Level
3+

THE CYNTHIA DOBRINSKI
HANDBELL SERIES

HOPE Publishing Company
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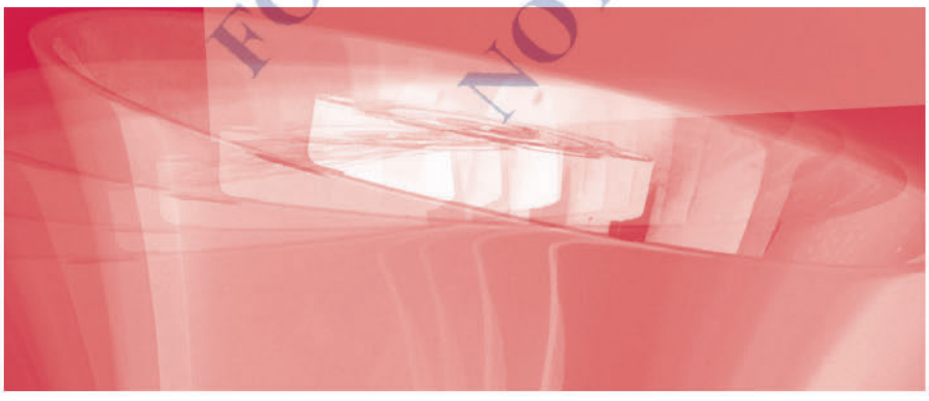
A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Martin Luther

Arranged for 3-5 octave handbells by
Cynthia Dobrinski



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In memory of John Hendel
Commissioned for the Jubilee Ringers and New Horizon Ringers in honor of
ten years of handbell ministry at Our Saviour's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hastings, Minnesota
Marilee Anderson, Director

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

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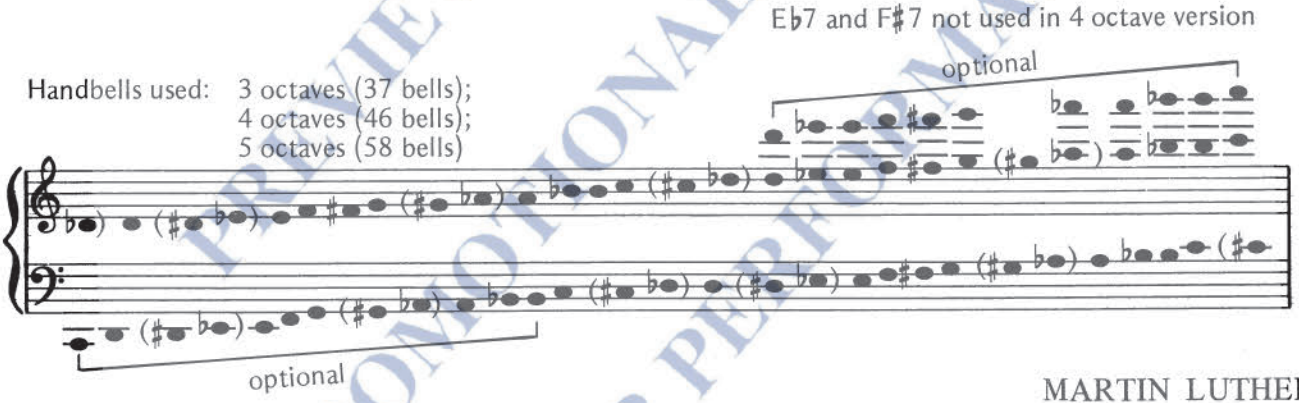
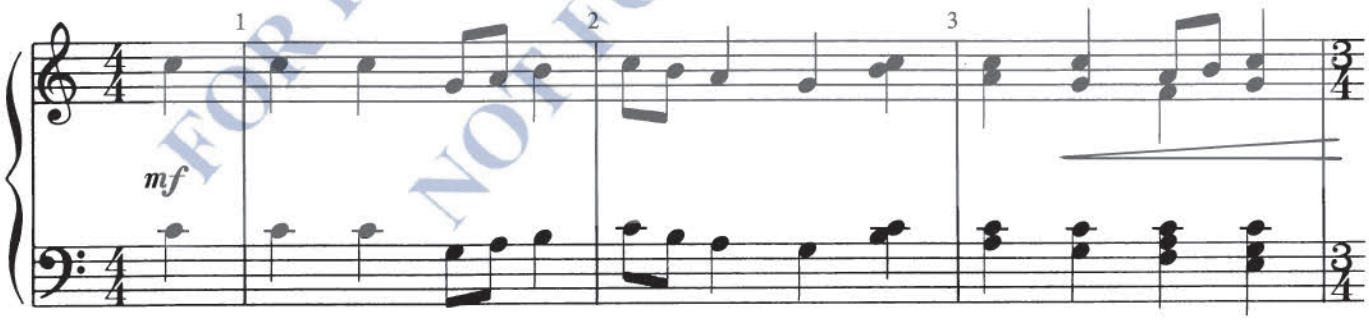
This setting of A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD is intended to depict the text of the four verses of the hymn. After an energetic introduction, the first verse is played more stately with massive chords used to depict the strength of God as our fortress. Verse 2 begins rather merrily with the melody lilting over a bouncing staccato bass. Though we may merrily go our own way, when we confide in our own strength, the foundation of our life is not strong and steady, but shaky and bumpy as heard in the bass staccatos. When the Man of *God's choosing* (these words are emphasized by rather unexpected harmonies) walks by our side helping us, we hear the music move in parallel motion and in a smoother fashion. The rest of verse 2 is set with harmonies designed to give a mystical or heavenly quality to depict the eternal Christ. The descending motive of the malleted high bells is symbolic of Christ's descent from heaven to come to our rescue and the long pedal point is descriptive of His eternal, unchanging nature. Verse 3 is loud and fiery and in a minor key to describe our battle with evil. Shakes are used to portray "we *tremble* not for *him*" but are absent on "not". Tone painting is also used in the bass bells on the word "rage". The notes on "doom is sure" are cut short to show that the power of evil is doomed to be cut off. The verse ends on a major chord as evil is vanquished. After a transition the stately final verse depicts the triumph and strength of our God, whose kingdom is forever.



