Sculpted in Smoke

for string orchestra and harp

Kevin Poelking

Perusal Score- Not for Performance

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMPOSER

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Kevin Poelking
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Personal Score - Not for Performance

Sculpted in Smoke

String Orchestra and Harp
Duration: ca. 6 min
(2026)

Program Notes

Having conquered clay, stone, and wood, a confident sculptor sets out to master the impossible medium of smoke.

The sculptor (represented by the orchestra) begins by moving in practiced ways, but the smoke (represented by the harp) doesn't react like the familiar materials. Repeated swipes and grasps at the unruly wisps only cause them to dance more wildly.

In a frustrated attempt to force the smoke into a defined shape, the sculptor violently traps it between both hands. A moment of quiet gives the false hope that the smoke has finally yielded, before it mockingly seeps from between the fingers, wandering aimlessly back to the air above.

Defeated, the sculptor slumps into a chair in the corner of the room, watching the careless white cloud meander through the open space.

And it begins to reveal itself.

Graceful movement. Unique shapes. Subtle changes in color as it pushes and pulls apart. The sculptor begins to notice that the smoke possesses its own inherent beauty.

Tentatively, they extend a gentle hand toward the floating mass. Shaping the air with a patient delicacy, more forms begin to emerge. It seems that simply allowing the smoke to move in its natural state reveals its greatest beauty.

The smoke eventually dissipates, as is its nature. The sculptor has nothing to place in a gallery. Nothing for others to marvel at.

But through this dialogue, the sculptor experiences a fleeting moment of beauty that remains with them forever.

The sculptor changes because the smoke is allowed to be.

Commissioned by

The Clements High School Orchestra

Neal Springer | Sally Kirk | Stephanie Gustafson
Director | Director | Harp Specialist

KPmusic
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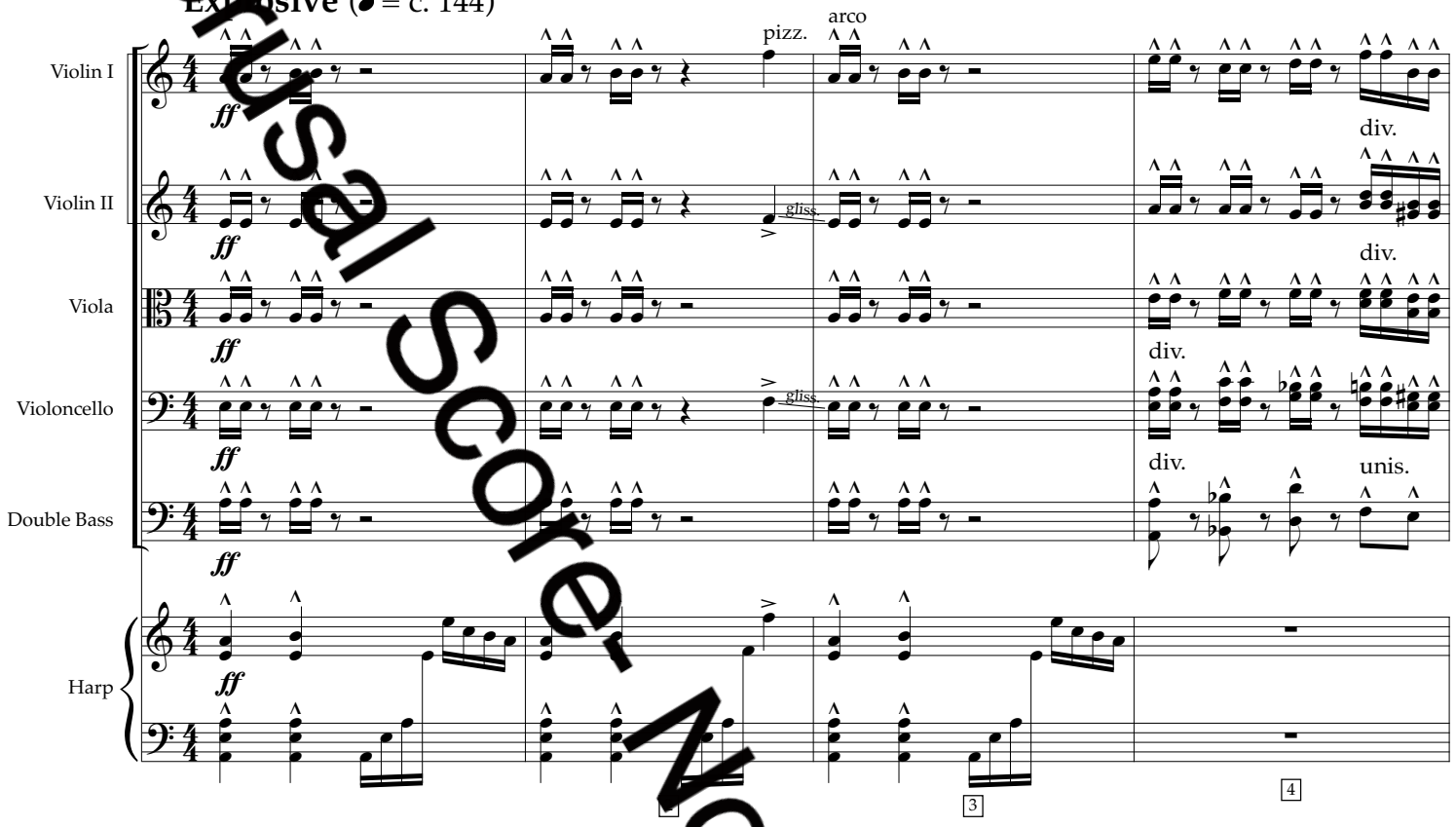
Perusal Score- Not for Performance

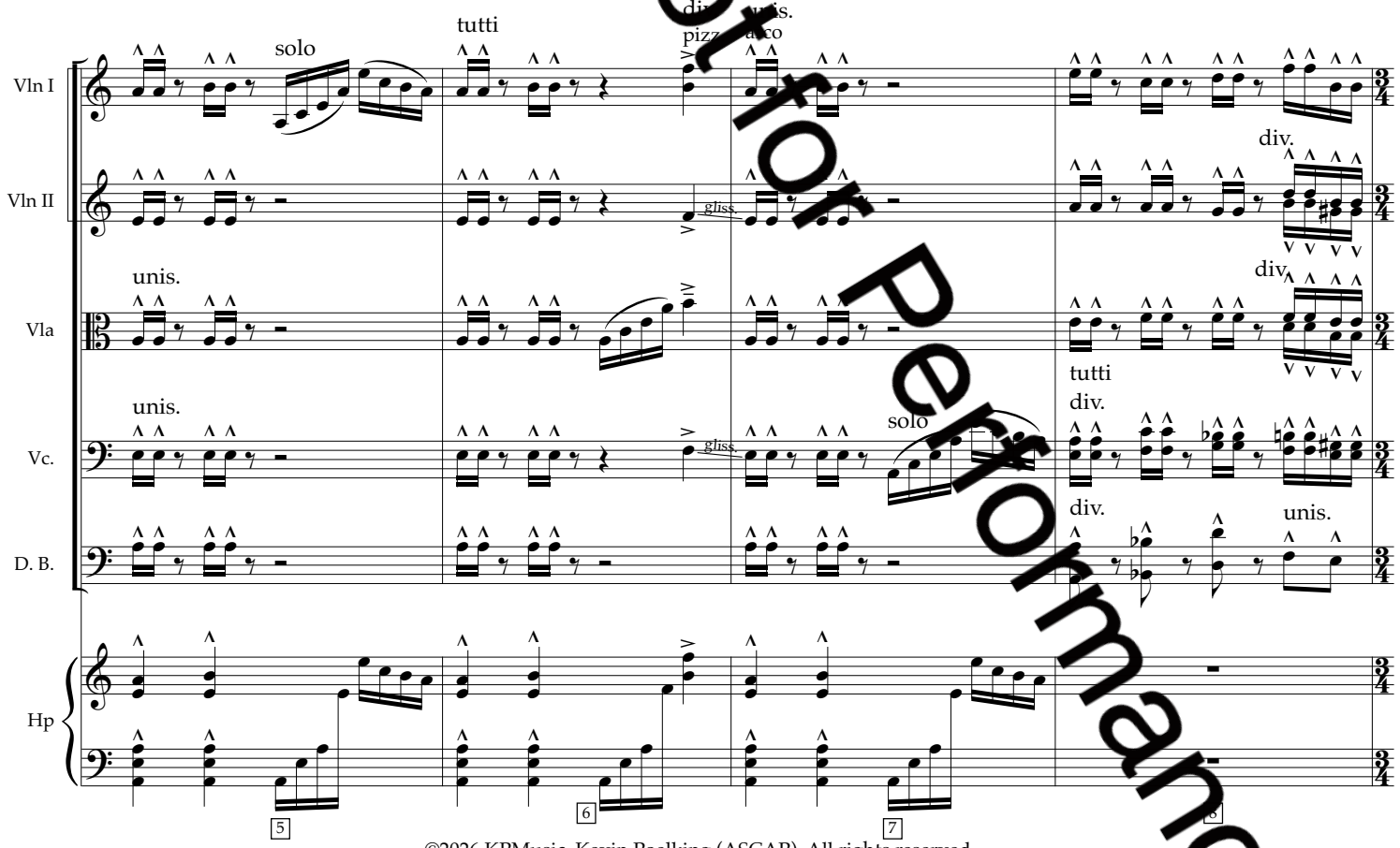
Sculpted in Smoke

FOR STRING ORCHESTRA AND HARP

Kevin Poelking

Explosive (♩ = c. 144)





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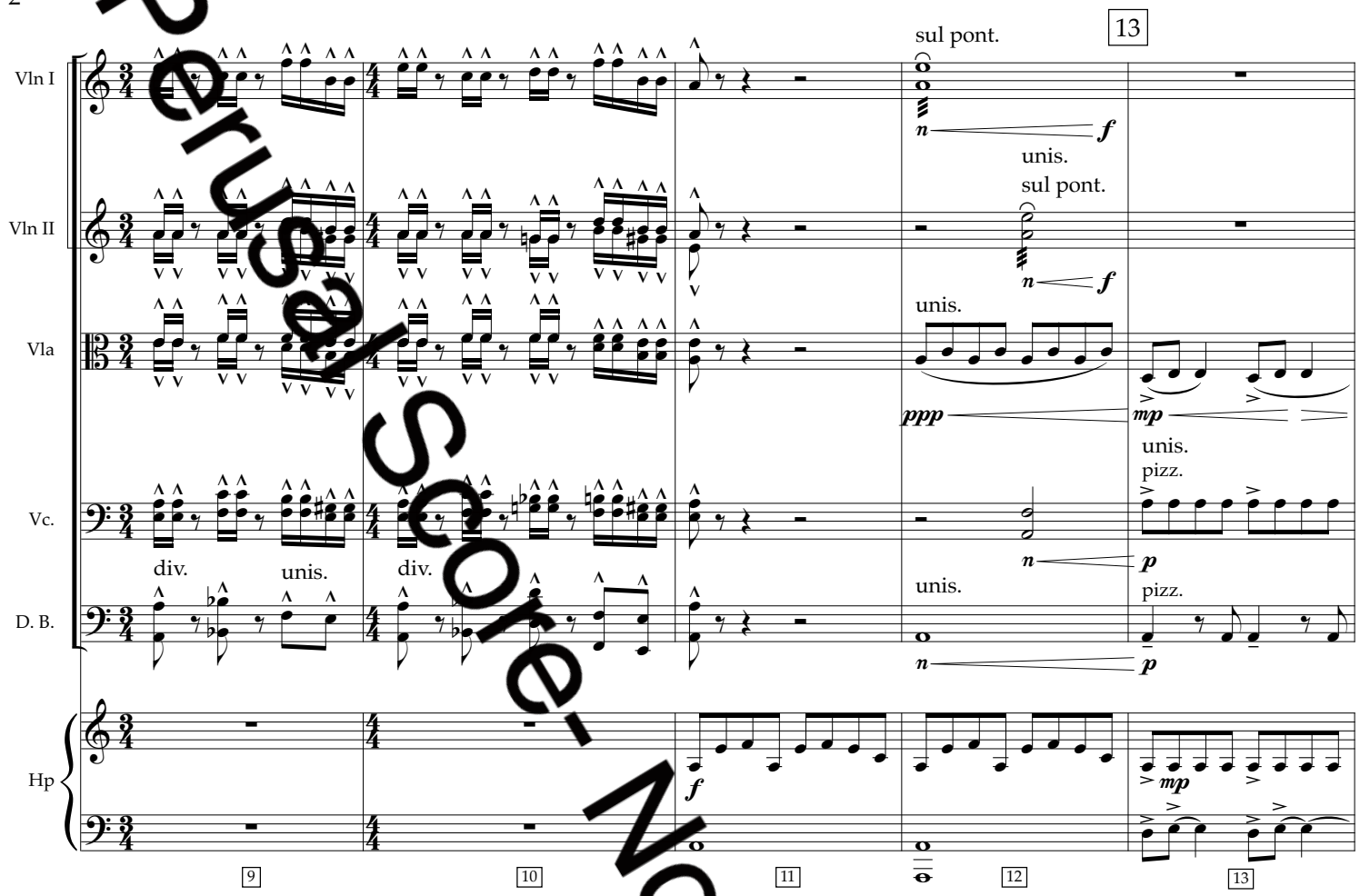

