

Burak Özdemir is a composer, bassoonist, and conductor. He studied historical performance and composition at The Juilliard School, the University of the Arts Berlin, and the Istanbul Conservatory. In 2008 he founded Musica Sequenza at The Juilliard School in New York – an ensemble known for innovation in baroque music and intercultural production. Since relocating to Berlin in 2011, Özdemir has developed new performance modalities through his own methods, creating internationally acclaimed projects such as *Sampling Baroque*, *Bach: The Silent Cantata*, and *Rameau à la Turque*.

Özdemir's work has been presented across Europe, North and South America, and Asia, at venues such as the Elbphilharmonie, Berliner Philharmonie, Concertgebouw, Staatsoper Vienna, Teatro Colón Buenos Aires, Peter J. Sharp Theater, and Club Berghain. As a soloist he has appeared with the Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic, L'arte del Mondo, and The Juilliard Symphony Orchestra, collaborating with artists including Menahem Pressler, Sasha Waltz, Rolando Villazón, Matthew Herbert, Werner Ehrhardt, Fazıl Say, Nicholas McGegan, Andreas Scholl, RIAS Kammerchor, Roberta Mameli, Lars Vogt, Rundfunkchor Berlin, Natacha Atlas, and Edita Gruberová.

Pioneering the genre of "electro-baroque," Özdemir applies the language and tools of contemporary performance to historical opera and sacred repertoire. Works such as *Fuga: The Electro-Baroque Opera* (2010), *Opera del Futuro* (2015), and *Kassia* (2021) have established his signature style. His project *Sampling Baroque / Handel* (2015), commissioned by the Händel Festspiele Halle and released on Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, was followed by *Sampling Baroque / Bach* (2016) for the International Bach Festival Schaffhausen. In 2024, Özdemir premiered the third episode: *Sampling Baroque / Purcell* dedicated to Purcell at the Istanbul Music Festival, marking a new chapter in the internationally touring series. Shortly after its creation, *Sampling Baroque* has become an internationally touring program and visited many festivals and concert halls such as Istanbul Music Festival, Bach Akademie Stuttgart, Club Berghain, Radialsystem V, Istanbul Bomontiada, Karavaan Festival, Oranjewoud Festival and broadcasted on Arte Concerts, Deutsche Welle, Swiss National Television and Radio Berlin Brandenburg.

Burak Özdemir is currently focusing on the intensification of collaborative processes, such as the dialogic development of choreography and music. In 2013 he collaborated with Sasha Waltz & Guests at the Festival d'Avignon for the performance of *Dialogue*. He composed original music for this production, using his sound recordings from the Gezi Park demonstrations in Istanbul. The performance took place in the Opera Avignon including Özdemir's improvisational performance. In 2016 Özdemir wrote music and performed live for Sasha Waltz's interdisciplinary and open exchange platform *Zuhören* at Radialsystem V. Following year Özdemir joined Sasha Waltz for the choreographic installation *Figure Humaine* for the inauguration of the Elbphilharmonie. In 2025 Özdemir appeared again at the Elbphilharmonie with pianist Fazıl Say and the Istanbul Borusan Philharmonic, underscoring his continuing presence on major international stages.

In 2018 Burak Özdemir was commissioned by the Stadttheater Schaffhausen for his choreographic work *Atlas Passion*. The inter-religious oratorio after Johann Sebastian Bach was created for four soloists, chamber choir, baroque orchestra, modern dance, video art, as well as light- and costume design. Nearly 100 artists performed in this production.

Özdemir is also active as a film composer. In 2014 he received a commission by the Grand Palais Museum Paris to compose music for the *Velazquez* exhibition. The work was curated and filmed by Karim Ainouz, which later became an international DVD release on Arte Edition. Özdemir wrote the original score for the new theatrical release *Identitti*, produced by Razor Film, choreographed by Constanza Macras and directed by Randa Chahoud, with the music performed by his ensemble Musica Sequenza.

During the pandemic, Özdemir created his Renaissance-inspired work *Inferno* (2021), based on the life of Dante Alighieri. Funded by the German Ministry of Culture (Musikfonds), the work premiered at the Berliner Philharmonie, was later presented at Radio Bremen and subsequently became the music for the international exhibition *The Medici: Portraits and Politics* at The Metropolitan Museum of Art New York, in collaboration with the Bargello Museum Florence.

2024 also saw the 10th anniversary of *Rameau à la Turque*, celebrated with an extensive European tour including the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival, Heilandskirche Berlin, Monastery Alt-Friedland and the Uckermärkische Musikwochen. Özdemir's latest Bach production *Interminata* has been conceived as a peace work—intercultural and rooted in Mediterranean folk traditions—bridging Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Israel, the Middle East, and North Africa. The project has received critical acclaim at prestigious events including the Bachfest Schaffhausen, Emmauskirche Berlin and the Mardin Biennial.

As a solo bassoonist, Özdemir brings his instrument into unexpected contexts, performing both early and contemporary repertoire, often integrated into his own productions. In 2024, Özdemir's interdisciplinary augmented concert series *Amour Fou* for bassoon, voice, modern dance, and ensemble presented at the Karlsruhe State Theaters and at the Handel Festival Halle. The production featured guest appearances by some of today's leading opera stars, including countertenors Nicolò Balducci and Georg Bochow, tenor Anders Dahlin, and bass José Coca Loza, bringing together a unique constellation of voices around Özdemir's artistic scope.

His latest opera *Kassia* was newly arranged by Özdemir himself for the vocal ensemble Sjaella and celebrated its world premiere in an a cappella version at the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival in 2025.

Istanbul-born and Berlin-based, Özdemir also performs live sets in leading clubs and festivals, from Berghain and KitKat to the Berlinale Film Festival and Bomontiada Istanbul, reflecting his boundary-crossing approach between baroque heritage and contemporary sound. Since 2012, his recordings have been released by Sony Music, Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, Neue Meister, and Tacet Nota.