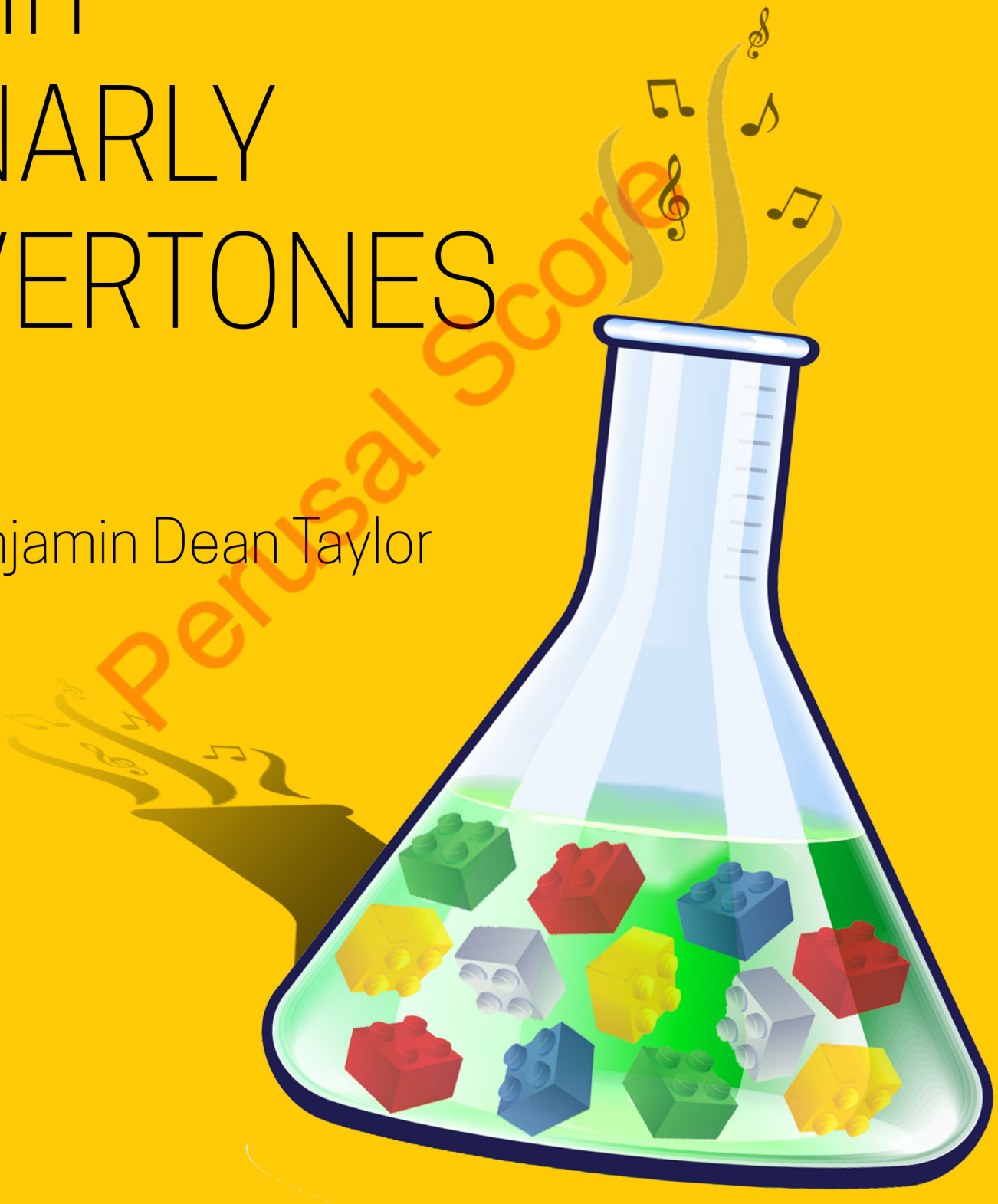
LEGOS EMIT GNARLY OVERTONES

Benjamin Dean Taylor

Perusal Score



LEGOS EMIT GNARLY OVERTONES

BENJAMIN DEAN TAYLOR

for flexible, virtual ensemble and audio track

Perusal Score

Written for and dedicated to

THE STUDENTS OF MUSIC CREATORS ACADEMY
2020

2020

Perusal Score

Duration: 4.5 minutes

Music typeset by the composer

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Taylor, Benjamin Dean
- *LEGOS EMIT GNARLY OVERTONES* for flex, virtual ensemble and audio track

www.benjamintaylormusic.com

Grade 2

Flexible, Virtual Ensemble Instrumentation

PART 1: **Flute/Violin/Oboe/Alto Sax./Clarinet/Trumpet**

PART 2: **Clarinet/Trumpet/Alto Sax./Horn in F/Violin/Viola**

PART 3: **Trombone/Euphonium/Tenor Saxophone/Bassoon/Cello**

PART 4: **Trombone/Euphonium/Tuba/Bass Clarinet/Bari. Sax./Double Bass/Bassoon**

PERCUSSION
No percussion is required for a successful performance of this work. Percussionists can choose from the pitched parts above and play them on mallet instruments such as marimba, xylophone, or vibraphone (or even a piano). Alternatively, percussionists may choose to play unpitched instruments but in this case they would need to invent, or improvise their own part in order to contribute tastefully to the groove in the audio track.

ELECTRONIC AUDIO TRACK (digital file playable on any device, required)

Perusal Score

Duration 4:30

Program Note

I absolutely love Legos and the creative play they inspire. Trapped at home during the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic, my five young boys and I played even more Legos than usual. That made me think, "What if I made a piece of music that was like building with little Lego blocks, where little melodic ideas snapped together in interesting and playful ways?" I choose to build all of the melodic themes from a C minor pentatonic scale since pentatonic scales are literally a foundational building block for many aspects of music theory. I envisioned that the electronic track would be like the building surface where I could then place individual blocks of one measure melodies on top. The sounds in the track consist of sounds from Legos as well as other 8-bit style retro video game sound effects (created using a free online program called "beepbox" which is setup in a grid, again similar to Legos).

An important aspect of this piece is that the performers get to build their own melodies with the C minor pentatonic scale during moments of improvised solos, with even everyone simultaneously soloing at one point. In addition to playing their traditional instruments, the performers improvise with Legos in sonic and visual ways to enhance the composition and create a performance unique to their personalities and tastes. The word Lego comes from the Danish phrase *leg godt* meaning "play well."

A virtual ensemble - Why?

When the pandemic first started and everything shut down, I was beyond deflated because all of my upcoming concerts and premieres were canceled. My artistic output totally ground to a halt. I couldn't write music. After weeks of stagnation, I finally decided that I was sick of feeling like I was in "pause" mode. I decided that I would change the paradigm; if I couldn't make music in person, I would explore creative ways that I could make music virtually. This is one of the works that was a result of that paradigm shift. And I'm calling it that because up until recently, I had always thought of virtual music performances as significantly subpar to in-person concerts. I think we can all agree that while Eric Whitacre's virtual choir videos are cool, they are still not as cool as hearing a choir in person sing that same piece. Needless to say, there are definite huge advantages to making music in person rather than virtually. But what about the flip side? What advantages are there to making music virtually that we can't do in person? What can I do in a virtual performance space that I can't do in a normal concert hall? I quickly realized that to fully take advantage of the virtual performance space, the performance video had to be much more than watching a bunch of people play their clarinet recorded in their bedroom. Rather, a virtual performance has to incorporate visuals, props, acting, lighting, choreography, etc. to be all it can be, and to make it a distinct performance category. This piece as it currently exists can't be successfully performed in a concert hall. It wouldn't work. Sure, the music could be performed, but it wouldn't be nearly as compelling and interesting without the extra-musical aspects. Ultimately, I choose to see possibilities where others saw only limitations. As Stravinsky famously said, "the more constraints one imposes, the more one frees one's self to the chains that shackle the spirit."

I invite you to join me in flipping the paradigm. There is no need to feel that we are just sitting waiting for a vaccine before we can make music again. Now, more than ever, we need to experience the healing power of music. We need music to bring us together as a community and society. We need to show the rising generation of music makers that we can adapt and pivot. We don't have to sit idly by wishing for the old days and complaining about all the things we have no power to change. Let's empower the rising generation to change the old models of large ensemble music making. I add my voice to others - we can still make music that is meaningful, engaging, compelling and relevant. I'm certainly not saying that virtual music making is better than live, in-person music making. But until we can return to that way of making music, let's continue to be creative and make wonderful music virtually. Let's continue to "play well" in whatever capacity we can!

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Performance Notes

Legos Emit Gnarly Overtones is way more involved than your typical band or orchestra piece and thus requires significant advance setup. This work was written specifically for virtual rehearsal and performance and thus includes many non-musical instructions to ensure that the final video recording is as compelling and successful as possible. The final performance will be individual video recordings of the performers amalgamated together into one video. Eric Whitacre's virtual choir videos are a great example. However, the video for *Legos Emit Gnarly Overtones* will be significantly different in that it incorporates visual elements such that it is more like a music video.

Please read the following instructions carefully.

"Home Base"

"Home Base" is the location in your house where you (the performer) will stand (or sit) while playing your instrument. It should be marked with a piece of tape on the floor (like is done in theatre staging) so that you will be centered in the frame of the video when you film yourself. If possible, select or create a location that is free of background clutter. Also, you will want to ensure it has adequate light on you so that you are seen clearly.

Reading the Music

You'll need to either memorize your part, have the printed sheet music sitting on a stand right next to your camera, or simply display it on the computer with which you are filming.

Costume and Props

As a group, decide in rehearsal what you will wear to present a unified look for the final recording. Performers are invited to create their own Lego creations as part of the props, or attach Legos to their instruments, or make costumes out of Legos, whatever. The more creative the better!

Video specs and requirements

The video must be captured in landscape. Not portrait. Please go into your device settings and ensure that your camera is set to record 720p at 30 fps. Some of you might think that is not very high quality, but remember, your individual video will be quite small on the screen when everyone's are amalgamated together. In fact, recording in super high definition actually makes things more difficult for the wonderful person who ends up assembling all these videos because the large file sizes take MUCH longer to render.

Eliminate all possible background noise. No TV or music on. No loud AC or refrigerator, or dishwasher running. No siblings screaming in the other room. No dogs barking down the hall. Silence your phone. Unless you are home alone, you will likely need to be diplomatic about this

Perusal Score

by politely asking your family to help you record a successful video. You have to plan for an ideal time. It will likely take many attempts. You will likely spend hours practicing and recording this until you finally have a take with which you are satisfied. Please plan accordingly.

