

# HARP 1

## **The Guinness 500**

A Bebop Blues for 500 Harps

by Deborah Henson-Conant

in honor of the World Harp Congress

Amsterdam - Summer 2008

This document includes the part plus essential info like lever setting and basic techniques and also FAQs and other helpful info.

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**If you have questions not answered in the FAQs**, check the student page as above. There you'll find the most updated version of this document, along with answers to questions, and other materials (like video or audio files). If you don't find the answer to your question there, email me at [info@HipHarp.com](mailto:info@HipHarp.com). I'll try to reply as soon as I can and I'll try to post the answers on my site as well.

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# "THE GUINNESS 500" - Techniques & Glossary

A Bebop Blues in F for 500 Harps - Premiere at the World Harp Congress in Amsterdam - Summer 2008  
Deborah Henson-Conant • [www.HipHarp.com](http://www.HipHarp.com)

"The Guinness 500" is swing music -- which is different from classical music, although it uses some of the same techniques. I'll explain some of the techniques here, and I'll put others on my website, where I'll also try to put some videos to help you see how to play this piece. The first two pages of this document have the most important information - and the rest is helpful, but not essential. If you have questions, you can email me at [info@HipHarp.com](mailto:info@HipHarp.com). I'll try to email you back as soon as I can, and I'll try to post the answers at my website. Before you email me, see if I've already posted the answer online at my "Student" Page.

Go to [www.HipHarp.com](http://www.HipHarp.com) > Galleries > Student Page

## ESSENTIAL TECHNIQUES

### HOW TO PLAY THE "SWING FEEL"

When music like this is marked to be played in "Swing Feel" (see measure 10), you need to "swing" the eighth notes so the music sounds like it's written in 12/8. Also, the second note of each eighth note pair is also generally a little lighter. So don't play each note with exactly the same evenness of classical music -- this music bounces, or swings.

The image shows two examples of musical notation for the "Swing Feel" technique. The first example consists of two measures. The first measure is labeled "LOOKS LIKE:" and shows a melody in 4/4 time with eighth notes. Below it, "SOUNDS LIKE:" shows the same melody in 12/8 time, with eighth notes grouped in pairs. The second measure is also labeled "LOOKS LIKE:" and shows a melody with eighth notes and triplets. Below it, "SOUNDS LIKE:" shows the same melody in 12/8 time. Below each "LOOKS LIKE:" and "SOUNDS LIKE:" pair is an "OR:" label followed by a single line of notation. The second example consists of three measures. The first measure is labeled "LOOKS LIKE:" and shows a melody in 4/4 time with eighth notes. Below it, "SOUNDS LIKE:" shows the same melody in 12/8 time. The second measure is labeled "SOUNDS LIKE:" and shows a melody in 12/8 time. The third measure is labeled "OR:" and shows a melody in 12/8 time.

### HOW TO PLAY "BISBIGLIANDO" and "TREMOLLO"

In Italian, "Bisbigliando" means "whispering" and "tremolo" means "trembling". They are both harp effects. *Bisbigliando* is a type of *tremolo* used for chords. To play both *bisbigliando* and *tremolo*, play very lightly and always use two hands. If it's a single note, just repeat that note, using two hands. The rhythm doesn't need to be exact as written below - these are musical "effects," so they just need to sound like whispering.

The image shows four examples of musical notation for "Bisbigliando" and "Tremolo" techniques. Each example consists of two measures. The first measure is labeled "LOOKS LIKE:" and shows a chord or single note. Below it, "SOUNDS LIKE:" shows a rapid, light tremolo effect. The second measure is labeled "OR:" and shows a single line of notation. The four examples show different chords and single notes: a Bb chord, a Bb7 chord, a Bb7b9 chord, and a Bb7 chord.