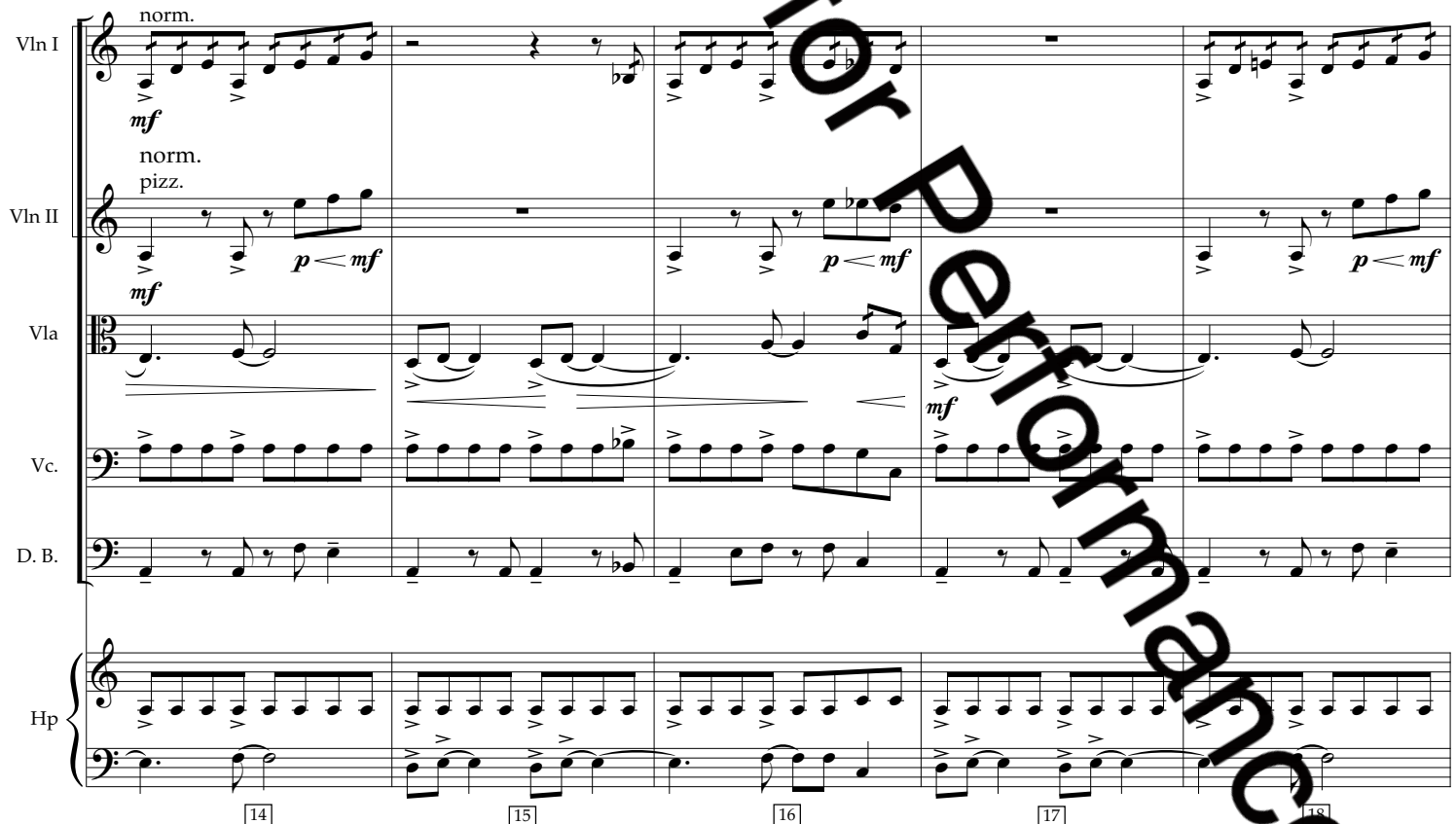

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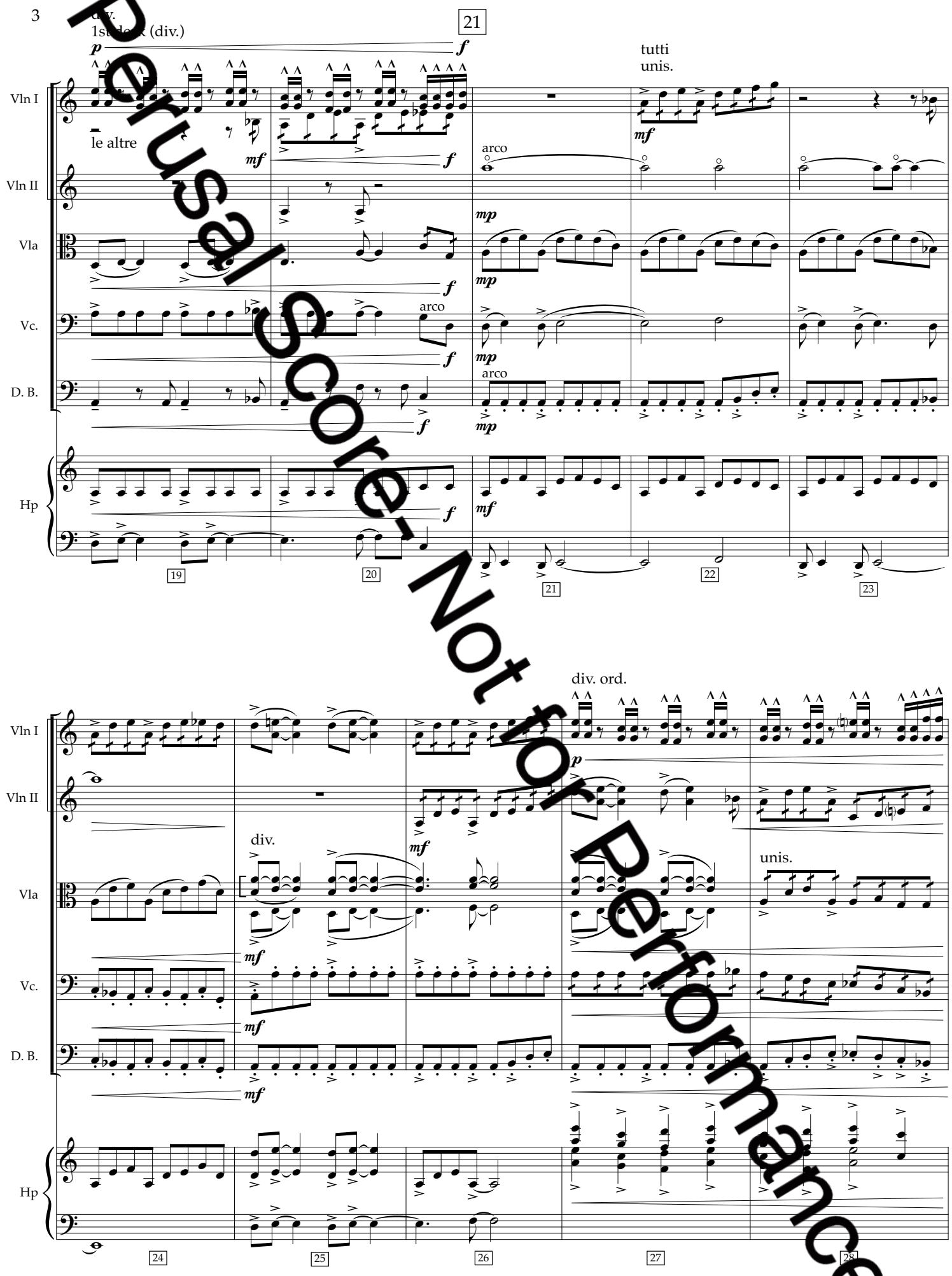

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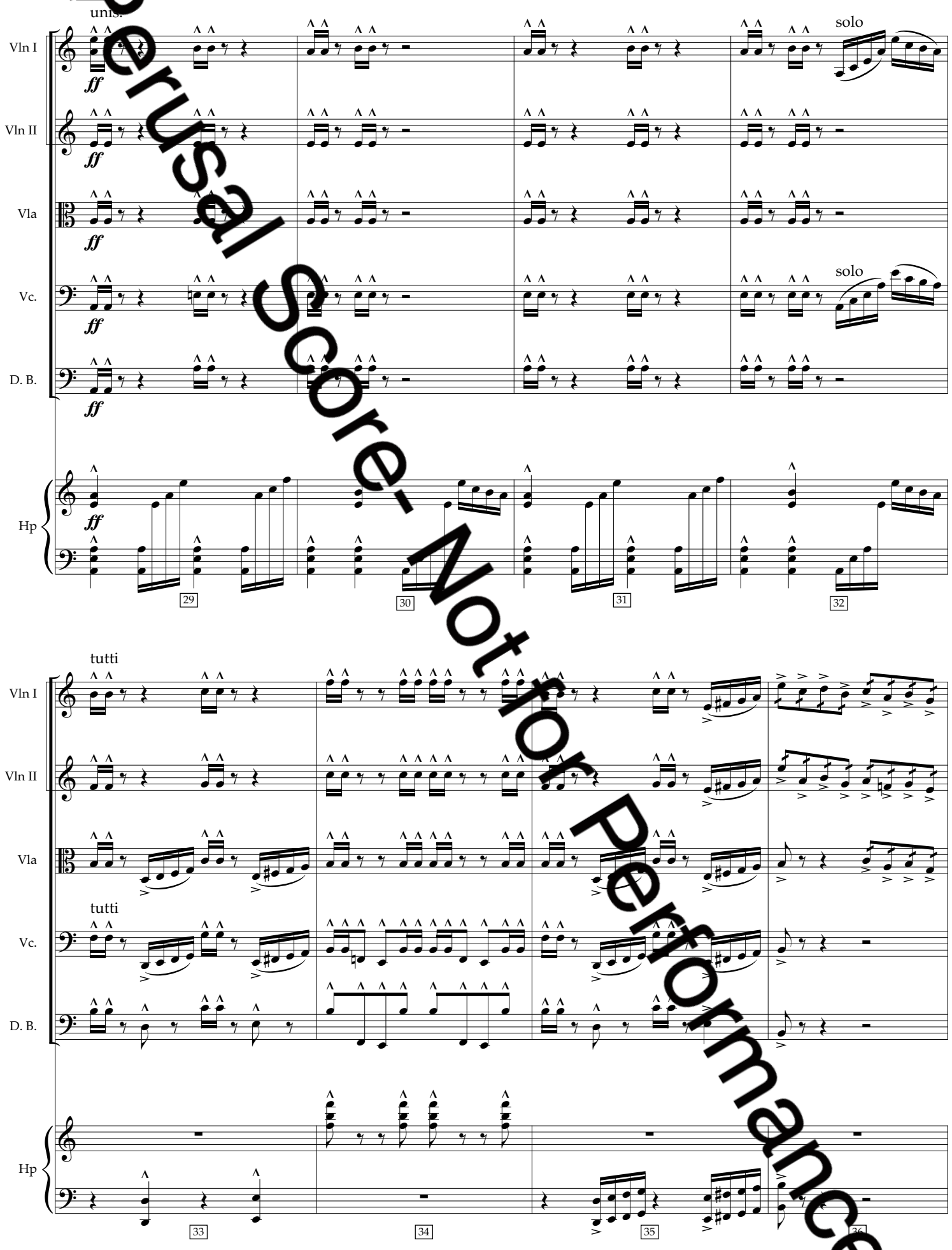

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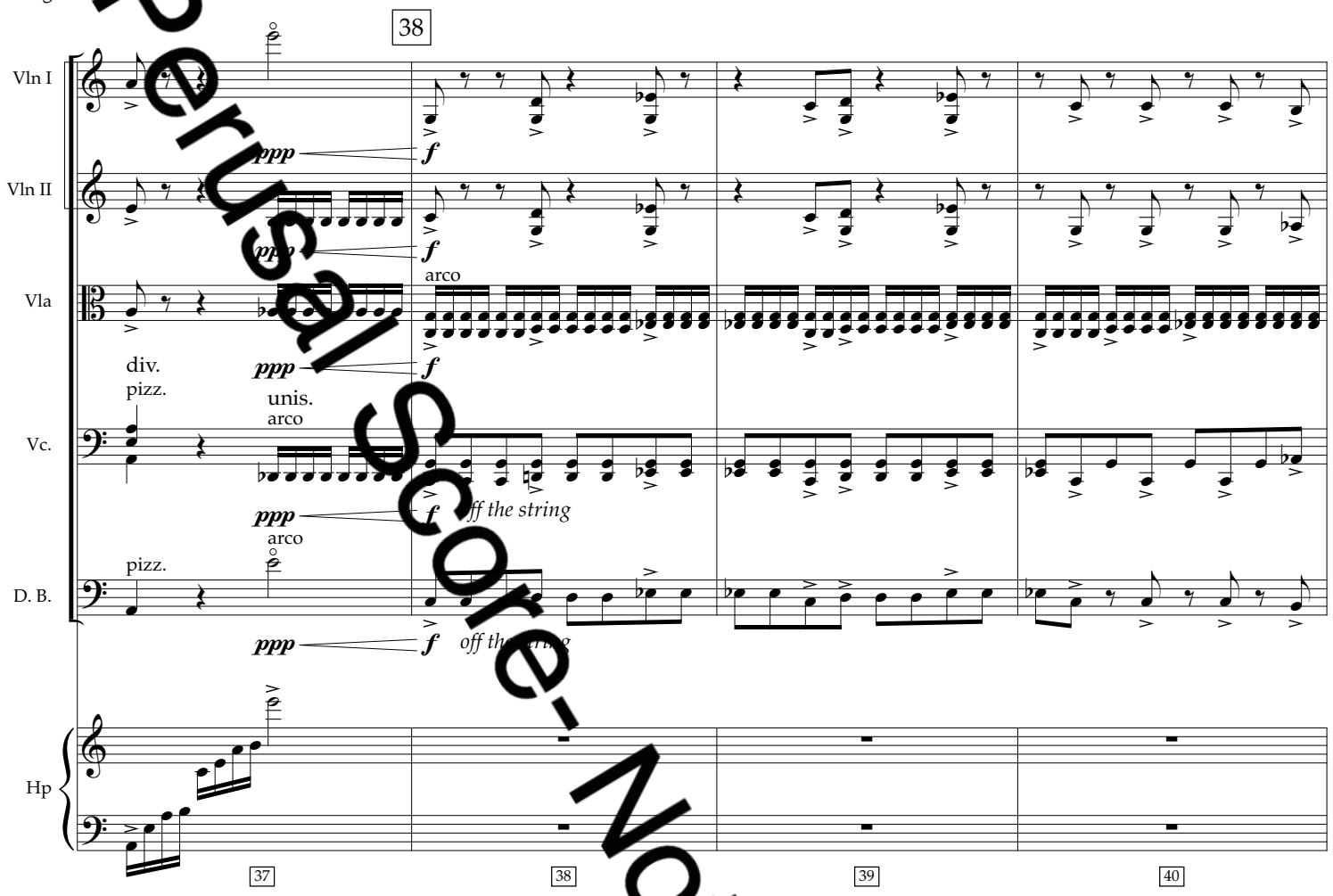

