Monday Evening, April 23, 2012, 7:00

Distinguished Concerts International New York (DCINY)
Iris Derke, Co-Founder and General Director
Jonathan Griffith, Co-Founder and Artistic Director

and

International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY)

Present

**Symphony of Voices from Turkic Lands**

TURKSOY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
JONATHAN GRIFFITH SINGERS

AHMET ADNAN SAYGUN  *Yunus Emre Oratorio*

Part I
1. Grave
2. Recitativo
3. Aria
4. Aria
5. Choral

Part II
6. Aria
7. Arioso
8. Arioso
9. Recitativo
10. Choral
   Intermezzo
11. Recitativo

Part III
12. Vivo
13. Choral

PROF. RENGIN GÖKMEN, Conductor
ESİN TALINLI, Soprano
FERDA YETİŞER, Mezzo-soprano
ŞENOL TALINLI, Tenor
TUNCAY KURTÖGLU, Bass
JONATHAN GRIFFITH, Chorus Conductor

*Yunus Emre Oratorio* presented by International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY) is sponsored by the Promotion Fund of the Prime Ministry of Turkey and co-sponsored by Karabakh Foundation, the U.S. Azeris Network, the U.S. Turkic Network, Governorship of Eskisehir, Greater Municipality of Eskisehir, and the embassies of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkey; co-produced by Distinguished Concerts International New York (DCINY) and Vokaliz Management.

Please hold your applause until the end of the last movement.

Avery Fisher Hall  Please make certain your cellular phone, pager,
or watch alarm is switched off.
Notes on the Program

YUNUS EMRE
Yunus Emre is often referred to as the national poet of Turkey. Emre was one of the most important representatives of early Turkish mysticism, and his 13th century poems have endured for centuries. Emre’s poems are devoted mainly to the themes of divine love, human destiny, and international humanism. They are also characterized by deep feeling.

Emre was a significant representative of Anatolian Humanism, the belief that cosmic consciousness can be found within every human being. In his lifetime, Emre called for social justice, charity, and many other modern ideas.

Emre wrote in the traditional syllabic meter of Anatolian folk poetry. His straightforward verse had a decisive influence on later Turkish mystics and inspired the poets of the renaissance of Turkish national poetry after 1910.

YUNUS EMRE ORATORIO
The Yunus Emre Oratorio is one of the many masterpieces of famous Turkish composer Ahmed Adnan Saygun. Since its premiere in Ankara in 1947, the oratorio has been translated into five languages and has been performed worldwide. The oratorio notably debuted in the United States in 1958 at the United Nations House, under the direction of conductor Leopold Stokowski. The performance featured the Symphony of the Air Orchestra and the Potsdam University Crane Chorus.

The Yunus Emre Oratorio is based on several poems written by Yunus Emre.

ADNAN SAYGUN (1907–91)
Ahmed Adnan Saygun was born in 1907 in Izmir, Turkey. As a member of the Turkish Five, a group of five musicians who pioneered western classical music in Turkey during the 20th century, he is considered to be one of the most famous musicians in Turkey. Saygun composed the first Turkish opera and was the first musician to earn the title of State Artist.

Saygun’s international acclaim flourished with his oratorio Yunus Emre in 1946. Written in a post-romantic style, the Yunus Emre Oratorio perfectly exemplifies Saygun’s legacy due to its use of Turkish modes and folk melodies. In 1958, the year that the Yunus Emre Oratorio premiered in the United States, Saygun won the Stella della Solidarieta and the Jean Sibelius composition awards. Ahmed Adnan Saygun’s works are preserved by Bilkent University in the Research and Education Center named after him.

Translation of Yunus Emre Oratorio

When dim grey dawn was breaking cold, the Tombstone desolate, I saw. Summer’s hills shall behold them no more, nor the plains nor the low seashore. And tongues once laughing our gay, in the mouths now silent I saw. Their hazel eyes all are sightless now, their radiant faces none can know. And hands that were once filled with roses, cold and laid in earth I saw.

