YOUNG JAZZ ENSEMBLE

Belwin JAZZ
a division of Alfred

# Strollin' with Sammy

*PAUL BAKER*

## INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor
1st E♭ Alto Saxophone
2nd E♭ Alto Saxophone
1st B♭ Tenor Saxophone
2nd B♭ Tenor Saxophone
E♭ Baritone Saxophone (Optional)
1st B♭ Trumpet
2nd B♭ Trumpet
3rd B♭ Trumpet
4th B♭ Trumpet (Optional)
1st Trombone
2nd Trombone
3rd Trombone (Optional)
4th Trombone (Optional)
Guitar Chords
Guitar (Optional)
Piano
Bass
Drums

### Optional Alternate Parts

C Flute
Tuba
Horn in F (Doubles 1st Trombone)
1st Baritone T.C./B♭ Tenor Saxophone (Doubles 1st Trombone)
2nd Baritone T.C./B♭ Tenor Saxophone (Doubles 2nd Trombone)

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## NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

*Strollin' with Sammy* is my tribute to the great Sammy Nestico whose signature style and sound, in my opinion, has become a benchmark against which all other swing charts are measured. I've tried to capture the same easygoing approach and natural progressions that make Sammy's music so much fun to play and listen to.

Synonymous with Sammy Nestico is the Count Basie Orchestra and the great history they have together, the most famous of which is the recording *Basie Straight Ahead*. I feel that every student of jazz, young or old, needs to be extensively familiar with this recording since it is one of the most accessible examples of what big band swing and style is all about. Simply put, this recording demonstrates how to play big band swing. You can listen to the demo recording of this chart at alfred.com/downloads.

One of the basic stylistic components of the swing is "laying back" and swinging the eighth notes. While this should be done throughout the chart, there are few places where it can be over-emphasized to good effect. For example: in measure 13, all three eighth notes can be given more weight and delayed just a touch. Measure 22, beginning on the "and" of beat 3, the entire horn section can be more deliberate with the three eighth notes, and a slight scoop into the "and" of 4 would also be appropriate. This does *not* apply to the rhythm section as they should continue to play steady and consistent time.

Another major component of this style is to always keep the energy moving through the longer notes and to give the notes full value. This is essential to the success of measures 12, 16 (saxes half note), 20 (half note), 22–24, 28, 45, 60, 68 and 80. Applying this same principal to your other swing charts will add new life to them as well and it will make the band sound polished and more professional. It's important to convey, to both the students as well as the audience, the musical energy of the chart from the very first measure through the end of the piece. If that energy ebbs in the wrong places, so does the impact of the performance. Again, listen to the Basie band for an example of how to maintain energy and focus.

Finally, dynamic contrast is fundamental to the Basie style. The simplest of musical passages can be made intensely dramatic with a change of dynamic levels. For *Strollin' with Sammy*, that means starting off at a moderately soft level, although with a well-supported sound, and making the most out of the crescendos and decrescendos, such as in measures 12, 23 and 27. Also, the direction of the musical line will offer guidance. Typically, as the line moves up the staff, the volume level goes with it and vice versa when it moves downward. The more dynamic shading you can achieve with your group, the more musical the performance will be, and that's what it's all about.

Enjoy!

—Paul Baker

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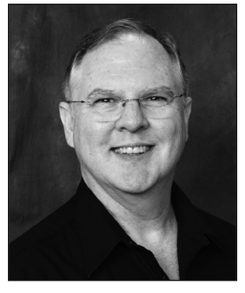

### Paul Baker

Currently residing in Austin, TX, Paul Baker's career as a composer, saxophonist, educator and clinician has covered a wide variety of musical genres from jazz, film, TV and R&B to Broadway. He has performed in venues from the Universal Amphitheater in Los Angeles to the Village Vanguard in New York City to jazz festivals across Europe. He has composed and arranged for films, theater, jazz bands of all sizes and levels, and computer games. Paul earned a B.M. in jazz studies from North Texas State University and an advanced studies certificate in film composition from USC. Visit Paul at www.bakersjazzandmore.com.

