

University Musical Society 2008 | 09 Season

وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ قَوْمًا لِيُجِزُوا
عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْحَرْبِ

Performing Arts of the
Arab World

UMS Global Series



University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

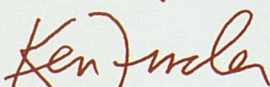
UMS Global Series

Five years ago, UMS changed the way it programs world music and dance. Each season, UMS now puts a more intense focus on one region of the world that has significant representation in southeastern Michigan, while continuing to present artists from around the globe.

The cycle has now come full circle, with a series devoted to Performing Arts of the Arab World, the same region that launched the inaugural global initiative in the 04/05 season. Other regional focuses include Africa, the Americas, and Asia. This series, like the others that have preceded it, represents UMS's commitment to present outstanding performing arts from around the world, to work with communities throughout our region, and to foster greater cultural understanding through the arts.

The season's global focus on the performing arts of the Arab World provides an opportunity for our community to explore the traditional and contemporary music and dance created and inspired by this part of the world, and to learn more about the artists who interpret and move beyond the Arab World's rich and diverse arts traditions. We offer this series in a spirit of celebration and understanding. Our goals are to present the rich and diverse artistic expressions found throughout the Arab World in an honest manner and to provide educational programming that enables our community to come to know the people, the culture, and the history that influence this art. We celebrate, of course, every time an engagement in the arts touches the soul and opens the mind and heart to new ways of thinking and behaving.

I hope you will join us for these events and others presented by UMS this season.



Ken Fischer
President

Thanks to Our Sponsors

The Performing Arts of the Arab World series is sponsored in part by:

TAQA New World, Inc.

National Endowment for the Arts

The Mosaic Foundation, Washington D.C.

Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan

Bustan al-Funun Foundation for Arab Arts



TAQA

TAQA New World, Inc.



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS

Additional support provided by

The American Syrian Arab Cultural Association

Global Education Excellence

Media Sponsors

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Arab
DETROIT

Educational Partner

Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS)

For information on supporting these and other UMS programs,
please call Susan McClanahan at 734-647-1177.

The background of the page is a collage of artistic elements. On the left, there is a vertical strip of dark, textured material, possibly a book cover or a piece of fabric, with a diamond-shaped pattern. The main background is a light beige color with faint, stylized Arabic calligraphy in orange and brown tones. The calligraphy is fluid and elegant, with some characters resembling 'و' and 'س'. There are also some geometric shapes, like diamonds and lines, scattered throughout the design.

About the Arab World

The Performing Arts of the Arab World series was developed to celebrate the cultural richness of the 22 countries and territories that identify themselves as being part of the Arab World.

The intent of UMS is not to delve into politics; rather, as an arts presenter, it is simply to pay tribute to the important cultural legacies of the Arab World through our global arts program, as one of the many ways in which we serve the diverse communities of this region.

Culture

Home to 260 million people, the Arab World is unified by the Arabic language. Though connected by language, the Arab World is culturally diverse with numerous religious and ethnic groups and traditions, including Christians, Jews, and Muslims, as well as Chaldeans, Assyrians, Kurds, Berbers, Armenians, and other communities.

Geography

The Arab World refers to the 22 Arab countries and territories that cover the vast area extending from the African shores of the Atlantic Ocean to the Arab/Persian Gulf in Asia. All are part of the League of Arab States. A complete listing of the countries and territories that identify as being part of the Arab World follows on the next page.

Sometimes Arabs and Arab Americans are referred to as Middle Eastern, which is not a completely accurate description. The "Middle East," as well as the Near East and the Far East, are British concepts that refer to different parts of the world that are east of England. Turkey, Iran, and Israel are part of this region, although they are not considered part of the Arab World. There are significant Arab populations outside the Middle East, including the U.S. and Europe.



