

Feliz Navidad

Merry Christmas

Words and Music by JOSÉ FELICIANO

Arranged by VICTOR LÓPEZ

INSTRUMENTATION

- 1 Conductor
- 8 Flute
- 2 Oboe
- 2 Bassoon
- 4 1st B \flat Clarinet
- 4 2nd B \flat Clarinet
- 2 B \flat Bass Clarinet
- 5 E \flat Alto Saxophone
- 2 B \flat Tenor Saxophone
- 2 E \flat Baritone Saxophone
- 4 1st B \flat Trumpet
- 4 2nd B \flat Trumpet
- 4 F Horn

- 4 Trombone
- 2 Baritone
- 2 Baritone Treble Clef
- 4 Tuba
- 3 Mallet Percussion
(Bells/Small Cowbell, Xylophone)
- 2 Timpani/Claves
(Tune: B \flat)
- 3 Percussion 1
(Snare Drum/Hi-Hat Cymbals,
Bass Drum or Optional Drumset)
- 2 Percussion 2
(Congas [2] or Optional Tom-Toms, Guiro)

WORLD PARTS

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- Horn in E \flat
- Trombone in B \flat Bass Clef
- Trombone in B \flat Treble Clef
- Baritone in B \flat Bass Clef
- Tuba in E \flat Bass Clef
- Tuba in E \flat Treble Clef
- Tuba in B \flat Bass Clef
- Tuba in B \flat Treble Clef

PROGRAM NOTES

Feliz Navidad, written in 1970 by José Feliciano, is one of the most popular Christmas songs in the world. José was born blind, to humble beginnings on September 10, 1945, in Lares, Puerto Rico. One of eleven boys, his love affair with music began at the age of three when he first accompanied his uncle on a tin cracker can. When he was five, his family immigrated to New York City. Young José learned to play the concertina at age six, using a handful of records as his teacher. At eight, he performed for his classmates at PS 57, and at nine, performed at The Puerto Rican Theater in the Bronx. Venturing beyond the accordion, he taught himself to play the guitar with undaunted determination and again, with nothing but records as his teacher, practiced for as many as 14 hours a day. Exposed to the rock-n-roll of the '50s, José was then inspired to sing.

At 17, José quit school. His father was not working at the time and he needed to help his family. He played in coffee houses in Greenwich Village and for his salary—as was customary during that time period in small clubs—they'd "pass the hat." He played his first professional engagement that same year in Detroit, Michigan. Shortly thereafter, a music critic writing of his performance at Gerde's Folk City referred to him as a "10-fingered wizard who romps, runs, rolls, picks and reverberates his six strings in an incomparable fashion," and added, "If you want to witness the birth of a star, catch Mr. Feliciano before he leaves tomorrow night."

Three songs that have been milestones for Feliciano are *Light My Fire*, *Che Sara* and *Feliz Navidad*. However, *Feliz Navidad*, the Christmas song that has now become a tradition worldwide during the holiday season every year, has had the most success. It is a top *iTunes* download and ASCAP has placed it among the 25 Greatest Holiday Songs of the Century.

NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

The unison and tutti section at the beginning and ending of this arrangement is a rhythmic motive that has become a signature for endless numbers of Latin compositions. This exciting rhythmic figure sets the tone for the melody, starting with the pickup at measure 9. Although the melodic material in this arrangement is fairly close to the original, there are variances throughout.

Please note that there is always a tendency for young musicians to play popular songs in the style that they have come to know. Emphasis should be placed on having students read the written figures correctly and not as they have heard them otherwise. A strong component of this arrangement is the rhythmic support provided by the percussion section.

As it is the case with this arrangement, one characteristic of a Latin rhythm section is to have several musicians playing individual repetitive parts at once; almost like a rhythm machine which is constantly steady. It is the combination of all of those ingredients that make it rhythmically special. Written in a Latin rock style, the Percussion 1 part provides the basic rock beat while the Percussion 2 provides authentic Latin components with the conga drums and guiro. Additionally, both the timpani and mallet percussion parts have been utilized to provide essential Latin percussion instruments. The timpani part includes the most fundamental of all Latin percussion instruments, the claves. Note that the pattern is 2/3 throughout. The player should hold one stick (clave) lightly in one hand with the palm up and the hand cupped, allowing the sound to resonate. If the clave is held tight, it will produce a choked sound. The other hand holds the stick firmly and strikes the indicated rhythm in the center of the resting clave. It is suggested that each part be rehearsed separately at first before trying to put them all together. Each player may want to research proper posture for holding his/her Latin percussion instrument.

