

LAU magazine

VOLUME 16 | issue n° 3 | Fall 2014

& ALUMNI BULLETIN



Beat Route



At the outset, empowering women was our purpose.

Today, it's our achievement.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Originally established as a college for women, LAU remains true to its roots of educating and supporting women in Lebanon and the Middle East. The university's institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World, the first in the region, invests phenomenal effort through constant programs, lectures, and events oriented toward advocacy and the encouragement of women's participation in all aspects of society. Furthermore, LAU's gender equality policy is an uncompromising objective exemplified by the achievements of its female student body and the significant number of leadership roles held by women within the institution.

www.lau.edu.lb



Embark, explore, discover...



Beat Route

FEATURES

6



Musical fusion

Arab artists are increasingly blending Arabic lyrics with a variety of musical styles born in the West. Are such fusions natural or forced? Can Western styles penetrate Arabic music and markets without threatening our folk music? *Reem Maghribi* explores these questions and more with local artists working across different genres.

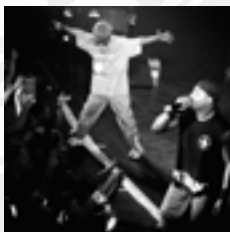
14

Singing for their supper

After decades of living underground financially and culturally, independent Arab musicians are finding their way into the international and regional limelight. *Amahl Khouri* talks to musicians who are discovering what it means to finally make a viable living from their art and the producers behind them.



22



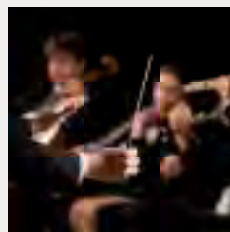
Fight the power

Music has the power to provoke and 'get the people going.' Certain songs, like Public Enemy's antiestablishment tune *Fight the Power* have stood the test of time and served as the soundtrack of young peoples' awakened political and social consciousness. *Mehrnoush Shafiei* investigates how music brings people together, promotes civic engagement and serves as an agent of change.

42

The power of music

Classical music in post-war Lebanon is experiencing a significant revival. *Irina du Quenoy* explores this vibrant cultural scene, as local musicians navigate the country's increasingly complicated environment in pursuit of art's higher aspirations.



CONTENTS

- 4 A home for the health sciences
- 5 LAU shines at Beirut design week
- 10 New master's in Islamic Art & Architecture
- 11 The Umayyad heritage: a Mediterranean wealth
- 12 Bringing about gender justice
- 13 Important breakthrough in combating microbes
- 18 An unfolding dream: Alf Mabrouk class of 2014
- 20 Health students' rites of passage
- 21 Actualizing actuarial studies
- 26 Interactive print design inspires faculty and students
- 27 A man of passion
- 28 Brain drain or brain drain?
- 30 Precious life
- 31 The food of love
- 32 Volunteering made easy
- 33 Making music a teaching opportunity
- 34 LAU alumni paint on silence
- 36 LAU's first Phonathon
- 37 Breaking down boundaries
- 38 Tackling a taboo
- 40 Still on a high note
- 41 Celebrating transformation
- 46 Creating a better Lebanon
- 47 Globalization takes its toll on the world of music
- 48 Campus notes
- 51 A trip down memory lane
- 52 Filling the gap
- 54 Ticking all the right boxes
- 56 Music as a non-universal language
- 58 Alumni update
- 62 Mastering optical illusions
- 63 Making a difference
- 64 Staying connected
- 68 Why I give back

Wherever You Go

LAU Magazine & Alumni Bulletin is your platform to share photos and news about yourself, your family and your friends. We encourage you to update us on your professional and personal activities and achievements—from wherever you are!



Help Tell Our History

We welcome news from alumni, friends, supporters and current and former faculty and staff representing all the university's current and former schools and colleges. Submit your stories and photos for inclusion in LAU's online and print publications.

Submit to: marcom@lau.edu.lb, or

Marketing and Communications Department
Lebanese American University
P.O. Box 13-5053/F24
Chouran, Beirut 1102-2801
Lebanon

New York Headquarters and Academic Center
Lebanese American University
211 East 46th St.
New York, NY 10017, U.S.A.

Letters to the Editor

It was exciting to read about the inclusion of students with special needs into school programs and LAU's efforts to help. I saved the Spring Bulletin until I had time to share some information with you.

Shenandoah University, to which my husband, Dr. James H. Laster (professor of music, choral director, organist at Beirut College for Women, 1967-73) has a Music Therapy Department from which two graduates, the Largents, in the early 1990's, founded the Virginia Beach School of Music.

They also used research on brain development and reorganization to develop a program they call Connections. Out of curiosity I attended a workshop and was sufficiently impressed to think the website worth sharing with you - www.wellconnectedbrain.com. I hope pertinent faculty members will investigate it and learn about this option for improving children's lives.

— Dr. Madlon Laster, Winchester, VA 22601

President

Joseph G. Jabbra

Editorial Advisory Board

Marla Rice Evan, *Vice President, University Advancement*

Peggy Hanna, *Assistant Vice President, MarCom*

Nassib Nasr, *AVP Development, MENA and Europe*

Robert Hollback, *AVP Development, North America*

Abdallah Al Khal, *Executive Director, Alumni Relations*

Edward Shiner, *Director, Alumni and Special Projects*

Managing Editor

Leena F. Saidi

Associate Editor

Zeina Abdallah

Writers

Mya Antar Aghasi

Linda Dahdah

Irina du Quenoy

Zalfa Halabi

Maya Hautefeuille

Toufic Kerbage

Amahl Khouri

Reem Maghribi

Dalila Mahdawi

Mehrnoush Shafiei

Kareem Shaheen

Contributors

Manwa Ghanoum

Sana Kouatly

Ghada Majed

Nayla Abou Merhi Moujaes

Nada Torbey

Zoya Zahabi

Editorial Assistants

Maria Abou Atmi

Palig Haroutunian

Nour Itani

Nour Romani

Graphic Designer

Marianne Amkieh Siblini

Photographers

Khalil Fawaz

Pro Studio

Yehia Malla

Lana Yassine

Front cover concept by Amahl Khouri

LAU Magazine & Alumni Bulletin is published quarterly by the Marketing and Communications Department (MarCom) at LAU and is distributed free of charge to alumni, students, staff, faculty, friends and supporters worldwide.

Direct comments can be sent to:
marcom@lau.edu.lb

CONNECT WITH LAU THROUGH:



From the President's Desk

Dear Friends,

The education of the whole person, academically, physically, morally and culturally is central to LAU's mission. Through embracing liberal arts, the university enables individuals to find their own spiritual and personal fulfillment. Knowledge in these arts is essential to be active in civic life, a societal pillar that LAU actively encourages.

Music, being one such field, touches the lives of each and everyone one of us. It crosses boundaries—spatial, linguistic, stylistic and disciplinary. Historians, scientists, philosophers and the like have all had something to say about it. For France's literary genius, Victor Hugo, "music expresses that which cannot be put into words and which cannot remain silent" while Albert Einstein, the most influential physicist of the 20th century, declared, "If I were not a physicist, I would probably be a musician. I often think in music. I live my daydreams in music. I see my life in terms of music."

In this issue we take an in-depth look into the influence of music on our lives and that of our community, trying to discern its future impact in this age of globalization. Being sensitive to the changing world in which we live, LAU makes sure to celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of all the members of its community, of which music has had its fair share. Faculty, students and alumni have all been touched in one way or another by what is technically speaking a collection of sounds interspersed by silence and they have shone in sharing their gift with others.

Liberal education is an approach to learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity and change. Our School of Architecture and Design followed the rich heritage of the Umayyad dynasty across seven countries around the Mediterranean Sea, our School of Arts and Sciences opened the door to new avenues in the fight against antibiotic resistance and at the same time uses theater as a tool of cultural resistance.

Developing a sense of social responsibility through means as diverse as creating an app to make volunteering easy or establishing student clubs that tick all the right boxes is all part of liberal education. While creative writing competitions, hosting conferences on gender justice and participating in Beirut Design Week demonstrate our ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings.

In each issue of this magazine, we also shed light on achievements – not only of the university's community but also on its continuous commitment to academic excellence. In this issue, we celebrate new undergraduate and postgraduate programs, including a Master in Islamic Art & Architecture and an executive one in Actuarial Science, that we have chosen with care, not only taking into consideration the needs of the job market and our capability to produce experienced graduate, but also the needs of society and the students themselves.

The magazine you are currently reading is at once an exploration of the historic, economic and sociological implications of music. But that's not all, in addition, we put the spotlight on celebrating transformation, recognizing development, what the future holds for recent graduates, tackling taboos and creating a better tomorrow in Lebanon.



Joseph G. Jabbara, Ph.D.,
President
Lebanese American University



A home for the health sciences

By Dalila Mahdawi

LAU inaugurates the
state-of-the-art Chagoury
Health Sciences Center
on the Byblos Campus

LAU formally inaugurated the long-awaited Chagoury Health Sciences Center at the Byblos campus on March 31st of this year. It was ambassador Gilbert Chagoury and his wife, Rose-Marie, who made the new state-of-the-art building possible. Their extraordinary gift of USD13.5 million is the largest single donation to LAU in the university's history.

The complex is home to the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine, the Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing and the School of Pharmacy. Already a landmark of the Byblos campus, the ultra-modern 15,500 square meter center will serve as a key multidisciplinary education and research facility, merging cutting-edge anatomy and biomedical research laboratories with classrooms, lecture halls, computer labs and student lounges.

The Chagoury Health Sciences Center has also been designed to support opportunities for collaboration among scholars and students from across the health disciplines, complementing the dedication to interprofessional education advanced by the three school curriculums.

"We are so happy you are in our midst and to be dedicating the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury Health Sciences Center in both of your names today," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara at the inauguration ceremony.

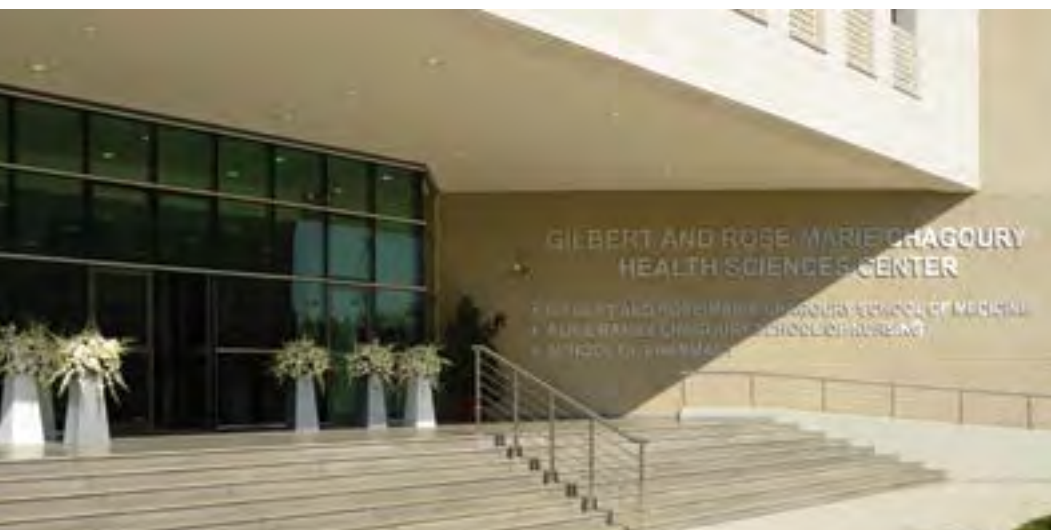
"Your generosity has opened up opportunities for young Lebanese to get the best medical, nursing and pharmacy education without religious, political or ethnic discrimination. We have full confidence that this health sciences center will become a beacon of excellence raising the name of LAU and Lebanon throughout the world in service of young people and our fellow human beings."

