Jim Casella

Joaquin on Sunshine

for percussion ensemble and rhythm section

Joaquin on Sunshine by Jim Casella
© 2010 Tapspace Publications, LLC, Portland, OR (ASCAP)
All rights reserved. International copyright secured. Printed in USA.

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-42

Program notes

Joaquin on Sunshine was originally written in 2008 under the working title "El Ritmo Adentro." In the early stages of my writing, the rhythms started developing an Afro-Cuban flavor, and before I knew it, I was writing my first songo-inspired piece. This wasn't my original intent. I set out to write something where syncopation dictated its energy and the downbeats were rarely the dominant part of the pulse, melody, or phrasings. (El Ritmo Adentro translates to "The Rhythm Inside.")

As the piece solidified, it took on a festive quality that turned out to be a lot of fun. However, I could never quite come up with a title that reflected this in addition to its Latin flavor. So while the title didn't come around until after the piece was finished (with inspiration from my friends Murray Gusseck and David Reeves), I love that our friend Joaquin has something to smile about. Fans of the band Katrina and the Waves may not appreciate the dangerously corny wordplay, but it makes me happy.

Written for a large ensemble, the piece uses a fairly typical array of percussion instruments as well as a rhythm section including bass guitar, piano, drumset, timbales, bongos, congas, and shekere. A recurring motive of 2+3 rumba clave appears regularly, though it isn't meant to be a constant key to the groove. Aside from the inherent challenges imposed by the syncopation, the often dense scoring can be difficult for players to navigate within. This becomes a great way for ensembles to rehearse awareness so that accompaniment doesn't become heavy and for more melodic parts to relate their off-beat phrasings to the groove supplied by the accompaniment. When performed well, the phrasing feels precise and fluid while weaving around the strong beats, with the various instruments finding a comfortable balance with each other.

Joaquin on Sunshine was written for the Foster High School percussion ensemble from Richmond, Texas, under the direction of Mr. Daren Jordan.

-Jim Casella

Instrument/Parts list

This piece calls for **15–17 players** with the following instrumentation:

Glockenspiel part
glockenspiel, splash cymbal, finger cymbals

Xylophone part
xylophone, crotales

Chime part
chimes, mark tree, triangle

Vibraphone 1 part
vibraphone, sizzle cymbal

Vibraphone 2 part
vibraphone

Marimba 1 part (ideally doubled)
4.3-octave marimba (low A), suspended cymbal, sizzle cymbal

Marimba 3 & 4 part (ideally doubled)
4.5-octave marimba (low F)

Timpani part
4 timpani

Piano part
piano

Bass Guitar part
electric bass guitar

Drumset part
5-piece drumset with, ride, 2 crashes, hi-hats, splash, and china cymbals

Bongo part
bongos, guiro

Conga part
2 congas, cabasa, djembe

Timbale part
standard timbale set (2 drums with 2 cowbells and cymbal), concert bass drum

Shekere part
shekere, triangle, suspended cymbal, tam tam, bell tree

Performance notes

If performed well, this piece should sound like a festive celebration that makes you want to dance. It'll be most successful if players have a natural feel for playing syncopated 16th-note parts, where notes aren't being literaly read from the page. This is the sort of thing in which "feel" dictates technique. These rhythms should be infused into players' muscles so that they can mostly listen to other players while fitting their own part into the mix. If the groove isn't solid and natural, it will be an unfortunate time for the audience.

Rhythm section percussionists: This includes drumset, bongos, congas, timbales, and shekere. These parts are intended to provide an underlying groove for the piece. While there are parts that are written out, these are often just suggested patterns that fit well with the Afro-Cuban flavor of the piece. It's okay to alter these as long as the phrasing and accents still fit.

All percussionists should be mindful of volume and how it affects the overall ensemble. If percussion parts are played at full "party volume," it will most likely drown out the mallet keyboards and turn into a noisy mess. It's a busy piece, so be careful not to let the high activity create volume problems - particularly instruments that easily overbalance, such as drumset, cymbals, and cowbells.

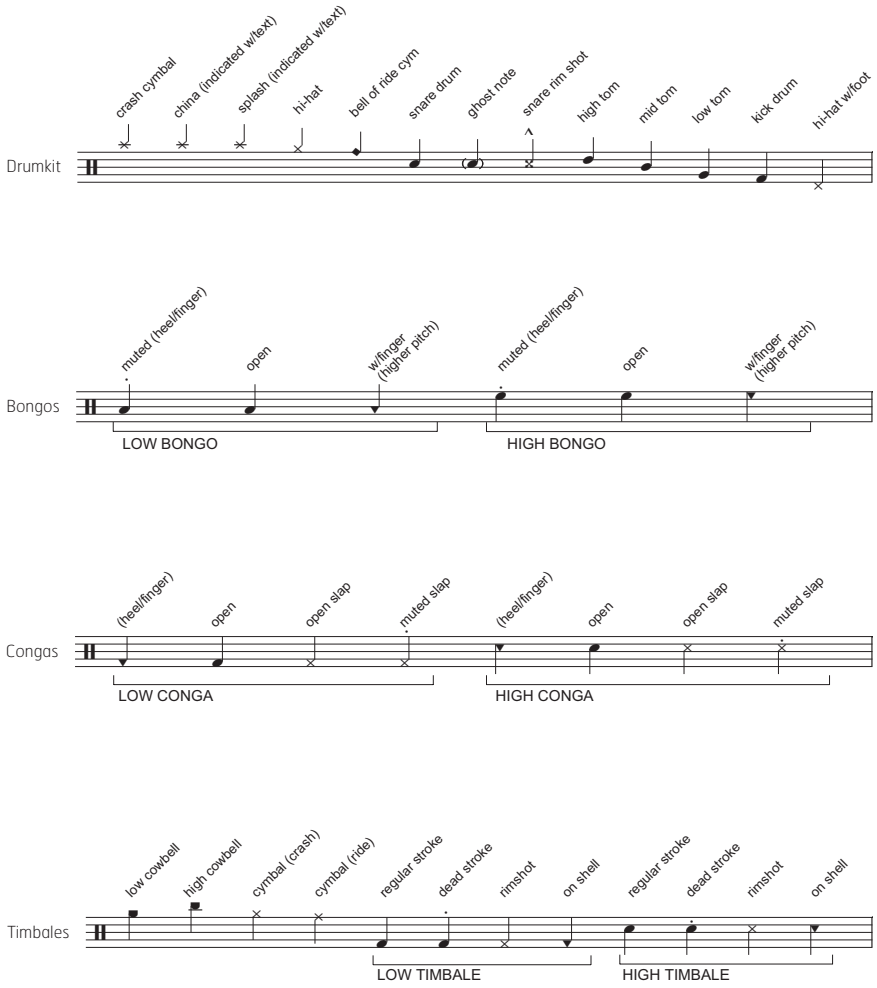
Percussionists may also encounter "slash notation" which simply indicates to continue the same groove or feel that was established in the previously written bar. During these times you may encounter notes above the staff which indicate points at which accents should be added.

Vibraphones: Pedal markings are not indicated in the music. This is left to the discretion of the performer as they interpret the stylistic phrasing of each part. Parts are often written with full note lengths in mind, which would imply pedaling. Since the piece is so driven by 16th notes, players will have to work to ensure a good balance between sustained tones and articulation. Some faster, more syncopated lines may include moments where the bars aren't ringing. Staccatos usually imply notes to be either completely dry or pedaled with a very short duration.

Marimbas: While there are only two marimba staves in the score, these parts are ideally intended to be doubled by two players, each on their own instrument, which will help these parts to be in balance with the rest of the ensemble.

Notation guides

Percussion parts use different noteheads to indicate specific sounds. Sometimes these are simply noted in the music. The examples below are the most commonly used.

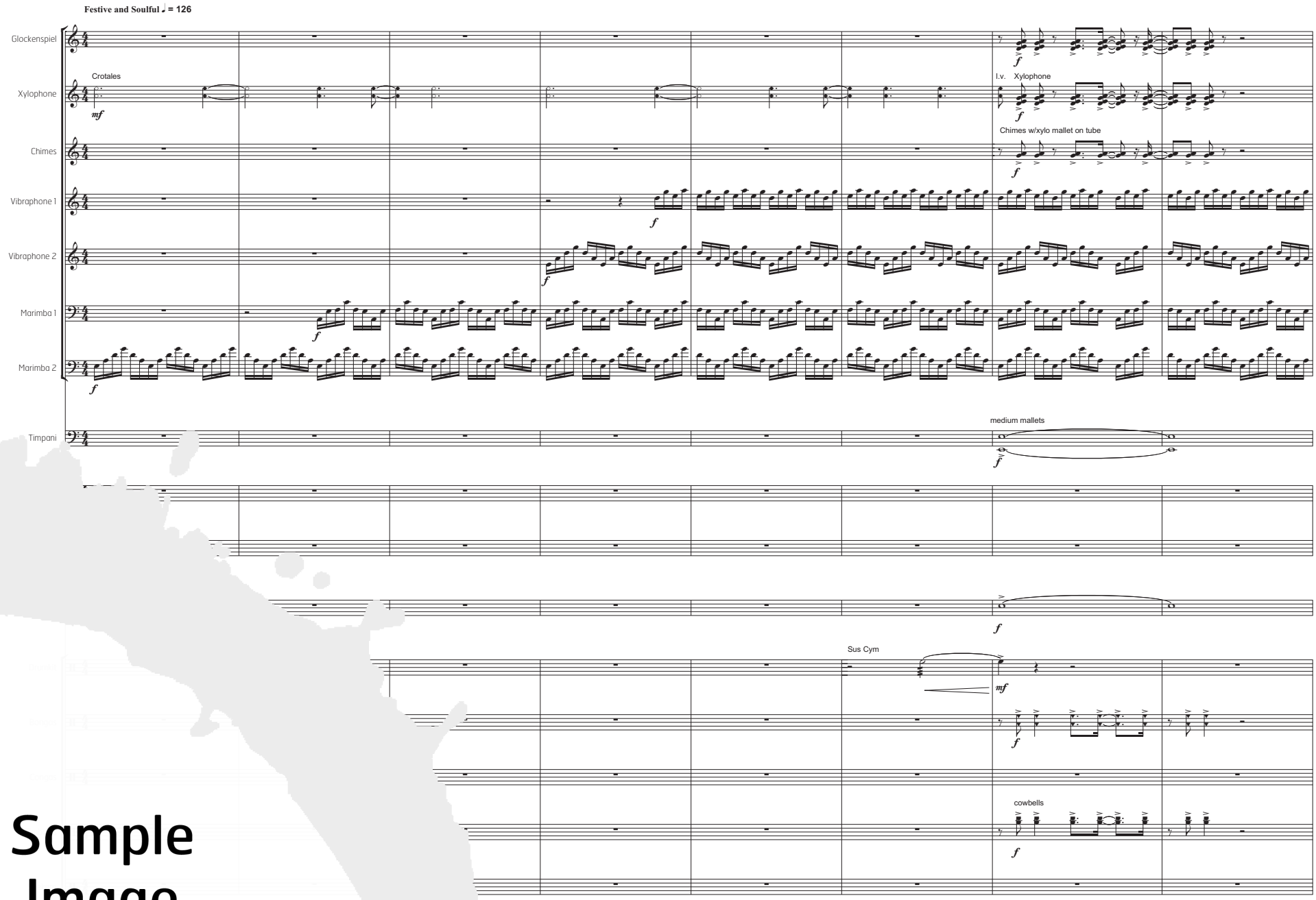


Level: Advanced
Duration: approx. 4'50"

