



Born into a musical family in Istanbul, Didem Başar is a kanun (Turkish zither) player, composer and teacher. She started her music education at Istanbul Turkish Music State Conservatory when she was 11 years old. After completing the Conservatory's kanun program, she continued her training at the same institution and received her Bachelor's Degree in composition. Her interest in examining the effects of art on society led her to pursue a Master's Degree on the musical analysis of Mevlevi Music at Marmara University. She gave lectures on Turkish music and kanun playing techniques at Haliç University's Turkish Music Conservatory and Istanbul University State Conservatory from 2001 until she moved to Canada in 2007. Relocating to Montreal has given Didem the opportunity to reinterpret her music in a new environment whose vividness is the result of the turbulent convergence of manifold cultures flowing from different parts of the world.

She has collaborated with many ensembles in Montréal including Constantinople, Oktoécho, Caprice Ensemble, Sound of Montréal, Zaman Ensemble, Minor Empire, Niyaz in Canada, U.S.A and Europe as well as Morocco, Lebanon, Egypt. She founded DuoTurco with her colleague Ismail Hakki Fencioglu, composed for an album recording called Yavuz in 2012. She also played in numerous albums and soundtracks such as Totem/Cirque du Soleil in 2010, Second Nature/Minor Empire in 2011, The Forth Light/Niyaz in 2014, Saimaniq Chants de gorge Inuit / Oktoécho in 2018, Waterlines/Christopher Trapani in 2018. Also, she composed for the albums Passages / Constantinople Ensemble, Horizons Lointains / Constantinople Ensemble et Belem and for the project Under the Syrian musical sky with Constantinople Ensemble and Kinan Azmeh, Et je reverrai cette ville étranger / Sound of Montréal, The 13-petaled rose / Constantinople Ensemble. She is invited as a soloist kanun interpreter to play Kiya Tabassian's piece Vers où l'oiseau migrera? with **Montréal Symphony Orchestra** conducted by Kent Nagano, also composed a Double Concerto with Katia Makdissi-Warren, for kanun, kemençe (turkish violin) and string ensemble and performed with **I Musici de Montréal** conducted by Jean-Marie Zeitouni and **Les Violons du Roy**. Since 2017, she teaches kanun and Turkish music at the Centre des Musiciens du Monde de Montreal.

After composing and playing with different artists and the ensembles, she wanted to create her own project, which would intertwine two musical influences: Turkish and Western classical music. As the result of this decision, her new album *Levantine Rhapsody* was released in February 2020. The dialog she created between the kanun and the western classical instruments immediately attracted the attention of the Quebec music community and the album was nominated for the album of the year prize not only by the **Association Québécoise de l'industrie du disque, du spectacle et de la vidéo (ADISQ)** but also by **the Conseil Québécois de la Music**. In 2021 the interest aroused by the Album brought the award of the Album de l'année at the 24e Prix Opus Competition in the category of the Musiques du Monde et Musique Traditionnelle Québécoise.