Sequential Warm-Ups for Beginning Jazz Ensemble

PETER BLAIR

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Instrumentation

Full Score	
Alto Saxophone 1	
Alto Saxophone 2	1
Tenor Saxophone 1	1
Tenor Saxophone 2 (optional)	1
Baritone Saxophone (optional)	1
Trumpet 1	1
Trumpet 2	1
Trumpet 3 (optional)	1
Trumpet 4 (optional)	1
Trombone 1	1
Trombone 2 (optional)	1
Trombone 3 (optional)	1
Trombone 4 (optional)	1
Guitar (optional)	1
Piano	1
Bass	1
Drums	1
Flute (optional)	1
Clarinet (optional)	1
Horn in F (optional)	1
Tuba (optional)	1

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How to use the Sequential Warm-Ups for Beginning Jazz Ensemble

Blair Bielawski (Peter Blair) has an extensive and varied background in music education, composition, and performance. He holds a BA from Carroll University (Waukesha, WI) and an MA from the University of Wisconsin. Currently, Blair is an Instrumental Editor at Excelcia Music Publishing and Kendor Music Publishing. An accomplished composer and arranger, he has over 100 compositions and arrangements in print, as well as many commissions for college, high school, and middle school groups throughout the United States. His music has been published by Hal Leonard, Heritage JazzWorks, and Alfred.

1. Harmonic Warm-up 1

This Warm-up should be played slowly and as musically as possible. There are no dynamics or specific tempo alterations notated…this as a rubato exercise that should be played slightly differently each time. Bend and stretch the tempo to follow the shape of the melody and the harmonic movement.

The Guitar can play the single note melody with the winds or may play chords in half notes and whole notes as notated. The Piano and Bass should play as written while the Drum part may be played more freely with improvised light Cymbal accents and other "color" fills.

2.Harmonic Warm-up 2

The emphasis in the first Warm-up is on minor and dominant chords, while this Warm-up is more focused on major tonalities. The Saxophone and Trombone sections use very typical voicings for each chord so that all the players can become familiar with the sound, feel and color of these jazz chords.

3.Nice and Easy

Warm-up 3 is the beginning of the section using even eighth notes in the key of B♭. The familiar ii7 – V7 chord pattern is the basis of all the examples in this section for a couple of reasons: it is the harmonic building block of many jazz compositions, so students need to get this pattern "in their ear", it offers some harmonic movement instead of just staying on a B♭ major chord, the Piano voicings in the right hand are straight forward and easy to read and the Bass only has to deal with two notes instead of a walking Bass line.

4. Rhythmic Workout 1

As with all the Warm-ups, there are no tempo or dynamic markings, so feel free to try this at a variety of tempos incorporating varying dynamic levels. If you would like to make this Warm-up even easier, put a repeat around any 2 or 4 measures and make a loop out of them.

5. Rhythmic Workout 2

Slightly more challenging rhythms are introduced in this Warm-up compared to the previous music. Try having one section of the band play while the other musicians listen and critique.

6. Let's Start Swinging

Now comes the core of what jazz is all about…swinging eighth notes. Volumes have been written trying to explain how to "swing", and it is beyond the scope of this collection to go into a lengthy description, but it comes down to the fact that swing eighth notes sound different than they look. Eighth notes in swing are triplet based compared to "even" eighth notes. The second eighth note in a group of two (or four or eight) is more accented than the downbeat and is played like the last third of a triplet. For example, the syllables you could use to demonstrate the rhythm of bar 1 in this example are "Doo – Daht" or "Doo – Dit"

7. Same Rhythms…Different Pitches

This Warm-up uses the exact rhythms in the winds as the previous example but now it is harmonized, so balance and blend become even more important. Care was taken to be sure that each of the wind parts makes sense on its own without an instrument being stuck on the same pitch for an entire phrase.

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8. More Swing Rhythms

Once again, this Warm-up has the winds playing typical swing rhythms in unison with the rhythm section playing time and outlining the harmonic structure.

9. Same Rhythms…Different Pitches

This Warm-up uses the exact rhythms of the previous example that are now harmonized. The rhythm section parts continue to become more challenging as the Warm-ups progress, but if any of these parts prove to be too difficult for your players, they can use the music from earlier examples.

10. Latin Rock…Back to Basics

This Warm-up uses half notes and quarter notes with simple harmony in the winds to help the rhythm section focus on the "groove". It is important to stress that each of these Warm-ups should be played at a variety of tempos and with different dynamic shadings.

11. Latin Rock Challenge 1

This Warm-up demonstrates the different approach to quarter notes in even eighth note based music compared to swing. In swing, consecutive quarter notes are almost always played short, while in even eighth note music there is often a long quarter note followed by a short one.

12. Latin Rock Challenge 2

Your band will have some fun with this Warm-up. Lots of rhythmic activity and some different phrases between the Trumpets and Trombones should keep everyone in the ensemble on their toes.

13. More Swing Rhythms

This Warm-up is composed of some of the most important and often used rhythms in swing. The winds are in unison so the focus can be on rhythmic accuracy and uniform articulation. This would be a great Warm-up to play at a slower tempo to really help lock in the articulation in the winds.

14. Same Rhythms…Different Pitches

As in previous swing Warm-ups, the example uses the same rhythmic figures as #13 but now it is harmonized. Be aware that the Drum part uses the timbre shift from Hi-hat time to Ride Cymbal to set off the 4 measure phrases. If your Drummer needs something easier, they can play the music from the previous example.

15. Keep on Swingin'

This Warm-up focuses on quarter notes with a marcato accent. These notes should be played with weight and with some space between each note. Remind the ensemble not to rush consecutive quarter notes in swing. The Bass line in this Warm-up introduces some more chromatic notes that are typical in a swinging jazz piece. If the player needs an easier line, they can play the music from Warm-ups 13 or 14.

16. Find the Groove!

The Drum notation in this Warm-up uses a musical shorthand that is very common. The staff has slashes indicating that the time continues, and it shows the rhythmic figures the band is playing so the Drummer can see where they can accent and fill with the ensemble.

17. It's Blues Time

This is a blues Warm-up with a simple 4 measure riff that is repeated twice to complete the 12 measure form. It uses a combination of important rhythmic figures from the previous swing Warm-ups.

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Sequential Warm-ups for Beginning Jazz Ensemble

Full Score

1. Harmonic Warm-up 1

PETER BLAIR
(ASCAP)

Slowly

Alto Sax 1
Alto Sax 2
Tenor Sax 1
Tenor Sax 2
Baritone Sax
Trumpet 1
Trumpet 2
Trumpet 3
Trumpet 4
Trombone 1
Trombone 2
Trombone 3
Trombone 4
Guitar
Piano
Bass
Drum Set

Guitar: B♭ma9 C mi9 F7 | B♭mi9 E♭7 | A♭ma9 F+7 | B♭ma9 C mi9 F7 | B♭ma9 C mi9 F7 | B♭ma9 E♭ma7 A mi7(b5) | D7(b9) | G mi6/9

Piano: B♭ma9 C mi9 F13 | B♭mi9 E♭13 | A♭ma9 F+7 | B♭ma9 C mi9 F13 | B♭ma9 C mi9 F13 | B♭ma9 E♭ma7 A mi7(b5) | D7(b9) | G mi6/9

Bass: B♭ma9 C mi9 F7 | B♭mi9 E♭7 | A♭ma9 F+7 | B♭ma9 C mi9 F7 | B♭ma9 C mi9 F7 | B♭ma9 E♭ma7 A mi7(b5) | D7(b9) | G mi6/9

