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THE WAR NEVER ENDS A COMPOSITION FOR LARGE JAZZ ENSEMBLE IN THREE MOVEMENTS

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THE WAR NEVER ENDS

A COMPOSITION FOR LARGE JAZZ ENSEMBLE IN THREE MOVEMENTS

by

Derek James Molacek

A Doctoral Document

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graduate College of the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor in Musical Arts

Major: Music

Under the Supervision of Professor Thomas Larson

Lincoln, Nebraska

May, 2017

THE WAR NEVER ENDS

A COMPOSITION FOR LARGE JAZZ ENSEMBLE IN THREE MOVEMENTS

Derek James Molacek, D.M.A

University of Nebraska, 2017

Advisor: Thomas Larson

"The War Never Ends" is a three-movement programmatic suite for large jazz ensemble plus additional instruments, dedicated to the military service personnel who suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. The piece is comprised of three movements: I. "The Call to Serve"; II. "The Call to War"; and III. "The Call for Peace." Each movement tells a different part of a story of a person who has signed up for military service.

"The Call to Serve" serves as the beginning to our service member's journey; from recruitment, to training, to assignment. "The Call to War" illustrates deployment: Specifically, deployment to the Middle-East. This is shown in the use of the ad'han and other elements of eastern musical writing over a jazz-rock groove. "The Call for Peace" represents the return from deployment as the service member struggles to adjust to civilian life, and continues to re-live his experiences from deployment before ultimately taking his own live.

As a whole, the work represents the experiences of one particular service member from recruitment, to training, to deployment, to coming home and unfortunately to re-live the experiences of the deployment and face new demons entirely. It is my hope that this work will help to raise awareness of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder faced by veterans every day.

The War Never Ends

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the members of the Armed Services: Those who have fought in the service of defense of this country, and especially those who continue to heal from injuries from those battles-the wounds that can be seen and the ones that cannot.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my committee members - Professor Thomas Larson, Dr. Scott Anderson, Dr. Paul Haar and Dr. Stephen Buhler. I would also like to acknowledge both of the supervisory committee chairs that I have had during the course of my studies at Nebraska-Professor Larson and Dr. Eric Richards for their advice, mentorship, and artistic insight. I would also like to thank and acknowledge all of the teachers that I have had over the years for their mentorship, and inspiration. This includes Nancy Gilpatrick, Norman Edwards, Stacia Vawter, Karen Marble, Erika Hipsher, Janet Schack, Lynn Thomas, Dr. William Lovgren, Dr. Kevin Wass, Nicholas Spath, Dr. Pete Madsen, Dr. Joseph Martin, Kathy Brantigan, Warren Deck, Malcolm Lynn Baker, Darren Kramer, Alan Hood, Dave Hanson, Eric Gunnison, Donna Wickham, Tony Baker, Paris Rutherford, Carl Murr, Akira Sato, Stefan Karrlson, Neil Slater, Steve Wiest, Paul Welcomer, and Scott Ruedger. I have lived in four states (Nebraska, Colorado, Texas, and California), and recognize all of my friends, family, and colleagues from each state.

I would also like to thank Amanda McCullough who has been a rock of support and helping me to stay the course when I have been distracted.

Finally, I would like to thank my family, especially my parents, for their faith, support, and encouragement in my musical endeavor.

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INTRODUCTION

"The War Never Ends" is a three movement programmatic suite for large jazz ensemble plus additional instruments, dedicated to the military service personnel who suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. The piece is comprised of three movements – I. "The Call to Serve," II. "The Call to War," and III. "The Call for Peace."

"The Call to Serve" establishes the beginning of our service member's journey. The first scenes of patriotism are highlighted by the trumpet and auxiliary percussion. This idea is repeated at letter "F" and at bar 191. The figure symbolizes the sense of patriotism that the service member feels after each phase of his journey. The prospective service member enters the recruiter's office, perusing information about the various service branches.

After the appearance of the trumpet, performing the *Adjutant's Call*, each section of the orchestra plays a subtle hint of each branch's service march before signing up, which is symbolized in the piccolo Revolutionary-style march. This transitions into a theme and a style that is very tonal, reminiscent of American country music. This theme serves as a travelling/transition as the service member journeys through Midwestern America to basic training.

Once at basic, the tone changes to a panicked, fast-swing tempo. The recruits/trainees are portrayed here by the saxophones, while the brass takes on the role of the Military Training Instructors (MTI). This frantic section begins with the saxophones all soloing at once before slowly coming together as a section, all the while

the hits in the brass are indicative of the MTIs yelling at the recruits to get it together. The tempo slows down to what I describe as a "militant swing," and solos occur from second trumpet and trombone, the commanders giving "speeches." A march cadence is heard in the auxiliary percussion as we have come to the graduation parade. At the end of this section, there is a ii-V recap of the country theme for two bars, and the movement closes with Copland-esque brass, symbolizing the relief that training is complete and the anticipation of the next assignment.

"The Call to War" opens with a drone played by the bass instruments and synthesizer. The brass triplets that follow are meant to show impending military action. Since this is supposed to depict a contemporary service member, I wanted this movement to reflect the state of contemporary warfare in both sound and style. Thus, our service member is deployed to the Middle East, and this movement reflects that. Over the drone and brass triplets, the ad'han (Muslim call to prayer) is heard.

The groove that begins is played over an FMaj7(b9,b13) chord which outlines the Lebanese or Arabic scale and is heard throughout this movement. This scale is identical to the harmonic major scale, but also replaces the natural 2nd with a flat 2nd (F, Gb, A, Bb, C, Db, E, F). The main melody of the chart is played by a trumpet in straight mute, and a soprano sax. In spite of the fact that both instruments are playing a unison part, the soprano sax is deliberately tuned a quarter-step up from the trumpet. I wrote it this way as a representation of the Middle-East, as that is a common sound. Background figures from the brass and lower saxes enter a second time, outlining the full FMaj7(b9,b13).

The chord progression of this melody follows an extended blues structure. To

keep the Arabic scale consistent throughout, chord quality remains consistent with the Maj7(b9,b13), but the functionality of the chord shifts. For example, the BbMaj7(b9,b13), which introduces the “B” section of the melody starting at letter I on measure 97 functions as a IV chord. Likewise, the CMaj7(b9,b13) at measure 105 functions as a V chord.

Following the melodic theme, there is a 16-bar transition that recaps the drone in F and also re-introduces the ad’han, now into the second phrase of the call to prayer. The solo section that follows scales back considerably in volume and takes more of an ethereal approach. It follows the same form as the melody with the extended blues structure, but minus the groove of the rhythm section the first time through. The background figures over the bridge cover the chord changes for those sections only, while the rest of the rhythm section plays only quiet hits over the first time. The groove returns for the second time through the form. After the solo, the shout chorus enters.

The last section of the movement is a recap of the drone from the beginning. This symbolizes a return to the base after the patrol or convoy mission. The sounds of fire and the sense of foreboding are still present.

“The Call for Peace” is also through-composed, with an internal song form (AABA) that occurs between letters “G” through “H.” It begins with the relief of returning from deployment, exemplified by the recap of the country theme from the first movement. However, the relief is short-lived. The consonant major chords abruptly turn dissonant, as the service member realizes that he is having difficulty coping with the thought of being home. For this movement, I return to the Arabic

scale but also rhythmically draw more upon contemporary jazz rhythms, progressive rock and heavy metal for inspiration. The contemporary jazz rhythms emerge at forty bars into the movement. This section draws upon influences from the ECM record label, and also from the writings of Darcy James Argue, especially with respect to Minimalism and his use of dissonant "helicopter" repeated patterns. The transition, a shout chorus at measure 97, is a call and response between the brass, the saxes and horns. This is played over the form of the melody and demonstrates more of the overwhelming emotions felt by the service member.

The opening of the solo section shows the service member attempting to calm himself. The dueling solos in the sax and trombone represent the two halves of the mind, and the growing battle within. This is why I used the sparseness that begins the duel, while staying within the ECM, open-eighth groove, and then the transition to more of a rock figure as the dueling solos progress. I had previously used this concept in a much earlier work of my own – "Reflections on February."

The final third of the movement centers around the text which is an Arabic prayer for peace written during the Siege of Damascus in 1389. One of the lines in this particular prayer, which translates to "save us from enormities, whether open or hidden," best exemplifies the internal turmoil of the service member. Behind the prayer are brass chords as well as a rock groove which later transforms into a more relaxed funk. This sequence ends on a I chord in F Major symbolizing the service member's attempts to stabilize himself. The tone cluster signals that he has fallen. *Taps* is the final closure: overwhelmed with the trauma and grief of combat, the service member has taken his own life.

As a whole, the work represents the experiences of one particular service member from recruitment, to training, to deployment, to coming home and unfortunately to relive the experiences of the deployment and face new demons entirely. It is my hope that this work will help to raise awareness of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder faced by veterans every day.

I. The Call to Serve

Instrumentation

Alto Sax 1 (with Piccolo Double)

Alto Sax 2

Tenor Sax 1

Tenor Sax 2

Bari Sax

Trumpet 1

Trumpet 2

Trumpet 3

Trumpet 4

Horn in F 1

Horn in F 2

Horn in F 3

Horn in F 4

Trombone 1

Trombone 2

Trombone 3

Bass Trombone

Tuba

Guitar

Piano/Synth

Bass (Electric and Upright)

Drums

Percussion 1

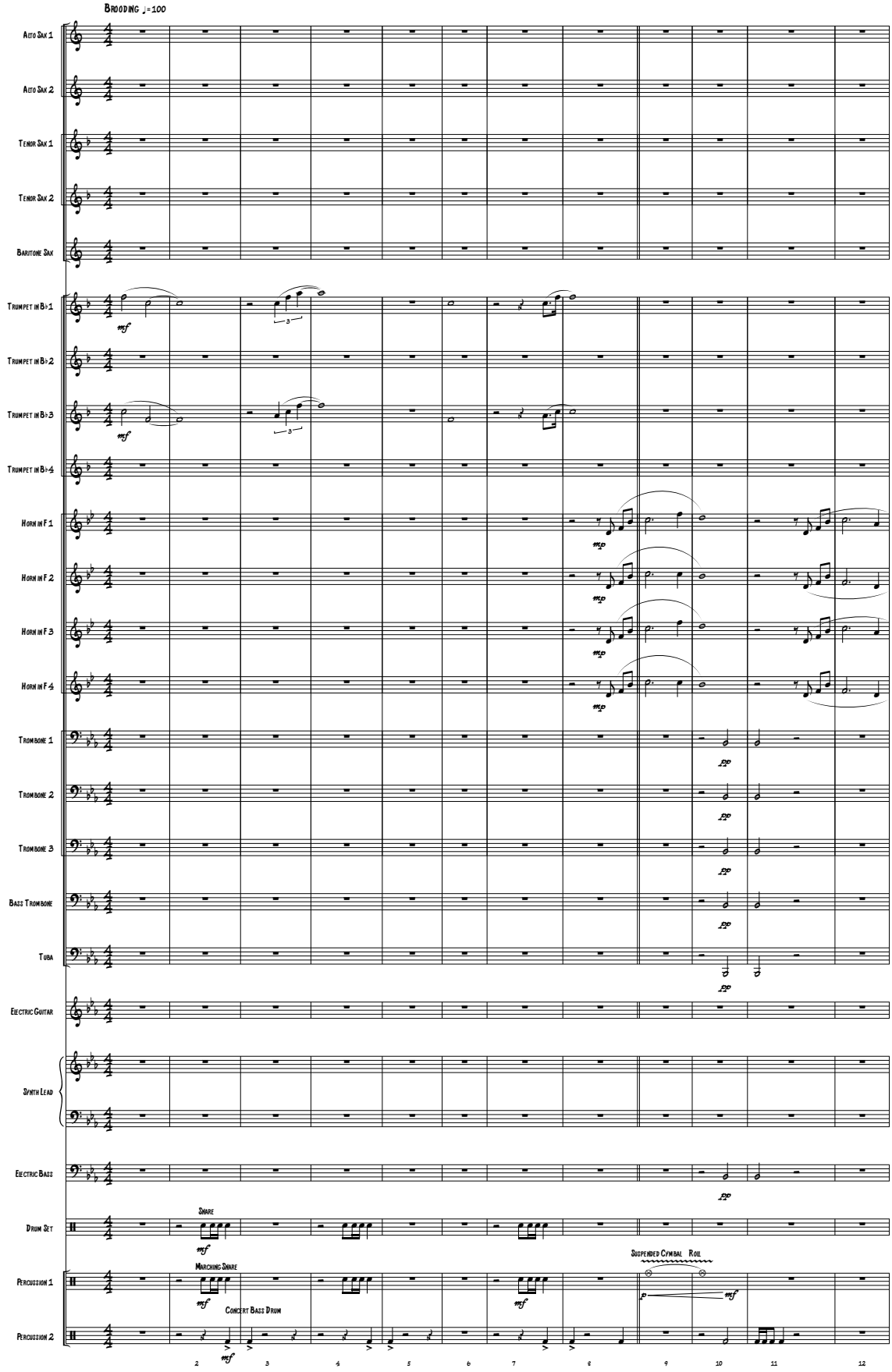
Percussion 2

SCORE

The War Never Ends

I. The Call to Serve

Derek J. Molacek



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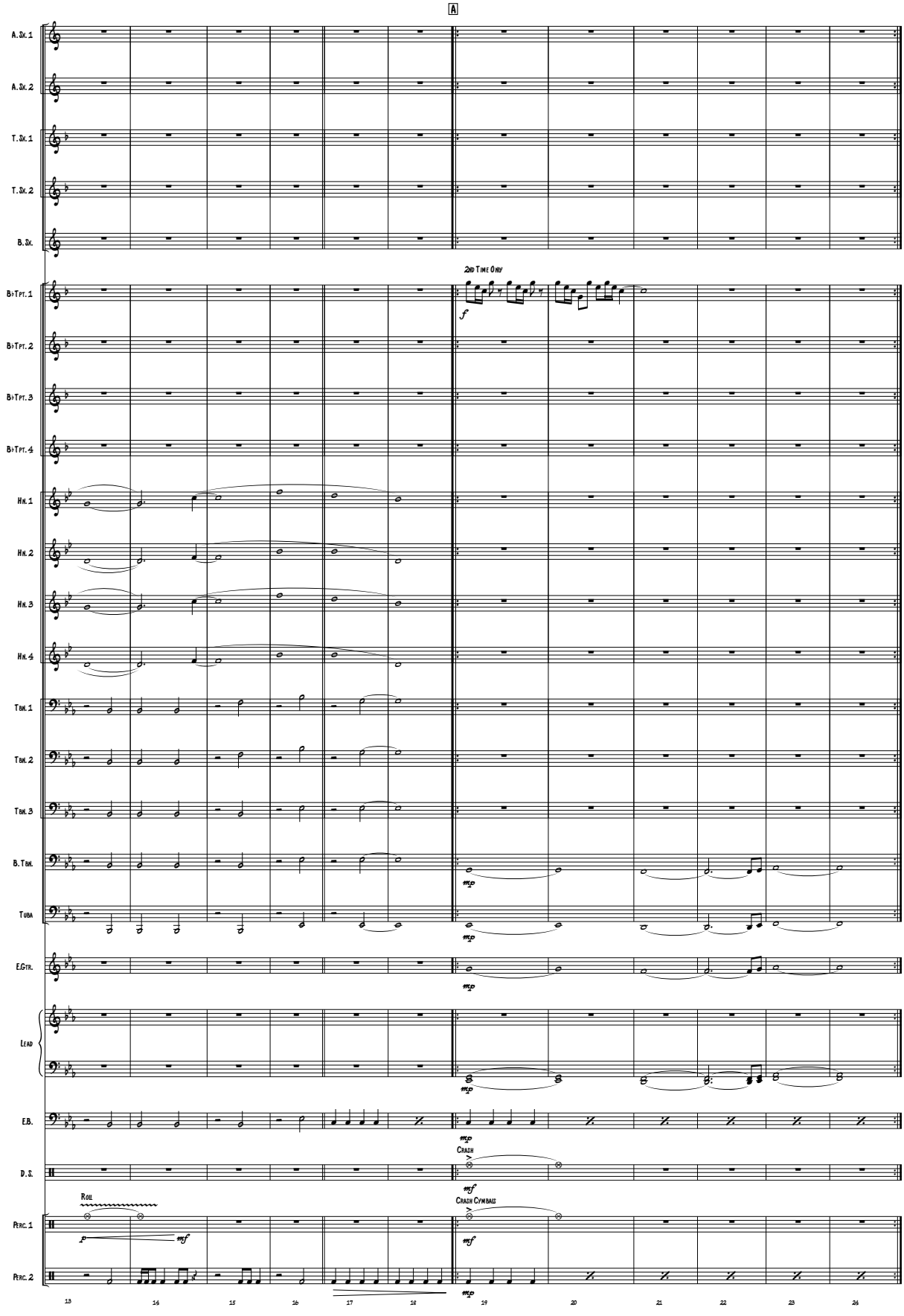

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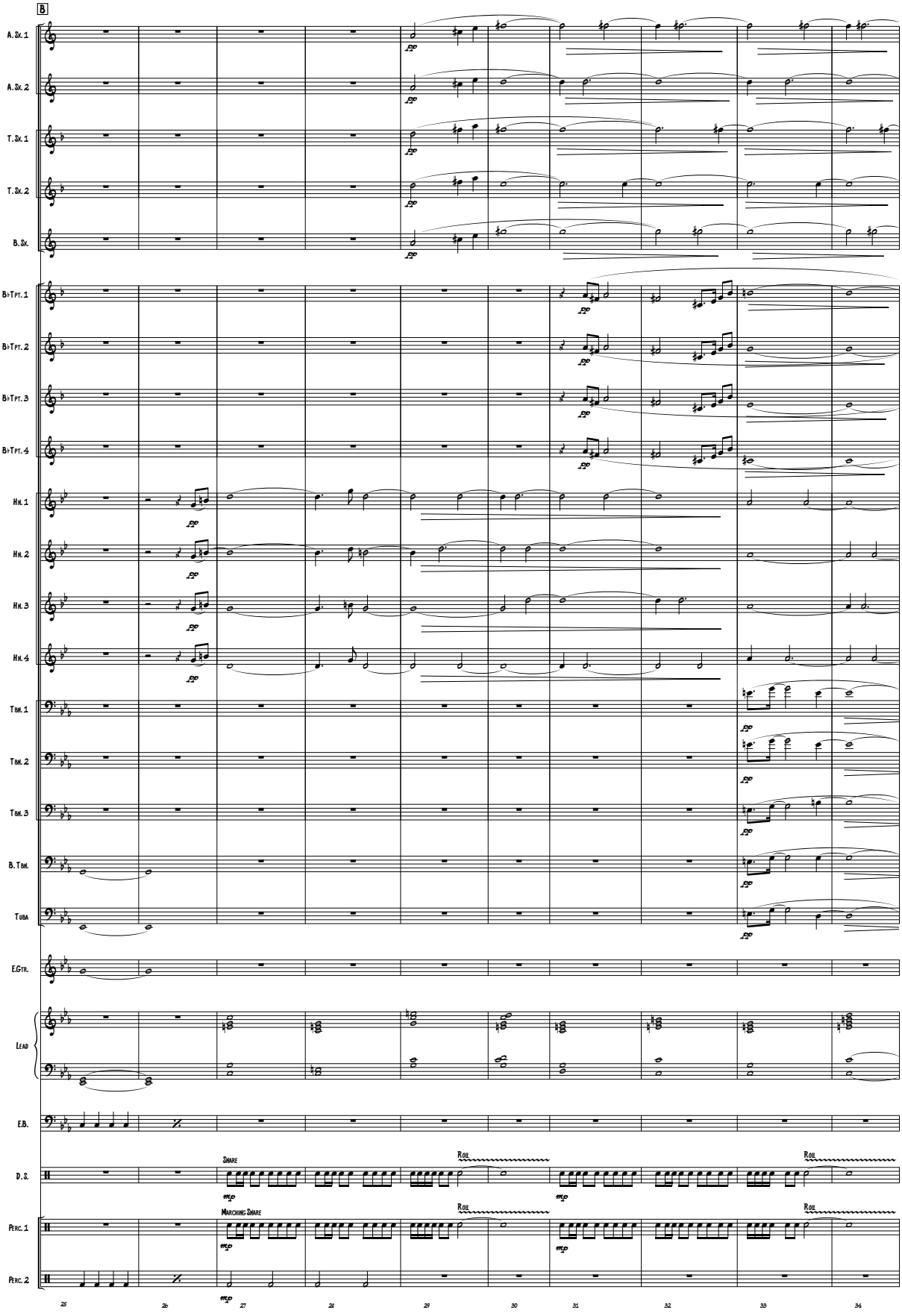

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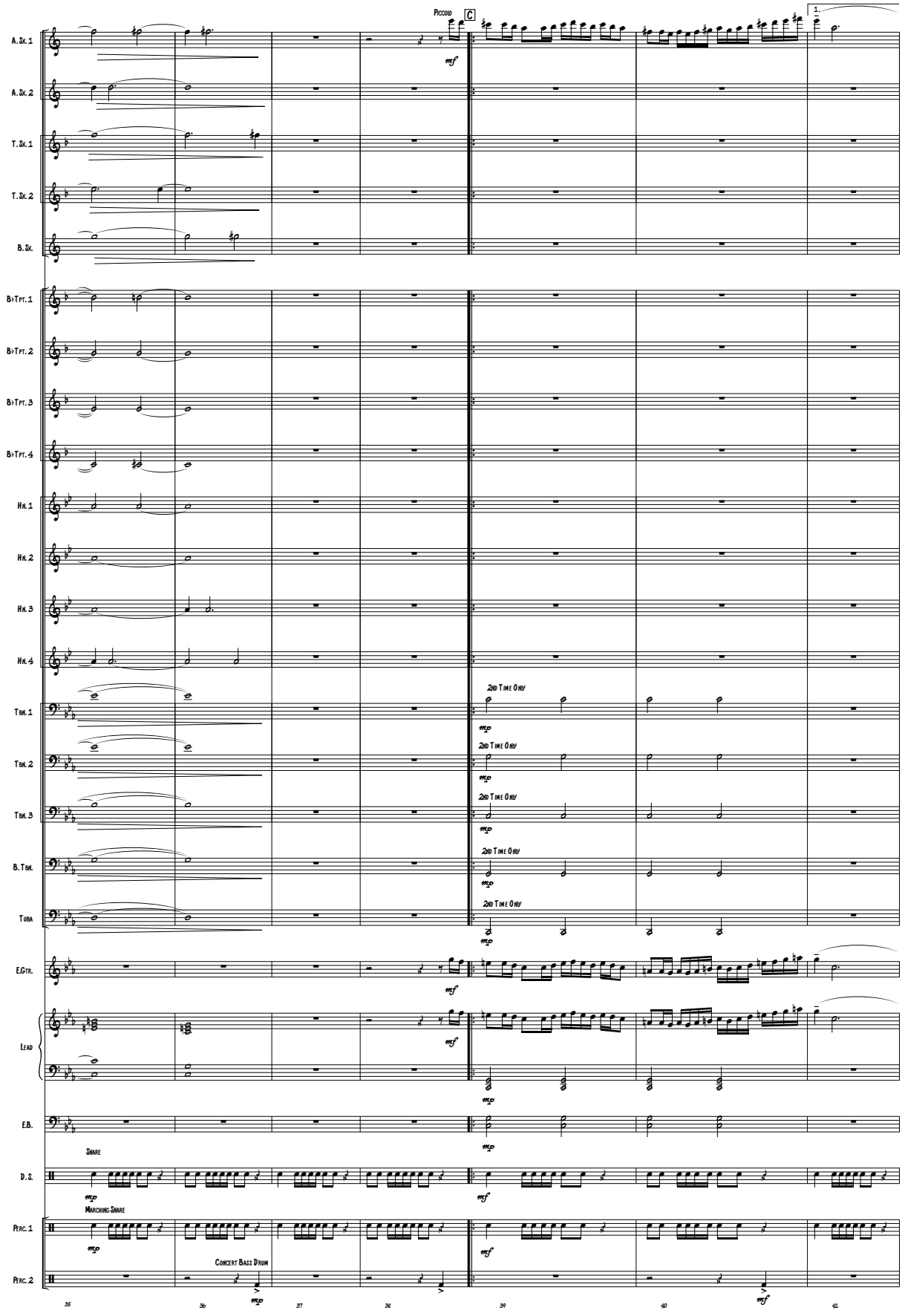

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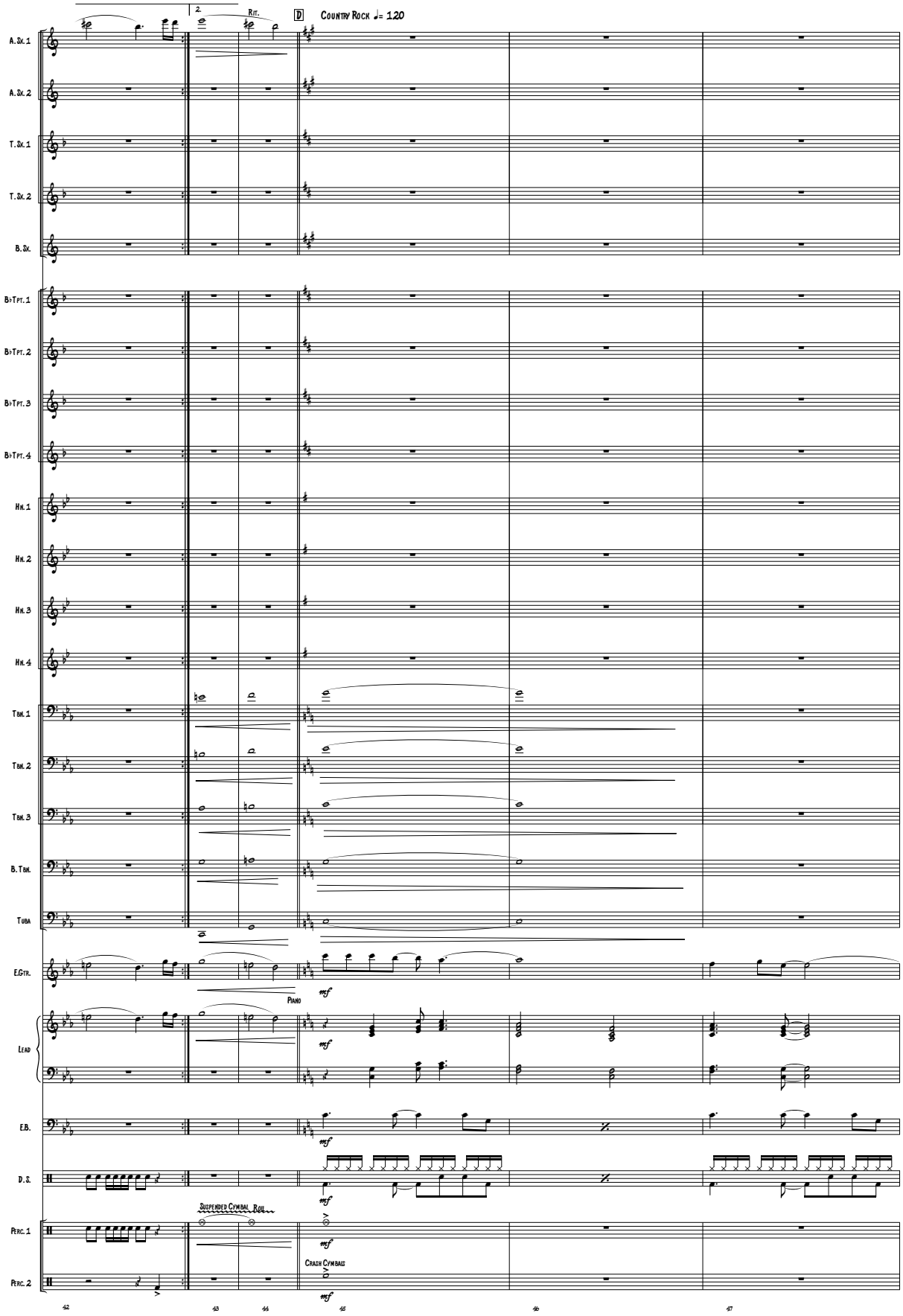

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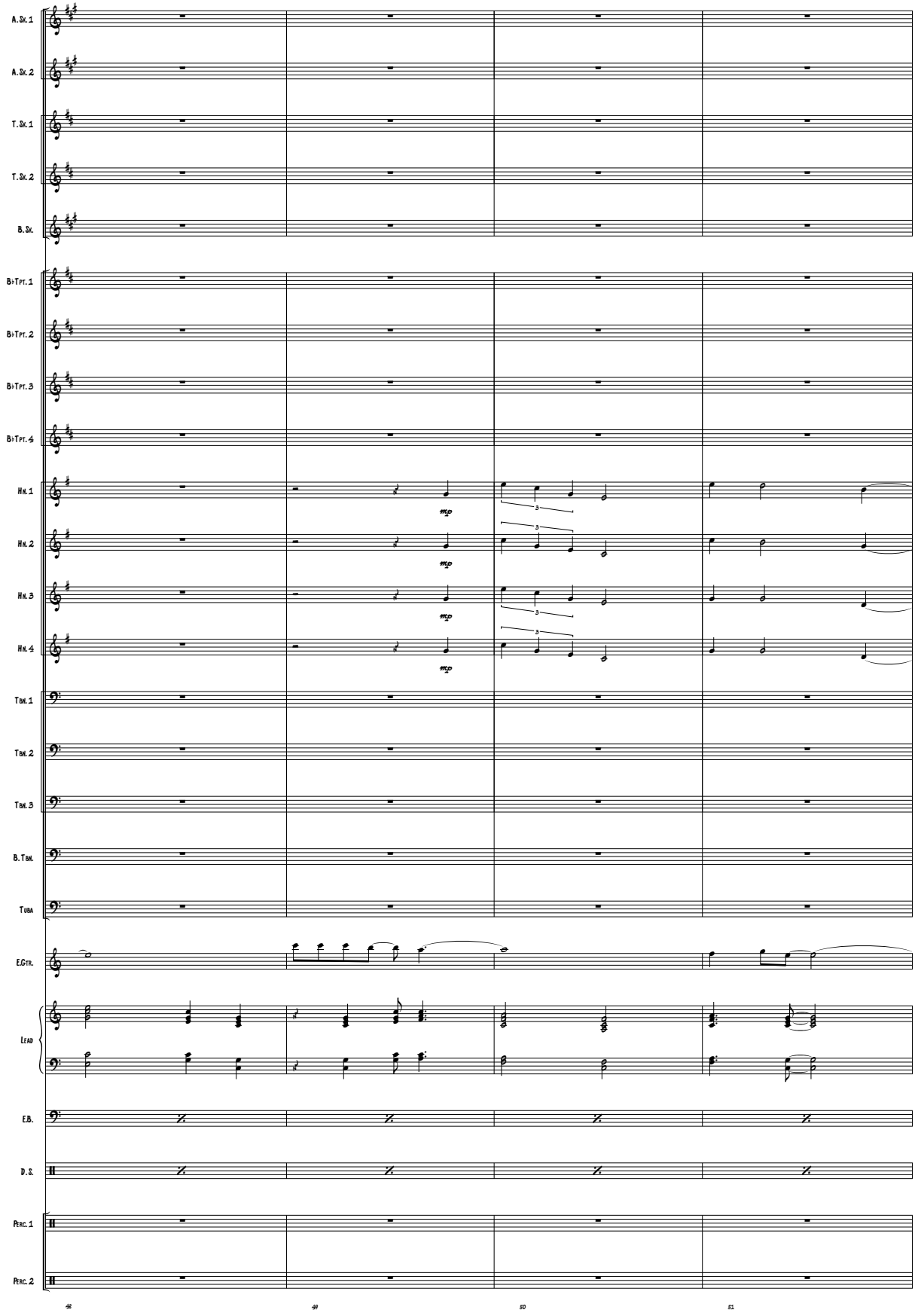

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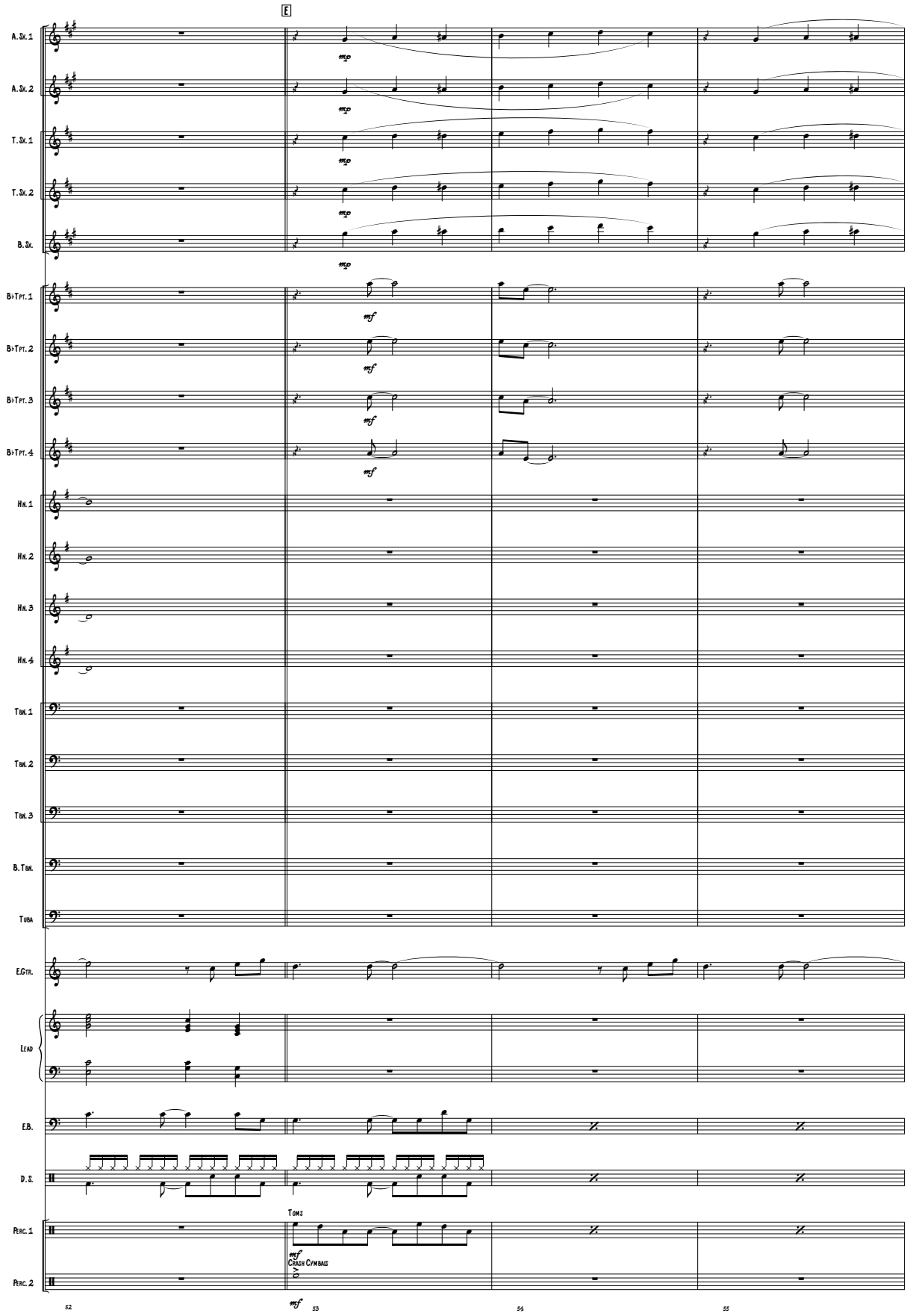

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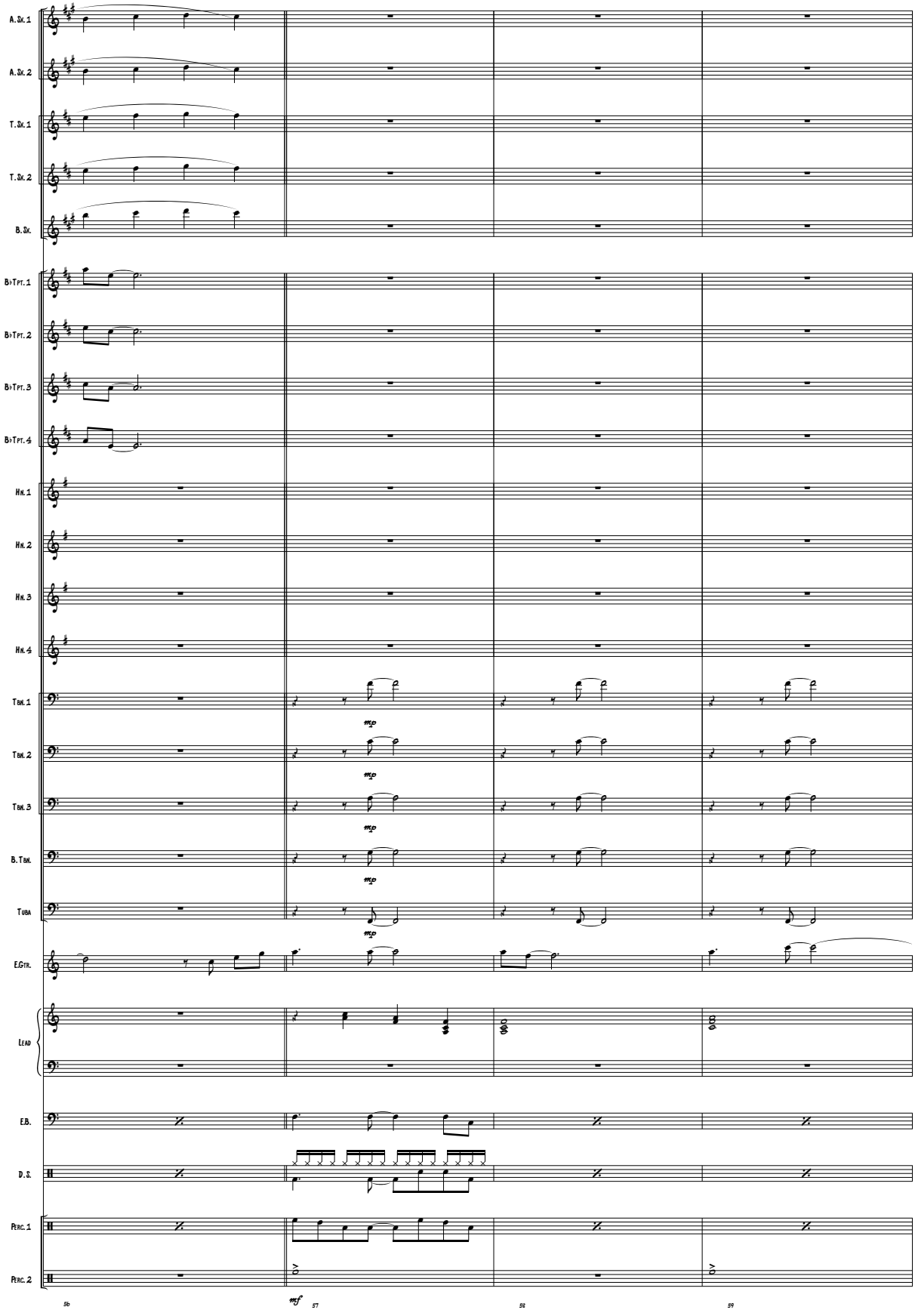

