

Joel Illerhag

Vision

I would like to work spatially with my instrument (the double bass) to make collaboration with other artistic forms relevant and hopefully somehow linked through interaction.

About the technology

I have developed 39 resonance strings to accompany the original four of the double bass. This new instrument I call: The Swedish Harp Bass. These strings will not only be able to resonate, when I play acoustic, but can also be linked to electromagnets. These electromagnetic microphones (e-bows) will be installed to the Swedish harp bass, which are controlled externally by a system of computers, sound cards and various electronic devices.

How electromagnetic microphones work

A signal can be sent via into a soundcard, which via electronic devices amplifies the signal to electromagnetic microphones mounted over the strings. When the microphones are turned on and off at high speed, the string will start to vibrate.

There are numerous reasons why I became interested in this technology

- I am attracted to the idea that the double bass on its own may create a varied sonic universe.
- The double bass has not been renewed for the last 400 years. I want to explore new ways of developing the sound of the double bass using new technology.
- The Swedish Harp Bass is, from my point of view, more suited than the classic double bass to make sculptural music, that doesn't follow the traditional concepts of melody and progression. I believe that this kind of music could very naturally be paired with other artistic expressions.

How I envisage it being applied in relation to the performative arts

We could link the electromagnets to dancers? Then the resonans strings would play corresponding to their movements. We could build a room full of strings and electromagnets? Then the audience could walk into a room which would respond with sound to their movement. If they stood still – there would be sound. I can see all kind of performative arts collaborate in such a room. This is the first two application possibilities that comes in to my mind. It is still very open because I am not particularly fond of working alone. I like to collaborate. I like to get inspiration from other people, especially when it comes to mixing artistic expressions.

Future ambition

It is my personal ambition to create music that utilizes the full potential of the Swedish Harp Bass as well as to evelope a musical universe in collaboration with other artistic paractices.

Bio

I graduated from the Copenhagen's Rytmic Music Conservatorium in 2007. Since then I have been working as a jazz musician. I play in different bands and two years ago I succeeded in doing my first solo album – hopefully of more to come. In 2017 I was accepted at the solo program at the Music Conservatorium and here I have been creating my Swedish Harp Bass since January 2018.

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