

Our Dancers

June Seaney is Cornell's very own professor of bellydance through the Physical Education Department at the Schwartz Center for Performing Arts. She is a professional Oriental and Romani dancer, instructor, and choreographer. She teaches and performs in the Turkish, Egyptian, and Lebanese styles of Dance Oryantal, Raks Sharqi, and Belly Dance. June offers workshops throughout the US, and teaches regularly at Moonlight Dancer Studio of Middle Eastern Dance in Ithaca. She is the director of Chandani Belly Dance Troupe and Danza Romani.

The **Cornell Persian Dance Troupe** was created to enrich, uplift, and educate the Cornell campus by performing traditional Persian dances and teaching the beauty, history, and symbolism of those dances. They perform at Cornell's Persian New Year celebration, Norooz, and during other large and small, cultural and artistic events on campus. The CPDT is open to any Cornell community member, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, disability, or beliefs.

Alicia Free started dancing with June Seaney at Cornell in 2000, joined Teszia Belly Dance Troupe as an undergraduate, and has been playing percussion in CUMEME since starting graduate school in 2011. She studied further under Jill Parker, the innovator behind the tribal fusion style, and with Tessa Myers, a master bellydancer from our own neck of the woods.

Kira Starfire is a dancer from San Francisco who joined the ensemble in 2016 while working on her master's degree. We are thrilled to have her back with us for this concert.

Mirage Belly Dancers of Ithaca is a multigenerational bellydance troupe that has been around for over 30 years! Mirage operates out of Ithaca's Community School of Music and Art. Tonight, Mirage lends dancers Hanan, Selenya, and Zajal. Selenya started dancing in 2013, learning from Zajal at the CSMA. She currently teaches bellydance at the CSMA. Zajal is a poet and professor at Ithaca College. Her published collection *Belly Words* celebrates the dance as an important part of Middle Eastern music.

Our Guest Performers

A graduate of Yale University, **Lucy Fitz Gibbon** is the recipient of numerous awards for her musical and academic achievements. Lucy also holds an artist diploma from The Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory and a master's degree from Bard College Conservatory's Vocal Arts Program. She currently holds the position of Visiting Lecturer at Cornell University.

Gary Moulds received his PhD in musicology from Cornell in 2014. He is a Visiting Lecturer at Cornell University and is also on faculty at SUNY Cortland.

Nora Starr studied bass with Nicholas Walker at Ithaca College. She now resides in Ithaca, where she is a freelance performer.

Our thanks...

to Professor Emeritus Dr. Marty Hatch

who founded the Ensemble, for continuing to support our activities, for sending new students and teachers our way, and for continuing to connect us to the right people to keep us going

to Dr. Gail Holst-Warhaft

for helping us with all of our Greek translations and pronunciations, for securing the funding to make tonight's performance a reality through a grant from the Cornell Institute for European Studies, and for continuing to believe in and support our Ensemble and its mission

to the Department of Near Eastern Studies

for their continued support for the ensemble and all the work we do

to the Cornell Institute for European Studies

for their continued support for our use of this performance space

the Shepherdess & the Shepherd

Tonight's program is easily the most ambitious we have attempted. The inspiration started thousands of years ago in the Middle East as nomadic shepherds began recording their histories in antiphonal song, sung back and forth between women and men. The common thread is that of a Shepherdess at a well approached by a stranger – often a Shepherd, sometimes a warrior or knight, or even a priest – who requests water for himself and/or his flock. The symbol of water has a dual meaning of fertility, meaning these songs are also records of marriage proposals and traditional wedding music.

We get our earliest glimpses of this story in the Bible as Abraham sends a servant to find a wife – Rebekkah – for his son Isaac. The story is echoed one generation later with Jakob and Rachel, not to forget Moses and Zipporah in Jewish-Islamic folklore. The symbol of water to drink returns again and again throughout Biblical lore, and the metaphor of water to drink is expanded in the Psalms and much later in the Christian tradition, most especially including the sacrament of baptism. The metaphor of thirst for wisdom was personified as Sophia. Shepherds also bear witness to Christ's birth. Jesus was cast both as a “the Good Shepherd” and “the lamb of God”. By the time of Muhammad, the idiom of God as a Shepherd was well-known and well-used throughout Western Asia, and it spread along with Islam.

