Béla Fleck

UFO Tofu

arranged for percussion ensemble and rhythm section
by Tom Gierke

"UFO-Tofu"
Written by Béla Fleck
© 1992 FLECK MUSIC (BMI) ADMINISTERED BY BUG.
All Rights Reserved. Used By Permission.

www.tapspace.com

Notice of Liability: Any duplication, adaptation, or arrangement of this composition requires the written consent of the copyright owner. No part of this composition may be photocopied or reproduced in any way without permission. Unauthorized uses are an infringement of the U.S. Copyright act and are punishable by law.

TSPCE-19

Performance notes

Béla Fleck is widely renowned as the world's foremost banjo virtuoso. His unique work with the Flecktones exemplifies a marriage of bluegrass and funky fusion jazz. **UFO Tofu** is a spirited and fast-paced *moto perpetuo* as well as the title track of the band's third album.

This orchestration for percussion ensemble was originally written for the Santa Clara Vanguard Drum & Bugle Corps to be performed at the DCI Individual and Ensemble competition. The fast-paced yet flowing melodies provided a great challenge for even the most accomplished 4-mallet musicians to perform. The tune's natural excitement allowed the group to add performance flair and even a "breakdown" section.

The mallet lines in this arrangement require a solid grasp of 4-mallet independence concepts which are suited for college or advanced high school ensembles. The orchestration calls for three marimbas but is designed so that two players can comfortably coexist on the second marimba, though they may need to be good friends to accomplish this. A fourth marimba can be used if one is available. The xylophone player will have to navigate quickly between xylophone and glockenspiel.

The arrangement also calls for a rhythm section consisting of timpani and drumset. Alluding to the original, the addition of some electronic elements to the drumset parts is well suited. If available, an electronic drum pad will work well for the tabla and reverse cymbal effects written into the score.

UFO Tofu should have a very flowing and effortless groove. There are two main challenges that performers should be aware of in creating this feel. First, you will notice that the piece weaves its way though a multitude of odd-metered time signatures. Take special care during rehearsal to ensure that the time remains constant and that the feel changes do not become choppy or disjunct. Secondly, the 4-mallet independence required in keyboard parts can be intense. Players should ensure that the stickings do not create unintended accents nor should the interpretation become static. The phrasings sound most interesting with natural dynamic shaping and rhythmic stresses that highlight the odd-metered groove. Again, it should sound effortless through any technical complication.

Drumset Part: Overall, liberties should be taken to help enhance accents and melodic motion. The original setup for which this was arranged included electronic pads which were programmed with patches for the tabla and reverse cymbal effects. If such instruments are not available, be creative! Letter E requires a set of bongos (to be played with one hand).

Letter B: Lay low on all the repeated D's so that the melodies played by the xylophone and marimbas (right hand) are clear and prominent. Also, this is where it starts getting tricky for two players to share Marimba 2. The stickings are notated at spots to help facilitate this. If four marimbas are used, then stickings should be tailored for maximum comfort.

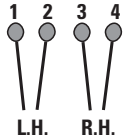
Letter E: Take special care that the djembe and drumset parts blend very well here. Notice the interplay between the djembe and the bongos and the bass drum to the bass tones.

Letter G: The marimba and xylophone players will need to spend some time establishing a logical sticking utilizing 4-mallet independence. The slurred phrasings written here should help suggest soloistic inflections. The chording elements in this section should play in a *comping* style (a mere complement to the melody) as if the parts were improvised.

Letter I: This is the "shout" section (or climax of the tune), a height of performance intensity.

Letter J: The acceleration beginning at measure 162 should be very slight. Once the ending is comfortable at tempo, adding this slight bit of push at the end will add another level of excitement to the performance.

Mallet sticking suggestions: In some parts, stickings have been suggested. However, you are welcome to use whichever stickings feel most comfortable. For reference, the sticking numbers indicated use this numbering formula.



Mallet choices are suggested as follows:

Marimba 1 and 3: Medium to hard yarn or cord. Articulate at the top end, yet not too harsh on the low D's.

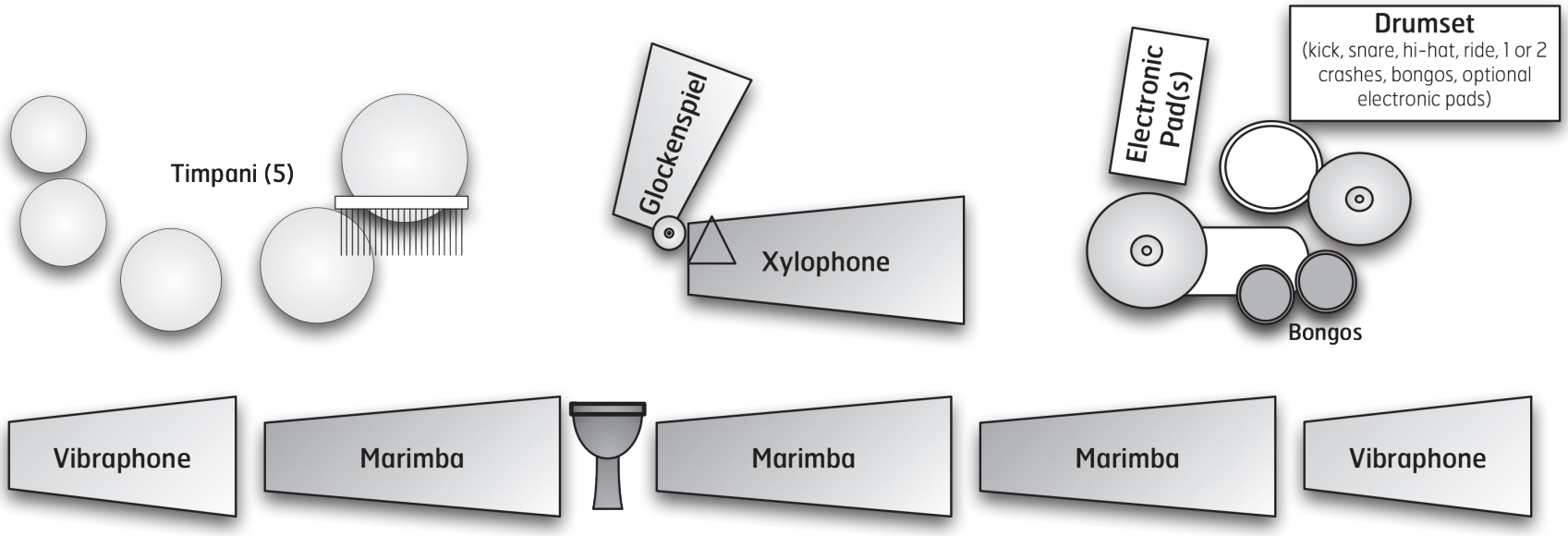
Marimba 2 (top): Hard yarn or cord in order to provide the most articulation in conjunction with the xylophone voice.

Marimba 2 (bottom): Medium-soft yarn — a nice deep tone at the low end with less articulation.

Vibraphones: Medium-hard cord - just enough articulation to cover the melodic lines without sounding overly harsh or metallic.

Xylophone/Glockenspiel: Soft plastic or hard rubber. The xylophone should blend with the top-end marimbas rather than overpower them. The glockenspiel may need a more articulate mallet than the xylophone if feasible. At times the player may need to hold both xylophone and bell mallets in a 1/3 - 2/4 configuration.

