Method of Carillon Playing with "Contact-Technique"

Koen Van Assche

"Contact"-Address:
Koen Van Assche
Broekstraat 23
3271 Averbode, Belgium

E-mail: beiaardierkoen@hotmail.com

www.koenvanassche.be
Foreword

Having acquired some experience with playing the carillon, I wanted to bring together the resulting knowledge in a didactic method. The playing technique that is suggested can be referred as the "Contact-Technique", because of the endeavour to have the utmost possible contact with the keyboard.

In the first part of this book, I have tried to describe all facets of this playing technique in as much detail as possible. In the second part, you will find technical exercises (divided in three levels) and several études. In 2009, more études will be published.

I hope that the result will be a manual for the beginning carillon student or for the carillonneur who is striving to master the technique of carillon playing.

My sincere thanks and appreciation to my wife, Anna Maria Reverté, and to my friends Liesbeth Janssens and Geert D'hollander. They have offered numerous ideas in addition to presenting some études. Thanks as well to "Edition Pors" for permission to republish a few études by Leen 't Hart, and to Brian Swagger for the English translation.

I wish everyone great success and much pleasure in playing the carillon and with your study of this method!

Koen Van Assche
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. GENERAL PREPARATIONS ......................................................................................................................... 5

1.1. Height of the Bench - Position of the Arm ................................................................................................. 5
1.2. Placement of the Bench with Relation to the Console .............................................................................. 5
1.3. Position and Posture of the Body on the Bench ......................................................................................... 6
1.4. Position of the Hand ................................................................................................................................ 6

2. PREPARATION AND PLAYING OF MANUAL KEYS ..................................................................................... 7

2.1. Preparation of Manual Keys .................................................................................................................... 7
2.2. Playing with the Half-Closed Hand .......................................................................................................... 7
  2.2.1. Position of the Wrist and the Hand During the Preparation ............................................................. 7
  2.2.2. Playing Manual Keys ......................................................................................................................... 7
  2.2.3. Playing Manual Keys in Fast Passages ............................................................................................... 8

2.3. Playing with the Fingertips ..................................................................................................................... 9
2.4. Double Grips ......................................................................................................................................... 9
2.5. Techniques for Specific Carillons .......................................................................................................... 10
  2.5.1. Carillons with Poor and/or Heavy Mechanical Action ....................................................................... 10
  2.5.2. Very Light Carillons .......................................................................................................................... 10

3. PREPARATION AND PLAYING OF PEDAL KEYS .................................................................................... 11

3.1. Preparation of Pedal Keys ...................................................................................................................... 11
3.2. Playing Pedal Keys ................................................................................................................................ 11
3.3. DYNAMICS IN THE PLAYING OF PEDAL KEYS .................................................................................... 11

4. DYNAMICS IN THE PLAYING OF MANUAL KEYS ...................................................................................... 12

4.1. General Rule ......................................................................................................................................... 12
4.2. Dynamic Accents and Sforzandi ............................................................................................................ 13
  4.2.1. Dynamic Accent .............................................................................................................................. 13
  4.2.2. Sforzando ....................................................................................................................................... 14

5. ARTICULATION ........................................................................................................................................ 15

5.1. Accents .................................................................................................................................................. 15
  5.1.1. Dynamic Accent .............................................................................................................................. 15
  5.1.2. Agogic Accent .................................................................................................................................. 15
5.2. Rests and Commas ............................................................................................................................... 16
5.3. Pizzicato and Legato ............................................................................................................................ 16
  5.3.1. Pizzicato ......................................................................................................................................... 16
  5.3.2. Legato ............................................................................................................................................. 16
5.4. Slurs ..................................................................................................................................................... 17
5.5. Arpeggios .............................................................................................................................................. 17
5.6. ORNAMENTATION ........................................................................................................................................ 19

6. HANDLING ..................................................................................................................................................... 20

7. TREMOLO .......................................................................................................................................................... 22

7.1. GENERAL GUIDELINES, APPLICABLE TO ALL TYPES OF TREMOLO ...................................................... 22

  7.1.1. Beginning the Tremolo ........................................................................................................................ 22

  7.1.2. The Middle of the Tremolo .................................................................................................................. 23

  7.1.3. Ending the Tremolo ............................................................................................................................. 22