The ones who left a world, deceitful, lying. They left us here, bereft, remote, and lonely. Above their graves grass is like banners flying. They left us here, bereft, remote, and lonely.

On some the daisies, like stars, now shine and glow; Others sleep beneath rows of cypress coldly. The innocent, the simple, or the hero. They left us here, bereft, remote, and lonely.

Since to weep my fate must be, weep oh mine eyes for evermore. Then, years of blood flow fast and full and blow salt tears, for evermore.
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So ask not where the loved once lay, nor how life’s roses droop and fade, nor if ’tis dawn, or light or shade. Ask not mine eyes, for evermore

Avoid the earthly sin and share the poisoned honey, oh beware, abandon dreams from anywhere. Look down, mine eyes, for evermore.

Hast thou exiled hither come? Why art thou mourning, nightingale? And art thou weary, a weary? Why art thou mourning, nightingale?

Ah! Thy poignant plaint my hearth doth rend. And so my sorrow hath no end; art thou too searching for the Friend? Why art thou mourning, nightingale?

The groaning water-wheel am I, from me the sparkling waters fly; so ordereth the Lord on high. For this I mourn, for this I weep, this my sorrow, that must I keep.

On mountain top a tree I stood, My limbs spread wide as branches should, they made me wheel and found me good; for this I mourn, for this I weep, this my sorrow, that must I keep. I draw the water from below. And from the height I make it flow. For this I mourn, for this I weep, this my sorrow, that must I keep.

Lord Almighty, if now Thou shouldst question me. Hear me, oh Lord, this shall my answer be: Ere the cord was broken, me unheard Thou hadst blamed. Ere a word I’d spoken, a rebel I was named. For I was born a slave to those desires, which Satan in the heart of man inspires: Hunger has been so oft unsatisfied. ’Twixt evil and good, sometimes I have erred; have I by one farthing ere Thy wealth abated, Or ever to myself Thy pow’r abrogated? When did I ever rob Thee, steal or borrow that which left Thee hungry on the morrow? I alone in my own heart have thrust a sword: This my sin: How have I wronged Thee, Mighty Lord?

Is’t enough, vengeance taking, killing me, stilling me, and in death with filling me? A handful of dust is not worth such dispute.

By Thy fire I am burned, oh hear, what happened to thee? In distaste from life turned, oh heart, what happened to thee? Then flee, oh my heart, then flee, far away over the sea, there the Friend doth wait for thee, oh my heart, what happened to thee?

Come my heart together let us go seek the Friend: So fear not; with one accord let us go seek the Friend in that land with glory glowing, wherever sing the nightingales: This from thence these breezes blowing, let us go seek the Friend. Ah! My heart is burning and my footsteps are turning. For the Truth I am yearning, let us go seek the Friend.

Breezes of morning as you blow, tell me where the Friend doth dwell. Let them say if they do but know, tell me where the Friend doth dwell. A soul in torment long I’ve sought, one is not found by taking thought; my patience and my peace are short, tell me where the Friend doth dwell. I’ve mediated long in vain, my tortured heart o’erflows with pain. Now all is lost, my strength is gone, tell me where the Friend doth dwell.

My soul longs for Thee, Lord: to me Thy love impart: My trust is in Thy word, to me Thy love impart. My mind intoxicate, blind my eyes to my state. Thee to find be my fate, to me Thy love impart. Their very lives they spurn, and with devotion burn,
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Who, faithful to Thee turn: to me the love impart. Purify, Lord, my heart, earthly loves from me depart. Love and joy accord me, love and joy now impart.

This passion now my heart enfolds. See what this love has done to me; my soul in thrall this torment holds, see what this love has done to me.

Now like the wind I sigh and blow, now like the road to dust I go, now like the raging torrent flow, see what this love has done to me.

Love when it come leaves nothing to be desired. I've drunk the perfum'd wine of love, whose scent intoxicates my brain. So lost am I, lost and so forlorn, I can scarce find myself again. I am an ocean on whose breast the jeweled starlight comes to rest.

