

# The 3-piano Project

Zeynep Ucbasaran | Miguel Ortega Chavaladas | Sergio Gallo



Works for three pianos by

Server Acim | Luigi Dallapiccola | Kamran Ince

Ahmet Adnan Saygun | Edson Zampronha | José Zárata

# The 3-piano Project

## Server Acim (1961-2019):

1	Fikir Hücreleri (Idea Cells)	6:15
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## Edson Zampronha (b.1963):

2	S'io esca vivo (If I escape alive)	7:10
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## Ahmet Adnan Saygun (1907-1991):

3	Poem, Op. 73	14:56
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## José Zárate (b.1972):

4	Petit Nocturne Noir	6:41
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## Kamran Ince (b.1960):

5	Requiem for Mehmet	4:44
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## Luigi Dallapiccola (1904-1975):

Musica per tre pianoforti (Inni - Hymn)		13:52
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6	I <i>Allegro, molto sostenuto</i>	2:55
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7	II <i>Un poco adagio, funebre</i>	6:12
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8	III <i>Allegramente, ma solenne</i>	4:43
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Total playing time:		53:40
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Zeynep Ucbasaran

Miguel Ortega Chavaldas

Sergio Gallo

# The 3-piano Project

The modern piano has no rivals when it comes to the astonishing scope and variety of tones it can produce. It claims the highest and lowest notes of practically any instrument. The piano can spin a dreamy melody, play any harmony, conjure up an orchestra, a rhythm section, or a place you've never been.

Multiply by three, and you have the "3 Piano Project," a collaboration of pianists Zeynep Ucbasaran, Sergio Gallo and Miguel Ángel Ortega Chavaldas, who first met when they were students at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest.

The idea of the "3 Piano Project" started with the planning of the world premiere recording of Turkish composer Ahmet Adnan Saygun's *Poem, Op. 73* for three pianos, written in 1986. This major work in the three-piano repertoire has remained unrecorded until now. The project continued to evolve, with commissions for works for three pianos by composers from Turkey, Spain, Brazil, and the U.S. For this recording, the performers added a landmark piece in the repertoire—Luigi Dallapiccola's *Inni*.

The Turkish composer **Server Acim** (1961–2019) is especially known for his compositions for theater. In 1993 he won the Best Theater Music of the Year Prize for his music for Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, staged by the Istanbul State Theater.

Acim held a Doctorate in Music and was Professor of Composition and Conducting as well as Director of the State Conservatory at İnönü University in Malatya, Turkey.

His music displays a wide range of styles. *Idea Cells for Three Pianos* was written in 2010 and bristles with rhythmic interest. Tempos and rhythms vary throughout the piece, with some sections in 7/8 time, dividing the measure into 2+2+3 or 3+2+2.

For further information about the composer and his works, see [serveracim.musicaneo.com](http://serveracim.musicaneo.com)

Brazilian composer **Edson Zampronha** (b. 1963) earned a Master's Degree in Music Composition from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and a Doctorate in Communication and Semiotics—Music from the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo. His composition *S'io esca vivo* (If I Escape Alive), composed in 2010, is based on a reinterpretation of an ornament in a madrigal by the 16th-century Flemish composer Orlando di Lasso. The composer writes, "I reinterpret the first very expressive ornament of this madrigal to design part of the architecture of the whole work. I reinterpret it in many other ways, as when I transform it into a motive in the lyric section of the composition. In addition, many other materials are reinterpretations of the universe this ornament inspired in me."

The music education of **Ahmed Adnan Saygun** (1907–1991) began in his native Izmir, then part of the Ottoman Empire. He continued musical studies in Paris, studying composition with Vincent d'Indy. Returning to Turkey, he brought Western musical practices with him and played an important role in establishing modern music education in Turkey, which was then being transformed under the reforms of Kemal Atatürk. He collaborated with Béla Bartók to collect and research Turkish folk music, and he incorporated Turkish folk tunes into some of his compositions, blending them with European modernism and impressionism.