The song of the Shepherdess crossed into Western Europe in Iberia in the Middle Ages and with it came a feminist trend. By this era, the Shepherdess might deny the advances. The polymath composer Zyriab entrenched the archetype in the Portuguese-Spanish and Aquitanian cultures, where troubadours expanded it, most likely starting with Marcabru. Even Mother Mary was recast as a Shepherdess by Alfonso X el Sabio. But the music continued on into France, Germany, Italy, England, and other nations in the Renaissance, and pretending to be shepherds became the favourite fantasy of European nobility.

So popular was this pretence that royals with money to spend would hire painters, sculptors, and composers to help them imagine that they were no more than poor shepherds living on the mountain, romancing

the young Shepherdess at the well. Our modern inheritance of this collective fantasy includes the games of croquet, soccer, football, and golf, as well as the popularity of bagpipes. The idea of having a lawn on one's property, with a larger lawn as a status symbol of more wealth, also originates with the nobility creating an outdoor play space for their children to indulge in the fantasies of shepherd life. The images survive in English the popularity of nursery rhymes like Little Bo Peep, Little Boy Blue, Little Miss Muffet, Baa Baa Black Sheep, and Mary Had a Little Lamb.

The antiphonal pastourelle genre continued in music for adults. The story developed more sexual overtones as it became more intertwined with European thought. In Marcabru's troubadour version, the knight asks the Shepherdess to come away with him, while she eloquently rebuffs him word-for-word. In later versions, she is taken by force. In the Renaissance, writers were far more explicit, using polyphonic tricks to simulate sexual motion, drawing criticism from the Catholic Church. Later versions in Eastern Europe sometimes recast the story as a woman hitting on a man who resists, while other versions as far afield as Jamaica and Australia wag a shameful finger at the Shepherd (or knight).

In English-language folk music, perhaps the most popular example is The Elfin Knight (Child Ballad #2), best known as Scarborough Fair, performed by Simon & Garfunkel in the 1967 film *The Graduate*. Another ballad well-known in Ireland – “Banks of Claudy” – and England – “Abroad as I Was Walking” – transforms the witty Shepherd dialogue to that of a sailor coming back from a long tour abroad while his erstwhile lover goes out each evening to search along the coast for his returning ship. Shepherds even make a key appearance in one of the first opera, Claudio Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* (1609), with subsequent usage by many operatic composers.

While the centrality of this fantasy to modern American – and European – life should not be underestimated, its Middle Eastern and Biblical origins frequently are. Hopefully, tonight's program will help draw the links for you. We hope you enjoy the journey, and most of all we hope you never see our Western culture the same way again!

Our first number of the evening features two beautiful melodies with intertwined meaning and harmony, one from the western extremity of the greater Middle East and the other from its eastern end. **Una Pastora** is a Jewish folksong in Ladino that tells the sweet love story of a boy who falls in love with the Shepherdess while **Anoush** is a famous Armenian tune that tells what draws the Shepherd to the mountain: his love of a woman and the love of all things “anoush”, meaning sweet-smelling, charming, or pleasant. The second tune was composed by the poet Hovanness Tumanyan, and the poem cycle which it begins inspired the opera *Anoush* by Komitas and Armen Tigranyan. Even though these melodies may be separated by thousands of miles, their meanings magically intertwine. Together they are a wonderful way to introduce you to the world of the Shepherdess.

A shepherdess I loved:

A beautiful daughter.

From my childhood I adored her,

no other lover like her.

Oh, how lovely it is on the mountain

Spending days in sweet, sweet.

Dreamy, gliding

One day we went,

Clouds and winds of sweet, sweet.

In the orchard sat together.

I told her: “For you, my flower,

I will die of love.”

They opened fresh in the morning,

Rose blooms from mountain-stone

Flowers and grass sparkle with dew,

Into her arms she took me me.

Breathing in the scent of Eden.

With love, she kissed me.

She answered me with sweetness:

“You are too young for love.”

Oh, how it is easy to climb

Losing hours of sweet, sweet.

And see, the Shepherd blew on the flute:

The woman, and the love of sweet, sweet.

I grew up and searched for her.

She took another and I lost.

She forgot about me,

But I will always love her.

– tr. J. Prusch & Mane Mehrabyan

Fasl Rast has a strange third tone that sits between the keys of E and Eb on the piano. To the Western ear, it is either a major scale with a very flat 3rd tone or a minor scale with an awkwardly sharp 3rd tone. Truly, it is its own distinct sound that has no real Western counterpart. Rast is the name used in both Turkish and Arabic classical music, while the Persian *dastgâh* is Rast-Panjgâh. Rast is used to express power and sound mind, therefore being used heavily in Islamic religious music. In secular contexts, it expresses masculine love or desire. A very closely related *fasl* to Rast is **Fasl Sikah**, coming from Persian Segâh, which is also used in Turkish. This second form starts and ends on the aforementioned note between E and Eb, suggesting weakness and instability, in contrast to the strength expressed by Rast.

