

Duration: 16–17 min.

Premiere performances by Volti on May 4, 2018 at Noe Valley Ministry in San Francisco and on May 6, 2018 at BAMPFA, in Berkeley, California.

Commissioned by Volti, Robert Geary, Artistic Director

COMPOSER'S NOTE

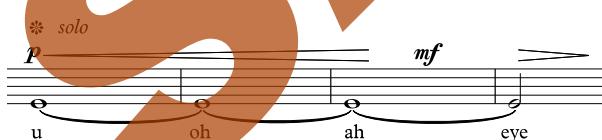
Continuously living in two languages – my native Lithuanian and English, I had an unresolved ambiguity about the choice of language for the text. I realized that whichever I was going to use - it would be a translation of some sort, either for me or for the listeners and singers. I was aiming for something more direct, a communication that goes beyond words and supersedes them. That's how I came to vowels thinking how they are almost the very first sounds we make when we attempt to speak as babies.

In the autumn of 2017, I was at a creative residency at the Pocantico Center, which is located at the Rockefeller estate Kykuit near New York City. There, among a rich collection of outdoor sculptures, I encountered a work by the cubist sculptor Jacques Lipchitz called "Chant des Voyelles". It was titled after an Egyptian prayer composed only of vowels that was designed to subdue the forces of nature. Further research showed that many ancient traditions (Egyptians, Greeks and Tibetans) ascribed sacred, mystical and healing powers and significance to vowels. The details might vary in different traditions, yet it is clear that something miraculous happens through the very act of prolonged repetition of certain vowels - whether in the form of a mantra or prayer or as a self-healing ritual. Also each vowel in elongation stimulates an appearance of particular overtones of the natural harmonic series. I wanted to experiment with subtly shifting, sometimes barely audible clouds of overtones resulting from the sustaining of certain vowels in multiple voices. I worked with vowels dedicating an entire section to one single vowel and then also mixing them up in various densities. I have yet to find out together with the singers and listeners what effects these vowels might have.

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GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Throughout the work, singers can take a breath whenever needed. The phrasing and breathing should reflect the general nature of a continuous sound world.



Sing it on a single breath, listening to the occurring overtones and pronouncing the indicated syllables in free rhythm.

A musical score for voice. It shows a continuous stream of eighth-note-like pulses on a single staff. The dynamic 'pp' is at the beginning, followed by 'mp'. Below the staff, the vocal line consists of the continuous repetition of the syllable 'yo'.

Oscillation of a single sound. Sing it on one breath as an unbroken oscillation of one sound.



Re-emphasize the tone (diaphgram accent).

Pronunciation of vowels:

a, e, i, o, u	as in the Italian language
æ	as in "act"
ö, ü	ias in the German language
y	as in "yard"
ha	as in "have". Pronounce it with strong aspiration.
u - oh - ah, muu-moo-maa-mee-may	gradually change vowels and syllables from closed position to more open to produce overtones.
o-i-o-i, a-i-a-i	slur both vowels and pronounce them without any break.
o-yo-yo-yo	stress the first vowel and continue with accelerating repetition of "yo" as in "yoga".

SAMPLE

CHANT DES VOYELLES

Incantation of Vowels

Fluidly and tenderly. Legato

p

3

ŽIBUOKLĖ MARTINAITYTĖ (2018)

The musical score consists of 18 staves, each representing a different vocal part. The parts are grouped into three sections: Soprano (1, 2), Alto (1, 2), Tenor (1, 2), Bass (1, 2), and a final section with Soprano 1.1, Soprano 2.1, Alto 1.1, Alto 2.1, Tenor 1.1, Tenor 2.1, Bass 1.1, and Bass 2.1. The music is in common time (indicated by '4'). The tempo is marked as '80'. The vocal parts are primarily composed of sustained notes with occasional rhythmic patterns. Large orange arrows are overlaid on the score to indicate specific vocal techniques: a large arrow points diagonally across the upper section (Soprano, Alto, Tenor), another large arrow points diagonally across the middle section (Bass), and a large circular arrow points around the bottom section (Soprano 1.1, Alto 1.1, Tenor 1.1). Smaller orange arrows point to specific notes or groups of notes in the upper and middle sections. The vocal parts are labeled with various vowel sounds (u, o, ü, oh, ah) below the notes.

