



Music Notes

The Three Banditos for trio on one marimba by Brian Slawson

The marimba is one of the most popular instruments in Mexico. In addition, the performance of Mexican folk music often features multiple players on a single marimba and the use of odd time signatures. Such is also the case in *The Three Banditos*.

This is what the composer, Brian Slawson, says to those performing the piece.

The counting of a $5/8$ time signature can effectively be broken down into measures of $3 + 2$ or $2 + 3$ depending on the pulse of the music. In this case, $3 + 2$ applies to all $5/8$ bars. The tune can be kept light and rhythmic by treating the accents as friendly pulses. Also, to maximize the overall effect of the “story,” be sure to take your time and “breathe” together while phrasing the sad, slow section. The cheerful recapitulation to follow should make for a successful getaway!