

Pentatonic Bell-Tree Processional

by **Karen Van Wert**

PART 1: BASICS

Situation: I'm playing a solo concert this summer. I like to open my solo concerts with a processional. Last time I did a singing bell (C4).

Considerations:

- I want to do something different this time.
- I want something that can transition quickly to the first piece I'm playing.
- It can be played as a solo.
- It does not need piano accompaniment.
- It should be flexible to work within whatever space I have.
- It is designed to get people's attention, indicate the concert is starting, and quiet the audience.
- Easy to memorize or adlib.

I came up with the idea of doing a pentatonic scale BT processional. It uses the "back" string of the Brocker Keyboard Setup (C#5-A#5), so I can slip it off the dowel processional pole and hang it on a tree that has the rest of the Brocker Keyboard Setup in place.

I wrote seven 4-measure phrases. The first and last phrases are the opening and closing phrases. The other five phrases can be played in any order, not played or repeated as needed. This checks the boxes of my requirements/considerations.

PART 2: OPTIONS

Once this was done, I started thinking of different ways you could use this. Here is my short list:

1. Change it to the Key of C and play it on the first string (C6-C7). Either string the bells needed or if ringing improvisationally, remember not to play E6, B6. I've included the score in the Key of C.
2. Use additional ringers playing chimes of the pentatonic scale and create a full processional. The chimes can create their own 2-4 measure repeated pattern or a random ring.
3. A second ringer using a different octave can ring antiphonally. The two BT ringers would ring alternating phrases. Repeat as needed/desired.
4. I don't know how it would sound, but it is possible two ringers could also do it as a cannon. You would need to try it to see which phrases work best together.

I share this as inspiration to come up with your own pentatonic processional! Have fun!

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