Twenty Violin Duets

Steven L. Rosenhaus

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Twenty Violin Duets

Steven L. Rosenhaus

Composer Steven Rosenhaus wrote the *Twenty Violin Duets* over two and a half months in 2020 out of the pure need to write rather than a commission. The collection explores ways to compose, both as a culmination of knowledge and an expansion of it. The only restriction is that the duration of each duet is relatively brief. The shortest is 24 seconds long, the longest about 4 minutes.

I. (Allegro ♩ = 136). The melody here is a mosaic, bits and pieces passing back and forth between the players. The rhythm is intense but fluid, as is the harmony.

II. (Moderato ♩ = 96). This is a waltz in a newer tonal language.

III. (Presto ♩ = 144) "(Octatonic Scale). The octatonic (8 note) scale has been used by composers as diverse as Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky, and Debussy.

IV. (Adagio ♩ = 56) "(Fifths). This duet builds both melodic and harmonic language from the interval of a fifth.

V. (Vivace ♩ = 112) "(Phrygian). In Pope Gregory's time the Catholic Church codified modes for use in prayer. The Phrygian mode used in this duet has a sort of "minor-ish" sound.

VI. (Moderato ♩ = 96, Allegro ma non troppo ♩ = 120). Consider this an appreciation of — but is by no means an attempt to duplicate — Indian classical music.

VII. (Lively ♩ = 120). The musical aesthetics of Debussy and Ravel can seep into your bones and later resurface in surprising ways.

VIII. (Moderato ♩ = 116). This duet weaves between canonic writing (call and response, as it were) and playing in synchronization.

IX. (Moderato ♩ = 104) "(C/E). Composers like Darius Milhaud and Charles Ives use bi-tonality to great effect; here C major and E major are juxtaposed in the context of a slip jig (a jig in 9/8 time).

X. (Presto ♩ = 136) (Sul G/Sul D). Most of this duet is played on the violins' two lowest strings, the G and D.

XI. (Moderato ♩ = 132). Here's a bit of fun; a bit of ragtime and a bit of early 20th century South American music.

XII. (Moderato ♩ = 116). Bird calls (of a non-existent bird) and drones are the genesis of this duet.

XIII. (Vivace ♩ = 152). Here is a bit of cinematic flash, like a really good chase scene.

XIV. (Maestoso ♩ = 60). This is a gentle nocturne with sustaining chords and little motion.

XV. (Allegro ♪ = 264). If No. XIII is a chase scene, this duet is straight out of an adventure movie.

XVI. (Moderato ♩ = 96). The inevitable (brief) tribute to "North-Eastern American Rationalism," or N.E.A.R. music, but it all works out in the end.

XVII. (Moderate waltz tempo ♩ = 132). Here is the antithesis of the previous duet, a lovely and straightforward waltz in D minor.

XVIII. (Lively swing ♩ = 100). The eighteenth duet is not quite jazz, but there are traces of Eddie South and Stuff Smith here and there.

XIX. (Lively ♩ = 120). Take time out to feel this duet in 5/4.

XX. (Andante ♩ = 72). The last duet is based on the ceaseless but evocative rhythms of tangos and other South American dances.

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Twenty Violin Duets

Score

STEVEN L. ROSENHAUS
(ASCAP)

I.

Allegro ♩ = 136

Violin 1

Violin 2

f

6

mp

f

11

13

16

mp

22

f

0'45"

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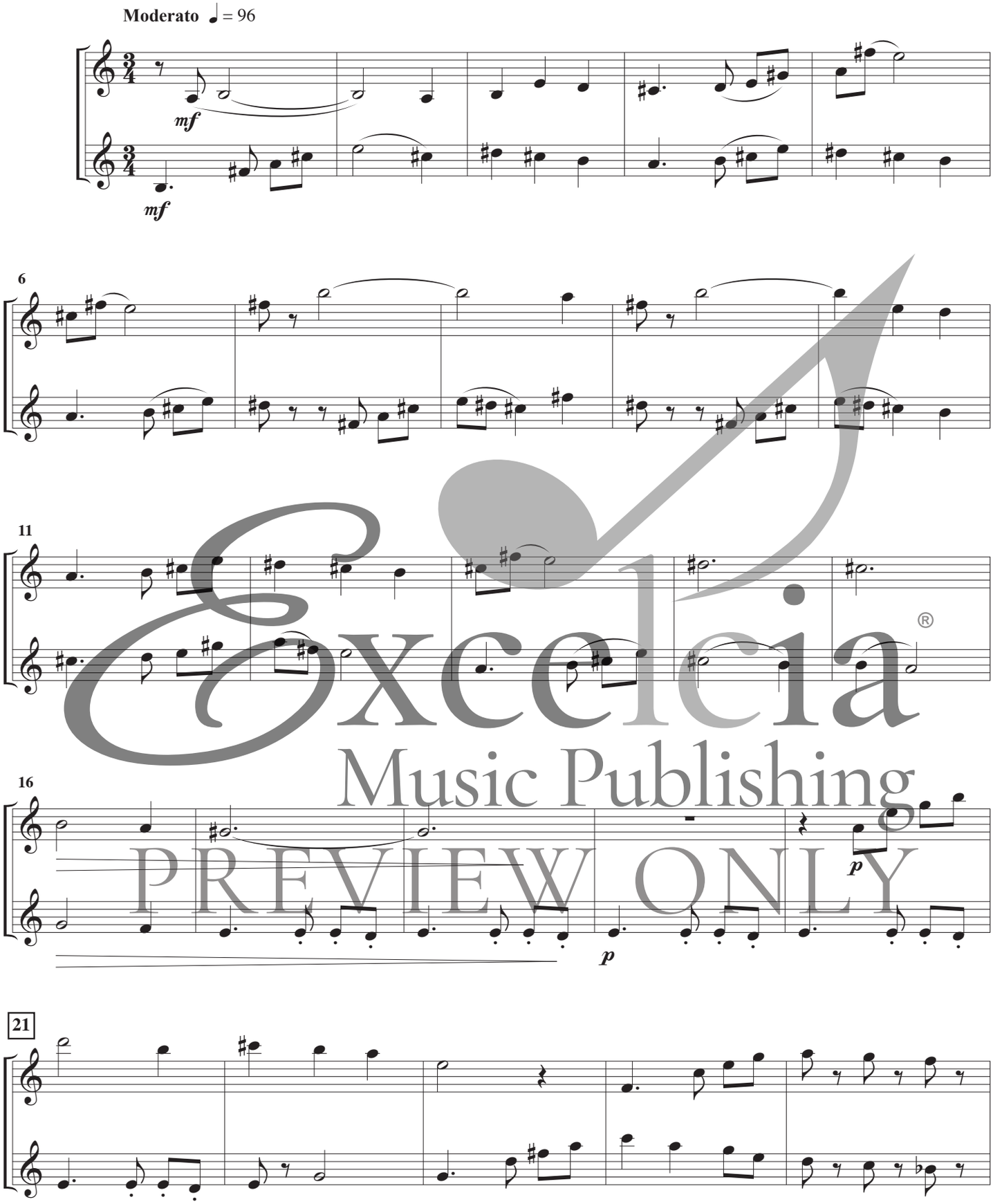

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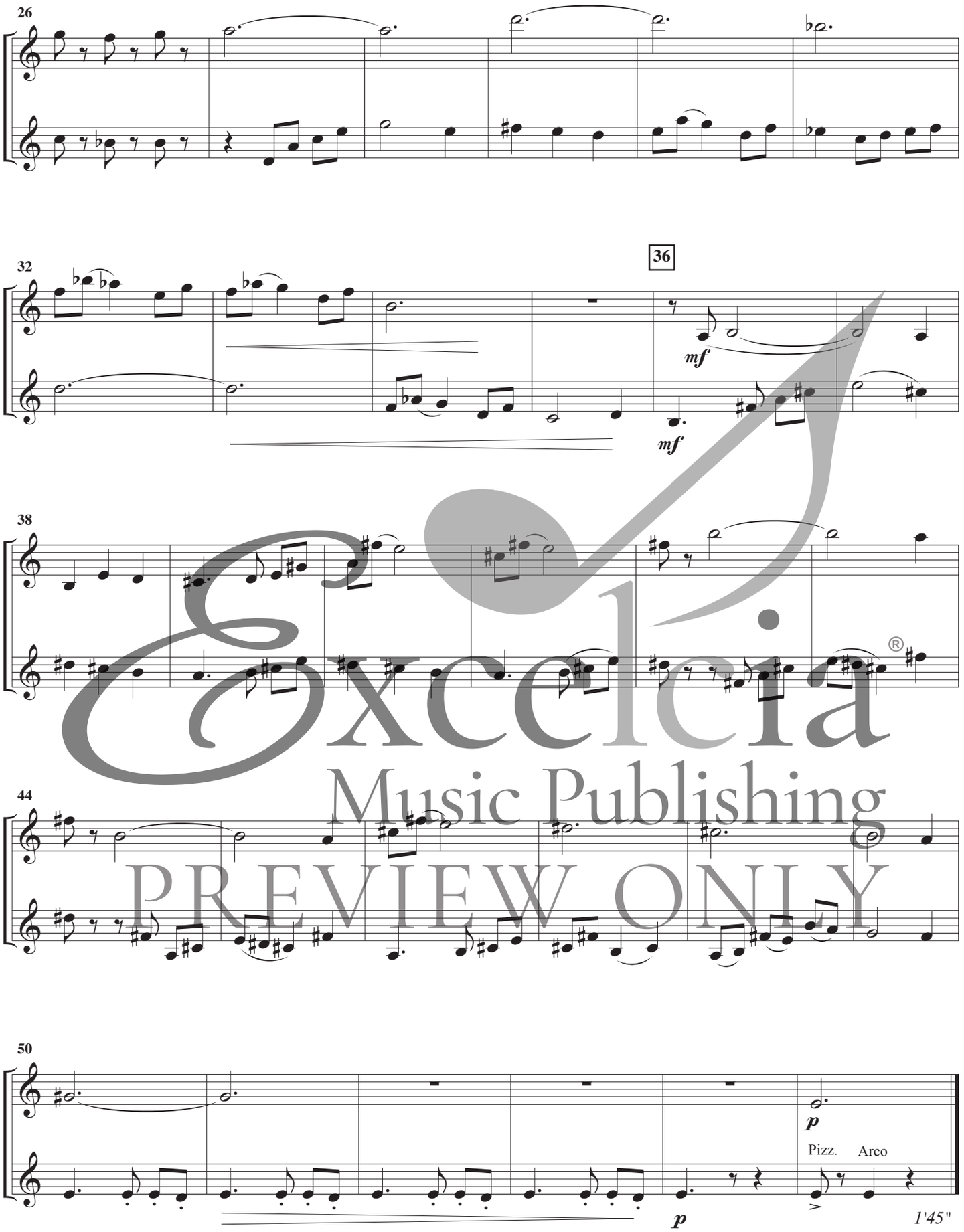

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III.

(Octatonic Scale)

Presto ♩ = 144

mf

mf

5

9

f

f

mf

mf

14

p

p

f

f

18

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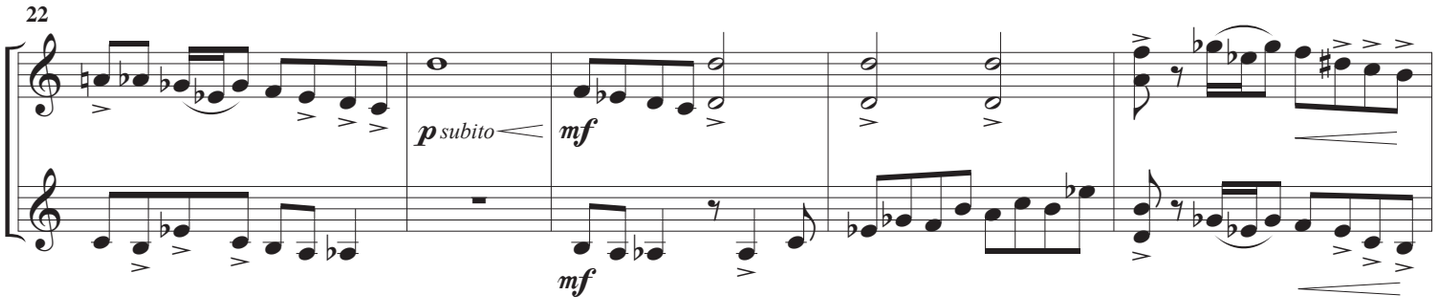
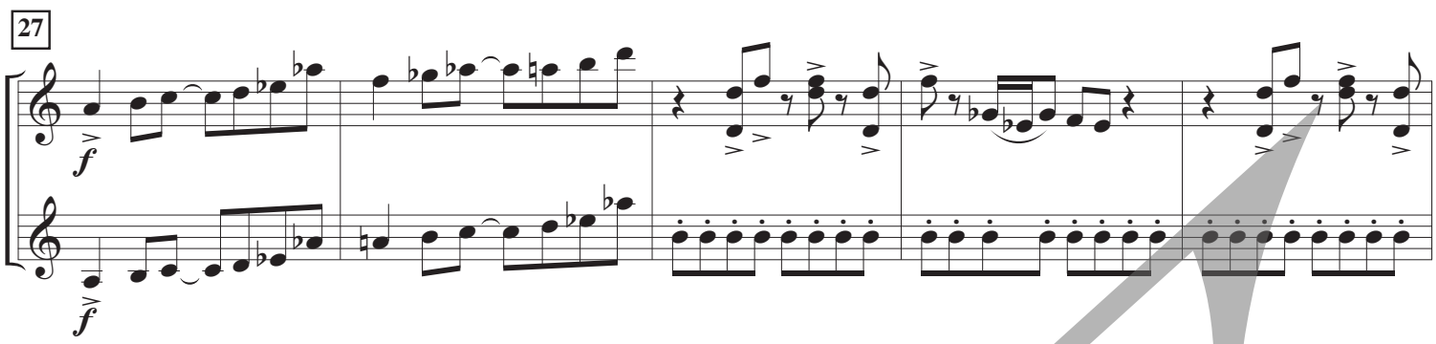
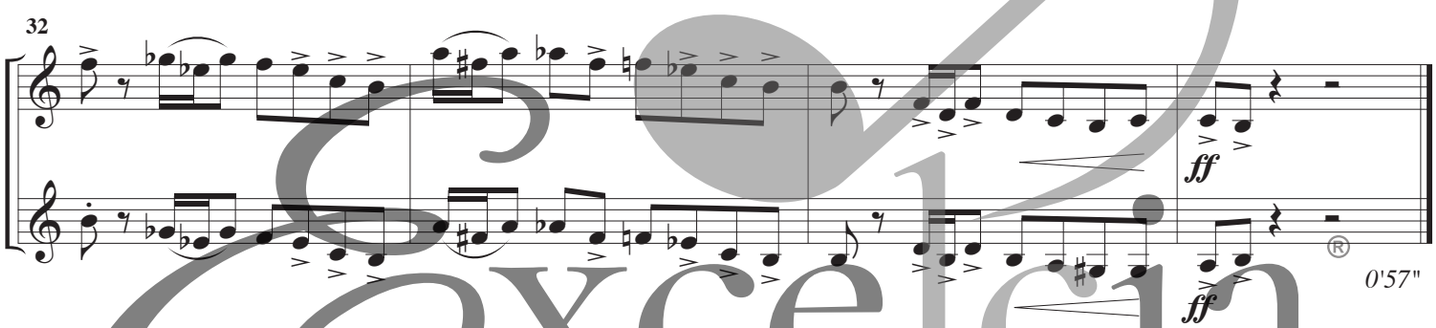




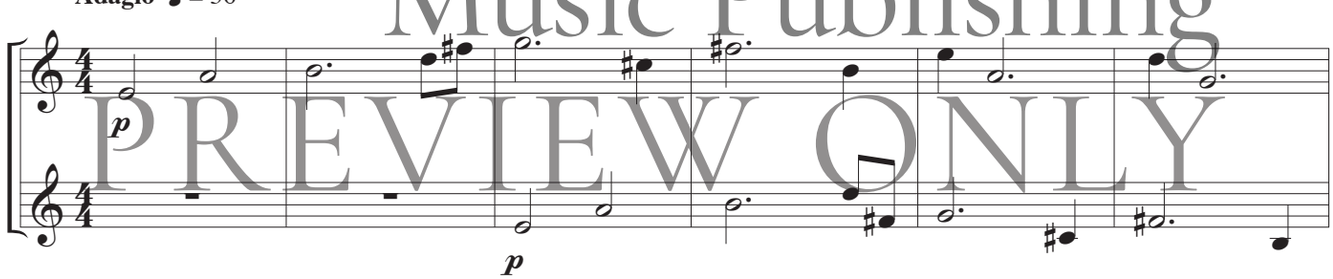


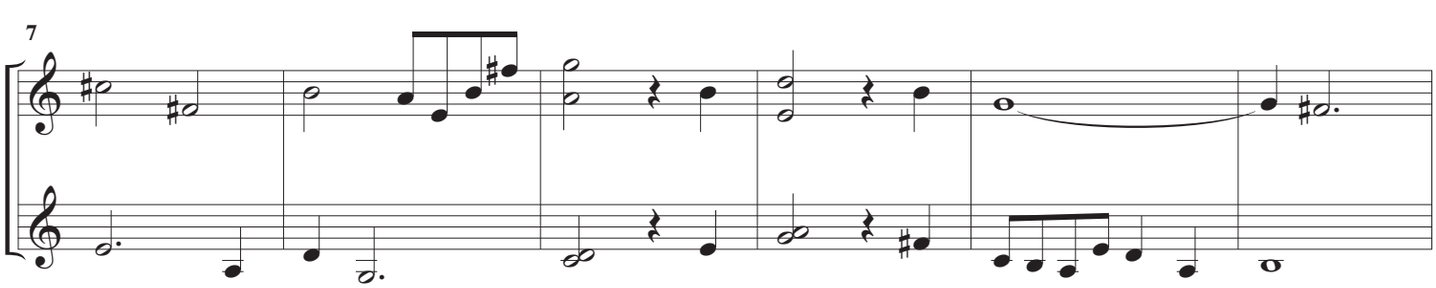
0'57"

IV.