Religion

Many people use the term Arab and Muslim interchangeably. While the majority of Arabs are Muslim, there are significant numbers of Arab Christians in several countries, especially Lebanon and Egypt. In Michigan, approximately 60% of Arab Americans are Christian and 40% are Muslim.

In the United States

Arab Americans live throughout the United States, with the majority residing in major cities such as New York, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Boston. The largest and most influential Arab American community in America is in southeastern Michigan.

Countries and Territories Included in the Arab World

The Arab World includes many countries and territories in the Middle East, but it also includes a large portion of northern Africa. The following are members of the League of Arab States:

- Algeria
- Bahrain
- Comoros Islands
- Djibouti
- Egypt
- Iraq
- Jordan
- Kuwait
- Lebanon
- Libya
- Mauritania
- Morocco
- Oman
- Palestine (West Bank and Gaza)
- Qatar
- Saudi Arabia
- Somalia
- Sudan
- Syria
- Tunisia
- United Arab Emirates
- Yemen

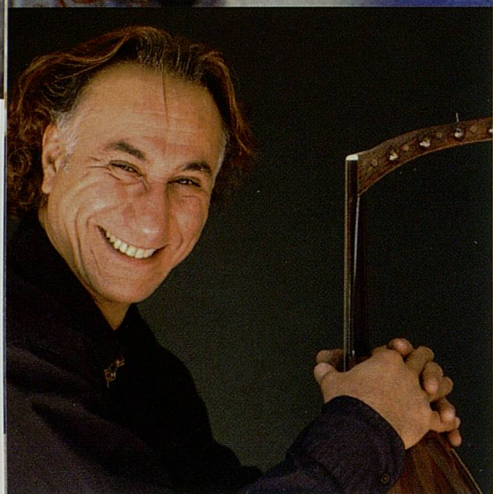
*Remembering Munir Bashir and the
Baghdad Conservatory of Music*

The Art of the Oud

Omar Bashir | Farida and the Iraqi Maqam Ensemble
Rahim AlHaj

Saturday, October 4 | 8 PM

Rackham Auditorium



Oud player Munir Bashir (1930-1997) was one of the most famous musicians in the Middle East during the 20th century. His 1972 album, *The Art of the 'Ud*, brought worldwide acclaim to the oud as a solo instrument, distinguished by a novel style of improvisation that reflected his study of Indian and European music. Born in Mosul to a Syrian father and a Kurdish mother, Bashir studied at the famous Baghdad Conservatory from age six and migrated to Budapest in the early 1960s. He returned to Iraq for several

years, where he championed the traditional folk music of his country and taught at the Baghdad Conservatory.


The Baghdad Conservatory was the preeminent institution for studying the unique Iraqi style of oud performance and Iraqi maqam. During the Iraq War, the Conservatory was bombed, and many of its faculty and students fled the country, threatening the continuation of the 5,000-year-old Iraqi oud tradition.

This performance celebrates the opening of the Performing Arts of the Arab World series and the end of Ramadan (the fasting month for Muslims). Paying tribute to the legacy of Munir Bashir and the Baghdad Conservatory of Music, the concert features Munir Bashir's son, Omar, and Rahim AlHaj. Iraq's most distinguished female singer, Farida, also performs with the Iraqi Maqam Ensemble. "This concert is only a small token of our deep gratitude and appreciation for Munir Bashir, a true hero of the 20th century," says AlHaj. "He was a wonderful musician and human being, who will be present in our lives, hearts, and music."

Made possible in part by the **U-M Center for World Performance Studies** and the **U-M Islamic Studies Initiative**.

Funded in part by the **Wallace Endowment Fund**.