Ecstatic with Thy beauty blest, I can no more myself regain. Thy love from me myself has ta'en, 'tis only Thee my heart desires, each night and day with love I burn, 'tis only Thee my heart desires.

Like Medjnoun on the mountain peak, to lose myself in Thee I seek, only of Thee to think or speak, 'tis Thee, my heart desires.

Alleluia: Myself itself now denies, so falls the veil from my eyes, as to the Friend my soul flies; my doubts all go with the wind. My broken heart He has lit, oh my world go with the wind. Thy love from me myself has ta'en, 'tis only Thee my heart desires,

Alleluia: Like Medjnoun on the mountain peak to lose myself in Thee I seek; only of Thee to think or speak, 'tis Thee, 'this Thee my heart desires. Alleluia.

Mercy and grace are in Thy face, to Thee oh Lord I stretch my hands; I stretch my hands. My hour has come, the time is ripe, brimming o'er is the cup life, which all must drink in Thy good time, to Thee oh Lord I stretch my hands.

Meet the Artists

TURKSOY

TURKSOY is an international organization that was established in 1993 with the objective of strengthening cooperation between Turkic peoples. For almost 20 years, TURKSOY has focused on the common bonds of culture and arts that exist among Turkic peoples.

TURKSOY was founded as a joint initiative aiming to establish cultural cooperation following a series of meetings that took place between the ministers of culture from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Turkey in 1992 and 1993. The six founding members, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Turkey, are joined by eight observer members: Altay (RF), Bashkortostan (RF), Gagauzia (Moldavia), Hakasia (RF), Northern Cyprus of the Turkish Republic, Saha-Yakut (RF), Tataristan (RF), and Tiva (RF).

As one of the leading voices in its field, TURKSOY aims to preserve, revitalize, and develop Turkic culture around the world. Through such cooperation, the organization seeks to forge close links among its member states and to establish greater understanding between peoples worldwide.
Since its founding, TURKSOY has collaborated with influential international bodies with shared interests such as UNESCO and ISESCO. TURKSOY is headquartered in Ankara, Turkey, and the official language of the organization is Turkish. Current secretary general Dusen Kaseinov is the former minister of culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan, special mission ambassador of the Kazakhstan Republic Ministry of Culture, and former president of the Kurmangazi State Conservatory. He was elected unanimously.

The principle goals of TURKSOY are to establish friendly relations among Turkic language speaking nations and to explore, protect, improve, and spread knowledge of common Turkic culture, literature, history, arts, customs, and traditions. TURKSOY additionally strives to transfer the knowledge of common Turkic culture to future generations through campaigns and joint initiatives and to support scientific research envisaging the common history of the Turkic World, as well as the languages, literature, culture, and arts. TURKSOY provides support for new cultural initiatives while considering trends in cultural movements and international relations.

Rengim Gökmen

Rengim Gökmen was born in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1955. He was born into a theatrical household and received his first music lessons from his family. In 1964 Mr. Gökmen was admitted to the Ankara State Conservatory, where he studied with Ilhan Baran and Ahmed Adnan Saygun.

In 1975 Mr. Gökmen received a scholarship from the Turkish Government that allowed him to continue his study of orchestra conducting at the Santa Cecilia Conservatory in Rome. He went on to study at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena under the direction of Franco Ferrara before returning to the Academy of Santa Cecilia for an additional course of advanced studies. His achievements qualified him to conduct a concert with the Orchestra Nazionale dell’ Accademia di Santa Cecilia’ at the Via Della Concilizione.

After returning to Turkey, during the 1984–89 seasons, Mr. Gökmen served as the general music director of the Ankara State Opera and Ballet. From 1991 to 2006, he was the music director and principal conductor of the Izmir State Symphony Orchestra. From 2006 to 2011 Mr. Gökmen was the principal conductor of the Presidential Symphony Orchestra of Turkey.

He has been the recipient of many awards. In July 1980, he won the Gino Marinuzzi contest for young international conductors, in 1989 the Italian government awarded Mr. Gökmen the Cavalleria in ordine di Merito, and most recently, he received the Turkish Presidential Culture and Art Prize and the Gold Medal of Foyer des Artistes.

