Peter Knell

Ferry Bluff

for SSAATTBB chorus

SAMPLE

Duration: ca. 6 minutes

Peter Knell

www.peterknell.com

Biography

Praised for being “gratefully idiomatic” (*Los Angeles Times*) and for its “subtle virtuosity” (*MusicWeb International*), Peter’s music is meticulously crafted for both instruments and voices, making full use of their expressive and coloristic potential. He is deeply invested in musical structure as a crucible to intensify the affective experience of the listener, and he has consistently been rewarded by the enthusiastic reception of his work by audiences and performers.

Peter’s music has received awards in numerous national and international competitions, including First Prizes in the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra's 10th New Music Festival International Composers Competition, the Indiana State University Contemporary Music Festival/Louisville Orchestra Prize, and the Omaha Symphony Guild International New Music Competition, as well as Second Prizes in the Fourth International Witold Lutoslawski Composers Competition, the First International Composers' Competition "In Memoriam Zoltán Kodály", and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra's Young Composers Competition. Peter was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship, a BMI Student Composer Award, two ASCAP Foundation Morton Gould Young Composers Awards, grants from the Paloheimo Foundation and Meet the Composer, and commissions from the Fromm Music Foundation/Ying Quartet, Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Barlow Endowment for Music Composition, Utah Arts Festival, Lyris Quartet, Oakland East Bay Symphony, and Dale Warland Singers, among others.

Peter’s music has been performed by ensembles such as the Hungarian Radio Orchestra, Louisville Orchestra, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Kremlin Chamber Orchestra, Filharmonia de Stat “Transilvania”, the Winnipeg, Omaha, Richmond, Memphis, and Oakland East Bay Symphony Orchestras, the Doric String Quartet, Ying Quartet, Lyris Quartet, Onyx String Quartet, Verdi Quartett, Jacaranda, Southwest Chamber Music, Volti Chamber Chorus, counter)induction, by soloists including James Dunham, Martin Chalifour, Peabody Southwell, Vijay Gupta, Markus Pawlick, and Ingeborg Danz, and at numerous music festivals. It has been broadcast in Russia, Canada, Hungary and Finland, as well as in several American cities. His orchestral work *LINES/ANGLES* was the American selection for the ISCM World Music Days 2009 and was performed in September 2009 by the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Peter’s solo violin work *Seven Last Words*, based on paintings of German artist Rolf Stein, is available in a book/CD format from Valve-Hearts, Cologne. A CD featuring his orchestral work, *"...the weakening eye of day"* in a live performance by the Budapest Symphony Orchestra is available on the Artisjus label, a CD featuring German pianist Susanne Kessel performing two of his *Four Snapshots* is available on OehmsClassics, a CD of Peter’s complete piano music performed by German pianist Markus Pawlik was released by Sono Luminus in 2013, and a CD of the Lyris Quartet performing his *Intimate Voices* was released in the summer of 2016 on the ARS Produktion label. A new CD featuring his *Canciones de Agua*, *String Quartet No. 2* and *Seven Last Words* is planned for released in early 2022.

Peter holds degrees from Princeton University (BA), the Juilliard School (MM), and the University of Texas at Austin (DMA), and he was a Fulbright Fellow at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Finland. His principal composition teachers have included Dan Welcher, Donald Grantham, and David Diamond. He is currently based in Los Angeles.

Program Note

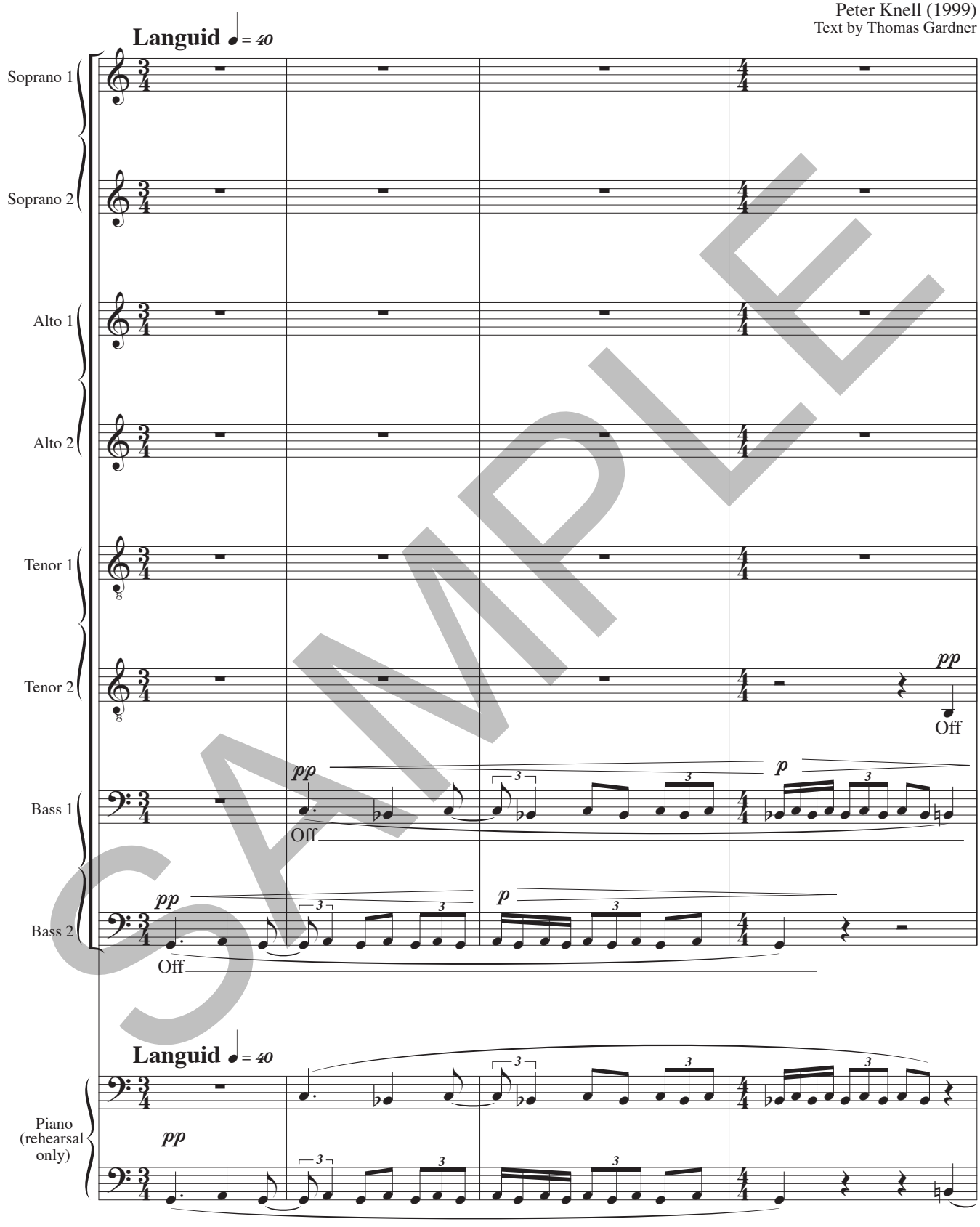
Ferry Bluff was commissioned by the Dale Warland Singers and composed during March and April 1999. It is a setting of a poem by Virginia poet Thomas Gardner. The poem describes an autumn day in Wisconsin when the poet, standing on a sandstone bluff above a river, loses his sense of self. The music attempts both to capture the atmospheric sense of the text and to portray many of the specific images. Below is the poet's response to hearing my setting of his poem:

"*Ferry Bluff* is really lovely. You've taken some very simple words and almost transformed them to wind and water, to elements. Mostly I found myself thinking of contrasts--the liquid layers of sound, voices dropping down through veils of them, in contrast to solid things and bursts of clarity; the play between the temporarily stable "I" and the dissolving, shifting world outside; and so on. It's a "contest" or debate or negotiation I think about (teach about) all the time, so I'm not surprised to find it in this poem, but how much richer it seems put in musical terms."

SAMPLE

Ferry Bluff

Peter Knell (1999)
Text by Thomas Gardner



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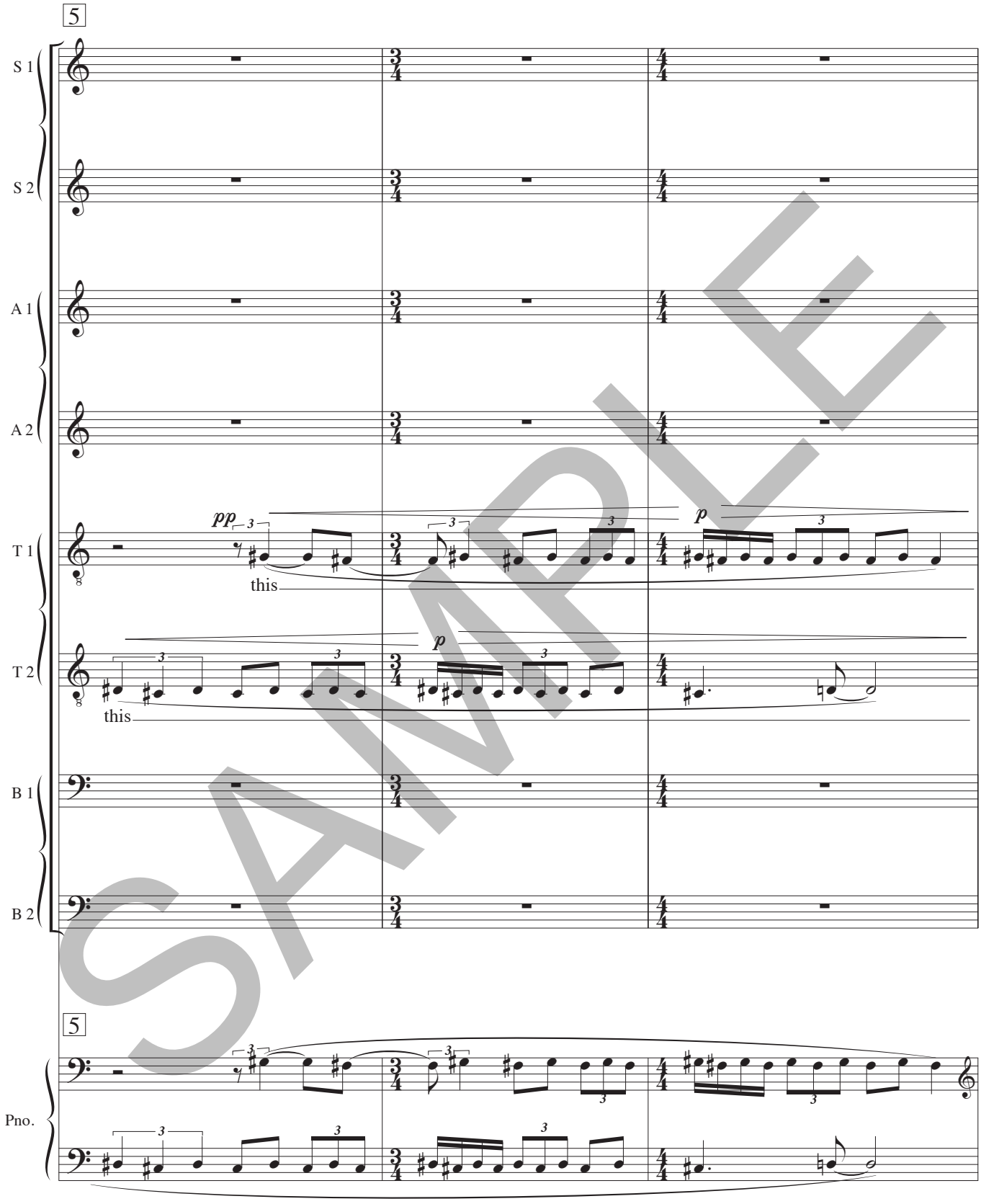

