

## Two Choral Vocalises

**Vocalise 1.** This simple warm-up exercise can help with several choral skills at once. The two sets of progressions are designed to give each of the four vocal sections, in turn, practice in tuning the tonic, the fifth, the fourth, the third, and the seventh of chords, both major and minor. Also the two lines of chord progressions, offering major and minor side by side, can heighten appreciation of the differing expressive atmospheres of these two modes. The suggested practice syllables can encourage greater continuity from deeper vowels to more frontal, and from lofty vowels to more horizontal. Beginning the syllables with "ñ" (as in "canyon") can encourage singers to move vowels back toward the soft palate. Both of these vocalises can of course be repeated at chromatic intervals up and down the scale.

**Vocalise 2.** This more advanced exercise offers enjoyment in making beautiful sounds. It is based on the concluding phrase of Claude Debussy's ravishing song for a *cappella* choir, *Dieu! Qu'il la fait bon regarder!* The Mixolydian mode and dynamic markings immediately set the music apart from more ordinary warm-up exercises. In measure 4 the choir can enjoy the altos' transformation of an empty fifth into a glowing major triad. The director might explain that the title of Debussy's song, which is also the text of this concluding phrase, roughly translates from the 15th-century French of Charles d'Orleans:

*My God! it does me good to look at her!*

Albert Blackwell  
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# Choral Vocalise I


The image displays a musical score for a choral vocalise. It is written in 4/4 time and consists of two systems of music. The first system is in the key of G major, and the second system is in the key of B-flat major. Each system features a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "ñaw ñoh ñah ñeh ñee ñaw ñoh ñah ñeh ñee ñaw ñoh ñah ñeh ñee ñaw ñoh ñah ñeh ñee". The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The score is written on a grand staff with a treble clef for the vocal line and a bass clef for the piano accompaniment.

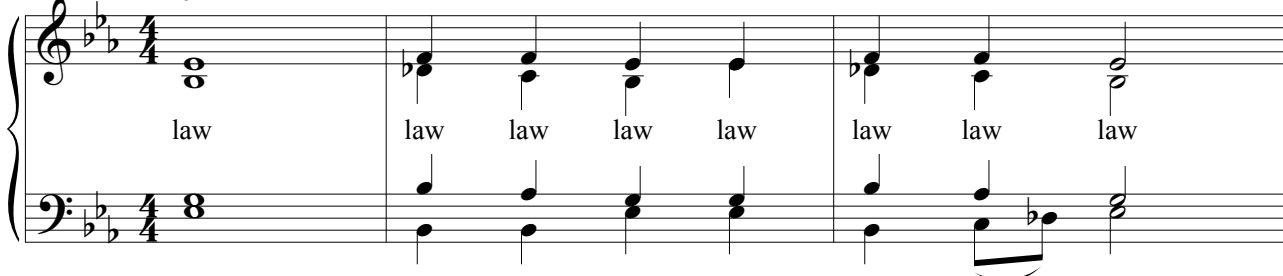
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# Choral Vocalise II

suggested M.M. ♩ = 74

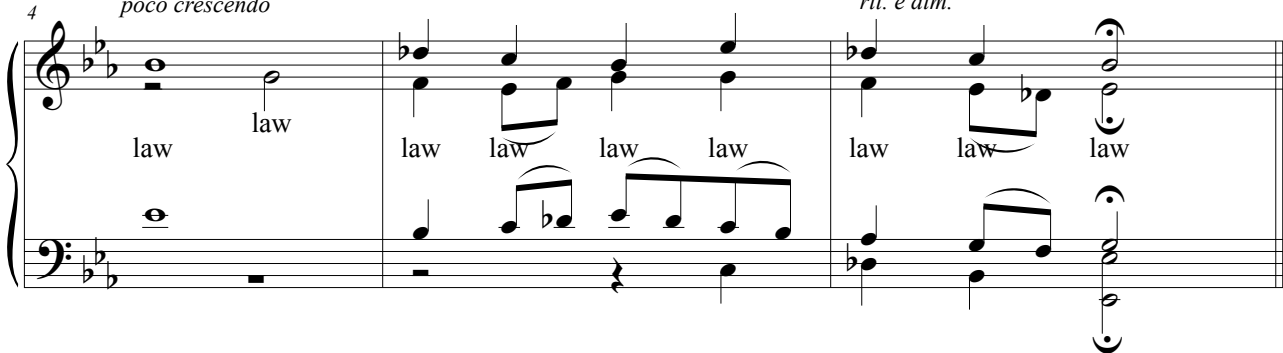
after Claude Debussy\* (1862-1918)

*mf*  *p*



law law law law law law law law law

4 *poco crescendo* *rit. e dim.*



law law law law law law law law law

\*The concluding phrase of his SATB song *Dieu! Qu'il la fait bon regarder!*

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