MARTIN LUTHER
Arranged by CYNTHIA DOBRINSKI (ASCAP)

Tempo 1 ♩ = c. 120–132, with energy



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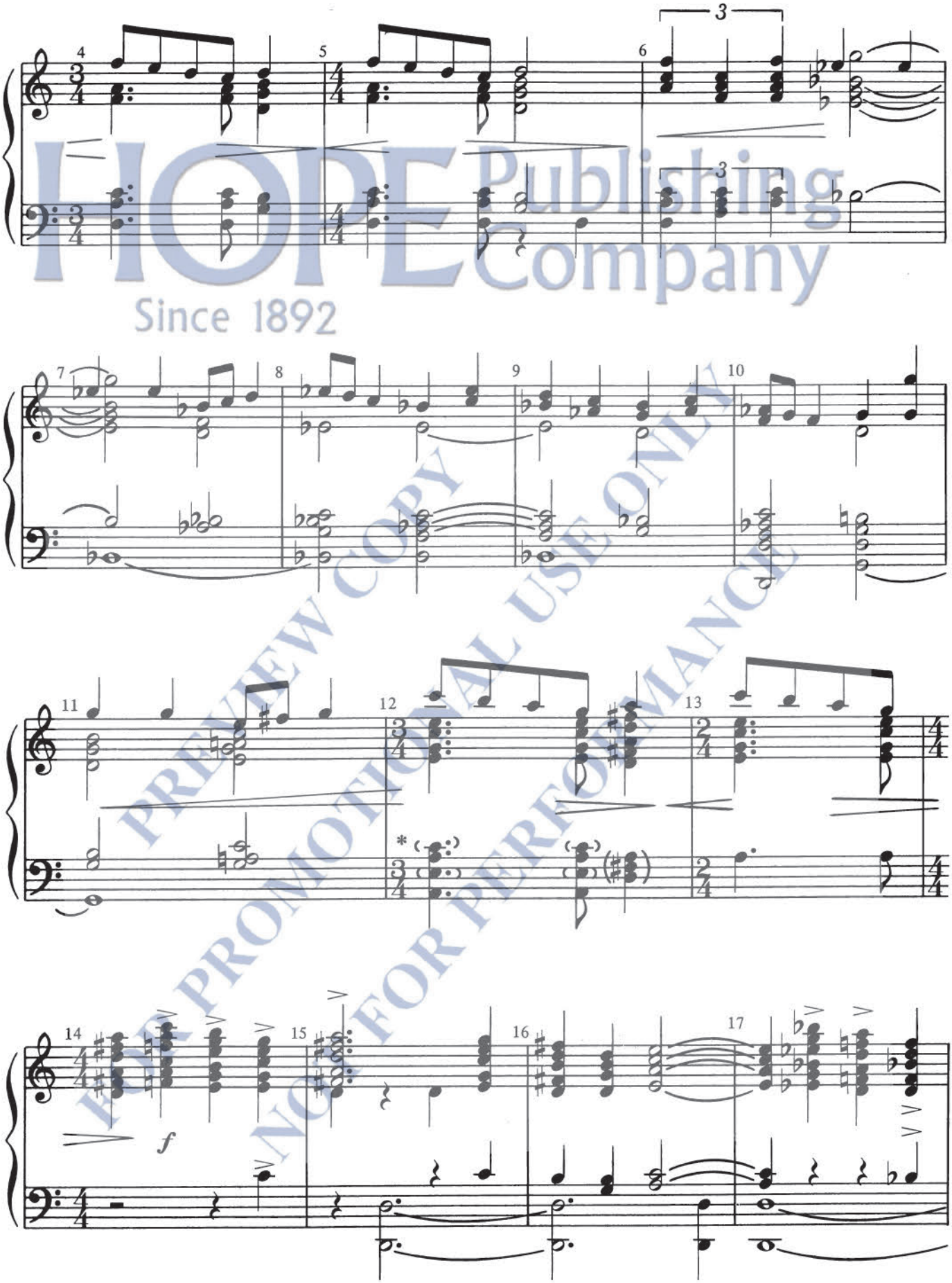

