Code of Hammurabi

King of Babylon

VICTOR LÓPEZ (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
(Bells and/or Xylophone)
1 Optional Timpani
(Tune: C, F)
2 Percussion 1
(Snare Drum, Bass Drum)
3 Percussion 2
(Crash Cymbals or Optional Suspended Cymbal, Sleigh Bells/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

The inspiration for this composition comes from reading historical facts about Hammurabi, a former King of Babylon (modern day Iraq), who ruled Babylonia for more than 42 years and wrote a set of Babylonian laws called the Code of Hammurabi; thus, the title. The codes of law are known to be one of the first ever written in recorded history. There are 282 laws and they were inscribed on stone tablets (stele) standing over eight feet tall (2.4 meters), of unknown provenance, found in Persia in 1901. The structure of the code is very specific, with each offense receiving a specified punishment. The punishments tended to be very harsh by modern standards, with many offenses resulting in death, disfigurement, or the use of "eye for eye, tooth for tooth." Owing to his reputation in modern times as an ancient lawgiver, Hammurabi's portrait is in many government buildings throughout the world.

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.

Belwin BAND
a division of Alfred

NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

Departing from the traditional format of most beginning band literature, this piece has been written without a key signature; consequently, all notes should be played in their natural form (no flats or sharps) except for any alteration indicated by an accidental. Students who have been playing for at least three months should not have problems playing most of the notes; however, due to the tonality of the piece, it was necessary to introduce D♭ Concert, which may be new to some students in the ensemble. Before rehearsing the piece, have students look up the fingerings in the method book and just check to make certain that it is correct. This should take very little time and effort.

The beginning should be played majestically. Notice that the winds in measures 1, 2, 5, and 6 are playing open fourth and fifth intervals. Make certain that those intervals are played in tune in order to achieve the intended sonority. At rehearsal number 10, the dynamic level is now at a mezzo forte and the clarinet has the melody while the mallets and sleigh bells have a percussive ostinato background that should stay under the clarinet. If there are no sleigh bells, the part may be played by a hi-hat in the closed position. Notice that the mallet part provides a great opportunity to introduce young players to the use of two mallets. When holding the mallets, the player should use the two-mallet grip. Make certain that all bars are played just slightly off center to produce the strongest fundamental pitch while providing consistency of sound.

At rehearsal number 18, the melody now moves to the flute, oboe, and trumpet while the alto saxophone and horn play a harmony part, and the mallets play along with the sleigh bells to continue to build intensity. At rehearsal number 26, the dynamic level goes up a notch to forte but there should be no overblowing. At measure 24, remind students to play all notes long but not accented. Be sure that the crash cymbal solo on measures 34 through 37 is played with firmness. A quick check to find out if the player is holding the cymbals correctly and able to produce the correct crash sound will definitely add to the effectiveness of this piece. In the absence of crash cymbals, an option would be to play the part using a suspended cymbal with a drumstick.

The section at measure 38 to the end is crucial as it sets up the ending. It is here that you can show off, if you will, the ensemble. Spend a little time rehearsing with the entire percussion section to the point that they have memorized the part. Work on measures 41 and 42 and make certain that the accents are being played correctly and that the crescendo starts at a mezzo forte and really builds to a fortissimo.

May you and your students have as much fun playing this piece as I had writing it. I know that it will be a favorite piece with your students and audience and that it may inspire you to take them to contest after all.

Enjoy!

Víctor López

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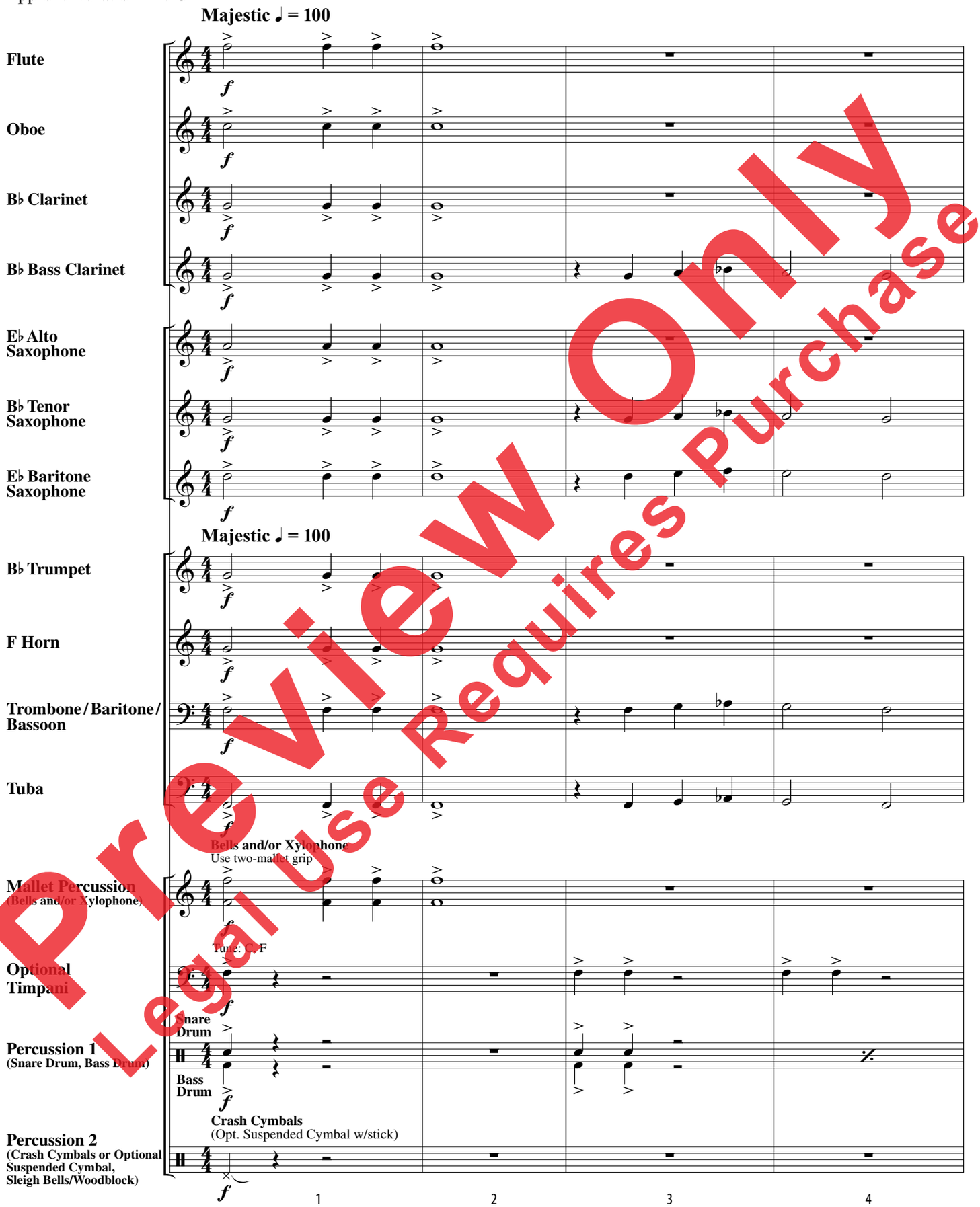
FULL SCORE
Approx. Duration - 1:45