Written for the Foster High School Percussion Ensemble, Richmond, TX – Daren Jordan, Director

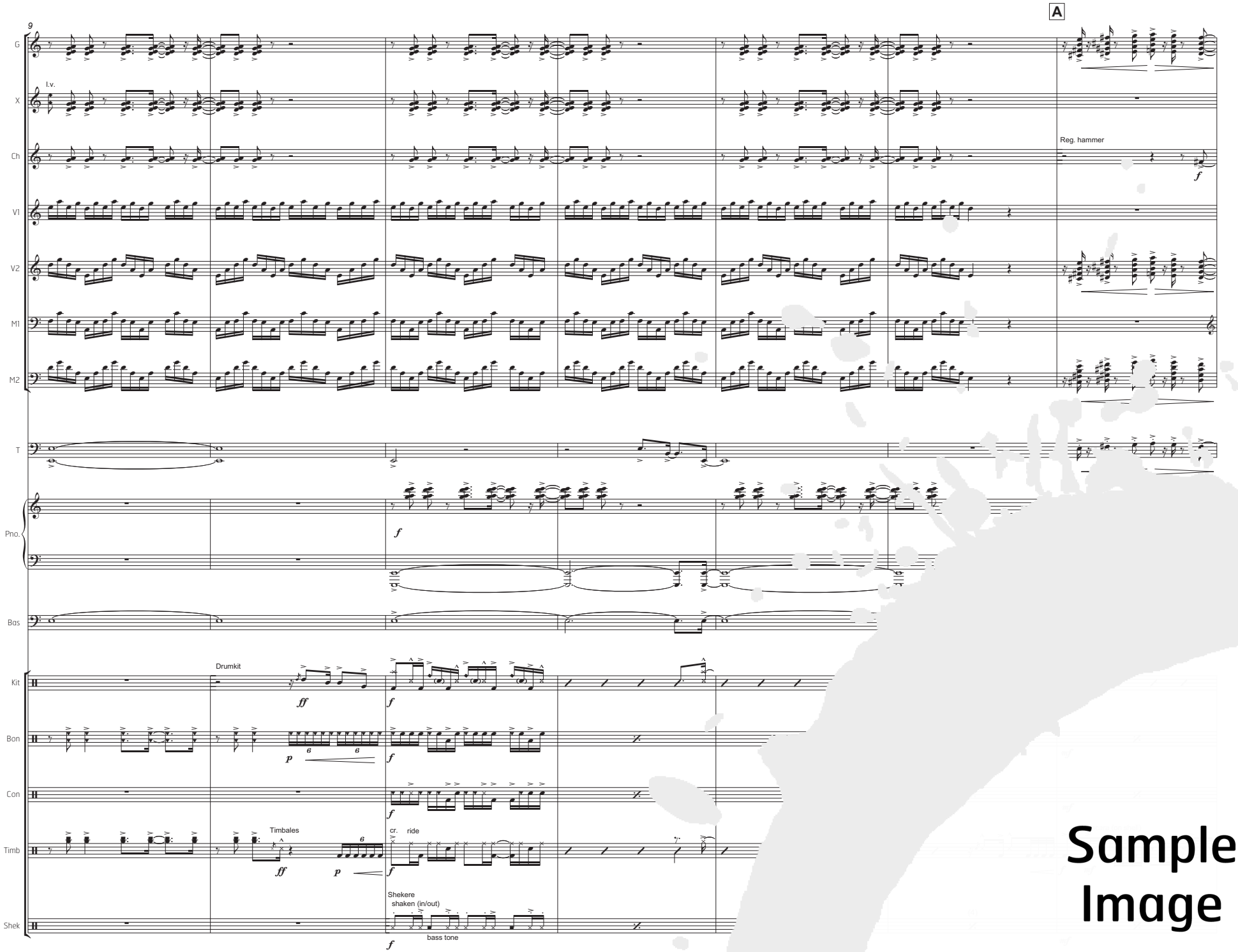
Joaquin on Sunshine

Jim Casella

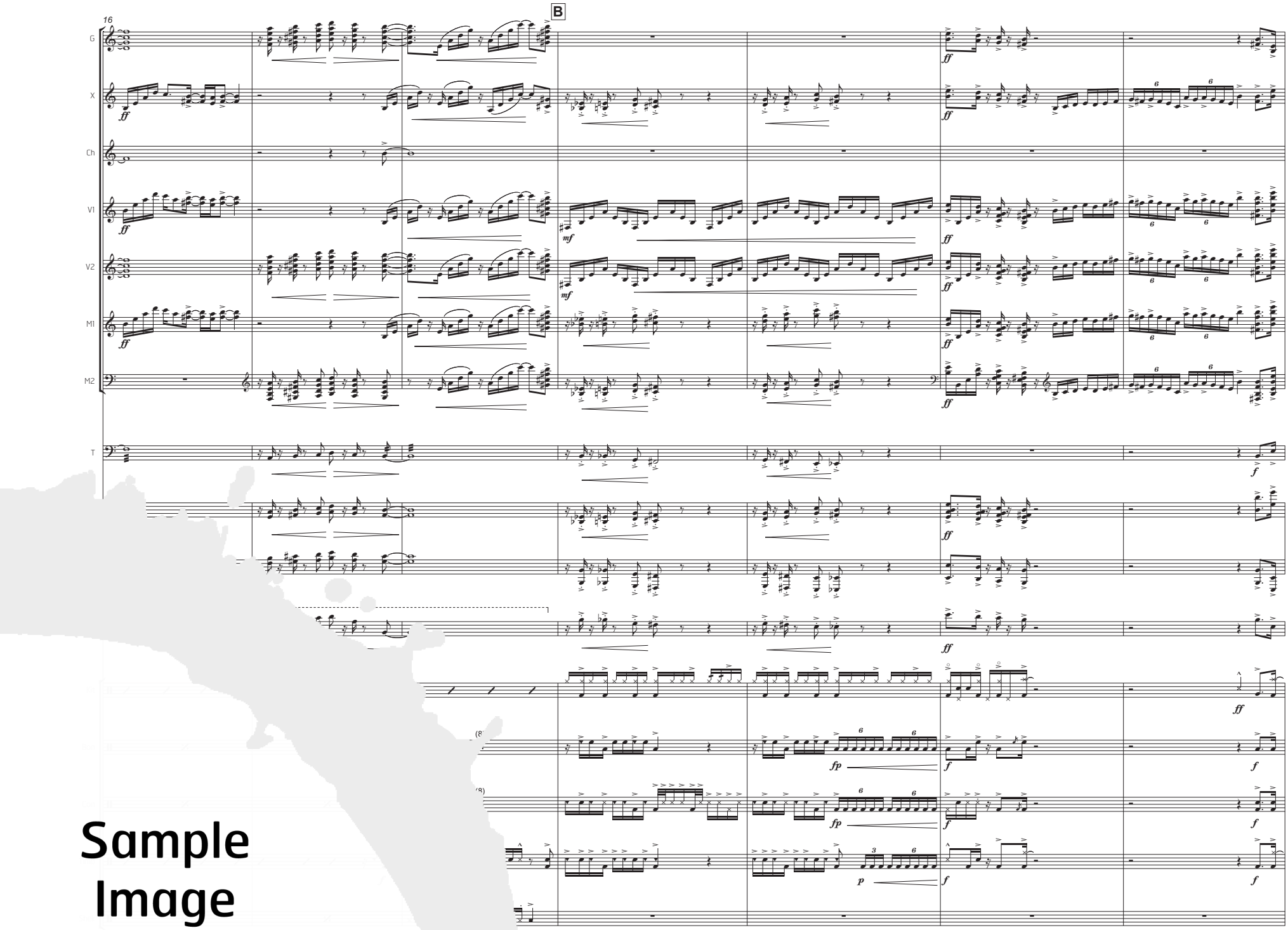


Sample Image

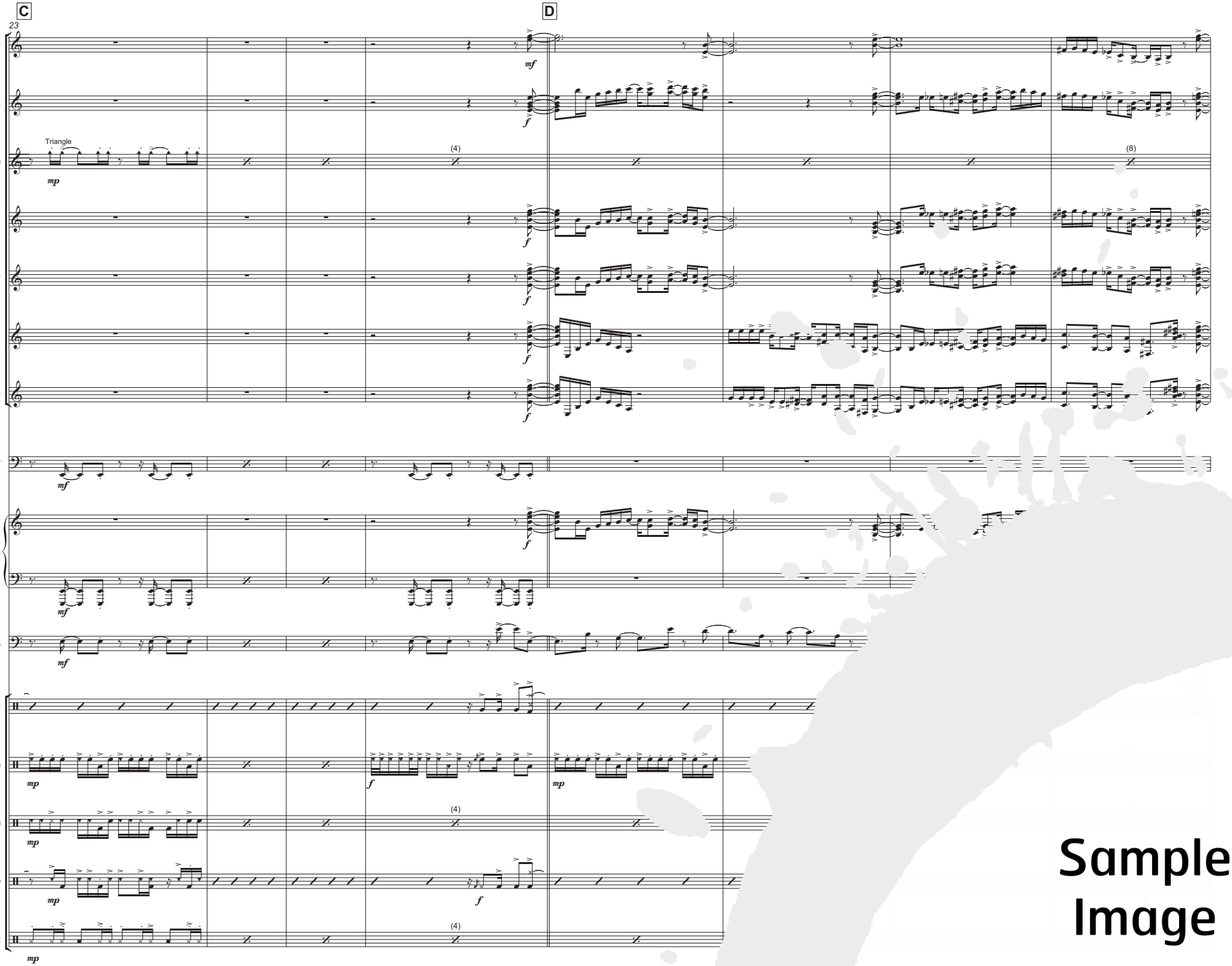
© 2010 [illegible] LC, Portland, OR (ASCAP). International copyright secured. All rights reserved.



