

# Pathways to Musical Ringing

Volume I:  
Articulations and Special Techniques

2 or 3 octaves handbells

Sandra Eithun and Michael W. Joy

An edition for 3, 4 or 5 octaves is also available, code CGB911. The two editions are fully compatible for festivals and other massed ringing events.

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Sandra Eithun and Michael Joy have created the *Pathways to Musical Ringing* series in order to offer music that teaches specific musical elements (in this volume, *Articulations and Special Techniques*), encourages success, and fosters growth in musicianship. These pieces have been carefully written and/or selected from folk, classical and sacred repertoire in order to spotlight particular techniques and articulations that are unique to handbells. In addition to being excellent teaching pieces, they are intended to be flexible for use in a variety of school, festival and sacred settings. With the inclusion of alternate titles, most have options for use in worship. As an additional benefit for developing ensembles, all of the selections have no page turns, with the exception of *Berceuse*.

The ten pieces in this collection range in difficulty from level 1 - through 2.

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## PROGRAM NOTES

**AGINCOURT SONG:** The “Agincourt Song” was written in England around 1415. This song celebrates the victory of Henry V and his English troops over the French. Well known by its secular words, this powerful melody now appears, with various texts, in over 40 hymnals. This arrangement features martellato and martellato-lift. To play marts, the ringer holds the handbell parallel to the table and, using gentle to moderate force, “taps” the full body of the handbell into the foam, creating a short, stopped sound. The martellato-lift is played the same way, followed by a quick vertical lift, allowing the handbell to continue ringing.

**ARMENIAN LULLABY:** Historically, lullabies are of an oral tradition—created, sung and passed down by mothers in the hopes of comforting their children as they send them off to sleep. Light and simple are the characteristics of this lovely tune from Armenia that is underscored by the gentle hum of the *singing bell* technique. You can imagine the mother quietly singing the text, “*Sleep, my little one, my loved one, as I rock and sing. As the bright moon watches o’er us, o’er your little crib.*”

**BERCEUSE:** Gabriel Fauré, (1845 – 1924) was a French composer, organist, pianist and teacher. His renowned Dolly Suite consists of short pieces, with the most familiar being *Berceuse*. Its delicate melody line is enhanced in this setting by the precise blending of the underlying accompaniment. In this accompaniment, ringers are performing the LV technique, in which the bells are not damped against the shoulder to stop the sound, but are instead allowed to linger and mix in a way that is pleasing to the ear.

**THE BLUE DANUBE:** Written by the famous Austrian composer, Johann Strauss II (1825 –1899), this charming waltz is instantly recognizable. It was written in 1866 and became an enormous success after it was performed at the World’s Fair in Paris in 1867. It has been adapted countless times since then and now we’ll hear it on handbells. The signature staccato sounds are achieved by the *Thumb Damp* technique where the performer places a thumb on the casting of the bell to create a shorter sound.

**BLOW YE WINDS:** Before the 20th century, being part of a sailing crew could be very difficult work. Work songs called “Sea Shanties” were commonly sung to accompany the hard labors and were a tradition for many years. The lyrics of this shanty provide the layer above the strong pulse giving the momentum to accomplish all of the different jobs that needed to be done on the ship: “*Blow ye winds in the morning, Blow ye winds, high-ho! Clear away your runnin’ gear, And blow, boys, blow!*” As the bells perform the *shake* technique, you can almost hear the winds!

**KUM BA YAH:** One of the best-known African-American spirituals, the title means “Come by here.” This arrangement features the echo technique. When performing echoes, ringers should play the handbell, touch only the lip of the handbell gently on a padded table, followed by an immediate lift. This creates an echo effect, so the name of the technique is very fitting. In this setting, the echoes often imitate the rhythm of the words “kum ba yah.”

**MIST AND FOG:** This original composition portrays the ideas of mist and fog through music. Mist is light and gentle. This musical depiction of mist uses suspended handbells and provides the accompaniment. The handbells are played gently with mallets, producing a quiet sound. For this technique, ringers should lightly tap the bell, using gentle force. Handbells should not be damped, allowing the sound to fade away quietly (except at the end of measure 20). Fog makes it difficult to see things clearly. The use of LV (let vibrate) for the melody gives the music a less distinct, “blurred” sound.

**MIXOLYDIAN MARCH:** All of this festive composition is played using mallets on handbells that are placed on a padded table. The handbells are struck with a mallet, on the outside top of the casting, at the same distance from the lip where the clapper strikes. To achieve the best musical results, handbells should be played with mallets using a gentle or moderate force. Ringers should think of “lifting” or “pulling” the sound out of the handbells instead of “pounding” the sound into the handbells.

**SHIMMERING REFLECTIONS:** This original composition, which makes extensive use of the vibrato technique, is a gentle piece using only whole and half notes. The longer note values and lush harmonies help to set a more meditative and reflective mood. The sound of handbells using vibrato has a shimmer to it. Put those ideas together and you have some insight into the title “Shimmering Reflections.” To support the musical intent of the piece, ringers should ring the bell, followed by a slow gentle movement, moving the casting from side to side. This helps to create a “shimmering” vibrato.

**THE TROUT:** Austrian composer Franz Schubert (1797–1828) used the text of a poem about a fish by writer Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart and set it to music for voice and piano. The lyrics tell the story of a happy little trout swimming in a river and eventually being caught by a fisherman. Here on handbells, we can imagine the quick little fish racing through the waters as the ringers incorporate the *pluck* technique by flicking the clapper of the bell downward as the bell rests on the tabletop.

