



Vox in Krishna

from *Feasts of Christmas*

Shruthi Rajasekar
SATB choir a cappella



Program Note

Vox in Krishna is from a collection of pieces (*Feasts of Christmas*) that draws parallels between Christian and Hindu mythologies and divine beings Jesus and Krishna. The title of this piece, “Vox in Krishna,” is as much a reference to the original Latin “Vox in Rama” as it is a nod to the dasavatara of Vishnu. The Latin text is connected to the Feast of Holy Innocents. Meanwhile, in Hinduism, Krishna is recognized as an avatar of the god Vishnu – another of His avatars is the deity Rama.

In “Vox in Rama,” Rachel’s voice is heard in the town of Ramah mourning the senseless death of her children which, in the Biblical Book of Matthew, occurs at the hands of the jealous and fearful King Herod. The origin story of the Hindu god Krishna is uncannily similar: a voice prophesizes that the child of King Kamsa’s relative will one day vanquish him. Out of, again, jealousy and fear, the King imprisons his relative Devaki and her husband Vasudeva, and each time a child is born to them, he slaughters it. Their eighth child, Krishna, escapes and ultimately ends Kamsa’s reign of terror.

- Shruthi Rajasekar, 2021

Text

A voice is heard weeping
Rachel, Devaki's children
They are no more

Herod, Kamsa
Killed the children

But Rachel, Devaki:
Know that
Kamsa will be no more
He will be no more

*- Adapted from Matthew 2:18 and
the Bhagavata Purana, Canto 10*

*Co-commissioned by the Institute of Sacred Music of Yale University and
the Department of Music of Princeton University. December 2021*

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Vox in Krishna - Holy Innocents

Shruthi Rajasekar

The musical score is for a four-part vocal setting with piano accompaniment. It is in 4/4 time with a tempo of quarter note = 60. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano). A rehearsal mark 'A' is placed above the first measure of the vocal parts. The lyrics are: "A voice is heard weep - ing_ voice is weep - ing_ Rach - el,_ De - va - ki's". The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and the piano part (rehearsal only) all feature a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure of the phrase. A large, stylized watermark "Shruthi Rajasekar music" is overlaid on the score.

Soprano
A voice is heard weep - ing_ voice is weep - ing_ Rach - el,_ De - va - ki's

Alto
A voice is heard weep - ing_ A voice is weep - ing_ Rach - el,_ De - va - ki's

Tenor
A voice is heard weep - ing_ is weep - ing_ Rach - el,_ De - va - ki's

Bass
mm heard weep - ing_ mm weep - ing_ Rach - el,_ De - va - ki's

Piano (rehearsal only)

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6

S. *mf* *dim.* *p*
 chil - - dren Rach - el, De - va - ki's chil - - dren they are no

A. *mf* *dim.* *p*
 chil - dren Rach - el, Rach - el, De - va - ki's chil - dren they they they they are no

T. *mf* *dim.* *p*
 chil - - dren Rach - el, De - va - ki's chil - - dren they they are no

B. *mf* *dim.* *p*
 chil - - dren Rach - el, De - va - ki's chil - dren they they they they are no

10

S. *pp ghostly* **B**
 more they are no more He - rod He - rod

A. *pp ghostly*
 more they are no more He - - rod He - - rod

T. *pp ghostly*
 more they are no more He - rod He - - rod

B. *pp ghostly*
 more they are no more He - - rod He - - rod

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15

S. He - He - rod He - He - He - rod, He - - rod, He - He - He - rod,

A. He - - rod, He - rod, Kam - sa He - - rod,

T. He - - - rod, He - rod, He - rod, He - Kam - sa He -

B. He - - rod, He - - rod, He - - rod, He - - rod,

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19

S. He - - - rod, He - - rod, Kam - sa He - rod killed the chil - dren *mp*

A. Kam - sa He - Kam - sa Kam - sa Kam - sa killed the chil - dren *mp*

T. He - rod, He - He - rod, Kam - sa Kam - sa killed chil - dren *mp*

B. Kam - sa Kam - sa Kam - He - rod killed the chil - dren *mp*

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24 **C** *cresc. poco a poco*

S. ng ng ng

A. *cresc. poco a poco*
A voice is heard weep - ing A voice is heard weep - ing weep - - ing

T. *cresc. poco a poco*
A voice is heard weep - ing A voice is weep - ing Rach - el De - va - ki

B. *cresc. poco a poco*
ng ng ng

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29 **D** *f* *p*

S. aa Rach - el, Rach - el, De - va - ki:

A. *f* *p*
weep - - - ing Rach - el, Rach - el, De - va - ki: -

T. *f*
weep - ing

B. *f*
weep - ng

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33

S. Rach - el, De - va - ki: Know that, that Kam - sa will be no more But

A. De - va - ki: Kam - sa will be no more

T. *p* ng no more

B. *p* But

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37

S. Rach - el, De - va - ki: Know that Kam - sa will be no more Kam - sa

A. Rach - el, De - va - ki: Know that Kam - sa will be no more that Kam - sa

T. *mm* will be no more that Kam -

B. *mm* Kam Kam

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rit poco a poco

42

S. Kam - sa Kam - sa Kam - sa will be no more He will be no more

A. Kam sa Kam - sa Kam - sa will be no more He will be no more

T. Kam - sa Kam mm He will be no more

B. Kam Kam He will be no more

pp

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Duration: c.3 minutes



Composer and vocalist Shruthi Rajasekar (she/her) is a McKnight Fellow, Jerome Hill Artist Fellow, Associate of the Royal Northern College of Music (ARNCM), winner of the Global Women in Music Award from the United Nations, and a Marshall Scholarship recipient. Shruthi's music reflects her diasporic South Asian identity and deep roots in the Carnatic (South Indian classical) and Western classical idioms. Through her work, Shruthi seeks to bring people together in the pursuit of representation, advocacy, and radical joy.

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