

9-1-2001

**2001-2002**

Middle Eastern Music Ensemble'

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.wm.edu/memea\\_ephemera](https://scholarworks.wm.edu/memea_ephemera)



Part of the [Ethnomusicology Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Middle Eastern Music Ensemble', "2001-2002" (2001). *Ephemera Materials*. 14.  
[https://scholarworks.wm.edu/memea\\_ephemera/14](https://scholarworks.wm.edu/memea_ephemera/14)

This Ephemera is brought to you for free and open access by the Middle Eastern Music Ensemble Archive at W&M ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Ephemera Materials by an authorized administrator of W&M ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@wm.edu](mailto:scholarworks@wm.edu).

## OUT AND ABOUT



### Music ensemble in concert

The William & Mary Middle Eastern Music Ensemble, under the direction of Anne Rasmussen, will present its fall concert Sunday, Nov. 18, at 7 p.m. at Williamsburg Regional Library theater. The concert coincides with the release of the group's new CD, "Live, in Concert," a compilation of its best concert performances 1997-2001. Featured guest artists will be Maryem Hassán Tollar of Toronto, Canada; Ernie Tollar; the William & Mary Botetourt Chamber Singers; and Najla Turczyn. The music ensemble has performed with several organizations and at various festivals, coffeehouses, restaurants and private parties. The 20th century ensemble combines performers on instruments indigenous to the Middle East, including 'ud (fretless lute), qanun (75-string zither in triple courses), nay (reed flute), kamanjan (violin) as well as percussion instruments, the daff, riqq and darabukkah, borrowed from the Western Europe and the Americas. The concert is free and open to the public.

Please join us to celebrate the release of our compact disc recording at our Fall Gala Concert!

## The William & Mary Middle Eastern Music Ensemble

(Anne Rasmussen, Director)



7:00 PM  
Sunday,  
November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2001  
Williamsburg  
Library Theatre  
(@ Scotland &  
Armistead Streets)  
free and open  
to the public

Featuring Guest Artists:  
**Maryem Hassan Tollar**  
Ernie Tollar, nay (reed flute)  
The W&M  
Botetourt Chamber Singers  
(Jamie Bartlett, Director)  
and with dancer Najla Turczyn!

information: [akrasm@wm.edu](mailto:akrasm@wm.edu) // 757-221-1097



## Ensemble Focus:

### *The William & Mary Middle Eastern Music Ensemble:*

*Entertaining & Educating Since 1994*

---

*By Sara R. Waller \**

Upon arriving at The College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, one will discover the existence of the W&M Middle Eastern Music Ensemble by perusing brightly-colored flyers on bulletin boards or by attending an event, function, or festival on the campus of The College of William and Mary.

Established in 1994, the W&M Middle Eastern Music Ensemble is composed of 15 to 20 undergraduate students. The musicians come from many backgrounds and musical training levels including Western classical, Baroque, chamber music, Appalachian, old-time, jazz, and theatre. They work together under Dr. Anne K. Rasmussen's direction and are transformed from individuals having no prior experience with Arab, Turkish, Persian, Armenian, or Greek traditions into an ensemble producing beautiful music.

The director, Dr. Rasmussen, is Associate Professor of Music and Ethnomusicology in the Department of Music at the College. She has been performing Middle Eastern music since 1985 in conjunction with her studies at the University of California at Los Angeles and fieldwork among Arab-American communities across the United States. Energetic and patient, she

conducts the most intense, invigorating, and satisfying rehearsals on Wednesday evenings that include ear training, examination of the modal scales and rhythmic patterns, and study of folk, traditional, and popular Middle Eastern music compositions.

Offered as a regular music department course, the ensemble is not supported by any regular stipend or budget. It survives solely on grants from a number of academic departments and programs that generously support its work year after year.

The W&M Middle Eastern Music Ensemble performs regularly in formal concerts in the Williamsburg area--at local music festivals, churches, and elementary schools.

The author with Dr. Rasmussen, Associate Professor of Music and Ethnomusicology and Director of the Middle-Eastern Ensemble of Music.



The ensemble has been fortunate to work with and feature numerous guest artists including:

Nabil Azzam (composer, violin); Munir Beken (composer, 'ud and tanbur); Latif Bolat (vocals and baglama); Kenan Yildiz (baglama); Nadim Dlaikan (nay); Yusef Kassab (vocals); Sue Rudnick (darbukkah); George Sawa (qanun); Nader Majd (vocals and tar); Ali Analoui (tonbak); Richard Hagopian (vocals and 'ud); and Harold Hagopian (violin).

It has traveled the region to venues including Marhaba Club of the Tidewater Arab American community; The Southeast Regional Association of Middle East and Islamic Scholars (SERMEISS); The Mid-Atlantic Society for Ethnomusicology (MACSEM); The University of Virginia; The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church; and The Prism in Charlottesville, Virginia; Duke University; The Floyd World Music Festival in Floyd, Virginia; The University of Pittsburgh; and The Pope John Paul II Cultural Center in Washington, D.C.

