

- This piece was composed in memory of David Davidson, the founding conductor of Distinctly Bronze, and a huge advocate of making *music* with handbells (rather than just “getting the notes right”). While Distinctly Bronze has become a place for awe-inspiring “flashy” music, it also embodies true musical line and dynamic contrast; this is why the piece’s “A” section is big and bold, and the “B” section is so very sensitive, with *molto rubato*. (To achieve this, though, you must watch me, and not your music.)
- The title refers to one of the four ancient Roman virtues, now used to describe someone’s personality. David was in so many ways the very embodiment of *gravitas*: a dignified, “weighty” personality, someone of great importance.
- Please change the opening dynamic to *ff*.
- The syncopated figure which is at the start of the first 13 measures (and throughout the entire piece) is often “cheated,” with the sixteenth note coming on the “and” of one (which is too early), or on the next beat (which is too late). The tempo really is too fast to practically count “1e&a” throughout, but the rhythm must be precise. Feel the “and” of one, and play off of it for the sixteenth note. If you need help, call me – I can explain a teaching method over the phone to help people “feel” this rhythm better.
- In general, the footnote on page 2 should be used very judiciously. *Plucks* are the preferred technique; they sound very different than malleted bells. If it is truly physically impossible to reach into the bell due to setup, malleting may be substituted. But please don’t make the decision to mallet just because it’s “more convenient.”
  - A hint: if you are playing the 2s, you can turn them around (mouth toward the ringer), so that you don’t have to reach over/around the casting to get to the clapper for the pluck. There’s ample time to “flip them around” later on in the piece.
- The CD4 ringer can very easily cover that B-flat3 in m. 20...
- A “warning” *shhh!* or some such note at the end of m. 23 will help ensure that the *subito p* at m. 24 isn’t missed. A damp sign at the end of m. 23 may also help to ensure that nothing “bleeds” into m. 24.
- Yes, that footnote on page 5 is important.
- Yes, the upper diads in mm. 37-39 are *suspended bells* played with mallets.
- Yes, that’s a D7 bell in m. 40 without the D6.
- All four whole notes in the treble clef at m. 53 mallet (bells suspended).
- The whole notes in mm. 65-66 are important – their initial strike should slightly overshadow the lower notes (but of course, they will fade very quickly).
- Yup, that C#5 has to damp on beat 3 of m. 78.
- There is a misprint in m. 87: the F#5 that appears as an eighth note on beat TWO should be an eighth rest. (So, the bell plays the first two notes [stem-down], then has an eighth rest, then plays on the “and” of beat 2, and so on.) All other notes in this measure are correct; this is just for the F#5.
- GIVE IT ALL YOU’VE GOT at m. 92!!!
- At the end of the piece, the final chord should strike “at the table,” with no follow-through. I’ll then bring everyone around for the damp.
- David was a great advocate for my writing, from the very fledgling stages of my compositional career. I will always have deep gratitude to him for that. And just as he believed in my writing very early on, Area 7 of Handbell Musicians of America (then AGEHR) believed in my conducting. Area 7 was the first to take a chance on me for a conducting engagement, back in 2008, for a new event which we named *Anthornis*. For my third year conducting that event, I composed a piece by the same name. The final cadential progressions of *Gravitas* and *Anthornis* are similar, for that reason.

As always, if you have any questions,  
please don’t hesitate to contact me (or, feel free to contact me just for fun!):

[michael@michaeljglasgow.com](mailto:michael@michaeljglasgow.com), 919-845-0303,  
[www.michaeljglasgow.com](http://www.michaeljglasgow.com) or on Twitter: @MichaelJGlasgow

### Poem of Thanksgiving (Donald Allured)

Paraclete Press PPM09117 (3-6 octaves), pre-levels (approximately 4-)

- From the beginning, *think triplets*. One of the hardest part about all of these quarter notes and half notes is keeping them from rushing. Let the triplet figure have buoyancy and fill the entire beat. (If you need to use a word to count it, try “ev-en-ly” or “buoy-an-cy,” both of which are less percussive than “tri-puh-let” – which isn’t how we generally say the word “triplet” anyway.)
- Measures 1, 4, 6, etc., all look rather confusing in the engraving. The math works; just realize that the rests are in the voice of the downstem chords. (It would’ve been a bit clearer if the rests were below the downbeat C3s.)
- Treble clef, don’t raise bells until the downbeat of measure 2, and then take three full beats to slowly raise.
- The highest note on the downbeat of m. 7 is a typo; it should be D-flat7.
- Please add a *molto* to the *dim.* in m. 11.
- Yes, all of the eighth notes – in both clefs – are plucked in m. 16.
  - Please omit the G3 on beat 4 of m. 16.
  - See the footnote, and assume we’ll have a G7.
- At measure 17, please mark the upstem notes in the treble clef *mf*, to bring them out. Also, I’d like to do all upstem treble-clef notes on CHIME in measures 17-26. At m. 27, all three notes on the downbeat should be played on chimes, and then the bells should commence on beat 2. CD67 ringers, let your neighbors help you.
- Add a hairpin *diminuendo* through m. 20, and a *p* for the accompaniment at m. 21.