Drum Set: Light Cyms.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

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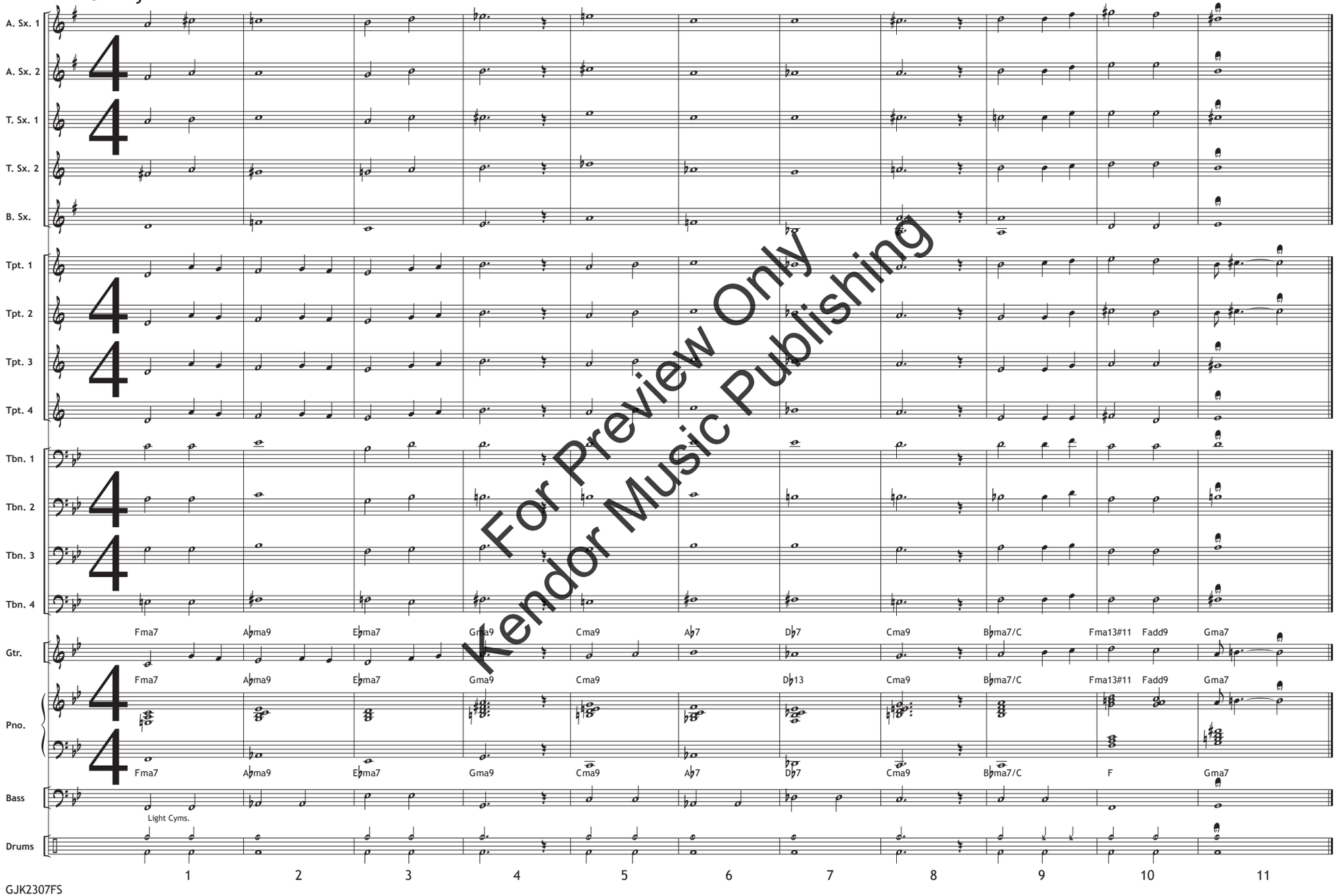
2. Harmonic Warm-up 2

Slowly



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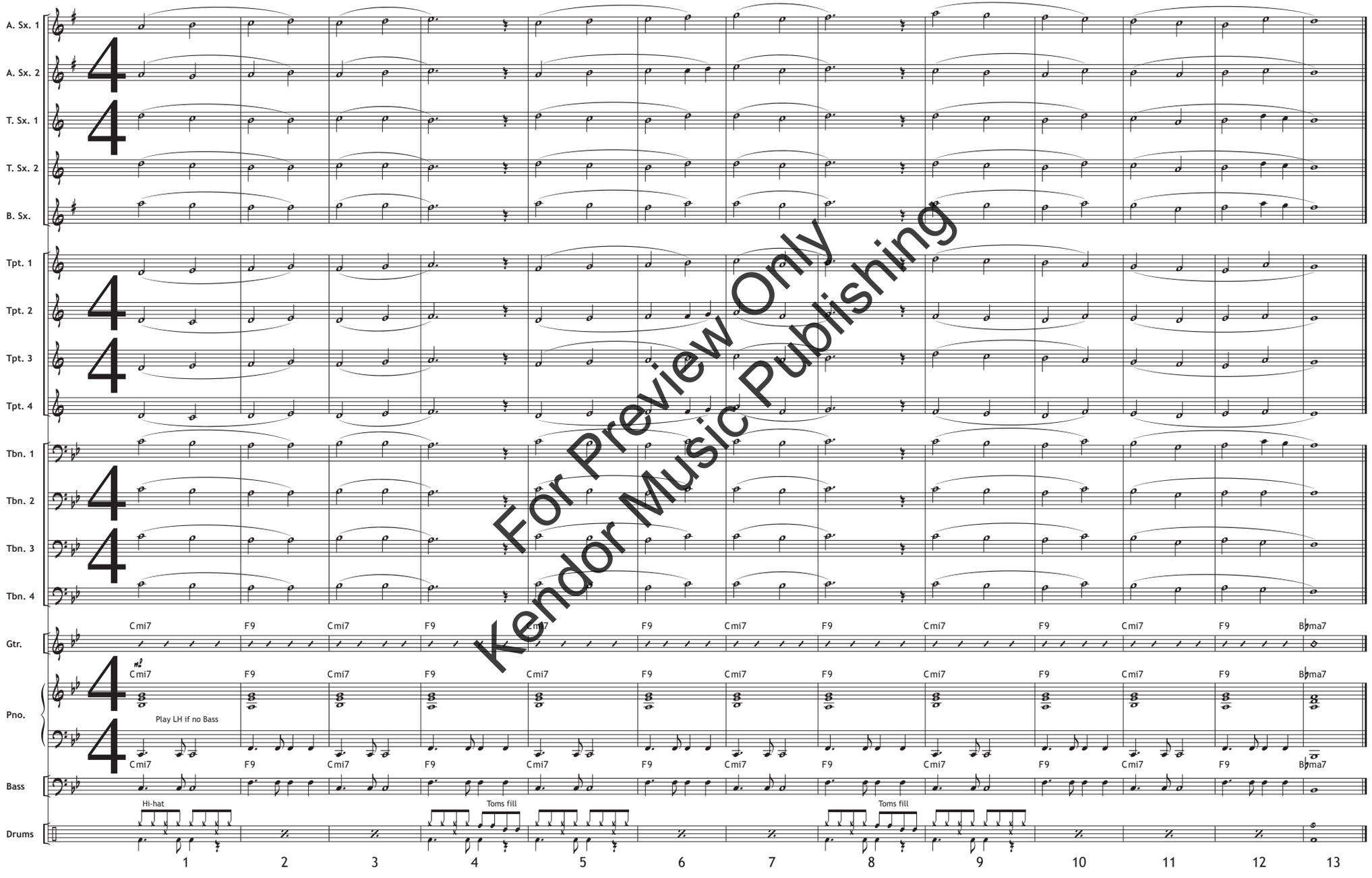
3. Nice and Easy

Even ♪'s



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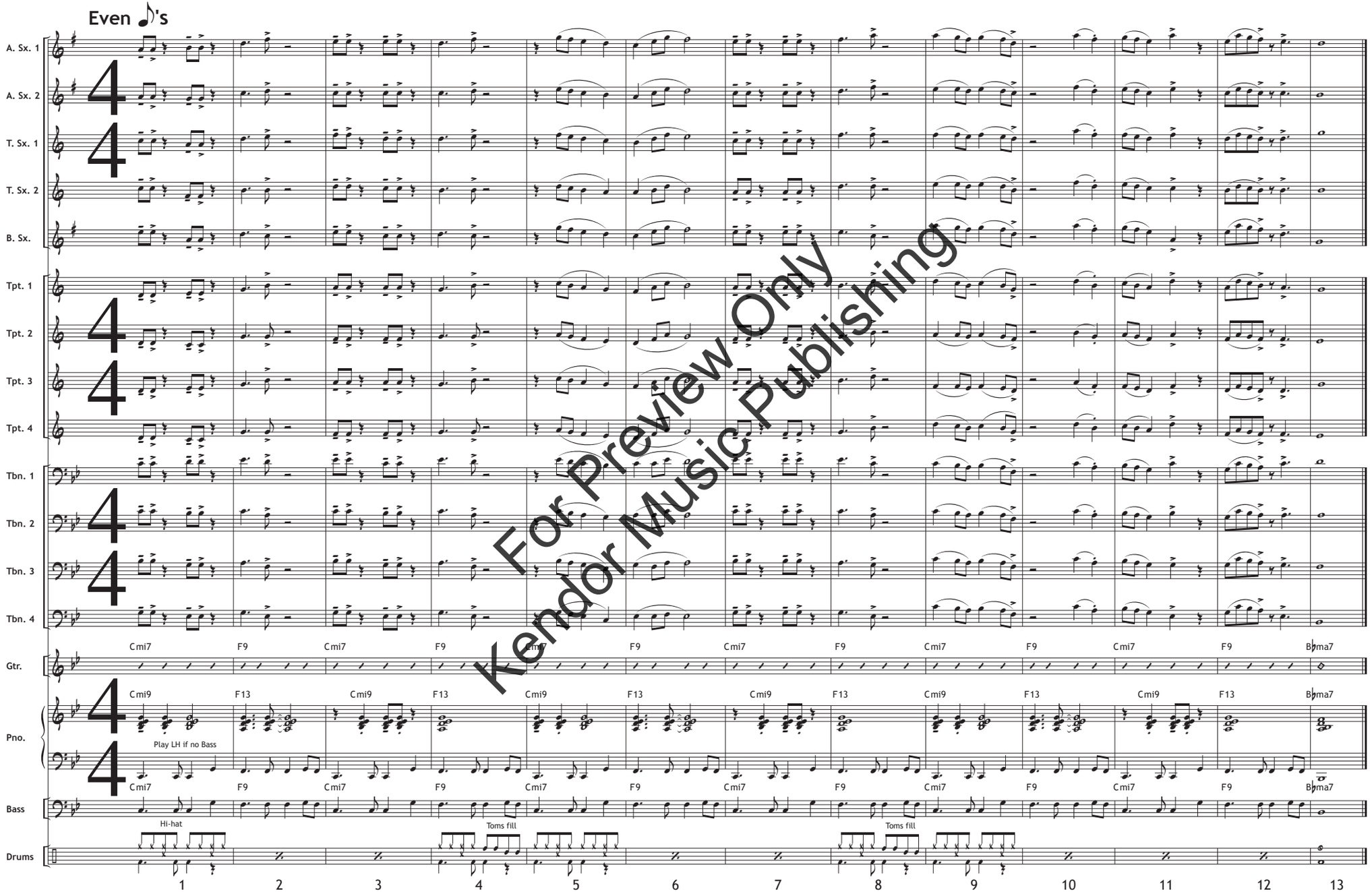
4. Rhythmic Workout 1