(Fifths)

Adagio ♩ = 56





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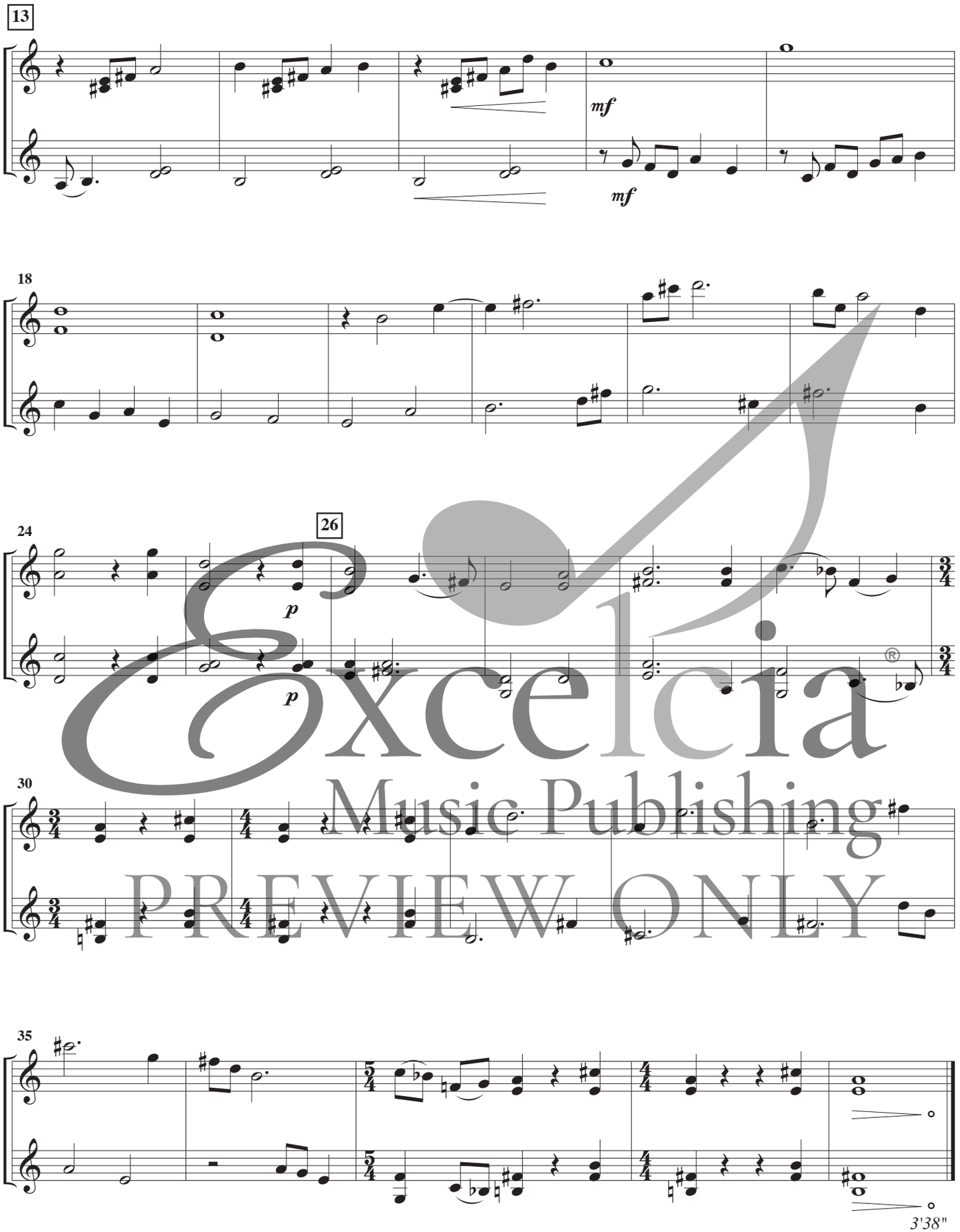

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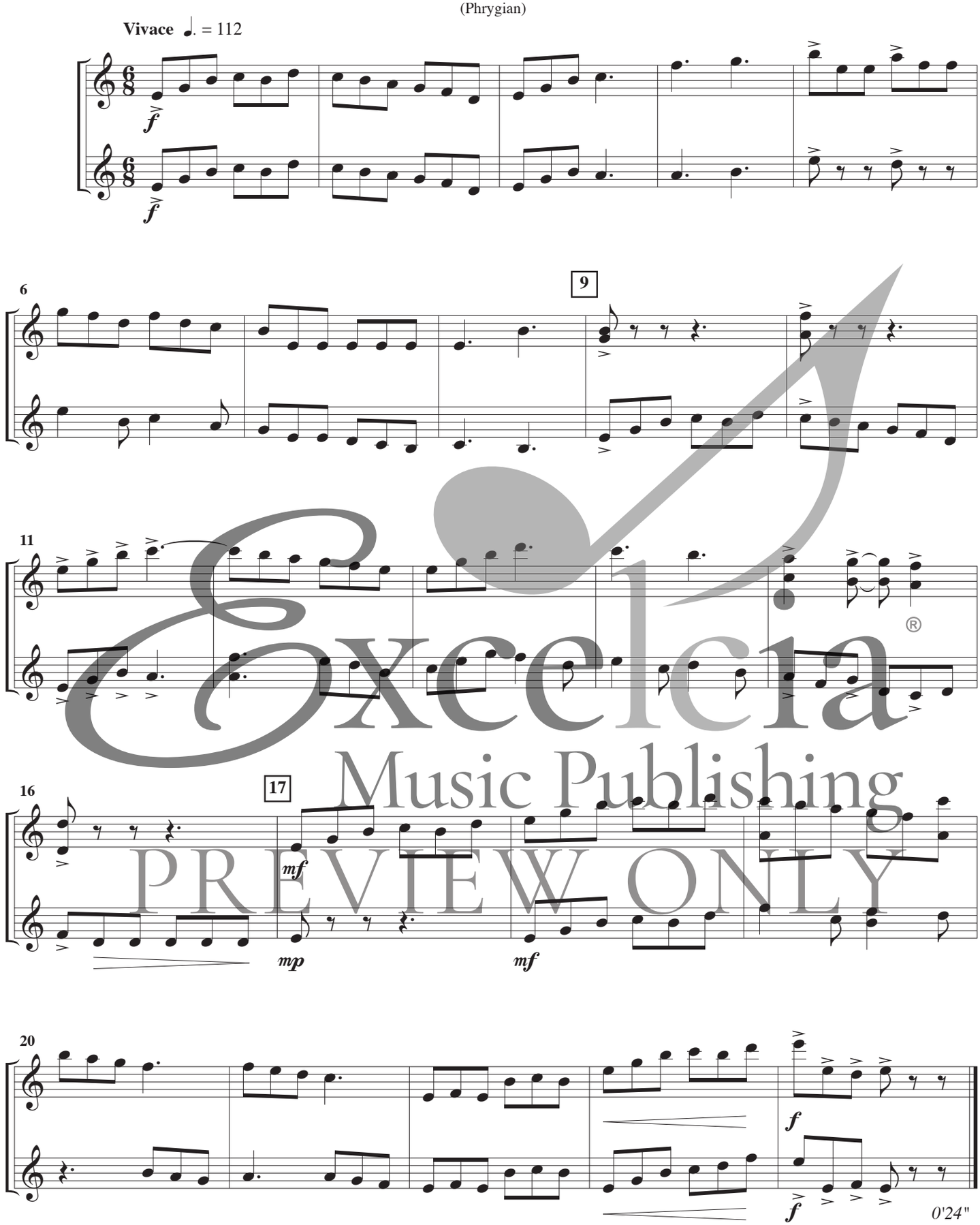
V.
(Phrygian)



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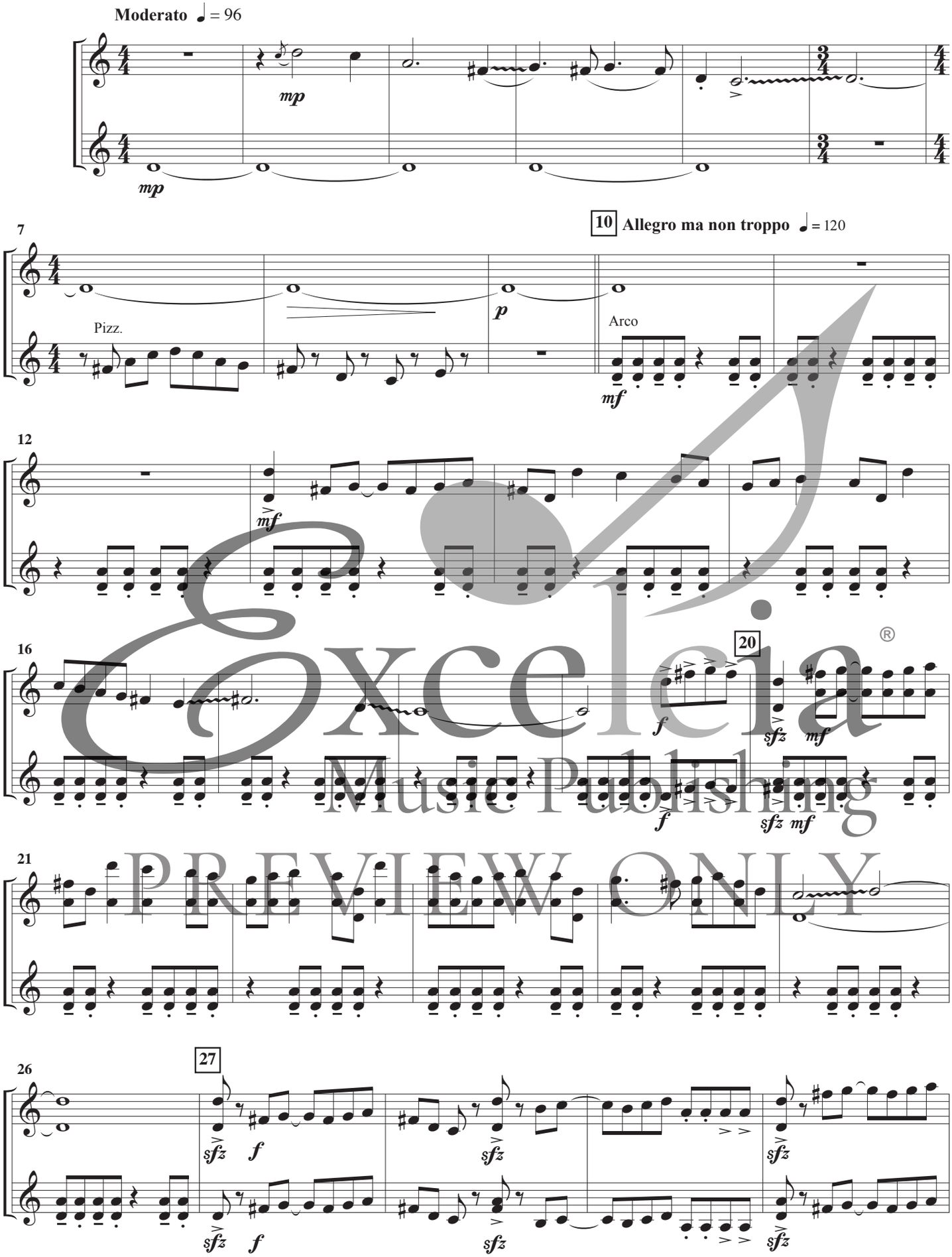

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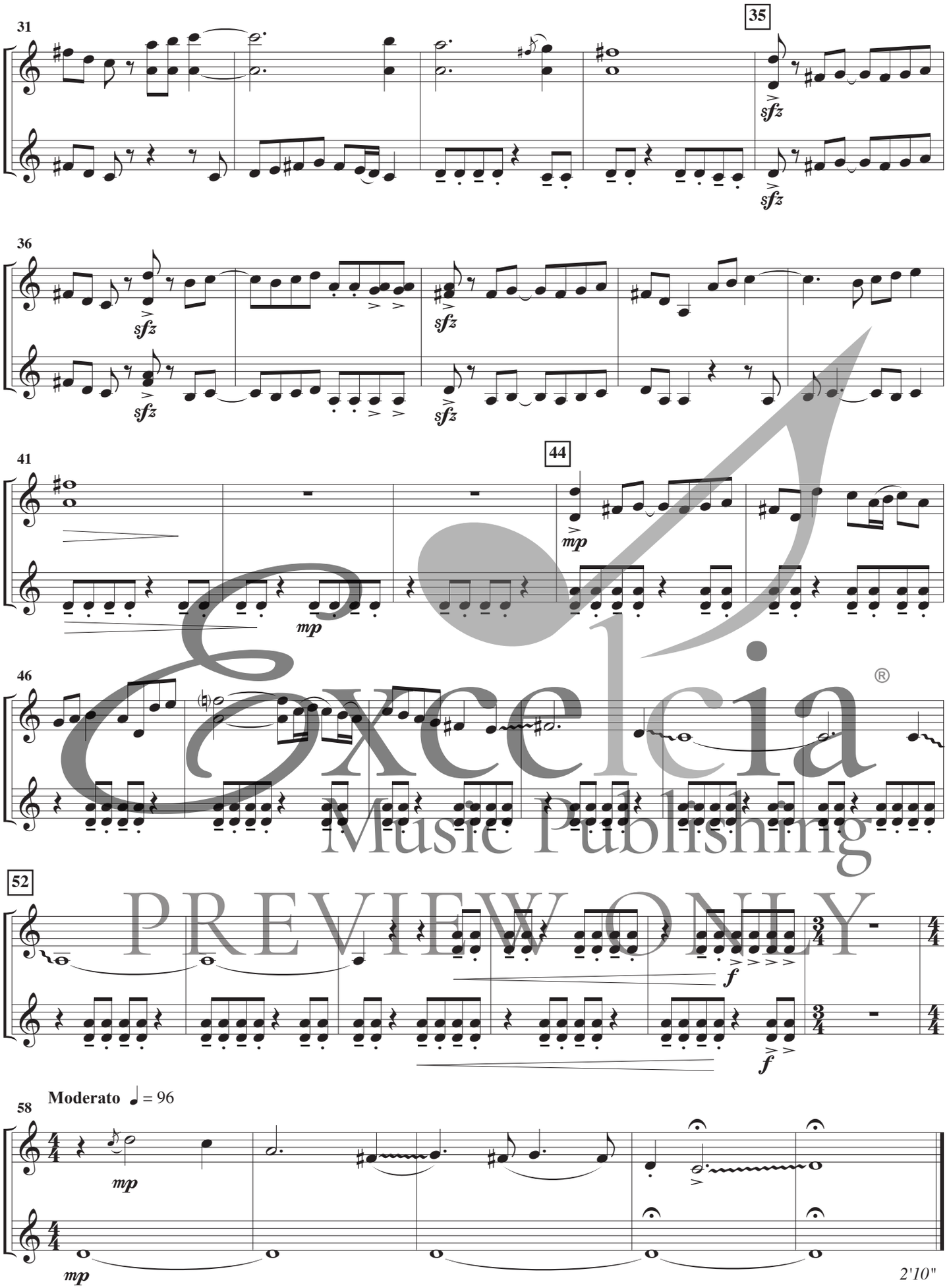

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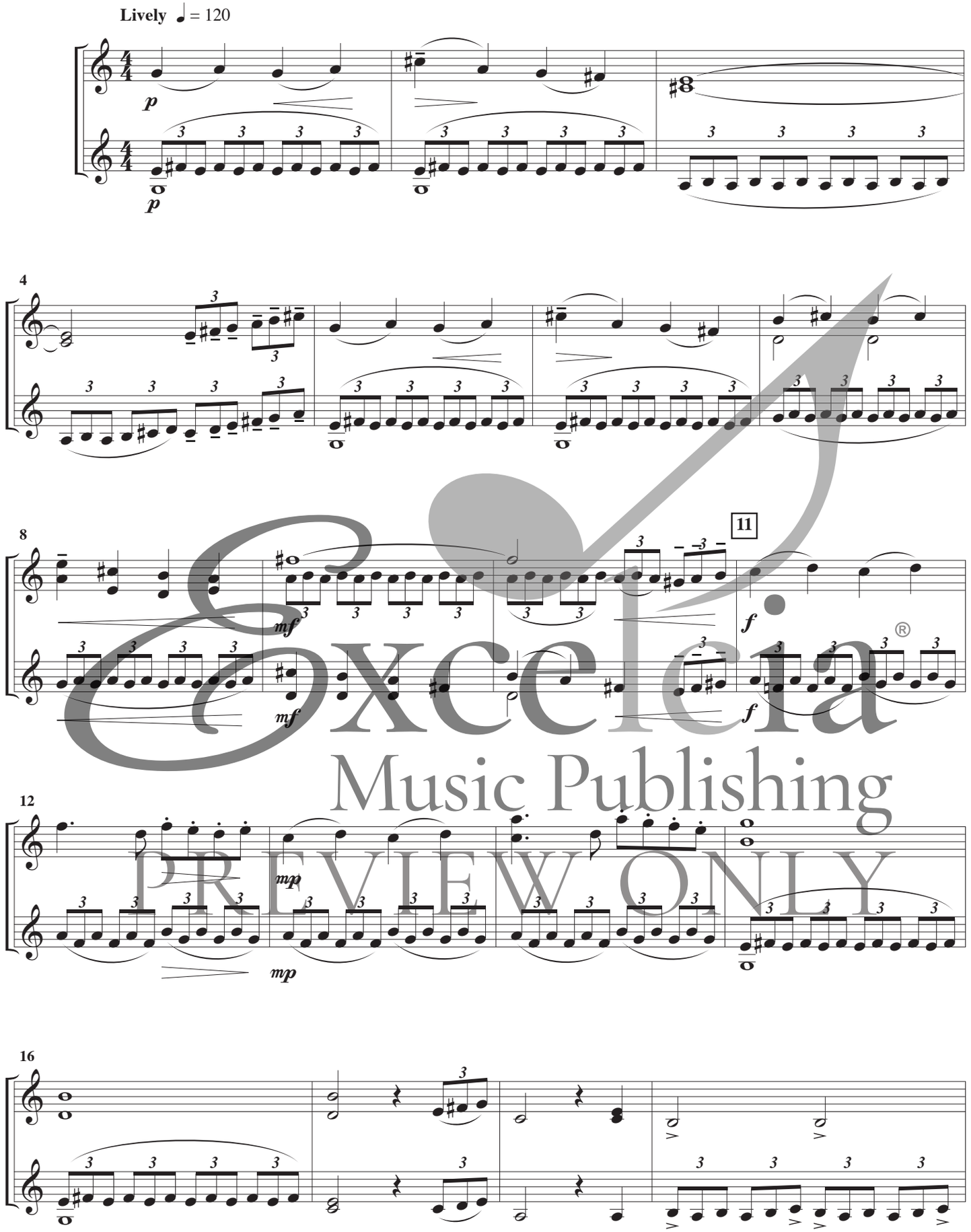

