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21st International Handbell Symposium Composition Contest

PURPOSE: To promote the composition and arrangement of music for handbells by Canadians, and in the process select the Canadian piece of handbell music which will be used as the Canadian Massed Ringing selection at the 21st International Handbell Symposium (IHS) in Hamamatsu, Japan in 2024.

PRIZE: A \$1000.00 prize will be awarded to the composer of the successful manuscript.

GENERAL INFORMATION: International Handbell Symposia are held every two years, and attract some of the top handbell choirs in the United States, Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, Australasia, Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Pieces are chosen from each country, and are rung “en masse” by all participants. The average ringer attendance ranges between 900 and 1200 ringers. Some teams or choirs ring three chromatic octaves of bells which range upwards from the C4, the C below middle C. Most attending choirs ring 5 octaves of bells, which range up from C3, the C two octaves below middle C. Several choirs have the sixth (or even seventh) octave from the G below to the G above that.

The 21st International Handbell Symposium will be held in Hamamatsu, Japan in August of 2024. The theme of the symposium is “Ring the Future”. Compositions that relate to or reflect the symposium theme are preferred, though not mandatory.

RULES AND COMPETITION CONDITIONS

1. Entries must consist of an original composition in the handbell idiom, or an arrangement of an original composition in any style. *It is the sole responsibility of arrangers to obtain written permission from copyright holders or to determine that the original work is in the public domain before proceeding with writing any handbell arrangements.*
2. Entries must be suitable for massed ringing and useable by 3, 4, 5, and perhaps 6 octave choirs in a single choir setting.
3. Compositions not yet selected for IHS events will given preference to those previously performed at international symposia.
4. The composition should be three (3) to five (5) minutes in length.
5. Range of difficulty should be medium to medium-difficult, or level 3 to 4+, according to the HMA rating system. Recognized handbell notation must be used. (The latest issue of Handbell Notation and Grading is available from the Handbell Musicians of America, 1-800-878-5459, <http://handbellmusicians.org/music-resources/agehr-music-2/notation-guide/>. Provincial Guilds can also be of service.)
6. Adjudication will be based on the following criteria:
 - I. appeal to ringers and audience;
 - II. effectiveness as a handbell composition;
 - III. suitability for massed ringing;
 - IV. probability of acceptance for publication (if unpublished); and
 - V. overall emotional, intellectual, and musical impression.

7. One digital PDF copy **without the name of the composer/arranger**, and one digital PDF copy **with** the name of the composer/arranger must be sent to the Chair along with the completed and signed entry form. All copies will be destroyed at the end of the contest. An electronic file recording may be submitted along with the entry to facilitate adjudication but is not required.
8. The composer/arranger may enter as many manuscripts as he or she wishes. A separate entry form is required for each manuscript.
9. The composer/arranger's permission is required with their entry for individual judges to duplicate the submitted manuscript solely for the purpose of sight reading with a handbell choir for adjudication purposes. After such single reading, the copies will be immediately destroyed. Without such permission, adjudication will be based purely on the manuscript.
10. Handbell Musicians of Canada reserves the right to guide the successful winners towards timely publication of the manuscript if it is not yet published.
11. Entrants must be Canadian citizens.
12. Entries must be received by email no later than 11:59pm (Pacific Time) **August 31, 2023**. Please send to: chair@handbellmusiciansofcanada.ca

**HANDBELL MUSICIANS OF CANADA RESERVES THE RIGHT NOT TO DECLARE A WINNER.
THE DECISION OF THE ADJUDICATION PANEL IS FINAL.**