



# Monkfish

for SATB choir, with  
divisi, and Soprano  
soloist

Alexa Letourneau

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for SATB Choir with divisi and  
Soprano soloist

Alexa Letourneau

8'30"

September 2023



noteheads containing an x indicate non-pitched sounds produced with the mouth, such as θ, ʃ, and tʰ. These stems always point down.



hairpins with a circled tip indicate to or from niente.



box notation indicates the repetition of the material within the box for the duration of the bold line.



X noteheads indicate body percussion, such as snap, clap, and stomp. These stems always point up.

All glissandi (except those in box notation) take place for the full duration of the preceding note. Those within box notation are performed at the performer's individual discretion.

All durational notation is entirely approximate; the conductor should move along at the speed that feels best for the ensemble.

# Monkfish Text

<u>Icelandic Text</u>	<u>IPA Pronunciation</u>	<u>English Translation</u>
meira en þú veist...	'mei:ra 'ɛ:n θu veist	more than you know...
meira en þú vilt vita...	'mei:ra 'ɛ:n θu 'viʔt' vi:ta	more than you want to know...
hún leynir á sér	hu:n 'lei:nɪr au: sɛ:r	there's more to her than meets the eye.
ég er skötuselur, botnbúi.	jɛɣ ɛ:r skœ:ty'sɛ:lɪr, pɔhtn'pu:ɪ.	i am a monkfish, a bottom dweller.
koma dýpra í skilning	'kʰo:ma 'ti:pra i: 'skɪlɪnɪŋ	come deeper into understanding
jæja?	'jaija?	are you ready?
jæja?	'jai:ja?	are you coming?

IPA symbols used, with Standard American English reference

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f - f in fit	a - a in bra
m - m in my	e - a in may
h - h in hi	ɛ - e in bed
j - y in you	i - ee in see
k - k in kiss	ɪ - i in bit
l - l in let	ɔ - au in taut
m - m in me	u - oo in boo
n - n in no	
ŋ - ng in sing	ʔ - beginning of each syllable in uh-oh
p - p in pie	
s - s in sit	r - <i>no exact equivalent</i> ; rolled r
ʃ - sh in she	ɫ - <i>no exact equivalent</i> ; l in let, but voiceless
t - t in tap	ɣ - <i>no exact equivalent</i> ; "sustained" g as in go
θ - th in thing	ʏ - <i>no exact equivalent</i> ; ü in German, i.e. schützen
v - v in van	œ - <i>no exact equivalent</i> ; ö in German, i.e. Hölle



# Monkfish

after Meredith Monk and the Icelandic musical tradition

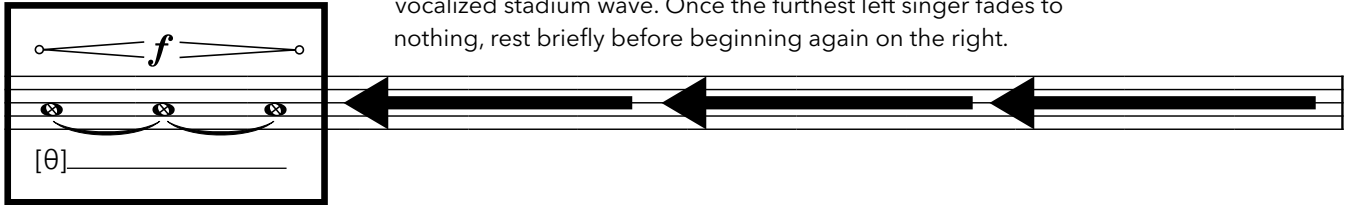
for SATB Chorus with divisi and Soprano Solo

words and music by  
Alexa Letourneau

## Freely, as waves in the sea

Pass this cell from stage right to stage left, as if performing a vocalized stadium wave. Once the furthest left singer fades to nothing, rest briefly before beginning again on the right.

