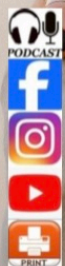


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COVER

**Anna Saprykina**

foto by: Taya Raevskaya



## *Music*



**SELIN SÜMBÜLTEPE WORKS & VISIONS** image: Selin Sümbültepe foto: TAHA BALAT © Courtesy of Selin Sümbültepe  
imagofeminae autumn 2024 XLI.

# SELIN SÜMBÜLTEPE

**WORKS & VISIONS** a vocal artist

by Selin Sümbültepe & Paiman Maria Davarifard

"The strength of being a woman lies in embracing heritage and reimagining it to connect the past with the future. Women blend pain, love, and resilience, becoming not only life-givers but also meaning-makers. The power of womanhood is in transforming wounds into art, offering healing to one's soul and to others."

Selin Sümbültepe

## Biography

Selin Sümbültepe was born in 1986 in Hatay in Southeastern Turkey. To date, she has released two studio albums and various singles, always working independently. Selin's first album "Cızgan" was released in 2017, her second album "Ben Estim Sen Esme" in 2021. In 2024, Selin Sümbültepe released her EP "Hemhal" (to unite, in English), produced by Lebanese indie and global music pioneer Zeid Hamdan. "Hemhal" celebrates the culture of Hatay that was hit by a devastating earthquake in 2023. Selin's new songs are healing music; by touching her roots, Selin felt, she would get closer to everything that she had lost in this natural disaster.

Selin Sümbültepe loves and is influenced by artists like Fairuz and Yasmin Hamdan, the two divas from Lebanon; Naissam Jalal, the inspiring flutist; as well as Turkish icons Barış Manço and Aysel Gürel, the amazing lyricist. In her music she combines Middle Eastern tunes with Western music, adding melodies based on her own cultural background. Selin has performed her Fusion Folk Pop at festivals all over Turkey, such as the Istanbul Caz Festival, Bursa Nilüfer Müsik Festivali and Bozcaada Caz Festivali, and has regularly been featured in the Turkish media, as well as in the Istanbul edition of The Arts

Hour on BBC Sounds. She is now looking for exposure outside of Turkey, aiming to be present on European stages in the years to come.

Selin Sümbültepe's new release "Hemhal" is not just an EP; it's a powerful declaration of her identity, a celebration of her heritage, and a bold step into a broader musical



**SELIN SÜMBÜLTEPE WORKS & VISIONS** image: Selin Sümbültepe foto: TAHA BALAT © Courtesy of Selin Sümbültepe  
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landscape. With "Hemhal" begins a new stage of Selin Sümbültepe's artistic path and her future releases will certainly continue to be intriguing. Stay tuned!





**SELIN SÜMBÜLTEPE WORKS & VISIONS** image: Selin Sümbültepe foto:TAHA BALAT © Courtesy of Selin Sümbültepe  
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## Social Life

Lately, the chaos of Istanbul has felt overwhelming, but one thing that continues to ground me is a peaceful walk by the beach. There's something about the rhythm of the waves and the open horizon that helps me recharge. I find myself attending crowded events only a few times a month—perhaps it's a phase of introversion, or maybe I'm just embracing a slower pace as I grow older.

Whenever I can, I dedicate my time to giving music and songwriting workshops in disadvantaged areas, particularly in Hatay. These sessions are incredibly fulfilling, offering a way to connect with communities and share the joy of creativity. I'm also working on bringing these workshops to Istanbul, hoping to expand their reach and impact.

## Performance Memory

I think it was about five years ago during an open-air concert. We were performing my song *Cızgan*, and the audience was swaying to the rhythm. Suddenly, an audience member jumped onto the stage and started belly dancing next to me. It was unexpected but added a spontaneous, lively touch to the performance.

## Special Comments About My Music

While my 2024 EP *Hemhal* holds a special place in my heart, there is one song that resonates with me on a much deeper level. *Akantüs / Hatay'a Ağıt* remains one of the most emotionally charged pieces I've ever written, and I still find it challenging to perform on stage.



**image:** still from the music video "**MERYEM MERYEMTI**" by Selin Sümbültepe Copyright: Production & Arrange : Zeid Hamdan. MUSIC. *imagofeminae* autumn 2024 XLI.

This song is a heartfelt lament, born from the profound loss and collective grief following the earthquake in 2023. It embodies not only the personal pain I felt but also the shared wound that so many of us carry from that devastating event. Each

essence. The story of Meryem is one deeply familiar in the Middle East.

The music video for Meryem was created by me and my director friend. I designed the costumes and invited women I'd never met



**image:** still from the music video "**MERYEM MERYEMTI**" by Selin Sümbültepe Copyright: Production & Arrange : Zeid Hamdan. MUSIC. *imagofeminae* autumn 2024 XLI.

time I sing it, it feels like reopening a scar, yet it also serves as a tribute to resilience and remembrance

**Selin Sümbültepe:** Meryem Meryemti is a song that originated in Hatay but resonates throughout the Levant. In my hometown of Hatay, Turkey, everyone, young and old, knows it. I later discovered that this song, which I'd known since childhood as a wedding staple, is actually a lament. In my interpretation, I wanted to stay true to its

before to join us at a yoga camp I was attending. What emerged, improvised and spontaneous over just two days, was something truly beautiful. These women already knew Meryem's song and were eager to be part of it. It felt as though our souls connected, and together, we breathed life into the story.

