REBIRTH BRASS BAND

FEEL LIKE FUNKIN' IT UP

as performed on the album FEEL LIKE FUNKIN' IT UP

for two trumpets, two trombones, tenor saxophone,
sousaphone, and 2 percussionists

by Kermit Ruffins, Phil Frazier, and Keith Frazier
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Premier music transcription
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About the Artist:

Grammy-winning **Rebirth Brass Band** has been a true New Orleans institution for nearly 40 years. Formed in 1983 by the Frazier brothers, with Phil on Sousaphone and Keith on Bass Drum, Rebirth is responsible (along with The Dirty Dozen Brass Band, iconic in their own right) for taking brass band music from the streets of traditional second lines and jazz funerals – where this culture was born and continues to thrive – into club venues, festivals, and stages all over the world, establishing it as modern, relevant, and unique dance music. While committed to upholding the deep tradition of New Orleans brass bands, Rebirth instills in the music elements of funk, R&B, and hip-hop, creating a raucous, celebratory sound that has come to define the city. "Rebirth can be precise whenever it wants to," says The New York Times, "but it's more like a party than a machine. It's a working model of the New Orleans musical ethos: as long as everybody knows what they're doing, anyone can cut loose." Rebirth continues to be New Orleans' cultural ambassadors around the globe, whether seen on HBO's *Treme,* on countless tours, or home in New Orleans for their legendary Tuesday-night gig at the Maple Leaf.

About the Song:

The legendary title track from their 1989 album, **"Feel Like Funkin' It Up"** was a rallying cry for New Orleans culture, and its signature sound was heard around the world, bringing to mind scenes of Mardi Gras, the world-renowned New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, or any given second line parade on the streets of the Crescent City. The song epitomizes the direction Rebirth was headed, with its trademark bassline, propulsive beats, brazen trombone rhythms, syncopated trumpet melody, and its use of an expanded harmonic vocabulary to complete the phrase (an indicator of the stage-driven brass band innovation they helped spark). Rebirth had now planted a musical flag in the evolution of New Orleans music, introducing a grittiness and swagger that would come to define the modern brass band ethos. That ethos (and sound) continues to be an inspiration for musicians, young and old, near and far.

Performance Notes:

These parts represent the blueprint of what was played on the album, but the magic of the song is in how the notes are interpreted, not in the notes themselves. We encourage performers to listen to recordings, watch videos, and invest yourselves in the vocabulary of New Orleans brass band music, culture, and history. Swagger and conviction are paramount, as well as placing rhythms deep in the pocket; playing something simple with intention and style is much more effective than demonstrating one's fastest licks, because groove is all that matters! Listen deeply to each other; the conversation between voices is where the tune shines, and that's what makes the music exciting for the performers as well as the audience.

Trumpets: The main melody is relatively simple, but it is meant to be a ever evolving and has plenty of space for stylistic choices and improvisation. It's a fairly low-register melody as well, so be sure to push a lot of air to be heard. Make sure to approach it with laid-back rhythms, experiment with different articulations, note choices/lengths, and be constantly playing off one another and pushing each other to give it personality and keep it moving.

Tenor Sax: You are essentially a member of the trombone section here, so be bold, play notes that are thick and aggressive, and bite down. As the only woodwind in a brass band, full-throated volume is essential to being able to stack up to the tone of the rest of the brass. You also have more freedom to express variations and filling in gaps due to the agility of the horn, and some of these ideas are written out, but more so than any other horn on this tune, you get to shine (for history buffs, this is not unlike the roll the clarinet played in early New Orleans jazz, arpeggiating and filling out the harmonic space).

Trombones: There are infinite ways to continue growing this part, from "tailgating" licks at the end of each phrase to changing up octaves, harmonies, and rhythms, and while your parts appear to stay relatively static, that exact thing is why you have so much room to make it your own. You are the meat of the sound in this tune, be sure to play like it!

Sousaphone: A relatively simple bassline, but the power lies in putting the rhythm right with the kick drum (or slightly behind it for a deeper pocket), playing big, boastful articulations with full-length notes (think of the notes as being shaped like blocks of sound, not sideways teardrops), and having interplay with the drums. Many times, taking some space and announcing your presence with a loud blast (or a few of them) is much more provocative than a fancy turnaround (known as "woops", these blasts are essential New Orleans vocabulary, and are not unlike a shout from the instrument). Also take note of how sometimes the turnaround every four bars can be syncopated in the "one-bar clavé" pattern, or given more space as two quarter notes. Never underestimate how funky straight quarter notes can be when played in the pocket with conviction (see: Parliament Funkadelic, etc).

Drums: More so than the other instruments, these are just suggested outlines of all that can be played. The notes on the page are a framework, but you have the freedom to constantly be expanding/changing, so long as that basic groove is always your touchstone. There should be a constant conversation between snare/bass (and sousaphone as well), and there's a call-and-response inherent to the groove and how you converse with it. Make space for each other, change up fills/variations, and learn to work together. These beats are played with an *extremely* wide dynamic range: unaccented notes are quite soft, accents are huge, and this difference between soft/loud is one thing that makes the groove deep.

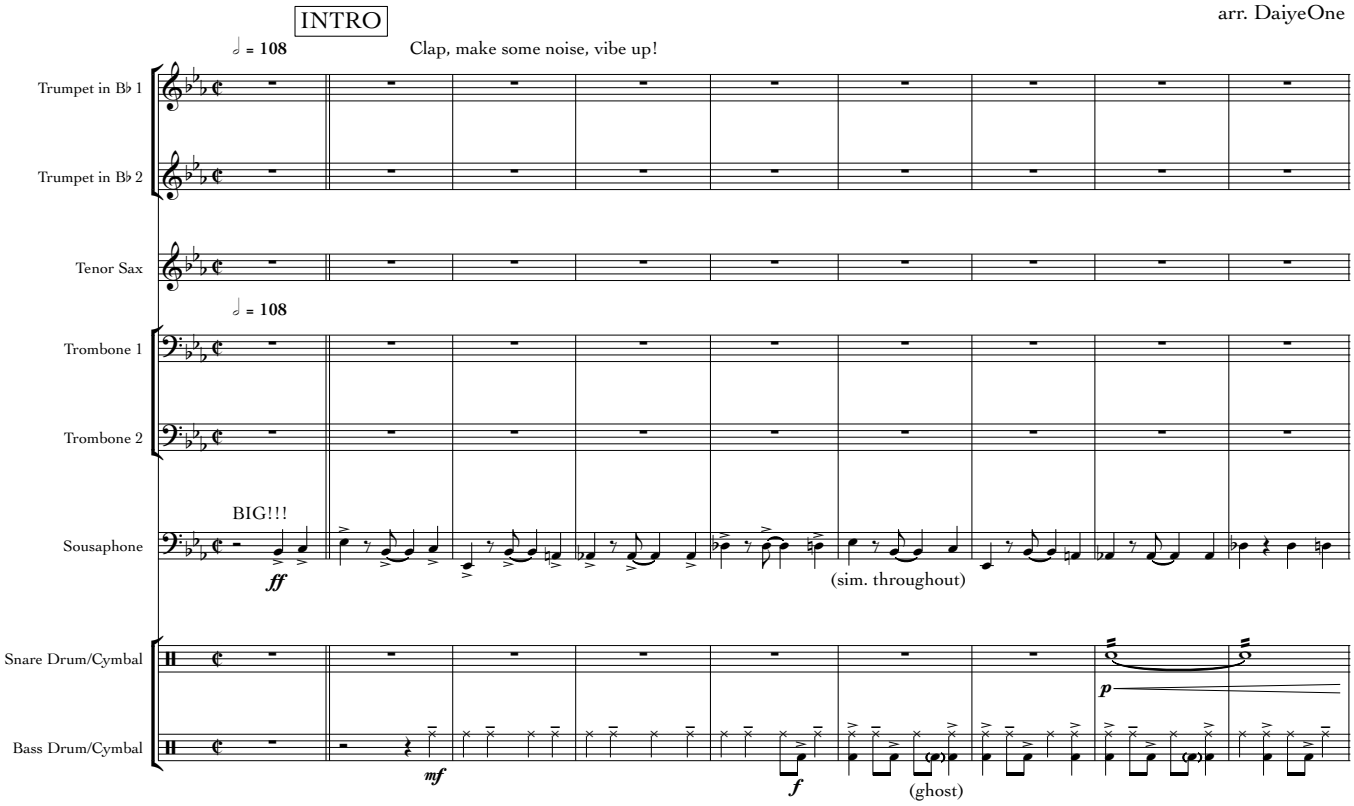
Above all, have a good time!