All



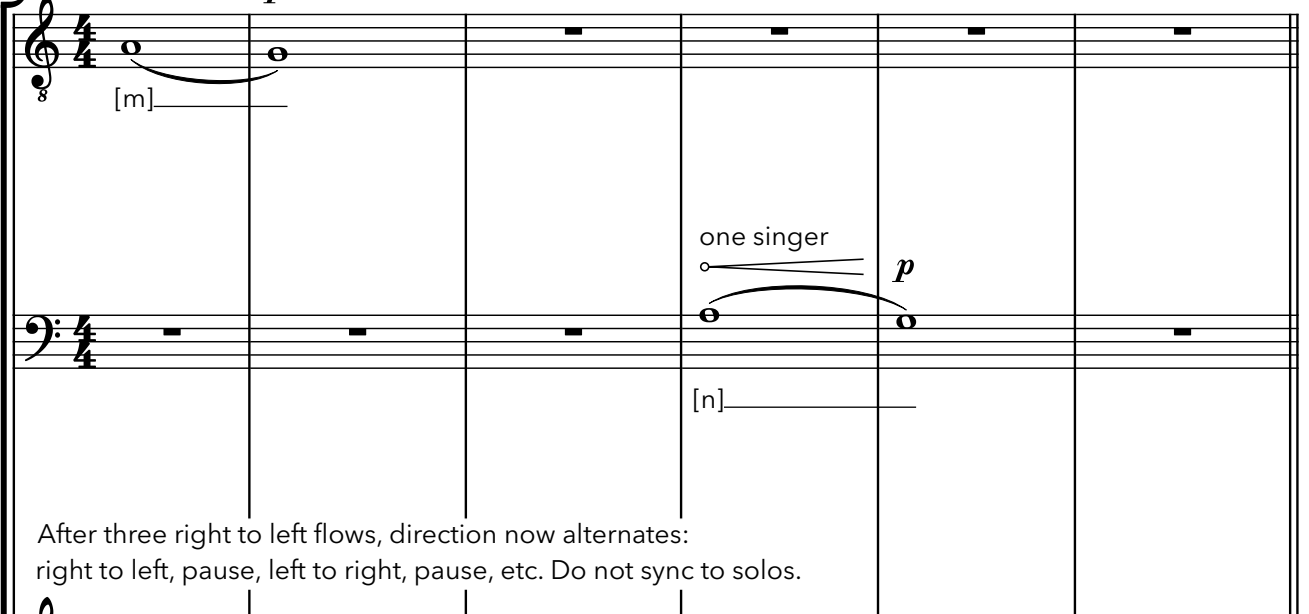
## Mostly serene, with an urgent undercurrent ♩ = 52

2

one singer

*p*

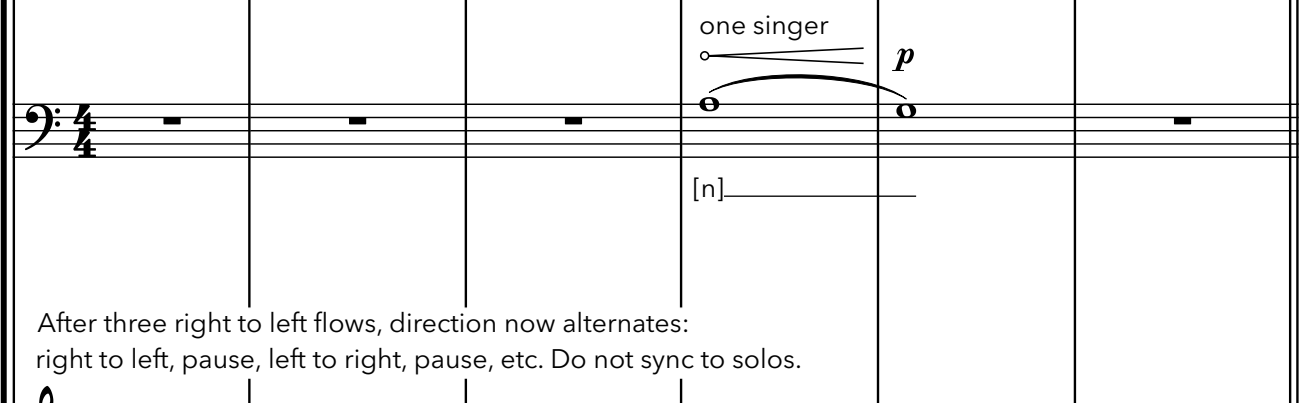
T.



one singer


*p*

B.



After three right to left flows, direction now alternates:  
right to left, pause, left to right, pause, etc. Do not sync to solos.

All



Monkfish, p. 2

**8**

one singer  
*mp* ————— *mf* >

S. [a]

one singer  
*mp*

A. [ŋ] [œ]

T. (one singer) *mf* [ja] [ja] tutti *pp*

All individually repeat cell, without passing around

**14** **17**

S. *p* tutti like distant bells [ŋ] [vŋ] [vŋ] [vŋ]

A. like distant bells *p* [vŋ] [ŋ]

T. like distant bells *p* [vŋ]

B.

