

Will Northlich- Redmond

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Music,
Faculty of Arts

Image created in Edmonton, Alberta

When You Lick My Skin We See Roses

Semi-finalist

“When You Lick My Skin We See Roses” is a graphic musical score. The work depicts a psychedelic confluence of distorted musical symbols, explosive color fields, abstract visual imagery, and varying dimensions of spatial depth. Ultimately, this image attempts to not only radically re-imagine conventional ideas of a musical score, but also presents a significant challenge to an instrumentalist: how is this to be “played”? A score such as this may be sonically portrayed by improvisation, or the composer may include specific instructions for the performer concerning precise interpretation of colors, images, and symbols. Ultimately, graphic scores involve significant communication between performer and composer for effective and successful execution, often resulting in a collaborative working situation in which both parties equally contribute to the creative experience.

My doctoral research consists of the confluence of electronic music and improvisation, and how improvisatory methodologies are effective in representing performances of electronic music visually. Graphic scores are indispensable in visually representing profoundly unorthodox creative processes, gestures, sonic states, and aesthetic visions. Thus, audiences are able to make profound connections with related musical material by gaining insight into performative decisions, sonic results, and the composer’s inspiration.