

HOLD ON

SA Voices with Piano and Optional Percussion

Traditional African American Spiritual

Arranged by
Dan Davison

BriLee Music
Part-by-Part 

For Accompaniment and Rehearsal Audio
Go to: BriLeeMusic.com/BL1241

Ranges:



Language: English

Use: General/Festival

Time: Approx. 2:54

*Difficulty: Moderate

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Arranger's Notes

Hold On comes out of the African American spiritual tradition. Most spirituals are considered to be “traditional,” meaning that the composer is not known. Rather, the song was passed from one generation to the next through oral tradition. While most spirituals refer to the topic of religious faith, some others include coded meanings that would help enslaved people who were escaping to freedom in the North.

The piece calls for a brake drum. This instrument is actually a heavy metal disk brake from a car that is hit with a hammer. Some school bands have this instrument in their percussion cabinet. If an actual disk brake cannot be found, you might try using a large, cast-iron fry pan and hammer. Whatever instrument is chosen, the outcome should be a metallic sound that sounds like a railroad tie being driven into the ground. The idea to be conveyed is that keeping your faith requires hard, consistent work.

There are plenty of places in the piece where singers are asked to hold notes for two whole notes. In all these cases, do not make the mistake of holding a single dynamic for the entire note. Instead, all long notes should have a dynamic arch added to them.

Rehearsal letter E is all about the counterpoint. The idea in counterpoint is to bring out your part when your part is moving, but then to soften on the held notes, providing an opportunity for the other part to be spotlighted.

In general, articulations in this piece are to be exaggerated. Staccatos are to be very short, and more importantly, accents are to be sung so as to “pop.” Likewise, dynamics should be exaggerated, especially the dynamic change at Rehearsal letter G.

About the Arranger

Dan Davison directed choirs at Ballou Junior High in Puyallup, Washington from 1979 - 2019. His responsibilities included working with mixed ensembles, tenor-bass ensembles, treble ensembles, and jazz choir.

Dan was born in 1956 in Sacramento, California, but has lived in the greater Seattle area since 1965. Since 1979, he has resided in Puyallup, Washington with his wife, Cathy, who was also an educator. He attended Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington, where he received his Bachelor’s degree, studying music under Maurice Skones. He continued his education with a Master’s in Music from Western Washington University, studying with Bruce Pullan.

Hold On

for SA Voices* with Piano and Optional Percussion

Traditional African American Spiritual

Arranged by Dan Davison

Slowly, with determination $\text{♩} = 80$

Piano

f

Pedal sparingly. Let rests be heard.

Brake Drum (or other percussion)

(Brake drum plays through m. 107)

mf

dim.

Soprano

mf **A**

8 10 11

No - ah, No-ah, let me come in.

Alto

mf

No - ah, No-ah, let me come in.

mp

*Also available for SATB Voices (BL1155), SSA Voices (BL1171), SAB Voices (BL1284), and TB Voices (BL1265).

12 13 14 15

The doors all fast-ened and the win-dows pinned. _____

The doors all fast-ened and the win-dows pinned. _____

mp *mf*

16 17 18 19

Keep your hand on - a that plow. _____

Keep your hand on - a that plow. _____

mp *mf*

20 21 22 23

Hold on, hold on, hold on! _____

Hold on, hold on, hold on! _____

p *f* *p* *f*

36 *mf* 37 *p* 38 *f* 39 *>* 40 *mp*

plow. Hold on, hold on, hold on! Hold on!

Hold on, hold on, hold on! Hold

p *f* *mp*

C *cresc.* 42 43 44 *ff* *>*

on, hold on, hold on! Keep your

on, hold on, hold on, hold on! Keep your

cresc. *ff*

mp *cresc.* *ff*

45 46 *mf* 47 *f* 48 *mp*

hand on - a that plow. Hold on, hold on! Mar-y had

hand on - a that plow. Hold on, hold on! Mar-y had

f *mf* *f* *mp*

D

50 51 52

a gold - en chain. Ev - 'ry

a gold - en chain. Ev - 'ry

p *mp*

53 54 55 56

link was in my Je-sus' name. Keep your

link was in my Je-sus' name. Keep your

p *mp* *p*

57 58 59 60 61

hand on - a that plow. Hold on, hold

hand on - a that plow. Hold on!

p *mp* *pp* *pp*

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62 63 64 E *mf*

on, hold on! Keep on

mf

Keep on plow - in'

mp

Pedal harmonically

66 67 68 69

plow - in' and don't you tire. Ev - 'ry

and don't you tire. Ev - 'ry round goes

70 71 72 73

round goes high - er and high er. Keep your

high - er and high er. Keep your hand

74 hand _____ on - a that plow. Hold on, hold *mp*

75 _____ on - a that plow. _____ Hold on, hold *mp*

76 _____ Hold on, hold *mp*

77 _____ Hold on, hold *mp*

p

78 on, hold *p* on! _____ If you want to go to

79 on, hold *p* on! _____ If you want to go to

80 _____ If you want to go to *pp*

_____ If you want to go to *pp*

F 82 heav-en, let me tell you how: _____ Got to keep your hand _____ on the gos - pel plow. Got to keep your

83 heav-en, let me tell you how: _____ Got to keep your hand _____ on the gos - pel plow. Got to keep your

84 _____ Got to keep your

pp

85 *>* 86 87 88 *ff*

hand on - a that plow. Hold on! *ff* If that

hand *>* on - a that plow. Hold on, hold on! *ff* If that

G 90 *>* 91 *>* 92 *>*

plow stays in your hand, — gon - na land you straight in the prom-ised land. — Keep your

plow stays in your hand, — gon - na land you straight in the prom-ised land. — Keep your

93 *>* 94 95 96 *mp* **H** *cresc.*

hand on - a that plow. Hold on! Hold on, *mp* *cresc.*

hand *>* on - a that plow. Hold on! Hold on, hold

98 99 100 *ff* 101

hold on, hold on! Keep your hand on - a that

on, hold on, hold on! Keep your hand on - a that

cresc. *ff*

102 *mf* *I* *cresc. poco a poco* 104 105 106

plow. Hold on!

plow. Hold on, oh, broth - er hold on! Oh, sis - ter hold on!

mf *cresc. poco a poco*

mf *cresc. poco a poco*

107 *molto rit.* 108 *ff* 109 *rit.* 110

You got - ta hold on! Hold on!

ff *rit.*

molto rit. *ff* *rit.* *8va--1*

slowly and deliberately

ff

(Brake drum stops)

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the Voice of Choral Music

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