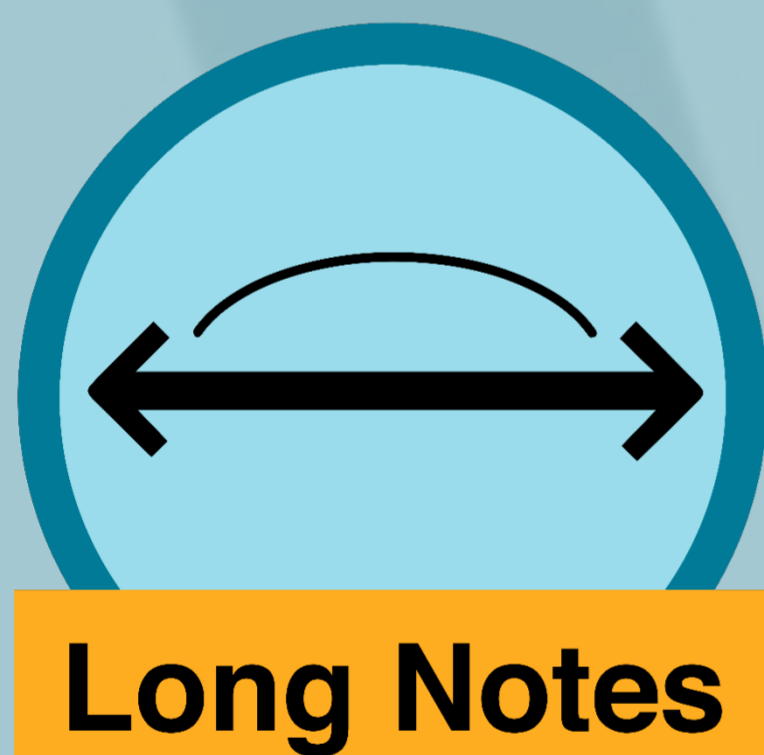
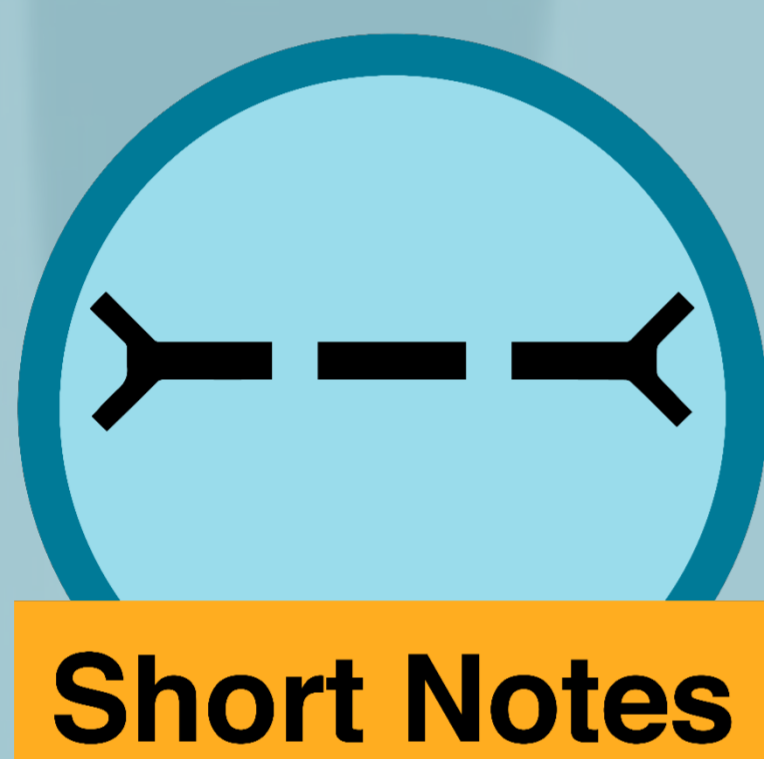
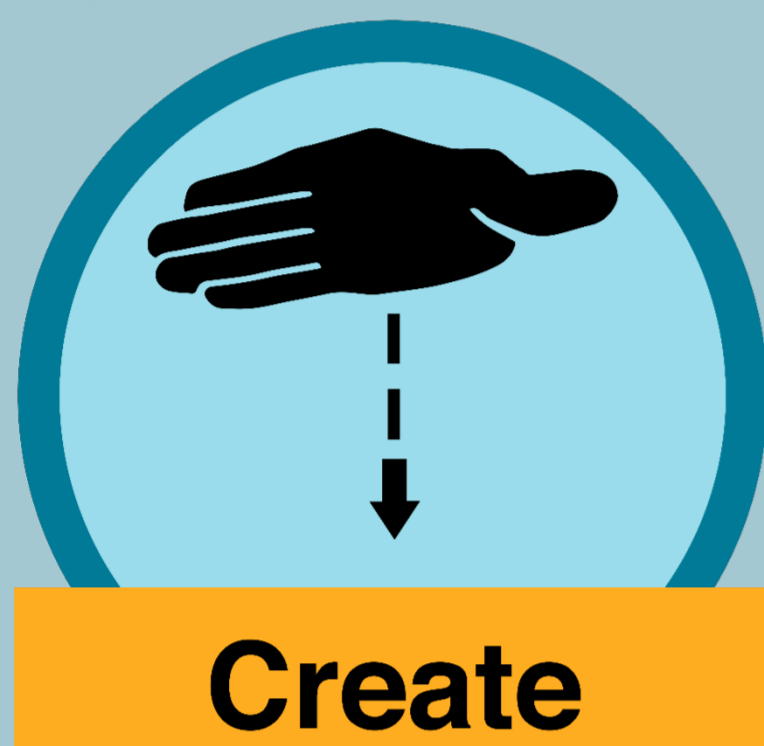


