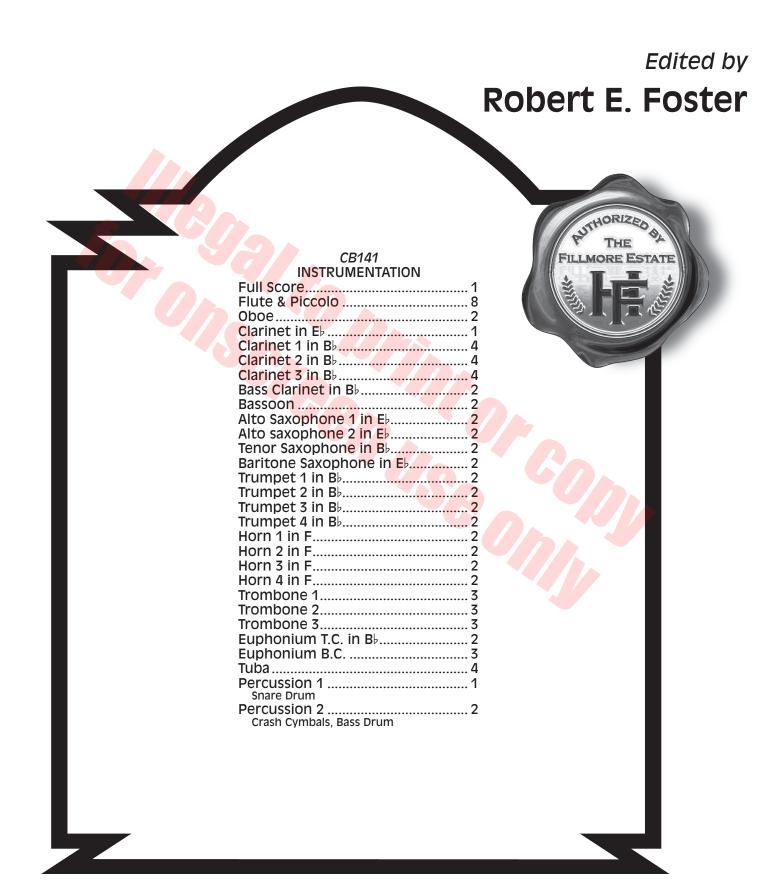
# AMERICANS WE HENRY FILLMORE



## **Program Notes**

In 1928, Henry Fillmore was the conductor of his own 24-member professional band in Cincinnati. They were performing a very popular series of concerts at the Cincinnati zoo when they performed a new march that is today considered his best. While the march was an instant success, Henry had difficulty finding a good title. In its first performances he called it *The Cincinnati Zoo*, and at other times he announced it as *Pure Food and Health*, the name of one of the sponsoring organizations. Neither of these titles seemed appropriate for publication. He realized that this was one of his finest works, if not the best, and he waited until he had decided on an appropriate title to publish it. When it was published in 1929 it was called *Americans We*, and was simply dedicated "To All of Us."

It has been a great march since its inception, and it continues to be enjoyed by bands and audiences all over the world.

(Information from *Hallelujah Trombone!*, The Story of Henry Fillmore, by Paul Bierley, published by Carl Fischer – Catalog Number TXT1)

### **Performance Notes**

Good performances of this march need to demonstrate great dynamic contrast, and attention to style and the important accents.

#### Introduction and 1st Strain

Play these as written. Note the important accents on the second beat, measures 3 through 7, and 12 through 15. Be careful to observe the mf and mps.

## 2nd Strain

Note the cymbal and bass drum accents, and the wide range of dynamics. For great dynamic contrast, play a really soft pianissimo. Observe the *sffz* in measure 33. Remember: Accented notes are separated notes!

#### Trio

The first strain of the trio is very soft. To lighten the texture, Mr. Fillmore would have the piccolo lay out (tacet), and the flutes play their part an octave lower until measure 71. Cornets (trumpets) played only when the march was used on the march, so they were usually tacet when it was performed in concert. Also, the percussion played this strain only on the march, so they are also tacet when performing inside. Bring out the baritone countermelody in this strain.