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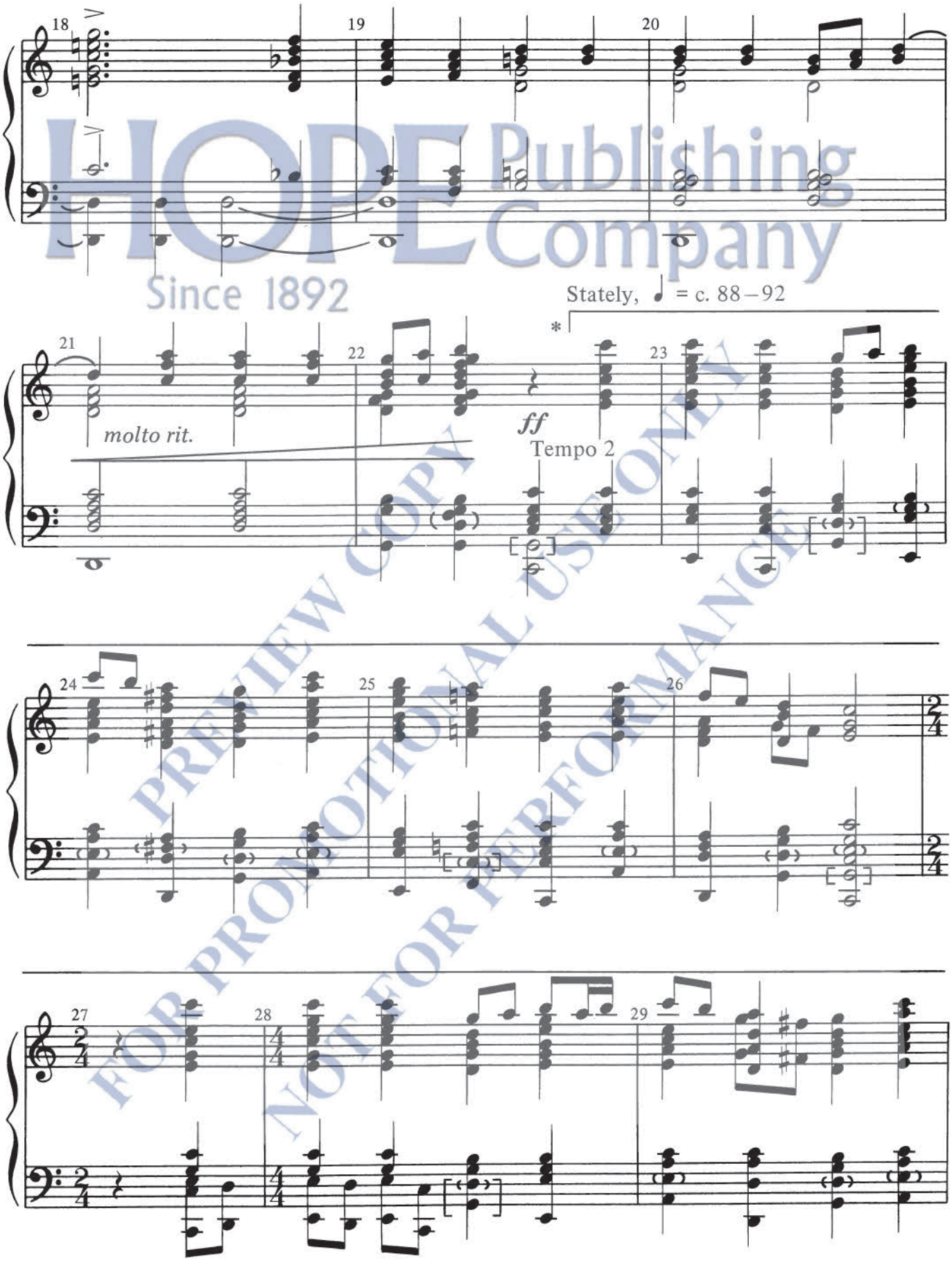
* 3 octave choirs omit notes in parentheses; 4 octave choirs omit notes in brackets; 5 octave choirs play all notes.



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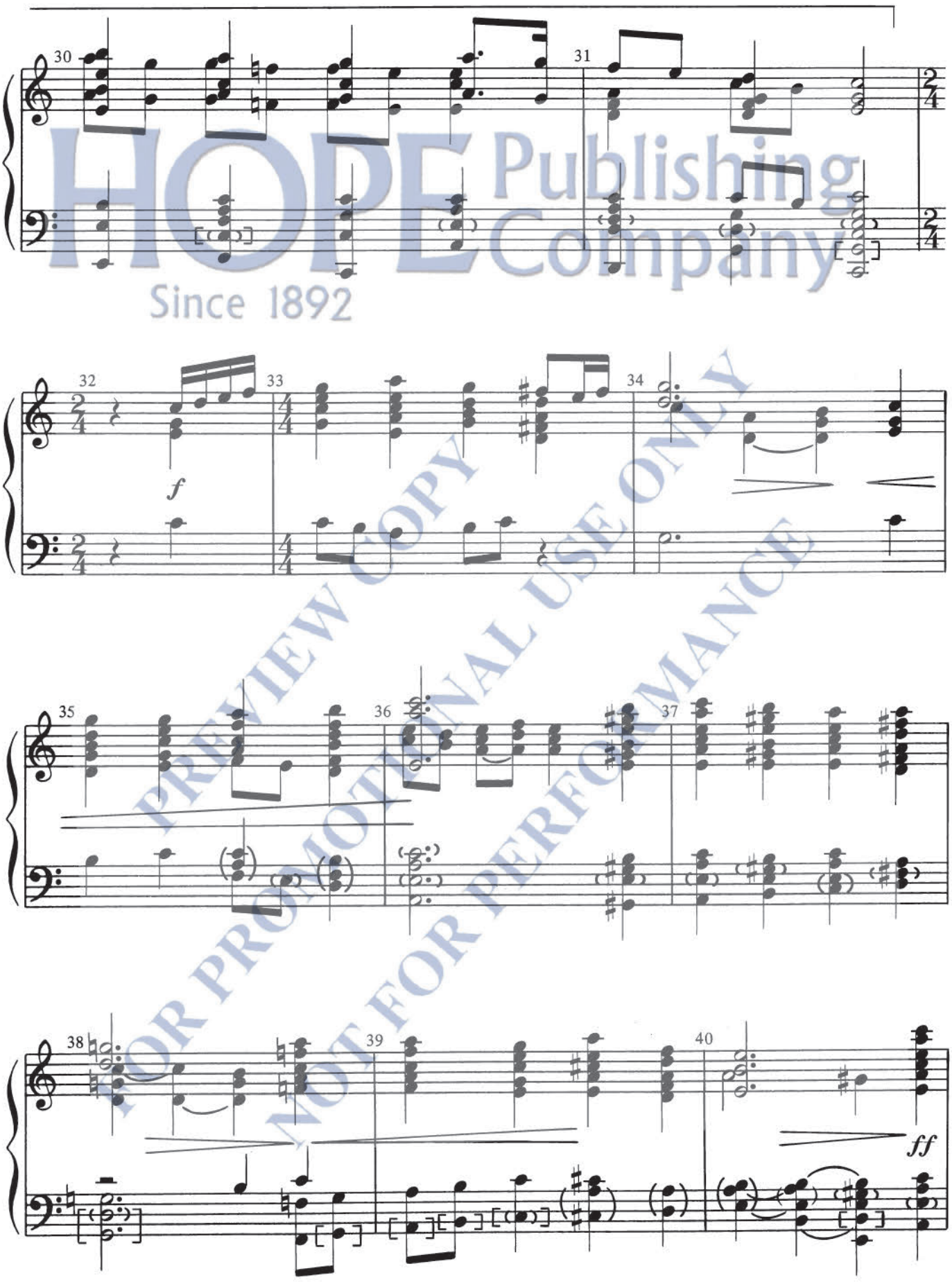
* 5 octave choirs double melody an octave higher.



