Grade 3

Music for String Orchestra

The Beautiful Araguaney

Joropo: Colombia and Venezuela

Mark Contreras Gómez

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INSTRUMENTATION

Violin I 8
Violin II 8
Viola 5
Cello 5
Bass 5
Percussion (Opt.) 2
Maracas, Rainstick

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Notes

The Araguaney is a bright, flowering tree that is also the national tree of Venezuela, from where this vibrant “joropo” style of song and dance originates. The natural harmonics played by violins imitate a characteristic sound of the Venezuelan and Colombia plains: the whistle, with which the people of the region communicate with each other and call animals, continuing a regional legend known as the whistler or “el silbón.” Set in A minor with traditional syncopated rhythms, this lilting piece includes optional percussion for an authentic sound.

About the Composer

Mark Contreras is a violinist, arranger, composer, and pedagogue. His works have been published in Spain, the United States, and Latin America under the signature of prestigious music publishers. Most of his publications focus on the practical initiation and learning of different instruments, including violin, guitar, viola or cello. In these methodologies one can feel the importance of work and practice, the result of more than 20 years of experience as a member of the Venezuelan youth orchestra program, known worldwide as “El Sistema.”

Contreras obtained the title of Superior Violin Professor with the highest qualifications at the Juan José Landaeta National Conservatory in Venezuela. He was a regular member of the Caracas Municipal Symphony Orchestra, where he shared the stage with the most prestigious conductors and soloists in the world. In Spain, obtained a degree in Pedagogy at the National University of Distance Education. He is currently dedicated to teaching full time, an activity he combines with concerts, recordings and the production of new materials.

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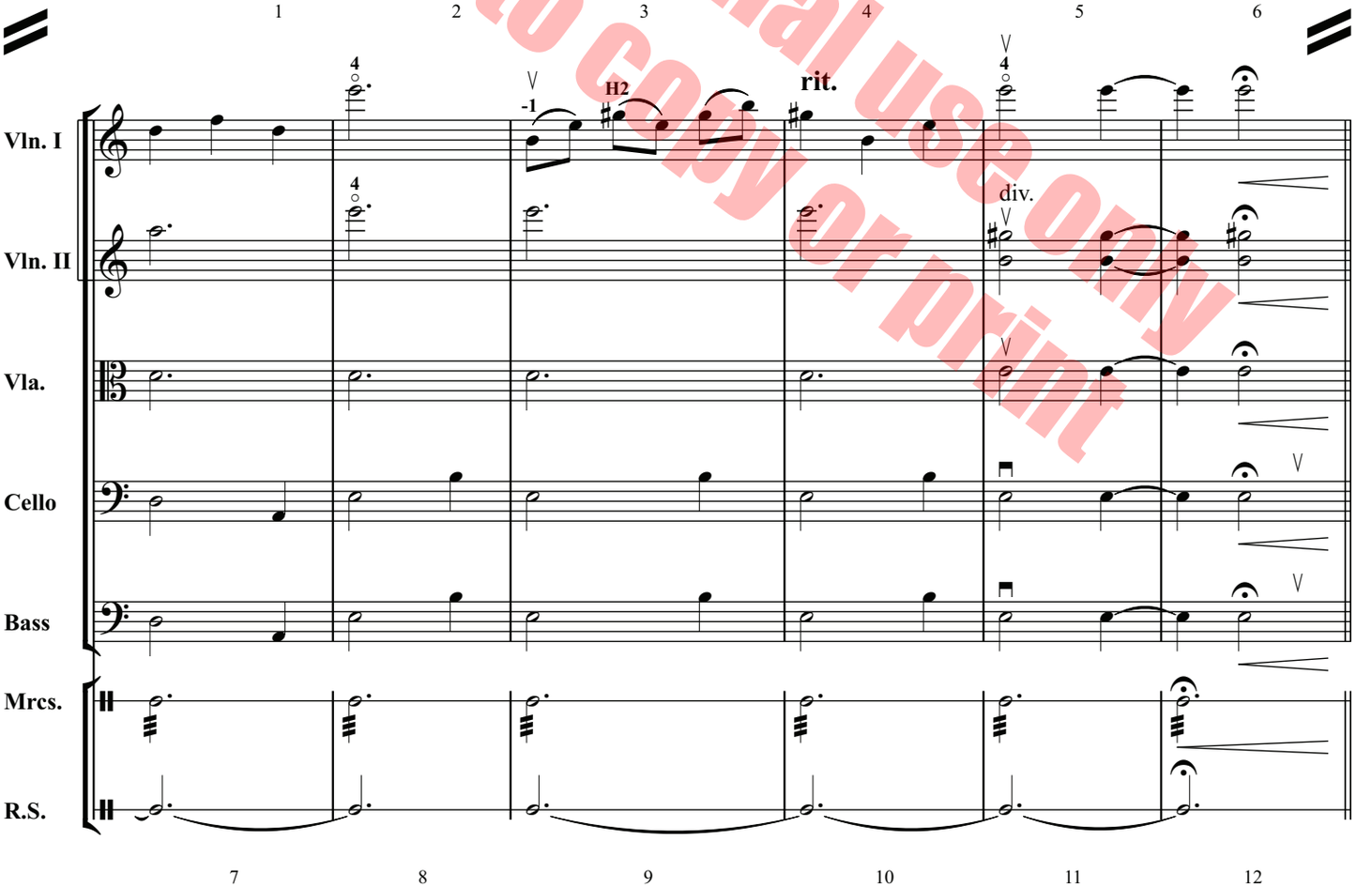
The Beautiful Araguaney

