

TECHNIQUE

CELIL REFIK KAYA

Koyunbaba



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“IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THIS PIECE, FIRST WE SHOULD UNDERSTAND HOW TO PHRASE IT. LISTEN TO TURKISH FOLK MUSIC TO TRULY PERFORM THIS PIECE AS IT WAS INTENDED TO BE PLAYED.”

LESSON DESCRIPTION



In this lesson, instructor Celil Refik Kaya talks about Domeniconi’s guitar suite ‘Koyunbaba’. He walks us through its etymology and source of inspiration, as well as the importance of familiarizing one’s self with ethnic music to play it properly.

Many stylistic features of this piece come from Turkish music, including ornaments, appoggiaturas, and striking dissonances. By the end of the lesson, Celil will have slowly taken us through the entire piece, providing students with valuable insight into proper performance practice of a unique and difficult composition.





ABOUT YOUR INSTRUCTOR



Named the Rising Young Musician of the Year for Istanbul in 2017, Celil Refik Kaya has performed in the most prestigious concert halls and festivals around the US and Turkey.

Born in Istanbul, Celil studied in Turkey with his father Mehmet Refik Kay. He later undertook his master's degree in New York City at the Mannes School of Music.

Kaya is currently studying for his DMA at Univ. Of Texas Austin in the studio of Adam Holzman. Kaya is also an avid composer

OUTLINE

1. Historical Background
2. Understanding Ethnic Music
3. Introduction
4. Bağlama and Ornaments
5. Maqams
6. Ossia
7. Second Movement
8. Third Movement
9. Fourth Movement and Şelpe

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



Today, Celil Refik Kaya is with us to talk about Italian composer Carlo Domeniconi's guitar suite entitled 'Koyunbaba'. The name 'Koyunbaba' comes from the name of a small village in Turkey, and also belongs to a 13th-century Turkish saint. In Turkish, the word means "sheep father". The composition is heavily influenced by both Classical Turkish Music and Turkish Folk Music, particularly in its rhythms, motifs, modes used, and the overall character of the piece. Cecil considers this piece a theme and variations, and believes it should be interpreted more as a meditative piece, rather than as a showcase of virtuosity.

Domeniconi himself has stated that the piece has a mysterious side to it. Apparently, many unfortunate things have happened in this town in Turkey; many stories of bad luck go around! This might even be one of the reasons this piece became so famous.

The majority of the guitar repertoire today is Spanish or Latin American in origin, but Koyunbaba's Turkish roots provide a new perspective for many players and a new sound to the literature.



UNDERSTANDING ETHNIC MUSIC

To understand this piece, we should first understand how to phrase it. The phrasing originates from the folk music that the piece was inspired by, and, for this reason, listening to that style is absolutely essential to performing Koyunbaba accurately. The same is true for jazz, Latin American music, or any type of ethnic music; listening to the music allows you to perform it correctly.

This piece requires a modified tuning, which can take a lot of time to set up. Some players carry a second guitar that is pre-tuned to avoid tuning on stage. If you're not changing guitars, it's best to check your tuning during the 1st movement (Celil mentions the exact section below).

INTRODUCTION

First, let's look at the introduction.

1 I Carlo Domeniconi 1985

(REAL)

(SCORDATUR)

Moderato

4

3

2 + 2 + 3

3

rit f

Fine

The composer didn't indicate a meter, since the piece has more of an improvisatory feeling throughout, but there are still written groupings that should be considered. Measure 4 is grouped into 2-2-3, suggesting $\frac{7}{8}$ time, a common feature in both Turkish folk and classical music.

He demonstrates how some people spend too much time in the introduction. Domeniconi himself has performed the piece on Turkish TV, and, in his rendition, there's a unity that doesn't break up the parts too much. Emphasize the slurs in measures 5 and 6, as well.

The image shows a musical score for guitar, consisting of two systems of staves. The first system starts at measure 7 and ends at measure 9. The second system starts at measure 10 and ends at measure 12. The score includes treble and bass clefs, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and fingering numbers (1, 2, 3, 4). Handwritten blue annotations include the word "Phrasing" above measure 7, a blue arrow pointing to a slur in measure 8, and "new phrase cresc." above measure 10. A green vertical bar is on the left side of the first system.

The motive in measure 9 is very Turkish. Be sure to play it stylistically accurate; play with a push to the next measure (accelerando) rather than straight.

Measure 11 marks the beginning of a new phrase.

BAGLAMA AND ORNAMENTS



The motif at the end of 16, going into bar 17, imitates a common turkish instrument, the bağlama. Compared to guitar, bağlama has a thinner sound, so he plays that section ponticello (close to bridge) and slurred. The writing itself also imitates that instrument. The motif in 21-22 is of the same idea.