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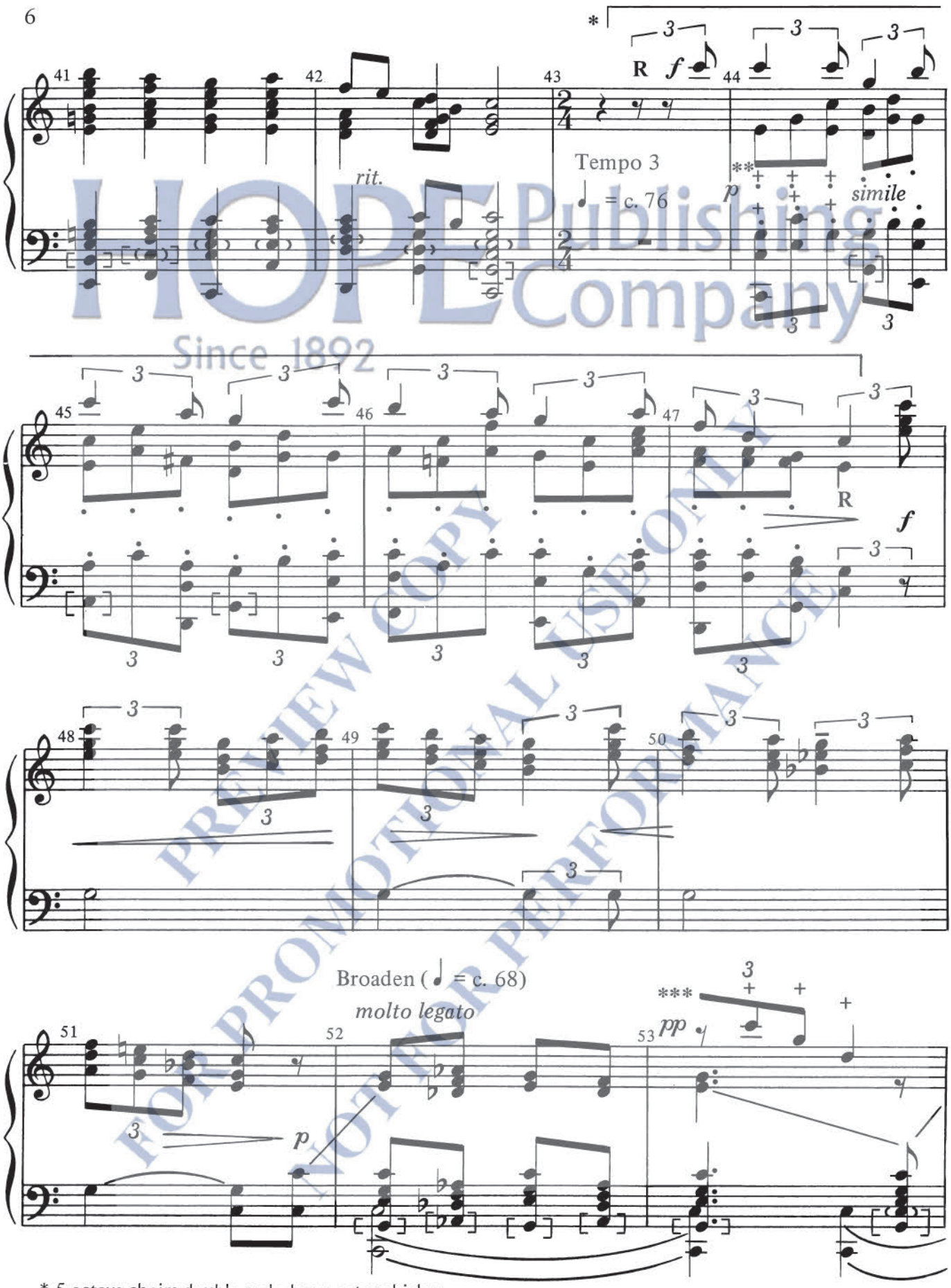