With all of this regarding lighting, background noise, etc. it is understood that the ideal may not be possible. That's fine. Just do your best with whatever parameters are in your control. Ask your friends in rehearsal and maybe you'll find a creative solution together!

Electronic audio track

It is CRUCIAL that you use headphones or earbuds to listen to the electronic audio track when video recording your performance. This will allow you to be synced with the rest of the ensemble. Download the track to your computer or phone (don't rely on streaming it off your wifi during the video recording session). You will hit play on the audio track, THEN navigate to your camera and start recording. The audio track has a built-in buffer of time to facilitate this.

Solo Space and Improvisation

It is recommended that students practice the concert C minor pentatonic scale. They can improvise with this scale over all of the chord changes and it will sound great!

Additional notes to ensemble director and video editor

The first four measures of the piece are only for synchronization purposes. The final video should be trimmed to start directly at rehearsal letter A.

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Benjamin Dean Taylor *is a composer of contemporary art music. His energetic, adventurous music provides a uniquely refreshing sonic experience for performers and audiences alike. Trained as a trumpet player and pianist, he performs with and writes music for a variety of chamber ensembles, jazz combos and big bands, wind bands, orchestras, choirs, and experimental ensembles. He received degrees in music composition from Indiana University, Brigham Young University and Bowling Green State University. Dr. Taylor's prizes and honors include winner in the Frank Ticheli Composition Competition, a BMI Student Composers Award, four Barlow Endowment Commissions, and an ASCAP Young Jazz Composer Award. His music is frequently performed in the United States and abroad. Dr. Taylor resides in Bloomington, Indiana, with his wife and five sons.*

BENJAMINTAYLORMUSIC.COM

Transposed Score
Duration: 4:30

Written for and dedicated to the students of Music Creators Academy, 2020

LEGOS EMIT GNARLY OVERTONES

BENJAMIN DEAN TAYLOR
(ASCAP)

(These first 4 bars are only for synchronization purposes.
The final video will actually begin at rehearsal letter A.)

♩ = 120

PART 1

Flute / Violin — clap
Oboe / (Alto Sax.) — clap
Clarinet / Trumpet — clap

PART 2

Clarinet / Trumpet — clap
Alto Sax. — clap
Horn in F — clap
Violin — clap

PART 3

Trombone / Euphonium — clap
Tenor Sax. — clap
Bassoon / Cello — clap

PART 4

Trombone / Euphonium / Tuba(8vb) — clap
Bass Clarinet — clap
Baritone Sax — clap
Double Bass / Bassoon — clap

(click)
Electronic Track

1 2 3 4

Perusal Score

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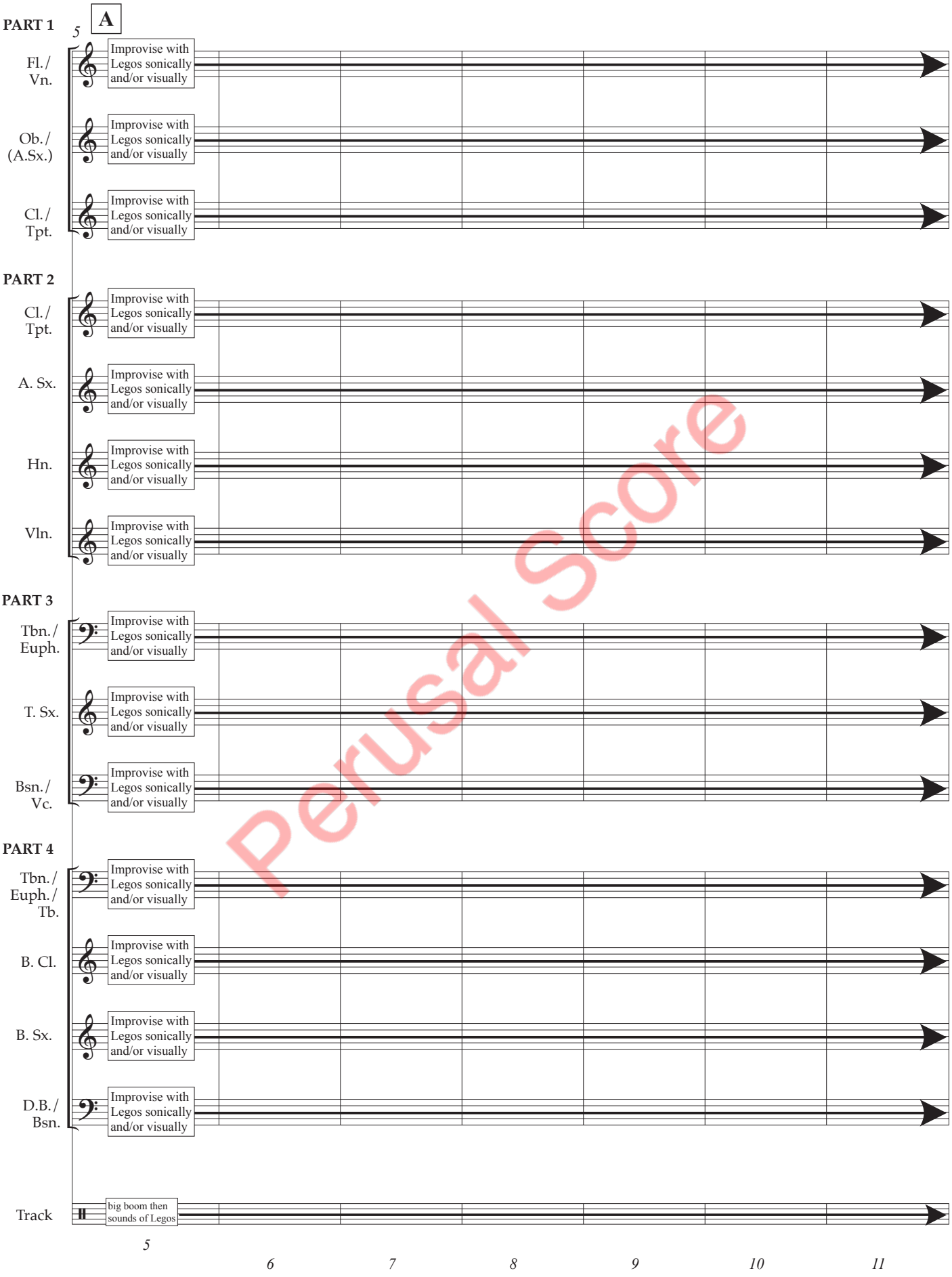

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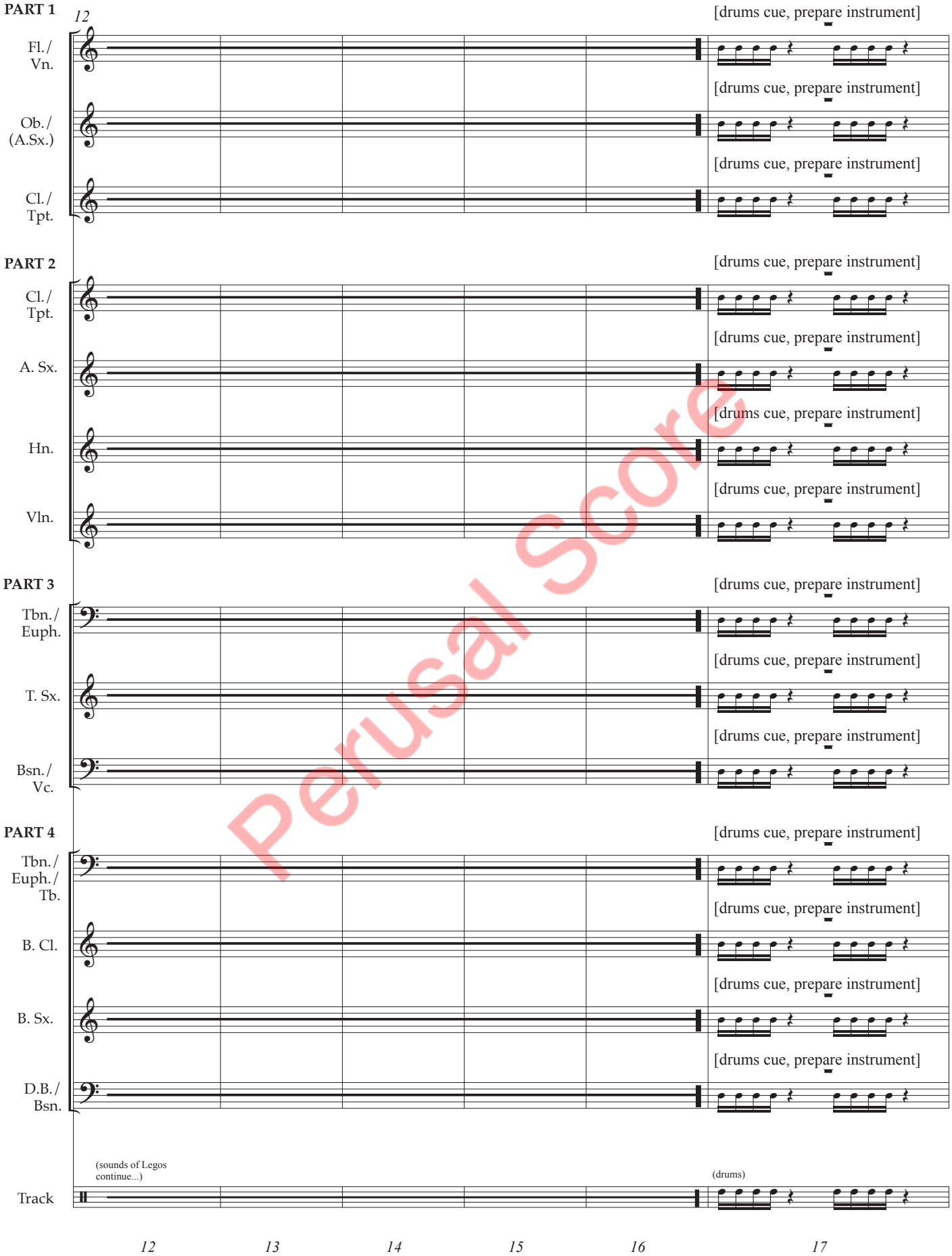