The melody and whole-note and half-note parts are *legato*. The quarter-note harmonic rhythm parts are not *legato*. Shape the phrases in this strain. *Crescendo* two measures, then *diminuendo* for two measures. Then, bring out the baritone's moving quarter-note countermelody.

#### Fight Strain (measure 71)

All play as written. Measures 81, 83, and 85, Mr. Fillmore liked for the bass drummer to "show off", and exaggerate these accents, having the player spin his/her beater the measure before. Whether or not one spins the beater, the bass drum and cymbal accents are very important.

#### Last Strain (measure 87)

This strain features the upper woodwinds. Brass are very soft the first time through. Trumpets and percussion are tacet the first time through. Piccolo does play at 87. Once again, bring out the baritone countermelody, especially the last time through.

# **About the Composer**

James Henry Fillmore, Jr. was born in Cincinnati on December 3, 1881 into a family of composers and publishers of religious music. A somewhat incorrigible boy, he was bored with church music. He preferred more exciting music such as that used in circuses. In fact, her ran off with circuses at least three times. This caused no small amount of consternation in the family, which had a dignified English-American bearing (he was a second cousin, twice removed, of President Millard B. Fillmore), so he received much of his education in a military school.

He graduated from the Miami Military Institute in 1901. Frustrated at being unable to influence the Fillmore Brothers to branch into the publication of band music, he left home. He married his secret sweetheart Mabel Jones, a vaudeville dancer, and joined the Lemon Brothers circus as a trombone player. He returned to Cincinnati and the publishing company after one season, but it was several years before the family accepted Mabel.

Gradually, Henry persuaded his father and uncles to publish more band music. The firm eventually became a leading band house, primarily because the music of Henry Fillmore and his seven aliases had become very popular. Another factor was his expertise as an arranger and editor.

Meanwhile, he was heavily involved with bands in the Cincinnati area. Under his leadership, the Syrian Temple Shrine Band became America's finest fraternal band. Industrialist Powell Crosley enticed him to organize a professional band, and it, too, achieved widespread fame through broadcasts over the powerful radio station WLW. One novel feature of the programs was Henry's exceptional dog, Mike the "radio hound," who barked at predetermined spots in the music.

Henry's music was now being played by bands throughout North America and abroad, and his intense schedule as composer, arranger, music editor, and conductor began to take its toll. In his late fifties, he developed a serious heart problem. Doctors told him his life expectancy would be less than one year unless he retired. They also suggested that he move to a warmer climate.

He moved to Miami with the expectation of living only a short time. However, he was revived by the Florida sunshine and lived almost two more decades. Much of his renewed energy could be attributed to a new life as mentor of school musicians throughout the state of Florida. He loved the kids, who adopted him universally as their "Uncle Henry."

His activities in the music education field soon became a serious commitment. One of his old friends was John J. Heney, a noted former percussionist of Sousa's band, who was obsessed with raising the level of school bands in Florida. Together they traveled about the state encouraging school officials to start bands. The end result of their extraordinary promotional efforts was the creation of three dozen new high school bands.

An especially loving relationship developed between Henry and the band at the University of Miami. He was named "permanent guest conductor" and accompanied the band on trips, including three to Central America. In appreciation of his concern—and his generosity—the university awarded him with an honorary doctorate.

Despite the warnings of doctors, Henry became even more active in the band movement. He was elected president of the prestigious American Bandmasters Association and held the organization together through the years of World War II when travel was restricted. And he seldom passed up a chance to be present at functions of the Florida Bandmasters Association.

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As might be expected, he paid the price for not heeding his doctor's advice. After being weakened by a series of illnesses, the big heart of Henry Fillmore finally gave way. He died peacefully in his sleep on December 7, 1956. His body was cremated, and his ashes were interred with those of his beloved Mabel at the Woodlawn Park Cemetery in Miami.