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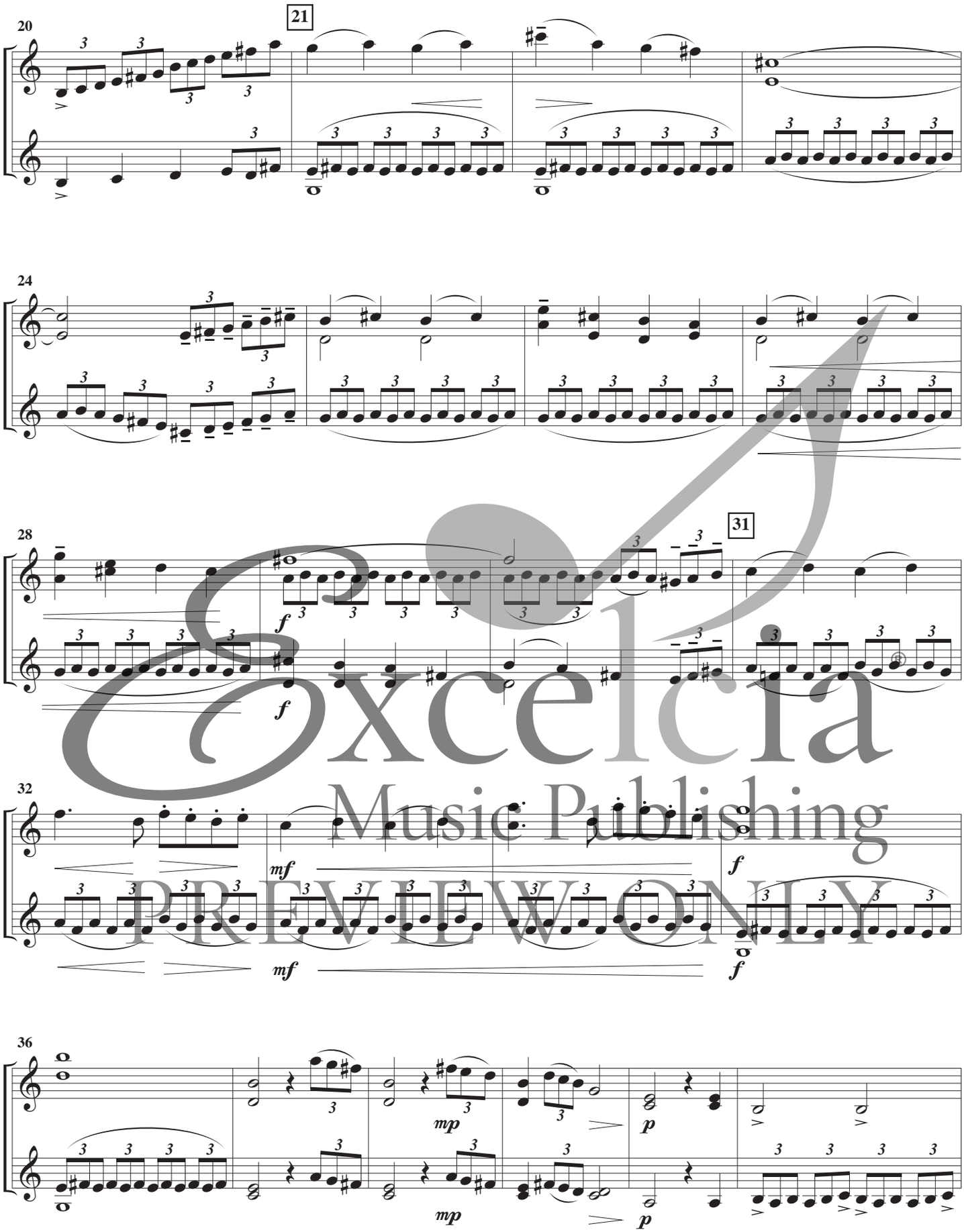

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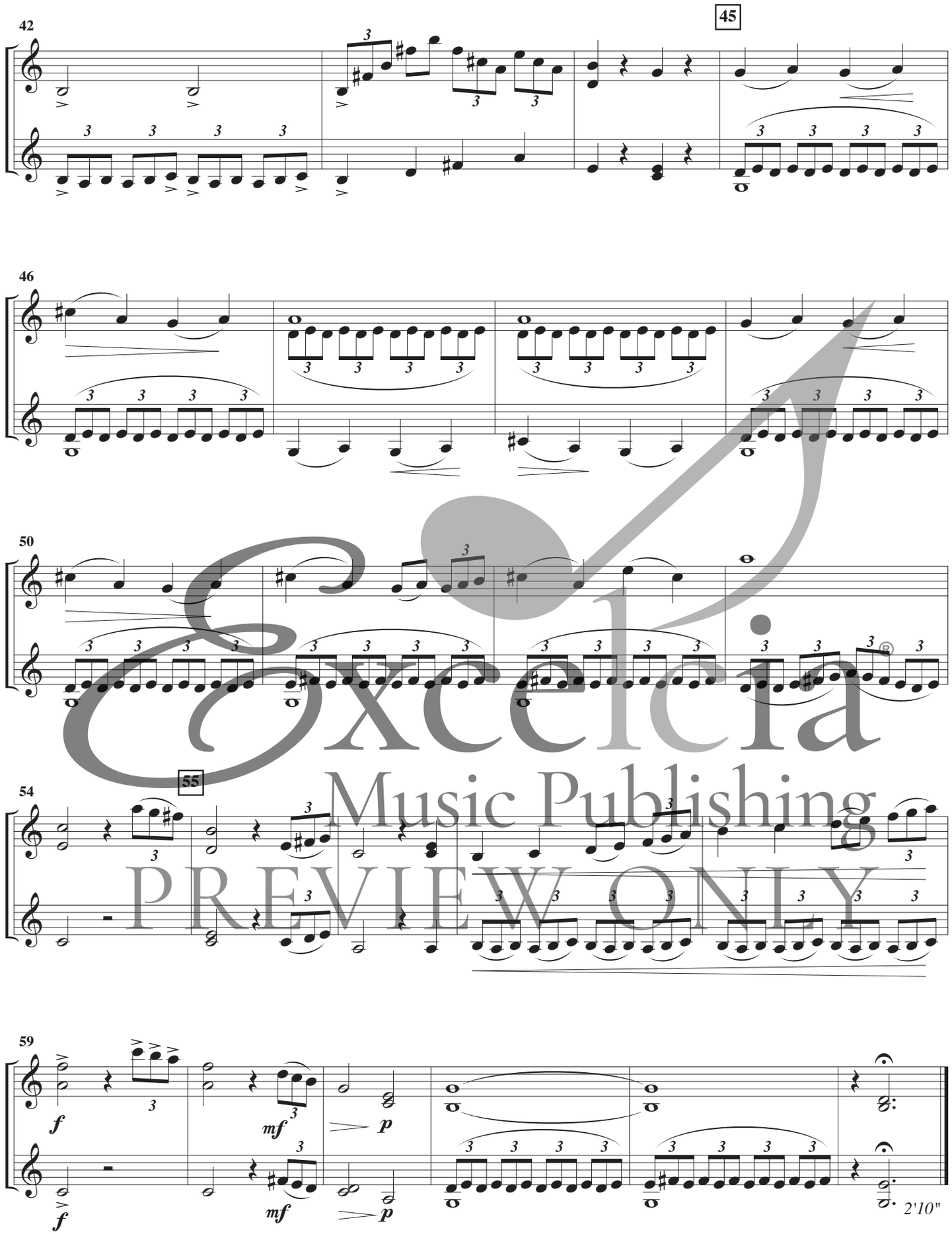

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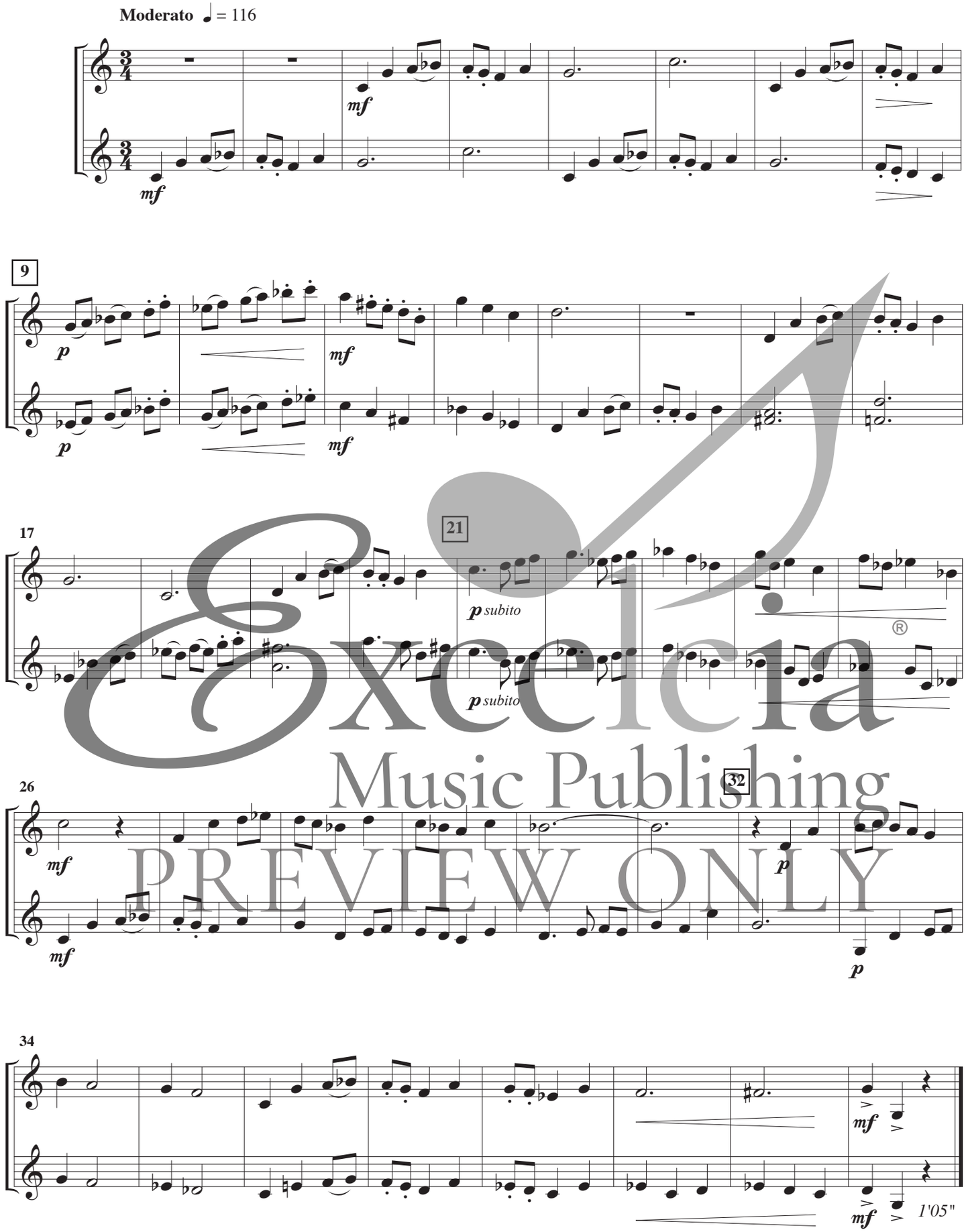

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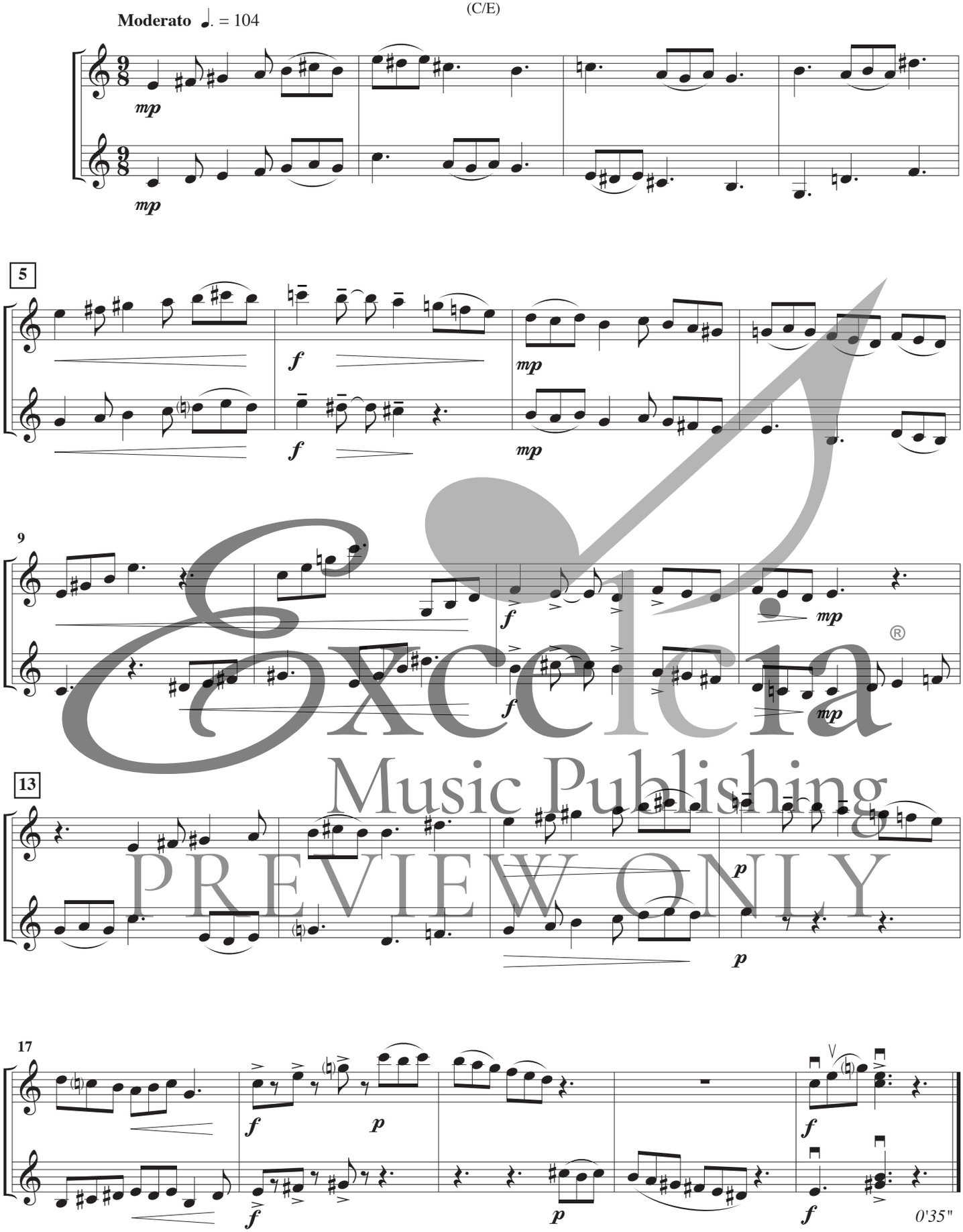
(C/E)



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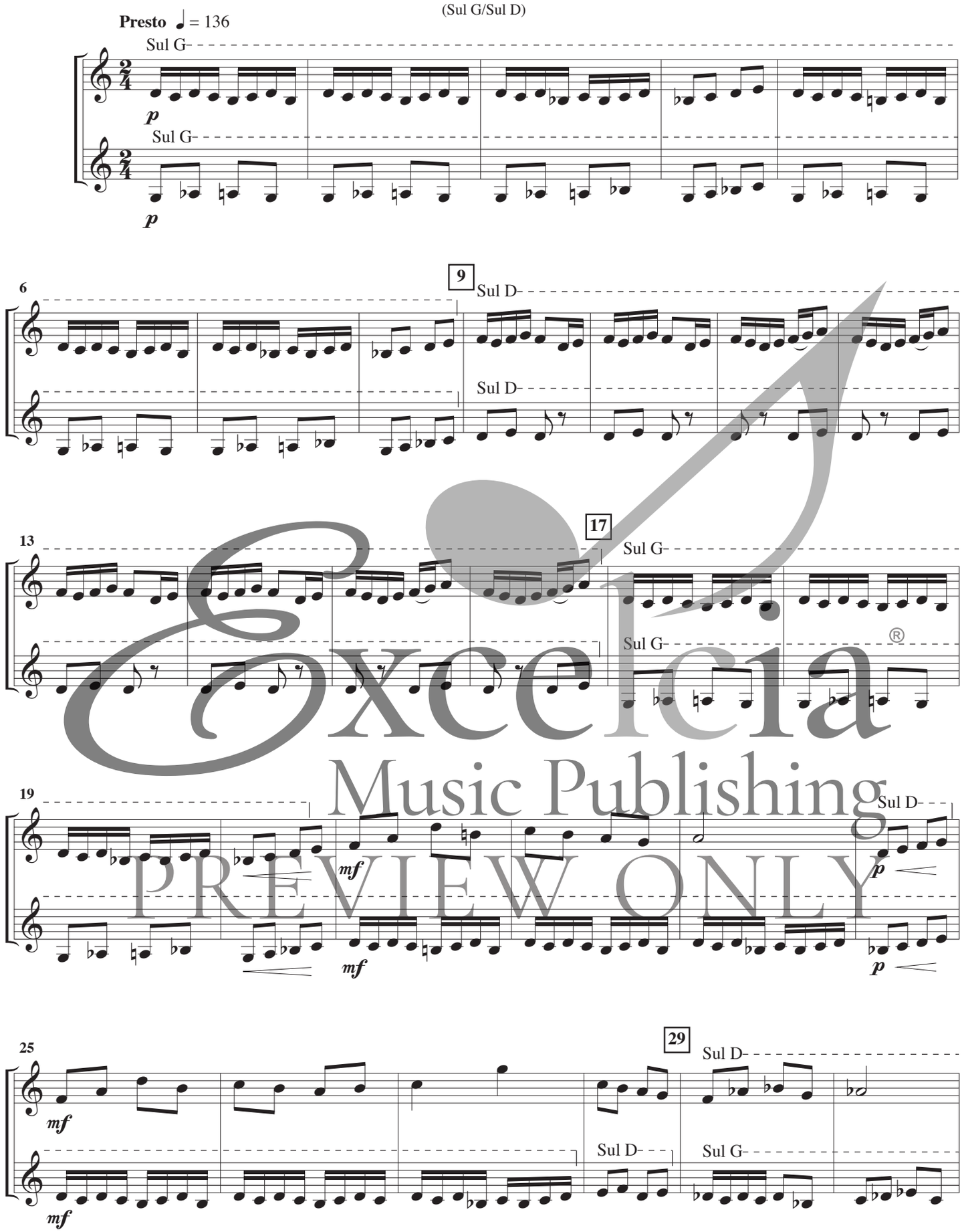
(Sul G/Sul D)