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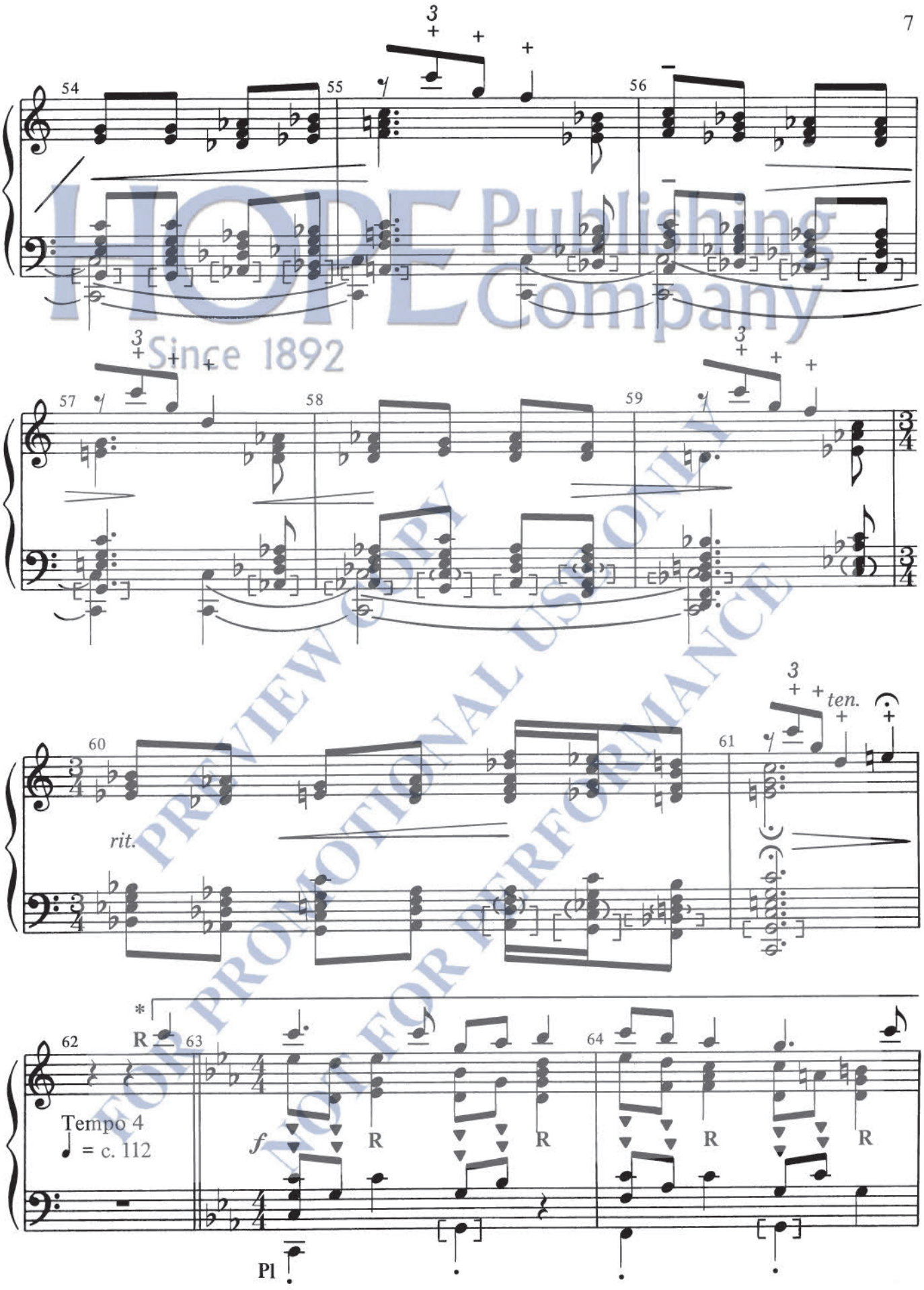
* 5 octave choirs double melody an octave higher.
** Bells are struck with mallets while on the table. If mallets are unavailable, plucking (and tap plucking) or thumb damping may be substituted.
*** Bells are struck with mallets while off the table and are allowed to vibrate.



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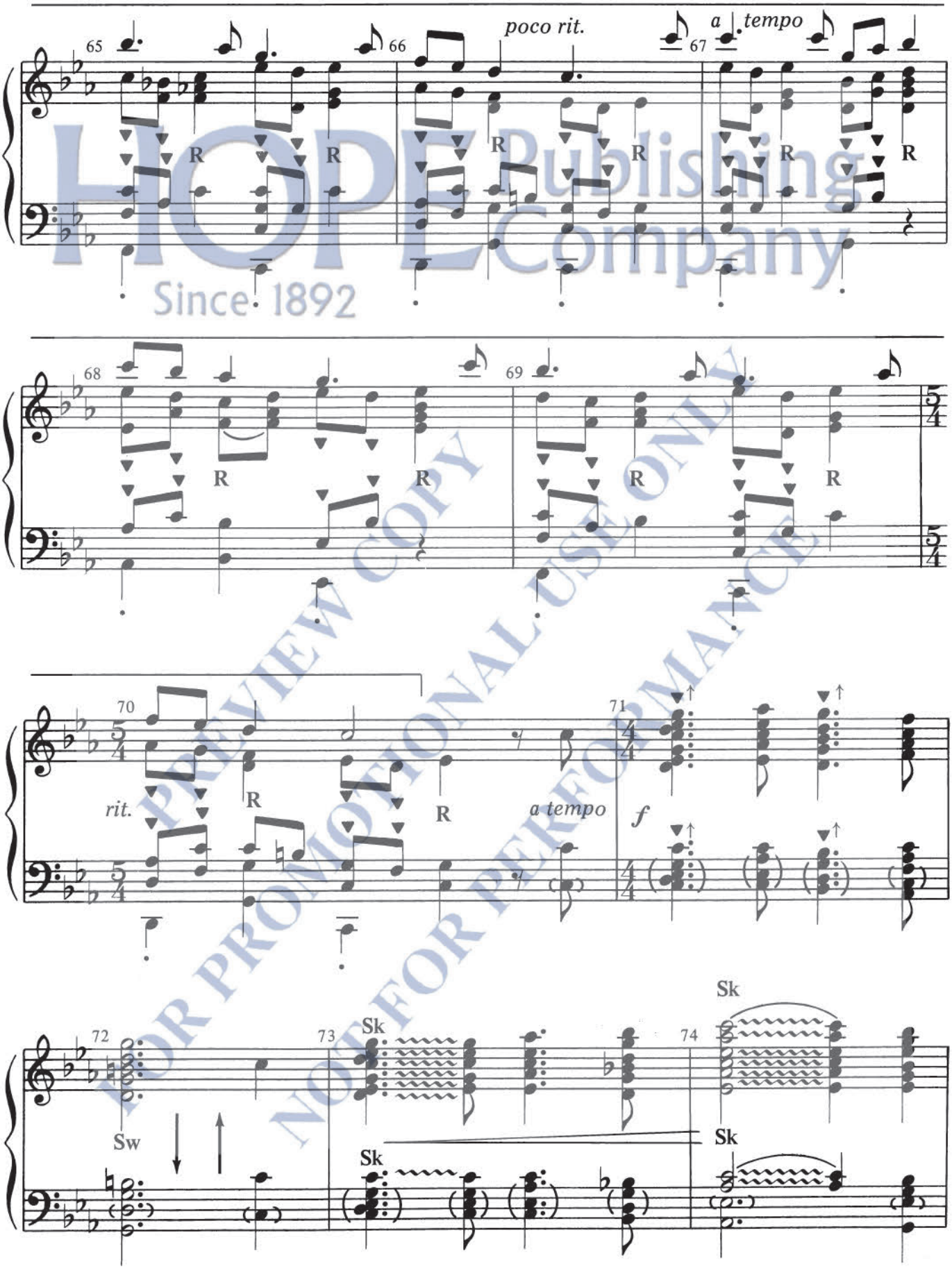