By Victor López (ASCAP)



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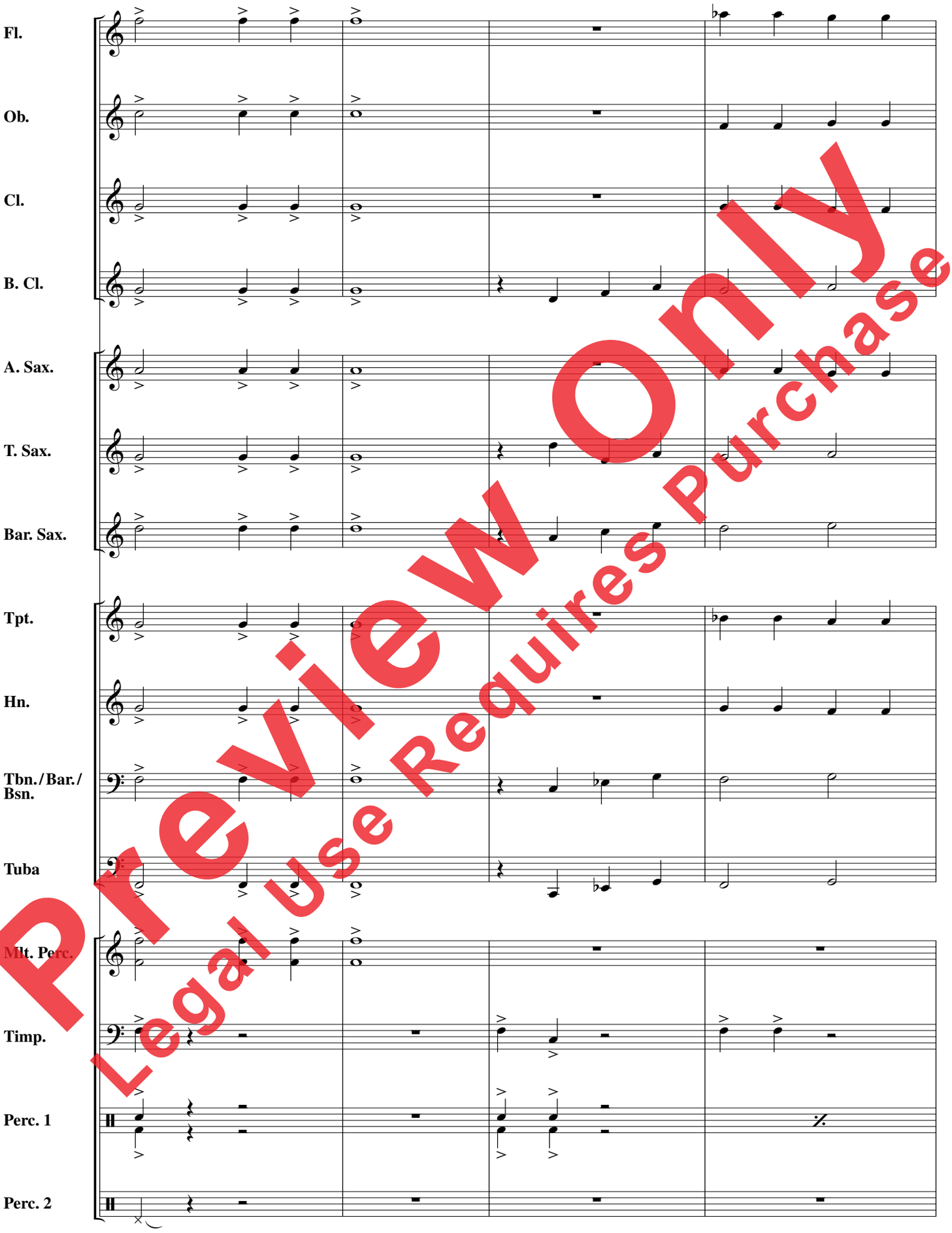