The band world had lost a giant, but his music will live as long as there are bands to play it. Benefiting most from his legacy was the University of Miami Band, to which he bequeathed most of his estate. The Henry Fillmore Band Hall with its Fillmore Museum is a symbol of that legacy.

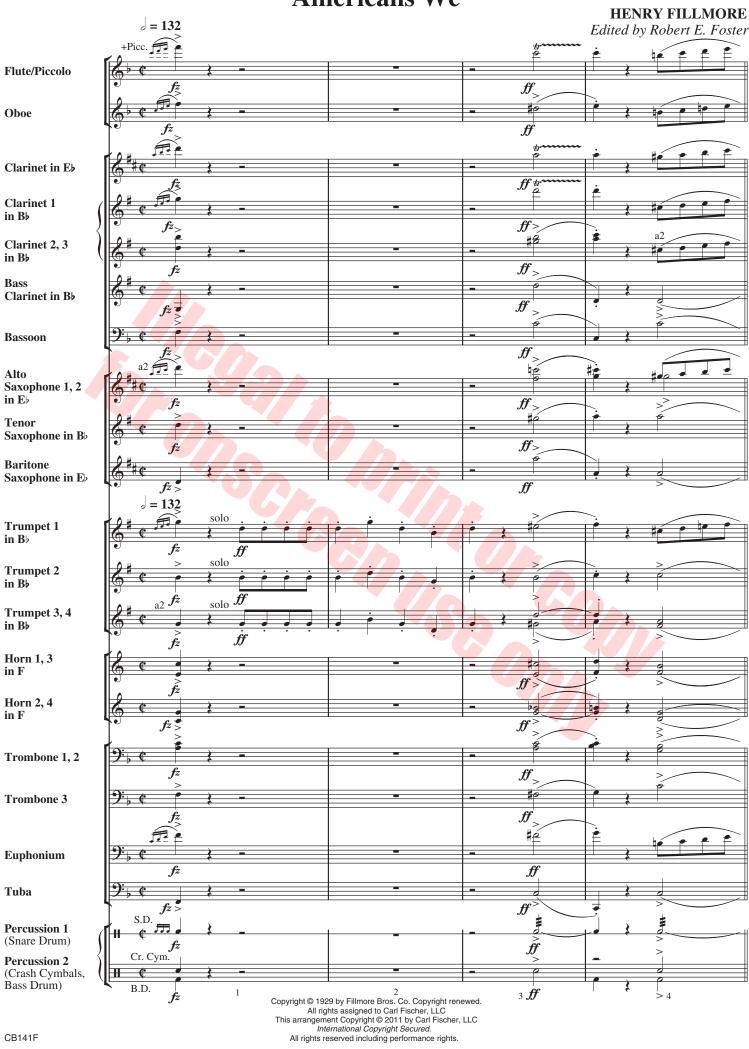
# **About the Editor**

Robert E. Foster has an extensive background as a music educator, conductor, adjudicator, and as a composer and arranger. He has served as a successful band director at the junior high school, high school, and university levels, and he has conducted and/or adjudicated throughout the United States and Canada, Mexico, Europe, Japan and Singapore.

He is Professor of Music in the School of Music at the University of Kansas, where he has been on the faculty since 1971. He is past president of the American Bandmasters Association, the National Band Association, the Southwest Division of College Band Directors National Association, and of the Big Twelve Conference Band Directors Association. He is the conductor of the award winning Lawrence City Band. In 2006, he was inducted into the National Band Association Hall of Fame of Distinguished Conductors. In 2010, he was inducted into the Kansas Music Educators Hall of Fame.

Foster is Vice-President of the John Philip Sousa Foundation, and has been actively involved in the promotion and performances of the music of John Philip Sousa. He worked with the Instrumentalist magazine as guest editor to produce their Sousa Sesquicentennial issue in November, 2004. He has edited new critical editions of Sousa's music, as well as of the music of Henry Fillmore. His impersonation of John Philip Sousa in Sousa Concerts has been a huge success, selling out concert halls in several different states. In July, 2006 he served as conductor of the National Band Association National Community Band in Las Vegas, again serving as Mr. Sousa in a gala concert called Sousa on the Strip.

