GORDON GOODWIN

LITTLE PHAT BAND SERIES

As Performed by Gordon Goodwin's Little Phat Band

An Elusive Man

GORDON GOODWIN

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INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor
B♭ Tenor Saxophone
B♭ Trumpet
Trombone
Guitar
Piano
Bass (Acoustic)
Drums
Guitar Chords

Belwin JAZZ
a division of Alfred

NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

This song is quite unlike anything I've written before. The groove indication says "half-time swing feel," but as The Little Phat Band worked on this song, it started to sound more earthy and "gut-bucket." We enhanced the rather bluesy/folk influence by using a six-string acoustic guitar. Getting the correct tempo here is crucial. The score indication of 136 BPM is the *fastest* tempo this song should be played. You may want to try it around 130 BPM, because this song should have a relaxed swagger to it. But get it going too fast, and the attitude goes out the window!

This song sort of cracks me up. After the earthy, bluesy-folksy start, there are moments of harmonic complexity, as in mm. 46–47 and mm. 69–70. This is the musical world we inhabit folks, and I love it! The stylistic barriers are breaking down, and as contemporary musicians, we must be prepared to handle any musical genre at any time.

The solo section at m. 47 starts out with the half-time feel, and I recommend that the piano player double the bass part with the left hand, until m. 90, where the bass begins to walk. But this is definitely not a traditional swing feel—the drums should still be slamming beats 2 and 4. Having said that, in the spirit of my genre-busting comments above, should the music want to go in any other direction during the solo section, by all means, follow your instincts as a band. For me, the essence of playing in a small group is having the freedom to create within the structure of a good song, and creating a balance between written parts and spontaneity in the improvisation.

After all the improvisation is finished, the chart embarks on the development section. (You know me—I have to put in one of those!) At m. 122, things get a little more sophisticated. Both the horns and the rhythm-section players have very specific parts that fit together like a puzzle, with one section answering the other. The drummer helps hold everybody together by setting the figures up.

Next, you will arrive at a key change at m. 138, as the chart drives to the finish. Once again, the chromatic left-hand line in the piano doubles the bass line. Take a close look at mm. 144–145. These measures can be a little tricky to line up, but once again, the drummer is the common denominator to listen carefully to and help place those triplets. (Note: For ease of notation, the piano, bass, and guitar parts are written as eighth notes, but you should swing them as you normally would.) The collage of ii–V chord progressions at m. 152 gradually morph into more dissonant harmonies in mm. 154–157, pushing that stylistic barrier to the edge.

Measure 160 includes a declarative statement of the bridge. Two measures of absolute silence (mm. 164–165) lead to a restatement of the opening vamp, but this time, with a brand new melody in the horns. Hey, I almost like this melody better than the original one! This vamp builds gradually to the last two bars, which assertively slam the door on this chart!

This song definitely requires a little preparation, but that effort will show that your band is versatile and up to any stylistic challenge.

I hope you have fun with "An Elusive Man."

—Gordon Goodwin

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Gordon Goodwin

Gordon Goodwin started composing at the age of three. No masterpieces at that time, but he kept at it and wrote his first big band chart at age 13. It was good enough to convince him that he could possibly keep doing this. Flash cut 20 years later and Gordon is working in Hollywood, writing for television and film, playing sessions on keyboards and woodwinds, and working with artists like Ray Charles, Christina Aguilera, Johnny Mathis, Toni Braxton, John Williams, Natalie Cole, David Foster, Sarah Vaughan, Mel Torme, Brian McKnight, and Quincy Jones, to name a few. Goodwin's cinematic scoring and orchestration craft can be heard on such films as *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, *Escape to Witch Mountain*, *Get Smart*, *Glory Road*, *National Treasure*, *The Incredibles*, *Remember the Titans*, *Armageddon*, *The Majestic*, *Con Air*, *Gone In 60 Seconds*, *Enemy of the State*, *Star Trek Nemesis*, and even the classic cult film *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes*.

In 2000, Goodwin formed The Big Phat Band, an eighteen piece jazz ensemble, which quickly gained a reputation as one of the most exciting large jazz ensembles on the planet. To date, the BPB has released five records, *Swingin' For The Fences* (2000), *XXL* (2003), *The Phat Pack* (2006), *Act Your Age* (2008), and *That's How We Roll* (2011). The albums have featured state-of-the-art guest artists like Arturo Sandoval, Eddie Daniels, Take 6, Brian McKnight, Johnny Mathis, Michael Brecker, Dianne Reeves, David Sanborn, Chick Corea, Dave Grusin, Lee Ritenour, Patti Austin, Art Tatum, Dave Koz, Gerald Albright, and Marcus Miller.

Goodwin's work has garnered him three Emmy Awards and eleven Grammy® nominations, with three Grammy wins for his work on the Pixar film *The Incredibles* (2006) and his arrangements of "Rhapsody in Blue" (2012) and "On Green Dolphin Street" (2014). His charts are played all over the world, and along with his method books and CDs, have been a robust source of inspiration and learning for thousands of young musicians.

