

Three Hundred Years of Turkish Music, Spring 2004 / Concert III

Hocalarımız ile Sohbetler / Conversations with our teachers

Performers of Turkish classical and folk music pay respects to their sources:
six lessons with three generations of musicians, both the famous and the anonymous.



Thursday, March 25, 2004, 8:00 pm / Jordan Hall / New England Conservatory
sponsored by the Turkish American Cultural Society of New England

directed by **Robert Labaree** (*çeng, voice, percussion*)

Eylem Başaldı (*violin, voice*) / **Jeffery Claasen** (*trumpet*) / **Cem Mutlu** (*voice, percussion*) /
Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol (*voice, zurna, ud*) / **Michael Winograd** (*clarinet*)
singers: **Nektarios Antoniou** / **Selis Önel Evren** / **Bilgehan Tuncer**
Yeliz Özalp Tuncer / **Cheryl Weber**

RECEPTION FOLLOWING THE PERFORMANCE IN THE STUDENT LOUNGE

This concert is divided into six “conversations” (*sohbetler*), each one featuring a moment of *meşk*, the old Ottoman Turkish word used by classical musicians to stand for traditional one-on-one oral learning without the use of notation. Each *sohbet* concentrates on a particular area of repertoire, calling for *meşk* with a particular teacher. In each case, the “lesson” begins in imitation and continues, true to life, into new creation. Some of these teachers, such as multi-instrumentalist İhsan Özgen (b. 1941) in *Sohbet I*, clarinetist Barbaros Erköse (b. 1939) in *Sohbet III*, singer Hafiz Kemal (1882-1939) in *Sohbet IV*, and violinist Sadi Isılay (1899-1969) in *Sohbet VI*, are part of 20th century musical legend in Turkey. Others, like Hatice Deklioğlu, the illiterate 13 year-old peasant girl recorded in Western Anatolia in 1936 (*Sohbet II*) and the unnamed trumpet player (ca. 1910) in *Sohbet V* are part of the legion of anonymous creators who comprise the vast majority of Turkish music-makers. For us, all these individuals are “teachers”, even though many of them never considered themselves such, because they provide momentary insight into some aspect of Turkish tradition, representing Ottoman court music, city music old and new, commercial and amateur music, the music of the Roma people and of Anatolian villagers. Different though they are, we view them equally as worthy of imitation, inspiring a new generation of musicians—both Turks and non-Turks—to put aside for a moment contemporary concerns over personal style and originality to submit to the nuances of one musician’s point of view.

Sohbet I is actually a double *meşk*, a multi-generational conversation in which teachers are also students. My own teacher, İhsan Özgen, dubbed in the 1990s as “The New Cemil Bey”, performs an improvisation (*taksim*) on the classical long-necked lute (*tanbur*) based on his own close study of the recordings of his namesake, the revered Tanburi Cemil Bey (d. 1916). In the village setting of *Sohbet II* the fragile voice of a 13 year-old girl, captured by Bela Bartok nearly 70 years ago, the conventional women’s theme of marriage is a vehicle for a powerful lament, imitated and enlarged by men’s voices: *Birben ölmeyne alem yıkılmaz*—“the world will not collapse because of my death”. In *Sohbet III* folk music takes a more urbanized form in our version of a *köçekçe takımı*, a set of songs and dances played during the 18th and 19th centuries by professional dance troupes featuring the *köçek*, a young boy dressed as a woman. The instrumentalists in such troupes were often a mix of Turks and other Balkan ethnic groups. The *meşk* here is with the well-known Roma clarinetist, Barbaros Erköse.

