Jean Sibelius

Suite

for Violin and String Orchestra
Op. 117

SCORE

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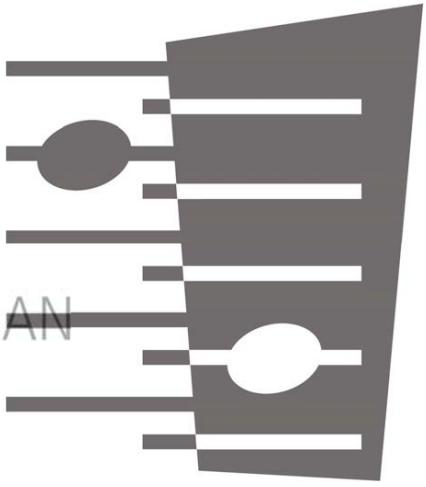

FENNICA GEHRMAN

FENNICA GEHRMAN OY, HELSINKI

Suite for Violin and String Orchestra [op. 117]

As is well known, Sibelius put the finishing touches to his orchestral work Tapiola in 1926. During the same year he wrote incidental music for a production of Shakespeare's "The Tempest" at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen. He created a concert version of this during 1927-28. The period which follows these events is often referred to as "the silence of Järvenpää", during which not a single major symphonic work was ever published from his pen.

This is not to say that Sibelius was inactive. Erik Tawaststjerna makes it clear in his biography that Sibelius worked intensively on an eighth symphony during the early 1930's, though the results were never exposed to public scrutiny. During the same period the composer also wrote an number of small-scale works and turned to reworking some of his early output.

In 1929 Sibelius sent some small pieces to the New York publisher Carl Fischer for consideration. Included among these was the Suite for Violin and String Orchestra, to which he had assigned the opus number 117. Fischer was obliged to refuse with this polite comment: "We must inform you that in view of the extremely unfortunate constellation in the music publishing field in the United States, it seems to us inadvisable at the present time to publish compositions of the high standard which you have submitted to us. The market is very unfavorable for this class of music and we are compelled to return them to you with our regrets." Fischer's negative response with regard to the suite was evidently a blow to Sibelius' confidence. It is possible that this episode played its part in nurturing an undue level of self criticism in Sibelius, leading in turn to the demise of the eighth symphony. A comment on the score of the suite reads "Skizz. Omarbetas!" (Sketch. Still to be worked on.) Sibelius never returned to it, however, and he seems to have forgotten it thereafter.

The Suite for Violin and String Orchestra represents the culmination point in a series of works written for violin and orchestra which started with the Serenades op. 69 and continued with the Humoresques op. 87 and 89. Together these works bear witness to the composer's deep insight into the instrumental possibilities of the violin. In these works, more limited in formal scope than the Violin Concerto though they be, the voice of the solo violin — Sibelius' second mother-tongue — unites with the orchestral writing of a mature and experienced symphonist.

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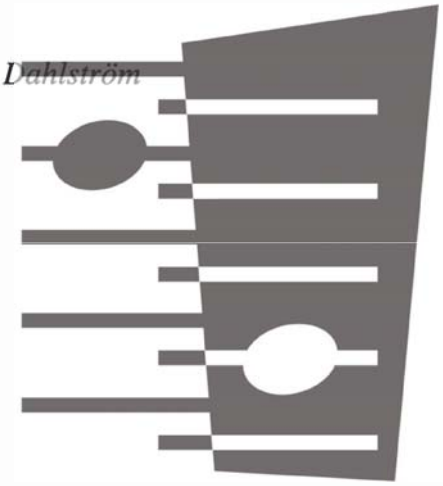
Fabian Dahlström



FENNICA GEHRMAN OY, HELSINKI

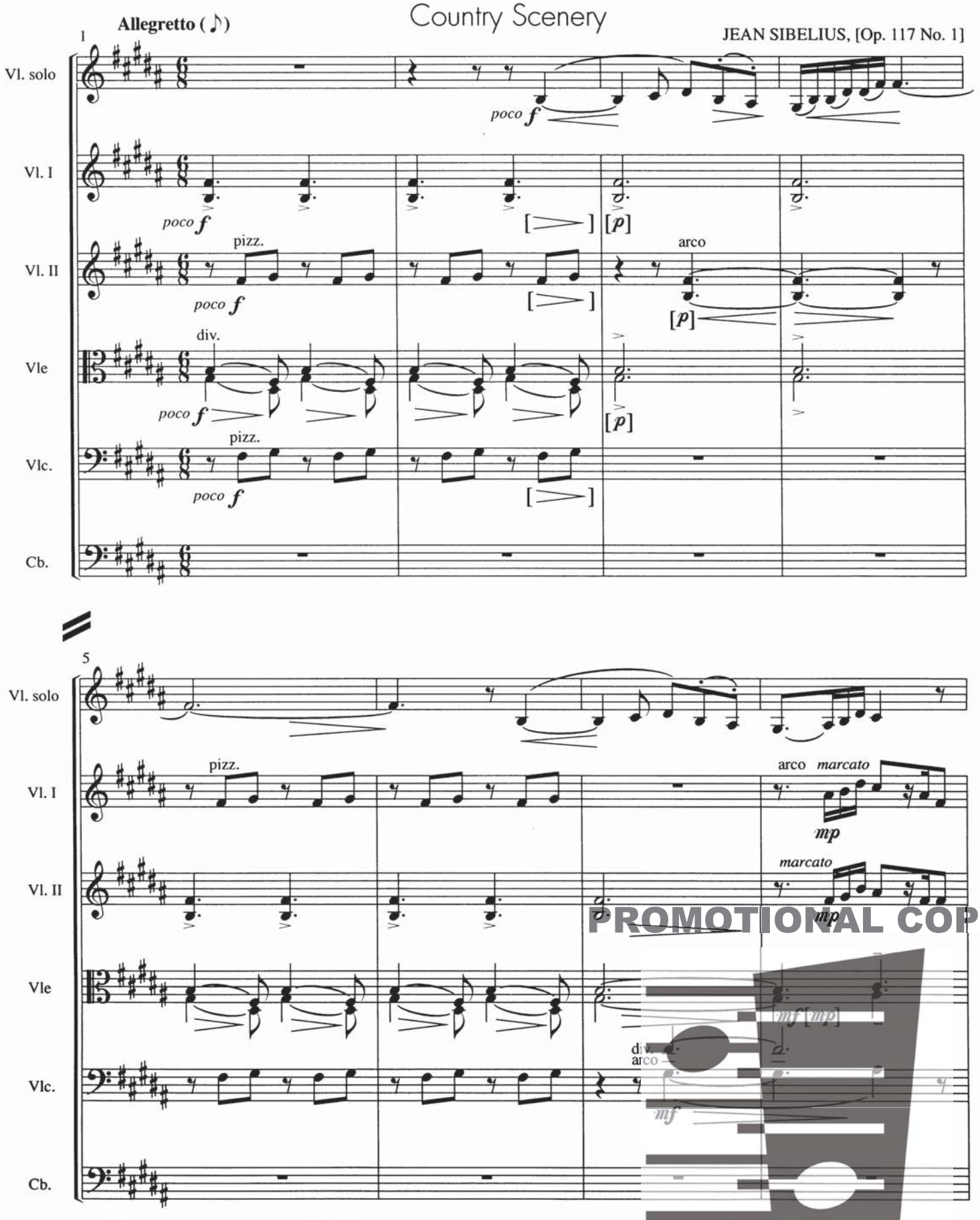
SUITE

for Violin and String Orchestra

I

Country Scenery

JEAN SIBELIUS, [Op. 117 No. 1]



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9

Vl. solo

Vl. I

cresc.

mf [ ]

Vl. II

cresc.

mf [ ]

Vle

[*mf*]

Vlc.

[ ]

p

Cb.

13

Vl. solo

mezzo

Vl. I

[ ] [ ]

mp

Vl. II

[ ] [ ]

mp

Vle

[ ]

Vlc.

[ ] [ ] *mf*

Cb.

pizz.

mf

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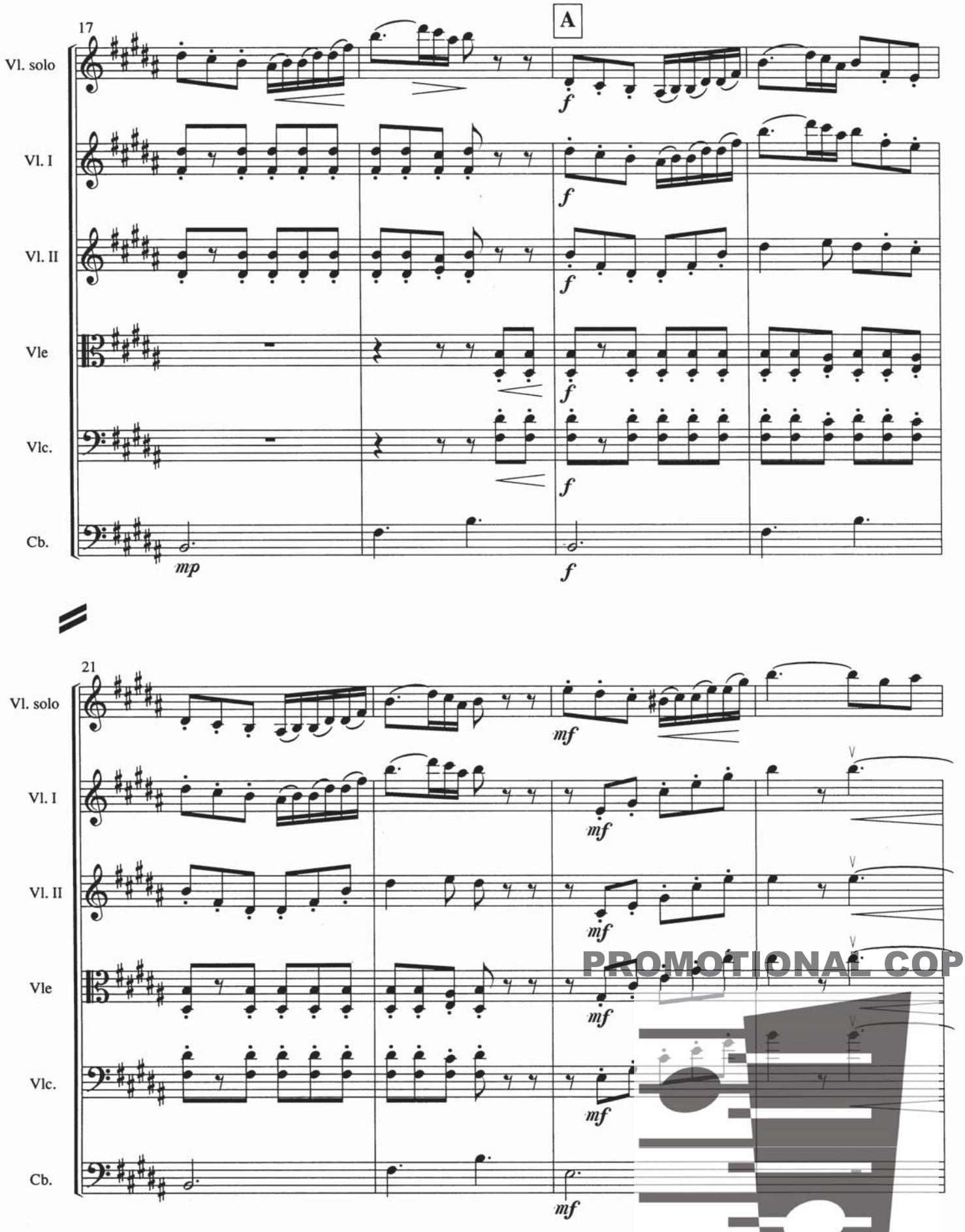

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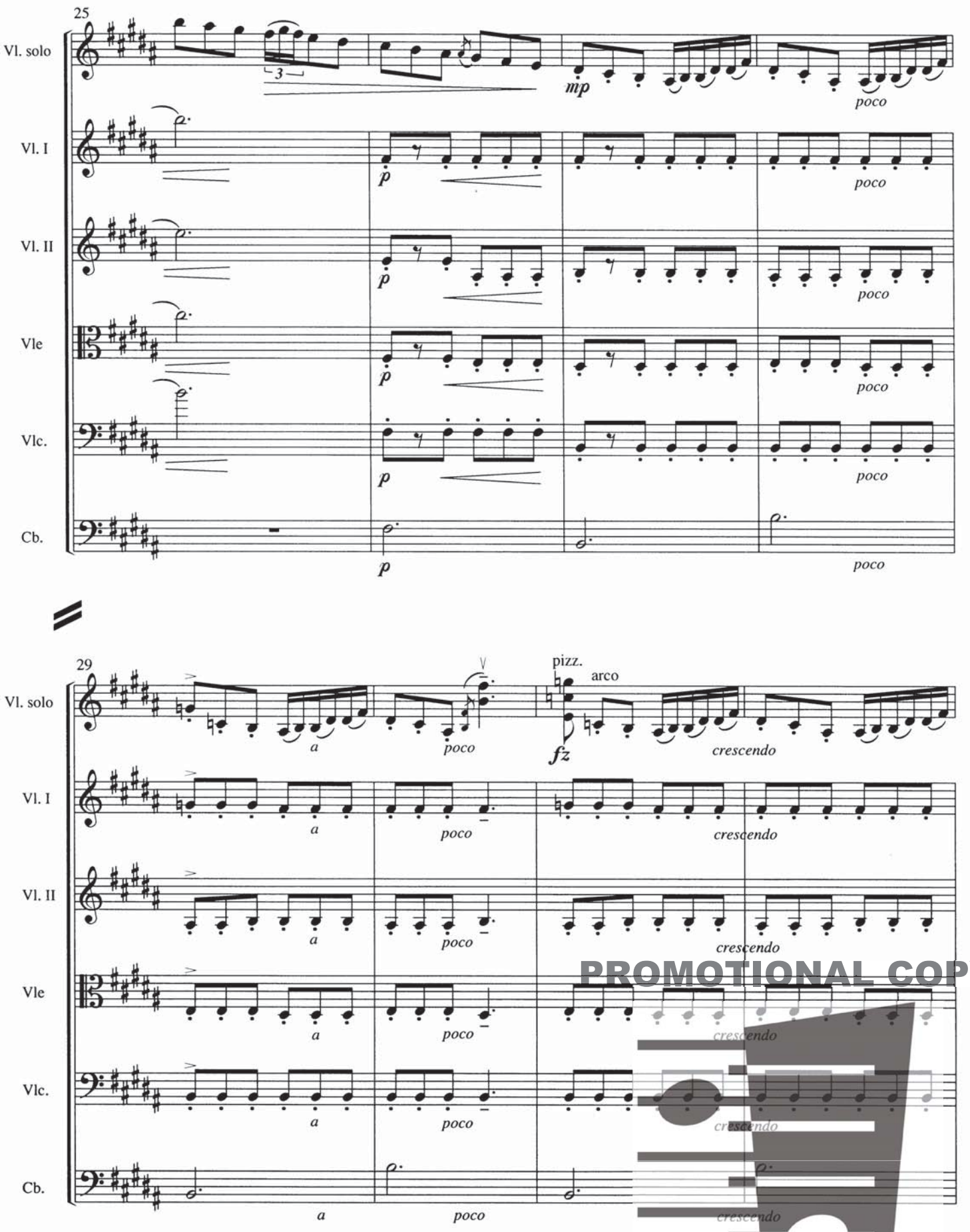

