

MISTERIUM

for double virtual handbell ensemble
by James Meredith

Virtual Handbell Ensemble is a project of the Handbell Musicians of America. This was announced in July, 2012 at the National Seminar in Cincinnati, Ohio by Executive Director, Jennifer Cauhorn.

Misterium consists of 135 musical segments to be recorded by individuals and small groups of players from around the world over a seven month period and uploaded to the web. All of the segments will be assembled by the editing videographer and the composer into the final work to be premiered online in July, 2013.

The players may opt to record any or all of the individual segments to the set tempo of the click tracks which can be downloaded along with the segments at <http://virtual.handbellmusicians.org>. Instructions where to upload the recorded segments in any video/DVD format will be found there as well.

Except for the segments needing more than one person, most are meant to be performed standing away from tables. We encourage you to be creative in your filming. Find a place as quiet as possible indoors or out. Choose a background which does not detract from you. You may film very close up, at a distance, from the side, front or overhead but make your performance interesting. The more interesting, the more likely your clips will be prominent in the final video collage. In other words, don't look like robotic automatons! Let's show the world how exciting handbells can be to watch and listen.

After the online premier, the score will be published so that any groups interested can perform the work designed for double ensemble.

About the Work

The style of ringing that we do is descended from change-ringing, a practice originating in England. This was a secular practice. Bells were hung in church towers since they were the highest places around. As 'tune ringing' took hold, especially in America, the church was the ideal place for handbells to find a home.

In homage to this history, the French plainchant melody *adoro devote* plays a large part of the composition of the work, though greatly transformed in the process. The sound of bells throughout history, within different cultures, has always had an air of mystery. The title of this work reflects that feeling and the extensive use of the 'singing bell' technique connects to an ancient Asian tradition.

The playing of handbells is a group endeavor. An interesting sociological study could be made on handbell playing as a microcosm for the community, with all its joys and challenges. To further that analogy, *Misterium* was written for two handbell ensembles to broaden the community involved.

The mystery is continued as none of the participating players will know what the final composition will sound like until it is put together in the video editing studio and premiered a year from now. The work is a soundscape of overlapping sonorities, rhythms and textures. As the composer, I know what it sounds like in my imagination but the final sound is up to your performances.

James Meredith
July 17, 2012
Oakland, CA

Mr. Meredith is the Artistic Director of Sonos Handbell Ensemble and a composer of many original works and arrangements for advanced handbell ensemble.

Video Instructions

- Use any device that records digital video. Ex: Flip Cam, iPhone, iPad, Android, digital camera, camcorder, etc.
- Choose a location - We encourage you to be creative in your filming. Find a place as quiet as possible indoors or out. Choose a background which does not detract from you. You may film very close up, at a distance, from the side, front or overhead, but make your performance interesting. The more interesting, the more likely your clips will be prominent in the final video collage. In other words, don't look like robotic automatons (unless you mean to and you own it!). Let's show the world how exciting handbells can be to watch and listen.
- Make sure you have headphones for your computer or iPod or other audio player so you can listen to the click track as you play without the click track being picked by your video recorder. Be sure to choose the appropriate click track for the segment you are recording, as indicated in the music.
- When you are ready to record, be sure to include an introduction with the following information:
 - Name(s) of performers
 - Home city, state, and/or country of performers
 - How each performer got their start in handbells
 - How long each performer has been ringing handbells
 - Segment being recorded
- After your introduction, start your click track and wait approximately 10 clicks before you begin playing.
- Perform and record only one segment of the piece.
- After your performance allow another 10 clicks before you stop the recorder.
- Do not record more than one segment per recording. You may record multiple segments, but they must be submitted individually.
- Instructions for uploading your video will be available by August 1, 2012 at virtual.handbellmusicians.org

Misterium Segments

Each to be recorded as a separate track/file to the tempo of the click track which you are listening to in an ear piece from a sound source. Do not record as a continuous piece of music. Only record the individual segment(s) you wish to perform, and stop your recording at the end of the segment. Record as few or as many segments as you like, but record each as a separate file.

Segments #1-121 use click track #1.