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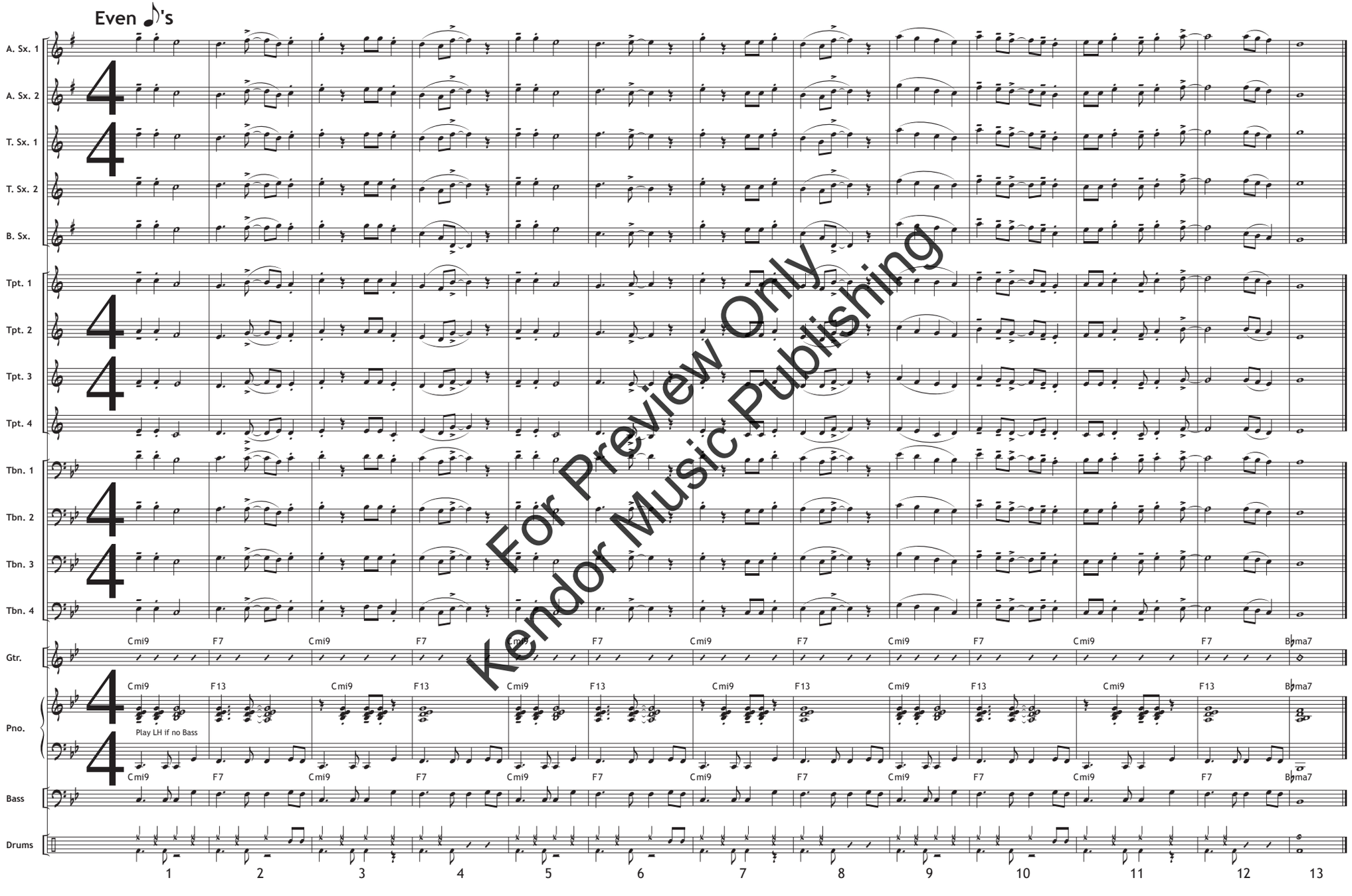
5. Rhythmic Workout 2



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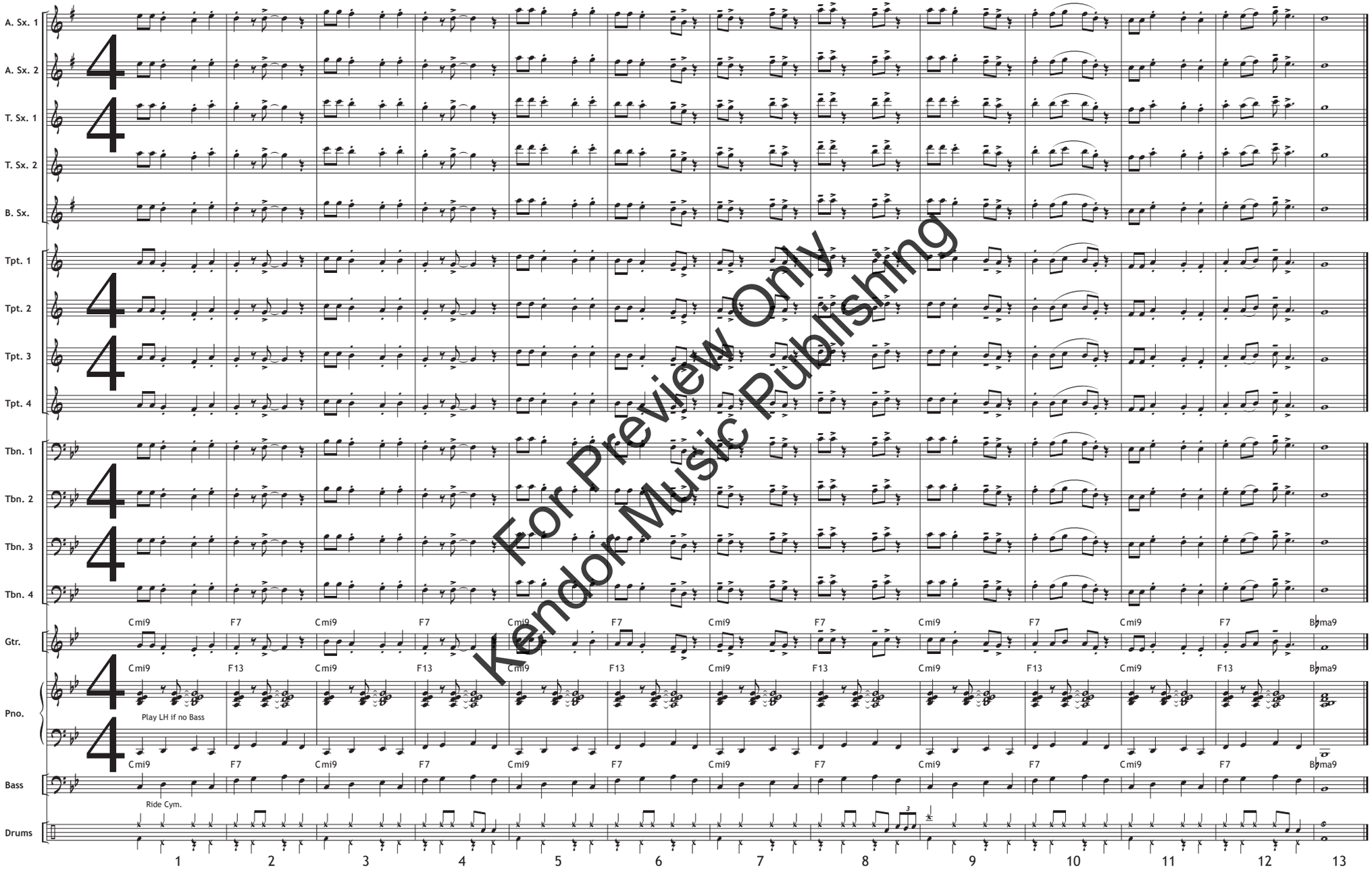
6. Let's Start Swinging

