## **KIAN RAVAEI**

# **GULISTAN**

for soprano, violoncello, and piano

(score)

ÆI edition

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Part 1 (	Sari Gelin	& Wildwo	ood Flov	ver).	
Part 2 (	(Saye Cha	man & Se	eds of L	_ove)	12

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### Commissioned by Chamber Music Northwest with the generous support of the CMNW Commissioning Fund.

#### PROGRAM NOTE

In *Gulistan*, I bring together traditional songs from my Western and Middle Eastern heritage. The title comes from the thirteenth-century Persian poet Sa'di, whose monumental work *Gulistan* ("flower garden" in Persian) uses flowers as a metaphor for wisdom. Folk songs may be said to represent the collective wisdom of a culture, preserving generations of values and worldviews. Inspired by Sa'di, I chose folk songs that make reference to flowers, each with different metaphorical implications.

Part 1 combines the traditional Azerbaijani song "Sari Gelin" with the American folk song "Wildwood Flower." The former describes a man helplessly longing for his distant lover, while the latter tells the story of a heartbroken woman whose lover has abandoned her. I intertwine the songs, suggesting a dialogue between two inconsolable lovers, each pining for the other.

Part 2 unites two metaphorical commentaries on the nature of love: the traditional Iranian song "Saye Chaman" and the English folk song "Seeds of Love." I set the Iranian melody in an American folk style, and the English melody in a style evoking Iranian classical music. The melodies are often presented in counterpoint—a kind of musical metaphor for the mixture of cultures in my own life.

This work was written expressly for mezzo-soprano Fleur Barron, who shares in common with me a diverse heritage comprising Eastern and Western cultures.

-Kian Ravaei

#### **TEXT & TRANSLATION**

#### Part 1

(Sari Gelin & Wildwood Flower)

Sāchïn üjün hörmazlar gülü sooloo darmazlar sāri galin The tassels at the end of your hair,
The dewy bud of your rose,
Blonde bride.

I'll twine 'mid the ringlets of my long flaxen hair, The lillies so pale and the roses so fair, The myrtle so bright with an emerald hue, And the pale aronatus with eyes of bright blue.

2)

1)

Boo sevdā na sevdādïr sanee mana vermazlar neynim āmān āmān sāri galin What kind of love is this love! They will not give you to me. What can I do? Please, please! Blonde bride.

I'll think of him never, I'll be wildly gay,
I'll charm ev'ry heart and the crowd I will sway,
I'll live yet to see him regret the dark hour
When he won, then neglected, the frail wildwood
flower.

2)

2)

1)

Boo daranin oozoonoo chobān gāytār goozoonoo sāri galin The tallest of this valley, Shepherd, return the lamb,

He taught me to love him, he call'd me his flower That blossom'd for him all the brighter each hour; But I woke from my dreaming, my idol was clay; My visions of love have all faded away. 1) Blonde bride.

Na olā bir gün göram nāzli yārïn üzünü neynim āmān āmān sāri galin

I hope that I may one day see The beautiful face of my beloved. What can I do? Please, please!

1) Blonde bride.

1) Azerbaijani Traditional, "Sarı Gəlin"

Translation by Kian Ravaei with assistance from Marjan Azimi.

2) Maud Irving (1840–1884), from "I'll Twine' Mid The Ringlets"

#### Part 2

(Saye Chaman & Seeds of Love)

Yek gole sāye chaman, sāye chaman Tāze shekofte, tāze shekofte Na dastom besh meerese, besh meerese Na khosh meeyofte, na khosh meeyofte Mastom, mastom, mastom Teeghet boreede shastom A flower in the shadow of a blade of grass Has newly bloomed My hand cannot reach it Nor will it fall on its own I am drunk, I am drunk Your blade has sliced my thumb Beeyā bereem gheble kootee, gheble kootee Ghālee koneem farsh, ghālee koneem farsh Booryāye sorkh o sefeed, sorkh o sefeed Man ghaleeb portash, man ghaleeb portash Mastom, mastom, mastom Teeghet boreede shastom

