

*An urgent invitation to Istanbul, by **Francesco Martinelli**:*

Come to a unique city for a unique experience!

ISMET SIRAL CREATIVE MUSIC STUDIO, JULY 29th – AUGUST 8th 2010, ISTANBUL

Do you need a good reason to visit Istanbul, or have you been there already and would like to go back with a different insight? Search no further, and seize this chance: an eleven-day program taking place all over this unique city, allowing you to feel the pulse of its most creative essence, together with cutting-edge artists from the East and from the West, from **Karl Berger** to **Oliver Lake**, from **John Zorn** to **Trilok Gurtu**, and with a strong representation of the best of today's Turkish music.

Not the tourist point of view, but the best from the insiders, including venues no festival used yet. I was lucky enough to take part in the 2006 first edition. It was on a much smaller scale, but the vibrations from those days reverberated for a long time, and the inspiration provided by close contacts with such artists in the context of one of the more history-filled and yet modern cities in the world proved unforgettable. My chronicle of those events can be read here: [Ismet Siral Creative Music Studio Istanbul 2006](#)

Intitulated to Turkish saxophonist Ismet Siral but inspired by the methods of the Creative Music Studio established by Karl Berger, the ISCMS is at the same time an international summer school, an extraordinary festival and above all a celebration of creativity and originality in music. The main base of the program will be the **Santral Campus** of Bilgi University, a century-old Ottoman power station transformed in a contemporary art center in the very heart of Istanbul but concerts will take place in the garden of the **Sepetçiler Kasrı**, seat of the Guild of Basket-makers in Ottoman times, an humble name for a palatial kiosk on the waters of the Golden Horn; and in the fabled **Prince's Islands**, off the coast of Istanbul, where students and musicians will go by ferry and jam in the unique sonic atmosphere: cars are not allowed there. Environmentally, the most imposing concert will take place on the bustling pedestrian bridge in **Eminönü Square**, a few steps from the entrance of the **Spice Bazaar** and of **Yeni Cami**, one of the monumental Istanbul mosques: there the especially formed "GO: Organic Orchestra" including around 20 artists (brasses, strings, harp, drums) will play with the city sounds, under the special conduction method of **Adam Rudolph**. Not too far from that point, famous poet Orhan Veli wrote his immortal ode to the city sounds: I listen to Istanbul, my eyes closed / An old world drunk in its head / A waterfront palace with a dark boat shed / The humming of the south wind ceases inside / I listen to Istanbul, my eyes closed.

But this time, also Istanbul will listen; because the music and the city sounds will be gently amplified through the loud-speakers creating a very special "happening" that could only take place this year, with Istanbul being Cultural Capital of Europe allowing special support from the municipality, the police and all the relevant authorities.

Reciprocally, actual Istanbul street-sellers will invade the stage with their calls, for an unprecedented so far unheard sonic experience with musicians from USA and Turkey. Foreign students will be able to mingle with students from the most adventurous music departments of the city, those at Bilgi, ITU Conservatory and Bosphorus, who have been working to collect sounds from the town and calls from vendors to be used in the concerts.

Other traditions will be explored: Indian dance and percussion with **Trilok Gurtu** and **Ravi Chary**, rhythm awareness with Brazilian/New Yorker percussionist **Cyro Baptista**, Turkish music and instruments from different regions and traditions with some of the leading figures in the field, from kanun player **Göksel Baktagir** and ud specialist **Yurdal Tokcan** to folk/jazz master guitarist **Erkan Ogur**. And of course the most important tradition to be celebrated will be the tradition of change and exploration in creative music, with concerts, seminars and workshops with inspirator **Karl Berger**, and then **John Zorn**, **Oliver Lake**, **Adam Rudolph**, **Marc Ribot**, **John Lindberg**, **Oğuz Büyükberber**, **Ayşe Tütüncü**, **Erdem Helvacıoğlu** and many others, whose groups will be featured in the concerts together with ad-hoc combos created with the participants. A full 11-day program with 8 thematic concerts, 23 workshops and seminars, 7 group events guided by the artists, 3 conferences, and several jam-sessions.

The historical sights, the spicy smells, the sound of the hustle and bustle of Istanbul, stately traditional music and exploratory cutting-edge avant-garde, in a heady combination that would be a sin to miss.

For further information, fees (there's a very sweet offer including tuition and hospitality) please consult the official site at www.iscms.org. You may also search ISCMS in Facebook and join the active group page.

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See this article in “**All About Jazz**” at: [An Urgent Invitation to Istanbul](#)