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XYLAFRIQUE: CONTEMPORARY ART COMPOSITIONS BASED ON THE DAGAABA *GYIL* (XYLOPHONE) GENRE

EMMANUEL BOAHEN

2012

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UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC EDUCATION

XYLAFRIQUE: CONTEMPORARY ART COMPOSITIONS BASED ON THE DAGAABA *GYIL* (XYLOPHONE) GENRE

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8100120022

A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC EDUCATION, SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS, SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR AWARD OF THE MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY (MUSIC COMPOSITION) DEGREE

JUNE, 2012

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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, **EMMANUEL BOAHEN,** declare that this Thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE:…….. DATE:……

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: ……..

SIGNATURE:…….. DATE:……

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Boahen family of Sunyani, my wife Janet Kissiwa Boahen, and children Alberta Serwaah Boahen, Kofi Owusu Boahen and Frederick Asare Boahen.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It would not have been easy for me to write and bring this thesis to its present form without the cooperation and support of a number of people, to whom I express my sincere appreciation and gratitude–Dr. C.W.K. Mereku, Head of Department of Music Education, University of Education, Winneba my principal supervisor and Co-Supervisor Prof. Eric A. Akrofi for their immense contribution to bring to light this thesis. The next goes to the Dean of the School of Creative Arts, Dr. Mrs. Mary P. Dzansi-McPalm for her enormous motivation. My sincere thanks also go to the lecturers of the School of Creative Arts, especially, the Music Education and Theatre Arts, the late Mr. Godson Ayikutu and Mr. Gershon E. Kwami. Equally important, the following lecturers also need commendation. They include Mr. Kingsley Ampomah, Rev. Michael Ohene-Okantah, Mr. Emmanuel Obed Acquah, Mr. John F. Annan, Mr. Michael Adomina, Mr. George Asabre Maclean, Mr. Moses Adzei and not forgetting Mr. Hope Konu, Mr. Victor Manieson, Mrs. Augusta Arko-Mensah and Miss Eva Ebeli for sharing with me their experiences and expertise during the Masters programme.

I‟m also very grateful to Mr. Gilbert Berese (Prof.) who served as my key informant and assisted in collecting and verifying the data and shaping *Xylafrique*. Besides, I would like to acknowledge all my colleagues on the Master of Philosophy in Music Composition programme, especially Mr. Timothy Mensah and Mr. Ebenezer Nantwie Kankam who were of great assistance in typing, editing and making corrections.

Lastly and very importantly, I thank my family for their encouragement and prayers during my master‟s programme. May God bless you all.

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GLOSSARY

Afro classic	A term indicative of a genre of music characterised through a merger of traditional African (Afro), classical Western (classic) idioms and elements.
Art musician	A contemporary musician that uses conventional music practice.
Ate kyillɛ	Let"s rejoice.
Cross-cultural Composition	The creation of a cultural synthesis of old and new, traditional and foreign into philosophical, artistic and stylistic product that communicates to both local and foreign audiences, (Njoora, 2005).
Dagaaba	The people from Upper West.
Dagaare	The language they speak.
Gangaar	Dagaaba drum made of wood and membrane.
Gyil	Xylophone.
Gyille	Two or more xylophones.
Kuor	The Dagaaba gourd drum.
Kuɔra	A sharp edge knife.
Lɛrpɛna	A hoe-like tool.

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ABSTRACT

The study adopted a mode of creativity/dynamic approach through the synthesis of *Dagaaba gyil* genre and Western compositional techniques and approaches. To ground the study in the rich cultural traditions of the *Dagaaba* people of Winneba and Kasoa in the Central Region of Ghana an anthropological documentation formed an important part of the study. The study adopted Nketia"s syncretic approach theory (1982), the bi-musicality, African Pianism theories of Euba (1992) and Webster"s model of creative thinking in music. In addition to Akuno"s (1997) theory on social functions in which; the contextual meaning of the composition was based. Thirty-nine Dagaaba gyil folk songs were collected from traditional performers, through purposeful and snowball sampling techniques. Songs were recorded, transcribed and analysed for dominant traditional musical features. The result was a compositional inspiration on which the *Xylafrique* was based. Rhythmic and melodic accuracy of the transcribed songs were ascertained by play backs using FINALE notation software. The report contains a discussion on the unique elements of *Dagaaba gyil* music, the full musical score of the innovations, and the analysis of the score and finally the perspectives highlighted all the social, moral and educational relevance of the work.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Research has shown that African music has a long history that has been captured in written form in excerpts based on western theoretical frameworks. Akpabot (1986, p.62) attested to the fact that in traditional setting, African music is not written down. In conception and performance, it is an oral tradition handed down from generation to generation and jealously preserved by those who have come to be known as master-musicians.

Contemporary African composers in search of this new medium of expression to satisfy the tastes of urbanized Africans need not look to Europe or other foreign cultures for inspiration (Nketia 1957, p.13). Euba (1966, pp. iv-v) asserts that there is a wealth of untapped resources in African traditional music and it is possible to expand the scope of this music without reference to foreign idioms. Blege (2009) corroborates this when he said most African scholars are of the view that researching into the untapped traditional music resources, seems to widen the scope of the traditional resources beyond instrumentation. He posits:

> Dance in many ways is an embodiment of society in expression. It provides a unit or microcosm of traditional resources…African dances have associated rhythms which define their identity and also carry their musical sounds. They have over the centuries developed their own melodic traditions; have their own styles of phrasing, cadence. Art music written in the dance vein therefore enhances the message which the song is intended to carry. By these elements such as rhythm, melody and harmony of song are determined by the rhythms and inflections of the words in the lyrics (Blege, 2009).

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Commenting on teaching of dance in public elementary schools in Ghana Adinku (2003, p.26) confirms the statement above and said, „the study of dances as a cultural activity, as aesthetic or artistic expression always occur with the study of music, since they are related forms".

Adinku again argues that from the music tradition described, two types of contemporary compositional approaches emerge. On one hand are those that create original works and on the other are those that use existing tunes to develop their works the latter being described as arrangers. In the process of composing, they do not identify the music features that characterise the folk songs that they use. While it is within their creative aspirations, some argue that the process impacts negatively on the folk songs to such an extent that often it is difficult to identify the chief melodic features of such folksongs.

As a result of this, Ghanaian art composers are not able to adequately replicate traditional music practices in terms of idiom and performance in their works. When using folk songs as compositional material, arrangers have a ready framework from which to operate, that includes the use of rhythm, melody and text. Sometimes these art composers work with folk melodies using the Western diatonic scale and harmony, while choosing not to use tonal/melodic characteristics that define the traditional music. The resultant works do not maintain the traditional melodic idiom of the community concerned. Musungu (2010, p. 4) makes a similar plea for himself and writes, features such as form, rhythmic patterns, pitch, duration, texture and harmony assist to sustain and validate the traditional music idiom of a community in an art work. This affects the traditional idiomatic features inherent in the songs. It is for

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these reasons that this study goes-on to propose a compositional framework that would assist composers using traditional musical elements.

Statement of the Problem

In Ghana, most of the art music composers write works using western classical techniques. Nevertheless, those who create works with traditional resources also fail to capture the inherent cultural nuances of the musical idioms of the concerned genre because of the bias from Western compositional techniques. This treatment affects the traditional character of the music that is composed in terms of rhythm, melody, text, texture, harmony, intervals, form and its idiomatic expressions. Omojola (1995, p.1) confirmed that although a considerable amount of research has been carried out on traditional African music, contemporary musical idioms in Africa have received limited attention by scholars. On the elements of African traditional music that scholars in composition can research into, Akpabot (1986, p.v) lists include the call and response pattern of vocal music; the bell rhythm of gong; the predominant use of the pentatonic scale; the speech rhythm growing out of tonal inflections of African words; musical instruments used as symbols together with the use of polymetres and polyryhthms.

Wachsmann (1953, p.51) observed earlier that our musical ancestors had left us with a heritage abundant with potential avenues of development which they themselves would have explored had they been concerned mainly with the practice of „art for art"s sake". The 20th century was a time for experiment, but only few African art composers moved towards the creation of a style of composition that distinctly

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represent a continuation and natural extension of African cultural heritage (Euba 1965, p. 63; 1992, p.307).

Euba went on further that, this new music although deriving its principles, values, and stylistics means from traditional sources, would be designed primarily for aesthetic listening as opposed to the utilitarian function which is customarily associated with African traditional music. It would be wrong to overlook the usefulness of outside influence to the development of art music in Africa. Indeed, the very notion of modern art music in the African idiom implies certain indebtedness to non-African art forms. It must be admitted, however that acculturation affects a culture in varying degrees…African composers can leave themselves open to foreign influences which are so peripheral in nature that the core of their music retains its identity (Euba, 1992, p.328).

Modern African composers in their attempt to Africanize their works or retain the African identity in their music made use of African tunes and rhythms. By so doing the European elements were discouraged or suppressed so that the African features come out. It was not an advocacy of total insulation of African music from foreign influences since such influence are often enriching, provided they were compatible with and do not tend to dominate the native tradition. If the influences at work are so forceful, the music produced is regarded as representing an almost total rejection of African norms. On the other hand, by judicious selection, African composers can leave themselves open to foreign influences (Euba 1970, p. 54; Omojola 1995, p. 65) and be accepted. Most contemporary art composers or ethnomusicologists agree that

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selective fusing of ideas from Europe and Africa respect of musical resources can allow for strong freedom of African aesthetics.

African art music contemporary composers have been confronted with the challenges of how best to retain the African identity in the restriction of Art music while at the same time effectively addressing international audiences. Euba draws attention to how this confrontation has led African composers to search for personal idioms that reflect both African and international principles. Touching on this cultural awakening, Nketia observed that:

> The situation has emerged in Africa as a result of different historical factors, namely, colonial intervention and deliberate imperial cultural policy that led to the institutionalization of western music and the mediation of consciousness of identity triggered by political awakening and the resurgence of traditional cultures. These processes have led to a new kind of interculturalism which is encouraging musicians to write new art music that combines the "received" Western tradition with indigenous resources (Euba 1993, p. 4).

Indeed, when composers became much more cautious and much more aware of the audience they were addressing, the need of resuscitating audible order in their compositions maximized. In Ghana, Mereku (1997, p.63) observes that composers had to focus on *folk* music and moved from its lesser polyphonic implications to a more direct reference to the polyrhythmic content of traditional music. Thus, traditional cultures of Ghanaian dominant ethinic groups such as Ewe, Akan (Ashanti & Fanti) became the reference point for many Ghanaian art music composers.

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Cross-ethnic borrowing was evident in their works. The realization of composers to look back to traditional idioms for motivation and adaptation in their reconstruction processes is not a recent phenomenon. In his inaugural lecture, Akin Euba (2001) noted that folk dances of Europe were often used as foundation materials for derivations in the works of major composers such as Bach, Handel, Mozart, Schubert, Brahms, Chopin and Dvořák. He noted, with interest, how Bach has used the Landler as the basis of the bass aria from his *Cantata* No. 104.

Perhaps the biggest model for exploring traditional or folk materials in contemporary works ever bequeathed this generation of composers has been provided by the Hungarian, Béla Bartók, (1881 to 1945). Akin Euba (2001) commenting on this, summarized Bartók‟s method as follows:

> First, composers are advised to use materials derived from authentic folk music and not rely on popular arrangements of folk music played by city musicians (Bartók 1992, pp. 301-302). Secondly, it is preferable to spend time living with "peasants" in the countryside rather than working with archival material (Bartók, 1992, pp. 324-325, 332-333, 341-395). Composers need to collect and absorb folk music at its source and to experience the context in which it is performed….Another important process prescribed by Bartók is that composers should get themselves so deeply immersed in folk music that it becomes a natural language.

Bartók, aside writing works which are arrangements on folk music, had modeled his own music to sound like folk music. An example of Bartók‟s works which is an outcome of models he derived from folk music is the *Cantata Profana* (1930) first broadcast by British Broadcasting Corporation on 25 May 1934 (Kennedy, 1980).

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Griffiths (1992, p.57) posits that, Dvořák suggested to the American composers that, they should look to their native music for stimulus, just as he had drawn on Czech folk song in forming his own melodic style. As Akin Euba mentioned earlier in Hungary, the way was led by Béla Bartók who devoted as much attention to collecting and classifying folk music. He became one of the foremost folk-song scholars of his time. For the largest and, indeed, the most valuable part of this treasure house of melodies lies in the old church modes, in ancient Greek and still more primitive scales(notably the pentatonic) and also the most varied and free rhythms and time-changes (Griffiths 1992, p.60). If there was any composer who was able to take up methods and materials from the past without the dead hand of irony, and that composer was Béla Bartók. He extracted the essence, whether in the construction of ideas or in the building of forms and then applied what he had learned without carrying over so much of the original as to make the result a pastiche. Stravinsky's interest in folk arts of his native country was greatest during the first years of his self-imposed exile from Russia, that is, from 1914 to 1920, when he was living in Switzerland. He had used the occasional folk melody in *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring* (Griffiths 1992, p. 63).

Even though several attempts are being made by African art music composers in this regard, only a few composers have dared the traditional immersion that has been fused with western 20th century compositional procedures. On the continent prominent among them includes Bongani Ndodana, Khabi Mngoma, Michael Blake, Jürgen Bräuninger, Richard Campbell, Robert Fokkens and Malcolm Forsyth of South Africa; Fela Sowande, Samuel Akpabot, Lazarus Ekueme, Akin Euba of Nigerian and

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J.H.K. Nketia, N.Z. Nayo, A.A. Mensah, Willie Anku, C.W.K. Mereku, Kenn Kafui, Gyimah Labi and A.A. Turkson of Ghana.

Purpose of the Study

This study, therefore, attempts to compromise the use of traditional idioms of the Ghanaian *Dagaaba* genre with its selected inherent musical resources that would lend itself to the composition process. It is an attempt to develop a style of music that can be identified as original African musical composition. In other words, it utilises traditional musical characteristics in the traditional *Dagaaba gyil* to specifically address the stylistic and artistic processes in the compositional framework as a contemporary composer.

Objectives of the study

As a contemporary music composer who seeks the fusion of African and Western twentieth century idioms in his works, the study sought to:

- Collect data on melo-rhythmic resources of the *Dagaaba gyil* genre.
- Describe the melo-rhythmic resources of the *Dagaaba gyil* genre
- Create an original post-tonal music, based on the selected melo-rhythmic resources.
- Analyse the new composition showing how the lilt of *gyil* dance has been maintained in the innovation.

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Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions

- Are there any elements of the traditional *Dagaaba gyil* that exist in the community that can still be identified as indigenous?
- What are the melo-rhythmic resources inherent in the *Dagaaba gyil* genre?
- What type of post-tonal composition can be created with the *Dagaaba gyil* genre?
- To what extent will composer be able to maintain the idioms in the *gyil* dance in the novelty being created?

Research Assumptions

The study assumed that:

i. The process of music composition among the Dagaaba as in other communities is an activity on its own right.

ii. The material and resources that are found in the artists" environment fuels the composition process.

iii. Some of the traditional *Gyil* music used by contemporary art musicians have been adulterated yet some elements of the music of the community can be identified as indigenous.

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Rationale and Significance of the Study

Several Composer-Researchers have undertaken composition projects utilizing the *Dagaaba gyil* with varying perceptions and results. However, most of the results did not articulate the musical features of the indigenous *gyil* music that they focused on. This study, apart from analysing and highlighting the musical characteristics inherent in the *gyil* genre, it ventured into melodic and textual manipulations in the local idiom. I hope the alternatives suggested will go a long way to assist composers who wish to create works using traditional idioms like Béla Batók, Nketia, Gyima Labi and Mereku.

The music education curriculum in Ghanaian schools is in a dilemma. Educators cannot decide whether to go African or move towards the Western classical music in which most of the current art music composers have been schooled. Consequently, traditional music has not been given prominence by these Ghanaian music educators‟ because the occasions for traditional music making are not as frequent as they used to be. Music educators may use the study as teaching and learning resources. Contemporary art musicians may also use this study as a basis for composing especially for festivals and academic purposes. Indeed, equally importantly the study will serve as a documentation of this fragile intangible cultural heritage of the *Dagaaba* people.

Scope and Limitations

The end result of the study was a musical composition imbued with musical elements of the *Dagaaba gyil* genre and fused with Western contemporary musical idioms. Western compositional techniques were used in the study because the *Dagaabas* do

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not have conventional ways of presenting music on paper (notation). The music themes were taken from traditional *gyil* music. The study used some of the songs because the community has a large collection of these songs compared to other socio-cultural activities.

The researcher chose the Dagaaba communities in Winneba and Kasoa as a focus for the study for logistical reasons and also due to shared identity. The songs selected were those that gave rhythmic, melodic contrasts and textual potential for instrumentation or arrangement. The *gyil* musical style used in the composition assisted in highlighting those local features that characterise traditional songs of the community. The instruments used were not of full-fledged orchestra but a chamber one for both the Western and Dagaaba musical instruments. The choice of instruments was based on tone compatibility, pitch implications and their availability.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review considers views of various scholars on musical compositional process and the use of aspects of traditional music to integrate Western musical elements to create hybrid or multicultural works. The related literature was reviewed under the following sub-headings:

- The meaning of music,
- Western composers works influenced by Ghanaian traditions,
- African art Music composers–the Nigerian scenario,
- African art Music composers-Ghanaian scenario,
- Choral writing in Ghana, and
- Instrumental art Music in Ghana.

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The meaning of music

Music according to Burney (1776, p. 89) is an innocent luxury, unnecessary, indeed, to our existence, but a great improvement and gratification of the sense of hearing. As a prominent theorist, music consists of melody, time, consonance, and dissonance. It is the science of art of pleasing, expressing, or making intelligible combination of tones; the art of making such combinations, especially into compositions of definite structure and significance.

Commenting on the definition of music, Reck (1977, p. 17) defines music as whatever we ourselves, or any other individuals or groups of people, or societies, or cultures, on planet earth (and perhaps elsewhere) comprehend as being music. He went further to say with this definition we might add that music is mostly (but not entirely) sound, that it is organised in some way, that it may be intimately and inseparably though loosely connected with what we in the West consider separate phenomena (viz. dance, body movement, visual arts, religion, mysticsm, power, medicine, astronomy). Finally, Reck (1977, p. 14) when he stated that although all the peoples of the world have music in one form or another, many of them do not have even a roughly equivalent word for it.

Chernoff (1979, p. 36) argue that the music of Africa is a cultural activity which reveals a group of people organising and involving themselves with their own communal relationships. To him music is more than just the body of sounds or a concept, but also an experience bearing and communicating issues of socio-cultural significance to the community that practices it. In supporting Chernoff, Kartoumi, (1981, p. 241) acknowledge the fact that music is conceived of not only sound which

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is pure and simple, but also it is a symbolic expression of culture, as the result of which wider connotations are attached to its sound components.

The importance of music, in actual fact, is also seen in its very power. It is powerful at the level of the social group because it facilitates communication which goes beyond words, enables meanings to be shared, and promotes the development and maintenance of individual, group, culture and national identity. It is powerful at the individual level because it can induce multiple responses–physiological, movements, mood, emotional, cognitive and behavioral and few other stimuli that have effects on such a wide range of human functions. The brain‟s multiple processing of music can make it difficult to predict the particular effects any piece of music can have on an individual.

The process of musical creation has been investigated by several researchers. What is evident is that composition can either be „working type‟ or an „inspirational type‟ (Bennett, 1976, p.4). No matter how one looks at it, composition can be described as a process. Composition, simply, is the act of bringing something into being which did not exist before. If one is using words, the outcome becomes a novel; if one is using colour, the result becomes a painting; but when uses sounds, the emerging product becomes a musical piece. Composition is, in fact, a „putting together‟ of materials (Scholes, 1991, p.218).

Taking an even modest and subtle stand on the composing process, Bennett (1976, p.3) said composing process involves, first, discovering a "germinal idea." A brief sketch of the germinal idea was often recorded, followed by a first draft of the work,

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elaboration, refinement of the first draft, and then completion of the final draft in addition to copying of the score. Compositional activity seems to occur most frequently in association with feelings of tranquility, security, and relaxation. Bennett also tells us about the four basic steps in musical composition which have been cited in Graf (1947). The first stage involves a productive mood a condition of expectation that a composition is imminent. Composers frequently cycle in and out of productive moods, Graf noted. Improvisation may help initiate a productive mood, as many variables such as time of day or season of the year.

The next stage in musical composition described by Graf is musical conception, when subconscious themes, melodies, or ideas break through to consciousness and are seized by the conscious mind. A sketch of the musical idea is often attempted at this time. Sketches are stenographic excerpts of the musical idea rather than finished pictures. The actual composing process involves condensation and expansion of the musical figures evoked during musical conception. Graf (1947); Bennett (1976, p.3); (Scholes 1991, p.218) all agree that intellect is important across all stages of musical creation, but particularly during the actual composing process.

Akuno (2001, p. 3) underscored that, music must be understood from the participants point of view, a true understanding involves analysis within the context in which it is created and practiced. The created music is influenced by the artist's understanding of the subject through experience and knowledge gained in that genre. Such experience, gained from casual, informal contacts or deliberate, organised instruction, is drawn upon for musical creativity as manifested in performance, response to musical stimuli as well as composition.

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However, things are different in the case of the Ghanaian composer because several Ghanaian art composers are subjected to the strict regimental rules imposed on them from the study of Harmony, Melody Writing, Counterpoint, Orchestration and Compositional Techniques by their teachers, a condition that stifled creativity only a few could stand out. Notwithstanding, other teachers in order to enhance creativity allow their composition students to be on their own by helping them develop their own style through relating to their ideas as well as searching more on their traditional sources.

Paynter (2002, p. 224) describes composing as an age-old natural process of thinking and making something. A similar view is shared by Bailey Shea (2007) who posits that the objective of composing music is to express oneself while satisfying the audience on the other hand. Corozine (2002) defines composition as an original piece of music; a process of creating a new piece of music. Arnold Whittal (2011) describes composition as a process and a product in his investigation into the process of composition.

Understanding traditional music should not be divorced from the values of the society in which the music was derived. Chernoff (1979, p. 92) observes that the Western perception of music tended to approach music cerebrally through the written score; and by assessing the performance, interpreting or reading of work with relatively strict non-physical conventions. Conversely, Nketia (1992, p. 207) concedes that African music might not distinguish between formal considerations such as dance, music and perceptive listening; and certainly not the score.

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Instead, African music combines these elements into an entire experience. In Western music, a score usually contains essential symbols that are peculiar to it or necessary to communicate to performers. These symbols help the music to have direction and marks that are necessary for a work to be performed (Leinsdorf 1981: 1). For example, a musical score might contain markings for intensity of sound (such as *f*, *p*) and different speeds (*Allegro*, *Moderato*) at which the music should be performed. The score might also contain markings for stress, repeats, pause, etc. In some cases, a performer is left to put these into effect at his or her own discretions. In the study, classical Western and contemporary music aspects such as harmonic texture and performance medium were incorporated in the composition alongside Dagaaba musical idiom to give it artistic drive and focus.

Western composers works influenced by Ghanaian traditions

Exploring African resources in contemporary compositions is, thus, part of a general intercultural trend in Western hemisphere, an approach to composition that is gaining ground because of increasing availability of African performers and recordings. The Western composers mentioned below were referenced because they were inspired by folk idioms and traditions of various communities in which they lived. The study refers to them for the sake of comparison even if they lived way back between the 18th and early 20th centuries.

According to Mereku (1997, p. 6) Ian Hall and Steve Reich had the opportunity to visit and research in Ghana. The former, one time the director of the Bloomsbury Society in London was born in Guyana and educated in Oxford University. He was appointed Director of Music at the famous Achimota School in Ghana between 1964

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and 1966. This experience, Hall describes, provided catalytic upheaval in his musical personality. Precisely, he said. „Ghana inspired my *Psalm 150* in which I introduced, *boma, mpintin, atumpan* and *donno* (all drums found at the Asantehene"s court) to accompany the chorus" (Mereku 1997, p. 5). On the other hand, Mereku also observed that Steve Reich in his research in Ghana, his preoccupation was on the fascinating four time embodied in a traditional dance of the *Anlɔawo*, the *Agbadza* dance (Mereku 1997, p. 6).

This time feel underlines most of the works he wrote. Mereku (2012) observes that Reich"s works include New *York Counterpoint* (1985), *Different Trains* (1988), and *The Cave* (1993). He illuminates how Reich manipulates high-tech to "imitate and develop recorded sounds." By use of samplers and keys, the musicians, controlling fragments of recorded speech are able to alter the phrasing and tempo of the words, or play „chords" of words or bits of words.

Commenting on other western composers, Mereku (1997, p. 5) observed that the American composer, Roy Travis, did not only have the opportunity in the 1960"s to record, transcribe and analyze *sikyi, techema-chema, asafo* and *akɔm* dance patterns from an Ashanti master drummer called Kwasi Badu (at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA) but also had the opportunity to record and transcribe Ewe genres like *gakpa* and *adevu* from the Ghanaian master drummer, Robert Ayitee. Among his compositions are African *Sonata* (1996) for Pianoforte, *Duo Concertante* for violin and piano–a three-movement work that utilizes *gakpa* and *asafo* dances in the first and last movements respectively. Each of the movements in his *Switched-on-Ashanti* is based on *akɔm* and *techema-chema sikyi* dance patterns. (Euba, 1989)

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considers Travis"s full-length opera, the *Black Bacchants*, (in which African elements are used) as the most ambitious of his works. The work is scored for five principal singers, triple chorus and a full symphonic orchestra combined with a large ensemble of Ghanaian traditional instruments.

African art Music Composers–The Nigerian scenario

Traditional music remains the pedestal of Nigerian cultural identification. The music has been in existence from the emergence of the nation and is still upheld by its practitioners as well as its patrons as the chief custodian and conduit of Nigerian cultural heritage. In a nutshell, traditional music encapsulates the world-view, philosophy, aspiration, religion, history, and lineage, social, economic and political systems of the nation. However, music in Nigeria has never been static, but has consistently been undergoing a process of metamorphosis through a continued exposure to diverse musical styles from foreign cultures. This process of assimilation and integration has left a long trail of musical synthesis between Nigeria and musical idioms from countries such as America, Brazil, Cuba, Europe and other African nations (Sadoh 2007).

While the Church constituted one of the avenues for the introduction of European church and European classical music, it also provided the forum for the emergence of short, experimental musical compositions by Nigerian composers who sought to replace European liturgies and hymns with a more culturally relevant tradition of church music. The early church composers included Ekundayo Phillips, Reverend Canon J. J. Kuti, Reverend T. A. Olude, Akin George, Emmanuel Sowande, Nelson Okoli and Ikoli Harcourt-Whyte.

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The compositional activities of these Nigerian composers marked the beginning of creative expression in a written form, in contrast to the oral tradition, which is the distinguishing nature of Nigerian traditional music. Njoku (1997: 242), in a study of the life and works of the Nigerian composer Okechwukwu Ndubuisi, corroborates this point, stating that the emergence of modern church and art music in Nigeria 'added new dimensions to the Nigerian tradition of compositions. The artistic position of some Folk songs also changed from being an adjunct to bedtime stories,

The next batch of Nigeria composers were those trained by the early church musicians In fact, the early Nigerian church musicians, many of whom lacked professional training in music, had to train a later generation of musicians and composers who, with the benefit of professional musical training in Europe, wrote a considerable body of compositions, conceived in the tradition of European classical music but making considerable use of African elements. These composers include Fela Sowande, Ayo Bankole, Akin Euba, Samuel Akpabot, Lazarus Ekwueme and Okechukwu Ndubuisi. For example, Samuel Akpabot and Fela Sowande received their initial training under Ekundayo Phillips. Akin George was the maternal grandfather of Ayo Bankole, Emmanuel Sowande, a composer of church music in the late nineteenth century, encouraged and provided initial training for his son, Fela Sowande.

In Nigerian contemporary art music, Fela Sowande wrote *African Suite* (1944) for strings, *Nigerian Folk Symphony* (1961) and other vocal and organ works. Samuel Akpabot wrote *Three Nigerian Dances* (1962) for string orchestra and percussion; *Ofala Festival* (1963) for wind orchestra plus 5 African instruments; his sound track to the film *Journey through Africa* (1965) and a few other compositions have combinations for African music. Lazarus Ekueme wrote *Nigerian Rhapsody* for

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strings and *Dance of the Black Witches* for quintet. Akin Euba wrote several songs with piano accompaniment in addition to piano and chamber works. His orchestral works include *Abiku No.II* (1962) for 3-part choir and Nigerian Instruments; *Dirges* (1972) for speakers, singers and Nigerian instruments; *Alantangana* (1975) for singers, dancers and Nigerian instruments; *Morning, Noon and Night* (1967) for singers, dancers and Nigerian instruments and finally his *Chaka* (1970) for soloist, chorus and orchestra. (Omojola 1995, p.65)

African art Music Composers–The Ghanaian scenario

Choral Music writing in Ghana

The pioneering composers in Ghana took their inspirations from traditional idioms which were blended with Western materials in their reconstruction process to create genuine forms of art in choral music tradition. Ephraim Amu, who has been ascribed the title the Father of Ghanaian choral music (Omojola 1995, p. 150) did extensive research on traditional music and this enabled him to devise a neo-African idiom which has influenced succeeding generations of Ghanaian composers (Euba 1993, p. 8). In a similar observation, Nketia (1993, p. 6) reviewed the strategies Amu adopted in his choral works and pointed out that, Amu drew models of form not only from the anthem and the hymn but also from warrior organizations, traditional song types that excited his imagination and some of the popular songs of the time. As a pace setter, Nketia (1993) acknowledges that he was the first to experiment on how complex polyrhythmic and contrapuntal textures could be realized from African rhythmic idioms embodied in dance genres. In *Adawura Bɔme* Amu imitates the percussion rhythm of the bell and the high drum, through the use of such non-lexical sounds as

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kon kon kon and *pete pete*. His other compositions include *Nenyo ne ɖe wo ɖeɖe*, *Miva miva*, and *Alegbegbe*.

Ghanaian art music composers like S.G. Boateng, N.Z. Nayo, F.K. Nyaku, A.A. Mensah, Charles Graves, Ernest Safo, J.M.T. Dosoo and J.S. Maison who were his pioneer students and others followed the style of Amu"s composition. J. H. Kwabena Nketia, also wanted to follow Amu"s compositional styles but he was advised to create his own style of composing. Nketia upon Amu"s advice composed a lot of choral works in his own tradition; amongst which are, *Monkamfo No, Monna N'ase, Mmɔbɔrɔ Asɛm* and *Nkyimma Nye Bi* and many others.

Another composer that made some innovations to choral music in Ghana also worth mentioning is Walter Blege. What serves as foreground to his works are traditional dance idioms, whose musical concepts or distinctive features serve as sources of enrichment but not, necessarily, as the focus of expression. In a paper he presented at the annual Conference of the Ghana Music Teachers" Association at Winneba in 1992, Blege explains how, like a master drummer, composers could vary their rhythm, syncopate or emphasize portions of motives derived from traditional dance idioms to achieve whatever compositional principle they might have set for themselves. It is interesting how he modeled rhythmic motives from traditional dances in order to maintain the lilts of the dances in his works. *Miawoe He Nyanyue Ve Na Mi*, is conceived in *adevu* dance vein; *Mel' Agbe*, has the lilt of *tudzi*, whilst *Davidi zu ze vi tukui* is set to *gbolo* dance. Blege"s innovation has inspired the compositions of younger composers in Ghana including Asare-Bediako in his *Ghana Mon Tie* (1995)

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that was conceived in *adowa* dance style, and Kofi Ansah"s *Anoagbe Kon* (1997) which is set to *gabada* dance.

N. Z. Nayo and Kenn Kafui are among other choral composers who added instrumental accompaniment to their works. In cases where traditional instruments were added, the instruments only served as reinforcement of the dance patterns for an additional percussive flavor. Nayo orchestrated some of his choral works and that of Amu when he was the Director of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra. His work *Mawu Xɔ Mia 'Kpedada'* is for choir and orchestra. Ken Kafui"s *Dom Ko Ma Yi* (1985) was written for choir and orchestra too. In this music, however, Kafui introduces *laklevu* and *akaye* ensemble of the *Eʋedome* tradition. The researcher"s *Tie Afutuo* (2008) in which the pervasive nature of rhythmic idioms cannot be overemphasized, derived from *gabada* and *adowa* dance practices. He constantly manipulated these dances to impact particular vitality to the music. The work used *gabada* and *adowa* ensembles as its accompaniment when it was premiered by the Seventh-day Adventist Church Choir at the University of Education, Winneba, Amu Theatre in May 2008.

Instrumental art music in Ghana

Unlike the choral tradition, only few Ghanaian composers dared to write solely instrumental pieces. The few that were written were more or less limited to the tonal harmonic practice idioms. Notwithstanding, in this review contributions of Nketia, Nayo, Anku, and Mereku are discussed.

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Nketia, in contrast to Amu (who used models from his Eʋe tradition and that of the neighboring Akwapen Akan) did not only use traditional African idioms from his tradition, which he devoted quality time studying; but also, from other cultures of Ghana, Nigeria, and Uganda. His piano works include *Bolga Sonata* for violin and piano (1958); *Cow Lane Sextet* for Wind and Percussion (1959); Dance of the Forest, No.1: *Mmoatia Sankuo* trio for Strings (1960); Ewe-Fon Trilogy No.3, *Dance of Joy*; and the three *Dance of the Maidens* No. 1, 2, and 3 which were all composed in 1960. These works use various idioms belonging to different ethnic traditions. He also wrote a prelude to *atɛtɛnbɛn* as well as piano and an *atɛtɛnbɛn* quartet (Mereku 2012, p.4).

Nicholas Zinzendorf Nayo is one of the outstanding composers that followed the footsteps of the two giants in Ghana. Nayo, who also wrote several works in Eʋe language, contributed magnificently in compositions that used African idioms embodied in dance genres. One of his earlier instrumental works *Violin prelude* written for *Ogbe* and *Eyina sege sege* arranged for orchestra. Moreover, his later instrumental symphonic works include *Fɔntɔmfrɔm Prelude, Volta Symphony* and *Accra Symphony*, premiered by the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra are based on Ashanti, Eʋe and Ga dance traditions respectively.

Another Ghanaian composer who needs mentioning is Atta Annan Mensah. Mereku (2012) in his recent article reveals how A. A. Mensah wrote several character pieces for the piano; solo voice and pianoforte accompaniment and composed several signature tunes for broadcasting. The signature tunes include that for *Hausa News* on Radio Ghana; *Ghana Muntie* for Radio Ghana News in English and the signature tune for Ghana TV News.

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In his assessment of Willie Anku‟s works, Mereku (1997, p. 6) conceives that Anku is perhaps the first Ghanaian composer to have successfully integrated African traditional dance idioms into serious music instrumental compositions in Ghana. Anku, who conducted series of computer-assisted analysis on African rhythms,was able to translate, into compositional terms, his findings, paying particular attention to the generative processes inherent in these dance idioms (Euba 1993, p. 11; Nketia 1993, p. 4). In a recent work of his, *Ognolapk,* Anku experiments with a retrograde of the *Kpalongo* dance. Mereku has also made significant contributions to instrumental music. His work, mostly in the tradition includes, *Pivicafrique Sasabonsam's Match* (1994), *Royal Requiem* (1994), *Afro-Drumnietta* (1995), *African Coronation Collage* (1995), *Orkney Quartet* (1995), *Ghana Rap-Ody* (1996), and *Akpini Electroacoustics* (1996).

For consistency with performing traditions, the study (*Xylafrique*) incorporated Western music performance direction marks. However, while it may be a foreign idea, this conventional way of presenting direction on musical score was used to enrich and to subscribe to music conventions. In *Xylafrique* this observation was taken into account to bring out the Dagaaba musical idioms by taking note of the Dagaare language‟s rhythmic features. Tone languages exhibit a tendency to follow both into natural contour of speech in melodies and the rhythm of speech in song (Nketia 1992, p. 186).

In this study, melodic contour attributes were observed so that they correspond to the Dagaare speech tone pattern to create meaning in the *Xylafrique* composition as Nketia (1992, p. 180) observes the melody conveys an intelligible message; it needs

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correlates with the speech tone of its text. The melody assumes a motion similar to the tonal movement of the text. Swanwick and Taylor (1982, pp. 53; Musungu, 2010, p. 14) argue that being creative is an inherent component of the musical experiences which include composition. Creativity is important in shaping a melody in relation to the words, choice of chords, texture, form, meter and tonality. They claim that these resources being drawn from Western classical music practices could be applied artistically alongside traditional musical features and still maintain the identity of the tradition.

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Theoretical Framework

The concepts and theories that the researcher used in supporting the research include Nketia syncretic approach theory (1982), the bi-musicality and African Pianism theories of Euba (1992) and Webster"s model of creative thinking in music.

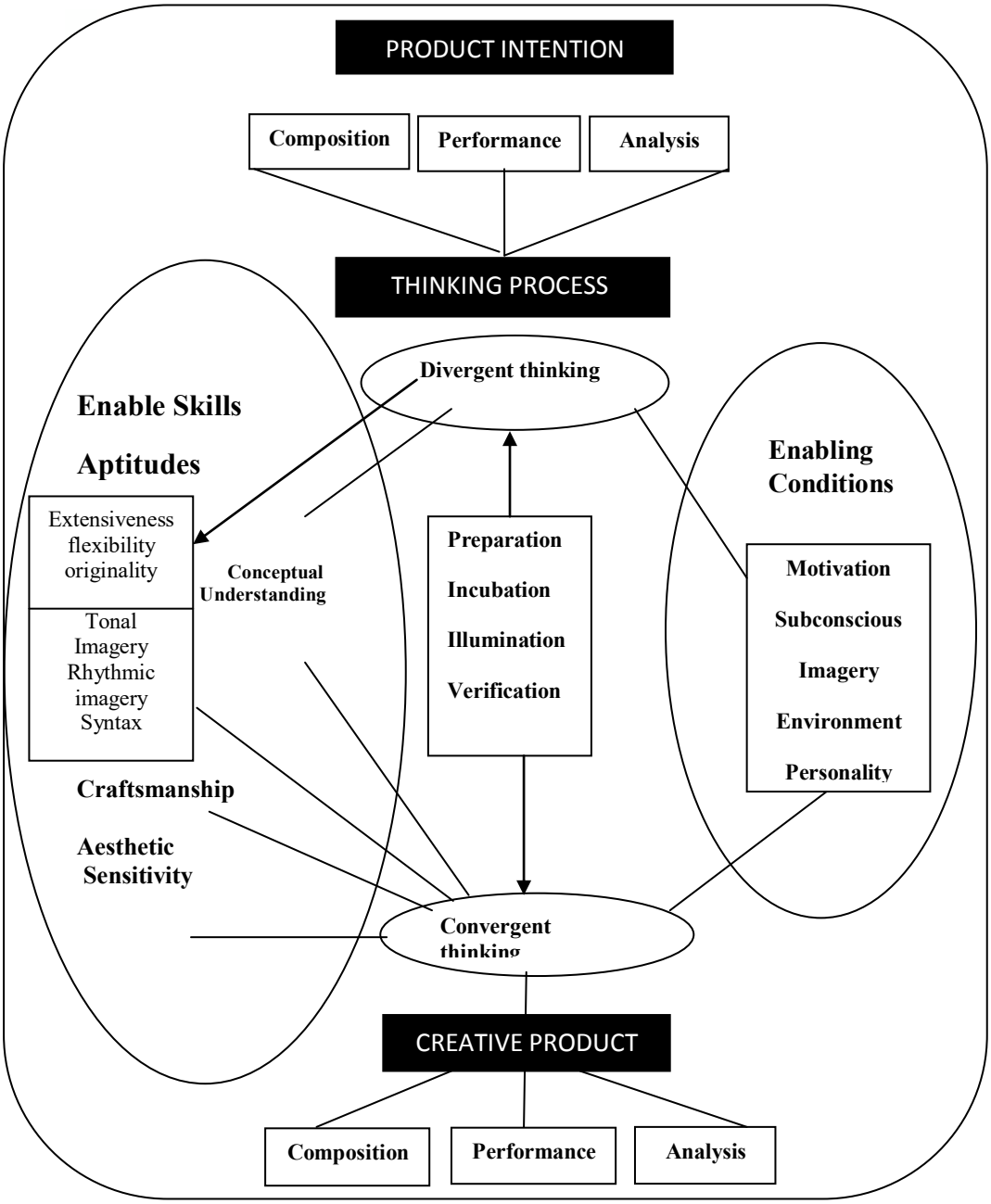

Figure 1: Webster's model of creative thinking in music

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Webster's Creative thinking in Music model

The first theory that supports the study is Webster‟s Creative thinking model as illustrated in Fig.1 above. Webster grouped the model into three major headings: Product Intention, Thinking Process and Creative Thinking. Composition, performance /improvisation and analysis can be considered at the outset of creative thinking as goals or „intentions‟ of the creator (composer). When the intention is established, the creator must rely on a set of skills that allow for the thinking process to occur. The first among these skills is the necessary collection of musical aptitudes. They include such convergent aptitudes like the ability to recognize rhythmic and tonal patterns and musical syntax. Certain divergent, imaginative skills such as musical extensiveness, flexibility and originality are also critical. These aptitudes are innate though subject to developmental improvement with training. Another enabling skill is conceptual understanding which comprises knowledge of facts, craftsmanship and aesthetic sensitivity which grow with age and experience but transfer of these abilities do not occur naturally.

In addition to the enabling skills that drive the creative thinking process, there are other factors which are non-musical. These include motivation, subconscious imagery, personality and environment. The influences of these enabling conditions vary from person to person and mingle with musical skills. The centre of the model which Webster termed as thinking process indicates movement between divergent and convergent thinking. These stages involve the preparation, incubation, verification and illustration. However there are a number of connections between this process and the enabling skills and conditions.

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From the model, my product intention, *Xylafrique*, has to go through the thinking process which divergently includes the enabling skills and conditions which converge into the final. The enabling skills include the skills acquired through training both formal and informal which have developed my craftsmanship enabling me as a composer to gather information on Dagaaba *gyil* genre and putting them together to come out with the final product which is the *Xylafrique*. The success of which emanating from the enabling conditions such as the motivation from my supervisors, lecturers as well as friends and the conducive environmental atmosphere under which the project was undertaken.

Syncretic approach theory

The usages of the past provide the moulds for creating and developing channels of the communication and musical codes that can be understood by the receptors of music and not just by those who generate them. To create something fresh, according to Nketia (2007), there are three techniques that are key to consider:

1. Reversal Techniques
2. Syncretic Techniques
3. Techniques of Re-interpretation

The reversal technique consists simply of turning the procedures of tonal music around and using the logic of the reversals as the basis for the major combinations of sounds and rhythm at crucial points of stress and tension–employing techniques for making the regular irregular and vice versa and generally avoiding procedures or combinations that may suggest unconscious return to tonality or "root harmony" incompatible with the idiom of tonal music."

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Syncretic approach, or „going to traditional music or music in oral or partly oral tradition for creative ideas, sources of sound, themes and procedures that may be used for expanding one‟s modes of expression‟ (Nketia 2007). Listeners, he says, are usually more apt to respond favorably to music that speaks in the same way in which their native language flows, each having its own peculiar rhythmic flow or feel. Nketia also talks about the importance on drawing from the past when trying to create a new musical idiom. Again, this is a concept probably as old as the tradition of composing music for art‟s sake Nketia (2007).

Alfred Fisher (1992 p.7) When authentic experience is expelled and the cultural vault emptied, what then can be the fate of memory? Divested of experience, what can degraded memory hold? Can memory as a functional component of creativity and intellection continue to be precious, its power heuristic? Art drawing only on experience is by definition a syncretic art. If experience is a precondition to creation of new art and if such creation may be understood to subsume artistic "advancement," "growth," or, at the least, "difference," the process will require significant potentialization from a source beyond the personal resources (experience preserved in memory) of the creator. There must be an "outside" source leading to conceptualization, analytical penetration and activation of system, however informal, if there is to be "process" or control in the making of art.

Chang (2001 p.2-5) cited Melville Herskovits was specific about the use of syncretism as a conceptual tool for clarifying cultural synthesis as a process:

> This [reinterpreting new elements in traditional terms], in turn, is further refined by references to the process of *syncretism,* the tendency to

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> identify those elements in the new culture with similar elements in the old one, enabling the persons experiencing the contact to move from one to the other, and back again, with psychological ease (Herskovits 1966:57).

This interest in developing a theoretical framework for the study of the blending process for different musical elements resulted in two important articles of the 1950s, both by Herskovits's students: "African Influence on American Negro Music," (1952) by Richard Waterman, and "The Use of Music in the Study of a Problem of Acculturation," (1955) by Alan Merriam. The term "amusical syncretism" was first articulated by Waterman in his 1952 article. In this case study, he applied Parsons's and Herskovits's ideas.

Bi-musicality

Davis (1994, p.147) argues that the hybridizing of musical elements of various ethnic origins and the development of new genres and styles occur within secular dance music; music that serves the function of recreation permits certain modification without jeopardizing its social purpose. He suggested that, styles and genres may merge, giving rise to new creations. On the other hand, both European and African derived musical styles and genres may coexist without complete syncretism, each represented by different component genres or subgenres within a musical event, or even by different aspects or sections of individual pieces.

African Pianism

Writing on how African art music composers can expand their creative resources Euba (1989, p. 151-152) and Akrofi (2002, p.172) explain African pianism as the techniques used in the performance of African xylophones, thumb pianos, plucked

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lutes, drum chimes… and the polyrhythmic methods of African instrumental music in general that would form a good basis for an African pianistic style. They further define it as the ingredients of thematic repetition, direct borrowings of the thematic material (rhythmical and/or tonal) of African traditional resources the use of rhythmical and/or tonal motifs which, although not borrowed from specific (identifiable) traditional sources, are based on traditional idioms. The term also includes the percussive treatment of the piano and making the piano behave like African instruments.

Going on further, Nketia (1994, p. iii) defines it as a style of piano music which derives its characteristic idiom from the procedures of African percussion music as exemplified in bell patterns, drumming, xylophone and *mbira* music. It may be simple or extended rhythmic motifs or the lyricism of traditional songs and even those of African popular music as the basis of its rhythmic phrases. It is open ended as far as the use of tonal materials is concerned except that it may draw on the modal and cadential characteristics of traditional music. Its harmonic idiom may be tonal, atonal, consonant or dissonant in whole or part, depending on the preferences of the composer, the mood or impressions he wishes to create or how he chooses to reinforce, heighten or soften the jaggedness of successive percussive attacks. In this respect, the African composer does not have to tie himself down to any particular school of writing if his primary aim is to explore the potential of African rhythmic and tonal usages.

The Webster"s model, syncretic method and African pianism theories became the underpinning of *Xylafrique*. All these theories were used in the *Xylafrique*

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composition and needed to blend to communicate in an appropriate musical idiom. The components relationships assisted in giving a musical meaning, while the social function came out in overall meaning of the composition in context. The close proximity was instrumental in synthesizing the various parts as in text and melody, rhythm and meter; then texture to bring out the *Dagaaba gyil* idiom in the composition alongside the Western compositional techniques.

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METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used both descriptive and creative designs, which to a large extent explores qualitative aspects. Ogula (1998, p. 15) observes that qualitative research can assist one in collecting data for analysis from their natural settings by direct observation. The descriptive phase involved the collecting and analyzing of the Dagaaba folk songs for identification of musical themes and elements to be used in the composing *Xylafrique*. An analysis of the text from the collected songs was also undertaken to extract direct or indirect meaning. Merriam (1964, p. 187) corroborates this viewpoint when he observes that the analysis of song texts reveals the relationship that exists between music and text. This view also assisted in the development of the themes for the composition.

Descriptive Phase

This involved analysing the collected songs from the Dagaaba *gyil* genre to haul out features like common rhythmic motifs, phrases, meter and themes that assisted in the creative work. The analysis was instrumental in confirming elements that characterised this Dagaaba traditional genre. Texts were also analysed for meaning and suitability, which enhanced creation of themes for the tunes in the composition.

Collection of Data

Population Sample

The population for the study consisted of traditional Dagaaba *gyil* performers around Winneba and Kasoa area in the Central Region of Ghana. Using the purposive

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sampling method, the researcher relied on his emic experience and exposure to xylophone music to establish contact with the traditional performers. Blacking (1971, p. 2) Advises that a researcher should work with someone who has a detailed cultural knowledge of the area in order to obtain accurate data.

Consequently Mr. Gilbert Berese, Xylophone Instructor in the Department of Music Education, University of Education, Winneba, who hails from Nandom in the Upper West Region of Ghana was used as the key informant. The setting on Mr. Berese as the key informant went beyond just the fact that he hails from Nandom. Additionally, He has since 1970 been teaching Xylophone and has gone beyond just being an educator. He has also been manufacturing xylophones and therefore very familiar with the organology of the instruments. The data collected therefore was not firsthand information but also it was authentic.

Research Instruments

Unstructured interview guide was used to collect data from the traditional musicians, who gave insight on the origin, function and performance of the *Gyil* genre. The age bracket of the musicians interviewed was between 40-65 years for seasoned performers of the two communities. Audio and video recorders were used to record the folk songs for transcription and analysis. Thirty-nine (39) Dagaaba *gyil* tunes were recorded live from the traditional performers (*cf.* pp. 56-59).

Analytical Methods

Cook (1987, p.9) observes that analysis may be approached through melodic, rhythmic or harmonic content. These are conventional methods of analysis that

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include macro analysis, extensional and intentional analyses. Macro analysis involved transcribing recorded Dagaaba *gyil* folk songs from the field. Some of the songs were transcribed and notated in staff (*cf.* Appendix A). Details like musical structure and performance styles in solo-response form were all noted (List 1974). Extensional Analysis describes the music itself–tempo, timbre, pitch, language, etc. which made it easier for the classification of the Dagaaba traditional music, while intentional analysis highlighted the qualities that make up the *Gyil* music. These included features like melodic and rhythmic patterns of the Dagaaba folk songs. The analyses assisted in identifying common music features in the folk songs that could guide the composing of *Xylafrique.*

Creative Phase

The creative phase involved establishing the themes and the resources used to compose *Xylafrique*. The compositions consist of three movements that have the programme line that is sub-divided into smaller sections. The movement one is called *Ate Kyillɛ*, the second *Zung be nyɛrɛ yee* and the third *Yang yang kole.*

Instrumentation

In the score, one sees a bulk of musical instruments that are used in the compositions that are both Western and traditional Dagaaba origin. Western instruments used for pragmatic reasons are as follows: the Piano, Piccolo, Flute I&II, Oboe I&II English Horn, B flat Clarinet I&II, Bass Clarinet, Bassoon I&II, Contra Bassoon, Violin I&II, Viola, Cello and Contra Bass. Traditional indigenous instruments include *Gyil, Nukpola, Kur Velkpele,* and *Cheimɛ* which are all percussive.

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Layout of the Research Report

This report is in five (5) chapters. Chapter one contains the introduction, background of the study which carries along the statement of the problem, purpose, objectives of the study, research questions, research assumptions, rationale and significance, scope and limitations that lead literature review. Still under chapter one the theoretical framework and methodology are discussed and ends with the layout of the report. Chapter two takes a look at the indigenous musical genre–the *Dagaaba gyil*–the researcher studied. Chapter three presents the scores on *Xylafrique*. Chapter four presents the definitive analysis on the hybrid innovation that evolved from the study, while Chapter five deals with the summary, conclusion and recommendations. Suggestions are also made to future researchers to explore the *terra incognita* in the use of traditional musical resources in the reconstruction process.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE DAGAABA GYIL GENRE

Brief historical background of the Dagaabas

The Dagaabas stretch from Tuna in the Bole District of the Northern Region of Ghana through Upper West and reach as far as Bobo in Burkina Faso (Mereku, Addo & Ohene-Okantah, 2005). Oral Tradition has it that they migrated from the South. Another school of thought believes that the people were offshoot of the Farefaras in the Upper East Region but because of dog-head broke off the brotherhood and moved westwards. Some prominent towns in the area include Baabile, Lawra, Jirapa, Busie, Nandom, Hamile, Kokoligu and Tiirpuo (Gan 1999, Mereku, Addo & Ohene-Okantah 2005, p. 54).

The origin of Bawa dance

Bawa dance is one of the oldest traditional dances of the Dagaare speaking people of the Upper West Region of Ghana. According to Gilbert Berese, (a *Gyil Maale* [xylophone maker], a *goba* [xylophone player] and instructor at the University of Education, Winneba), „*Ba wa*" genre came into being as a result of a fight between Samori and Babatu tribes during the slave trade era. The word *ba wa* is a Dagaare word that comprises two different words–*Ba* literally meaning (friends) and *Wa* meaning (come). So, the compound word, *ba wa*, means „friends come and dance or jubilate". As it has been said earlier on, in the fight the Babatu tribe was able to conquer the Samori and for that matter, tribe. As a result of this, they were happy and started jubilating in the form of dancing. They called other people to come and join them (*ba wa*) to jubilate to express their joy.

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On the name of the genre, Mereku & Ohene-Okantah (2007, p. 102) corroborate what Berese said when they observed that, in the past there was disintegration among the Dagaabas due to tribal wars and many other anti-social activities. Consequently, it was very difficult for people to converge at a point to discuss issues of mutual interest and understanding and to exchange ideals. However, the divine intervention of *Bawaa,* which literally means let them come, was what saved the situation. They went further to say, it was *Bawaa* dance which brought peace, unity and understanding among the people of *Dagaaba* land. They argue that since then *bawa* dance became an ensemble for the people of Upper West Region and *gyil* (xylophone) is the principal instrument.

Contextual Setting of Gyil

Unlike the other dances where women are not allowed to participate, *bawa* performance is by both men and women. The men play the xylophone or the *gyil* while the women sing and dance. In the olden days, the *Bawa* ensemble had also flutes with women‟s voices in some cases, accompaniment with drums were not uncommon in the chief‟s procession to a durbar. Today, *Bawa* is one of the main forms of recreational music and dance among the Dagaabas. Apart from *Bawa* ensembles, *gyil* is used in other ensembles such as *Bagr Binne* (the festival dance), *Mesa* (the church music), and *Kour* (funeral dance).

The *gyil* is used for everything in Lobi and Dagaabas life, from weddings and funerals to dances and everyday recreation. Nearly every man in the community can play at least a tune or two, yet the *gyil goba* or the *maale* studies the instrument for much of his life before he is considered worthy to represent the community at sacred events.

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These support Webster‟s position on extensiveness as an enabling skill in the creative process. In that capacity, he is much like a doctor, on call to heal emotional or physical illnesses, and like an academic advisor, always available to coach and evaluate young musicians. The *Gyil* master is especially important as the initiator of the funeral, the Lobi's and Dagaaba's most important rite of passage.

Organology

In the Dagare language, *Gyil* means one xylophone and *Gyille* also means two or more xylophones. *Gyil* is the national instrument of the Lobi, Dagaare, and neighboring ethnic group. It is one of the oldest of the mallet keyboard family. It is made up of fourteen wooden slabs (*Legaa*) wood that is suspended on a frame, over calabash gourds. Each gourd has one to several holes that is covered with a spider‟s film which allows each slab to produce a column of buzzing air. Its powerful sound can be so soothing and healing.

