Creative Use of Handchimes

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20th International Handbell Symposium

Class description: Interested in learning more about chime techniques, this class is for you! This class will cover techniques that can be used for both handbells and handchimes, techniques specific to handchimes, and a newer technique that has only been used a few times before! In addition, we will use music written for handbells that can also be applicable for handchimes.

Common Techniques

Most techniques that are commonly used for handbells can also be used for handchimes. There are a few exceptions (like martellato, as we don't want to be marting chimes on the table), but there are more techniques that are interchangeable between handbells and handchimes than one might originally think.

Chimes & Bells	Bells Only
Ring (R)	Martellato
Let Vibrate (LV)	Martellato Lift
Shoulder Damp (SD)	Gyro
Table Damp	Pluck (PL)
Table Land Damp (TLD)	Pluck Lift
4-in-Hand	Brush Damp (BD)
Shelley	Mallet Lift
Thumb Damp (TD)	Singing Bell (SB)
Vibrato (*vib.*)	
Mallet on the Table	
Mallet Roll on the Table	
Mallet in the Air	
Ring Touch (RT)	
Tower Swing	
Echo	
Shake (SK)	
Trill (*tr*)	
Rolled Chord	
Chord Bend/Trombone Slide	
Bowing	

Chord Bend/Trombone Slide

Technique descriptions from Rock Around the Clock (CGB493) and Dancing Queen (JHS9505)

To methods to accomplish this:

1. Strike both chimes simultaneously with the 1st pitch rung upright and the 2nd pitch rung toward the shoulder. Slowly tilt the 1st pitch toward the shoulder as the 2nd pitch is tilted to an upright position. Damp both pitches at the same time.
2. Both pitches are rung simultaneously. The 1st pitch is rung high near the shoulder. The 2nd pitch is rung lower holding the chime horizontally. The 1st pitch is damped as the 2nd pitch is moved upward through a normal circular ringing motion.

New Invention! Bowing Handchimes

Credit to Megan Reishus for sharing the following information

Beyond the common techniques above, a new creative chime technique has come about in the past few years. To my knowledge, Forté Handbell Quartet is responsible for the invention of **bowing handchimes**. This technique is most successful with longer notes (similar to a singing bell technique), but can even be used for passing eight notes or grace notes (not entire sections).

Bowing handchimes can be achieved using a violin bow with rosin (cheaper violin bows are sufficient) on C4 through C7 chimes. Experimentation has also been used on C3 through B3 using a bass bow to achieve the same effect on lower chimes.

Hold the chime upright in one hand with the bow in the other. Using a downbow technique, draw the bow across the top of a single tine on the handchime. Depending on the octave of the chime, different pressures will be needed to produce a sound. Once you have finished, wipe off the chime to remove any rosin that may have come off of the bow. It is also possible to hold two chimes in a single hand, angling the bow over a single tine on each chime to create a chord.

Creative Uses of Chimes in Music

Although certain musical selections do have sections specifically written to be played on handchimes, there are additional opportunities to play chimes in place of bells even if the piece doesn't indicate to do so. The following are examples of when this may be appropriate. Excerpts from these pieces are included on the following pages.

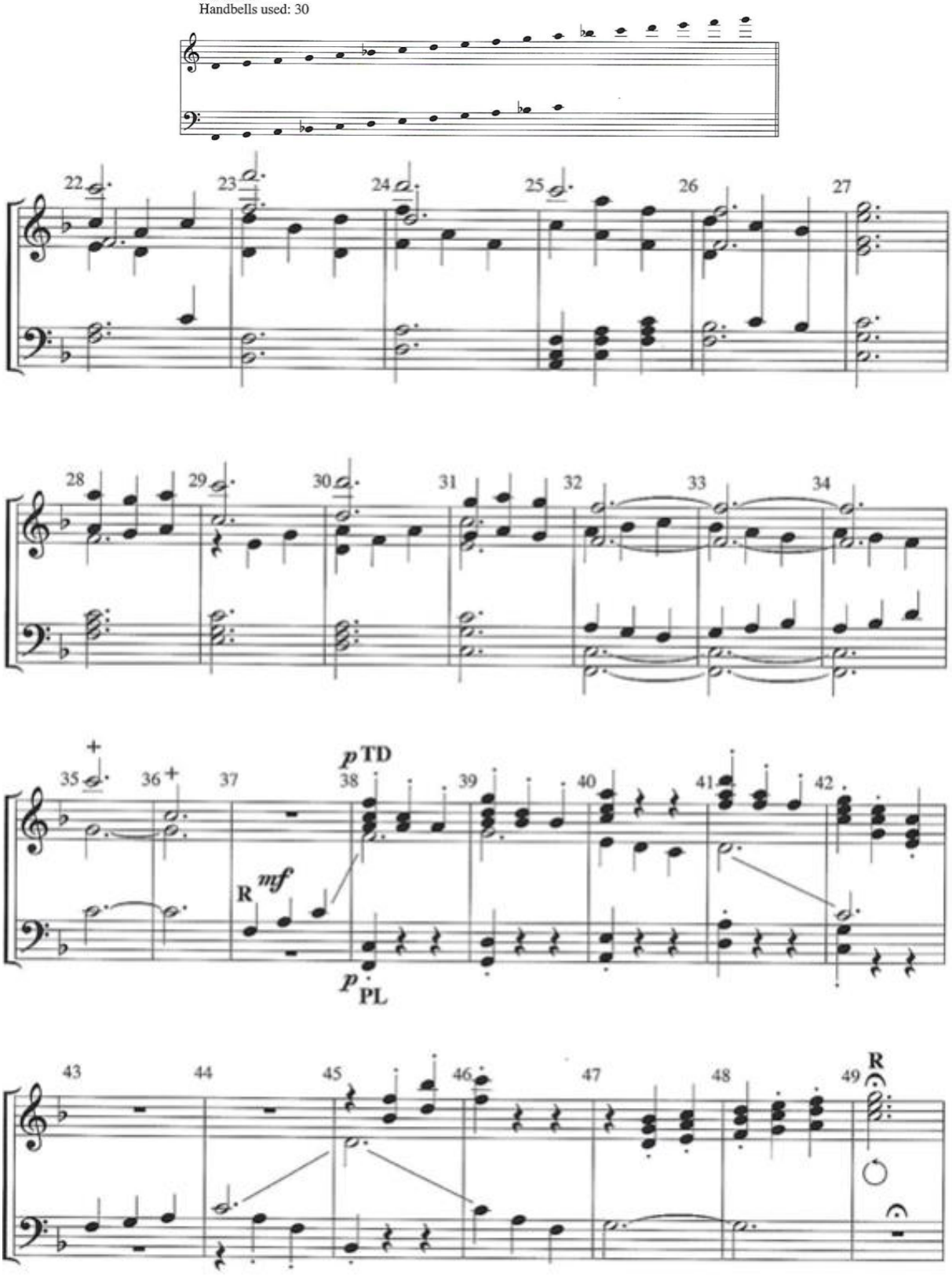
	Lyrical	Bombastic
Level 1	Morning Has Broken (HM01091)*	Christ Is Risen, He Is Risen Indeed! (2868)
Level 2	Pie Jesu (1693)	Alleluia (HP1677)
Level 3	Call of the Water (RE8005)	Alabaré (977485)
Level 4	Clair de Lune* (CGB1075)	Rock Around the Clock (CGB493)
Level 5	Arabesque I (1281)	Enhebrado De La Aguja Del Espacio (20415HB)

