HARIS KITTOS

PRIAM'S NIGHT-JOURNEY

based on the K. Cavafy's poem

for voice (mezzo soprano), clarinet in Bb (doubling bass-clarinet in Bb), violin, cello and Piano.

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ΠΡΙΑΜΟΥ ΝΥΚΤΟΠΟΡΙΑ

Ἄλγος ἐν τῇ Ἰλίῳ κ' οἰμωγή.
Ἡ γῆ
τῶν Τρώων ἐν ἀηχτιαμῷ πυρῷ καὶ δίει
τὸν μέγαν Ἕκτορα τὸν Πριαμίδην κλαίει.

Ὁ θρῆνος βορεάς, ὄαφυς ἠχεῖ.
Ψυχή
δὲν μένει ἐν τῇ Τροίᾳ μὴ πένθους ὕδωρ,
τοῦ Ἕκτορος στὴν μνήμην ἀμέλουσα.

Ἀλλ' εἶναι μάταιος, ἀνωφελὴς
πολὺς
θρῆνος ἐν πόλει ταλαιπωρημένῃ·
ἡ δυμενὴς κωφεύει εἰμαρμένη.

Τ' ἀνωφελὴ ὁ Πρίαμος μισῶν,
χρυσὸν
ἐξάγει ἐκ τοῦ θησαυροῦ· προσδίδει
λέβητας, ὑάπτας, καὶ χλαίνας κ' ἔζει

χιτῶνας, φοινὰς, πέπλων ὡρέων
μυρεύς,
καὶ ὅτι ἄλλο πρόσφορον εὑρίσκει,
κ' ἐπὶ τοῦ ἅρματος τὰ τιθεμαίζει.

Θέμα μὲ λύπην ἀπὸ τὸν φορεῖον
ἐχθρόν
τοῦ τέκνου του τὸ σῶμα νὰ ἀνακτήσῃ,
καὶ μὲ θεσπὶν καὶ ἁγίαν νὰ ἐμπλήσῃ.

Φεύγει ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ τῇ ἀγρίᾳ.
λαμπὶ
ἄλογα. Μόνην συνέρχει τώρα ἵππει
ταχύ, ταχύ τὸ ἅρμα του νὰ φέρῃ.

Ἐκτείνεται ὁ γέρων βοηθός.
Εἰκῇ
ὁ ἄνεμος ὑβρίζει κ' οἰμώζει.
Κόμης ἀπαίσιος μικρόθεν κρούει.

Ἔτω, κυνὸς ἀκούει ὑλακή·
ἐκεῖ,
ὡς γύπιος λαγὼς πρὸ τῶν ταχύπους.
Ὁ βασιλεὺς κινεῖ, κινεῖ τοὺς ἵππους.

Τῶν πεδίων ἐξυπνοῦν σκιαὶ
λαιαὶ,
καὶ ἀφροῦν πρός τι ἐν τούτῃ βίᾳ
πεινῇ ὁ Δαρδανίδης πρὸς τὰ πλοῖα

Ἀργείων φονικῶν, καὶ Ἀχαιῶν
δικαίων.
Ἀλλὰ ὁ βασιλεὺς αὐτὰ δὲν τὰ προσέχει·
ῥέπει τὸ σῶμα του ταχύ, ταχύ νὰ τρέχει.

Κ. Καβάφης, 1893

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PRIAM'S NIGHT-JOURNEY (translated by the composer)

There is pain and lamentation in Ilium.
The land
of Troy is in bitter despair and dread,
it weeps for the great Hector, son of Priam.

The loud threnody echoes heavily.
Not a soul
in Troy is left not mourning,
the memory of Hector neglecting.

But the great lamentation is in vain,
superfluous,
in the wretched city
the ill-disposed destiny is deaf.

Priam, hating the useless, takes out
gold
from the treasury; he adds
cauldrons, rugs and cloaks; and even

chitons, tripods, a stack of peplums
sparkling
and whatever other offering he considers handy
and piles them on the chariot.

With ransom he wants to recover from the dread
foe
the body of his child
and honor it with a venerable funeral.

He leaves in the silence of night
He speaks
little. The only thought he has now
is for the chariot to run swiftly, swiftly.

The dreary road stretches before him.
Piteously
The wind wails and laments.
A frightful raven croaks in the distance.

Here the barking of a dog is heard;
over there,
a hare passed swift-footed, like a whisper.
The king spurs, spurs the horses on.

The shadows of the plain awaken
sinister,
and they wonder why the scion of Dardanus
flies in such haste toward the ships

of the murderous Argives and Achaeans
boorish.
But the king does not notice these things;
provided the chariot runs swiftly, swiftly.

K. Cavafy, 1893

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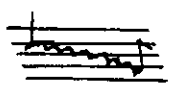
NOTATION – INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE INSTRUMENTALISTS

Violin & Cello :

s.p.	= sul ponticello
s.t.	= sul tasto
ord.	= ordinario
ord. ⟶ s.p. etc.	= move smoothly between two states
s.v.	= senza vibrato
n.v.	= normal vibrato
incr. vibr.	= increase vibrato to an extreme point of loose pitch and frantic character (approx. 3rd minor around the note)



= glissando with "molto vibrato"

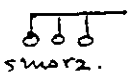
♭ = "Bartók" pizzicato (snap pizz.)

\+ = left hand pizzicato

= accelerando (or the opposite) within specific duration

Clarinet and Bass-Clarinet in Bb :

s.v.	= senza vibrato
n.v.	= normal vibrato
incr. vibr.	= increase vibrato
flz	= "flutter" tonguing
bend	= bend the note (as much as possible)



= "smorzato" effect (volume vibrato by pressure)

= accelerando (or the opposite) within specific duration

Piano :

ped. ⟶	= sempre ped.
with. ped.	= use of the pedal according to the player's judgement
1 C.	= "una corda"
3 C.	= "tre corde"

= accelerando (or the opposite) within specific duration

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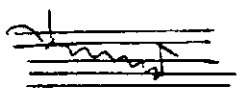
NOTATION – INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SINGER

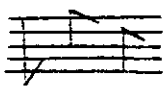
s.v. = senza vibrato

n.v. = normal vibrato

ord. = ordinario (including vibrato when there is no n.v or s.v. indication)

incr. vibr. = Increase vibr. to as much as possible (approx. minor 3rd around the note)

 = glissando with "malto" vibrato


a. b. c.

= spoken
a. with high voice (highest possible)
b. with ordinary, medium voice
c. with low voice (lowest possible)

etc. = "sprechgesang"

PHONETIC ALPHABET

(Based on the International Phonetic Alphabet)

a ⟶ palm / hat

ɛ ⟶ bed / sled

i ⟶ see / sit

ɔ ⟶ hot / spot

ʊ ⟶ hoover / loo

ɣ ⟶ like Yes with more pressure of the tongue

ɾ ⟶ like french sur or arrivé with no the R vibration

ð ⟶ the

θ ⟶ thin

R ⟶ rein (German rolled r in the front of the mouth)

x ⟶ like German Ach

ç ⟶ like German Ich

s ⟶ ceiling

K ⟶ cat (when kɛ, it sounds in the front of the mouth like kɛ, but with very fast ɛ)

Ks ⟶ ex, Xmas

The rest of the consonants sound like the English ones.

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Word-by-word translation for the singer, using the phonetic alphabet and with the accents

A

álɾɔs ɛn tɩ ɩlíɔ kɩmɔɣí
pain in Ilium and lamentation

ɩ ɣí
the land

tɩs tɾías ɛn apɛlpismó pɩkɾó kɛ ðɛ́ɩ
of Troy is in despair bitter and dread

tɔn méɾan éktɔɾa tɔn pɾɩamíðɩn klɛ́ɩ
the great Hector the son of Priam it weeps

ɔ θɾínɔs vɔɛɾós, vaɾís ɩçí
the threnody is loud heavily it echoes

psɩçí
a soul

ðɛn méɲɩ ɛn tɩ tɾía mɩ pɛnθúsa,
is not left in Troy not mourning

tʊ éktɔɾɔs tɩn mnímɩn amɛlúsa
Hector's the memory neglecting

alinɛ mátɛɔs anɔfɛlís
but it is vain useless

pɔlís
superfluous

θɾínɔs ɛn pólɩ talɛpɔɾɩméɲɩ;
the lamentation in city hard-shiped

ɩ ðɩsmɛnís kɔfévɩ ɩmaɾméɲɩ
the bad-destinied is silent wretched

B

tanɔfɛlí ɔ pɾíamɔs mɩsón,
the useless Priam hating

xɾɩsón
gold

ɛksáɣɩ ɛk tʊ θɩsavɾú; pɾɔsθétɩ
he takes out from the treasury he adds

lévɩtas, tápɩtas kɛ xlénas; kétɩ
cauldrons, rugs and cloaks and even

çɩtónas, tɾípɔðas, pépɩɔn sɔɾón
chitons, tripods peplums stack

lambɾón
sparkling

kɛ ótɩ álo pɾósfɔɾɔn ɩkázɩ,
and anything else offering/handy he homes

kɛpí tʊ ármatós tʊ ta stɩvázɩ
and on his chariot he puts them

θélɩ mɛ lítɾa apó tón tɾɔmɛɾón
He wants with ransom from the dread

ɛxθɾón
foe

tʊ téknʊ tʊ tɔ sóma nanaktísɩ
his child's the body to recover/regain

kɛ mɛ sɛptín kíðian na tɩmísɩ.
and with venerable funeral to honor

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C

févɣɪ ɛn tɪ nɪktɪ tɪ sɪɣɪlí
He leaves in the night the silent

lalí
he speaks

ɔlíɾa. mónɪn sképsɪn tóra éçɪ
little. The only thought now he has

taçí, taçí tɔ árma tʊ na tréçɪ.
swiftly, swiftly his chariot to run.

//

ɛktínɛtɛ ɔ ðrómɔs zɔfɛrós
Stretches the road dreary

ɪktrós
pitcously

ɔ ánɛmɔs ɔðírɛtɛ kɪmózɪ
the wind wails and laments

kóraks apésɪos makróðɛn krózɪ.
raven frightful in the distance croaks

/

ɛðó, kɪnós akúɛtɪlakí;
Here, of a dog a barking is heard

ɛkí,
over there

ɔs psíθɪrɔs laɾós pɛrná taçípʊs
like a whisper a hare passes swift-footed

ɔ vasɪléfs kɛdá, kɛdá tʊs ípʊs
the king spurs spurs the horses

//

tɪs pɛðɪáðɔs ɛksɪpnún skɪé
of the plain awaken shadows

lɛé
sinister

kɛ apɔrún prɔs tɪ ɛn tósɪ vía
and they wander for what in such a haste

pɛtá ɔ ðarðanɪðɪs prɔs ta plía
flies the scion of Dardanus toward the ships

//

arɣɪɔn fɔnɪkón, kɛ açɛón
of Argives murderous and Achaeans

skɛón.
boorish.

alá ɔ vasɪléfs aftá ðɛn ta prɔéçɪ;
But the king these things does not notice

fθánɪ tɔ árma tʊ taçí, taçí na tréçɪ.
provided his chariot swiftly swiftly to run.

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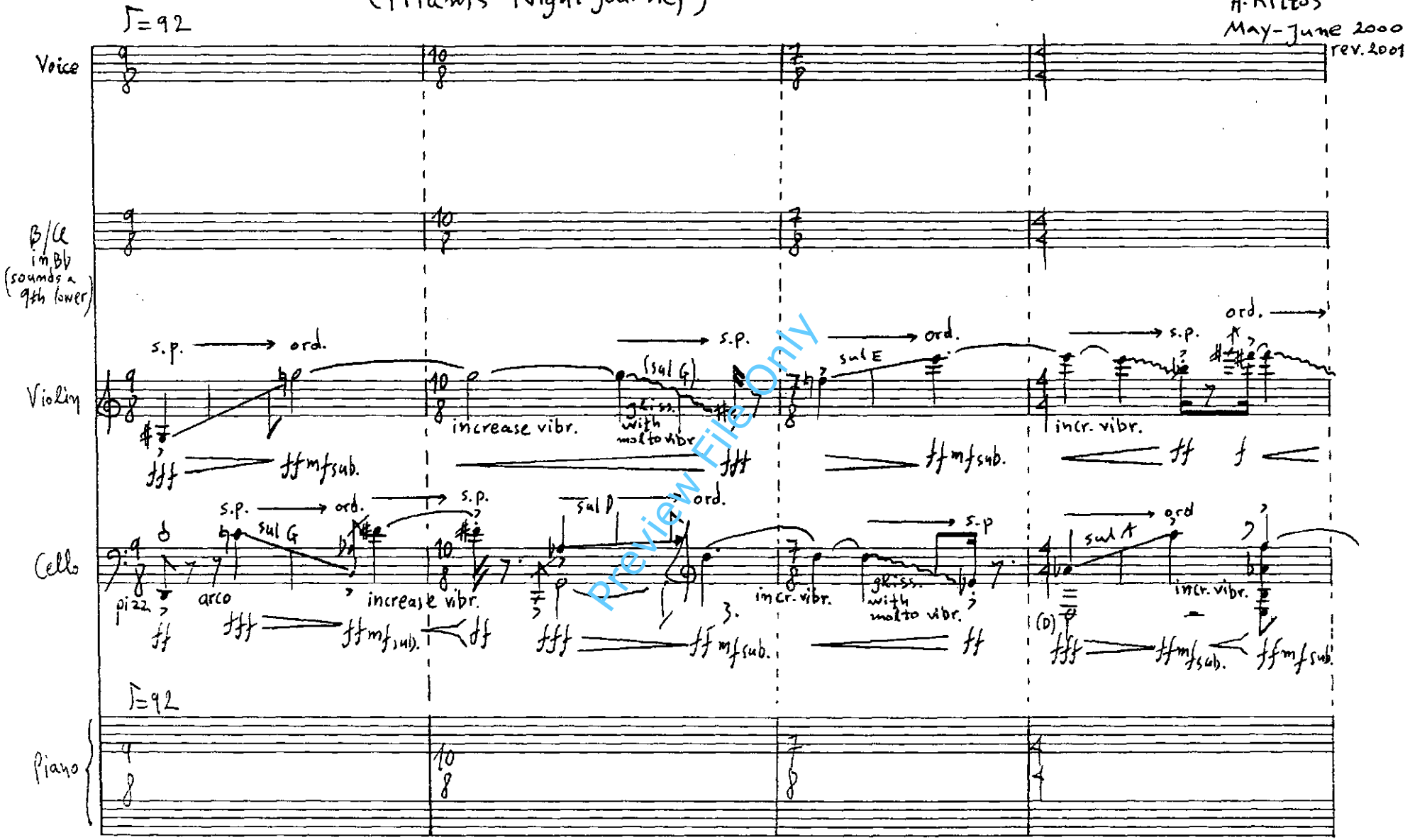
ΠΡΙΑΜΟΥ ΝΥΚΤΟΠΟΡΙΑ