CONDUCTOR
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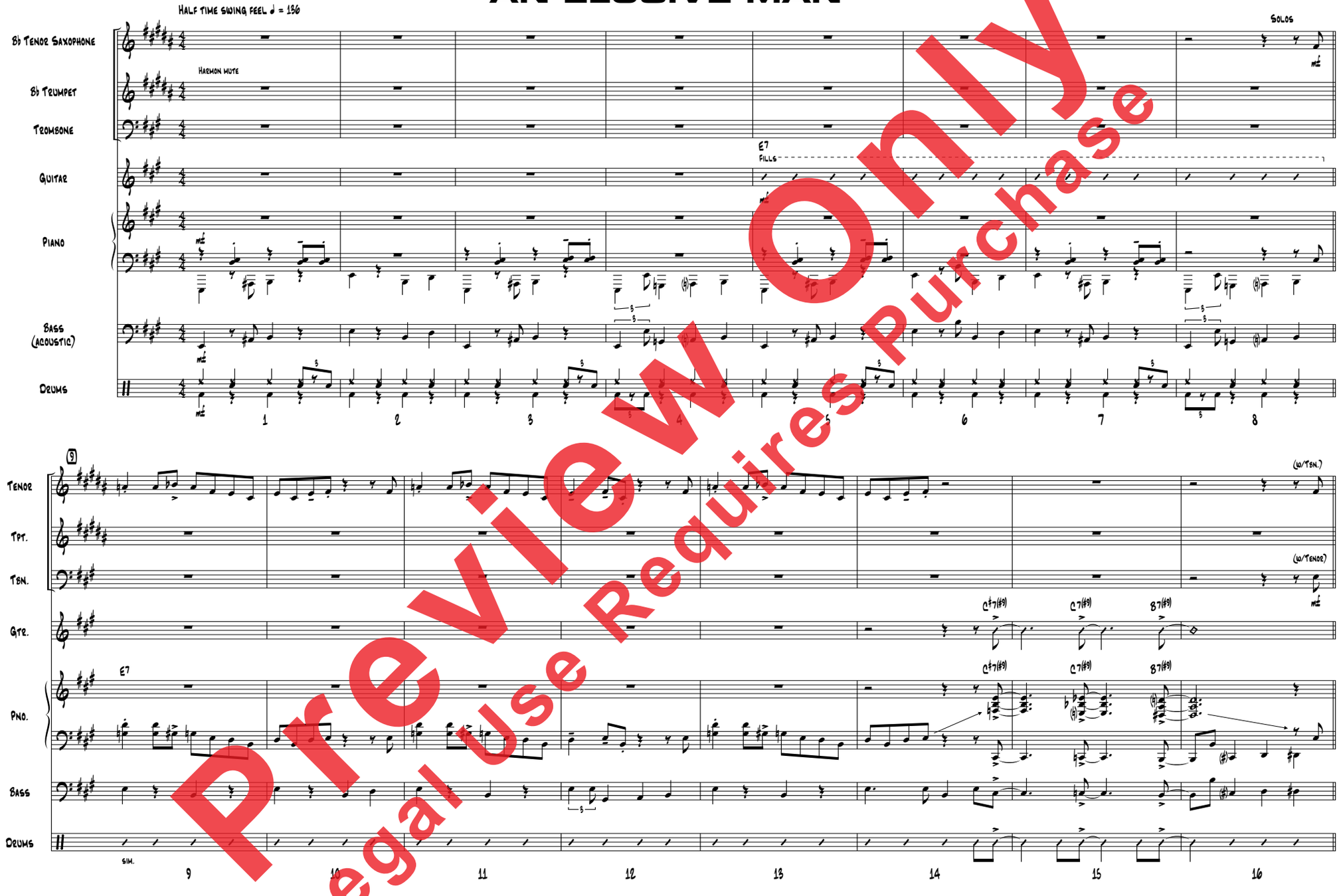
As Performed by Gordon Goodwin's Little Phat Band

AN ELUSIVE MAN

By Gordon Goodwin



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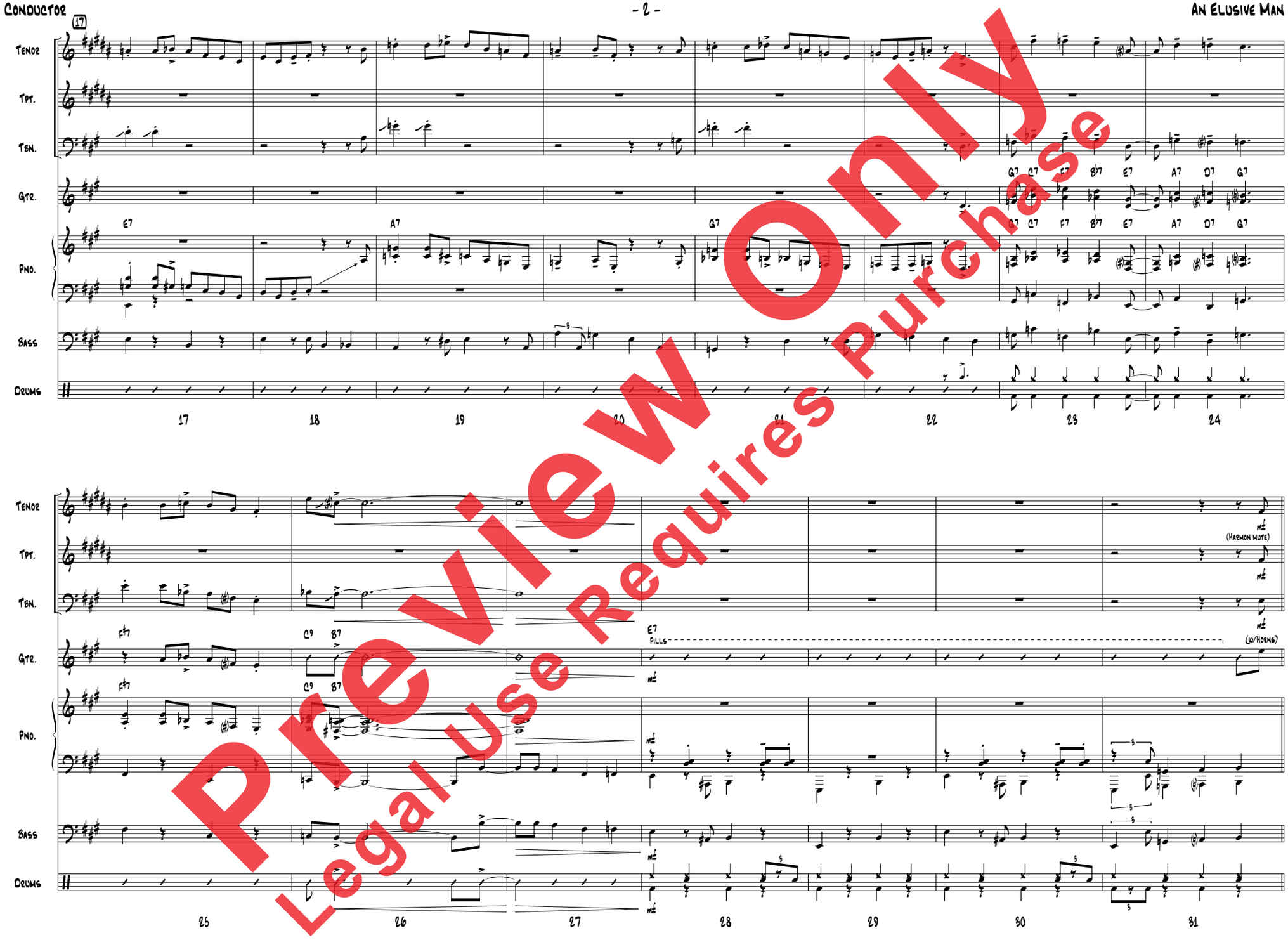