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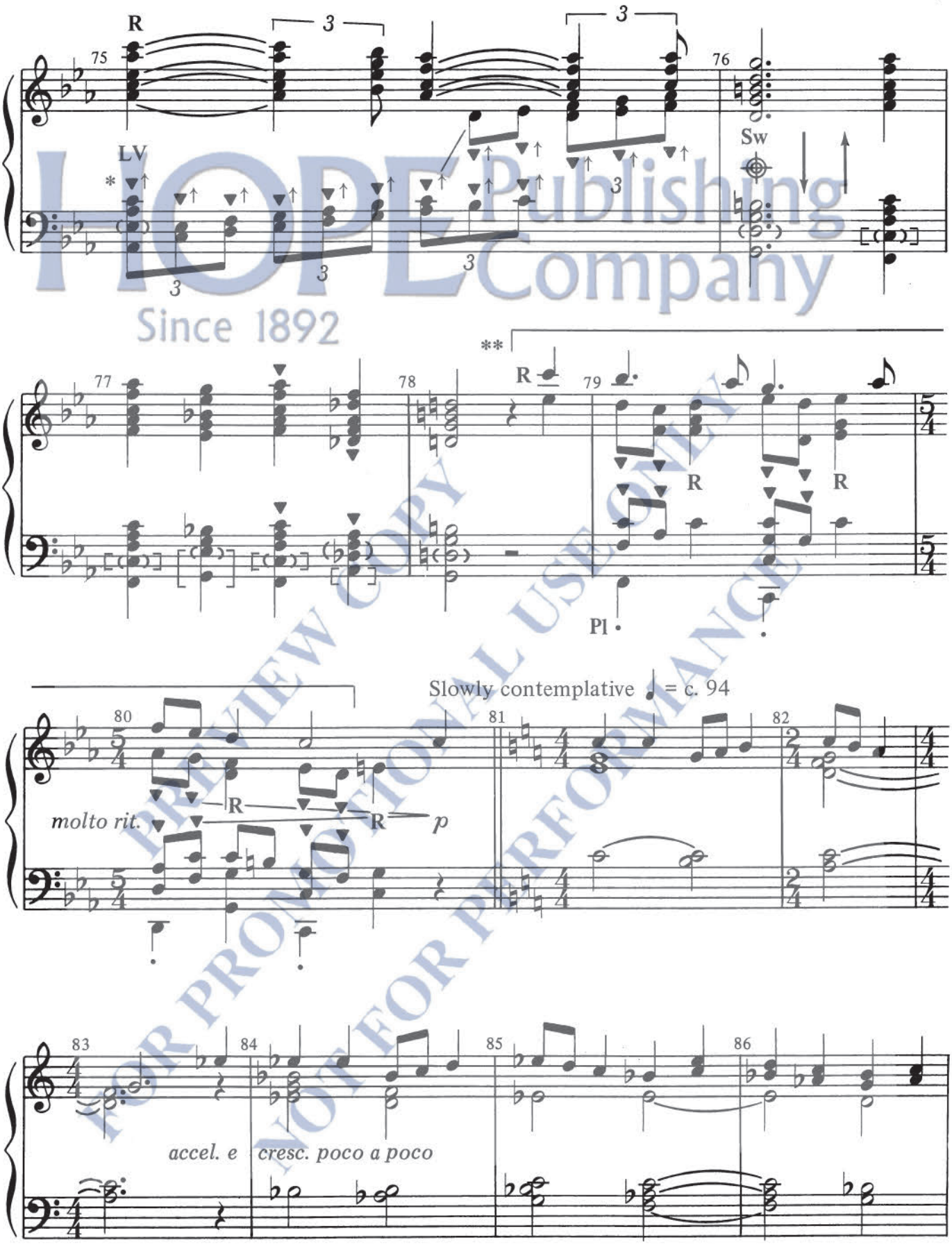

