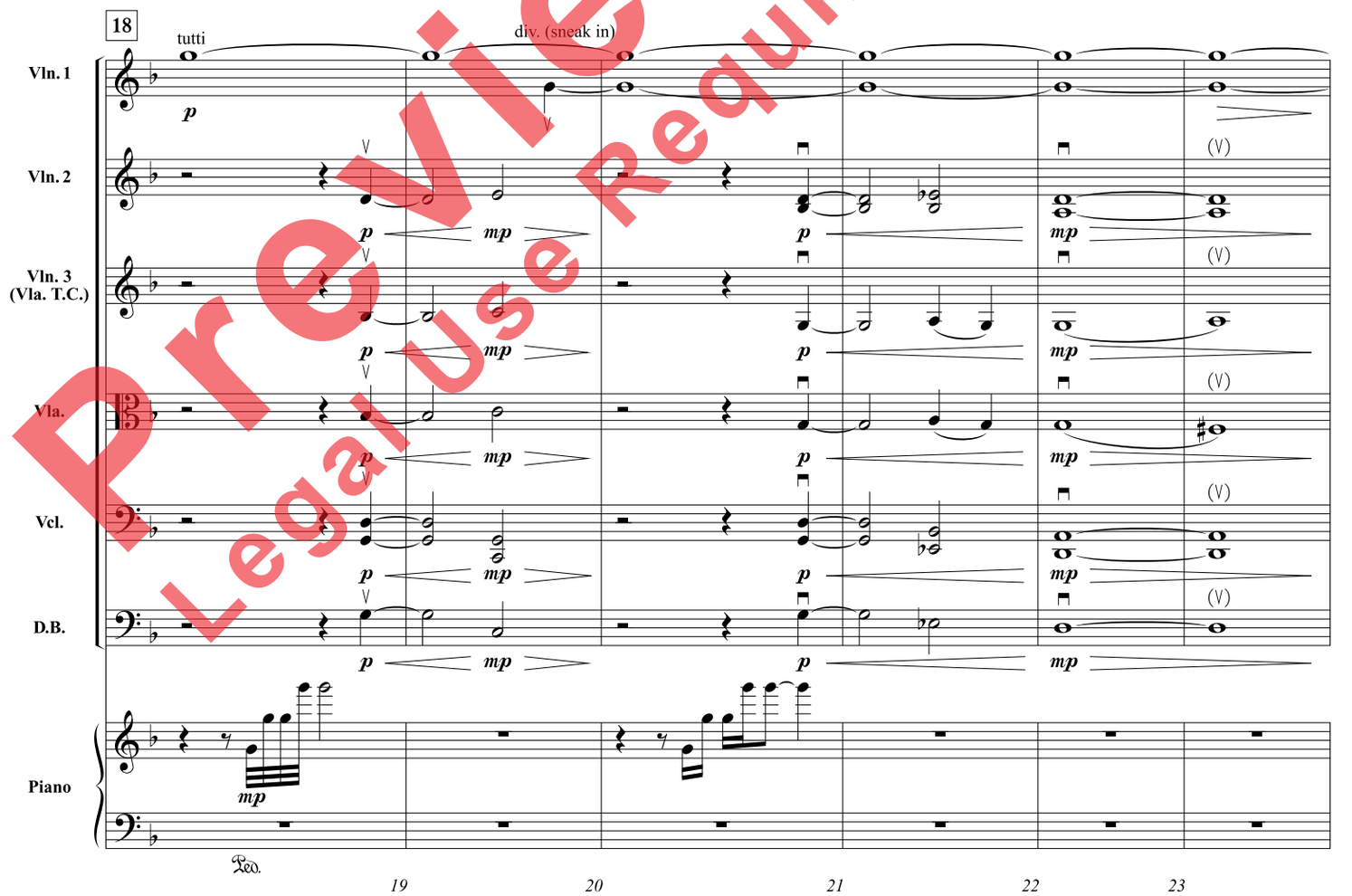

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