

# PALM TO PALM

*SSAA a cappella*

Vocal ranges



## SHRUTHI RAJASEKAR

*Text by Anna Leader*

*shruthi*  
shruthi  
rajasekar  
music

**Text:**

**Palm to Palm**

My mother's hips,  
Struck through with lightning lines,  
The marks that show how she gave life to me;  
And in her fist where veins run clear and blue  
She still holds my tiny hand in hers.

Palm to palm -  
Love is passed  
From palm to palm.

Now I hold my mother's hand in mine,  
And I will hold my daughter's hand like she held mine,  
And on and on,  
We form a chain -  
We do not know whose hands have touched our own,  
Whose hands we hold,  
Or who will hold our hands in eighty years,  
But we have always known this to be true:

We take our leave with handfuls of love,  
Passed from palm to palm.

- *Anna Leader*

**About:**

Anna Leader is a two-time recipient of the Luxembourg National Literary Prize for Literature, winning this award for her poetry and prose. I asked Anna, my good friend and frequent collaborator, to write in celebration of the shared knowledge of womxn across time and place. The result was this beautiful text. For Anna, "our connection is wisdom that we're born with, and even babies know it— that's why they grab our fingers."

**Performance notes:**

Though stated clearly, tempo indications and even rhythms throughout the piece can be loosely interpreted. The main objective is to create a natural progression of speeds that follows the cadence and pacing of the text.

Vocal ranges

Soprano I

Soprano II

Alto I

Alto II

# Palm to Palm

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Anna Leader

Shruthi Rajasekar

$\text{♩} = 72$  inward  
*p*

Soprano I  
*ng\**

Soprano II  
*ng\**

Alto I  
*mp*  
My mo - ther's hips struck through with light-ning lines

Alto II  
*mp*  
My mo - ther's hips struck through with light-ning lines

Piano  
(rehearsal only)

*\* open-mouthed hum, should be relaxed and easy*

6

S. I  
*mp*  
life to me and in her fist where

S. II  
*mp*  
gave life to me and in her fist where

A. I  
*p*  
the marks that show she gave to me *mm*

A. II  
*p*  
the marks that show how she gave to me *mm*

Pno

Palm to Palm

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10

S. I  
veins run blue she still holds my ti - ny hand in hers

S. II  
veins run clear and blue she still holds my ti - ny hand in hers *pp*

A. I  
ti - ny hand in hers Palm to palm *pp*

A. II  
ti - ny hand in hers Palm to palm *pp*

Pno

shruthi  
rajasekar  
music

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16

S. I  
*p*  
Love is passed from palm to palm.

S. II  
*p*  
Love is passed from palm to palm.

A. I  
*mp*  
to palm to palm to palm to palm to palm to palm palm to palm palm to palm

A. II  
*mp*  
palm to palm to palm to palm palm to palm to palm to palm palm to palm

Pno

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music

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21 *mf* ♩ = 100 \*

S. I Love is passed palm to palm Now I hold my mo - ther's hand in mine, and

S. II Love is passed palm to palm hold my mo - ther's hand

A. I palm to palm palm to palm Now I hold mo - ther's hand in mine, and

A. II palm to palm to palm to palm Now I hold mo - ther's hand in mine,

Pno

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\*This tempo change should be a little business like; the choir is moving on (from the suspended, introspective refrain of "Palm to Palm" to the outward narrative for the listeners)

27 *mp* ♩ = 160 a sudden gust *cresc.*

S. I I will hold my daugh - ter's hand like she held mine, we do not know whose

S. II I will hold my daugh - ter's hand she held mine,

A. I I will hold my daugh - ter's hand she held mine, we do

A. II daugh - ter's hand like she held mine, we

Pno

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31

S. I hands have touched our own whose hands we hold or who will hold hands eight - y

S. II whose hands we hold or who will hold our hands in eight - y

A. I not know who will hands eight - y

A. II do not know who hands

Pno

*mf cresc.* *f* *f* *f*

shruthi rajasekar music

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36

S. I years, But we have al - ways known this to be true:

S. II years, But we have al - ways known this to be true:

A. I years, But we have al - ways known this to be true: that love is passed from

A. II But we have al - ways known this to be true: that love is passed from

Pno

*mp* *mp* *mp* *mf* *mf*

rit.....a tempo (♩ = 102)

shruthi rajasekar music

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42

S. I *mp* passed from

S. II *mp* As we take our leave with hand-fuls of love

A. I palm to palm. Love is passed palm to palm

A. II palm to palm. Love is passed palm to palm

Pno

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46

S. I *mp* palm to palm we form a chain she still

S. II *p* on and on form a chain from palm to palm she still

A. I *p* on and on form a chain palm - - *mm*

A. II *p* on and on form a chain from palm to palm

Pno

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\* This passage should be reminiscent of m.9-14, but not identically sung; the color should demonstrate reflection

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52

S. I  
holds my ti - ny hand in hers *mm* \_\_\_\_\_ to palm.

S. II  
holds my hand in hers \_\_\_\_\_ Love is passed from palm to palm.

A. I  
*mp*  
hers Love is passed palm to palm.

A. II  
*mp*  
*mm* \_\_\_\_\_ to palm.

Pno

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Duration: c.3'



"[Shruthi] Rajasekar has allowed boldness to be her guiding light in the journey through her dense and evocative creativity... Rajasekar will continue to sail forward, into a cartography of her own delineation."

— The Seattle Times

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. Her creative work highlights identity, community, and joy. Shruthi's music reflects her deep roots in the Carnatic (South Indian classical) and Western classical idioms, her diasporic South Asian background, and her belief in the importance of community, gathering and civic engagement. Globally, her compositions have been featured at the Royal Albert Hall (London, UK), the Cannes Film Festival (France), the National Centre for Performing Arts (Mumbai, India), Victoria Concert Hall (Singapore), and the United Nations' COP 26 (Glasgow, UK).

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