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# STROLLIN' WITH SAMMY

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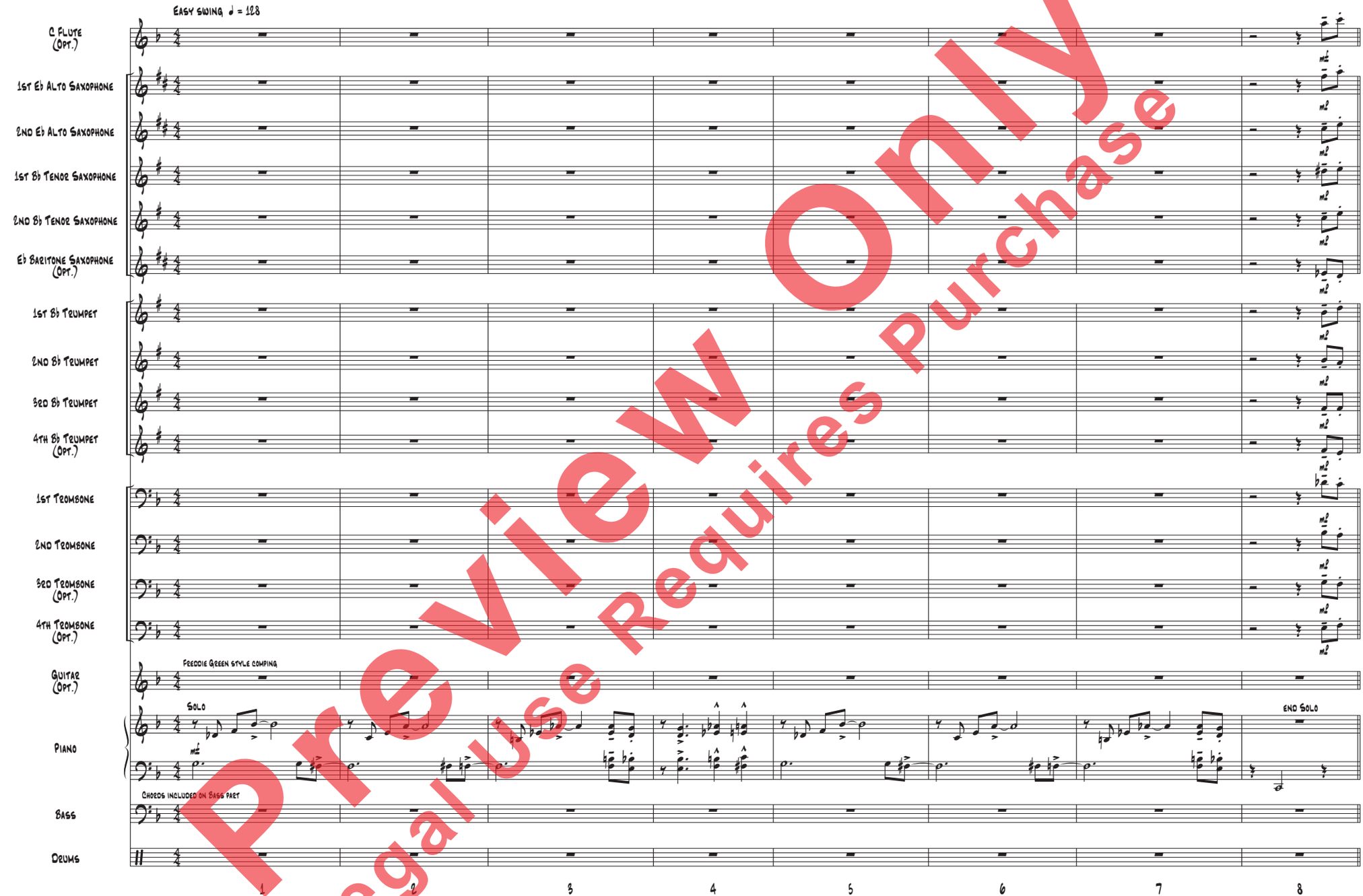
