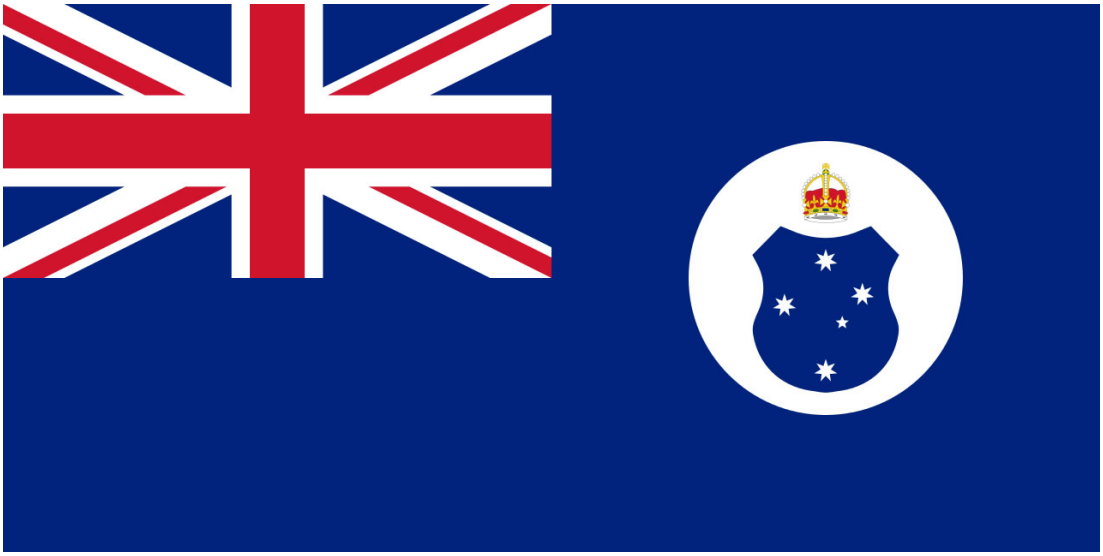


Australasian Olympic Flag - 1908 and 1912

THE AUSTRALASIAN

CONTEST MARCH

(Dedicated to the Brass Bands of Australasia)

Composed by WILLIAM RIMMER

Score Compiled by PHIL CHAPMAN

Although many major composers, among them Elgar, Holst, Vaughan Williams and Bliss have been persuaded to enter the specialised world of writing for brass band, much of its repertoire down the years has been provided by people particularly associated with it. Not that even these have confined themselves to that, as we shall see. But their achievements are worth recalling.

There was a time when virtually all the music played by bands seemed to be composed or arranged by Williams Rimmer, born in 1862. He enjoyed his earliest musical experiences in his father's Southport Rifle Band as drummer and cornettist, transferring later to Besses o' The Barn Band. Soon William turned to conducting bands, major ones of the time like Irwell Springs, Wingates Temperance, Black Dyke (then styled Black Dike), Hebden Bridge, Besses and Fodens. All these did well in competition at that time; in 1909 William was a trainer or conductor of five of the six prize winners in the Open Championships at Manchester. The following year he retired from conducting to devote himself to composing, arranging and teaching; his pupils included that great doyen of the brass world Harry Mortimer. Rimmer became music editor of the Liverpool music publishing firm, Wright and Round, in 1913. He returned to conducting after the Great War directing Southport Corporation Military Band for two years. He died on 9 February 1936. So many other famous figures died around that time - among them Dame Clara Butt, Rudyard Kipling and King George V - that it seemed like the end of an era. In the world of brass bands Rimmer's death appeared to have the same cataclysmic effect.

Above all his compositions were marches: *Avenger*, *The British Flag*, *The Carnival King*, *The Comet*, *Dauntless*, *Dawn of Freedom*, *Faithful and Free*, *For Freedom and Honour*, *Kings of the Air*, *Jack o' The Lantern*, *Knight of the Road*, *Monarch*, *Ravenswood*, *Sergeants of the Guard*, *Sons of Victory*, *The Virtuoso*, *The Wizard*, *The Australasian*, *Black Knight*, *Cross of Honour*, *Honest Toil*, *North Star*, *Slaidburn*, *The Bostonian*,*Victor's Return*, *Viva Birkinshaw* (a tribute to a one-time leading Black Dyke cornettist) and, best known of all, *Punchinello* and *The Cossack*, adopted by Fodens as their signature tune. Many of these, and I have mentioned only a fraction of them, are still played, as are the cornet solos *Silver Showers*, *Hailstorm* and *Cleopatra* the euphonium solo *Weber's Last Waltz* and the *Rule Britannia* Overture. *Chiming Bells* was a popular number around 1900 and the fantasia *Military Church Parade* was also played. Rimmer's arrangements were legion and included practically every operatic overture you can think of not least of them being Balfe's *The Bohemian Girl* which I enjoyed quite recently. He wrote for orchestra too *The Bells of St Malo*, *The Coster's Wooing*, the march *Southport Belles*, a *Tarantelle* for piccolo and orchestra and the gavotte *Wedding Bells* - all five scores include as a reminder of Rimmer's band association, a euphonium.

MEN OF BRASS - A FEW BRASS BAND COMPOSERS by Philip ...
www.musicweb-international.com/classrev/2001/July01/MenofBrass.htm

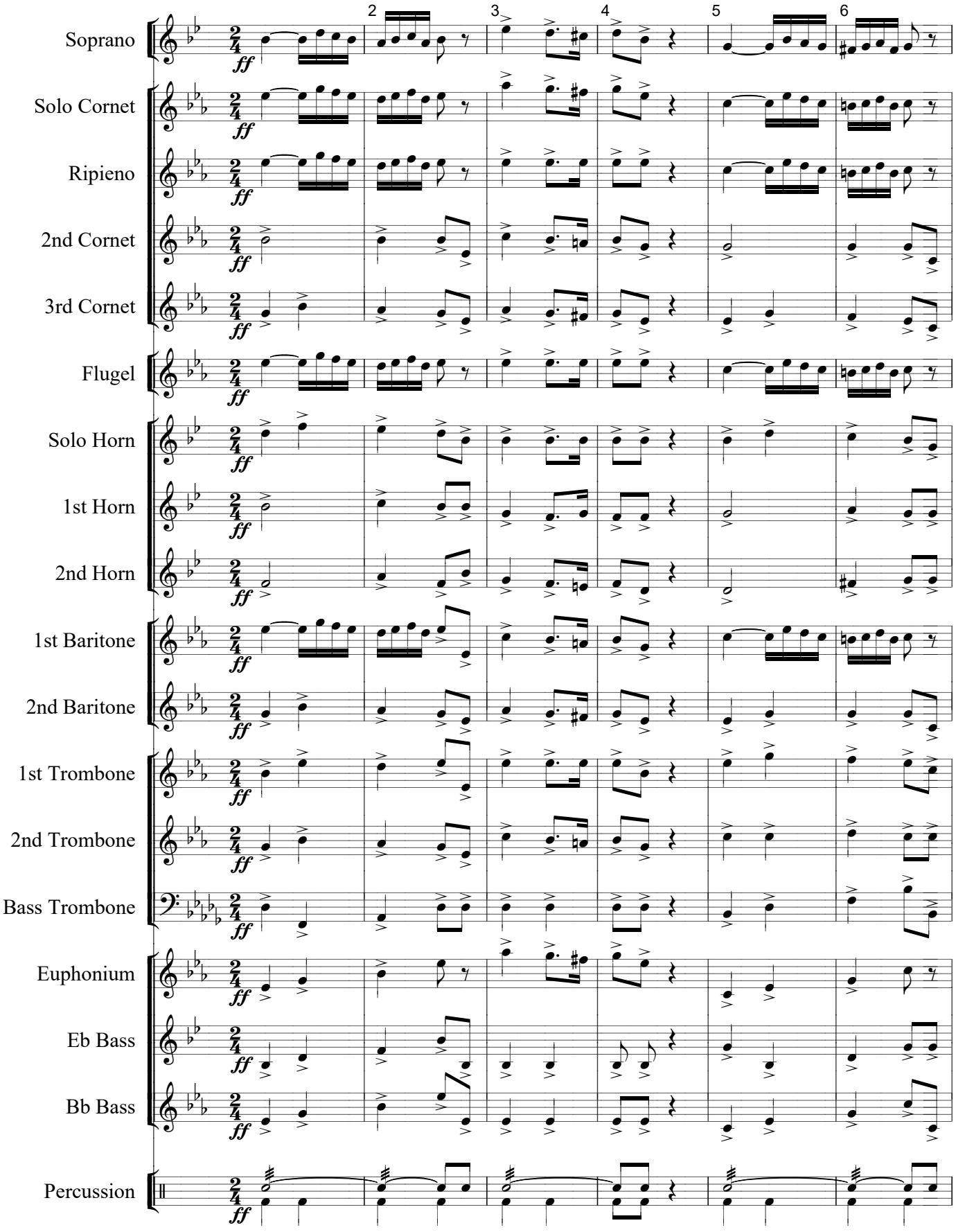
The march cards used to compile this score carried no special notes, except the Solo Cornet, which was marked *'4th Edition'*. The writer has sought to reproduce the cards as they exist; inconsistencies between the parts should be evident when reading the score.