By sharing its love of the music, the ensemble aims not only to entertain but also to educate the community about the music cultures of the Middle East, North Africa, and the Mediterranean regions by discussing geography, religion, dance, language, instruments, and social and cultural practices.

#### Source of information:

Dr. Anne Rasmussen, Liner notes to *The William and Mary Middle Eastern Music Ensemble: Live in Concert* (Middle Eastern Music Ensemble MEME 1, 2001).

---

\* Sara R. Waller is in her senior year at The College of William and Mary, studying music with a concentration in Ethnomusicology. She has played Western classical violin since age nine and has played violin in the W&M Middle Eastern Music Ensemble since August 2000. Sara has been a summer intern with Smithsonian Folkways Recordings in Washington, D.C.

## Sectional Meetings

Uds  
Violins

Mondays 2-3 /Tuesday 4-5  
Mondays 3-4

Percussion  
Nay and Qanun

Friday 12-1  
Fridays 2-3

## Working Schedule of Upcoming Events

~~Friday, September 14, 2001, 6:00 p.m. Gardens~~ Festival of Cultures, W&M Sunken

~~POSTPONED~~

Saturday, September 29, 2001, 4:30-5:15  
Meet in Ewell at 3:00 p.m. Family Weekend, Great Hall, Wren Building

Sunday, October 7, 2001, 3-3:45  
Meet in Ewell at 2 p.m. Occasion for the Arts, Great Hall Wren Building

Friday, November 16, 2001, 8 p.m.  
With Maryem Hassan Toller and Ernie Toller The PRISM, Charlottesville, VA

Sunday, November 18, 2001 7:00 p.m.  
Fall Concert with Maryem Hassen Toller, vocalist, Ernie Toller, wind player  
*extraordinaire*, and with the W&M Botetourt Chamber Singers Williamsburg Library Theatre

E  
W  
E  
L  
L  
C  
O  
N  
C  
E  
R  
T  
S  
E  
R  
I  
E  
S

The College of William and Mary  
Department of Music

Ewell Concert Series

Presents

*Richard Hagopian, 'ud*  
&  
*Harold Hagopian, violin*

With the  
*William and Mary*  
*Middle Eastern Music Ensemble*  
*Anne Rasmussen, director*

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Friday,  
April 12, 2002  
8 p.m.

## Program

Laylat Hubb	Composed by Muhammad Abd al-Wahhab
Longa Nihavent	Traditional Middle Eastern Repertoire
Dzagh e poonch	Traditional Armenian Dance
Rompi Rompi	Gypsy folk tune in the 9/8 rhythm karsz'lama
Bardezum	Composed by Ashugh Sheram
Sirdus Vura Kar Ma Ga	Composed by Oudi Hrant Kenkulian
Laz Bar	Traditional Dance in 7/8
Kurdili Hicazkar Longa	Composed by Kemani Sebu
<i>Huseyni Suite</i>	
Basha Bella	Urban song from Istanbul in the 10/8 rhythm curcuna
'Ud Taksim	Richard Hagopian
Ghurgeet	Maya in free rhythm composed by Oudi Hrant Kenkulian
Huseyni Saz-Semaai	Composed by Kemani Tateyos Ekserjian (10/8)
Parov Yegar Siroon Yar	Composed by Oudi Hrant Kenkulian
Laz	Traditional Dance in 7/8
Kale Kale	Armenian Folk song composed in America
Shisheler	Traditional Turkish Folk Song

**Richard and Harold Hagopian** have just returned from a 3-week concert tour of Yerevan Armenia and Istanbul Turkey, where they performed with the Turkish Ensemble Lalezar (a group some of our audience may remember from their performance in the Great Hall at William and Mary last spring). The Hagopians followed the Armenian leg of their trip with concerts in Boston and New York and have been in Williamsburg for a brief but wonderful residency with the William and Mary Middle Eastern Ensemble. We are proud and fortunate to have Richard and Harold Hagopian on stage with us this evening!

## Guest Artist Biographies

**Richard Hagopian** has become one of the most renowned Armenian musicians preserving the folk and classical repertoire of Armenians from the Ottoman Empire. He was born in California after his parents fled the Turkish Genocide of 1915 and settled in the fertile valley near Fresno, which became the largest Armenian community outside of the newly formed Soviet Armenian Republic. Hagopian studied Anatolian folk music with several of the local musicians from the old country and classical art music of the Ottoman Empire with the renowned musician Kanuni Garbis Bakirgian.

