Jeffrey Ryan

Jubilant Red

for sanxian and string quartet

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Jeffrey Ryan

Jubilant Red

Performance notes

Total performance time 5 minutes.

 1/4 tone sharp
3/4 tone sharp

All glissandi begin immediately after the first pitch is sounded; glissandi of duration greater than a quarter note are notated with an opening eighth note along with the required duration.

Seating:
san
vnII vc
vnI va

Sanxian:
Tuning
All long notes are non-tremolo unless specifically marked.
Harmonics are written as sounding.

Strings:

marcato ending to note with no bow change

give note a slight rhythmic and dynamic stress

Other performance notes are given as required in the score and parts.

Programme note

I first encountered the work of Canadian painter Jean McEwen at the Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal. I was struck by his use of bold lines to form large shapes, and many layers of colours to create rich and vibrant textures, constantly in interior motion. I stood rapt in front of his large-scale *Jubilant Red*, its five panels mirrored around a central vertical black stripe, the fiery scarlet revealing yellow, black, lavender and more underneath, as I looked closer.

When the Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra invited me to write a short piece for a quintet of sanxian and strings, I returned to the image of *Jubilant Red* as my inspiration. My own five-minute ***Jubilant Red*** is divided into five musical panels, fast-moderate-slow-moderate-fast, mirrored around a brief central sanxian solo.

The symbolism of red and black in Chinese culture have an important influence in the character of the music. Red and black are extremes: red is fire, full yang, expansive, summer, hot; black is water, full yin, conserving, winter, cold. Chinese numerology plays a large role in the work as well, particularly with the auspicious number five (representing the five elements) used at all levels of the structure, as well as three (representing the three stages of life). The very inauspicious number four (so common in Western music's 4/4 time and four-measure phrases) is avoided, giving the music a sense of always being in motion, where every arrival is the beginning of the next journey.

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commissioned by the Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra

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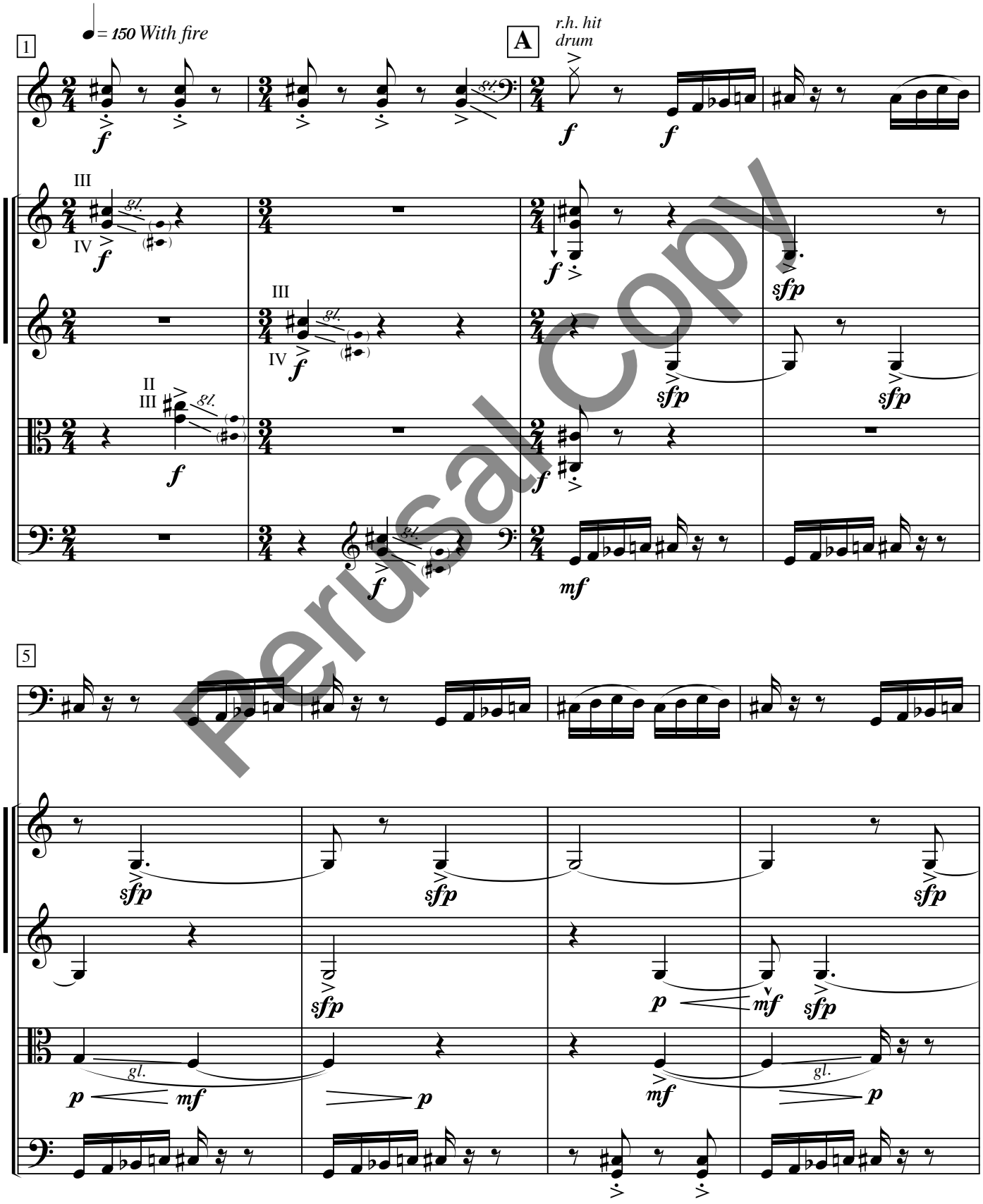

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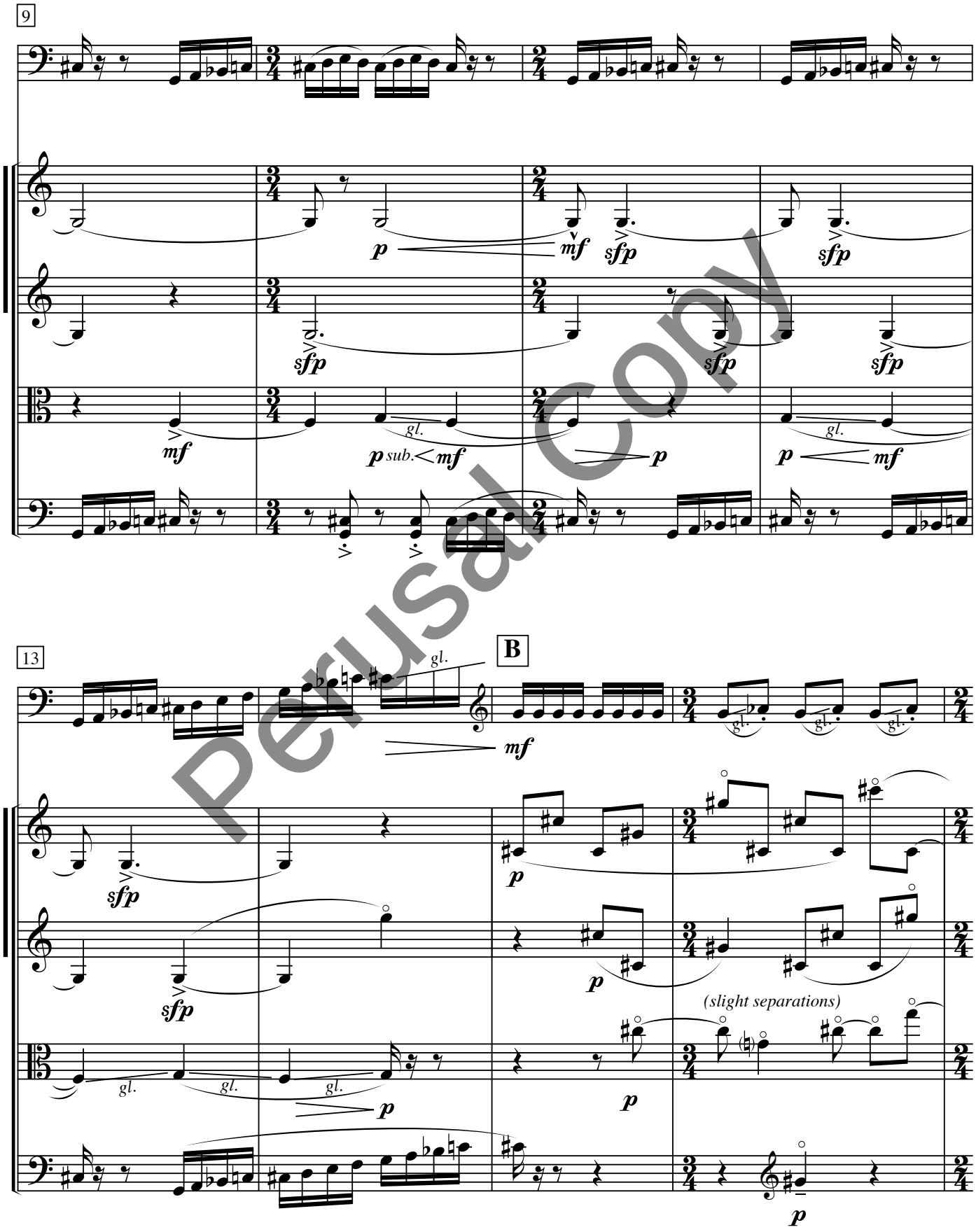

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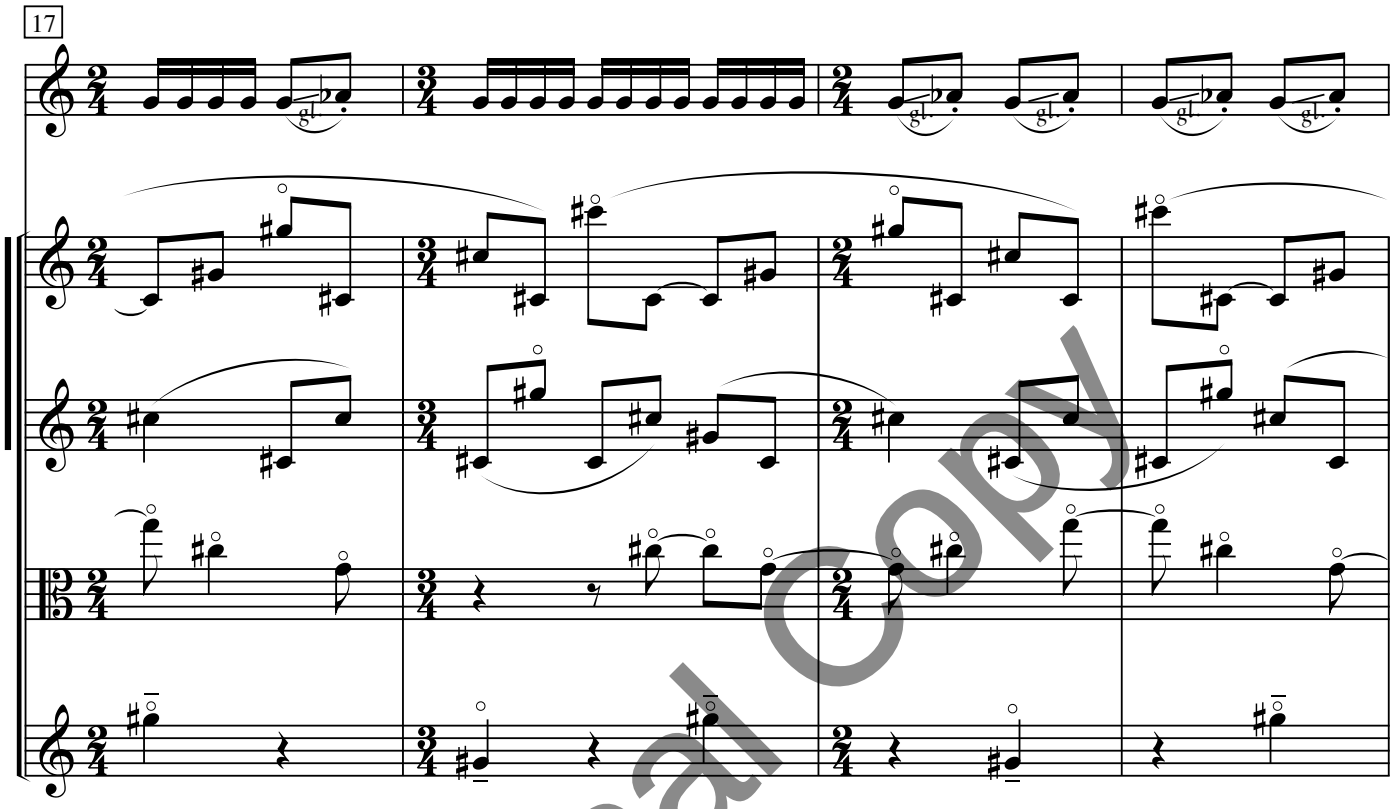