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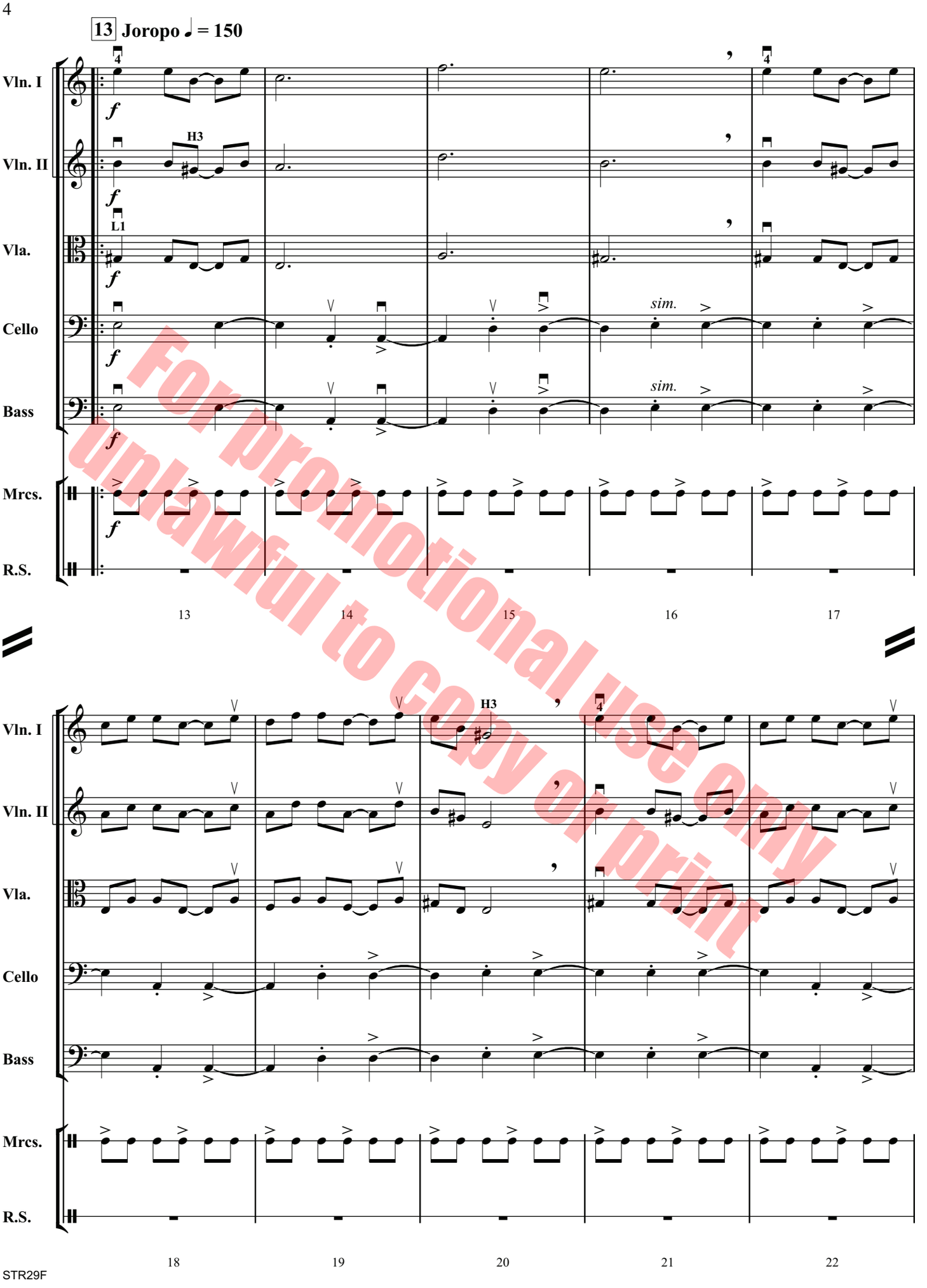
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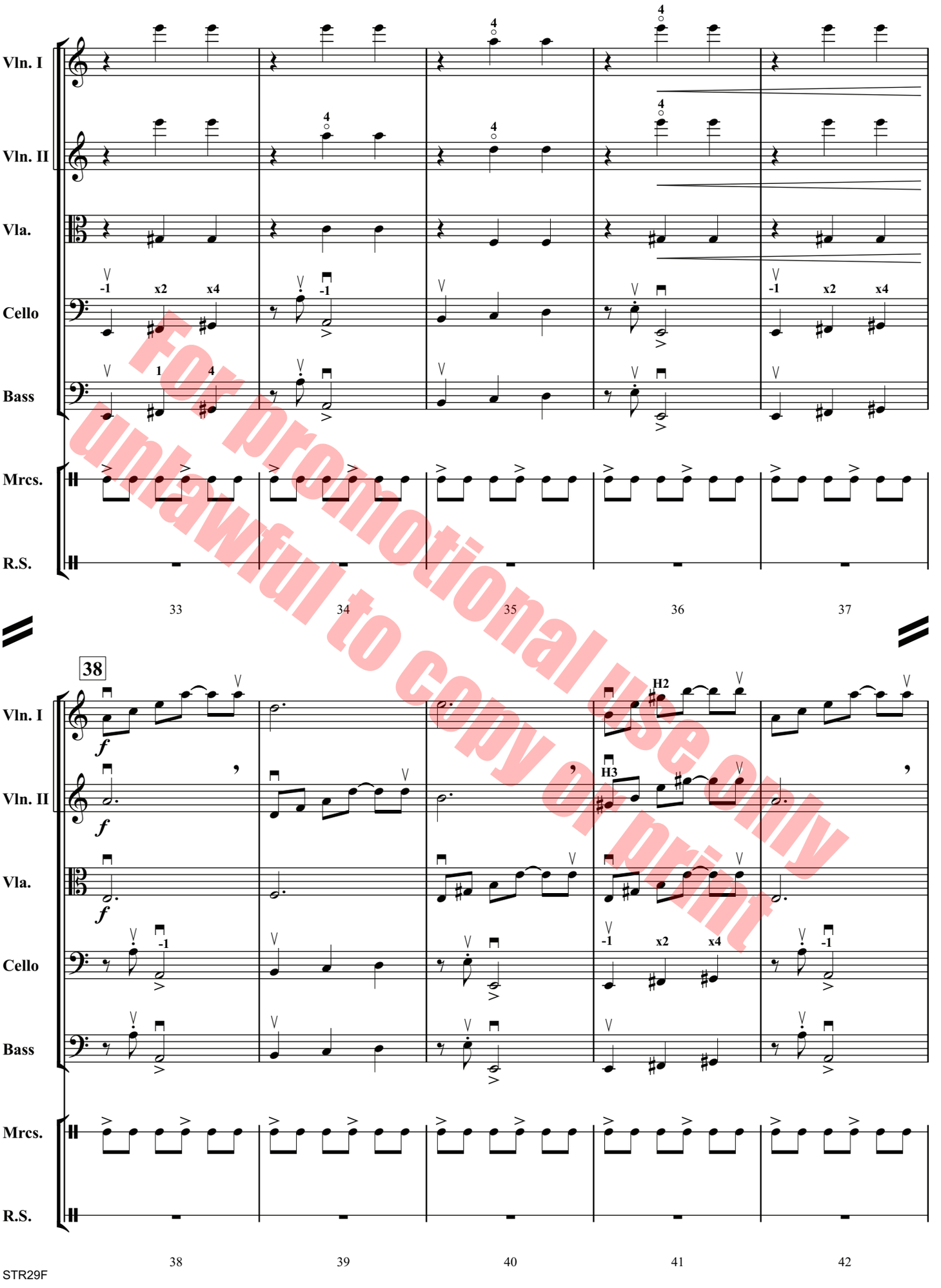