*This song is arranged for multiple levels and group sizes (solo, duet, full choir)

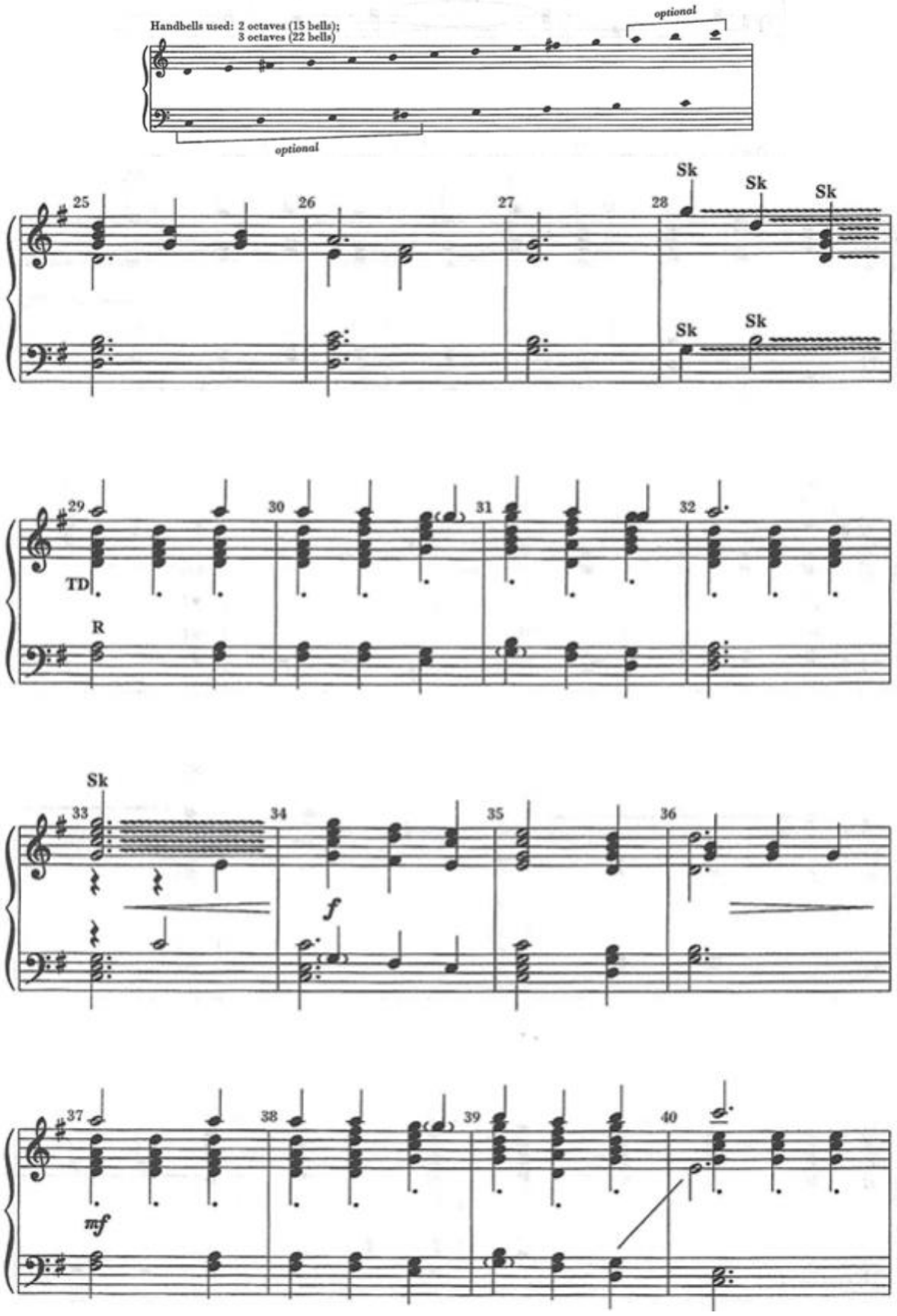
Morning Has Broken

(Bunessan)