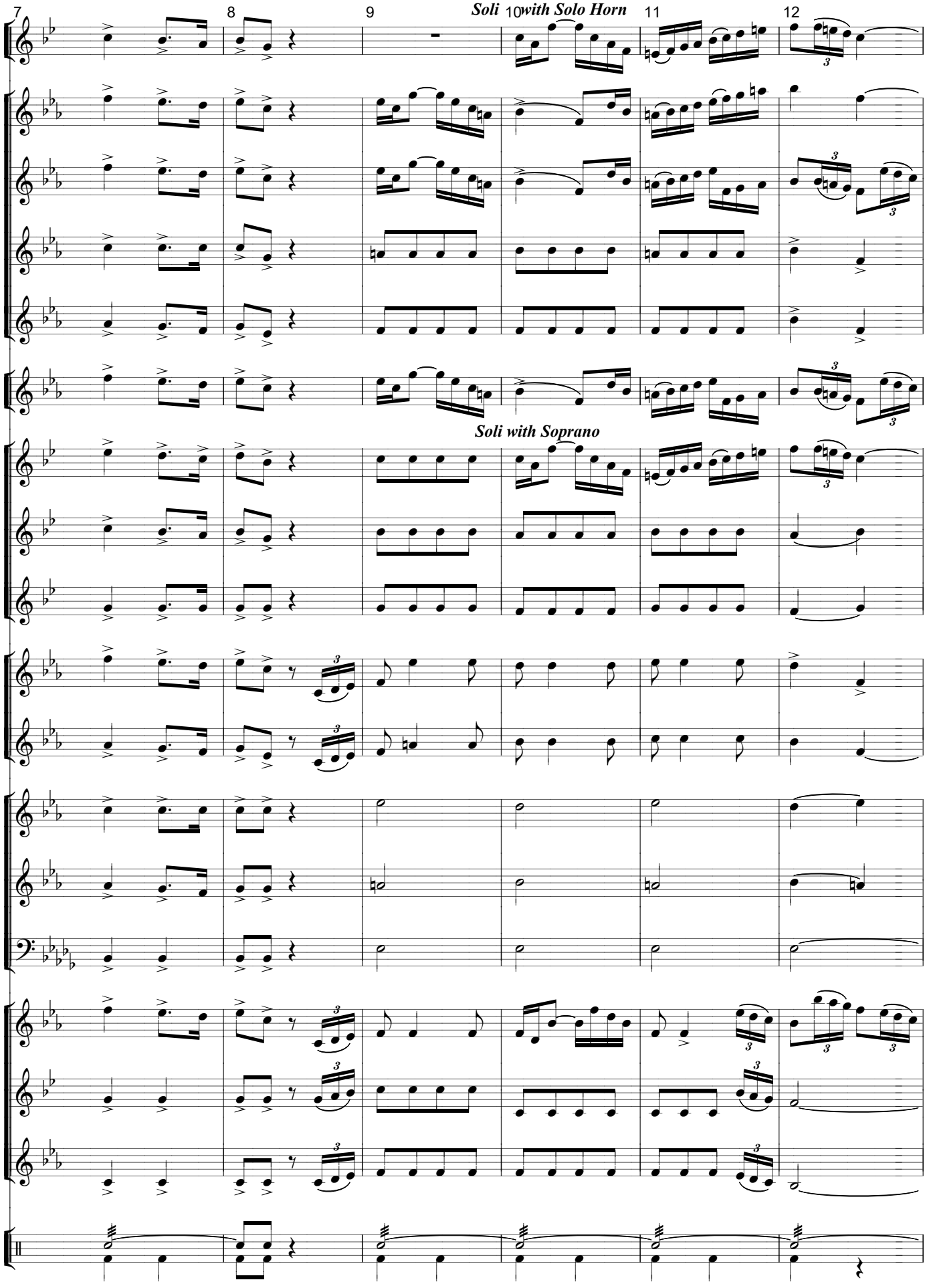
Phil Chapman

The AUSTRALASIAN

Tempo di marcia

Composed by William Rimmer (1861/2-1936)
Score Compiled by Phil Chapman

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Soli