Sohbet IV features a lesson in the intimate setting of classical Ottoman music with the renowned classical singer Hafiz Kemal (the title *hafiz* indicating that he was trained in koranic chant) who improvises an elaborate musical setting of an Ottoman quatrain in free rhythm. *Sohbet V* features popular (and, in some cases, rather westernized), musical genres representative of the highly cosmopolitan Beyoğlu district of Istanbul from about 1900 to 1950, all of which we learned from 78 rpm recordings. It begins with a 1912 excerpt from the *Muzıkay-ı Hümayun*, the Ottoman sultan’s marching band, followed by the first tango recorded in Turkey, an example of Greek *rebetika* (sung mostly in Turkish), and a series of somewhat citified folk songs full of nostalgia for the Anatolian countryside. In *Sohbet VI* the concert ends where it began, in an intimate conversation between student and teacher on the art of *taksim* (improvisation) in which the teacher gets both the first, and the final, say.

PROGRAM

Sohbet I (First Conversation)

Hocam ile bir meşk / A lesson with my teacher

Robert Labaree (*çeng*/Ottoman harp)

RECORDING: ***taksim* (improvisation), *ihsan Özgen, tanbur* (1999)**

Taksim (improvisation)

Peşrev in Kürdilihicazkar Makamı (classical instrumental prelude) [32/4]

Tanburi Cemil Bey (1871-1916)

Kervan (folk instrumental) [4/4]

from Eskişehir

Sohbet II (Second Conversation)

Köyde bir meşk / A lesson in the village

Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol (*zurna, voice*) / Michael Winograd (*clarinet*) / Cem Mutlu (*voice, percussion*)

Robert Labaree (*voice, çeng*) / Nektarios Antoniou (*voice*) / Bilgehan Tuncer (*voice*)

RECORDING: ***İstanbul'dan çıktım* (uzun hava/unmetered song), *Hatice Deklioğlu* (13 years old), *voice*,
recorded by Bela Bartok in Hüyük village, Çorum, November 16, 1936**

Pehlivan güreş havası (traditional instrumental prelude to wrestling competitions) [5/8]

from Antalya

Bülbülüm altın kafeste (*türkü*/folk song) [9/8]

from Trakya

Bülbülüm altın kafeste / Öter aheste aheste / Ötme bülbül yarım haste...

My nightingale is in a golden cage/ He sings slowly / Nightingale, do not sing, my love is ill...

İstanbul'dan çıktım (*uzun hava/unmetered folk song*) solo: Cem Mutlu (*voice*)

from Çorum

...Birben ölmeyine alem yıkılmaz / ...Alsam gitsem eder mi yik dirligi? / Al bem terkine gıdek Kürd oğlu...

...The world will not collapse by my death / ...If I married you, would we live together? / Take me, son of a Kurd...

Şu dağların yükseğine erseler (*türkü*/folk song) [9/8] solo: Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol

from Silifke

Şu dağların yükseğine erseler / Lale sümbül mor menevşe derseler

Bir güzeli bir çirkin verseler / Güzel ağlar çirkin güler bir zaman...

If you reached the top of those mountain / If you gathered tulips, hyacinths and violets

If you gave a beautiful girl to an ugly man / The beauty would cry and the ugly one would laugh, one day...

Şu dirmilin çalgısı (*türkü*/folk song) [9/8] (dance of the Tahtacı nomads) solo: Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol from Burdur

...Altın yüzük var benim / Parmatğma dar benim / Şu güzeller içinde canlar / Orta da boylu da yar benim...

...I've got a golden ring / too small for my finger / Among those beauties, my friends / walks my love...

Sohbet III (Third Conversation)

Köçekçe meşki / A lesson in köçekçe (dance music)

Robert Labaree (*voice, çeng*) / Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol (*ud*) / Michael Winograd (*clarinet*) / Cem Mutlu (*voice, percussion*)

Eylem Başaldı (*violin, voice*) / Selis Önel Evren (*voice*) / Yeliz Özalp Tuncer (*voice*) / Cheryl Weber (*voice*)

RECORDING: ***taksim*, *Barbaros Erköse* (clarinet) (1984)**

Selam havası (opening instrumental piece) [9/8]

Kavak kavaktan (*türkü*/folk song) [9/8]

from Aydın

Kavak kavaktan uzundur / Asmada biten üzümdür / Yar benim iki gözümdür / Sen kaldır beyaz ellerin...