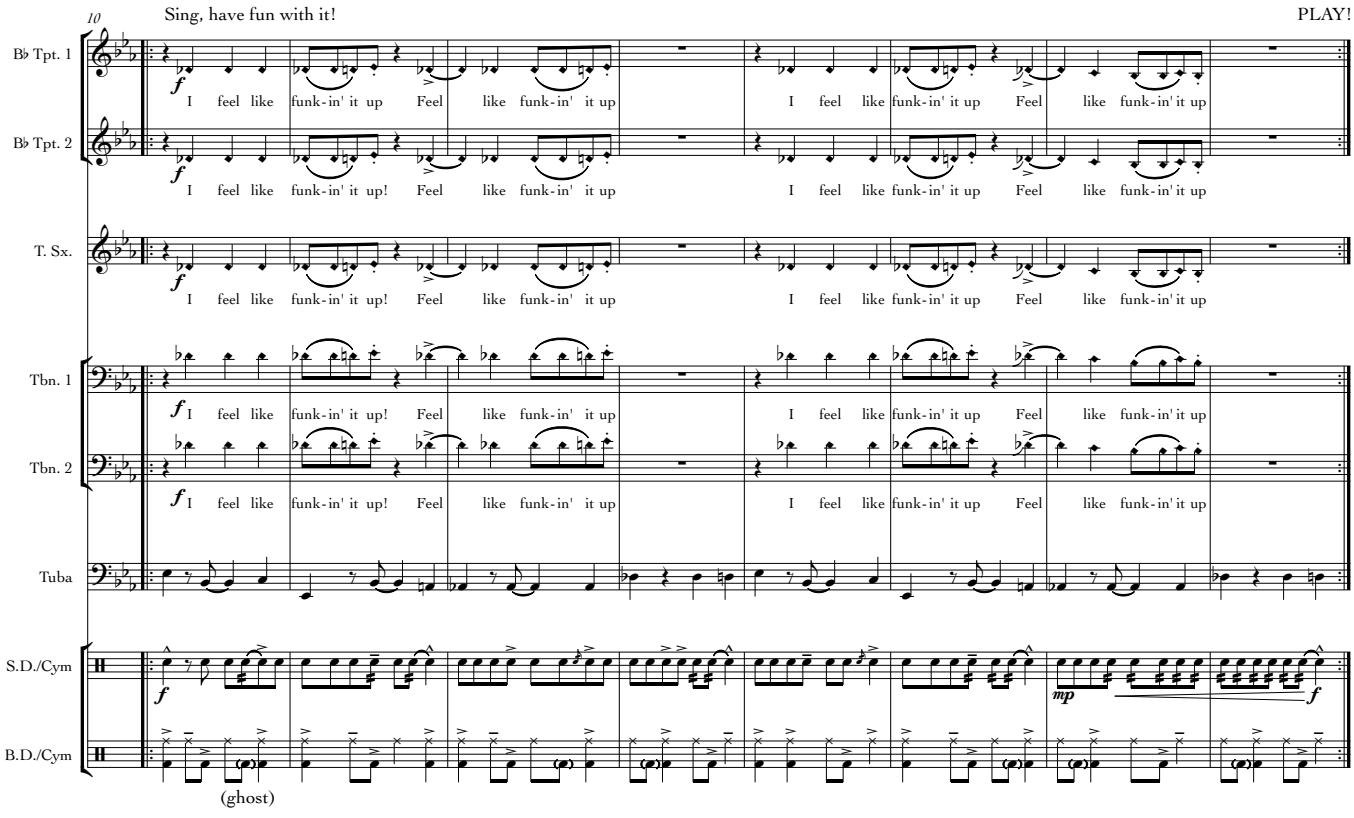
Feel Like Funkin' It Up

as recorded by Rebirth Brass Band

FULL SCORE

Kermit Ruffins, Phil Frazier, Keith Frazier
arr. DaiyeOne





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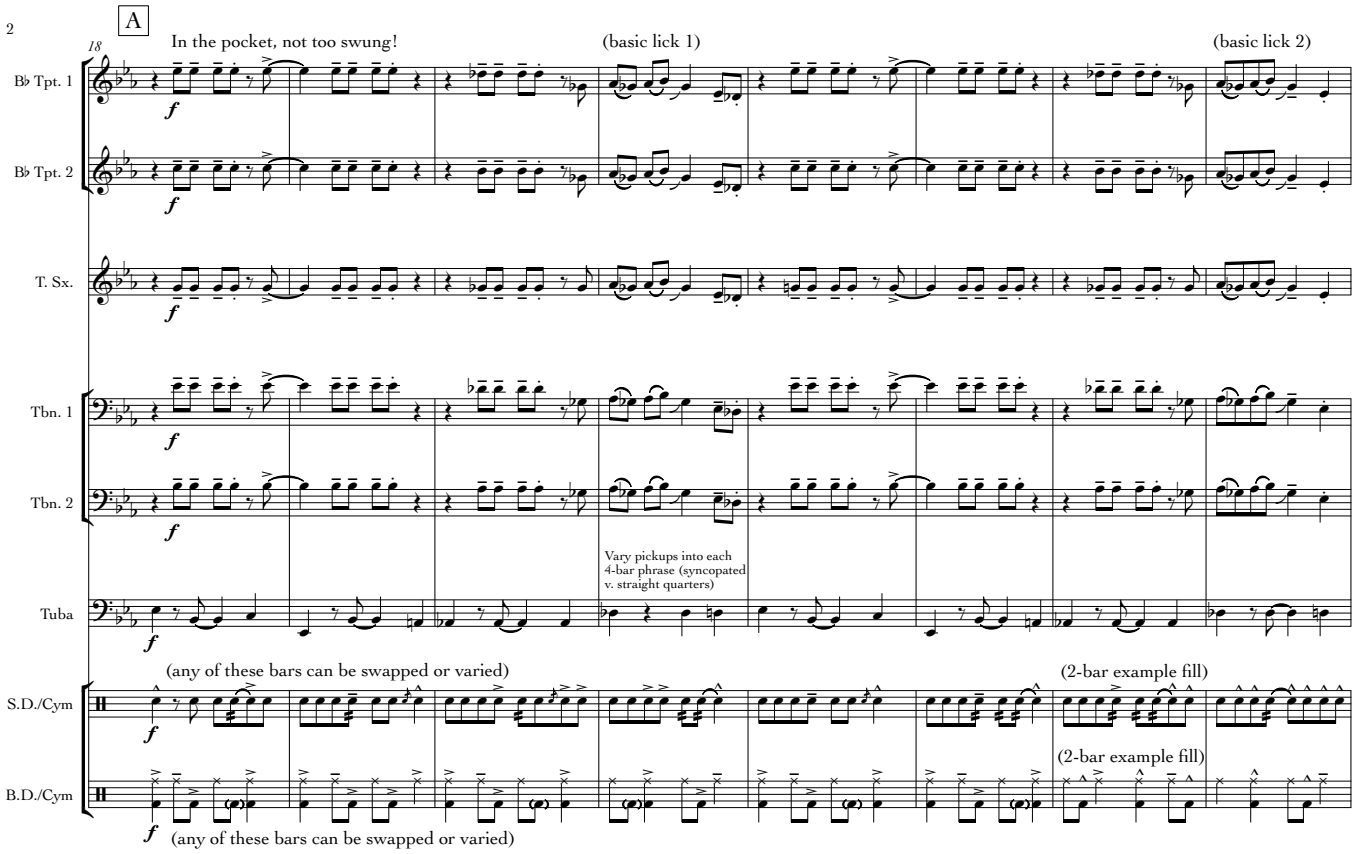
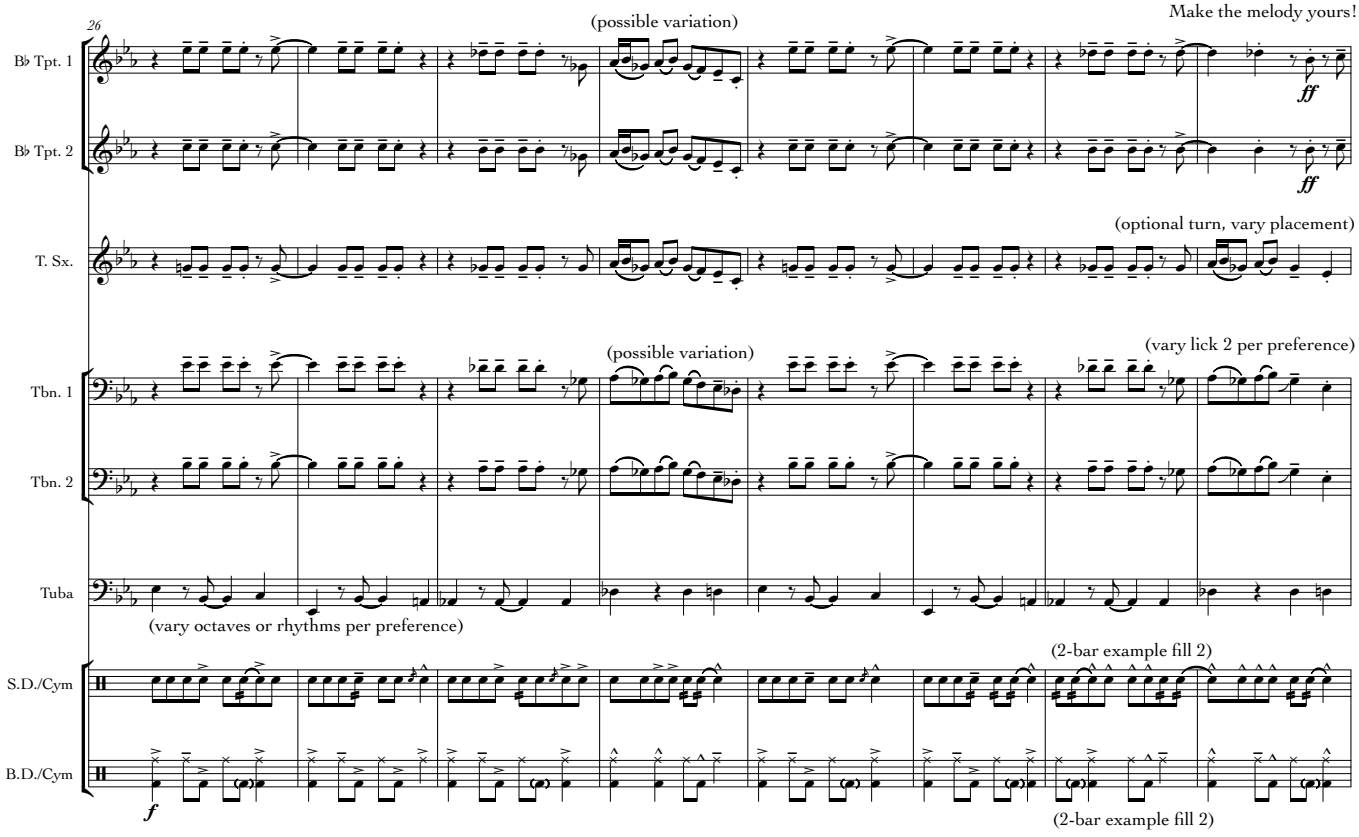
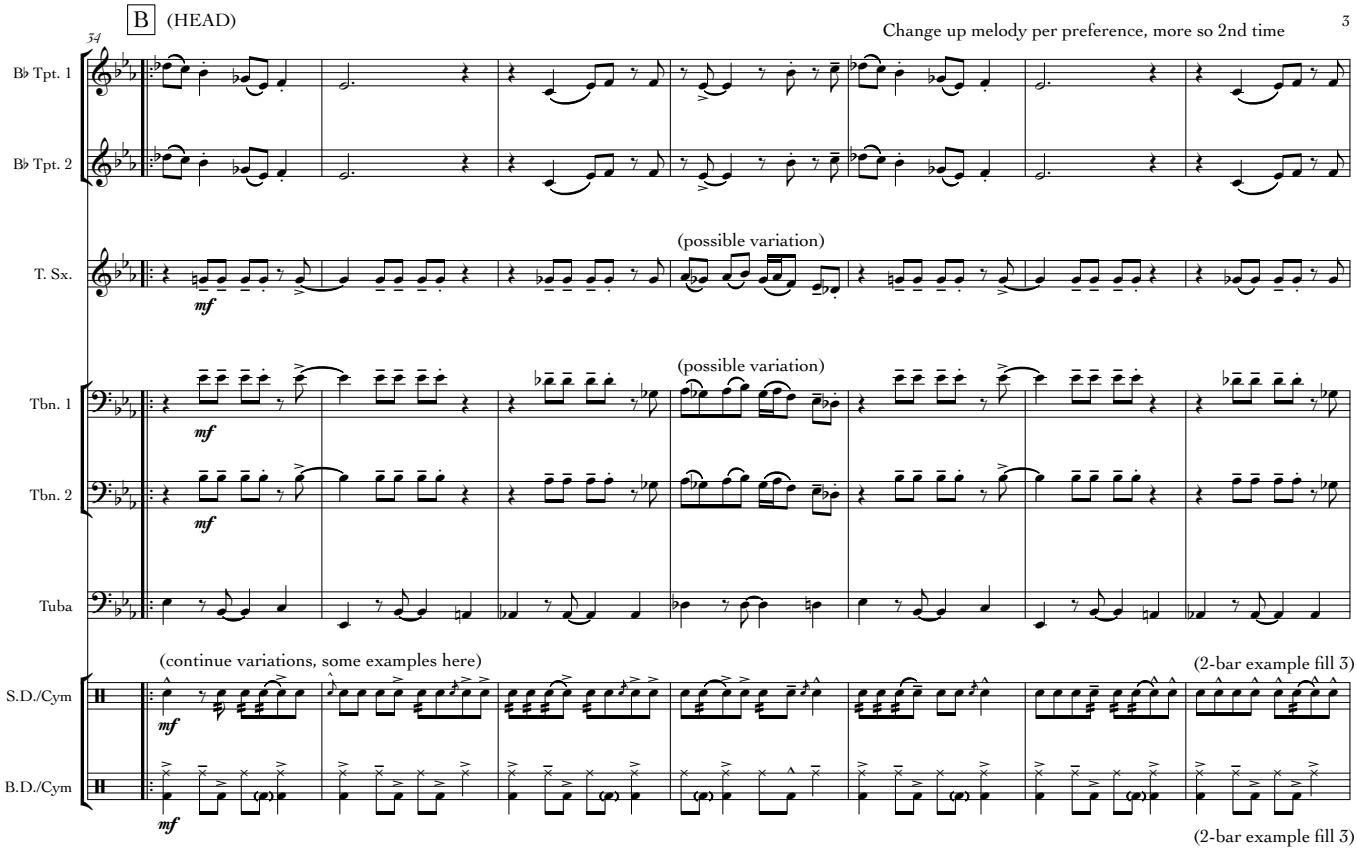
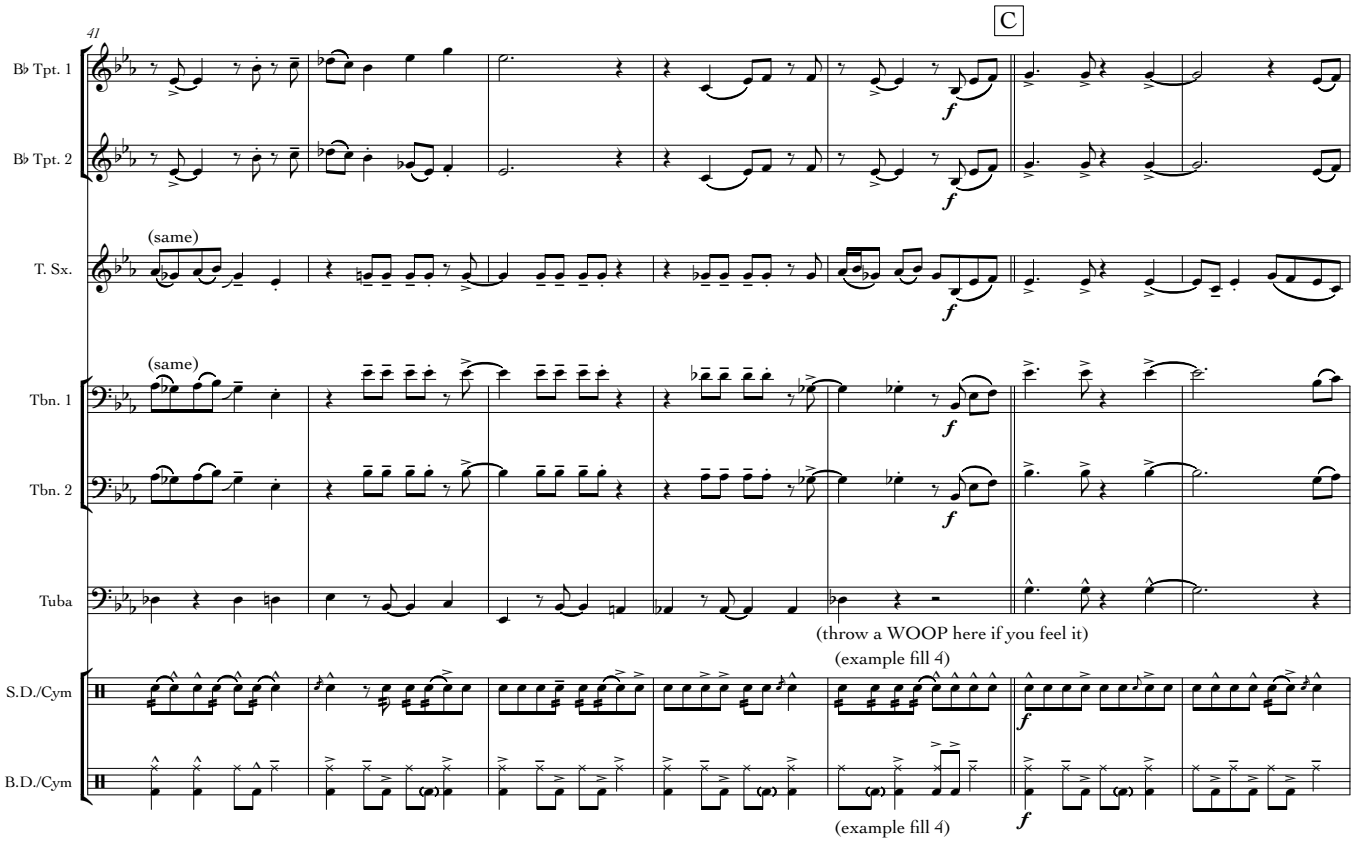
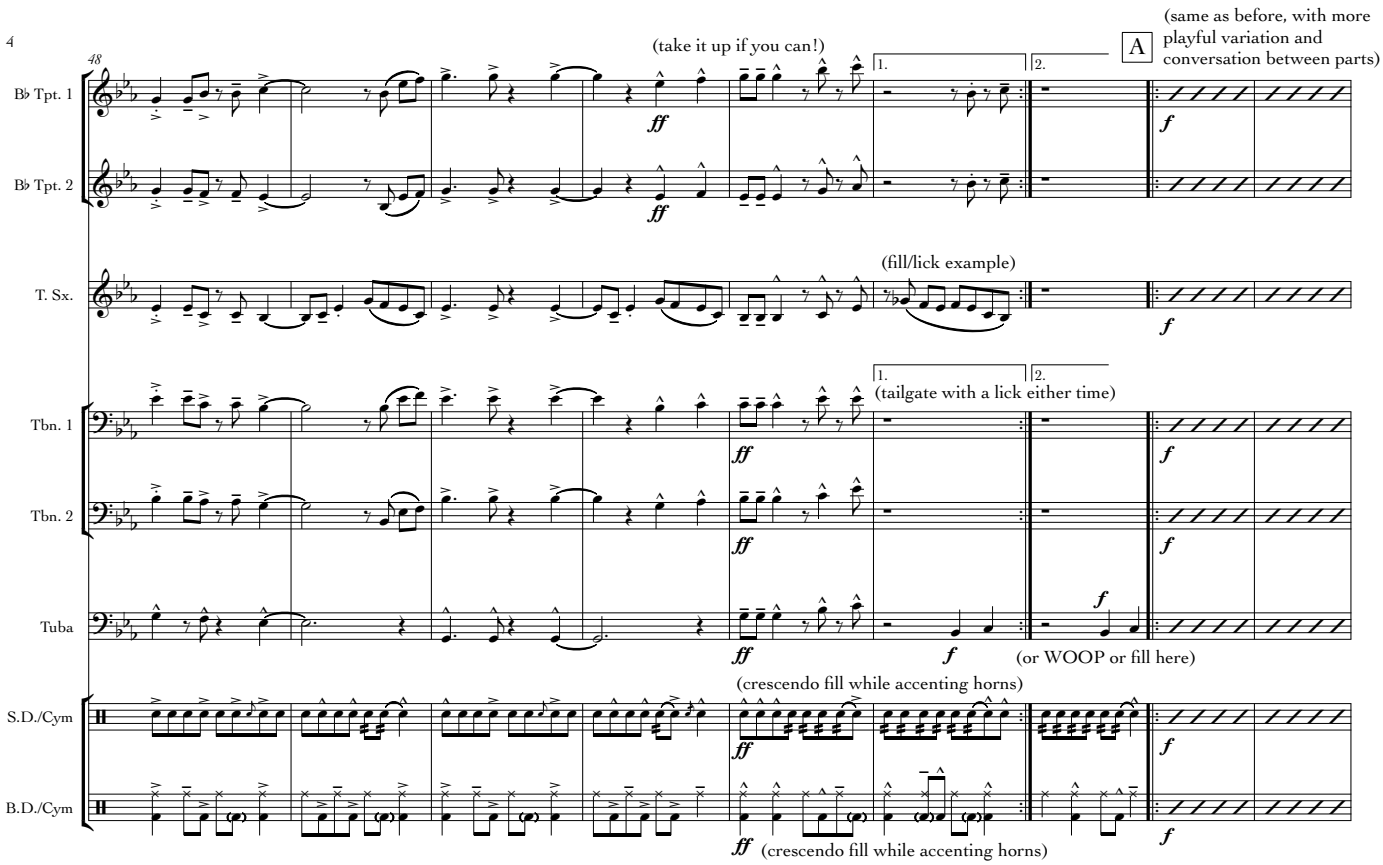
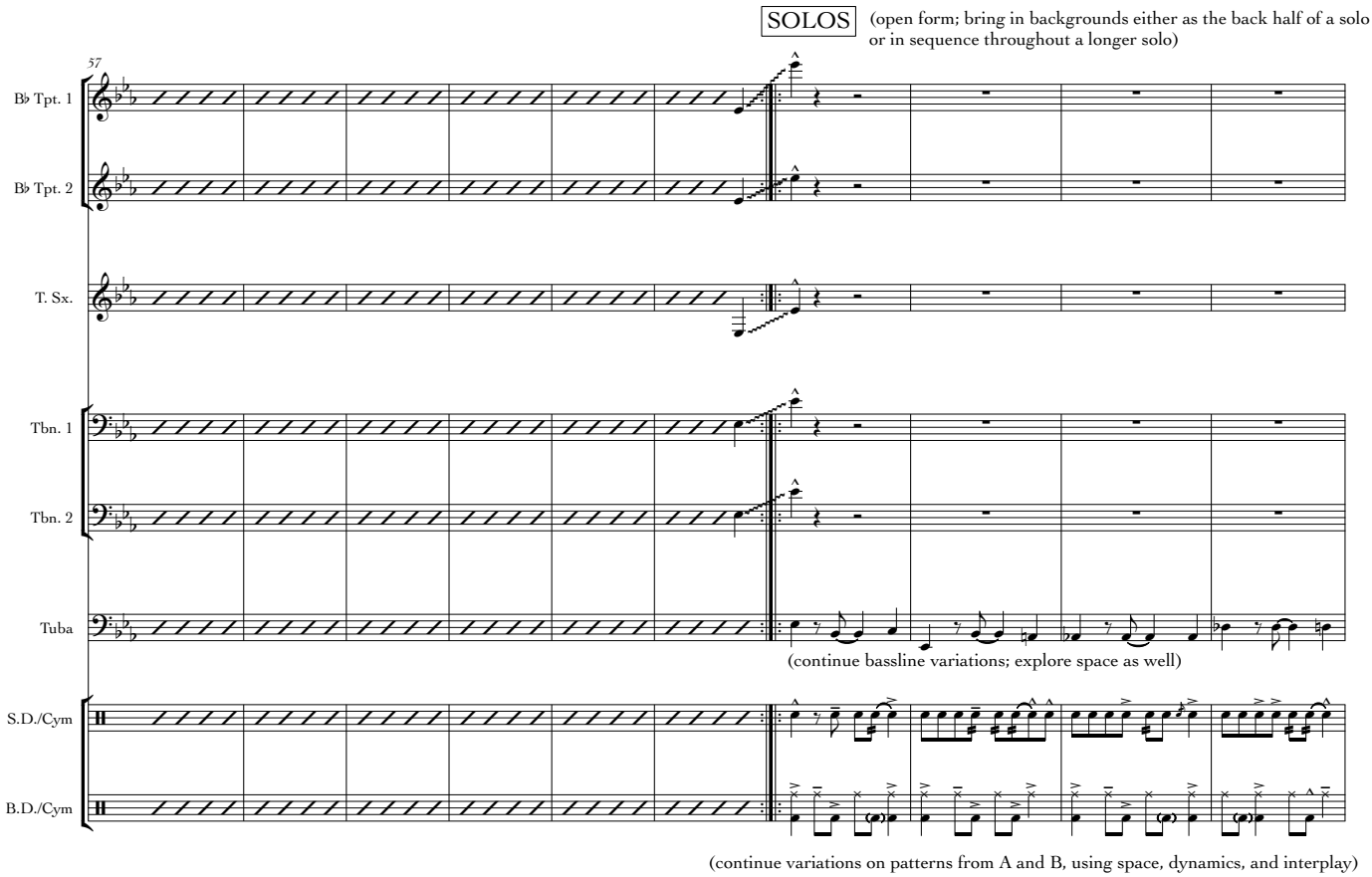

A
18
In the pocket, not too swung!
(basic lick 1)
(basic lick 2)
B♭ Tpt. 1
B♭ Tpt. 2
T. Sx.
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Vary pickups into each 4-bar phrase (syncopated v. straight quarters)
Tuba
(any of these bars can be swapped or varied)
(2-bar example fill)
S.D./Cym
(2-bar example fill)
B.D./Cym
(any of these bars can be swapped or varied)