20

*pp* [a] *mfp* [ja] *p* [ja]

S. [a] [e] [ja]

A. a] [ja] [e] [ja]

T. [e] [ja] [e] [ja]

B. [ja] [ei] [ja]

26

*f* *f* *mp* *f* *f* *mp* *f*

S. mei-ra en þú veist mei-ra en

A. [mei] mei-ra en þú vilt vi-ta

T. mei - ra vi-ta, mei-ra en þú veist

B. mei - ra mei-ra en þú



29 **30** *mp* *p*

S. *mp* *p*  
 — þú veist mei-ra en þú veist

A. *mp* *p*  
 en þú vilt vi-ta mei-ra en þú vilt vi-ta

T. *mp*  
 en þú vilt, mei-ra en þú vi-ta mei - ra vi - ta

B. *mp*  
 veist mei - ra

32 **34** *mp* *p* *mf*

S. *mp* *p* *mf*  
 hún ley - nir á sér mei-ra

A. *p* *mf*  
 hún ley - nir á sér mei-ra

T. *p* *mf*  
 hún ley - nir hún ley - nir á sér mei-ra

B. 1 *pp* *mf*  
 hún ley - nir mei - ra

B. 2 *pp* *mf*  
 hún ley - nir mei-ra



36

The musical score is arranged in a system with seven staves. The vocal parts (S.1, S.2, A.1, A.2, T.1, T.2) are in treble clef, and the bass part (B.) is in bass clef. The score is divided into four measures. The first measure is in 7/8 time, and the second and third measures are in 4/4 time. The fourth measure is in 7/8 time. Dynamic markings include *mp*, *f*, *pp*, and *mf*. The lyrics are: [ei] [ja] [fja] [ei] [ja] [fja] [ja] [jœ] [ei] [ja]. The bass part lyrics are: [ei] mei-ra en þú veist.

**S. 1**  
*mp* [ei] [ja] [fja] [ei] [ja] [fja] [ja] *f* [jœ] [ei] [ja]

**S. 2**  
*pp* mei - ra mei - ra

**A. 1**  
*mp* [ei] [ja] [fja] [ei] [ja] [fja] [ja] *f* [jœ] [ei] [ja]

**A. 2**  
*pp* mei - ra mei - ra

**T. 1**  
*mp* [ei] [ja] [fja] [ei] [ja] [fja] [ja] *f* [jœ] [ei] [ja]

**T. 2**  
*pp* mei - ra mei - ra

**B.**  
*mf* [ei] *f* mei-ra en þú veist

40

S. 1  
[ei] [ei] [ei] [ei] [ja]

S. 2  
*mf* *f*  
en pú vilt vi - ta\_\_  
*f*  
mei - ra

A. 1  
[ei] [ei] [ei] [ei] [ja]

A. 2  
*f*  
mei - ra

T. 1  
[ei] [ei] [ei] [ei] [ei] [ja]

T. 2  
*mf* *f*  
mei - ra\_\_ vilt vi - ta\_\_  
*f*  
mei - ra

B.  
*mp* *f*  
mei - ra  
mei - ra

47

With Playful Intensity ♩ = 104

44

(in time) *p* — *mf*

S. 1  
mei-ra

S. 2

A. 1  
[a] [e] [e] [e] [e]

A. 2  
[e] [e] [e] [e]

T. 1  
mei-ra  
mei-ra

T. 2  
mei-ra  
mei-ra

B.  
mei-ra

49

S. *mp*  
[fja] [fja] [fja]

A. *sim.*  
[e] [e] [e] [e] [e] [e]

T. *mp*  
[ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja]

B.

54

S. *mp*  
[fja] [fja] [fja-ja - ja] [fja-ja-ja]

A. [e] [e] [e] [e] [e] [e]

T. [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja]

B.

58

snap snap sim.

S. [fja] [fja] [fja] [fja] [fja] [fja] [fja]

A. [e] [e] [e] [e] [e] [e] [e] [e-?e-?e] [e]

T. [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja]

B. [t] [t] [t] [t] [t] [t] [t] [t] [t]

63

66

goat trill *f*

S. Solo [jœ]

S. [fja] [fja] [fja] [fja] [fja]

A. [e] [e] [e-?e-?e] [e] [e] [e] [e-?e-?e] [e]

T. [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja]

B. [t] [t] [t] [t] [t] [t] [t] [t]

67

S. Solo

kv - tl] [e - ?e - ?e] [ja]

S.

[fja] [fja] [ja - ja - e - ja - e - ja] [fja] [fja]

A.

[e] [e] [e] [e] [e] [e] [e]

T.

[ja] [ja] [ja] [e - ?e - ?e] [ja] [ja] [ja]

B.

