

music by

HANNAH SELIN

based on a graphic score by ANNE YONCHA

S U O N L A U L U

(S O N G of the S W A M P)

FIRST

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EDITION

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Lyrics

The lyrics are from the *Kanteletar*, Second Book, Part IV: Men's Songs (*Miesten lauluja*). The *Kanteletar* is a book of Finnish-Karelian lyric folk poems collected by Elias Lönnrot and originally published in 1840. Lönnrot (1802-84) was a Finnish philologist and folklorist who collected oral history from the inhabitants of the remote eastern portion of Finland, including the rugged region of Karelia, which is now divided between Finland and Russia. Lönnrot is also known for collecting and publishing the *Kalevala*, the Finnish national epic poem.

Sources:

Lönnrot, Elias. (2017). In Encyclopaedia Britannica, *Britannica concise encyclopedia*.
Simonsuuri, K. K. (2016). Finland, Poetry of. In R. Greene, & S. Cushman (Eds.),
Princeton reference: The Princeton handbook of world poetries. Princeton University Press.
Lönnrot, Elias (1840). *Kanteletar*. <https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/7078/pg7078.txt>
English translation by Google Translate, translate.google.com.

273. En joua laulamahan

Lauloin ennen, lauloin eilen,
Laulaisin tänäki päänä
Viel' on virttä tieossani,
Saatavillani sanoja;
Virttä toista tuulet toisi,
Meren aaltoset ajaisi,
Linnut liitäisi sanoja,
Puien latvat lausehia.

Vaan en joua laulamahan
Kesäisiltä kiirehiltä,
Heliältä hein'ajalta,
Kalakuulta kaunihilta;
Lohi kultainen kutevi,
Kala kaunis karkajavi,
Minun lapsen laulellessa,
Päivät suota soitellessa.

273. I don't have to sing.

I used to sing, I sang yesterday,
I would sing in my head
I still have power in me,
Available words;
Currents repeat, winds repeat,
The waves of the sea would drive,
Birds would connect words,
The tops of the trees are sayings.

But I don't have to sing
From the summer rush,
From noisy hay days,
From a fish moon to a beautiful night;
The golden salmon spawned,
The beautiful runaway fish,
As my child sings,
Playing the swamp for days.

*For the Tuira Chamber Choir
In collaboration with Anne Yoncha*

Duration: ca. 10'30"

Program Note

Suon laulu (Song of the Swamp) is inspired and informed by *Re:Peat*, a multifaceted eco-art project by Anne Yoncha. In 2019, Anne worked with scientists from Natural Resources Institute Finland to study restoration techniques for peatland extraction sites. Peatland is an important source of fuel in Finland, but it is also non-renewable due to the peatlands' extremely slow growth rate. Anne's score maps multiple data sets from unrestored and restored peatlands onto two musical staves, which unfold simultaneously. The piece moves from past to present through two core samples of the peatlands, representing many decades of growth. Variations in water content, temperature, and level are mapped as variable pitch contours onto the upper and lower staves, with the upper staff representing a restored peat study plot, and the lower staff, an unrestored plot. Anne's original concept for the choral piece involves a antiphonal, on-site performance, with half of the choir singing from the unrestored peat plot and the other half singing directly across from them on the restored plot.

I have taken many liberties in reimagining Anne's graphic score for choir, perhaps the biggest one being the incorporation of a folk poem from Elias Lönnrot's *Kanteletar*. I also drew inspiration from Finnish music traditions, in particular the *kantele*, Finland's zither-style lap harp. The singers are invited to use a strummed instrument of their choice to play the accompaniment; in Finland, this will almost certainly be the widely-used *kantele*. The form of the piece follows the dynamic markings from Anne's score, which represent fluctuations in the peatlands' water level. The opening melody, and other wordless melodies in the piece, are transcribed directly from hyperspectral camera reflectance data in Anne's score. There are also a few passages where I have directly incorporated excerpts from Anne's graphic score, where the singers improvise wordless melodies.

Performance Notes

Long-Sustained Notes:

On very long, sustained notes, singers should breathe at their own individual pace, staggering their breathing to create a continuous sound. Dashed slurs indicate where the sound should remain continuous as a sustained note changes. Pay close attention to moments where a long, sustained note moves from the upper voices to the lower voices and vice versa: make the transition as seamless as possible.

