

This music is for perusal only.

# Christmas Bells

for S.A. Children's Choir and Piano  
*Commissioned by Cantabile Children's Choir*

## Larysa Kuzmenko



Chorus/Piano Score

counterpoint  
music library services

## Program Note by the Composer:

I was delighted when I was asked to compose a Christmas song for the Cantabile Children's choir. I had always wanted to write a Christmas song. For me, it's one of the happiest and most joyous times of the year.

I chose to set Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem *Christmas Bells*. I tried to create the sound of chiming bells in the piano accompaniment. This accompaniment texture is heard throughout the piece. I make a very small reference to the church bell motive from Debussy's *Sunken Cathedral* in the Piu mosso section. The song ends on a happy and bright note celebrating peace on earth and goodwill to all.

Commissioned and premiered by Cantabile Children's Choir, December 17, 18, 2011, in Kingston, Ontario.

Duration: 3 minutes

*I heard the bells on Christmas Day  
Their old, familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet  
The words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!  
And thought how, as the day had come,  
The belfires of all Christendom  
Had rolled along  
The unbroken song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!  
Till ringing, singing on its way,  
The world revolved from night to day,  
A voice, a chime,  
A chant sublime  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men*

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

## Composer Biography:

Larysa Kuzmenko is a Toronto-based composer, pianist and Juno nominee. Her music has been commissioned, performed, broadcast and recorded by many outstanding musicians all over the world. She has appeared as a pianist in several countries, and has performed at Carnegie Hall, New York City, St. Lawrence Centre, Roy Thomson Hall and Massey Hall, all in Toronto, England, USA and several other Canadian venues. She is currently on staff at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music, where she teaches piano, harmony, and composition.

Her works demonstrate a strong affinity towards the mainstream of classical music. She imbues her music with a strong melodic sense, and a firm rooting in traditional, albeit extended tonal processes. She has been awarded commissions from the Ontario Arts Council, CBC, Laidlaw foundation, and from private commissioners. She was a composer in residence at the Memorial University in Newfoundland, in 2010. Her solo piano works *In Memoriam to the Victims of Chernobyl* and *Mysterious Summer's Night* have become standard repertoire for pianists. These pieces receive over a hundred performances a year. Her choral works *Winds* and *Stars* are performed regularly all over the world.

In 2011, Larysa received a Juno nomination for her *Piano Concerto* which was recorded on CD by well-known Ukrainian Canadian pianist Christina Petrowska Quilico. She was commissioned, through a grant from the Ontario Arts Council, to write a work for the Toronto Symphony's 90th anniversary. This work, *Behold the Night* was composed for the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and the Toronto Children's Chorus. It was extremely well received by the audience and was broadcast on CBC. Oscar winning actor Christopher Plummer, was on the same show as the premiere of *Behold the Night*. During the after-show dinner, he told the composer that "Shakespeare would have been very proud of Larysa Kuzmenko's musical setting of the text to 'A Midsummer's Night Dream'". Critic Colin Eatock from the Globe and Mail wrote, "The work is as charming and colourful as any film score by Danny Elfman or John Williams".

Many of her works have been performed by groups in Canada and internationally, and championed by a number of prominent performers.

Larysa Kuzmenko's work *Golden Harvest*, for full orchestra, chorus with soprano and baritone soloists, was written to celebrate the 125th anniversary of Ukrainians immigrating to Canada. It was premiered March 18, 2016 with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and a joint choir made up of local Winnipeg choirs. This work has now been performed a number of times across Canada, to enthusiastic acclaim.

Please visit the composer's website [www.larysakuzmenko.com](http://www.larysakuzmenko.com)

# CHRISTMAS BELLS

for SA Children's Choir and Piano

Text by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Music by Larysa Kuzmenko

$\text{♩} = 75-80$

S  
I heard the bells, I

A  
I

Piano  
*f*  
*con Ped.*

6  
heard the bells on Christ - mas Day Their old, fa - mil - iar car - ols play, fa -

heard the bells on Christ - mas Day Their old, fa - mil - iar car - ols play, fa -

11  
mil - iar car - ols play, And wild and sweet The words re - peat Of

mil - iar car - ols play, And wild and sweet The words re - peat

16

peace on earth, good - will to men! I heard the bells on Christ - mas Day, the  
 peace on earth, I heard the bells on Christ - mas Day,

21

Più mosso ♩ = 85

bells on Christ - mas Day.  
 bells on Christ - mas Day.

27

*mf*  
 And thought how, as the day had come, The bell - fies of  
*mf*  
 And thought how, as the day had come, The bell - fies of

34 *f*

Chris - ten - dom Had rolled a - long The un - bro - ken song Of

Chris - ten - dom Had rolled a - long The un - bro - ken song Of

*f*

(8<sup>vb</sup>)

41

peace on earth, good - will, good - will to men!

peace on earth, good - will, good - will to men!

48 *ff*

Till ring - ing,

*ff f*

54

sing-ing \_\_\_\_\_ on its way, on its way, \_\_\_\_\_ on its way, \_\_\_\_\_

Till ring-ing, sing-ing \_\_\_\_\_ on its way, \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ its way, \_\_\_\_\_

*ff*

61

\_\_\_\_\_ The world re - volved from night to day, The \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ The world re - volved \_\_\_\_\_ from night to day, The \_\_\_\_\_

*mf* *f espr.* *f*

*mf* *f*

67

world re - volved from night to day, \_\_\_\_\_ A voice, a chime, A

world re - volved from night to day, \_\_\_\_\_ A voice, \_\_\_\_\_ chime, \_\_\_\_\_

*ff* *ff*

*ff*

73

chant sub - lime A voice, A chant sub - lime Of peace on  
 chant sub - lime A voice, A chant sub - lime Of peace on

80

*poco rit. a tempo*

earth, good - will to men! Of peace on earth, good - will to men!  
 earth, good - will to men! Of peace on earth, good - will to men!

*mf mp*

87

**Meno mosso**

*mf f mf*