



A LIVING
MEMORIAL
TO THE
HOLOCAUST

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Multimedia Tribute to Poet and Holocaust Survivor Paul Celan
Performed by Avant Garde group Barbez and Narrated by Fiona Templeton
at the Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust

New York, NY— **Barbez's** critically acclaimed multimedia piece *Force of Light* will have a special performance at the **Museum of Jewish Heritage—A Living Memorial to the Holocaust** on **Wednesday, January 7 at 7 p.m.** *Force of Light* interweaves fragments of poetry from the great Holocaust poet and survivor Paul Celan with music and video. Each song is based on a poem, prose piece, or biographical detail from Celan's life. The works have been recorded by John Zorn's Radical Jewish label, Tzadik Records, in 2007.

Tickets are \$12 adults, \$10 students/seniors, \$7 for members and are available online at www.mjhnyc.org or by calling the Museum's box office at 646.437.4202. Co-sponsored by Poets House.

About Paul Celan

Paul Celan was born in Romania in 1920. He studied medicine in Paris in 1938, but returned to Romania shortly before the outbreak of World War II. His parents were deported and eventually died in Nazi labor camps; Celan himself was interned for 18 months before escaping to the Red Army. In 1945, he moved to Bucharest and became friends with many of the leading Romanian writers of the time. He began to publish his own poems and translations. Celan's first book was published in 1947; it received very little critical attention. His second book, however, garnered tremendous acclaim and helped to establish his reputation. During the 1960s he published more than six books of poetry and gained international fame. In 1970, Celan committed suicide. He is regarded as one of the most important poets to emerge from post-World War II Europe.

About the artists

Barbez is an innovative ensemble that the *Washington Post* calls "the most musically adventurous of the blooming 'ethno-punk-cabaret' movement." The group features **Dan Kaufman**, guitar; **Pamelia Kurstin**, theremin; **Danny Tunick**, marimba and vibes; **Peter Hess**, clarinet and percussion; **Catherine McRae**, violin; **Fiona Templeton**, voice; **Peter Lettre**, guitar; **Andrew Jones**, bass; **John Bollinger**, drums; and **John Jesurun**, video.

Praise for Barbez and Force of Light

- "...they cover everything from Bertolt Brecht to Black Sabbath...the real attraction is their melodically haunting originals. With a folk-music sound located somewhere between turn-of-the-century Eastern Europe and modern America, it's arty rock that moves between brooding and winking," *New Yorker*
- "Barbez is no ordinary band. In its willingness to combine classical rigor with a broad pop sensibility...in its theatricality and willful eclecticism." *Forward*
- "Band members display a command of dynamics that rivals noise innovators Sonic Youth and Swans...The degenerate-art revival starts here." *Time Out New York*

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- "...postmodern panbohemian fusion nods to Eastern European music, klezmer, the French torch song, and pretty much everything in between..." *Chicago Reader*
- "It's rare that a band as musically advanced as Barbez, or at least one willing to take broad chances, has such a clear vision of their art." *CMJ New Music Monthly*

About the ensemble

Dan Kaufman (composer and guitar) founded Barbez in the late 90s. Since its inception, the group has released four albums and collaborated with several dance and theatre pieces including Juliette Mapp's dance piece *One*, that was presented at Danspace at St. Mark's Church, and theatre director John Jesurun's serial play *Chang in a Void Moon*. He is currently working on a new musical work about the Iraq War and was recently accepted to the MacDowell Colony.

Pamelia Kurstin was described by electronics pioneer Bob Moog as "one of the most important innovators of the theremin living today." Besides her work with Barbez, Pamelia has performed or recorded with David Byrne, John Zorn, the Indigo Girls, Sebastien Tellier, and Bela Fleck & the Flecktones, among others. She has taught and lectured at the Berklee College of Music and the Metropolitan Museum of Art and performs her own solo improvisations, called Theremin Orchestra, all over the world.

Narrator **Fiona Templeton** is a poet, and director of the performance group The Relationship. Her award-winning productions include most recently sections from her epic *The Medead* on Governor's Island, and *GOING (with Coming)*, a recreated and reworked piece from the 70s by the Theatre of Mistakes, of which she was a founding member. Her books include *YOU-The City*, *Cells of Release*, *Delirium of Interpretations*, and the forthcoming *Elements of Performance Art*.

