## Stephen Hill

# The Prairie

## Solo Violin and Orchestra

Orchestra (Grade 4)



Instrumentation Flute 1-2 Oboe English Horn Bb Clarinet 1-2 Bassoon 1-2

> French Horn Bb Trumpet Trombone Tuba

Timpani Percussion (S.D., B.D., Triangle, 2 Wood Blocks)

> Mallets (Vibraphone, Glockenspiel) Piano Harp

> > Solo Violin Violin 1 Violin 2 Viola Cello String Bass

Duration - ca. 6:00



#### About the Work...

**The Prairie**, composed in 2007, was originally written for Solo Tuba and Piano. It was written at the request of Peter Alexander (Alexander Publishing) and is part of a larger project of Solo Compositions written for each major instrument of the Orchestra: Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn in F, Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba, Violin, Viola, Cello and Double Bass. The project consisted of composing music for specific poems chosen by Peter that he felt reflected the character of each instrument. For the Solo Tuba, the poem assigned was Rudyard Kipling's, **The Prairie**.

#### The Prairie by Rudyard Kipling

I see the grass shake in the sun for leagues on either hand, I see a river loop and run about a treeless land -- An empty plain, a steely pond, a distance diamond-clear, And low blue naked hills beyond. And what is that to fear?""Go softly by that river-side or, when you would depart, You'll find its every winding tied and knotted round your heart. Be wary as the seasons pass, or you may ne'er outrun The wind that sets that yellowed grass a-shiver 'neath the Sun."

I hear the summer storm outblown -- the drip of the grateful wheat. I hear the hard trail telephone a far-off horse's feet. I hear the horns of Autumn blow to the wild-fowl overhead; And I hear the hush before the snow. And what is that to dread?"

"Take heed what spell the lightning weaves -- what charm the echoes shape -- Or, bound among a million sheaves, your soul shall not escape. Bar home the door of summer nights lest those high planets drown The memory of near delights in all the longed-for town."

> "What need have I to long or fear? Now, friendly, I behold My faithful seasons robe the year in silver and in gold. Now I possess and am possessed of the land where I would be, And the curve of half Earth's generous breast shall soothe and ravish me!"

**The Prairie**, Orchestra Version - In the summer of 2015, I took a road trip to Omaha, Nebraska, to visit with my friends Ken and Ruth Meints (both colleagues with whom I had taught together at Whittier Christian Schools). While there, I shared a copy of **The Prairie**. Ruth asked me to re-score it from the original for Solo Tuba to Solo Violin for her "Frontier Strings" at the Omaha Conservatory of Music. Ken quickly noted it's not often an original work for solo tuba that is rescored for solo violin. It's usually the other way around.

Since I had my laptop with me, Ruth and I spent the evening adapting The Prairie for Solo Violin. We transposed the original key of Bb to G. Ruth, divided up the phrases for 3 Violin Soloists, and then worked out the specific bowings. We made the changes in Sibelius. On my return to California, I orchestrated the original Tuba and Piano part for Violin and Orchestra. The new setting was premiered by the "Frontier Strings" of the Omaha Conservatory of Music with the Omaha Symphony, Enrico Lopez-Yanez, conducting.

#### About the Composer...

Stephen Hill (b.1958) was born and raised in Southern California. His compositional lineage includes the likes of Roy Harris, Ingolf Dahl, Clifton Williams, Bernard Rogers, and Howard Hanson through study with Philip Westin (Cerritos College, 1976-1978) and most notably with W. Francis McBeth at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas (1978-1980). Stephen continued with graduate work at California State University, Los Angeles (1980-83) with composers Dr. Byong Kon Kim and William Hill. He composes for the simple joy of it.

For over 40 years, Stephen taught K-12 instrumental music concurrently in both the Private Christian School (Whittier Christian) and Public School (California High School) settings. Though semi-retired, Stephen still works with students by continuing to teach part-time at California High School and maintaining his private music studio, where he plays and teaches Woodwinds, Brass, Strings, and Piano. Stephen also plays with the church orchestra at Calvary Chapel, La Habra, CA. where he attends. When teaching full-time, he was primarily a "summer" composer. No longer teaching full-time, Stephen has the privilege to compose beyond just the summer months and publishes through his company, SARAHTIM–a title which comes from simply combining the name of his daughter Sarah and son Timothy.

