Boundless Spirit

Comments by Major Martin Cordner

This medley contains highlights from music the composer wrote for the opening event of *Boundless,* The Salvation Army's International Congress held at London's O2 Arena in 2015. The work features original melodies but also recognisable tunes with a global flavour; *Moscow* (T.B. 198), *Europe* (T.B. 367), *Calabar* (T.B. 362), *They shall come from the east* (T.B. 887), *The world for God* (T.B. 876) and *Happy Song* (T.B. 644) which calls to mind the words *'There's salvation for the world'*. The objective of the piece is to celebrate the diversity of The Salvation Army around the world through a variety of music styles.

In terms of overall performance, percussion instruments are key to the international 'feel' of the piece, so as many as possible of the indicated instruments should be employed. It is an energetic number, however extended loud playing is not required. Instead, allow the energy of the music to come from rhythmic motion.

At the opening, there is a 'home' theme. This bookends the music and requires a bright and energetic approach. At the third bar of A, a more *legato* approach could be utilised in the middle band, with this employed by the full ensemble at the *placido* before section B. At this point in the music, the Army in Europe is referenced.

The music in sections B-G focuses on The Salvation Army in Africa. The *tempo* should be *non troppo* so resist the urge to go quicker. A bright and light attack is required with sections E and F sounding celebratory.

At section G there is a brief interlude which draws attention to the southern Pacific area of the world, and then we move into a flowing, two-in-a-bar *tempo*. At H the Euphonium should feature against the lightest of accompaniment. The instrumentation is intentionally thinned out here to allow expression from the soloist whilst still playing delicately. Ideally, the soloist would present the melody in two, eight-bar phrases. The *con calore* instruction at J is to invite warmth from the ensemble. Whilst percussion is tasked with a louder *crescendo* into the section, there should be tenderness in the brass instruments. Resist the temptation for an exaggerated *glorioso* moment.

At L the focus is the Army in the Americas and Caribbean and a Central American flavour is adopted. A steady *tempo* is required, and it would be advisable to dedicate rehearsal to establish a percussion sequence suitable to the ensemble. Note that the first *ff* of the piece occurs in the bar before M. At section M the Trombones should be confident, adopting a unified *non-legato* style. Four bars before N, the full-band *fortissimo* should be stunning, and Horns and Baritones will need to be forceful to bring the clash of harmonies in the second bar.

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By contrast, N brings tranquillity, but the style should still be angular. Be sure to highlight the brief *forte* moment in the bar before O. This will bring contrast to section O where there will need to be lightness of touch from Horns and Trombones followed by a few bars of exuberant, celebratory music. Eight bars before P the music starts an *accelerando* back to the *tempo* and style of the introductory bars.

A delicate approach is required at section P, where there is much motion around the *World for God* melody on 1st Cornet and Flugel. At section Q, build the excitement and note the *mp* marking four bars before R. The verse of *Happy Song* at section R should not be too boisterous; there is sufficient rhythm in Trombones, Basses and Percussion to create energy. However, one bar before S, ensure there is an immediate switch to a bright attack to introduce a foot-tapping presentation of the chorus at section S.

One bar before T, there is a recapitulation of the 'hope' theme from the opening. This needs to be presented strongly by Horns and Baritones. Be patient with the building of dynamics to ensure a robust *ff* conclusion.

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MARTIN CORDNER

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44

E

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74

riten.

G Andante ♩ = 76

riten.

