

## Solastalgia

Vessels promise an escape from responsibilities towards the landscape, they facilitate our avoidance of conscientiously feeling our attachment to the mainland. The visual nothingness of deep water and clean horizons fools the brain and delivers a treacherous feeling of independence.

We ignore the truths expressed by landscapes, so we mould them into urban projects for our strange desires. We clean up the irrationalities by which nature constructs itself. Then we look up to the skies, where the abstractions we have to draw in our minds should reside and inspire us.

We peer into the various shades of blue above the waters, the emptiness guarantees possibilities of our abstractions becoming realities. The apathetic stare into neat, straight horizons transforms our ancestral landscape into dirt and danger, when looking back to it.

To be on a ship under quarantine, is an upside down experience, for the promised escape has turned into a forced paralysis. The Lima flag (• — • •, in morse code), presented on the outer sleeve of this record, indirectly demands of all passengers to stay aboard and contemplate their escape from the land they now desire to return to.

These four piano pieces could be considered as a classical sonata (allegro-adagio-scherzo-rondo). In a recital they are accompanied by four video pieces by artist Karl Van Welden. We picked the videos out of his extensive archive, choosing images intuitively while listening to the piano music. The theme of ships relating to quarantine thus came unannounced but of course, we were in the middle of the pandemic at the time.

Solastalgia was already waiting as a title for the new album before march 2020. I first came across the word in *Underland*, a book by Robert Macfarlane (2019). He defines the word as “The unhappiness of people whose landscapes are being transformed about them by forces beyond their control”. These forces and this unhappiness are, I believe, what constitutes the modern human.

Frederik Croene (August 2022)