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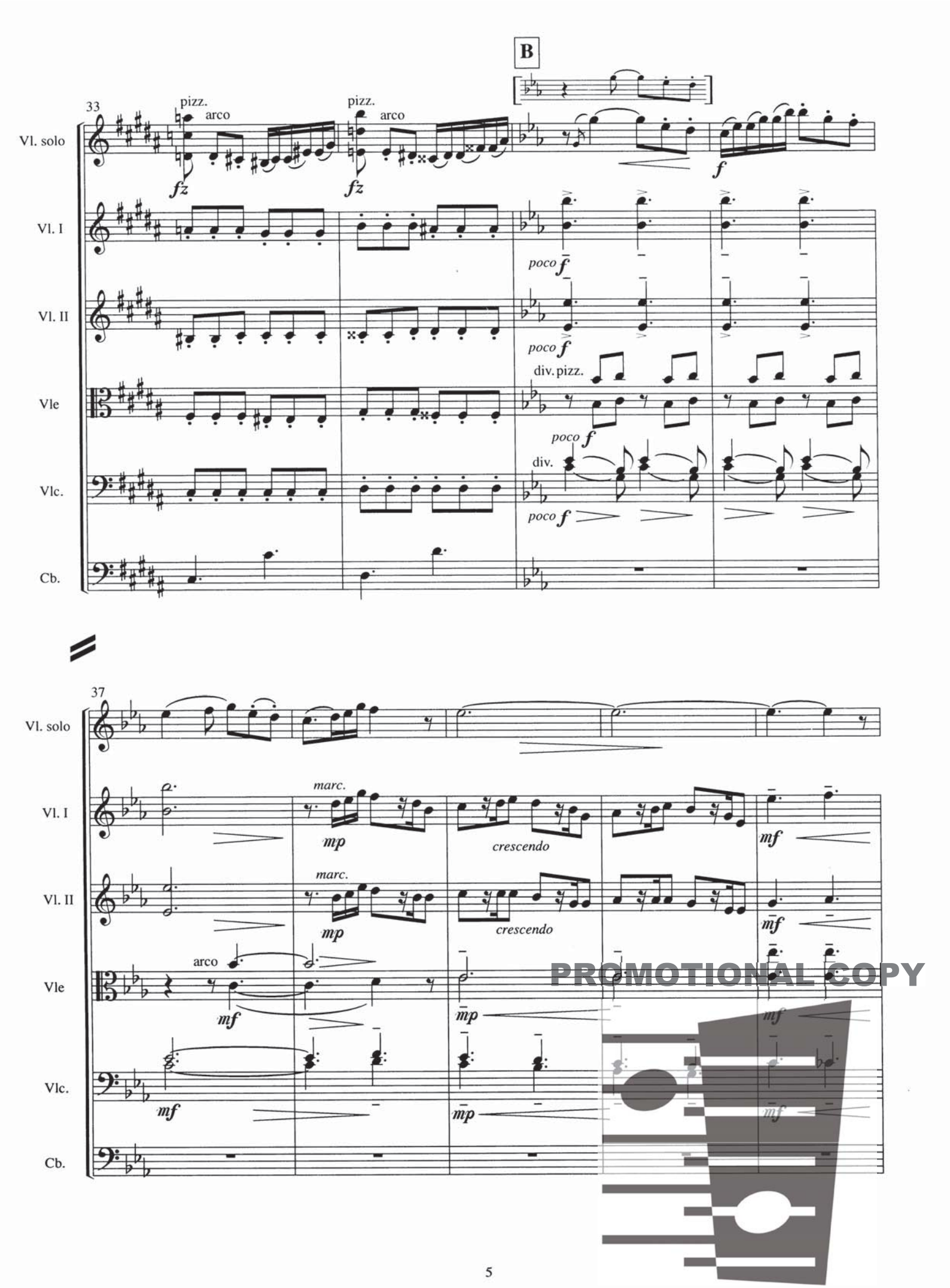

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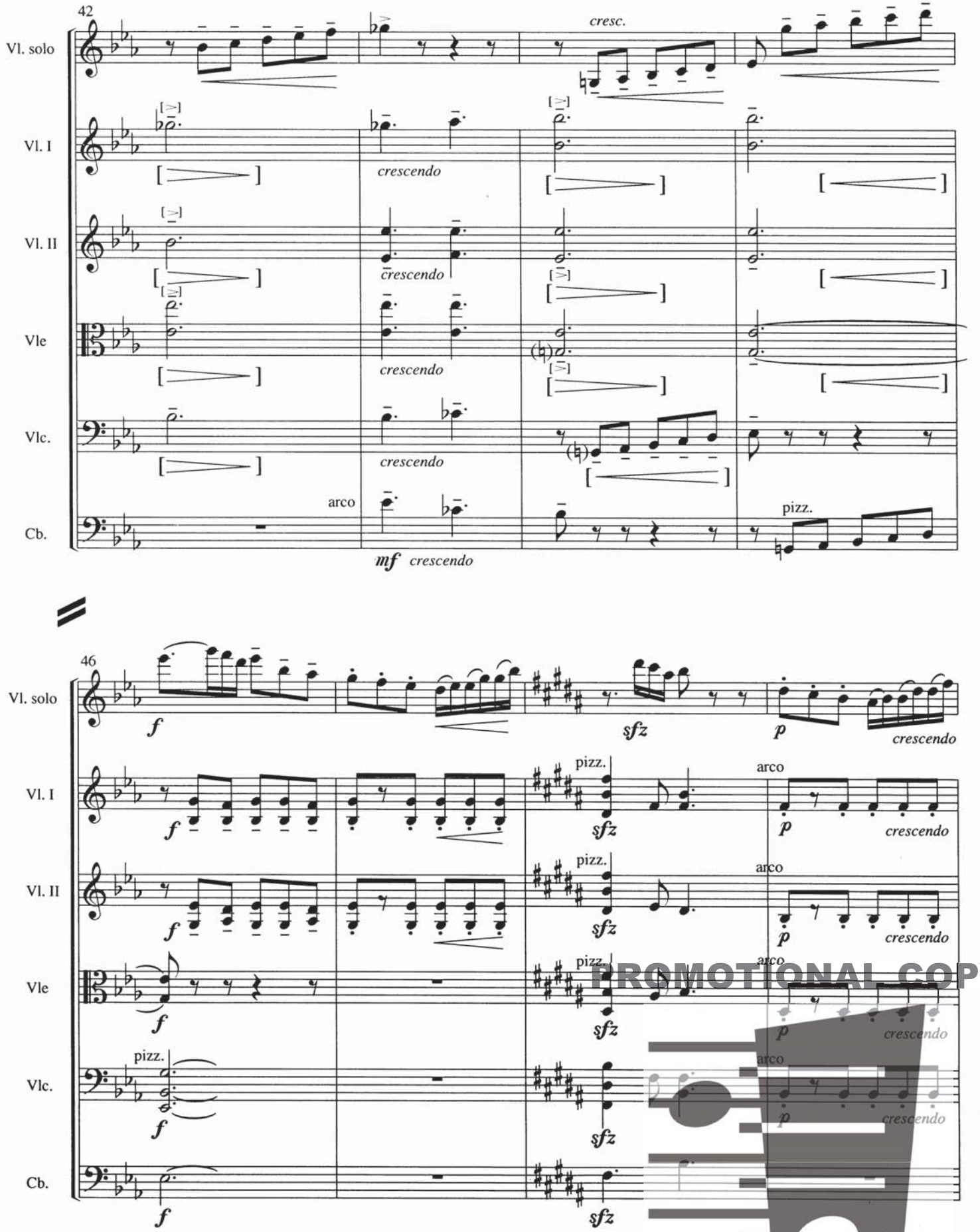

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50

Vl. solo

Vl. I

Vl. II

Vle

Vlc.

Cb.

f

54

C

*)8va

mf

*) Pencilled addition to the original manuscript. First appearance of the equivalent passage is an octave lower, bb. 20-22.

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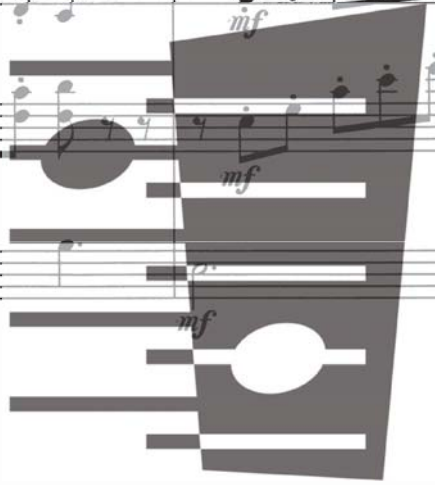

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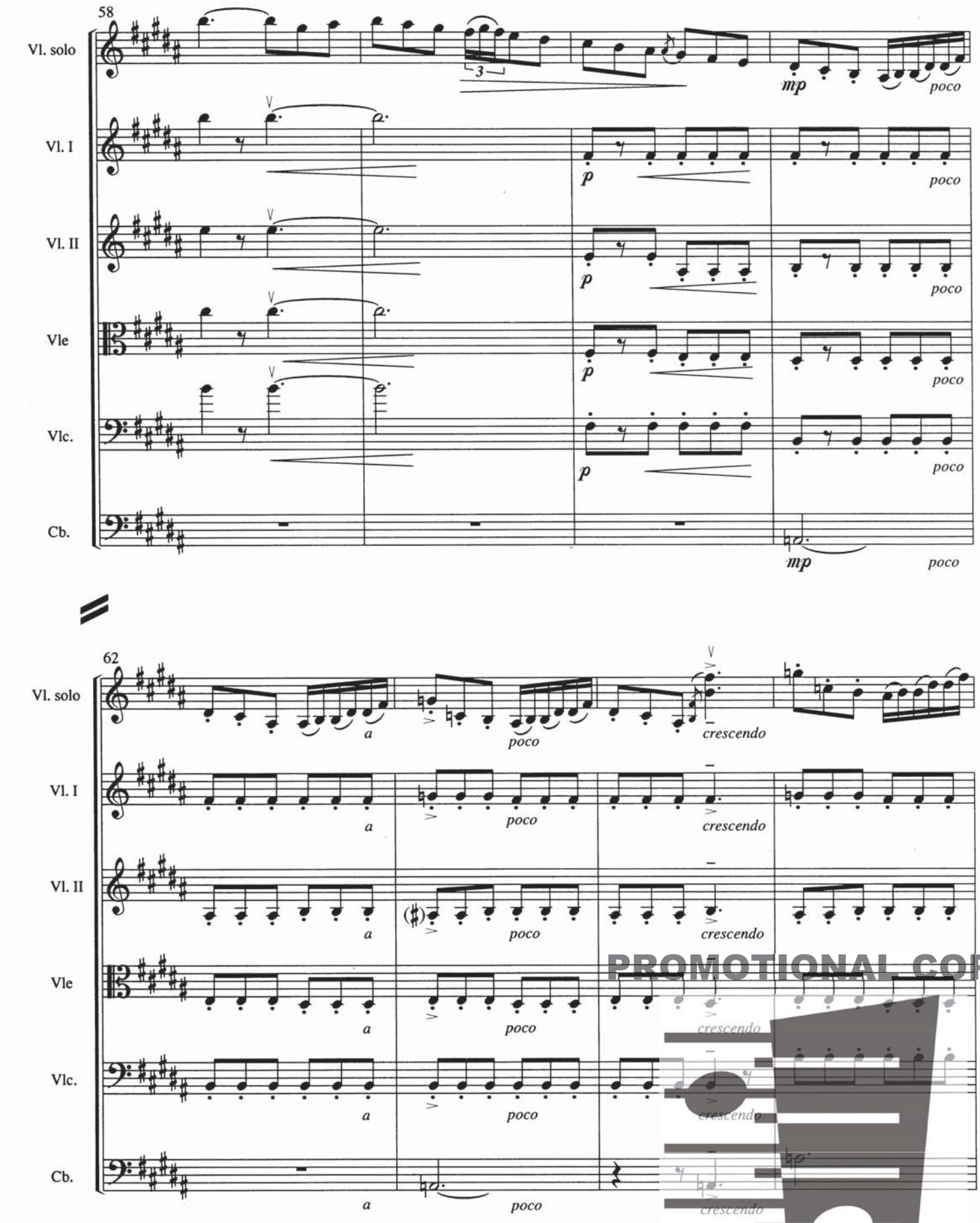

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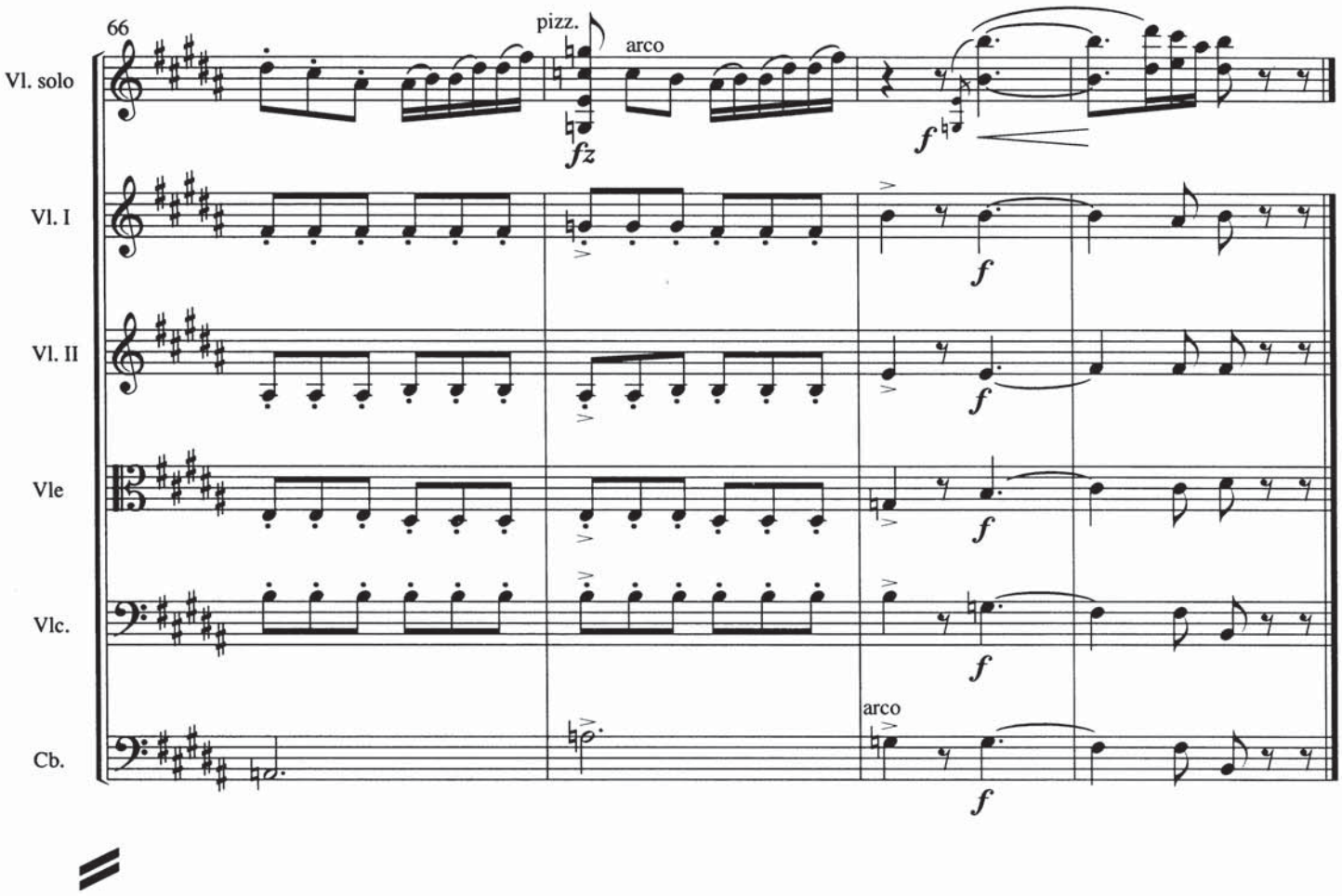

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FENNICA GEHRMAN OY, HELSINKI

II

Evening in Spring

JEAN SIBELIUS, [Op. 117 No. 2]

Andantino

1

Vl. solo

espressivo e dolce

Vl. I

p

Vl. II

p

Vle

Vlc.

