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## **Attack and Sustain - Program Note**

Commissioned by clarinetist Lucy Abrams-Husso, *Attack and Sustain* combines live acoustic clarinet with pre-recorded processed clarinet sounds. Abrams-Husso recorded the fixed media on E-flat, B-flat and bass clarinets, with sound engineering by Tuukka Tervo and Michael Hammond. The pre-recorded electronics incorporate the full clarinet range, from the high octave of the E-flat clarinet to the lowest register of the bass clarinet. They also make use percussive elements including key slaps and slap tongue on the bass clarinet. The fixed media of *Attack and Sustain* was processed to manipulate sound, balance, and sonic effects. The acoustic clarinet part in both works, however, contains no live processing.

The piece explores the process of going between sustain and arpeggiation, and the relationship between the two states. As the clarinet moves from sustain to motion, the electronics shift from arpeggiation to sustained chords and finally dense polyphony. The fixed media is constant, mechanic, and unyielding. The acoustic clarinetist, meanwhile, must navigate between the rigid backing sounds and her own musical expression. Though all sounding elements are clarinet, the processing of the pre-recorded sounds distinguishes the live clarinet sound from the choir for the entirety of the work. The live player must navigate not only rhythmic alignment but timbral space with a distorted version of herself.