Beeyā bereem shāhe cherāgh, shāhe cherāgh Ahdee bebandeem, ahdee bebandeem Har koodoom ahd beshkaneem, ahd beshkaneem Kamar nabandeem, kamar nabandeem Mastom, mastom, mastom Teeghet boreede shastom

Yek gole säye chaman, säye chaman Täze shekofte, täze shekofte Na dastom besh meerese, besh meerese Na khosh meeyofte, na khosh meeyofte Mastom, mastom, mastom Teeghet boreede shastom

I sowed the seeds of love And I sowed them in the Spring. I gathered them up in the morning so soon While the small birds do sweetly sing.

My garden was planted well With flowers everywhere, But I had not the liberty to choose for myself The flower that I loved so dear.

The gardener was standing by, I asked him to choose for me. He choosed for me the Violet, the Lily and the Pink, But those I refused all three.

The Violet I did not like Because it bloomed so soon. The Lily and the Pink I did really overthink; So I vowed I would wait till June.

In June there was a red rosebud And that is the flower for me. I oftentimes have plucked that red rosebud Till I gained the willow tree.

The willow tree will twist
And the willow tree will twine.
I oftentimes have wished I were in that young
man's arms
That once had this heart of mine.

Let us go to Gheble Kooti Let us lay out a carpet A mat of red and white I burn like a fiery grill I am drunk, I am drunk, I am drunk Your blade has sliced my thumb

Let us go to Shahe Cheragh Let us make a promise Let us each break the promise And not fasten our waistbands I am drunk, I am drunk, I am drunk Your blade has sliced my thumb

A flower in the shadow of a blade of grass Has newly bloomed My hand cannot reach it Nor will it fall on its own I am drunk, I am drunk Your blade has sliced my thumb Yek gole sāye chaman, sāye chaman Tāze shekofte, tāze shekofte Na dastom besh mirese, besh mirese Na khosh miyofte, na khosh miyofte Mastom, mastom, mastom

A flower in the shadow of a blade of grass Has newly bloomed My hand cannot reach it Nor will it fall on its own 1) I am drunk, I am drunk, I am drunk

Come all you false young men, Do not leave me here to complain, For the grass that has oftentimes been trampled underfoot, Give it time, it will rise again.

> 1) Iranian Traditional, "Yek Gole Saye Chaman" Translation by Kian Ravaei with assistance from Marjan Azimi and Cyrus Salimi.

2)

2) English Traditional, "Seeds of Love"

Vowels

 $\ddot{u} = \ddot{u}ber (German)$ 

All texts are in the public domain.

#### TRANSLITERATION PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

#### Consonants a = matg = game gh = like a guttural "g" $\bar{a} = fall$ (voiceless uvular plosive) e = netj = joyee = keen kh = "ch" in the German word dach ey = pr<u>ey</u> (voiceless uvular fricative) i = bity = yeari = "oo" with unrounded lips (close back unrounded vowel) (All remaining consonants are the same as in English.) o = bowlö = œuvre (French) oo = p<u>oo</u>l

To aid with pronunciation, a spoken recording of the text may be accessed at: kianravaei.com/downloads/gulistan.mp3

#### **IPA TRANSCRIPTION**

#### Part 1

Sāchin üjün hörmazlar [sa.tʃum y.dʒyn hœr.mæz.lær] The tassels at the end of your hair,

gülü sooloo darmazlar [gy.ly su.lu dær.mæz.lær] The dewy bud of your rose,

sāri galin [sa.rī gæ.līn] Blonde bride.

Boo sevdā na sevdādīr [bu sev.da næ sev.da.dur] What kind of love is this love!

sanee mana vermazlar [sæ.ni mæ.næ ver.mæz.lær] They will not give you to me.

neynim āmān āmān [nɛj.nɪm a.man a.man] What can I do? Please, please!

sāri galin [sa.rī gæ.līn] Blonde bride.

