

4-1-2016 8:00 PM

World Music Series, Zafir, a sonic journey of discovery, April 1, 2016

Lawrence University

Follow this and additional works at: <http://lux.lawrence.edu/concertprograms>



Part of the [Music Performance Commons](#)

© Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

Recommended Citation

Lawrence University, "World Music Series, Zafir, a sonic journey of discovery, April 1, 2016" (2016). *Conservatory of Music Concert Programs*. Program 211.

<http://lux.lawrence.edu/concertprograms/211>

This Concert Program is brought to you for free and open access by the Conservatory of Music at Lux. It has been accepted for inclusion in Conservatory of Music Concert Programs by an authorized administrator of Lux. For more information, please contact colette.brautigam@lawrence.edu.



WORLD MUSIC SERIES

*Zafir, a Sonic
Journey of Discovery*



LAWRENCE
UNIVERSITY
APPLETON, WISCONSIN

Zafir, a Sonic Journey of Discovery

Friday, April 1, 2016 • 8 p.m.

Memorial Chapel

Simon Shaheen, oud and violin, musical director

Nidal Ibourk, vocals

Juan Pérez Rodríguez, flamenco pianist, vocalist, guitarist

Bassam Saba, flutes

Najib Shaheen, oud

Tareq Rantisi, percussion

Naseem Elatrash, cello

Ali Amr, qanun

Auxi Fernandez, flamenco dancer

Fatafit Al Sukkar

Muhammad Fawzi

Al Nawba Al Khadra'

Khamis Al Tirnan

Ayyuha I-Muwla'u

Yammim Riyada I-Wurud

Bi Marsa al-Tharif

Thughuru Ayyamikum Bawasim

Al Qantara

Simon Shaheen

Samba Sikah

Ahmad Fuad Hassan

Ya Msafer Wahdak

Muhammad A Wahhab

Zafir

Simon Shaheen

Aguilera Alegrías

Juan Pérez Rodríguez

Al Wadi Al Kabir

Sonia Mbarek / Lorca

Zafir: Musical Winds from North Africa to Andalucía

The links between Arab culture and that of Andalucía are deeply embedded in history. For more than 600 years, the Moors held sway over a large part of the Iberian peninsula which they called Al-Andalus. The courts of Cordoba, Seville and Granada flourished as centers of Arab-Iberian culture until the surrender of Granada in 1492. *Zafir* (from which the English word “zephyr” is derived), which means “wind” or “breath,” describes the creative breath that blew across two continents during this very pivotal time when music and the arts took a huge leap forward. Music flourished in Al-Andalus, especially after the arrival of master musician Ziryab from Baghdad in Cordoba around 825 A.D. He introduced original Arab musical forms and instruments which would later compose the roots of flamenco. While the origins of flamenco remain shrouded in mystery, the imprint of the Moors is undeniable. The aim of both Arab classical music and flamenco is to achieve a heightened state of emotion, a feeling of ecstasy, known by the Arab musicians as tarab and by flamenco performers and enthusiasts as duende. This transcendent feeling is essential to both traditions.

Nidal Ibourk is an exceptional singer and scholar in Chicago. Nidal was born in Rabat, Morocco. She received a Bachelor Degree in English Studies in Morocco, and a full scholarship from the U.S. State Department to complete her postgraduate studies at Kent State University. Through her collaboration with Simon Shaheen, Nidal revived the Arab music repertoire of the 50's and 60's era and successfully presented authentic music to the American audience across the States. What distinguishes Nidal as an artist is her commitment to preserve her cultural heritage and present a genius repertoire of classical Arabic and Moroccan music. Her sophisticated presence on stage is not only reflected through her fine selection of songs, but also through her traditional outfits that shows her pride in her roots.

Auxl Fernandez is an international flamenco dancer from Andalucía, south of Spain. She has toured the world collaborating with top musicians and dancers including Chick Corea, Carles Benavent, Jorge Pardo, Buika and Sara Baras among others.

Juan Pérez Rodríguez is a flamenco pianist from Andalucía, Spain. Coming from a family of gypsy flamenco musicians, his father is the singer Juan Sombra, and his uncle is a legend of flamenco guitar, Niño

Miguel. Juan has studied classical piano since the age of eight in Spain, and finished his master in Boulogne Billancourt Conservatoire (Paris).

Simon Shaheen is one of the most significant Arab musicians, performers and composers of his generation. His soaring technique, melodic ingenuity and unparalleled grace have earned him international acclaim as a virtuoso on the oud and violin. His work incorporates and reflects a legacy of Arabic music, while it forges ahead to new frontiers, embracing many different styles in the process. This unique contribution to the world of arts was recognized in 1994, when Shaheen was honored with the prestigious National Heritage Award at the White House.

