

Başar Can Kıvrak | Piano

Biography

Season 2025-2026

Başar Can Kıvrak is praised for his compelling interpretations and profound musical storytelling, blending the legacy of the Soviet Piano School with a distinctive artistic voice rooted in personal resilience.

A leading Turkish pianist of his generation, Kıvrak continues to shape the contemporary piano scene through a vibrant combination of solo, chamber, and orchestral performances. In 2024, he released his latest album, *Director's Cut*, dedicated to Robert Schumann's solo piano works under the Ada Müzik label. The recording centers on Schumann's *Sonata No. 3*, presented in its rarely performed first version that originally included five movements. The album also showcases works such as the *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 111, and *Nachtstücke*, Op. 23 — poetic and introspective pieces that are performed less frequently in recital programs.

Over the past decade, Kıvrak has performed as a soloist with all state orchestras in Turkey and with leading ensembles such as the Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic and the Bilkent Symphony Orchestra. His passion for chamber music has led to collaborations with renowned ensembles including the Borusan Quartet and the Semplice Quartet. He has appeared at leading festivals such as the Ankara, Gümüşlük, Antalya, İzmir, and Nicosia International Music Festivals, as well as the İzmir International Days of New Music.

Known for his ambitious and artistically meaningful programming, Kıvrak was the first pianist in Turkey to present the complete Beethoven piano trios within a single concert season. He also took part in a landmark Rachmaninoff project alongside two other pianists, performing all four piano concertos, the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*, the complete works for two pianos, and a selection of significant solo pieces to mark the composer's 150th anniversary. In addition, he gave the Turkish premiere of Max Bruch's *Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra* with the Presidential Symphony Orchestra, and performed the world premiere of Bogatay Köprülü's Piano Concerto — a work by a young contemporary Turkish composer — at the İzmir Festival.

His talent has been recognized with prestigious awards such as third place in the 2002 International Ferdi Statzer Piano Competition, the 2004 Yamaha Scholarship, and the Grand Prix at the 2005 Sofia Young Virtuosos Piano Competition.

Although Kıvrak first encountered the piano at the age of ten, his path to the instrument was anything but traditional. After an early start under Ozan Bilen, he stepped away from the piano for several years during adolescence, only to return at sixteen with a renewed

sense of purpose. His decision to pursue professional training — despite this unconventional timeline — became a defining element of his artistic identity, fueling a deep sense of self-discovery and independence. Though both of his parents were respected professors at the music academy, they did not teach him directly; his choice to study music was entirely his own.

After resuming studies with Emre Şen, he entered Bilkent University's Faculty of Music and Performing Arts Preparatory School, continuing under Namık Sultanov and later earning his bachelor's degree under Gülnara Aziz. In 2008, he was admitted to the prestigious Moscow Tchaikovsky State Conservatory, where he studied with Eliso Virsaladze — one of the foremost representatives of the Soviet Piano School — and graduated with a Red Diploma in 2012.

Today, alongside his concert career, Başar Can Kıvrak shares his knowledge and artistic vision as a faculty member at Yaşar University's Faculty of Arts and Design, Department of Music — passing on the same spirit of resilience and freedom that shaped his own path.