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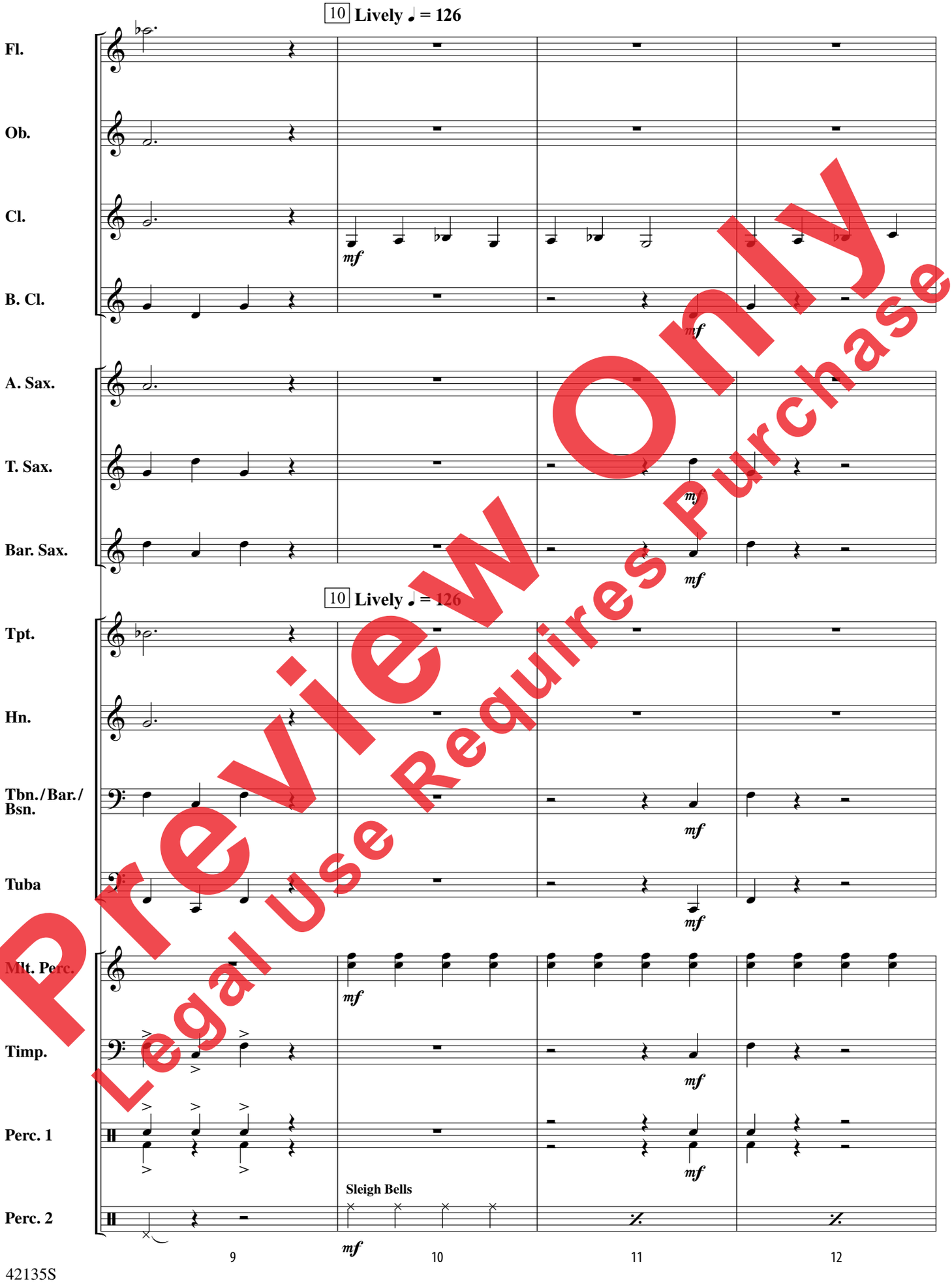

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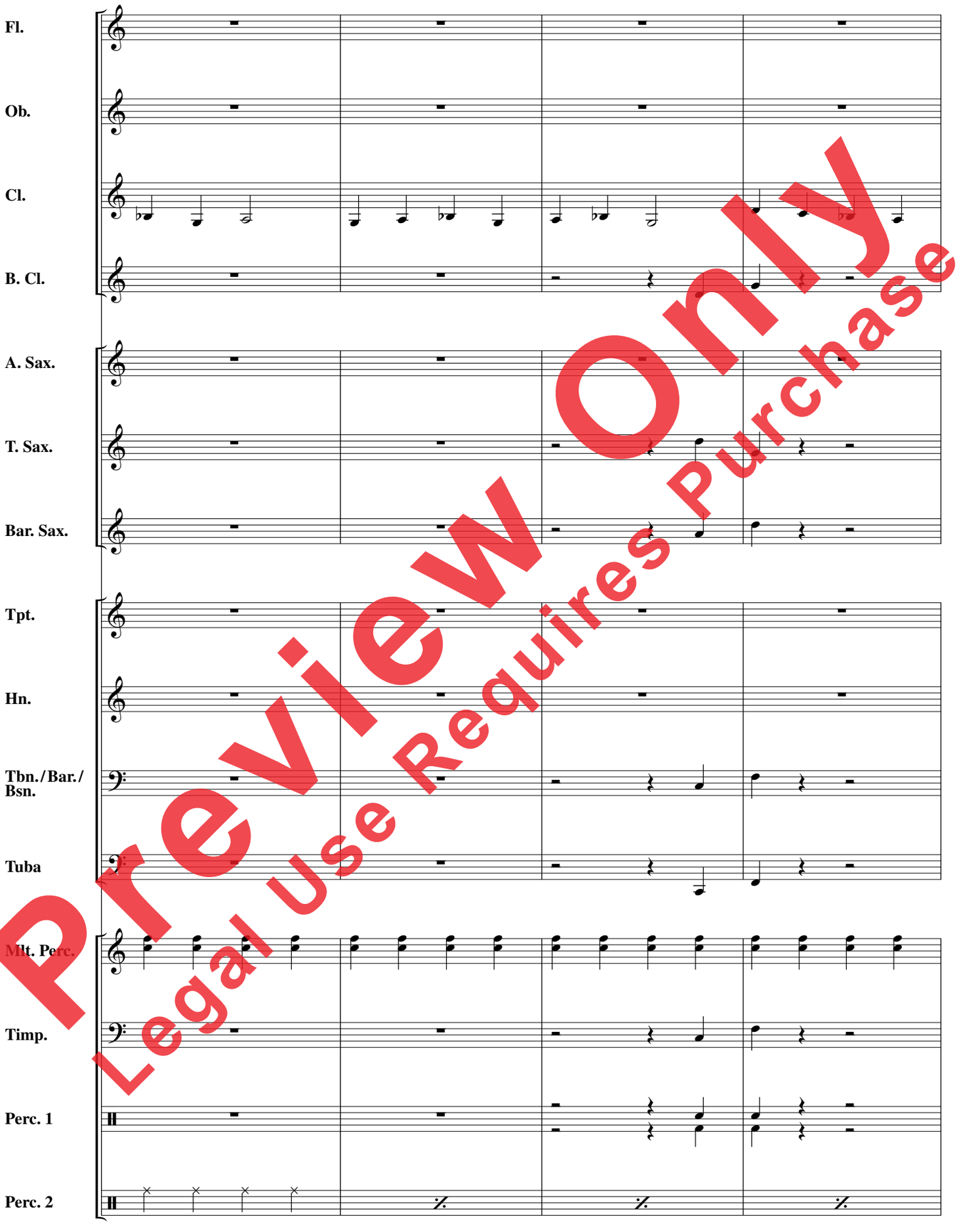

