



Rehearsal Notes

Andante in F minor

- This is a very lyrical piece, which alternates rhythmic motion between the melody and the harmony. By this I mean that when the melody is static (as in a half note) the accompaniment takes over the momentum carrying the phrase to the next point of melodic motion. This is important to know because during these points where the melody is static, the accompaniment players can play out. An example of this is beat 3 of m. 1, same with mm. 3 and 5.
- Take note at the beginning of the piece that only the accompaniment figures are marked as *LV*. The melodic line (stem up treble clef) is marked *R*
- The *mp* dynamic marking at the beginning of the piece doesn't have to be too soft – often with a piece like this we tend to try and play too quietly, don't be afraid to ring a nice natural dynamic here
- Make sure you have clean damping at each new *LV* marking – as these are typically points where the harmony changes we need to make sure there is no bleed over from the previous *LV* measures
- Note the *crescendo* marked in m. 7 with the *decrescendo* in m. 8
- Even though these are the first marked dynamic changes in the piece, I think we can utilize some melodic dynamic contrast, as in as the line rises the dynamic can play a little louder and conversely as the line falls we can play a little softer
- Note the *ritardando* marked in m. 8, this will only be a slight pull back of tempo with a return to the original tempo in m. 9
- Note the *crescendo* marked in m. 13. This is only a slight *crescendo* carried over 2 measures leading us to the *mf* dynamic marked in m. 15. As this is the most active part of the piece so far, I'm OK if this dynamic ends up being a little more *f*-like

- Please add a little accent to the E6 bell on the and-of-4 in m. 15, and work to intentionally play the F6 bell on beat 2 of m. 16 less
- Note the *decrescendo* marked in m. 16 leading us back to the original dynamic
- Again, note the *crescendo* in m. 21. Like previously, this is only a slight dynamic change. I'd like to keep this one a little subtler as we will continue to get louder at the end of the page (m. 29) leading to the *f* marked in m. 31. I would like to make sure we have dynamic room to get to that *f* marking
- Note the *diminuendo* in m. 32. This will take us to the *mf* dynamic in m. 33
- Note the shift to the chimes in m. 33. The chime part contains the main melodic material for the piece so the upper bell counter melody should be played softer (*mp*)
- Through this section take note of the switches between the *LV* measures and the *R* measures
- I think we can bring out the C7 part just a little bit in m. 40, it adds a nice rhythmic contrast to the rest of what has been happening. We'll work through this balance during the rehearsal
- Note that the full ensemble is playing chimes beginning at m. 41
- Please note the *decrescendo* in m. 48.
- I may also add a slight *ritardando* to the end of this measure (m. 48) that will lead us into the new melodic material and key change at m. 49
- Note the key change at m. 49. Here we switch from F minor to F major, so it is really important to get the right bells here (especially the A natural bells)
- Take note through this section where the *LV* markings are. Sometimes they are at each new measure, and sometimes they are marked every other measure
- We will still go with the accompaniment being *LV* and the melody being *R* through this section
- Note the *crescendo* at m. 55. This will carry through m. 56 leading us to the *f* marked in m. 57
- The full ensemble is marked *R* in m. 56
- Again, we'll go with accompaniment *LV* and melodic *R* from mm. 57-64
- Note the *diminuendo* marked in m. 63. This will carry through m. 64 leading us to the *mp* dynamic in m. 65
- I may also add a slight *ritardando* at the end of m. 64 leading us into the new key
- Note the key change at m. 65
- The main melody is in the chime part starting at m. 65, so bell players (especially upper bell players) make sure to play soft enough to hear the melody
- The entire ensemble returns to bells in m. 72 – Ab5 and C6 players in the measure will have to work out how to play their chimes on beat 1 of m. 72 and then the same notes as bells on beat 2

