MUSIC THEORY.aargh© Why Cb? (Session 39) By Dr. Ona Pinsonneault

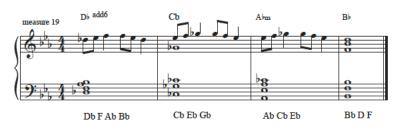
In the short amount of time that I have been ringing bells I have purchased a few scores, usually for Festivals and Anthornis. I have rung in the battery, close to the ringer on the B4 C5 bells. One rehearsal the ringer turned to me and asked, "Why do I have a Cb?" It was difficult in a short amount to time to convince the ringer that "Cb" was a real note, "Why can't they just use 'B natural?'", the ringer asked.

I looked through the scores that I own and have discovered that the amount of time that "Cb" is needed is about 1 per cent of the time. There are multiple uses for "C" and "C#", but not "Cb." Reasons for using any bell would be to fulfill one of two things, a melodic or a harmonic purpose. The bell used is either part of the melody or part of the harmony.

Melodically here is a "Cb". Sandra Winter opens her composition called "Genesis" (*Bechenhorst Press, Inc,* 2009) with this sequence. (Some notes have been omitted for clarity.) The composer wants measures 5-8 to sound like 1-4 but transposed up a third. The exactness of this transposition creates a "Cb" on the third downbeat of measure 5-7. (Does the ringer appreciate having a "Bb" and a "Cb" to play, clearly one with each hand?)



Harmonically a Cb Major chord was used by Betty Radford in "A Spirit of Joy" (*From the Top-*Music, 2017). This example contains measures 19-22. Again, the Cb Major chord sounds the same when written B, D# F#, but imagine how that would look for ringers. Also, this composition is in the key of Eb Major, a key with three flats. Flats are related to this key.



I have decided that this column will be my last submission on a regular basis. I am always open to discussing theory questions that you may have. You can continue to reach me at pinsonoj@gmail.com and I will get back to you either directly or through Clapper Chatter. (Sometimes we all have the same perplexity!) I love being with you and will continue to ring! *Ona Pinsonneault*, May 2020