The *Dagaaba gyil* is played with two mallets called beaters. The mallets are made up of wood like the bass drum stick just that the ends are improvised rubber at front automobile tyres. Two types of grip are identified with holding the beaters are (i) light grip, and (ii) Traditional (tight) grip (Green, 1996) as could be seen in fig 2 below. With the light , the beaters are held in between the index and the middle fingers whereas with the tight all the four fingers are wrapped round the stick downwards with the thumb pressing on the top (Adjahoe 2012, p.29). *Gobas* interviewed agreed among themselves that with practice any of the two techniques can be make you a virtuoso on the instruments. In other words, all the two are equally recommended for pedagogical purposes

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Figure 2: Gilbert Berese the Xylophone Instructor, U.E.W, Winneba

A brief history on Gyil

The *gyil* (Xylophone) is a tuned idiophone which is played in many societies in Africa. According to Agordoh (2002, p.60), in Ghana, there are four different tribes who play xylophone. They are the Dagaabas, the Lobis, the Birifors and the Sisaalas. The various local names given to the instrument by these tribes include jengsi by Sisaala, kogyil by Birifor *gyil* by Lobi and Dagaaba. He writes that the *Gyil* was originally in a pit form where they dug a pit and the slabs were laid on it. Today xylophone has slabs mounted over a wooden frame, below which a number of gourd resonators are suspended, graduated in size in relation to the pitches of the wooden slabs, and Berese agrees with all the view point Agordoh presented.

The Sissala, Birifor and Dagaaba xylophones differ in aspects of size and tuning. The *Birifor's gyil* normally has 14 wooden slabs, whereas the Dagaaba and Sisaala

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xylophones can have 18 slabs. The Sisaala *jengsi* is also bigger and heavier, though not any way louder. This practice is by no means fixed, and xylophones of varied number of slabs are made for different purposes (Agrimbau, 2011). This assertion was also confirmed by Berese and Kajaga who is a *goba* at Kasoa.

When dismantled, the *gyil* is identified in Dagaare linguistic area as having head, chest, middle, bottom frame and slabs. Fig. 3 shows the parts of the *gyil* and table 1 below gives the Dagaaba names of these parts.

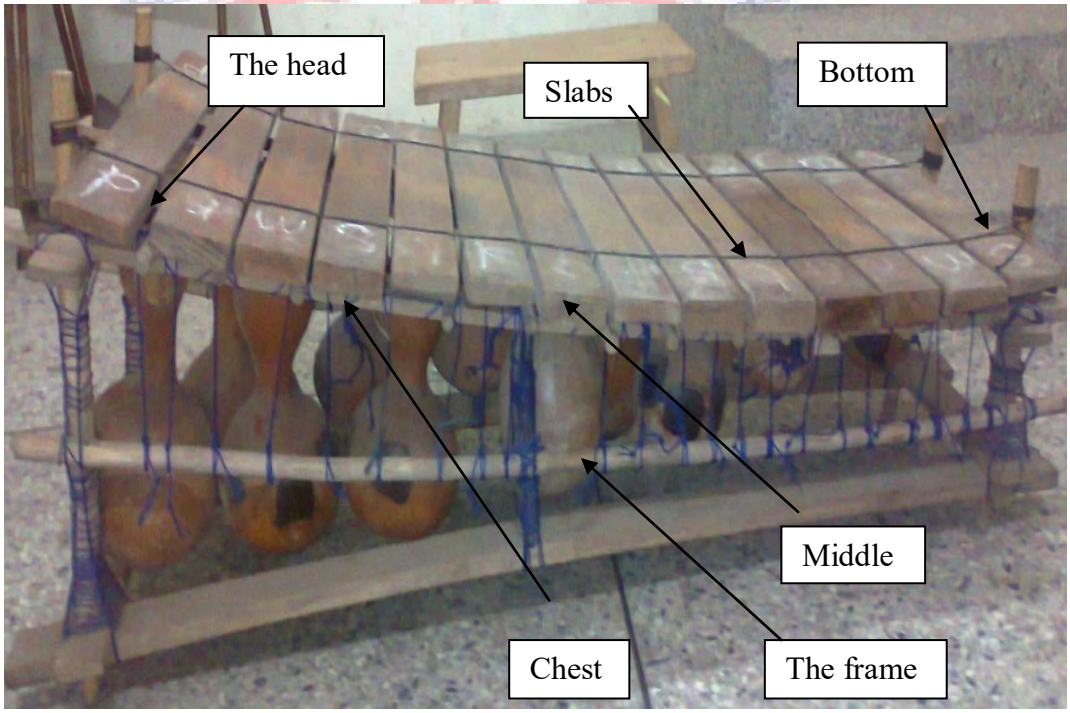

Figure 3: Gyil (Xylophone) parts

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Table 1 : Parts of Xylophone in local and literal translation

Local Names	Literal Translation
Gyil Zu	Head
Gyil Nyaa	Chest
Gyil Sog	Middle
Gyil Per	Bottom
Gyil Zang	Frame
Gyil Bie	Slabs

Construction of the Gyil

Upper West is rich with a variety of *gyil*. A xylophone has anything from fourteen to twenty two wooden slabs called *ligaa*, made from wood from the sheanut tree attached to a wooden frame below which hang resonators made from calabash gourd. On the resonators, spider web silk cover small holes in the gourds to produce a buzzing sound. The process of constructing and tuning the *gyil,* according to Agordoh (2002, p.64), starts with the chipping of the roots of the *ligaa*, in order to make the tree die. The tree is then left to fall by itself. To make the tree fall sooner, fire might be set into the chipped roots. After the tree has fallen, the *Gyil Maale* (Xylophone Maker) waits for between three and six years for the wood to lose most of its oils and then it will be ready to be shaped

After some time, the wood is cut from the tree to appropriate slab sizes. The slabs may either be kept near the roof above the compound‟s cooking fire place for a period of another year, or placed on top of a small trench of fire that burnt day and night for

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three weeks to fully dry as wood. After this, the cutting, trimming, scraping and tuning process begins. Gilbert Berese, the *Gyil Maale*, posits that the tools used to construct the *gyil* are *Lɛrkpaara* - the axe that is used to split the *Liga* wood into pieces. ***Lɛrpɛna*** - a hoe-like tool that is used for carving the *Ligaa* wood. The ***Koɔra*** - a sharp edge knife that is used to smoothen the carved surface of the slab. ***Lɛra*** - a sharp pointed tool that is used to pierce holes in the *Gyil* frame. *Pii*- sharp pointed knife used to bore holes in the gourds. ***Suɔ*** - the cutlass used to cut the wood into sides and ***Kyiɛra*** - a chisel-like tool for cutting.

Agordoh (2002, p. 65) also tells us that, the slab is placed over a vibrating chamber, a gourd and that amplifies the small sound produced by the slab. The *Gyil Maale* must study the sympathetic vibrations of available gourds and the gourds respond closest to the sound of pitch selected for that slab. If the gourd is sounding slightly sharp or flat the *Gyil maale* will use some techniques until it is in tune with the pitch. The holes are usually all placed on the side of the gourd the faces the outside of the *gyil*. A frame is constructed and a cushion support made of strips of leather, is secured across the frame on which the slabs are laid.

Nowadays, xylophone makers replace the spider‟s silk web is replaced by plastic bags or a delicatessen paper bag or air mail envelope which is made up of both paper and plastic. Antelope sinew and leather, or nylon rope is used to hold the slabs together, while cow skin is bound around the frame to secure its sturdiness. Xylophone making is considered sacred and was reserved for a few families.

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Names for Beaters

Like the marimba family, *gyil* is played with two wooden beaters. The names given to the beaters (mallets) in Dagaare language are *Gyil Nɛɛ, Gyil Doole*, *Gyil Loore, or Gyil Bie.* The wooden handles of the beaters are made from Dagaaba *sunsulre* tree and the rubber ends from the *Pempene* tree. The *gyil* is played by striking the slabs with the beaters. The rubber heads were traditionally made from the *Pempene* (rubber tree), but now the commonly used material is automobile truck tyre. Fig.4 shows the beaters and how it is held.

Figure 4 : How to hold the beaters

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Tuning of the *Gyil*

Issues of tuning and tone in West African xylophone have been the subject of investigation for a number of years. The fact that the slabs are fixed to pitches, makes it easier to study xylophone tunings than other instruments like drums that need frequent retuning. The *Dagaaba gyil* is tuned to the pentatonic scale. Depending on slab selected to be the tonic, the scale can either be hemitonic or enhemitonic pentatonic. However, pentatonic tunings received little attention in Jones‟s work and the Dagaaba *gyil* is evidently little known academically (Wiggins 2011, p. 235).

Wiggins (2011, p. 235) and Kubik (1985, pp. 47) all report that, write on tuning of the *gyil* have quite often been surprised that some African instrumentalists when retuning their instruments, apparently reproduce only approximately the intervals which they have noticed only shortly before. When the study tried to probe into this assertion aurally the *gobas* claimed that „it is the same tuning and to prove it they played the same pieces‟.

The scale pattern is also affected by acoustics, more especially by the timbre structure of the individual slabs of an instrument. Mensah (1985, p. 49) also notes that earlier measurements of older specimens of xylophones at the University of Ghana showed that weather and age had considerable effect on xylophone keys. It points out that the interval patterns from one octave to another became quite erratic.

In one of my visits to the University of Ghana, Legon, on November 9th, 2011, I was granted an interview by Aaron Bebe, the Xylophone Tutor in the Music Department, who said the *gyil* he played was tuned in C pentatonic. He admitted, however, that he could not sight-read. Mereku & Ohene-Okantah (2007, p. 126) argue that the lowest

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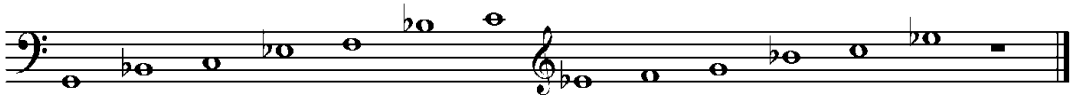
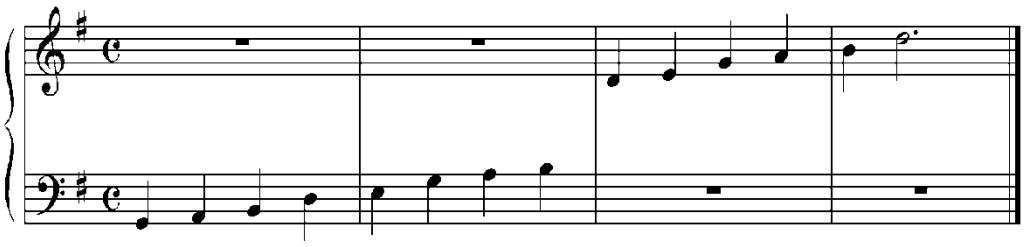
key on the g*yil* is G, the first line in the bass staff, and the highest is E flat, three octaves higher as shown in Ex. 1 below.



Example 1: Pitches associated with the Dagaaba gyil

In discussing the *gyil* with Gilbert Berese a lot of controversy was observed Gilbert Berese (2011) said the *gyil* is tuned in G anhemitonic pentatonic, that is the pentatonic without a half step, but cautions that it is not the absolute pitch as the slabs are mechanically tuned but manually. This affirms Dela Botri"s (the founder and Director of Hewale Soundz, a resident traditional contemporary dance ensemble in Accra), findings that the tuning is G anhemitonic that corroborates Berese"s (Adjahoe, 2010, p.16). Examples 2 below illustrate Berese and Botri"s position on the tuning.



Example 2: The G-anhemitonic pentatonic tuning system.

Nketia (1988, p.82) reported these controversies earlier when he observed that xylophones are usually tuned progressively from low notes to high (or from large slabs to small), but no means invariable. In some societies, such as those of northwestern Ghana, small and large xylophones are sometimes kept separately,

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because their keys begin on different pitches and are therefore not played together. In addition to differences in tuning, differences in the quality of various types of African xylophones are also noticeable. Much depends on the resonance of the wood, as well as the choice of resonators. Log or leg xylophones, for instance, do not sound the same as frame xylophones. In the case of frame xylophones, one would notice appreciable differences in quality between xylophones whose gourd resonators have buzzers (spider‟s nest membranes, which produce a buzzing sound) attached to them and those which do not have this device. (Nketia 1988, p.83)

Nketia (1988, p.177) further states that actual pitches of the basic scale steps show considerable variation from one society to another; sometimes such variations are found even within the same culture–that is why the Lobi of Ghana maintain that those who wish to play xylophones together should obtain them from the same instrument maker.

Nketia‟s view was echoed by Agrimbau (2011) who argues that the differences in tuning are arguable. The most significant of them all as they concern the use of xylophone music as a surrogate language. The tonal nature of the Sisaala, Birifor and Dagaaba languages and their dialectic forms, makes it possible to convey meaningful words and phrases by playing idiomatic melodic configurations. Different xylophone tunings, therefore, occur as a result of a communicational need more than an aesthetic preference. The variation of tunings is not definite as people belonging to the same ethno-linguistic group living in separated communities frequently speak different dialects, which is likely to affect their *gyil* tunings.

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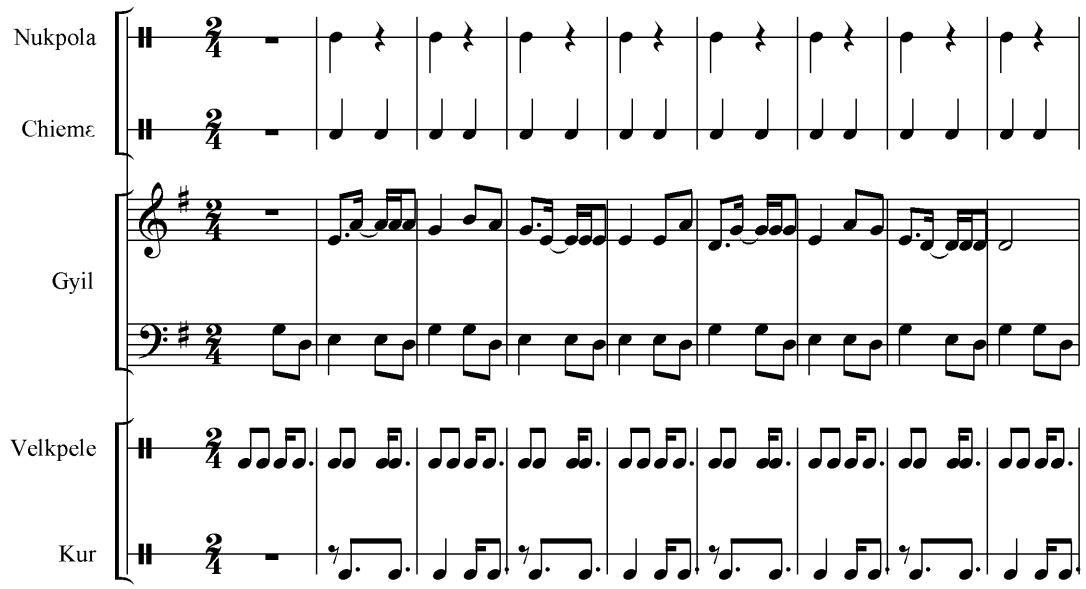
The Gyil ensemble

The *gyil* can be played by one player (*Goba*) or a pair where one *Goba* plays the melody, which is more rhythmical, and the other improvises harmonically or reinforces the tune with the right hand while he hits the edge of the low slabs with the hard end of the left hand beater. It may be subordinate to the instrumental part or it may be of equal or greater importance, depending on the context and function of the music. *Gyil* may possibly be accompanied by drums like *Velkpele*, *Kuor*, *Gangaar* and other percussive- like *Bule, Nukpla* and *Chiamɛ* as well as *Wele*, a melodic instrument. It can also be played by one person with the drums or by a soloist. In all such combinations, the voice part is very essential to the *Gyile* genre. As shown below.



Example 3: The *Gyil*

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The *Kuor* (gourd drum) forms part of the *gyil* ensemble.

The drum is made out of a big hollow gourd with a monitor lizard skin covering a hole as seen in fig. 5 below

Figure 5: Kour the gourd drum

The *chiamɛ*, ankle rattles, are usually made of metal. They are used by both dancers and gyil players alike. In both cases, the ankle rattles are activated as a result of the movement that dancers and gyil players make, as they are usually attached to wrists or ankles as seen in fig. 6 below.

Figure 6: *Chiamɛ* bells worn on the left leg of a dancer

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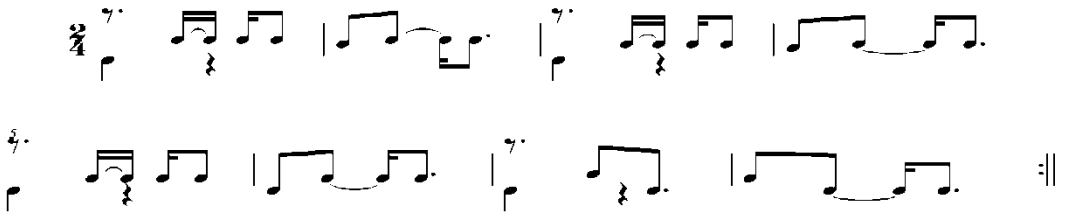
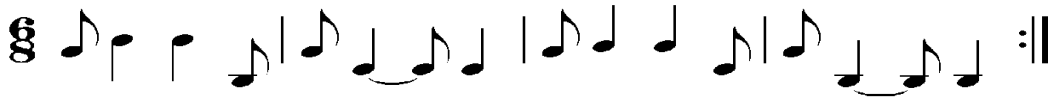
Gyil Rhythmic patterns

The prominent ethnomusicologist, Nketia (1988, p.125), noted that African traditions are more uniform in their choice and use of rhythms and rhythmic structures than they are in their selection and use of pitch system. Since African music is predisposed towards percussion and percussive textures, there is understandable emphasis on rhythm, for rhythmic interest often compensates for the absence of melody or the lack of melodic sophistication.

Instrumental rhythms are organized in both linear and multi-linear forms, and are generally conceived of as either syllabic–rhythms reflecting songs or abstract patterns. The rhythmic pattern of the *Gyil* ensemble is melodic since the instrument depicts the melody of songs. *Gyil* melodic patterns are normally short, repetitive and unitary, either binary or ternary forms with no modulation. The rhythmic patterns can be grouped into speech, percussive, poly-rhythmic, bell, standard and free rhythms. Following are examples of *gyil* melo-rhythmic patterns:



Example 4: *Gyil* melo-rhythm pattern in simple duple metre



Example 5: *Gyil* melo-rhythmic pattern in compound duple metre.

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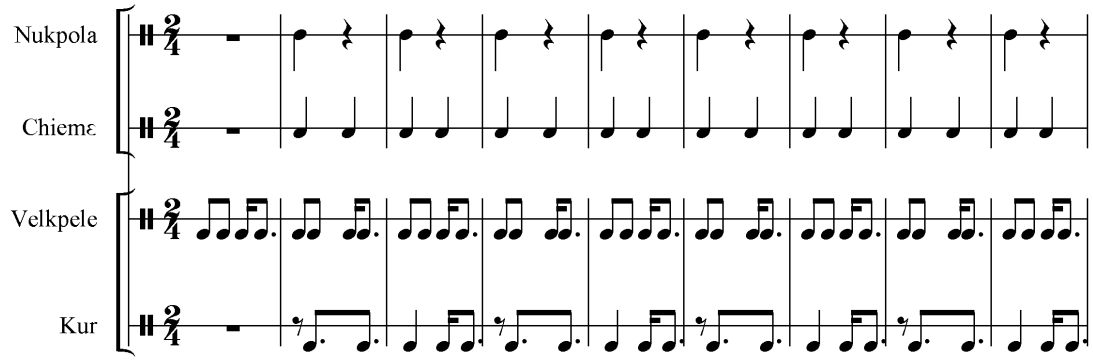
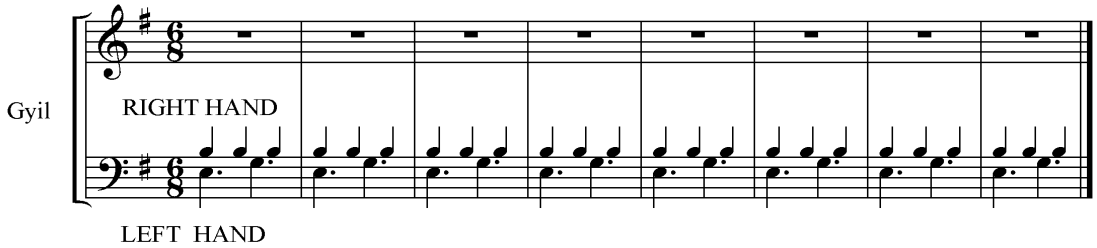
Below are also rhythmic patterns elicited from percussive instruments in the genre:



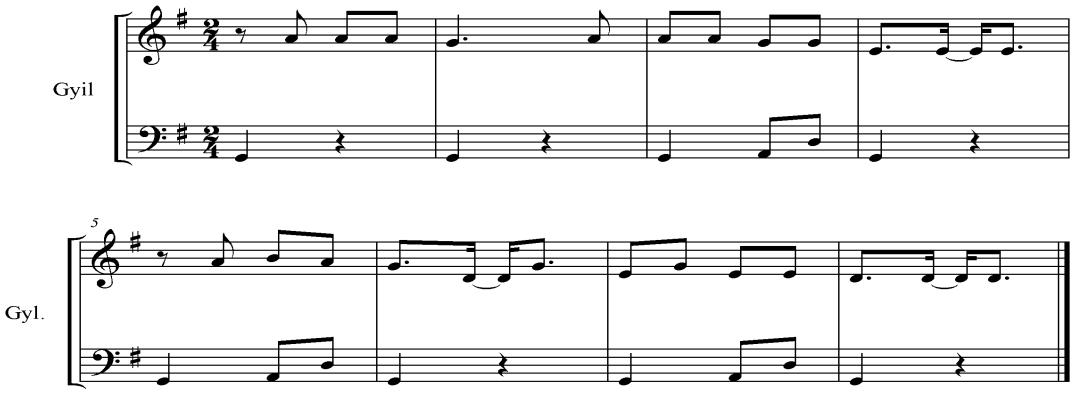
Example 6: Rhythmic patterns played by percussive instruments

Gyil left and right hand patterns (polyrhythmic patterns on the xylophone)



Example 7: Left and right hand patterns creating hemiola

Melo-rhythmic phrases against Ostinato creating polyrhythmic effects



Example 8: Ate kyill[melodic and ostinato pattern

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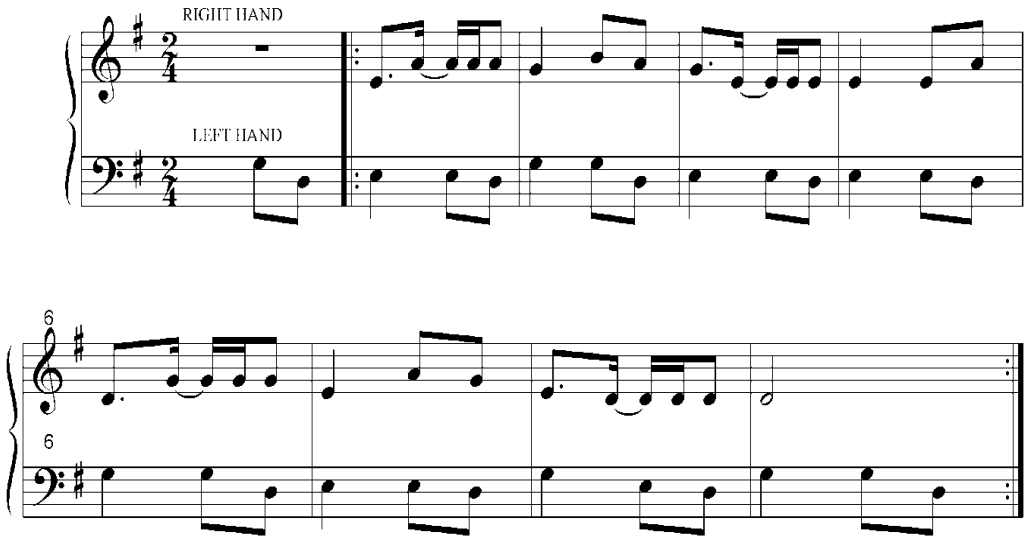
Fusion of melo-rhythmic and polyrhythmic patterns by the gyil .



Example 9: Second melodic and harmonic patterns played by the *Gyil*

The example above shows how the solo xylophonist improvised freely over this osinato. There is a clear example of two-part counterpoint and harmonies in thirds, fourths, fifths, and octaves.

Form in *Gyil* Music

Akpabot (1986, p.101) defines the basic elements in musical forms as repetition, variation and contrast. These three elements operate in the field of melody, harmony, rhythm and tone colour. Scholes (1991, p. 370) agrees with Akpabot but points out that it might be imagined that these three factors could be combined into an almost unlimited variety of forms, but as a matter of fact, only about six distinct forms have been in use, though in detail these can, indeed, vary endlessly.

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Ekwueme (1972, p. 248) is of the view that, form is rhythm in the long span. It is the organization of rhythmic units and patterns over a long period that yields phrases, sections, and parts, in a piece of music. The analysis of these sections and their relationships, describes the architecture or form of the piece of music. He went further to state that, West African musical rhythm is based on a skeleton–a background structure which may simply be called the "form" of the music. In a general way, this is reducible to an A-B form, or simply a "Call and Response" or "Call and Refrain" form. By this, Ekwueme implies that the background of the bulk of most African musical rhythm is a duple statement or pulsation, in the long span, in binary form. This duple statement–or a dual, symmetrical balance–may be slightly altered at various levels without significantly changing the structure of the music.

In the Dagaaba context, the researcher found out that, in *gyil* musical genre, the melodies are usually short and repetitive. The forms of the *gyil* music can be unitary, binary, ternary, theme and variation and call and response, which are frequently expressed in more sophisticated ways as Ekwueme pointed out. The call and response can be grouped into three categories. In the first type, a thematic idea is introduced by a call (the antecedent phrase) and confirmed in a way of repetition by a response (the consequent phrase). The second type also depicts a thematic statement given by the response to be completed with a thematic statement introduced by the call and the third type is a response which neither corroborates nor completes the thematic idea introduced by the call.

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Legends and myths on the *Gyil*

There is a belief that, the *liga* has life and is considered as a human being; therefore the one who cuts the tree has to mourn it like mourning the dead. For that reason, the *Gyil Maale* (xylophone maker) has to go to the bush, mourn the tree and also make a mark on it. After some days, he goes there to see if the mark is still there then it is a good tree to be cut if not he has to find another one and go through the same process.

In Ghana, it is forbidden for the master drummer to carry his drum on his head as this could lead to disastrous results (Akpabot 1986, p. 58) and this is corroborated by Gilbert Berese (2012) that it also applies to the *Gyil Mweɛɛ* (xylophone player). The Dagaabas hold on that, women are not allowed to play *gyil* because it is said to be sacred and women are considered not to be pure as it pertains to traditional drums. So women in the *gyil* traditional ensemble are only singers, dancers or minor idiophones players.

Gyil song themes

According to Akpabot (1986, p.95), song texts have three groupings or categories namely: praises, songs of insult and songs for entertainment. He went further by saying, it could also be seen as historical, philosophical, social control, work, war, rituals, humour, communication, children‟s, praise/ insult indecent women and songs for funeral. As a researcher, I found out that *gyil* song texts are classified under four themes, viz., thus; *Bawa* (recreational songs), *Bagr Binne* (festival songs), *Mesa* (church songs), and *Kour* (funeral songs). And even the funeral songs are still grouped into two–songs for men and songs for women. The table below shows the

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titles of the thirty-nine songs collected from the field work classified under the four categories. The gender roles have also been specified.

Table 2: Titles of *gyil* songs

No.	Title	Literal Translation	Gender
	***Kour binne* (funeral songs)**		
1	*Kuu te e ngmen*	What should we do death?	M&F
2	*Te na kpen nyin*	Where can we be or stay?	M&F
3	*Te na kpen ka*	We shall stay or live here?	M&F
4	*Oyi ate zaa baarena*	Oh, we are all getting extinct.	M&F
5	*Te kpe ka a kuu zie nabena*	Any where we go, there is death.	M&F
6	*Dɛpɛlɛrɛ ma, A nang tɛb bɛr O dɛ kone yoo*	A spider"s mother is stung by a scorpion and she is crying.	F
7	*A kuu wa ngɔg sang sang bɛr*	Death came and spoiled everything.	M&F
8	*Taatuli makum mɔ zie na sob o wa*	Caterpillar"s grandmother returns in the night.	F
9	*Kpi yang mhaa dɔmɛ yoo Grandaa kpi yang mhaa dɔmɛ yoo*	A great warrior should die, so that his enemies will be happy.	M
10	*A zaa ne lɛ, kone*	It is finished, mourn for the last.	M&F

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	abaar		
11	*Nyɛ bie na borɛ*	The child is getting wayward.	M&F
12	*Pog le zina tɔ ate wa, nina tɔ ate wa*	Lady said next week we should come, try and come next week.	F
13	*Yaang mhaa mɛ*	I am grateful.	M&F
14	*Kon gbɛ bir, a baa dung ngɛr*	Leper‟s toes bitten off by a dog.	M&F
15	*Gandaa puo lɛa faa moɔ*	Great farmer, his farm has turned bushy.	M
16	*Wonɛɛ noa, wa luɔ tuo*	Popular man is now distressed.	M
17	*N naa nilɛ*	If I should be a chicken.	M&F
18	*Saa minɛ wulmɛna guu*	My fathers and mothers tried to advice me.	M&F
19	*N saa ne ma*	The enemies of my father and mother	M&F
20	*Nile bang zima*	The chicken knows how to sit.	M&F
21	*Pɔgnyang zu gbalgbal*	The old-bald-headed woman has died.	F
22	*Daa miir dug poɔ*	A great female *pito* brewer is dead.	F
23	*Kuuti e nwin mɔɔ?*	Death, what should we do?	M&F
24	*Saa nyɔg muuɔ pore*	Father, sacrifice with a soul.	M

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25	Kpin ɛkyɛ bang kɔnɛ kuuro	Before you mourn.	M&F
26	*Tie kuu ngmen nɛ mí?*	What shall we do about death?	M&F

Table 3: Title of gyil songs 2

No.	Title	Literal Translation	Gender
	***Mesa songs* (church songs)**		
27	*Ate kyillɛ*	Let us rejoice.	M&F
28	*Zunoɔ sob ne a ner nɛ*	Lucky is that person.	M&F

Table 4: Title of *gyil* songs 3

No.	Title	Literal Translation	Gender
	***Bagr Binne* (festival songs)**		
29	*Beyuo zagr bagbɛ daa*	*Beyuo* rejects sacrifice drinks.	M
30	*Ba saab bɛ tare bagbɛ*	A bad lady who is foodie.	F

Table 5: Title of *gyil* songs 4

No.	Title	Literal Translation	Gender
	***Bawa* (recreational songs)**		
31	*Bie pog no ga yiiri bɛr*	Do not go in for what is not yours.	M&F
32	*Yang yang kolee*	The beggar is free to beg.	M&F

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33	*Borune kɔ taɛ ɔ lɛ sor*	White man constructs hill to become road.	M&F
34	*Nyira dug zirɛ komɛ abɛ nímɛ*	An ants prepare a soup and it was not sweet.	M&F
35	*Zunŋ bɛ nyɛrɛ yee*	The blind man.	M
36	*Beriberzaa laolao*	A greedy woman.	F
37	*Baalo faa na nyoge mɛ*	A dangerous disease attacked me.	M&F
38	*Fo na me nyn kɛ zi*	You drink and sit very, very tall.	M&F
39	*A nang be a yir mi*	Even if a scorpion is in the house.	M&F

Out of thirty-nine (39), the five songs the researcher used in the *Xylafrique* composition process in Ex. 10.below

The first is No. 27 in the list, a church song.

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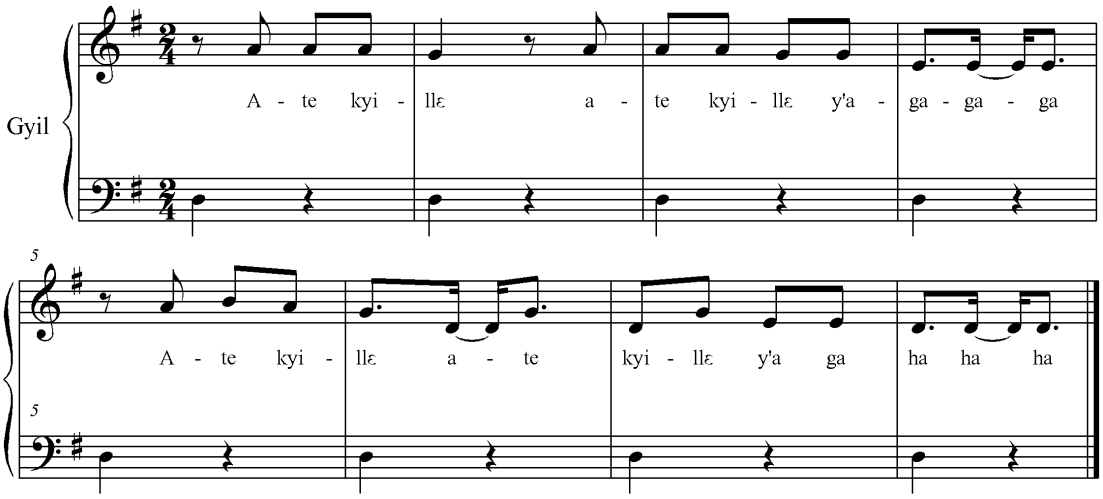
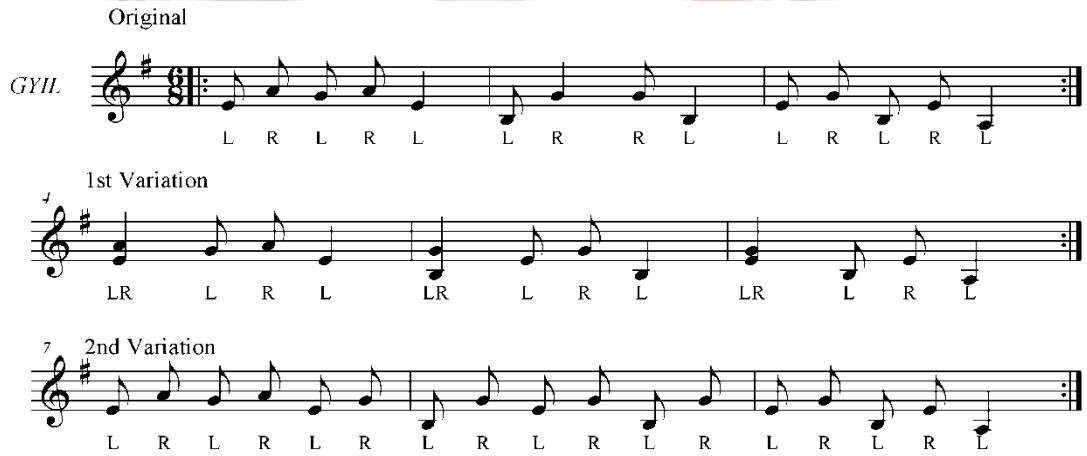


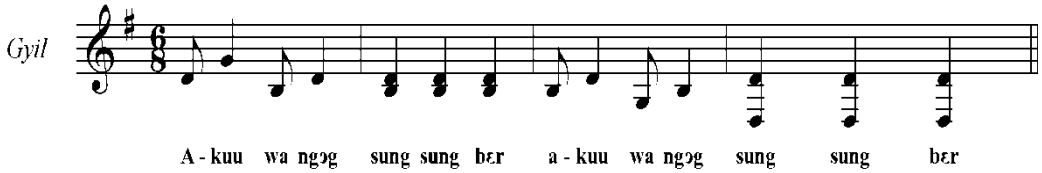
Example 10 : *Ate kyillɛ* first theme of *Xylafrique I*

The second is No. 6 in the list, which is also a funeral song.



Example 11: *Depelere ma* second theme of *Xylafrique I*

The third song utilized is No. 7 in the list. This choice also a funeral song.



Example 12: *A kuu wa ngɔg* the third theme of *Xylafrique I*

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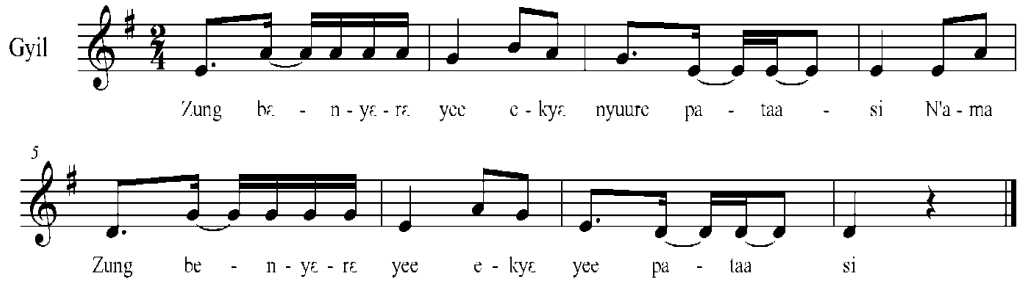
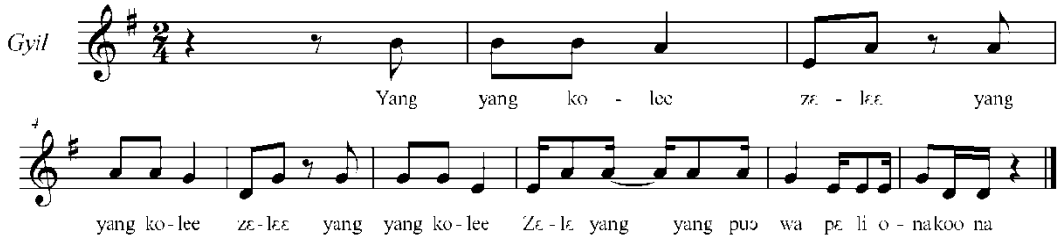
The forth song utilized is No. 35 in the list. This choice is again a funeral song.



Example 13: *Zung bɛ nyɛrɛ yee* main theme of *Xylafrique II*

Finally, the fifth selected is No. 32 in the list. This is a recreational song.



Example 14: *Yang yang kolee* main theme of *Xylafrique III*

As could be inferred from the legends of the examples *Ate Kyillɛ*, *Dɛpɛlɛrɛ ma* and *Akuu wa ngɔg sung sung bɛr* were utilized in the 1st movement; Zɔng bɛ nyɛrɛ yee in the 2nd movement while the 3rd movement used basically *Yang yang kole.* The discourse on how the themes were used is done in the analysis which is presented in chapter four of the report.

Gyil Polyphony involuntary harmony and counterpoint

Polyphony of a more contrapuntal nature is exploited in the study. What was observed took the form of simultaneous melodies, melody and supporting ostinato or ostinati,

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or interlocking melodic figures. In Dagaaba *gyil* music, the right hand generally plays the main melody whilst the left hand accompanies with figures that may be counter-rhythmic in nature. Some may be repetitive (ostinato) and other may be just be improvisationary figures

A critical analysis of the *gyil* music collected emphasizes what Akpabot (1986, p. 59) revealed about the involuntary harmony and contrapuntal nature of African music. In his summary, Akpabot argues that African harmonization is based on:

a) Harmony, as westerners conceive it, is present in Africa music although this is sometimes improvisatory rather than pre-conceived.
b) Preconceived harmony exists in fourths and fifths in the style of strict organum.
c) The musicians deliberately sing the same melody a fourth or fifth below to produce harmony.
d) African harmony and polyphony separately.

In conclusion, the chapter tried to present the findings of the ethnographic study the researcher embarked upon. The chapter described the origin, legends and myths of *gyil* music; the organology of the *gyil* and the ensemble; listed the songs transcribed and the illustrations made for *Xylafrique* composition process and form in the in *gyil* music. Additionally, it took a look at melo-rhythmic as well as the percussive rhythmic patterns identified with the genre.

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Finally, it reviewed literature side-by-side confirming/collaborating and disagreeing with authorities that have written on the subject. The next chapter presents the novelty created from the study.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE ORIGINAL COMPOSITION

The innovation that came out of the study is nicknamed „Xylafrique.‟ „*Xylafrique'* is an acronym found with the prefix *Xyl.* (Xylophone), with the suffix *Afrique* that is Africa in French. The instrumentation of the three movements as well as graphic scores in *Xylafrique* are presented below.

The *Xylafrique I* uses violin, cello, piano *gyil* and *velkpelle*. The piano boosts the Dagaaba melodic instrument and they relate well in call-response passages. The violin and cello, the Western instruments, reinforce *gyil* idioms well with the traditional rhythms. The piano as well helps because of its percussive nature and was used in place of the *kuor* drum the full instrumentation of the first movement is shown in Ex.15 below.

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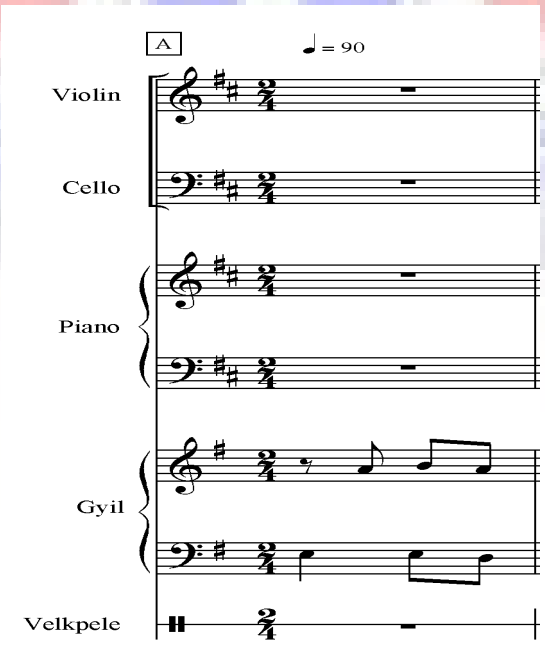

Example 15: *Xylafrique I* instrumention

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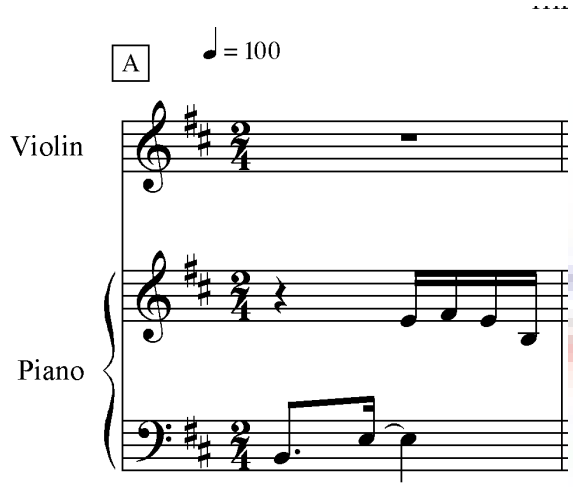
The *Xylafrique II* uses two instruments Piano and Violin. The piano accompanies the violin solo to enrich the texture of the piece. It plays the Dagaaba idioms and fits well within the traditional rhythms as shown in Ex.16 below.



Example 16: *Xylafrique II* instrumentation

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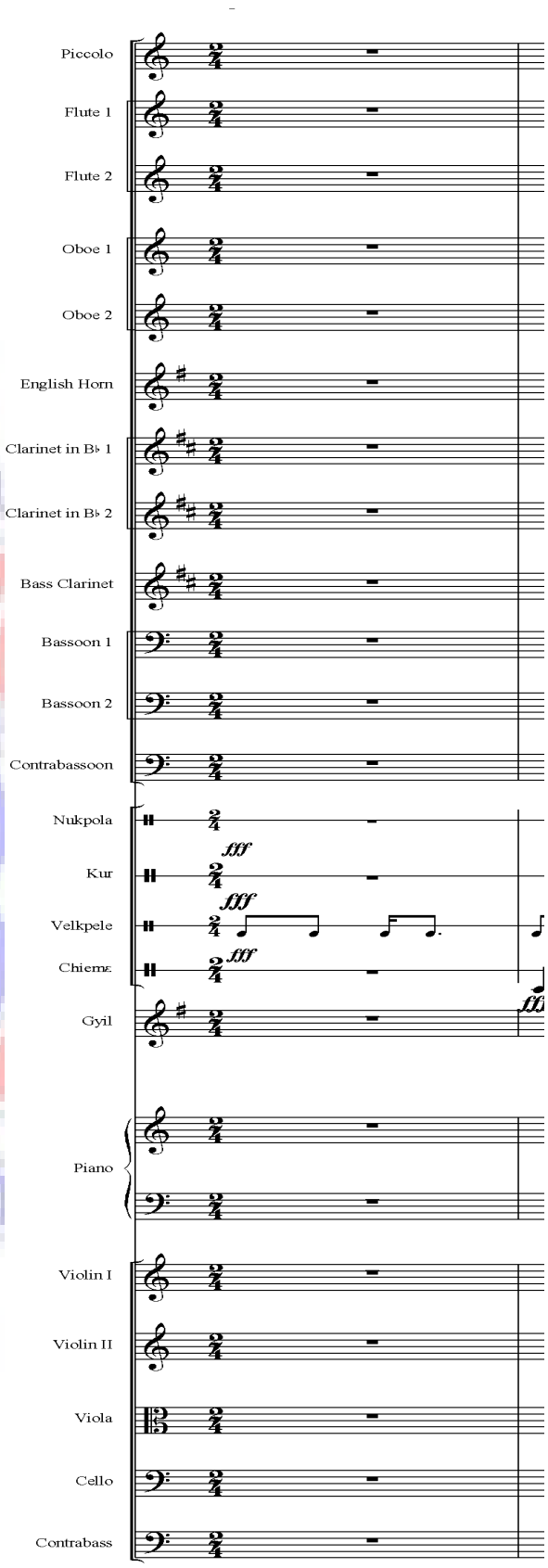
Xylafrique III was orchestrated for triple woodwind, a full strings orchestra and five African instruments namely *Velpele, Chiemɛ, Kur, Nekpola* and *Gyil* as shown in Ex.17.



Example 17: Instruments used in scoring of Movement III

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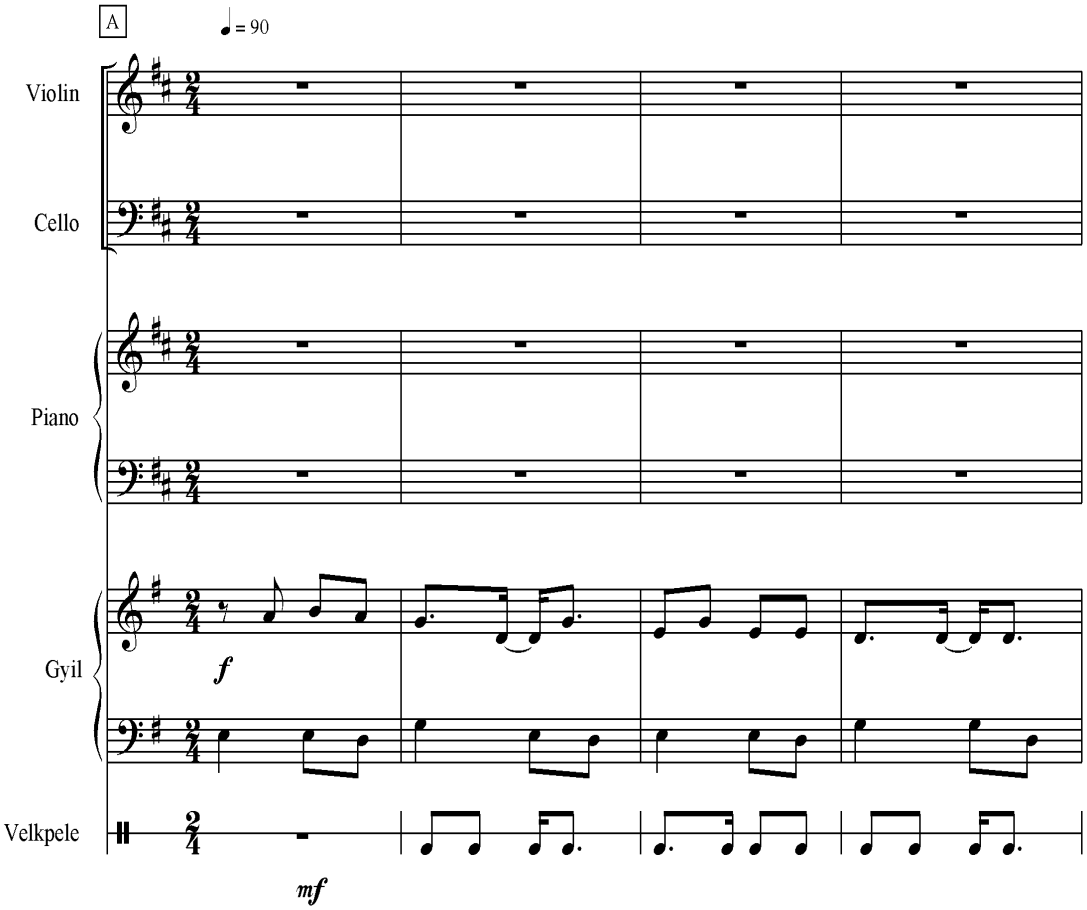
THE MUSICAL SCORES

1st Movement–*Ate Kyillɛ*

XYLAFRIQUE

ATE KYILƐ
LET US REJOICE

EMMANUEL BOAHEN



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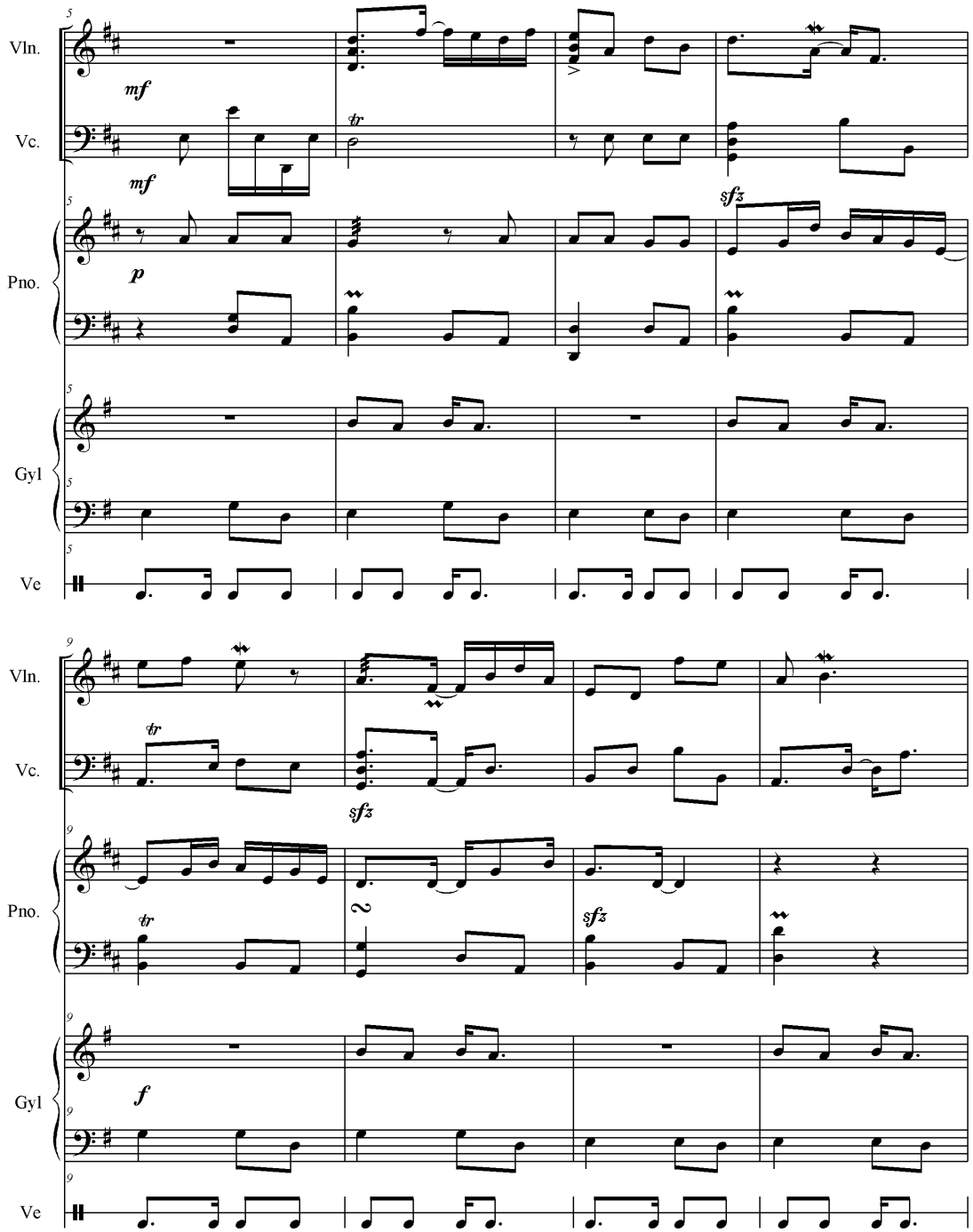

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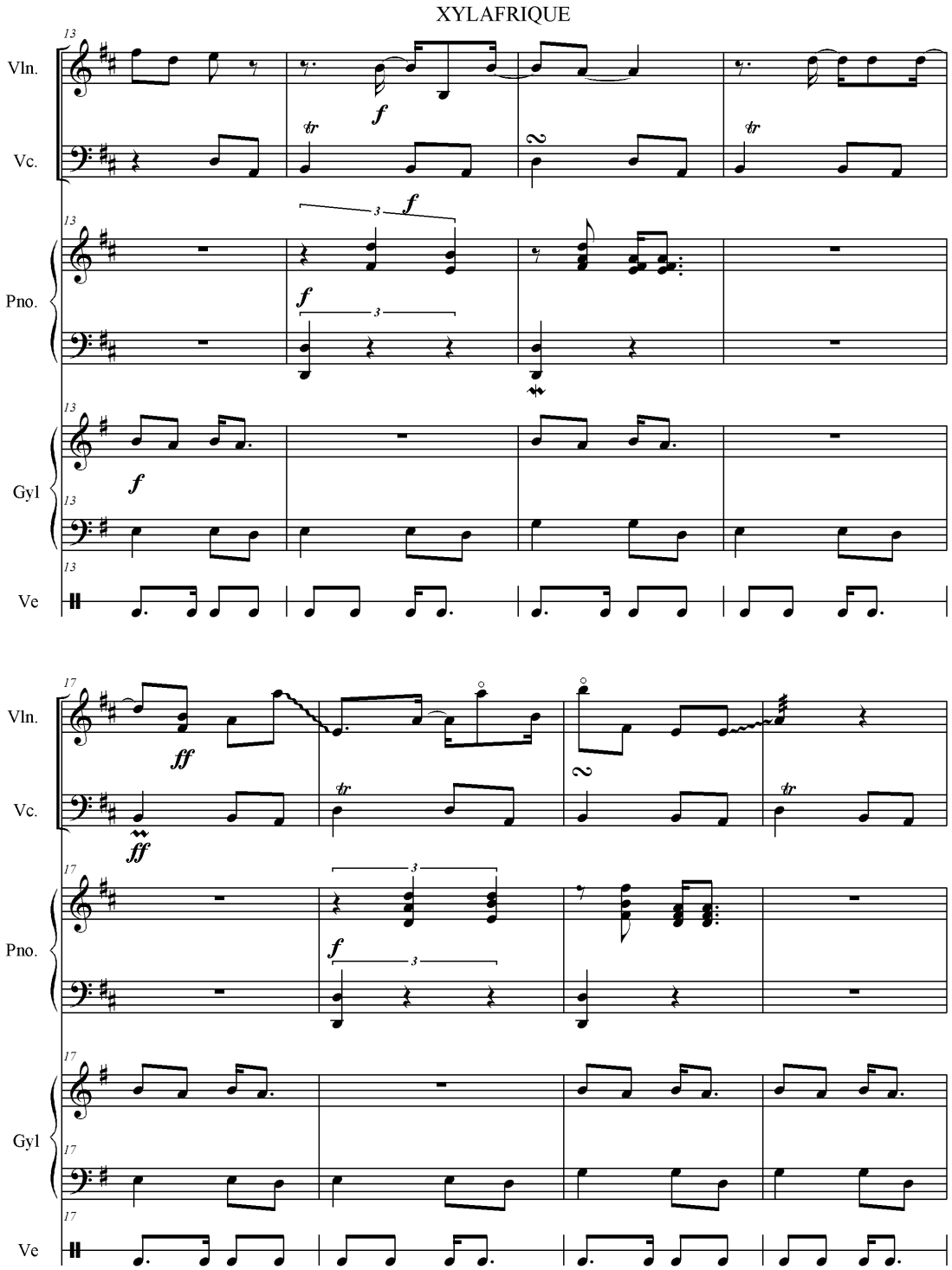