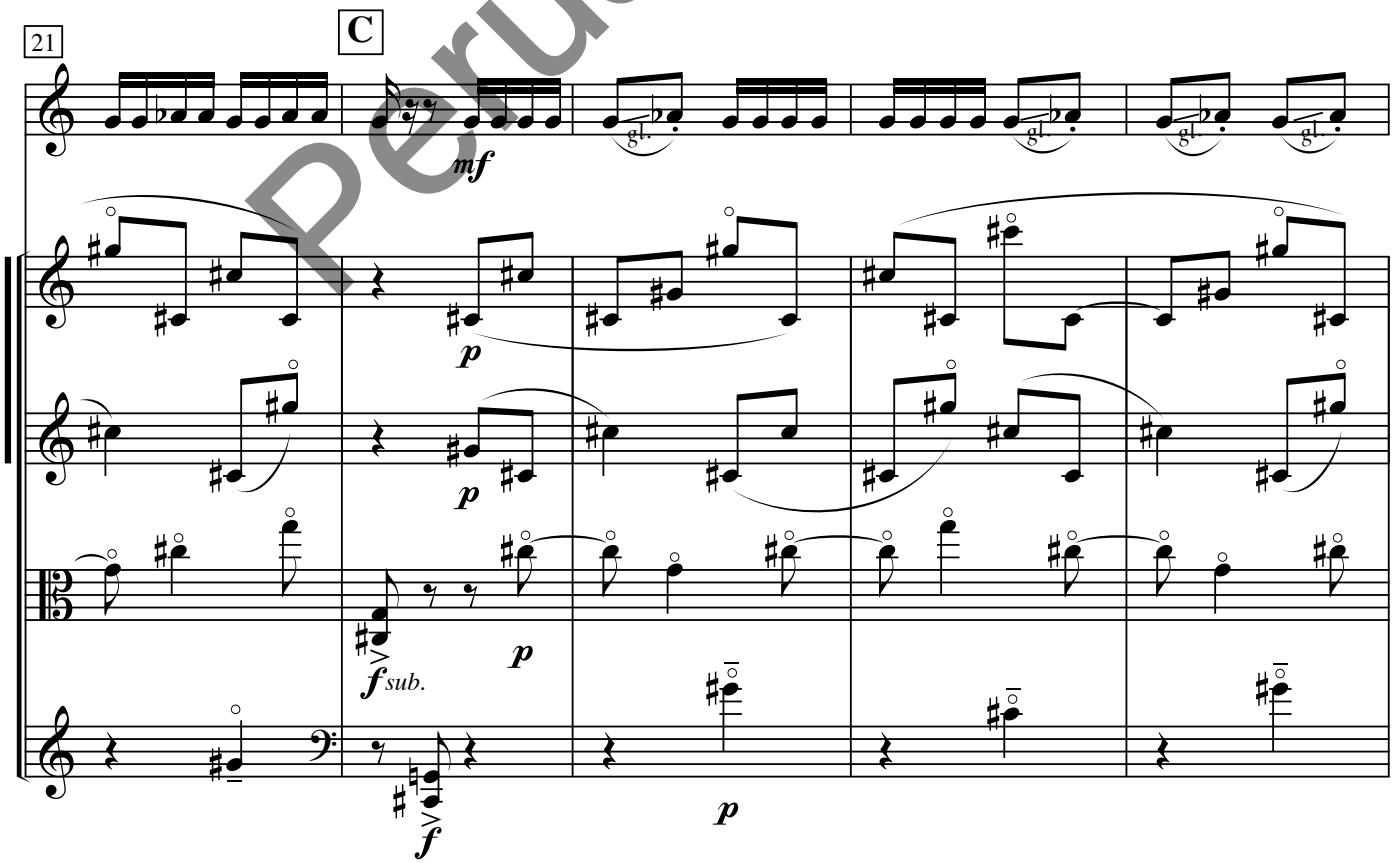

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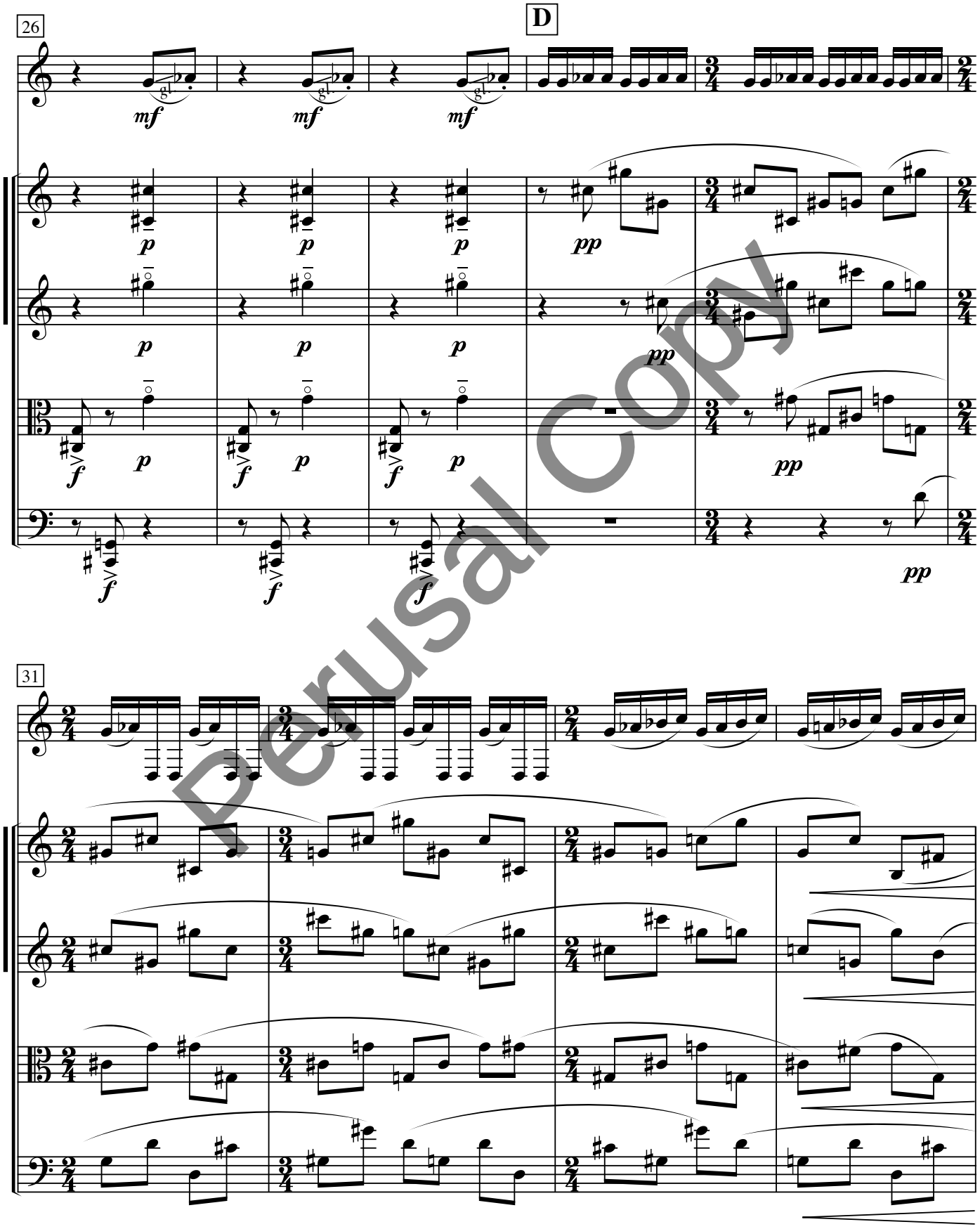

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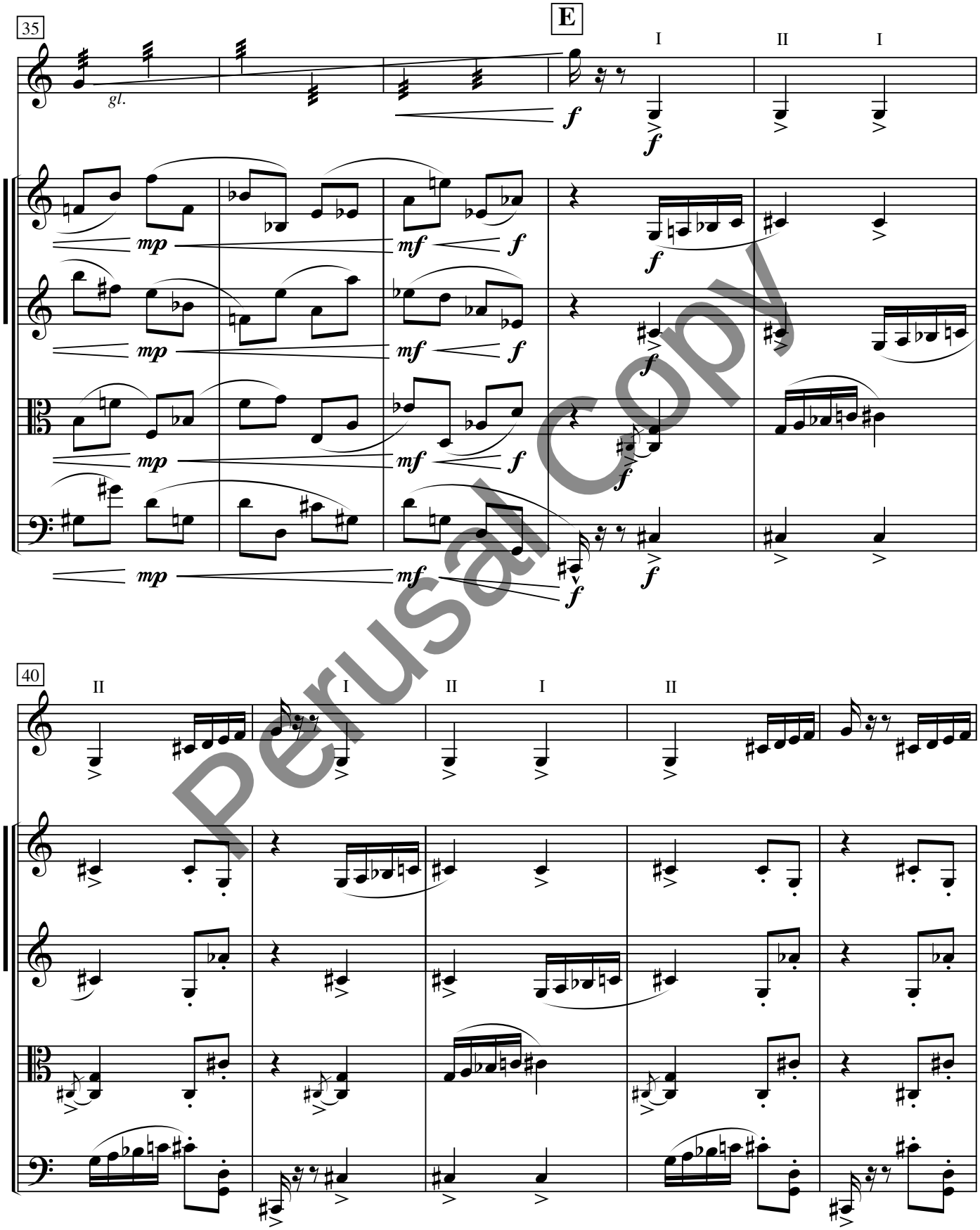