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with Solo Horn
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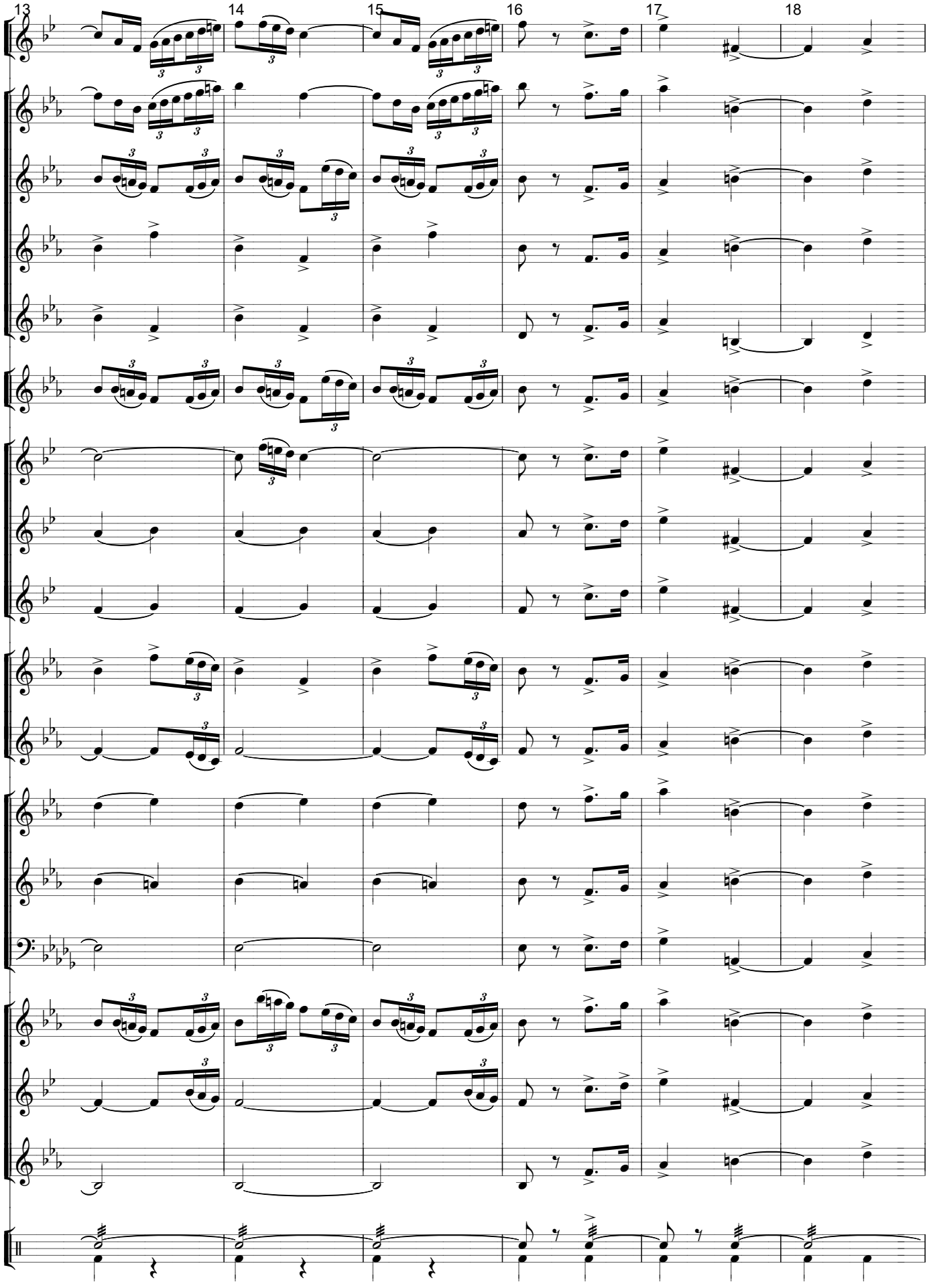
Soli with