ICESICLES!

A Collection of 9 Grade II-IV Christmas Ensembles For Six Percussionists

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Silent Merry Christmas

Performance Notes: *Silent Merry Christmas* is a medley of *Silent Night* & *We Wish You A Merry Christmas*, sitting atop a relaxed timbale/conga groove. Because it's a small ensemble, the timbale & conga players will need to be careful not to overplay their parts and maintain a nice balance with the rest of the ensemble. Both marimba parts can be played on a shared 4 1/3 octave instrument. Letter **D** of the ensemble is a section that features the timbales and congas. Letter **E** is a transition section into *We Wish You A Merry Christmas* with a salsa feel. It needs to be lively but not raucous on part of the timbales & congas. Played with a lot of spirit, (and the players donning some Santa hats), this fun ensemble should be the highlight of your Christmas concert!

Set-Up

Player Five

Player Six

Timbales, Cowbell

Congas

Player Two

Player Three

Marimba 1

Marimba 2

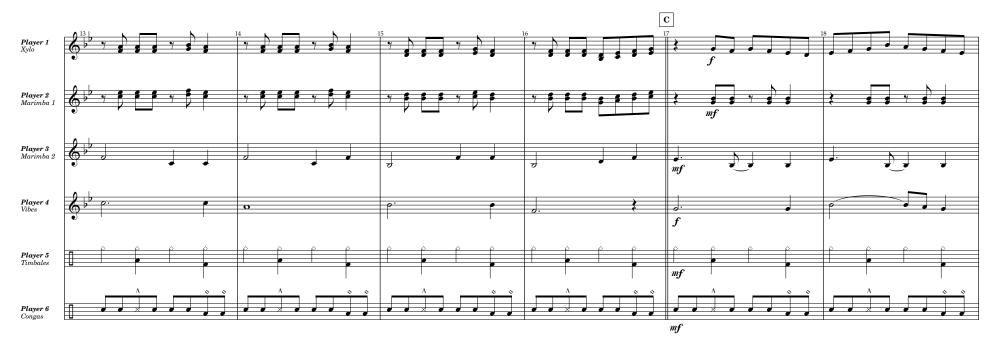
Player One

Player Four

Silent Merry Christmas



$\underbrace{\textbf{Silent Merry Christmas}}_{pg.\,2}$





Joy to the World

Performance Notes: This arrangement is a mallet and timpani ensemble written in a "theme and variations" form. After a brief introduction, the theme is played in the marimba 1 part and doubled in the xylophone. The first variation is at Letter B, with the xylophone playing the melody that has been filled in with extra pitches and rhythms. Letter C has the second variation in which the melody is moved to the vibraphone with the rhythmic values doubled and the key modulated to the relative minor. After a short transition at Letter E, the last variation comes at Letter F in a new key and again in half time, this time with the melody played in the vibes and bells. There are also a few accompaniment parts throughout the piece that explore the inversions of the main melodic material.

Balance and blend are important for all instruments. Mallet selection for all players will help with this. Players should pay close attention to who has the melody so the others can work on supporting that line, including those players that double on non-tonal percussion instruments. The timpani player should provide the bass line without overpowering the mallets. More advanced ensembles can begin to work on the unwritten dynamics of the piece by shaping the melodic lines in a musical fashion.

The non-tonal percussion parts should also be kept in balance with the tonal instruments. The triangle (mounted optional) should be played with a thin beater hitting on the bottom side as straight on as possible (this produces a sound with more overtones and less of a specific pitch). The tambourine part is marked "secco" which means dry. Hold the tambourine level, place the wrist on the head, and play with the fingertips at the edge over the jingles.

Set-Up

Player Six

Timpani, Suspended Cymbal

Players Four & Five

Marimba 1 & 2

Player Three
Xylo, Chimes, Tambourine

Player One

Bells, Triangle

Player Two

Joy to the World



$\underbrace{\textbf{Joy to the World}}_{pg.\,2}$



All Jingled Up

Performance Notes: *All Jingled Up* is a tongue-in-cheek ensemble with many bells & whistles for the players to have fun with. The piece starts with a beautiful, arpeggiated mallet motif and quickly jumps into a goofy, yet entertaining, *Jingle Bells* romp. In measure 35 the ensemble splits in performing a "*laughing all the way*" with a Ha! Ha! Urge the players to exagerate this for optimum comedic effect. Make the most of measure 40 with the vibe's rubato arpeggio. In measure 53, the players should begin bobbing up & down as if on a horse. In measure 54, there's a crack of the whip and player 1 lets out a big scream which brings scornful looks from the other players. Measures 54-65 are a bit of a juggling act for player 6 with all of the "toys" quickly being performed. The "toys" should be placed on a trap table, or horizontal stand that will not "tilt", with a cloth or towel draped across it to prevent noise from the quick changes. It's very important that player 6 sounds all of the "toys" in the correct spots. If possible, mount the cowbell on a stand and have the duck call and siren on a loose necklace around the neck. Make sure there is an equal balance between the melody solos in measures 72-73. Player 6 may need to "one-hand" the slide whistle in the last measure while holding the sleigh bells in the other. Remember, the more fun the ensemble has performing the piece, the more enthusiastic the audience response!