  7.1.4. Consecutive Tremolos ......................................................................................................................... 23

  7.1.5. General Observations ......................................................................................................................... 23

7.2. RHYTHMIC TREMOLO ............................................................................................................................... 24

7.3. FREE TREMOLO ........................................................................................................................................... 25

7.4. LEARNING TO PLAY TREMOLOS ............................................................................................................ 25

8. CONCLUSION ................................................................................................................................................ 25

PART 2: Technical exercises and Etudes
1. General Preparations

1.1. Height of the Bench – Position of the Arm

*Guidelines:*

Use these considerations to determine the height of the bench:
- Keep the back lengthened and straight.
- Rest the hand on a key without depressing it.
- The forearm must follow the same line as the key (it may be lower).

If the forearm is too high, the bench must be lowered.

*Observations:*

- If the bench is too high, it will not be possible to use the wrist movement that is described later in this method. Furthermore, it is essential that you maintain a relaxed posture at all times, without having the feeling that you are leaning forward.
- If the bench is too low, there will be too much tension in the thigh muscles.
- The guideline above assumes that the bench is adjusted to a relatively low position, and that as a result, the muscles of the foot need to make a small effort to keep the feet pointing upwards. The foot muscles are able to relax for a moment at the point when a pedal key is prepared and played. Make sure that the bench is placed far enough forward in order to partially compensate for this. (see 1.2)

1.2. Placement of the Bench with Relation to the Console

*Guidelines:*

- The bench stands close to the console.
- Tall people sit farther back. (Nearly half of the thigh is supported on the bench.)
- Short people sit more forward.

*Observation:*

- If the bench is placed too far back, you lose your balance easily and must rely on the console for support. This is to be avoided: **Do not use the pedalboard for support!**
- Many carillonneurs change the height of the bench. However, it is better to change the position of the bench while also sitting farther forward or back. Nonetheless, the guideline concerning the position of the arm, described in section 1.1, always takes priority.
1.3. Position and Posture of the Body on the Bench

The body is centered with relation to the middle of the pedalboard.

*Guidelines:*

- The A-flat in the middle of the pedal keyboard can serve as a point of reference for the middle of the body.

- The upper body is flexible and moves left and right such that the forearms—or at least the direction of the hands—stay perpendicular to the console.

In order to play the highest octaves of the manual keyboard, for example, a combination of arm movements and hip movement is necessary.

- In some cases it is beneficial to play with the back arched and leaning toward the keyboard, in soft passages for example. This position brings the elbow lower than the level of the line of the keys, resulting in increased control.

*Observations:*

- Playing the carillon does not require so much a heavy physical effort as free mobility of the upper body in combination with fast and, above all, supple movements of the arms and hands.

1.4. Position of the Hand

The keyboard is usually played with a half-closed hand, although it often makes sense to use a few fingertips as the point of contact with the key. (see 2.5.2)

*Guidelines:*

- The hand is half closed. In other words, the fingertips do not touch the palm.

- The thumbs are glued, as it were, to the middle part of the index finger (in the crease between the fingertip and the second knuckle), without actually tensing any muscles.

*Observation:*

- Thumbs that always point upwards impede the fast, forward motion of the hands that is necessary for the preparation of keys. (read further)

- In slow passages and while moving the hand from one key to the next key (for preparation), the hand is completely relaxed (so not all the time half closed). A little "ballet of the hands" can lead to more relaxation.
2. Preparation and Playing of Manual Keys

2.1. Preparation of Manual Keys

Guidelines:

- The hand that has just depressed a key completely should move immediately to the next key and depress it more than halfway, even if this note will not actually be played until the next measure.

- At least one hand always has at least one key already halfway depressed (or a bit less than halfway, depending on dynamics—read further).

  Mere contact with the key without pushing it down is not sufficient!

  There is an exception to this in fast passages. (See 2.2.3)

- Conscientious attention to this technique of note preparation is necessary when the music is being learned. It is useful in the application of this technique in the beginning to make appropriate notations in the score. (See the first études.)

Notation:

- vertical line above the note = right hand
- vertical line below the note = left hand

2.2. Playing with Half-Closed Hand

2.2.1. Position of the Wrist and the Hand During the Preparation

Guidelines:

- The top of the hand is turned somewhat inward at the moment of preparation, approximately one to two centimeters with respect to the bottom of the hand. (The right hand turns to the left; the left hand turns to the right.)

