

Danish Hymns and Carols

Sets of 9 playing scores presenting, as far as possible, the original settings of the respective composers.

Edited by Klaus Bjerre (2003)

Christmas time has recurring calls for seasonal music material for diverse instrumental constellations, so this project started out with a wish to present Christmas carols from my own country in a version for tuba and trombone quartets/ensembles. That would set a limit for the highest note used. The choice most relevant occurred to be c". A note that also is very relevant as the limit in plainsong. Some will find the chosen range high for the lead euphonium and trombone, but for serious players and students this just is everyday fare.

You will find indications of tempo, legatos, and phrase lengths, but nothing further. Declamatory performances built on vocal choir practises will lead to good results.

While preparing scores for Bb and Eb brasses, also playable by clarinets and saxophones, it became clear, that the chosen range also was perfect for horn quartets, which will enjoy the high G as a nice limit for the 1st horn. The upper parts also can be played by Bb trumpets and soprano Bb clarinets. Making these settings relevant for brass, clarinet, and saxophone quartets/quintets/ensemble/choirs.

You will find playing scores for bass clef low brasses, Bb and Eb treble clef lower and higher brasses, and for horns in F. The newest additions provide scores for strings and for organ/keyboards/ATB-guitars.

Furthermore: *8va* scores for recorders and Flute Choir. The latter is adaptable from the small SSSA quartet through large SSAT formations.

For the benefit of the wholesomeness the strings, the recorders, and the flutes have been faced with challenges key- and range-wise. This is acceptable in larger contexts, but not when these instruments are playing on their own. Hence there is a folder providing "Easy Key" scores for strings, recorders, flutes, and organ/keyboard/guitars. These keys are **not** compatible with those chosen for the general carol presentation, but they allow for performances mixed string/recorder/flute ensembles supported by organ/keyboard/guitars. Sadly it must admitted towards the soprano recorder players, that in some cases, where the only problem is, that the tune descend below C, there has not been added an "Easy Key" version. The solution to the problem is the one historically used by recorder players: they just take their alto recorders and play the soprano the soprano line.

The single staves are designated with their musical functions and with their transpositions rather than with instrument names. You will find music allowing the **SATB** lines to be played by these instruments:

Soprano: Bb trumpets (cornets, flugelhorns), horns in F and Eb, bass clef and treble clefs trombones (baritones, euphoniums, bassoons, cellos), clarinets (soprano, alto, bass), saxophones (soprano, alto, tenor), violins, and *8va* up: flutes, recorders (soprano, alto)

Alto: Bb trumpets (cornets, flugelhorns), horns in F and Eb, bass clef and treble clefs trombones (baritones, euphoniums, bassoons, cellos), clarinets (soprano, alto, bass), saxophones (alto, tenor), violins, and *8va* up: flutes, alto recorders

Tenor: horns in F and Eb, bass clef and treble clefs trombones (baritones, euphoniums, bass tubas, bassoons, cellos), clarinets (soprano, alto, bass), saxophones (tenor, baritone), and *8va* up: flutes (soprano, alto), tenor recorders

Bass: horns in F (treble and bass clefs), bass clef and treble clefs trombones (euphoniums, bass tubas, contrabass tubas, bassoons, cellos, double basses), clarinets (bass, contralto, contrabass), saxophones (baritone; the bass saxophone will need a few octave transpositions), and *8va* up: flutes (alto, bass), recorders (bass, great bass)

Two of the scores have lines for basses as well as for contrabasses. This is no indication, that the overall balance should be bass heavy. The distribution on the bass and contrabass lines should strive to accommodate the range and the instruments of the actual players. Both lines are equally relevant. Any of them can be omitted, if the other one is adequately represented.

This editor does not like cadential leading notes to be resolved to the fifth of the tonic. In quartet performances the player should play the large note, the tonic. In ensemble performances some players should play the smaller cue note, the fifth.

If the contrabass line descends beyond low E natural, cue notes are provided for the best octave transpositions.

You will note, that “the old teacher” despite the lack of dynamics and articulations still points a few of his favourite fingers:

- playing from scores whenever possible
- all parts/instruments where relevant come in bass as well as treble clef notations
- the treatment of leading notes
- providing modular material for “impossible” mixed constellations. As long as an overall good balance is kept, any combination of instruments finding a relevant part can lead to musically valid performances

You will find separate pages on the music/composers and on suggestions for the use of these scores in smaller and larger ensembles.

This edition can be used free of charge, but reports on readings and performances would be nice.

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