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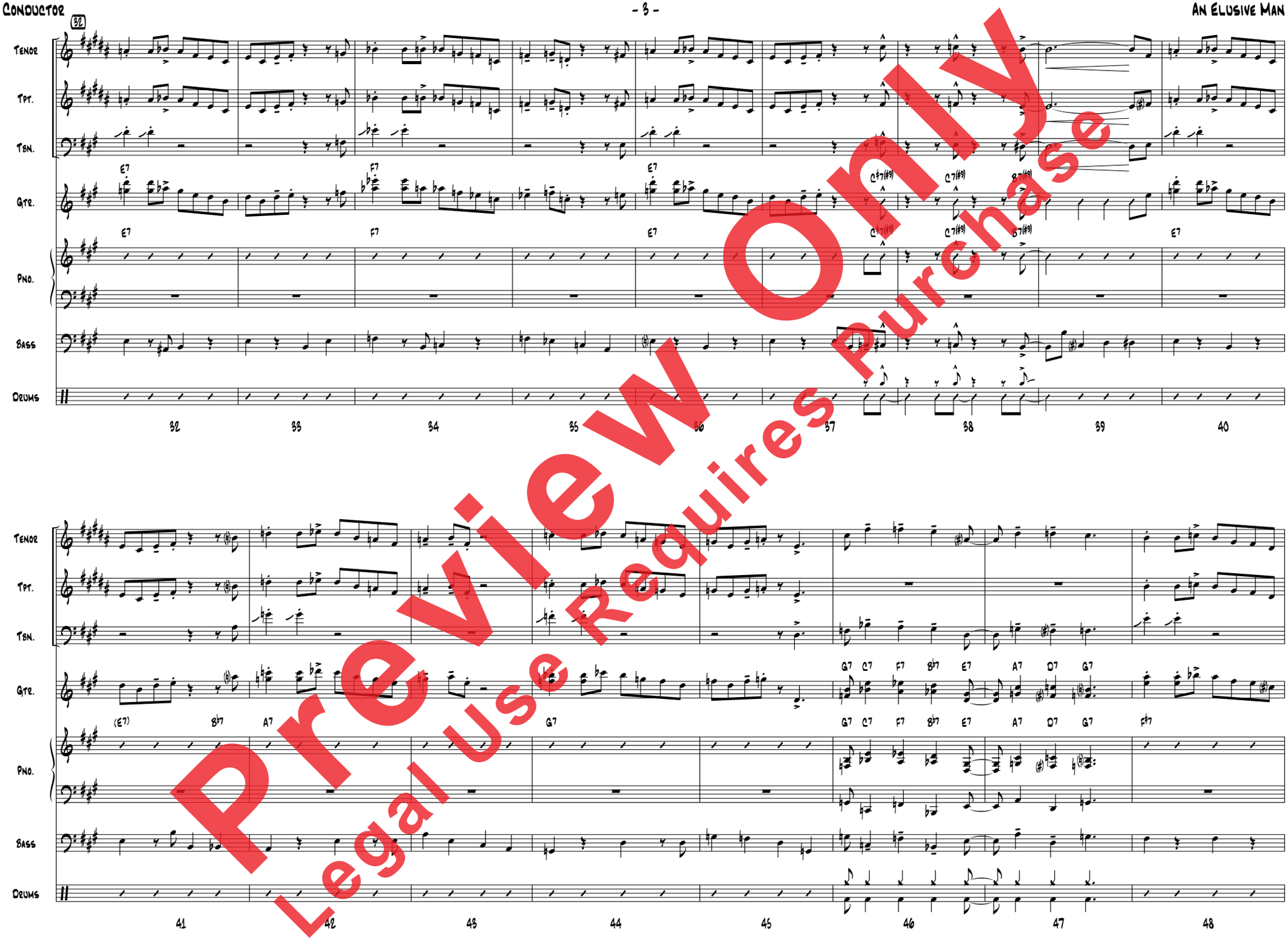

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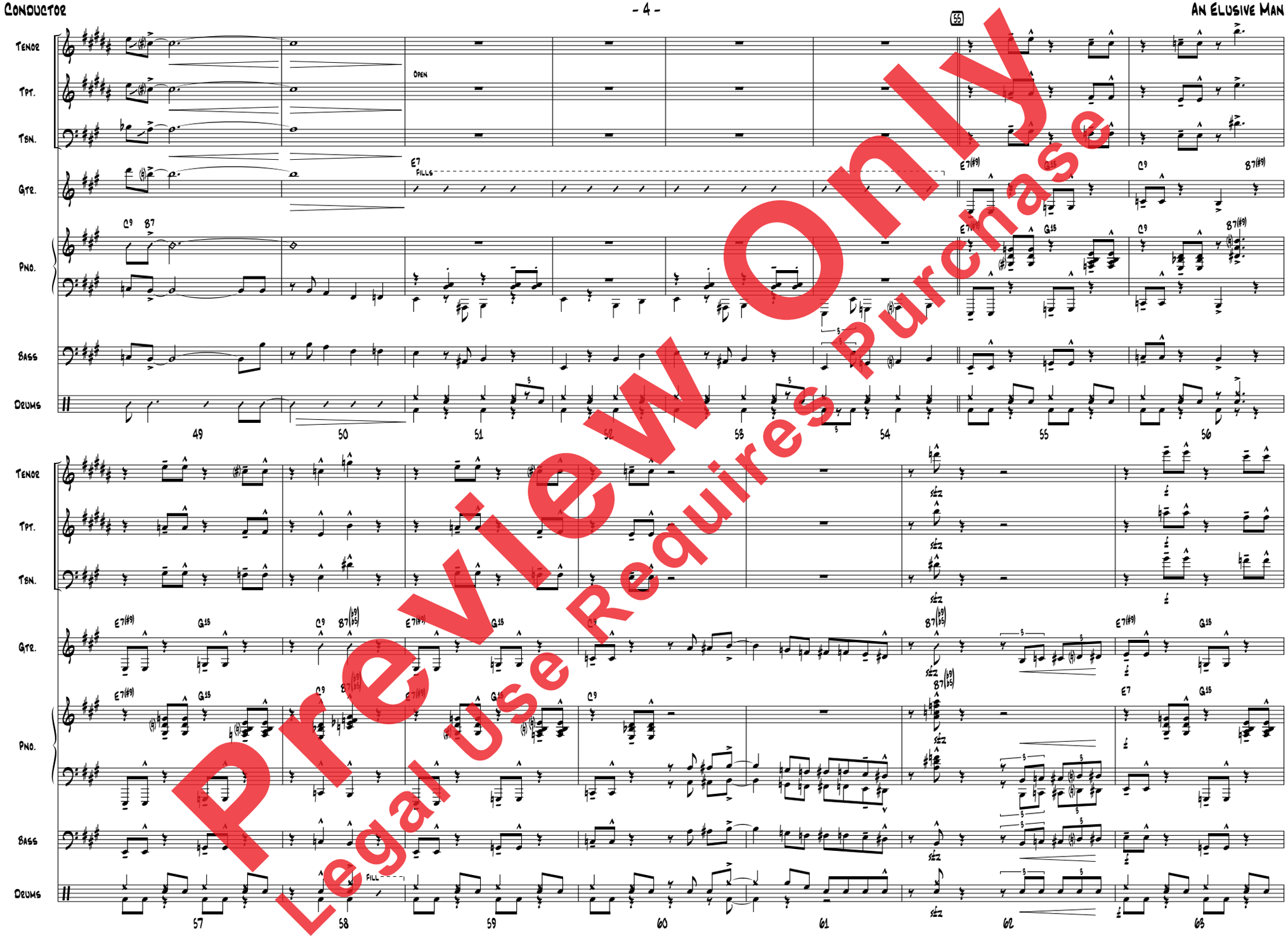