\$40 / \$36 / \$26 / \$20




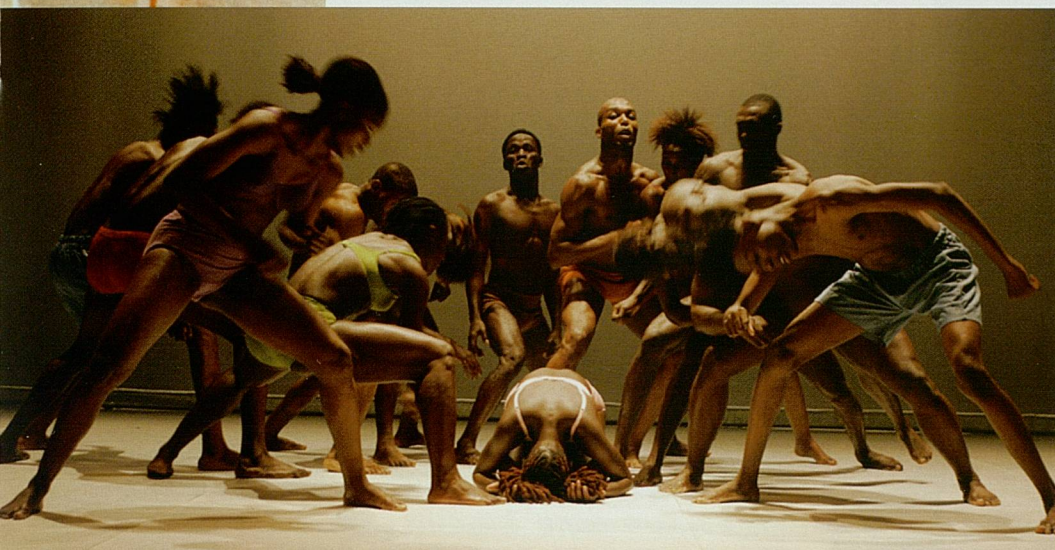
The Rite of Spring

Compagnie Heddy Maalem

Heddy Maalem artistic director

Wednesday, October 15 | 8 PM

Power Center



Heddy Maalem was born in Batna, Algeria, in the heart of the Aurès, to an Algerian father and a French mother. He had early and extensive training in boxing and also studied aikido. His faith in the strengths of his own body launched him into a long period of research to uncover his own movement.

Maalem brings together 14 utterly distinctive dancers from Mali, Benin, Nigeria, and Senegal for his explosive interpretation of Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps* (*The Rite of Spring*). Maalem's *Rite* — furious and bold, straightforward and without artifice — is placed in urban Africa and is inspired by the choreographer's time in Lagos, Nigeria, a city of 12 million people. Highly dynamic dance sequences and overwhelming group scenes are interlaced with intense scenes of atmospheric film projections and silence, providing provocative contrast to the music. Again and again, the male and female dancers — each one urgent and unflinching — meld into one unit, pulsating with energy.

Performed without intermission.

Funded in part by the **National Dance Project of the New England Foundation for the Arts** and the **Performing Arts Fund**.

Additional promotional support provided by **Metro Times**, **Between the Lines**, **Michigan Radio 91.7 FM**, and **Michigan Chronicle/Front Page**.

Main Floor \$38 / \$36 / \$24 / \$20
Balcony \$36 / \$30 / \$24 / \$16

Gilgamesh

Kinan Azmeh composer & clarinet

Kevork Mourad painter & live visuals

Friday, January 23 | 7 PM & 9 PM

Saturday, January 24 | 7 PM

Biomedical Science Research Building
Auditorium



The current unrest in the seat of the world's oldest civilization has inspired the Juilliard-trained Syrian clarinetist Kinan Azmeh to embark on a multimedia exploration of the most ancient epic that exists in writing today. *The Epic of Gilgamesh* is a series of Sumerian legends and poems from Babylonia about the mythological hero-king Gilgamesh, thought to have ruled in the third millennium BCE. This unique event, developed as part of Juilliard's "Beyond the Machine" Festival, explores the epic through both music and visual art, using original composition on the clarinet inspired by spontaneous drawings projected live by Syrian/Armenian painter Kevork Mourad. While improvising freely in different Arabic modes on top of a multi-layered virtual ensemble, Azmeh and Mourad create a shockingly different take on one of the world's oldest literary texts.