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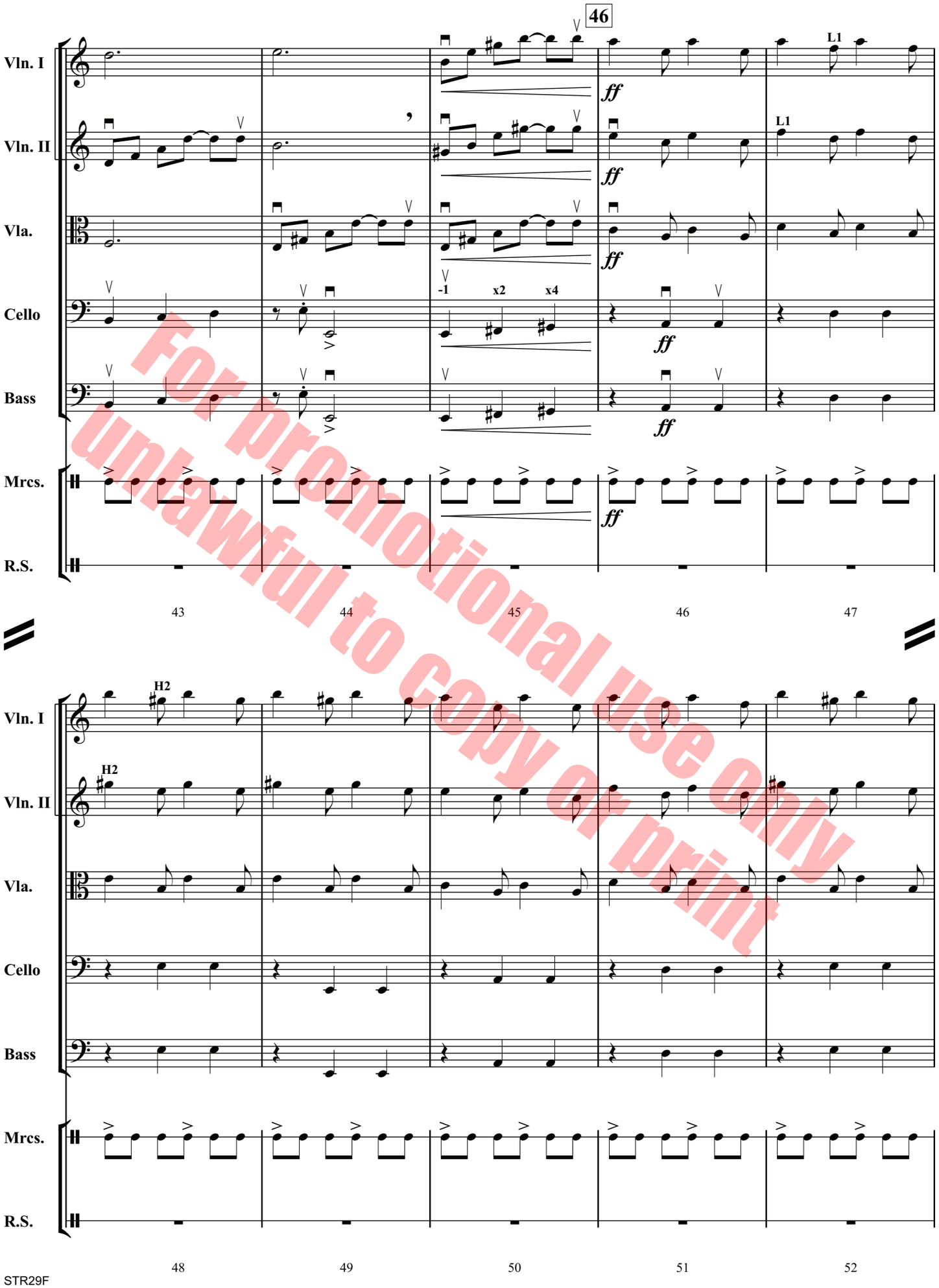
