

Rehearsal Notes for Massed and Tin Choirs
Area I -2017
Deborah Carr

MASSED REPERTOIRE

General Notes: I truly believe that mass ringing is one of the most powerful learning environments for bells – this is the place to take risks, to possibly select a piece that you might hesitate to do with your group at home, but want them to experience a challenge. The beauty of mass ringing is the breadth of experience across all groups of ringers – yes, it can be a challenge, but where else do you have “backup” all around you? These pieces will be difficult for some groups, easier for other groups – but we have an opportunity to really learn and support each other as we work through these selections! Use the notes below to prepare – this is a great set of literature and I guarantee that we will all learn something new, regardless of experience level!!

Psalm of Celebration – Kevin McChesney

A great original composition – stately and wonderful techniques excellent with organ/brass and the tympani – great balance and contrast! Note the tempo marking – no faster!!

INTRODUCTION – Very straightforward – lots of follow-through on the half notes in the middle and lower bass bells – note the accents and the marts must be exceptionally clean with NO carry over into beats two and four in measures 5 and 6 – make sure the sound is stopped!

OPENING STATEMENT – begins with the organ and brass in m. 10, bells enter in m. 13 – be very precise rhythmically – especially with the dotted eights and 16th – very clean damping please! I prefer TD in m. 17 and 19 – bass bells may mallet – the important point here is a clean stopped sound. Be very aware of the crescendo and the dynamics in m. 31 – 35 there will be a ritardando in m. 34 – watch for it!!

BELLS ALONE – Beginning m. 36, in a new key – be sure you have the correct bells going into this beautiful section – a lovely melody line and smooth, flowing accompaniment – we get two 8 measure phrases of this melody – with embellishments the second time, but note the dynamics! M. 52 brings us into a contrasting section and the dynamics and very clean stopped sounds are a must – the rhythm in the middle and bass in m. 56 – 58 sets us up for a reprise to that melody line and it should SING in m. 60 – 67! There will be a clean break prior to the brass entrance at m. 68.

RETURN OF OPENING STATEMENT – we get a 6 measure bridge back to the D.S. and the chord in m. 9. The brass enters in m. 10 and we relive the opening statement to m. 28 – CLEAN DAMP at the end of this measure as the brass introduce the Coda at m. 74!

CODA: Brass restates the opening theme followed by a ritardando in m. 76 – watch for it! This rit will establish the new tempo marking in m. 77. The hardest part??? Saving up for the triple FFF at the end without hurting yourself! Be sure that you have three distinct volume levels for m. 76, 77 and 78. We will enjoy another ritardando (watch for it!) in m. 80 and the bells are joined by the brass for the final chord in 82!! The release must be CLEAN and together – all eyes up!

A New Gloria – Cathy Moglebust

What a great piece and what fun rhythmically! Note that Cathy asks for the introduction to be conducted in one! Is that possible?! I believe it is! I like to conceptualize the intro into a phrase of three measures, a phrase of four measures, then three measures, closing with three sets of four measures and then we are at m. 23 which will set up the tempo for the next section! Note the tempo!!!! How close can you get?

M. 25 starts the next section – go for the tempo – directors – you may find it easier to conduct in two, letting the ringers count to four, which most ringers will want to do – the melody enters at m. 27 – bring this out – find the melody throughout and make sure it is prominent! Everything else is “icing on the cake” or part of the harmonic foundation!

Measures 39 – 43 are not difficult, but can be confusing – keep the eighth note constant and follow the accents! The second statement of that fun melody line begins in m. 46 – again, bring that out. D5 and G4/A4, coupled with the base chords will keep us in check – note the dynamics! M. 58 -60 mirrors m. 39 – 41, then we transition into the new section with a tempo change in m. 61 that will set up the tempo in m. 62.

The following section is just beautiful, so lyrical – note the dynamics, we want a lovely contrast from the first section – you will need to bring your most beautiful technique with you – lots of follow through after the strike – we want this section to flow. The melodic motif of this section returns in m. 98 and note the dynamic change! M. 107 sets up another tempo change – but we will hold the fermata and let those LV’s fade away to set up the new dynamic level as well!

M. 110 is a return to the beginning – same concepts as the intro, and then m. 132 sets us up for the beautiful close, which is slower, yet utilizes the same rhythmic motif with extra flourishes in techniques and dynamics – to actually achieve the dynamic marking in m. 138, you may try using a “brush damp” technique to get the volume down to a piano volume prior to the closing shake!!

