

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 staff, 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

A

B

C

1 note per breath

2 notes per breath

2/3 notes per breath

Perfect 4th/5th

Minor 6th / Major 3rd

Minor 7th / Major 2nd

short-med lengths
med-long spaces between

med lengths
med spaces between

med-long lengths
short-med spaces between

Georgia
Robin
Daniel

Fliss
Lucy
Robin
Daniel

Fliss
Lucy
David
Daniel
Christina

X fade

X fade

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 durations

Individually 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

mp

mf

David
Christina

Georgia
Gavin
Robin

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

Georgia, 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

p

3

~40"

4

~1'30"