- At the same time, incline the top of the hand toward yourself by moving the wrist downward.

2.2.2. Playing Manual Keys

Guidelines:

- First of all, the key is prepared in as much as is possible. (See 2.1)

- The technique for playing a key is as follows:

  a) Turn the wrist (which is already turned inward, see 2.2.1) with a sharp, quick movement to the right (for the right hand), or to the left (for the left hand).

  b) At the same time, rotate the hand downward (pinky downwards), without moving the forearm forward or down.
While the hand moves downward, the wrist and the distal part of the forearm now move automatically upward.

- Only in certain instances (for example, when playing \textit{ff}) may additional force be exerted by the forearm. The focus is on the forward thrust of the turning hand.

\textbf{Observations}:

- \textbf{The muscles around the wrist must remain relaxed.}

- Always try to imagine that you have pressed into a rubber ball which has a bouncing effect.

\textit{Demonstration video of this movement: www.koenvanassche.be} – Publications

\section*{2.2.3. Playing Manual Keys in Fast Passages}

Naturally, in fast passages it is difficult to prepare all notes as described above, but it is still necessary to keep the wrist supple.

\textbf{Guidelines}:

- The key that will be played first—at the beginning of the fast passage—is prepared as much as possible.

- Technique:

  - Fast passages are also played \textit{with the wrist relaxed}!

  - The forearm makes quick, sharp movements in which the relaxed wrist automatically pushes the hand down (a flinging motion).

  - Only in fast passages are dynamic variations achieved by varying the force of the forearm.
2.3. Playing with the Fingertips

*Guidelines:*

- Use the index finger and the middle finger together as if they were glued to each other.

- The preparation is the same as in 2.1, but with the fingertips.

- While the key is depressed with the fingertips, the wrist remains relaxed, but naturally there is no vertical movement as in 2.2.2.

*Observations:*

- This technique is especially advised for repeated notes or in very slow *pianissimo* passages. It allows for the possibility of playing more softly and supply.

- From the very first stages of learning to play the carillon, it is essential to learn to combine both techniques in fluid alternation: playing with the half-closed hand *and* playing with the fingertips.

2.4. Double Grips

Obviously, it is possible to play more than two notes at a time by using double grips. A double grip is played with an open hand. To play four notes, each hand usually uses the thumb, and the index finger together with the middle finger.

In practice, the combination of one closed hand (one note) and one open hand (at least two notes) is used frequently.

*Guidelines:*

- When using double grips, a good preparation is indispensable.

- When there is no arpeggio (see 5.5), all notes must always sound together! This requires much practice and experience, certainly given the diversity of carillons and their particular characteristics.

*Notation:*

- vertical bracket to the left of the notes `[ ]` = open left hand

- vertical bracket to the right of the notes `]` = open right hand
2.5. Techniques for Specific Carillons

2.5.1. Carillons with Poor and/or Very Heavy Mechanical Action

Guidelines:

- Concentrate primarily on the preparation and the arm movement, less on the wrist movement.
- In this case, the wrist is typically less mobile.

2.5.2. Very Light Carillons

The fingertip technique is employed frequently on these instruments. See 2.3.
3. Preparation and Playing of Pedal Keys

3.1. Preparation of Pedal Keys

In contrast with the manual, pedal preparation is more limited.

*Guidelines:*

- Be sure that the feet always stay in contact with the pedals.
- In soft passages it is likewise prudent to depress the pedal key in advance.

*Comment:*

- If you apply this technique consistently and learn the music well, wearing shoes is unnecessary, even for heavy carillons. Playing the pedals without shoes gives more control and contact with the pedals, which of course is recommended.

3.2. Playing Pedal Keys

*Guidelines:*

- Push the ball of the foot down with enough force, light to heavy, to achieve the desired dynamic.
- If so desired, the foot is removed immediately to the next pedal note.