Cb.

7

Vl. solo

Vl. I

Vl. II

Vle

p

Vlc.

p

Cb.

p

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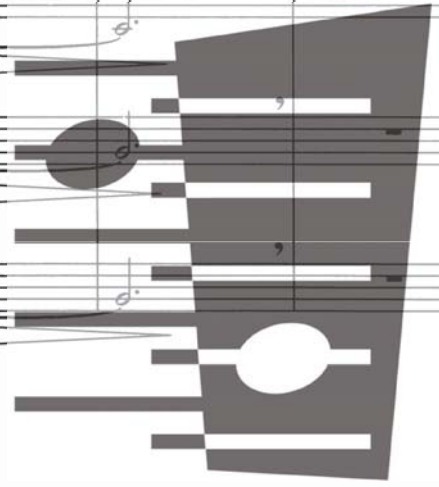

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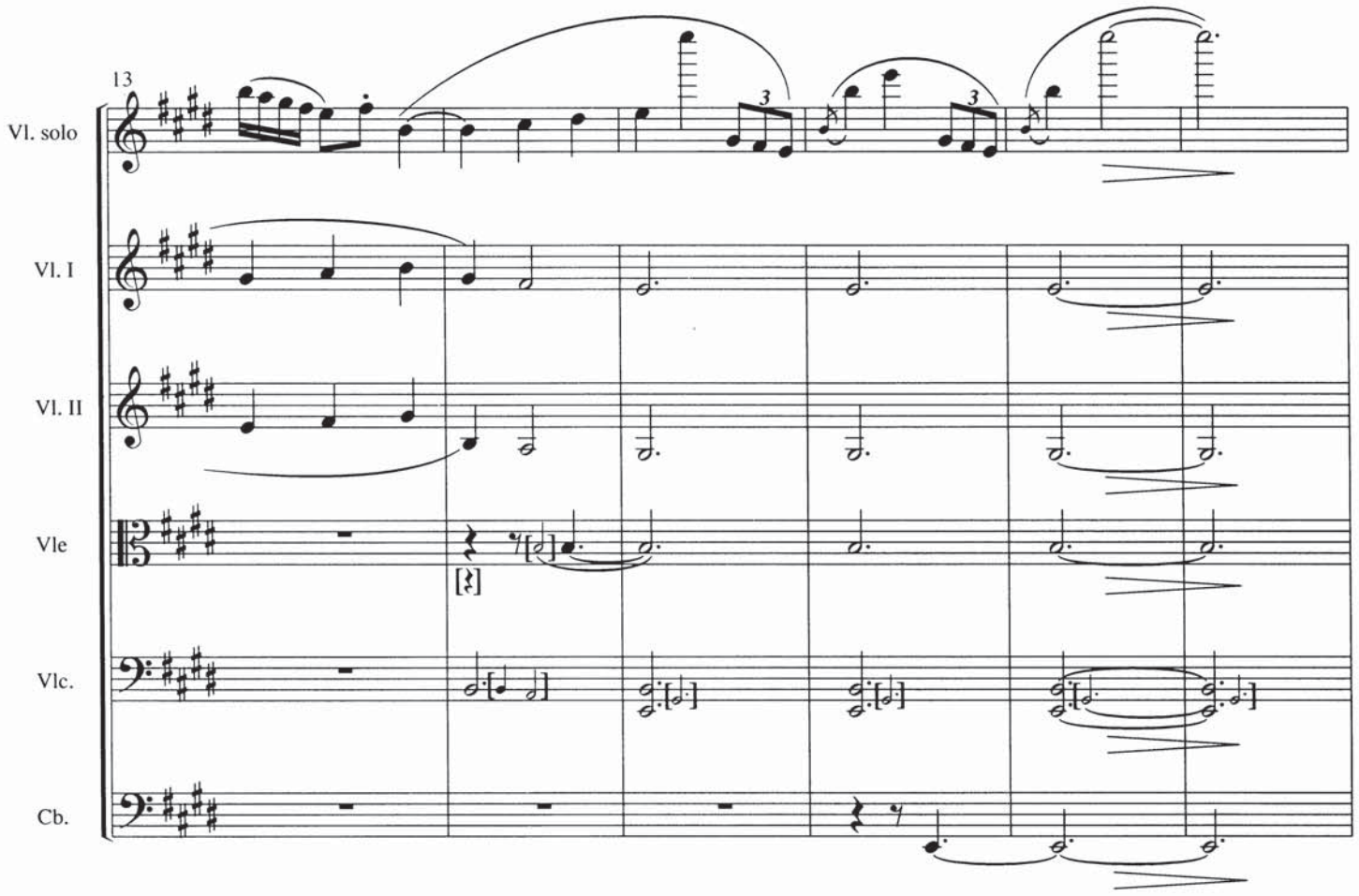

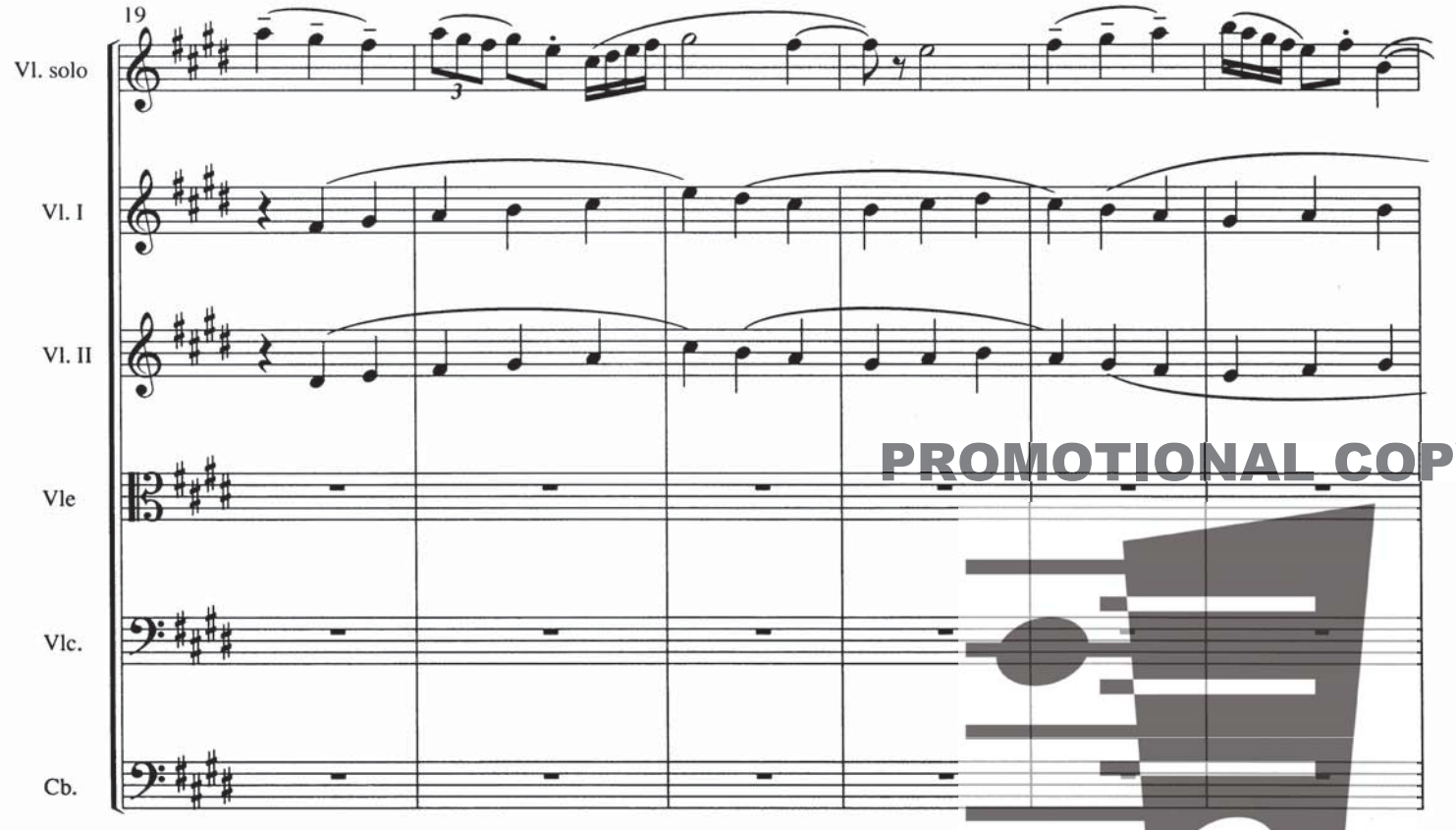

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FENNICA GEHRMAN OY, HELSINKI

25

Vl. solo

Vl. I

Vl. II

Vle

Vlc.

Cb.

[pp]

[pp]

[pp]

[pp]

31

A

Vl. solo

Vl. I

Vl. II

Vle

Vlc.

Cb.

mf

fz

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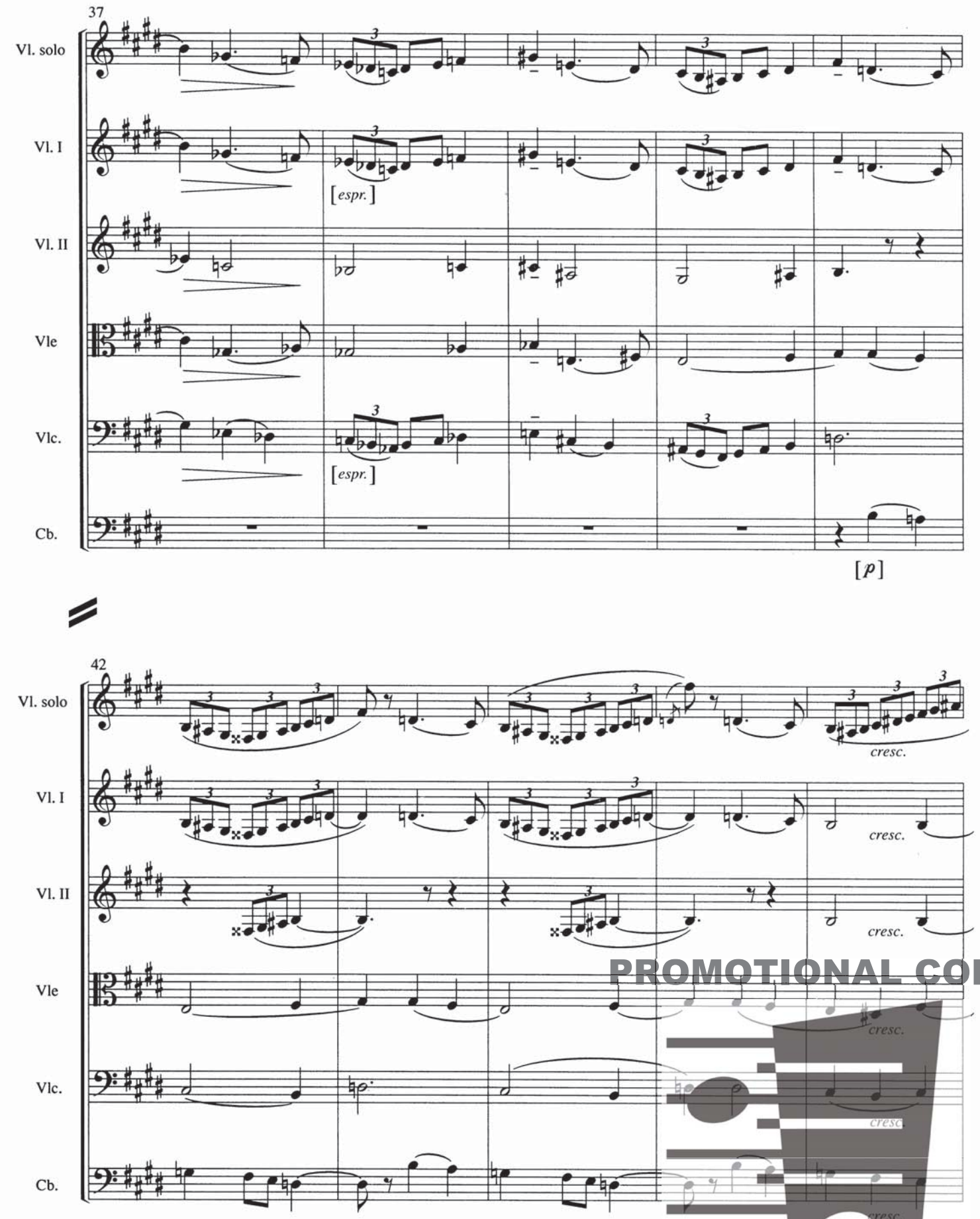

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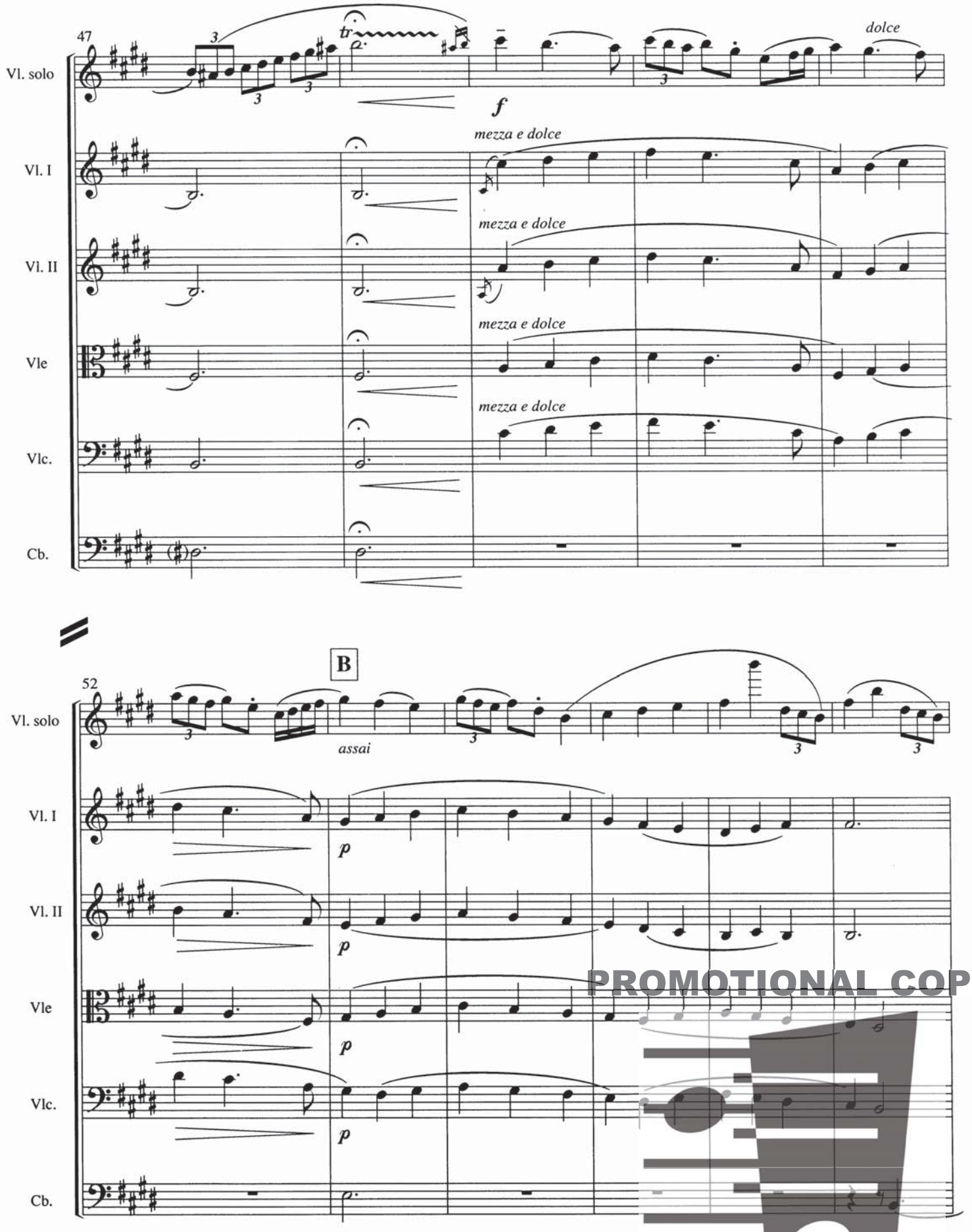