*On a single breath, producing the overtones by changing vowels

17

solo, overtone singing *p* *mf*

S.1 solo, overtone singing *p* *mf* u oh ah

S.2 solo, overtone singing *p* *mf* oh ah

A.1 *p* 5 u u o u o u u o u ü u o u

A.2 3 u o u ü u o u

T.1 8 u o u o u ü o u o ü

T.2 8 u o u ü u o u ü o u o

B.1 *p* ü o u ü o u ah

B.2 u ü o ah u o u o u o

=

25

S.1 *p* 3 o u o u o u o =

S.2 *p* 5 u o u o u ü o u o u u

A.1 ü o ü o u o u o u o u o

A.2 u o u o u u o u o p

T.1 8 u o u o u u o u o u o u

T.2 8 u o u o u u o u o mp p 5

B.1 p u ü o u o u ü u oh ah

B.2 u ü o solo, overtone singing *p* *mf* u oh ah

33

S.1 *p* *mp* *5* *3*

S.2 *mp* *p*

A.1 *mp* *3*

A.2 *mp*

T.1 *5* *mp* *3* *3*

T.2 *p* *mp*

B.1 *p* *mp*

B.2 *p*

=

41

S.1 *mp* *3*

S.2 *mf* *mp* *3*

A.1 *5*

A.2 *mp* *3*

T.1 *3* *5* *3*

T.2 *solo, overtone singing* *mf* *mp*

B.1 *mp*

B.2 *mp*



57

S.1 *mp* 3 *poco rit.*

S.2 *mp* 3

A.1 *mf* *mp* 3 *p*

A.2 *oh* *ah* *u* *o* *u* *ü* *p*

T.1 *mp* 5 *p*

T.2 *p*

B.1 *mp* 3 *p* 3 *pp*

B.2 *mp* *p*

80 solo, overtone singing

S.1 *p* *mf* ————— *p* ————— *o* *o* *o*

S.2 ————— *ö* ————— *u* *o* *u* *o* *a*

A.1 ————— *o* *u* *o* ————— *u* *o* *u* *o* *u*

A.2 ————— *o* *u* *o* ————— *u* *o* *u* *o* *a*

T.1 *ö* ————— *u* *o* ————— *ö* ————— *o* *u* *o* *u* *o*

T.2 *u* *o* ————— *u* ————— *o* *u* *o* *u* *o*

B.1 ————— *u* *o* *ö* ————— *u* ————— *o* *u* *o* *u* *o*

B.2 ————— *ö* ————— *o* *u* *o* *u* *o*

=

87 *a* ————— *a* *o* ————— *a* *o* *a* *o*

S.1 *mf* ————— *u* *a* *o*

S.2 ————— *a* ————— *a*

A.1 *mf* ————— *u* *o* *a* *o* *a* *u* *o*

A.2 *mf* ————— *u* *o* *a* *o* *a*

T.1 *a* ————— *o* *u* *a* ————— *o* *o* *u* *o* *u*

T.2 ————— *u* *o* *u* *o* *u* ————— *o* *a* *u* *o*

B.1 *mf* ————— *u* *o* *u* *o* *u* *o* *a* *u* *o*

B.2 ————— *u* *o* *u* *o* *u* *o* *a*

94

S.1
S.2
A.1
A.2
T.1
T.2
B.1
B.2

u o a o
o a u o u o
u a o a u o ö
o u
u o a o u o u o
o u o a o u o a u o
u o u o a o u o u o u o

=

101

S.1
S.2
A.1
A.2
T.1
T.2
B.1
B.2

ö o u
ö u o ö
o u p
o u ö pp
ö u
o u ö pp
u o o u ö
ö p 3 o u ö pp
ö u ö pp
ö u ö pp

poco rit.