Boo daranin oozoonoo [bu dæ.ræ.nɪn u.zu.nu] The tallest of this valley,

chobān gāytār goozoonoo [tʃo.ban gaj.tar gu.zu.nu] Shepherd, return the lamb,

sāri galin [sa.rı gæ.lın] Blonde bride.

Na olā bir gün göram [næ o.la bir gyn gœ.ræm] I hope that I may one day see nāzli yārīn üzünü [naz.lı ja.run y.zy.ny] The beautiful face of my beloved.

neynim āmān āmān [nɛj.nɪm a.man a.man] What can I do? Please, please!

sāri galin [sa.rı gæ.lɪn] Blonde bride.

#### Part 2

Yek gole sāye chaman [jek go.le sp.je chæ.mæn] A flower in the shadow of a blade of grass

Tāze shekofte [tɒ.ze ʃe.kof.te] Has newly bloomed

Na dastom besh meerese [næ dæs.tom bes mi.re.se] My hand cannot reach it

 $\begin{array}{lll} \textbf{Na} & \textbf{khosh} & \textbf{meeyofte} \\ [n \varpi & xo ] & \text{mi.jof.te}] \\ \textit{Nor will it fall on its own} \end{array}$ 

Mastom, mastom, mastom [mæs.tom mæs.tom] I am drunk, I am drunk

Teeghet boreede shastom [ti.get bo.ri.de sæs.tom] Your blade has sliced my thumb

Beeyā bereem gheble kootee [bi.jp be.rim geb.le ku.ti] Let us go to Gheble Kooti

Ghālee koneem farsh [gɒ.li ko.nim færʃ] Let us lay out a carpet

# Booryāye sorkh o sefeed [bur.jp.je sorx o sefid] A mat of red and white

Man ghaleeb portash [mæn gæ.lib por.tæʃ] I burn like a fiery grill

Mastom, mastom, mastom [mæs.tom mæs.tom] I am drunk, I am drunk, I am drunk

Teeghet boreede shastom [ti.get bo.ri.de sæs.tom] Your blade has sliced my thumb

Beeyā bereem shāhe cherāgh [bi.jp be.rim fp.he tfe.rpg] Let us go to Shahe Cheragh

Ahdee bebandeem [æh.di be.bæn.dim] Let us make a promise

Har koodoom ahd beshkaneem [hær ku.dum æhd beʃ.kæ.nim] Let us each break the promise

Kamar nabandeem [kæ.mær næ.bæn.dim] And not fasten our wastebands

Mastom, mastom, mastom [mæs.tom mæs.tom] I am drunk, I am drunk, I am drunk

Teeghet boreede shastom [ti.get bo.ri.de fæs.tom] Your blade has sliced my thumb

#### **ANALYSIS**

In Part 1, I changed the lyric "raven black hair" from "I'll Twine 'Mid The Ringlets" to "long flaxen hair" in order to suggest the blonde bride of "Sari Gelin." Both melodies feature vocal embellishments inspired by their respective folk traditions.

In Part 2, the first 18 measures are inspired by clawhammer banjo playing and Carter Family guitar picking, in which the melody is played on the bass strings. The melody of "Saye Chaman" includes a *koron*, an Iranian microtone which is approximately a quarter-tone flat in relation to 12–tone equal temperament. The *koron* is approximated using quarter-tone accidentals. In mm. 150–167, the cello taps a rhythm on the body of the instrument in the manner of a *tombak*, an Iranian percussion instrument. The piano melody in mm. 169–189 is inspired by Hossein Alizadeh's 7/8 *Chaharmezrabe Mahur*.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

My sincerest thanks to my musical mentors, colleagues, and collaborators, all of whom were essential in the creation of this work: Fariborz Azizi, Fleur Barron, Don Freund, Lucy Fitz Gibbon, Adrian Golay, Dylan Kinneavy and Richard Pearson Thomas. Special thanks to Cyrus Salimi, my mother Marjan Azimi, and my grandmother Parvaneh Monsef for their assistance with translation and pronunciation of the Azerbaijani and Persian texts.

