

Wendy Murphy recommends

***Centennial Chimes* by Joey Brink**

Original Composition

“ My favourite piece to learn was ‘Centennial Chimes’ by Joey Brink that I played for my assessment recital. I liked that it had a clear melodic line, several musical moments throughout the piece varying in difficulty, some enabled early success and the wish to push on and master the more difficult sections. To me it was the pinnacle piece of my program. The piece came through as a freebie in 2022 as it was commissioned by the Mechelen school for 100 years of the Jef Denyn school. ”

Availability: Was available as a free download as part of the Mechelen Jubileumboek.
[Note from Daniel: If you'd like the PDF, send me an email]

Lucy Koe recommends

***Paean from Four Experiments* by Alex Burnard**

Original Composition

“ Paean, by Alex Burnard, was written for the War Memorial Carillon of Sydney University in 1936, but sounds contemporary. It showcases almost the entire range of the 54 bells and also allows music to be played from fff to pp, with variation of tempo as well. Thus the carillonist should derive great pleasure from playing this composition. ”

Availability: Contact Daniel for a copy.

Daniel Guo recommends

Leo et Scorpius from Constellations

by Geert D'hollander

Original Composition

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Geert D'hollander is perhaps my favourite living carillon composer, and all his compositions are of the highest quality. Even the ones that are technically difficult are so idiomatic for the instrument, which is the most important criteria for me. Very often, I find that carillon compositions and arrangements have too many notes for our Taylor bells, yet Geert D'hollander's works are just right.

Leo et Scorpius displays the full range of the carillon, physically and musically. It begins with a bold introduction, then fast, light finger playing and a floating melody. It shows off the instrument and the virtuosity of the player. I have also chosen it because the subject matter makes it easy to draw connections and make a themed program – last year, I programmed it in three separate recitals: about space (Star Wars...), about animals (Saint-Saëns, etc) and celebrating my cat's 2nd birthday (her name is Cosmos).

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Availability: Was available as a free download as part of the 2021 Trinity College commissions.

[Note from Daniel: If you'd like the PDF, send me an email]

Jane Stewart recommends

Take a Break by Geert D'hollander

Original Composition

“ One of my favourite pieces is a Geert d'Hollander piece which I found available free online.

It's a great piece to play because of the repetition of the ostinato feature with variations of increasing intensity over the top. I also love the jazzy feel. I haven't tried it, but there is also the option to improvise, due to the chord patterns remaining the same.

I'd say that the degree of difficulty is moderate/intermediate due to the faster moving notes in the more intense sections. Probably much like Pachelbel's (sometimes overplayed!) Canon, the trick is to make sure the bass ostinato stays steady rather than trying to speed up as the hands move more quickly!

Availability: Free download from https://www.carillon.org/pdf/Take_a_Break.pdf

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Julie Wright recommends

Leuvens Preludio by John Gouwens

Original Composition

“ John is a highly accomplished American carillonist, organist and pianist and has performed, taught and written for each instrument as well as for choirs for many decades. (He is currently serving as a consultant for the expansion, relocation, and total reconstruction of the Arthur R. Metz Memorial Carillon at Indiana University.)

The style is Baroque and when I first heard it being played it sounded strangely familiar. I couldn't quite place it but knew I wanted to learn it. It's not difficult to play and is quite short but lends itself to a repeat either from the top or part way through. I wrote my own turnaround bar to facilitate the repeat and sent it to Gouwens as a courtesy. He wrote back with another suggestion which I can share if anyone is interested.

The challenges are not to start too fast, to keep it even and to keep repeated notes quiet. It makes a great opening piece for a recital.

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Availability: Buy from GCNA at

<https://www.gcna.org/music-store#!/PDF-Leuvens-Preludio/p/140820385>

Isaac Wong recommends

Preludium quasi una fantasia by Jef van Hoof

Original Composition

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My favourite piece to play on the carillon is *Preludium quasi una fantasia*, an original carillon composition by Jef van Hoof (1886-1959), a Belgium composer who taught composition and harmony at the Royal Carillon School in Mechelen at Jef Denyn's invitation.

I love this piece for its expressiveness and its rich, kaleidoscopic display of harmonic colours. There are tremolando passages that showcase the carillon's dynamic range, delicate broken chords that deliciously caresses the treble bells, and virtuosic, thunderous runs that would impress every listener. The expressive potential of the piece is endless – I play it differently every time, taking liberty with the tempo, the rubatos, how I break up the chords – and each time I feel like I am discovering something precious all over again.

I like to tell people that I discovered this composition by myself. At the end of my school year studying in Mechelen (2009) I raided the school's music library and made copies of dozens of pieces to bring back to Sydney. Without enough time to test out each of these pieces while in Mechelen, it was only later, in Sydney, that I finally played and heard how they would sound. I fell in love with this one immediately, and have been playing it ever since. I was surprised I had never heard it mentioned before, and until then I did not know anyone who played it. I have since realised that, of course, the professors at the school were familiar with it, but it was not well-loved enough to join the standard repertoire. I went on to introduce this piece to fellow Australian carillonists Thomas Laue and Peter Bray, both of whom played it so brilliantly at the Queen Fabiola Competitions that they both progressed to the finals in their respective competitions (2014 for Thomas; 2019 for Peter).

