

İstanbul Sokakları/Streets of Istanbul

One hundred years of Istanbul's popular music from tavern and Sufi lodge, salon and cinema

Sunday, March 3, 2013, 8:00 pm Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory

DÜNYA Ensemble

Mal Barsamian *clarinet/ud/guitar* **Robert Labaree** *çeng/voice/percussion*
Brenna MacCrimmon, *voice, percussion* **Cem Mutlu** *percussion/voice*
Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol *voice/ud/saz/ney* **Phaedon Sinis**, *kemençe/yaylı tanbur*

I. Türk Sanat Müziği (Ottoman Music in 20th Century Istanbul)

In the period after the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923, classical Ottoman music had to make a place for itself outside the homes of the aristocracy and compete in a new environment dominated by commercial entertainment. We begin the program with pieces composed by musicians who lived or were trained in the Ottoman period but whose music was well-known in the mid-20th century through recordings by a new generation of iconic performers like Zeki Müren and Bülent Ersoy.

Robert Labaree, *çeng* Brenna MacCrimmon, *voice* Cem Mutlu, *percussion*
Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol, *ud* Phaedon Sinis, *yaylı tanbur*

Yaylı tanbur taksim (improvisation on the bowed long-necked lute)

Saz Semaisi in Segah Makam (classical instrumental piece) music: Sadi Işıl (1899-1969)

Yürük Semai in Segah Makam: Tuti-i mucize guyem ne desem laf değil

words: Nefi Ömer Efendi (1572-1635) music: Buhurizade Mustafa Itri (1640-1712)

Tuti-i mucize guyem ne desem laf değil I am a miraculous parrot talking yet nothing I say makes a difference
Çerh ile söyleşemem âyinesi sâf değil Cannot speak to people since their reflection [in this world] is not pure

II. İstanbul'da Gurbet (Longing in Istanbul)

In Turkish, *gurbet* is the particular longing which comes of being far from home. It is a type of traditional poetry and song which is equally adaptable to the circumstances of Anatolian peasants living in Istanbul and to Turkish guest workers in Germany. In the hands of some Sufi poets, this longing is given a spiritual interpretation.

Robert Labaree, *çeng, percussion* Brenna MacCrimmon, *voice, percussion* Cem Mutlu, *percussion, voice*
Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol, *voice, saz, cura* Phaedon Sinis, *kemençe*

Çeng and cura açış (improvisation in folk style on the Ottoman harp and folk lute)

Gurbet elde bir hal geldi başıma words: Pir Sultan Abdal (1480-1560) music: Ali Ekber Çiçek (b.1935)

The two sources for this song are both *aşıks*, traditional folk singer-poets. The poetry of Pir Sultan Abdal, hanged by the Ottoman authorities in 1560 for his anti-establishment sentiments, is kept alive by modern singer-poets like Ali Ekber Çiçek. *Aşıks* like Ali Ekber Çiçek are widely imitated and their music has been absorbed into urban popular music.

Gurbet elde bir hal geldi başıma In a distant land a feeling came upon me
Ağlama gözlerim mevlam kerimdir Do not weep, mine eyes, the Lord is gracious
Derman arar iken derde düş oldum Looking for a solution I fell into sorrow
Ağlama gözlerim mevlam kerimdir Do not weep, mine eyes, the Lord is merciful

Huma kuşu yere düştü ölmedi The Bird of Paradise fell to the earth and died
Dünya Sultan Süleymana kalmadı The world didn't even belong to Sultan Süleyman
Dedim yare gidem nasıp olmadı I wanted to go to my Beloved but could not
Ağlama gözlerim mevlam kerimdir Do not weep, mine eyes, the Lord is merciful

Sakin gelme İstanbul'a (türkü: folk song)

Aşık İsmail Azeri (b. 1928)

A warning to those back home about the difficulties of city life by an singer-poet from eastern Turkey.