(Notes by Dr. John Burdett, Azusa Pacific University)

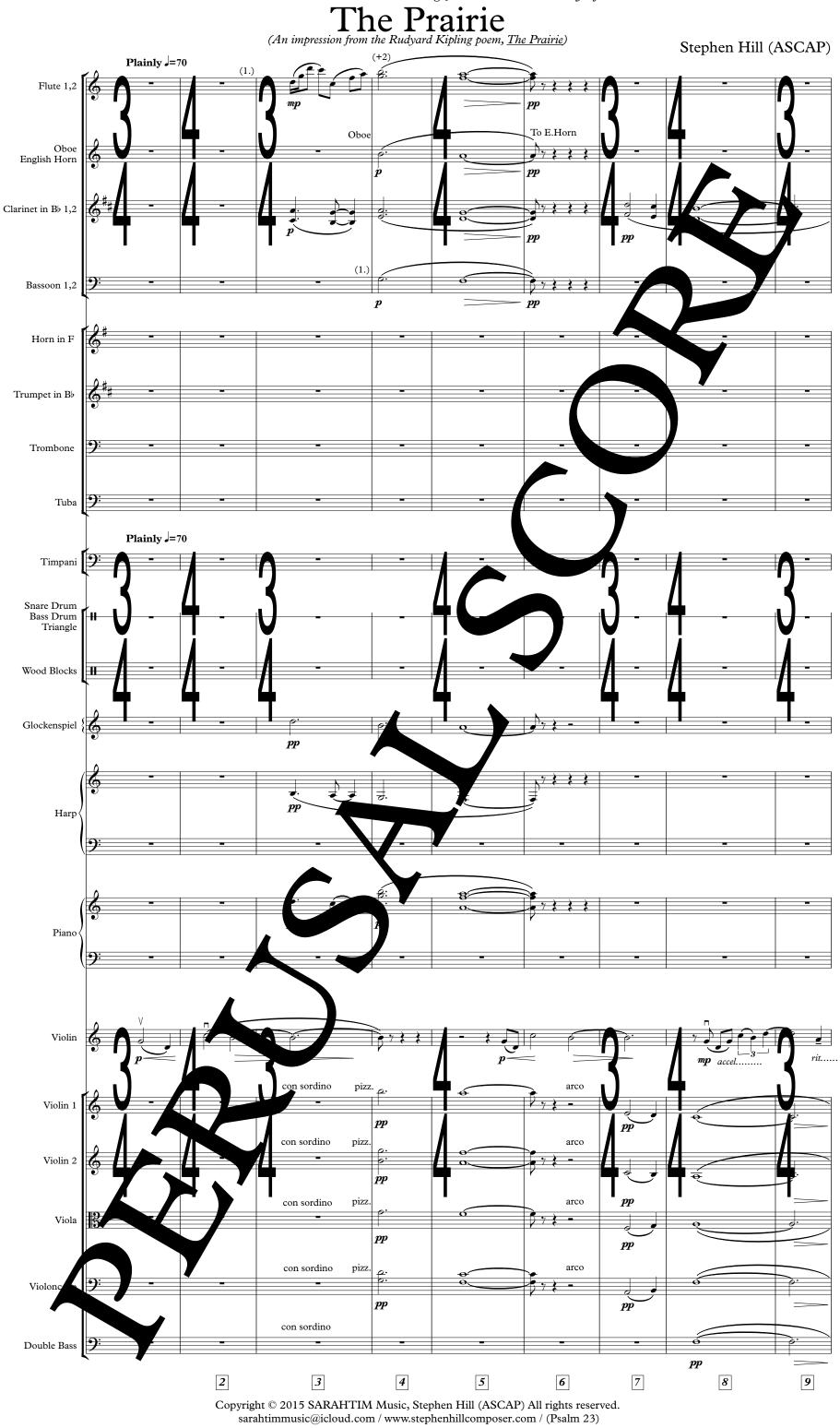
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