Set-Up

Player Six
Percussion 2

Player Five

Percussion 1

Player Four
Timpani

Player OneBells, Chimes, Crash Cymbals

Player Two
Vibes

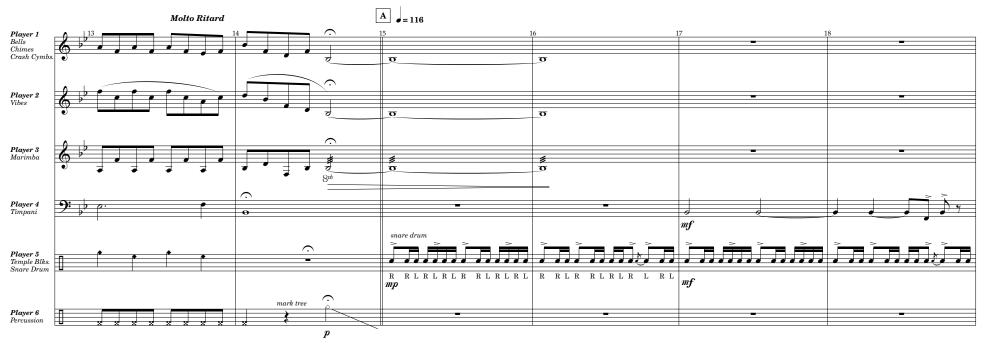
Player Three

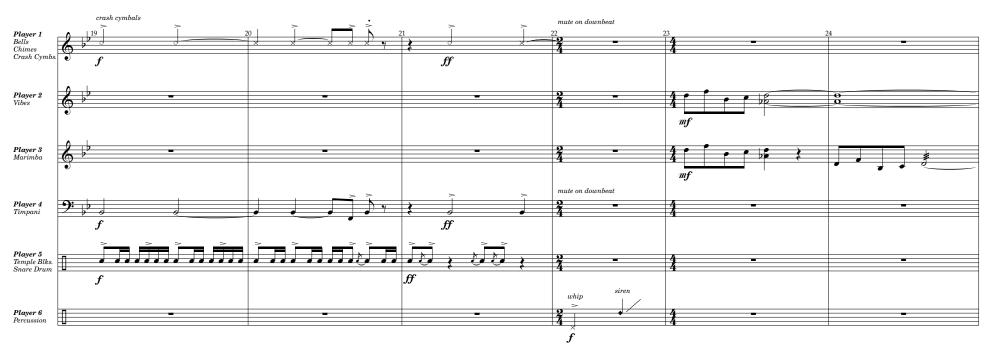
Marimba

All Jingled Up

arr. by Chris Crockarell **■=94** Sleigh-Ridey Player 1 Bells Chimes Crash Cymbs. Player 2 Vibes Player 3 Marimba Player 4 2 temple blocks Player 5 Temple Blks. sleigh bells Player 6 mf **Player 1** Bells ChimesCrash Cymb Player 2 Vibes Player 3 Player 4 Player 5 Temple Blks.

$\underset{pg.\,2}{\underline{\textbf{All Jingled Up}}}$





The First Noel

Performance Notes: This arrangement starts with a middle eastern hand drum/floor tom/vibes drone groove that should trick the listener a bit. The floor tom needs to be tuned to a pitch that doesn't fight the Bb tonal center in the mallet instruments. Hand drums are preferably small & large djembes (on a stand), but congas will work fine as well. The hand drum part is easily performed by one player, but can be two players. As well, the pitches of the hand drums need to be in sync with the mallet instruments. If you're doubling the mallets and making this a larger ensemble, you could as well double the hand drums as long as they don't overplay. At Letter **B**, the melody is stated with the bells and reinforced by the marimba on the back half of the phrases. At Letter **D**, there is a modulation and the arrangement takes on more of a traditional flavor. Melody is carried by bells & vibes and the timpani gives the low end support. A suggestion, if you don't have timpani, electric or acoustic bass will work well for this part. The ending of the piece reverts back to the original groove with the tempo slightly relaxed. In measure 101, the vibes have a D on the downbeat, which is a suspension that's resolved in measure 102. Make sure the D isn't too loud, i.e. shouldn't be dominant over the root in the melody. Technically, this is an easy ensemble, but should be played with lots of musicianship. Make it sweet, and it's sure to put your audience in the Christmas spirit.

