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## The Arranger

Timothy Loest is a name in instrumental music synonymous with creativity, versatility and accessibility. His compositions and arrangements possess an imaginative, well-crafted style that resonates with performers and audiences worldwide.

Mr. Loest had his first work published in 1995, and today he is an exclusive composer and arranger for The FJH Music Company Inc. The bestselling supplemental methods he has written for FJH include *Warm-ups and Beyond* and *Rhythms and Beyond*, and he is a co-writer of *Measures of Success®: A Comprehensive Musicianship Band Method*.

As a clinician, Mr. Loest delivers engaging and thought provoking presentations on various aspects of instrumental music. He frequently guest conducts bands throughout the United States and regularly accepts commissions.

Mr. Loest received his Bachelor of Music Education degree from Illinois State University, and his Master of Music degree from Northwestern University. He holds membership in NAfME, ASCAP, Illinois MEA, the Illinois Grade School Music Association, and the Christian Educators Association International.

Mr. Loest is band director at F.E. Peacock Middle School in Itasca, Illinois. An ASCAP award-winning composer, he advances music education through his writing and teaching.

## About the Music

Strings on the Housetop is a delightful section feature of Benjamin R. Hanby's Up on the Housetop. Using just six notes, it is cleverly scored so that even ensembles with few players or limited instrumentation will sound rich and full.

When rehearsing this work, keep the tempo and style both bright and festive. The melodic, bass, and harmonic lines may be rehearsed separately, and then together so that each musician understands how the various layers of music interlock. Measures 13-16 present each section of the string family. Then at measures 21-24, the sections return in a pizzicato style. The "Ho! Ho! Ho!" shout-out at measure 26 should be exuberant, tight, and punchy so that the audience gets the message (in a nice way!). The quick tempo change at measure 33 should be spot on. This tempo change may require repetitive practice, but the pay-off will be worth the investment.

This arrangement incorporates optional percussion instruments, including sleigh bells, temple blocks, and slapstick. These parts are easy to learn and can be mastered by anyone in the ensemble.

Finally, it is hoped that each musician develops mutual respect for each section of the ensemble, while understanding that the group as a whole is greater than the sum of its parts. And if you ever think that you hear reindeer paws on the housetop, listen closely. It just might be an orchestra!

- Timothy Loest

## STRINGS ON THE HOUSETOP



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