*"Caring for patients is not only
a science but also an art"*

—Dr. Youssef Comair, dean of the Gilbert
and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of
Medicine

Addressing the audience, Chagoury noted his pride in being part of LAU's remarkable expansion into a regional hub for premier health sciences education. "Allow me to quote the great Roman author Cicero, who said that 'In nothing do men more nearly approach the gods than in giving health to others'. Let us be committed to that ideal. I am confident that the success of the Schools of Medicine and Nursing will extend beyond the borders of Lebanon and provide the world community with doctors and nurses holding a degree of excellence that is second to none."

Speaking on behalf of LAU's three health sciences schools, Dr. Youssef Comair, dean of the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine, said that the Chagourys had made an indispensable gift at a crucial time of change in the health professions. "Caring for patients is not only a science but also an art. We at LAU aim to help our students become better than us. We are confident that the center will help prepare better doctors, nurses and pharmacists and continue the tradition of Lebanon as a beacon in providing the best healthcare in the region."



LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara with Ambassador
Gilbert Chagoury and his wife, Rose-Marie



The six-story complex is also home to one of the Arab world's finest clinical skills and simulation centers. The center's full-body mannequin simulators are a key learning tool for students at all three schools. Capable of simulating physiological changes such as a loss of pulse, a sudden drop in blood pressure or pupil dilation, the mannequins can be used to mimic a range of scenarios including injections, labor, heart attacks or stab wounds. LAU has been a regional pioneer in using simulation technology in teaching the health sciences and aspires to play a regional role in healthcare education by also providing training to practicing doctors, pharmacists and nurses. The Simulation Center, along with other facilities in the building, is available for naming by donors.

LAU shines at Beirut Design Week

By Amahl Khouri

If on the podium in Irwin Hall Mona Hatoum describes her state as emotional, it's because she is back at LAU after a 40-year absence. "I haven't been on this stage since 1970. The last couple of hours walking around campus have brought back so many memories that I'm feeling a little bit emotional right now," she said reflecting fondly upon her time as a student at the then BCW (now LAU).

Currently one of the world's most acclaimed artists, Hatoum studied graphic design here, but only to please her mother, who wanted her to have "a real job". When the civil war began, Hatoum, stuck in London, was finally able to realize her dream of studying art. Today, she is preparing for an upcoming exhibit at the Centre Pompidou in Paris.

Hatoum came to speak at LAU as part of Beirut Design Week, which is organized annually by the MENA Design Research Center. The week focuses on creative economies and intercultural exchange, as well as design education and entrepreneurship. This year, the city's top designers, along with 21 international guests, created an exciting program of exhibits and events worthy of any leading capital.

"Clothes have changed, but the way people work hasn't."

—Caroline Simonelli, a professor at NYC's Parsons School of Design

LAU's School of Architecture and Design hosted a talk and two workshops on its Beirut campus. The talk on Fostering Creativity and Design Thinking, given by Mona Hatoum with fashion designers Caroline Simonelli and Esen Karol, as well as journalist Hilary Alexander, was aimed at promoting a dialogue between students, faculty and the broader design community.

"In the 80's, everyone wanted to be a rock star. In the 50's everyone wanted to be a movie star. Now, everyone wants to be a fashion designer," exclaimed Simonelli, who herself is something of a rock star in the New York fashion world.

The celebrated Liz Claiborne fashion designer, who is currently a professor at Parsons School of Design, guided participants in a creative draping workshop, during which they cut fabric to make spirals that they then draped around a dummy with stunning results. "This workshop is about bringing to LAU a creative, conceptual and beautiful way of working. Clothes have changed, but the way people work hasn't," she explained.

Simonelli, who herself is a Lebanese American (née Shalala), has a huge influence on her students. One former student, Lebanese designer Sarah Hermez, recently co-founded the Creative Space Beirut, an innovative free fashion design school, with her. "There's so much that is needed in education. It's how people teach, not what they teach," pointed out Hermez.

"Life on the Front Row" was the title of a workshop given later in the day by OBE awarded fashion journalist Hilary Alexander, currently Fashion Director of The Daily Telegraph. Alexander filled the participants in on such topics as translating a shoot from a vision to actual photographs, prepping for interviews and the debate over print versus digital media. "Fashion journalism is unique because it encompasses many other disciplines - science, technology, history, craftwork, social problems, culture, desire, psychology and so much more," she stressed.

"Having world-class practitioners come here to give our students the benefit of a lifetime of experience was greatly appreciated. They not only learned about new ways of working but also about professional practice," said LAU's assistant professor Jason Steel.



Caroline Simonelli gives a workshop at LAU as part of Beirut Design Week

For the second year in a row, LAU's School of Architecture and Design was at the hub of Beirut Design Week showcasing Lebanon's global potential



Mona Hatoum speaking at LAU during Beirut Design Week

Musical Fusion

By Reem Maghribi

Are today's popular performers an act of force or nature?

Musical styles and languages have been blending and merging worldwide for centuries, and the advent of the Internet and popular travel has brought cultures together more readily and frequently. But are such fusions natural or forced? Can styles born in the West penetrate Arabic music and markets without threatening our folk music? We ask musicians from different genres to share their thoughts and experiences.

The eclectic MC

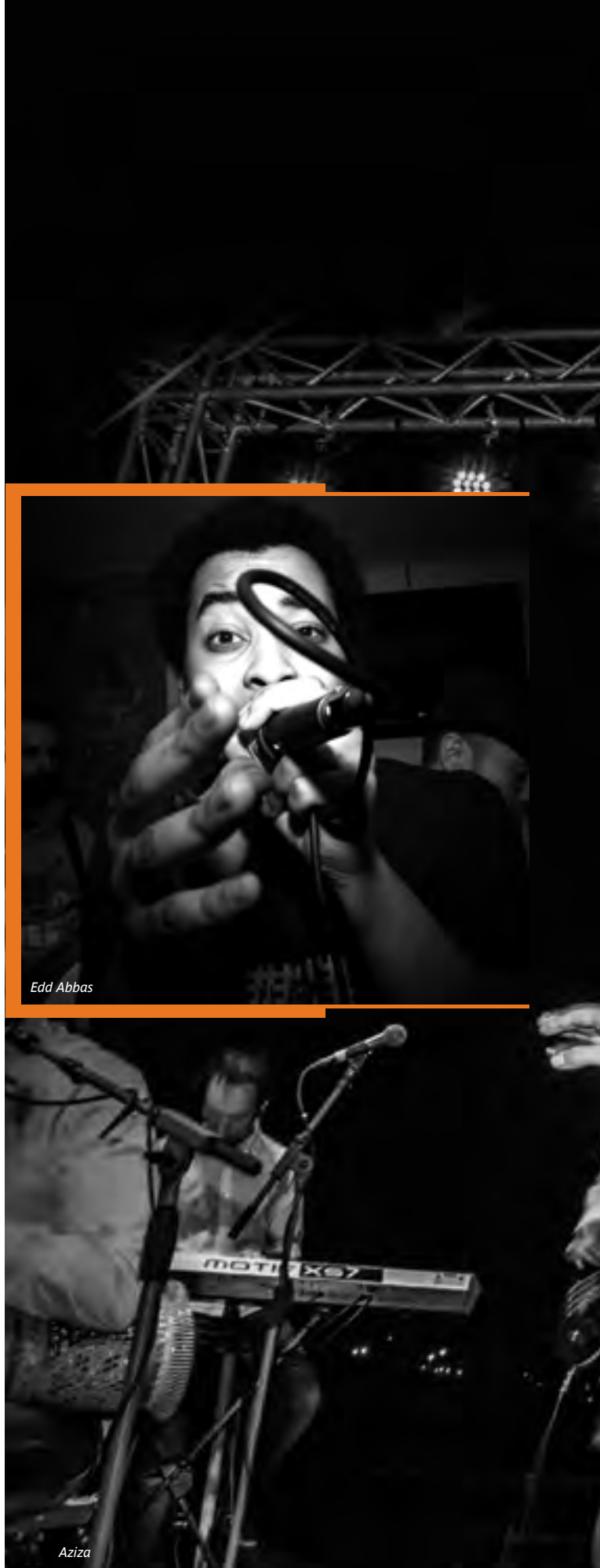
Lebanon's Fareeq el Atrash, Palestine's DAM and Syria's Sayed Darwish are among the Arab hip-hop bands and artists continuing to make waves in Arabic rap since the scene first sprouted roots in the early years of this century.

One of this writer's favorite rap songs is not only a fusion between Arabic lyrics and the hip-hop style born in the West, but also a fusion of Arabic and Latino lyrics and melodies. The recently released track *Somos Sur*, by Chilean artist Ana Tijoux, features the Arab queen of hip-hop Shadia Mansour.

The London-based Palestinian raps in Arabic and wears Palestinian dress for her performances because "our language, like our clothes, is our heritage. We have our own culture and there's nothing more beautiful."

Rap was born in the Bronx with MCs talking about police brutality and their grief. Palestinian rap follows the same logic, says Mansour. The rap of the Arab revolutions was also message driven.

Edd Abbas, a Lebanese-Sierra Leonean MC who found fame with Lebanese band Fareeq el Atrash, believes that Arabic rap definitely increased in popularity after the so-called Arab Spring. "Our voice became a more common one, addressing things people could understand. The internet also helped popularize our kind of music."



Edd Abbas

Aziza

"Today's music scene is clouded with bad commercial Arabic music. It's so bad"

—Aziza, Lebanese tarapop artist



FareeQ el Atrash has two albums to its name. The hip-hop band uses only live instruments - bass, keyboard, electric guitar, drums and beatboxer - while Abbas "spits" his lyrics about struggle and strife.

Abbas began writing lyrics in 2002. "The Arabic rappers of that time were very old school, still singing like Run DMC did in the 1980s. So, I listened mostly to English rap." After writing in English for a while, Abbas felt out of his comfort zone and began writing and rapping in Arabic, his mother tongue, about local issues.

"It was difficult at first. We went through a period where Arabic hip-hop was not desirable. Rap language is quite vulgar and I think it took time for us to adapt to using the language in a more suitable way and for the audience to get used to it."

Having come to Lebanon from the Ivory Coast when he was only three years old, Abbas has now returned to his birthplace. "Musical development is organic. After a couple of years here I may well begin to rap in French and sample Arabic *tarab* in my tracks."

Like Abbas, LAU professor Dr. Martin Loyato believes that cross-cultural musical development is organic and the result of our globalized world.

"I think now things are fusing no matter what. With globalization, cultures fuse, languages fuse and it's natural, not forced," he says, referring to the Beirut way of speaking, with Arabic, French and English all making an appearance in most sentences, as a prime example of this concept.

