

Rehearsal Notes for OGEHR Festival - Ontario, 2023

Kath Wissinger

Here's to Ontario in 2023!! Finally!! I am so looking forward to ringing with you. Here are some notes on the pieces we will be working on. First, a few general comments:

1. Knowing your music well enough **to look up** at crucial times will allow me to help you ring through these spots well – this includes anything in italics, key changes, meter changes, tricky rhythms, etc. **Looking up once per measure** makes me happy! **Looking up even more than that** will make our performance even better!! Try learning your part in phrases so you understand where you fit in the big picture, moving beyond a note-by-note read through. I promise I will smile at you and give encouragement all along the way.
2. I applaud sharing bells with neighbors for the good of the music, even when it's not absolutely necessary. One person ringing three different bells like crazy when a neighbor has little to do is awkward to watch and often not the best musical answer. Half the fun is in the delicate choreography when we share bells with others. So when a chromatic section comes up, share the wealth and keep the line moving musically.
3. Listening to the demo recordings will help you get a good feel for the piece, but they are not exactly how we will play it. Be ready and willing to be flexible when I ask you to try something a different way. Note there is a tempo change option for playback recording on the Jeffers site. You can slow down a recording for practice!

Call of the Water (Wissinger)

<https://www.hanbellworld.com/music/MusicPiece.cfm?Piece=16299>

This piece is truly programmatic – representing an entire day on the water starting at dawn with water lapping the shore, pushing off into the shallows, out in the exhilarating open water with wind and spray, returning to shore in the evening. The accompaniment part in Mm.17-89 should be very smooth. Singing bells start with a rung bell and then continue for the line. At M.63 the melody is in the middle and bass voices. If you have the lower 6th/7th oct. chimes, please bring them!! If you have an alternate bell set or want to try a Bell tree from M.63 to the end, feel free! A separate score for this is included. Make sure this part recedes behind the rest of the score and does not overpower it. Note AB4 are in the treble clef in the Coda. The last chord from F5 down is singing bell from silence; do not strike the bell beforehand.

Time to Say Goodbye (arr. McChesney)

<https://www.hanbellworld.com/music/MusicPiece.cfm?Piece=13326>

This is such an interesting contrast between triples and duples, and often the middle voices (especially D5-A5) switch back and forth in these voices within a measure – so keep your head above water and make sure you can hear the big picture. The slower tempo makes this easier

and allows us to stretch the lyric triplet patterns just a little (like singing.) Stately mallets start at the key change at M. 43.

If you are having problems keeping the 3s, 2s and 3s in the right place - You might want to use the Takadimi counting method to keep track of all the patterns in which the underlying 16th note triplet pattern (Line#1 below) can be counted “Ta va ki di da ma”). You may know better ways to do this – feel free to use other methods.

Everyone say this out loud and clap your own rhythmic pattern, one line at a time, then all together. This is an example for M.45: Line #2 is treble stems-up rhythm (with 8th note triplets), #3 treble stems-down (8th notes), #4 bass stems-up (8th notes with some 16th triplets), #5 bass stems-down (a mix of 8th notes and 16th triplets). (Note, there’s a typo in M.45: add one more 8th note in stem down treble part!)

1. Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma,
2. Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma,
3. Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma,
4. Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma,
5. Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma, Ta va ki di da ma,

Who Will be a Witness for my Lord (arr. S.Tucker)

<https://www.hanbellworld.com/music/MusicPiece.cfm?Piece=18095>

This snazzy, jazzy rendition needs rhythmic precision to make it work. Malleted lines should be balanced, without any one note sticking out. For the repeated F3 sections, you can suspend mallet those if need be. Marts and mart lifts in M. 29 must be precise! Consider sharing bells at M.17 (B6), Mm.29, 31, etc. (FG5 ringer can cover the Eb5), M.53 (Eb6). Listen to the track to get a feel for the syncopation, with a jump on the back beat – the “and” part of the 8th note pair that’s tied to the next beat.