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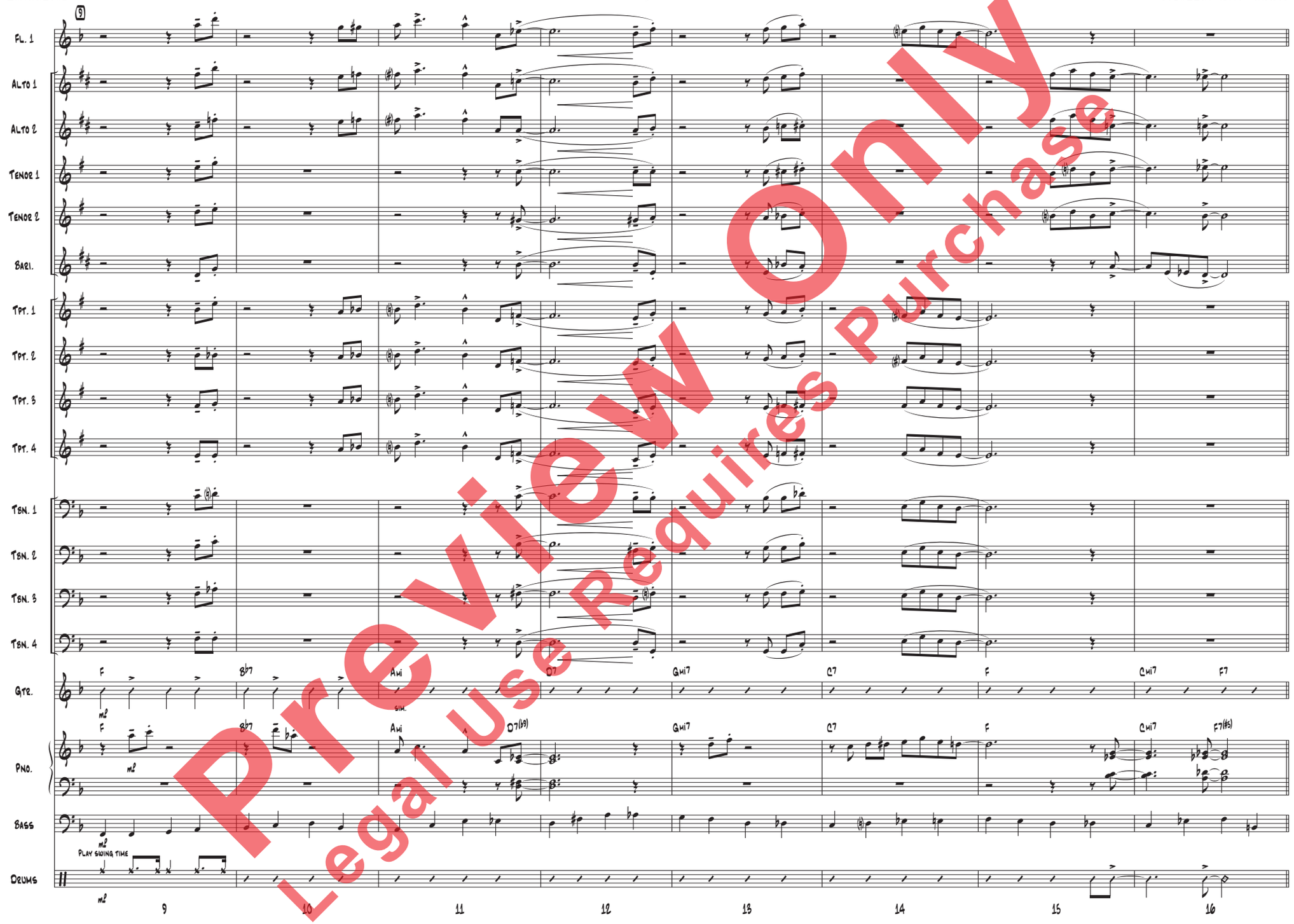
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