James Meredith (2012)

1 SB 44x LV 4x STOP 2 SB 43x LV 4x STOP 3 SB

8 42x LV 4x STOP 4 SB 41x LV 4x STOP 5 SB 40x

15 LV 4x STOP 6 SB 39x LV 4x STOP 7 SB 38x LV 4x STOP

8 SB 37x LV 4x STOP 9 SB 36x LV 4x STOP 10 SB

29 35x LV 4x STOP 11 SB 34x LV 4x STOP 12 SB 33x LV 4x STOP

13 LV 5x LV 10x STOP 14 LV 5x LV 10x STOP

15 LV 5x LV 10x STOP 16 LV 5x LV 10x STOP 17 LV CONTINUE →

Misterium Segments

50 **STOP** 18 **STOP** 19

5x LV 10x LV 5x LV 10x LV 5x

p

57 **STOP** 20 **STOP** 21 **STOP**

LV 10x LV 5x LV 10x LV 5x LV 10x

p

22 **STOP** 23 **STOP** 24

LV 5x LV 10x LV 5x LV 10x LV

p

71 **STOP** 25 **STOP** 26

5x LV 10x LV 11x LV 8x

p

77 **STOP** 27

LV 9x LV

p

82 **STOP** 28

8x LV 7x

p

87 **STOP** 29

8x LV

p

92 **STOP**

5x 8x

p

30 *LV* *3x* *8x* STOP

31 *pLV* *8x*

106 *p* STOP 32 *LV* *27x* GP *LV* 33

111 25x GP 34 *LV* 23x GP 35 *LV*

117 21x GP 36 *LV* 19x GP 37 *LV*

123 17x GP 38 *LV* 13x GP 39 *LV*

129 11x GP 40 *LV* 9x GP 41 *LV*

135 7x GP 42 *LV* 5x GP 43 CONTINUE →

Misterium Segments

141 3x \emptyset GP STOP 44 LV \sharp $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ GP STOP $\frac{4}{4}$

fff *ff* *fff*

45 LV 8x STOP 46 LV 6x STOP 47 LV 4x STOP

mp *mp* *mp*

48 3x STOP 49 LV 2x STOP 50 LV

mp *mp* *mp*

157 STOP 51 LV 7x STOP 52 LV 5x STOP

mp *mp*

53 LV 2x STOP 54 LV 2x STOP 55 LV 2x STOP

mp *mp* *mp*

56 LV 2x STOP 57 LV 2x STOP 58 LV 2x STOP

mp *mp* *mp*

59 LV STOP 60 LV

mp *mp*

179 4x STOP 61 LV 6x STOP 62 LV 3x STOP CONTINUE →

mp *mp*

186 **STOP** 63 *LV* 5x 2 **STOP** 64 *LV* 7x *mp*

193 2 **STOP** 65 *LV sempre* 8x *p*

199

203

209 2

216 **STOP** 66 *LV sempre* 4 *p*

224

228 *pp* CONTINUE →

234

2 SB

242

LV STOP

ppp

67

R SB LV 3 R SB

pp ppp pp

STOP STOP

260

LV STOP

ppp

69

STOP 70

p p

tight TD very loose TD

LV

275

282

R LV 5 STOP

pp ppp

71

SB LV 2 STOP

pp ppp

72

very loose TD tight TD

p *pp*

Detailed description: A single musical staff in treble clef. The first half of the staff is marked 'very loose TD' and contains a series of eighth notes with a dotted quarter note. The second half is marked 'tight TD' and contains a series of quarter notes. The dynamic starts at *p* and ends at *pp*.

309

5 SB *pp*

Detailed description: A musical staff in treble clef. It begins with a quarter note, followed by a whole rest, then a five-measure rest (marked '5'), and ends with a half note. The dynamic is *pp*. 'SB' is written above the staff.

320

2 STOP 73 SB 5

ppp LV *pp* LV *ppp*

Detailed description: A musical staff in treble clef. It starts with a quarter note, followed by a two-measure rest (marked '2'), then a half note. A 'STOP' sign and the number '73' are placed above the staff. The staff continues with a half note, followed by a five-measure rest (marked '5'), and ends with a quarter note. Dynamics include *ppp*, *pp*, and *ppp*. 'LV' and 'SB' are also present.

332

STOP 74 SB 3x SB 25x SB 15x SB

mf *mp* *p*

Detailed description: A musical staff in treble clef. It starts with a quarter note, followed by a 'STOP' sign and the number '74'. The staff continues with a half note, followed by a '3x' rest, a half note, a '25x' rest, a half note, a '15x' rest, and ends with a half note. Dynamics are *mf*, *mp*, and *p*.

