

Embassy of the North Sea rīvus 23rd biennale of sydney



Image: Embassy of the North Sea, *Seasynthesis*, Sea

MAJOR GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



PRINCIPAL PATRON



PRINCIPAL PARTNER



MAJOR STRATEGIC PARTNER



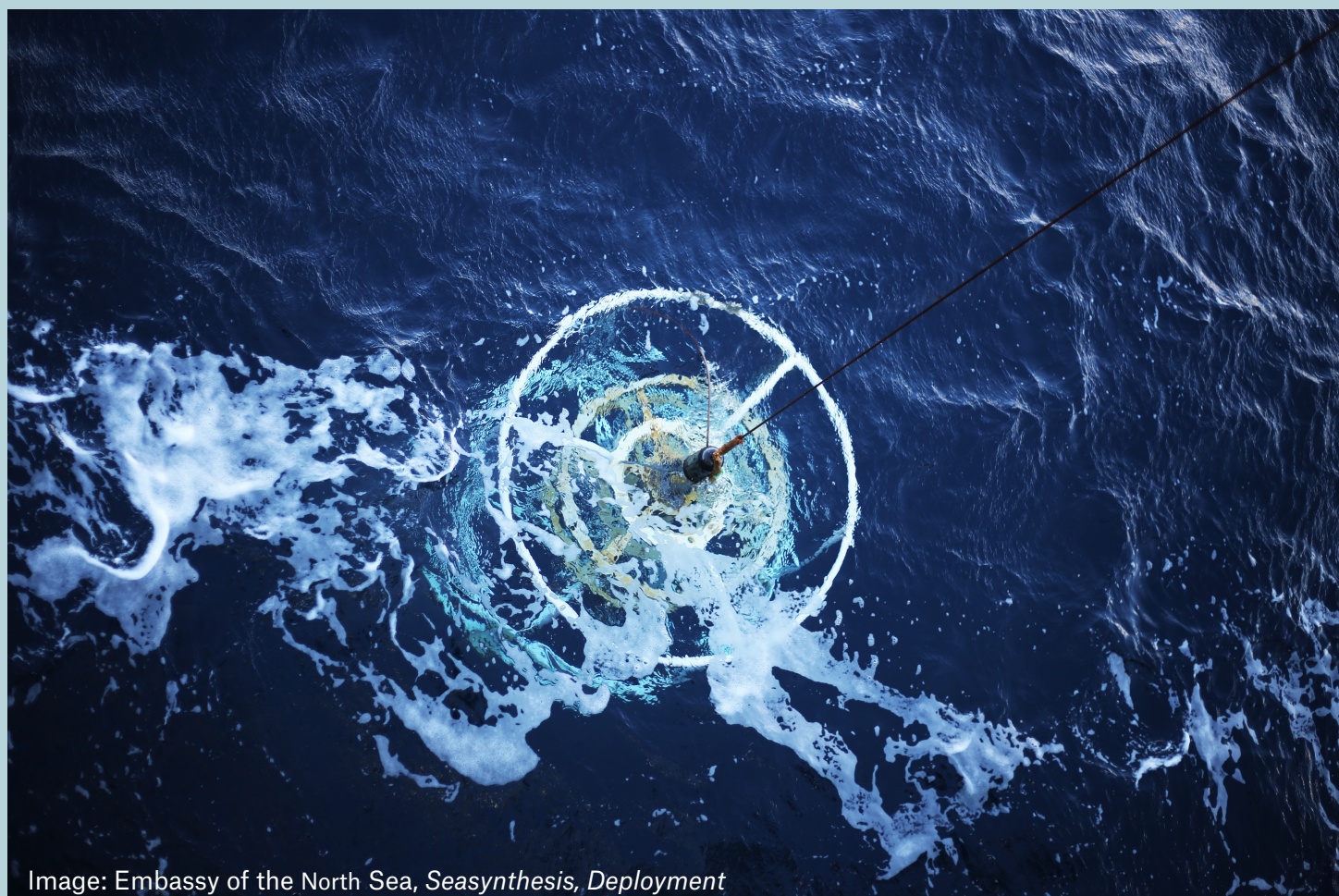
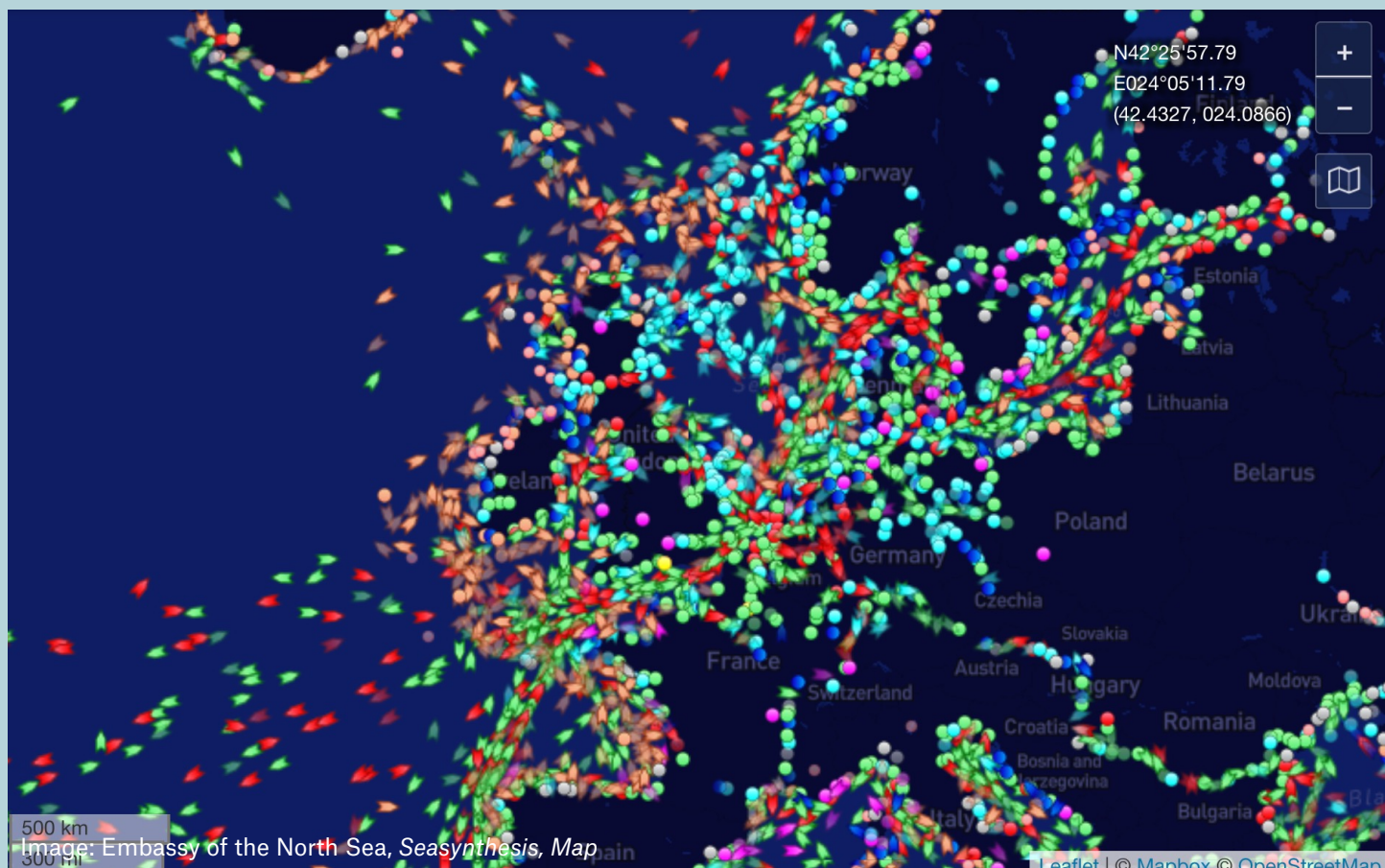