Mr. Gökmen is presently a member of the Advisory Committee of the Ankara and Istanbul International Art Festivals. He is the general director of the Turkish State Opera and Ballet and is also a member of the academic staff of Hacettepe University Ankara State Conservatory. He continues to conduct orchestras throughout Europe.

Esin Talinli

Esin Talinli is a soprano who began her career in opera in 1991. Mrs. Talinli has performed in concerts, recitals, and opera productions
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in countries throughout the world, including Korea, Moldova, Spain, Germany, France, and Estonia. The recipient of many awards, she was a finalist in the Francesco Vinas Opera Competition in 1997 and was awarded the title of best female artist of Turkey from 1996–97. Mrs. Talinli has additionally lent her voice to several CD recordings. She continues to perform with the Ankara State Opera as a soloist.

Her repertory includes Orfeo ed Euridice, Carmen (Michaela), La bohème (Mimi and Musetta), Turandot (Liu), Eugene Onegin (Tatiana), Don Giovanni (Elvira), Madama Butterfly (Cio-Cio San), Le nozze di Figaro (Contessa), Rusalka (Rusalka), Così fan tutte (Fiordiligi), Mozart’s Requiem, Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, Der Zigeunerbaron (Safi), Yunus Emre Oratorio, and many more.

Ferda Yetişer

Ferda Yetişer graduated from the Hacettepe University State Conservatory Opera Department in 1989. Following her graduation, she began work at the Ankara State Opera and Ballet as a mezzo-soprano. Her important roles include Rigoletto, Il tabarro, Yolanta, Aida, La nozze di Figaro, Il barbiere di Siviglia, Madama Butterfly, Mahagonny, Idomeneo, Les Contes d’Hoffman, and Die Fledermaus. In 2004 she sang Handel’s Messa Oratorio with the Dokuz Eylül University Orchestra on Patmos Island (Greece). During the 2010–11 season she performed Venus in Wagner’s Tanhäuser and Dorabella in Mozart’s Così fan tutte.

Ms. Yetişer has performed concerts and recitals frequently in Russia, Georgia, Moldova, Germany, and Pakistan.

Şenol Talinli

Tenor Şenol Talinli began his career in opera in 1989. Mr. Talinli has participated in opera productions, concerts, and recitals in Estonia, Pakistan, Germany, England, Italy, Azerbaijan, Moldavia, Macedonia, France, and Poland.

His repertory includes Un ballo in maschera, Madama Butterfly, Il trovatore, Macbeth, Faust, La traviata, Rigoletto, La bohème, Il barbiere di Siviglia, Don Giovanni, Die Fledermaus, Der Zigeunerbaron, Mahler’s Eighth Symphony, Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, Yunus Emre Oratorio, the Requiem of Webber and Verdi, Puccini’s Messa di Gloria, and many more.

Ferda Yetişer

Tuncay Kurtoğlu

Bass Tuncay Kurtoğlu has 23 years of experience at Ankara State Opera. Mr. Kurtoğlu has won honors and awards in significant competitions abroad. These awards include an Honorable Mention Award at the first Leyla Gencer Voice Competition, which serves to discover promising singers from all over the world, the title of Most Successful Male Soloist by the Lions Clubs in 2010, and the first prize in the Cittá del Alcamo International Singing Competition in Italy.

Mr. Kurtoğlu has been invited to perform at major opera houses around the globe, where he has represented Turkey. From 2004 to 2006 he performed in eight productions and in many concerts and operatic performances
in Spain, France, Russia, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, Serbia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Greece, Cyprus, Austria, Chile, and Moldova.

Jonathan Griffith
The co-founder of Distinguished Concerts International New York, Jonathan Griffith is an active conductor, educator, lecturer, and consultant. His many conducting credits include the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Salt Lake City; Manhattan Philharmonic and New England Symphonic Ensemble, both in performances at Carnegie Hall; The European Symphony Orchestra, Spain; Bohuslava Martinů Philharmonia and Philharmonia Chorus, Virtuosi Pregensis Chamber Orchestra, Karlovy Vary Symphony Orchestra, and Dvořák Chamber Orchestra, Czech Republic; Bialystok State Philharmonic, Poland; and regional orchestras and choirs in the United States.