(Priam's Night-Journey)

based on K. Cavafy's poem

H. Kittos
May-June 2000
rev. 2001



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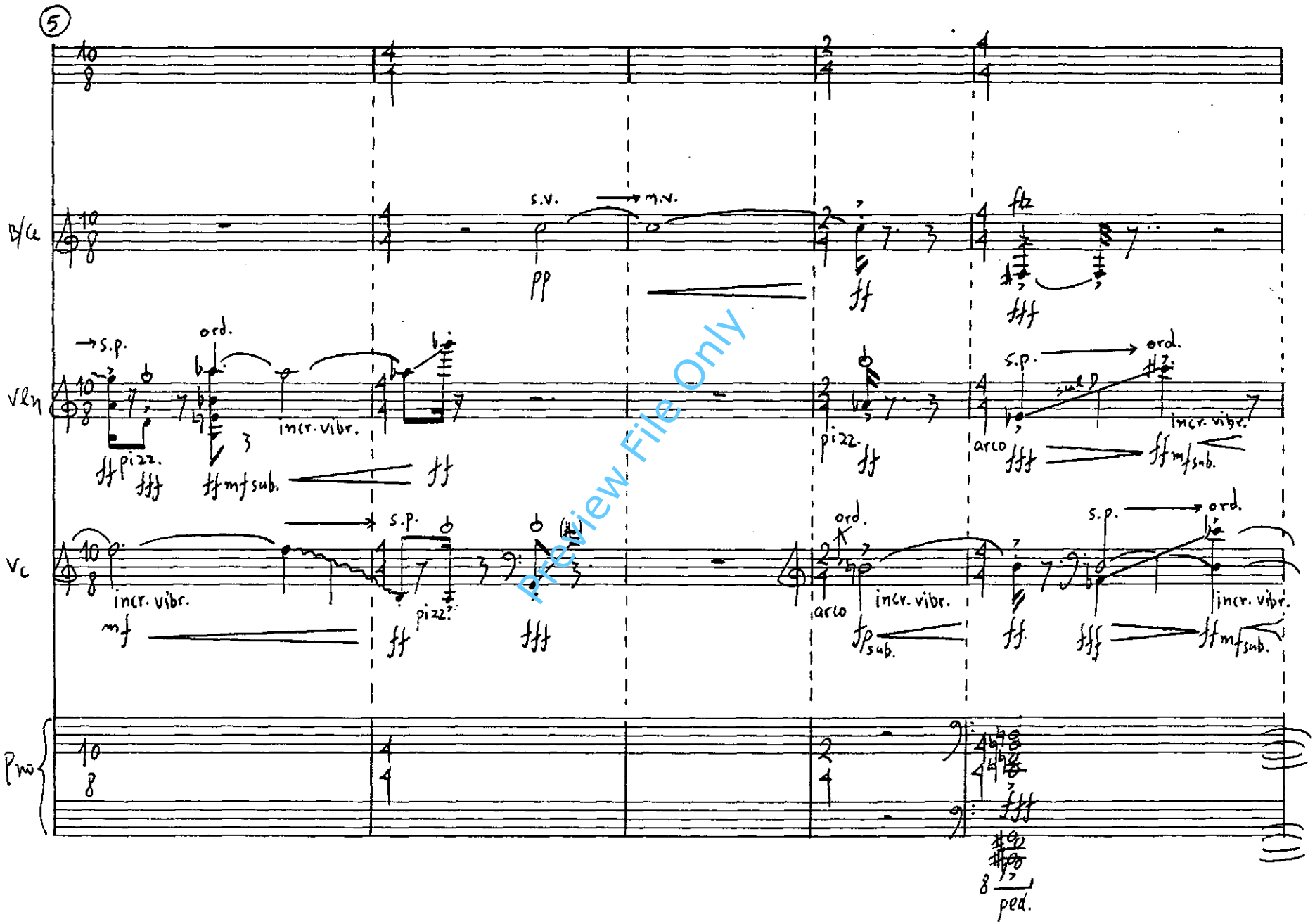

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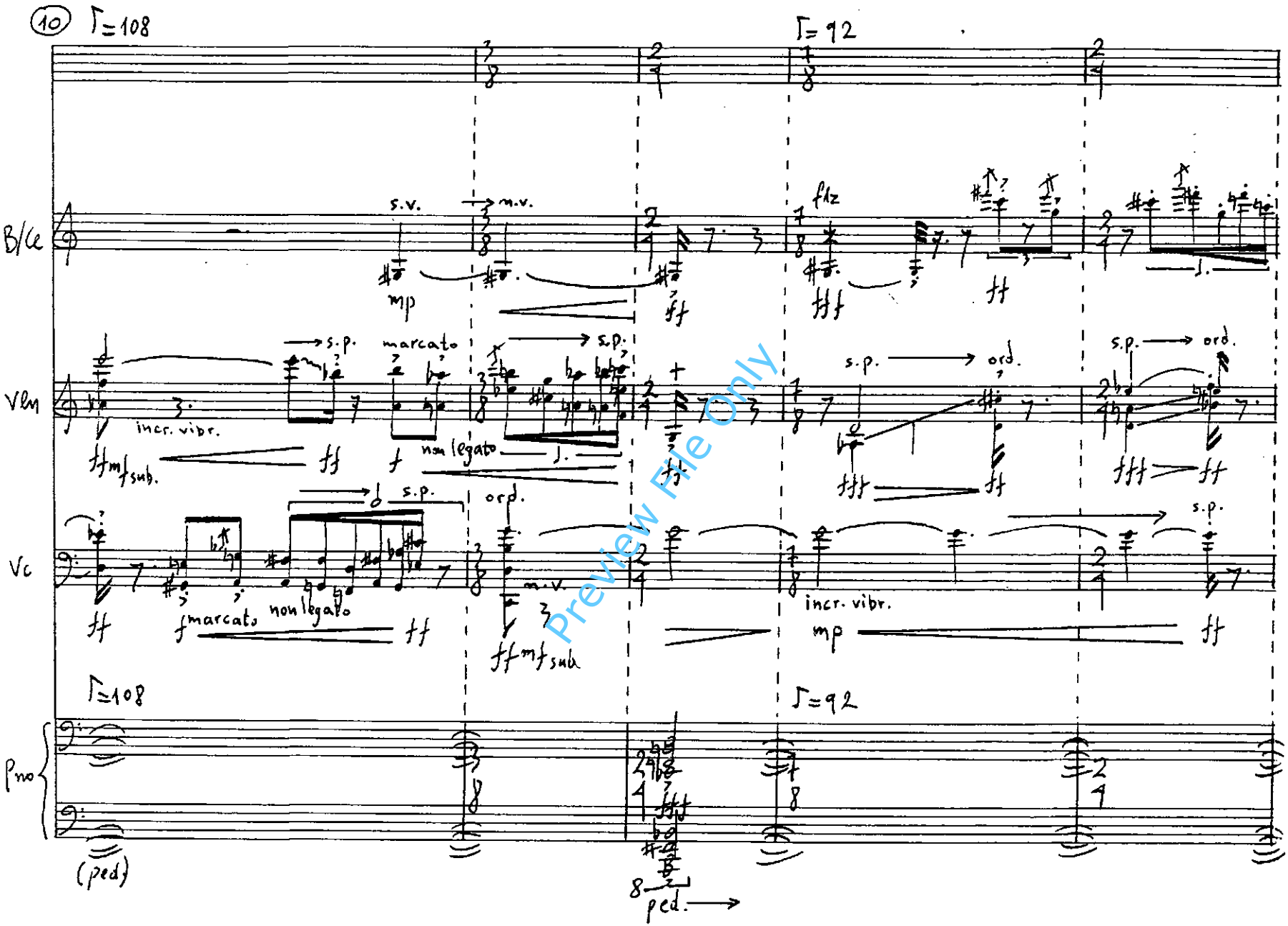

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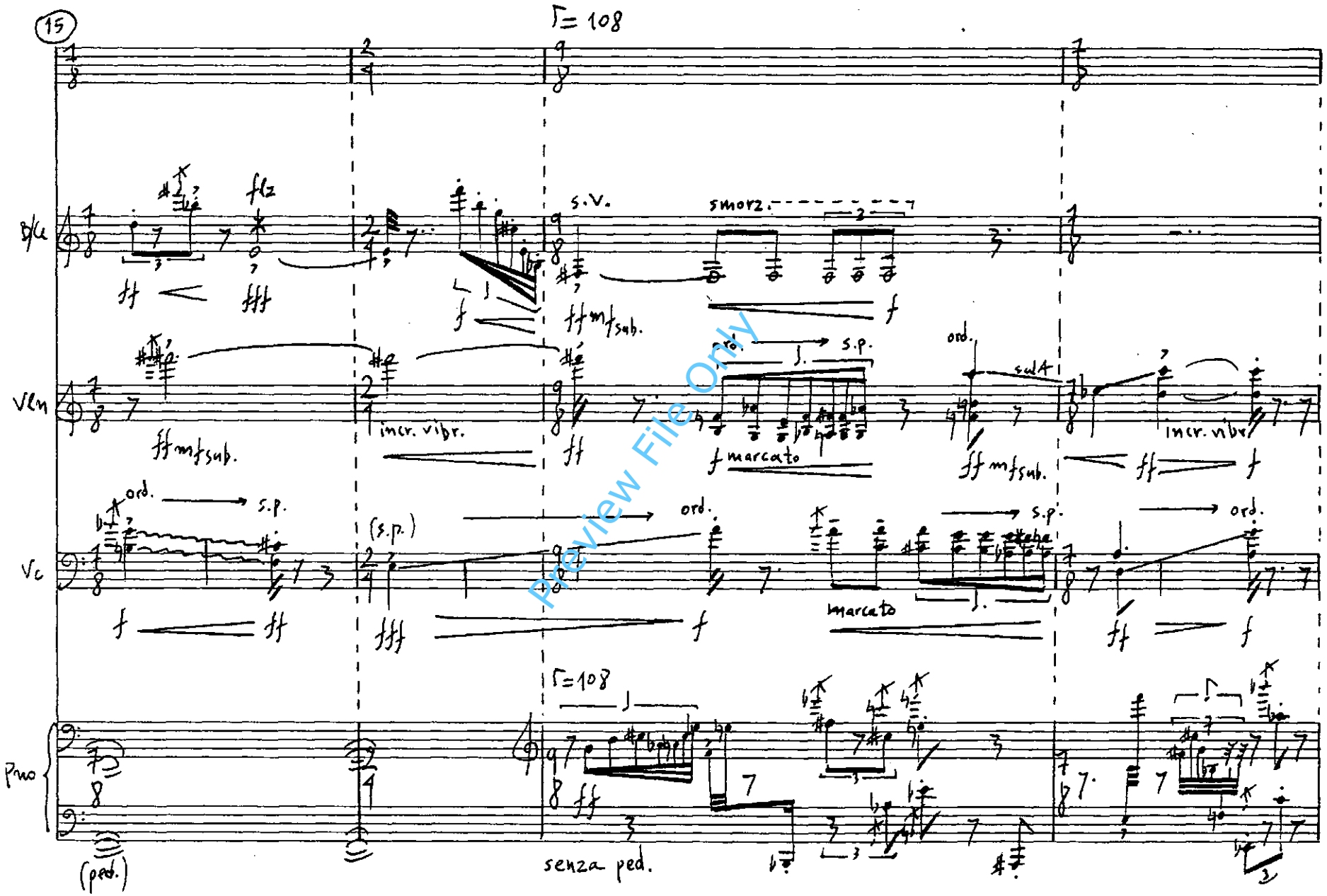