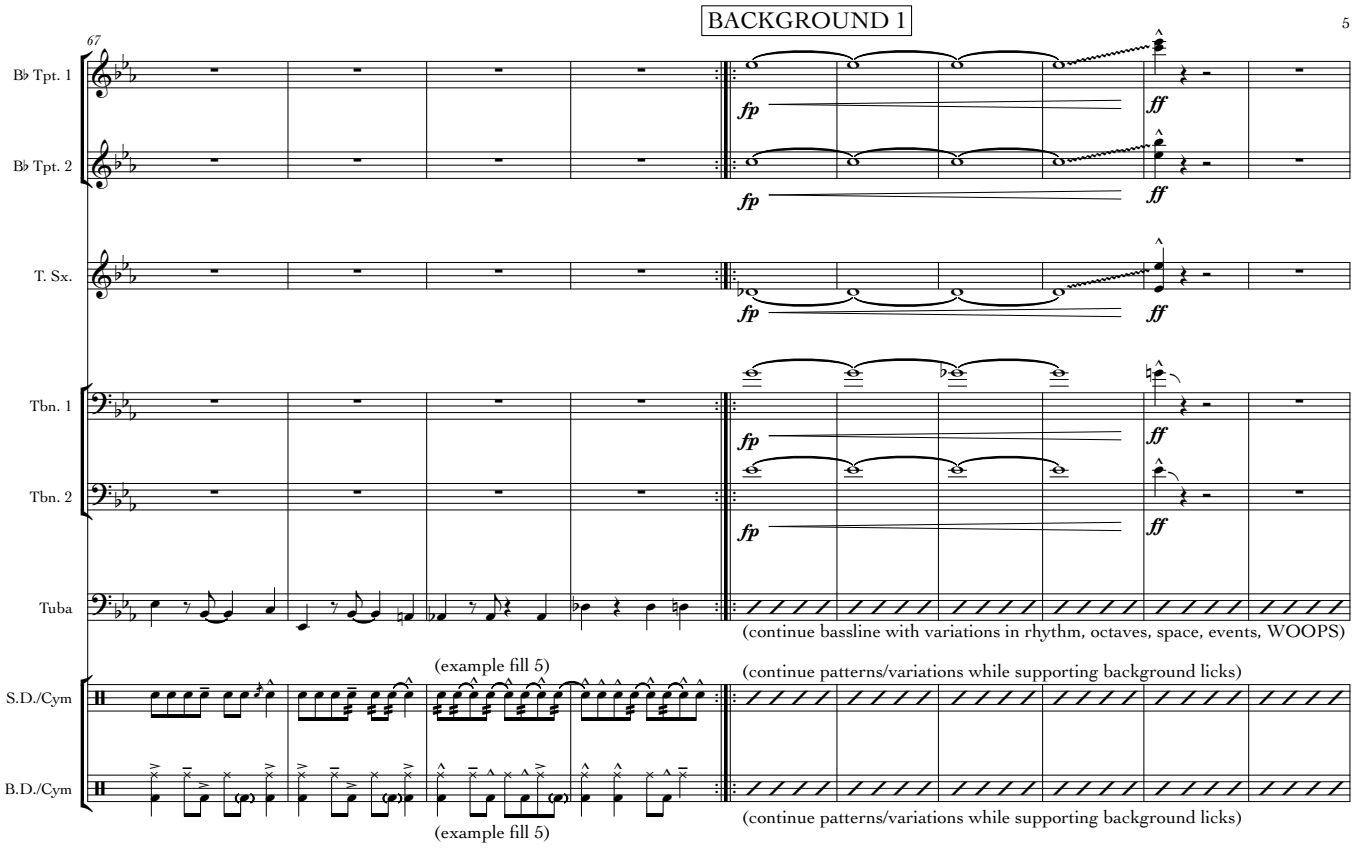

26
(possible variation)
Make the melody yours!
B♭ Tpt. 1
B♭ Tpt. 2
(optional turn, vary placement)
T. Sx.
(possible variation)
(vary lick 2 per preference)
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tuba
(vary octaves or rhythms per preference)
(2-bar example fill 2)
S.D./Cym
B.D./Cym
(2-bar example fill 2)

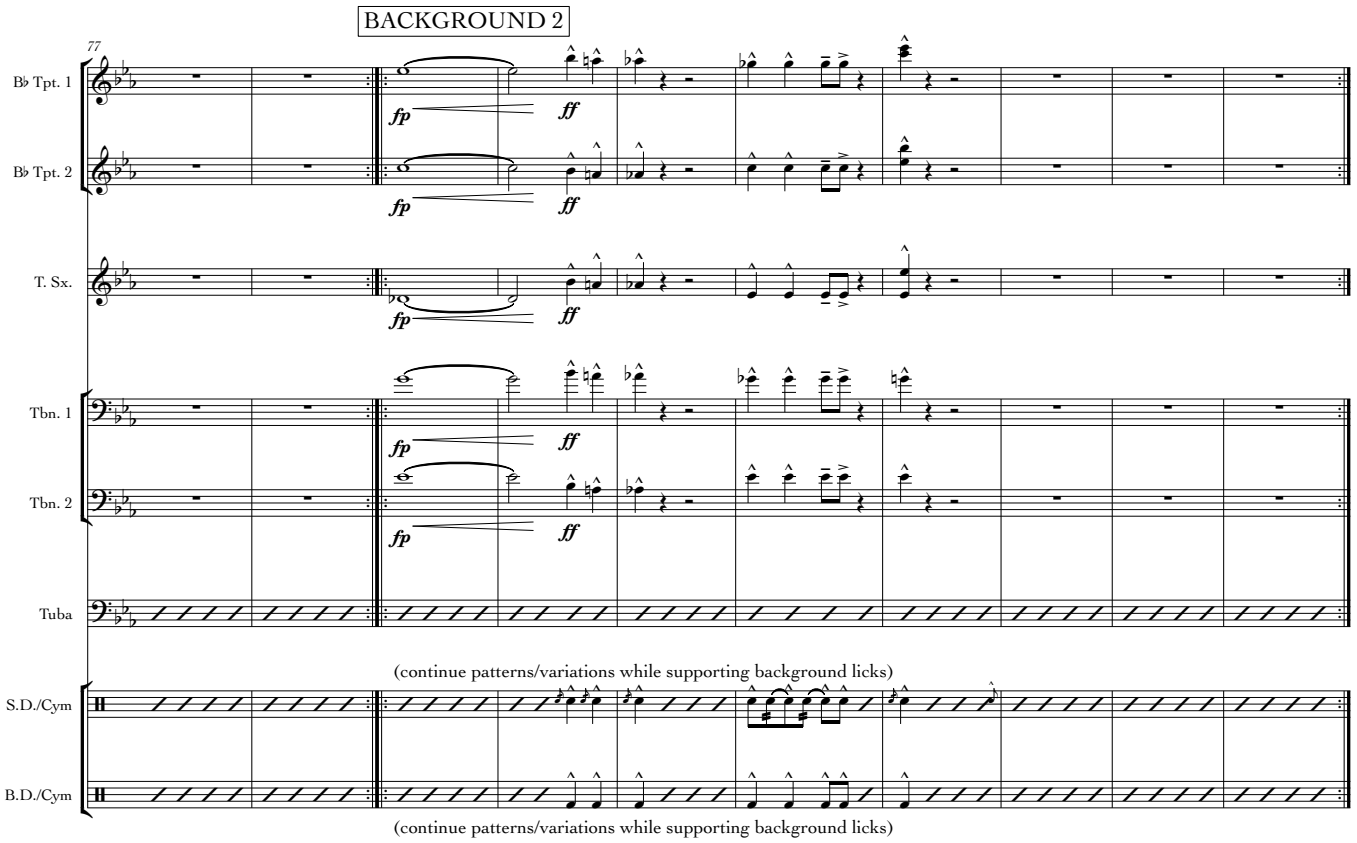

B (HEAD)
Change up melody per preference, more so 2nd time
54
B♭ Tpt. 1
B♭ Tpt. 2
T. Sx.
(possible variation)
mf
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tuba
(possible variation)
(continue variations, some examples here)
(2-bar example fill 3)
S.D./Cym
B.D./Cym
(2-bar example fill 3)


C
41
B♭ Tpt. 1
B♭ Tpt. 2
f
T. Sx.
(same)
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tuba
(throw a WOOP here if you feel it)
(example fill 4)
S.D./Cym
B.D./Cym
(example fill 4)


48
(take it up if you can!)
1.
2.
A
(same as before, with more playful variation and conversation between parts)
B♭ Tpt. 1
B♭ Tpt. 2
T. Sx.
(fill/lick example)
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
(tailgate with a lick either time)
Tuba
(or WOOP or fill here)
(crescendo fill while accenting horns)
S.D./Cym
B.D./Cym
(crescendo fill while accenting horns)


57
SOLOS
(open form; bring in backgrounds either as the back half of a solo or in sequence throughout a longer solo)
B♭ Tpt. 1
B♭ Tpt. 2
T. Sx.
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tuba
(continue bassline variations; explore space as well)
S.D./Cym
B.D./Cym
(continue variations on patterns from A and B, using space, dynamics, and interplay)


BACKGROUND 1
67
B♭ Tpt. 1
B♭ Tpt. 2
T. Sx.
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tuba
S.D./Cym
B.D./Cym
fp
ff
(continue bassline with variations in rhythm, octaves, space, events, WOOPS)
(example fill 5)
(continue patterns/variations while supporting background licks)
(example fill 5)
(continue patterns/variations while supporting background licks)


BACKGROUND 2
77
B♭ Tpt. 1
B♭ Tpt. 2
T. Sx.
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tuba
S.D./Cym
B.D./Cym
fp
ff
(continue patterns/variations while supporting background licks)
(continue patterns/variations while supporting background licks)

BACKGROUND 3

87

B♭ Tpt. 1
B♭ Tpt. 2
T. Sx.
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tuba
S.D./Cym
B.D./Cym

f *ff*

1. 2.

96

B

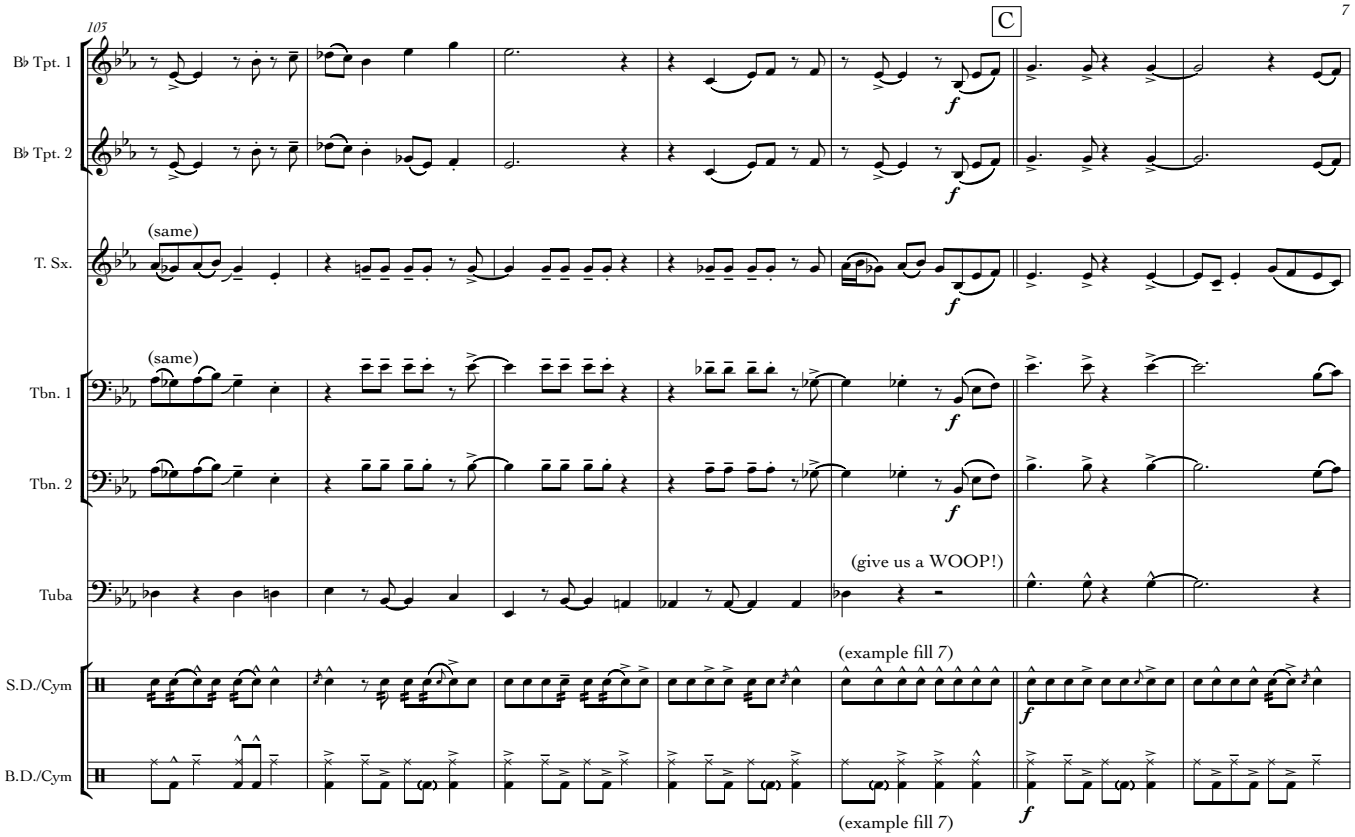
Include more bold variations for final head

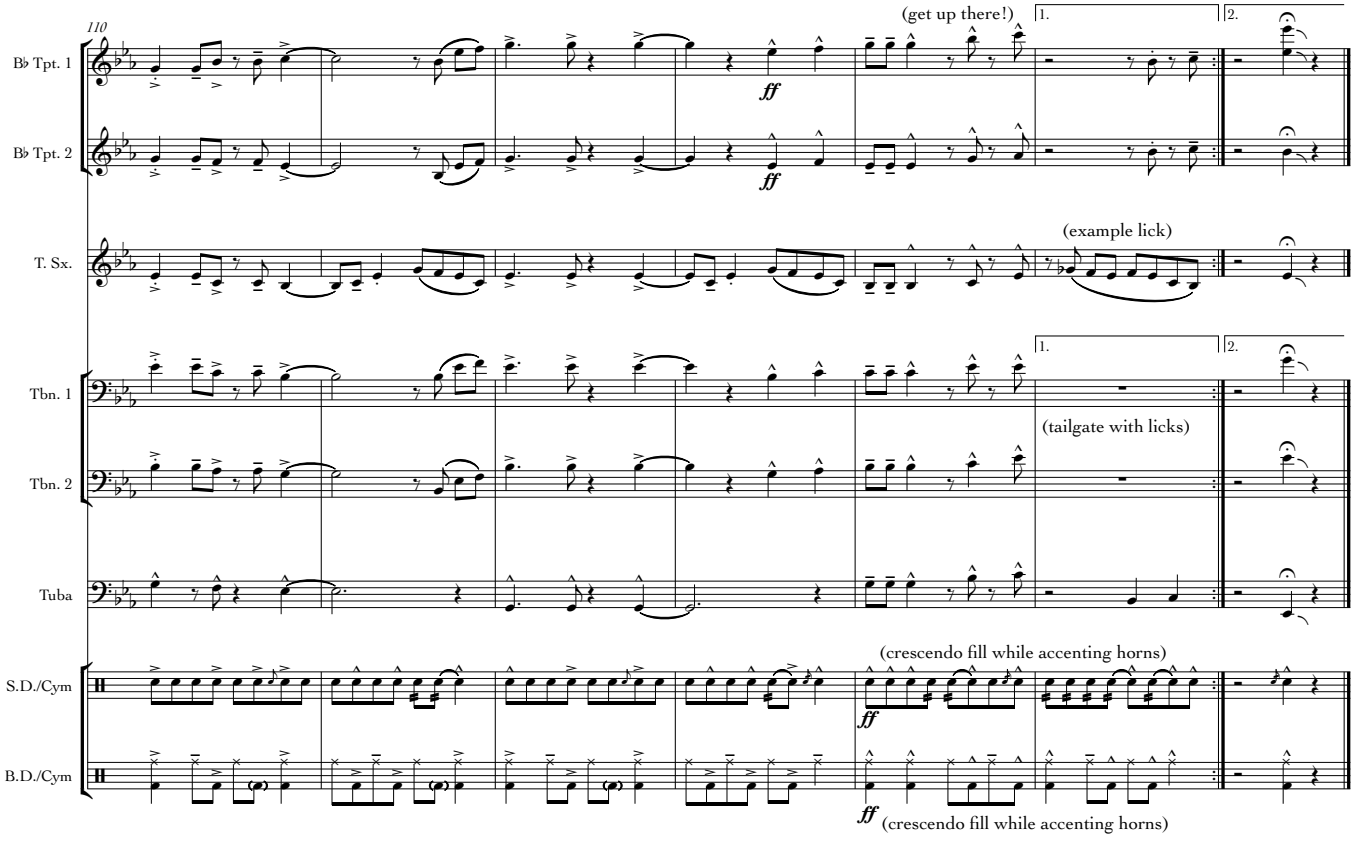
(variable lick)

mf

(more variations on Head, more bold)

(2-bar example fill 6)


105
C
B♭ Tpt. 1
B♭ Tpt. 2
T. Sx.
(same)
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
(same)
Tuba
(give us a WOOP!)
S.D./Cym
(example fill 7)
B.D./Cym
(example fill 7)


110
B♭ Tpt. 1
(get up there!)
1.
2.
B♭ Tpt. 2
T. Sx.
(example lick)
Tbn. 1
(tailgate with licks)
Tbn. 2
Tuba
S.D./Cym
(crescendo fill while accenting horns)
B.D./Cym
(crescendo fill while accenting horns)