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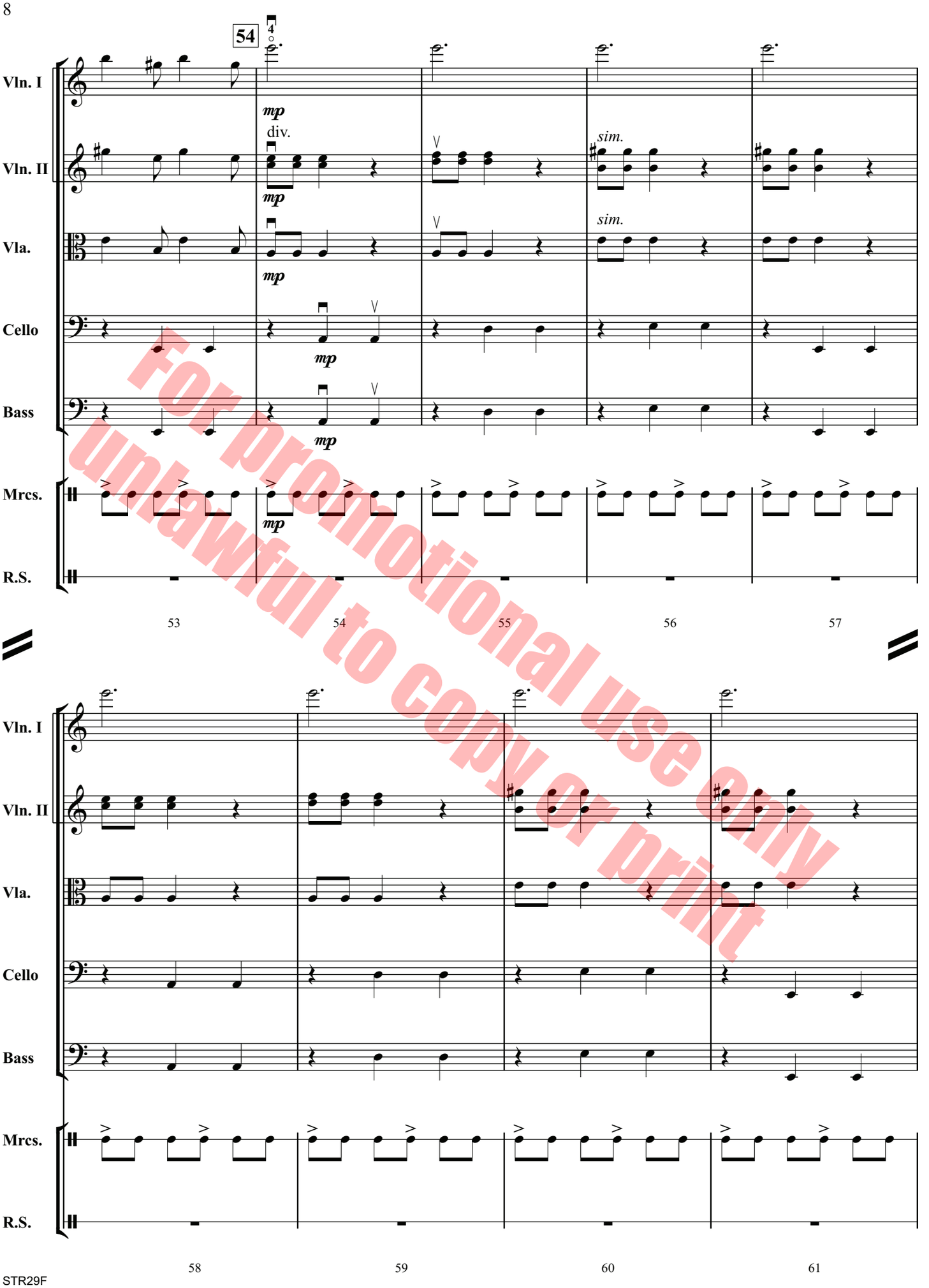