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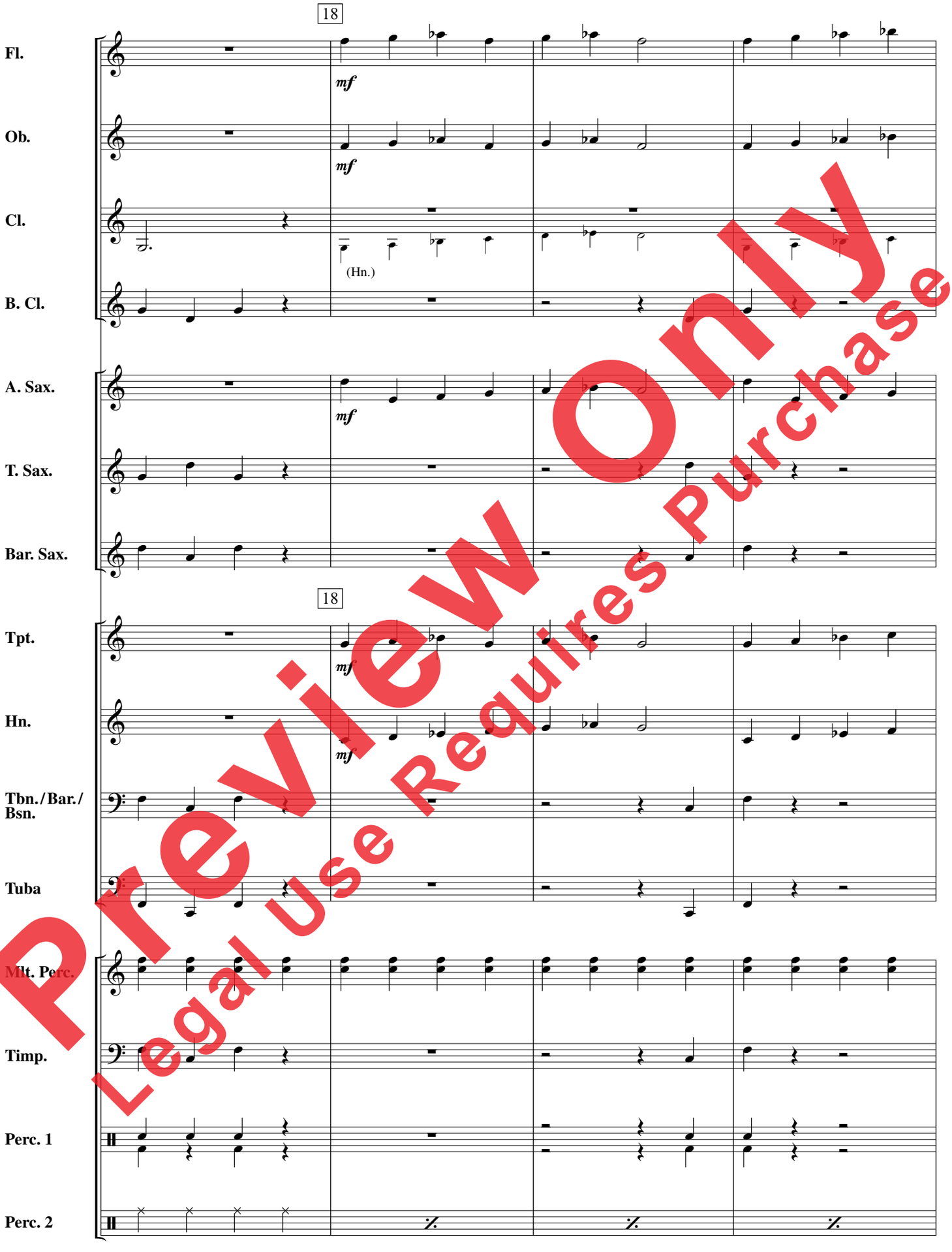