Feel Like Funkin' It Up

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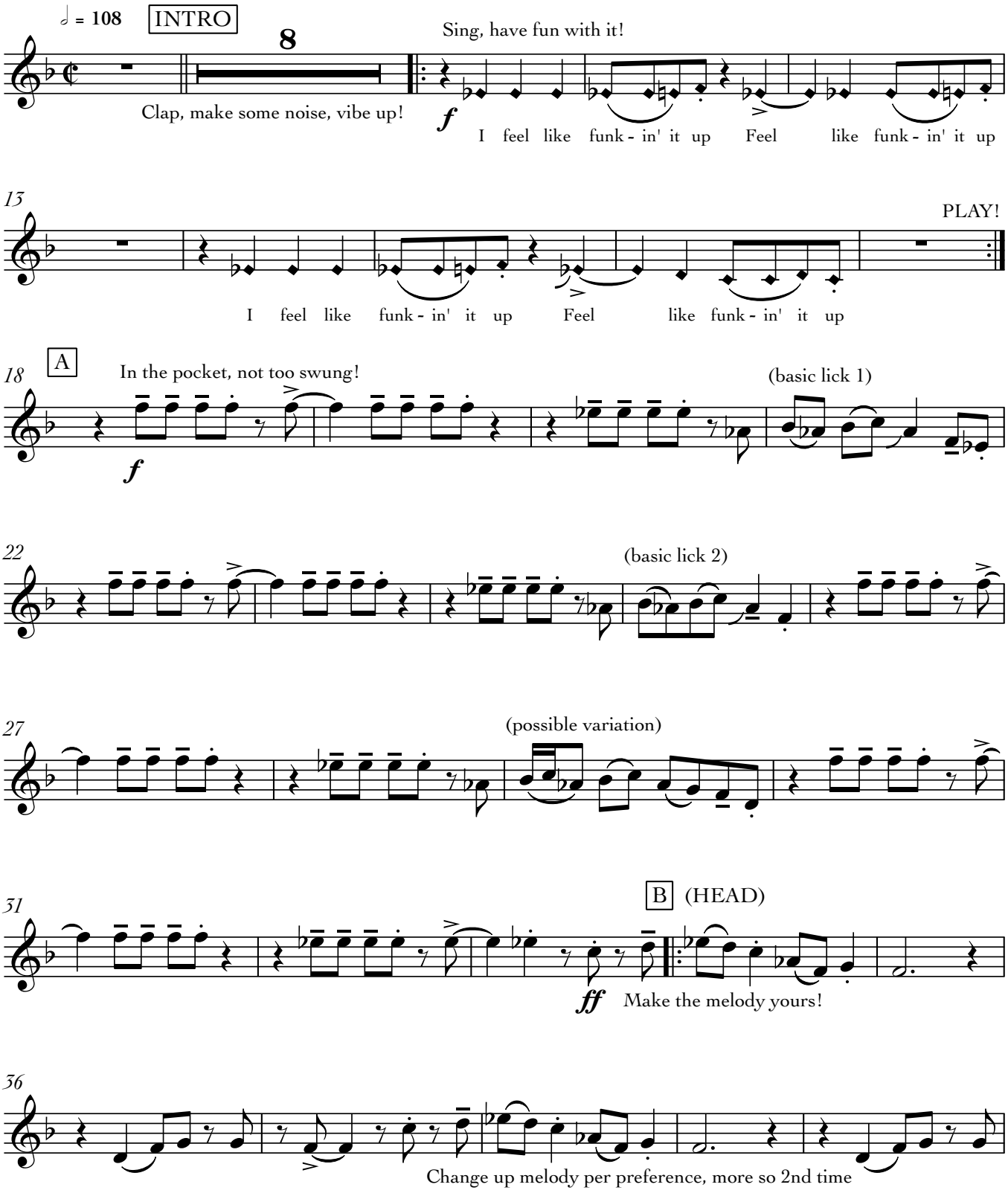
Trumpet in B♭ 1

Kermit Ruffins, Phil Frazier, Keith Frazier
arr. DaiyeOne



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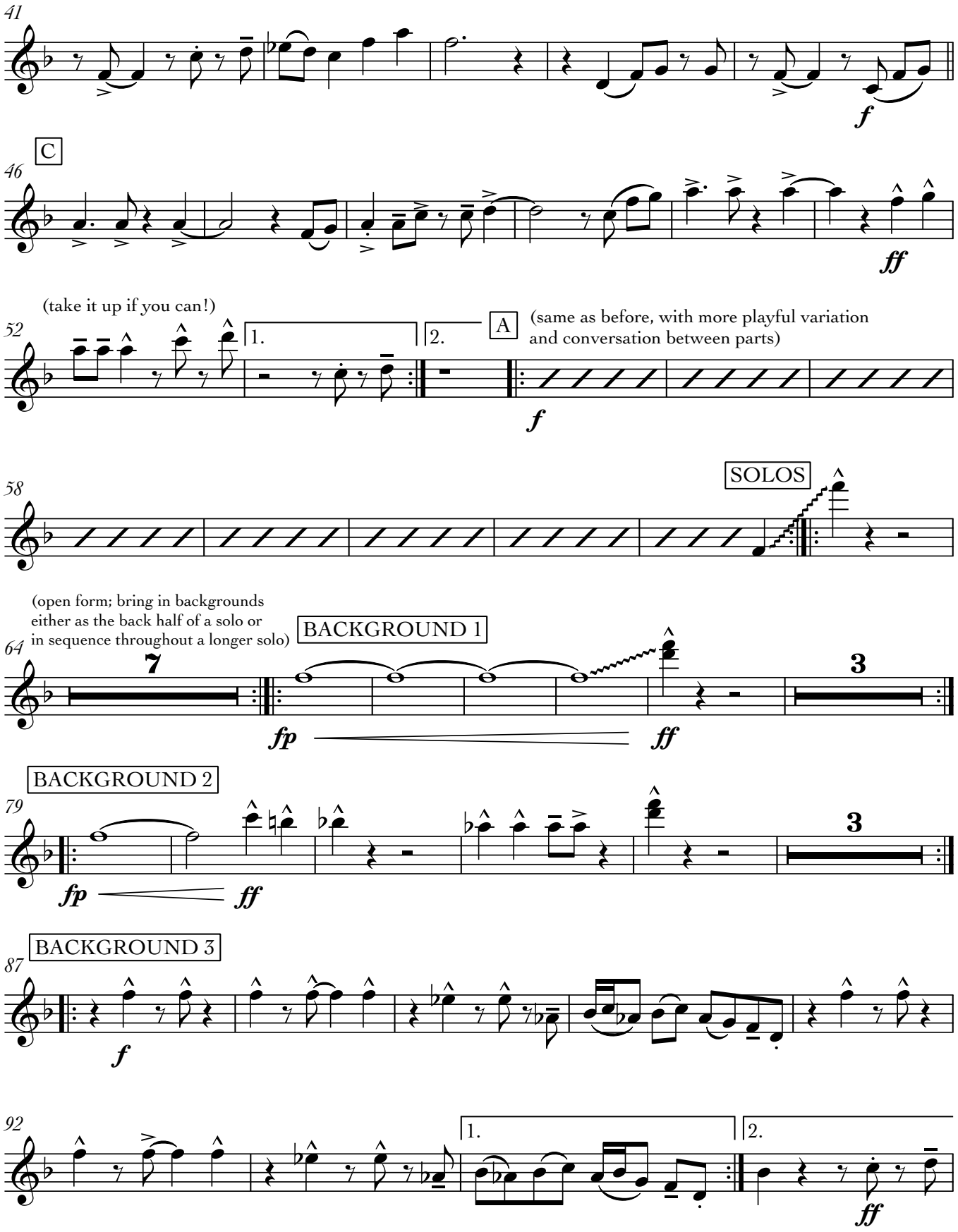
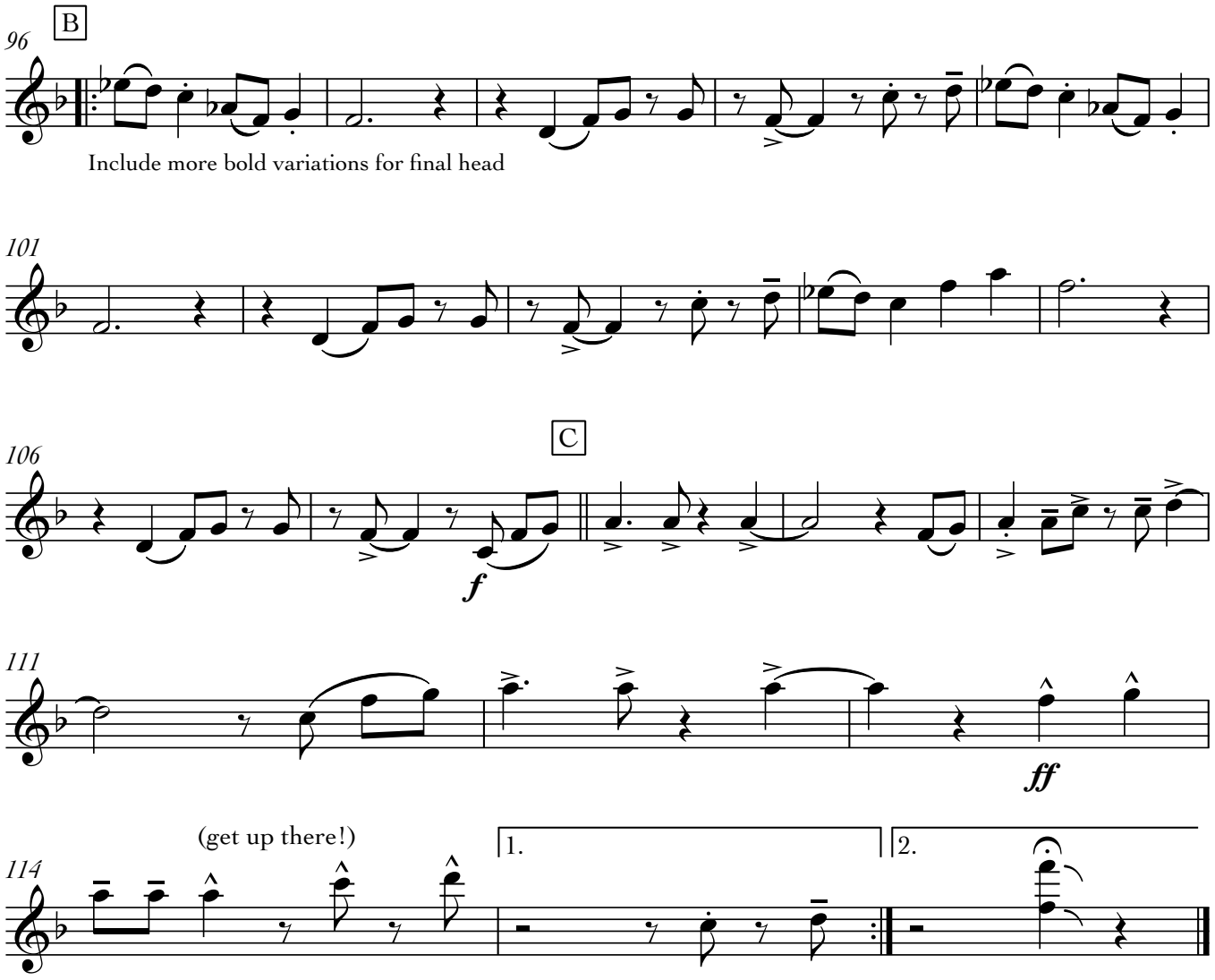

41
f
C
46
ff
(take it up if you can!)
52
1.
2.
A
(same as before, with more playful variation and conversation between parts)
f
58
SOLOS
(open form; bring in backgrounds either as the back half of a solo or in sequence throughout a longer solo)
64
BACKGROUND 1
7
3
fp
ff
BACKGROUND 2
79
3
fp
ff
BACKGROUND 3
87
f
92
1.
2.
ff