Set-Up

Player Five

Hand Drums

(Djembes or Congas)

Player Six

(Electric or Acoustic Bass)

Player One

Bells

Player Two

Vibes

Player Three

Marimba 1

Player Four

Marimba 2, Sleigh Bells

The First Noel



$\underset{pg.\,2}{\textbf{The First Noel}}$





God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

Performance Notes: It is important throughout this piece that the drum set is never over-powering the keyboard players. At Letter **A**, keep all players at a modest volume as the vibes carry the sole (soul) melody. **God Rest Ye...** has a road map (D.S.). This would be an excellent opportunity to discuss methods used for reading the music, for example: light pencil marks, highlighting D.S. signs and coda markings. Make sure all of the "step-out" solos can be heard at Letter **B**, i.e.: drum set snare, player 3 snare with snares off and timpani. Players 2 & 3 can share a marimba. If using two marimbas, have marimba 1 play measures 55-66 down an octave. Beginning in measure 58, player 3 (marimba 2) uses a dead-stroke technique. This is acheived by simply striking the bar and holding the mallet head against the bar to dampen any bar resonance making a short, dead sound. This should be done with a low stick height as to not damage the bar. At Letter **E**, (coda), impress to the ensemble the importance of the dynamic change and crescendo that occurs in measures 74-78.

Set-Up

Player Six
Drum Set

Player Five
Timpani, Suspended Cymbal

Players Two & Three
Marimba, Concert Snare Drum,
Vibraslap

Player Four
Vibes, Sleigh Bells



God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen



$\underset{pg.\,2}{\textbf{God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen}}$



Arabian Dance

Performance Notes: Arabian Dance is one of the most haunting and recognizable themes from *The Nutcracker*. Given the design of a small percussion ensemble vs. the full orchestra version, this arrangement brings a bit more of a street feel to the piece. The mounted tambourine is played with triangle beaters, but care needs to be taken so that there's not too much attack in the tambourine sound. You may need to put a little padding on the tambourine where it will be struck to soften the attack. This is a good opportunity for one of your students to learn the art of playing a dumbek. YouTube will be a great resource (or a competent percussion instructor), for the student to learn how one gets two pitches from the drum. If you can't commandeer a dumbek, you could use bongos or congas, however, a dumbek really gives the piece the intended sound and feel. The xylophone should be played with softer mallets so the attack is not too brittle. Also, rolls shouldn't be too fast, try and make the xylo & marimba as legato sounding as possible. Last but not least, if you have a student that's danced this dance in a production of *The Nutcracker*, incorporating the dance would make performing *Arabian Dance* a real treat for the players and the audience.

Set-Up

Player Five

Mounted Tambourine, Triangle

Player Six

Dumbek (Congas or Bongos)