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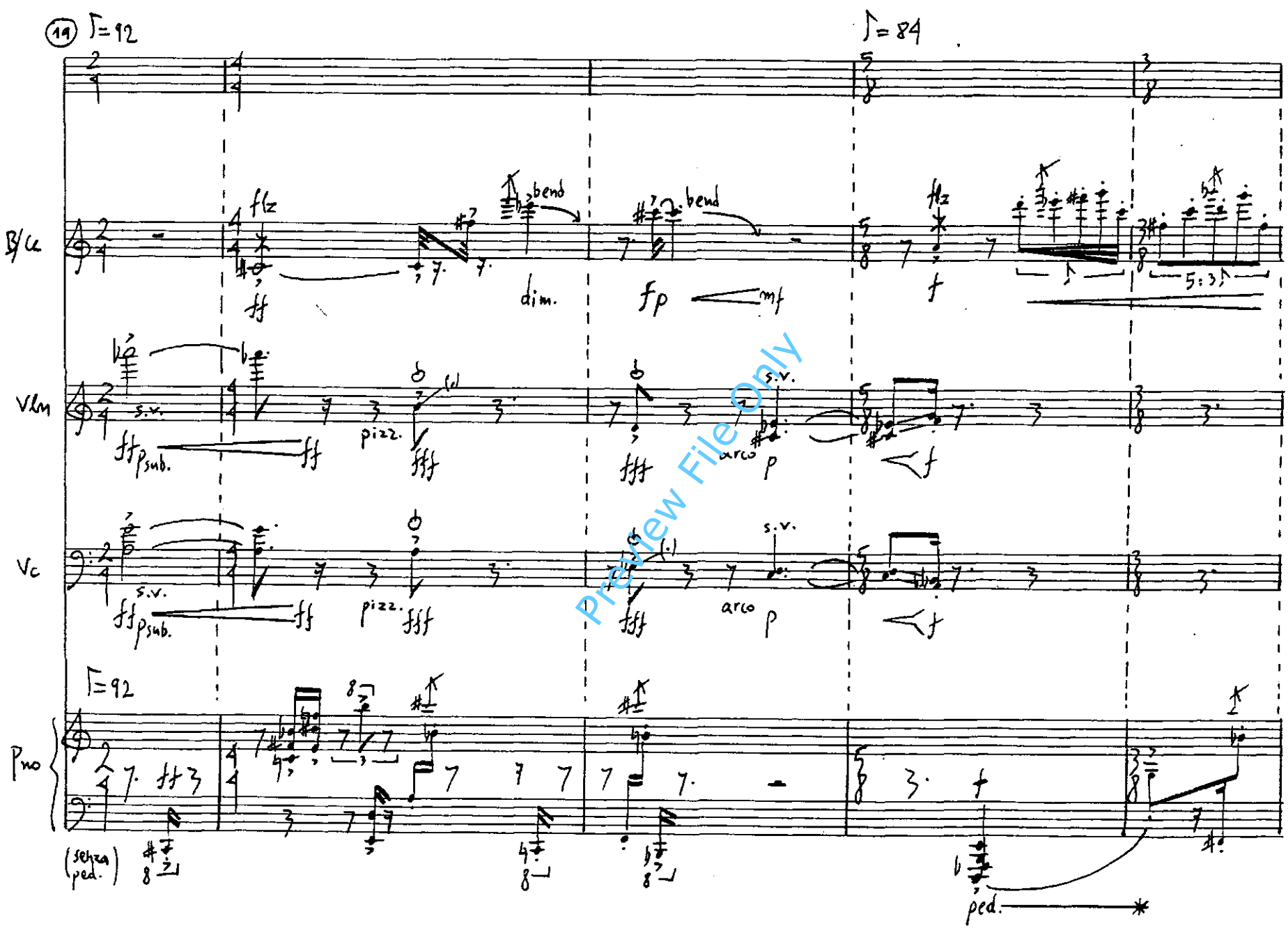

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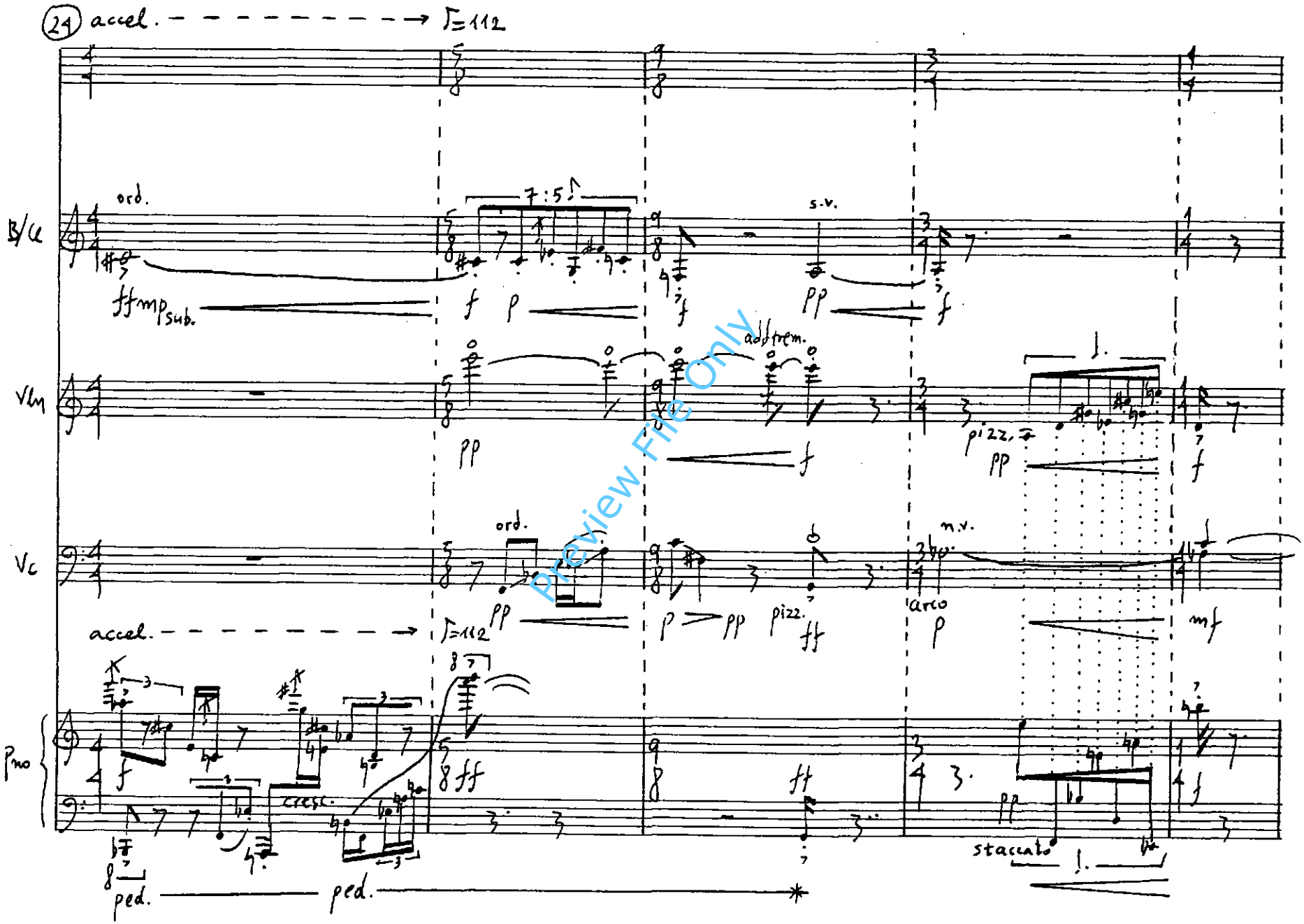

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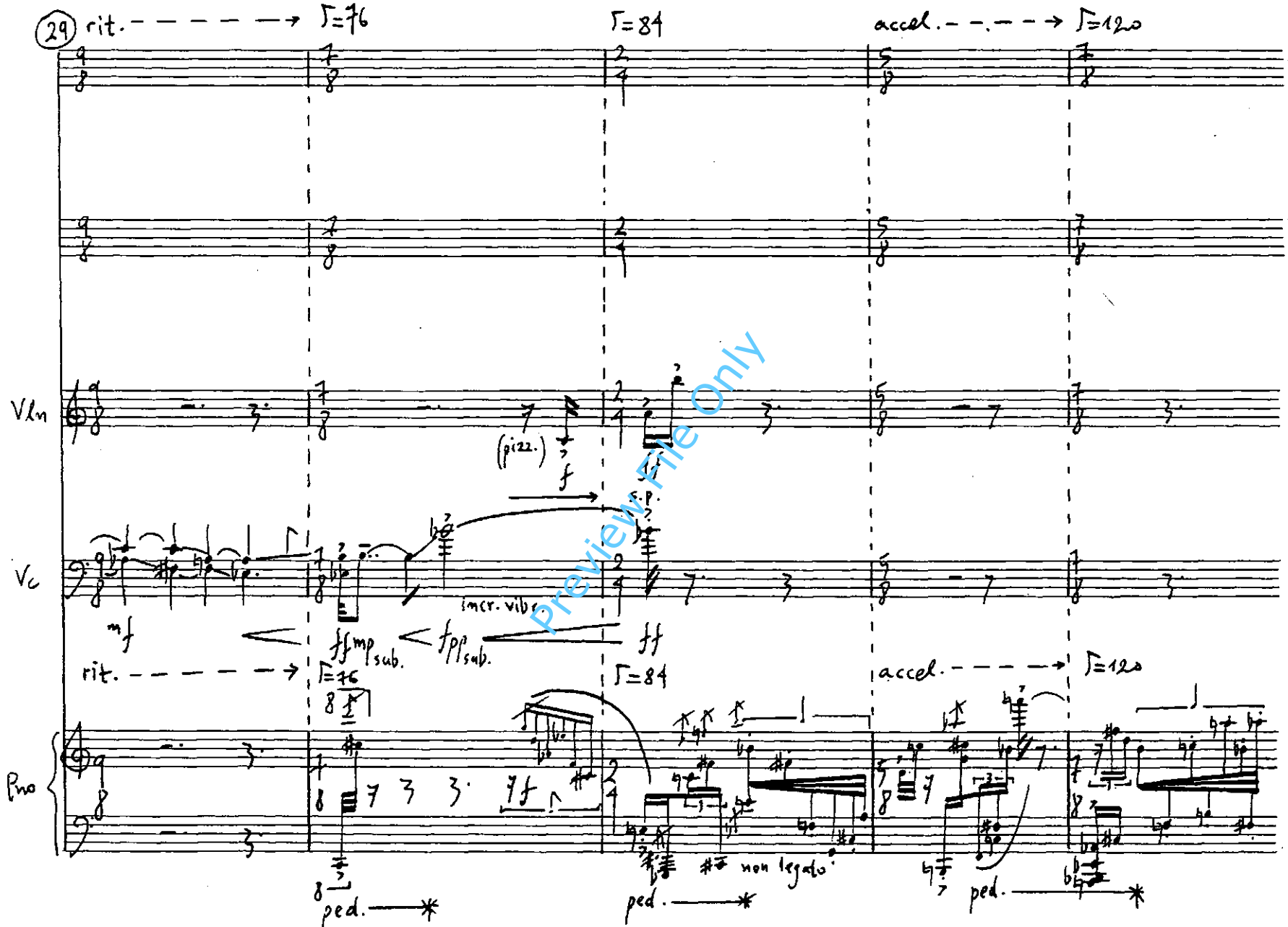

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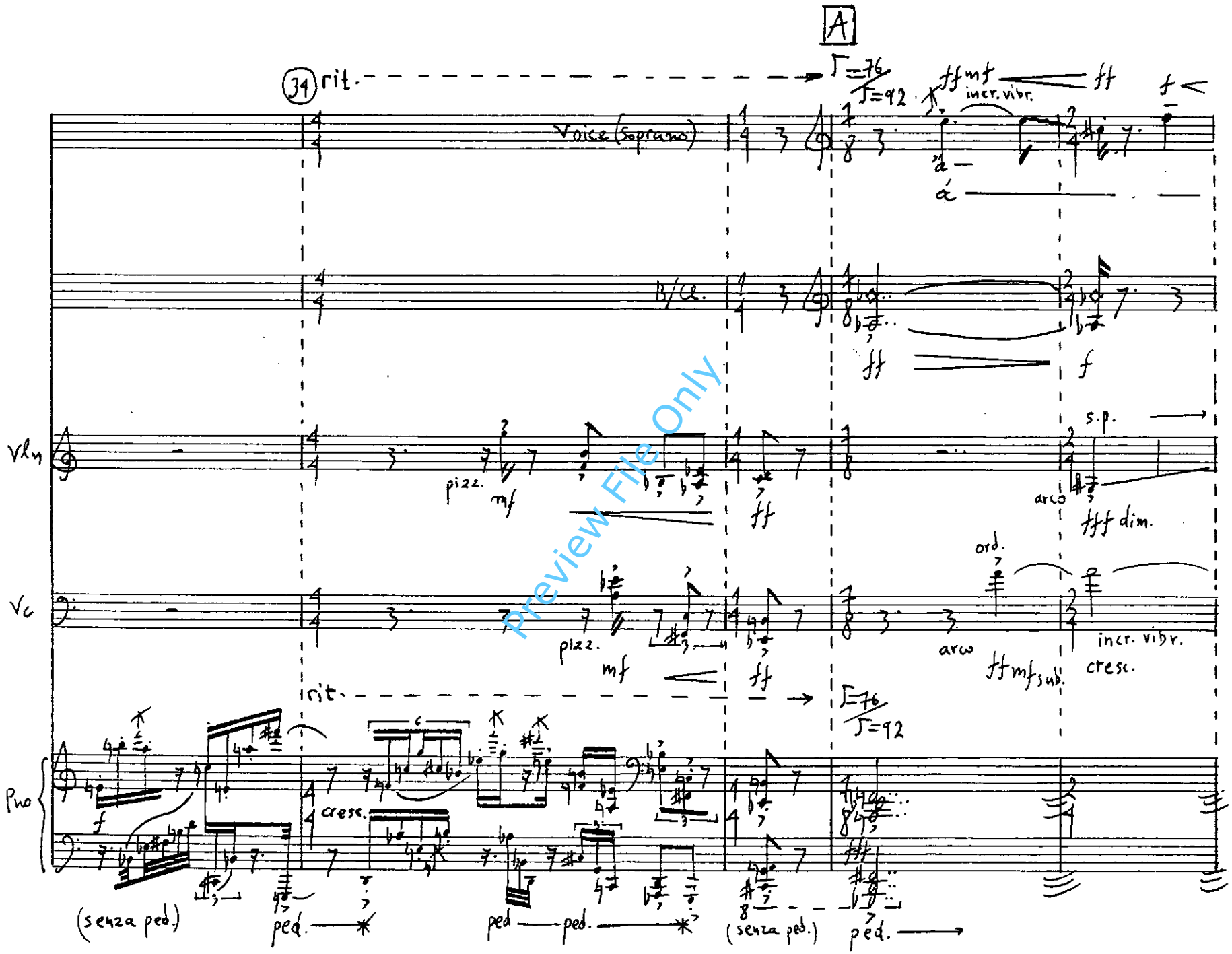

