

اللاخفا

LEKHFA

MARYAM SALEH
MAURICE LOUCA
TAMER ABU GHAZALEH

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Three musicians who came of age in 1990s Cairo, their disparate paths in music intersect a couple of decades later when they're drawn to each other's work, and agree to meet at a seaside cabin in Alexandria, followed by residencies in Amman, Cairo and Beirut to create and record a new album.

Maryam Saleh, Maurice Louca and and Tamer Abu Ghazaleh, names that have turned heads in alternative Arabic music with solo albums and conspicuous collaborations, with Lekhfa they give birth to an off kilter sound where layers of grit and beauty intertwine in and around the dystopian poems of their contemporary Mido Zoheir, whom they've dubbed the fourth member in this creation and one of the most talented Egyptian poets of their generation.

Three years in the making, the album features every possible instrument they came across along that journey with Maryam Saleh on vocals, Tamer Abu Ghazaleh on vocals, ouds, buzuq, mizmar, synths, keys, synth bass and electric guitar, Maurice Louca on beat loops, electronics, synths, keys, slide guitar, guitar and harmonium joined by Khaled Yassine on various percussions and drums and Mahmoud Waly on bass.

Inspiring the work of these three musicians is a distinct sentiment that Mido Zoheir taps into, penning a certain reckoning with reality that eschews nihilism in favor of jubilant desperation. Teskar Tebki (drunk, you weep like a kid), perhaps one of the ten tracks that best embody this juxtaposition, is essentially an Egyptian dance track with a dirty downbeat maqsum rhythm, flowery oud, buzuq, synth and guitar arrangements, inhabited by Maryam and Tamer's soulful interpretations of gut wrenching lines such as "you whose tears fall like bricks, in your heart, a branch still blooms". With its explicit lyrics, Teskar Tebki will only be released in the uncensored version of the album.

Maryam Saleh

A major creative force and a powerful voice for her generation, Egyptian singer and songwriter Maryam Saleh composes and performs music that is personal, political and contemplative. She released her monumental debut album Mesh Baghanny (eka3, 2012), after which she joined forces with Lebanese electro-pop pioneer Zeid Hamdan to release Halawella (Mostakell 2015). Known for her muscular, alluring vocals and charismatic stage presence, stemming from being brought up in the world of theatre by her late father, theatre critic, director and writer Saad Saleh. Maryam is also known for bringing the protest songs of Sheikh Imam back to life in new alternative forms through her band BarakA. She starred in many Egyptian films and TV series including Ibrahim El-Batout's Eye of the Sun (2008) and Tamer El Said's In the Last Days of the City (2016).



Maurice Louca

Inspired by many influences, from psychedelic to Egyptian shaabi, Maurice Louca's second album Benhayyi Al-Baghbaghan (Nawa Recordings, 2014) shattered the confines of musical and cultural labelling and was dubbed by many as a game-changer for the region's bustling independent music scene. He went on to co-found the Dwarfs of East Agouza with Sam Shalabi and Alan Bishop, releasing their first album together to worldwide critical acclaim. Maurice is also a founding member of Alif, Karkhana and Bekya and he continues to compose for film, dance and theatre.

Tamer Abu Ghazaleh

A cross-genre composer, producer and a prolific collaborator born in Cairo to a Palestinian family, Tamer released his latest album Thulth (third), via Mostakell in 2016, earning him widespread attention for melding virtuosity with fierce experimentation in Arabic composition, songwriting and performance. In 2012 he co-founded the critically acclaimed alternative band Alif with Maurice Louca and Khyam Allami; produced Maryam Saleh's debut album Mesh Baghanny in 2012; collaborated with Yacoub Abu Ghosh on his album As Blue as the Rivers of Amman in 2011; started the cross-genre group Kazamada in 2010 with Zeid Hamdan, Mahmoud Radaideh and Donia Massoud; released Thawret Ala' (Revolution of Anxiety), a collaborative piece of musical theatre performed by Al-Tamye Theatre Group in 2008; worked with Palestinian and Egyptian artists on Jehar with Huda Asfour; collaborated in Duo Buzuq with Rabea Jubran and in Kalam Mazzika with Salam Yousry and performed on Khaled Jubran's Psalms in 2005.

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