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# AMBIENT MUSIC

**Critical Explorations, Wicked Problems, and Small Wonderments**

International Conference

Copenhagen, Denmark

September 15-17, 2026

## Venue

RMC, Rhythmic Music Conservatory, Leo Mathisens Vej 1, 1437 Copenhagen

## Organizers

Holger Schulze (Copenhagen University) & Ulrik Schmidt (Roskilde University)

RMC Conference Team: Mimmi Bie & Jan Stricker

Why is everybody listening to ambient music these days? Beatless music, or music with almost inaudible percussion or beats, seems to be one of the hidden champions these days. It finds its audience across the spectrum of age, gender, race and ability. It has a clearly soothing and healing quality – but also oozes into all sorts of other genres, styles and artistic movements: its roots and offshoots range from Minimal Music to Krautrock, from Gamelan to Soundscape Composition, from radiophonic composition to noise music, from film music to neoclassic, from hauntology to lo-fi hip hop beats to relax/study to.

Ambient is a truly planetary genre of music – with an endless range of local traditions and highly diverse scenes. Is ambient even becoming the dominant model for popular music production in the 21st century, replacing the backbeat of rock'n'roll, the percussive patterns and loops of EDM, and taking its place alongside hip-hop and R'n'B? Is the ambient music genre simply tailor-made for perfect playlist adaptability, workplace mood regulation, and spotifycore? A few decades ago, listening to this genre was considered embarrassing, or at the very least, clichéd by many: today, it is a widespread preference of countless artists, music lovers and streaming platforms across the globe.

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# PROGRAM

(preliminary)

## SEPTEMBER 15

8:30 COFFEE

9:00 WELCOME AND OPENING STATEMENT

**Holger Schulze and Ulrik Schmidt**

9:30 MORNING PERFORMANCE

**Paulus van Horne (US)**

10:00 KEYNOTE

**Ann Werner (SE)**

Beyond Seamless Listening: Ambient Music, Platforms and Gender.

11:00 COFFEE BREAK

11:30 LOCAL HISTORIES I

**Ramlath A (IN)**

Sonic Realism and Cultural Memory in Kammattipadam: Analysing Ambient Music as Narrative Tool

**Katsushi Nakagawa (JP)**

Local history and aesthetics of ambient music in Japan

**Nick Prior (UK)** (Audio paper)

Ambient Machines: A Sound Essay on Japanese Vending Machines

13:00 LUNCH

13:30 LUNCH PERFORMANCE

**James Ler (KE)**

14:00 AMBIENT AND POPULAR MUSIC

**Anders Bach Pedersen (DK)**

Ambient Music Is Officially Mainstream

**Lorenzo Montefinese (IT)**

Music for the body and the mind. Convergences between ambient and electronic dance music

15:00 COFFEE BREAK

15:30 HIGHTEA PERFORMANCE

**Jane Arnison (US)**

We Are All in This Together

16:00 AMBIENT AND AESTHETICS

**Caroline Locke (UK)**

Sonic Ecologies: Ambient Music as Environmental Translation and Embodied Listening

**Brady Cranfield (CA)**

Towards a Field Theory of Timbre

19:00 EVENING PERFORMANCE

**Iman Jesmi (IR/DE)**

**Matt Choboter (CA/DK)**

**LASALTAS (ES/NL/BR)**

**Norah Lorway and Jason Rule (CA)**

## SEPTEMBER 16

8:30 COFFEE

9:00 KEYNOTE

**Jacob Smith (US)**

New Age Audiovision and the Will to Shine

10:30 COFFEE BREAK

11:00 AMBIENT MUSIC AND LISTENING

**Raphael Börger (DE)**

Pleasure Control Through Sonic Tonics: Irv Teibel's environments (1969-1979)

**Roberto Azzaretto (US)**

Levels of ambient attentional engagement

12:00 LOCAL HISTORIES II

**Ondřej Daniel (CZ)**

Dub Echoes: Ambient Aesthetics and Cultural Translation in 1980s Czechoslovakia

**Piotr Kędziora (PL)**

Who Cares How You Listen? Thoughts on Ambient Music as a Laboratory and The Polish Ambient Music Project

13:00 LUNCH

13:30 LUNCH PERFORMANCE

**Christian Naujoks (DE)**

14:00 AMBIENT AND HEALTH

**Louisa Grantz (DE/UK)**

Sonic Care: The Role of Ambient Music in Healing Environments

**Rupert Till (UK)**

Ambient and Autism

15:00 COFFEE BREAK

15:30 HIGHTEA PERFORMANCE

**Seth Cluett (US)**

Spheres of Multiplicity

16:00 AMBIENT AND MEDIA I

**Ann-Kathrin Allekotte (DE)**

"Congratulations! You've reached a digital resting point. Stay as long as you like" – Digital Resting Points as a Phenomenon of Ambiance Listening and Viewing Practices on TikTok

**Mattia Merlini (IT)**

A Look from Inside the Limbo: Historical Constraints and Future Potential of Ambient Video Game Music

19:00 CONFERENCE DINNER

## SEPTEMBER 17

8:30 COFFEE

9:00 MORNING PERFORMANCE

**Niels Lyhne Løkkegaard (DK)**

9:30 KEYNOTE

**Joseph Kamaru / KMRU (KE/DE)** (Audio paper)

Other 'Ambient' Music

10:30 COFFEE BREAK

11:00 TEACHING WITH AMBIENT

**Katharina Schmidt (DE)**

From Atmospheric to Academics and Back: Tactics for Teaching Ambient

**Angelina Tarlovskaia (DE/RU)**

Teaching Texture and Atmosphere: Integrating Ambient Music into Contemporary Piano Pedagogy

12:00 LOCAL HISTORIES III

**Anna Ganzha (RU)**

Ambient sentimentality: the late-Soviet soundtrack of a transformed world

**Evgeny Bylina (UA/GE)**

Music for the End of the World: "Quiet Music" as a Reflection on Trauma in Post-Soviet Sound Art

13:00 LUNCH

13:30 LUNCH PERFORMANCE

**Adel Akram Alameddine (DE/SE)**

Touching Space

14:00 AMBIENT AND MEDIA II

**Riccardo Ancona (IT)**

Ambient Music in the Age of AI Reproduction

**Macon Holt (DK)** (Audio paper)

How commercial AI generated ambient music helps me sleep, when there are a lot of good reasons to lie awake at night

15:00 COFFEE BREAK

15:30 HIGHTEA PERFORMANCE

**Ricardo Tovar Mateus (CO)**

**Katharina Schmidt (DE)**

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16:30 FINAL REMARKS



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