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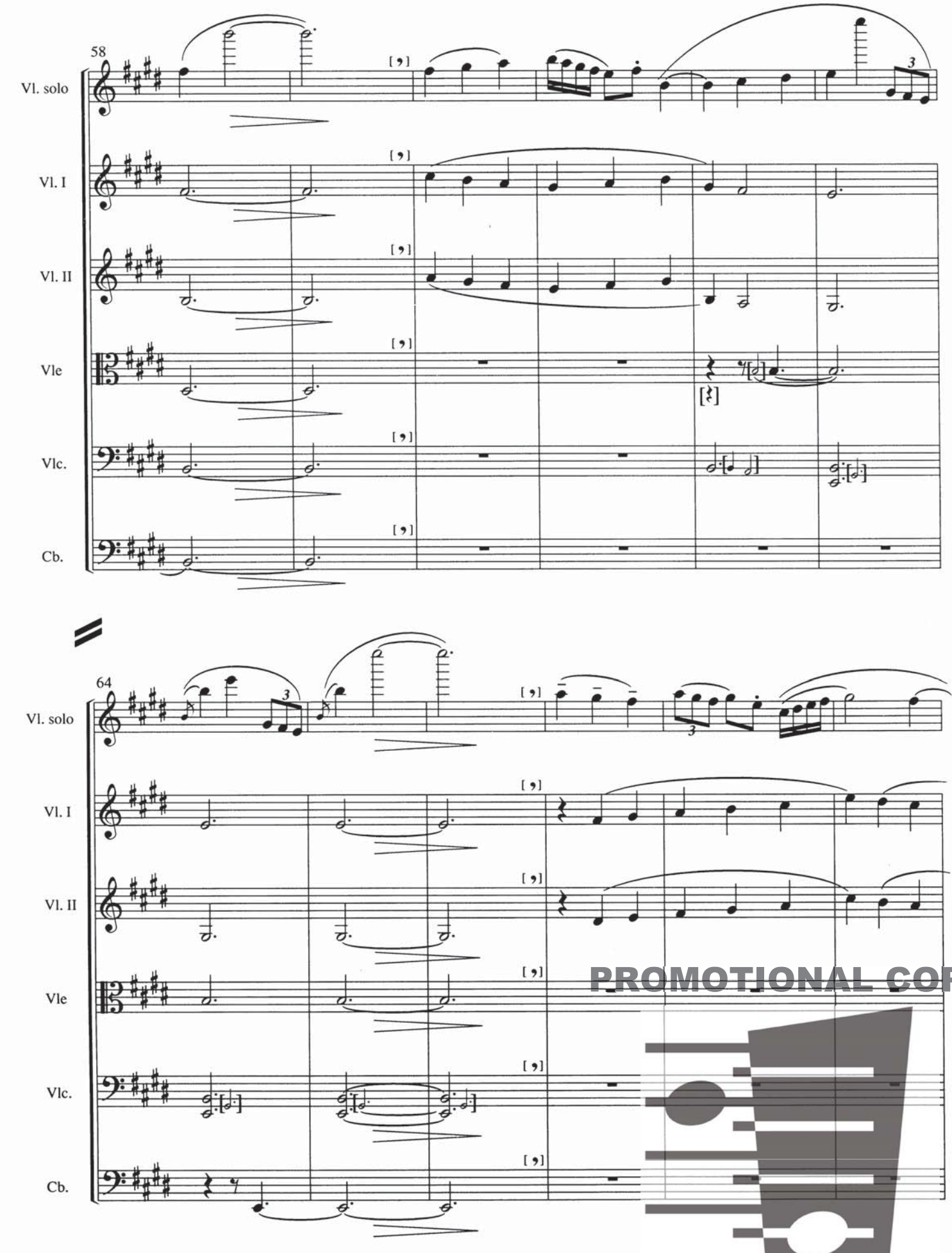

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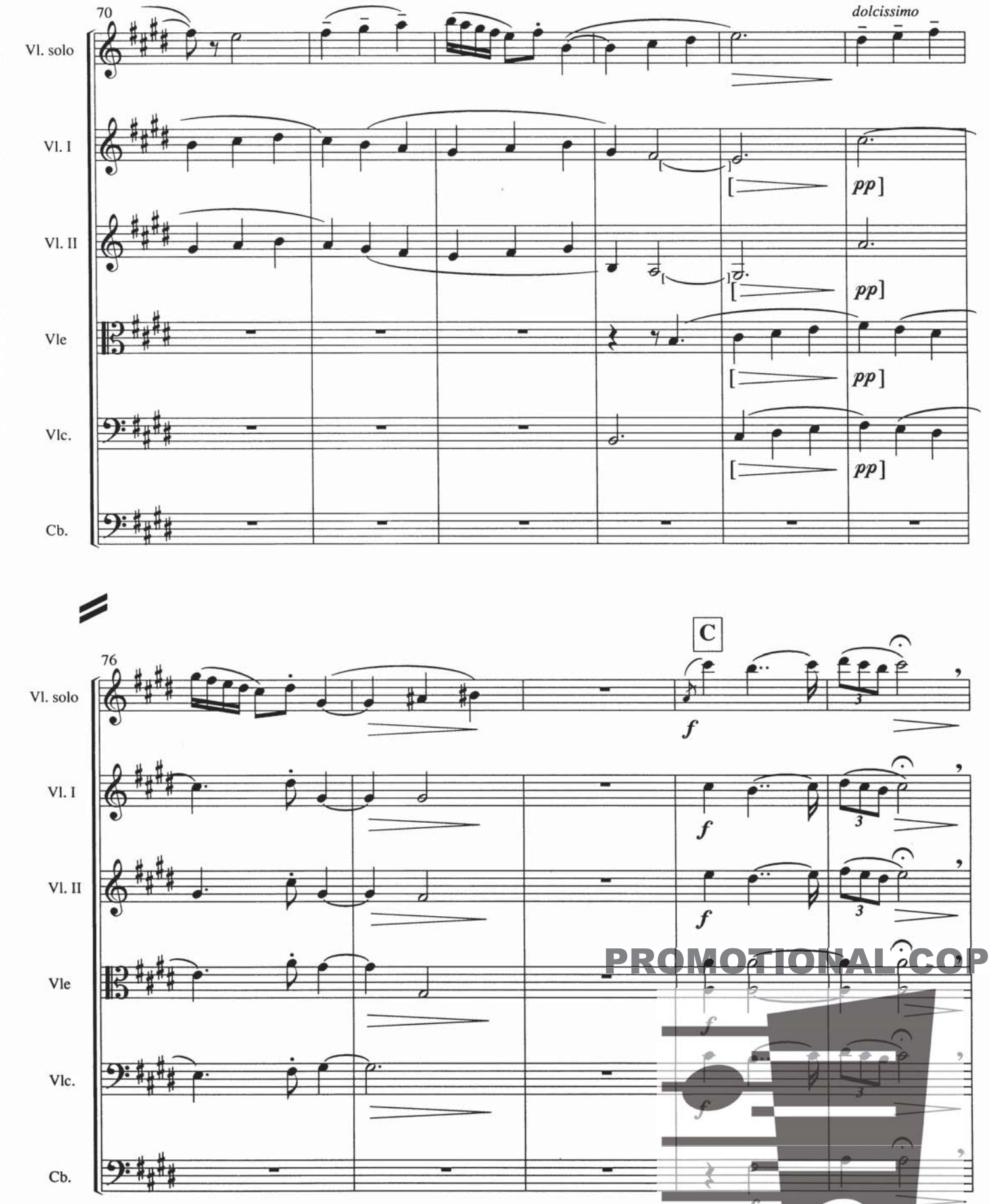

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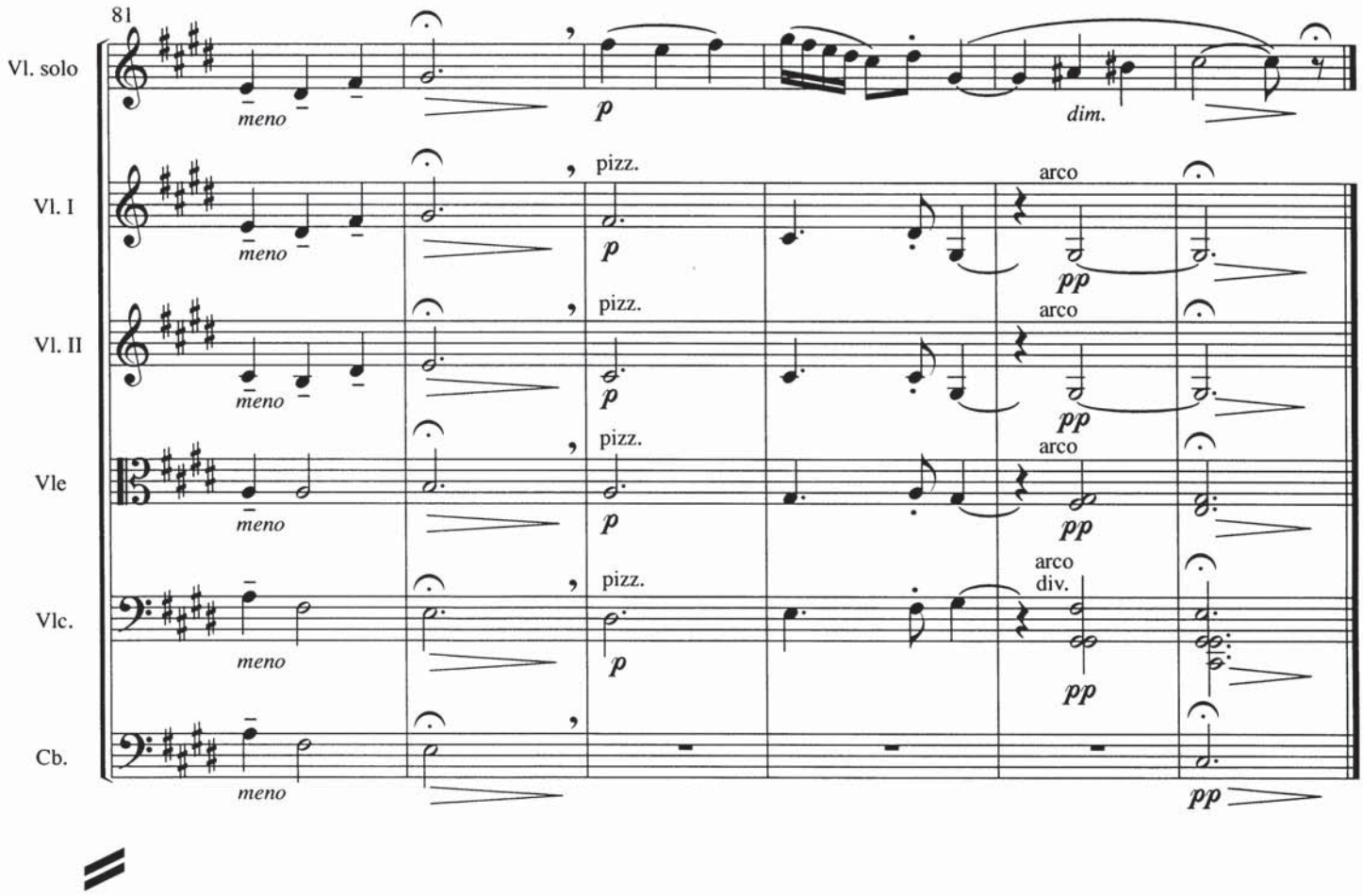

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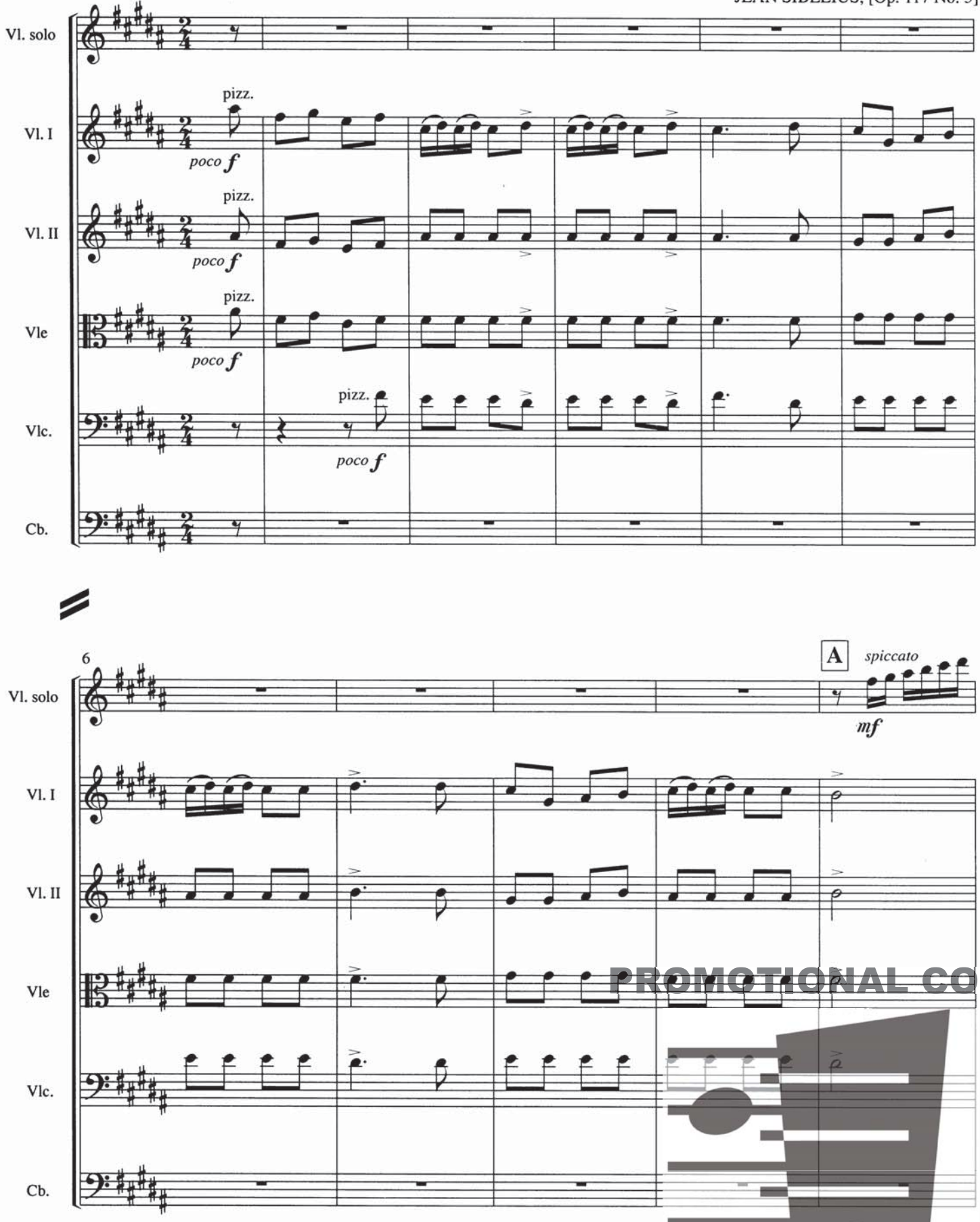
III
In the Summer