It is possible to leave your foot on a pedal, if for example no pedal is to be played for a long time, but *never completely depressed!*

3.3. Dynamics in the Playing of Pedal Keys

*Guidelines:*

- Vary the dynamic by moving the ball of the foot faster (and more forcefully) or more slowly (more gently).
- Only on heavy carillons could it be occasionally necessary to give force from above with the thigh.
4. Dynamics in the Playing of Manual Keys

4.1. General Rule

When this technique is well done, it is easy to vary the dynamics, from \textit{pp} and \textit{p}, through \textit{mf}; to \textit{f} and \textit{ff}.

The principles that must be used to achieve this, are – \textbf{in order of importance} – the following:

\begin{itemize}
  \item[a)] \textbf{Preparation}
    \begin{itemize}
      \item as deep as possible for \textit{pp} and \textit{p}
      \item not quite so deep for \textit{mf}
      \item slightly or not at all depressed for \textit{f}
      \item not depressed, or even a slightly raised hand for \textit{ff} (the single exception when an upward motion of the hand may be used)
    \end{itemize}
  \item[b)] \textbf{Wrist Movement} (as described in 2.2.2) and hand movement
    \begin{itemize}
      \item as slowly as possible for \textit{pp} and \textit{p}
      \item slowly for \textit{mf}
      \item fast for \textit{f}
      \item very quickly for \textit{ff}
    \end{itemize}
  \item[c)] \textbf{Forearm}
    \begin{itemize}
      \item absolutely no additional pressure from the forearm for \textit{pp}, \textit{p}, and \textit{mf}
      \item additional pressure with the forearm for \textit{f}
      \item forceful pressure with the forearm for \textit{ff}
    \end{itemize}
\end{itemize}
Suggestions:

- Use dynamics appropriate to the carillon being played. For example, when playing a light carillon in a completely open tower, make \(mf\) your loudest dynamic level, or a maximum of \(f\) for a heavy carillon in a low tower.

- A striking effect (\(ff\) or \(sfz\) for example) is part of the complete range of dynamic possibilities in carillon playing. Use it only in combination with other dynamic effects.

- Always keep these two thoughts in mind:
  
  - Even the most beautiful of carillons sounds unpleasant when played too loud (with the exception of effects of short duration).
  
  - The distinct use of a wide dynamic range is one of the fundamental ways of achieving an effective interpretation. When playing a carillon in a high and/or closed tower, it is essential to exaggerate both the phrasing and the dynamics.

Guideline for carillons with poor action:

- Dynamic variation is achieved by varying the pressure from the forearm.

4.2. Dynamic Accents and Sforzandi

4.2.1. Dynamic Accent

Guidelines:

- Use the principles described in section 4.1 to play a dynamic accent louder (\(mf\), \(f\), or \(ff\), depending on the desired result)

- Use the principles described in section 4.1 to play the other notes softer.

Observation regarding light carillons, or carillons in an open and/or low tower:

- Play the dynamic accents with less force, giving more attention to playing the unaccented notes softer.
4.2.2. Sforzando

Guidelines:

- Follow the same principle as with accented notes.

- The wrist motion is quite sharp, and the forearm exerts considerable additional force.

- Use a strong “bouncing ball effect” (see 2.2.2) in order to minimize the amount of time that the clapper stays in contact with the bell.

With this technique, the highest overtones of the bell are accentuated, resulting in a brighter tone.
5. Articulation

The carillon is an instrument which in most cases is placed in a tower where the sound is not always transmitted immediately and directly to the audience.

Therefore it is often necessary for the carillonneur to exaggerate the articulation!

5.1. Accents

An accent is emphasis that you put on a note or a chord by means of a short lengthening (agogic accent) or by means of amplification (dynamic accent) of the desired note or chord, usually on certain beats of the measure.

Depending on the style of music, the two types of accents can be used individually or together.

Accents are necessary in order to give a clear rendition of the music, given the long resonance of the bells. Furthermore, in fast passages they are the basis (and support) that you can incorporate in order to make all notes sound evenly.

5.1.1. Dynamic Accent

Use the technique described in section 4.2.1.

*Notation:* >

5.1.2. Agogic Accent

*Notation:* –

*Technique:*

- The note in question is lengthened somewhat in time.

  To avoid disrupting the general tempo, the succeeding notes must be played in a modified (faster) tempo, until the next measure for example.

*Observations:*

- With an agogic accent you can play into, literally and figuratively, the resonance of the bell. The interruption of the next note is less abrupt, and the accented note is therefore more distinct.