Mr. Foster brings a wealth of experience, background, and knowledge about traditional marches, and the concerts that were performed by Mr. Sousa and his great band, and by the legendary band leader, Henry Fillmore.





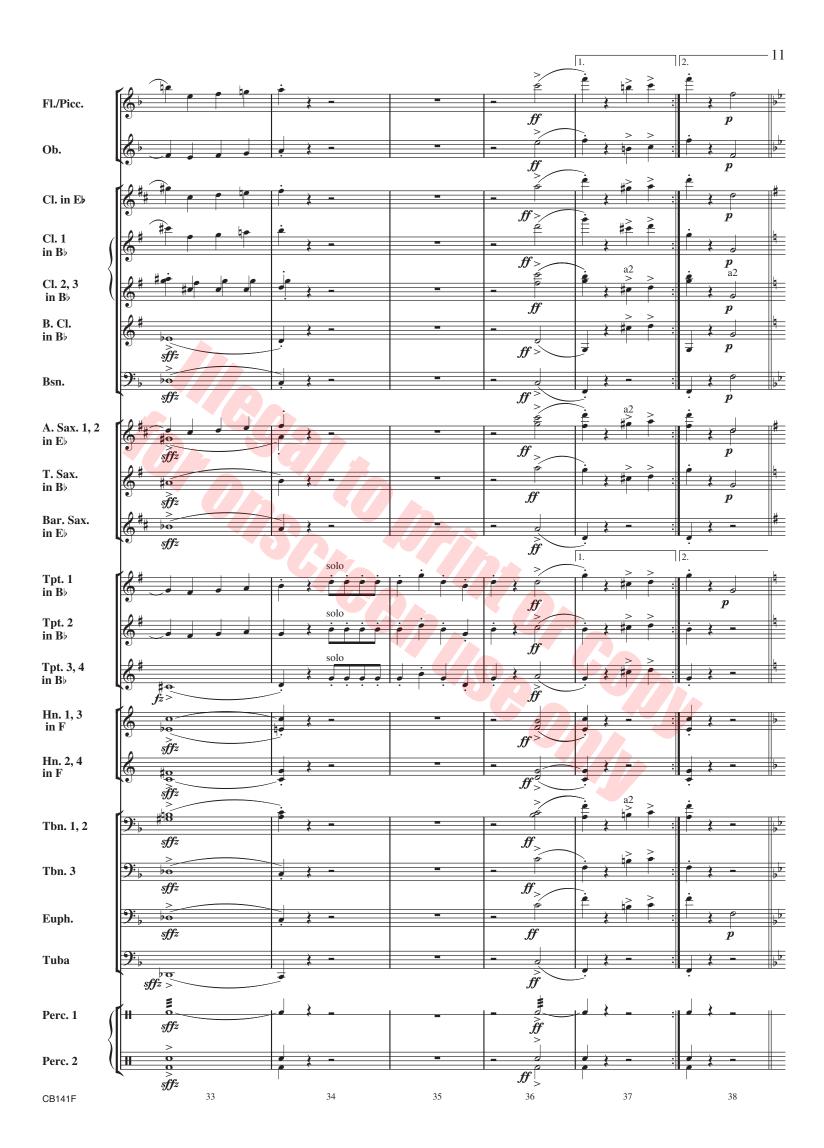


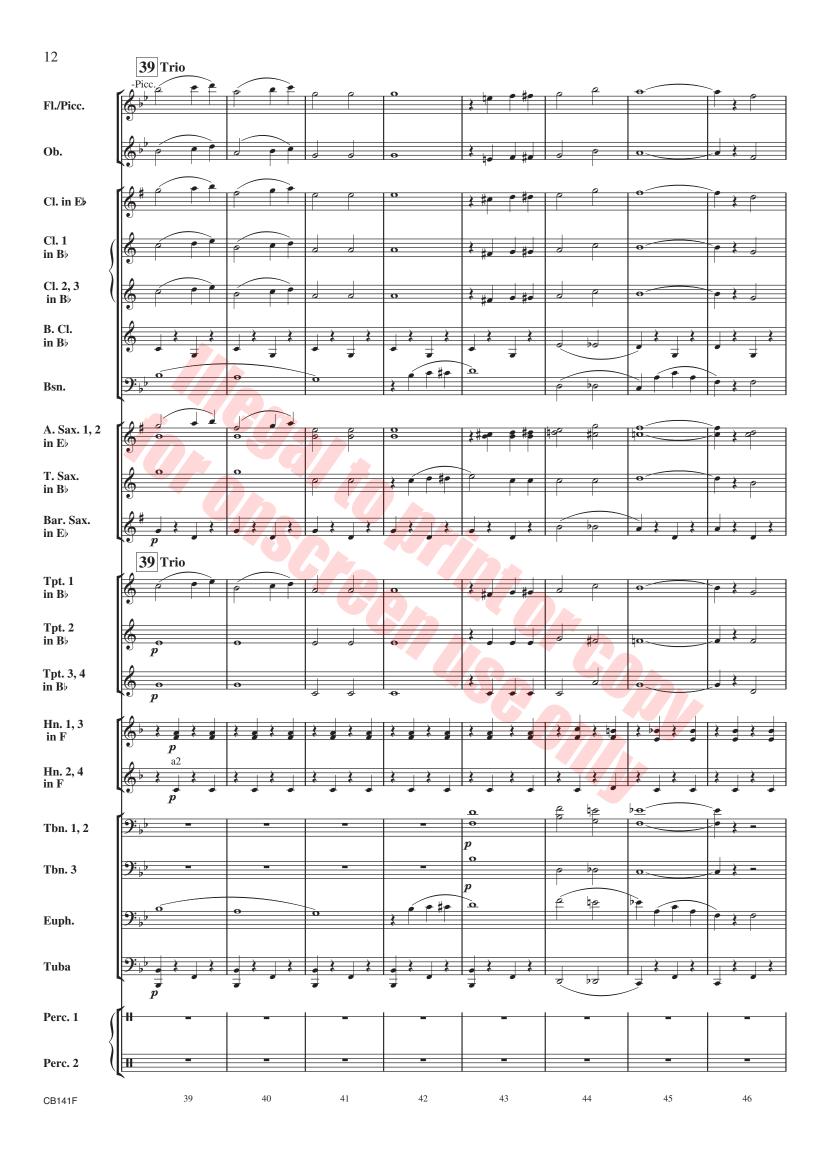