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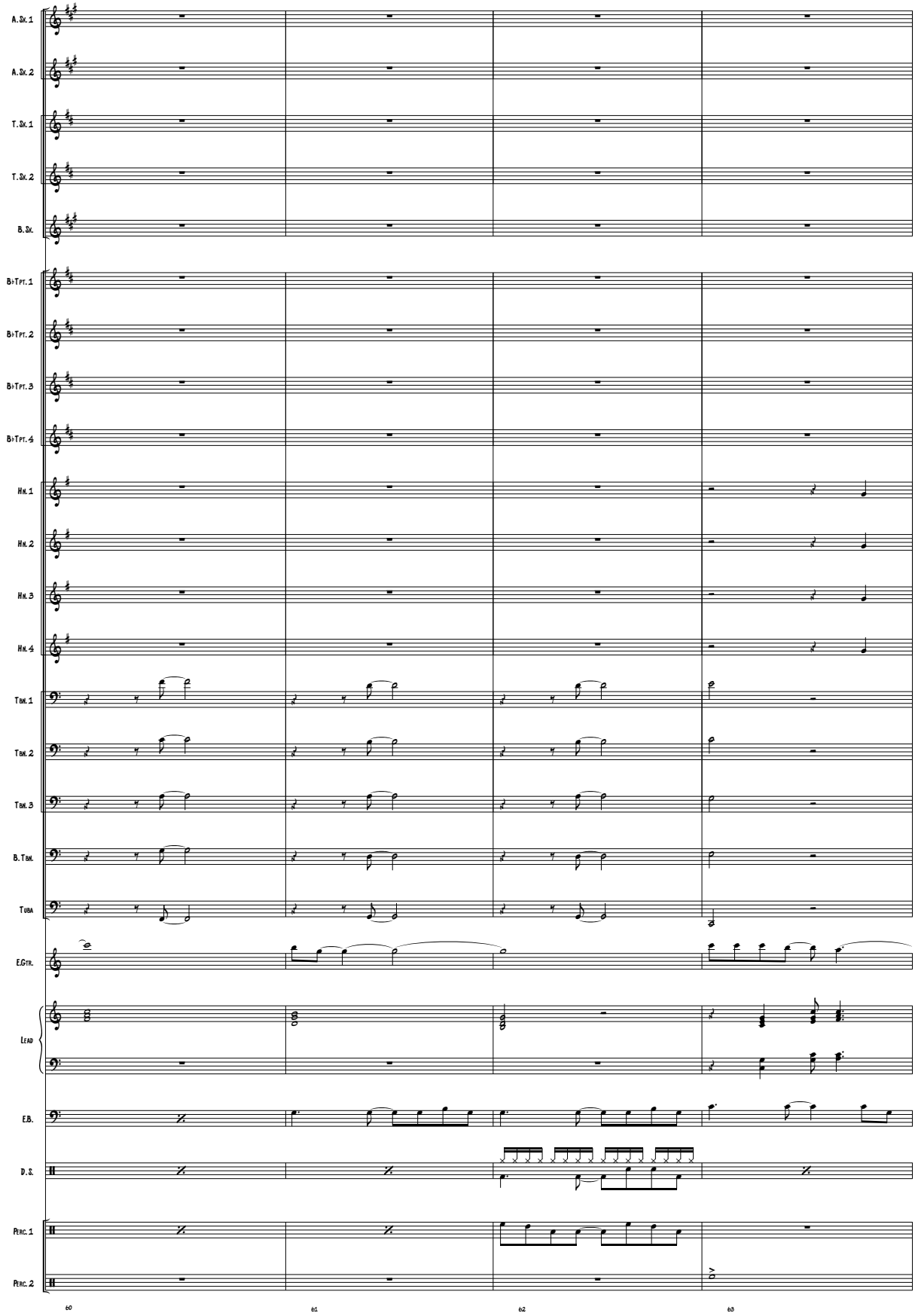

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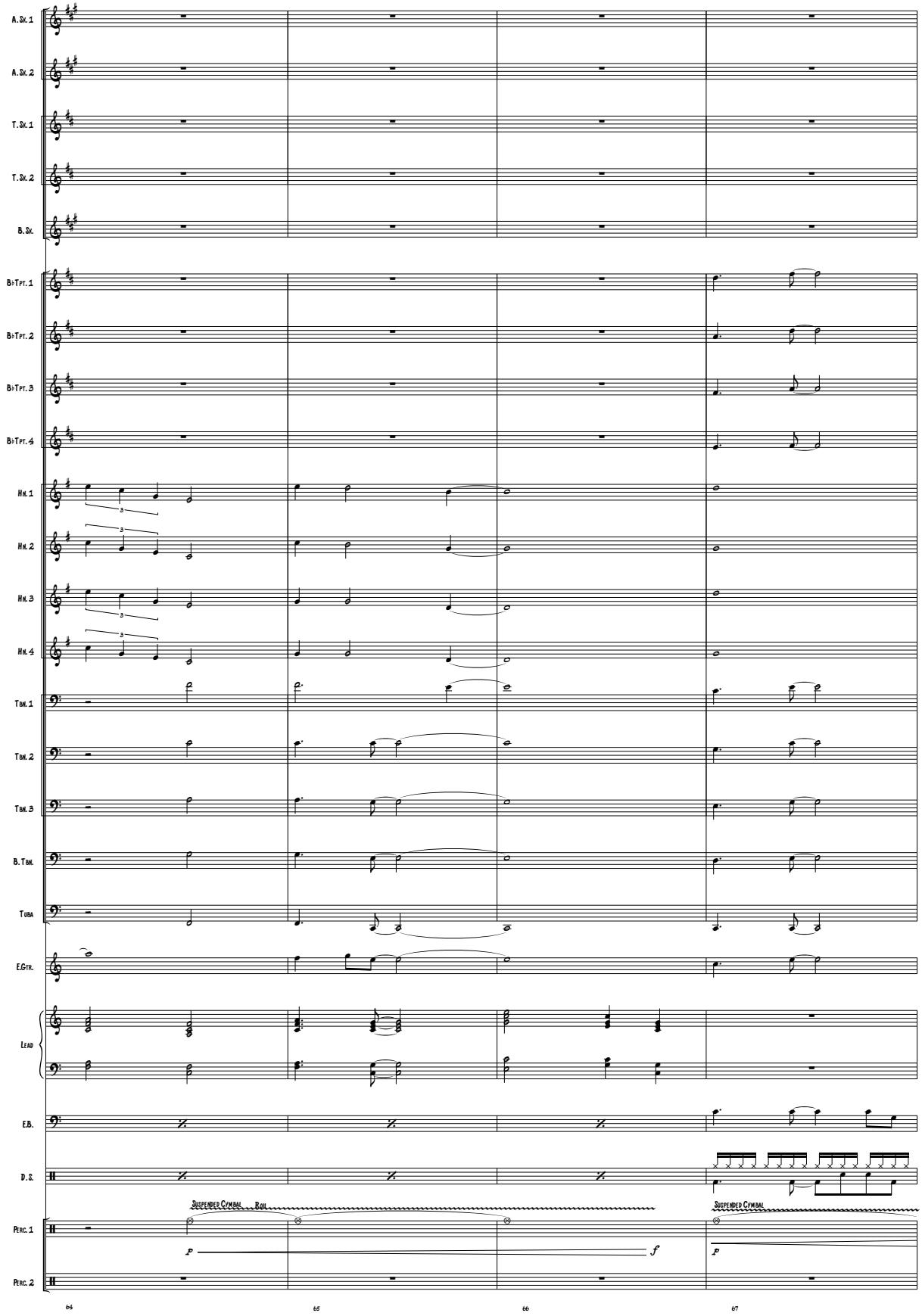

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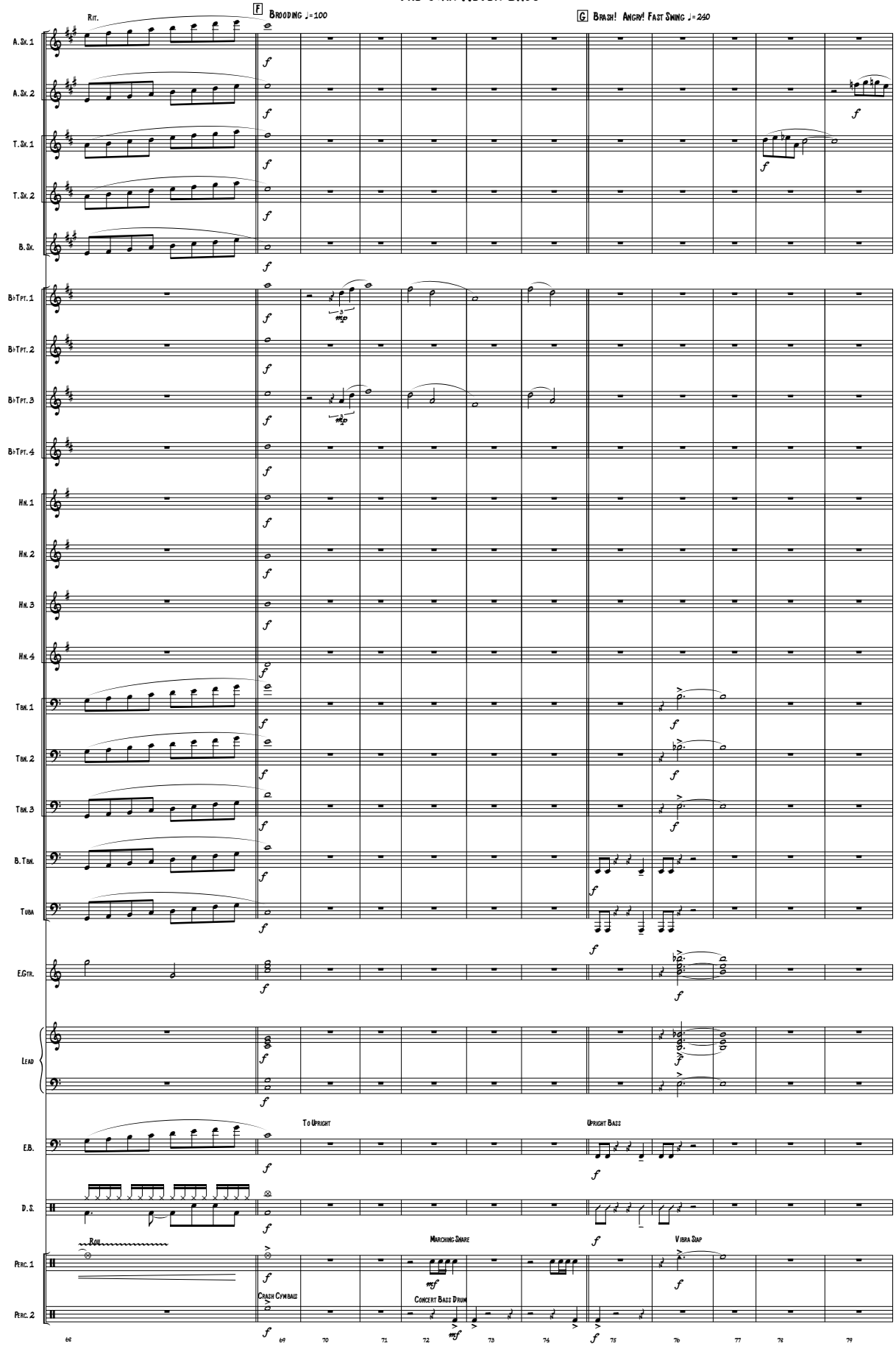

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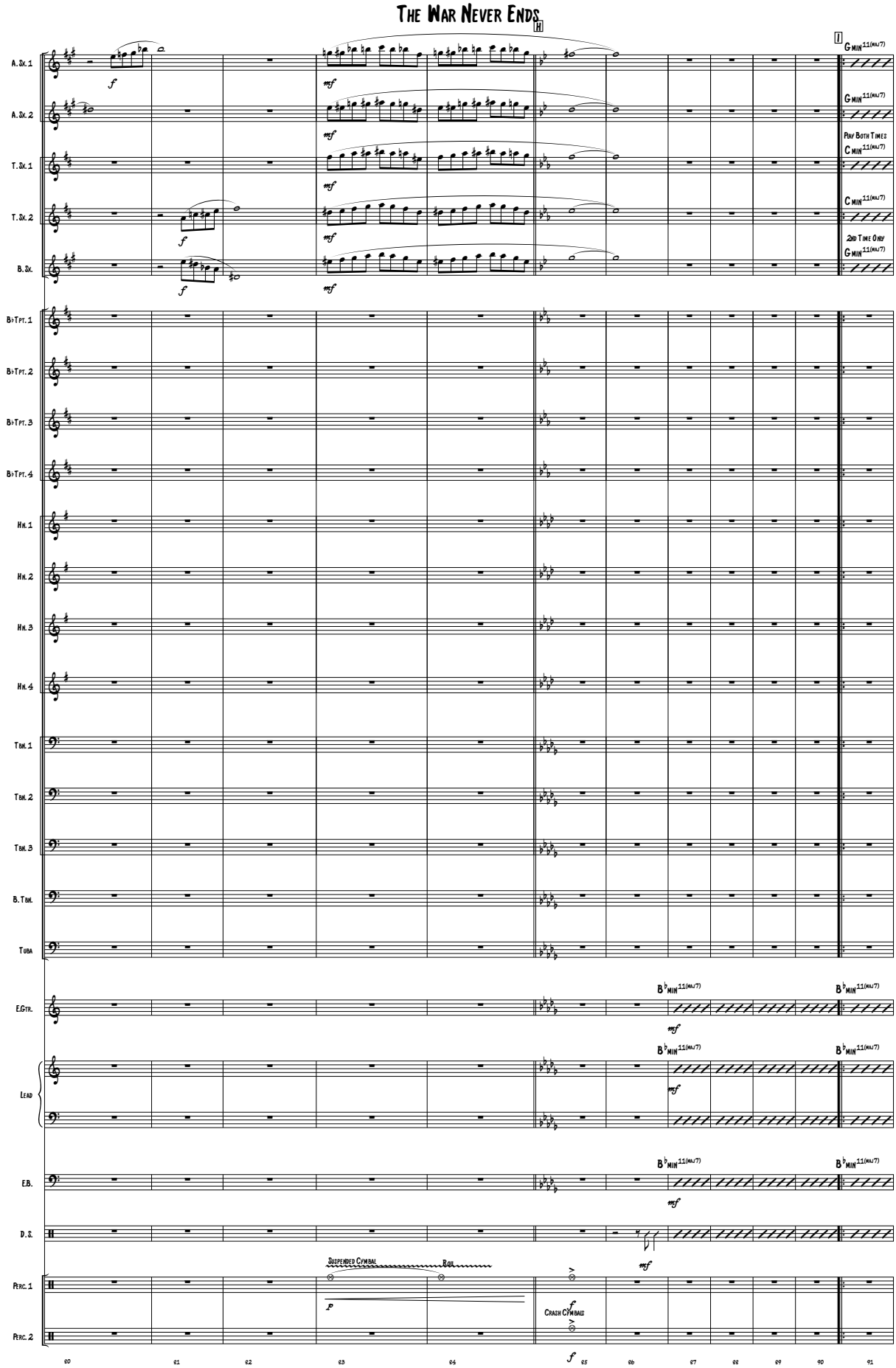

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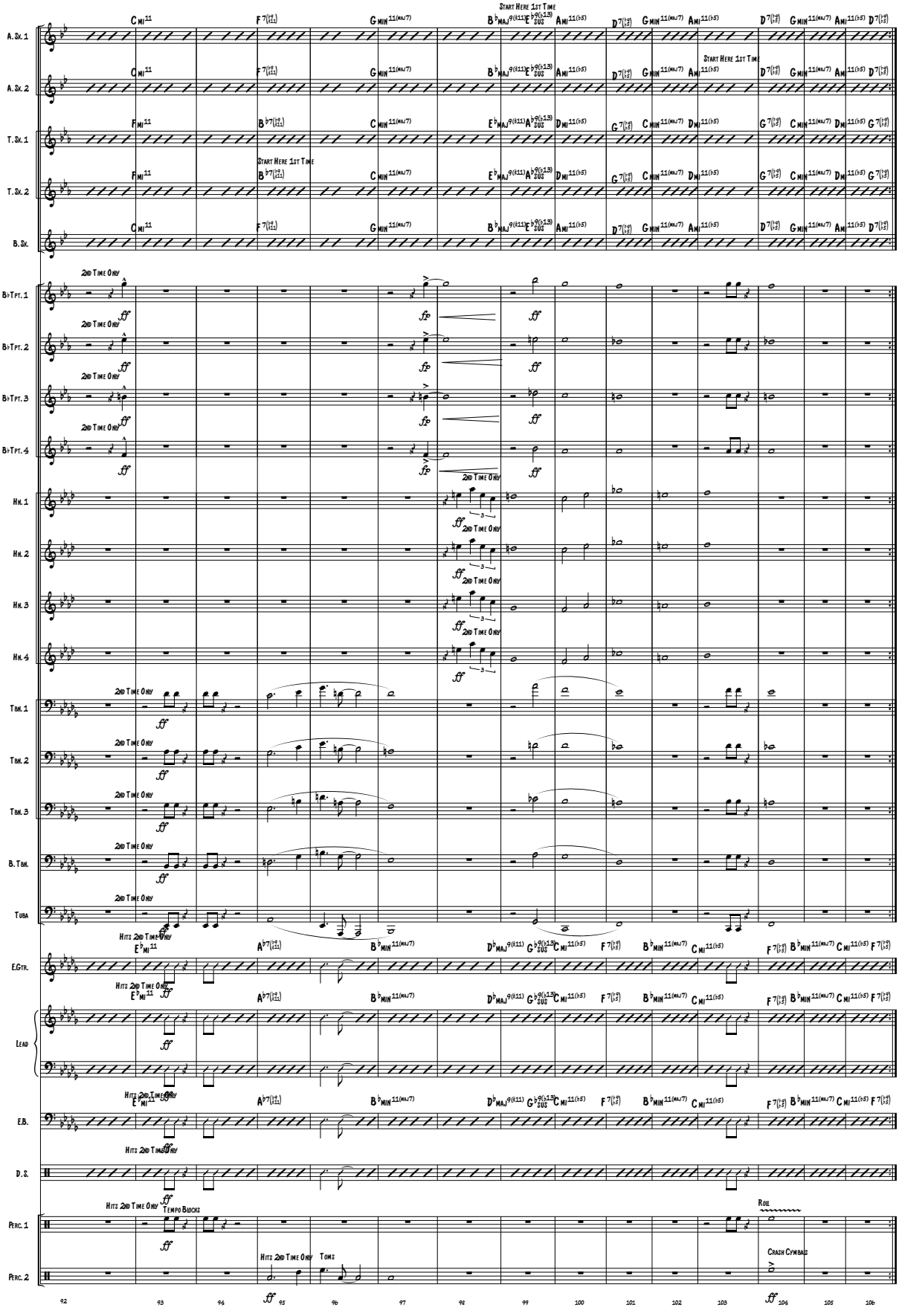

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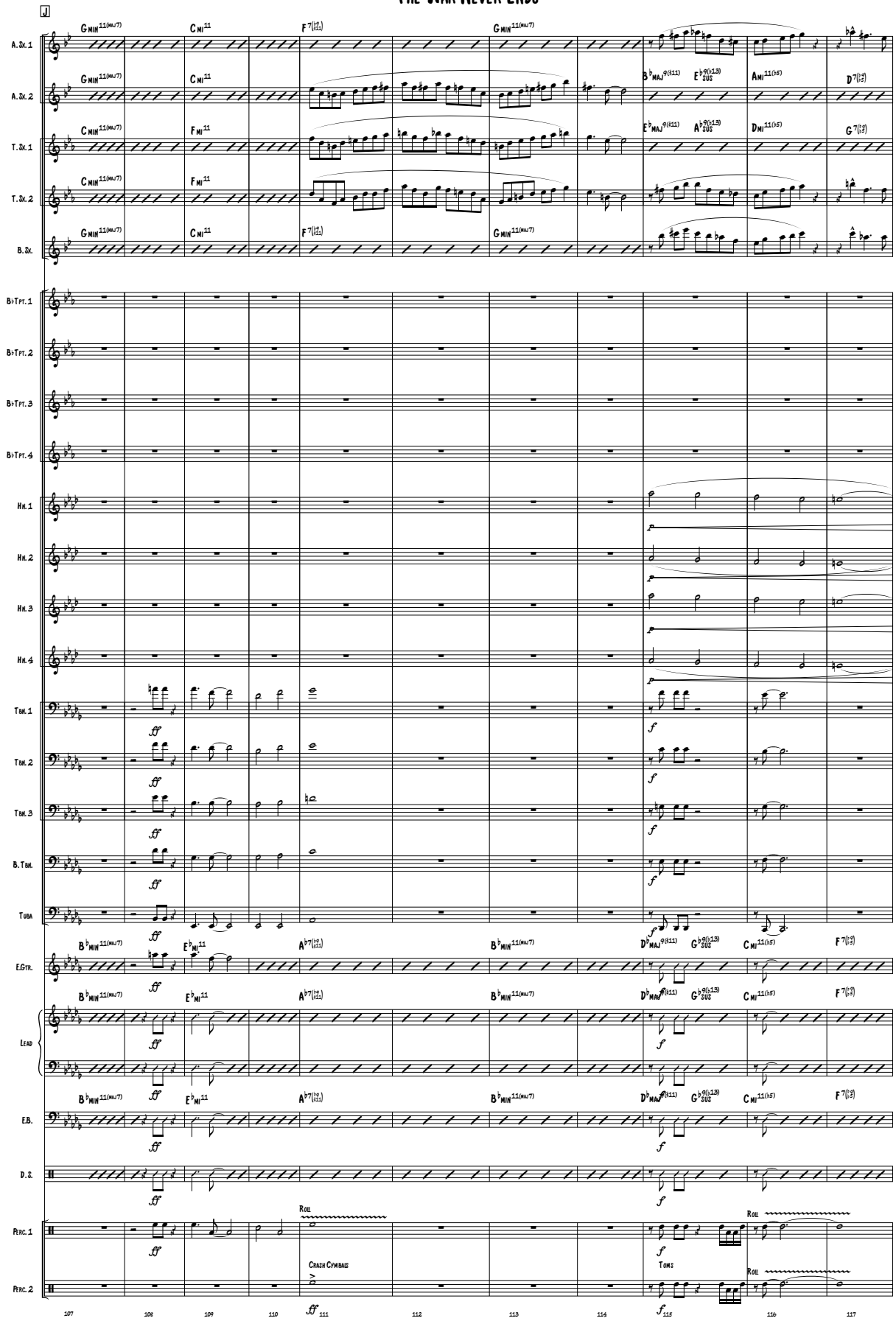

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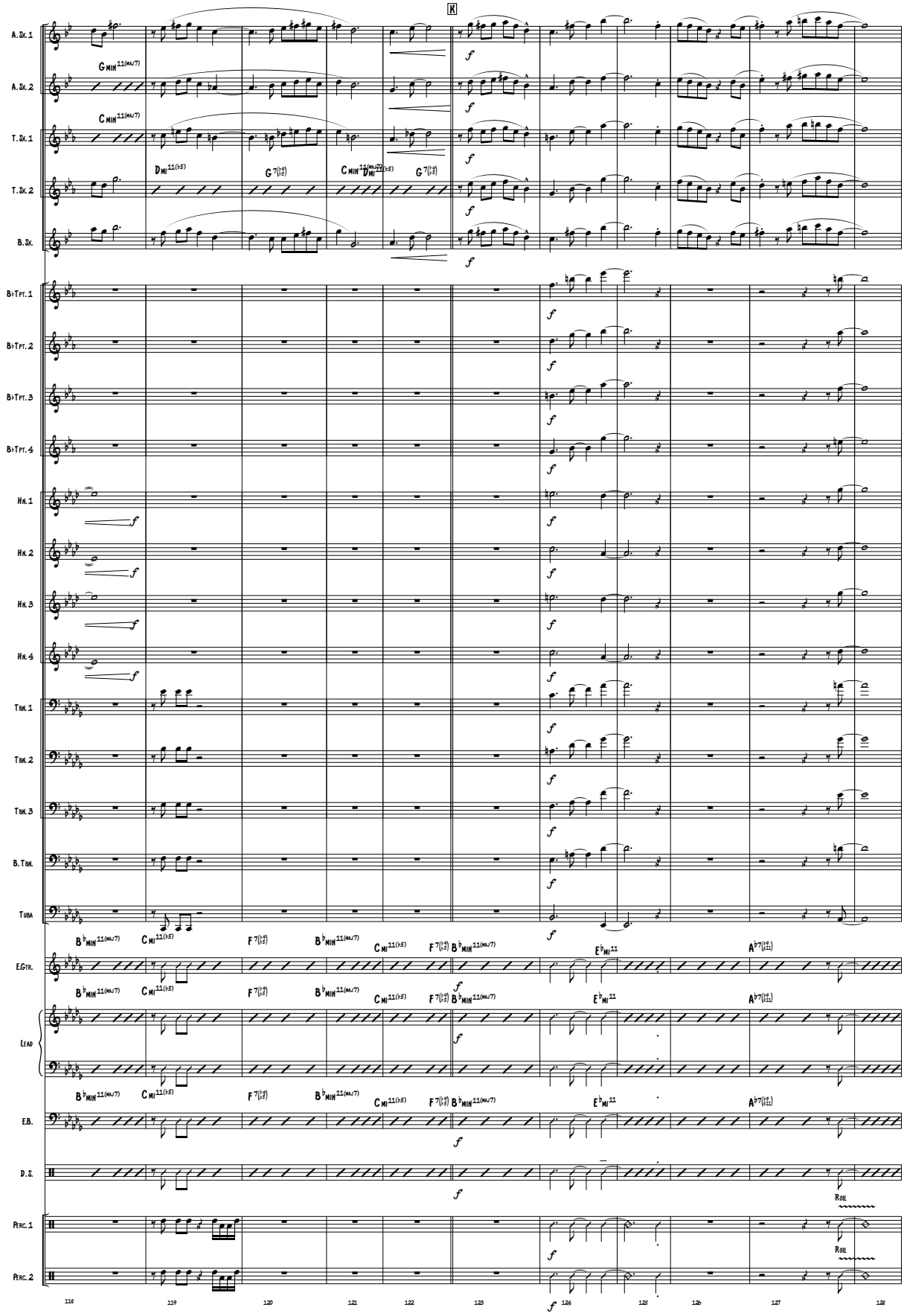

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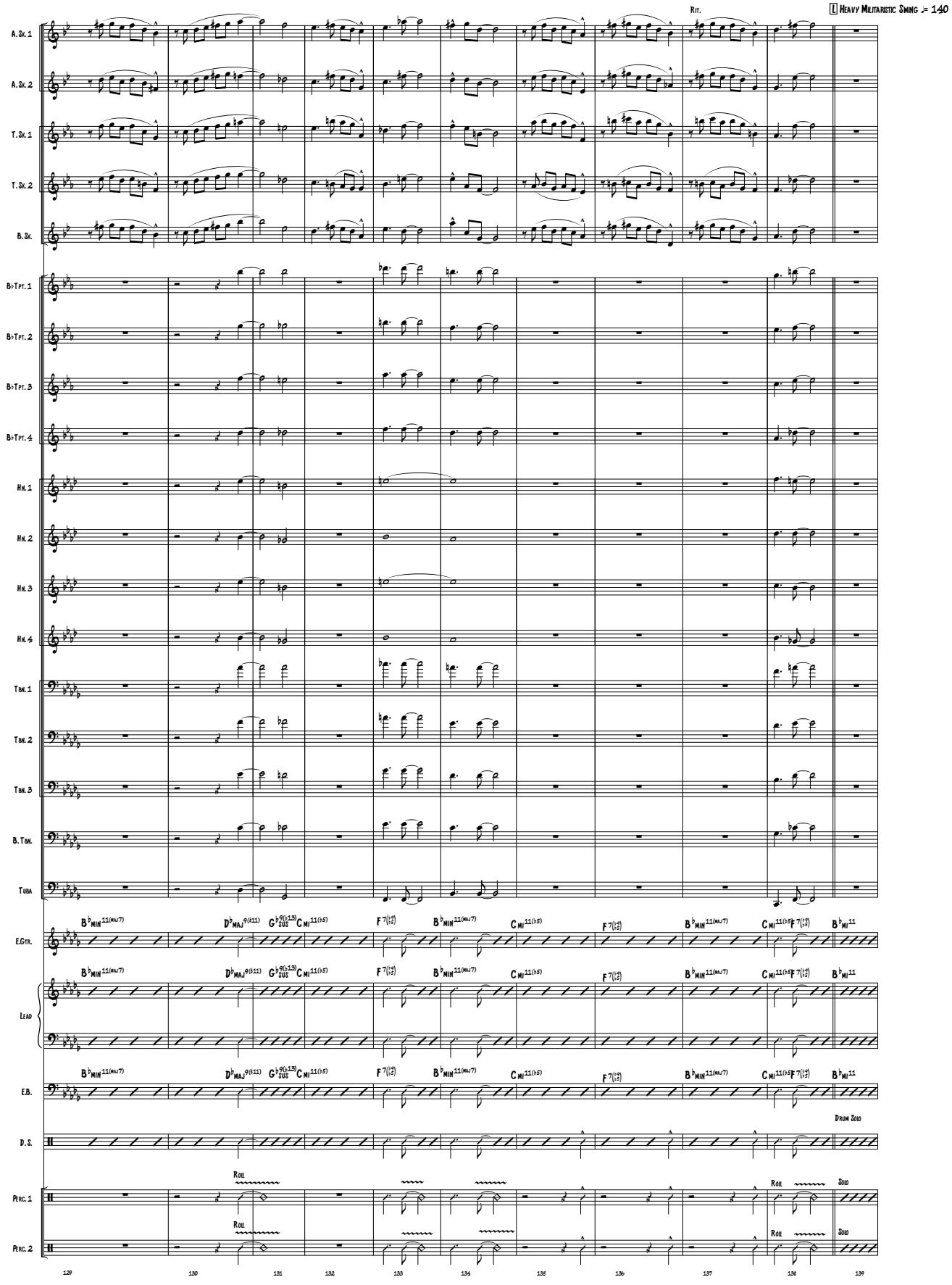

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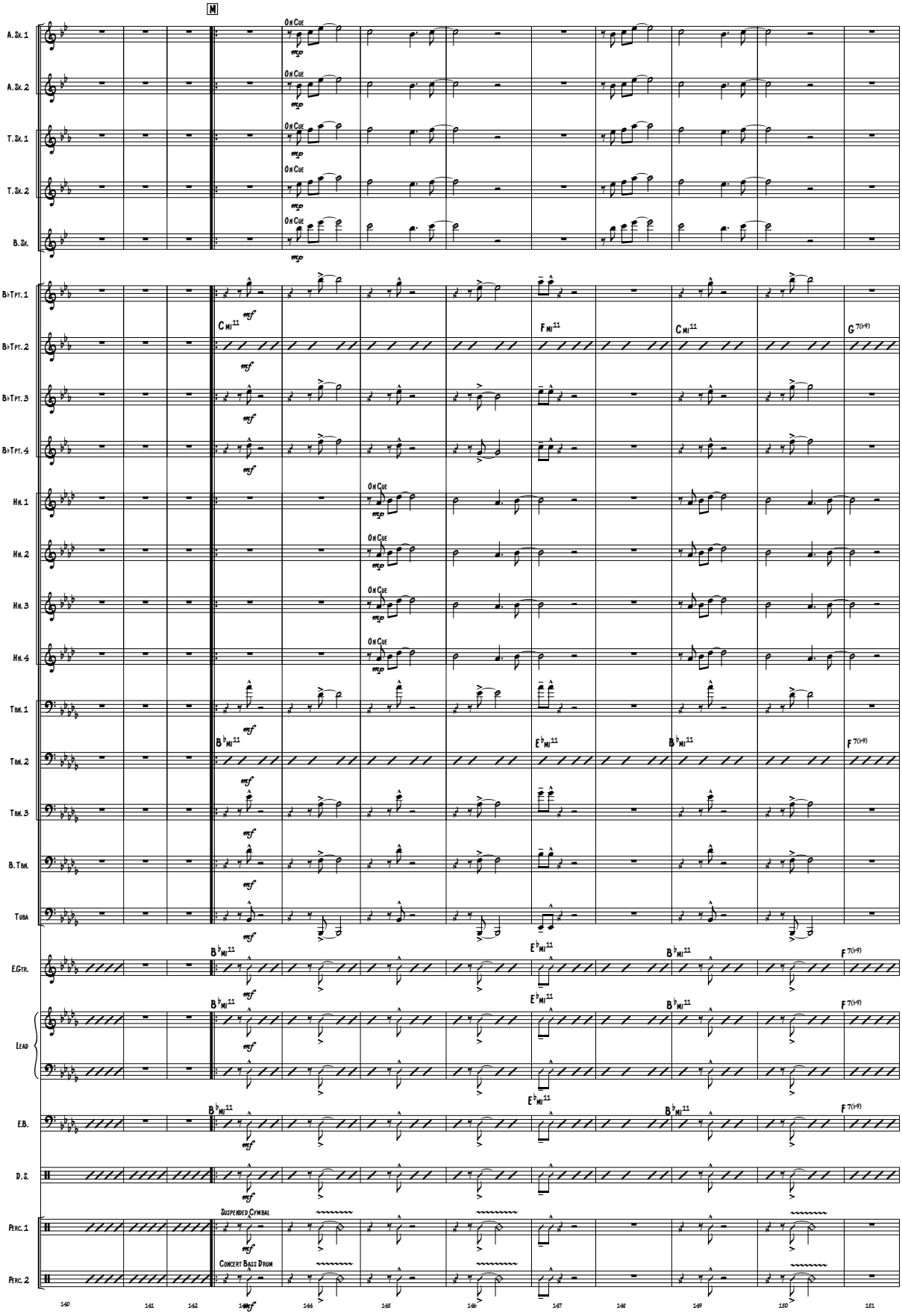

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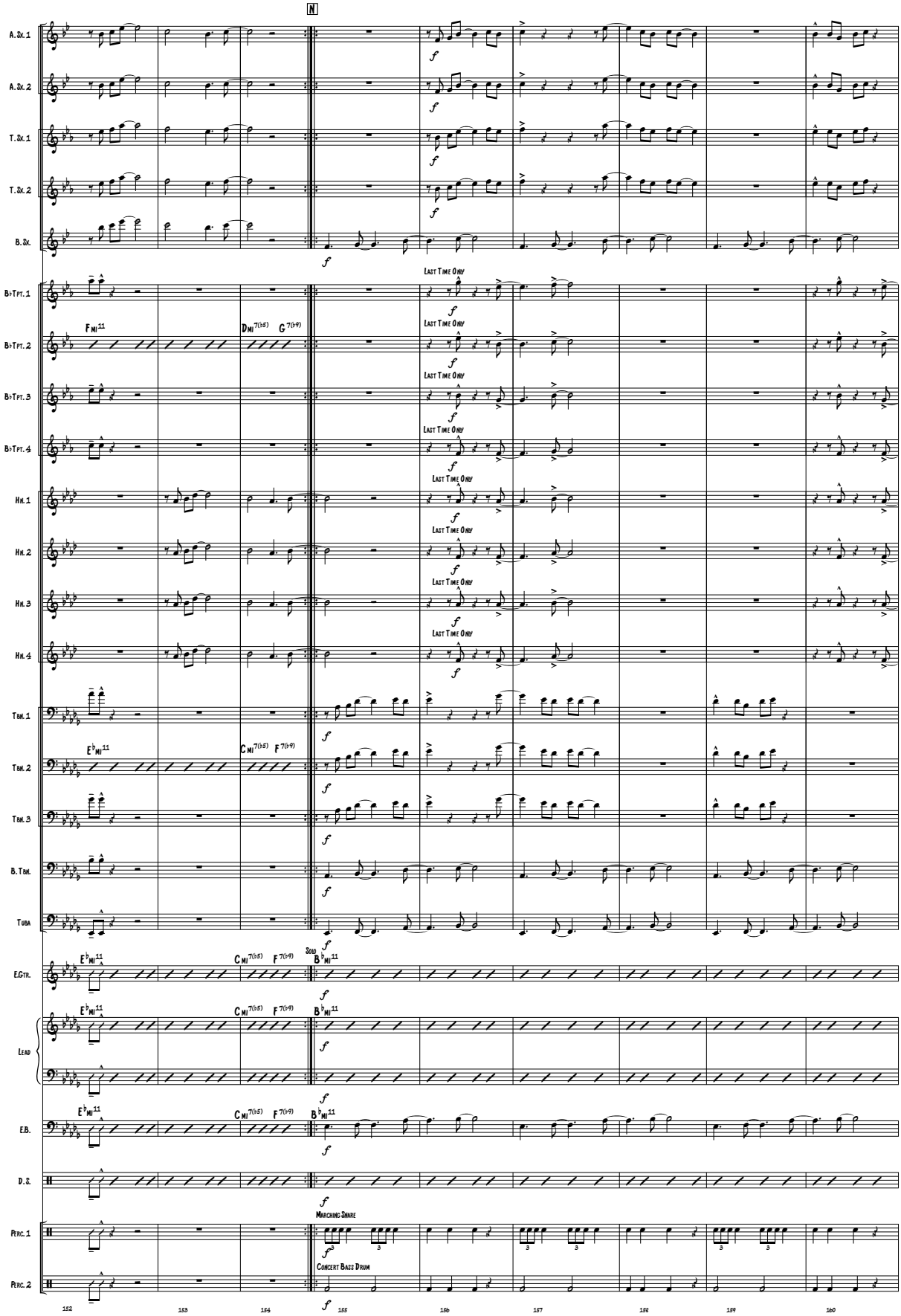