340

8x SB 8 STOP 75 SB 2x SB 25x

pp LV *mf* *mp*

Detailed description: A musical staff in bass clef. It starts with an '8x' rest, followed by a half note, an '8' rest, a 'STOP' sign and the number '75', a half note, a '2x' rest, a half note, and ends with a '25x' rest. Dynamics include *pp*, *mf*, and *mp*. 'LV' is also present.

355

SB 15x SB 8x SB 8 STOP 76 SB

p *pp* LV *mf*

Detailed description: A musical staff in bass clef. It starts with a half note, followed by a '15x' rest, a half note, an '8x' rest, a half note, an '8' rest, a 'STOP' sign and the number '76', and ends with a half note. Dynamics include *p*, *pp*, and *mf*. 'LV' is also present.

370

25x SB 15x SB 8x SB

mp *p* *pp*

Detailed description: A musical staff in bass clef. It starts with a half note, followed by a '25x' rest, a half note, a '15x' rest, a half note, and ends with an '8x' rest. Dynamics are *mp*, *p*, and *pp*.

378

STOP 77 CONTINUE →

8 SB 25x SB 15x SB

LV *mp* *p*

Detailed description: A musical staff in bass clef. It starts with an '8' rest, followed by a half note, a 'STOP' sign and the number '77', a half note, a '25x' rest, a half note, a '15x' rest, and ends with a half note. The text 'CONTINUE →' is written to the right. Dynamics include *mp* and *p*. 'LV' is also present.

Misterium Segments

393 **STOP** 78

8x SB LV 8 SB 25x SB

pp *p* *mp*

407 **STOP** 79

15x SB 8x SB 8 SB 21x

p *pp* LV

422 **STOP** 80

SB LV 3 SB 9x SB LV 3 **STOP**

mp

81 **STOP** 82

SB 14x SB 3 SB 21x SB

mp LV *mp*

441 **STOP** 83

SB 20x SB 2 **STOP**

p *mp* *p*

84

LV 3 SK 2 4 4

fff *fff*

460

LV 3 SK LV 3 SK 2 4 4

fff *fff*

471 **STOP** 85

LV 2 SK

fff CONTINUE →

480 LV 3 $\frac{2}{4}$ SK $\frac{4}{4}$ LV 3 SK $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ *fff* *fff*

491 LV 3 $\frac{2}{4}$ SK $\frac{4}{4}$ LV 2 SK $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ *fff* *fff* STOP 86

501 LV 3 SK $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ *fff*

511 LV 3 SK LV 3 SK $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ *fff* *fff*

522 LV 2 (mallet roll off the table) *fff* LV $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

531 *fff* LV $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

539 *fff* LV $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ *fff*

547 STOP 88 CONTINUE → *fff* LV $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$

555

Musical notation for measures 555-562. The score is in bass clef. Measures 555-562 are marked with *LV*. A *fff* dynamic marking is present. A wavy line indicates a tremolo effect. A **STOP** sign is located at the end of measure 562.

563

Musical notation for measures 563-570. The score is in bass clef. Measures 563-570 are marked with *LV*. A *fff* dynamic marking is present. A wavy line indicates a tremolo effect. A **STOP** sign is located at the end of measure 570.

571

Musical notation for measures 571-577. The score is in bass clef. Measures 571-577 are marked with *LV*. A *fff* dynamic marking is present. A wavy line indicates a tremolo effect. A **STOP** sign is located at the end of measure 577.

578

Musical notation for measures 578-585. The score is in treble clef. Measures 578-585 are marked with *SK*. A wavy line indicates a tremolo effect.

586

Musical notation for measures 586-593. The score is in treble clef. Measures 586-593 are marked with *SK*. A wavy line indicates a tremolo effect.

594

Musical notation for measures 594-600. The score is in treble clef. Measures 594-600 are marked with *SK*. A wavy line indicates a tremolo effect. The tempo marking *molto marcato* is present.

601

Musical notation for measures 601-606. The score is in treble clef. Measures 601-606 are marked with *R*. A wavy line indicates a tremolo effect.

607

Musical notation for measures 607-614. The score is in treble clef. Measures 607-614 are marked with *SK* and *LV*. A *sffz* dynamic marking is present. A wavy line indicates a tremolo effect. A **STOP** sign is located at the end of measure 614.