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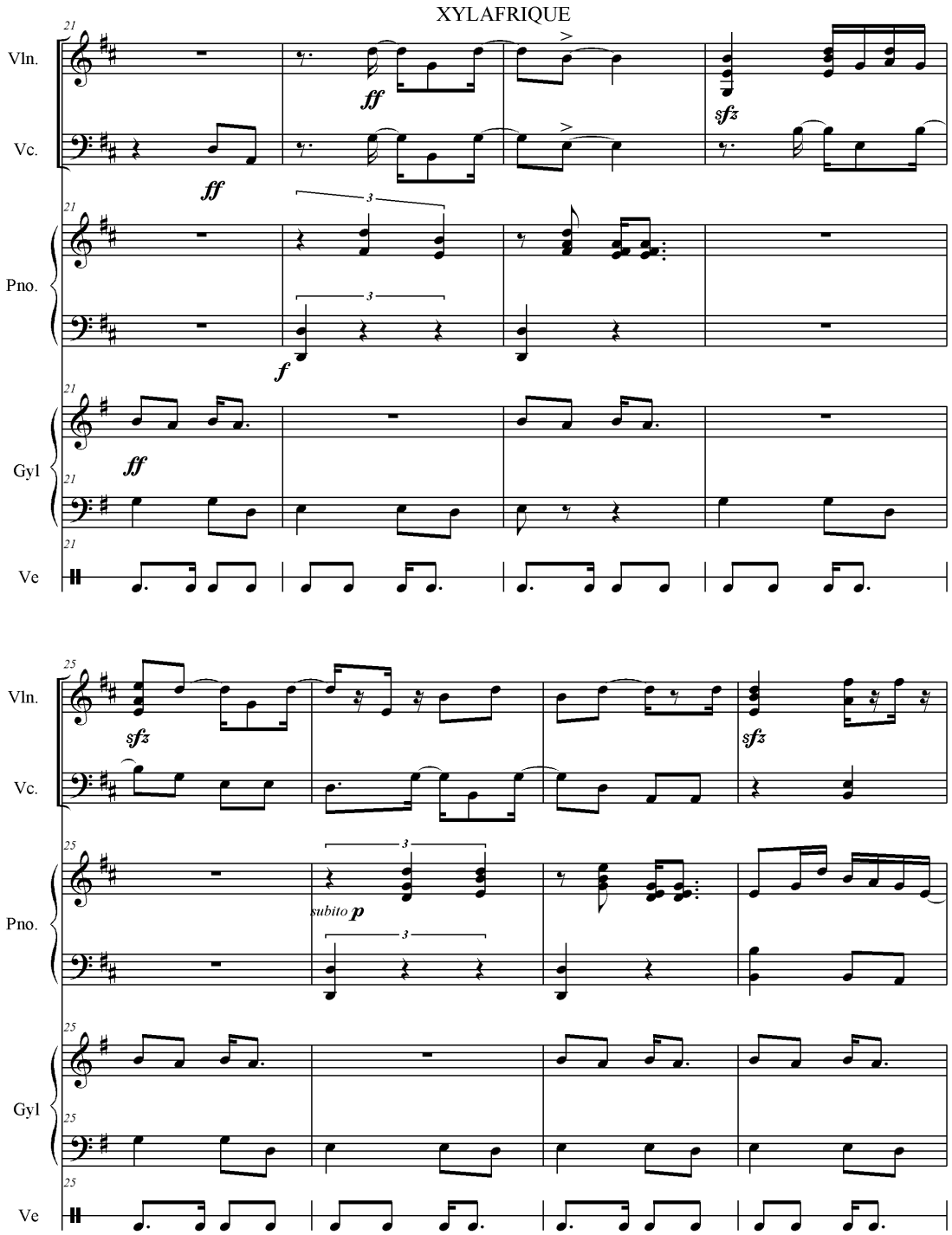

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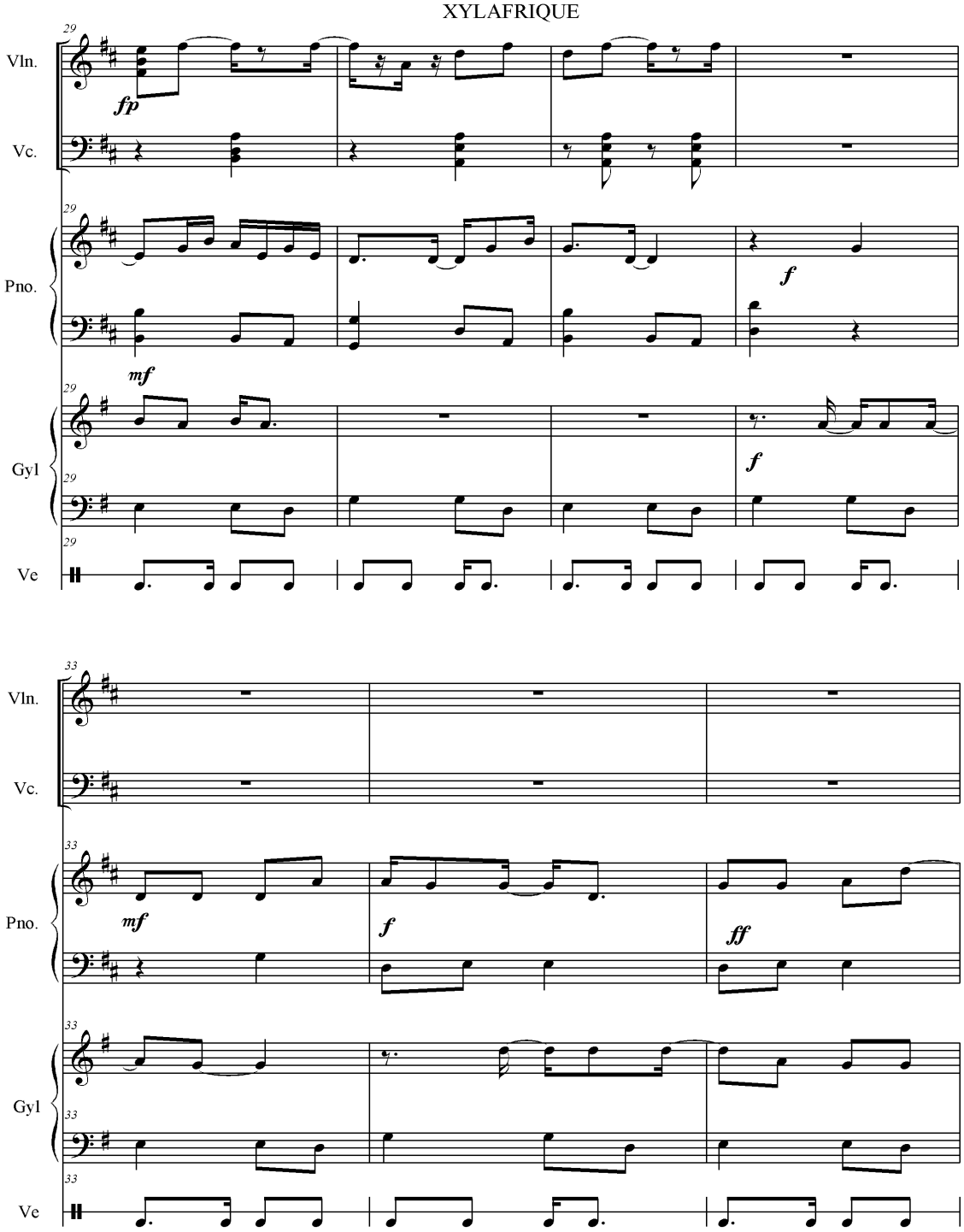

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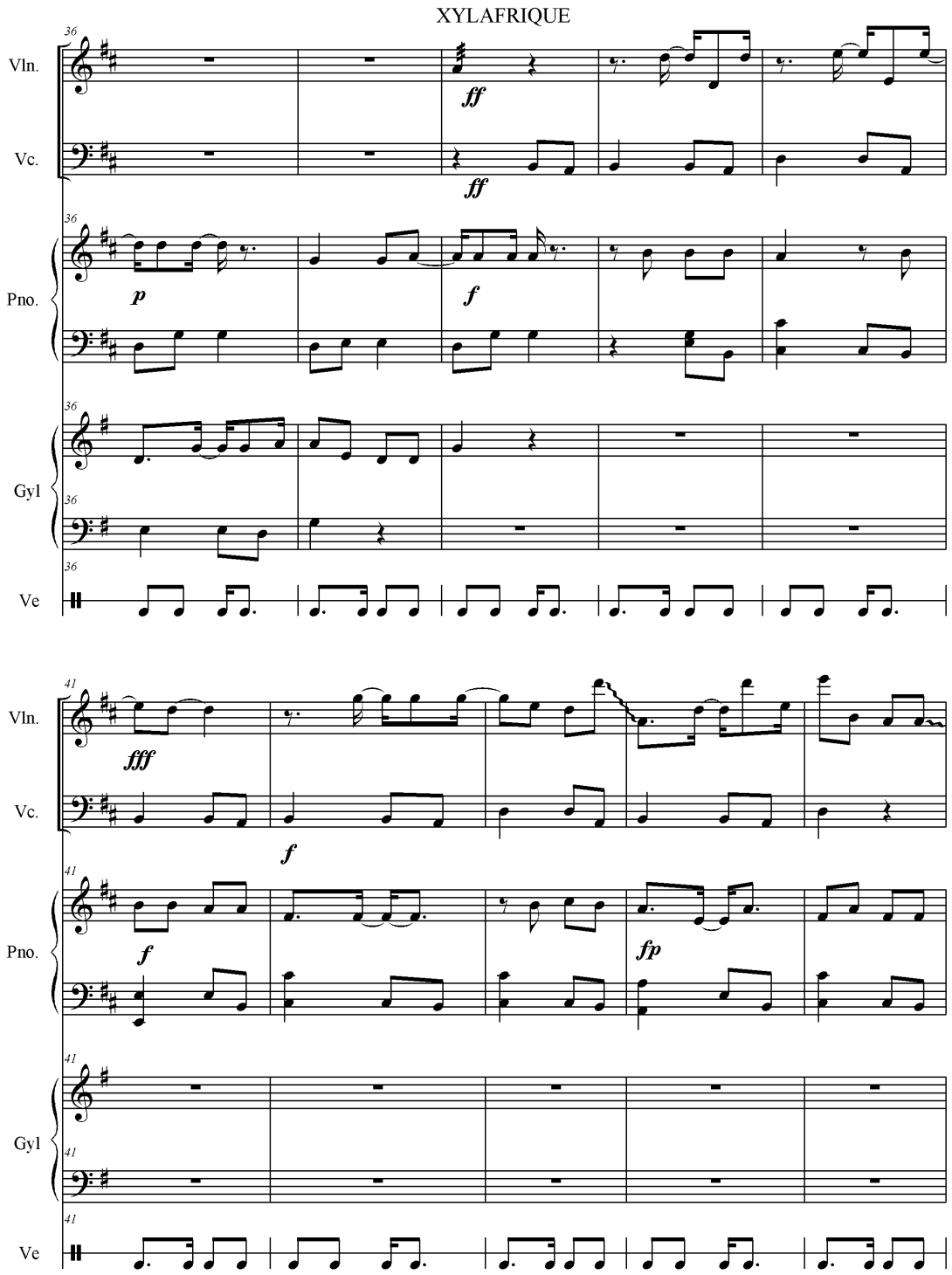

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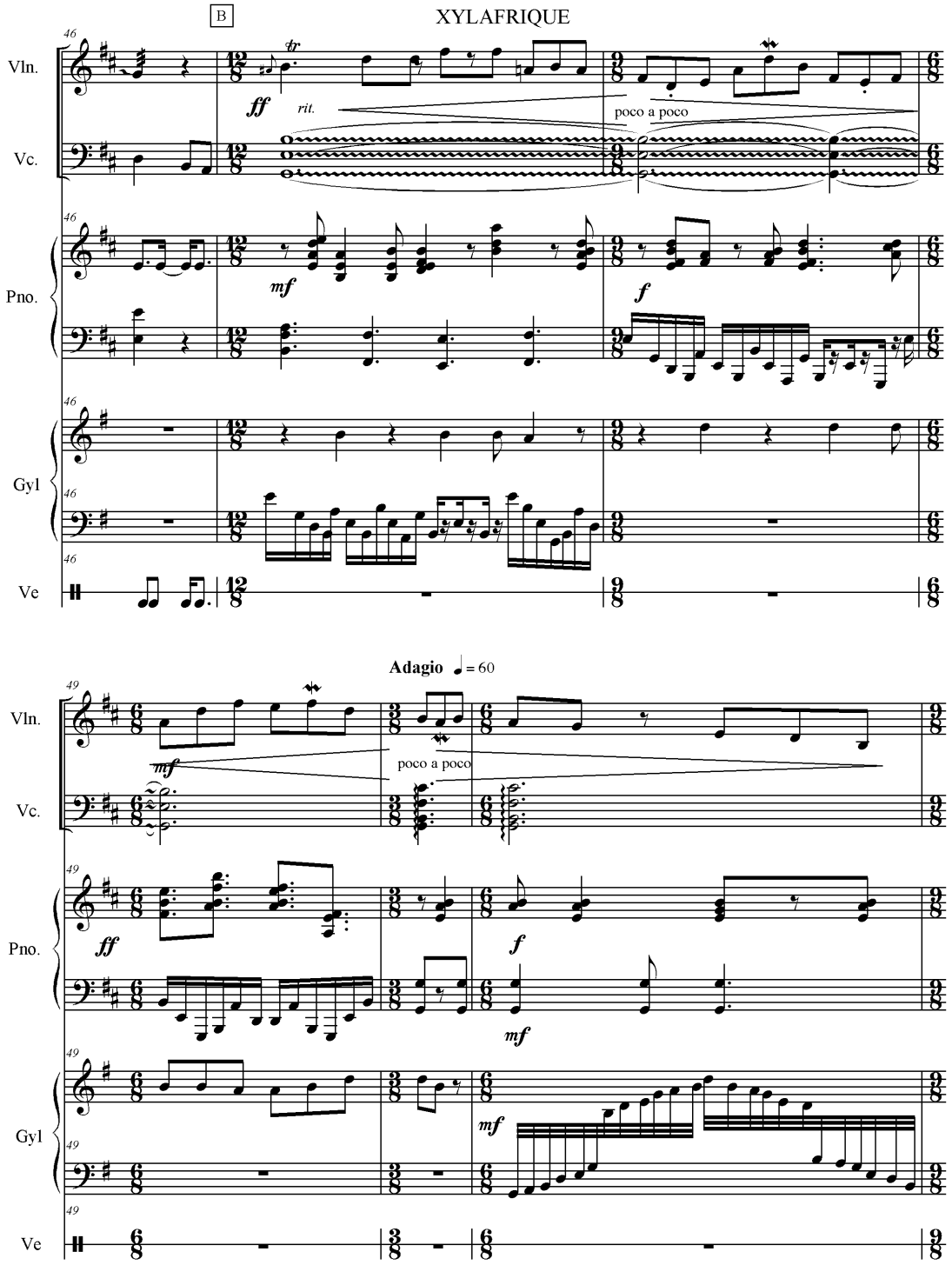

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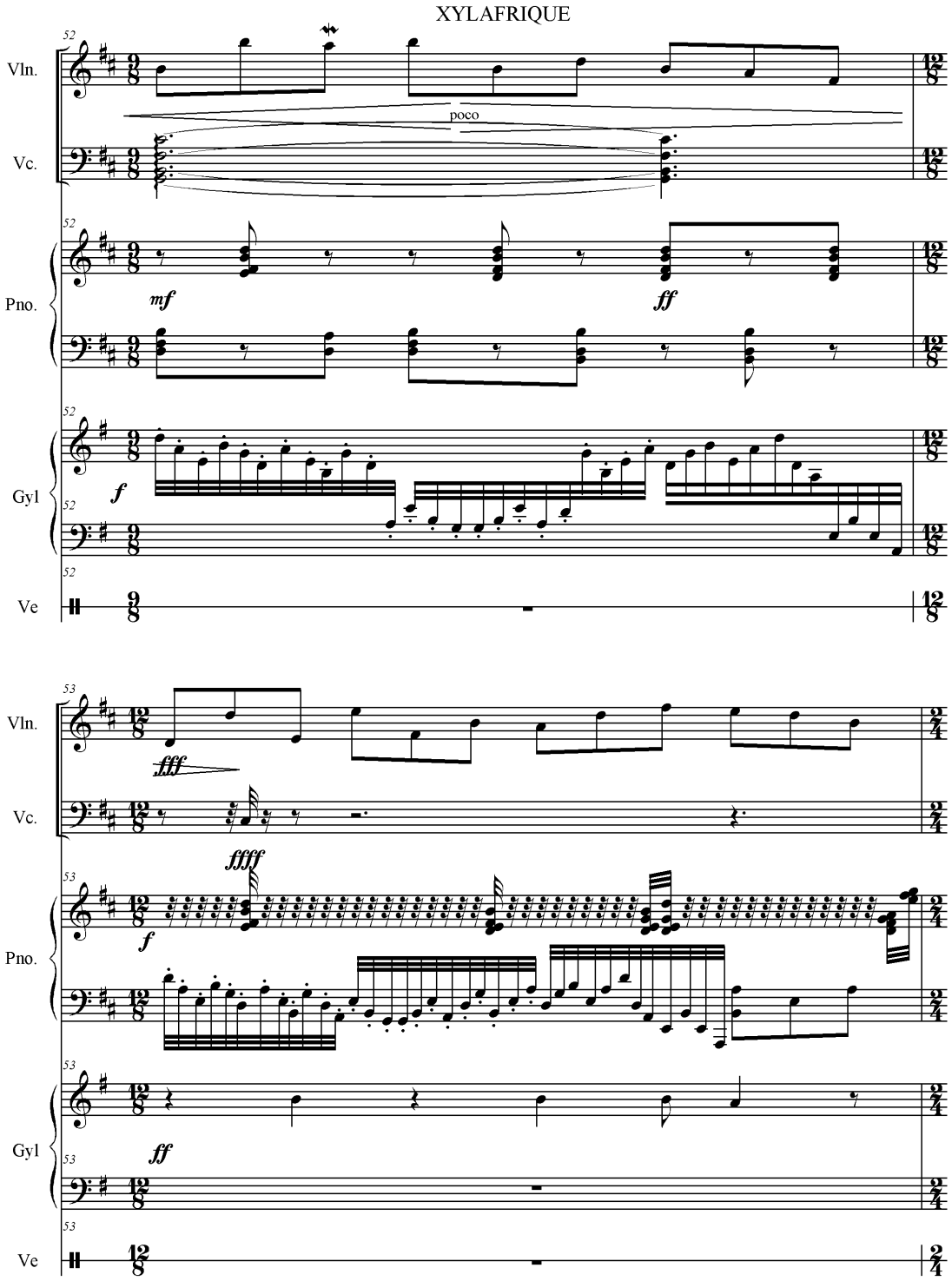

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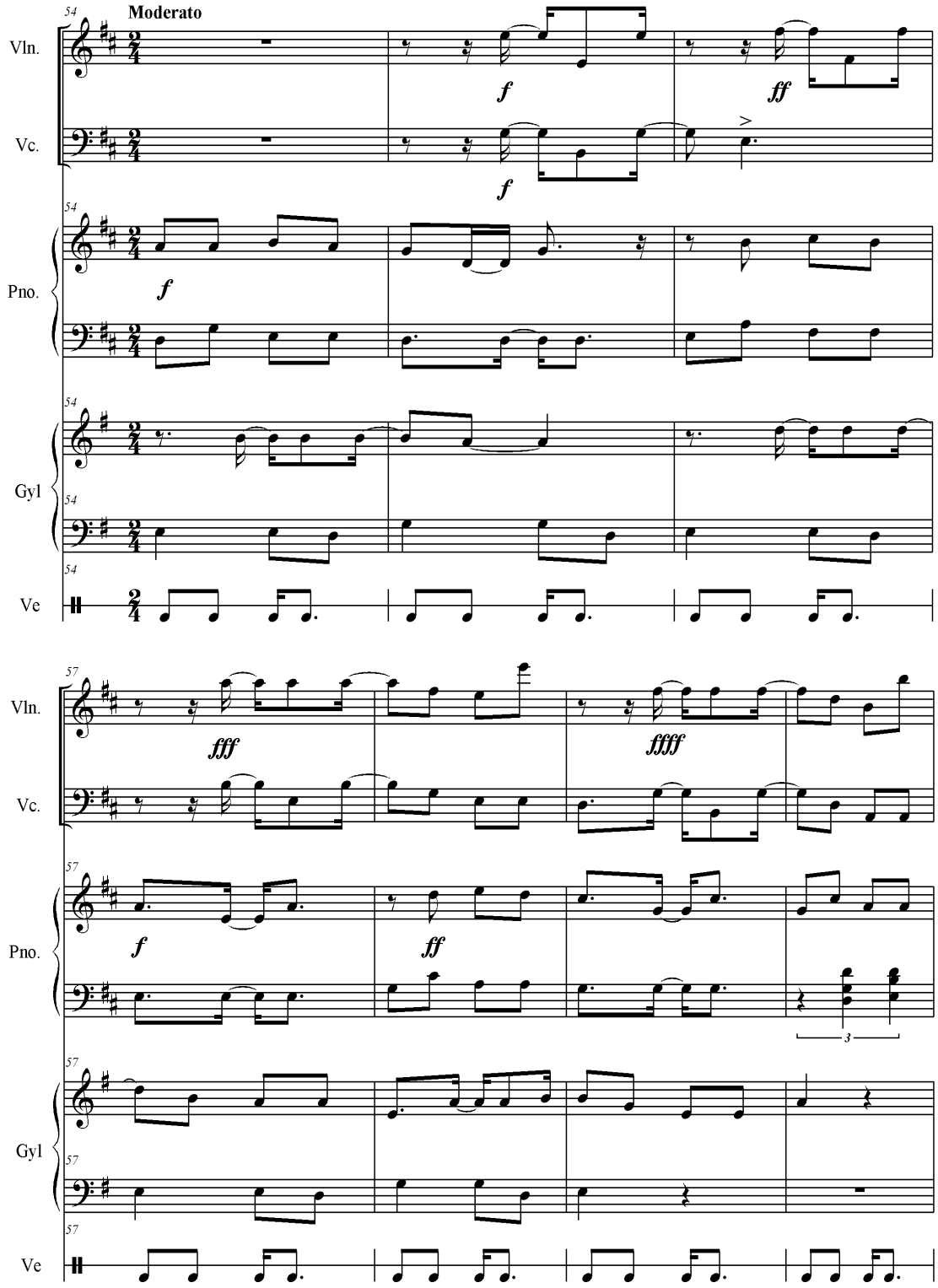

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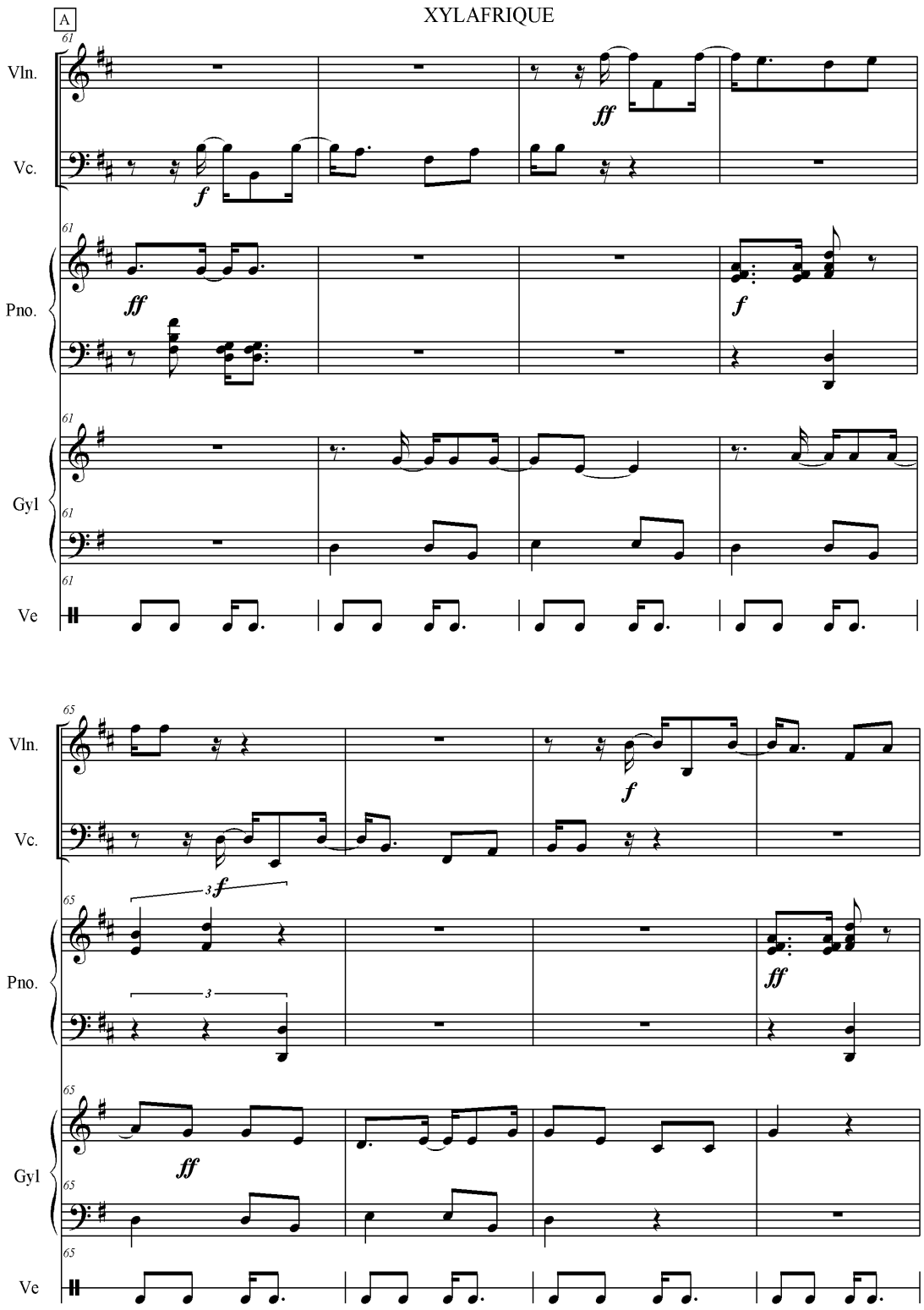

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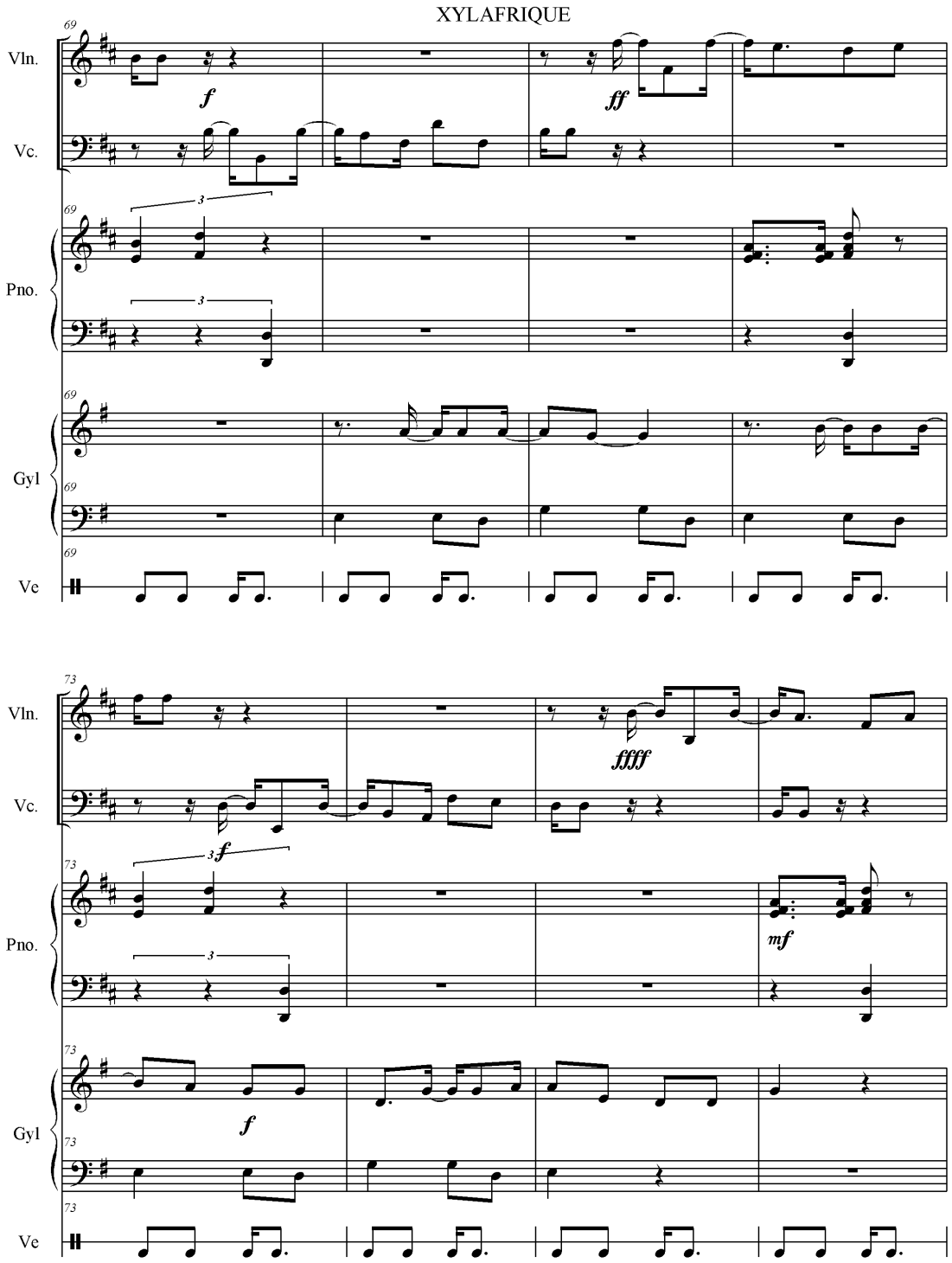

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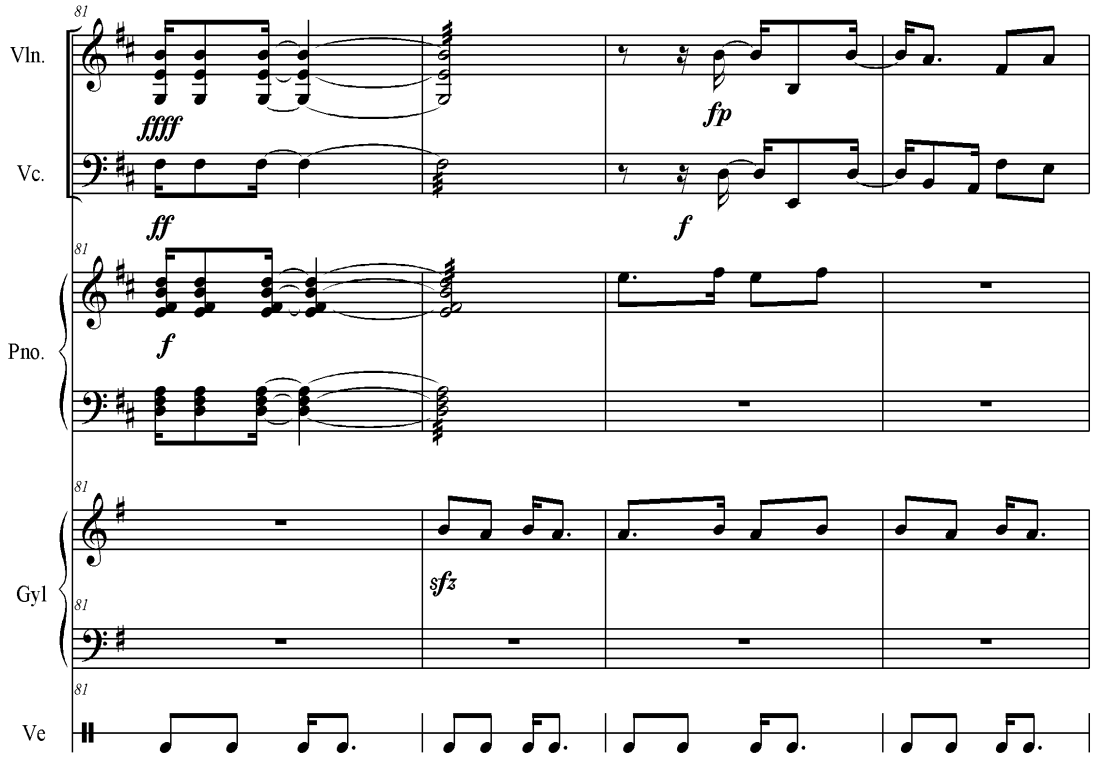

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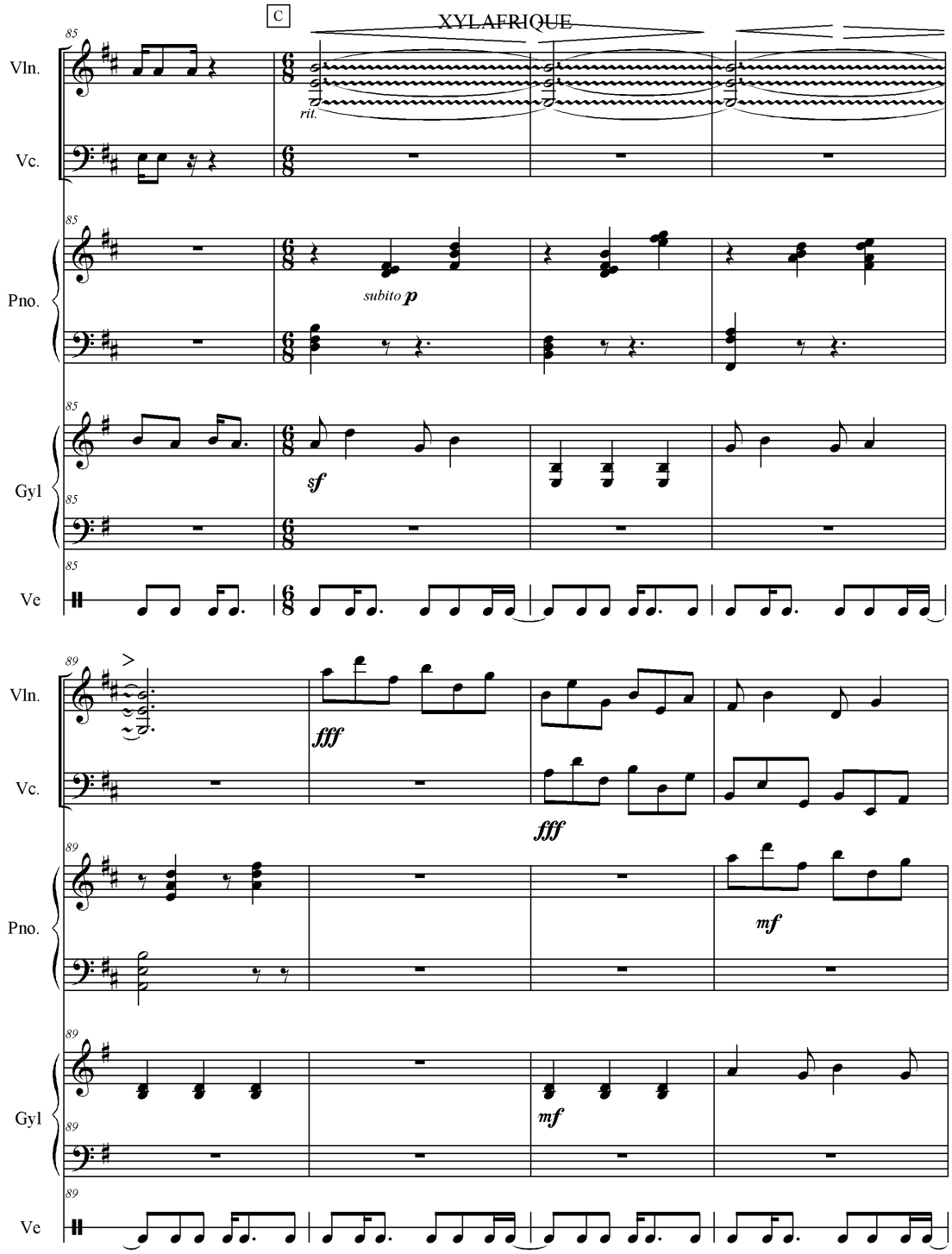

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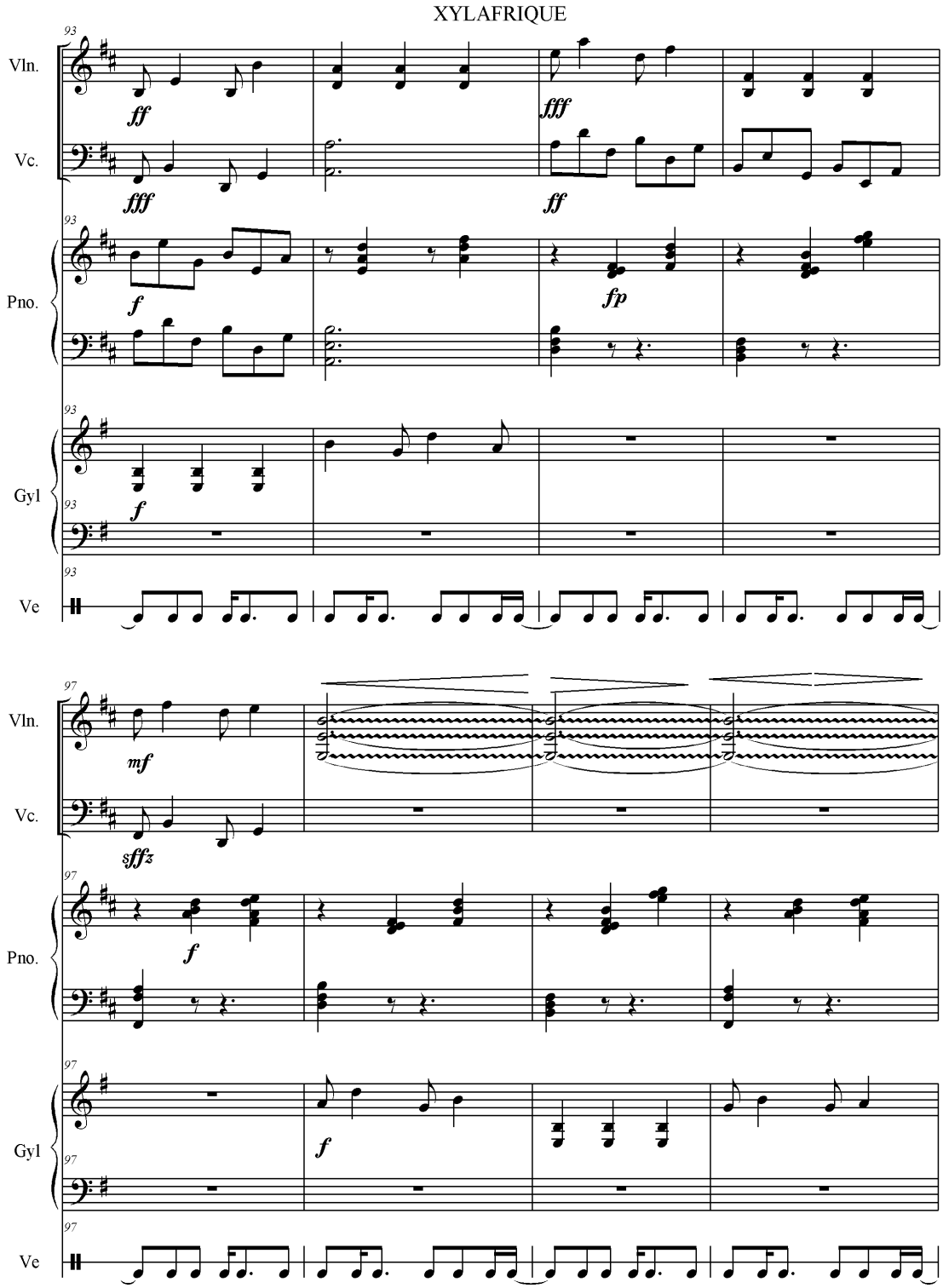

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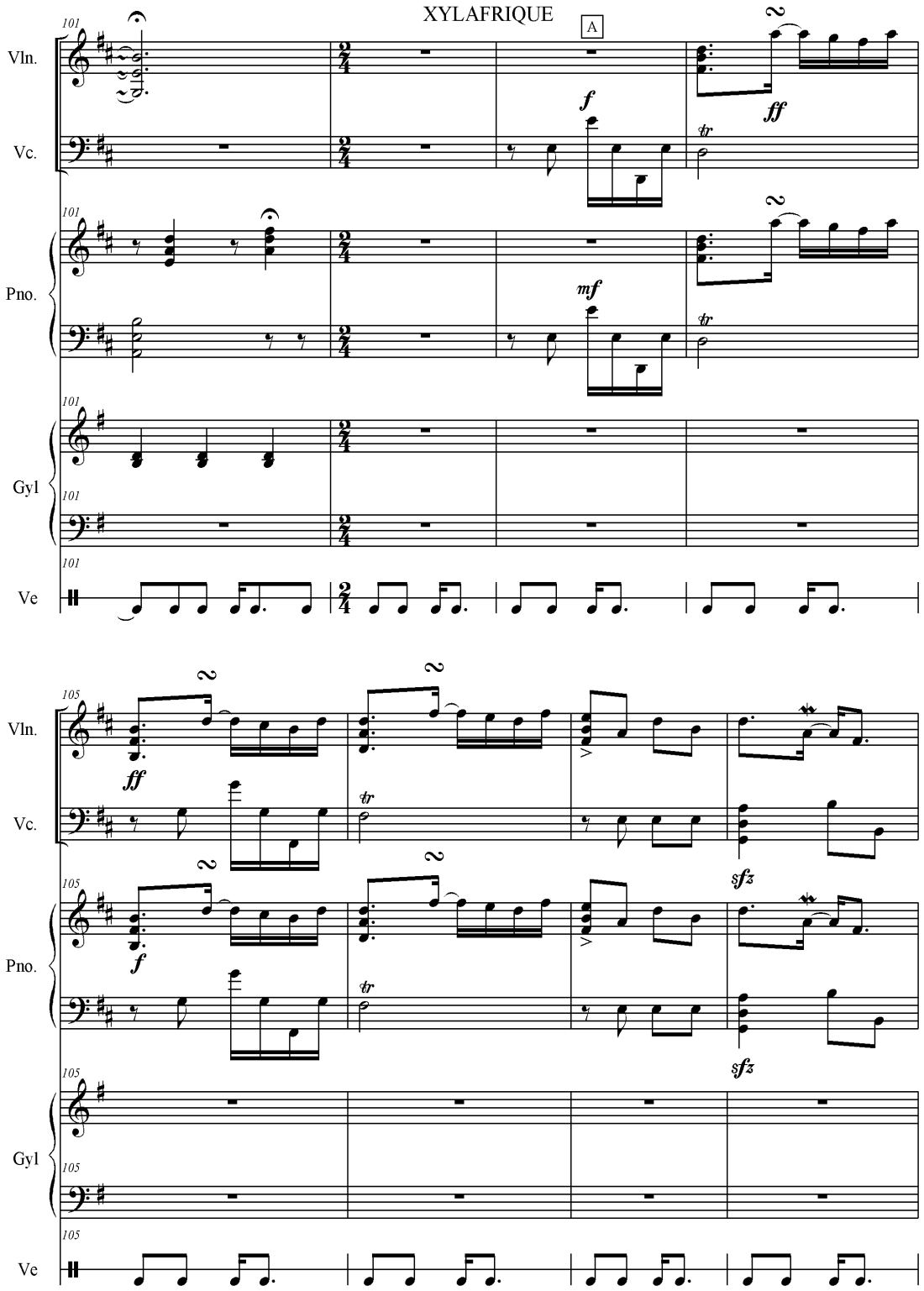

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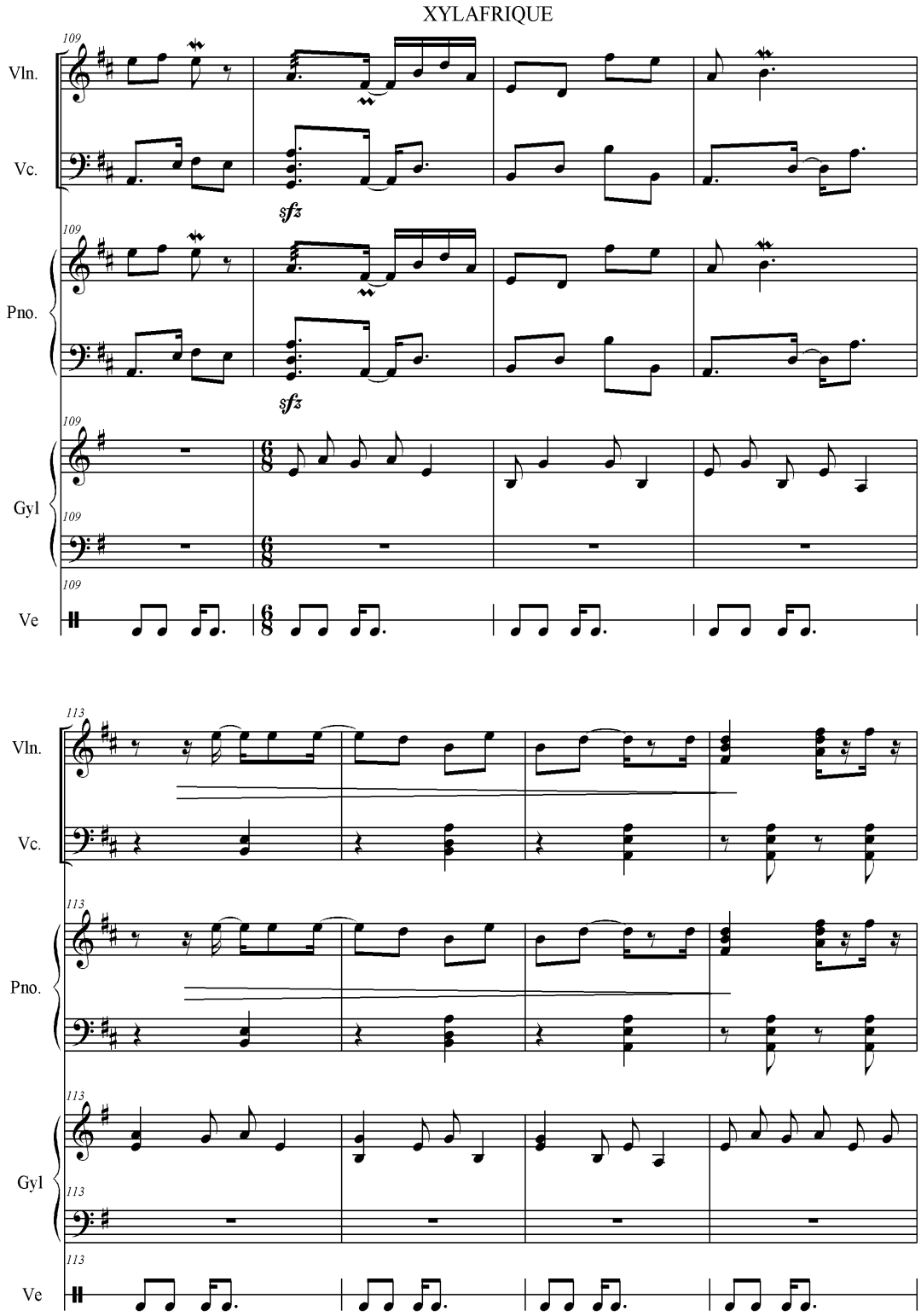

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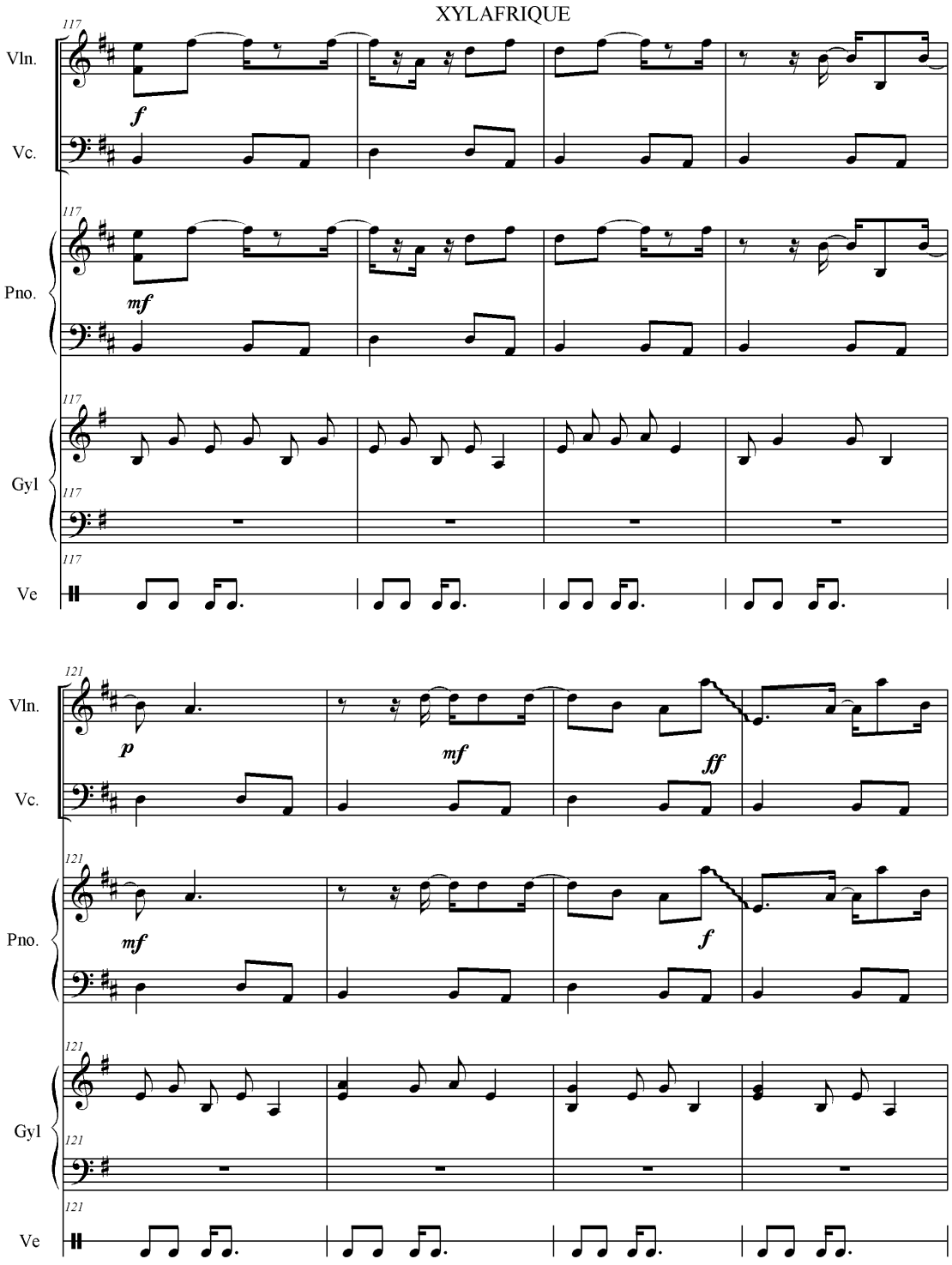

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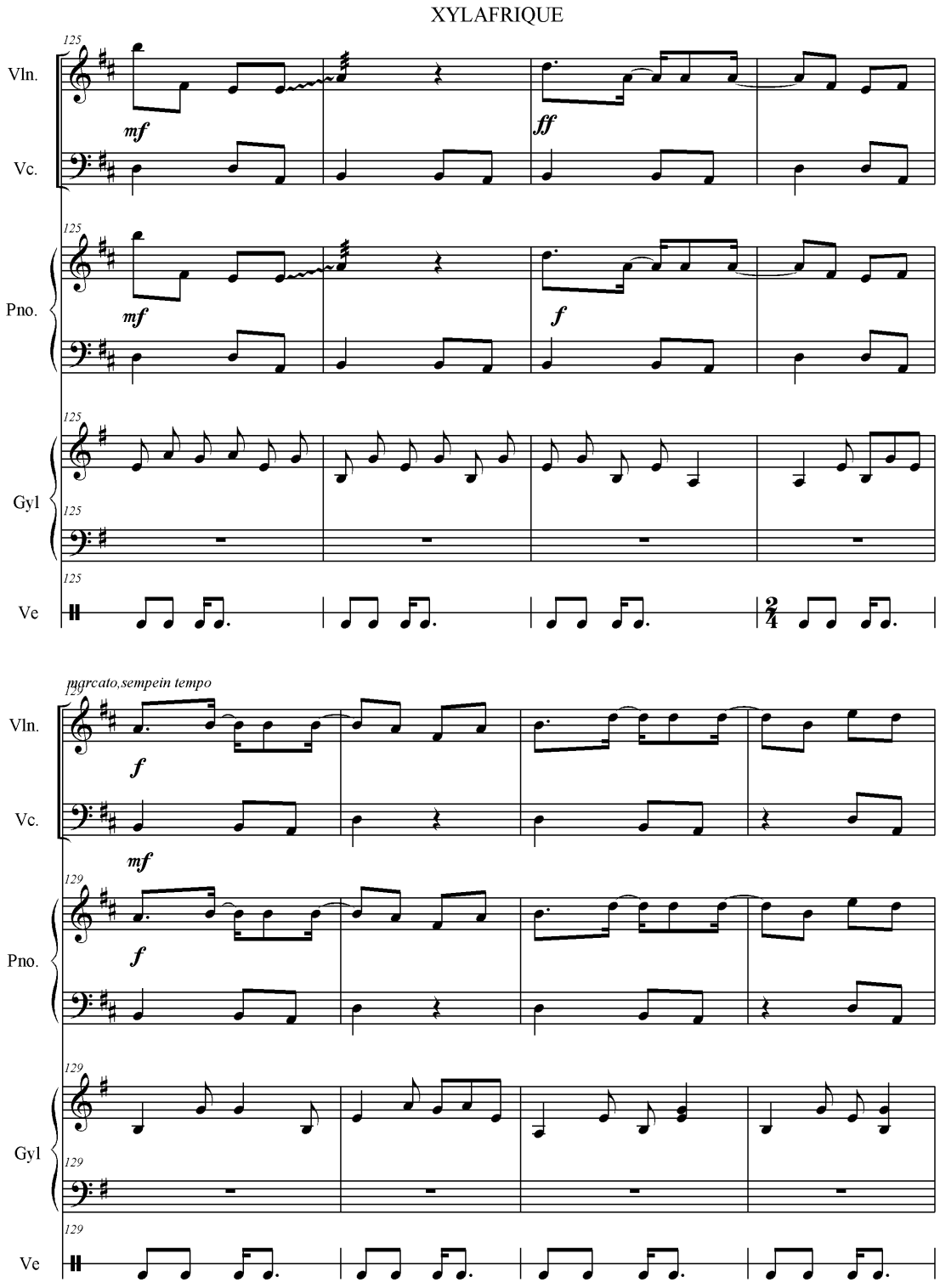