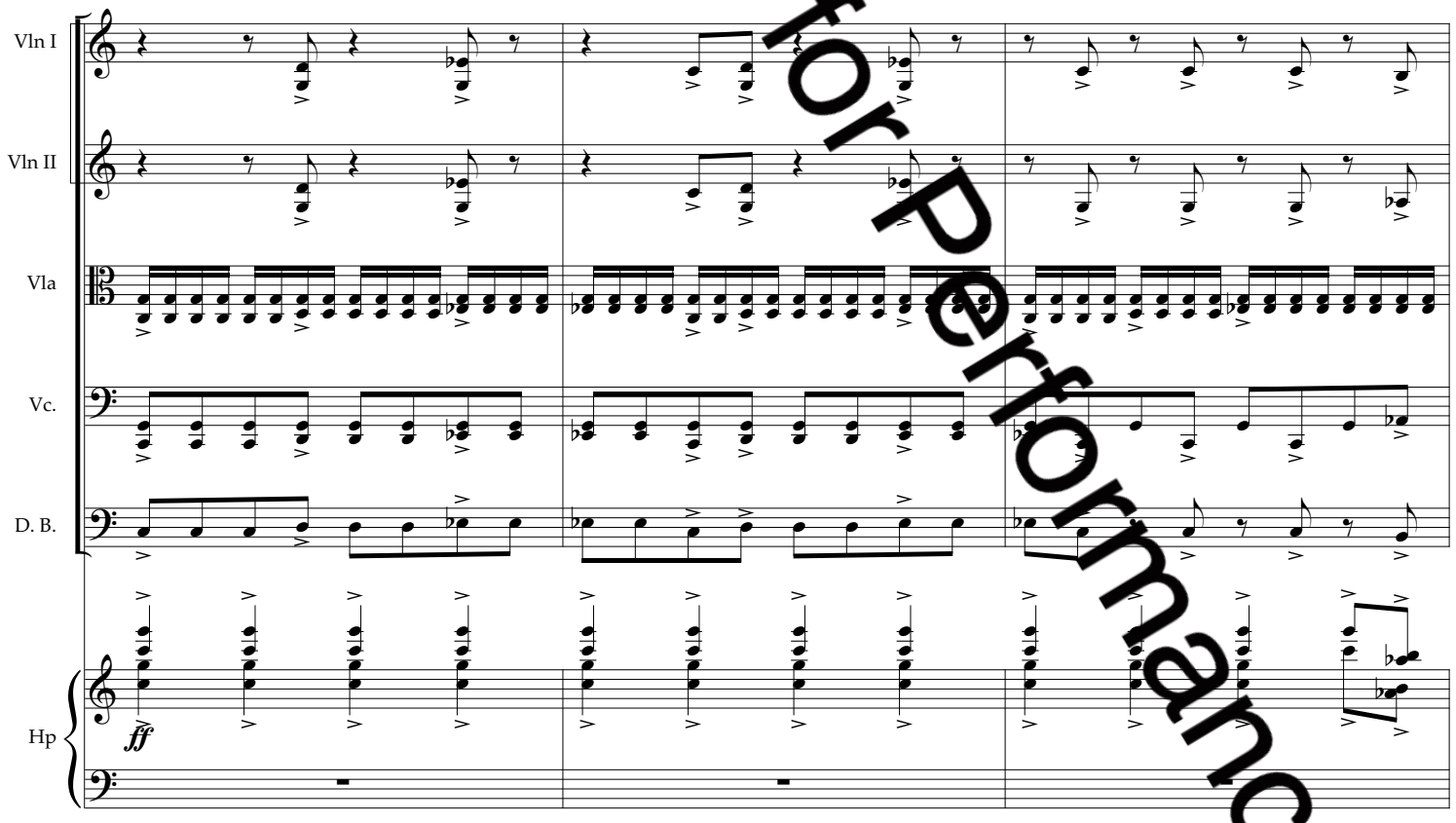

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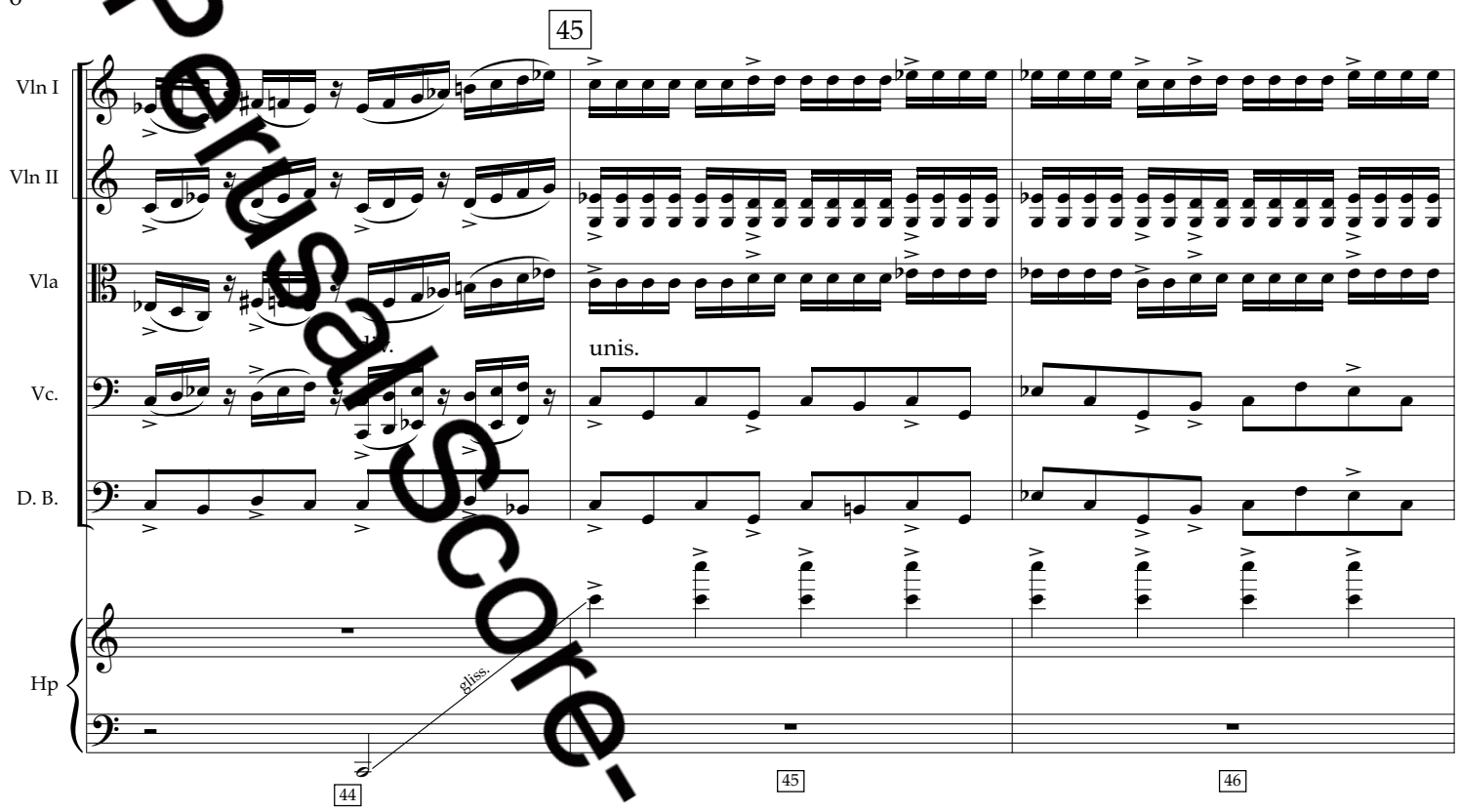

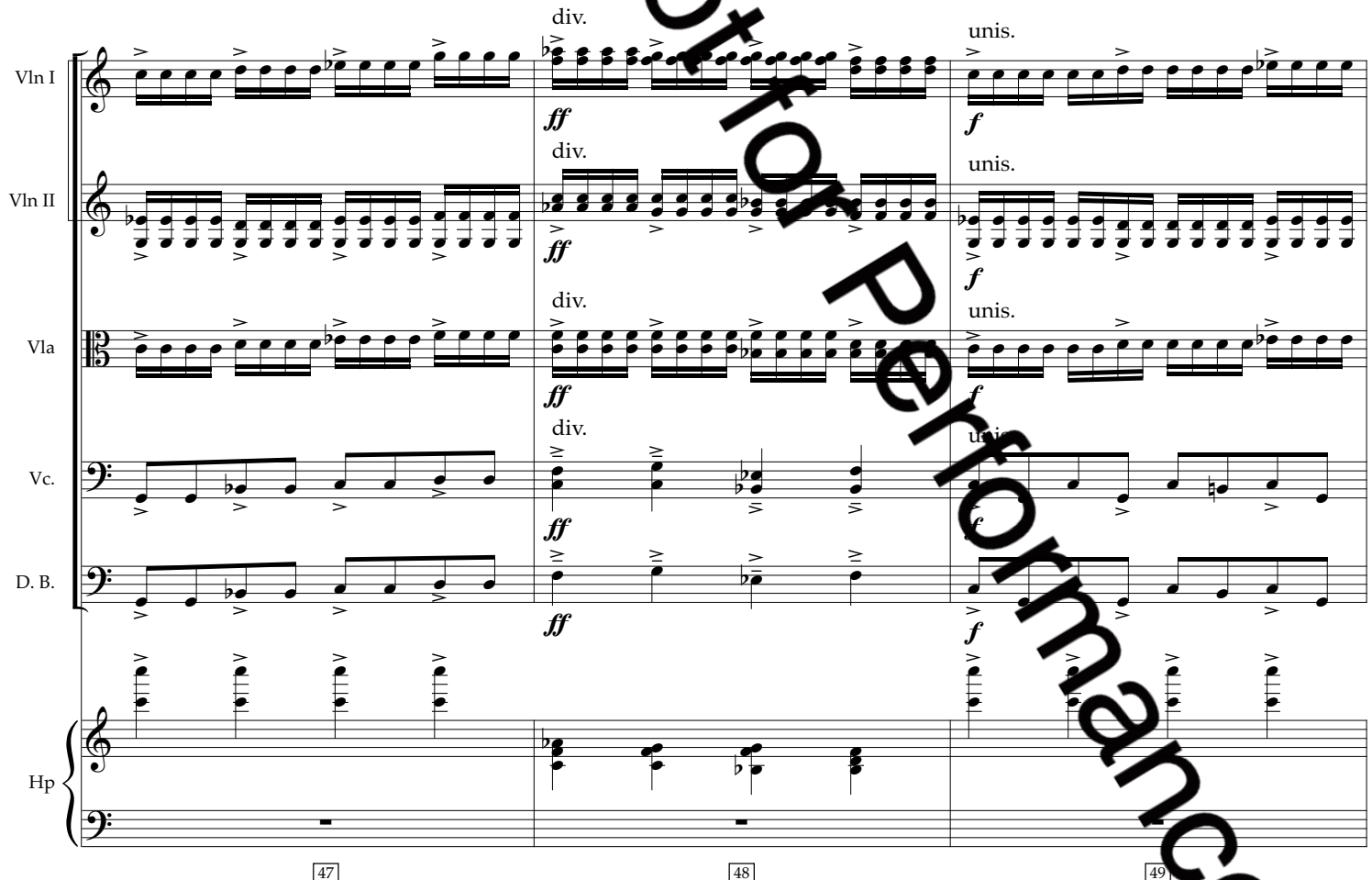

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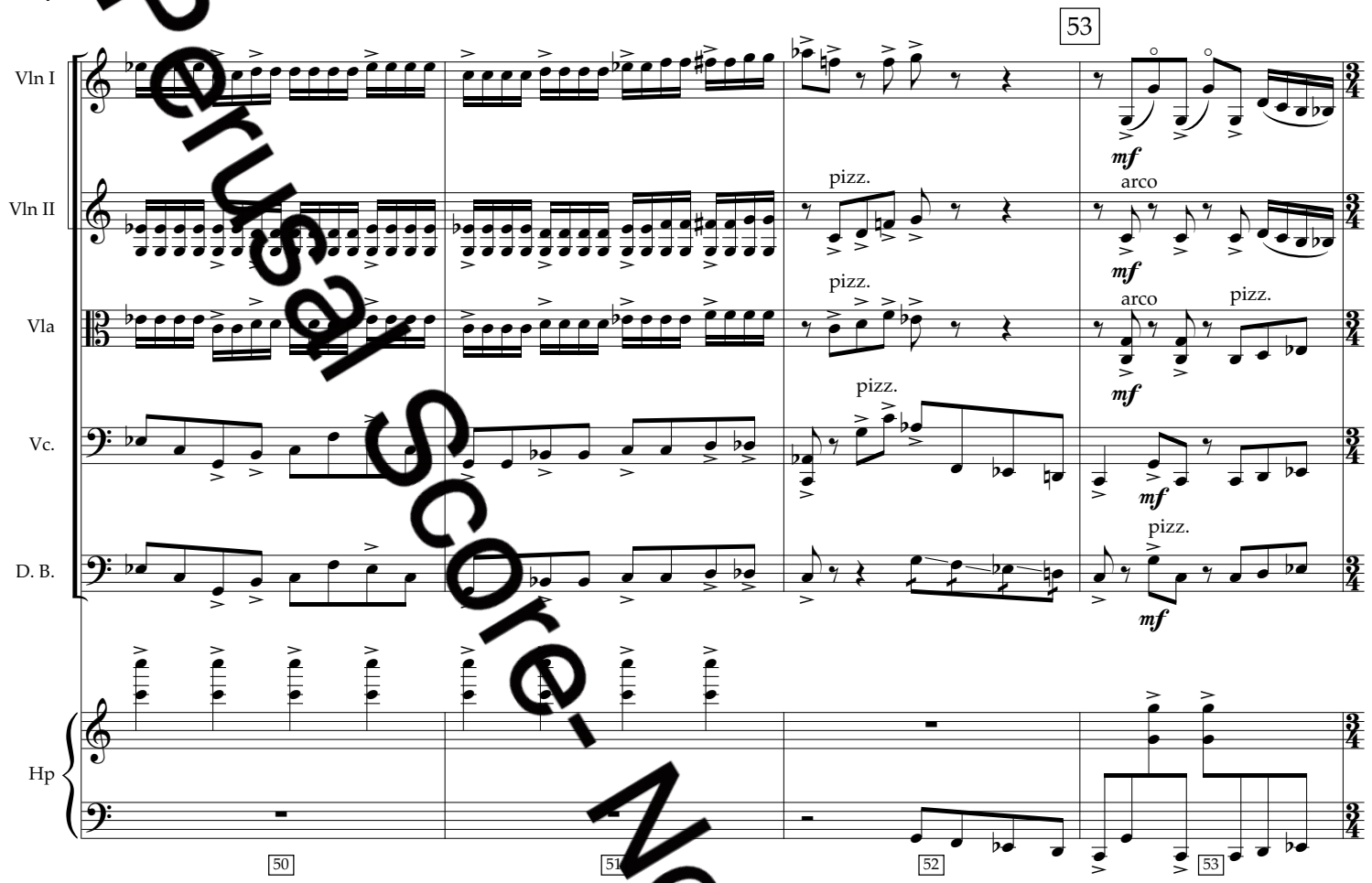