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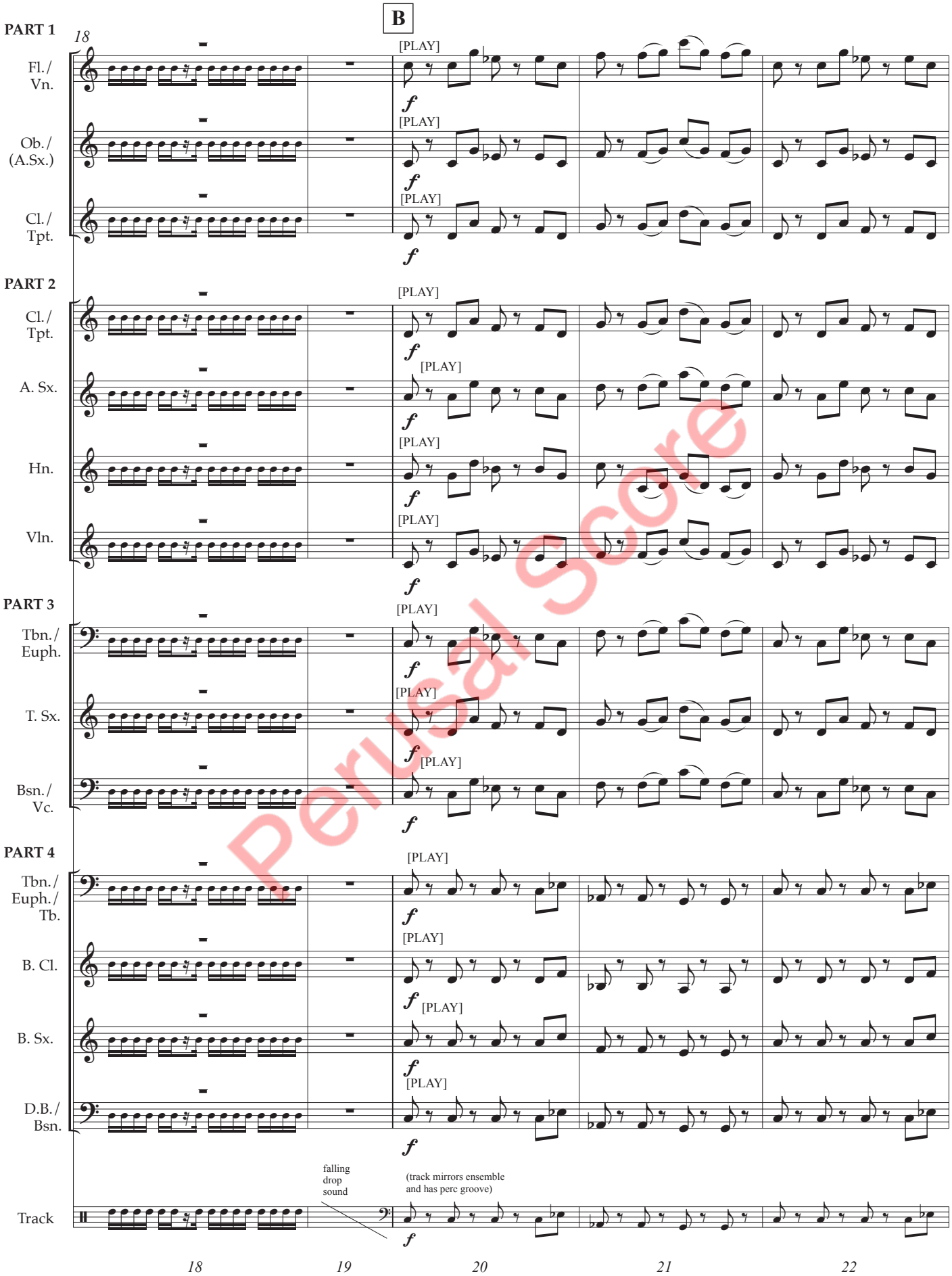

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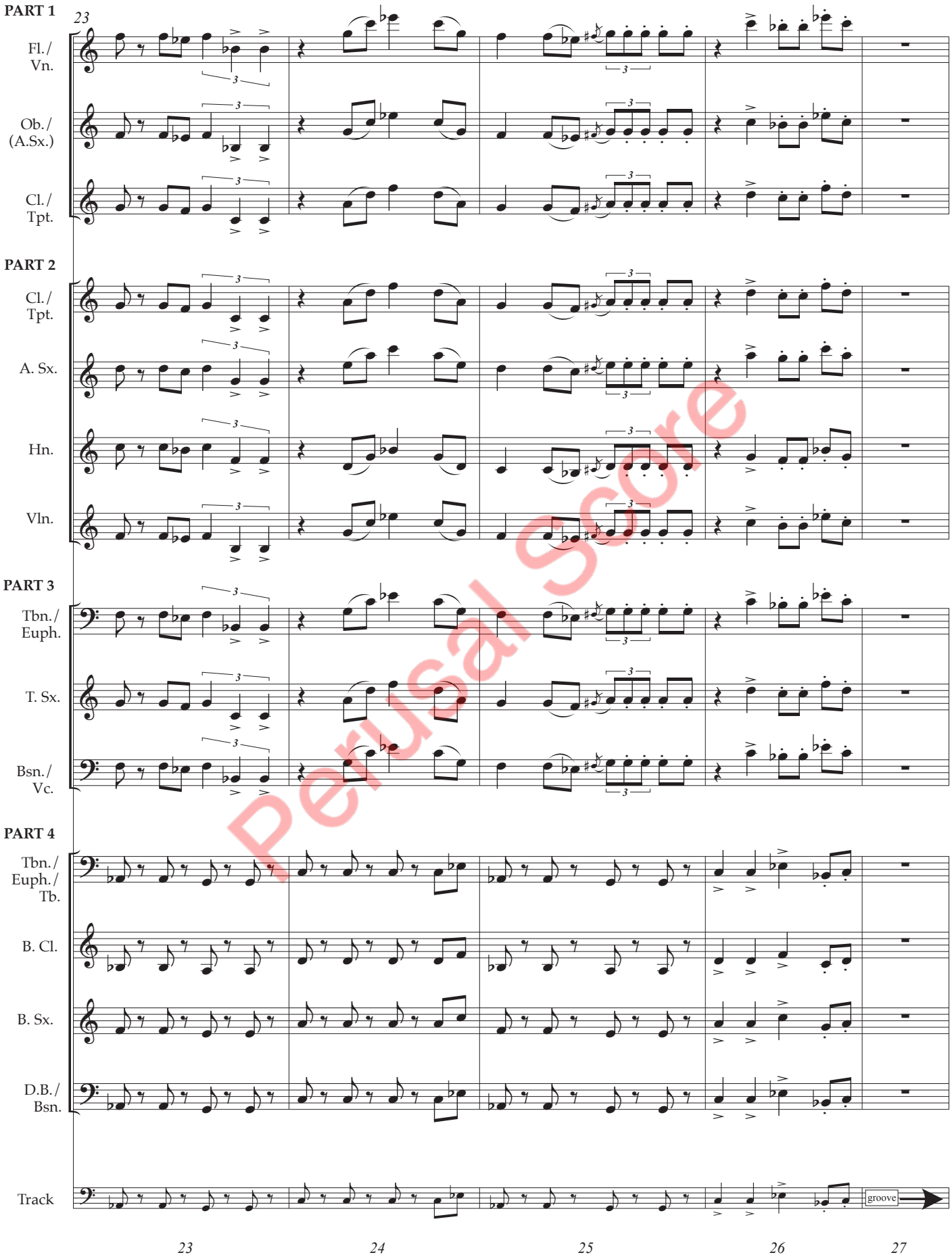

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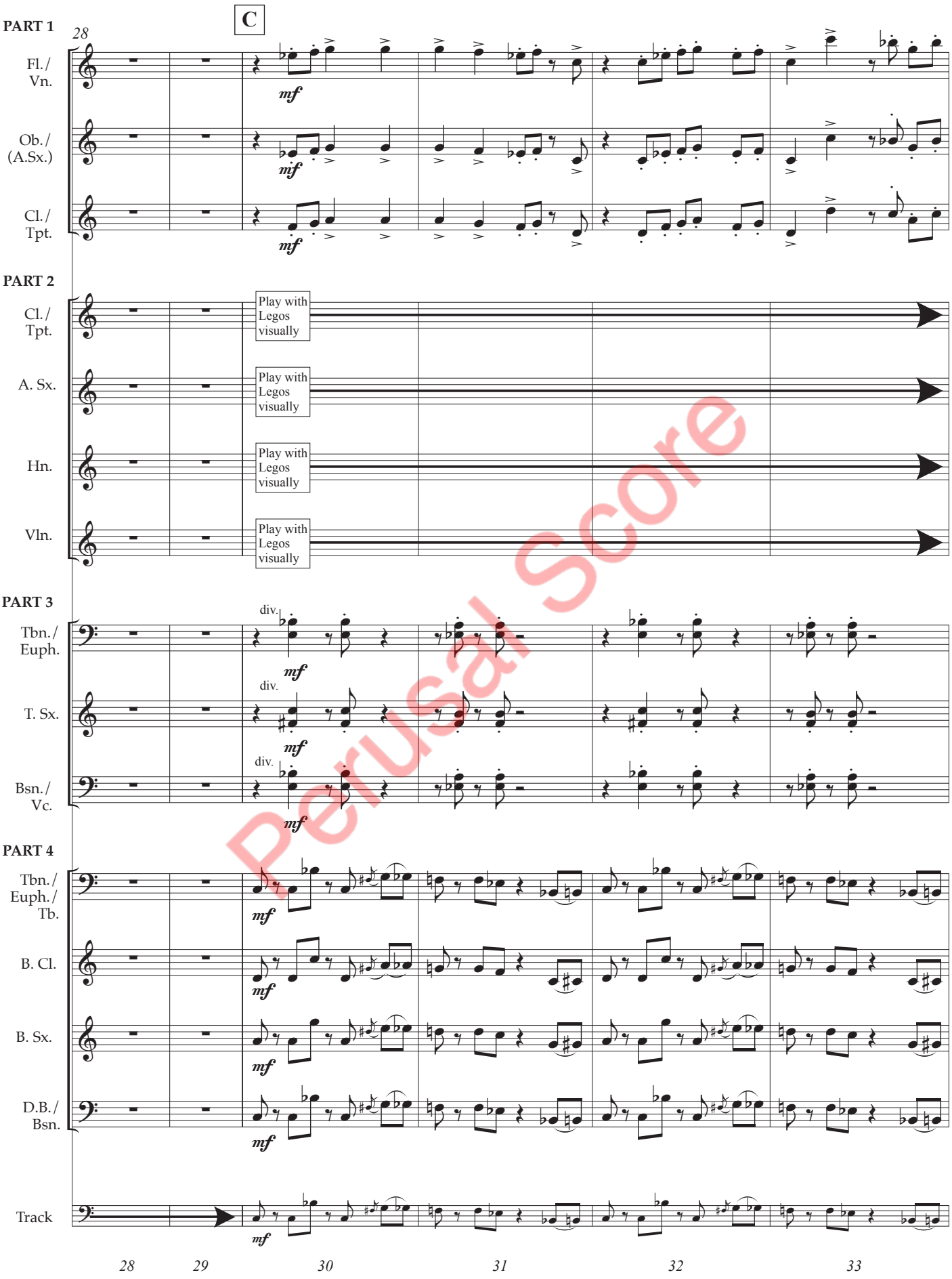

