

**Rehearsal Notes**  
**Hudson Valley Handbell Festival**  
**Nyack College**  
**Nyack, New York**  
**April 28, 2018**  
**Bill Alexander, Conductor**

**General Comments:**

I am delighted to be your conductor for the Hudson Valley Handbell Festival. A lot of preparation has gone into making this a memorable and musical experience. Your efforts to prepare the music before the festival will benefit everyone. I believe that I am an extremely easy conductor to follow, but that means nothing unless you are able to look up and see what I'm doing. Massed ringing is unlike any other musical event. No matter how well your group plays together, massed ringing will be a challenge. Identify all tempo changes and musically rough areas, and work them until you feel comfortable looking away from the page. Because of the limited time for rehearsal, it is even more important that the pieces are well prepared.

For those of you who have never met or worked with me, I can assure you that my goals for this and any festival, concert, service, rehearsal, or workshop are to make music sound like music and to have fun in the process. We WILL have fun! See you in April! Being from Duluth, this probably means I get to see spring twice this year.

***Bill Alexander***

**Massed:**

**Battle Hymn of the Republic**

**arr. Cynthia Dobrinski**  
**Agape/Hope 1862, L3, 3-5 oct.**

This is going to be a very BIG piece. There are many tempo changes, time changes, and dynamic changes. You will need to know this piece well enough to be able to look up at EVERY change. Bring out the middle line at measure 26. Make beat 3 of measure 46 and the "and of 4" in measure 59, tenuto. Please do not mallet at measure 26. Familiarize yourself with each technique used. I may change the ending a bit once we get into it, so be flexible.

## Acclamation In G Minor

Karen Thompson  
AGEHR AG46030, L2+, 4-6 oct.  
AG23046, L2+, 2-3 oct.

There's a good portion of this that I will conduct in 8/8 time (3+3+2), but at some point, as the 4/4 and 8/8 come together more, it shouldn't make much of a difference. The important thing is that we put emphasis where it should be in the pattern. In the 8/8 sections it normally will be on 1, 4, and 7. Also, relax. I don't intend to have you memorize this piece. (although, you could)

## Recollection

Tim Waugh  
Choristers Guild CGB974, L2+, 3-5 oct

This is a new piece for me. It's just plain beautiful. I have some ideas of where chimes might go nicely, but it really works well with just bells. I do, however, want to play both bells and chimes on the final chord.

## Siyahamba

arr. Bob Ward  
AGEHR AG46014, L3, 4-6 oct.

I envision this piece as a parade of people entering a village from far away. You can hear them coming. As they reach the center of town, it's full-on sound and celebration. As the parade continues through and out of the village, you can hear them moving away. There IS a lot of repetition, but that's the way this style of music is meant to be. Find the subtle nuances and let yourself be carried along.

We will be using Bob's suggestion of chimes in measures 8-24 and 72-93. See his notes.

Bob Ward has issued an ERRATA to the piece for intended changes:

- Mea. 10: B4 is tied from beat 2+ to 3
  - Mea. 44: Omit *mf*
  - Mea. 52: Omit *ff*
  - Mea. 56: Move *ff* to beat 4
  - Mea. 58: C5 is tied from beat 2+ to beat 3
  - Mea. 62: Db5 is NOT tied from beat 3+ to beat 4

In addition, please see his rehearsal notes in the handbell score.

## **Coppers:**

### **Allegro Con Moto**

**Jason Krug**  
**GIA G-8073, L3+, 3-5 oct.**

The level of success of this piece thrilling an audience is directly proportional to how much time you put in on measures 12, 20, 28, 94-95, and 103. Combine that with overdoing ALL of the dynamics, and we will have something spectacular!!

### **The River**

**arr. Anna Laura Page**  
**Alfred 8655, L4-, 3-5 oct.**

One of the main issues I usually hear with this piece is dotted eighth/sixteenth note patterns being played as triplets. Be precise, yet be gentle and smooth with the eight notes. It doesn't happen often, some would say it doesn't happen often enough, but the melody in this piece can often be found in the middle bells. So, if you can't hear the melody, you're playing too loudly.

## **Tins:**

### **Ring Joyfully**

**Susan Geschke**  
**Choristers Guild CGB352, L1+, 4-5 oct.**  
**CGB351, L1+, 2-3 oct.**

I only have a couple of concerns with this piece. The first is going to be how we end up playing the martellato and Mart Lifts, and second, how we use dynamic markings to separate the melodic and harmonic lines.

**Martellato and Mart Lifts:** While we will certainly work on this in rehearsals, it's important to begin at home with basics. Make sure you are not using marts as a dynamic technique. It is a color technique. It will be louder all on its own...no need to bash it into the foam. Four to six inches high is a good starting point. Push the bell into the pad and make sure the sound is stopped, especially if that note repeats. If you happen to have the low bells marked as PL (pluck), make sure that your note is about the same length as the mart notes by damping them by hand. The mart lifts need to have a popping sound off the table. Now, all we need to do is play them at exactly the same (correct) time. Subdivide the beat to have a better chance of not being early.

**Dynamic Markings:** I really don't have to say much. If you do dynamics as marked and listen to all the notes, we will hear all the parts we are supposed to.

## **Chanson**

**Kenneth Lowenberg**  
**AGEHR AG46028, L2, 4-6 oct.**  
**AG23037, L2, 2-3 oct.**

Here's the answer to the first question: I want to do this with bells instead of all chimes. There is a chime section where I am hopeful all of you own chimes. If not, I'm fairly sure that having a group or two playing bells here would be fine. This piece really has a lot of material in it and calls for knowing what everyone else is doing. That means a lot of playing time. Be careful not to rush the thumb damp section and play as smoothly and beautifully as you can. Honestly, most of what I could tell you in these notes is actually already written on the page. Just follow it all, the dynamics, key changes, and tempo changes, and we should be in pretty good shape.