

# Mordacious Lips, To Dust

**Werktitel:** Mordacious Lips, To Dust

**Untertitel:** Für vier SängerInnen (soprano, countertenor, tenor, bass)

**KomponistIn:** [Palme Pia](#)

**Beteiligte Personen (Text):** Palme Pia

**Entstehungsjahr:** 2014–2015

**Dauer:** 11m

**Genre(s):** Neue Musik

**Gattung(en):** Ensemblesmusik Vokalmusik

**Sprache (Text):** Deutsch

**Besetzung:** Vokalquartett

**Besetzungsdetails:** [Sopran](#) (1), [Countertenor](#) (1), [Tenor](#) (1), [Bass](#) (1)

**Art der Publikation:** Manuskript

## **Abschnitte/Sätze**

Part I und Part II

## **Beschreibung**

"In *Part I* the soprano performs a virtuosic solo part, which is written to highlight the soprano voice – whilst the three male voices provide a shifty microtonal background of hushed activity. In *Part II* all four singers perform a microtonal partsong together, ending with the whispered word *Staub* (German for *dust*).

In the text for this work, I discuss the category 'beauty' from an artistic perspective. For me beauty is represented in texts, words, music, artwork... I was never interested in beauty, or beautiful appearance, as a woman. Why should I care about visual beauty, fashion, shoes or a hairstyle? That's a prison to keep you busy in (I cite the Austrian author Elfriede Jelinek here). As a composer, I appear through my works, in this case, compositions. My text was inspired by the Mexican author Sor Juana Inez de la Cruz; she argued along the same line, as a writer, in the Baroque period.

In the title of my work:

...the adjective *mordacious* makes reference to the irate female voice permeating

the composition. As a composer, I pay homage to Homer's epos Iliad, which begins with the Ancient Greek word for wrath, summoning a female voice to sing about the fury that caused warfare and bloodshed ('*The wrath, goddess, sing...*').

The baroque ornament *mordent* is frequently used in this piece to enhance singular notes in the soprano part. I wanted to compose a quick and subtle aural accent, which might cause an aural twinkle that would cut, bite or sting through the mechanisms of listening, to open up a glimpse of another dimension. The text for the soprano summons the thorns of a rose, shards of glass, or the penetrating power of love and madness to punctuate reality and skin.

Etymologically, the words *mordacious* and *mordent* originate from the same source, the Ancient Greek term σμερδαλέος '*smerdaleos*' — painful, horrible. One could go further back to the ancient Indo-European '(s)merd' — *to bite, to sting*. The German word '*Schmerz*' — *pain* is also connected to this origin, as well as the English term *smart*. As a feminist composer, I find these connections stimulating." Pia Palme (2015)

### **Uraufführung**

17. Oktober 2015 - [London](#), The Warehouse

**Mitwirkende:** EXAUDI Ensemble - Juliet Fraser (Soprano), Tom Williams (Countertenor), Stephen Jeffes (Tenor), Simon Whiteley (Bass), James Weeks (Leitung)

**Veranstaltung:** EXAUDI EXPOSURE2015

**Weitere Informationen:** The composition was further supported by the Kulturabteilung der Stadt Wien Musik and the BKA Austria. Composed for the ensemble EXAUDI in a longer process during 2014/15, as part of the Sound and Music Portfolio Project. The composition won the George Butterworth Prize 2016.

### **Aufnahme**

**Titel:** MORDACIOUS LIPS, TO DUST

**Plattform:** [SoundCloud](#)

**Herausgeber:** palmeworks

**Datum:** 27 Oktober 2015

**Mitwirkende:** EXAUDI Ensemble