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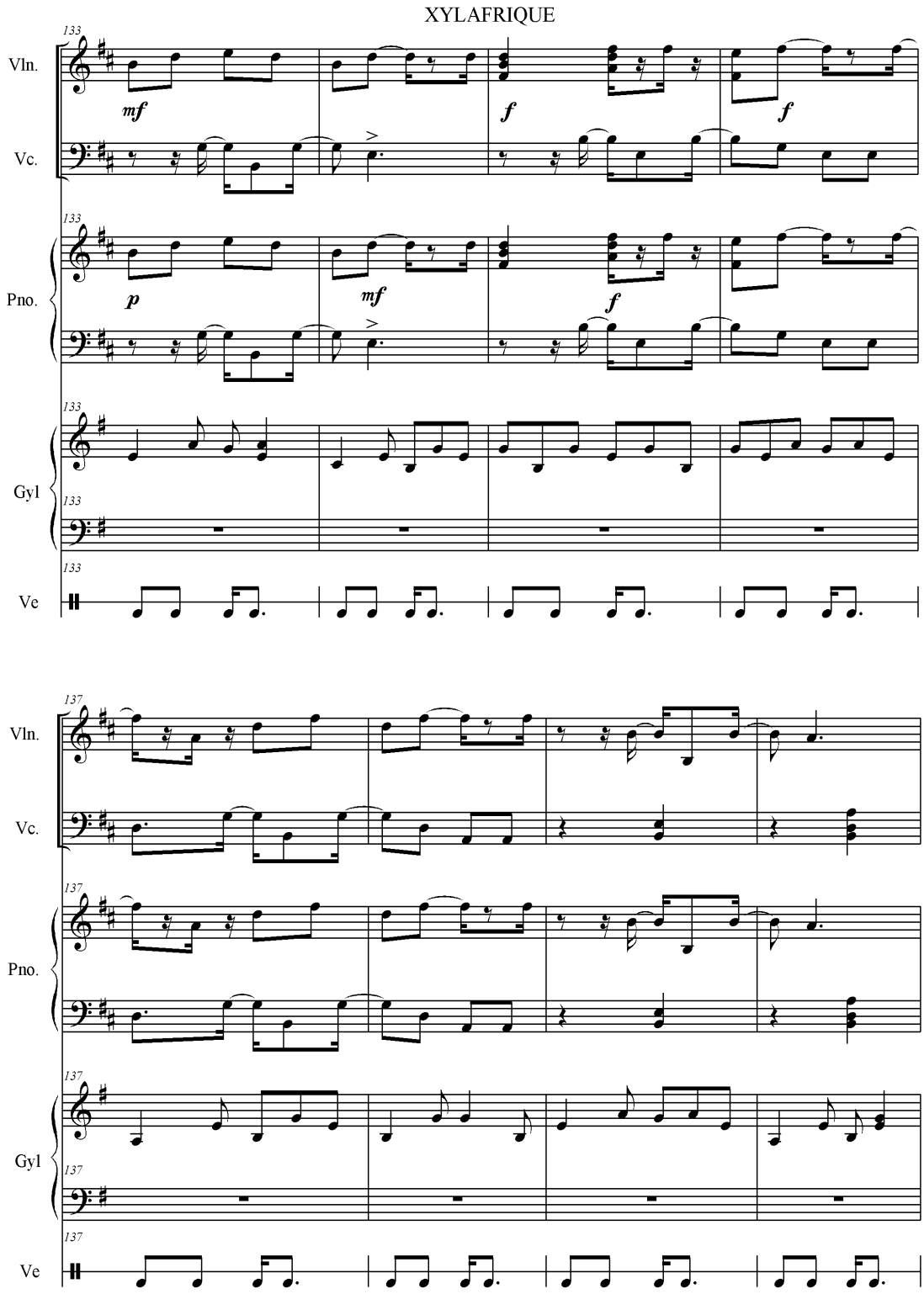

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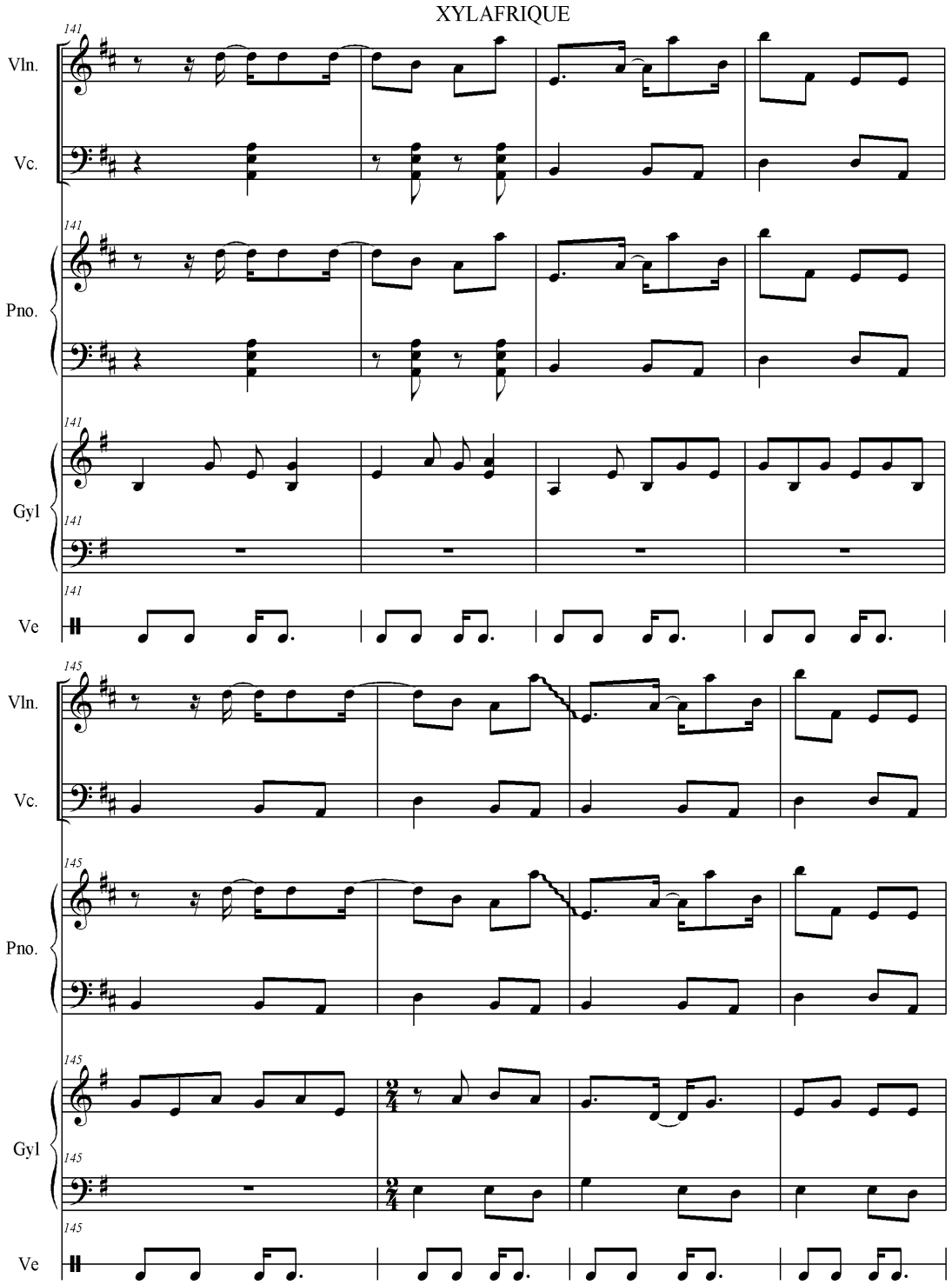

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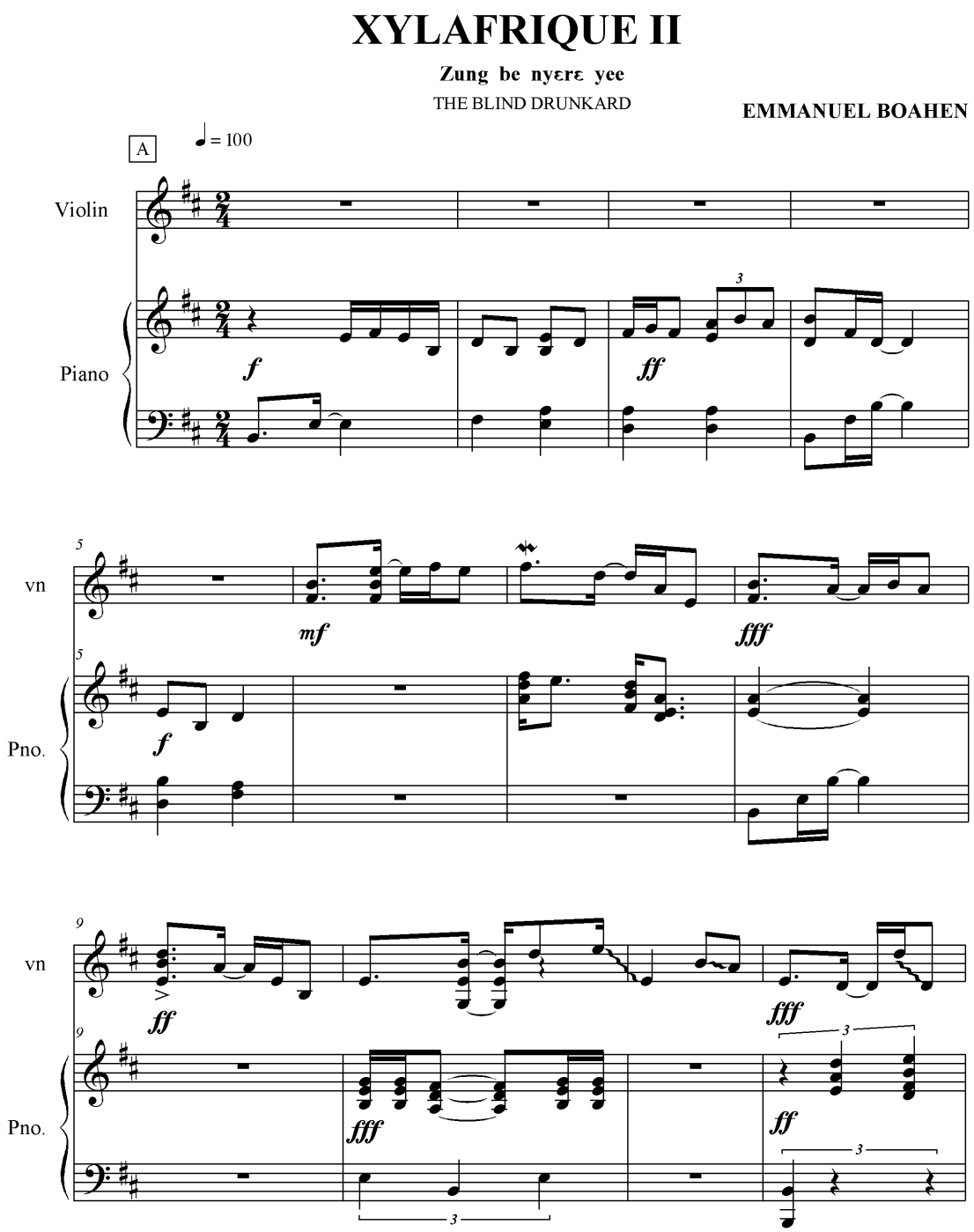
2nd Movement–Zunŋ Bɛ nyɛrɛ Yee



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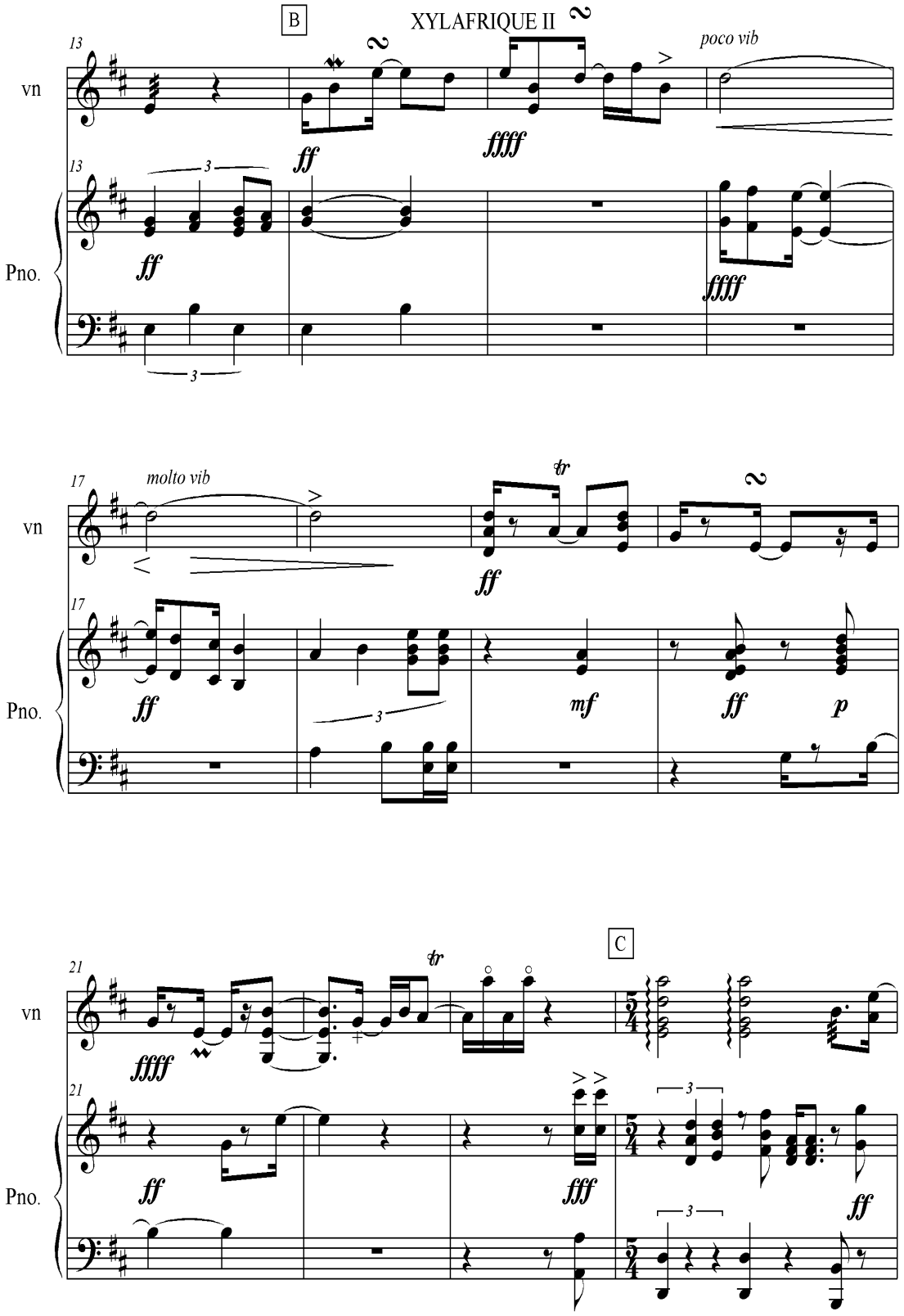

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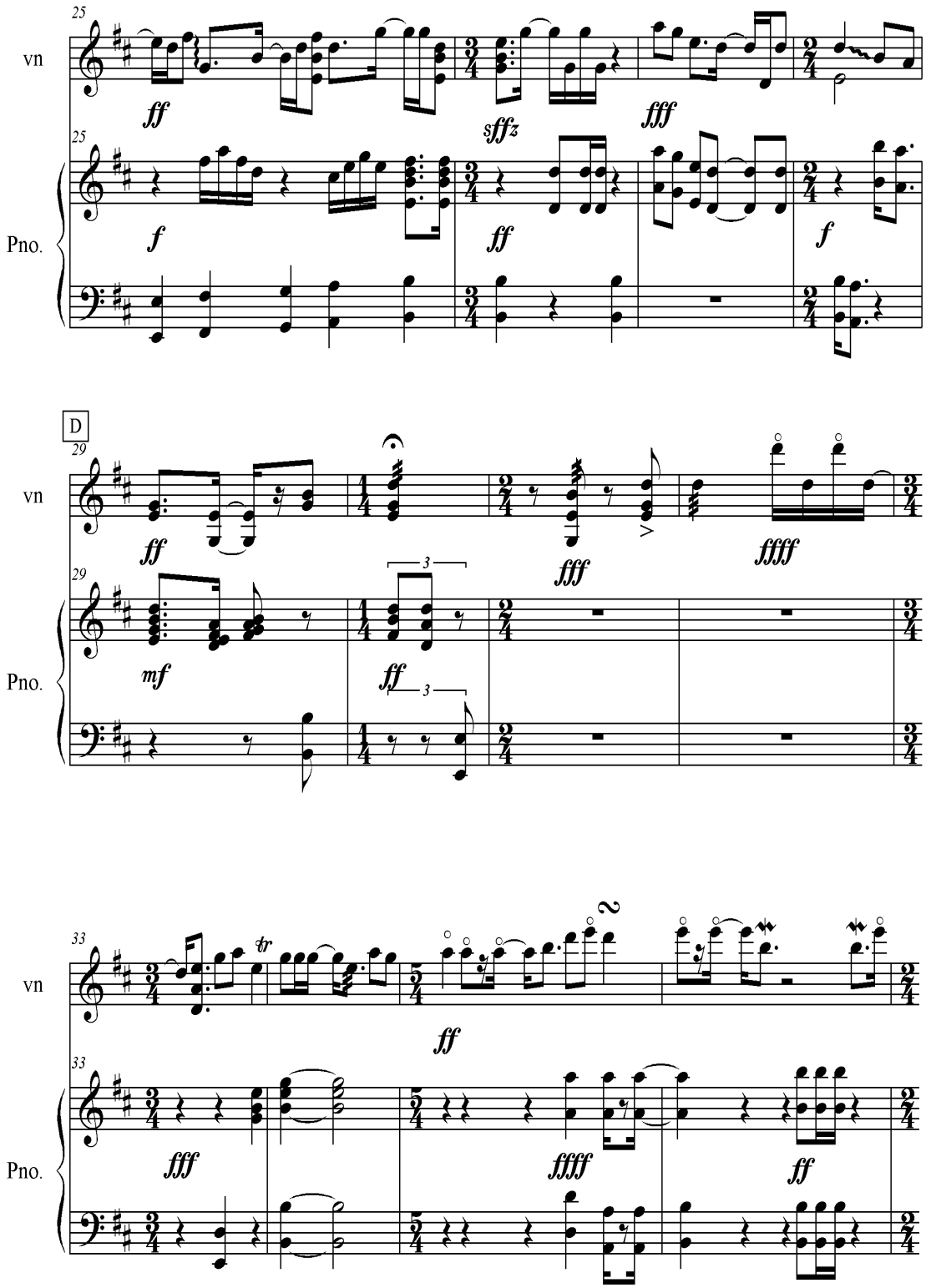

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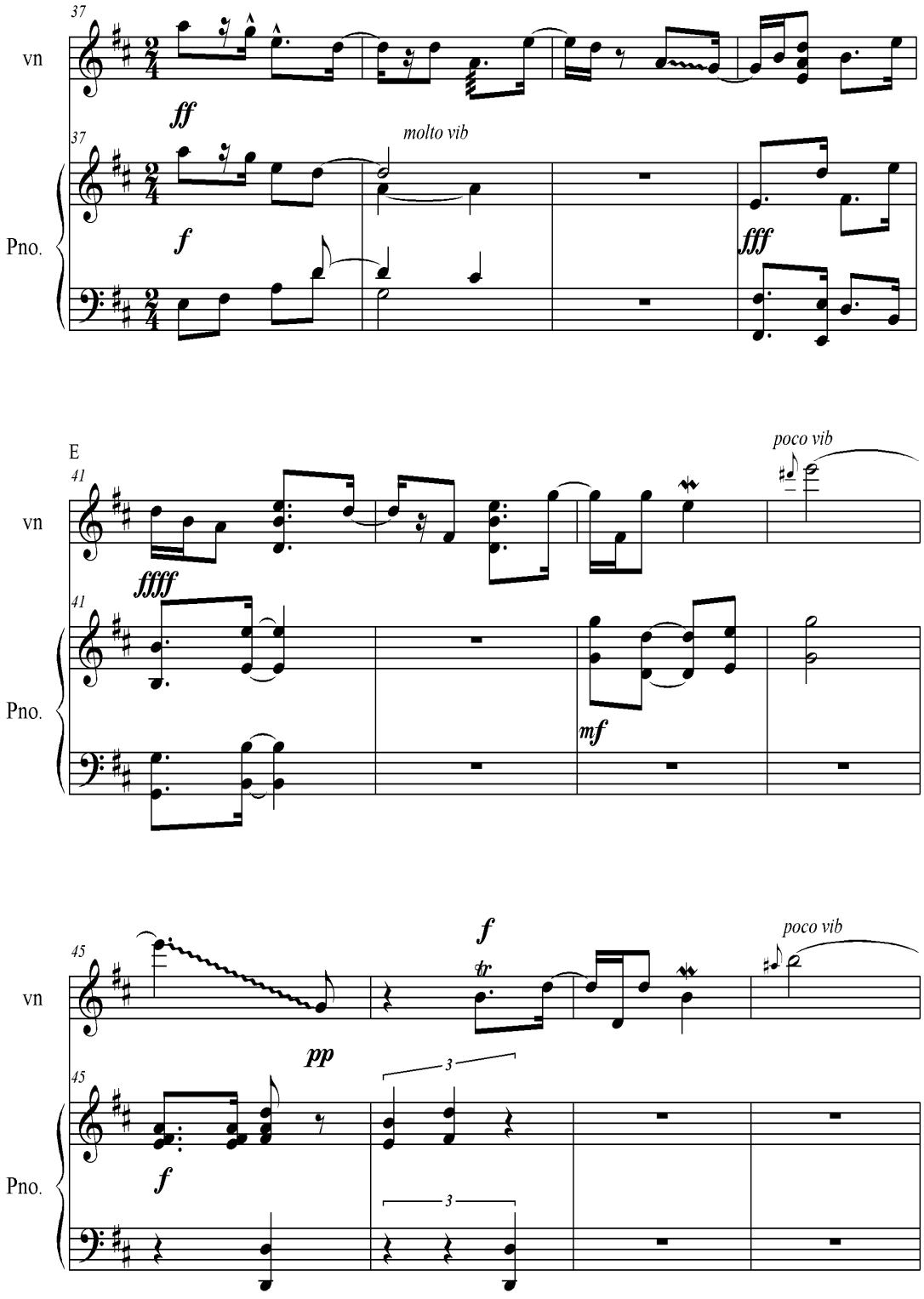

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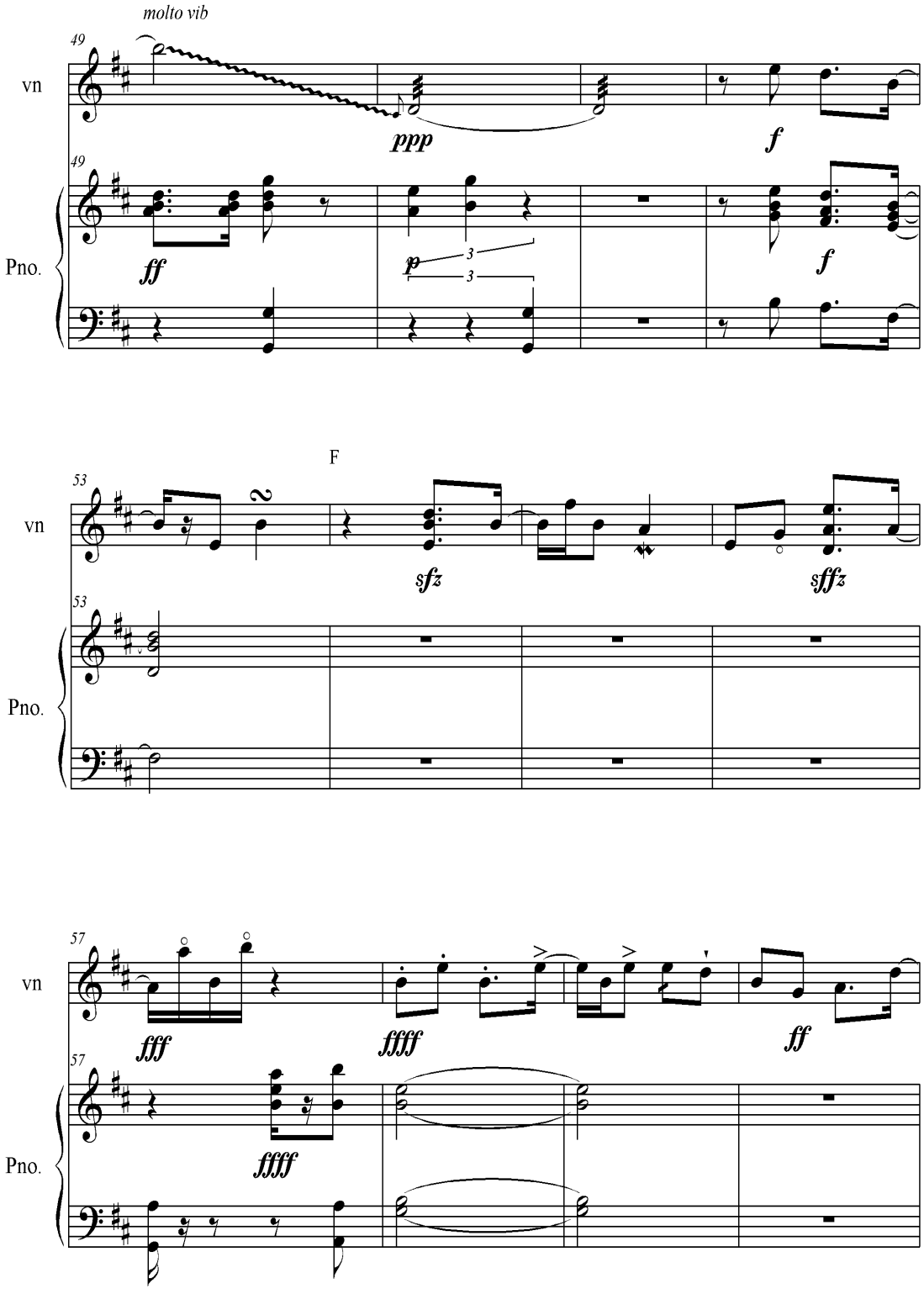

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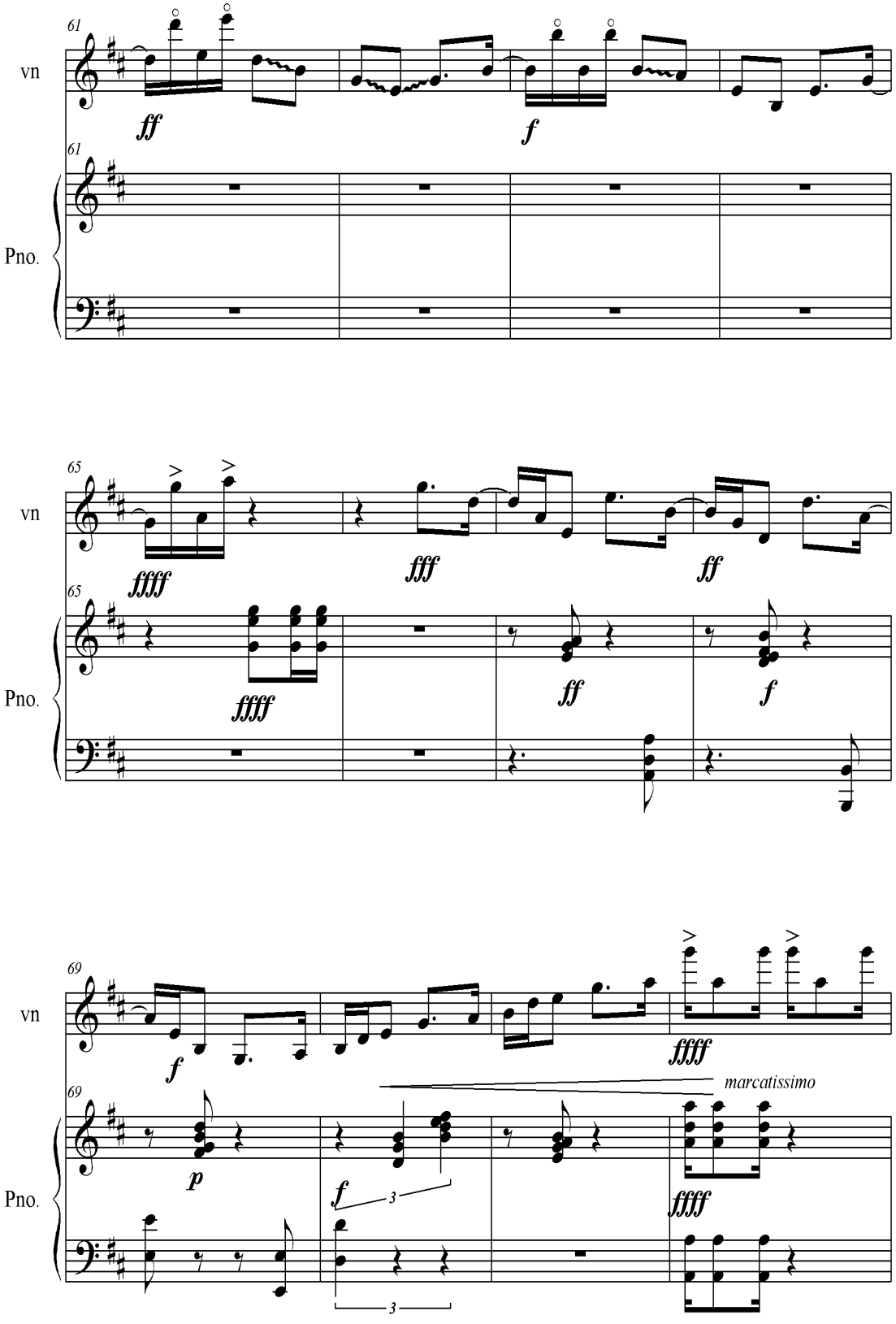

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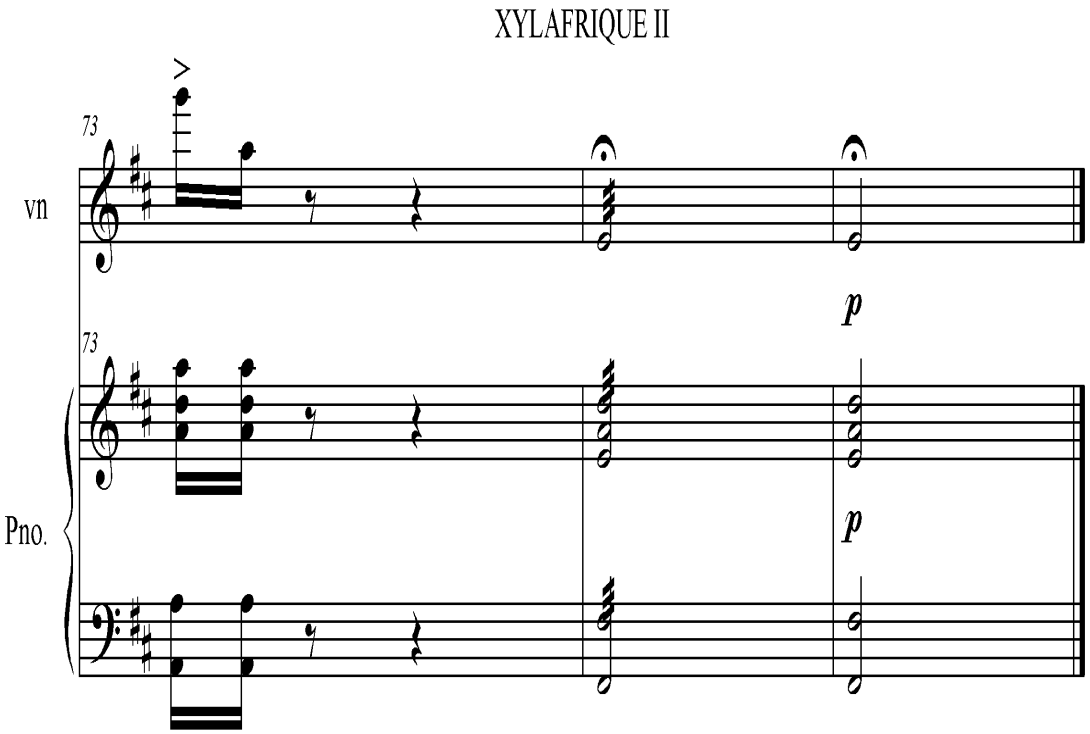

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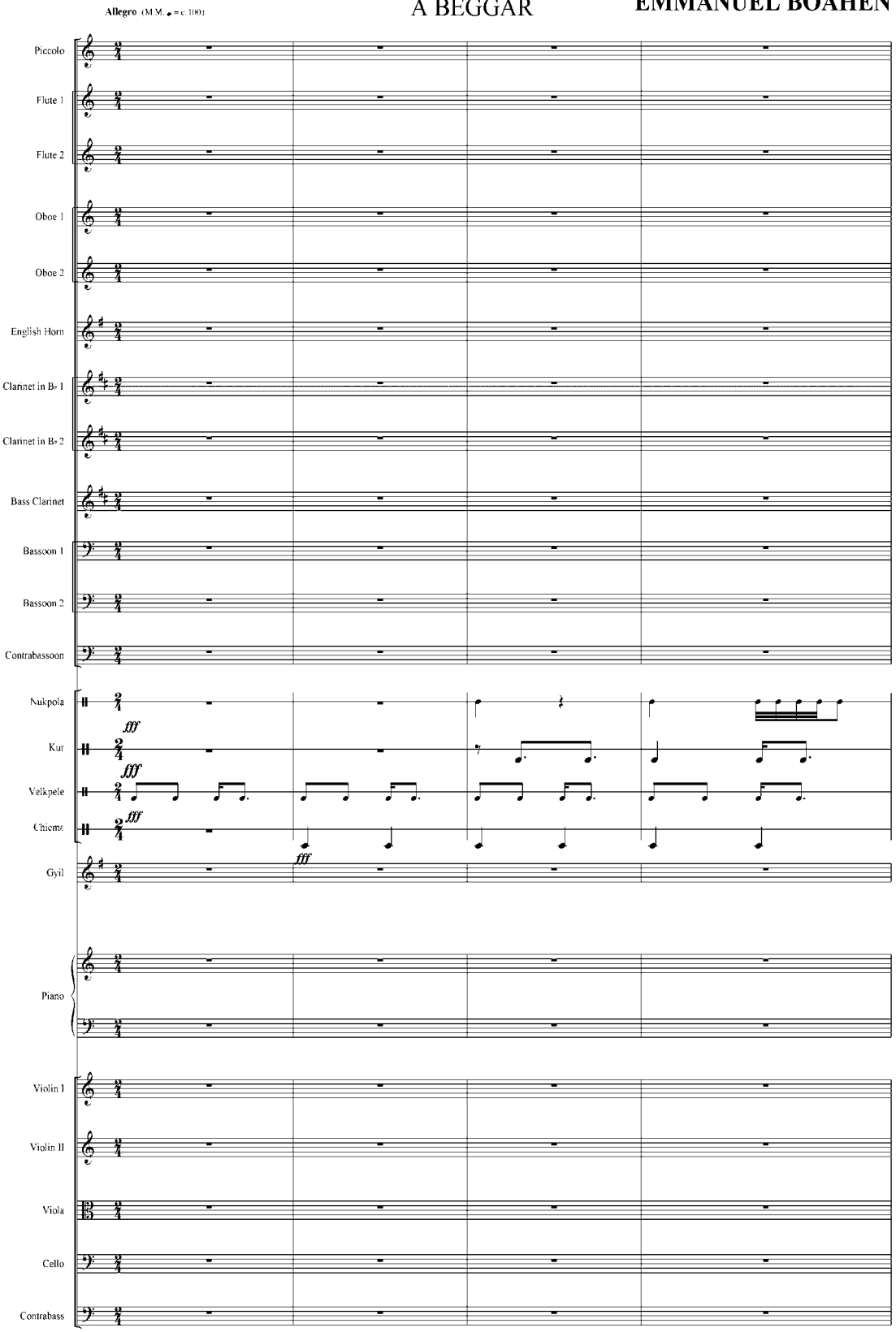
3rd Movement–Yang Yang Kolee

XYLAFRIQUE III

Yang yang kolee

A BEGGAR

EMMANUEL BOAHEN



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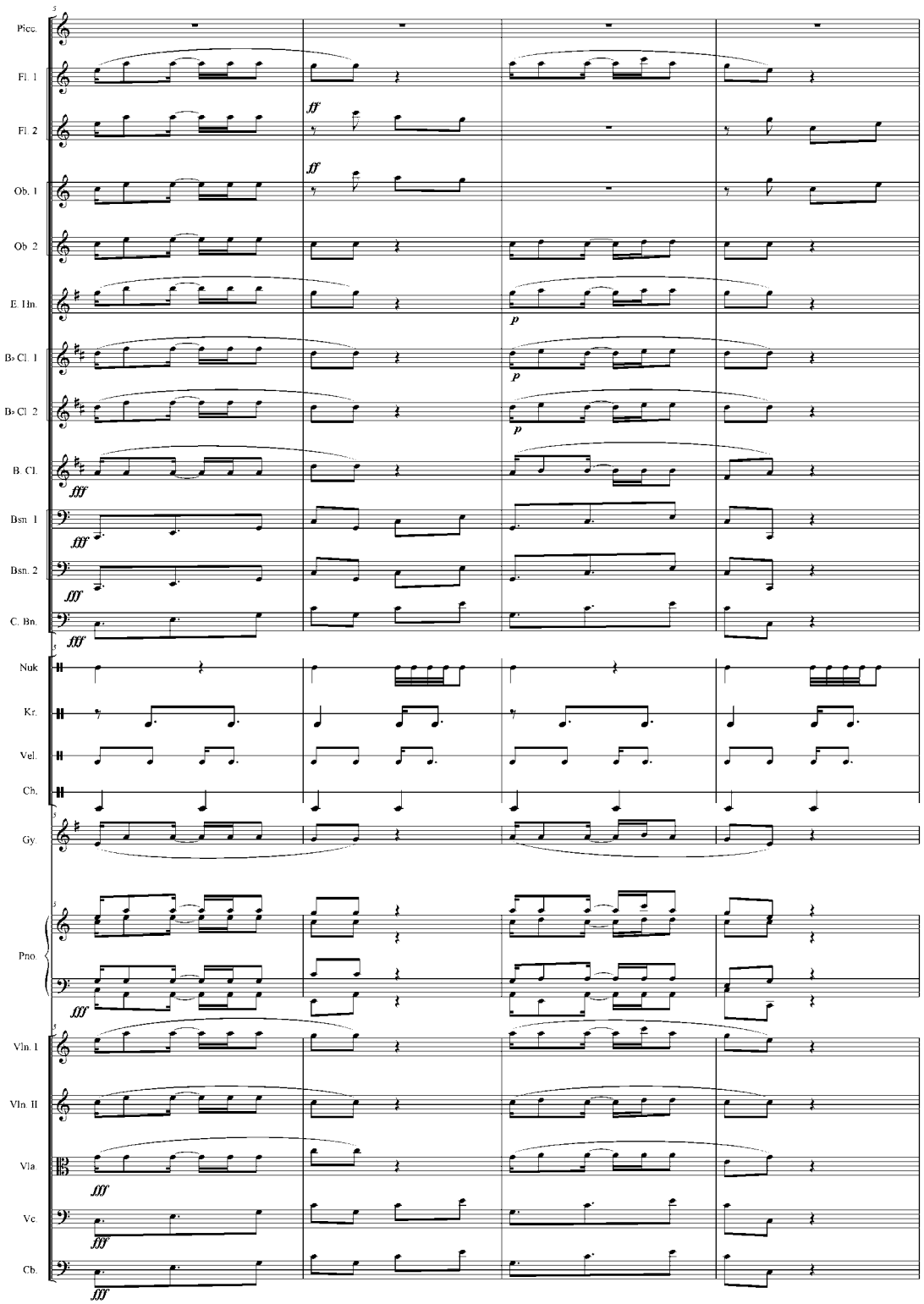

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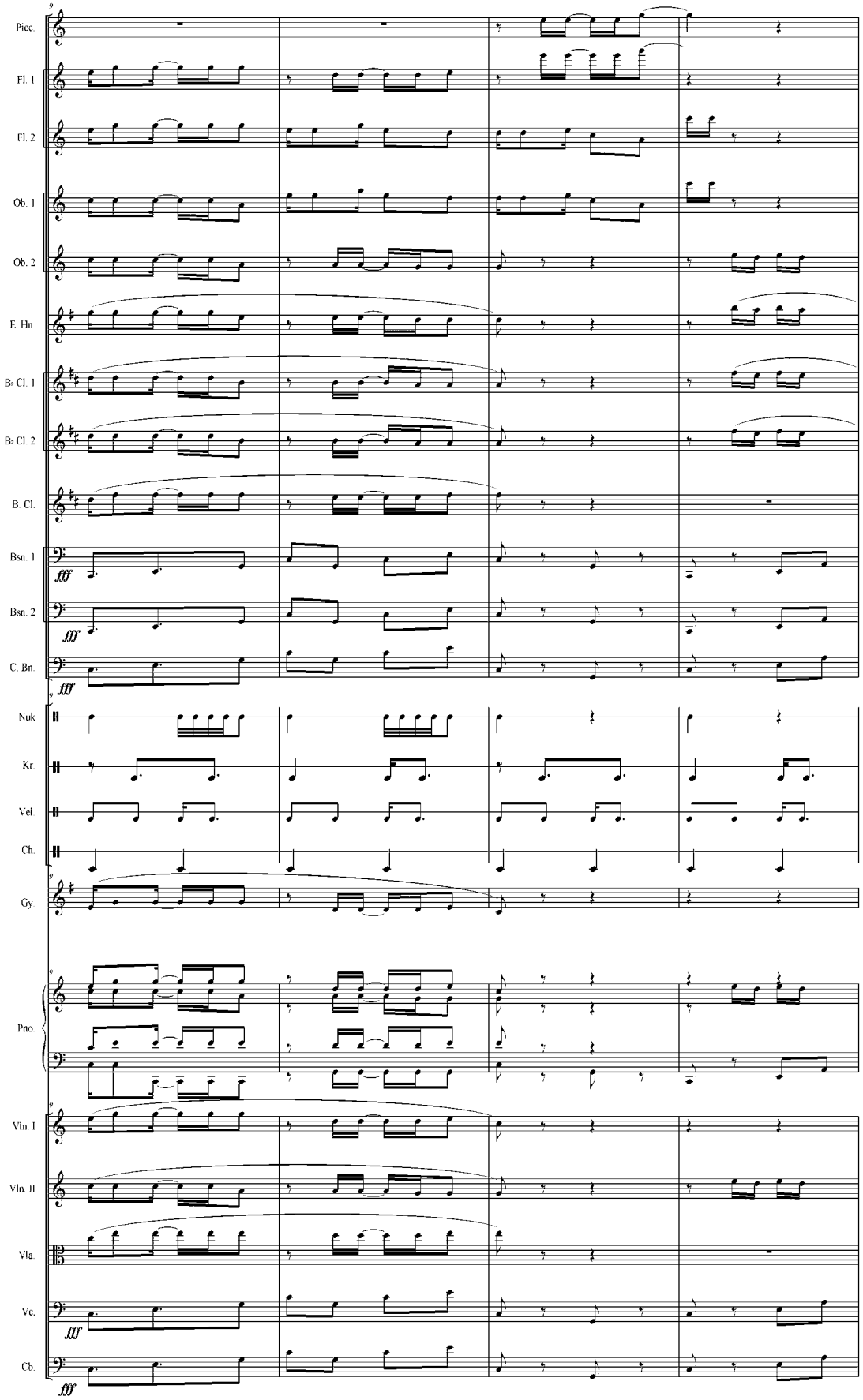

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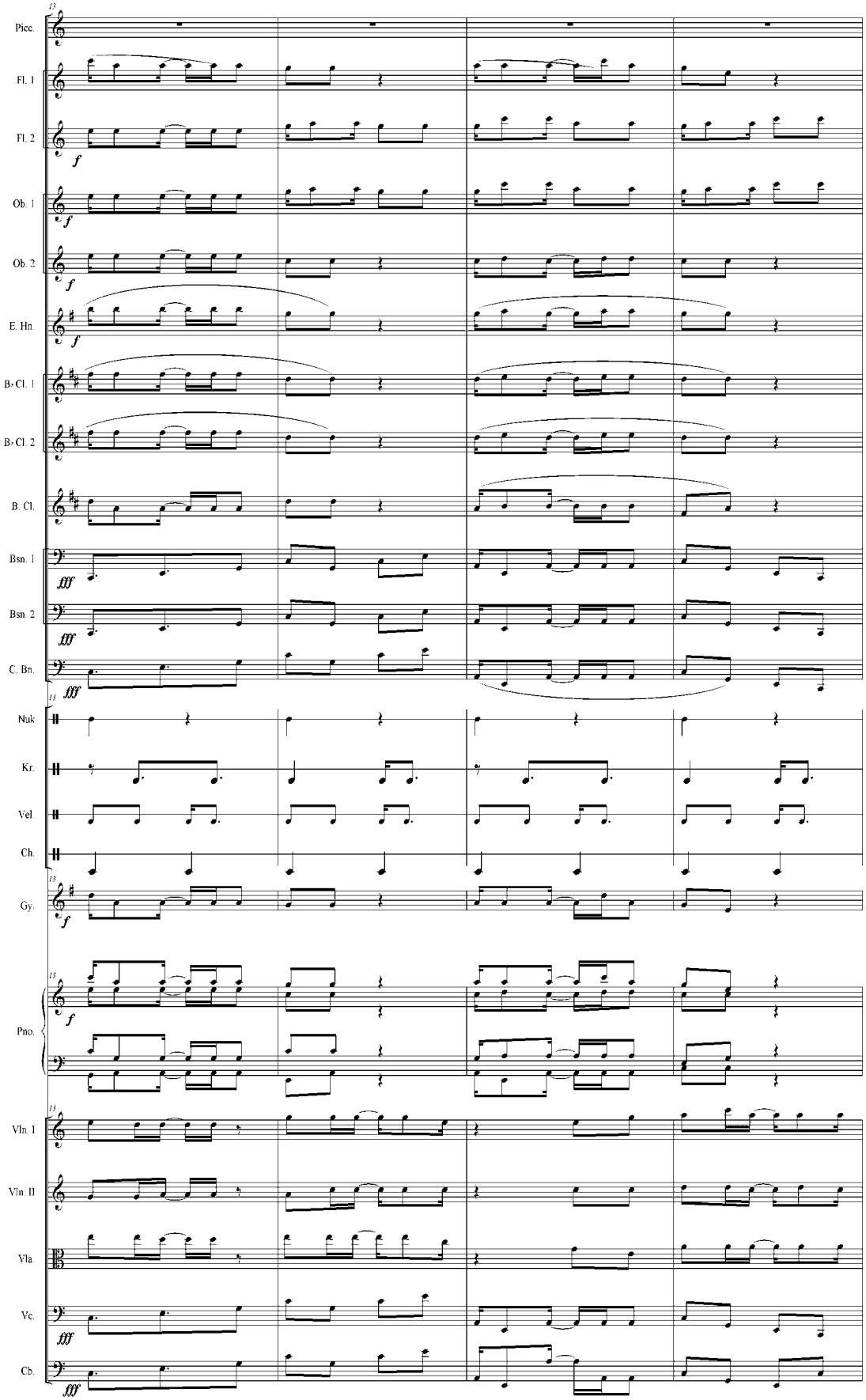

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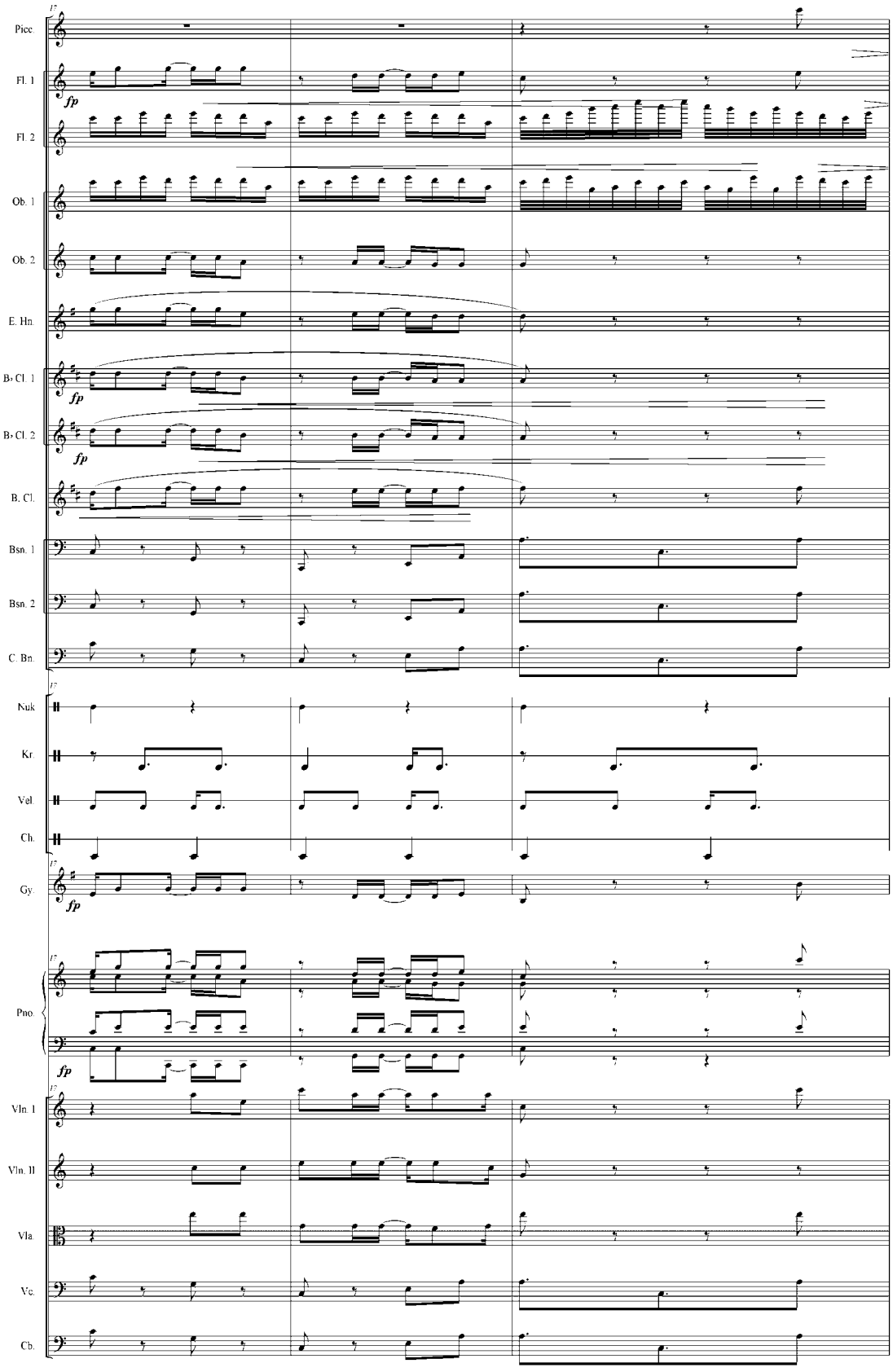

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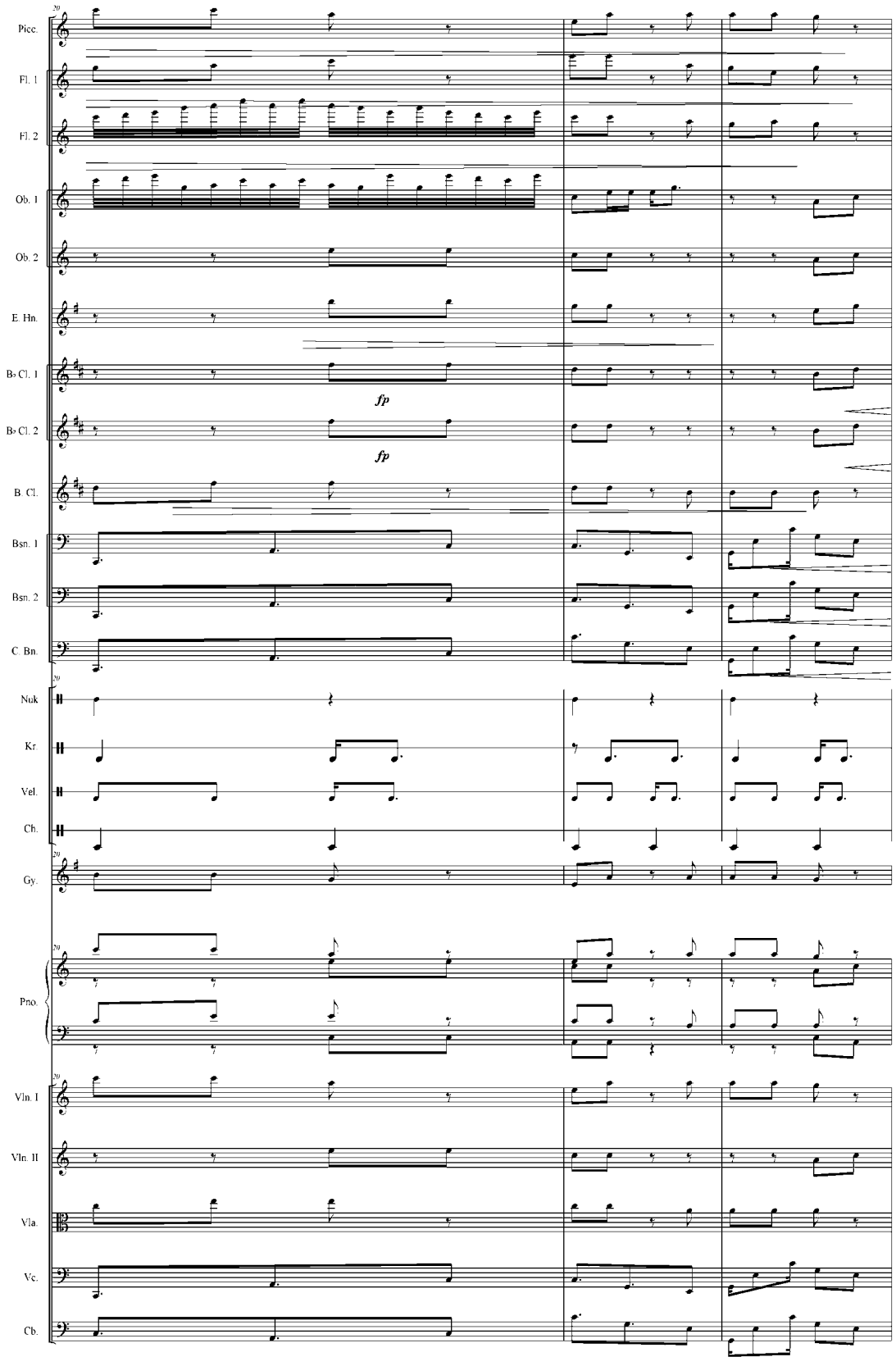

