

BIG SKY HANDBELL FESTIVAL APRIL, 2024

Notes—

New repertoire:

Fantasy on All Creatures of Our God and King L2+ Eithun

- *A note regarding a typo in this piece—in the first printing of this arrangement, there were some B4's in m's 58-59 that should be A4's. In the later printing, this has been corrected.*
- Care should be taken in m's 1-16 to keep the syncopated bass pattern very steady and clean.
- 30-31 bring out the melody in the bass/battery section
- Those executing the echo in m. 34 should practice looking up, as there is some slowing down happening in that section.
- Give a little dynamic “push” to the 8th notes in m's 46, 68, 70 & 73
- Give “weight” to the notes with the tenuto markings in m's 60-65 to give emphasis to the melody beneath those very large chords.
- Close attention should be paid to the director in m. 84 for a “grand slowing” in this measure.
- The C6 ringer should be ready to enter in m. 86. The fermata will linger for a bit.
- Treble can practice breathing together to execute a clean mallet strike on the suspended bells in m. 91.

Ah, Holy Jesus L2+ Eithun

- As noted, the opening measures will be very freely conducted with no real feeling for steadiness. It won't be extreme, but being prepared to look up will be helpful.
- There are a lot of LV passages in this song that should be observed to provide the fullness to the bass line.
- There will be a lot of ringers involved with the running passage in the treble m's 39-40 & 88-89 (although in 88 the tempo will be a touch slower), so some drill there can help us to get it as clean as possible in a festival setting. Just LV (or lazy damping) on those sections, as it translates better. Don't stress about any damping there.
- The echoes on pages 5-6 are executed on the “&” of beat 2 and on beat 3.

- The 8th notes in m. 71 should be very deliberate.
- Watch for the cutoff after the fermata in m. 84
- I'll just cue the final chord in the trebles in m. 92. The wind chimes should wait until that chord is struck before they play.

Sanna Sannanina L3- Eithun

- The percussion should have a presence throughout but never overpower the bell line.
- If you have access to this piece in your hymnal or can find it, I found my ringers had no issues with the rhythms once they sang it a few times through to get the feel of the syncopation.
- Practice a clean attack on the initial strike of the mallet rolls.
- Please see the footnotes on the bottom of 14-15, as there are suggestions to assign sus. mallet parts so that it can be done efficiently as well as chime assignments.
- The mallets on suspended bells in this section should be very tender and incidental. Just a gentle strike to the casting.
- There is new energy happening from 65-68 as a lead up to the original tempo and mood. Practice the crescendos, clean shakes and marts.
- Shake through the measure at 85...no re-striking each quarter note.

The Storm Shall Pass L3 Compton

- If available, rain sticks can be given to the FG5 ringer to randomly play between m's 2-8 and 79-80.
- It is important for the melody to be heard in 14-21. The battery bells are often a bit more mellow, so the upper trebles should take care to play softer.
- There's a lot of expression happening on pages 10-11 with dynamics and tempo which we will acknowledge.
- The whole notes ringing in m. 79 should strike very softly and go directly into the singing bell. When I cue the chime chord in 81, the dowels can detach and the bell can continue to LV.

The Promised Coming L3 Eithun

- I would like to change the dynamic marking in m. 7 from *mf* to *f*.
- Keep the duration of the long, held notes in this opening section...don't damp them too soon.

- The quarter notes in m. 14 should be very slow and deliberate...really press into them.
- The 8th note part can come in strong at 15 but needs to quickly decrescendo by the end of 18.
- Make sure the melody is brought out between 19-24.
- Even though there's not an LV marking for the 8th note patterns in 26, those notes can "bleed" together a bit. No need for strict damping there.
- There's a dialogue going on between the stemmed up bass and stemmed down treble between 32-35. Make sure it's light and doesn't overpower the melody above.
- B4/C5 keep a watchful eye at 38-39, as you'll be in charge of the *rit.* there.
- The cresc. From 48-49 should be dramatic and sweeping.
- The B4/C5 and DE5 positions should try to memorize their part in 53 in order to really look up and not rush.
- PLEASE read the footnotes at the bottom of pages 6-7 for the distribution of bells and chimes for certain positions.
- In the closing section from 59-end: If available, finger cymbals (or a triangle) can be added by the AB5 position if low bass chimes are not being used. Keep them quiet and incidental. They should strike following the rhythmic pattern of the very low bass chimes on beat 3 in m's 62, 66, & 70. Additionally on beat 3 of m's 81 and 82.

From previous Festivals:

Gloria Hodie L3 Turner/McChesney

- Give the immediate strike of the mallets for the roll a nice, punctuated attack so that we can feel beat 1
- With so many hands performing the mart lifts at the beginning, it'll be essential to have the casting no more than 2 inches from the table top.
- Those "jumbo" chords in 23 and 27 should almost be like a ring touch. They should be accented quick and then damped out for an amazing affect.
- Mallets should be incidental at 38 to allow the melody to have a presence.
- We will practice three cues for the ending: 1st cue will be to strike the chord and commence the random ringing, 2nd cue to bring in the D pitches that are footnoted and 3rd to transition to mallets. Really practice fading the intensity of the sus. bells w/mallets at the end.

Celtic Farewell L3- Lamb

- This piece has a lot of octave in doubling in ranges that don't often see it. For example, in m. 19 the A6 is doubled up from the A5 and so forth in that section. It comes back again later in the piece. Some upper treble ringers will need to watch for those added notes.
- In m. 58, the cue for beat three is also the cue for the notes being held by the fermata to damp.
- In m. 78 there will be a full cutoff before beat three enters.
- This song is filled with a lot of expression created by the rise and fall of the crescendo/decrescendo patterns. We will practice that phrasing.

Joyous Spirit L2+ Stephenson

- Keep the energy high throughout the piece, but always make sure that the melody is heard. It occurs in different places throughout. The 8th notes in the treble really need to come in strong and then pull back at m. 5 so the bass melody can come through.
- The LV at 13 is very important for the quarter note patterns.
- Very important to know where the melody is between 61-72. The upper trebles are in the background while most of the bass and down-stemmed trebles are the melody.
- All martellatos should be executed no further than 2" from the tabletop for a clean and tight result.
- Not much in the way of tempo changes in this piece, but be prepared to check in with me in m. 92.

Challenge piece

When Morning Gilds the Skies L4 Behnke

- This piece is "bookended" by a similar opening and closing that creates a vivid atmospheric feeling. You can see the sunrise in your mind's eye. Practice the natural feel of the meter changing in these sections.
- A lot of dynamic variance happens on page 4, so be aware.
- The tempo change at 33 will need to be perceived quickly from the prep beat given. We'll be going over that to make sure it's smooth.
- The pick up to m. 41 has the melody in the bass....trebles need to practice holding back the intensity so that the melody can be highlighted.
- In 97 through the end, we have that closing that is filled with expressive detail to watch for.