

DAVID DZUBAY

# Three Meditations

2024

SATB Chorus



PRO NOVA MUSIC

# Three Meditations

1. AUM [3:35]
2. balance [4:05]
3. breath [2:25]

**Duration:** 13 minutes

**Premiere:** NOTUS; Dominick DiOrio, conductor; IU Auer Hall; March 11, 2025

## Performance notes:

The preferred choir seating is SATB left to right, which will best present the panning effects in the first movement. The first two movements should be sung without vibrato. In *balance*, final 8th notes should always be sung with full duration, not clipped. The third movement can make use of subtle vibrato here and there, warming up the expression in a more personal way. The reductions for *AUM* and *breath* are just for rehearsal purposes. Movements may be performed on their own.

Text and pronunciation:

1. *AUM*. (a-u-m). Also spelled *Om* - this is "the sound of the universe," and is typically sung or chanted slowly, gradually changing the vowel from *a* (a as in *father*) to *u* and then closing to *m*. The singers should likewise change the sound very gradually at indications with arrows such as "a→u→m". Singing (or chanting) *AUM* will cause vibrations in the body to gradually move from the diaphragm up to the head. For the closed-mouth singing (*m*), singers should keep jaws open and lips relaxed for maximum resonance.

2. *Om Namaḥ Śivāya* (om namah shivaya in the setting)

om: for melismas and longer tones, try singing a-u-m; for the 8th note occurrences, simply sing om.

na & mah: *a* as in *father*. In Sanskrit, the *h* is also pronounced by an exhalation; this occurs only at the end in the setting.

shi: as in sheep; va & ya: *a* as in *father*, but the *va* in a longer syllable, often on a melisma this setting.

3. *Soham, Hamsa* (sohum, humsa in the setting)

so: *o* as in *oh*; ham: *a=u* as in *hum*; sa: *a* as in *father*.

Sometimes spelled *Sohum*. *Ham* is pronounced *hum* for both; the *hum* spelling is used in the score for ease of performance. Place *m* at the very end of any *hum* that does not have "(m)" specified at a rhythmic location.

## Program note:

These three meditative choral movements are settings of ancient Hindu mantras practiced worldwide.

*AUM* (or *Om*) is often called the sound of the universe and consists of four elements—*a* (as in *father*), *u* (as in *moon*), *m*, and silence. In Sanskrit, *a* followed by *u* combines to form a long *o* sound. Many cultures incorporate these sounds into significant words, such as *Amen* or *Shalom*. Chanting *AUM* involves very gradually changing the sound from *a* to *u* to *m*, guiding vibrations from the diaphragm through the chest and into the head.

*Namah Shivaya* is known as the *Panchakshara Mantra*, or five-syllable mantra, often preceded by *Om*. Each syllable represents one of the five elements: *Na* (earth), *mah* (water), *Shi* (fire), *va* (air), and *ya* (space). *Namah* means "to bow," while *Shivaya* refers to Shiva—the inner, higher, or cosmic self. These five elements are the fundamental building blocks of all creation, including the human body, and Shiva is regarded as their master. Repeating this mantra is believed to create vibrations that resonate with the universe's energy, bringing about a sense of peace and harmony.

*Soham* (pronounced *sohum*) translates to "I am He/She/That" and mirrors the natural rhythm and sound of one's breath—*so* on inhalation and *hum* on exhalation. The *hamsa* (*humsa*) mantra poses the question, "Who am I?"

*Three Meditations* progresses from the elemental "sound of the universe" to an organic, canonic unfolding of the five-syllable mantra that grows and recedes in a balanced palindrome, to the final, deeply personal reflection: Who am I? I am That.

## Cover Art:

The AUM symbol on the cover is an altered version of a public domain (CC-0) image at Wikimedia Commons (Om.svg, by Rugby471).

# Three Meditations

(2024)

Text: Hindu mantras

David Dzubay (b.1964)

## 1. AUM

$\text{♩} = 50$  elemental  
*non vibrato sempre*

The score is written for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass, with a Reduction section at the bottom. It consists of four measures, each with a different time signature: 4/4, 5/4, 4/2, and 4/4. The Soprano and Alto parts have two staves each, labeled 1 and 2. The Tenor and Bass parts have one staff each. The lyrics 'a - - - - u' are spread across the four measures. Dynamics include *p*, *pp*, and *p* with accents. A rehearsal mark is present at the end of the first measure of the Reduction section.