## **GULISTAN**

Azerbaijani Traditional, Maud Irving, Iranian Traditional, English Traditional

### Part 1

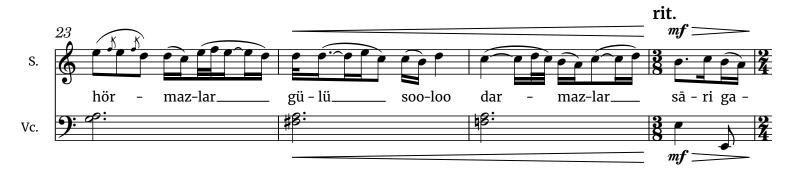
Kian Ravaei (2024)

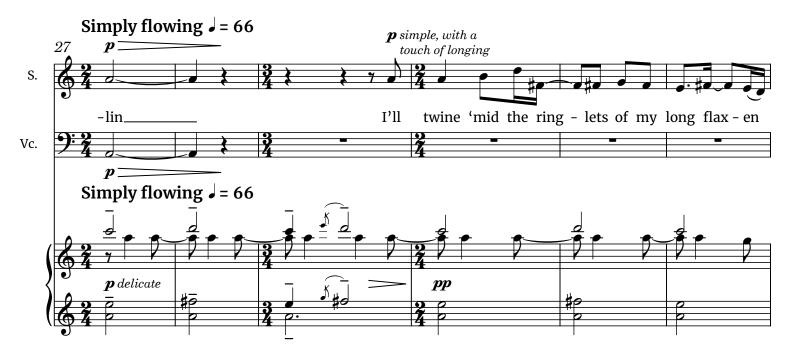
(Sari Gelin & Wildwood Flower)



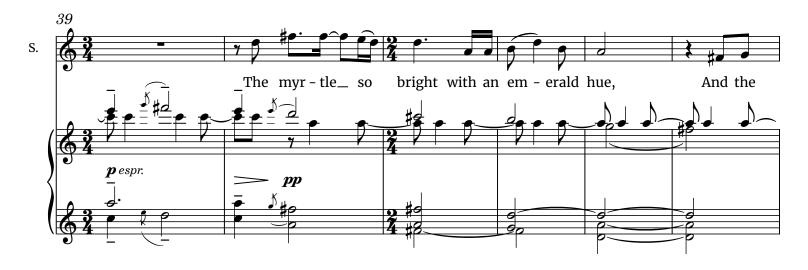
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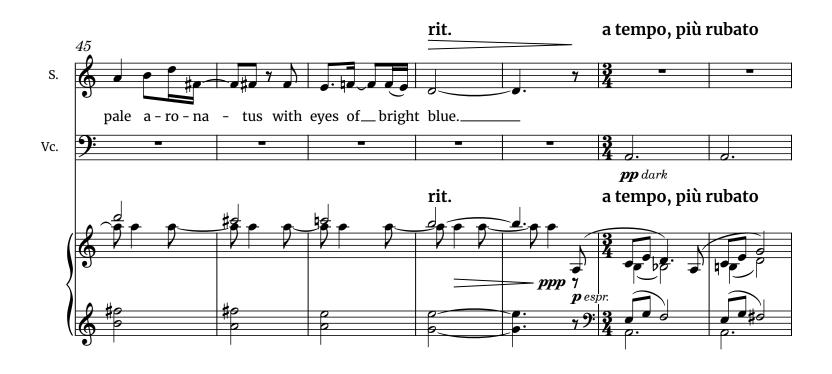