Air-Whistling Contours:

A few sections include excerpts from Anne's graphic score. Depending on instructions, hum or air-whistle individually at any pitch while also listening to the group. Observe breath marks. Air-whistle refers to simply whistling with mostly air sound; this can be done on both inhale and exhale. It results in a soft, airy sound that has only a little pitch.

Plucked instruments:

As many singers as possible should also play a plucked instrument of their choice. For performances in Finland, everyone should play a *kantele*. Ideally, the instrument will have open strings tuned to the following ascending five-note scale (in any octave):
D-E-F-G-A.

Plucked instrument accompaniment:

The plucked instrument accompaniment is notated on the middle staff of the score. It is an important part, and must be included performance. However, depending on the difficulty of the vocal parts, the singers can take turns playing the accompaniment part. For example, if the upper half of the choir is singing a difficult passage, they can stop playing the accompaniment to focus on singing while the lower voices continue playing the accompaniment. It is also possible to include some additional accompanists on *kantele* or another plucked instrument (such as the harp or guitar), to provide extra support for the singers.

Audience participation:

If the audience includes some experienced *kantele* players or guitar players, it is even possible that they could join in playing this accompaniment part for the ostinato (D-F-A-D, E-F-A-E). This would require a short introduction and practice session with the conductor before the performance.

Performance Setup:

The choir can choose either their normal performance setup, or they can divide into two antiphonal groups: upper and lower voices. The latter reflects Anne's original concept for the performance: the upper voices, representing a restored peat plot, sing across from the lower voices, representing an unrestored plot.

Suon laulu (Song of the Swamp)

for SATB choir with plucked instruments

Lyrics by Elias Lönnrot

Music composed by Hannah Selin

Graphic score by Anne Yoncha

deep-rooted energy $\text{♩} = 56$

SOPRANO + ALTO

mp

oo (sim.)

Kantele (or any plucked instr.)

TENOR + BASS

mp

deep-rooted energy $\text{♩} = 56$

suo - ta, suo - ta, (sim.)

S.+A.

4

ff

K.

T.+B.

f

S.+A.

8

mp

K.

T.+B.

12

S.+A.

K.

T.+B. *mp*



15

S.+A.

K.

T.+B. *poco rit.* *pp*



A a little slower ♩ = 50

19

S.+A. *p*

K. *mp*

A a little slower ♩ = 50

repeat this 4-bar pattern until a new figure is indicated

23

S.+A.

K.

(*sim.*)

T.+B.

27

p

S.+A.

Lau - loin _____ en - nen, _____

K.

pp *mp*

T.+B.

mm(hum)

31

mp

S.+A.

lau - loin _____ ei - len, _____

K.

p *poco*

T.+B.

35 Sopranos + Altos: air-whistle contours

S.+A.

K.

T.+B.



39

S.+A.

K.

T.+B.



43

S.+A.

K.

T.+B.