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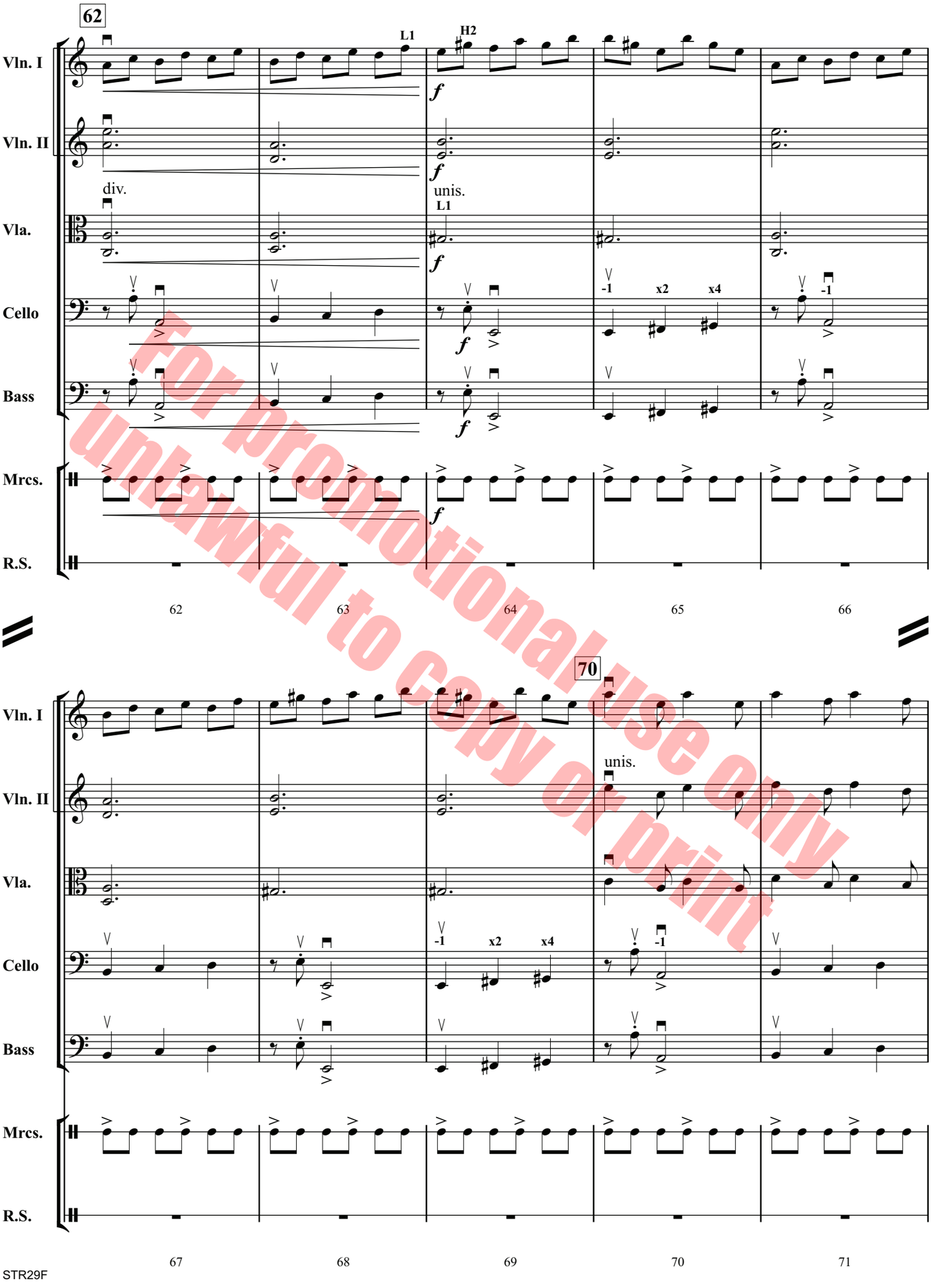