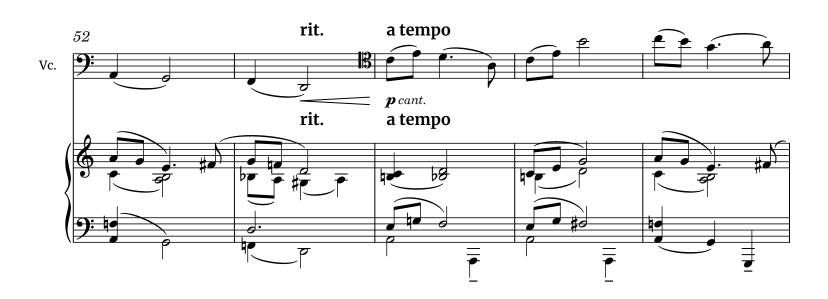




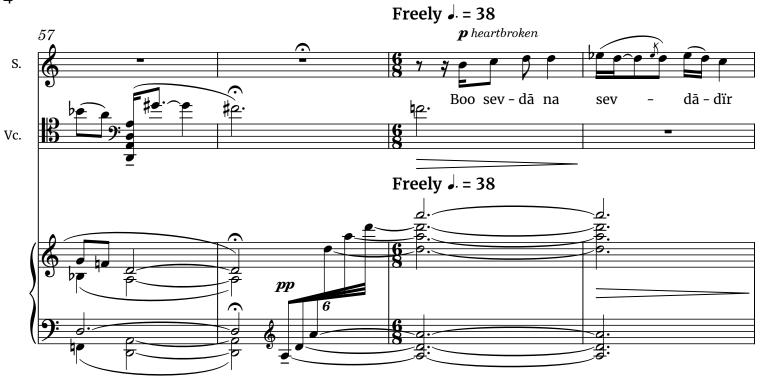




















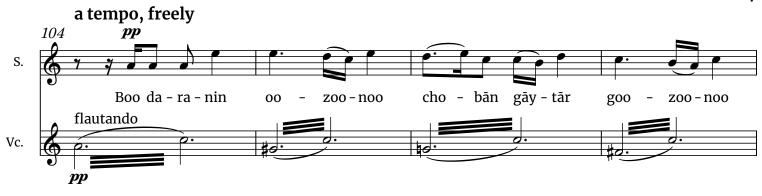


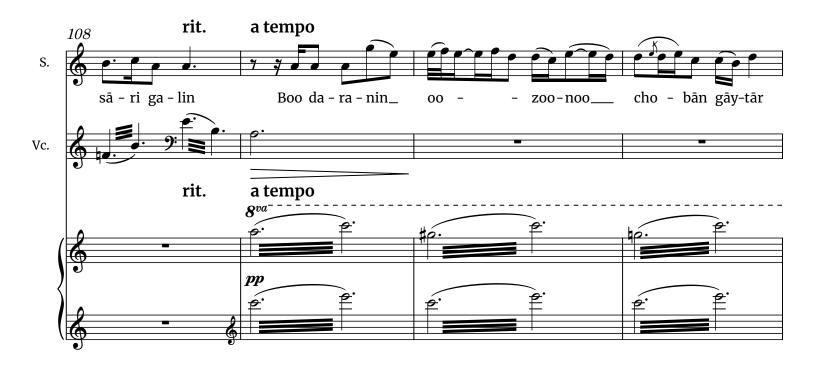


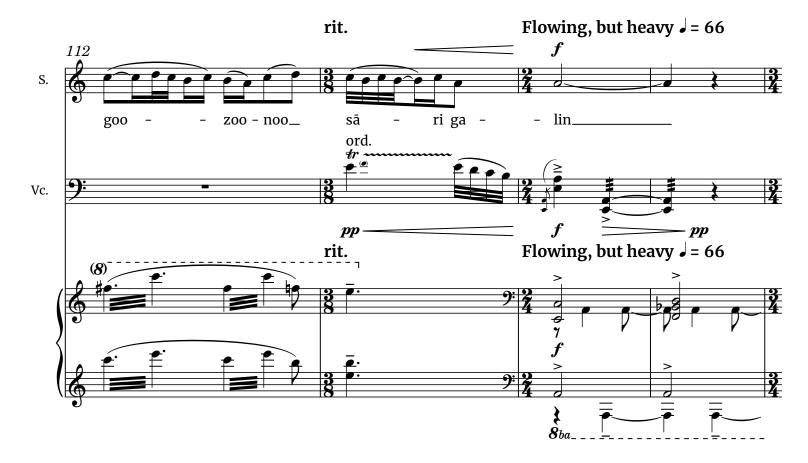


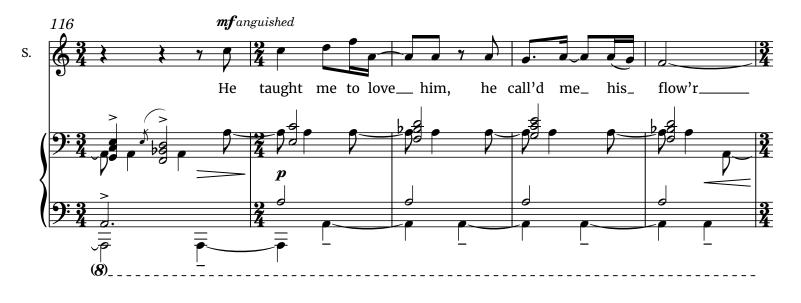


