

## NEW ELECTRONIC MUSIC

Robert Seaback

March 8, 2023 – Norwegian Academy of Music

### *stasis, self-present* (2022) | real-time synthesis | indeterminate

A slowly evolving, automated wave terrain synthesis instrument, which grew out of improvisation contexts.

### *Skin and Siren* (2022) | for High Order Ambisonics | 10:30

What layers of meaning remain when the surface level intelligibility of a sound recording is smeared, blurred, damaged, cracked, or removed?

*Skin and Siren* poses a response to this question in its treatment of recordings from percussionist Ingar Zach and field recordings made in Oslo in the Spring of 2022. After the application of digital processes to alter the clear communication of sources, what remain can be considered peripheral aspects of the acoustic experience—spatial profile encompassing proximate and distant fields, reverberation and resonance, ephemeral transients and noise floor—along with the sensorimotor expressiveness which may accompany these phenomena.

The work presents dreamlike passages alternating between the corporeal residue of performance (Zach) and fractured city soundscape recalling travel, leisure, and serene distant music. Filtered and pitch-shifted resonances from the snare drum and timpani create a harmonic frame for much of the work, in addition to resonances extracted from bells sounding at Oslo City Hall.

### *Lightness in Transit* (2021-22) | for High Order Ambisonics | 10:30

*Lightness in Transit* derives sound archetypes from subway and commuter train recordings made in Oslo. The sonic residue of metal, wind, engines, and movement contribute to the sensual, corporeal experience of the music. Against this backdrop, a voice continually emerges and recedes, oscillating between song-like utterance and digital stasis. Sources were recorded from Nationaltheatret Station, Holstein, and mezzo-soprano, Marika Schultze.

After an initial period of experimentation, my intention for *Lightness in Transit* became to mirror the visual and vibrational pulses of trains from different sonic perspectives—as an observer and as a traveler: enclosed, underground, or emerging—and in ways that traverse between fantasy and hyperreality. In the latter case, sound field recordings are presented in raw states, with subtle additions to enhance the scenes.