A Shining Star (arr. Wissinger)

<https://www.hanbellworld.com/music/MusicPiece.cfm?Piece=15627>

This piece keeps you on your toes, tempos will ease a little compared to the recording except for the malleted sections. It was written to employ every technique known to bell ringers. Key changes and technique changes need to be effortless – so practice changing equipment, turning pages and resetting yourself for each new section! One goal is to give full value to every note – which may require some sharing with your neighbor! M.14, figure out who will play the A4 bell (B4C5 ringer?), so the G4 chime isn’t damped too soon! M.17/18 – the G5 ringer can also cover the E5 chime, so the DE5 ringer can cover bells. M.23 C5 can also ring A4 bell. And the chromatics in M.31 & 33 can be helped by ringers outside the patten (AB5 and GA6). M.37 Pluck lifts can be by anyone with 2 hands free! G3 and G4 get to aqua bell at M.51. We’ll need to pause there for audience response – then dry off and keep going! M.70 – a Brush Damp is a

forced decrescendo on a rung bell: sweep it down across your chest to soften the vibrations without totally damping it. M.71 Klocken Carta takes some getting used to. Have the papers handy to slip into place during the Brush damp Chord – or before that if possible. M.78 chime chords should continue TD.

In Times and Places (Eithun)

<https://www.hanbellworld.com/music/MusicPiece.cfm?Piece=16418>

This piece guides us through many scenarios, like a movie theme – each section tells a story. 16th notes that are shared between two ringers must be gentle and precise. Practice gently shifting from chimes back to bells at M.48. Marts and mart lifts also need to pop at the same time – I like bells to “hover” about 4” from the pad prior, especially if they’ve been rung before that. M.79 is like a shaking roll-off (if you were ever in a marching corps or the maybe even the Rockettes!). We will start a ritard in M.81 for those mart lifts. And we will thoroughly enjoy the last page – BIG and expansive with the damped-note chords at the end.

Wade in the Water (S. Tucker)

<https://www.hanbellworld.com/music/MusicPiece.cfm?Piece=5739>

You can hear the audio clip here:

<https://www.hopepublishing.com/Search/Sondra%20Tucker.aspx>

This is like a palate cleanser – simple, spunky and very clean, with lots of octave work and mallets. What’s not to love? Being absolutely sure of your rhythmic patterns will make this piece shine. I suggest all ringers work through the piece by first slowly counting out loud together and clapping the universal rhythms that everyone is ringing (for example: 1 a 2 a 3 + a 4 a) in swing rhythm. The again, still counting out loud but this time patsching (tapping left and right hands on thighs or table top for your own notes.) Move on to ringing only when you are sure of yourselves. Marting/malleting a passage will assure everyone is together. You can we’ll be counting out loud when we practice it together!

Festive Promenade (Wissinger)

<https://www.hanbellworld.com/music/MusicPiece.cfm?Piece=9468>

Bright and cheery, originally written just for bells on the L3 part, you can pull out the voices of the melody line as it weaves through the chords with close attention to dynamics. Adding chimes to the mix raises the difficulty level – but it’s not necessary. Note that it moves through many keys and modes, but there are no accidentals. If you have a L1 chime choir, guitar and tambourine, add them to the mix – it makes for a fun presentation!

One Great Spirit (Wissinger)

<https://www.hanbellworld.com/music/MusicPiece.cfm?Piece=13122>

Smooth and dignified. You may play from either score: 2-3 oct. or 3-5 oct. Never rushed, this piece calmly moves through themes and variations. Note the octaves in the bass: the top note is rung and the lower note is malleted.

The Syncopated Clock (Anderson/arr. Thompson)

<https://www.hanbellworld.com/music/MusicPiece.cfm?Piece=12928>

More than rhythm and mallets – it's chromatics!! Sharing bells gets bonus points to keep our visual presentation smooth – not frantic. So if someone has 3 different bells in a row, see if a neighbor can play one of them to make it flow more effortlessly. Trebles will want to Thumb damp, as many notes are staccato and then rung. Bass can be malleted, of course, but plucking would be very effective visually and would increase the challenge. Make sure the few 8th note pairs are played in straight rhythm, not swung. In spite of the continual malleting, there are many very legato sections to contrast.

Let's ring well!!!

Kath