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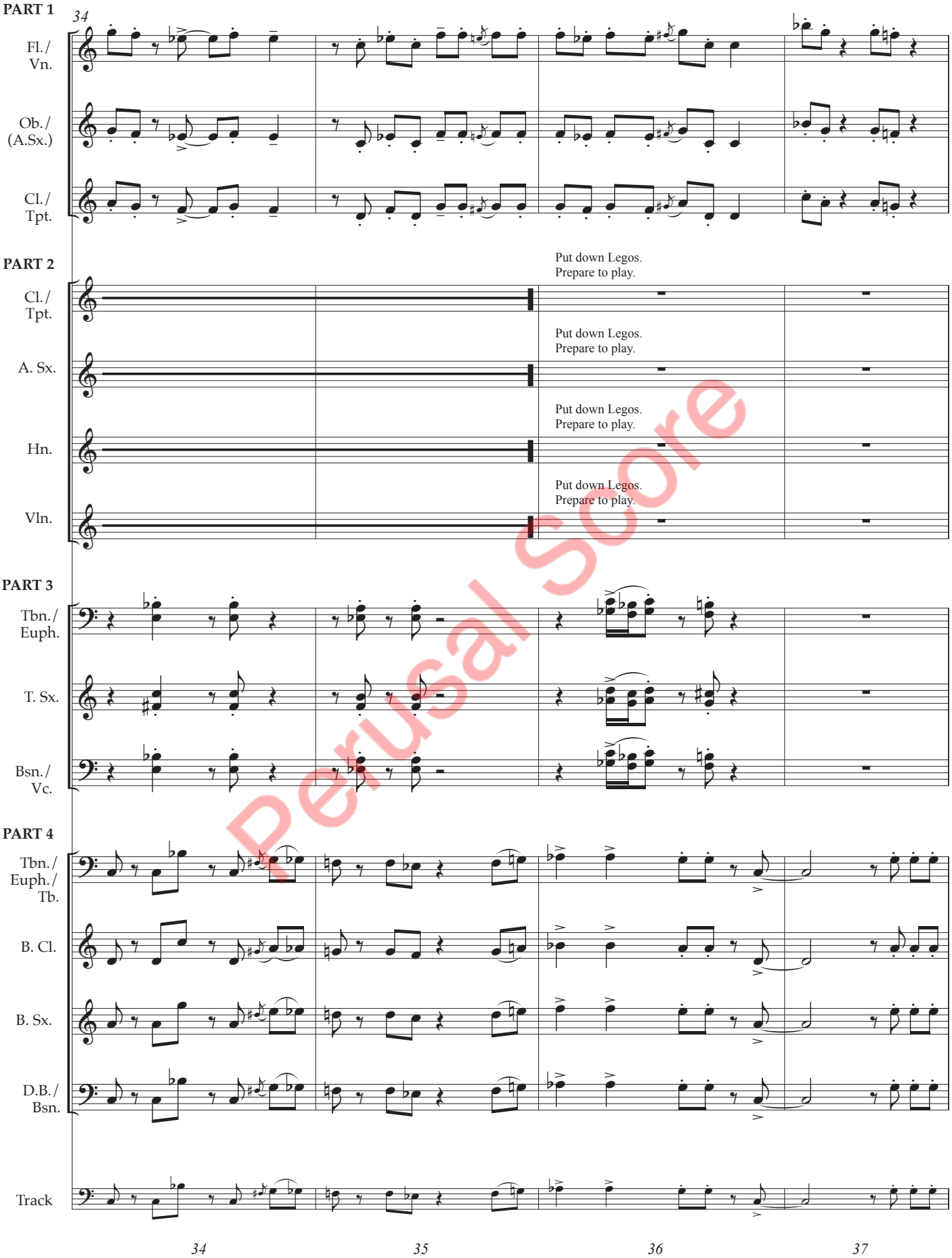

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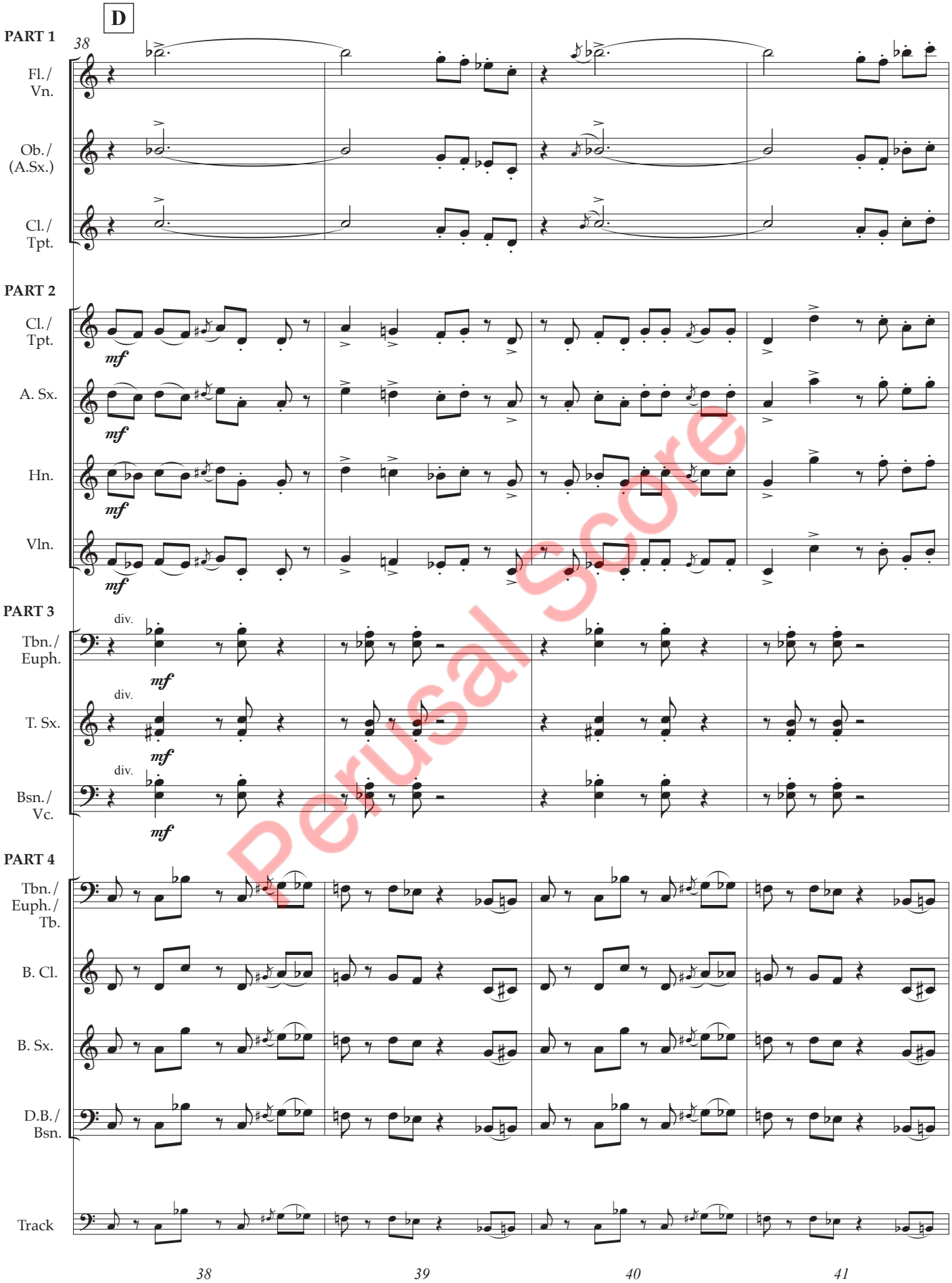

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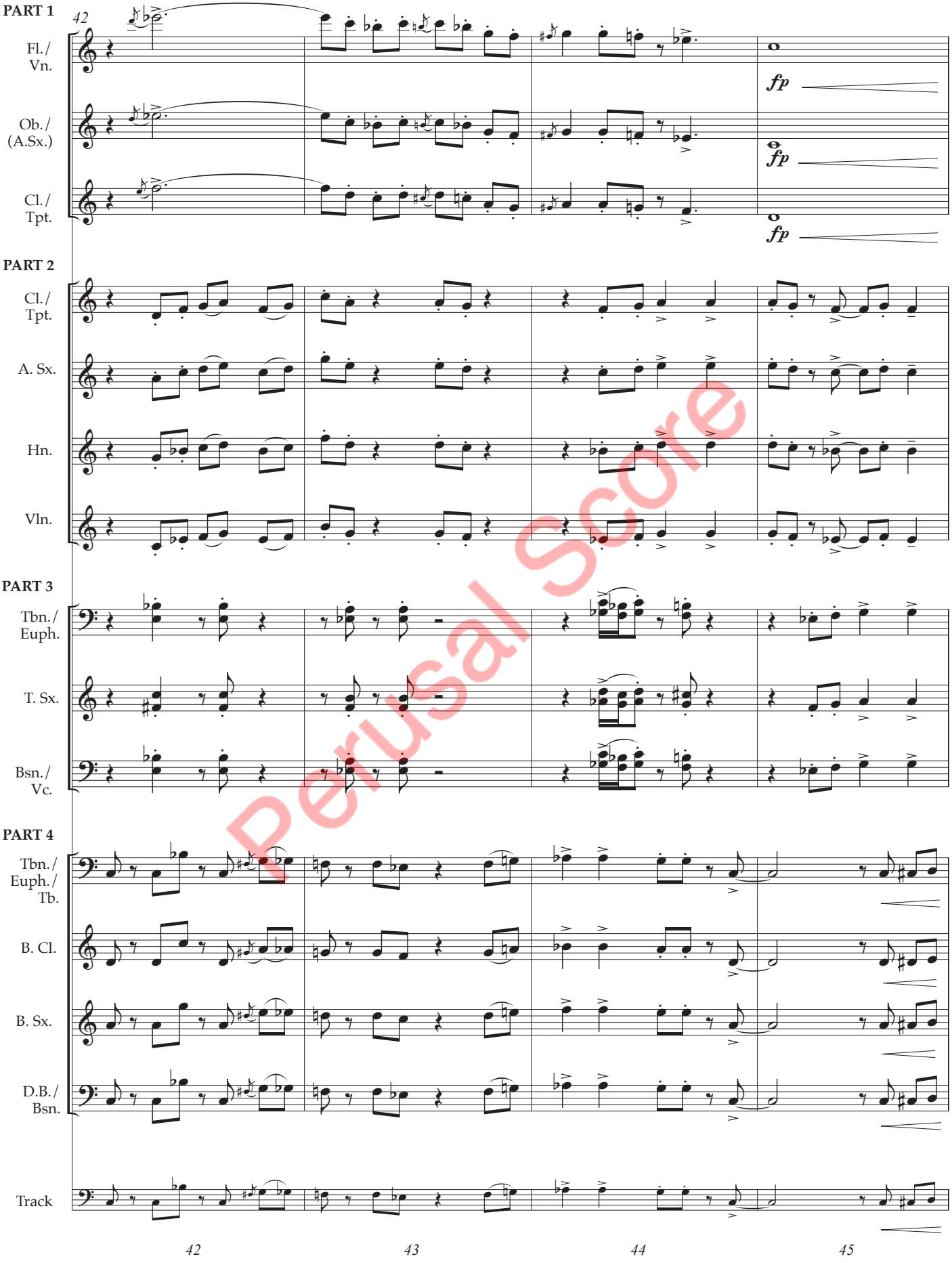