pp *p*

Lau - loin en - nen,

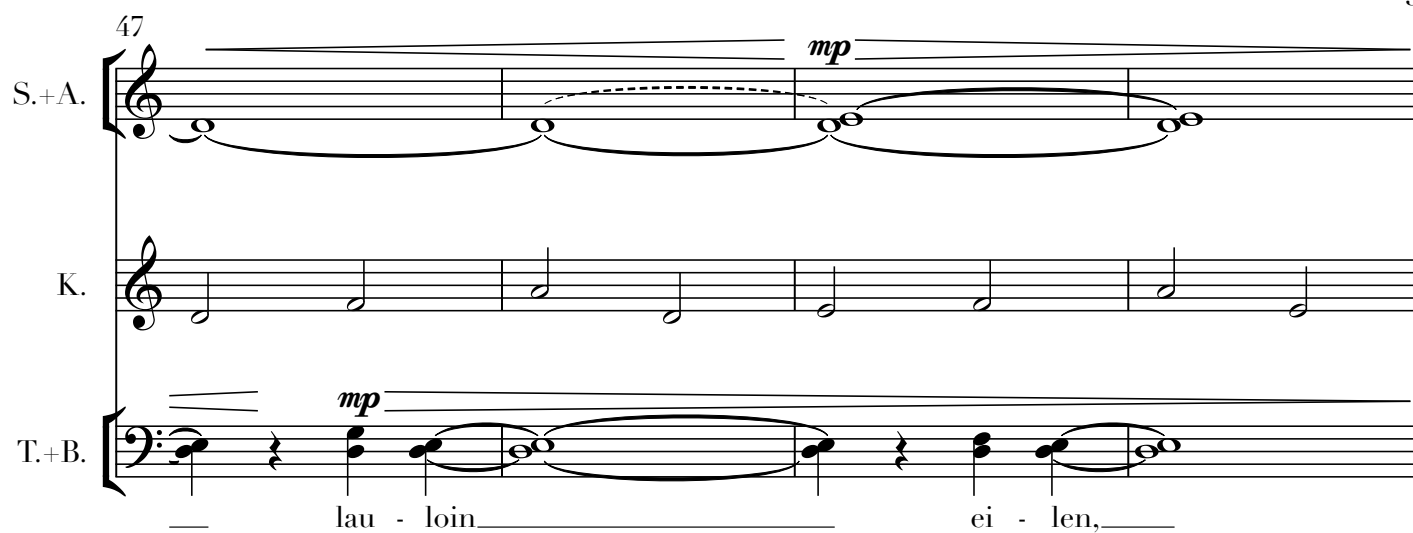
47

S.+A. *mp*

K.

T.+B. *mp*

lau - loin ei - len,



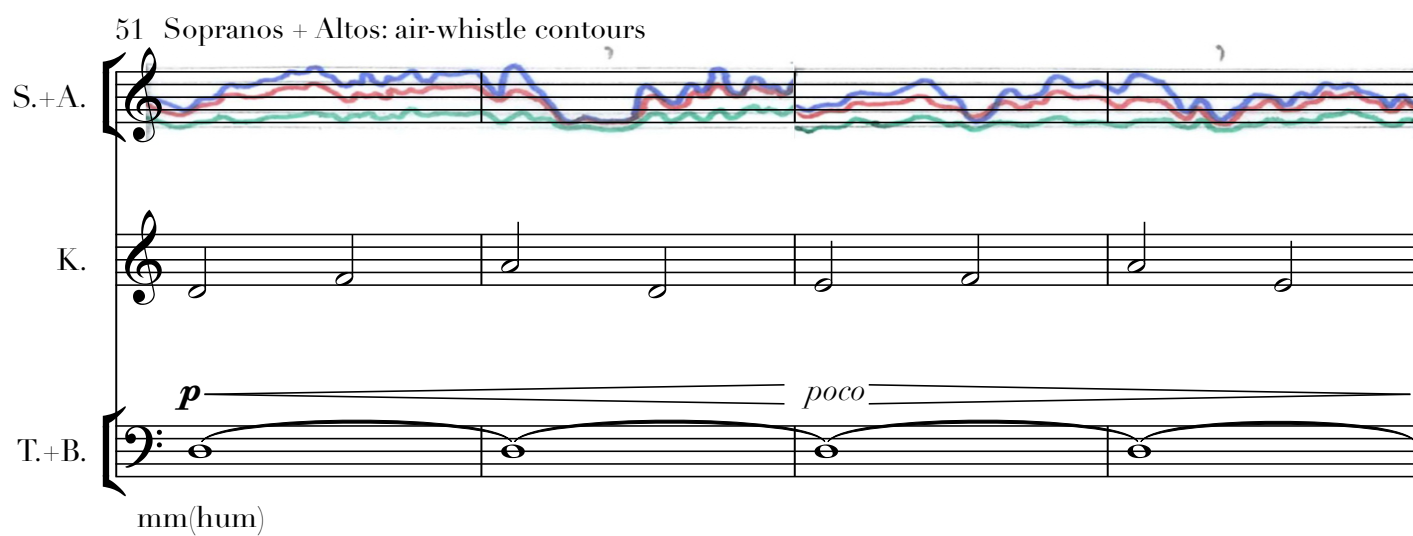
51 Sopranos + Altos: air-whistle contours

S.+A.

