



CARNEGIE HALL presents

CITI GLOBAL ENCOUNTERS

# ROMANI MUSIC OF TURKEY

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A Program of The Weill Music Institute at Carnegie Hall

**TEACHING ARTIST VISIT:  
FREEDOM AND STRUCTURE IN IMPROVISATION**

 **The Weill Music Institute  
at Carnegie Hall**

Citi Foundation



**CARNEGIE HALL**



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### Contributing Writer / Editor

Daniel Levy

### Consulting Writer

Sonia Seeman

Citi Foundation



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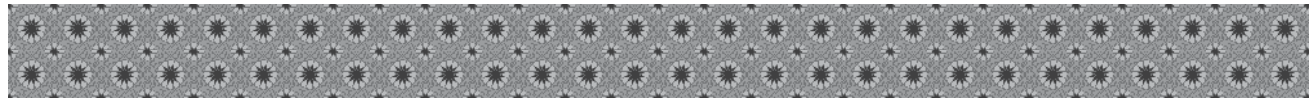
### The Weill Music Institute at Carnegie Hall

881 Seventh Avenue  
New York, NY 10019  
212-903-9670  
212-903-0925  
weillmusicinstitute.org

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## TEACHING ARTIST VISIT 1

**AIM:** How do our artists make the most of freedom and structure in their musical improvisations?

**SUMMARY:** Students connect their own lives with the practice of musical improvisation.

**MATERIALS:** Citi Global Encounters CD

**TIME REQUIRED:** 60 minutes

**US STANDARDS:** NYS Social Studies: 1.2, 2.3; Blueprint: Music Literacy, Music Making

### CREATE A MAXIM

Lead students through the activity of creating maxims to use in this exercise around improvisation.

#### Tell students:

- “Generate short phrases, observations, or maxims comprising up to 10 words.” (For example: ‘Don’t cry over spilt milk.’; ‘Ain’t no stoppin’ us now.’; ‘How do you get to Carnegie Hall? Practice, practice, practice.’)
- “Write your maxim on a strip of paper, fold the strip of paper, and place it in a box.”

Model the process of improvising for students through the actions below:

1. Choose a text from the box (have text already chosen).
2. Play one of the four accompaniment tracks from the Citi Global Encounters Turkey CD (Tracks 21–24).  
Have an accompaniment already chosen.
3. Say the phrase three times rhythmically along with the accompaniment.
4. Improvise with the text (repeating, fragmenting, and extending).
5. Repeat the original phrase three times.

#### Example:

##### PHRASE:

You get what you get, and you don’t get upset  
You get what you get, and you don’t get upset  
You get what you get, and you don’t get upset

##### IMPROVISATION 1 (repeating):

You get, you get, you get get get  
You don’t, you don’t, and you don’t don’t get  
What what what you don’t get, you don’t get—a what what

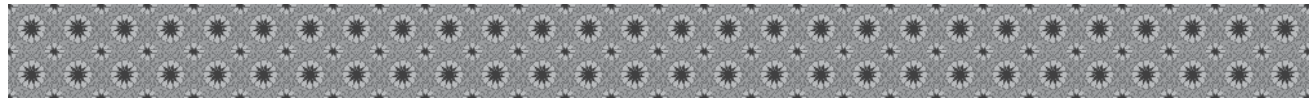
##### IMPROVISATION 2 (fragmenting):

Get, g-get, g-g-g-g-g-g-g-g-get-et what you get  
Y-g-g-g set, y-g-g-g set  
Et et set set what you up-up-up-up-set

##### IMPROVISATION 3 (extending):

What you get is what you get is what you want is what you need  
You need what you want, so you feed the need  
Do you get it? Do you got it?  
If you get it, will you want it?  
Who’s the giver? Who’s the getter?

##### PHRASE:



**Ask students:**

“What did we just do?” (For example: we repeated, fragmented, and extended.)

“What was the relationship between the music and the text?”

“Was that a good or not-so-good musical choice to accompany that text? Why?”

**CHOOSE A MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT**

Lead students through the process of choosing a musical accompaniment.

- Have each student draw one random text from the box. Play 30-second clips of the four accompaniment samples on the Citi Global Encounters Turkey CD (Tracks 21–24).

**Ask students:**

“Which of these tracks will work best with the chosen text?”

“How could you adapt your spoken performance for each musical accompaniment?”

“Would it be easier to improvise with or without accompaniment?”

**IMPROVISE WITH A MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT**

Have five students volunteer to perform their texts along with one of the accompaniment tracks. They should try each of the four instrumental samples.

1. Begin playing one of the four accompaniment tracks.
2. Have performers say their text or phrase three times (rhythmically) along with the accompaniment.
3. Have performers improvise with the text (repeating, fragmenting, and extending).
4. Have performers repeat the original phrase three times.

Note: Please share exemplary accompanied texts with the Carnegie Hall staff so we can showcase these student performers in the final concert.

**HEARING OUR ARTIST IMPROVISE**

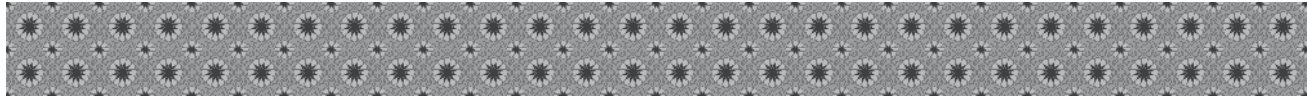
Preview the discussion questions below and have the whole class listen to Selim Sesler’s recording of “Kara Üzüm Habbesi” (“Black Grape Seed”) (Track 6).

**Ask students:**

“What do we notice about this improvisation?”

“Where was the artist’s use of repeating, creating fragments, or extending especially effective?”

“Why might the artist’s musical improvisation be easier or harder to create than our textual improvisations? Can you be specific?”



## SUMMARY AND REFLECTION

Lead your class in a discussion of the recordings you just listened to. Think about and discuss the following questions:

### Ask students:

**(For all classes)**

“How does the artist’s use of freedom compare with your own?”

“How can we share this work with other students at the concert?”

**(For music classes only)**

“What musical structures make the artist’s free improvisation possible?”

“What does the artist do with his freedom?”

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Brainstorm with students and come up with a list of things people can discover in their lives. Pick one item from the list and have students write a short poem or essay about it. Have each student find a recording of instrumental music (or use one of the instrumental accompaniment tracks on the Citi Global Encounters Turkey CD) that works well with his or her poem. Then, have students practice improvising the text with the music, and perform their accompanied poems for the class.