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E

Select one soloist for each two bar phrase.
Solos are improvised or may be played as written.

PART 1

Fl./ Vn.

Ob./ (A.Sx.)

Cl./ Tpt.

PART 2

Cl./ Tpt.

A. Sx.

Hn.

Vln.

PART 3

Tbn./ Euph.

T. Sx.

Bsn./ Vc.

PART 4

Tbn./ Euph./ Tb.

B. Cl.

B. Sx.

D.B./ Bsn.

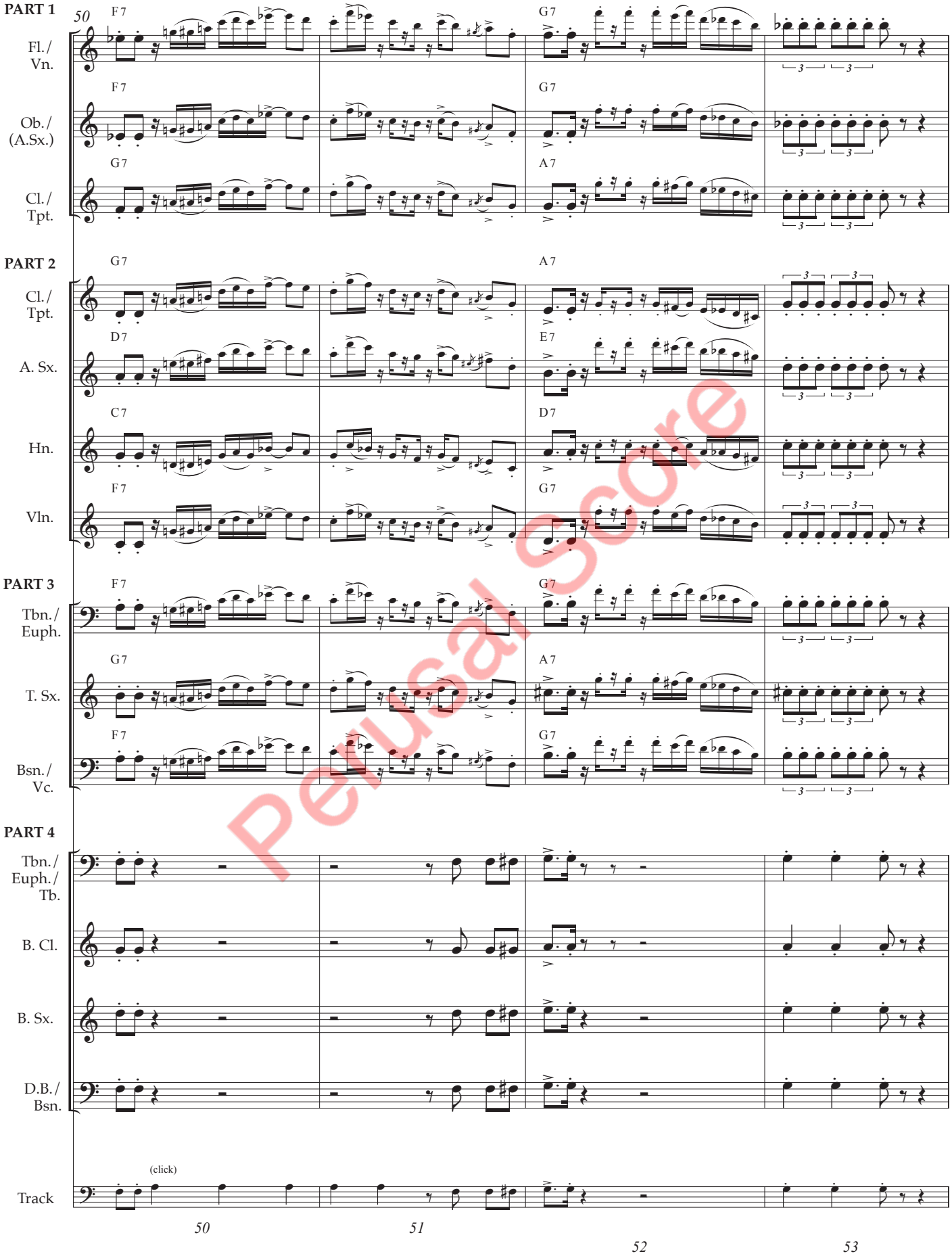
Track

(click)

(click)

46 47 48 49

Perusal Score



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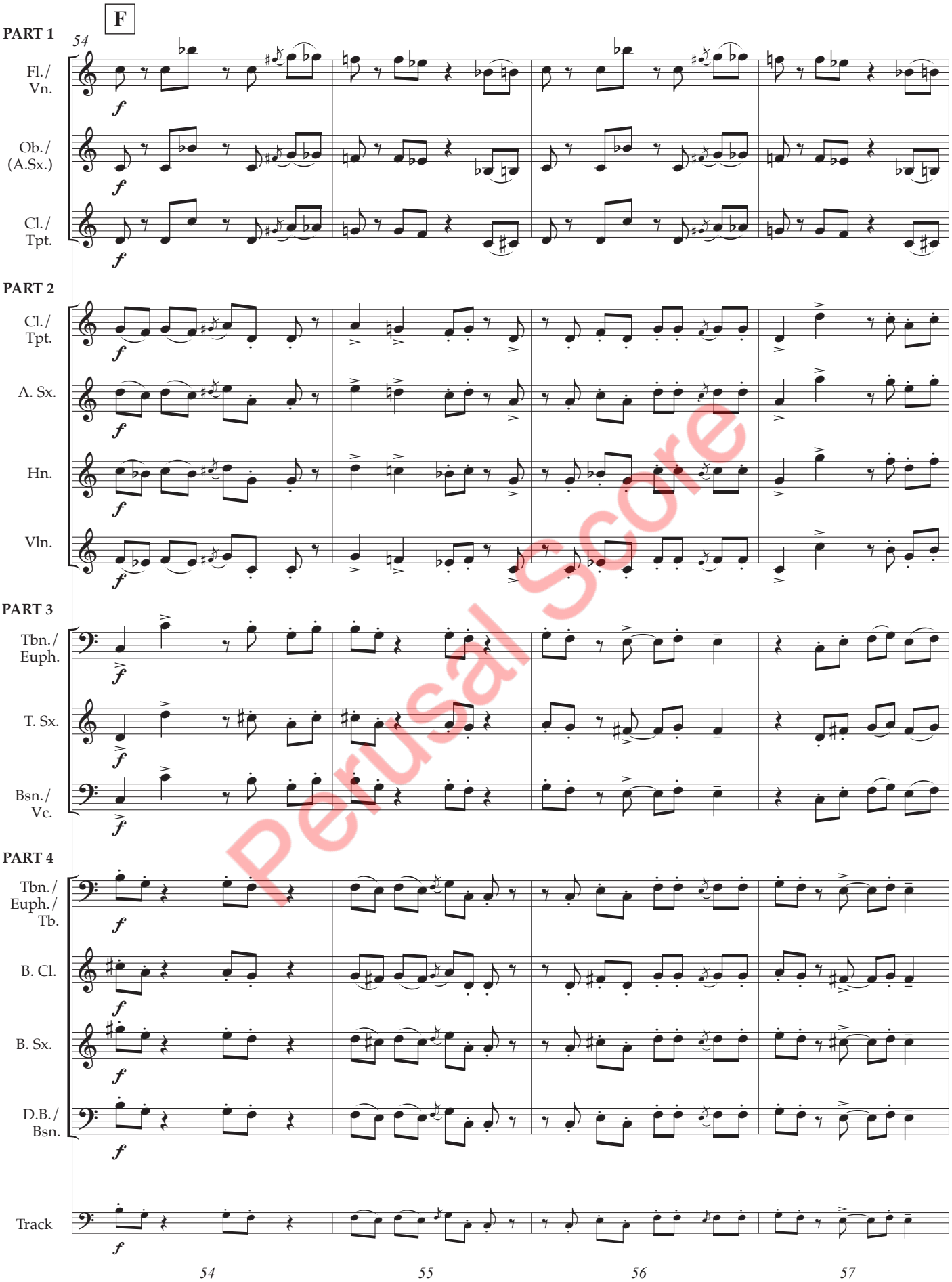