K.

T.+B. *p* *poco*

mm(hum)

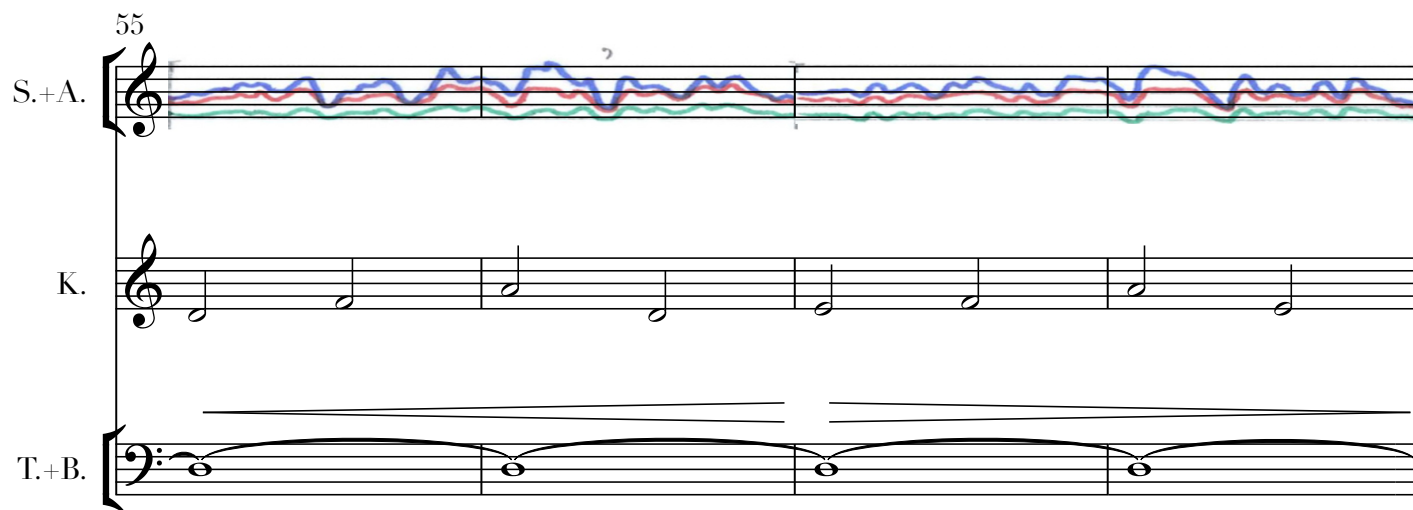


55

S.+A.

K.

T.+B.



B

59

mp

S.

Lau - lai - sin

tä - nä - ki

pää - nä

A.

mp

Lau - lai - sin

tä - nä - ki

pää - nä

K.

B

T.

B.



63

p

S.

mm(hum)

A.

mp

Lau - lai - sin

tä - nä - ki

pää - nä

K.

T.

mp

Lau - lai - sin

tä - nä - ki

pää - nä

B.

67

S. *p* *mp*

suo - ta, suo - ta, (sim.)

A. *p* *mp* (sim.)

suo - ta, suo - ta, (sim.)

K.

T.+B. *p*

mm(hum)

==

71

S.

A.

K.

T.+B.

75 **C**

mf

S. Viel' on virt - tä tie - os - sa -

A. Viel' on virt - tä tie - os - sa - ni,

K.

C

mf

T.+B. Viel' on virt - tä tie - os - sa - ni,



79 *f*

S. ni, Viel' on virt - tä tie - os - sa -

A. *f* Viel' on virt - tä tie - os - sa - ni,

K.

f

T.+B. Viel' on virt - tä ni,

83

mp

S. ni,

mp

A. mm(hum)

K.

mp

T.+B. mm(hum)

==

87

p

S. suo - ta, suo - ta, (sim.)

p

A. suo - ta, suo - ta, (sim.)

K.

Tenors + Basses: hum contours

T.+B.

10

91

S.

A.

K.

T.+B.

=

95

S.

A.

K.

T.+B.

