

WELS Western Region Handbell Festival
April 6-7, 2019
Director's Notes
3 Exaltate & 2 Mass Pieces

Here I Am, Lord (Mass)

"Here I Am, Lord" will be performed with handbells and SATB choir. Measures 1-14 will be sung a cappella. The bells will enter on measure 15. Follow the dynamic indications in the score. Make sure that the melody, played by the handchimes, is prominent in measures 70-78. It is important to be able to look at the director in measures 122-124 and again at measures 127-132 as the tempo flexes at the end of the piece.

The King of Glory Comes (Exaltate)

This piece will be performed with a clarinet and string bass. It may seem that the tempo may be slow in some places. However, it is important that the composer's tempo indications are closely followed. If we played the Allegro, ©92 at a faster tempo, the clarinet part in measures 54-68 would become muddy, especially in the Chapel of the Christ's live acoustic. Everyone should use mallets in the parts where there is an option of plucking or using mallets. Work for precision, especially when mallets are used or if you are performing a martellato or a mart lift. Following the dynamic indications will help keep the balance between the handbells and the instrumental parts.

What Child Is this (Exaltate)

There is a challenge at the very start of this piece. We need to keep the eighth notes moving along while playing at mezzo piano. It might seem strange that there is a diminuendo in measures 17-20 followed by an indication to ring at mezzo forte. The diminuendo will happen naturally by the natural decay of the sustained chord. At the mezzo forte indication, just bring out the melody. The denser texture that begins at the pickup to measure 21 will naturally provide a mezzo forte dynamic. Otherwise, follow the composer's dynamic indications. Other challenges include changing keys and switching between bells and handchimes. All our efforts will be turned into a reward when we perform this beautiful arrangement.

The Day of Resurrection (Exaltate)

"The Day of Resurrection" will be performed with handbells, organ, brass, timpani, SATB choir and congregation. There are fermatas at the ends of the introduction and interlude as well as at the ends of the hymn stanzas. Be sure to look at the director for those cut offs and for the cue to start each stanza. For stanza 2, those playing the stem-down notes in the treble clef and the stem-up notes in the bass clef

should play at forte. The bells above and beneath should play at mezzo forte so that the melody can be highlighted. This concertato should raise the roof!

Lift High the Cross (Mass)

This piece is arranged for handbells and piano. There doesn't seem to be many tricky bits in this arrangement. Follow all dynamic and tempo indications. Keep an eye on the director when there are tempo changes. As the tempo becomes a bit broader as the piece progresses, keep in mind that there is not a great difference between ♩96 and ♩92. In addition, there is not a great difference between ♩92 and ♩88. The broadening of the tempo is subtle.

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