→ (and dotted slurs) = very gradual change of vowel sounds

5

The musical score consists of several systems. Each system has two vocal staves (1 and 2) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts feature a melodic line with a dotted slur and dynamic markings of *pp* and *ppp*. The lyrics are: "a - u" and "a - u - m". The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines. A bass line is present at the bottom of the page. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines, with a double bar line and repeat sign at the end of the system.

precise vowel changes...

11

9

*p* *mp*

1 a → - - u → - - m a - - - u - m

2 a → - - u → - - m a - - - u - m

*p* *mp*

1 a → - u → - - m a - - u - m

2 a → - u → - - m a - - u - m

*p* *mp*

1 a → - u → - - m a - u - m

2 a → - u → - - m a - u - m

*p* *mp*

1 a → - u → - - m a - u - m

2 a → - u → - - m a - u - m

1 a → - u → - - m a - u - m

2 a → - u → - - m a - u - m

u together now

*p*





20

*pp*

1

- m

2

- m

(gradual vowel changes)

*pp*

1

- m - - (m) - a → - u → - m

div. a 2

(gradual vowel changes)

*pp*

2

- m - - (m) - a → - u → - m

(gradual vowel changes)

*pp*

1

- m - - (m) - a → - u → - m

optionally covered by a bass

(gradual vowel changes)

*mf* *pp* *mf* *pp*

2

- a - u - - - - - - - (a) → - u → - m

(gradual vowel changes)

*mf* *pp* *mf* *pp*

1

- a - u - - - - - - - (a) → - u → - m

(gradual vowel changes)

*mf* *pp* *mf* *pp*

2

- a - u - - - - - - - (a) → - u → - m

*pp*

unis.

*p*

musical staff with lyrics: m - - u - - m - - u - a - - m -

unis.

*p*

musical staff with lyrics: m - - u - - m - u - a - - m -

unis.

*p*

musical staff with lyrics: m - - - u - - m - - u - a - -

unis.