The electronica queen

Arguably the most popular female electronica vocalist in the Arab world today is Yasmine Hamdan, who began her music career in her native Lebanon before moving to Paris. Released this summer, her single *Nediya* presents Yasmine's trademark sultry voice, singing unmistakably Arabic lyrics, against a hypnotic electro beat.

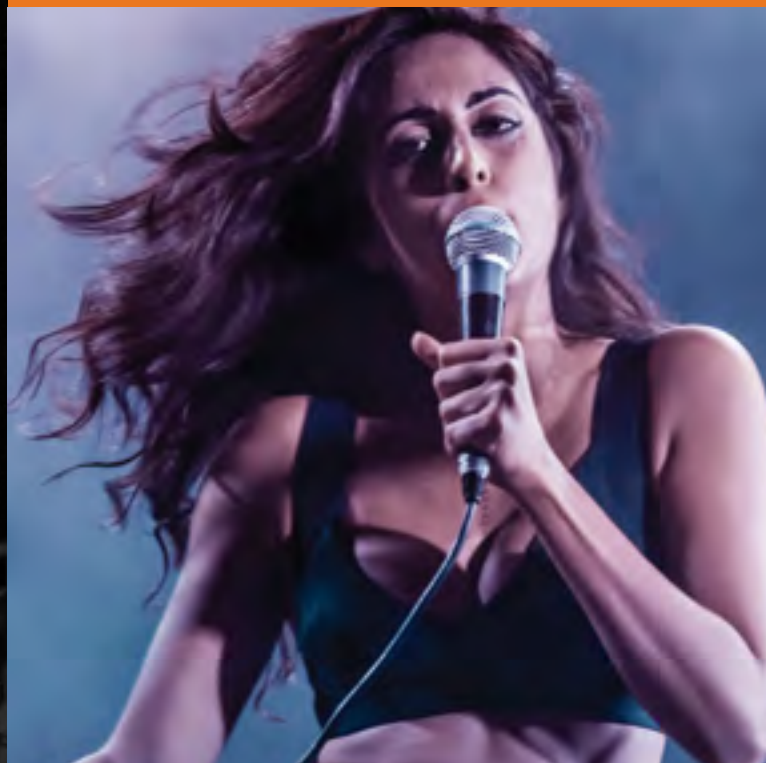
Not only is Hamdan's single a masterpiece of Arabic/electro fusion, the accompanying music video breaks free of the oriental landscape many Arabic songs still cling to. In the words of one fan: "Boundaries are simply smashed to bits setting emotions free no matter the language or the geographic origin of the music."

Jazz, explains Loyato, has also smashed through boundaries and travelled far and wide, developing sub-genres. "Blues has its roots in Africa. Slowly, with the introduction of new instruments and a move to the U.S., jazz developed. But if you listen to the jazz styles that developed in Chicago, N.Y. and L.A., you'll hear they are different. Then it went abroad and took on different cultures and musical backgrounds, fusing jazz in different directions."

Loyato himself plays the trumpet with Ziad Rahbani and his jazz band. "Rahbani was one of the first to fuse Arabic music and lyrics with jazz. He creates beautiful arrangements with Arabic instruments and brass instruments."

"Rap language is quite vulgar and I think it took time for us to adapt to using the language in a more suitable way"

—Edd Abbas, Lebanese-Sierra Leonean MC



Yasmine Hamdan

The tarapop bopper

Another Lebanese musician experimenting with fusing different genres of music with Arabic lyrics is Aziza. Her debut album launch in Beirut this June showcased the multitude of musical styles present in the self-titled album. Electro, dance, *tarab*, Egyptian folk, reggae, classical, disco, ballad and rock all make an appearance in one of the album's nine tracks.

Aziza describes her music as tarapop, "a fusion between tarab and pop. I love pop culture and music and believe we need good pop music in Arabic. Today's music scene is clouded with bad commercial Arabic music. It's so bad."

Loyato believes that part of the problem is a lack of curiosity on behalf of consumers. "I ask my students whether they listen to music they really want to hear or whether they are simply fed by the media and accept what is labeled as cool."

Though she certainly adopts a 'cool' persona in her music videos and on stage, Aziza reminisces fondly about the days her father used to sing with her and introduce her to the music of the era. "I learned how to sing from big icons like Oum Kalthoum, Abdel Wahab, Fareed Atrash and Asmahan. But I can never compare myself to them."

Certainly, while the greats each had a more distinct sound than that boasted in Aziza's melange, none of them sang in fusha Arabic to a track that sampled reggae, electric guitar, trumpet, violin and drums.

"This is the world of Aziza. You can never know what to expect. I think experimenting and curiosity are natural and lead to fusion." She feels, however, that modern attempts to fuse Arabic and western music have been unsuccessful.

"If we look back, when Abdel Wahab introduced the western and Latino beats, as well as the chachacha, salsa and flamenco to



Martin Loyato

Arabic music in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, he produced a majorly successful hit and created a new sound for Arabic music. He showed that we could make fresh music with our language using western beats while remaining oriental. He didn't change the whole; he just added layers and played with it and experienced new sounds, and it was perfect."

An understanding of one's roots, says Loyato, is important in the development of strong musicians and music. "Young generations must learn about their roots and then they are free to play it in a traditional way or fuse it, but they need to know the root."

Decades after Abdel Wahab sampled latino melodies while remaining true to the root of Arabic music, another Egyptian sang, if not composed, what was to become an international sensation. Arabic lyrics, Spanish flamenco and French accordion united harmoniously in the track *Habibi ya Nour el Ain* released in 1996 and sung by Amr Diab.

The cabaret sensation

"International sensations are born out of a magical mix, the main ingredient of which is genuineness," says Syrian artist Amr Safadi.

"A genuine artist produces music based on their personal taste. We enjoyed listening to the blues and jazz and to artists like Tom Waits and we wanted to hear this music in our language," says Safadi, who moved to Lebanon with his music partner from Damascus "in order to further develop our sound and success."

The piano and drums feature in his band's work. "We chose cabaret as our mode of arrangement and use the French horn and accordion, evoking thoughts of Eastern Europe and gypsies. It gives us yet another dimension."



Amr Safadi

Safadi believes that music transcends borders and reaches all. "Jazz may have been born in one place, but it dispersed throughout the world and therefore my work is global. Those who gave birth to jazz no longer monopolize it; there are new sub-schools worldwide. Therefore when we enter new schools, we needn't worry that we are copying the West. There is no such thing."

LAU professor Loyato agrees: "Americans want to own jazz, but they didn't even create it. You can't own a genre, it naturally, organically develops."

Eastern styles have not however developed in recent centuries, believes Safadi. "All countries and civilizations have their folk music. Ours is known as *tarab* and *maqamat*. But no new instrument was invented as it was in Europe, predating as it did the birth of new musical styles."

As such, Safadi refers to classical orchestral music as "the father of music, which is a western school. There is no modern eastern music, only variations of the same style. Modern styles that hailed from the West are now already considered classical styles, such as jazz and blues."

Loyato believes that Arabic music is far richer than western music but agrees that it has shown less progress in recent times. "The development of instruments and styles in this region may have been stunted by economic hardship or a lack of institutional support," he says. "Or, given that the cultural history of the region far precedes that of western civilizations, it may simply be that there was a lack of interest in developing new instruments or styles because people were satisfied with their culture." ■

New at LAU

New master's in Islamic Art & Architecture

By Maya Hautefeuille

LAU's 18-month graduate program is the first of its kind in Lebanon and will cover Islam's influence in this field over the area extending from southern Spain to Central Asia

"There is a great rise in interest in Islamic visual culture in the West"

—Dr. Abdallah Kahil, director, Institute of Islamic Art and Architecture

Interior shot of the Manavgat mosque in Antalya, Turkey

Human civilizations were created in all their variety "so that you may know one another" specifies the Qur'an in a spirit promoting mutual exchange and understanding among cultures.

In a generous application of this ideal, longtime supporters of LAU's Institute of Islamic Art and Architecture (IIAA), Mu'taz Sawwaf and his wife Rada, are facilitating the launch of a new degree to bolster cultural awareness from inside a vital area of the Muslim world itself.

Taking on its inaugurating class in the spring of 2015, the 18-month M.A. in Islamic Art and Architecture is no less than the first of its kind in Lebanon. Praised by the dean of the School of Design and Architecture, Dr. Elie Haddad, as a path-breaker, the interdisciplinary curriculum "will foster a counterview to the prevalent misrepresentation of Islamic culture and show its continuity with other great aesthetic traditions."

"We have a keen interest in recognizing Islam's contributions to arts and sciences throughout the world," emphasizes Sawwaf in referring to the religion's culture and history that are "often in the news but are little understood."

After graduating in Architectural Engineering from AUB, Mu'taz Sawwaf embarked on a successful career in the construction industry in Saudi Arabia. With a vision to improve industrial facilities around the Middle East, he pioneered several construction projects in the Gulf before founding Construction Products

Holding Company, an all-in-one business for building material needs in the region.

Although Islamic arts and architecture occupy a major place in academic institutions in North America and Europe, it's a discipline that remains underexplored in the Arab world. "There is a great rise in interest in Islamic visual culture in the West, but here in the Middle East we have limited research resources," points out IIAA's Director, Abdallah Kahil.

The only other related postgraduate degree in the region is offered by the American University of Cairo, which concentrates on the Fatimid, Mamluk and Ottoman eras more specific to Egypt. Dr. Kahil believes that the two programs will work to complement each other, as LAU students will be well stationed to conduct research in the Levant area and make use of Lebanon's positioning at the historical crossroads between the Islamic and Western worlds. Within the scope of his teaching, Kahil also hopes to expose students to a variety of other subcultures and engage with a balanced range of Islamic art including calligraphy, painting, ceramics and woodwork.

Multidimensional changes are placing the Muslim world in a new, urgent and international context, and its rich artistic sense is perhaps one of the most accessible expressions of a civilization that often seems enigmatic to outsiders. In the Middle East, promising endeavors are increasingly taking place to harness the power of this visual field to transcend differences in language, culture and creed.

In tandem with another timeless Islamic adage to 'seek knowledge as far as China', the postgraduate program will traverse an area extending from southern Spain to Central Asia in search of how physical objects and spaces have been embodying the beliefs and concerns of societies since the seventh century to the present day.

LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara with Mu'taz Sawwaf and his wife Rada



The Umayyad heritage: a Mediterranean wealth

By Linda Dahdah

With the industry contributing some USD 7,000 billion to the GDP worldwide, according to the 2013 World Travel and Tourism Council report, all authorities, local and international, are being encouraged to adapt to the new tourist demand of theme-oriented tourism itineraries.

"In times of economic recovery, tourism has proven to be one of the most dynamic activities and main drivers of economic and social development," says Marina Martin, managing director of the Andalusian Public Foundation that is presenting the three-year Umayyad Route Project, which LAU is an active partner in.

The project is funded by the European Union under the European Neighborhood and Partner Instrument's Cross-Border Cooperation Mediterranean Sea Basin Program. It aims to revive the rich heritage of the Umayyad dynasty by promoting sustainable tourism and territorial cohesion, based on the design of a transnational itinerary across seven countries around the Mediterranean Sea.

