The Legend of El Muerto

The Last Ride

By Roland Barrett (ASCAP)

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INSTRUMENTATION

- 1 Conductor
- 10 Flute
- 2 Oboe
- 10 B♭ Clarinet
- 2 B♭ Bass Clarinet
- 6 E♭ Alto Saxophone
- 4 B♭ Tenor Saxophone
- 2 E♭ Baritone Saxophone
- 8 B♭ Trumpet
- 4 F Horn
- 6 Trombone/Baritone/Bassoon
- 2 Baritone Treble Clef (World Part Trombone in B♭ Treble Clef)
- 4 Tuba
- 2 Mallet Percussion (Chimes/Xylophone)
- 1 Optional Timpani (Tune: G, D, E♭)
- 2 Percussion 1 (Snare Drum, Bass Drum)
- 4 Percussion 2 (Suspended Cymbal/Tambourine, Temple Block/Woodblock)

WORLD PARTS
Available for download from
www.alfred.com/worldparts

Horn in E♭
Trombone/Baritone in B♭ Bass Clef
Tuba in E♭ Bass Clef
Tuba in E♭ Treble Clef
Tuba in B♭ Bass Clef
Tuba in B♭ Treble Clef

PROGRAM NOTES

This piece, *The Legend of El Muerto,* is based on an old folk tale originating in Texas in the mid-1800s. In a largely untamed and lawless area known as "No Man's Land" (an area of land between the Rio Grande and Nueces Rivers), livestock rustling had reached epidemic proportions. Among the many rustlers was a legendary horse thief known simply as Vidal. Vidal had made quite a name for himself, and was wanted "dead or alive" with a generous bounty being offered to anyone who apprehended him.

In an astonishing lack of judgement, Vidal made the mistake of stealing several prized mustangs belonging to a Texas Ranger named Creed Taylor. Taylor and another Ranger quickly caught up with Vidal and his men and killed them in their sleep. Not being content with the outlaws' deaths, however, the Rangers decided to send a brutal message to *all* the cattle rustlers and horse thieves in the region. To that end, they beheaded Vidal and tied his torso firmly in the saddle of a wild mustang. Then, attaching Vidal's head and sombrero to the saddle with a long strip of rawhide, the Rangers set the horse free . . . free to roam the Texas hills carrying its ominous burden.

Soon, stories began to emerge from all across the region . . . stories of a headless rider galloping along the prairie with a sombrero-topped head swinging wildly at the horse's side, laughing wildly in the Texas moonlight. The legend lives on to this day.

Please note: Our band and orchestra music is now being collated by an automatic high-speed system.
The enclosed parts are now sorted by page count, rather than score order.

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NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

After a dramatic crescendo in measures 1–2, measures 3 and 4 (and all similar spots) should be played with a sharply articulated and forceful marcato.

The ensemble should work to really emphasize the crescendo-decrescendo "rise-and-fall" effect in measures 5 and 6 (and all similar passages). At the same time, the audience should be able to easily hear the temple block's evocation of a galloping horse. (Note: while only one temple block is required, two may also be used, with the alternation of high vs. low left to the discretion of the director. Also, if a temple block is not available, a woodblock may be substituted.)

All players should focus on dropping the dynamic level to a true *piano* in measure 41, then executing a crescendo to a true *forte* on the downbeat of measure 44. Players should be encouraged to take a good breath, then carefully sustain, support, and crescendo while still listening carefully to their intonation.

The aleatoric passage in measures 45–51 requires a bit of explanation: Within each section of instruments, begin with one player, then quickly add in all the players in that section. Each person repeats the four-note cell as many times as possible in the given time frame. The four notes may be played as quickly or as slowly as each player wishes, in any rhythmic configuration, and with any articulation the player wishes. No two players should sound the same. As each person repeats the cell as many times as possible, as more and more players are added, and as the crescendo builds, the overall effect should be ominous, menacing, and absolutely chaotic! Finally, work to make sure that everyone finishes up on time and arrives together on the downbeat of measure 52.

Lastly, the trumpet solo in measure 71 is intended to be a sound effect, imitating a horse "whinny." The best way to explain this effect is simply to refer you to the final passage of *Sleigh Ride*, that famous seasonal favorite by Leroy Anderson.

Roland Barrett

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The Legend of El Muerto

The Last Ride

FULL SCORE
Approx. Duration - 2:15

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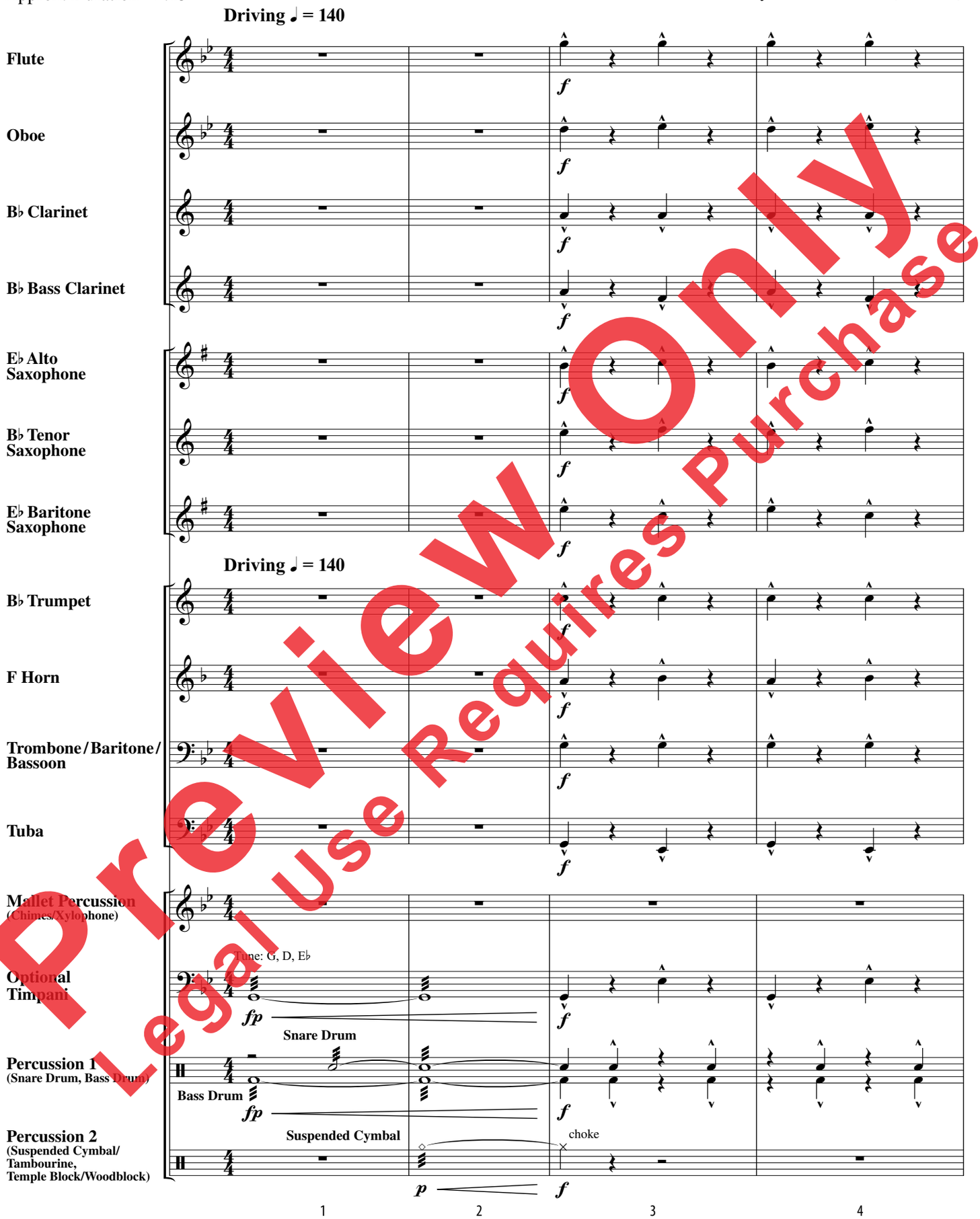