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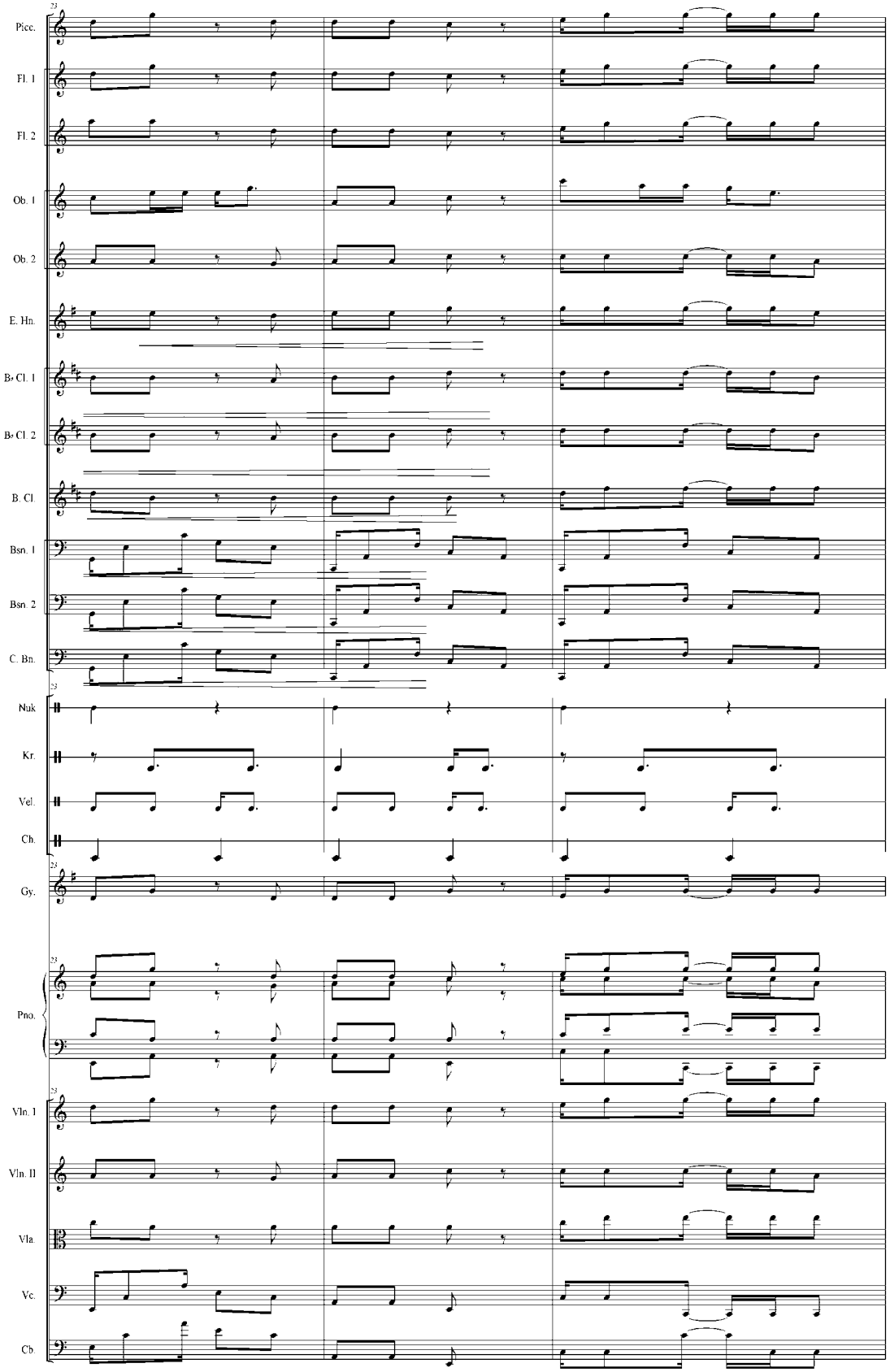

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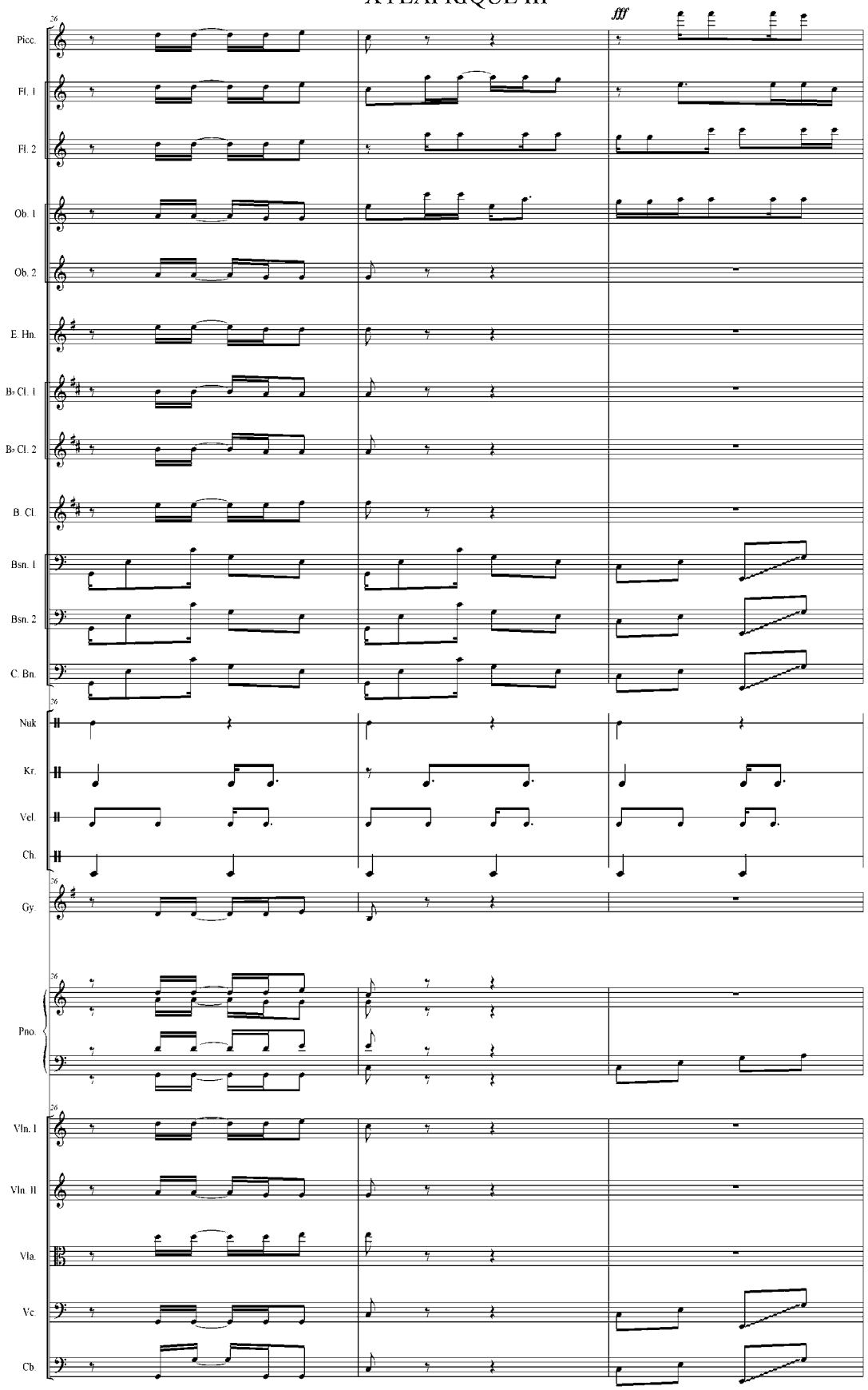

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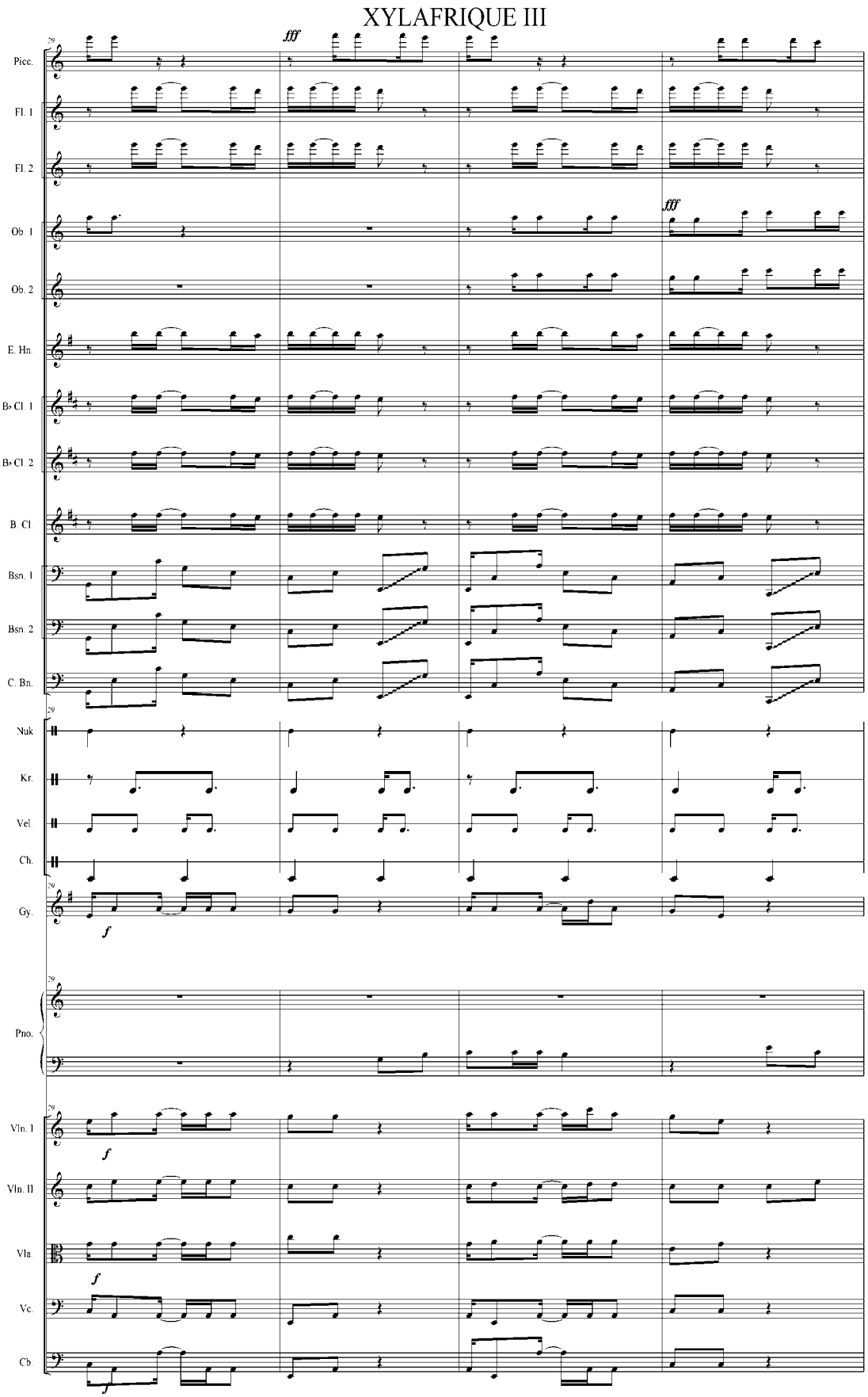

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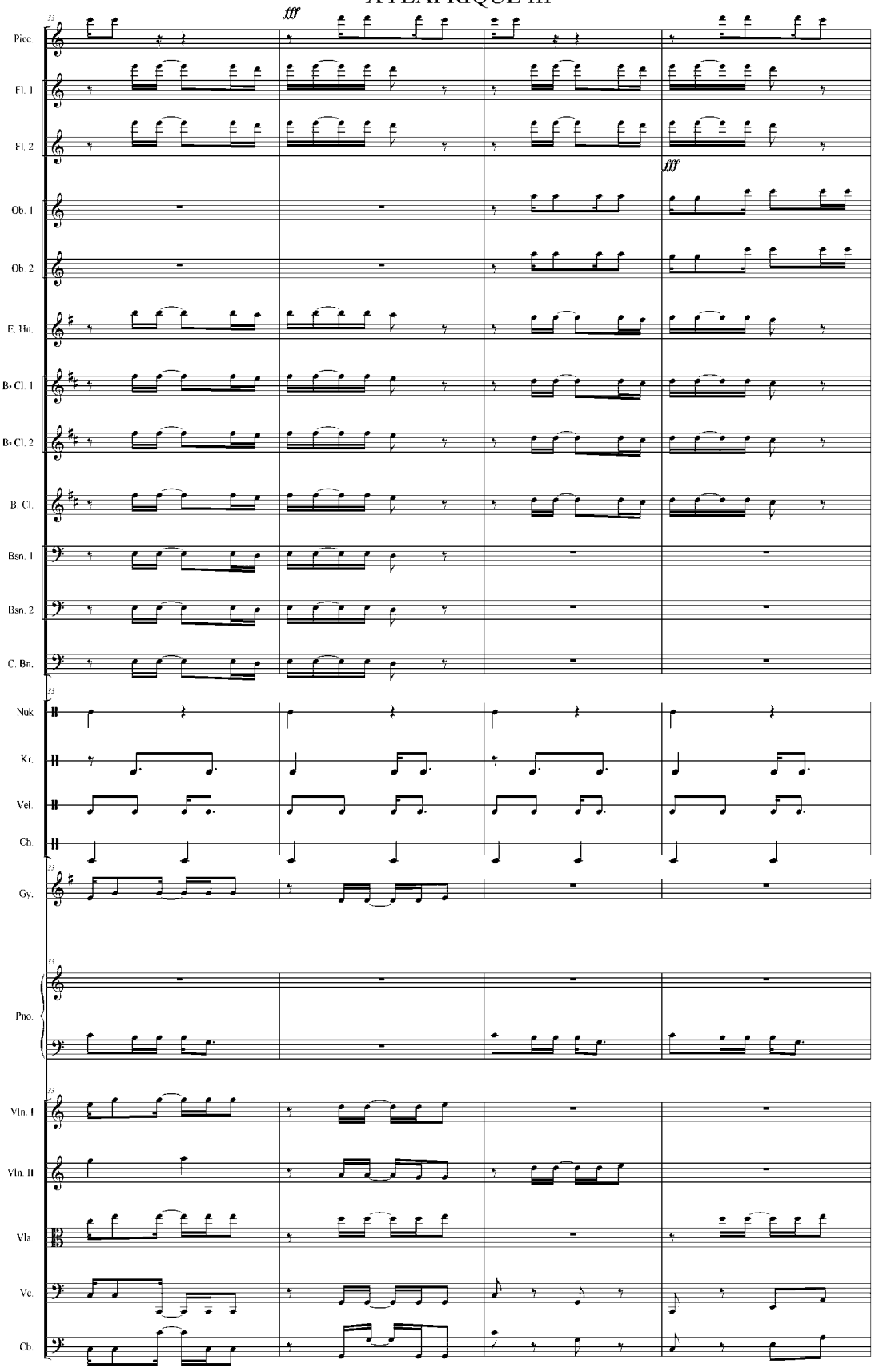

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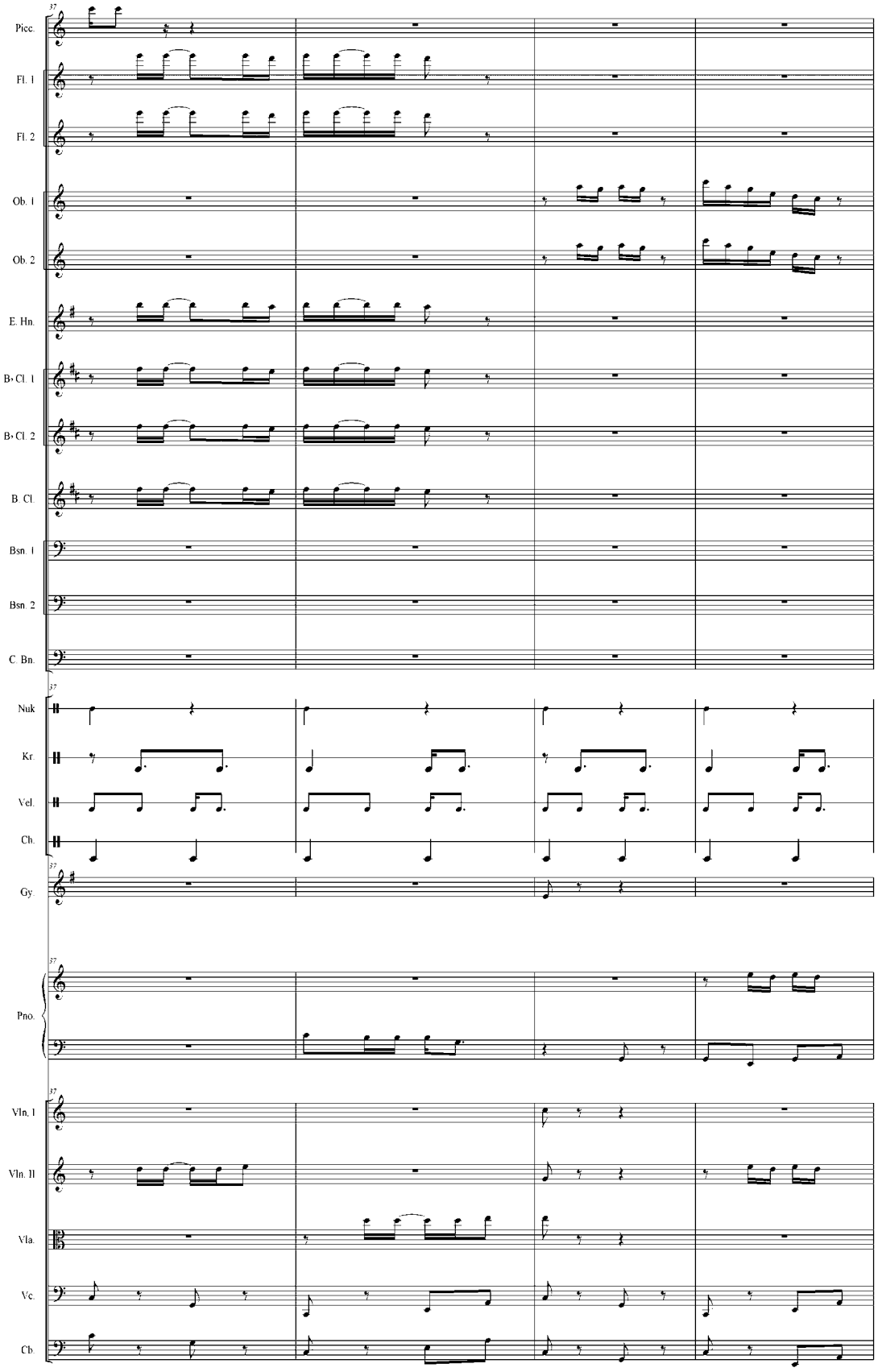

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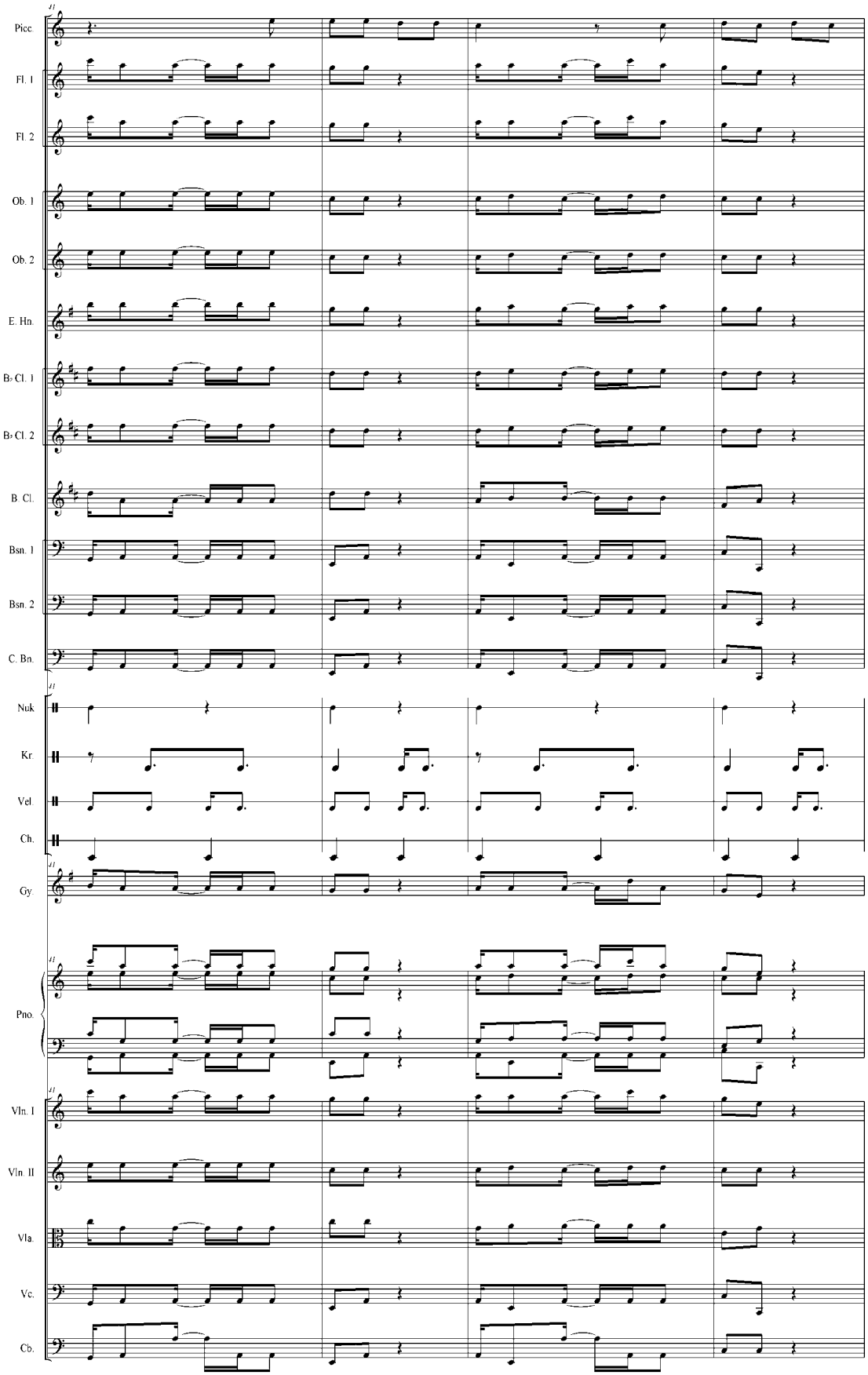

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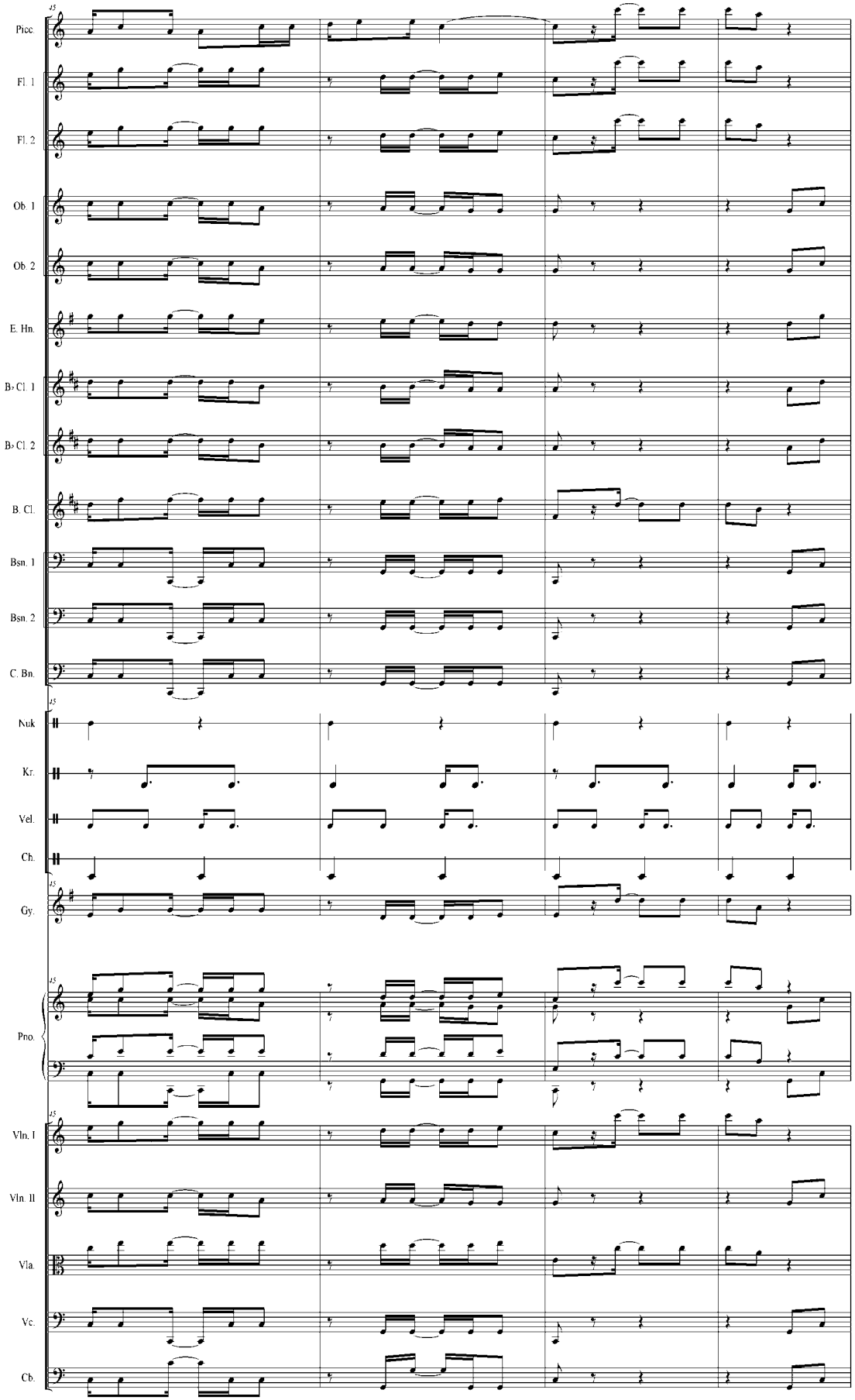

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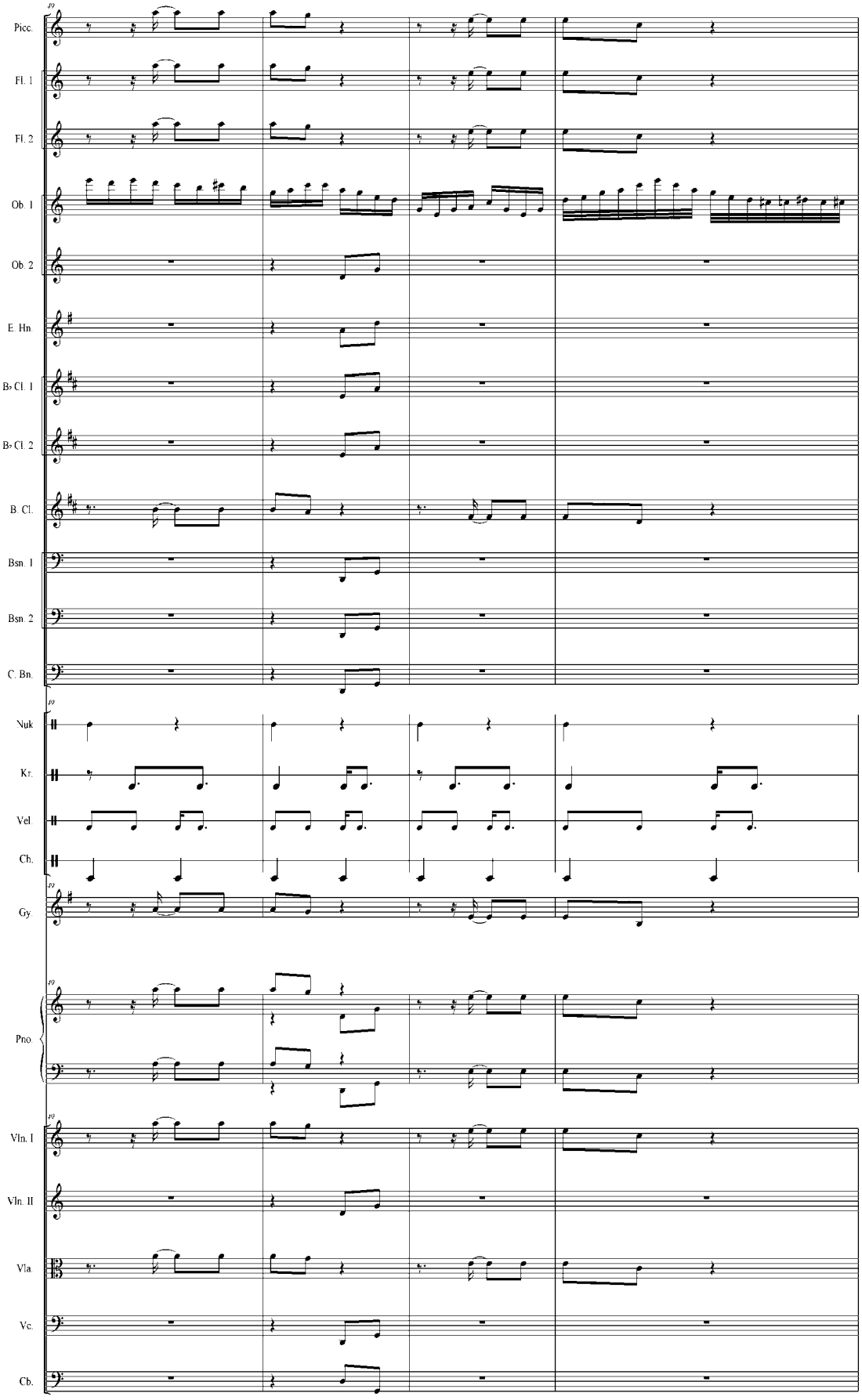

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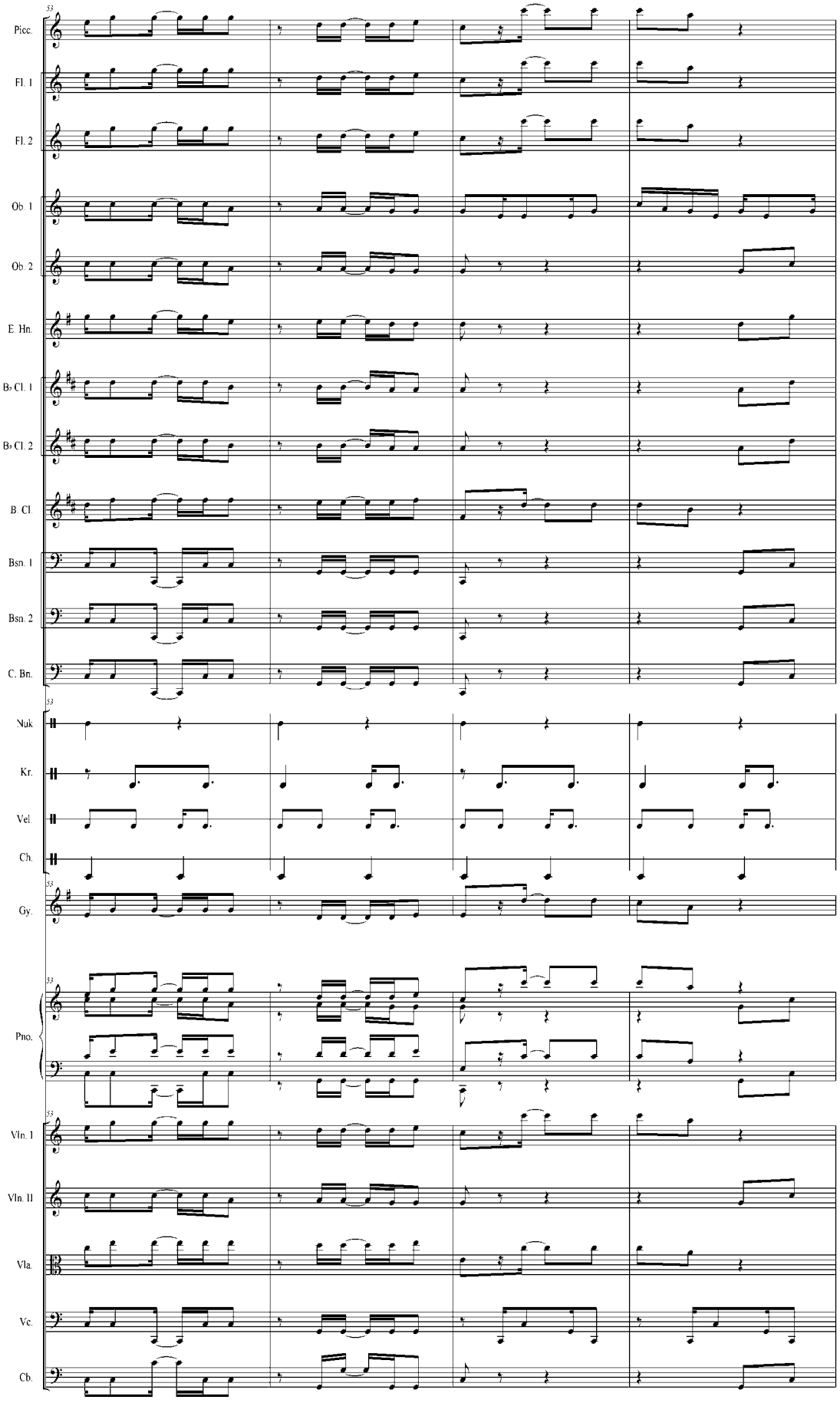

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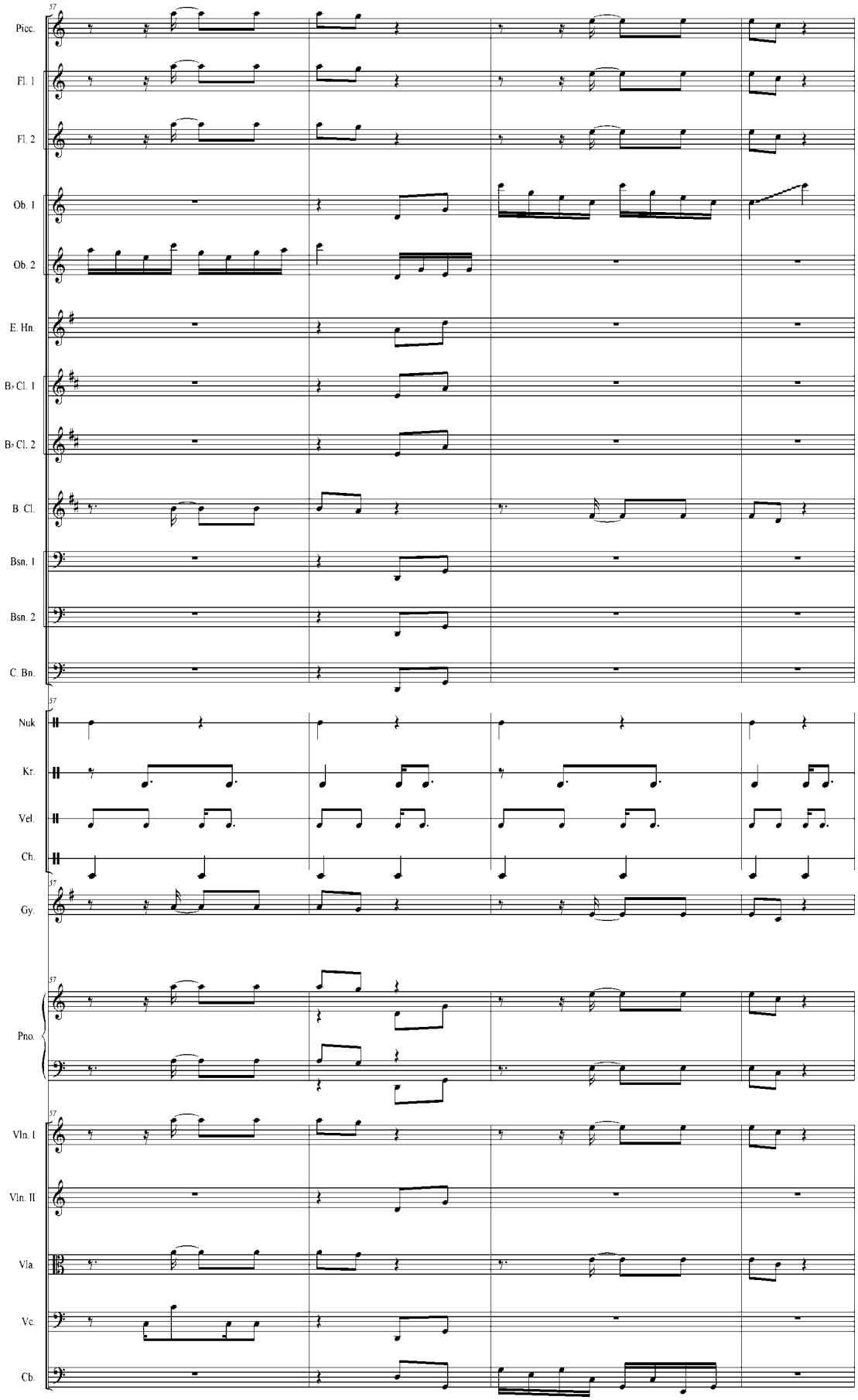

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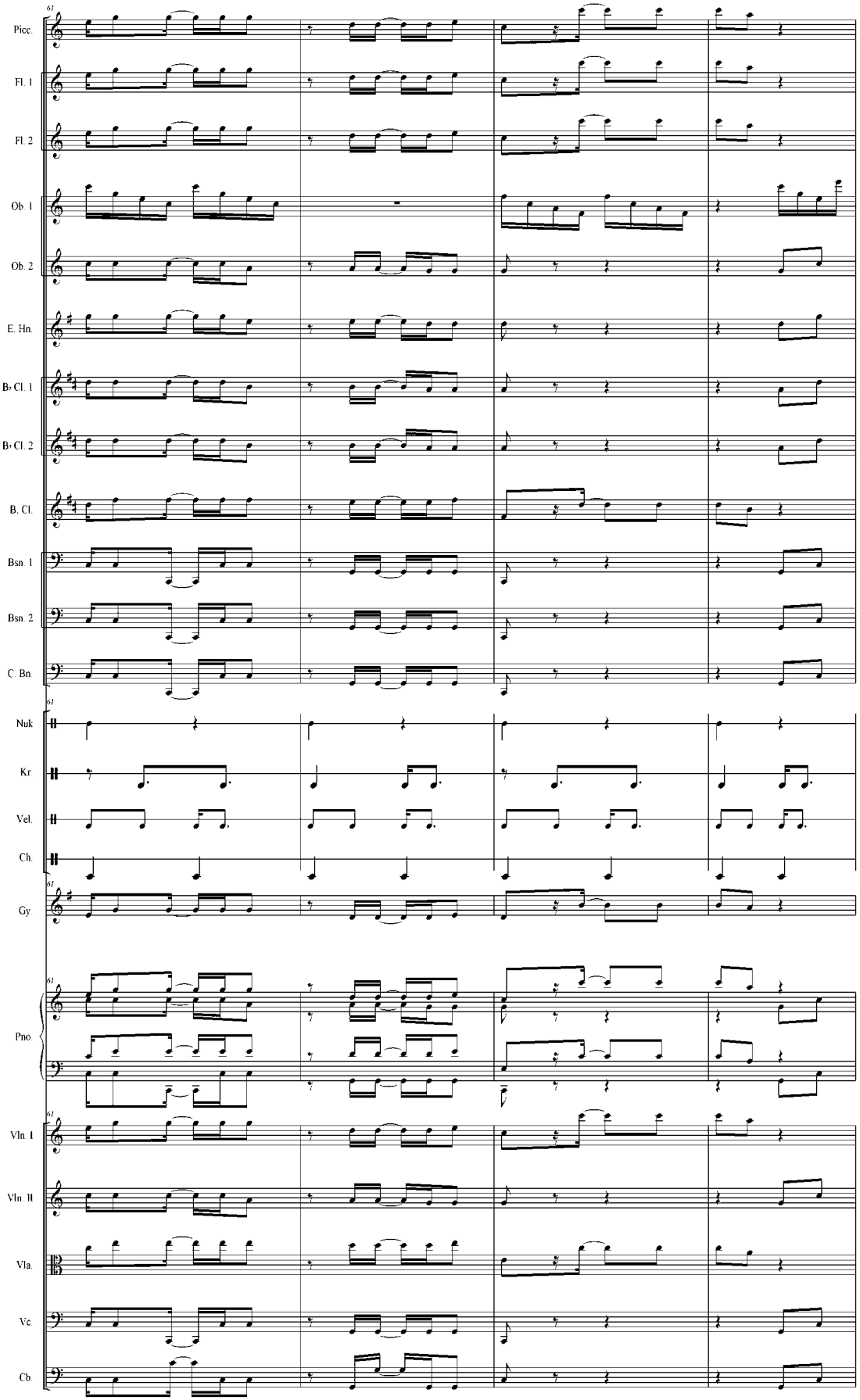

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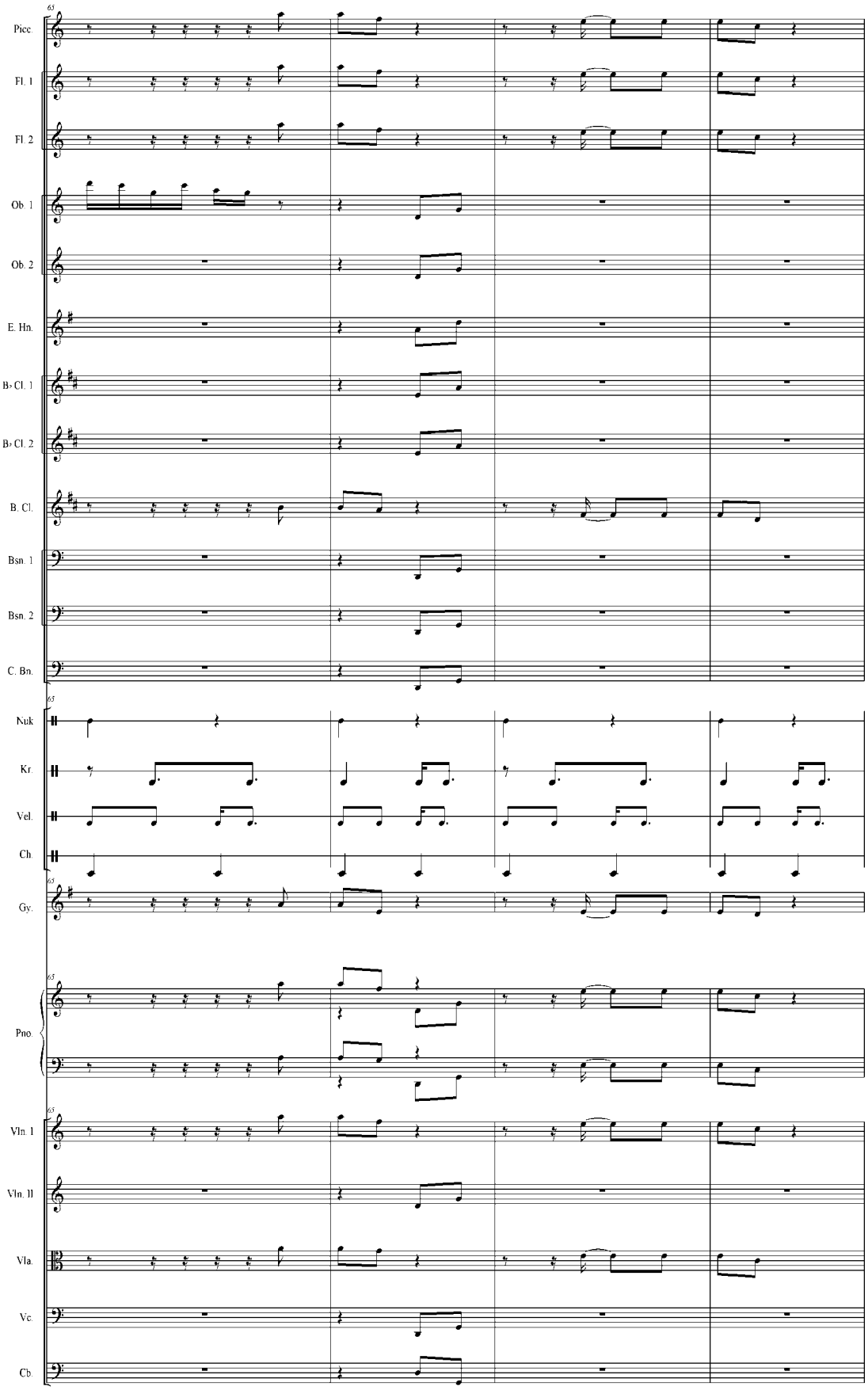

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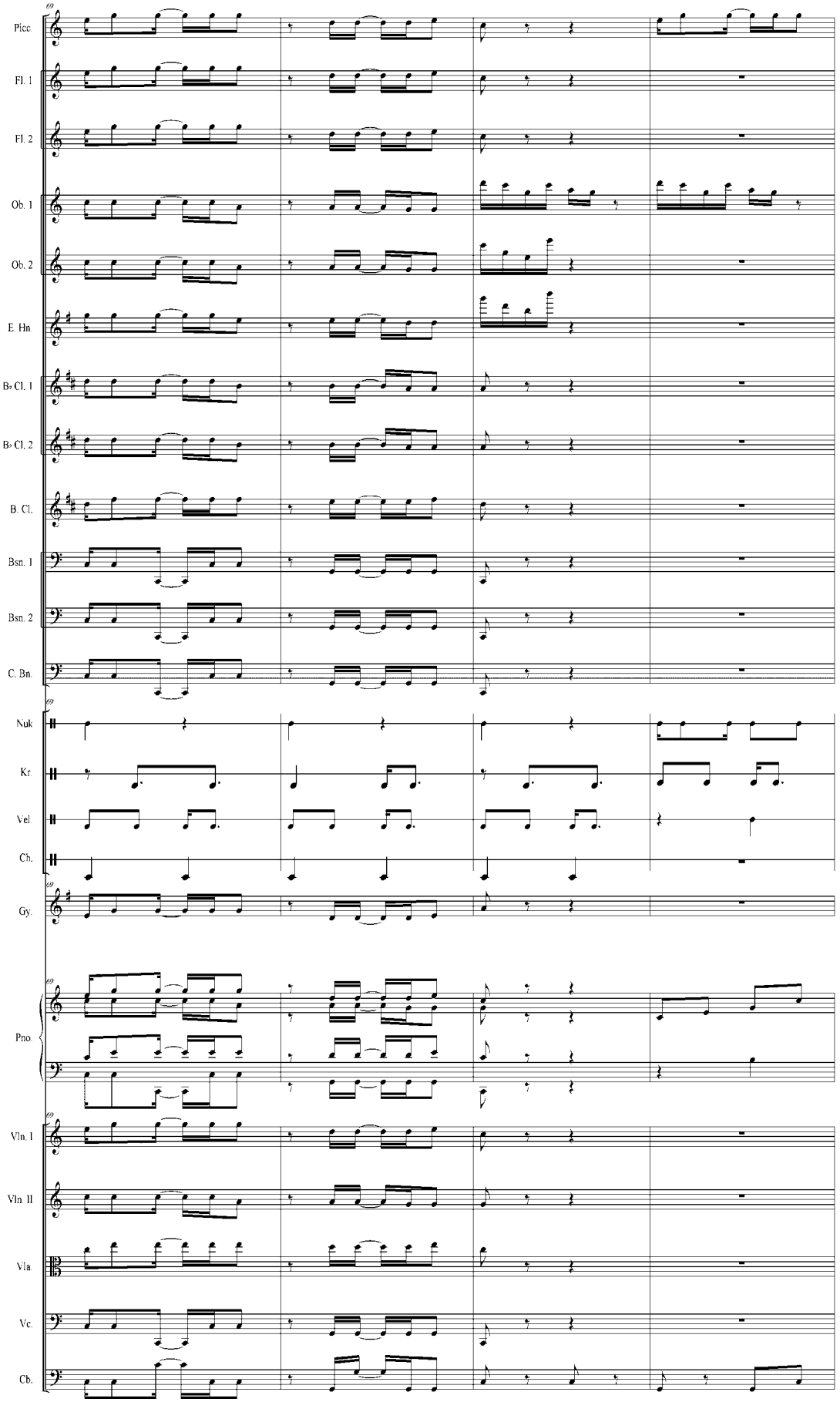

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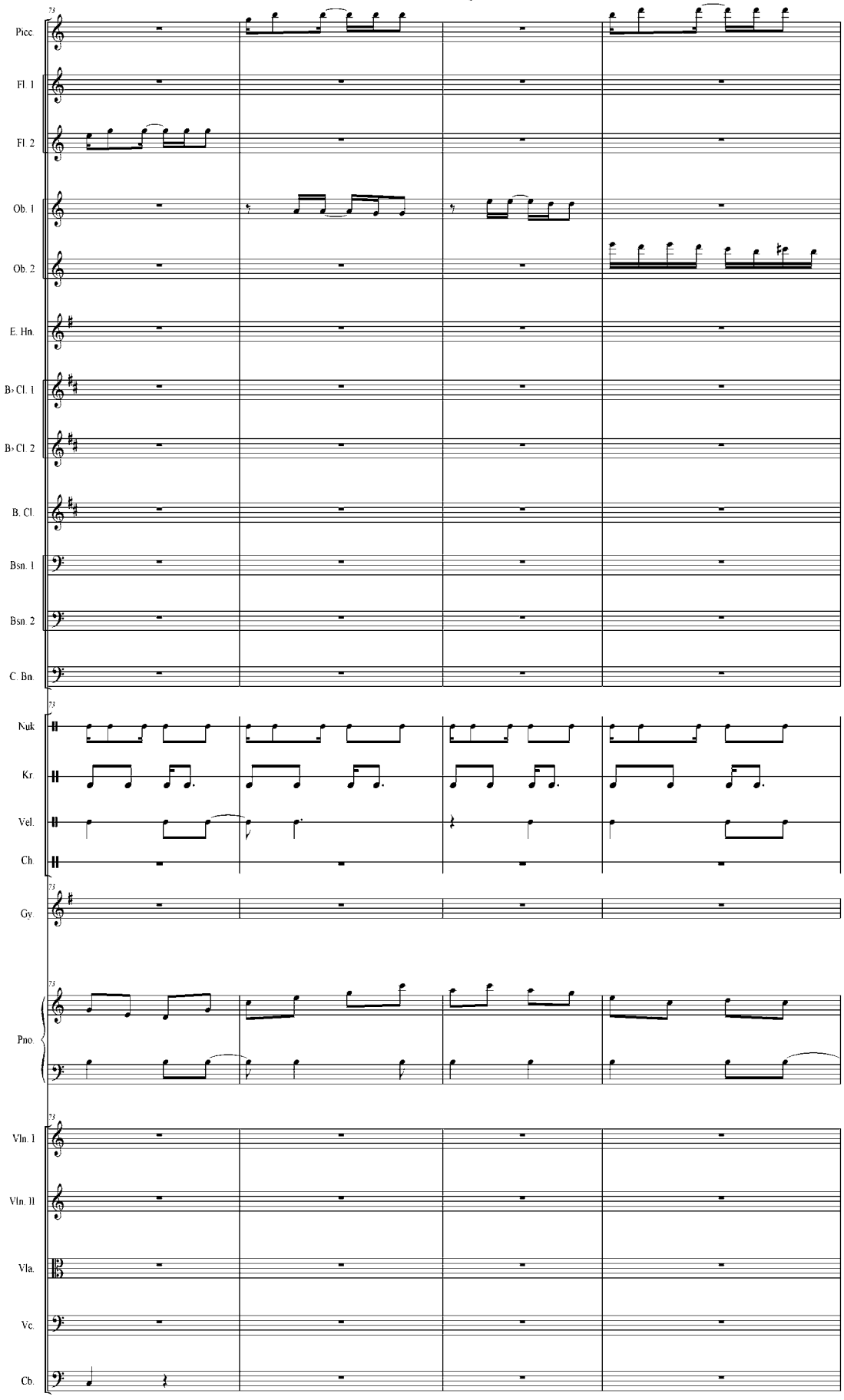

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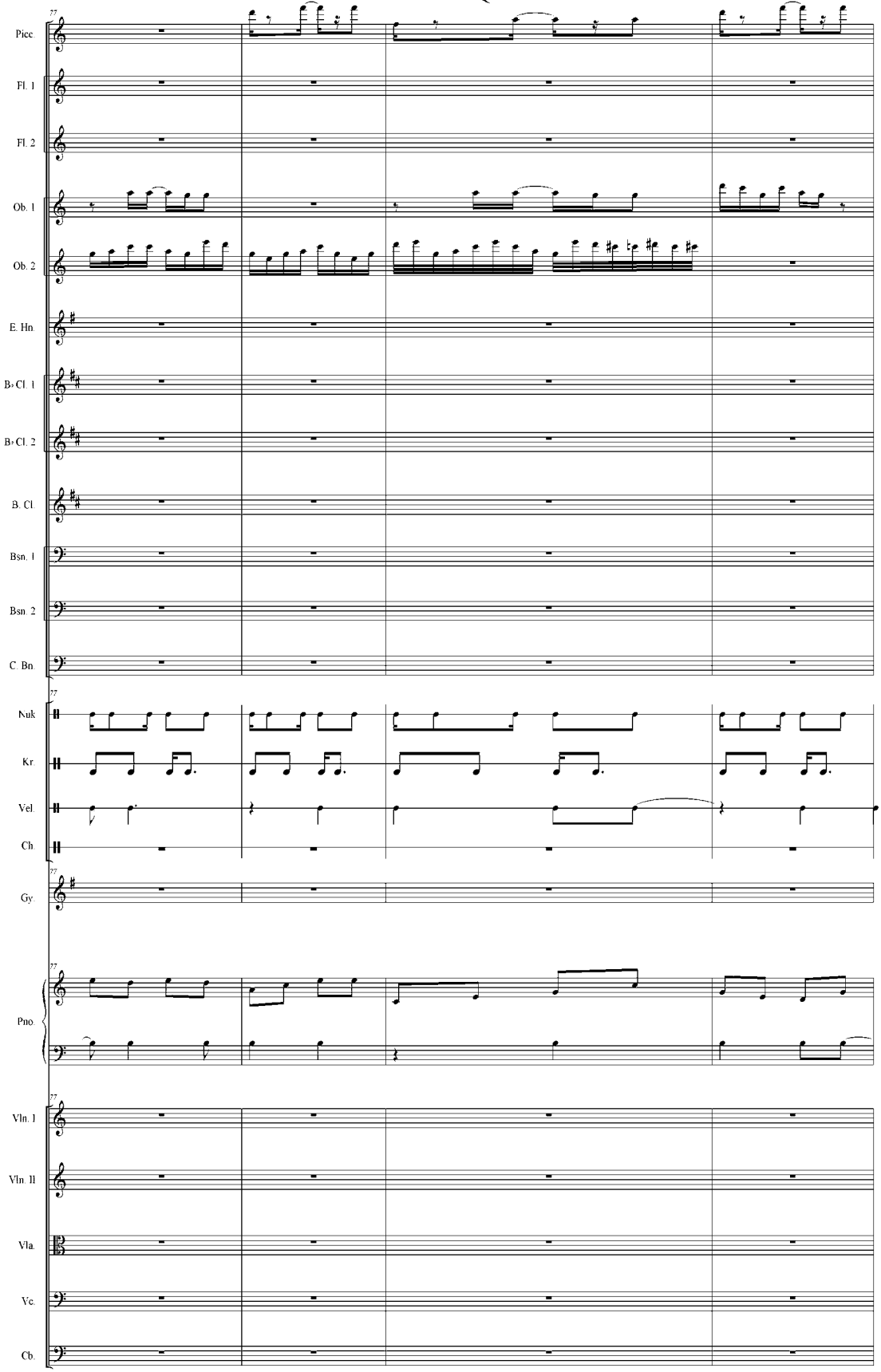

