

BBC - Proms - 9 August 2010

Prom 33: BBC Radio 3 World Routes Academy

Ilham Al Madfai

Date Monday 9 August 2010

Time 10.00pm–c11.20pm

Venue [Royal Albert Hall](#)

Tickets £10/£15, [price band D](#) or [Prom for £5](#)

Broadcast live on BBC Radio 3. Available on demand for 7 days.

Pioneering Iraqi guitarist, singer and composer Ilham Al Madfai was the first in his country to internationalise Iraqi music and blend it with contemporary world styles. He brings a group of musicians to present his own songs as well as arrangements of Iraqi standards, and he introduces young oud player Khyam Allami, whom he has been mentoring as part of BBC Radio 3's new World Routes Academy.



The young Iraqi Oud player, London-resident Allami came to the oud – the Middle Eastern lute – via the violin, drums and bass guitar. He is the first recipient of this exciting scholarship, founded to foster artistic collaborations and support young artists working in world music.

There will be no interval

Ilham Al Madfai *guitar/vocalist*

Khyam Allami *oud*

Saro Kevorkian *drum kit*

Anwar Abo Daoud *joza*

Faisal Ghazi *percussion*

Omar Ahmed Majeed *percussion*

Suhad Najm Abdullah *qanun*

Nicola Barakat *electric bass*

Robert Michel *guitar*

For more information visit

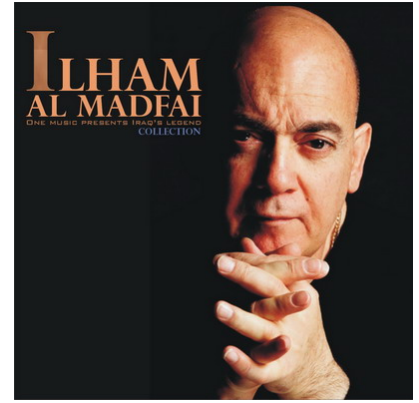
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/proms/2010/whatson/0908.shtml#prom33>

For ticket information visit

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/proms/2010/booking/howtobook.shtml>

Ilham Al Madfai

was born and raised in the early forties in Baghdad, Iraq. His musical talent began developing at the age of twelve. He was and remains until today a guitarist at heart. He formally started his musical career when he formed his first band "Twisters" in 1961, comprising of electric guitar, bass guitar And drums. It was the first band in Iraq and probably the Arab world to use modern rock instruments in playing Arabic music. He pioneered Arabic-World music crossover. Ilham modernized the traditional Iraqi song giving it a new wider appeal and a new freshness placing it in the modern era.



The band created a new wave in Arabic music but Ilham was heavily criticised by the public and media for being an eccentric and for destroying long maintained musical traditions. Further more, his family, who enjoyed a high profile at the time, some of them holding high governmental positions, were not only strongly against his musical style, but also against his involvement in music in general. They were very concerned about their son Ilham developing a socially inappropriate career.

Ilham has worked with many western and oriental musical talents. He has played with talents as diverse as Donovan, Art Blakey, Johnny "Ace" Harris, Munir Bachir, Tommy Aros, Nazem El Ghazaley, Glen Fisher, Chico, Sabah, Hollis Gentry, Aboud Abdel Al, and collaborated lyrically with the likes of Nazar Qabbani, Bedr Shakir El Sayyab, Ilyya Abu Maadhi, Abdul Qassim Al Shabi, and Abdel Wahab El Bayati.



Ilham's latest album "Baghdad" was released in June 2003, inspired by the current situation, it pays homage to Ilham's beloved city. The album was recorded over two years in London and in the Middle East and features reputable Arab and Western musicians, with musical influences, instrumentations and fusions ranging from Jazz and Latin to Classical Arabic and Iraqi. The album is arranged and produced by Ilham, and following on his tradition of doing renditions of classics, the album includes some very loved nostalgic tunes and some less known hidden gems from the Iraqi folklore. It also includes original tracks including collaborations with the renowned poets : Kareem Al Iraqi, Kathem Al Saidi, Muthafar Al Nawab & the legendary Nizar Qabbani.

Previous press reviews visit:

<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/features/ilham-almadfai-triumph-of-the-baghdad-beatle-586913.html>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2003/jul/24/worldmusic.artsfeatures>

Khyam Allami

Khyam is a London based musician of Iraqi descent and the first beneficiary of Radio 3's World Routes Academy which aims to support and inspire young world-music artists by bringing them together with an internationally renowned mentor belonging to the same tradition. Khyam's mentor is the celebrated Iraqi guitarist, singer and composer Ilham al Madfai, who lives in Jordan and who Khyam will be working with in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan later this year. Khyam Allami is a young and active London based musician of Iraqi descent. Born to an Iraqi family in Damascus, Syria, in 1981 and brought up in London from the age of 9, his passion for music began in Syria at the age of 8. From the Violin his interests moved towards Rock and in 1996 began to play Drums and Bass Guitar. In 2004 his interests took a turn once again and he began to study the 'Ud (or Oud - Arabic Lute), Arabic music theory and traditional Iraqi repertoire with the London based Iraqi maestro Ehsan Emam with who he continues to study today. Khyam graduated with a BA Honours in Music Studies (Ethnomusicology) from the University of London in June 2008, Throughout his BA, his studies focused on the 'Ud, the music of the Arab world, North Indian Classical Music and the Mugham tradition of Azerbaijan. During this period he also studied Indian Tabla for one and a half years with Guruji Sanju Sahai. His practical, performance based masters research focuses on the Iraqi 'Ud school, its influences and development, those being the Turkish and Egyptian 'Ud schools alongside the classical and folk music of Iraq.





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