Hard Times

based on a song by Stephen Foster

for Javanese gamelan
with mandocello and chorus

Jody Diamond
1985

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song by Stephen Foster, setting and parts for gamelan by Jody Diamond (1985)

Balungan

Verse

··13 2312 1365 3231

2123 2312 1365 323①

Chorus

··35 6536 1151 5653

5213 2312 1365 323①

Reduced Balungan for Irama II

Verse

···3 ·3·2 ·6·5 ·2·1

·2·3 ·3·2 ·6·5 ·2·①

Chorus

·3·5 ·3·6 ·3·1 ·6·3

·2·1 ·3·2 ·6·5 ·2·①

Treatment and sequence

Hard Times begins with the song and the mandocello (or other instrument) and gradually enfolds the gamelan around them, eventually giving the song completely over to the gamelan. The performance of *Hard Times* consists of several repetitions of the entire piece, with the treatment and instrumentation varying in some way each time. The first gongan (gong phrase or first two lines of balungan) is referred to as the "verse" and the second gongan is the "chorus." Adjustments may be made in the performance sequence, depending on the players and instrumentation available.

The chorus may be sung by the gamelan players, or by additional singers who are integrated into the ensemble. In previous performances, the composer sang the solo verses and also played the added melody. The mandocello and violin were seated on the floor at the front of the ensemble. The solo singer would sit there also if not playing an instrument.

This score presumes knowledge of Central Javanese gamelan practice. Notation is given only for fixed parts (vocal, balungan and added melody). Other parts (bonang, gender, etc.), as well as the mandocello, are realized by the players. For assistance in realizing these parts, or for recordings of previous performances, please contact the composer.

In a recent performance (1993), the following sequence was used. Each section represents one repetition of the whole song, with the exception of the first (A) and last (H), which are only the verse and the chorus respectively. (Note that in Section D, imbal is played by two players on a gender panerus. With a full gamelan, the imbal parts would be played on bonang or saron, and the gender panerus could play its usual Javanese role in interpreting the balungan.)

A. **verse** only: mandocello alone, free rhythm, no voice

B. **verse**: add violin drone, gender freely and voice (text for first verse) singing slowly

 chorus: slenthem enters on fourth beat of chorus (note 5), gong enters at end of chorus, tempo increase slightly to Irama I.

C. **verse/chorus**: no voice; add kenong, ketuk, kempul and added melody on saron

D. **verse/chorus**: no voice; add imbal (two players) on gender panerus [or other instruments], kendang, gender, gambang

E. **verse**: all play quietly under solo voice (text for second verse)

 chorus: add extra singers, add all remaining instruments, play strongly

F. **verse/chorus**: no voices, slow to Irama II, stop imbal, use reduced balungan, stop added melody

G. **verse**: andegan (stop) on fourth beat: 2 voices sing third verse in free rhythm, not together; gamelan plays pitch 1 when the voices come together on the word "o'er." Voices continue freely, converging again on last word of verse. Following voices and cue from gender or kendang, all players re-enter on gong 1 at end of verse on "more."

 chorus: all play, resume added melody

H. **verse**: all voices sing text of fouth verse, all instruments play

 chorus: add interlocking clapping; ritard slightly; gamelan and chorus stop at gong, allowing instruments to ring; two beats later, one or two solo singers and mandocello repeat last phrase— Oh! Hard Times come again no more—to end (if two singers, harmonize final phrase).

Tuning and improvisation

Tuning the mandocello

Larry Polansky explained his method for tuning the mandocello to the gamelan: The D and A strings are tuned to the gamelan (which pitches depends on the gamelan tuning, i.e. which notes are closest to the D and A); the C and G strings are then adjusted so that the A and the D when played on the C and G strings are the same as the two open strings.

The mandocello part

The part for the mandocello (and violin) is not specified here, as it is specific to the abilities of the player. Larry had a slightly different treatment for each repetition of the song, beginning with artificial harmonics, and then including chords, split-string techniques, registral variations, strumming, and various picking styles. In Irama II, he used a kind of "cross-picking" style in the high register of the instrument, adding a texture like a Javanese celempung or siter.

The mandocello player (and the violin) can follow specific aspects of the piece, such as the song or the added melody, or improvise more freely within the general texture. These and any extra instruments, i.e. those added to the gamelan, should be integrated into the ensemble, and not stand out as "soloists." The piece may be performed without the mandocello, or with another instrument in its place.

