ANDREW TOOVEY

ACROBATS

FOR MIXED WIND ENSEMBLE

COMMISSIONED BY COMA

FIRST PERFORMANCE BY COMA CONDUCTED BY SIMON FOXLEY 11/8/95

AT BRETTON HALL WAKEFIELD

DEDICATED TO JOHN DAVIES

Programme Note :

Acrobats was commissioned by COMA for the 1995 residential summer school at Bretton Hall, and lasts about 10 minutes. It is scored for three groups of mixed woodwind and brass players. The work is dedicated to sculptor John Davies

The idea for Acrobats comes directly from a group of human figures John Davies has made since the early '80s which are on ladders, swings, rope, trapeze, and he sees as something of a human circus, life's circus. At first I wrote many musical ideas which I felt captured the movement and life of these magnificent figures. It suddenly struck me that I had been looking at them in a rather obvious way. Imagining actual movement rather than a captured moment, movement or gesture. The patina of painted skin texture also seems to suggest their immobile state. Once I had 'looked' in a different way my own work dramatically changed. I thought about making my music clear and ritualistic. Rather than simply creating a music for these figures to dance to I made music that I hope mirrors their intensity.

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Performance Note :

Three instrumental groups are used. A and B each have four parts (numbered 1 - 8 in the score), and are conducted. I imagine woodwind and brass mixed between these two groups. Group C is set out on two pages with a type of mobile collection of melodic fragments for three high instruments (possibly fl/ob/clar), and is not conducted, except to indicate when to start and stop. The three performers are to put a 'version' of these fragments together, making them overlap, echo etc. This music begins the work, and is used in the central section, adding short outbursts to the existing texture. Some spacial separation between the three groups would be ideal. An ideal scoring would possibly be a mixture of the following.

Group A : 1 = Picc/Fl/Eb/Bb Clar. 2 = ob/clar/trpt. 3 and 4 clar/sax.

Group B : Should have three instruments per part.

5 = 2 fl + 1 ob. 6 = 2 clar + 1 sax. 7 = horn + 2 bsns. 8 = 2 tbn + tuba.

There are many other approaches, depending on available instruments.
I would also welcome the use of Eb and Bb instruments on part 1 using non transposed parts to further add other notes to the part as kind of an over-tone.

1.