Swing ♪'s



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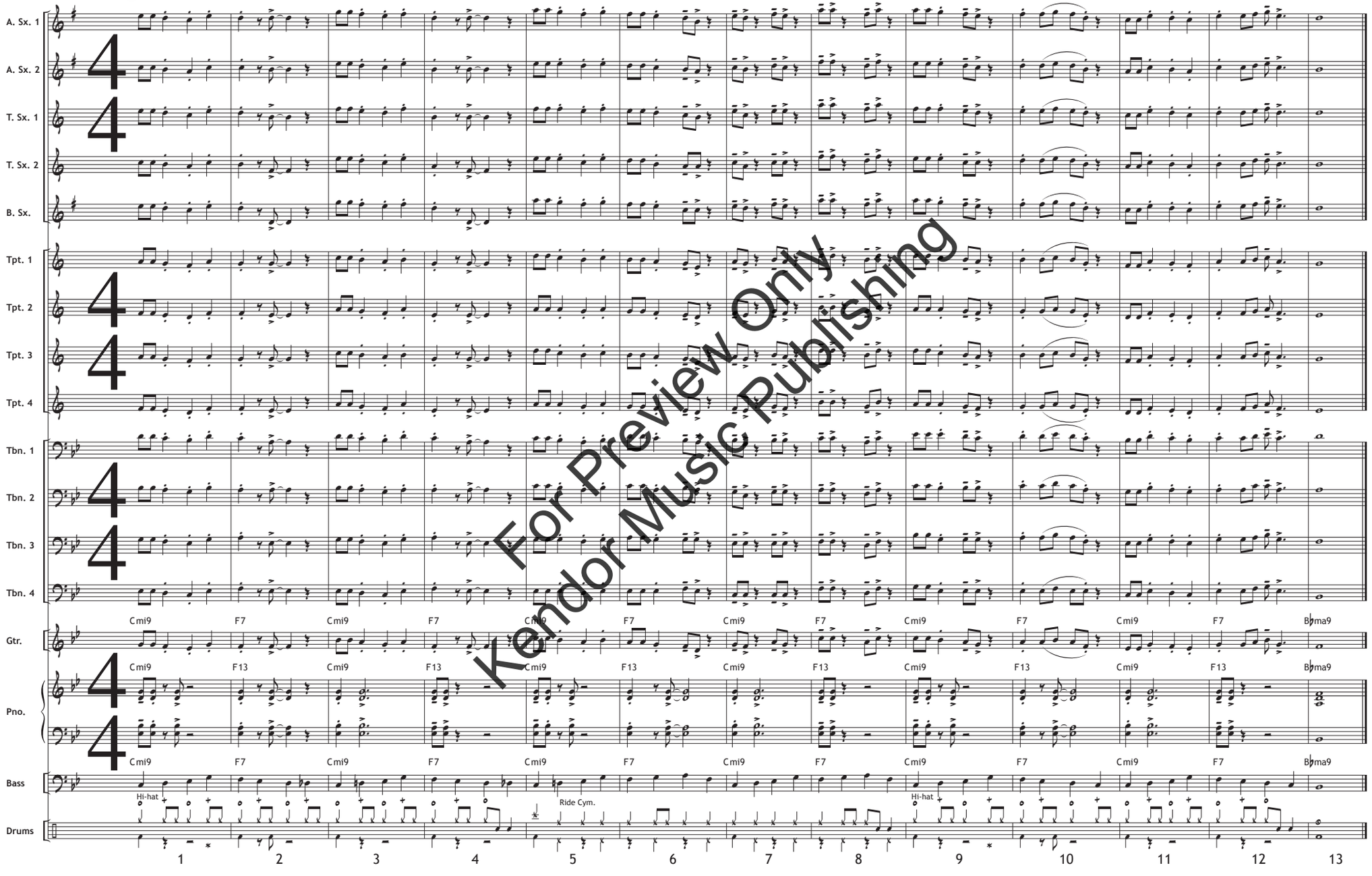
7. Same Rhythms...Different Pitches

Swing ♪'s



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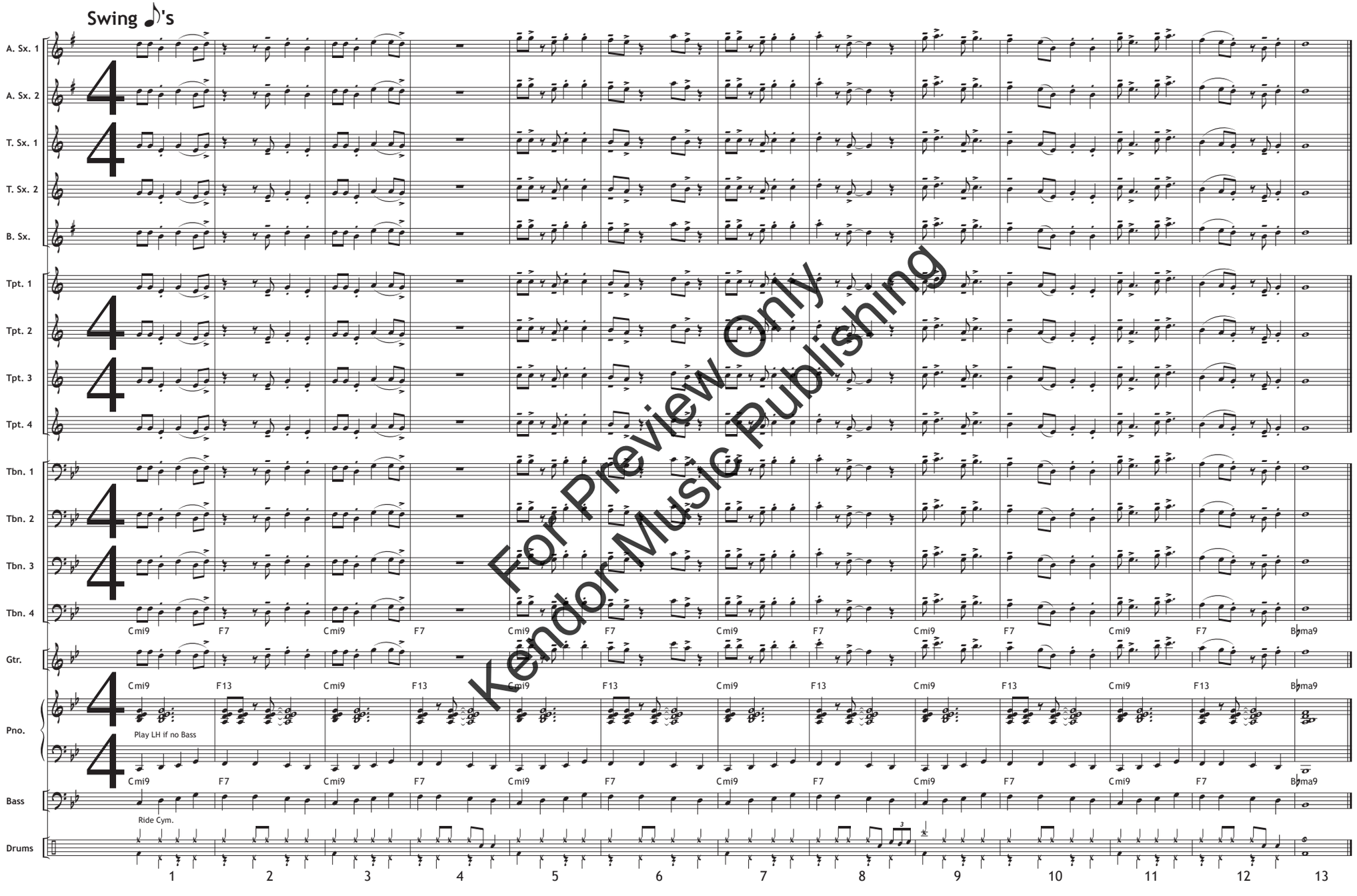
8. More Swing Rhythms