The combination of both the rock beat and basic authentic Latin "Cha-Cha-Cha" rhythms is what makes this work special. However, the arrangement will sound just as effective with just the Percussion 1 or drumset part. Starting with rehearsal number 9 through the first beat of measure 24, the counter melody should not overpower the melodic line. At rehearsal number 25, the rhythmic feel gets more exciting as the small cowbell is introduced in the mallet part. Note that the quarter notes should be played on the mouth of the bell with the shoulder of the drum stick and the eighth notes should be played on the center or body of the bell with the tip of the stick. The mouth of the bell should face out to the audience. Note that the rhythmic pattern is written in reverse as the mouth of the bell (low sound) is written higher and the shoulder (high sound) written lower.

Throughout the entire composition, but especially in this section, as a stylistic concern, pay close attention to the articulations and dynamic markings. The *Del Segno* at measure 40 takes you back to rehearsal number 9 and then to the *Coda* at the end of measure 23. The *Coda* is the same as the introduction with the exception of the last measure.

Enjoy and *Feliz Navidad* to all!



Feliz Navidad

FULL SCORE
Approx. Duration - 2:00

Merry Christmas

Words and Music by José Feliciano
Arranged by Victor López

Latin rock ♩ = 120

Flute

Oboe

Bassoon

1
B♭ Clarinets

2

B♭ Bass Clarinet

E♭ Alto
Saxophone

B♭ Tenor
Saxophone

E♭ Baritone
Saxophone

Latin rock ♩ = 120

1
B♭ Trumpets

2

F Horn

Trombone

Baritone

Tuba

Mallet Percussion
(Bells/Small Cowbell,
Xylophone)

Tune: B♭

Timpani
(Claves)

Percussion 1
(Snare Drum/Hi-Hat
Cymbals, Bass Drum
or Optional Drumset)

(Dry sound)

Percussion 2
(Conga Drums [2]
or Optional Tom-Toms,
Guiro)

1

2

3

4

5

30794S

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Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

1 Cls.

2 Cls.

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

1 Tpts.

2 Tpts.

Hn.

Tbn.

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.
Bells

Xyl. *f*

Timp.

Perc. 1
rim shot

2 Conga Drums (opt. Tom-Toms) *mf*

Perc. 2
Slap

Open

Guiro *mf*

Claves (2/3 pattern) *mf*

H.H. *mf*

9 %

9 %

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

Fl.
Ob.
Bsn.
1
Cls.
2
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
Bar. Sax.
1
Tpts.
2
Hn.
Tbn.
Bar.
Tuba
Mlt. Perc.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2

simile 11 12 13 14 15

This page contains a musical score for a large ensemble. The instruments listed on the left are Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Clarinets (Cls. 1 and 2), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sax.), Baritone Saxophone (Bar. Sax.), Trumpets (Tpts. 1 and 2), Horns (Hn.), Trombones (Tbn.), Baritone (Bar.), Tuba, Multiple Percussion (Mlt. Perc.), Timpani (Timp.), Percussion 1 (Perc. 1), and Percussion 2 (Perc. 2). The score is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature (C). A large red watermark reading 'Preview Only' is overlaid diagonally across the page. At the bottom, there are rehearsal marks for measures 11 through 15, with the word 'simile' written below measure 11.

17

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Bsn.

Cls. 1 *f*

Cls. 2 *f*

B. Cl. *f*

A. Sax. *mf*

T. Sax. *f*

Bar. Sax.

17

Tpts. 1 *mf*

Tpts. 2 *mf*

Hn. *mf*

Tbn. *f*

Bar. *f*

Tuba

Mlt. Perc. Bells and Xyl. *mf*

Timp.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

To Coda ☉

25

Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

1
Cls.

2

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

To Coda ☉

25

1
Tpts.

2

Hn.

Tbn.

Bar.

Tuba

Sm. Cowbell

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

1
Cls.

2

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

1
Tpts.

2

Hn.

Tbn.

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

33

Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

1
Cls.

2

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

33

1
Tpts.

2

Hn.

Tbn.

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

D.S. % al Coda

Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

1 Cls.

2 Cls.

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

1 Tpts.

2 Tpts.

Hn.

Tbn.

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

D.S. % al Coda

Coda

Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

1
Cls.

2

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

Coda

1
Tpts.

2

Hn.

Tbn.

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

r.s.
(Dry sound)
f

Fl.

Ob.

Bsn.

1
Cls.

2

B. Cl.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

1
Tpts.

2

Hn.

Tbn.

Bar.

Tuba

Mlt. Perc.

Timp.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Bells

Xyl.

f