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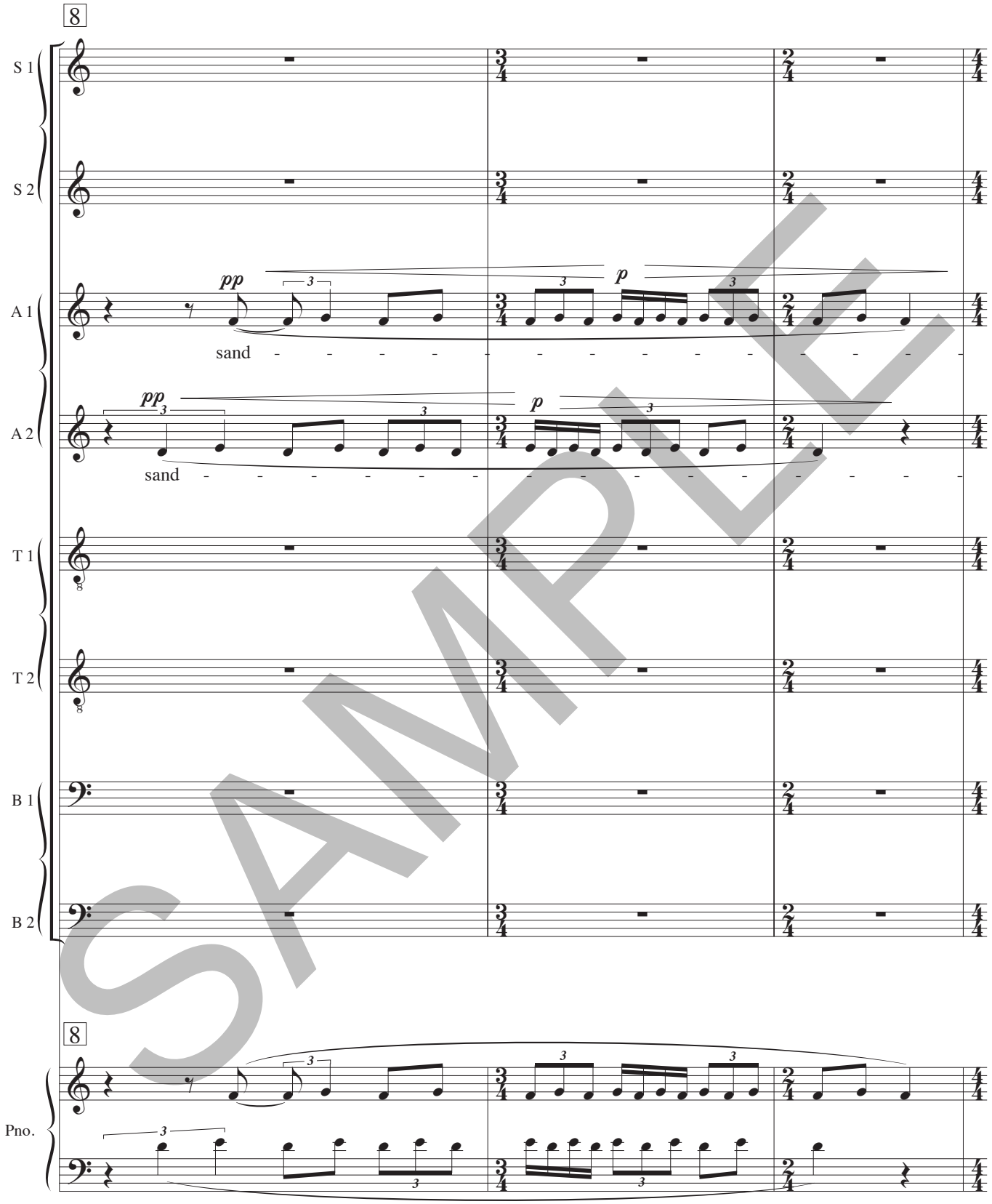

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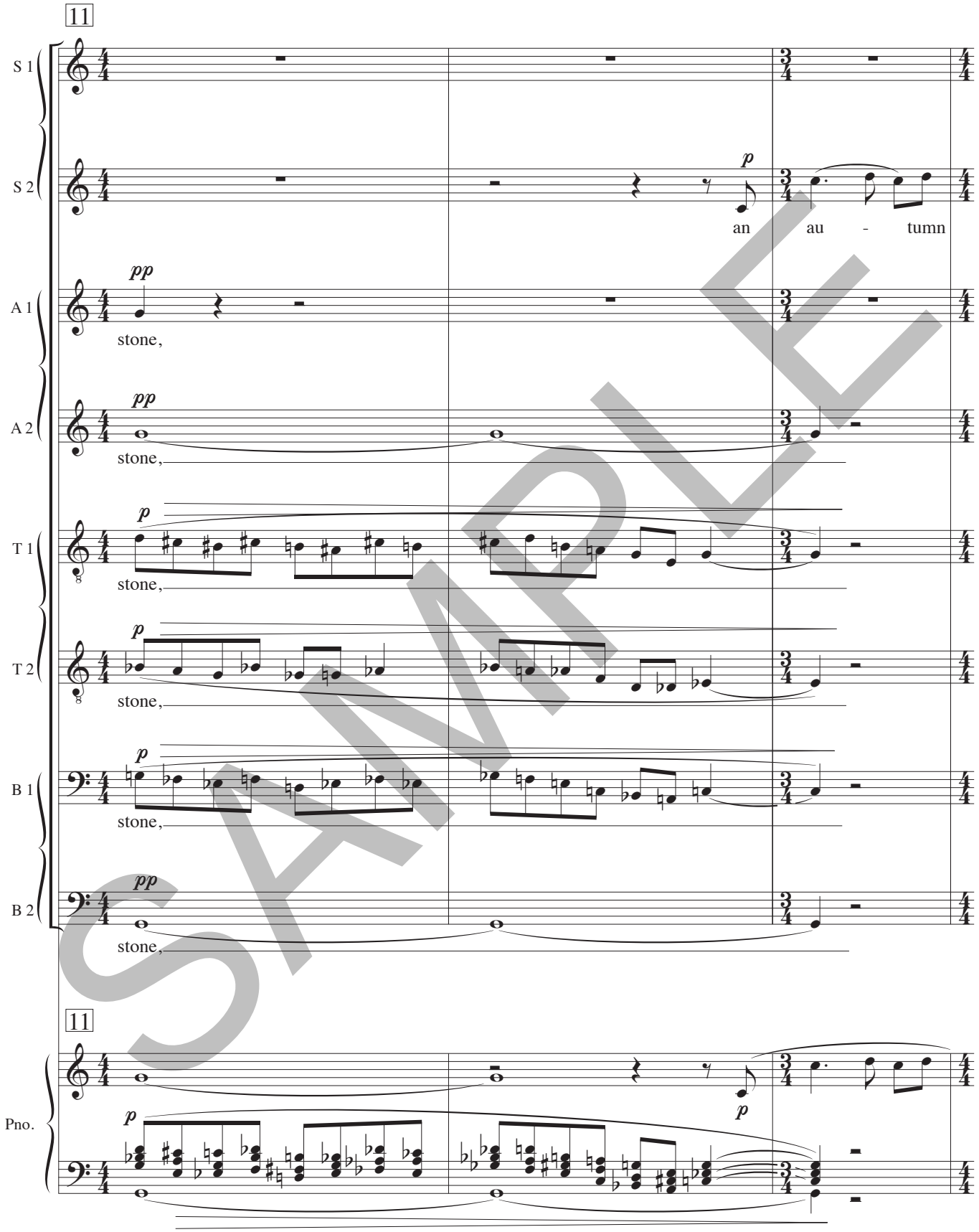
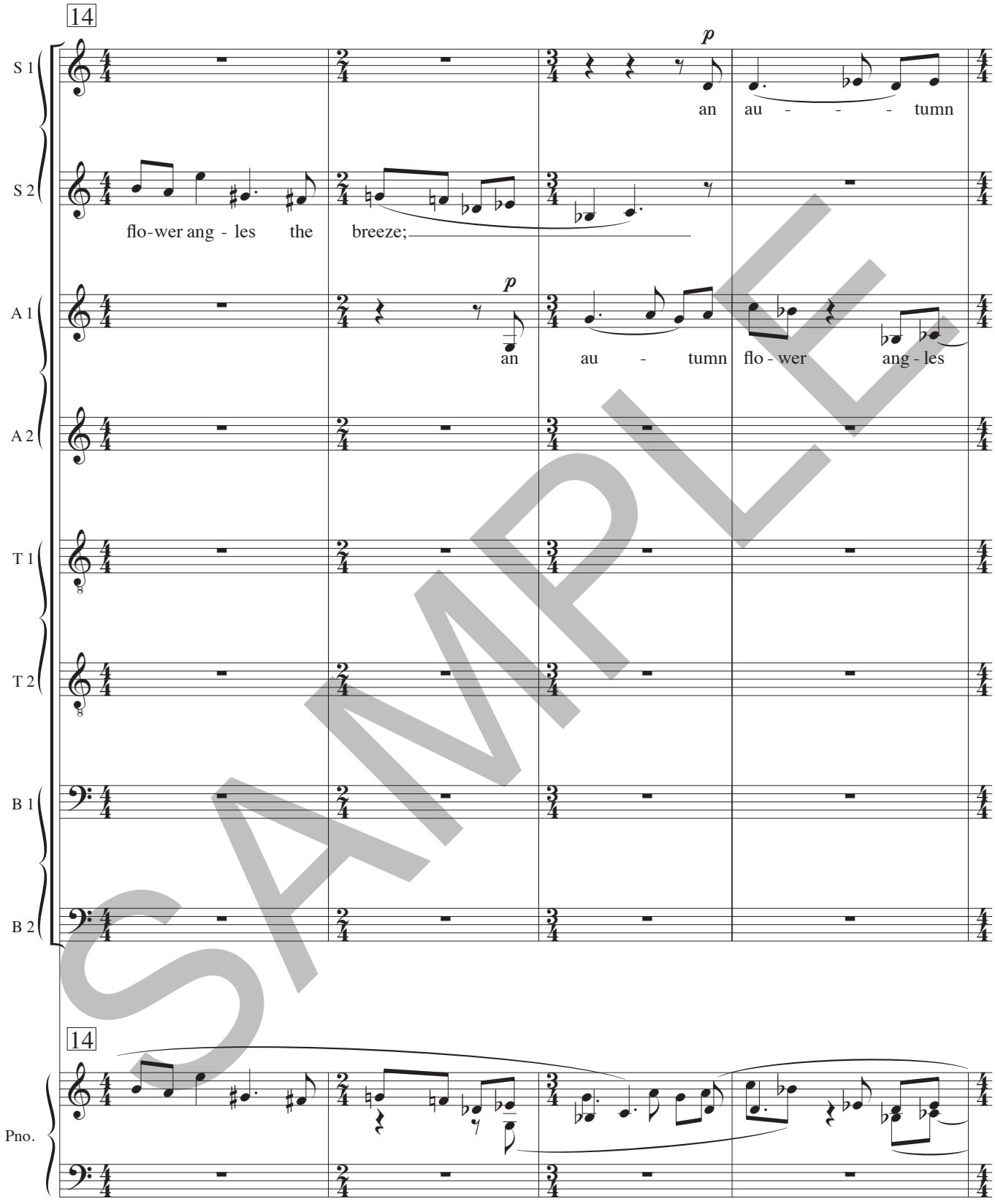
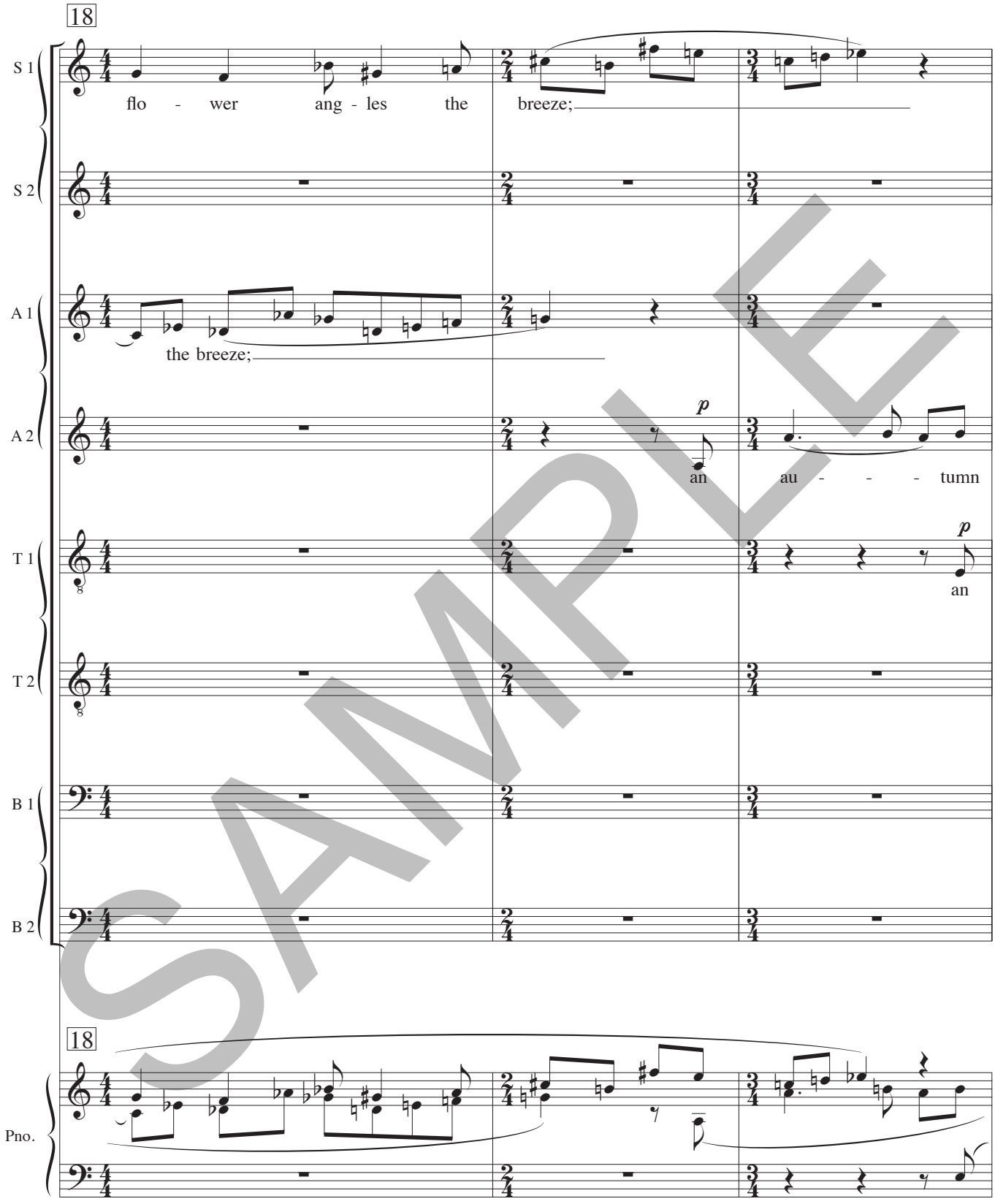