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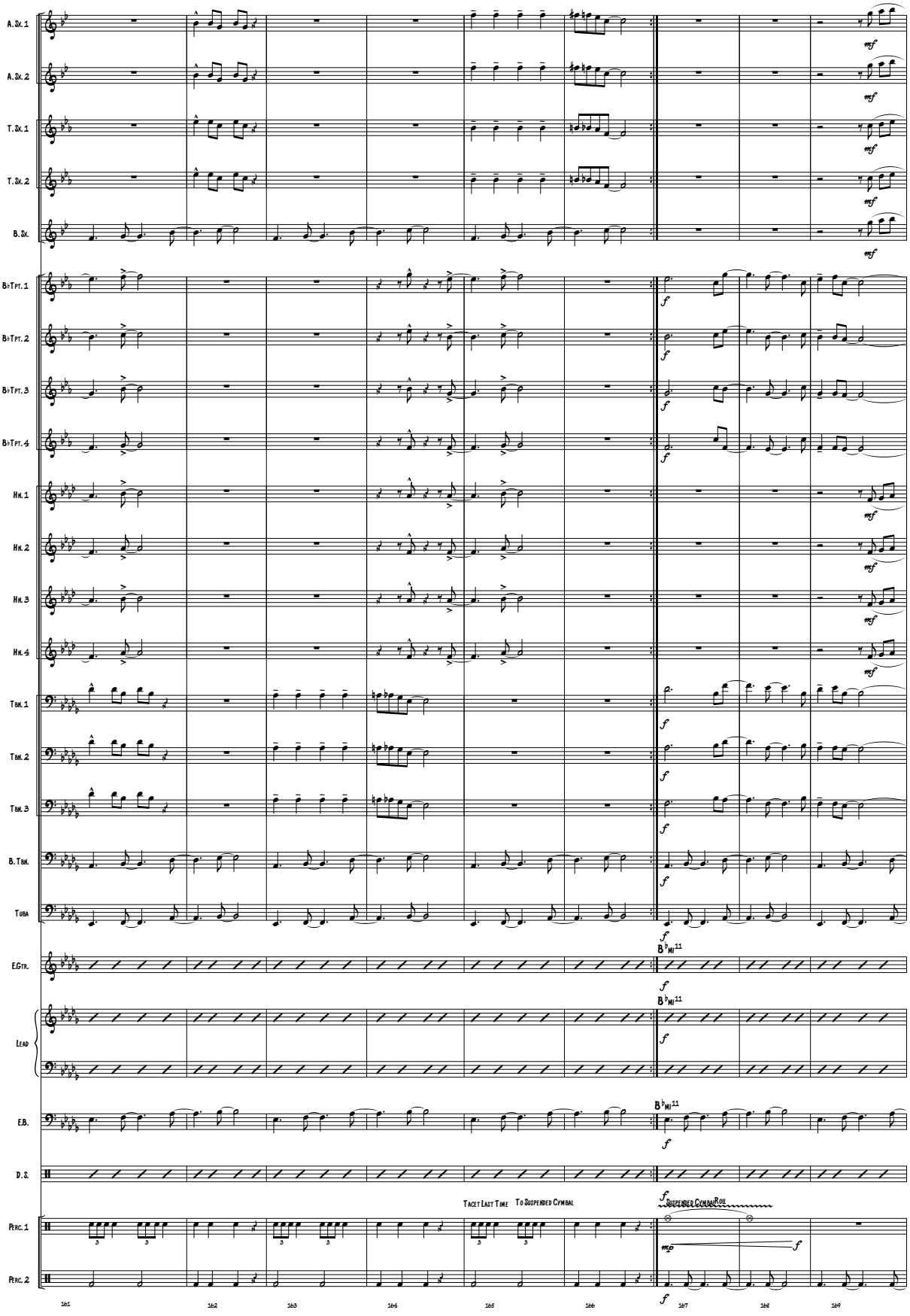

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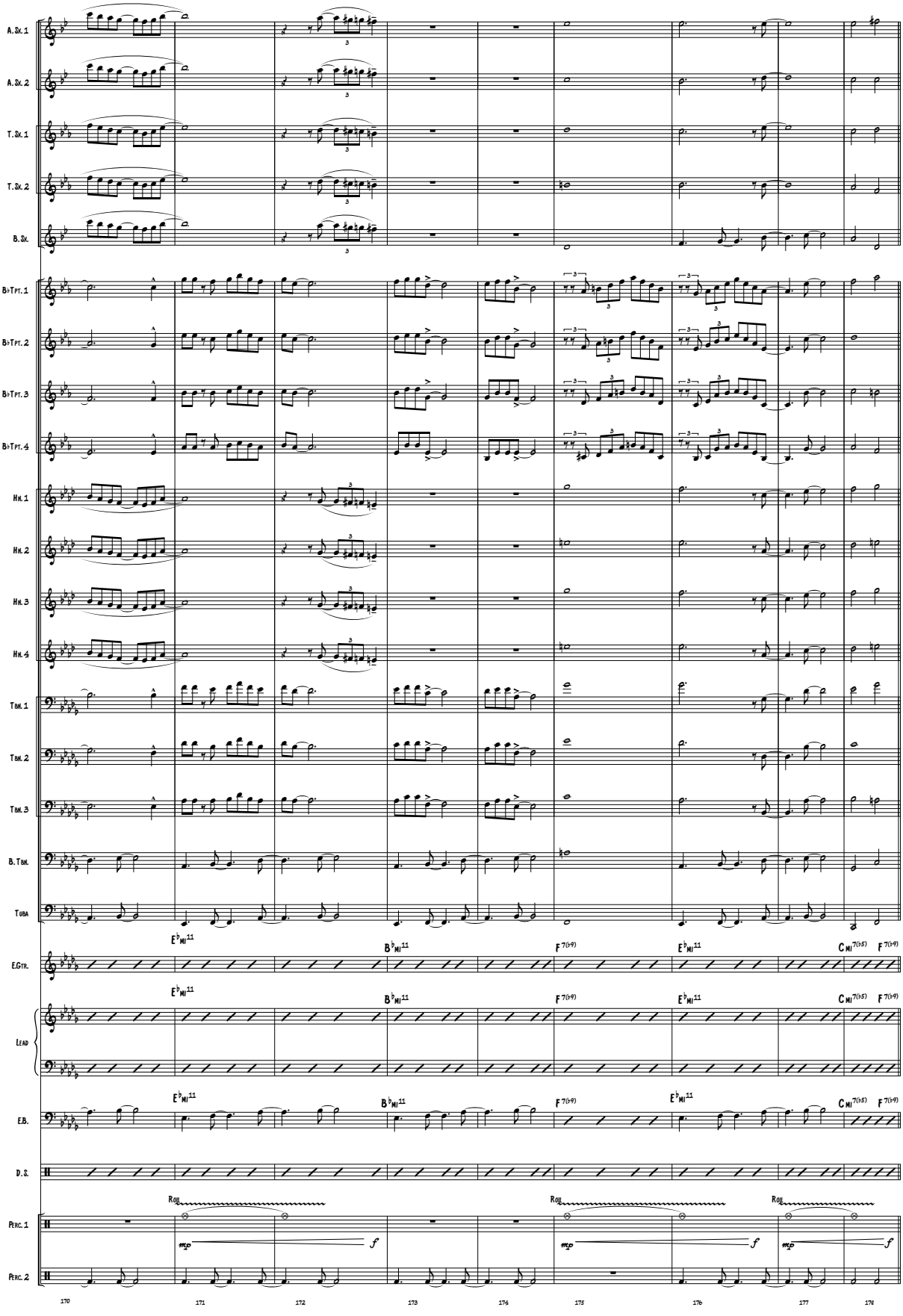

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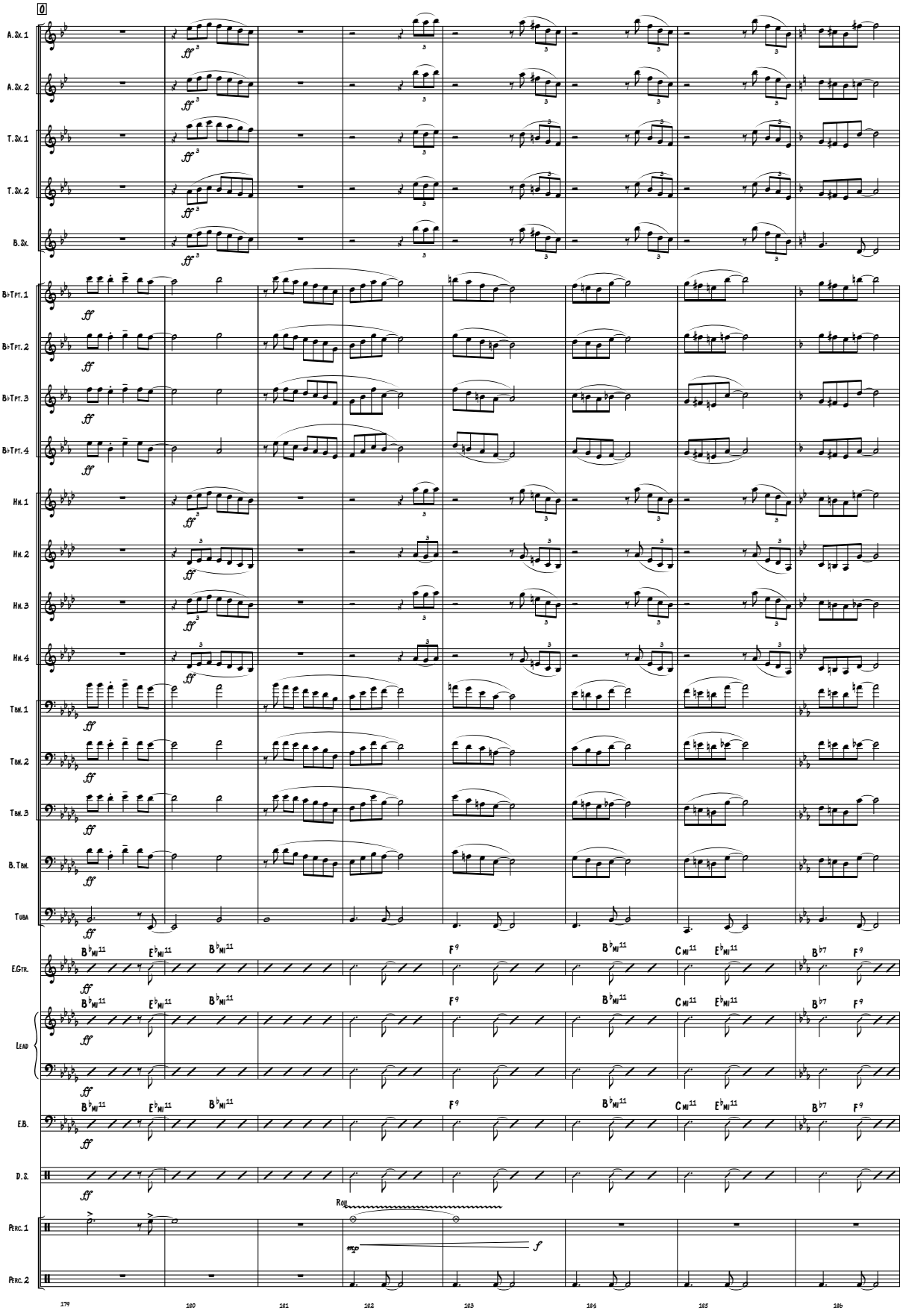

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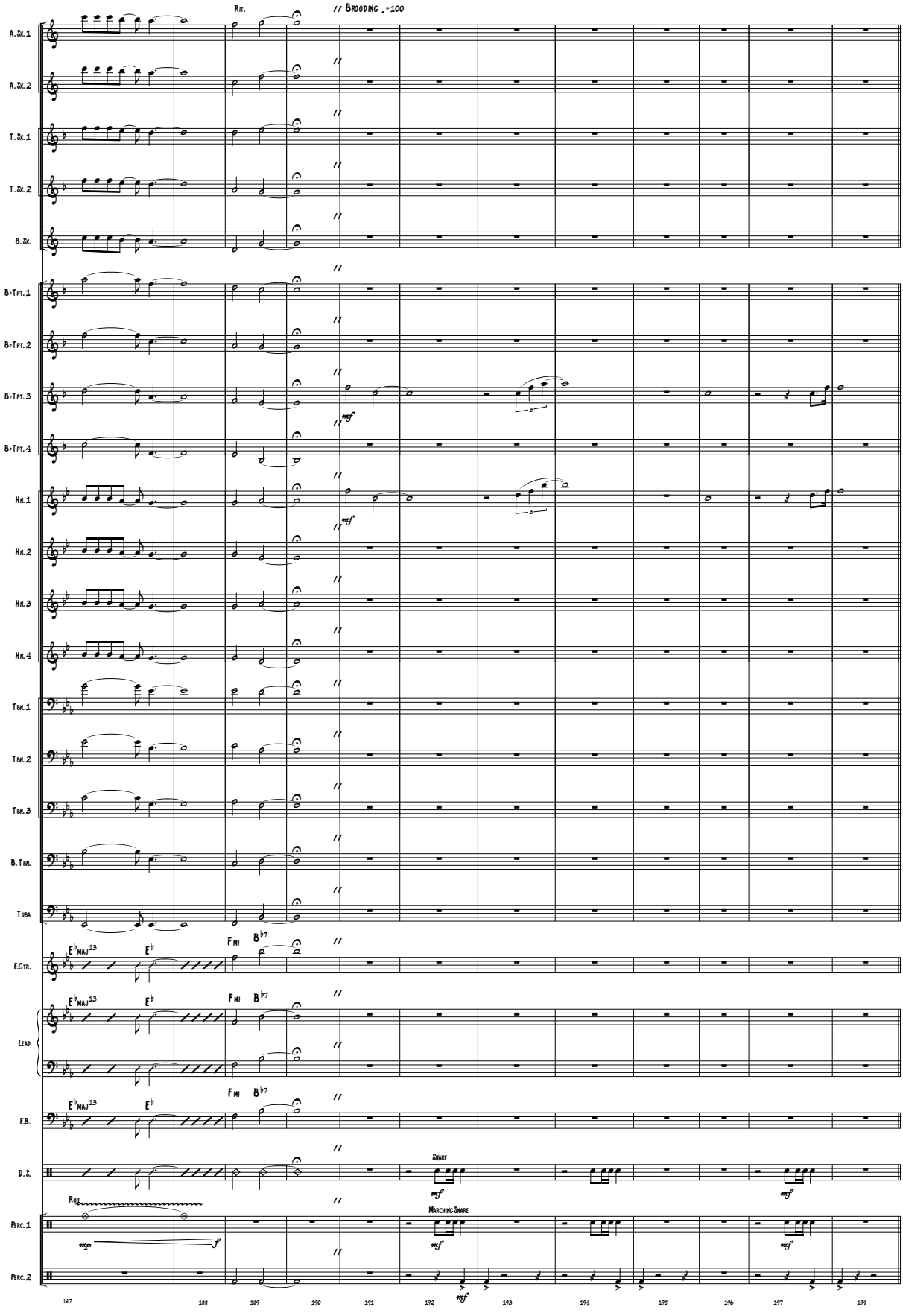

II. The Call to War

Instrumentation

Soprano Sax

Alto Sax

Tenor Sax 1

Tenor Sax 2

Bari Sax

Trumpet 1

Trumpet 2

Trumpet 3

Trumpet 4

Horn in F 1

Horn in F 2

Horn in F 3

Horn in F 4

Trombone 1

Trombone 2

Trombone 3

Bass Trombone

Tuba

Guitar

Piano/Synth

Bass (Electric and Upright)

Drums

Percussion 1

Percussion 2

Baritone Vocal

SCORE

The War Never Ends

II. The Call to War

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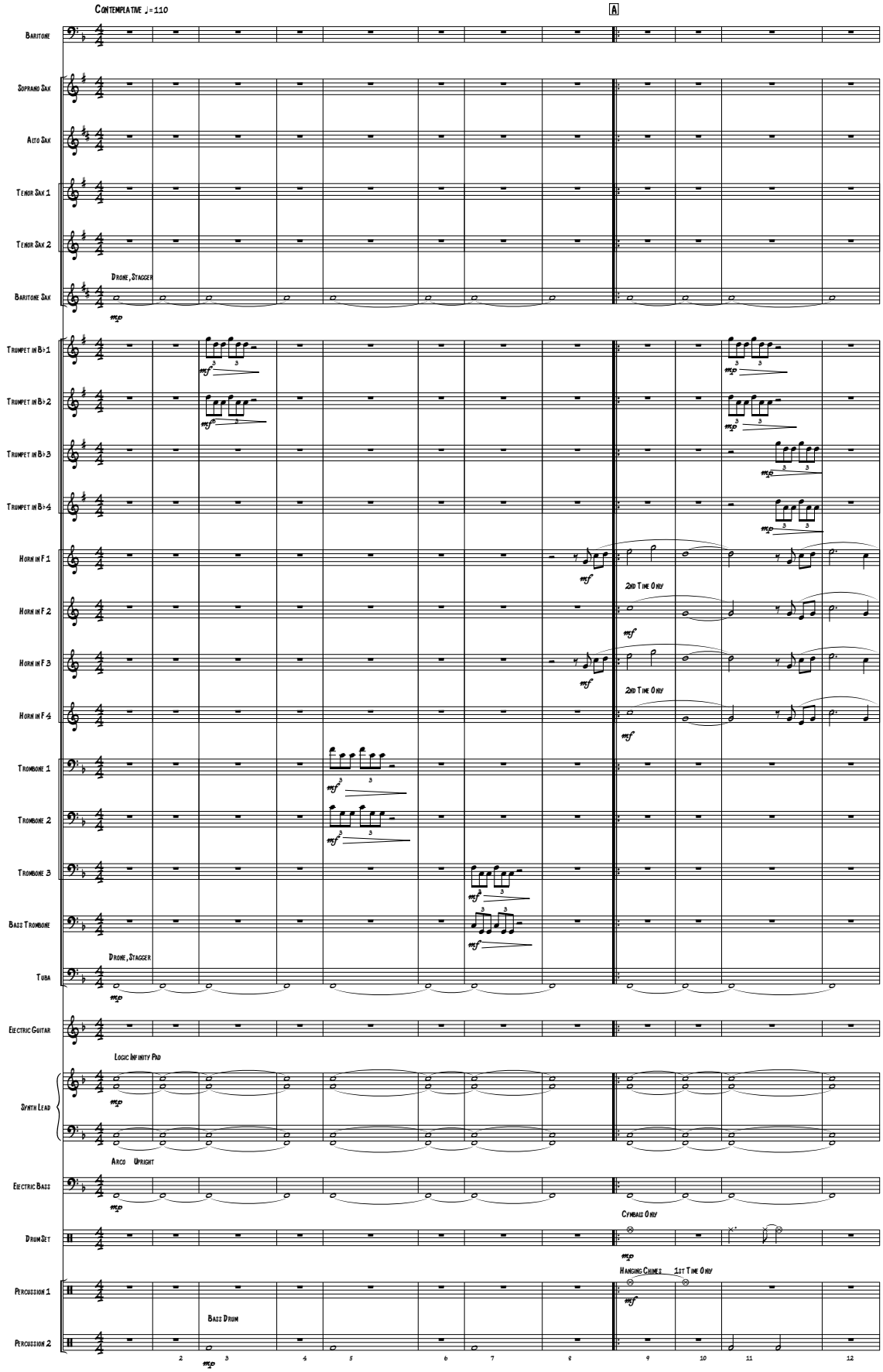

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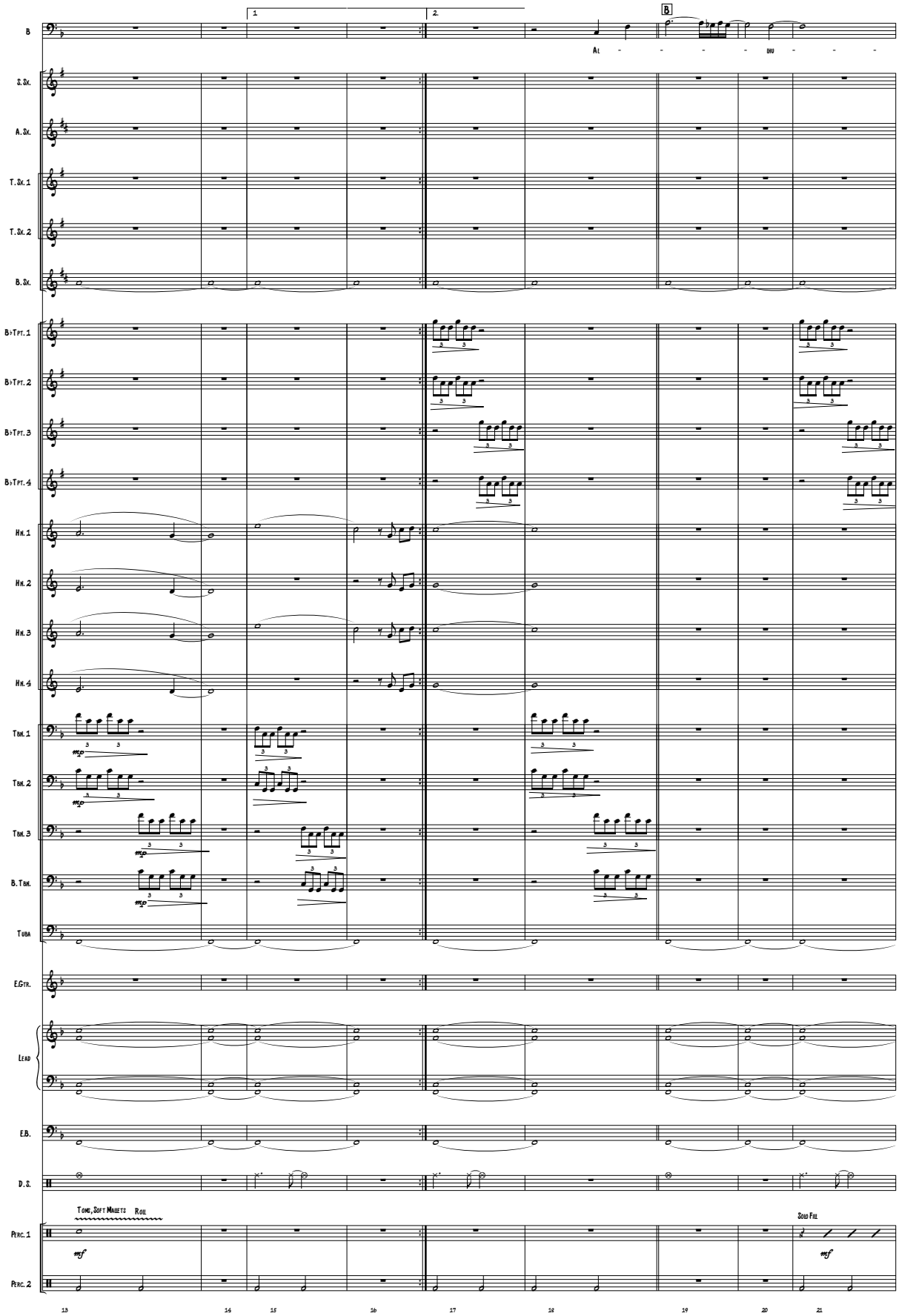

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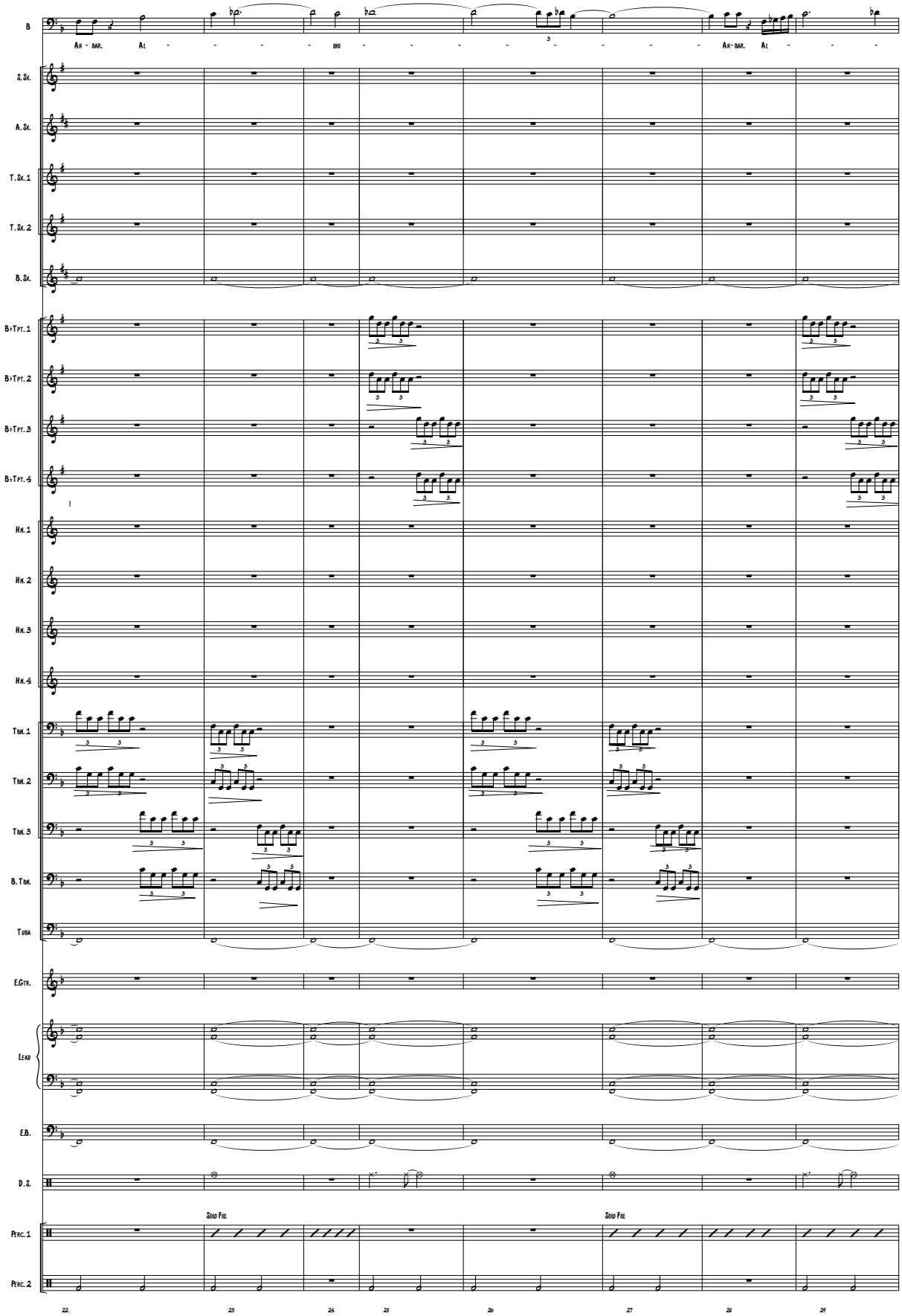

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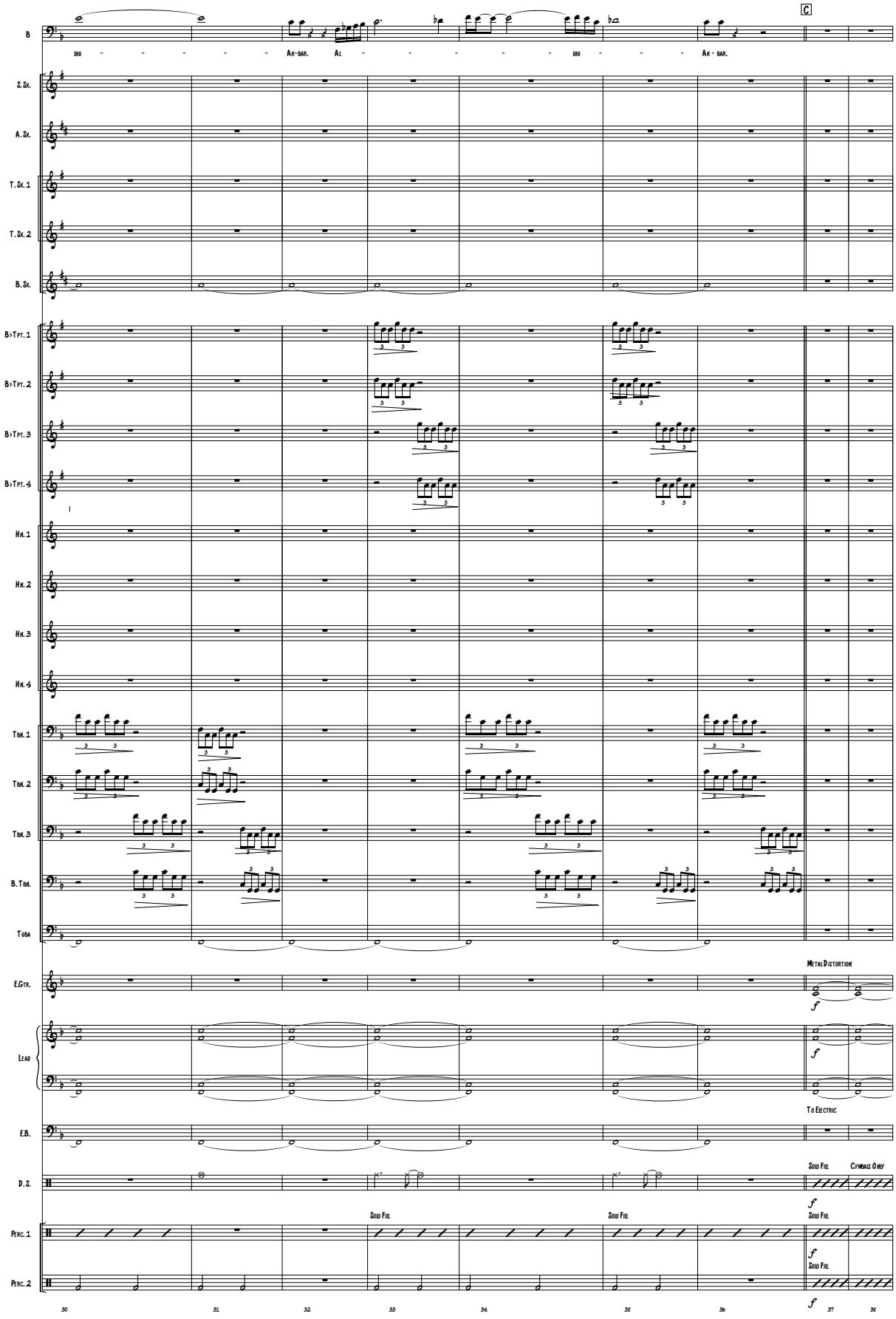

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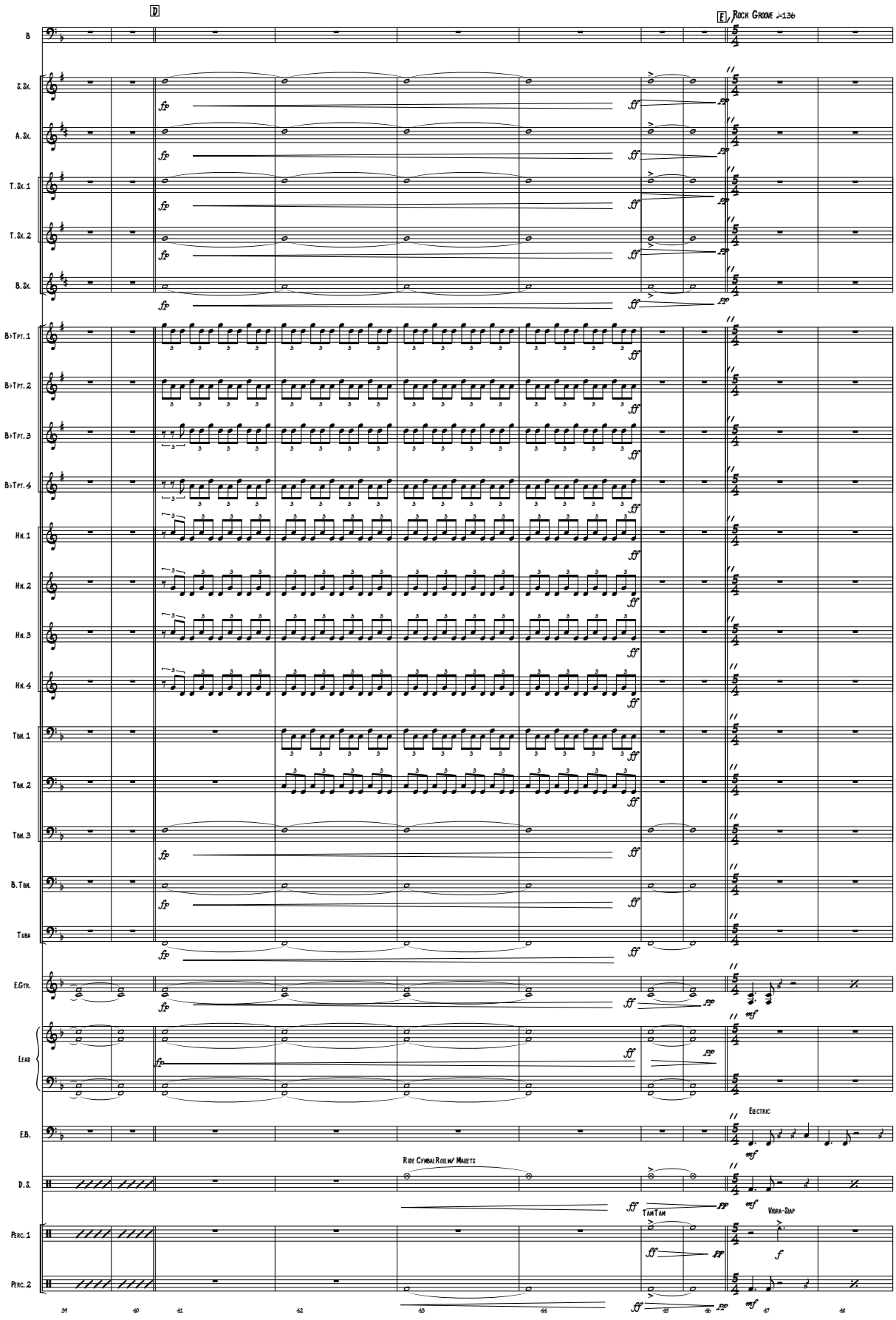

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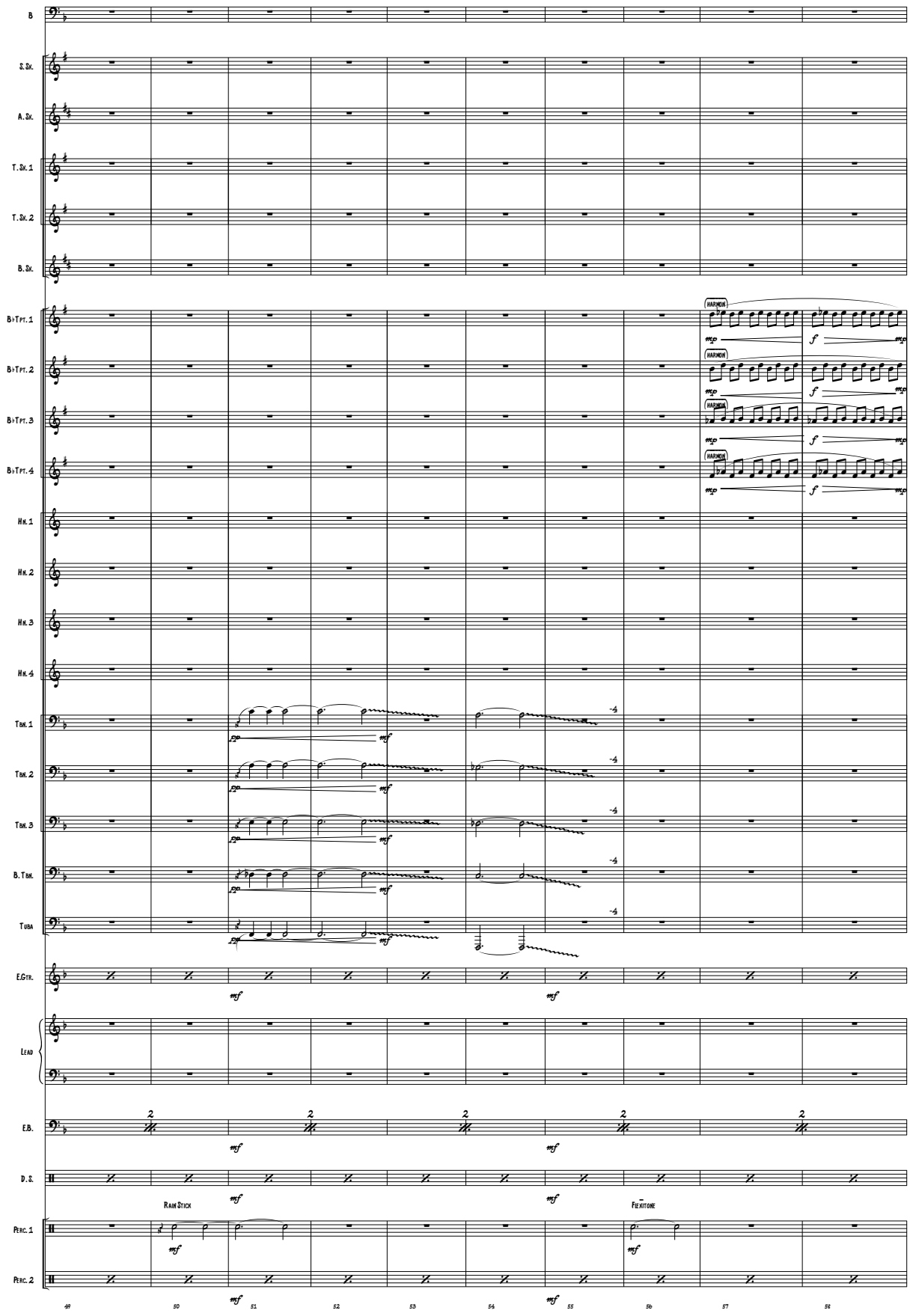