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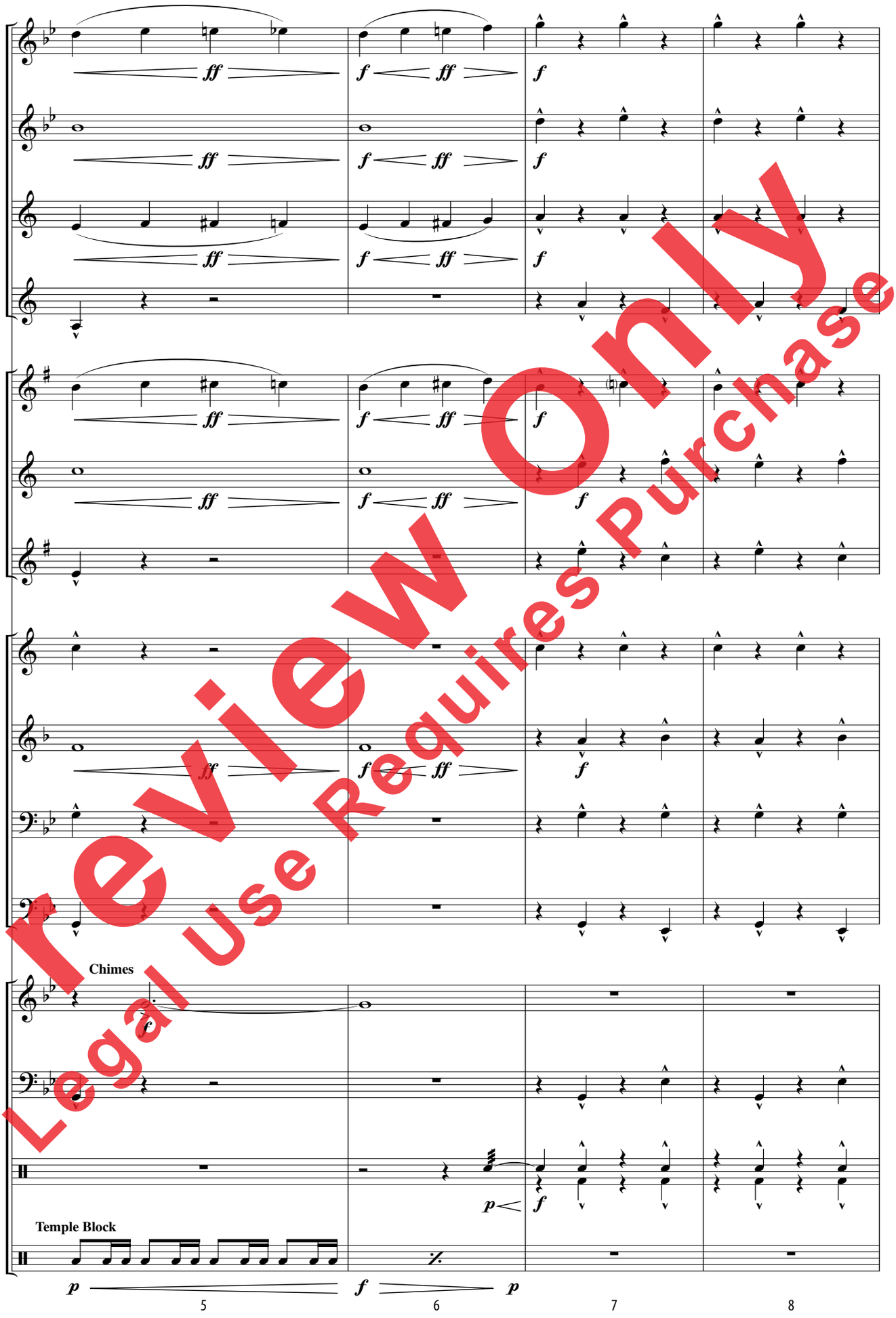

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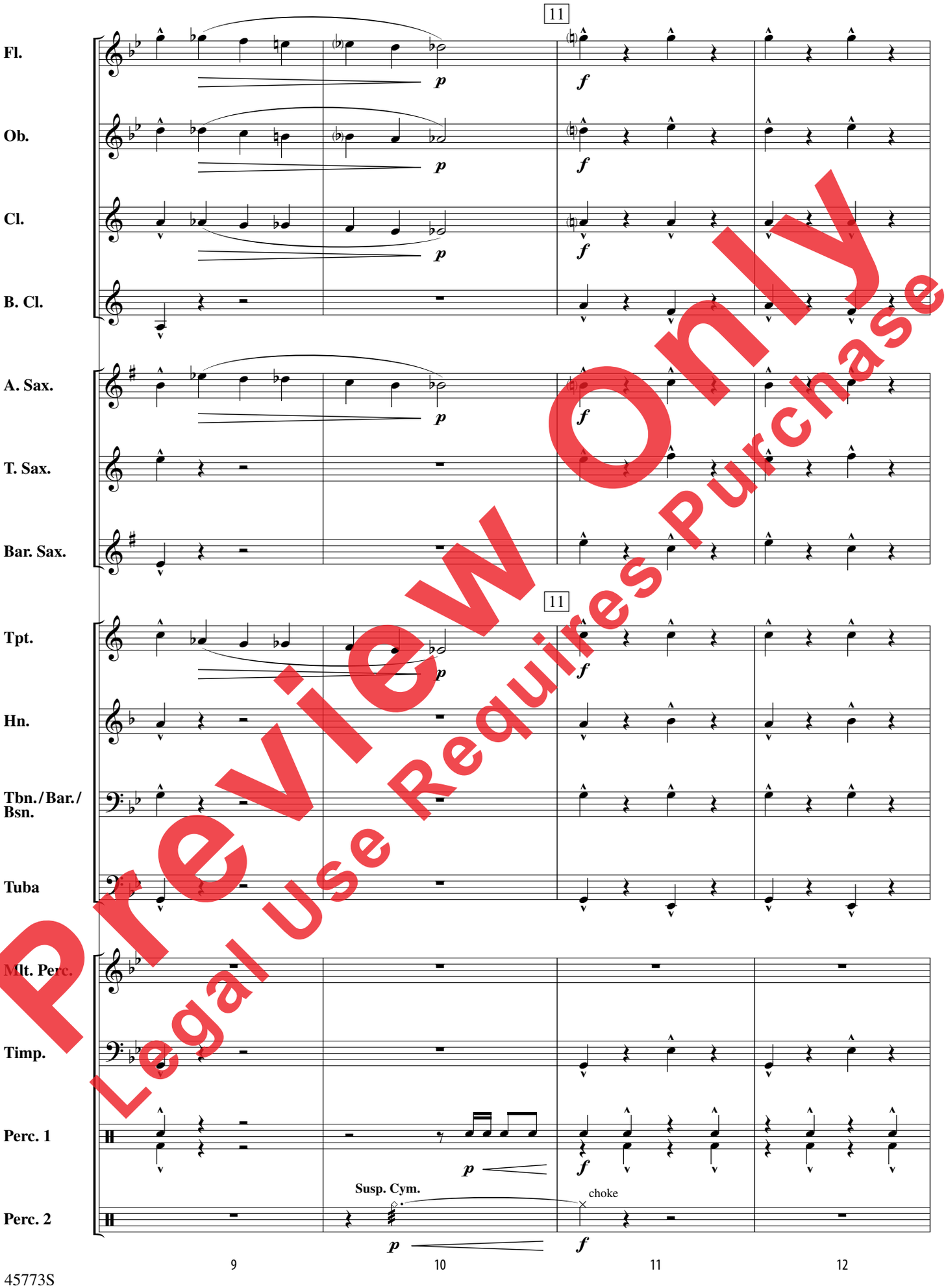

