

## ABSTRACT

**CREATIVE PROJECT:** The Bells

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*The Bells* is an eight-part chamber choral setting of Edgar Allan Poe's poem by the same name. The piece conveys sound images seen throughout the text using bell-like vertical sonorities and cascading textures. Onomatopoeia and extended vocal techniques such as *Sprechstimme*, inhalation, whistling, and tongue clicks are employed to increase the timbral possibilities of the choir and portray these sound images. The form of the piece is largely governed by the form of the four-stanza poem. The piece captures the drama and wide range of emotions from delight and even child-like nostalgia regarding the bells to terror and macabre fear invoked by their ringing. The emotional change of the text are musically traversed and experienced using recurring sectional melodic variation that gives the piece consistency as well as draws out the relations between the stanzas of the text. These melodies are used with more simple textures in the beginning. However, these melodies grow more rhapsodic with thicker and more varying textures as the work progresses with increasingly dissonant harmonies and timbral effects as the drama of the piece unfolds.