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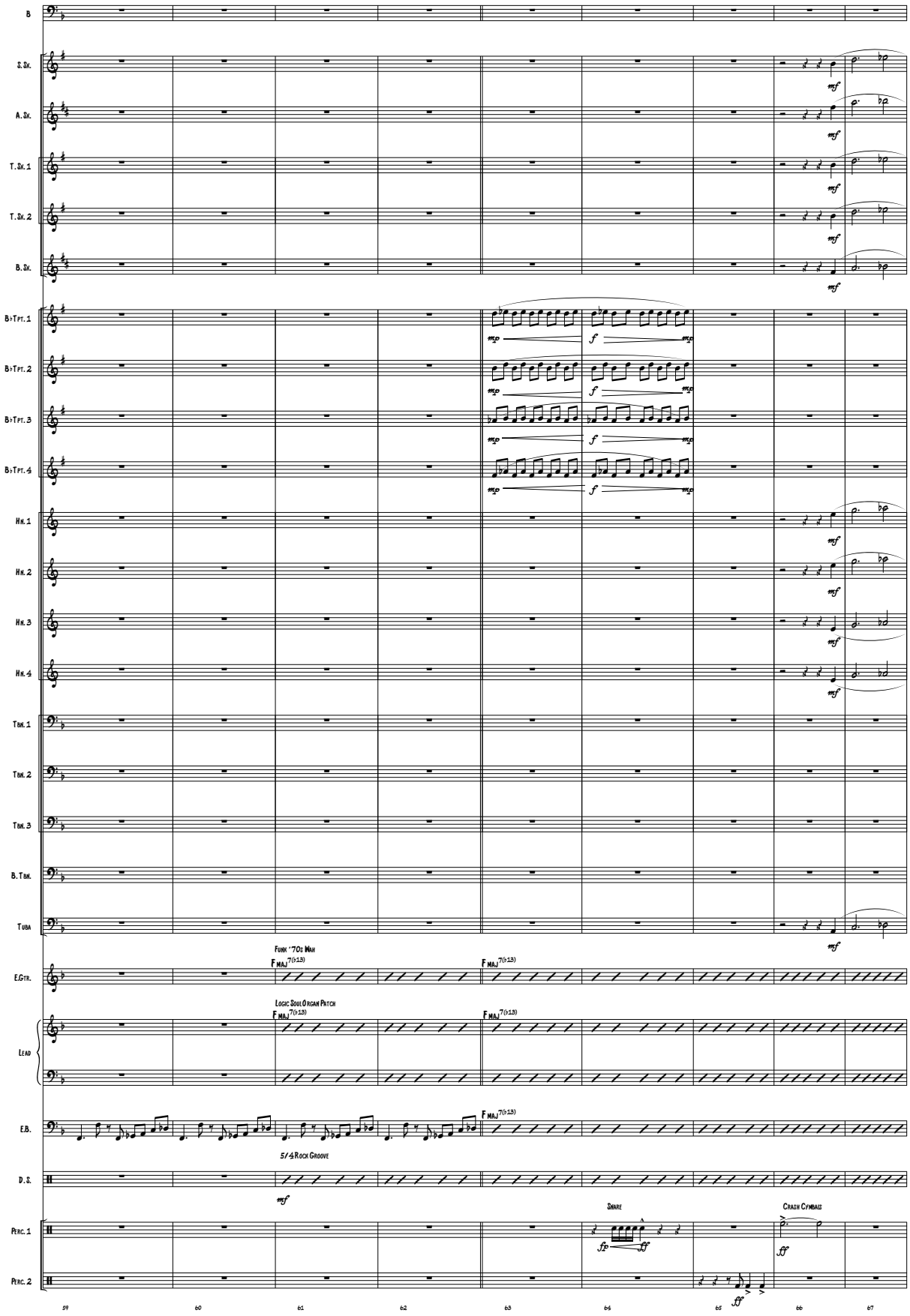

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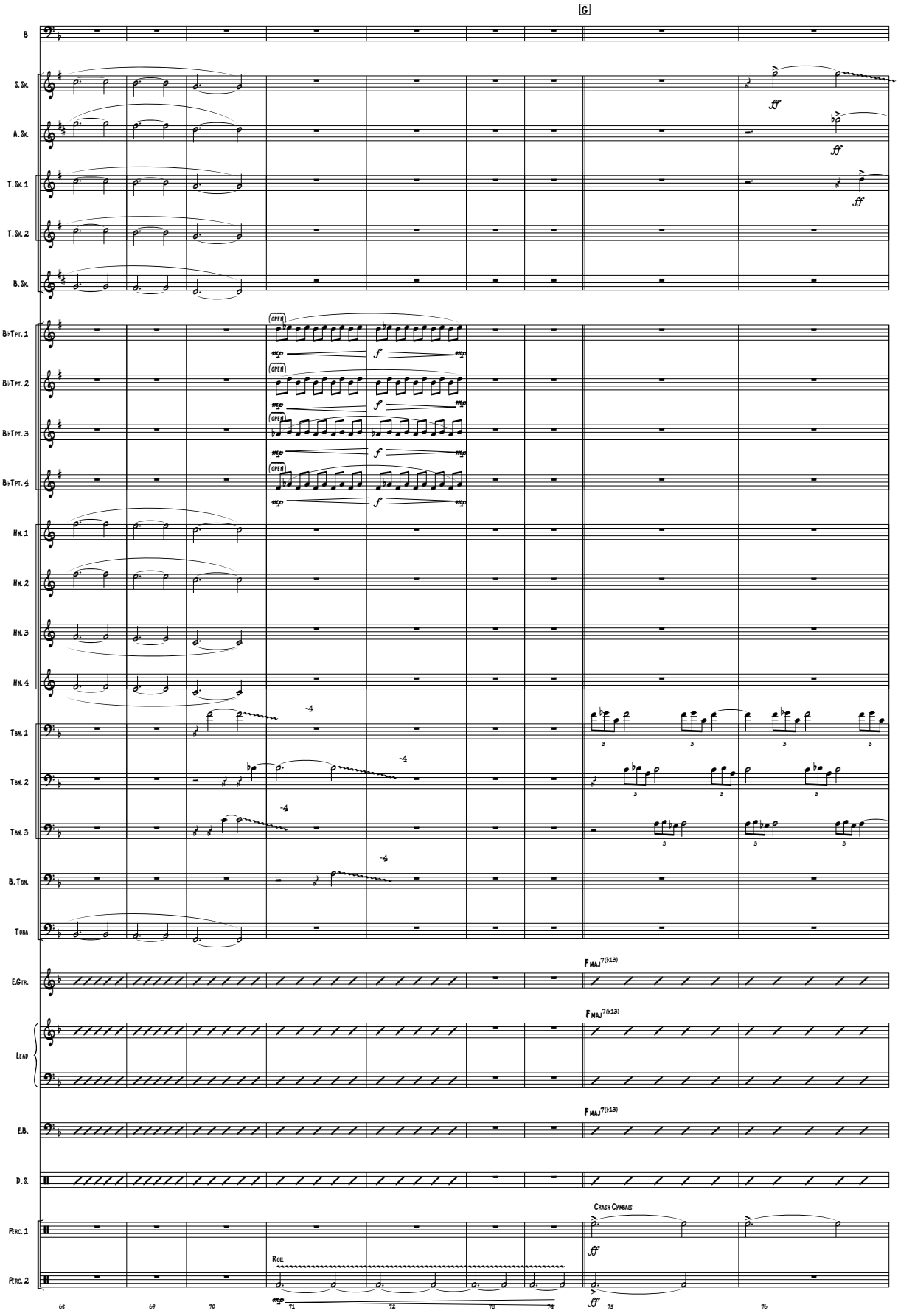

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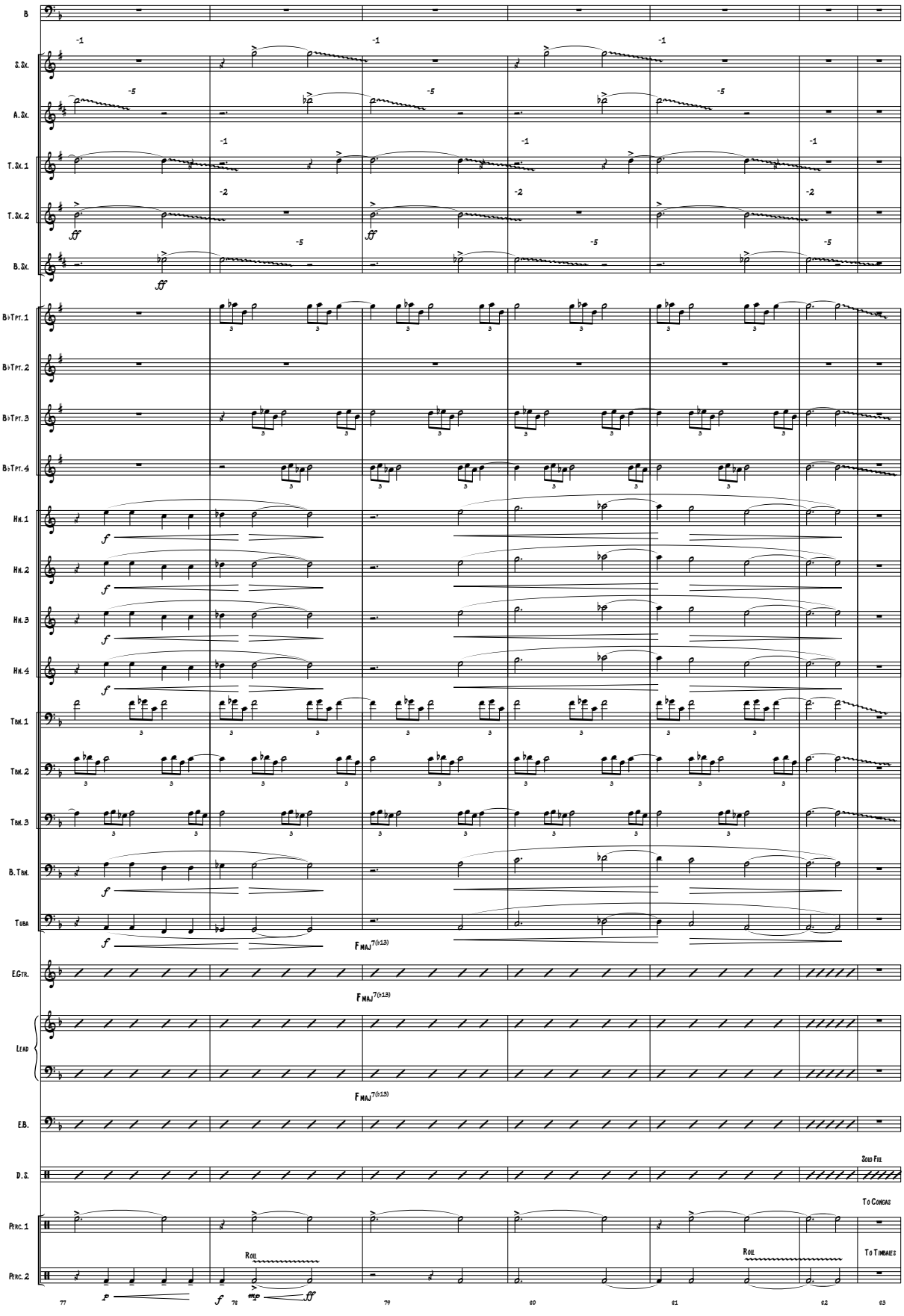

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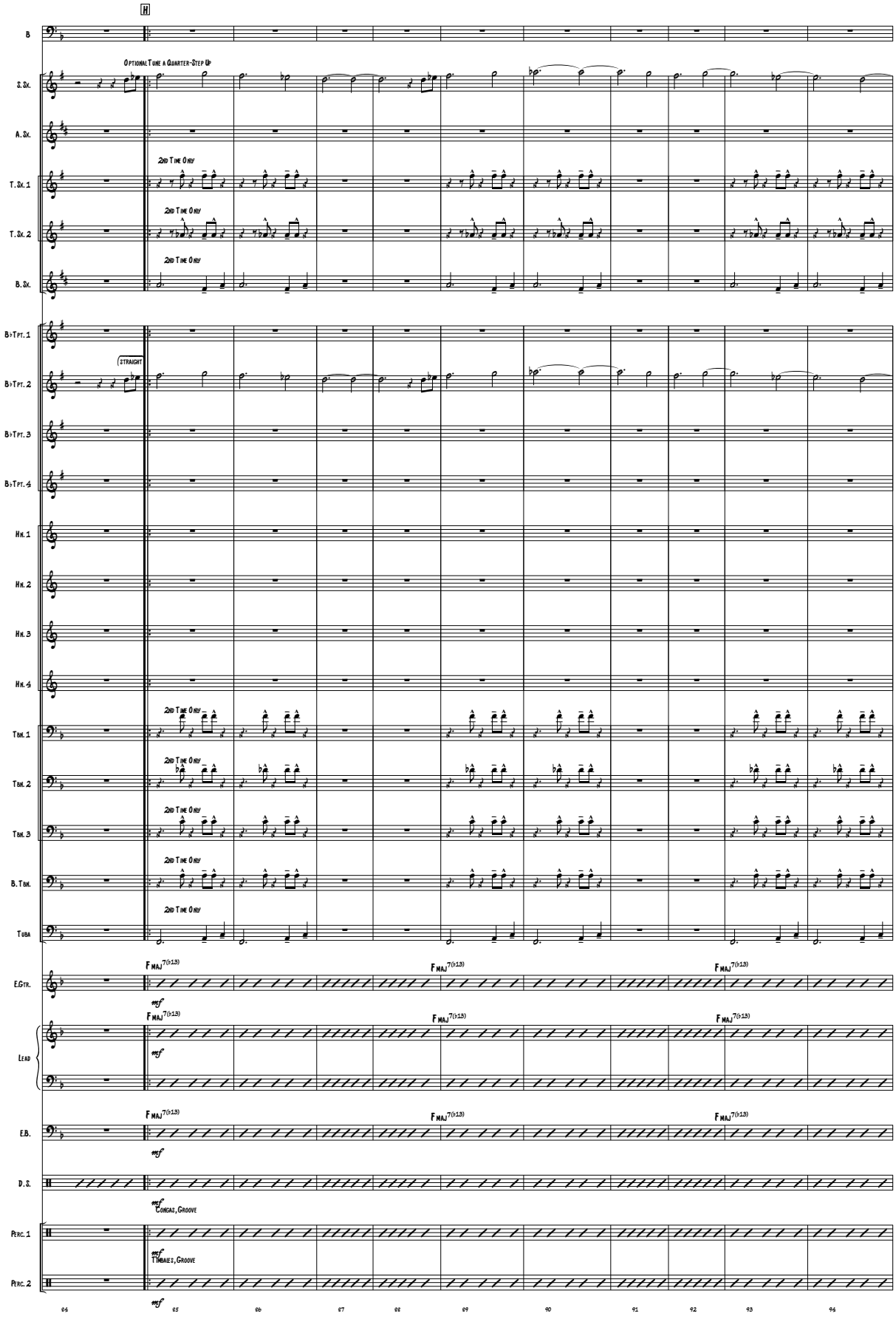

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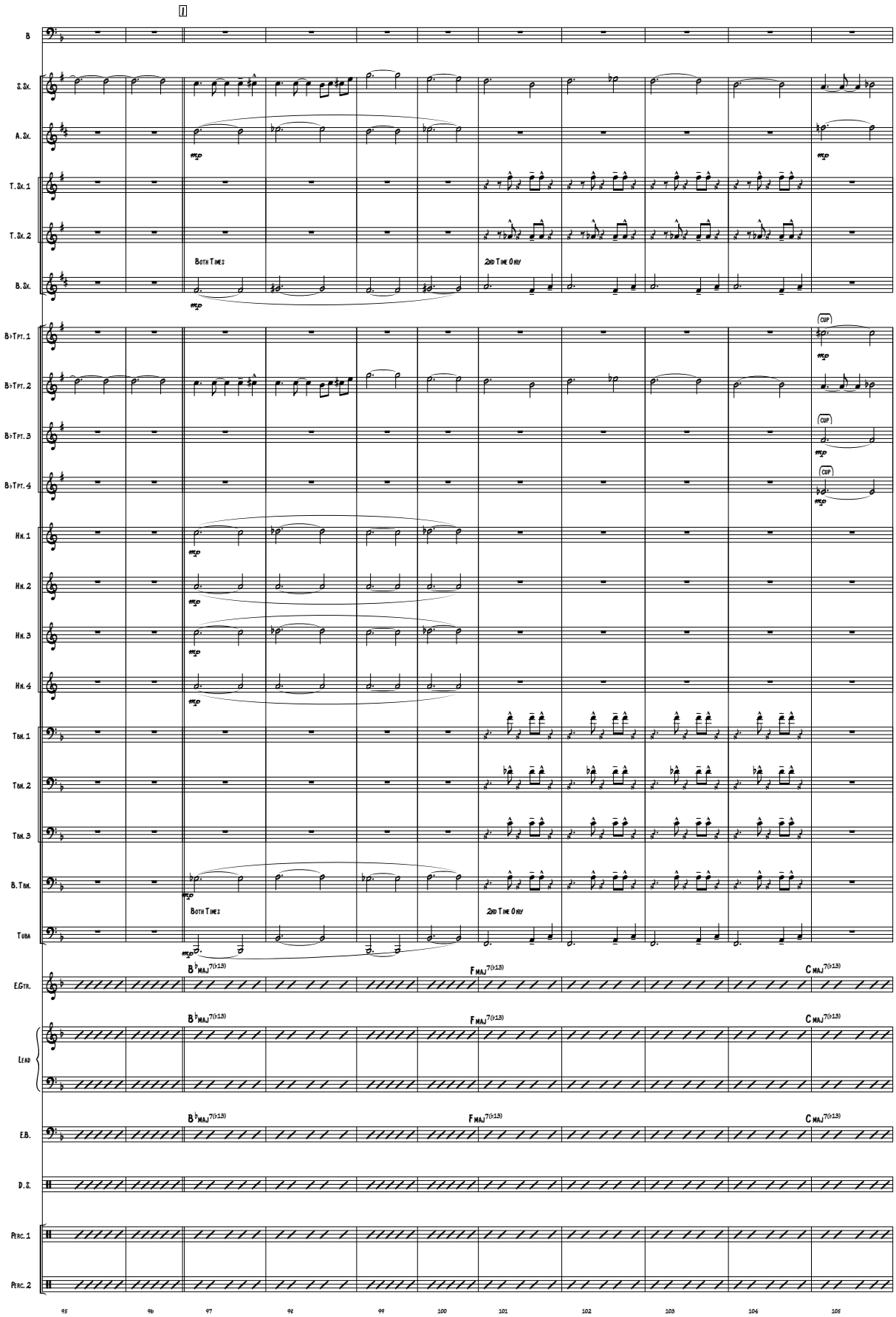

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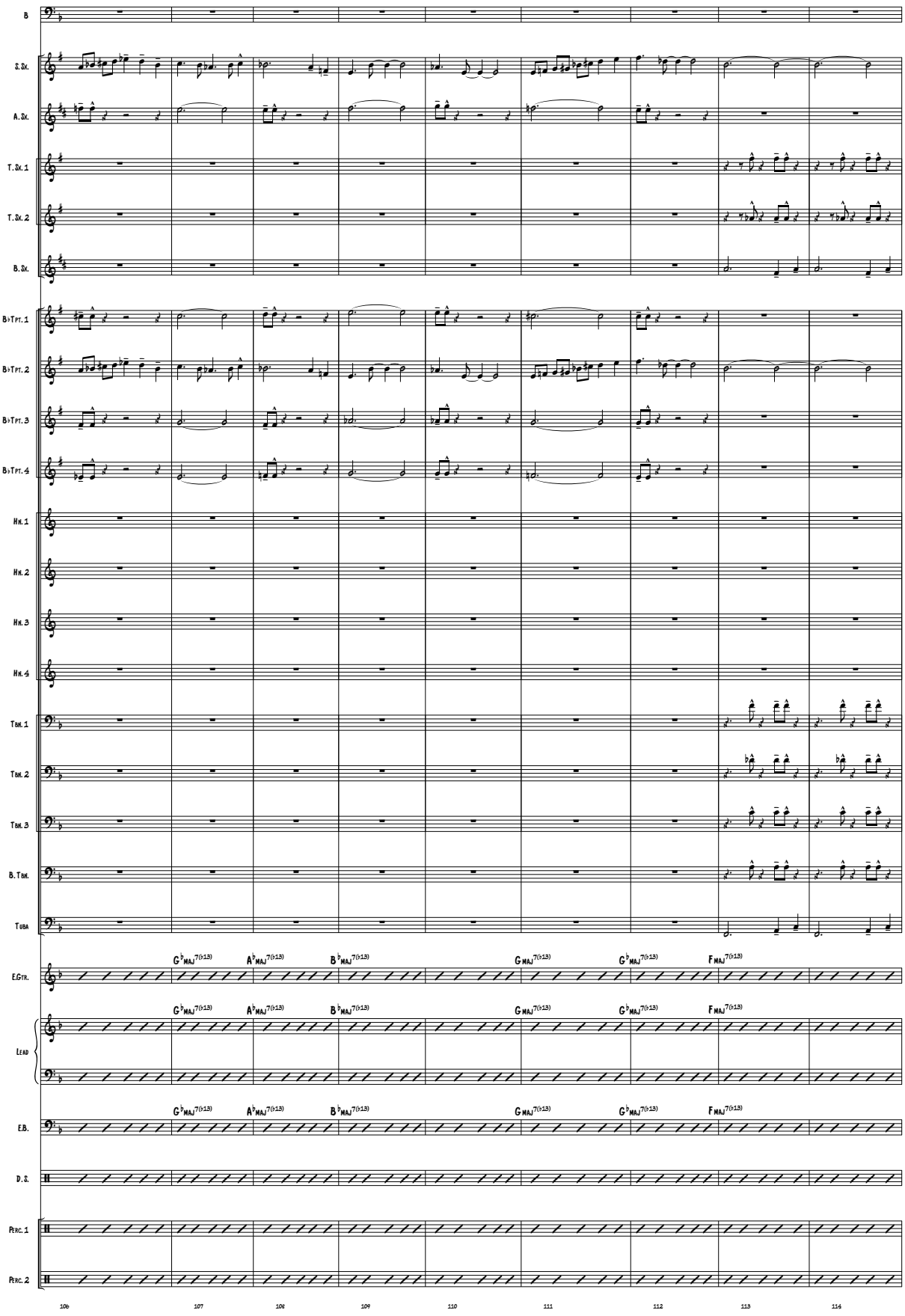

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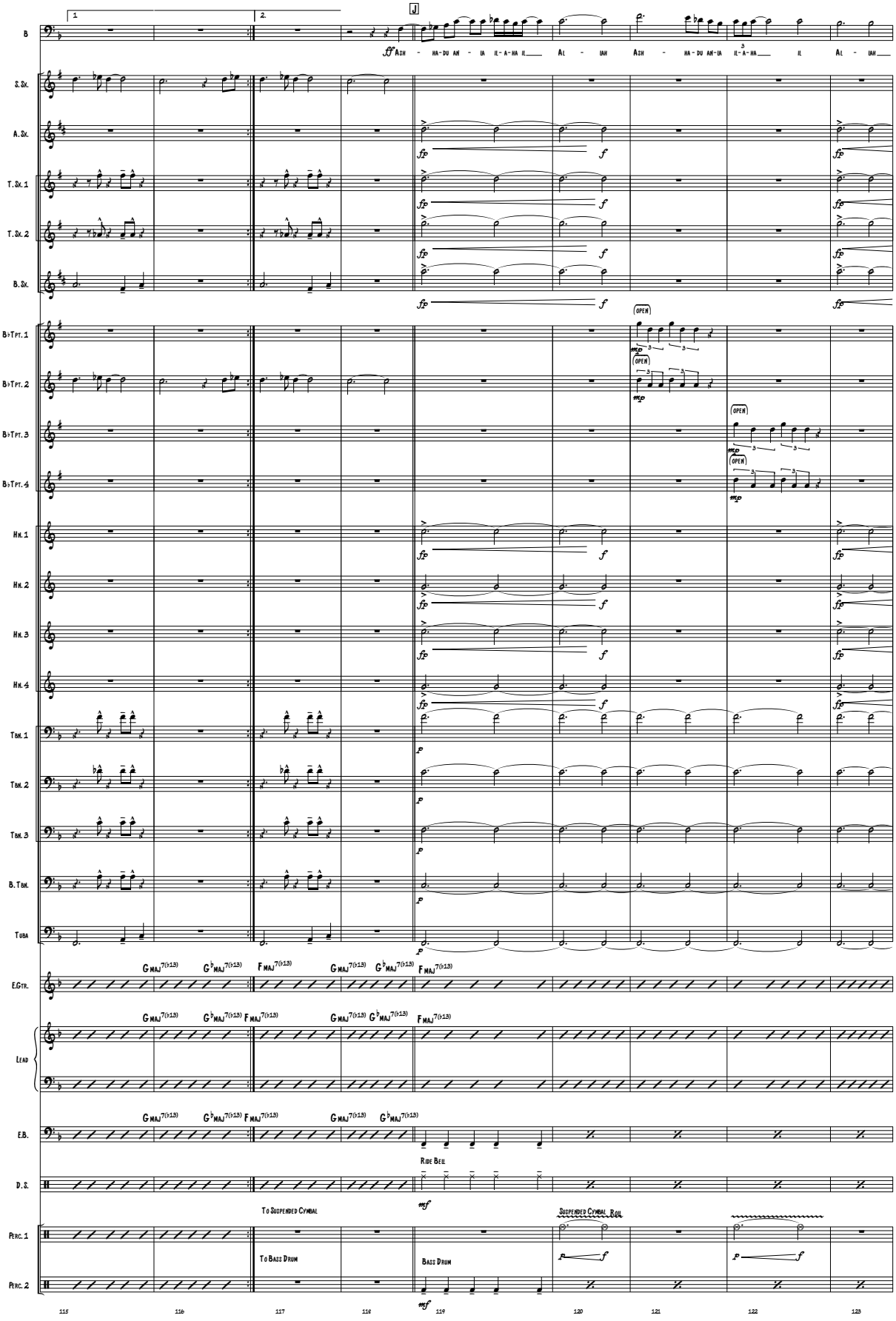

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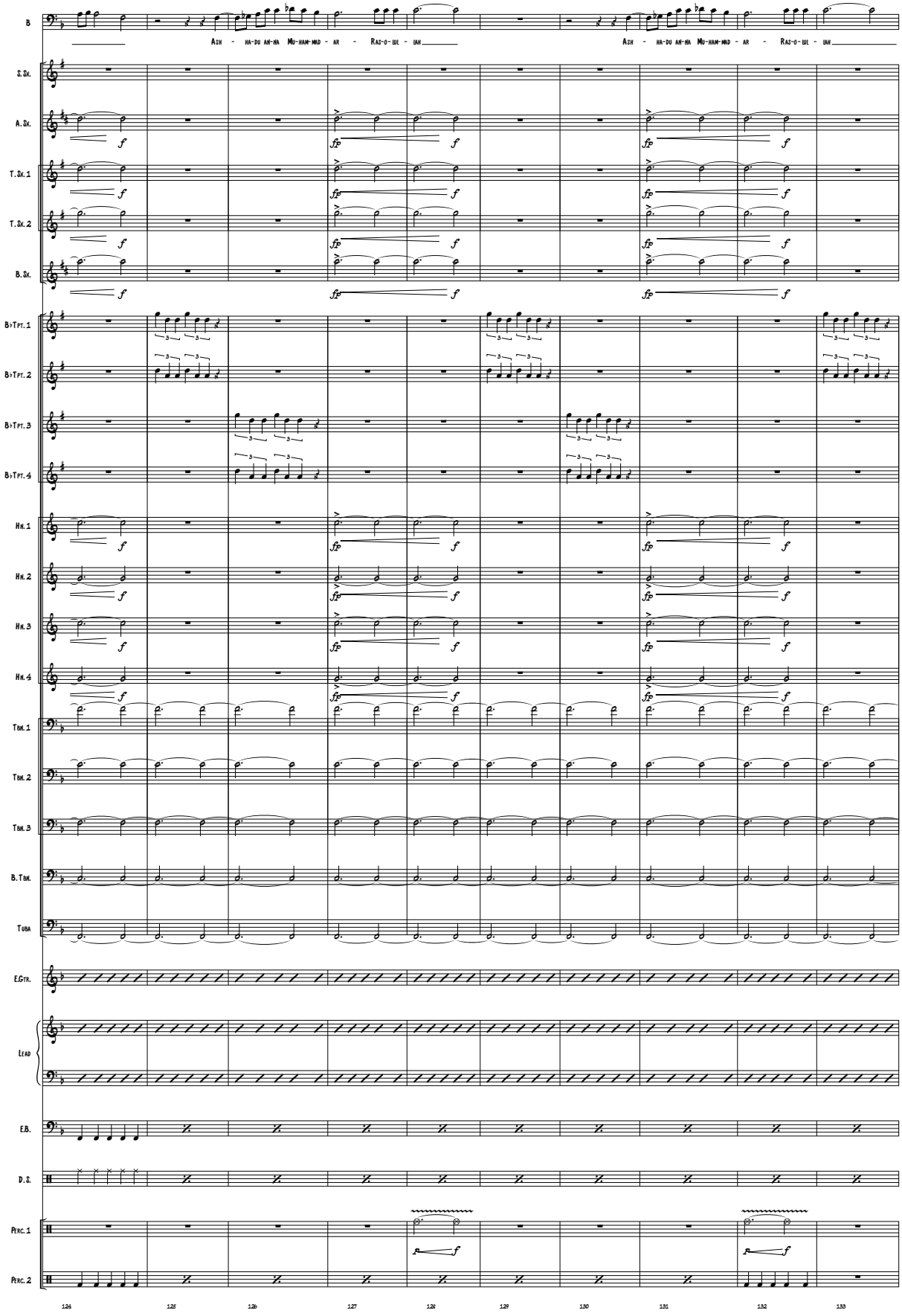

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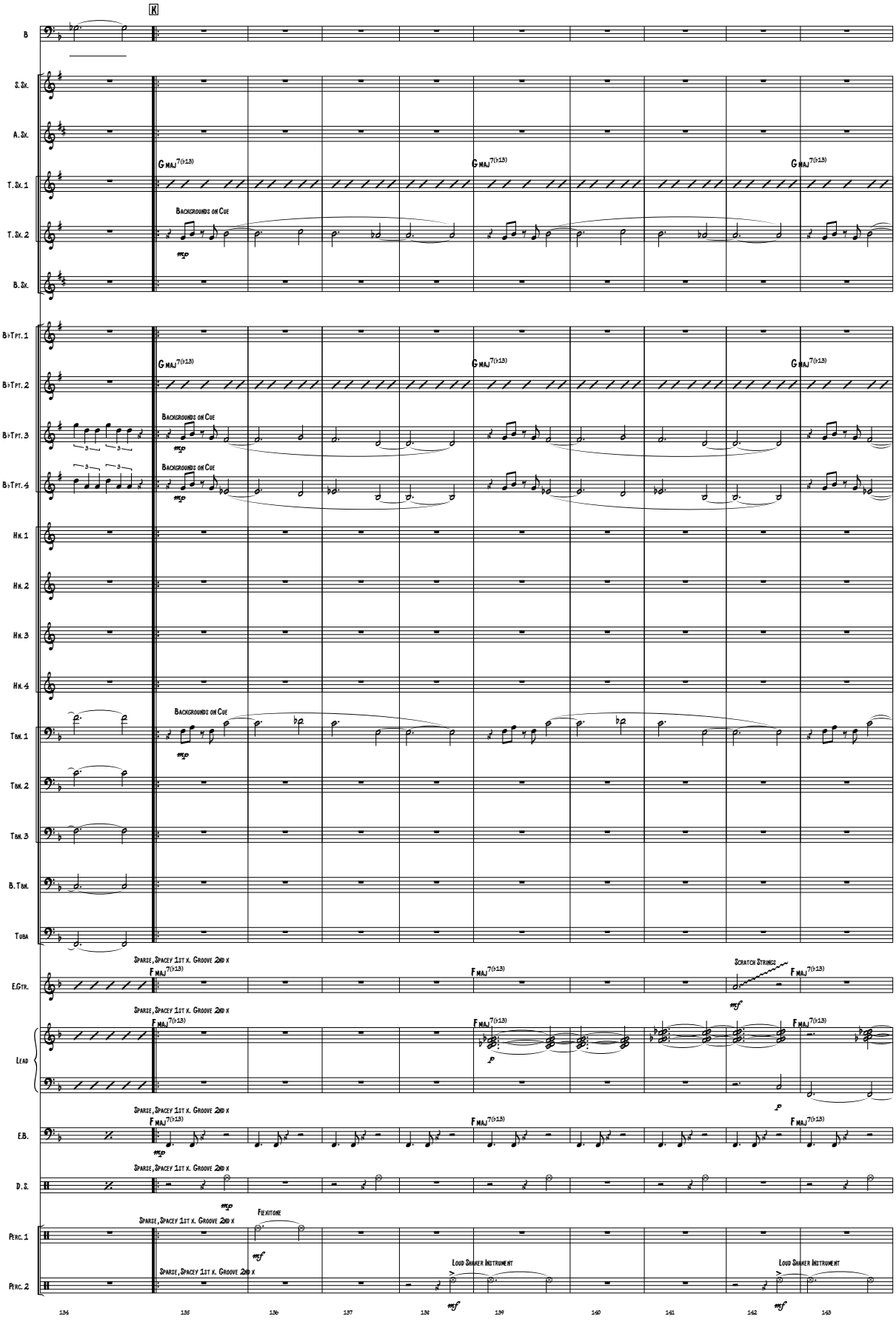

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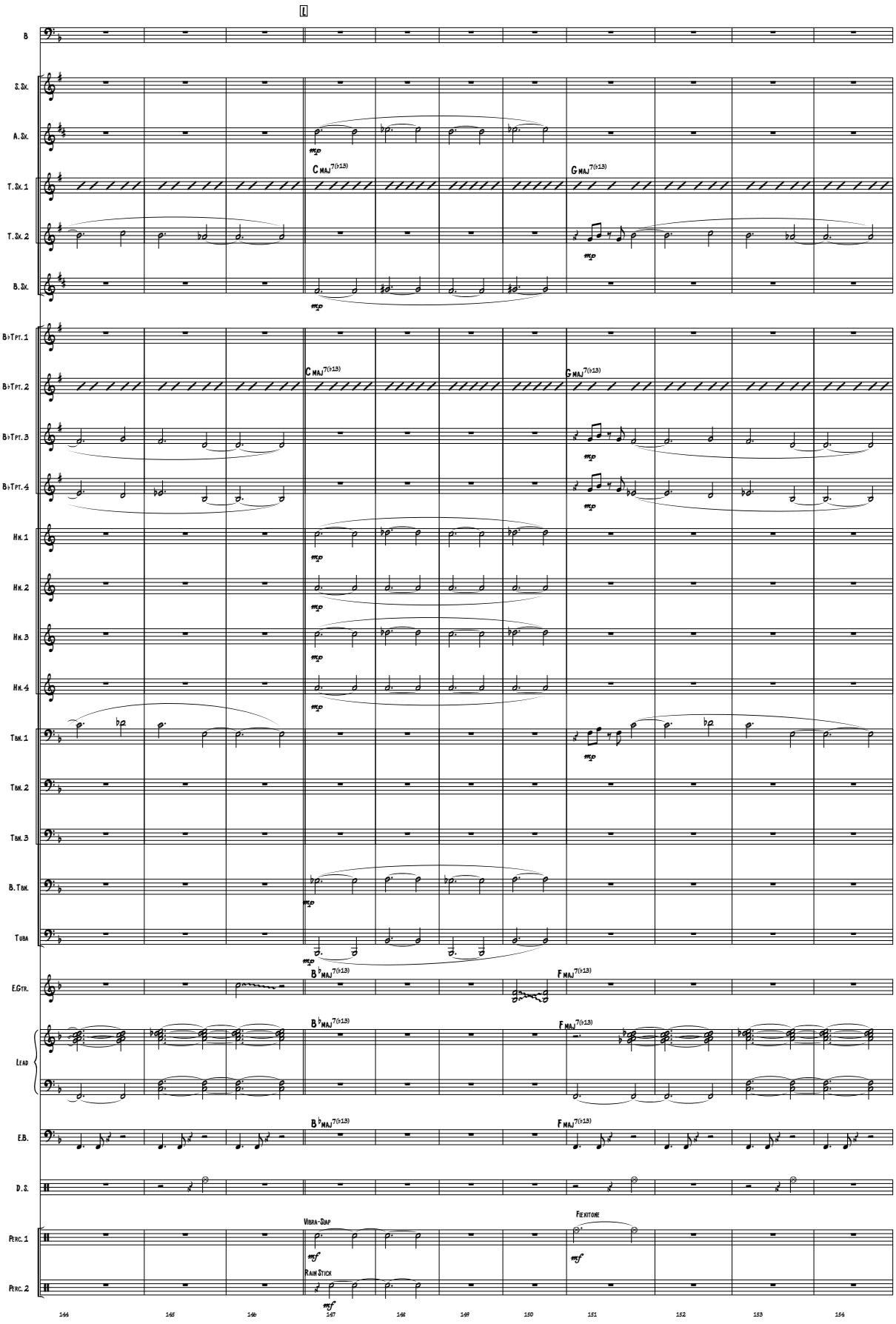