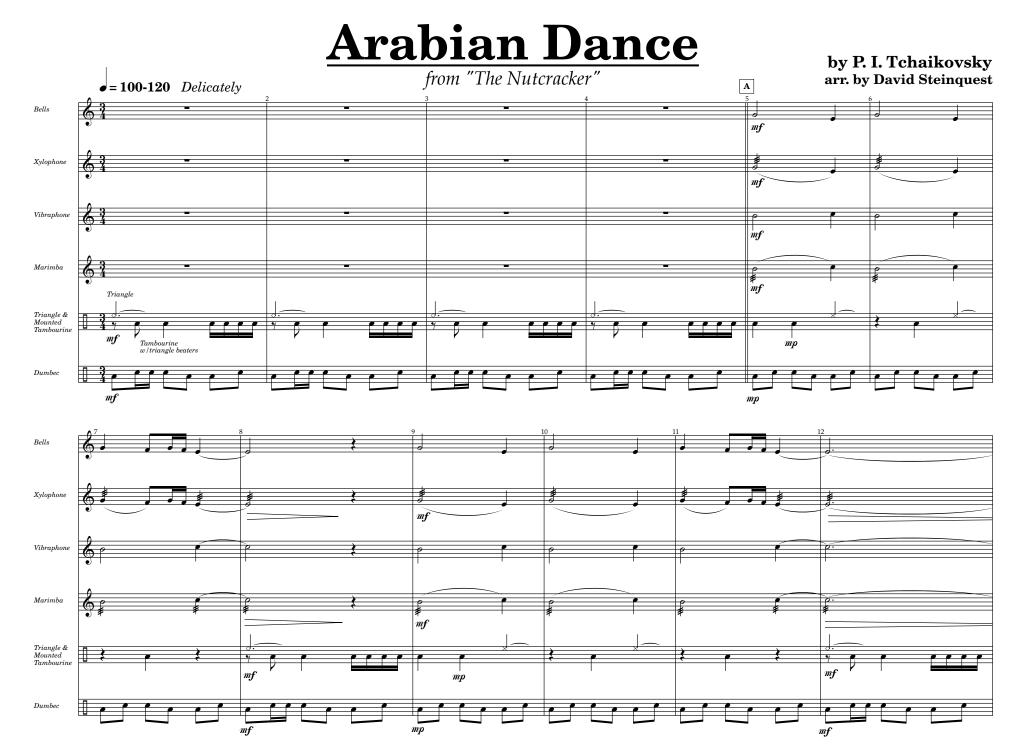
Player Two

Xylophone

Player Three

Player One

Player Four



$\underbrace{\textbf{Arabian Dance}}_{pg.\,2}$



Deck The Halls

Performance Notes: This fun arrangement for Boomwhackers® has three basic sections. The first is similar to Ellmenreich's *Spinning Song*. The arrangement then jumps into the style of a Viennese waltz. The final section "rocks out" with a pulsing 1/8th note bass line. You'll need to know that Player 1 - Player 6 are not ordered in terms of difficulty, but in terms of the ranges of the Boomwhackers®, Player 1 being the high end of the range, and Player 6 being the lowest. From a difficulty standpoint, Player 4 has the most rhythmically challenging part. Player 3 is not difficult, but does have one very quick whacker change in measure 71 which will take a little practice. Players 5 and 6 carry all the bass line parts, and have the most whacker changes. The Player 1 part is the most sparse, so this player has opportunity to add a little comedic content here and there. As for whacker changes, for example, when a player has to make a change from a "C" tube to a "D" tube in the left hand, there will be a graphic to denote that change: OLH C to D.

For the best performance option, you'll also need to build three whacker tables. Plans on how to build them are included here. It's a little extra work, but well worth it for a spectacular Boomwhacker[®] performance. In your performance, Players 1 & 2 would share a table, Players 3 & 4 would share a table, and Players 5 & 6 would share a table.

Boomwhackers[®] needed to perform *Deck The Halls* are: (2 sets) C Diatonic, (2 sets) Chromatic, (1 set) Treble Extension, (2 sets) Octavators.

Purchase this entire set through Row-Loff and receive 10% off!

In the set-up below, pitches for each player are in their respective octaves, and are denoted in the score and parts.

Set-Up

Player One C, Db, D, Eb

C, Db, D, Eb

C, Db, Eb

C, Db, Eb

C, Db, Eb

C, Db, Eb

C, Players 1 & 2 share an Eb)

Player Three *Ab, A, Bb, B*

Player Four D, F, G

Player Five

Player Six

Deck The Halls



Deck The Halls pg. 2



Bring a Torch

Performance Notes: *Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella* is a French Christmas carol originated from the 16th century. If there are more than 6 players available, an optional hand drum (found on the Tom part) may be added with one or two additional players. Very close attention should be paid to dynamics and rhythms, especially within players 5 & 6 throughout. Player 2 should perform all noted pedal instructions. At Letter **D**, practice the constant eighth-note pattern which is split between players 4 & 6 to make as fluid as possible. During this section a single finger cymbal may be clipped from a stand and struck with a triangle beater while the tambourine is placed on the lap, head up, and struck toward the edge with cupped fingers. In measures 163 & 164 be sure the vibes notes can be heard over the decrescendo within the ensemble. In measures 168-181 strive for an even balance between the vibes & bells "call and answer". Practice for a smooth Molto Ritard at the end and proper articulation (pedaling) on the vibes.

Set-Up

Player Six

Player Five

Percussion

Tom, Hand Drums

Player One Bells, Chimes Player Two
Vihes

Players Three & Four

Marimba, Suspended Cymbal

Bring a Torch

arr. by Chris Crockarell



Bring a Torch





Three Kings Carolin'

Performance Notes: This ensemble is performed with a "swing 8th note" feel. (The eighth notes within a beat are interpretted as the first and third note of an eighth note triplet.) The arrangement has moments of staggered melody within the players (Letter **A**) where the melody is played as a "row", as in Row, Row, Row Your Boat. If a drum set is not available, the player may perform the piece as written with only snare drum, sizzle & ride cymbals. If a drum set is being used, player 6 make take more libertys with the part by adding bass drum and light tom fills. (It is important not to over-power the ensemble.) Player 5, (marimba 2), is written as a "bass guitar line" and should be practiced as such with the ride cymbal of player 6. Teach these players that it is important to stay together and "keep good time" for the ensemble. It is especially important to observe all dynamics in **Three Kings Carolin'**. Have Fun!

Set-Up

Player Six

Drum Set

Players Three & Five

Player Four
Vibraphone

Player Two Player One

Xylophone

Bells

Three Kings Carolin'

arr. by David Steinquest **J** = **144** Swing 8th note Player 5 Marimba 2 ride cymbal Player 6 Drum Set A Player 2 Xylophone Player 3 Marimba 1 Player 4 Vibraphone Player 5 Marimba 2 Player 6 Drum Set

$\underset{pg.\,2}{\underline{\textbf{Three Kings Carolin'}}}$