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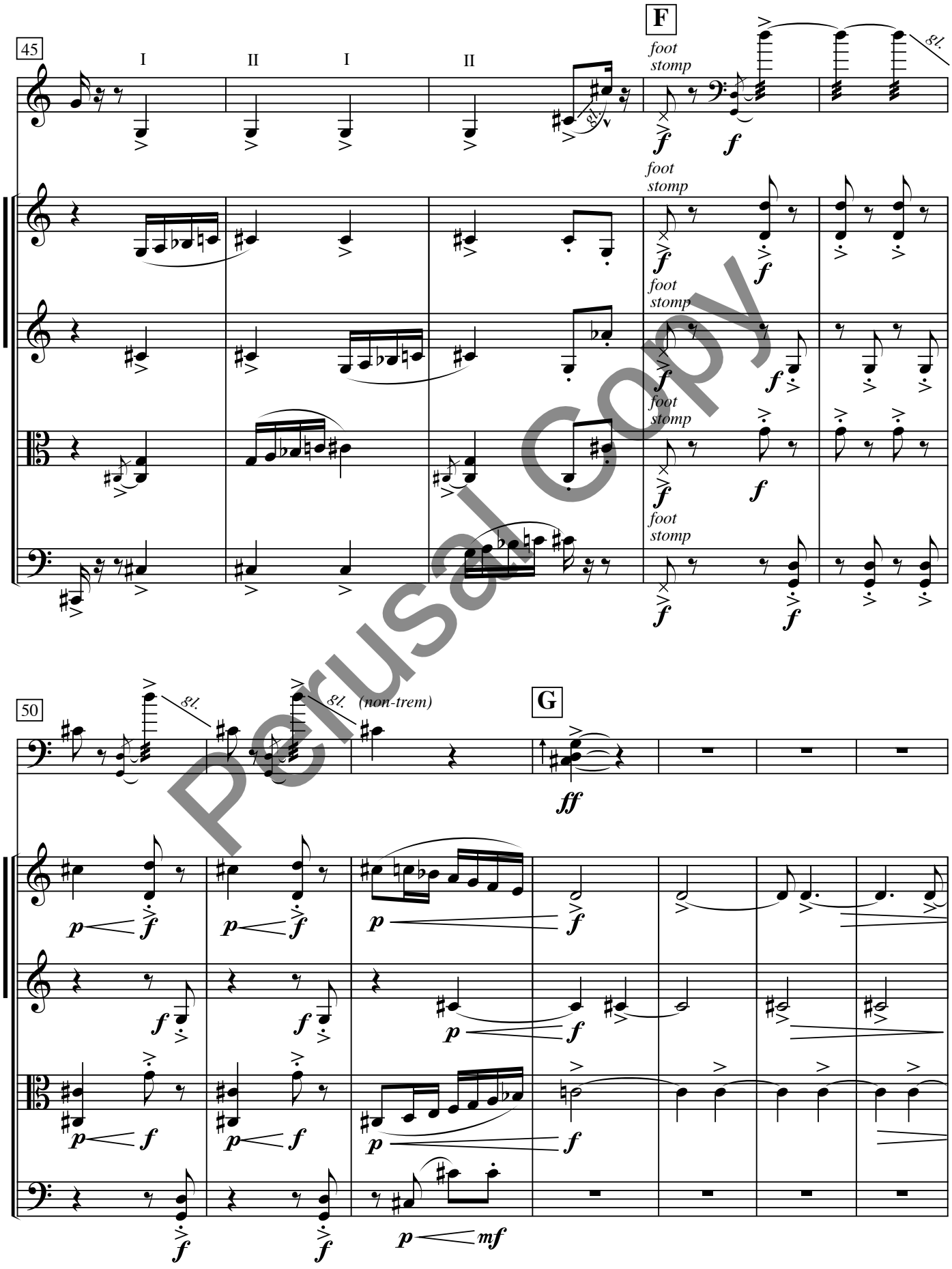

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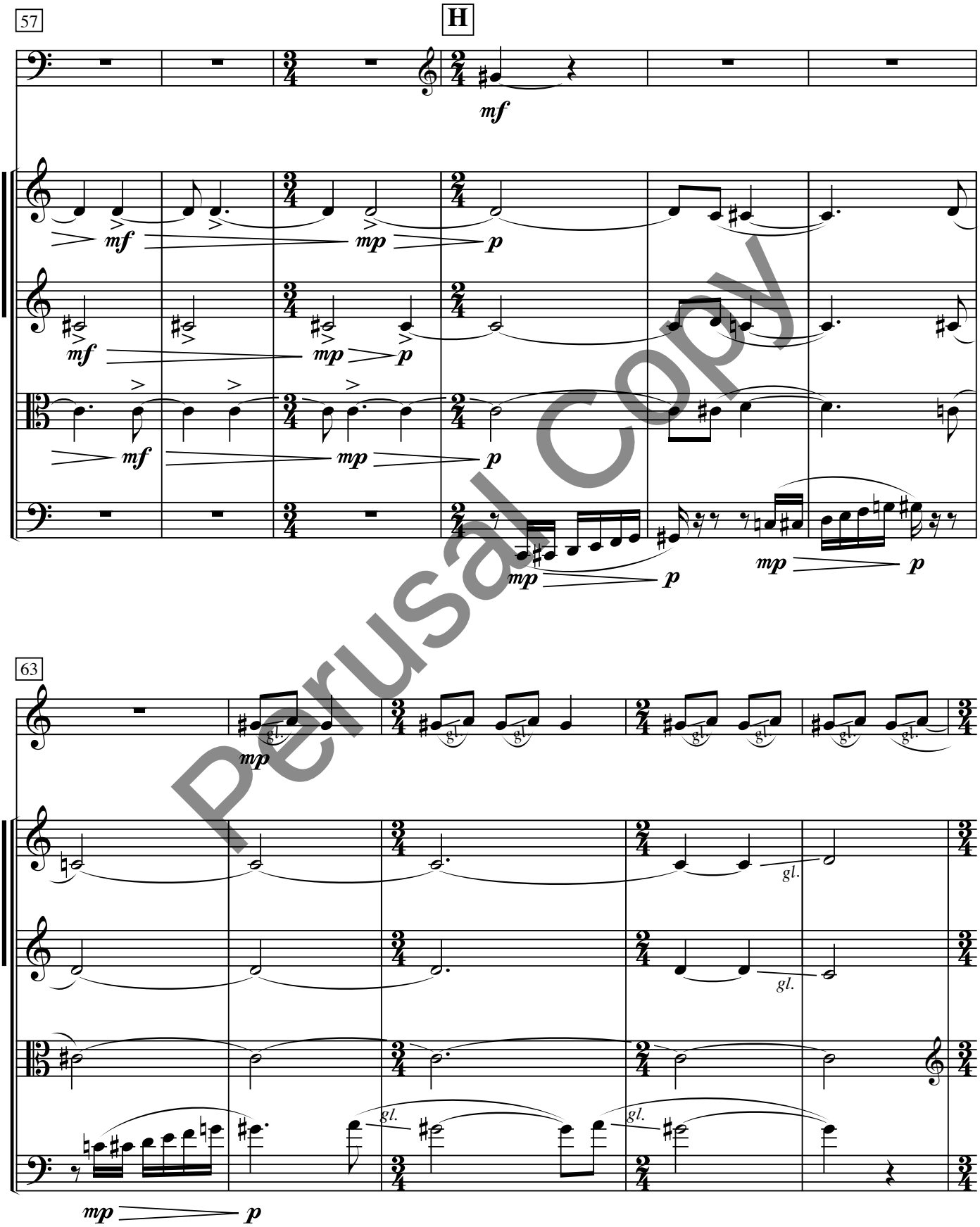

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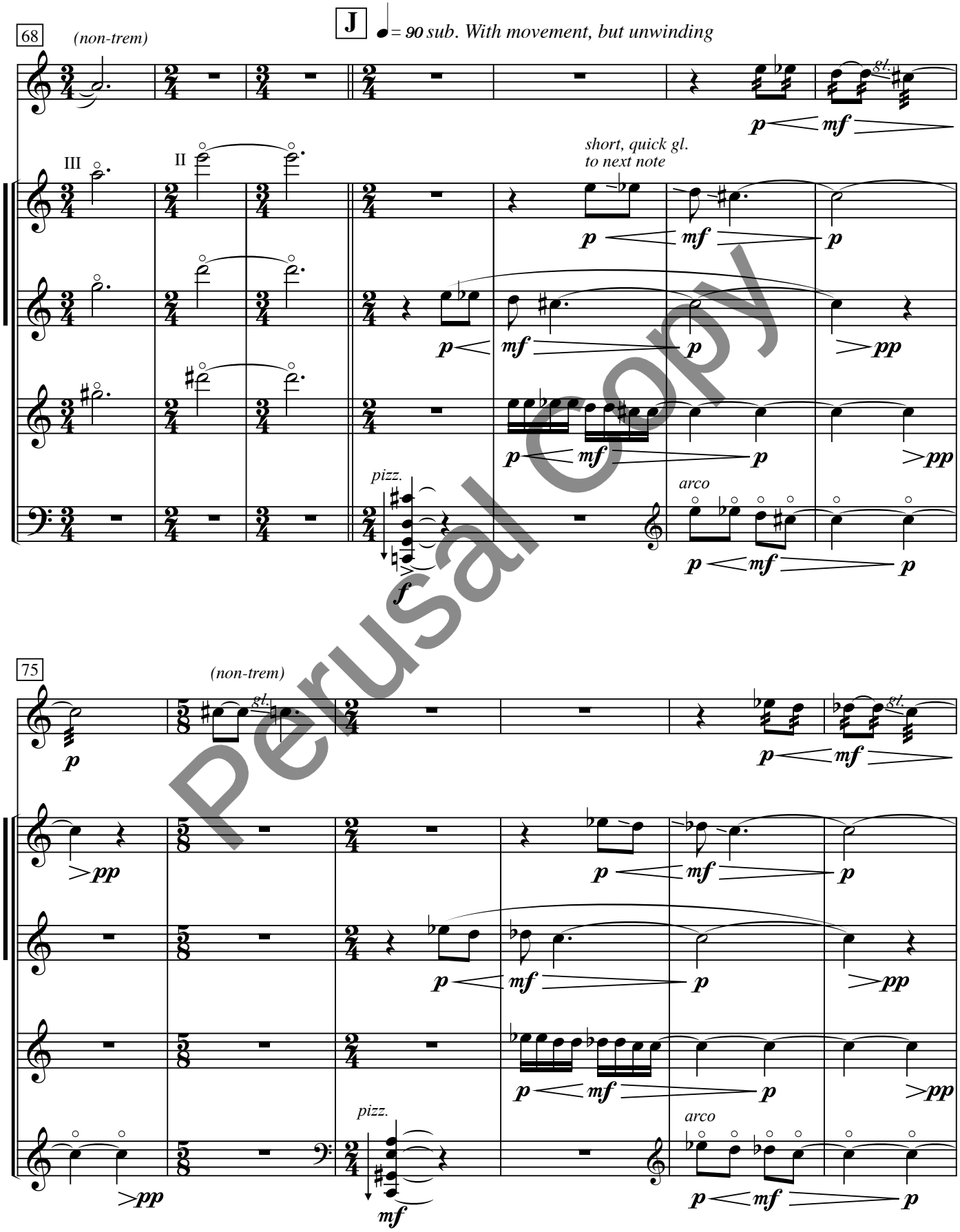

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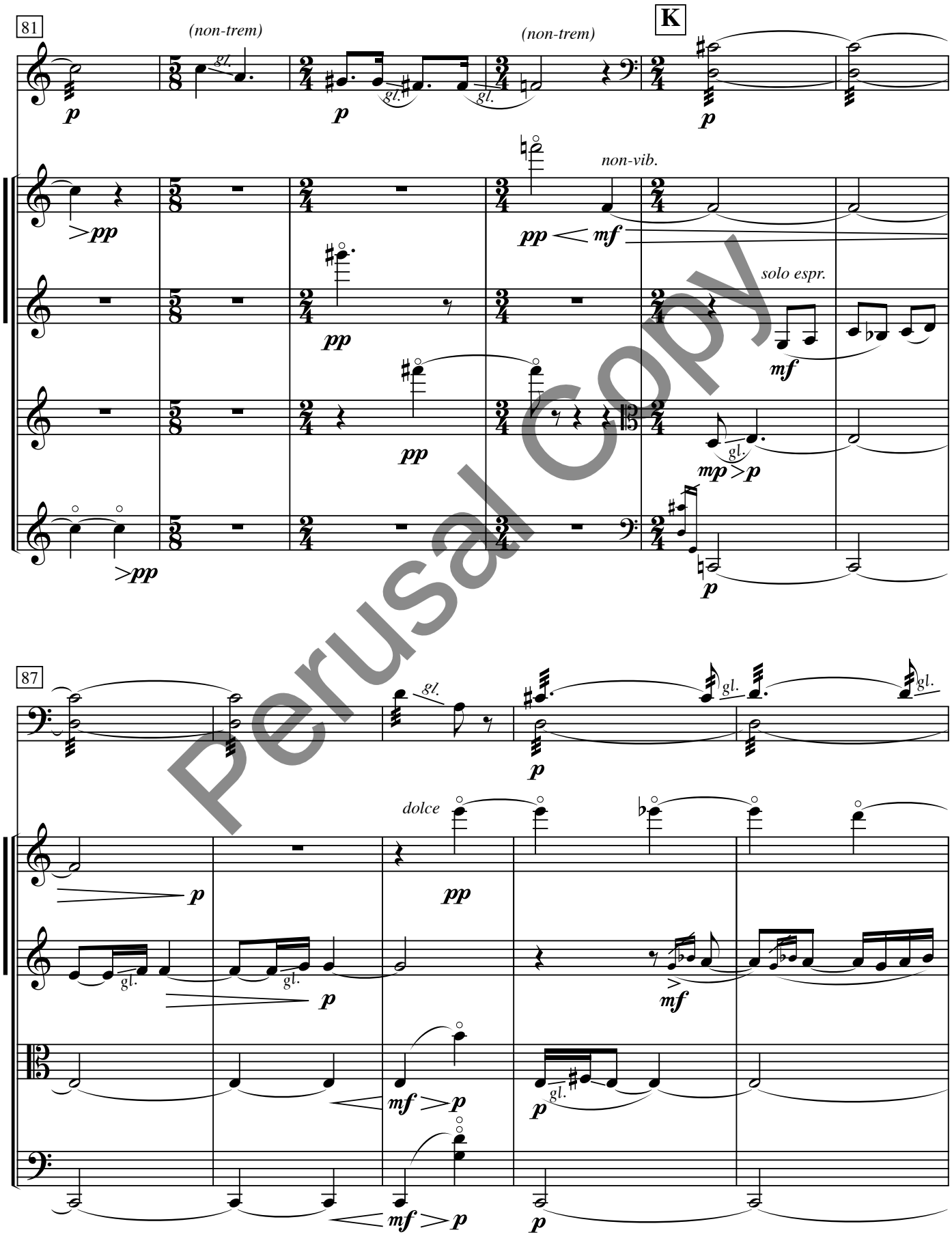

