

Moss Freed

## **Listen, Distil**

For choir (SSAATTBB)



## Performance Notes

### Instrumentation/ensemble

This piece was written for Via Nova, a choir specialising in experimental music. Players are referred to by their names in the score, which refer to the following voice types:

Fliss – soprano; Christina – soprano; Lucy – alto; Georgia – alto; Robin – tenor; Gavin – tenor; Daniel – bass; David – bass.

### General notes

Vertical arrows indicate a point of synchronicity or main section change. Curved arrows represent gradual changes of sub-sections, where singers should move to their next activity over some time. Any member of the group can cue these changes – with either a normal downbeat or curved, slow downbeat, as indicated – bearing the timing suggestions written on the score in mind. Cue to move on when it feels right, in the moment. There should be no fixed leader or conductor.

### Section 1

Someone should give a clear downbeat to start the piece, although individual singers may start when they feel it is appropriate.

Move through the bars independently and at your own pace. Spend between 3"–25" in each bar. Choose from the available pitches in each bar and use a mixture of short-medium durations and a variety of pause lengths between notes. If you choose to reiterate the same pitch multiple times within a given bar, try to vary the tone each time. Where text is present above the stave, there is an option to use the given word with your chosen pitch(es).

In bar 6, hold only long durations with shorter pauses between. Continue to alter tone for any pitch reiterations.

Once everyone is holding only longer durations (signifying that everyone is in b.6), someone should discreetly cue. This indicates that singers should then proceed through the bars in reverse (from 6 to 1) in the same way. On this cue point, repeat b.6 using short-med durations and varied pauses once more. When you reach b.1, hold only longer durations and shorter rests again.

Once all singers are back in b.1 holding longer durations, Georgia, Robin and Daniel should prepare to move seamlessly into section 2 on cue, at which point the other singers should stop and get ready for their next activity.

### Sections 2-4

Read these sections left to right. The top line represents the main **generative** activity of the section e.g. in section 2A Georgia, Robin and Daniel are generating a hummed bed based on perfect 4th and 5th intervals. Boxes beneath represent more **responsive** activities, whereby other singers pick out certain elements that they hear and emphasise them (e.g. 2A Lucy picks out a pitch she hears in the sound-bed produced by Georgia, Robin and Daniel and emphasises it by using an open-mouth sound). This **listening and distilling** is shown by dotted vertical arrows. Make sure to follow dynamics when going through these processes.



# Listen, Distil

For *Via Nova*

Moss Freed

1

~2'30" -3'00"

↓ 1 2 3 4 5 6 ↓

there is a light ←

S. [Hum] ←

A. [Hum] ←

T. [Hum] ←

B. [Hum] ←

*mf/mp* mainly - occasionally other dynamics

2

~4'00"-5'00

A

B

C

1 note per breath

**Perfect 4th/5th**short-med lengths  
med-long spaces betweenGeorgia  
Robin  
Daniel

X fade

2 notes per breath

**Minor 6th / Major 3rd**med lengths  
med spaces betweenFliss  
Lucy  
Robin  
Daniel

X fade

2/3 notes per breath

**Minor 7th / Major 2nd**med-long lengths  
short-med spaces betweenFliss  
Lucy  
David  
Daniel  
Christina

sync stop

Focus on a pitch around you and  
**hum** a pitch the given interval  
above or below. Repeat.Same process  
(hum)Same process  
(hum)*mf**mf**mf*

Lucy

Christina

Georgia

Robin

Gavin

Wait at least 20" then:

**Twice**, focus on a pitch you can  
hear and match it with an open-  
mouth sound of your choice.  
Optional: use the word '**seek**'

Hold for any length

**Twice**, focus on **two** pitches you  
can hear (in sequence or stacked).  
Sing them in sequence with an  
open-mouth sound of your choice  
(Optional: use the word '**pinprick**')  
  
**AND**  
  
**Once**, do the same with a  
sequence of **three** pitches  
  
Free choice of note durationsIndividually focus on **three** or  
**four** pitches you can hear.  
Independently, sing them in  
sequence (open-mouth sound).  
(Optional: use the words  
'**multitudes**' or '**destination**')  
  
Loop sequence, with space  
initially then increasingly closer.  
  
The loop is then a springboard:  
**expand, develop, intensify**.  
Occasionally copy each other*p**p*

David

Christina

David, choose one of Lucy's two  
sounds and match it as closely  
and quickly as possible.  
Christina, match David as closely  
and quickly as possible.Medium duration  
Ignore section cues*p*

Georgia

Gavin  
RobinGeorgia, twice, choose one of  
Christina's sounds and match it  
as closely and quickly as  
possible.  
Gavin/Robin, match Georgia as  
closely and quickly as possible.One short-med duration  
One long duration  
Ignore section cues*p**mp**mf*

3

~40"

4

~1'30"