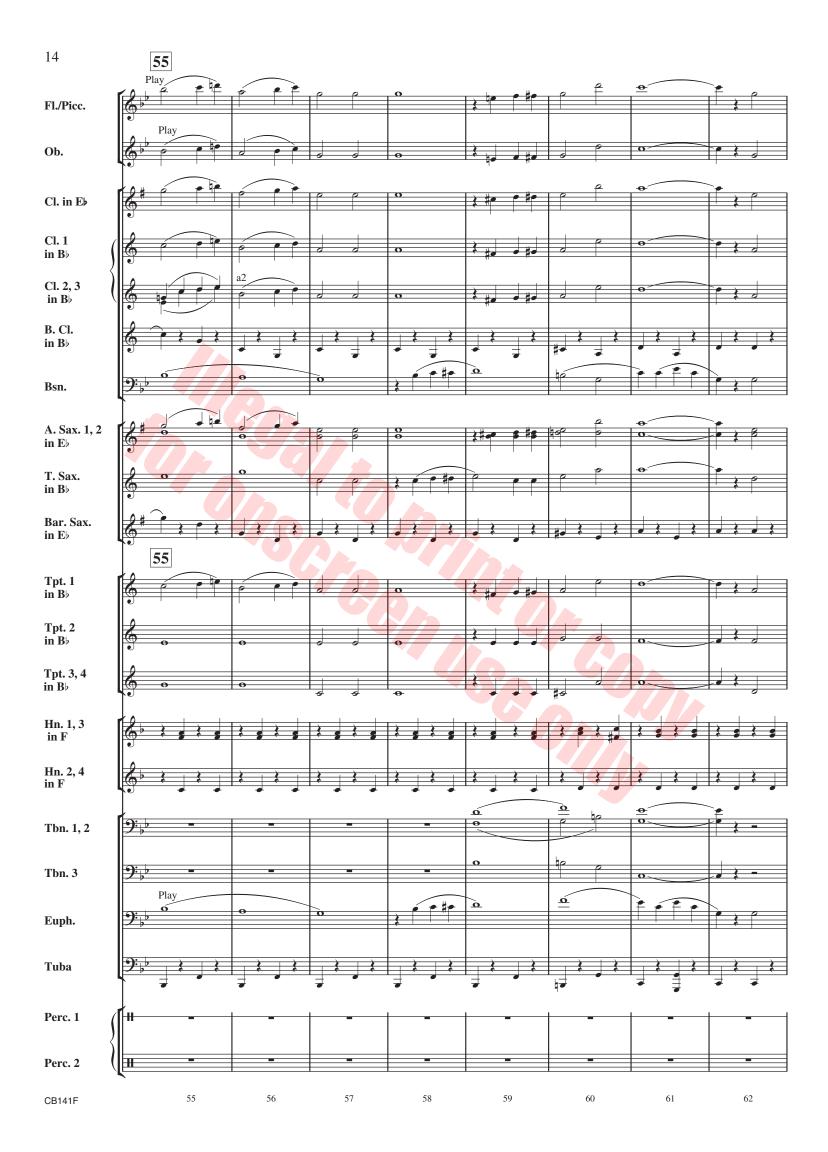














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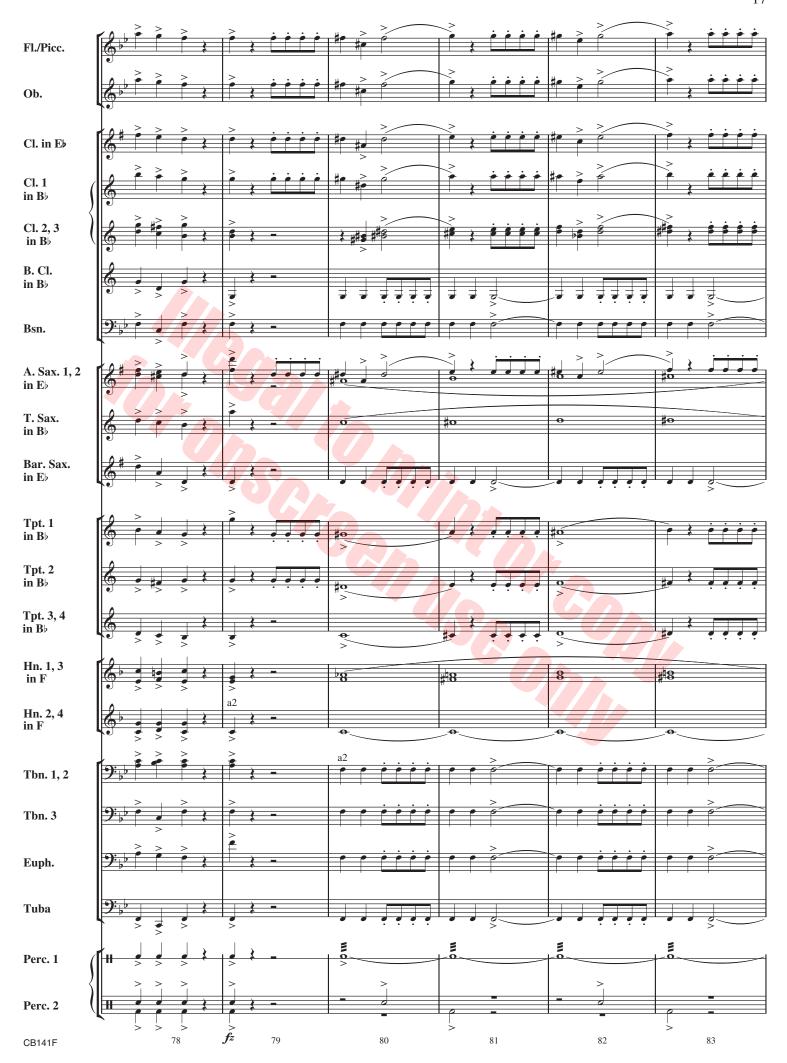