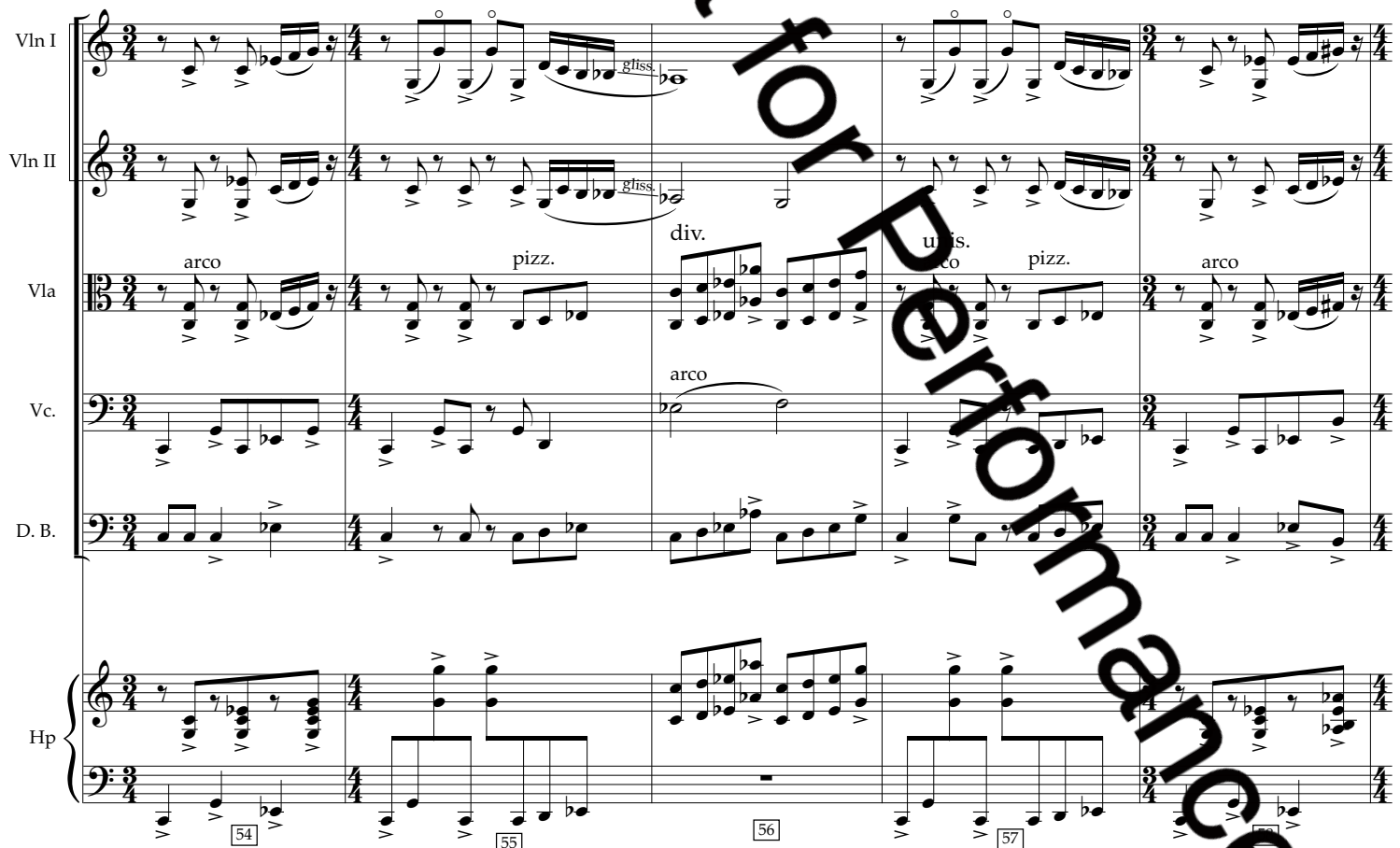

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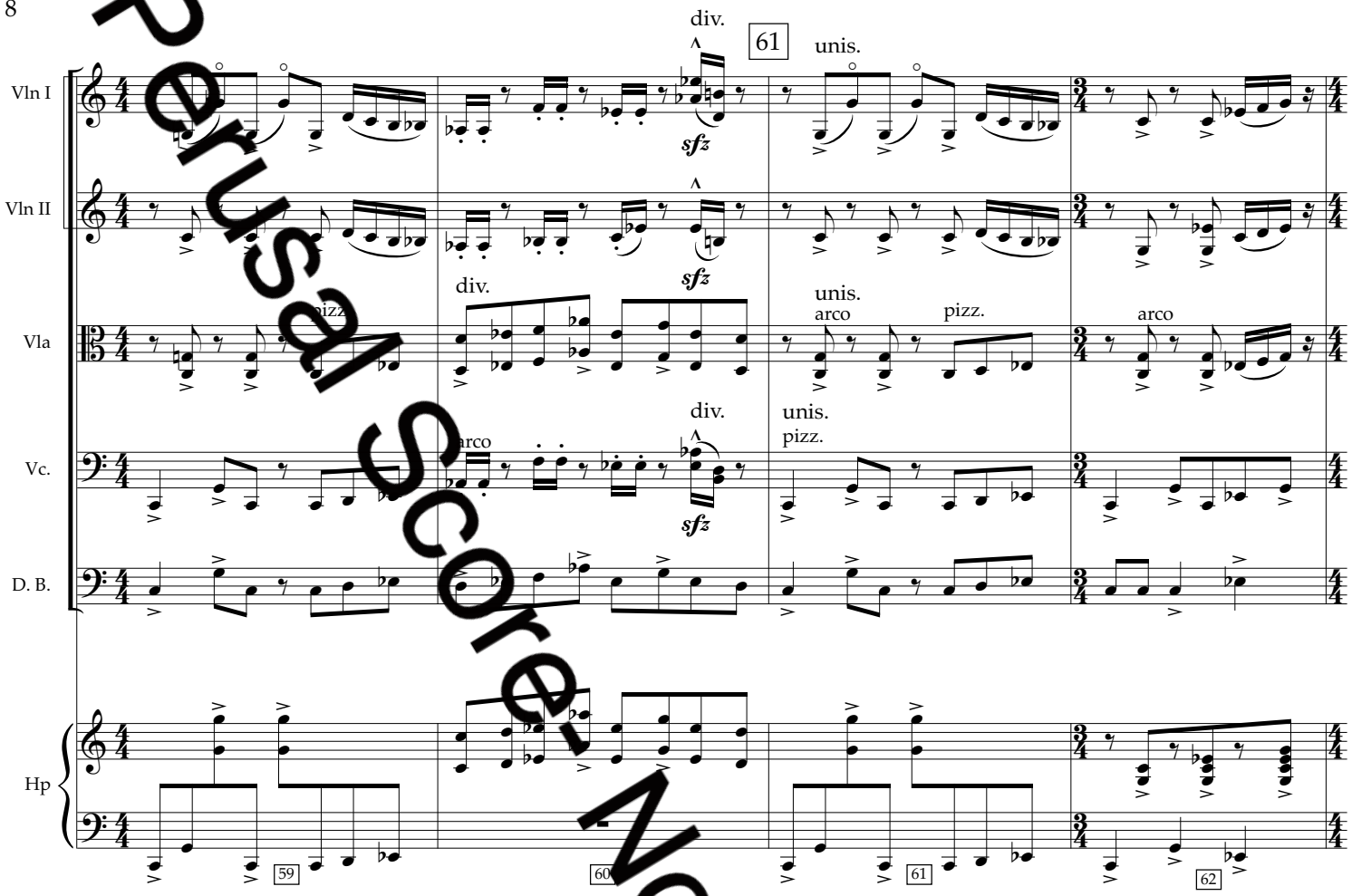

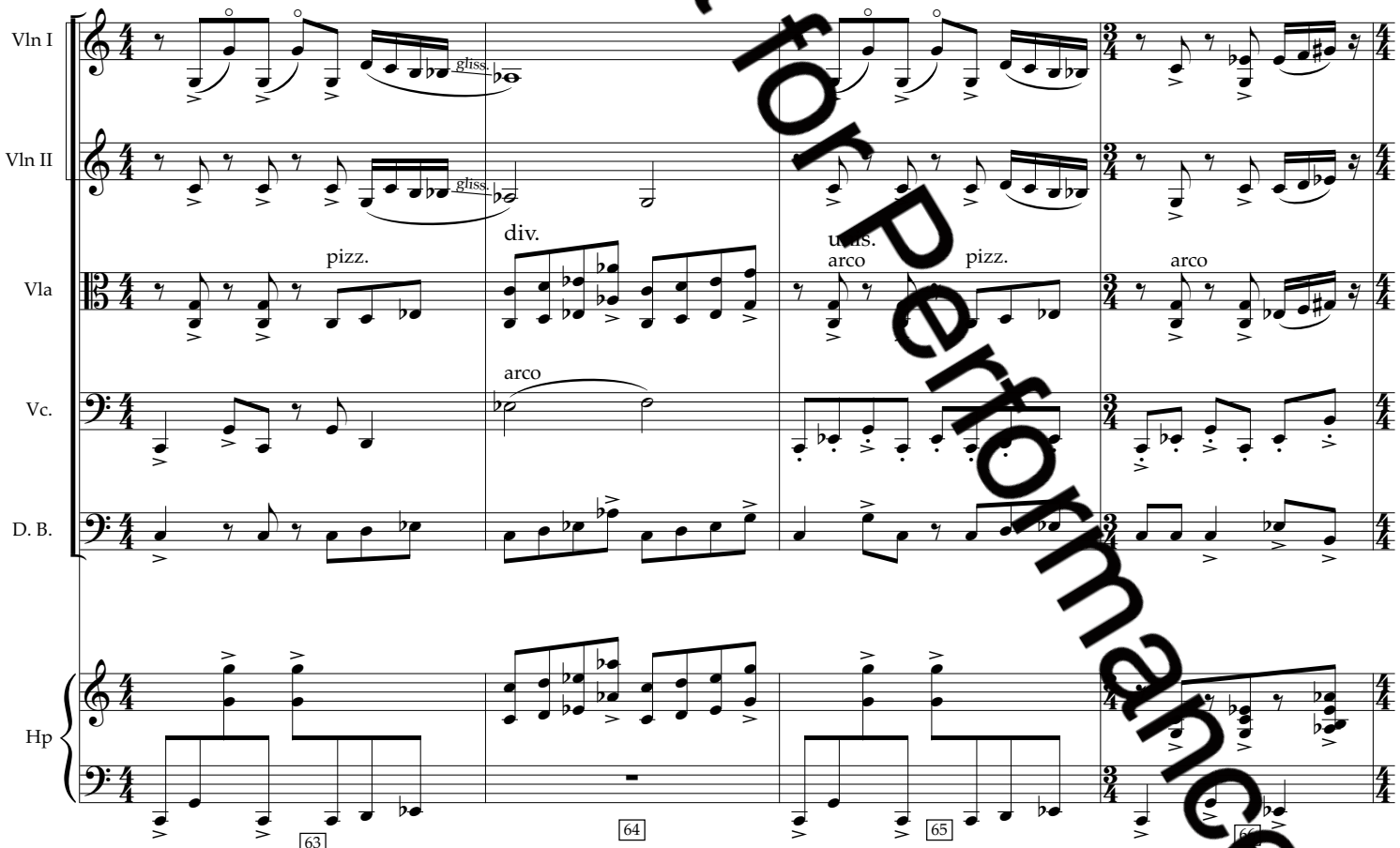

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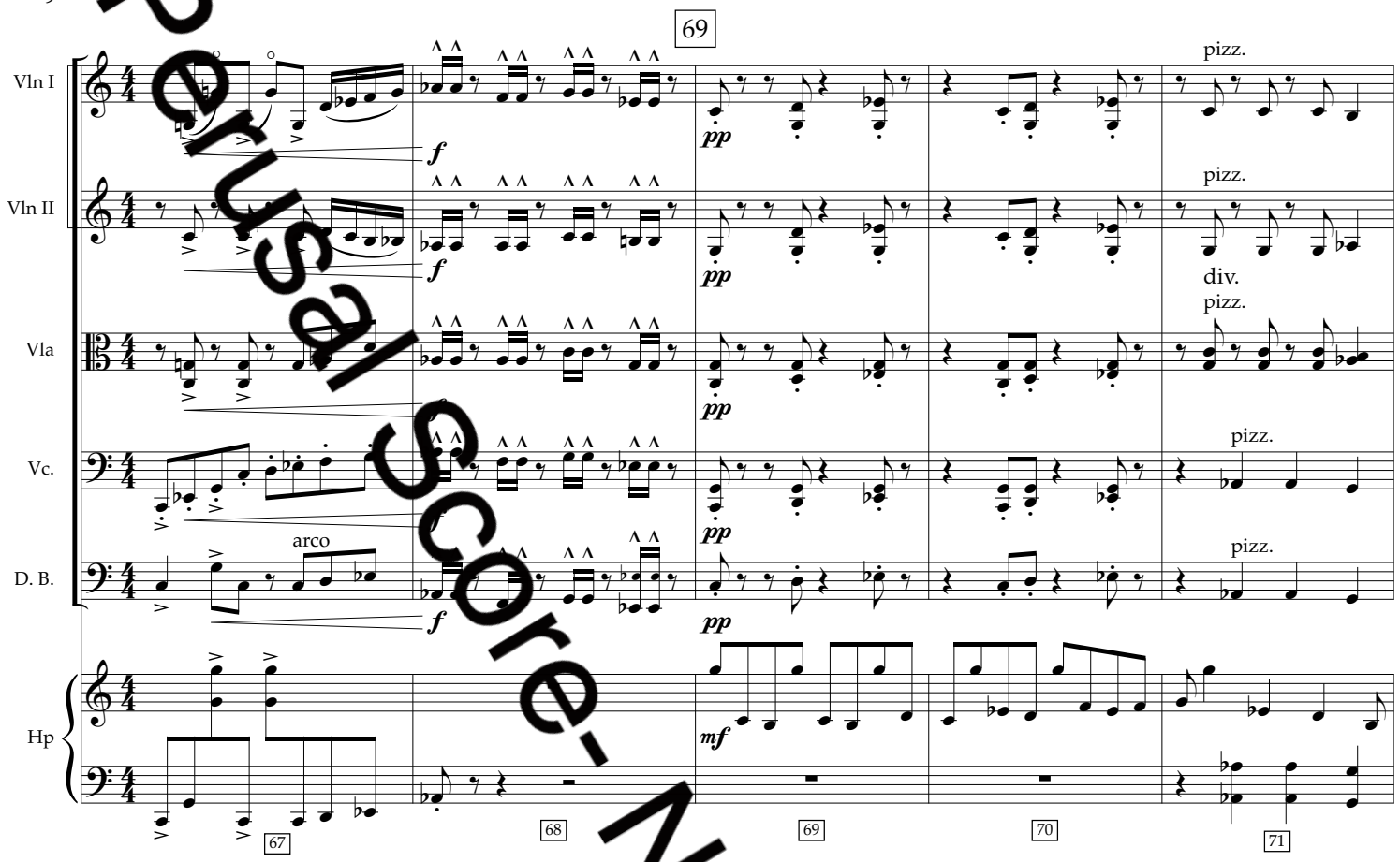