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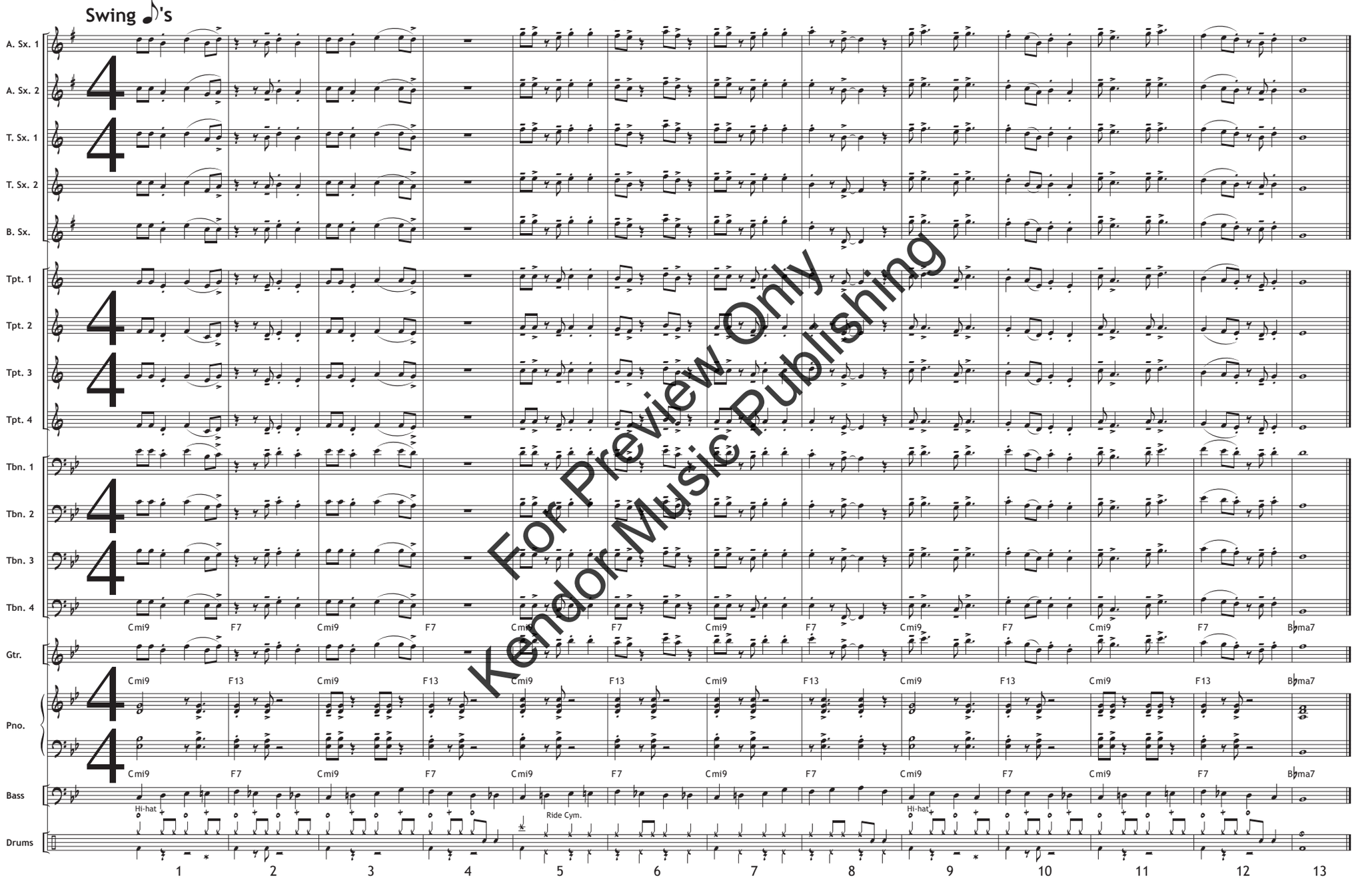
9. Same Rhythms...Different Pitches



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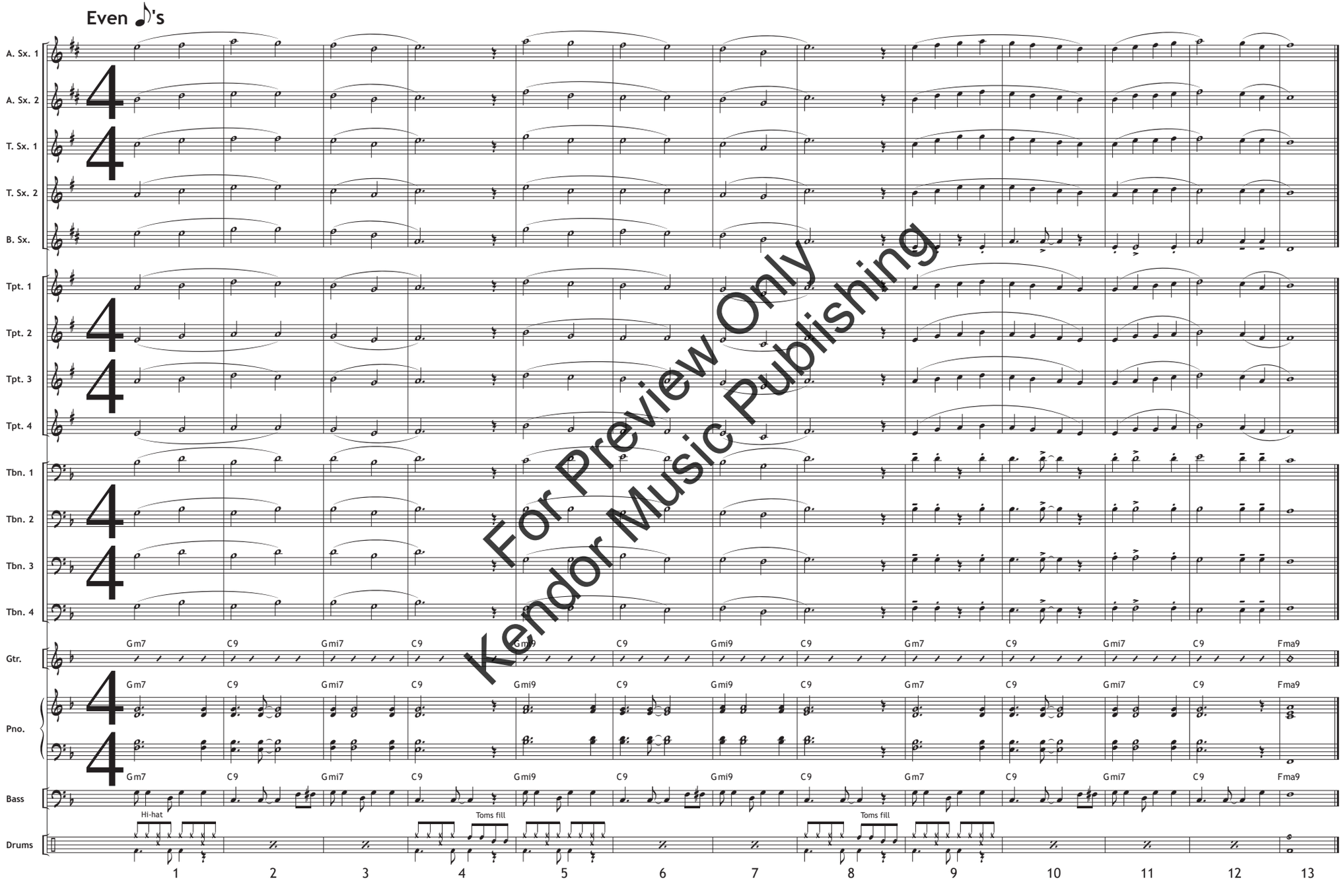
10. Latin Rock...Back to Basics