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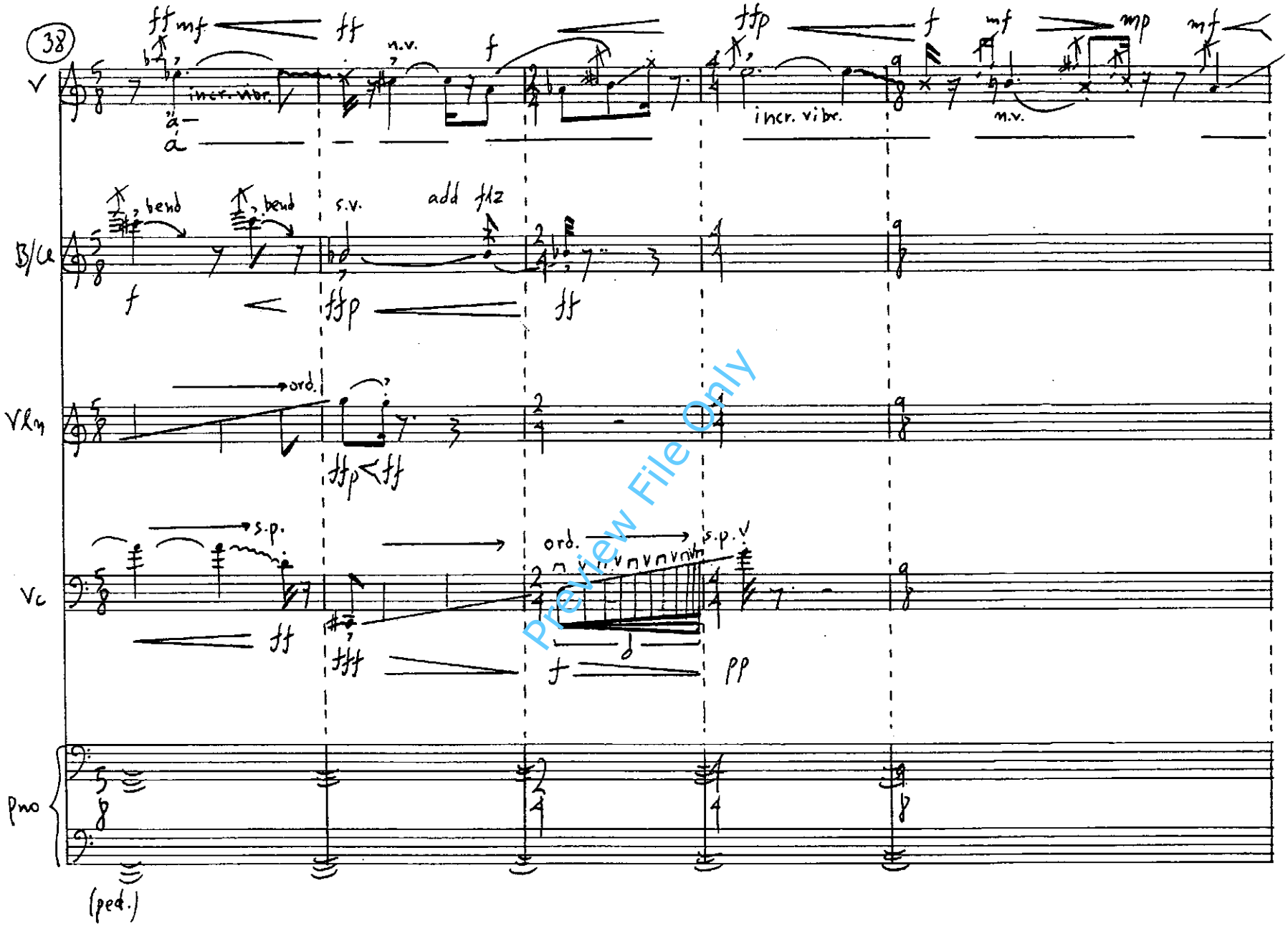

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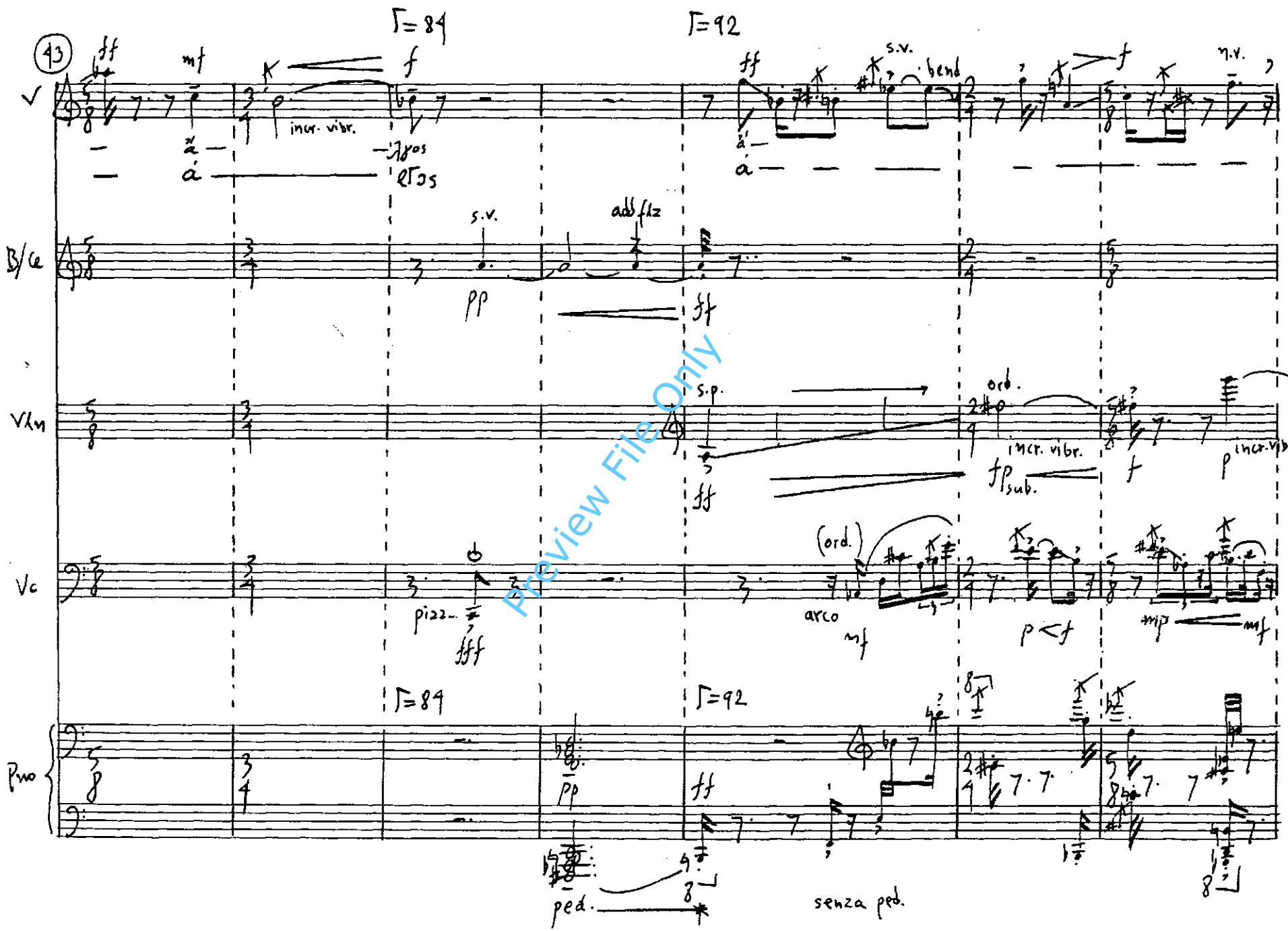

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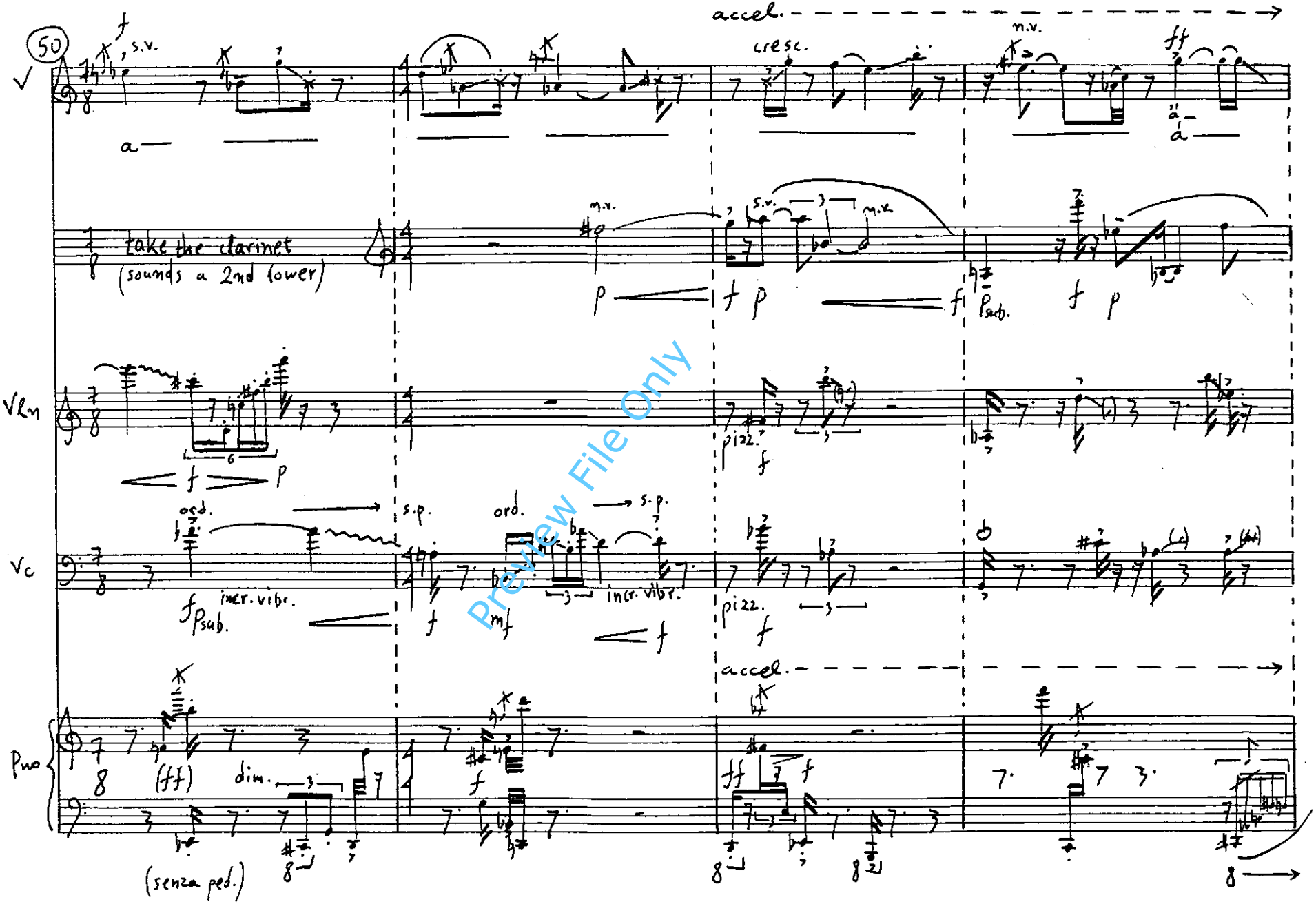

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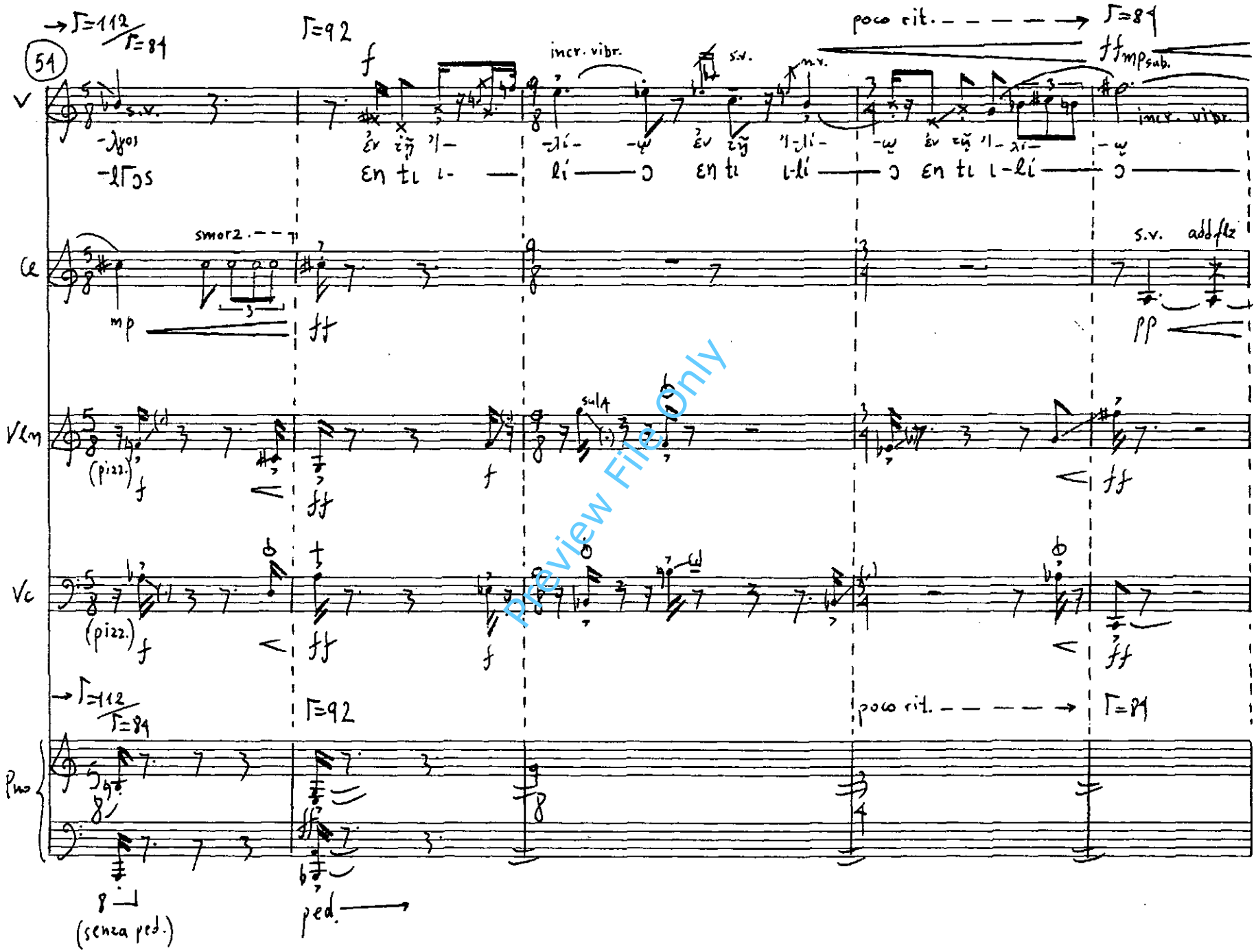