For four decades Hagopian has acted as the most important ethnomusicologist in Armenian music, collecting tunes and dances from his parents' and grandparents' generations, and passing this musical heritage on to his children, community, and mainstream audiences through local and national performances. The New York Times referred to Hagopian as "one of America's most accomplished folk musicians." In the 1960s, Hagopian formed the Kef Time Band which performs adaptations of Armenian folk songs with innovating Big Band, folk, and classical influences. The Kef Time Band produced four albums that have recently been reissued on CD on the Traditional Crossroads Label. Dirty Linen Magazine described them as "*wild, muscle-flexing Middle Eastern 'folk rock' gold... more roots than rock, but no rock music is more energized, driven of passionate.*"

Hagopian was honored with a "Meet the Composer Grant" from the New York State Council for the Arts in 1990, and has instructed master classes at both the Manhattan School of Music and California State University at Fresno, where he served as Artist in Residence. In 1991 Hagopian was awarded the prestigious "National Heritage Fellowship" by the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, the nation's highest honor awarded in the traditional folk arts. Since that time he has made two major recordings of traditional Armenian music for Smithsonian Folkways and ARC Records in Europe, which have been regarded as some of the most authentic renditions of Armenian folk music performed in the Diaspora. He has performed at major venues across the US over the last five years, including New York's Merkin Hall, The Smithsonian Folk Festival and Lisner Auditorium in Washington, D.C., in the "Folk Masters" series at Wolf Trap in Northern Virginia, The World Music Institute in New York, the Lowell Folk Festival in Massachusetts, Kenyon College, and The University of California at Santa Barbara. On May 10th he will perform a hundredth anniversary tribute concert to the legendary blind Armenian 'udist Oudi Hrant at the Freer Sackler Gallery at the Smithsonian Institution.

**Harold Hagopian** learned to play the 'ud and kanun from his father Richard. He is also an accomplished performer on the violin of European classical music and is a graduate of the Juilliard School of Music. In 1988 Harold Hagopian performed the US premiers at Carnegie Hall of several soviet Armenian composers. He toured Europe and Russia with the Schleswig-Holstein Orchestra directed by Leonard Bernstein from 1988-1990. Harold Hagopian commissioned Alan Hovhaness to write a violin concerto that mixes Middle Eastern Makam with Western Classical Styles. Hagopian was the violinist for its premier piece in 1990.

Harold Hagopian is founder and artistic director of Traditional Crossroads Recording Company ([www.traditionalcrossroads.com](http://www.traditionalcrossroads.com)). He has produced projects that range from traditional folk artists from Armenia to the music of legendary master musician and composer Oudi Hrant to Cuban, Irish, Balkan, and Klezmer music. At present there are 80 recordings in the catalogue. He has also been important as a concert producer facilitating the tours of ensembles in the Traditional Crossroads catalogue like the exquisite Lalezar of Istanbul, Turkey to the exciting Bulgarian wedding music of Yuri Yukanov.

Harold was nominated twice for Grammy awards for recordings produced for RCA Victor (The Complete Collection of Violinist Fritz Kreisler and The 92 CD box set of Arthur Rubinstein). Presently Harold is working with Yo Yo Ma on the Silk Road Project which encompasses workshops and concerts throughout the world through the year 2004. One of the upcoming components of the Silk Road project will occur in Washington D.C. June 24th through July 6th 2002 at the Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife on the Washington Mall.



*The Musicians of the  
William and Mary Middle Eastern Music Ensemble*

*... On Ud*

*Anne Rasmussen  
Rebecca Skreslet  
Anne Gepford  
Evie Mpras  
Rebecca Howley  
Scott Hertel  
Maria Fashing  
Farrah Hawana  
Kevin Smith*

*... On Qanun*

*Deborah Justice*

*... On Violin/Viola*

*Lillie Gordon  
Sara Waller  
Jack Simonson  
Charlie Wilmoth  
Monica Davis  
Christopher Schiel*

*... On Nay*

*Kelley Boyer  
Catharine Reynolds  
David Anderson*

*... On Percussion*

*Najla Kurani  
Tom Volo  
Oliver Shao  
Dnyanesh Kamat  
Sucheta Damle*

*... On Bass*

*Niels Miller*

*... On Clarinet*

*Anne Gepford*

**The W&M Middle Eastern Music Ensemble** specializes in the traditions of Arabic, Turkish, Armenian, Greek, and Iranian culture that comprise the Middle East. The 15-25 musicians in the ensemble perform on authentic Instruments, including the 'ud (fretless lute), qanun (75 string zither in triple courses), nay (reed flute), kamanjah (violin), and percussion instruments including the daff, riqq, and darabukkah. The ensemble performs regularly throughout the region and invites guest artists for formal concerts in Williamsburg.

**Ensemble director Anne Rasmussen** is associate professor of ethnomusicology in the Department of Music and has been studying and teaching Middle Eastern music since 1985. In November, 2001 The William and Mary Middle Eastern Music Ensemble released their first compact disc recording "Live in Concert."

For more information about the Middle Eastern Music Ensemble please contact:  
Anne K. Rasmussen at (757) 221-1097 office, or [akrasm@wm.edu](mailto:akrasm@wm.edu)

This performance marks the final concert in the Ewell Concert Series for the 2001-2002 season. Please join us for more exciting and free performances next year!

This series would not have been as successful this year without the help of the following individuals:

Anne Rasmussen, Chair of the ECS  
Kitty Preston, Music Department Chair  
Special thanks also to Libby Covairt, assistant to the chair.