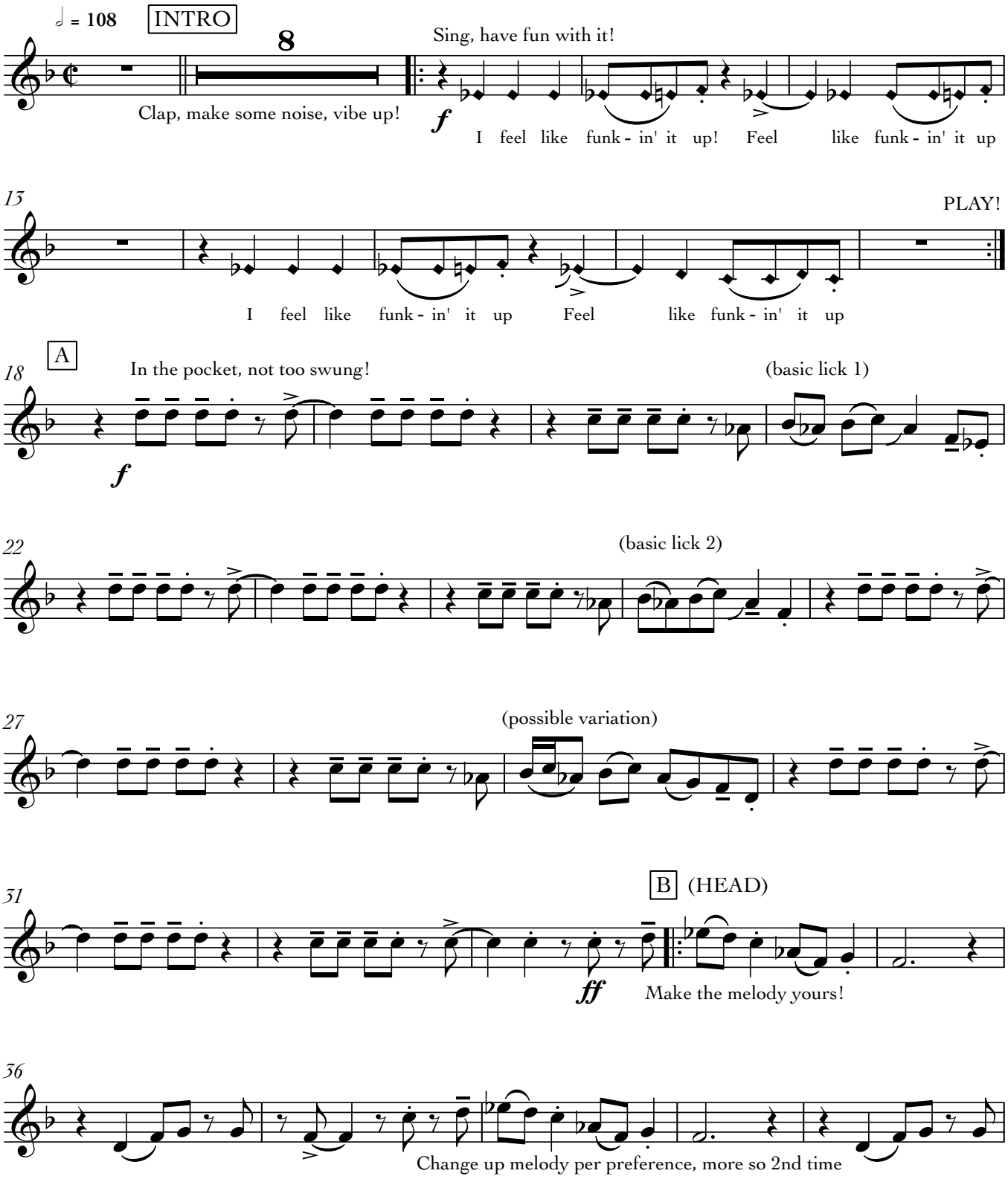

96
B
Include more bold variations for final head
101
106
C
f
111
ff
114
(get up there!)
1.
2.

Feel Like Funkin' It Up

as recorded by Rebirth Brass Band

Trumpet in B♭ 2

Kermit Ruffins, Phil Frazier, Keith Frazier
arr. DaiyeOne



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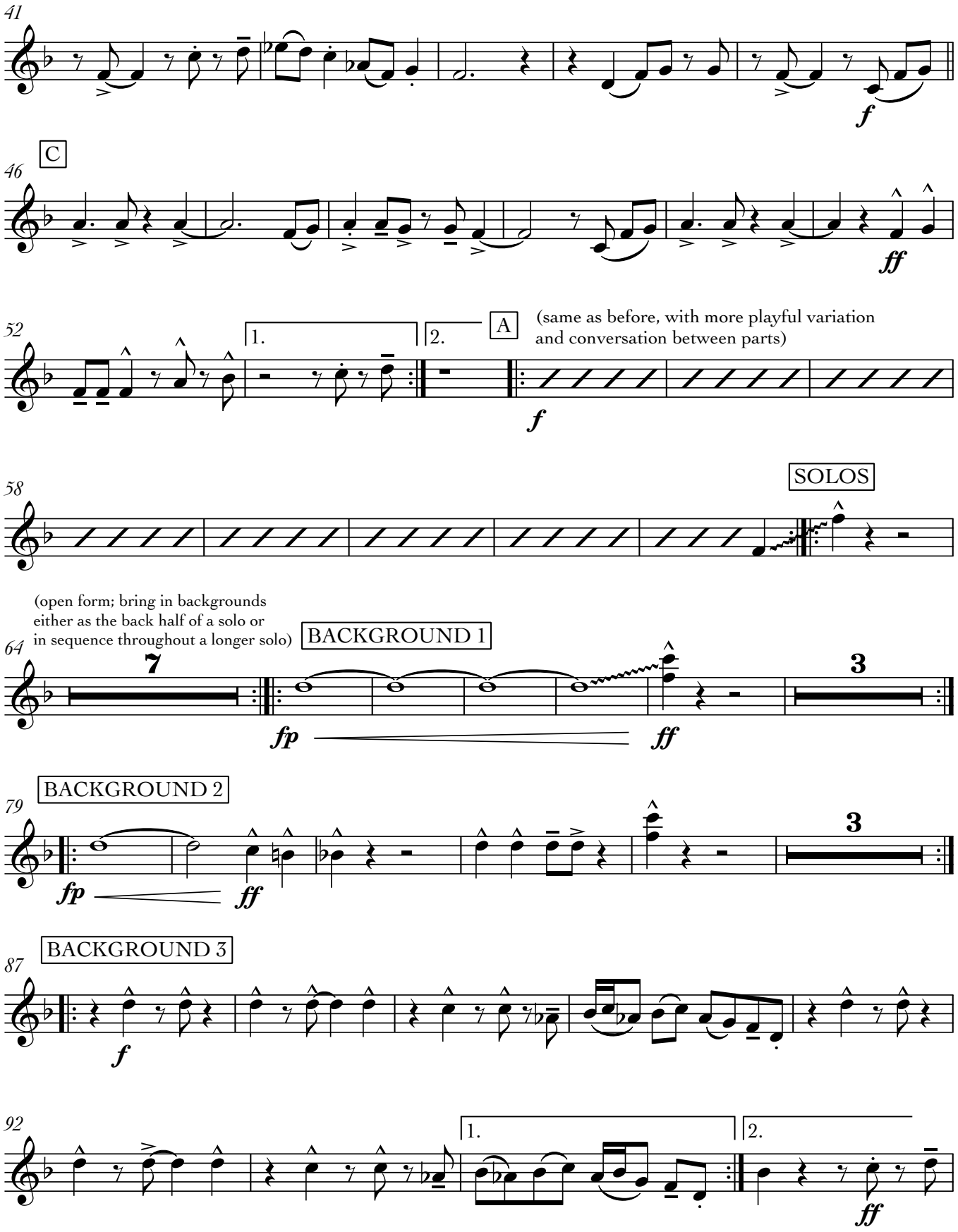
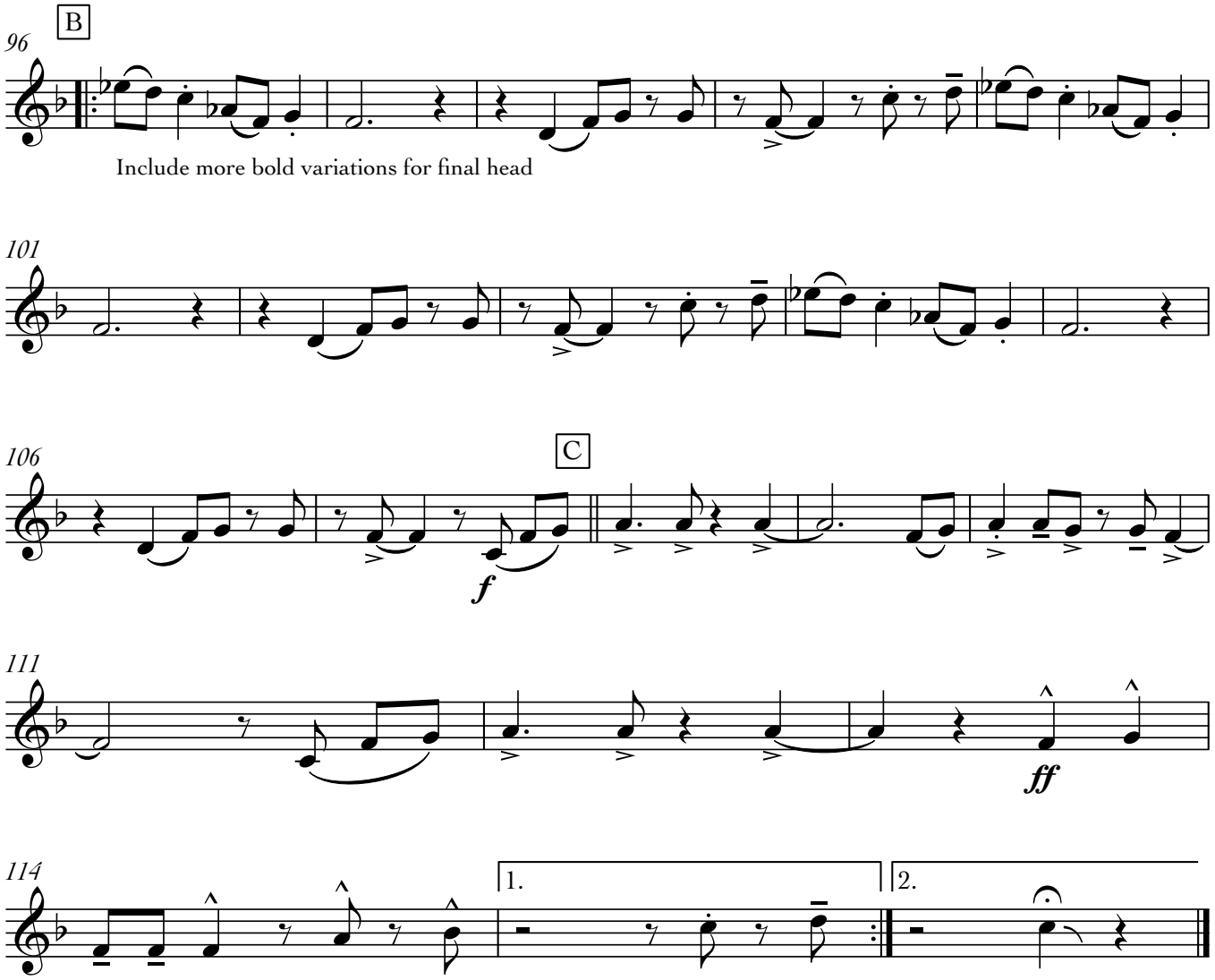

41
f
C
46
ff
52
1.
2.
A
(same as before, with more playful variation and conversation between parts)
f
58
SOLOS
(open form; bring in backgrounds either as the back half of a solo or in sequence throughout a longer solo)
64
BACKGROUND 1
7
3
fp
ff
79
BACKGROUND 2
3
fp
ff
87
BACKGROUND 3
f
92
1.
2.
ff

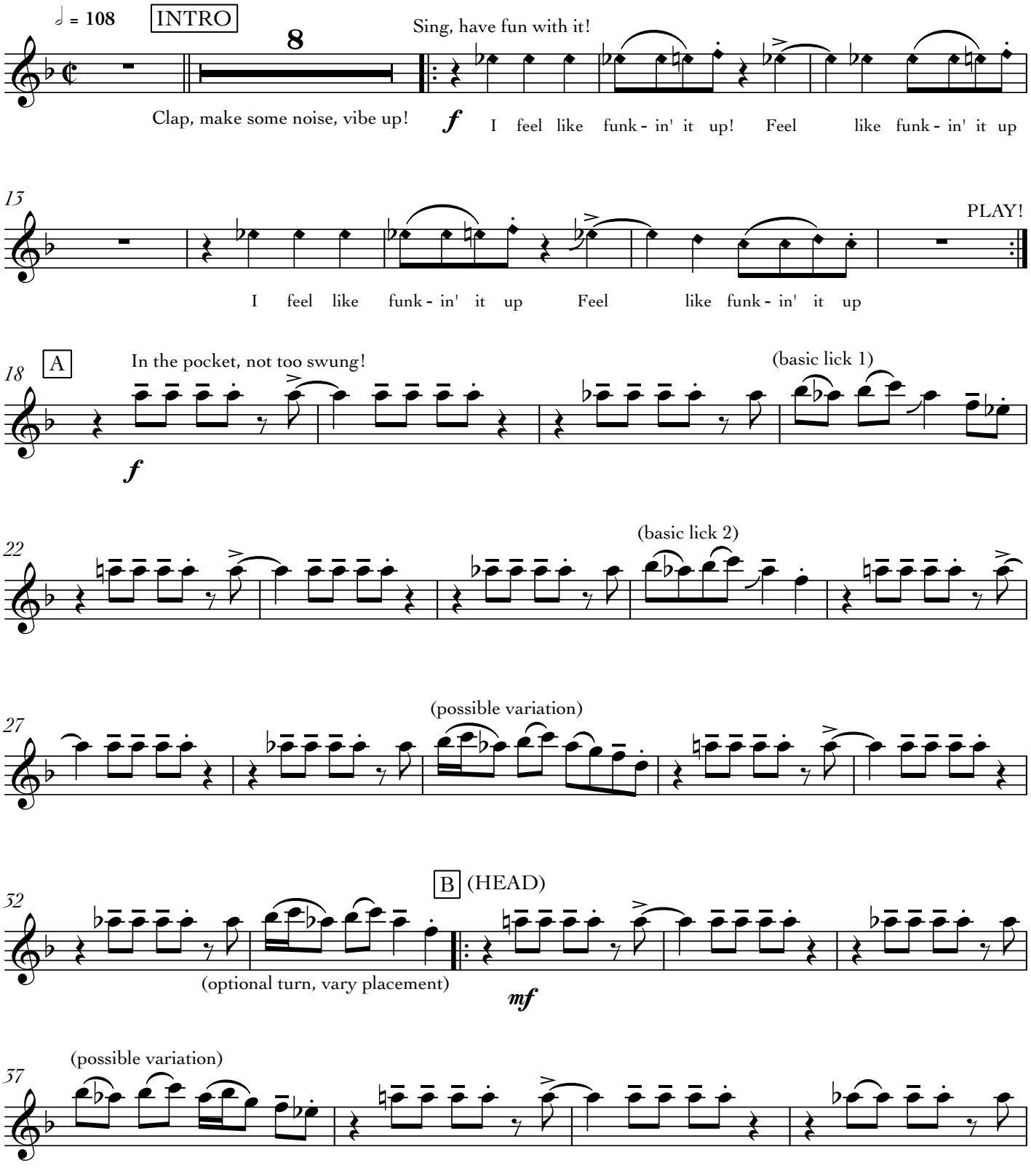

B
96
Include more bold variations for final head
101
C
106
f
111
ff
114
1.
2.

Feel Like Funkin' It Up

as recorded by Rebirth Brass Band

Tenor Sax

Kermit Ruffins, Phil Frazier, Keith Frazier
arr. DaiyeOne



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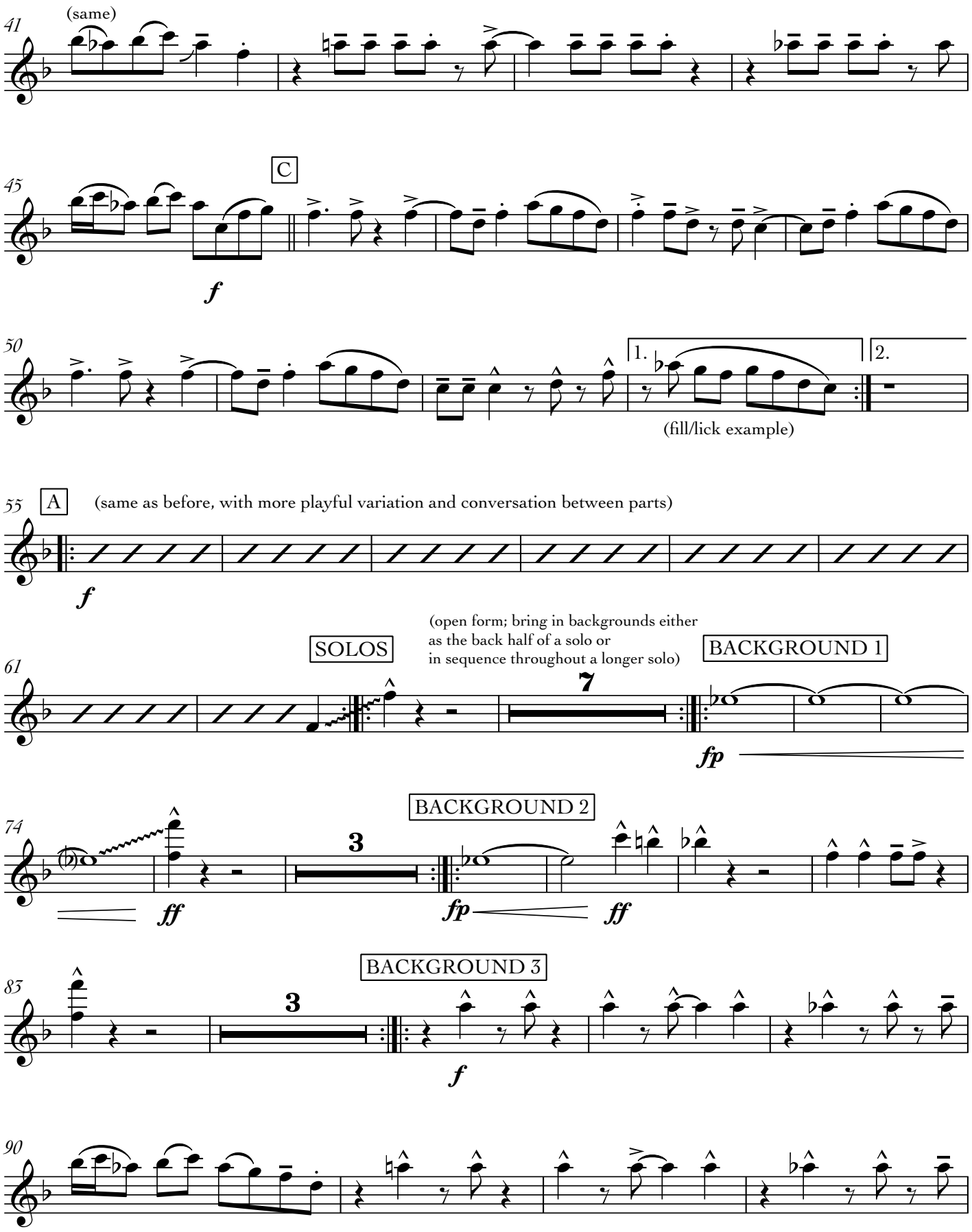
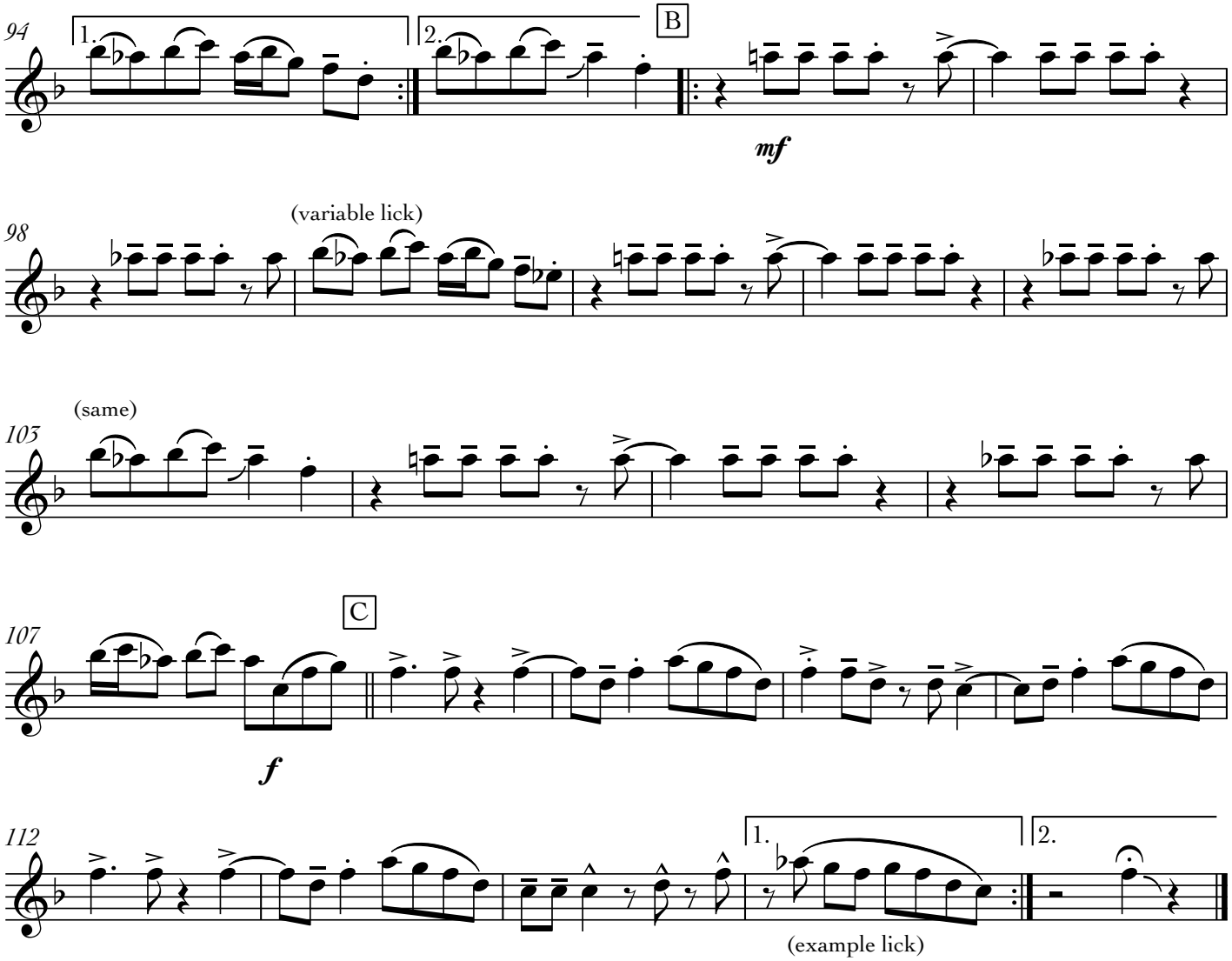

41
(same)
45
C
f
50
1.
2.
(fill/lick example)
55
A
(same as before, with more playful variation and conversation between parts)
f
61
SOLOS
(open form; bring in backgrounds either
as the back half of a solo or
in sequence throughout a longer solo)
7
BACKGROUND 1
fp
74
BACKGROUND 2
3
ff
fp
ff
83
BACKGROUND 3
3
f
90