Soprano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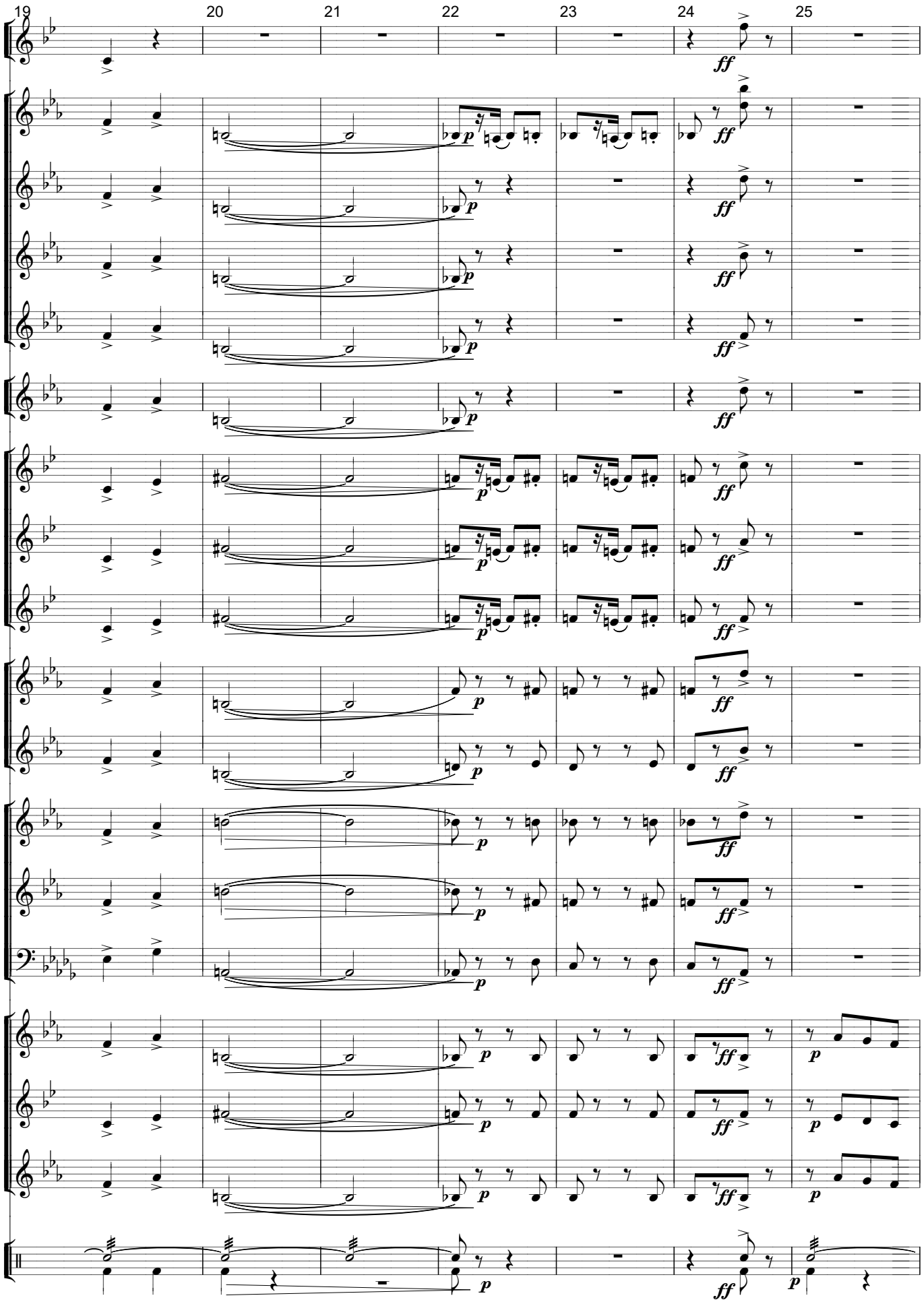
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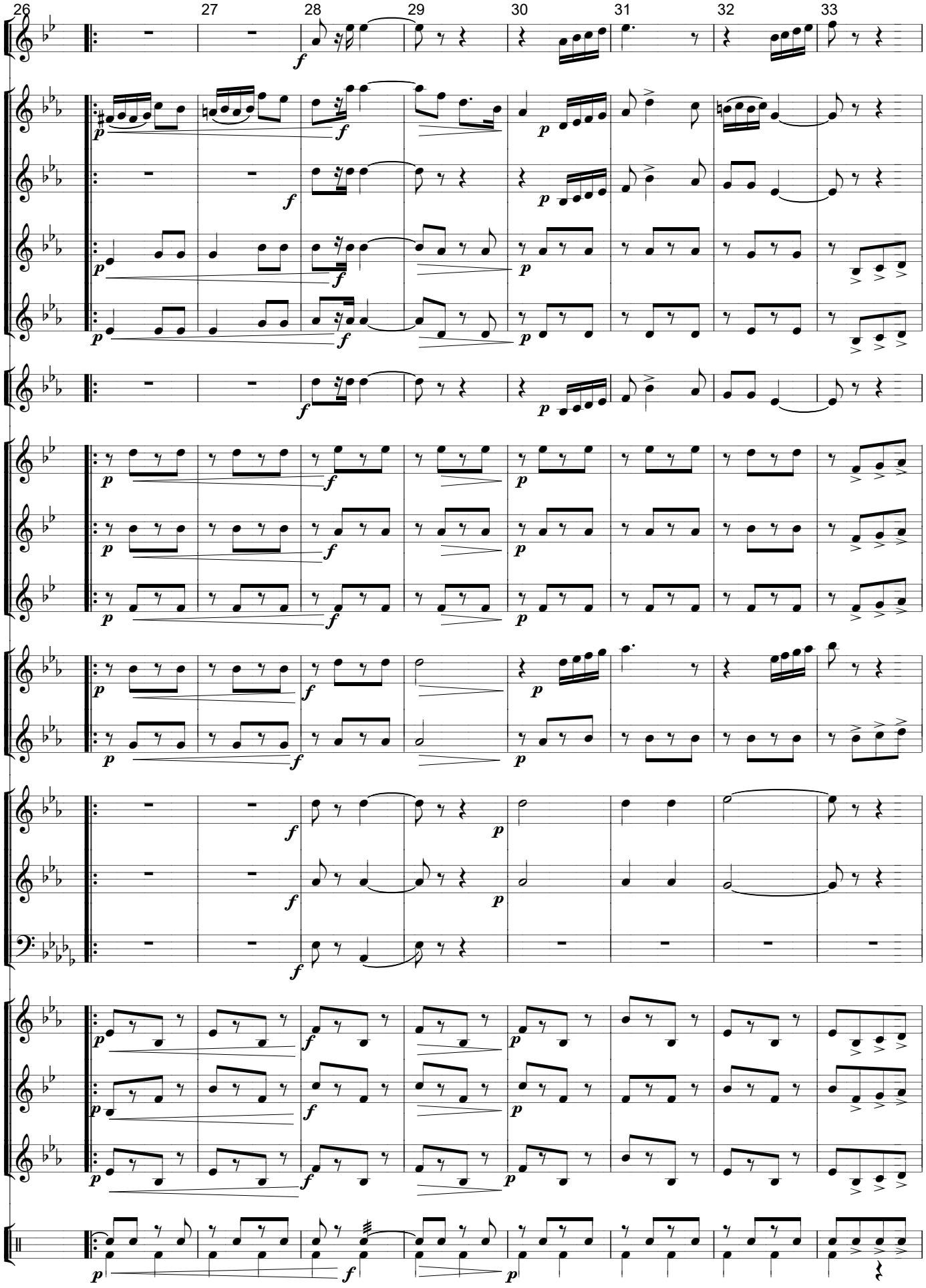
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