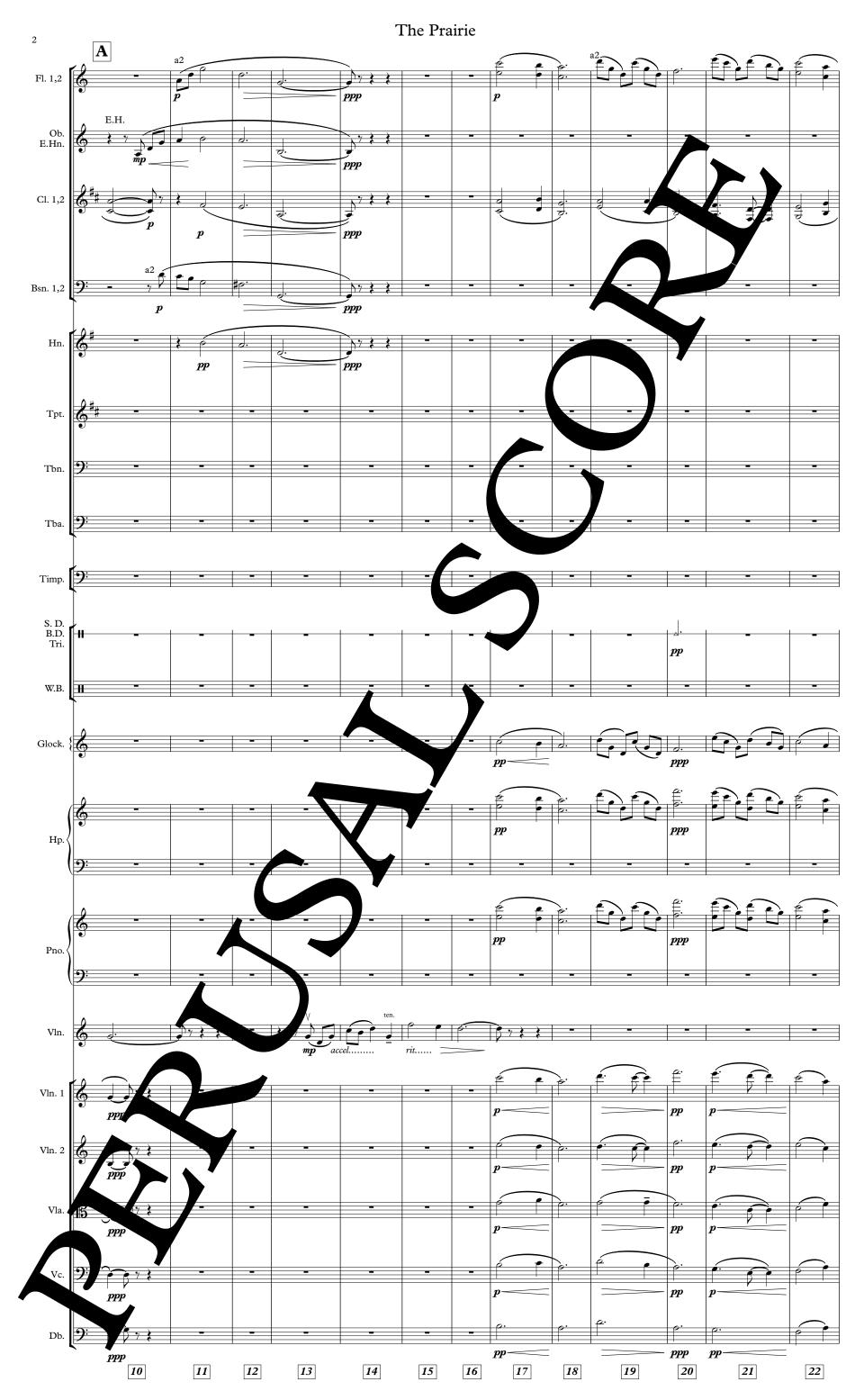
"Where there is devotional music, God is always at hand with His gracious presence." J.S.Bach "The Lord is my shepherd..." (Psalm 23)

"Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from eternity to eternity, you are God" (Psalm 90:2)

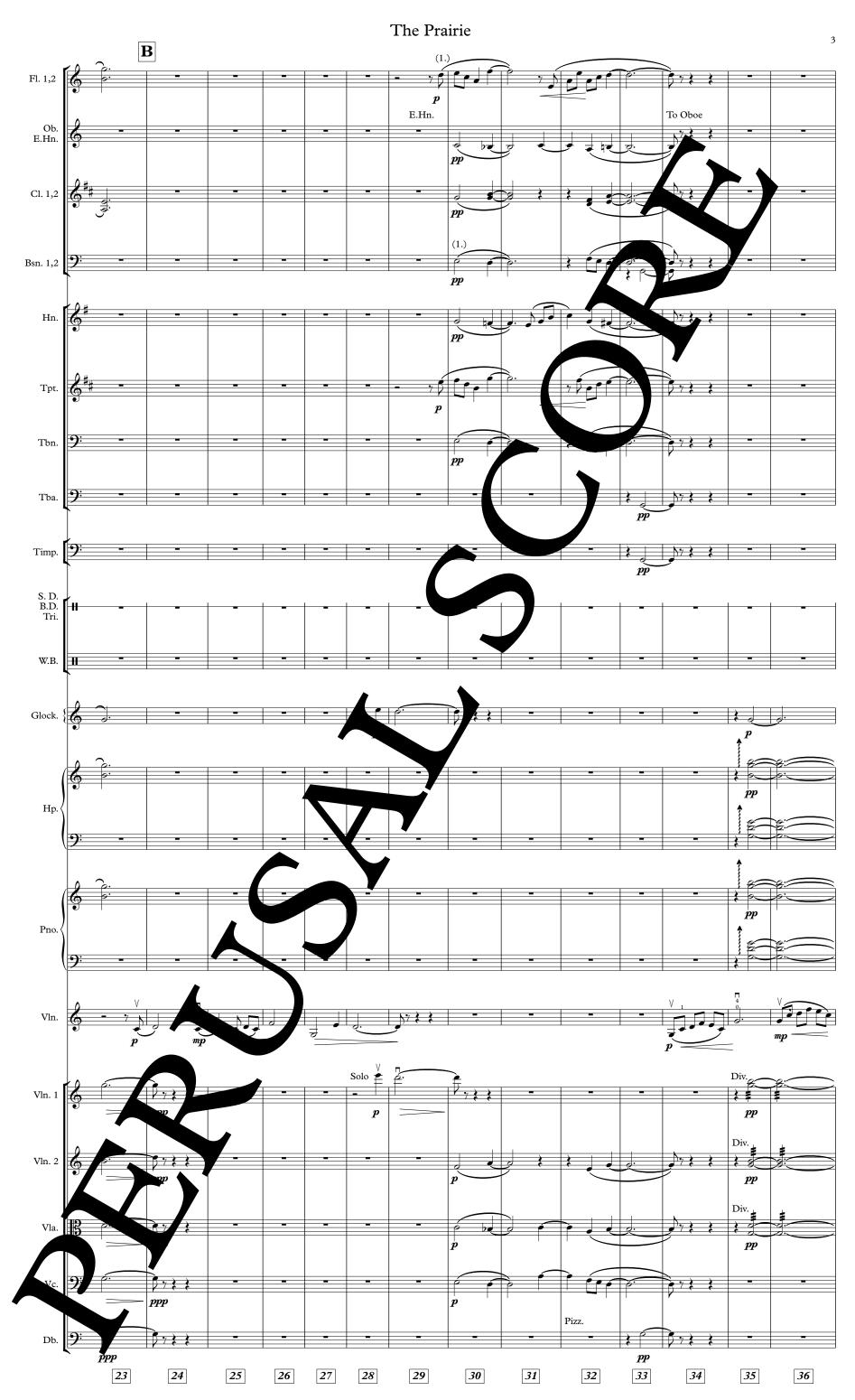
For Ruth Meints and The Frontier Strings, Omaha Conservatory of Music