99

S. *pp*
mm(hum)

A. *pp*
mm(hum)

K.

sustain (humming) whatever pitch you end on (or D)

T.+B.



103

S.+A.

K.

T.+B.

107

S.+A.

K.

T.

pp

suo - ta, suo - ta, (sim.)

B.

pp

suo - ta, suo - ta, (sim.)



111 poco accel.

S.+A.

K.

T.

p

poco accel.

B.

p

115 - - - - -

S.+A.

K.

T. *mp*

B. *mp*



D joyful ♩ = 124

119 *mf*

S.
Saa - ta - vill - a - ni sa - no - ja, Saa - ta - vill - a - ni sa - no - ja,

A. *mf*
Saa - ta - vill - a - ni sa - no - ja, Saa - ta - vill - a - ni sa - no - ja,

K.

D joyful ♩ = 124

T. *mf*

B. *mf*

123

S. *Saa - ta - vill - a - ni sa - no - ja,* *Saa - ta - vill - a - ni sa - no - ja,*

A. *Saa - ta - vill - a - ni sa - no - ja,* *Saa - ta - vill - a - ni sa - no - ja,*

K.

T. *mf*

B. *mf*

Detailed description: This block contains measures 123 through 126 of a musical score. The Soprano (S.) and Alto (A.) parts are in treble clef and sing the lyrics 'Saa - ta - vill - a - ni sa - no - ja,'. Both parts feature a five-note melodic phrase in each measure, with a '5' indicating a fifth interval. The Tenor (T.) and Bass (B.) parts are in bass clef and play chords marked 'mf' (mezzo-forte). The Keyboard (K.) part is in treble clef and provides a simple accompaniment with quarter notes. A double bar line is present at the end of measure 126.



127

S. *Saa - ta - vill - a - ni sa - no - ja,*

A. *Saa - ta - vill - a - ni sa - no - ja,* *sa - no - ja*

K.

T. *mf*

B. *mf*

Detailed description: This block contains measures 127 through 129 of the musical score. The Soprano (S.) and Alto (A.) parts continue their melodic lines. In measure 129, the Alto part has a triplet of eighth notes marked '3'. The Tenor (T.) and Bass (B.) parts continue with chords marked 'mf'. The Keyboard (K.) part continues the accompaniment. A double bar line is present at the end of measure 129.

130

S. *sa - no - ja,* *sa - no - ja,* *sa - no - ja;*

A. *sa - no - sa - no - ja* *sa - no - ja;*

K.

T.

B.

133

ff S. *Virt - tä toi - sta* *tuu - let toi - si,*

ff A. *Virt - tä toi - sta* *tuu - let toi - si,*

ff K. *Virt - tä toi - sta* *tuu - let toi - si,*

ff T. *Virt - tä toi - sta* *tuu - let toi - si,*

ff B. *Virt - tä toi - sta* *tuu - let toi - si,*

137

S. Virt - tä tuu - let toi - si,

A. Me - ren aal - to - set aj - ai - si, — aj - ai - si,

K.

T. Virt - tä toi - sta tuu - let toi - si,

B. Virt - tä toi - sta tuu - let toi - si,

141 *mp*

S. Lin - nut liit - täi - si sa - no - ja, sa - no - ja, sa - no - ja, sa - no - ja,

A. *mp* Lin - nut liit - täi - si sa - no - ja, —

K. *mp*

T. *mp* Me - ren aal - to - set aj - ai - si, — aj - ai - si,

B. *mp* Me - ren aal - to - set aj - ai - si, — aj - ai - si,

145

S. *sa - no - ja, sa - no - ja, sa - no - ja, sa - no - ja*

A. *Lin - nut liit - täi - si sa - no - ja*

K.

T. *Me - ren aal - to - set aj - ai - si,*

B. *Me - ren aal - to - set aj - ai - si,*



tempo I ♩ = 112

149

S. ***p** Pui - en lat - vat lau - sehi - a //*

A. ***p** Pui - en lat - vat lau - sehi - a //*

K. ***p** //*

tempo I ♩ = 112

T. ***pp** mm(hum) //*

B. *//*

153

S.+A.

K.

B.+T.

mp



E

157 Sop. + Altos: air-whistle contours

S.+A.