The Friday performances are sponsored by **Gil Omenn and Martha Darling**.

Additional support provided by the **Penny W. Stamps Distinguished Visitors Program of the U-M School of Art and Design** and the **U-M Armenian Studies Program**.

Additional promotional support provided by **Between the Lines**.

\$30 general admission





A Multimedia Celebration of the
Golden Age of Arab Music

Aswat (Voices)

Simon Shaheen artistic director

Featuring

**Ibrahim Azzam, Sonia M'barek, Khalil Abonula,
Rima Khcheich, Simon Shaheen** and the **Aswat Orchestra**

Thursday, March 12 | 8 PM

Hill Auditorium

The period from the 1920s to the 1950s is considered the “golden age” of Egyptian cinema, but it was also a golden age of song in many parts of the Arab world — in particular, Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria. Many of these countries’ greatest singers and composers reached unprecedented heights of artistry and stardom throughout these years. Now, one of today’s leading Arab composers and instrumentalists, Simon Shaheen, is bringing this era back to life. With a traditional, 12-piece Arab orchestra and special guest vocalists, Shaheen directs this evening of classic, unforgettable melodies, soul-stirring voices, and lush orchestral arrangements, authentically recreating and interpreting the sights and sounds of this magical time.

Shaheen conducted an international search for the top Arab singers of today, and Palestinian singers Ibrahim Azzam and Khalil Abonula, Sonia M'barek from Tunisia, and Rima Khcheich from Lebanon join Shaheen in presenting some of the most beloved songs of all time by composers like Mohammad Abdel Wahhab, Farid Al-Atrash, and the Rahbani Brothers. The Aswat Orchestra includes virtuoso instrumentalists who deliver a rich musical experience for devotees and new fans alike. As a backdrop to the live performance, a projection screen flashes preserved images and film footage of the great singers of the Golden Age, creating a multimedia experience of historical depth and lasting emotional impact.

Main Floor \$42 / \$38 / \$32 / \$24

Mezzanine \$32 / \$30 / \$24 / \$18 / \$10



Fez Festival of Sufi Culture in Fez, Morocco

Mohammed Bennis and the Hmadcha Ensemble

SATURDAY, APRIL 18 | 8 PM

SUNDAY, APRIL 19 | 7 PM [NOTE TIME]

University of Michigan Museum of Art Apse

A champion for preserving Moroccan Sufi traditions, artistic director Mohammed Bennis founded the Hmadcha Ensemble as a way to preserve traditional Sufi chanting in the Hmadcha tradition of Fez, which dates back to the 17th century. This performance will attempt to recreate an authentic, late-night performance that is featured at the Fez Festival of Sufi Culture in Morocco. Beginning with incantations, the ceremony builds in intensity, with the chanting of poems and sacred *qasidas* leading to movement and dancing with more invocations and chanting. Director Mohammed Bennis was born to a family renowned for its devotion to religious traditions and has studied the art of spiritual poems under a series of eminent masters, all with an eye toward preserving the traditional Sufi chanting tradition. A community reception immediately follows each performance in the newly restored and expanded University of Michigan Museum of Art.

Made possible in part by



and the **U-M Islamic Studies Initiative**

\$40 general admission



Additional Events

Heather Raffo's *9 Parts of Desire*

By **Heather Raffo**

September 19 – October 26, 2008

Thursdays and Fridays | 8 PM

Saturdays | 3 PM and 8 PM

Sundays | 2 PM

Performance Network Theatre (120 E Huron St)

As topical as today's headlines, this is a portrait of the extraordinary (and ordinary) lives of Iraqi women: a sexy painter, a radical Communist, doctors, exiles, wives and lovers. This one-woman show explores the conflicting aspects of what it means to be a woman in the war zone that is Iraq. It is a timely meditation on the ancient, the modern and the feminine in a country overshadowed by war. "Powerful, impassioned, vivid, memorable! The voices are a study in contrasts: vivid and subdued, sophisticated and naïve, seductive and standoffish. But they cohere to form a powerful collective portrait of suffering and endurance," says *The New York Times*. Starring Sarab Kamoo. Directed by Ed Nahhat. A co-production between Performance Network with Water Works Theatre Company

Tickets: \$22-\$41

First Thursday preview and first Saturday matinee are pay-what-you-can.