America the Beautiful – arr. Arnold Sherman

Arnold has given us such wonderful repertoire through the years – and this is one of my favorites. He has captured, from my perspective, the heart and soul of this beautiful

composition – and we need to give this our very best in terms of technique, attention to dynamics, and accuracy.

Introduction – the first 16 measures take us on an interesting series of harmonizations – make sure that the bell changes are accurate and cleanly damp so we get the full effect of those key changes – note the dynamics – we will build to a double ff but then bring it down for the last four bars to set up the melodic statement in m. 17.

Sing the melody throughout this section as you learn it so we have a sense of phrasing – an interlude begins at m. 32, note carefully the LV and R sections so we have a clean set-up into m. 36 – gently pulse the first of each group of eighth notes in m. 36 – 40, try to avoid “hammering” each eighth note.

KEY CHANGE at m. 43 and a great mallet section – gently emphasize counts one and three on the mallets – melody needs to dominate and trebles are “icing” in m. 48 and m. 52 – this verse closes out and we begin a transition into our closing key in m. 62. Careful attention to bell changes here and to the dynamics – the *molto ritardando* in m. 69 will set up the tempo change for m. 70 – this is a double forte section but the melody still needs to dominate and be sure to mark the LV** sections.

The close is beautifully done, and needs to be clean in m. 84 – the actual RT should only be an eighth note – get those bells stopped! In m. 85, counts three and four will be subdivided and that will set up the tempo for the closing two measures. Shakes need to be joyful, loud, but try and keep the hand relaxed as possible to allow for maximum volume to the end! With instrumentation and/or organ – one of the best!

Soon and Very Soon – Andraé Crouch, arr. Hart Morris

We will have some fun with this piece! The goal here is to relax into the rhythm – reduce the tension when playing – the rhythm needs to just happen, try not to force the off beats on 2 and 4, but do note the accents! Sing it while you learn it – it will help keep you in the spirit of the piece!

Introduction m. 1 – 8, sets up the rhythmic motifs in the piece. RT's must be clean, accents as indicated, note the dynamics. Marts, beginning in m. 9 are light, not heavy, setting the underlying rhythm. Melody must predominate.

The second verse begins at m. 25 with the melody in the middle treble and upper bass. The treble accompaniment figure needs to be TD, and note the change back to R in m. 28. This must be very light, not overpowering, let the melody come through. This is a tricky section for the trebles, note the R accents in m. 35, 36, 38 and at m. 40 everyone is back in with a double forte.

The third verse is improvisatory with a really slick bass line – have some fun with this! Trebles are playing with a variety of techniques with some jazz licks thrown in – everyone is back in in m. 57 with the chorus line!

We will then repeat the chorus motif into a great key change into the key of D to close out the piece. At this point – we are all headed for glory, so let it go, the marts can have a bit more punch here – shakes must crescendo – the dynamic contrasts are crucial here – play it loud, play it soft and we will all get taken up to heaven in the end!

TINS REPERTOIRE

General Notes: We have three GREAT pieces to work on for our Tins Choirs! It's almost too hard to pick a favorite in this group, but I'll want to know YOUR favorite when we gather together! Remember, it's all about the spirit of each piece - and you need a good road map to help you along the way! As you get to know these three pieces, try and settle into the rhythm of each piece, but figure out your map first so you know where you're going!

Tuya Es La Gloria – arr. Susan T. (Nelson) Sylvester

The Spanish text for this song is below. There are several translations available, and the song itself is found in several hymnals. I would ask someone you know who speaks Spanish to teach you these words in the Spanish language – ask for their translation into English! Key words to remember in this beautiful and lilting melody are: Glory, Honor, Power, Adoration, Love and Amen!

**Tuya es la Gloria
la honra también;
tuya para siempre.
Amén. Amén.**

**Tuyos los dominios,
los tronos también;
tuyos para siempre.
Amén. Amén.**

**A ti yo me rindo,
te adoro también;
amor absolute.
Amén. Amén.**

**Gloria en las Alturas
y en la tie-rra también;
gloria, alleluia.
Amén. Amén.**

ROADMAP for TUYA ES LA GLORIA

INTRO & VERSE 1: 2 m. of Introduction to set the tempo for the piece, note the dynamic marking! The melody enters in measure 3, note the dynamic marking! The melody needs to be flowing, connected and beautiful – it helps to sing it – for example: “We sing of your glory, we will praise you again. We sing of your glory, Amen. Amen.”

VERSE 2: Begins in m. 11 – the melody line is embellished as is the accompaniment. Note that the LV markings, throughout are only for the accompaniment line. The melody must be connected, but cleanly damped throughout.