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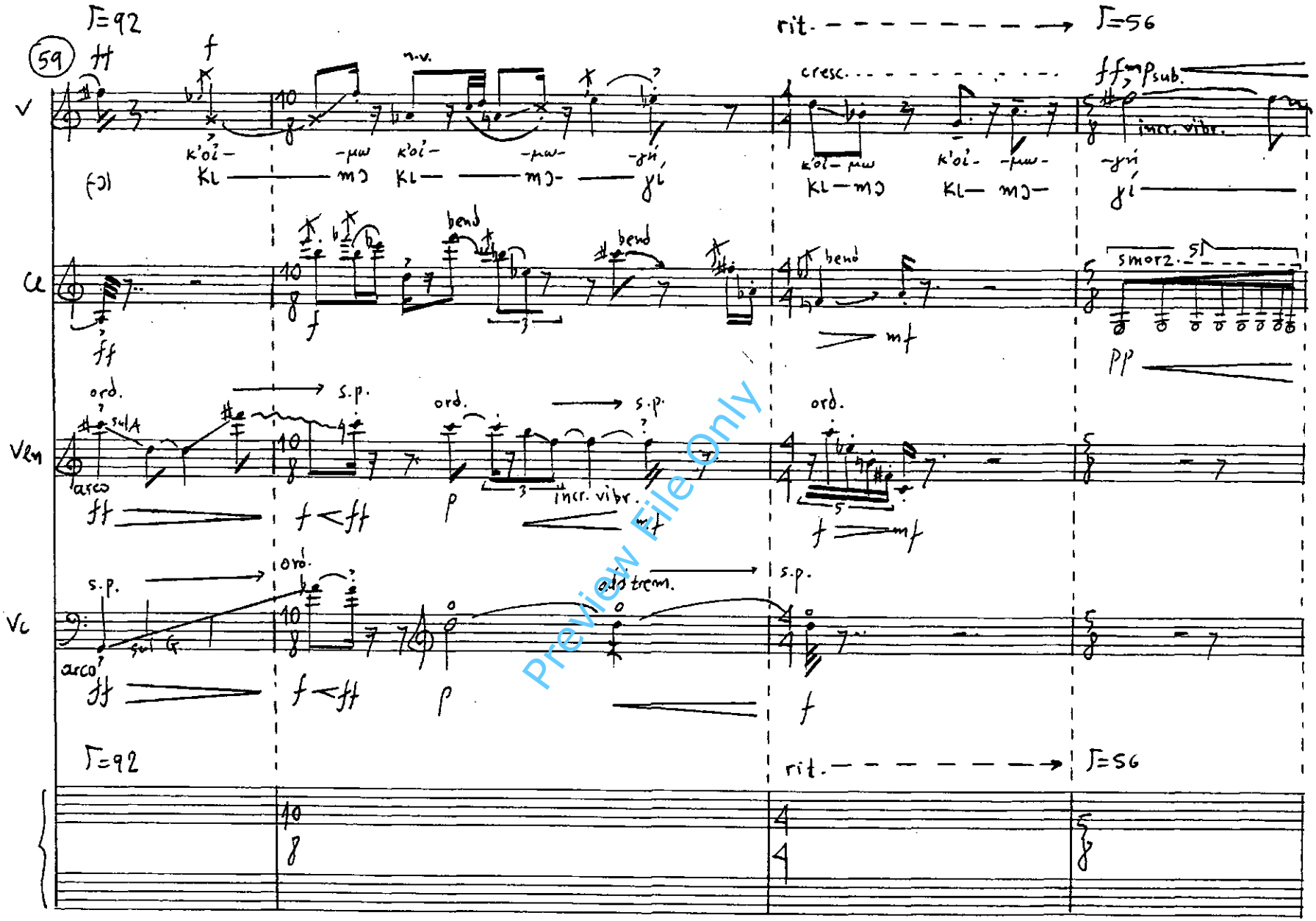

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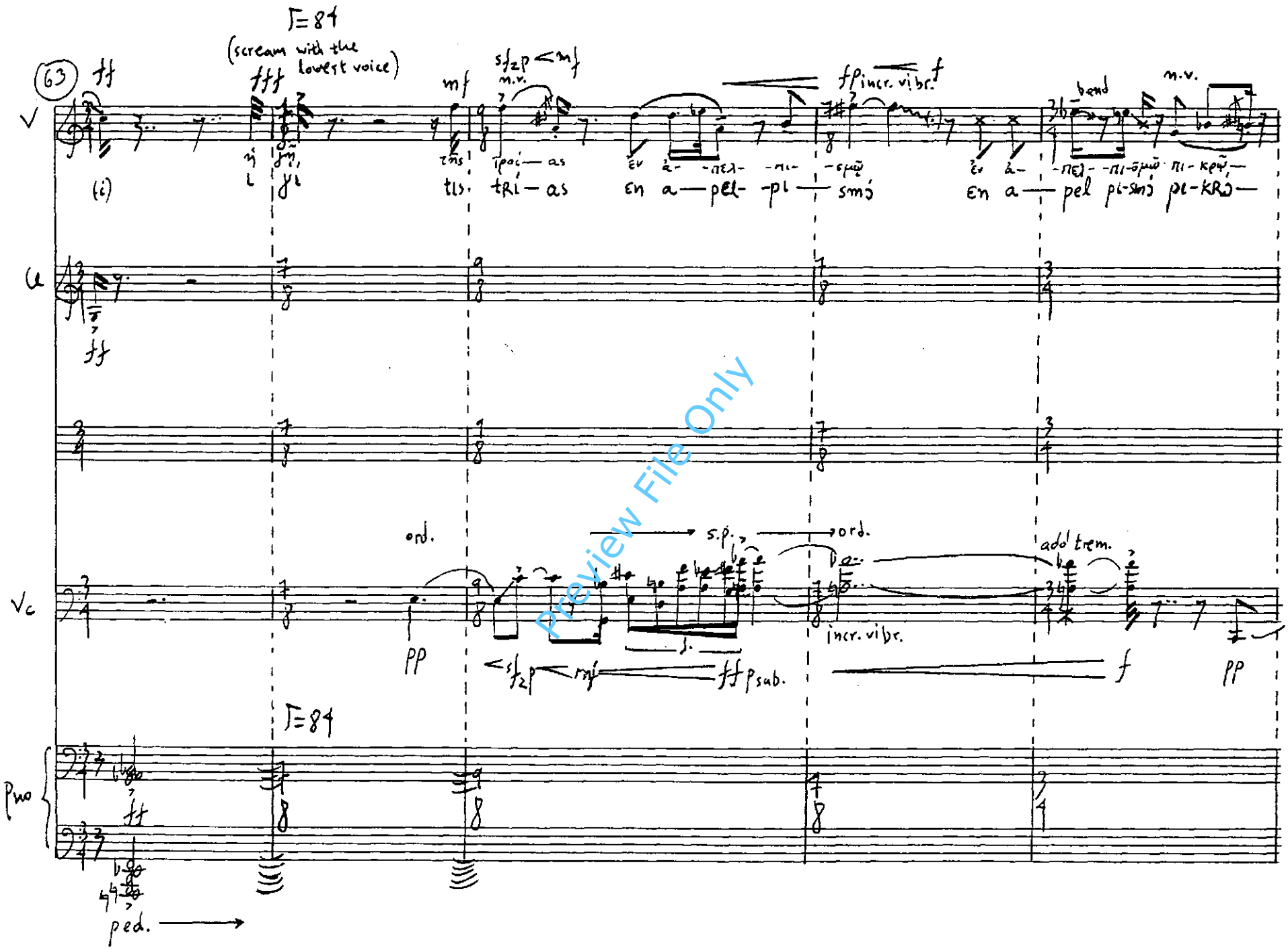

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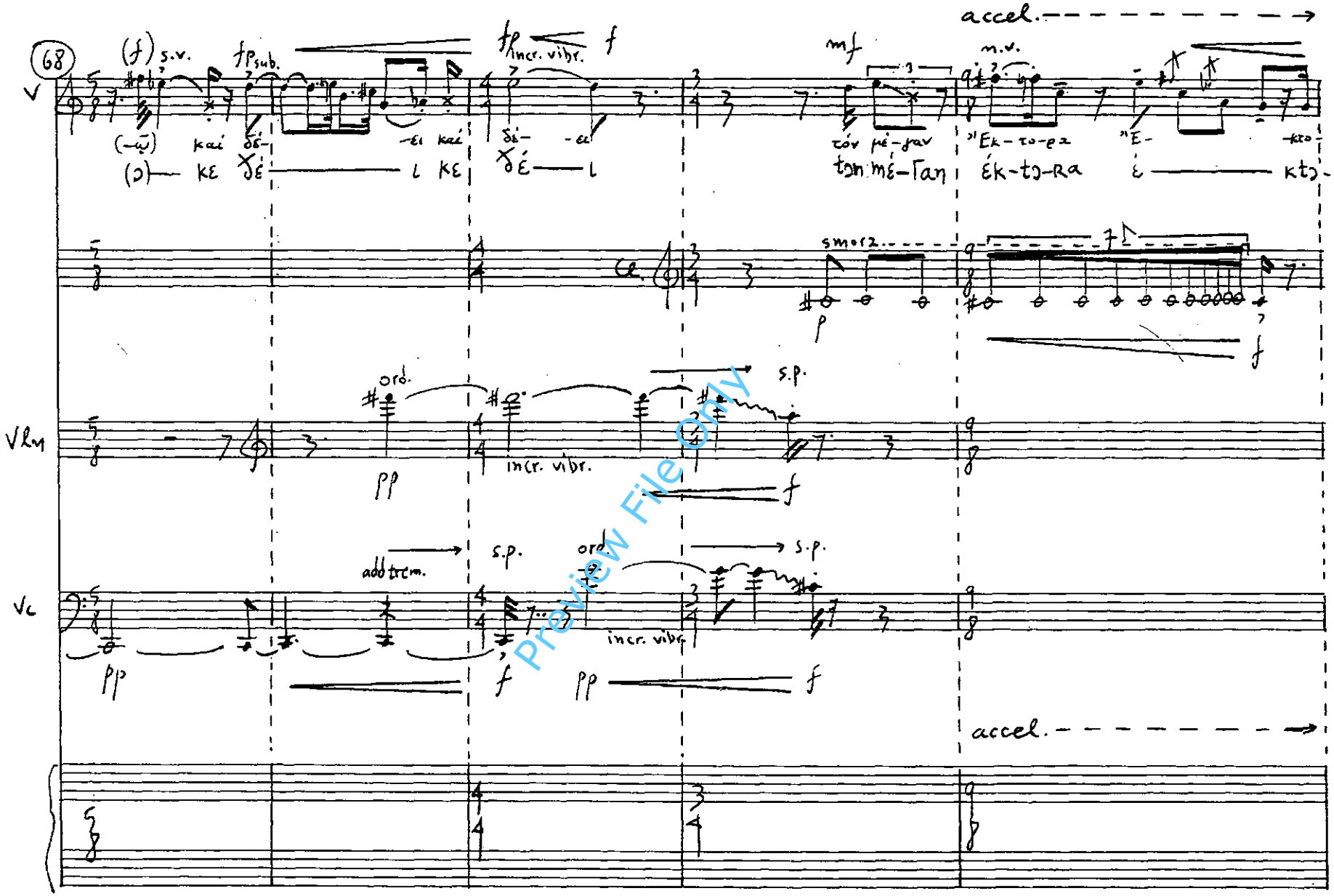