Con espress. 𝅗𝅥 = 56

H

They shall come from the east (T.B. 887)

Muted (straight)

Three muted (straight)

Solo

One

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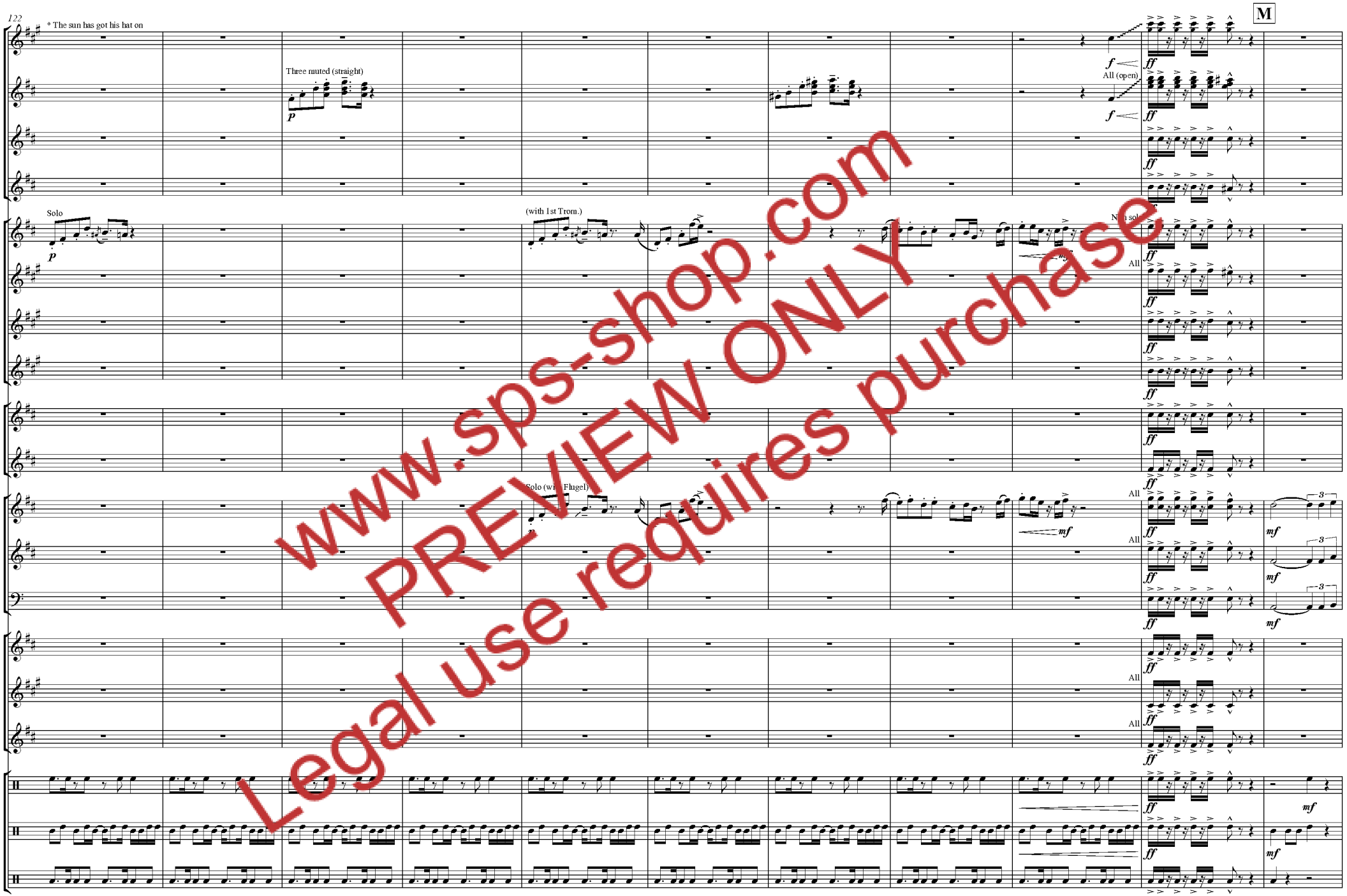

