

the Dybbuk

A MULTIMEDIA CHAMBER OPERA

The Dybbuk: Between Two Worlds is a multimedia chamber opera in three acts, composed by Ofer Ben-Amots and inspired by S. Ansky's timeless Yiddish play of the same name.

The music intertwines folk elements with contemporary textures to create a haunting, self-contained world, while multiple live video projections by Sheri Wills combine to tell a powerful story of transcendent passion between two ill-fated lovers.

In our re-telling, the opera begins with a young woman, Leah, near-death, awakening to the whisper of a clarinet. As the clarinet plays, she slowly realizes the sound is the spirit of her dead lover, Hannan, and begins remembering what has happened. The rest of the opera then unfolds as a flashback, in which she must choose between life with a man she does not know and death with her beloved, who has possessed her as a Dybbuk, (a dead soul who takes possession of a living body).

The Dybbuk explores Leah's experience from the first-person. The video art makes her inner-state visible with expressive, abstracted organic imagery, aflame with the range of Leah's powerful emotions. The text of her thoughts becomes an integrated visual element in the video, punctuating crucial moments in the dialogue. The video is played in real-time, in tempo with the musicians, keeping the performative aspect vital.

For any additional information, please contact: info@dybbukproject.org

Upcoming Performances:

Houston Jewish Community Center, USA – November 14, 15 2009

Performance History:

Mizel Arts and Culture Center, Denver, USA – November 2008

The E. Gaylord Cornerstone Arts Center, Colorado Springs, USA – October 2008

International Summer Academy of Music, Michelstadt, GERMANY – August 2008

The Segal Center for Performing Arts, Montreal, CANADA – January 2008

Biographies:

Ofer Ben-Amots' compositions are performed regularly in concert halls and festivals worldwide. His music has been performed by such orchestras as the Zürich Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, ÖRF - Austrian Radio Orchestra, Brooklyn Philharmonic, The Moscow Camerata, the Filarmonici di Sicili, the Concerto Soloists of Philadelphia, The Portland Chamber Orchestra, and the symphonies of Heidelberg, Erfurt, Brandenburg, and Colorado Springs among others.

His compositions have been professionally recorded by the Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig, the Munich Chamber Orchestra, the Barcelona Royal Symphony, the BBC Singers, and the renowned Czech choirs Permonik and Jitro. Ben-Amots has received commissions and grants from the MacArthur Foundation, Fulbright Foundation, Maurice Amado Foundation, Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, Fuji International Music Festival in Japan, Delta Ensemble from Amsterdam, Assisi Musiche, Musica Nova in Tel Aviv, and many others.

Ofer Ben-Amots is the winner of the 1994 Vienna International Competition for Composers. His chamber opera, Fool's Paradise, was premiered in Vienna during the 1994 festival Wien modern and has become subsequently part of the 1994/95 season of Opernhaus Zürich. He is recipient of the 1988 Kavannagh Prize for his composition Fanfare for Orchestra and the Gold Award at South Africa's 1993 Roodepoort International Competition for Choral Composition. His Avis Urbanus for amplified flute was awarded First Prize at the 1991 Kobe International Competition for Flute Composition in Japan. In 1999, Ben-Amots was awarded the Aaron Copland Award and the Music Composition Artist Fellowship by the Colorado Council on the Arts. Dr. Ben-Amots is a member of the Board of the Milken Archive of American-Jewish Music. In addition, he is a Jerusalem Fellow of the Center for Jewish Culture and Creativity and its Artistic Director for North America since 1997.

Ofer Ben-Amots' works have been repeatedly recognized for their emotional and highly personal expression. The interweaving of folk elements with contemporary textures, along with his unique imaginative orchestration, creates the haunting dynamic tension that permeates and defines Mr. Ben-Amots' musical language. His music has published by Baerenreiter, Kallisti Music Press, Muramatsu Inc., Dorn, and Tara Publications. It can be heard on Naxos, Vantage, Plæne, Stylton, and other recording labels.

www.oferbenamots.com

Sheri Wills is an artist whose work is based in live video, film, and digital media. Her work has been exhibited around the world, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the London Film Festival, the International Film Festival in Rotterdam, San Francisco Cinematheque, the Director's Lounge in Berlin, the New York Underground Film Festival and the Telluride International Experimental Film Exposition. Her work was included in "Big As Life: An American History of 8mm Films" at MoMA, has been broadcast in high definition throughout North America, and is featured in the Rizzoli book, Sonic Graphics: Seeing Sound, by Matt Woolman.

She has written art criticism for magazines such as the New Art Examiner and Dialogue. She holds an MFA in filmmaking & a master of art in art history, theory & criticism from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Sheri Wills' commitment to a meaningful integration of sound and image is reflected in her ongoing project of cinematic interactions with music by contemporary composers. In this body of work, (which includes the Dybbuk Project), Wills dispenses with conventions of soundtrack or music video and instead builds a dynamic relationship between silence and motion, sound and stillness, music and vision.

Her collaborations include creating video art for concerts, dance performances and gallery installations with composers, including Bright Sheng, Jan Jirásek, Lyn Goeringer, and Charles Norman Mason and performed by ensembles such as the Providence String Quartet and Luna Nova New Music Ensemble. She is an associate professor of art at the University of Rhode Island and she lives in New York City. www.sheriwills.com

In addition to the Dybbuk, **Jeremy Wilhelm** has previously performed three of Ofer Ben-Amots' song cycles, in Yiddish, Ladino and English. He is a theatre artist based in Minneapolis, where he specializes in developing new plays.

This year he will direct new work by Sally Oswald and Cory Hinkle in residence at the Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis, and for Browen Bittetti at the Ontological-Hysterical Incubator in New York City.

Mr. Wilhelm also performs and writes for Lucidity Suitcase Intercontinental, based in Philadelphia, which will premier Flamingo/Winnebago Off-Broadway at the Barrow Street Theatre in New York City during the fall of 2008. He is a guest instructor in acting at Colorado College, and this summer will teach in the new Cornerstone Performance Lab. He holds a B.A. in Drama from Colorado College and an M.F.A. in Directing from the University of Iowa.



