# Middle Eastern Rhythms and the democratization of Gender roles

# Identity and mission

- Bridging the connection between my background as a jazz drummer and Lebanese heritage through well-known and beloved Lebanese folk tunes, an original composition and "jazz" heavily improvised melodic vehicle.
- Encourage artists and audiences to delve and mine the resources which they possess, to bring forth a new way of perceiving themselves and thereby changing their story as a citizen of the world
- Every child's potential is equal, regardless of gender

# Towards a paradigm shift, informed through gender inclusion...

- Artistic expression provides a vehicle for opinion. Whoever's voice will and can be heard has the potential towards validation and influence over it's environment.
- I used folk tunes performed and made famous by a respected and most well-known Lebanese vocalist Fairuz. These serves as a vehicle to open the dialogue of females expanding their roles to that of an instrumentalist. Hers was an example of empowerment to both sexes!
- Democracy and equality of gender roles in the arts reflected in creative equality between instrumentation and each musical voice in the ensemble.
- Could the inclusion of female musicians and artists in modern culture in Arab countries contribute to the awareness and social movement towards equality amongst the sexes? A good start perhaps?...

#### **Plan** of Action

OBJECTIVE: to create and develop an inter-generational conversation regarding the inclusion of the female presence in the arts, predominantly in the Middle-East. To challenge gender/identity stereotypes relating to ability, roles and cultural significance in the Lebanese, Middle East and global Arab diaspora.

# Women Percussion History

- Lupishiau considered the first percussionist in ancient Middle Eastern cultures. There was a time in our history when the primary percussionists and drummers were women. The first named drummer in history was a Mesopotamian priestess named Lipushiau. She lived in the city-state of Ur in 2380 BC
- "In every ancient Mediterranean civilization... studied, it was a goddess who transmitted to humans the gift of making music."



## Nassam Alayna Al'Hawa ("The Air Breezed Upon Us")

- Ziad Rahbani, Fairuz gave voice to the cultural fracture of civilians created by the Lebanese Civil War in the 1970s
- Iqa-combination of Maqsoum and Wehde,
- C# Kurd (Phrygian) scale (C# D# E
  F# G# A B)
- Irtijal (plural: Irtijalat) or Mawwal (plural: Mawaweel)

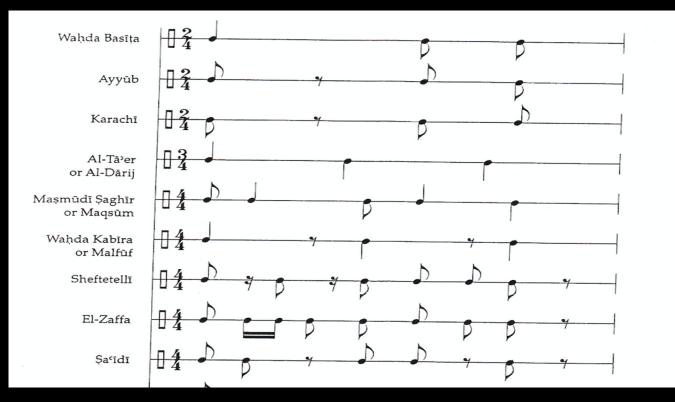




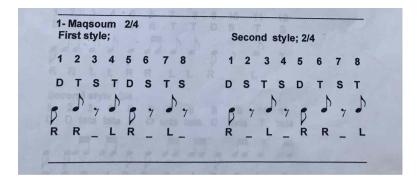


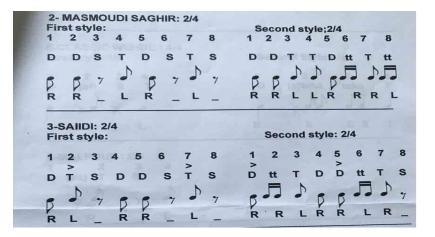


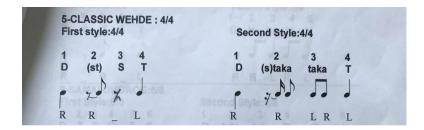
#### Notated Rhythmic skeleton (Iqa)



#### Michel Merhej Baklouk rhythm chart







#### Beit Kassab (original composition)

- The layering of harmonies and rhythmic interplay
- G Melodic minor starting on fifth degree as improvisatory foundation
- "Agitation" esque Tony Williams intro solo 1960s Miles Davis Quintet
- Collaboration amongst all instruments involved (an approach usually shunned in traditional Middle Eastern music)



#### Sa'alouni El Nass ("The People Asked Me")

- Ziad Rahbani; Fairuz
- A hybrid between Masmoudi and Maqsoum rhythmic themes Call and response alternating with main melody, composed from: (implies the "dialogue between the traditional and progressive" in a narrativistic context...) Locrian scale - improvisation; Lami scale (Iraqi) (eg. D Eb F G Ab Bb C)
- https://voutu.be/XSH0liXO7BI







# Notated Rhythmic skeleton (Iqa)



#### Drum Music

The exchange of melodic ideas/input intersecting with that of Paul Motian's

- Call and response alternating between Paul's and my melodies (based on the Turkish Kavijar scale: C D Eb F Gb A Bb C)
- Homage to the guitar saxophone drum format substituting laouto for guitar

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#### Into The Future

- Further study towards history, importance and repertoire of female inclusion in the arts of the Middle East
- YouTube channel
- Awareness and travel to Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan...taking the concept further, tours

#### Credits

Thank-you:

Layth Sidiq (violin/voice), Vasilis Kostas (laouto), Alber Baseel (auxiliary percussion), Benjamin Jephta (double bass), Noé Zagroun (piano), Alex Johnston (tenor saxophone \*Drum Music), Liz Teutsch (engineer)

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# Bibliography/Resources

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maqamworld.com (website)

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Fadl, 1955-, Salamat (Piranha, 2003), 57 min

"Of Drums And Damsels: Women's Performance In Ancient Israel" Carol L. Meyers, The Biblical Archaeologist, University of Chicago, JSTOR, Vol. 54 No.1, (Mar 1991) p16-27