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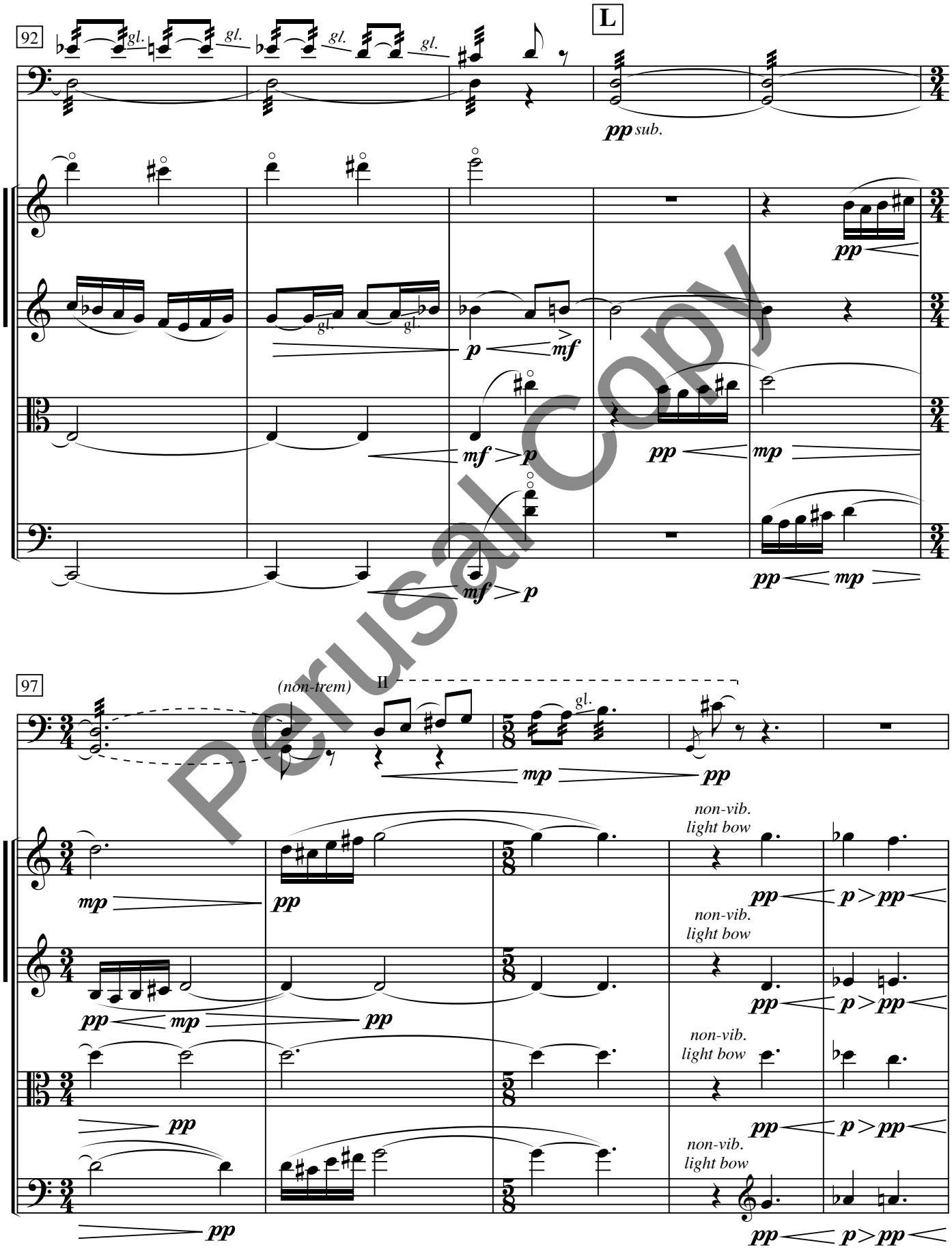

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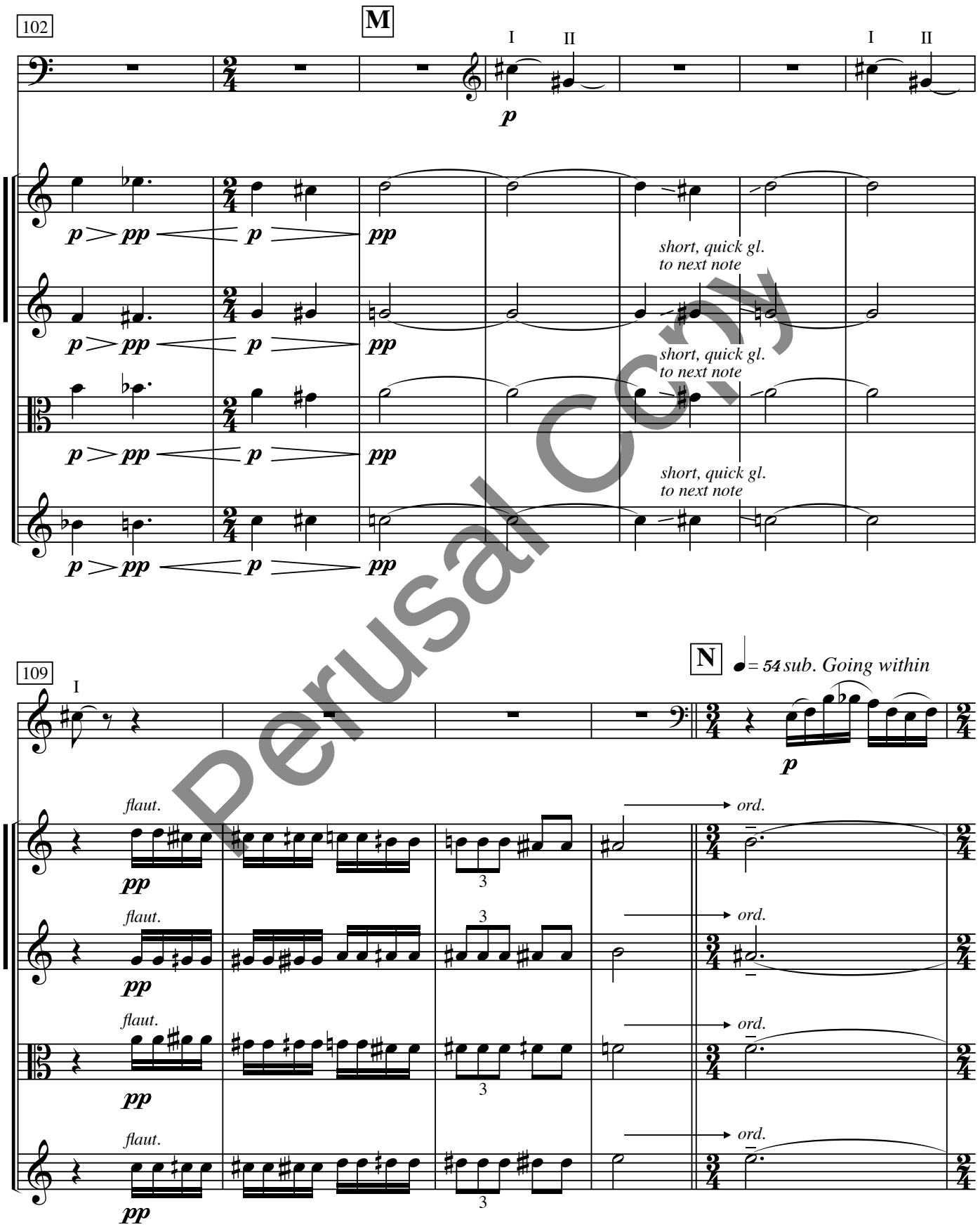

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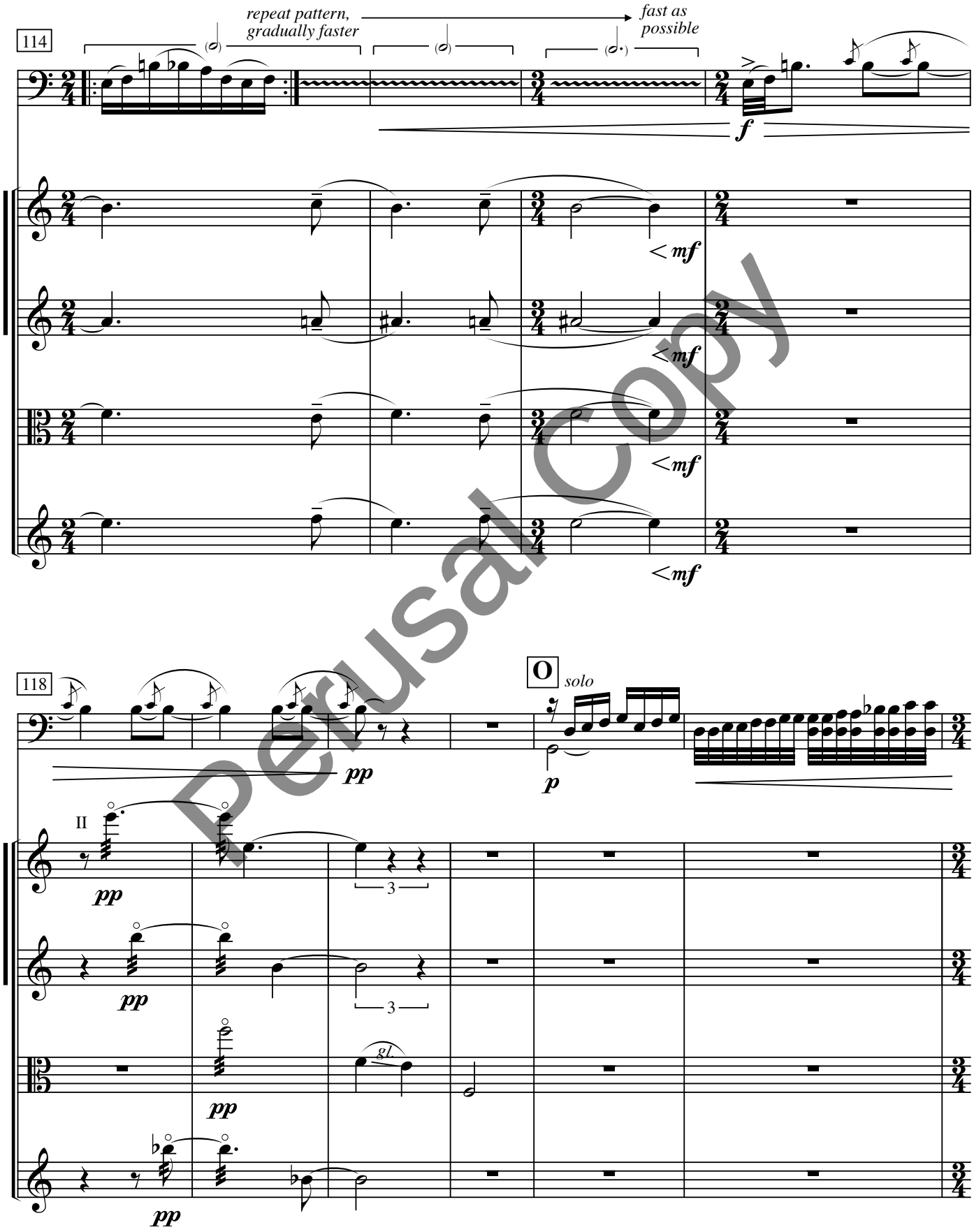