R Gradually unfolding new sonorities

108 **D** = 80 **pp**

mp 3 solo, overtone singing

Sheet music for a vocal ensemble of eight parts (Soprano 1, Soprano 2, Alto 1, Alto 2, Tenor 1, Tenor 2, Bass 1, Bass 2) featuring lyrics and dynamic markings. The music is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. The vocal parts are arranged in two staves: Soprano (S.1, S.2), Alto (A.1, A.2), Tenor (T.1, T.2), and Bass (B.1, B.2). The lyrics are written below the notes, and dynamics (pp, mp, p) are indicated above the staff. Orange diamond-shaped boxes highlight specific melodic patterns in the Tenor and Bass parts.



116

124

mf

S.1 u o a

S.2 o u o o a o a u o

A.1 u o a o o a o u a o

A.2 a o u o u o a

T.1 o a o u o a o a o a

T.2 a u o u o u o a o a

B.1 o o a o a o u o o u o

B.2 o u a o o a o u o u

=

131

p

S.1 o u a o a

S.2 u o u o o u o o

A.1 u a u a o u o u o u o

A.2 o u a o o u o u u a u

T.1 o u o u u o u o u o

T.2 o a a o u o u o u u

B.1 a a o o u o u o u a a

B.2 a o o u o u o u o u

138

S.1 *p* *mf*

S.2 *a* *p* *mf*

A.1 *a* *p* *mf*

A.2 *o* *a* *mf*

T.1 *u* *o* *mf*

T.2 *o* *u* *o* *a* *mf*

B.1 *u* *o* *a* *mf*

B.2 *a* *u* *o* *a* *mf*

C Sonorously. Passionately. *d* = 90

S.1 *i* *mp* *cresc.* *3*

S.2 *u* *o* *i* *cresc.* *3*

A.1 *u* *o* *u* *o* *cresc.* *3*

A.2 *o* *i* *5* *cresc.* *3*

T.1 *o* *u* *o* *a* *i* *cresc.* *3*

T.2 *o* *u* *i* *a* *ae* *i* *o* *cresc.* *3*

B.1 *o* *u* *u* *o* *a* *ae* *i* *o* *cresc.* *3*

B.2 *o* *u* *a* *i* *o* *i* *o* *cresc.* *3*

153

S.1 *mf* *cresc.* *f*

S.2 *mf* *cresc.* *f*

A.1 *mf* *cresc.* *f*

A.2 *mf* *cresc.* *f*

T.1 *mf* *cresc.* *f*

T.2 *mf* *cresc.* *f*

B.1 *mf* *cresc.* *f*

B.2 *mf* *cresc.* *f*

$=$

161 *f*

S.1 *f*

S.2 *f*

A.1 *f*

A.2 *f*

T.1 *f*

T.2 *f*

B.1 *f*

B.2 *f*

169

mf

S.1 a ae i e

mf

S.2 u a ae i e

mf

A.1 ae i e

A.2 a ae i a ae i e

mf

T.1 a i ae i e

mf

T.2 a i ae i e

mf

B.1 u a i ae i e

mf

B.2 0 a i ae i e

poco rit.

2

*On a single breath, listening to the occurring overtones. Pronounce syllables in free rhythm.

183

S.1

S.2

A.1

A.2 solo, overtone singing ***pp***

T.1 solo, overtone singing ***pp*** ***mf*** ***p*** muu
muu moo maa mii may i

T.2 ***p*** yo yo

B.1 ***p*** y o y o u i u y u y u y u

B.2 ***mf*** ***p*** maa mii may mee

=

187

S.1

S.2

A.1 Sing on one breath as an unbroken oscillation of one sound ***pp*** ***mp*** i o y o y o y yo yo

A.2 ***mf*** solo, overtone singing ***pp*** moo maa mee muu

T.1 Sing on one breath as an unbroken oscillation of one sound ***mp*** ***pp*** -o y o y o y o y yo solo, overtone singing ***pp*** i o u

T.2 solo, overtone singing ***pp*** ***mf*** muu moo maa may mee

B.1 *solo ***pp*** ***mf*** muu moo maa mmee i solo, overtone singing ***pp***

B.2 ***p*** i o u

192

poco rit.  = 65

S.1

S.2

A.1   

A.2    
moo maa mee i o y o y o y o y yo yo

T.1    
solo, overtone singing    
muu moo maa mee may i

T.2    
muu moo maa mee o i

B.1    
o y o y o y o y o y o e i o i

B.2    
oh ah eee o i

CANTO

198

poco accel.   