Acrobats

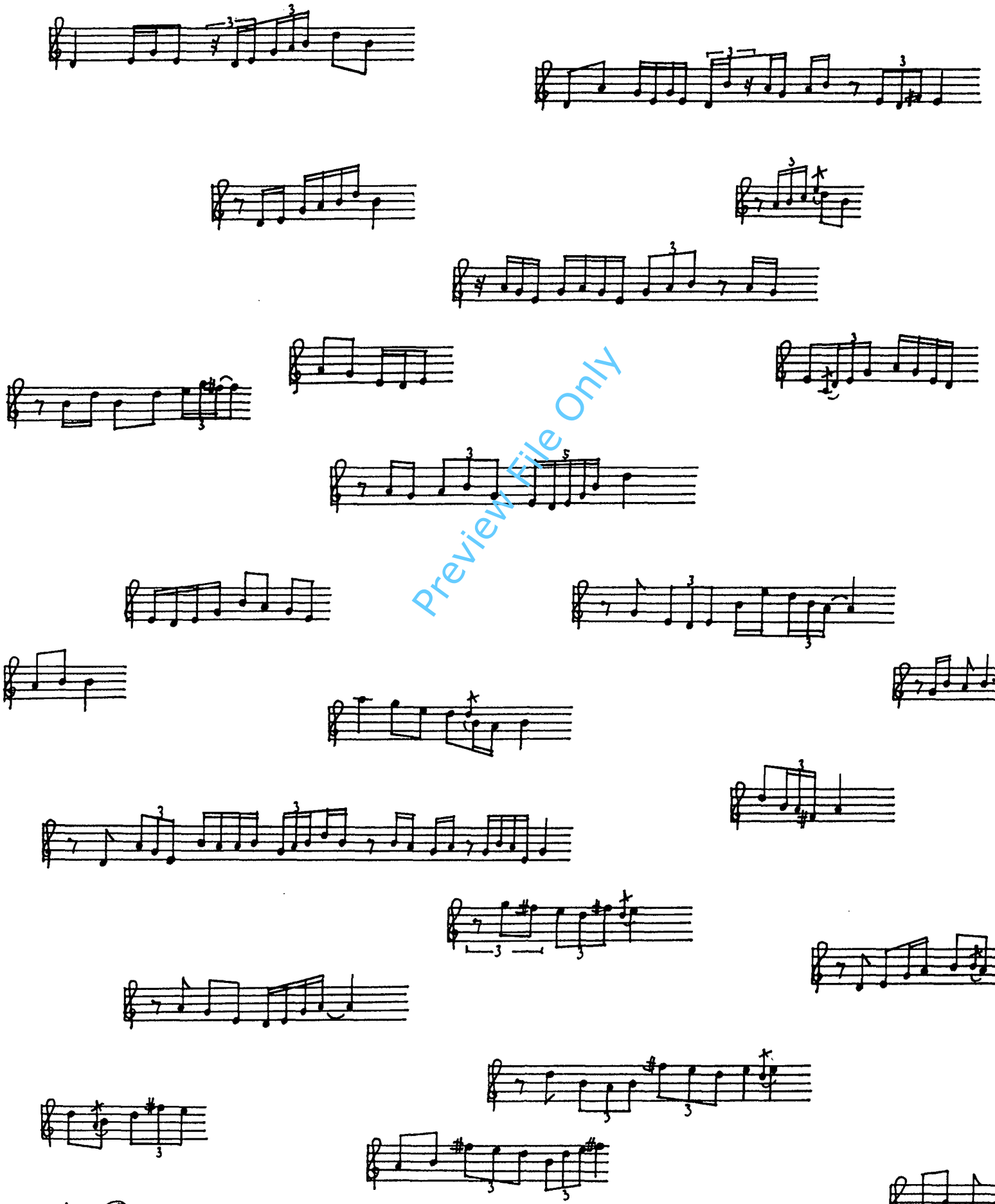
for John Davies on his 49th Birthday

Andrew Toovey
1995

Group C. (3 instruments)

(♩=60) moderate tempo never more than mf with inflections < > ad lib. and slurs ad lib.

Conductor will indicate to begin. Play your own combination of the following melodic fragments. Silence is an important part of the process, do not make the fragments one long melody. Make your version at least two minutes long. Instrumentalists in group C can be displaced around the concert hall like one might a fanfare.



