



Can
ATILLA
(b.1969)

Symphony No. 2

'Gallipoli – The 57th Regiment'

Şenler • Ahıskal • Bilkent Symphony Orchestra • Tüzün



Can ATILLA (b. 1969)

Symphony No. 2 in C minor, 'Gallipoli – The 57th Regiment'

The Gallipoli campaigns have always held a particular significance for the Turkish composer Can Atilla. In 2012 he composed the original score of what was to become the most successful Turkish film about the Battle of Gallipoli: *Gallipoli 1915*. This project generated many ideas for a second work, and thus the ideas for the *Second Symphony* began to germinate.

Atilla's *Second Symphony in C minor* is a war symphony depicting the innocence and desperation of humanity in the face of war. The symphony, prepared on the occasion of the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Gallipoli, is both a national symphony of the Republic of Turkey and also the first classical symphony written about the Battle of Gallipoli. It was composed in memory of the 57th Regiment, who showed great heroism in the war and *all* of whom lost their lives in the battle. Furthermore, the third and fourth parts of the symphony are dedicated to Anzac soldiers. The première of the work was performed during the Peace Summit in Istanbul on April 23, 2015, presented to representatives of 30 countries, including Charles, Prince of Wales.

The *Second Symphony* is particularly influenced by the Late Romantic Period. The first two movements of the symphony are in the form of a *sinfonia concertante* for solo cello and orchestra. The fourth movement of the work is an elegy – melodic, melancholic, full of sorrow and anguish. It is a portrait of a world threatened by the dark shadow of war.

Allegro moderato maestoso begins with an orchestral *tutti* 'Fate' motif, a musical expression of the tragedy and horror of all battles. This is followed by a motif in the heroic key of E flat major, symbolising bravery and victory. The two motifs intertwine and the introductory section is completed with traditional Baroque harmonic progressions. The solo cello then performs the main elegiac theme – *senza orchestra* – which is then incorporated into an orchestral *tutti* with a grand crescendo. The solo cello enters again, this time with the Fate and Bravery themes reworked as classical variations with full orchestra. The orchestral transitions were written mostly with Baroque harmonic cadences, and are stylistically influenced by the traditional orchestral marches of the nineteenth century. The solo cello interjections in this section depict Lieutenant Colonel Hüseyin Avni Bey, Commander of the 57th Regiment; his feelings, concerns and longing for his family. In the coda, the main theme is then heard in its darkest incarnation, *maestoso*, ending with the death march to represent the complete decimation of the 57th Regiment: every life was lost by the end of the battle.

Adagio appassionata tells the story of the soldiers' yearnings and their love letters. The solo cello expresses the feelings of soldiers who are torn between their beliefs and duties, whereas the orchestra expresses the brutal actuality of battle. These dramatic and tragic effects remain throughout the movement.

Marcia funebre – Andante angoscioso is a lament written for soprano and orchestra. The soprano, accompanied by the orchestra, sings emotive verse written by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, who was involved in the Gallipoli campaigns. His words are a compassionate declaration

of respect for the mothers of the Anzac soldiers who had lost their lives fighting against the Ottoman Empire in Gallipoli. Today, these meaningful and profound lyrics are written on the monuments at the Gallipoli Martyrs' Memorial:

1. Kinderwelt

Das Kind in sel'gem Unschuldstraum
Ahnt der Versuchung Nähe kaum.
Reisst ihre Lockung es auch hin,—
Sie trübt noch nicht den reinen Sinn.

2. Zeit der Leidenschaften

Doch in des Herzens heilgste Gefühle
Mischt bald sich wilder Leidenschaften Streit.
Es wird der Mensch entrückt dem hohen Ziele,
Er folgt der Welt,—denkt nicht der Ewigkeit!

3. Endlicher Sieg des Göttlichen

Wird aber in des ird'schen Treibens Ketten
Der freie Geist nun ganz gefangen sein?—
O nein! Sein Genius* wacht—mahnt—will ihn retten.
Er siegt—und sel'ge Ruh' zieht bei ihm ein!

The World of Childhood

The child in innocence dreams on, nor feels
How near him still Temptation steals;
Drawn unsuspecting to its sweet control,
There is not yet gloom in his pure soul.

The Age of Passion

But in the heart's most holy springs of feeling
Soon all the passions mingle their wild strife;
Then swerves man from his high goal and, reeling,
Pursues the world—forgets the "Eternal Life".