S.1   
e i e

S.2   
e i

A.1   
e i e

A.2    
i e i

T.1    
o i e i

T.2    
o i e i

B.1    
o y o y o y o y yo yo

B.2    
i e i

  
Sing on one breath as an unbroken oscillation of one sound   

$\text{♩} = 90$

203

S.1 *i o a e i a o i a ho*

S.2 *e o a i a o i a ho*

A.1 *i o a e i a o i a ho*

A.2 *e o a i a o i a ho*

T.1 *e i o a e i a o i a ho*

T.2 *o e i o a e i a o i a ho*

B.1 *e i o a e i a o i a ho*

B.2 *o e i o a e i a o i a ho*

E Risoluto $\text{♩} = 100$

211

S.1 *ha ha a ha ha a ya ya ya ya ya*

S.2 *ha ha a ha ha a ya ya ya ya ya*

A.1 *ha ha ha ha ha a ha*

A.2 *ha ha ha ha ha a ha*

T.1 *ha ha ha ha a ha o i o i o*

T.2 *ha ha ha ha a ha o i o i o*

B.1 *ha ha ha ha ha ha*

B.2 *ha ha ha ha ha ha*

217

S.1 S.2 A.1 A.2 T.1 T.2 B.1 B.2

a ha a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya ha ae
 a ha a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya ha ae
 a ya ya ya ya ya ha o ha ae
 a ya ya ya ya ya ha o i o i o a ya ya ya ya ya ae
 ha ha o ha a ya ya ya ya ya
 ha ha o ha ae
 o i o i o o ha a ya ya ya ya ya
 a ya ya ya ya ya ha ha ae

222

S.1 S.2 A.1 A.2 T.1 T.2 B.1 B.2

e i a ya ya ya ya ya ha ae
 e a ya ya ya ya ya
 a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya ha ae
 e i ha o i o i o o i o i o
 a ya ya ya ya ya i ha o i o i o o i o i o
 e o i o i o o i o i o a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya
 a ya ya ya ya ya i ha ha ha ha a ya ya ya ya ya
 e o i o i o o i o i o a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya

227

S.1 o i o i o i o u
S.2 a ya ya ya ya ya ya ya u
A.1 o i o i o i o u
A.2 a ya ya ya ya ya ya ya u o yo yo yo yo yo yo yo yo o i o i o
T.1 i o a o yo yo yo yo yo i o a o yo yo yo yo yo
T.2 i o a o i o i o i o a o i o i o
B.1 i o a o i o i o i o a o yo yo yo yo yo
B.2 i o a o yo yo yo yo yo i o a u

231

S.1 a e a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya ha
S.2 a ya ya ya ya ya e i e i e ae i ae i ae i ae i ae
A.1 a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya a i ya i ha
A.2 o i o i o e ae ae i ae i ae ae i ae i ae
T.1 o yo yo yo yo yo a ya ya ya ya ya ae ae i ae i ae a ya ya ya ya ya
T.2 o i o i o a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya
B.1 o yo yo yo yo yo e i e i e ae i ae i ae a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya
B.2 a e ae a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya

236

S.1
o i o i o i o ha
S.2
i e i ae a i a a i o u
A.1
o yo
A.2
o yo
T.1
o yo
T.2
i e i ae a i a i a i o u
B.1
i e ae i a i o u
B.2
i e ae i a i o u

240

S.1
i o i o i o ha ae i
S.2
o yo yo yo yo yo i o ha ae i
A.1
i o yo
A.2
o yo
T.1
o yo
T.2
i o i o ha ae a i a i
B.1
o yo
B.2
i o i o ha ae a i a i