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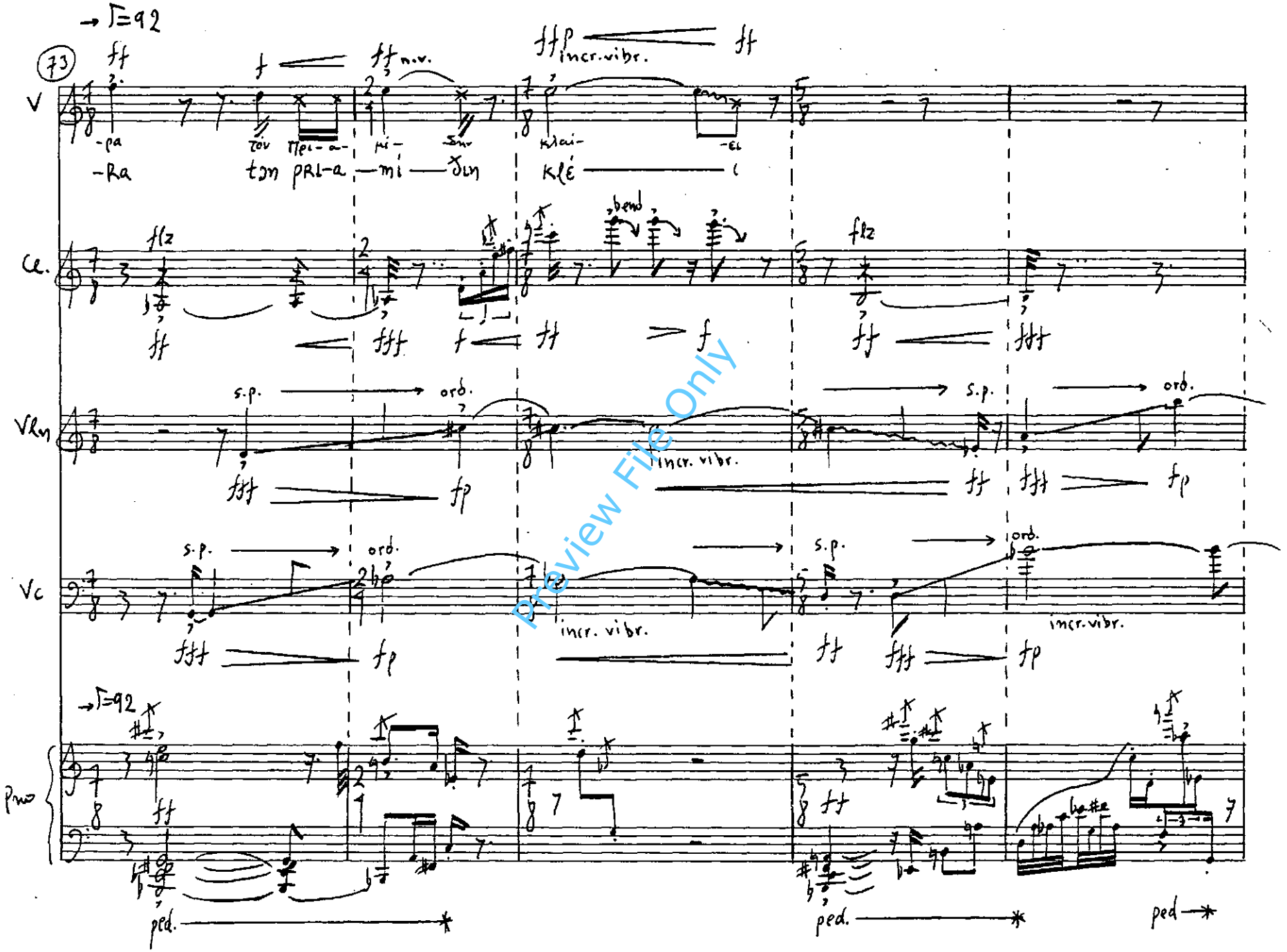

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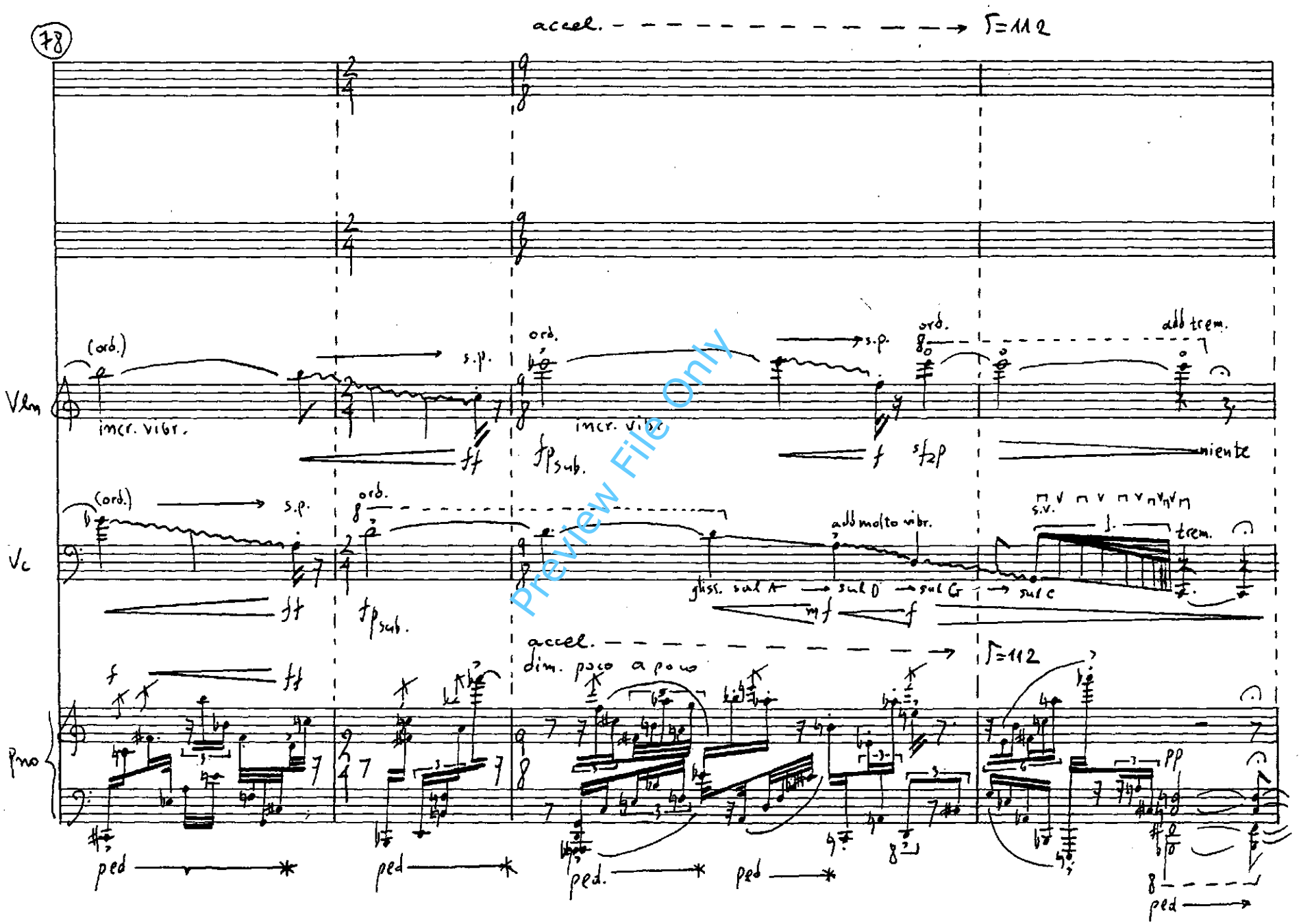

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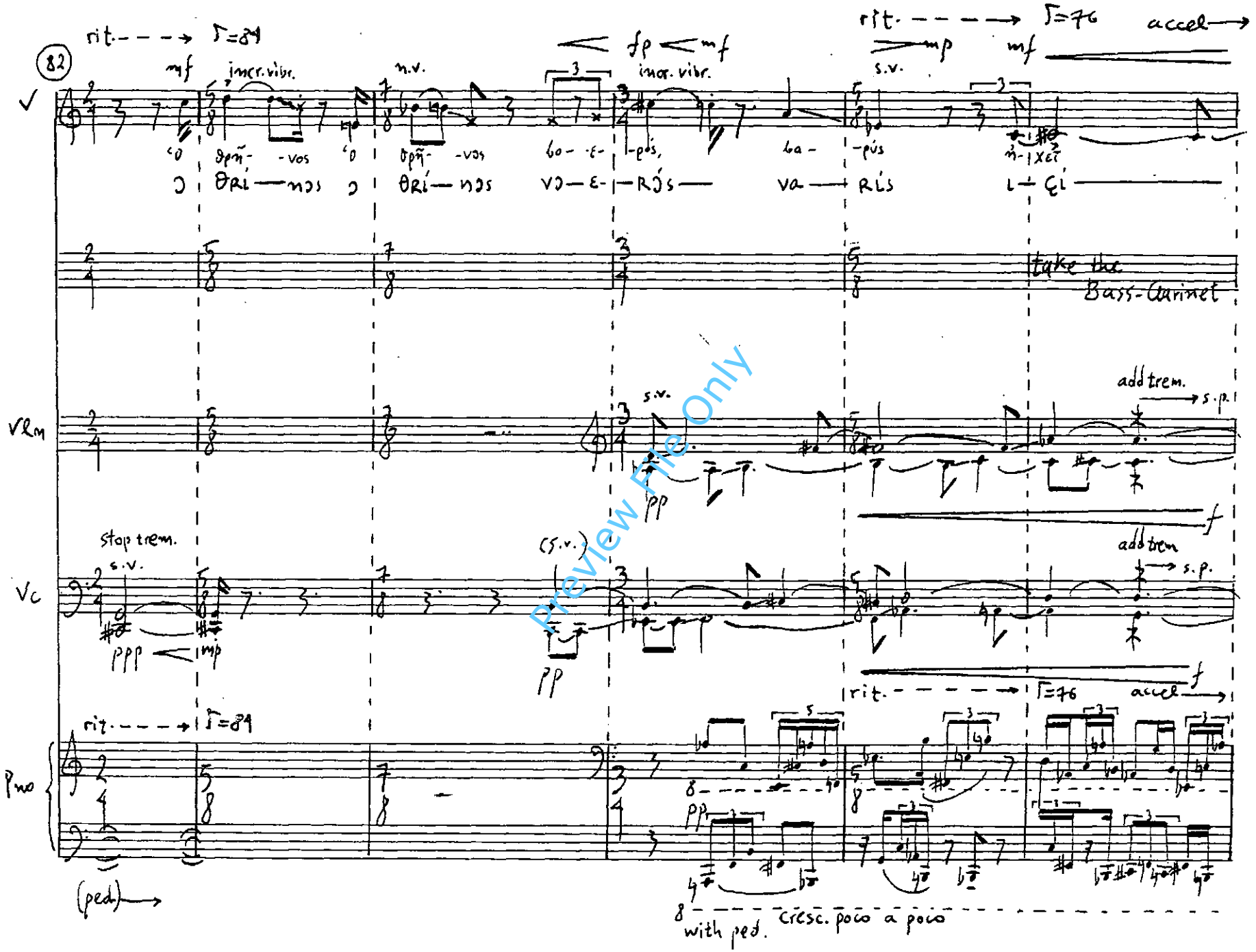

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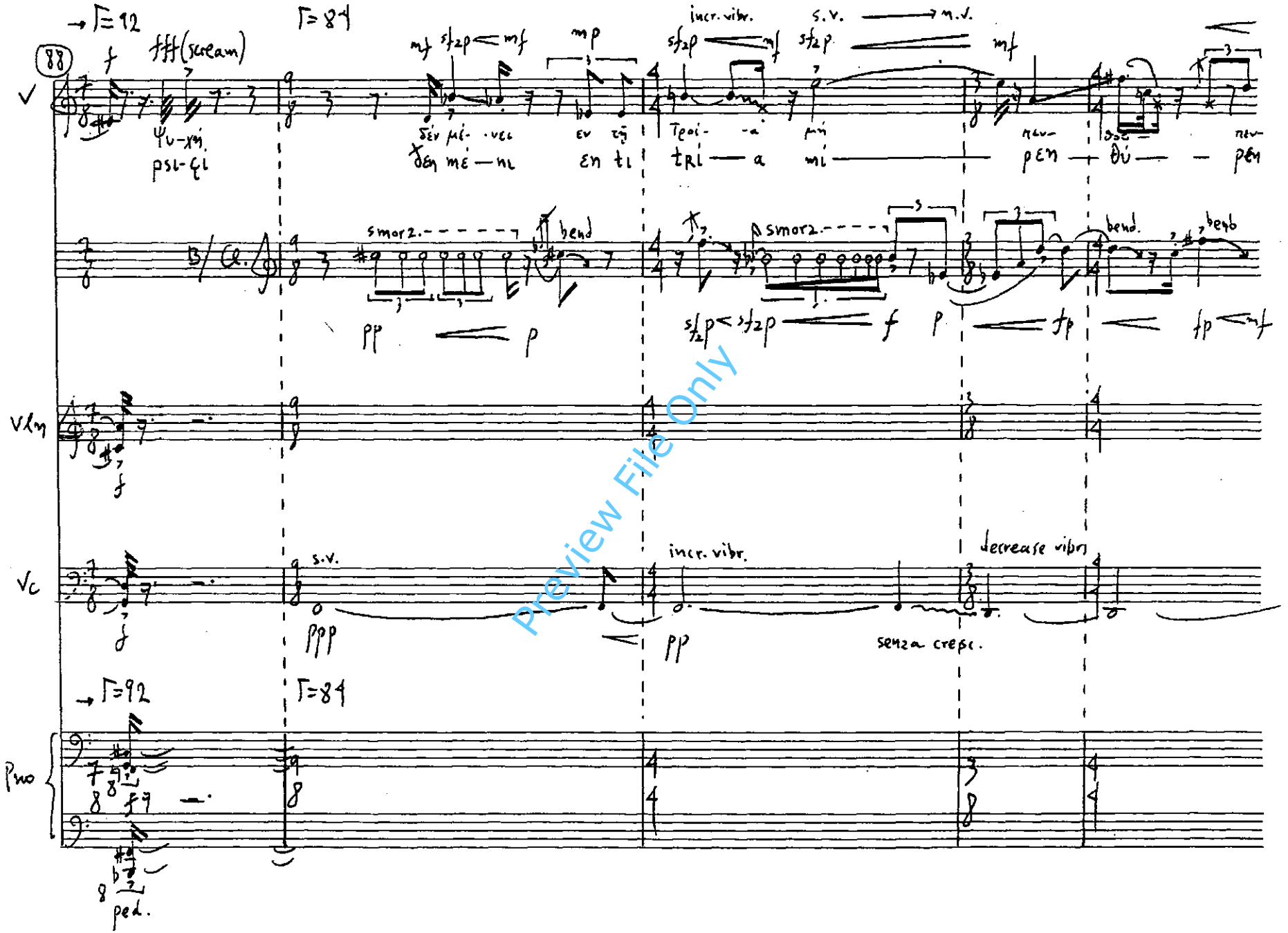