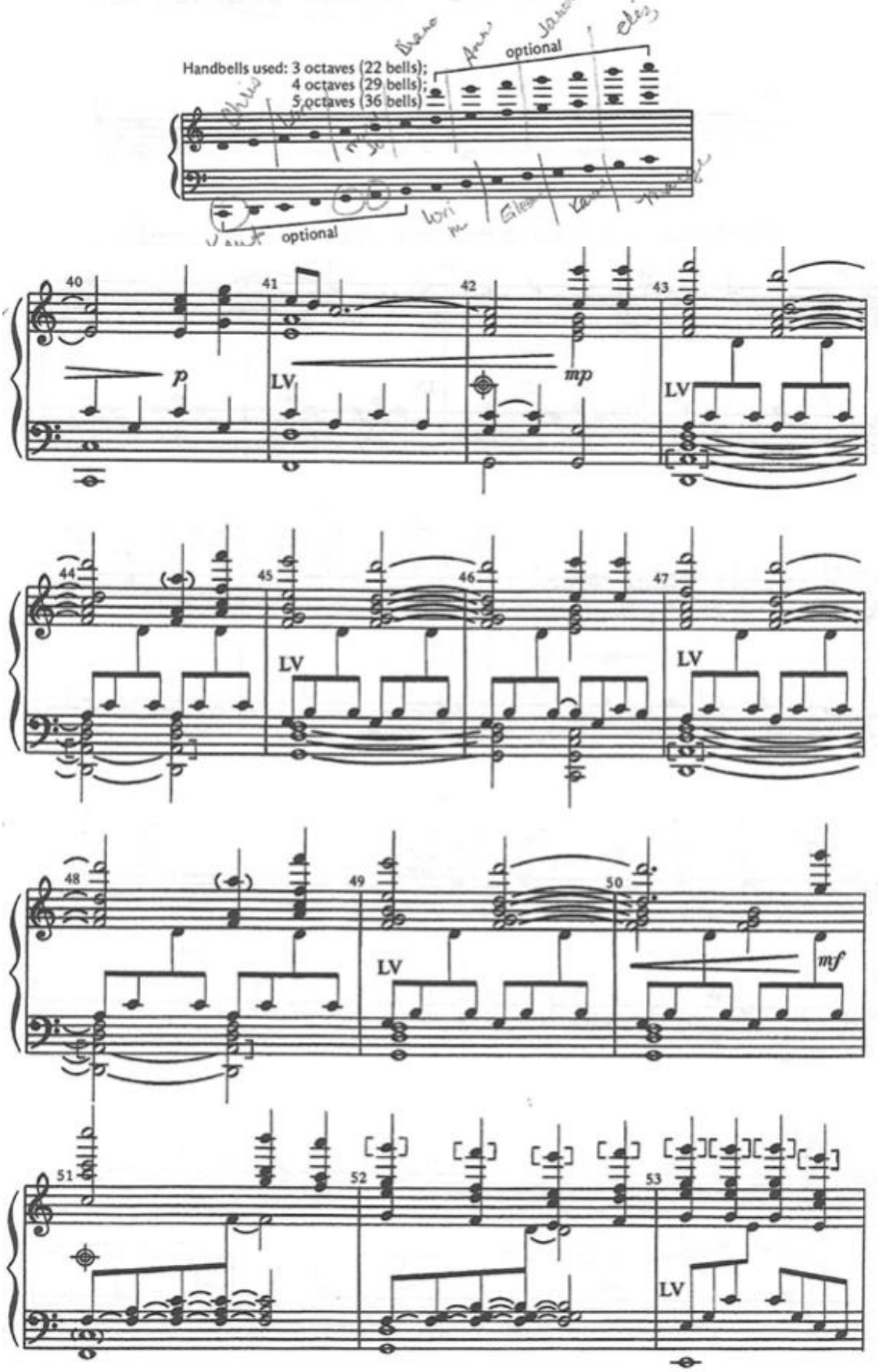
4 Octaves
Handbells used: 30



Christ Is Risen, He Is Risen Indeed!