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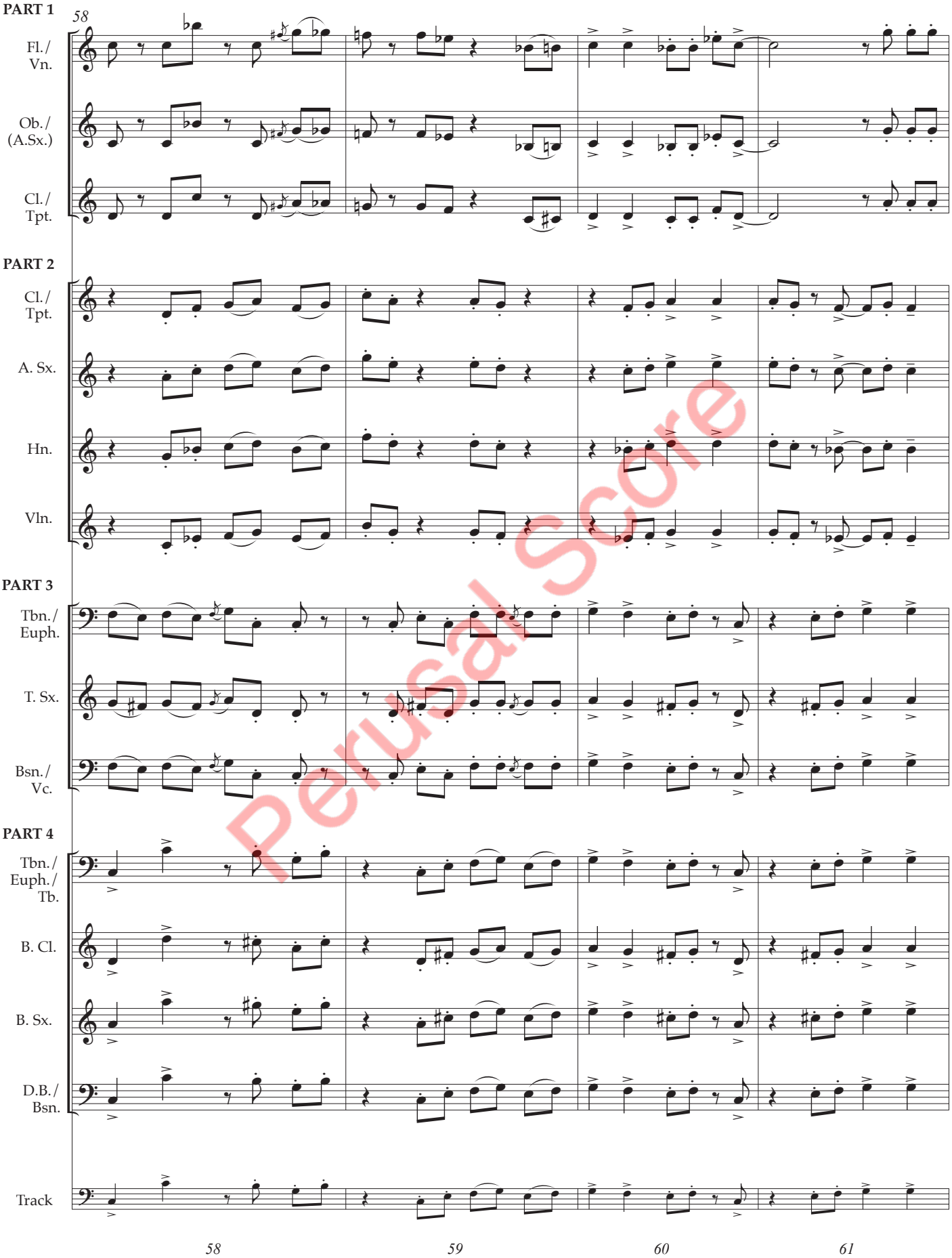

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G SOLO 1 (Those not soloing should improvise interesting visual backgrounds)

PART 1

62 Solo Break for 1st soloist

Fl./Vn. — G7 | C7 | F7 | C7 | F7

Ob./(A.Sx.) — G7 | C7 | F7 | C7 | F7

Cl./Tpt. — A7 | D7 | G7 | D7 | G7

PART 2

Cl./Tpt. — A7 | D7 | G7 | D7 | G7

A. Sx. — E7 | A7 | D7 | A7 | D7

Hn. — D7 | G7 | C7 | G7 | C7

Vln. — G7 | C7 | F7 | C7 | F7

PART 3

Tbn./Euph. — G7 | C7 | F7 | C7 | F7

T. Sx. — A7 | D7 | G7 | D7 | G7

Bsn./Vc. — G7 | C7 | F7 | C7 | F7

PART 4

Tbn./Euph./Tb. — G7 | C7 | F7 | C7 | F7

B. Cl. — A7 | D7 | G7 | D7 | G7

B. Sx. — E7 | A7 | D7 | A7 | D7

D.B./Bsn. — G7 | C7 | F7 | C7 | F7

Track — groove

62 63 64 65 66 67

Perusal Score

H SOLO 2

PART 1

68

Fl./ Vn.: C7 F7 A♭7 G7 C7 C7 F7 C7 F7

Ob./ (A.Sx.): C7 F7 A♭7 G7 C7 C7 F7 C7 F7

Cl./ Tpt.: D7 G7 B♭7 A7 D7 D7 G7 D7 G7

PART 2

Cl./ Tpt.: D7 G7 B♭7 A7 D7 D7 G7 D7 G7

A. Sx.: A7 D7 F7 E7 A7 A7 D7 A7 D7

Hn.: G7 C7 E♭7 D7 G7 G7 C7 G7 C7

Vln.: C7 F7 A♭7 G7 C7 C7 F7 C7 F7

PART 3

Tbn./ Euph.: C7 F7 A♭7 G7 C7 C7 F7 C7 F7

T. Sx.: D7 G7 B♭7 A7 D7 D7 G7 D7 G7

Bsn./ Vc.: C7 F7 A♭7 G7 C7 C7 F7 C7 F7

PART 4

Tbn./ Euph./ Tb.: C7 F7 A♭7 G7 C7 C7 F7 C7 F7

B. Cl.: D7 G7 B♭7 A7 D7 D7 G7 D7 G7

B. Sx.: A7 D7 F7 E7 A7 A7 D7 A7 D7

D.B./ Bsn.: C7 F7 A♭7 G7 C7 C7 F7 C7 F7

Track: groove

68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75

Perusal Score

I SOLO 3

PART 1

76

Fl./ Vn.: C7 F7 A♭7 G7 C7 C7 F7 C7 F7

Ob./ (A.Sx.): C7 F7 A♭7 G7 C7 C7 F7 C7 F7

Cl./ Tpt.: D7 G7 B♭7 A7 D7 D7 G7 D7 G7

PART 2

Cl./ Tpt.: D7 G7 B♭7 A7 D7 D7 G7 D7 G7

A. Sx.: A7 D7 F7 E7 A7 A7 D7 A7 D7

Hn.: G7 C7 E♭7 D7 G7 G7 C7 G7 C7

Vln.: C7 F7 A♭7 G7 C7 C7 F7 C7 F7

PART 3

Tbn./ Euph.: C7 F7 A♭7 G7 C7 C7 F7 C7 F7

T. Sx.: D7 G7 B♭7 A7 D7 D7 G7 D7 G7

Bsn./ Vc.: C7 F7 A♭7 G7 C7 C7 F7 C7 F7

PART 4

Tbn./ Euph./ Tb.: C7 F7 A♭7 G7 C7 *mf*

B. Cl.: D7 G7 B♭7 A7 D7 *mf*

B. Sx.: A7 D7 F7 E7 A7 *mf*

D.B./ Bsn.: C7 F7 A♭7 G7 C7 *mf*

Track: groove

76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83

Perusal Score

J SOLO 4

PART 1

84

Fl./ Vn.: C7 | F7 | A♭7 | G7 | C7 | C7 | F7

Ob./ (A.Sx.): C7 | F7 | A♭7 | G7 | C7 | C7 | F7

Cl./ Tpt.: D7 | G7 | B♭7 | A7 | D7 | D7 | G7

PART 2

Cl./ Tpt.: D7 | G7 | B♭7 | A7 | D7 | D7 | G7

A. Sx.: A7 | D7 | F7 | E7 | A7 | A7 | D7

Hn.: G7 | C7 | E♭7 | D7 | G7 | G7 | C7

Vln.: C7 | F7 | A♭7 | G7 | C7 | C7 | F7

PART 3

Tbn./ Euph.: C7 | F7 | A♭7 | G7 | C7 | div. *mf*

T. Sx.: D7 | G7 | B♭7 | A7 | D7 | div. *mf*

Bsn./ Vc.: C7 | F7 | A♭7 | G7 | C7 | div. *mf*

PART 4

Tbn./ Euph./ Tb.

B. Cl.

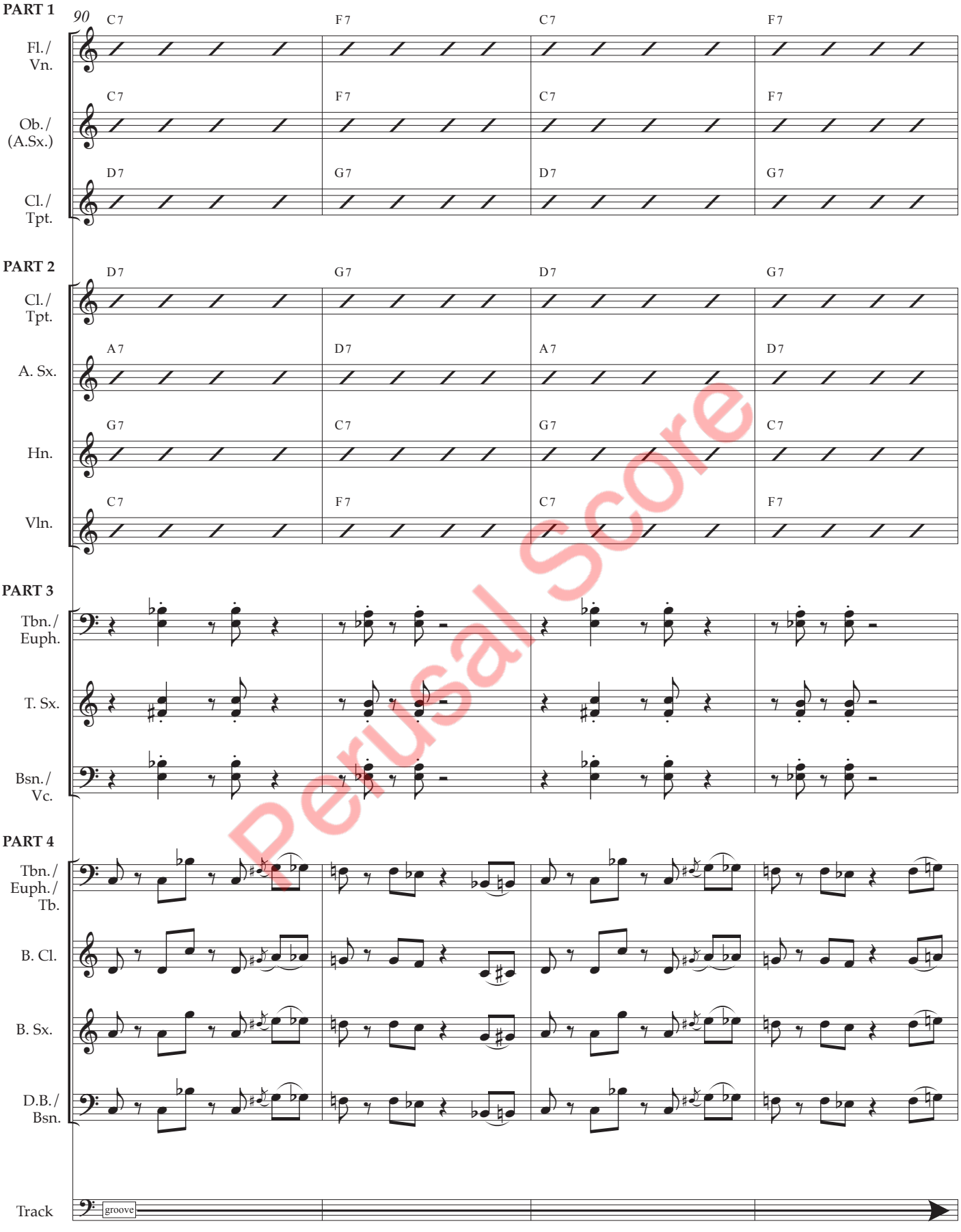
B. Sx.

