

## ***Lunea* – programme note**

*Lunea* takes its primary materials from a music box melody written some years ago for another piece that was subsequently abandoned. The sound of music boxes is one of my earliest sonic memories and I've always held a fondness for them, finding the gentleness of their sound somehow at odds with the impersonal, mechanistic aspects of their production. This melody forms a kind of cantus firmus; elements of it are constantly present and transformed throughout the work through a variety of procedures.

During the early stages of composition, I happened upon a painting by Paul Nash entitled *Voyages of the Moon* in which Nash transforms his initial inspiration of globular ceiling lamps reflected in a mirror of a French restaurant into something altogether more unsettling and otherworldly.

The sense of cyclic movement within the painting and the interlocking mechanical parts of clockwork music boxes led me to using such a structural approach in *Lunea*. Each part of the melody is assigned a set of musical materials, each of which has a cycle or orbit within the piece so that at certain points elements come to the fore, which had previously been subsidiary materials, before fading away again. Harmonic and intervallic relationships are subject to such cycles, moving ever inward before the music gradually melts into the sound of massed music boxes.

Ashley John Long 2019