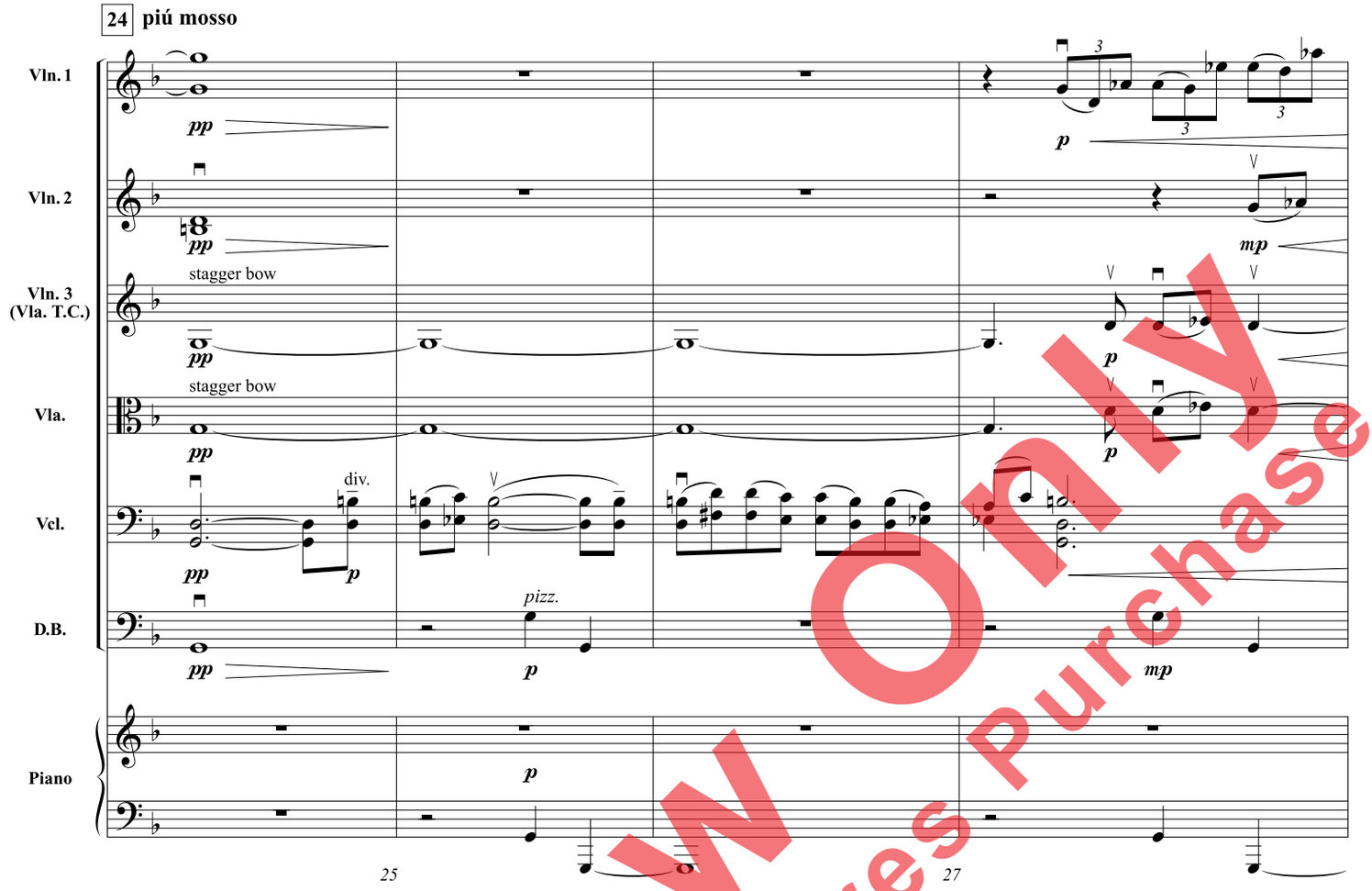

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