

**blessing the speech  
for ensemble  
rafael nassif**

for 8 musicians and conductor  
playing and speaking the sanskrit alphabet

[silent page]

May my most holy Guru  
Khentrul Rinpoche Jamphel Lodrö;  
Khentrul Rinpoché,  
Khentrul Jamphel Lodrö Rinpoche,  
(His Eminence the Precious One,)  
Joyful Manjushri,  
Jamphel Lodrö,  
Rinpoche,  
live a healthy and long life!  
May His profound view of peace and harmony  
come to be true in this Earth.

[this piece was inspired on the beginning of His Kalachakra Sadhana "Enlightening the Heart";  
may the positive merits acquired through composing, editing, playing, hearing, reflecting and so on  
be all dedicated towards His ultimate altruistic intention]

**Kompositionsauftrag des  
Ensemble NeuRaum / Bruno Strobl (IGNM)**

Kompositionsarbeit gefördert bei  
**SKE / ske-fonds.at** und  
**Gesellschaft der Freunde der Akademie der Künste, Berlin**

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**encomenda de  
Bruno Strobl / ensemble NeuRaum (Carítina - Áustria)**

com o patrocínio de  
**SKE-Áustria &**  
**Gesellschaft der Freunde der Akademie der Künste, Berlin**

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**commissioned by  
Bruno Strobl (ISNM) / Ensemble NeuRaum (Austria)**

composition support by  
**SKE-fonds Austria** and  
**Gesellschaft der Freunde der Akademie der Künste, Berlin**

ensemble

conductor

alto flute  
bass clarinet

accordion

2 violins  
viola  
cello  
double-bass

(strings with scordatura)

## **spatial disposition A**

[the composition, conceived with the following dispositions in mind, does reference to the Sanskrit Alphabet, in which vowels and consonants are structured in a very natural, progressive outwardly way from the guttural sounds until the labial ones; the disposition try to emulate the oral cavity]

### **conductor**

(alone at the stage, directing towards the audience)

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musicians placed (quite) far apart at the middle of the audience:

(sitting towards the conductor)

vn 1

a-fl

vn 2

vla

acc

bass-cl

vc

d-bass

## alternative spatial disposition B

conductor

(alone at the stage, directing towards the audience)

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musicians placed far apart at the sides of the audience:

(sitting towards the conductor; if necessary, use platforms)

vn 1

a-fl

vn 2

vla

acc

bass-cl

vc

d-bass

(for the disposition B, recording with a binaural equipment placed at the middle of the public might be appropriate)

**alternative spatial disposition C**

musicians placed (slightly) far apart at the (whole) stage's space,  
ideally one of depth:

d-bass

vc

bass-cl

acc

vla

vn 2

a-fl

vn 1

conductor  
(directing toward the musicians)

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audience



# instructions for reading the score and performance

1-3x

play this section from one to three times in total

## solid bars

one can 'finish' earlier at the solid bars, for ex. at bar 24 or 25 on the piece ;  
when there are repetitions, one can also combine different decisions:  
e.g. on the piece **KA**, if one decided to exclude bars 20-21 in the first time,  
this does not mean that one should necessarily exclude them also when repeating

## transpositions

all tones are written transposed for all instruments, independently of the technique employed

(only for) conductor



clatch hands (*sonoro*); keep the hands together while waiting the pause

(only for) flute



pizzicato



tongue-ram fingering



aeolian sound (the degree of air is context dependent;  
the musician can explore variations in order to give shape to the overall texture)

(only for) flute & clarinet



maximum 1/4 tone lower



maximum 1/4 tone higher

(only for) **clarinet**



slap tongue

(only for) **accordion**



just air sound

(only for) **strings**



'bow in the air': raise the bow as higher as possible and move it quickly and strongly in the air

undertones of the piece **KA**: play firmly, with stable and strong pressure;  
it should sound one major seventh below or exactly one octave below than the open string;  
it can be helpful to very slightly muffle the string with the left hand;  
if reaching these specific tones is not possible, or, if producing one stable tone is not possible,  
then try to get any undertones possible, also if they are unstable, but  
avoid to increase the pressure too much to the point that noisy aspect reaches the foreground

(only for) **viola, cello and double bass**



nail pizz.

multiphonics of the piece **JHA**: bow slowly and slightly touch the written note (as for harmonics);  
in some cases, the pressure of the left hand can be a little bit increased;  
playing a little bit sul ponticello might help, but in some cases other positions might be useful;  
an harmonic of the 8<sup>th</sup> partial tone (two octaves above the open string) was written before, in order to  
help finding the multiphonic node, as they are very near to each other; indeed,  
if it is not possible to produce it easily, alternatively one can play another familiar multiphonic

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## **for all musicians:** spoken voice