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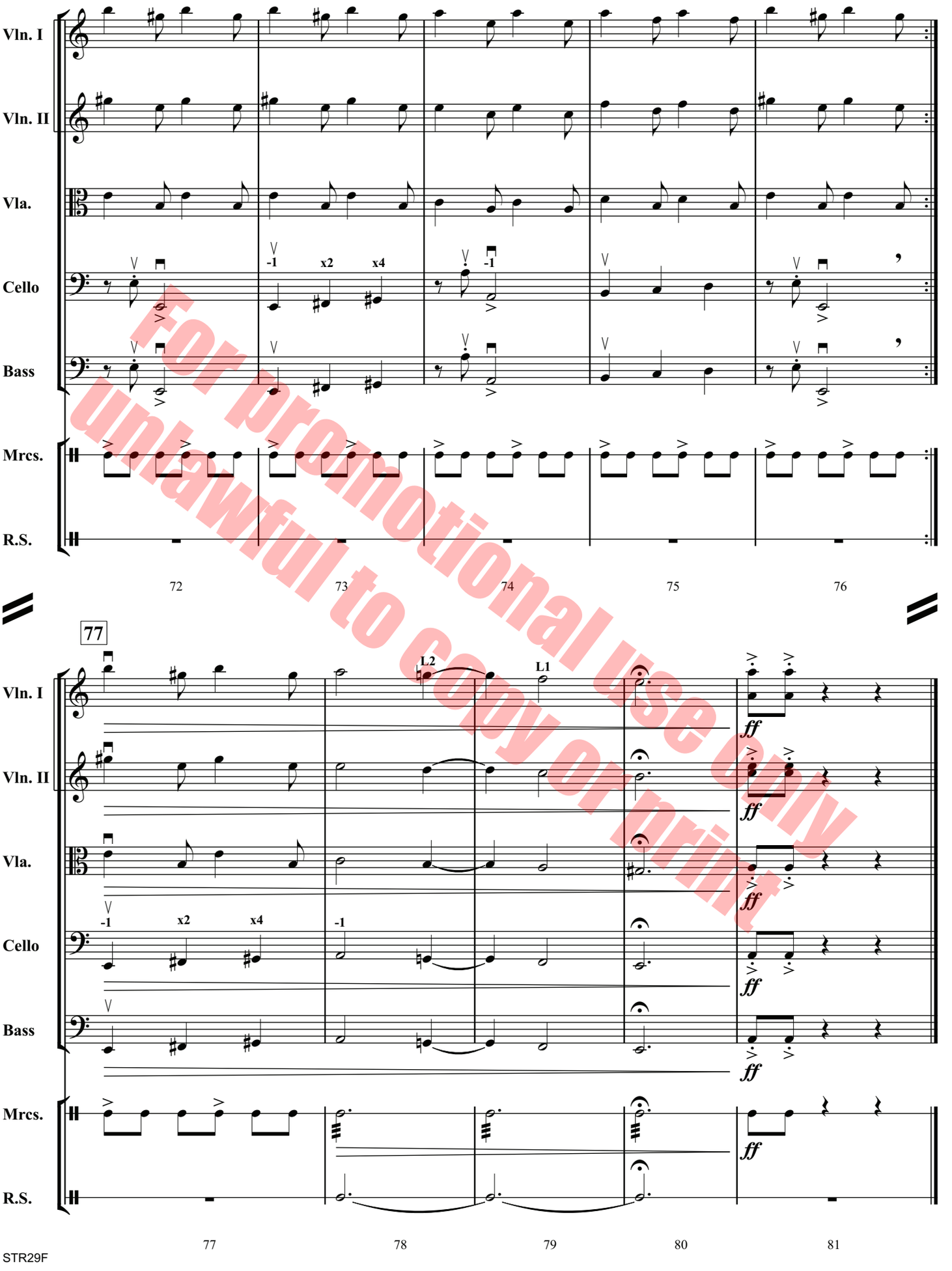