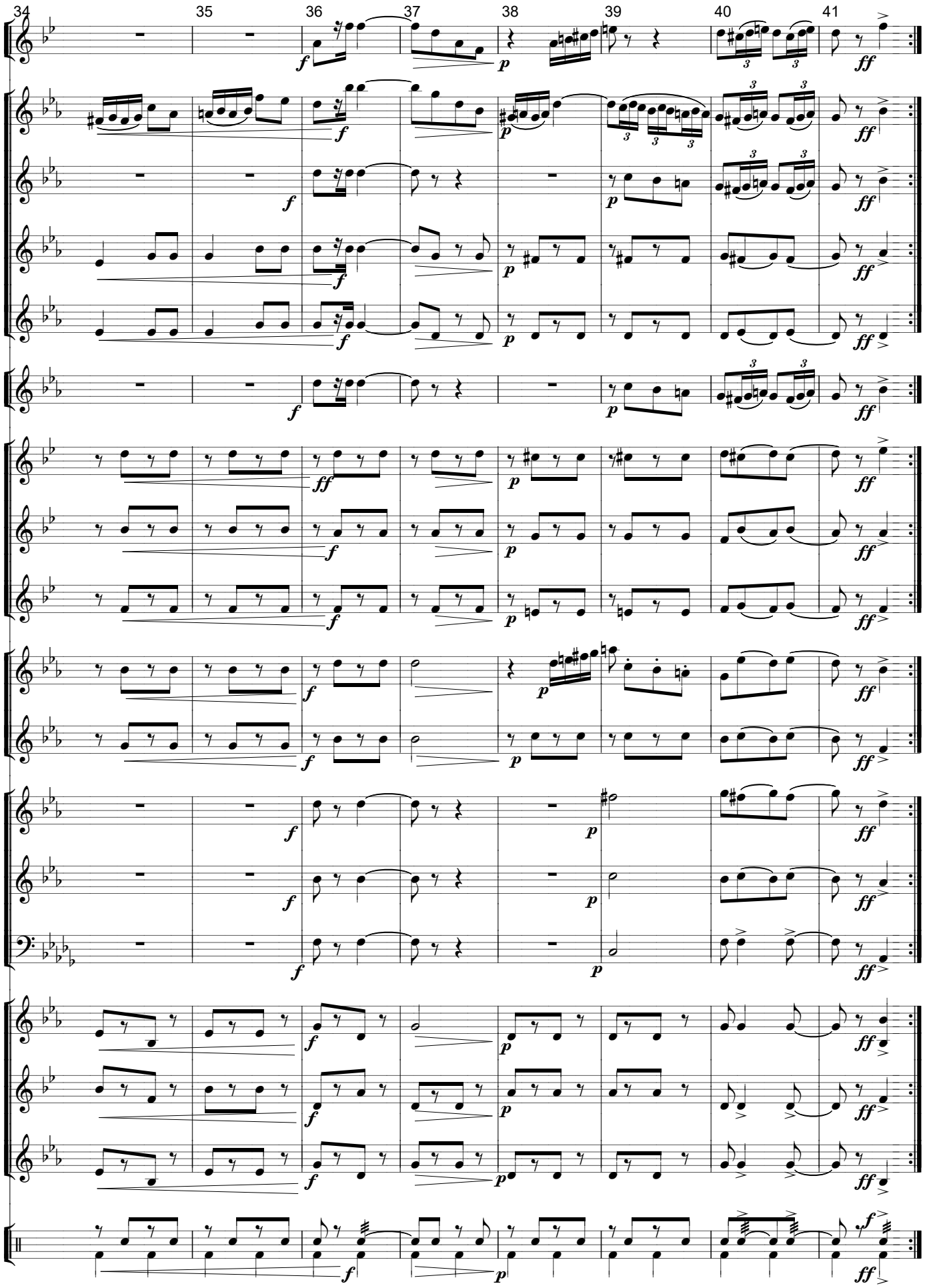
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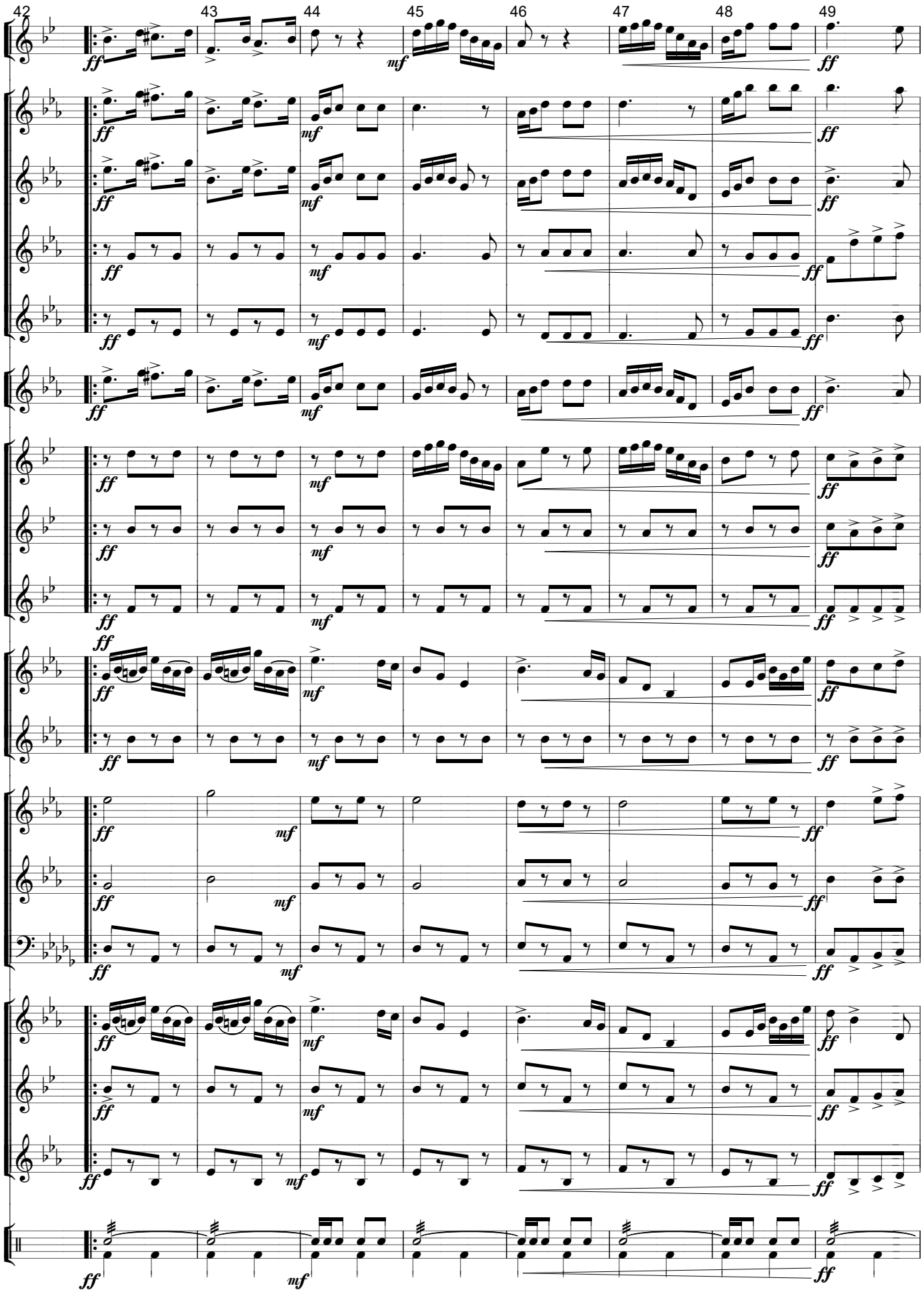
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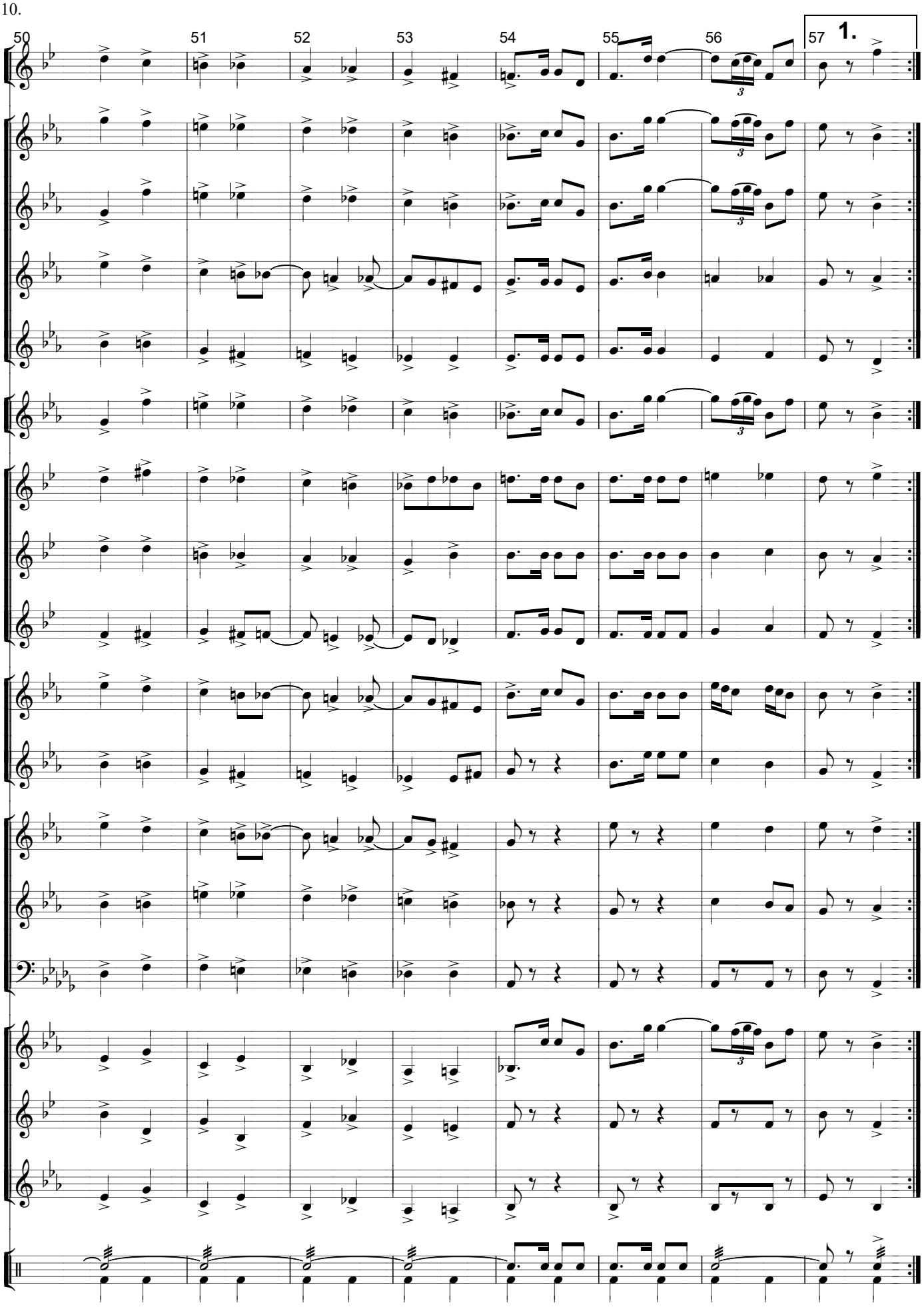
