

Campanella - “like bells” - (from the same root as “campanology”) is where we deliberately let notes over-ring onto the following notes, like a peal of bells.

That’s the simple bit!

The complicated bit follows on from that - for over-ringing, it has to be that each note is on a different string to its predecessor and successor.

That’s easy when we’re playing arpeggios - the music is written precisely to achieve that. But bells play scales!

When we’re playing scales, surely that’s impossible - we have to play three notes on each string before we go to the next string, not all of them can overlap....

Wrong!

Campanella works by going up the neck and using open strings to help. When we’re up the neck, the pitch of the open strings gets “left behind”. Open string notes are not on the same string as the fingered notes of nearby pitch.

Confused? I imagine so!

Here’s a worked example.... It’s the descending scale of G, which we want to sound like a peal of bells...

①	②	①	②	③	②	③	④
1	4	0	1	3	0	1	4
<i>3</i>	<i>7</i>		<i>3</i>	<i>5</i>		<i>2</i>	<i>5</i>

I’ve added the string (circled), the finger number (roman font), and the fret number (italic) so you can re-create this.

If you look at the string numbers (circled) you’ll see that every note is on a different string to the note before and after. Mind you that doesn’t make it easy to play!

Campanella using harmonics

Sometimes people associate harmonics with a bell-sound, and if you play different natural harmonics on different strings, these too, will ring on.

Here’s part of the Westminster Peal, but there are consecutive notes on one string. The A harmonic is also available on fret 5 of string 5, which will improve the ringing on, but the harmonic is less likely to speak well and it’s a long way to move in a hurry.

②	③	④	④	④	④	②	③
<i>12</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>12</i>

All the notes are natural (left-hand) harmonics.

I’ve added the string (circled) and the fret number (italic) so you can re-create this.

Welcome to the world of Campanella, where some of the notes aren’t where you expect them to be!