Danny Tunick (marimba, vibraphone) has played, conducted, and recorded music ranging from classical (Pierre Boulez, Terry Riley, Annie Gosfield) to punk rock (Jowe Head, The Clean). He can be heard on many record labels including CRI, Opus One, EMI Portugal, Point, Princeton, New Albion, Capstone, Tzadik, Merge, Wiiiija, Important, Konkurrent, Mystic, Mutable Music, and Bridge.

Clarinetist **Peter Hess** performs with Barbez, Balkan Beat Box, the World/Inferno Friendship Society, Slavic Soul Party, Guignol, Redhooker, Collide Quartet, the Hold Steady, and many others.

John Jesurun is a writer, director, and designer. He has written, directed, and designed over thirty pieces including: *Chang in a Void Moon*, *Deep Sleep/White Water/Black Maria*, and *Faust/How I Rose*. Fellowships include the Guggenheim, MacArthur, Rockefeller, NEA, and Foundation for Contemporary Arts. Recent work includes: *Philoktetes* at Soho Rep. and Harry Partch's Opera *Delusion of the Fury* at the Japan Society. Jesurun will premiere his new work *Firefall* at Dance Theater Workshop in February.

Andrew Jones started playing double bass at the age of ten, in his hometown of Phoenix, Arizona. Andrew has since performed or recorded with Rufus Reid, Steve Gadd, Michael Jefry Stevens, and many others.

Guitar player **Peter Lettre** has toured nationally with Shearwater (Matador Records), Barbez, and Andy Gillis. He recently composed music for the film *Love and Bones*, directed by Dan Rigazzi. As an actor, he has performed with Young Jean Lee, International WOW Company, The Flying Machine, LAByrinth Theater Co., and on "Law & Order."

Catherine McRae is one-half of the duo known as The Quavers, in which she plays violin, sampler, and sings. With T. Griffin (of The Quavers) she has collaborated on many live soundtrack projects with filmmaker Jem Cohen. They also created a live score for Danny Williams Factory Films, which has been presented at film festivals around the world. She is currently recording a solo album of songs.

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She has worked with Patti Smith, Vic Chesnutt, Tom Verlaine, the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, Fugazi, Mark Mulcahy and Ben Katchor, writer Nick Tosches, photographer Michael Ackerman, filmmaker Brent Green, and theater director Richard Maxwell.

John Bollinger's drumming can be heard in numerous bands from Jonnah Speidel to the Bronx Opera. He is currently working on his fourth solo recording, which features his drumming and vocal harmonies. In addition, John is a multi/mixed media/video artist/performer. His work has been shown in several short film festivals including the 2007 San Francisco Short Film Festival where he and his collaborator won a Director's Choice Award.

About Poets House

Poets House is a 50,000-volume poetry library and literary center that will be moving from Soho to Ten River Terrace in Battery Park City in 2009. In preparation for this move, the library is currently closed but programs will be held throughout the year at various venues. The permanent home for Poets House will include a state-of-the-art programming hall; a reading room with views of the Hudson River; a children's room; an open-access multimedia archive; and a multidisciplinary exhibition space. Founded in 1985 by the late Stanley Kunitz and Elizabeth Kray, Poets House has a distinguished record of innovative poetry programming. For more information, please call (212) 431-7920 or visit www.poetshouse.org.

About the Museum

The Museum's three-floor Core Exhibition educates people of all ages and backgrounds about the rich tapestry of Jewish life over the past century—before, during, and after the Holocaust. Special exhibitions include *Woman of Letters: Irène Némirovsky and Suite Française*, on view through March 22 and *The Shooting of Jews in Ukraine: Holocaust by Bullets* through February 16. The Museum offers visitors a vibrant public program schedule in its Edmond J. Safra Hall. It is also home to Andy Goldsworthy's memorial *Garden of Stones*, as well as James Carpenter's *Reflection Passage*, Gift of The Gruss Lipper Foundation. The Museum receives general operating support from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and is a founding member of the *Museums of Lower Manhattan*.

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