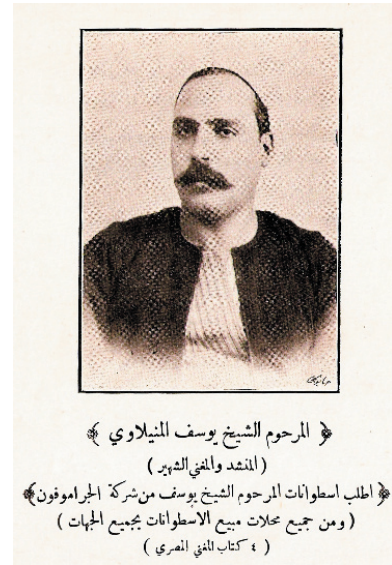


Tarek Atoui Visiting Tarab

A Performa Commission with
the Sharjah Art Foundation.



◆ PERFORMA 11



SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION



Ali al-Qasabji and his son Muhammad
علي القصبجي مع ابنه محمد القصبجي

There is no word in English that accurately translates the word Tarab from Arabic to English, which makes it very difficult to define. Tarab is used in Arab culture to describe the emotional effect of music, but it is also associated with a traditional form of art-music. The word 'Tarab' ... refers to an older repertoire, which is rooted in the pre World War 1 musical practice of Egypt and the East-Mediterranean Arab world and is directly associated with emotional evocation. Tarab sessions are known to last hours where both enchantment and ecstasy play an important role within the Tarab performance. Tarab is a musically induced state of Ecstasy, an enchantment roused by of music, whereas Spanish Duende depicts the state the musician may experience during his performance - it is called in Arabic Saltana-, Tarab describes the enchantment of the audience. The starting point of this project is the private music collection of Kamal Kassar who owns the biggest library of Tarab and classical Arab music in the world. His collection is constituted of old 78 rpm shellac discs and studio tapes of music between 1903 and 1950, largely covering the Arab renaissance period that started early in the nineteenth century and

continued through the 30th of the twentieth century. This collection contains around 5500 discs and more than 6000 to 6500 hours of tape recordings we find for instance, the first Arab music discs ever recorded in the Middle East representing the prolific and genuine golden era of the renaissance, as well as Arab music that is uninfluenced by western instruments, arrangements and scales. The library is now in Lebanon, but a lot of its material was found in old record shops and old private collections in Cairo Lebanon and Syria. Some of it was in very bad condition. For the last 2 years Kamal Kassar has been digitizing and preserving this collection through the Foundation for Arab Music Archiving & Research (AMAR), that he recently founded. A lot of the material has been digitized and noise reduced, but original versions with very particular noise grains and signal distortions are available. The project for Performa is about revisiting Tarab as musical genre and form as well as looking at it from a sound & performative perspectives.

1- Revisiting Tarab and classical Arab music:

The idea is to open Kamal Kassar's collection to 12 or 15 musicians and sound artists from different practices and horizons. From pop, hip hop, electronic, contemporary, improvised and noise music, artists known for their performative work and for their sampling and noise techniques will be invited to use this library as sound material for live acts and performances they imagine and conceive. As part of the archive is digitized, the invited artists will have to access to it through soft copies. The work process will aim to introduce them to the history of Tarab, and deepening their understanding of its forms and its performative contexts. Kamal Kassar as well as musicians and musicologists from AMAR will provide that kind of initiation.

2- The final performance:

The artistic proposals can range from Dj sets to more sophisticated acts and performances. They can be acoustic or electronic and they will all be presented during one long evening, inspired by how Tarab sessions take place.

For 4 to 5 hours, the music will be continuous and will follow a meticulous build up of energies, intensities and textures inspired by the structure and the rules of Tarab.

For example, during the first third of the 20th century the Tarab band is formed of around five musicians playing in a heterophonic form giving way to a feeling of depth in the music. In later stages the band was enlarged to copy western orchestras. Those big bands accompanied Umm Kulthum, Abdel Wahab and many other great singers, but as they intended to play tutti, heterophony started to disappear...

These changes and others, will inspire curate and orchestrate the final evening, where the notions of enchantment and ecstasy will be revisited in relation to these changes and today's realities.

The evening will not only be a series of solos, collaborations and improvisations are also expected to take place with an attention given to the singularity, the technique and the physicality of each performer.+



کابل افیئر انجیلے





<http://www.visitingtarab.com>
<http://www.tarekatoui.com>

All images courtesy of AMAR foundation