*p*

musical staff with lyrics: m - - - u - - m - u - a - -

piano accompaniment staff with lyrics: m - - - u - - m - u - a - -

musical staff with lyrics: - u - - a - - a - - u - - m - - a - -

musical staff with lyrics: - u - - a - - a - - u - - m - - a - -

musical staff with lyrics: - m - u - - a - - a - - u - - m - - a - -

musical staff with lyrics: - m - u - - a - - a - - u - - m - - a - -

piano accompaniment staff with lyrics: - m - u - - a - - a - - u - - m - - a - -

33

*mp* *pp* 1,2 *mp* *pp*

u - - m - a m - - u - - a - - u - a

div. a 3

*mp* *pp* *mp* *pp*

u - - m - a m - - u - - a - - u - a

*mp* *pp* 1 *mp* *pp* *pp* <

u - - m - a m - - u - - a - - u - a m -

div. a 3

*mp* *pp* 2,3 *mp* *pp* *pp* <

u - - m - a m - - u - - a - - u - a m -

*pp* *mp* *pp*

38

*p* 1,2 *mf non dim.* *p* *pp*

m - - u - - a a - (a) - - u - - m

div. a 3

*p* 3 *mf non dim.* *p* *pp*

m - - u - - a a - (a) - - u - - m

1 *mf non dim.* *p* *pp*

- - - u - - a a - (a) - - u - - m

div. a 3

2,3 *mf non dim.* *p* *pp*

- - - u - - a a - (a) - - u - - m

*p* *mf non dim.* *p*

## 2. balance

♩ = 56 organic, inevitable

*non vibrato sempre; final 8ths always full value*

4

Soprano

Alto

1  
Tenor

2

1  
Bass

2

om na - mah

om na - mah

om na - mah

om na - mah

om na - mah

om na - mah

7

5

1

2

1

2

1

2

om na - mah

om na - mah

om na - mah

om na - mah

om na - mah

om na - mah

om na - mah

om na - mah

om na - mah

om na - mah

om na - mah

om na - mah

9 10

1 *p* shi - va - ya

2 *p* shi - va - ya shi - va - ya

1 om na - mah om na - mah

2 na - mah om na - mah om na - mah

1 na - mah om na - mah om na - mah

2 na - mah om na - mah om na - mah

1 om na - mah om na - mah

2 om na - mah om na - mah

13 ♩ = 58 *mp*

1 *mp* shi - va - ya shi - va - ya

2 *mp* shi - va - ya shi - va - ya

1 *mp* om na - mah om na - mah om

2 *mp* om na - mah om na - mah om

1 *mp* om na - mah om na - mah

2 *mp* om na - mah om na - mah

1 om na - mah om na - mah

2 om na - mah om na - mah

16

1 na - mah shi - va - ya na - mah shi - va - ya

2 na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah

1 om na - mah om na - mah na - mah

2 om na - mah om na - mah na - mah

1 om na mah om na mah

2 om na mah om na mah om na mah

1 om na - mah om na mah

2 om na - mah om na - mah

19

1 na - mah shi - va - ya na - mah shi - va - ya

2 na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah

1 om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya om shi -

2 om na - mah om na - mah shi - va -

1 om na mah om na mah

2 om na mah om na mah shi - va - ya

1 om na - mah om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya

2 om om na - mah om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya

22

1 na - mah shi - va ya shi va - ya na - mah shi - va - ya

2 na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya na - ma shi - va - ya

1 -va - ya om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya

2 - ya om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya

1 om na - ma shi - va - ya om na - ma shi - va - ya

2 om na - ma shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya

1 om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya

2 om om na - mah om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya

25 ♩ = 63

1

2

1 *f* om na - mah shi - va - ya

2 *f* om na - mah shi - va - ya

1 *f* om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya

2 *f* om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah

1 *f* om na - mah om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya

2 *f* om na - mah om na - mah om na - ma shi - va - ya

27

1 *f* om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya

2 *f* om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya shi - va - ya

1 - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya

2 -ya om na - mah shi - va - ya shi - va - ya

1 om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya shi - va - ya

2 om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya

1 om na - mah om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya shi - va - ya

2 om na - mah om na - mah om na - mah shi - va shi - va - ya

30

1 na - mah shi - va - ya shi va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya

2 na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya na - mah shi - va - ya

1 om na - mah na - mah shi - va - ya na - mah shi - va - ya

2 na - mah shi - va - ya na - mah shi - va shi - va - ya

1 om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah

2 om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah om na - mah

1 om na - mah om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya shi - va - ya

2 om na - mah om na - mah om na - mah shi - va shi - va - ya

*ff* na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah

om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya

*ff* om na - mah shi - va - ya na -

om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya

*ff* om na - mah shi va - ya om na - mah shi va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya

*ff* om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah om na - mah om na - mah shi -

*ff* om om na - mah na - mah om na - mah shi va - ya om na - mah na - mah

*ff* om na - mah om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah om na - mah

36 shi - va - ya shi - va - ya om na - mah shi va - na - mah na - mah om

shi - va - ya shi - va - ya om na - mah shi va - na - mah na - mah om

-mah shi va - ya shi - va - ya om na - mah shi va - om na - mah shi -

na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi va - om na - mah shi - va - ya

om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi va - na - mah om na - mah

- va - ya om na - mah shi va - na - mah om na - mah

om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi va - om na - mah shi -

om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi va - na - mah shi - va - ya om

40 42

1 na - mah shi - va - ya na - mah na - mah om

2 na - mah shi - va - ya na - mah na - mah om

1 -va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi -

2 om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya

1 om na - mah shi - va - ya na - mah om na - mah

2 om na - mah om na - mah

1 -va - ya om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi -

2 na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah na - mah shi - va - ya om

43 *mf* ritard.....

1 na - mah shi - va - ya *mp*

2 na - mah shi - va - ya shi - va - - ya

1 -va - ya om na - mah *mf* *p* om na - mah shi - va - ya shi - va

2 om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya

1 na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya shi -

2 na - mah om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya

1 -va - ya om na - mah om na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va - ya om na -

2 na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah na - mah shi - va - ya om na - mah shi - va -

47 .....♩ = 54

49 *mp* ♩ = 63 (final 8ths full value)

1 om na - mah om na - mah

2 om na - mah om na - mah

1 om na - mah om

2 *p* shi - va om na - mah om

1 - va - ya om na - mah om na - mah

2 *p* shi - va - ya om na - mah om

1 - mah om na - mah (h) shi - va - ya

2 *p* ya om na - mah (h) shi - va - ya shi - va - ya

51

52 *p*

1 om na - mah om na - mah

2 om na - mah om na - mah

1 na - mah om na - mah om na - mah

2 na - mah om na - mah om na - mah

1 om na - mah om na - mah unis.