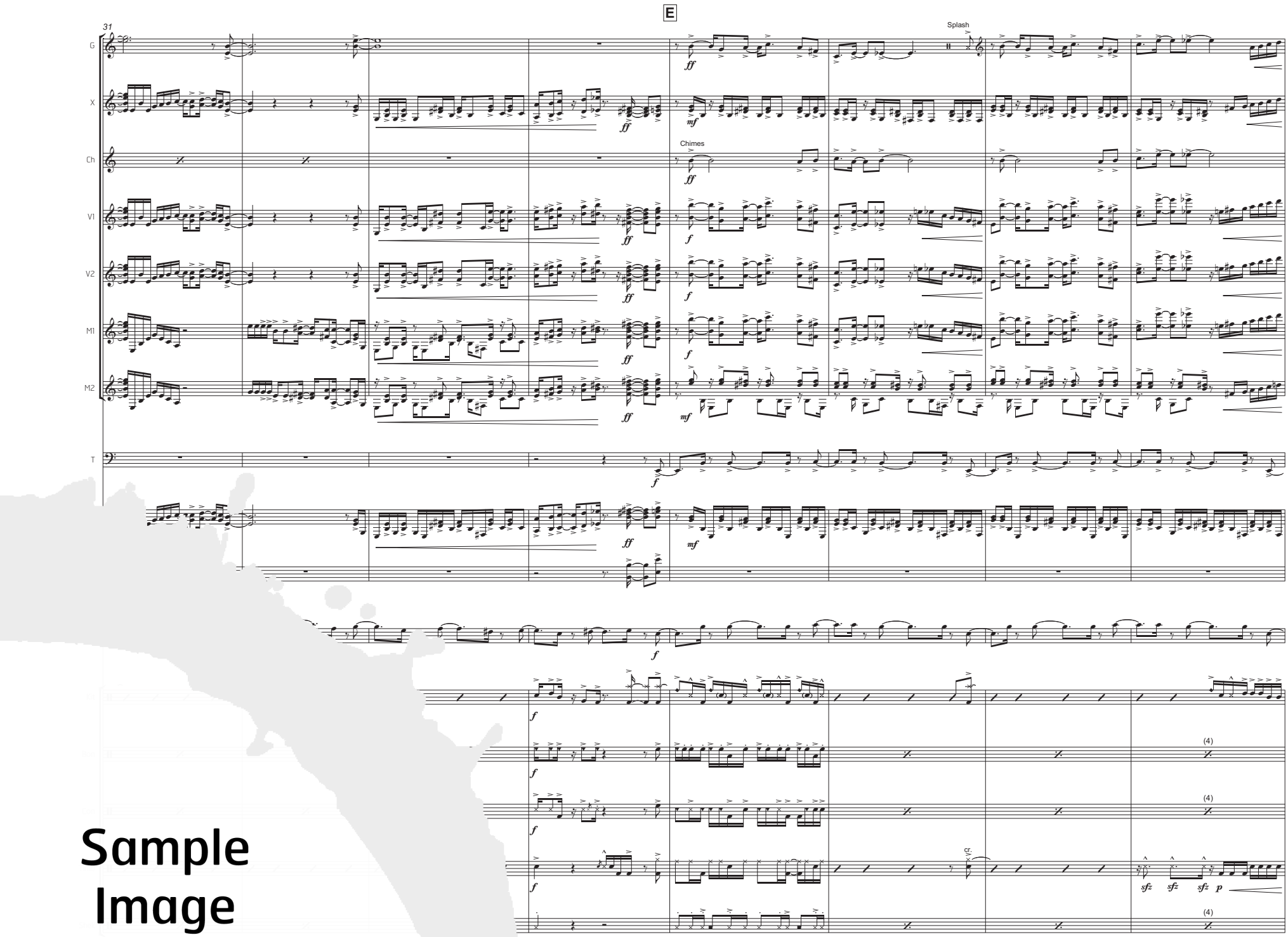
Sample Image

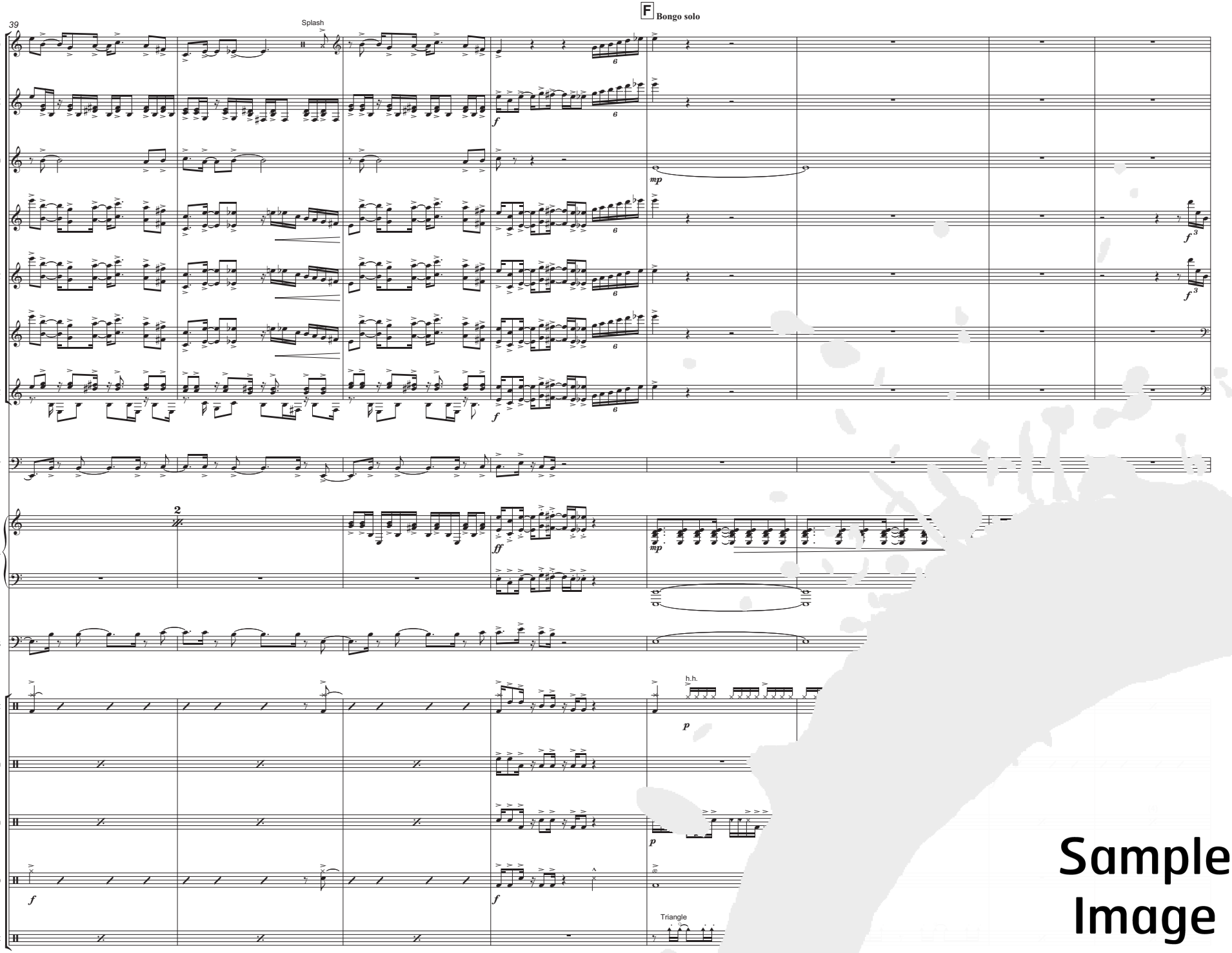


Sample Image

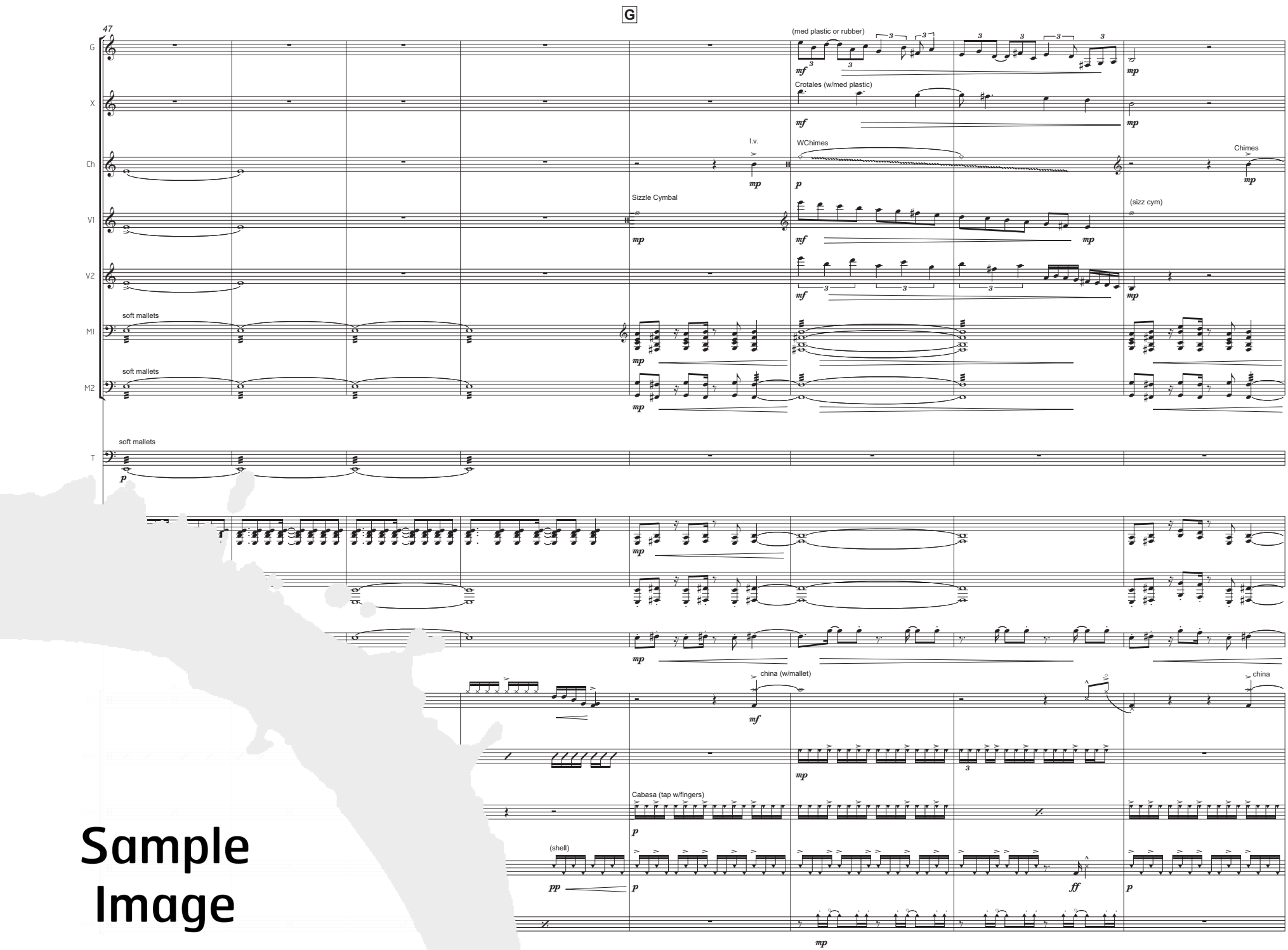


Sample Image

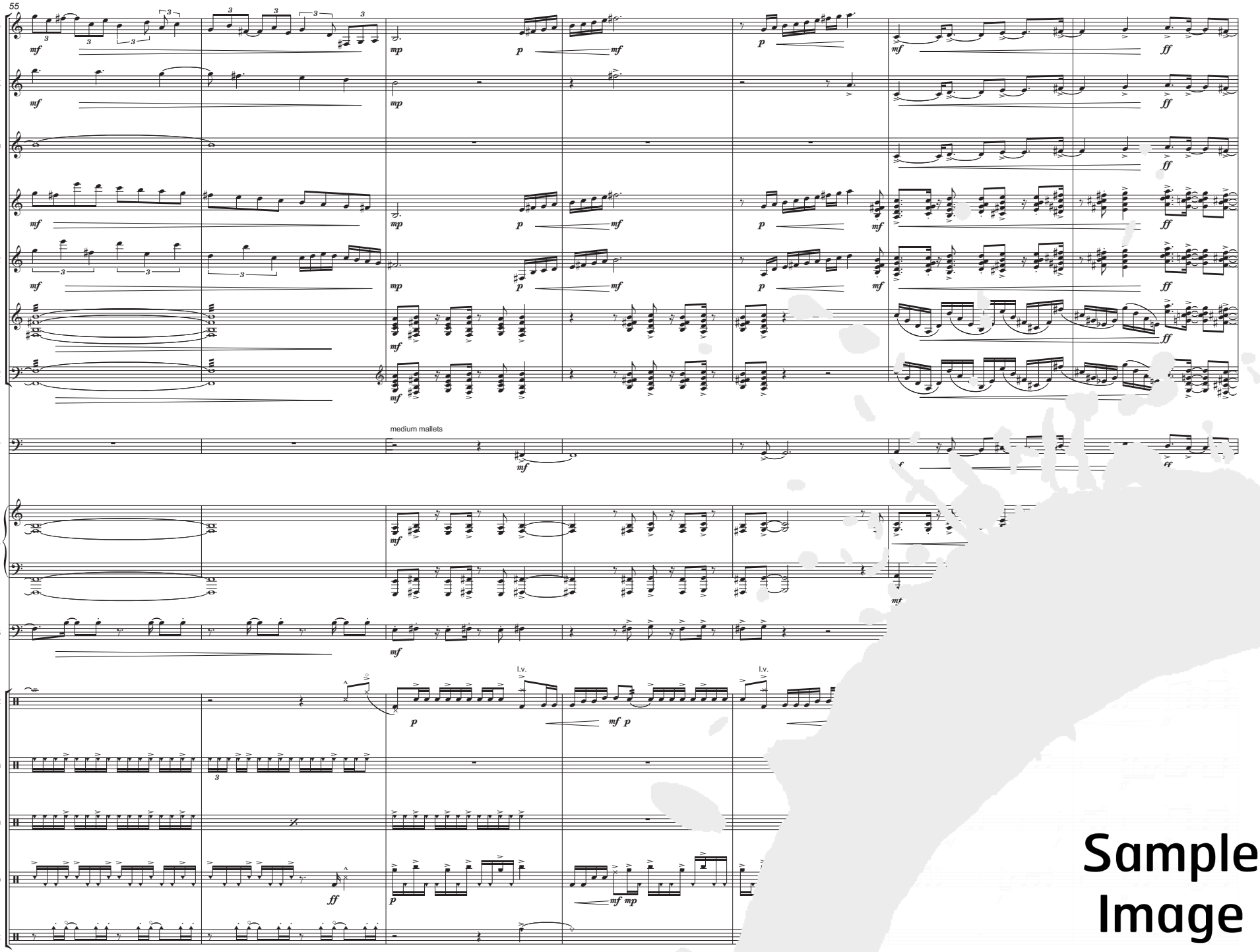

E
31
Splash
Chimes