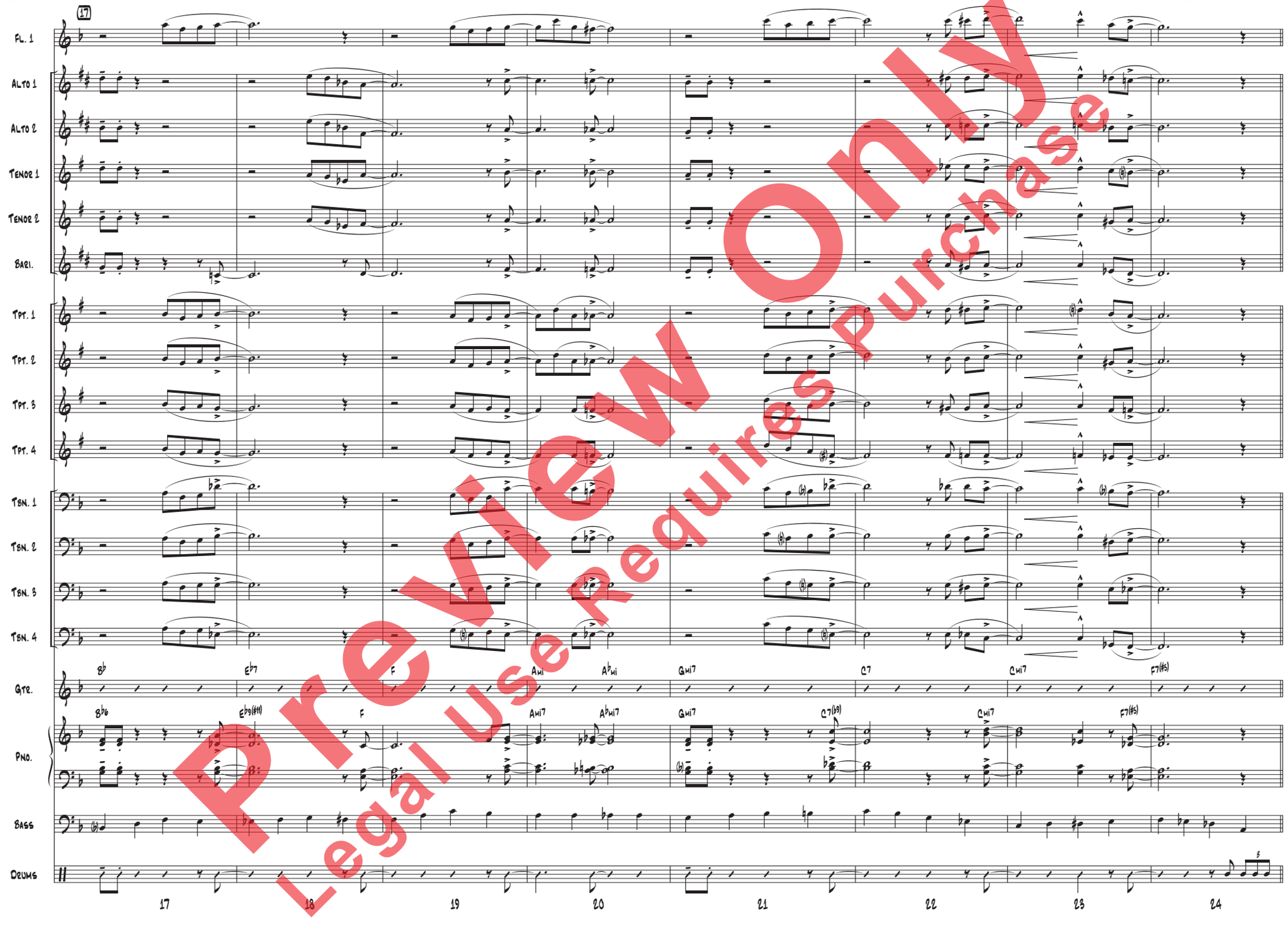
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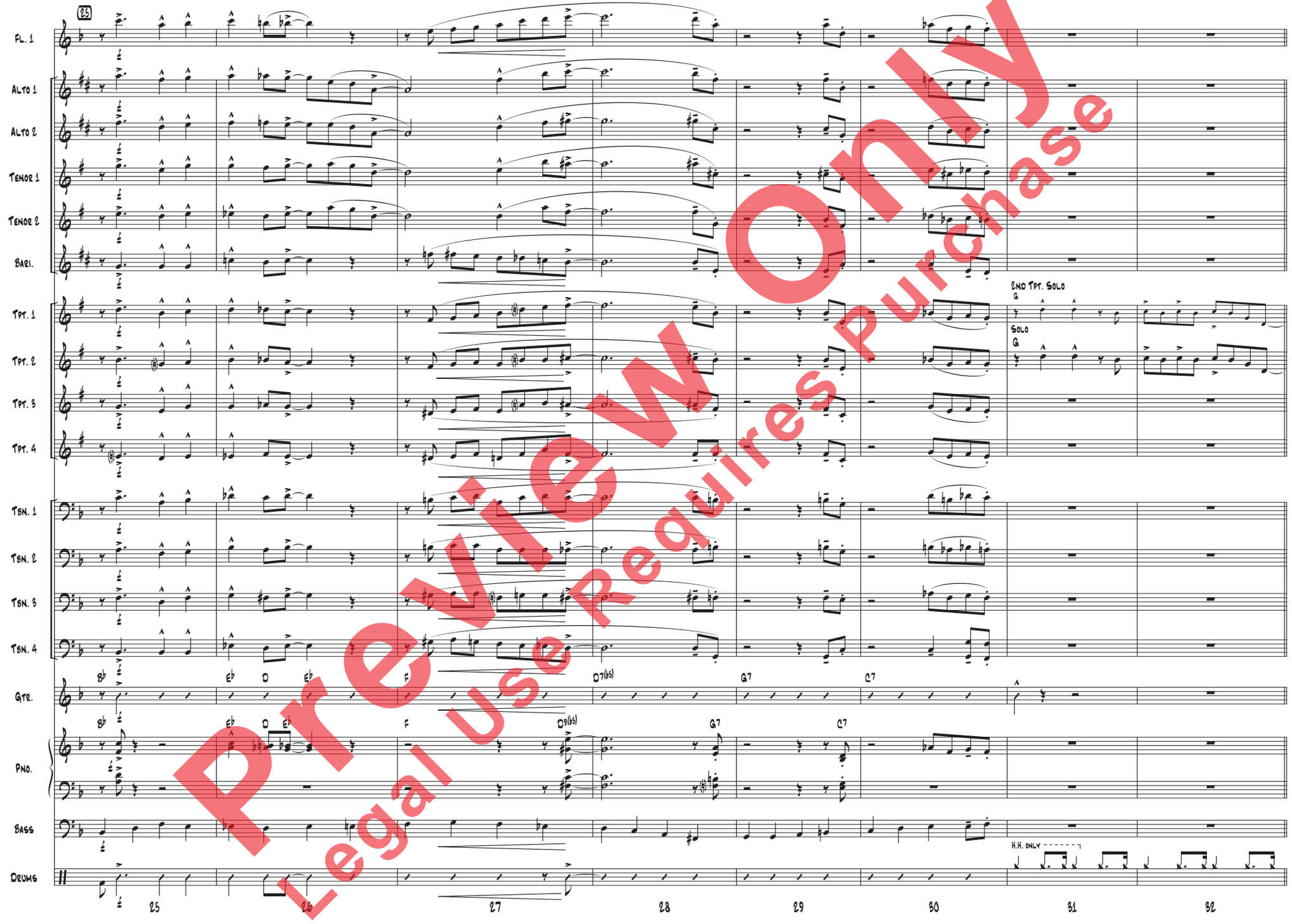