Images: Pier 2/3, Four Minutes To Midnight, 2022

Seasynthesis
(2017-ongoing) -
[Listen here](#)

Stereo composition
for “Space in
Between”, rīvus,
Biennale of Sydney,
2022

Xandra van der Eijk
(The Netherlands, 1985)
Mix for stereo by Harpo 't Hart,
Embassy of the North Sea



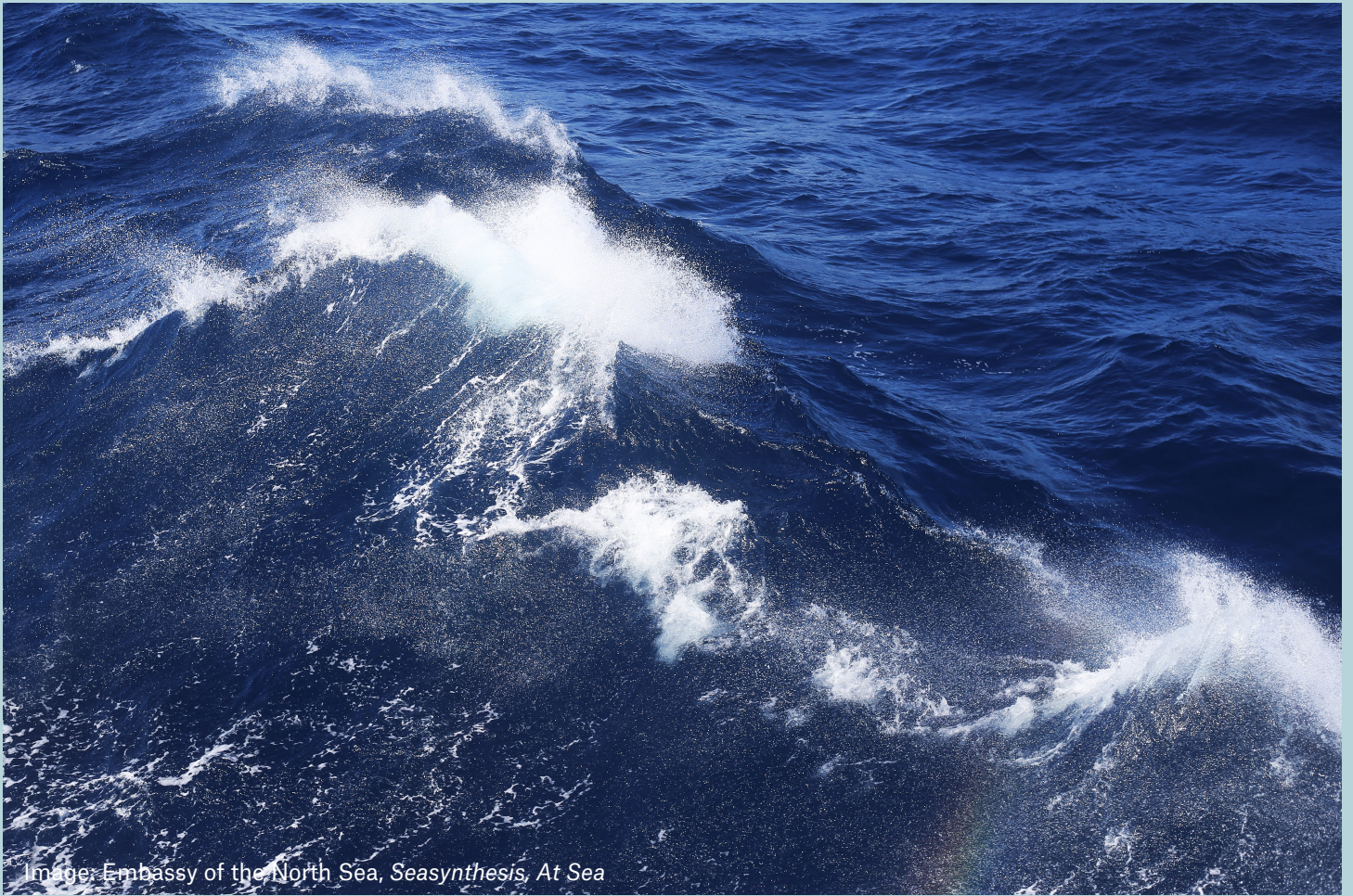


Image: Embassy of the North Sea, *Seasynthesis*, *At Sea*



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Seasynthesis is an ongoing research project that aims to provide access to the North Sea through listening. Though the North Sea is one of the busiest seas in the world, it remains a hostile environment with extremely limited in-person access. As sound travels five times faster through water compared to air, a valuable understanding of the activity of both man, aquatic life and the planet, over a vast distance, is gained by the act of listening. In the shape of ambient noise, the recordings tell stories about earthquakes hundreds of kilometers away, weather patterns and the ever flowing movement of water molecules. But predominantly, they give insight into the vast amount of anthropogenic noise in the North Sea, raising questions about the effect of sound intensity and frequency vibration on the ecologies of this body of water.

To obtain the recordings, a special hydrophone was constructed that was able to record independently at depth. The hydrophone was attached to a lander, a structure invented and built by Dutch sea research institute NIOZ for deploying scientific measuring devices. On board the famous research vessel 'Pelagia', the scientists set out to place the lander in the North Sea, far off shore. After the structure was placed, the Pelagia set sail elsewhere to conduct a research survey, only to return days later for pickup.

Though many seas and oceans are naturally noisy, anthropogenic noise is increasingly recognised as a main pollutant. Many marine mammals, animals and corals depend on sound for survival. Anthropogenic noise, especially low frequency sounds produced by marine traffic, create an acoustic fog, obscuring biological signals and non-human means of communication. Passive acoustic monitoring is not often chosen as a scientific strategy for understanding the North Sea and anthropogenic influence on its ecosystems. If it is applied, it is not analysed by ear, rather by volume levels alone. The act of personally listening to days of ambient noise is therefore an act of slow activism, that calls for attentiveness to all actors operating in the open, porous borders that exist between all underwater sound producing entities.

Project partners

Wageningen Marine Research, NIOZ

Commissioners

Seasynthesis was originally developed for the Bio Art & Design Award in 2016 and first presented at MU Hybrid Art House in 2017.