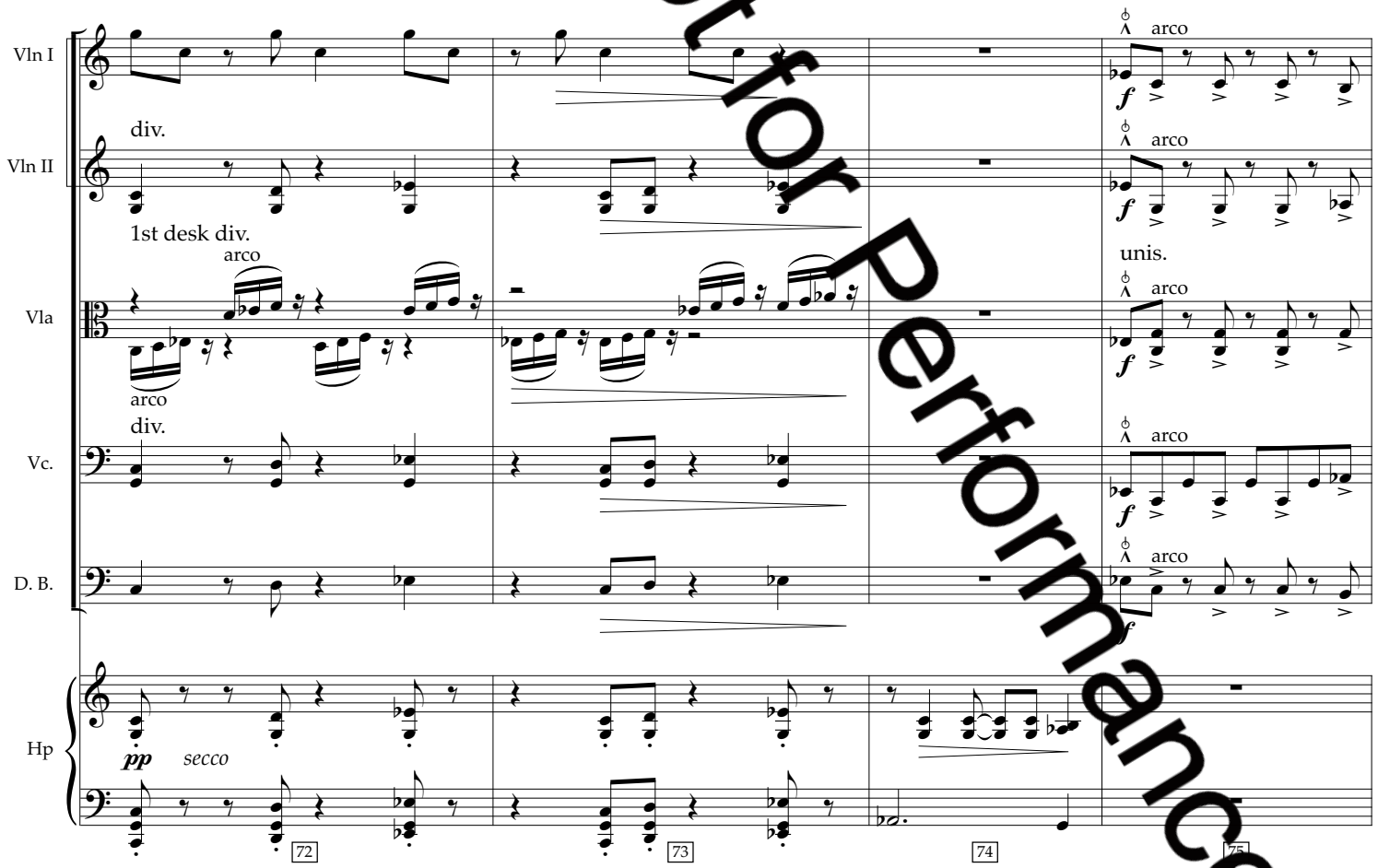

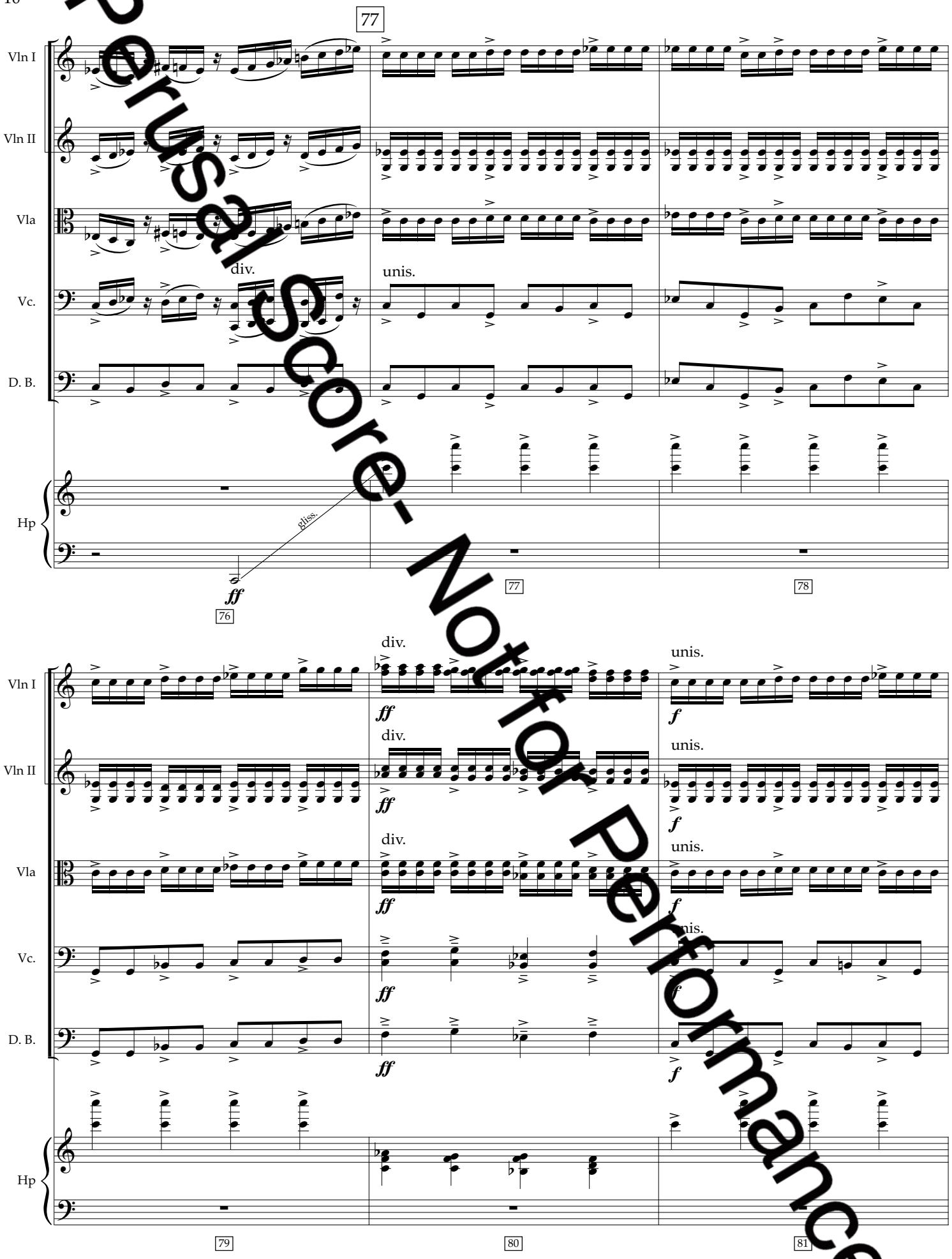

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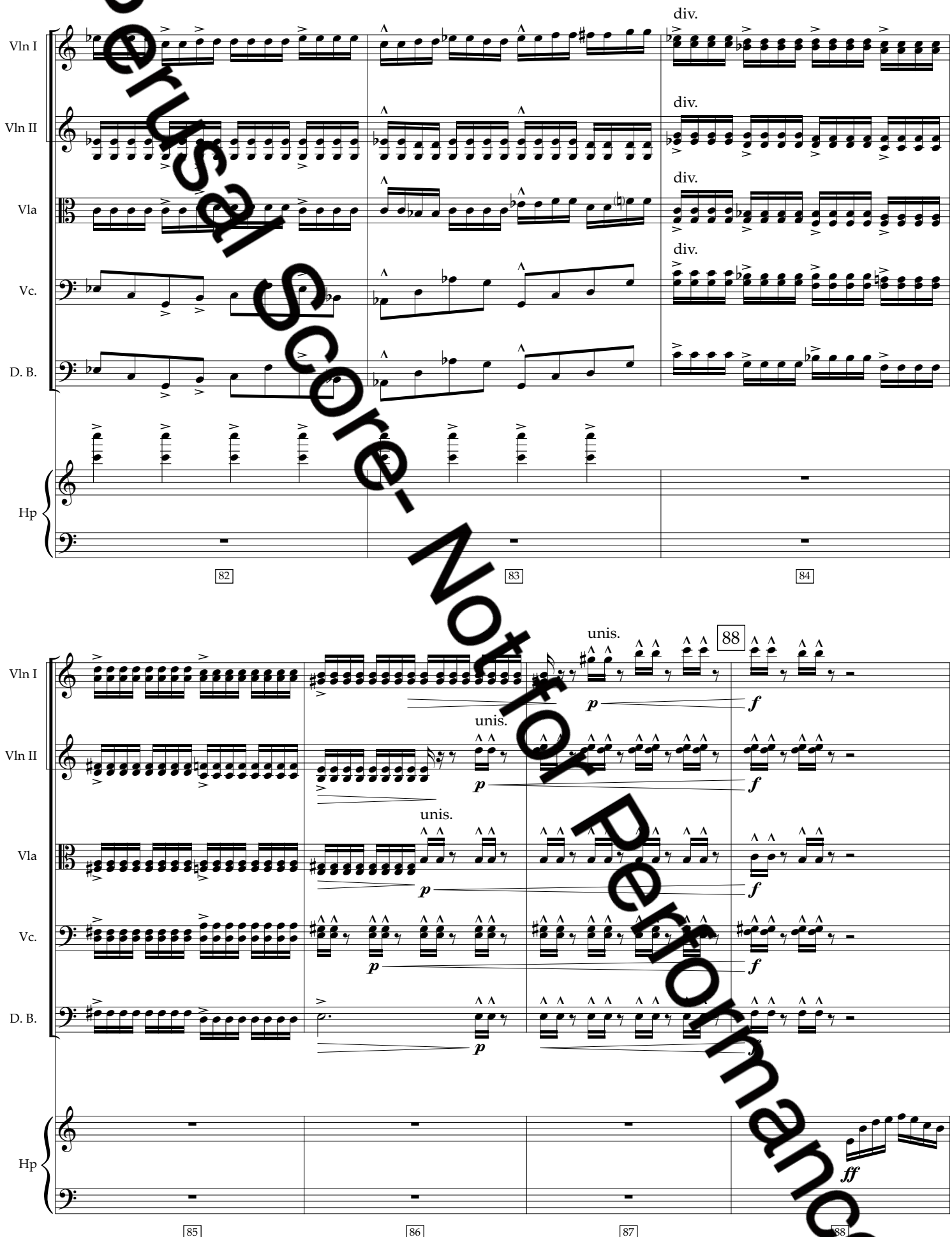

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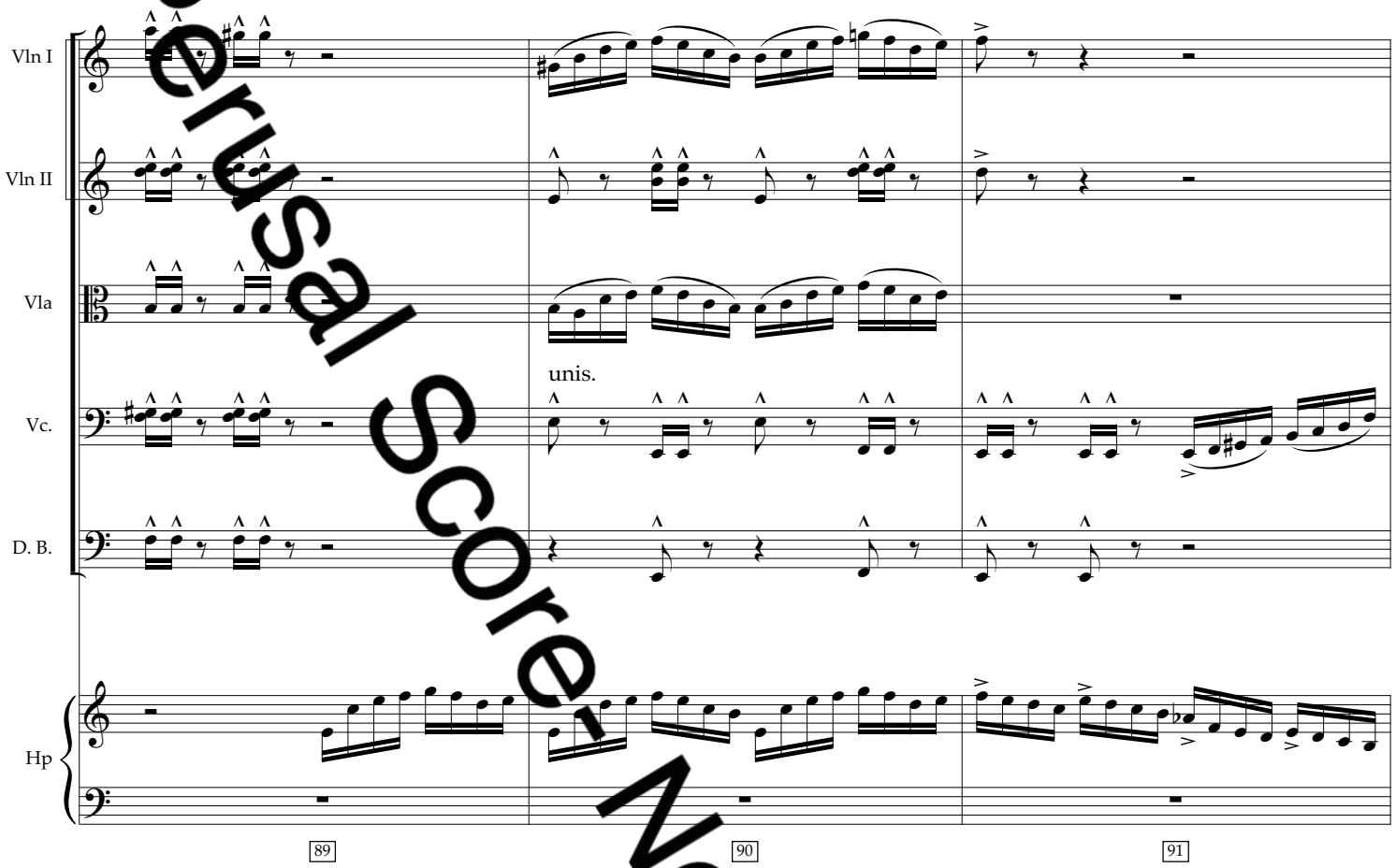