In Lebanon, the municipality of Byblos and the Safadi Foundation are working hand in hand with LAU's Urban Planning Institute (UPI) to implement the national circuit and raise awareness, among both the population and tourists, of the Umayyad culture and heritage and the importance of its preservation in a sustainable fashion.

"The fact that the Public Andalusian Foundation reached out to us is a recognition of our expertise and of the university as a regional and international player," says architecture professor Dr. Rachid Chamoun, head of the UPI.

Staying true to its mission to involve its students in community projects and outreach, the School of Architecture and Design assigned its apprentices to the task.

"The Public Andalusian Foundation reaching out to us is a recognition of our expertise as a regional and international player"

—Dr. Rachid Chamoun, director of LAU's Urban Planning Institute

Under Chamoun's supervision, and armed with notebooks, pencils and cameras, students went in search of monuments and cities to incorporate in the cultural tourism guide they are to develop. Lebanon's Umayyad route takes in several historic cities, the most prominent being the old city of Anjar.

"What an experience!" says Nathalie Dabaghi, "I had never visited the site. So, I guess awareness started with us!"

After weeks of visits and research across the country, the group developed a comprehensive brochure suggesting noteworthy monuments – not only Umayyad – that surround principle sites.

"Through this project we have learned a lot about the value of history and heritage and how to keep it alive," says Toni Abi Hanna, a recent interior design graduate. Like twelve fellow students, he was tasked with turning a medieval house – currently a fossil museum – located at the entrance of the city of Byblos into an Umayyad digital museum.

"The building already carries its own history and the challenge was to keep its identity intact while incorporating the Umayyad spirit to it in the most harmonious way," he adds.

"We collaborate with the ministries of tourism and culture, tour operators, municipalities and several entities both private and public. The students are involved in all the stages. It is a very interactive learning experience," explains Chamoun.

And what better reward and recognition for the hard-working team than the Umayyad Project coordinator's special request that they take charge of implementing the museum project.

"I hope that the museum will take place in a strategic central location to be managed by the UPI and sustained by LAU as a reputable higher education and research institution in the region," enthuses coordinator Juan Manuel Cid in a letter to Chamoun.

With new plans in perspective, LAU, its faculty and above all its students have a lot to discover and unfold.



LAU's Urban Planning Institute involves architecture students in implementing a national itinerary and museum promoting Umayyad culture and heritage

Anjar, Lebanon



Bringing about gender justice

By Maya Anbar Aghasi

Gender rights and constitutional reforms in times of transition were the focus of discussion during an international conference hosted by LAU's women's institute



INSTITUTE FOR
WOMEN'S STUDIES
IN THE ARAB WORLD

"Constitutions by themselves do not provide true justice—they [simply] pave the way for it"

—Hoda Elsadda, academic and women's rights activist

In Egypt's symbolic space of freedom from dictatorship, Tahrir Square, people from all walks of life came together in one communal voice to express political discontent and demand true, representative democracy. But even here, men coalesce around women and horrific acts of mob assault take place.

A very graphic excerpt from a YouTube video depicting such a scene was part of a panel discussion at the international conference 'Arab Countries in Transition: Gender Rights and Constitutional Reforms' organized and hosted by LAU's Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) in partnership with The Woman and Memory Forum - Egypt, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung - Rule of Law Program MENA Region and The Danish Center for Research and Information on Gender, Equality and Diversity (KVINFO) and held from 23-25 June.

While historical patterns of regime overthrows have shown that women's rights usually undergo setbacks in moments of transition, conference participants discussed possibilities of writing gender justice into new constitutions to avoid such setbacks. Over three days, "participants explored the practical relevance of these issues," as IWSAW's Interim Director, Samira Aghacy put it. Speakers from Yemen and Iraq, currently in the process of redrafting their constitutions, discussed the details of how they are going about doing so. Similarly, speakers from Egypt detailed how they put together a constitution that not only wrote gender justice into law, but justice for all strata of Egyptian society.

But, is the law enough to protect women, their political and social rights, and, indeed, their bodies? "The gap between constitution, laws and reality is one of the biggest problems [in the region] because of the lack of transparency and corruption,"

noted Peter Rimmel, the resident representative of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung - Rule of Law Program MENA region.

LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara explained that the conference aimed to "examine these issues and come up with evaluations to enable real tasks of reform."

As such, legal reforms were discussed, such as the recent changes in the Lebanese law concerning women passing on Lebanese nationality to their spouses and children and the recent domestic violence law.

"Constitutions not only structure the relationship between the citizen and the state, but they constitute relationships in society," noted Suad Joseph, distinguished professor at the University of California-Davis in her keynote address. In other words, by changing the constitution, over time, the culture of a society changes, making it more prone to gender justice.

Participants acceded that, while the law is crucial to protecting women, it is only a step in changing the general culture of gender relations. "Constitutions by themselves do not provide true justice—they [simply] pave the way for it," clarified professor and founder of the Women and Memory Forum, Hoda Elsadda, in the second keynote speech of the conference.

Although this work is difficult, and emotionally and physically taxing, participants agreed that raising public awareness, lobbying politicians, and political and legal education are all conducive to women-friendly democracies emerging. "An expressed interest in democracy is not enough. Socioeconomic and cultural changes are also needed," stressed feminist scholar, Valentine Moghadam of Northeastern University in Boston.

By working to change the entire society's attitudes toward women, injustices against women can be alleviated, and actual, rather than symbolic, democracy can take place.

Important breakthrough in combating microbes

By Kareem Shaheen

LAU professor of microbiology starts using whole genome sequencing in diagnosis

"I can sequence the whole genome within two days and get a detailed overview"

—Dr. Sima Tokajian, associate professor of microbiology at LAU

Scientists from the Lebanese American University and the University of California, Davis have sequenced the whole genome of disease-causing bacteria found in Lebanese patients, opening the door to new avenues in the fight against antibiotic resistance.

"In order to be able to fight infections caused by bacteria and to help in limiting the spread of those pathogens in the community and in hospitals, we need first to understand the properties of the causative agent," explains Dr. Sima Tokajian, associate professor of microbiology at LAU, who carried out the sequencing of the bacteria. The team of scientists analyzed 40 strains of bacteria collected from patients in Lebanon, including *Staphylococcus aureus*, which causes skin infections, *Streptococcus pyogenes*, which causes sore throats and *Escherichia coli*, which causes urinary tract infections.

Tokajian carried out the whole genome sequencing during a sabbatical at UC-Davis, working alongside professor Jonathan Eisen at the UC-Davis Genome Center, Dr. David Coil, the project scientist at UC-Davis' Eisen Lab and Guillaume Jospin, a bioinformatics engineer at the lab.

UC-Davis' professor Kenneth Burtis, the faculty adviser to the chancellor and provost, was instrumental in organizing Tokajian's sabbatical at the lab, which was funded by LAU. As a first step in encouraging widespread use of the technique in diagnosis in Lebanon, the equipment used to carry out the whole genome sequencing was acquired by LAU and installed at the university's Byblos campus.

"Now, I can sequence the whole genome within two days and get a detailed overview," says Tokajian.

Intricate knowledge of a bacterium's

genetic makeup is necessary because it can offer clues as to how microorganisms that cause diseases operate - a process known as pathogenesis. For instance, disease-causing bacterium can have genes that allow them to secrete toxins, others that help overcome immune system defenses and some that make them resistant to antibiotics.

Doctors and scientists around the world have grown increasingly concerned with antibiotic resistance - a process through which bacteria become unresponsive to the most powerful drugs. A recent report by the World Health Organization confirmed the trend and scientists at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have warned of an imminent or even ongoing "post-antibiotic age."

Tokajian's research will help combat pathogens, which are usually known to have high growth rates - doubling its population every 20 minutes as in the case of *E. coli* - allowing them to adapt and develop resistance. She reveals that her research is aimed at typing bacterial pathogens, identifying resistance mechanisms, looking into virulence factors and determining whether they are hospital or community acquired.

The use of whole genome sequencing can revolutionize the fight against antibiotic resistance by helping doctors to identify the best treatment of choice, hence minimizing the use of broad-spectrum antimicrobial agents.

"Collaboration between the LAU genome lab and the university's affiliated hospital, LAUMC-RH, will help to better understand the epidemiology of these infectious diseases and, hopefully, lead to the development of better control measures," Tokajian points out.



Singing for their supper

By Amahl Khouri

FEATURE



Mashrou' Leila

A viable financial future is in sight for independent Arab musicians as they discover the path to success

At National Public Radio's (NPR) office in Washington, D.C., Lebanese songstress Yasmine Hamdan is swaying and crooning her version of the song *Beirut*, written in the 1940's. It's all about drinking arak, playing cards, hunting pigeons and going to the horse races. It's also about unemployment and hopelessness. She's singing all this in Arabic, but that doesn't seem to bother the enthusiastic audience. According to NPR, "through her singular pairing of sound and language, she's opening up what it means to be an Arab artist today".

Lebanese artists like Hamdan and the band Mashrou' Leila, who are touring Europe, are not only not only opening up what it means to be an Arab artist, they are opening up a new market for themselves and others. They are marking a shift in the independent Arab music industry. Where once Arab artists were classified under World Music, a classification that Talking Head's singer David Byrne calls "dismissive", they are now playing venues in mainstream Europe alongside other top international bands.

As part of their European tour, Mashrou' Leila recently played at the renowned A club Scala in London, where bands such as Coldplay, Foo Fighters, The Killers, Moby, Sheryl Crow, Gavin DeGraw, Ray LaMontagne, Super Furry Animals, The Chemical Brothers, Avril Lavigne and Maroon 5 have played.

"Why do Germans listen to rock in English without being able to understand the lyrics? Because it's good. Why do English-speaking people listen to German hard rock even though they can't understand the lyrics? Because it's good. Why do they listen to French rap if they can't understand it? Because it's good. It's the same," says Beirut based independent music producer, Raed Al Khazen.

"In the beginning it was tough," says Haig Papazian, violinist with Mashrou' Leila. "We used to play concerts for USD200 and then have to divide that amongst us. After a while we started to learn about how the music industry works in the Arab world. Most artists here rely on private concerts and weddings for an income. There's no concert culture on a bigger scale. We had to set a certain bar for ourselves in terms of sound quality of venues we play at, for example." The band also hired a manager, Karim Ghattas, who has been booking them for tours across Europe and the Arab region, setting a precedent for Arab independent music success.

The shift that independent Arabic music is making is impressive in light of the many setbacks musicians face. According to Tamer Abu Ghazaleh, founder of Eka3 Music Productions, Arab independent musicians lack any manner of state funding and support, vital in a country's arts and cultural growth domestically and internationally. "There is also the lack in business knowledge and experience among indie artists, because the indie market is too young," Abu Ghazaleh explains, adding, "And there's the lack in music companies that understand indie music and willing to work with artists with dedication and transparency."

Yasmine Hamdan



"Their job is to produce an exportable product and then the rest is about luck and connections"

—Raed Al Khazen, Beirut based independent music producer

Xriss Jor



He believes that making a living from music is no easy ride for artists in both the East and the West. "The only difference is that in Europe or the U.S. - for example - the indie music market is much larger and more mature, including a much higher number of venues, cultural funds, labels, distributors, unions, studios, agencies and so on. This is why it is relatively easier for a musician to reach a point there where they can live off music," he points out. Abu Ghazaleh believes that it is eventually possible for an Arab artist to make a career out of their music. "They can yes, but only after many years of hard work and genuine artistic productions."