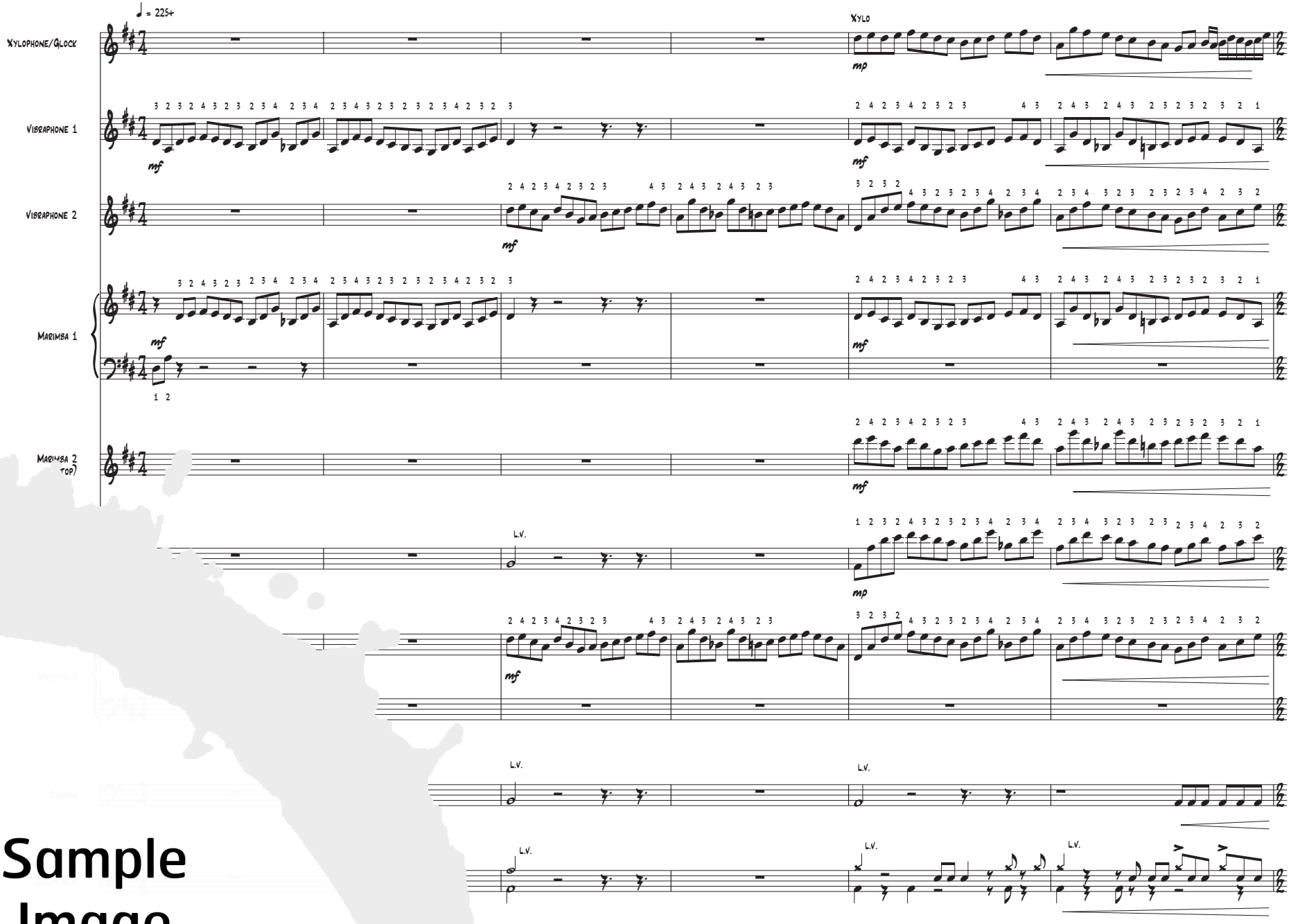
Suggested Setup



Level: Advanced
Duration: approx. 3'10"

UFO Tofu

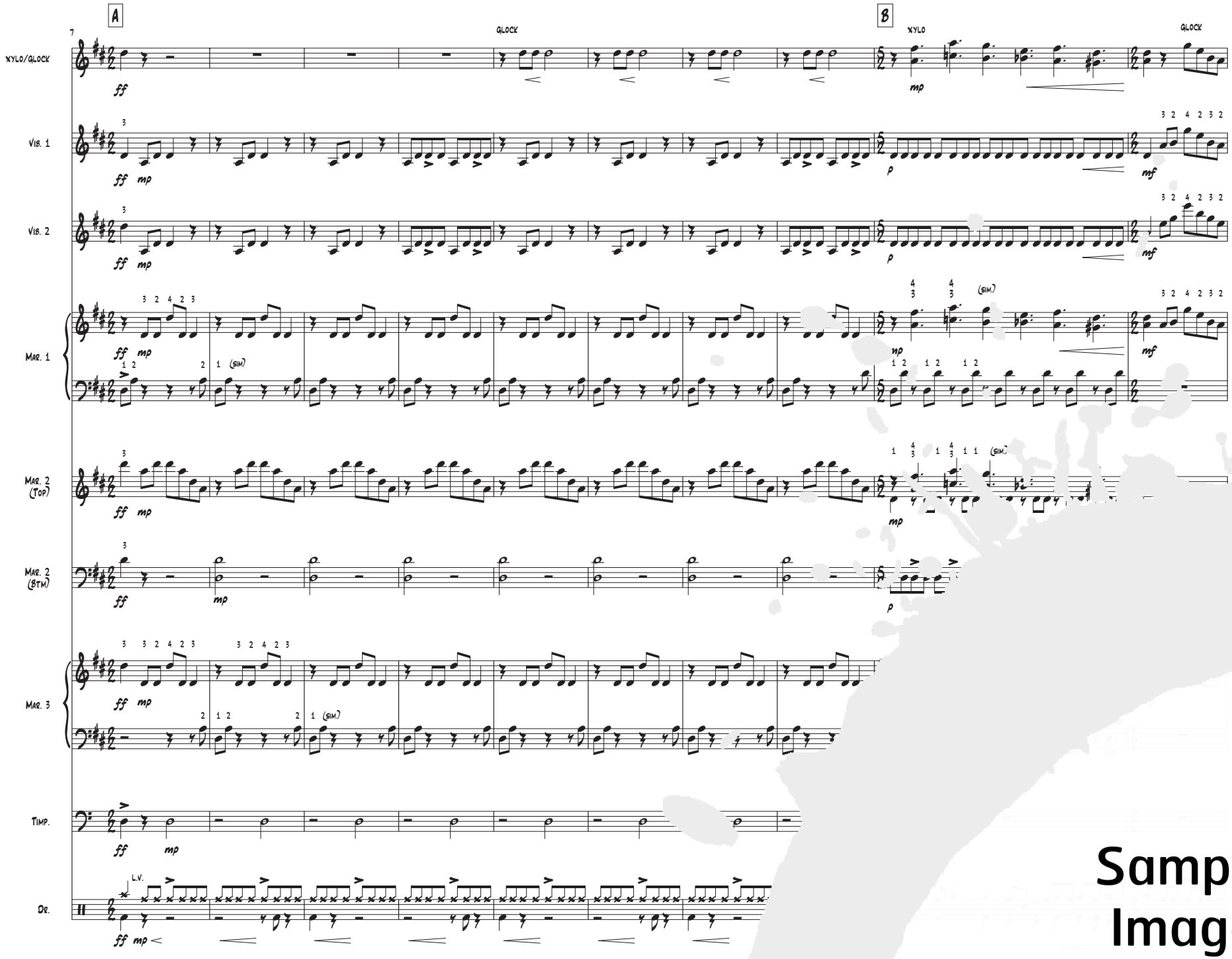
Béla Fleck
arranged by Tom Gierke



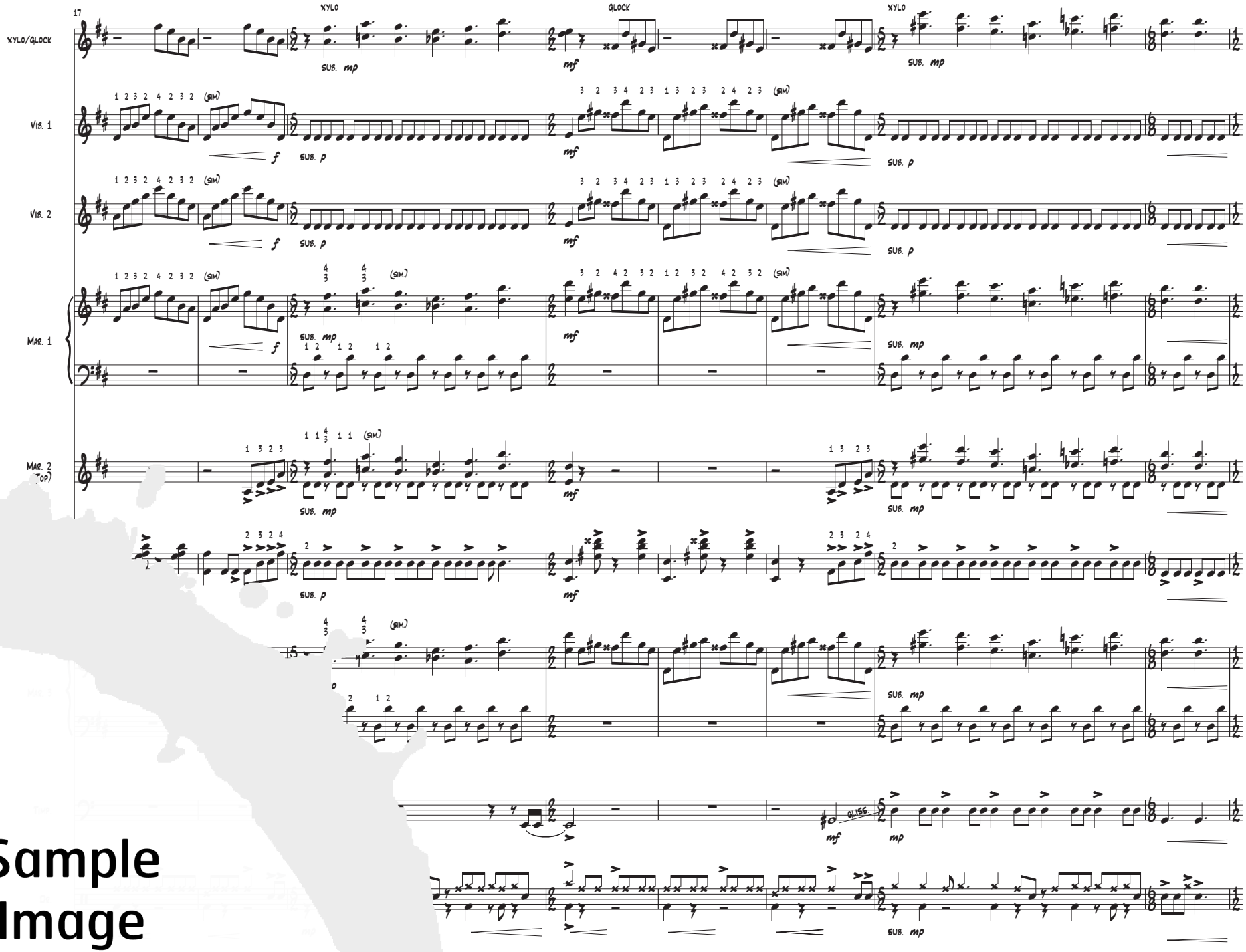
Sample Image

"UFO-Tofu" Written by Béla Fleck
MI) ADMINISTERED BY BUG. All Rights Reserved. Used By Permission.