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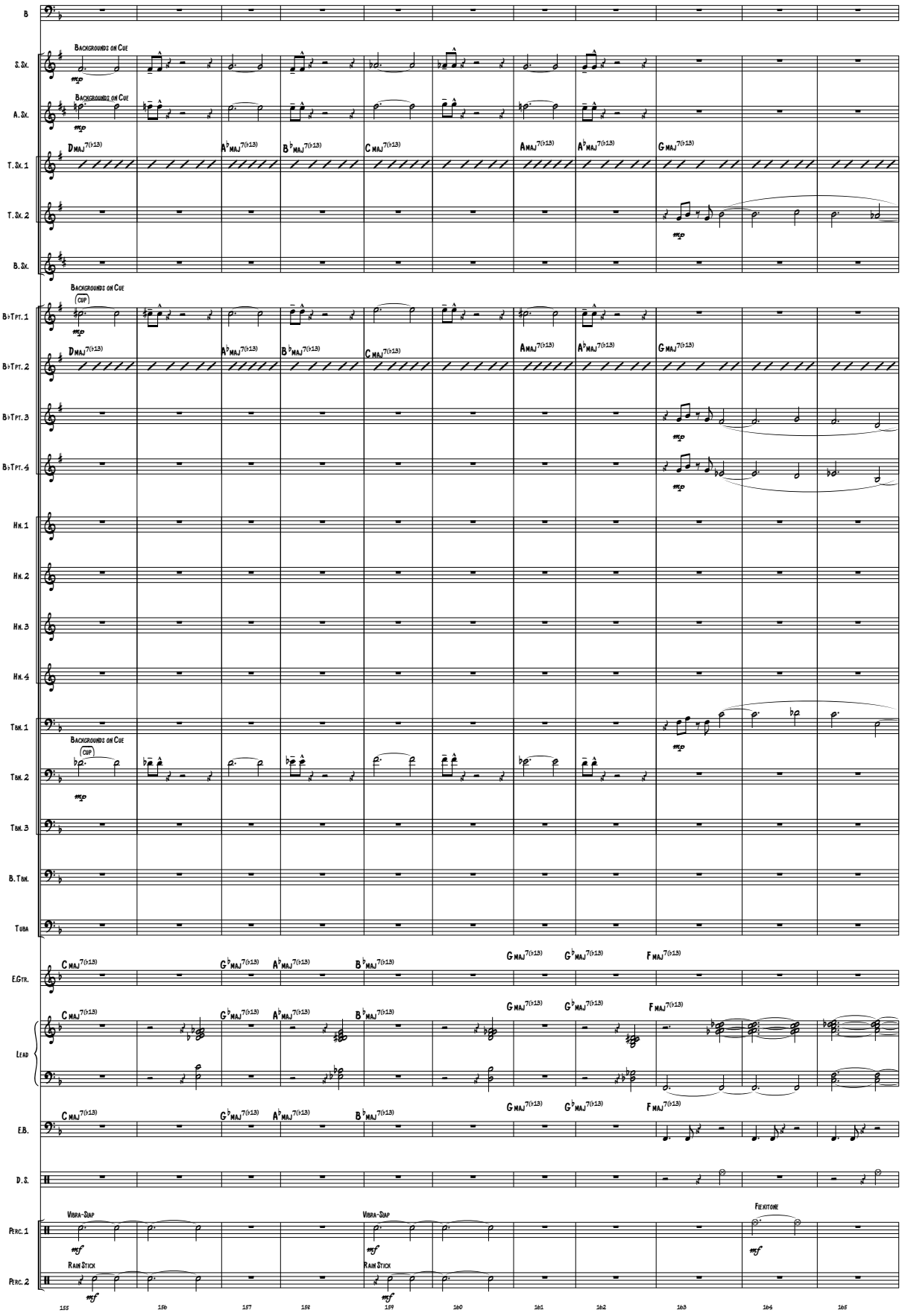

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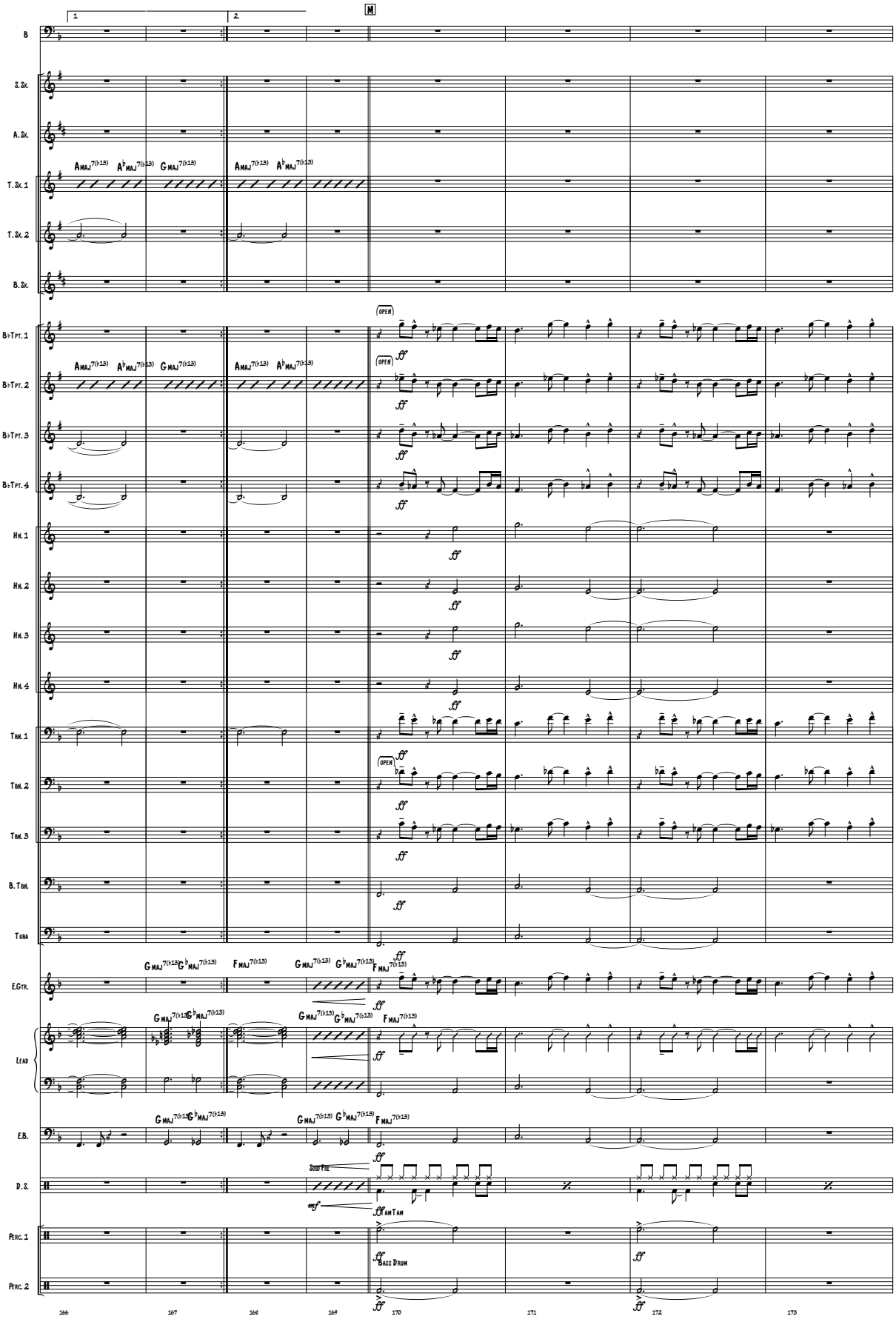

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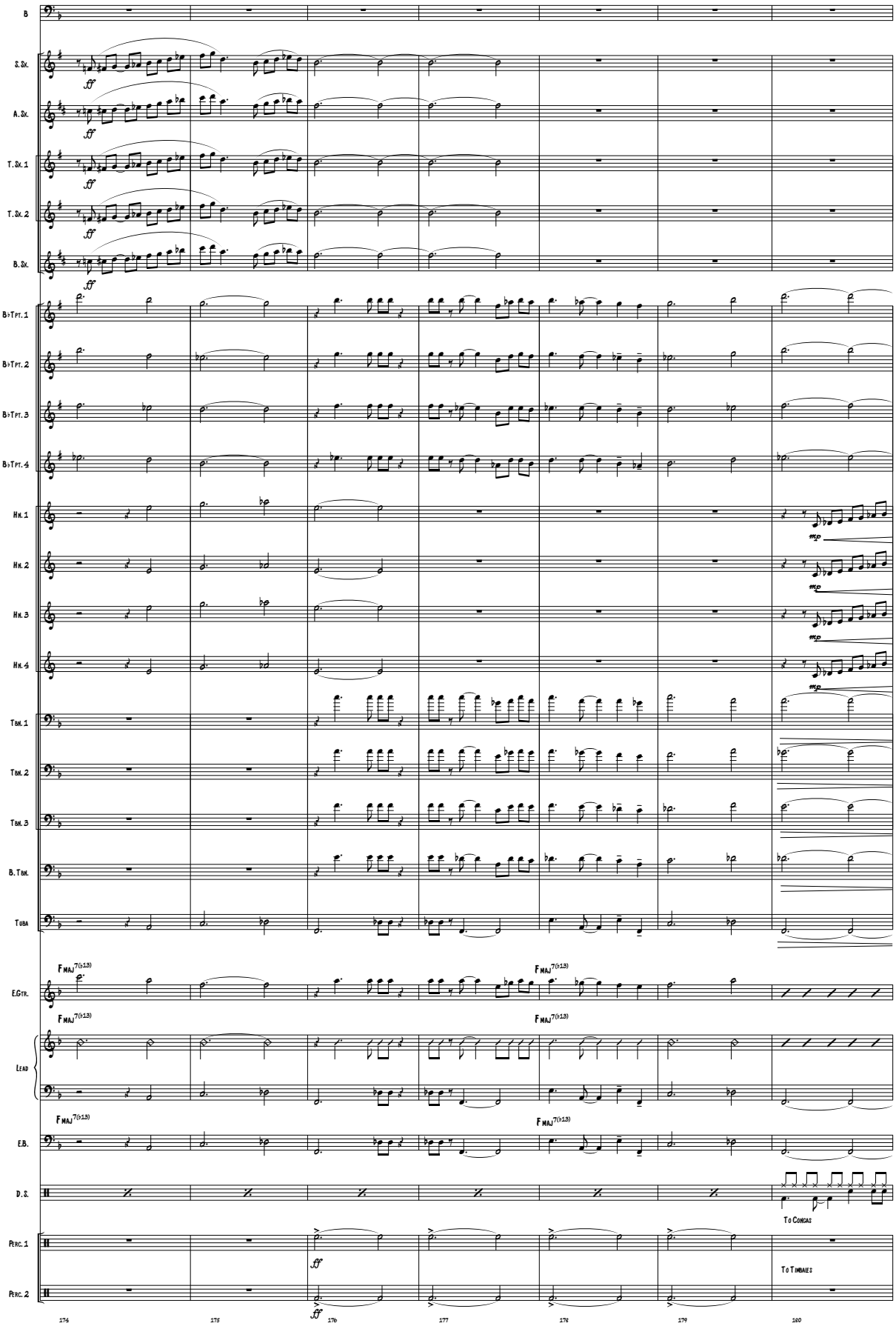

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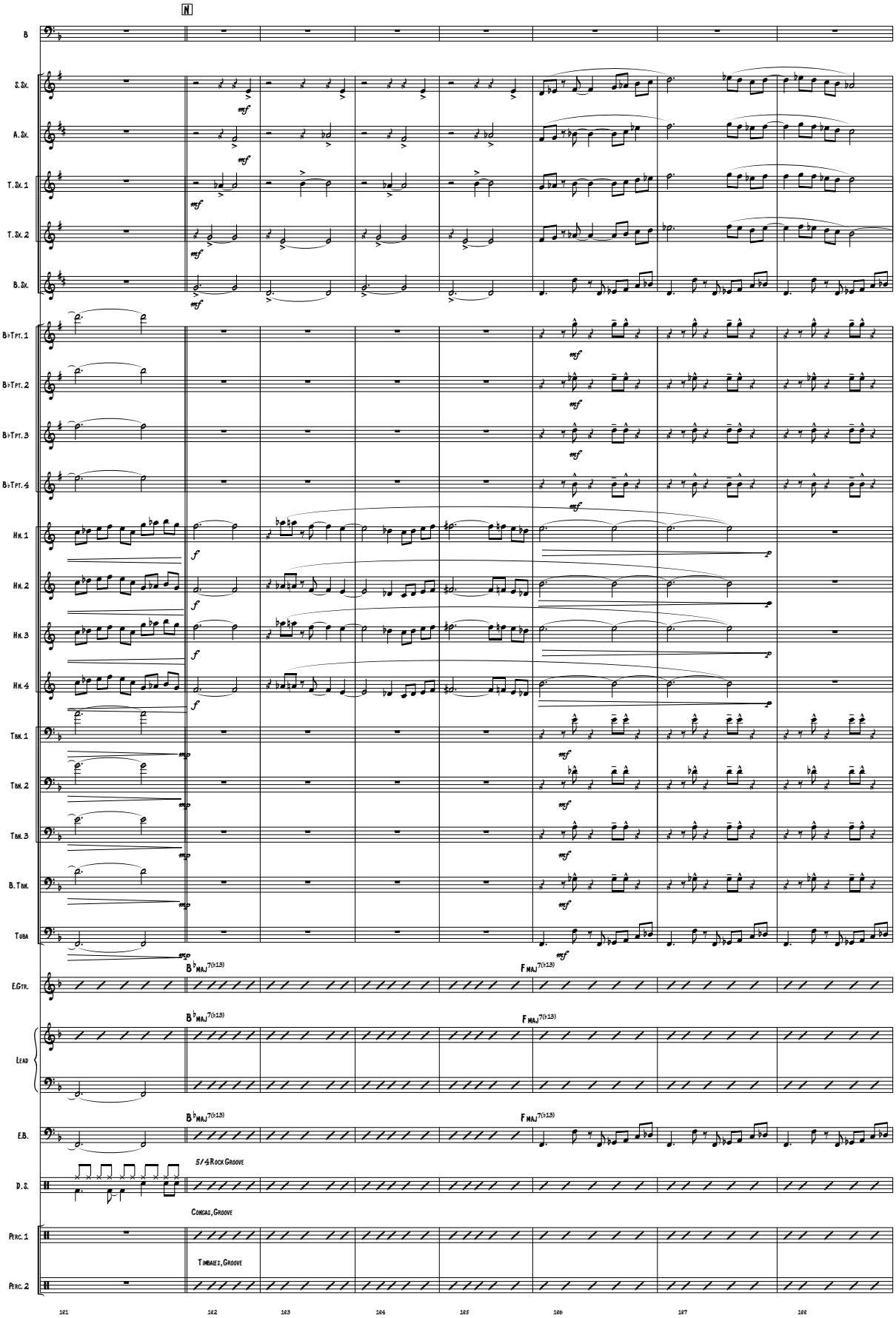

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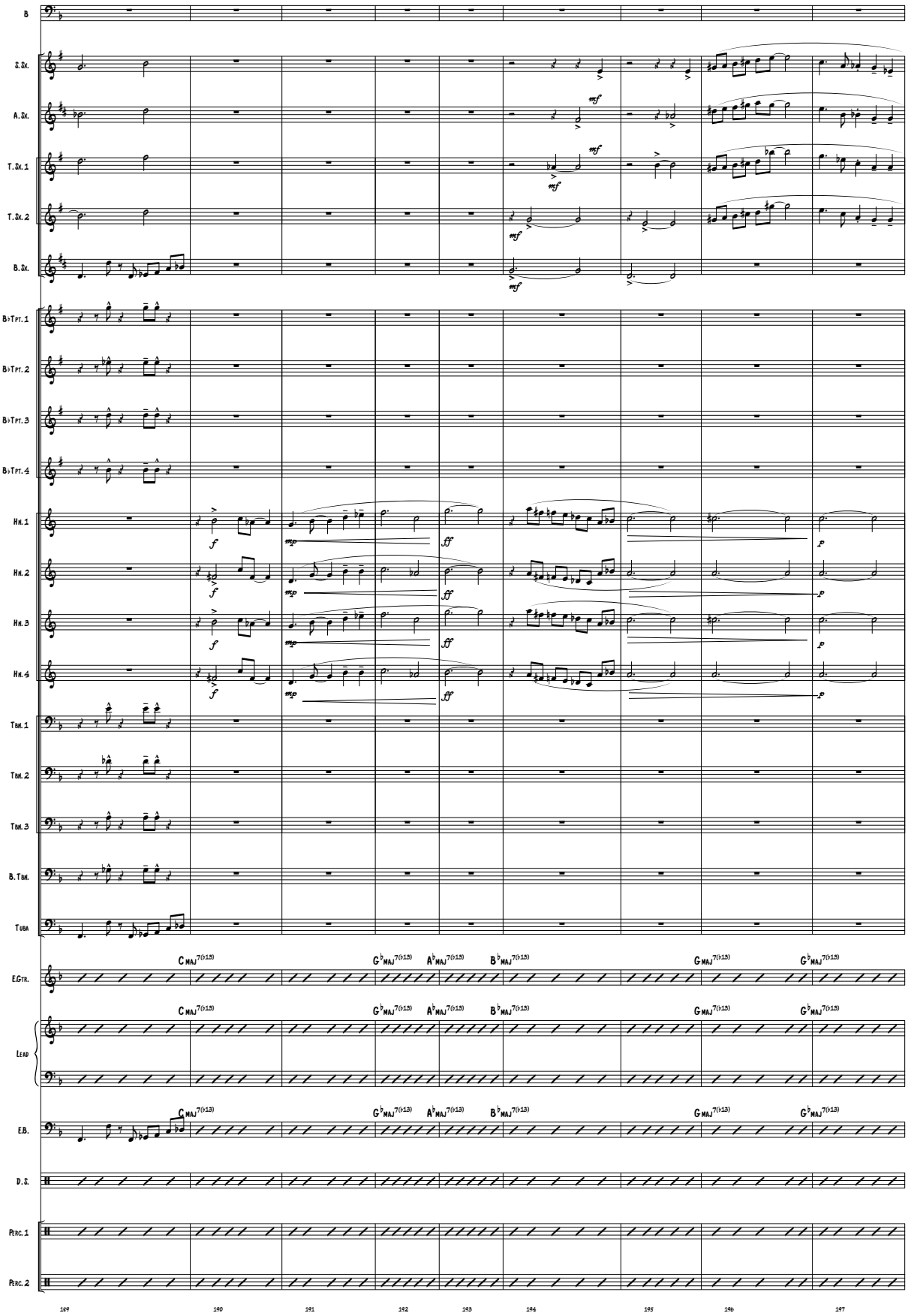

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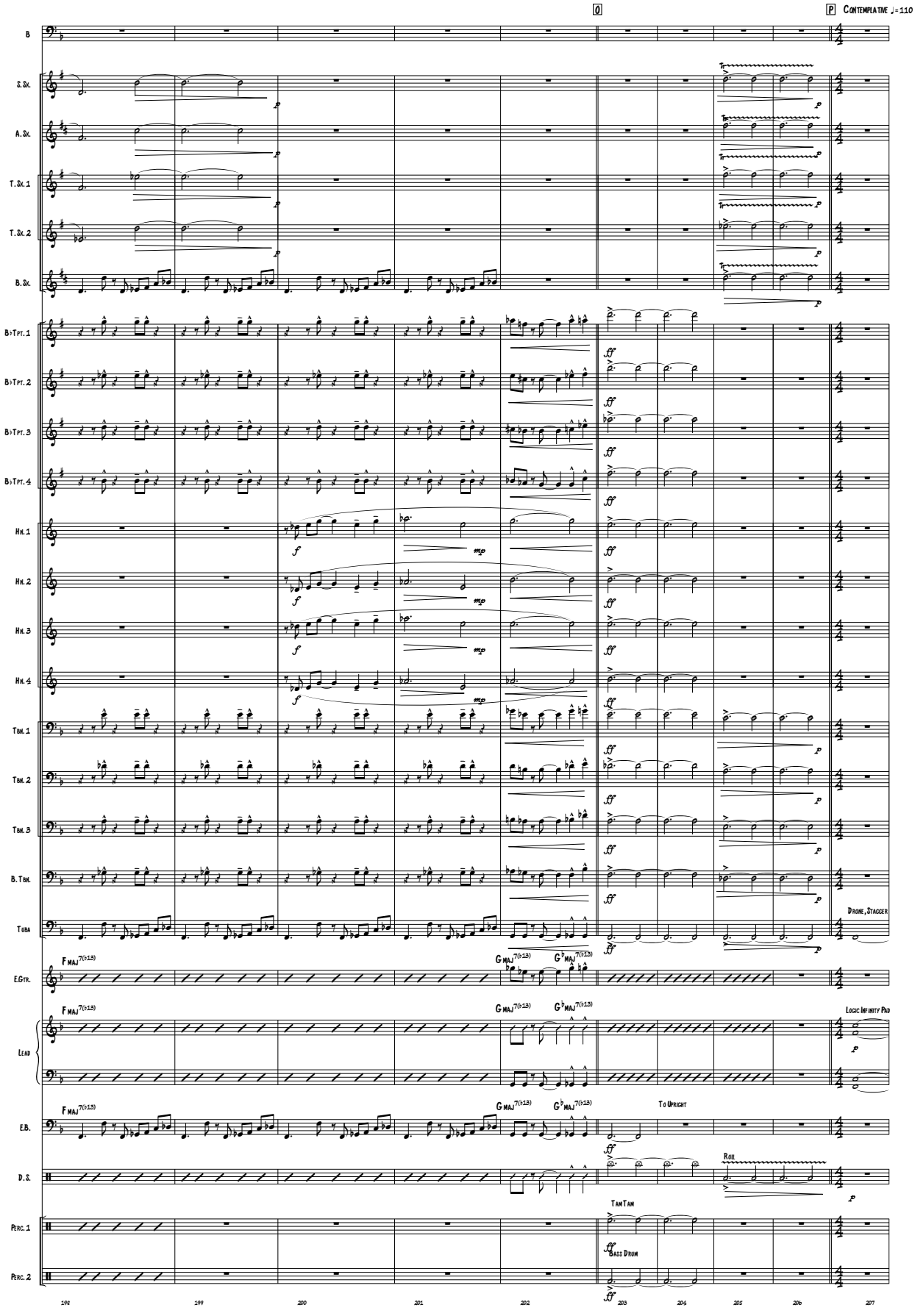

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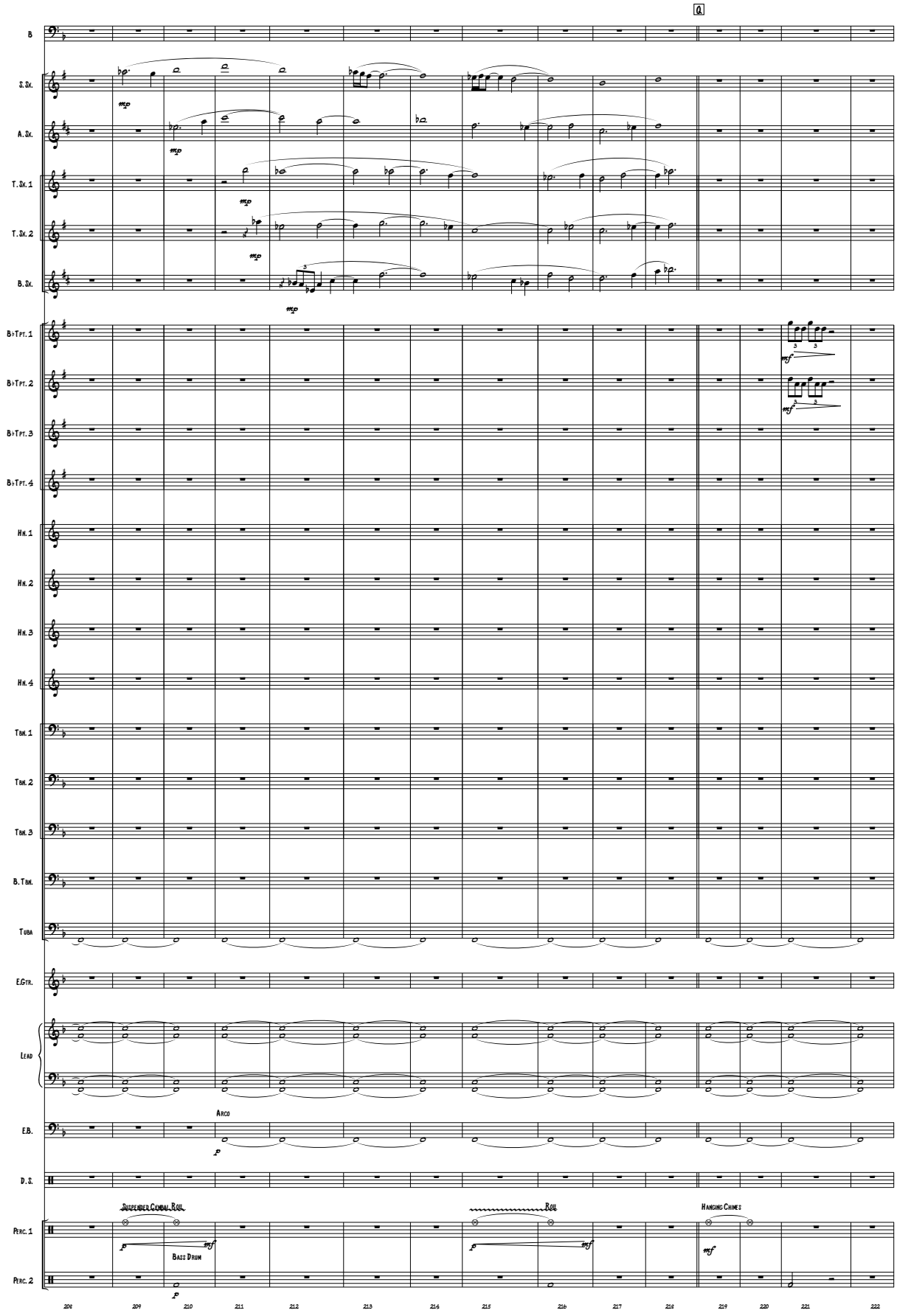

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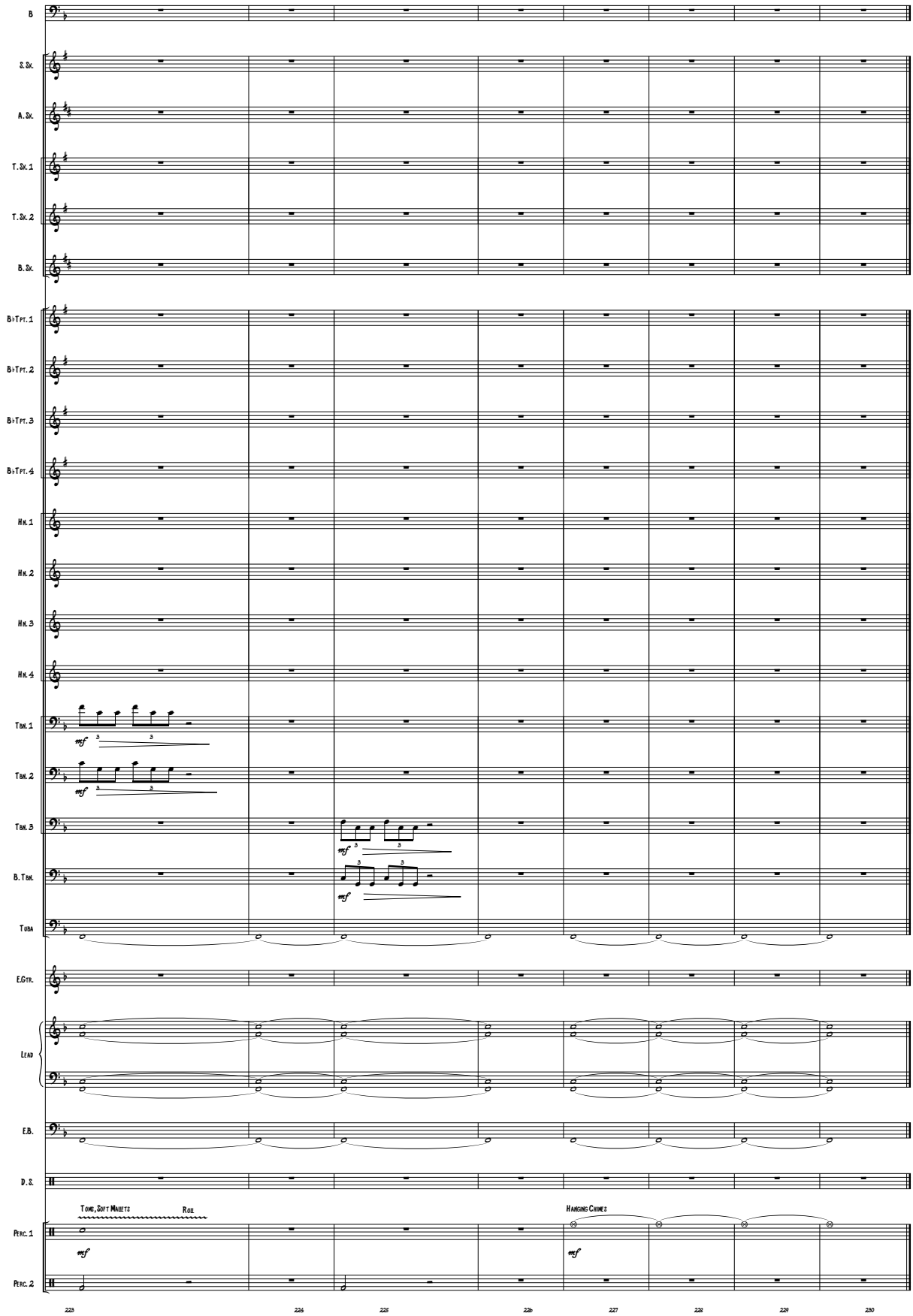


III. The Call for Peace

Instrumentation

Alto Sax 1

Alto Sax 2

Tenor Sax 1

Tenor Sax 2

Bari Sax

Trumpet 1

Trumpet 2

Trumpet 3

Trumpet 4

Horn in F 1

Horn in F 2

Horn in F 3

Horn in F 4

Trombone 1

Trombone 2

Trombone 3

Bass Trombone

Tuba

Guitar

Piano/Synth

Electric Brass

Drums

Percussion 1

Percussion 2

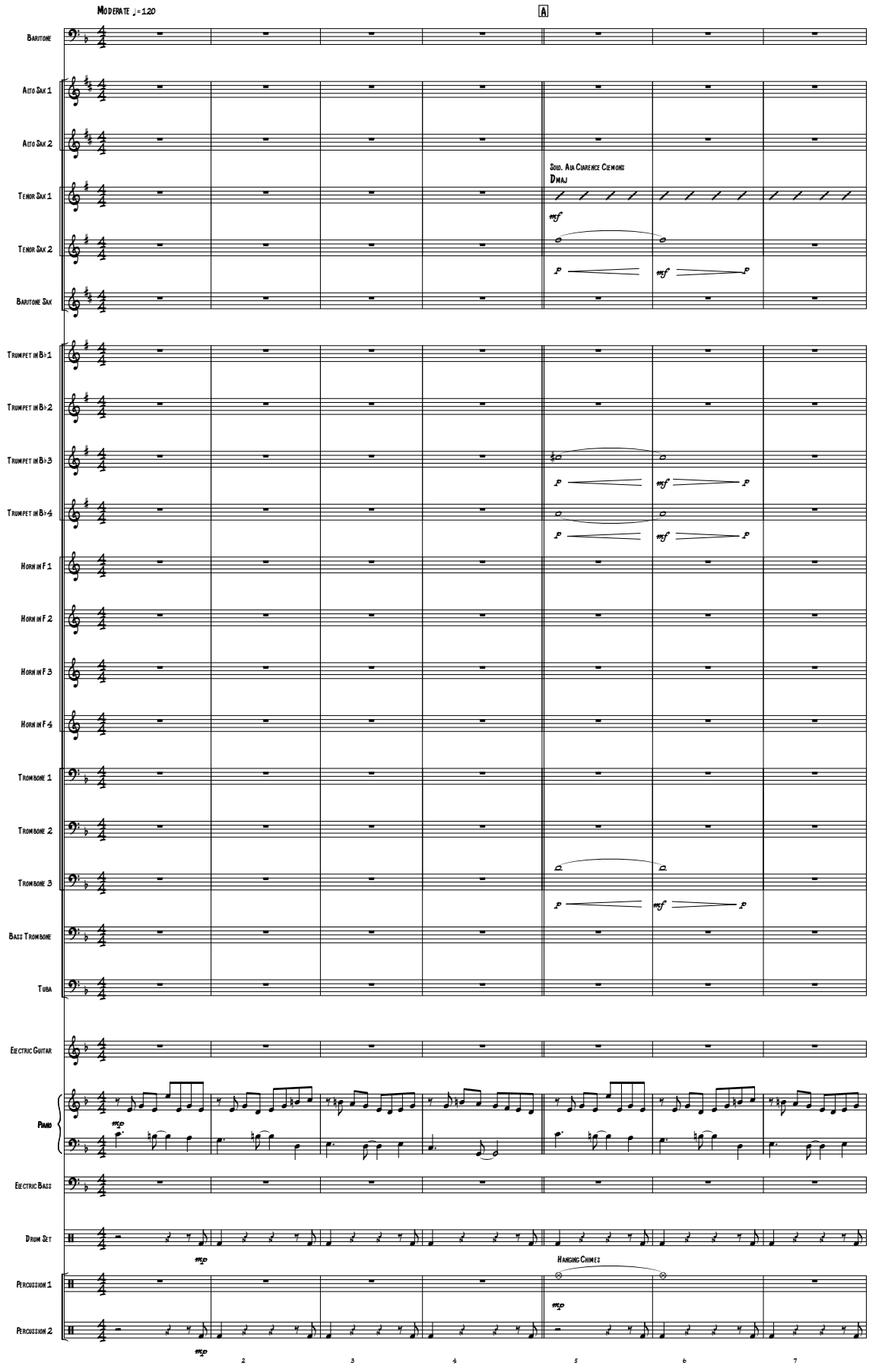
Baritone Vocal

SCORE

The War Never Ends

III. The Call for Peace

Derek J. Molacek



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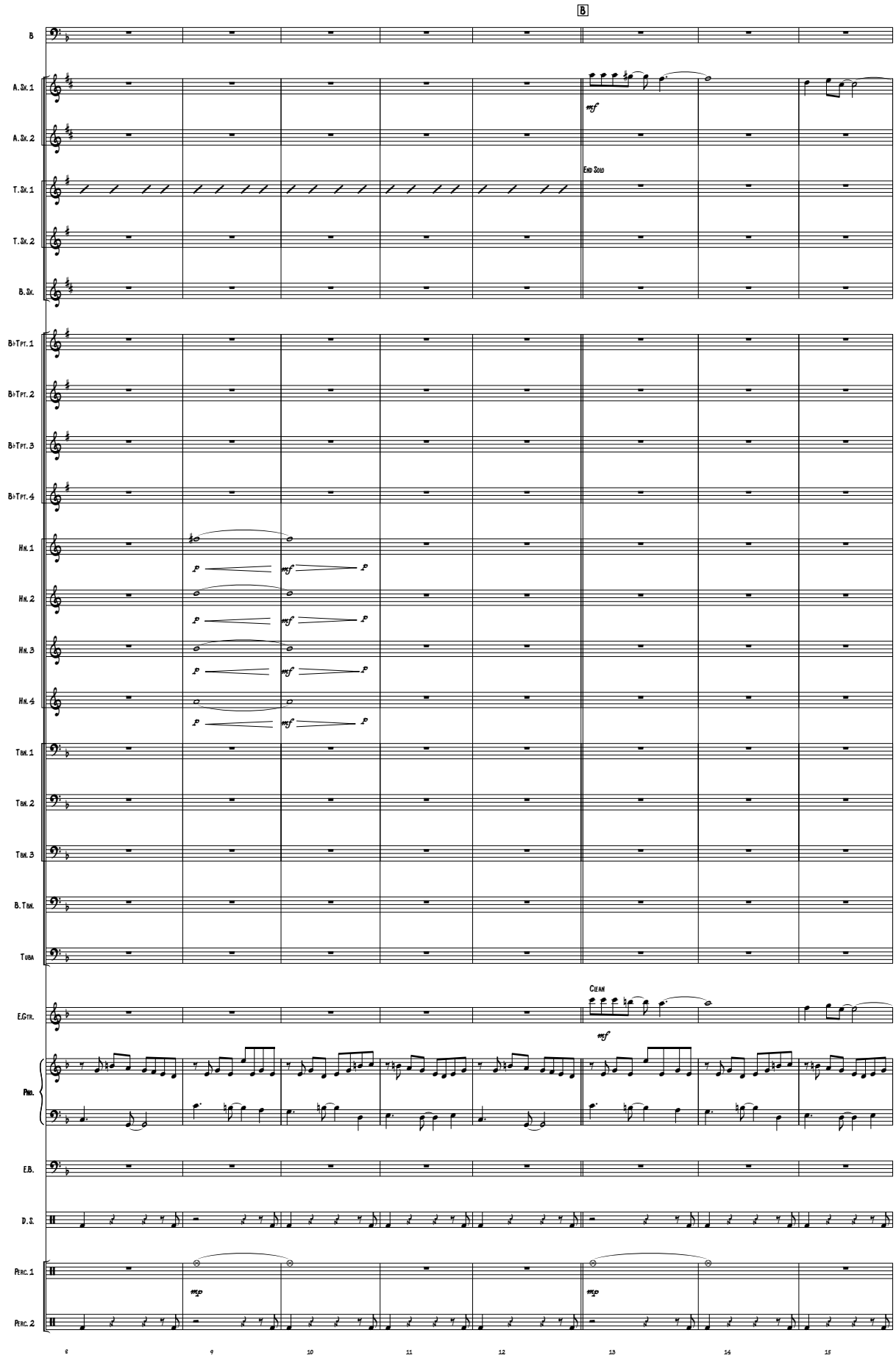