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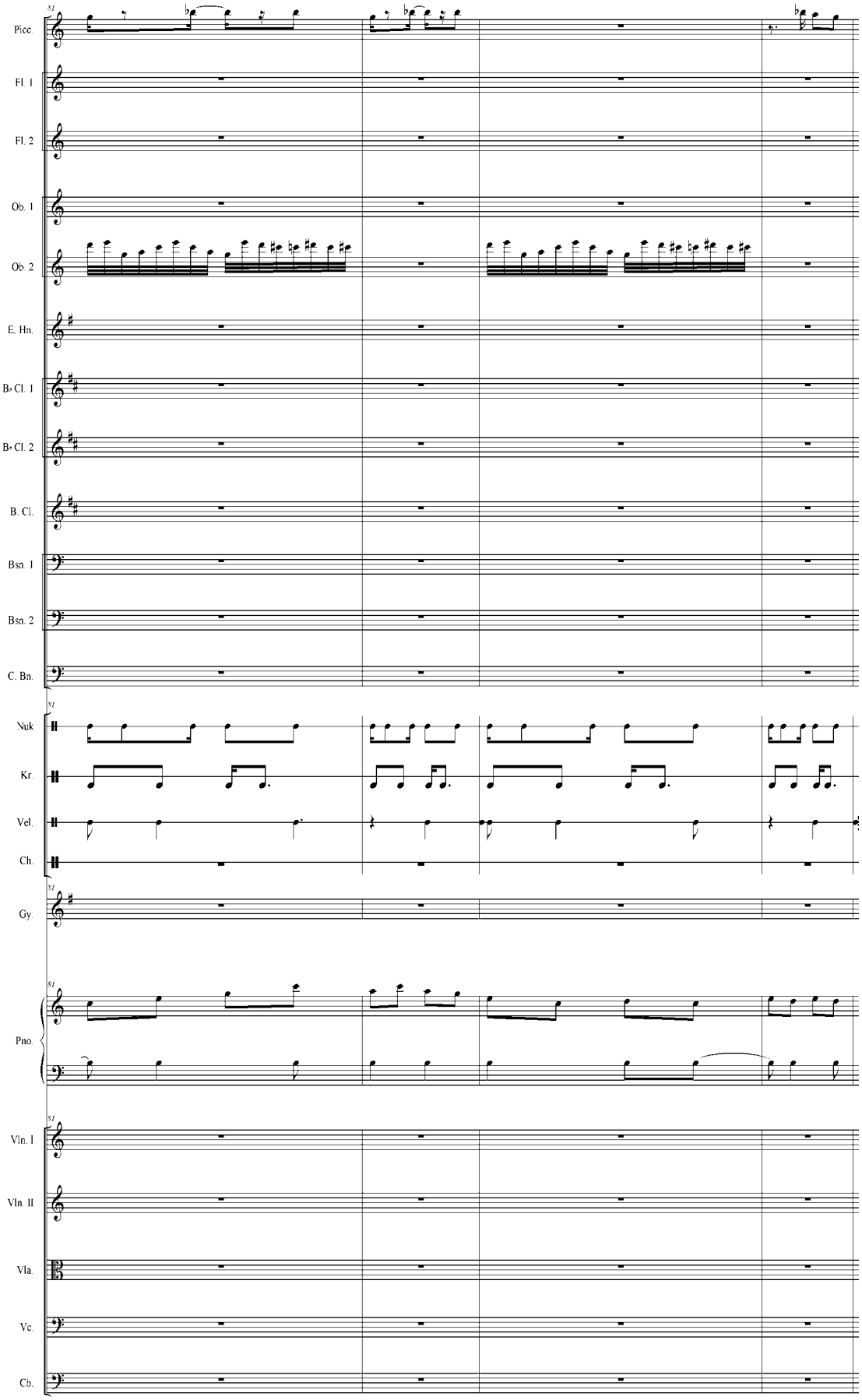

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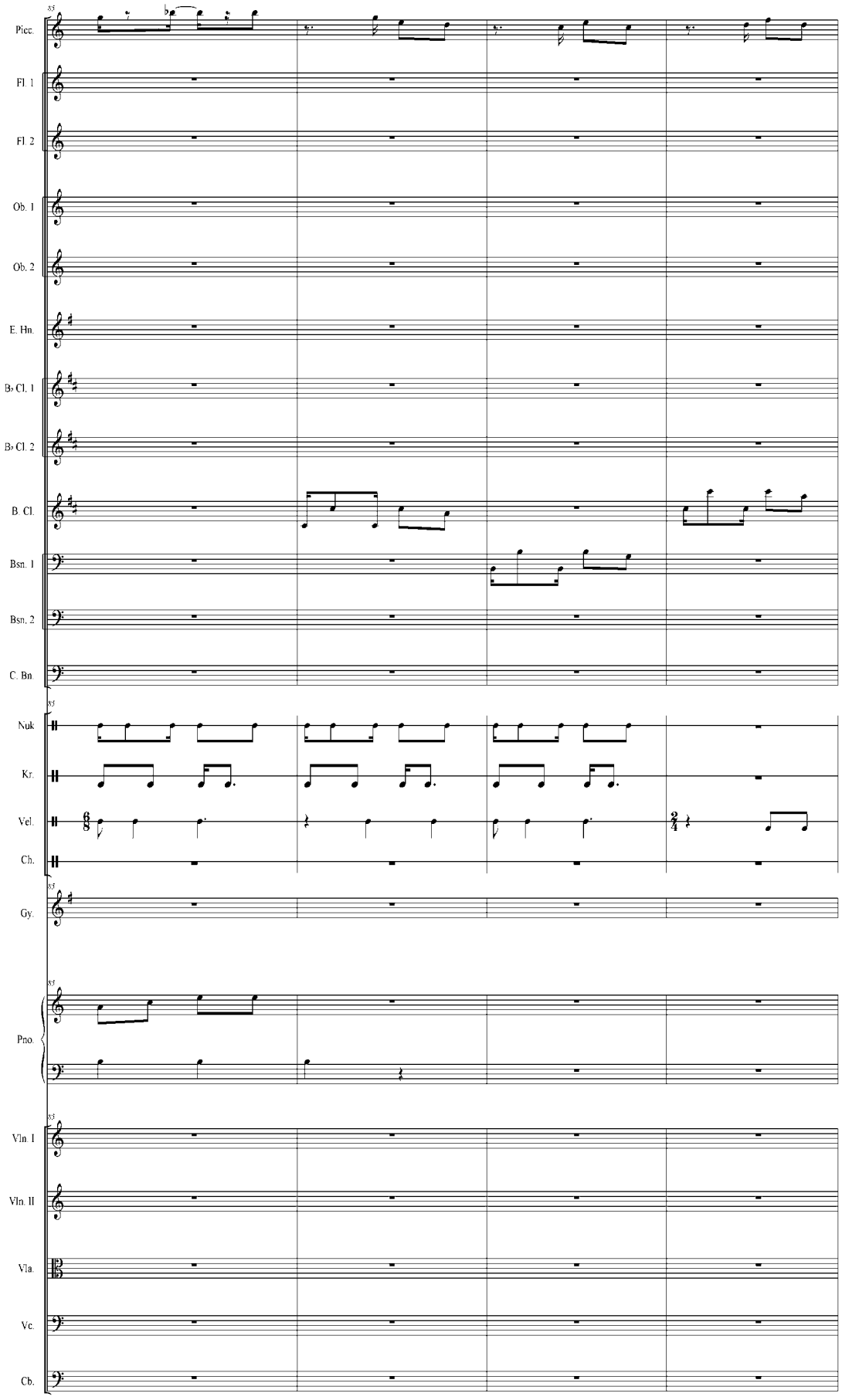

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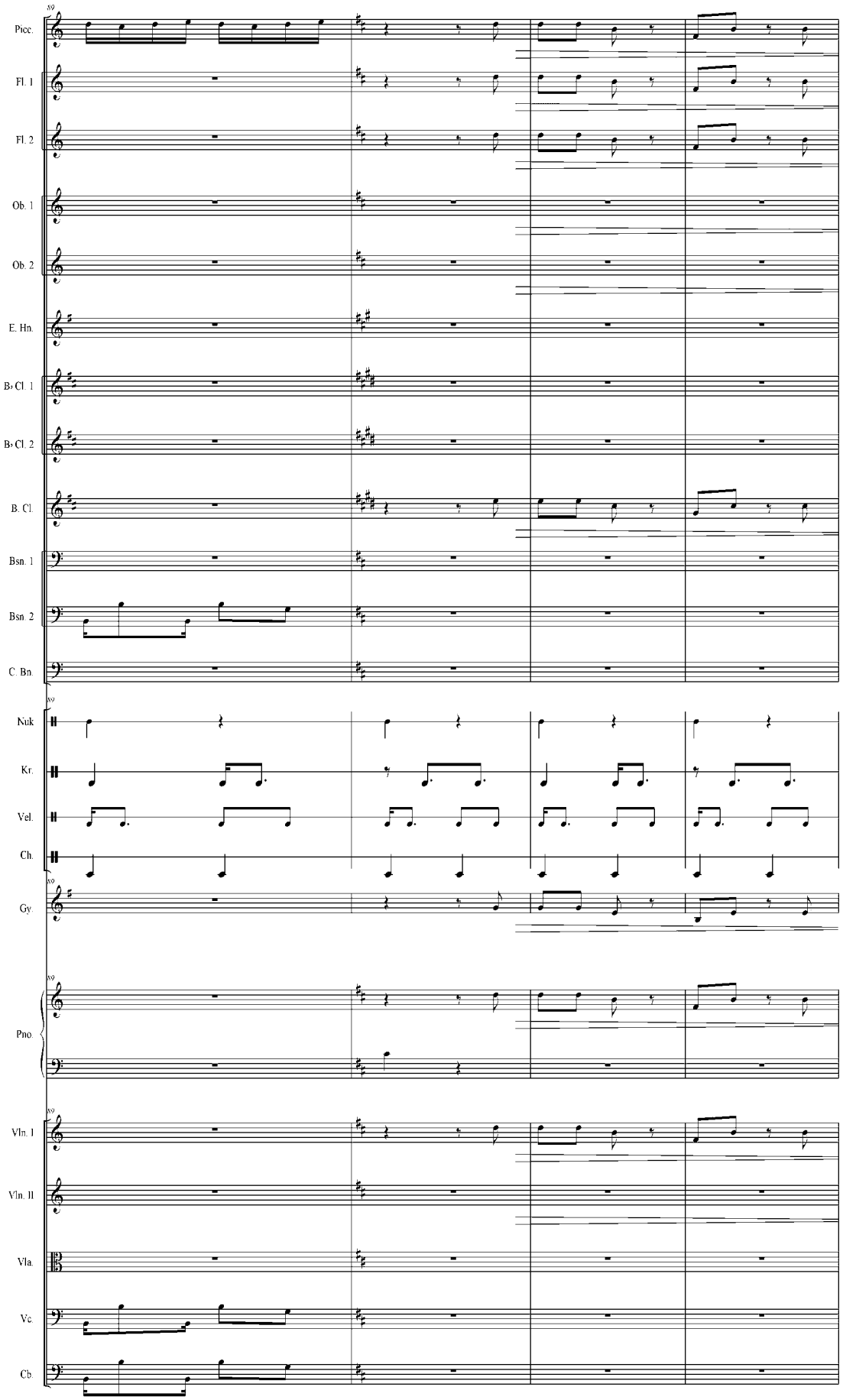

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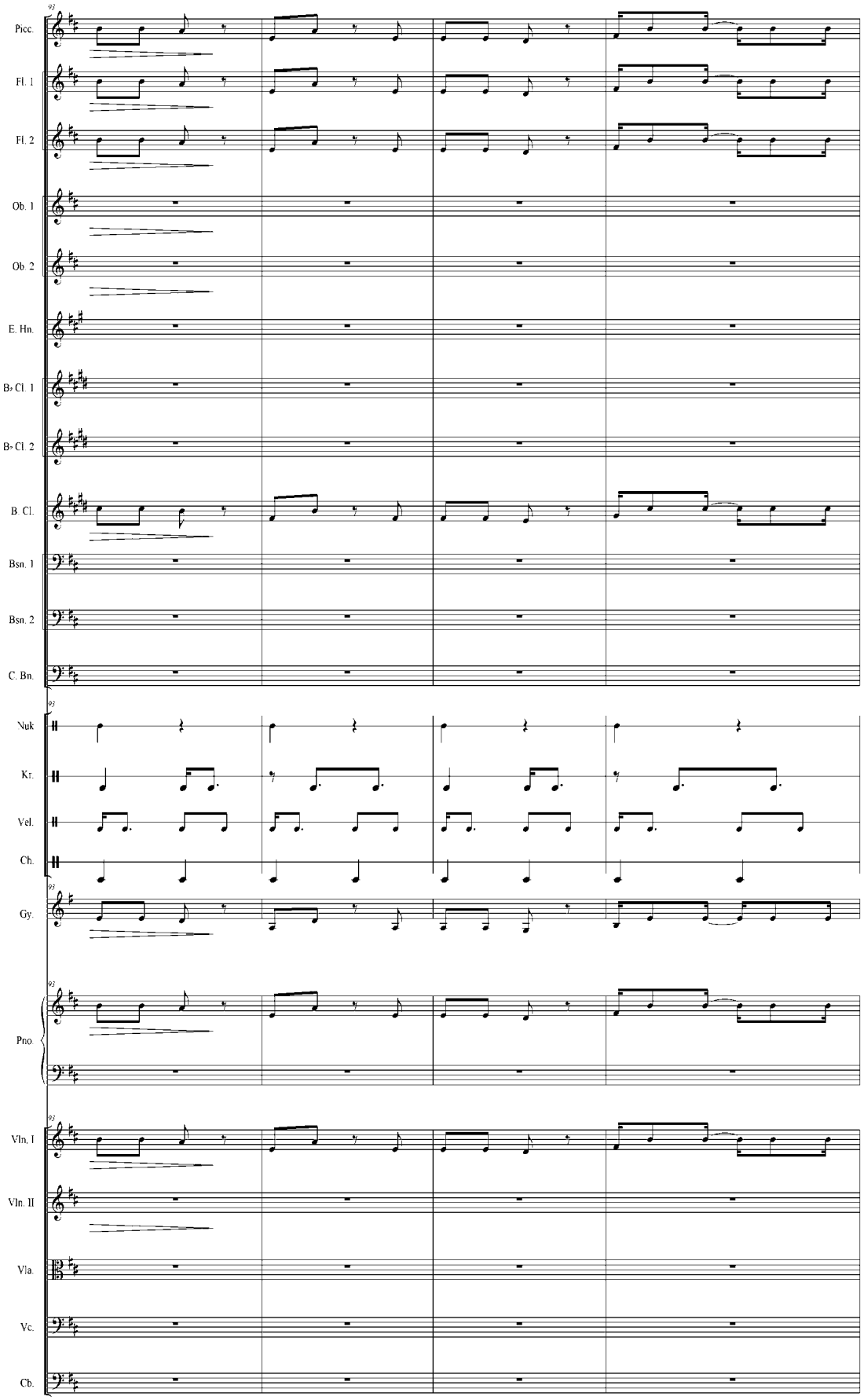

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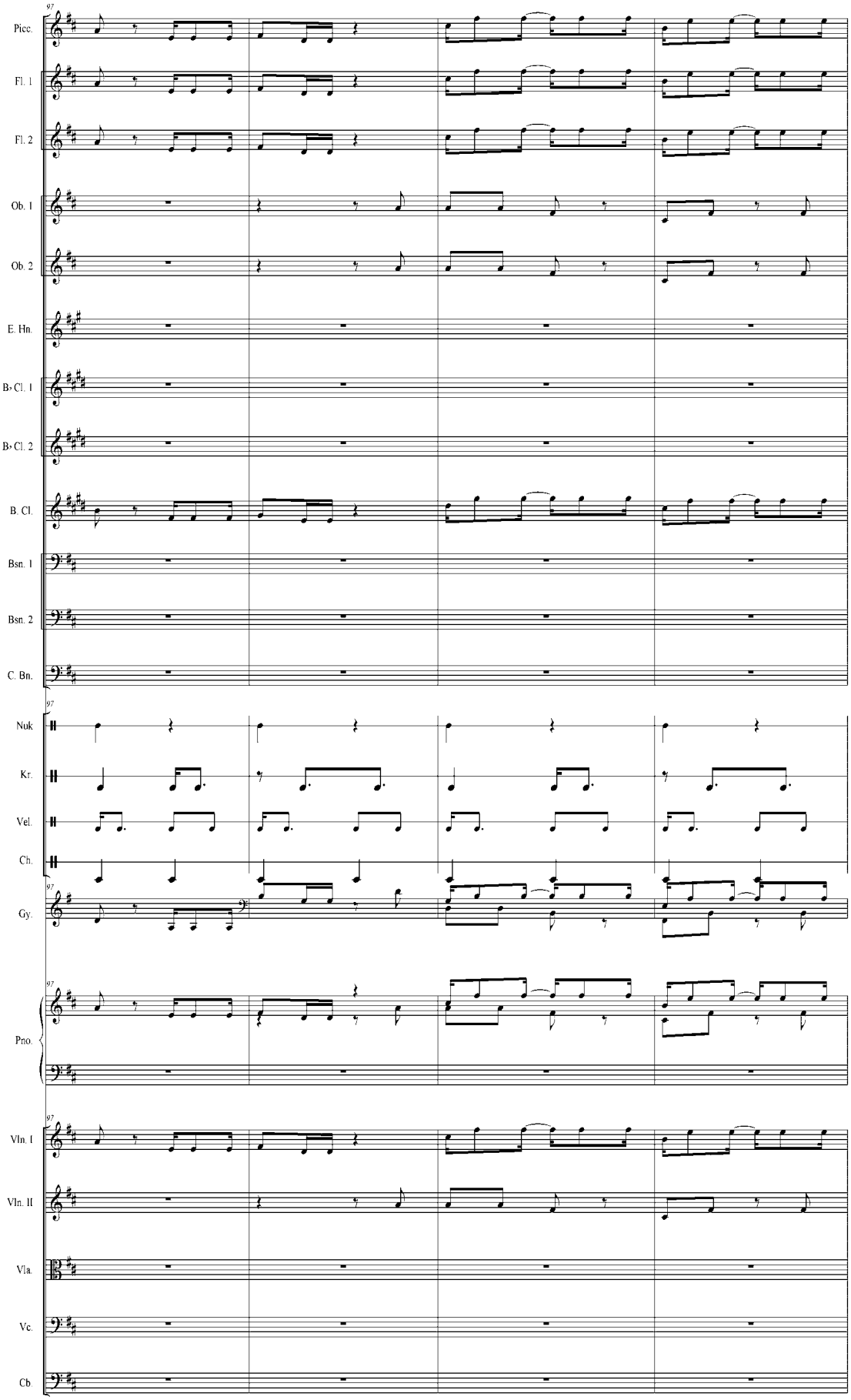

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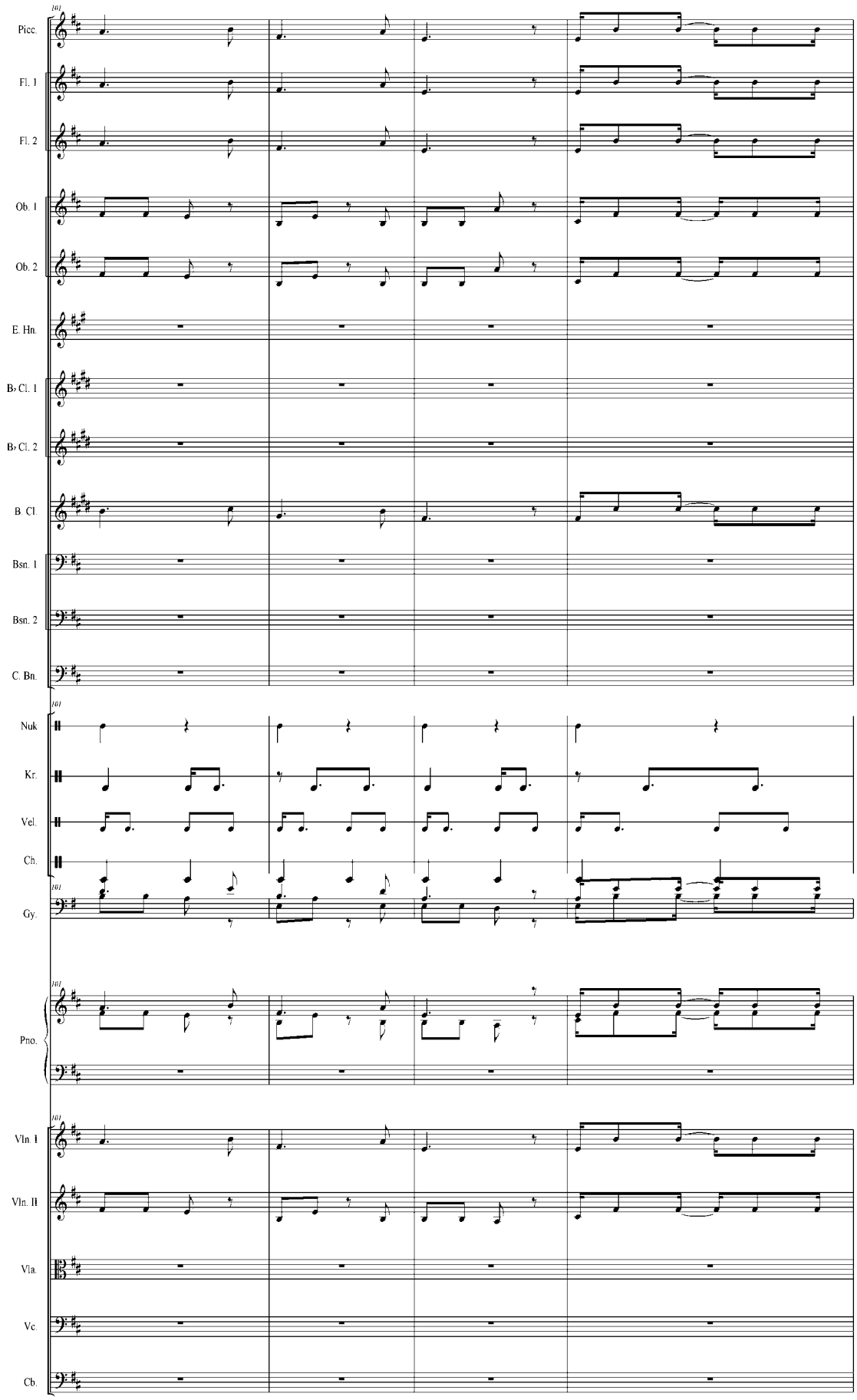

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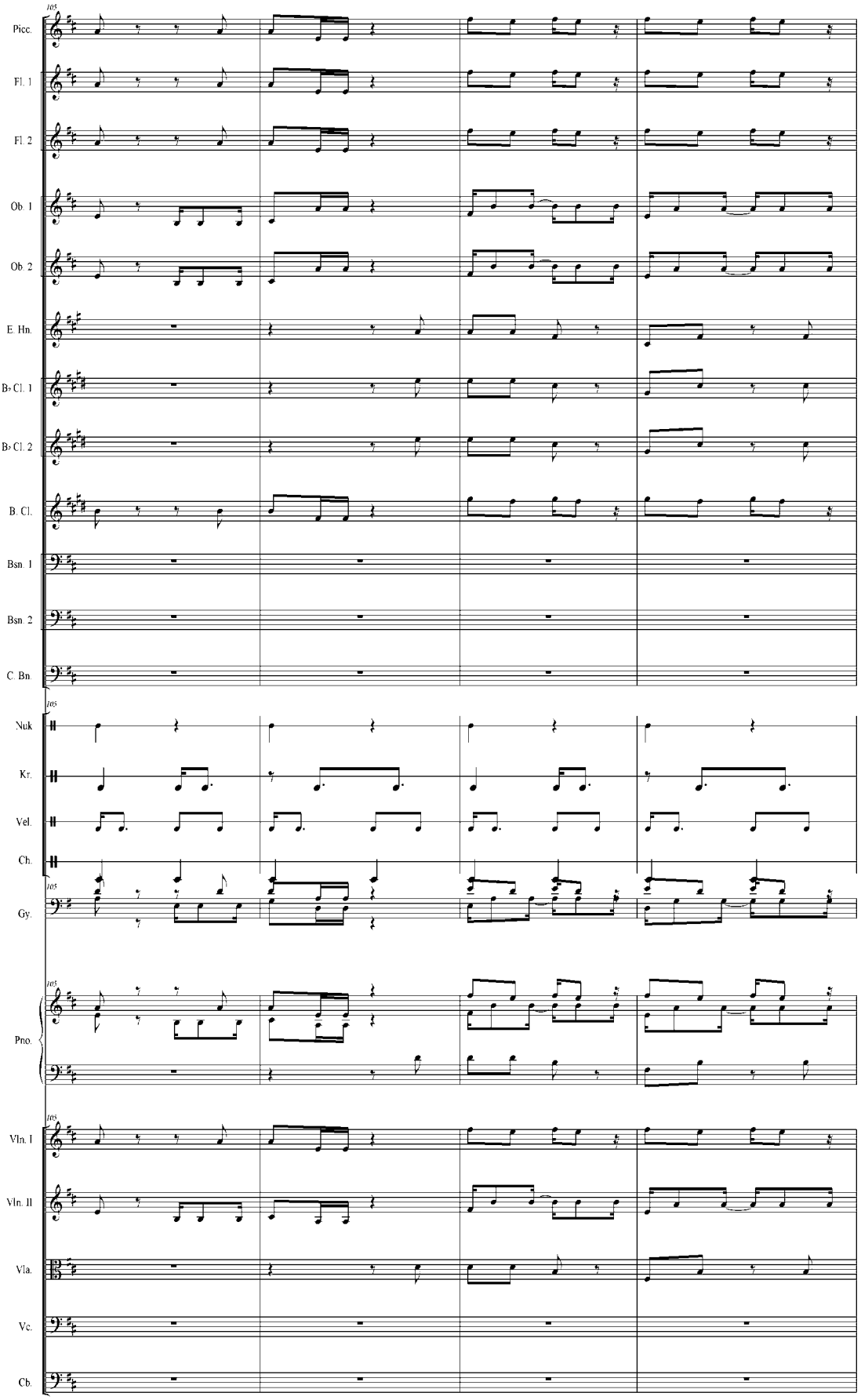

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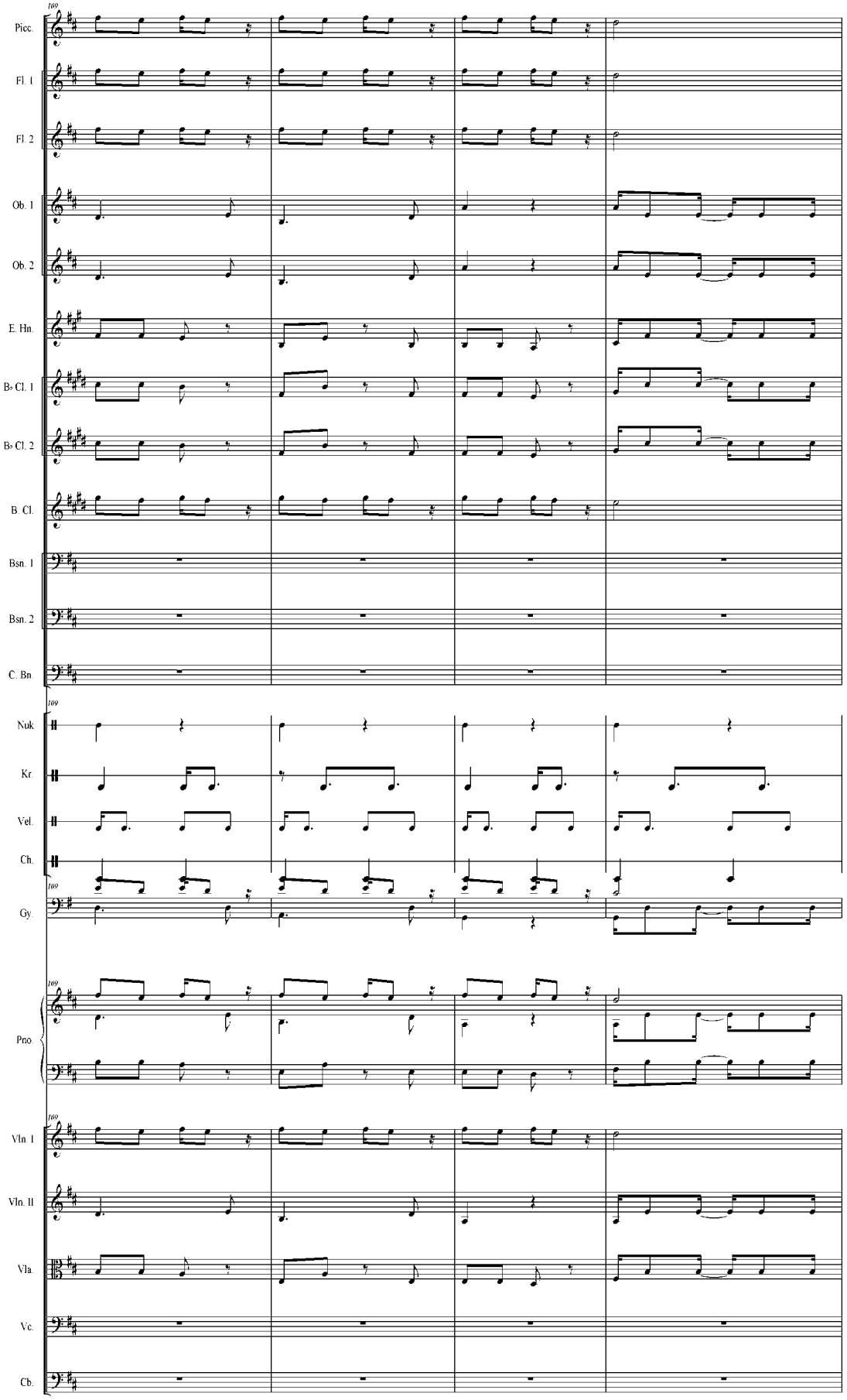

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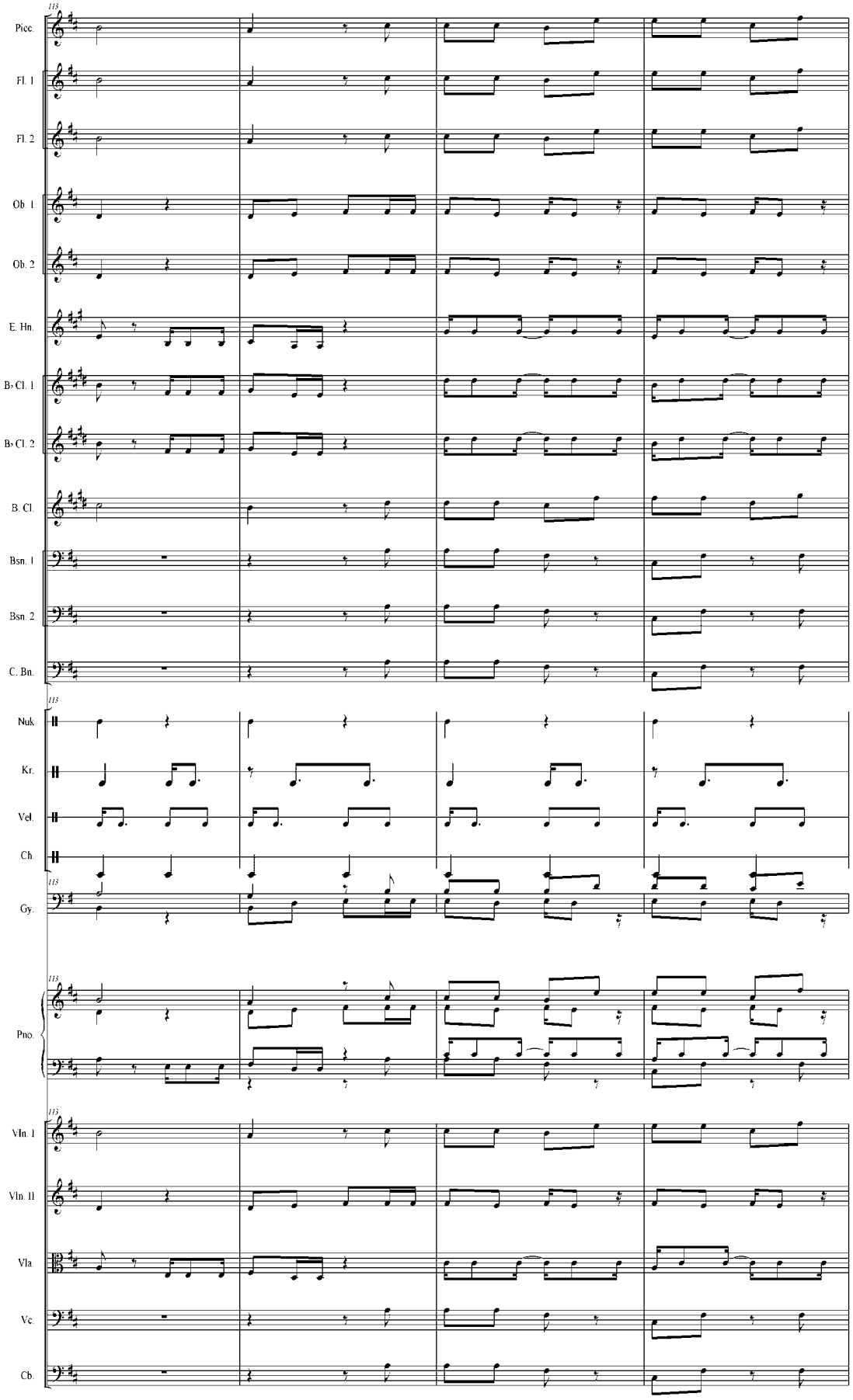

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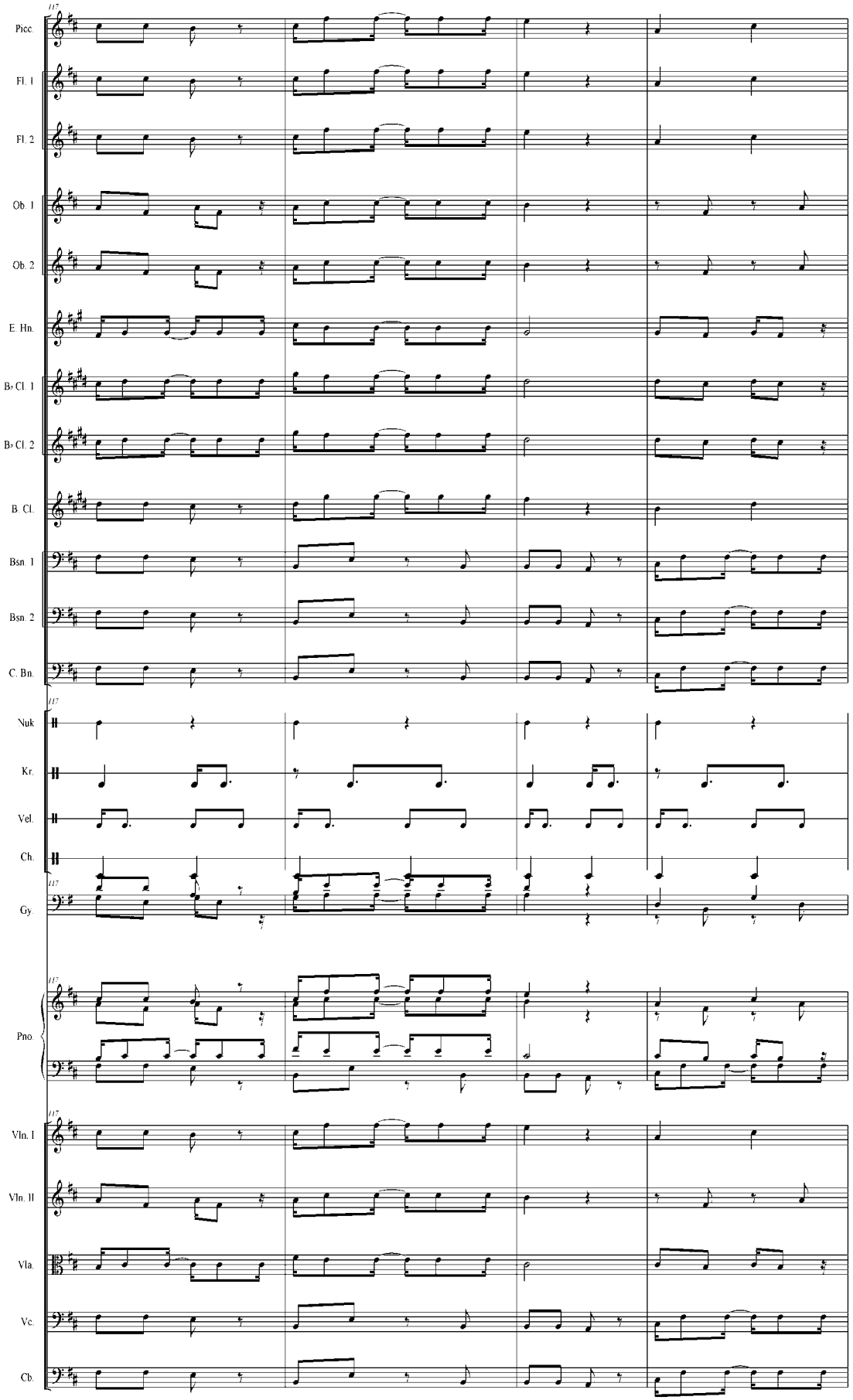

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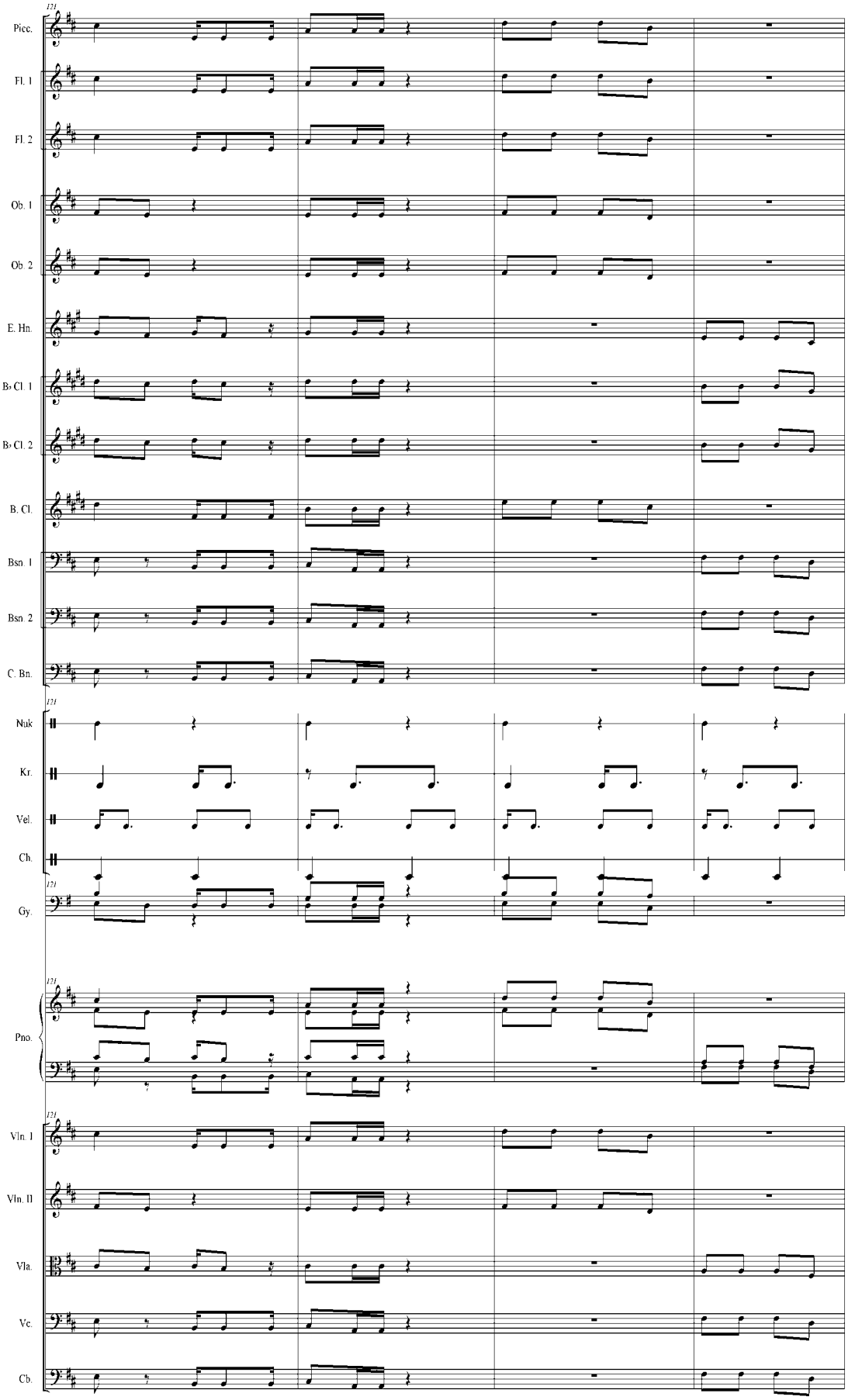

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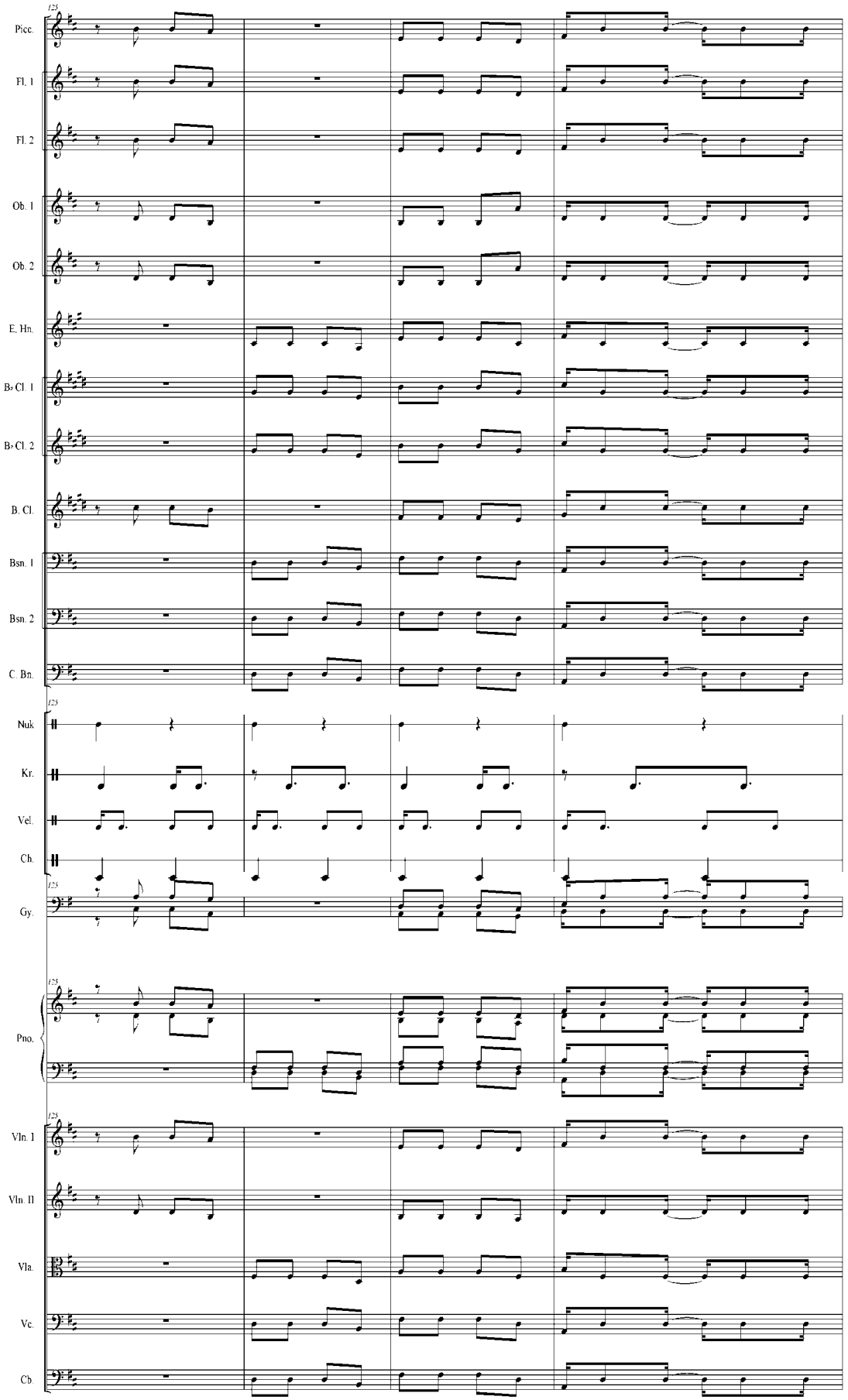

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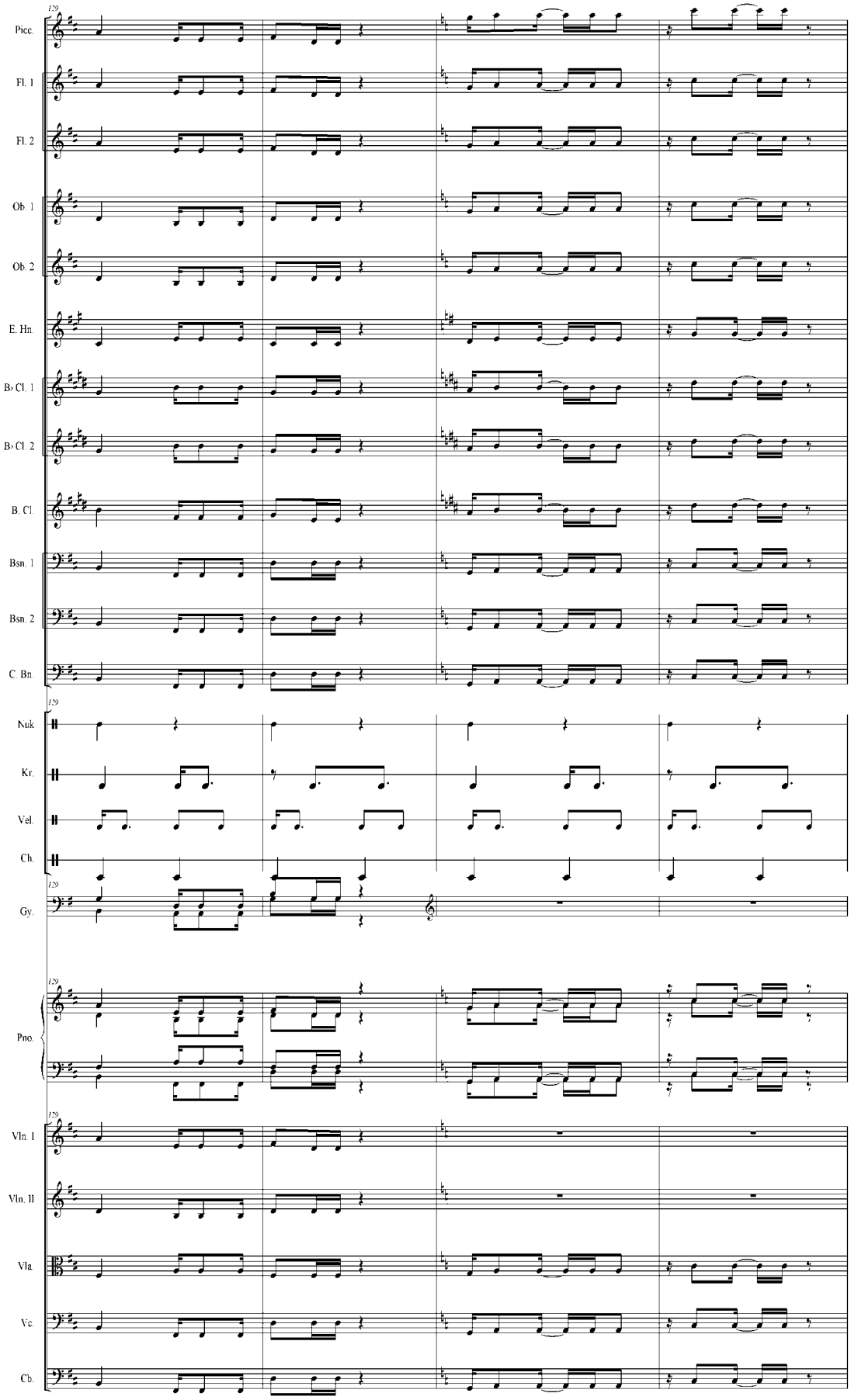

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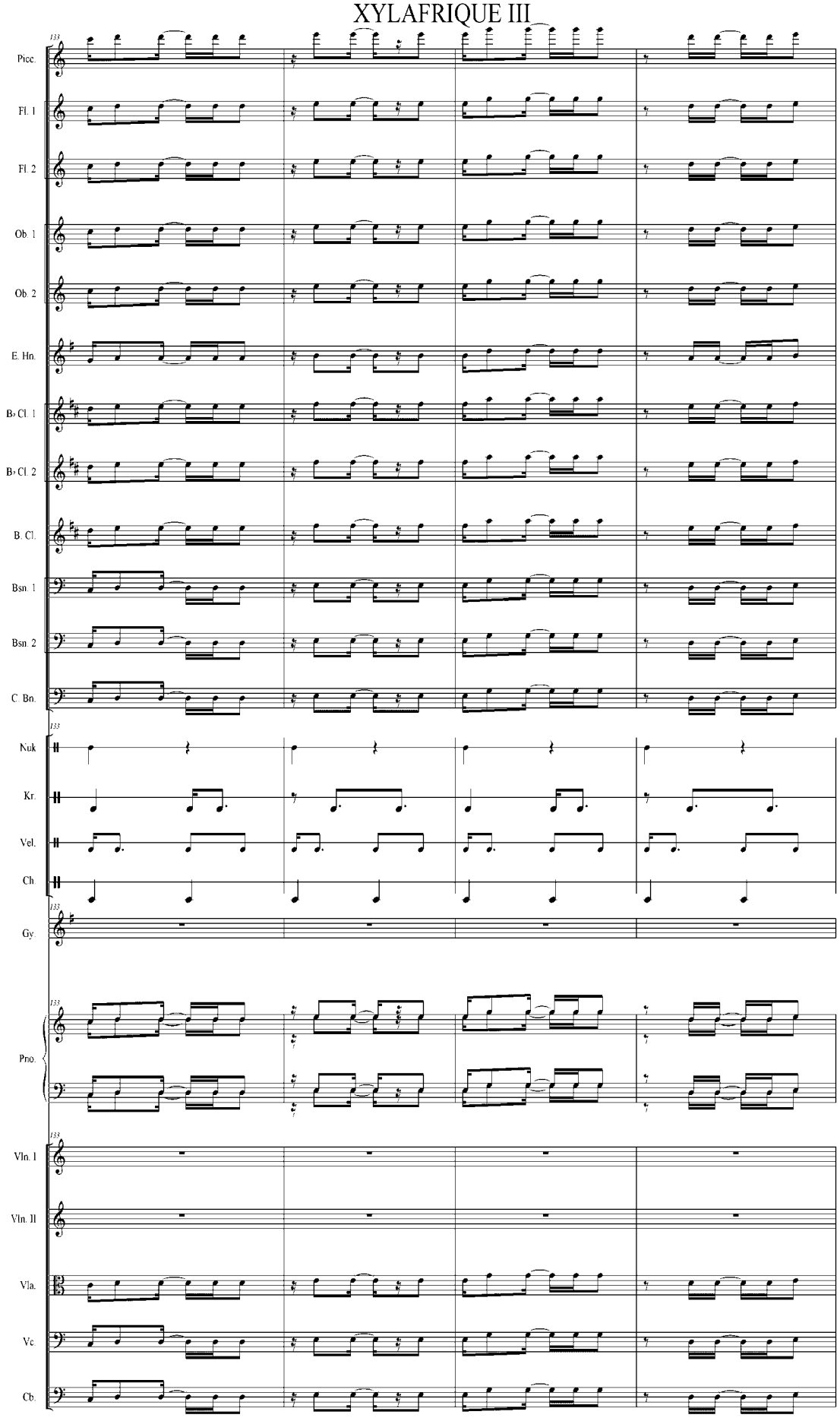

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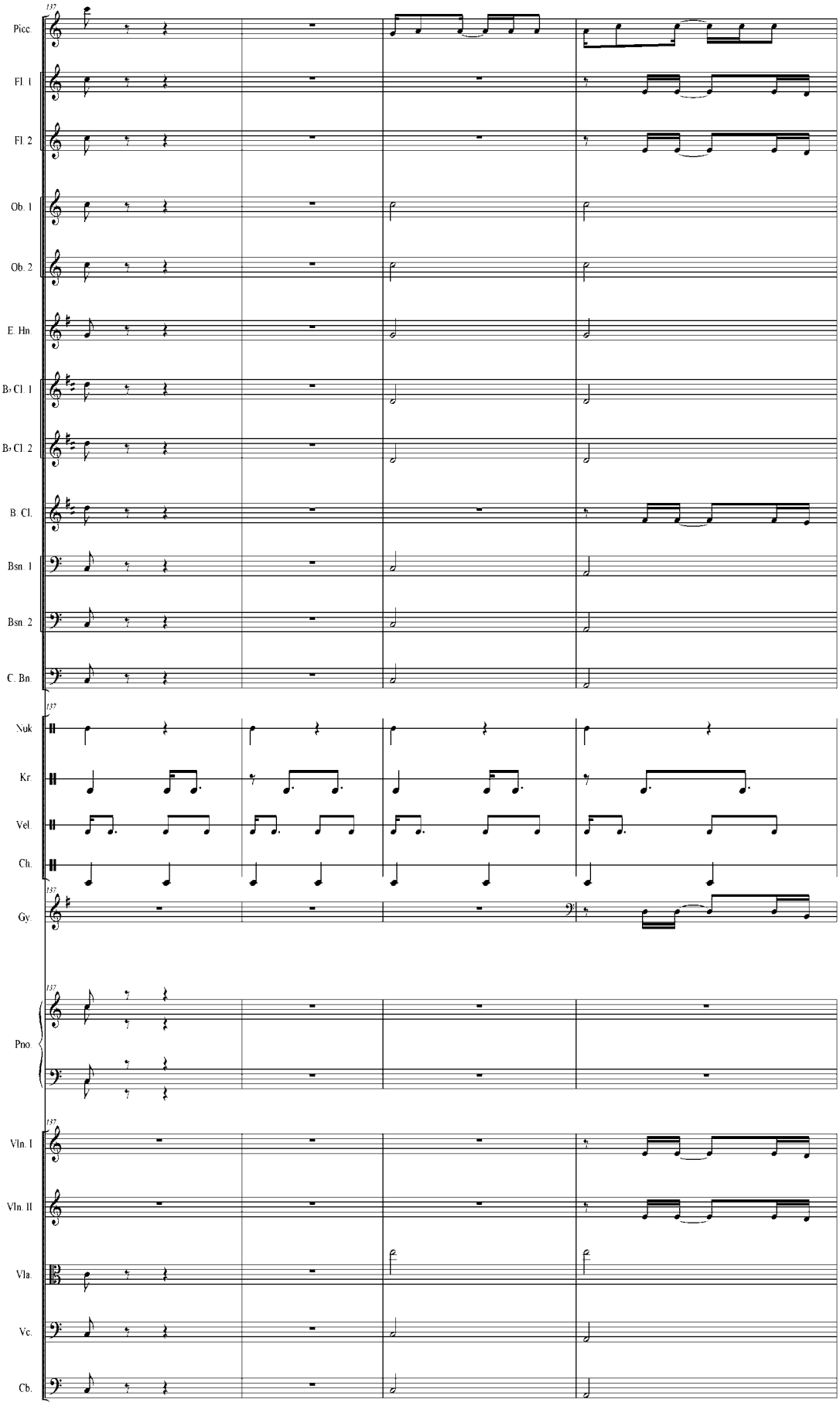