We start this suite with **Tahmila Rast Suznak**, an Arab-Turkish *sharqi*, which is a kind of simple melody used to learn and explore a particular *maqam*. This *sharqi* contains an improvisational aspect called *tahmila*, which differs from the improvisation form of *taqsım* in that the *takht* (orchestra) is required to adjust its central tone as the player progresses through the stages of Rast Suznak. This *maqam* differs from the root form of Rast by utilising *jins Hijaz* in the upper half, a set of tones that evoke the thirst of the desert and longing, and which will be an important aspect of the last *fasl* of our performance.

Çoban Beni Sudan Geçir is an old folksong from the Turkish city of Elazığ, historically known as the Armenian city of Harput, which folklorist Jack Zipes suggests might be the reason behind Charles Perrault's choice of locale for the false prince from Puss-n-Boots. This song was traditionally sung by the village women and answered by the village men in a story where the Shepherdess asks the Shepherd to help her “get across the water”. The young Shepherd protests that she asks too much of him, eloquently fending off her advances word-for-word. The melody is in *makam* Segah, an open-ended aspect of Rast that is said to be the sound of “the Mountain.”

The last pair of tunes in this set are most likely related. **Bala Çiçek Acar Bahar Gelende** is an Azeri folk song sometimes attributed to Turhan Topper, a 20th-century Turkish musicologist. Its melody in *makam* Huzam – a slight variation on the last song's Segah – and form were the model behind the tune with which it is paired, **Namus Belasi**.

The metaphor of dark eyelashes is a clear link through Azerbaijan to Persian music, and will be heard again in tonight's performance. The second tune is a much more famous song in Turkey, having been penned in 1972 by Muhtar Cem Karaca, one of the Babas (“fathers”) of Anatolian rock and performed with his band Moğollar (“the Mongols”). Karaca's mother was an Azeri opera singer, and it is likely the folk melody inspired his beautiful criticism of the Turkish traditional social system. In 1980, Karaca was in Germany on business when a coup broke out. The military banned this song and much of Karaca's music, and asked him to return to Turkey to face charges for disturbing the peace, which he refused. An amnesty was issued in 1987, but the great singer had lost much of his audience during the purges, and never regained his former stature, becoming yet another sad casualty of the system he so eloquently criticised.

*In jail, there are so many who give advice.
If I laid that advice end-to-end, it would pave a road from here to town.
Mother, father, sister, brother become strangers on my worst day;
For the problem with honour, my brother, the blood we spill is ours.*

*We are one in manner, from Turhal, we are similar to one another:
Even if we promise 100,000 times, we'll still keep on drinking;
Ours are the horses, ours are the women, ours are the guns, ours is the glory;
But the problem with honour, my brother, we go to jail, which is ours.*

*My bride – handsomely tall – before fulfilling one another other,
By God, without unveiling your face, without sitting knee to knee:
They have taken you away, made you collapse into silence;
For problem with honour, my brother, the life we cut is ours.*

*My elder is victim, my lord is victim; I made my manners
Neither lacking nor greedy, everything is right, I said.
Break my fortress, fine me – what do I need to live for?
For problem with honour, my brother, the life we sacrifice is ours.*

– tr. J Prusch & Doğa Tekin

Fasl Ajem is a family of maqamat which includes the Western major scale. In Turkish, it is spelled Acem while the Persian *dastgâh* is named Mahur. The 3rd and 7th degrees of Ajem are pitched slightly lower than those of the Western major scale, tuned like the Western major during the Baroque era and earlier. The *maqamat* of Ajem evoke strength and majesty, and are typically used in national anthems all over the world. Ajem can also convey a sense of cheerfulness as in our final song.

CUMEME have performed **Tala Min Bayt Abuha** on several past programs. It is a simple Shepherd song in *maqam* Jihargah, a version of Ajem where the 3rd and 7th tones are a little flatter than normal Ajem, and centered on F instead of C. In each verse, the Shepherd hits on the Shepherdess he has met at the watering hole, and each time she responds in kind, calling him “you poor soul!” followed by even harsher rejection of his advances. It was most likely composed by the Iraqi composer and singer Nazem el-Ghazali, though it is probably based on earlier song models. Please feel free to join us on the refrain, even if you don't know it.

