

Director's Notes for Danza

This piece arranged for handbells by Kevin McChesney, was first published by Renaissance composer Tielman Sustato in 1551. It is most likely a Morris (Moorish) dance song from Medieval times and was used as an entry dance. We will strive to keep the dance-like, processional feel by accenting beat one of every measure and keeping the subsequent beats lighter. This will be easier to do in cut time, like the time signature suggests, so I'll be conducting in 2. For the tempo, let's do half note=84.

In keeping with its dance-like nature, please make sure to cleanly damp – there aren't any LVs in this piece!

There are both marts and mart lifts in this piece. Make sure you notice if you're doing mart lifts or marts and when doing marts, make sure your marts don't become mart lifts, especially the repeated notes. You can add a thumb and/or index/middle finger when you mart to help with that.

The Handbell World recording has a brass quintet and timpani, but we'll have something even more special than that; June will be playing oboe with us on a part she composed!

Here are some specifics:

- M. 1 – forte
- M. 21 – mf or even mp. This section has no marts and has a different feel.
- M. 28 – let's do a nice big crescendo leading into the downbeat of the next measure.
- M. 29 – forte
- M. 36 – big crescendo leading into the downbeat of the next measure
- M. 37 – ff
- M. 45 – mf or even mp
- M. 49 – f
- M. 53-56 – start piano then play a big crescendo into m. 57.
- M. 57 – ff. The articulation pattern changes. Now it's mart lift, mart, mart.
- M 71-72 – memorize these measures so that you will look up until the end of the song.
- M. 71 – ritardando
- M. 72 – let's add a ring touch (RT) to beat 1. Circle the rest and the caesura (railroad tracks) above it. You may want to also write in a fermata over the rest to be sure and look up. Who knows how long I'll feel like resting there? It will probably never be the same length twice in a row. Also put a fermata over the last note; not sure how long I'll hold that one either!

Let's have fun! If only we had enough time for us to learn a Morris dance to go with it, although I did give my swords away after I retired.....Here's a link to a wind ensemble arrangement of "Danza" (Danseye, 1st mvt., La Morisque):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VpXhfXrvFk>



Director's Notes for Hashivenu

Hashivenu means 'return us' in Hebrew. The lyrics of the folksong are from the final verse in the Hebrew Book of Lamentations (5:21) and the translation is:

*Turn us back, turn us back, O Lord to You,
And we will turn, and we will turn,
Renew, renew our days as before.*

This Book is read on the saddest day of the Jewish year, 9 Av, which is Aug. 12-13 in 2024. On this day, the Jewish people lament all the horrible things that have happened to their people throughout the centuries from the fall of temples to The Holocaust. Even through all the pain of remembering, there is still a sense of hope through developing resilience and renewing faith. I think Brenda's handbell arrangement reflects this in the mournful yearning at the beginning to the driving confidence at the end. It's a beautiful, emotional piece!

Each of the lines has its own beautiful melody. Often, you will hear performances of this folksong done as a round such as these two examples:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cOrv8Jm95OA&t=2s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1vGv6xBQrU>

Brenda's arrangement doesn't use the melodies in a round, but treats them as separate entities often with their own phrasing. That will be the challenge of playing this piece – playing legato (smooth and connected) together musically with meaningful phrasing.

If you don't have chimes, go ahead and play bells, but the contrast of the two timbres is magnificent in this piece!

Always subdivide so that we keep the rhythm accurate. At the beginning, it will keep things smooth and flowing, and at the tempo change, it will keep things exciting, energetic and moving toward the downbeat.

Some specifics:

- Beginning tempo is quarter note = 78
- M. 10 add a crescendo
- M. 11 add a decrescendo
- M. 13-18 – have the phrasing follow the pitches – up=cresc., down=decresc.
- M. 19 – add a decrescendo
- M. 14-19 – that + without the dot means to mallet those bells off the table for a sustained sound. Treat it like an LV. For the GA6 ringer, put your bells in 4 (2) in hand position in your left hand with the A on the bottom, and mallet with your right hand. In m. 18 after you mallet the A, put down your mallet and take the A bell from underneath with your right hand so that it will be in your correct hand.
- M. 21 – mf
- M. 26 – add a crescendo
- M. 29 – f



Director's Notes for Hashivenu (continued)

- M. 29-30, 31-32, and 33-34 – make the 1st beat (the Eb6) louder and then decrescendo. into the following measure.
- M. 36 – mf
- M. 37-39 – memorize so that you can look up
- M. 37 – rit. I will more than likely subdivide.
- M. 38 – no cut-off after the fermata. C5 and Eb5 – surreptitiously put down your chimes and get your mallets over your bells.

- M. 39-end – Let's do this at quarter note = 138. This whole last section should feel like a $\frac{3}{4}$ paso doble. Notice the rhythm in m. 39-40. The rhythm of these 2 measures constantly repeats throughout the rest of the song. The last 3 eighth notes of this 2 m. rhythm pattern should always drive to the downbeat of the next measure, even if the melody is doing something else dynamically.

- When malleting on the table (+ with a dot above or below), use 2 mallets and alternate hands almost always to keep from getting tense and bogged down.

- M. 43-62 – pretty much keep the phrasing the same as m. 13-32.
- M. 63 – treble clef stems up is R, treble clef stems down is mart, and bass clef is malleted.

- M. 64-88 – thumb damps. Don't press your thumb so hard into the casting that you become tense and lock up your wrists. Keep your circular stroke and bell laddering up. Now it's your turn to drive the last 3 eighth notes to the downbeat of the next measure.

- M. 89-95 – don't rush the repeated quarter notes on beats 2 and 3. Also don't play them as loud as beat 1.
- M. 95-107 – keep the phrasing the same as m. 21-33
- M. 108-end – keep driving to the end
- M. 115 – shake C5 and up when you come in
- M. 117 – your choice as to how to make that last chord very short – RT, mart or PL or mallet with choking the sound immediately afterward.

Have fun playing such an awesome piece!