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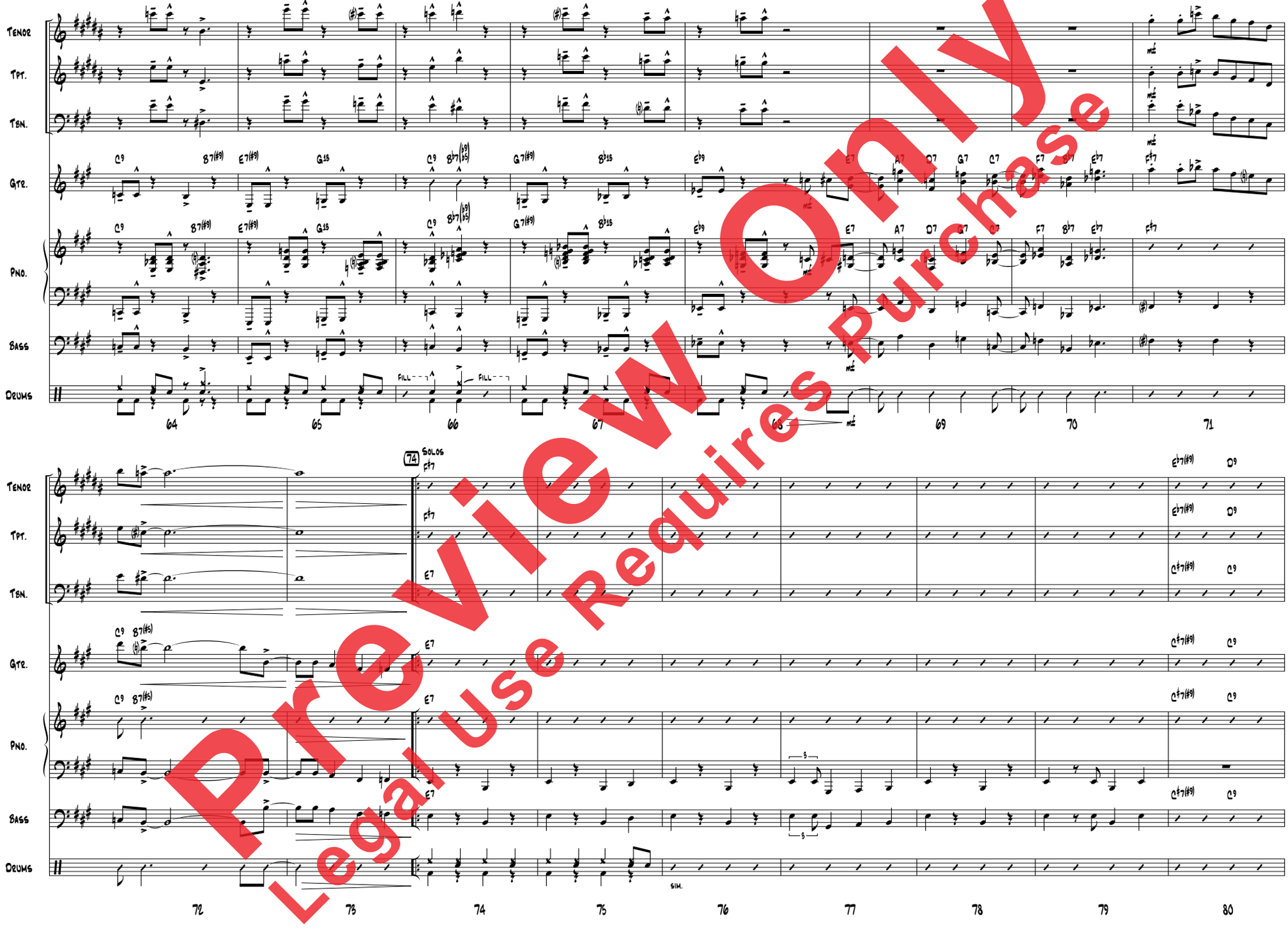