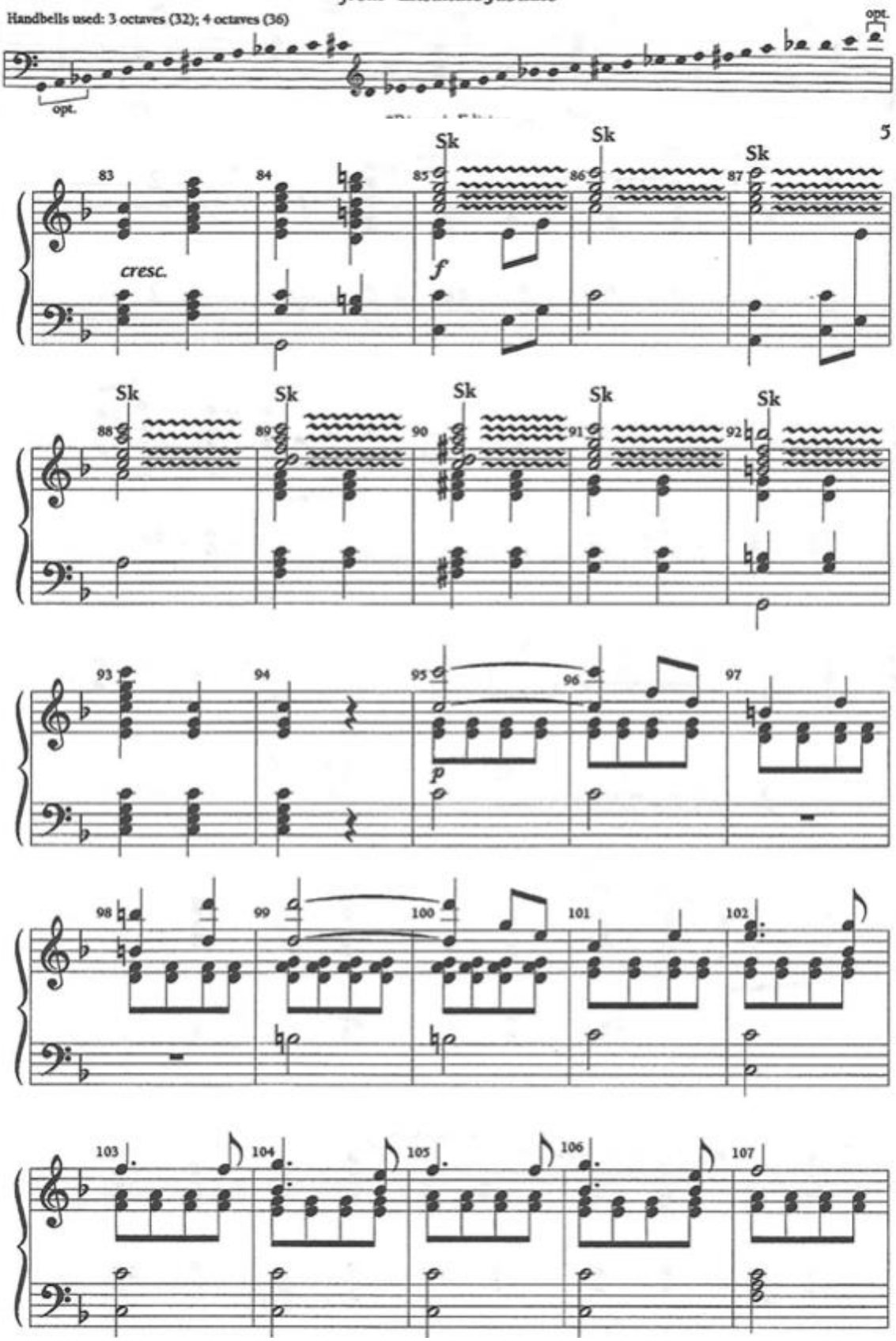


PIE JESU


Handbells used: 3 octaves (22 bells);
4 octaves (29 bells);
5 octaves (36 bells)
optional
optional
40
41
42
43
p
LV
mp
LV
44
45
46
47
LV
LV
48
49
50
LV
mf
51
52
53
LV

Alleluia

from "Exsultate Jubilate"