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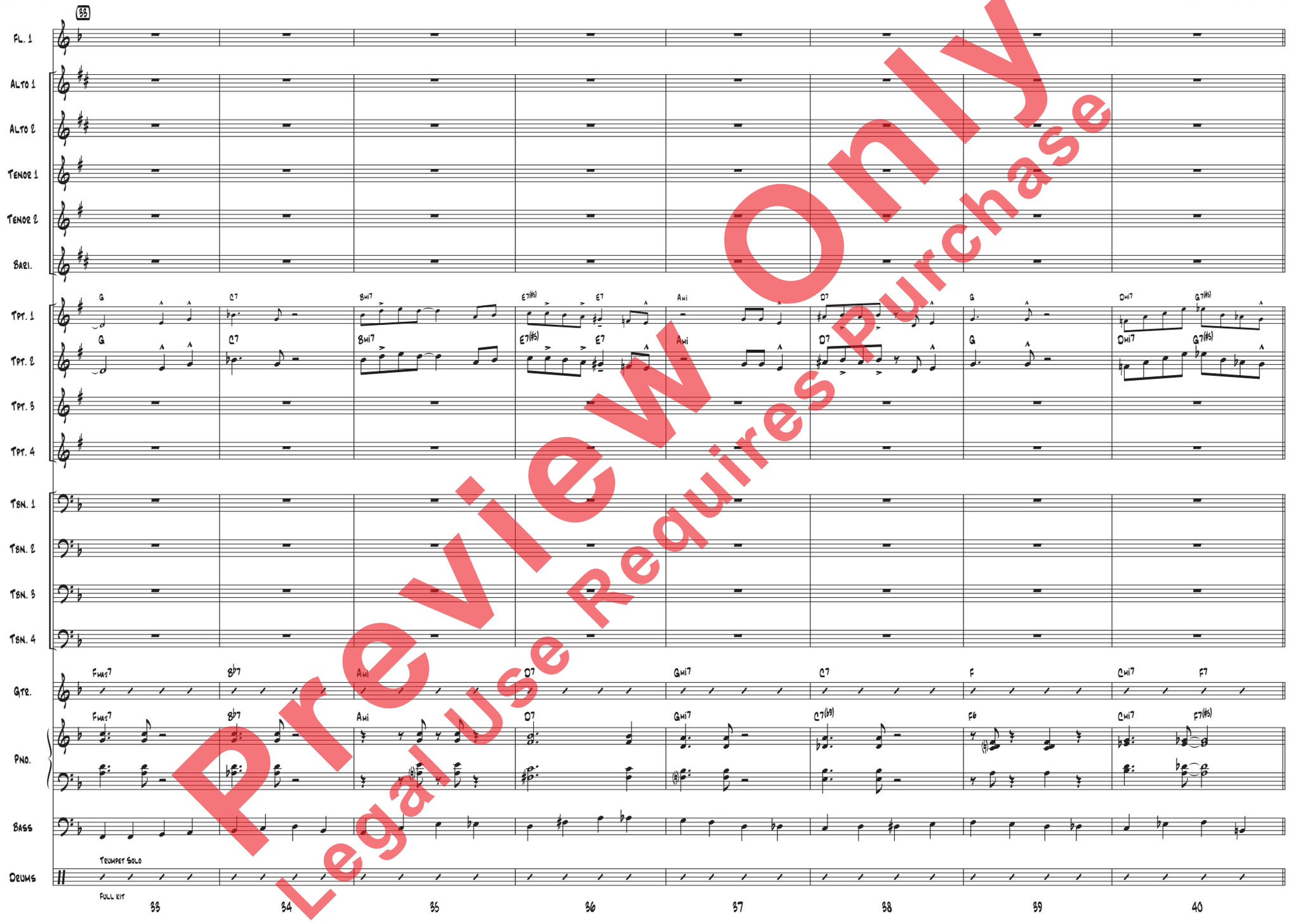
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