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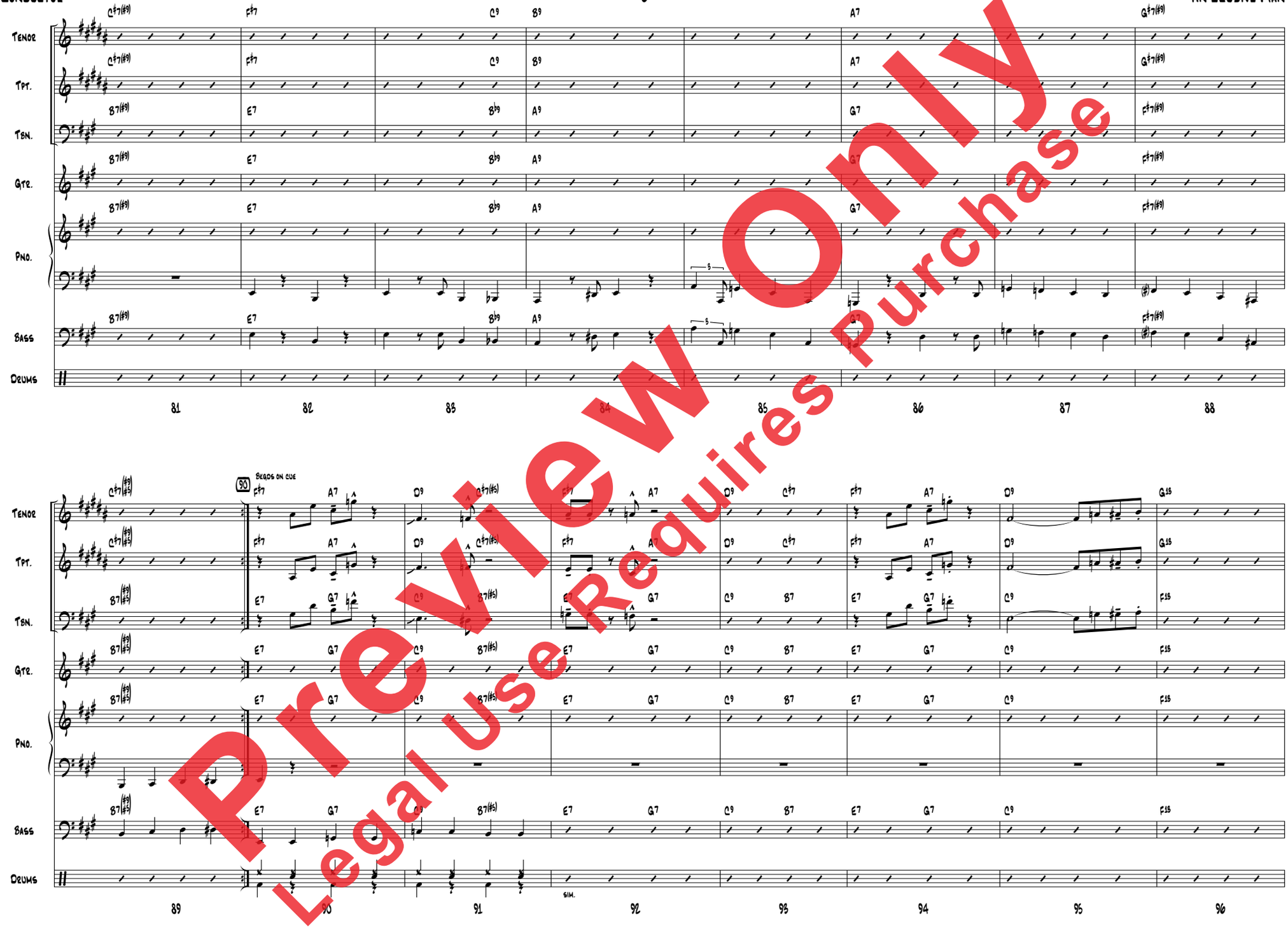

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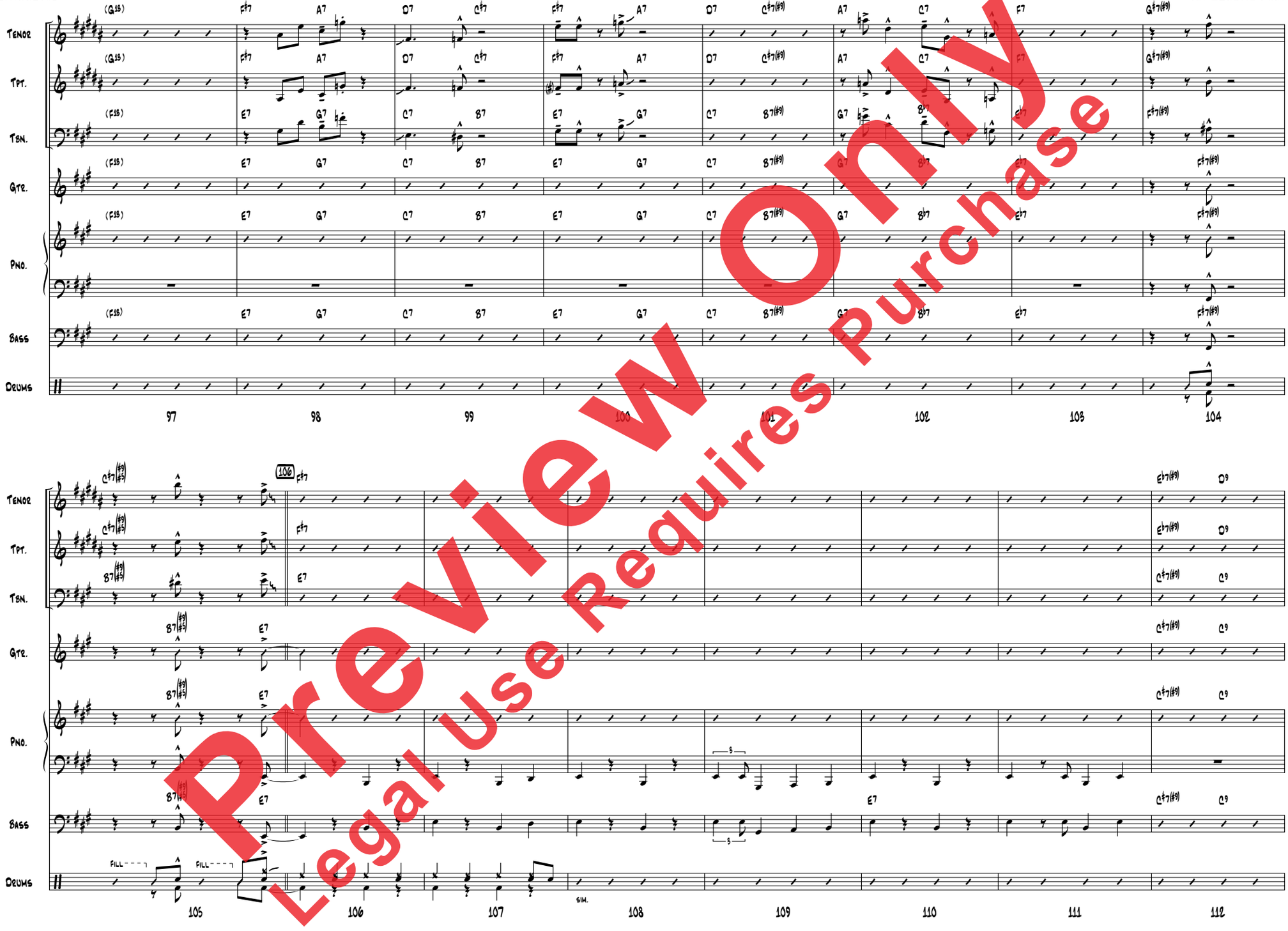

