

The Harp Ensemble Book

Eleven Enchanting Duets and Trios
for the Lever Harp

by Beth A. Kollé

Six Duets and Five Trios
Arranged for Harp Players of All Levels

This book conserves paper resources by reducing blank pages

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INTRODUCTION

BENEFITS OF ENSEMBLE PLAYING: Playing with other musicians is great fun, and it is never too soon in the life of a musician to start. Many of these pieces are accessible to early beginners, making them a great teaching tool. Ensemble playing helps develop a musician's ear, improves rhythmic sense and builds confidence.

Here are other benefits of playing in a group:

- * Someone always brings cookies
- * You get to hang out with your friends and talk about harps
- * Your level of musicianship will improve from playing with others
- * The more you play music with others, the more your ear develops
- * There's a rush of good feeling that comes when all the instruments play well together. Somehow you just helped to make the world a better place.

LEVELS: In this book, Harp I is usually the most challenging part and is in several pieces suitable 'as-is' for a solo piece. Harp II and III are generally the easiest parts. See page 7 for suggestions on how to divide up the parts.

RHYTHM, EXPRESSION, STAYING TOGETHER: A common occurrence for groups, no matter how small, is to find a tempo for the piece - and stick to it no matter what. This works very well for groups playing dance music, as dancers need a definite tempo from the musicians. But if the group is playing an expressive song or air, the tempo and dynamics may safely vary. In fact, without these variations, the song or air will likely not be as pleasing to play or to hear. Try varying the tempo just a bit in places, such as phrase endings.

A designated harper can play the part of leader, using nods, eye contact, or even a slight intake of breath on the upbeat to help the group start and end together. Your music will sound immeasurably better as you begin to meld as an ensemble.

TIPS: Here are a few suggestions for playing a harp ensemble piece -

- * Sing just the melody as a group (on 'la-la-la') and note on the music where taking a breath comes naturally, usually at phrase endings

- * Play slowly through each part as a group. Beginners may play just one clef or just the first note of each measure for this initial run-through. Decide who will play which part

- * Work on each part, both in individual practice and as a group, first playing slowly and then gradually bringing the part up to tempo. This process may take many rehearsals and individual practice sessions

- * Try to capture the expression that comes naturally when you sing the parts. This will help to develop expression in the piece

- * Listen to each other as you play and become aware of small signals given by each player before they start to play a phrase. In this way, players will eventually be able to start and end together without someone having to conduct.

- * Memorize your music, if at all possible. While not crucial to playing notes, memorization is crucial to making music. Once you stop using your eyes to guide you, your ears will take over and help you cue off the other players.

COPYRIGHT ISSUES: You have my permission to make up to 3 copies of each page for your group's use in practice and performance only. If more copies are needed, please purchase another book. Be honest - you know I have spies in the Harp World!

Have fun with these pieces. Please write and let me know your thoughts. I'd also welcome your ideas on how to make ensembles better and more fun, and of course if you catch any errors, I'd like to know about them.

Beth Kollé

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THE ARRANGEMENTS

In this book you will find some of my favorite music, arranged for two, three or even more harps. Some pieces appear as solos in other books of mine and have been adapted here for ensemble.

Metronome markings are to be taken as a guideline, not as a rule. Please find the tempo that feels best to you and your group.

Many of these arrangements may be played as duets, trios or even quartets. If your group is large enough and the players represent a range of experience on the harp, the parts may be divided in different ways to suit the group. Even the arrangements written out as duets with two full harp parts could be played as a trio or quartet. Feel free to divide up the staves any way you see fit.

Three of the arrangements include the individual parts plus a combined Harp I & II part, to enable one person to play both of these parts as if it were a solo piece. These three are: *Carolan's Draught*, *Loftus Jones II*, and *Waltz for Kuisma*.

For example, *Carolan's Draught*, comprises three staves. It could be split three ways and played as a trio. Played as a duet, an experienced harper could play the top two staves (treble and bass clef) while a student or a less experienced harper could play the bottom staff (Harp III).

The Score for each arrangement is intended to be a quick reference for anyone wishing to see how the parts fit together. The individual harp parts follow, with as few page turns as necessary.

Sue Richards, the accomplished harper, teacher and recording artist, contributed her arrangements on two of the ensembles presented here: *On the Way to Stavanger* and *Polonaise*. Both of these pieces were performed during the HARPA folk harp concert tours to Scandinavia, and appear as solos in *The Harpa Tunebook*.

Lauri Keskinen of Finland gave me permission to arrange his beautiful tune, *Waltz for Kuisma*, for the harp. *Oh Shenandoah*, in a slightly different version, was performed on the Harpa 2008 tour as we gently sang the verses to our Norwegian audiences. The lovely *Snowfall Waltz* was composed by my father's best friend, talented Jim Lough. All the other tunes are favorites I have learned as a folkdance and harper over the years.

THE AUTHOR



Beth Kollé performs on harp, flute, pennywhistle and vocals. She has produced five CDs and nine books of harp music and has been featured in many festivals and retreats in the United States, Canada, Scandinavia and Ireland.

She studied piano and flute at the University of Washington and received a BA in Music. Since then, Beth has immersed herself in the world of traditional Nordic music, and has enjoyed finding the parallels between Nordic and Celtic folk music.

Playing in ensembles has been a favorite activity since middle school years. She teaches workshops on harp ensemble. This is her first book of ensemble pieces.

Beth Kollé lives in Seattle, Washington with her scientist husband, Jack. Daughter Lily is in college and son Reijer will soon follow.

The Butterfly

Traditional Irish Slipjig

Score

Moderate INTRODUCTION

Harp I

Harp II

5 A

5 A

The score is written for two harps, Harp I and Harp II. Harp I has a right-hand part with slurs and 'RH' markings. Harp II has a left-hand part with chords and a right-hand part with a simple bass line. A section labeled 'A' is marked at measure 5 for both harps.

Arrangement © 2008 Beth A. Kollé
Key of E minor, no lever changes

The Butterfly
Score - Page Two

8

1 2 B

8

1 2 B

11

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