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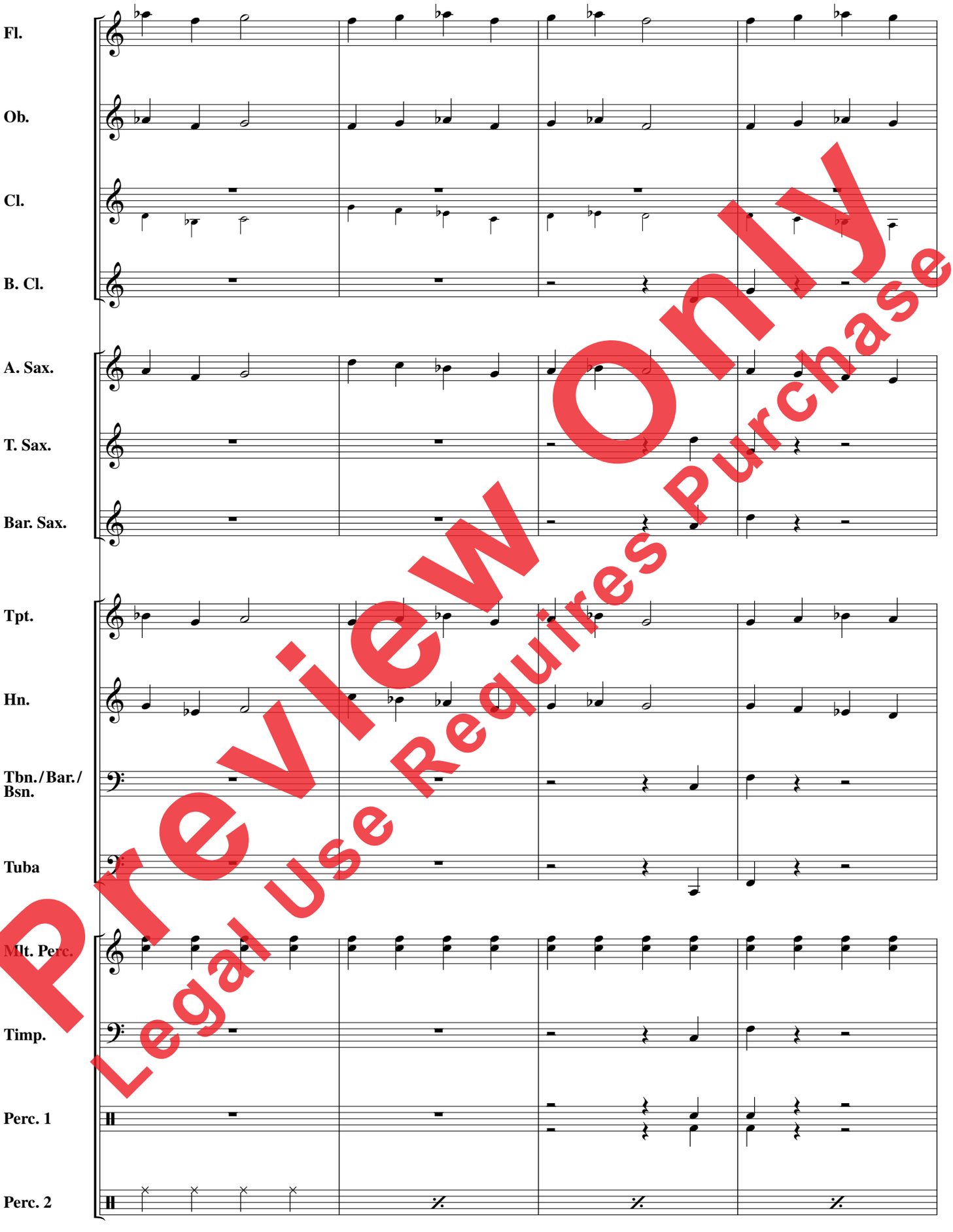

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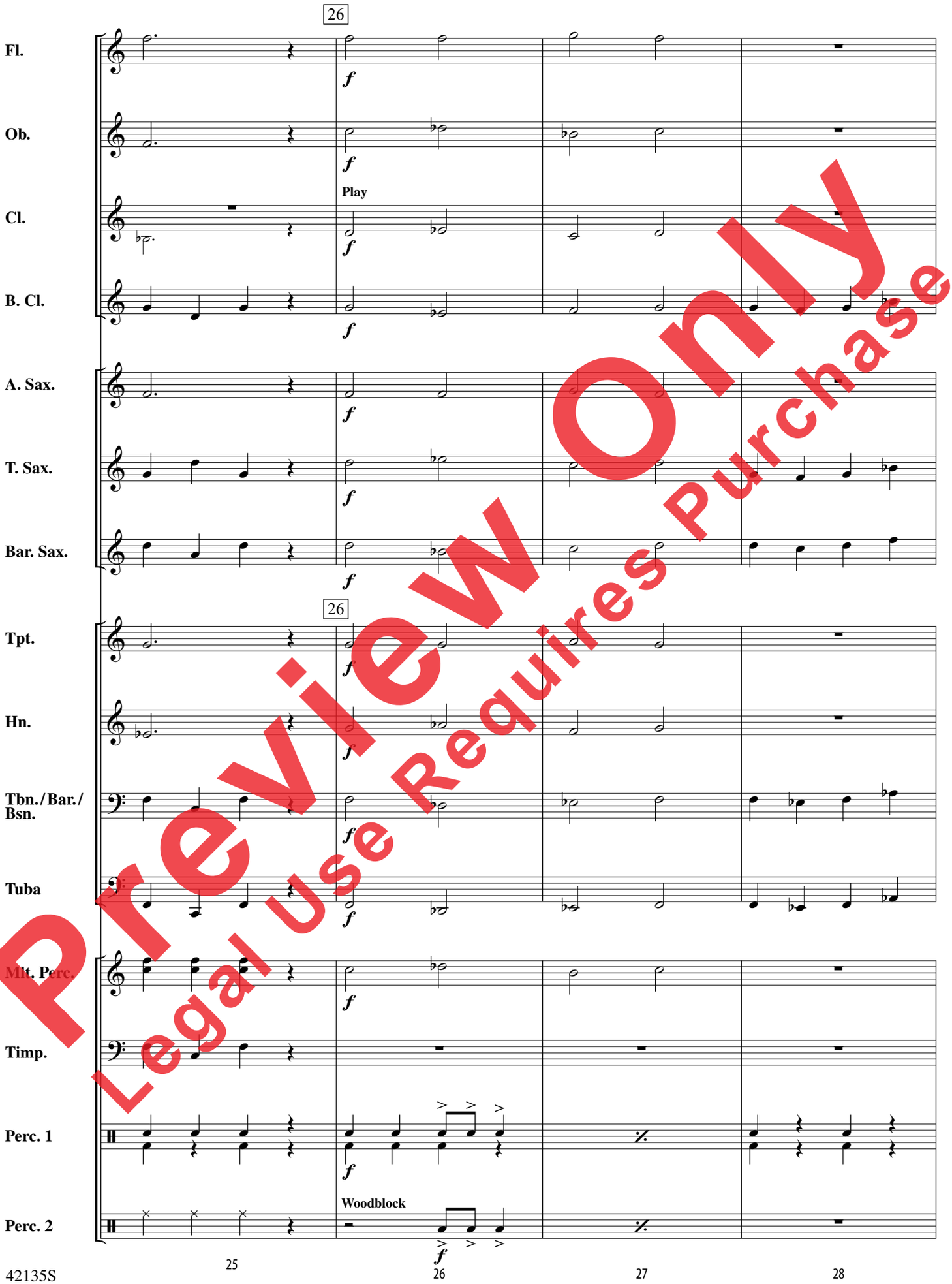