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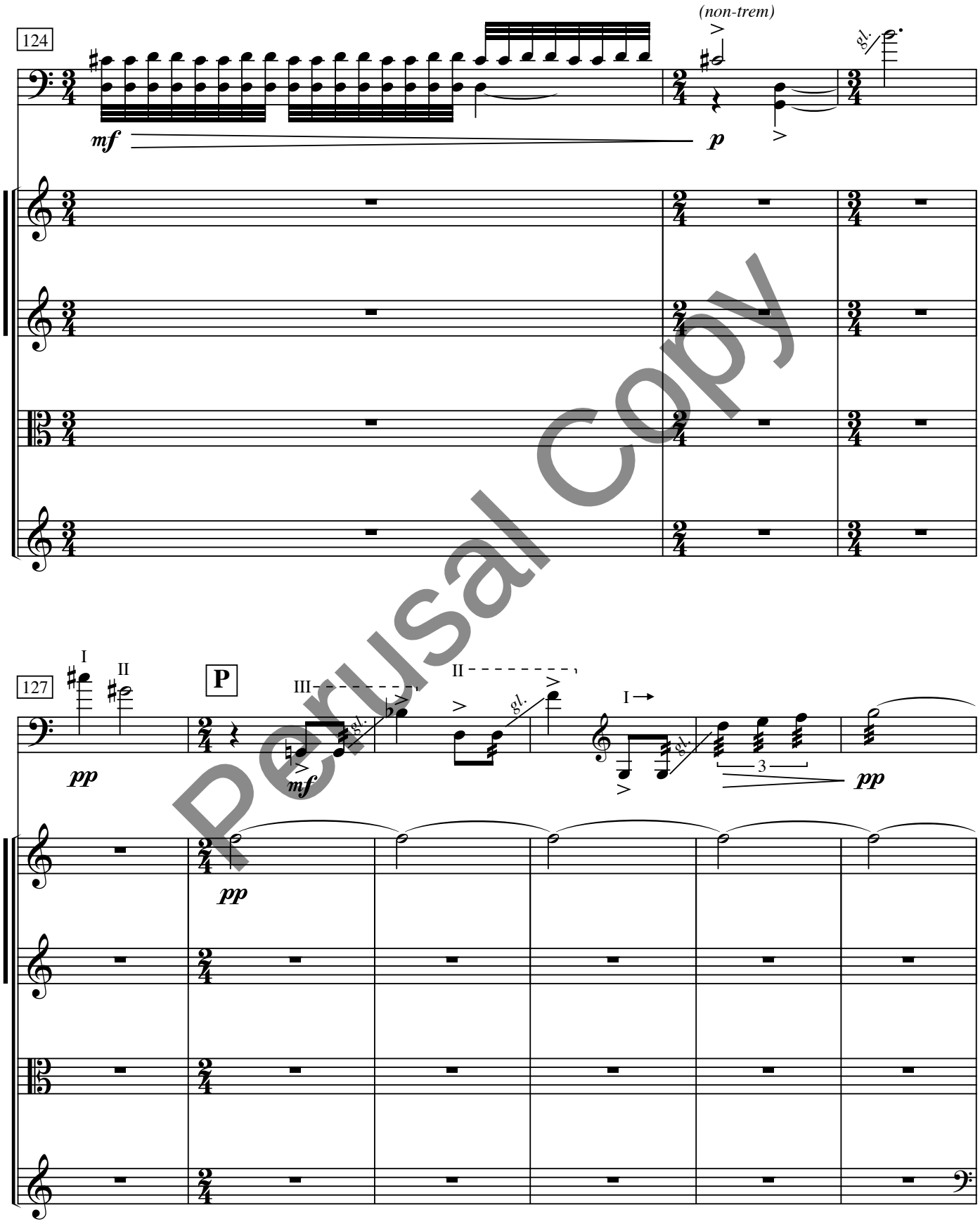

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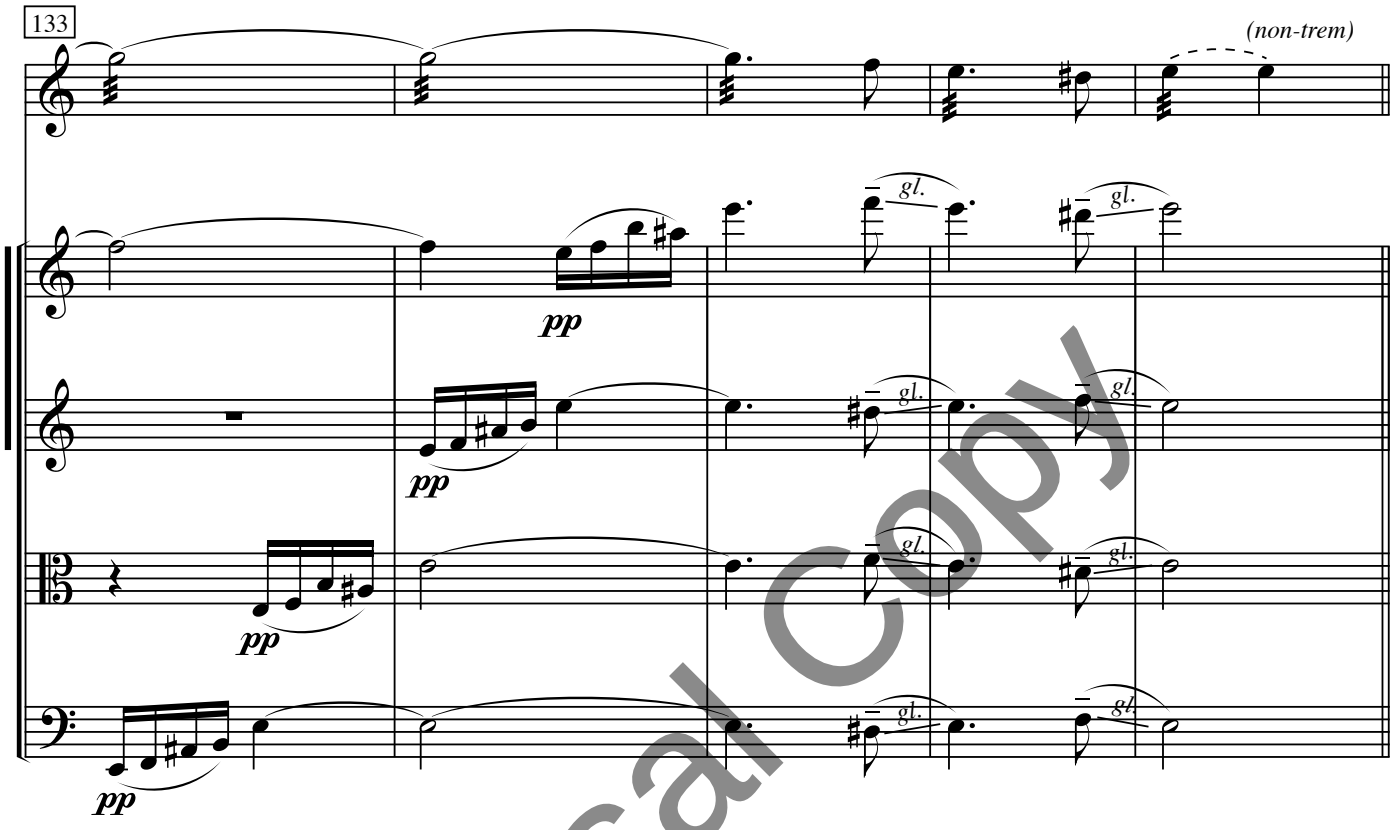

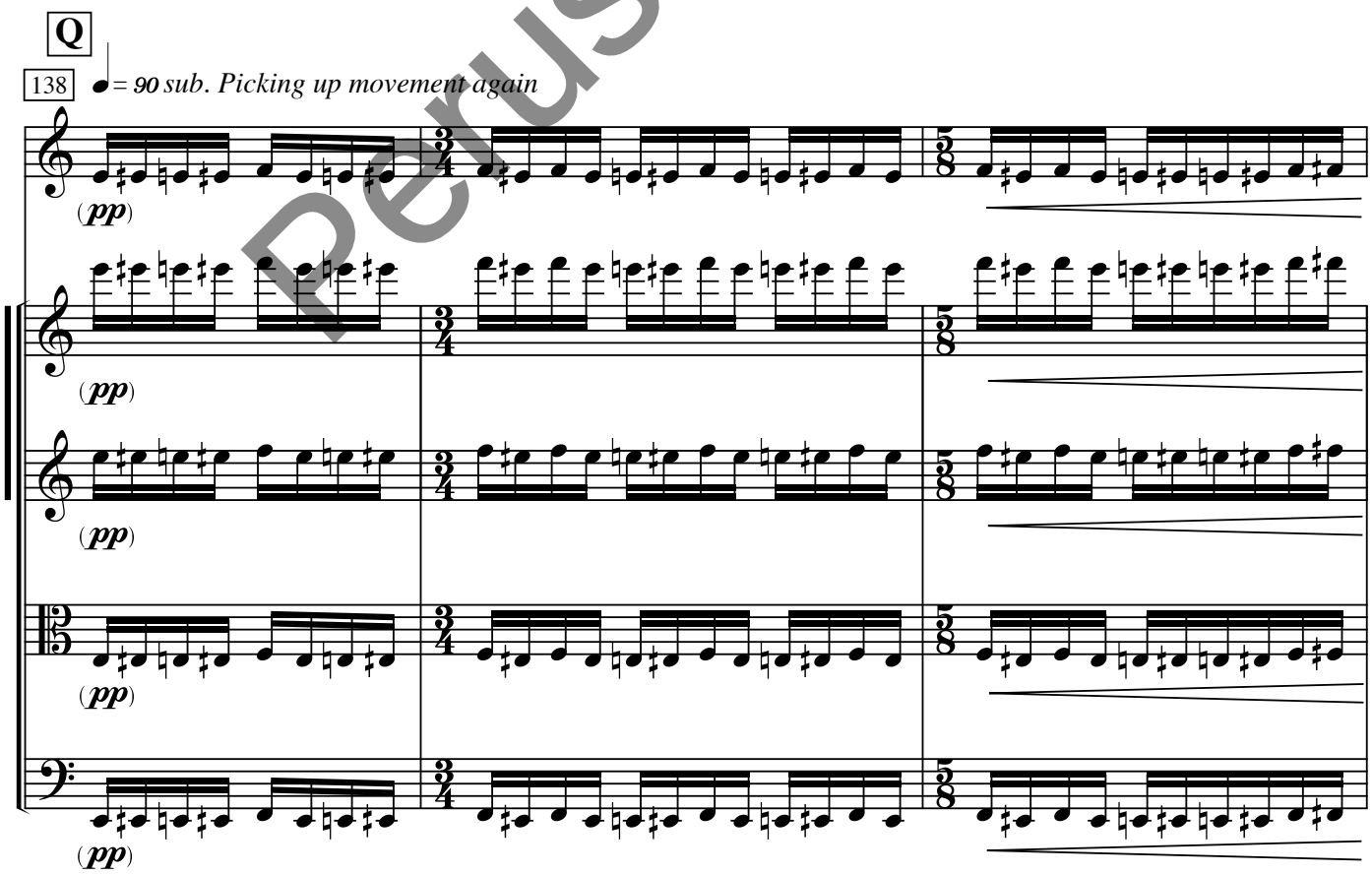

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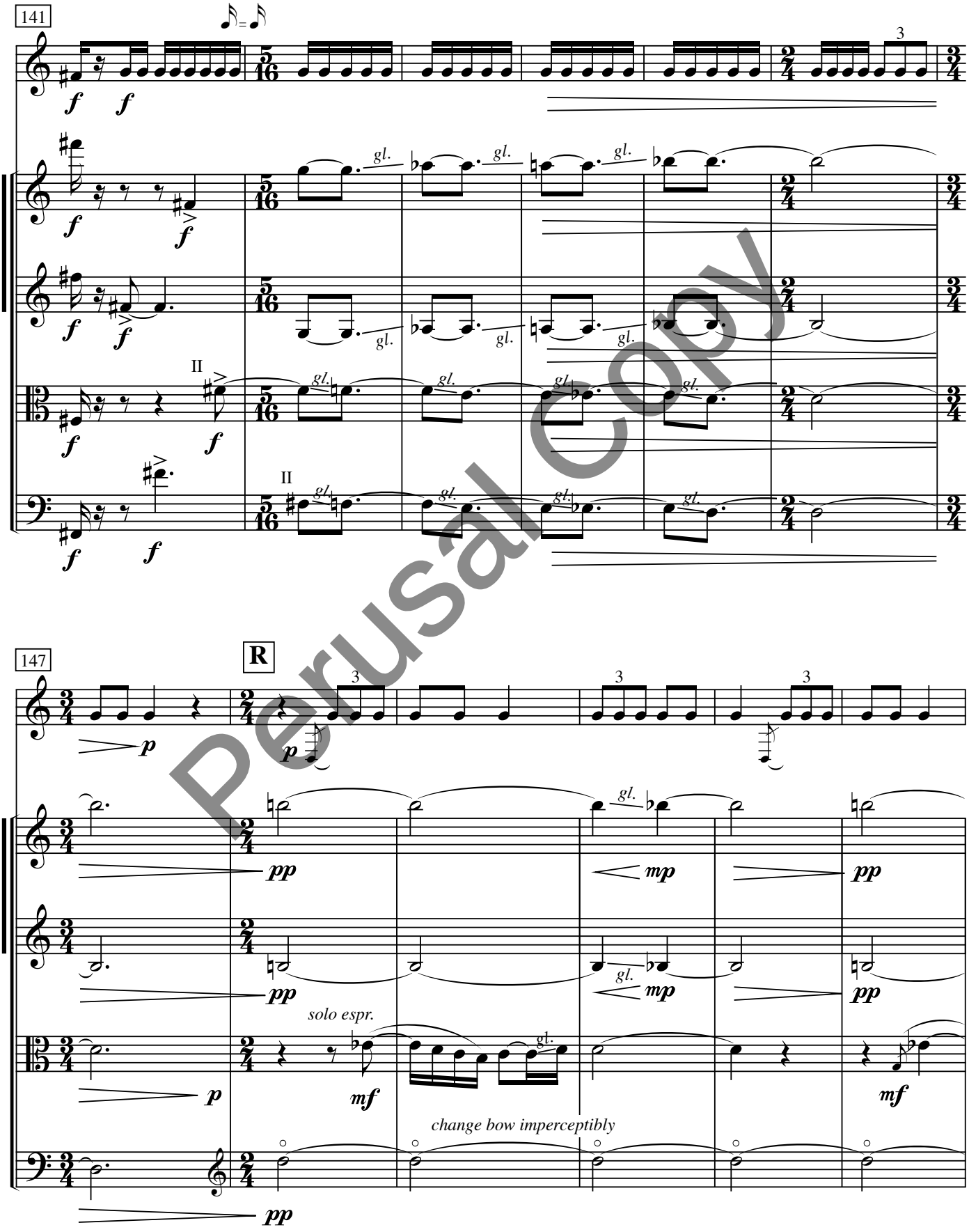