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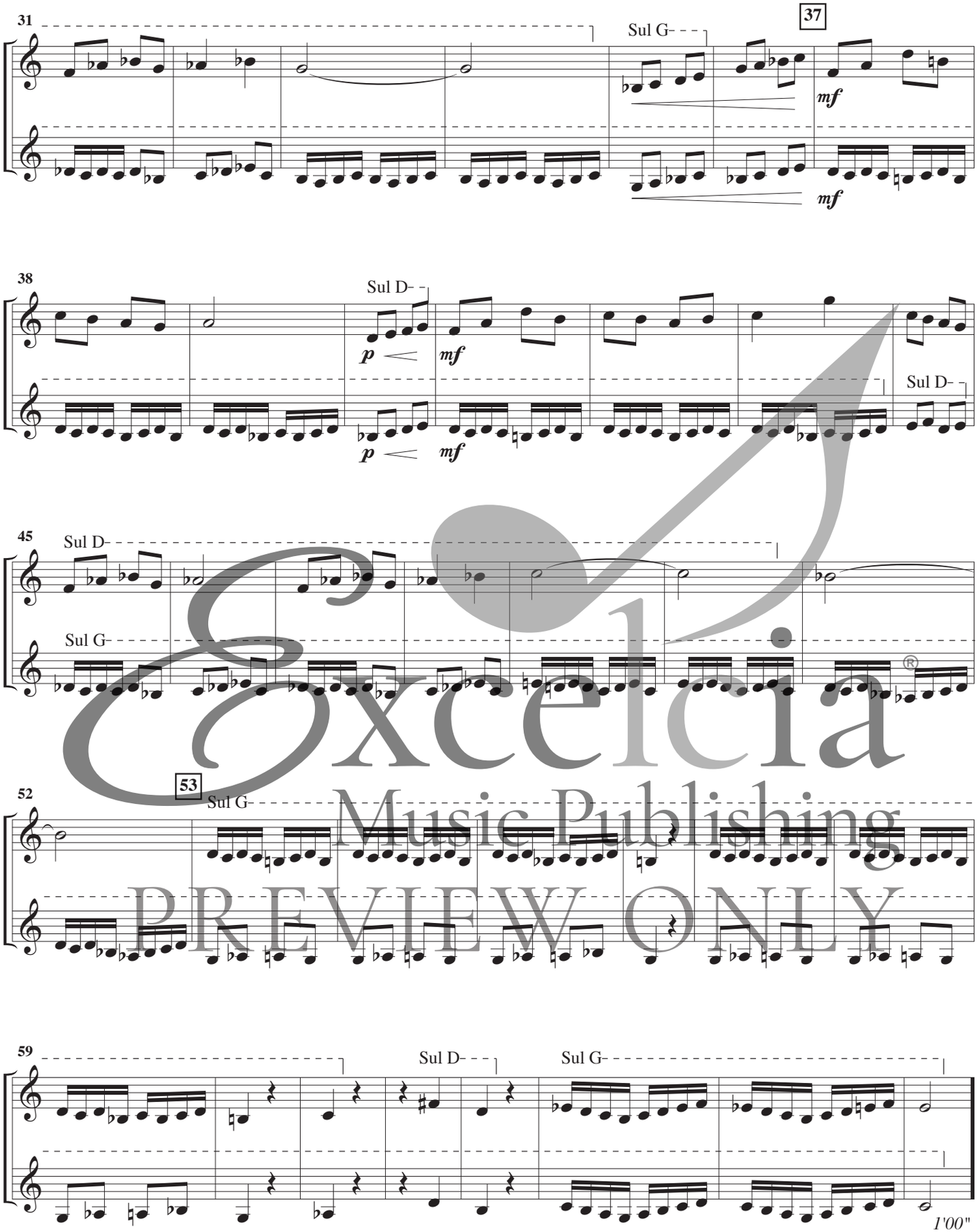

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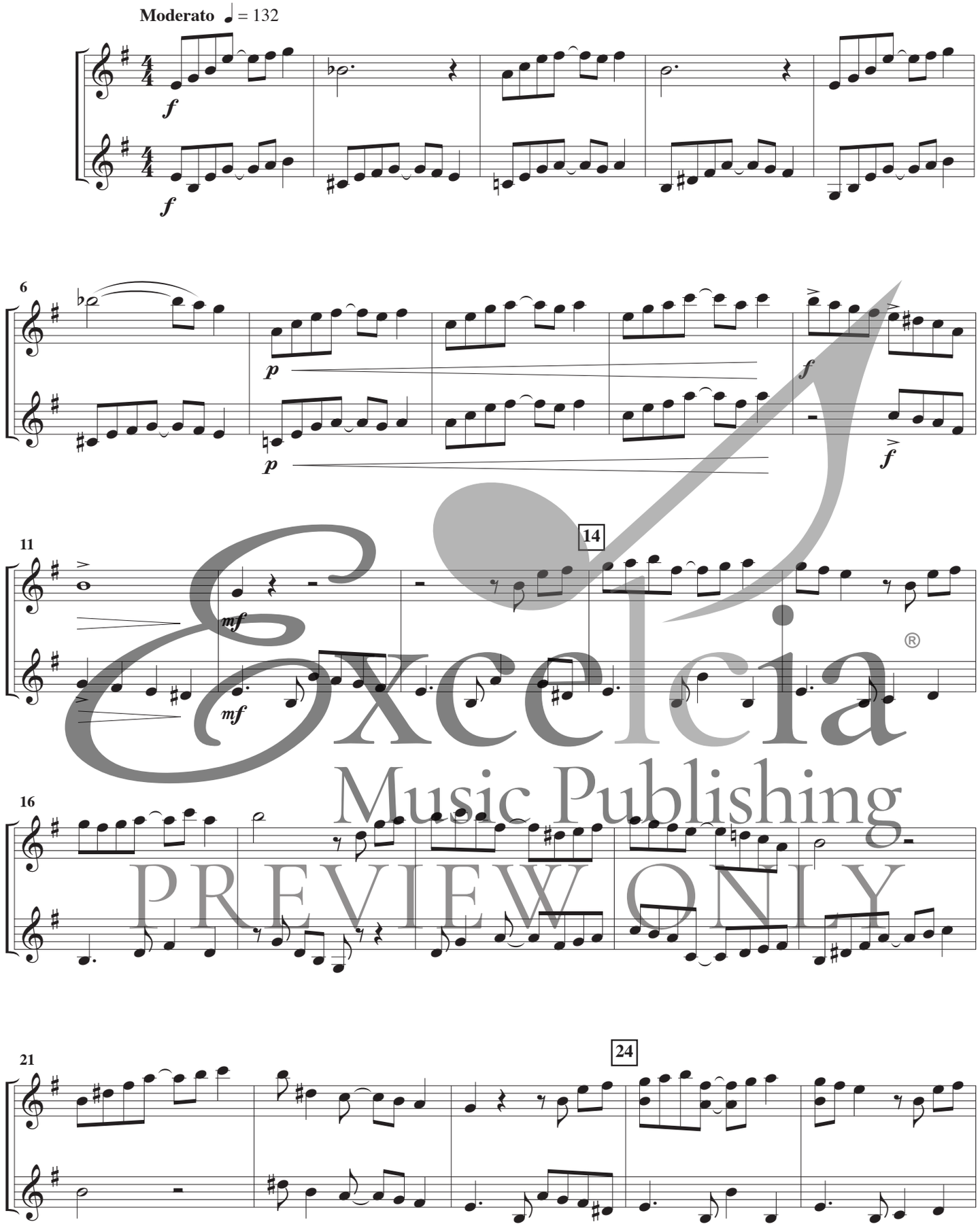

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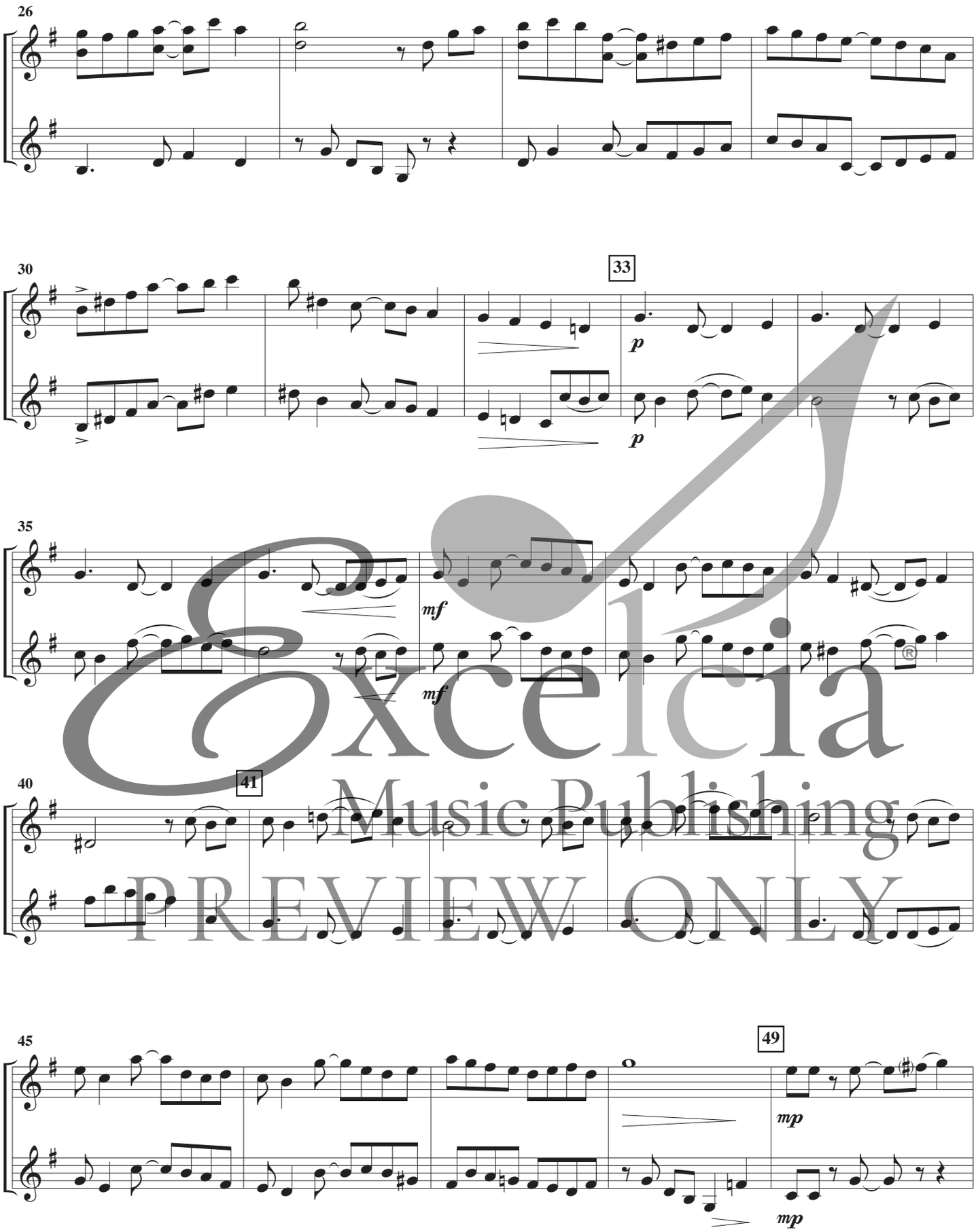

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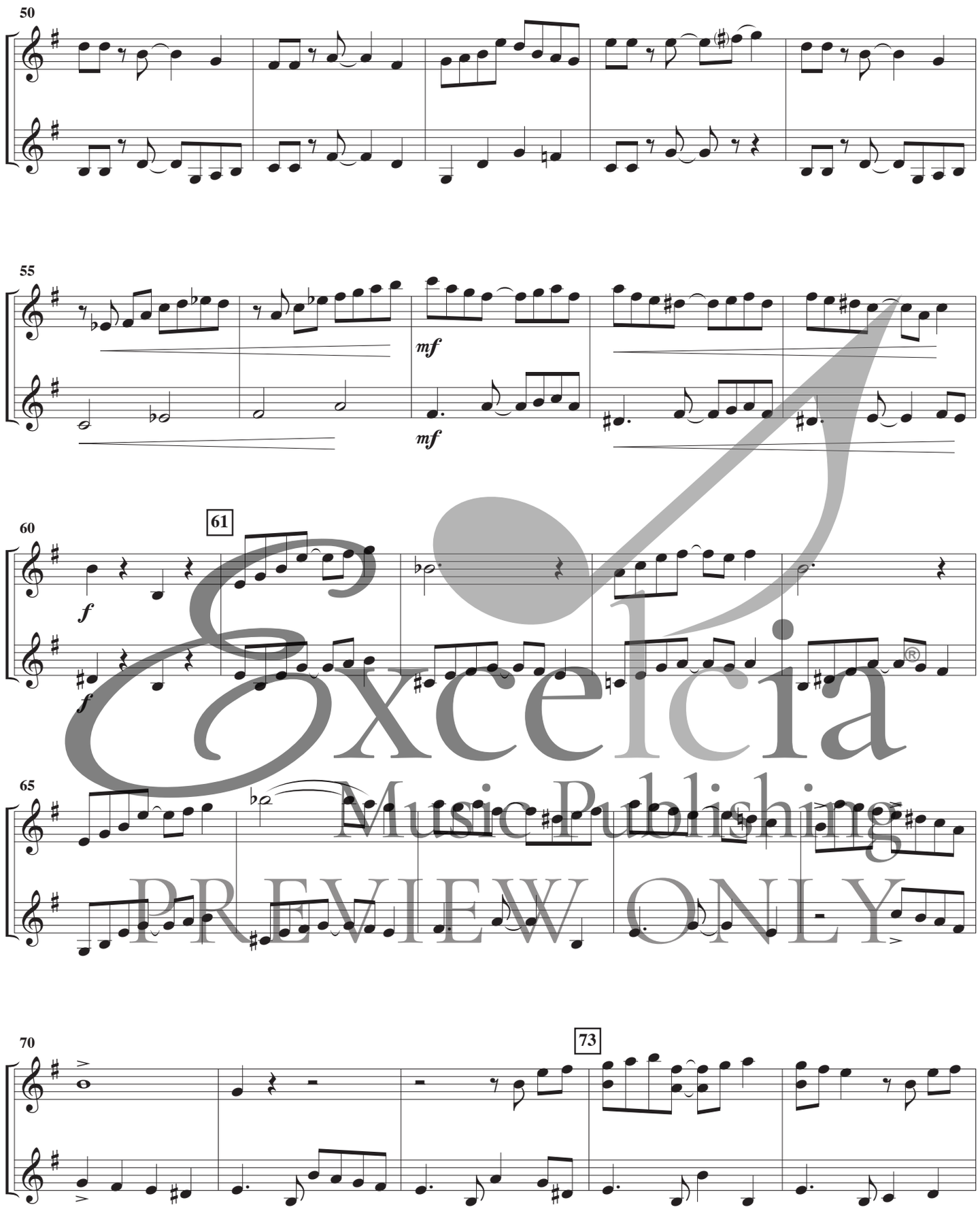

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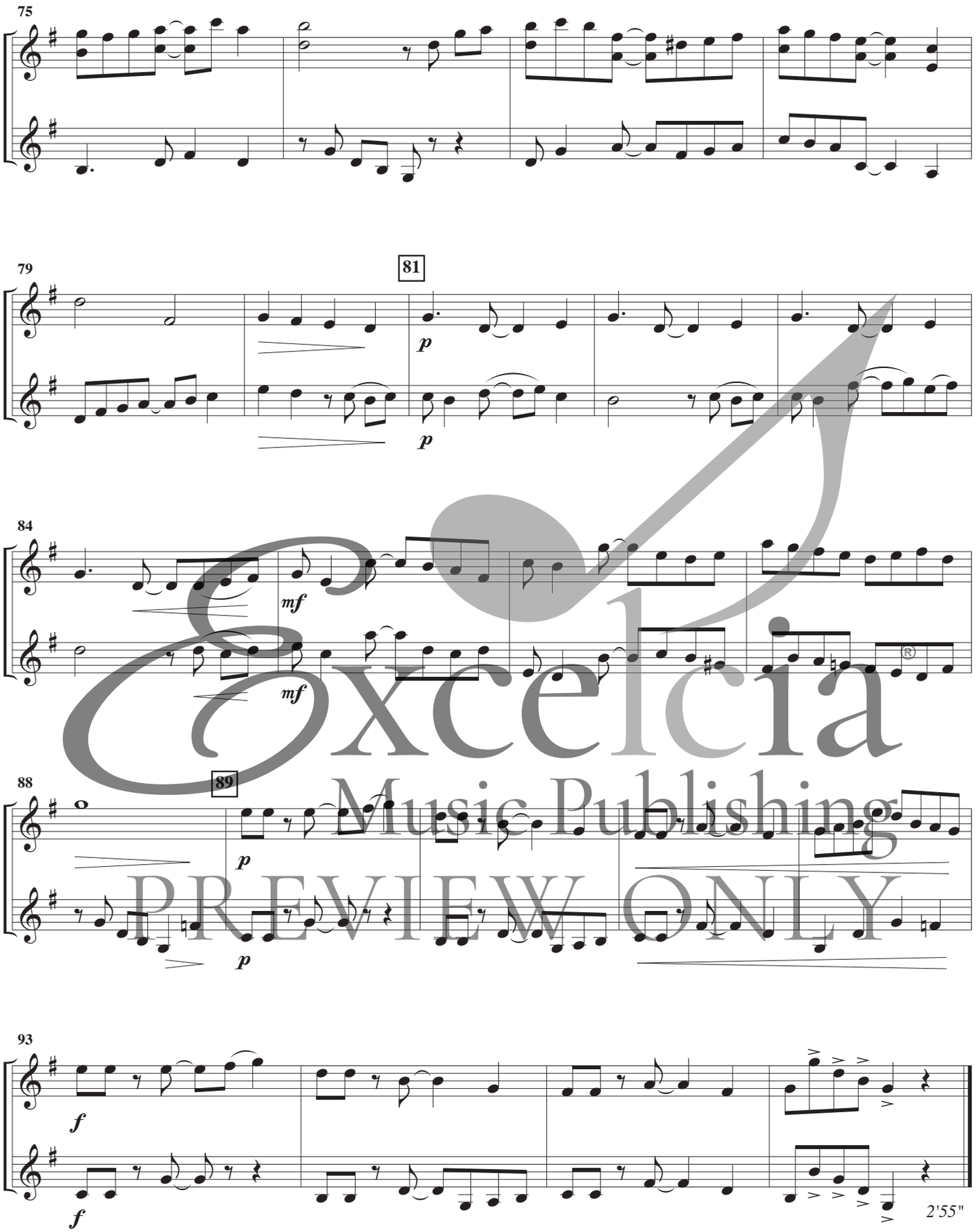