Briefly, the tale is about Cemil and Meryem, lovers on the verge of marriage. During their wedding, an Ottoman soldier abducts Meryem. Cemil, heartbroken, sings this



**Video:** Selin Sümbültepe Director & Color & Edit : Taha BaltaLyric & Music : Anonymous Song Interpretation & Flute Solo: Selin Sümbültepe Production & Arrange: Zeid Hamdan Mix & Mastering: Zeid Hamdan Concept Design & Creatif Director & Make Up & Styling: @selinsumbultepe Dresses: Atelier tenera @ateliertenera Casts: İmren Sayar, Özge Akış, Doğa Atasever, Işıl Tabybzadeh Label: MDLBEAST Records @MDLBEAST@mdlbeastrecords. *imagofeminae* autumn 2024 XLI

lament for the woman he loves, only to be tragically killed.

While preparing to release this EP, I lost my family in the 2023 earthquake. My family was filled with strong women, and their presence gave me the strength to endure. One of the songs in the EP, Ma Ureedu, is something I first heard from my great-grandmother. I believed it was a lullaby she had created because she was always inventing songs. Later, I learned it closely resembled an old song from Iraq. My mother, who played the oud and sang folk songs in Arabic and Turkish, deeply influenced me. Now, I realize that my roots trace back to the music and love in my mother's womb.

The strength of being a woman lies in embracing heritage and reimagining it to connect the past with the future. Women blend pain, love, and resilience, becoming not only life-givers but also meaning-makers. The power of womanhood is in transforming wounds into art, offering healing to one's soul and to others.

**Story about the photo of "Woman in red dress on the Hatay shore"**

In August 2024, my beloved sister, Selin Sümbültepe, and I found ourselves in Arsuz, Hatay, our hometown. Invited by a local association, we had the joy of meeting children in a container that had been transformed into a creative workshop. I spoke to them about photography, while Selin introduced them to the playful world of songwriting. The warmth of the container was filled with the children's eager curiosity.

The next morning, long before the sun made its presence felt, Selin came to me. The heat was unbearable, and a slight humidity hung in the air. She lay down beside me on the bed, and we began to chat, gazing up at the ceiling. We laughed and giggled, sharing stories of the absurd, difficult, and sometimes hilarious experiences we'd been through. It felt so authentic, so us. Then, with a sense of adventure, I blurted out, "Come on, Selin, let's go to the sea. If you have a red dress, put it on now!"

Fifteen minutes later, Selin was walking toward the Mediterranean waves in her red dress, while I readied my camera. "Immerse yourself in the sea," I told her. "And if you feel like it, sing a song." At that moment, Selin sang "[Derbest](#)," dedicating it to the water—and to me. In that instant, there was

only her voice, the rhythm of the waves, and the endless blue horizon.

Months later, I received a message on my phone. One of my followers had painted that

"Hemhal" (to unite, in English), celebrating the rich culture of Hatay, her home region in Southeastern Turkey. She has performed her Fusion Folk Pop at festivals all over Turkey, and has regularly been featured in the



**SELIN SÜMBÜLTEPE WORKS & VISIONS** image: Selin Sümbültepe as "woman in red costume in "Hatay" shore in Turkey. foto: Dilan Bozyel © Courtesy of Selin Sümbültepe *imagofeminae* autumn 2024 XLI.

very photo on canvas, using oil paint, and shared the beautiful result with me. In that moment, I was reminded of how deeply inspiring the simple, natural moments we experience can be. Life takes on profound meaning in the moments we share, stand by each other, and offer support.

This story is a testament to the power of women's solidarity, sisterhood, and sharing. Every time we touch one another, every time we extend our hands, we open doors to creativity and healing. For we are like different colors waving together in the same vast blue. (story narrated by **Dilan Bozyel**)

### **Fusion Folk Pop**

<https://selinsumbultepe.com/>

In her music Selin Sümbültepe combines Middle Eastern tunes with Western music, adding melodies based on her own cultural background. In 2024, Selin released her EP

Turkish media. "Hemhal" it's a powerful declaration of Selin's identity, a celebration of her heritage, and a bold step into a broader musical landscape. [putzi productions](#). With special thanks to Putzi Productions [Kurt Werren](#).

### **PERFORMANCES 2025:**

- **1. February 2025: München „Import/Export“**
- **19. April 2025: Berlin "Mixfest"**
- **22. April 2025: Berlin "tbc"**
- **25. April 2025: Ludwigshafen "DasHaus"**
- **26. April 2025: München "Bellevue di Monaco"**
- **30. April 2025: Wien "Aera"**
- **2. Mai 2025: Amsterdam. "Podium Mozaiek"**
- **April 2025 in der Schweiz**

**SELECTED WORKS**



**IMPRESSUM**

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