11
S 1
S 2
p
an au - tumn
A 1
pp
stone,
A 2
pp
stone,
T 1
p
stone,
T 2
p
stone,
B 1
p
stone,
B 2
pp
stone,
11
Pno.
p
p

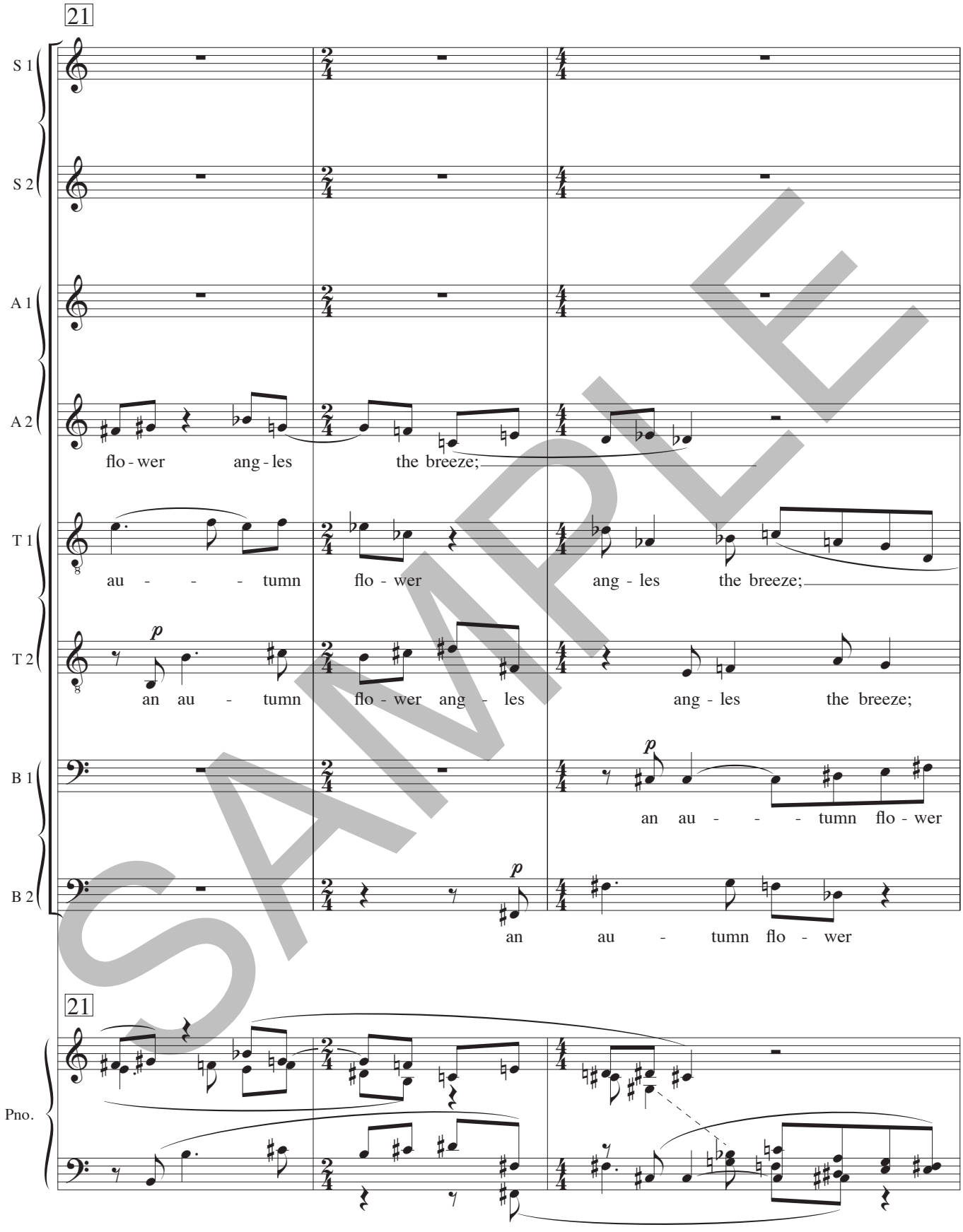
SAMPLE


14
S 1
S 2
A 1
A 2
T 1
T 2
B 1
B 2
Pno.
p
an au - - - tumn
flo-wer ang - les the breeze;
p
an au - tumn flo - wer ang - les
14

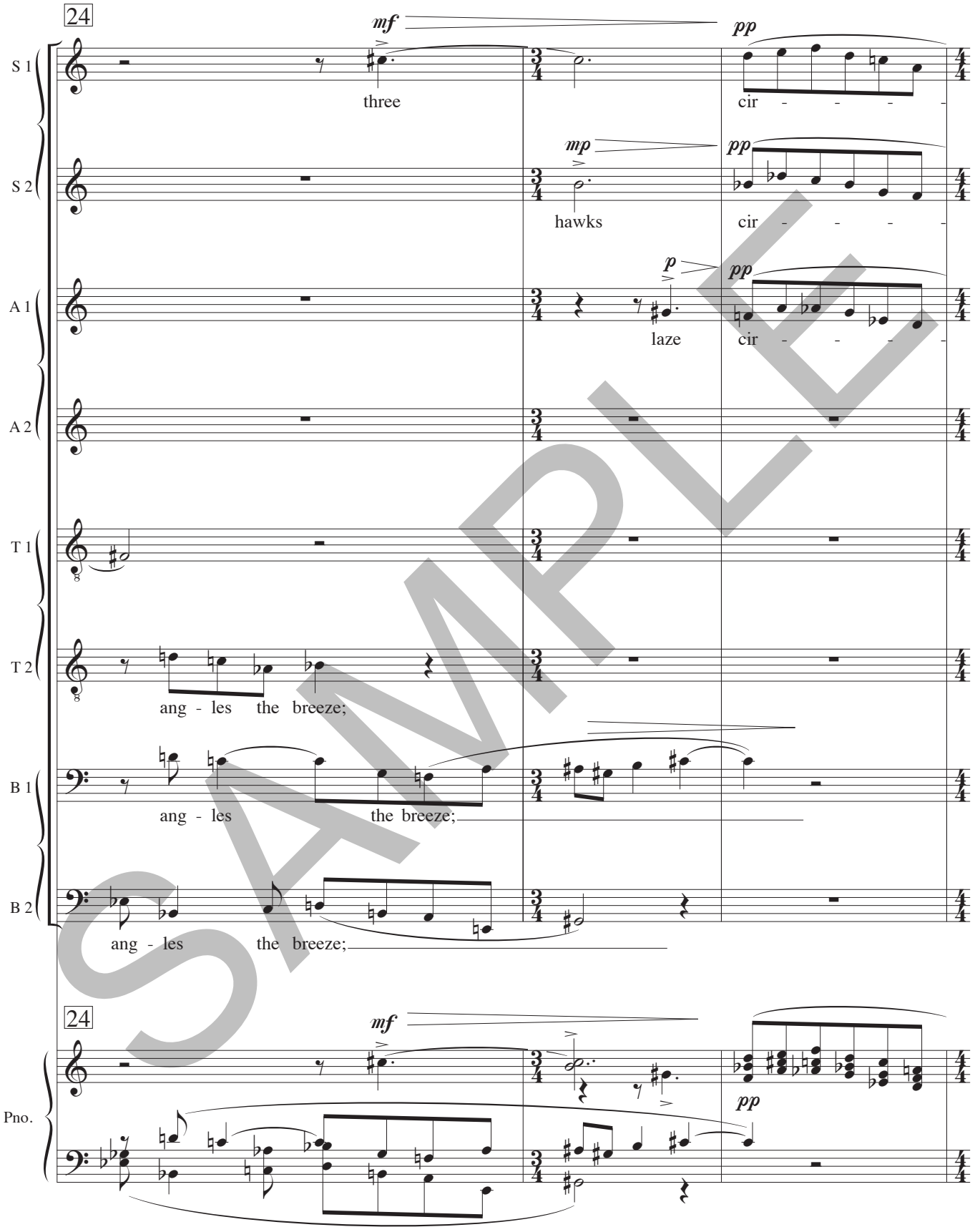
SAMPLE


18
S 1
flo - wer ang - les the breeze;
S 2
A 1
the breeze;
A 2
p
an au - - - tumn
T 1
p
an
T 2
B 1
B 2
18
Pno.

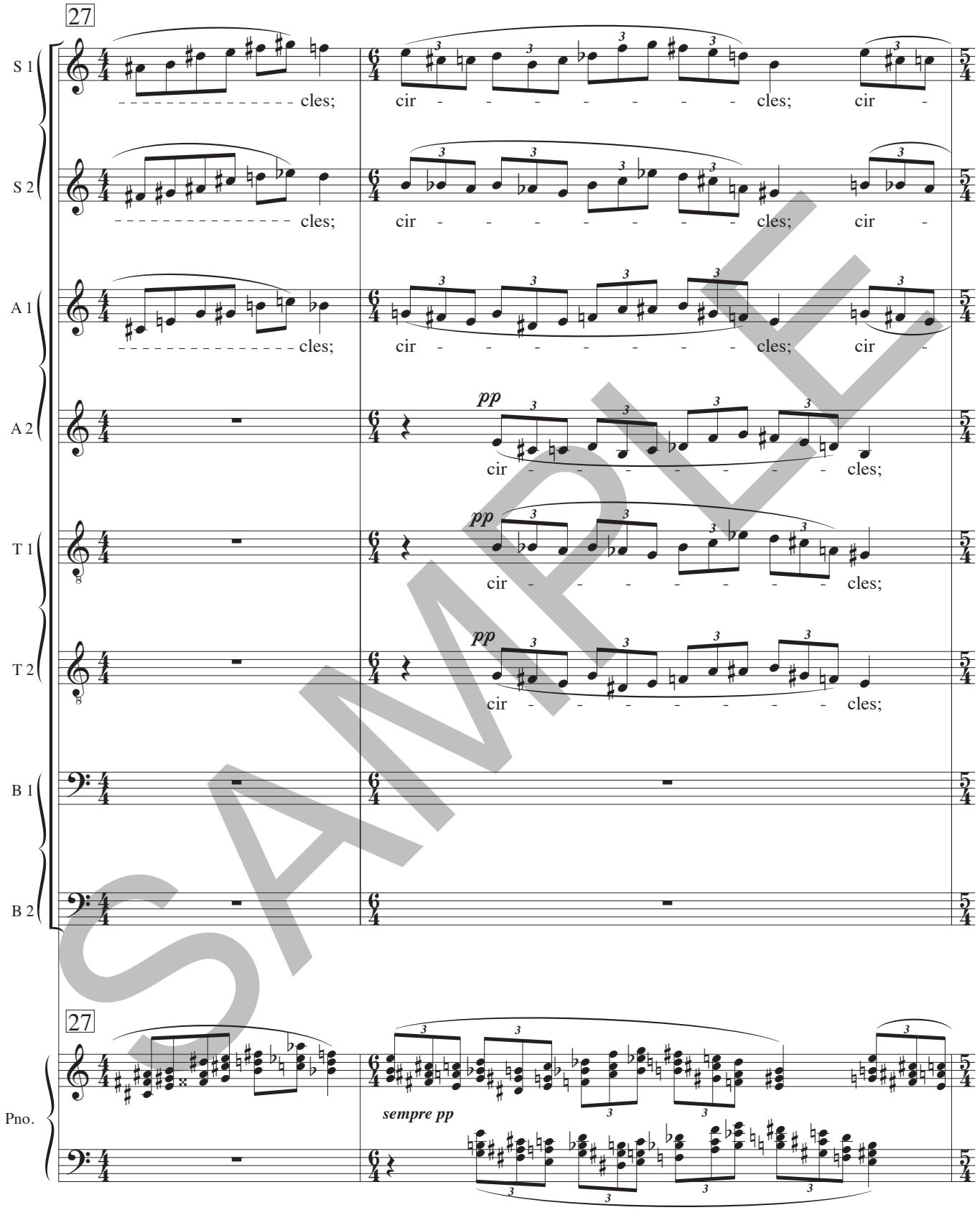
SAMPLE


21
S 1
S 2
A 1
A 2
flo - wer ang - les the breeze;
T 1
au - - - - tumn flo - wer ang - les the breeze;
T 2
p
an au - tumn flo - wer ang - les ang - les the breeze;
B 1
p
an au - - - - tumn flo - wer
B 2
p
an au - tumn flo - wer
21
Pno.