## LEVERS (for Eb Harp)

To get some of the bluesy chords, we need to set the levers one way in the upper part of the harp and another way in the lower part. ABOVE MIDDLE C, raise all G's and A's (on Eb Harps). Below middle C leave all levers in the flat position except for the low A:

## ETTOUFFEZ and P.D.L.T. (pres de la table) and SIMILE

Étouffez is a baroque technique, but it's great for Blues basslines. When you see a little "+" under the note, that means to play the note "étouffez" or slightly damped. To do this, play all notes with your **thumb only**, so that each string is damped a little bit as you play the next string.

In this piece, also try to play all étouffez passages *pres de la table* (very low down on the string, near the soundboard). When you see the word "simile," it means to keep playing "similarly," so in this case, it means keep playing *étouffez* and *pres de la table* even though the little crosses aren't under all the notes.

## PLAY ALL CHORDS UNBROKEN (DRY)

In this style it's important to play all chords very dry (unbroken), and often nearer the soundboard than in classical music.

ALL chords in "The Guinness 500" are unbroken including these examples:

## CUE NOTES

To help you know what everyone else is doing, there are "cue notes" in your part. They're much smaller than the notes you play, usually they have a description below or above them, like "(Cue: Harps 2)" -- that tells you that Harps 2 will be playing that line at that place. Cue notes are very helpful if you have to come in after a measure or two of rest -- it helps you know what to listen for.

Don't play these cue notes - someone else is playing them. Only play the big notes. Note in measure 104 - 116 all the small notes are cue notes -- they show you what the soloist is playing. Only play the large notes.

## FINGERINGS

There are many ways to finger the melody. I'll put some of my favorite fingerings on my website.

# EXAMPLES

These are pictures of some of the markings and other things you'll see in the music. The next couple of pages explain what they are

**D** **CHORUS 1**

Rehearsal Letter

Section Marker, Chorus

measure number

50

dynamic marking

*mp*

*étouffez - p.d.t.*

*simile*

*étouffez*

*pres de la table*

*simile*

Style indication - this one tells you to "swing" the eighth notes (see "essential techniques")

**A** **Swing Feel** ♩ = 128 ... 144

Tempo marking

cue notes - notice how much smaller they are than the regular notes

(Cue: Harp 2)

cue description

multimeasure rest (the big number tells you to rest for 2 measures, instead of 1)

clef change

*bisbigliando*

tremolo or bisbigliando symbol

"(Solo Harp Fill)" is a cue that tells you the solo harp will play a short "fill" while you hold the note

Fermatta (hold this note until the conductor tells you to go on)

(Solo Harp Fill)

Cue: "One! Two!"

"One! Two! Three! Four!"

116

cue notes

(Cue: Harp 4 begins)

(Cue: Harp 3 enters)

(Cue: Harp 2 enters)

*p* → *mf*

dynamic markings (this one says start soft and go to medium loud)

"measure repeat marks" - they tell you to play exactly the same thing as you played in the previous measure

**G** **CHORUS 4**

86

*mf*

RH & LH tells you which hand to play with. This is a fast single line to play "hand-over-hand" so you can play faster and more evenly

RH 2

LH

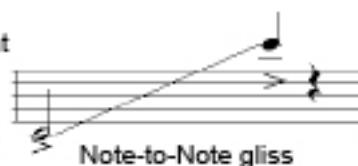
RH 3

LH

LH

the "measure repeat" marks tell you to play the same notes from this measure this measure and this measure

**GLISSES** -- I wrote both note-to-note glisses and "off-the-top" glisses in this piece, but if the music is too fast for you to get the note-to-note glisses perfectly, it's OK to play approximate glisses (just gliss from approximately where the gliss starts to approximately where it ends. If it begins on an "x" note, that means "the gliss starts approximately here." If there is no ending note for the gliss, then it means either "gliss off the top of the harp" or "gliss up, but it doesn't matter how far." In this piece, some glisses are marked with straight lines and some are marked with wavy lines. There's no difference in how they should sound.