Abu Ghazaleh is himself a musician of staggering talent. In 2002, while living under siege in Palestine during the second intifada, he composed a set of songs on his *oud*. The songs were explosively good (pun intended) and may well be the forerunner of a future genre called the "*oud* punk". Composing them under siege was not a problem for someone as precocious and unfazed as Ghazaleh, but producing and marketing them was. What would the inventor of *oud* punk genre do when faced with

"It takes many years of hard work and genuine artistic production to be able to live off their music"

—Tamer Abu Ghazaleh, founder of Eka3 Music Productions

an Arab market insatiably gluttonous for cloned curvaceous singers and instantly forgettable video ditties?

Celebrated scientist Carl Sagan once said, "If you wish to make an apple pie from scratch, you must first invent the universe." Faced with a structural void in which mainstream music producers didn't understand or want the work of innovative musicians and malevolent "independent" producers only sought to exploit it, he invented the universe. It was a universe that would not only solve his problem, but also that of other independent musicians. Abu Ghazaleh created an ambitious polyvalent production company called *Eka3*.

Under its umbrella, *Eka3* harbors the independent Arabic music label *Mostakell (Independent)*, founded on the belief that "quality music should be introduced to the Arab masses." Its mission, no less, is to "reshape the landscape of mainstream music in the Arab world using originality and quality."

Eka3, however, is much more than an independent label for Arab musicians. It offers many useful services, among them *Awyav*, described as a "passionate first-of-a-kind music agency based in Cairo, Egypt, working with a diverse network of original artists and professional music producers around the Arab world to answer to the needs of content makers and users, from filmmakers and advertisers to theater, radio and TV." *Awyav*'s services include music consultancy and production supervision as well as a rich library of high quality independent Arabic music ready for licensing. *Eka3* also houses *Almoharek*, a booking agency for Arab acts as well as *Ma3azef*, a new online magazine in Arabic with critical writing about music.

Television has been a medium of great influence when it comes to publicity for Arab musicians, and not just those featured in Rotana videos. LAU alumna, singer Xriss Jor knew she wanted to make a living doing music since she was sixteen, but it was her participation on the *The Voice* that pushed her career to a new level. After winning at the Dubai Music Festival, Jor performed in front of acclaimed U.S. music producers Quincy Jones and Timbaland, landing herself a three-year U.S. recording contract. Jor has also witnessed a change in the Lebanese independent music industry. "I am so proud that our music scene feels a lot richer and more tasteful. For the first time in a long time it is music to my ears... literally," say Jor.

The Internet has also afforded many opportunities to emerging Arab artists. The most powerful and important one is perhaps the possibility it has opened up for them to crowd fund albums. Mashrou' Leila was able to raise upwards of USD80,000 on zoomal.com for its latest album *Ra'asuk*. Tania Saleh, a Lebanese singer songwriter and LAU alumna, also experienced astonishing success using the same approach, raising 125% over her USD40,000 goal. "It's a wonderful feeling. Some people continued contributing to my campaign even after we had reached the goal set on Zoomal. There is a pleasure in supporting something you love. I feel that all the people who contributed to my campaign could be my friends, they appreciate my work."

The Internet has also made it possible to share music and publicity through social media such as YouTube, SoundCloud, Instagram and Facebook, giving artists a huge marketing edge and access to previously unimaginable distant audiences. Hamed Sinno, lead singer for Mashrou' Leila, regularly receives comments on his Instagram photos from all over the world. Alaa Wardi, an Iranian-Saudi singer who took social media by storm with his innovative Arabic accapella cover songs, has 1,732,773 hits on one of his YouTube videos and a fan base all over the world reaching out to him in his comment sections.

What about Internet music piracy and its effect on album sales? "Record sales are a dead industry. Today, it's all about getting your band on the road. Touring- that's where the money

Through social media artists have a huge marketing edge and access to previously unimaginable distant audiences.

is,” says Al Khazen, who studied at Berkeley School of Music and played guitar on major US record labels for many years before deciding to come home to Lebanon and make a change.

His philosophy as a producer and a musician is very clear - international and regional exportability and sustainability are possible for independent Arab musicians if they work hard enough to produce true quality. “If a band or an artist only spends USD3,000 dollars to record their album and they think they can record and mix it in a few days, it’s naturally not going to be good,” he says, explaining, “they might produce an album that’s considered good regionally or locally, but it won’t ensure future sustainability for that artist. They are the same musicians who play four gigs in Europe, sleep at friends couches and think they’ve made it.”

For Al Khazen there is no financial future for such artists because their product is not viable. He considers 50-90 shows a year and selling 50,000 records, a real career. “People here talk about having a career when they sell 2,000 records. For me, that’s a hobby. Of course those same musicians will complain that no one is buying records. They aren’t buying because the product isn’t good. It’s a chicken or the egg situation,” he adds.

He believes that a good album needs at least 8-16 months of hard work and a production budget of between USD40,000 - 60,000. Mashrou’ Leila broke the stigma that Arab musicians can’t live off their music by doing exactly that. Their product is viable and they have a financial future.

The Arab world is super thirsty for good music Al Khazen believes, “We have the youngest people on the planet out of our population of 450 million. We have the biggest number of YouTube users in the world, Saudi Arabia. We have money, in the Emirates. We have a lot of people willing to fund quality culture!”

“Creating a product that can stand against international competition is a whole lot of work. Their job is to produce an exportable product and then the rest is about luck and connections, etc.,” says Al Khazen. ““As the band AC/DC said, ‘It’s a long way to the top if you wanna rock’n’roll.’” ■

Tamer Abu Ghazaleh



An Unfolding Dream

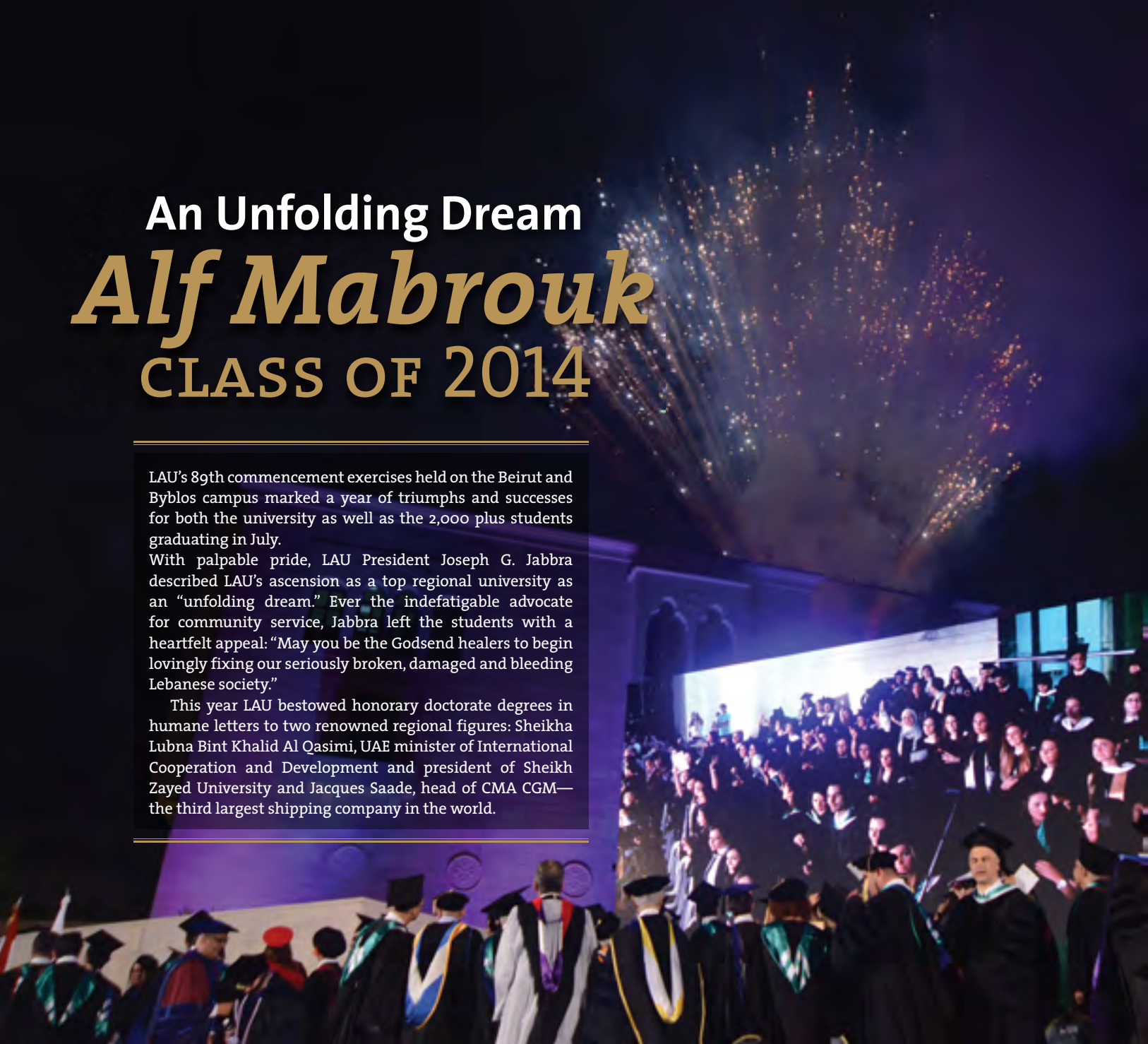
Alf Mabrouk

CLASS OF 2014

LAU's 89th commencement exercises held on the Beirut and Byblos campus marked a year of triumphs and successes for both the university as well as the 2,000 plus students graduating in July.

With palpable pride, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra described LAU's ascension as a top regional university as an "unfolding dream." Ever the indefatigable advocate for community service, Jabbra left the students with a heartfelt appeal: "May you be the Godsend healers to begin lovingly fixing our seriously broken, damaged and bleeding Lebanese society."

This year LAU bestowed honorary doctorate degrees in humane letters to two renowned regional figures: Sheikha Lubna Bint Khalid Al Qasimi, UAE minister of International Cooperation and Development and president of Sheikh Zayed University and Jacques Saade, head of CMA CGM—the third largest shipping company in the world.



"I don't see 700 graduates in front of me, I see 700 revolutionaries!" remarked valedictorian Toni Joe Gerius Lebbos in a high-voltage speech to fellow business graduates on July 12. With a near perfect GPA and many extracurricular activities and volunteer experience under his belt, Lebbos spoke about the human values he acquired during his time at LAU, "When I first came to this university, all that mattered to me was graduating and earning money, but since then I have come to realize that we, those privileged enough to stand here today, have a responsibility to confront the challenges that await our generation." "Winter is coming to this part of the world and what our society needs is revolutions of philosophy and ideas. But before we do that, first let me take a selfie," he joked to a laughing crowd, lifting the gravitas of the moment.



This year the commencement ceremonies were particularly special as LAU alumni who were unable to attend their ceremony in the past, due to extenuating circumstances, were invited back to their alma mater and given a unique opportunity to march with their fellow graduates and celebrate their past achievements. "It was truly a wish and a dream come true, though 30 years later! Better late than never. And what a dream come true. It was fantastic," said, alumnus Imad A. El Khalil.