SAMPLE


24
mf
pp
S 1
three
cir - - - -
mp
pp
S 2
hawks
cir - - - -
p
pp
A 1
laze
cir - - - -
A 2
T 1
T 2
ang - les the breeze;
B 1
ang - les the breeze;
B 2
ang - les the breeze;
24
mf
pp
Pno.

SAMPLE



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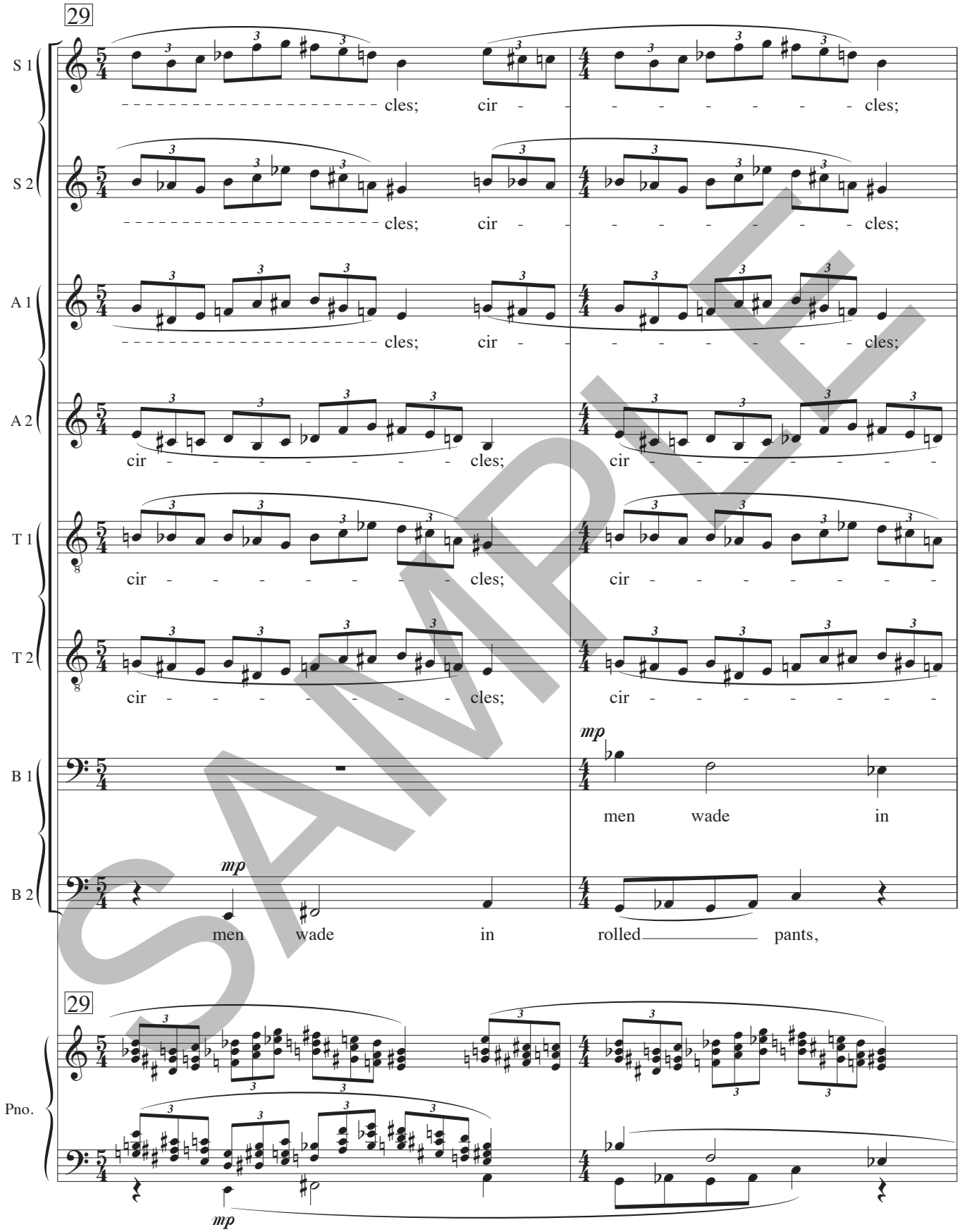
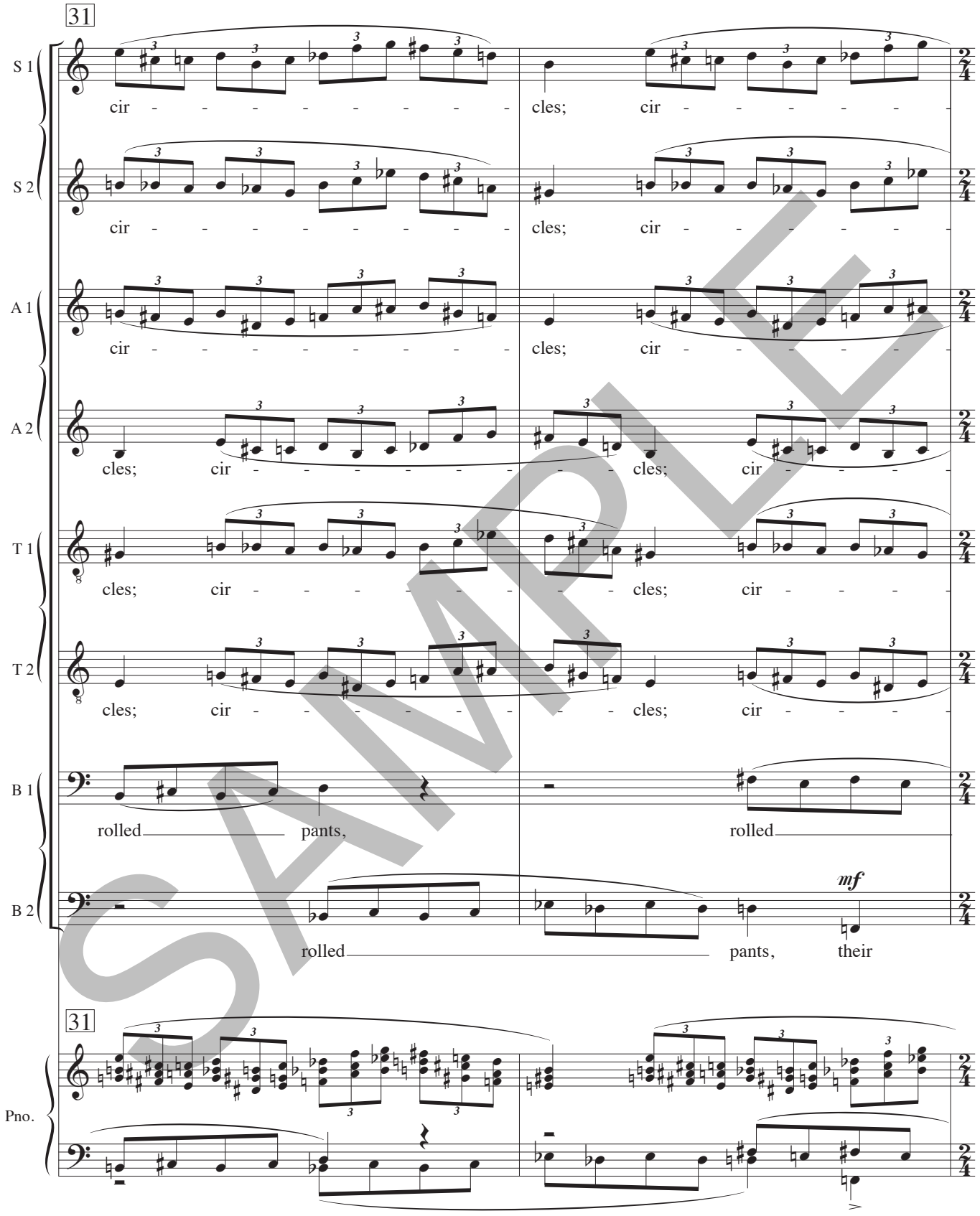
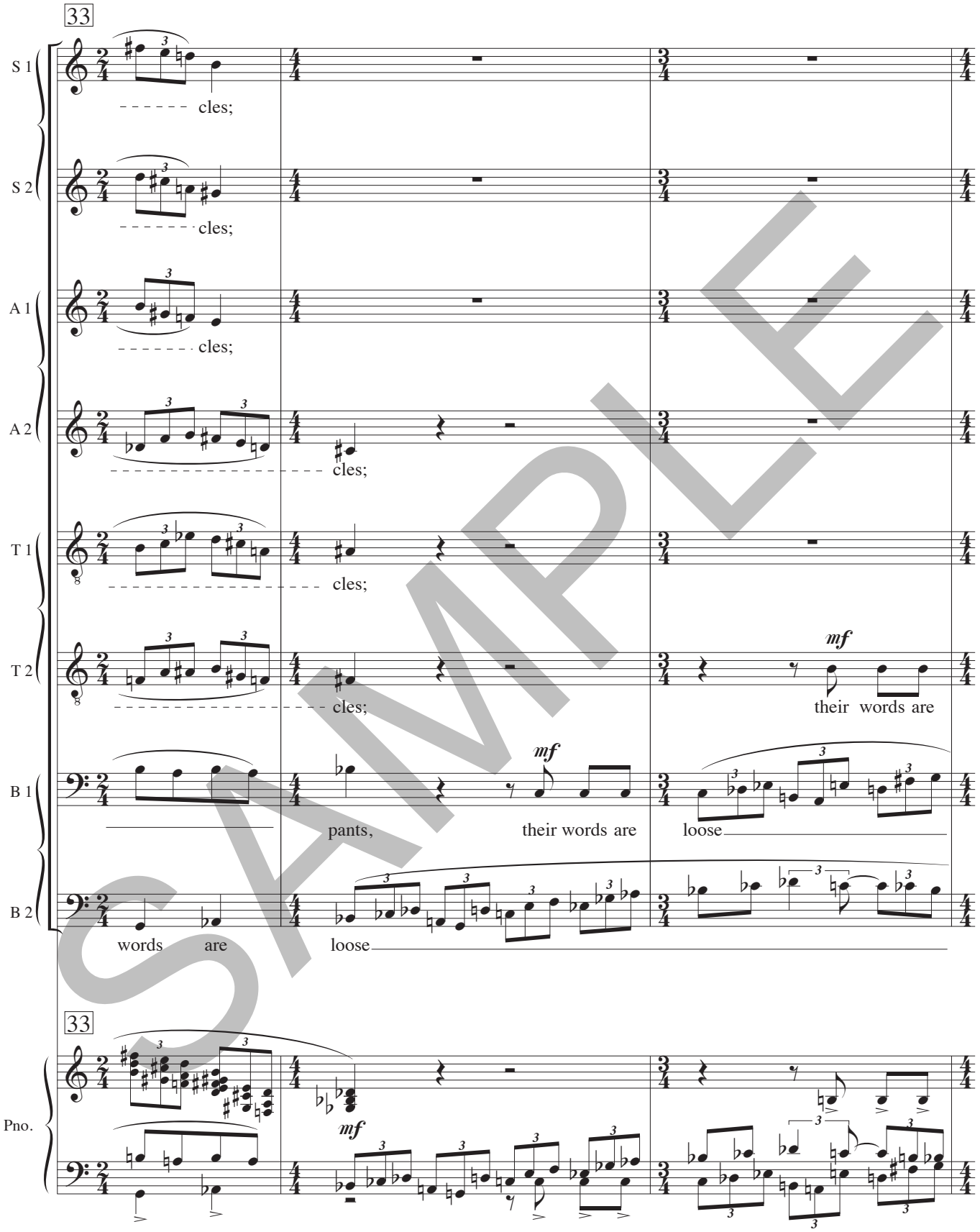