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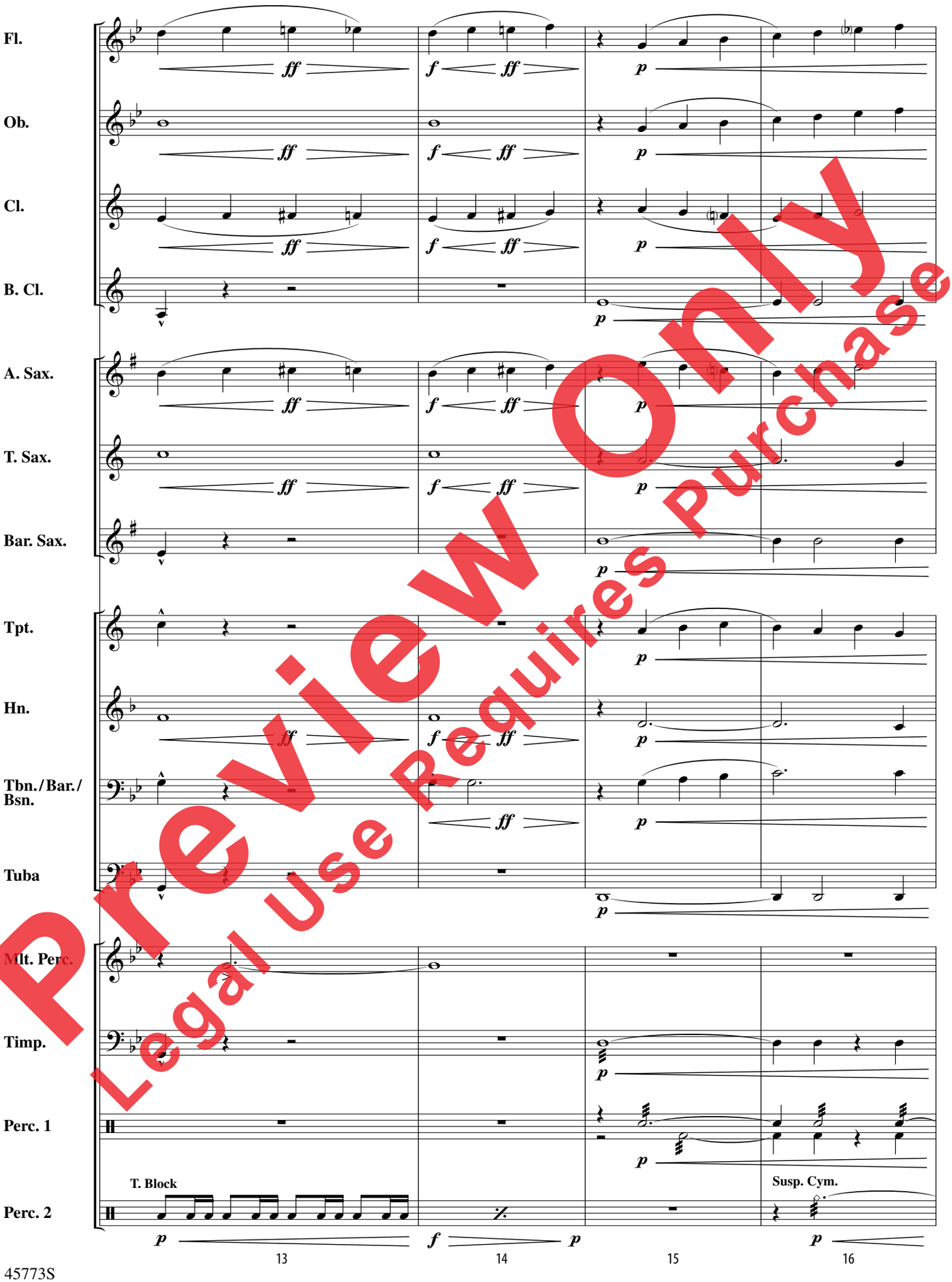

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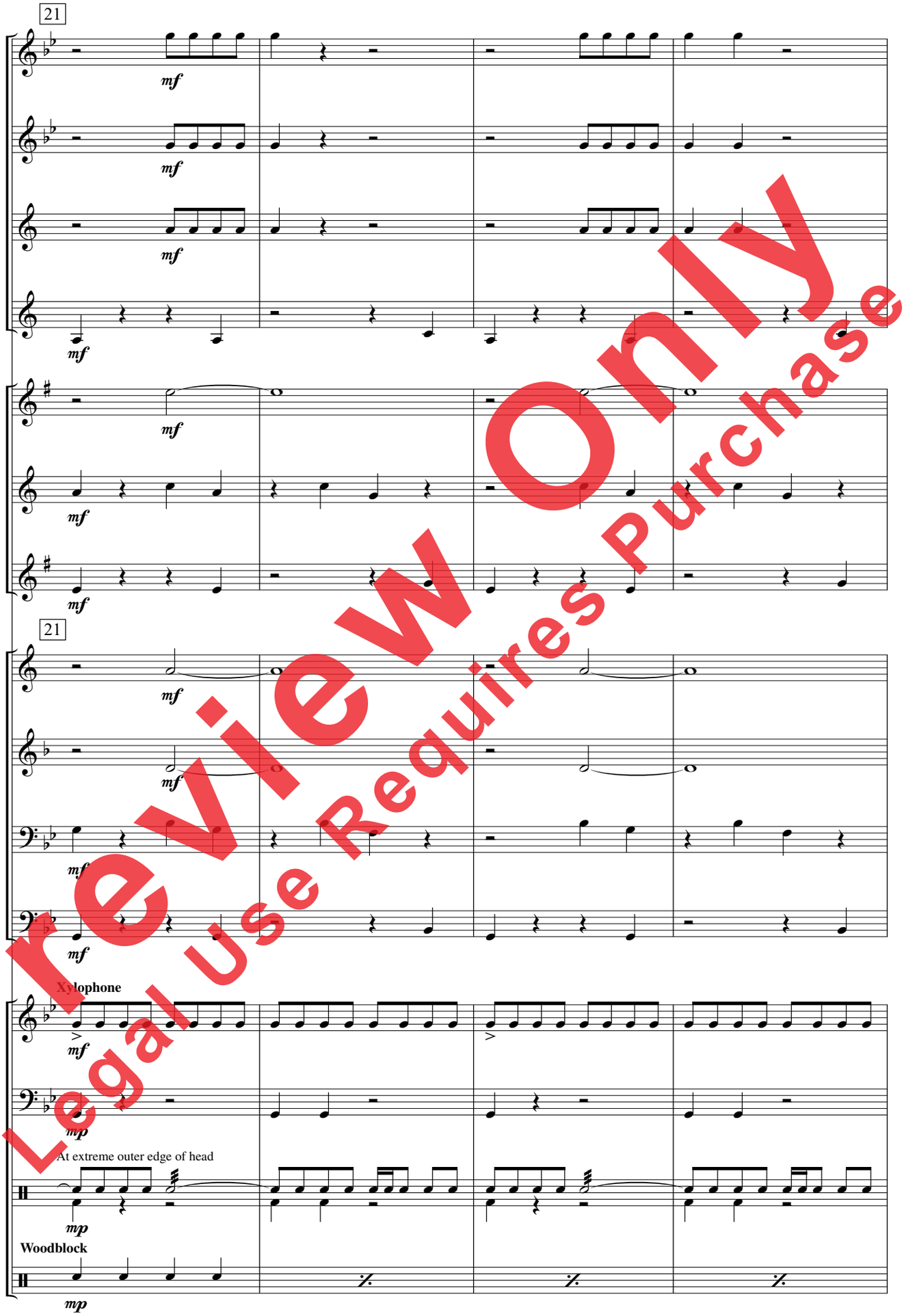