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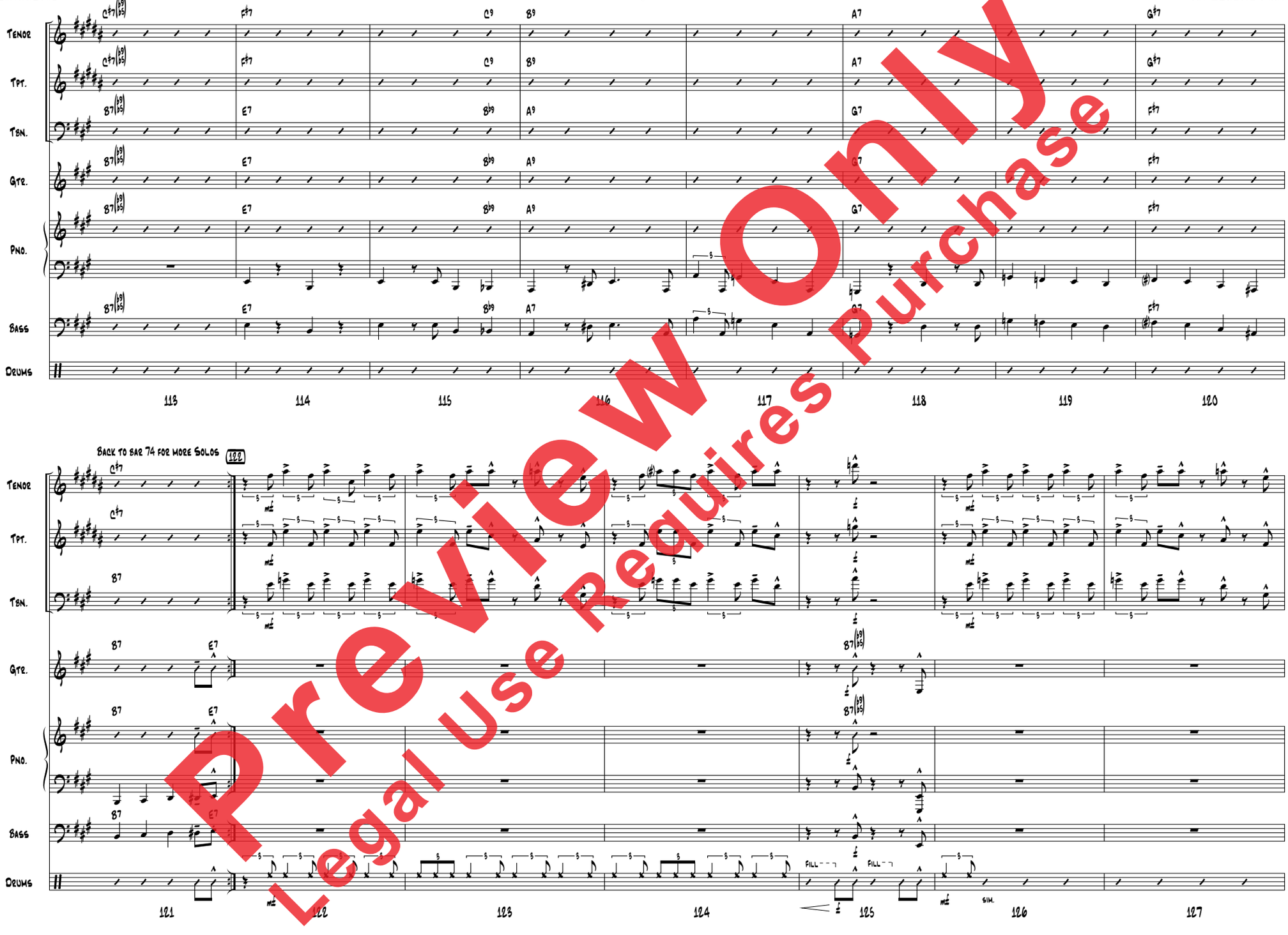

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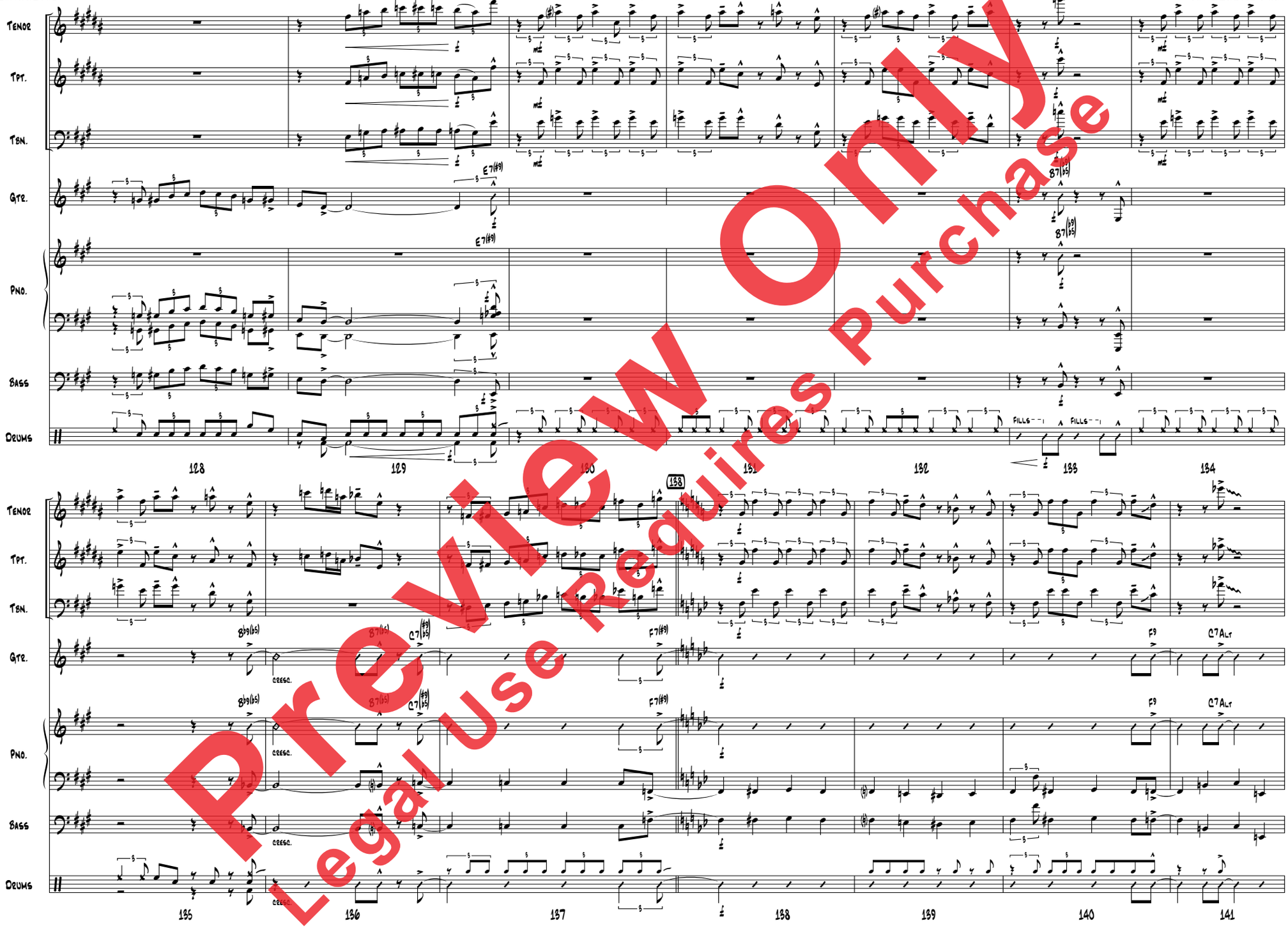

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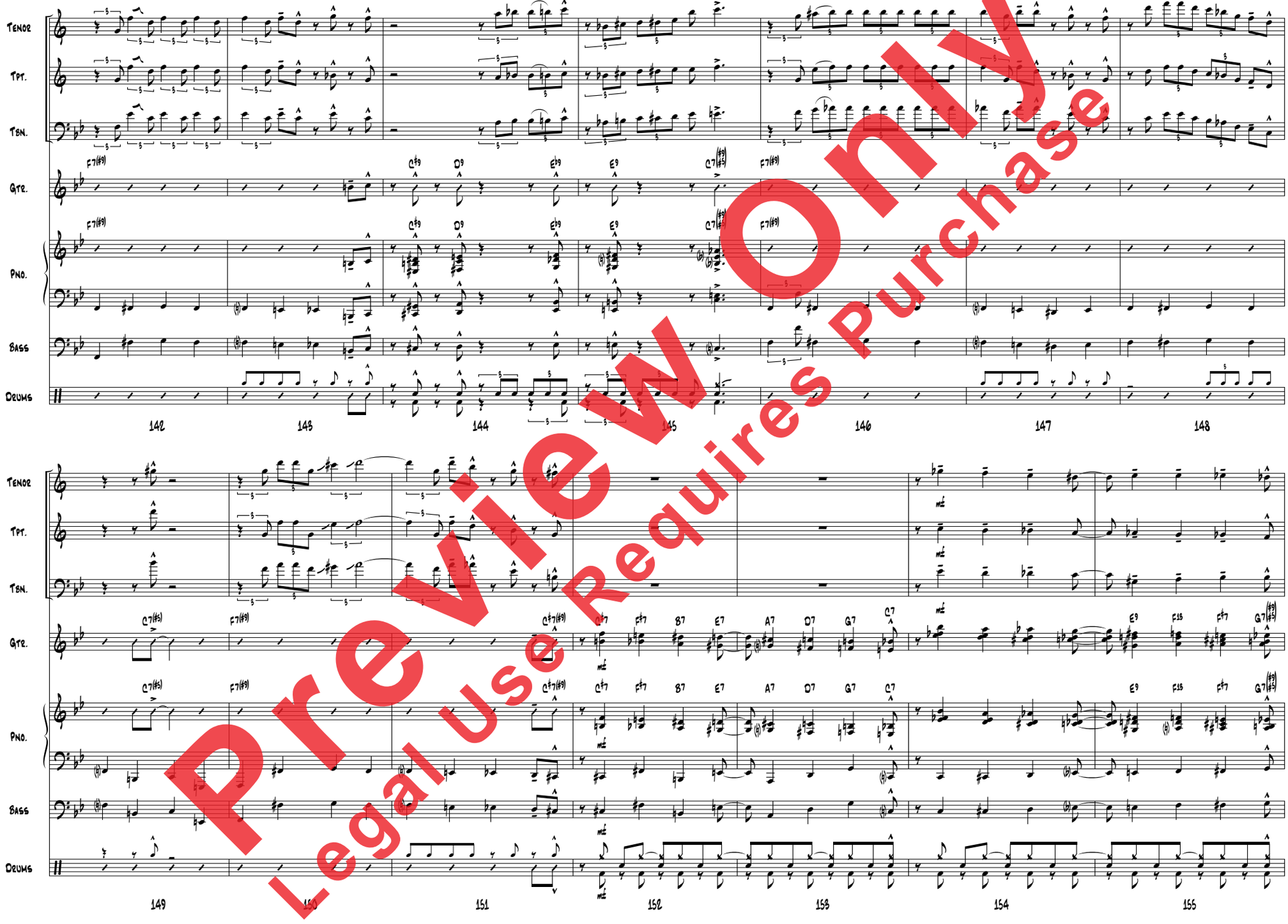