Vivace

JEAN SIBELIUS, [Op. 117 No. 3]



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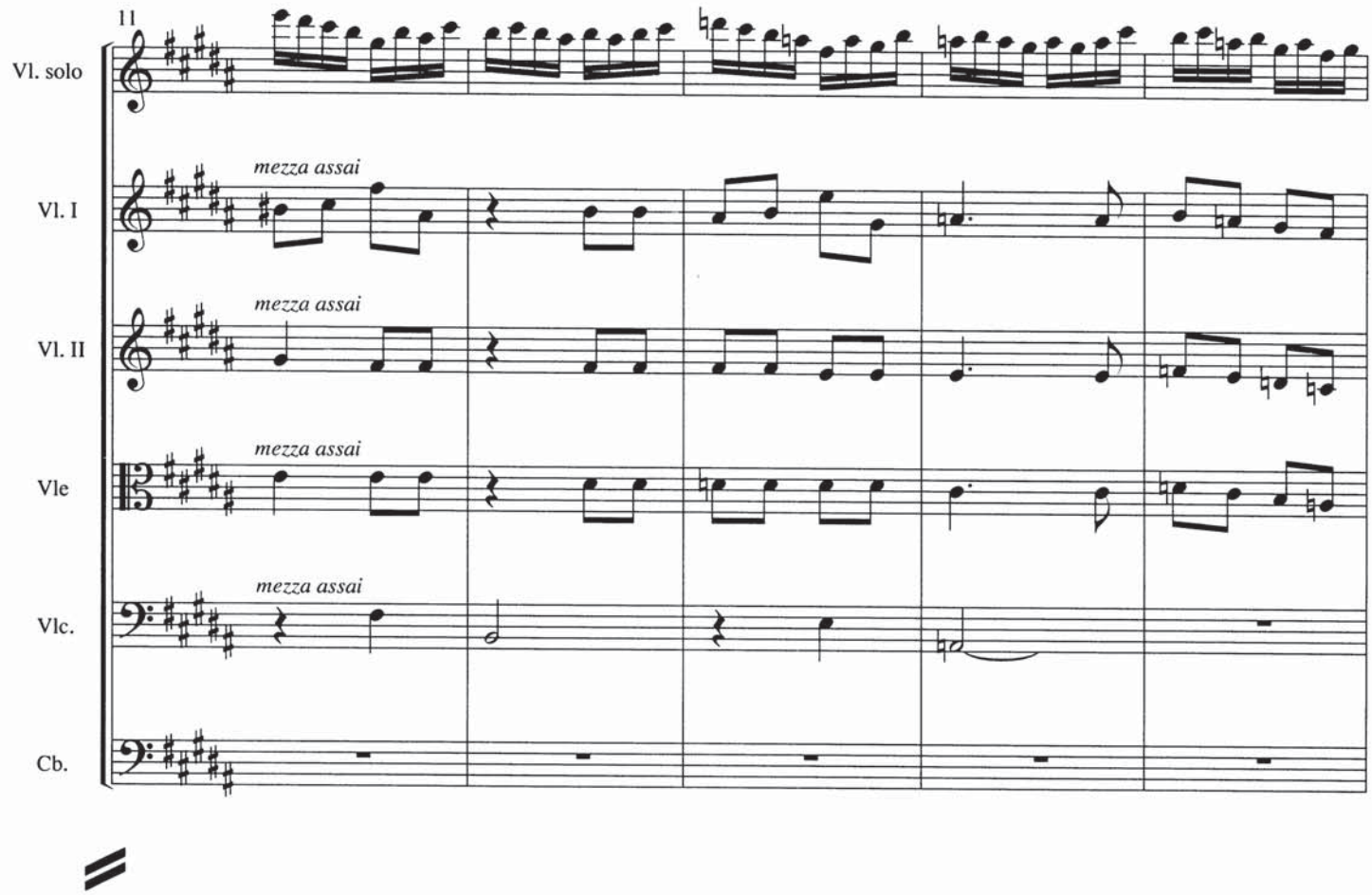

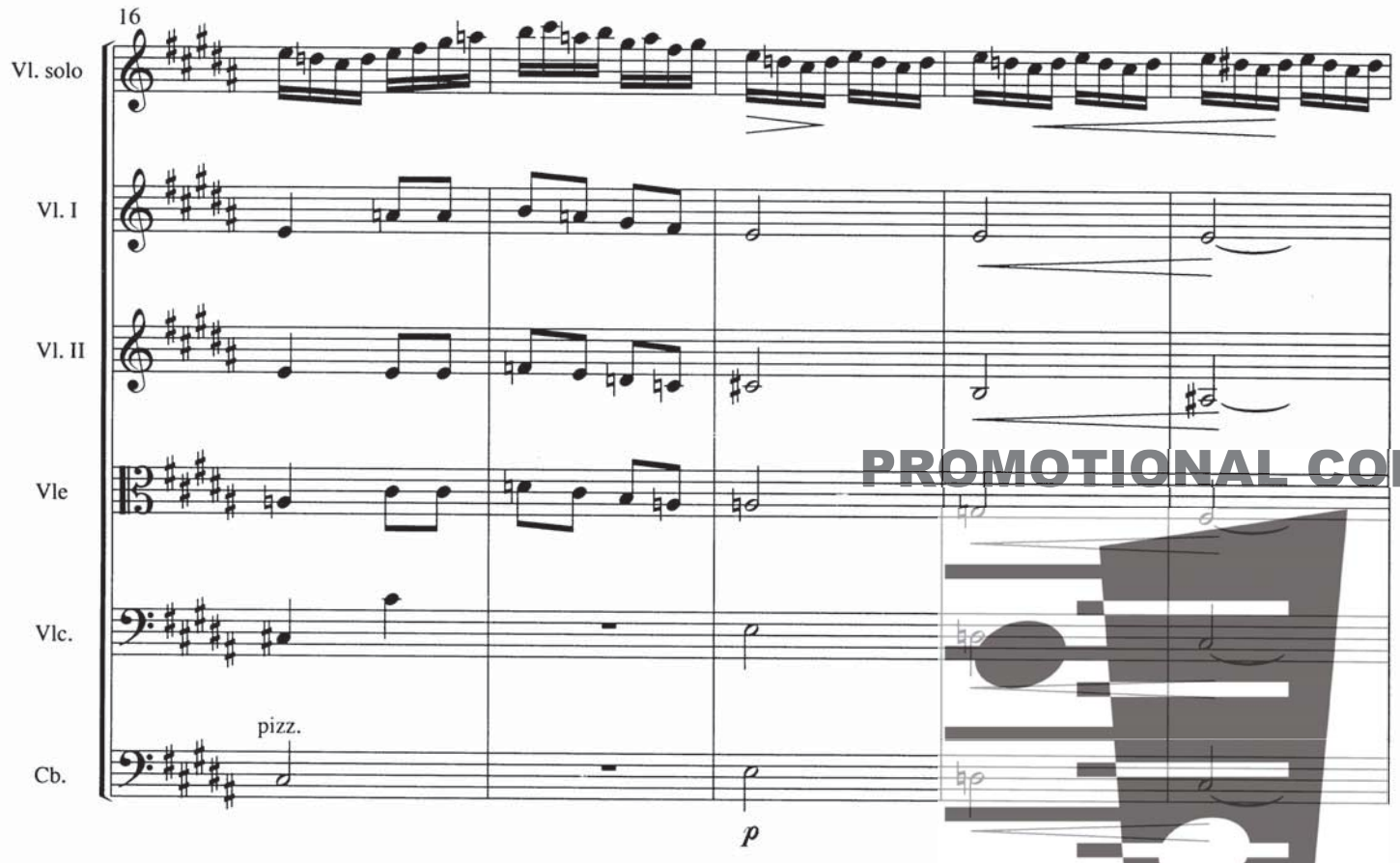

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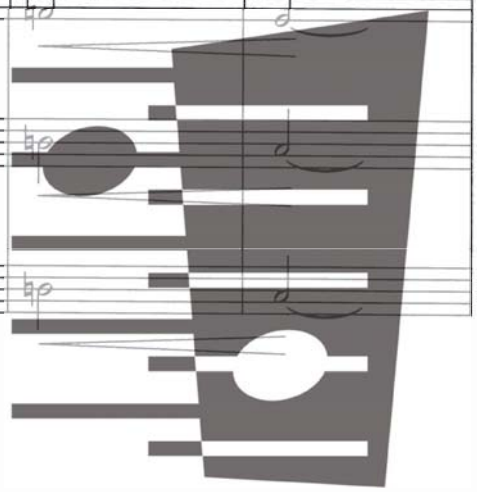

FENNICA GEHRMAN OY, HELSINKI

B

21

Vl. solo

Vl. I

Vl. II

Vle

Vlc.

Cb.

26

Vl. solo

Vl. I

Vl. II

Vle

Vlc.

Cb.

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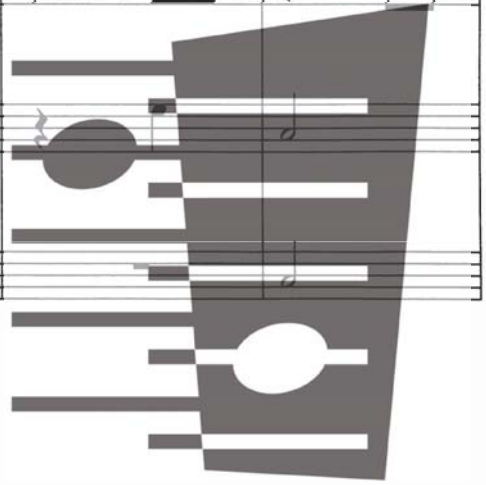

FENNICA GEHRMAN OY, HELSINKI

31

Vl. solo

Vl. I

Vl. II

Vle

Vlc.

Cb.

C

36

Vl. solo

Vl. I

Vl. II

Vle

Vlc.

Cb.

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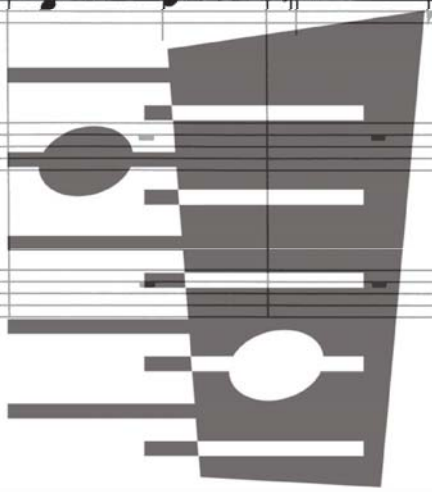

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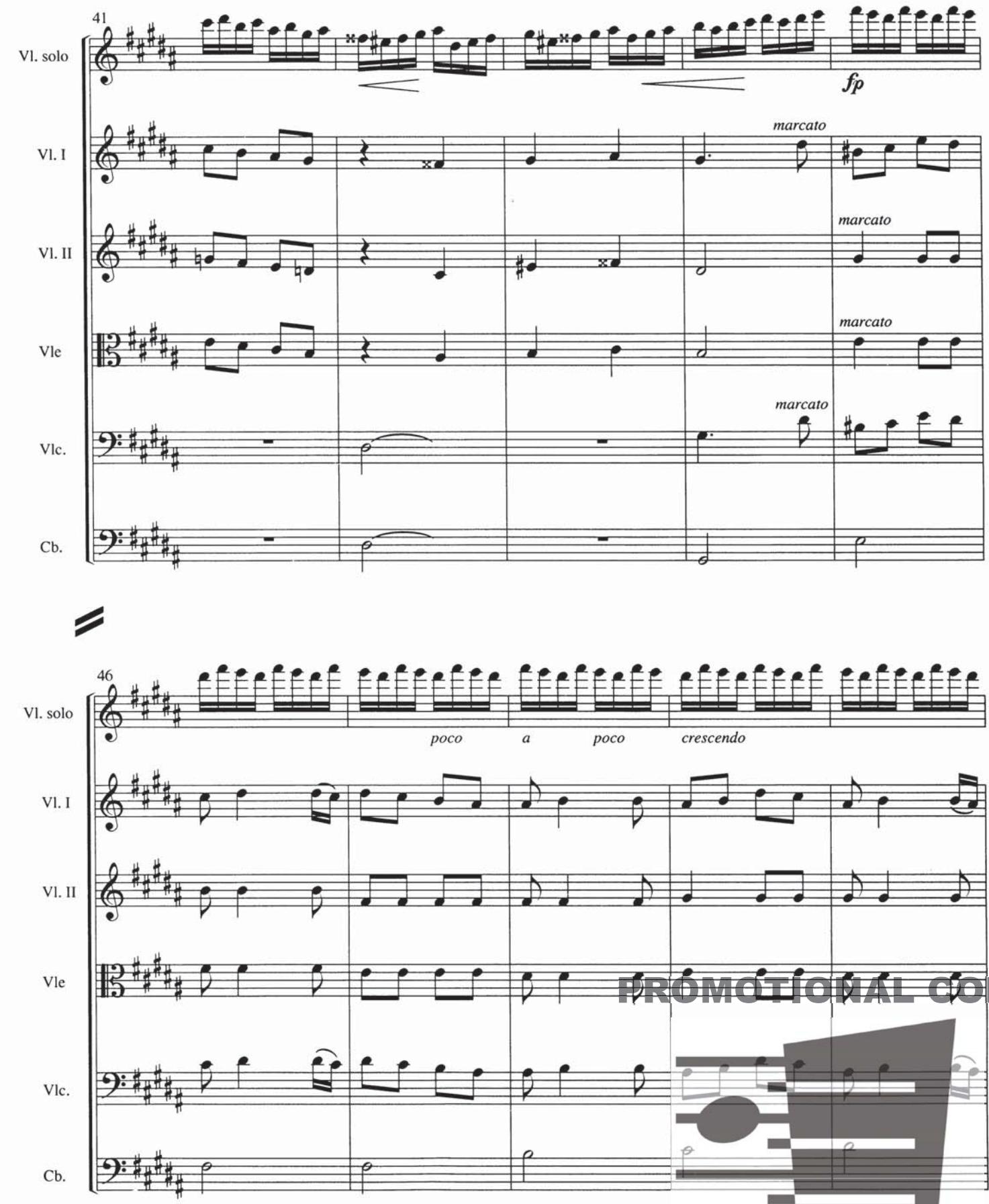

