

Gilead Mishory

Breath Psalm for solo clarinet

"Breath Psalm" is not a description of a particular chapter of the Psalms, but an attempt to reflect the human condition described in many of them: great danger, feeling of suffocation, despair, helplessness. Emerging from all these - whether in long sentences or in broken words, due to shortness of breath - the desire to call for help, to return to yourself, to rediscover the calm beat, the orderly inhalation and exhalation.

At the end - the "simple psalm": a silent monologue that contains the melodic material of the entire piece. At the beginning, on the other hand, there is an inner restlessness and an inability to say (or sing) one coherent sentence. It is a dialogue of two contrasting voices of the same speaker. In the course of things, the unrest turns into fragments of a struggle. The simple psalm, or its individual words, become during the work a cry of pain, protest, defiance. The desire to calm yourself down, to achieve regular breathing (starting from bar 45) does not go well. The rage and accusation take up more and more space, reaching a tantrum that develops into dizziness, inability to breathe.

The "simple psalm", as postlude: does it come from faith? out of desperation? Maybe it's a description of a slow death, which alone eventually brings the longed-for peace?

The piece was written in August and September 2023.