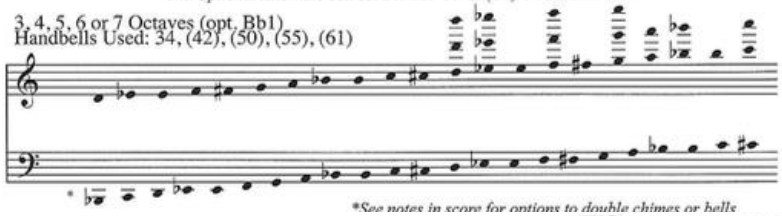


Call of the Water

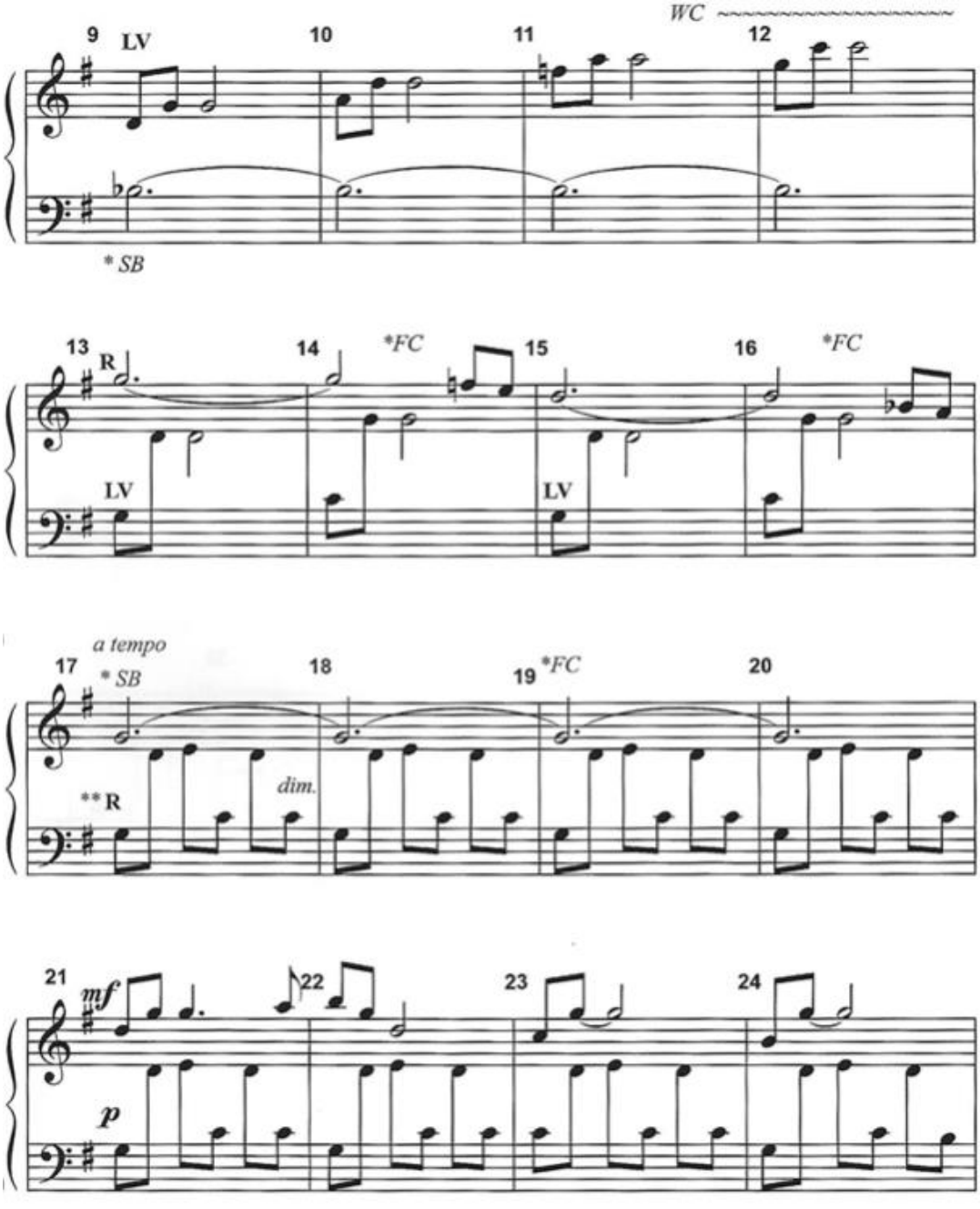
"Living Water" 4:15

Optional Wind Chimes & Finger Cymbals,
and Optional Alternate bell set/Belltree G5-C7(D7) or C Instrument

3, 4, 5, 6 or 7 Octaves (opt. Bb1)
Handbells Used: 34, (42), (50), (55), (61)



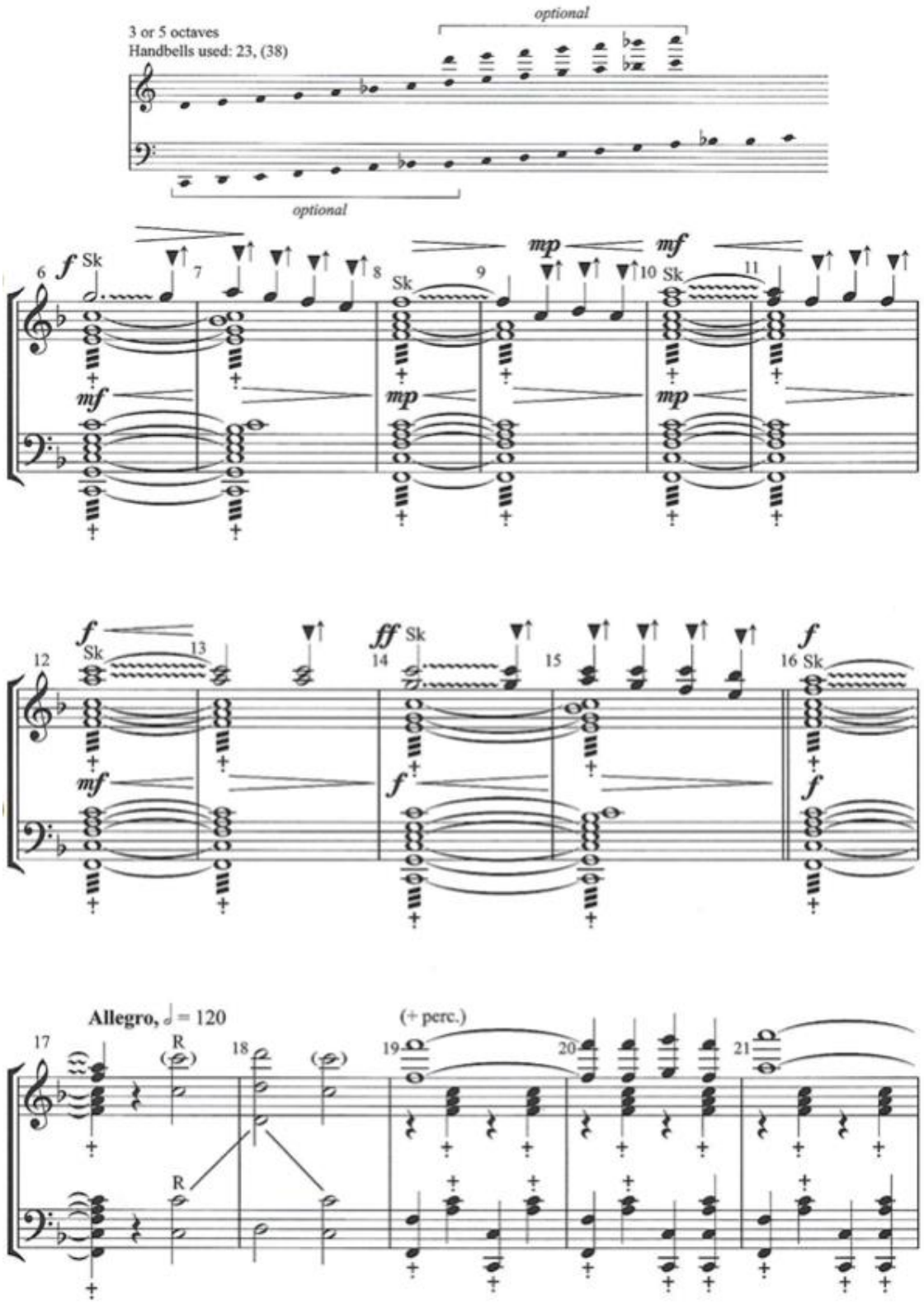
*See notes in score for options to double chimes or bells



