

Samir Odeh-Tamimi, Composer

Biography

Samir Odeh-Tamimi's vivid and rhythmically intense musical language reveals an archaic power at times. Born in Jaljulia near Tel Aviv in 1970 and enthusiastic about both European classical music and the aesthetics of New Music, the composer came to Germany at the age of 22 and studied musicology and composition. In addition to engaging with compositional role models such as Giacinto Scelsi and Iannis Xenakis, he became increasingly involved with Arabic music during this time. His intensive research into the history of the ancient Orient and ancient Greece has since inspired his music more and more.

Samir Odeh-Tamimi's works are regularly performed at renowned festivals and concert halls throughout Europe, and he has received commissions from Deutschlandfunk, Saarländischer Rundfunk, Donaueschinger Musiktage, the European Center for the Arts Hellerau, WDR and Bayerischer Rundfunk/musica viva. In 2010, his music theatre piece *Leila und Madschnun* had its world premiere at the Ruhrtriennale in Bochum. As part of the project *into Istanbul*, initiated by the Ensemble Modern and the Siemens Arts Program in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut, he composed a piece for Ensemble Modern in 2008 inspired by his stay in the Turkish metropolis. In recent years, Samir Odeh-Tamimi has also worked in close collaboration with the Boulanger Trio and Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart. The singers have since travelled to the composer's birthplace, his parents' home near Tel Aviv, to discover his musical roots in preparation for a new work to be premiered at Stuttgart's Eclat Festival.

His oratorio *Hinter der Mauer* (Behind the Wall) was commissioned by the RIAS Kammerchor to mark the 20th anniversary of German reunification. Following its world premiere in Berlin it was then performed in Jerusalem and Dresden. SWR's anniversary concert on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation saw the world premiere of *Gidim*, a work for orchestra and electronics that deals with Sumerian death rituals. In October 2018, the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra premiered the viola concerto *Šamaš*, named after the sun god of Babylonian mythology, and in 2020, SWR commissioned the work *TIMNA*, for choir, percussion, flute, viola, violoncello and double bass, named after an ancient capital in Yemen. In 2016, the Klarafestival in Brussels commissioned a new work as part of Pierre Audi's staged version of Bach's *St John Passion*. The intermezzo *L'Apocalypse Arabe I*, performed in between the two parts of the passion, is based on texts by the Lebanese poet Etel Adnan and was also performed in 2017 at the Muziekgebouw Amsterdam and in 2018 at Opera Rouen. Samir Odeh-Tamimi has developed the piece into a full-length music theatre work, which had its world premiere in July 2021 at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence.

Important recent works include the music theatre piece *Philoktet* which premiered at the ECLAT Festival 2023, composed for the Neue Vocalsolisten and the Zafraan Ensemble and inspired by the tragedy of Sophocles as well as by André Gide and Heiner Müller. The Kammerakademie Potsdam premiered *Tachypnon* in September 2023, and in January 2024, the Munich Chamber Orchestra performed the new work *Melancó pion* for string orchestra without conductor, which is infused with theatrical elements. Samir Odeh-Tamimi has been commissioned by the Biennale di Venezia to compose the sextet *Roaikron* for the Christian Benning Percussion Group for their 2024 edition. The

world premiere of a new work for the Ensemble Meitar is also planned for June 2025.

In cooperation with the RBB and Kairos, the Berlin-based Zafraan Ensemble recently released a highly praised portrait CD of chamber music works by the composer. Further recordings of his works have been produced by WERGO, among others. Samir Odeh-Tamimi has been a member of the Akademie der Künste in Berlin since 2016 and in that same year was awarded a German Music Author's Prize by GEMA.

2024/25 season

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