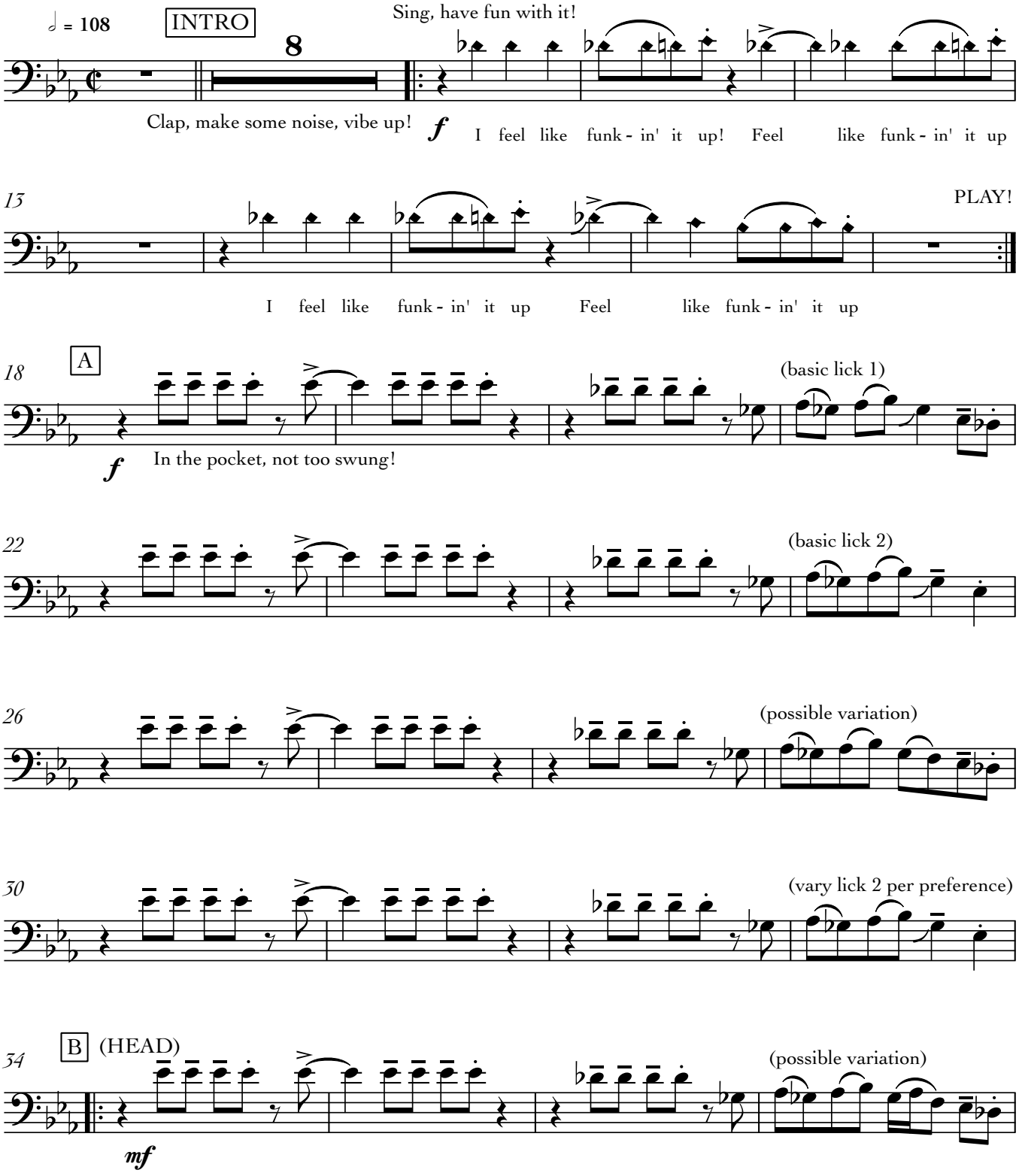

94
1.
2.
B
mf
98
(variable lick)
103
(same)
107
C
f
112
1.
2.
(example lick)

Feel Like Funkin' It Up

as recorded by Rebirth Brass Band

Trombone 1

Kermit Ruffins, Phil Frazier, Keith Frazier
arr. DaiyeOne



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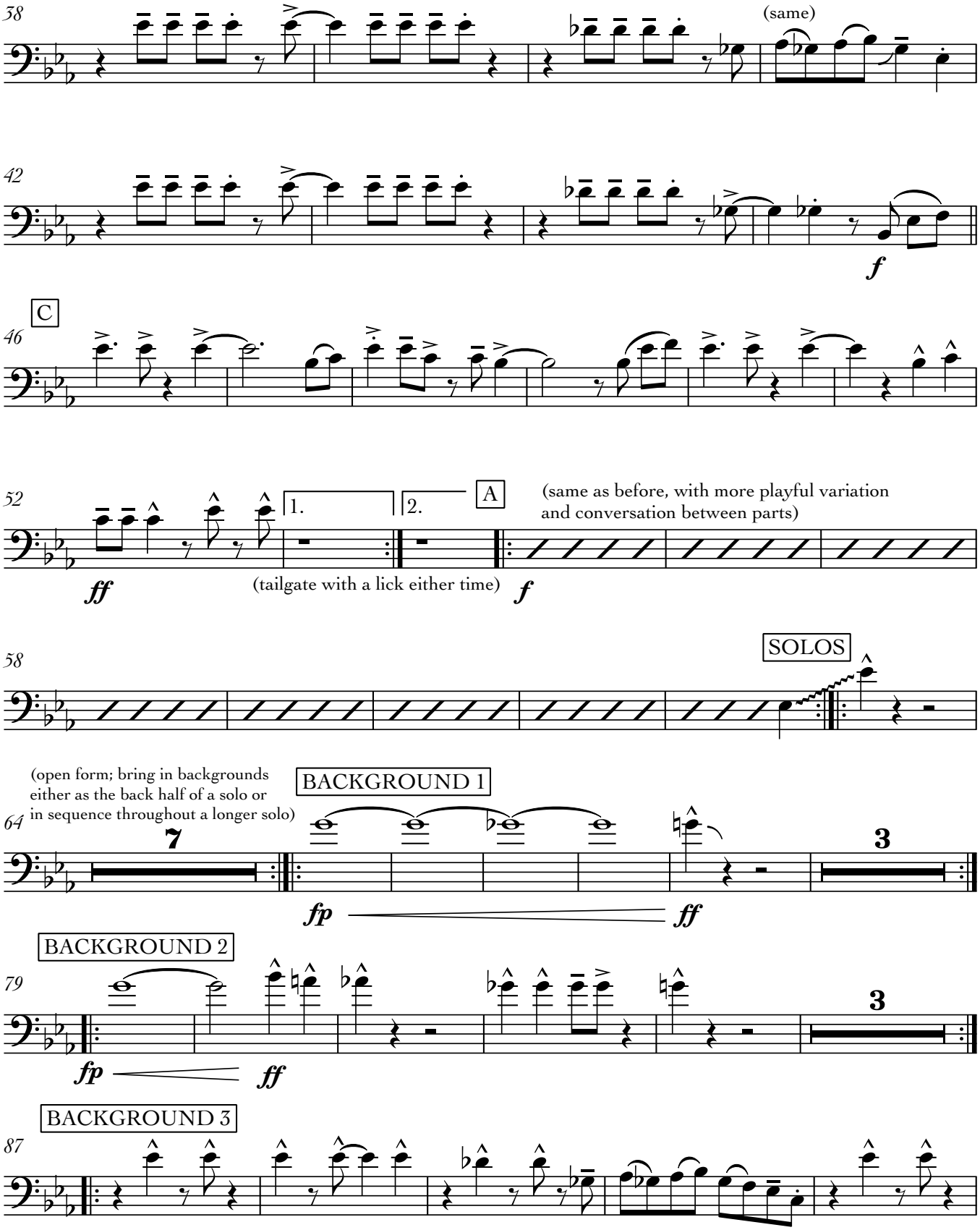
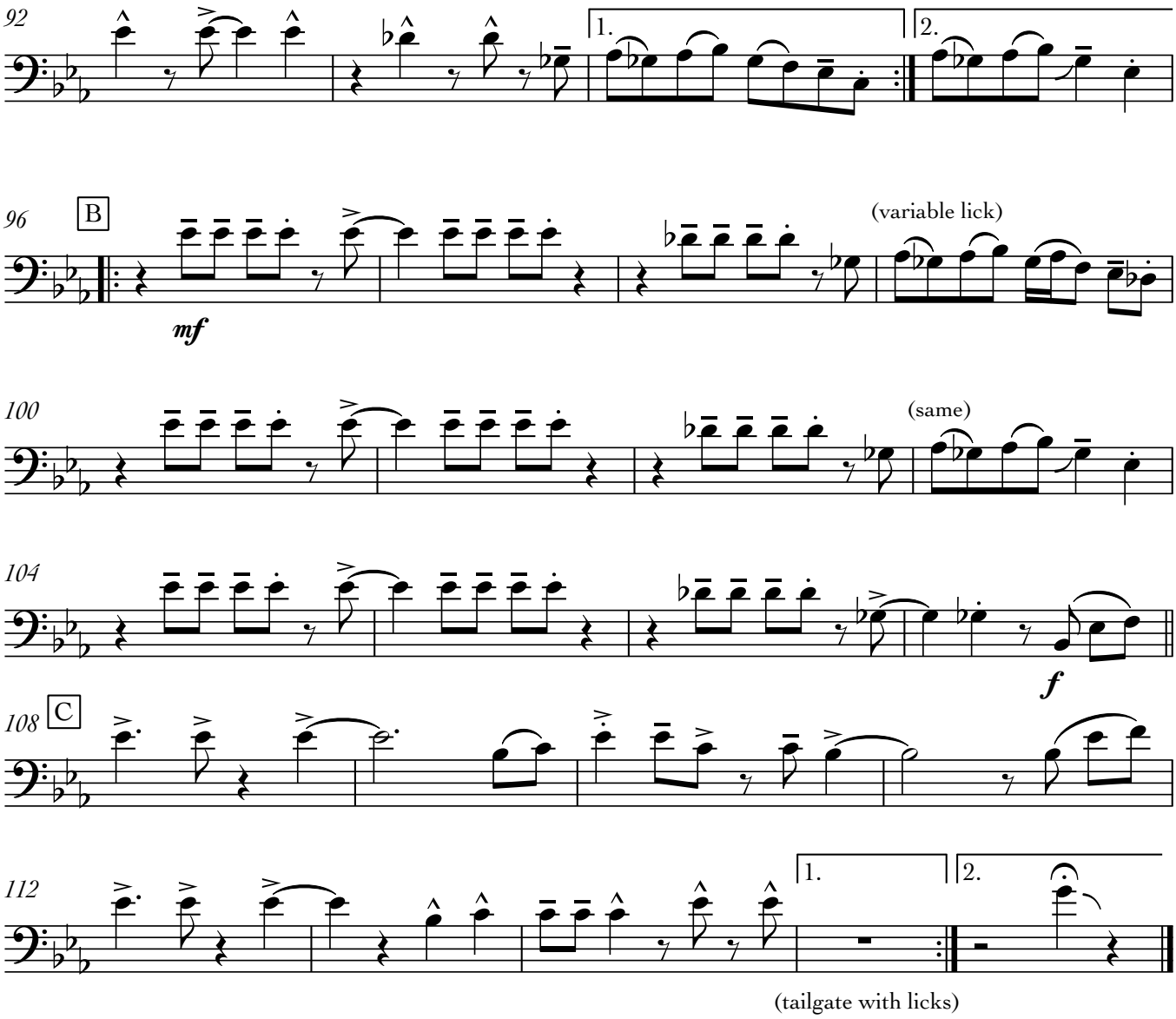

38
(same)
42
f
C
46
52
1.
2.
A
(same as before, with more playful variation
and conversation between parts)
ff
(tailgate with a lick either time)
f
58
SOLOS
(open form; bring in backgrounds
either as the back half of a solo or
in sequence throughout a longer solo)
BACKGROUND 1
64
7
3
fp
ff
BACKGROUND 2
79
3
fp
ff
BACKGROUND 3
87


92
1.
2.
96
B
(variable lick)
mf
100
(same)
104
f
108
C
112
1.
2.
(tailgate with licks)

Feel Like Funkin' It Up

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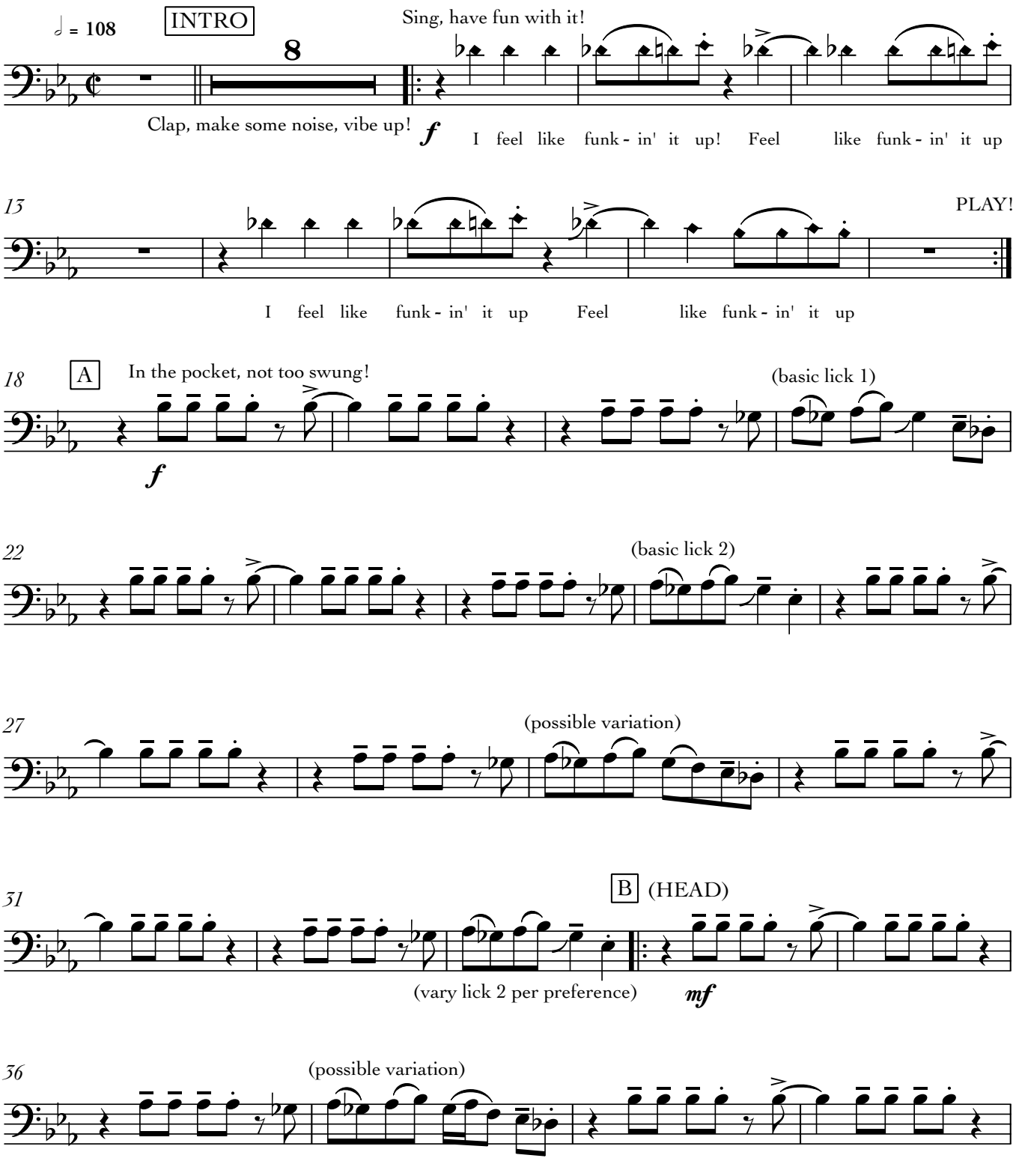
Trombone 2