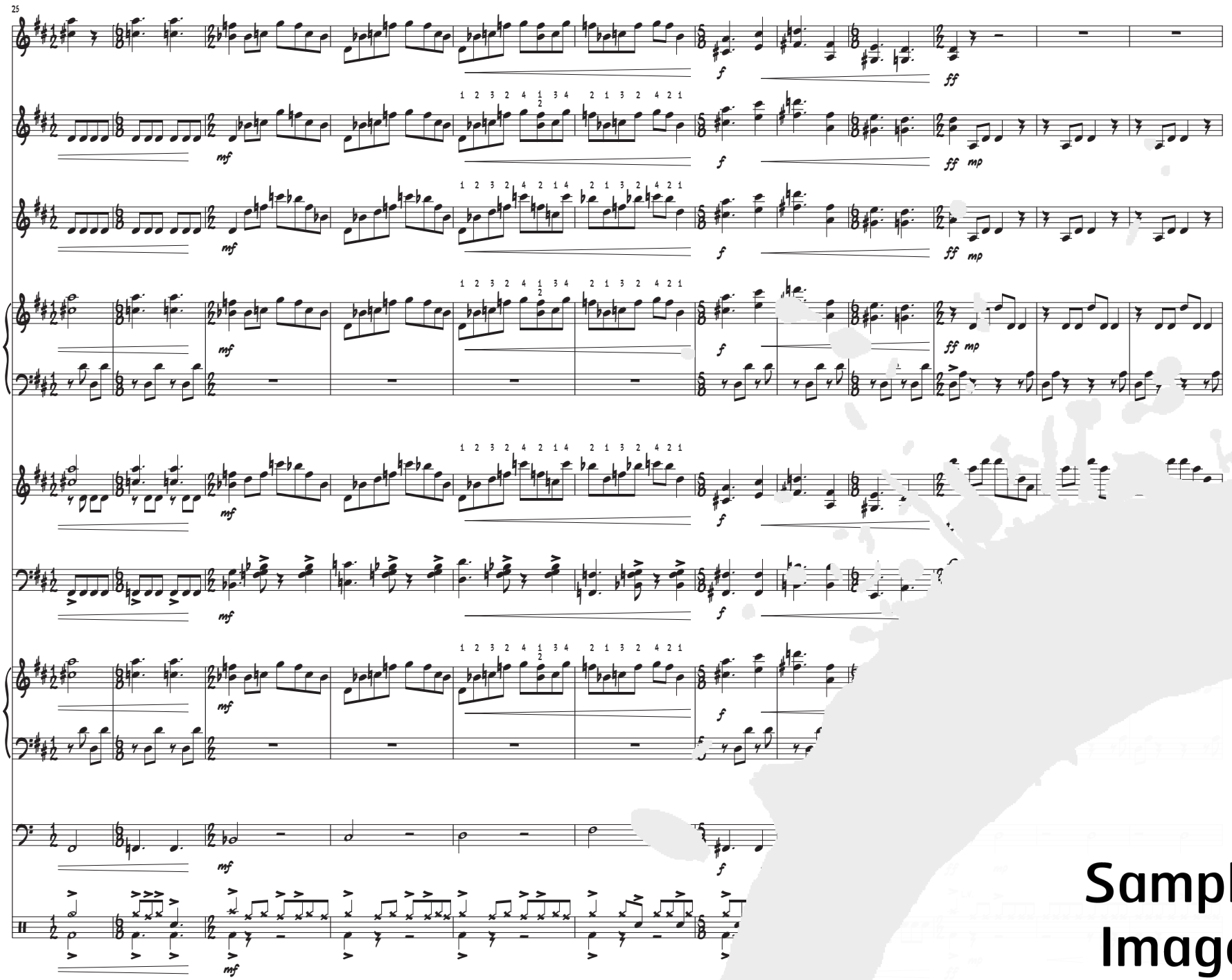
UFO Tofu - Fleck, arr. Gierke



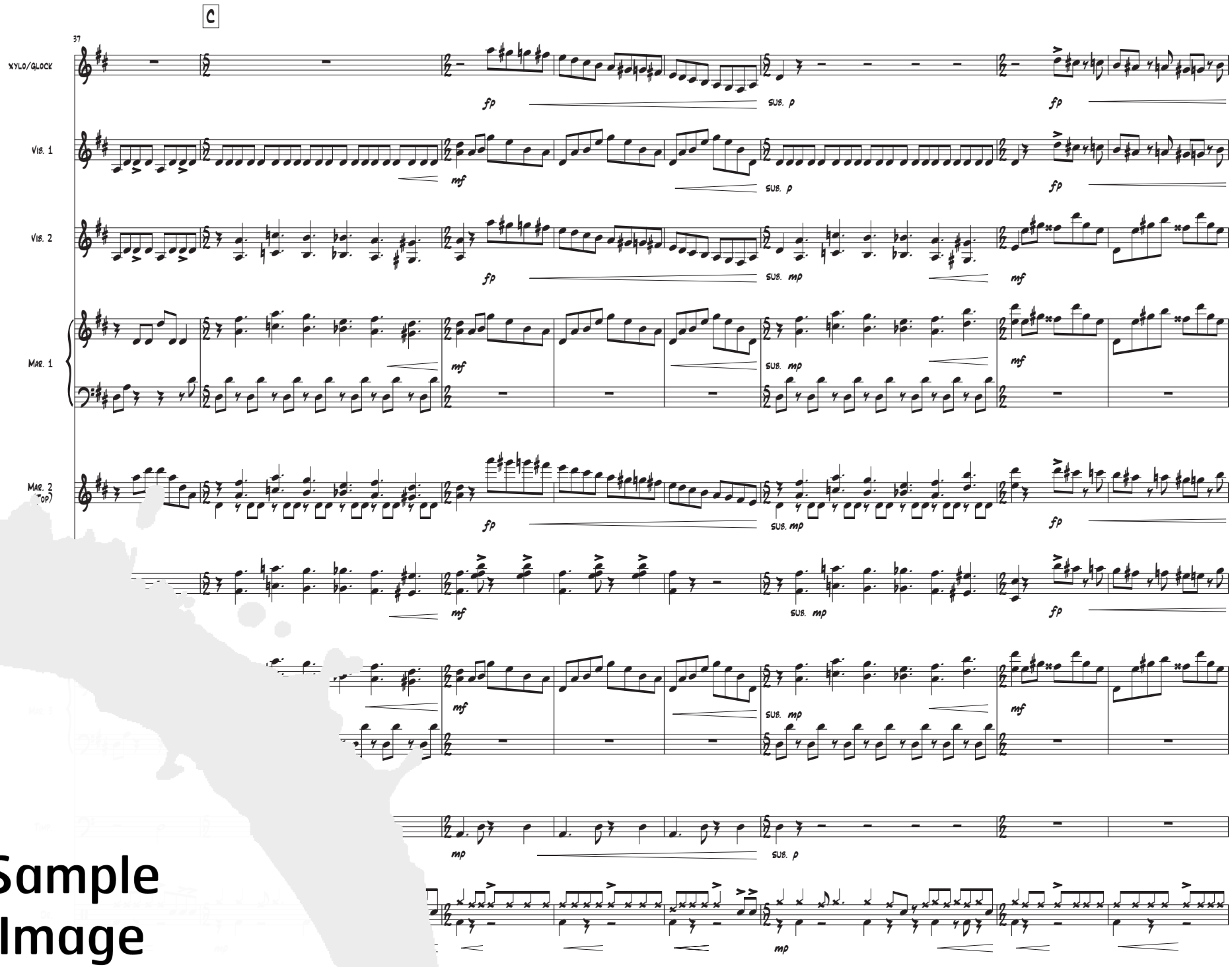
Sample Image