Saygun wrote five symphonies, three string quartets, five concertos and five operas, including the first opera in Turkish. He also wrote solo piano music, music for two pianos and the ***Poem, Op.73*** for three pianos, completed in 1986 and recorded here for the first time.

More information about A.A. Saygun can be found at Ahmed Adnan Saygun Center for Music Research and Education (<http://bsc.bilkent.edu.tr/>)

Composer and pianist **José Zárate** (b. 1972) has received many commissions and awards, beginning with the Young Composer of the Year Award in 1996. In 2010, Zárate was honored by the Compositores de España (Spanish Composers) International Piano Competition, which featured him as the composer of the year. All his compositions for piano were performed during the competition.

Dedicated to the children of a different world, the notation of the ***Petit nocturne noir*** does not use the customary bar lines; the durations of some notes are left to the performers to decide and some held chords continue for a specific number of seconds, as notated in the score. Written in 2010, the peaceful and poetic composition picks up speed toward the end, with the three pianos playing in unison and gradually becoming faster and louder before returning to the quiet and thin distribution of notes that characterizes much of the piece.

Turkish-American composer **Kamran Ince** was born in Montana and raised in Turkey. He teaches composition in both Istanbul and Memphis, TN. According to his website, "the energy and rawness of Turkish and Balkan music, the spirituality of Byzantium and Ottoman music, the tradition of European art music and the extravert and popular qualities of the American psyche are the basis of Kamran Ince's sound world."

***Requiem for Mehmet*** was written in memory of Turkish composer Mehmet Aktuğ, who died in 2009. The opening of the piece utilizes the percussive quality and lowest register of the three pianos, creating a powerful intensity that lasts throughout the piece.

For more information about the composer please see [kamranince.com](http://kamranince.com)

The distinguished Italian composer **Luigi Dallapiccola** (1904-1975) is known especially for his vocal music and operas. ***Musica per tre pianoforti***, written in 1935, is his first published instrumental piece. The year before it was composed, Dallapiccola joined the faculty of the Cherubini Conservatory in Florence as an instructor in piano and he remained there until his retirement in 1967. Writing about himself and his music, Dallapiccola noted that “If one side of my nature demanded tragedy, the other attempted an escape toward serenity.”

Subtitled “Inni” (Hymn), *Musica per tre pianoforti* predates Dallapiccola’s use of the 12-tone technique for which he later became known. The piece contains chromatic passages and extended harmonies within a tonal framework and is in three movements. The initial allegro begins with a cheerful dotted rhythm and is followed by the longest of the three sections, a somber movement marked “funebre” (funereal). Low tone clusters and repeated notes set the mood. The last movement is contrapuntal and conversational, building to a climactic ending.

For more information about Luigi Dallapiccola see  
[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luigi\\_Dallapiccola](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luigi_Dallapiccola)

# The musicians

Pianist **Zeynep Ucbasaran** began her music studies at the age of four at the İstanbul Conservatory. She received a Concert Artist Diploma from the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, and after advanced studies at the Hochschule für Musik, in Freiburg, Germany. She earned her MA and DMA degrees in Piano Performance from the University of Southern California.

Ucbasaran has won professional awards such as the American Liszt Society Award, and she was a prize-winner in the 1996 and 2000 Los Angeles Liszt Competitions. She was designated a “woman of distinction in the year 2003” by the Daughters of Atatürk organization in the United States.

Ucbasaran has given recitals and concerts in many countries, making her Wigmore Hall debut in November 2004. She has given master classes and lecture recitals throughout the United States, and in Brazil, Spain, Sweden and Turkey. In addition to concertizing as a solo performer, she has toured with international musicians in various chamber music configurations. In 2019, as a part of the 47th İstanbul International Music Festival, Ucbasaran performed a four-piano recital with George Lazaridis, Cyprien Katsaris and Janis Vokoris as the “Four Musketeers of the Piano.” These collaborations will continue into the future.