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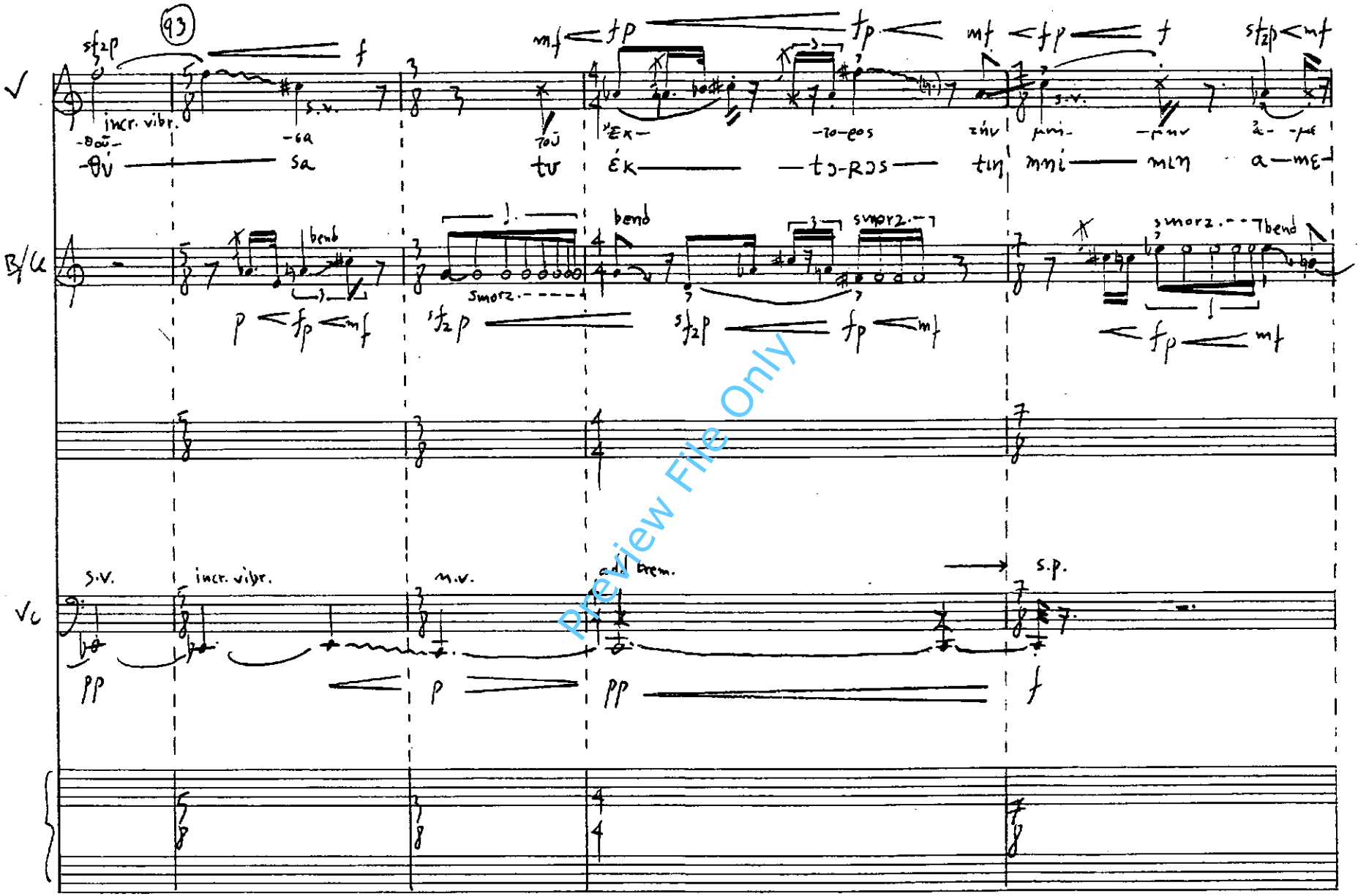

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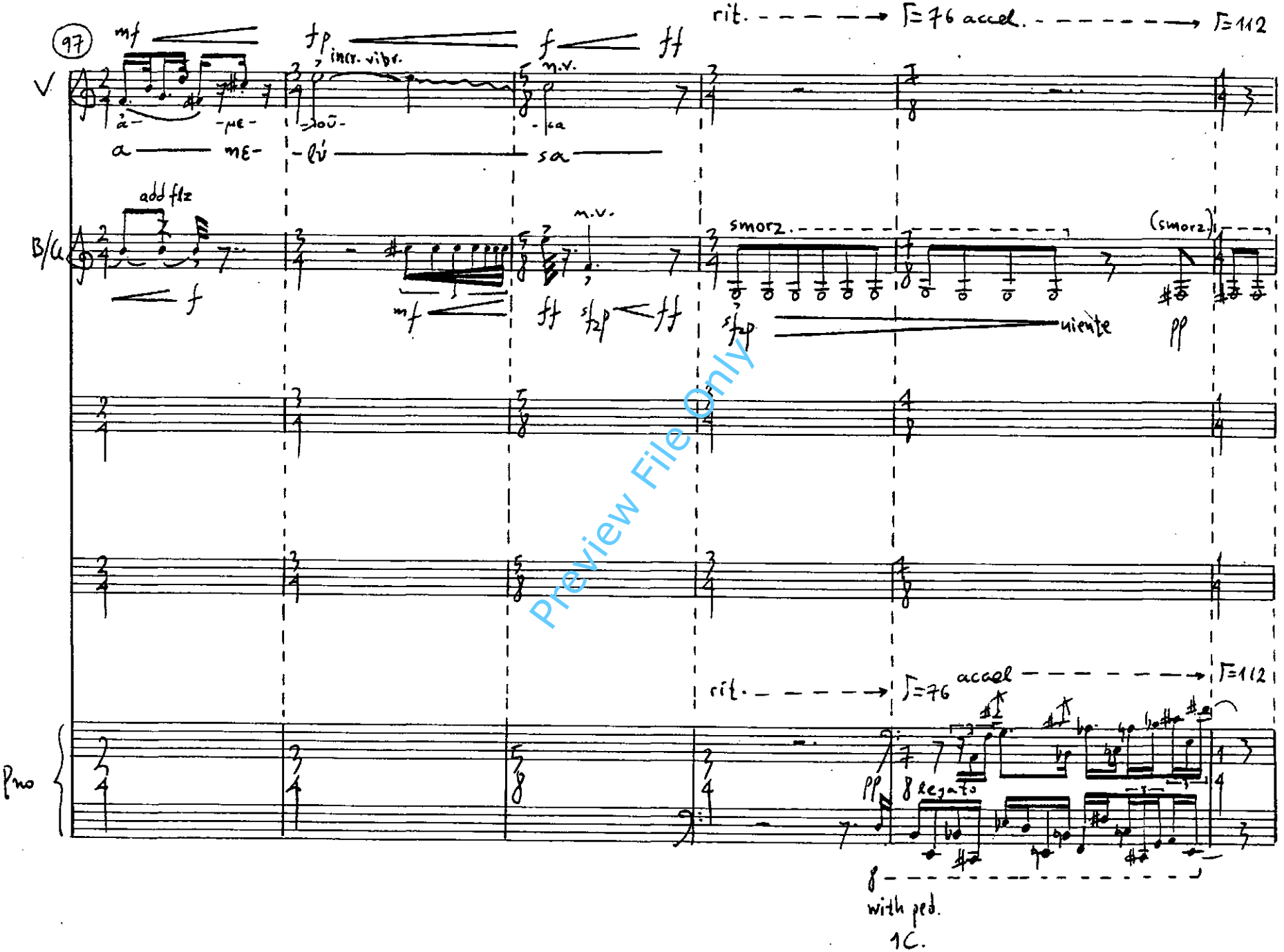

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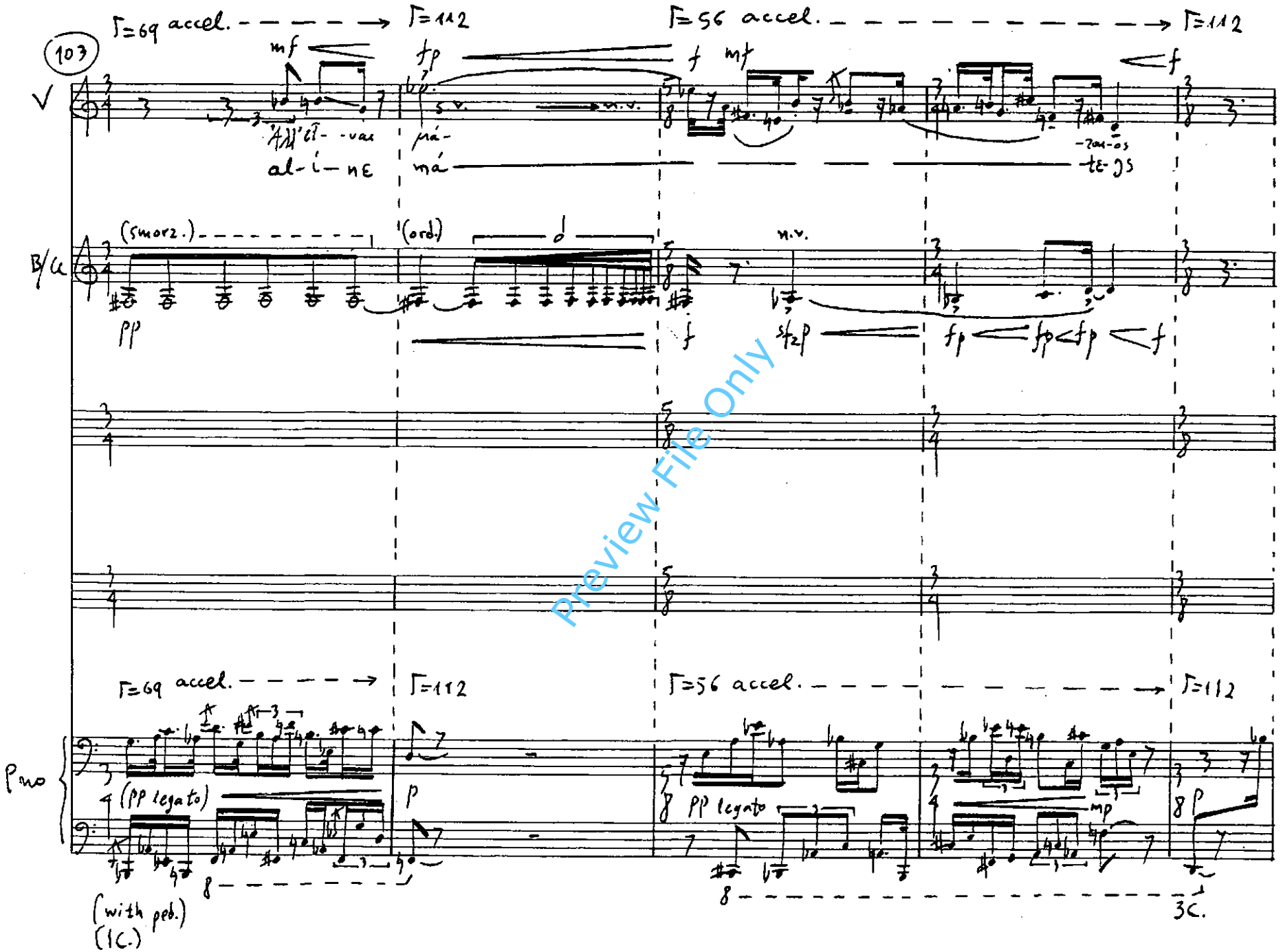

