



902349

Tracklisting:

1. Horizon
2. Bombs Turn Into Roses
3. Hi-Jazz
4. Touta
5. Queen Of The Night
6. Syrian Dreams
7. The Seven Gates Of Damascus

Producer and engineer:

Jerry Boys

Executive producer : Joe Boyd

Musicians:

Maya Youssef: qanun
Sebastian Flaig: percussion
(Indian wooden castanets,
frame drum, doholla)
Barney Morse-Brown: cello
Attab Haddad: oud

Listen:

[https://mayayoussef.com/
music/](https://mayayoussef.com/music/)
[https://mayayoussef.com/
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Press:

Mike Gavin
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Label:

Simon Astridge
simon.astridge@pias.com

Artist: www.mayayoussef.com

Maya Youssef

Syrian Dreams

Release date: 17 Nov 2017

PRESS RELEASE

Launch 20th November at Rich Mix London

"This album is my personal journey through the 6 years of war in Syria. It is a translation of my memories of home and my feelings into music. I see the act of playing music as the opposite of death; it is a life and hope-affirming act. To me music is a healer and an antidote to what is happening, not only in Syria, but across the whole world. I like to think that my music brings people back to humanity and to their heart centres, where no harm can be done to any form of life and where all can exist together in peace."

Maya Youssef

Maya Youssef's virtuosity and unique innovative approach to playing the qanun, originally a traditional instrument, has expanded her audiences to international platforms. She combines her extraordinary musical gifts with a generosity of outlook, warmth, humour and optimism.

The qanun is a traditional Syrian 78 stringed plucked zither. It also exists in the rest of the Arab world, Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan but in slightly different forms. The Arabic word 'qanun' translates as 'The Law': the qanun sets the pitch at traditional ensembles as well as leading it in some cases.

Maya has performed all over the world and is the winner of the Exceptional Talent award which enabled her to migrate to the UK in 2012. As well as music she is researching "Music Healing for Syrian Refugee Children" as her PhD project at SOAS University of London, where she is also teaching the qanun and directing the SOAS Middle Eastern Ensemble. Maya is a regular on the BBC and was featured at the BBC Proms at The Royal Albert Hall.

Maya is from a progressive and intellectual Damascus family of writers and artists. She was the first musician in the family but her father had a huge collection of music from all over the world: Arabic Classical, Jazz, Fusion, World, Tibetan monks, Western Classical... She started learning music aged 7 at Sulhi al-Wadi institute of music in Damascus. When she was 12 she won the Best Musician Award in the National Music Competition for Youth. She continued at the High Institute of Music and Dramatic Arts in Damascus for a BA in Music specialising in qanun graduating in 2007 before moving to Dubai to perform and then to Oman in 2009 to teach and perform.

"What is it that makes an instrumentalist a virtuoso? I'd say it was a mystical symbiosis that takes place before your very ears and eyes, so that, for you, they define their instrument and their instrument defines them. And so new audiences will discover that Maya is both possessed by the qanun and personifies it. Every time I hear her play it's a revelation...she seems to reach another level of dextrous skill to draw you further into her flamboyant and intricate maqam labyrinth. Maya you are a revelation. This is a wonderful recording debut and I look forward to listening and watching your transformational and glorious trajectory across new musical horizons in the years ahead." Max Reinhardt BBC broadcaster