29
S 1
S 2
A 1
A 2
T 1
T 2
B 1
B 2
Pno.
cles; cir - - - - - - - - cles;
cir - - - - - - - - cles;
cir - - - - - - - - cles;
cir - - - - - - - - cles;
cir - - - - - - - - cles;
cir - - - - - - - - cles;
mp
men wade in
mp
men wade in rolled pants,
29
mp

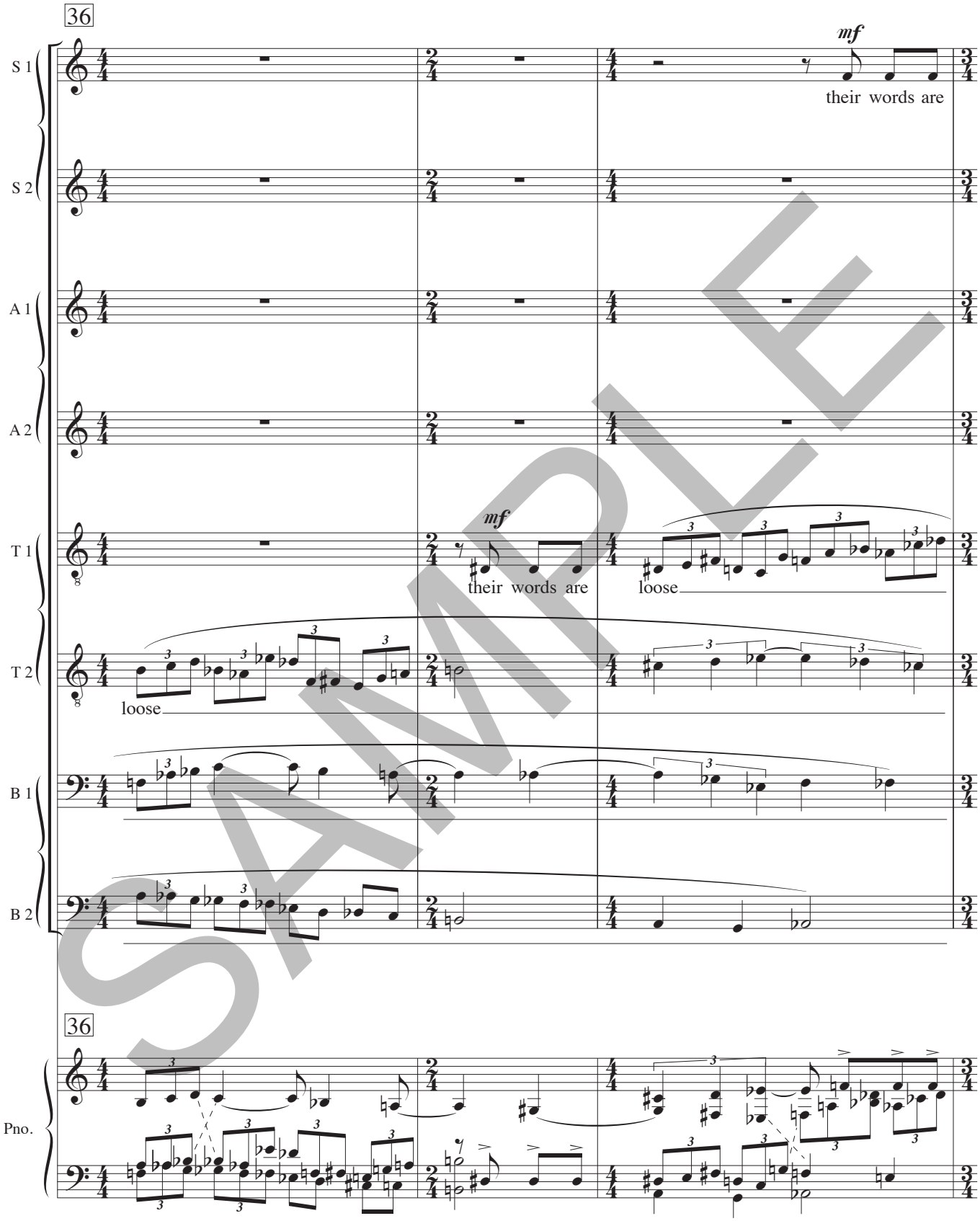
SAMPLE


31
S 1
S 2
A 1
A 2
T 1
T 2
B 1
B 2
Pno.
cir - - - - - - - - - cles; cir - - - - - -
cles; cir - - - - - - - - - cles; cir - - - - - -
rolled pants, rolled
mf
rolled pants, their