Tickets are available at 734-663-0681 or www.performancenetwork.org.



Additional Events, continued

Celebrating OUR Community Arab American National Museum

13624 Michigan Avenue, Dearborn, MI
(313) 582-AANM (2266) www.arabamericanmuseum.org

The Arab American National Museum is the first museum in the world devoted to Arab American history and culture. Arab Americans have enriched the economic, political and cultural landscape of American life. By bringing the voices and faces of Arab Americans to mainstream audiences, the museum continues its commitment to dispel misconceptions about Arab Americans and other minorities. The Museum brings to light the shared experiences of immigrants and ethnic groups, paying tribute to the diversity of our nation.

Members of the Arab American National Museum have been actively involved in the curation of the Performing Arts of the Arab World series. Please visit their new facility to gain a better understanding of the contributions of Arab Americans to southeastern Michigan and the United States.

The Silk Road Ensemble with Yo-Yo Ma cello

FRIDAY, MARCH 13 | 8 PM
SATURDAY, MARCH 14 | 8 PM
Hill Auditorium

"Yo-Yo Ma is part modern Marco Polo, an explorer of cultures far beyond his own; part musical missionary, eager to share ideas and make vital connections between peoples." (*Chicago Tribune*) Founded by Yo-Yo Ma in 1998, the Silk Road Project has been a catalyst for a new kind of conversation, opening avenues of inter-cultural communication and collaborative thinking. For about 2,000 years the Silk Road was the main conduit for the spread and exchange of goods, ideas, religions, and culture, connecting people from Asia to the Mediterranean. The collective is drawn from internationally renowned musicians interested in exploring the relationships between tradition and innovation in music from the East and West.

The Friday performance is sponsored by **KeyBank**



The Friday performance is made possible by the **Catherine S. Arcure and Herbert E. Sloan Endowment Fund.**

The Saturday performance is sponsored by **Robert and Pearson Macek.**

The 08/09 Family Series is sponsored by **Toyota.**

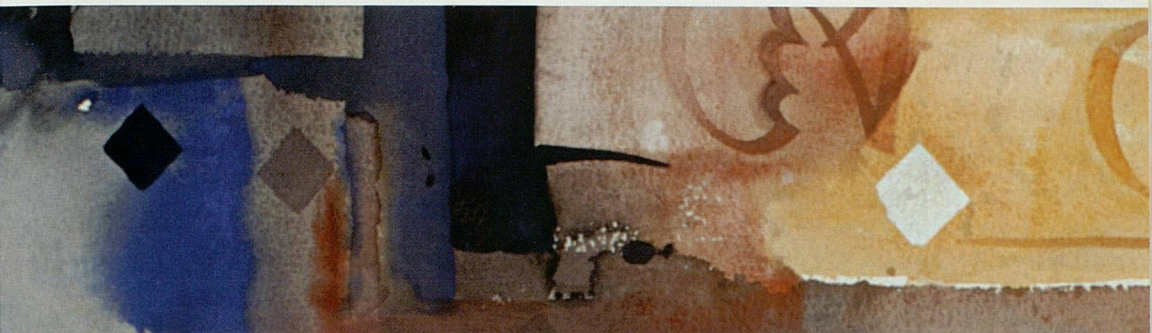
Media Sponsors **Ann Arbor's 107one, WGTE 91.3 FM,** and **Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.**

Main Floor \$100 / \$90 / \$76 / \$48
Mezzanine \$80 / \$70 / \$10
Balcony \$56 / \$48 / \$30 / \$10



Understanding Arab Music and Instrumentation

There are some qualities of Arab Music that are helpful to know in order to understand and appreciate the complexity of this art form.