One poplar is taller than another / On the spent vine there are grapes / My love is both my eyes / Raise your white hands...

Altı kızlar (*uzun hava/unmetered folk song*)

from Aydın

Altı kızlar altı kızın biri Fatma / Benleri var derme çatma altı kızlar...

There are six girls, one of them is Fatma / She's the one with the beauty marks, six girls...

taksim (*improvisation*) solo: Michael Winograd (*clarinet*)

Açıldı laleler (*türkü*/folk song) [3/8]

from Mus

Acıldı laleler güller / Güzel gider Muş ovası / Güzeller kolkola vermiş / Akıp gider Muş ovası...

The tulips and roses open / The plain of Mus has become beautiful / The girls go arm-in-arm / Mus has come to life...

Son havası (concluding instrumental piece) [9/8]

* * * *intermission* * * *

Sohbet IV (Fourth Conversation)

Sarayda bir meşk / A lesson in the palace

Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol (*voice, ud*) / Robert Labaree (*çeng*)

RECORDING: ***Hasretle bu şeb (gazel), Hafız Kemal, voice (1932)***

Gazel in Uşşak makam (*classical vocal improvisation on Ottoman poetry*): ***Hasretle bu şeb***

Hasretle bu şeb gah uyudum / Gah uyandım hep ol mehi andım / Eğlence edüp hab-ü hayali / Oyalandım ta subha dayandım

Tonight, with longing, at times I slept / At times I woke, but always I thought of her
Enjoying my dream / I wasted time until morning...

Şarki in Uşşak makam (*classical song*): ***Esiri zülfünüm yüzü mahum*** [10/8]

Şevki Bey (1860-91)

Esiri zülfünüm yüzü mahum / Gece dogmuş benim bahtı siyahım...

I am slave of your hairlock / My dark destiny was born in the night...

Sohbet V (Fifth Conversation)

Beyoğlu'nda bir meşk / A lesson in Beyoğlu

Jefferey Claasen (*trumpet*) / Michael Winograd (*clarinet*) / Cem Mutlu (*percussion*)

Robert Labaree (*piano, voice, çeng*) / Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol (*ud, voice*) / Eylem Başaldı (*violin, voice*)

singers: Nektarios Antoniou, Selis Önel Evren, Bilgehan Tuncer, Yeliz Özalp Tuncer, Cheryl Weber

RECORDING: **anonymous trumpet player with *Muzikayi Humayun* (state marching band), ca. 1912**

İzmir marşı [4/4] solo: Jefferey Claasen (*trumpet*)

Klarnetçi Mehmet Ali Bey (d. 1895)

Mazi (tango) [4/4] (words: Necdet Rüştü) solos: Yeliz Özalp Tuncer, Selis Önel Evren

Ben de gönül çektim eskiden / Yandı hayatım bu sevgiden / Anladım ki bir aşka bedel / Gençliğimiz elimden giden...

Once I too fell in love / My life caught fire from this love / I understood that our youth / is the price of love...

Sigaramın dumanı [4/4]

Sigaramın dumanı / Yoktur yarın imanı / Altından köşk yaptırırım Gümüştan merdivanı...

Smoke of my cigarette / My beloved has no mercy / I built a golden villa / With silver stairs...

Horos dervishikos [9/8] solo: Nektarios Antoniou

Aysem, Aysem, mor meneksem / Kocan çirkin, bosan Aysem...

My Ayse, my Ayse, my purple violet / Your husband is ugly, divorce him, Ayse...

Bağlamamın düğümü [4/4]

Bağlamamın düğümü / İsterler öldüğümü / Sag yanım yastık ister / Sol yanım sevdiğimi...

Knots in the frets of my lute / They wish I were dead / My right side wants a pillow / My left side wants my love...

Beyoğlu'nda gezersin [4/4]

Beyoğlunda gezersin gözlerini süzersin / Sevdiceğim yavrucagım niçin niçin beni üzersin...