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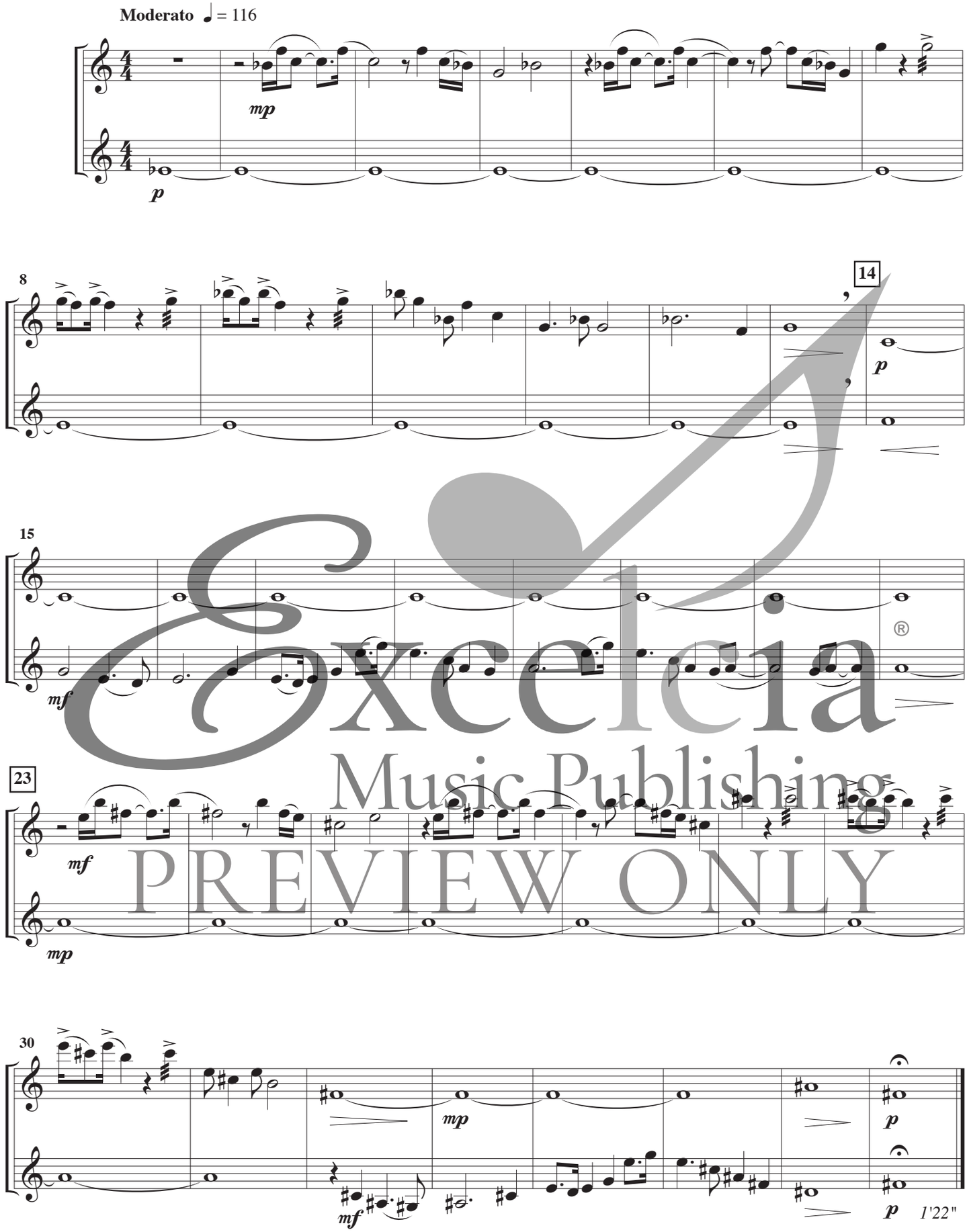

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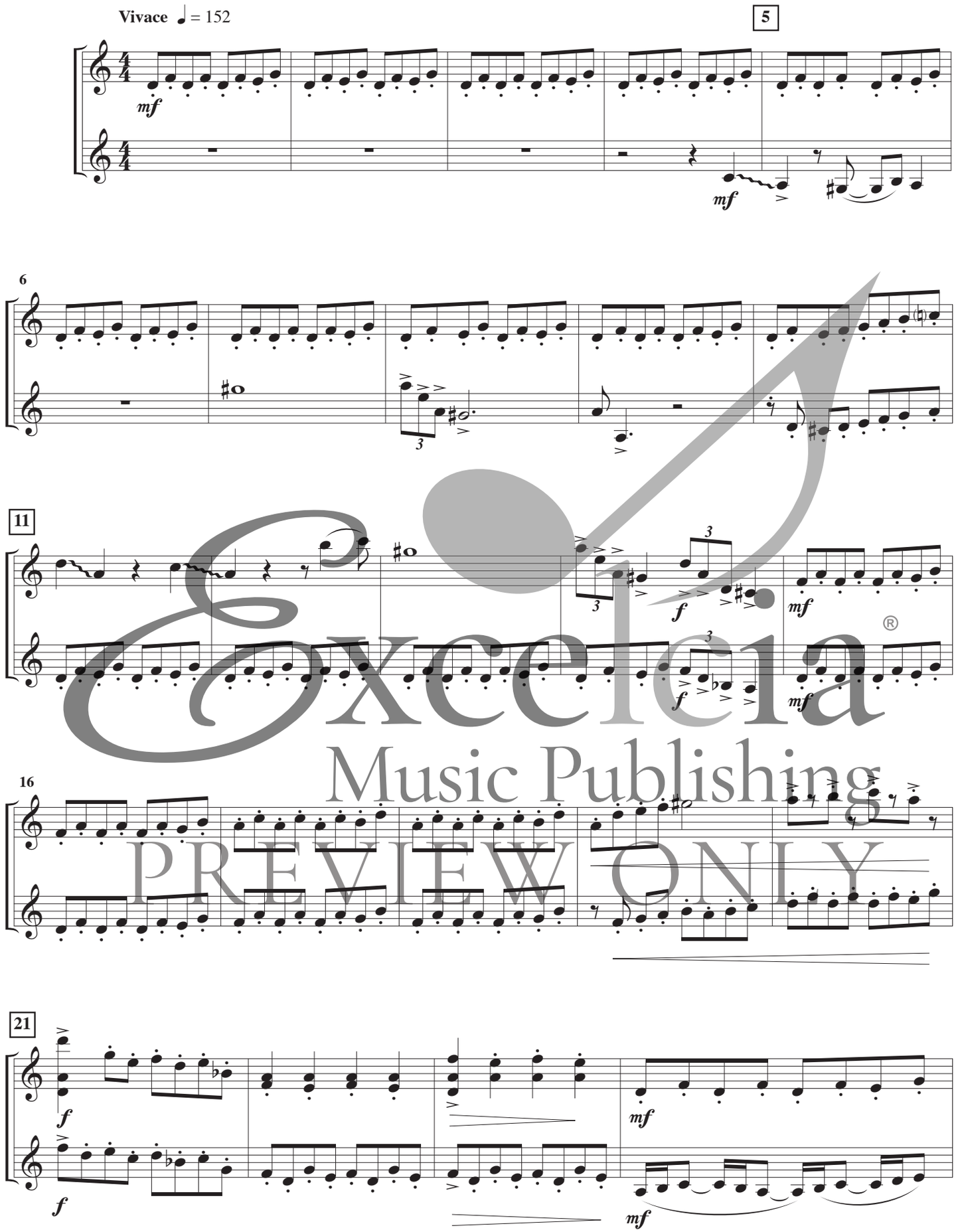

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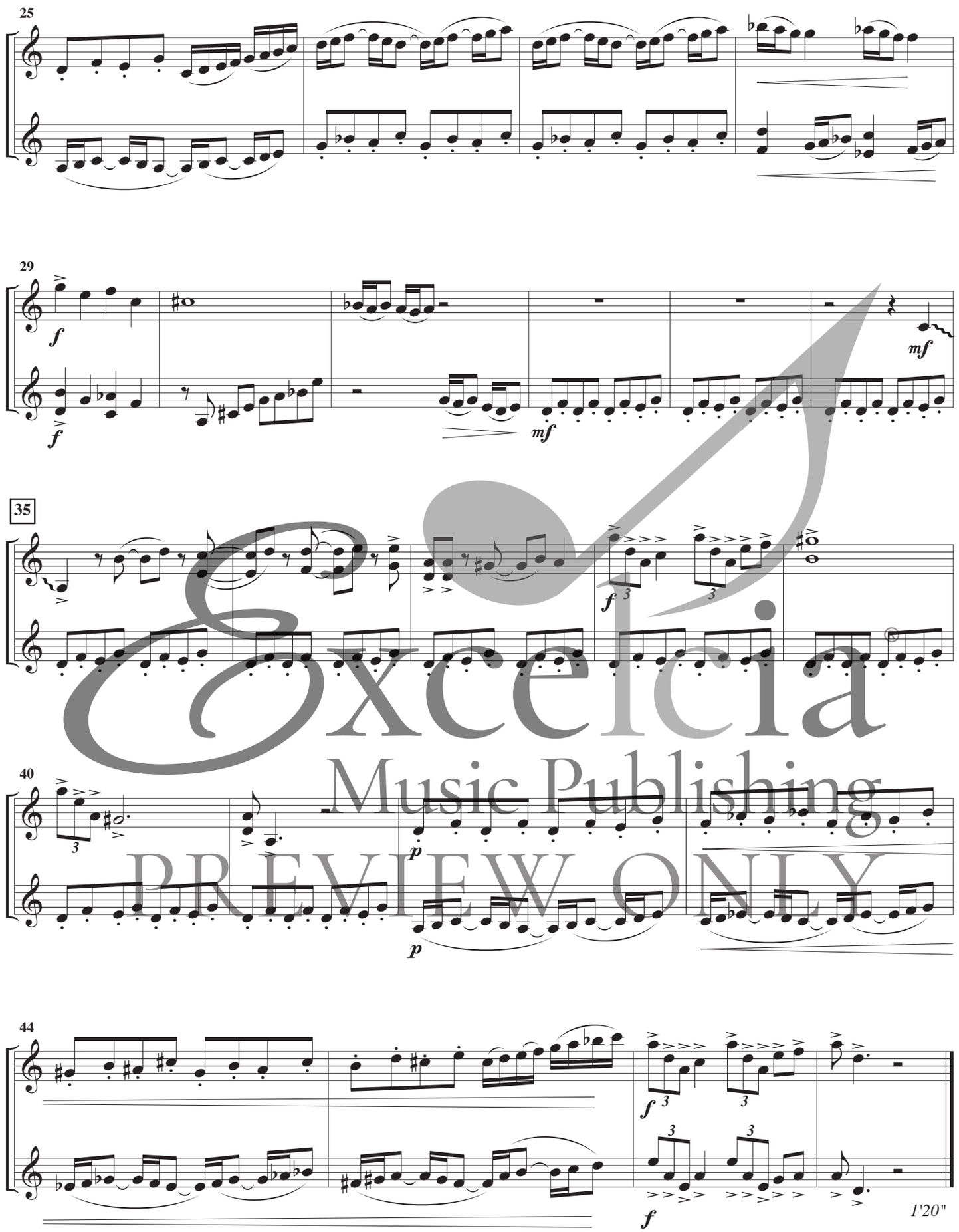

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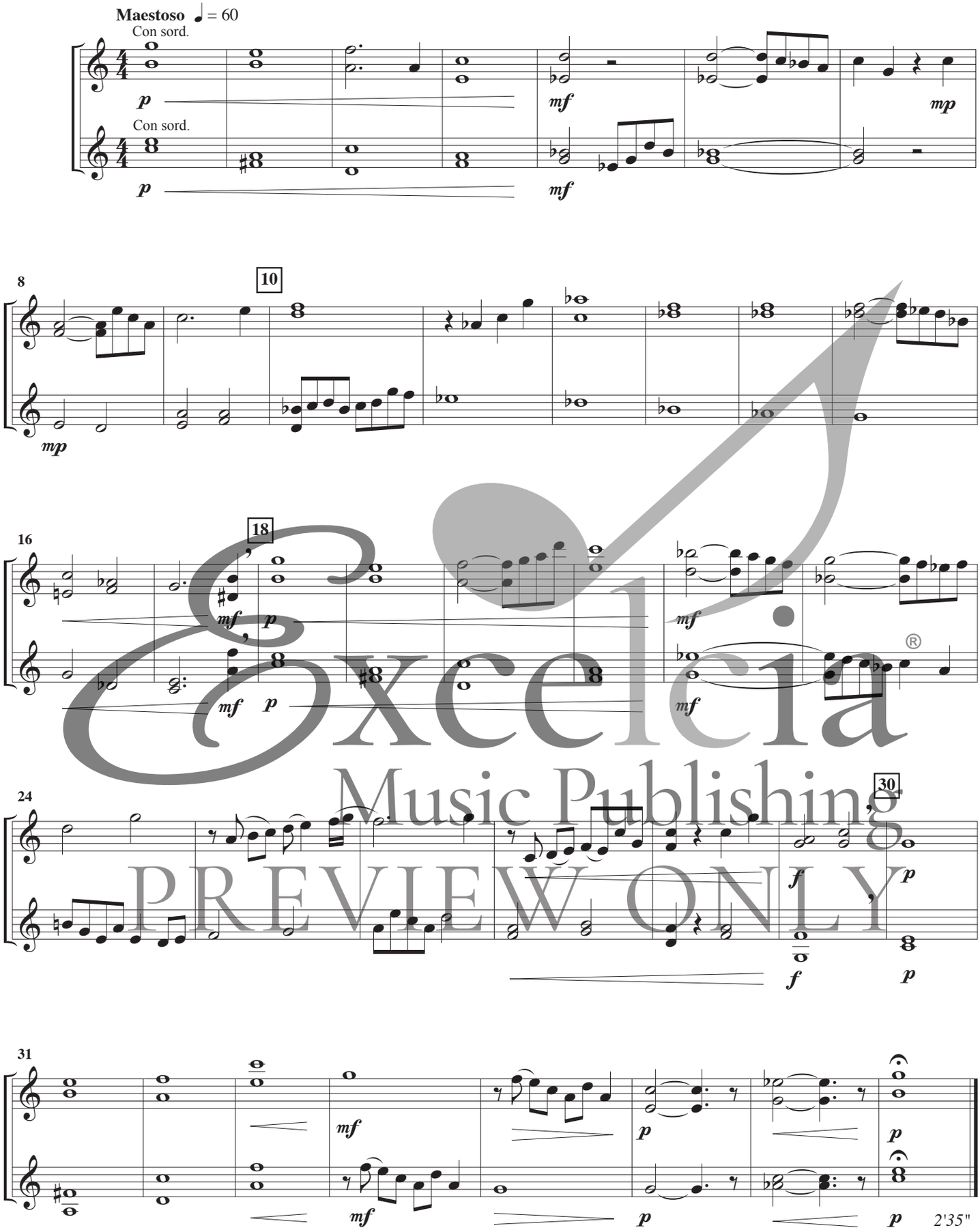