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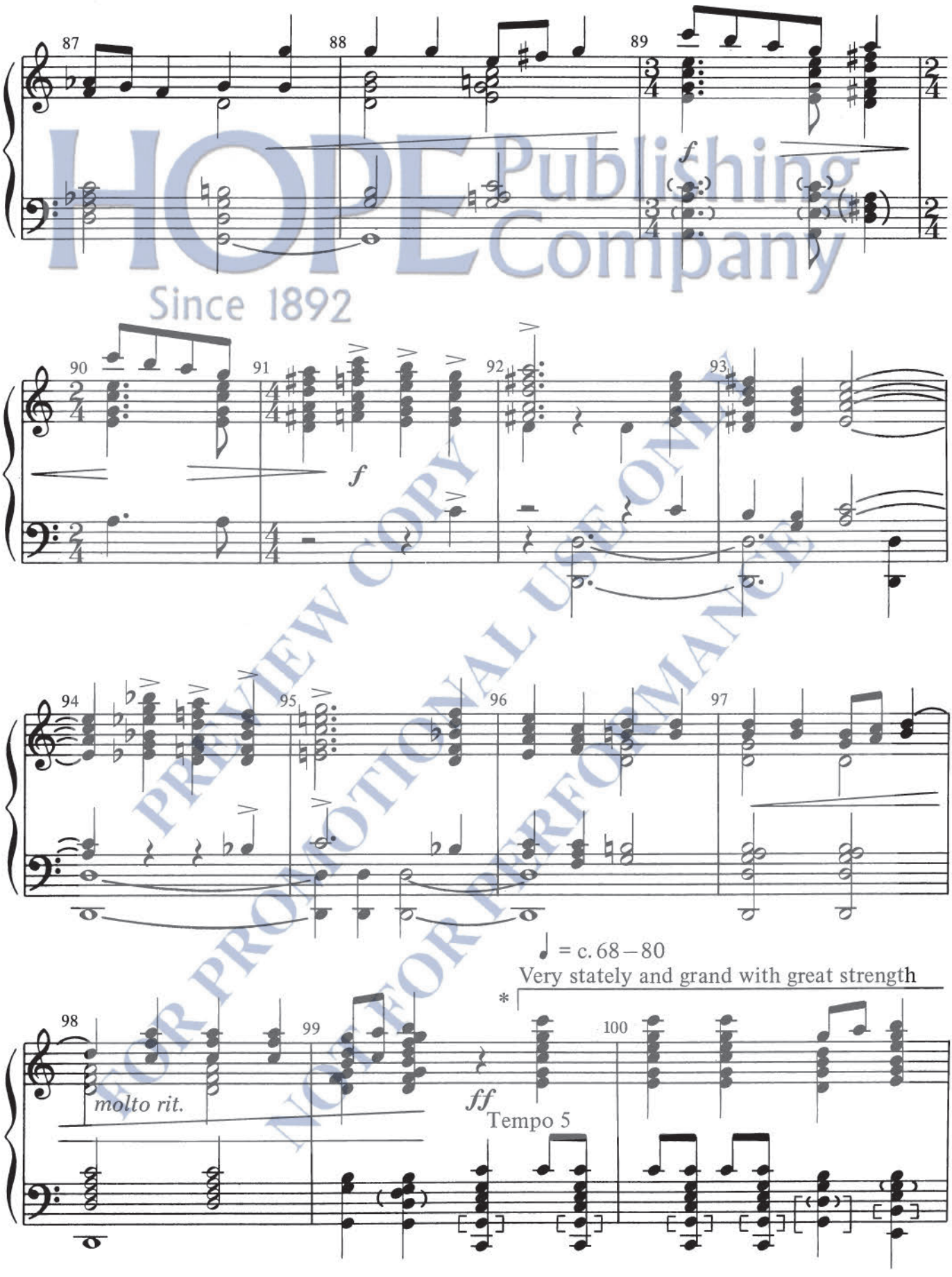
* In this measure make the attacks of the ▼↑'s louder than the duration of the notes so that the run can be heard clearly even while the LV is in effect.

** 5 octave choirs double melody an octave higher.

Tempo 1 ♩ = c. 120–132



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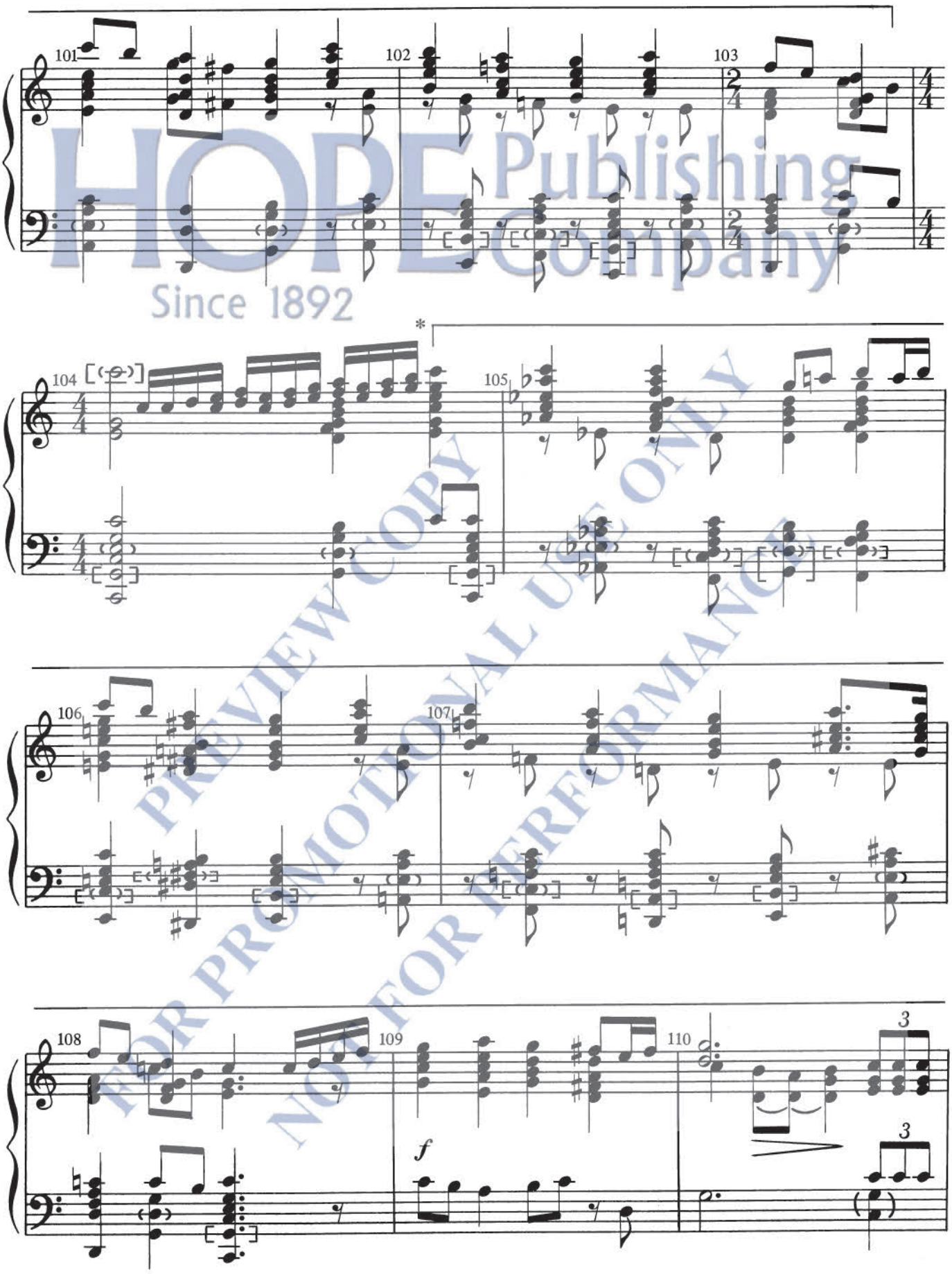