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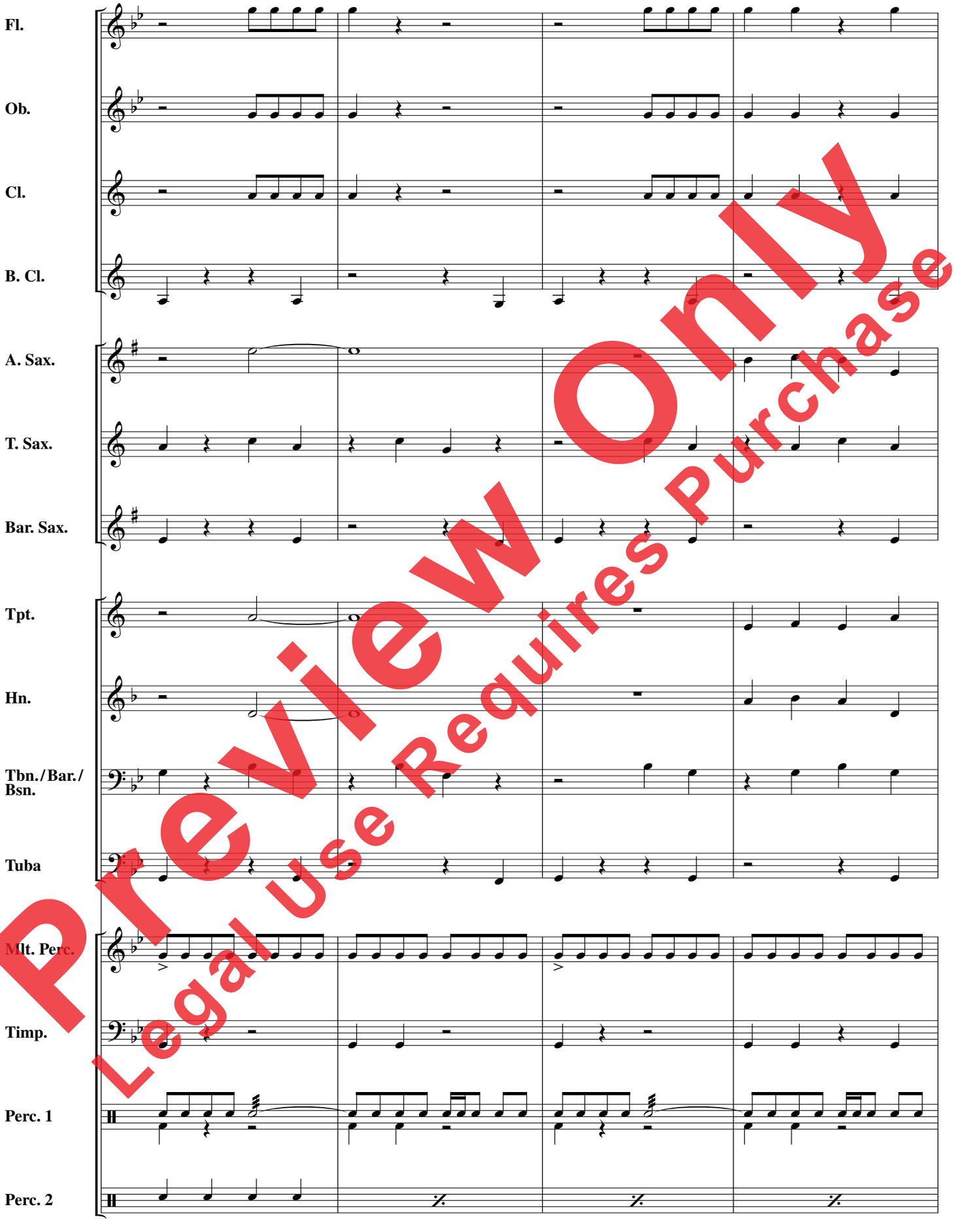

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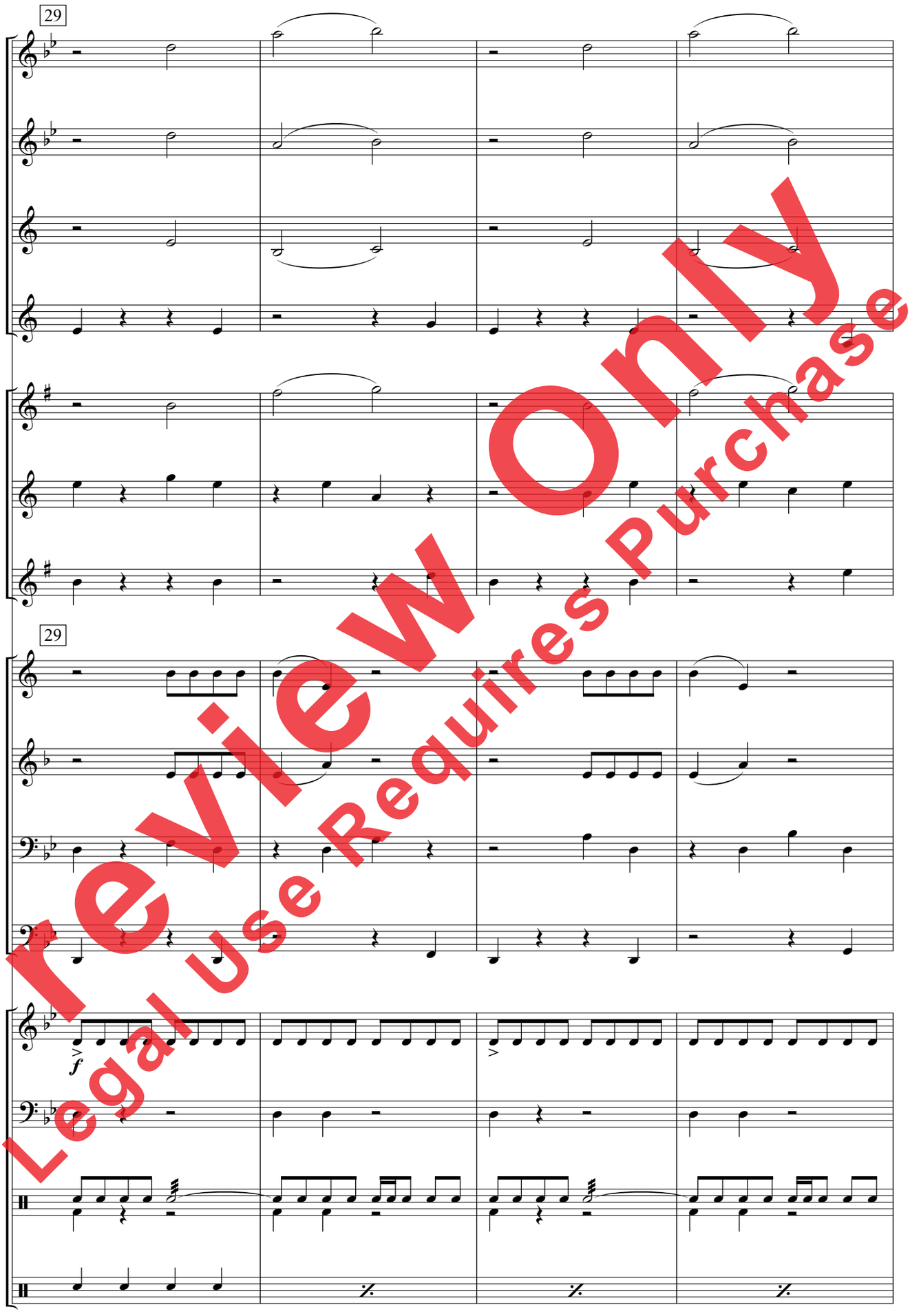

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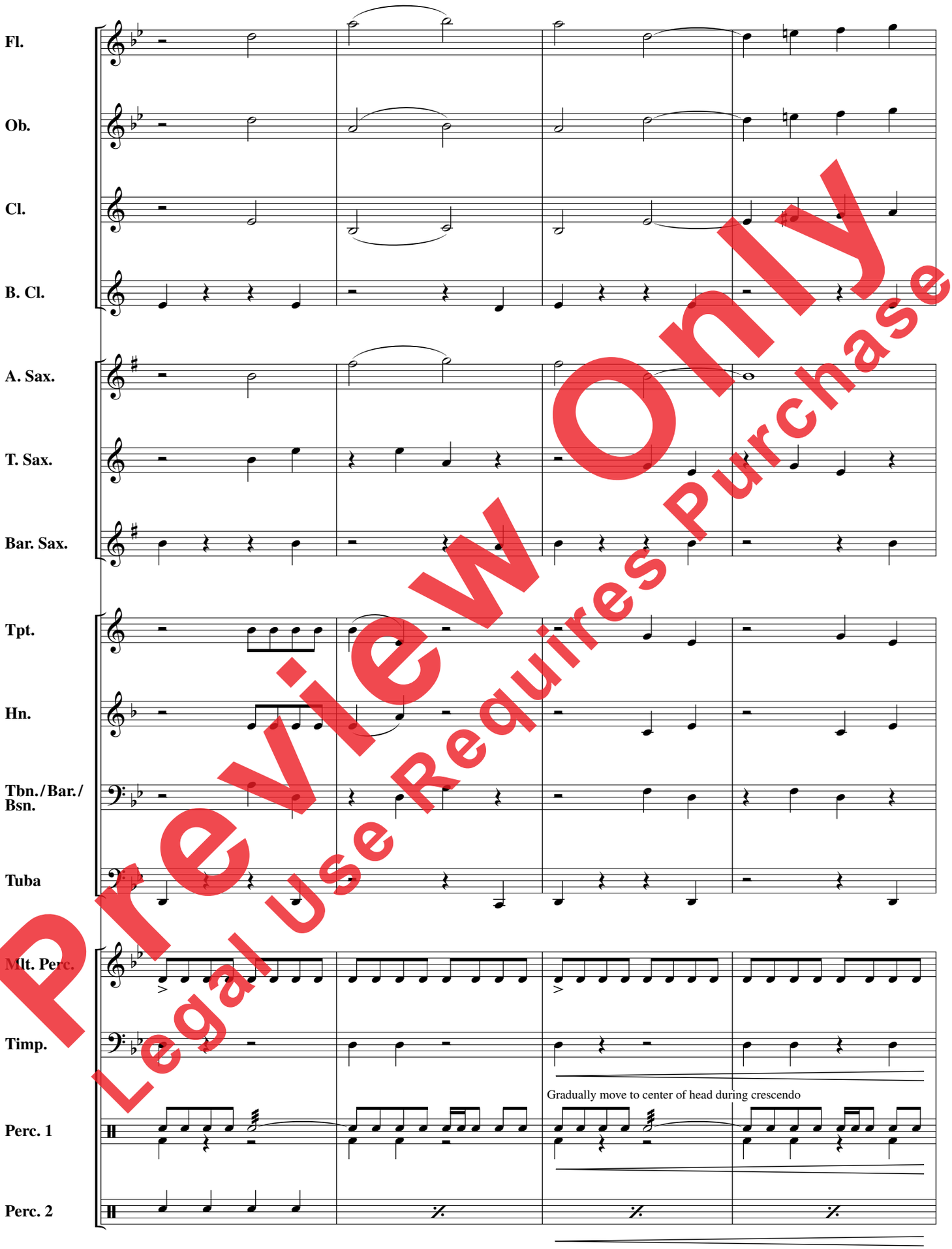