Off-the-top glisses with approximate start points

## GLOSSARY

**BEBOP:** Bebop" is a style of "Swing" playing that's upbeat and bouncy. This piece has a kind of bebop rhythm and a Blues form (see Blues below)

**BISBIGLIANO:** (see example in "essential techniques")

**BLUES:** Blues in this tune refers to the 12-bar form. Notice that the "First Head" "Second Head," and Choruses 1,2 & 3 are each 12 bars long. They all use the "12-Bar Blues" form.

**CHORUS:** Each section marked "chorus" is a kind of improvisation on the 12-bar structure of the head. It doesn't mean that anyone will be singing. (See m. 50, 62, 74 & 86)

**CUES & CUE NOTES** - (see example on previous page)

**DOTS & ACCENTS:** When a note has a dot above or below the notehead, that means to play it "staccato" - so try to damp it right away by putting your fingers right back on the string. When a note is accented, play it louder. When it has BOTH an accent and a dot, do both.

**FERMATAS:** You need to keep playing the music in that measure until the conductor cuts you off -- that might be a long time or a short time, so you need to pay attention.

**ETTOUFFEZ:** (see essential techniques)

**HARP FILL:** (see meas. 121) -- This is like a mini-cadenza for the solo harp, similar to a "drum fill" at the end of a phrase or a section.

**HEAD and OUT-HEAD:** (see measures 26, 38 & 124) The "Head" is the basic melody of the piece. It's like "Exposition" in a classical piece. The "Out-Head" is the same melody, but at the end of the piece. It's like the "Recapitulation" in a classical piece.

**LH / RH:** These indicate to play with either the Left Hand or Right Hand. Many of these "riffs" or little jazz melodies are very easy to play once you know the fingering. When the fingering makes a big difference, I wrote it in the scores and parts.

**LETTERS (TINY):** (see m. 76 in Harp 4 or m. 16 in Harp 1)- This is just a helpful reminder of what the note is for notes very high up above the staff

**MEASURE REPEAT SYMBOL:** (See example in previous page) It means to repeat exactly what was written in the preceding measure.

**MULTI-MEASURE RESTS:** (see m. 68 Harp 1, m. 63 Harp 2, m. 62 Harp 3, m. 74 & 26 Harp 4) In ensemble parts you'll often see "Multi-measure rests" - it tells you that you rest for more than one measure. The big number tells you how many measures to rest for. If you need to mark those measures in your music with a pencil so they're easier to count, that's perfectly fine. Professional orchestra musicians do that all the time.

**NUMBERS IN PARENTHESES ABOVE THE STAFF:** If you need to repeat a measure many times, the arranger will often put the number of repeats above the staff you know which repeat you are currently playing.

**OFF THE TOP (GLISS OFF THE TOP):** This means to gliss all the way to the top of the harp instead of glissing from one note to another. You don't have to be careful about this -- just gliss up to approximately the top -- it's a more free type of gliss. If a gliss doesn't have an ending note, you can assume it's a freeform or off-the-top gliss

**OPEN SOLO HARP CADENZA:** This means that the Solo Harp will play a cadenza for as long as she wants. She's probably be improvising, so each time she plays it will be different. The word "open" means that the length of the solo is open (undetermined).

**PRES DE LA TABLE:** (also see "essential techniques") means to play very low down on the string, as close to the soundboard as you can.

**REHEARSAL LETTERS:** (see m. 10, 26, 38, etc.) These big letters in boxes allow the conductor, or players to easily suggest places to start rehearsing. They're usually placed at the beginning of a new section, or at places where the composer or arranger thinks it's likely people will need them. Since most rehearsals start and stop, these letters make it easier for everyone to find their place and start together.

**SWING FEEL:** (See m. 10) Swing Feel is a "feeling" of bounce or swing. For notation, it means that when you see two eighth notes together, the first eighth is about twice as long as the 2nd eighth. It ends up sounding kind of like a Scottish or Irish jig. (See the "essential techniques" page for how to play the swing rhythm.)