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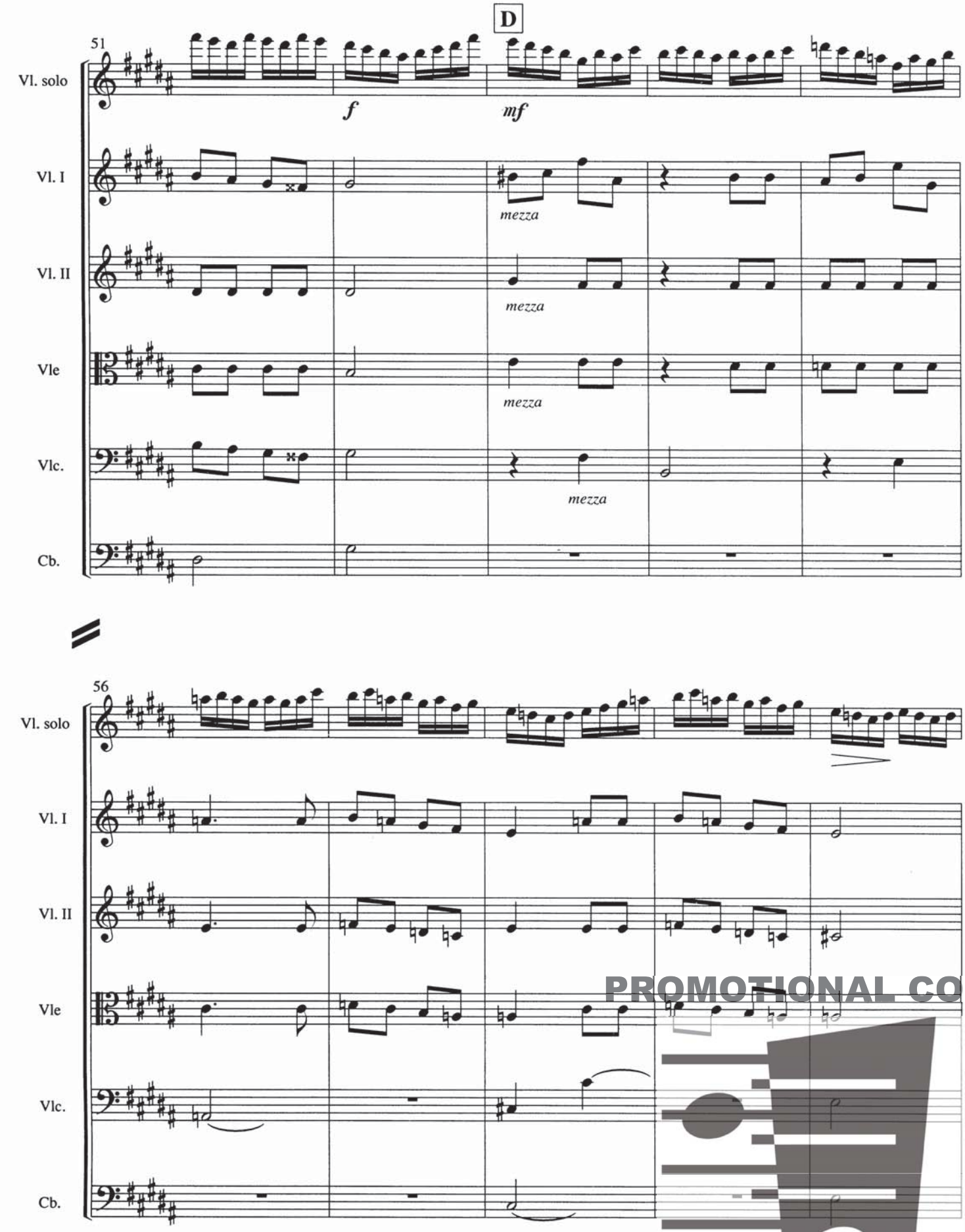

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FENNICA GEHRMAN OY, HELSINKI

61

Vl. solo

Vl. I

Vl. II

Vle

Vlc.

Cb.

66

Vl. solo

Vl. I

Vl. II

Vle

Vlc.

Cb.

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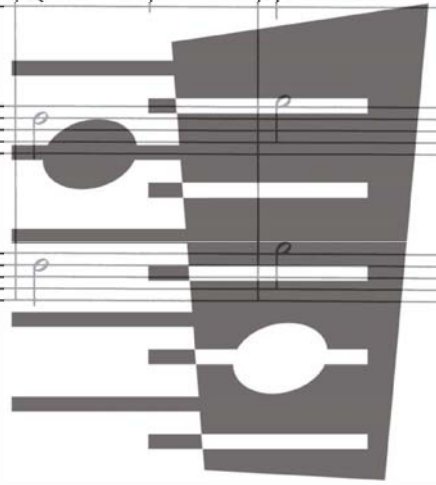

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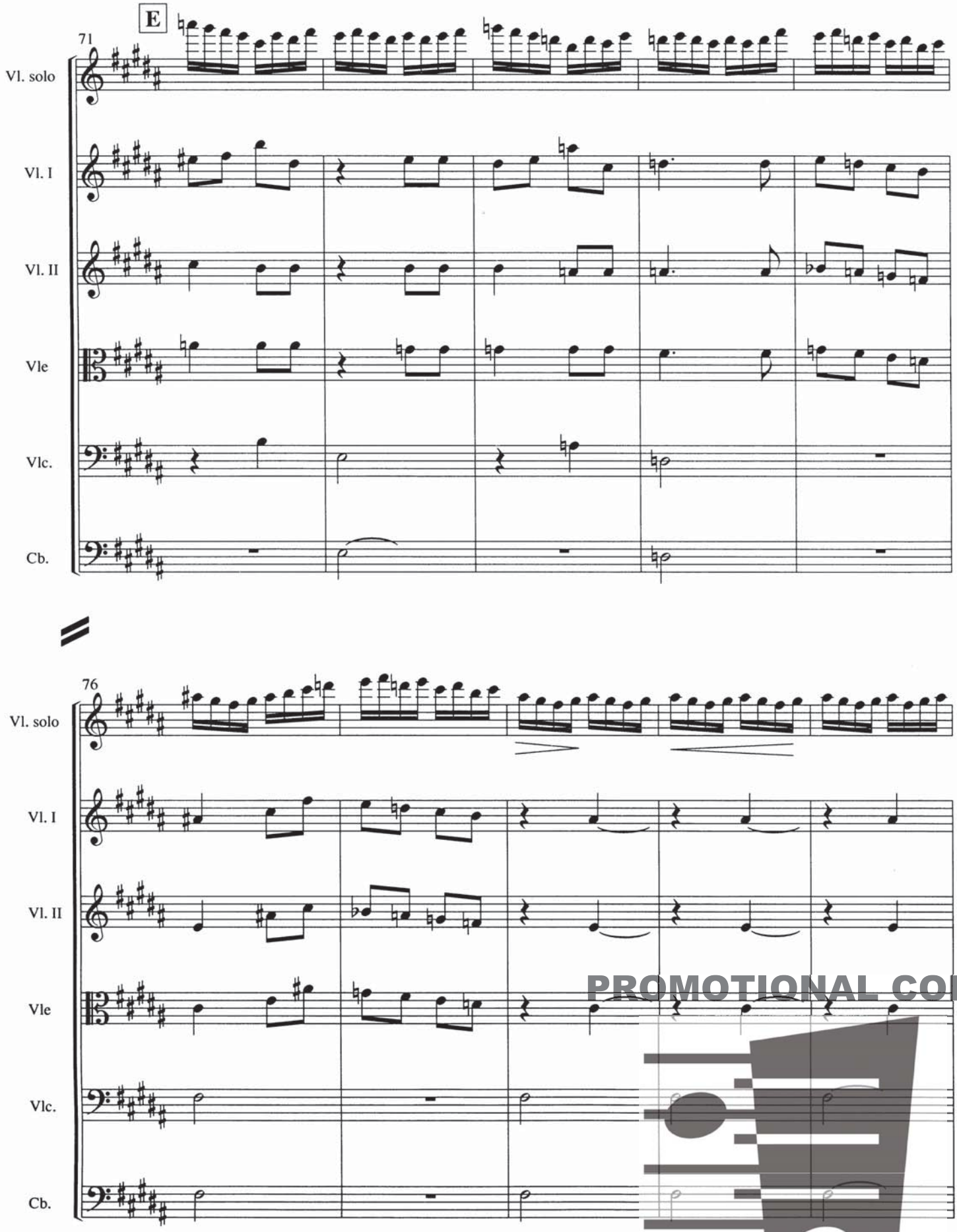

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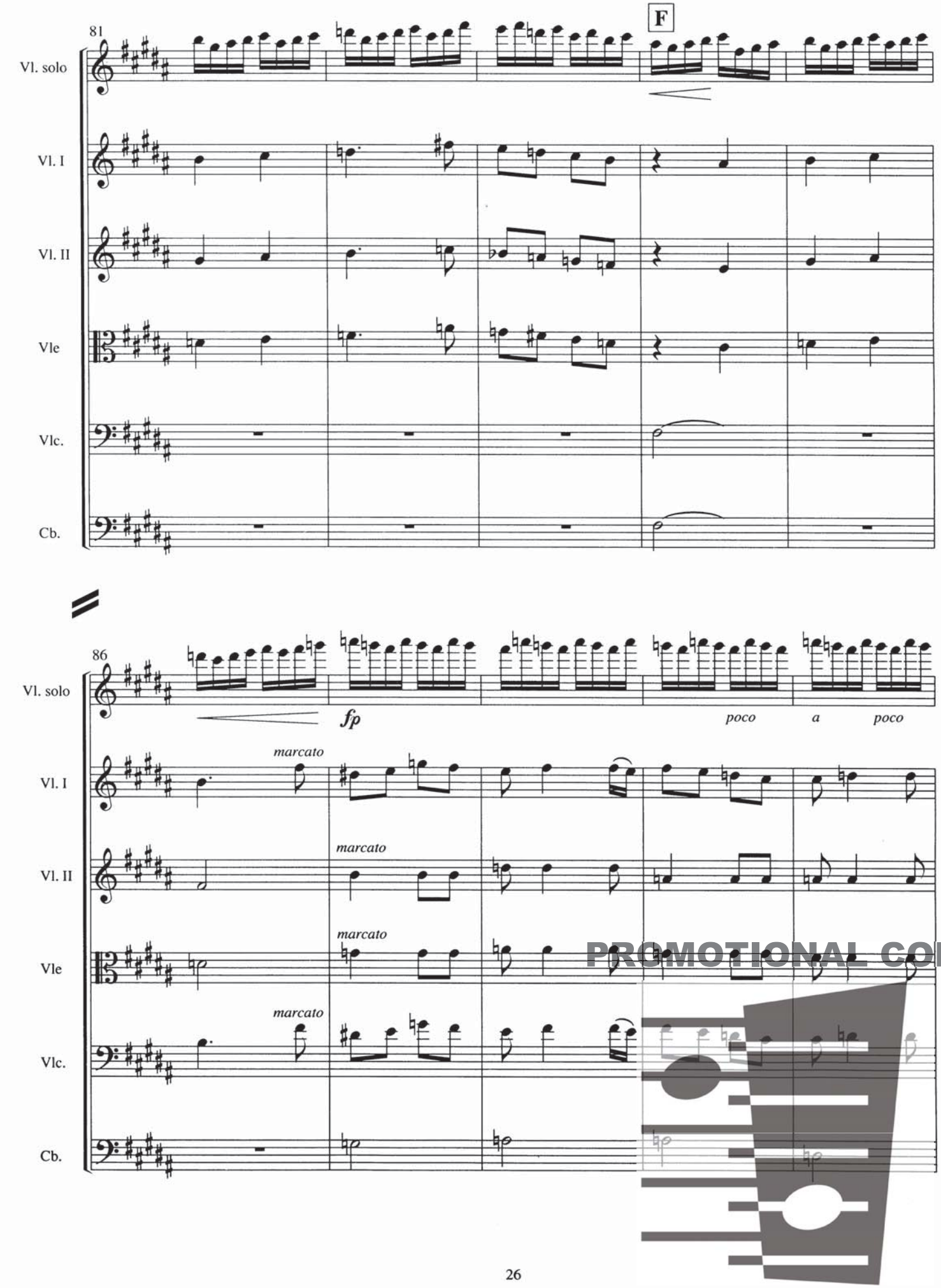

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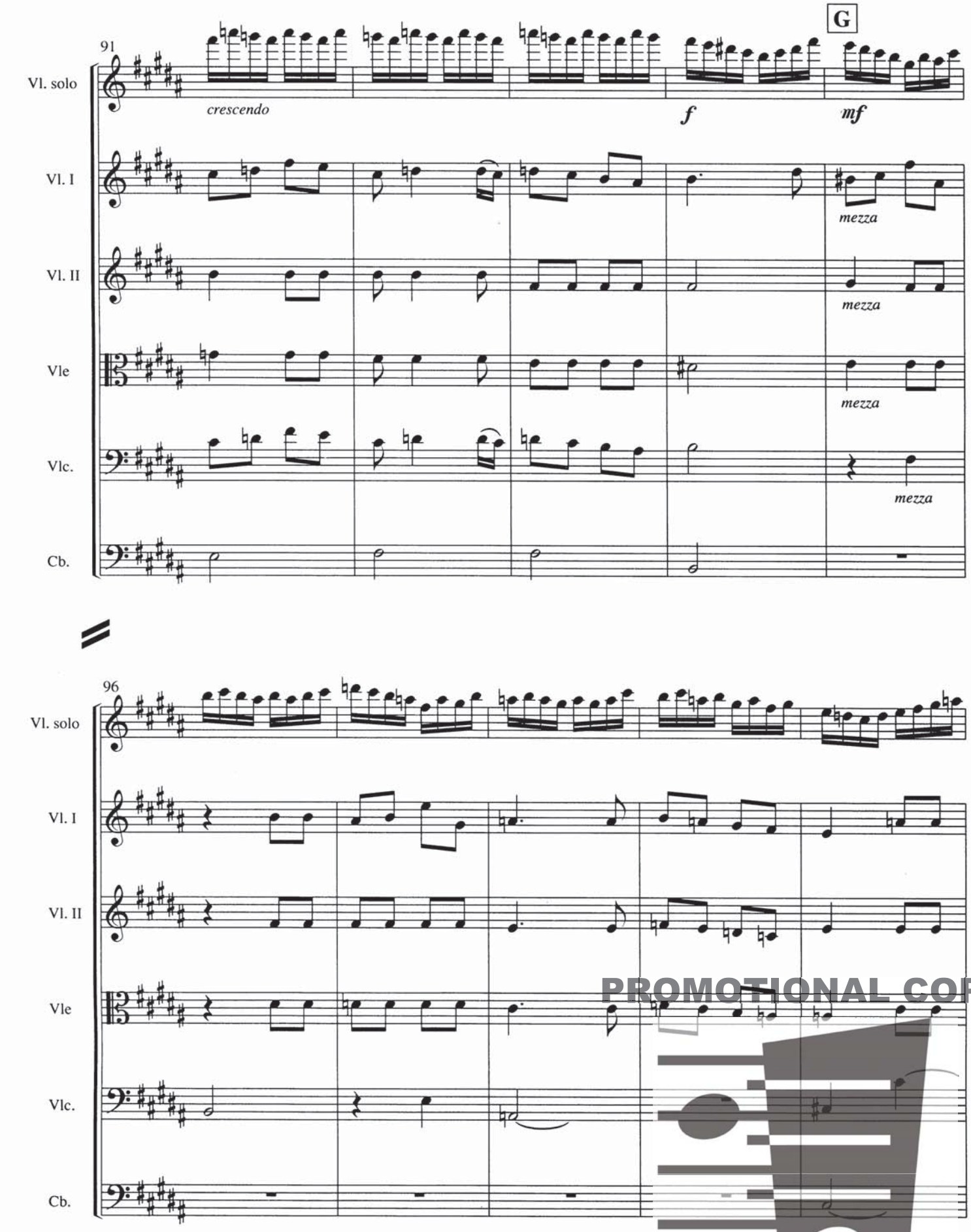