### CHIME PARTS

In addition to the passage above, there are other spots which you’ll see below where I’d like to add chimes. I’ll explain them below, but in the meantime, a “chimes used chart” can be written at the start of the piece this way:

C-E-F7

C-D-E-F-G-A-B6

C-C#-D-Eb-E-F-G-Ab-A-B5

C-D-Eb-E-F-G-Ab-A-B4

A3, if available.

Also, if a C3 *and* G3 are available, they’ll be used on the very last chord. The DE5 ringer should play the C3, and the AB5 ringer should play the G3.

- Please add a hairpin *crescendo* in m. 27.
- Please mark “NO RIT” at m. 32 (you’ll want to!)
- Misprint on the last treble-clef chord of m. 32: the D5 and D6 should have natural signs before them.
- Again, at m. 32, write “*think triplets*” so the chords don’t rush.
- Beginning at m. 38, please play all of the EIGHTH-NOTE ACCOMPANIMENT PATTERNS on chimes instead of bells. This will continue through m. 48.
- Yup, those notes way up there in the treble in mm. 46-48 need to be played. Careful with the ledger lines, and with the rhythm of m. 48.
- To get out of the chime part, m. 49 will be played thusly: everything from C4 through E5 (inclusive) will be on chimes. G5 and higher will be on bells.
- There is not – and should not be – an LV anywhere on page 5. Please don’t create one. ☺
- Please play the chord at m. 59-60 on *chimes*. (If you only have some of these notes as chimes, play what you have on chimes and the others on bells; we’ll listen in the room and see what’s most effective.)

### CUT: IMPORTANT

I have put a cut in the music. Here’s what you need to do:

1. At m. 63, color in the half note so that it becomes a quarter note.

2. Play the first two beats of m. 63, then cut. Restore (without adding any time) with the THIRD BEAT of m. 68.
  3. Please omit the E3, E6 and E7 from the third beat of m. 68.
- Note that the D6 in m. 69 shouldn't be played when the D7 is available (which it should be).
  - Please add a *rit.* at m. 77. I will subdivide the latter half of this measure, so watch for the eighth notes.
  - Please add an A2 whole note at m. 78, and tie it to a half note in m. 79. Damp it on the third beat of m. 79. (You should also mark this note in your HUC, if you in fact have the A2.)
  - Starting with BEAT TWO of MEASURE 83, the VERY HIGHEST NOTE in the treble clef should be played on CHIMES, through the second beat of m. 86. So, at the end of m. 84, for example, the chime notes are A6-E6-A6. The C6-B5-C6 are on bells. At m. 85, the E6 is of course a chime, and the final chime is B5. Please feel free to call me if you need clarification.
  - Please add an Ab2 whole note at m. 93. (A chime is fine, if that's all you have. Or play both!) Damp it at the start of m. 94. Also, you should mark this bell and/or chime into your HUC, if you are adding it/them.
  - At m. 96, please write "damp sloppily." The LV from m. 94 officially ends at the start of m. 96, but we want mm. 96-97 to be *molto legato*, so a little bleed is OK. (A full-on LV is *not*, however, so don't be *too* casual about the damping.)
  - I'd like the upstem treble notes in m. 98 to be played on chimes, as well as the E6 and C7 in m. 99.
  - Please mallet (off the table) the half-note E7 and C8 in m. 99.
    - To achieve these markings, I recommend the B6C7 player do the A,B and C chimes; and the GA6 player handle the E7 and C8 bells and mallets. The EF6 ringer would then, of course, do the E6 chime.
  - Please mallet (off the table) the final bass chord at m. 100 (and/or double it on chimes).

I know that these are a lot of markings, but the addition of the chimes and extra bells really help "solo out" some of these beautiful melodic lines. If you have questions about how to mark anything, or want suggestions or a look at my score, I'm readily available to you; just see below and reach out!

Thank you in advance for your preparation. This will make our time together so meaningful as we do honor to this beautiful piece of music. (Don't forget to read the dedication at the bottom of page 8!)

As always, if you have any questions,  
 please don't hesitate to contact me (or, feel free to contact me just for fun!):  
[michael@michaeljglasgow.com](mailto:michael@michaeljglasgow.com), 919-845-0303,  
[www.michaeljglasgow.com](http://www.michaeljglasgow.com) or on Twitter: @MichaelJGlasgow