



BAC FOLK ARTS PRESENTS

بروكلين مقام

BROOKLYN MAQAM

ARAB MUSIC FESTIVAL

مهرجان الموسيقى العربية

Tuning Your Ear: Learning to
Listen to Arab Music

Tuesday, March 6, 6:30 - 8pm

BROOKLYN ARTS COUNCIL



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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.

Thursday, March 6
Safe-T-Gallery

Program
6:30-7:30pm

*Tuning Your Ear: Learning to
Listen to Arab Music*

Karim Nagi, percussionist and widely regarded workshop teacher, leads a session on Arab music basics including how a listening audience responds

7:30-8:30pm

Jam in 3-D: Dumbek, Darbukah, Derbekki

Demo and jam session with the legendary Michel Merhej Baklouk and Middle Eastern Percussion Ensemble featuring Karim Nagi and Brooklyn's own Egyptian tabla masters Gamal Shafik and Mohamed Yhya.

Karim Nagi

Nagi, a native Egyptian, is an expert in Arab, Turkish and Andalusian hand percussion. He holds a Psychology degree from Skidmore College. Nagi has studied with Nabil Ata, Midhat al-Rashidi, Simon Shaheen, and Michel Merhej Baklouk. He returned to Cairo to study with Dr. Alfred Gamil (Cairo Conservatory of Music) and Mohammed Al-Araby (percussionist for Umm Koulthoum and The National Orchestra of Egypt). An educator himself, Nagi is a former faculty member of the New England Conservatory of Music and currently travels the country presenting his Arabiqa education program that aims to teach students about the depth of Arab art and the importance of Arab culture in general. He also dances and teaches *debkah*, leads the *Zaitoun* Debkah Troupe, and is the director of a workshop series on pan-Arab dance. Nagi leads the *SHARQ* Arabic Music Ensemble, which performs classical Arabic instrumental and vocal repertoire. In addition, he performs a music and dance show called *Turbo Tabla*, which combines traditional Arab and Turkish music with modern Electronica and Techno. www.karimnagi.com ; www.arabiqa.com

Michel Merhej Baklouk

Michel, a Lebanese *riqq* player and teacher at the Lebanese Conservatory, has worked with numerous pioneers of Arab music over the course of his long and successful career. Among the notable musicians with whom he has collaborated are the legendary vocalist Fairuz and the Rahbani Brothers, whose orchestra he accompanied for half a century. He also worked

with such distinguished singers as Wadi Elsafi, Sabah, Nour el Hoda, Halim al-Rumi, Tawfiq al-Basha, Zaki Nasif, Filimon Wahbi, Mohammad Abd al-Wahhab, Farid al-Atrash, Abdel Halim Hafez, and Warda Aljazaeria. He partnered with the most well-known dancers of the time, including Nadia Gamal, Tahiyya Karyoka, Samia Gamal, and Naima Akef. In addition to his work with these renowned artists, Michel has contributed greatly to Middle Eastern music as one of the first modern musicians to transcribe nomadic Arab folk songs. After more than five decades as a professional musician, Michel is still active in the music world, teaching local and international students. Since moving to New York in 1989, he has been working with Palestinian composer/performer Simon Shaheen, and holds many festivals and workshops for Middle Eastern drums and percussion.

Gamal Shafik

Brooklyn-based Shafik grew up in a musical family surrounded by Egyptian popular, folk and classical music that made his Cairo, Shobra neighborhood jump. As a young boy, he practiced percussion on household items – like pots and pans and even a simlac container! Pushed by his love and talent for percussion, he soon was sneaking out of the house to play *tabla* at local wedding parties. Shafik went on to play with such famous musicians as Ragheb Alame, Najwa Karam, and Sabah Fakhri. Immigrating to the United States in 1979, he immediately became a respected tabla player in the golden age of New York's Arab music and dance scene, playing with orchestras at night clubs, concerts, wedding and other illustrious Arab parties of the time. He is featured on a CD of percussion solos designed to teach the rhythm and phrasing of Egyptian drumming called *The Secret Language of Drum Solos*.

Mohamed Yhya

Born in Alexandria, Egypt, Yhya started playing the *tabla* at age 5. His uncle performed at local celebrations and would bring Yhya along, sit him on a chair, and prop a drum on his knees. Soon Yhya wanted his own tabla and started to make and sell them, fixing the skins (from donkey or fish from Lake Nasser) to the clay goblet-shaped base with an adhesive made from cow hooves. As a teenager Yhya drummed at Alexandria's festivals and weddings but soon moved to Cairo where he performed at the well know El-Haram street venues, was hired at Cairo's most reputable nightclubs and began playing for top Egyptian singers. Before immigrating to the United States, Yhya lived in Switzerland and he enjoyed collaborating with fusion jazz ensembles there. Now residing in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, Yhya is a member of the Pharaohs Band and performs throughout the metropolitan area.
www.pharaohsentertainment.com/theband.html

ABOUT BROOKLYN ARTS COUNCIL (BAC) 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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