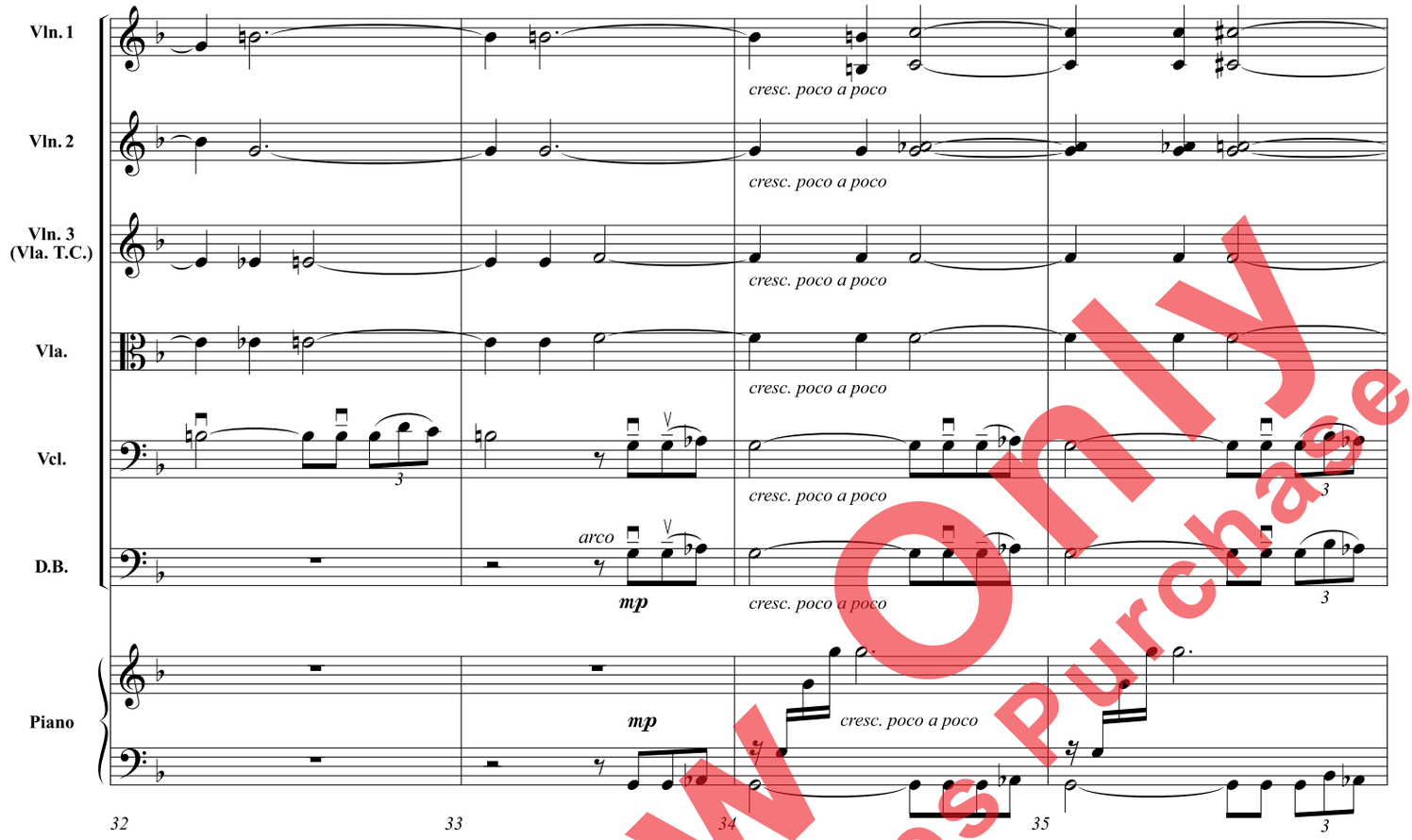

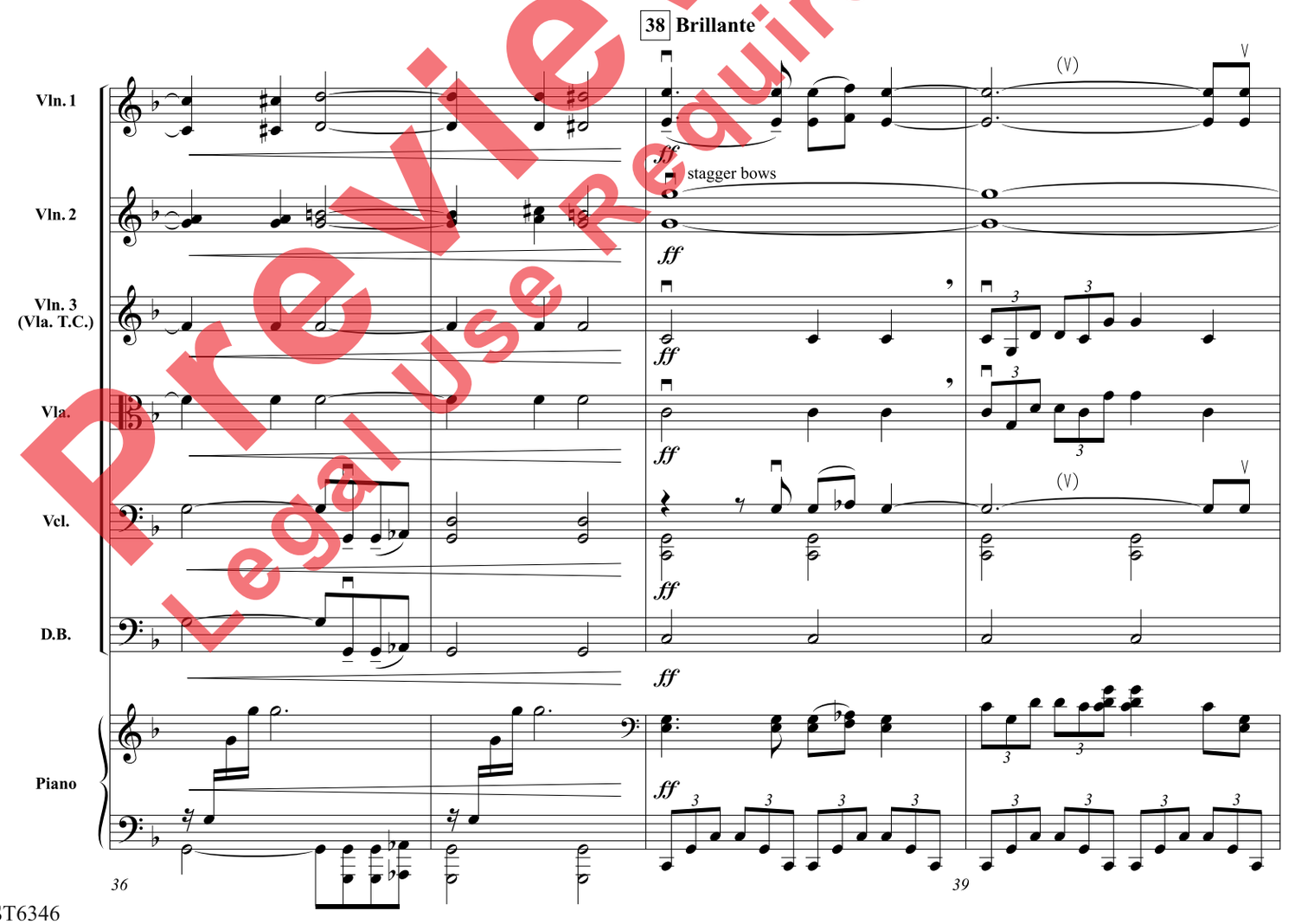