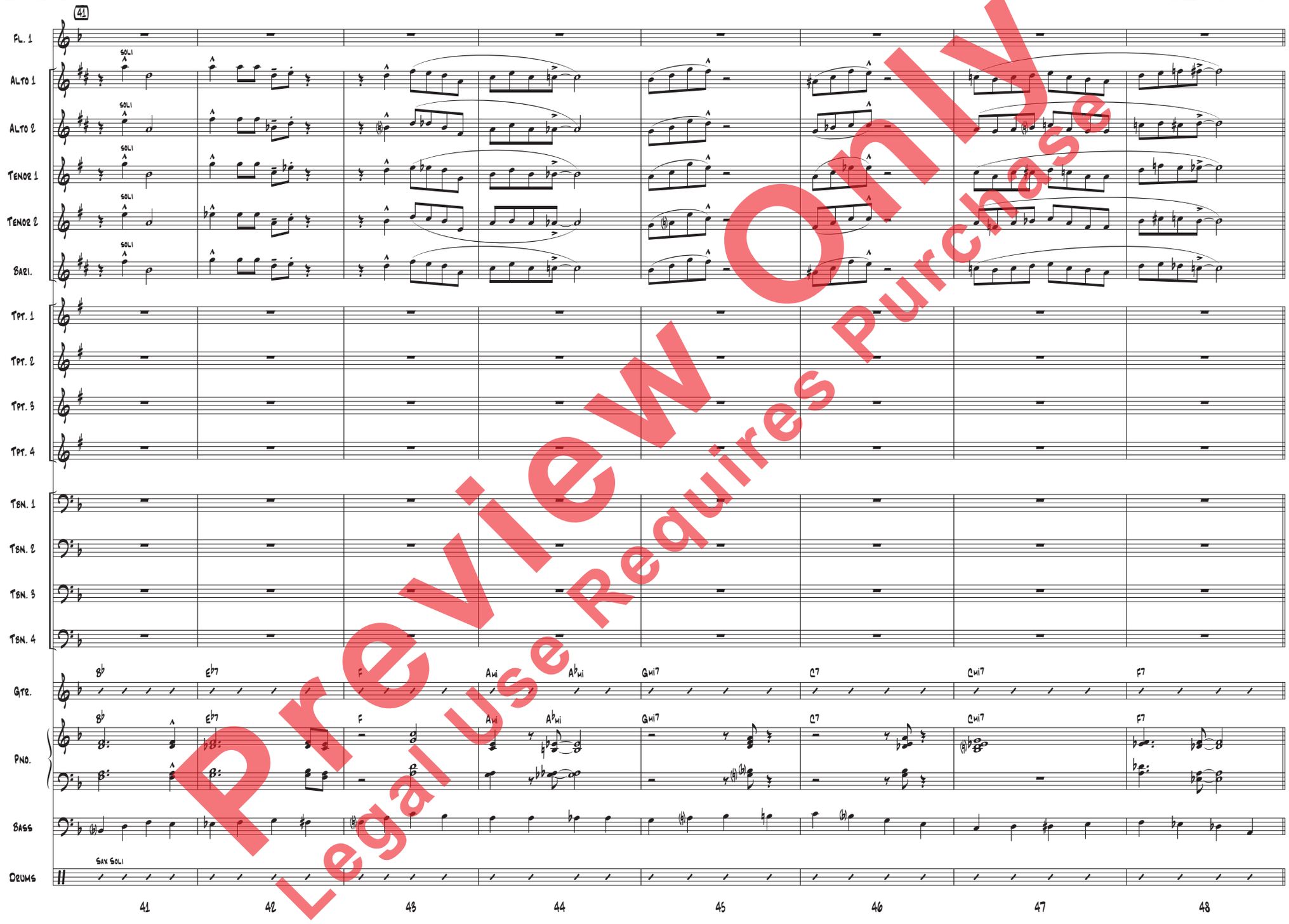
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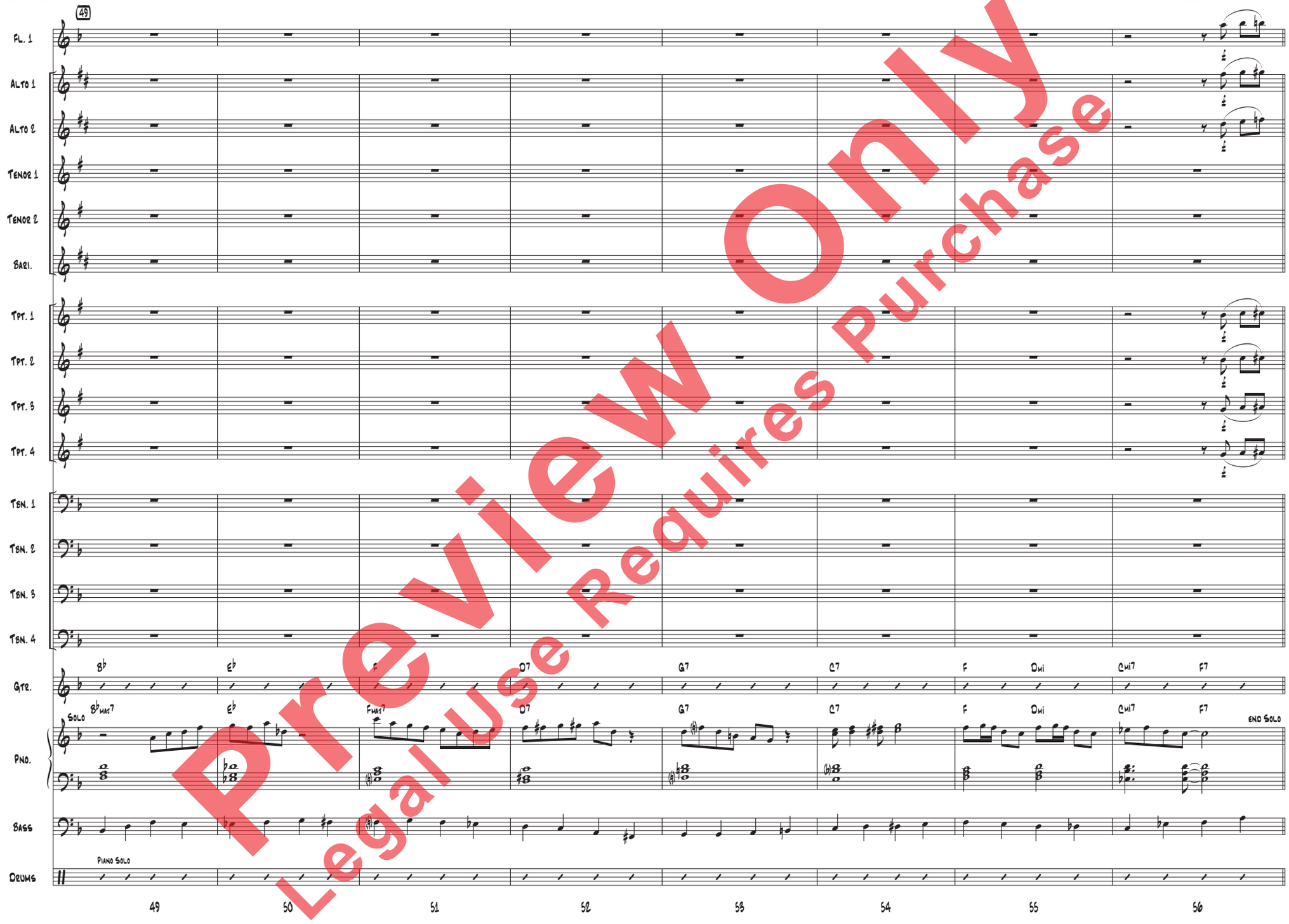
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