

The Arab American Arts Institute  
Presents the Twenty-Third Annual

# Arabic Music Retreat

seven days of intensive classes, workshops,  
and performances by participants and instructors

August 3-10, 2019

Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA, USA

[www.arabicmusicretreat.org](http://www.arabicmusicretreat.org)

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Arab musician and composer Simon Shaheen invites students, performers, and scholars of Arabic music to the Twenty Second Annual Arabic Music Retreat at Mount Holyoke College. The Retreat is honored to present an accomplished faculty roster including Associate Director Dr. A.J. Racy. This year we welcome back Sonia M'barek from Tunisia and Wassim Odeh.

The Retreat includes seven days of Arabic music instruction in both chamber music and large orchestra performance. The Retreat also offers private lessons and classes in Arabic music theory, analysis, and ear training. The structured format, along with the relaxed academic atmosphere of Mount Holyoke's beautiful rural campus, makes the Retreat an ideal setting for the serious study of Arabic music.

## Classes

Seven days of instruction in Arabic music performance, ear training, theory, and history. Two levels of theory classes, beginners and advanced, will be offered. The Retreat will concentrate on daily group classes in Arabic chamber music, coached by a faculty instructor. These classes will help students experience key elements of Arabic music performance such as musical communication, *maqam* intonation, dynamics, style, and interpretation. Primary instruments of instruction will be: the *'ud* (Arabic lute), violin, *nay* (end-blown reed flute), *qanun* (Arabic zither), *buzuq*, voice, and percussion instruments such as the *riqq* (tambourine), *tablah* (goblet-shaped drum) and *tar* (frame drum). Private lessons will be given every other day.

## Students

Participants should be able to read western music notation, or learn quickly by ear. Advanced and accomplished music students who are interested in Arabic music but are relatively new to its instruments are also encouraged to attend. Participants under 18 years old must be accompanied by an adult family member. If you have any questions, please contact us.

## Instructors

The Retreat will feature the following instructors and musicians (subject to change):

**Simon Shaheen** *Artistic and Executive Director  
Performance and Theory  
Chamber Music*

An acclaimed Arabic music performer, composer and educator, Shaheen tours worldwide as a soloist and with his ensembles, Qantara, and the Near Eastern Music Ensemble. His recordings (*The Music of Mohamed Abd al-Wahhab*, *Turath*, *Taqasim*, *Saltanah*, *The Two Tenors and Qantara*, and *Blue Flame*) have won him an international reputation as a leading Arab musician of his generation. A master instructor in performance and theory, Shaheen is a professor at Berklee College of Music. He conducts residencies and workshops at universities around the world. [www.simonshaheen.com](http://www.simonshaheen.com)

**Dr. A. J. Racy** *Associate Director  
Nay and Buzuq Performance  
Chamber Music*

Professor Racy of the U.C.L.A. Ethnomusicology Department is an inspiring teacher, author, renowned composer and performer. A pioneer in conducting Arabic music ensembles in the U.S., he has inspired generations of Western and Arab musicians to study and perform the rich musical traditions of the Middle East. Professor Racy performs and lectures internationally on Middle Eastern music. His recordings include *Taqasim*, *Jazayer Plus Ali Jihad Racy*, *Ancient Egypt*, and *Mystical Legacies*. His numerous scholarly publications include the award-winning book, *Making Music in the Arab World: The Culture and Artistry of Tarab* (Cambridge U. Press, 2003).

**Bassam Saba** *Nay and 'Ud Performance  
Chamber Music*

Bassam is the Principal of the Lebanese National Higher Conservatory of Music. After earning a Master's degree in music performance from the Moscow Conservatory, he joined the Near Eastern Music Ensemble in 1992 as principal *nay* player, and also performs with Qantara. Bassam has performed with Fairuz, Ziad Rahbani, Marcel Khalife and the Absolute Ensemble. He has many recording credits including *Wonderful Land*. Bassam also directs the New York Arabic Orchestra.

## Sonia M'barek

### Vocal Performance

#### Chamber Music

Sonia is the leading vocalist of Arabic classical and *ma'luf* vocal repertoire. A graduate of the National Conservatory of Tunis, she performs worldwide. Her recordings include *Liberte, Tarab, Tawchih, Takht, Tir Al Miniar, and Romances*. M'barek is a professor and researcher at the Higher Institute of Musicology and gives master classes around the world. She also has a PhD in Political Science, and a Master's in Public Law, and recently served as Tunisia's Minister of Culture.