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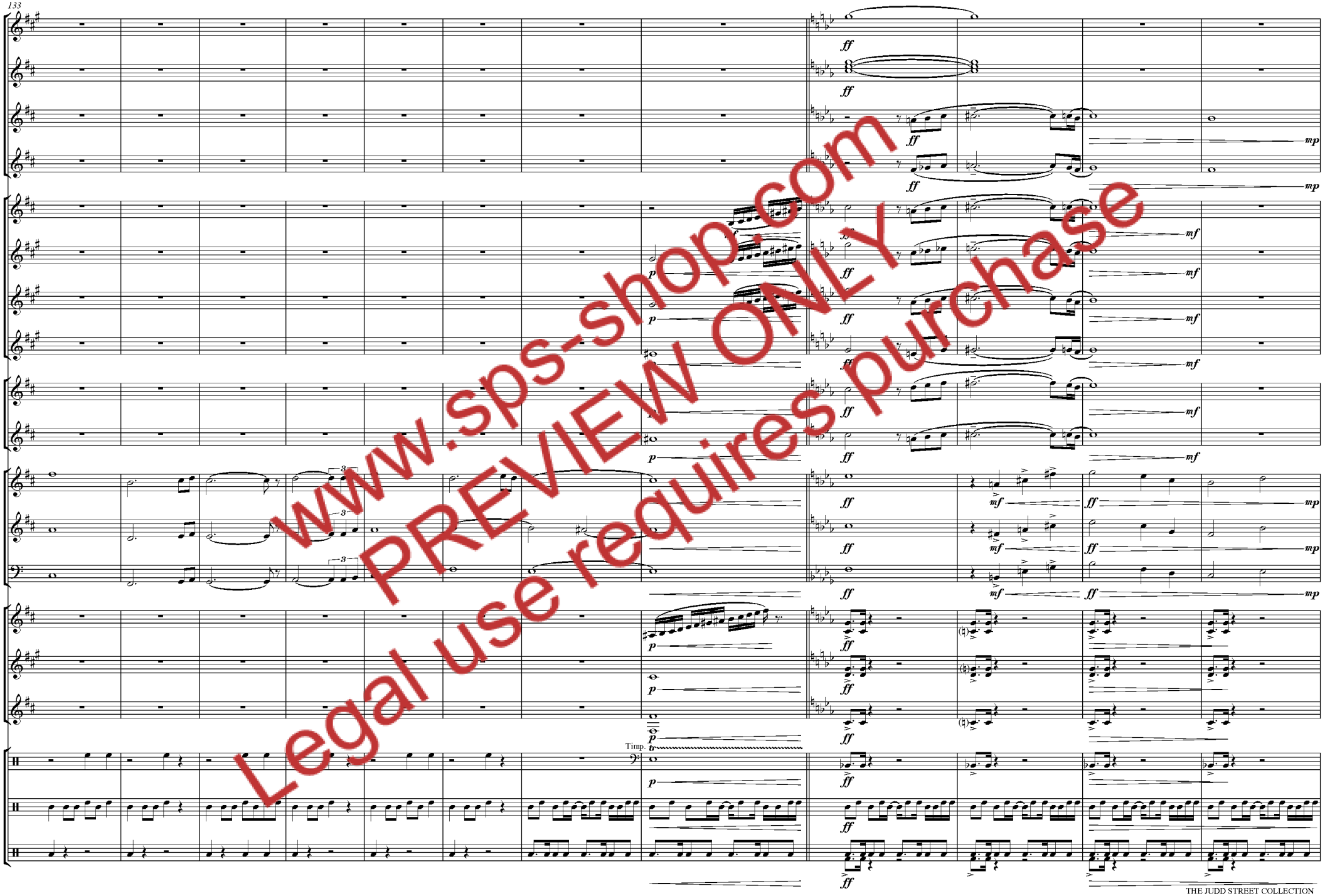

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N

O

The world for God (T.B. 876)

Three

One

1st Trom. (2) (muted (straight))

Muted (straight)

Muted (straight)

Muted (straight)