Refrain: Tal3a min beit abuha
Royeh3al beit eljiran.
Tal3a min beit abuha
Royeh3al beit eljiran.
Fatma salem 3al3aya
Yimkin el helu za3alan.
Fatma salem 3al3aya
Yimkin el helu za3alan.

Because the land of the troubadours was a key point for the transmission of Islamic culture and sciences into Catholic Europe, we could scarcely afford to omit **L'Autrier Jost'una Sebissa** from tonight's concert. This song is by the troubadour Marcabru, born in Gascony to one of the lower classes, and first made famous as Pan-Perdut, or “Completely Lost,” a possible suggestion that his mother

was a shepherd, a calling he forsook for court life. He learned the form of pastourelle from Cercamon and first worked in the court of Auvillar, gaining a following for his way with language and hidden meaning, as well as his genius with character, especially accents. He later was hired by William X of Aquitaine and Alfonso VII of Leon, giving him the necessary worldly experience to broaden his character palette. His written work is decidedly moralist, in contrast to the general troubadour trend of forging a new path forward based largely on the influx of Islamic culture and science, albeit in Christian environs. This composition records a witty exchange between a Shepherdess getting water for her flock and an older knight who fails at seducing her and can't seem to understand why. He expresses interest in protecting her from the cold, points out that pasturing so many animals is a tough task, compliments her parentage, asks to see her naked, and finally asks her to surrender her virginity under a bush. To each improper advance, she has a comeback to turn him away, such as the insulting:

*“But I, for a small entrance fee,
Would not give my virginity
To exchange for the title of whore.”*

The dialogue ends in one pointed, personal rejection where the Shepherdess defers to the wisdom of past sages who urge moderation. This causes him to sulk an answer and change his earlier compliments to insults, followed by the Shepherdess's final moral lesson to her aggressor:

*“Sir, the Owl assures you:
Some gape at the painting
While others hope for manna.”*

The Owl is an invocation of the pre-Christian bird goddess, whose power was borne out in such matters as love, pregnancy, and childbirth, as well as wisdom and music. That is why we still sometimes tell our children that their baby sister or brother was “brought by the stork.” In the folklore of the Basque, the people indigenous to Marcabru's sphere, she was known as Mari. In Christian society of the time, she would have been understood as the Virgin Mary, and the owl as her messenger. Such syncretism is somewhat unexpected during this era of Christianity, though the owl and other bird symbols flourish throughout Europe and the Near East today.

The *Cantigas de Santa Maria* are an exquisite collection of devotional art music to a religious figure, the Mother Mary. They are attributed to Alfonso X el Sabio, the 13th-century king of the proto-Spanish realm of Castille, though there are some suggestions that he only oversaw their creation rather than composing them himself. Melodies survive for these songs, showing their distinct European flavour, though also demonstrating influences from the Islamic world. Each song tells about a different miracle of the Mother Mary, most of which are folk tales in origin. **Cantiga 398** “The Mother of the Good Shepherd” casts the Holy Mother as a Shepherdess herself, albeit somewhat differently from the typical central figure of the pastourelle. In this tune, she calls on the wolves to protect a flock of lost sheep until a shepherd can find them. He is so amazed that the wolves have not harmed his flock that he attributes the incident to Mary. Please feel free to sing the refrain with us.

Refrain: A madre do Pastor bõ
 que connosceu séu gãado
 ben póde guardar aquele
 que lle for acomendado.

Our final tune of *fasl* Ajem is the Bulgarian folk dance **Sedi Donka**. It is almost in 7/8 except that every third out of four measures is truncated to 4/8. It starts in Ajem, then modulates to Hijaz in its second half, suggesting strength and stability alternating with a period of separation. Many of the stylistic habits of Ottoman culture were preserved by the talented Bulgarian (and Macedonian) musicians while they fell out of favour in Turkey because the Young Turks cast their predecessors as corrupt and unworthy of study. Bulgarian rhythm and harmony preserves some of the greatest diversity of the former Ottoman sphere, and their dancing and singing was legendary even for the ancient Greeks and Egyptians. Long after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Bulgarian shepherds continued dancing to this music in their villages, and today the tradition is so strong that it survives not just in Bulgaria, but also with dedicated adherents from the United States to South Korea.