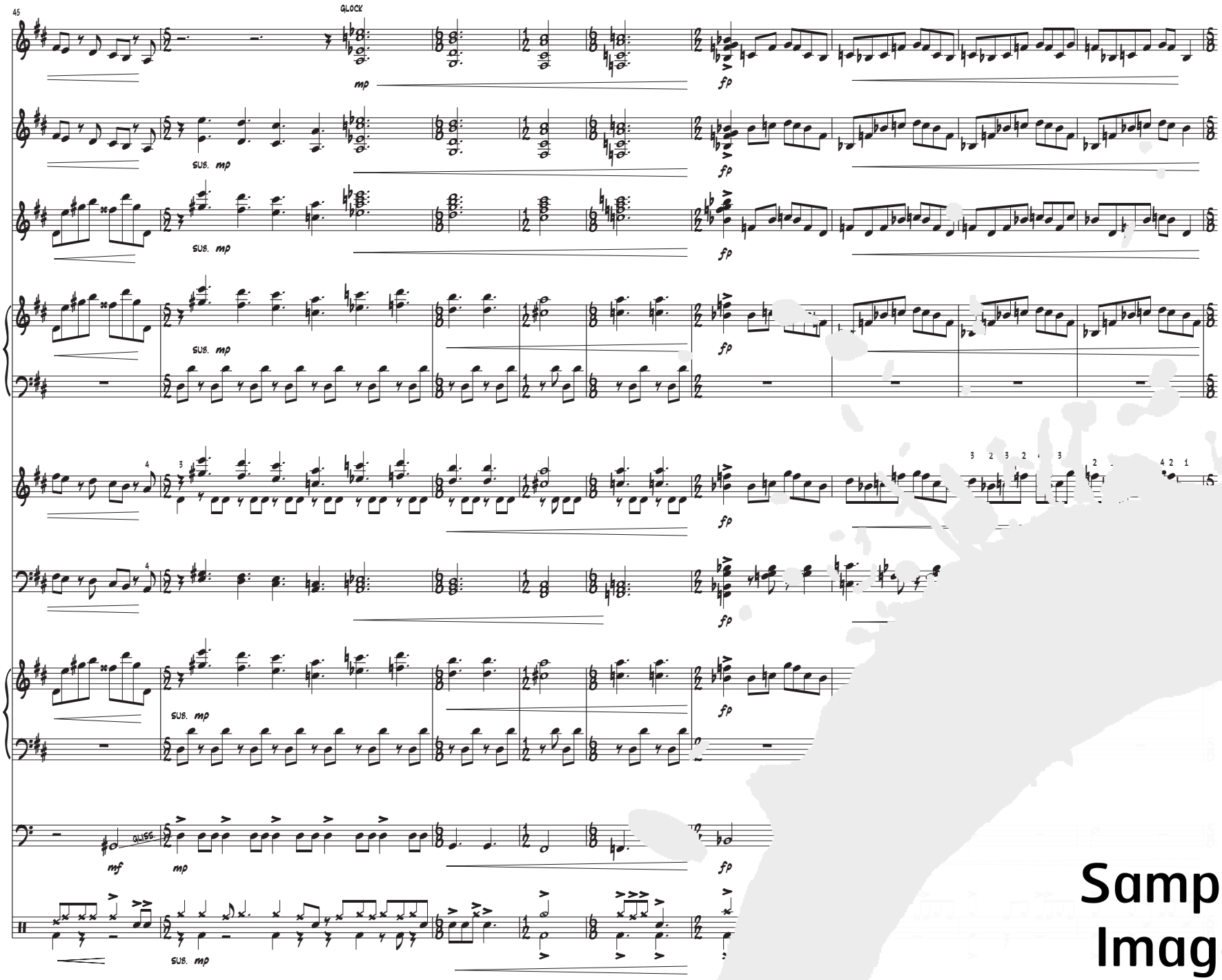
Sample Image



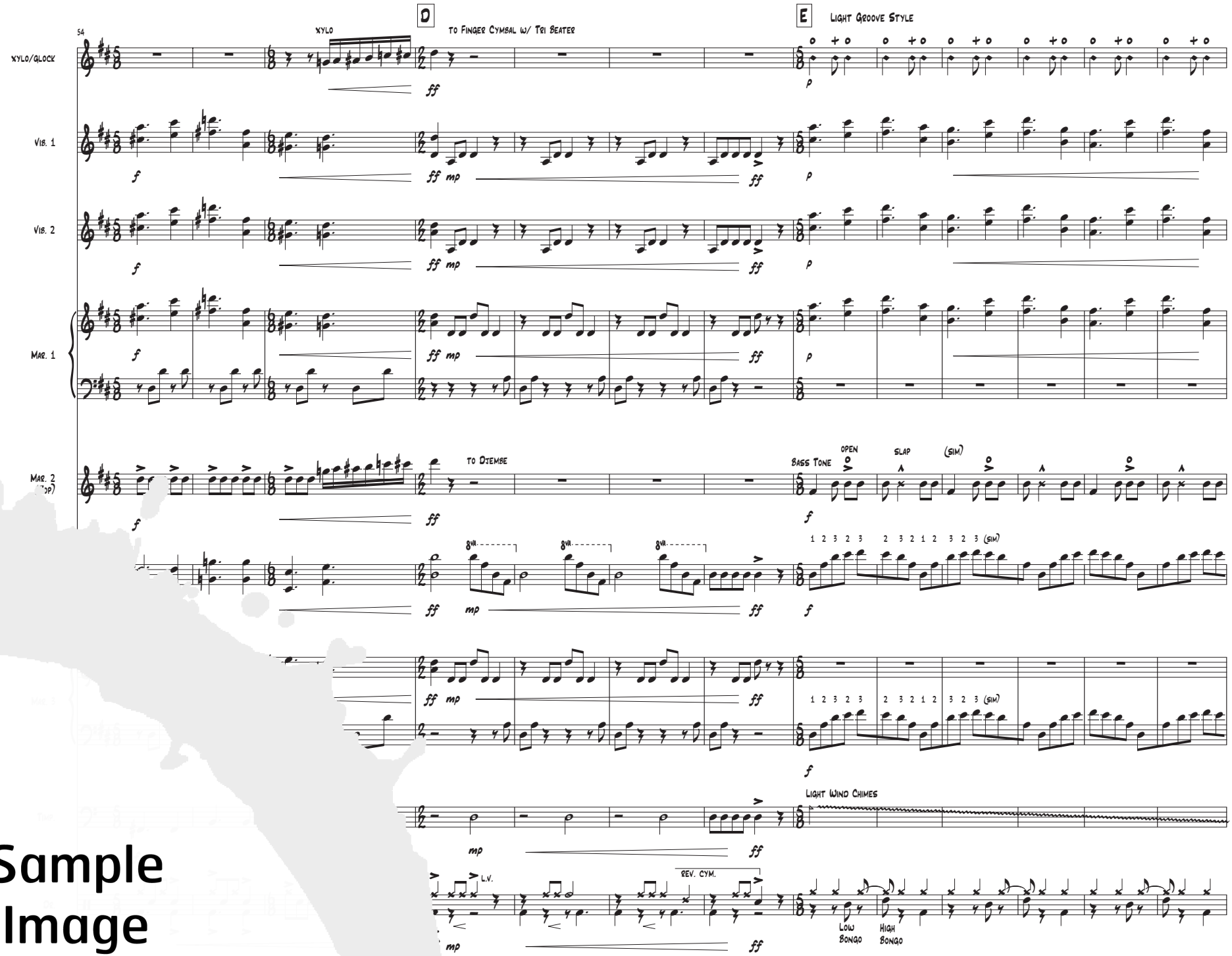
Sample Image



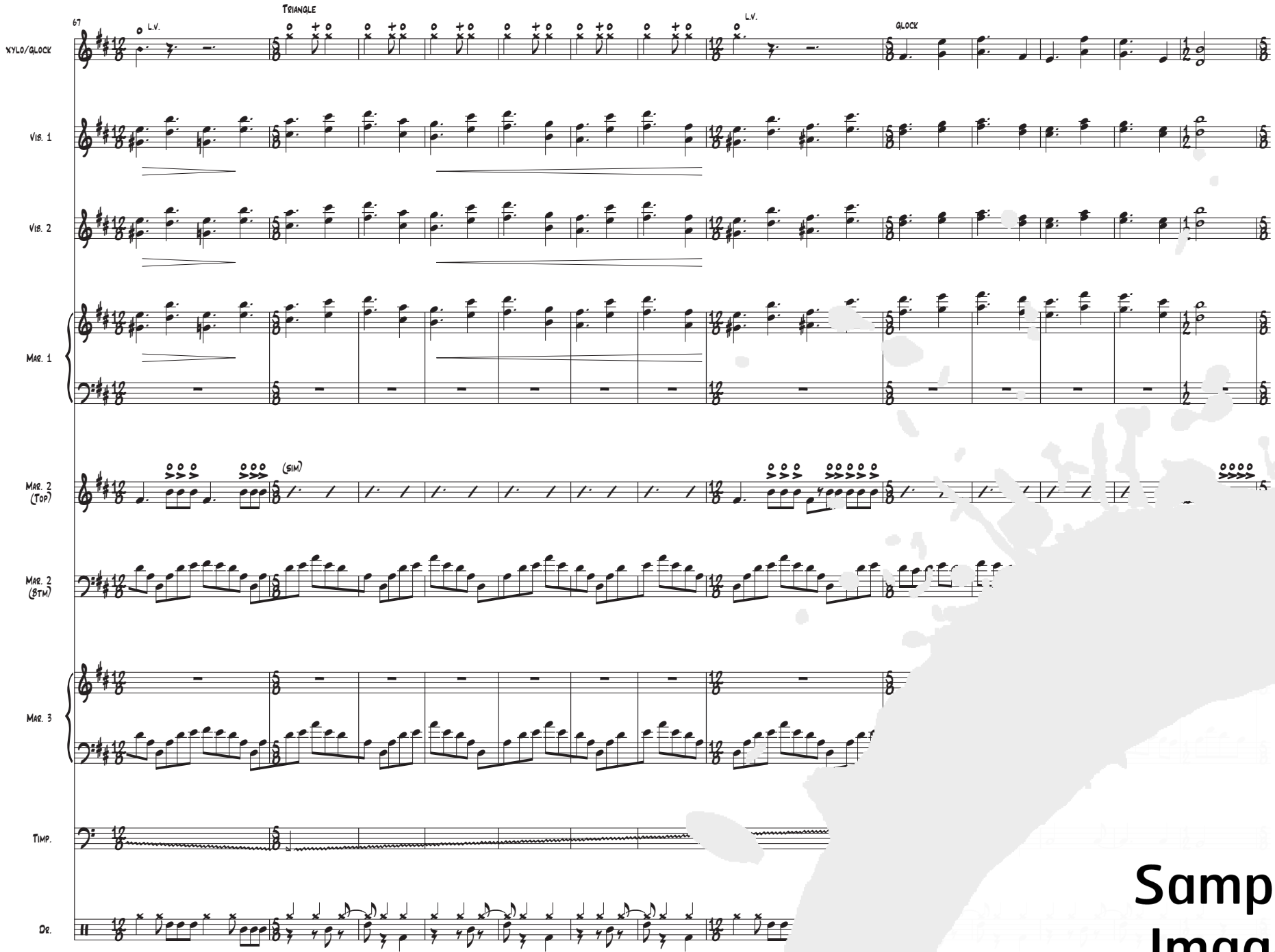
Sample Image