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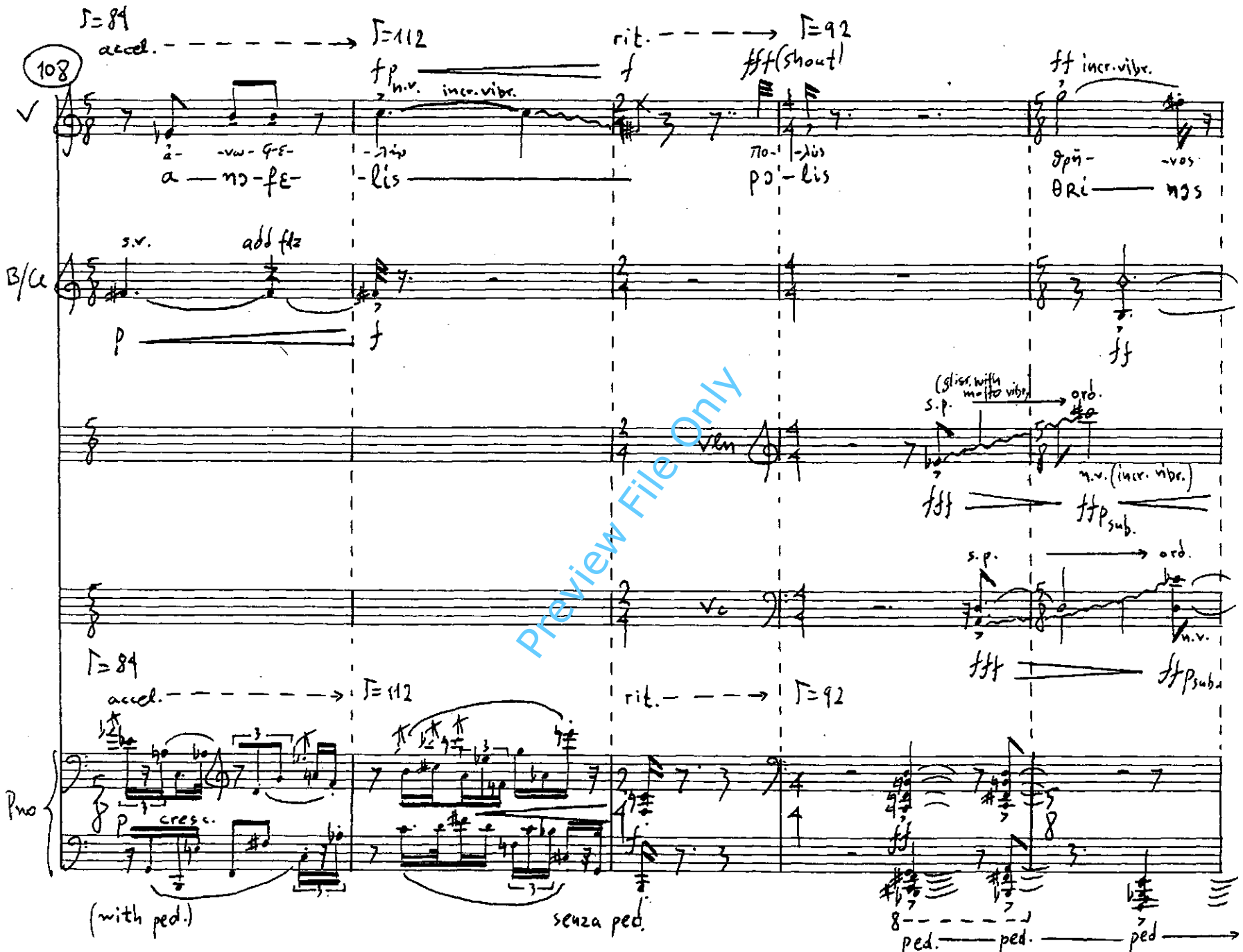

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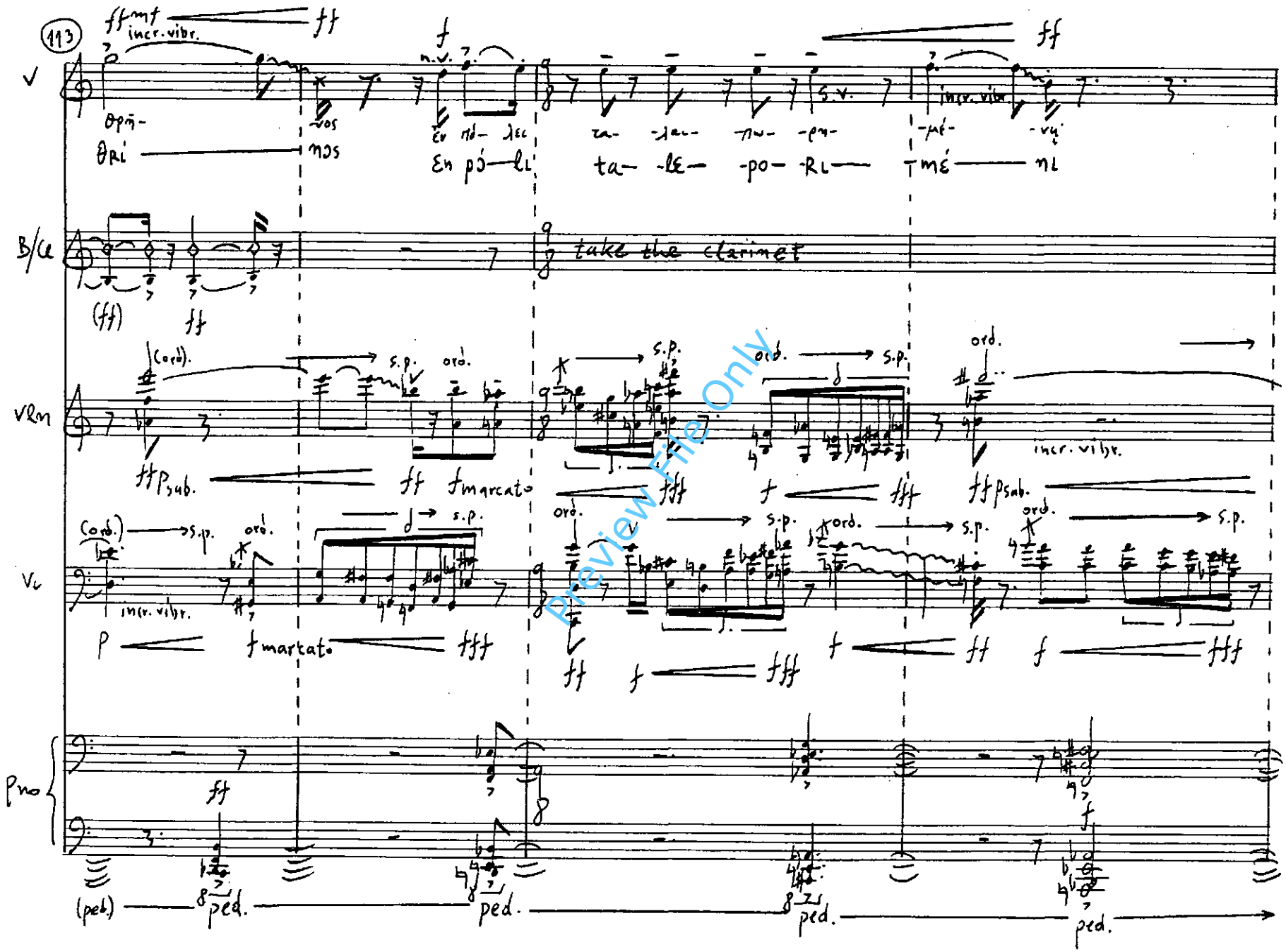

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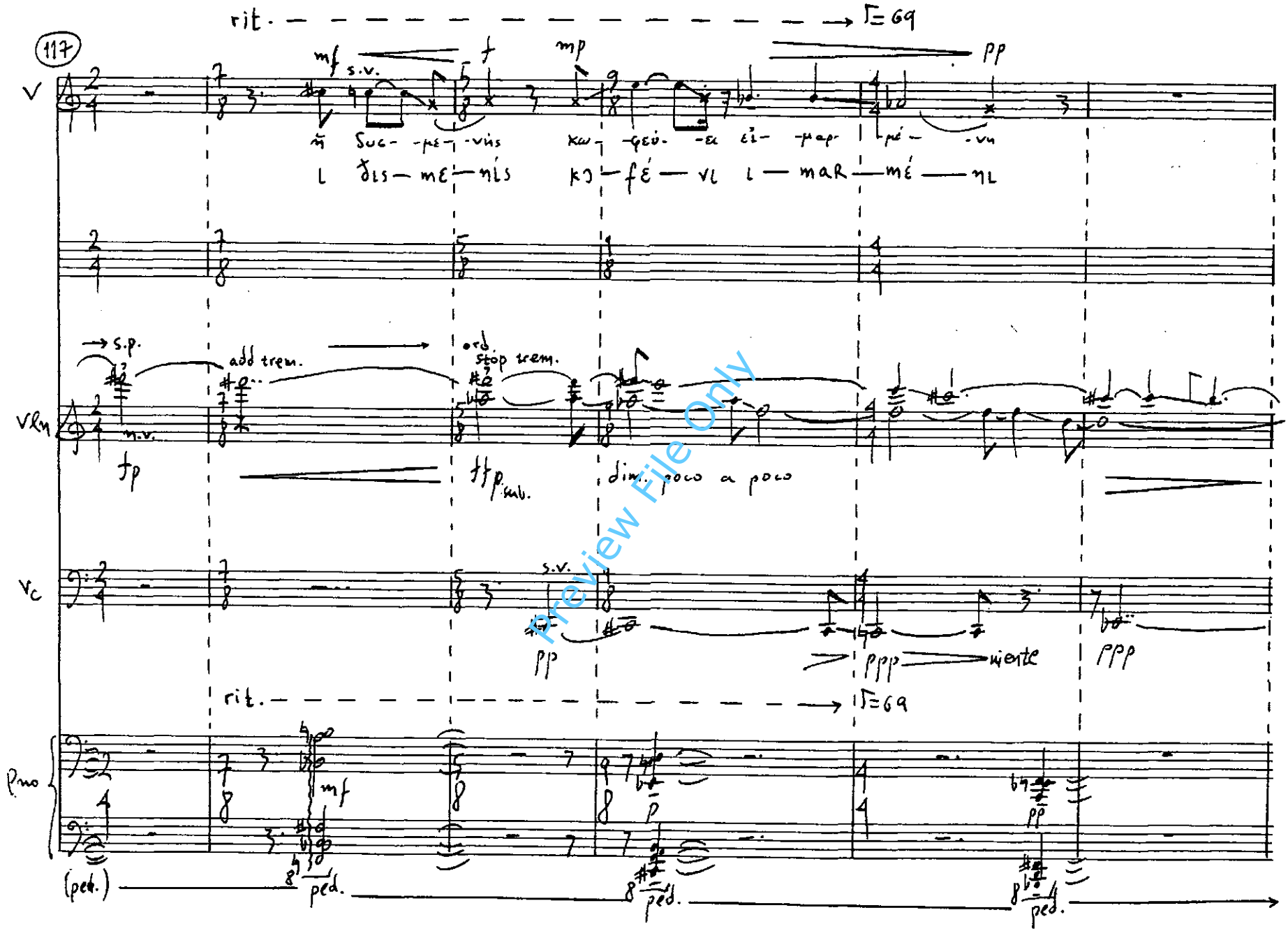

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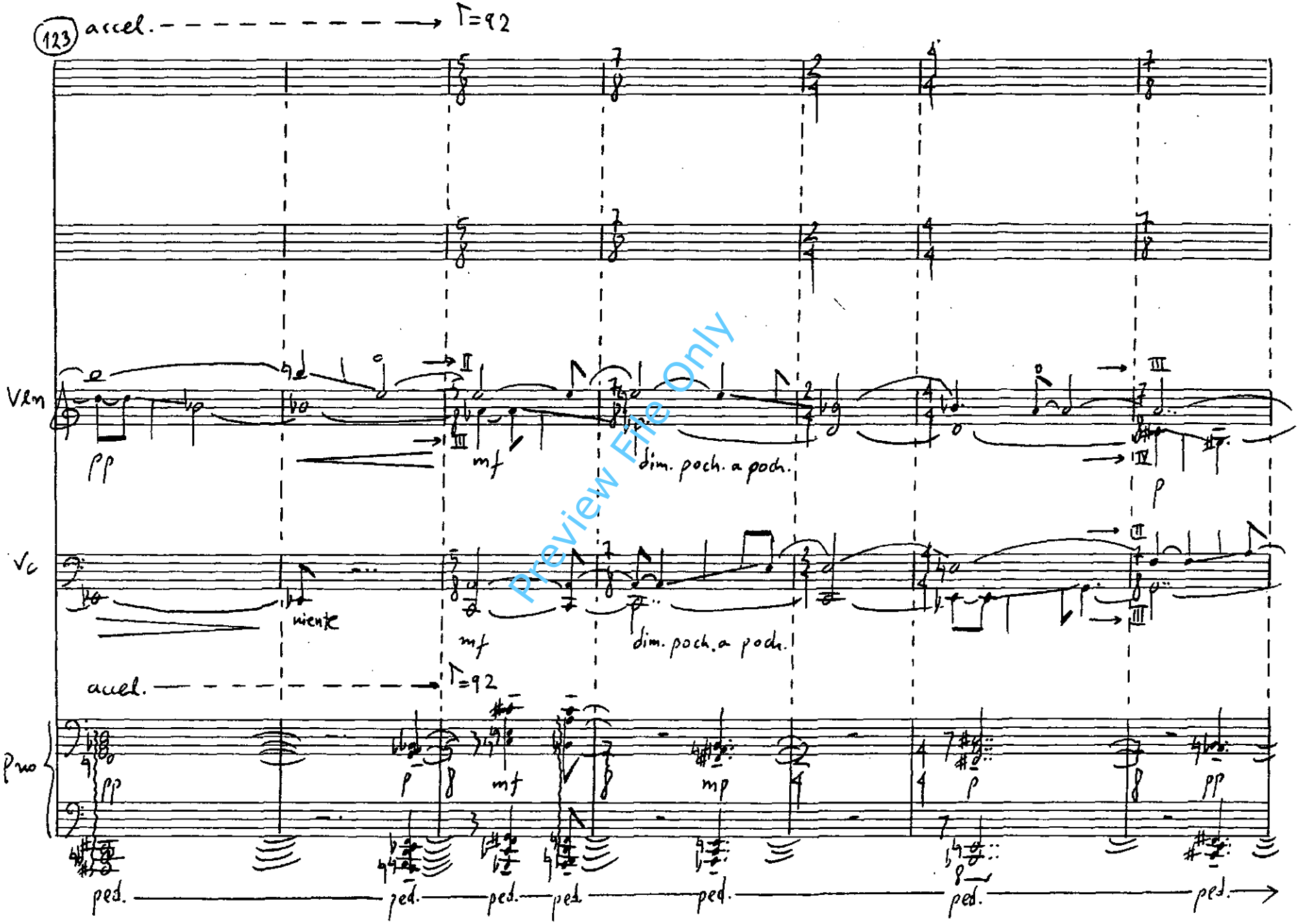

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