Final Triumph of the Heavenly

But will this slavery of earth forever
Hold the free spirit in ignoble chains?
O no! His Genius* watches—warns— and will deliver;
He wins! and heavenly rest rewards his pains!

(* "Genius"; not the modern usage of intellectual brilliance, but the singular of *genii*, meaning an attendant good spirit associated with a person or place).

“Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives... You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours... You, the mothers who sent their sons from faraway countries, wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. Having lost their lives on this land, they have become our sons as well.”

Finale – Andante con moto – Vivace furioso – Adagio begins with a Romantic chorale written for the Anzac soldiers. Following this chromatic and evocative atmosphere, the orchestra is silenced by the combined efforts of the solo cello and soprano. The cello and soprano duet heard in this section portrays the brotherhood between Turkish and Anzac soldiers in their shared fate. The soprano accompanied by the orchestra performs the poem by Anzac poet John Le Gay Brereton (1871–1933) in music reminiscent of an Anzac folksong.

Within my heart I hear the cry
And you may have no praise from me
For warfare's vast vulgarity;
Only the flag of love, unfurled
For peace above a weeping world,
I follow, though the fiery breath
Of murder shrivel me in death.
Yet here I stand and bow my head

To those other banners led,
Because within their hearts the clang
Of Freedom's summoning trumpets rang,
Because they welcomed grisly pain
Happy because, in gloomiest night,
Their own hearts drummed them to the fight.

The main theme in C major is repeated with the participation of the orchestra and cello; then rises in a crescendo, with the strings following the soprano. After a general pause, the folkloric Anzac melody in A minor is combined with the main theme in C major before lapsing, with a long decrescendo, into a deep and tranquil silence. The furioso theme of the *Vivace* section is in C minor and further illustrates the calamities of battle. This segment is also evocative of Beethoven's symphonies. The work is finalised with the reappearance of the lyric, C major theme of the soprano – underscoring the belief that peace and freedom are the most basic of human rights.

Can Atilla and Angela Ahiskal

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Turkey, the Chief of General Staff
and the executives of Pet Holding

Can Atilla, Composer



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Can Atilla was born in Ankara on 26th February 1969. His father was a diplomat, and as a result Atilla spent some of his music education in Moscow, specialising in piano and violin. He was accepted into the Ankara State Conservatory in 1980. While completing his degree in violin at Ankara State Conservatory, he began to compose professionally, and has since composed numerous pieces for concert, film, theatre and ballet. From 1988 to 1990 he was a member of the Presidential Symphony Orchestra in Turkey.

The world première of Atilla's *St. Florian Symphony* was performed by the Presidential Symphony Orchestra in 2002. He conducted his *Symphonic Suite* with the Ankara State Opera and Ballet in 2005, and 2008 saw the world premières of his *Mevlana Oratorio* and *Ballet of the Call*. Shortly afterwards in 2009, a governmental commission materialised for *Diriliş* (Resurrection). *Diriliş* was premièred by an orchestra of 300, acting as the accompaniment for the violin soloist, State Artist Suna Kan. Also in 2009, the PSO premièred his début symphony: *100th Year Turkish Air Force Symphony*. In 2014 and 2015, Atilla's ballets *Kerbela* and *Piri Reis* were performed by

the Turkish State Opera and Ballet in several cities. He has been honoured many times with artistic awards from his native Turkey. A prolific composer of electronic music, Atilla's discography includes 21 albums released internationally since 1992. His original score for the film *Gallipoli 1915* was released by Sony-BMG in the USA.

Burak Tüzün, Conductor

While attending Hacettepe University State Conservatory, Burak Tüzün studied violin with Server Ganiev, music theory with Sami Hatipoğlu and orchestral conducting with Alfred Mişurin before graduating in 1992. Between 1996 and 2002 he was awarded a state scholarship to study at the Opera and Symphony Conducting department of the Moscow Tchaikovsky State Conservatory where he graduated with his masters degree. During that time he also worked with composer Yuri Butsko. In addition, with the support of the Eczacıbaşı Foundation for Culture and Arts in 2002, he was able to remain in Moscow and complete his postgraduate degree in Musicology. Between 2004 and 2011 he was the conductor and General Music Director of Anadolu University Symphony Orchestra. He has been the conductor for several recordings of concert performances with Hacettepe, Mersin, and Anadolu University Symphony Orchestras. These recordings include works by the composers Ahmad Adnan Saygun, Ulvi Cemal Erkin and **İlhan Usmanbaş**, among others. Tüzün has been working at the Composition and Orchestral Conducting Department of Hacettepe University and at the Ankara State Conservatory as Associate Professor since 2012.



