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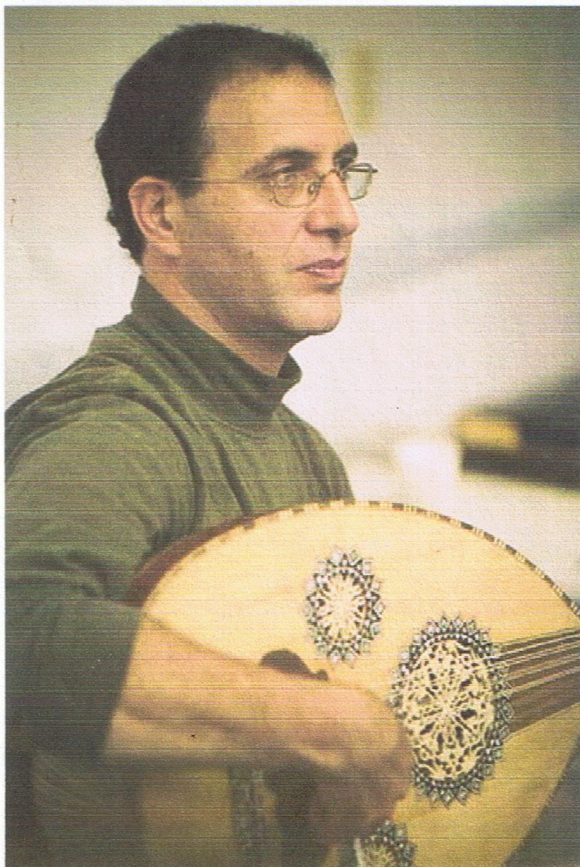
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The Kan Zaman Ensemble

I am privileged to have Dr. Wanda Bryant as my teacher for Music Cultures and this semester, for Middle Eastern Music studies, she invited members of Pasadena's Kan Zaman ensemble to come and share their art with us.

The performers were Wael Kakish (voice, 'ud and buzuq), Moses Nasser (voice and qanun), Lana Khalaf (voice), Moheb Boules (ney), and Petro Al amar (riqq). They performed an Egyptian song called Sama'l Bayyati al-Aryan by Ibrahim al-Aryan, a Layali, and a Mawwal by Farid Al Atrash called "Ya Binti Baladi"



The Kan Zaman ensemble specializes in classical a

[\(http://seenandheard.calarts.edu/2011/04/01/the-kan-zaman-ensemble/kan-zaman1/\)](http://seenandheard.calarts.edu/2011/04/01/the-kan-zaman-ensemble/kan-zaman1/) nd folkloric Arabic music and has won numerous awards for their excellence and contribution to diversity in Southern Californian music.

They gave short explanations of their instruments. The Oud, which means "wood," is fretless to accommodate their microtonal scales.

The Ney is a vertical wind instrument that consists of 9 joints (similar to bamboo) with 7 holes (6 on front and one on back). They come in a 7-piece set (for different modes) and are played by creating a circle inside your mouth and channeling the air towards the edge of the instrument. The actual ability to produce a sound on this instrument is the most challenging part.

The Qanun (which means "law") is the instrument that the Takht (traditional Middle Eastern ensemble) tunes to. It is shaped like a trapezoid with 81 strings with groups of three strings to a note; 4 octaves total. Stainless steel finger picks are used and a similar playing technique to the harp is employed (playing with forefingers). There are levers at the end of the strings for microtonal tuning.

Wael Kakish also brought out a smaller Oud (a gypsy instrument) called the Tambour on one of the songs. It's a Sitar-like instrument with moveable frets and usually only 2 strings, though this one had 3. You only play one string and the other string(s) is a drone.

In all of the music they played, only one song was purely instrumental. They explained that Arabic music is primarily vocal and that if you held an instrumental concert in the Middle East that people would likely walk out after the first few songs.

as an introduction or sectional break.

The voice is prized because it can deliver a message. Instrumental music is treated

It was a beautiful mini-concert and they made sure to invite us to their open rehearsals. They are every Wednesday night, 8pm-midnight and are open to the community.

Written by [James \(http://seenandheard.calarts.edu/author/james/\)](http://seenandheard.calarts.edu/author/james/).

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