- Note the *crescendo* at m. 78. This will carry over 3 measures leading to the *f* in m. 81. This is the “high point” of the work so if the dynamic pushes a little louder here I’m OK with that
- Again, note where the *LV* and *R* markings are through this next section
- Note the *ritardando* in m. 88 with a return to the tempo in m. 89 – also note the *decrescendo* here leading to the *mp* in m. 89
- Note the *crescendo* in m. 93, this is the last push dynamically in the piece and it is not a big one, only going to *mf* (m. 95) over 2 measures.
- From this point, m. 95, dynamically there will be a steady *decrescendo* to the end of the piece. We will also gradually slow the tempo to the end of the piece
- I will indicate each of the chords in the last 2 measures (half notes in m. 97 and the whole note in m. 98). Really try to find a nice *p* dynamic for these chords
- As this is a very lyrical piece it is especially important for melody players to work together to find a single line (as opposed to a melodic line that sounds like it is shared between a number of different players). To help with this I would suggest that each player be able to sing/hum/recognize the melody, while playing, through the entire piece.
- Here is a recording you can listen to:
<https://www.handbellworld.com/music/MusicPiece.cfm?Piece=13818>

Jubilant Spirit

- Generally, this is a very bright and buoyant piece. This means that with the moving eighth note lines, as in m. 16 for an example, will need to be rung quite close to the body so as not to be played late
- Please take note of the 8/8 time signature. This is different than a normal 4/4 time signature, even though there are the same number of eighth notes in the measure. I will of course be conducting the 4/4 measures in 4. The 8/8 measures, on the other hand, will be conducted in 3 – this has to do with the way the eighth notes are grouped together – 3+3+2 in stead of 4 groupings of 2
- One tool to help you sort through these is to remember to count! We should always be counting (and subdividing the beat), but in this case, counting “One-and-a, Two-and-a, Three-and” will help with the 8/8 measures and of course the normal “One-and, Two-and, Three-and, Four-and” for the 4/4 measures will work
- Watch the opening *p* dynamic marking – this piece should start soft. The *crescendo* through the opening four measures only rises to *mf* at m. 5 – There are more dramatic *crescendos* later in the piece, as in the *crescendo* leading to the *f* in m. 13
- There are a number of places in the piece where there are a series of multiple meter changes you need to be watching for – these places are: mm. 16-21, 32-37, 72-77, and 88-end. Please make sure your eyes are up for these sections

- Note the sudden dynamic shift into m. 21. I think the sudden thinning of the overall texture and the move to lower bells will take care of this naturally, but it is something to take note of
- In m. 22 – the G₄ and B₄ bells will need to ring beat 2 close to the table so that you will be in position to pluck beat 3, this is similar in m. 24 for the A₄ and C₅ players. This is a tricky move at the tempo we'll be taking and so make sure you practice this
- Stem up bass clef notes in m. 29, please make sure you are working through the *crescendo* down the scale. Most of the crescendo in this measure will come from your line
- In m. 30, C₃ and C₄ players please keep track of your moving staccato notes. It is seen above the second, third, and last eighth notes, whereas it is below all the rest
- Please make note of the dynamic differences in m. 37. Here, the chime players have the melody and so are marked up to *mp*, though we will likely bump this up to *mf*. Conversely, the upper bell notes here are marked *p*, and so these players need to be mindful of where the melody is at all times
- One trick that will help with this dynamic contrast is for the bell players to ring close to the table, this will also help properly position you for the echo technique used through this section
- Also, please note the slower tempo at m. 37 so please make sure you are watching
- Please be mindful of the dynamics in mm. 53-60. Here, the upper and lower chime parts should be softer than the middle chime moving line. I would like the moving line to be brought out of the texture – we can try a similar dynamic scheme as at m. 37 here
- Also, we have *LV* markings between mm. 53-60. On the down beats of these measures, especially from the lower bass ringers, I would like you to ring slightly above the marked dynamic – this will allow the note to carry through its decay for the full measure
- Watch the tempo shift between mm. 63-69. This begins with a *ritardando* in m. 63 followed by a return to the slower tempo for beats 2 and 3 in m. 64 (80); we will then start to gradually increase the tempo between mm. 65-68 with a return to the original tempo at m. 69 (144). Please make sure you are really watching for this so we can all stay together – don't just rely on your ears to guide you through this
- Be careful of the marts in mm. 77-84. Make sure to keep the bell close to the table here – the tempo is quite bright here and these will come across sloppy if the marts are started too high off the table
- Take note of the *crescendo* in m. 84 to the *ff* in m. 85. Remember, dynamics on the bells require an actual physical change in the way you ring the bell so you must be fully and actively prepared for this. We will discuss this concept in more detail during our time together
- Also note that this dynamic at m. 85 (*ff*) continues until the end of the piece, so you will have to work hard to maintain your energy through to the end