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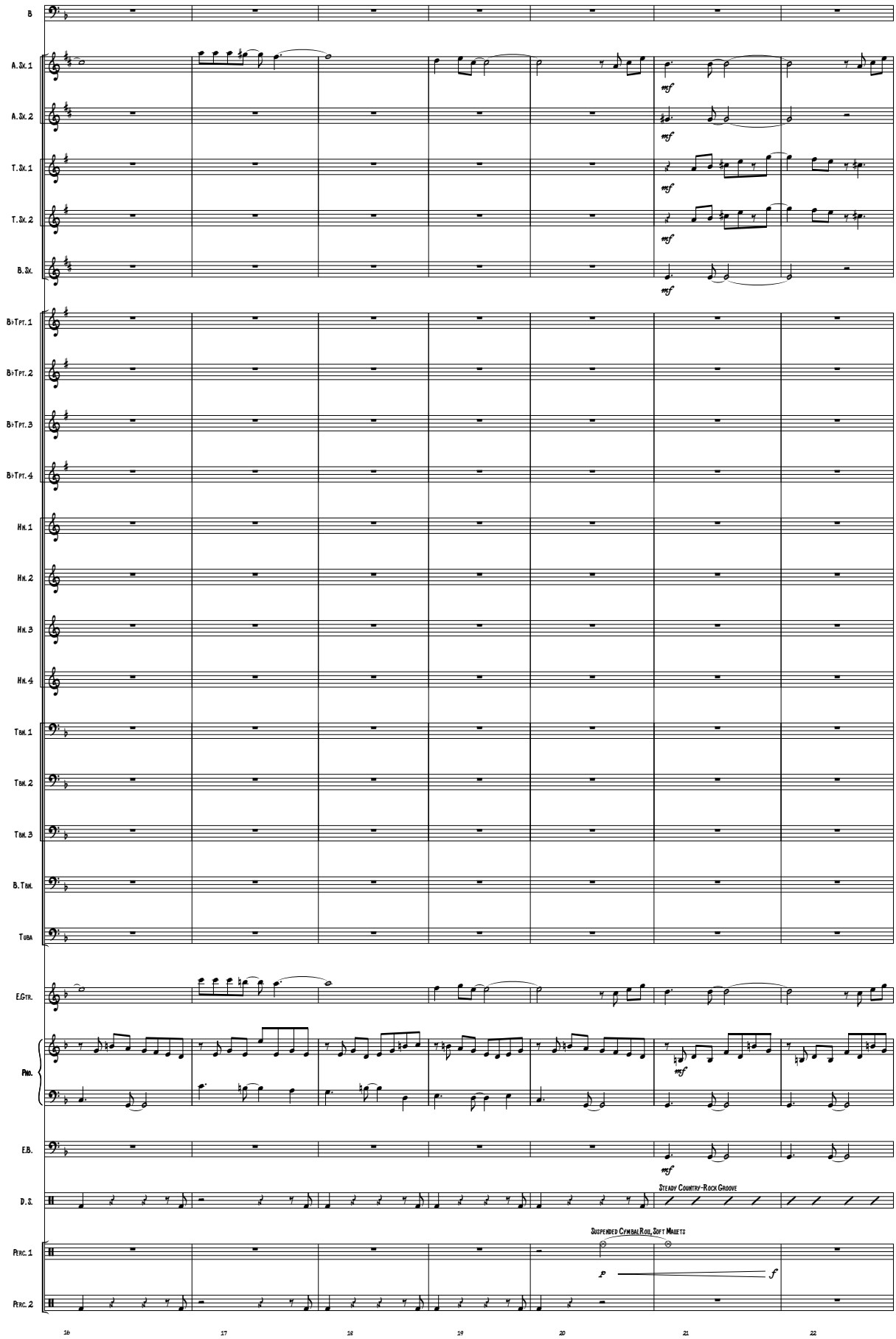

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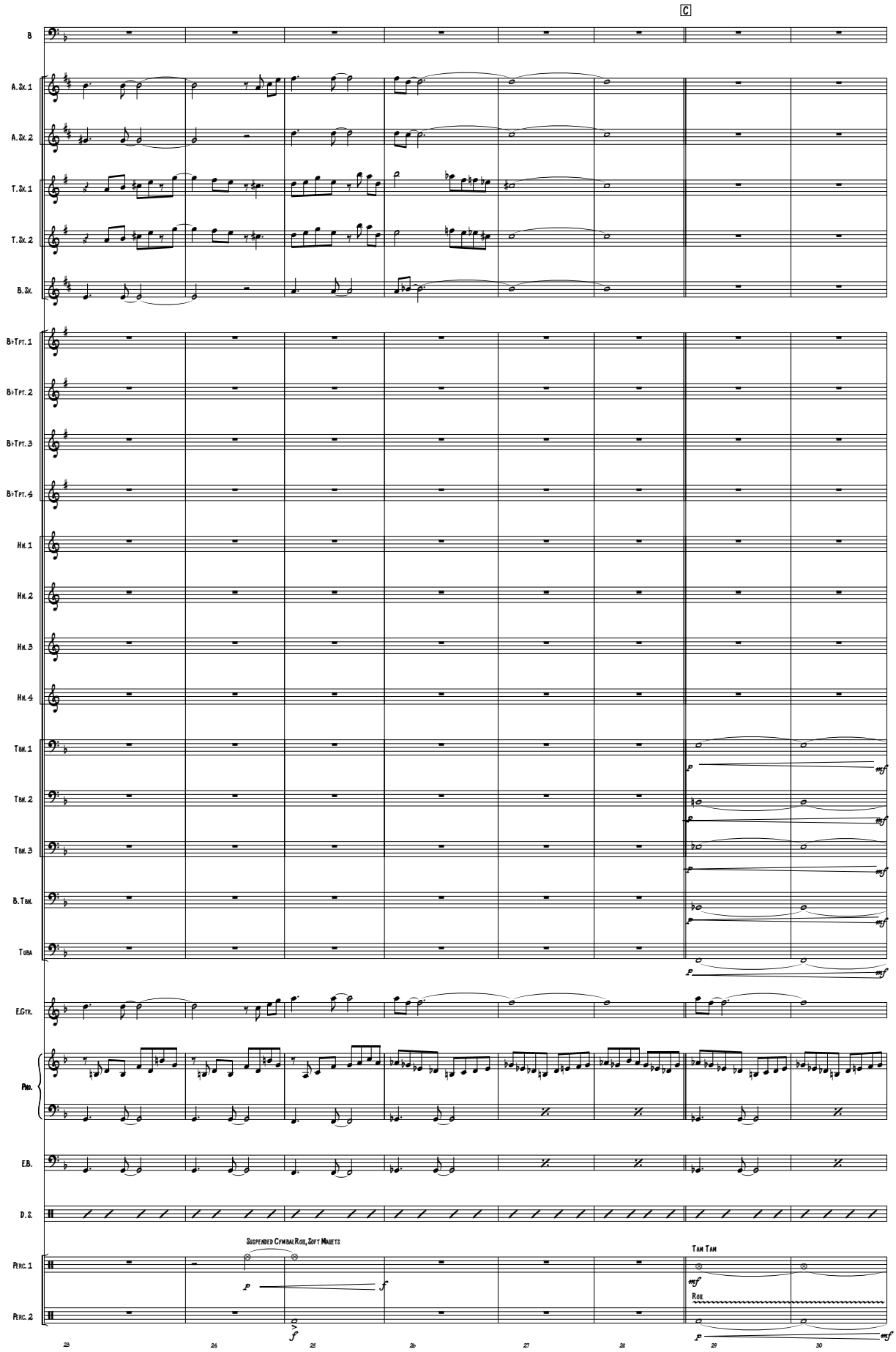

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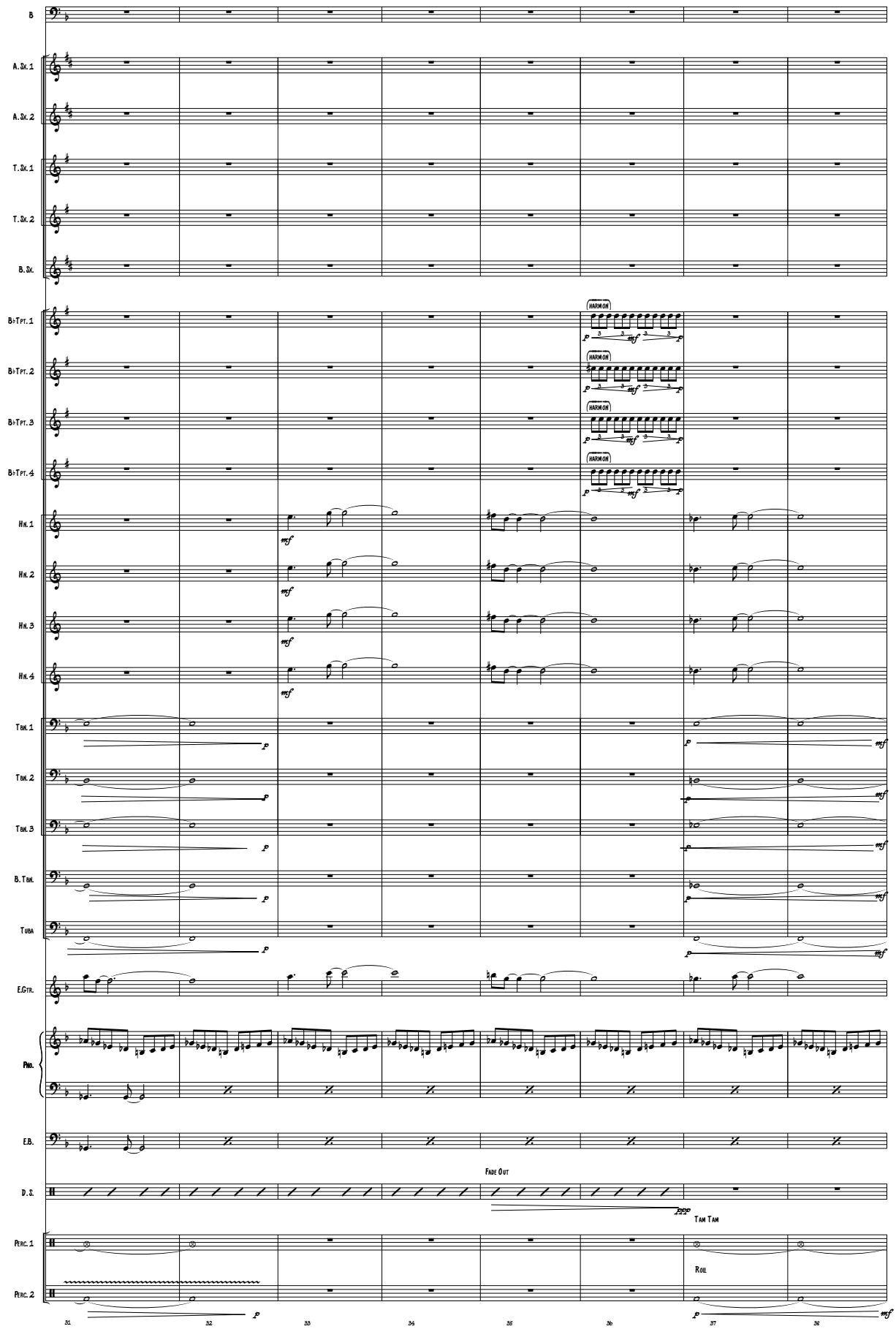

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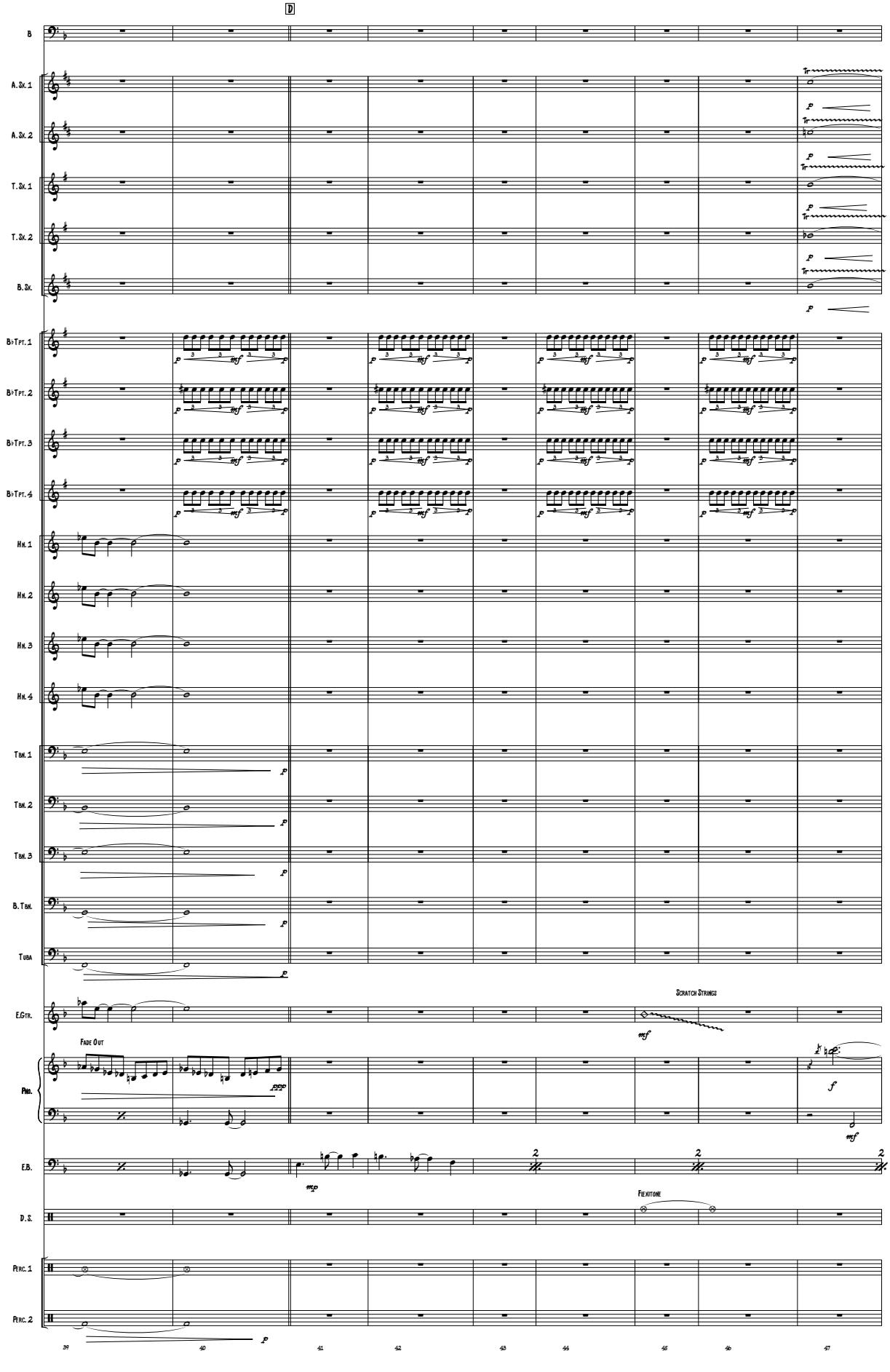

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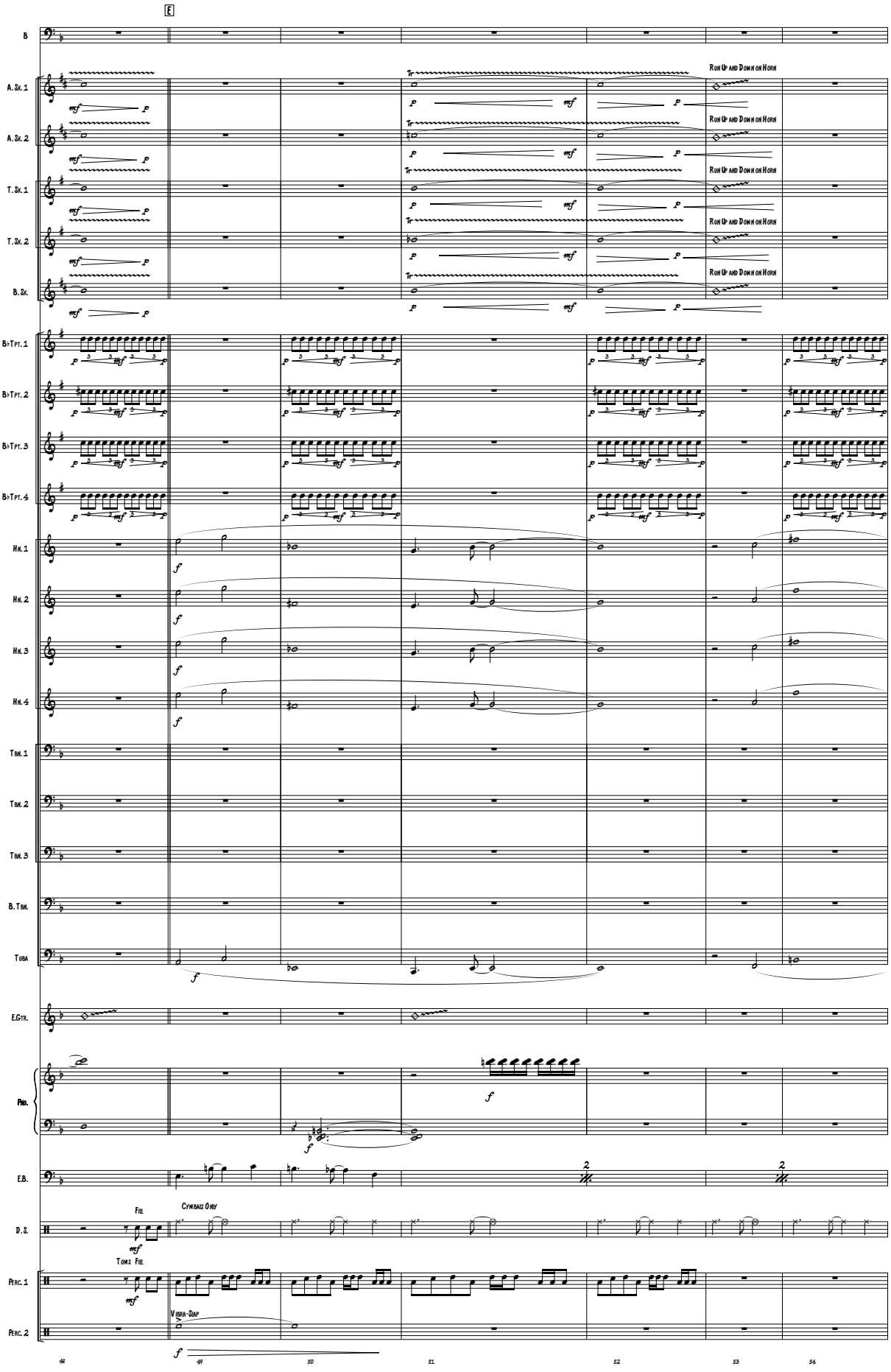

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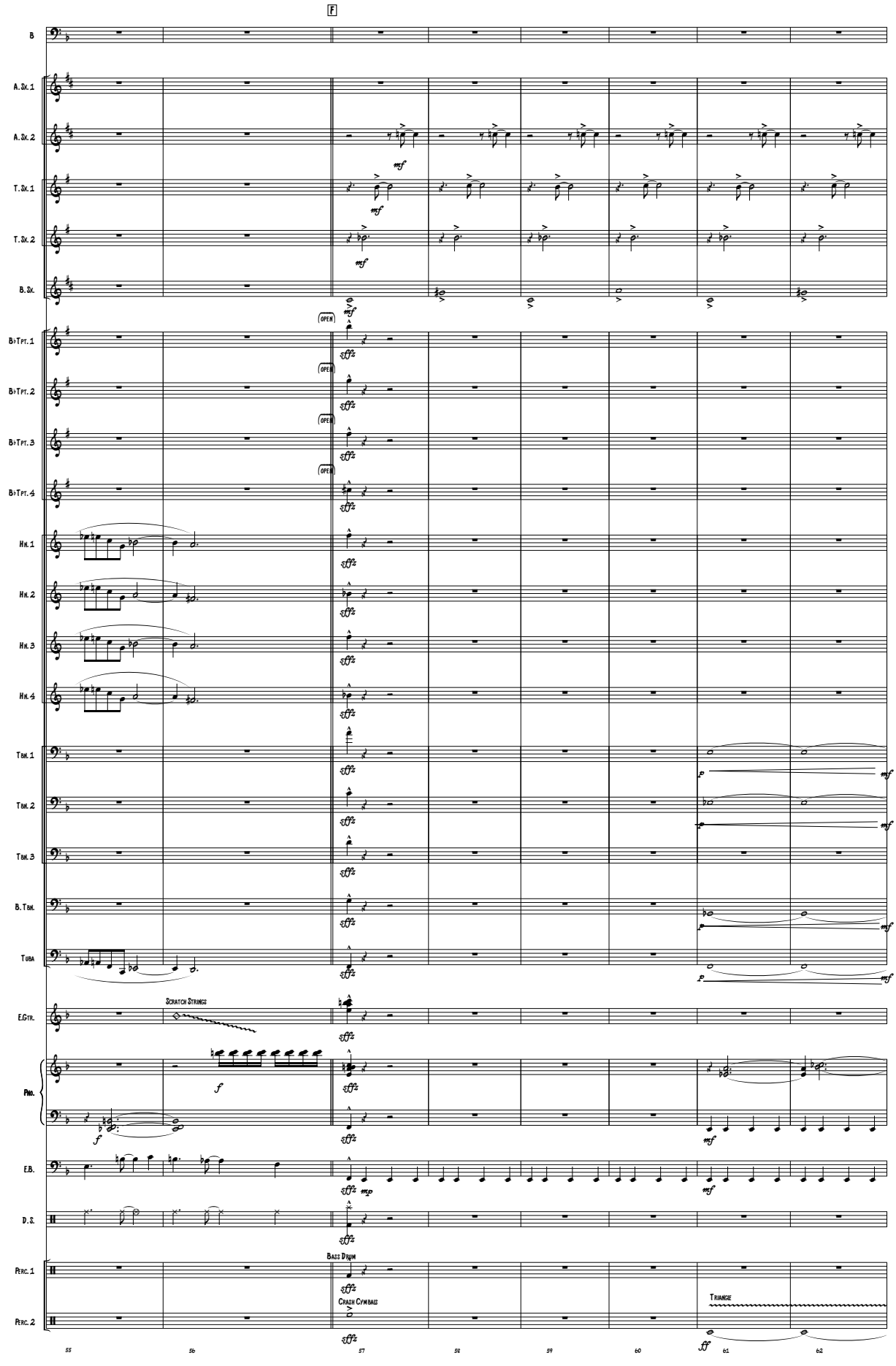

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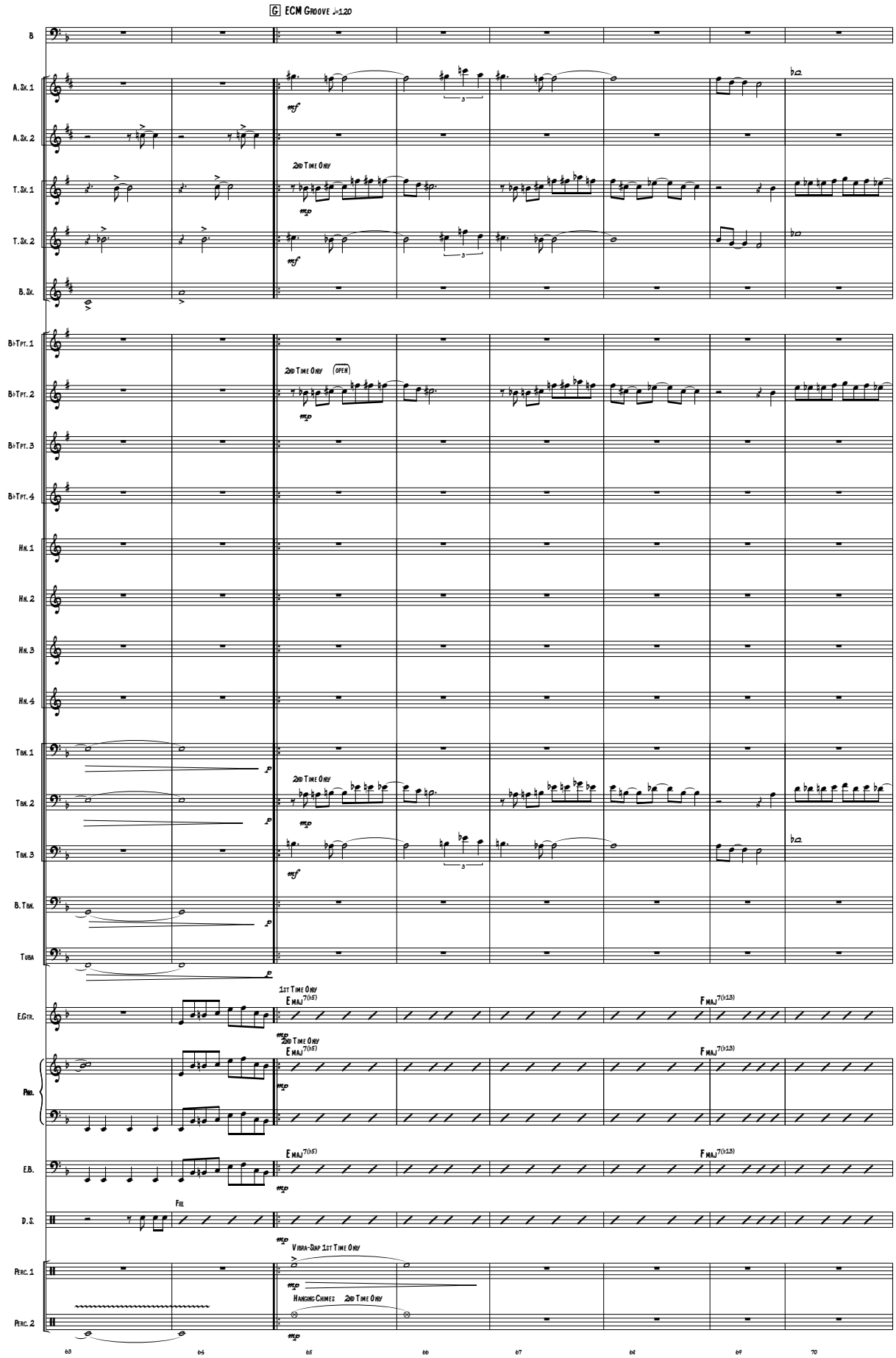

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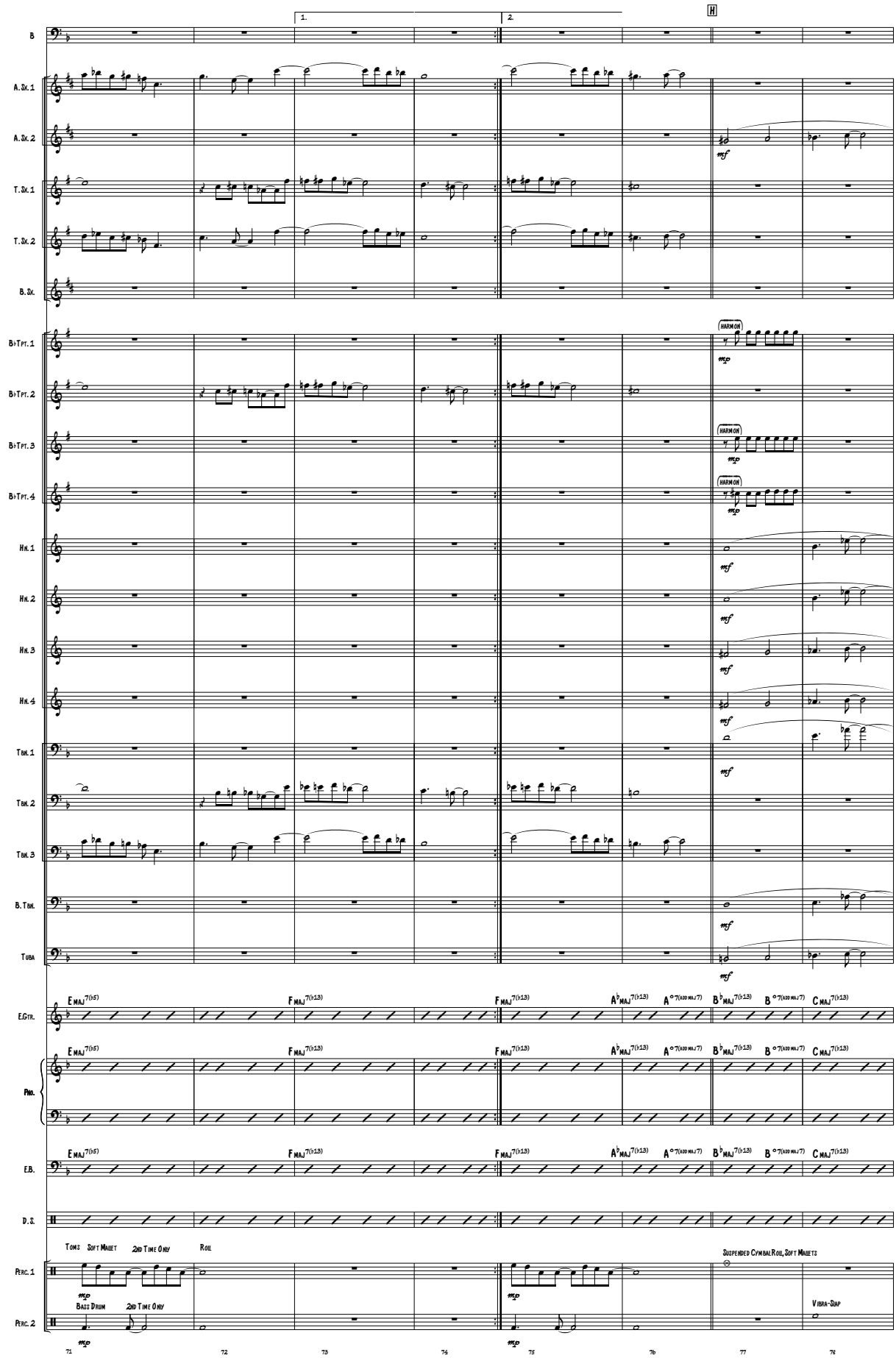

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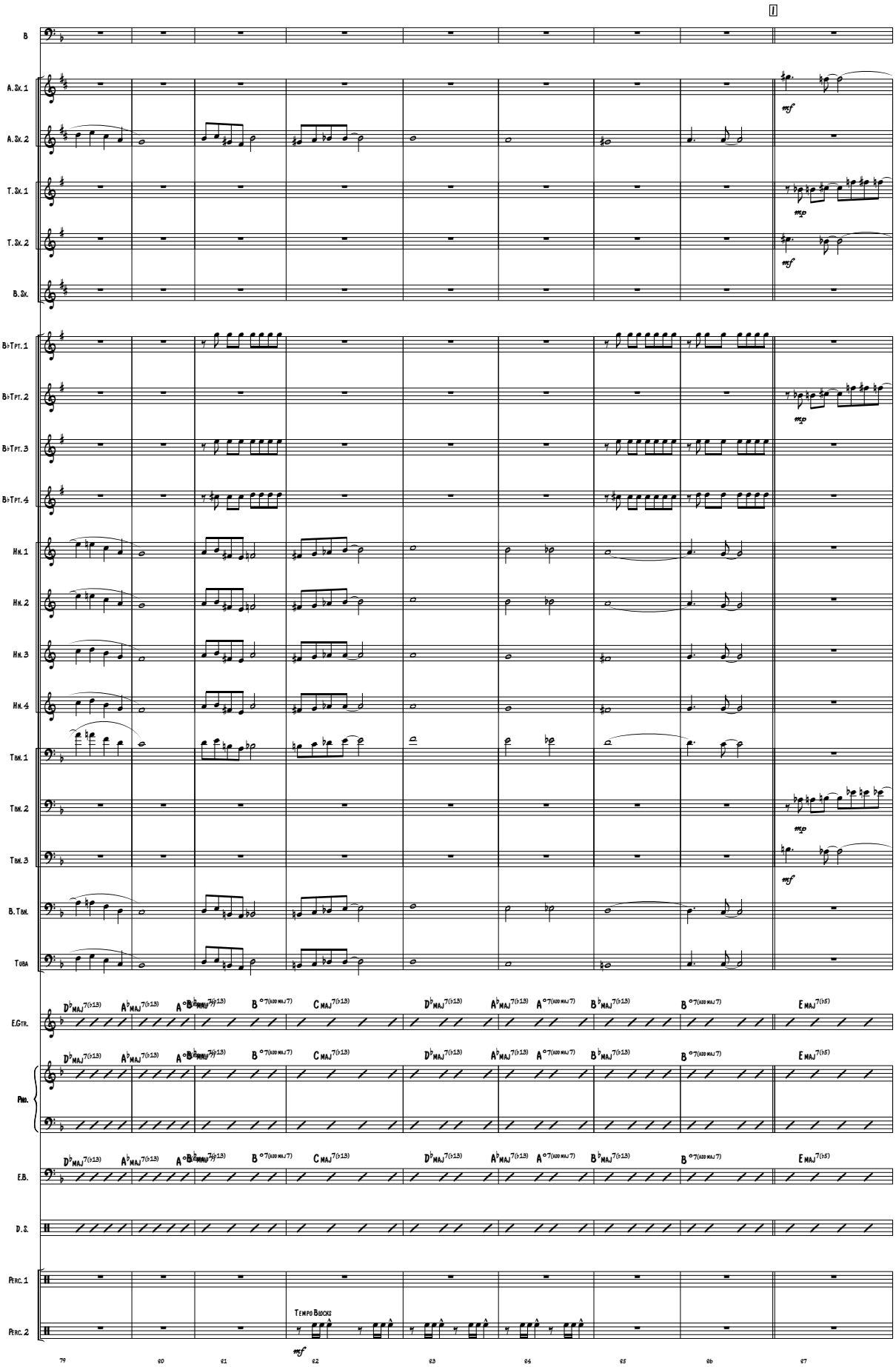

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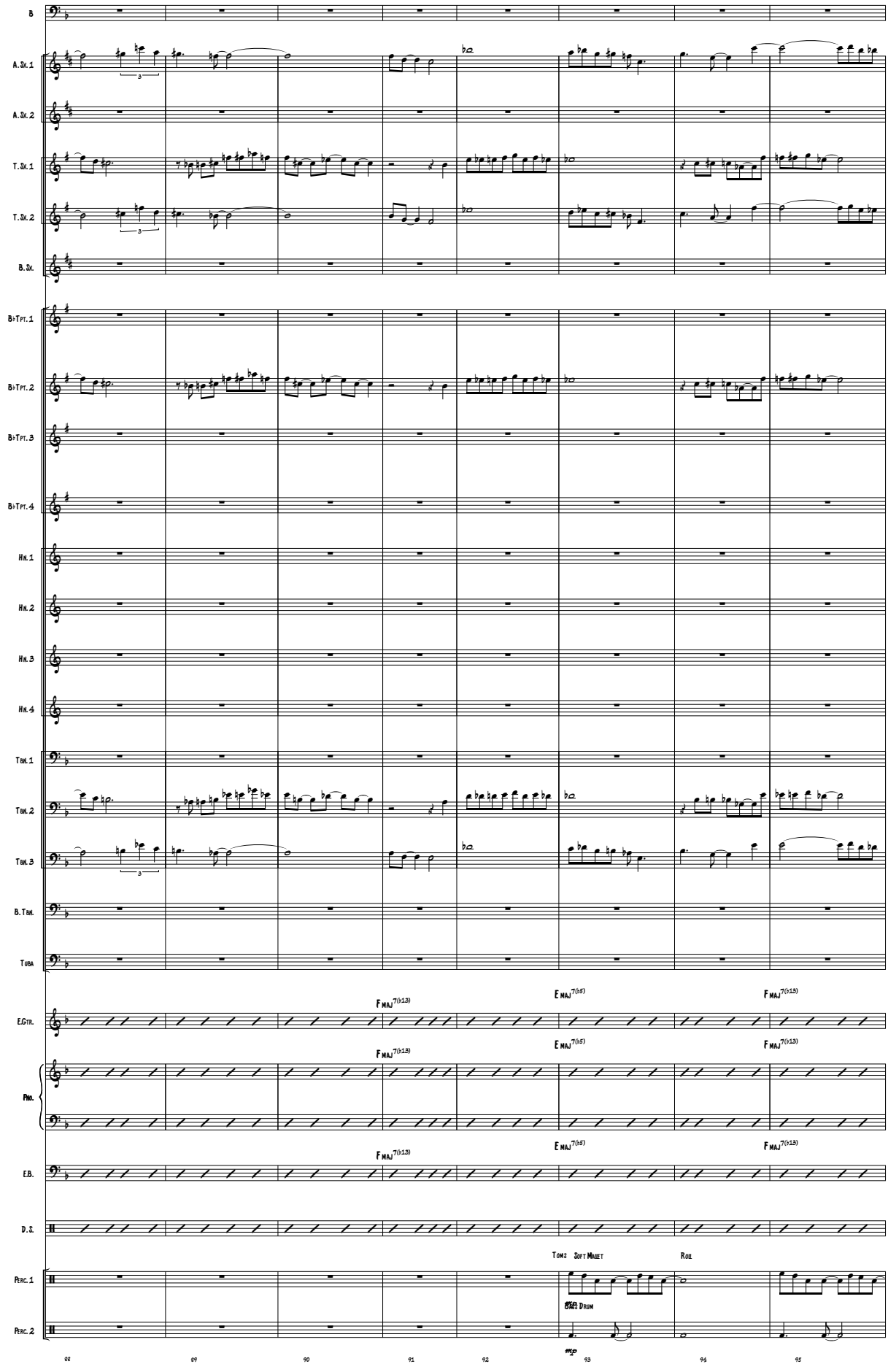

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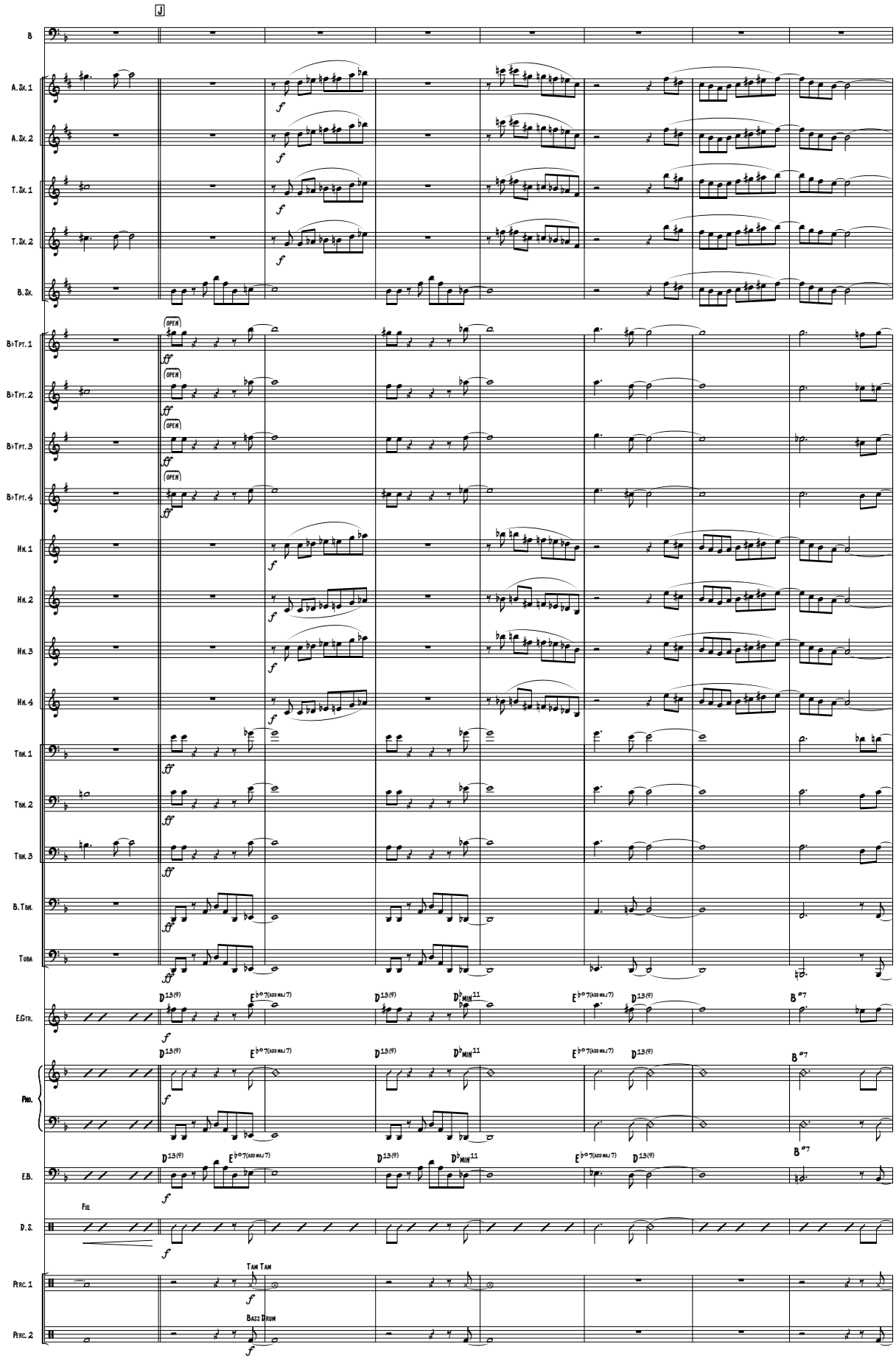

