



# Everyone Sings: A guide to open singing

Tom Johnson

Grand Prix of Polish Choral Music 2025



- Tom Johnson
- Violinist & Conductor
- Open Singing Leader

# What is open singing?

- Emphasis on connection
- Joy of singing
- Process not product
- Different then normal rehearsal



# Goals during Open Singing

- Everybody Happy
- Everybody involved
- Something for Everybody



# Throw Catch

Jikeleza = turn around (Xhosa) from East London in South Africa





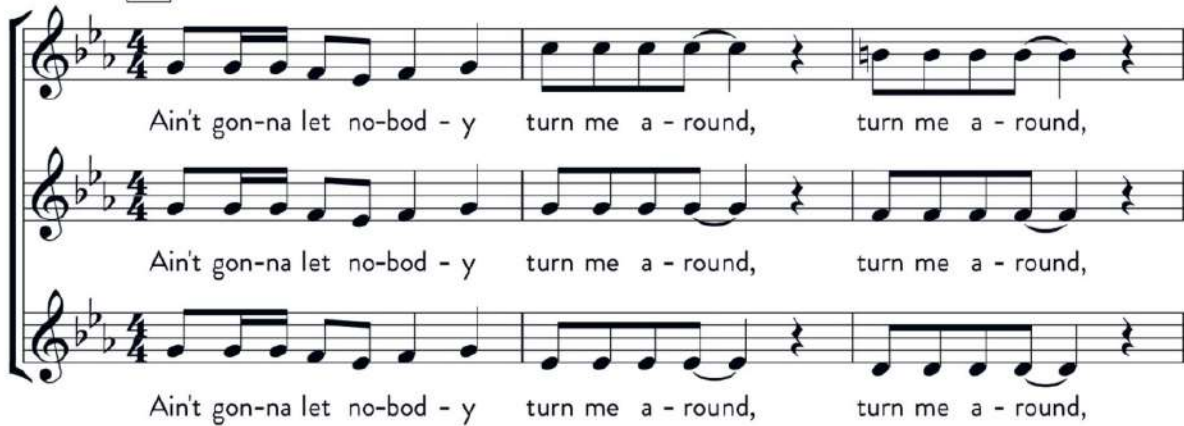
# Preparation: 1 song

- Study the score
  - Find the entrance
  - Find the difficulties
  - How to avoid them
- 
- Make a plan
  - What & how

# AIN'T GONNA LET NOBODY TURN ME AROUND

African-American spiritual with additional text from 'Words Like Freedom' by Langston Hughes  
Arrangement by Rollo Dilworth

A



Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,

Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,

Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,



turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na


turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na



keep on walk-in', keep on talk-in', march-in' up to Free-dom  
sing-in' shout-in'

keep on walk-in', keep on talk-in', march-in' up to Free-dom  
sing-in' shout-in'

keep on, keep on march-in' up to Free-dom



Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

# AIN'T GONNA LET NOBODY TURN ME AROUND

African-American spiritual with additional text from 'Words Like Freedom' by Langston Hughes

Arrangement by Rollo Dilworth

**A**

[illegible]

turn me a-round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod-y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a-round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod-y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a-round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod-y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

keep on walk-in', sing-in' keep on talk-in', shout-in' march-in' up to Free-dom

keep on walk-in', sing-in' keep on talk-in', shout-in' march-in' up to Free-dom

keep on, keep on march-in' up to Free-dom

Land, \_\_\_\_\_ march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

Land, \_\_\_\_\_ march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

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Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round I'm gon-na

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

keep on walk-in', sing-in' keep on talk-in', shout-in' march-in' up to Free-dom

keep on walk-in', sing-in' keep on talk-in', shout-in' march-in' up to Free-dom

keep on, keep on march-in' up to Free-dom

Land, march-in' up to Free-dom Land!

Land, march-in' up to Free-dom Land!

Land, march-in' up to Free-dom Land!

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Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,

Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,

This block contains the first system of the musical score, featuring three staves in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats. The melody is highlighted with a red box. The lyrics are: 'Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,'.

