Composer – Artist

Valentin de Sol

Selected composition

Suite Femminile in Mi Minore

per Chitarra Classica — Per Hilal

Solo classical guitar · 24 November 2026 · 5:58

A suite in E minor, dedicated to Hilal.

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Composer profile

Valentin de Sol is an Istanbul-based composer of European classical concert music. The piano is his principal composing instrument, followed by the classical guitar. He uses electric guitar to extend the instrument’s expressive range.



Contact Valentin de Sol

Valentin de Sol

Musical training and performance history

Years of instrumental lessons, the study of composition and friendships with the musicians he played with in Ankara shaped Valentin de Sol’s musical education.

Childhood · First instruments

Valentin de Sol’s first instrument was the mandolin. He began playing at the TED Koleji kindergarten and continued at Çıra Kindergarten just before starting primary school. He took a break from music during his years at Yücetepe Primary School.

In his first year of middle school, he began playing a Russian guitar that had belonged to a Russian guitarist. It came to him through a friend of his mother’s, an agricultural engineer at Turkey’s State Hydraulic Works (DSİ). During these years, Hürriyet Apaydın taught him piano and Baroque flute.

High school · Guitar

In high school he began taking electric guitar lessons with Şener Göksu, a physics teacher. Their lessons continued for six years. He studied classical guitar with Ruşen Utku Özkanoğlu, who taught at Bilkent and was the proprietor of Kadans Müzik in Adana.

Kabataş Erkek Lisesi · Solfège

During his high school years, Valentin spent one school year between 1986 and 1990 studying solfège with the music teacher at Kabataş Erkek Lisesi in Istanbul. He then returned to Anıttepe Lisesi in Ankara.

Hasan Özak and Faris Akarsu are two names Valentin remembers from those years. In 1987, when the school won the Milliyet competition for high schools with its production of Fiddler on the Roof, Özak was credited as music teacher and Akarsu as musical director.

High school · The military band and the conservatory

In high school, Valentin was in contact with a military band on several occasions and earned a place in it. He decided against joining because he could not see himself spending his life in the military.

On several occasions he planned to sit the conservatory entrance exams. Each time he had to put those plans on hold because he could not spare the time or afford the expense. He learned his craft in one-to-one lessons with his teachers, in rehearsals with fellow musicians and on stage.

Ankara · Musical friendships

Valentin and drummer Volkan Öktem went to school together for part of their high school years. In Ankara, they moved in the same circle of musicians. At the time, Öktem played drums for Alpay at Karpiç Bar. In recalling those years, Valentin also remembers his close friend, drummer Gökhan Yarat, who died at the age of 46.

Valentin credits his friendship with composer Çağdaş Üstüntaş with deepening his understanding of advanced composition. Üstüntaş had close ties to Ricardo Moyano and Carlo Domeniconi. Another musician in this circle was Murat Seğmen, with whom Valentin performed as a duo. He speaks of genius in both Üstüntaş’s composing and Seğmen’s musicianship.

His classical guitar teacher, Ruşen Utku Özkanoğlu, counted Ahmet Kanneci and Jorge Cardoso among his close musician friends.

Valentin de Sol

Guitar studies and ensemble work

Beşiktaş · Guitar lessons

In the early 1990s, Valentin took guitar lessons with Şemsi Yastıman in Beşiktaş, Istanbul. It was a short course. He recalls that it did not offer the classical guitar training he was looking for. At the time, he felt that Ankara had a stronger classical guitar community, so he returned there to continue his studies.

In the Istanbul music scene Valentin remembers, much of the work was in the studio. Session musicians were hired to play on recordings for different artists. Record companies and recording engineers in Unkapanı were still influential. Studios were recording on magnetic tape, and CDs were just beginning to circulate in his musical circle.

After high school · First band

Valentin joined his first band, the Yenimahalle Rock’n’Roll Orchestra, immediately after graduating from high school. The orchestra was part of Ankara’s Yenimahalle Municipality. Taner Somgören was its lead singer. The orchestra modelled all its Elvis Presley covers on the sound of his 1973 album Raised on Rock / For Ol’ Times Sake.

Ankara · Ensembles and performances

Years later, while teaching guitar at the Nâzım Hikmet Cultural Centre in Ankara, Valentin formed Evvel Bahar, Kızıl Oktav and Mavi Oktav with his musician friends. He played cello in Evvel Bahar. For nearly two years at Fikrim Bar in Soysal Pasajı, he directed the ensemble and arranged traditional melodies for its players.

In Ankara, Murat Seğmen, Valentin de Sol and Suha Bey founded Ars Longa Musiki Avadanlığı as three partners. The academy brought instrument making and music education together. Valentin recalls that Suha Bey was also a co-owner of Dore Müzik. The three partners later went their separate ways.

Beyoğlu · Composition and harmony with Ali Perret

Valentin studied with Ali Perret for two semesters at Panonika in Beyoğlu. He studied composition in the first semester and took courses in jazz harmony and advanced jazz harmony in the second. In his biography, Perret names İlhan Usmanbaş as his composition teacher at the Istanbul State Conservatory. In 1983 he graduated with honours in jazz composition and arranging from Berklee College of Music in Boston.

Istanbul · Okay Temiz’s rhythm workshop

Valentin studied rhythm with Okay Temiz and served as his assistant at the workshop. For years the two played there as a duo, listening and responding to one another in spontaneous free jazz improvisations. One recording from this period pairs Valentin on electric cello with Temiz on daophone.

Valentin remembers melody as the point at which their paths diverged. In his account, their workshop practice set melody aside, while he wanted it at the heart of his compositions. That difference led him to end the collaboration.

Ali Perret’s biography KentSanat Academy

Istanbul stages and composition

Istanbul · Performing with Alenois

For two years Valentin performed regularly in Istanbul with Alenois. He played at Bova Jazz Club on Mis Sokak, at Hancı and at Kaset Mitanni on Barbaros Bulvarı. These venues gave him the chance to meet and play with musicians from many countries.

Among the musicians he worked with on fusion experiments in Istanbul were percussionist Volkan Çağdaş, saxophonists Volkan Terzioğlu and Duru Tuna, cellist Duygu Demir and violinist Özlem.

REM Art Space · Reading paintings

At REM Art Space in Firuzağa, Valentin composed ambient pieces as musical interpretations of paintings. He called these works “resim okumaları” (“reading paintings”).

Çağrı Erdem and Şevket Akıncı

Valentin worked with musician Çağrı Erdem. Recalling his friendship with guitarist Şevket Akıncı, he remembers spending time together at a festival in Çeşme.

İzmir and Oslo · Collective improvisation

He explored improvisation with Çatı 1972 in İzmir and performed across Europe with the international collective Multiversal. At the MultiNO !V festival in Oslo in January 2018, he played cello on three successive evenings, each time with a different group of musicians.

2026 · Composing as Valentin de Sol

By late 2026, publishing his own compositions had become his focus. In this mature period he stepped forward under the name Valentin de Sol as a composer of European classical concert music. He develops most of his compositions at the piano. His E minor suite for solo classical guitar, dedicated to Hilal and released on 24 November 2026, brings the instrument he played throughout his Ankara years into his work as a solo guitar composer.