- There is no slowing of the tempo leading to the end of the piece – we will maintain our tempo right until the last note
- In the last measure, the shake on beat 3 needs to be done close to the table in order to cleanly mart the final note. This is counter to how we typically consider a shake, so please make sure to work on this
- I am also wondering about the C₄ player in this measure. While not marked, I think it would make sense to treat this note the same way as the C₃ is with the mallet roll. However, it seems to me that you will need a mallet in each hand to facilitate the mallet roll on beat 3, which would make a pluck on beat 4 difficult at the tempo we will be playing. I think playing the last note with a mallet instead would offer the same type of sound so we will experiment with this during our rehearsal time
- Here is a recording of the piece you can listen to:
<https://www.jwpepper.com/Jubilant-Spirit/10911602.item#/>

Rondo Rustico

- This is a very bright and energetic piece. While it is very fast, it is also very repetitive so look for these repetitions of lines so you do not have to learn everything as if it is brand new
- I will be conducting this piece in 2, so please be prepared for that (this means that there will be one half note, 2 quarter notes, and 4 eighth notes per beat). This is also the feel I would like us to achieve, a nice lilting 2. To achieve this all of the primary beat notes should be played with a little more weight than the inner pulses of the beat
- In light of the tempo we will be taking for this piece, you will need to play the eighth note passages close to the body – this should help to keep these passages, especially the one starting at m. 51 in the upper treble, in time and cleanly played
- In looking through the score, we will not play the B₄ notes that are in the []
- Similarly, we will have to play by ear how many of the G₃-B₃ notes in the () or [] we will play. This will largely depend on how the overall musical line comes across. We will determine this fairly early on in our rehearsal process
- The composer has indicated a number of dynamic shifts in this piece, so please take note of these. Some will naturally occur due to a change in the texture/density of the writing or where on the table the notes are found (for example, the *mp* in m. 5 will naturally happen as a result of thinning the texture and loosing the treble notes), while others are a little more sudden as in the shift from the *mf* in mm. 17-20 and the *f* seen in m. 21
- Since the opening material of this piece is in E minor, please take note of the D#'s throughout

