Esteemed composer and alumnus Mahir Cetiz returns to School of Music as Assistant Professor of Theory and Composition

The Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music is excited to welcome composer and UofM alumnus Dr. Mahir Cetiz to his new position as Assistant Professor of Theory and Composition. Cetiz will be teaching theory, composition and film music on both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

“It is my distinct privilege to welcome Dr. Mahir Cetiz to the faculty of the Rudi Scheidt School of Music,” said Dr. Kevin Sanders, director of the School. “He is a truly brilliant composer, an articulate and experienced pedagogue and a proud alumnus of the Scheidt School. He joins our faculty after many years teaching at NYU and Columbia. We look forward to the perspective he will bring to our students and our theory and composition program.”

Cetiz is a 2001 graduate of the School of Music with a master’s in composition. He stated that the School played a crucial role in his education and that his time spent at the University of Memphis provided many firsts for him, especially as an immigrant from Turkey.

“The Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music is one of the best educational institutions in music in the area,” Cetiz said. “It has many very successful alumni as well as such a great faculty, well-respected musicians and scholars in their field. Moreover, I also feel that the School of Music is
one of the important centers of musical culture in Memphis, with the concerts and shows that
the faculty and students provide to the community.

Cetiz is highly esteemed and the recipient of many honors, including the Guggenheim
Fellowship. As a conductor, pianist and cellist, Cetiz is continuously active in his musical career.
His compositions consist of pieces for ensembles as well as solo instrumental pieces.

“Mahir is an amazing composer. His music has great meaning,” said Kamran Ince, chair of the
search committee for the position. “It is dramatic, epic, spiritual and very deep. He is currently
on a Guggenheim Fellowship, one of the most prestigious fellowships for composers and
individuals in all arts.”

A dedicated teacher and artist, Cetiz said he is hoping to enhance the international perspective
of the School, having lived in three different continents and worked with many talented people in
the music industry from around the globe. “In a more concrete level,” Cetiz said, “I hope to add
to the culture of contemporary music-making at the School of Music - which is already in such a
high level - by providing classes and resources in electronic music, and by developing my
research projects in music cognition and analysis, as well as creating opportunities to bring
various types of music of our time to the campus.”