[t4] [t4] [t4 - e - ja - e - ja - e]

70 **71**

S. Solo

[fja - t4a - jœ - kv] - - - t4]

*fp* *clap* *clap* *sim.*

S. [fja] [fja] [fja] [fja] [fja]

*fp* *stomp* *stomp* *sim.*

A. [fja] [e] [e] [e] [e]

*fp* *snap* *snap* *sim.*

T. [fja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja]

*fp*

B. [fja] [fja - t4a - jœ - kv]

73

S. [ja - ja - e - ja - e - ja] *clap* *clap* *sim.*

[fja] [fja] [fja] [fja]

*clap* *stomp* *stomp* *sim.*

A. [fja] [e - ja - e - ja] [e] [e] [e] [e]

*clap* *snap* *snap* *sim.*

T. [jœ] [kv] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja]

B. [jœ]



76

S. Solo *fp* [jœ - kv - tl] *f*

S. *f* *p* [fja] [fja] [fja]

A. *f* 3 *p* [e - ?e - ?e] [e] [e] [e]

T. *f* *p* [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja]

B. *fp* [jœ - kv - tl] *f*

78

S. Solo clap *mfp* [ja - fja]

S. [fja] [fja] [fja] [fja] [fja] [fja]

A. [e - ja - e - ja] [e - ja - e - ja] [e - ja - e - ja] [e - ja - e - ja]

T. [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja]

B. clap *mp* [?e - ?e - ?e] [tʃ] [tʃ] [tʃ] [e - ja - fja - tʃa]

81

S. [fja] [fja] [jœ - kv - tl] [jœkv-tl] [ʔe-ʔe - ja]

A. ja[e-ja-e - ja][e-ja - e - ja][e-ja-e - ja] [e-ja-e - ja][e-ja-e - ja][e-ja-e - ja][e- ja][e-ja-e - ja][e- ja][e-ja-e - ja]

T. [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja]

B. [tʃ] [tʃ] [tʃ] [tʃ]

stomp

85

87

S. [e-ja-e-ja - fja] [jœkv-tl] [ʔe - ʔe - ʔe]

A. ja - e - ja[e-ja-e] [ja - ja - ja] [e-ja-e - ja][e-ja-e - ja][e-ja-e - ja][e- ja][e-ja-e - ja]

T. [ja] [ja] [ja] [ʔe-ʔe-ʔe] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja] [ja]

B. [tʃ] [tʃ] [e-ja-e-ja] [e-ja-e-ja]

stomp

stomp clap

89

S. clap clap

A. ja - e - ja [e - ja - e - ja] [e - ja - e - ja] [e - ja -

T. [ja] [ja]

B. mp stomp 3 stomp [t4]

[ja]

[t4]

91

S. snap snap pp sim.

A. e - ja] [e - ja - e - ja] [e - ja - e - ja] [e - ja - e - ja] [e - ja - e - ja] [e -

T. [ja] [ja] pp snap snap sim.

B. stomp 3 3 [t4]

[t4]

[t4]

[t4]

[t4]

95

(2+2+2+3) (snap) *f* clap snap snap *sim.*

S. [fja] [fja] [fja] [fja]

(2+2+2+3) *f* clap

A. [e] [e - ja - fja - tʰa] [e - ja] [e - ja - e -

(2+2+2+3) *f* clap

T. [ja] [ja] [ja] [e - ja - fja - tʰa] [ja] [ja]

(2+2+2+3) *f* (stomp) clap

B. [tʰ] [tʰ] [e - ja - fja] [e - ja] [e - ja]

97

S. [fja] [fja] [e] [ja] [e] [e] [ja] [e]

A. - ja] [e - ja] [e - ja - fja - tʰa] [e - ja - fja - tʰa]

T. [ja] [e - ja - fja - tʰa] [e - ja - fja - tʰa]

B. [e] [ja] [e - ja - e - ja] [e - ja - e - ja] [e - ja - e - ja] [e - ja - e - ja]

stomp 3 stomp

tʰ

101

S. [ ]

A. *mp* snap

T. stomp

B. *p*

ja[e-ja-e - ja][e-ja - e - ja][e-ja-e - ja] [e-ja] [e-ja][e-ja] [e - je]

105 106

S. Solo *mp* *f*

S. *f*

A. *f*

T. *f*

B. *f*

Ég er skö - tu - se - lur skö - tu - se -

[t♯] bo - tn - bú - i

[f] bo - tn - bú - i

[t♯] bo - tn - bú - i

[f] bo - tn - bú - i

bo - tn - bú - i

109

S. Solo

S.

A.

T.

B.

