

O Holy Night

Cantique de Noël

ADOLPHE ADAM, ARR. HUGH LEVEY



WIND QUINTET

SCORE & PARTS

O Holy Night (Cantique de Noël)

ADOLPHE ADAM

The 'Cantique de Noël' is a French Christmas Carol whose title translates as 'Christmas Song' or 'Christmas Hymn', but it is better known in the English speaking world as 'O Holy Night'. The original French words were written in 1843 by poet, lawyer and wine-merchant Placide Cappeau, although they were attributed to a Mary Cappeau in the 1852 edition. Adolphe Adam set the words to music in 1847 and it remains one of his best known works, alongside his ballet music for Giselle. The English words were written by the Unitarian Minister John Sullivan Dwight in 1855.

Other than telling the story of the Virgin birth and redemption for mankind, the English words bear little relationship to the original French. They are new lyrics rather than a translation. There are no "stars [that] are brightly shining" in the original French version which, instead, begins "Midnight, Christians, it is the solemn hour when God the man came down for us". The carol remains popular in both language versions.

This arrangement for wind quintet remains faithful to the original Cantique de Noël, with its simple charm and understated passion. The accompanying piano arpeggio figure has been amended to suit wind players but the rhythm and harmony remains exactly the same as the original. The only addition is a repeat of the final chorus (bars 27 to 30) which provides a more sustained climax to this instrumental version.

Duration: approximately 2 minutes 30 seconds, or 4 minutes 37 with the optional repeat (which also appeared in Adam's original).

PERFORMANCE NOTES

This published version is intended as an instrumental, but could accompany a soprano or tenor singing the vocal line. If you require this arrangement in a key more suited for general or lower voice singing, please contact hugh@woodwindly.com. The note in parentheses (o) at the beginning of the oboe is required to match the original French words but can be omitted for those more familiar with the English text.

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Lyrics - Placide Cappeau

Adolphe Adam (arr. by Hugh Levey)

Andante Maestoso

The image displays a musical score for the piece "O Holy Night" (Cantique de Noël) by Adolphe Adam, arranged by Hugh Levey. The tempo is marked "Andante Maestoso". The score is for woodwind instruments and includes a large "PREVIEW ONLY" watermark. The instruments listed are Flute, Oboe, Bb Clarinet, Horn in F, and Bassoon. The score is written in 4/8 time and features dynamic markings such as *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *p* (piano). The Flute part is mostly silent, while the Oboe, Bb Clarinet, Horn in F, and Bassoon parts have specific melodic lines. The Bassoon part includes a triplet of eighth notes. The score is divided into two systems, with a repeat sign at the beginning of the second system.

5

Fl.

Ob.

Bb Cl.

F Hn.

Bsn.

PREVIEW ONLY

7

Fl.

Ob.

Bb Cl.

F Hn.

Bsn.

mp

mp

9

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

F Hn.

Bsn.

11

Fl.

Ob.

B♭ Cl.

F Hn.

Bsn.

p

pp

pp

pp

13

Fl.

Ob.

Bb Cl.

F Hn.

Bsn.

PREVIEW ONLY

15

Fl.

Ob.

Bb Cl.

F Hn.

Bsn.

mp cresc.

mp cresc.

mp cresc.

mp cresc.

mp cresc.

mp cresc.