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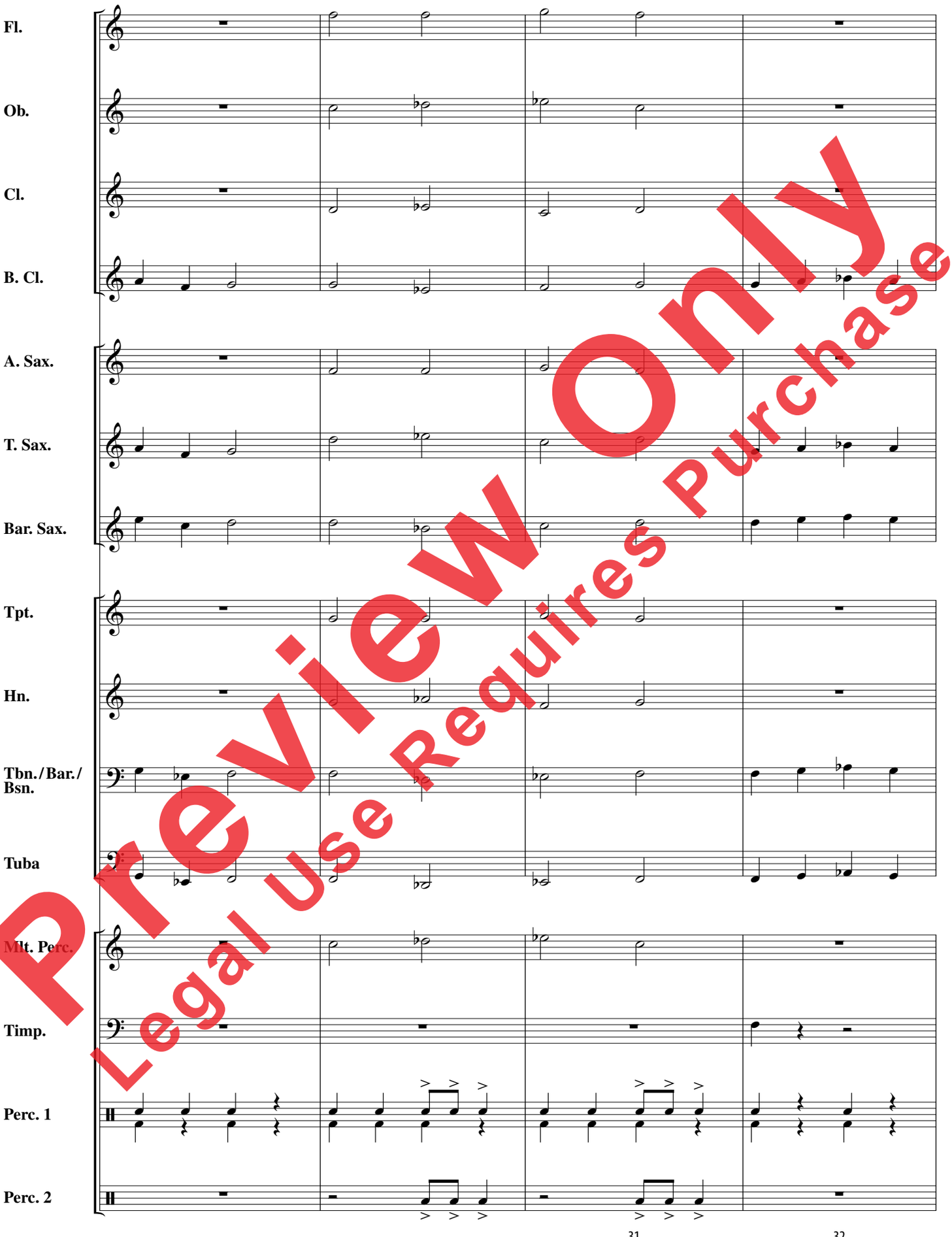