G
X
Ch
V1
V2
M1
M2
T
Sample Image



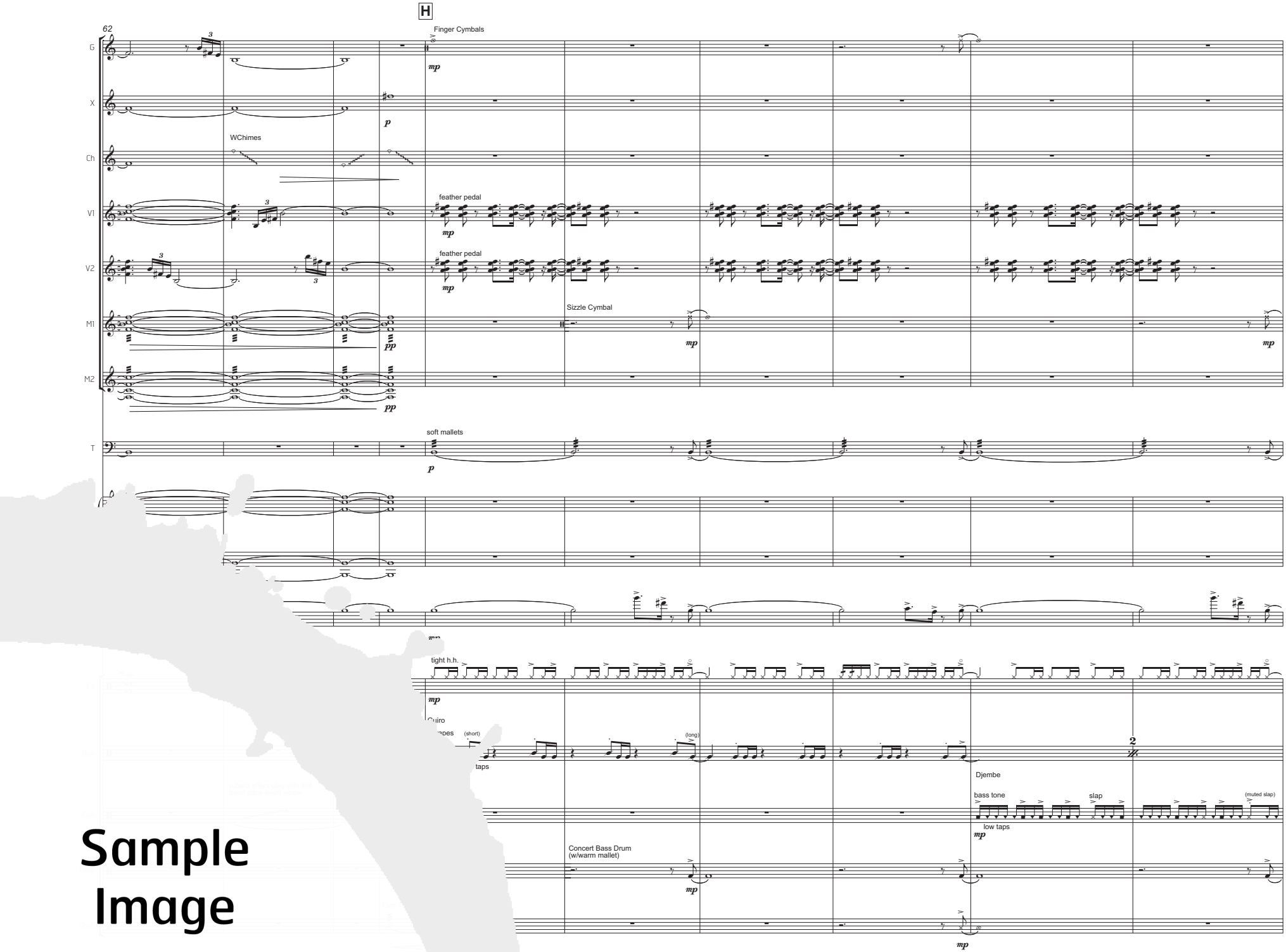
Sample Image

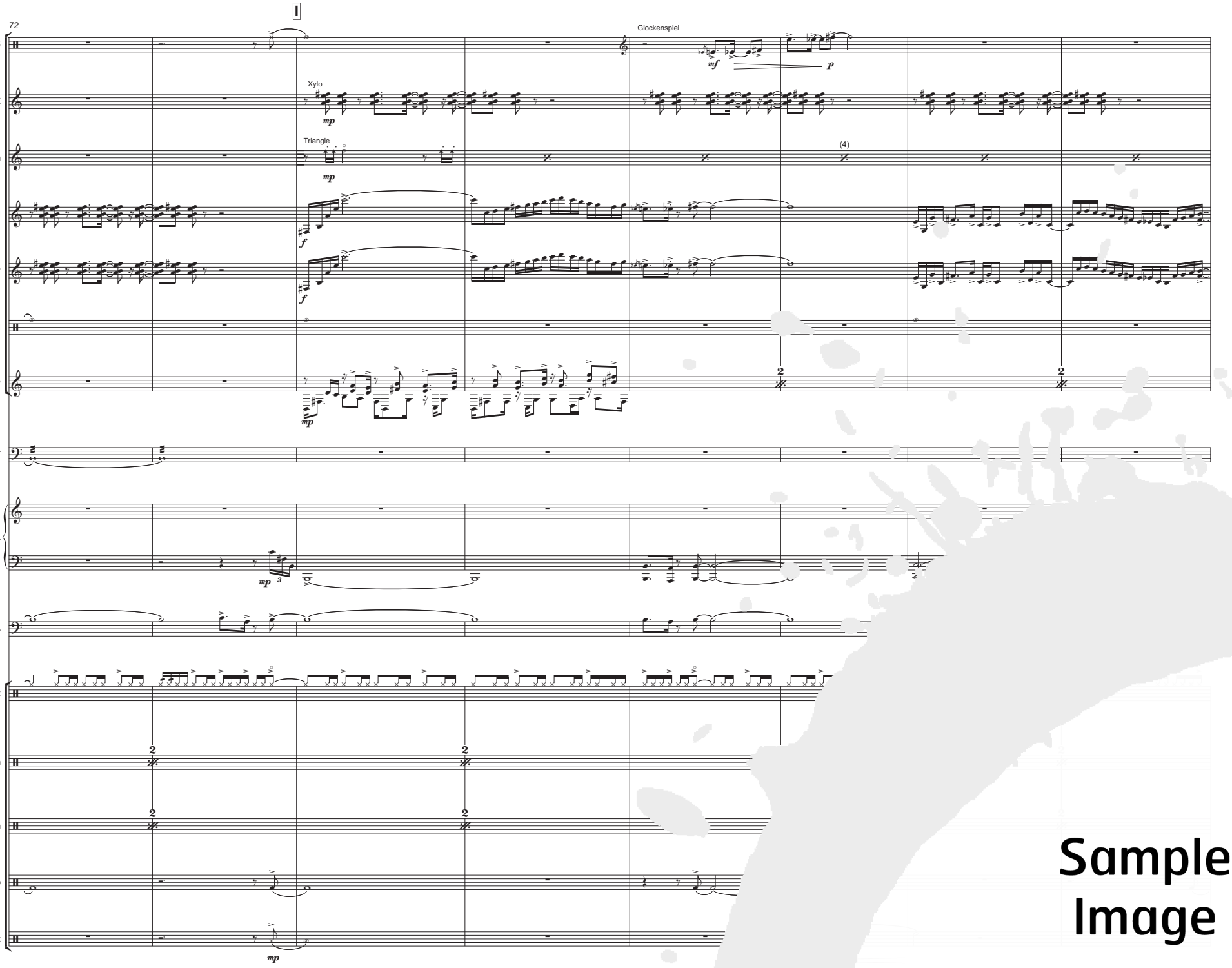


Sample Image

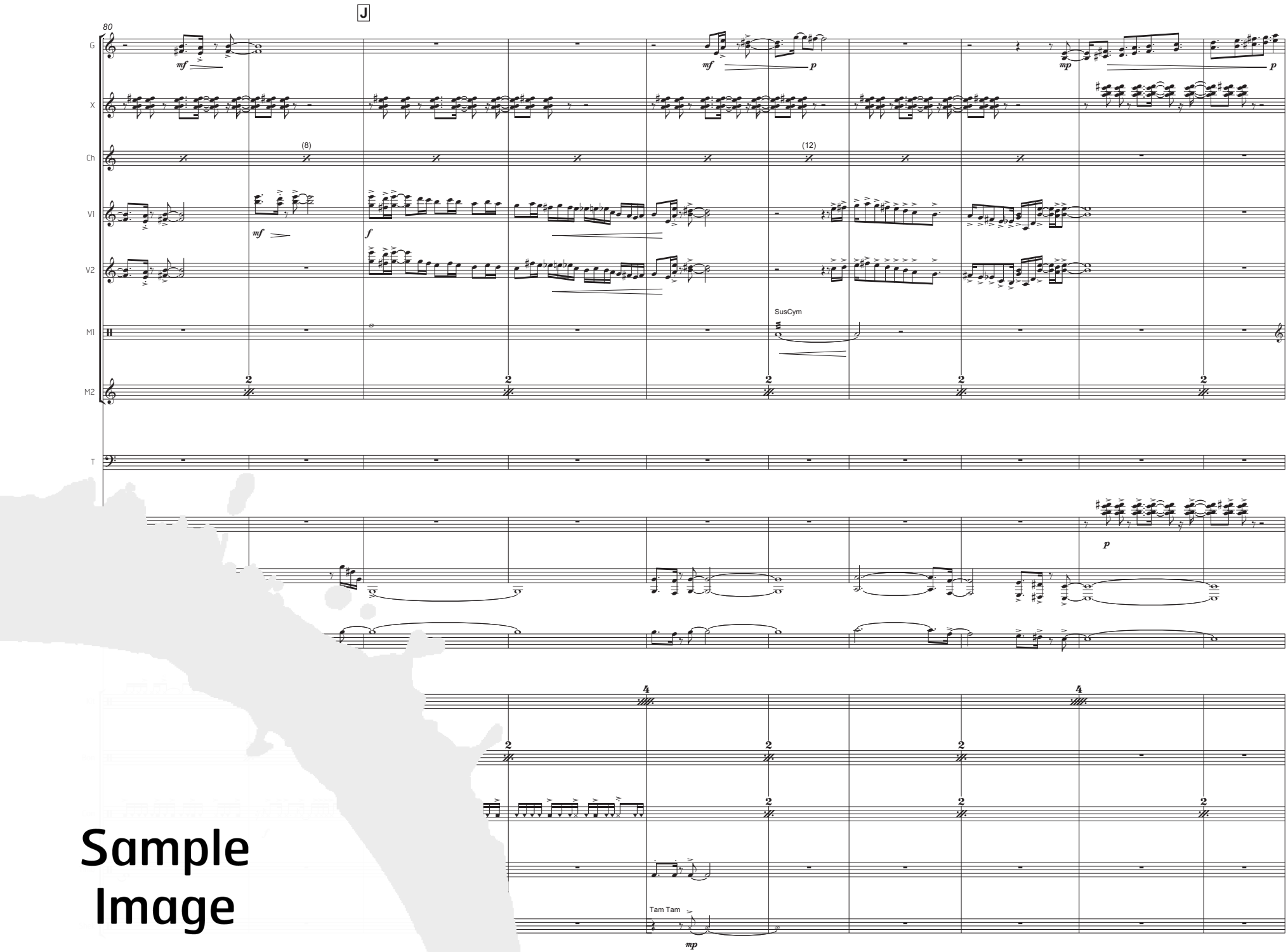


Sample Image

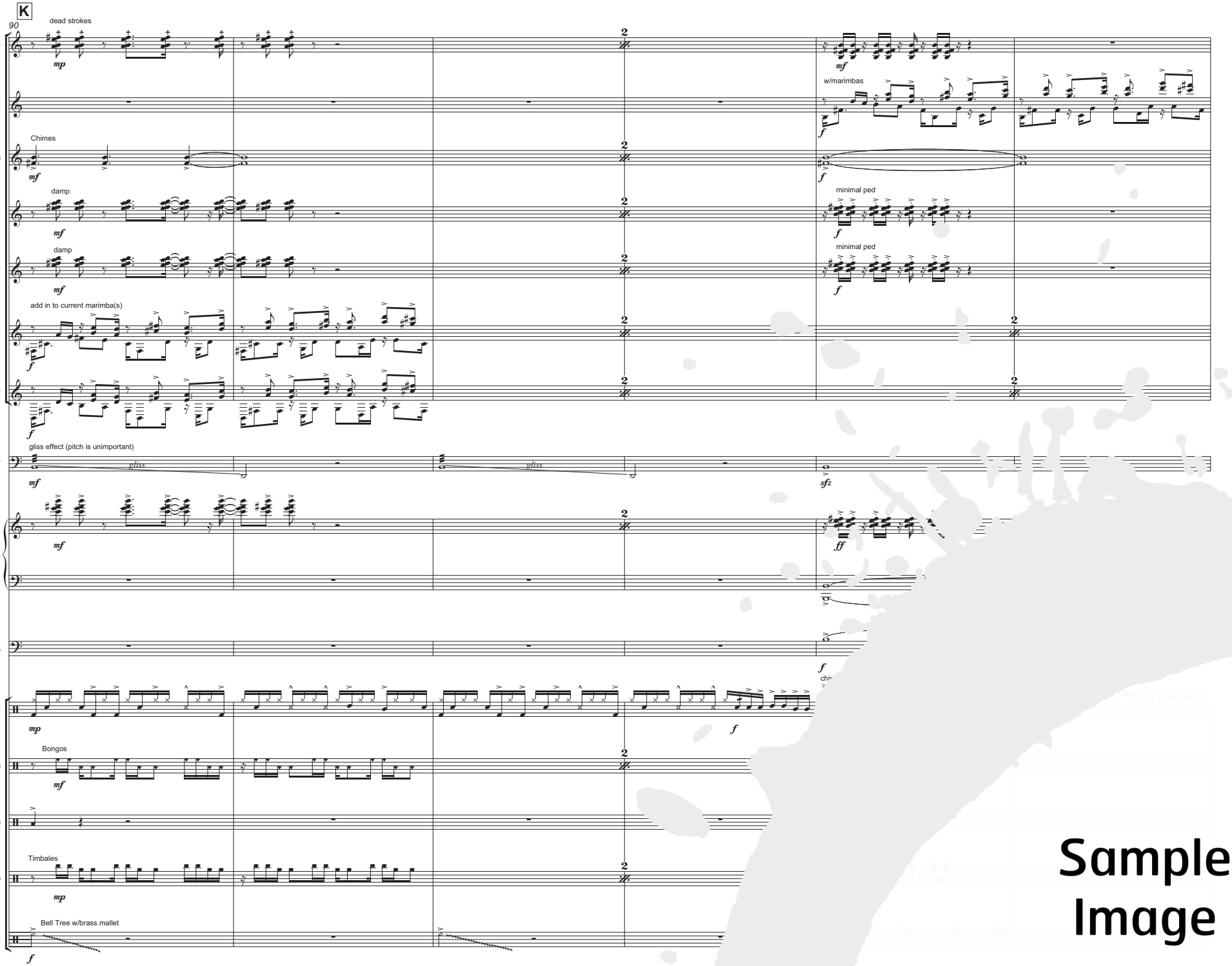

H
62
Finger Cymbals
WChimes
feather pedal
feather pedal
Sizzle Cymbal
soft mallets
tight h.h.
taps
(short)
(long)
Djembe
bass tone
slap
(muted slap)
low taps
Concert Bass Drum
(w/warm mallet)
Sample
Image