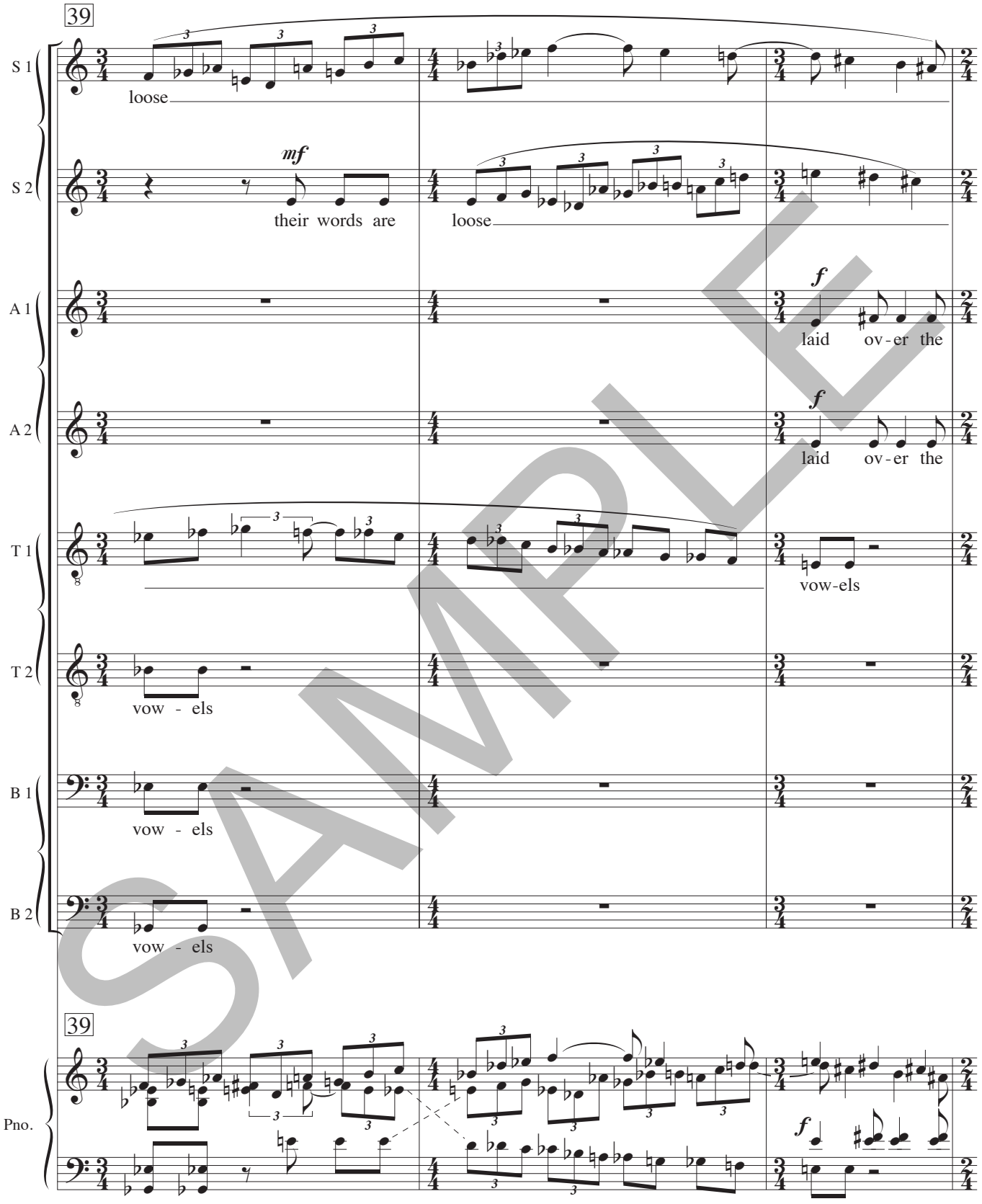
SAMPLE


33
S 1
S 2
A 1
A 2
T 1
T 2
B 1
B 2
Pno.
cles;
mf
their words are
pants,
loose
words are
33

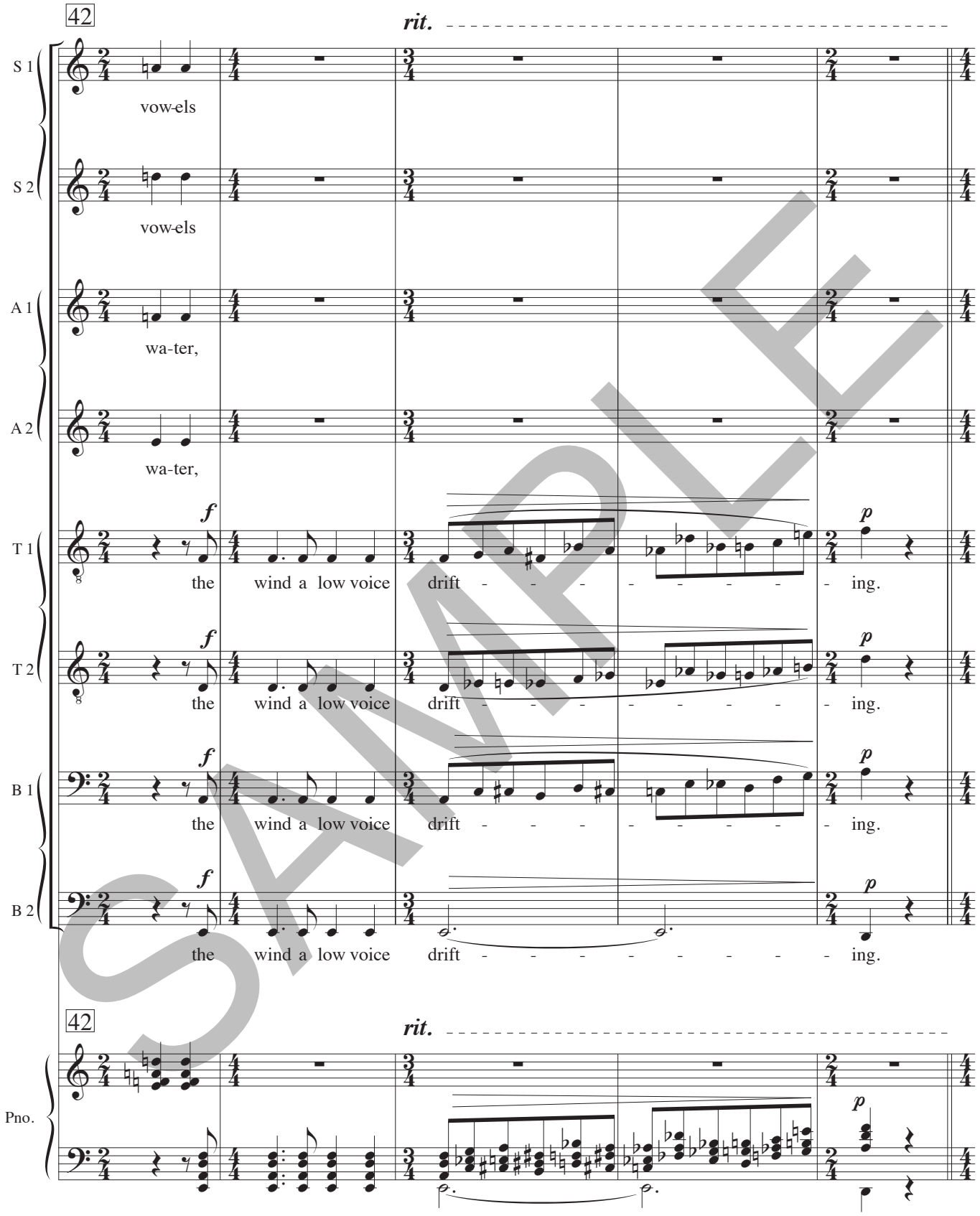
SAMPLE


36
S 1
S 2
A 1
A 2
T 1
T 2
B 1
B 2
Pno.
mf
their words are
loose
mf
their words are
loose
36

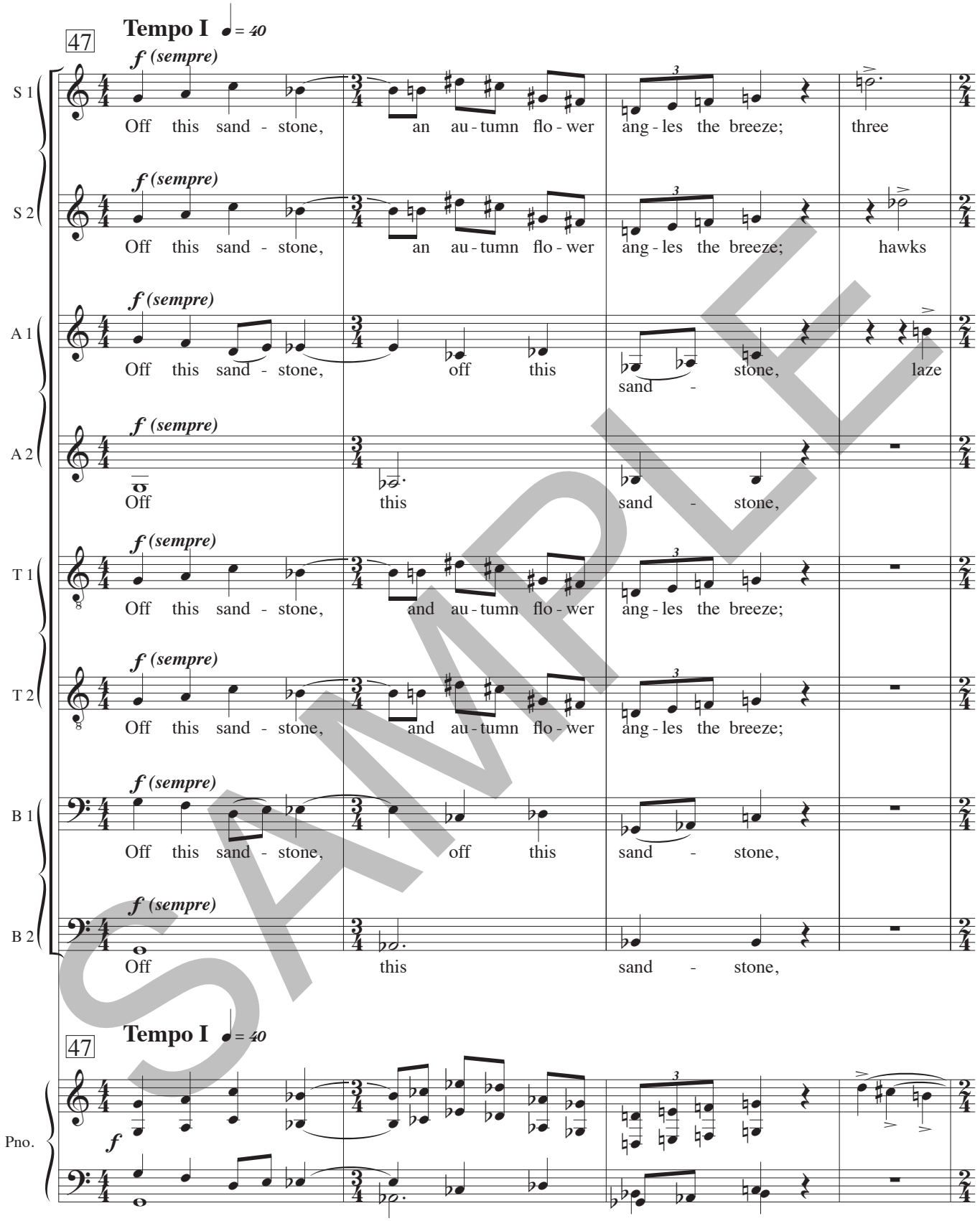
SAMPLE


39
S 1
loose
S 2
mf
their words are
loose
A 1
f
laid ov-er the
A 2
f
laid ov-er the
T 1
vow-els
T 2
vow - els
B 1
vow - els
B 2
vow - els
39
Pno.
f

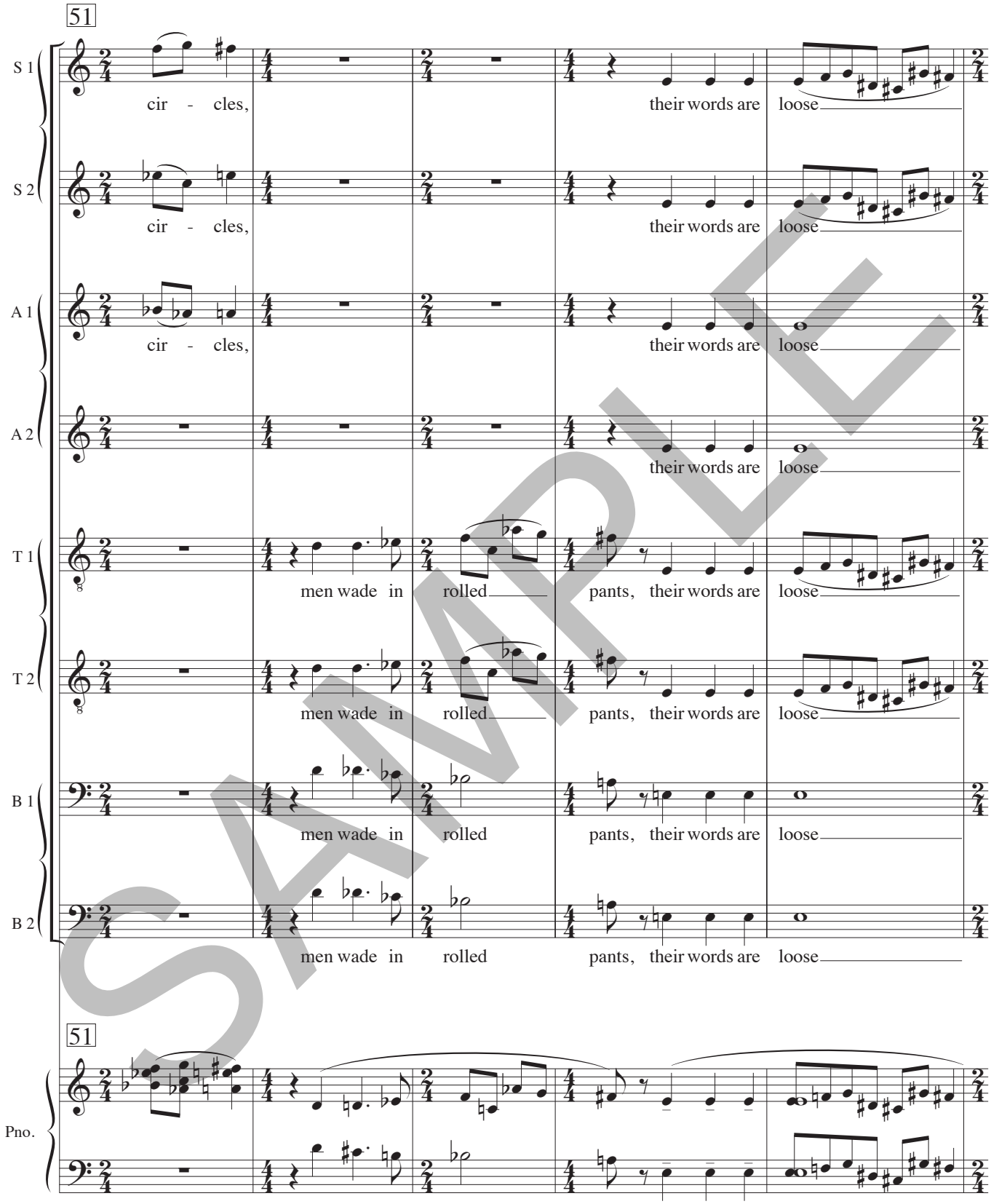
SAMPLE


42
rit.
S 1
vow-els
S 2
vow-els
A 1
wa-ter,
A 2
wa-ter,
T 1
f
the wind a low voice drift - - - - - - - - ing.
p
T 2
f
the wind a low voice drift - - - - - - - - ing.
p
B 1
f
the wind a low voice drift - - - - - - - - ing.
p
B 2
f
the wind a low voice drift - - - - - - - - ing.
p
42
rit.
Pno.
p

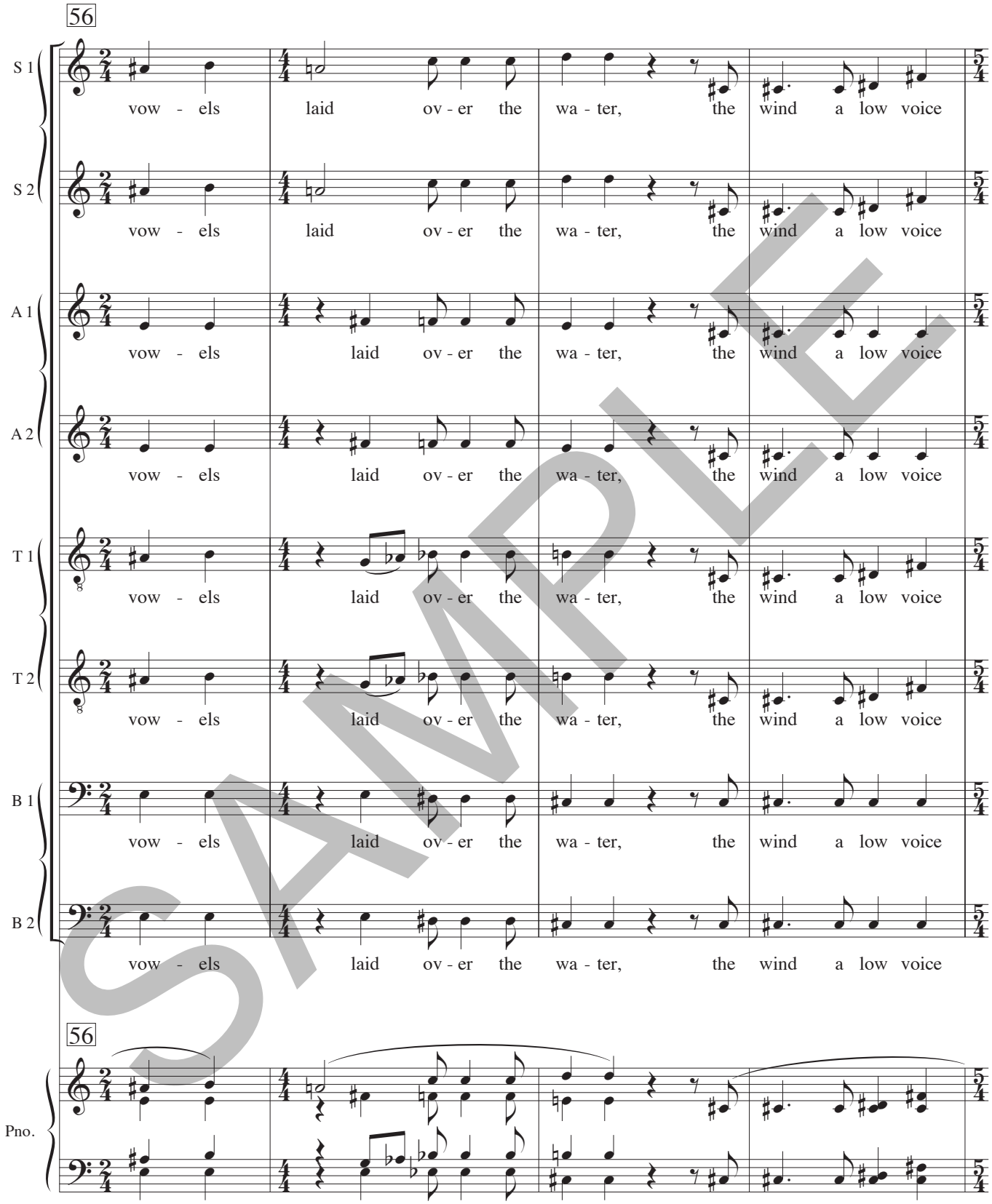
SAMPLE


47
Tempo I ♩= 40
S 1
S 2
A 1
A 2
T 1
T 2
B 1
B 2
Pno.
f (sempre)
Off this sand - stone, an au - tumn flo - wer ang - les the breeze; three
Off this sand - stone, an au - tumn flo - wer ang - les the breeze; hawks
Off this sand - stone, off this sand - stone, laze
Off this sand - stone,
Off this sand - stone, and au - tumn flo - wer ang - les the breeze;
Off this sand - stone, off this sand - stone,
Off this sand - stone,
47
Tempo I ♩= 40
f