Fasl Nahawand is a family of Maqamat evoking drama and emotion extremes. In Western music, it is frequently used to evoke sadness. The Turkish spelling is Nihavent while its Persian *dastgâh* is named Navâ. Its basic form is essentially equivalent to the Western classical harmonic minor mode. A gentler form of Nahawand is Farahfazah, equivalent to the Western natural minor mode – also known as Aeolian – and the descending version of the Western melodic minor mode. While Western culture associates these sounds with sadness, anger, and pain, Middle Easterners might say Nahawand expressing excitement, joy, and contentment, particularly the joy of being with friends enjoying the time of day after sunset.

Prituri Sa Planinata (Притури се планината) is a Bulgarian folk aire made famous by the classical Stefka Sabotnova (1930-2010) in the now-famous 1975 recording “Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares,” which revealed to the world the incredible talent of classical Bulgarian singers. The best vocalists of Bulgaria work every day to stretch their voice in the usual ways, but go even farther by coordinating vibrato speed and width while applying a keep focus to harmonic relations. The story of the song is of two shepherds who die on the mountain. In the pre-Christian spiritual tradition, the Mountain was an epithet for the highest deity, the Thunder-god Pirin, or Perun, and this song is possibly thousands of years old.

*The Mountain has fallen down
And captured two shepherds.
Two shepherd, two friends.*

*The first shepherd begs her:
“I have beloved who shall grieve about me.”
The second shepherd begs her:
“I have mother who shall grieve about me.”*

*The Mountain replies:
“Oh, you two shepherds,
A beloved one grieves from morning till noon
but a mother grieves for life.”*

– tr. J. Prusch

The subsequent Armenian folksong **Hingala** seems to foreshadow the events of the previous tune, while also harkening back to our opening medley. The Shepherd is also on the Mountain, and there is an obscure reference in the refrain to being “left inside deep canyons” much in the way that the Bulgarian shepherds were “captured” by the Mountain. As with Anush, these lyrics point to the fresh spring flowers as the reason for the Shepherd's joy. We assume the bright cheeks and blazing eyes belong to his beloved.

*The Shepherd on the mountain became sad
he played the love song:*

*The song to bright cheeks,
The song to blazing eyes,
The song to happy days.*

*Ah, poor Shepherd!
Your portion
You were left inside deep canyons.
Hingala, Hingala*

*The song to bright cheeks,
The song to blazing eyes,
The song to happy days.*

*Behold! a new spring came!
Your flowers, ornate
The colorful flowers
I love them, yes, yes, yes
The colorful flowers.*

– tr. Mane Mehrabyan

Sometimes the Shepherd is not such a good character. **Çoban Kirli Çoban** (“Shepherd, Filthy Shepherd”) hails from Rumeli, the Bulgarian part of modern-day Turkey. It takes a bitterly angry tone with the Shepherd in question. Perhaps the words are critical of the Shepherd's attempts to seduce the Shepherdess. Just like the Shepherdess in L'Autrier Jost'una Sebissa, he is also described as wearing sandals. As in much Ottoman-era folk music, the filthy deeds of the shepherd are only alluded to, and never made explicit.

Sozaleh is an interesting combination of influences. It was composed by Kurdish-Iranian classical composer Bijan Mortazavi who had an effect on Iranian popular tastes similar to that of Riverdance in the US. His breakthrough hit Ronak showed that Iranian audiences wanted to get back in touch with their own inner shepherds, leading to a relaxation of censorship around ethnically Kurdish music, in response to overwhelming popular demand. Today, Kurdish traditional music in Iran enjoys a far better place than it did 20 years ago, largely thanks to Mortazavi. His teacher in violin and composition was the prodigious Parviz Yahaghi (1936-2007), whose music was famous in pre-Revolutionary Iran. Sozaleh received some criticism for its influences from outside the Kurdish traditional realm, particularly Azeri, Armenian, Egyptian, and electronic dance motifs which are used throughout. But Mortazavi has been open about the composition's origins, arguing that his composition is played in the Kurdish spirit but does not come from tradition.

One of the greatest songs of the North African genre known as Raj is **Ya Rayah**, by Dahmane el Harrachi. The piece was also arranged for Cheb Khaled and Rachid Taha, so many Arabic listeners are more familiar with these newer versions and have never heard the magic of the original. In the 1970's, Algerians were in social flux, with many emigrating to France in search of work which was scarce back home. El Harrachi wanted to capture the plight of the migrant worker in a style that at once sounds part reggae, part rock-n-roll, part medieval, part Berber, and part Bedouin. Even though the Algerian dialect is short on vowels and difficult for other Arabic speakers, we invite you to try to sing the refrain along with us, which translates (roughly) as “Oh wanderer, where are you going? Eventually you return./Many ignorant folks regretted it before you or me.”