245

S.1

S.2

A.1

A.2

T.1

T.2

B.1

B.2

o_____ a ya ya ya ya ya e_____ i_____ a ya ya ya ya ya
 o_____ ha a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya o_____
 o yo yo yo yo yo ha a ya ya ya ya ya o yo yo yo yo yo o_____
 o yo yo yo yo yo a ya ya ya ya ya e_____ i_____ o_____
 o i o ha e i e i e o i o i o a i a i a
 o i o i o a i a i a e o i o i o a i a i a
 o_____ a i a i a e i a i a
 o_____ ha i o o o o

250

S.1

S.2

A.1

A.2

T.1

T.2

B.1

B.2

o i o i o o i o ha a ya ya ya ya ya ha
 o yo yo yo yo yo o yo yo yo yo yo ha a ha
 ae i ha a ha
 ae i ha a ha
 o yo yo yo yo yo o yo yo yo yo yo ha a ha
 o i o i o o i o ha a ha
 o i o i o ha a ya ya ya ya ya ha
 o i o i o o i o ha a ha

255

S.1 *mp* ————— *mf* *mp* ————— *f* *mp* ————— *f* *mf* ————— *f* —————

ae_____ i_____ o i o i o a ya ya ya ya ya ha_____

S.2 *mp* (3) ————— *mf* (3) *mp* (3) ————— *f* (3) *mp* (3) ————— *f* (3) *mf* (3) ————— *f* (3)

a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya o yo yo yo yo yo a ya ya ya ya ya ha_____

A.1 *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* —————

ae_____ e i e i e o yo yo yo yo yo a ya ya ya ya ya ha_____

A.2 *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* —————

ae_____ i_____ o_____ a ya ya ya ya ya ha_____

T.1 *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* —————

ae i ae i ae e i e i e o yo yo yo yo yo a i a i a ha_____

T.2 *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* —————

ae_____ i_____ o i o i o a i a i a ha_____

B.1 *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* —————

ae_____ i_____ o i o i o a i a i a ha_____

B.2 *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* —————

ae_____ i_____ o_____ a e_____ ha_____

=

260

S.1 *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *mf* ————— *mp* (3) ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f*

i_____ o_____ a ya ya ya ya ya a_____ o i o i o i o

S.2 *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *mf* ————— *mp* (3) ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f*

o i o i o o_____ o_____ a_____ o i o i o

A.1 *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *mf* ————— *mp* (3) ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f*

o yo yo yo yo yo o yo yo yo yo yo a ya ya ya ya ya a ya ya ya ya ya o yo yo yo yo yo yo

A.2 *mp* (3) ————— *mf* (3) ————— *mf* (3) ————— *mp* (3) ————— *f* (3) ————— *mf* (3) ————— *f* (3) ————— *mf* (3) ————— *f* (3)

o yo yo yo yo yo o yo yo yo yo yo a ya ya ya ya ya a_____ i o i o

T.1 *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *mf* ————— *mp* (3) ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f*

i_____ o_____ a i o a_____ i o i o

T.2 *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *mf* ————— *mp* (3) ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f*

o i o i o o i o i o a i a i a a i a i a o i o i o

B.1 *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *mf* ————— *mp* (3) ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f*

o yo yo yo yo yo o yo yo yo yo yo a i a i a a i a i a o i o

B.2 *mp* ————— *mf* ————— *mf* ————— *mp* (3) ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f* ————— *mf* ————— *f*

i_____ o_____ a i a i a a i a i a o i o i o

F With inner resolve.

♩ = 80

265 *mf* *ff*

S.1 ha_____ o i a e i o

S.2 a i a o i o i o i a

A.1 a ya ya ya ya ya ya ya
i a i a

A.2 i a i a

T.1 i a i a o i e i o i a

T.2 a ya ya ya ya ya ya ya
a e

B.1 a i a i a i a o i a

B.2 i a i a o i a

rit. *pp*

271 *mp*

S.1 i o u

S.2 e i o i o u

A.1 i o u

A.2 e i o u

T.1 e i o u

T.2 i o u

B.1 e i o u

B.2 i muu moo maa mii may mii mmuu

*solo, overtone singing *mp* *pp*

*Listening to the occurring overtones. Pronounce syllables in free rhythm.