K.

B.+T.

E

p

oo



161

S.+A.

K.

B.+T.

165

S.+A.

K.

B.+T.

mp *mf*

≡

169 *poco accel.*

S.

A.

K.

B.+T.

p *p*

poco accel. *mp*

suo - ta, suo - ta,

suo - ta, suo - ta, (sim.)

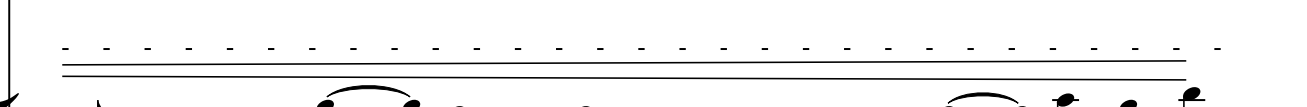
Vaen en jou - a lau - la-ma-han_ Ke-säi - sil - tä kii - re - hil - tä

173 - - - - -

S. 

A. 

K. 

B.+T. 

Hel-i - äl - tä hein'__ aj - al - ta Ka-la - kul - ta kau - ni - hil - ta;



F energetic and strong ♩ = 132

177 *f*

S. 

Lau - la - ma - han Lau - la - ma - han aj

A. 

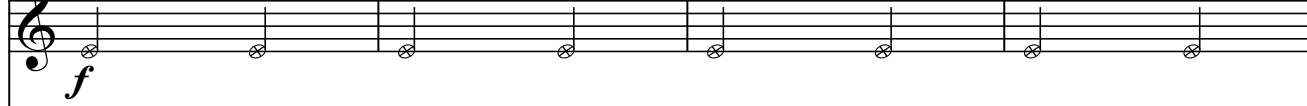
Lau - la - ma - han Lau - la - ma - han aj

tap wood - half notes or quarter notes, whatever feels best

K. 

f

F *f* energetic and strong ♩ = 132

B.+T. 

aj Lau - la - ma - han Lau - la - ma - han

181

S. Lau - la - ma - han Lau - la - ma - han aj

A. Lau - la - ma - han Lau - la - ma - han aj

K.

B.+T. aj Lau - la - ma - han Lau - la - ma - han

==

185 *mp*

S. *mp* aj

A. *mp* aj

K.

T. *mp* Lau - la - ma - han Lau - la - ma - han

B. *mp* Lau - la - ma - han Lau - la - ma - han

189

S. Lau - la - ma - han Lau - la - ma - han

A. Lau - la - ma - han Lau - la - ma - han

K.

T. *p* aj

B. *p* aj



tempo I ♩ = 112

193

S.+A.

K. slow strum (can be 8th notes, or more like a tremolo) *ppp*

T. *p* oo *pp* oo

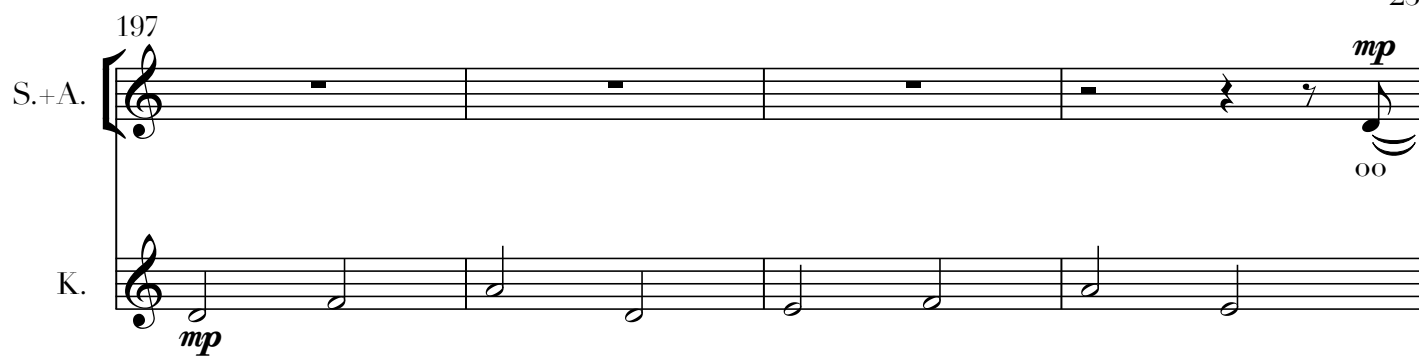
B. *p* oo *pp* oo

197

S.+A. *mp*

K. *mp*

oo



201

S.+A.