Ornaments are a crucial part of all traditional Turkish music. Ornaments are put in very specific places in ascending or descending lines- they are not random.

Practicing slowly is the key to success. An important feature of this music is to play ornaments a bit faster than written. They're very quick, unlike western classical music ornaments. Again, listening to the music will explain the way they should sound better than words ever could.

MAQAMS

The dissonance in bar 23 also references Turkish music.

Traditional Turkish music is based on maqams, or short sets of notes that form the structure of a piece. In this particular spot, Domeniconi purposely writes a dissonance that clashes with the maqam. This clash should be highlighted and played with slightly elevated intensity.

23

The image shows a musical score for measure 23. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a dissonant chord of notes (F#, G, A, B, C) circled in blue. A blue 'p' (piano) dynamic marking is placed below the staff. The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains a melodic line with fingerings: 1, 4, 2, 1, 4, 2, 1, 2. There are circled numbers 2 and 3 above the bass line, and circled numbers 1, 4, 2, 1, 4, 2, 1, 2 below it. A red wavy line is at the top right of the page.

OSSIA

Measure 27 often proves challenging. If you can't reach easily, rotate your 1st finger to make it easier. Alternatively, Domeniconi provides a second option (also called an ossia) that's easier to execute. The fast turns in 28, written as sixteenths, are also typical Turkish motives.

The image shows a musical score for measures 27 and 28. Measure 27 has a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The bass clef staff has a circled ossia line with fingerings: 1, 4, 2, 1, 4, 2, 1, 2. A blue handwritten note says "Ossia possibilissima". Measure 28 has a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The bass clef staff has a circled ossia line with fingerings: 0, 4. A red wavy line is at the top right of the page.

SECOND MOVEMENT



In the opening of the 2nd movement, the written accents don't land on the actual melody. However, still play them louder than other fingers. The notes circled in red on score reflect the actual melody, but they will jump out on their own. Be careful to bring out the accents in bar 4, and play the arpeggios in that bar with fingers A-M-I.

The ornaments in bar 6 might be notated on the score as regular mordents, but Domeniconi is referring to the traditional Turkish ornaments we played in the first movement. They should be faster than actual tempo. The fingerings for the embellishments that Celil recommends are notated on the score above. Maintain an apoyando (rest stroke).

The next section contains another very typical Turkish motive. Emphasize the written C on the top of measure 7, and accent the beginning of the subsequent measures. This will help you count the times the passage happens, in order to better memorize the piece.

7

8

②

1 2 4

typical

VII

1

④

Slow down as you move into bar 21. Here, Domeniconi goes outside the maqam again, so bring out the dissonant chords. As we come back to the DS, Cecil reminds us that the ornaments in bar 6 should be practiced very slowly. Avoid the common trap of playing the turns too square, as they should not feel like perfect subdivisions of the beat, but should feel faster. Listen to the video lesson, or Cecil's recording, if you're unsure.

THIRD MOVEMENT

Note the appoggiaturas in the beginning of the third section- be sure to lean on the downbeats to make more of the syncopation. The phrases are indicated by red caesura markings. Take your time when you come to the end of one phrase before moving on.

Stylistically speaking, the phrasing in this section in particular is very specific, so it would be helpful to listen to the way Celil plays it. The time isn't straight, but alternates pushing (accelerando) and pulling (rubato) on certain notes. Lean on the notes highlighted or circled in the score.

III

1 Cantabile

There are many markings that Celil made on the accompanying score for this section to give guidance on his preferred interpretation of the piece. Many other directions he only gives verbally in the lesson.

-In measure 21, where Domeniconi utilizes the pentatonic scale, bring out the first note of each measure.

-Bars 28 and 29 utilize notes inside the maqam, so play bars 28 and 29 as if you're approaching a cadence point at the end of bar 30.

-Bring out the melody notes that are marked with an M on the score.

-Start speeding up in measure 40, and intensify at 55.

-Lean on the first notes in bars 63, 64, 65, and 67; they all contain very traditional Turkish sounds.

-Bring out the heavy bass line in 71-81.

-In measure 81, where the melody returns, obtain a more stable speed.

-Resume speeding up in 89, and even more so at 101.

117 *rubato.*

p i m a a a
m.d.
pppimami

-Cecil recommends his own specific fingering in bar 117: *pppimami*.

-At 122, keep the energy up high even though we go back to 'a tempo'.

-This movement ends with a long gradual slow down, so allow the sound to die out by the very end.

FOURTH MOVEMENT AND SELPE

The Presto section of Koyunbaba is often misunderstood. The composer is imitating a bağlama technique called Şelpe. The bağlama is a softer instrument, so this section should be played softer. Of course dynamics should still be played, but in the context of the bağlama's dynamic range. Louds are medium-loud, and softs are even softer.