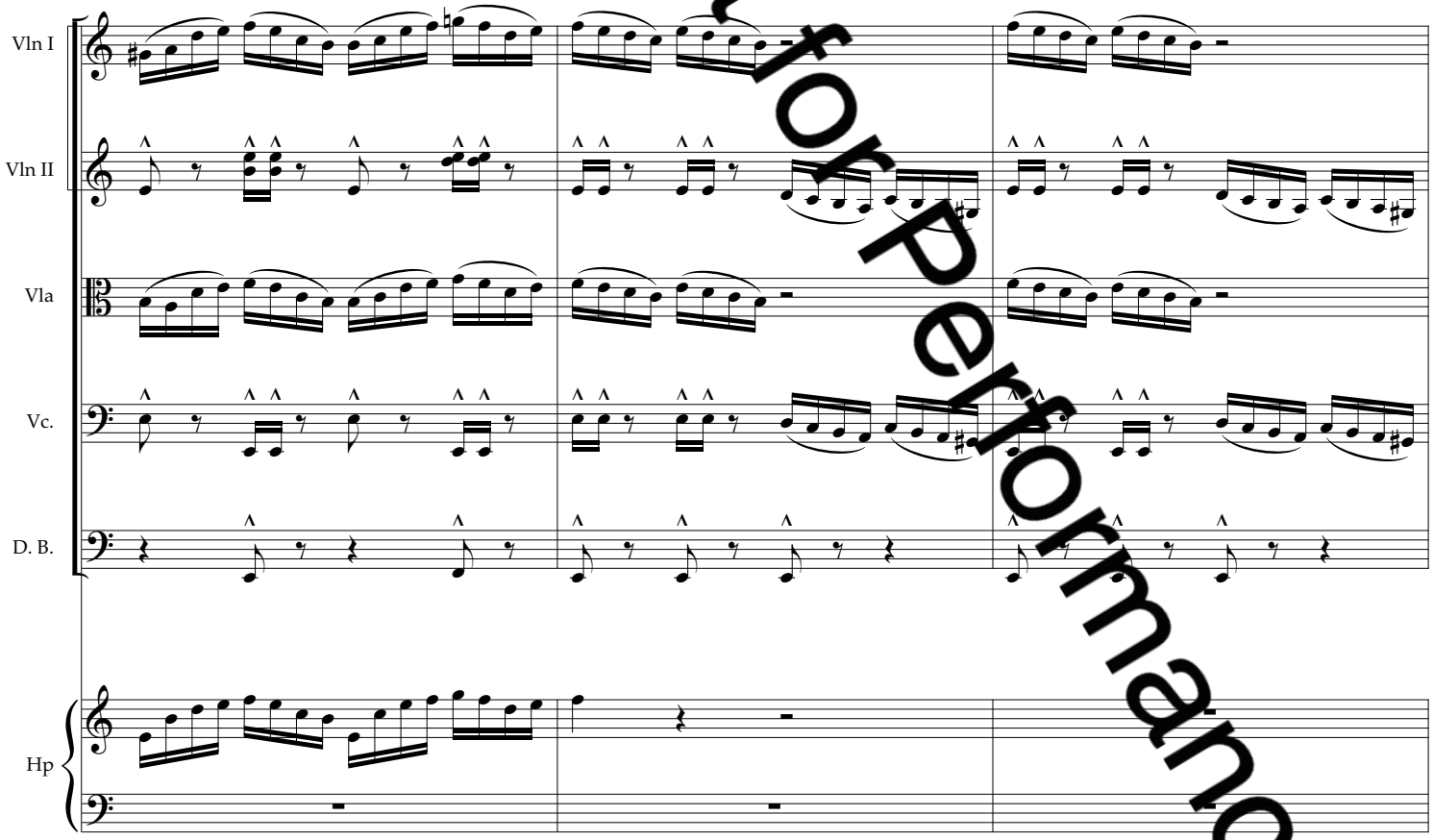

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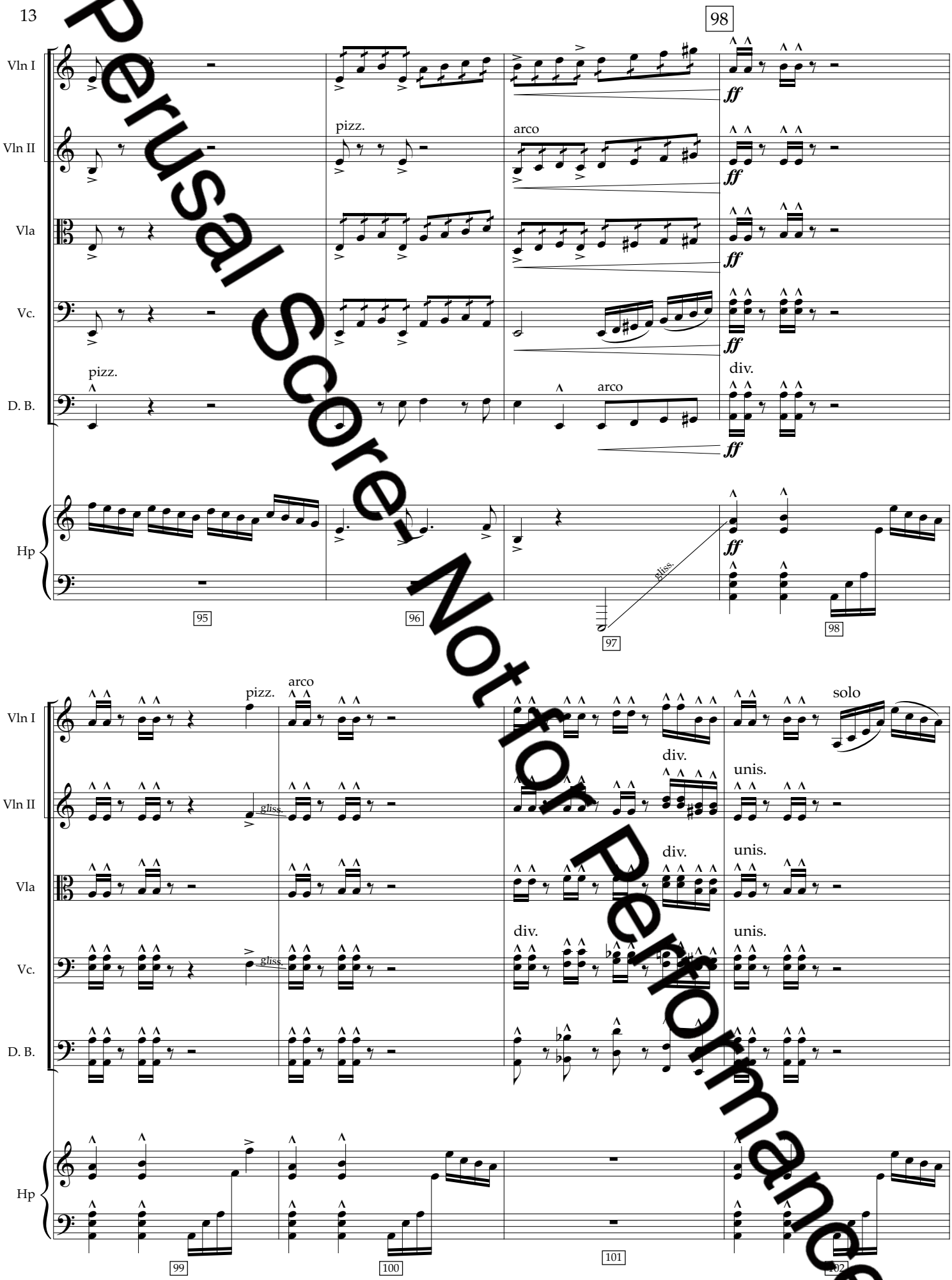

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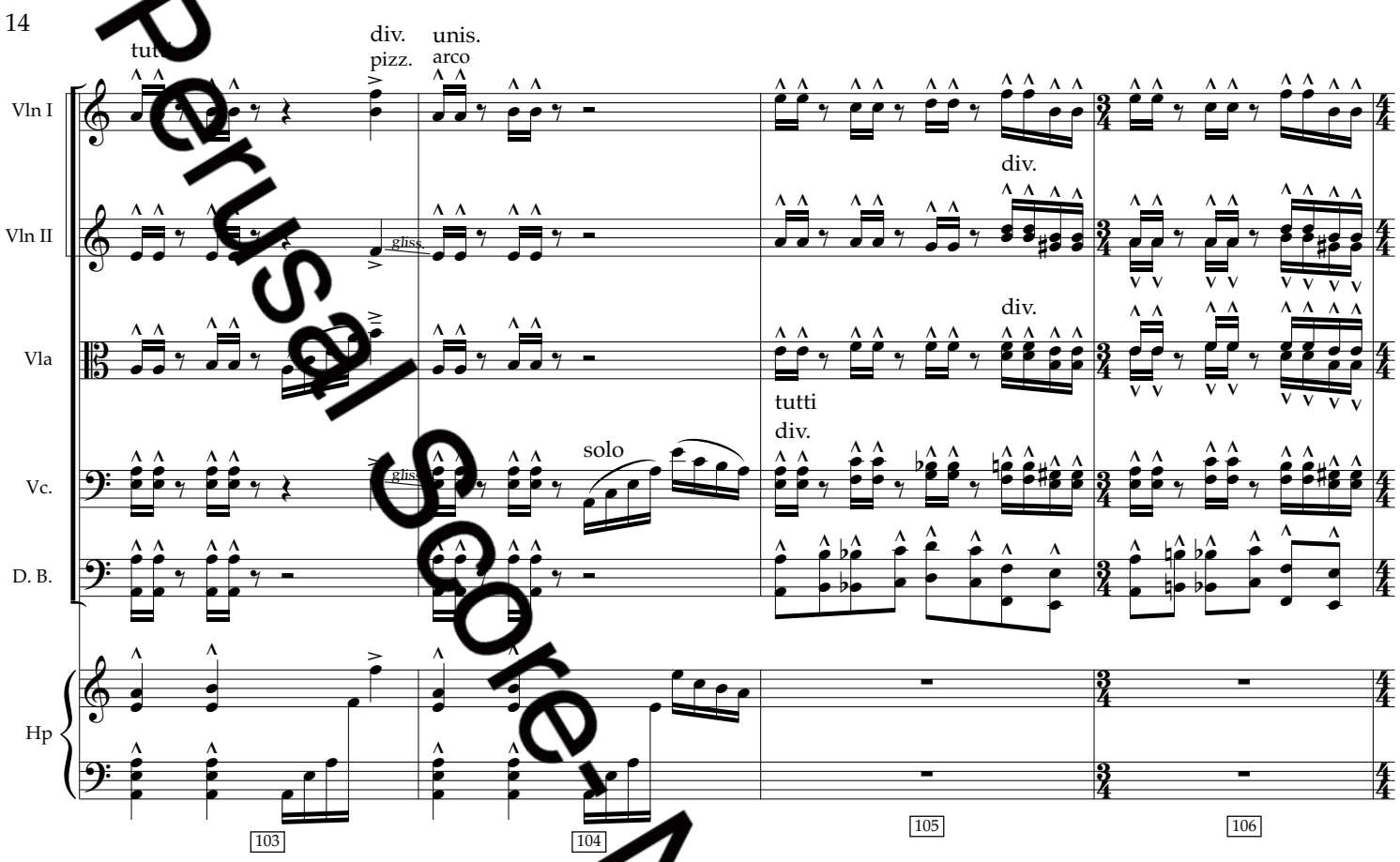