Western Music is greatly indebted to the rich history of Arab music.

The modern guitar and violin (as well as all stringed instruments) are direct descendants of the Arab *oud* (also spelled 'ud), a pear-shaped stringed instrument that was the progenitor of the European lute. The *oud* is to classic/contemporary Arab music what the piano is to Western classical music and what the guitar is to rock and roll. In addition, all reed instruments (clarinets, bassoons, saxophones, etc.) are direct descendants of the reed instruments developed in the Arab World.

Arab music is melodic. A prominent feature of Arab music is the dependence on extremely complex melodies, full of subtle nuances and intricate ornamentation, often referred to as *maqams*. While Western music depends heavily on complex harmony, the vast majority of the world's music, including Arab music, gives primary importance to melody. Part of the complexity of Arab music stems from the fact that the music can be played in over 120 different *maqamat* (pronounced MAH-kah-maht), or modes, which dictate the collection of pitches used, notes of emphasis, and patterns of melodic movement. The rhythm of Arab music is also extremely complex, as a song may follow dozens of different *iqa'at* (pronounced EE-kah-aht), rhythmic patterns of beats ranging in number from 2 to 24 or more.

Arab music uses microtones. Melody in Arab music employs microtones, notes that do not exist within the half-step and whole-step intervals of traditional Western music. One way to understand microtones is to imagine that several additional keys were added to play the notes in between the black and white keys on a keyboard. These smaller intervals are microtones. To the Western ear, these unfamiliar notes may sound out-of-tune or "off-key" at first. Microtones give Arab music a continuous, gliding quality.

Arab music relies on improvisation. Improvisation, known as *taqasim* (pronounced tah-kah-SEEM), is an important characteristic of Arab music. When many musicians play together, they pass the same melody from artist to artist, with each adding individual flourishes of ornamentation. This art of adding ornamentation to a melody is known as *zakhrafat* (pronounced ZAH-krah-faht). The ability to improvise and embellish is considered very important within the tradition of Arab music.

How to Order Performance Tickets



Hours

9 am to 5 pm Monday-Friday
10 am to 1 pm Saturday

By Phone

With Visa, MasterCard, Discover
or American Express

734-764-2538

Outside the 734 area code and
within Michigan, call toll-free
800-221-1229

There is a \$6 service charge
per order for all phone, fax,
and mail orders.

By Fax

734-647-1171

By Web

www.ums.org

Per-ticket service fees of
\$2.50 to \$4.50 apply.

Please Note: The per-ticket charge is set
and collected by tickets.com as a usage
fee for their internet ticketing software.

In Person

Visit the Ticket Office on the
north end of the Michigan
League building (911 North
University Avenue).

Group Sales Office

When you bring a group of 10 or
more people to a UMS event, you'll
save 15-25% off the regular ticket
price for most performances.
For more information, call UMS
Group Sales at 734-763-3100 or
umsgroupsales@umich.edu.

**All sales are final. Refunds
are available only when
an event is canceled or
rescheduled. Programs
and artists are subject to
change without notice.**

All performances will begin
promptly. Please allow enough
time to park and find the
performance venue.

Map & Directions

Downtown Ann Arbor Map Key

1. Rackham Auditorium (915 East Washington Street)
2. Power Center (121 Fletcher Street)
3. UMS Ticket Office/Michigan League (911 North University Avenue)
4. Hill Auditorium (825 North University Avenue)
5. Biomedical Science Research Building (109 Zina Pitcher Place)

Directions & Parking

Visit www.ums.org/parking for information.



Burton Memorial Tower
881 North University Avenue
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1011



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