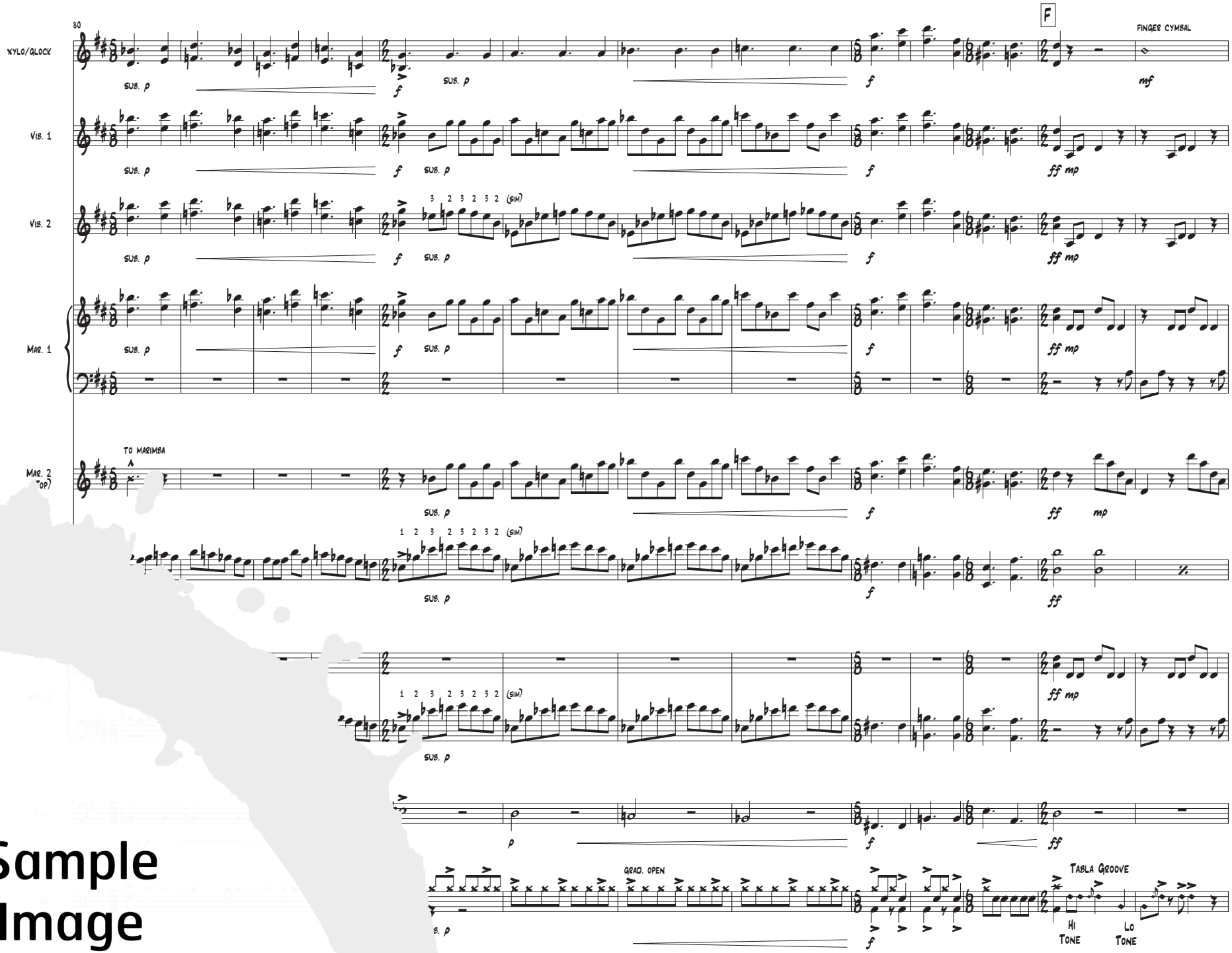
Sample Image



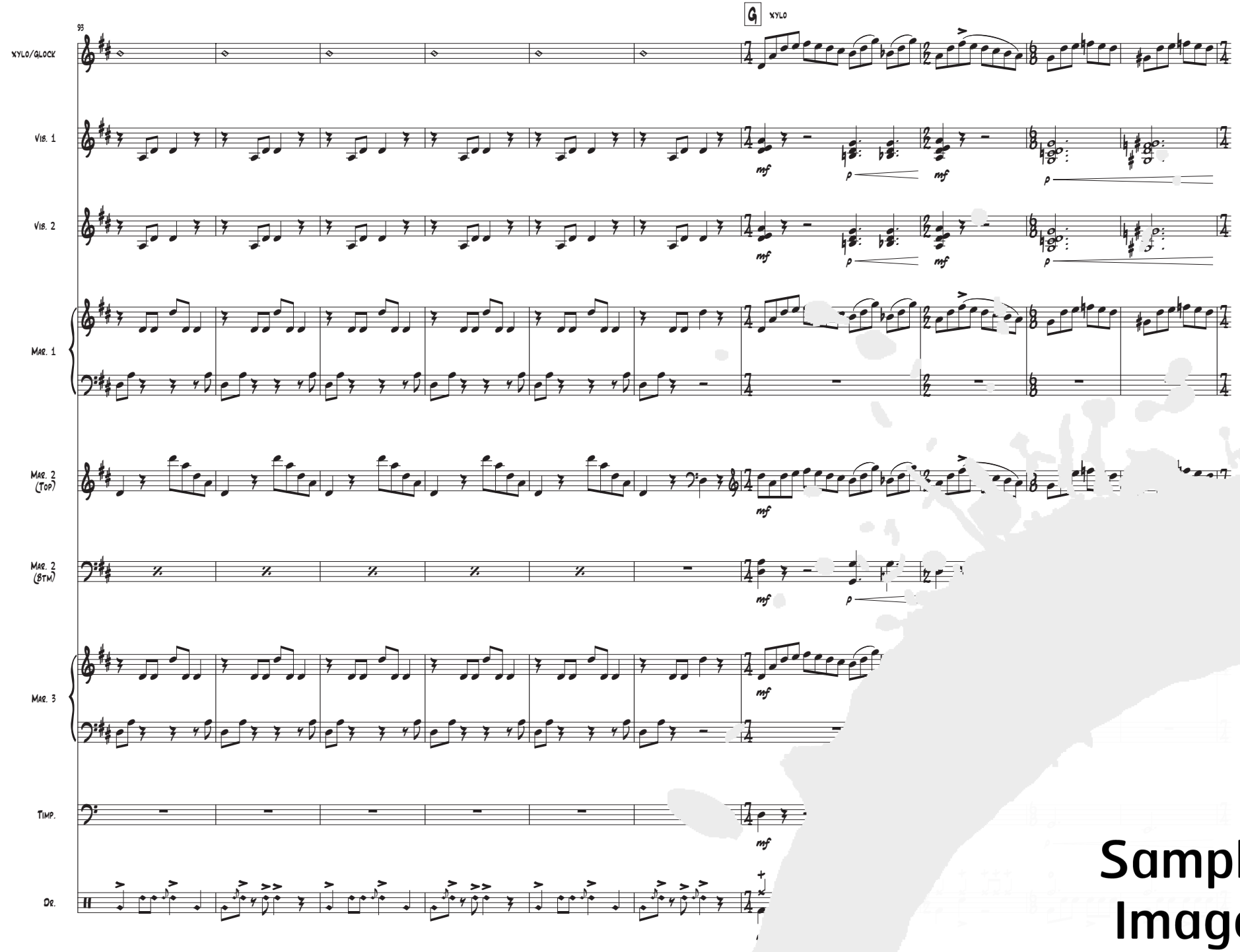
Sample Image



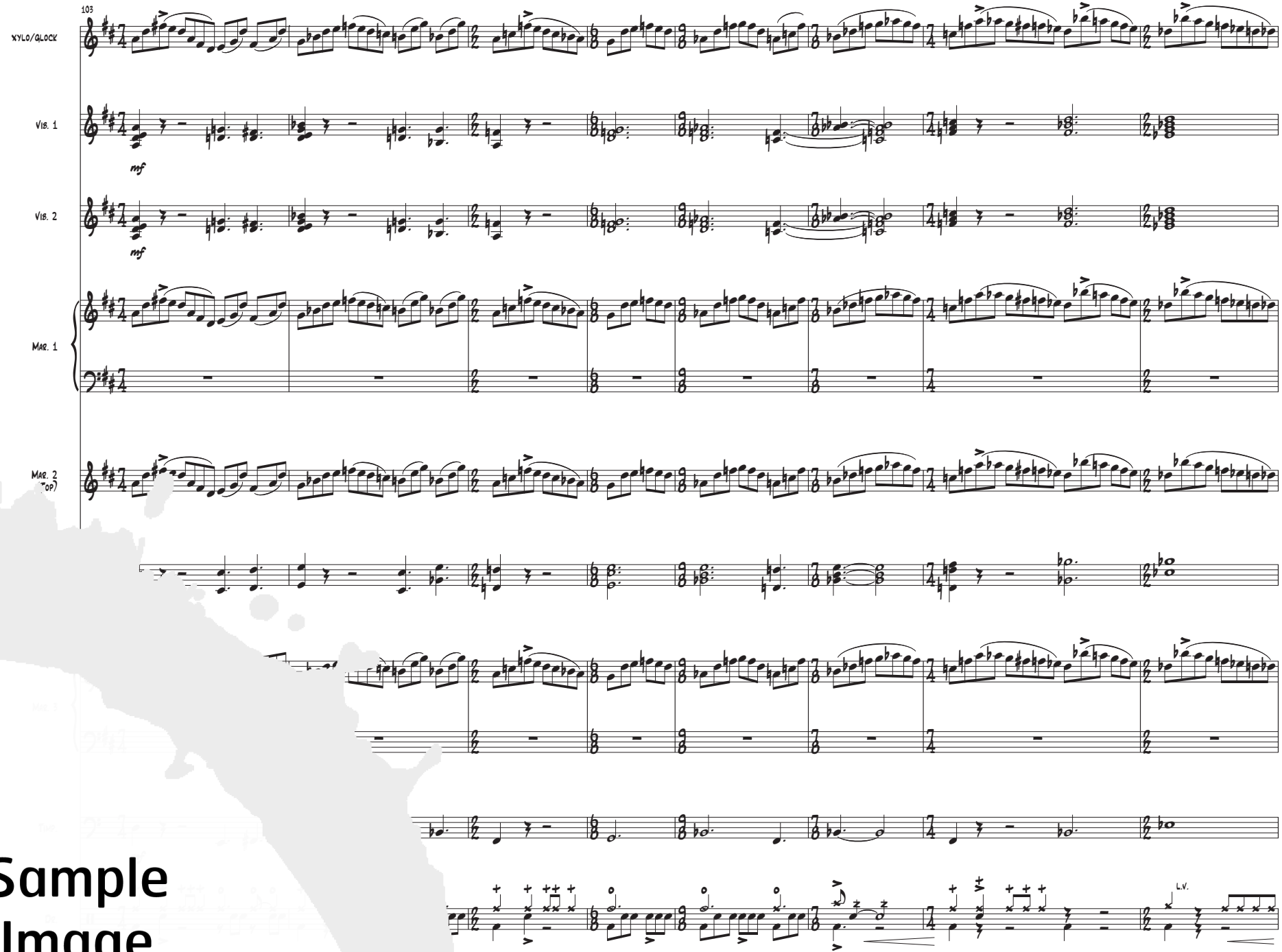