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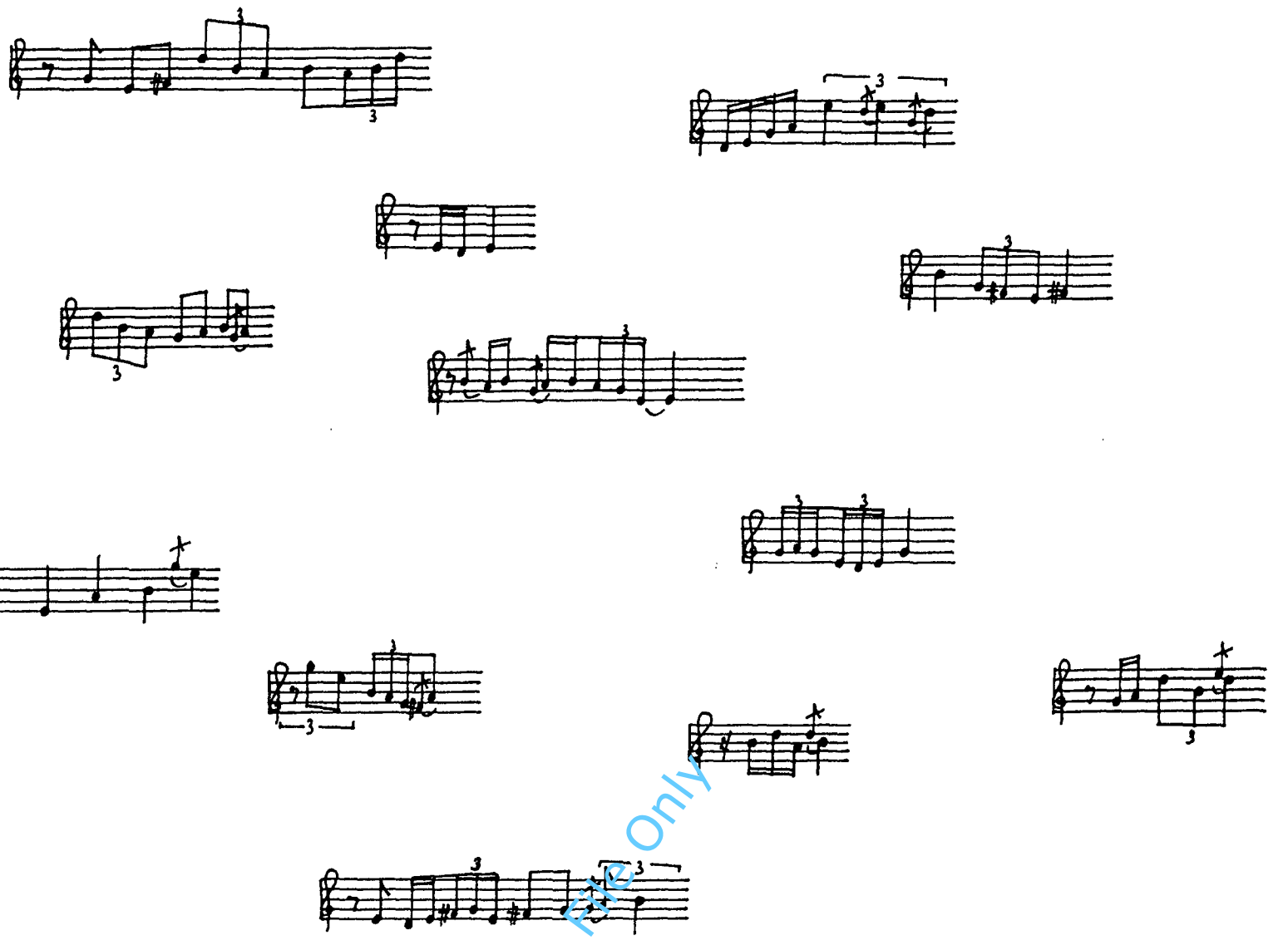

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3.

♩= c60

A

B

3 5 4 7 5

Group C Stops suddenly.

10

4 3 5 7 5

Preview File Only

7 3 5 4 5

Preview
File Only

20

(5) 7 4 3 5

5.

(5) 3 4 7 5

File Only

preview

30

(5) 4 5 3 7

Group C to add 7 fragments during pages 6 → 10 only.

Slightly Slower ♩ = c.53

Grace notes are to be fitted always before the beat. Notes chosen at random.

mp

5 7 5 3 4

*p

* each chord is to have a < > on it.

40

5 7 4 5 3

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7.

(3)

5 3 7

5 7 3

50

(cb)

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4 7 5 4

5 4 7 4

Preview
File Only

9.

(4) 7 4 5

4 5 7 4

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(No < in group A).

3 7 5

!! !! !! !!

pp pp pp pp

(Breath ad lib).

80

!! !! !! !!

7 3 5 3

!! !! !! !!

Preview File Only

11.

Not too slowly – plaintively.

All parts ppp! As if whispered!

ppp!

ppp!

ppp!

ppp!

4 All Brass muted throughout.

ppp!

ppp!

5:4 3

ppp!

ppp!

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Preview

5:4

(Breath when needed!)

File Only

Preview

100

Preview File Only

110

File Only

Preview

15.

