

## **“A Piece Inspired by Long Distance Music”**

Stefan Maier and Max Eilbacher

## LONG DISTANCE MUSIC

Right now we do not make music unless we are in the same room together. Music is made ONLY between men and women in ONE room, ONE field, or in ONE building between rooms through loudspeaker and microphone transmission.

To experience music in spaces other than the room we are in, in locations sufficiently distant from each other we must physically go to them - separately at different times.

We have no occasions for interacting with any world (sound or continent) other than our own.

Having to be in such situations all the time just does not correspond to our receptivity - to Life Time and Its Music.

The music we make is confining us to boundaries of ONE PLACE situations ALL THE TIME. Receptive to our own structures ONLY as we are making them.

Long distance music is developing occasions where boundaries of ONE PLACE situations can begin to vanish. Some involve electronic links, some do not.

All involve the interaction between men and sound at distant locations. Focused together in the same instant of time. Making music together.

Listening and transmitting out of the place we are in.

Communicating outside our own structures.

New awareness is developed for the place we are in. With links because of actual acoustic change effecting us. And with occasions like Green Weather requiring a completely new attitude of mind.

Having to extend our listening in this manner extends our receptivity to each other - to the music we are making in the very room we are in.



In *Long Distance Music*, composers Max Eilbacher and Stefan Maier explore listening and composition across vast geographic distances. Drawing on Maryanne Amacher's text-scores of the same name, Eilbacher and Maier reinterpret Amacher's call for "new awarenesses" beyond normative spatial listening and investigate the prospect of telematic listening in the contemporary moment of supposed unprecedented "interconnectedness."

Having emailed on-and-off for a number of years with the intention of eventually collaborating, the duo's attempts at working together were continually frustrated by competing projects, touring schedules, and, most of all, by the fact that Eilbacher and Maier do not live in the same city. *Long Distance Music* thematizes this frustration and materializes the conditions of their inability to collaborate in-person through sound.

Work began with Eilbacher and Maier exploring the material differences between specific spaces — places of leisure, work and commerce — in their native homes of Baltimore and Vancouver, respectively. Over a number of months, this research was documented through time-sync'd field recordings of harbours, stadiums, casinos, business districts, their day-jobs and studios, among others. These recordings later became "backing tracks" for time-sync'd telematic improvisation sessions. Here, Eilbacher and Maier would improvise alongside the other's field recordings, attempting to play "together" despite not being able to hear what the other was playing.

To augment these encumbered attempts at real-time collaboration, the duo developed different strategies to enhance and develop long-distance listening which included commissioning custom software by Victor Shepardson for each to use. Internalizing Amacher's contention that the manifold conditions of a place — the geographic, acoustic and social factors that constitute a space — all contribute to the resultant sonic characteristics in a highly specific and perceptible manner, Shepardson's software translated nuanced sonic information into Eilbacher and Maier's synthesizers so as to directly condition and influence their playing. At the same time, deep-listening meditation sessions were conducted before each recording and improvisation session, wherein the duo attempted to connect cognitively and further embody new psychic awarenesses despite the glaring reality of geographic impasse.

Following these "enhanced" time-sync'd sessions, the duo mixed both field recordings and improvisations simultaneously so as to make audible the differences between place and their respective improvisational decisions at all times. The finished work consists of a single 20 minute piece assembled and mixed from the material recorded and generated from the five locations. In addition to the long form piece, available for download are each location/improvisation mixed down by Eilbacher and Maier. These 10 mixes are the sub mixes of each location that were then utilized to sculpt the long form

piece. A conversation about the work and process between Maier and Eilbacher is also included for download.

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## **Recording/Improvisation Sessions**

### **Places of Work**

Intellijel Designs Inc. (Vancouver, CA) - 03-27-2018  
Notam studios (Oslo, NO) - 05-08-2018  
Bar Clavel (Baltimore, MD) - 03-27-2018  
315 E 33rd Studio (Baltimore, MD) - 05-08-2018

### **Harbour**

Oslo Port Authority (Oslo, NO) - 05-09-2018  
Deep Blue studios (Vancouver, CA) - 06-07-2018  
Inner Harbor Tourist District (Baltimore, MD) - 05-09-2018  
315 E 33rd Studio (Baltimore, MD) - 06-07-2018

### **Business District**

Bank of Montreal (Vancouver, CA) - 06-06-2018  
Deep Blue studios (Vancouver, CA) - 06-07-2018  
East Baltimore Street Subway Stop (Baltimore, MD) 06-06-2018  
315 E 33rd Studio (Baltimore, MD) - 06-07-2018

### **Stadium**

BC Place (Vancouver, CA) - 06-06-2018  
Bard College (Hudson, US) - 06-10-2018  
M&T Bank Stadium (Baltimore, MD) - 06-06-2018  
Attic Studio (Baltimore, MD) - 06-10-2018

### **Casino**

Edgewater Casino (Vancouver, CA) - 06-06-2018  
Bard College (Hudson, US) - 06-10-2018  
Horseshoe Casino (Baltimore, MD) - 06-06-2018  
315 E 33rd Studio (Baltimore, MD) - 06-10-2018

Image from Long Distance Music Reader courtesy of Blank Forms