Kardeşim, haberin aldım Brother, I've gotten your news
Sakin gelme İstanbul'a Beware of coming to Istanbul
Çok acele haber saldım I've just gotten urgent news
Aman gelme İstanbul'a My God, don't come to Istanbul

İstanbul'a İstanbul'a To Istanbul, Istanbul
Kaçıp gelme İstanbul'a Don't come running to Istanbul

Olur olmaz lokma yutma Whether it's small or big
Çürük yerlere temel atma Don't lay a foundation on bad ground
Sakin tarlaların satma Take care, don't sell your possessions
N'olur gelme İstanbul'a Whatever happens, don't come to Istanbul

Ardıç arasında biter naneler

anonymous folk song from Denizli

Ardıç arasında biter naneler Mint grows between juniper trees
Doğurursa kız doğursun analar Have all mothers given birth to girls?
Çöz Aslı'm çöz, çöz göğsün düğmelerin Aslı, unbutton your top
Ala göz üstüne çek sürmelerin And darken your eyes with kohl

Uzun hava (folk-style vocal improvisation)

Gurbet

Özdemir Erdoğan (b. 1940)

A well-known piece of Turkish pop music from the 1970s, an example of *Anadolu Rock* (Anatolian Rock) which combines folk-style Turkish poetry with folk-like melodies and folk instruments to evoke *gurbet*—the longing for home.

Kime desem derdimi ben bulutlar O clouds, tell me who shall I tell of my sorrows
Bizi dost bildiklerimiz vurdular The ones who we thought were our friends shot us
Birde gurbet yarası var hepsinden derin Besides, the pain of being far away is deeper than all

Söyleyin memleketten bir haber mi var: Tell me if there is any news of my home
Yoksa yarın gözyaşları mı bu yağmurlar Or is the rain outside the teardrops of my love
İçerim yanıyor yar yar yaram pek derin... I'm burning inside, my wound is too deep...

III. Tango ve Kanto

During the early years of the 20th century *tango* and *kanto* were conspicuous features of city life. Both of these types of songs were heavily influenced by European stage, film and cabaret music, reflecting the increasing flow of people, recordings and commerce between Istanbul and cities like Paris and New York. For an American audience, Turkish tangos may seem like Parisian tango with Turkish instruments, while the kanto group (*kanto potpuri*) may seem to have more of a Turkish flavor in their use of Turkish rhythms and modes.

Mal Barsamian, *clarinet, guitar* Robert Labaree, *çeng, percussion* Brenna MacCrimmon, *voice*
Cem Mutlu *percussion, voice* Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol, *ud, voice* Phaedon Sinis, *yaylı tanbur*

İşler güçler hep sinema

words: Aşık Veysel music: R. Labaree (arr. M. Sanlıkol)

The most famous traditional singer-poet (*aşık*) of the 20th century was Aşık Veysel Şatıroğlu (1894-1973), who was blind from childhood and lived most of his life in the Anatolian countryside, far from Istanbul. And yet his poem here uses cinema as a metaphor, which has led us to set his words as a tango, popular during his lifetime, though a style Veysel himself never performed or perhaps even knew.

Şaşar Veysel bu ne haldir? Veysel is amazed—what kind of a thing is this?
Hakikat de hep hayaldir Truth is all a dream
Hayat filime misaldir Life is a model for a film
İşler güçler hep sinema... Everything we do is cinema...

Bayan bana bak

music: Dramalı Hasan Hasgüler (1896-1984)

This tango by a famous Istanbul composer of Balkan heritage is in the form of a dialogue which expresses changing relations between men and women in early 20th century Istanbul.

*Sakın bana yan yan bakma
Ruhuma hicran katma*

Don't you glance at me like that
and heap sorrow on my heart

*Bayan seni alır kaçarım
Benden uzaklaşma*

Miss, I would take you and flee
Don't draw away from me

*Bay seni alıp kaçarım
Benden uzaklaşma*

Mister, I would take you and flee
Don't draw away from me

*Bayan bana bak yanıma yakın gel,
Bay beni sev yanıma yakın gel
Gel gel gel kimse olamaz engel*

Miss, look at me, come here next to me
Mister, love me, come here next to me
Come, come, no one can stop us

Kanto potpuri

A collection of *kanto*, commercial entertainment music combining European and Turkish musical qualities which circulated through performances in city cafes and in 78 rpm recordings beginning at the end of the Ottoman period.

Koşa koşa

anonymous

*Koşa koşa yana yana
Geldim dostlar ben şu meydana
Yusyuvarlak tostoparlak
Benim yarım vallah çok parlak*

Running and burning inside
That's how I came around friends
Chubby and round
My lover is truly gorgeous

Hovardayız biz (zeybek)

music: Dramalı Hasan Hasgüler

*Hovardayız biz öteden beri
Güzellere sataşmaktan dönmeyiz geri*

We've been casanovas for a while
We never cease bothering beautiful girls

*Rakıyı içer güler oynarız
Bazen Çamlıca'yı, Yakacığ'ı boylarız*

We are always at play, drinking rakı and laughing
Sometimes we end up in Çamlıca or Yakacık

*Paramız tıkr neşemiz pek bol
Kışın İzmirdeyiz yazın İstanbul...*

We're stashed with cash and flush with good times
Winters we're in Izmir, summers we're in Istanbul...