Kermit Ruffins, Phil Frazier, Keith Frazier
arr. DaiyeOne



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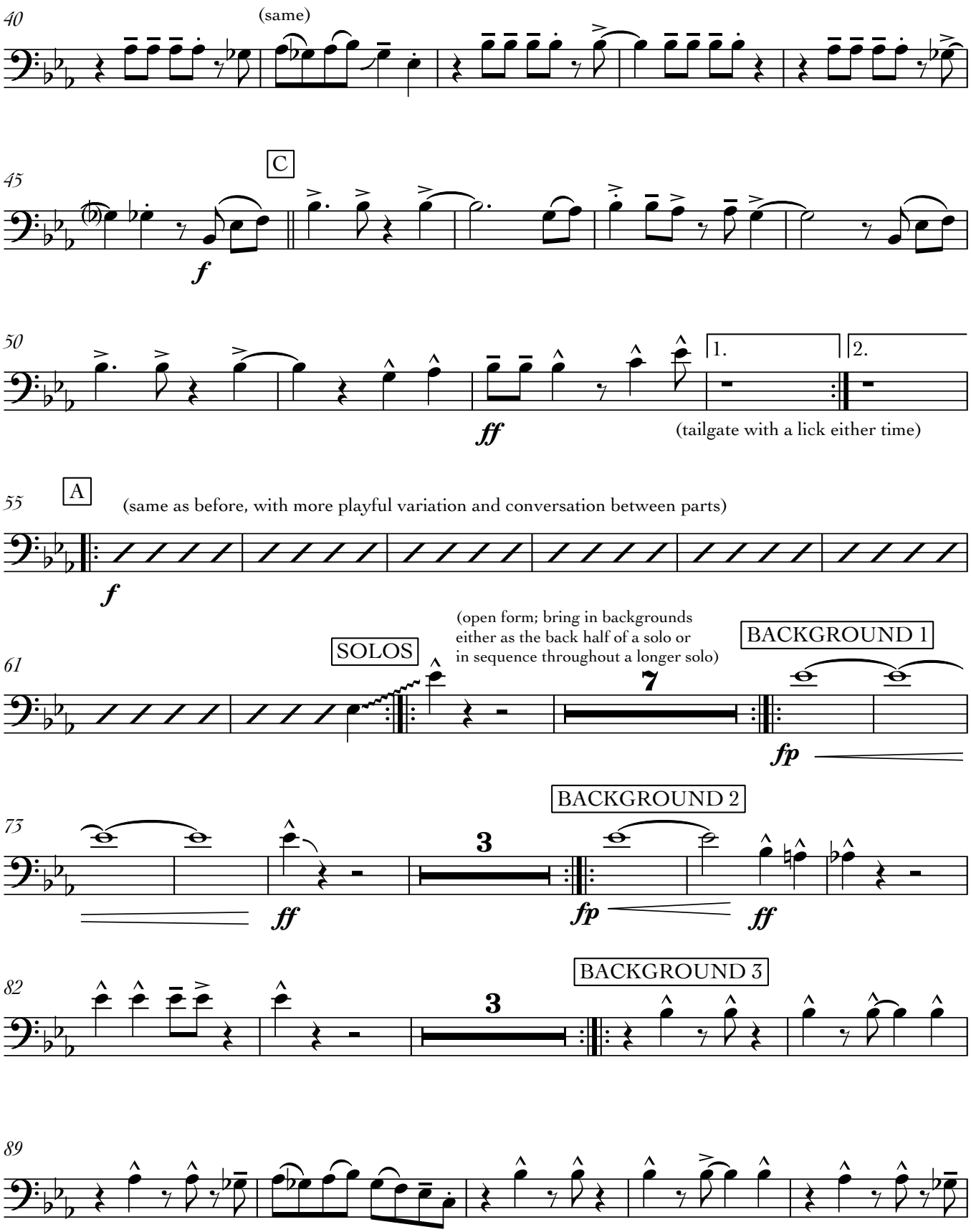
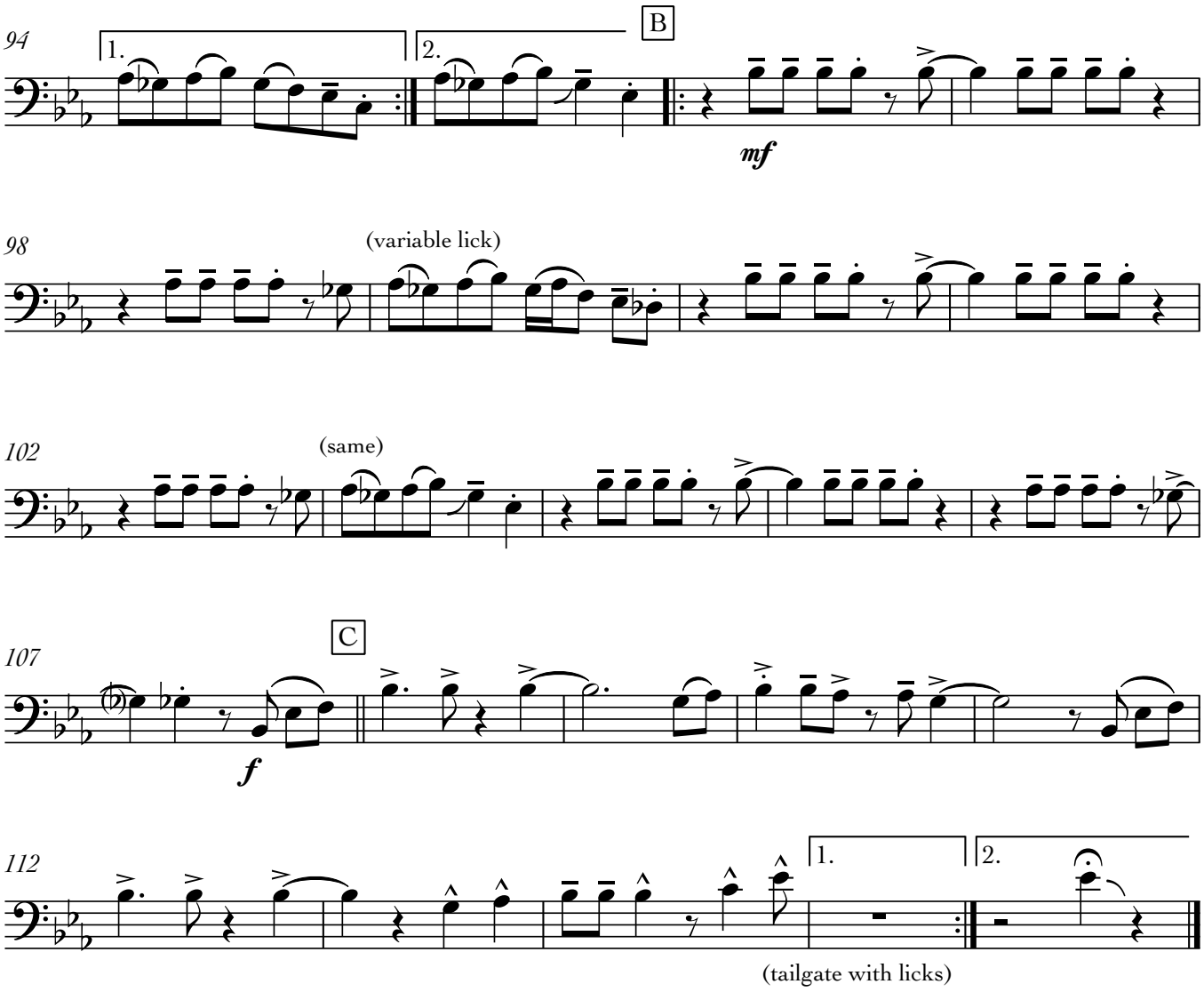

40
(same)
45
C
f
50
1.
2.
ff
(tailgate with a lick either time)
55
A
(same as before, with more playful variation and conversation between parts)
f
61
SOLOS
(open form; bring in backgrounds
either as the back half of a solo or
in sequence throughout a longer solo)
7
BACKGROUND 1
fp
73
3
BACKGROUND 2
ff
fp
ff
82
3
BACKGROUND 3
89

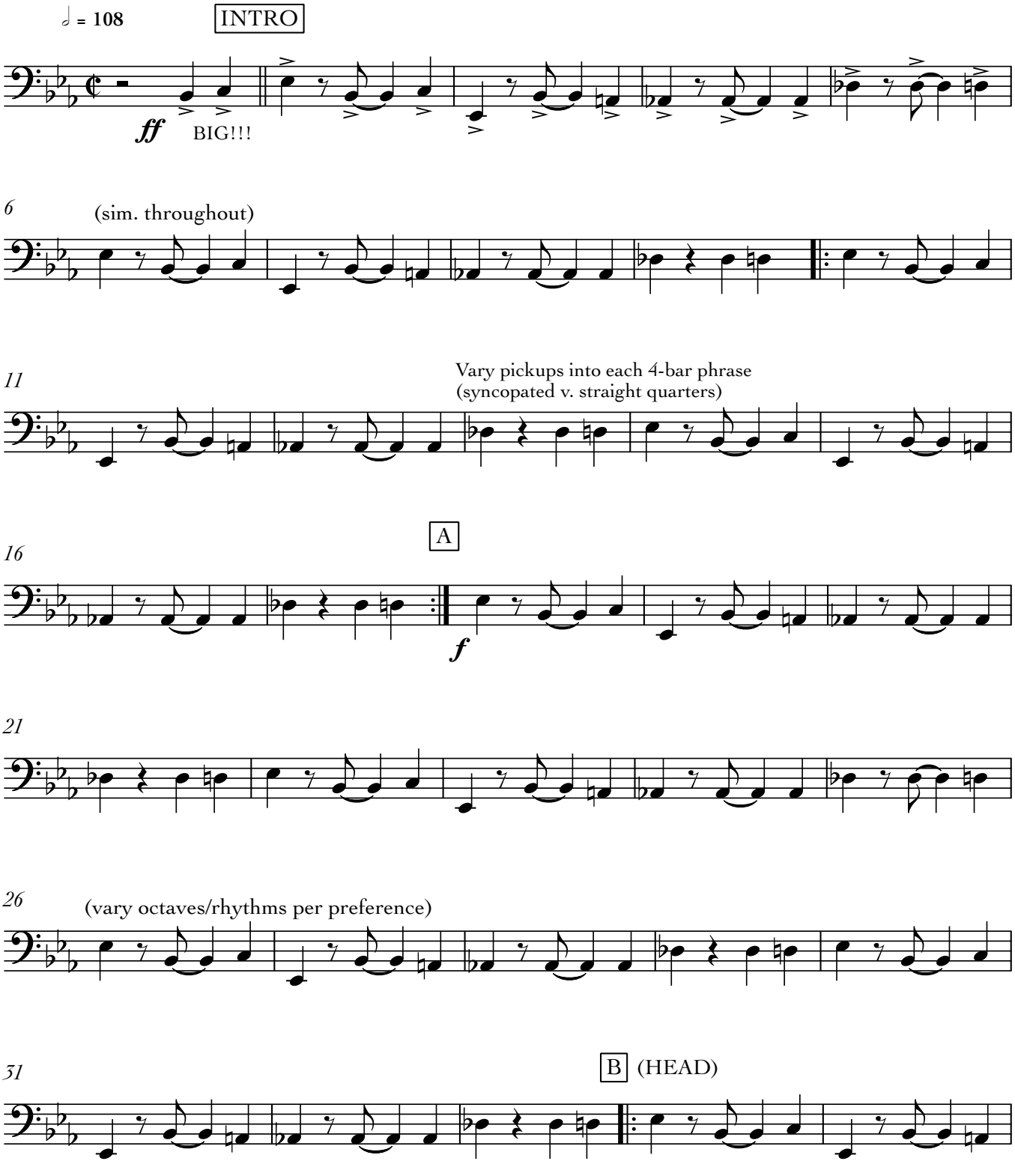

94
1.
2.
B
mf
98
(variable lick)
102
(same)
107
C
f
112
1.
2.
(tailgate with licks)

Feel Like Funkin' It Up

as recorded by Rebirth Brass Band

Sousaphone

Kermit Ruffins, Phil Frazier, Keith Frazier
arr. DaiyeOne



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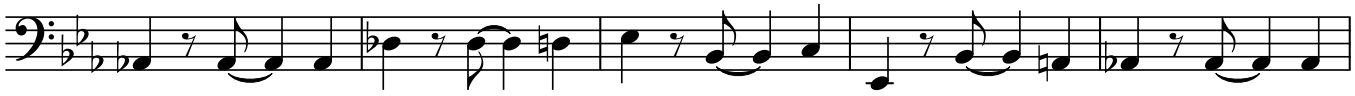
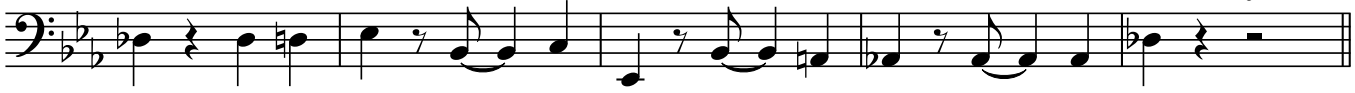
36



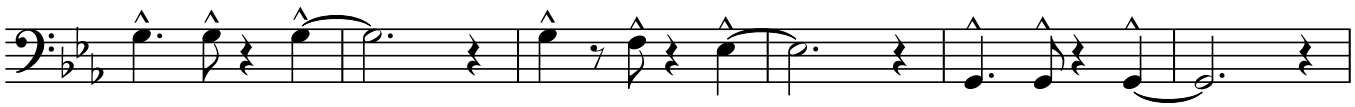
41

(throw a WOOP here if you feel it)



C

46

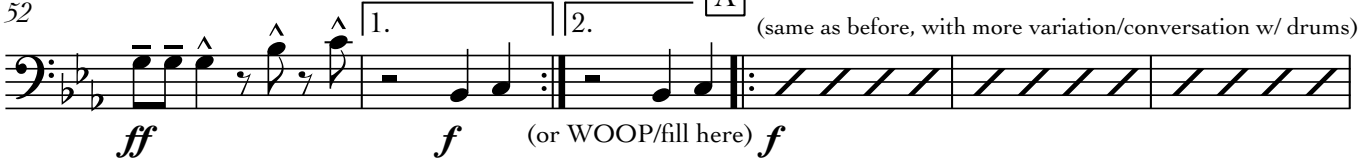


52

A

(same as before, with more variation/conversation w/ drums)

1. 2.

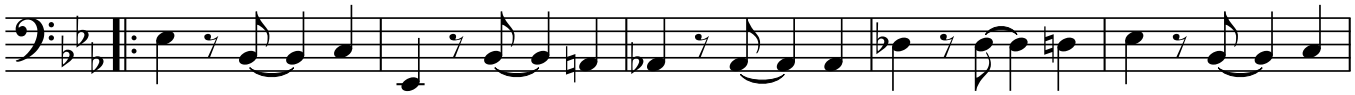


ff *f* (or WOOP/fill here) *f*

58

SOLOS (open form; backgrounds either as the back half of a solo or in sequence throughout a longer solo)

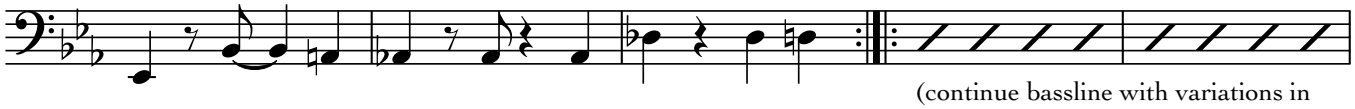
63



(continue bassline variations; explore space as well)

BACKGROUND 1

68



(continue bassline with variations in rhythm, octaves, space, events, WOOPS)

73

BACKGROUND 2

79

BACKGROUND 3

85

91

1.

2.

B

97

102

C

107

(give us a WOOP!)

112

1.

2.

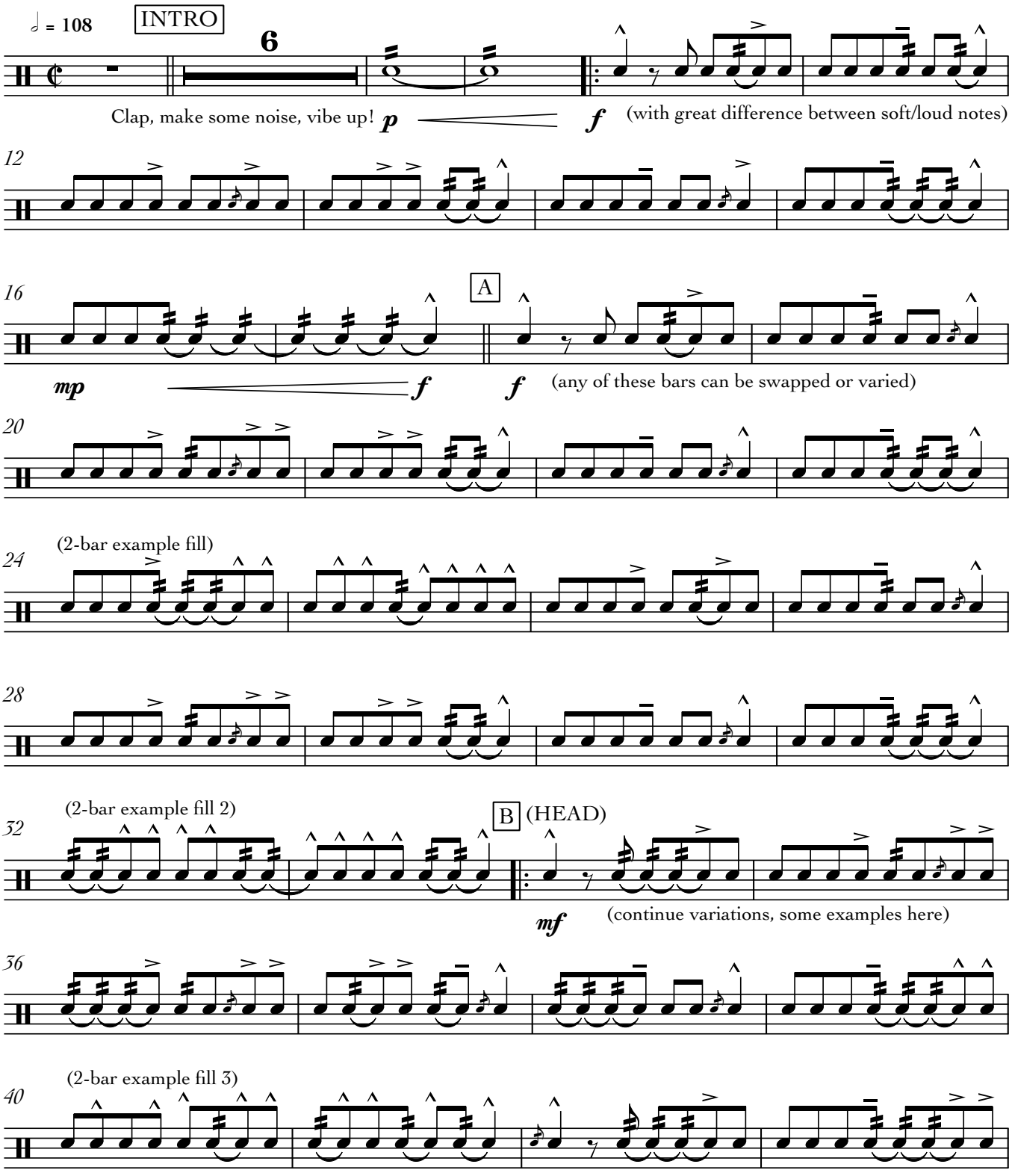
ff

Feel Like Funkin' It Up

as recorded by Rebirth Brass Band

Snare Drum/Cymbal

Kermit Ruffins, Phil Frazier, Keith Frazier
arr. DaiyeOne



V.S.