Hi-hat

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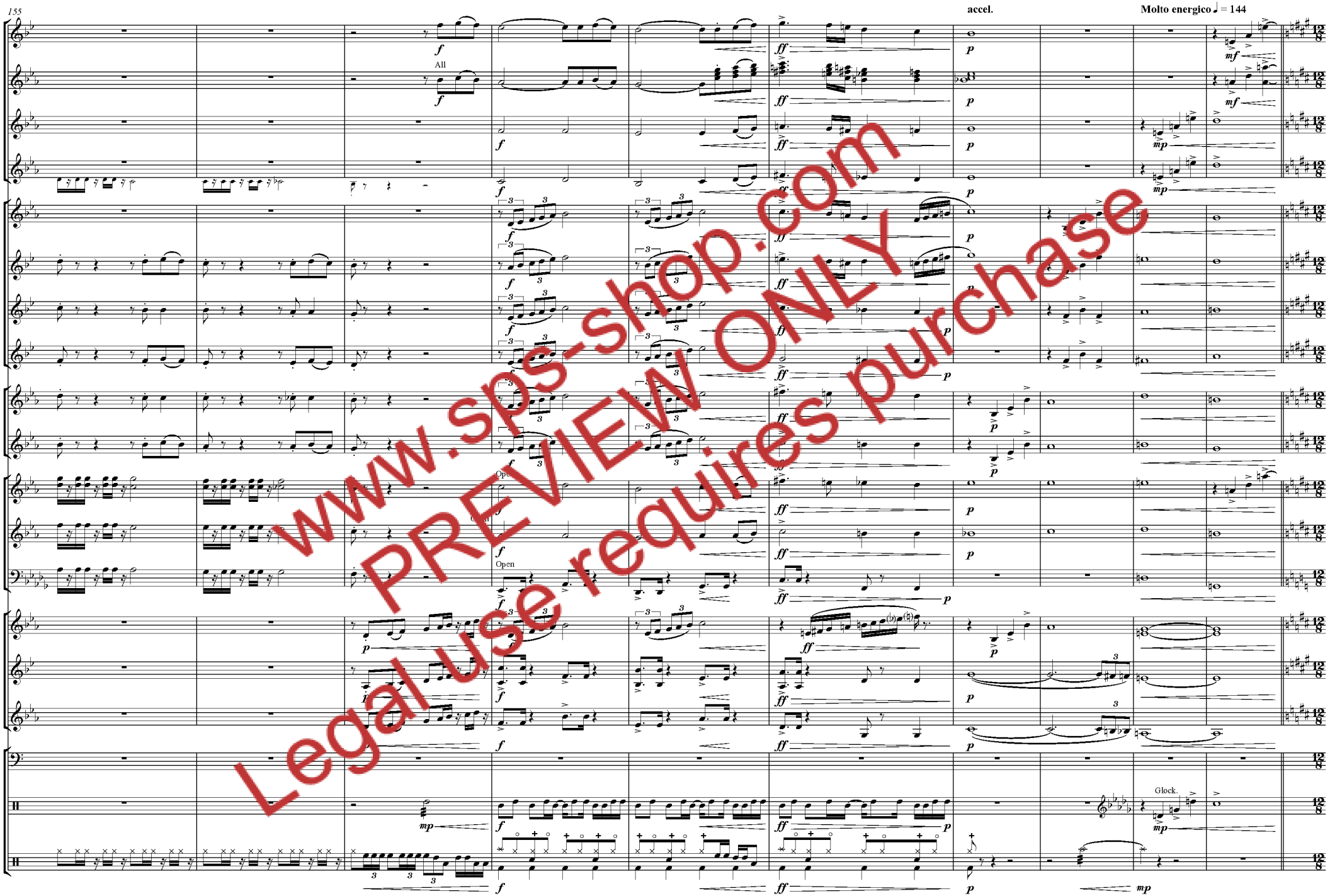