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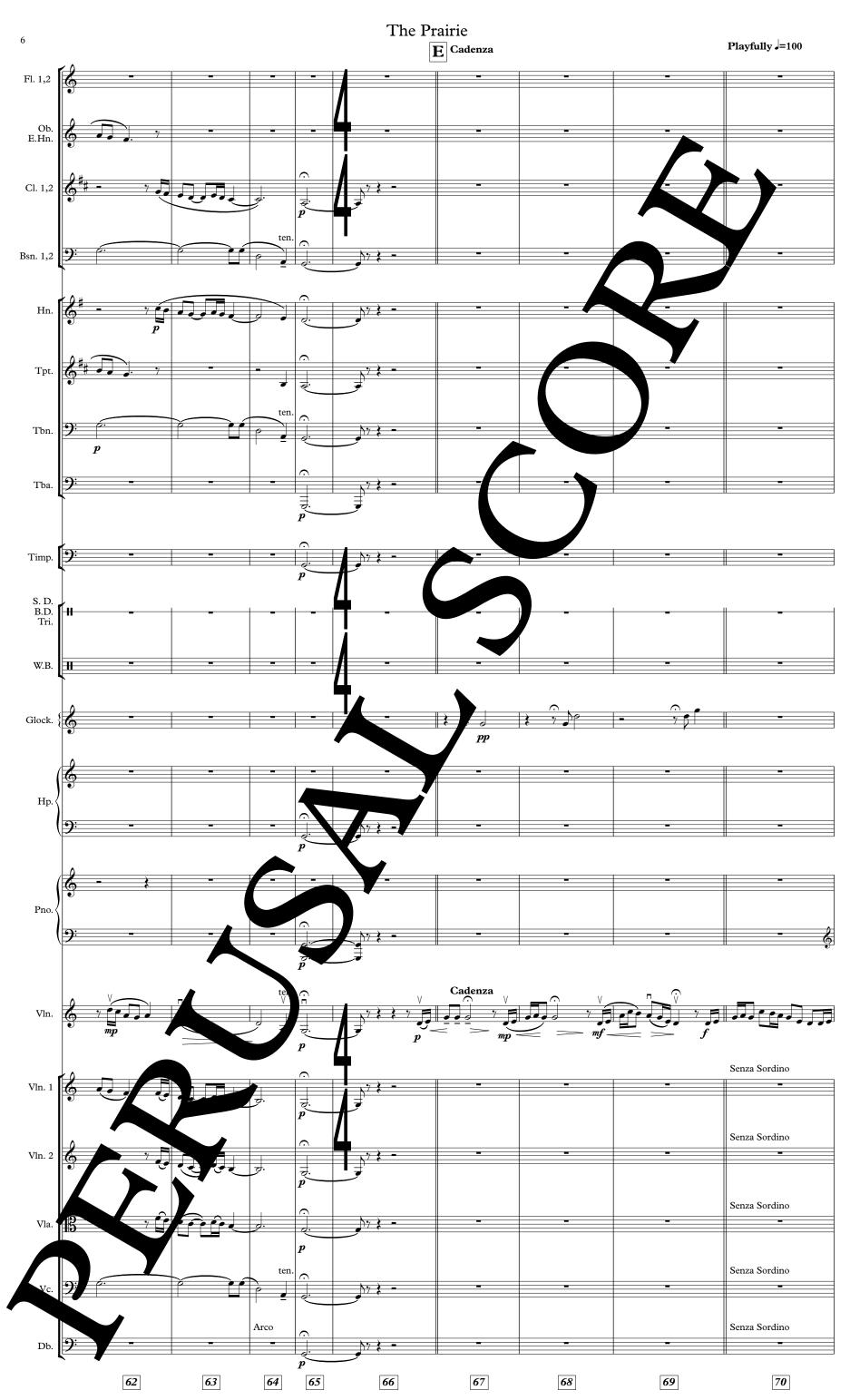