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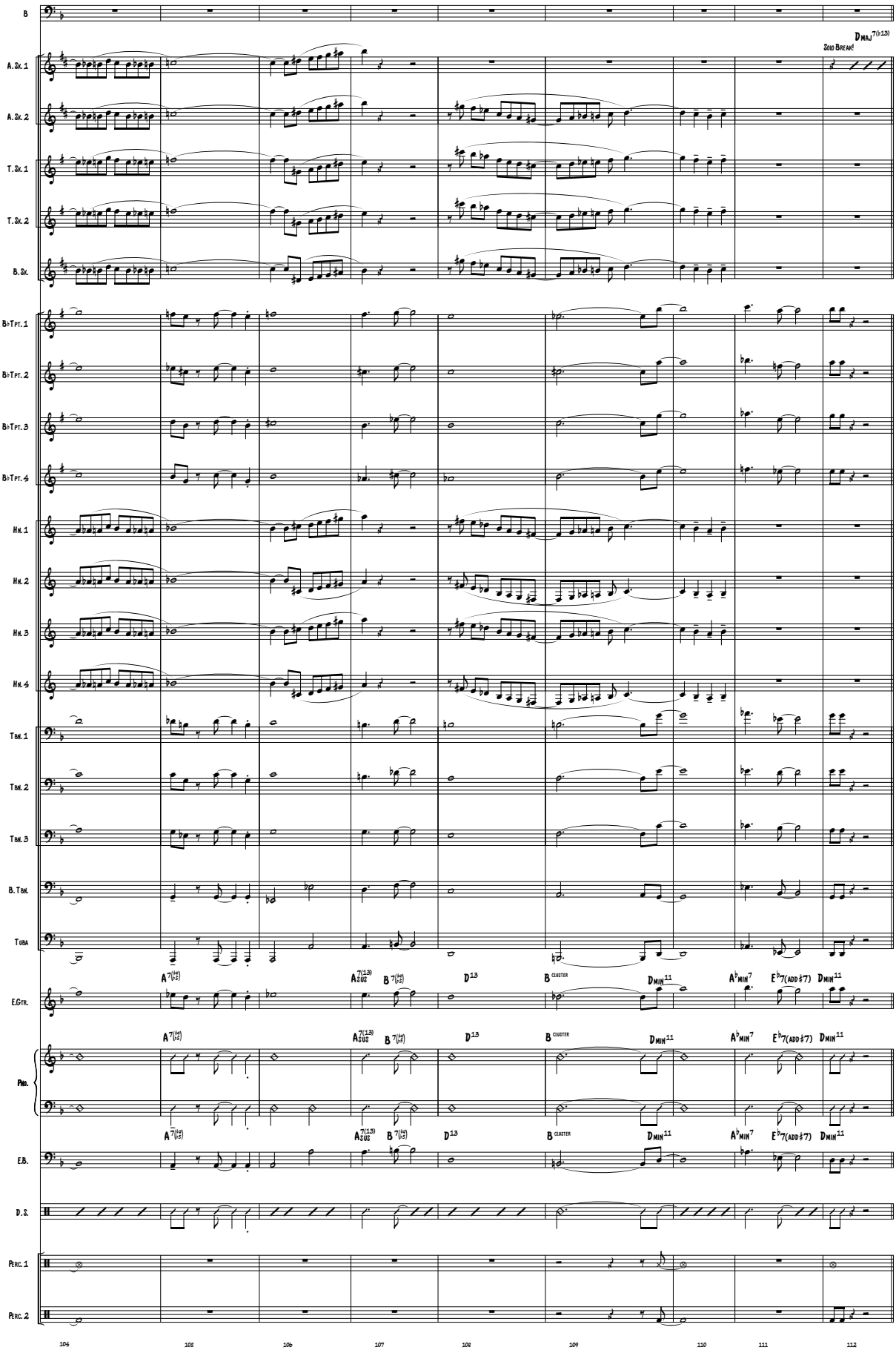

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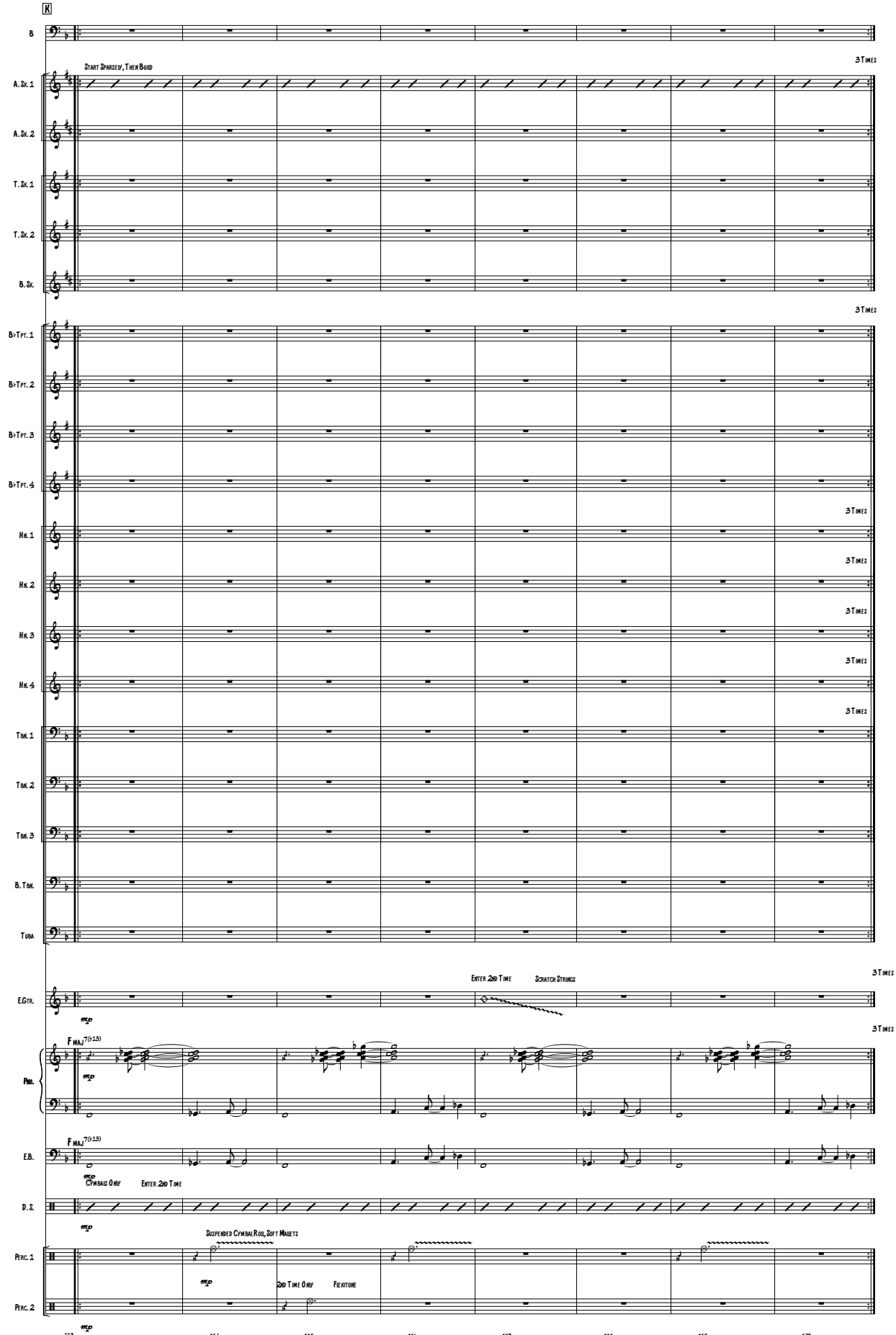

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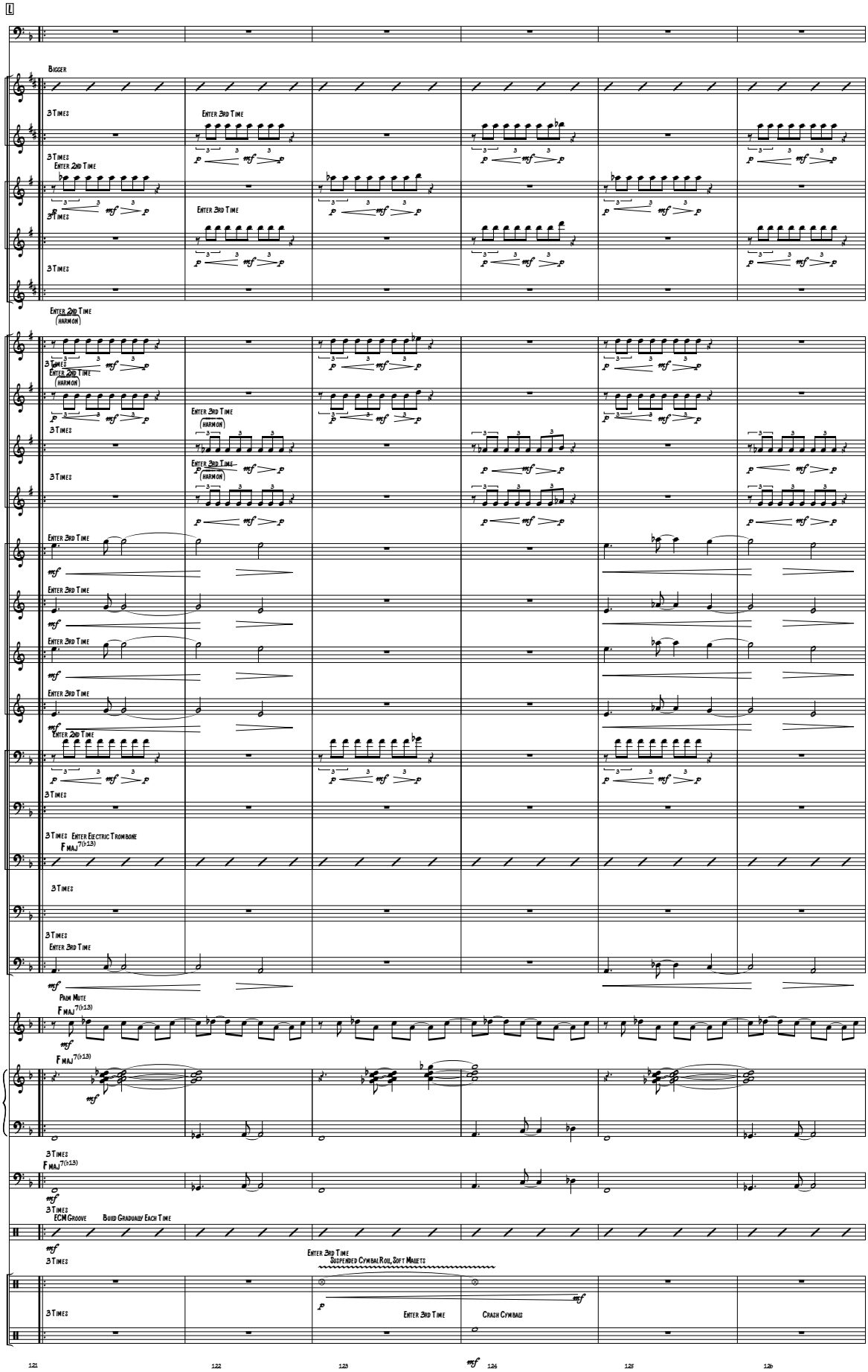

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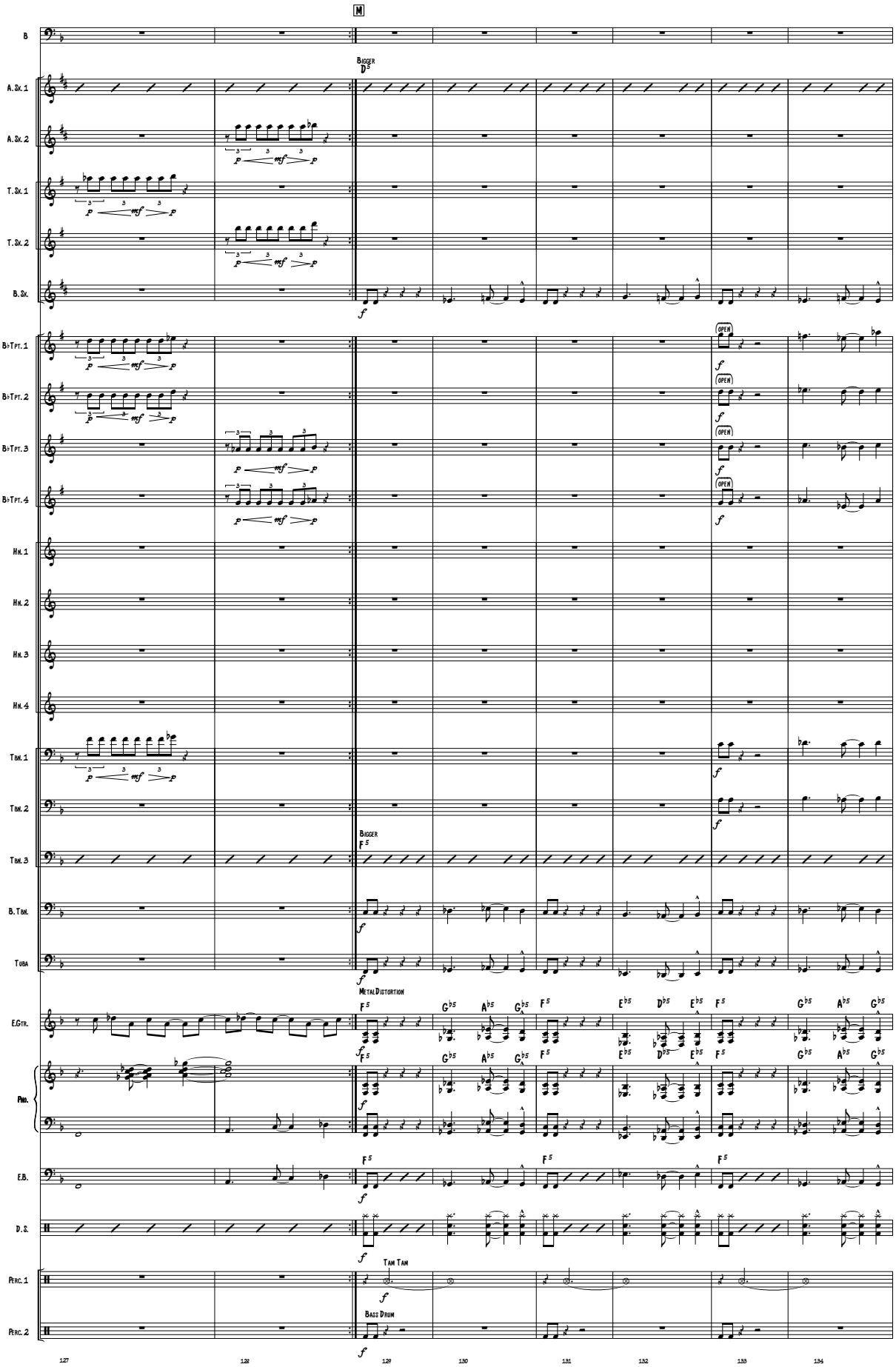

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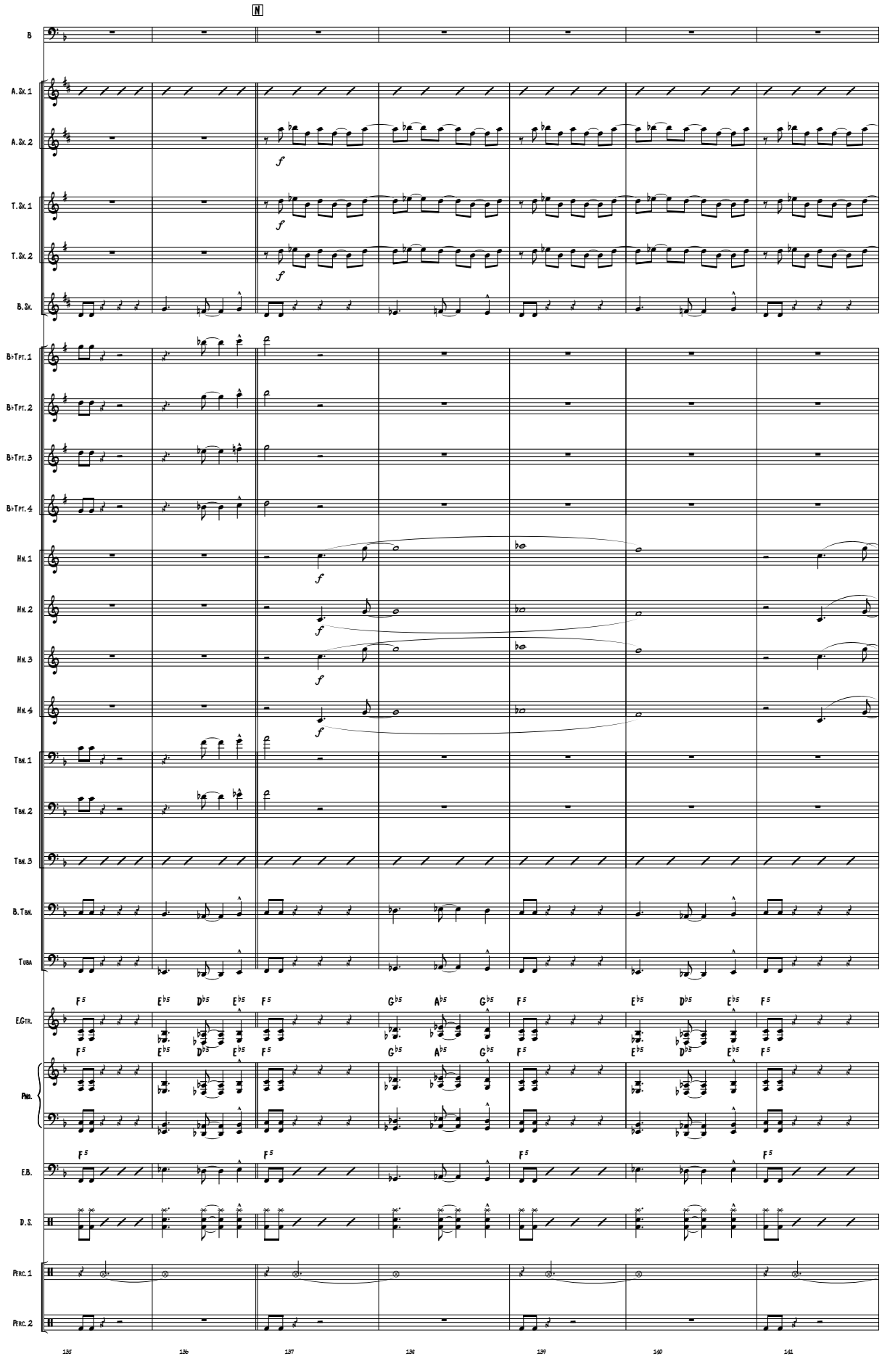

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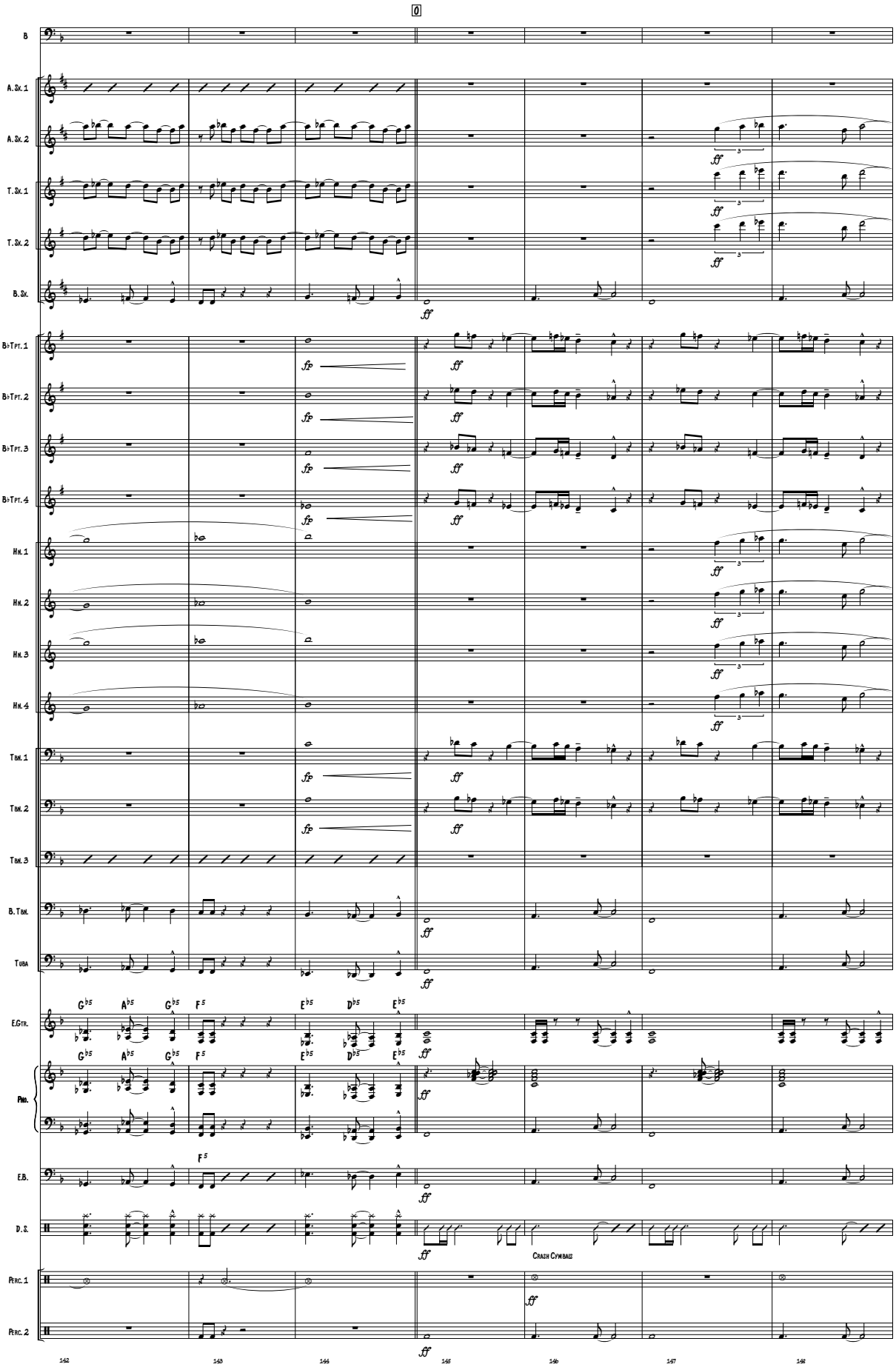

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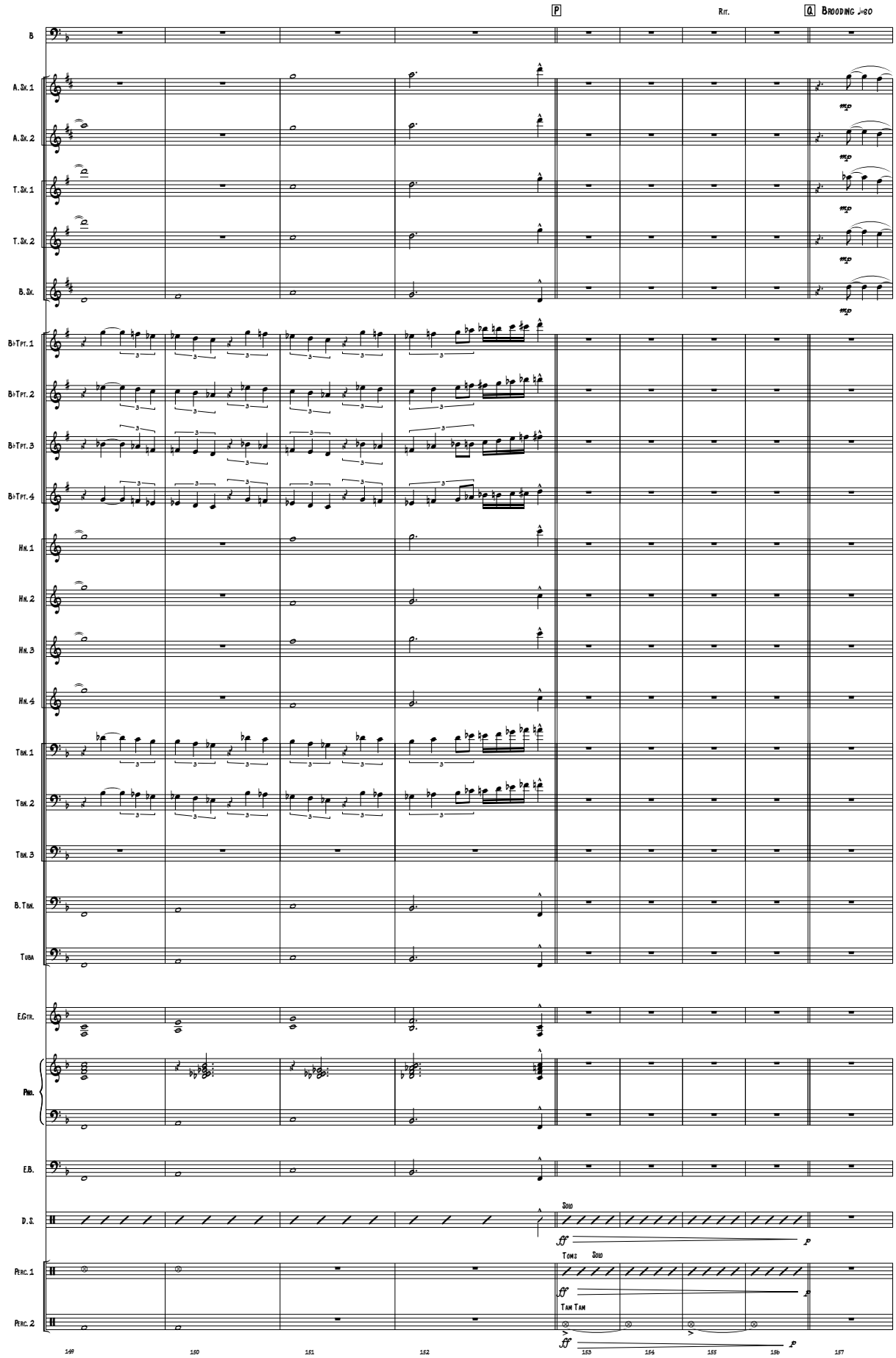

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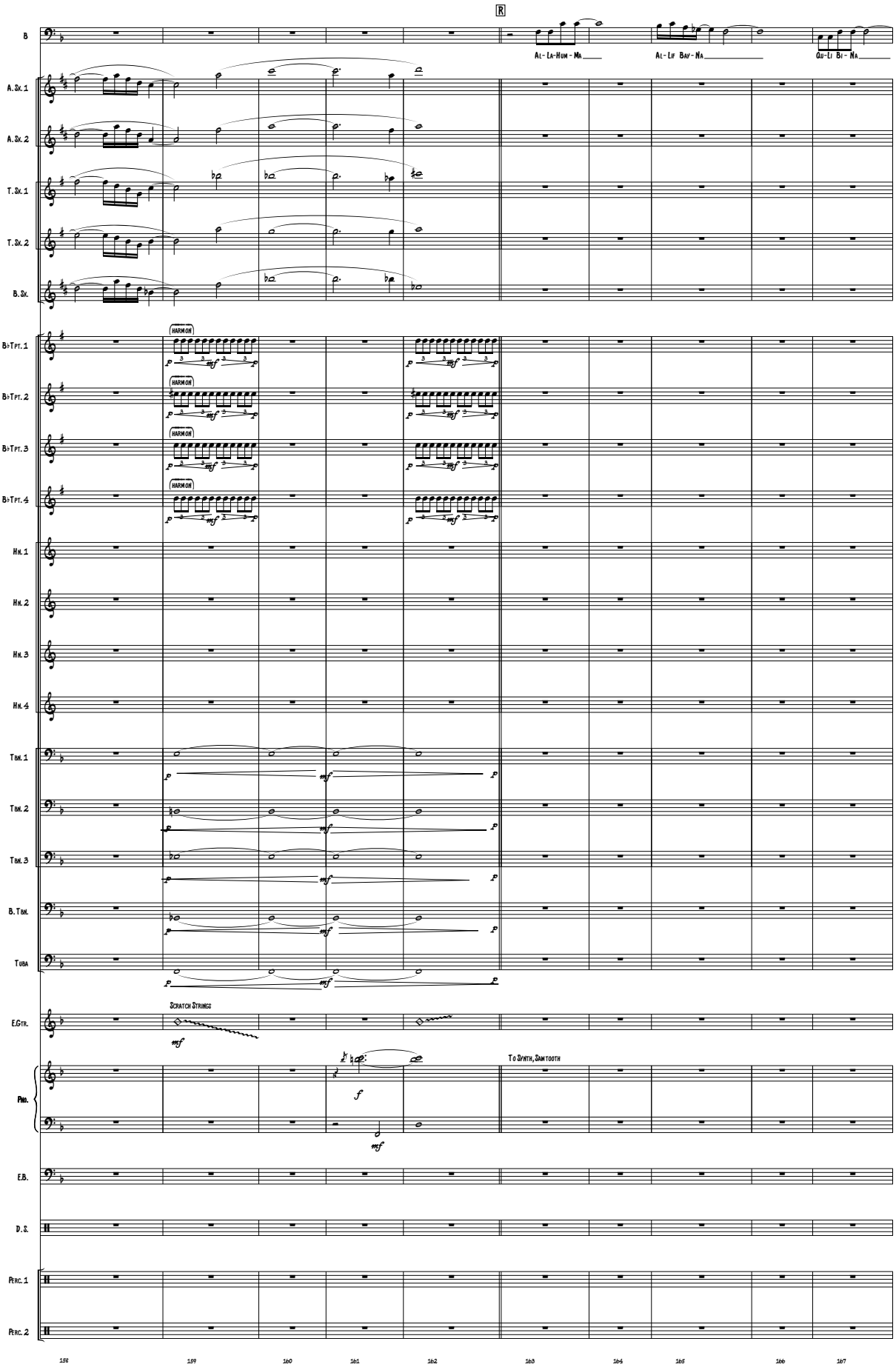

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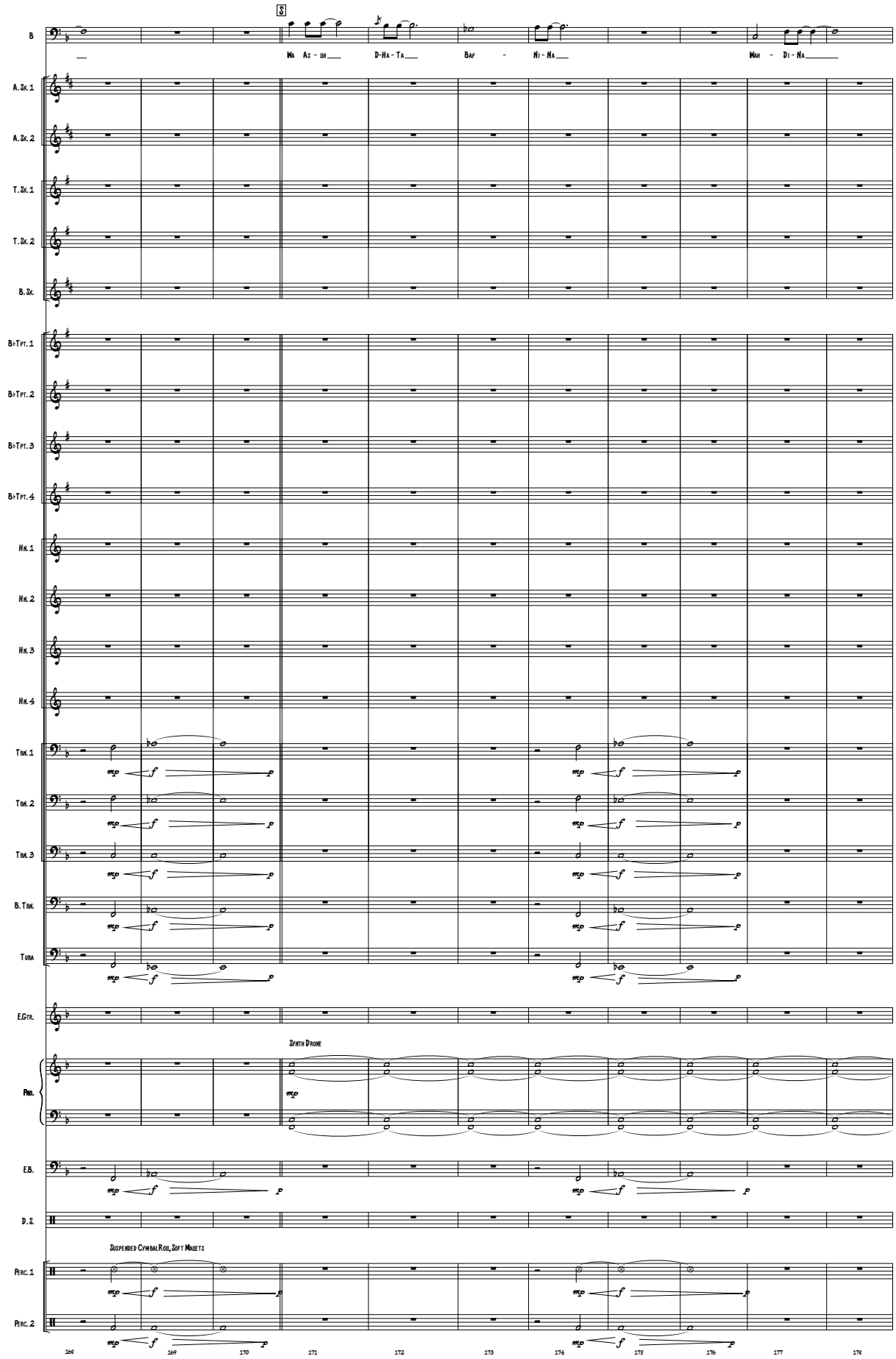

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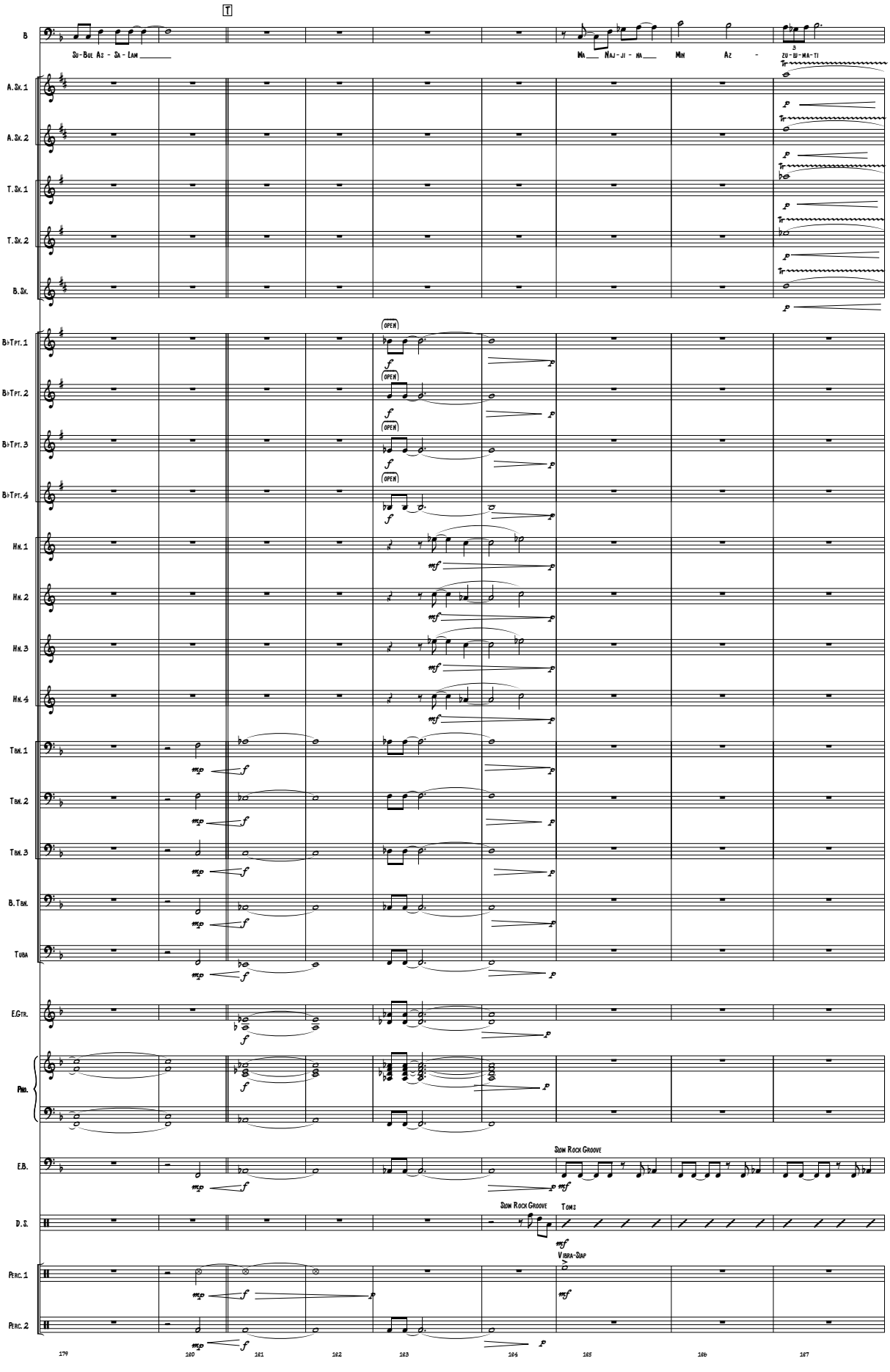