Sample Image



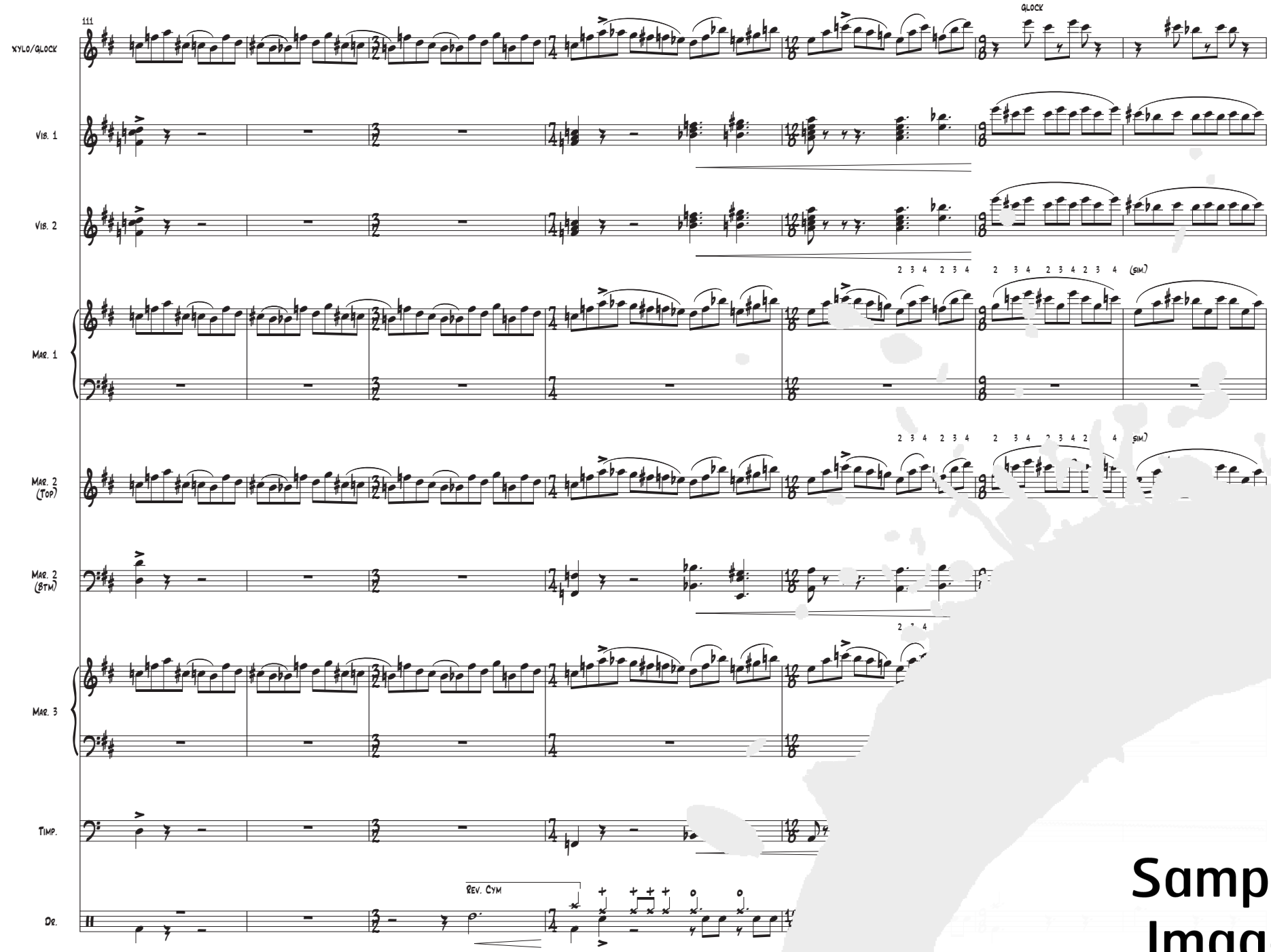
Sample Image



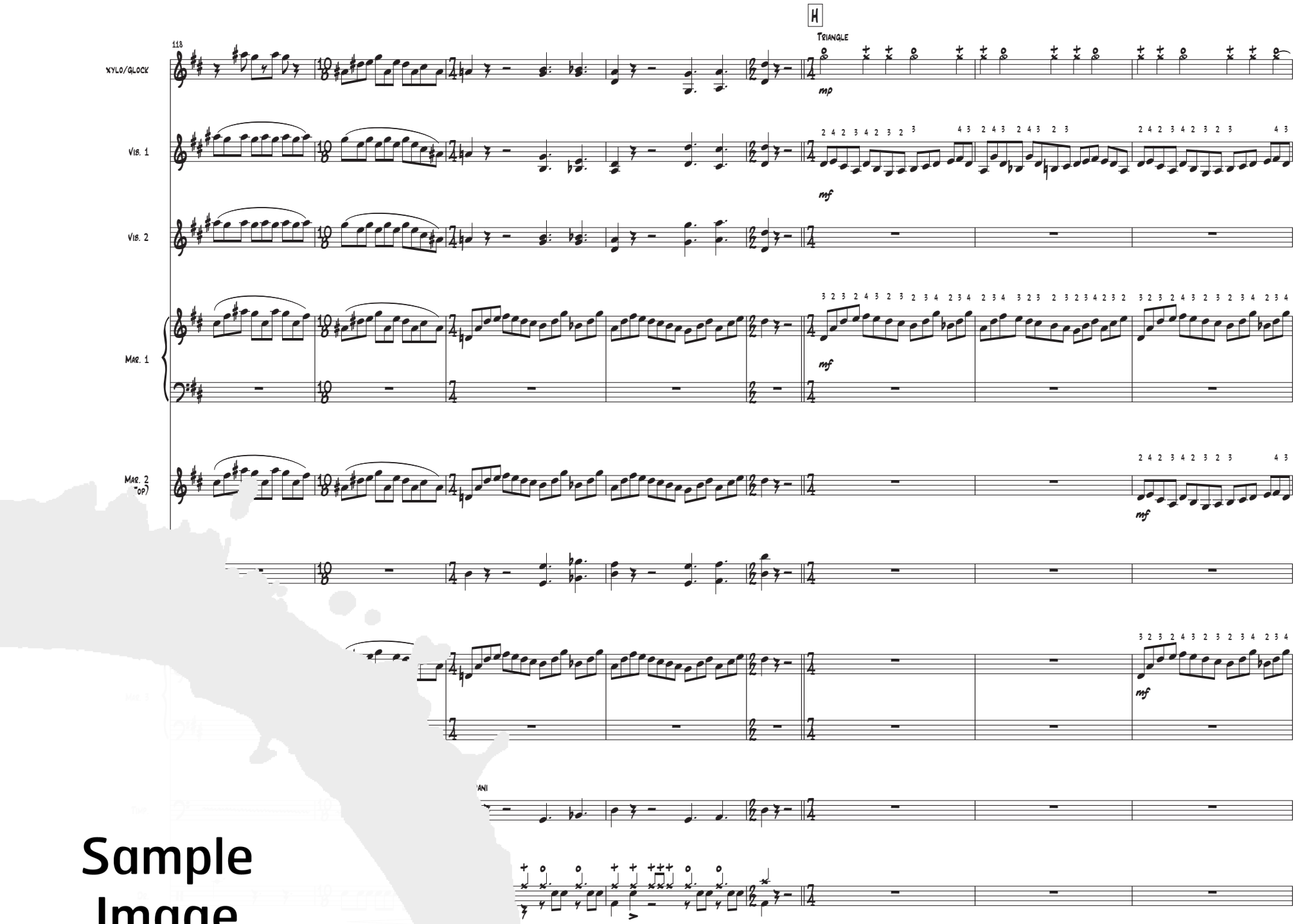
Sample Image