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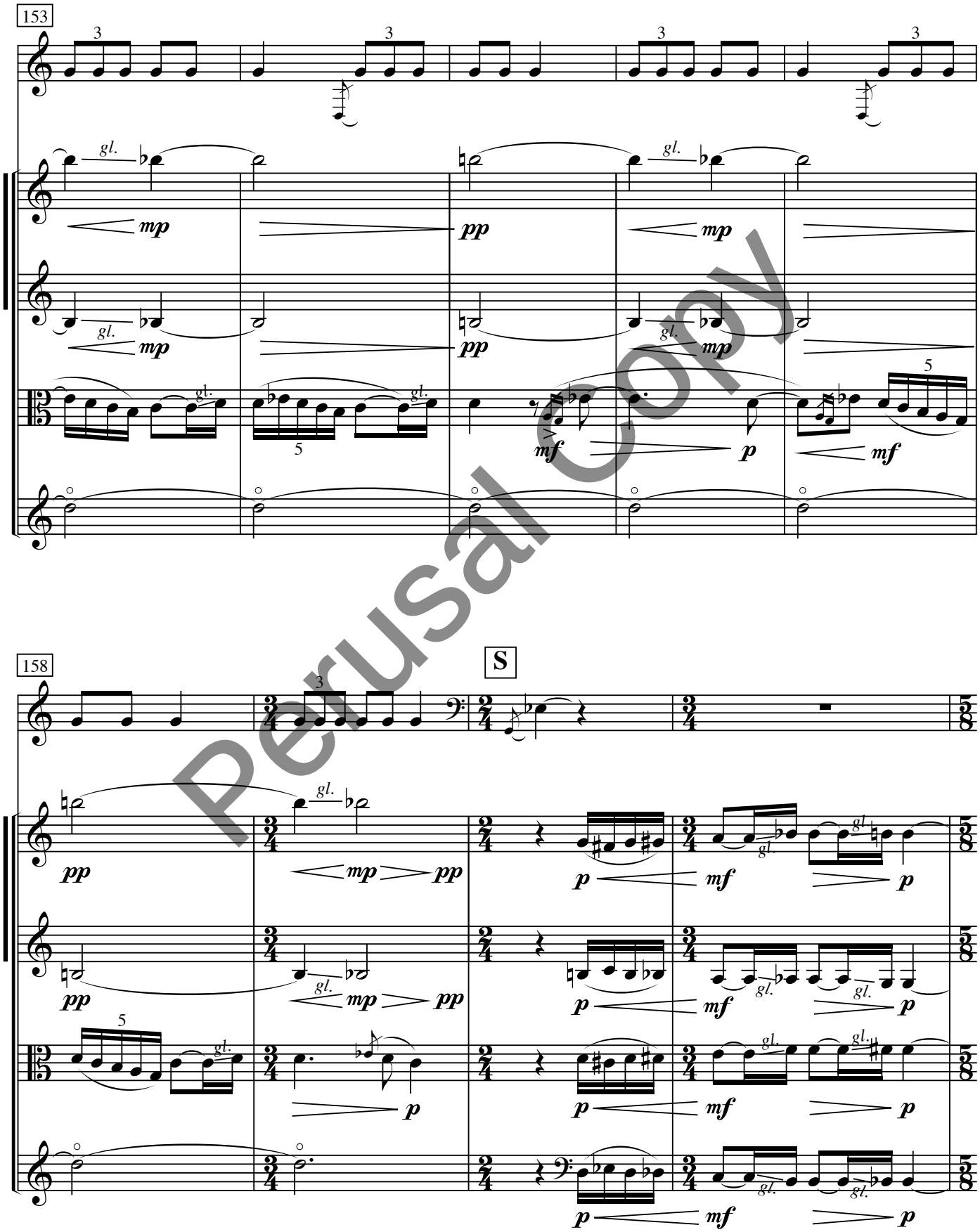

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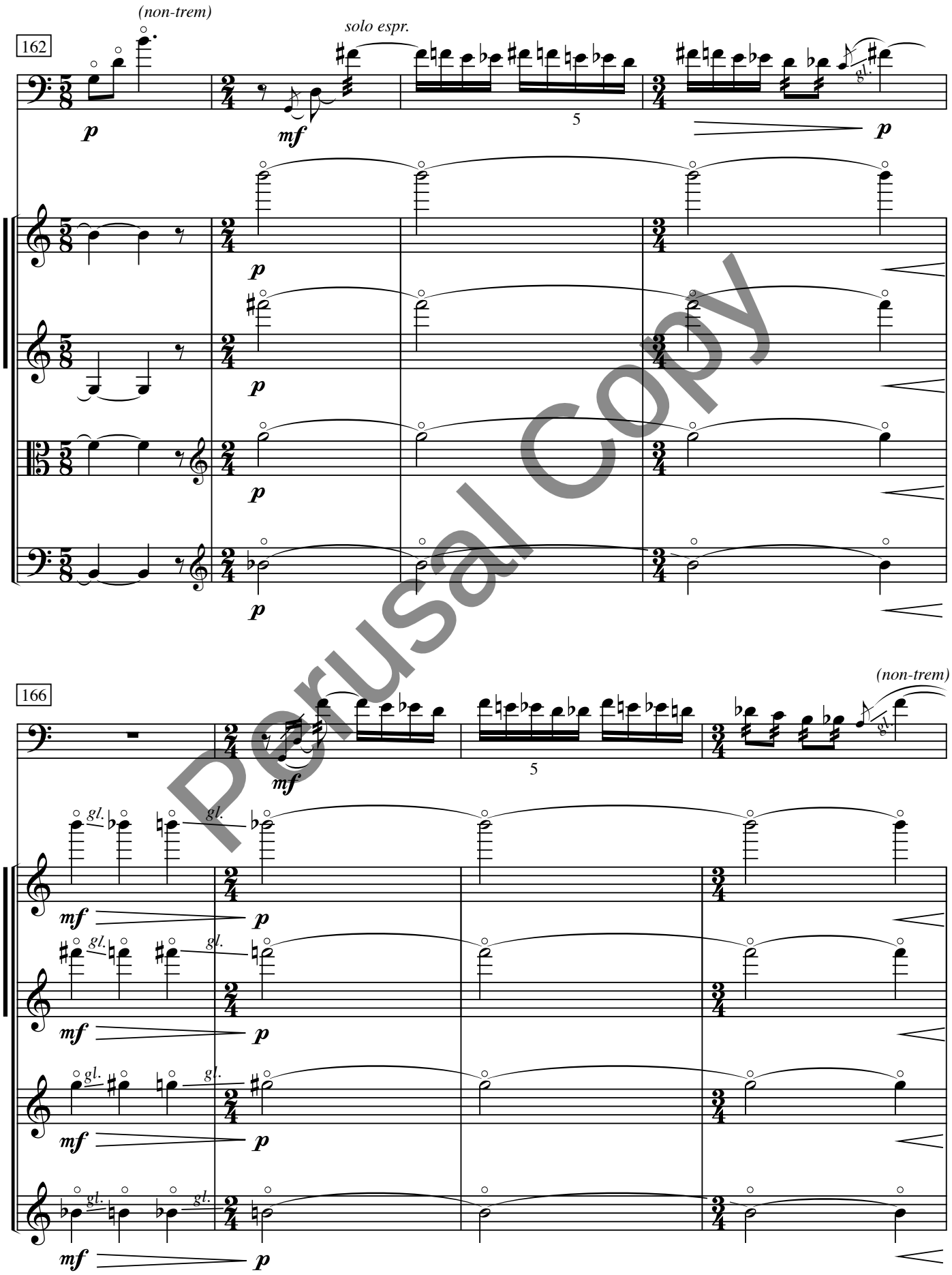

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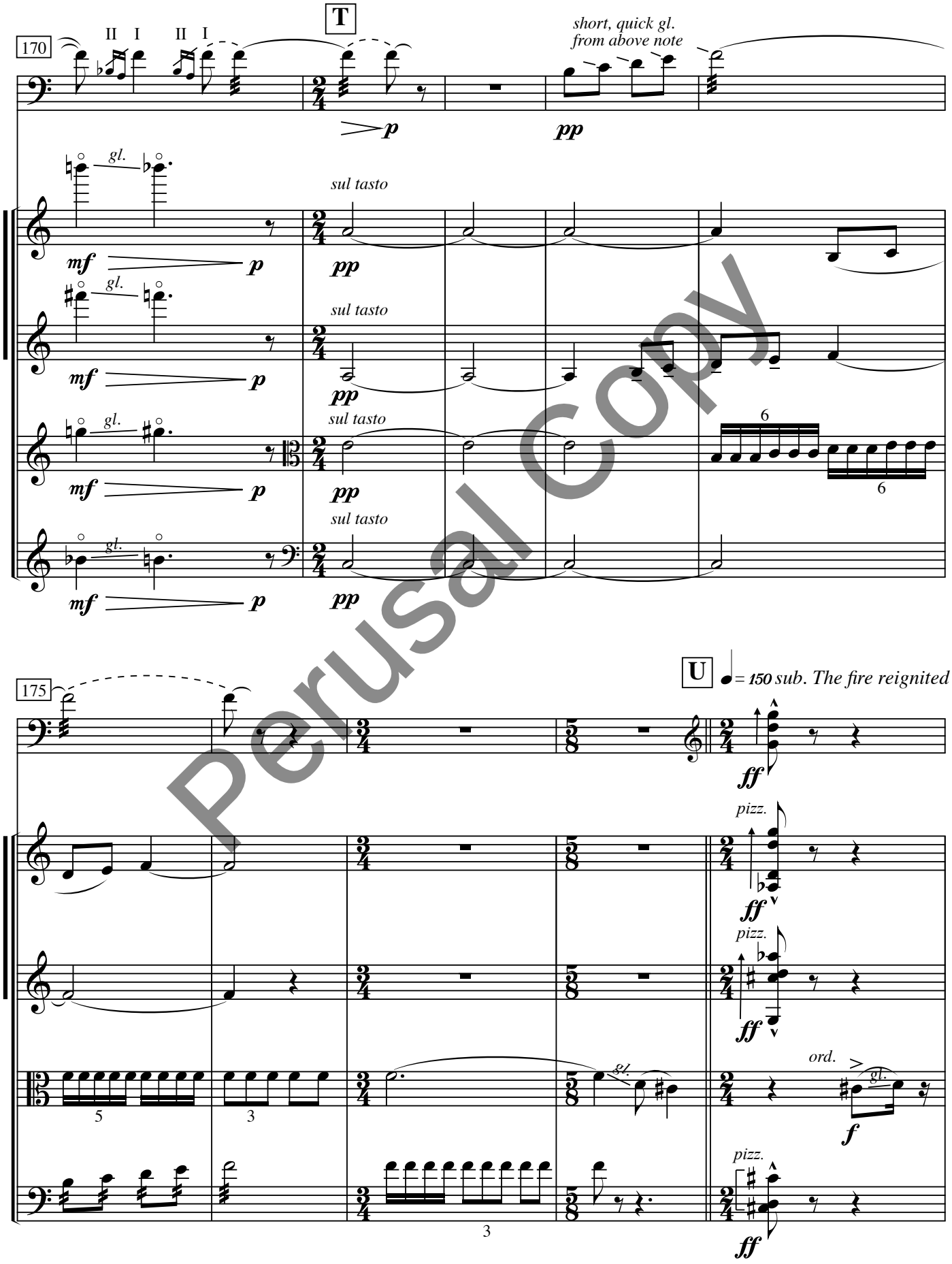

