*Birun*. Ottoman music seminars  
Director: Kudsi Erguner

***Music of the courts: from Herat to Istanbul***

**27 March-1 April 2017**Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice  
**Call for application for eight scholarships.   
Deadline for application: 15 January 2017**

From 27 March to 1 April 2017, the Intercultural Institute of Comparative Music Studies of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice, is holding the six edition of *Bîrûn*, a series of advanced workshops on Ottoman classical music, directed by Kudsi Erguner, and addressed to professional or semi-professional musicians.

Based on the modal system of the *maqâm*, Ottoman classical music has been enhanced by the contributions of Turkish, Arab, Persian, Greek, Jewish and Armenian composers who all flourished in the territories of the empire. Considering Ottoman classical music as an “ethnic”, regional or national tradition would be misleading, since it represents a taste and an art shared beyond cultures of provenance in much the same way as European classical music. The aesthetics of Ottoman music is the result of influences that range from Byzantium to the Middle East, Central Asia and India.

**The theme of this year’s *Bîrûn* seminar will be that of the court music of Khorasan and, in particular, that of the works of the composer Abd-al Qader Marâghî (1360?-1435), unanimously considered the maestro and inventor of different musical forms.** The region divided between modern Iran, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan and known in the Persian language as Khorasan (“rising sun”) and its main centres, the cities of Ghazni, Bukhara and Herat, were over the years capitals of various dynasties, such as those of the Sassanids, the Ghaznavids and the Timurids. Musically the area was the cradle of a culture that is the basis of the art music of all the Eastern courts: from the times of the sultan Mahmud of Ghazni (971-1030) through to the end of the Ottoman empire (1923), all the musical traditions of the various courts were closely linked to one another such that it is now possible to travel through the musical history from Istanbul to Herat and from Herat to Baghdad and India.   
A similar heritage of historically documented cultured music was preserved and handed down by the Ottomans until the twentieth century, especially in their capital Istanbul, while in other Middle Eastern countries this was gradually replaced by popular and regional styles of music. Many of these compositions have been saved from oblivion thanks to the work of musicologists like Rauf Yektâ bey (1871-1935), Refik Fersan (1893-1965) and Ulvi Erguner (1924-1974). Twenty-seven pieces composed by Marâghî along with other works attributed to the Timurid sultan Huseyn Bayqara (1469-1506) and the Persian language poet Molla Jamî (1414–1492) will be studied during our seminar.

The workshop will end with a public concert performed by the *Bîrûn* ensemble, conducted by Kudsi Erguner.

**Scholarships**The Fondazione Giorgio Cini, thanks to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, is offering **eight scholarships** for **singers** and **instrumentalists** who will then form an ensemble at the workshop. Instruments particularly requested are: *ney* (flute), *‘ûd* (short-necked lute), *tanbûr* (long-necked lute), *kanûn* (plucked box zither), *kemençe* (bowed box-shaped lute) or *yayli tanbûr* (bowed long-necked lute) and percussions – *def* or *bender* (frame drums), *zarb* (goblet drum) and *kudûm* (drums). For this particular repertoire, the Fondazione Giorgio Cini is looking for **more than one singer.**

The scholarships will cover the enrolment fee, accommodation (in the Vittore Branca Center Residence ), lunches (but not dinners) and travelling expenses (in economy class up to a maximum of 400 euros).

To apply for selection, candidates must send the following material to the workshop secretary by email (birun@cini.it) **before 15 January 2017:**

* + - CV with details clearly referring to the type of instrument applied for (e.g.: voice; *ney*; etc.);
    - 1 recording in mp3 format of a piece of Ottoman music;
    - 1 improvisation (*taqsîm*) including various modulations of different *maqâm*

Candidates are required to be able to read European art music notation and to study the proposed repertoire beforehand; they will receive it in good time before the beginning of the workshop.

**NB each file must bear the first name and surname of the candidate**.

Scholarship winners and auditors\* will be chosen by Kudsi Erguner.

The results of the selection will be communicated to all candidates by email and published on [www.cini.it.](http://www.cini.it/)

As in previous editions, if the quality of the recordings are deemed to be of suitably high standard, a CD will be produced with the Nota Edizioni label.

\*Candidates who are selected but not assigned a scholarship can take part in the workshop as auditors and can stay at the Vittore Branca Center Residence at their own expense (depending on the availability of rooms).

Info: [birun@cini.it](mailto:birun@cini.it) – [www.cini.it](http://www.cini.it/) – Tel. +39 0412710357