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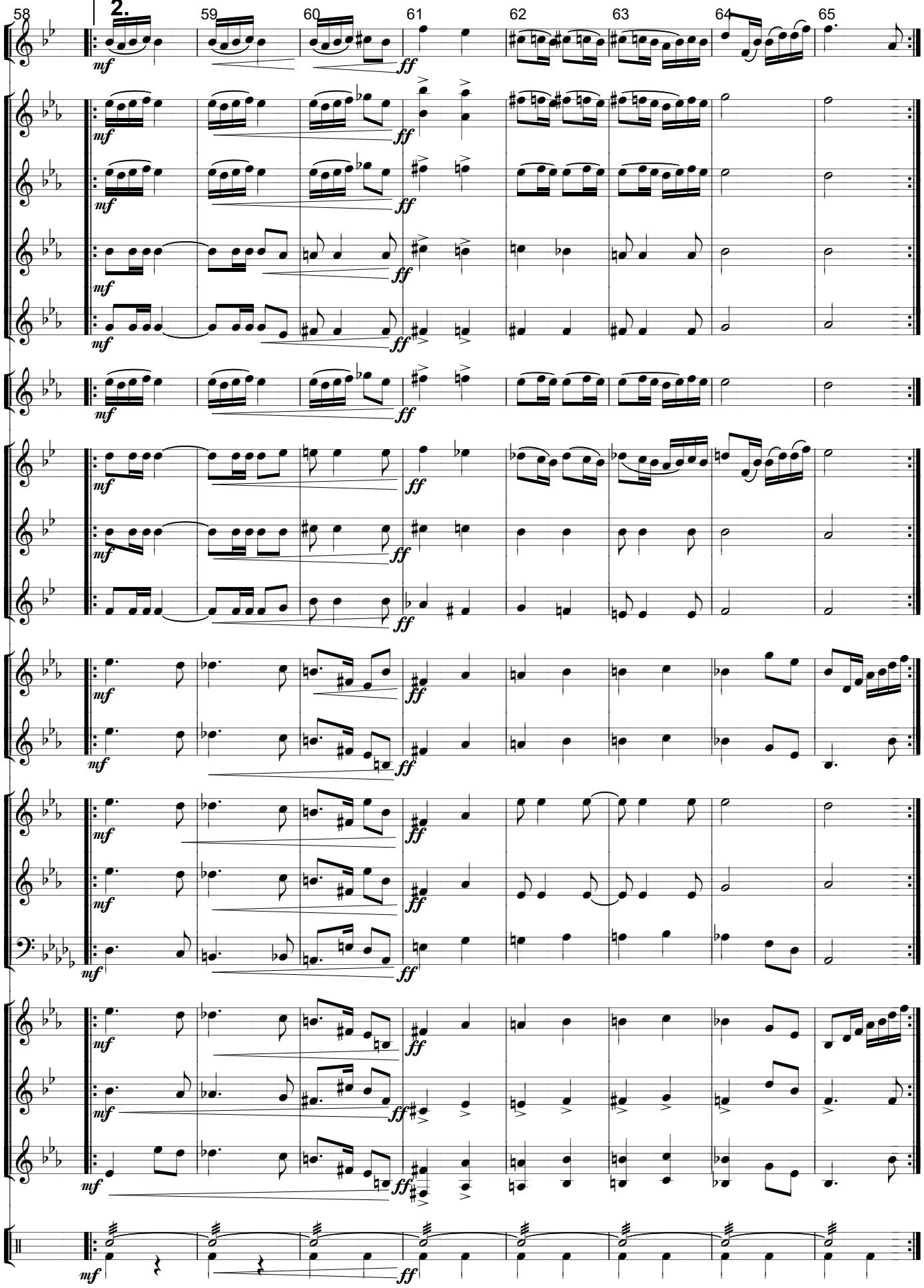
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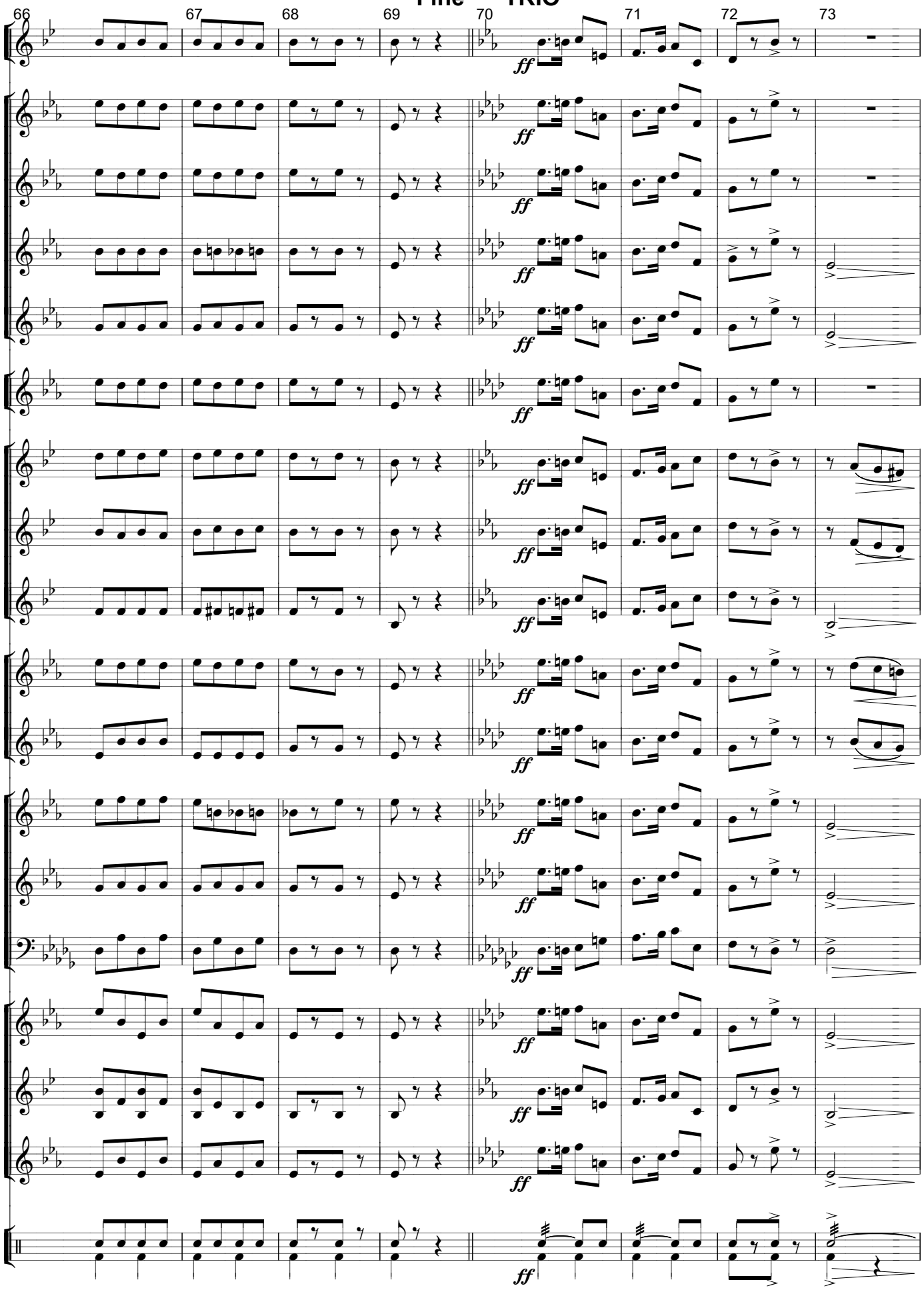