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Onur Şenler, Cello



© Burcu Bilgin

Onur Şenler began his musical studies with piano lessons at the age of nine, and later studied the cello with Çağlayan Ünal and Doğan Cangal. He has enjoyed masterclasses with well-known artists including Peter Bruns, Maria Kliegel, Alexander Rudin, and Young-Chang Cho. He has performed Dvořák's *Cello Concerto in B minor* with the Presidential Symphony Orchestra, the Eskişehir Municipality Symphony Orchestra and the Bursa State Symphony Orchestra, and has appeared as the soloist in Haydn's *Cello Concerto No. 2 in D major* with the Metropolitan Academic Orchestra. He has performed several acclaimed concerts with the Ankara Chamber Orchestra Ensemble and the Ankyra String Quartet in many cities in Turkey. As well as his career in chamber music with the PSO Cello Quartet, he has a flourishing solo career. Şenler is also a member of the Presidential Symphony Orchestra in Ankara.

Angela Ahıskal, Soprano

American coloratura soprano Angela Ahıskal has sung with ensembles including Connecticut Lyric Opera, Simsbury Light Opera Co. and Connecticut Concert Opera. Her choral experience includes performances with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and The Manhattan Philharmonic in Carnegie Hall. In 2003 she partnered Peruvian conductor-pianist Pablo Sabat in a series of recitals of French, German, Italian and American art song repertoire. In recent years, Ahıskal has given recitals such as 'Spring Fever' (Antalya), 'Whimsy' (Ankara, İstanbul, İzmir, Eskişehir), 'Moon Stars and Stripes' (Ankara, Konya, Braga-Portugal) and 'Renaissance Reflections' (İstanbul). She has appeared as soloist with the Ahıskal Baroque Ensemble, the Bilkent Symphony Orchestra, the İzmir State Symphony Orchestra, the Eskişehir City Symphony Orchestra, the Mersin Academic Chamber Orchestra and The İstanbul European Choir (İstanbul, Thessaloniki). As a member of the Opera Department of the Ankara University State Conservatoire from 2011-2016, she has given masterclasses at various universities in İzmir, Konya, Mersin, and Braga (Portugal). Ahıskal completed her vocal studies in the performance programmes at the New York State University at Buffalo and the Center for Advanced Studies in Music at İstanbul Technical University.



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Bilkent Symphony Orchestra



The Bilkent Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1993 as an original artistic project of Bilkent University in Turkey. Developed by the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts, the orchestra comprises over ninety artists and academicians of the faculty from over a dozen countries. The Bilkent Symphony Orchestra is the first private, international and academic artistic ensemble in Turkey. With both Turkish and foreign guest conductors, soloists and choirs, the orchestra has distinguished itself through its season of over eighty concerts a year and has recorded over fifty albums on the Bilkent Music Production, Naxos, CPO, Alpha and EMI record labels. Through events such as the Bilkent Concert Series, Turkish Composers' Week, Education Concerts and The Bilkent International Anatolia Music Festival, the orchestra aims to bring a wide range of activities to large audiences; to spread the appreciation of music at national level; to undertake international activities; and to develop links with institutions abroad.

Can Atilla is one of the leading Turkish composers of his generation. Success in film and television music has been accompanied by comparable achievement in the orchestral repertory. The Gallipoli campaigns in the First World War have always held particular significance for Atilla, and *Symphony No. 2 'Gallipoli' – The 57th Regiment* is a war symphony, composed for the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the battle. This powerful elegy, in which the first two movements have an important role for solo cello, commemorates the tragic Turkish 57th Regiment and is also dedicated to the Anzac soldiers who perished in the battle.

Can ATILLA

(b. 1969)

Symphony No. 2 in C Minor

'Gallipoli – The 57th Regiment' (2014)

54:46

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|----------|--|-------|
| 1 | I Allegro moderato maestoso | 17:01 |
| 2 | II Adagio appassionata | 14:14 |
| 3 | III Marcia funebre – Andante angoscioso | 6:46 |
| 4 | IV Finale – Andante con moto – Vivace furioso – Adagio | 16:41 |

WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING

Bilkent Symphony Orchestra

Onur Şenler, Cello **1 **2** **4** • Angela Ahiskal, Soprano **3** **4****
Burak Tüzün

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Playing Time

54:56



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