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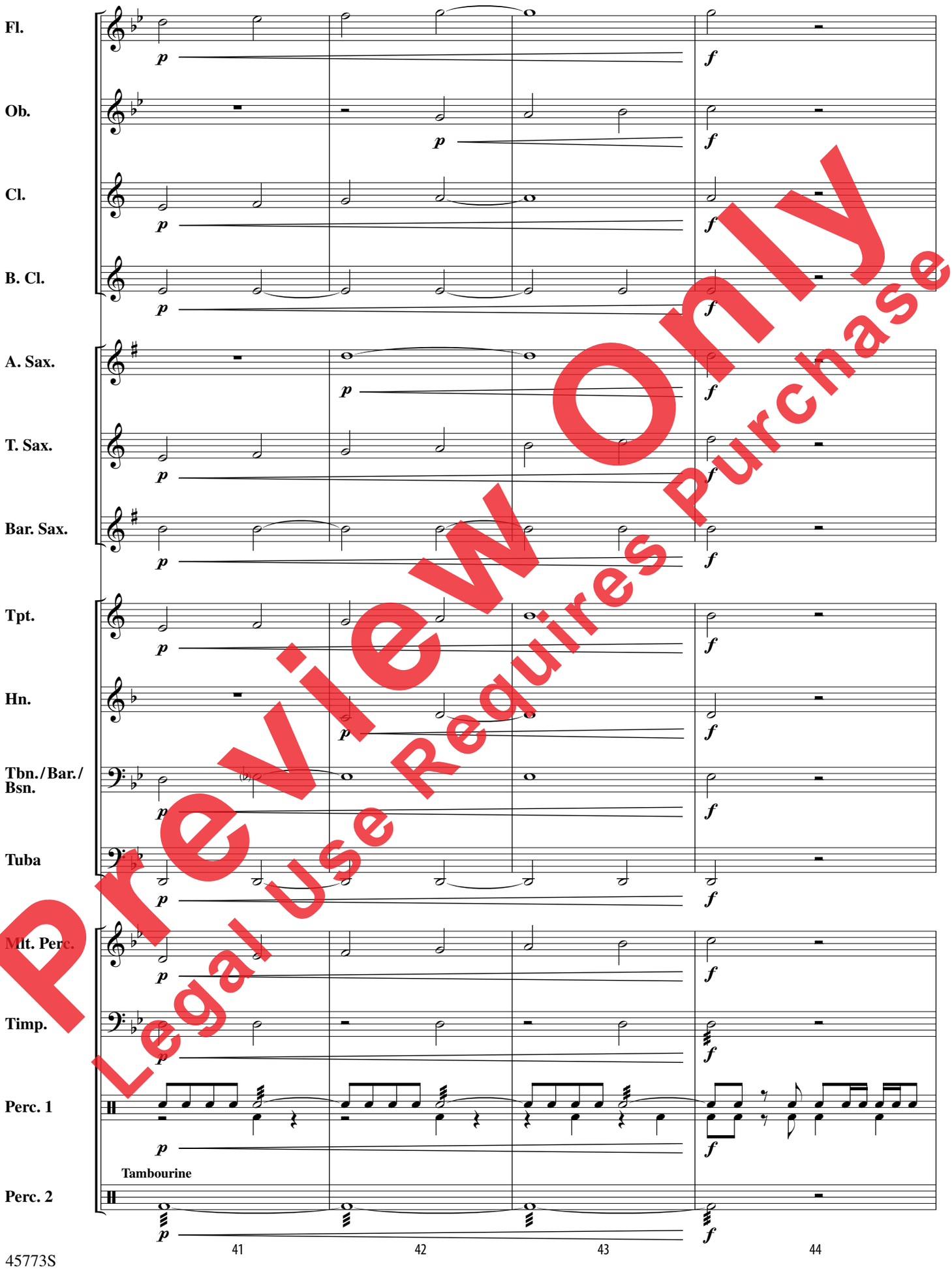

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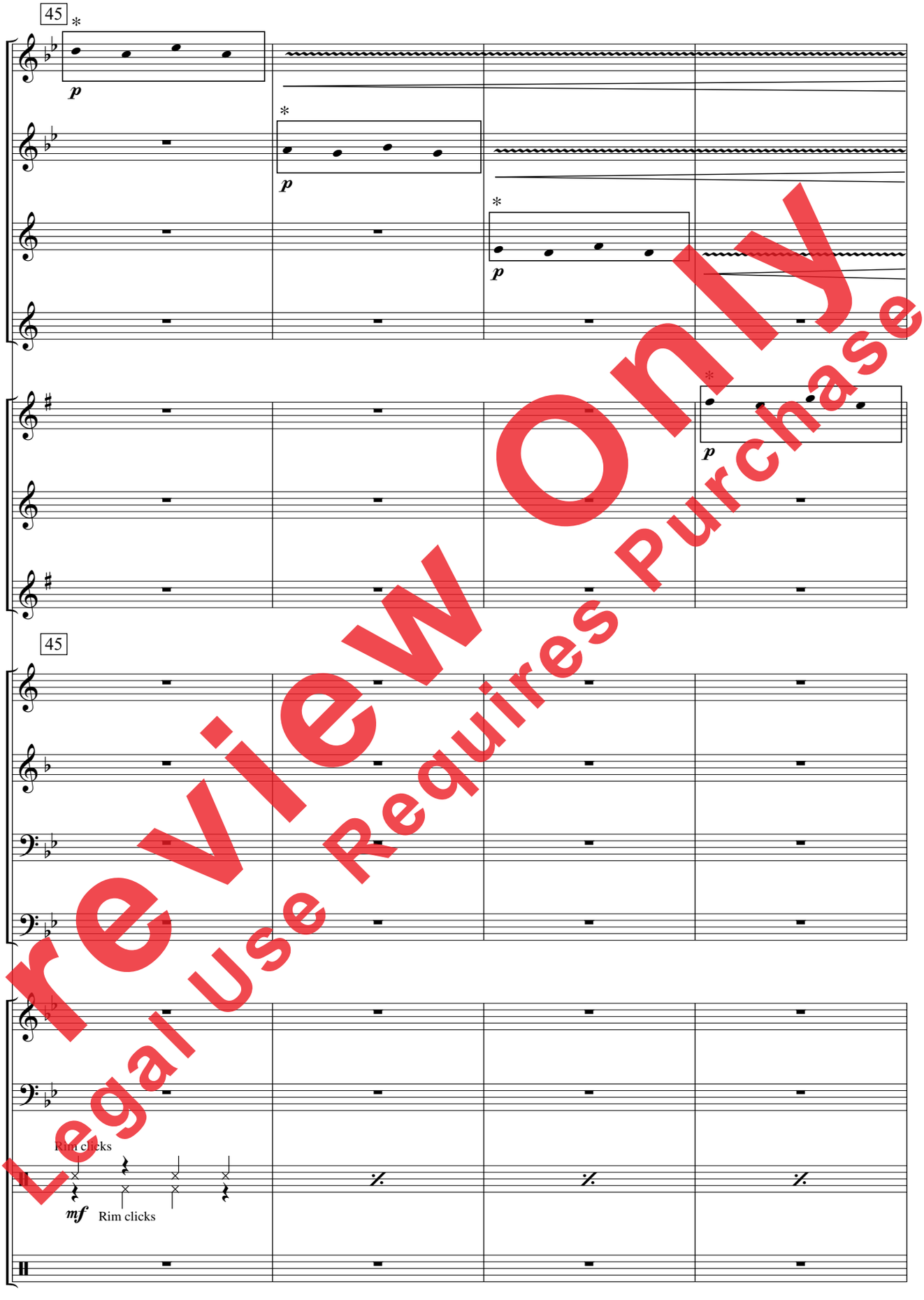