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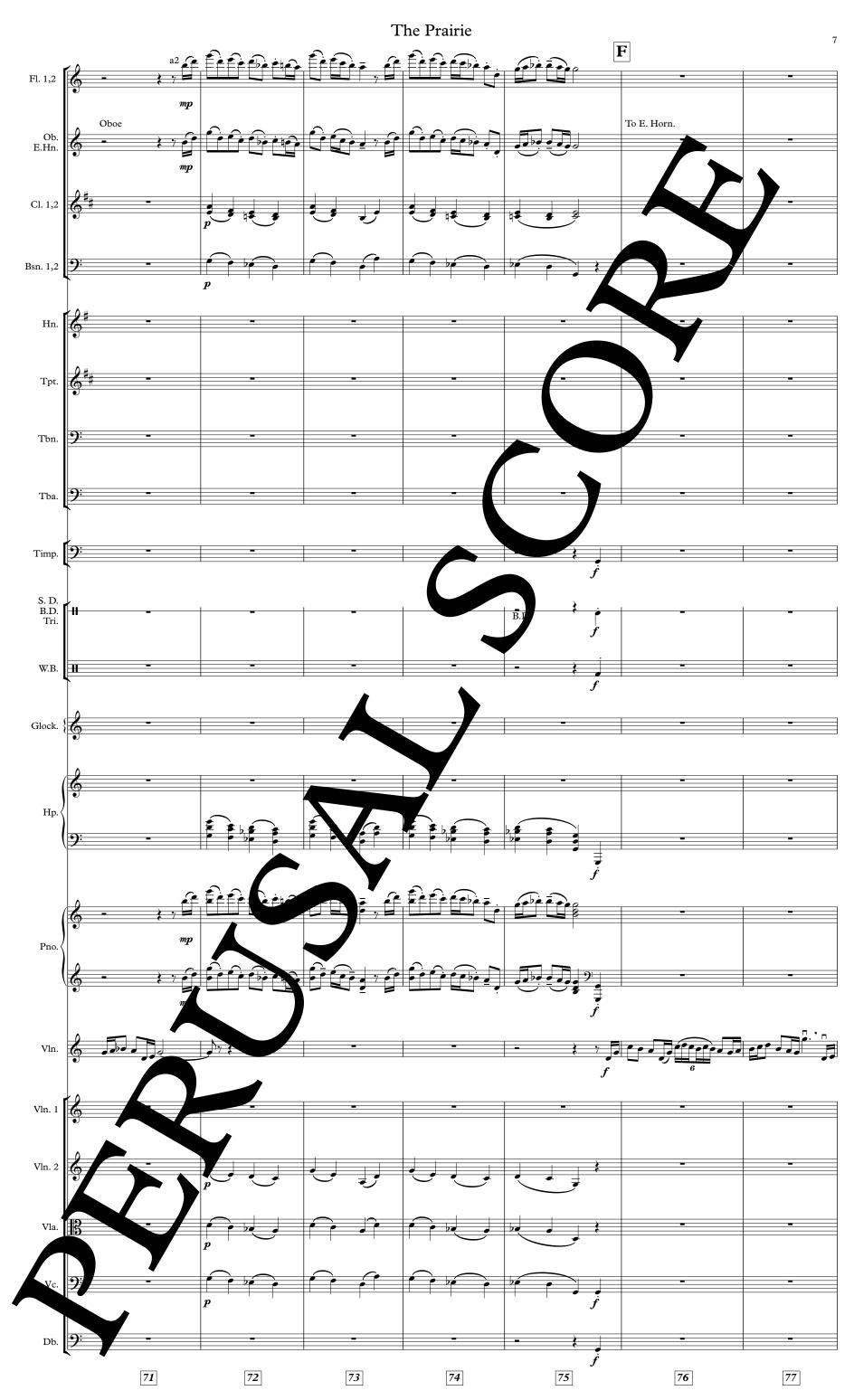


