

# STRING EXPLORER SERIES

## Smoky Mountain Christmas

Three Appalachian Carols

Traditional American

Arranged by Andrew H. Dabczynski (ASCAP)

### INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor Score.....	1
Violin I.....	8
Violin II.....	8
Viola.....	5
Violin III (Viola  .....	3
Cello.....	5
String Bass.....	5
Piano Accompaniment.....	1

Snowy hilltops, timeless family traditions, and the warmth of a hearth—the atmosphere of a *Smoky Mountain Christmas* is captured in this arrangement of three traditional Appalachian carols. The simple modal melodies of “Star of the East” and “Babe of Bethlehem” are passed throughout the orchestra, before concluding with the stirring spiritual “Rise Up Shepherd and Follow.” The keys, meters, and bowings are all playable by second-year string students, but intermediate and advanced students also will find this a satisfying holiday concert piece.



## PROGRAM NOTES

Snowy hilltops, timeless family traditions, and the warmth of a hearth—the atmosphere of a *Smoky Mountain Christmas* is captured in this arrangement of three traditional Appalachian carols. After a short introduction, the simple modal melody of “Star of the East” is heard (also known as “Brightest and Best”). Some say this carol has British roots, but it is widely considered an Appalachian tune. “Babe of Bethlehem” is heard next, a subdued melody drawn from early 19th century “shape note” singing practices. The piece ends with a setting of the stirring, familiar spiritual “Rise Up Shepherd and Follow.” The orchestra sections answer each other back and forth, reminiscent of the “lining out” African-American singing tradition. The piece fades quietly away, as might a *Smoky Mountain Christmas* eve of years gone by.

## NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

Following a four-measure introduction in C drawn from “Rise Up Shepherd and Follow” and a unison fermata (m. 4), the medley begins with a setting of the modal “Star of the East” (also known as “Brightest and Best”) in A-Aeolian mode (C Major key signature). Students should recognize that the melody arches to a peak at measure 25. A shift to 3/4 meter, a slightly faster tempo, and a direct modulation to D-Dorian mode (m. 34, G Major key signature) mark the beginning of the southern hymn “Babe of Bethlehem,” with the melody presented in the violas and cello (mm. 34–44); this carol setting should feel “in one.”

The melody shifts to the first violins (mm. 45–60), joined by the violas for a brief time (mm. 53–55). A diminuendo and ritard (mm. 59–60) lead to a direct modulation to D Major and the beginning of “Rise Up Shepherd” in slightly slower 4/4 time. Care should be taken in this transition to subordinate the held D pitch (violas, cello, basses, mm. 61–62) under the quiet main theme presented by the violins. The orchestra texture—alternating 2-measure theme segments—suggests the “lining out” tradition common to spirituals (mm. 62–82). A ritard and fermata (m. 81) transition to a slower, broader tempo for a final statement of the “Rise Up Shepherd” theme. Following a swelling cadence, the parts hold and fade to a quiet ending.

# Smoky Mountain Christmas

CONDUCTOR SCORE  
Duration - 3:30

Three Appalachian Carols

Traditional American

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**Violins I**  
*pp* *mf* *pp*

**Violins II**  
*pp* *mf* *pp*

**Viola (Violin III)**  
*pp* *mf* *pp*

**Cello**  
*pp* *mf* *pp*

**String Bass**  
*pp* *mf* *pp*

**Piano Accompaniment**  
*pp* *mp* *pp*

*Distantly* (♩ = 80)

**Vlns.**  
*mp/mf* *legato*

**Vla. (Vln. III)**  
*p/mp* *legato*

**Cello**  
*p/mp* *legato*

**Str. Bass**  
*p/mp* *legato*

**Pno. Accomp.**  
*p*

*Andante* (feeling "in two") (♩ = 116)

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

10 11 12 13 14

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

15 16 17 18 19

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

20 21 22 23

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

24 25 26 27 28

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mp*

Vlns. I  
Vlns. II  
Vla. (Vln. III)  
Cello  
Str. Bass  
Pno. Accomp.

29 30 31 32 33

Vlns. I  
Vlns. II  
Vla. (Vln. III)  
Cello  
Str. Bass  
Pno. Accomp.

34 Slightly faster (♩ = 120)

34 35 36 37 38

1. 2.

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

39 40 41 42 43

45

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

44 45 46 47

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

rit.

A tempo

*p* *mf*

*p* *mp*

*pp* *p*

48 49 50 51 52

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

*mp*

*mp*

53 54 55 56 57



4

rit.

61 Moderato (♩ = 90)

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

58 59 60 61

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

62 63 64 65

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

66 67 68 69

This block contains the musical score for measures 66 through 69. It features five staves for strings (Violins I and II, Viola/Violin III, Cello, and String Bass) and one grand staff for Piano Accompaniment. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The score includes dynamic markings such as *pp*, *mp*, and *mf*. A large red watermark is overlaid diagonally across the page.

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

70 71 72 73

This block contains the musical score for measures 70 through 73. It features five staves for strings (Violins I and II, Viola/Violin III, Cello, and String Bass) and one grand staff for Piano Accompaniment. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The score includes dynamic markings such as *p*, *mf*, and *f*. A large red watermark is overlaid diagonally across the page.

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

*mp* *mf* *p*

74 75 76 77

Vlns. I

Vlns. II

Vla. (Vln. III)

Cello

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

*p* *f* *p* *f* *f* *mf*

78 79 80 81

82 Slower, broadly (♩ = 70)

Vlns.

I *mp*

II *mp*

Vla. (Vln. III) *mp*

Cello *mp*

Str. Bass *mp*

Pno. Accomp.

82 Slower, broadly (♩ = 70)

*p*

82

83

84

Vlns.

I *mf* *pp*

II *mf* *pp*

Vla. (Vln. III) *mf* *mp* *mf* *pp*

Cello *mf* *mp* *mf* *pp*

Str. Bass *mf* *pp*

Str. Bass

Pno. Accomp.

85

86

87

88