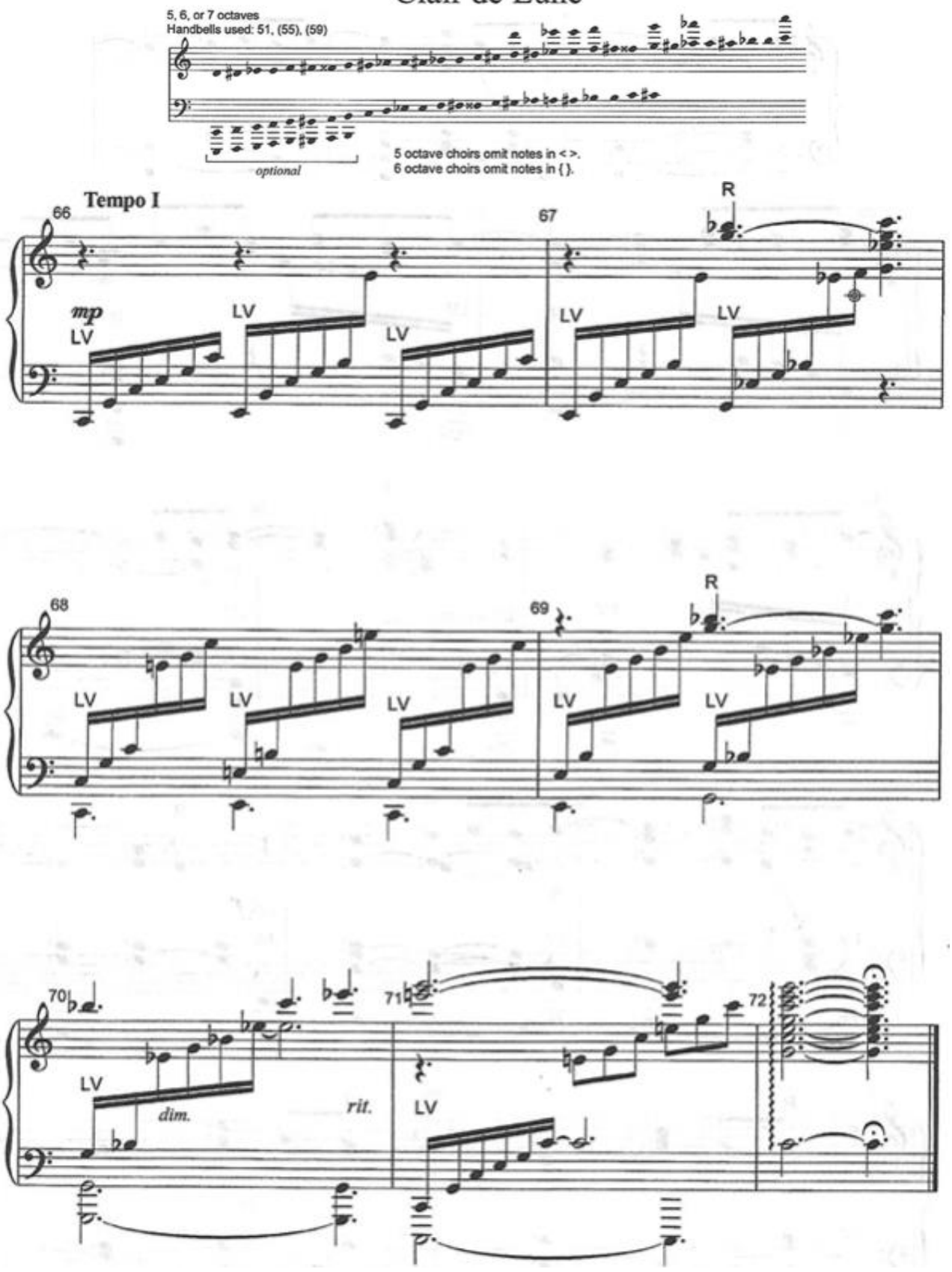
*FC Finger Cymbals
**R - Use a "Lazy Damp" method for ostinati bass pattern, for a legato line, damping when it gets muddy

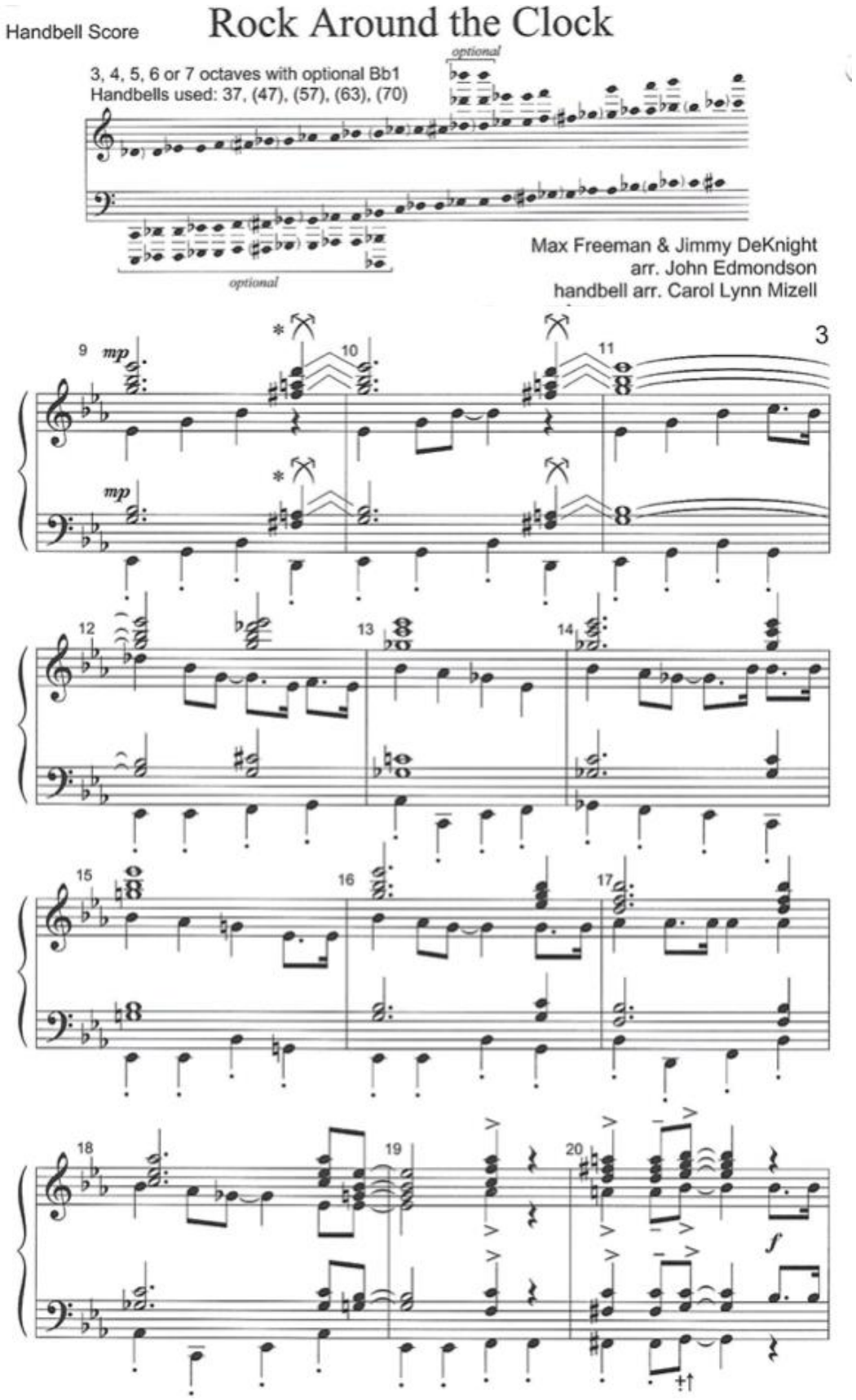
Alabaré

3 or 5 Octave Handbells, Percussion
Level III



Clair de Lune

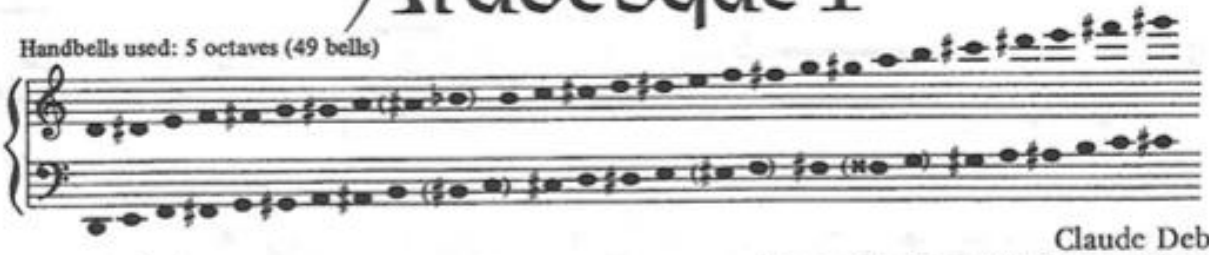




Alternative trombone slide/pitch bend: Both pitches are rung simultaneously. The first chord is rung high near the shoulder. The second chord is rung lower holding the chime horizontally. The first chord is damped as the second chord is moved upward through a normal circular ringing motion. (Technique from Dancing Queen JHS9505)

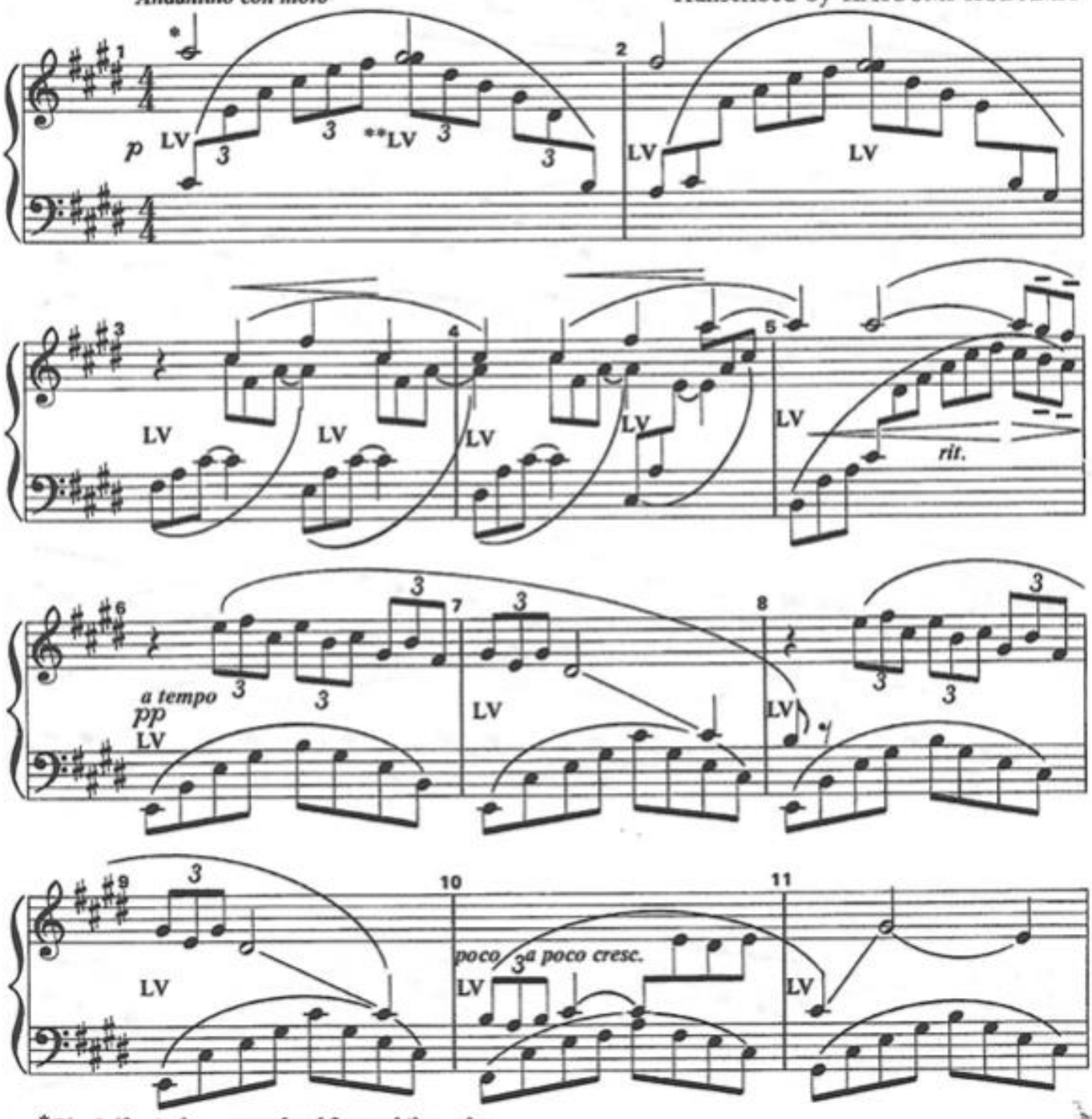
Arabesque I

Handbells used: 5 octaves (49 bells)



Claude Debussy
Transcribed by KATSUMI KODAMA

Andantino con moto



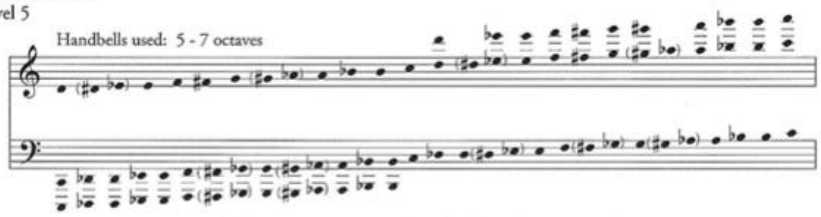
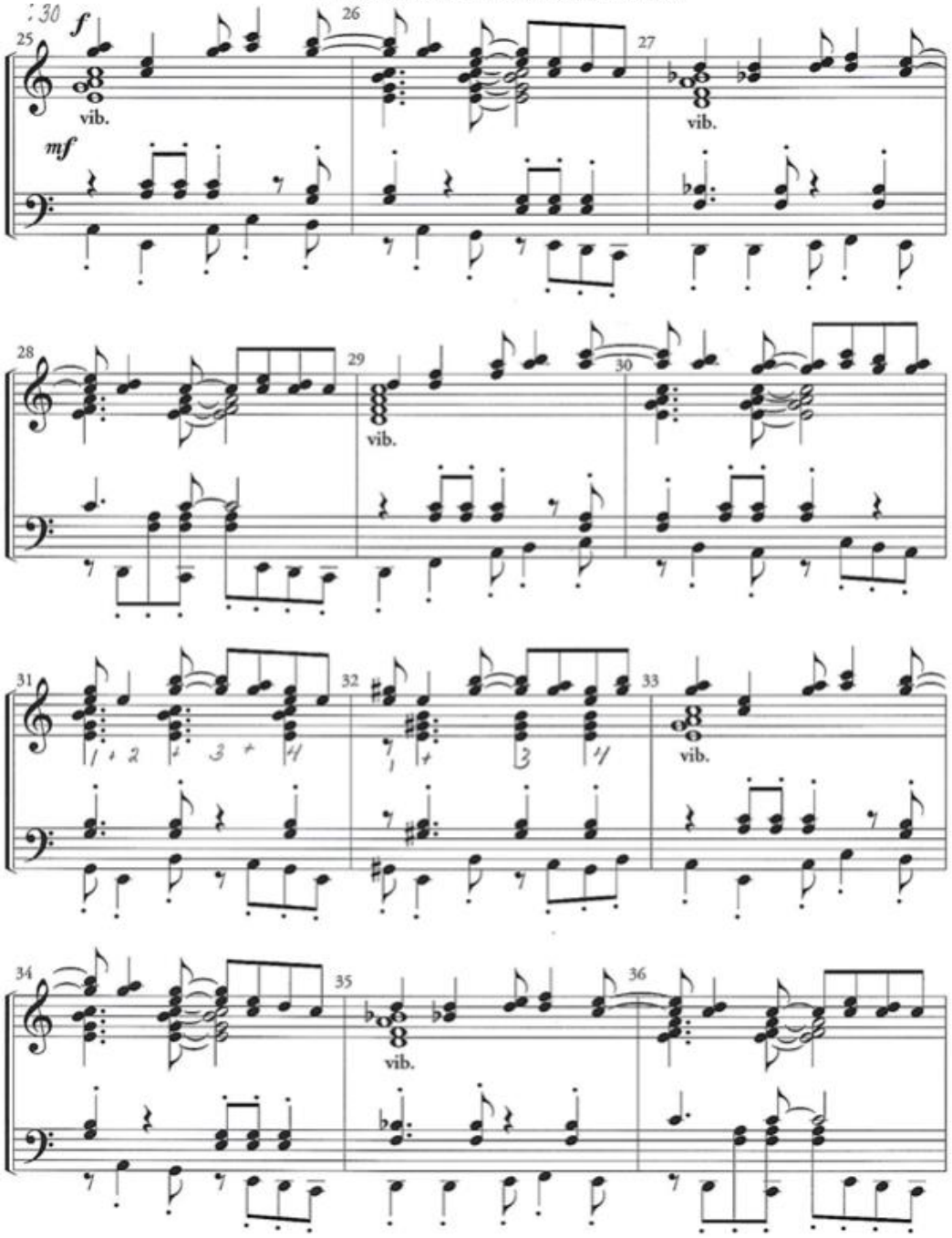
* Ring half notes in measures 1 and 2 second time only.
** Each repeated LV signifies terminating the previous LV and starting a new LV.

Enhebrado de la Aguja Del Espacio

*for 5-7 octaves handbells and drum kit/Latin percussion **

Cat. 20415-HB
Level 5

Handbells used: 5 - 7 octaves



All staccato notes are malleted unless otherwise noted