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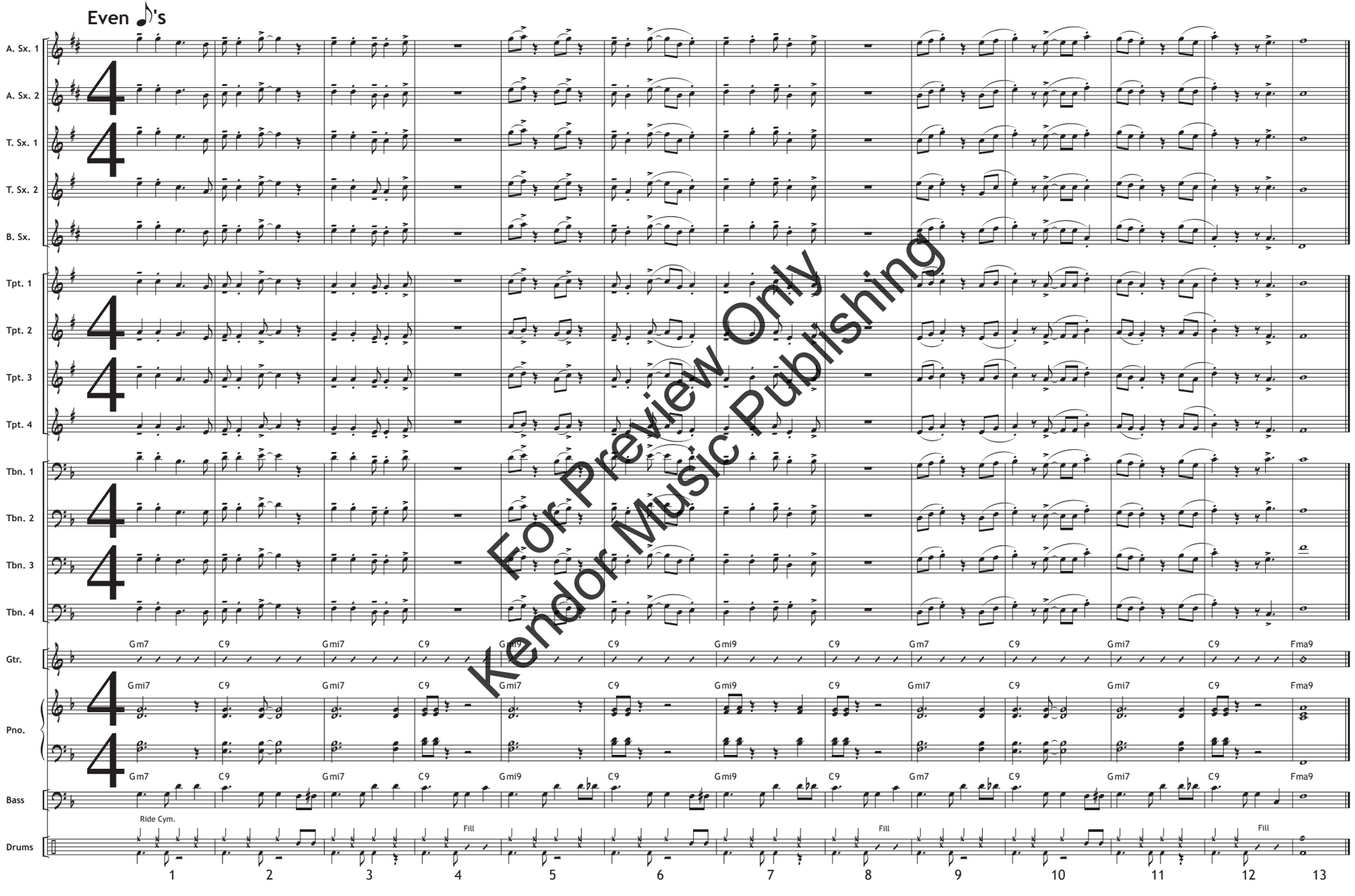
11. Latin Rock Challenge 1



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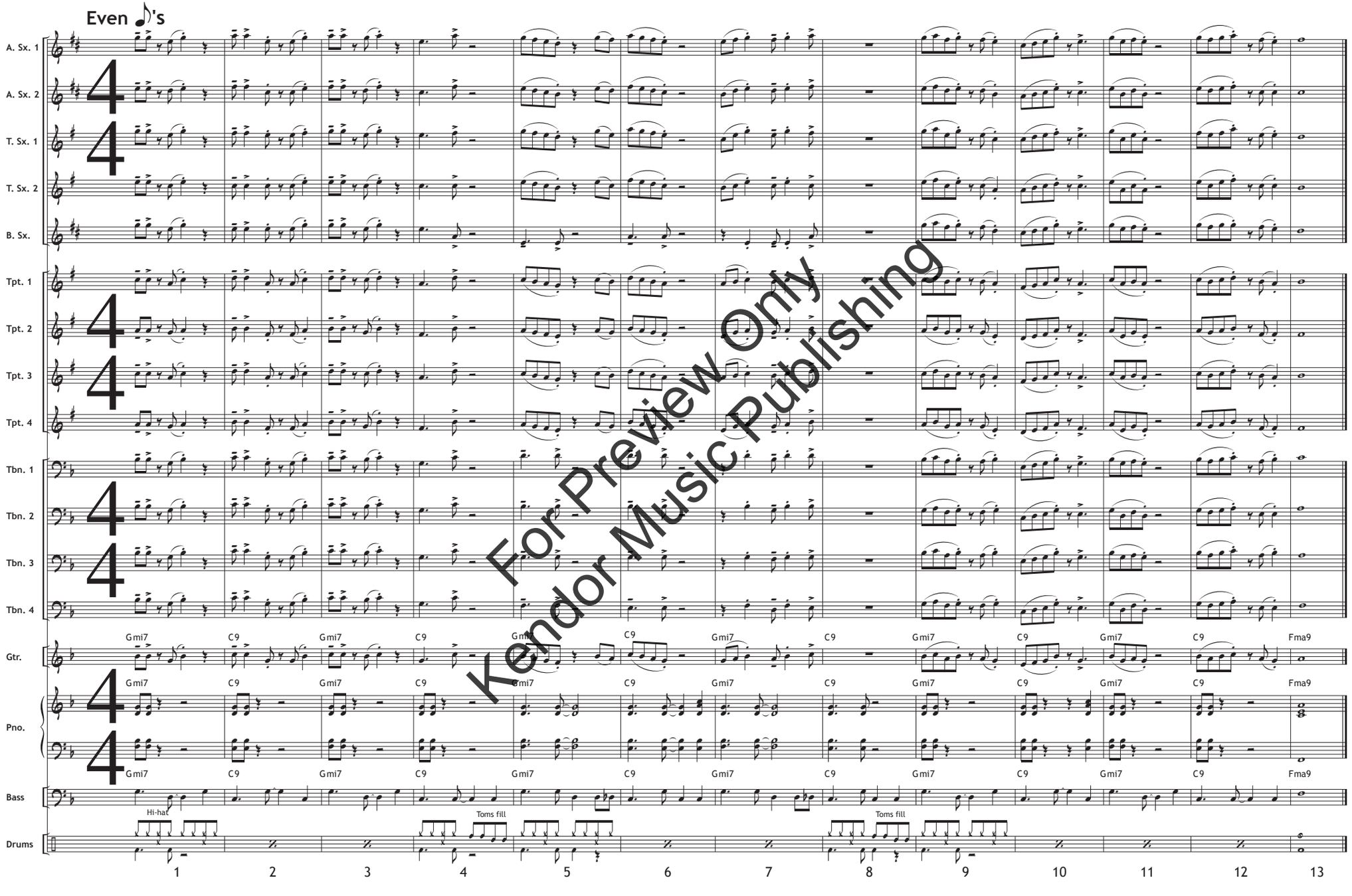
12. Latin Rock Challenge 2



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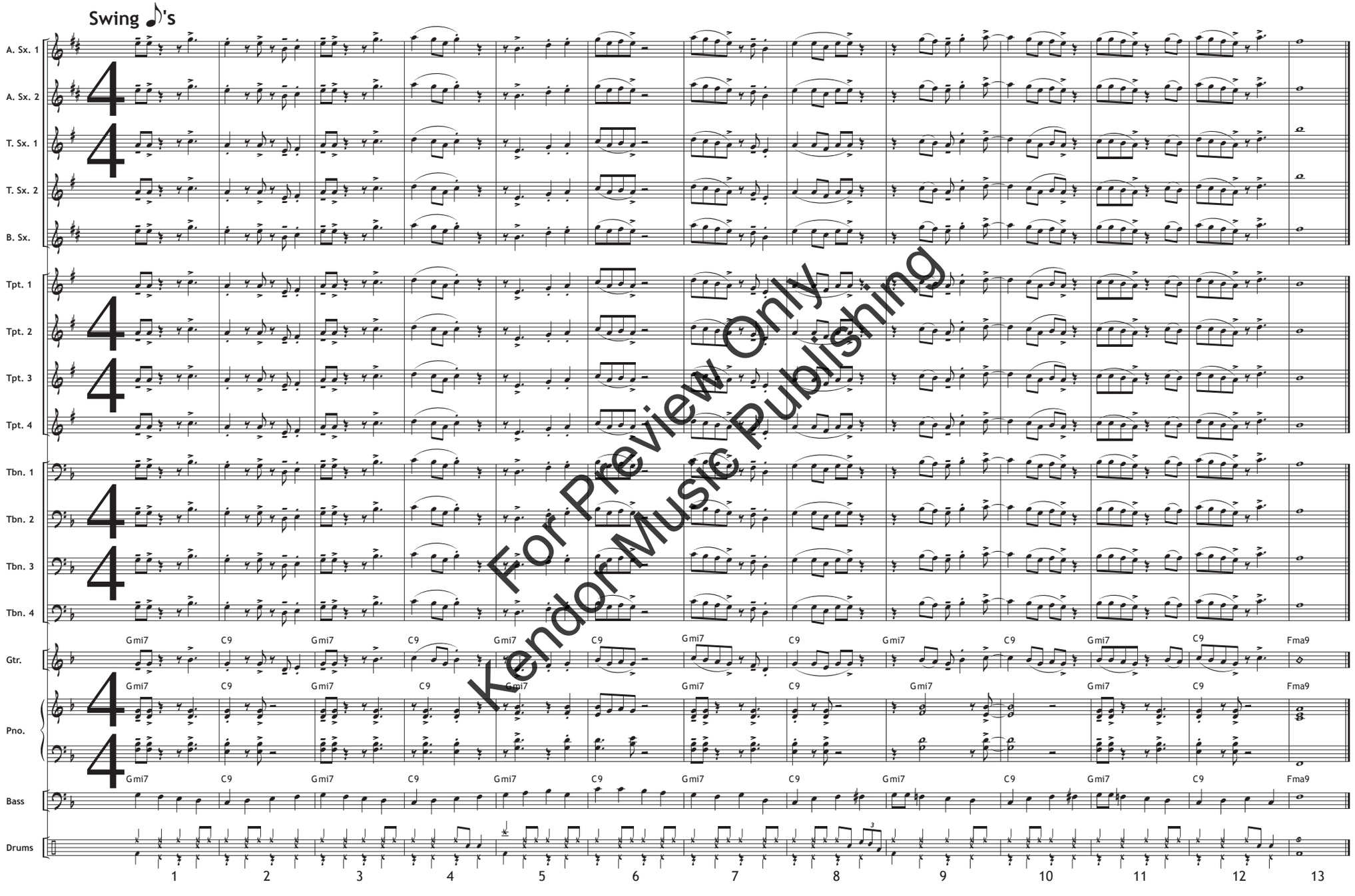
13. More Swing Rhythms