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

This block contains the second system of the musical score, featuring three staves in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats. The melody is highlighted with a red box. The lyrics are: 'turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na'.

keep on walk-in', keep on talk-in', march-in' up to Free-dom  
sing-in' shout-in'

keep on walk-in', keep on talk-in', march-in' up to Free-dom  
sing-in' shout-in'

keep on, keep on march-in' up to Free-dom

This block contains the third system of the musical score, featuring three staves in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats. The lyrics are: 'keep on walk-in', keep on talk-in', march-in' up to Free-dom sing-in' shout-in'.

Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

This block contains the fourth system of the musical score, featuring three staves in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats. The lyrics are: 'Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!'.

# AIN'T GONNA LET NOBODY TURN ME AROUND

African-American spiritual with additional text from "Words Like Freedom" by Langston Hughes  
Arrangement by Rollo Dilworth

A

[illegible]

turn me a-round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod-y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a-round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod-y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a-round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod-y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

keep on walk-in', sing-in' keep on talk-in', shout-in' march-in' up to Free-dom

keep on walk-in', sing-in' keep on talk-in', shout-in' march-in' up to Free-dom

keep on, keep on march-in' up to Free-dom

Land, \_\_\_\_\_ march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

Land, \_\_\_\_\_ march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

Land, \_\_\_\_\_ march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

# AIN'T GONNA LET NOBODY TURN ME AROUND

African-American spiritual with additional text from 'Words Like Freedom' by Langston Hughes  
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A

Musical score for the first system of the song. It consists of three staves in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody is on the top staff, with the lyrics 'Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,' written below it. The bottom two staves provide harmonic accompaniment.

Musical score for the second system of the song. It consists of three staves in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody continues on the top staff with the lyrics 'turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na'. The bottom two staves provide harmonic accompaniment.

Musical score for the third system of the song. It consists of three staves in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody on the top staff includes the lyrics 'keep on walk-in', sing-in', keep on talk-in', shout-in', and 'march-in' up to Free-dom'. The phrase 'march-in' up to Free-dom' is highlighted with a yellow box. The bottom two staves provide harmonic accompaniment.

Musical score for the fourth system of the song. It consists of three staves in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody on the top staff includes the lyrics 'Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!'. The phrases 'Land,' and 'march-in' up to Free - dom Land!' are highlighted with yellow boxes. The bottom two staves provide harmonic accompaniment.

# AIN'T GONNA LET NOBODY TURN ME AROUND

African-American spiritual with additional text from 'Words Like Freedom' by Langston Hughes

Arrangement by Rollo Dilworth

**A**

[illegible]

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

The image shows a musical score for the song "Keep on Marching" in 3/4 time. It consists of three staves. The first two staves have lyrics: "keep on walk-in', sing-in'" and "keep on talk-in', shout-in'", followed by "march-in' up to Free-dom". The third staff has lyrics: "keep on," and "keep on march-in' up to Free-dom". A yellow box highlights the final measure of the first staff, which contains the melody for "march-in' up to Free-dom".

keep on walk-in', sing-in' keep on talk-in', shout-in' march-in' up to Free-dom

keep on walk-in', sing-in' keep on talk-in', shout-in' march-in' up to Free-dom

keep on, keep on march-in' up to Free-dom

Land, \_\_\_\_\_ march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

Land, \_\_\_\_\_ march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

Land, \_\_\_\_\_ march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

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**A**

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Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,

Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

keep on walk-in', keep on talk-in', march-in' up to Free-dom  
sing-in' shout-in'

keep on walk-in', keep on talk-in', march-in' up to Free-dom  
sing-in' shout-in'

keep on, keep on march-in' up to Free-dom

Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

# AIN'T GONNA LET NOBODY TURN ME AROUND

African-American spiritual with additional text from 'Words Like Freedom' by Langston Hughes  
Arrangement by Rollo Dilworth

A

Musical score for the first system of the song. It consists of three staves in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody is on the top staff, with piano accompaniment on the middle and bottom staves. The lyrics are: "Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,".

Musical score for the second system of the song. It consists of three staves in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody is on the top staff, with piano accompaniment on the middle and bottom staves. The lyrics are: "turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na". The phrase "I'm gon-na" is highlighted with a green box.

