



Kan Zaman in its latest musical performance held in Bovard Auditorium at USC. The program, presented by conductor Wael Kakish, was complemented by a guest performance by UCLA music professor, Dr. Ali Jihad Racy.

Kan Zaman's Spectacular Performance Ignites Audience of 1200

Dr. Ali Jihad Racy complements traditional Arabic program with two outstanding solos.

By WILLIAM A. HANNOSH
Assistant Editor

Over 1200 music lovers listened to the Arabic stage ensemble Kan Zaman perform at USC's Bovard Auditorium recently in a concert that had the audience clapping, trilling and yearning for more of the *taqasim* (improvisations).

The ensemble performed traditional *muwashahat*, (poetic Arabic verses sung in the old Andalusian Spanish tradition) on such instruments as the *oud*, *nay*, *qanun*, and *kaman*. Kan Zaman also performed old folk songs from the turn of the century, which made some elder Arabs reminiscent of the old days.

Although the group conducts its musical presentations using the same style of traditional rhythm, this concert was by no means routine, as it inter-mixed the program with slow, mellow songs and more fast-paced, celebratory numbers. There was a special performance by a talented musician who, from a little rehearsal room at UCLA, inspired this group to take its show to the public. Dr. Ali Jihad Racy, special guest artist, a musician and academic, is considered the master of Arabic folkloric music today, played a couple instrumental solos.

One was done using the *nay*, a wood-

en, flute-like instrument which gives off a mellifluous sound that quickly eases the soul. The second piece was nothing less than a powerful wake up call, Arabian-style. Dr. Racy used the *mizmar*, an old instrument resembling a pipe or flute which sounds like a thousand bagpipes sounding off at once. With the *mizmar*, Dr. Racy was able to shake the auditorium as drummer Faisal Zedan beat the *tabla* to provide the needed background. The resulting music was powerful, explosive, and rest assured, there were no sleepy heads to be seen anywhere. The *mizmar* is generally difficult to play because it stubbornly requires constant circular breathing, a musical capability not everybody can command.

During the performance, Sami Asmar, musician and ensemble president, gave an informative explanation on the types of instruments used, the origins of the musical styles, and the background of Kan Zaman itself. It started out as a group of musically talented individuals who wanted to educate the public about the Arab people and culture. It started out with practice sessions among some students and professionals who just wanted to play for personal enjoyment. Afterwards, Kan

Zaman became an organization, a sort of cultural fixture which has performed at major Southern California universities, the Los Angeles Convention Center, various libraries, museums and international festivals throughout the state. This past concert saw fans coming from all parts of Southern California, with one family travelling from as far as Texas to witness Kan Zaman's authentically Arabic music.

The many talented members of Kan Zaman include musicians Elias Tomas, Maurice Saba, David Markowitz, George Hamad, Nabih Ismerat, Thalia Goldsworthy, Yervand Khamtrashyan, Jihad Salman, Faisal Zedan, Alfred Madain, Emad Hassanieh, Salim Aiyub, George Haddad, Sami Asmar, Sami Gawad, Nader Qaqiesh and Muhsin al Hashimi. The vocalists include Sam Masoudi, Samir Saado, Abdallah Hourany, Ghazi Zedan, Sylvian Castel de Oro, Steve Kary, Mondher Saied, Elia Azar, Adel Mansour, Hoda Stefanos, Ban Aziz, Ghada Jamal, Hanan Kary, Rana Silyan, Umaima Baqer, Lana Khalaf, Faiza Lansing and Mary Soliman. Kan Zaman's conductor and artistic director is Wael Kakish.