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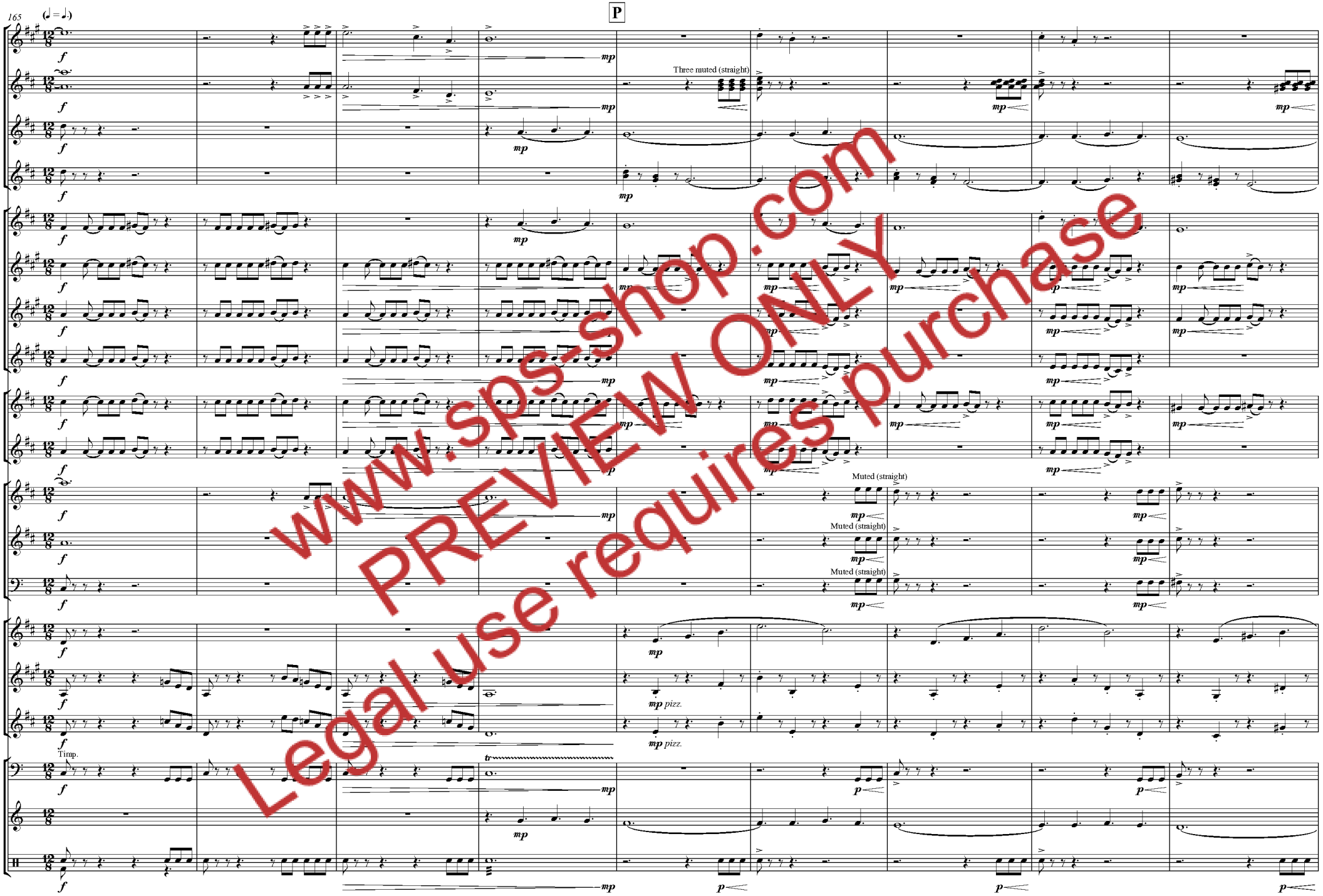