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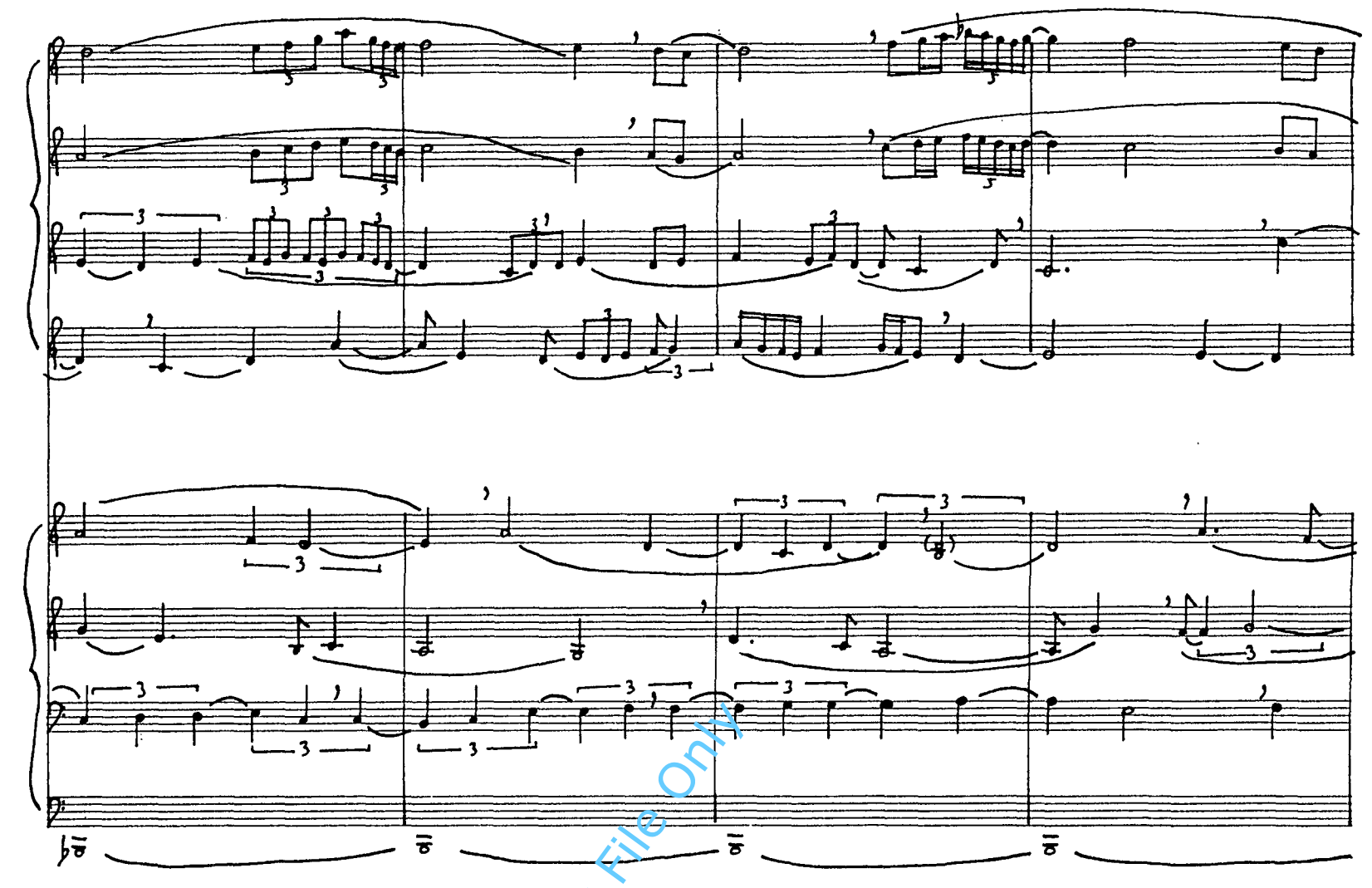