## Wassim Odeh

### 'Ud Performance

#### Chamber Music

Wassim is a renowned Palestinian 'ud player and composer. He has been an 'ud instructor and ensemble director at the Academy of Music and Dance in Jerusalem, the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music in Ramallah, and Bait al-Musiq in Shafaamr. He has performed in many important festivals worldwide. Alongside his hectic schedule, he is finishing his PhD thesis at Bar-Ilan University on the instrumental music of Muhammad Abd al-Wahhab.

<https://www.facebook.com/odehwassim/>

## Najib Shaheen

### 'Ud Performance

Najib began performing 'ud with his father Hikmat Shaheen's orchestra in Haifa at age 12. He performed with Hanan, as well as with the Near Eastern Music Ensemble and Qantara. He teaches 'ud privately and is a master 'ud maker. He will present a class on the care and maintenance of 'uds. [www.oudman.com](http://www.oudman.com)

## William Shaheen

### 'Ud and Violin Performance

#### Theory and Chamber Music

After learning the 'ud from his father Hikmat Shaheen, William studied classical violin at the Rubin Conservatory in Haifa. He gives workshops and performs at Universities in the U.S., and performs with the Near East Music Ensemble. He teaches 'ud and violin privately in California.

## Layth Sidiq

### Violin Performance

#### Theory and Chamber Music

Born in Baghdad and raised in Jordan, Layth studied at the National Conservatory in Amman, and with Simon Shaheen. He leads the Arab Music Ensemble at Tufts University, teaches privately and leads the Four Corners Quartet. His CD *Son of Tigris* bridges Iraqi music and jazz. [laythsidiq.com](http://laythsidiq.com)

## Jamal Sinno

### Qanun Performance

Lebanese-born Jamal Sinno studied *qanun* at the Lebanese National Conservatory under virtuoso Mohammad Sabsabi. Jamal has performed with leading song stars of the Middle East including George Wassouf and Kazem Al-Sahar. He performs with Simon Shaheen's Near Eastern Music Ensemble.

## Dr. Iman Roushdy Hammady

### Arabic Diction

A native Arabic speaker from Cairo, Iman has an extensive knowledge of Arabic Literature and several Arabic dialects. She taught Arabic language and diction at Harvard University where she earned her PhD in medical anthropology.

## Michel Merhej

### Percussion Performance

Michel was the principal percussionist with Fairuz and the National Lebanese Radio Orchestra for over 20 years, and has been performing in prestigious Arabic Music ensembles in the Middle East and the U.S. for four decades. He currently plays with the Near Eastern Music Ensemble and teaches percussion in New York.

## Tareq Rantisi

### Percussion Performance

A native of Jerusalem, Tareq is a graduate of Berklee College of Music, with expertise in Middle Eastern, jazz and other world styles. He has performed with Simon Shaheen, Paul Winter, Glen Velez, and Bassam Saba. [www.tareqrantisi.com](http://www.tareqrantisi.com)

## Schedule

### Saturday, August 3, 2019

Arrival after 2PM, Welcome reception and dinner 6PM.

### Sunday - Friday, August 4-9, 2019

Full days of Arabic chamber music (groups will be assigned), private lessons (every other day), lectures, and Retreat Orchestra rehearsals.

### Friday, August 9, 2019

Recital: An informal concert featuring the participant chamber groups, and the Retreat Orchestra.

### Saturday, August 10, 2019

Group performance class for the entire Retreat at 10:30AM. Departure after lunch.

**Location:** Mount Holyoke College is a small liberal arts college in the town of South Hadley in western Massachusetts, providing a quiet and intimate setting for the Retreat. It is conveniently located forty-five minutes from Hartford, CT's Bradley Field Airport, three hours by car from New York, and two hours by car from Boston. Bus service is available to the nearby city of Springfield from Boston and New York. [Contact us for a list of van services that can bring you to Mount Holyoke from the Hartford Airport and Springfield Bus Station.](#)

**Accommodations:** We have reserved the double occupancy air-conditioned rooms at the College's Willits-Hallowell Conference Center. Non-air-conditioned dormitory rooms will also be available. *The Willits-Hallowell rooms will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis with deposits.*

**Meals:** All meals will be provided at the Willits Hallowell Conference Center, from Saturday's dinner through the second Saturday's lunch. Once again, Najib Shaheen will work with the chefs to provide delicious and healthy Arabic meals in the evenings.

**Other:** We will also be able to use the College's athletic facilities (indoor pool, weight room, tennis courts).

**Fees:** Fees include all classes, meals, and accommodation for the entire Retreat. See last page for details. Deposit of \$100 due by June 1st. Balance of fees due by July 15, 2019. No refunds will be given after July 25, 2019, in any circumstances. Late registration is subject to availability.

**Scholarships:** We offer a limited number of partial work scholarships, priority will be given to participants who have attended previously. Applications are available on the web site. Application deadline is June 1, 2019.

