

with arpeggiated sixteenth-notes in the orchestra. The final section (*allegro*) starts with a short fugue and builds to an "amen" typical of Handel's writing. There are also four statements of the text "world without end" sung in long notes that permeate the texture and resemble a sort of *cantus firmus*. The imitation diminishes to a final homophonic ending to this great work.

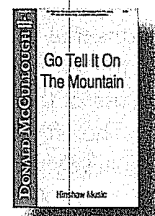
David J. Belles  
Willimantic, Connecticut

**Go Tell It On The Mountain**  
SATB (div.), opt. Soprano or Tenor solo,  
percussion  
Donald McCullough (arr.)  
Hinshaw Music  
HMC 2078  
\$1.80

**T**his energetic setting of a familiar Christmas tune is a delightful addition to Donald McCullough's choral series. McCullough, conductor of the Master Chorale of Washington, has brought a

fresh perspective to this popular spiritual with the use of percussion including shaker, claves, bongo, and finger cymbals (notated for 2 players). McCullough's arrangement has at its structural core a lively, syncopated *ostinato* that begins the work and recurs throughout in the men's voices (TTBB). Optional solo parts are provided which may be sung by a unison soprano section, although these passages would likely benefit from the flexibility of a soloist. The setting is unaccompanied but the arranger provides a helpful keyboard reduction for rehearsal purposes. The edition is easy to read, and its visual presentation is clean and attractive.

With an indicated duration of 3'30", the piece opens with a nineteen-measure setting of the refrain "Go Tell It, On the Mountain" in which the *ostinato* mentioned earlier supports the soprano melody. This extended introduction blends into a more homophonic treatment of the melody in SATB texture, leading to the two stanzas



"While shepherds kept their watching" and "The shepherds feared and trembled." The familiar refrain is repeated at the end of each stanza, after which a modulation accompanies the return of the men's *ostinato*, now in G major. The third stanza is then presented in the tenor, while the remaining parts provide supporting harmonic accompaniment. This leads to a return of the original key of B<sup>b</sup> major and the expected *ostinato* in the men's voices. Only seven measures later, the music makes its final modulation to A major, with the *tessitura* of all parts expanding considerably, and the inclusion of an optional high soprano solo. Even without the optional solo, McCullough brings the piece to a glorious close using an eight-voice A-major chord, with soprano one on the pitch a<sup>2</sup>.

McCullough's technique for sustaining interest in this piece is its constant forward and somewhat unpredictable motion: the overall construction of the piece takes several unexpected turns, but the frequent return of the recognizable *ostinato* in the men's voices not only provides rhythmic vitality, but also a motivic glue that holds the piece together. In general, the work is appropriate and manageable for an intermediately skilled ensemble, but will require at least a medium-sized chamber choir to handle the *divisi* effectively. The repetition in the supporting harmony of the lower voices, and the familiarity of the principal melody, should help the singers in maintaining accurate intonation. Ranges are also relatively contained, with sopranos spanning d<sup>1</sup> to a<sup>2</sup>, altos a to e<sup>2</sup>, tenors d to g<sup>1</sup>, and basses F (with an optional D) to c<sup>#1</sup>. *Go Tell It on the Mountain* will be sufficiently challenging and enjoyable to sing, and is sure to be quite a success on the Christmas programs of many church and chamber choirs.

D. Jason Bishop  
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