- Please take note of the key change at m. 41 – here we shift from E minor to E major, so you will need to make sure you prepare your bell changes in advance (playing a G natural here will sound quite odd and it is very easy to do this)
- I would like to keep the mart-lifts beginning at m. 43 nice and light. Please make sure you start these close to the table each time. Also, due to the bright tempo we will be taking please do not raise the bell too far off the table for the lift – this technique should really be contained to about 3 inches off the table at the most
- I suspect the trickiest part of this piece to pull together will be the upper treble eighth note run starting at m. 51. There are at least two challenges here, the first being the tempo. Really work to play these notes close to the body; almost, a simple flick of the wrist off the shoulder should suffice. These players will really have to be on top of the beat through here in their note preparations as it will be easy to fall slightly behind. The second issue will be the dynamic. Often in fast passages like these, we tend to play the notes a little more frantically, which also translates to playing the notes a little louder. Please keep in mind that this very difficult line is only an accompaniment passage with the melody in the middle of the table (lower treble and upper bass). Please keep an ear towards the melody at all times
- Note that at m. 51 the bass mart-lifts apply only to the stem down notes, the E₃ and E₄
- Take note of the return to E minor at m. 59, as at the last key shift, here G sharps will sound very strange so please make sure to prepare your bell transitions early
- At m. 61, the melody shifts to the bass clef. Treble players, please watch your overall dynamic levels here, always be mindful of the melody through this passage
- During this passage, treble bells please make sure you are damping cleanly, I would like there to be complete silence from you through the quarter rests
- Bass players in this section, it can be difficult to play the eighth notes quickly, so you will need to really work to play “off the shoulder” or close to the body, but also you will need to make sure your preparatory gesture is early enough to sound the bell at the right time – as in it will be very easy to play these notes slightly behind the beat
- Take note of the shift to A minor at m. 77
- Also at m. 77, notice the thumb damps here. These cover all of the stemmed treble clef notes. We will have to practice how much thumb to put up on the bell as the bigger the bell gets the more hand you need to actually articulate the bell properly with this technique – as a general rule though, you will need more of a palm on the bell, not just a thumb, for the lower notes
- Again, in this section the melody is found in the bass clef, so please always keep an ear towards that
- Take note of the modulation back to E minor at m. 103

- Upper treble players, please take note in m. 111 that everyone stops playing but you. You will have to work here to maintain the *ff* dynamic level through your solo line
- We will not slow the tempo leading into the final measure, so please make sure you stay with me here
- We need to make sure we have a very clean damp between the penultimate chord in m. 120 and the final chord in m. 121, any non-chord tones, as in the D#, will sound very strange against the final E minor chord. So, if you are playing during the shake but not in the last chord make sure you really pull the bell into you to stop the sound on the down beat of the last measure
- We will honour the TLD marking in the last measure. Those playing the final chord play it high, then turn the bell upside down (opening to the table) and we will place the bell like that on the pad to dampen the chord
- Here is a recording of the piece to listen to:
<https://fromthetopmusic.com/product/rondo-rustico/>

The Lord is my Shepherd

- Notice that both the treble and bass clef lines are *LV* from beat 2 of m. 1 until the *R* in m. 3. Similarly from beat 2 of m. 4 until the *R* in m. 6
- Take note of the dynamic shaping throughout the piece. The general rule here is that we will *crescendo* as the melodic line rises and *diminuendo* as the melodic line falls
- Note the *crescendo* in m. 6 leading to *f* in m. 7. Keep playing the *f* dynamic through the first part of m. 8 with a *subito mp* on the pick up to m. 9
- Take note of the eighth rest in m. 8, I would like a nice clean damp here, similarly with the quarter rest in m. 12
- I would like to add slight accents to the Bb 3 (Bb2) in mm. 9 and 10
- There will be a slight *rit.* in m. 10
- The tempo change at m. 13 will be very subtle (it is only going from quarter note equals 74 to 80). It is really just an impression of more movement here, so we will just push the tempo slightly
- Accompaniment bells make sure you keep track of where the melody is beginning at m. 13, especially as the melody falls to the middle of the table (the Eb5 and D5) in m. 15. I have found that it is easy to over power the melody when it is in this part of the table
- There will be a slight *rit.* in m. 23
- We will have to watch the over all balance beginning at m. 25 when the melody falls to the bass clef bells. To help with the balance here, melody bells