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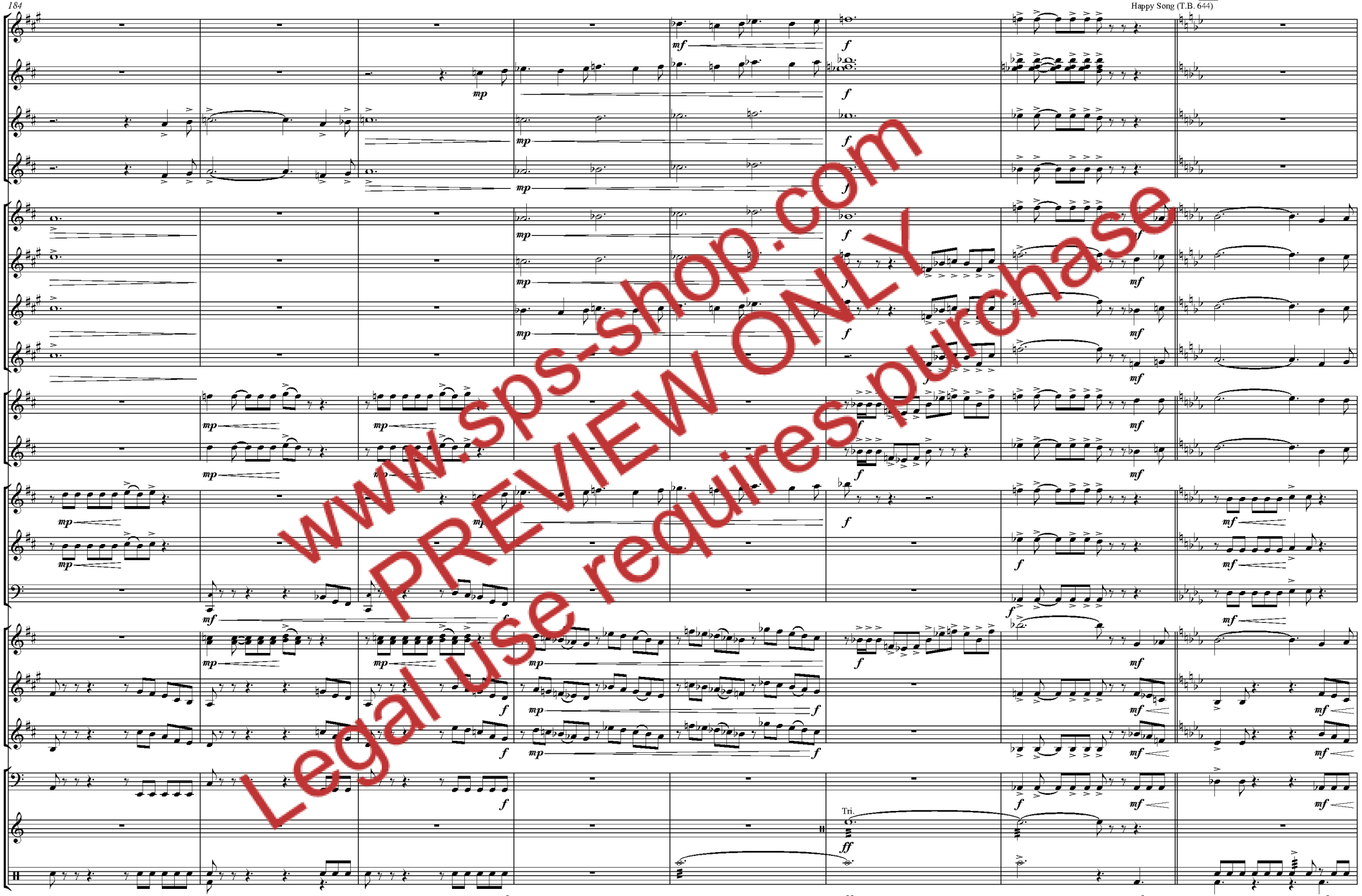
R

Happy Song (T.B. 644)