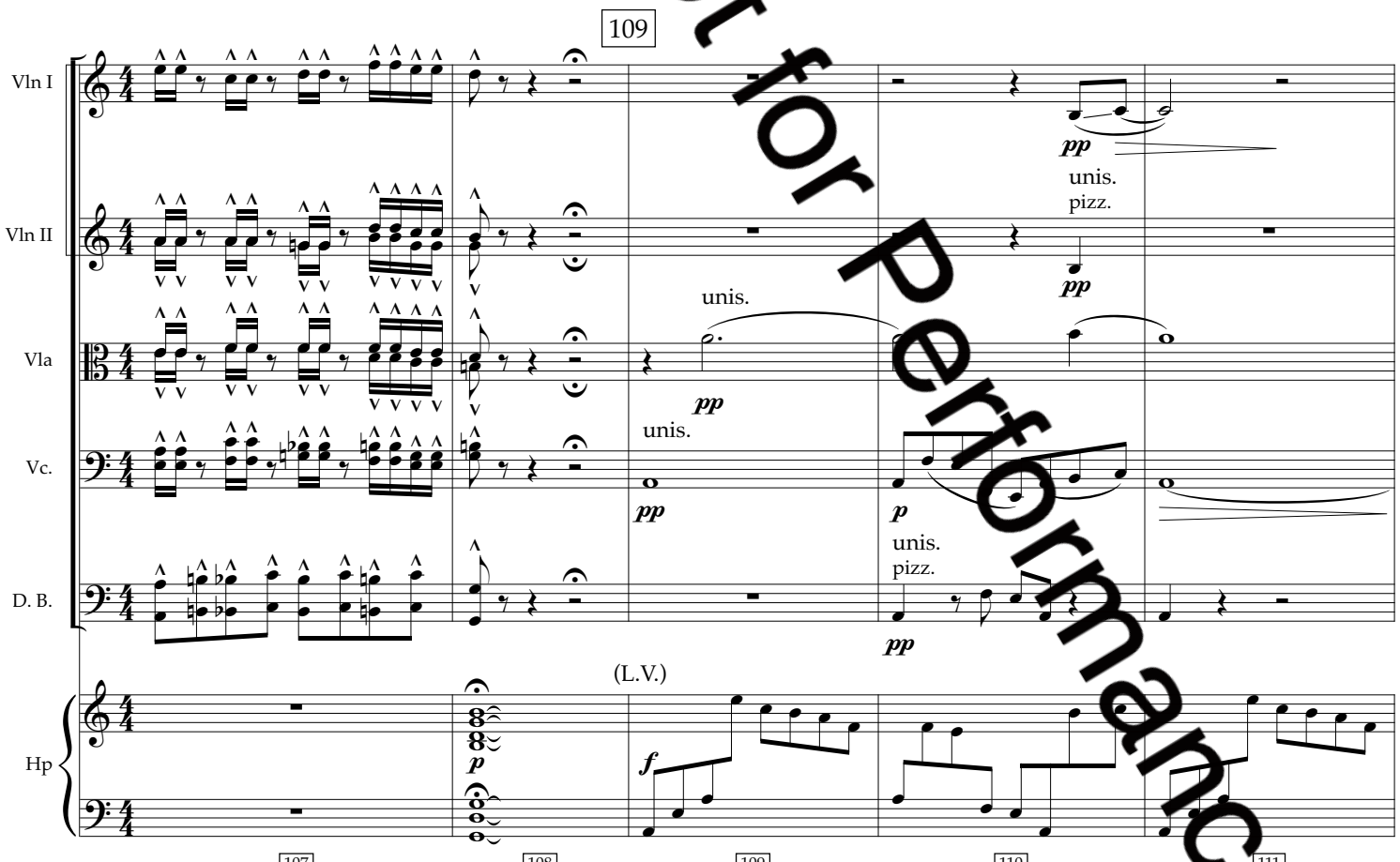

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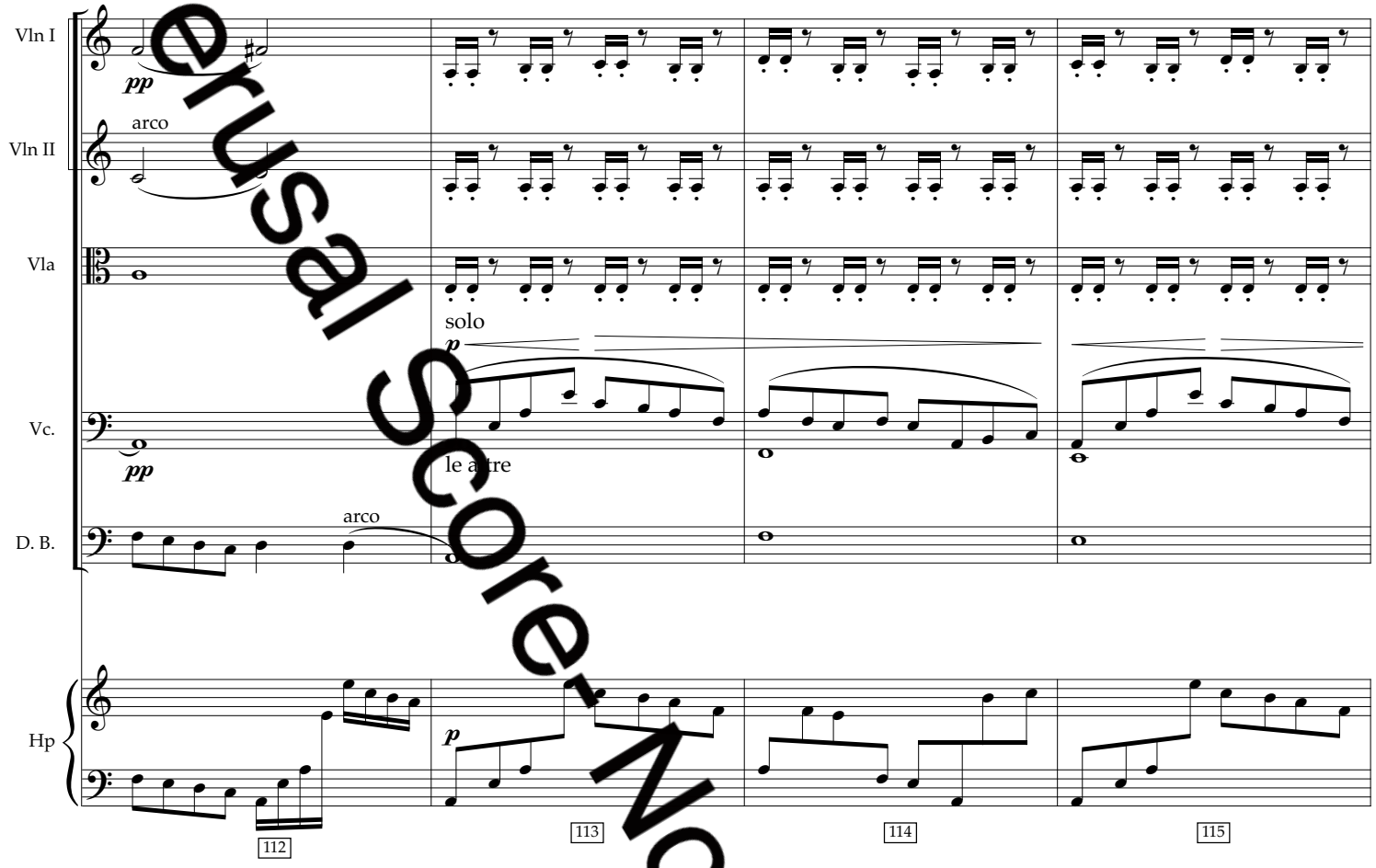

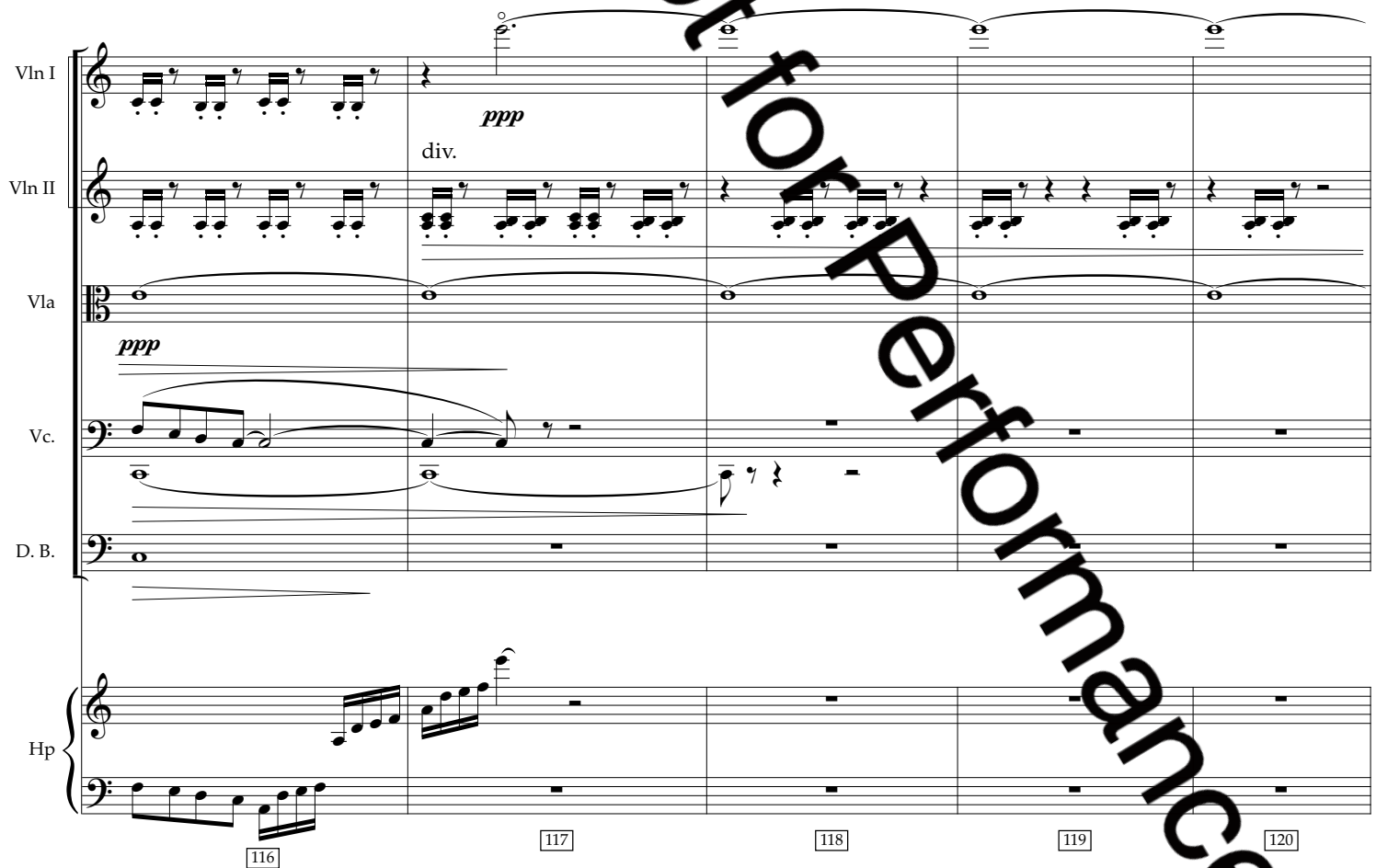

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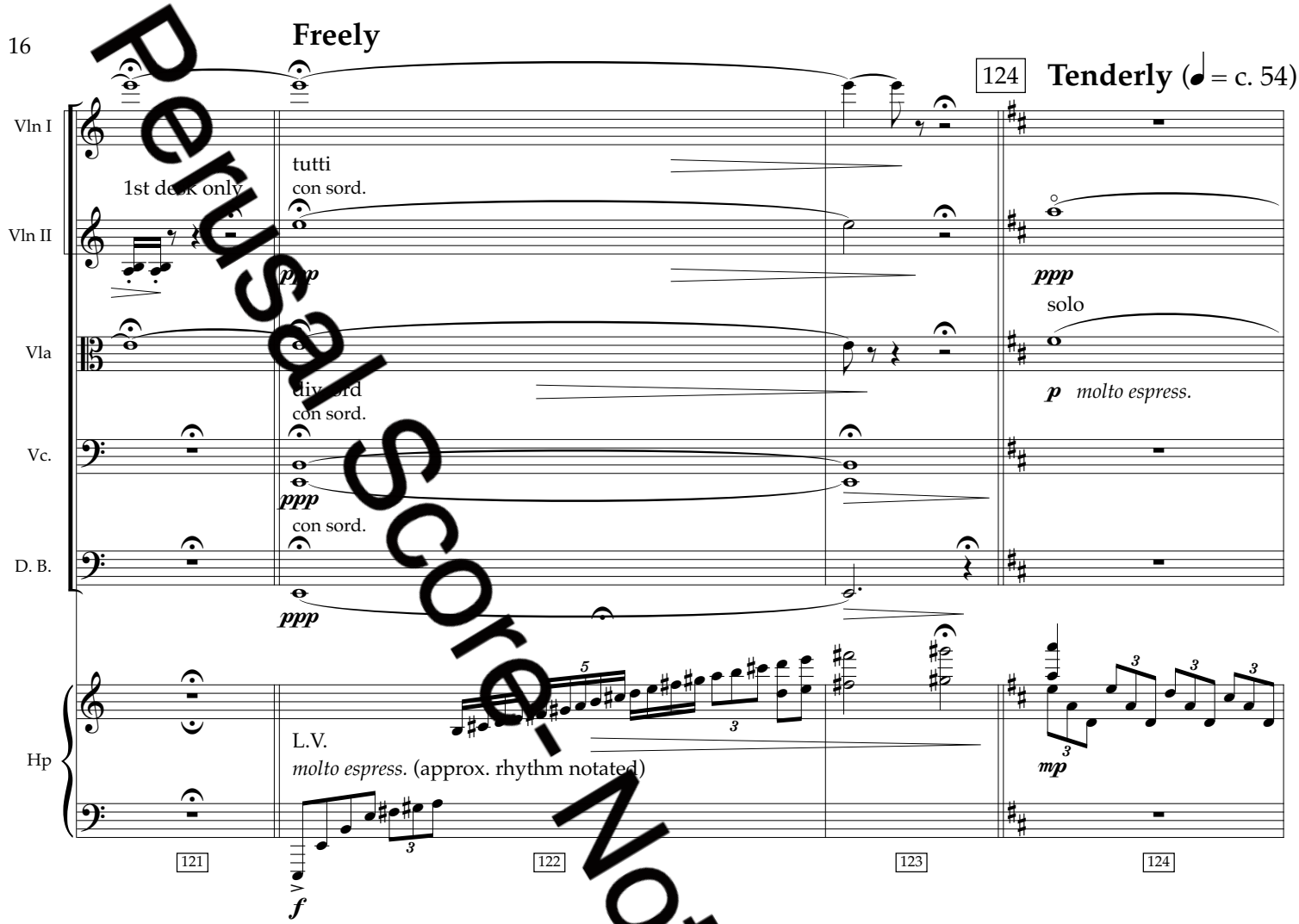