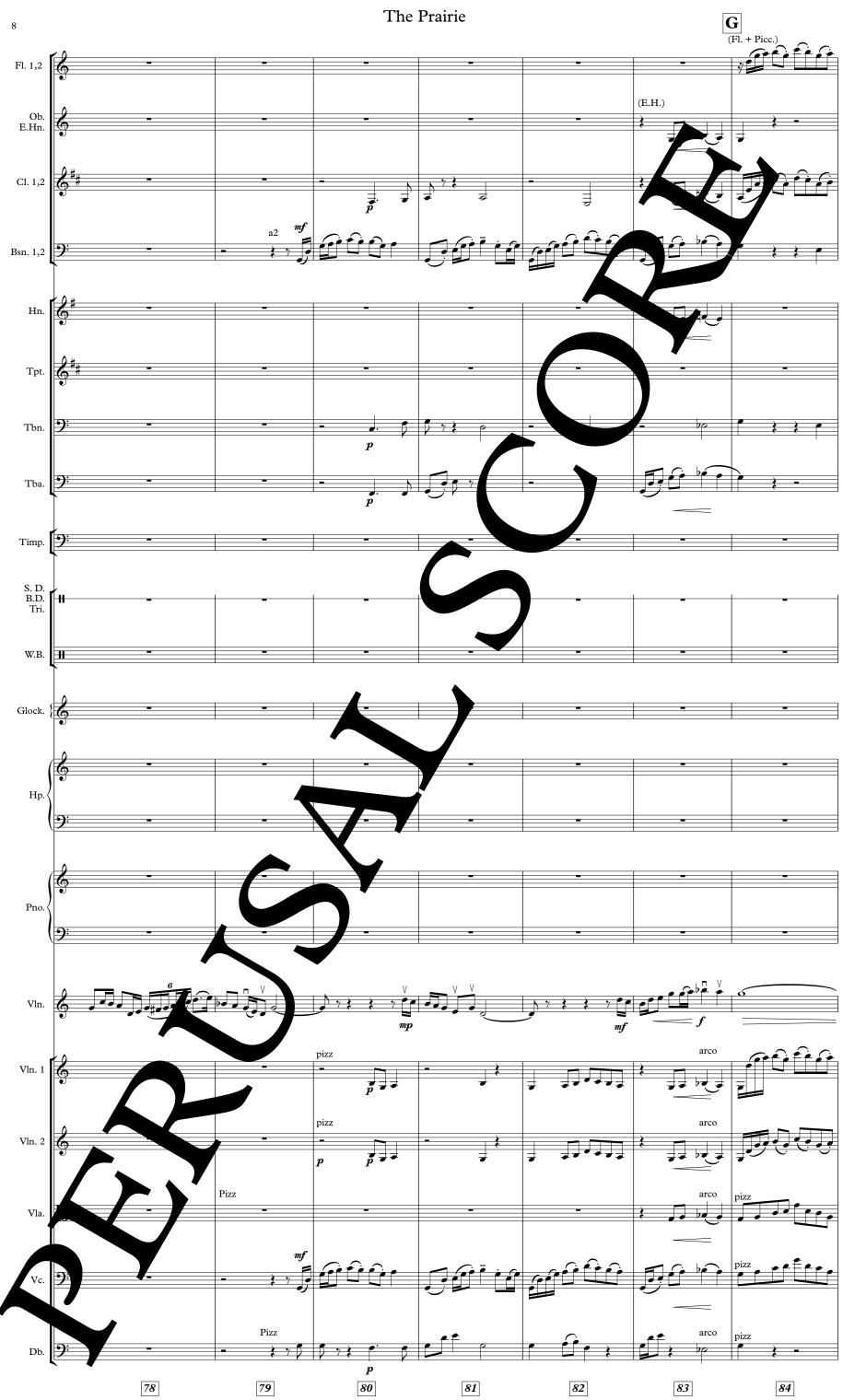
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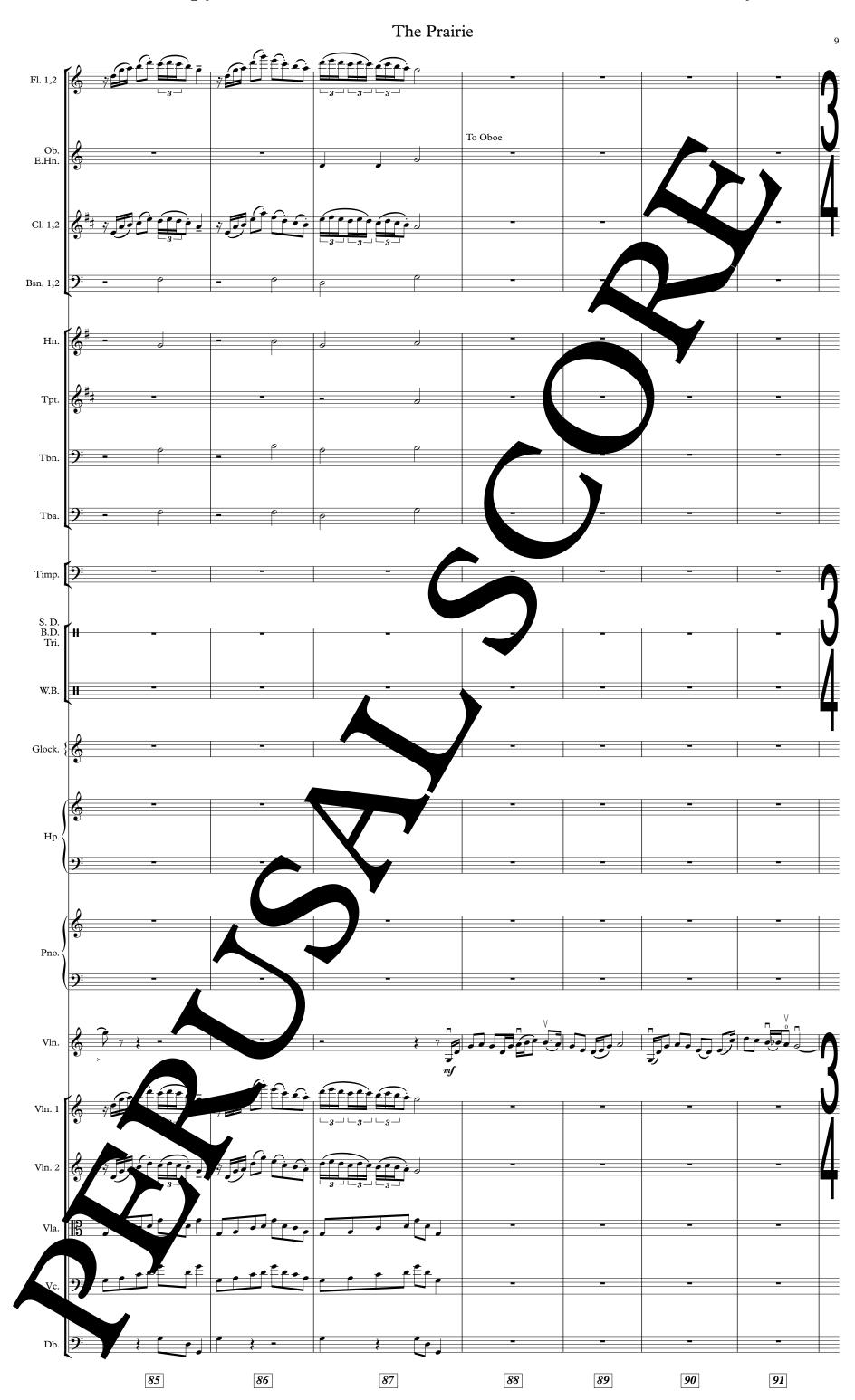