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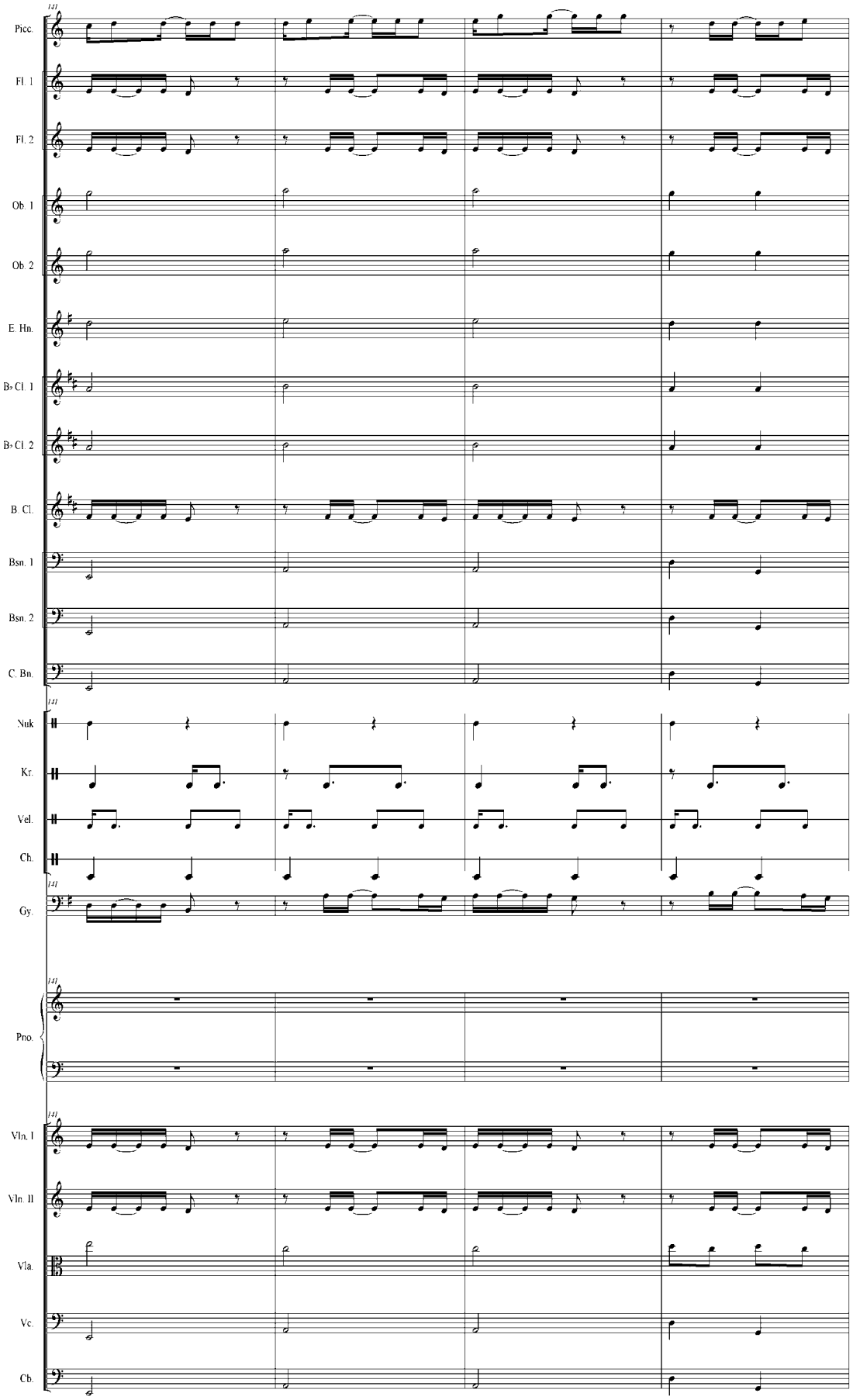

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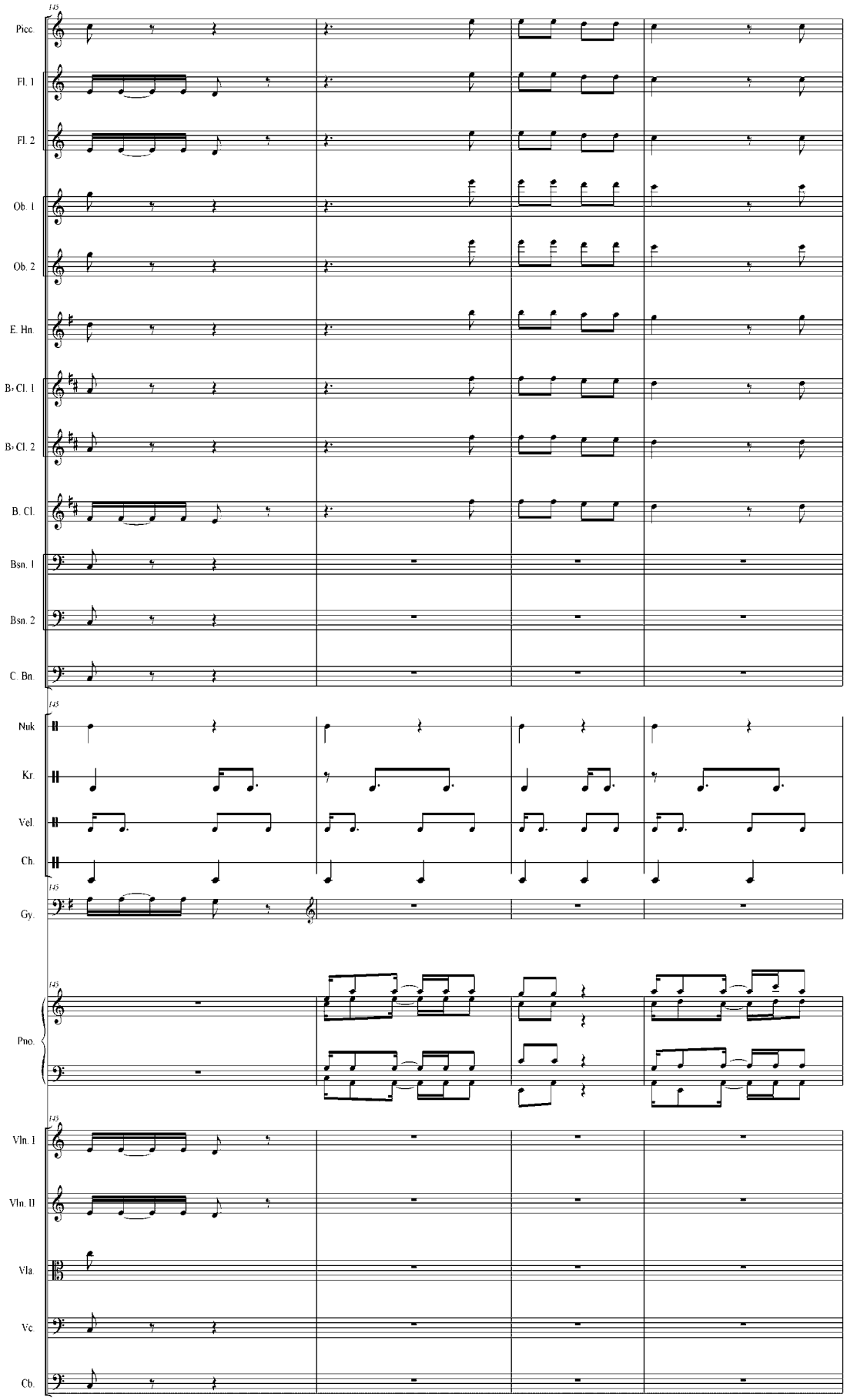

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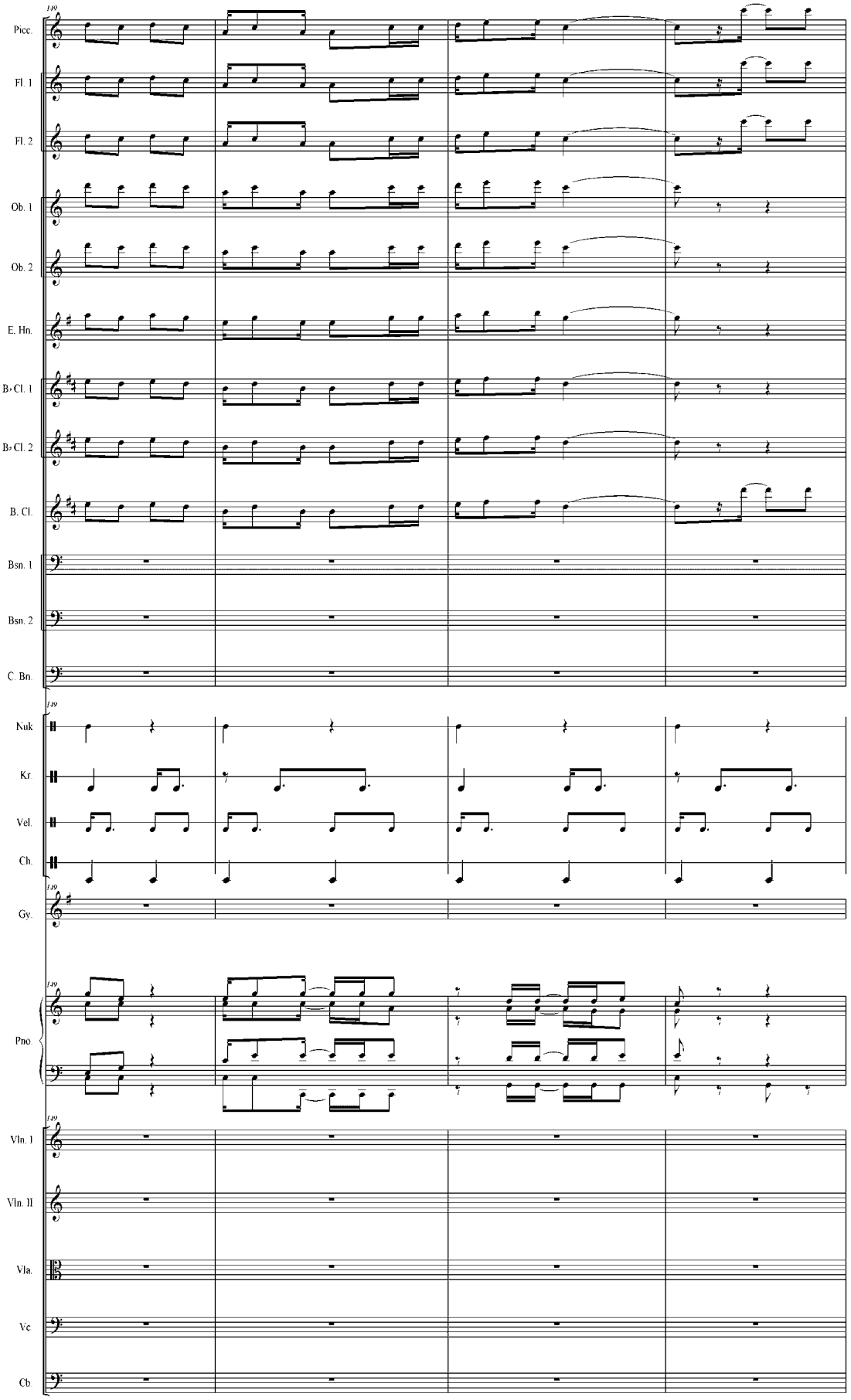

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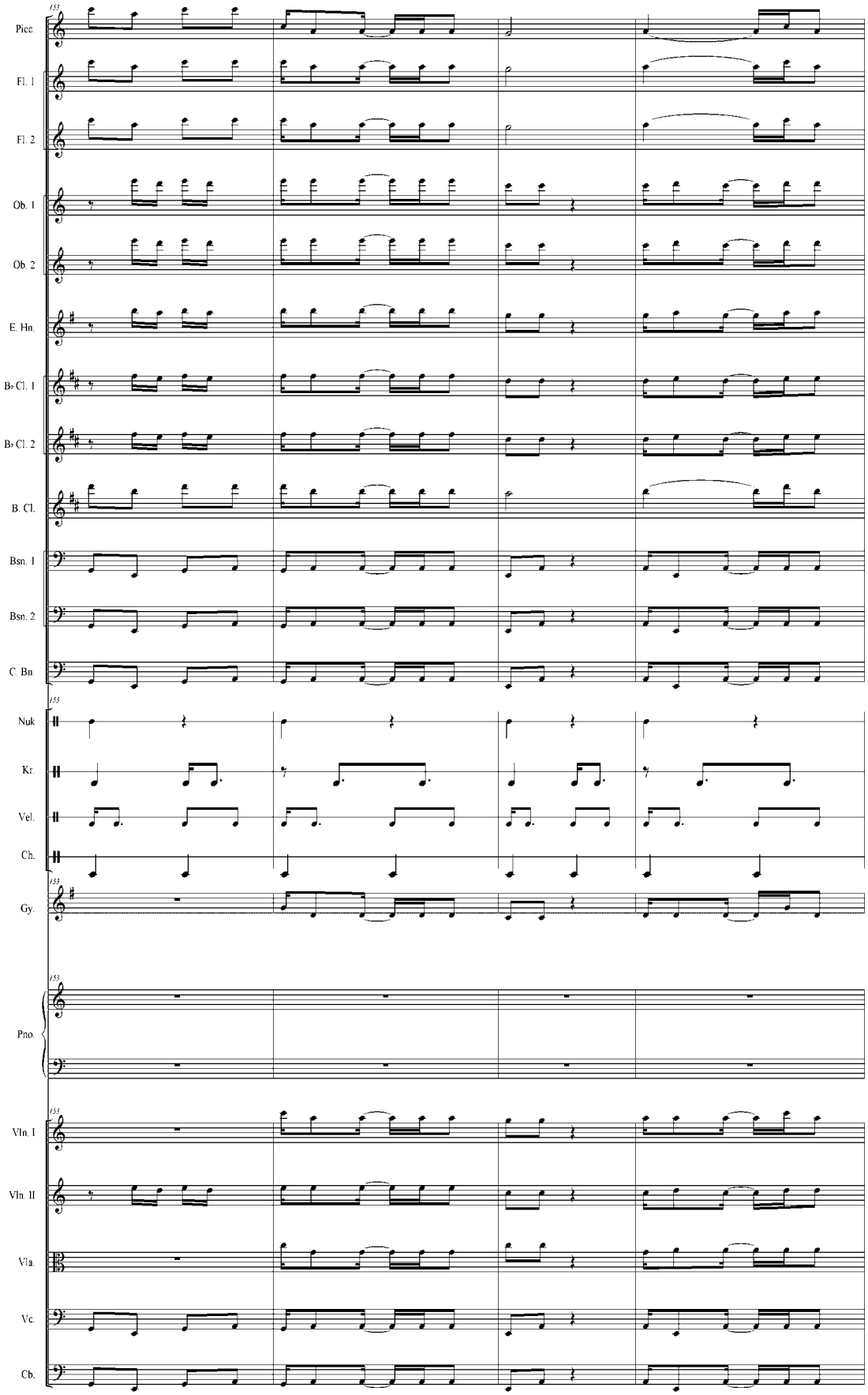

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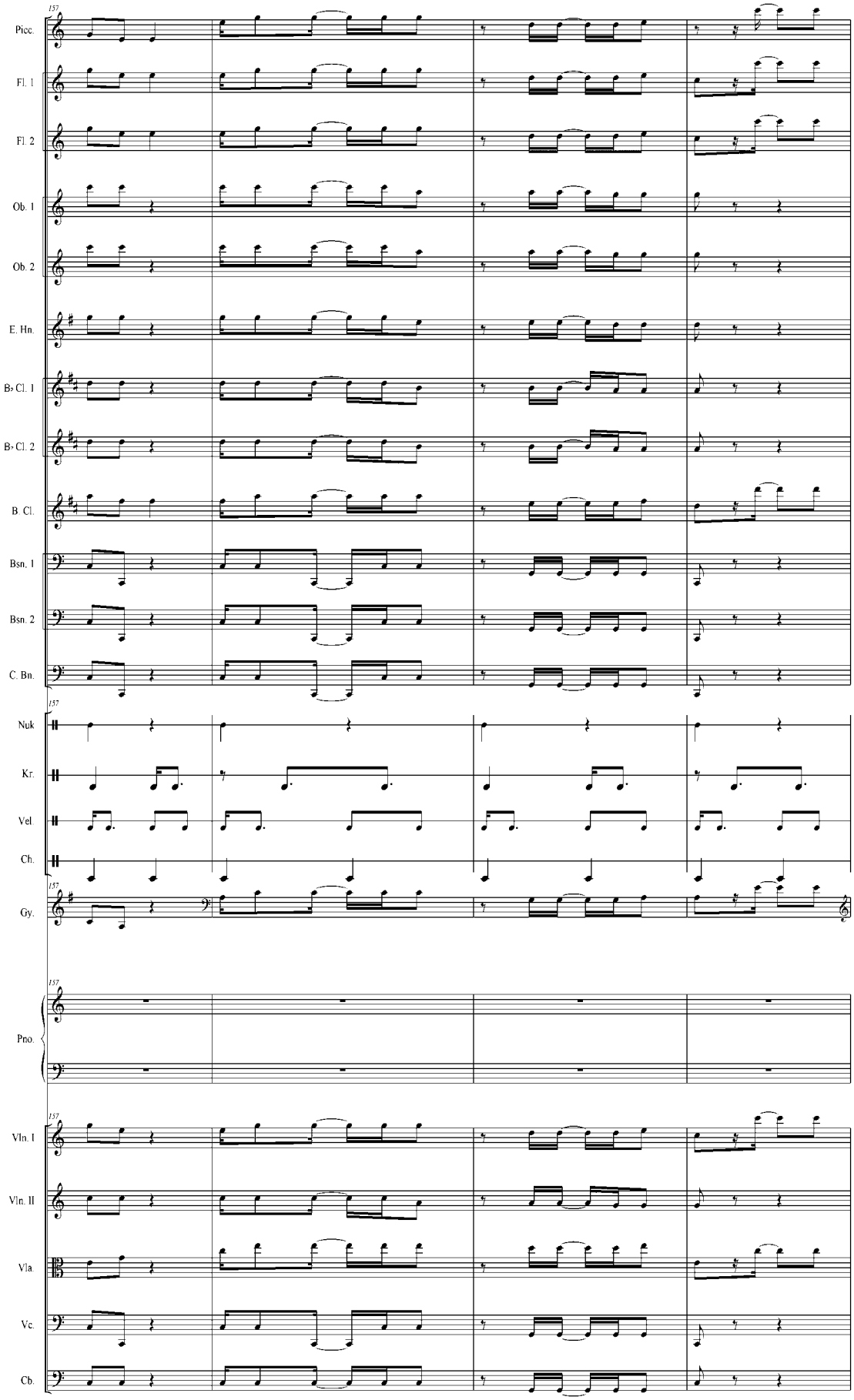

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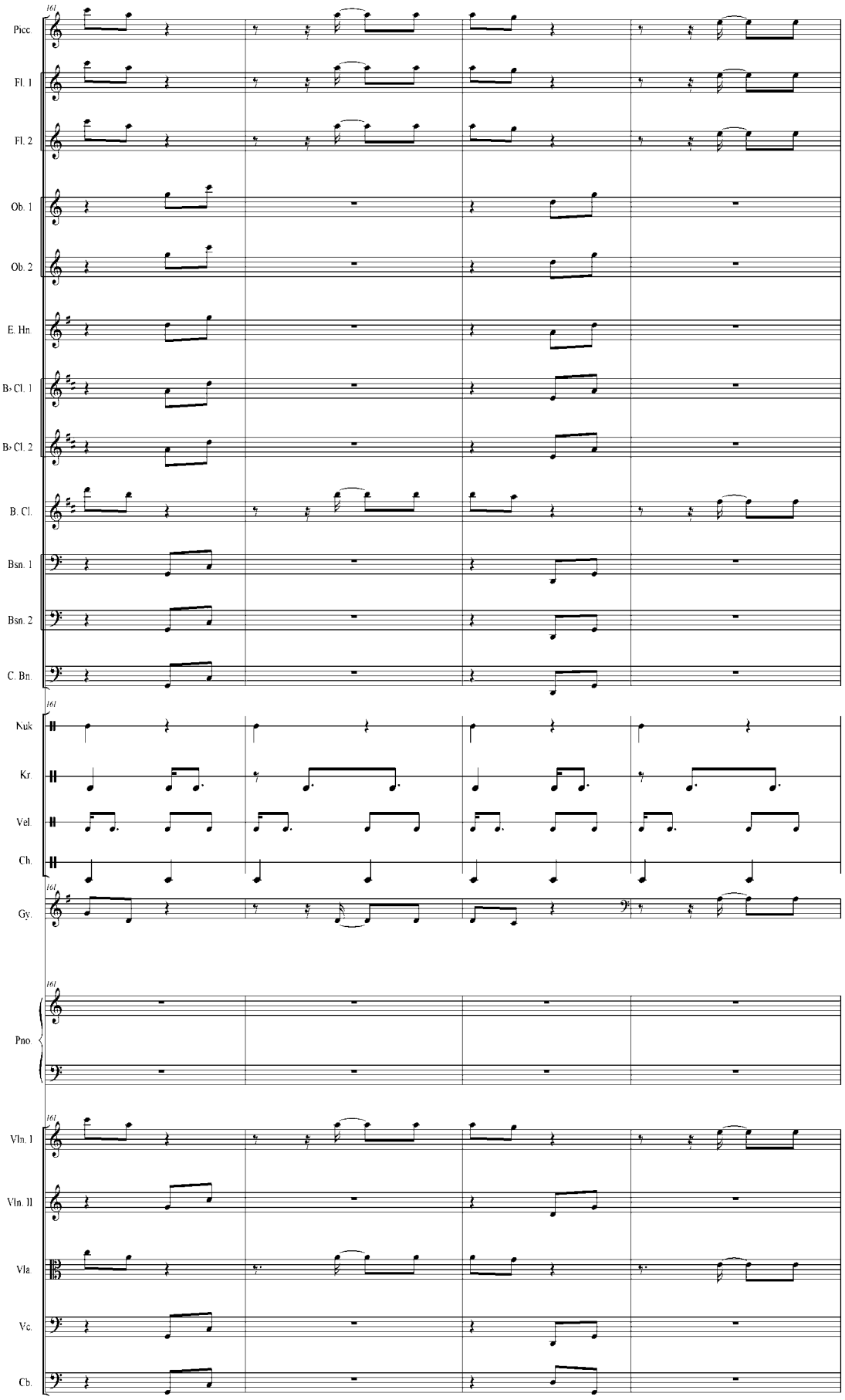

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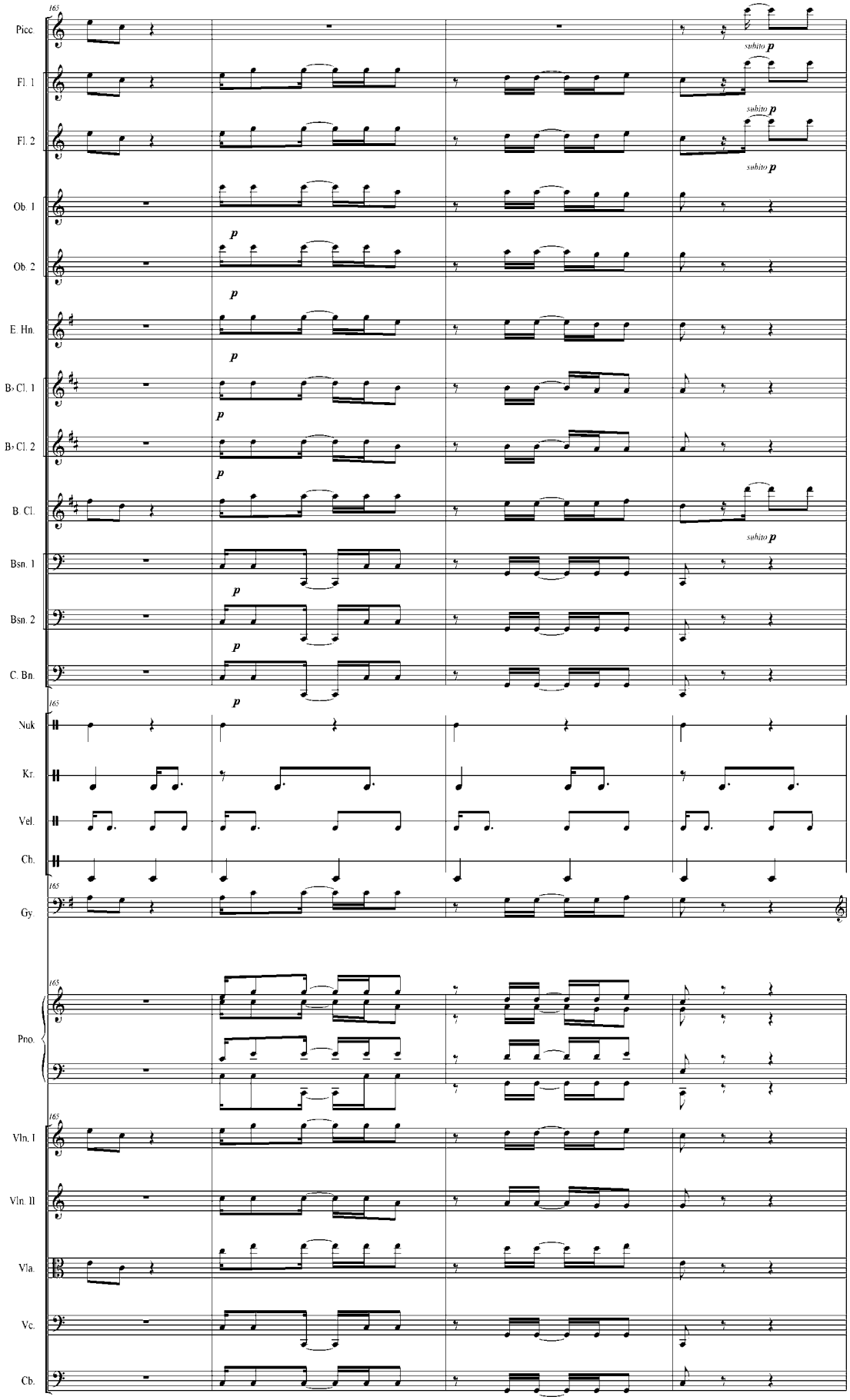

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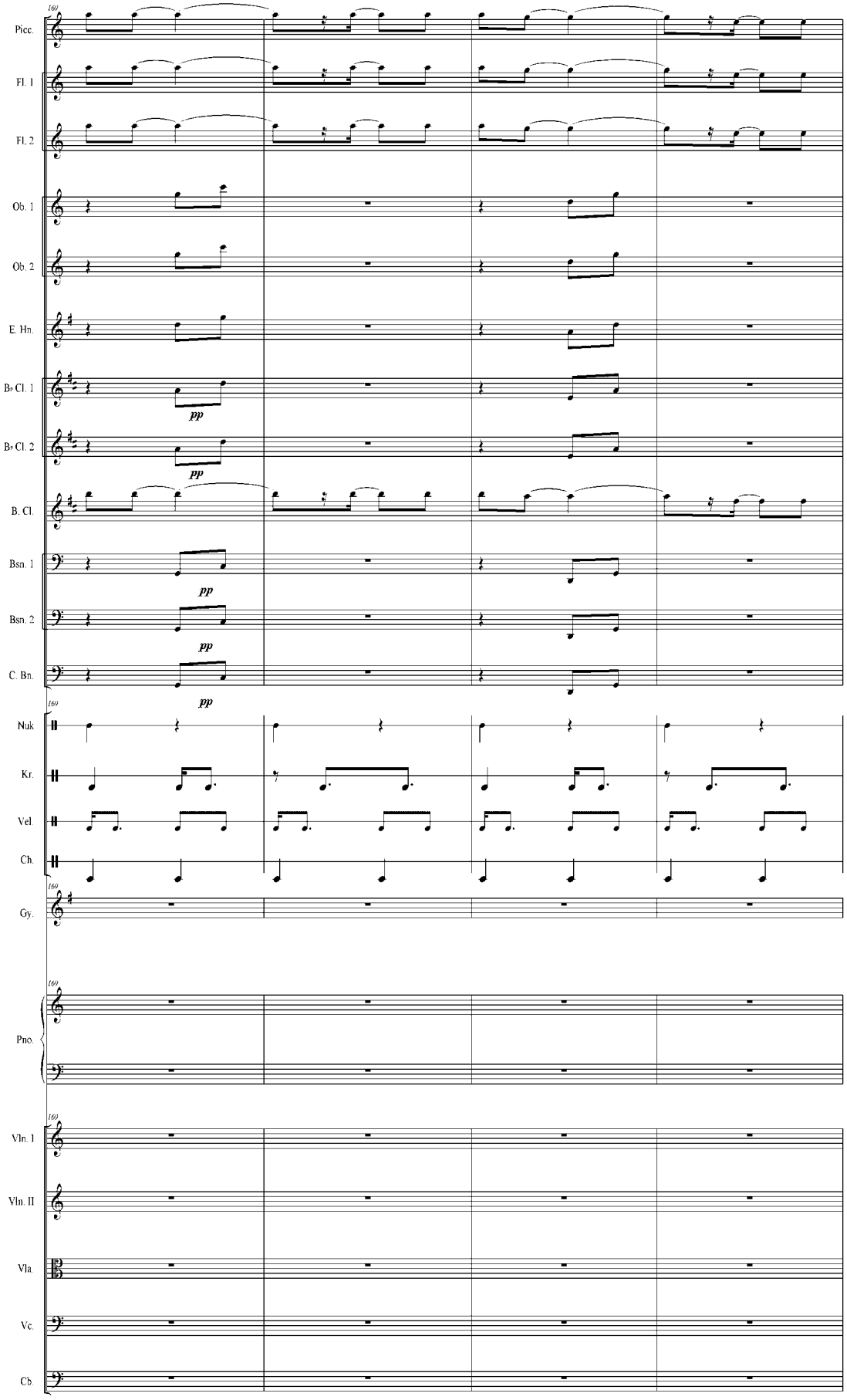

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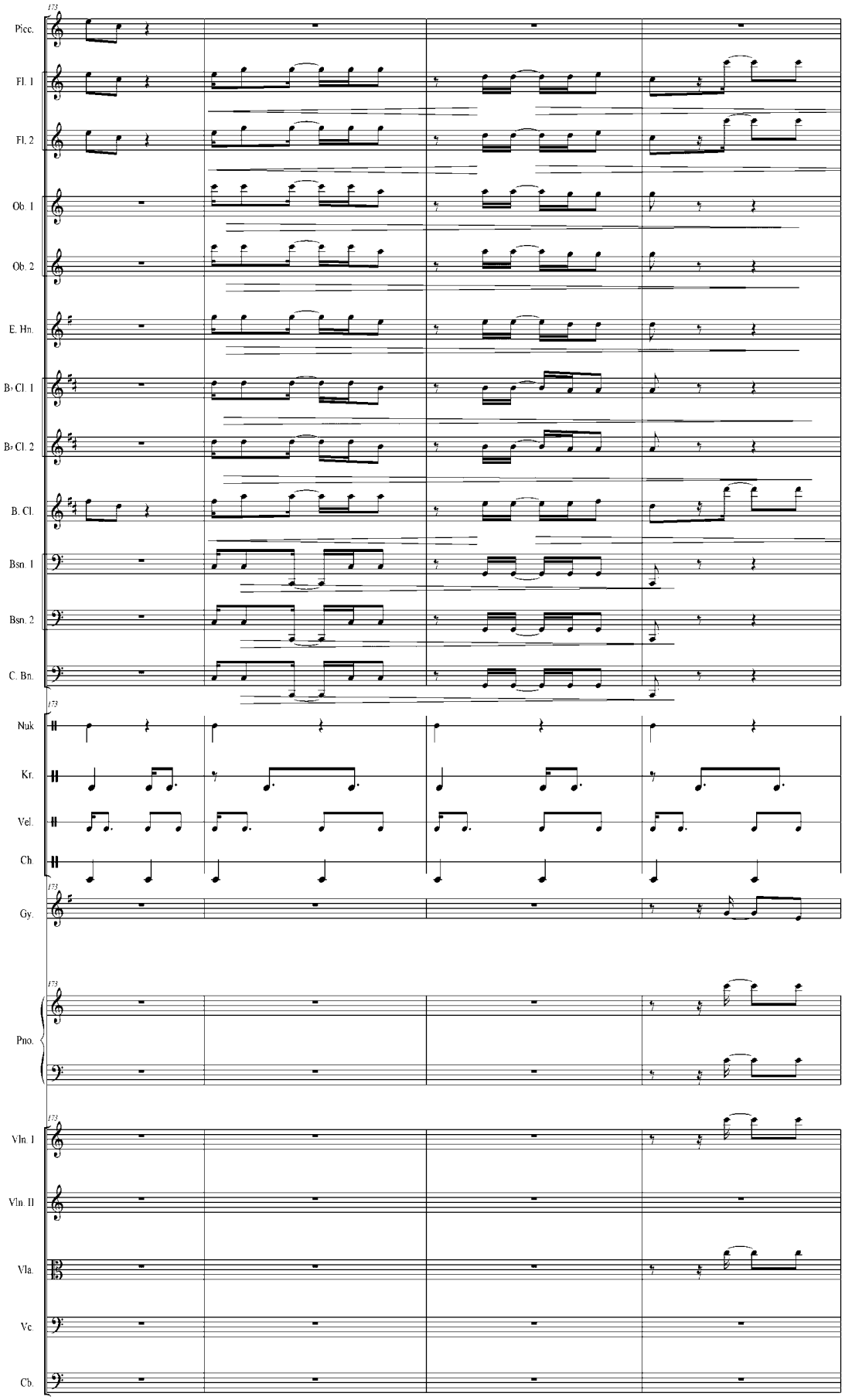

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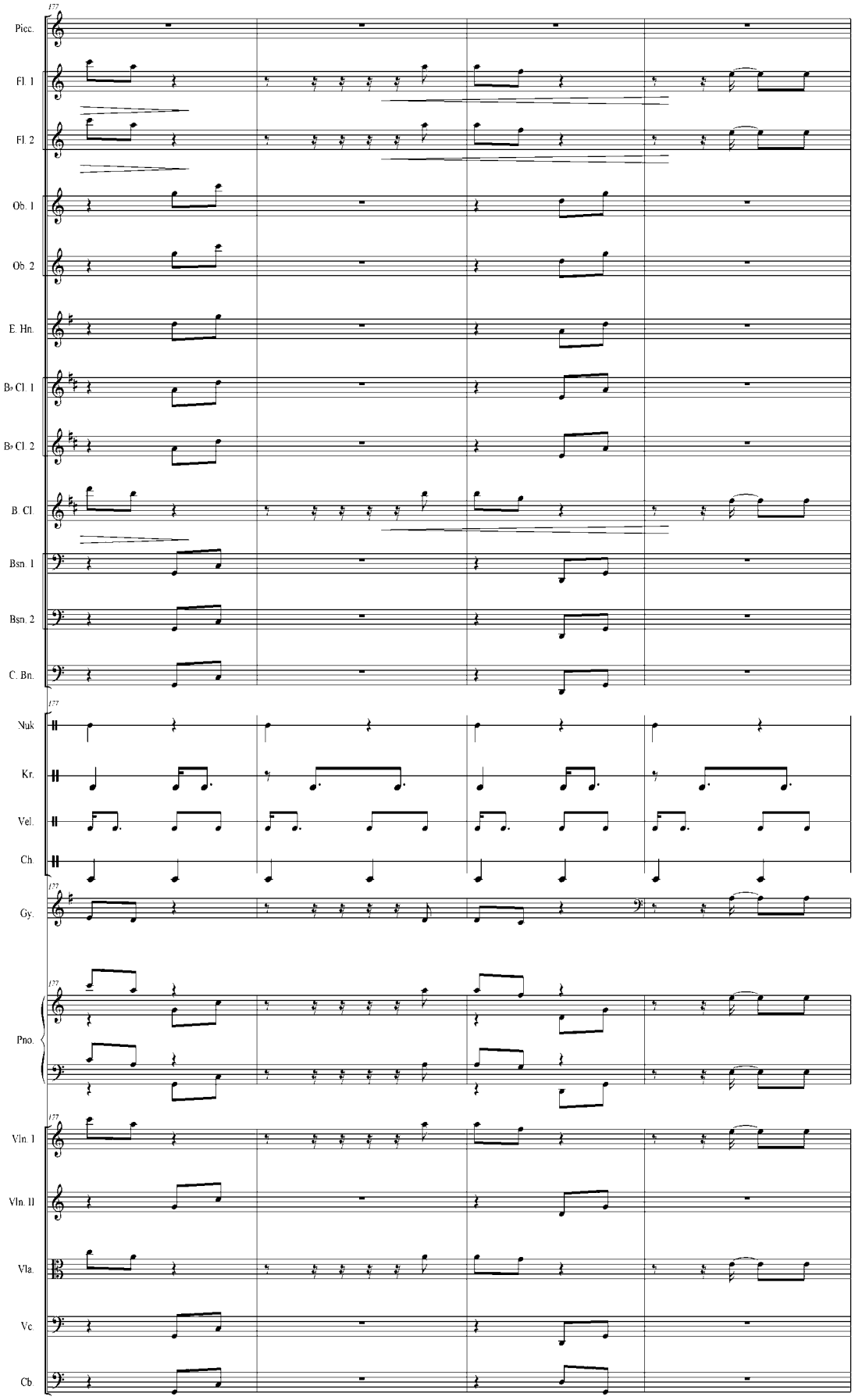

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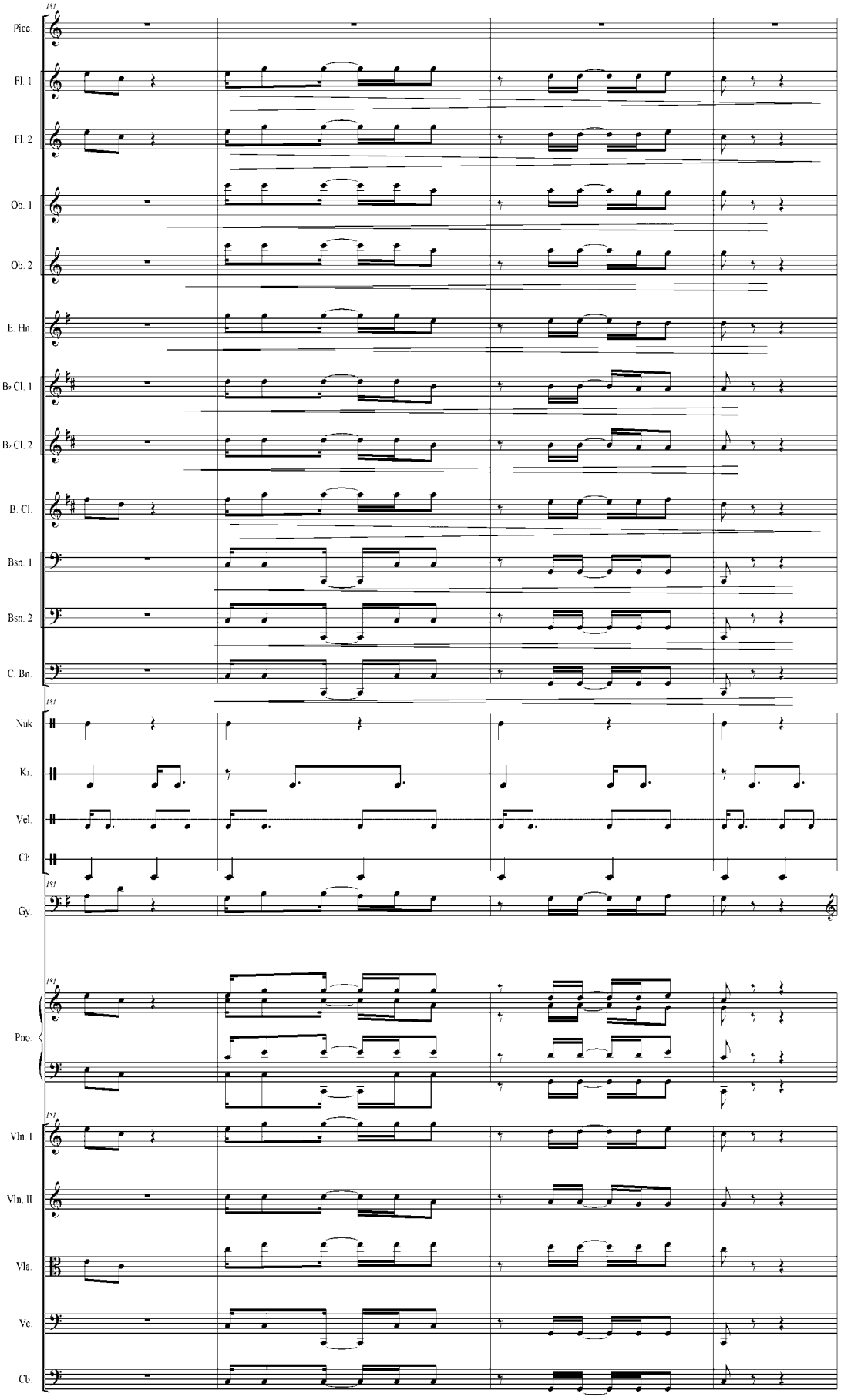

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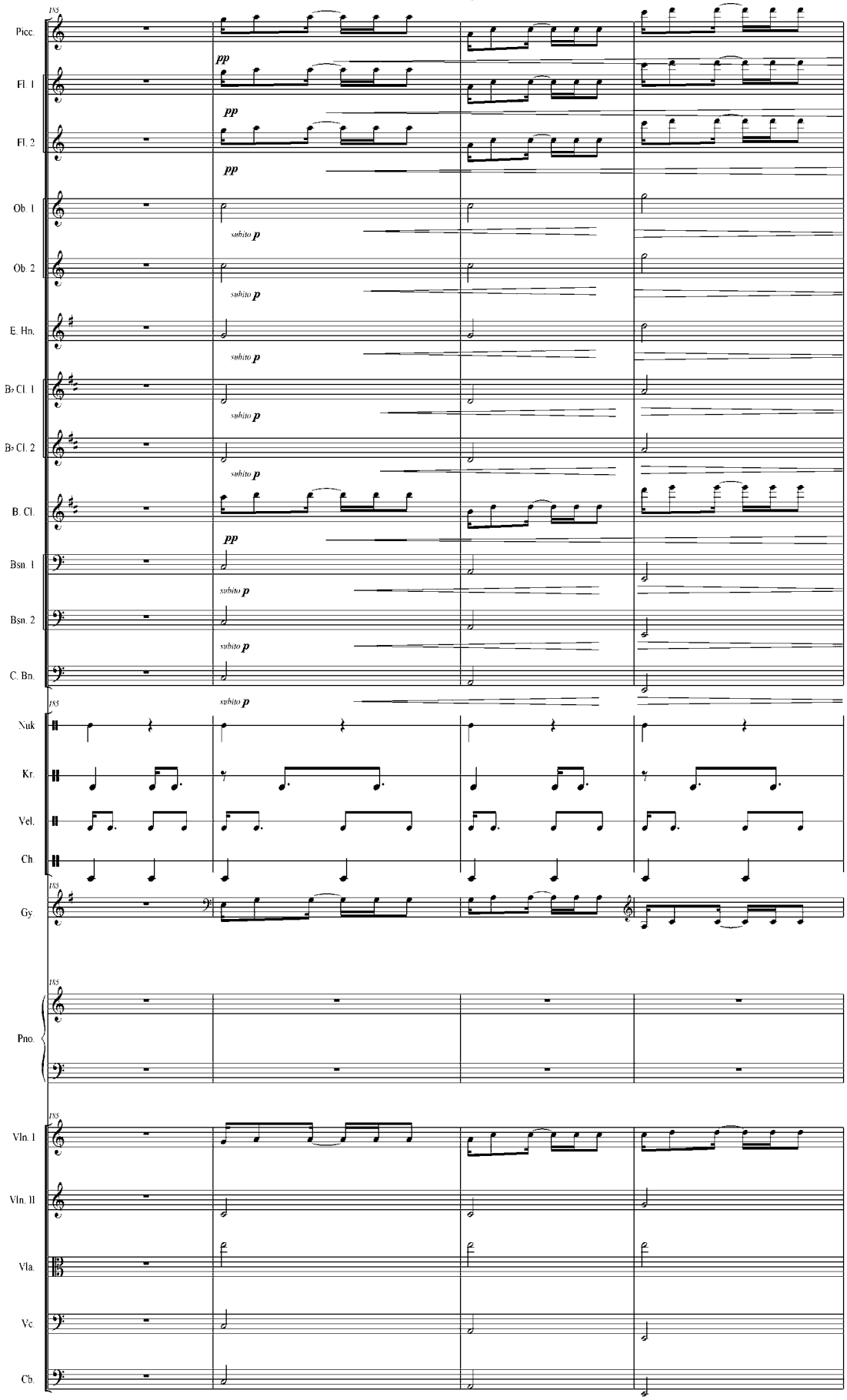

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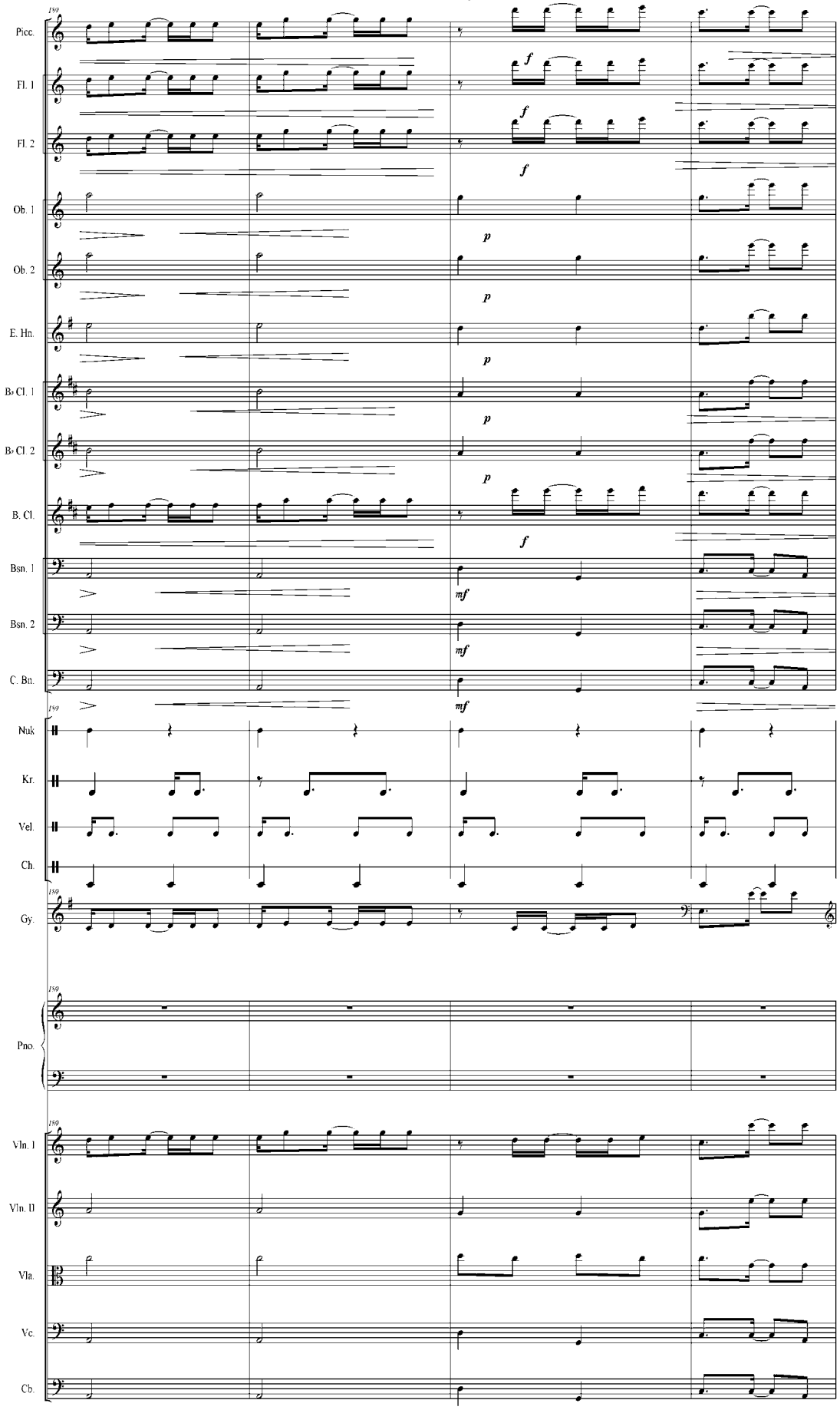

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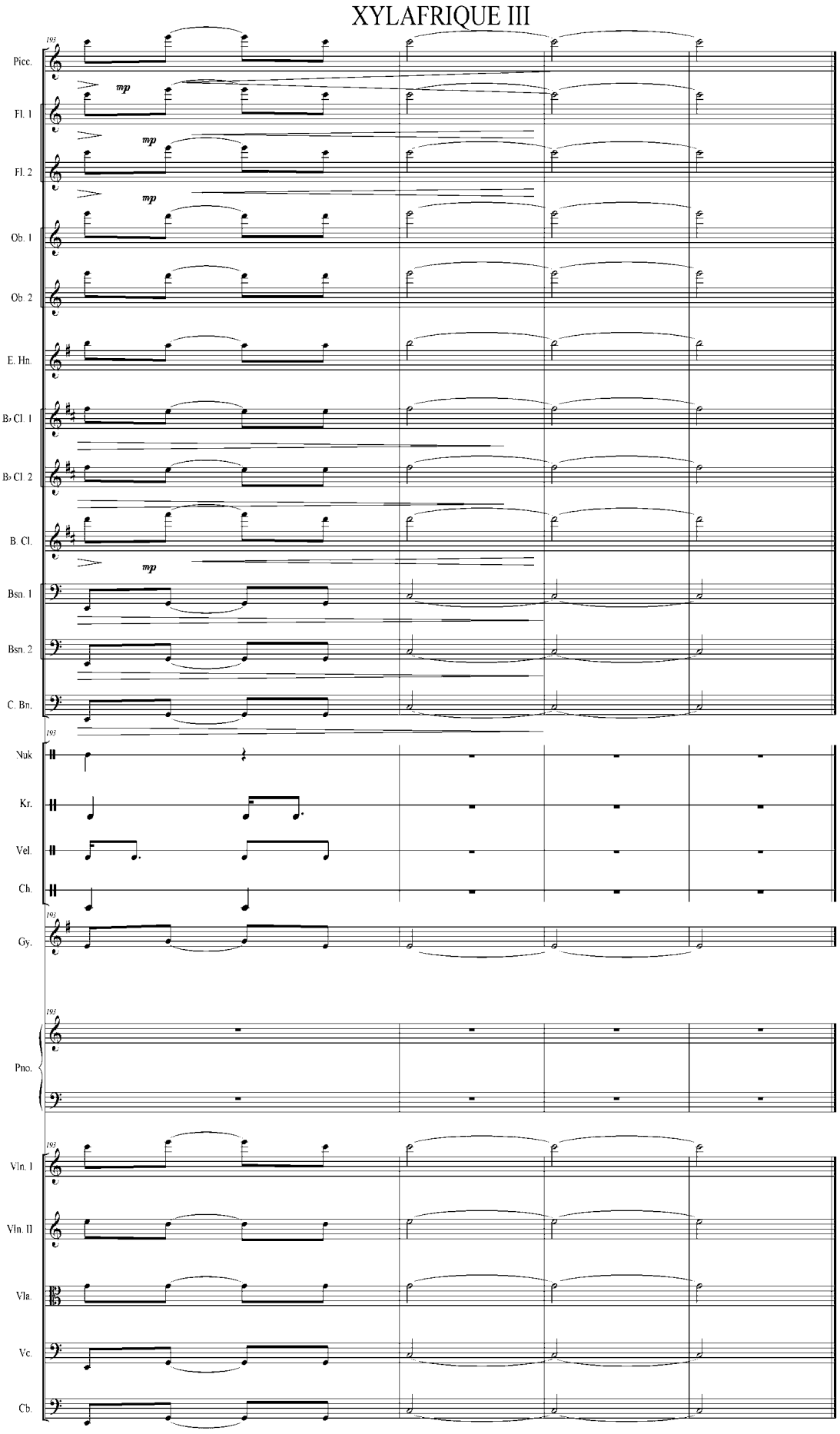

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CHAPTER FOUR

DEFINITIVE ANALYSIS OF *XYLAFRIQUE*

This chapter examines the similarities and differences between the composer‟s constructional processes and that of western contemporary composers and the re-use of traditional African features. Equally important, the ensuring paragraphs also give the definitive analysis of *Xylafrique* taking the reader through a sectional description of that which gives a panoramic view of the piece. It is also supported with a diaclonic tableau (Kongo 2001) that represent a skeleton preview of the piece using the following six labels namely: sectional titles, metrical modulations, rehearsal letters, modal modulations, general dynamic trend, tempo modulations and running time.

Musical analysis is the resolution of musical structure into relatively simpler constituent elements, and the investigation of the function of those elements within that structure (Bent 1988, p.1). Seeger (1969: p. 236) opines that, analysis is dividing into parts to distinguish one thing from another in recognition of differences. From the viewpoint of the compositional process, most parts are already in the repertory of the tradition and available for synthesis. Once under way, every synthesis is an analysis and every analysis, a synthesis. It is the interplay of the two that is the essence of the formational apparatus. Analysis is divisive as it proceeds from the large to the small with countless in view. It is static and structural, and invokes existing taxonomies.

Comparative analysis is used to compare musical features in the Dagaaba *gyil* genre and *Xylafrique* composition which has proved the existence of the *gyil* idioms in the

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work. Musungu (2010, p.178) cited Cook (1987, p.183) that comparative analysis can be used to measure two types of music against each other without theoretical explanations. In this case the use of highlighted Dagaaba musical features against Western music elements in the composition is checked. The analysis also takes into account the retention of the *gyil* idioms in the *Xylafrique*.

