

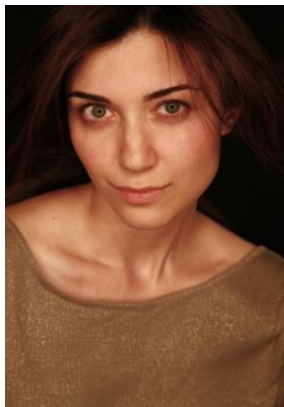
# OTTOMAN COMPOSERS: A musical journey to old Istanbul

by

Mahir Cetiz, artistic director and pianist, Gözde Yaşar, cellist, Ece Ünsal, soprano

Thursday, November 12, 2009, 8:00 pm

Dominion Chalmers United Church, Ottawa, ON.



**Ece Ünsal**, soprano, was born in Ankara and started her music career as one of the soloist members of the high school orchestra. Although she majored in science, she continued her high school education in Bilkent Music Preparatory High-School, where she started to study voice with mezzo-soprano Ivanka Gospodinova. The following year, she was accepted to the opera department of Bilkent

University In Ankara, where she earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees. During this time, Ünsal studied with Dan Serbac, Pekin Kırız and Meral Gökoğlu and became a member of the Bilkent Youth Choir, a prize winner ensemble in many world class competitions. During this period, Ünsal participated in the master classes of world renowned Turkish opera artists, Leyla Gencer and Suna Korad. After finishing her graduate studies at the Bilkent University in 2007, Ünsal continued her studies at the CUNY Brooklyn College Opera Department, where she studied in the studios of Anna Skibinsky, Richard Barrett and Mark Schaible.

Ece Ünsal has been one of the forerunners of "Ottoman Composers" project. Accordingly, she gave performances in different venues in Turkey, as well as in the USA. Her repertoire covers many compositions from early baroque to contemporary music, including the new generation composers from Turkey.

Ece Ünsal currently lives in New York City and continues her studies with Rick Christman.



**Gözde Yaşar**, Cello, was born in Izmir, Turkey in 1985. She graduated from Bilkent high school in 2003 when she experienced solo performance for the first time during Bruch's "Kol Nidrei" with the Bilkent Youth Symphony Orchestra. Later that year she won 2nd Prize in the "Trakya 6th International Cello Competition".

In 2004, Gözde Yaşar toured with the Anatolian Chamber Orchestra in Turkey, Belgium and Germany, performing with several distinguished Turkish musicians. In 2004, she toured with the Anatolian Chamber Orchestra in Turkey, Belgium and Germany, performing with several distinguished Turkish musicians. In 2006 Miss Yaşar performed and recorded the solo piece by Cemil Arif Bey for "Ottoman Music Organization" with Mr. Mahir Cetiz. In 2007 she performed Brahms' "Double Concerto for Violin and Cello" before completing her undergraduate study at the top of her class. Although she was mostly involved with solo performances, she was also active as both a string quartet and a piano trio member due to her passion for chamber music performances. As an undergraduate, she received multiple invitations to perform with a professional orchestra at her school called "Bilkent Academic Symphony Orchestra", with whom she performed in several concerts. Following her graduation, she performed chamber music with violinist Lucas David in a group known as "Young Musicians."

In 2007 she received a Fulbright Scholarship and decided to come to the U.S.A to further improve her skills and attended SUNY/Purchase College Conservatory of Music in NY. At Purchase she studied under Julia Lichten while pursuing a masters degree in cello performance. During her studies with Ms. Lichten, she was recommended for the pre-concert recital and performed Reger Solo Cello Suite No. 2 at The Performing Arts Center in Purchase. While attending Purchase College she was invited to participate in the National Orchestral Institute at the University of Maryland in the summer of 2008. During the winter of 2008, Miss Yaşar performed Dvorak's "B Minor Cello Concerto" with the Purchase Orchestra as the winner of the 2008 Concerto Competition. After she earned her master's degree from SUNY Purchase College, Miss Yaşar was accepted to the Maryland School of Music to do her DMA program.

Presently she is continuing her cello studies with Evelyn Elsing and Peter Wiley. While she continues to perform in numerous solo recitals, she remains active as a chamber music performer; which in conjunction with her numerous orchestra concert performances, amounts to an extensive amount of accumulated experience in her field of study.



Mahir Cetiz was born in Ankara. He started to play the piano at the age of 7 under the provision of his father Tulga Cetiz, who was a concert pianist and a professor in Ankara State Conservatory. Mahir Cetiz was accepted to the same institution, where he studied cello, piano, composition and orchestral conducting.

Following his undergraduate studies, Cetiz studied with Chen Yi, Zhou Long and Kamran İnce in the Master's Program at the University of Memphis. In the year 2000, he won a scholarship from British

Council, which enabled him to continue his studies with Anthony Gilbert, at "Royal Northern College of Music". After two years of study in Manchester, he went back to Turkey, and taught composition and music theory courses in Bilkent University.

Mahir Cetiz is a teaching fellow and a DMA candidate in Composition at Columbia University, where he is studying with Fabien Lévy, Tristan Murail and Fred Lerdahl. He is the assistant conductor of the Columbia University Orchestra. His compositions received performances by such ensembles as: BBC Philharmonic, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Bilkent Symphony Orchestra, International Contemporary Ensemble, SO Percussion and Zurich-Tonhalle Orchestra.

Cetiz is the co-founder of "Ottoman Composers Project", has been in collaboration with the history department of Bilkent University and gave lectures and recitals as a part of the project.

