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## Kay Campbell of al Hareem Orchestra

Jawaahir's stirring performance of *Girls' Night Qat IN* at the Southern Theater was enriched by the outstanding musical direction of Kay Hardy Campbell. Kay jokes that Cassandra asked her to direct the all-women al Hareem Orchestra because she's bossy, but it was Kay's knowledge and talent that landed her the job.

Kay lives in Boston, but spent her childhood in Minnesota. At 15, she saw *Lawrence of Arabia* and was deeply affected by the movie's overture and beautiful vistas. She says that although the movie stretches history and the Arabic music is "dumbed-down," she was hooked! She graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies at a time when Saudi Arabia was the happening place, with wealth pouring in and jobs abounding, and its draw on her was powerful. She went with her husband and they stayed for 7 years, before returning to the U.S. in the mid-1980s.

Kay earned a master's degree in Middle Eastern Studies and an MBA, and worked in commercial banking for 15 years while pursuing writing and Middle Eastern music. After 9/11, the bank was bought out and she took a "mid-life sabbatical to throw myself into the mix to do my part." She is now a musician, writer, lecturer, Middle East specialist, dancer, teacher, Jawaahir board member, and Administrative Director of the Arabic Music Retreat. Kay specializes in folk music and dance of Saudi Arabia and the Arabian Gulf, and plays the 'ud, the pear-shaped predecessor of the lute.



*Al Hareem Orchestra*  
 Clockwise from lower left:  
 Nicole LeCorgne, Beth Bahja  
 Cohen, Kay Hardy Campbell, Anne  
 Elise Thomas, Bridget Robbins,  
 Laura Harada, Susu Pampanin

Since *Girls' Night Qat IN* depicted a Middle Eastern women's dance party, an all-women's band was needed. Kay had played with most of the musicians before, and spoke with Cassandra about their experiences in Morocco. It was important to make the show flow and acknowledge that parties can get out of hand, so it was decided that the finale would be the zar, which is used for psychological healing.

Kay speaks passionately about the musicians, saying "Each was a star in her own right!" She says there's a different dynamic working with women, calling it an "all-round uplifting experience." What's so cool about Jawaahir, she adds, is that Cassandra, with her knowledge and respect for culture and tradition, is open to new ideas and pulling together elements that no one else is doing. Kay was moved by the performance of her composition, *Lullaby*: "Only a women's group could have performed it so well and with such great tenderness." And, after working together so intensively for two weeks, the band was both sweeter and sizzling by the end.

Kay is polishing her novel about two Saudi women, a troubled college graduate and an elderly Bedouin storyteller. She points out that history is usually told through events, but the view is clearer if you look at women's lives. Kay hopes the novel will educate and make others aware of the wonderful Saudi people. She'll be traveling to Morocco this fall with Oasis Dance Camp and looks forward to enjoying the Moroccan people and their culture. For more about Kay and her exciting projects, visit [kayhardycampbell.com](http://kayhardycampbell.com).

## Reserve Your Space for the Gala and Weeklong On-Line!

Don't miss *Caravan Under the Stars! Jawaahir's Third Annual Gala and Fundraiser* is Saturday, May 10 from 6 to 10 pm at The Woman's Club of Minneapolis with MPR radio's Cathy Wurzer, silent and live auctions, entertainment, henna, appetizers and desserts, and cash bar. Don't forget to dress to shine! Tickets can be purchased for \$35 at [www.jawaahir.org](http://www.jawaahir.org) or by calling 612-872-6050.

It's a new time for *Cassandra's 2008 Weeklong Oriental Dance Intensive!* This year it will be June 16-21 at the Jawaahir studios and includes five days of dance classes, live drum accompanist, and three performances: participant dinner show, *Enchanted Evening*, and *Cassandra's Cabaret*. Oriental and folkloric technique will be covered along with two choreographies, conditioning and stretching, lectures, teaching assistants, Saturday review and video session, and vendors. The cost is \$600 US, and space is limited to 30. For more information or to register, visit [www.jawaahir.org](http://www.jawaahir.org) or call 612-872-6050.

## Bridget Robbins of al Hareem Orchestra

*Nay* player Bridget Robbins was Riga among al Hareem's shining stars! Her passion for the Arabic flute was born 17 years ago, when, as a student of western flute at the University of California, she attended an assembly where a professor played the *nay*. As a flutist, she was naturally drawn to the instrument, and its exotic sound drew her even further. At the time, she was in the beginning of her flute studies, when practice is rigid with no room for deviation. Bridget saw that she could immediately put herself into the *nay* because it requires ornamentation and improvisation.

Her performances are inspired by that freedom along with the challenge of playing the instrument. With its simple construction—basically a tube with six holes—it's harder to play than the western flute. After moving to New York, Bridget began taking lessons with master *nay*ist Bassam Saba, and studied with him for years. She says it's still important for her to take lessons for her musical development, just like professional dancers!

Bridget shares by teaching flute and *dumbak* (drum) to grade school students for the Brooklyn Conservatory.

Although she likes to keep her classes fun, she's had to become more stern, but says it's so rewarding to see the students' development and personalities emerge. She also performs at school assemblies, where programs include violin and 'ud players, Nicole LeCorgne (another al Hareem member) on drums, and a dancer. She also performs with Zikrayat, a group in which Nicole also plays.

Influenced by dancers, Bridget says that Cassandra brings out the music when she dances and makes her hear the music differently. She performed in her first Jawaahir show, *Sawwah*, last year, and says it was unusual, inspiring, and fun to play with al Hareem this year. In fact, al Hareem had its own fun *Girls' Night ~~At~~ IN!* One evening, the musicians were hanging out and Nicole put some music on the stereo. They begged her to play anything but music from the show, but she jokingly put on Said Mrad's *Move*. They started to dance and imitate steps from the show, which lead to lots of laughter and so much noise that they received a visit from the police! It seems that art does, indeed, imitate life, and we hope that Bridget and her fun-loving spirit and talent will return to Minneapolis soon!

## Did You Know...

...*Taqasim* is an instrumental improvisation unique to Arabic music. The Arabic music scale, or *maqam*, is different from the western scale. On a western piano, an octave covers 8 white keys and 5 black keys, or 13 notes. Arabic music can be played with 17, 19, or 24 notes in an octave. Therefore, the human voice and instruments can more easily "get" the notes between those on a piano's octave. These are called quarter tones, microtones, or half-flats and half-sharps.

Improvisation in Arabic music is the use of these notes for the variation of a theme. The scales, or *maqamat*, can be played on a variety of instruments. On this framework, performers build a sequence of unharmonized melodies, varying the original rhythm and improvising new ones. The instrumentalist starts at the tonic, building melodies and phrases around the notes of the *maqam*, ascending and then descending the scale.

Only about 25 percent of playing the *nay*, for example, is playing the basic melody. That's the beauty of Middle Eastern music: there is a basic melodic line, but each instrument is different in sound, part, ornamentation, and attack.

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## Upcoming Events

Caravan Under the Stars: Jawaahir Gala and Fundraiser  
Cassandra's Weeklong Intensive  
Jawaahir performs in Enchanted Evening  
Cassandra's Cabaret

Saturday, May 10, 6pm  
June 16–21  
Friday, June 20  
Saturday, June 21

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