Adjusting the gamelan tuning

The balungan and saron melody should sound close to the western melody of the song. That is, the pitches on the strong beats should match, and the gamelan should not sound like it is "out of tune." When the piece was first performed on Gamelan Si Darius/Si Madeline, the slendro tuning was close to the Western tuning. On Gamelan Lipur Sih, however, the slendro three was so high that the song sounded "strange." It happened that substituting pelog 3 for slendro changed the scale just enough that the song and the tuning fit. This was done by changing keys on Lipur Sih's modified saron and by placing the pelog slenthem in front of the slendro one, raised slightly on wooden blocks. The substitution was made *only* on the slenthem and saron—all other instruments played in slendro without adjusting. (In a full gamelan additional balungan instruments might need to be adjusted.) Each gamelan should make similar adjustments if necessary.

Performance History

Hard Times was originally written for mandocello and gamelan, and premiered at Mills College in Oakland California in 1985 on the Gamelan Si Darius/Si Madelaine, built by Lou Harrison and William Colvig. Larry Polansky played the mandocello part. The added melody was played on the gender panerus, in a two-hand rendition of the part given here. A version in 1993 was arranged for the Gamelan Lipur Sih, a large *gadon* (chamber gamelan) built in Surakarta by Tentrem Sarwanto. The added melody was played on the saron wayang. Violin and voice parts were added for Barbara Benary's participation in the performance. Recordings of both performances are in the Archives of the American Gamelan Institute.

The text used here comes from *a Treasury of Stephen Foster*, published by Random House in 1946. Notes in that book indicate that the song *Hard Times Come Again No More,* by Stephen Foster, was first published in 1855.

Vocal Melody (solo and chorus) in slendro with pitch "4"*

Verse

bal.		·	·	1	3	2	3	1	2
voice	· · · · ·	1	2	3 ·	3	3̅2̲, 3	5 ·	3	2

1. Let us pause   in life's plea-sures   and count
2. While we seek   mirth and beau-ty,   and mu-

bal.		1	3	6	5	3	2	3	1̂
voice	1	1	2	3 ·	6̲ 5̲,	5 ·	3	3 2 1 3	·2̅ 1

its man - y tears, While   we   all sup sor- row with the poor:
sic light and gay,   there are frail   forms(·) faint-ing at   the door:

bal.		2	1	2	3	2	3	1	2
voice	· · · · ·	1	2	3 ·	3	3̅2̲, 3 [4]	5 ·	3	2

There's a song   that will lin-   ger   for- e -
Though their voi-   ces   are si-   lent,   their plead-

bal.		1	3	6	5	3	2	3	①
voice	1	1	2	3 ·	6 ·	5 ·	3 ·	2 1 3 2	1

ver in   our ears;   Oh!   Hard   Times   come a - gain no more.
ing looks will say,   Oh!   Hard   Times   come a - gain no more.

Chorus

bal.		·	·	3	5	6	5	3	6
voice	· · · · ·	3	4	5 ·	·	5 5	·	4	5 6

'Tis the   song,   the sigh   of   the wea -

bal.		1̇	1̇	5	1̇	5	6	5	3
voice	· · ·	5 ·	·	· 1̇	· 5	·	6̲ 5̲,	5 ·	3

ry;   Hard   Times,   Hard   Times,   come

bal.		5	2	1	3	2	3	1	2
voice	3 2 1 2 ·	1	2	3 ·	3	3̲2̲ 3	5 ·	3	2
	a - gain no more:	Man -y	days	you	have	lin -gered	a -	round	

bal.		1	3	6	5	3	2	3	①
voice	1 1 2 3 ·	6 ·	5 ·	3 ·	2	1	3	2	1
	my ca - bin door;	Oh!	Hard	Times,	come	a -	gain	no	more.

Verse I: Let us pause in life's pleasures, and count its many tears,
While we all sup sorrow with the poor:
There's a song that will linger forever in our ears;
Oh! Hard Times, come again no more.

Chorus: 'Tis a song, the sigh of the weary;
Hard Times, Hard Times, come again no more:
Many days you have lingered around my cabin door;
Oh! Hard Times, come again no more.

Verse II: While we seek mirth and beauty and music bright and gay,
There are frail forms fainting at the door.
Though their voices are silent, their pleading looks will say,
Oh! Hard Times, come again no more.

Verse III: There's a pale drooping maiden who toils her life away,
With a worn heart whose better days are o'er:
Though her voice would be merry, 'tis sighing all the day,
Oh! Hard Times, come again no more.

