

Michalis Paraskakis

kama, 2016

world premiere, commissioned by impuls

Barley porridge, or a crust of barley bread, and water do not make a very cheerful diet, but nothing gives one keener pleasure than the ability to derive pleasure even from that.

Seneca

The sunflower does not want to face the sun, the pine tree does not want to fight bugs, and the paramecium does not want to reverse its direction. Lacking a brain, they cannot desire anything ... In a full-fledged case of desire, by way of contrast, a creature is able to form a mental representation of the thing it desires, compare the current state of affairs with the desired state, and initiate action to diminish the difference between these states of affairs. Only a creature with considerable brainpower will have these abilities.

William B. Irvine in *On Desire*



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Michalis Paraskakis was born in Athens, he initially studied and worked in graphic design and visual arts, while playing the piano and the accordion. Later, music became his main focus, studying composition and singing. Musicians he has worked with include the Klangforum Wien, ASKO/Schönberg, Nieuw Ensemble, Momenta Quartet, Ensemble Modelo62, Slagwerk Den Haag, Klang Ensemble, Hellenic Group of Contemporary Music, Enno Poppe, Bas Wiegers and Carl Cristian Bettendorf, in venues like the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ Amsterdam (NL), Athens Concert Hall (GR), The Kitchen [US], Korzo Theatre The Hague (NL). His works have been broadcasted on Radio 4 and Concertzender (NL).

As a singer/performer, he focuses on challenging and demanding roles, including "Kassandra" by Iannis Xenakis and "Anaparastasis I" by Jani Christou, as well as modal singing of the Medieval and Renaissance era. He has performed with the ASKO/Schönberg Ensemble, ASKO Kammerkoor, the Ballata Ensemble, the Athens State Orchestra, and the Greek National Choir. Additionally, he participated in several premieres by young composers and artists. In 2013 Karyn Benquet invited him on the stage of Nederlands Dans Theater, for her dance piece "Ensuig" where he sung and improvised together with the dancers. In 2014 he was invited by the School of Arts – Ghent Conservatory in Belgium, to perform and teach Christou's work as part of the Week of Contemporary Music 2014. His work 'Not Yet II' was premiered in MATA Festival in New York and Impuls Festival has commissioned him a new piece to be premiered by Klangforum Wien and Enno Poppe.

He completed his Bachelor and Master degree in composition in the Royal Conservatory of The Hague with Martijn Padding, Yannis Kyriakides, Cornelis de Bondt and Diderik Wagenaar, as well as Costas Varotsis in Athens. He also studied singing in the same Conservatory with Manon Heynes and Kees Jan de Koning and from 2011 he is working with Rebecca Stewart in polyphonic medieval and Renaissance music. He studied piano in Athens with Sofia Rosmaraki.