



For Madison Windham Smith

African Bell Carol

For String Orchestra and Percussion

TRADITIONAL

Arranged by ROBERT W. SMITH (ASCAP)

INSTRUMENTATION

- 1 Conductor
 - 8 1st Violin
 - 8 2nd Violin
 - 8 3rd Violin (Viola T.C.)
 - 5 Viola
 - 5 Cello
 - 5 String Bass
 - 3 Percussion I
(Congas, Low Toms,
Optional Large Djembe)
 - 3 Percussion II
(Shaker, Optional Large
Beaded Gourd,
Crash Cymbals)
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PROGRAM NOTES

“African Bell Carol” is a multicultural setting of the traditional “Ukrainian Bell Carol” for string orchestra and percussion. Featuring the percussion section throughout, the arrangement explores the traditional carol through ethnic tone colors and dynamic contrast.

“African Bell Carol” is dedicated to Madison Windham Smith, the arranger’s daughter. In her very first “duet” at the piano with her father, she chose the four descending notes A through E. The stylistic variations of the bell carol followed to the delight of both father and daughter!

NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

The percussion parts are written within the abilities of your string players who wish to double. Please note the following as it relates to the percussion section:

1. The conga part should be assigned to the most experienced and stylistically secure musician.
2. The tom part notated on the Percussion I staff should be played on a floor tom. As an option, you may wish to use a djembe for a more authentic performance. I suggest staging both the congas and the tom/djembe in front of the orchestra.
3. The shaker should be staged in front of the orchestra as well. This part should be played on a shakere (large beaded gourd) if one is available.
4. If personnel and equipment allow, a second tom and shaker should be added at measure 33. I suggest staging these two additional players in front of the orchestra, yet on the extreme left and right sides for musical and visual impact.
5. The remaining available percussionists should be added at measure 73. For optimum effect, I suggest staging them throughout the hall to provide a more surround-sound listening experience. This will require additional rehearsal time in the hall to alleviate any timing concerns for the performance.
6. Feel free to experiment with percussion throughout. I have written this work as a unique teaching opportunity for the winter concert. Depending upon your available equipment, the percussion arrangement may change and grow as you see fit.

The concept of this setting centers on the ever-growing ensemble. Beginning with three percussionists and the violin section, the work progresses to the entire orchestra. Please note the dynamic contrasts notated throughout. Care should be taken not only to the shaping of individual phrases but also to the growing intensity of the arrangement.

I hope you, your orchestra, and your audience find “African Bell Carol” to be a musically rewarding experience. Best wishes for a wonderful performance!

Robert W. Smith

CONDUCTOR

AFRICAN BELL CAROL

for String Orchestra and Percussion

TRADITIONAL
Arranged by ROBERT W. SMITH (ASCAP)

Comfortable groove ♩ = 180 (in one)

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola
(Opt. Violin 3)

Cello

String Bass

Percussion I
(Congas, Low Tom-Toms
Optional Large Djembe)

Percussion II
(Shaker, Optional
Large Beaded Gourd,
Crash Cymbals)

Congas

mf Low Tom-Tom (opt. large Djembe)

mf Shaker (opt. large Beaded Gourd)

1 2 3 4 5 6

9

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Cello

Str. Bass

Perc. I

Perc. II

7 8 9 10 11 12