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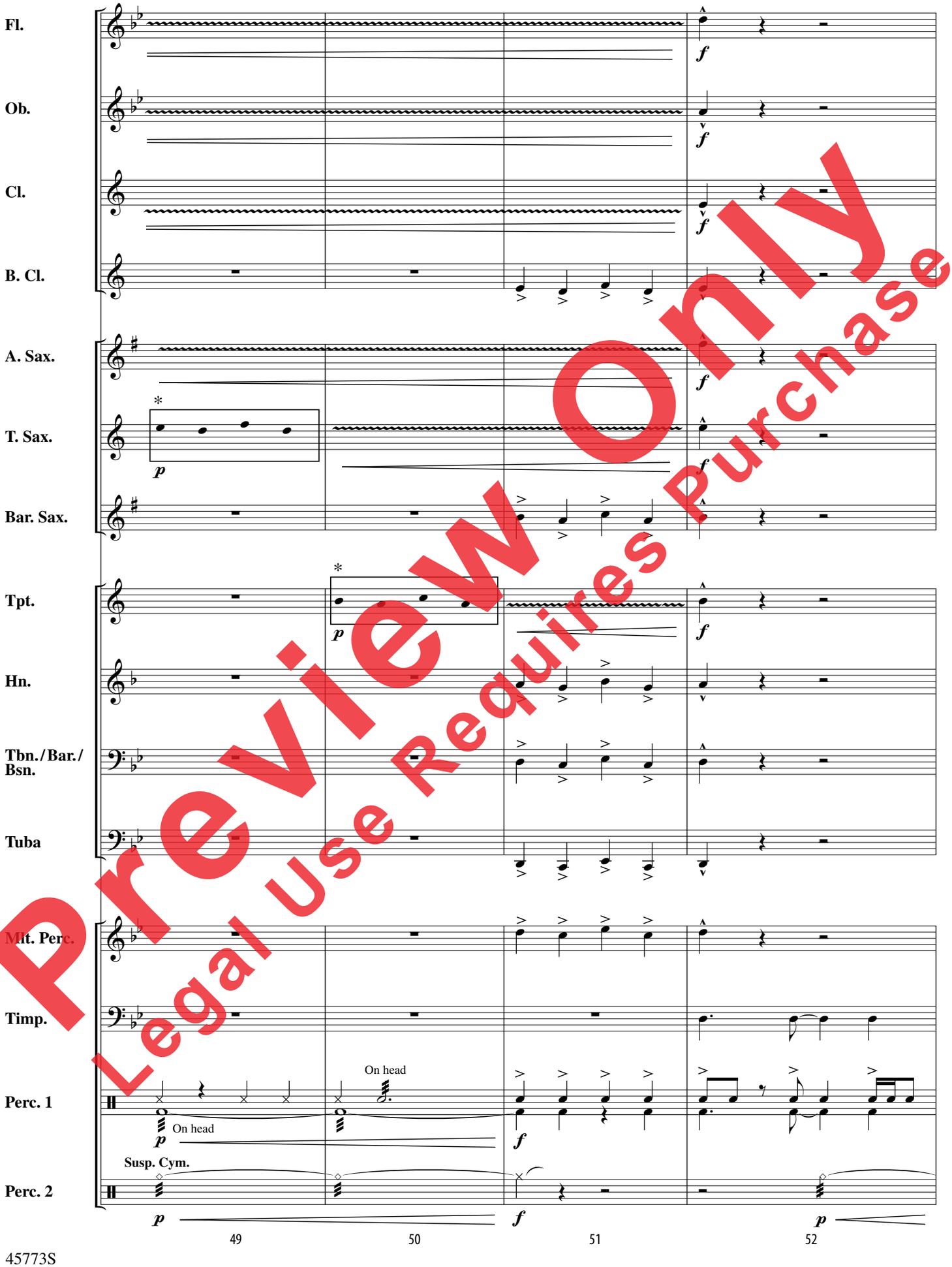
*Begin this aleatoric passage with one flute, then quickly add in the remainder of the flute section, followed by oboe, clarinets, alto saxes, tenor saxes, and trumpets. Each player should repeat the motive as many times as possible in the allotted time. Additionally, each player should play the motive at a different speed, rhythm, and style—no two players should sound the same. The resulting effect should be extremely chaotic. All players should crescendo in volume, speed, and intensity, reaching the highest peak of frantic activity in measure 51. In measure 51, there should be no break in the action or diminishing of intensity as players prepare to resume normal activity in measure 52.



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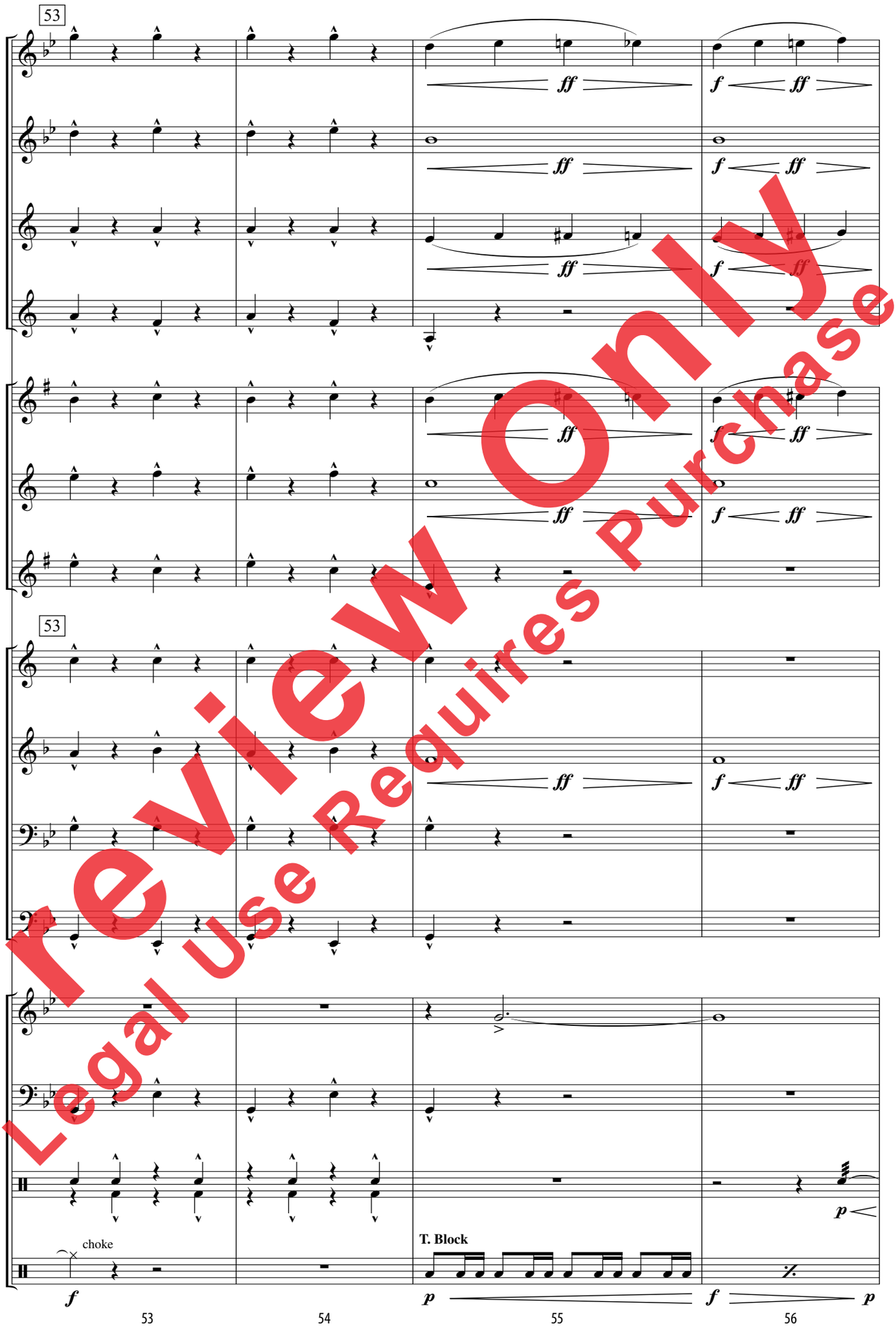