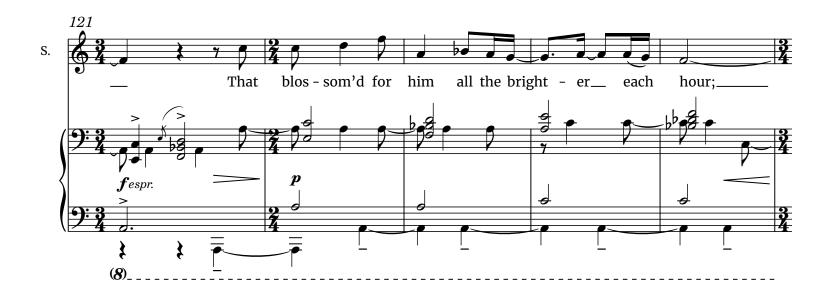


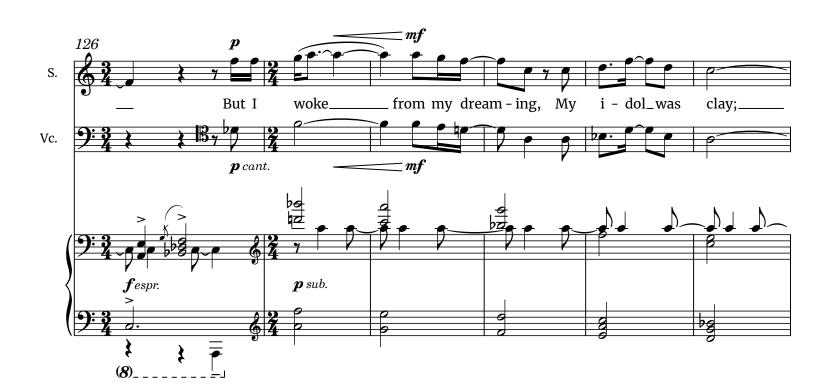


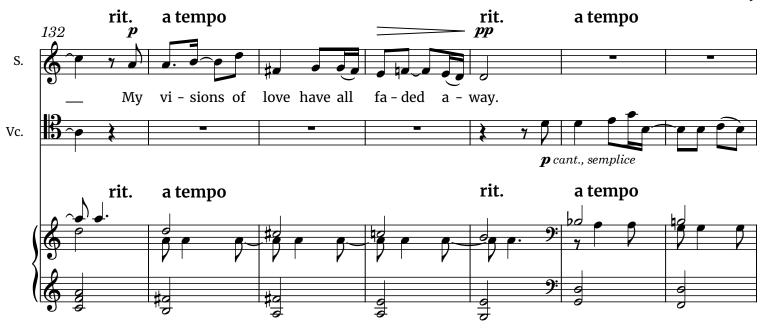






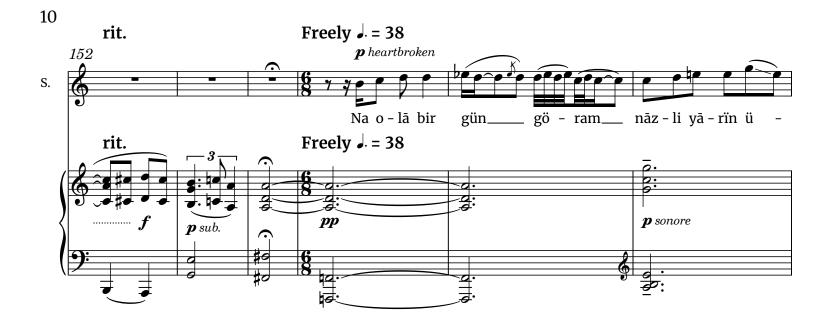


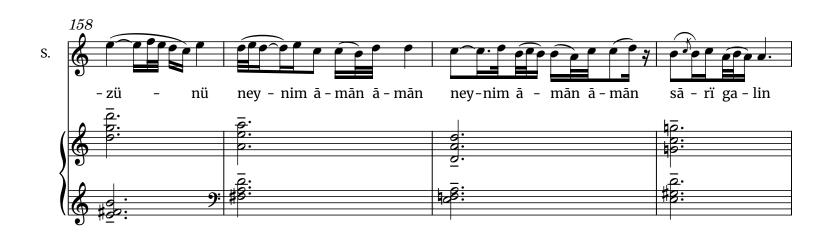