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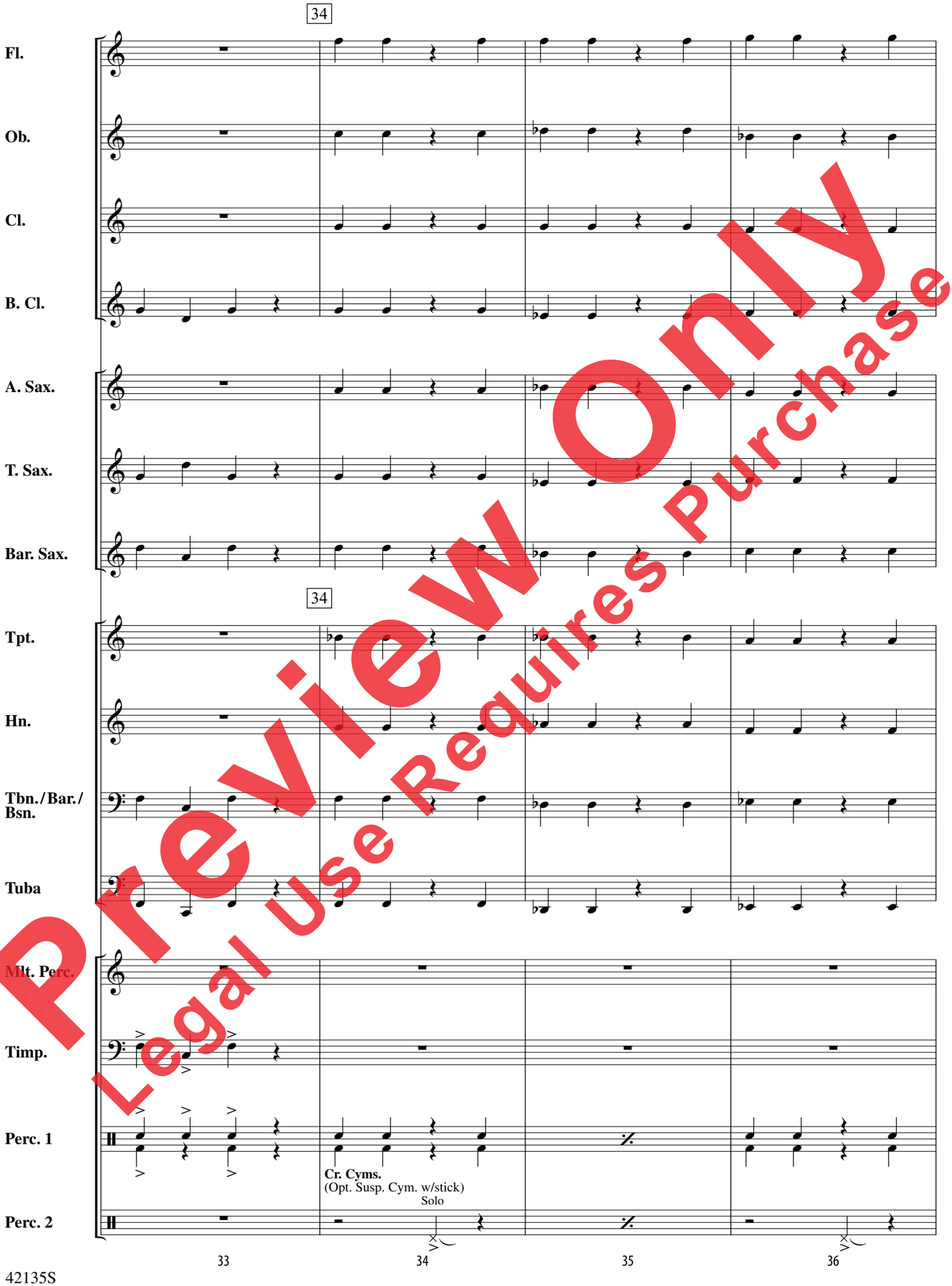

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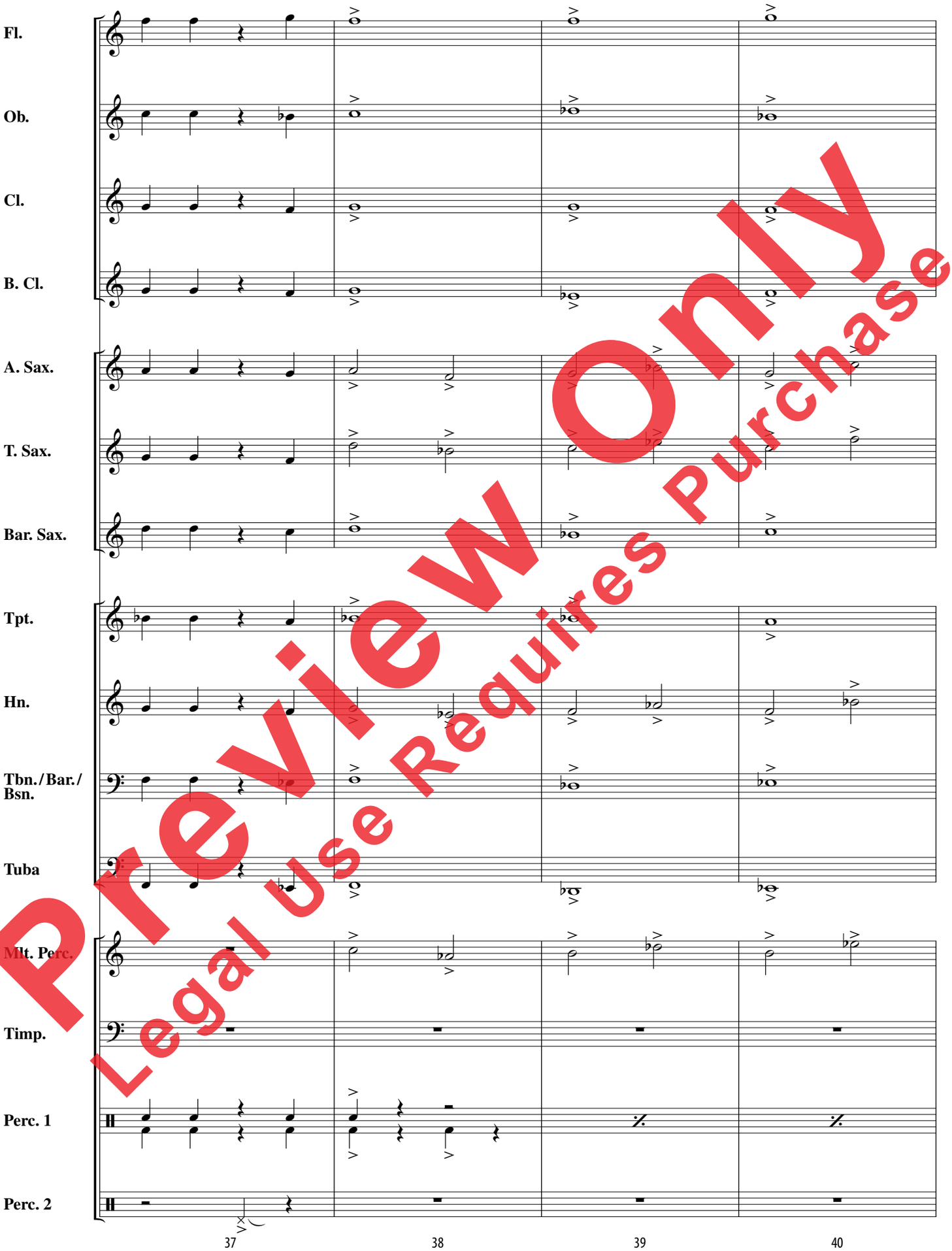