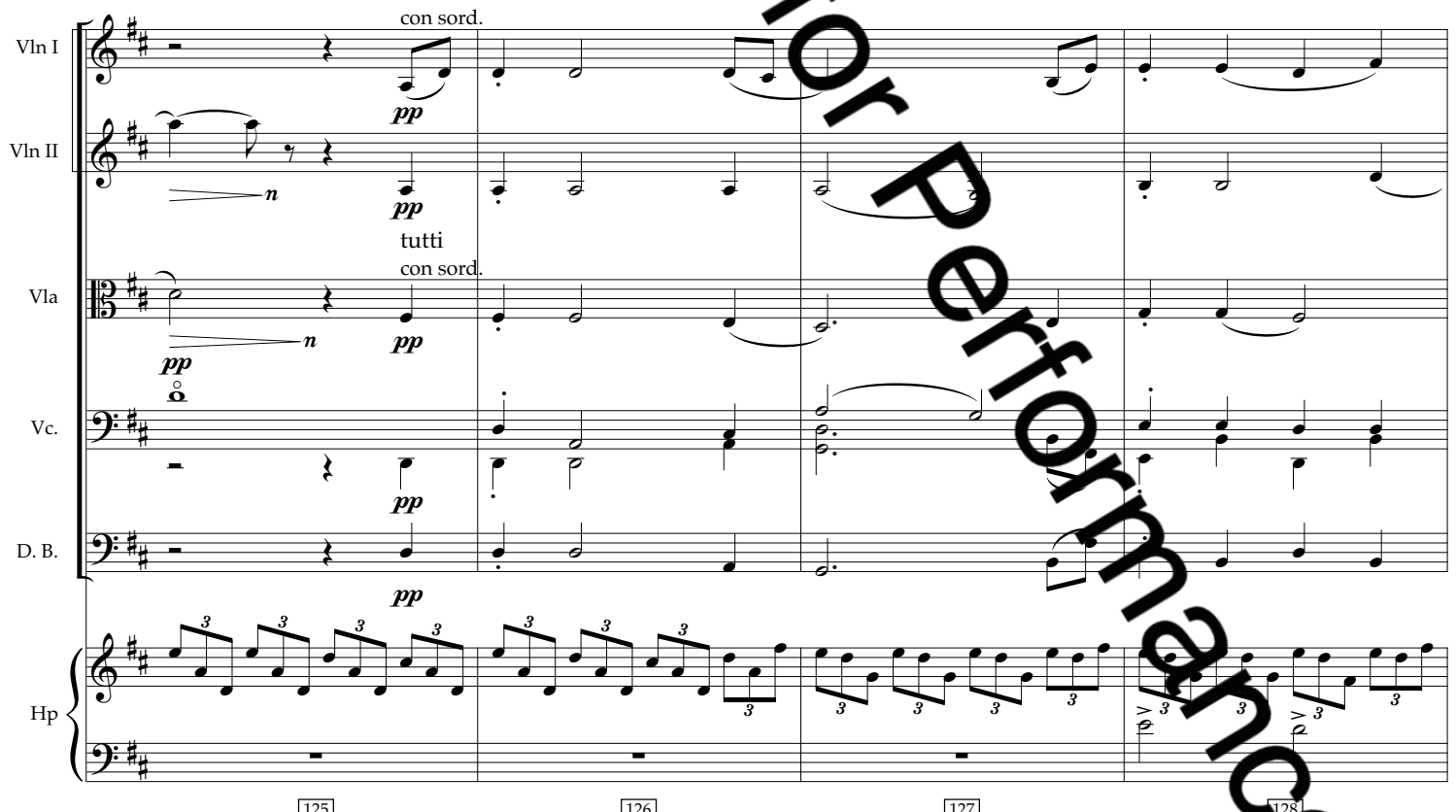

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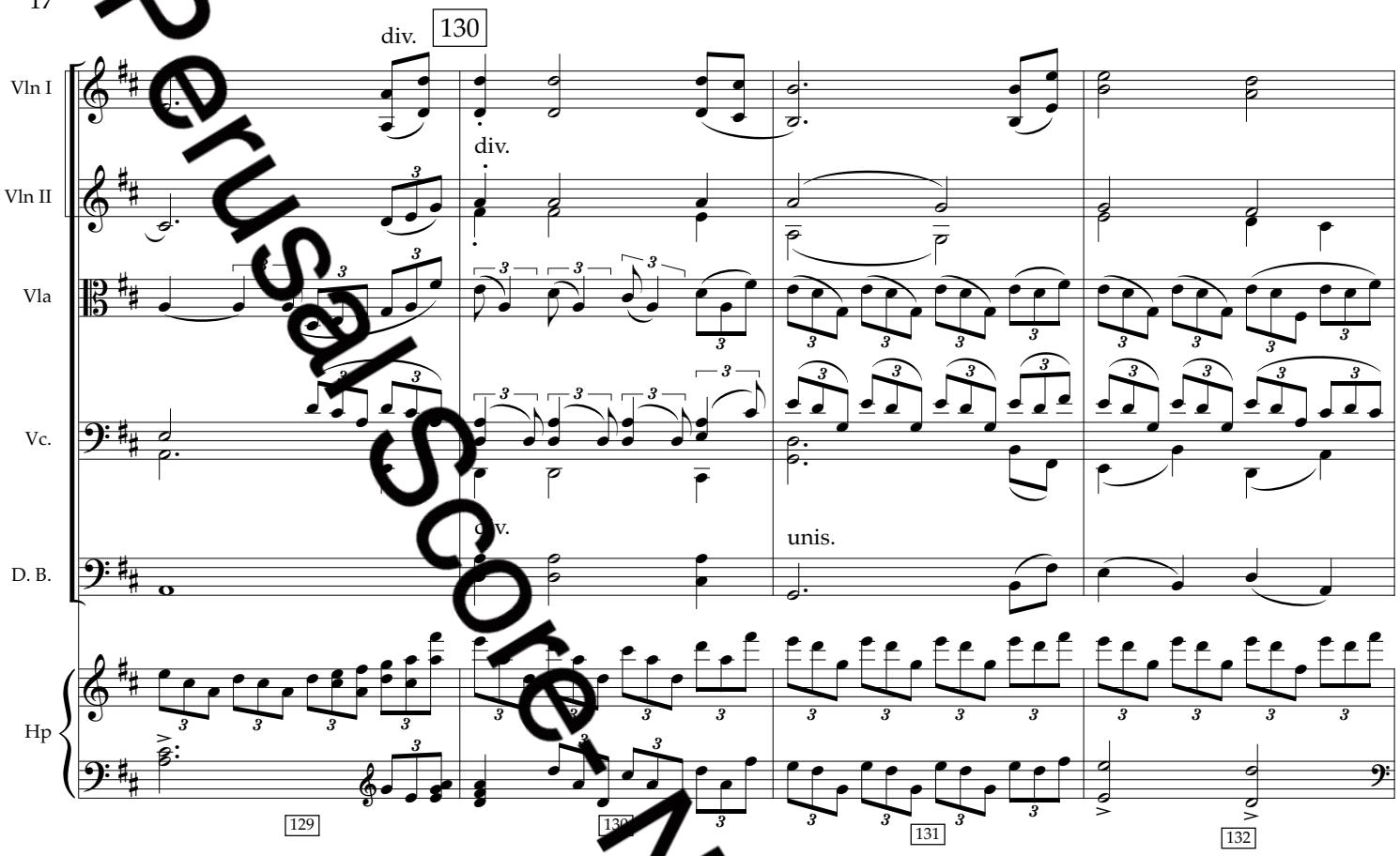

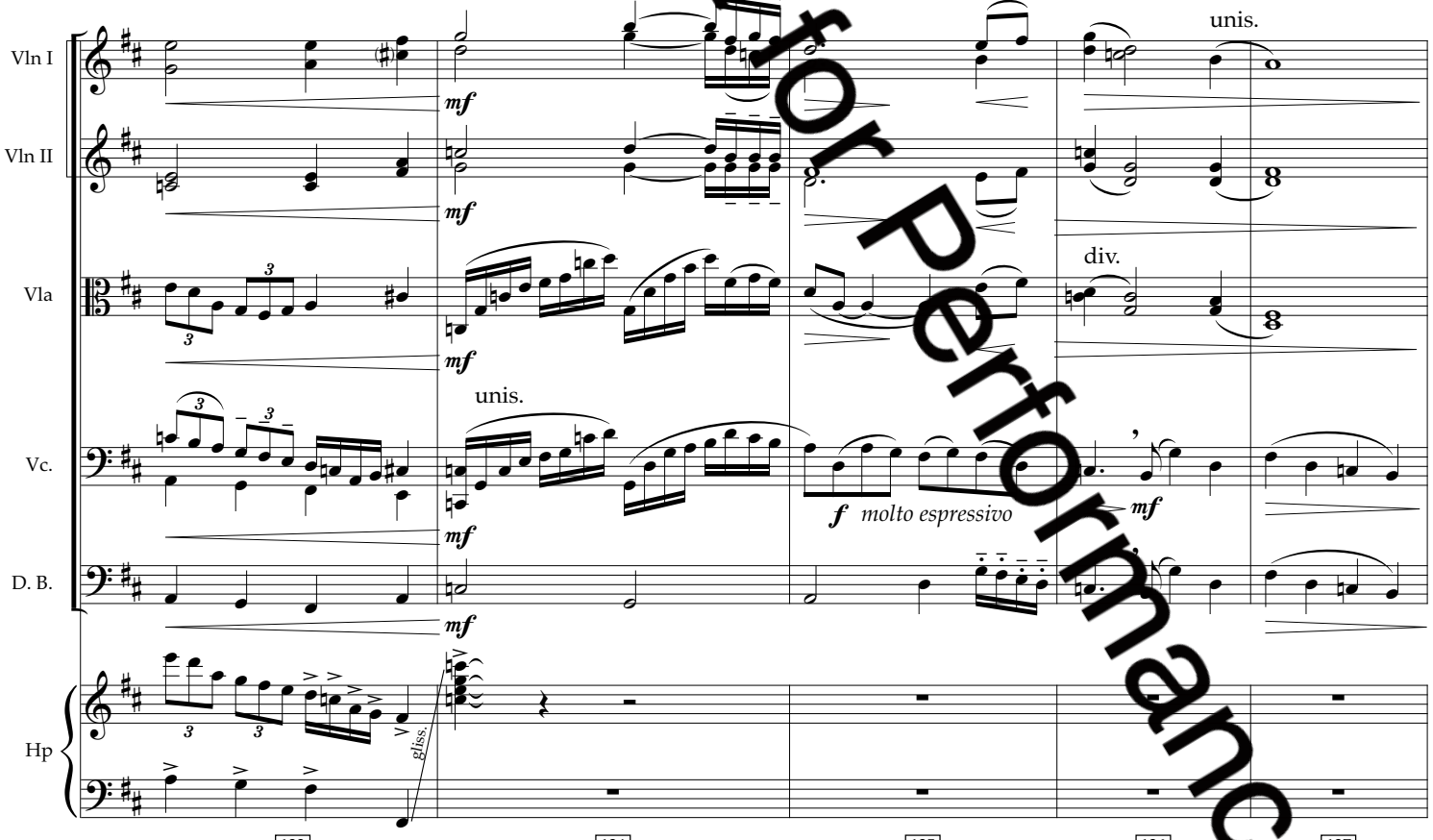

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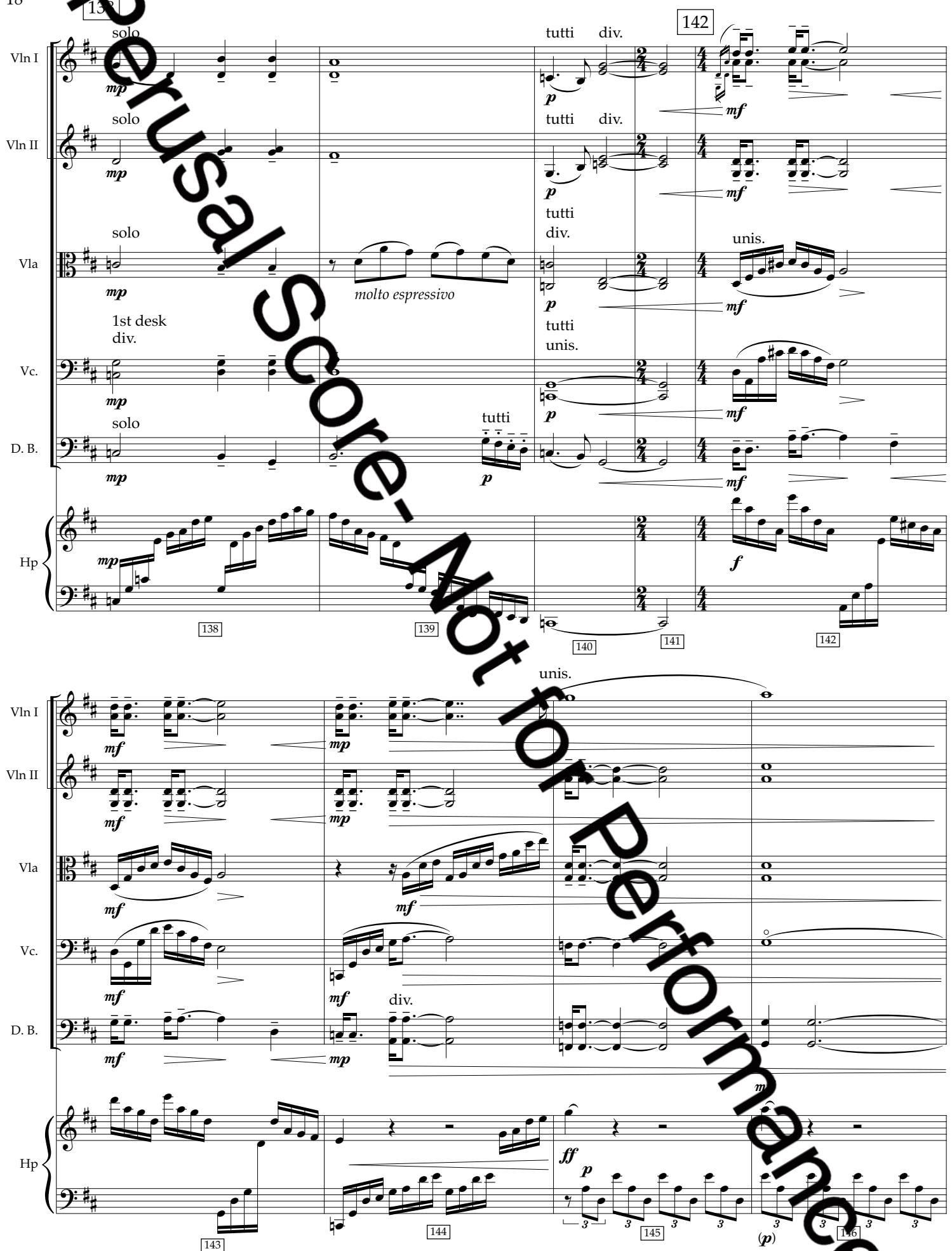

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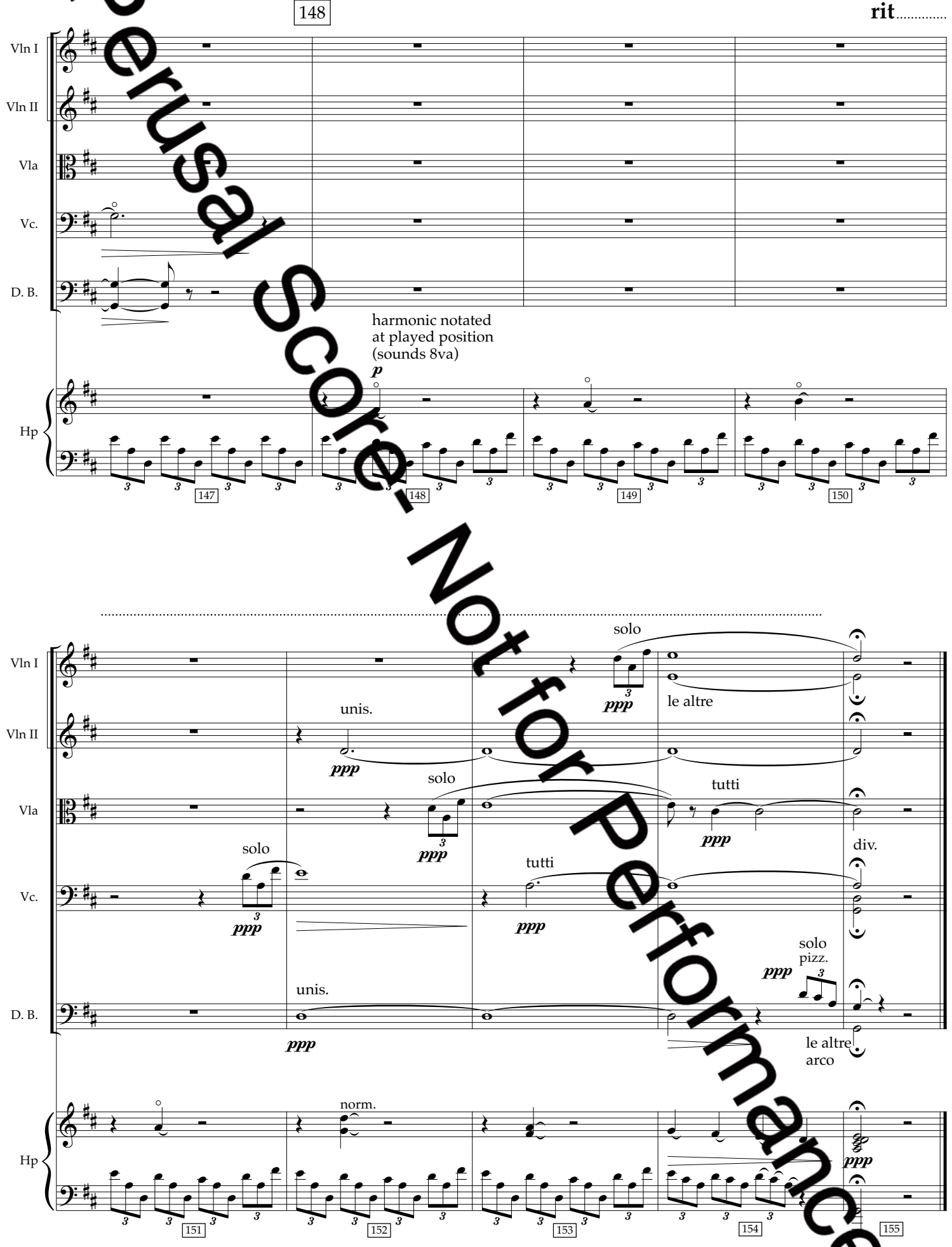

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