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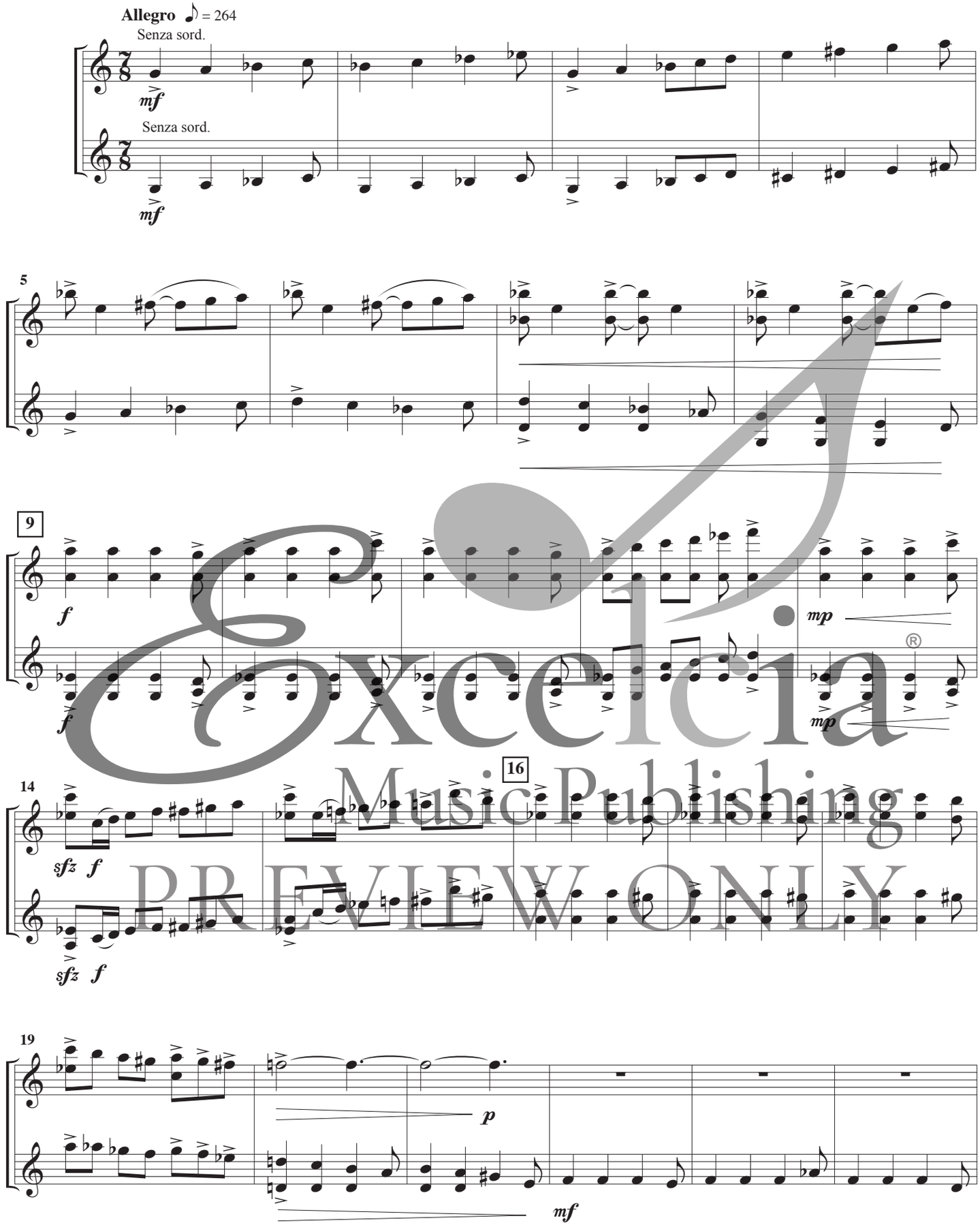

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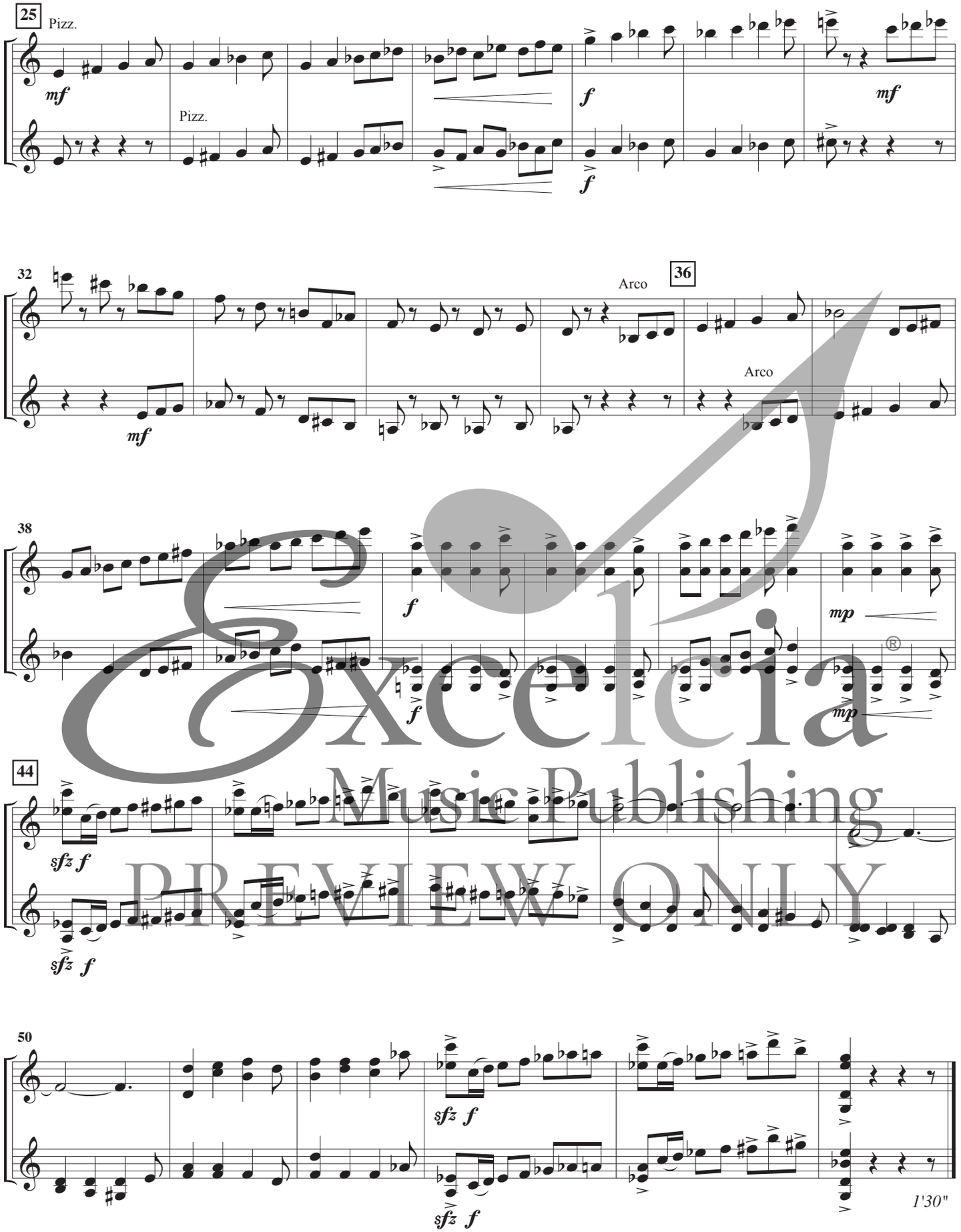

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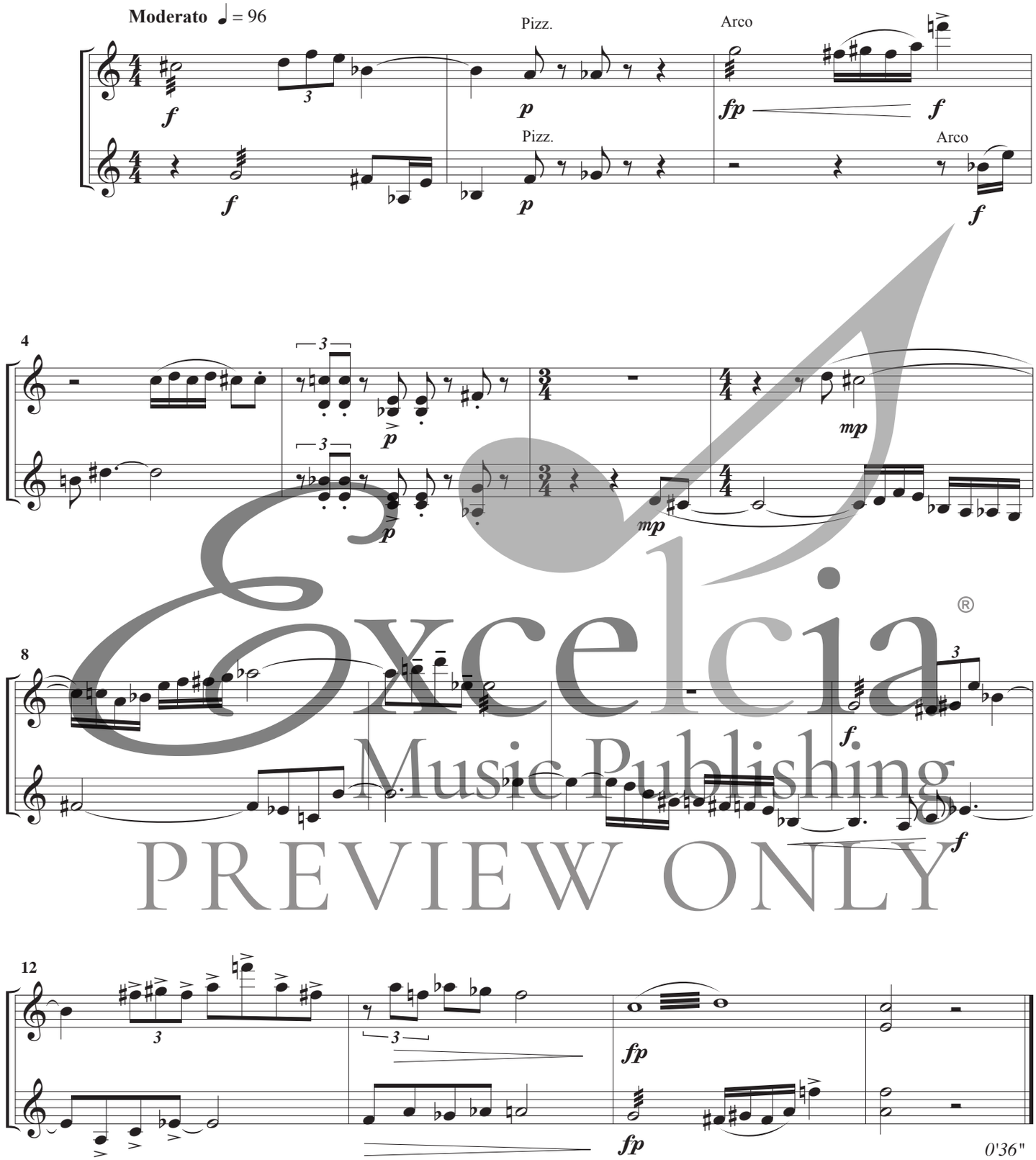

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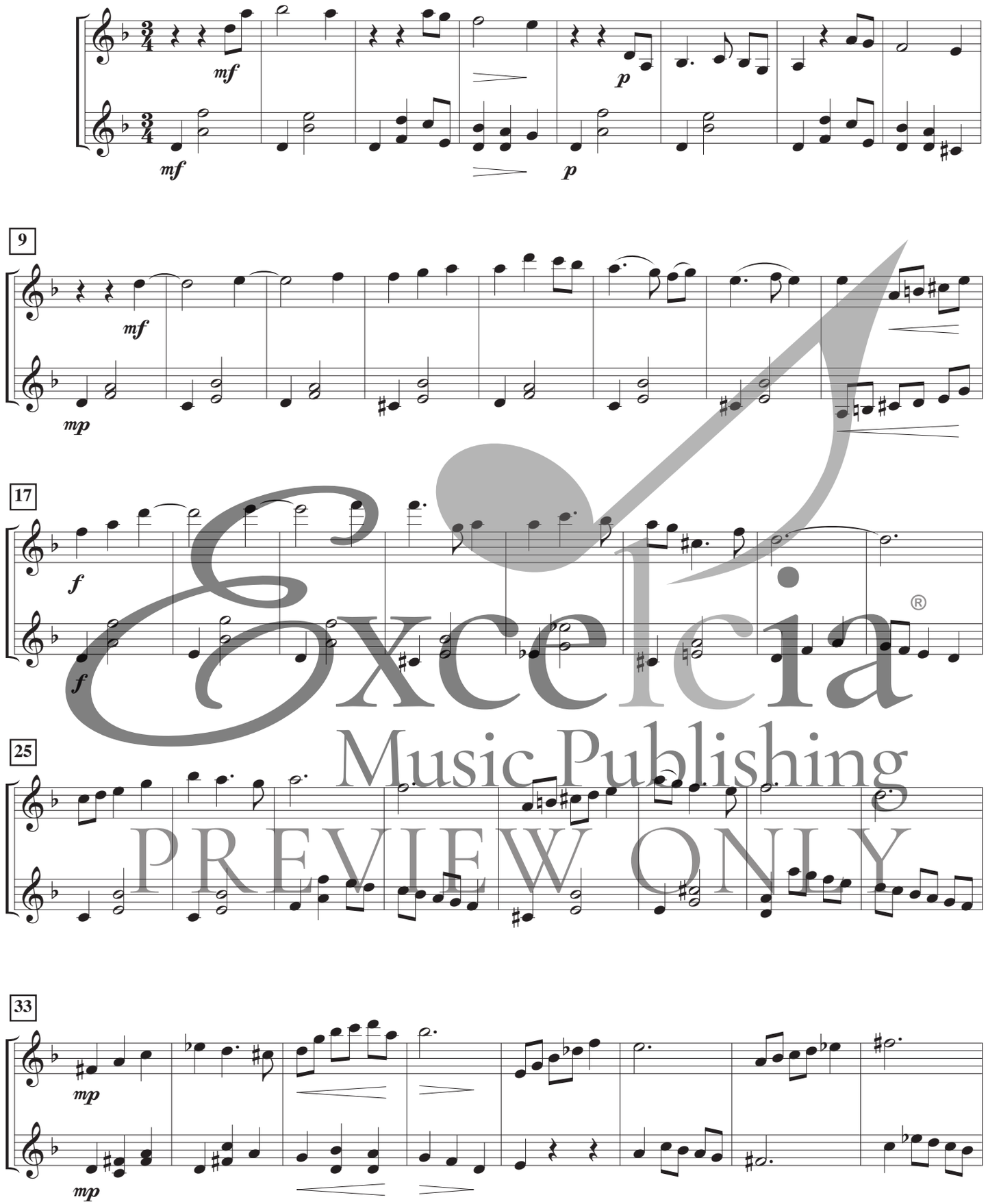
XVII.

Moderate waltz tempo ♩ = 132



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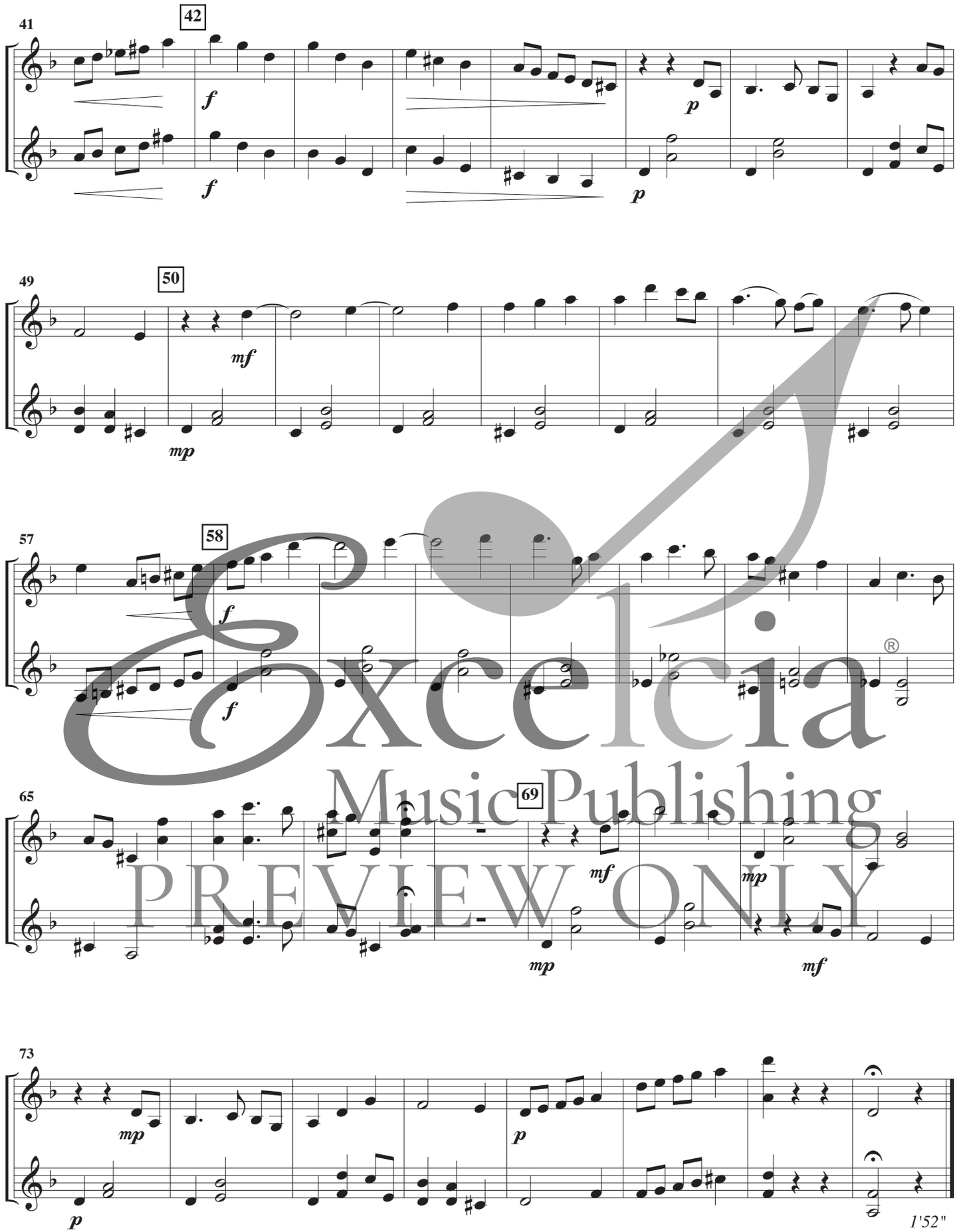

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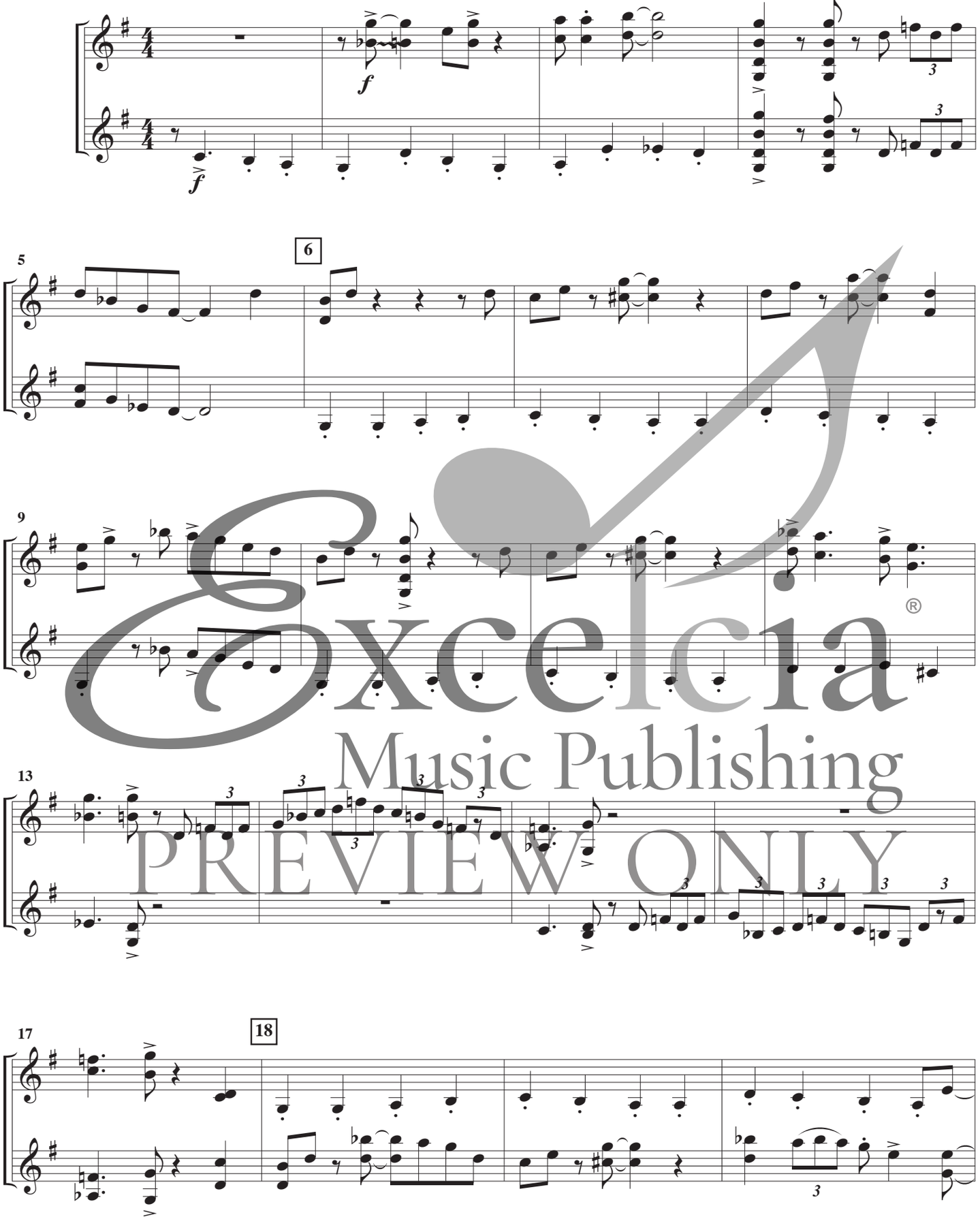
XVIII.