- Be discerning in your use of agogic accents, knowing that they are not equally appropriate to all musical styles.
5.2. Rests and Commas

*Guidelines:*

- Be certain to respect all the rests notated in the score.
- If the musical style permits, it is desirable to articulate the end of a phrase with a comma, or to make a rest a bit longer.
- Take a real breath yourself.
- Emphasize a comma not only by pausing briefly, but also by making a small difference between the dynamics of the music before and after the comma.

5.3. Pizzicato and Legato

You can influence the duration of the resonance of a bell, admittedly in limited measure, by the wrist movement (slow or fast). This in combination with an interpretation of the context, you can make a difference between pizzicato and legato.

5.3.1. Pizzicato

*Guidelines:*

- Preparation: dependent on the desired volume
- Wrist Movement: very sharp
- Forearm: no force from the forearm, otherwise you'll get an accent
- Minimize the contact time by letting the arm bounce back up, the “bouncing ball effect.”
- Play the notes before and after the pizzicato especially legato (see next section).

5.3.2. Legato

*Guidelines:*

- Preparation: dependent on the desired volume
- Wrist Movement: as slow as possible
- Forearm: Use the forearm to obtain the desired dynamic, in contrast to the general guideline.
- To the extent that it fits the type of music: lengthen the note that is to be played legato, as in an agogic accent.
Observations:

- The above pertains to one note that expressly must be played legato. In normal carillon playing, everything will sound legato with the exception of pizzicato notes.

- The difference between normal carillon playing and intentional legato playing is the wrist movement, which in the latter must be as slow as possible, and which in this sense temporarily does not have the function as described under Dynamics in section 4.1. In this case, obtaining the desired dynamic is dependent on the force of the forearm.

5.4. Slurs

Guidelines:

- When the musical style permits: make a short break (comma) before and/or after the slur.

- Make a discernible difference in the dynamics between the beginning, the middle, and the end of the slur. For example, depending on the style of music, this could go from $p$ to $mf$ and then back to $p$.

- All notes under the slur are played expressly legato. (See 5.3.2)

5.5. Arpeggio

An arpeggio (broken chord) can be played in several ways:

a) Note by note (always with closed hands) without crossing the hands,

Example: $c^1$ (left) - $g^1$ (right) - $e^1$ (left) - $c^2$ (right)

Notation: broken vertical line

b) Note by note (always with closed hands) and crossing the hands

Example: $c^1$ (left) - $e^1$ (right) - $g^1$ (left) - $c^2$ (right)

Notation: broken vertical line, with an arrow on top
c) Using a double grip (see 2.4): one or two notes with the left hand open, and one or two notes with the right hand open

Notation: squiggly vertical line

Guidelines:

- Note by Note Arpeggio:
  - Clearly accentuate the final note of the arpeggio, taking special care to play the preceding notes softer!
  - With large broken chords (with a two-octave range, for example): find a good handling with which you play the penultimate note with a different hand than the last note (the accented note).
  - With large broken chords, played on a carillon in a high, closed tower: consider placing a small, intermediate accent on an important note of the chord.

- Double Grip Arpeggio:
  - This is actually the most difficult arpeggio to perform, but it almost always gives the most beautiful result. Depending on the notes in the chord (in the event of a combination of diatonic and chromatic notes, for example) it is better to play the arpeggio note by note, especially when it seems difficult to get the result to sound even.
  - A good and deep preparation is essential for a good execution of an arpeggio using a double grip.

General Observations:

- The notes of the arpeggio must always sound perfectly even (just like four sixteenth notes in a row). This requires extensive practice and experience, especially on carillons with poor action.
- "Look before you leap!" Poorly executed arpeggios are one of the principal causes of disagreeable carillon playing.
5.6. Ornamentation

Refer to relevant literature for the performance practice of common ornaments.

When executing ornaments on the carillon, handling is very important, and it is necessary to give attention to dynamic contrasts.

