

## ***the delicate illusion of reality***

**Commissioned by the Art Gallery of South Australia (2021)**

**Composer:** Gabriella Smart  
**Electric Crystal:** Gabriella Smart  
**Sampling, Electronics:** Daniel Pitman

***the delicate illusion of reality (excerpt) 28.2.21:***

<https://vimeo.com/598687572>

***the delicate illusion of reality full recording 3.9.21***

<https://soundcloud.com/soundstream-4/the-delicate-illusion-of-reality>

*the delicate illusion of reality* is inspired by the quiet passion, courage, and presence of Clarice Beckett. Her steel strength of mind enabled her to follow her passion and individual voice despite the adverse conditions under which she worked, including incessant and prolonged vilification by the critics of her time. My work uses, as its departure point, the jarring disconnect between Clarice's physical world and her artistry. Sounds of Clarice's landscapes, such as 1930s street sounds and the ocean, are drawn upon. But in the true spirit of Tonalism, these sounds are transfigured to evoke mood and presence.



Clarice Beckett's *Summer Fields* (1926)

Live electronics are performed by Daniel Pitman, who transforms the sound of the ElectricCrystal into a subtle sonic palette layering the space behind Gabriella's performance. At times the Electric Crystal can be heard in its amplified, rich rawness; at other times it generates sounds that mirror Clarice's intimate, interior world. It is a gorgeous instrument, so full of sonic possibilities. Yet its sound production is fragile, relying on the friction between water and glass. Dylan Crismani is the maker of this particular instrument, the only one of its kind in Australia. He has created an even more ethereal and fragile timbre by tuning it microtonally.

Clarice was interested in the aural in relation to painting, and in 1995 Bruce James remarked that "her paintings are little evocations that build like musical phrases towards a greater and compelling whole." I have used the concept of these 'little evocations' to build the foundation of *the delicate illusion of reality*, which is in five sections. Throughout, the unique sounds of the Electric Crystal capture the ethos of Clarice's world.

**Snapshot of the *Clarice Beckett: The present moment* Exhibition at the Art Gallery of South Australia:**

<https://www.agsa.sa.gov.au/whats-on/exhibitions/clarice-beckett-present-moment/>