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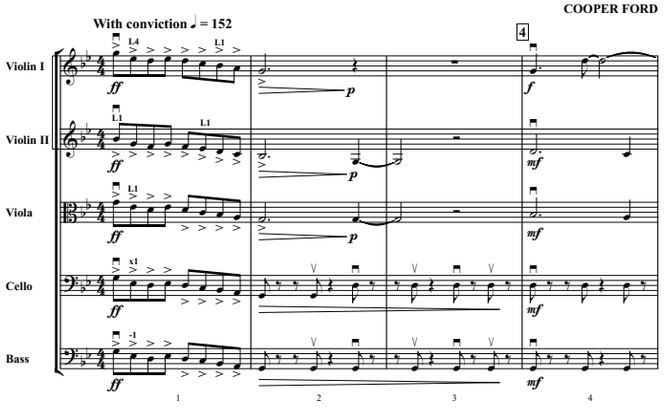
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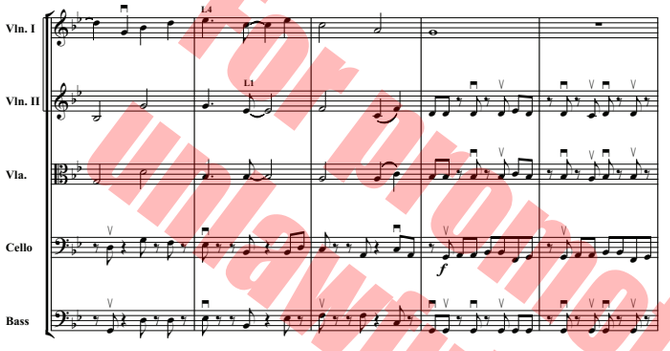
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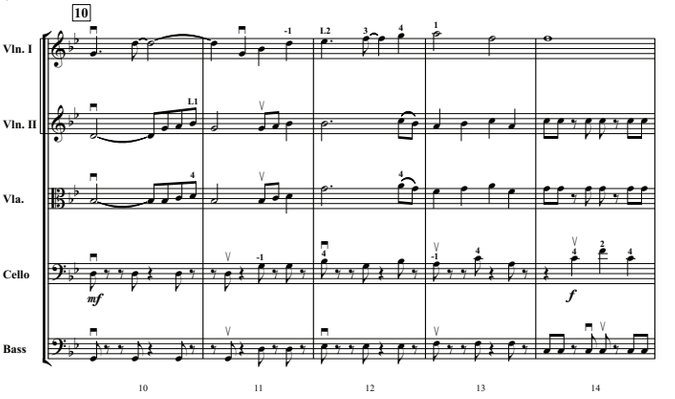
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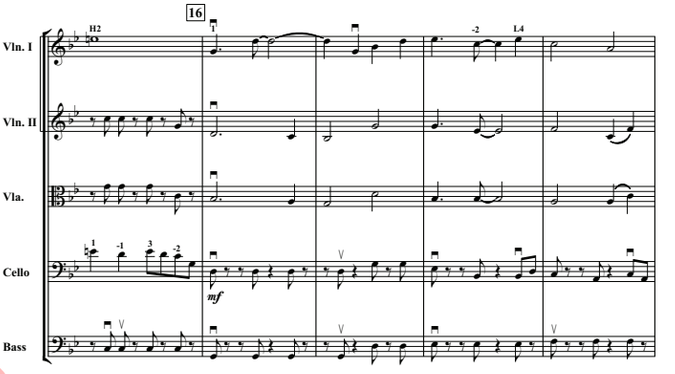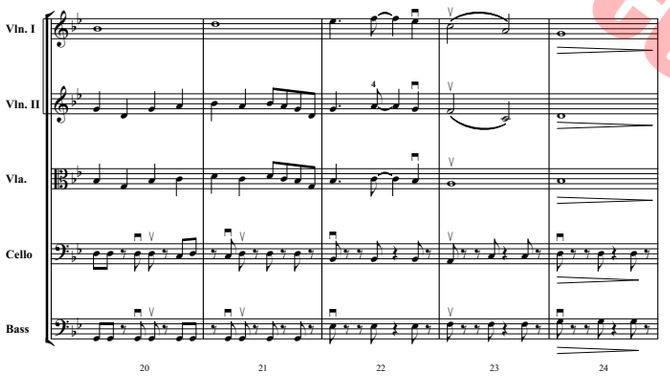