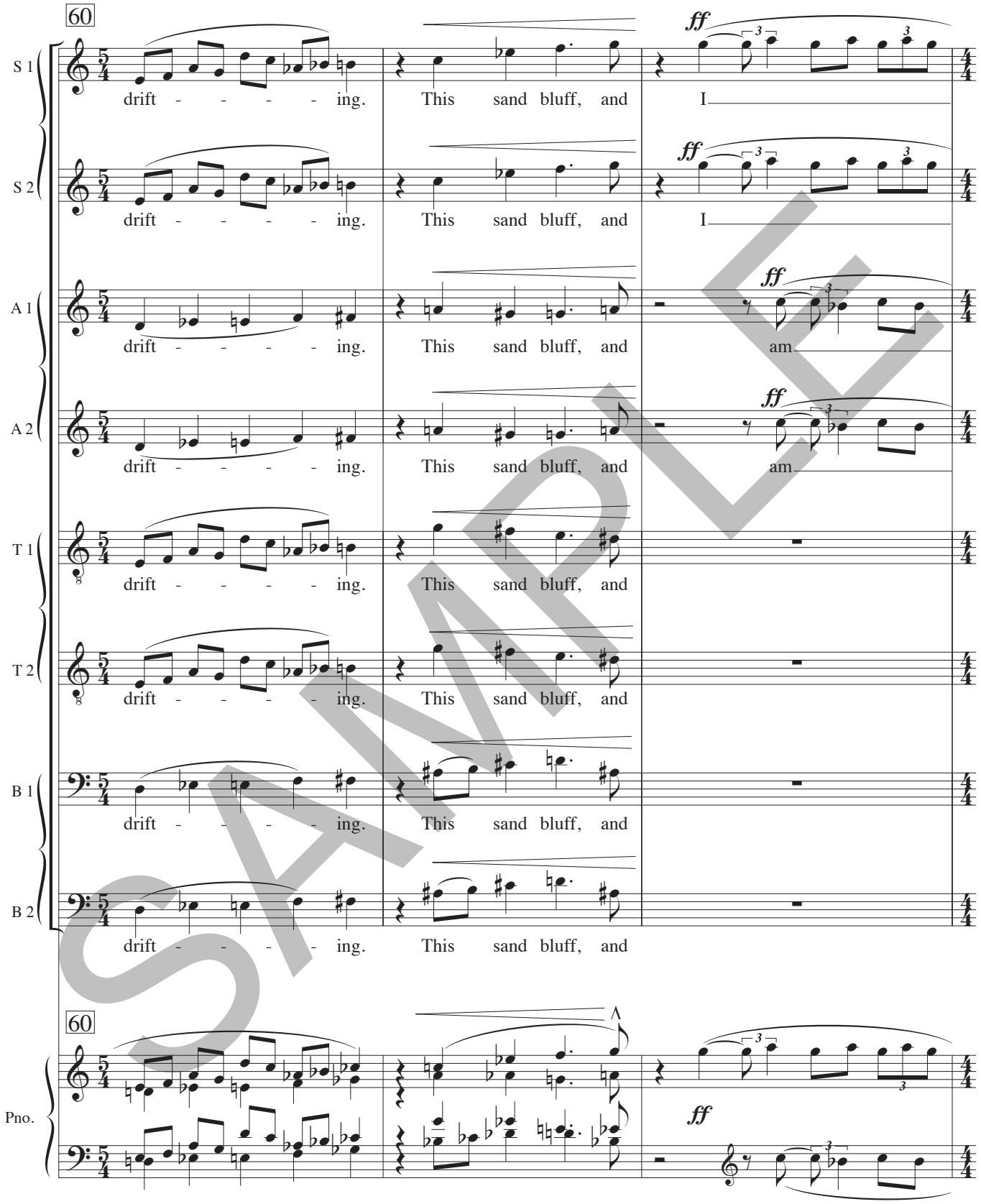
SAMPLE


51
S 1
cir - cles,
their words are loose
S 2
cir - cles,
their words are loose
A 1
cir - cles,
their words are loose
A 2
their words are loose
T 1
men wade in rolled pants, their words are loose
T 2
men wade in rolled pants, their words are loose
B 1
men wade in rolled pants, their words are loose
B 2
men wade in rolled pants, their words are loose
51
Pno.

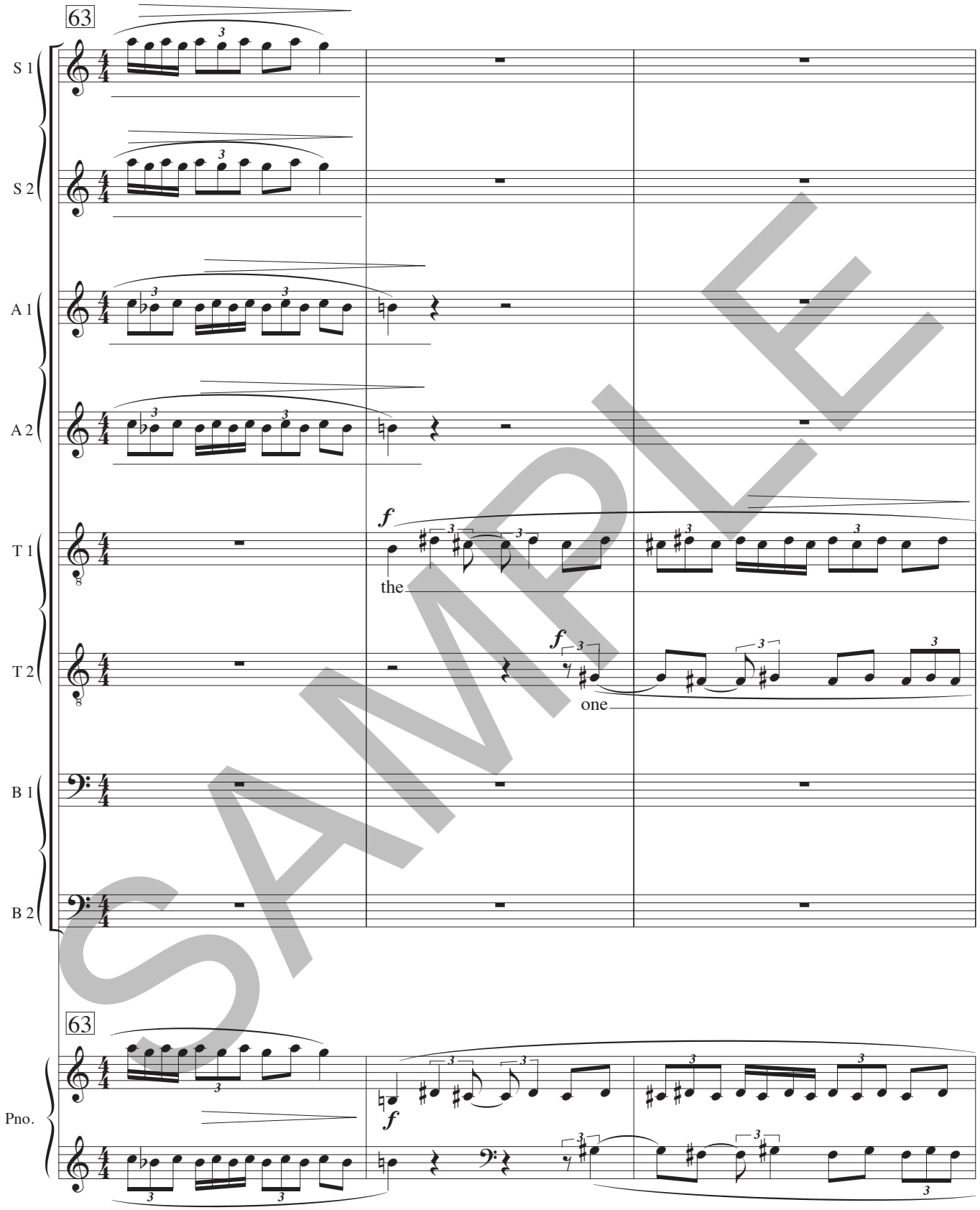
SAMPLE


56
S 1
vow - els laid ov - er the wa - ter, the wind a low voice
S 2
vow - els laid ov - er the wa - ter, the wind a low voice
A 1
vow - els laid ov - er the wa - ter, the wind a low voice
A 2
vow - els laid ov - er the wa - ter, the wind a low voice
T 1
vow - els laid ov - er the wa - ter, the wind a low voice
T 2
vow - els laid ov - er the wa - ter, the wind a low voice
B 1
vow - els laid ov - er the wa - ter, the wind a low voice
B 2
vow - els laid ov - er the wa - ter, the wind a low voice
56
Pno.

SAMPLE


60
S 1
S 2
A 1
A 2
T 1
T 2
B 1
B 2
Pno.
drift - - - - - ing.
This sand bluff, and
I
am
ff
3

SAMPLE



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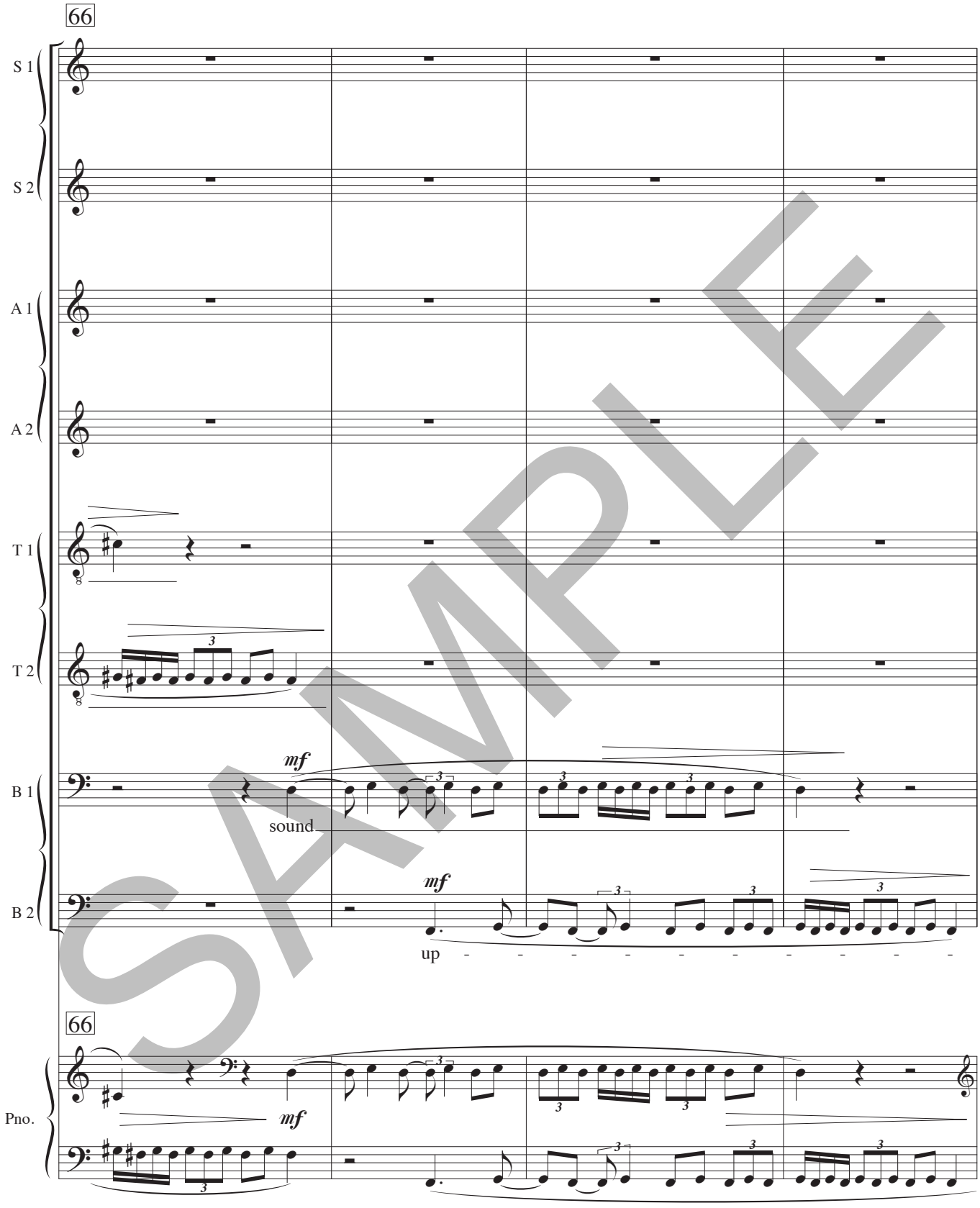