Maestro Griffith’s 50-plus conducting appearances at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center span the major works of the classical repertoire and include the U.S. premieres of Welsh composer Karl Jenkins’ Stabat Mater and Te Deum, Russian composer Sergei Taneyev’s Upon Reading a Psalm, Czech composer Miloš Bok’s Missa Solemnis, Luigi Boccherini’s Villancicos, and Eugène Goossens’ reorchestration of Handel’s Messiah; as well as numerous world premieres, including Eric Funk’s Pamela, Seymour Bernstein’s Song of Nature, and Robert Convery’s The Unknown Region and I Have a Dream.

TURKSOY Symphony Orchestra
The International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY) has pioneered many projects that were intended to improve and promote the culture and art of the Turkic world. One such project is the multinational TURKSOY Symphony Orchestra, which makes its debut with this performance.

The orchestra is composed of distinguished singers of TURKSOY’s member countries. The TURKSOY Youth Chamber Orchestra is also incorporated within the TURKSOY Symphony Orchestra. The orchestra is conducted by Professor Rengim Gökmen.

Jonathan Griffith Singers
Founded by conductor and educator Jonathan Griffith in 1987, the Jonathan Griffith Singers have developed and grown over the years. Beginning as a chamber choir of 24 professional singers in Portland, Oregon, they are now an ensemble of 80–120 amateur and professional singers who come from several different regions of the United States and Canada. All of the members have had years of choral experience, and many of the singers are music teachers and full time musicians. Known for their appealing and accessible programming, the singers perform a wide range of repertoire. Members of the ensemble have performed in some of the world’s finest concert halls in the United States and in Europe, including Carnegie Hall, the Rudolfinum in Prague, the Palau de la Música in Barcelona, the Santa Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome, and the Cathedral Duomo of Pisa in Italy.

In the summer of 2009 Maestro Griffith led the singers to the People’s Republic of China, conducting two China premieres of Karl Jenkins’ The Armed Man: Music for Peace performed by the celebrated Xin Ya Kong Qi Symphony Orchestra at Beijing’s Forbidden City Concert Hall and Shanghai’s Oriental Arts Center. These highly anticipated concert events were recognized internationally, as they commemorated the 30th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic
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relations between the United States and China. In summer 2011, Mr. Griffith led the singers on a tour to Uruguay and Argentina in performances of Mozart’s Requiem.

Distinguished Concerts International New York
Founded by Iris Derke (General Director) and Jonathan Griffith (Artistic Director and Principal Conductor) Distinguished Concerts International is driven by passion, innovative vision, a total belief in its artists, and unwavering commitment to bringing forth unforgettable audience experiences. DCINY is a creative producing entity with unmatched integrity that is a talent incubator, a star-maker, and a presenter of broadly accessible, world-class musical entertainment. For more information about Distinguished Concerts International in New York and upcoming DCINY musical events around the world, please visit: www.dciny.org, or call (212) 707-8566.

Vokaliz Management
Vokaliz Management is one of the leading promoters and booking agents for foreign and local artists in Turkey. Vokaliz is also specialized in art and culture activities with an aim of presenting Turkish artists, soloists, or groups internationally.

Vokaliz produces world-wide qualified musical activities for audiences. In last few years, Vokaliz realized concerts and productions of world-wide known artist and groups such as Elton John, Chick Corea, Bobby McFerrin, Al Di Meola, The Manhattan Transfer, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Esbjörn Svensson Trio, Swingle Singers, Anna Maria Jopek, Sertab Erener, Zülfü Livaneli, and many more. Please visit www.vokaliz.com.

Visit www.turksoyevents.com/yunusemre

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Jonathan Griffith Singers includes members of the following organizations: The Continuo Arts Foundation Civic Chorale, Khorikos, New York Festival Singers, and The Ridgewood Singers.

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