Lively swing ♫ = ♩ ³ ♪ ♩ = 100



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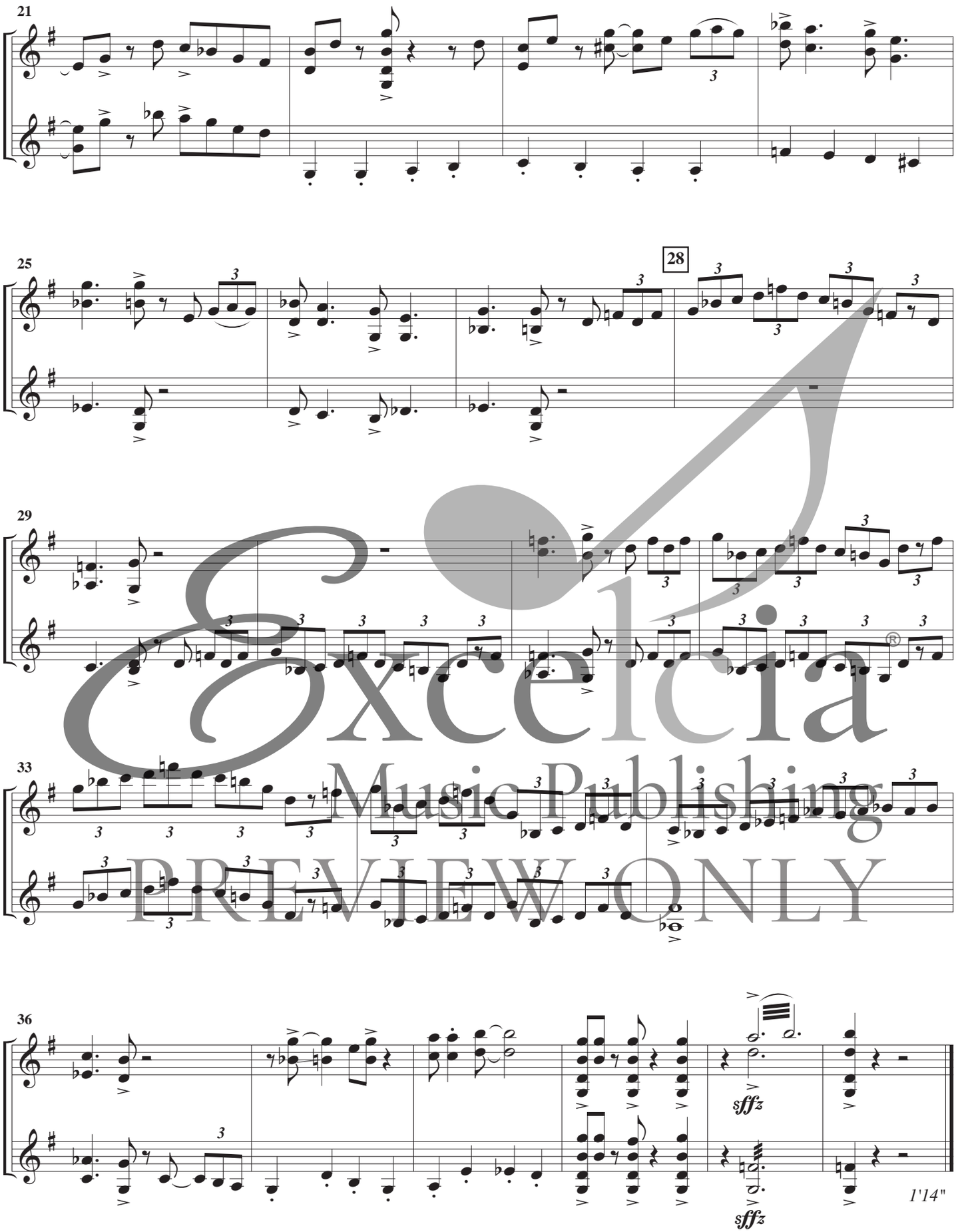

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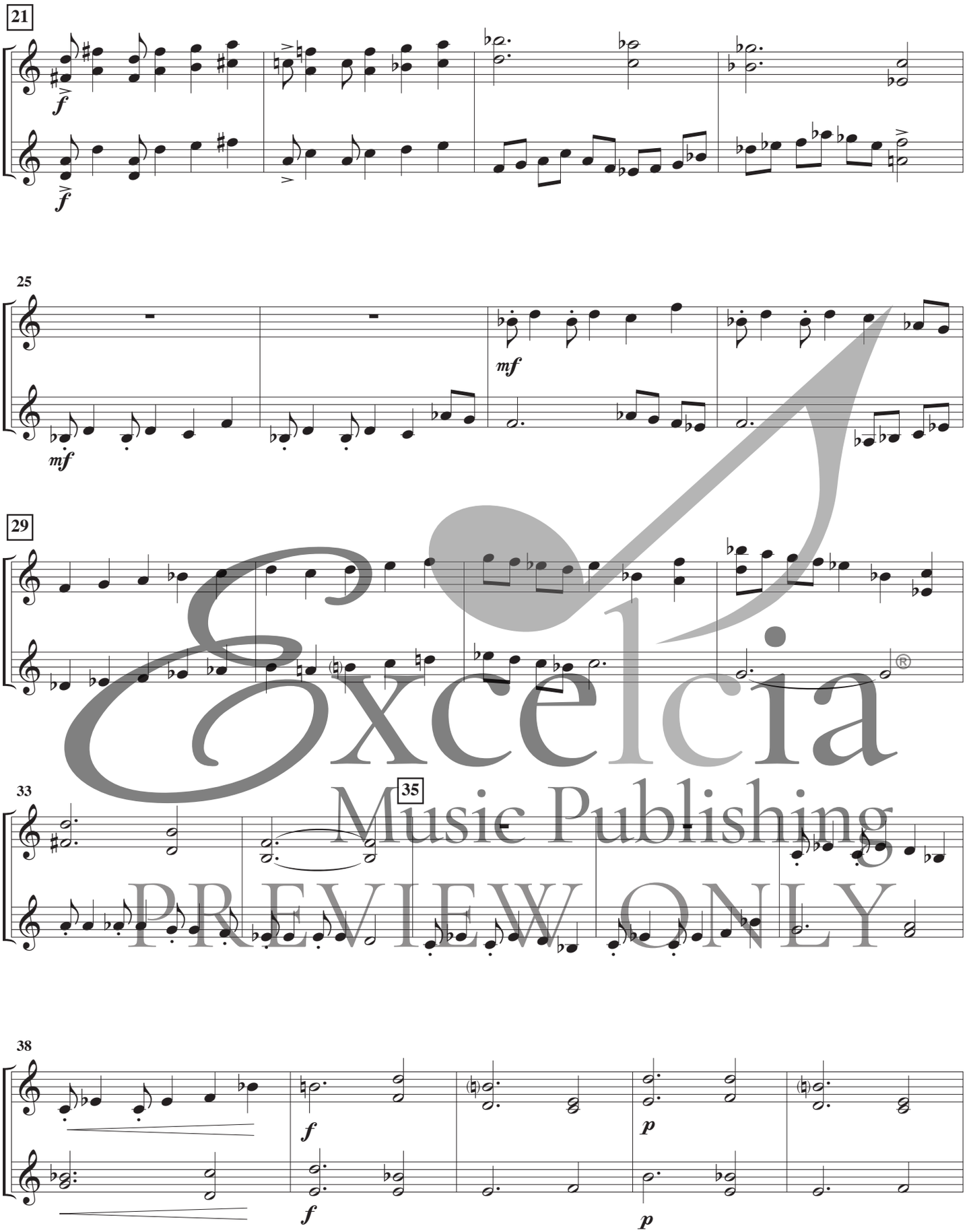

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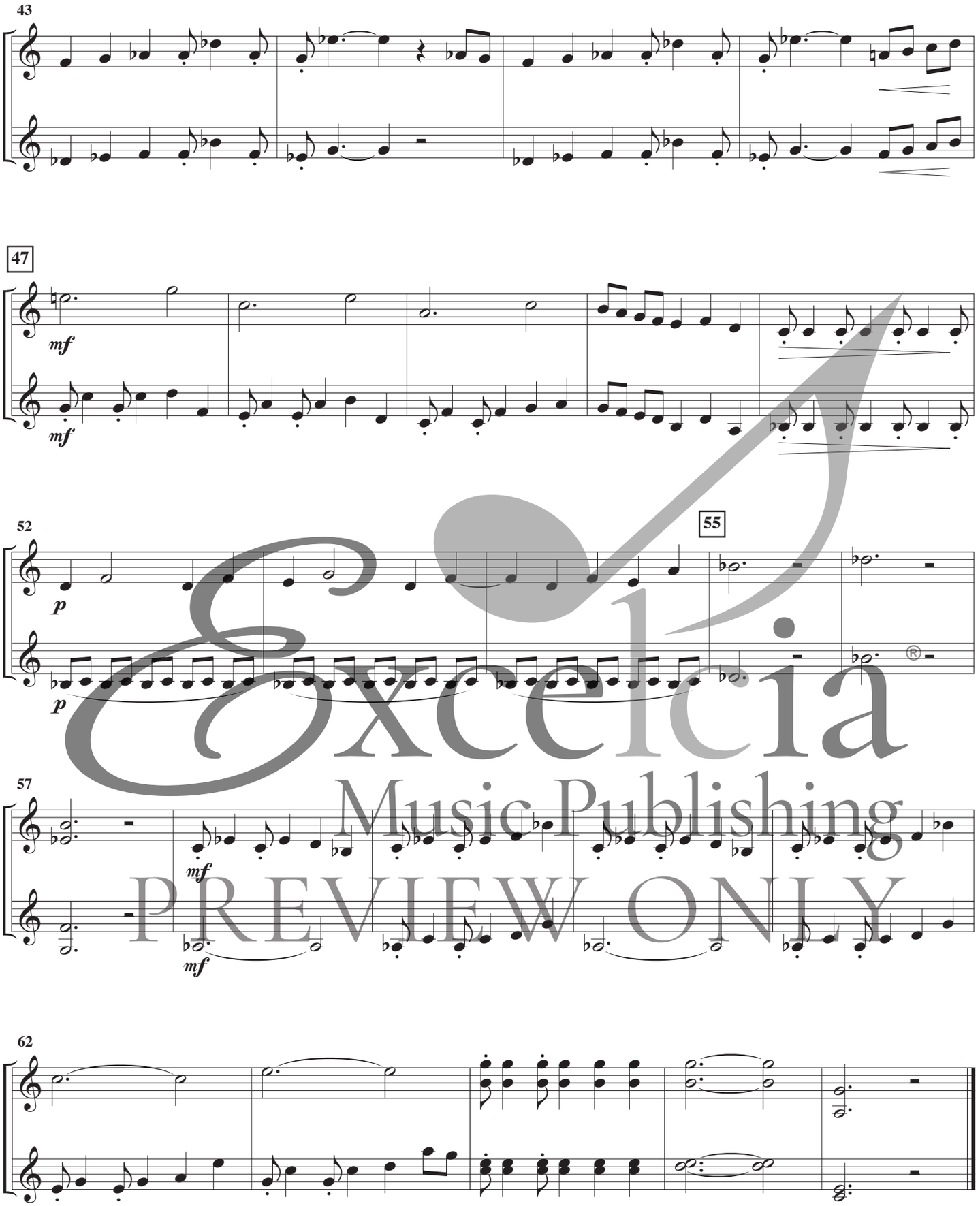

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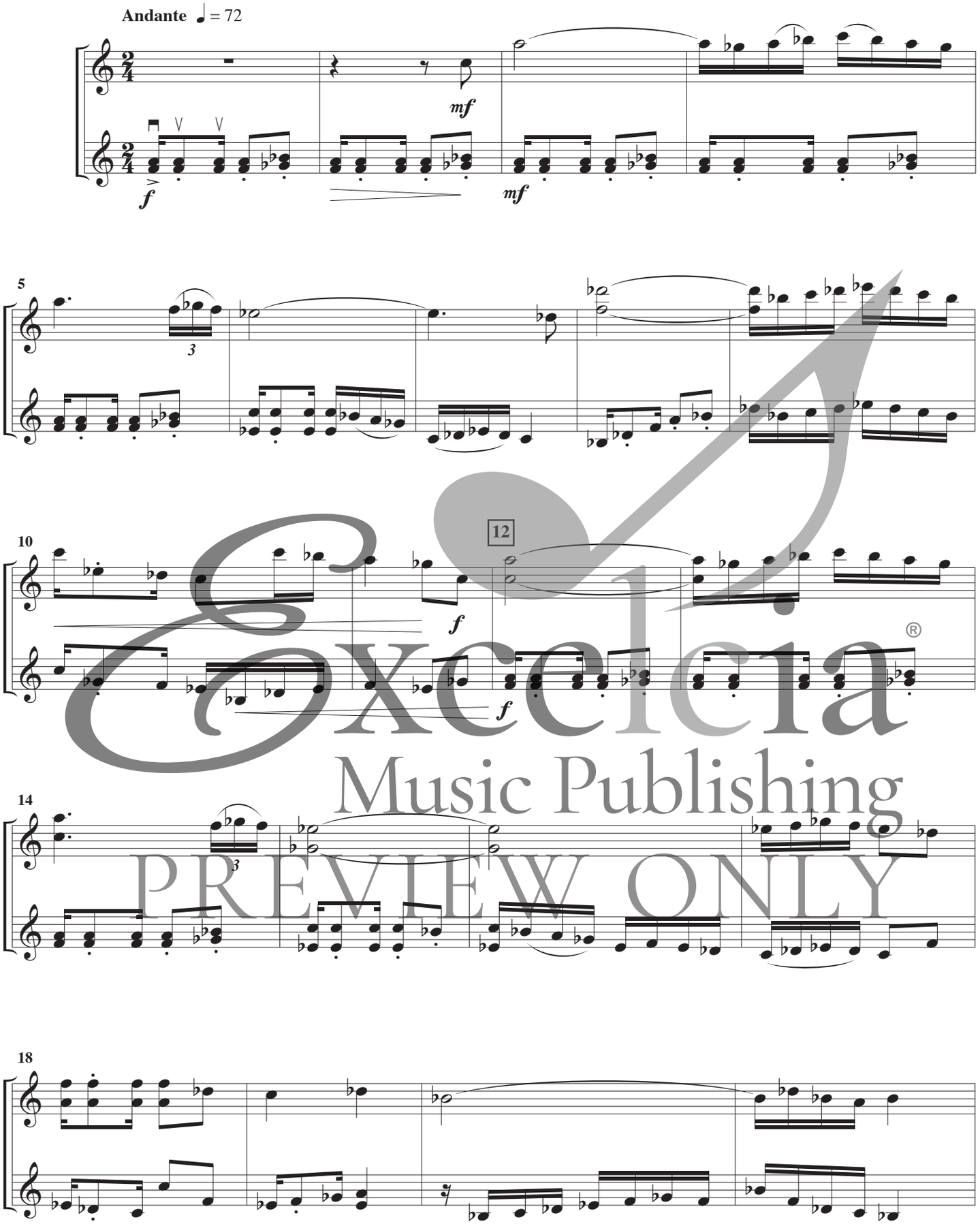