"LAU has become an academic power house, taking its right place in the constellation of leading institutions of higher education in Lebanon, the MENA region and beyond," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra. He praised the students' ambition to excel, their high ethics, professionalism and their altruism. "Their poise, self-confidence deportment and delivery are absolutely superb," Jabbra declared. Wishing the graduates "fair wings," he urged them not to forget their country's future. "Lebanon needs bright minds like you to sail ahead," he said.



Valedictorian Sarah Hussein Abou Alaiwi underscored the importance of creating change in the world, "We are so fortunate to be here tonight, sometimes we take what we have for granted, but right now our dreams are coming true—we stand here as the harvest of the seeds our parents planted years ago." She concluded her impassioned address with a quote from Gandhi: 'Be the change you want to see in the world.'



"This is our World Cup!" enthused valedictorian and recipient of the President's Award Mirla Abi Aad to a cheering crowd. "We wait four years for this magnificent and grand event... We all get so hyped up for this huge occasion that we forget to recognize the constant training, preparation, and hard work that we put in to get here, to qualify, and to perform," said the engineering graduate, who earned a perfect GPA.



Overwhelming, the feeling of excitement was for some mixed with a pinch of nostalgia. Holding witty signs, waving to their family and friends, smiling and cheering, the graduates' exhilaration was tangible and contagious.



"Don't be afraid to be innovative and daring, have a vision and live by your convictions, be demanding – first of yourself and then of others, and finally - create solid relationships with your partners based on trust," Jacques Saade told the graduates.



Health students' rites of passage

By Amahl Khouri

LAU sends its medical, pharmacy and nursing students out into the field, confident that they will become compassionate healers providing optimal care

"Enjoy the rich rewards that come from helping people"

—Dr. Nancy Hoffart,
founding dean, School of Nursing

No entry into the medical and health field is complete without its different rites of passage. For LAU's medical students it was the Hooding and White Coat Ceremonies that took place on the Byblos campus on June 3 and at the affiliated LAU Medical Center – Rizk Hospital on June 27.

Faculty and administration, as well as family and friends, proudly looked on as the students were hooded and recited the Hippocratic oath in preparation for their new lives as physicians. "Our mission, your mission, is to transform health care in this country," Dr. Youssef G. Comair, the dean of university's Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine, told the graduating class of 2014.

As they head out into the domain, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara, was keen to remind the graduating doctors of the university's values, "The exceptional achievements in technology have helped the medical profession so much, yet at the same time, your challenge is to make sure that technology, however excellent, does not rob you of your humanity."

Meanwhile, at the Pharm.D. hooding and the nursing pinning ceremonies on July 1, Jabbara asked the pharmacy and nursing students to never compromise who they are and what they stand for.

During her speech, valedictorian Nisrine Haddad focused on optimal care, stressing, "This is something that has time and time again been emphasized in our classes. It entails looking at each patient alone to give them the best possible treatment." True to her training, the pharmacist continued, "When we seek optimal care, we cannot but be truly and faithfully caring for our patients to the

extent of giving them what we would want to have if we were in their shoes."

"There is so much need for you, and your professional competence and commitment, to construct bridges of trust toward a better future. So, step up to the challenges and let us synergize our efforts and partner in building a new generation of pharmacists," Dr. Imad Btaiche, the dean of the School of Pharmacy instructed his graduates.

As the Pharm.D. students were being hooded, the nursing students were also stepping up to be lauded just next door, at the Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing's Recognition Ceremony.

Guest of honor, Helen Samaha Nouwayhid, president of the Order of Nurses, congratulated the class of 2014, as well as LAU's School of Nursing, on having achieved the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education's accreditation. She enthusiastically outlined the changes the profession has been witnessing over the years and how nursing is being repositioned in Lebanon.

All the while, Founding Dean Nancy Hoffart looked on proudly before distributing the President's Circle Award and Shaké Ketefian Award for high achieving students. She hoped that the new health-carers would "enjoy the rich rewards that come from helping people in critical moments".

"The Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing will always be your home," she reminded the students, adding, "In the years ahead, I will look forward to seeing you at alumni events and hearing about your accomplishments."

Actualizing actuarial studies

LAU unveils Executive Master's in Actuarial Sciences

By Dalila Mahdawi

"I came to LAU to ask for help because I wanted to protect the industry"

—Lutfi El Zein, chairman of MEDGULF



In a world full of risk and speculation, there will always be career opportunities for an actuary.

Actuaries are risk management experts who work across a broad spectrum of fields, from insurance, banking, healthcare and investment firms. They use their knowledge of mathematics, probability, statistics and financial theory to predict the likelihood of scenarios and to minimize risk.

In recent years, legislative developments in the form of new insurance laws and regulations in the region, which are now on par with international standards, have paved the way for increased opportunities for actuaries.

But despite playing such a crucial role, there are very few actuaries in the Arab world and even fewer actuarial degree programs. Recognizing a gap, LAU officially launched an Executive Master's in Actuarial Science (EMAAS) on May 15. The program, made possible by a generous donation from MEDGULF, comes as demand for qualified actuary professionals soars. "Employment of actuaries is projected to grow 26 percent from 2012 to 2022, much faster than the average for all occupations," notes the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Actuaries can also look forward to enviable salaries, with an experienced fellow earning north of USD150,000 a year.

Lutfi El Zein, chairman of MEDGULF, said that to better serve the needs of the industry he had been keen to partner with LAU. "I was appalled to learn that in the whole Arab world there are only

two or three dozen actuaries, while in the country to the south of us there are at least 200," he said. "I came to LAU to ask for help because I wanted to protect the industry. Thank you for listening to me and be assured that we will always be there next to you."

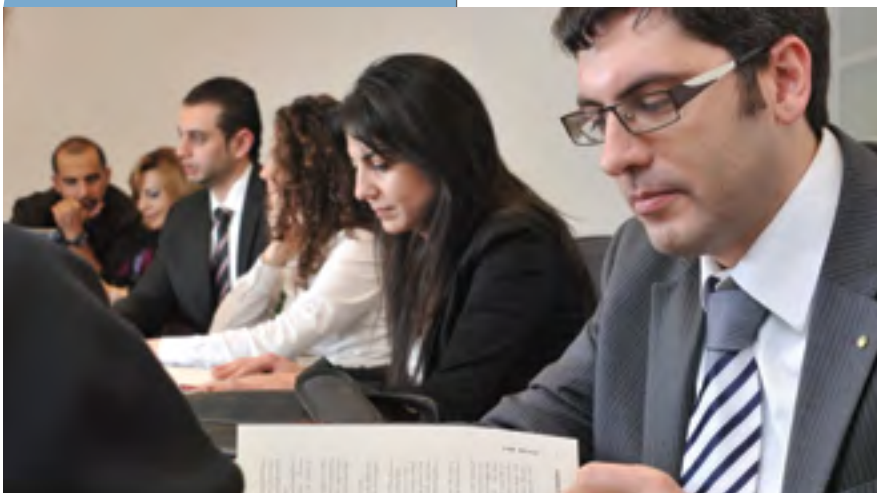
The degree program provides students with the opportunity to establish themselves as actuaries with recognition as a "Fellow of the Society of Actuaries (FSA)" or a "Fellow of the Causality Actuarial Society (FCAS)".

While the program is primarily targeted at those already working in the insurance industry, Dr. Samer Habre, assistant dean in the School of Arts and Sciences, says the course will also benefit professionals looking to broaden their knowledge of risk analysis and statistical analysis.

Habre worked closely with Samer Abi Ghanem, lecturer of actuarial studies at LAU, and Antoine Wakim, from the Board of Directors at Allianz SNA, to put together a curriculum for the program, which is designed to take two years of part-time study to complete. "The Arab region is in dire need of more qualified actuaries and this degree program, which is one of very few masters programs in the region, should go a long way in redressing that need," said Habre. "Until recently, the actuary field has been perceived as quite obscure."

When asked how the program at LAU prepares students for the market, Abi Ghanem explained that in line with the statutory role of actuaries the courses are designed "to prepare students for success in the different lines of insurance in terms of product design, pricing and reserving for life, health, property and casualty insurance." Additionally, the courses also prepare the students to take the professional qualification exams with the Society of Actuaries.

The EMAAS program is jointly run by LAU's School of Arts and Sciences and School of Business, and is offered in the Department of Computer Sciences and Mathematics. The interdisciplinary program has two main focal points: insurance management and actuarial mathematics. Classes will be held at LAU's Solidere Executive Center in the heart of Beirut's financial capital.





FEATURE

Fight the power

By Mehrnoush Shafiei



Civic engagement through music turns up the volume

"Music is the universal language between humans, it brings us together in our humanness and it penetrates borders, orders and waters," says Carlton Douglas Ridenhour—known by his stage name as Chuck D—a lead member of the legendary American hip-hop and rap group Public Enemy, in a moment of lyrical candor. You wouldn't expect anything less from the renowned Rock'n'Roll Hall of Fame inductee and world-famous lyricist, who is responsible for the poetic verses that have touched many generations of young people all over the world. With numerous awards and books under his belt, Ridenhour has a reach that is rivaled by few.

Public Enemy's political manifesto hit track, *Fight the Power* was revolutionary in its day for its raw level of social consciousness and its in-your-face call for civic engagement. From the Middle East to South Africa, a rallying call for urban American youth: 'Our freedom of speech is freedom or death. We've got to fight the powers that be. Lemme hear you say. Fight the power....' struck a chord with civil society activists all over the world.

"The song *fight the power* was a huge hit all over the world—especially in 1989 Germany when the Berlin wall came down and a highly politicized youth was drawn to music with a strong 'people power' message," says LAU exchange student and Berlin-native, Linda Moeller. "I was very young when I first heard it but I was instantly seized by its power," she adds.

"I was born when the song was first released but I grew up with older brothers who always played it in the car during road trips—it is one of the soundtracks of my childhood and as an Arab it always resonated with me because I could relate to the sense of frustration and anger that the song describes," agrees AUB student Fadi Nazha. Adding: "When I think about it, I can't imagine a more suitable song for what is going on in the Arab world these days, 'Fight the Power' is really timeless and it was just amazing to see Chuck D in person."

"The Arabic language is so melodic and eloquent that the Arab rap coming from this part of the world is really elevating the entire hip-hop scene—America no longer has a monopoly on this genre of music; a lot of what is being produced here is staying true to the roots of what hip-hop is all about"

—Chuck D, from Public Enemy

"Being here in Beirut has been very eye opening for me because, here, you have a lot of young Arab rappers who have a lot to say about the society they live in," Ridenhour says speaking at AUB to a jam-packed event hosted in partnership with the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs (IFI) and the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud Center for American Studies and Research (CASAR) in the late spring.

"The Arabic language is, in and of itself, so melodic and eloquent that the Arab rap coming from this part of the world has really been elevating the entire hip-hop scene—America no longer has a monopoly on this genre of music; a lot of what is being produced here is staying true to the roots of what hip-hop is all about," he adds.

The origins of hip-hop and its roots as a political and social movement, was originally intended to raise civic consciousness, a message that has, unfortunately, been weakened by a slew of contemporary main-stream artists who are concerned mainly with money-making, power and status.

