

Jacob Mühlrad, Composer

Biography

Born in Stockholm in 1991, composer Jacob Mühlrad transcends genre boundaries and combines his Jewish heritage with a contemporary musical language in emotional compositions. For his new clarinet concerto *SEMA*, which was premiered in April 2024 by the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra under Martin Fröst with soloist Magnus Holmander, he was inspired by the choreography of Sufi whirling. Audiences and the press reacted enthusiastically to the "powerful music that spans religious boundaries" (Dagens Nyheter). Two major world premieres will follow in 2024/25. During the fall, *RESIL*, commissioned and premiered by the Swedish Chamber Orchestra, will be also performed in a second version, for orchestra, by the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra. In February 2025 a new work for the Ensemble Linea commissioned by Radio France and to be premiered during the Festival Présences in Paris.

In his first large-scale orchestral work *REMS* (Rapid Eye Movement Sleep), he explored the mysteries of the dream state. *REMS* was premiered by the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra under Pablo Heras-Casado in 2021. A recording of this interpretation was released by Warner Classics in 2023, and in the same year, a shorter version was performed with the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra under Matthias Pintscher at Suntory Hall.

The work takes up motifs from Jewish prayers, lullabies and Indian ragas, which appear and dissolve again in the orchestral flow of breath; through close dialogue with the orchestra's section leaders about specific instrumental techniques, Jacob Mühlrad developed a unique sound language that incorporates microtonal composition.

Before these first orchestral compositions, Jacob Mühlrad attracted attention with his choral music in particular. *Anim Zemirof*, composed in 2013, was recorded by the Swedish Radio Choir together with three other choral works in 2021 for the highly acclaimed album *TIME*. The BBC Music Magazine's 5-star review of the recording, released by Deutsche Grammophon, states: "*TIME* is indeed timeless, not to say haunting and beautiful." Also included in this recording is the deeply personal *Kaddish*, which is based on Jacob Mühlrad's grandfather as a survivor of the concentration camps. It was created with the help of a grant from the Micael Binfeld's Foundation in Memory of the Holocaust and it was premiered in Stockholm in 2017 by the Swedish Radio Choir under Peter Dijkstra with soloist Eva Dahlgren. Jointly-commissioned by the Cappella San Francisco, the WDR Radio Choir Cologne, the Swedish Radio Choir and the Tapiola Chamber Choir, the title *TIME* (2018) is based on the translation of the word "time" into 27 different languages: concept that was inspired by the Old Testament story of the Tower of Babel.

Jacob's choral and orchestral works have also been performed by the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra and the Vancouver Chamber Choir, among others. He has also worked on cross-genre projects with Swedish rapper Silvana Imam and Swedish House Mafia.

Jacob Mühlrad began his musical career as a self-taught musician before studying composition at the Gotland School of Music Composition, then at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm and lastly at the Royal Academy of Music in London. The Austrian composer Olga Neuwirth played a special role as his mentor and gave him important impulses. His works have been published by Gehrmans Musikförlag, Universal Music Publishing and by Bosworth Music.

2023/24 season

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