Speak as clear as possible – not too soft, not too loud; natural variations of dynamics are welcome;  
the durations can be in some occasions slightly shortened, in order that they can sound natural,  
also oscillations of tone on the long vowels are welcome;  
in some moments the voices will sound in the foreground, in others in the background

if one wishes to understand the structure of the Sanskrit Alphabet,  
reading the details of the following page might be helpful;  
alternatively just hear to the demo recording of it, which can be accessed through:

[rafaelnassif.com](http://rafaelnassif.com) / [rafael\\_nassif@hotmail.com](mailto:rafael_nassif@hotmail.com)

# Sanskrit Alphabet (transliteration)

## short and long vowels

a ā i ī u ū ṛ ṝ ḷ ḹ e ai o au aṃ aḥ (the end with a short 'ha' as an echo of the vowel)

## consonants (with added vowel)

gutturals/velars:

ka kha ga gha ṅa

palatals:

ca cha ja jha ña

cerebrals/retroflexes:

ṭa ṭha ḍa ḍha ṇa

dentals:

ta tha da dha na

labials:

pa pha ba bha ma

aproximants:

ya (palatal), ṛa (cerebral/retroflex), la (dental), va (labial, between 'wine' and 'victory')

sibilants:

śa (palatal), ṣa (cerebral/retroflex), sa (dental)

aproximant:

ha (guttural/velar)

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Additional notes from David Reigler

(from his article *Sanskrit Mantras in the Kālacakra Sādhana*, 2009)

The short “a” is pronounced like English “u” in the word “but”. The long “ā” is pronounced like “a” in “father”. The short “i” is like in “kit”. The long “ī” is pronounced “ee” as in “feet”. The short “u” is like in “put”, not like in “united”. The long “ū” is pronounced “oo” as in “boot”. The vowel “ṛ” is kind of like the “ri” in trip, but is trilled. The vowel “ṝ” is kind of like the “re” in “able”. The “e” is pronounced like English “ay” as in “day”. The “ai” is like the vowel in the word, “tie”. The “o” is like in “go”. The “au” is like the vowel in the word “cow”.

For consonants, the main things are: The “c” is pronounced “ch”. The “th” and “ṭh” are pronounced “ta”, and aspirated. They are not like the English “th” sound. The “ś” and “ṣ” are pronounced “sh”.

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# blessing the speech for ensemble by rafael nassif © 2020 rafaelnassif.com

conductor  
voice

alto flute

bass clarinet

accordion  
acc.  
voice

violin 1  
(scordatura)  
vn. 1  
voice

G D +29c A - 49c E - 16c

$\frac{8}{8}$   $\frac{8}{21}$   $\frac{12}{11}$   $\frac{5}{3}$

violin 2  
(scordatura)  
vn. 2  
voice

G - 45 cents D +2c G E - 41c

$\frac{31}{8}$   $\frac{3}{2}$   $\frac{8}{8}$   $\frac{13}{8}$

viola  
(scordatura)  
vla.  
voice

C +49 cents G C sharp + 28c G sharp + 12c

$\frac{11}{8}$   $\frac{8}{8}$   $\frac{23}{8}$   $\frac{8}{15}$

cello  
(scordatura)  
cello  
voice

B (not B flat) -14 cents G D flat - 28c A +4c

$\frac{10}{8}$   $\frac{8}{8}$   $\frac{8}{23}$   $\frac{9}{8}$

d. bass  
(scordatura)  
d. bass  
voice

E flat +14 cents A +31c D - 49c G

$\frac{8}{5}$   $\frac{8}{7}$   $\frac{8}{11}$   $\frac{8}{8}$

## form:

the work consists of 6 different separated pieces;  
 the piece **SVĀHĀ** must be placed always on the end;  
 the other pieces **A**, **Ā**, **KA**, **JHA** and **ṬA** can be combined in any order,  
 but, after one piece has been concluded, it should not be played again afterwards;  
 optionally, one of these five pieces may be excluded;  
 between each piece let a pause take place  
 (between ca. 8" and 24" seconds, while variations are welcome)

**total duration:** ca. 12' - 16'

## scordatura:

all tones derives from a G as fundamental tone;  
 for those musicians which have been introduced to just/pure intonation,  
 the circled proportions below the staff at this page will inform them exactly  
 how the tones of the open strings relate to the fundamental tone;  
 alternatively, and for all other musicians,  
 just follow the information above the staff in order to tune the strings;  
 in this piece, only these open strings, as well as their harmonics, are used.

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(from) **blessing the speech** for ensemble by rafael nassif © 2020 rafaelnassif.com

[transposed score]

ca. 80

conductor voice

alto flute

bass clarinet

accordion

acc. voice

violin 1 (scordatura)

vn. 1 voice

violin 2 (scordatura)

vn. 2 voice

viola (scordatura)

vla. voice

cello (scordatura)

cello voice

d. bass (scordatura)

d. bass voice

mf, sf, mp, pp dolce, legno+arco battuto, (8th partial tone), (multiphonic of harmonics), (multiphonic with 5th, 8th, 13th and 18th partials), (voice), (sounding 8va higher than written)







[silent page]