- lur\_ bo-tn bú-i\_ hún  
 bú - i\_ Ég er skö-tu - se - lur,  
 bú - i\_ Ég er hún skö-tu-se-lur, Ég er  
 skö-tu - se - lur\_ bo-tn - bú-i\_ skö - tu - se - lur  
 skö-tu - se - lur\_ bo-tn - bú-i\_ Ég er bo -  
 bú - i skö - tu - se - lur

113

S. Solo

S.

A.

T.

B.

*ff*  
 skö-tu - se - lur  
*ff*  
 bo-tn - bú-i skö-tu - se - lur skö-tu - se - lur\_  
*ff*  
 - tn - bú-i skö-tu - se - lur skö-tu - se - lur\_  
*ff*  
 skö-tu - se - lur bo - tn  
*ff*  
 skö-tu - se - lur bo - tn

117

S. Solo

S.

A.

T.

B.

Ég er í, í bo - tn bú -

Ég er bo - tn bú -

bú - i

bú - i

120

S. Solo

S.

A.

T.

B.

skö - tu - se - lur

i bo - tn bú - i

i bo - tn bú - i

Ég er í bo - tn bú - i

Ég er í bo - tn bú - i

*mf* *f* *ff*

*mf* *f* *ff*

*mf* *f* *ff*

*mf* *f* *ff*

*mf* *f* *ff*



15"

123

(exactly 15 attacks)

S. Solo

spoken; repeat freely  
*ff*

[?e] rearticulate ?, quasi goat trill

S. 1  
ei

spoken; repeat freely  
*ff*

S. 2  
ja

spoken; repeat freely  
*ff*

A. 1  
fja

spoken; repeat freely  
*ff*

A. 2  
tʃa

spoken; repeat freely  
*ff*

T. 1  
jœ

spoken; repeat freely  
*ff*

T. 2  
kv

spoken; repeat freely  
*ff*

B. 1  
tʃ

B. 2

**124**

**Stoic and Indignant ♩ = 104**

S. 1

S. 2

A. 1

A. 2

T. 1

T. 2

B. 1

B. 2

*f*

ko - ma - dý - pra

15"

126

S. 1 *p* repeat in your own time, moving freely between pitches  
skilning

S. 2 *p* repeat in your own time, moving freely between pitches  
skilning

A. 1 *p* repeat in your own time, moving freely between pitches  
skilning

A. 2 *p* repeat in your own time, moving freely between pitches  
skilning

T. 1 *p* repeat in your own time, moving freely between pitches  
skilning

T. 2 *p* repeat in your own time, moving freely between pitches  
skilning

B. 1 *f* *p* repeat in your own time, moving freely between pitches  
í skil - ning skilning

B. 2 *f* *p* repeat in your own time, moving freely between pitches  
í skil - ning skilning

15"

gradually transition to A only

129

*ff*

S. 1

*ff*

gradually transition to E only

S. 2

*ff*

gradually add in B-flats

A. 1

*ff*

A. 2

*ff*

T. 1

*ff*

T. 2

*ff*

gradually transition to A only

B. 1

*ff*

gradually transition to E only

B. 2

130

15"

S. 1

S. 2

A. 1

A. 2

T. 1

T. 2

B. 1

B. 2

*mp*

*mp*

gradually stop including B-natural

gradually transition to D only

10"

131

return to wave effect

*f*

[f] \_\_\_\_\_

S. 1

return to wave effect

*f*

[f] \_\_\_\_\_

S. 2

A. 1

A. 2

T. 1

T. 2

return to wave effect

*f*

[f] \_\_\_\_\_

B. 1

return to wave effect

*f*

[f] \_\_\_\_\_

B. 2

10"

return to wave effect

132

A. 1

A. 2

T. 1

T. 2

All

The musical score consists of five staves. Staves A. 1 and T. 2 are marked with a circled '132' and a box containing a dynamic marking 'f' with hairpins, a slur over three notes, and a bracketed instruction '[f]'. Staves A. 1 and T. 2 also feature a 'return to wave effect' instruction with a horizontal line above the staff. Staves A. 2 and T. 1 have a horizontal line above the staff. The 'All' staff at the bottom has a thick black bar with arrows pointing right and left, indicating a specific performance technique. A '10"' instruction is at the top left, with a line extending across the top of the page.



15"

133

S. Solo

*f* *p* *ff* *mf* like an echo

jæ - ja? jæ - ja?

A. 2

return to wave effect

*f*

[f] \_\_\_\_\_

T. 1

return to wave effect

*f*

[f] \_\_\_\_\_

All

10"

134

All

tutti (not passing back and forth) *fff* clap!

[f] \_\_\_\_\_