Tombul bebeğim

anonymous

*Ufacıksın tefeciksın tombul bebeğim
Gözlerine meftun oldum
Acep beni sever misin?*

My itty-bitty chubby baby
I am captivated by your eyes
Would you love me?

Clarinet taksim (improvisation)

Gönlüme bir eğlence

anonymous

*Ben kalender meşrebim
Güzel çirkin aramam
Gönlüme bir eğlence isterim olsun*

I'm the easygoing type
I look for neither the good-looking nor the ugly
I just want to have fun

* * * *intermission* * * *

IV. İstanbullu Alevi ve Bektaşiler (Alevi and Bektaşî Sufis of Istanbul)

Islamic mysticism or Sufism continued to be an integral part of everyday life in Istanbul after the end of the Ottoman dynasty in 1923, despite the attempts to suppress the Sufi brotherhoods by the new secular government under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. During the 16th century, the heterodox form of Islam practiced in the Turkish countryside, deepened under Shiite influence from Iran, giving rise to Alevi traditions. Today in Turkey, the Alevi are considered to be a distinct but prominent minority group, defined both by an ethnicity and religious practice. The traditions of a Turkish Sufi brotherhood, the *Bektaşî*, are similar to those of the Alevi, and in modern times the two groups are often represented as one. Both groups were at times viewed with suspicion by Ottoman and Turkish governments because of their unorthodox religious and political beliefs.

Mal Barsamian, clarinet, ud Robert Labaree, *çeng*, percussion, voice Brenna MacCrimmon, voice
Cem Mutlu voice, percussion Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol, ud, saz, voice Phaedon Sinis, yaylı tanbur

Dün gece seyrim içinde

music: anonymous words: Kul Himmet (16th century)

A Bektaşî Sufi devotional song (*nefes*) performed in an informal style, with no instruments.

*Dün gece seyrim içinde
Ben Dedem Ali'yi gördüm
Eğildim niyaz eyleydim
Düldülün nalını gördüm*

In my journey last night
O, my Teacher, I saw Ali
I stooped and entreated
I saw the shoes of Düldül [Ali's legendary horse]

*Kanberi durur sağında
Salınır Cennet bağında
Ali, Musa Tur dağında
Ben Dedem Ali'yi gördüm*

His loyal servant on his right handside
He rides in the gardens of Heaven
Ali and Moses on Mount Sinai
O my Teacher I saw Ali

Araya araya bulsam izini

music: anonymous words: Yunus Emre (1240?-1321?)

A Bektaşî *nefes* from the Balkan region to the west of the Ottoman capital. It is performed here in a more classical Ottoman style—a customary Istanbul treatment for Balkan pieces of this kind.

*Araya araya bulsam izini
İzinin tozuna sürsem yüzümü
Hak nasip eylede görsem yüzünü
Ya Muhammed canım arzular seni*

I shall look for your path
I shall put the dust of your path on my face
God allow it so that I can see his face
O Muhammed, I long for your presence

Ben melamet hırkasını

anonymous

This Bektaşî *nefes* was well-known in club performances and 78 RPM recordings in Istanbul. We therefore give it a treatment compatible with commercial music of the time.

*Ben melamet hırkasını kendim giydim eynime
Ar ü namus şişesini taşa çaldım kime ne*

I've worn the cloak of *melamet* [a Sufi path] myself
I smashed the bottle of virtue and decency, it's no one's
business

Ah Haydar Haydar taşa çaldım kime ne

O Haydar [second name of Ali], I smashed it myself

*Kah giderim medreseye ders okurum Hak için
Kah giderim meyhaneye dem çekerim Aşk için
Ah Haydar Haydar taşa çaldım kime ne*

I both go to the religious school and study for God
and go to the tavern to drink for Love
O Haydar, I smashed it myself

Karlı kayın ormanında

words: Nazım Hikmet (1902-63) music: Zülfü Livaneli (b. 1946)

A setting by the successful popular music and film music composer Zülfü Livaneli of a poem by the poet Nazım Hikmet, imprisoned and exiled by the Turkish government for his leftist views.

*Karlı kayın ormanında
Yürüyorum geceleyin
Efkarlıyım, efkarlıyım
Elini ver nerde elin*

On the snowy forest of beeches
I'm walking at night
I'm melancholic, melancholic
Give me your hand, where is your hand?