Refrain: Ya rayeH wen msafar trouH te3ya we twalli
shHal nedmu le3bad el-ghafelin qablk we qabli.

The Afghani rock tune **Layli Jân** also has somewhat iconic status in its own nation. Composer, singer, and multi-instrumentalist Ahmad Zahir was intimately familiar with over a dozen styles of music from around the world, and recorded entire albums in those styles. While he was inspired by the Beatles, among others, he released about twice as many albums as they did in the same amount of time, the short seven years he was active before he was assassinated. Zahir frequently tapped into Indian music, and helped expose Indian culture to other ethnic groups in Afghanistan. The unique beat of Layli Jân was likely inspired by a meditational rhythm from India. He was also a huge fan of cowboy movies, and felt kinship with the legendary figures who once lived in the great American desert, so much of his music reflects that Mexican musical inspiration, as does this love song. In his original recording, Zahir performed on the trumpet to lend the tune more of a mariachi feel. He also swings and stresses his vocal melody in a way that is distinctly reminiscent of Chicano rocker Richie Valens (1941-1959). The song is a love song to a woman named Layla – Arabic for “evening”, an important metaphor for *maqam* Nahawand – who has broken the singer's heart by refusing him a kiss, much like the Shepherdess in the standard pastourelle. This song also uses the recurring metaphor of her “dark eyebrow”.

Refrain: Layli Layli Layli jân – jân jân
Dileh ma kardi wayrân.
Dayi kishlaq nâmadi – wây, wây
Mara kushti ba armân.

We close out the Fasl Nahawand with a Roma song from Macedonia, made famous by the late Esme Redžepova, who just passed away in December. Our dancer June Seaney had the wonderful opportunity to learn the song from Esme herself, and performs tonight in tribute to her life and beautiful music. The lyrics of **Čaje Šukarije** speak to much the same sentiment as Layli Jân, telling of a broken heart and asking the “little girl” to not walk behind him so slowly. The singer also asks for her to “bring water” to quench the burning of his heart, which is at its core the narrative of the pastourelle simultaneously yoked with the distinctly Islamic metaphor of burning in the flames of

love, as we have seen in past concerts. Such multicultural synthesis is a key feature of Roma musical practise. Filmmaker-comedian Sacha Baron-Cohen got the rights to use this song as the theme for his 2006 film *Borat*, and just like most of the other participants in that film, Redžepova sued him in court for misappropriating her song and perpetuating racial stereotypes about the Roma. Even though Roma were considered unclean people when this song came out in 1961, her marriage to arranger-accordionist Stevo Teodosievski helped break down those perceptions in Yugoslavia, an effect that trickled into surrounding communist nations. Today, this tune is well-known and loved from Hungary to Turkey, with its original Roma language version known by heart to millions who don't actually speak it!

Before we get into our final *fasl*, we feel it necessary to touch on one of the Biblical precursors to the pastourelle. While there are many verses and songs to choose, we will present **Psalm 23** “The Lord is my Shepherd” as it not only uses the Shepherd metaphor for God, but its composition is also attributed to King David, who was raised as a shepherd. Furthermore, the grammatical gender of the words in the first half of this Psalm are frequently feminine with imagery of masculine gender roles – e.g. “he leads me beside still waters”, “your rod and your staff, they comfort me,” while the second half is comprised of exclusively masculine words describing feminine gender roles – e.g. “you prepare a table...”, “my cup overflows.” It is striking that even 3000 years ago, both genders of the time were clearly attributed to God, and the themes we have seen tonight are clearly reflections of this ancient example. Our cantilation and pronunciation come from the vastly underexplored and underappreciated traditions of the Jews of Yemen.

Fasl Nikriz is comprised of only two *maqamat*: *maqam* Nikriz and *maqam* Nawa Athar. The difference is only in their upper half. Nikriz uses a major 6th and a minor 7th while Nawa Athar uses a minor 6th and a major 7th. Both *maqamat* reference *fasl* Hijaz in the feeling of separation. The difference for *fasilah* Nikriz and Nawa Athar is that they are both more settled and grounded, projecting a sense of acceptance: God (or water) may be far away, but is surely within reach. By contrast, Hijaz can often verge into dramatic despair, even for the mystic calling out for the Divine.