Her recordings on the Eroica label include the scherzos and polonaises of Chopin, the complete piano sonatas of Mozart, music by Liszt, Schubert, Scarlatti and Beethoven; and twentieth-century composers including Leonard Bernstein and Robert Muczynski.

Ucbasaran’s recording of the piano music of Ahmet Adnan Saygun is found on the Naxos label. Her recordings have been received with acclaim: *Gramophone* magazine remarked that “An agreeable elegance pervades pianist Zeynep Ucbasaran’s playing.”

As a part of the “3 Piano Project” she has performed and recorded music for three pianos with her colleagues Sergio Gallo and Miguel Ángel Ortega Chavalas including this album, *The 3 Piano Project*, which includes the premiere recording of Saygun’s *Poem, Op. 73* for three pianos. 2020 will also see the release of an album of music for piano four-hands with Sergio Gallo.

Ucbasaran’s performance of the works that Franz Liszt performed in İstanbul when he visited the city in 1847 was broadcast by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) to all of Europe as part of the celebration of Liszt’s 200th birthday in October 2011. A compilation of these selections interpreted by Ucbasaran was released in 2013 under the title “Liszt in İstanbul.” She has recently completed her solo project of recording the complete set of Mozart’s variations for piano. The *All Music Guide* raved, “As a Mozart player, Ucbasaran touches the sublime.”

For more information, please see her website, [www.zupiano.com](http://www.zupiano.com)

A Steinway artist, **Sergio Gallo** specializes in the repertoire of the Romantic period, especially Liszt and his contemporaries, including Schumann, Henselt, Brahms, and Chopin. He has also championed the work of composers in Brazil, the nation of his birth.

Gallo has recorded several acclaimed CD’s for the Eroica label, with forthcoming projects on the Naxos, Grand Piano and Quartz labels. Sergio Gallo’s recent release of Liszt’s transcriptions of operas by Meyerbeer received a four star rating from *BBC Magazine*. His recent recording of music by Villa-Lobos garnered high praise from *Gramophone* magazine: “splendid playing of a lively programme . . . [a] nuanced performance . . . played with exceptional artistry”) and Bradley Bolen wrote in *American Record Guide*: “It is hard to imagine a pianist leaving me with a more intense feeling of nobility.” In 2011, Gallo won the Global Music Award of Excellence for his album *Mostly Villa-Lobos: 20th Century Piano Music from the Americas*.



Gallo has performed with orchestras throughout the Americas and worldwide. In the last decade, he has performed in Turkey, Brazil, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Serbia, Portugal, Korea, Taiwan, Canada and China, as well as in recitals given across the United States. Since his Brazilian national radio debut in 1986 on Radio Cultura, São Paulo and his European radio debut in 1988 on Radio France, Paris, Gallo's performances have been regularly played on classical music radio outlets around the world. His performances of Liszt's Hungarian *Fantasy L.123*, Schumann's *Concerto in A minor, Op. 54*, and Tchaikovsky's *Concerto No. 1 in D-flat Minor, Op. 23* were highlighted in 2011 Atlanta symphonic performances.

Sergio Gallo is the winner of concerto competitions of the Sao Paulo Symphony Orchestra and of the University Symphony in Santa Barbara. He has received a grant from the Henry Cowell Incentive Funds at the American Music Center in New York to record works by Cowell, and this recording has been featured in the program "Piano Matters" with David Dubal. Gallo twice received a Challenge America Fast-Track Grant award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Gallo earned the Diplôme d'Excellence at the Conservatoire Européen de Musique de Paris, a Post-Graduate Certificate at the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, an M.M. and Artist Diploma at the University of Cincinnati; and the Doctorate of Musical Arts from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1998. Gallo took part in the Daniel Barenboim Workshop for Pianists and Conductors at Carnegie Hall in 2000, and participated in the Orchestra Stabile Summer Festival in Bergamo, Italy, the Sergei Rachmaninoff International Courses in Piano Performance in Tambov, Russia and the Seminaire Jean Fassin in Paris. He is Professor of Piano Performance at Georgia State University in Atlanta, and is an affiliated artist of the Rocky Ridge Music Academy in Estes Park, Colorado.