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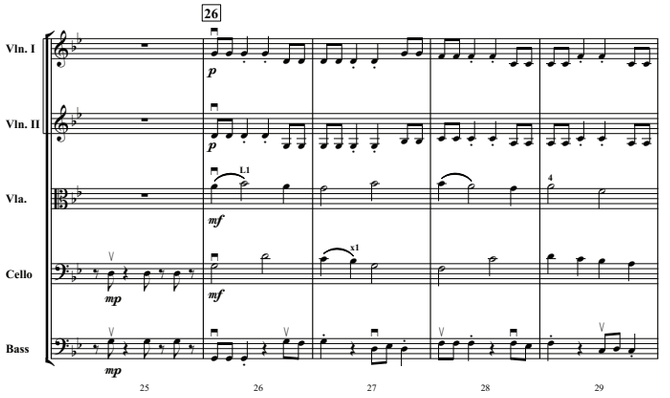
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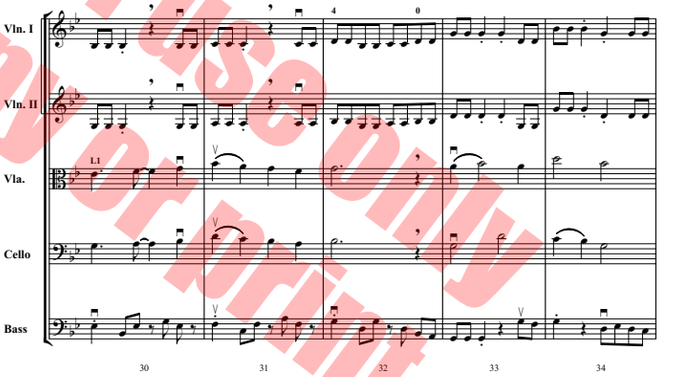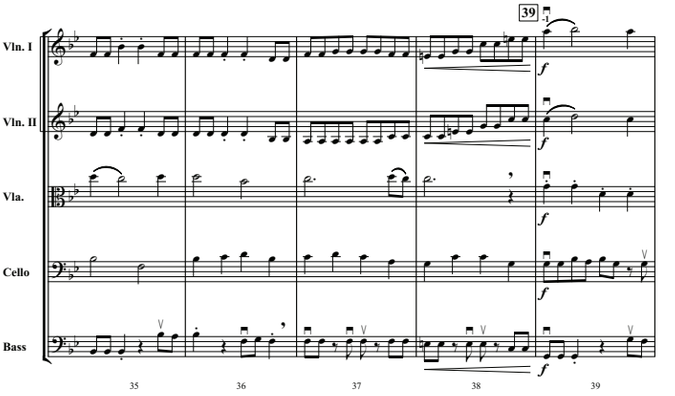




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Music for String Orchestra

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