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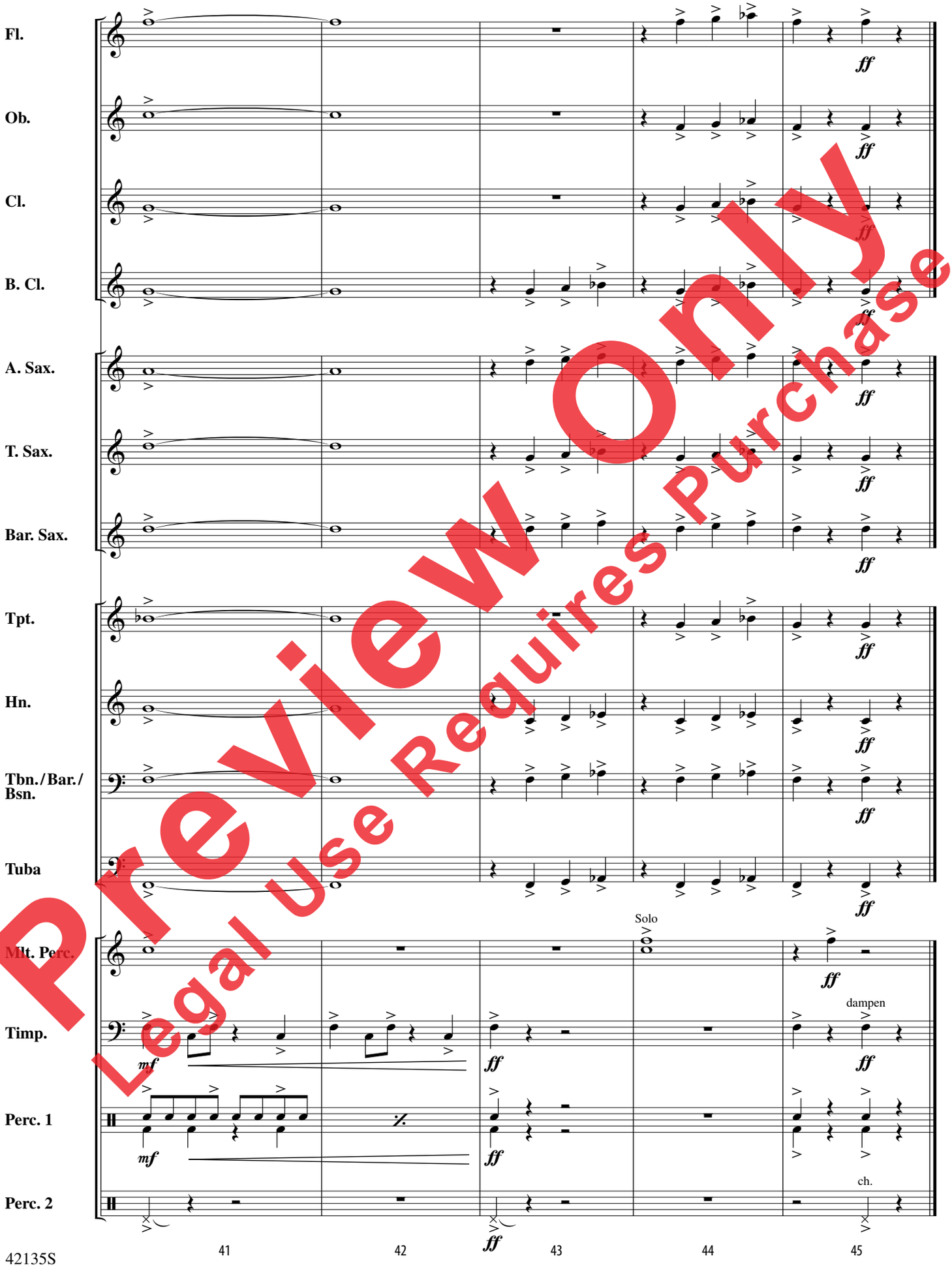

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