# Shimmering Reflections

(Vibrato)

## Gentle Praise

2 or 3 octaves  
Handbells used: 15, (22)

2 octave choirs omit notes in ( ).

Michael W. Joy

1 **Slowly** (♩ = 72)

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## Mist and Fog

*(Mallet Suspended Bells, LV)**Meditation*

2 or 3 octaves

Handbells used: 15, (21)

2 octave choirs omit notes in ( ).

3 octave choirs omit notes in [ ].

**Moderately with freedom** (♩ = 92)

Michael W. Joy

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## The Blue Danube

(Thumb Damp)

2 or 3 octaves  
Handbells used: 16, (22)

optional

2 octave choirs omit notes in ( ).

An der schönen blauen Donau, Op. 314  
Johann Strauss II, 1825-1899  
arr. Sandra Eithun

Slowly

Light and dance-like (♩ = c. 112)

1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 9

10 11 12 13 14

mp LV

R

TD

R

LV

R

LV

R

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# Kum Ba Yah

(Echo)

2 or 3 octaves  
Handbells used: 15, (22)

2 octave choirs omit notes in ( ).

African American spiritual  
arr. Michael W. Joy

**Moderately** (♩ = c. 88)

*Up-stemmed notes second time only*

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# Armenian Lullaby

(Singing Bell)

2 or 3 octaves  
Handbells used: 15, (22)

2 octave choirs omit notes in ( ).

Quietly, slowly (♩ = 80)

Armenian folk song  
arr. Sandra Eithun

\* If chime tree is available, the A♭5/B♭5 ringer should softly perform a whole note in measures 2, 10, 26, and 31.

\*\* The D5/E♭5 ringer can perform the rhythms indicated on either a triangle or finger cymbals in measures 3-11 and 26-31.

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# Blow Ye Winds

(Shake and Swing)

## *Winds of Morning*

2 or 3 octaves  
Handbells used: 16, (24)

2 octave choirs omit notes in ( ).

**Steadily** (♩ = 104-108)

Sea chanty  
arr. Sandra Eithun

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# Agincourt Song

(Martellato and Martellato-lift)

## O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High

2 or 3 octaves  
Handbells used: 18, (26)

Musical notation for handbells, consisting of two staves. The upper staff contains a sequence of notes with flats, and the lower staff contains a simpler sequence. Brackets labeled "optional" indicate specific sections of the music.

2 octave choirs omit notes in ( ).

DEO GRATIAS  
15th cent. English  
arr. Michael W. Joy

**Boldly** (♩ = c. 112)

Musical notation for piano accompaniment, measures 1 through 6. The score is in 3/4 time and features a variety of chords and melodic lines. Dynamic markings include *f* and *ff*. Performance directions include "Boldly" and "DEO GRATIAS".

Musical notation for piano accompaniment, measures 7 through 13. The score continues with complex chordal textures and melodic fragments. Dynamic markings include *mf* and *ff*. Performance directions include "DEO GRATIAS".

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# Mixolydian March

(Mallet Bells on Table)

## Festive Fanfare

2 or 3 octaves  
Handbells used: 17, (25)

optional

2 octave choirs omit notes in ( ).

March-like (♩ = c. 116)

Michael W. Joy

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

*f*

*mf*

*cresc.*

*f*

\* Handchimes may use finger damp throughout this piece.

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# The Trout

(Pluck)

## Schubert Quintet, Opus 114 (last movement)

2 or 3 octaves  
Handbells used: 17, (25)

Handbell notation for two staves. The upper staff has notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6. The lower staff has notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Brackets indicate 'optional' sections: one under the first six notes of the lower staff, and another under the last three notes of the upper staff.

2 octave choirs omit notes in ( ).

from *Piano Quintet in A Major*, D. 667  
Franz Schubert, 1797-1828  
arr. Sandra Eithun

**Happily** (♩ = 104-108)

Piano accompaniment for 'The Trout' in 4/4 time. The piece is marked 'Happily' with a tempo of ♩ = 104-108. The first section (measures 1-5) is marked *mf* *Pl*. Measure 3 includes a 'R' (ritardando) marking. The second section (measures 6-9) is marked *mp*. Measure 7 includes a fermata. The third section (measures 10-13) includes 'LV' (lento vivace) markings in measures 11 and 13, and an 'R' marking in measure 12. The notation shows chords and melodic lines in both hands.

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# Berceuse

2 or 3 octaves  
Handbells used: 19, (26)

Handbell notation with two staves. The upper staff contains a sequence of notes: G4, Bb4, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, Bb5, C6. The lower staff contains: G3, Bb3, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, Bb4, C5. Brackets labeled "optional" are placed under the first four notes of each staff. An additional bracket labeled "optional" is placed over the last three notes of the upper staff: Bb5, C6, and D6.

2 octave choirs omit notes in ( ).

from *Dolly Suite*, Op. 56  
Gabriel Fauré, 1845-1924  
arr. Sandra Eithun

Piano score for Berceuse, measures 1 through 9. The tempo is marked "Andantino" with a quarter note equal to 84-88 beats per minute. The music is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. The score includes dynamic markings such as "mp" and "LV" (likely for left hand). Handbell assignments are indicated by "R" (right hand) and "LV" (left hand) with lines pointing to specific notes in the piano accompaniment. Measure 1 starts with a piano introduction. Measures 2-9 show the main melodic and harmonic development.

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