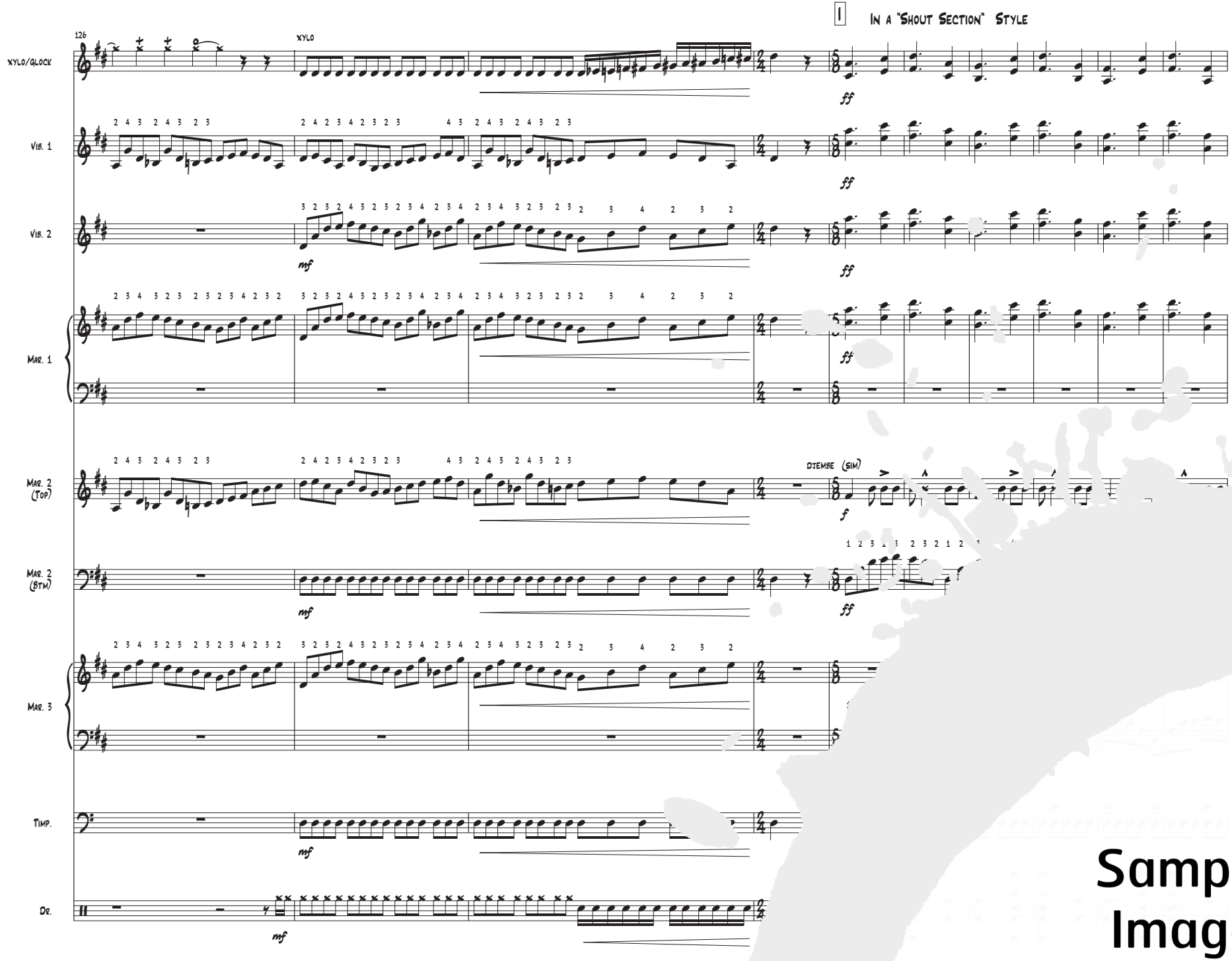
Sample Image



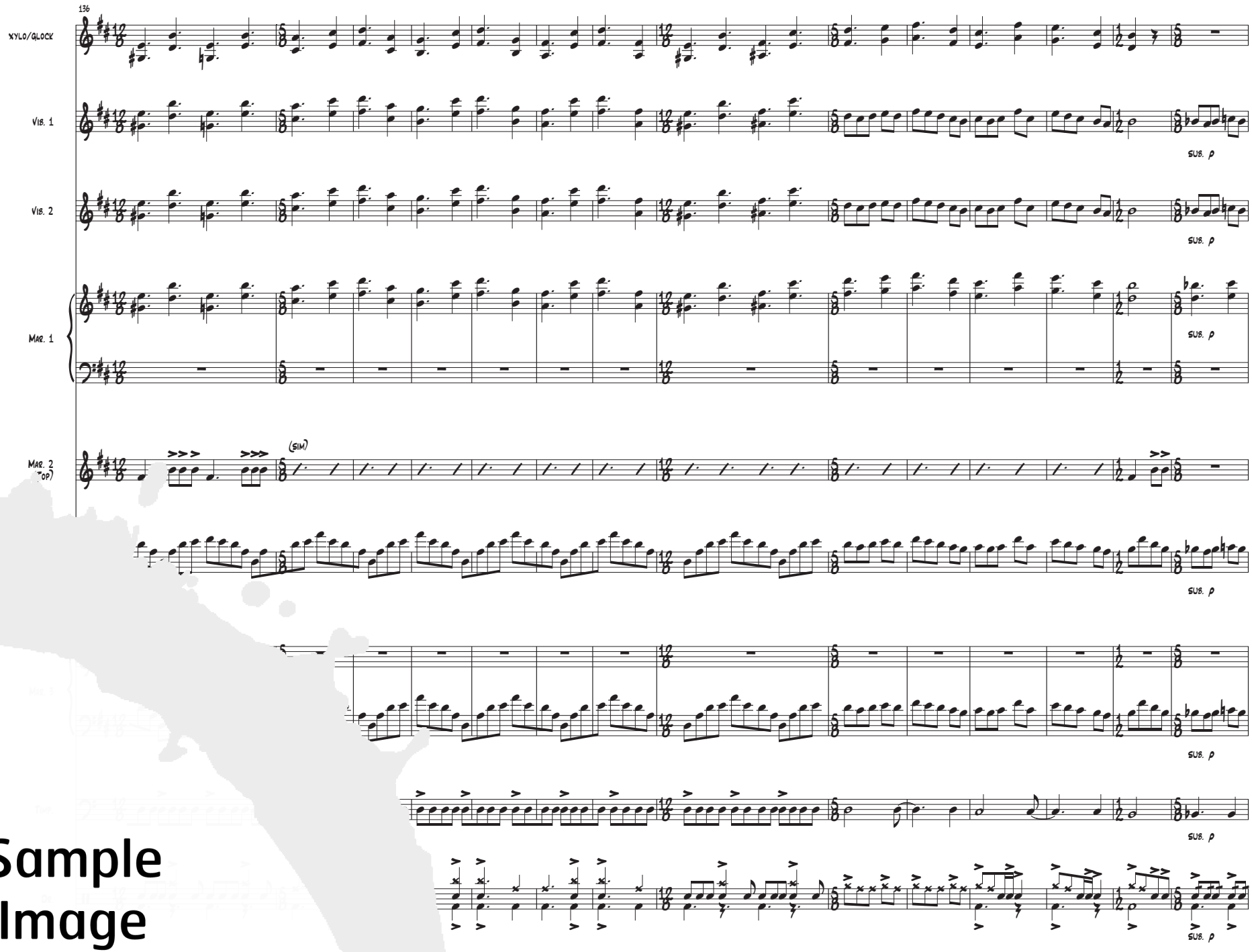
Sample Image



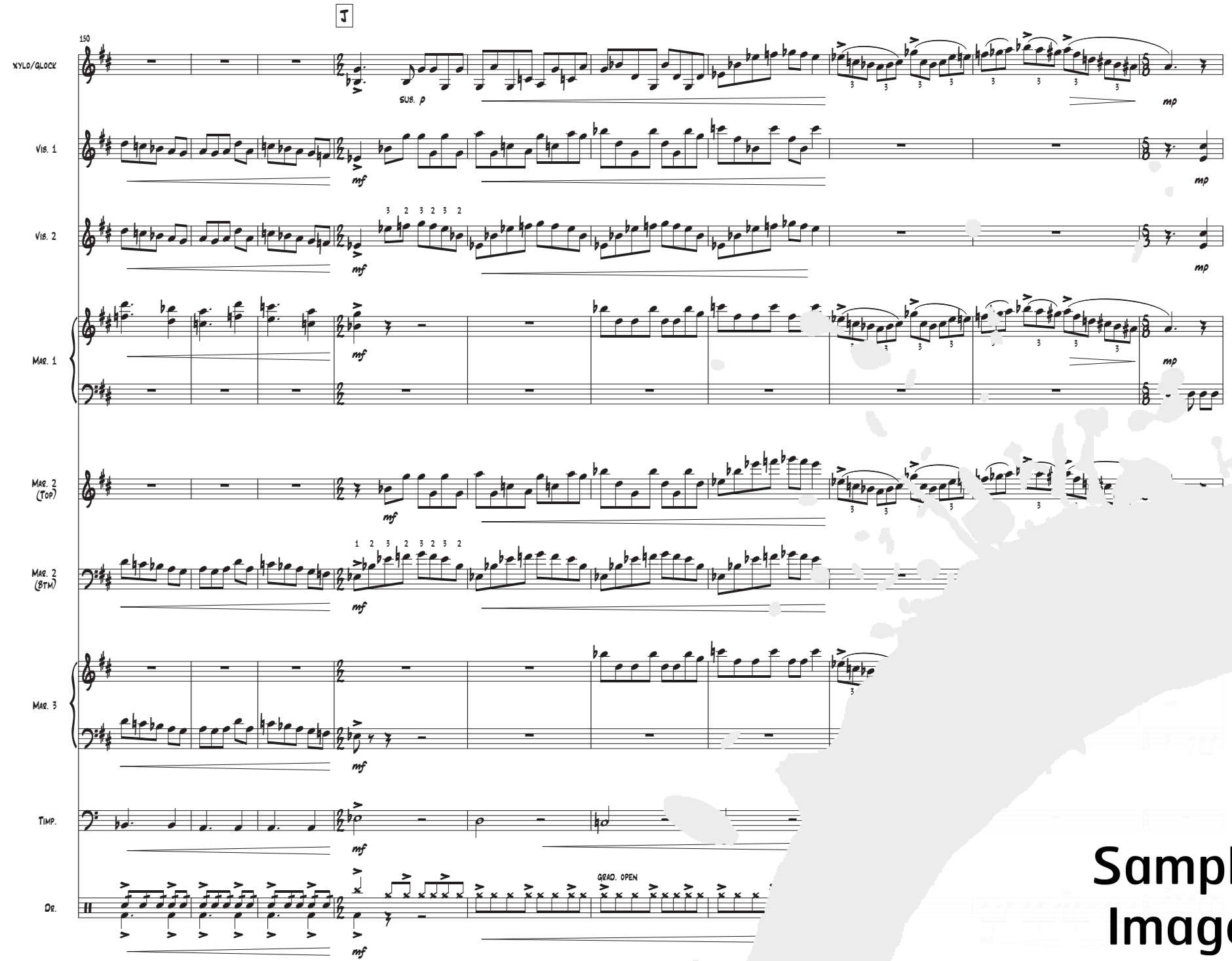