VERSE 3: Begins in m. 19 and introduces a second melody one third higher than the first melody – the accompaniment is simplified – note the *cresc.* in m. 26- this is a gentle *cresc.* into the next section!

VERSE 4: If you have handchimes here is the chance to use them – if you do not have handchimes that is fine! Use the bells – note the *vib.* markings in this section of the piece. Regardless of whether you are using handchimes or bells, this should be the gentlest of movement, using the wrist, to move the instrument from side to side. Note the *diminuendo* in m. 35 in the accompaniment line!

VERSE 5 and CLOSE: Begins in ms. 36 – note the dynamic marking! This piece ends as gently as it started – we will work it down to a double *pp* and note the *ritardando* in m. 44. I will subdivide that measure beginning on the third count – it will look like another 4/4 measure and will make it very easy to slow down together – D5, E5 and G5 fingers will have a special moment!!

Danza – Tielman Susato, arr. Kevin McChesney

Tielman Susato was a Renaissance composer and was the first music publisher in the Netherlands. He is well known for his dance arrangements – and this one is delightful! As usual, Kevin has done a masterful job of embodying the Renaissance “flavor” of this piece – note that it is marked “Joyfully” and is written in cut time! No need to panic! The music easily slips into four measure phrases – and you will LOVE playing this – it will be conducted in 2! After the four quarter notes be sure that you use a great follow-through on the dotted half note – this rhythmic motif happens over and over again – just plain fun!!

ROADMAP for DANZA

Section 1: Measures 1 -4 INTRODUCTION

This is the basic rhythmic motif – everyone will play this at some point in the piece – make sure that the marts are “clean” – you need to keep a hand on the bell or we will have a “mart-lift” effect, and the cleaner sound is preferred – you will need to ring close to the table to be able to mart cleanly and then get the bell rung on the downbeats!

Section 2: The initial melody begins at measure 5 and goes through m. 20! The bass will keep us grounded in the tempo!

Section 3: There is an 8 measure “bridge” from m. 21 – 28 that is R throughout – follow through on the half notes, but be sure to work the crescendo in m. 28 noting the great treble note run in m. 28 – that comes back three more times! And then....

Section 2 – revisited!: The initial melody comes back with a bit of embellishment in m. 29 – note m. 36 treble ringers and then a double FF in m. 37!

Section 3 – revisited!: In m. 45 we get a return to the “bridge” section from m.21, again embellished, but at m. 53 Kevin adds an extra four measures – note the dynamic and we crescendo the last four measures into the closing statement of the piece – again, double FF and the high treble gets to enjoy the basic rhythmic motif as we close out the piece!

Section 4: CLOSE

We will slow down in m. 71 – that measure will be conducted in four – that makes for very happy ringers!! Cut off on two in m. 72 and then...wait for it...one final chord!!

We Three Kings – John H. Hopkins, arr. Barbara B. Kinyon

This is a great arrangement – Barbara uses mallets and dynamics to set two verses of this favorite hymn – with a beautiful introduction and closing section. Pay close attention to the dynamic markings!

ROADMAP for WE THREE KINGS

INTRODUCTION Measures 1 – 20

What a great introduction! “Mysterioso” and look at the tempo marking! Keep this very soft and be sure to “follow-through” on all of the long notes!

Verse 1: Measure 21 – keep the introductory feel for the first 8 measures – then everyone is ringing at m. 29 and note the dynamics! We get the lead-in into the refrain in m. 37 and 38 and then...

Refrain 1: Begins in m. 39 – note the dynamic and be sure that all long notes have a good follow-through, especially the dotted half notes in m. 42, 46, 53, 54 and 55!
Singing while you're learning will help to keep the phrasing intact!

Bridge: Begins in m. 55 – the A4 player brings back the introductory rhythm, but ringing and we start the 2nd verse in m. 59 – Where is the melody?

Verse 2: Measure 59 – the melody is in the middle bells – how exciting – note the dynamics for the treble and bass ringers – trebles you are the “icing” here – very, very, very, very soft!! We get the lead-in into the refrain in m. 74 and 75!

Refrain 2: Measures 76 – 92 – note the dynamics, we drop the volume at m. 84 and then have a wonderful crescendo into the closing of the refrain.

CLOSE: Begins in m. 92 with the C5 player to set up the mallets that opened the piece – A4 takes over in m. 96 and we'll want to revisit that “Mysterioso” effect that we had at the beginning of the piece – only a slight retard and the A4 player softly closes out the piece as the bells naturally decrescendo! BEAUTIFUL!!