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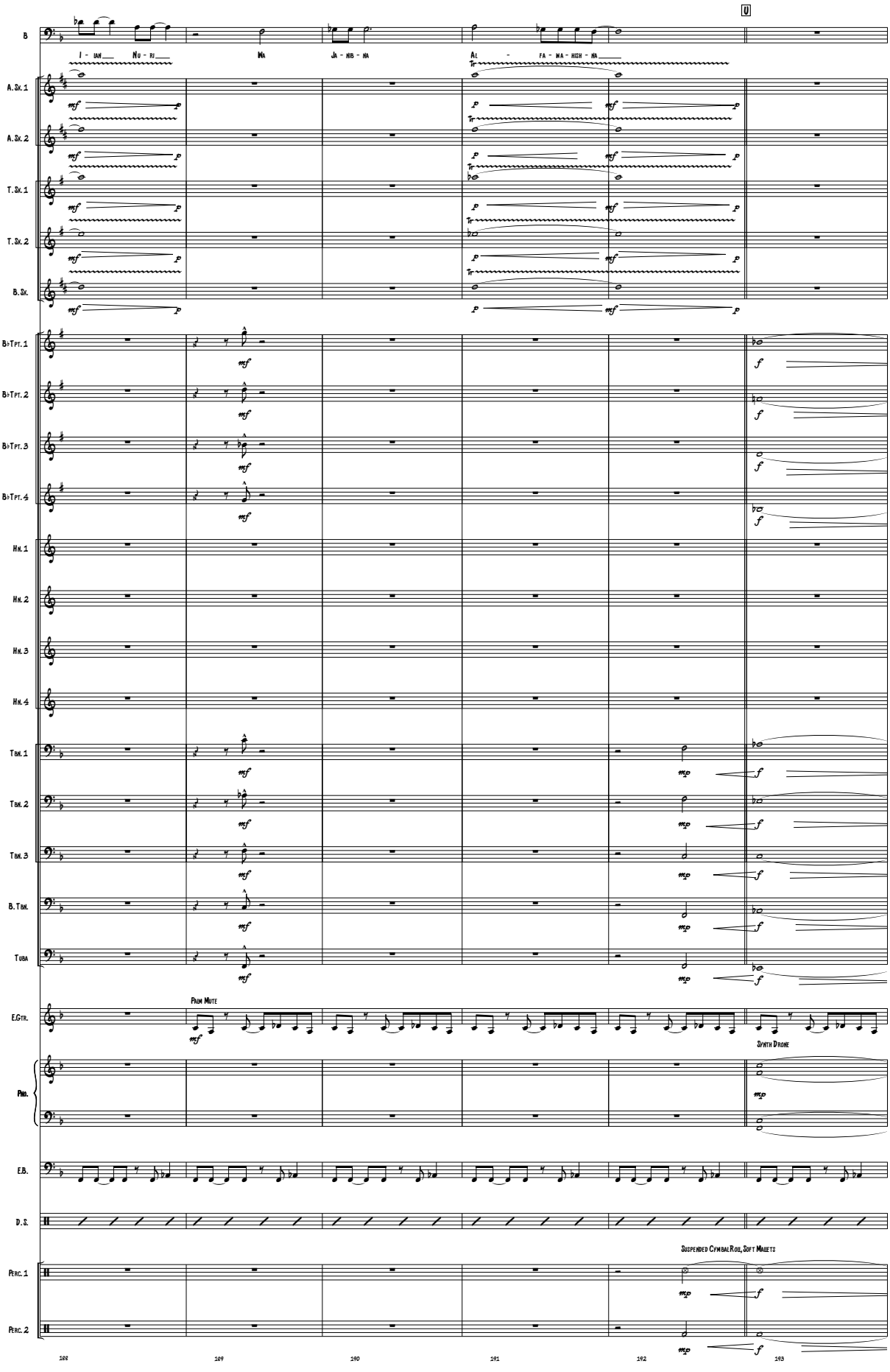

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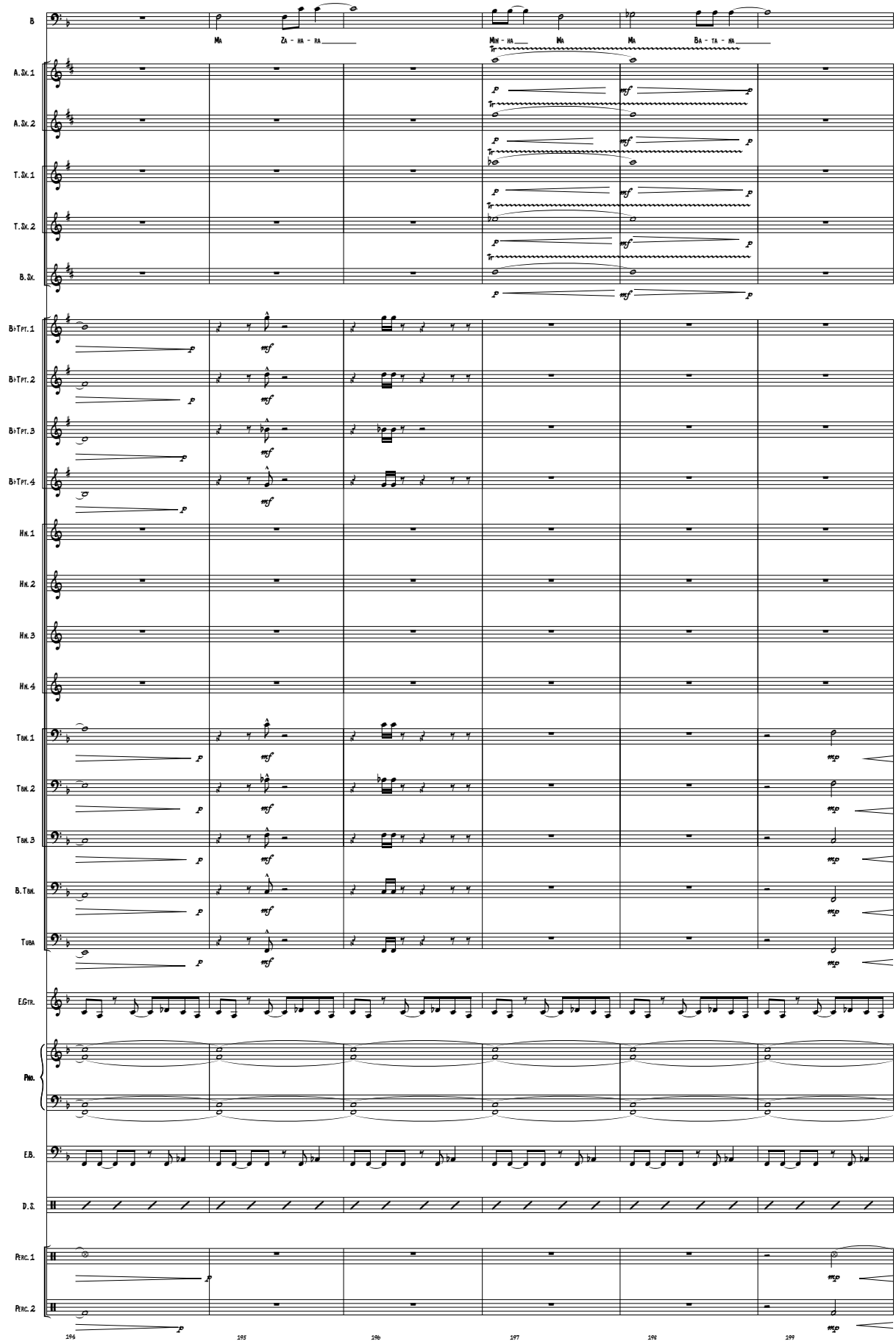

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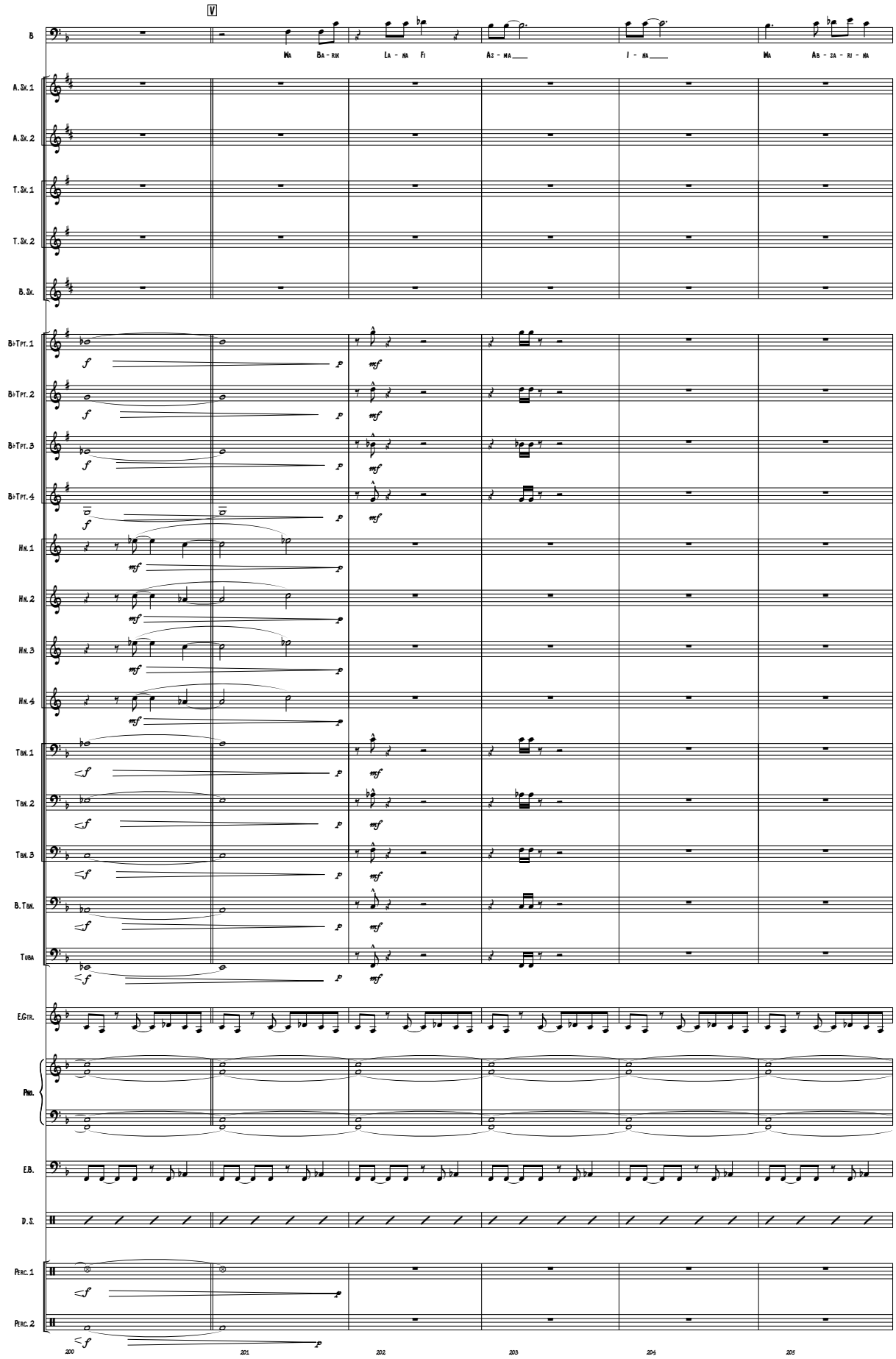

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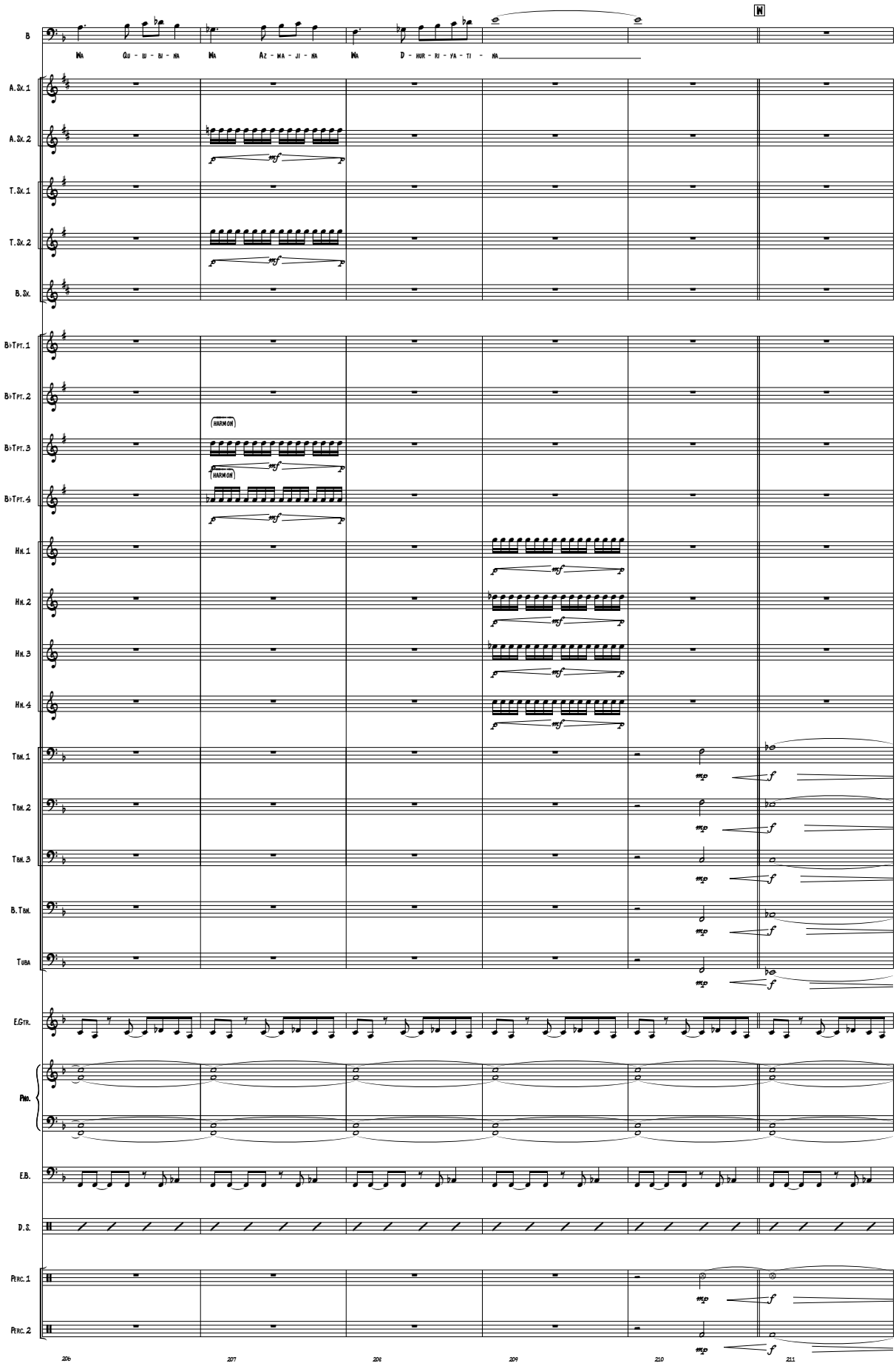

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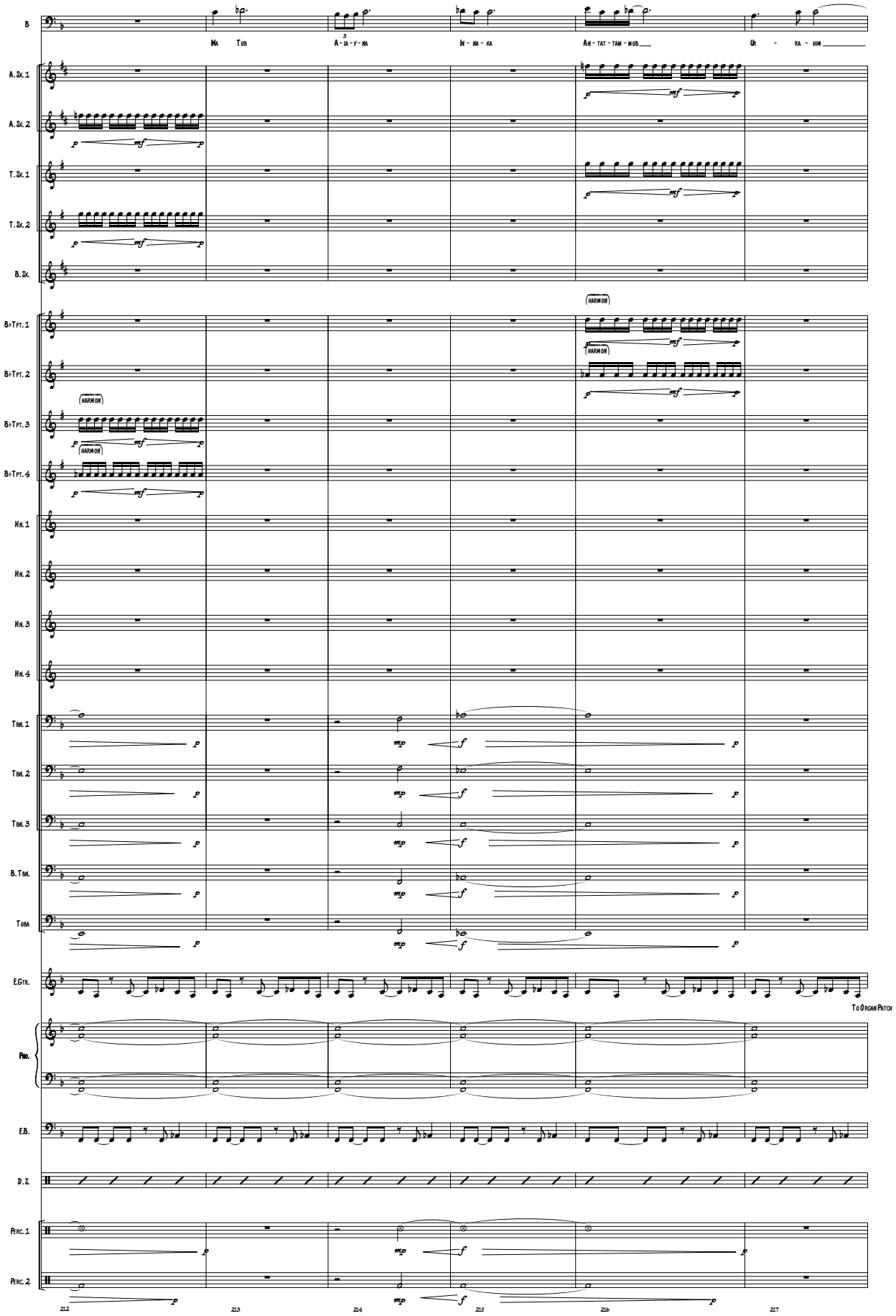

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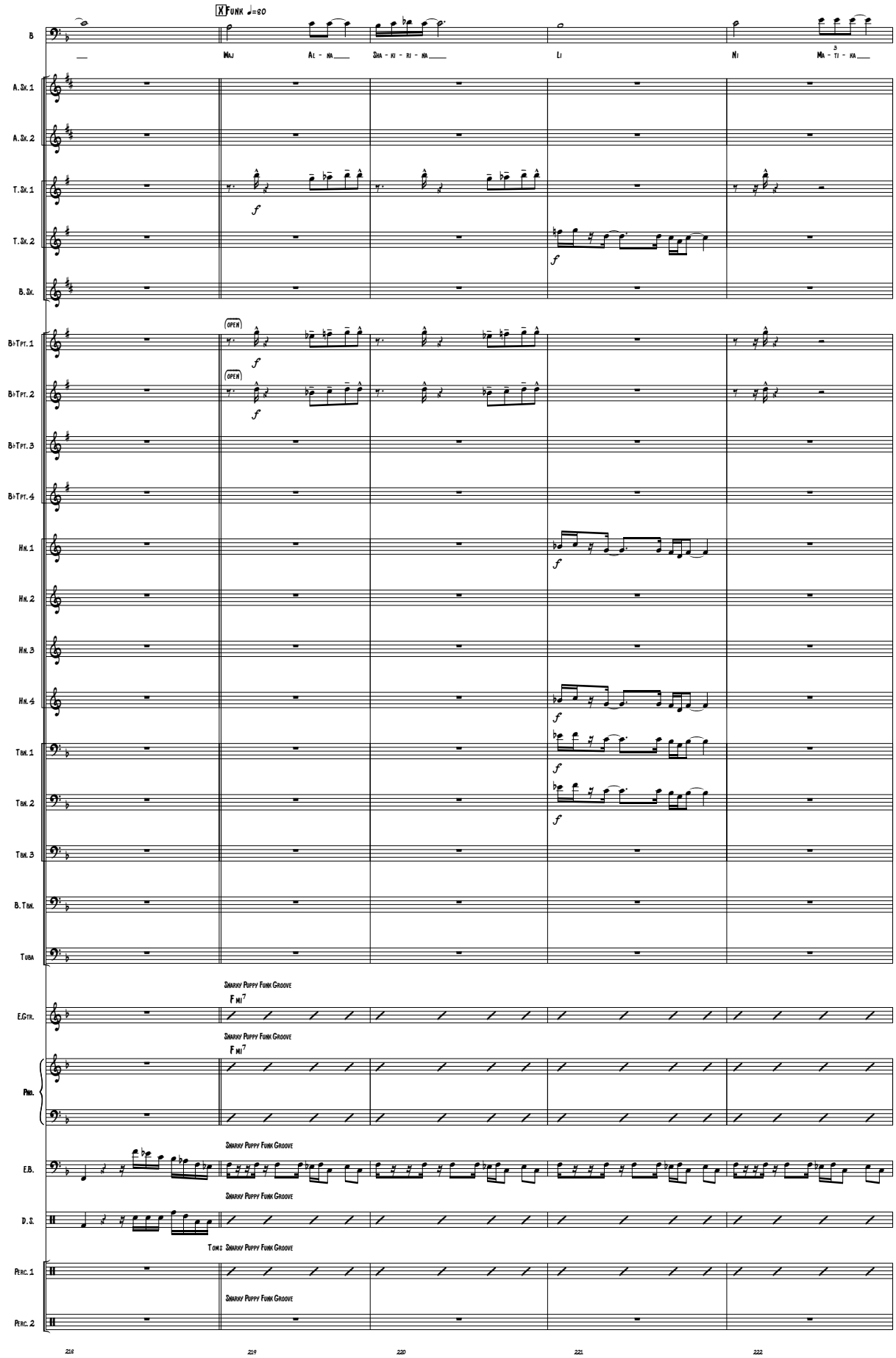

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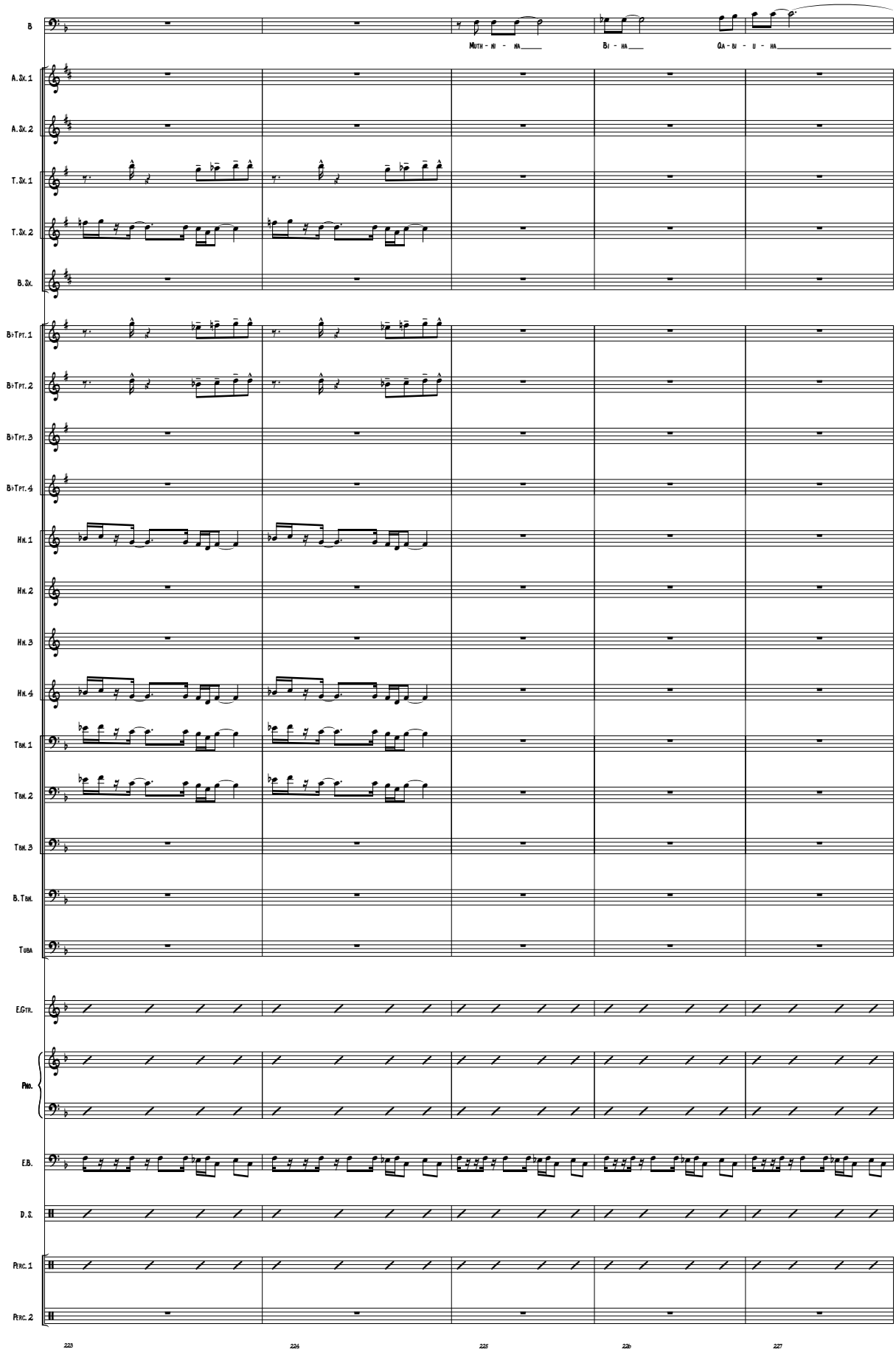

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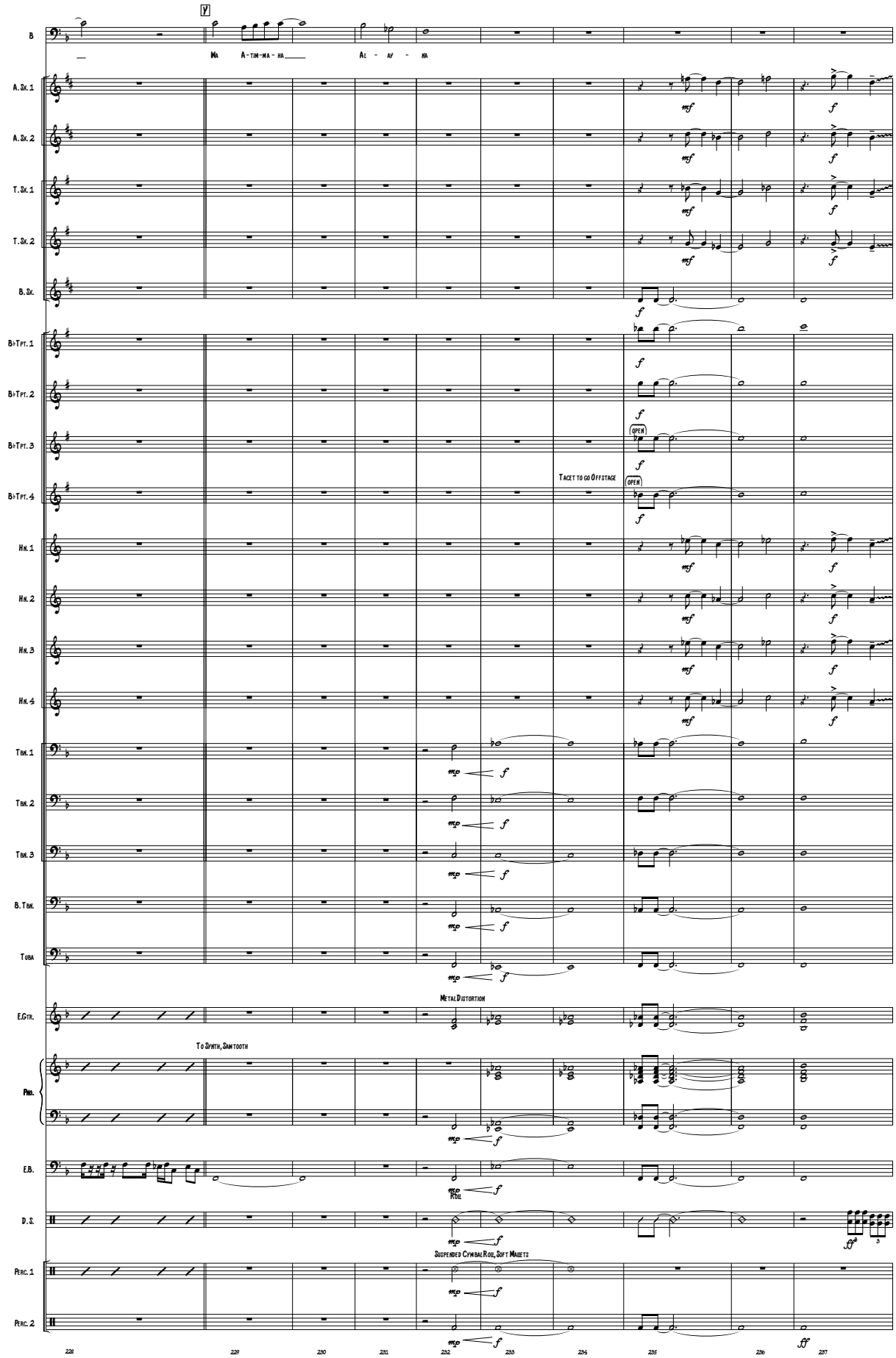

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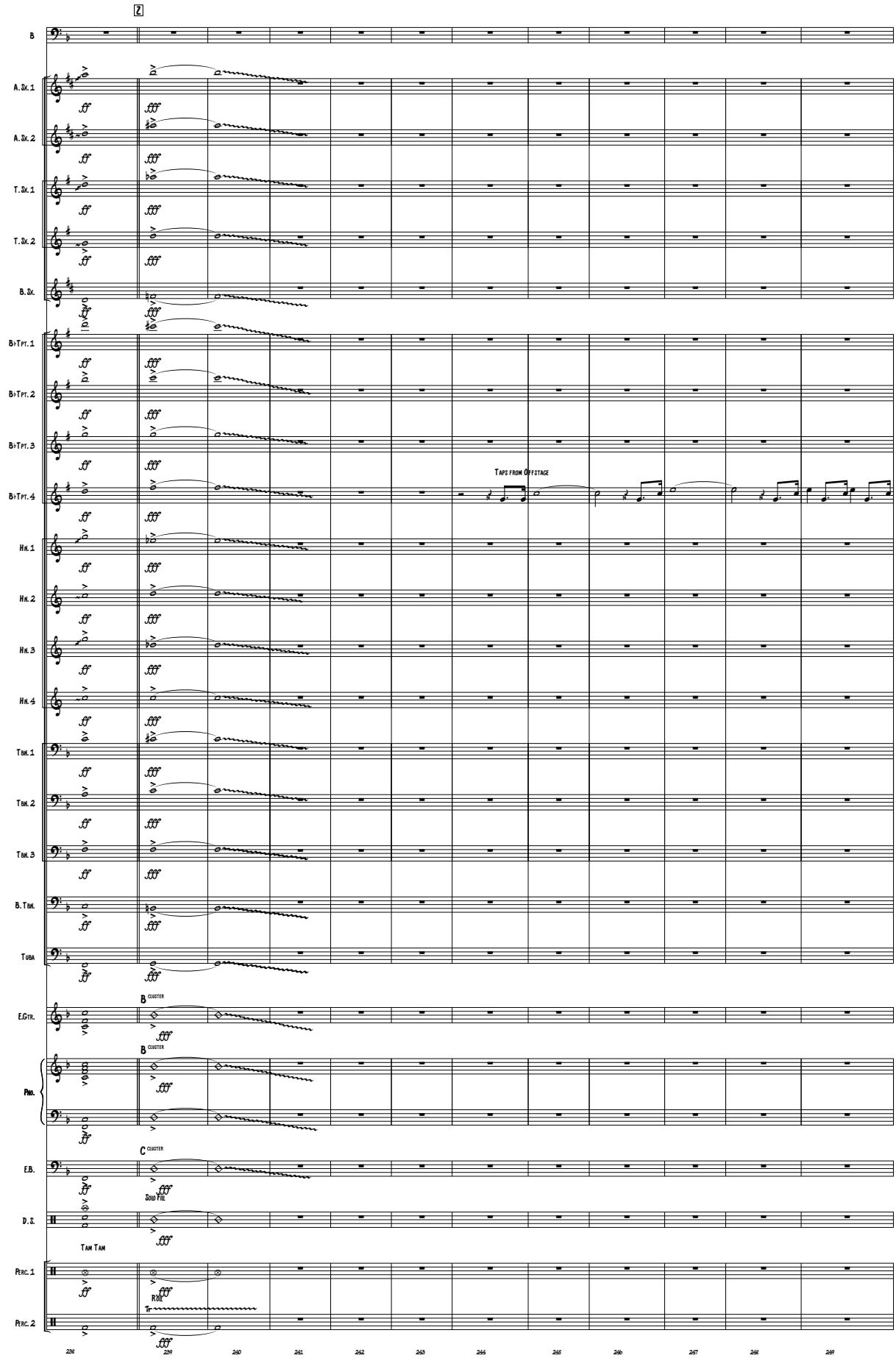

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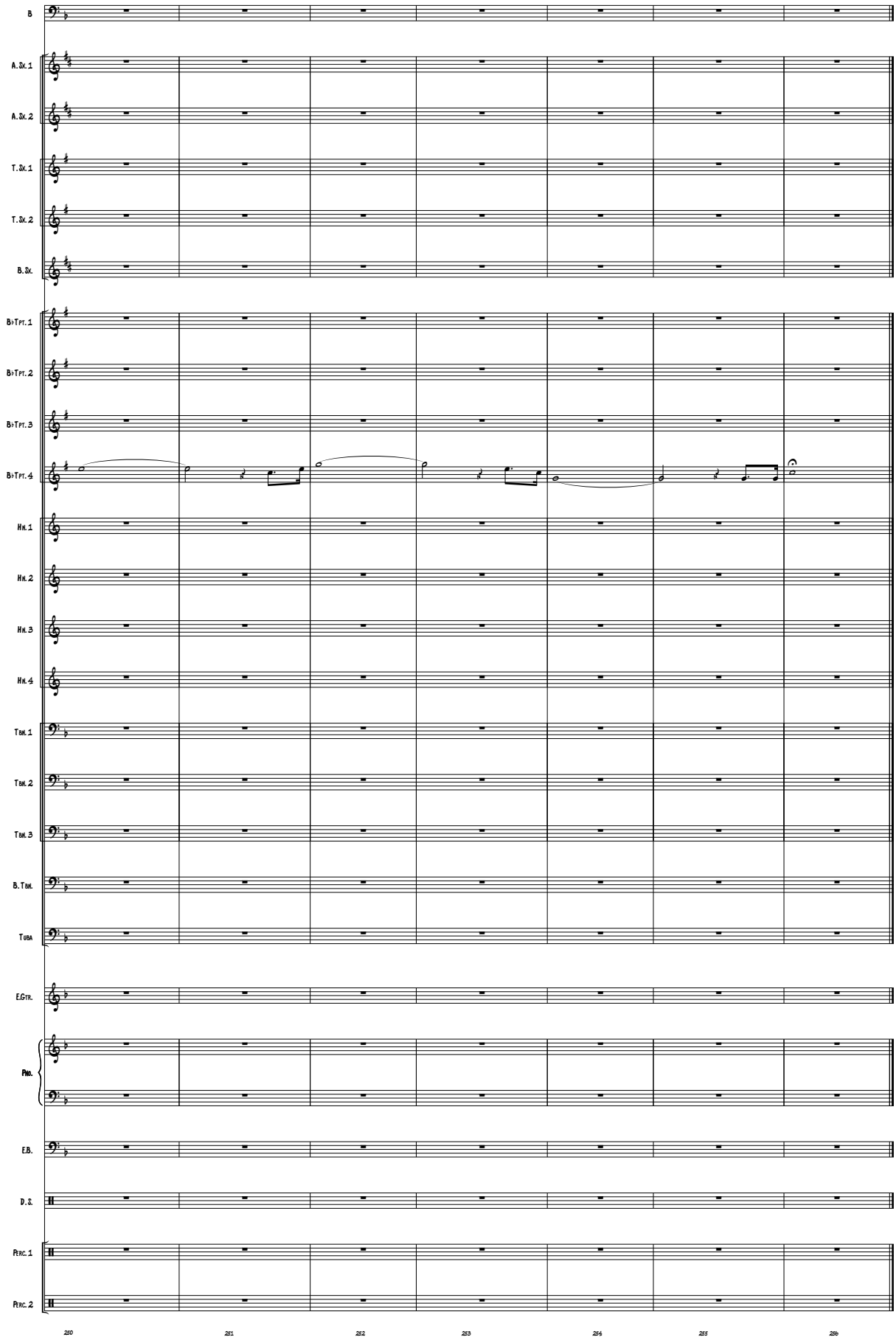

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