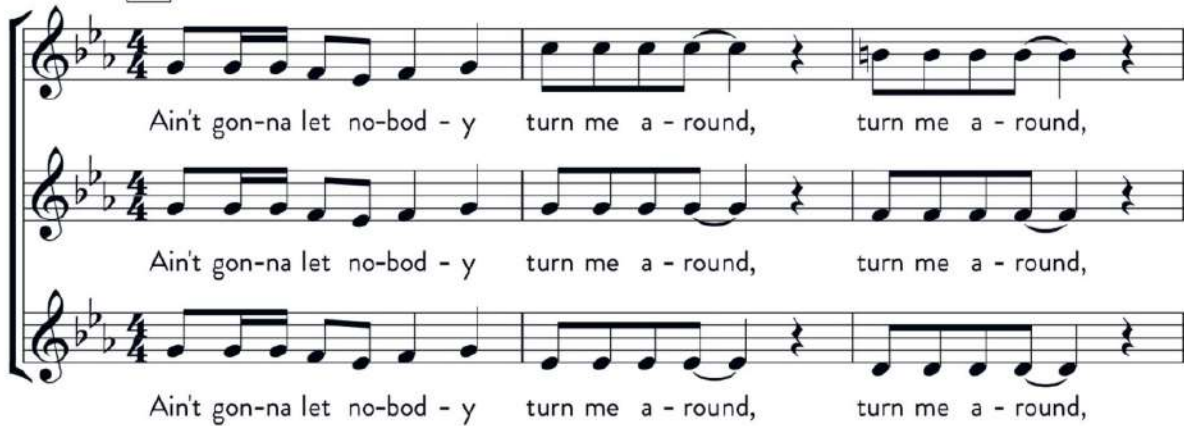
Musical score for the third system of the song. It consists of three staves in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody is on the top staff, with piano accompaniment on the middle and bottom staves. The lyrics are: "keep on walk-in', sing-in' keep on talk-in', shout-in' march-in' up to Free-dom". The first two measures of the top staff are highlighted with a green box.

Musical score for the fourth system of the song. It consists of three staves in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody is on the top staff, with piano accompaniment on the middle and bottom staves. The lyrics are: "Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!".

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Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,

Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,

Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,



turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na


turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na



keep on walk-in', sing-in' keep on talk-in', shout-in' march-in' up to Free-dom

keep on walk-in', sing-in' keep on talk-in', shout-in' march-in' up to Free-dom

keep on, keep on march-in' up to Free-dom



Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

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Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,  
Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round,

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na  
turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na  
turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

keep on walk-in', keep on talk-in', march-in' up to Free-dom  
sing-in' shout-in'  
keep on walk-in', keep on talk-in', march-in' up to Free-dom  
sing-in' shout-in'  
keep on, keep on march-in' up to Free-dom

Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!  
Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!  
Land, march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

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The image displays a musical score for three voices: Soprano, Alto, and Tenor. Each voice part is written on a five-line staff with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and a time signature of 4/4. The lyrics are "Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a - round, turn me a - round," repeated across three measures. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some phrases spanning across bar lines. The Soprano part starts with a half note G4, followed by eighth notes A4-B4-C5, and ends with a half note D5. The Alto part starts with a half note F#4, followed by eighth notes G4-A4-B4, and ends with a half note C5. The Tenor part starts with a half note E4, followed by eighth notes D4-C4-B3, and ends with a half note A3. The lyrics are aligned under each measure of music.