Verse IV: 'Tis a sigh that is wafted across the troubled wave,
'Tis a wail that is heard upon the shore,
'Tis a dirge that is murmured around the lowly grave,
 Oh! Hard Times, come again no more.

* To notate the song in slendro, one additional pitch is necessary. At the beginning of the chorus, there is a tone that lies between three and five. Though notated here as "4", it may not be the pitch four on the gamelan. *It should be sung between the two slendro tones as if a half-step above pitch three.*

Clapping Patterns

These repeating patterns are clapped during the final repetition of the chorus, begun just after the gong. Use a resonant clapping sound, Javanese style—made by the closed fingers of one hand open hand struck in the center of the curved palm of the other. Use at least the first two patterns, add others as desired. The chorus may be divided into clappers and singers if performers prefer not to do both at once.

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balungan   .   .   . 2   .   .   . 1

  1.     x . x . x . x .   x . x . x . x .

  2.     . x . x . x . x   . x . x . x . x

  3.      x   x   x   .     x   x   x   .

  4.      x   .   x   .     x   .   x   .

  5.      .   x   .   x     .   x   .   .

  6.     . . x . . x . x   . . x . . x . x

  7.     x x . x x . x x   . x x . x x . x x .   etc.
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Added melody, saron wayang version

This part has been played on both the gender panerus and saron wayang (low 6 to high 3). (In the gender panerus version, additional notes are played by the second hand.)

bal.	·	·	1	3	2	3	1	2
saron	·5·3	5321	·6̣·1	·2·3	2123	2123	5·23	5·32

on repeats only

bal.	1	3	6	5	3	2	3	1̂
saron	16̣12	16̣13	···5	1̇·65	·3·2	·1·2	16̣13	·2·1

bal.	2	1	2	3	2	3	1	2
saron	·5·3	5321	·6̣·1	·2·3	2123	2123	5·23	5·32

bal.	1	3	6	5	3	2	3	①̇
saron	16̣12	16̣13	···5	1̇·65	·3·2	·1·2	16̣13	·2·1

bal.	·	·	3	5	6	5	3	6
saron	·5·3	·2·1	····	·3·5	61̇·5	61̇·5	61̇2̇·	1̇6·3̇

bal.	1̇	1̇	5	1̇	5	6	5	3
saron	2̇·1̇·	6·1̇5	···5	61̇·2̇	1̇6·5	·56·	53··	·5·6

bal.	5	2̂	1	3	2	3	1	2
saron	532·	31·2	···1	·2·3	2123	2123	5·23	5·32

bal.	1	3	6	5	3	2	3	①
saron	16̣12	16̣13	···5	1̇·65	·3·2	·1·2	16̣13	·2·1

Version for Si Aptos, March 20, 1995

A. **verse** only: violin alone, free rhythm, no voice
B. **verse**: add gender freely and voice singing text for first verse slowly, violin follow voice, free rhythm

gender "noodles" at end of each phrase, echoing voices final few notes

Let us pause in life's pleasures, and count its many tears	1 2 3
While we all sup sorrow with the poor:	5 3 2 1
There's a song that will linger forever in our ears;	6̣ 1̄6̄ 1̄2̄ 3
Oh! Hard Times, come again no more.	5 3̄5̄ 3̄2̄ 1

voice pauses slightly at end of verse, then begins chorus with implied meter, voice gives upbeat to slenthem player

chorus: slenthem enters on fourth beat of chorus (note 5, word "song"), gong enters at end of chorus, tempo increase slightly to Irama I, tempo is controlled by slenthem player. gender now uses cengkok for irama I, violin follows voice, adding ornaments as desired.

C. **verse/chorus**: no voice; violin continues, add kenong, kethuk, kempul and added melody on gambang

D. **verse/chorus**: no voice; add saron and demung imbal (two players each, or other imbal as desired, i.e. bonang) kendhang, gender panerus, siter (all instruments will be playing at this point)

E. **verse**: all play quietly under solo voice (text for **second** verse) (imbal players play balungan only)

chorus: add extra singers, add all remaining instruments, play strongly

F. **verse** 3: reduced instrumentation according to taste of arranger (voice and violin? voice and siter only?)

 chorus: all players and singers, as in E.

G. **verse** 4: singer, kempul and gongs matching as many balungan pitches as feasible, slenthem

 chorus: all players and singers, as in E. add clapping

H. repeat **chorus** only, all end on gong (slight ritard only)

voice and violin sing tag line (i.e. repeat last line)

"Oh Hard Times come again no more!"