

# Know Your Composers

**Dia Succari, Syria (b.1938)** was born in Aleppo, where he became a disciple of the Russian violinist Michael Boricenko. In 1951 he went to Paris where he studied musicology and composition under the famous Olivier Messaien. His works ranged from chamber music to symphony, characterised and inspired by oriental themes, such as the chants of the Syrian trilogy *Ur Nina*, *Baal* and *Anat*, and many others.

**Gamal Abdel Rahim, Egypt (1924-1988)** His father was an oriental musician, a fact that must have positively influenced Gamal's oriental sensitivity. Later on he studied western music and piano at the hands of European professors in Cairo. In 1950 he obtained a fellowship to study music composition in Friburg, Germany, under Professor Harald Gentzmer. Returning to Egypt in 1957 he taught and established the first department of music composition in the Arab world, from which many Arab composers have graduated. When composing he was in quest of modern Egyptian music, drawing upon the roots and forms while making the best use of sophisticated western techniques. He was a pioneer and a great professor in his field.

**Esam Al-Jowder, Bahrain (b.1962)** Born in Bahrain in 1962, he studied composition under Gamal Abdelraheem at the Cairo Conservatoire, gaining a master's degree with distinction in 1997. He went on to study under Alwynne Pritchard and Andre Lovett at Trinity College of Music, London, and is currently researching a PhD in Composition at the University of Bristol under the supervision of Geoff Poole.

His compositions have been performed by the Cairo Symphony Orchestra, the Cairo Opera House Orchestra and the European Union Chamber Orchestra, both in the Middle East and in Europe. They have featured regularly at the Bahrain International Music Day Festival, which he established in 1992. He has also composed several works for the Young Egyptian Musicians Society and has been a frequent participant at the annual Arab Musical Conference in Egypt. 2006 and 2007 saw him participating as a composer to Arab Perspectives – the New Generation, a music festival held annually at the Cairo Opera House. He has been engaged in researching musical expressions in Arab songs and Arabic scales.

In 2002, Essam was awarded the Medal of Achievement from His High Majesty Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa King of Bahrain, and was acknowledged for his achievements in music by the Arab Academy of Music.

**Mustafa Aïcha Al-Rahmani, Morocco (b.1944)** was born in Tetouan. He studied music, piano and cello at the then Spanish Conservatoire and musical composition with Professor Emilio Soto. After finishing his studies in 1972 he produced a large variety of musical works. His music shows influence of Andalusia culture and he is distinguished for his 'Lied-style' songs. His works have been played in Spain,

France, Morocco, Greece and Syria.

**Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)** was born in Warsaw, Poland, composer and virtuoso pianist, who left the country when was twenty years old, making his home in France after the November uprising in Poland. He worked as a piano teacher and composer and gave few concerts. He used a French passport when travelling. His romantic involvement with Aurore Dupin (more famously known as George Sand) a French novelist, was ill-fated from the beginning. After a long illness he died of pulmonary tuberculosis at thirty-nine years of age. The *Nocturnes op. 9* are a set of three dedicated to Madame Camille Pleyel. The second of the set is full of melancholy and is written in a rounded binary form with an instruction of *senza tempo* in the penultimate bar, is reflective in mood and passionate near the end. Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908) is the transcriber for this piece for violin and piano.

**Boghos Gelalian, Lebanon (b.1927)** was born in Syrian Alexandrette. He showed great interest in playing the various musical instruments, including the harmonium and organ. Upon the Turkish annexation of his hometown in 1939 his family emigrated, along with other Armenians, to Tripoli, Lebanon. He continued his studies of the harmonium, the organ and the harp, and studied composition under the tutelage of Professor Belling.

In 1954 he was teaching piano, in 1957 accompanied artists at the piano at the National Conservatoire in Beirut and in 1961 became professor of piano and musicology. He obtained a number of international awards in musical composition including the 1964 and 1966 awards of the Lebanese Young Musicians. In 1965 he won the Club du Faubourg prize for all his works and in 1969 won the Saïd Akl prize. He received distinction from the Vatican and the title of Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres from France. He has published works in Lebanon, France, Italy, Germany and Argentina and his works are played in many countries through the world.

**Zayed Jabri, Syria (b.1973)** was born in Damascus into an arts-loving family; his father, Ghassan Jabri was a TV Director and his mother, Asma Fayuni a painter and interior designer. Zayed fell in love with modern and classical music, drawn to and impressed by the Polish School and its eminent figures Lutoslawski and Penderecki, so much that he decided to study music composition in Krakow under Professor Zbigniew Buyarski. He obtained the first Prize in the Adam Dedur Competition in 1997 and he has had works performed in Poland, Germany, Armenia, Italy and Syria where his compositions were played by the Syrian National Orchestra under the leadership of Solhi Al Wadi.

**Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992)** was born in Mar del Plata, grew up in New York, settled in Paris and performed the Argentine new tango. An exceptionally talented musician and composer

he was also a gifted linguist, fluent in English, Spanish, French and Italian. In 1955 formed the *Octeto de Buenos Aires*, the most innovative group in the history of tango who broke all traditional forms with regard to arrangements and "sound". The musicians were worried about the quality of music they were playing so Osvaldo Pugliese was invited to a rehearsal at *Rendez Vous*, when Pugliese declared "it is tango", the group was satisfied. Unable to sell enough recordings to maintain themselves, the *Octeto de Buenos Aires* was forced to disband after a year and a half. *Tango en La* is a short piece, very musical with an energetic swing of tango with notable registers.

**Zequinha de Abreu (1880-1935)** remarkable Brazilian composer who contributed to the establishment of the *choro*; he learned to play simple pieces on his harmonica and joined the musical group of José de Abreu writing music, published by Casa Sotero, at a young age. Zequinha took music lessons with Dionisio Machado, Jose Pintos Tavares and Rossini Tavares de Lima. As a composer he wrote choros, marchinhas, vales and tangos. After his father died the family moved to Sao Paulo and his breakthrough came when *Casa Vitale* published his valse *Branca* dedicated to the daughter of the train station manager. *Tico Tico No Fubá* (little bird eating corn meal) is a jumpy fast tempo choro music piece written in 1917 and published in 1930 with lyrics by Eurico Barreiros. The piece was recorded by Ademilde Fonseca in 1942; it was also included in the *Aquarela do Brasil* section of the picture *Saludos Amigos* by Walt Disney studios in the same year. Later Carmen Miranda was to sing it in the film *Copacabana* with lyrics by Aluisio de Oliveira (1947).

**Rodion Shchedrin (b.1932)** a prolific Russian composer, pianist and organist, his father was a composer and taught music theory. He studied at the Moscow Choral School and later entered the Moscow Conservatoire, graduating under Yuri Shaporin and Nikolai Myaskovskii. He wrote pieces of considerable aleatoric and serial techniques, among them operas, ballets, orchestral works, concertos and concertante pieces, liturgical, and chamber music, vocal, solo piano and violin etc. His successes as a performer and composer opened the doors to Germany where became a member of the Berlin Academy of Arts. As a pianist he performed for the premières of the first three of his six piano concertos. Later received the Russian State Prize presented to him by President Boris Yeltsin in 1992. Shchedrin is married to Maya Plitetskaya and currently divides his time between Munich and Moscow. *In the style of Albéniz op. 52* was written in 1973 with some touches of folk music beautifully orchestrated, inspired in the style of the Spanish composer.

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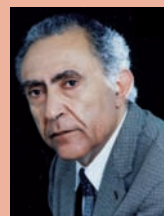
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