- please play *mf*; middle bells (stem down treble and upper bass clef) please play *mp*; upper bells (stem up treble) please play *p*
- Here the *LV* only applies to the upper treble notes
 - Careful of the damping through the *LV* in m. 31
 - Watch the *diminuendo* in m. 36 leading to the *mp* in m. 37. Work to keep the *mp* dynamic in m. 37, the block chords on beats 2 and 3 will be easy to over play
 - The *crescendo* in m. 38 is not a big one. We are only moving from *mp* to *mf* here. It will largely be instigated by the Eb 3 and 4 players, please add a slight accent on these notes
 - Note the *rallentando* doesn't begin until m. 46; this will be a big one so please watch specifically here. I will be following the flute player in m. 47 with the *molto rallentando* so it might be a good idea for you to also keep an eye on that part as well as me in that measure
 - There is also a *crescendo* through these measures to *ff*
 - The tempo at m. 48 will be more relaxed, much like the beginning of the piece
 - The natural tendency will be to include a *diminuendo* in mm. 49 and 50 and the musical line descends. Here, I'd like to keep the *ff* intensity through these measures with a further *crescendo* in m. 51 to lead to the *fff* dynamic in m. 52. Note that this will require a fair amount of physical ringing to maintain
 - After we arrive at m. 52 we can start the gradual *diminuendo* to *mp* at the end of m. 55
 - Through this section (from m. 48 to 55) make sure to mark where the *LV* and *R* markings are
 - There is another push dynamically to *f* in m. 59 with an immediate withdraw to *mp* to close the page
 - Please add a slight accent to the C4 note on beat 2 in m. 59
 - Note that the cut off of the *fermata* in m. 60 will be the down beat of m. 61
 - Note the dynamic change to start m. 62 (*mp* to *p*)
 - Watch for the *rit.* in m. 66 and the *Tempo I* in m. 67
 - To facilitate the *molto rit.* in m. 71, I will likely subdivide this measure so make sure to watch for this
 - Again, make sure you are watching for the broader tempo in beginning in m. 72
 - Note the meter changes in the last few measures (3 to 4 to 3)
 - There is a *molto rit.* marked in m. 76, I will show each of the quarter notes here; There will also feel like there is a slight *fermata* on beat 4
 - We will resume our slower tempo in m. 77 and I will give you each entry for these last 2 measures
 - Here is a recording you can listen to:
<https://www.hanbellworld.com/music/MusicPiece.cfm?Piece=16841>

Song of the Flowers:

- This piece is actually a setting of three folk songs: Orchid Sprout, Plum Flower, Ali Mountain – which means there are three distinct parts, or characters, to the piece. I will share a little more about each of these folk songs, as they were described to me by the composer, during our rehearsals
- He also shared with me two editorial typos in the scores you have, please make these changes:
 - In m. 31 – please change the D₆ note on beat 3 to a C₆
 - In m. 61 – please change all Fs (F₃ and F₄) to F#s
- Right off the top of the piece, please notice the *ff* dynamic. This means that the opening shake should be energetic and dynamic!
- This dynamic holds through the opening 4 measures – however, please note that the marts should be prepared from fairly close to the table. Here, we are looking for the articulation primarily not the overall dynamic. Remember, that the further from the table you prepare the mart the less together they will be played
- Note the shift to *mf* in m. 5. This will largely be taken care of by the shift in texture of the writing. Note here the mallets will be played with the bell on the table
- One thing to really watch for in this section (starting at m. 5) are the *RT* notes on beat 4 of mm. 6, 8, 12,14, and 20, and the *TD* on beat 4 of m. 16. These will need to be well prepared as they will be easy to forget
- Through this section, it will be fairly easy to rush (especially the off beat E₅ player). Please make sure you have an eye to the beat and are counting the subdivisions (one-and, two-and, Three-and, four-and) in your mind. This will help up keep the tempo nice and stable
- For the melody players, stem up treble, please keep the sixteenth notes nice and crisp. Often when we see sixteenth notes we simply think fast – this is not always the case! There is a distinct place for these rhythmic values within the beat so it might be good for you to subdivide your individual counts even further to one-e-and-a, two-e-and-a, etc. This way you will know exactly where in the beat you are to play
- In m. 17, please ring the stem down, treble sixteenth note passage close to the body and keep it nice and light – this line is a supportive gesture to the melody line above you, not the main feature here
- Similarly, at m. 21 the melody shifts to a running sixteenth note line – this line can be rung out a little more, though still try to ring close to the body – you'll find that you have more control of the bell this way
- Note the dynamic shift from *f+* in m. 23 to the *mf* on beat 3 of m. 24. This will mostly be achieved through the considerable thinning of texture, but for these players, still make sure you play out here
- Please note the *ritardando* in mm. 25 and 26. If we do this correctly the slowing of tempo in these measures will end with the new tempo at m. 27
- We have the first character shift of the piece leading into m. 27. We move from a more rhythmic first section into a legato second section.