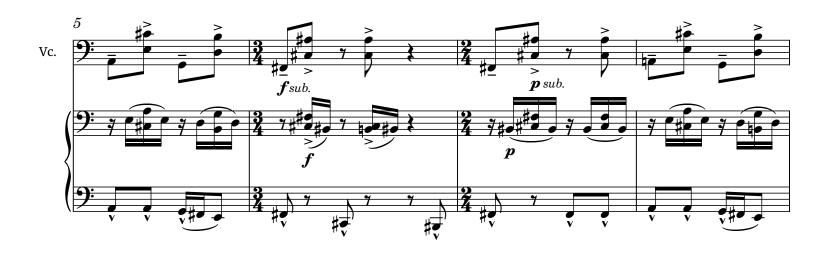






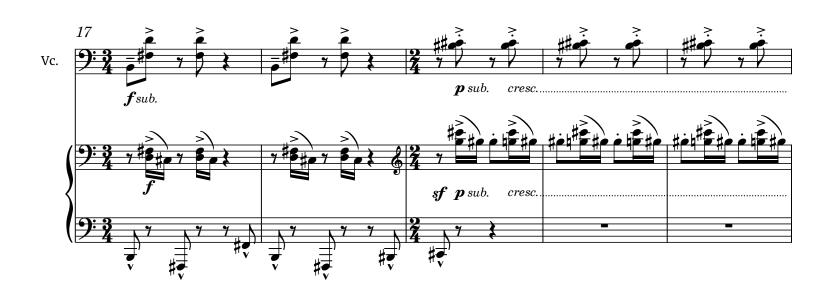
Part 2
(Saye Chaman & Seeds of Love)







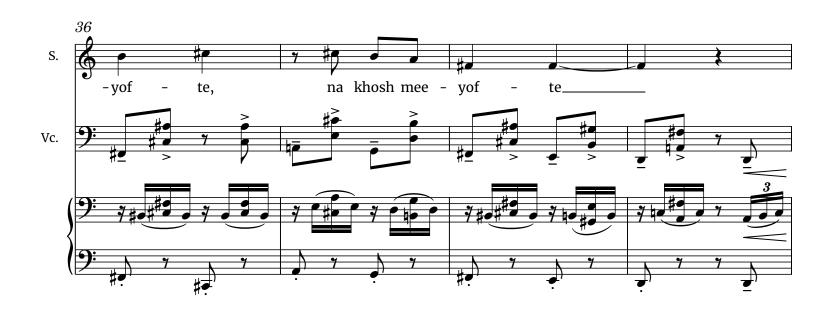














\*)  $\sharp$  =  $\frac{1}{4}$ -tone sharp,  $\frac{1}{4}$  =  $\frac{1}{4}$ -tone flat