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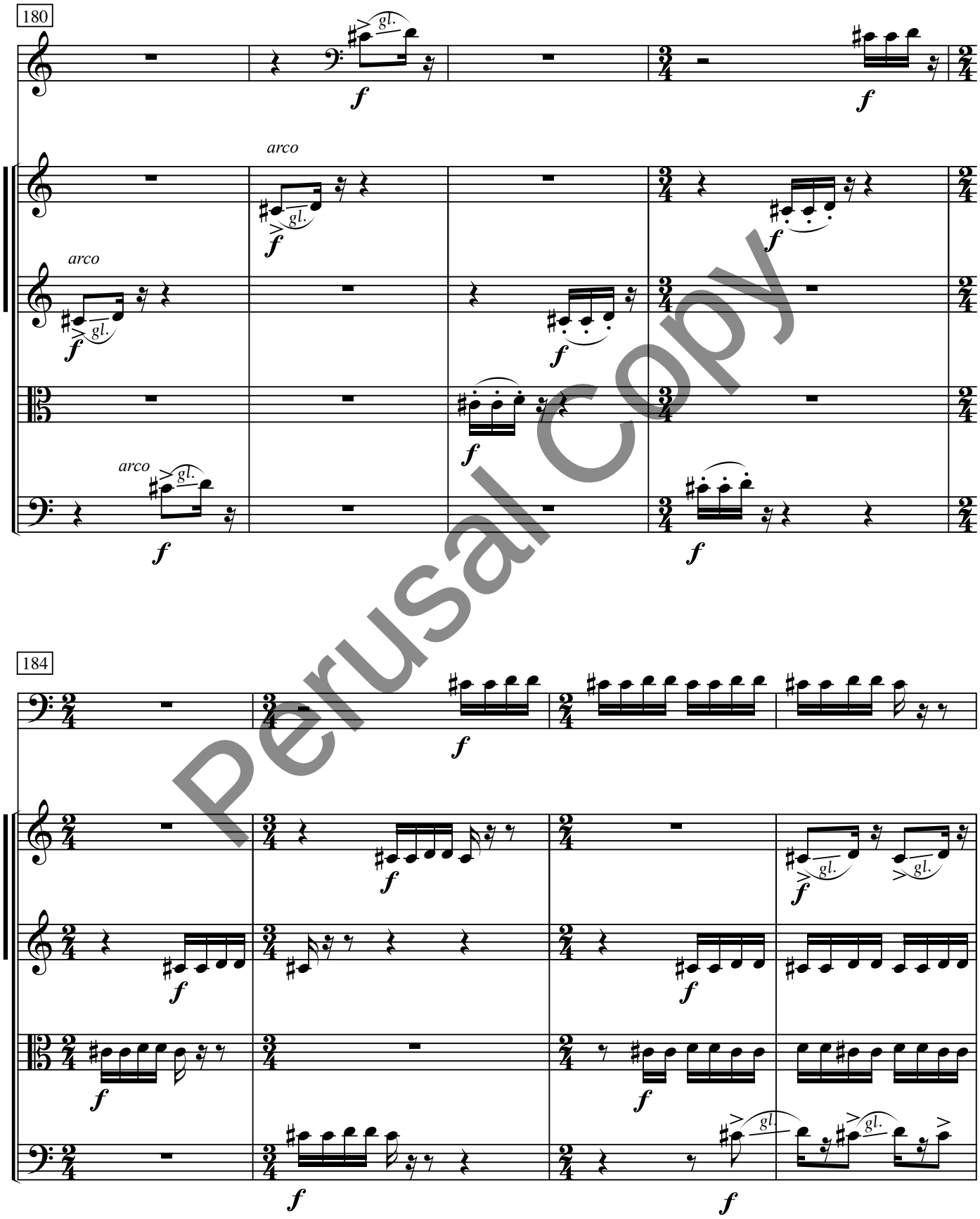

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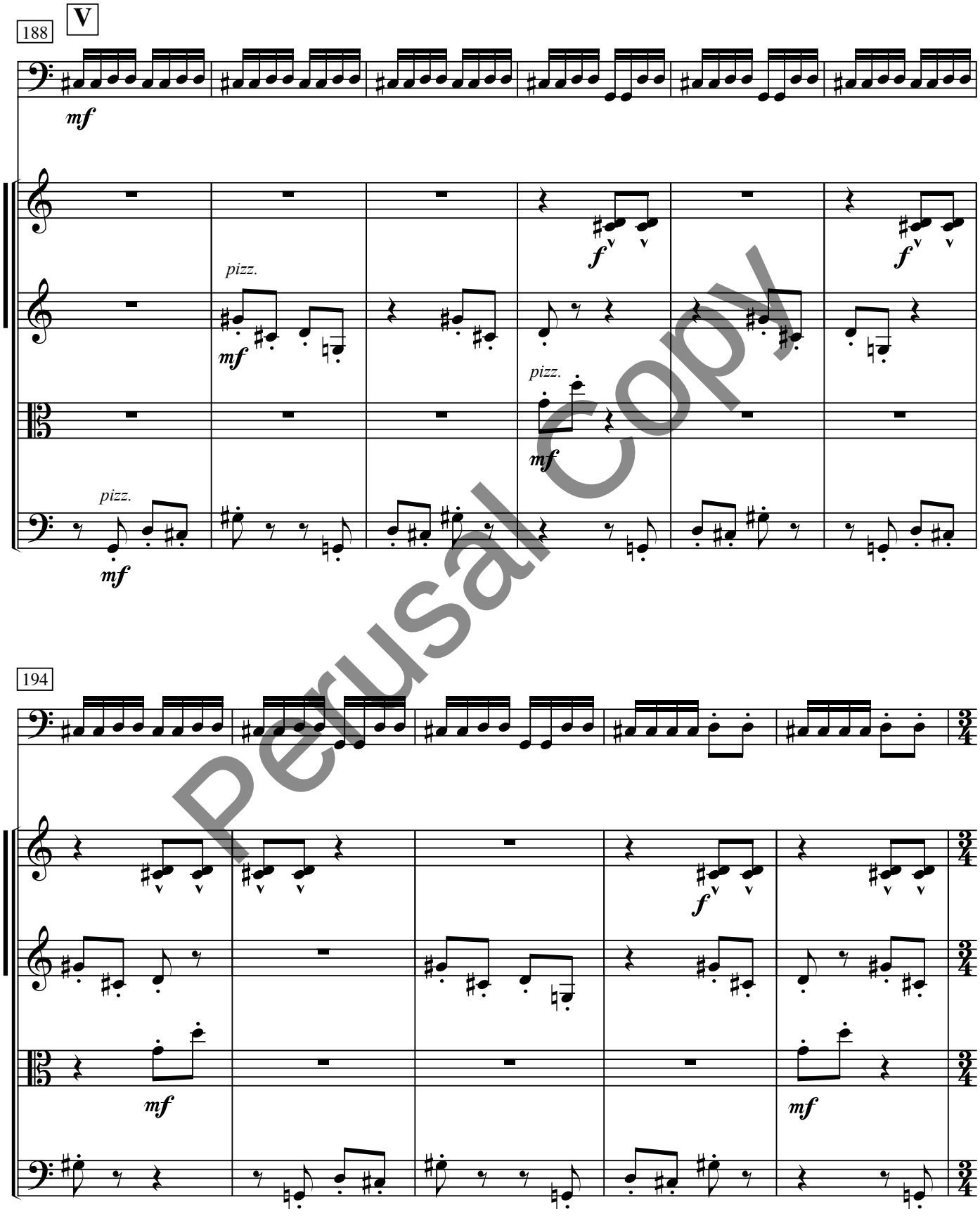

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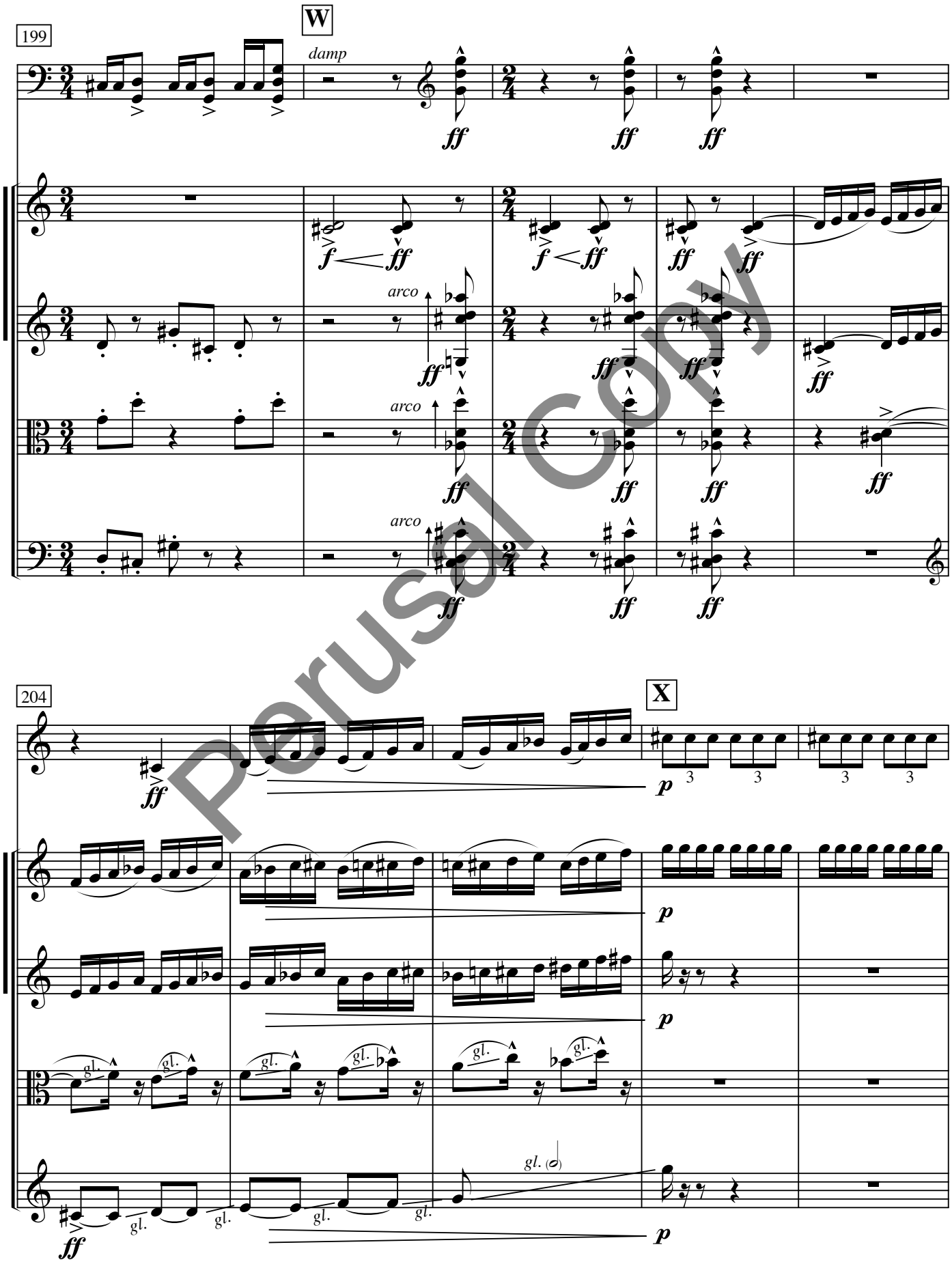

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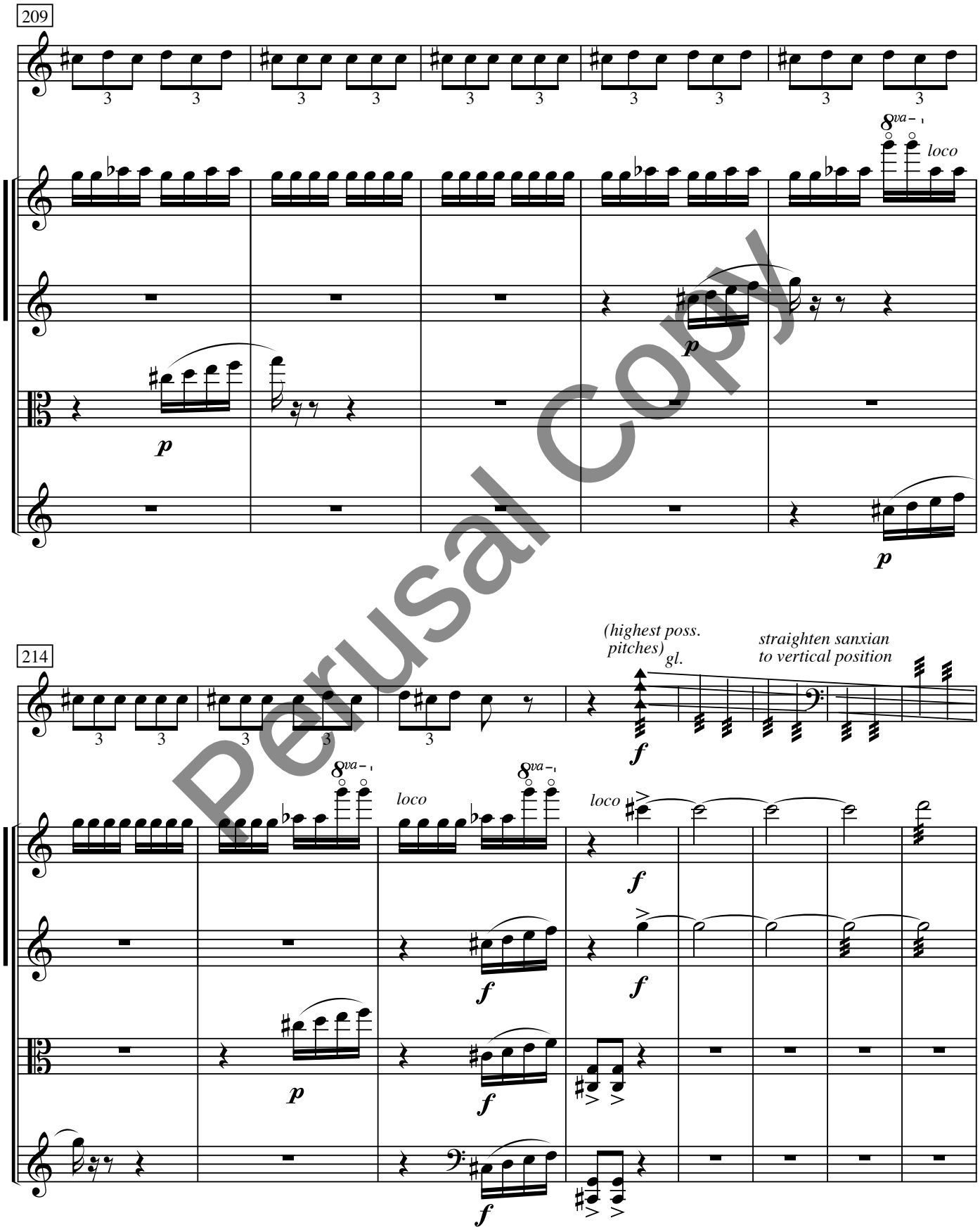

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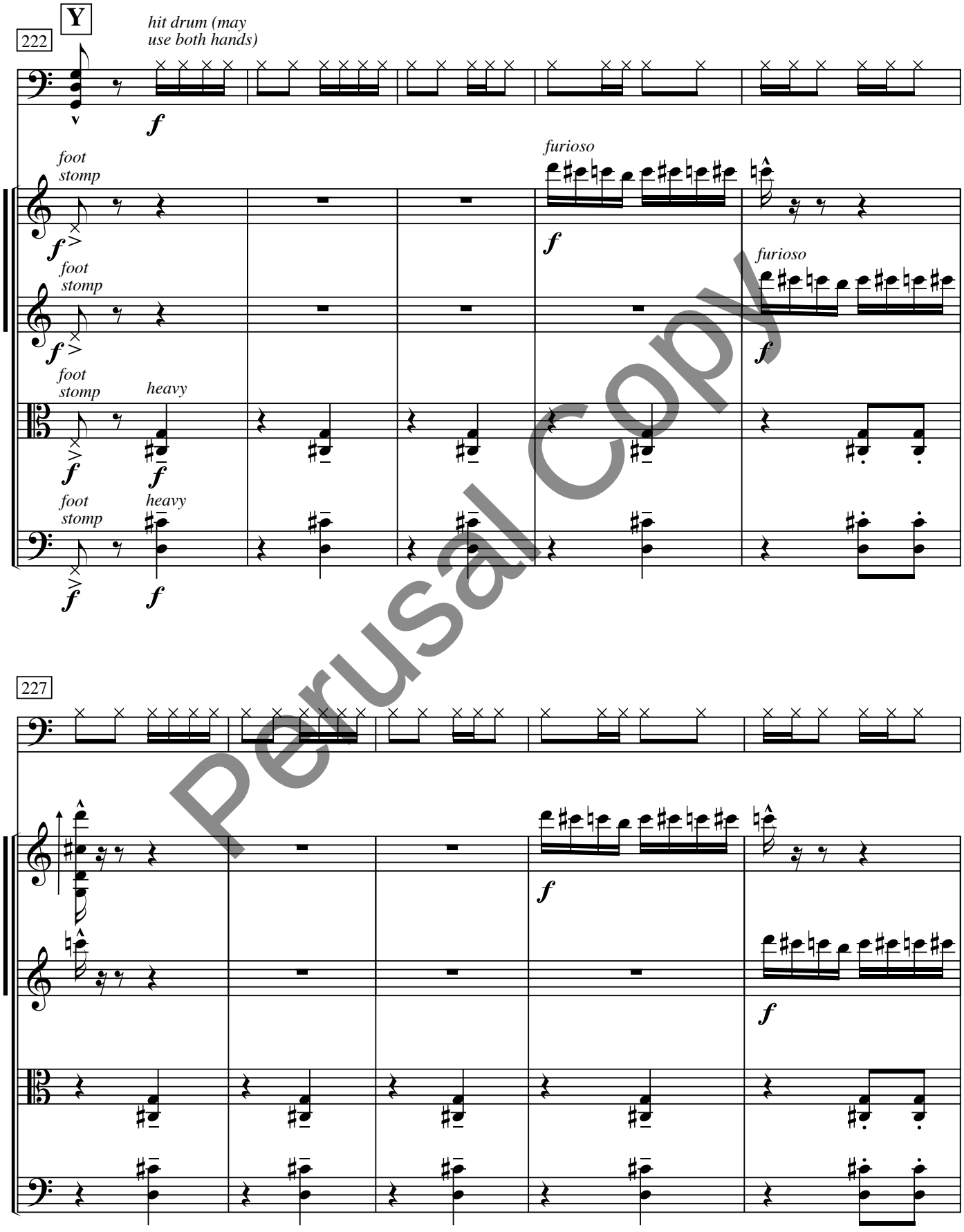

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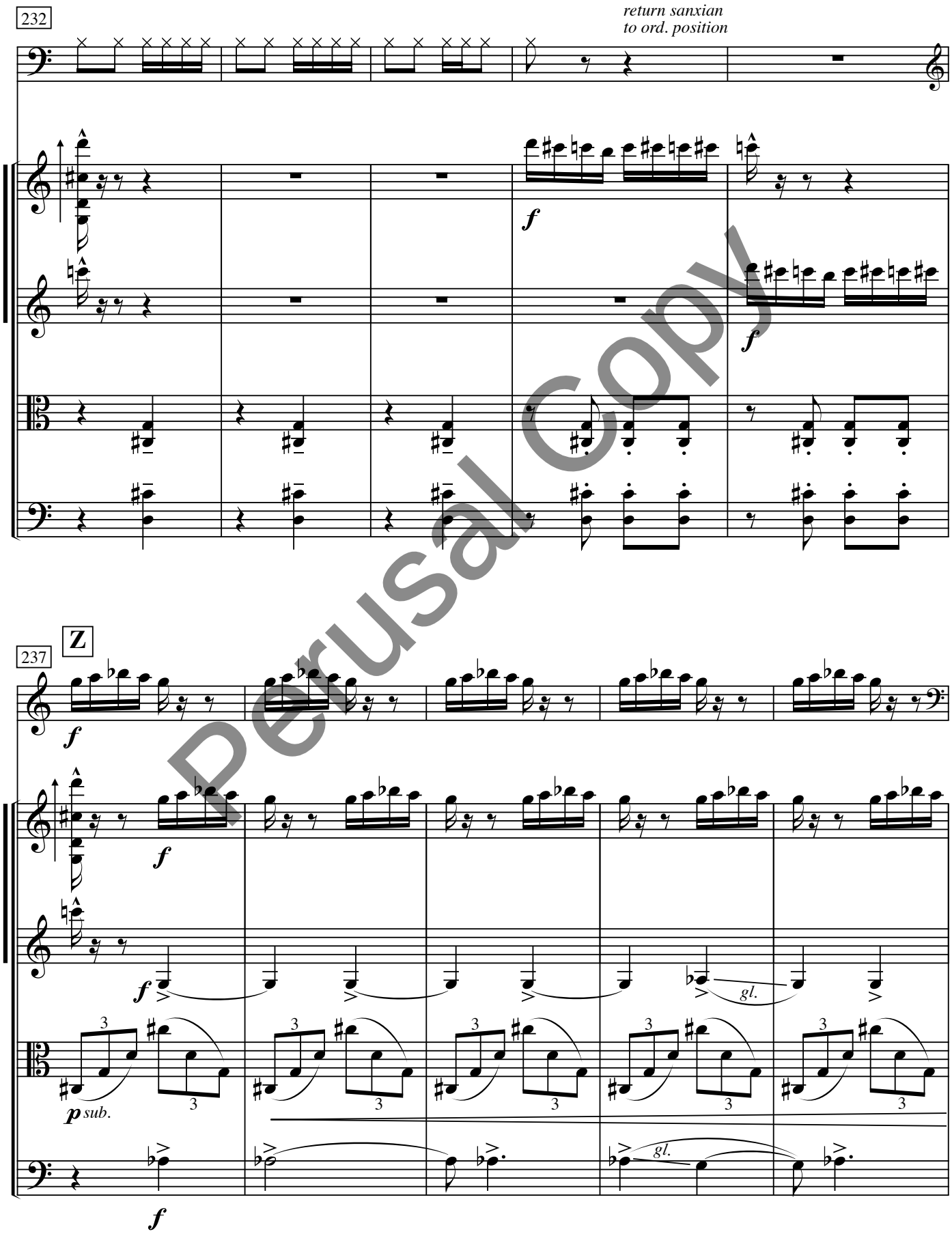

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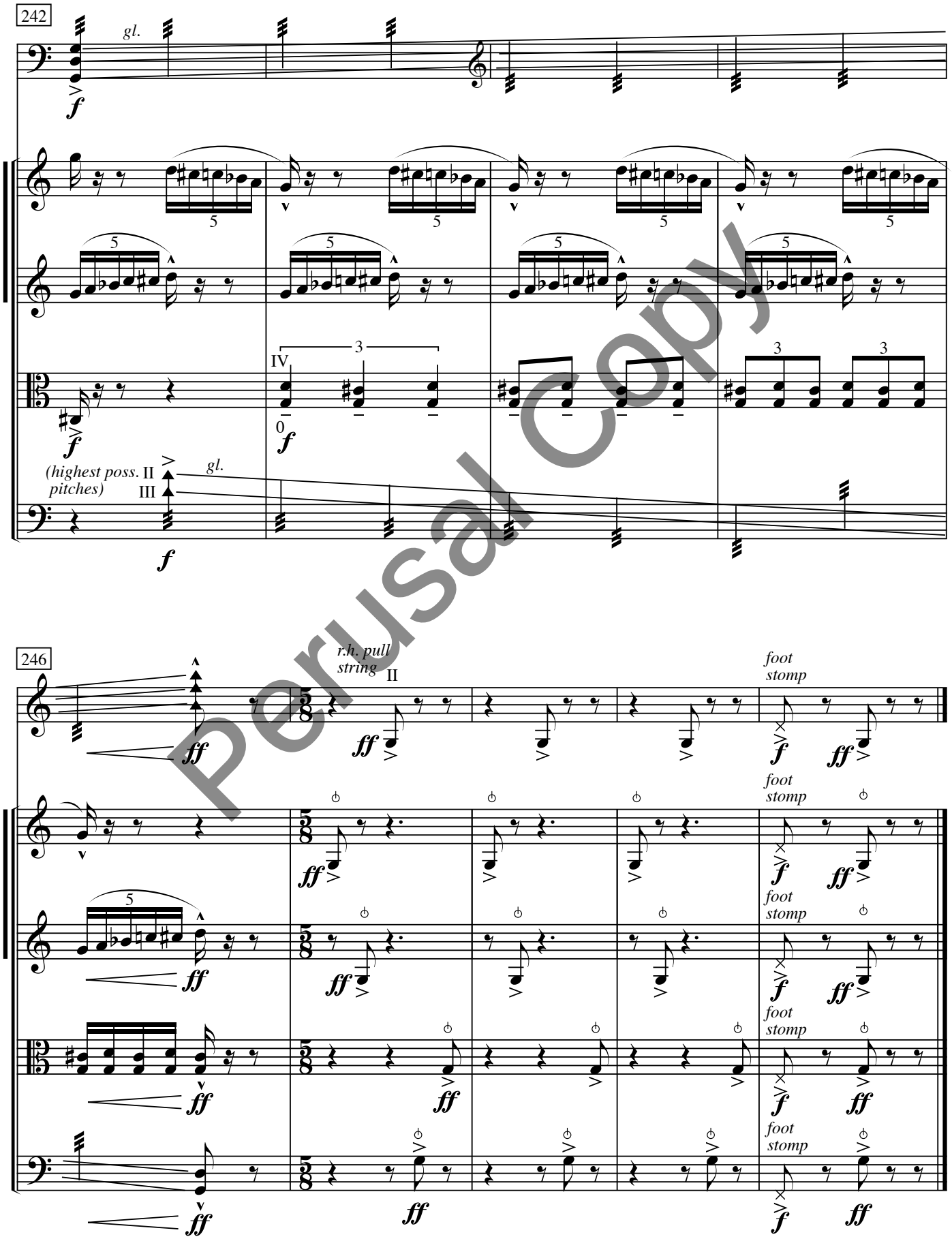

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