90

fff

622

629

636

molto marcato

643

sffz

sffz

STOP 91

molto marcato

650

LV

657

sffz

STOP

92 *fff* *sffz* SK SK

671 LV *sffz* *sffz*

679 *sffz* *sffz*

STOP 95 STOP 96 STOP

97 *sffz* *sffz* *sffz*

STOP 98 STOP 99

695 *sffz* *sffz*

STOP 100 STOP 101 STOP

102 LV *ff* LV *ff* STOP 103 STOP 104 LV *ff*

708 LV *ff* STOP 105 STOP 106 LV *ff* STOP 107 LV *ff* STOP

108 STOP 109

ff *ff*

110 STOP 111

ff *ff*

112 STOP

ff *ff*

114 STOP 115

ff *ff*

728 STOP 116 LV STOP 117 LV

ff

734 STOP 118 LV STOP

ff

119 STOP

ff

120

LV 4x

ff

STOP 121

752 LV 4x

ff

STOP

Segments #122-125 use click track #2.

122 STOP 123 LV 7x 9x 7x STOP 125

ff *ff* *ff* *ff*

STOP

766 15x STOP 126 Return to click track #1.

mp *mf*

STOP 126 Return to click track #1.

772

mp *mf* *mp*

779

786 STOP 127 CONTINUE →

mp *mf* *mp*

STOP 127 CONTINUE →

793 **STOP** 128

mp LV mp

Detailed description: This musical staff covers measures 793 to 800. It begins with a 'STOP' sign and the number 128. The music is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat. It features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, and a bass line with dotted quarter notes. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present, with a hairpin indicating a crescendo and decrescendo. A 'LV' (Lento) marking is placed above the staff.

801 **STOP** 129

mp

Detailed description: This musical staff covers measures 801 to 809. It starts with a 'STOP' sign and the number 129. The music continues in bass clef with a key signature of one flat, featuring a melodic line with eighth notes and a bass line with dotted quarter notes. A dynamic marking of *mp* is shown.

810

Detailed description: This musical staff covers measures 810 to 817. It continues the melodic and bass lines in bass clef with a key signature of one flat.

818 **STOP** 130

mp LV

Detailed description: This musical staff covers measures 818 to 825. It begins with a 'STOP' sign and the number 130. The music is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present, and a 'LV' (Lento) marking is placed above the staff.

826

Detailed description: This musical staff covers measures 826 to 833. It continues the melodic and bass lines in bass clef with a key signature of one flat.

834

Detailed description: This musical staff covers measures 834 to 841. It continues the melodic and bass lines in bass clef with a key signature of one flat.

842 **STOP** 131

LV

Detailed description: This musical staff covers measures 842 to 850. It starts with a 'STOP' sign and the number 131. The music is in bass clef with a key signature of one flat. A dynamic marking of *mp* is present, and a 'LV' (Lento) marking is placed above the staff.

851 CONTINUE →

Detailed description: This musical staff covers measures 851 to 858. It continues the melodic and bass lines in bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The staff ends with the instruction 'CONTINUE →'.

859

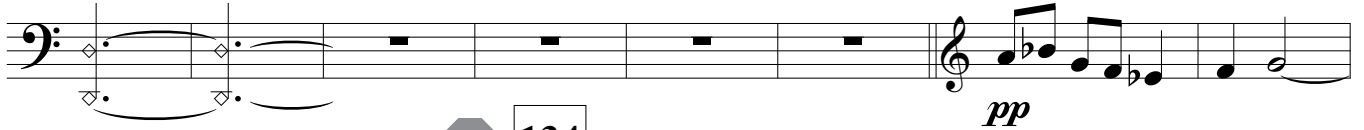


132

LV

STOP

133



875

STOP

134

LV

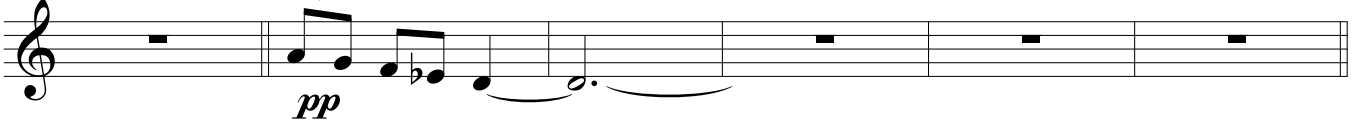


STOP

135

LV

883



STOP