Examples:

a) Grace Note, notated by a small note with a cross-stroke, played before the beat:
   - Play the grace note as soft as possible, and if possible, not with the same hand that plays the main note (pay attention to the preparation).
   - Play the main note (i.e., the note on the beat) with a dynamic accent

b) Appoggiatura, notated by a small note without a cross-stroke, played on the beat, taking half the value of the following note(s) (depending on the style):
   - dynamic accent on the appoggiatura, and the main note softer
   - if there are multiple notes in the appoggiatura: dynamic accent on the first ornamental note, with a very clear agogic accent in an exaggerated diminuendo before the remaining notes

c) Trills:
   - in most cases: begin the trill with a clear dynamic accent
   - for long trills: it is possible to incorporate a crescendo and/or decrescendo in the course of the trill (depending on the musical style)
6. Handling

It is not possible to give a complete technical description of handling. In practice, each score must be studied individually in order to find the handling that suits it the best. Choices for handling are often influenced by the tempo.

Nonetheless, you can take the following guidelines into consideration:

a) Alternate hands as much as possible.
   - This makes it possible to prepare notes.
   - If it seems that the hands are crossing too much, consider playing a few notes with the same hand. Try to avoid this when an accented note is involved. (see below)

b) Accented notes, and the passages before and after an accented note
   - Find the accented notes in the score, and make sure that you play the preceding note with a different hand than the accented note itself, especially in fast passages.
   - Logically speaking, it is usually the left hand that plays the preceding note, and the right hand that plays the accented note, when the accented note is a high note (the right side of the keyboard), and the opposite for low notes.
   - Once the accented notes have been found, and the correct handling determined for the accented note and the preceding note, then you can figure out the rest of the score, the passages before and after the accented notes, taking into account the practice of alternating hands as much as possible.

Observations:

- This guideline is of the utmost importance for playing the preceding note softer in comparison to the accented note.
- The note that follows the accented note, when it seems that there is no alternative, can be played with the same hand, provided that there is a small agogic accent (in a passage that begins with an accented note, for example) in order to be sure that there is a difference in dynamics between the two notes.
Notation:

- vertical line above the note = right hand
- vertical line below the note = left hand

- horizontal bracket above the notes = two or more consecutive notes with the right hand
- horizontal bracket below the notes = two or more consecutive notes with the left hand

- double grip: vertical bracket to the left of the notes = open left hand
- double grip: vertical bracket to the right of the notes = open right hand
7. Tremolo

Tremolo, or tremolando, is the technique in which two or more notes are rapidly and continuously reiterated (repeated), in alternation, in order to lengthen the resonance of these bells.

There are three types of tremolo:

- rhythmic tremolo in two (comparable to playing a passage in eighths, sixteenths, or thirty-seconds, depending on the tempo)

- rhythmic tremolo in three (comparable to playing a passage in triplets or sextuplets, depending on the tempo)

- free tremolo

Determining which tremolo to use depends on the style of music and the musical context. Most tremolos begin rhythmically, eventually turning into free tremolos.

7.1. General Guidelines, Applicable to All Types of Tremolo

7.1.1. Beginning the Tremolo

a) If the beginning of the tremolo does not need to be particularly soft:

- Begin with both hands at the same time, then the right hand always plays next, and then alternating left and right.

- Articulate the first notes with a clear accent (both dynamic and agogic).

b) If the beginning of the tremolo must be soft:

- Begin with the left hand.

- Articulate the first note clearly with an agogic accent (obviously, without a dynamic accent), and begin as softly as possible.

7.1.2. The Middle of the Tremolo

- This must sound discernibly softer. Keep the hands very low.

- For rhythmic tremolo: intermediate accents
  For free tremolo: no accents

- Dynamic variation during the middle part of the tremolo (from p to f for example) is achieved with pressure from the forearm. The wrist muscles always remain relaxed.
7.1.3. The End of the Tremolo

a) If the end of the tremolo needs to be loud:
   - When possible: end with both hands together, and play a dynamic accent on the final note (or notes).
   - If the style of music permits, you can emphasize the end of the tremolo by playing an (extended or not) arpeggio of the chord.

b) If the end of the tremolo needs to be soft:
   - Always end with the right hand, or – for advanced players – play a soft arpeggio with an open double grip.
   - Finish with a morendo.

7.1.4. Consecutive Tremolos

- If accent marks are not indicated on the score for each tremolo: always begin the next tremolo with the left hand. The left hand always plays the heaviest bell, making the transition to the next tremolo (usually another chord) very clear.

- If the score does show accent marks for each tremolo: when possible, begin with both hands together, and articulate with a clear dynamic accent.

