

## The Joubran Trio



The story of the Joubran Trio's creation can be traced back some ten years. Samir, the eldest, started his solo career with his first two albums, *Taqaseem* (1996) and *Sou'fahm* (2001). For his third album, *Tamaas*, Samir invited his younger brother Wissam to join him on his musical adventure. It is from this album that three songs were used in the movie by the director François Dupeyron *Inguélézi*. The three brothers reunite for *Randana* in March 2005. Adnan, the youngest, had joined in with his older brothers to form the first and only ud' trio known of to this date. When *Randana* comes out under the Randana-Fairplay/Harmonia Mundi label, in 2005, it is the trio's very first album. Randana is also the first Palestinian label to be distributed in France whose aim is to promote other artists from that country. The trio is introduced to the public at large on a summer afternoon in 2004, at the Luxembourg Garden in Paris.

The franco-German television station ARTE broadcasted, on December 8, 2005, *Improvisation, Samir et ses frères* (Improvisation, Samir and his brothers). Raed Andoni, a Palestinian director, therein shoulders his camera and gives the audience a privileged, intimate look at the birth of the trio. In 52 minutes he outlines the conflict of identity (that of a Palestinian musician bearing an Israeli passport), the conflict between generations, the insatiable fascination for music, and Samir's extraordinary determination and willpower, which touch and break the spectator all at once. With their skillful, heart-wrenching improvisations and interpretations that tell of Palestine, the trio brings to bear harmony and sweetness, depth and joy. On the stage, as their eyes meet, their instruments join together to express that which the spoken word cannot. When the transcendence of improvisation unites them, the trio expresses its full mastery of the ud'.

The Joubran Trio is the product of the worthy inheritors of a rich family tradition. For the Joubrans, music is a family affair. The trio's parents, Hatem Mbadda Joubran, stringed-instrument maker emeritus known throughout the arab world, and Ibtisam Hanna Joubran, a singer, both come from families where music is transmitted from generation to generation. Be it the next logical step, or the magic of destiny, Samir pulls Wissam and then Adnan along in his footsteps. The Joubran Trio stands on the mutual understanding of three brothers who share a common and limitless love for the ud'. The trio's repertory, made up of original creations and magnificent improvisations, takes root in their knowledge of the imposing culture of traditional maqâms and their subtle interpretations.

The group was the big revelation at Langon's *Atypical Nights* (Nuits Atypiques) festival, nominated for the 2004 *Django d'Or* awards, selected at the Womex 2004 and the *Strictly Mundial* 2005, the trio has been living a musical adventure that is taking it all over the world : the trio played before thousands at the Festival of Nyon, was welcomed at Carnegie Hall in February 2006, and recently played at the Jerusalem festival (August 2007).

The trio is acknowledged by its peers in the music world, and it accepts conductor Daniel Barenboim's invitation to take part in a concert in Spain. Then the trio joins forces with Massive Attack at the Brixton Carling Academy in a concert to support the Hoping Foundation. The trio's music even touches the arab intellectual world, in the person of Mahmoud Darwish. Choreographers H la Fattoumi and Eric Mamoureux also asked the duo (Samir and Adnan) to write the musical score for *La Mad'aa*.



*Maj z*, the Joubran Trio's second opus, is the arabic translation of the word "metaphor" : just like that rhetorical technique, the trio intended once more to carry its audience from one emotion to another. For this second album, the trio brought in percussionist Yousef Hbeisch. A new international tour, made all the richer for his artistic contribution, is at the heart of their programme for the 2007-2008 season. Between painful

ecstasy and sumptuous silence, the trio's overwhelming stage performances are both precise and overflowing with emotions that take their audience's breath away. This new album reveals the maturity of a trio that took flight with *Randana*, and whose *Maj z* is an invitation to travel.

Soundfiles:

<http://www.believe.fr/albums/12951,majaz.html>

Homepage:

<http://www.letriojoubran.com/>

Booking:

<http://www.levinson-concerts.com>

*"These are exciting times for the oud, with several very talented young Arab players pushing the instrument beyond its classical repertoire. In many ways, Maj z is less experimental than other recent oud recordings; however, what it lacks in gimmicks and fusions it more than makes up for in straightforward, discerning musicianship."*  
(Bill Badley; <http://www.songlines.co.uk>; Issue 49 January/February 2008)

*"He plays with eyes closed. On his features, shadows and signs betray anxiety. Something is burning inside, a biting intensity,... In the silences, the spaces between notes, reality is screaming out."* (Le Monde 4 and 5 August 2002 Patrick Labesse)