

## Special Commission for Brundibár Arts Festival

### PIANO TRIO No. 2 “*Songs of Silenced Words*”

Where oppressive regimes have silenced voices of dissent, music has often been both the object of silencing, as well as the act of resistance. More opaque than words, music eludes literalism. But music can also forge identities and communicate powerful sentiments, both dangerous for authoritarian regimes. This Piano Trio “Songs of Silenced Words” explores such power to sublimate meanings of words. While a kind of *Songs without Words* like those of Felix Mendelssohn’s, the three “Songs” here do contain words, except they are set to music and then “Silenced”, not spoken out, unintelligible.

#### I. Forbidden Words

This movement derives its motivic and harmonic materials from sound recordings of utterances of “forbidden words”. These are words from the past and from our own time that have become censored, some of these are derived from my own country whose history and present have many forbidden words.

#### II. Old Love Song

As an “Intermezzo”, this movement is based on an old Thai love song, weaving in and out of recognisability.

#### III. Forgotten Words

Words are silenced not only through censors, but in our world of overwhelming information, they also get drowned out, algorithmized to irrelevance, forgotten. This “Song” sets some of these words.