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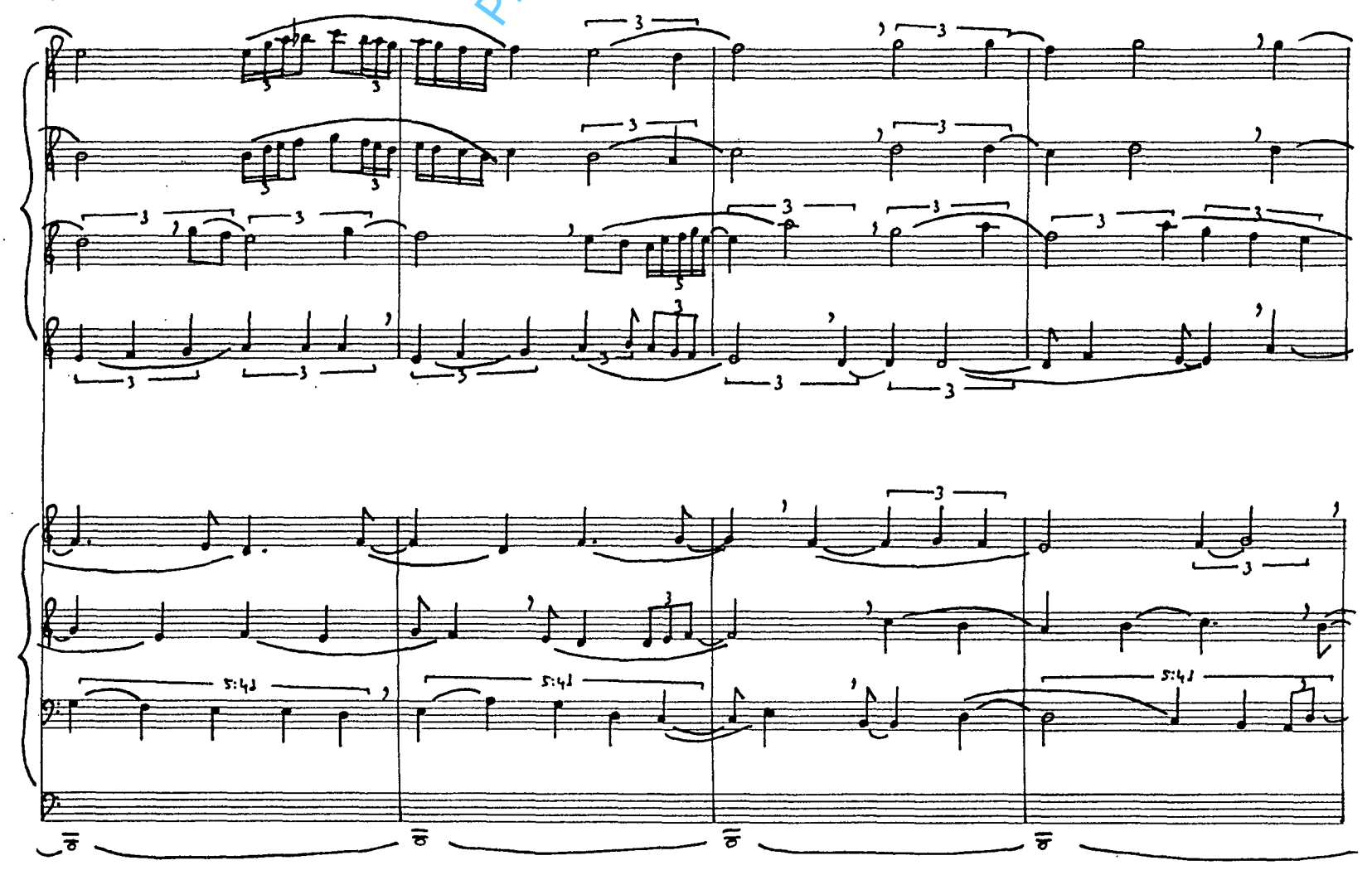
Preview



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