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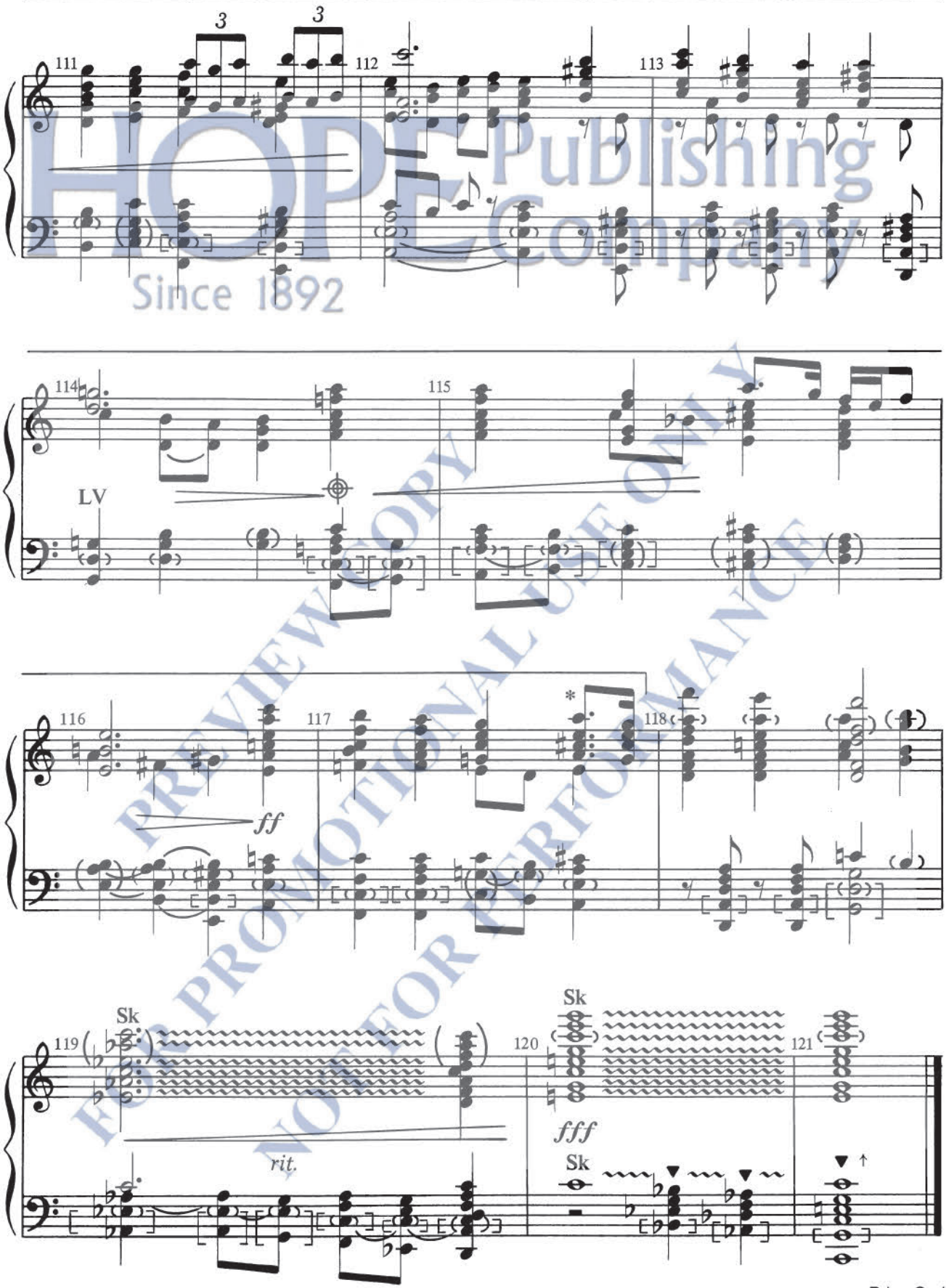

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* 4 octave choirs play A6 as a quarter note and omit G6.

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