



BAC FOLK ARTS PRESENTS

بروكلين مقام

BROOKLYN MAQAM

ARAB MUSIC FESTIVAL

مهرجان الموسيقى العربية

Ladies Night at Layaly

Wednesday, March 19, 9pm-Midnight

LAYALY



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at Brooklyn Maqam Venues.



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BAC FOLK ARTS PRESENTS

BROOKLYN MAQAM ARAB MUSIC FESTIVAL

Ahlan wa Sahlan! Welcome to **Brooklyn Maqam Arab Music Festival** featuring local musicians, bands, and dancers presenting Arab musical traditions from Egypt, Yemen, Israel, Tunisia, Palestine, Iraq, Morocco, Syria, Lebanon, and Sudan. *Maqam* is the Arabic word referring to the patterns of musical notes, based on a quarter note system, that form the building blocks of traditional Arab music. Join **BAC Folk Arts** throughout March 2008 for **Brooklyn Maqam** concerts, symposia, and workshops featuring local musicians specializing in Arab folk traditions, classical forms, and contemporary arrangements. Entry to all events is FREE of charge and all events are open to the public.

Wednesday, March 19, 9:00pm- midnight

Layaly

Ladies Night at Layaly

Program

This evening features 3 women vocalists performing distinctive styles and music traditions from the Arab world.

Alsarah

Opening tonight's soiree, Alsarah sings from the repertoire of the long-standing tradition of Sudanese *aghani al-banat* (girl's song). She creatively presents the songs in new arrangements while maintaining core traditional elements and a characteristic organic sound, accompanied by acoustic oud and percussion. Alsarah will also perform new compositions that celebrate women, in the same genre.

Alsarah: vocals

Tiye Giruad, dumbek, shakeray and gord

Haig Manoukian, oud

Rana Beyruti

Beyruti hails from Tripoli, Lebanon, a region known for its cultural heritage of *debkat* music and dance. Tonight, she treats us to a set of Lebanese song known as *jabali*, stemming from the music traditions of the mountainous countryside. Beyruti's soulful voice evokes the rich sound of Lebanese songstress Najwa Karam. She will include songs made famous by Karam and other contemporary women vocalists such as Arab-music pop singer Nancy Ajram and Nawal El Zoghbi. Beyruti's repertoire is wide-ranging and also consists of favorite sung genres from Egypt and the Levant, such as those originally performed by the vocalist beloved by all the Arab-world from the 1950s onward, Warda Al Jaziira.

Rana Beyruti: vocals

Jawad Bohsina: org

Mohamed Abdellah: violin

Said Fahmy: tabla

Ahlem

Ahlem is originally from Tunis, but her repertoire is as varied as the audiences she sings for. To conclude *Ladies Night*, Ahlem will perform a range of pop and classical songs – including genres originating in the Gulf, Egypt, the Levant and Tunisia, that are guaranteed-crowd pleasers in NYC-area Arab-American music venues and parties. Among the women vocalist that have most inspired Ahlem, whose songs are included in tonight's program, is the young and highly acclaimed contemporary Egyptian singer Sherine (Sherine Abdel Wahhab).

Ahlem: vocals

Jowad Bohsina: org

Mohamed Abdellah: violin

Said Fahmy: tabla

Introduction to Aghani Al banat by Alsarah

Singer and ethnomusicologist Alsarah has provided the following introduction to Sudanese women's song tradition.

Women in Northern Sudan are the keepers of the popular *aghani al-banat*, or girl's music, which plays as an interactive soundtrack to the many festive events in Sudan. Among the diverse music genres in Sudan, *aghani al-banat*, with its tongue-in-cheek playful style, has managed to flourish in the midst of a repressive regime and continuously evolves, adding to its unparalleled popularity. Though *aghani al-banat* is native to Central Sudan, it has taken on a uniquely cosmopolitan influence as it has become a mainstay in Khartoum, the largest city and cultural center of Sudan. Traditionally, *aghani al-banat* is performed during the Henna night and the Subhia, (two elements of the wedding festivities) by an *Alghenaia*, an accomplished female singer with a strong voice. She accompanies herself on a *daluka*--a clay-bodied drum covered in goat skin. An *Alghenaia* also teaches brides-to-be formal dances they will perform during festivities prior to their wedding night. Because *aghani al-banat* is composed of a simple beat and vocals, it has been easily passed down orally from one generation to the next even while the tradition's practitioners survive economic and social hardships.

Artists Biographies

Ahlem

Ahlem was born in Tunis, Tunisia and began singing at 13 years old. She studied at the music conservatory of the Tunis and then went on to perform at local parties and weddings, national and international festivals such as the Libya's Eid celebration, and appeared on television. Ahlem performed throughout Europe and the Middle East before immigrating to the United States in 1998. She made her way to the East Coast (singing en route!)- via Los Angeles and then Texas, to settle in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn in 2004. Ahlem is one of the few women vocalists to sing a wide repertoire of Middle-Eastern and North African classics and pop songs regularly at Metro area Arab music venues, such as Layaly (Manhattan) and Shish (NJ), and at festivities throughout the East Coast.