*Yedi tepeli şehrimde
Bıraktım gonca gülümü
Ne ölümden korkmak ayıp
Ne de düşünmek ölümü*

In my city of seven hills
I've left the bud of my rose
It's neither a shame to fear death
nor to think about death

Obur dünya

words and music: Muhlis Akarsu (1948-93) (arr. Cem Karaca, 1945-2004)

The words of Muhlis Akarsu, a prominent 20th century Alevi-Bektaşî poet, are given a setting by the controversial rock musician Cem Karaca which combines social criticism with a traditional Sufi skepticism about the seductions of the material world.

<i>Karnı büyük obur dünya</i>	Bloated belly, greedy world
<i>Keder dolu acı dünya</i>	Full of grief, painful world
<i>Ne gül koydun ne de gonca</i>	What rose have you put here, even a bud?
<i>Yedin yine doymadın mı...</i>	Again you've eaten, aren't you satisfied?...

V. Hafız Post ile Yeliz

Musically, these two love songs from the 17th and the 20th centuries blend effortlessly while the poetic conventions of their texts contrast sharply. In both, the singer claims that the lover and beloved are meant for each other. But the song of Ottoman court singer Hafız Post uses the images of intoxication and the beloved of traditional Sufi poetry, while the 1976 hit song by the female pop star Yeliz Eker adapts the language of European popular songs of the 1930s to contemporary relationships between men and women.

Mal Barsamian, ud Robert Labaree, *çeng*, voice Brenna MacCrimmon, voice
Cem Mutlu voice, percussion Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol, voice, ney Phaeton Sinis, *kemençe*

Ney Taksim (improvisation on the end-blown fute)

Nakış Yürük Semai in Rast Makam: Biz alude-i sagar-ı badeyiz

Hafız Post (1630-1694)

<i>Biz alude-i sagar-ı badeyiz</i>	We are contained in wine cups
<i>Anınçün leb-i yare dil-dadeyiz</i>	That's why we're in love with the lips of the beloved

Bu ne dünya kardeşim (Turkish pop song from 1976)

Enrico Macias (b. 1938)

Turkish version performed by Yeliz Eker (b. 1957), Turkish lyrics by Oktay Yurdatapan (d. 2005)

<i>Bu ne dünya kardeşim seven sevene</i>	Look at this world, brother, people in love
<i>Bu ne dünya kardeşim böyle</i>	Look at this world, brother
<i>Bir garip buruk içim bilmem ki niye</i>	I can't tell why inside I am sorrowful
<i>Belki de sevdiğim yok diye</i>	Maybe it's because I don't have a lover

<i>Bu ne dünya kardeşim giden gidene</i>	Look at this world, brother, people leaving
<i>Bu ne dünya kardeşim böyle</i>	Look at this world, brother
<i>Gün gelip selam verince gökteki meleklerle</i>	When the day comes to greet the angels in the sky
<i>Artık dönüşün yoktur yere</i>	You won't be able to return to earth

<i>Ne bir kürk ister bu şen gönlüm</i>	Neither does my cheerful heart desire furs
<i>Ne bir han ne de saray</i>	Nor mansions and palaces
<i>Ye iç eğlen çok kısa ömrün</i>	Eat, drink, enjoy, life is short
<i>Sev çünkü sevmek en kolay</i>	Love, because to love is the easiest

The Musicians

♦ **Mal Barsamian** (*clarinet, oud, guitar*) is from a family of oud players and has a Masters degree in classical guitar from New England Conservatory. He is currently on the NEC Contemporary Improvisation faculty. ♦ **Robert Labaree** (*çeng, voice*) is on the faculty of the NEC Music History Department, director of the NEC Intercultural Institute, and co-founder and Vice President of *DÜNYA*. ♦ **Brenna MacCrimmon** (voice) lives in Toronto and has been performing and teaching Balkan and Turkish music since the late 1980s. She is internationally acclaimed as a Turkish folk singer and is featured on the 2005 documentary *Crossing the Bridge: the sound of Istanbul*. ♦ **Cem Mutlu** (voice, percussion) plays jazz and a variety of world musics with groups in the Boston area and is a founding member of *DÜNYA*. ♦ **Mehmet Ali Sanlıkol** (voice, ud, saz, ney) is a composer, jazz pianist and teacher with a doctorate in composition from NEC, and is co-founder and president of *DÜNYA*. ♦ **Phaeton Sinis** (*yaylı tanbur, kemençe*) specializes in Ottoman music on the *kemençe, tarhu* or bowed *tanbur, kanun* and *flute*. He plays with the *Aman Saki Trio* in the San Francisco area.