We open this *fasl* with an *oyun havası* in Hijaz by the famous Ottoman classical composer Ismail Hakki Bey entitled **Çoban**, or “Shepherd”. The meaning of *hava* in Turkish is equivalent to the English *aire* or Italian *aria*, meaning this composition is intended to be an exploration of melody, albeit for instruments rather than voice. The tonal ambiguity of this composition coupled with the lack of a fourth *hane* in its form suggest that it may have led into a vocal piece (possibly a *semai*) from which it has been separated. Not much is known about the composer's life, save for his teachers and students, but a long list of compositions survives, including Ottoman opera. He was born, lived, and died in Istanbul.

Elmas Senin Yüzün Gören is the work of the semi-mythical historic figure Mustafa Çavuş, who flourished in the mid-18th century, though some stories place him as early as the 16th century. He may have been born in the village of Tırafşın in modern-day Kayseri Province, but another account places his origin in Kadıköy. Part of the trouble reconciling the historical information is that records of his life were preserved orally, not in documents or artifacts. He was said to have played the tanbur and also to have been famous for his wisdom which he conveyed through eloquent joke-telling. One anecdote says that Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (mid-1600's) elevated him to the rank of Çavuş by giving him a special pearl to place on his turban, so all the others of his rank would know beyond a doubt that Mustafa was above them. Of course, if he lived in the mid-18th century, this story is likely untrue in part or whole. The lyrics are built around the central image and metaphor a diamond. They compare the tragic figure of Mecnun,

Majnoun in Arabic, to a diamond. The poet says the diamond connects him to his lover, but he also criticises his lover, or diamond, for being unable to love him in return, and for “playing” with her lovers and his heart. He closes by saying the diamonds are the notes made by his tanbur, perhaps to suggest that his sense of being in love is a delusion perpetuated by his musical instrument.

We begin the next phase of this *fasl* with a *peşrev* by another interesting Ottoman figure, albeit somewhat less legendary and far more factual. Ali Ufki Bey was born in Poland as Wojciech Bobowski. When he was 20, his sister was sold to Sultan Murad IV as a concubine, and he was also given into the royal family as a worker. His knowledge of music and language took him out of the ranks of skilled labourers and into that of the *dragoman*, the Ottoman corps for ambassadors and interpreters of the highest rank. He ultimately converted to Islam, made a pilgrimage to Mecca, mastered 16 languages, translated the entire Bible from Latin into Ottoman Turkish (being the first person to do so), learned to play santur, and composed 14 psalms in Turkish, among other works. He was also responsible for composing an explanation of Islam in Latin, helping foster peace and understanding between two cultures which had spent the greater part of the previous 8 centuries at war with one another. His **Nikriz Peşrev** is used today by students of Turkish classical music to study the form of this *makam*, even though it is clearly Polish in style. Like our earlier Hicaz Oyun Havası “Çoban”, this *peşrev* is missing its fourth *hane*.

We will go directly into the modern composition **Bulutları Dağıtım** by contemporary oudi Cemil Altınbilek. The lyrics are a love poem of dedication by the contemporary Turkish poet Cansın Erol. The music is a wonderful complement to the lyrics, and is especially useful for understanding the underlying emotion of *makam* Nikriz: there is a clear sense of longing, but also the faith that love will be fulfilled.

*I will clear the clouds over your heart
I will shine the stars' lights onto you
For your word, I will give all of myself
As long as you wish it of me, wish it of me, my Sultan*

*Give me your hands, my heart is yours
Wish for whatever you want from me, make me happy
I am here and I am not, only your love exists
As long as you wish it of me, wish it of me, my Sultan*

*If you want I will devote spring to you
let me add life to yours from mine
Be my master, I am at your service
As long as you wish it of me, wish it of me, my Sultan*

– tr. Doğa Tekin

We round out this middle of the suite with a Bulgarian *kopanica* from the famous accordionist Boris Karlov. The *kopanica* is a traditional dance most often described as having 11 sub-beats in three groupings, though Karlov was a master of hemiola and would break two 11's into 7+8+7, intentionally confusing the musicians trying to keep up with him. The melody is a display typical of Karlov's skill as a performer and subtlety as a composer. This **Boris Karlov Kopanica** starts and ends in Nikriz, but visits Ajem and Hijaz along the way, much like our last Bulgarian dance tune of the evening which started in Ajem and went through Hijaz before ending. Although the *kopanica* was traditionally danced by shepherds out in the villages, Karlov's *kopanica* was composed in communist times and reflected a more perfected, or classical, strain of music than the folk tradition as communist Bulgaria attempted to look forward and ignore what had come before.