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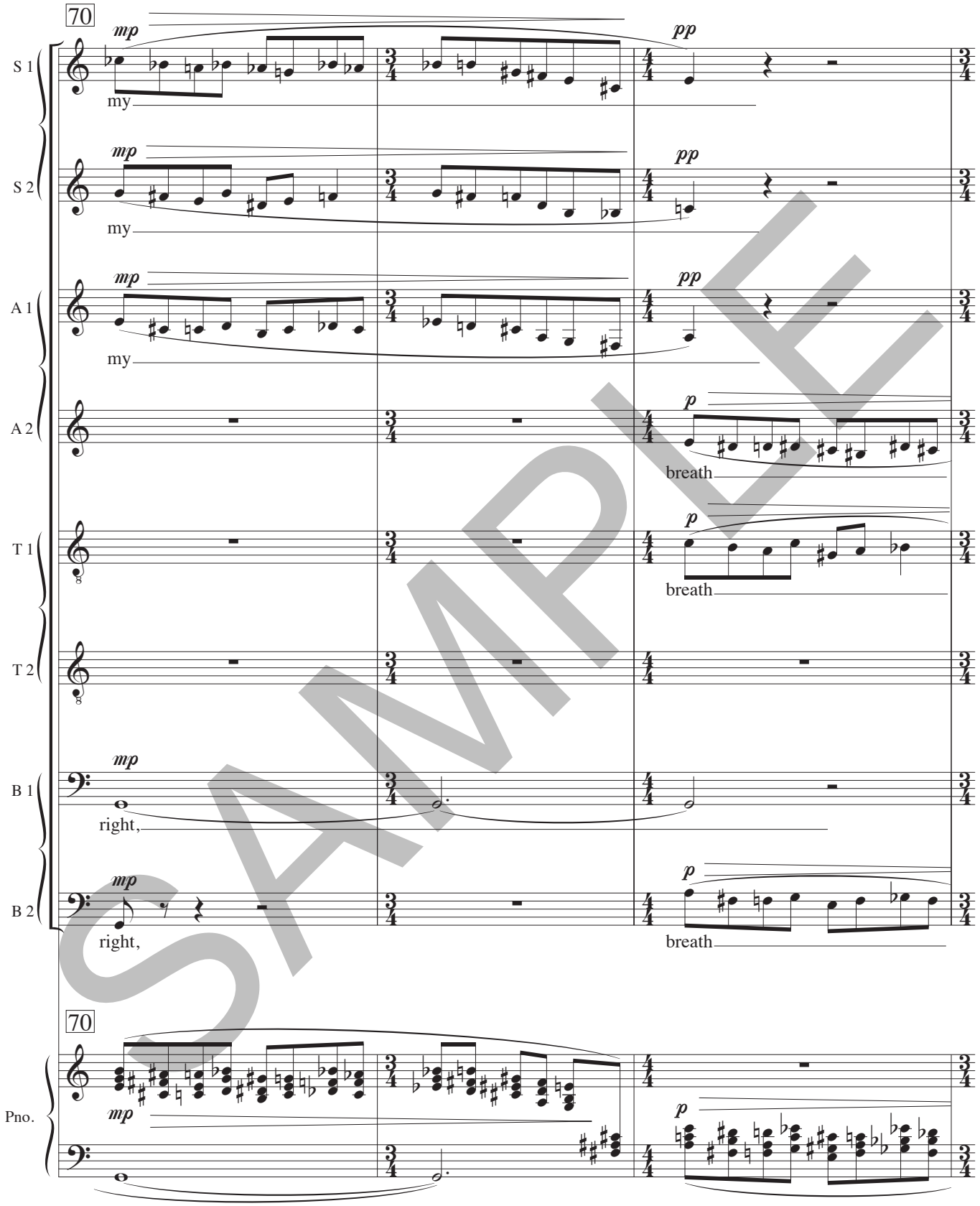
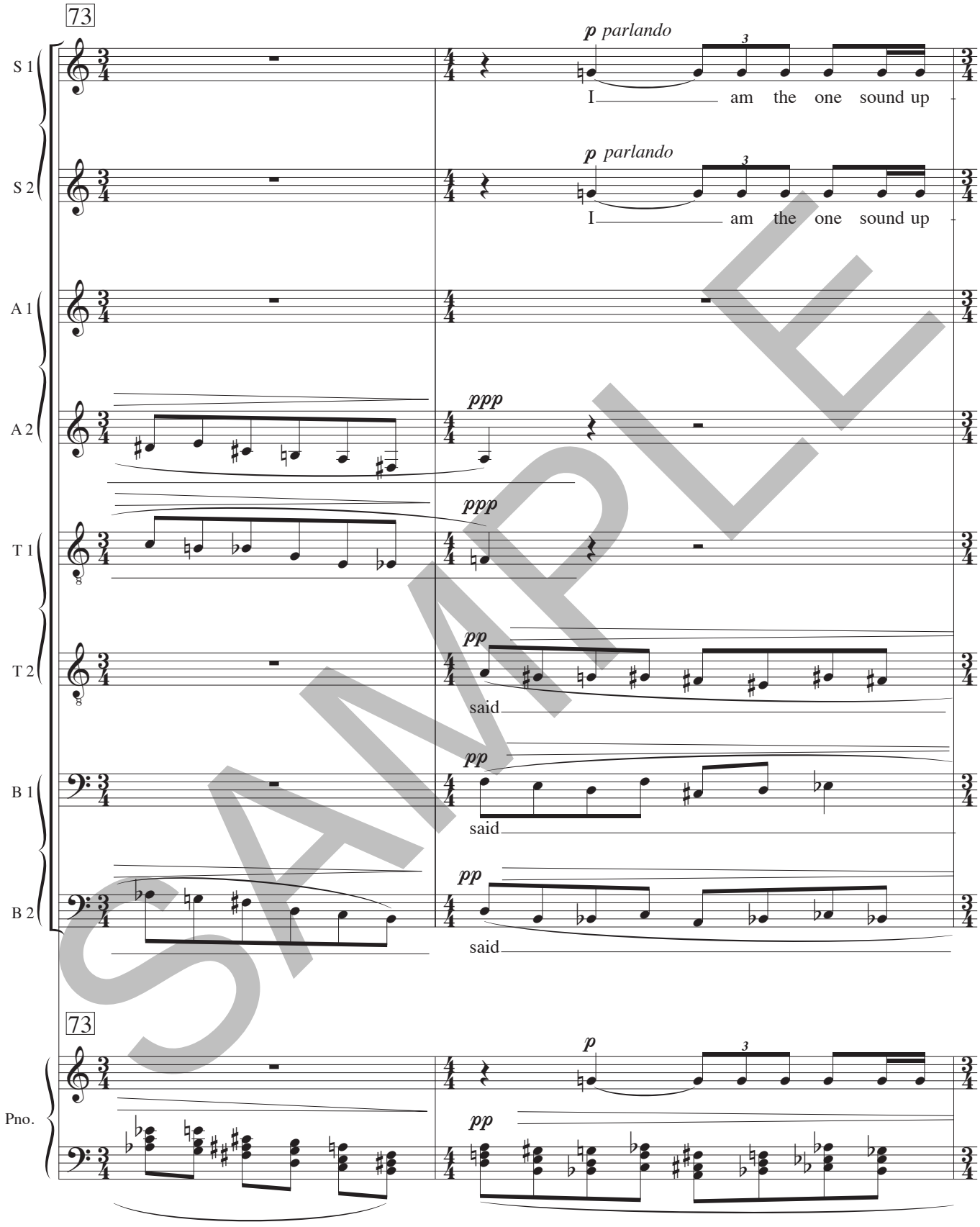
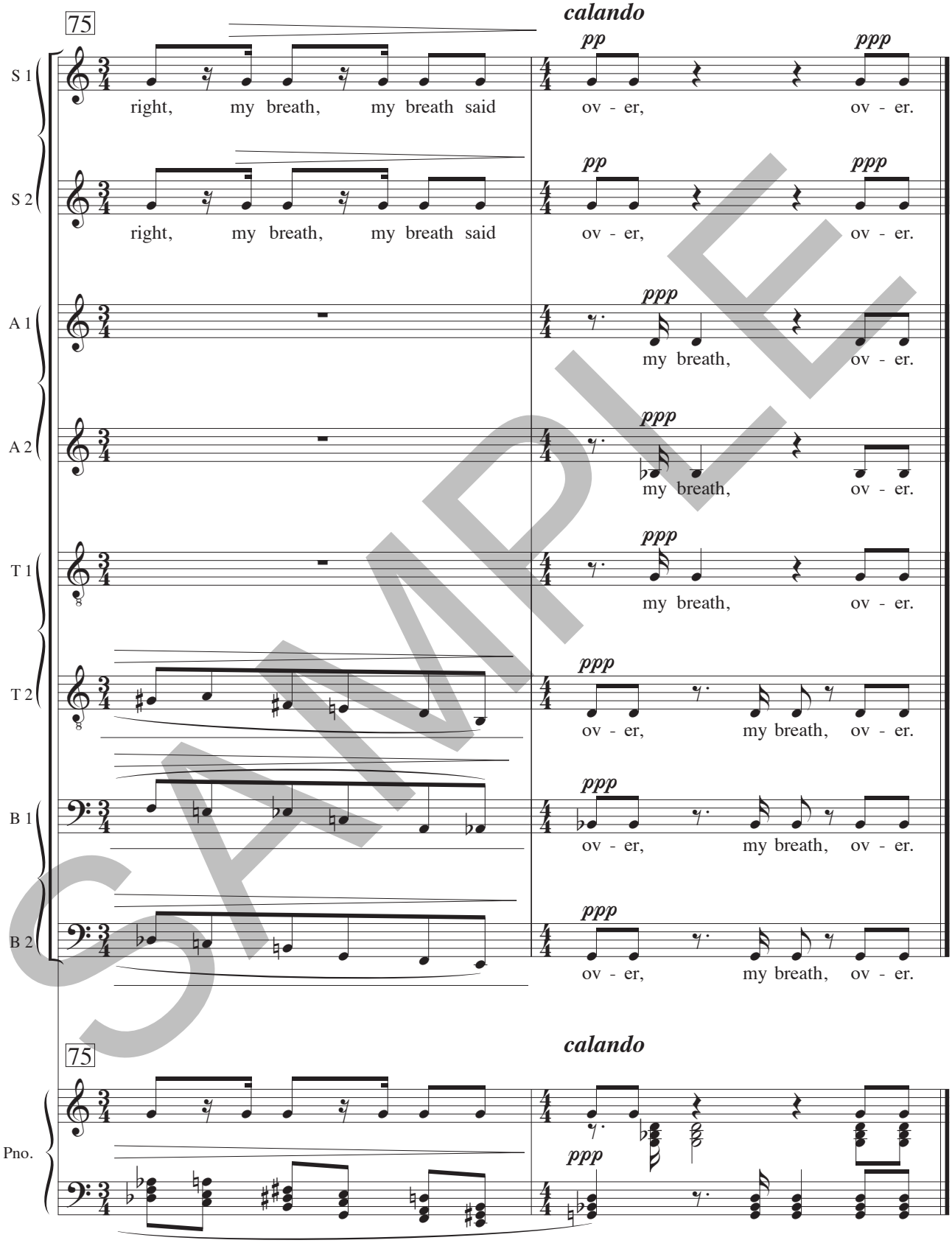

70
S 1
S 2
A 1
A 2
T 1
T 2
B 1
B 2
Pno.
mp
pp
p
my
breath
right,
SAMPLE


73
S 1
S 2
A 1
A 2
T 1
T 2
B 1
B 2
Pno.
p parlando
I am the one sound up
ppp
pp
said
p
pp

SAMPLE


75
calando
pp
ppp
S 1
right, my breath, my breath said
ov - er, ov - er.
S 2
right, my breath, my breath said
ov - er, ov - er.
A 1
my breath, ov - er.
A 2
my breath, ov - er.
T 1
my breath, ov - er.
T 2
ov - er, my breath, ov - er.
B 1
ov - er, my breath, ov - er.
B 2
ov - er, my breath, ov - er.
75
calando
Pno.

SAMPLE