"Music, and more generally hip-hop, is a tool for empowerment and civic engagement," he explains pointing to the fact that hot-top issues such as racism, poverty, and police brutality were the central concerns of early hip-hop.

"One of our missions here at AUB is to raise the quality of

public policy-related questions and to enrich the quality of interaction among different civil society actors in the Middle East and abroad," says Alexander Lubin, director of CASAR. "Released in the summer of 1989 in the wake of a neo-conservatism wave taking over and dominating the political landscape in the United States, the song Fight the Power has not lost its powerful quality as a rallying call in the fight against racism and the protection of freedom of speech," Lubin adds.

Ridenhour came up with the idea for the song, in a moment of inspiration, while on a plane flying over Rome: "I was inspired by The Isley Brothers' 1975 song version of the song but I wanted to add a political and modern point-of-view about our own personal circumstances." According to the hip-hop artist, the song is not about the fact that law enforcement is unnecessary—"it's not about fighting authority"—it's about fighting abuses of power.

"Music has a duty to inform people, especially at times when the media gets soft or leads people astray," the songwriter says, adding: "I consider myself a rap-tivist (rapper + activist) - my job is to spread the words—music can start or stop wars."

While Ridenhour speaks in the cryptic tongue typical of an artist-philosopher, his understanding of music's political power is backed up by science. Dr. Jeffrey Arnett, famed American psychologist, did a much-cited scientific investigation approximately 25 years



Hisen Perik

ago on the relationship young people have with music. His results revealed that “music is an intense avocation that shapes their view of the world, their spending habits, their moods, their friendships, their notion of what is admirable and their hope for what might become.”

Two decades later, the same holds true for today’s youth except today the music industry has changed dramatically due to technology such as smart phones and social media platforms. YouTube has allowed amateur musicians to get their music out without being tied to powerhouse recording studies.

According to LAU student Ahmad Kabbani, this ‘democratization’ of music has opened up many possibilities, with young people feeling there is a space for them to express themselves. While not overtly political himself, Kabbani believes that music has the power to bring people together and serve as a reminder of what is good about society.

“The question of the relationship between art and civic engagement is quite relevant for Lebanon in particular and in the region, more generally,” he says. Explaining, “It goes without saying that right now in Lebanon we are going through an exceptionally difficult time - what’s happening in Palestine, in Syria, in Iraq in addition to our difficult economy and domestic instability—and I believe, that what will help this country get through these difficult times is music,” he says.

Kabbani, a dedicated member of LAU’s choir, took to the stage this year and performed a solo singing act during the university’s first ever “LAU’s Got Talent” show. “It was the first time I’ve done anything like that at university, and it was quite amazing seeing all these students share their artistic passion with one another and support one another—school is not just about studying and books, it is about developing other aspects of your personality” he remarks.

Echoing this philosophy, Riman Jurdak, senior student coordinator at LAU Beirut, says “LAU’s Got Talent,” the highly successful student-run event, was a way for students to engage in the arts. “LAU believes that the arts are an integral element of a well-rounded education and we always encourage our students to be creative and find ways to express themselves,” she says.

Event organizer and communication arts student, Zeina Shehayeh, explains that, “A group of former LAU classmates decided to put on the event, and unlike many of the cultural events of this summer, we decided that it would go on as planned regardless of any instability,” she adds.

While not all the students had an activist agenda and none of the performances were anywhere near incendiary, many of the students involved believe that just participating in such an event

is an act of resistance in and of itself in Lebanon: “With all that our country has gone through in the past year, this event shows the spirit of the people and the spirit of the country—we will not sacrifice art simply because of ‘instability,’” she says. “Music is important, it can mobilize and bring people together and help people increase their morale during difficult times,” she adds.

Relying on music to get through difficult times is certainly something Beirut-based Kurdish Syrian singer Hisen Perik relates to. “I have been singing all my life but since the events in Syria took a downhill turn back in 2012, I have been writing my own music about the struggles my generation has to overcome.”



Scene from LAU’s Got Talent



While Perik’s music is poignant and at times downcast, it nevertheless has a steely optimistic core. “Music’s main challenge is to become a vehicle for social change and change cannot happen until awareness is raised,” he says. “I hope with my music I can give people a glimpse into the life of a war refugee living in Lebanon,” he says, adding: “This awareness may be the catalyst for them to then take more action—to pressure their political representatives or engage in volunteer work. Music isn’t just for parties.”



“Music is an intense avocation that shapes their view of the world, their spending habits, their moods, their friendships, their notion of what is admirable and their hope for what might become”

—Dr. Jeffrey Arnett

Interactive print design inspires faculty and students

By Reem Maghribi



A book designed by three members of the LAU School of Architecture and Design (SArD) has been selected as a winner in Creative Quarterly's professional graphic design category competition.

This fall's issue of the prestigious art and design journal, Creative Quarterly, will feature *Compendium* - a work by faculty from LAU's Department of Design encompassing their students' work, which was a finalist in the journal's professional graphic design category.

Compendium is a collection of work from graphic design students of the university's Byblos campus, where Melissa Plourde Khoury teaches together with fellow assistant professor, Tarek Khoury. The catalogue, which subsequently received a Merit Award in the Graphis Competition: Design Annual 2015 and is showcased in their online gallery of winners, was also worked on by LAU graphic designer Charbel Harb.

"We are all of course delighted. This is a win for all of us, Tarek [Khoury], Charbel [Harb], our students, LAU and myself," says Plourde Khoury, the project's art director.

In addition to being motivated by her role as associate chair of the university's design department, Plourde Khoury found inspiration in a paper she had read.

"The paper was about interactive print design and it stimulated my approach to the catalogue's cover design, which incorporates foldable cutout letterforms." The book's cover is white and the letters of its title *Compendium* are formed using cutouts that, once folded, reveal the vibrant color stripes of the inside pages, forming a bright bold title.

"I wanted to find a way to encourage the user to spend more time with the book," she explains of her design process. "If they interact with it, they will enjoy and remember it more and are more likely to keep it."

There is no doubt that digital technologies and their intrinsic promotion of interactivity have influenced the way graphic designers approach 2D projects. The paper that inspired Plourde Khoury was published in *Icograda Journal of Design Research* and highlighted various examples of how graphic design has been used to promote animation in print products. The students of LAU's School of Architecture and Design have themselves created such products.

"Two students created fabulous business cards during their packaging design studio class," enthuses Plourde Khoury. Melissa El Hajj designed a card for a costume designer that folded out into a boutique, complete with cutout dresses and hangers, while Stephanie Assio's card for a toy store included a 3D Ferris wheel.

Despite not being taught as a specific course or even chapter within the graphic design degree, Plourde Khoury believes interactive print design lingers throughout the curriculum. "It's very much apparent in our printing variables course and throughout the studio courses when students are invited to focus on their own areas of interest." She is looking forward

to teaching the publication design studio again next year after two years away from it. "Interactive design will definitely feature more heavily this time because technology has developed so much. Our industry is heavily influenced by technology and it has forced print media to reconsider how it exists."

One LAU student project that did just that was Diala el Zein's, a book that presented facts and quotes related to atheism in Lebanon. "As you turned the pages, information kept appearing and disappearing, reflecting the closeted nature of the taboo subject matter very creatively."

Mayssa Noujeim's student project also encouraged interaction with a printed book. The manual issued for a fashion collection included paper modules that turn into wearable paper-folds in a bid to introduce potential customer to the unique paper-like material used in collection.

"I wanted to encourage the user to spend more time with the book"

—Melissa Plourde Khoury, LAU design professor and associate chair of the Design Department

Q&A

A man of passion

With over 900 compositions and 17 CDs, for Joseph Khalife the creative process never stops.



Twenty years ago Joseph Khalife joined LAU as a part-time music teacher. Throughout his time here, he has been instrumental in encouraging gifted students to take their musical talent to the next level. As an acknowledgement of his hard work and dedication, Khalife is now the university's first ever musician-in-residence. LAU Magazine & Alumni Bulletin took a moment to talk to him about his passion.

How did your love for music start?

At school, when I was little, I used to listen to my teacher playing the harmonium and I was mesmerized by the music. I began playing the piano by the time I was 11, but as we didn't own one at home I practiced on the dining table. I'd imagine that it was a real piano and I would sit and rehearse for hours. I did this for four years until my parents decided to get me one.

Was there a certain trigger?

I was about 16 years old when I first heard Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto Number 1 at a friend's house. I was transported to another world, every nerve in my body tingled, I was in heaven. From that day I became deeply involved in music. Although my father wanted me to become a doctor, I chose music studies and composition as my major at university.

How has being LAU's first musician-in-residence inspired you?

Music interacts with one's soul. You really have to be gifted to specialize in music, because if you're not it will sound superficial and soulless. The career of those, who simply seek fame and fortune, even if they learn how to sing or play, is short lived. Success meets those who pursue it as an art.

Motivating university students must be challenging, how do you go about it?

Students, who choose music as an elective, can gain a great deal of general knowledge. For them to benefit most, I teach it in an entertaining and pressure-free way, so that they end up wanting to know more.

Where did the inspiration for your love of religious music come from?

All my life I've liked things that are spiritual, such as nature, the sea and the sky. Spiritual and Sufi music relax me and make me feel at peace. They put me in a safe place where no lies exist.

Which Lebanese stars have you composed for?

One is Majida Roumi, whom I've known for over 30 years. "Liannak Ayni" with lyrics by poet Henri Zgheib was the first song I worked with her on and we've been collaborating from that time. Joumana Mdarwar is the other. I met her at the beatification of Saint Rifka and we have since worked on 12 albums together.

You also compose for TV shows and films, is it very different?

Yes, it is different, in both kind and composition, because whether it is serving the scenario or message, it needs to be done in a very specific way. It has to be precise and accurate, and the rhythm has to go with what is taking place on screen.

What does the future hold for you?

As well as organizing events at LAU on a monthly basis with students, currently, I'm working on a new album with Joumana Medawar. The creative process never stops, even when I'm asleep, because it's an innate part of me. I always want to be ready to serve people through music. This is who I am.

What is your advice for a budding musician?

To be true to themselves and their music, and to be able to give others peace and joy through it.



Brain drain or brain gain?

By Reem Maghribi

Six young and talented graduates of LAU's architecture program are this year pursuing postgraduate studies at high profile universities in the U.S.A. and U.K. LAU Magazine & Alumni Bulletin met up with them to discover the reasons behind their decision.



All six graduates had designed strong socially motivated buildings for their final year project, but none of them expect projects like theirs to reach fruition in Lebanon. The lack of opportunity for the development of socially motivated spaces is but one of the reasons that is likely to encourage these former LAU students to stay abroad after they complete their graduate studies, at least for some years to come. Other reasons include instability and corruption.

"As a university we are committed to raising the level of awareness, improving the situation around us and participating effectively in making things better within the community," says Dr. Elie Haddad, dean of the School of Architecture and

Design. "We cannot continue on this path of instability, uncertainty and dysfunctional governance. We are now in a no war, no peace situation. That, however, was not the way it looked when I decided to return in 1994."