D.B./ Bsn.

Track: groove

84 85 86 87 88 89

Perusal Score



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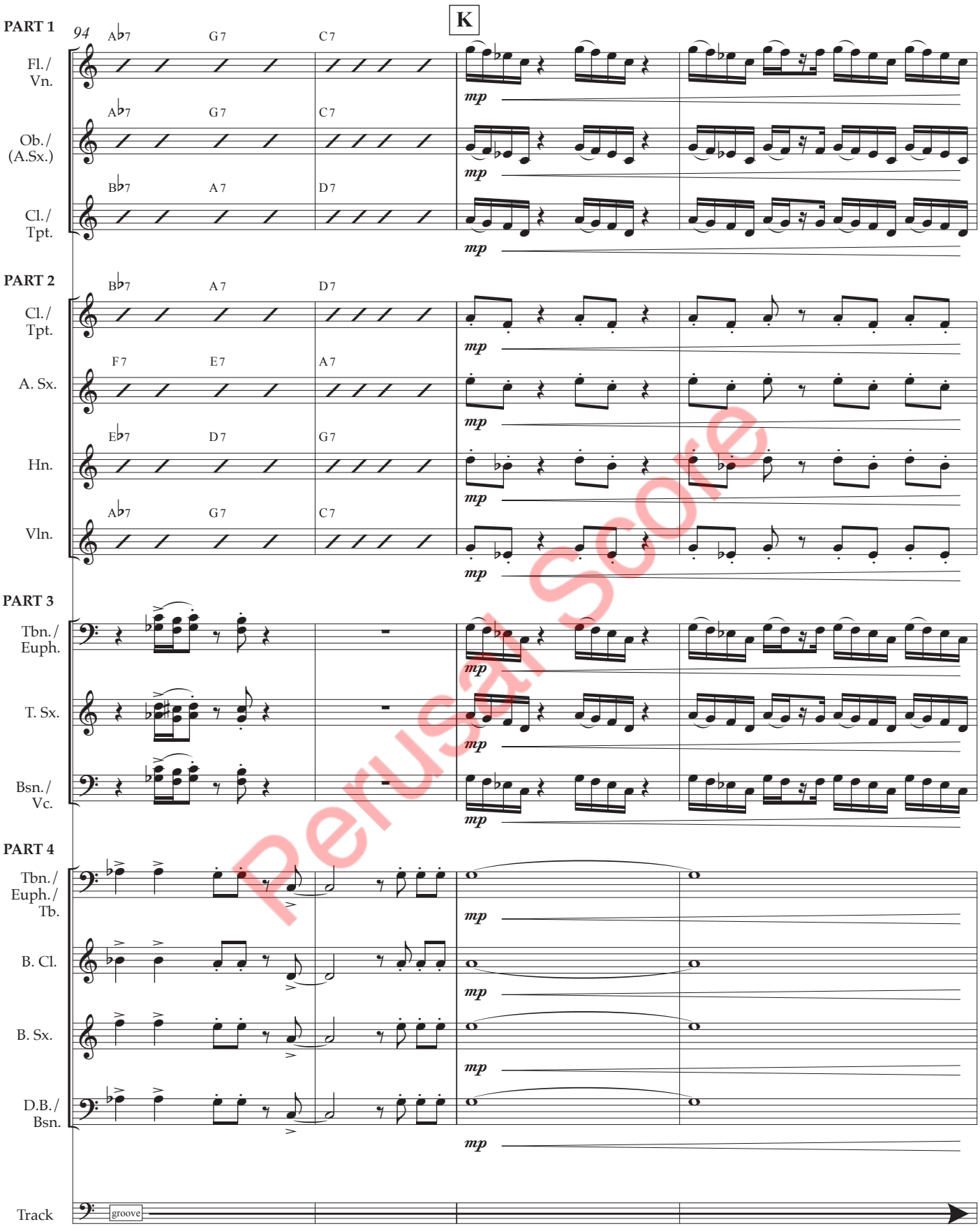

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L Simultaneous Solos

PART 1

98

Fl./ Vn. — C7 | F7 | C7 | F7

Ob./ (A.Sx.) — C7 | F7 | C7 | F7

Cl./ Tpt. — D7 | G7 | D7 | G7

PART 2

Cl./ Tpt. — D7 | G7 | D7 | G7

A. Sx. — A7 | D7 | A7 | D7

Hn. — G7 | C7 | G7 | C7

Vln. — C7 | F7 | C7 | F7

PART 3

Tbn./ Euph. — C7 | F7 | C7 | F7

T. Sx. — D7 | G7 | D7 | G7

Bsn./ Vc. — C7 | F7 | C7 | F7

PART 4

Tbn./ Euph./ Tb.

B. Cl.

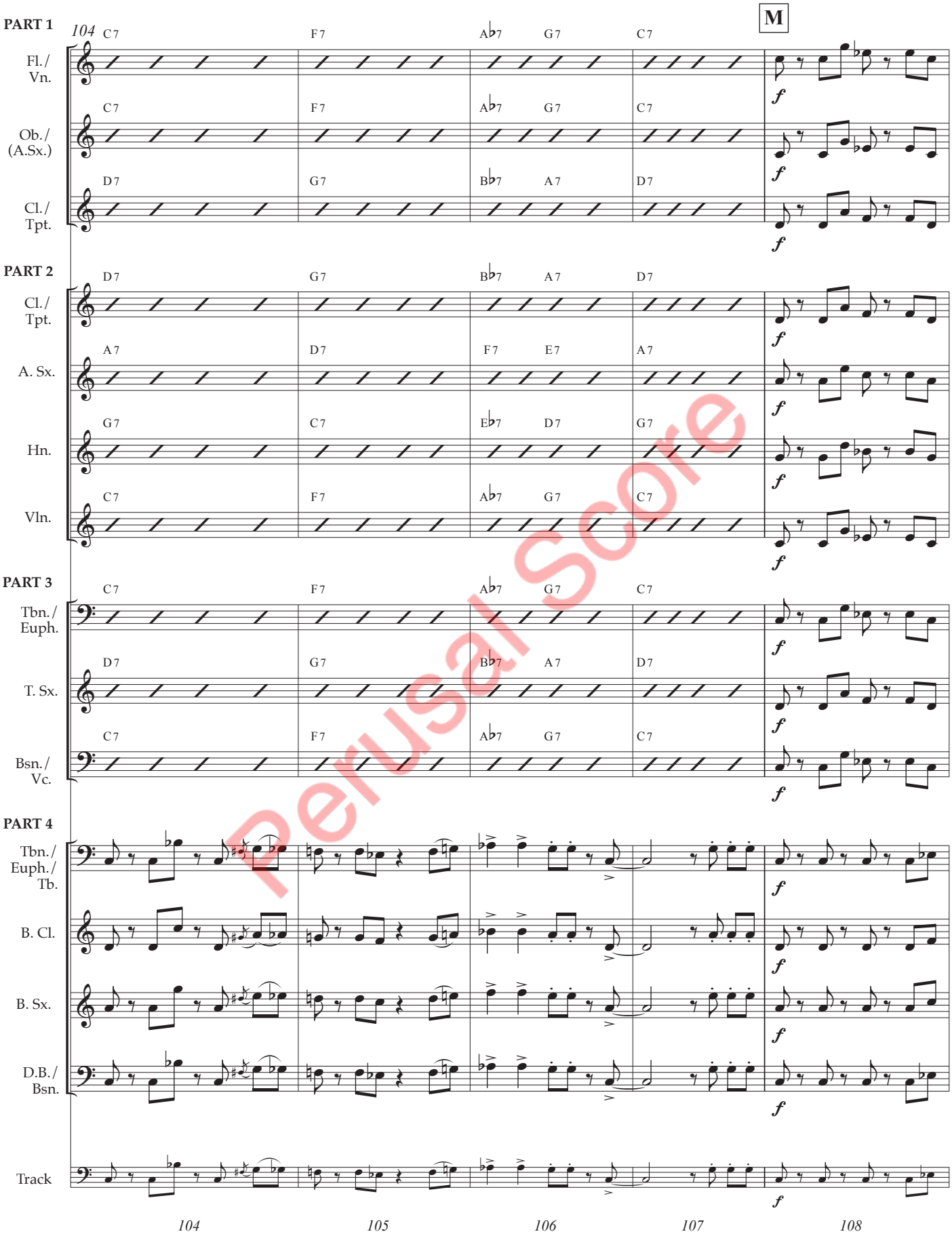
B. Sx.

D.B./ Bsn.