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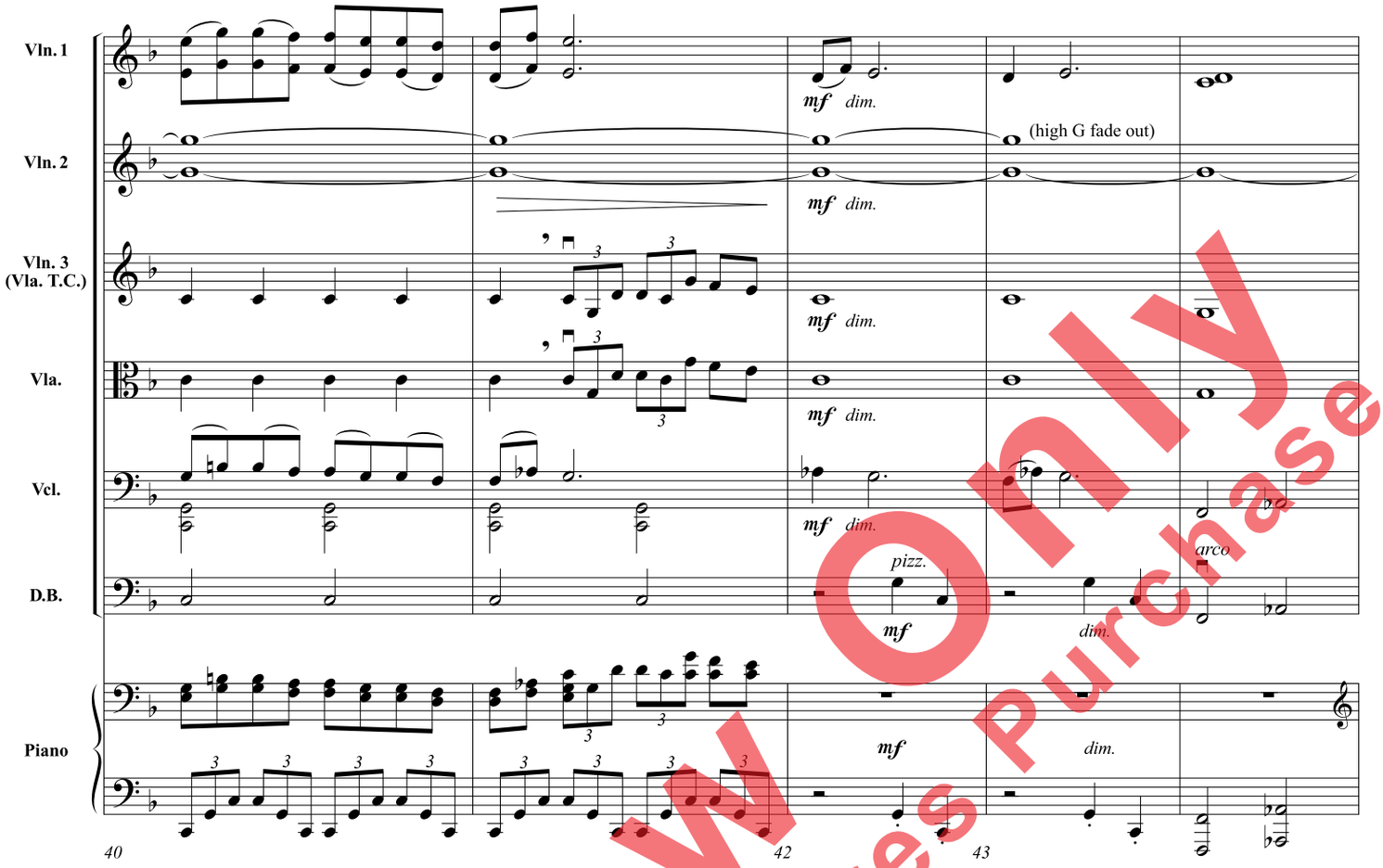