- Even if the score has no accent marks, make a light dynamic accent at the beginning of each new tremolo, possibly in combination with an agogic accent, for example, in Romantic music.

7.1.5. General Observations

- Wrist movement: in contrast to the general rule, tremolos are played with the wrist movement as described in section 2.2.3. This is due to the speed of the tremolo.

- Tremolos that are played unevenly or with no distinct dynamic variation sound extremely disagreeable.

  A good effect, for example, with a long tremolo beginning forte, is:
  - a $s$ in the beginning (both hands together and with an agogic accent)
  - subito piano following the first chord
  - then a light crescendo
  - then a diminuendo and ending with a morendo

- The speed of the tremolo is determined by the musical style as well as by the weight of the carillon. Tremolos are played more slowly on heavy carillons (or carillons with stiff action) than on light carillons.
7.2. **Rhythmic Tremolo**

In rhythmic tremolos, intermediate dynamic accents are made during the tremolando.

**Technique:**

- You can make dynamic accents with the same hand each time, for example on every fourth eighth note, or every fourth sixteenth note, etc. Since such an accent is made after an even number of beats, it is called a tremolo in two.

- By alternating hands for the intermediate accents, you get a tremolo in three. In specific musical contexts this can have a striking effect.

- The tempo of a rhythmic tremolo always stays the same, hence, don’t speed up.

**Examples:**

a) Rhythmic tremolo in two:

"Recuerdos de la Alhambra", Francisco Tarrega (arr Brian Swager)
b) Rhythmic tremolo in three:

"Menuet en Trio voor beiaard", Staf Nees

with very light dynamic accents

7.3. Free Tremolo

This is the tremolo without intermediate dynamic accents. This tremolo can be used for music with rubato interpretation.

Technique:

- Begin the tremolo as if it were a rhythmic tremolo, but without dynamic accents in between.

- In the course of the tremolo, let the speed increase (in the middle of the tremolo, for example) or slow down (at the end of the tremolo, for example).

- Be certain that the result always sounds perfectly even!

7.4. Learning to Play Tremolos

In the early stages of learning to play the carillon, it is imperative that rhythmic tremolos are played in all instances.

This is the only way to guarantee that you will develop the technique to play free tremolos evenly. Tremolo practice begins with very slow tremolos. In the course of time, control is developed, and slow tremolos will evolve into faster tremolos.

See the following exercises:
A - 6, 7, 8
B - 1, 2, 5
C - 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
8. Conclusion

It is obvious that the study of a didactic method for learning to play any instrument can only lead to a good result if you completely immerse yourself in the student role and if the exercises and musical studies are pursued with the requisite discipline and dedication.

The fundamental principles of this method are the proper preparation of manual keys and the correct wrist movement. It is essential to be completely focused on these from the very beginning, applying them to simple exercises.

It is also important for experienced carillonneurs to continue practicing various technical exercises, always seeking to be more at one with (i.e. connected to, in contact with) the keyboard.
PART 2 : Technical Exercises and Etudes

Introduction

Technical Exercises

The technical exercises are intended both for beginners as well as for advanced players and are organized in three levels:
- A: Basic
- B: Intermediate
- C: Advanced

It is very important that these exercises are practiced regularly and amount to approximately one-third of each practice session.

It is not possible to advance quickly to the next level. Naturally, much is dependent on your practice habits, but a period of at least one year of study is necessary before being able to advance to the next level.

Furthermore, it is essential to practice each exercise in a meticulous manner, with careful attention to all of the details that are explained in the first part of this method. Pay close attention to the performance, strive for perfection, and make corrections where necessary.

Etudes

In contrast to the technical exercises, the études are actually only intended for the Basic level and for the beginning of the Intermediate level. For other études, please refer to the existing carillon literature.

Video Demonstrations

Video demonstrations are available for selected exercises from the series. They can be seen via www.koenvanassche.be in the "Publications" section.

On the same website, in the "Music and Video" section, you can find several videos which show the application of the playing technique from this method.
Technological Exercises – Level A – Basic

A – 1

To study the preparation:
Perform as follows for a while. Afterwards, leave the doubled notes, but act as if you are going to play them.