Sample Image



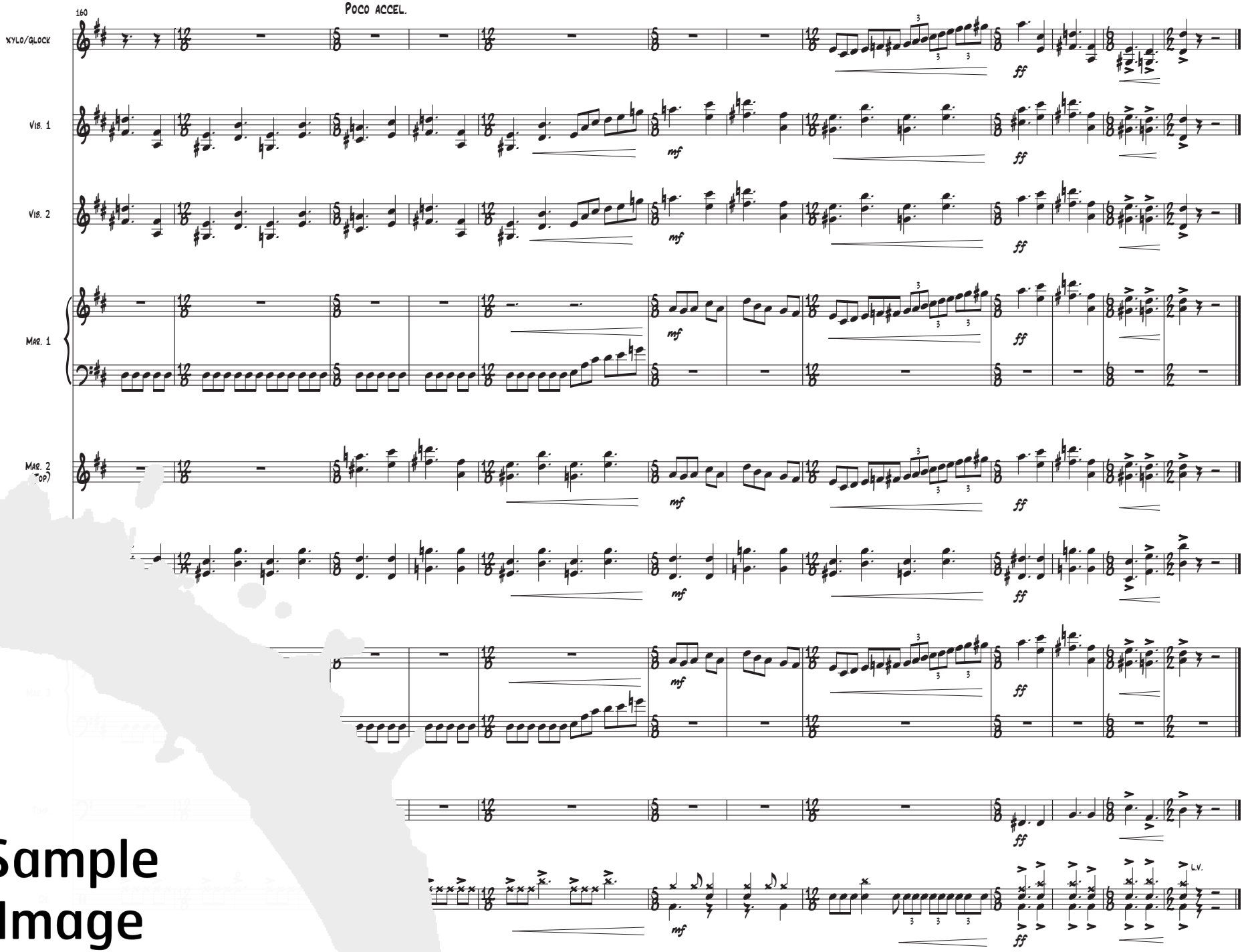
Sample Image



Sample Image



Sample Image



Sample Image

tapspace™
creativity in percussion™