



Inuit Throat Singing

Tanya Tagaq – Throat Singing

TANYA TAGAQ:

I do Inuit throat singing, it's traditionally done with two people. This whole thing started where the noises are emulating the sounds of land or the sounds of animals and traditionally it's two women and the sounds are broken up into two different parts. It's a game, it's like round robin where if one woman's making one sound and the other woman's (one's?) doing the other, and it goes back and forth like this and it's very regimented.

It's a competition but it's, like it's not about who's better, it's just fun, I don't think it's something people take seriously at all and I really like that about it, I don't think it needs to be a hyper competitive thing, you know?

Traditionally it's a game but people nowadays, like you know, any occasion is good, like when people open meetings and stuff, you know you have to show respect or maybe someone's getting married or a talent show, like it doesn't matter, it's very very informal, it can be anywhere, like I sing at parties with my friends at 3 in the morning, like it's...there's no rules surrounding it.

Traditionally though, there'd you know if there's a feast, like if someone came back with a huge bounty of food and they'd make the giant igloos and sometimes they'd be interconnecting, then people would definitely do it but I think that in the winter people got maybe bored sometimes because it was so cold and they'd get stuck inside so...

It's not words, it's the sound, like there's even a little song for boiling water rivers and songs about mosquitoes and then some that are just there for the sounds, so they're all different. it's the sounds, it's not normally putting words in.

This song that I'll show you, it's called ...(different language)... and it's about the dog teams, it's about a little puppy that was running and when the sea ice freezes, there'll be patches of snow and then smooth pieces of ice and the puppy because it's so small, it doesn't know yet, it was running and went to the ice and ended up slipping, you know how dogs do that, it's really cute. Ok but this is just one half of it, OK?

(she sings)

So that's about, that's about the little dog slipping but when the two people are doing it together it's like, the rhythm of it, you can almost hear that, yeah.