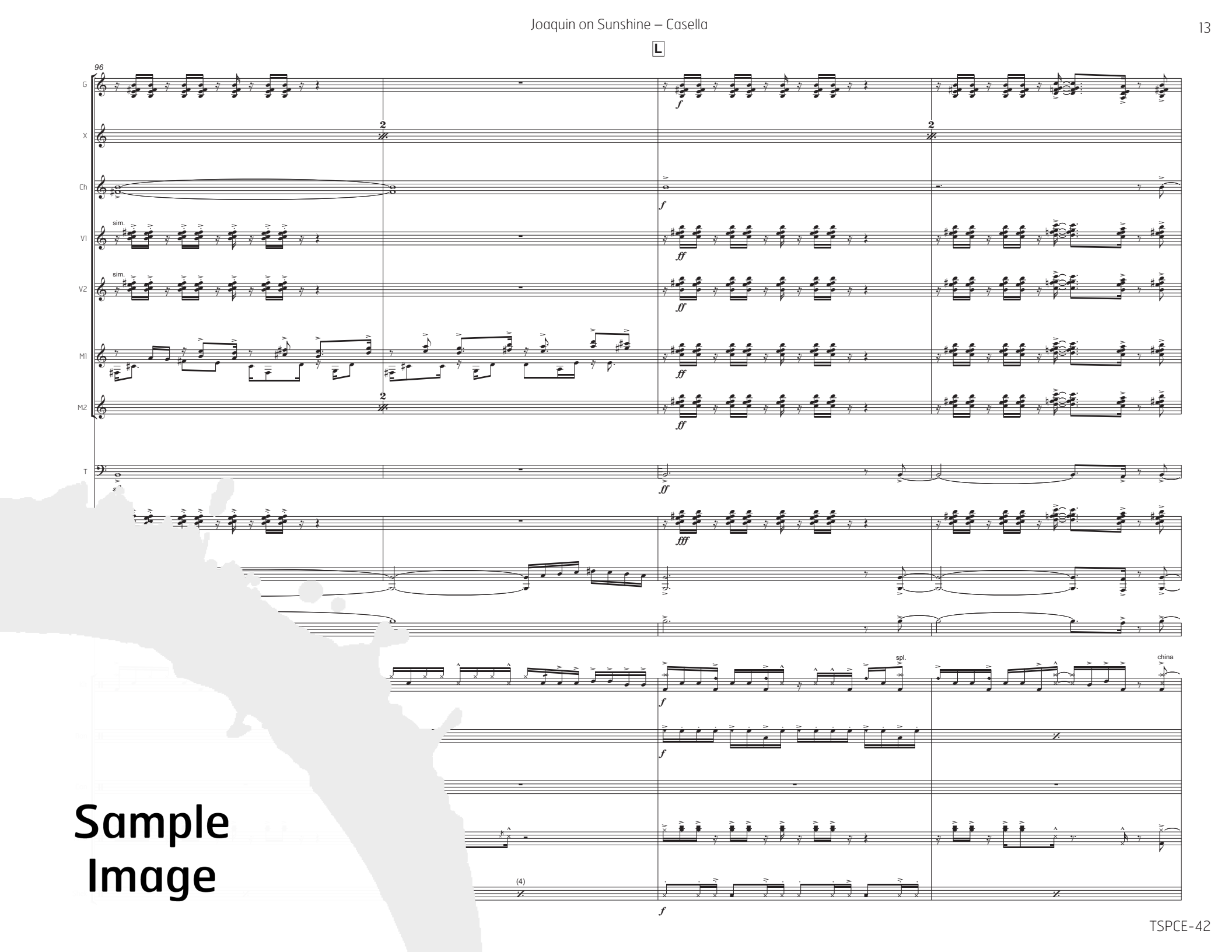
Sample Image



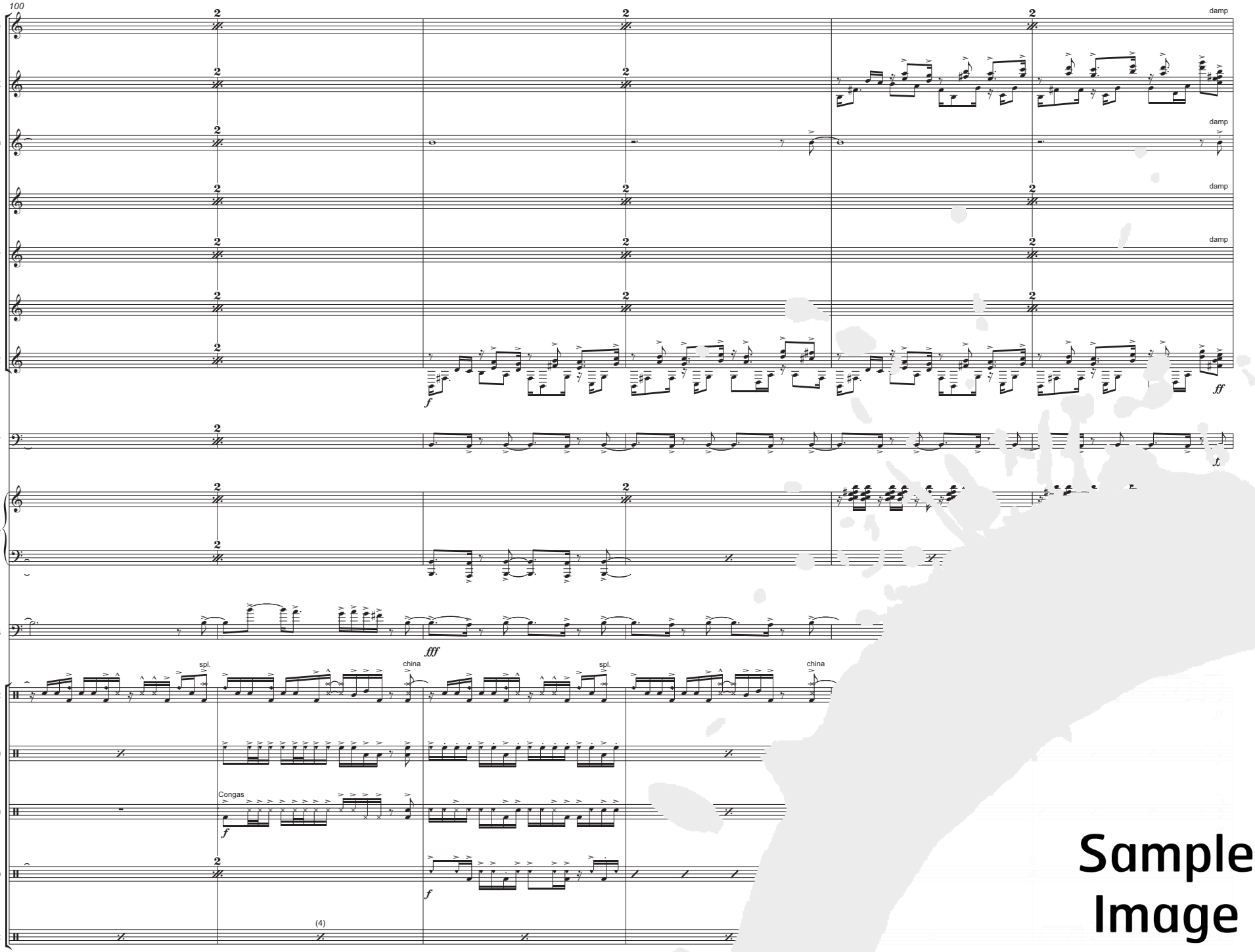
Sample Image



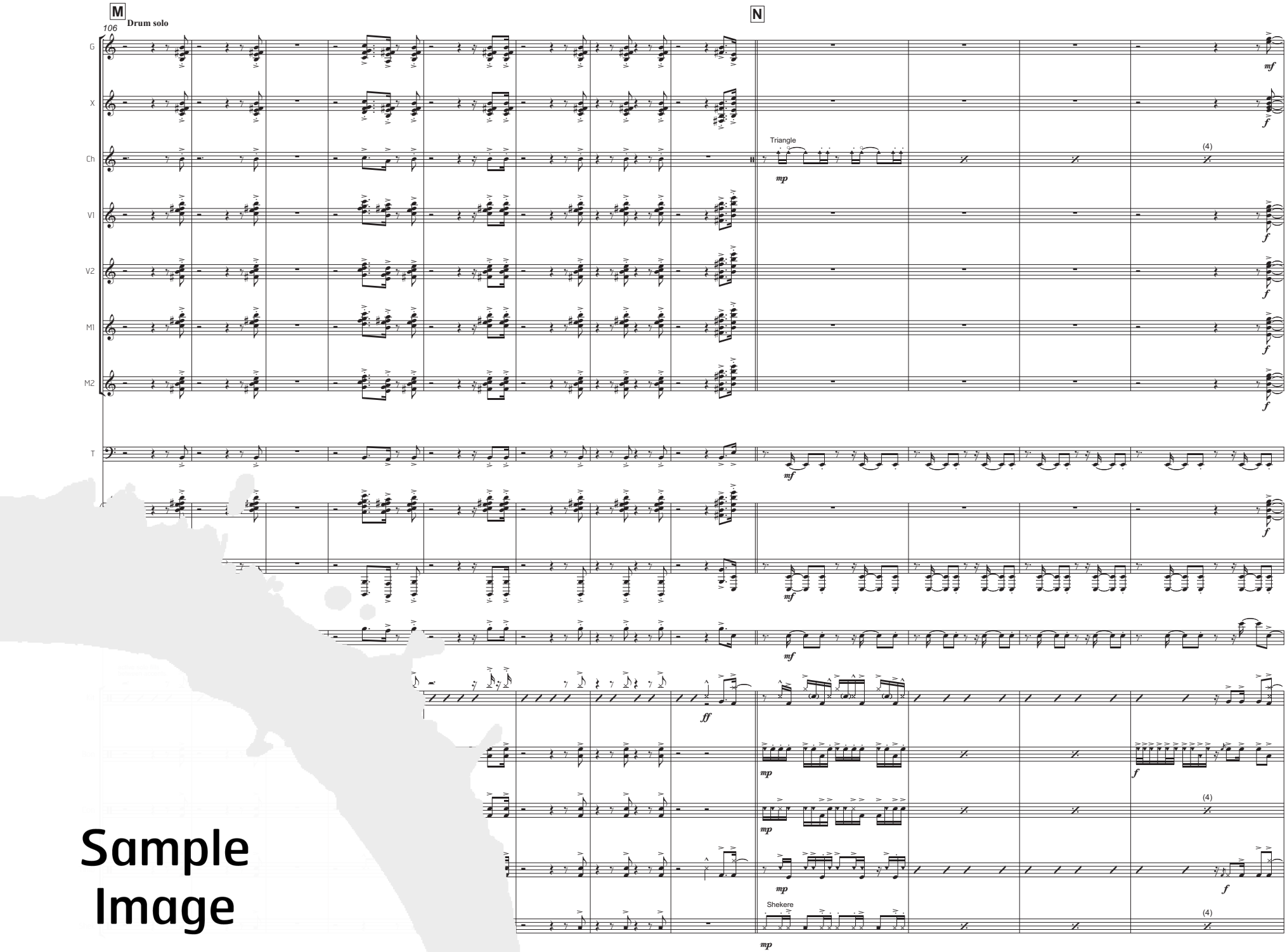