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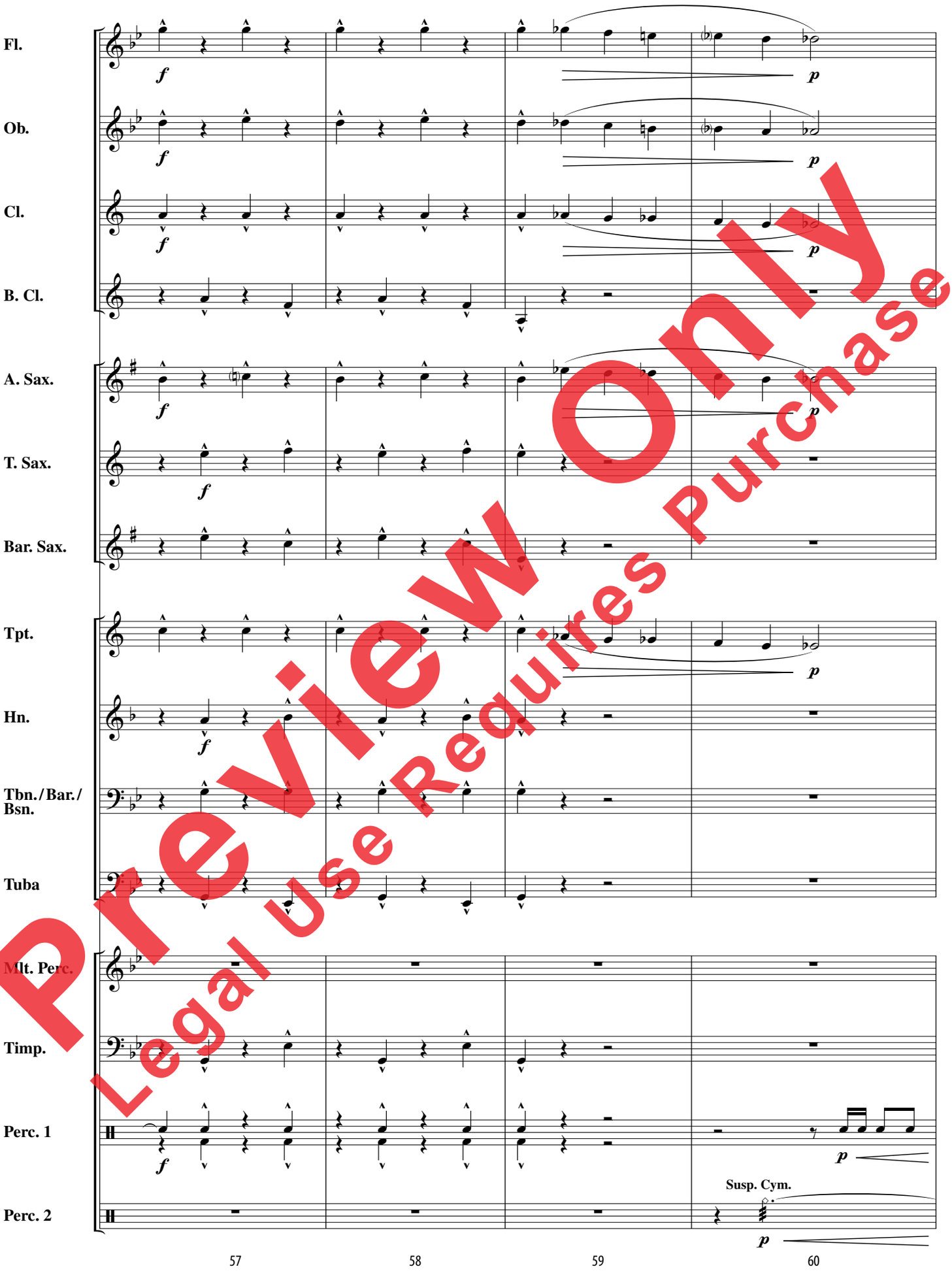

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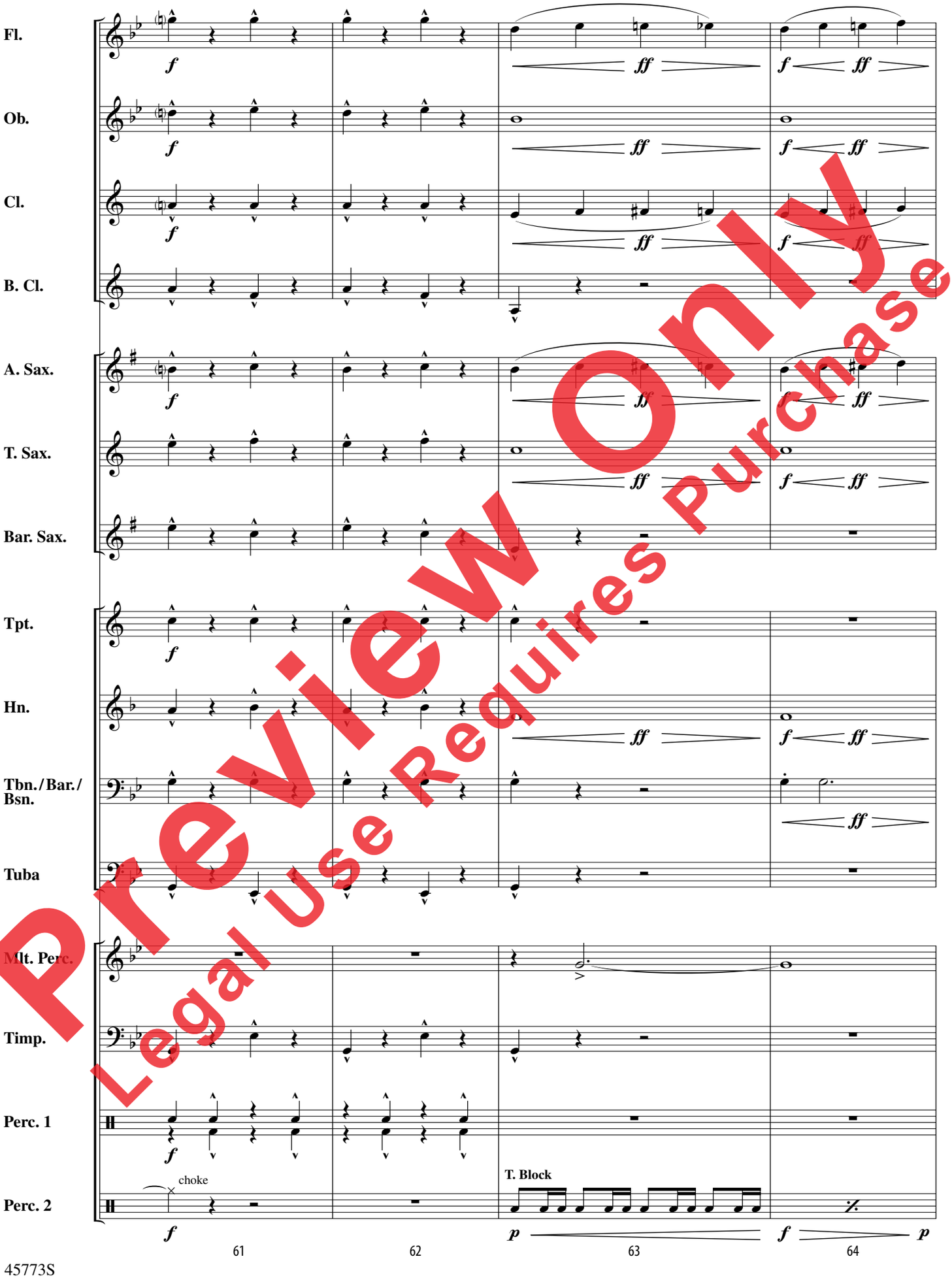