***Xylafrique* I: *Ate Kyile* (Let us rejoice)**

The story line

In this composition, the tune was applied to fit a personal life situation encountered by the composer. The ups and downs of the composer are depicted where life seems to go on well at a point in time and then sudden events avert the situation tossing it from bad to worst. Depicted in the work, the mood begins happily and blissful from the start, then uncertainty sets in at the middle making life unbearable– Confucius, hopefulness for the family. However, just as things were out of hand, God, in his own way, brought back happiness. As if it was all well, death introduced the old sadness as I lost my dear sisters and my uncle. Nevertheless, things picked its course and the whole family came back to the track of blessing and progress.

***Xylafrique* I: *Ate Kyilɛ* (Let us rejoice)**

Rejoice Fantasy

This movement is derived from the popular tune *Ate Kyile* from the Dagaaba *gyil* genre. *Ate kyile* is a Dagaare phrase which literary means let us rejoice. This song forms the basis of the 1st movement. The excerpt in Ex.18 below which serves as the introduction is, in fact, the conclusion phrase of the song.

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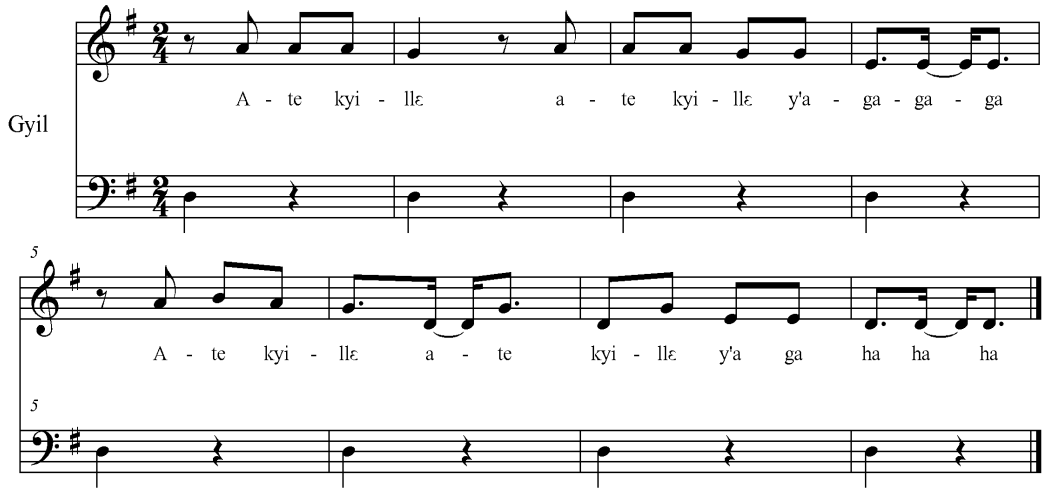
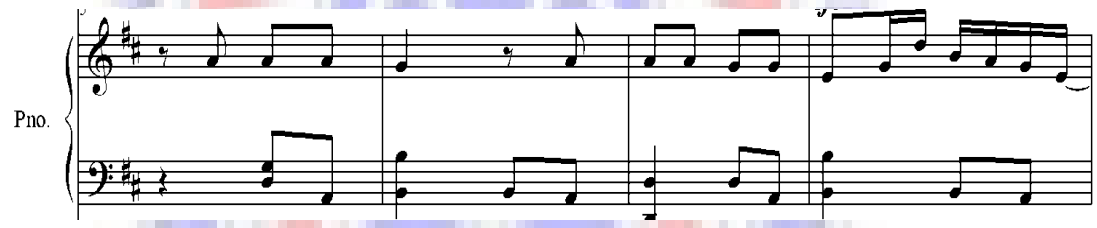


Example 18: *Ate Kyillɛ* the first theme of *Xylafrique I*

The main theme with variation and bass osinato in G anhemitonic pentatonic is first heard in piano (bars 5-12) as quoted in the excerpt in Ex. 19 Below.



Example 19: How the Piano introduced the first theme in *Xylafrique I*

The form of this movement is ABACA. The A section represents the happy mood; the B the unhappiness circumstances and the C moment in my life.

Sad moment in life (section B)

The second theme utilized the song *dɛpɛlɛrɛ ma a nang tɛb bɛr o dɛ kone yoo.* It is a philosophical statement in Dagaare language which literary means a spider's mother is

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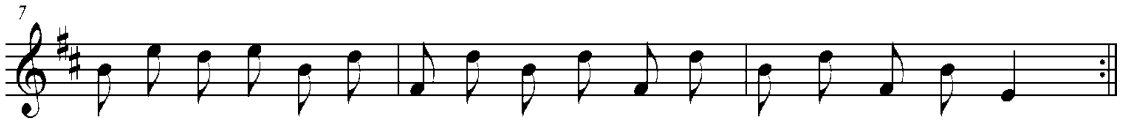
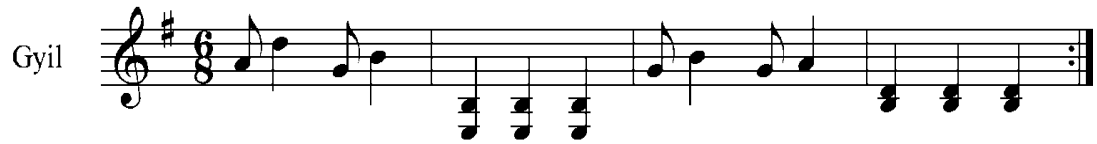
stung by a scorpion and she is crying. The excerpt is quoted in Ex.20 below in D anhenitonic pentatonic.



Example 20: Dɛpɛrɛlɛ ma the second theme of *Xylafrique I*

The violin section announces a variation of the theme from bar 46 in D anhenitonic pentatonic to end the section in bar 53. The *gyil* and violin with viola continue with a bridge in call-and-response dialogue to usher in the section A1.

Years of Uncertainty



Example 21: *A kuu wa ngɔg sang sang bɛr* the third theme of *Xylafrique I*

The section derived its theme also from the *Dagaaba gyil* genre. It is from a song titled *A kuu wa ngɔg sang sang bɛr* which literary means death comes to destroy everything. It is announced by the *gyil* in (bars 86-89). The violin begins with embellishments using diminution and improvisation of the theme in canon form. In bar 90 the viola enters and in bar 91the piano continues till the phrase ends in bar 93. The *gyil* repeats the theme in retrograde form (bar 92-94) but violin and viola repeat the theme with variations (bars 93-97). The *gyil* plays the theme again from bar 98 to end the section at bar 101. The last section of the 1st movement, A2, is the repetition

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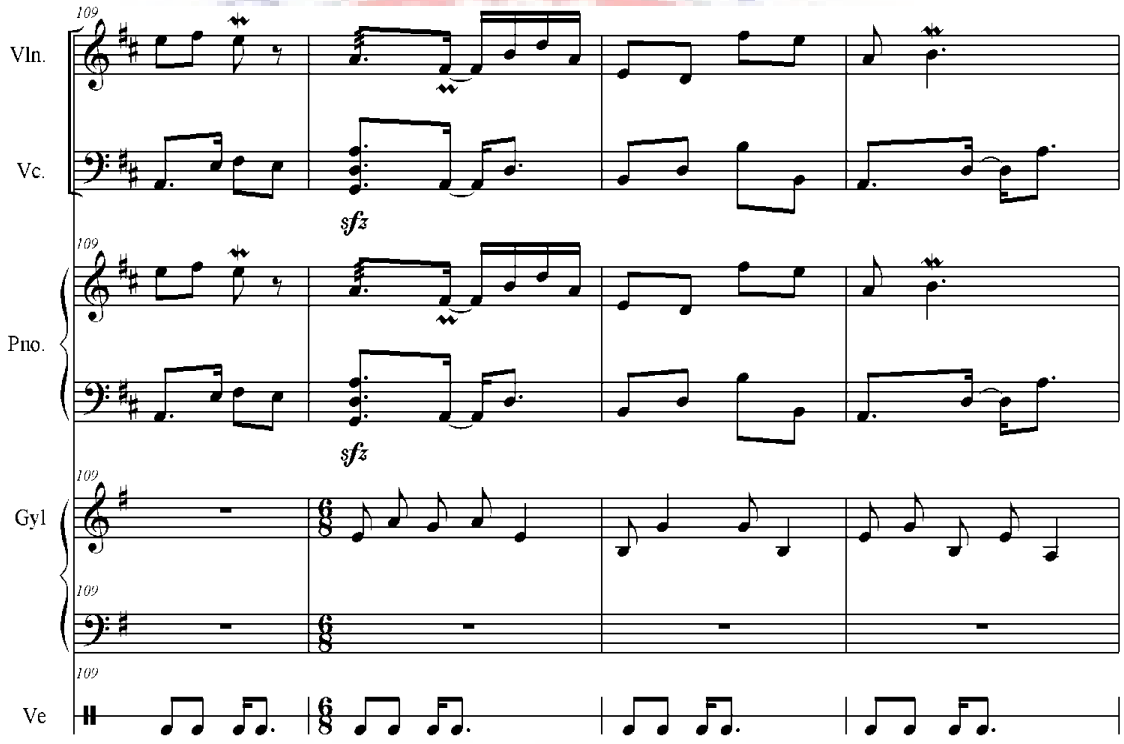
of A that is from bars 102 to bars 151 with many motivic developments and improvisation devices.

The main theme goes through variation and the second theme is repeated in the form of bi-metre and bimodality–using two modes at the same time. Bi-metre as used in this piece is the simultaneous use of two different metres was applied in third movement of Nr. 2 of Paul Hindermith‟s Kammermusik (1925). The excerpt Ex.22 below illustrates a biometric texture.



Example 22: Biometric in the *Xylafrique I*

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Orchestration

The *xylafrique I* uses violin, cello, piano, *gyil* and *velkpelle*. The piano boosts the Dagaaba melodic instrument and they relate well in call-and-response passages. The violin and cello, the Western string instruments, reinforce *gyil* idioms well with the traditional rhythms. The piano as well helps because of its percussive nature and was used to depict of the *kuor* drum.

Meter and rhythmic patterns

The composer kept the *gyil* tradition as detected the folk songs by using simple and compound meters. But as a contemporary art music composer, there were several twentieth century devices used in the compositional process such as metrical and dynamic modulation. Shifting from metre and tempo to another was not uncommon. This corroborates what was originated by Elliott Carter and used in his *Eight Etudes and a Fantasy for Woodwind Quartet* (1950).

Another device used was the hocket-technique. With this technique, the constituent notes of a tune, a rhythm otherwise a tone-pattern, or the constituent notes of a supporting ground-accompaniment, are played at the exactly appropriate point in time by those particular instruments that are included within their compass, or by those particular instruments that provide the required contrasts (Nketia 1962, p.44).

Furthermore, an adaptation of the Fibonacci sequence was also used from bars 47 to bar 53. A true Fibonacci sequence is a series of numbers that read 1,1,2,3,5,8,13,21,34,55,89…. etc. Each number, after the second, is the sum of the

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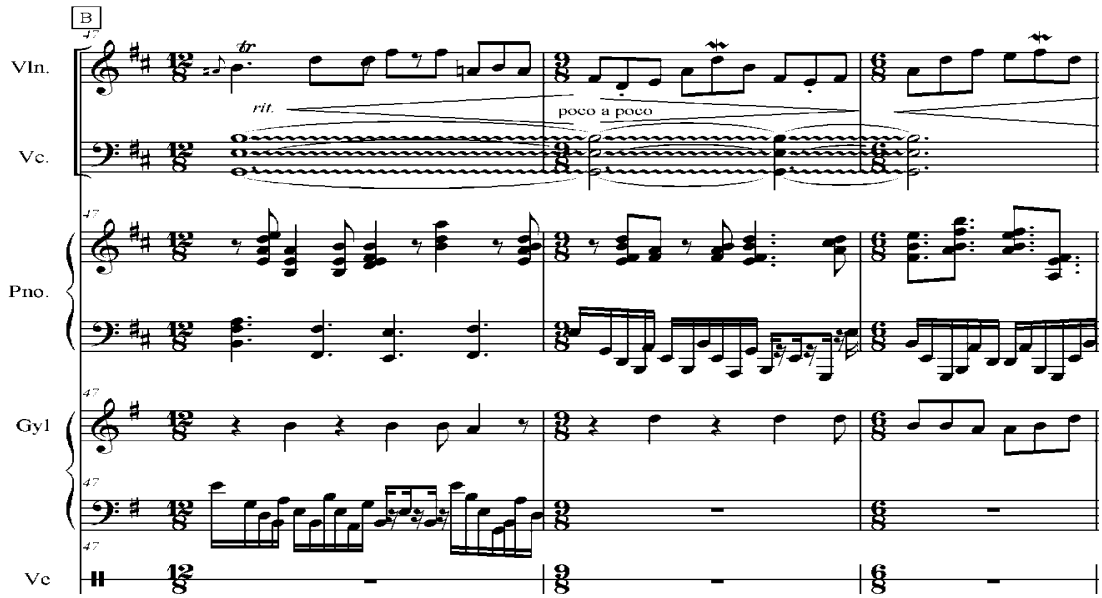
two previous numbers. This sequence was discovered by the Italian mathematician Leonardo Fibonacci (Kramer 1973, p.110).



Example 23: A derivation of Leonardo Fibonacci sequence in *Xylafrique I*

However, the excerpt above shows an adaptation of Fibonacci sequence used in *Xylafrique*. The series the composer used is the multiples of 3 thus: 3,3,6,9 and 12 which is a derivation of the mathematical interpretation of Fibonacci.

Treatment of Tonality

In the 1st movement of *Xylafrique,* is based on the *Dagaaba gyil* tune. *Ate kyillɛ,* which is stated in G major pentatonic. It is accompanied by an ostinato bass also in G major pentatonic as quoted in Ex. 24 below. It is interesting to note that the material used is the ending phrase of the the *Ate kyillɛ* melody.

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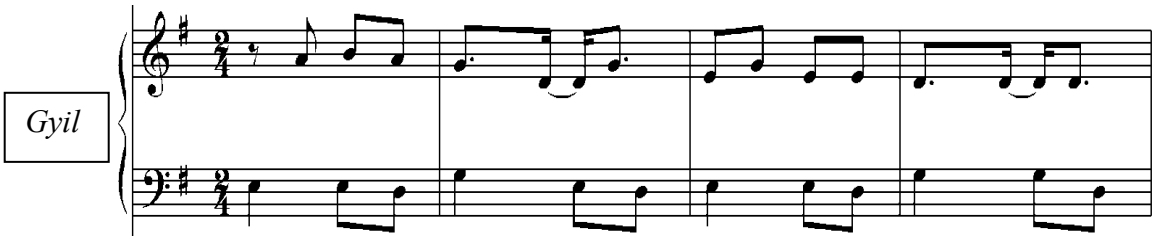
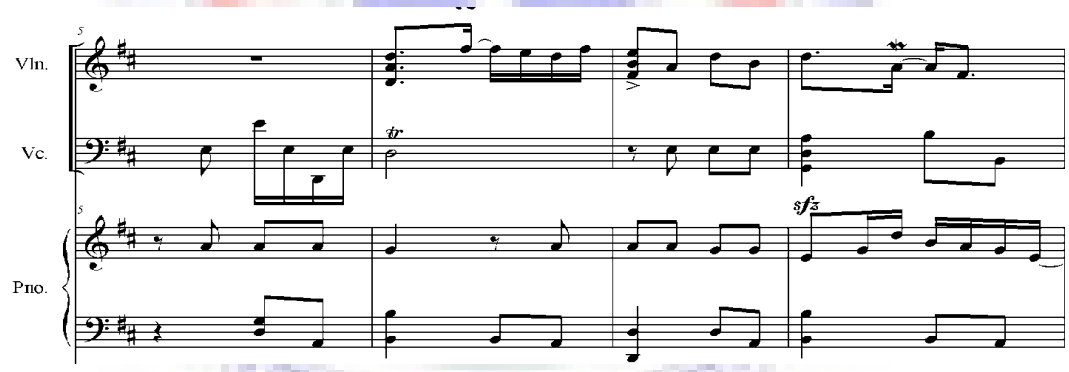


Example 24: how the gyil entered with *Ate kyillɛ* in *Xylafrique I*

Shifting of modal centres is not uncommon as a twentieth century device in this piece. The piano enters in the same key G major pentatonic, whiles Violin (Vln.) and Cello (Vc.) play in the dominant, i.e., D major pentatonic (bar 5- 11) An attempt was made to create bitonality by juxtaposing the G on the D pentatonic modes was used by Béla Bařtók in his „Songs of Harvest" form his 44 Violin Duets (1931) as illustrated in Ex.25 below.



Example 25: Bitonality in *Xylafrique I*

The tonal centre for the piano modulates from G pentatonic to D major pentatonic with a common chord modulation technique in (bars12-23) but the *gyil* stays in the G major pentatonic. The Vln. and Vc. move from D major to G pentatonic(bars 22 – 27) and return to D major pentatonic to end the section at bar 31 whiles the piano plays in G major (bar 25) to the end of the section.

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The tonal centers of the section B are almost like that of the section A. All the instruments alternate between the two key centres of G pentatonic and D pentatonic in bars 46- 53, Section A1 bar 61- 85, Section C bars 86-101 and Section A2 (bar 102-151 to end the movement.

Melodic Contour, Range and Intervals

The three melodies move in steps, thirds, fourths, fifths and an octave; which is similar to the folk songs. The range for the three tunes is within the traditional performance.

The Viola states a variation of the main theme (bars 5-12) and continues with the ostinato bass to bar 21 whiles the violin enters with a retrograde variation of the theme (bars 6-13). The main theme with retrograde variation and motivic developments run through the section. The percussive nature of the piano allows it to alternate with *gyil* and *kour* drum patterns. But the *velkpele* plays the original pattern and the retrograde from bar 2 to the end of the section at bar 46.

Harmony

The *Xylafrique I* was not based on the conventional Western harmonization for four parts; which is not a *Dagaaba gyil* musical feature. The folk songs harmony is only found in overlapping parts between the *gyil*, piano, violin and viola. There are some other Western harmonic techniques that were used to boost the Dagaaba musical idiom in the work e.g., quartal harmony–Harmonic formations were based on the interval of the fourth. Most often the perfect fourth has been the basic building block of such chords, and composers such as Paul Hindemith and Béla Bařtók are well-

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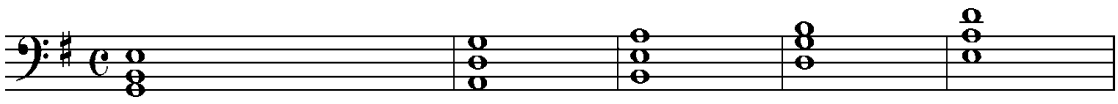
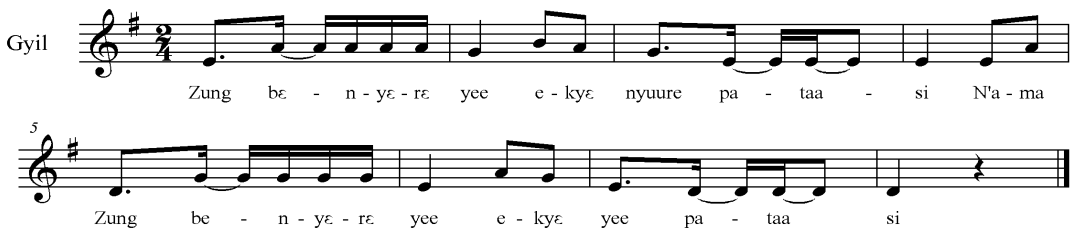
known for their penchant for quartal harmonies. Another harmonic device used was the tertian harmony where chords construction in thirds as in triads. Ex. 26 below shows tertian and quartal harmonic arrangements of in *Xylafrique*.



Example 26: Chordal arrangements for *Xylafrique*

Xylafrique II: Zuŋ be ɲyɛrɛ yee (The blind drunkard)

The melodic motive of this second piece came from a *Dagaaba gyil* musical tune titled *Zuŋ be nyɛrɛ yee, ɛkyɛ nyuur pataasi* that literary means a blind man and yet drinks *akpeteshi* a locally alcoholic brewed drink. Just imagine how a person with normal sight behaves when intoxicated and how much more will you expect of a blind person who already gropes as he/she walks. The two friends went to a drinking bar to drink and got drunk, on their way home a lot of incidents occurred and the incident is what the composer tries to depict. In fact, the journey of the blind man and his friend from the drinking bar to his house was something worth seeing. The form of the piece is through composed, made up of six sections (ABCDEF). The violin is the blind man and piano his friend. The excerpt of the *Zuŋ be nyɛrɛ yee* is shown below.



Example 27: *Zuŋ be nyɛrɛ yee* the main theme for *Xylafrique II*

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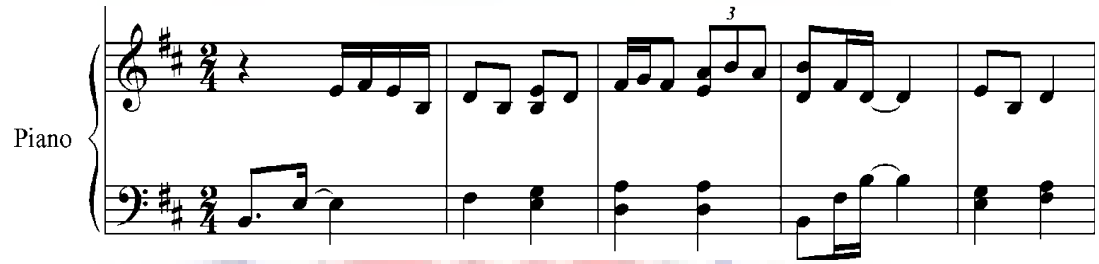
Xylafrique II Introduction

The second movement is written for a solo violin and piano accompaniment. The piano introduces the piece with a melody in D anhemitonic pentatonic (Bars 1- 5) as shown in Ex. 28 below.



Example 28 how the piano introduced theme of *Xylafrique II*

The violin pronounces at this point in picking up a double-stopping in the same key and shifts to G anhemitonic pentatonic (Bars 6-13) Shifting of the tonal centre from D anhemitonic to G anhemitonic pentatonic continues to the end of the piece.

In section B the instrument moves from the D pentatonic to G pentatonic (Bars 14-22). The piece maintains the tonality that is G anhemitonic pentatonic in section C (Bars 24-2). The piano uses an embellishment (nonharmonic tones). There is motivic development in the melodic structure; these include departure note, goal note contour, climax and main structural and tessitura changes to the end of the piece.

Melodic movement in Xylafrique II

The main theme is quoted in Ex.29 below.

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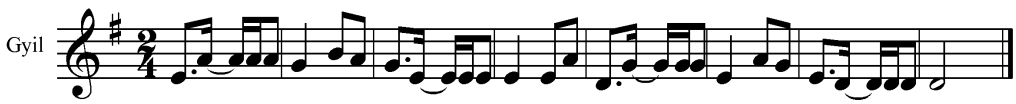
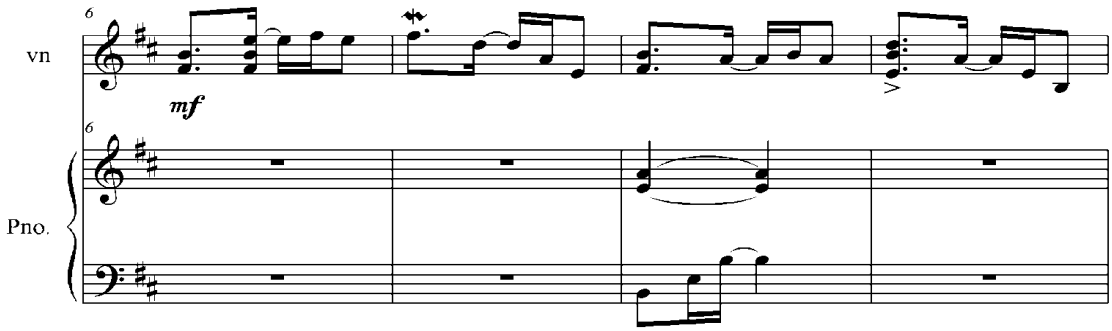


Example 29 : the original transcription of *Zuŋŋ be nyɛrɛ yee*

The above excerpt the original transcription of the tune from the *Dagaaba gyil* genre, was manipulated in such a way that the original theme is not noticed in the piece. In the piece, the melodic contour moves steps, thirds, fourths, fifths and an octave.



Example 30: How violin came in with the theme (*Zuŋŋ bɛ nyɛrɛ yee)*

Form in Xylafrique II

The movement is the theme-and-variation form. The first theme was announced by the violin (Bars 6-13) and the first variation came from Bars 14-23. The second variation is (Bars 24-28); the third variation is (bars 31-40); the fourth variation is (Bars 41-45) that was repeated a perfect fourth below in (Bars 46-51) whiles the fifth variation is in (Bars 54- 65). The piece ended with a coda in the arpeggio, ascending and descending pentatonic scalic techniques (bars 66-75).

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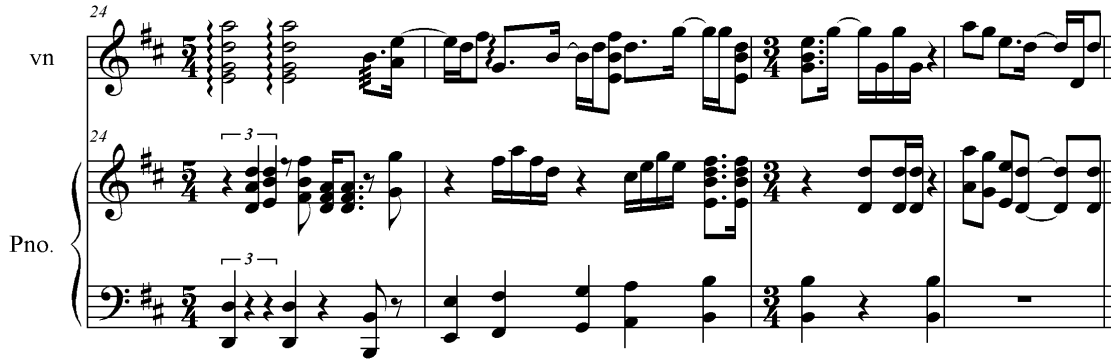
Meter and rhythmic patterns in Xylafrique II

The Dagaaba tradition was captured of the use of the folk songs. As a contemporary African art music composer, many techniques used in the compositional process included counterpoint, call-and-response and hocket-technique propounded by Nketia.

Like *Xylafrique* I, the second movement also made use of the Fibonacci sequence (Bars 24-36). Unlike the earlier one which was an adaptation, the *Xylafrique II* made use of the true sequence as seen in the excerpt in Ex. 31below.



Example 31: Fibonacci sequence in *Xylafrique II*

Xylafrique III: Yang yang kolee (A beggar is free to beg).

The third movement of *Xylafrique* was scored for the full orchestra introducing Dagaaba traditional instruments such as *Nukpola*, *Kuor, Velkpele*, *Gangaar*, *Chiamɛ* and the *Gyil* as shown in the illustration in Ex.32.

It is interesting to note that the *gyil* was made a transposing instrument. It is transposing a 5th above as French horn. This means it plays G when all concert instruments are playing C.

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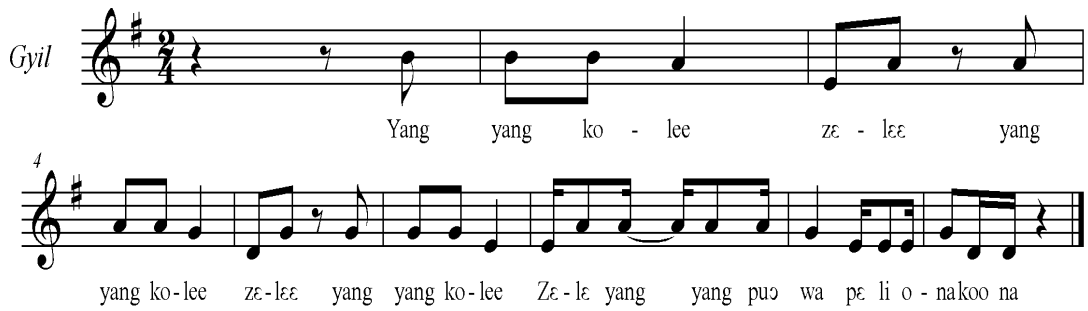
The third movement of *Xylafrique* is also based on *Yang yang kolee.* It is again a philosophical statement among the Dagaabas. This song is adopted as the theme by the composer, unlike *Xylafrique I* and *Xylafrique II* because the composers wanted to display his grip on the twentieth century techniques. The excerpt of *Zang zang kolee* is show in example below.



Example 32: *Yang yang kolee.* The main theme for *Xylafrique III*

Sectionalization in Xylafrique III

The movement begins in bitonality where the *Gyil* is taken as a transposing in instruments sounding a fifth above, plays in G major whiles the other instruments play in C major (bar 1- bar 89). All the melodic instruments state the subject of the fugal exposition in D major but the *gyil* maintains its original key of G pentatonic (bar 90- bar 98). The Alto instruments answer in the dominant of D major pentatonic which is A pentatonic (bar 98-bar 106). The tenor instruments come in with the subject in D pentatonic (bar 106- bar 114) and the basses take over the answer in A pentatonic to end the fugal exposition (bar 114- bar 122).

Finally they all go back to the beginning bitonality key system where the *Gyil* plays in G concert and the other instruments play in C concert Key. The bitonality is not

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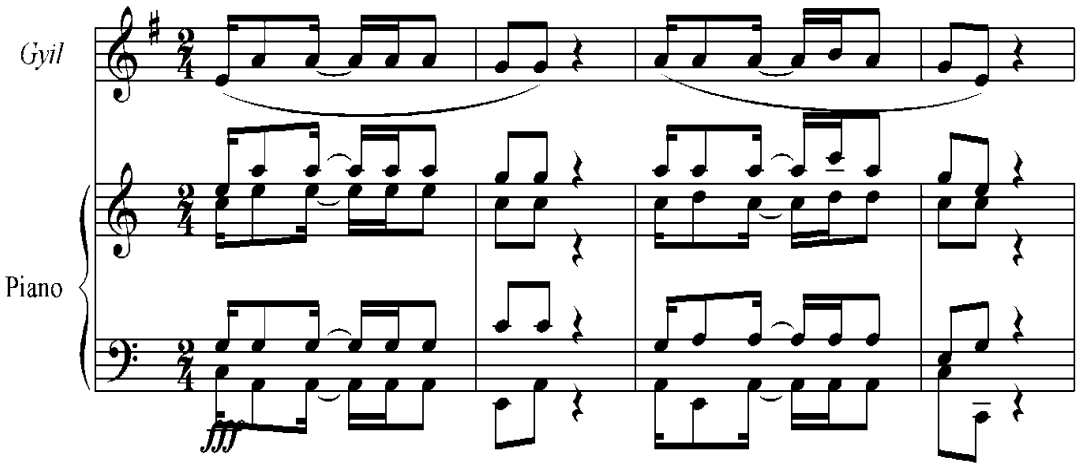
common in folk songs but was artistically used by the composer to enrich the work. The excerpt below in Ex.33 Illustrates this artistic phenomenon employed.



Example 33 : Bitonality in *Xylafrique III*

Other artistic devices employed include notation, dynamics, expression marks, metric modulation, bitonality and fugal exposition

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes what this study was set out to do and how it was done. It also draws conclusions based on the research findings and makes recommendations that hope to assist contemporary music composers who would like to explore traditional African and Western conventional musical idioms to compose in contemporary setting.

Summary

The study set to find out the traditional Dagaaba musical features that could be used in art music. It identified contemporary art style devices and compositional techniques and used the gyil music as a model for creating conceptual guidelines to compose a musical piece in a 21st century style. The composition demonstrates that it is possible to integrate traditional *gyil* idioms with Western music elements and techniques whose result is a hybrid from both worlds. Carefully selected Western classical elements like clefs, key signature, time signature, dynamics, notation and expression marks have been used alongside the *gyil* traditional music elements to ensure performance by musicians conventionally.

Traditionally the *gyil* musical tradition does not use written scores but in this study Western music elements have been used to create a compositional framework with contemporary art music performers in mind. These borrowed features have taken the Dagaaba *gyil* genre idioms to a different dimension, and has kept safe the traditional music features that are identifiable in the composition

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The stated objectives were prompted by the fact that some art musicians who use folk songs as compositional themes often change the inherent cultural nuances and the musical idiom concerned through the use of Western compositional techniques which affect the traditional characteristics of the music that is composed. As far as this study is concerned, the *gyil* music experienced changes in its rhythmic patterns, melody, meter, text, texture, harmony, interval and its idiomatic expression.

Sometimes Ghanaian art music composers may not be conversant with the traditional music making contexts because Ghana is a multi ethnic nation. The songs used in compositions in most cases do not hold on to the traditional idioms of the communities involved. The product of musical styles that are identifiable with various communities can therefore be endangered.

The researcher used syncretic approach, bi-musicality, African pianism and the Webster‟s model of creative thinking in creating a frame work of thought for the study. The accommodation theory on convergence was used in bringing together the researcher‟s musical experiences, cultural musical beliefs and changes that came up while composing *Xylafrique.* The researcher‟s exposure to different cultural contexts stirred all these. The theories brought all these aspects together in order to come up with a fusion that assisted in composing *Xylafrique* while sustaining the Dagaaba *gyil* idioms.

The theory on convergence was also used to bring together the Dagaaba and Western music materials that were isolated for use in the *Xylafrique* thus relating parts of the

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works in Dagaaba *gyil* idioms, collection of Dagaaba *gyil* tunes making meaning of the compositional elements in context, and the synthesis of the *Dagaaba* and Western musical elements that resulted in the *Xylafrique* composition.

Methodology

The research instruments used for data collection comprised interviews, participant observation, documentary search and the use of modern musical composition resources (i.e., computer, music software-Finale and Cubase). The study also used both the descriptive and creative designs that explored qualitative aspects. The descriptive phase involved the use of purposive sampling method to identify traditional musicians for interview. They also performed the various Dagaaba *gyil* folk songs which were video-and-audio recorded, transcribed and classified. Thirty nine songs were collected. The Dagaaba *gyil* folk songs were analysed to identify the inherent features such as melody, rhythm, meter, text, form, harmony, and tempo which were isolated for use in the composition. The selected songs reflected closeness to the various sections of the *Xylafrique*. The highlighted features were those that could sustain the Dagaaba musical idiom that cuts across all the analysed folk songs.

These contained the main details of the traditional Dagaaba music. The creative stage involved establishing the text and tunes to compose the three movements of *Xylafrique*. Western music tradition provided capacities such as notation, tumbrel effect and harmony. These were merged with the Dagaaba musical features that included melody, rhythmic patterns, instruments of the ensemble, form, solo-responsorial patterns and intervals in the tunes to create a work that is a hybrid. Each section of the works has been analysed to find out the consistency of the features in

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use and to establish new features in them. The main challenge was transcribing the folk songs to give accurate Dagaaba rhythmic patterns. This was overcome by the use of Finale software which assisted in series of play backs to get the correct representation of the *gyil* music on paper.

Composing *Xylafrique* was a great success because it proves that music composition is an activity that may be used to validate innate traditions. Traditional *gyil* composers create music for various functions using resources within the community, and so the requirements of the people have great influence on the process of composition. Similarly *Xylafrique* was fuelled by adulteration of *gyil* music by Berese, the xylophone tutor of University of Education, Winneba. The compositions show that it is possible to compose in any tradition as long as the musical features of the community are identified and utilised to assist in upholding the local idiom. Transcription and analysis of the *gyil* folk songs prove that traditional music among the Dagaabas still functions even with the advent of modernization. It has not been interfered with the entire source though the music has aptly been utilised by artistes.

The study also reveals that fusing other cultures like that of the Western classical musical tradition is not detrimental to the *gyil* music. All these can be identified in the analysis of the *Xylafrique*. The composition is consistent with the *gyil* musical features and the traditional idiom is felt as the music communicates effectively.

Conclusion

The researcher during the collection of the Dagaaba *gyil* songs noticed that the traditional musicians used an established format in their compositions. Like its

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antecedent the western marimba, the *gyil* has a vast repertoire, passed from father to son for centuries. The *gyil* tradition has set the tone for the melody/improvisation/melody form common in jazz. Even youngsters who play *gyil* are expected to remember the complex pieces and improvise according to dance movements and the singer's directives.

Furthermore the *gyil* musicians consider the traditional function of the music that is composed to match the *gyil* idiom in which the songs are performed. Therefore, compositions in traditional aspects have the aim of delivering messages or saying something edifying, rather than the usual melodies, harmonies, timbres and rhythms as in Western musical tradition (Agawu 2003, p.5). The stated model may assist art music composers to create traditional music that is functional in various Dagaaba idioms. Art musicians need to acknowledge the community from which the music is derived, occasion for the music, find out the musical features involved to maintain the idiom and then create their music consistent with the tradition of the community in question.

The study proposes a guide to assist art musicians who compose using traditional idioms. Another model that the researcher used when merging traditional music elements and Western classical music is explained as traditional music is „Culture" and Western music is „Information". The merge results in a new entity, a hybrid which is „Creativity"; a new musical creation of contemporary art songs. Culture is the local idiom inherent in the traditional music of a community; and Information consists of the Western classical music elements and compositional techniques that are acquired knowledge. Composers need to create their music with a traditional function in mind

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to maintain the idiom. Therefore, the traditional music features have to be highlighted and utilised; to validate melodic, rhythmic and textural elements of the borrowed music. These together with the Western music elements will give the composition shape in contemporary style. The result will be Creativity, a hybrid at the point of convergence between Culture and Information as seen in Fig.7 below.

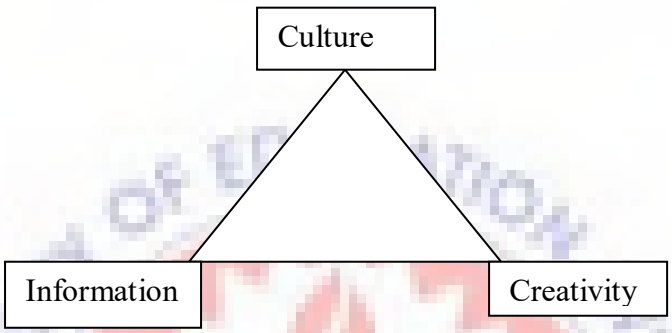

Figure 7 Creativity Model Culture is both a product and source of creation

Akuno (2001, p. 188) stating the matter differently says it is a result of relationships as well as an expression between man, the society and the environment. It is found in one's total existence including relationships, perceptions and aspirations.

The study is significant because it attempts to:

i. Suggest options that will guide music composition using material and techniques from oral tradition in a contemporary society by Ghanaian art musicians, even with the impact of classical Western music.

ii. Postulate a theoretical platform to aid in the use and study of Dagaaba traditional music that could be adapted for other non-Western music traditions.

iii. Foster and encourage creativity among scholars of music, particularly those composing using traditional music styles.

iv. Add to the repertoire of art music by Ghanaian composers.

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v. Expose selected elements of Dagaaba *gyil* genre music to the world of art music.

Suggestions and Recommendations for Further Study

The following suggestions and recommendations serve as a guide for further study and research based on summary and conclusions in this study.

Ghanaian art musicians may use this study as a basis to compose in a traditional style and in various idioms to add to the existing contemporary art music repertoire. It will also be one way of developing traditional music in contemporary style.

Various festival committees in Ghana will have a source of art songs for consideration as local pieces for competitions. In the process, art musicians will develop their composition skills and be encouraged to increase the output. This may also encourage more students to take up music composition as a field of study.

Music students should be exposed to traditional music composition for the exposure to traditional musical features of various communities in Ghana. Through analysis and performance of such music, students will experience pertinent concepts involved. Availability of art songs will also encourage examination bodies to utilise such art works as musical prescribed pieces instead of depending entirely on Western classical music.

Also further research could be undertaken based on the findings and conclusions of this study to explore issues from other Ghanaian communities. The study has shown that traditional composers have a guide to their activity and that each community has its own inherent music features which corroborate the observation by Herbst, Zaidel-

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Rudolph & Onyeji (2003:150) that one can compose using traditional African music elements alongside Western musical features.

Indeed, this also supports the feeling about African musicians who have used traditional tunes to develop art music identified with their local idioms. This should be the reawakening of cultural ideals amongst Ghanaian art musicians who use traditional songs. The present study was carried out on the Dagaaba *gyil* music; similar studies could be undertaken on the music of other Ghanaian communities. This would assist art music composers to be well equipped with guidelines for use in Ghanaian traditional music composition studies.

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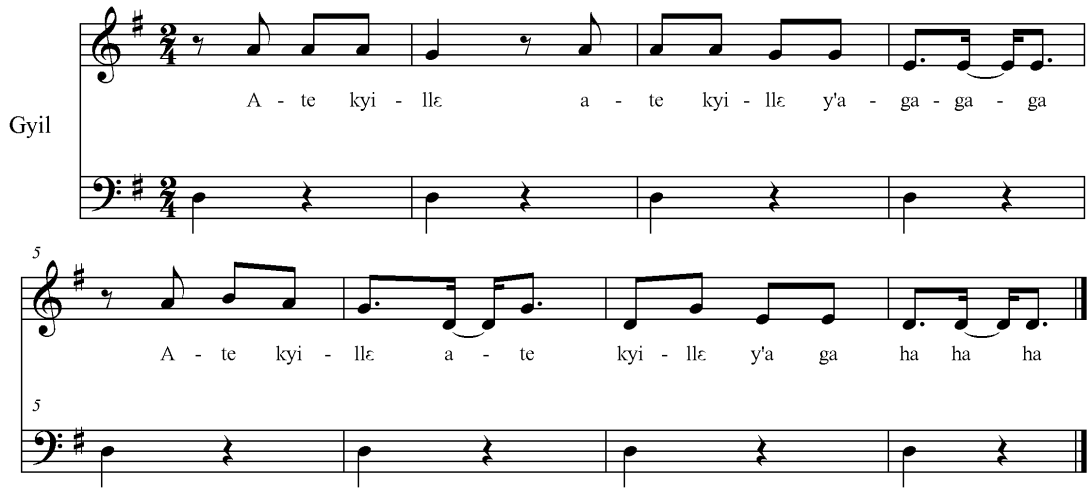
APPENDIX A

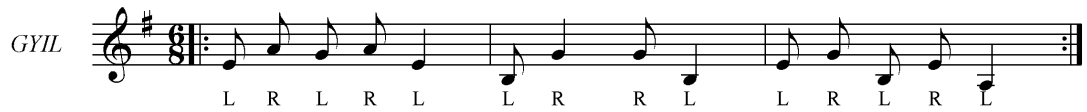
DAGAABA TRADITIONAL GYIL TUNES USED

ATE KYILLƐ



DƐPƐLƐRƐ MA

Original



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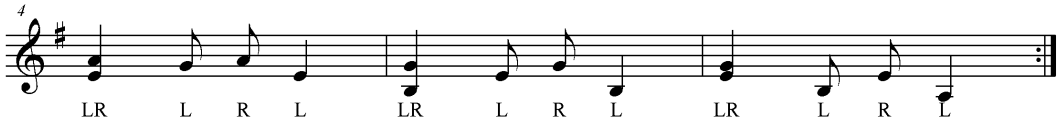
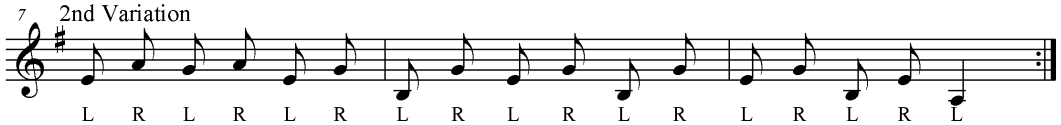
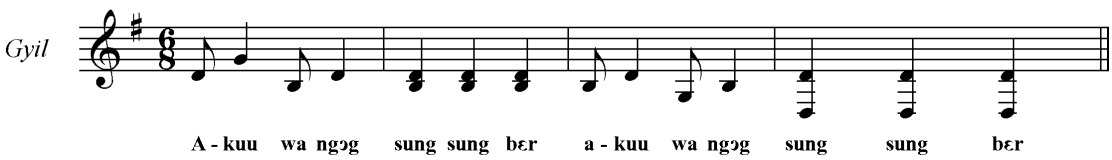


2nd Variation



Akuu wa ngɔg



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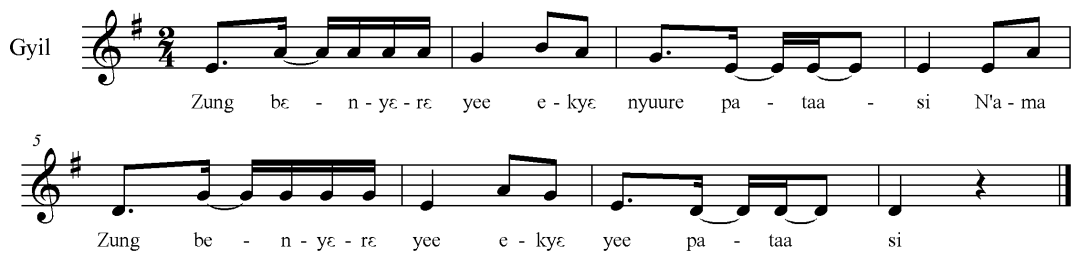
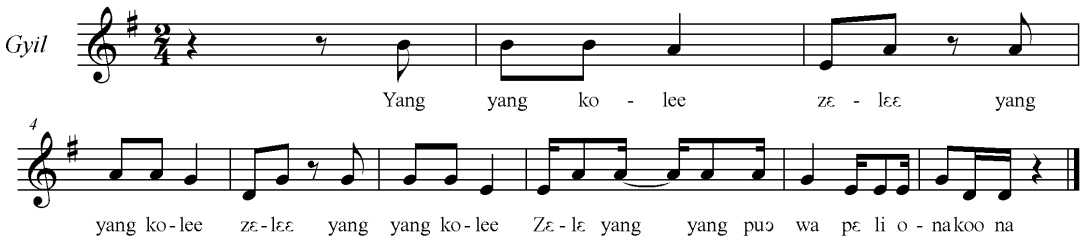
ZUNG BƐNYƐRƐ YEE



YANG YANG KO LEE



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APPENDIX B

TITLES OF DAGAABA TRADITIONAL GYIL SONGS COLLECTED

Titles of *gyil* songs

No.	Title	Literal Translation	Gender
	***Kour binne* (funeral songs)**		
1	*Kuu te e ngmen*	What should we do death?	M&F
2	*Te na kpen nyin*	Where can we be or stay?	M&F
3	*Te na kpen ka*	We shall stay or live here?	M&F
4	*Oyi ate zaa baarena*	Oh, we are all getting extinct.	M&F
5	*Te kpe ka a kuu zie nabena*	Any where we go, there is death.	M&F
6	*Dɛpɛlɛrɛ ma, A nang t[b bɛr O dɛ kone yoo*	A spider‟s mother is stung by a scorpion and she is crying.	F
7	*A kuu wa ngɔg sang sang bɛr*	Death came and spoiled everything.	M&F
8	*Taatuli makum mɔ zie na sob o wa*	Caterpillar‟s grandmother returns in the night.	F
9	*Kpi yang mhaa dɔmɛ yoo Grandaa kpi yang mhaa dɔ mɛ yoo*	A great warrior should die, so that his enemies will be happy.	M
10	*A zaa ne lɛ, kone abaar*	It is finished, mourn for the last.	M&F
11	*Nyɛ bie na borɛ*	The child is getting wayward.	M&F
12	*Pog le zina tɔ ate wa, nina tɔ ate wa*	Lady said next week we should come, try and come next week.	F
13	*Yaang mhaa mɛ*	I am grateful.	M&F
14	*Kon gbɛ bir, a baa dung ngɛr*	Leper‟s toes bitten off by a dog.	M&F
15	*Gandaa puo lɛa faa moɔ*	Great farmer, his farm has turned	M

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		bushy.	
16	*Wonɛ ɛ noa, wa luɔ tuo*	Popular man is now distressed.	M
17	*N naa nilɛ*	If I should be a chicken.	M&F
18	*Saa minɛ wulmɛ na guu*	My fathers and mothers tried to advice me.	M&F
19	*N saa ne ma*	The enemies of my father and mother	M&F
20	*Nile bang zima*	The chicken knows how to sit.	M&F
21	*Pɔgnyang zu gbalgbal*	The old-bald-headed woman has died.	F
22	*Daa miir dug poɔ*	A great female *pito* brewer is dead.	F
23	*Kuuti e nwin mɔɔ?*	Death, what should we do?	M&F
24	*Saa nyɔg muuɔ pore*	Father, sacrifice with a soul.	M
25	*Kpin ɛkyɛ bang kɔnɛ kuuro*	Before you mourn.	M&F
26	*Tie kuu ngmen nɛ mɔ?*	What shall we do about death?	M&F

Title of gyil songs 2

No.	**Title**	**Literal Translation**	**Gender**
	***Mesa songs* (church songs)**		
27	*Ate kyillɛ*	Let us rejoice.	M&F
28	*Zunoɔ sob ne a ner nɛ*	Lucky is that person.	M&F

Title of *gyil* songs 3

No.	**Title**	**Literal Translation**	**Gender**
	***Bagr Binne* (festival songs)**		
29	*Beyuo zagr bagbɛdaa*	*Beyuo* rejects sacrifice drinks.	M

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30	*Ba saab bɛ tare bagbɛ*	A bad lady who is foodie.	F

Title of *gyil* songs 4

No.	Title	Literal Translation	Gender
	***Bawa* (recreational songs)**		
31	*Bie pog no ga yiiri bɛr*	Do not go in for what is not yours.	M&F
32	*Yang yang kolee*	The beggar is free to beg.	M&F
33	*Borune kɔ taɛ ɔ lɛ sor*	White man constructs hill to become road.	M&F
34	*Nyira dug zirɛ komɛ abɛ nɔmɛ*	Ants prepare a soup and it was not sweet.	M&F
35	*Zung be nyɛrɛ yee*	The blind man.	M
36	*Beriberzaa laolao*	A greedy woman.	F
37	*Baalo faa na nyoge mɛ*	A dangerous disease attacked me.	M&F
38	*Fo na me nyn kɛ zi*	You drink and sit very, very tall.	M&F
39	*A nang be a yir mi*	Even if a scorpion is in the house.	M&F

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APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR *GYIL* MUSICIANS

1. Name …….
2. Age ……..
3. What is the origin of *Bawa* dance?
4. How many instruments have you been using during performances?
5. How do you get your instruments, did you acquire or make it your instruments?
6. Do you perform rituals for the *Gyil* before they are used?
7. What type of songs have you been singing?
8. How often have you been training and where do you normally train?
9. What benefits did you get from your performances?
10. How do people react to your performances in terms of appreciation?
11. On what occasions do you play your music?
12. What have been the themes of your songs?
13. Your songs are difficult to understand. Why that?
14. Mention the names of the instruments you were using.
15. Did you have other supplementary instruments?
16. How did you keep or preserve the instruments?
17. For what occasions did you perform your music, and what costume did you use?
18. How did you recruit and train your musicians?
19. Did you have women in the group, if yes, what were their roles?
20. What do you see differently in today's *gyil* compared to the olden days?

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APPENDIX D

Work Plan

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
20/05/2011	1st Visit to Winneba Dagaaba group.
14/06/2011	1st Visit to Kasoa Dagaaba group.
28/06/2011	1st Visit to African Studies Centre, U.G. Legon.
03/08/2011	2nd Visit to Kasoa Dagaaba group.
10/08/2011	1st Visit to Department of Music Library, U.G. Legon
03/09/2011	2nd Visit to Winneba Dagaaba group.
12/01/2012	2nd Visit to African Studies Centre, U.G. Legon.
15/01/2012	2nd Visit to Department of Music Library, U.G. Legon
23-25/01/2012	Visit to Department of Music Library, UCC. Cape Coast.
20-23/02/2012	Visit to Osagyefo Library, UEW, Winneba.
24/02/2012-21/05/2012	Writing of the Report.
30/07/2012	First & Second Draft sent to Supervisor.
15-20/08/2012	Final Draft sent to Supervisor.
15/09/2013	Submission of Thesis to HOD.

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DIACHRONIC TABBLEAU OF XYLAFRIQUE

FIRST MOVEMENT							SECOND MOVEMENT				
Sectional Title	**Happy Living**	**Uncertainty**	**Restoration of happiness**	**Appearance of Death (sadness)**	**Harmonious Living of The family**	**Happy Living**	**The beginning of the journey**		**Misunderstanding Between the blind and his friend**		**Towards home**
Metrical modulation	2/4	2/4, 12/8, 9/8, 3/8	2/4	2/4, 6/8	2/4 & 6/8	2/4	2/4	2/4	5/4, 3/4, 2/4	1/4, 2/4, 3/4, 5/4, 2/4	2/4
Rehearsal letters	A Bars 1-46	B Bars 47-60	C Bars 61-85	D Bars 86-102	E Bar 103-151	F Bar 1-46	A Bars 1-13	B Bar 14-23	C Bars 24-28	D Bars 29-40	E Bars 1-13
Modal modulation	G pentatonic and D pentatonic (Bitonality)	G pentatonic and D pentatonic (Bitonality)	G pentatonic and D pentatonic (Bitonality)	G pentatonic and D pentatonic (Bitonality)	G pentatonic and D pentatonic (Bitonality)	G pentatonic and D pentatonic (Bitonality)	D pentatonic and G pentatonic	G pentatonic	G pentatonic and D pentatonic (Bitonality)	G pentatonic and D pentatonic (Bitonality) to G pentatonic	D pentatonic and G pentatonic
General dynamic trend	*f-mf-f-ff-fff*	*ff-mf-f-mf-f-*	*f-m f*		*mf-ff-mf-ff-f-mf-f-*	*f-mf-f-*	*fff-ff-fff-ff*	*ff-ff-mf-ff-p-*	*fff-ff/f-ff-fff-f*	*ff/mf-ff-fff -fff-*	*f-ff-f-mf-fff-ff-fff-ff*
Tempo modulation	♩=90-♩=60						♩=100				
Actual time	55 sec.	41 sec.	26 sec.	26 sec. .	62 sec.	55 sec.	15 sec.	15 sec.	30 sec.	38 sec.	15 sec.
Running time	0 sec. to 55 sec.	55sec. to 1:36 sec.	1: 36 sec. to 2:02 sec.	2:02 sec. to 2:28 sec	2:28 sec to 3:30 sec.	3:30 sec. to 4:25 sec.	0 sec. to 15 sec.	15 sec. to 30 sec.	30 sec. to 1:00 sec.	1:00 sec. to 1:38 sec.	1: 38 sec. to 1: 53 sec

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THIRD MOVEMENT					
Sectional Title	**First day**	**Second day**	**Third day**	**Fourth Day**	**Last day**
Metrical modulation	2/4				
Rehearsal letters	A Bars 1-45	B Bars 45-70	C Bars 70-89	D Bars 89-130	E Bars 130-196
Modal modulation	C pentatonic &G pentatonic (Bitonality)	C pentatonic &G pentatonic (Bitonality)	D pentatonic &G pentatonic (Bitonality)	C pentatonic &G pentatonic (Bitonality)	C pentatonic &G pentatonic (Bitonality)
General dynamic trend	*f-mf-ff-fff-*	*f-mf-ff-fff-*	*fffff*	*f-mf-ff-fff-*	*pp-mf-ff-fff*
Tempo modulation	♩=100				
Running time	0 sec. to 46 sec.	46 sec. to 1:10 sec.	1:10 sec. to 1: 28 sec.	1: 28 sec. to 2:10 sec.	2:10 sec. to 3:15 sec.
Actual time	46 sec.	24 sec.	18 sec.	42 sec.	1:05 sec.