In the 1990s, he released four albums of his own: *Saltanah* (Water Lily Acoustics), *Turath* (CMP), *Taqasim* (Lyricord) and *Simon Shaheen: The Music of Mohamed Abdel Wahab* (Axiom), while also contributing cuts to producer Bill Laswell's fusion collective, *Hallucination Engine* (Island). He has contributed selections to soundtracks for *The Sheltering Sky* and *Malcolm X*, among others, and has composed the entire soundtrack for the United Nations-sponsored documentary *For Everyone Everywhere*. Broadcast globally in December 1998, this film celebrated the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Human Rights Charter.

But perhaps his greatest success has come with *Blue Flame* (ARK21, 2001), where he leads his group, Qantara, on a labyrinthian journey through the world of fusion music to discover

the heart of the Middle East. The album has been nominated for 11 Grammy Awards, and the band's performances have been called "glorious."

A Palestinian, born in the village of Tarshiha in the Galilee in 1955, Shaheen's childhood was steeped in music. His father, Hikmat Shaheen, was a professor of music and a master oud player. "Learning to play on the oud from my father was the most powerful influence in my musical life," Shaheen recalls. He began playing the oud at age 5 and studying violin a year later at the Conservatory for Western Classical Music in Jerusalem. "When I held and played these instruments, they felt like an extension of my arms."

After graduating from the Academy of Music in Jerusalem in 1978, Shaheen was appointed its instructor of Arab music, performance and theory. Two years later, he moved to New York City to complete his graduate studies in performance at the Manhattan School of Music, and later in performance and music education at Columbia University.

In 1982, Shaheen formed the Near Eastern Music Ensemble in New York, establishing a group that would perform the highest standard of traditional Arab music. This time also marked the beginning of Shaheen's workshops and lecture/demonstrations in schools, colleges and universities to educate the younger generation. As a champion and guardian of Arab music, Shaheen still devotes almost 50 percent of his time to working with schools and universities, including Julliard, Columbia, Princeton, Brown, Harvard, Yale, University of California in San Diego, University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and many others.

His concert credits are a veritable compendium of the world's greatest venues: Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, Cairo's Opera House, Theatre de la Ville in Beirut and Belgium's Le Palais des Arts. In May of 2004, Shaheen appeared at Quincy Jones' "We Are the Future" fundraising concert in Rome in front of a crowd of a half million.

As a composer, Shaheen has received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, Meet the Composer, the Jerome Foundation, Continental Harmony and Yellow Springs Institute. In addition to his recorded work, his theatrical repertoire includes *Majnun Layla* (performances included the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., and The Museum of Natural History in New York), *The Book and the Stranger* (from Kalilah Wa-Dimanah), *Possible City* and *Collateral Damage* with actress Vanessa Redgrave. He has also written the music for the documentary of the British Museum's Egyptian collection, which has toured U.S. museums.

Since 1994, Shaheen has produced the Annual Arab Festival of Arts, called "Mahrajan al-Fan." Held in New York, the festival showcases the work of the finest Arab artists, while presenting the scope, depth and quality of Arab culture. To continue this exposure to Arab music and culture, Shaheen founded the Annual Arabic Music Retreat in 1997. Held each summer at Mount Holyoke College, this weeklong intensive program of Arabic music studies draws participants from the U.S. and abroad.

For the past six years, though, Shaheen has focused much of his energies on Qantara. The band, whose name means arch in Arabic, brings to life Shaheen's vision for the unbridled fusion of Arab, jazz, Western classical and Latin American music, a perfect alchemy for music to transcend the boundaries of genre and geography. The members of Qantara are all virtuosos in their own musical forms and whose expertise and knowledge can raise the music and the group's performance to spectacular levels.

WORLD MUSIC SERIES 2015–16

Cimarrón

Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2015 • 8 p.m.
Stansbury Theatre, Music-Drama Center

Karin Loberg Code, Harding fiddle

Monday, Oct. 5, 2015 • 8 p.m.
Harper Hall, Music-Drama Center

Hector Del Curto Quintet

Monday, Feb. 1, 2016 • 8 p.m.
Harper Hall, Music-Drama Center

***Zafir* a Sonic Journey of Discovery**

Friday, April 1, 2016 • 8 p.m.
Memorial Chapel

Gamelan Cahaya Asri Concert

Monday, May 30, 2016 • 3 p.m.
Stansbury Theatre, Music-Drama Center

go.lawrence.edu/worldmusic