Play on the edge, but never too heavy, or else the intent isn't clear. Stay very light, and bring out the melody notes over the rest.

In the B section- hit the slurs harder, as in a hammer, and the melody will get more clear. If the strings are played too hard, unwanted string noise is created, so always keep control of your attacks. Play forte at the D section and gradually decrescendo to piano before E.

E

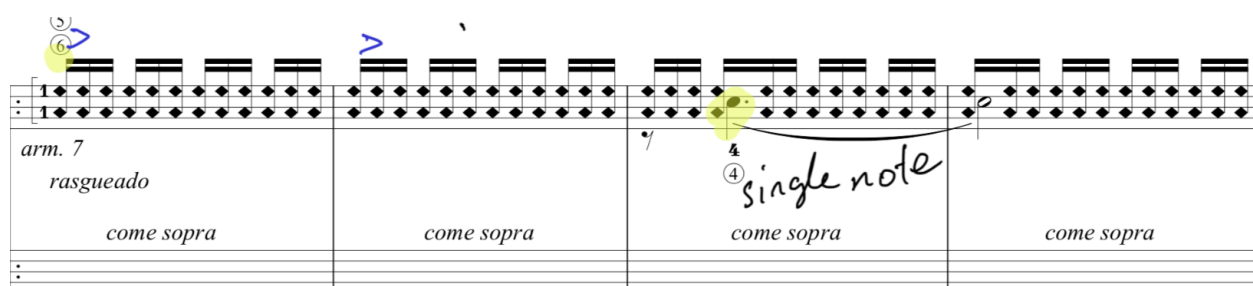
The image shows a musical score for section E, consisting of two staves. The first staff has a circled 'E' in a red box. The score is divided into two parts by a double bar line. The first part has four measures of music, each with a slur over a group of notes and a 'p' (piano) dynamic marking below. The second part has four measures of music, each with a slur over a group of notes and a 'p' dynamic marking below. Handwritten annotations include the word 'count' above the second part, and numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 below the first four notes of the second part, indicating a count. The notes in the second part are circled with black lines.

The bar after E starts loud and gradually dies out. Accent the first beat in each grouping of 3 notes to have more clarity and confidence while practicing.

In the G section, play the second time piano. Common mistakes happen in the jumps at H that use the twelfth fret. Practice very slowly there, until you can intuitively feel the 12th fret without thinking about its location.

While playing H, Cecil doesn't focus on any one particular element, but tries to see everything on the fingerboard at once. He recommends developing this level of focus to play the piece much more cleanly.

The rasgueado section is not written in a meter, but should still be played in a way that reflects the groupings notated.



The image shows a musical score for a guitar piece, specifically a section of rasgueado. The score is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a 12/8 time signature. The music consists of a continuous sequence of chords, each with a different fingering indicated by numbers in circles above the notes. The first bar is marked with a circled '6' and a blue arrow pointing to the first note. The second bar has a blue arrow pointing to the first note. The third bar has a circled '4' and a blue arrow pointing to the first note, with a handwritten note 'single note' and a blue arrow pointing to the same note. The fourth bar has a circled '4' and a blue arrow pointing to the first note. The score is divided into four measures by vertical bar lines. Below the staff, there are four lines of text: 'arm. 7', 'rasgueado', 'come sopra', and 'come sopra'. The first two lines are in the first measure, the third line is in the third measure, and the fourth line is in the fourth measure.

In the third bar of this section, one note rings out above the droning rasgueado. Make sure this note comes out unbroken and the rasgueados don't interfere with it. This technique isn't used in oud or baglama, as is often taught, but is just textural, not intended to imitate a specific technique.

When we come back to Moderato, Cecil plays more free, since we're preparing to end the piece. He plays ponticello three bars from the end just as he does in the first movement.

This concludes all four parts of the Koyunbaba suite! Cecil recorded the entire piece for Naxos Records, if you are interested in hearing it played in its entirety.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Koyunbaba is a unique piece in the guitar literature, in that it draws very strong influence from Turkish traditions. For this reason, spend time studying the nuances in the articulation and ornaments that define this style.

RESOURCES



Mircea Gogoncea's lesson On Tuning

One of the challenges of Koyunbaba is making sure your guitar is in tune and being able to adjust in the middle of the piece if necessary. Check out Mircea's lesson On Tuning to learn how to do both accurately!

Celil Refik Kaya's lesson on Vals Op. 3 No. 8 (Barrios)

Did you enjoy Celil's wonderful teaching style? Continue learning with this young pedagogue by watching his lesson on Barrios's "Vals Op. 8 No. 3."



