Omer Barash Pourpres (2026, impuls commission, world premiere)

Programme Notes

"Pourpres" is the aftermath of a clash between fragments torn from two mercurial texts: Rimbaud's poem "Voyelles" and Beckett's play "Not I". The former conjures an image of "spat-up blood, the curl of lips / In laughter, hatred, or besotted penitence" (translation: George J. Dance). The latter very much incarnates this image in its inexorable stream-of-consciousness monologue, sputtered by a disembodied mouth. The volatility, violence, and extreme expressive range shared by these two texts propel the music forward with great urgency, as if everything were spewed in a single breath.

Bio

Omer Barash's music interrogates betweenness and urgency, often stemming from personal interpretations of Hebrew texts and traditions and the sonic landscapes that surround him. This sensibility has led him to projects that span ancient manuscripts and digital signal processing.

His music has been performed internationally by groups including Ensemble Modern, TAK Ensemble, and Meitar Ensemble, and featured at festivals such as the Tanglewood Music Center (USA), Wittener Tage für neue Kammermusik (Witten), cresc... Biennale for Contemporary Music (Frankfurt), La Semaine du Neuf (Montreal), and CEME (Tel Aviv).

Barash is currently a doctoral fellow in Composition at Columbia University, where he studies with Georg Friedrich Haas and George Lewis. He previously studied at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, McGill University, the mdw (Vienna), and Ircam, and has received important artistic guidance from Franck Bedrossian, Chaya Czernowin, Clara Iannotta, Rebecca Saunders, and Amnon Wolman.

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