The greatest thing about the *Preludium quasi una fantasia* is that it is in fact not difficult to learn, despite sounding so impressive. Although there are many quick passages, the hands usually play one note at any one time. The challenge is in the interpretation: working out how to delicately sound the soft notes, how to bring out the drama in the tremolando, how to hold on to the pauses just a bit longer. Once you have worked out the details it comes a work of wonders.

The score is available at all three carillons in Australia. I have also transcribed it to C major so that it can be played on carillons that do not have B-flat and E-flat in the bass. I highly recommend it. Add it to your list to learn!

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Wendy Murphy recommends

Prelude on: Joyful, Joyful from Beethoven's Symphony No. 9

by **Laura Hewitt Whipple** Original Composition

“ My favourite carillon piece to play is “Prelude on Joyful Joyful: Hymn to Joy from Symphony No. 9” arr. by Laura Hewitt-Whipple. It’s a firm favourite with audiences as they know and recognise the piece. It is fun to play with the different treatments of the theme, including the counter-melody section of a pealing bell in the hands while the feet have the melody. Such fun to play. The coordination of feet and hands was a challenge in the beginning, so we played it as a duo. Now that I am a bit more coordinated, it is a fun piece for any recital program. ”

Availability: In a book of Laura Hewitt Whipple works.

[Note from Daniel: Sydney carillon has it somewhere. Maybe other towers too?]

Ted Grantham recommends

La Paix from Music for the Royal Fireworks

by **George Frideric Handel** Arrangement by Ted Grantham

“ My current favourite piece is "La Paix" from Handel's Royal Fireworks Music. I play from the full score, a simplified version of the melody plus an accompanying part of two to four notes per bar, usually a third or a sixth below according to Handel's chord, also sometimes a diminished fifth. ”

Availability: Ted has written out an arrangement. Contact Ted or Daniel for the score.

Veronica Lambert recommends

Benedictus from *The Armed Man* by Karl Jenkins

Arrangement by Ted Grantham

“ This piece was written for the millennium celebrations and commissioned by Royal Armouries Museum, UK and dedicated to the Kosovo victims. It reflects on the passing of 'the most war-torn and destructive century in human history' and looks forward in hope to a more peaceful future.

I sang this piece with Sydney Philharmonia Choirs approximately 8 years ago and it was a truly moving experience. We are singing it again in June this year with 1000 choristers at Sydney Opera House. It has become even more pertinent than in 2000 with so many heartbreaking and active war fronts in 2024.

Ted Grantham offered to arrange a piece for me some years ago and this is the piece I requested. He has done a lovely arrangement which sounds great on our carillon and is a suitable arrangement for beginners. ”

Availability: Contact Veronica if you would like the score

Jennifer Roberts recommends

Sinai Hora, The Blessing Nigun, and Let's Sing

Arrangements by Moshé Lewkowitz

“ I have been having a bit of fun playing some of the little arrangements of Moshe Lewkowitz. Unfortunately the recent events in Israel have coloured these a bit for me, and I am not playing them at the moment, but they are still great little pieces. They were all arranged in Utrecht in 1999. Lewkowitz died recently in 2023. They are all quite simple and short - 1 or 2 pages max - with flexibility to repeat and change as you need to lengthen. They go very well in a little set together:

Sinai Hora - My favourite - sounds a bit like a Klezma dance, but is actually a Romanian dance. It starts very slow, then you can go as wild as you can manage! Has a few cute trills that were a challenge to me in my early stages of learning Carillon.

The Blessing Nigun - a prayer for learning. Just a beautiful, simple tune.

Let's Sing - an Israeli tune in traditional style, much fun can be had with tempos and tremolo. ”

Availability: In Nieuwegeins Beiaardboek III, free download from

<https://www.parkbeiaard.nl/parkbeiaard/nieuwegeinse-beiaardboeken/>

Thomas Laue recommends

Scarborough Fair/Canticle

by **Simon & Garfunkel**

Arrangement by Thomas Laue

“ The original soundtrack is etched in my memory from repeated listening as a teen. The lyrics are as pertinent today as it was back in the 60s. As a species, and as Australians, we continue to move towards irreversible global conflicts. Not enough people are standing for peace, so for me this music can help deliver a worthy message to our communities.

The arrangement is sparse, so a nice fun challenge is to bring out those melodies and counter-melodies! Usual ‘fist’ playing works, but my suggestion is to use fingers for much of it; I do this about half the time, which is quite frequent. Then it will be soft, and this will help the melody shine and sparkle as needed, much like the glockenspiel (or chimes?) in the timeless original.

Play it a bit slower, and it should make it a lot easier to learn. Nothing wrong with playing it slower than the original. I think this arrangement a great entry point to carillonists wanting to try out finger-technique playing. Happy to share my fingerings / handlings – just get in touch!

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Availability: Buy from Sheet Music Direct (also available on SheetMusicPlus) at https://www.sheetmusicdirect.com/se/ID_No/1371228/Product.aspx