# VOPA - Vocal Painting Concerts

by professor Jim Daus Hjernøe



RAMA Voices in concert at Aarhus Vocal Festival featuring special guest artists performing online from Brazil, Finland, and the Netherlands



This project explores and consolidates an extensive collection of interactive hand signs for live-composing and live-arranging in vocal ensemble performances.

## Why VOPA?

During the last 30-40 years, a large number of choirs and a cappella groups have created new styles of choral music built upon popular musical styles such as pop, rock, soul, and jazz, often at a very high artistic level. Interestingly, this development has not led to any notable renewal of neither the performance practice nor the conducting methods which usually follow the classical tradition. Unfortunately, this limits the possibility of creating music on the fly and taking advantage of the singers' creative potential. The goal of this project was to innovate the role of the choir leader and to design new tools and methods to establish a new concert form for vocal ensembles.

## What is VOPA?

VOPA is a vocal evolution of Soundpainting by Walter Thompson which is a universal multidisciplinary sign language to create and direct improvised live performances with musicians, actors, dancers, and visual artists. In VOPA it has become a new language for vocal art, used to complement conventional conducting techniques of choir music. VOPA currently consists of 75 signs, and more are in the making. The VOPA technique makes it possible to spontaneously adjust musical details on form and content (dynamics, harmonization, meter, transposition, text, sound colors, etc.). It is also possible to implement pre-rehearsed modules on the fly, re-composing, re-arranging, etc.

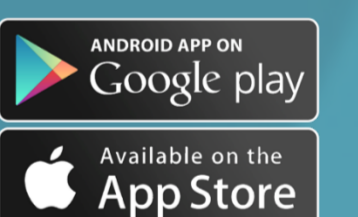
## How does VOPA work?

VOPA has been applied systematically both in the supervision of RAMA students' choirs from all over Europe and in performances with RAMA Voices at festivals in Denmark, Sweden, and Germany. Recently in a concert with Bobby McFerrin and innovative concert designs, featuring special guest artists from around the world performing live through the internet with low latency. Both feedback and experience strongly indicate that VOPA constitutes a link that bridges improvisational and structured approaches to music performance.

Through the development of VOPA as a pedagogical tool and an artistic methodology, the signs have shown to be surprisingly effective as a feasible way to create music with singers of all levels, from audience participation to the highest professional level of vocal arts.

## The VOPA App

VOPA is now available in an App to offer conductors and vocal ensembles from all over the world the opportunity to learn and apply the signs.



RAMA Voices in concert with Bobby McFerrin & Gimme5 at the Danish Radio concert hall in Copenhagen