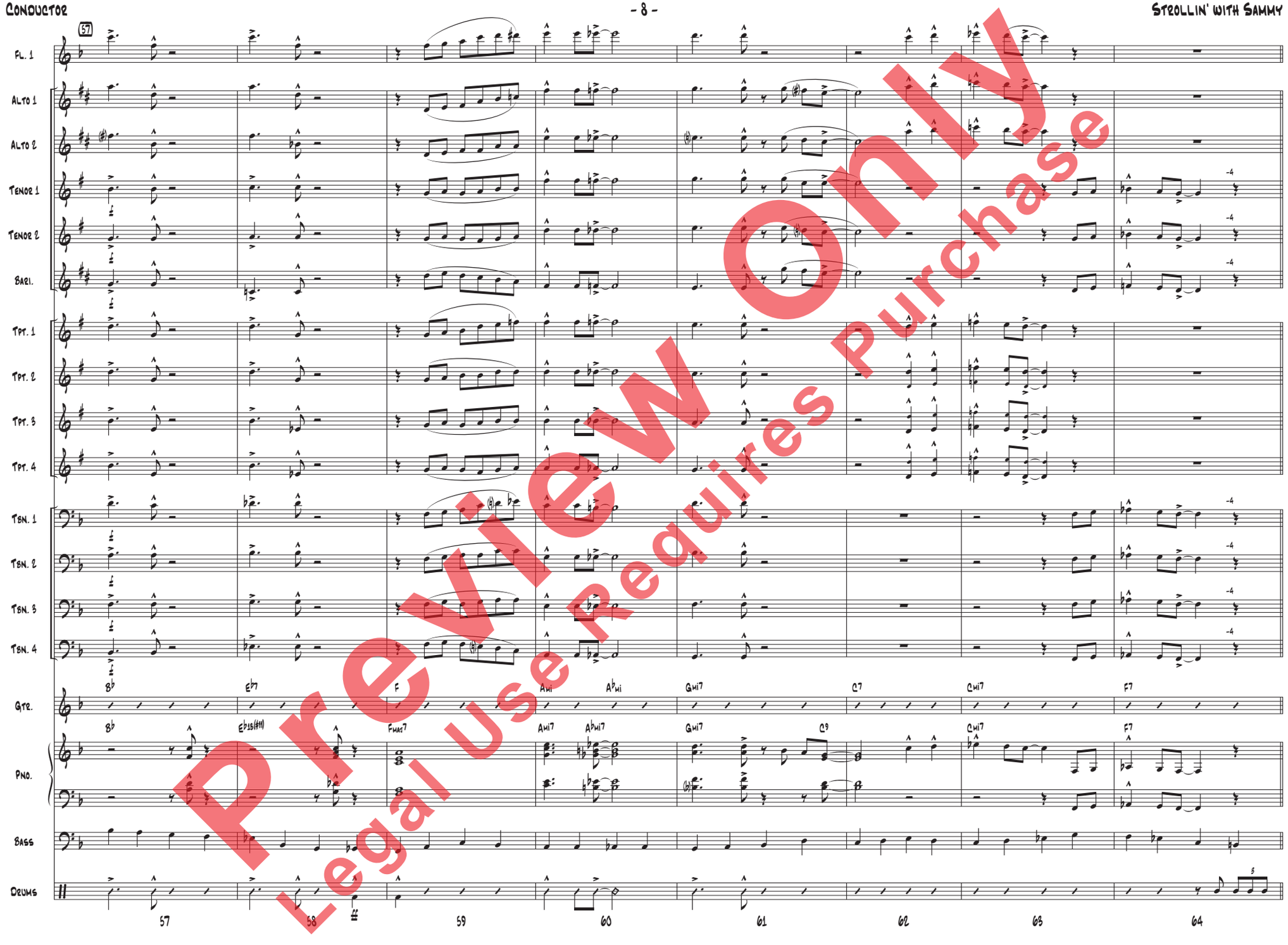
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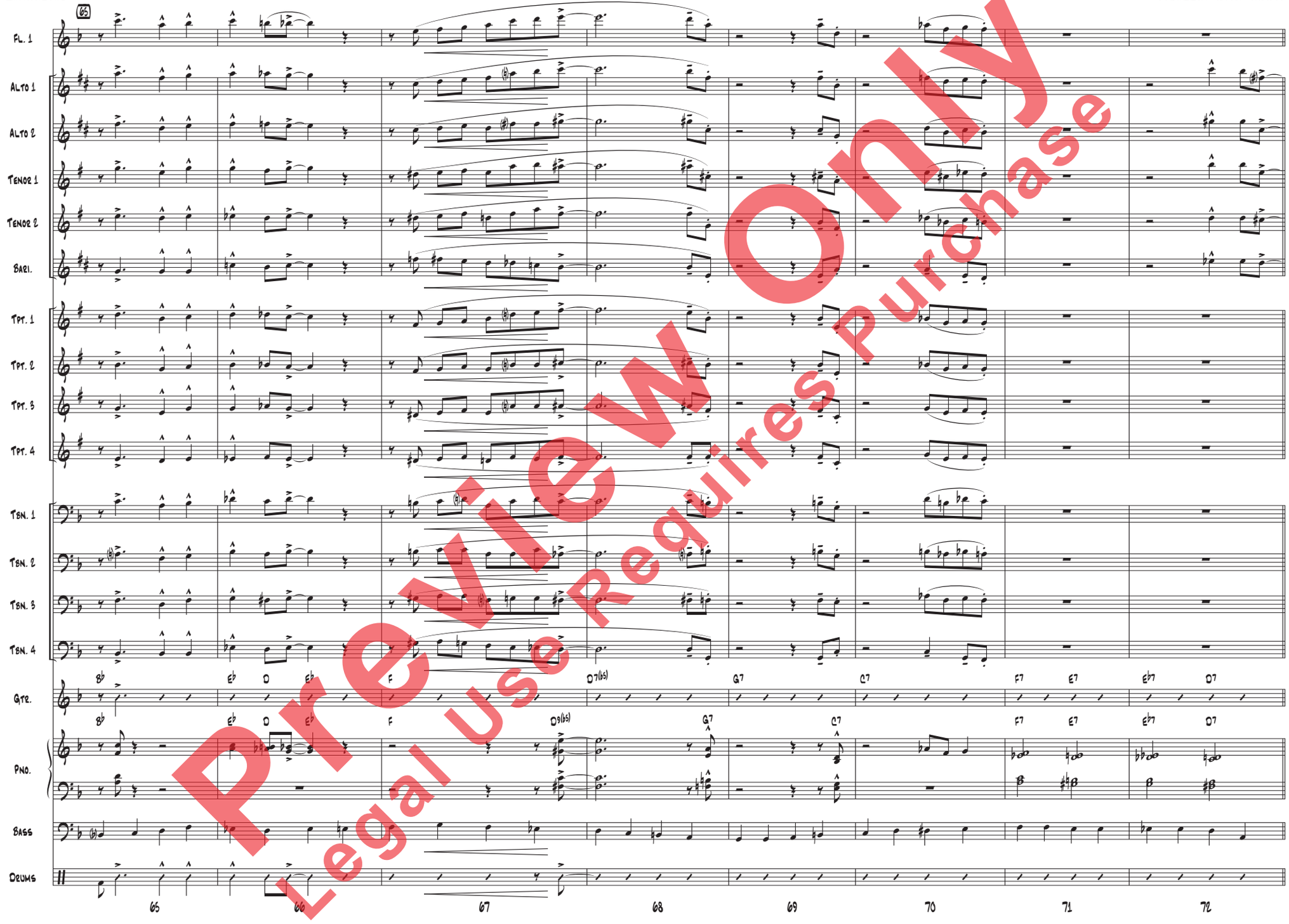