For more information please see  
[www.naxos.com/person/Sergio\\_Gallo/239123.htm](http://www.naxos.com/person/Sergio_Gallo/239123.htm)

Born in the Canary Islands, **Miguel Ángel Ortega Chavaldas** pursued his studies in Spain under the direction of Almudena Cano. During this time, he was awarded the First Class Diploma in Piano and Chamber Music.

He continued his studies at the Sweelinck Conservatorium van Amsterdam and the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest. His teachers included György Kurtág, András Mihály, Katalin Némcs, Márta Gulyás and Ferenc Rados. He recently earned a Master of Musical Research Degree from the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos (King Juan Carlos University) in Madrid.

Ortega Chavaldas made his orchestral debut performing the Brahms *Concerto in D Minor* with the Gran Canaria Philharmonic Orchestra, and he has appeared regularly in Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Luxembourg, Tunisia, Tanzania, Vietnam, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Turkey and the USA. Ortega Chavaldas took part in Beethoven Piano Concertos Project with conductor Adrian Leaper and with the Bilbao Symphony Orchestra and he has collaborated in chamber music concerts with many well-known musicians including Natalia Gutman, David Geringas, Frans Helmerson, János Starker, Philippe Müller and Antonio Meneses, to name just a few.

Ortega Chavaldas has recorded for the Verso label as well as for the radio in Spain, Hungary, Poland, Sweden and Germany. He has also made recordings for TVE (Spanish State Television) and NHK (Japan).

Seriously and actively committed to music teaching, he founded the Béla Bartók Association and the Music Course for Young Musicians Santa María del Paular in Rascafría (Madrid). He also teaches at the Conservatorio Superior de Aragón in Zaragoza, Spain; at the Alfonso X University, and at the Escuela Superior Reina Sofía in Madrid. He gives master classes regularly in Europe, America and Asia.

For more information see [www.asociacionbelabartok.com](http://www.asociacionbelabartok.com)



Miguel Ortega Chavaldas



Zeynep Ucbasaran



Sergio Gallo

Recorded at Hahn Hall, Music Academy of the West, Santa Barbara, California in 2010

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Music copyrights:

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Zampronha: Copyright Control

Saygun: Peermusic Classical

Zárate: Copyright Control

Ince: Schott Music

Dallapiccola: Carisch, Milan

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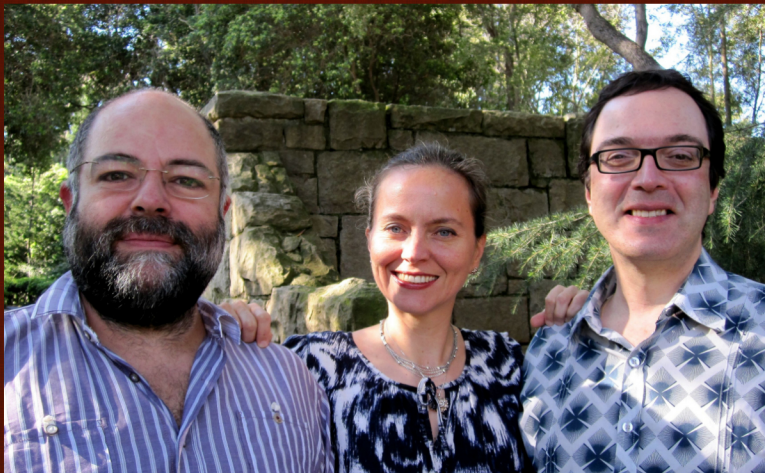
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This recording is dedicated to our colleague,  
composer Server Acim (1961-2019)



Miguel Ortega Chavalas

Zeynep Ucbasaran

Sergio Gallo