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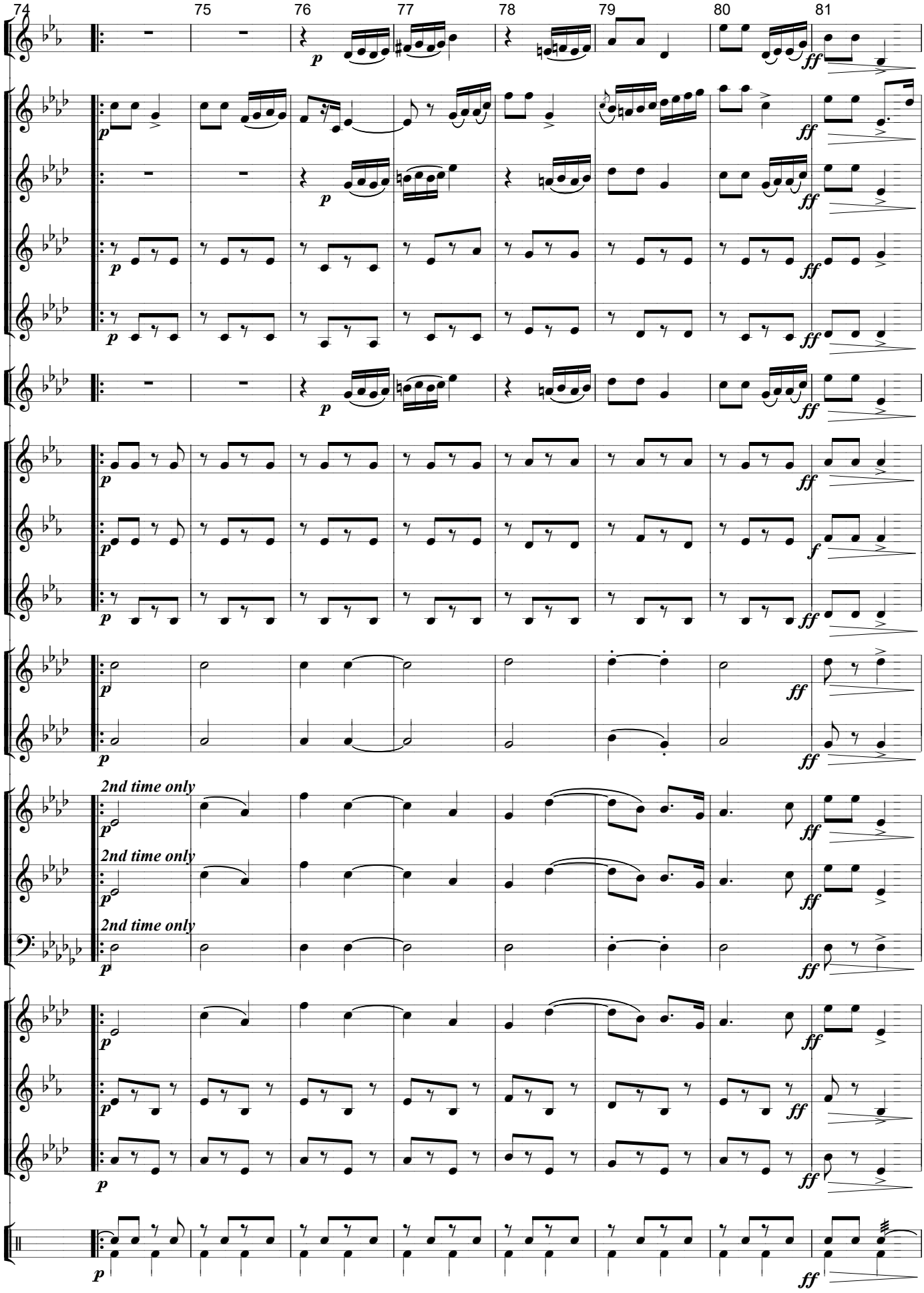
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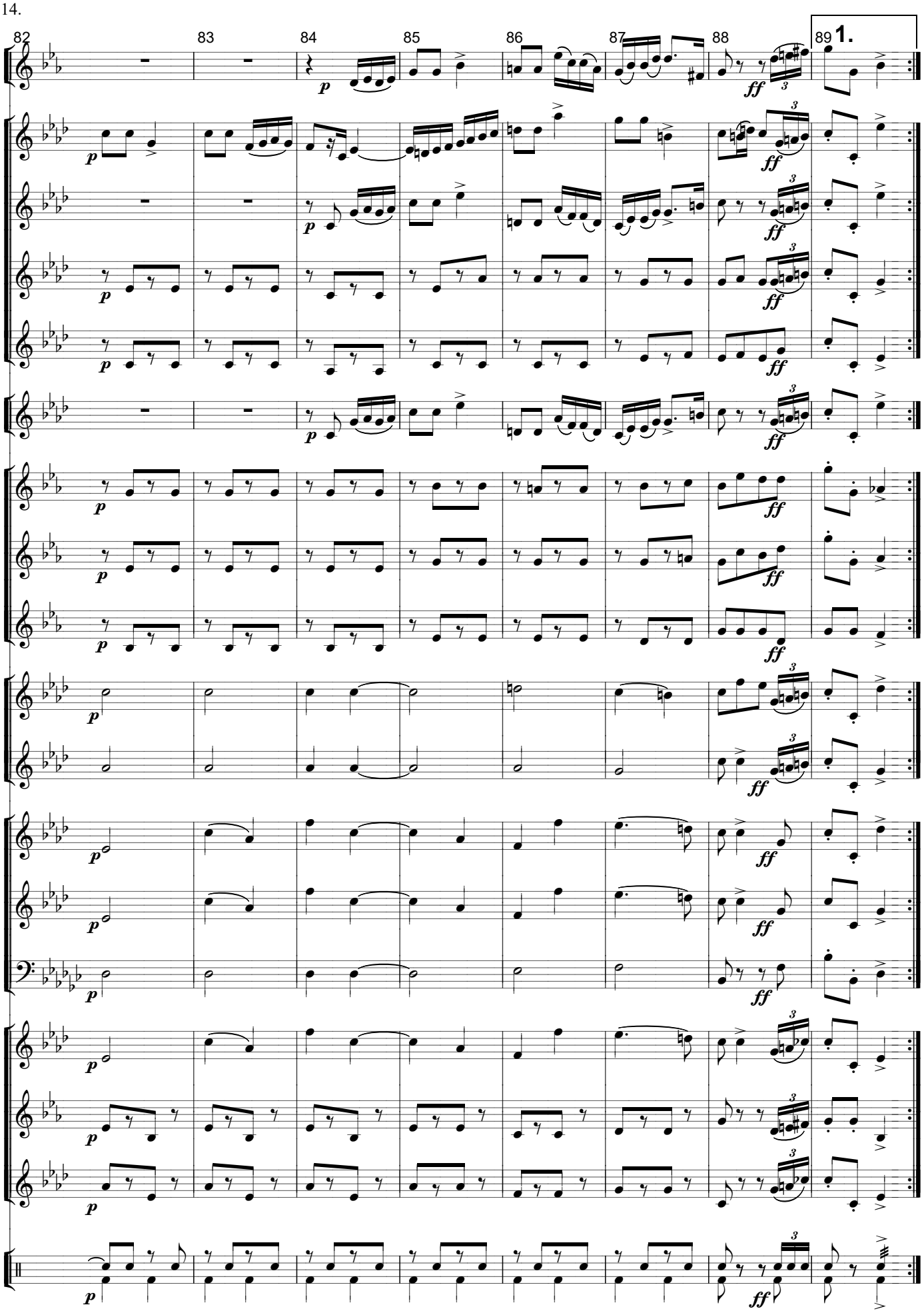