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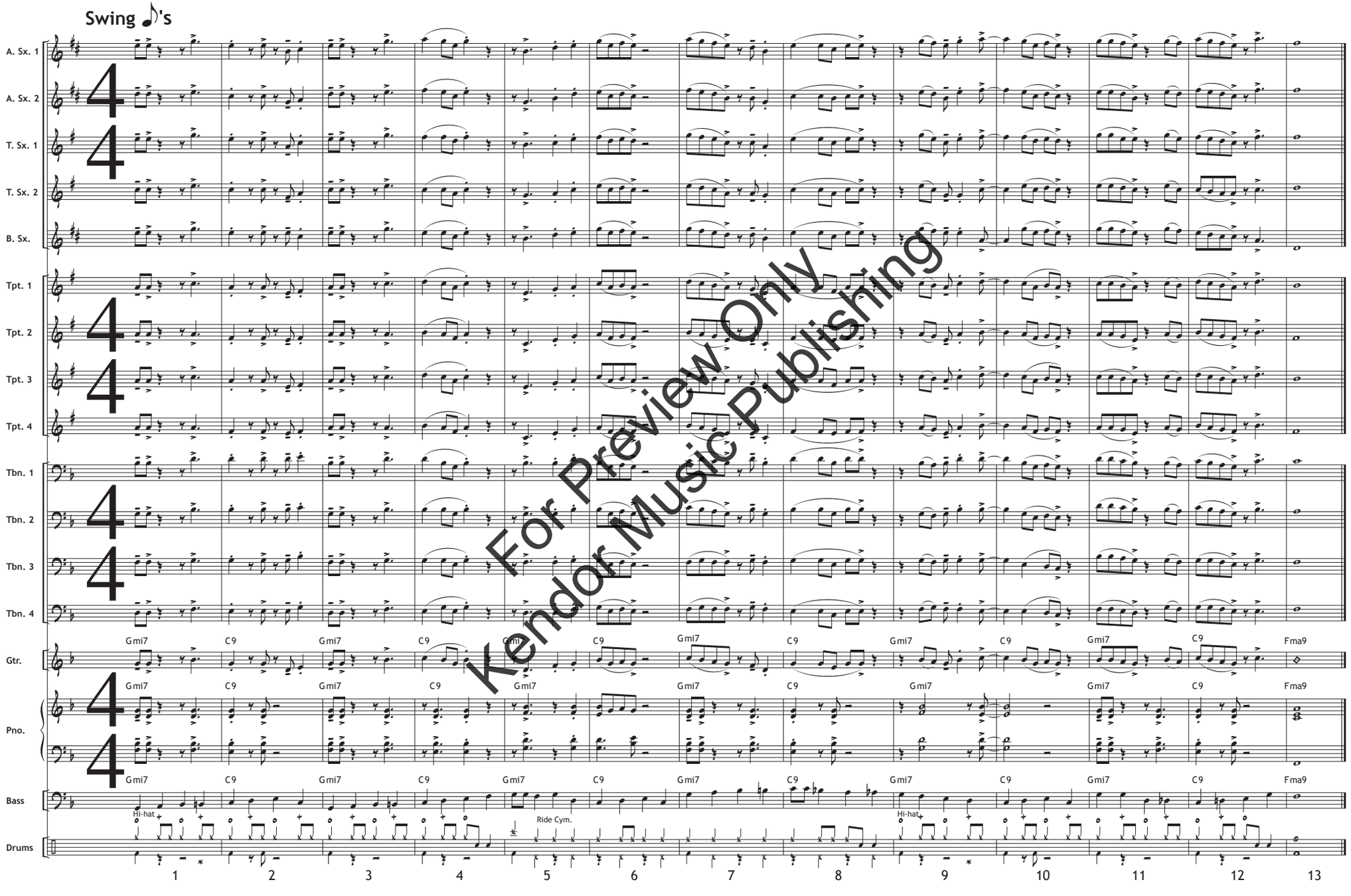
14. Same Rhythms...Different Pitches



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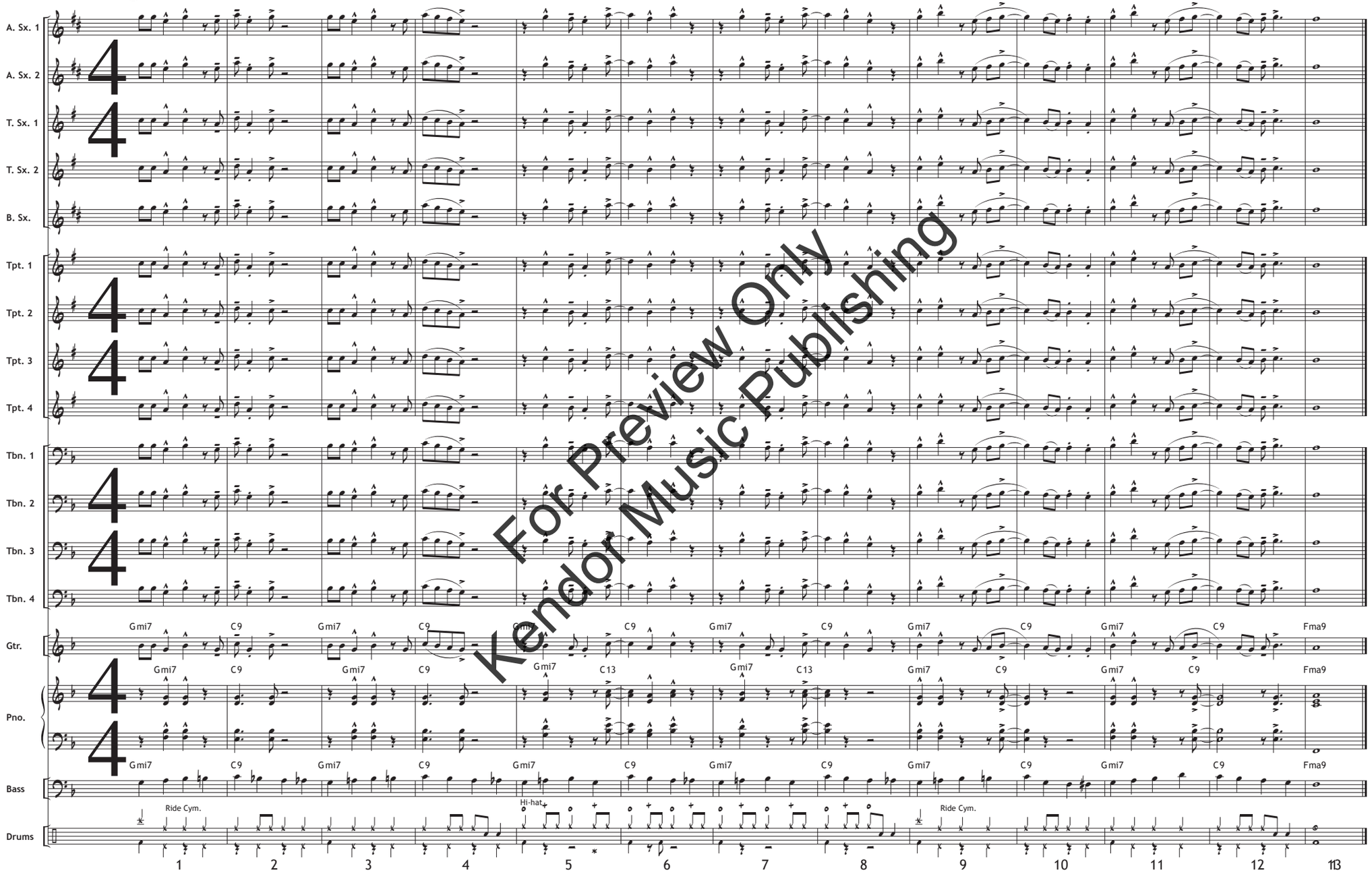
15. Keep on Swingin'