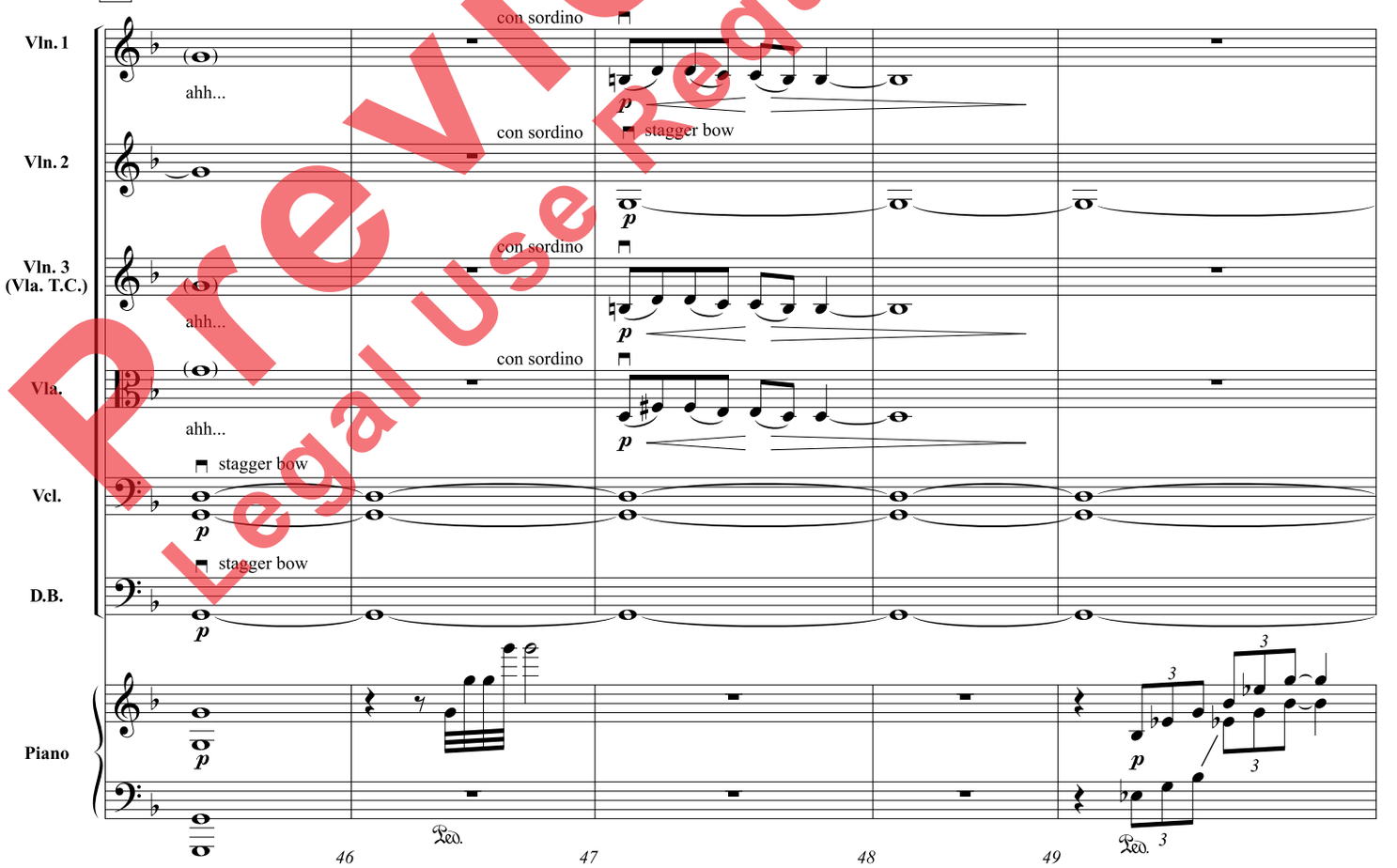


45 *all players sing "ahh" on concert G (middle / upper range) until end of piece*



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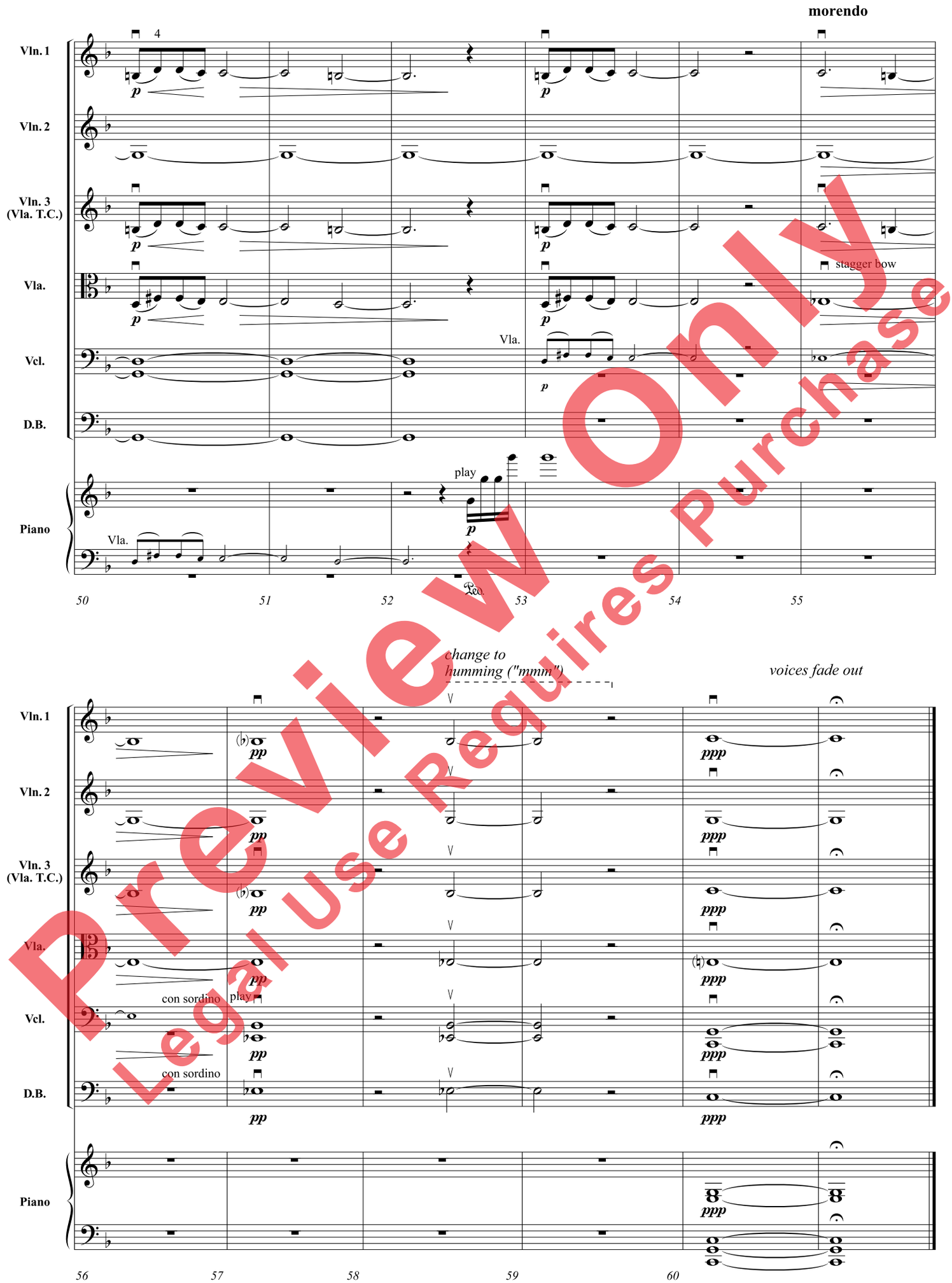

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