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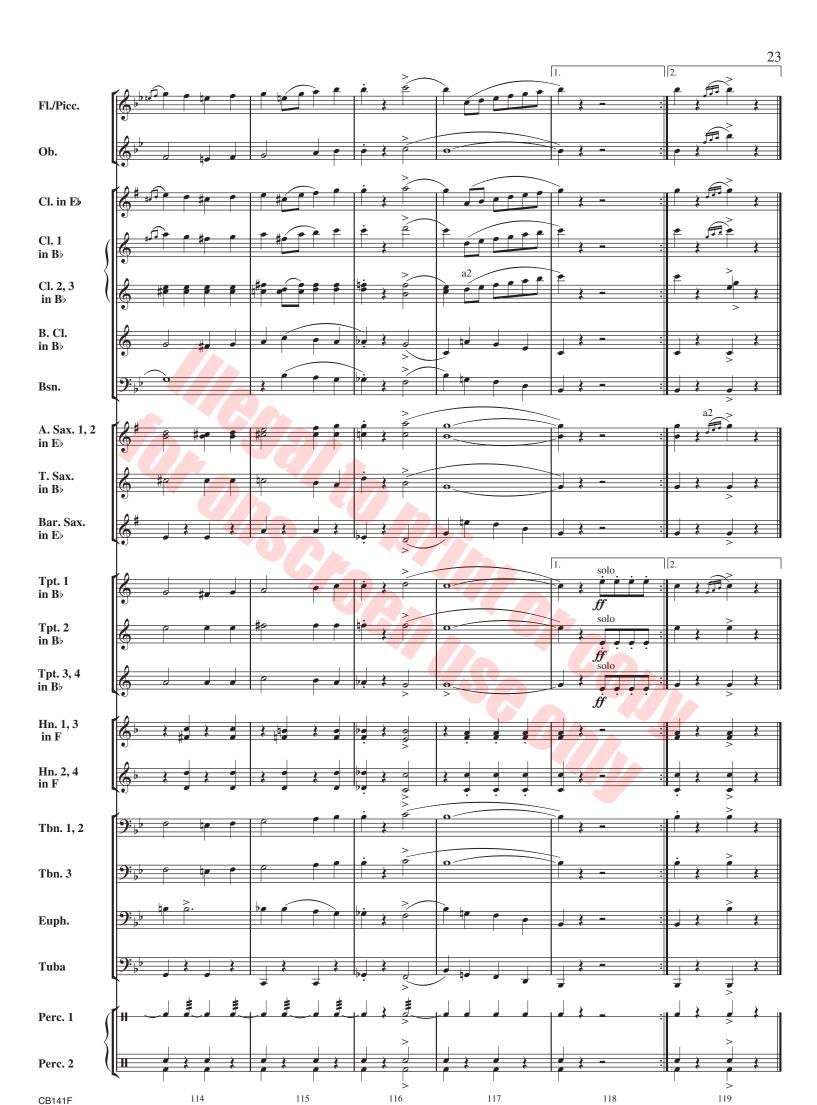


















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