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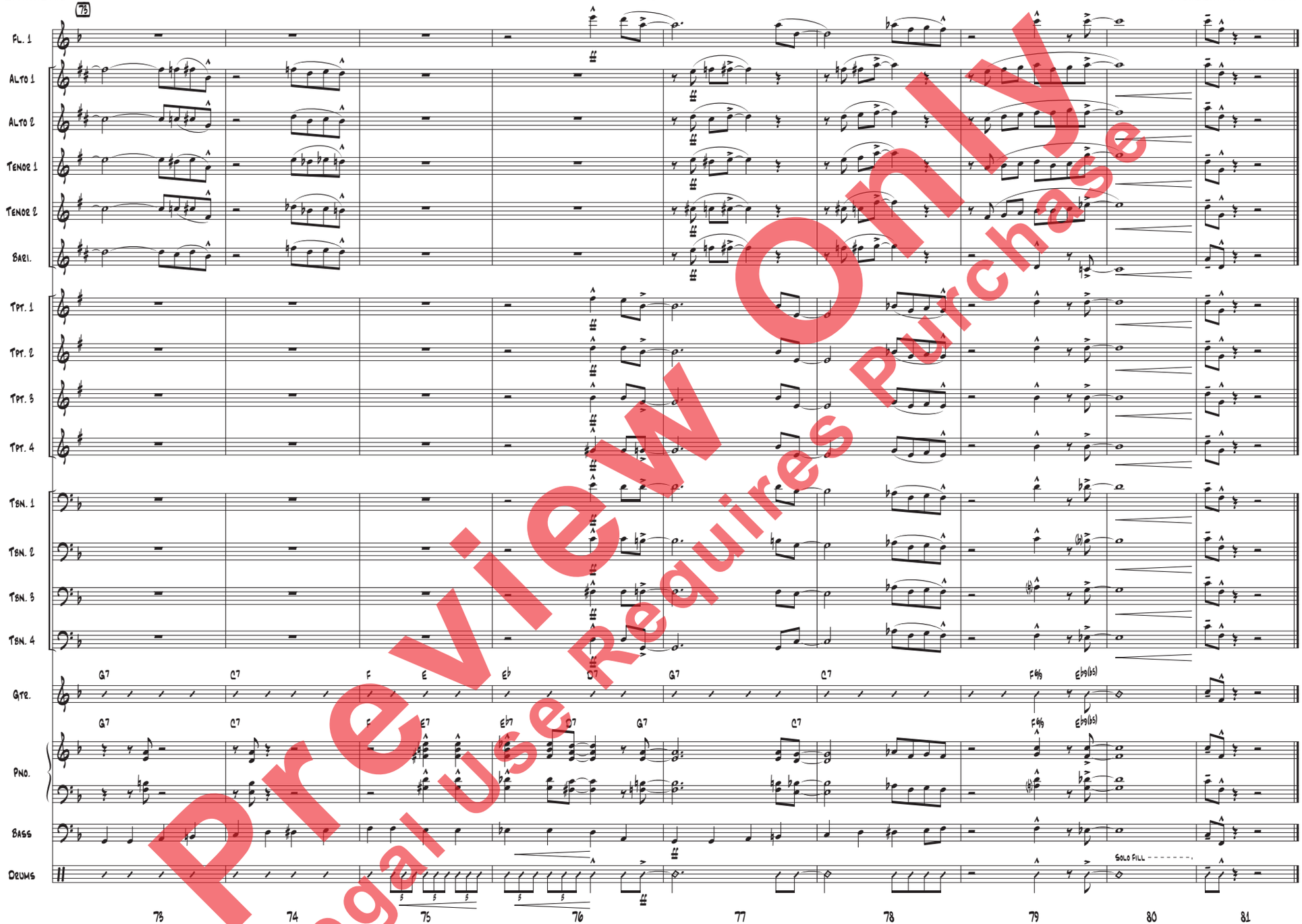
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