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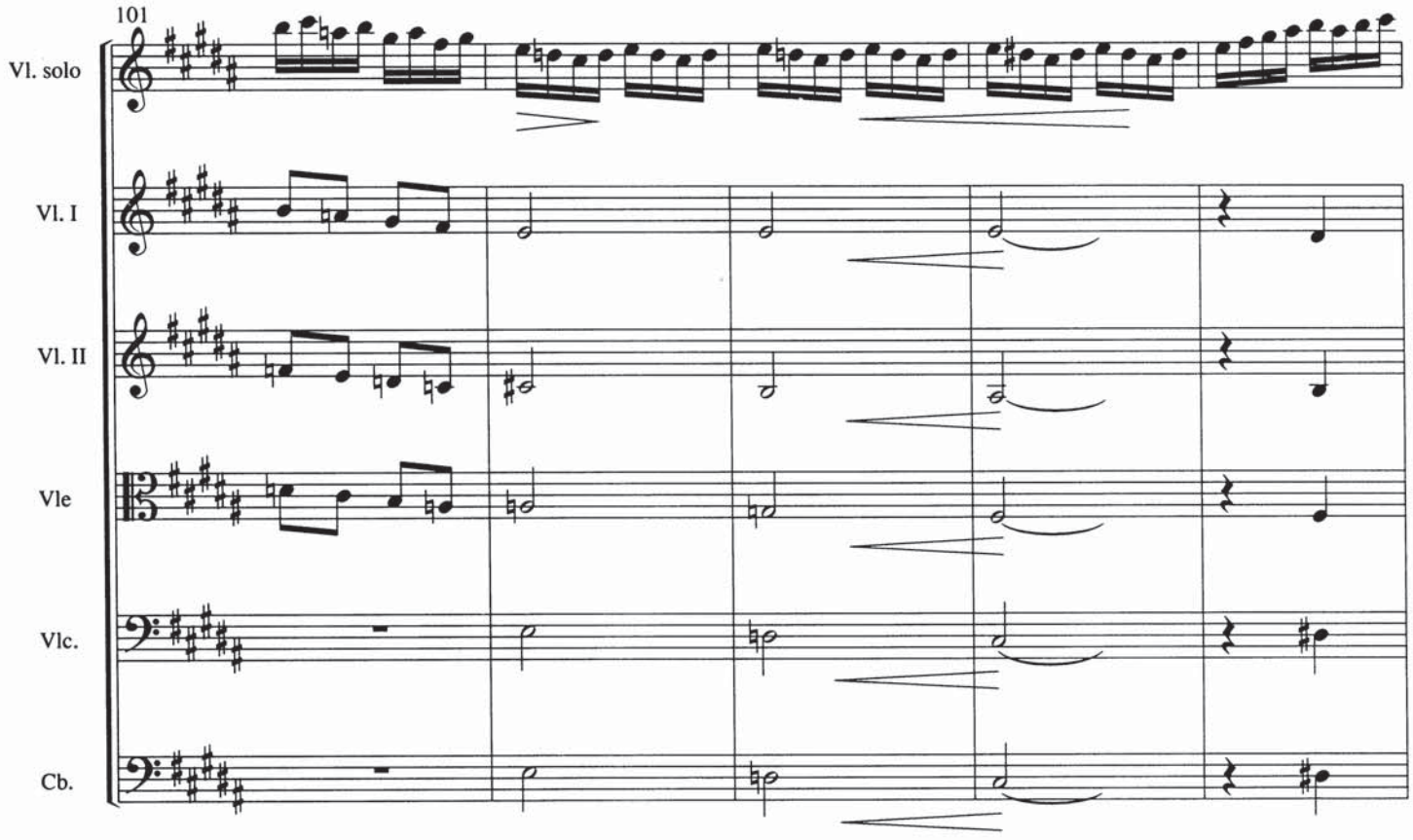

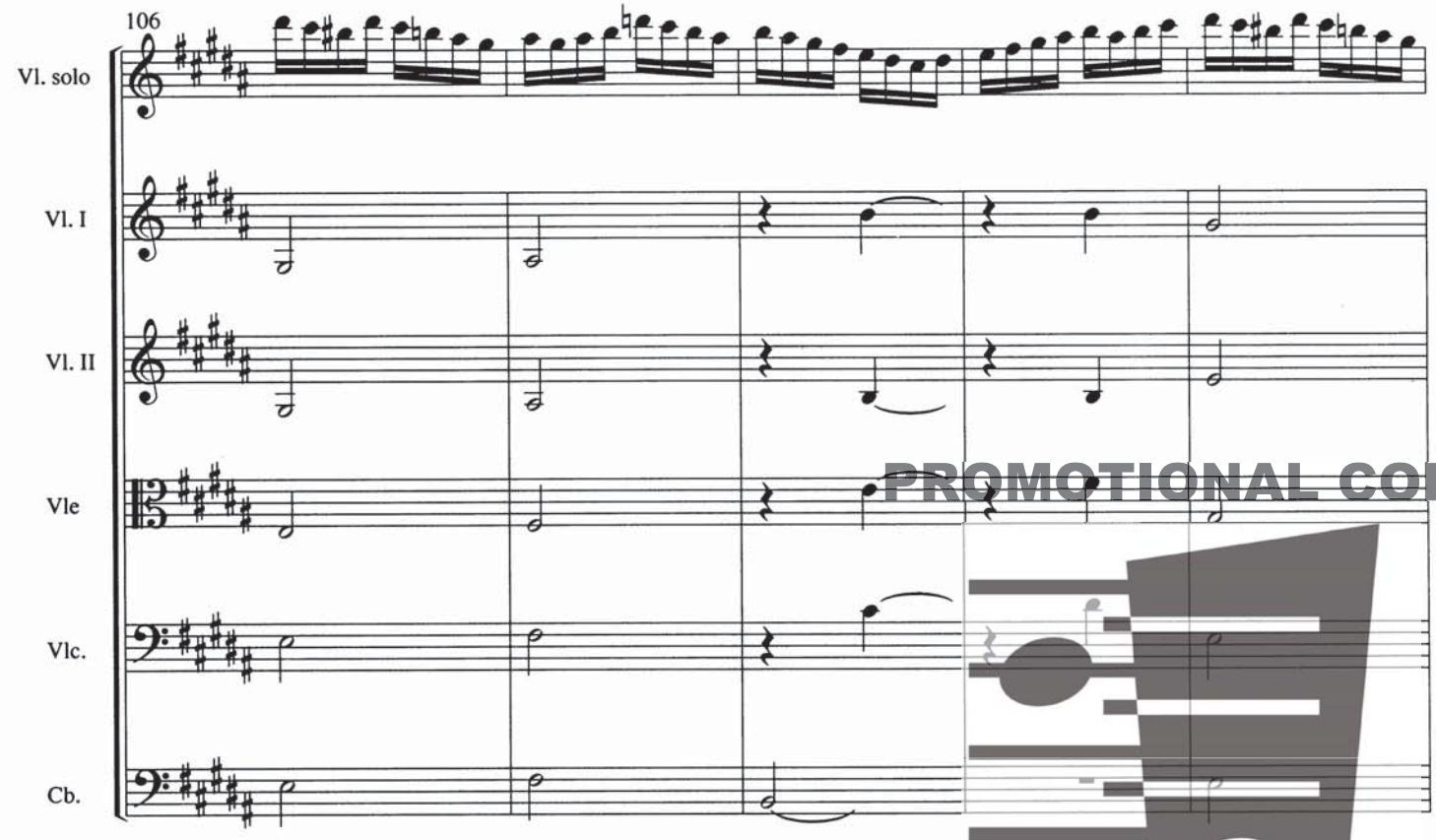

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FENNICA GEHRMAN OY, HELSINKI

H

111

Vl. solo

Vl. I

Vl. II

Vle

Vlc.

Cb.

116

Vl. solo

crescendo

Vl. I

Vl. II

Vle

Vlc.

Cb.

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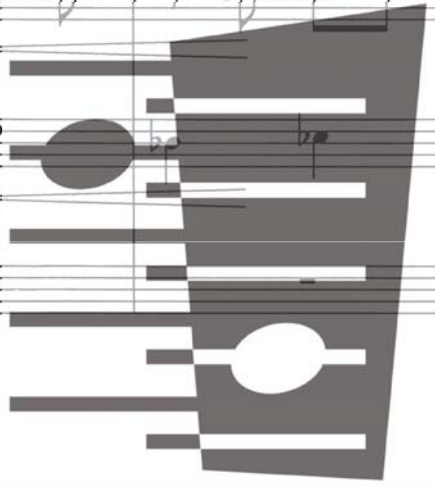

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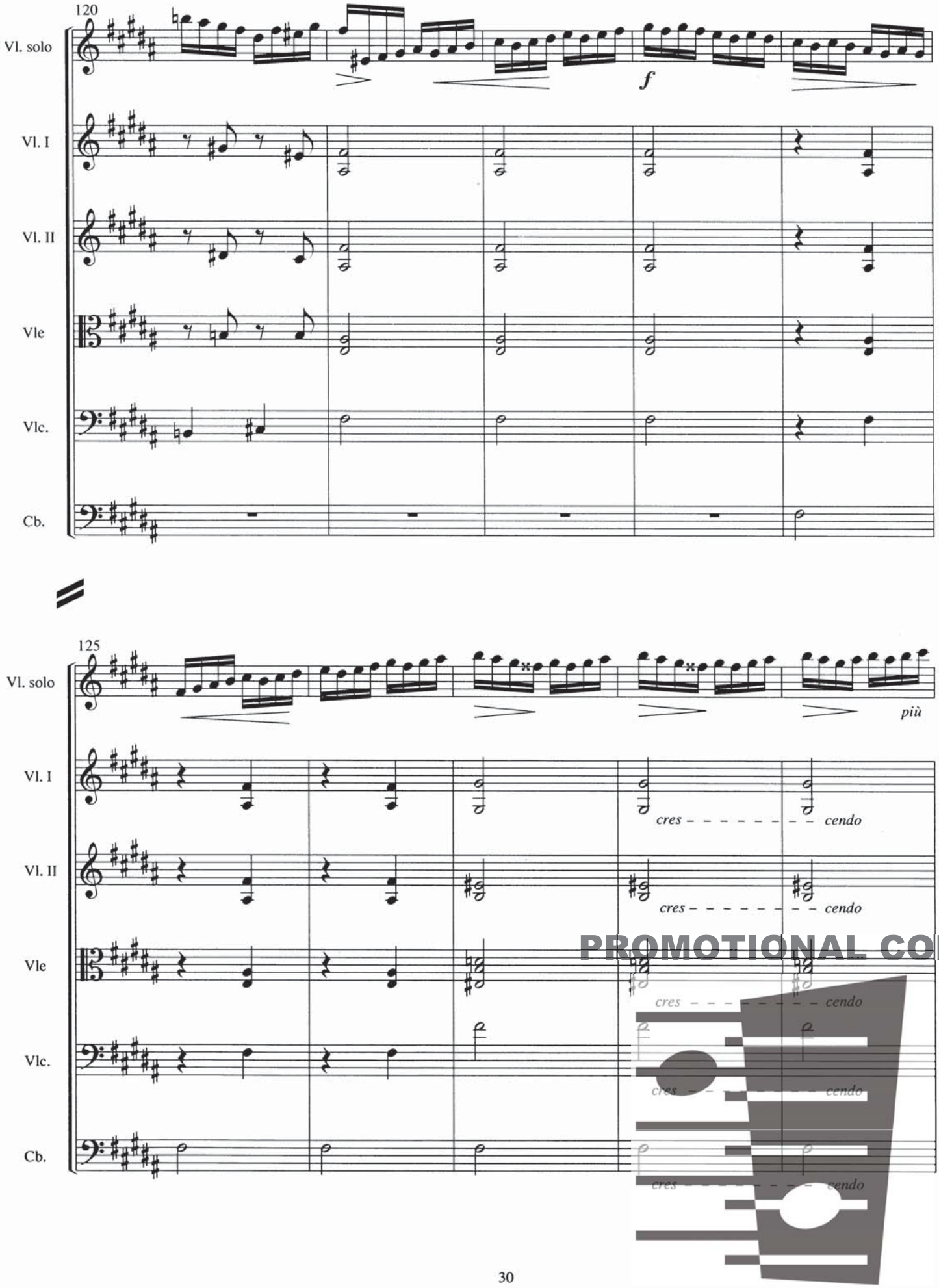

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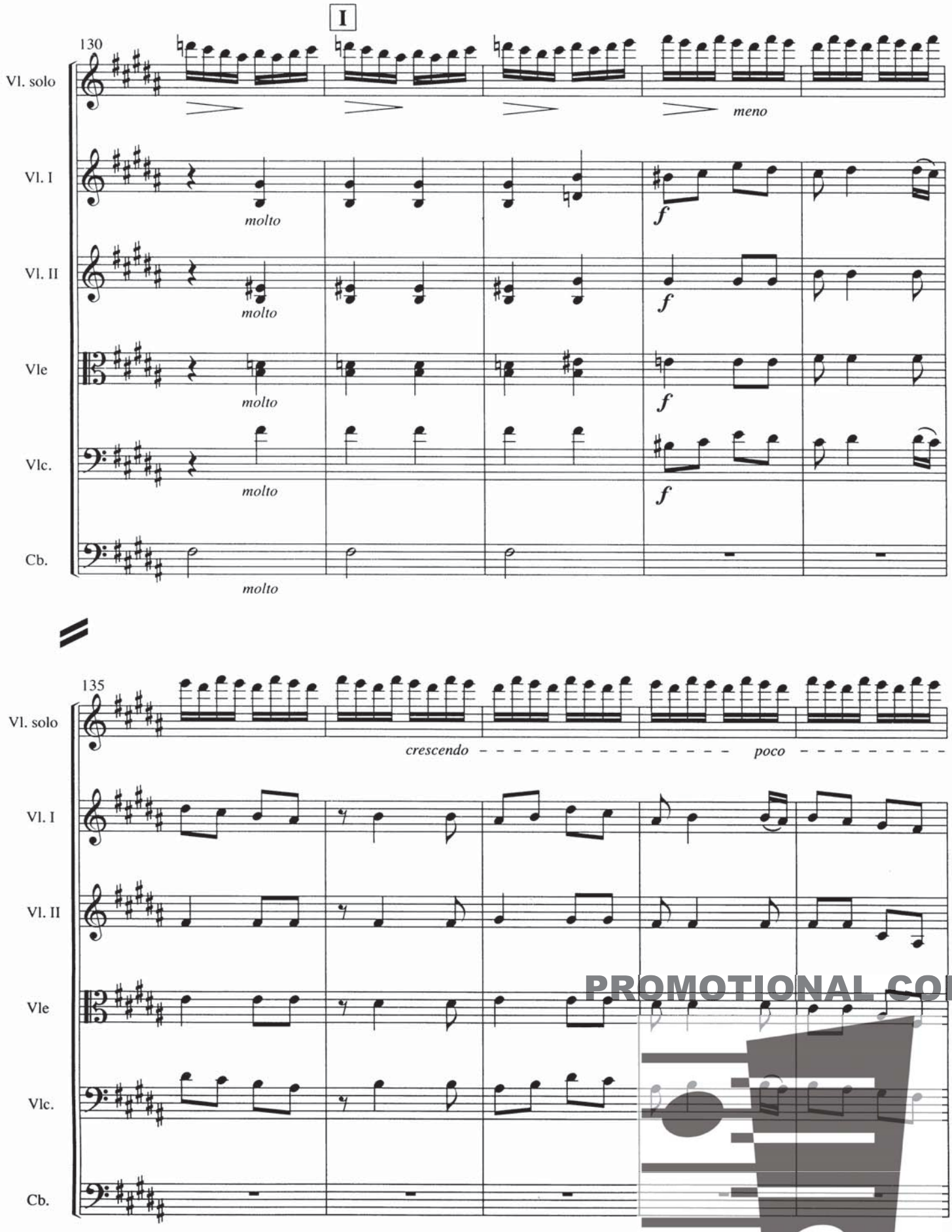