Play this exercise also in G, D, A, F, B♭, and E♭ (transpose upwards)
Example: G

Video: www.koenvanassche.be - Publications

A – 2

Play this exercise also in G, D, A, F, B♭, and E♭ (transpose upwards)
Example: F
A – 3

Play this exercise also in G, D, A, F, Bes and Es (transpose upwards)
Example: Es

A - 4

Play this exercise also in G, D, A, E, F, Bes, Es and As (transpose upwards)
Example: E

Perform with a good preparation of the keys, in the second part!

video: www.koenvanassche.be - Publications

A - 5

Play this exercise also beginning with the other natural tones.
Play this exercise also in G, D, A, F, Bes and Es (transpose upwards)

This exercise serves not only to develop the sense of muscular movement between both hands, but it is also the basic study voor the tremolo.

video: [www.koenvanassche.be](http://www.koenvanassche.be) - Publications
**TECHNICAL EXERCISES – Level B – Intermediate**

*Keep on studying A – 4 and A – 5, in faster tempo*

**B – 1**

Play this exercise also in G, D, A, F, Bes and Es (transpose upwards)

**B – 2**

Play this exercise also in G, D, A, F, Bes and Es (transpose upwards)
Play this exercise also in G, D, A, F, Bes and Es (transpose upwards)
Example: Es

Play this exercise also in Bes, A and G (transpose downwards)
Example: Bes
B – 5

Play this exercise also in G, D, A, F, Bb, and E (transpose upwards)
Example: A
TECHNICAL EXERCISES – Level C - Advanced

Keep on studying A – 4, A – 5, B – 3 and B – 4, in faster tempo

C – 1

C – 2

C – 3
**Note**

In your carrier as carillonneur, keep on studying the following studies, in faster tempo:

A – 4 en A - 5  
B – 3 en B – 4  
C – 1, C – 2, C – 9 en C – 10  
All the tremolo-studies: ad libitum
ETUDES (Basic level and beginning of intermediate level)

Oef 1

Perform with a good preparation of the keys (see also A – 1)

video: www.koenvanassche.be - Publications

Oef 2

Perform with a good preparation of the keys (see also A – 1)
Oef 3

Perform with a good preparation of the keys (see also A – 1)

Oef 4

Perform with a good preparation of the keys (see also A – 1)

Oef 5

video: www.koenvanassche.be - Publications
Oef 14

Playing with the fingertips (see 2.3.). Use this method ad libitum in other études.

Oef 15

Oef 16
Oef 17

Make sure you perform this etude with good preparations of the keys. Play first in slow tempo, and afterwards a little bit faster.

Oef 18

video: www.koenvanassche.be - Publications

Oef 19

Oef 20
Oef 24 – "Ode to Joy", Ludwig van Beethoven

LJ
Oef 25

Da Capo al Fine
Oef 26 – "Ah, vous dirai-je, maman" (W.A. Mozart): Theme with variations

Theme

Variation 1

Variation 2

Variation 3
Variation 4

Oef 27 – Theme with variations, Jef Denyn

Theme

Variation 1
Variation 2
The first études with pedal

Oef 28

Oef 29
Oef 37
Oef 38 – "Apunt Chopinià 1"
Oef 40 – "L'heru Riera" (tradicional catalana)
Oef 41 – 1r Xotis del “Ball de Gitanes de Rubí” (tradicional català)
Oef 42 - "Ball dels gegants" (tradicional catalá)
Oef 43 – "El Choclo", A.G. Villoldo
Oef 44 – "Davant la verge, Sardana", Enric Morera
Oef 45 – "El graller (Pasdoble)“, Feliu Monné
Oef 46 – "Peggy Sue Rock", Buddy Holly

AM
Oef 47 – Film Amélie: "La dispute", Yann Tiersen
Oef 48 – Film Amélie: "La valse", Yann Tiersen

\[\text{KVA}\]
OEF 49 - DUO - Film Amélie - “Sur le fil”, Yann Tiersen
Oef 50 – DUO – Film Amélie: "Comptine d’un autre été: l’après-midi", Yann Tiersen

KVA

Method of Carillon Playing

www.koenvanassche.be

Version 19/02/2008
AM = Anna Maria Reverté Casas
GD = Geert D'hollander
LtH = Leen 't Hart
LJ = Liesbeth Janssens
SN = Staf Nees
blanco of KVA = Koen Van Assche