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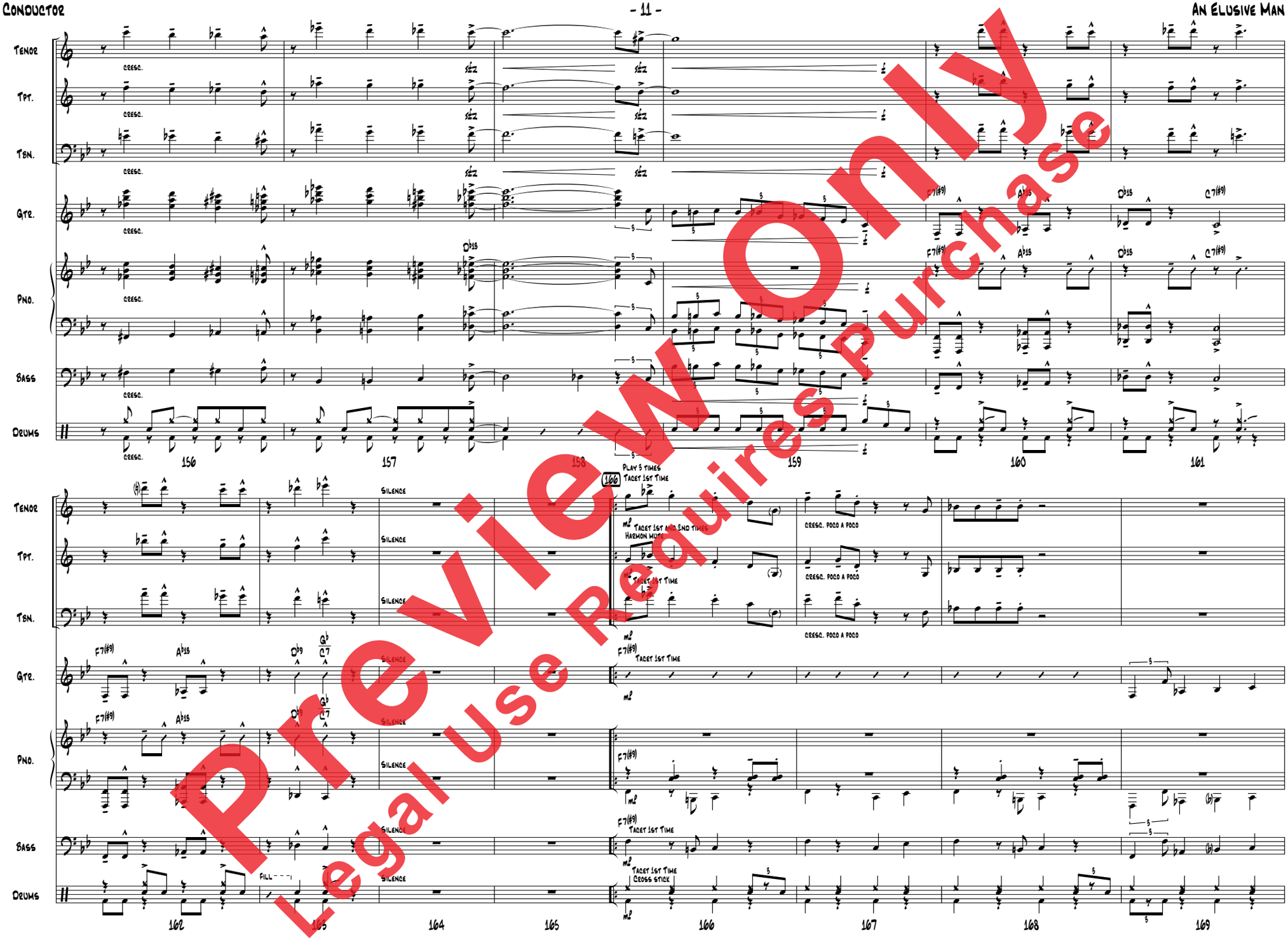

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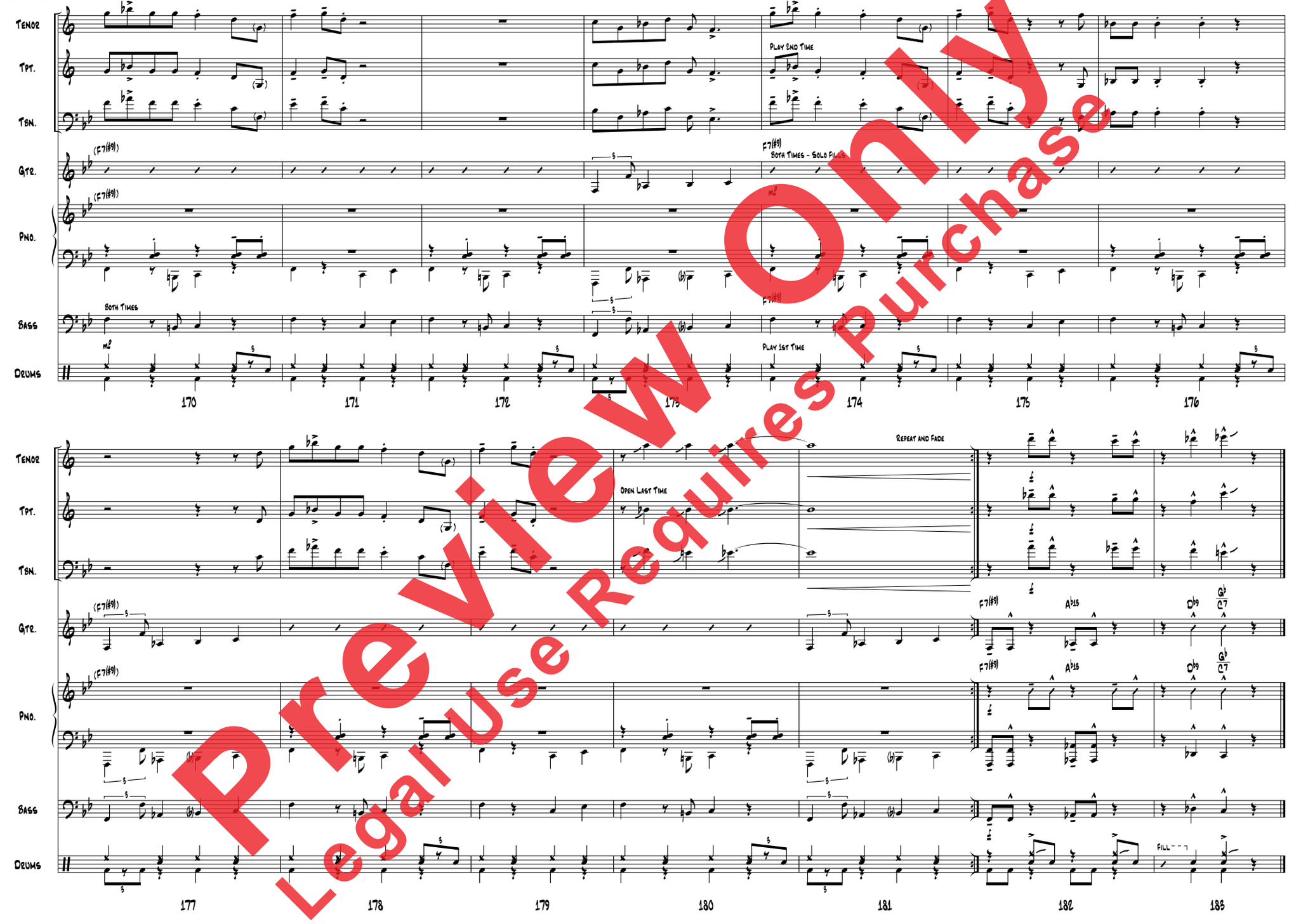

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