2 na - mah om na - mah unis.

1 unis.

55 ♩ = 60

58 *pp* ♩ = 58

1 om na - mah om na - mah om na - mah

2 om na - mah om na - mah om na - mah

1 om na - mah om na - mah unis.

2 om na - mah unis.

59

61 *ppp* ♩ = 56 exhale

1 om na - mah om na - mah om na - mah (h)

2 om na - mah

### 3. breath

♩ = 76 expressive, human, personal  
*poco vib. ad lib.*

unis. *pp* *p* *pp* *mp* *p* *poco accel. .... ten.* ♩ = 52 *mf* *rit. .... ten.* *mp*

Soprano  
 so - - hum - (m) so - hum so - - hum - sa so - hum hum

Alto  
 so - - hum - (m) so - hum so - - hum - sa so - hum -

Tenor  
 so - hum - (m) so - hum so - - hum - sa so - hum -

Bass  
 so - hum - (m) so - hum so - - hum - sa so - hum hum

Reduction  
 For rehearsal purposes only

♩ = 58 ♩ = 76 **10** *pp* *pp* *p* *pp* *ppp* *poco accel. ....* ♩ = 80 *mp* *p* *poco ritard. ....*

9  
 sa so - hum - (m) hum - sa so - - - - hum  
 - sa so - hum - (m) hum - sa so - - - - hum  
 - sa so - hum - (m) hum - sa so - - - - hum  
 sa so - hum - (m) hum - sa so - - - - hum

16 *dim. poco a poco* .....  $\text{♩} = 66$  *ppp* 22  $\text{♩} = 76$  *ppp*  $\text{mp}$

so - - hum (m) so - - hum

*dim. poco a poco* ..... *ppp* *ppp*  $\text{mp}$

so so - - hum (m) so - - hum

*dim. poco a poco* ..... *ppp* *ppp*  $\text{mp}$

sa so - - hum (m) so - - hum

*dim. poco a poco* ..... *ppp* *ppp*  $\text{mp}$

so so - - hum (m) so - - hum

*dim. poco a poco* ..... *ppp* *ppp*  $\text{mp}$

24 *poco accel.* .....  $\text{♩} = 84$   $\text{♩} = 80$  *mf* *rit.*.....

*p* *mf* *mp* *f* *mf*

hum - sa so - - hum - sa hum - sa hum so - -

*p* *mf* *mp* *f* *mf*

hum - sa so hum - sa hum - sa hum - sa so - -

*p* *mf* *mp* *f* *mf*

hum - sa so - - hum - sa so - - - hum so - -

*p* *mf* *mp* *f* *mf*

hum - sa so - - hum - sa so - - - hum so - -

*p* *mf* *mp* *f* *mf*

hum - sa so - - hum - sa so - - - hum so - -

31  $\text{♩} = 63$  *ppp* **33**  $\text{♩} = 76$  *pp* *ppp* *pp* *poco accel.*  $\text{♩} = 80$  *mf* *p* *poco accel.*

hum (m) so - hum - (m) so - hum - sa so - - hum

hum (m) so - hum - (m) so - hum - sa so - - hum

hum (m) so - hum - (m) so - hum - sa so - - hum

hum (m) so - hum - (m) so - hum - sa so - - hum

38  $\text{♩} = 84$  *f non dim.*  $\text{♩} = 72$  *p* *pp* (slight accent) *mp* *pppp*

hum - sa hum - sa so - - hum - hum - sa hum - sa so - - hum - hum - sa so - - hum

hum - sa hum - sa so - - hum - hum - sa hum - sa so - - hum - hum - sa so - - hum

hum - sa hum - sa so - - hum - hum - sa hum - sa so - - hum - hum - sa so - - hum

hum - sa hum - sa so - - hum - hum - sa hum - sa so - - hum - hum - sa so - - hum