**SIMILE:** means "keep doing the same kind of thing you were just doing." Many times in this piece you'll see "étouffez - p.d.l.t." with crosses under the notes, and then you'll see "simile." The simile means "keep playing étouffez and pres de la table" (usually to the end of the chorus) even though the crosses aren't under these notes."

## **Q & A**

**WHY DO I ONLY HAVE ONE LINE? SINGLE - LINE PARTS:** Please note that many of these are "single-line parts" -- because we're playing outdoors, and page turns will be very difficult, I made the parts to avoid any page turns while you're playing. **WATCH OUT** for where the clef changes (from Treble Clef to Bass Clef or back)! Circle the clef in pencil so you make sure to play in the correct part of the harp!

**WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE THE NOTES ON MY HARP?** If you don't have the notes on your harp (if it's too high or too low), then play it in a different octave.

**CAN'T PLAY ALL THE NOTES?** Try playing just the strong beats, or just the downbeats. Bebop and blues is fun even if you can't play all the notes -- the fun is the rhythm and playing with everyone else.

## **IF YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS:**

Check the student page on my website. Go to: [www.HipHarp.com](http://www.HipHarp.com) > Galleries > Student Page

There you'll find the most updated version of this document, along with answers to questions, and other materials (like video or audio files). If you don't find the answer to your question there, email me at [info@HipHarp.com](mailto:info@HipHarp.com). I'll try to reply as soon as I can and I'll try to post the answers on my site as well.

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BLANK PAGE - YOU CAN IT FOR YOU OWN NOTES

# Harp 1

# "The Guinness 500" A Bebop Blues in F for 500 Harps

Deborah Henson-Conant

For 4-Harp Ensemble (Lever Harp in Eb or Ab - or Pedal Harps) & Solo Electric Lever Harp

Guinness500WHC\_Hrp1 Musiolab  
Save date: 3/31/08

Special Thanks to CAMAC Harps, Linda Wood Rollo, Mary Kay Waddington & Sabine Meijers

If you have questions, email them to: info@HipHarp.com - More info available at www.HipHarp.com - Updated Mar. 1, 2008

Freely (change chord on soloist's cue)

*bisbigliando*

## A Swing Feel ♩ = 126 ... 144

(Cue: Solo Harp) (Cue: Harps 2 enter) (Harps 3 & 4 enter)

*mf* *f* (Cue: Solo Harp plays something like this:)

Cue: "One! Two!  
Three! Four!"

## B FIRST HEAD

*mf*

*mp* *mf*

## C SECOND HEAD

*mf*

*mp* *mf*



**D CHORUS 1**

50 *mp* *étouffez - p.d.l.t.* *simile*

56 *mf*

**E CHORUS 2**

62 (Cue: Harps 2) *f* (Cue: Harps 2)

70 *étouffez - p.d.l.t.* *simile*

**F CHORUS 3**

74 *mp*

80 *étouffez - p.d.l.t.* *simile*

**G CHORUS 4**

86 *ff*

90

94 DHC - if this sounds good -- add to score & reprint score

(Off the top is OK)

(Off the top)

**H OPEN SOLO  
HARP CADENZA**

99

**I** TRANSITION

104 (Cue: Solo Harp) *mp*

110

116 **J** (Solo Harp Fill) Cue: "One! Two!" "One! Two!" "Three! Four!"

(Cue: Harp 4 begins) (Cue: Harp 3 enters) (Cue: Harp 2 enters) *p*  $\triangleleft$  *mf*

**K** OUT-HEAD

124 *mf*

128

132 *mp*  $\longleftarrow$  *mf*

136 *mp*  $\longleftarrow$  *mf*

140 *mp*  $\longleftarrow$  *mf* *f* *bisbigliando* *mp*  $\triangleleft$  **FINE**