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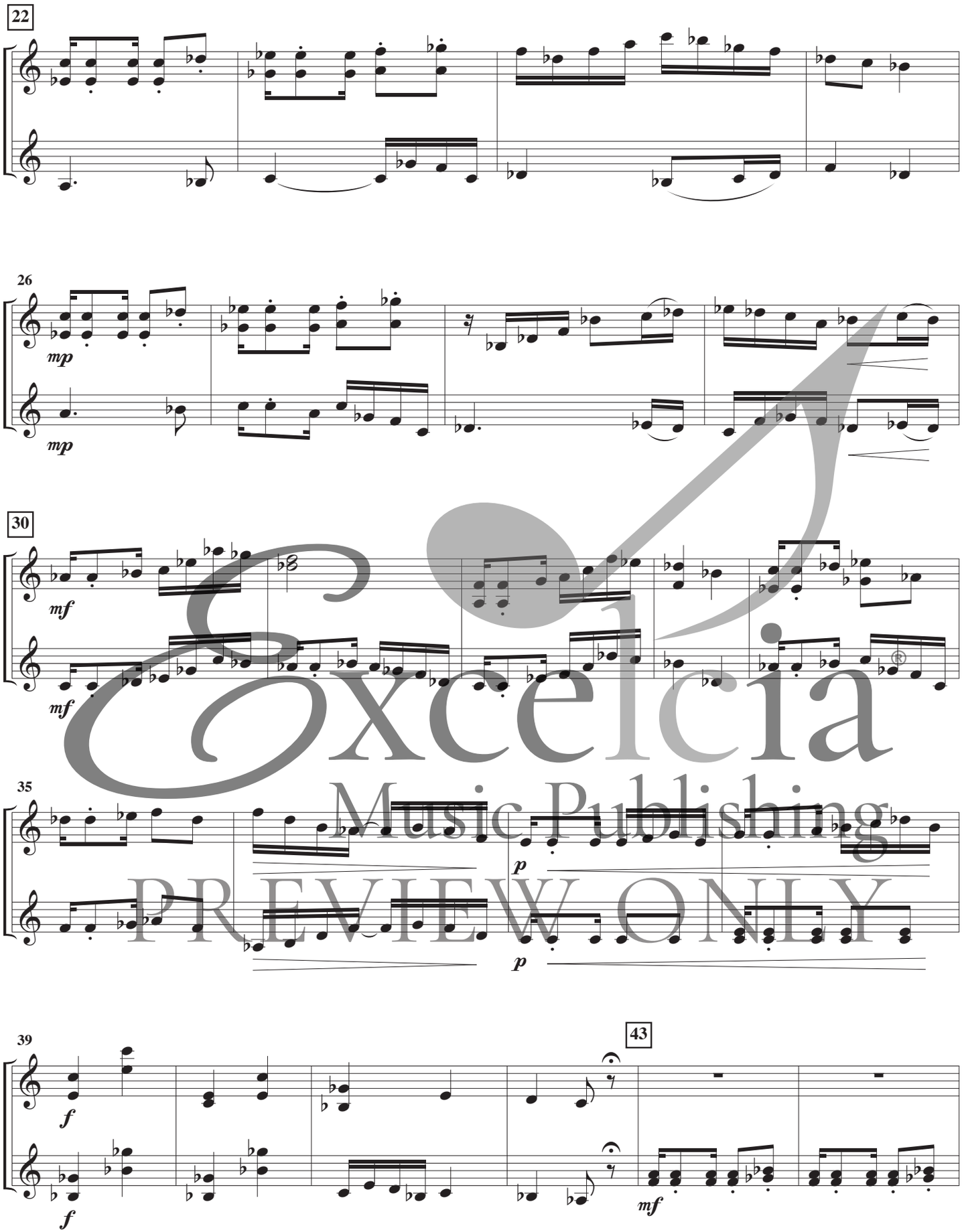

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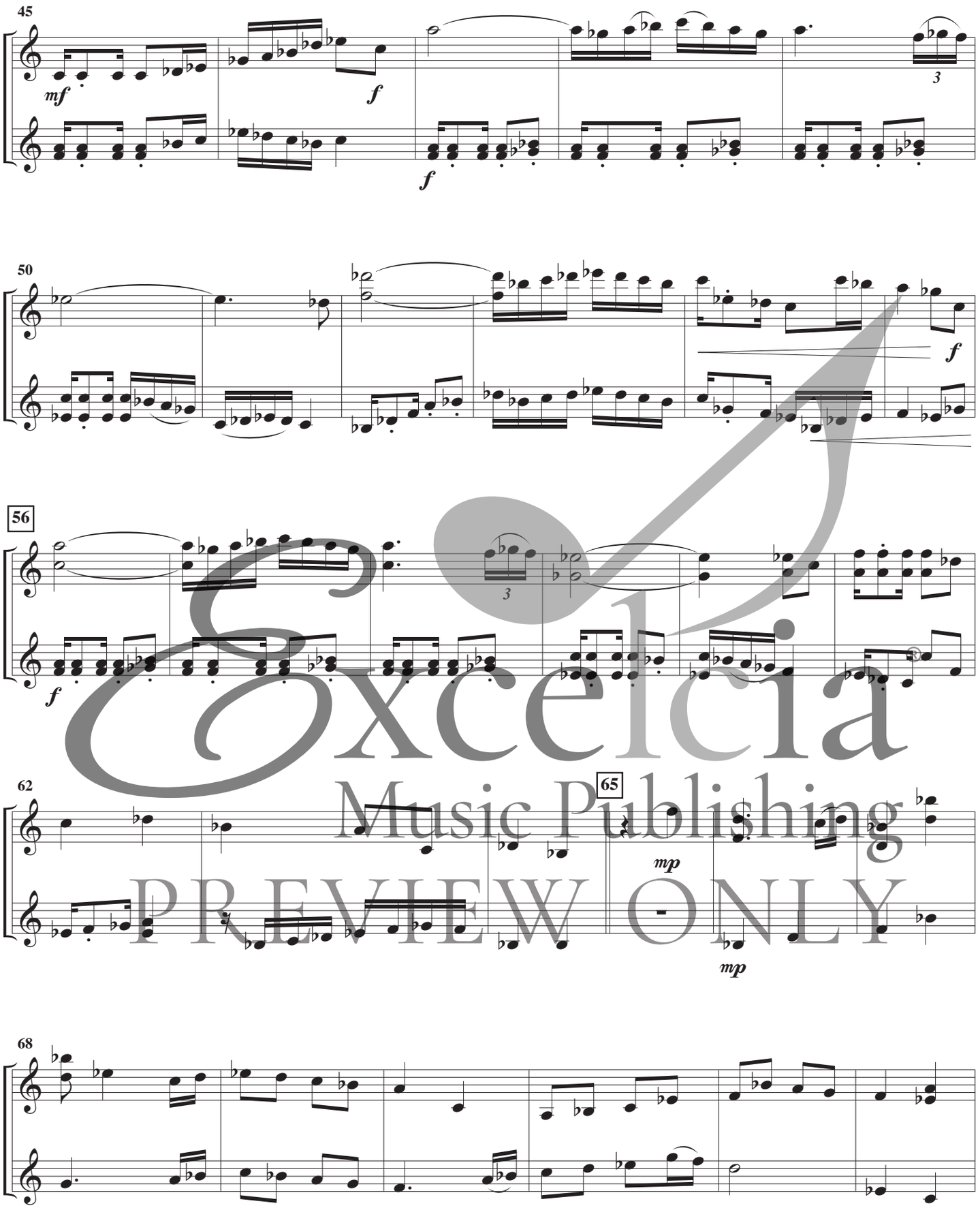

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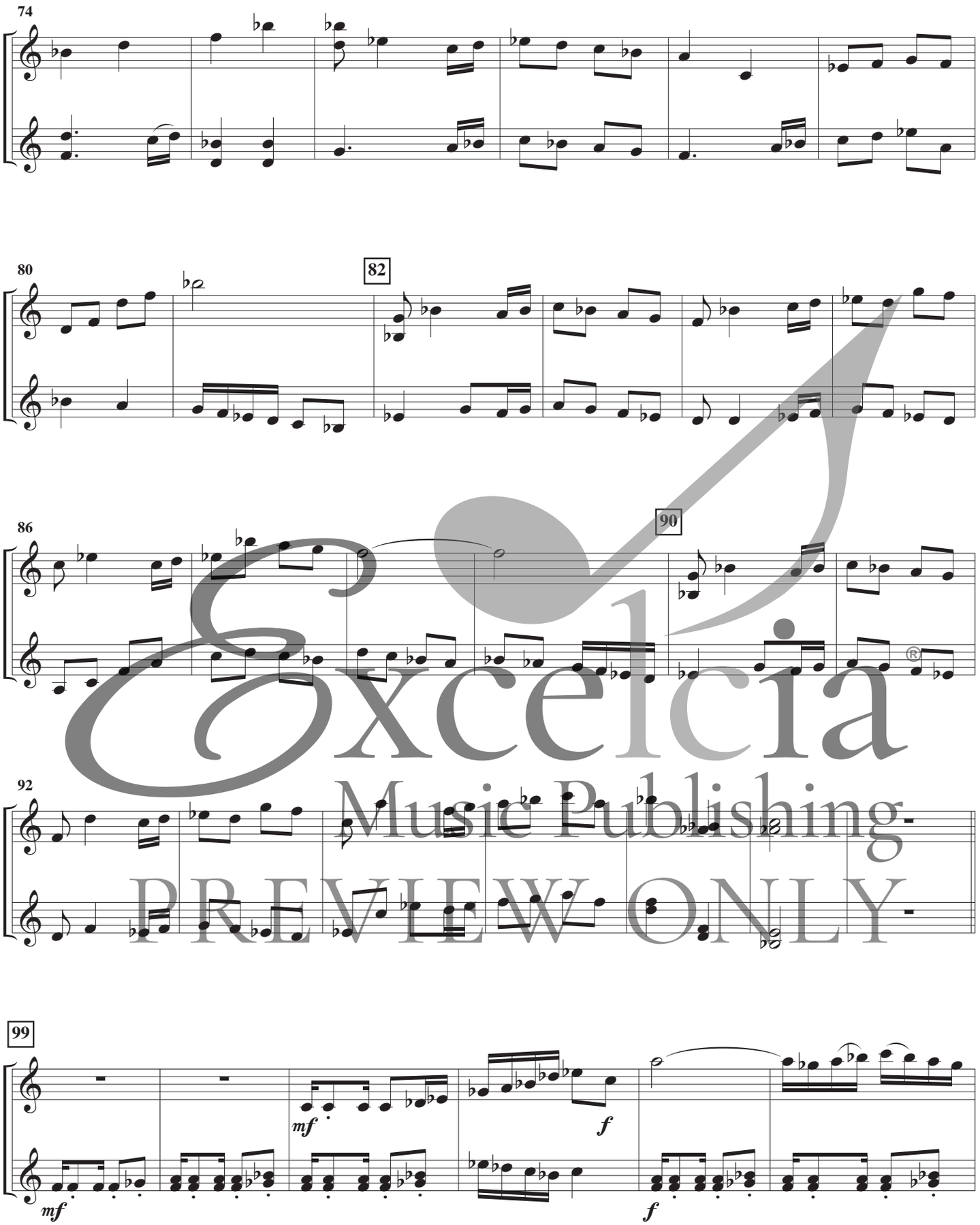

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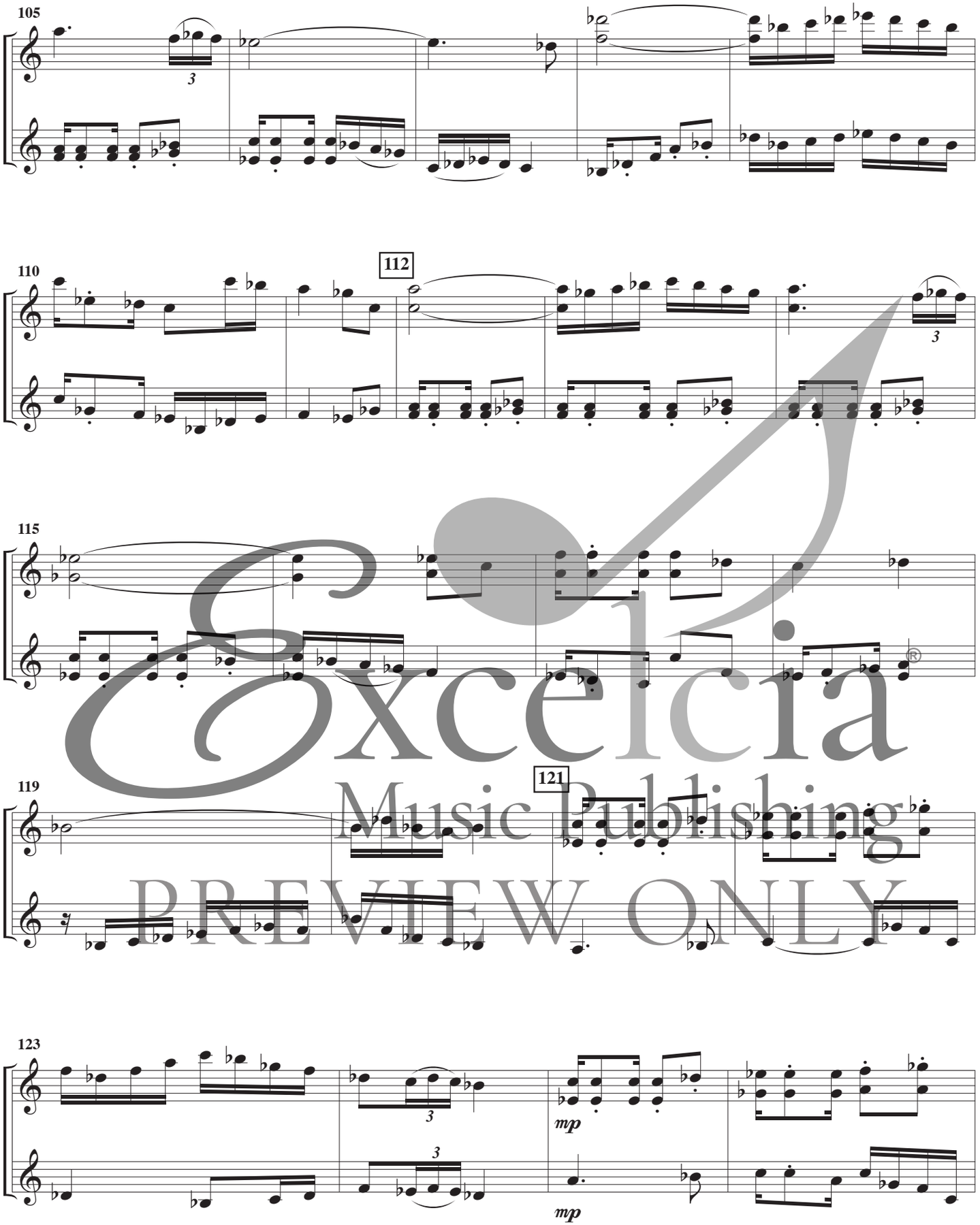

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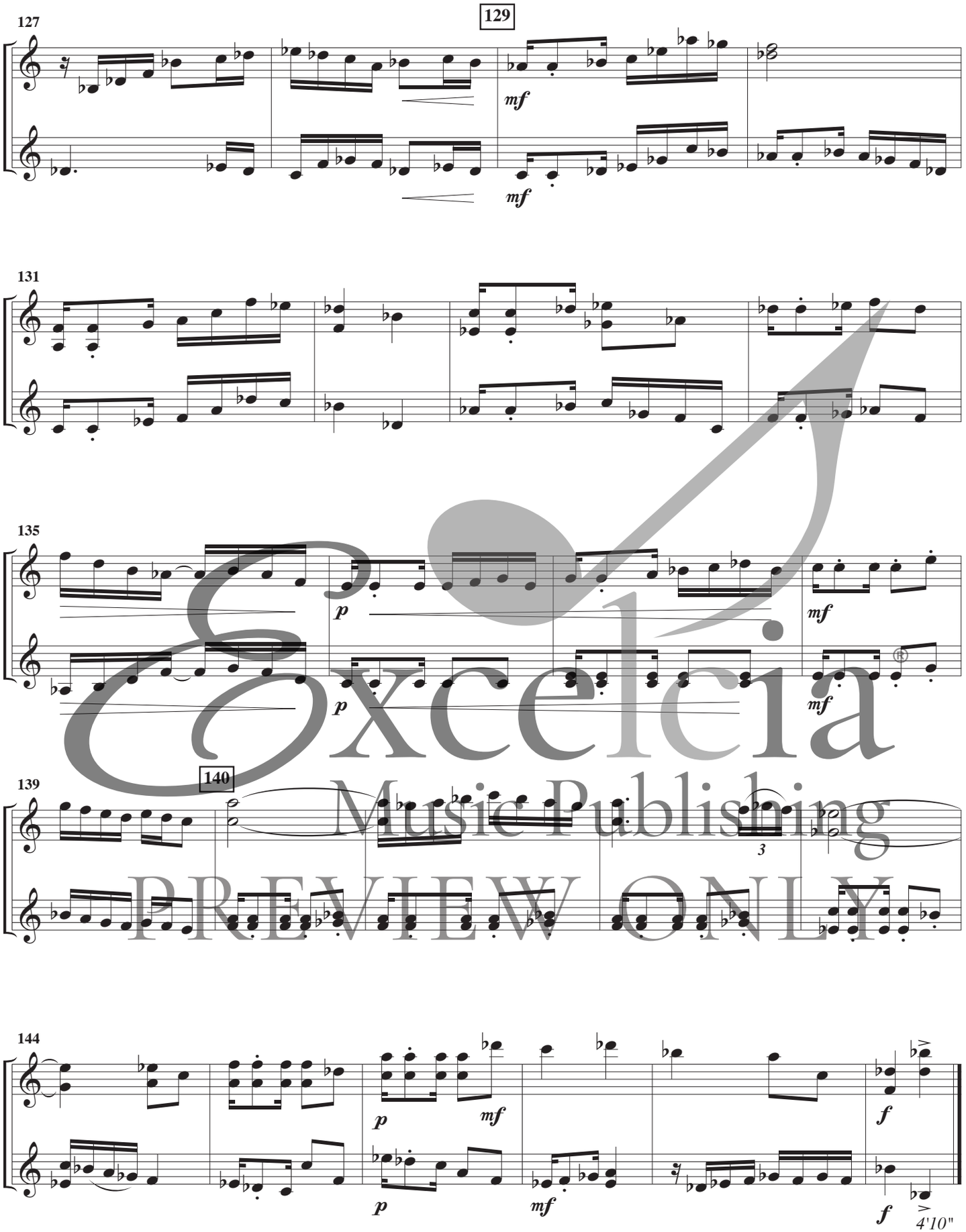

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