Track — drum fill

98 99 100 101 102 103

Perusal Score



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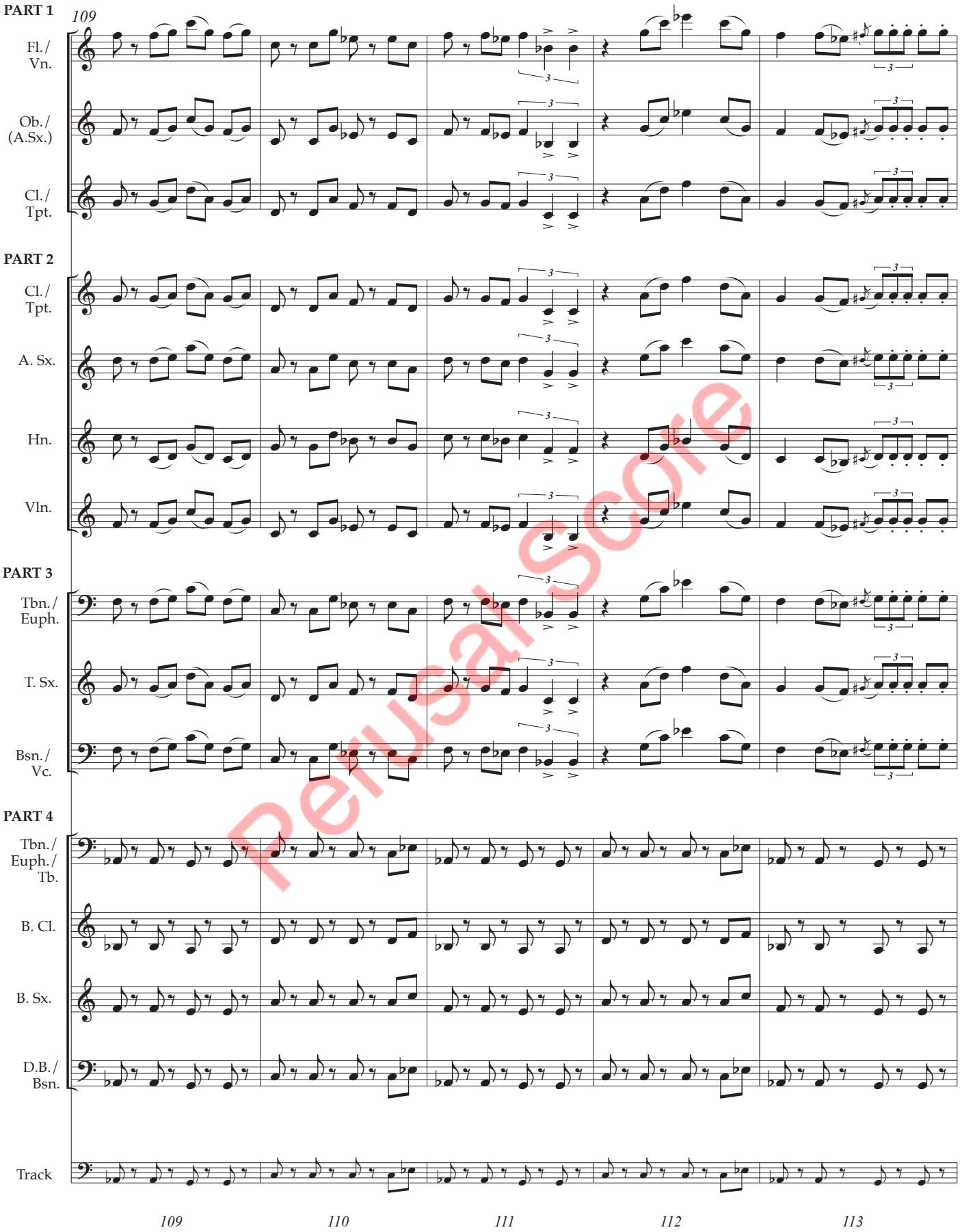

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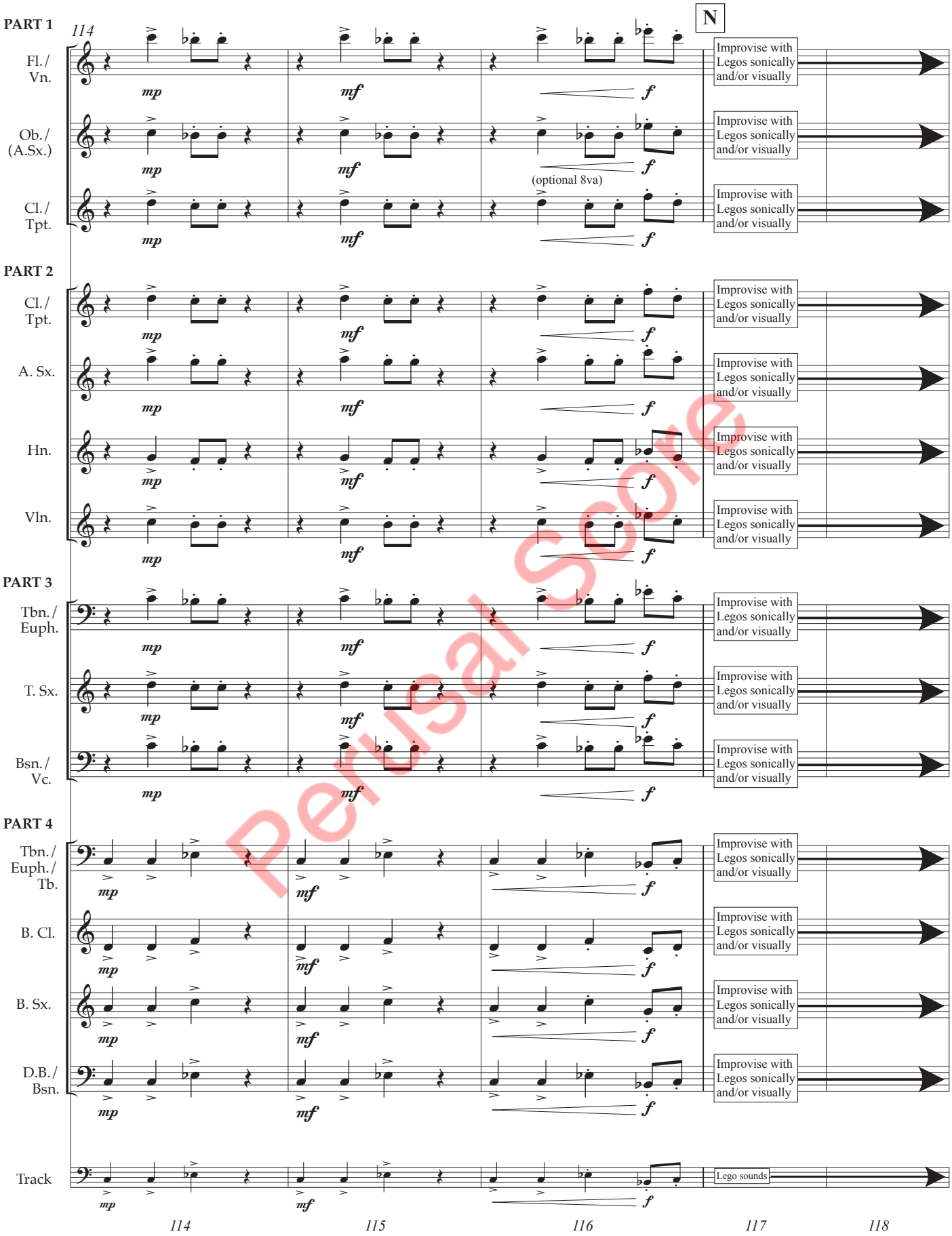

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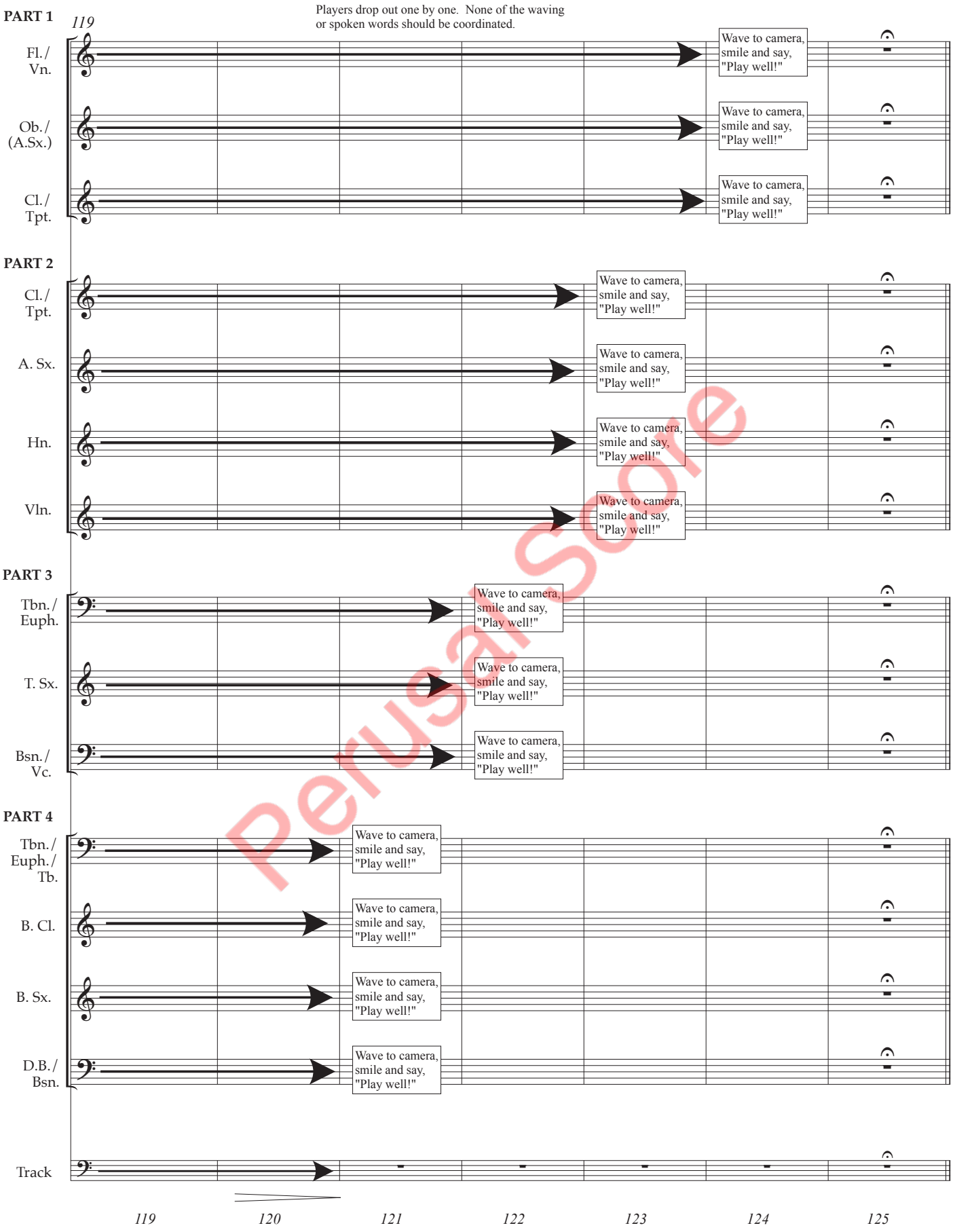

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