Our last set of pieces starts with a *sharqi* from Egyptian composer Baligh Hamdy. This *sharqi* is one well-known section from the much longer classical composition **Baet Anak**, performed by the legendary Umm Kulthum (1904?-1975). Hamdy first came to classical attention at a very young age, and his first collaboration with Umm Kulthum was *Hob Eih*, which probably began in 1957, when he was just 25 years old. That work rocketed him to stardom and wealth for the next two decades, which he handled well, becoming one of those rare Arabic musicians known outside of his own country, and settling into the role

of international music producer in the final two decades of his life. Umm Kulthum's legend begins far earlier, when she memorised the entire Quran from her father, who was an imam. To avoid the stigma of women performing for men, she would dress in boys' clothing when she first performed. Her voice, personality, and morality were so powerful that almost the entire nation of Egypt respected her deeply. To hear modern Egyptians talk of her, you would think she was born a queen. She raised three generations of Egyptian musicians to fame. Her voice was so physically powerful that she had to stand back from the microphone to avoid distorting the sound of her performance. The composition describes the singer's insomnia over being so far from her beloved. The lyrics, which we will not perform tonight, also use the same metaphor of “burning in love” that we saw in Čaje Šukarije. Our Ensemble learned this *sharqi* from Simon Shaheen, who taught it as part of a workshop the morning after his Bailey Hall performance. We are always grateful for his teaching and look eagerly forward to the next opportunity.

We follow that melody with a beautiful poem by Ziya Gökalp (1876-1924) known as **Çoban İle Bulbul**, set to music by the contemporary composer Faruk Şahin from the Black Sea city of Samsun. Gökalp was born to a Kurdish family in Diyarbakir, but went to veterinary school in Istanbul, where he was attracted to Revolutionary politics. Today he is known as the mind behind Kemalist sociology, and this poem demonstrates some of his tendencies in that regard, thick with plenty of witty puns. He references the traditional images of the nightingale and the rose for masculine and feminine sexuality, metaphor understood across the entire Islamic world as much as “your staff comforts me” and “my cup overflows” are known to Christianity. The poet asks if the Shepherd has become extinct. The Shepherd here is a metaphor for Turkishness, or Turkish national identity, drawing on the migratory nature of the Turkic peoples who came into Anatolia roughly 1,000 years ago. There is also a cultural stereotype that the Shepherd is both innocent and naive, which we might call “simple”. Gökalp evokes the Shepherd to get the Turkish reader/listener on his side. Starting with Edirne in the West and Van in the East, the poem lists a number of Turkish cities with different ethnic backgrounds, rallying each by saying they are filled with “the purest shepherds!”

Gökalp urges the Shepherd to beg for his lands while he invokes the nightingale to save the language. The poem wonders whether there can be a national identity for a nation so diverse with ethnic groups, but suggests that as long as Turkish people speak one language, they will be one people. This concept was one of the “pillars” of Kemalism, and embracing it helped post-Ottoman Turkey coalesce as a nation rather than splintering into many smaller entities.

We attach to this melody one last tune in Nikriz, this one from the USA! The **Odessa Bulgar** probably started out somewhere in Eastern Europe, if not the formerly-Ottoman port city of Odessa (in modern-day Ukraine), as a Jewish dance tune in the Bulgar rhythm, called *'iqa Malfuf* in Arabic and *usul Müsemmen* in Turkish. The city of Odessa changed hands a number of times in its history, and was given to Russia by the Ottoman Empire in 1792 as part of the settlement of war between the two powers. The region around Odessa was inhabited by a large Jewish population from ancient times, as the mouths of four major rivers made Odessa an important trade hub for many nations. For klezmer musicians, generally identified with Ashkenazi rather than Mizrahi Jewish culture, this *makam* is today called *mishebeirach*, after the cantillation of the traditional Jewish prayer for the sick, though Mizrahi Jews still call it *nikriz*. This dance was first recorded in 1919 (as far as we know) and made popular by Abe Schwartz, the great klezmer violinist and bandleader. A number of other first-generation Klezmerim played under Abe Schwartz, including the pioneering clarinetist Naftuli Brandwein (1884-1963).