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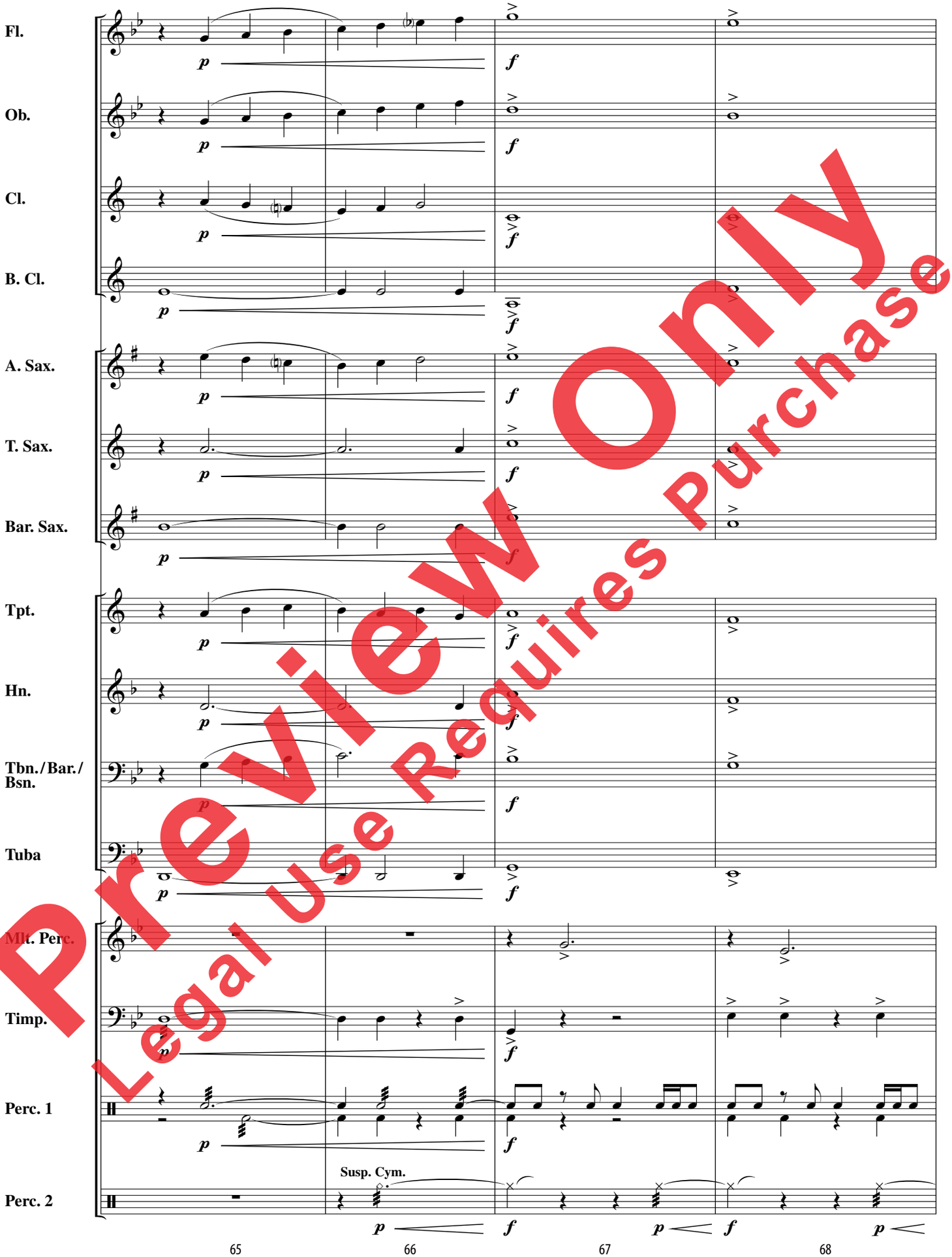

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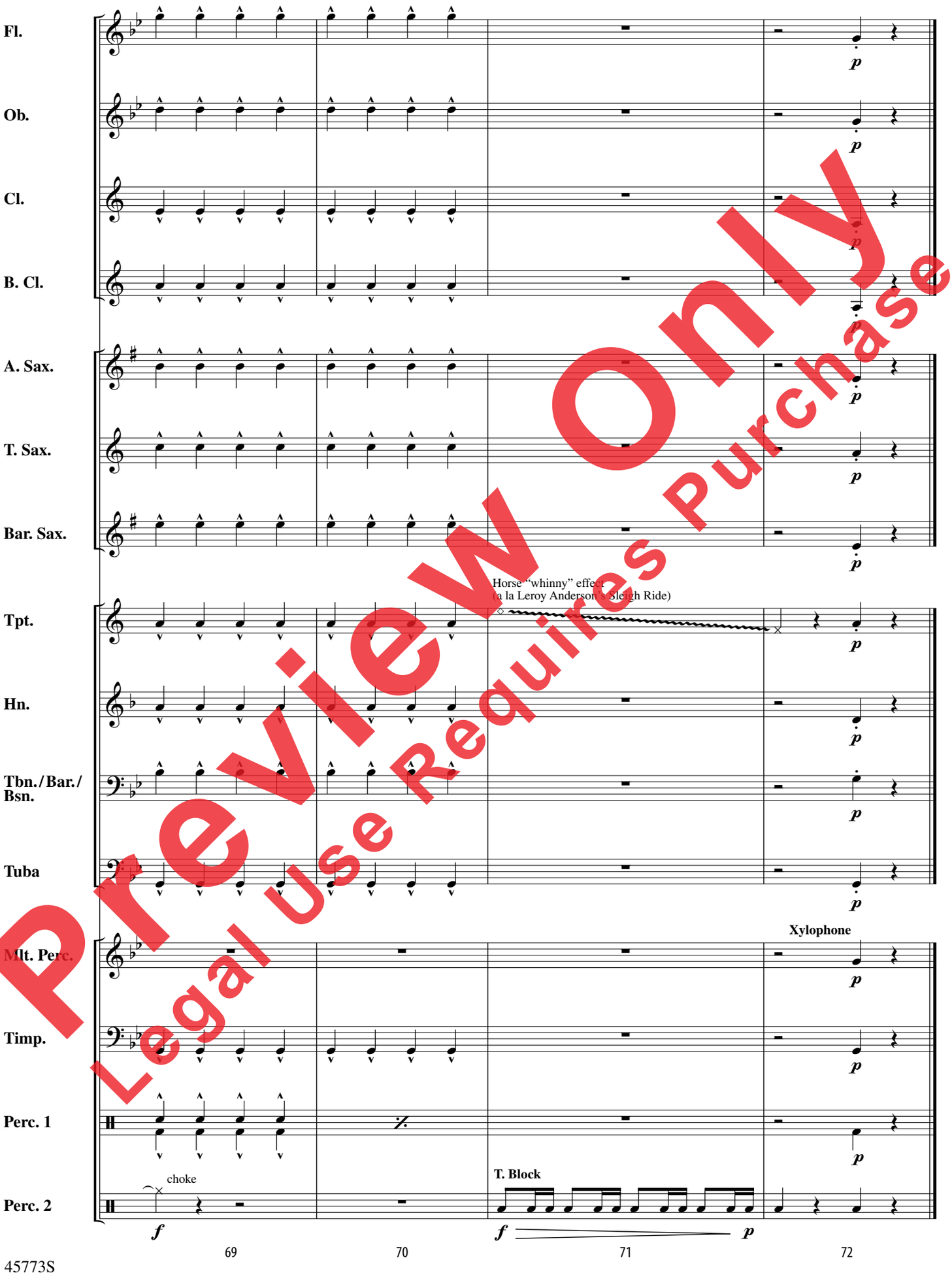

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