Sample Image



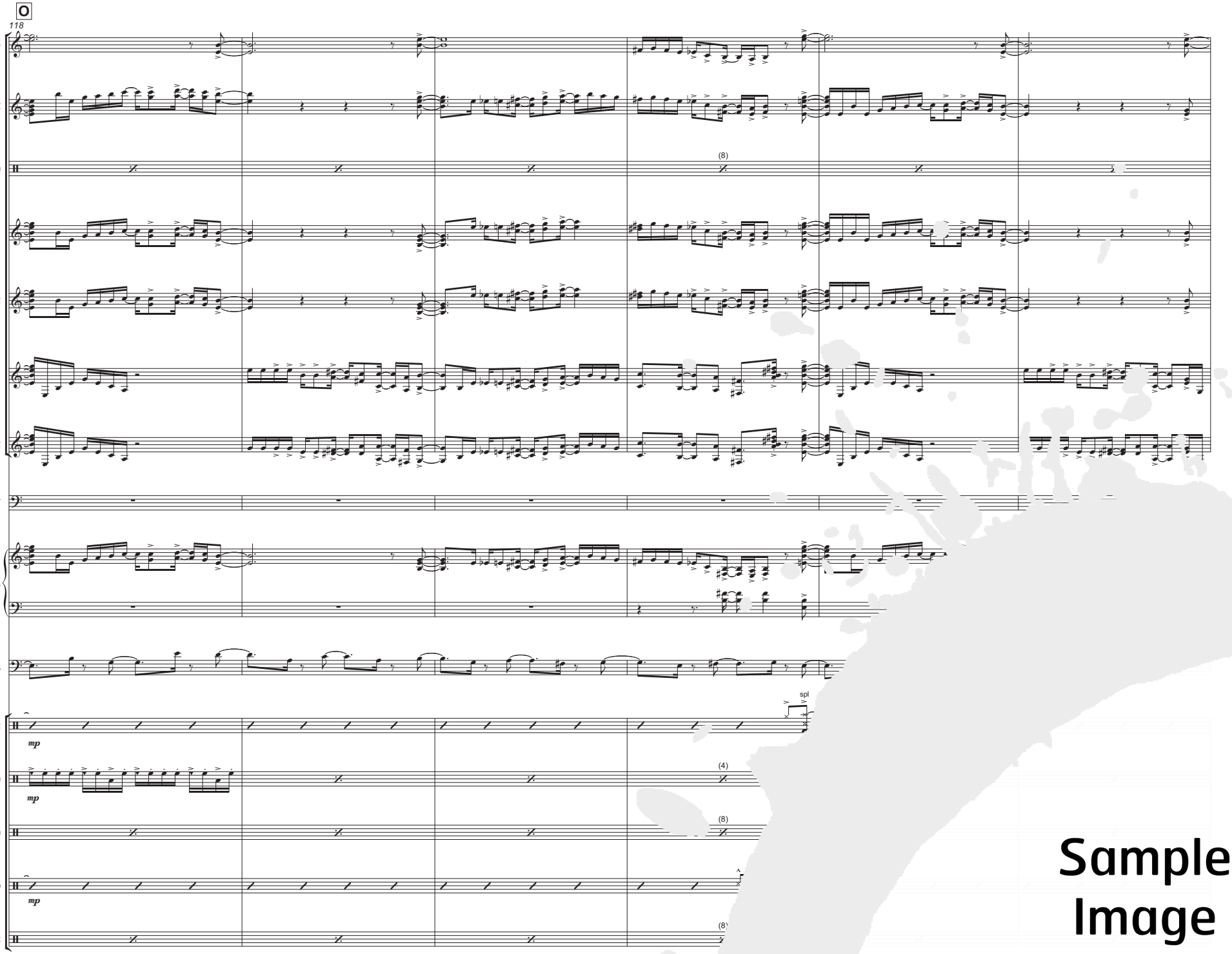
Sample Image



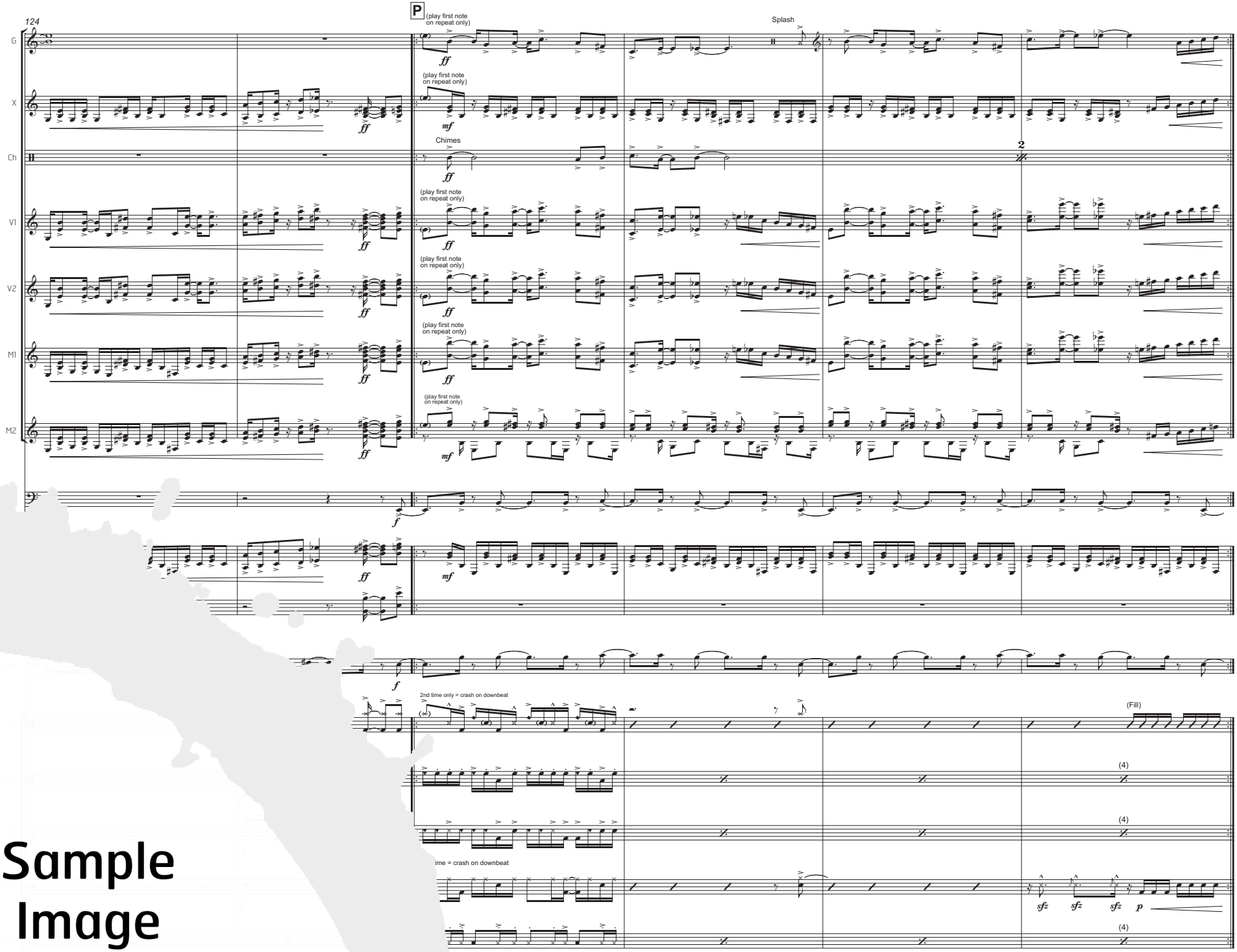
Sample Image



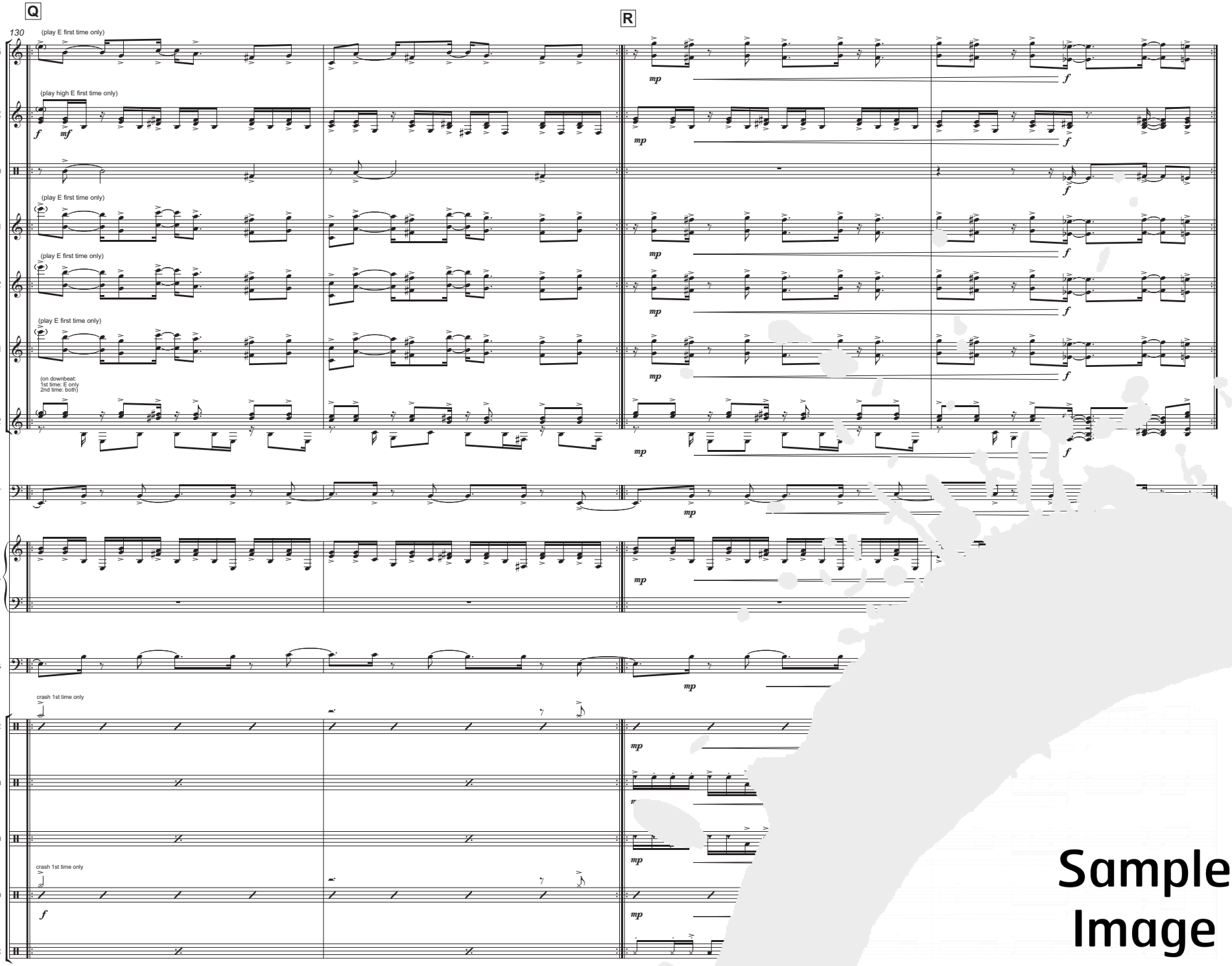