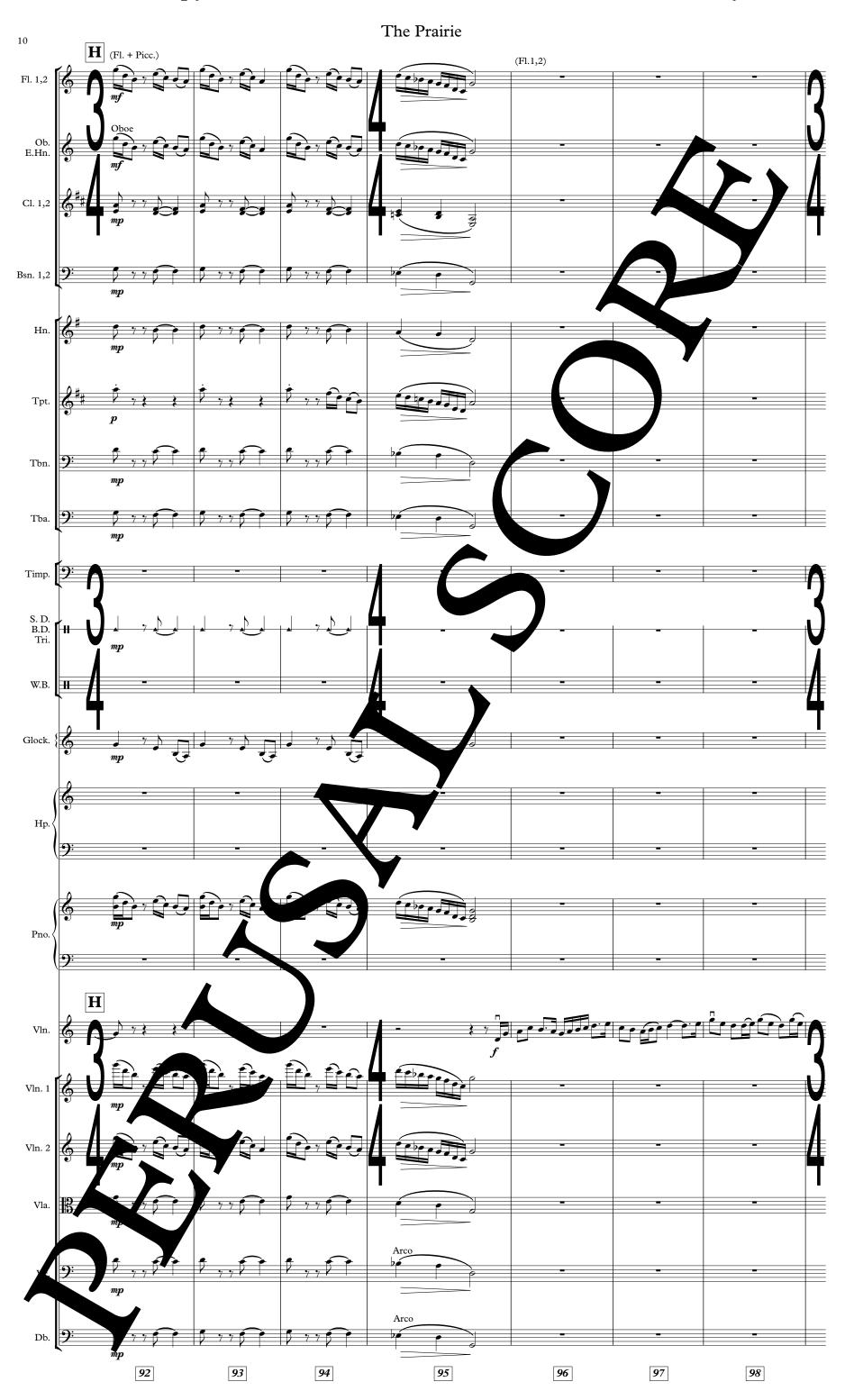


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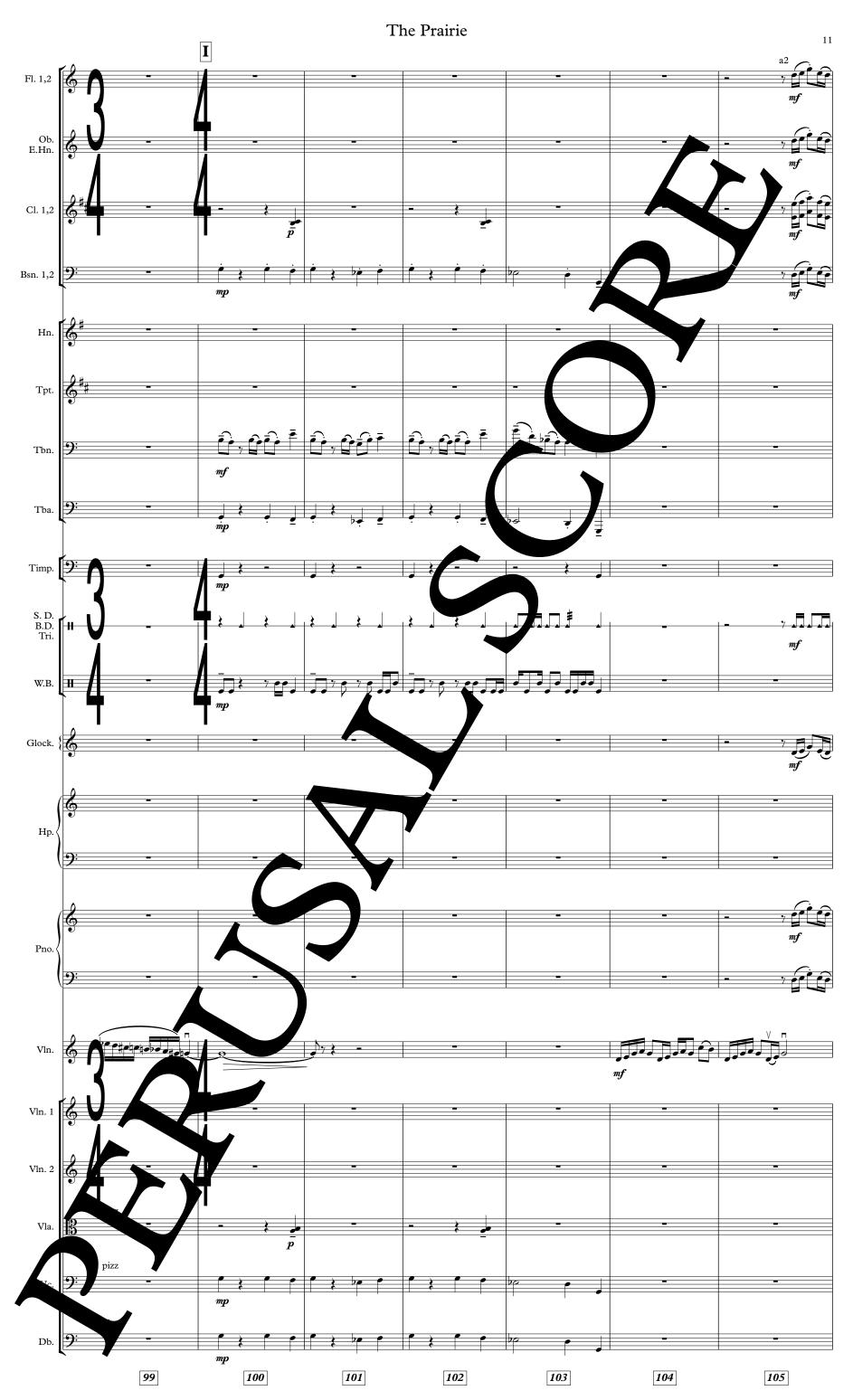








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