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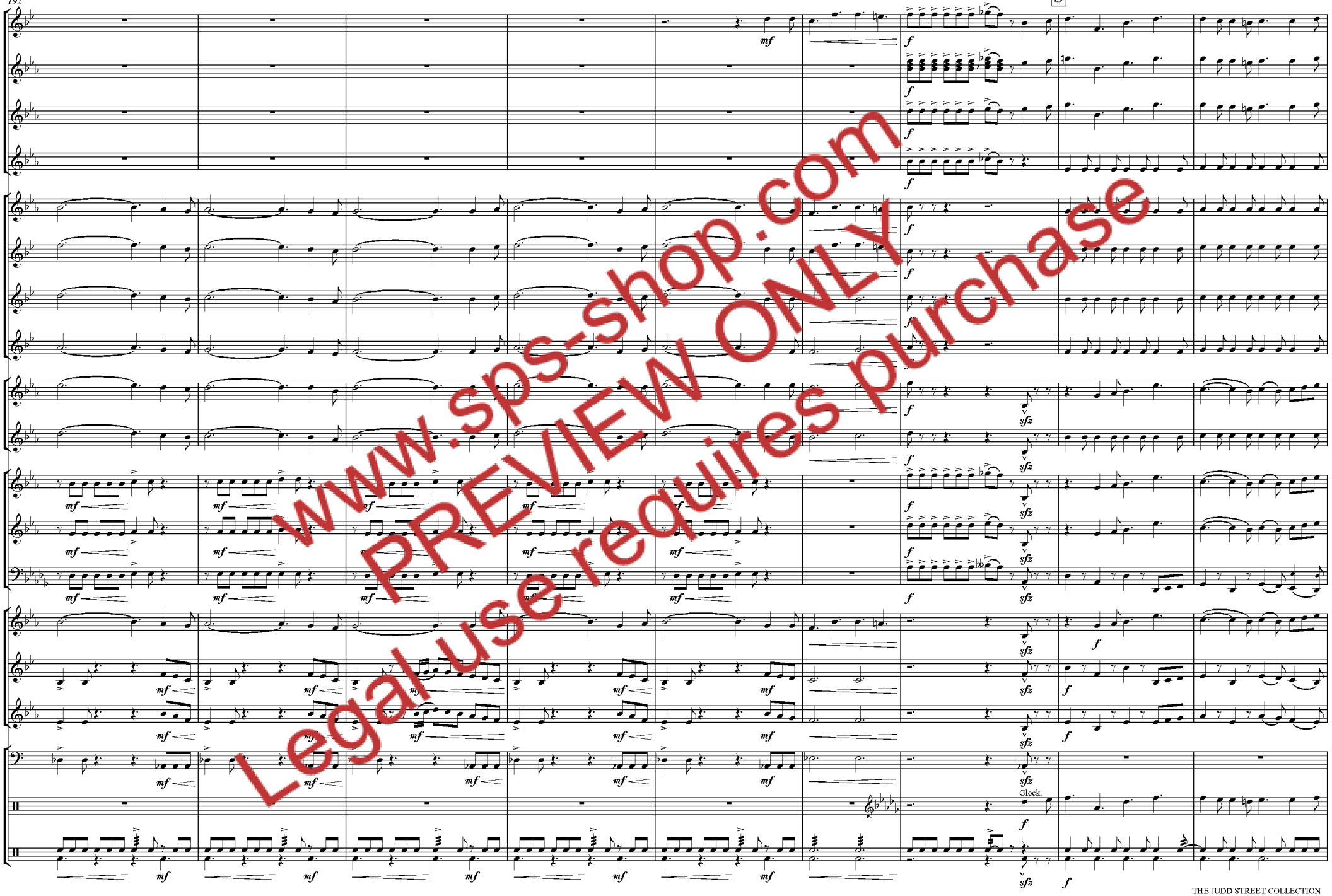
S