Swing ♪'s



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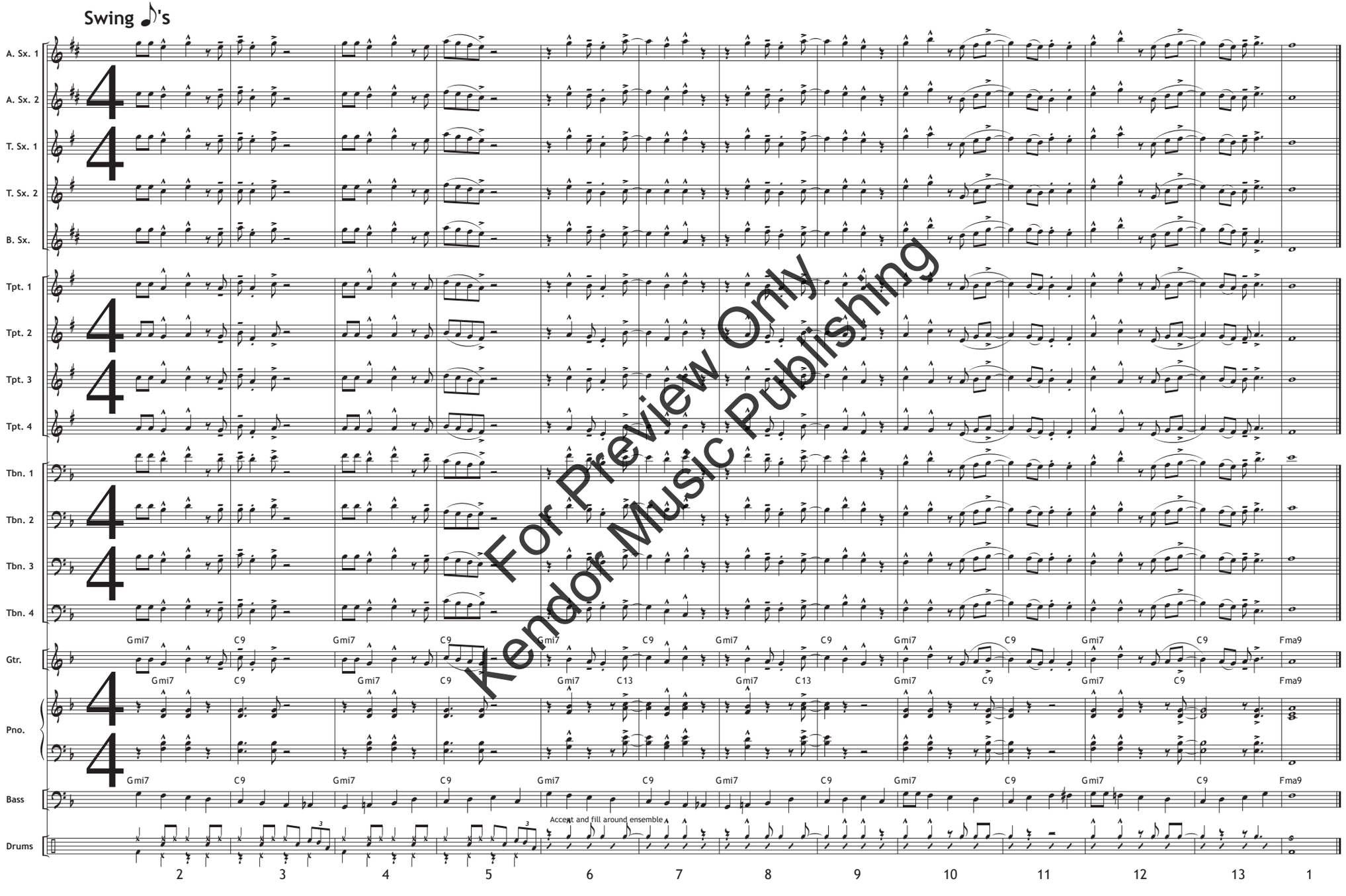
16. Find the Groove!



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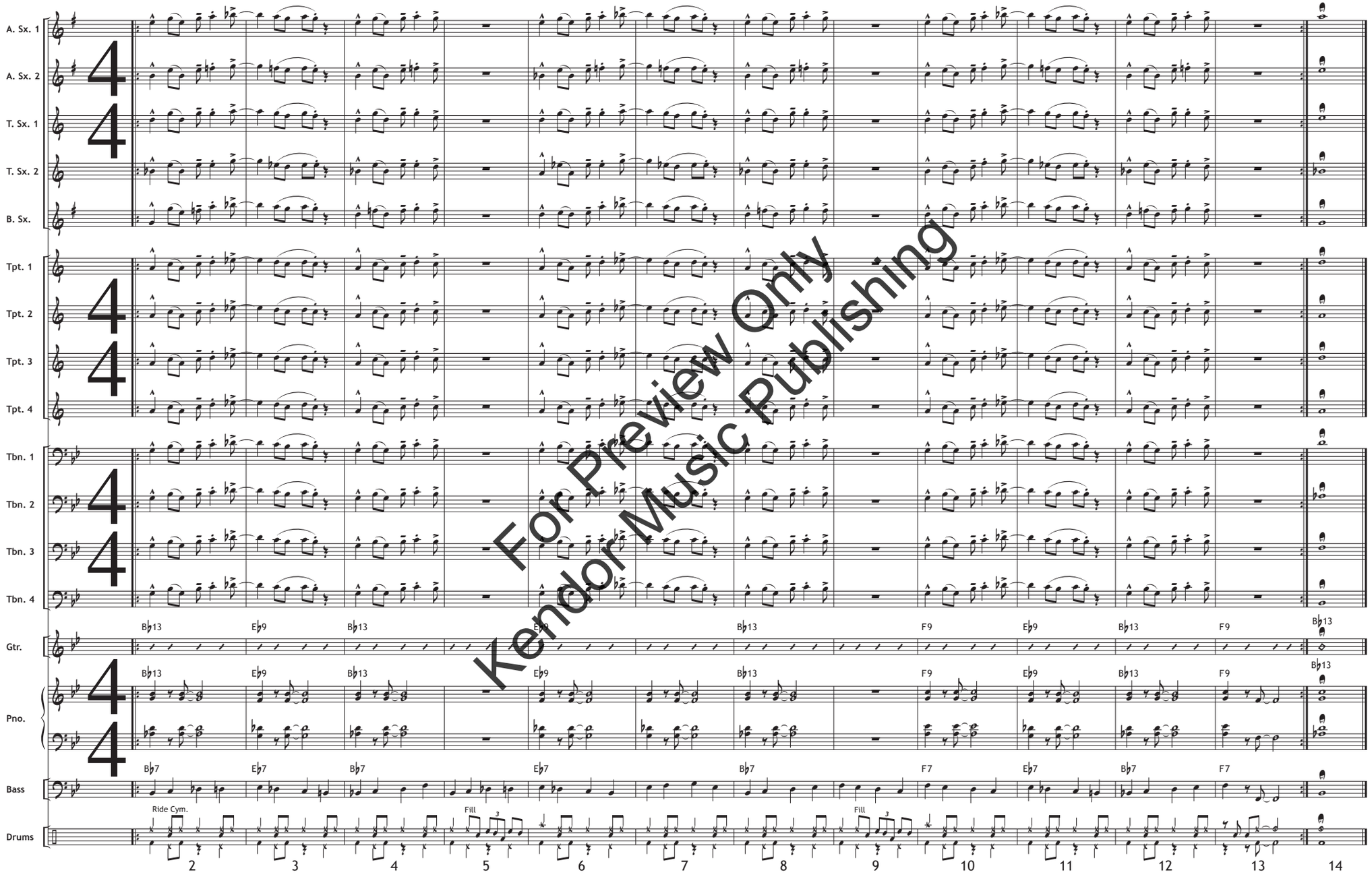
17. It's Blues Time

Swing ♪'s



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