You stroll through Beyoğlu and you look everyone over / Sweetheart, why, oh why do you give me trouble?

Sohbet VI (Sixth Conversation)

Keman meşki / A violin lesson

Eylem Basaldı (*violin*)

RECORDING: ***taksim* (improvisation) by Sadi Işlay, violin (ca. 1955)**

Taksim

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program notes by Robert Labaree

translations by Robert Labaree, Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol, Serap Kantarcı, Harold Hagopian, Ursula Reinhard

Acknowledgements

Preparing this concert has been like the making of a city. In the beginning my role was city planner, laying out the streets and neighborhoods. After that, I became the contractor and wore a hardhat. By the end, I simply directed traffic. It is the ensemble itself which has acted as the actual architects and builders. To several members of the ensemble who helped provide the necessary quality control I owe special thanks: to Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol and Cem Mutlu, who at times acted as co-directors, for their versatility and commitment to always going deeper; to Eylem Başaldı for her impeccable musicianship and her attention to details; and to Michael Winograd, for bringing the *stetl* to Istanbul. Thanks to Serap Kantarcı for handling the publicity for the 300 Years of Turkish Music series, and for her chocolates. And thanks, as always, to Erkut and Ferhan Gömülü, for another collaboration.

The Musicians

Nektarios Antoniou (*voice*) is a professional singer and conductor of Greek sacred music and is currently a graduate student at Yale school of Sacred Music. **Eylem Basaldı** (*violin, kasik*) is a graduate student in Contemporary Improvisation at NEC. She teaches violin and plays with Arabic and klezmer groups in the Boston area. **Jeffery Claasen** (*trumpet*) is a doctoral student in Jazz Studies at NEC and plays regularly in the Boston area. **Selis Önel Evren** (*voice*) is a doctoral student in Mechanical and Industrial Engineering at Northeastern University and sings with the *Cambridge Musiki Cemiyeti*. **Robert Labaree** (*çeng, voice, percussion*) is on the NEC Music History faculty and is director of the NEC Intercultural Institute. **Cem Mutlu** (*voice, percussion*) plays jazz and a variety of world musics with groups in the Boston area. **Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol** (*voice, zurna, ud*) is a jazz pianist completing his doctorate in Composition at NEC. **Bilgehan Tuncer** (*voice*) is a graduate of Berklee College of Music in guitar and works as a Chemical Engineer. **Yeliz Özalp Tuncer** (*voice*) works as an Industrial Engineer, and sings Turkish pop and Rock music with her husband Bilgehan. **Michael Winograd** (*clarinet*) is a sophomore Contemporary Improvisation major at NEC and plays in a variety of klezmer and Balkan music groups. **Cheryl Weber** (*voice*) is a member of the women's music ensemble *Libana* and is currently NEC's Director of Alumni Relations.

The Turkish American Cultural Society of New England, Erkut Gömülü, President

The Turkish American Cultural Society of New England (TACS), founded in 1964, is a non-profit, tax-exempt and charitable organization whose primary goals are to promote Turkish culture and heritage and to bring together the people of Turkish heritage and friends of Turkey. To meet its goals, TACS organizes conferences, seminars, concerts, exhibitions, as well as educational programs on Turkish culture. TACS was the recipient of the prestigious ATAA Component Association of the Year Award in 2000. For more information about TACS visit www.tacsne.org.

Third Boston Turkish Film Festival, April 22 – May 2, featuring the New England premiere of Nuri Bilge Ceylan's Cannes Film Festival Grand Jury Prize winner film *Distant*, the U.S. premiere of Ömer Kavur's *Encounter*, and other fine examples of contemporary Turkish cinema. Influential Turkish filmmaker Zeki Demirkubuz will be present for the North America premiere of his latest film *The Waiting Room*. Films are in 35mm, in Turkish with English subtitles. Screenings will take place at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. For more information visit www.bostonturkishfilmfestival.org.