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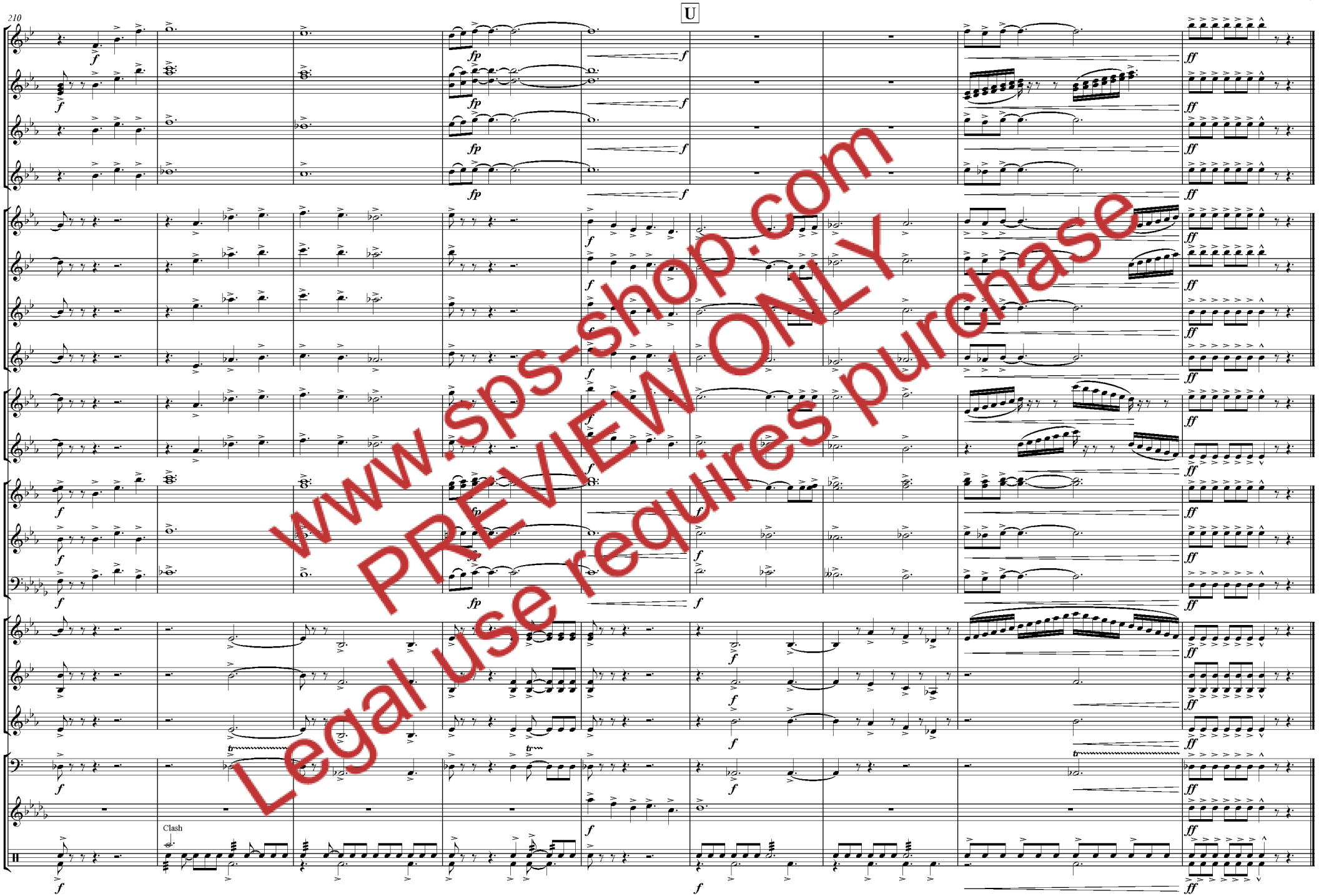

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