## Additional Information:

### For more information please contact:

Kay Campbell, Administrative Director

Arabic Music Retreat

P.O. Box 412

Jefferson, Maine 04348

Phone: 617-512-8122

e-mail: [arabicmusicretreat@gmail.com](mailto:arabicmusicretreat@gmail.com)

Join our e-mail list – send a blank e-mail message to:

[arabicmusicretreat-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:arabicmusicretreat-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

Join our facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/51924008930/>

## Registration Form/Questionnaire

To be filled out by all participants when registering. You can e-mail your registration form and audition to: [arabicmusicretreat@gmail.com](mailto:arabicmusicretreat@gmail.com) To pay using credit card, visit: [www.arabicmusicretreat.org/how-to-register/](http://www.arabicmusicretreat.org/how-to-register/)

First time participants should send a recording (mp3 or YouTube link) of their playing and/or singing of up to three minutes in length in the instrument they wish to study at the Retreat. This will help in identifying each participant's level and will assist with the class planning process. Returning participants are not required to submit an audition recording.

Name:  Mr.  Mrs.  Ms. \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

Phone:

Cell Phone:

e-mail:

Website:

*Note: The above information will be listed in the Retreat Directory to be given to all participants upon arrival, so please indicate if you prefer to be listed differently.*

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ If you are under 18 years old, provide the name and e-mail address of the adult family member who will accompany you to the Retreat:

Name and Telephone Number for Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

*Each participant will focus on a primary instrument during the Retreat for private lessons and Chamber Group sessions.*

What primary instrument do you plan to study at the retreat? Please circle only one:

Ud  Nay  Buzuq  Qanun  Violin  Voice  Percussion  Other \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: Due to our very tight schedule, you will need to focus on only one instrument at the Retreat.*

How well do you read musical notation?  not at all  a little  fair  well

How well can you learn music by ear?  slowly  quickly

Have you studied western music theory?  not at all  basic knowledge  strong knowledge

If you have studied Arabic music, with whom did you study and for how long?

If you have studied Arabic music, list up to three Arabic instrumental and/or vocal music compositions with which you are most familiar as a performer:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

If you have studied Arabic music theory, please check your level in the following areas:

Maqamaat (melodic modes):  beginner  intermediate  advanced

Iqa'aat (rhythmic modes):  beginner  intermediate  advanced

Ashkaal (music forms):  beginner  intermediate  advanced

Besides Arabic music, describe any other music education you have had and for how long:

Are you familiar with the art of Taqasim: (Arabic music improvisation)? If so, please explain.

**Fees and Accommodations:** The Retreat can accept payment by:

1. U.S.\$ check or money order made out to Arab American Arts Institute, 2) Credit card: pay on our website: [www.arabicmusicretreat.org/how-to-register/](http://www.arabicmusicretreat.org/how-to-register/) If paying from outside the U.S., please contact [arabicmusicretreat@gmail.com](mailto:arabicmusicretreat@gmail.com) for payment instructions. Participants must cover fees charged for global payments.

**\$ 1,249** - Double Occupancy air-conditioned rooms at the Willits Hallowell Conference Center (assigned on a first-come first-served basis for participants registering with deposits).

**\$ 1,114** - Single Occupancy non-air-conditioned dormitory room on campus.

**\$ 1,015** - Double Occupancy non-air-conditioned dormitory room on campus.

**\$ 864** - Commuter rate (classes, lunches and dinners only).

Roommates will be assigned by the Retreat; we will attempt to honor all roommate requests

Handicapped? Please indicate here if you have any special accommodation needs.

\_\_\_ Meals: please note here if you are pure vegetarian, lactose or gluten intolerant or have other food allergies.

\_\_\_ Enclosed is my deposit of \$100 due by June 1, 2019; balance of fees due by July 15, 2019

\_\_\_ Enclosed is my payment in full of \$\_\_\_ (\$1,249 double occupancy in Willits, \$1,114 single occupancy in dormitory, \$1,015 double occupancy in dormitory, \$864 commuter rate).

My housing choice is: \_\_\_ Willits Hallowell Double \_\_\_ Dormitory Single \_\_\_ Dormitory Double \_\_\_ Commuter

**No refunds will be given after July 25, 2019 in any circumstance.  
Late registration is subject to availability.**

If registering by mail, please make your check payable to **Arab American Arts Institute** and mail it with the registration form and audition recording to:

Arabic Music Retreat  
Arab American Arts Institute  
P.O. 412  
Jefferson, Maine 04348

For more information, please contact Kay Campbell at: 617-512-8122; e-mail: [arabicmusicretreat@gmail.com](mailto:arabicmusicretreat@gmail.com)

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