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

turn me a - round, Ain't gon-na let no-bod - y turn me a-round. I'm gon-na

keep on walk-in', sing-in' keep on talk-in', shout-in' march-in' up to Free-dom

keep on walk-in', sing-in' keep on talk-in', shout-in' march-in' up to Free-dom

keep on, keep on march-in' up to Free-dom

Land, \_\_\_\_\_ march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

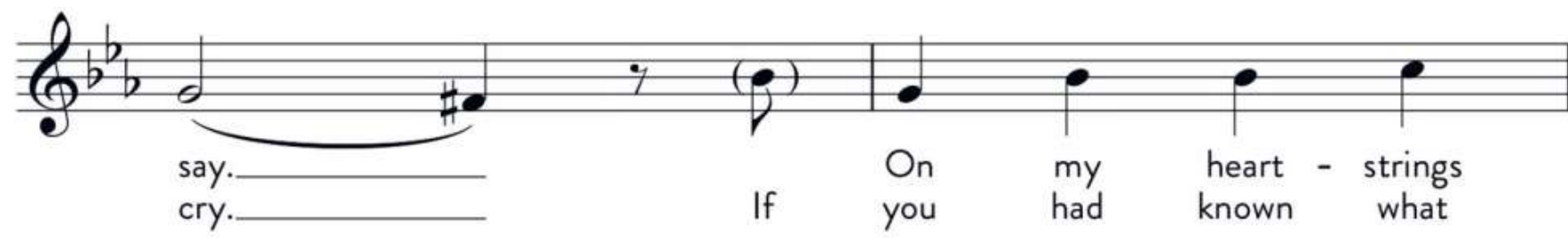
Land, \_\_\_\_\_ march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

Land, \_\_\_\_\_ march-in' up to Free - dom Land!

**B**



There are words like Free - dom, sweet and won - der-ful to  
There are words like Li - ber - ty that al - most make me



say. \_\_\_\_\_  
cry. \_\_\_\_\_  
If On you my had heart - strings what



free-dom sings \_\_\_\_\_  
I \_\_\_\_\_ know, \_\_\_\_\_  
all day you would ev - er - y day. why.

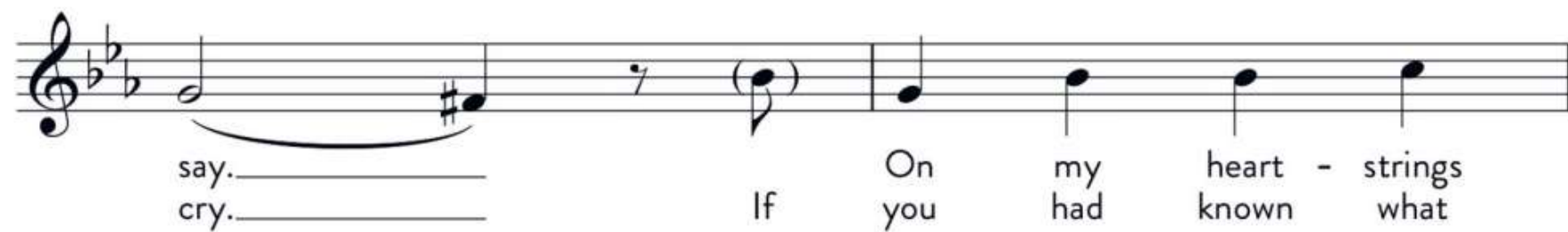
B



There are words like  
There are words like

Free - dom,  
Li - ber - ty

sweet and won - der - ful to  
that al - most make me



say.  
cry.

If On you my heart - strings  
known what



free-dom I  
sings know,

all day you would ev - er - y day. why.

**B**

There are words like Free - dom, sweet and won - der-ful to  
There are words like Li - ber - ty that al - most make me

say. cry. If On you my had heart - strings  
cry. If On you my had known what

free-dom sings I know, all day you would ev - er - y day. why.

**B**



There are words like Free - dom,  
There are words like Li - ber - ty\_\_\_

sweet and won - der - ful to  
that al - most make\_\_\_ me\_\_\_



say.\_\_\_\_\_  
cry.\_\_\_\_\_  
If

On my heart - strings  
you had known what



free-dom sings\_\_\_\_\_  
I\_\_\_\_ know, -

all day ev - er - y day.  
you would know\_\_\_\_ why.

**B**



There are words like Free - dom, sweet and won - der-ful to  
There are words like Li - ber - ty that al - most make me



say. \_\_\_\_\_  
cry. \_\_\_\_\_  
If On my heart - strings  
you had known what



free-dom sings \_\_\_\_\_  
I know, all day ev - er - y day.  
you would know why.

1 **C** VAMP



No, no, no, no. Can't turn a - round!\_\_\_\_\_

2



Can - not turn a - round. No turn - ing back!

3



I can - not turn a - round.\_\_\_\_\_ No!