Alsarah

Alsarah is a singer, songwriter and ethnomusicologist. Born in Sudan, she called many places home before settling in Brooklyn. She began studying music at the age of 12, and joined her first 'world music' group at the age of 16. She graduated from Wesleyan University in 2004 with a BA concentrating in ethnomusicology and began working as a singer specializing in north and east African music, while writing and recording original work. Having released an album of *taarab* songs from the eastern coast of Africa earlier this year with the Sounds of Taraab

(www.soundsoftaarab.com), she is currently putting together an album of original work. For Brooklyn Maqam programming, Alsarah draws from her repertoire of Sudanese women's song.

www.alsarah.com

Rana Beyruti

Born in Tripoli, Lebanon, Beyruti has been singing and acting since the age of 12, when she began performing at local *haflat* (parties) and restaurants. Since immigrating to the U.S. in 1996, Beyruti has established herself as a highly sought-after vocalist, specializing in Lebanese *jabali* song. She has performed in concerts all along the east coast, including venues in Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Virginia, and New Jersey. Beyruti sings regularly at private parties, weddings, and other celebrations, as well as clubs throughout the New York City area. She performs weekly at Club Aladdin in Hackensack, NJ. www.ranabeyruti.com

Mohamed Abdullah

Abdullah graduated from the Institute of Classical Music, with a specialization in both Western and Arab violin, in his native city of Aleppo, Syria. Known as a listening community with scrupulous aesthetic standards for Arab music, Aleppo (*Halab*) produces a repertoire of *Halabi* and *Tarab* songs and singers such as Sabah Fakhry. While in Syria, Abdullah performed with such ensembles, and while on tour with Halabi vocalist Shadi Jamil in 1990, he came to the USA to stay. Abdullah continues to play violin in the Syrian repertoire, particularly at Syrian Jewish music events in the Ocean Parkway corridor of Brooklyn. He is one of the few very talented local violinists to perform pan-Arab styles and songs at Arab nightclubs, concerts and parties in the Tri-State area.

Jawad Bohsina

From Casablanca, Morocco, Bohsina bought his first keyboard at age 12, and – as he recounts- it grew with him. Today he is one of NYC vocalists' most requested and respected keyboardists. By 16, Bohsina was playing at social events throughout Casablanca. His passion was Rai music, both from Algeria (such as Cheb Khaled) and from Northeastern Morocco, like the Oujda-based group Bouchmak, but he expanded his repertoire to encompass his audience's tastes, playing Moroccan sha'abi, rai, khaleegi (Arabian Gulf music), Egyptian and Levantine classics and hits. Bohsina first came to the US in 1998 on tour with the Moroccan Jewish singer Binhas. Since then, he has played regularly at clubs such as Cedars of Lebanon, until its closing in 2001, and at social events throughout the metro area. Despite his North African origins, Bohsina often plays Arab Levantine and Egyptian classic folk and pop music for New York based Levantine singers, as performance opportunities for Moroccan music are rare. You can hear Bohsina regularly at Layaly Lounge in Manhattan.

Said Fahmy

Born in Alexandria, Egypt, Said has been playing percussion for more than thirty-five years. As a young boy, he was fascinated by Arab classical music traditions such as *muwashahat* and the vocal genre of *dawr*. Fahmy began playing *riqq* as a teenager, primarily self taught, he soon was playing with renowned musicians and orchestras in Alexandria and Cairo. He has played with dancer Aida Nour and with such singers as Mohamed El Helwa, Ali Haggar, and Iman Darwish, the grandson of the great composer Said Darwish. He has toured with Kazem El Saher, and plays in clubs and on stages from Cairo to New York City. In addition to *riqq*, Fahmy is an expert at tabla, tabl beladi, dof and sagat. Fahmy settled in New York in 1996, and soon was playing in Arab music venues such as Ibis Club, and later Cedars of Lebanon. You can find him playing at New York hot spots for Arab music such as Layaly (www.layalynyc.com) and the Nile restaurant and nightclub in North Bergen, NJ.

ABOUT BROOKLYN ARTS COUNCIL (BAC)

Brooklyn Arts Council (BAC), an arts and services organization founded in 1966, is the umbrella for Brooklyn's range of cultural groups and individual artists working in the visual, performing, media, and literary arts. BAC helps Brooklyn's artist population—from the experimental to those preserving and evolving traditions of cultural heritage—create and present their work. BAC ensures that thousands of people throughout Brooklyn have access to a variety of free arts programming each year. Our programs are essential to the livelihoods of thousands of artists, creative professionals, and arts organizations across the borough.

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