K.



205

S.+A. *p*

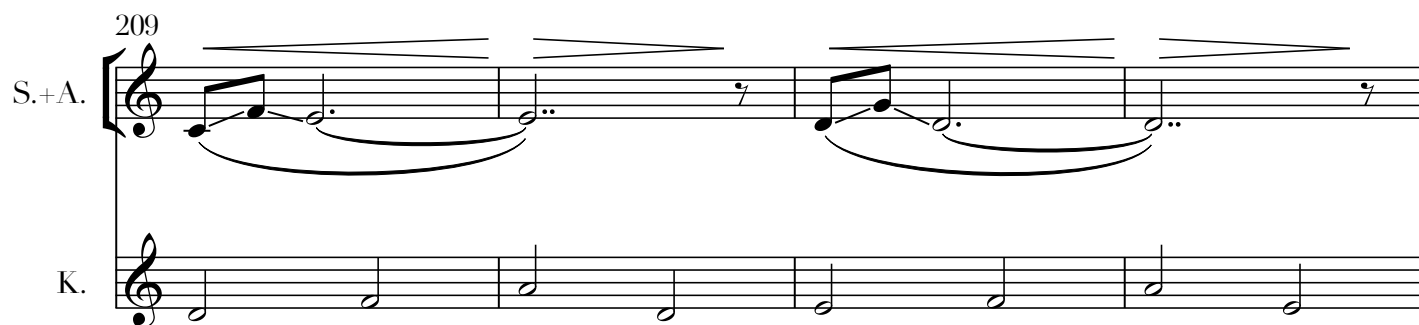
K.



209

S.+A.

K.



213

S.+A. *pp*

K.

217

S.+A.

K.

G

221 *mp*

S.

Lo - hi kul - tai - nen ku - te - vi Ka - la kau - nis kar - ka - ja - vi

mp

A.

Lo - hi kul - tai - nen ku - te - vi Ka - la kau - nis kar - ka - ja - vi

K.

G

p

T.+B.

suo - ta, suo - ta, (sim.)

225 *poco f*

S. *poco f*

A. *poco f*

K.

T.+B. *mf*

Mi - nun lap - sen lau - le - lle - ssa, _____

Mi - nun lap - sen lau - le - lle - ssa, _____

229 *mp*

S. *mp*

A. *mp*

K.

T.+B.

Mi - nun lap - sen lau - le - lle - ssa, _____

Mi - nun lap - sen lau - le - lle - ssa, _____

233 *p*

S. *5*

lau - le - lle - ssa

A. *p*

Mi - nun lap - sen, Mi - nun lap - sen.

K.

T.+B. *pp*



237 Sop. + Altos: air-whistle contours

S.+A.

K.



241

S.+A.

K.

finish on this D at any point in this measure:

245 *p*

S.+A.

K.



a little slower

249 *mp*

S.+A.

Päi - vät suo - ta soi - - te -

K.

p



252

S.+A.

lle - - - ssa

K.

255

S.+A.

K.

T.

B.

p

p

suo - ta, suo - ta, (sim.)

suo - ta, suo - ta, (sim.)



Sopranos & Altos: Improvise using the lyrics "En joua laulamahan" and the D dorian scale (like D minor but with B natural instead of B flat). Sing sustained notes for "en joua," then (optionally) embellish "laulamahan." Follow the scales/harmonies indicated. The sound should gradually cascade, rising and falling. Only about half of the singers should be singing at any given time, entering and exiting at different times for a continuous sound.

259

S.+A.

K.

T.

B.

improvisation begins gradually

Open Repeat:

Repeat as many times as desired, then begin to gradually fade out. Upper voices can fade out before lower voices.

263

S.+A.

K.

T.

B.

Switch from F to F#:



267

S.+A.

K.

T.

B.

Return to F natural

Switch to F#: