



AG23057

RINGCRAFT
RING & LET VIBRATE

Catherine McMichael

Scored for Handbells (2-3 Octaves)

RingCraft

Building Technique through Music

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R and LV

Ring and Let Vibrate

by Catherine McMichael

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Titles can be learned in any order. They are offered here in the suggested progression.

To accommodate 2- and 3-octave groups, the pieces have been written so that you simply play the bells you have in your ensemble. 2-octave choirs will be playing a satisfying musical piece without the higher or lower notes that 3-octave groups add.

Recommended Bell Assignments

2 Octaves (8 ringers). From low to high, each ringer is assigned 2 consecutive notes; except for the highest ringer, who is assigned only 1 note (G6)

3 Octaves (11 ringers). From low to high, each ringer is assigned 2 consecutive notes.

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General Instructional Guidelines for RingCraft: Ring and LV

Music in this collection is Level 1, indicating no division of the beat. Counting is of paramount importance in bell ringing. Count and clap every piece before playing. Use 1-1-1-1 for four quarter notes, 1-2 for half notes, 1-2-3 for dotted half notes, and 1-2-3-4 for whole notes. Once this is secure, move to 1-2-3-4 counting in each measure.

Rests are equally important. Damp bells precisely on the rest. It is highly recommended to begin with slow practice under the marked tempo and to count out loud. If there are areas that need extra rehearsal, isolate and drill those measures separately.

An elementary level of pitch recognition is essential for ringing handbells. If needed, spend time teaching musicians note names on the music staff. Good ringing begins with music literacy.

This collection introduces voicing: two voices may be placed on the same staff and rung simultaneously. The duration of each voice is determined by stem direction. Durations are not additive, but simultaneous. When specific techniques are indicated above or below a note, the technique impacts only the notes with the same stem direction. Notes with the opposite stem direction are unaffected unless specifically instructed otherwise.

Primary Technique: Ring/Damp Technique

R, or “ring,” implies ringing on the indicated beat and damping at the beginning of the next beat after the written duration (i.e., a half note rung on beat one should be damped on beat three). To avoid “air space” between notes, a quarter note on beat one is damped at the beginning of beat two, not before. Practice this skill by having musicians ring slowly up and down scales, one note at a time, ringing the second note while simultaneously damping the first. This helps develop listening skills and physical coordination for legato ringing from note to note.

LV (Laissez Vibrer, or Let Vibrate) functions like regular ring/damp, except the bell is not damped at the end of its notated duration, and rests do not need to be damped. **LV** notes continue and end at the beginning of the next **LV** (damp previous notes and begin the next **LV**) or **R** (ring), which instructs ringers to return to normal damping.

Secondary Focus: Dynamics

Dynamics are essential to musical ringing. To help musicians find differing volume levels, practice slowly, ringing from very loud to very soft, step by step, and back to very loud. Repeat several times, naming the dynamics as you go. Musicians will learn to recognize what is required to achieve the full dynamic range of the bells. This also helps develop crescendo and decrescendo. Next, ask musicians for specific dynamics without the help of a progression.

“Clarion Call”

Clarion Call presents the opportunity to focus on crisp ringing and precise damping. Dynamics are tiered at first to allow musicians to calibrate volume levels. Crescendos are contained within each measure; each beat should be rung louder than the previous one.

“Juba Dance”

Juba Dance builds on Clarion Call with more measures requiring precise damping. Counting notes and rests is paramount. Watch the director for entrances after rests. Sudden dynamic changes add color and drama.

“Garden Stroll”

“Garden Stroll” introduces the 3/4 time signature. Though not difficult, explanation may be helpful. Dotted half notes should be carefully counted to ensure musicians understand their duration. Legato playing with gentle damping will allow the melody to sing. Balance (melody notes louder than others) should be introduced here.

“Peal”

Bell ringing began as change ringing in England. Ringers learned complex note patterns, called “changes,” and wove them into intricate peals. Often performed at royal occasions, peals are resonant and loud. This piece introduces the LV technique used in change ringing. There are also occasional individually rung chords.

“Hallelujah!”

In the tradition of gospel music, there is elementary syncopation. The important first treble note falls on the second beat rather than the first. Harmony supports the downbeat.

This piece employs two voices in the treble staff. Notes with stems up are melodic; stems down are harmonic. They move together in time, following their own written durations within their voice “neighborhood.” Measure one in the treble clef contains only four beats, not seven (if durations were added together). The lower voice rings on beats one and three; the upper voice rings on beats two and four. This is an important concept in reading handbell music.

You can listen to “Juba Dance” and “Peal” by following the QR codes or URL.



“Juba Dance”
bit.ly/ringcraft-juba



“Peal”
bit.ly/ringcraft-peal

Clarion Call

for Handbells (2 or 3 Octaves)

Focus: Strong snaps will give bright sound without harshness. Damp rests precisely.

Observe dynamics for the special "echo" effect (m. 1, less in m. 2, less in m. 3).

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

optional

Catherine McMichael (ASCAP)

Driving ♩ = 152

1 2 3 4

f *mf* *mp*

5 6 7 8 9

f *mf* *f*

10 11 12 13 14

mf *mp* *f*

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Musical notation for measures 15-19. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Measure numbers 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 are indicated above the staff. Dynamics include *p* (piano) and a hairpin crescendo.

Musical notation for measures 20-24. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Measure numbers 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24 are indicated above the staff. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *f* (forte).

Musical notation for measures 25-28. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Measure numbers 25, 26, 27, and 28 are indicated above the staff. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano).

Musical notation for measures 29-32. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Measure numbers 29, 30, 31, and 32 are indicated above the staff. Dynamics include *f* (forte).

Juba Dance

for Handbells (2 or 3 Octaves)

Focus: Syncopation (strong emphasis on normally weak beats) creates a gospel feel.

In m. 3, 19, and 25 the bass rests, and half notes on beat 2 (m. 11, 13, etc.), all create the jazzy style.

2 or 3 octaves

Handbells used: 15, (22)

Catherine McMichael (ASCAP)

Jump for joy! ♩ = 160

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Musical notation for measures 15-19. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Measure 15: Treble clef has a quarter note F#4 and a half note chord of G4-A4-B4. Bass clef has a quarter note F#2 and a half note chord of G2-A2-B2. Measure 16: Treble clef has a quarter note G4 and a half note chord of A4-B4-C5. Bass clef has a quarter note G2 and a half note chord of A2-B2-C3. Measure 17: Treble clef has a quarter note A4 and a half note chord of B4-C5-D5. Bass clef has a quarter note A2 and a half note chord of B2-C3-D3. Measure 18: Treble clef has a quarter note B4 and a half note chord of C5-D5-E5. Bass clef has a quarter note B2 and a half note chord of C3-D3-E3. Measure 19: Treble clef has a quarter note C5 and a half note chord of D5-E5-F#5. Bass clef has a quarter note C3 and a half note chord of D3-E3-F#3. Dynamics: *p* (piano) is indicated between measures 16 and 17.

Musical notation for measures 20-24. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Measure 20: Treble clef has a quarter note D5 and a half note chord of E5-F#5-G5. Bass clef has a quarter note D3 and a half note chord of E3-F#3-G3. Measure 21: Treble clef has a quarter note E5 and a half note chord of F#5-G5-A5. Bass clef has a quarter note E3 and a half note chord of F#3-G3-A3. Measure 22: Treble clef has a quarter note F#5 and a half note chord of G5-A5-B5. Bass clef has a quarter note F#3 and a half note chord of G3-A3-B3. Measure 23: Treble clef has a quarter note G5 and a half note chord of A5-B5-C6. Bass clef has a quarter note G3 and a half note chord of A3-B3-C4. Measure 24: Treble clef has a quarter note A5 and a half note chord of B5-C6-D6. Bass clef has a quarter note A3 and a half note chord of B3-C4-D4. Dynamics: *f* (forte) is indicated at the start of measure 21.

Musical notation for measures 25-29. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Measure 25: Treble clef has a quarter note B5 and a half note chord of C6-D6-E6. Bass clef has a quarter note B3 and a half note chord of C4-D4-E4. Measure 26: Treble clef has a quarter note C6 and a half note chord of D6-E6-F#6. Bass clef has a quarter note C4 and a half note chord of D4-E4-F#4. Measure 27: Treble clef has a quarter note D6 and a half note chord of E6-F#6-G6. Bass clef has a quarter note D4 and a half note chord of E4-F#4-G4. Measure 28: Treble clef has a quarter note E6 and a half note chord of F#6-G6-A6. Bass clef has a quarter note E4 and a half note chord of F#4-G4-A4. Measure 29: Treble clef has a quarter note F#6 and a half note chord of G6-A6-B6. Bass clef has a quarter note F#4 and a half note chord of G4-A4-B4. Dynamics: *p* (piano) is indicated at the start of measure 28.

Musical notation for measures 30-34. Treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#). Measure 30: Treble clef has a quarter note G6 and a half note chord of A6-B6-C7. Bass clef has a quarter note G4 and a half note chord of A4-B4-C5. Measure 31: Treble clef has a quarter note A6 and a half note chord of B6-C7-D7. Bass clef has a quarter note A4 and a half note chord of B4-C5-D5. Measure 32: Treble clef has a quarter note B6 and a half note chord of C7-D7-E7. Bass clef has a quarter note B4 and a half note chord of C5-D5-E5. Measure 33: Treble clef has a quarter note C7 and a half note chord of D7-E7-F#7. Bass clef has a quarter note C5 and a half note chord of D5-E5-F#5. Measure 34: Treble clef has a quarter note D7 and a half note chord of E7-F#7-G7. Bass clef has a quarter note D5 and a half note chord of E5-F#5-G5. Dynamics: *mf* (mezzo-forte) is indicated at the start of measure 31, and *f* (forte) is indicated at the start of measure 33.

Garden Stroll

for Handbells (2 or 3 Octaves)

Focus: Legato (smooth) melody. Damp gently for maximum smoothness.

Observe dynamic contrasts.

2 or 3 octaves
Handbells used: 15, (20)

optional

Catherine McMichael (ASCAP)

Andantino ♩ = 144

p

mf

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Musical notation for measures 13-17. Treble clef, bass clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). Measure 13: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4; Bass has whole note chord G2, B2, D3. Measure 14: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4; Bass has whole note chord G2, B2, D3. Measure 15: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4; Bass has whole note chord G2, B2, D3. Measure 16: Treble has whole note chord G4, A4, B4; Bass has whole note G2. Measure 17: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4; Bass has whole note G2. Dynamic *p* is indicated in measure 17.

Musical notation for measures 18-22. Treble clef, bass clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). Measure 18: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4; Bass has whole note G2. Measure 19: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4; Bass has whole note chord G2, B2, D3. Measure 20: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4; Bass has whole note chord G2, B2, D3. Measure 21: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4; Bass has quarter notes G2, B2, D3. Measure 22: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4; Bass has quarter notes G2, B2, D3.

Musical notation for measures 23-27. Treble clef, bass clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). Measure 23: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4; Bass has quarter notes G2, B2, D3. Measure 24: Treble has whole note chord G4, A4, B4; Bass has quarter notes G2, B2, D3. Dynamic *mf* is indicated in measure 24. Measure 25: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4; Bass has quarter notes G2, B2, D3. Measure 26: Treble has whole note chord G4, A4, B4; Bass has whole note G2. Measure 27: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4; Bass has whole note chord G2, B2, D3. Dynamic *mp* is indicated in measure 27.

Musical notation for measures 28-32. Treble clef, bass clef, key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). Measure 28: Treble has whole note chord G4, A4, B4; Bass has whole note chord G2, B2, D3. Measure 29: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4 with accents; Bass has quarter notes G2, B2, D3 with accents. Measure 30: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4 with accents; Bass has quarter notes G2, B2, D3 with accents. Measure 31: Treble has quarter notes G4, A4, B4; Bass has quarter notes G2, B2, D3. Measure 32: Treble has whole note chord G4, A4, B4; Bass has whole note G2. Dynamic *p* is indicated in measure 32.

Peal

for Handbells (2 or 3 Octaves)

Focus: Like peals at royal occasions, LV lasts a long time! Damp at each new LV or R.
Dynamics: Loud and loud and loud.

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

optional

optional

Catherine McMichael (ASCAP)

Maestoso ♩ = 92

1 2 3 4

f LV

5 6 7 8 9

LV LV

10 11 12 13 14

LV LV

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Musical notation for measures 15-19. The system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. Measure numbers 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 are indicated above the treble staff. The bass staff contains labels 'LV' under measures 15-16 and 'R' under measures 17-19. The music features dense chordal textures in the treble and simpler accompaniment in the bass.

Musical notation for measures 20-24. The system consists of two staves. Measure numbers 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24 are indicated above the treble staff. The bass staff contains a label 'LV' under measure 21. The treble staff shows a melodic line with some rests, while the bass staff provides accompaniment.

Musical notation for measures 25-29. The system consists of two staves. Measure numbers 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29 are indicated above the treble staff. The bass staff contains labels 'LV' under measures 25, 26, 27, and 28, and 'R' under measure 29. The music continues with complex chordal patterns.

Musical notation for measures 30-34. The system consists of two staves. Measure numbers 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34 are indicated above the treble staff. The music concludes with dense chordal textures in the treble and simple accompaniment in the bass.

Hallelujah!

for Handbells (2 or 3 Octaves)

Focus: Stem direction determines duration for the upper or lower voice (m. 1-2 and others).
Practice dynamic contrast (m. 1 vs. 10, and crescendos). Clean damping on rests, especially m. 4!

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

Musical notation for the first system, consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef). The melody is written in a single line with stems pointing up and down. A bracket labeled "optional" spans the first four measures. Another bracket labeled "optional" spans the last three measures of the system.

Catherine McMichael (ASCAP)

Piano accompaniment for the piece, consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef). The tempo is marked "Lively" with a quarter note equal to 160. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The piece is divided into 12 measures, numbered 1 through 12. The dynamic marking *f* (forte) is present in measures 1-4, and *p* (piano) is present in measures 9-12. A large watermark "Preview Only" and "Copying is illegal" is overlaid on the score.

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Musical score for measures 13-17. The piece is in G major (one sharp). The right hand features dense chordal textures, while the left hand provides a simple accompaniment. Dynamics include *mp*, *mf*, and *f*. A crescendo hairpin is present between measures 16 and 17.

Musical score for measures 18-22. The right hand continues with chordal textures and some melodic lines. The left hand has a steady accompaniment. Dynamics include *f* and *mp*.

Musical score for measures 23-27. The right hand features dense chordal textures. The left hand has a steady accompaniment. Dynamics include *mp* and *p*. A decrescendo hairpin is present between measures 26 and 27.

Musical score for measures 28-32. The right hand features dense chordal textures. The left hand has a steady accompaniment. Dynamics include *mf* and *f*. A decrescendo hairpin is present between measures 28 and 29.



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