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2

44

(example fill 4)

C

f

48

52

1.

2.

A

(same as before, with more variation/conversation)

ff

(crescendo'd fill while accenting horns)

f

57

SOLOS (open form; backgrounds either as back half of a solo or in sequence throughout a longer solo)

63

(continue variations on patterns from A and B, using space, dynamics, and interplay)

(example fill 5)

67

BACKGROUND 1

71

(continue patterns/variations while supporting background licks)

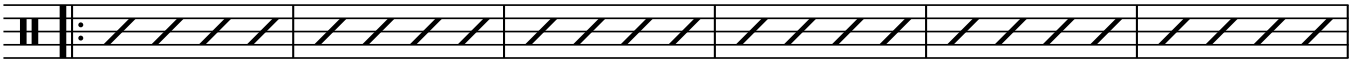
BACKGROUND 2

77

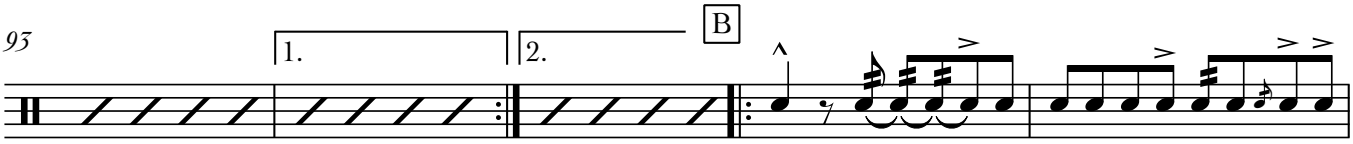
82

BACKGROUND 3

87

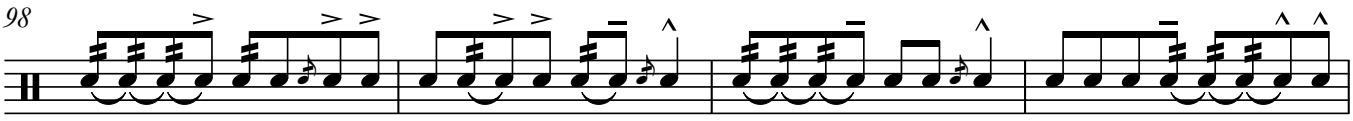


93



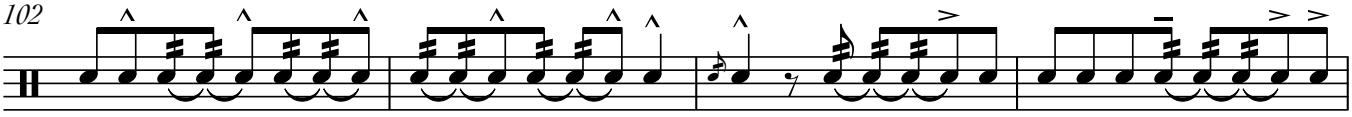
mf (more variations on Head, more bold)

98



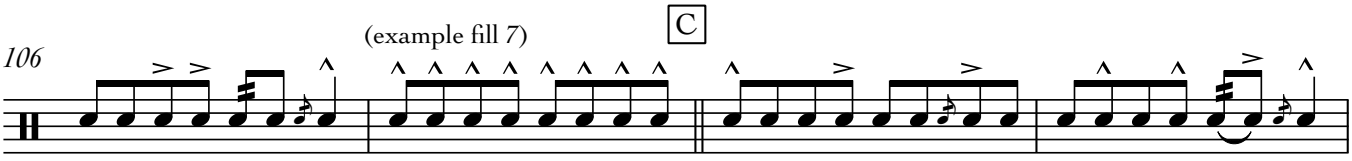
(2-bar example fill 6)

102



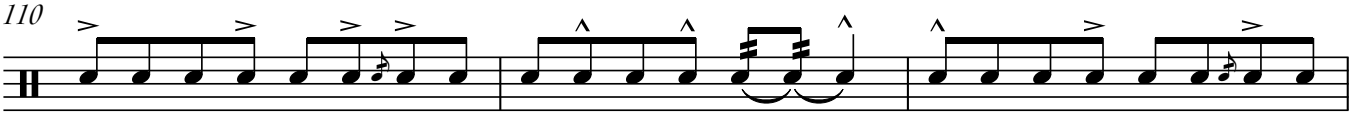
(example fill 7)

106

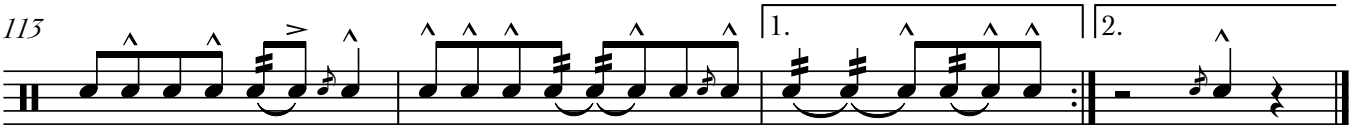


f

110



113



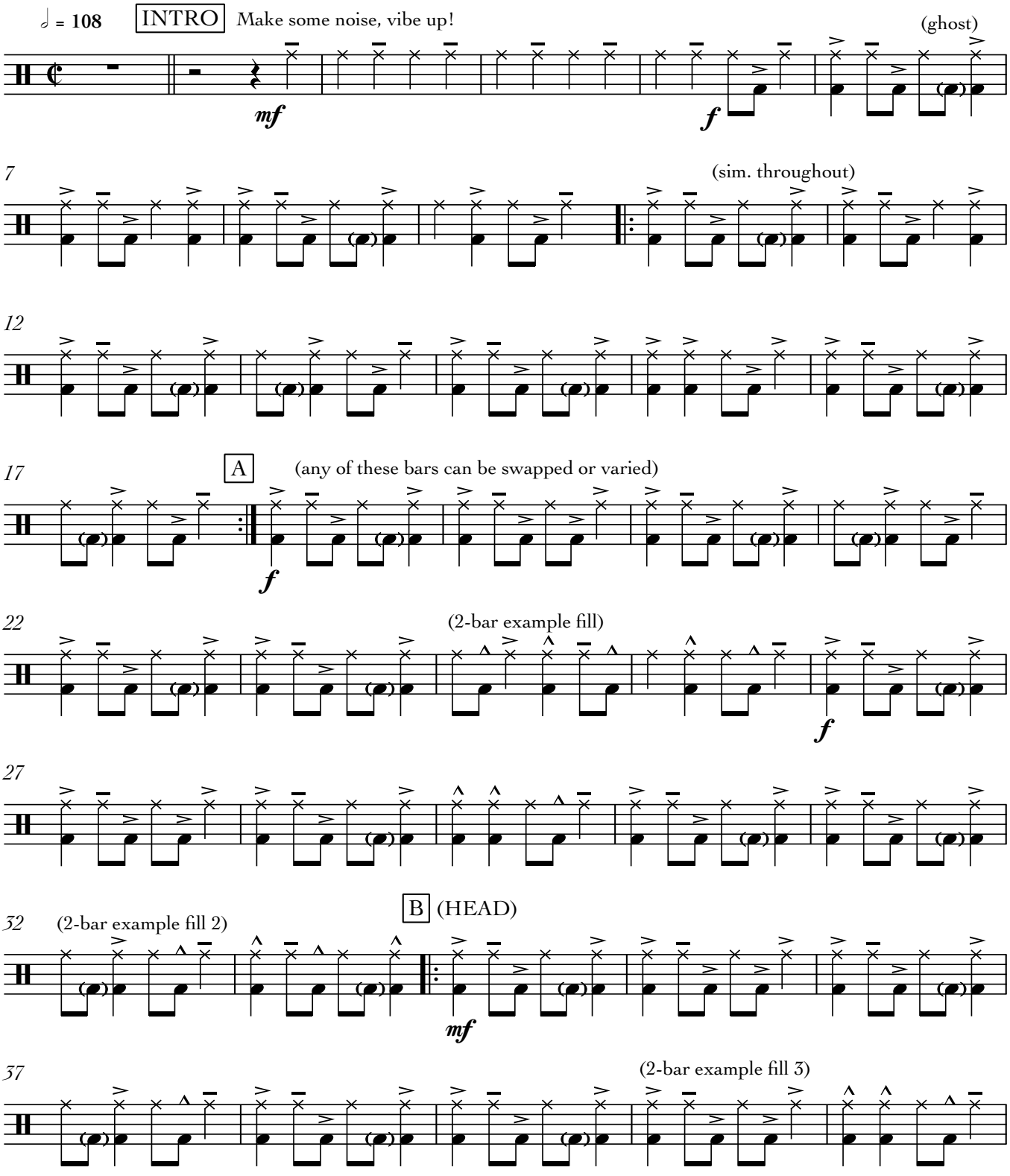
ff (crescendo'd fill while accenting horns)

Feel Like Funkin' It Up

as recorded by Rebirth Brass Band

Bass Drum/Cymbal

Kermit Ruffins, Phil Frazier, Keith Frazier
arr. DaiyeOne



V.S.

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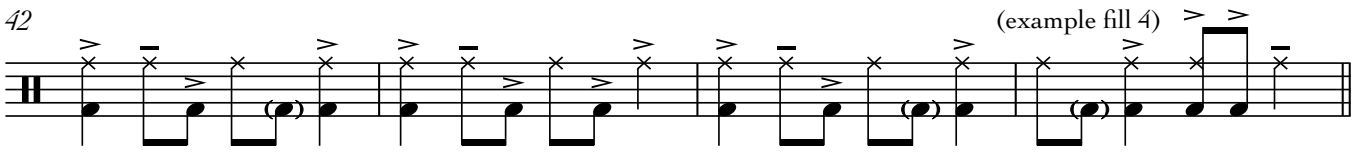
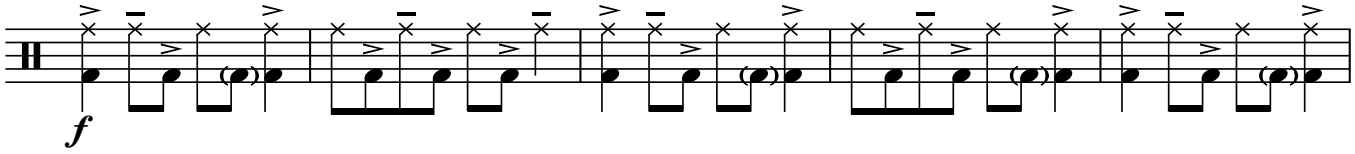
42

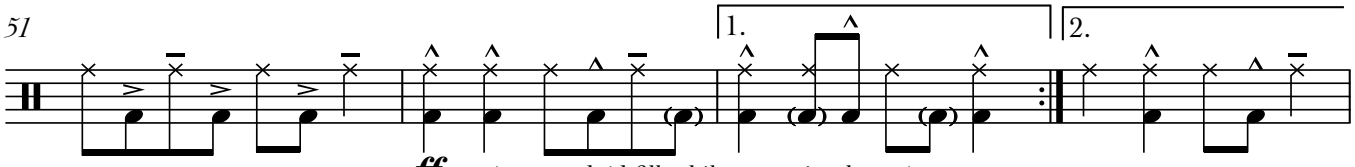
(example fill 4)



46 C



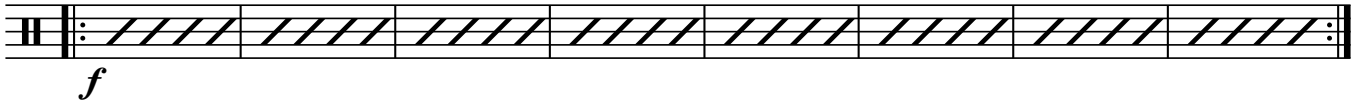
51



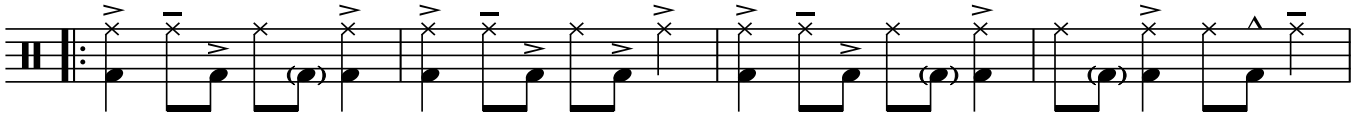
(crescendo'd fill while accenting horns)

55 A

(same as before, with more variation/conversation)



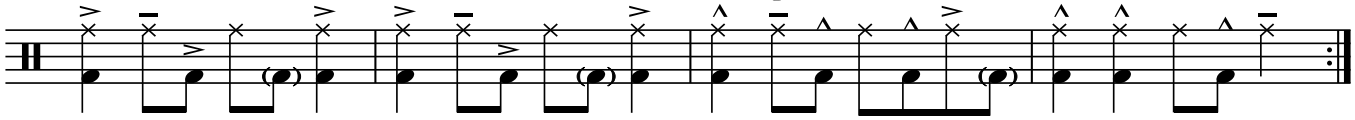
63 SOLOS (open form; backgrounds either as back half of a solo or in sequence throughout a longer solo)



(continue variations on patterns from A and B, using space, dynamics, and interplay)

67

(example fill 5)

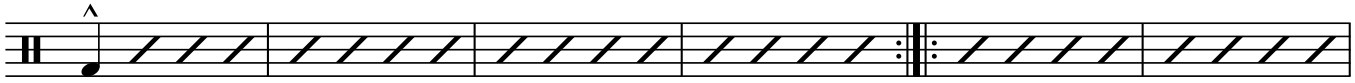


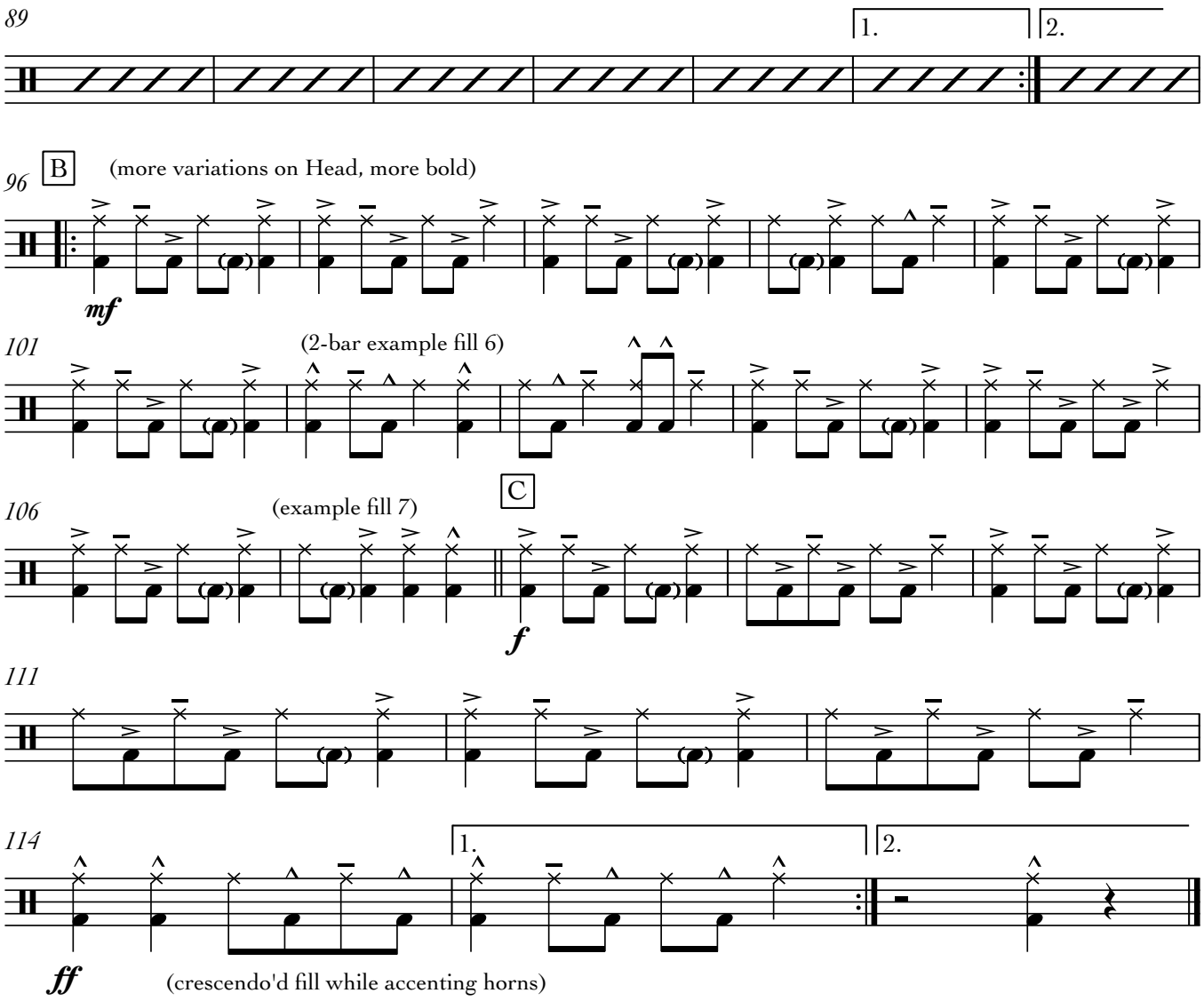
71 BACKGROUND 1

(continue patterns/variations while supporting background licks)

77 BACKGROUND 2

85 BACKGROUND 3




89
1.
2.
96
B
(more variations on Head, more bold)
mf
101
(2-bar example fill 6)
106
(example fill 7)
C
f
111
114
1.
2.
ff
(crescendo'd fill while accenting horns)