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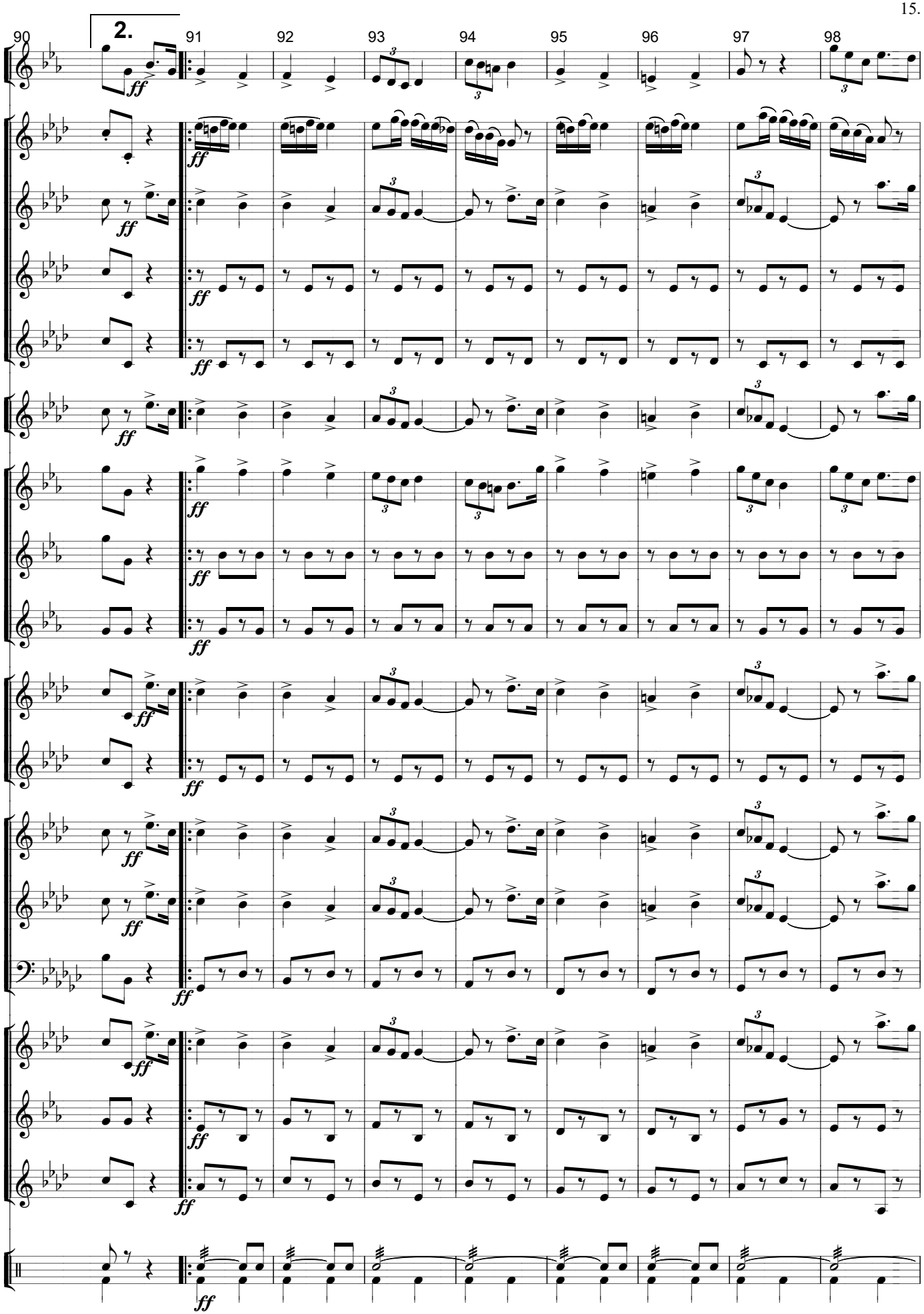
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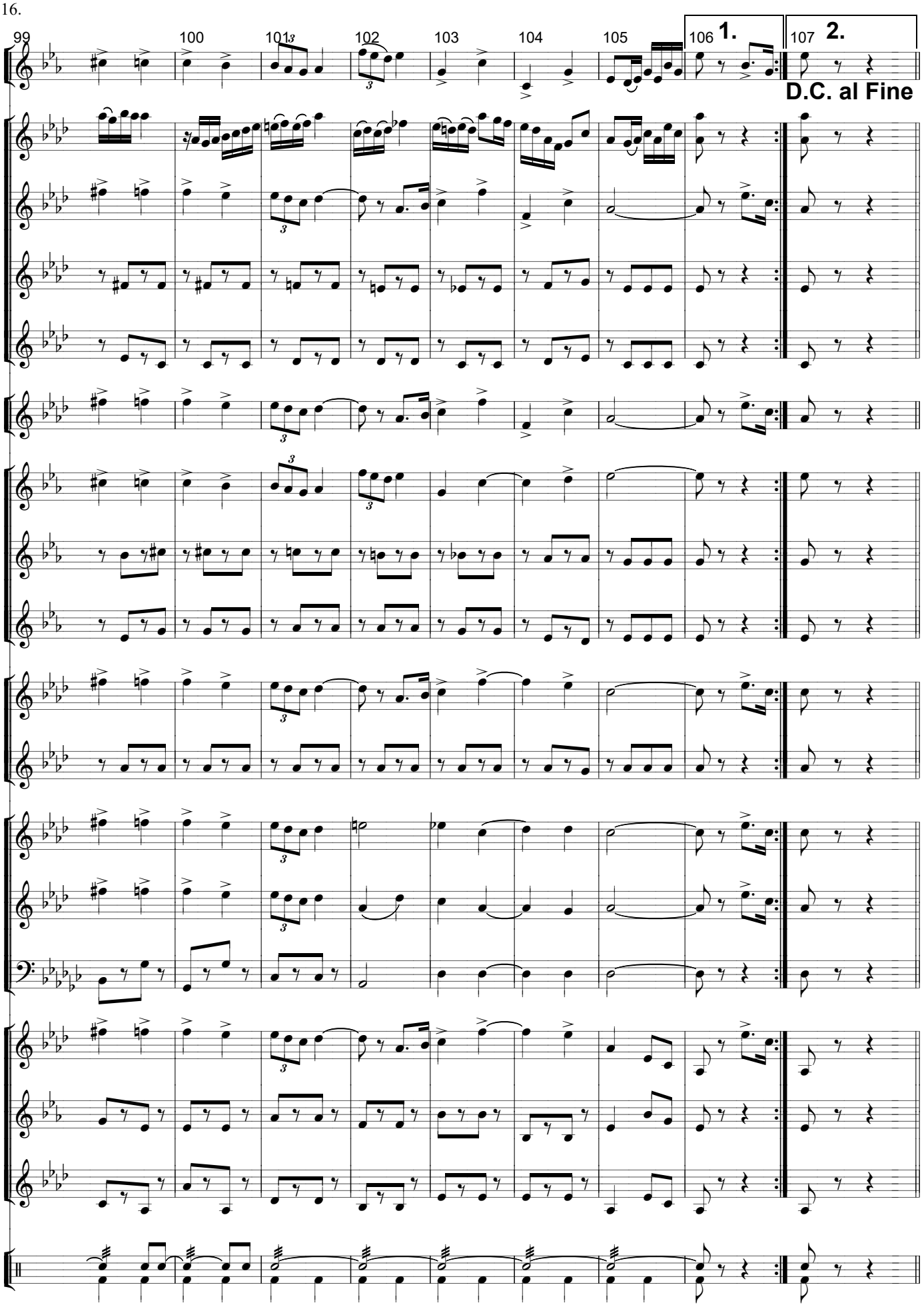
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