- Please note the *LV* markings in this section. Also note that the *LV* markings here only apply to the accompaniment figures, not the melody. The melody should be damped as usual – while maintaining the legato feel of the section
- Also note the dynamic marking here – *p*. Once we get past the introduction to the melody in mm. 27 and 28, please note the dynamic differences, the accompaniment figures are marked at *mp* while the melodic figures are marked at *mf* – it would be a valuable exercise, for the mid-upper trebles, to go through this section and mark where you play the melody and where you play the harmony – you will physically play notes differently when you are melody and when you are harmony, even the notes are played close together.
- This is actually a good exercise for everyone as well – I typically look at a handbell ensemble much like I do a choir; that you are not a collection of individual parts but rather a single musical entity, and so I will often ask just to hear the melody of a section played or just the harmony. If you have cross over parts you will need to know what notes to play when as I don't want to hear your actual part (meaning, if I ask for the melody, I only want to hear the melody, not the accompaniment notes you may also have to play...). This can be a tricky, and sometimes frustrating, thing to accomplish, but I firmly believe it makes a huge difference in the overall presentation of the piece. We will certainly discuss this concept more during our rehearsals
- In a section like this where the notes played on the down beat of a measure need to sustain an *LV* through the measure, I typically ask these players to ring out just a little more in order to accommodate the decay of the note. So, in this section if you play on the down beat of the measure please ring out a little more, this especially holds true for the foundational bass notes
- The next character shift in the piece comes at m. 64. Please note here both the tempo change and the key change!
- Note, with the tempo change here there is no lead up preparation, so please make sure you are watching for this
- We return at m. 64 to mallets with the bells on the table, even though it is marked *f* here, it is more the articulation we are looking for. Please make sure, like with the marts that you don't start to mallet from too high off the bell. We have a better chance at ensemble uniformity and control here if you mallet from closer to the bell
- This is a very rhythmic and energetic section, so we really need to work hard, physically, to stay on top of the beat – it would good for your inner counting monologue to shift to the sixteenth note subdivision as I described earlier in these notes
- There is a dramatic *decrescendo* in m. 78, from *ff* to *mp*, please take note of this
- I would like to start with a slightly softer dynamic at m. 84, this will allow the *crescendo* in mm. 86-88 to be even more effective. Please mark this down to *mp* – starting with the shake on beat 3 of m. 84. One trick to help with this is to start the shake a little closer to the table and then build it into a much larger circle – up and away from your body

- Like with the off beats earlier in the piece, we have to be careful not to rush the offbeat sixteenth note figure through this section. At m. 86 this would mostly apply to the stem down treble notes as these notes are preceded by an eighth rest
- Note that the dynamic level we reach at m. 89 is *ff* and this dynamic level is maintained through the rest of the piece – so you will need to work hard physically here to maintain that dynamic level
- Note that there is no *ritardando* leading to the end of the piece. The composer has built that in for us and so work to maintain the tempo right to the end
- We will TLD (table damp) the final note with the mouth of the bell down to the table. This will be done in time and so the bell must be on the table for beat 3
- Here is a recording of the piece you can listen to:
<https://www.lorenz.com/handbell/sheets/handbell/handbell-sheets/song-of-the-flowers>