Sample Image



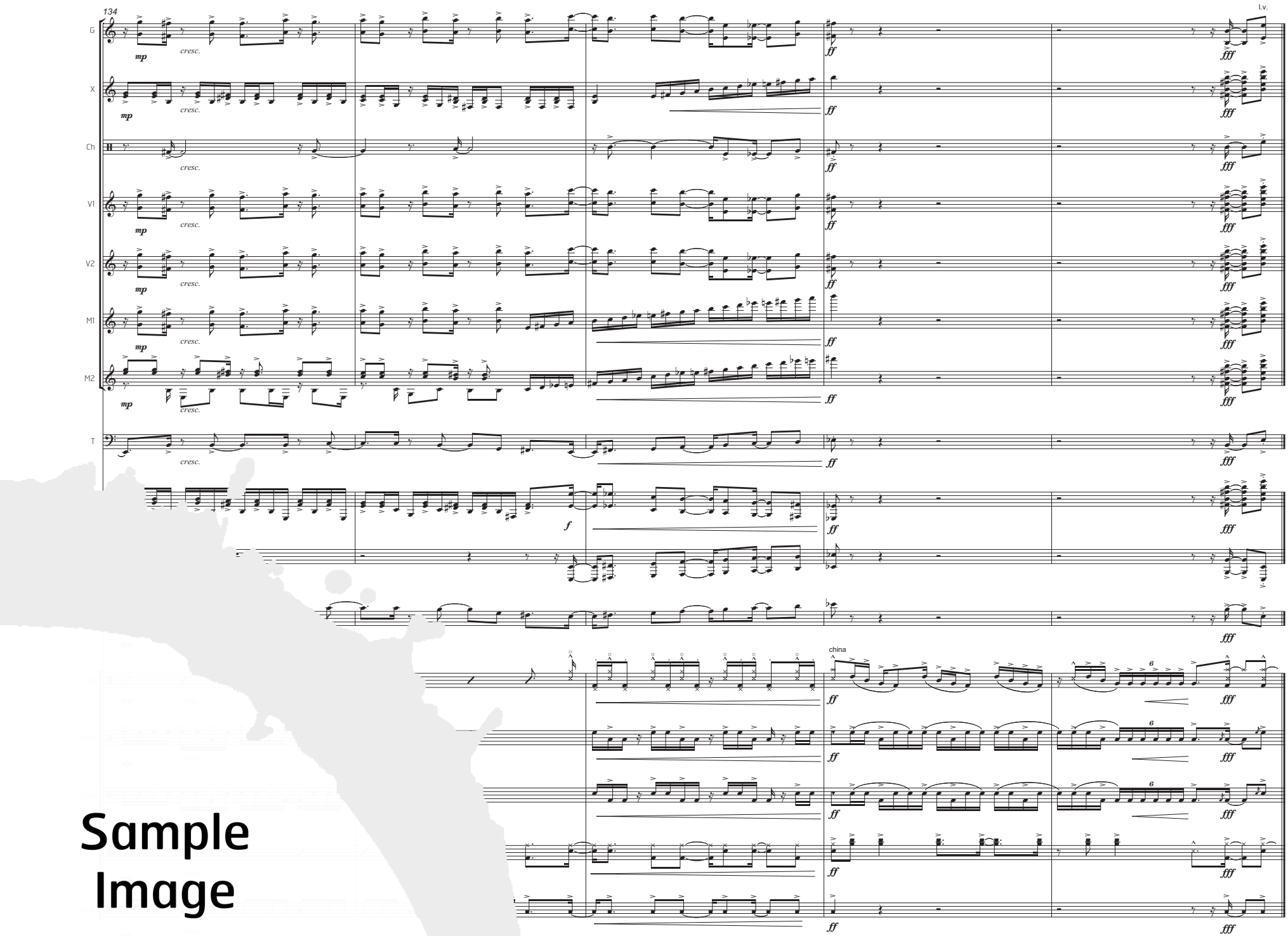
Sample Image



Sample Image



Sample Image



Sample Image

tapspace™
creativity in percussion™