Atakan Sari was born, 1981, in lzmir, Turkey.His earliest piano training was with his father, Mahmut Sari, an accomplished pianist who studied at L’Ecole de Normale in Paris. At age 15, Atakan had an epiphany when he first heard the recording Berkofsky plays Liszt. He realized that his life goal was to play the piano and immediately transferred his concentration from the viola. When he discovered that a student of Martin Berkofsky, Can Coker, was teaching at Adana’s Cukurova University he quickly enrolled there. After concluding two years of studies with Coker, Sari was awarded first prize at the 1999 Turkish Ministry of Culture’s Young Talent Award ceremony. In 2000, Berkofsky appeared in Turkey for a concert and master class. Upon hearing Sari’s playing, Berkofsky arranged a scholarship to bring the 19-year-old to the US. Sari began his with Solomon Mikowski at the Manhattan School of Music in 2002. A year later Sari recorded with Berkofsky himself.Conducted by Konstantin Krimetz, this was the premiere recording of Alan Hovhanness’ Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra,the score having been entrusted to Berkofsky by the composer. In 2004, Sari performed in Tchaikovsky hall,Moscow. An enthusiastic invitation followed from the Armenian Foreign Service. Sari, became the first Turkish soloist, ever, to perform in Armenia. Sari’s graduate studies were completed at lthaca College. Concurrently he began teaching at Cornell university.A much-in-demand pianist and chamber musician , Sari’s currently brought out a Beethoven CD to help cancer patients and has served on the faculty of NEU.