# Preparation

## Open Singing set

- All the plans of the songs
- Make the puzzle
- Variety of styles, tempi, approaches...
- Visualise



## 25. Ja dan duia 8-part canon

Soili Perkiö (b 1958)

The musical score is written for an 8-part canon in G major, 3/4 time. It consists of three staves, each containing four measures. The lyrics are written below the notes. Chord symbols G and Dm<sup>7</sup> are placed above the first two measures of each staff. Measure numbers 1 through 8 are circled at the beginning of each measure. The lyrics are: "Ja dan du - i - a, ja dan du - i - a, ja dan daa dan daa dan dei - ja ja dan daa dan duu - i - a." The score ends with a double bar line at the end of measure 8.

Measures 1-8 of the 8-part canon:

Measure 1: G (1) Ja dan du - i - a, (Chord: G)

Measure 2: Dm<sup>7</sup> (2) ja dan du - i - (Chord: Dm<sup>7</sup>)

Measure 3: simile (3) - a, (Chord: G)

Measure 4: (4) ja dan daa dan daa dan dei - ja (Chord: Dm<sup>7</sup>)

Measure 5: (5) ja dan daa dan daa dan dei - ja (Chord: G)

Measure 6: (6) ja dan daa dan daa dan dei - ja (Chord: Dm<sup>7</sup>)

Measure 7: (7) ja dan daa dan daa dan dei - ja (Chord: G)

Measure 8: (8) ja dan daa dan daa dan dei - ja (Chord: Dm<sup>7</sup>)

© Soili Perkiö

Ending: Repeat the last 4 bars (with upbeat) until all groups have reached the end, or alternatively end in canon on beat 1 of the G major chord

# Movement

Always supporting  
the overall musicality.

- With a didactical goal
- With a vocal goal
- With an esthetic goal



# Marvelous Things

The musical score is written for three voices in 3/4 time. The key signature is C major. The first voice part has a melody with lyrics: "He has done mar - ve-lous He has done mar - ve-lous things, Praise the Lord". The second voice part has a melody with lyrics: "Mar-ve-lous mar-ve-lous mar-ve-lous mar-ve-lous things, Praise the Lord". The third voice part has a melody with lyrics: "He has done mar-ve-lous things, Praise the Lord". Chords are indicated above the first voice part: C, G/B, Am, Gm, C7, F, F/G, C, G7.

C G/B Am Gm C7 F F/G C G7

He has done mar - ve-lous He has done mar - ve-lous things, Praise the Lord

Mar-ve-lous mar-ve-lous mar-ve-lous mar-ve-lous things, Praise the Lord

He has done mar-ve-lous things, Praise the Lord

# Bee! I'm expecting you – Mirjam de Wit

- Composed on my request for open singing
- Flexible score
- No obligations
- Find:
- Difficulties?
- Solutions?
- Possibilities?
- Ideas?

# Bee! I'm expecting you – Mirjam de Wit

- Difficulties:
  - 5 bar structure
  - Body Percussion
  - Melody
  - Bass part
  - Score
- Possibilities:
  - Harmonic scheme
  - Sounds
  - Discant at letter C

Bee! I'm expecting you!  
Was saying yesterday,  
to somebody you know  
that you were due.

Bee! I'm expecting you!  
Was saying yesterday,  
to somebody you know  
that you were due.

Bee! I'm expecting you!  
Was saying yesterday,  
to somebody you know  
that you were due.

Bee! I'm expecting you!  
Was saying yesterday,  
to somebody you know  
that you were due.

Bee! I'm expecting you!

Was saying yesterday,  
to somebody you know  
that you were due.

Bee! I'm expecting you!  
Was saying yesterday,  
to somebody you know  
that you were due.

Bee! I'm expecting you!  
Was saying yesterday,  
to somebody you know  
that you were due.

# Bee! I'm expecting you

Mirjam de Wit

Yours, fly \_\_\_\_\_

Bee! I'm ex - pec-ting you! wassay-ing Yes-ter-day \_\_\_\_\_ to

Bee! I'm ex - pec-ting you! wassay-ing Yes - ter-day to

Bzz

Dum dum dum dum dum dum dum dum

some - bo - dy you know that you were due

some - bo - dy you know that you were due

dum dum dum dum

ooh

The Frogsgot home last week - are set-tled, and at work - Birds, most-ly

The Frogsgot home last week - are set-tled, and at work -

You'll get my let - ter by the se-ven-teenthre - ply or bet-ter be with

back The Clo - ver warmand thick

-Birds, most - ly back and the Clo - ver warmand thick

me or bet - ter be with me