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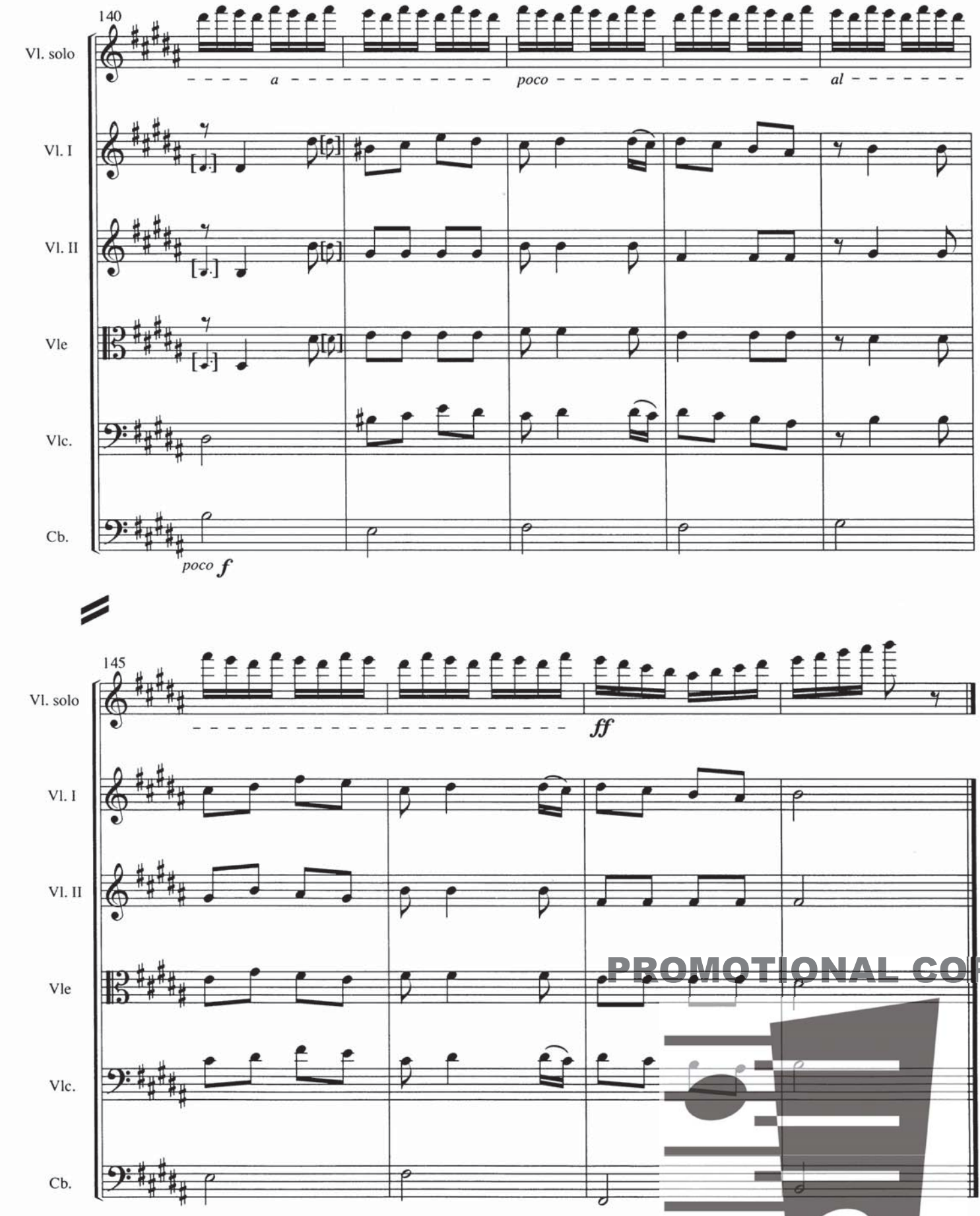

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FENNICA GEHRMAN OY, HELSINKI

Suite for Violin and String Orchestra [op. 117]

Editorial comments:

The present edition of the score and parts of the Suite [op. 117] closely follows the composer's manuscript. Some corrections made for the recording by the Lahti Symphony Orchestra (BIS-CD-575) have been incorporated. These are enclosed within square brackets [ ] or appear in reduced size notation.

The work's opus number is likewise bracketed because current listings of Sibelius' works end with opus 116. In some older sources opus number 117 was allocated to other works. Op. 117 was nevertheless assigned by the composer himself on the fair copy of the score. It is also noteworthy that Sibelius numbered the separate movements op. 117 no. 1, op. 117 no. 2 and op. 117 no. 3. We may therefore assume that the numbering has at least 'semi-official' status.

Two sources for the score exist, one being a manuscript in the composer's hand and the other a fair copy made by Lauri Nissinen. There are some small differences (missing staccato markings and cancelled accidentals) attributable to copying errors, but in other respects these scores are identical. Both sources are taken from the Helsinki University collection of Sibelius manuscripts (nos. 0845: and 0846:).

These relatively insignificant errors apart, one can fairly conclude that the original score is correct and a complete and final version. The composer offered the score to the American publisher Carl Fischer. However, on receiving a rejection from Fischer, Sibelius began to make some changes to the work and some alterations in lead pencil, made in the composer's hand, can be found in Nissinen's fair copy. Many of them are of a provisional nature and some are rather unclear, from which one may conclude that they were not final. Some of these corrections have been subsequently erased. Rather than taking a stand on the appropriateness of these corrections, I list the composer's pencil markings below.

1ST MOVEMENT

bars

23 Cb.

Note E crossed out and changed to B. The same is not done in the recapitulation, b. 57.

25-26 Vl. 1, Vl. 2, Vla, Vlc

Note B2 in Vl. 1 continued to the end of b. 26, possibly in the following rhythm (alteration partly erased):

In Vl. 2, Vla & Vlc, b. 26, the composer has ringed the first beat of the bar, possibly indicating a change of heart about the rhythm (alteration partly erased).

35 Solo

Alteration made on the stave to the rhythm. The first crotchet of the bar (G2) altered to a quaver, the leading grace-note possibly deleted. Above the stave proper, a portion of stave has been drawn by hand on which there is sketched a melodic figure, probably the following:

50 Solo

Provisional alterations (2nd, 3rd & 4th notes of the bar changed to E2, D#2 & C#2) probably rejected (deleted with pen stroke).

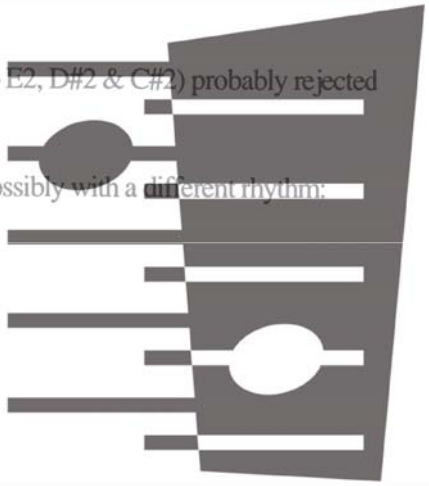
59-60 Vl.1

Note B2 continued up to b. 60 (corresponding to bb. 25-26, but possibly with a different rhythm: ♩. ♩. | ♩ ♪♪♩).

69 Vl. 1, Vl.2, Vla, Vlc

Provisional alterations erased with India rubber.

PROMOTIONAL COPY

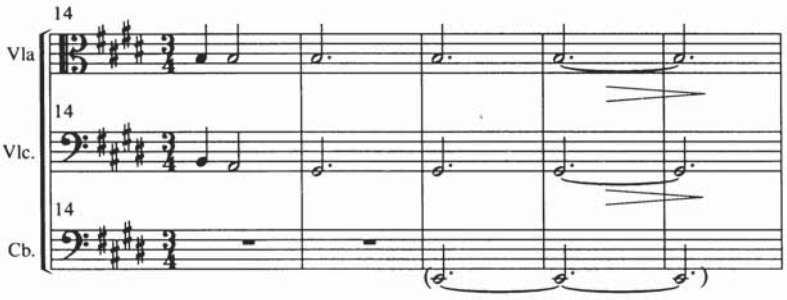


FENNICA GEHRMAN OY, HELSINKI

2ND MOVEMENT

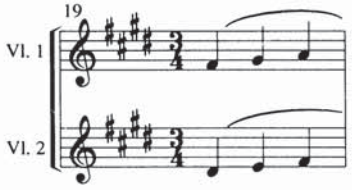
14-18 Vla, Vlc, Cb.

Changes to notes and rhythm. Note E in the double bass has been deleted with a pen stroke as follows (the same change is not made in the equivalent passage, bb. 64-66):



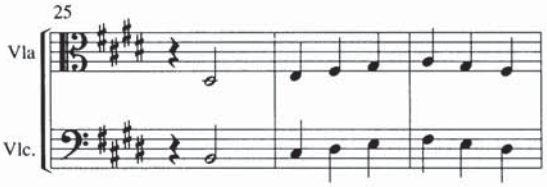
19 Vl. 1, Vl. 2

Melodic motion changed to the following:



25-27 Vla, Vlc

Changed to the following:



30-31 Solo, Vl. 1, Vl.2, Vla, Vlc, Cb

The bars have been circled, provisional alterations erased.

62-66 Vla, Vlc, (Cb.)

Similar alteration to that of bb. 14-18, except that here the double bass E has been left intact.

67 Vl. 1, Vl. 2

Equivalent passage to b. 19. However, alterations to this bar are less clear.

85-86 Vla

Upper note (G) deleted with pen stroke.

3RD MOVEMENT

In the 3rd movement there are many indications of proposal rhythmic modifications. The general underlying principle seems to be combination of smaller durational values to form longer ones.

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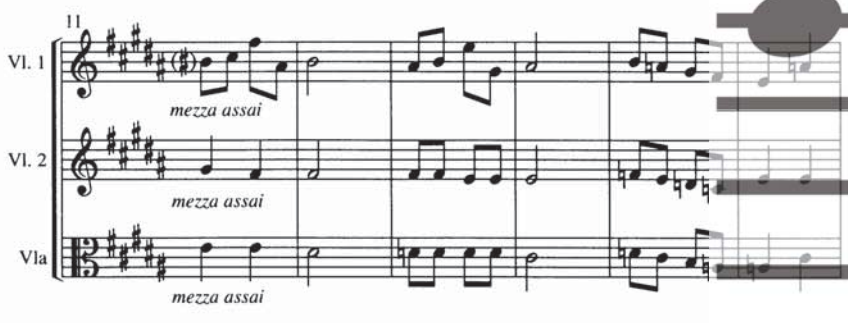
11-16 Vl. 1, Vl. 2, Vla

Rhythmic alterations.



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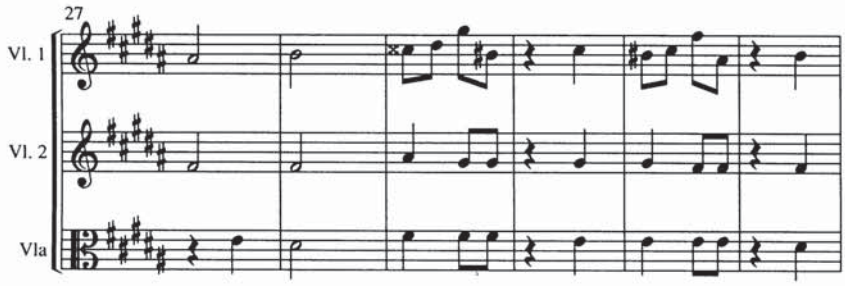
27-32 Vl. 1, Vl. 2, Vla

Rhythmic alterations.

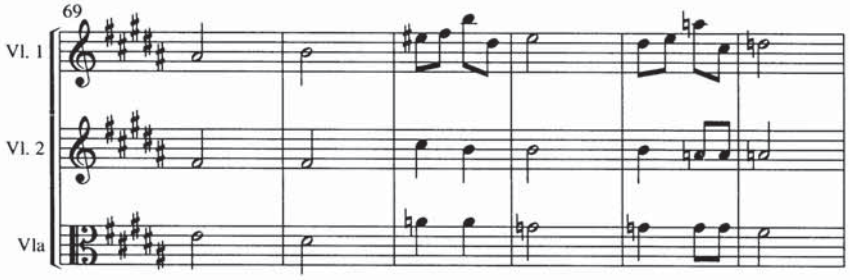


54-58 Vl. 1, Vl. 2, Vla

Rhythmic alterations: similar corrections to those of bb. 11-16, except that b. 53 (equivalent to b. 11) has been left unaltered.

69-74 Vl. 1, Vl. 2, Vla

Rhythmic alterations.



86 Vl. 1, Vlc

Last quaver of the bar has been circled (not the case in the equivalent passage in b. 44).

95-100 Vl. 1, Vl. 2, Vla

Rhythmic alterations: similar corrections to those of bb. 11-16, except that the crotchet rest in the first beat of b. 96 (equivalent to b. 12) has been left intact and the subsequent quavers have been combined into a crotchet.

111-116 Vl. 1, Vl. 2, Vla

Rhythmic alterations (passage equivalent to bb. 68-74). However, the alterations made to these bars are less clearly marked.

118 Vl. 1, Vl. 2, Vla

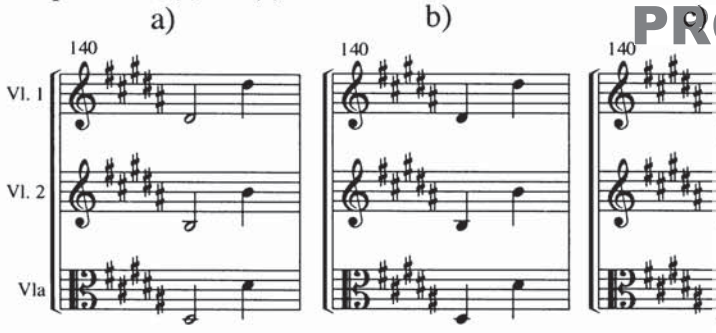
Third quaver of the bar has been altered to a rest (making the rhythm in this bar equivalent to that of the previous and subsequent bars).

131 Vl. 1, Vl. 2, Vla

First crotchet of the bar changed to a rest (making the rhythm in this bar equivalent to that of the previous bar).

140 Vl. 1, Vl. 2, Vla

Since the change made to the bar (a) results in too long a duration, one may choose between two interpretations, (a) and (b).



147 Cb.

Octave F# added above the note.

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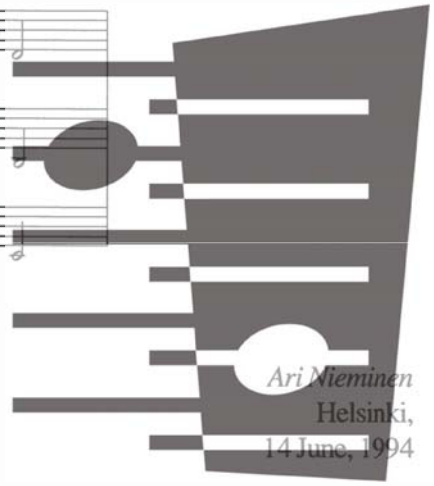

Ari Nieminen
Helsinki,
14 June, 1994

FENNICA GEHRMAN OY, HELSINKI