Haddad left Lebanon to the U.S. during the civil war. "I couldn't keep crossing between east and west Beirut," he explains. After gaining his bachelor's, master's and doctorate in the U.S., he stayed there and taught. "I came back mainly because the war was finally over. There were prospects for development and there was an optimism that things were going to get better." The optimism, he says, is slightly wavering now. "I can understand those who are not certain

whether they will return immediately after completing their degrees or not," he says of his former students.

Indeed all six of the students declared their intention to come back to Lebanon, eventually, but only one was absolutely certain of her return. Nour Zoghbi studied for her bachelor's degree in Beirut because "my parents insisted I stay near my family for the undergrad and then travel for my postgrad." Now in New York studying at Columbia, she believes that family will be the impetus behind her return to Lebanon. "I know that financially and in terms of a career I would excel more in New York, but I am very family oriented and will want to raise my children in Lebanon."



Fellow LAU graduate Ramzi Naja also believes that he has a responsibility to return but for a different reason. "You can't preach from afar. There is much more to be done in Lebanon than anywhere else. Those financially and politically in control now aren't interested in architecture for welfare, so we need more socially-conscious people to climb the ladder and be influential."

Naja will soon begin his postgraduate studies at Harvard, as will Aziz Barbar, but unlike Naja whose ultimate goal is to open his own practice, Barbar is keen on working in academia. "After graduating, I will seek out opportunities to teach in the U.S.," says Barbar, who will for the next 18 months be studying toward an M.A. in Design Studies, with an emphasis on technology. "New technologies are really shaping our profession and it fascinates me. All we push in Lebanon are capitalist ideas, not innovation."

Despite this, Barbar is confident he will return to the country in which he grew up. "I have always lived here. I like our culture and the way of life in Lebanon."

Also fond of her culture is Layla Merhi, who preoccupied herself with it while developing her final year project at LAU. "We in Lebanon think we have no national identity because of our current situation

and preoccupation with politics and war, but we do have one, socially," she says, recalling Beirut's expressive graffiti and an old man reciting the Quran in the streets of Hamra.

Merhi was attracted to architecture through "an appreciation for the value of space and the impact it holds on human experience" and very much believes that she will return to Lebanon soon after completing her two-year postgraduate degree in London. "Everybody loves a challenge and I want to be able to apply everything I am going to learn about urban design in my home country."

Anahid Simitian has also been motivated by urban design and its affect on Lebanese society. She had considered studying political economy or international relations before enrolling in architecture at LAU "but, living in Lebanon, it somehow felt hopeless to study either one of these fields."

Instead, the political state of Lebanon after 2005 motivated Simitian's decision to study architecture. "People kept running out on the streets to express their frustration and it was during that time that the need for public space was felt. I don't think Lebanon would have gone through the political and economic turmoil it's been going through if these inclusive spaces were available for everyone to vent

their anger in more productive ways."

Not sure how long she will stay in the U.S. after completing her master's at Columbia, Simitian also refers to family as a reason for her eventual return.

Sabine Aoun is similarly undecided. "I want to come back to Lebanon, perhaps not straight away though. It's all about the experience and what you learn, as this is what helps you later," says the graduate. Having worked briefly in Lebanon, Aoun believes that her country would benefit from the different experience she would gain working abroad. "Architecture is so international. Most big firms have offices in other countries and also in the Middle East. However, I would prefer to work in Europe or the States at first. I am from the Middle East and know it well. What I want is to get to know other cities and cultures."

Whether the lure of such cities and cultures keep Lebanon's graduates from returning to their homeland is a matter for us all to consider, says Haddad. "If you want your kids to return, you have to give them the opportunity to do so. Not on an individual basis, but as a society. We have to think about the majority and what is needed to make Lebanon better for people to come back to."



[1] (l-r) Anahid Simitian, Aziz Barbar, Layla Merhi, Nour Zoughby, Ramzi Naja, Sabine Aoun

Sketches and presentations from the LAU graduates' final year projects:

[2] By Anahid Simitian.

[3] By Aziz Barbar.

[4] View from exhibition.

[5] By Layla Merhi.

[6] By Nour Zoughby.

[7-8]. By Sabine Aoun.



Precious life

By Dalila Mahdawi

Nature photographer and Dima Healthcare owner Michel Zoghzoghi establishes scholarship at the Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing

"We already have very good nurses, but we need even more of them"

—Michel Zoghzoghi



Michel Zoghzoghi, owner of Dima Healthcare, had made the long journey to Katmai National Park in Alaska to photograph grizzly bears feasting on salmon during their annual migration upstream. Zoghzoghi slept in a tent at a small campsite, around which roamed close to 100 bears. One day, as he returned to camp, he found a dozing bear and her cub blocking the path. "We had to make a four-hour detour around them up into the mountains to get to our campsite," Zoghzoghi recalls with a smile. "The last thing you want to do is disturb a mother bear with a cub."

Zoghzoghi is a man prepared to go to great lengths for a great shot. Yet his love for photography happened almost by mistake, when he bought a camera at an airport duty free shop eight years ago. It was the best impulse purchase possible, revealing a remarkable talent for wildlife photography that's taken him to some of the most remote corners of the globe. He's covered over 250,000 kilometers in pursuit of bathing hippos, prowling tigers and soaring eagles.

It's a world away from Zoghzoghi's work at Dima Healthcare, which deals in medical equipment and supplies. But there are some lessons from photography that transcend boundaries. "I'm someone who is usually very impatient, except when I have a camera in my hand," he says. "I'm goal-driven and photography pushes me to keep on trying to work harder and get better at what I'm doing."

Though he discovered photography later in life, his photos have already been featured on National Geographic's website and earned him accolades at the Hamdan International Photography Awards and

Sony World Photography Awards. He's also published a book, *Prey*, on big cats and other endangered species.

Getting up close and personal with some of nature's most impressive creatures might sound daunting, but ironically Zoghzoghi's only real brush with danger occurred on home terrain. He was sitting at his desk in Beirut when a car bomb killed Wissam Eid, a senior Internal Security Forces official, in 2008. The force of the explosion smashed all the windows at Dima Healthcare's offices showering him and 15 colleagues with glass. Despite being left with a scar on his neck, Zoghzoghi says the assassination only reaffirmed his commitment to his native country: "We need more people to invest in Lebanon and its youth."

With this goal in mind, Zoghzoghi recently established the Dima Healthcare Annual Scholarship Grant at LAU to support needy and qualified Nursing students. Zoghzoghi hopes his gift will go some way in transforming perceptions about nursing. "I'm always interacting with nurses through Dima Healthcare and I see how hard they work and how difficult their job is," he says. "I felt it was important to establish the scholarship as a token of appreciation for Lebanon's nurses. We already have very good nurses, but we need even more of them."

Zoghzoghi has also found a way to give back to Mother Nature through photography. All revenue generated from his photographs is donated to charities in Lebanon and wildlife conservation efforts abroad. Nevertheless, "there are areas that exist today that won't exist in ten years," he warns. "We humans are the predators in the modern world."

The food of life

By Zalfa Halabi

Innovative series of lecture shows how music accompanies us in every aspect of our lives

For as long back as we can trace, music has been an inherent part of our culture. Based on archeological discoveries of drawings of flute shaped carved bones with holes suggesting the existence of musical instruments, it has existed ever since the Paleolithic era.

Music accompanies us throughout our life and is there at every milestone. Lullabies send us to sleep when we are young, growing up we choose what we like listening to and at weddings couples have a first dance song. Music even entertains us while we are stuck in traffic.

LAU's musician in residence, composer Joseph Khalife, organized a series lectures on the subject of music and its relationship to other disciplines. "Without music nothing works," says Khalife amusingly, adding, "I organized this lecture series to show students that music is the essence of life."

During the series, Mark Korkomaz, a pharmacist, Elio Kallassi, an engineer, Georges Abi Aad, an architect, and Nancy Chedid, a physician, all musicians as well, each addressed their personal relationship to music and its influence on their careers.

"The first tune I ever played was a wedding tune," says Korkomaz jokingly, "I returned from a wedding that I'd been to with my parents having memorized the tune and played it on my keyboard." Then and there, music became an indispensable part of his life and career.

"It affects my job in the most positive ways," explains the keyboard-playing pharmacist. According to Korkomaz, learning to play an instrument apparently

teaches discipline and patience. "Music instills in one a sense of responsibility, humanism and self satisfaction," he elaborates, adding, "It also goes without saying that it enhances communication skills in the sense that it makes one an active listener."

In her lecture, Chedid illustrated the musician physician connection based on self-reported traits of physician-musician and narrowed it down to three points. Physicians find relief from stress and intensity of work in music. They also desire to collaborate with others towards a common goal and musical cooperation does just that. And for physicians, music and medicine are attractive because they both present a dual aspect: the rational versus the emotional, and science and art.

Abi Aad expressed his delight at discovering a life changing quote by John Wolfgang Goethe, an 18th century writer and poet, "Music is liquid architecture, architecture is frozen music." This inspired him to research thoroughly the relationship between music and architecture, only to learn that they are synonymous.

"Music is an integral part of a person's life," points out Khalife, "Starting in the womb with the sound of your mother's heartbeat, its regular rhythm becomes part of you and when it stops it means death." For him music is an essential part of mankind and all sciences have a link of some sort to music, "Pythagoras was a doctor, an engineer and a musician at the same time."

"Without music nothing works"

—Joseph Khalife, LAU musician in residence, Byblos campus

Architect Georges Abi Aad



Volunteering made easy

By Mehrnoush Shafiei

LAU-NGO Network application promotes community service



It's a sign of our times that almost everything seems to have an app. Need help waking up in the morning? There is an app for that. Want to stay abreast of the latest gossip and celebrity news? There is an app for that, as well. Want to mislead your friends and family into thinking you are in a relationship when you are not? Yes, sadly, there is an app for that as well.

For better or for worse, smartphones are here to stay and while some of the ways people use them are perhaps not the "smartest" way to spend one's time, there are other ways in which technology is serving the greater good.

Beyond fun and games, tech-savvy activists use them to shake up civil society, increase communication and get things done. It was in this spirit that LAU's Outreach and Civic Engagement (OCE) unit teamed up with the university's IT Applications and Solutions Department to launch its LAU-NGO Network app.

The OCE has always strived to provide LAU students with a diverse range of volunteer opportunities. According to Elie Samia, the unit's executive director, having an LAU-NGO application will expedite, institutionalize, regulate, document and facilitate the functional interaction between the NGO community and the university.

"The application, which is free to download on Google play, will provide up-to-date listings of local non-government organizations networks in Lebanon in addition to some prominent international ones," he explains.

Those on the hunt for internship and volunteer opportunities will conveniently have a series of local listings at their fingertips, as well as an LAU-NGO map. Helping budding activists save time and navigate Lebanon's prolific non-profit, voluntary citizens' groups, the app provides students with handy information about their mission, current projects, social media networks, contact information and events. It's a one-stop shop for all things NGO.

According to Samia, while the application is open to the public, the internship opportunities feature is only accessible to the LAU community—students, faculty, staff and alumni—via a login.

Dina Abdul Rahman, the OCE program lead coordinator, says the application "will help the Lebanese youth stay connected to the NGO field, be more informed and

educated on what civil society has to offer them and what they can do to help." Currently there are over 100 NGOs featured, with that number expected to increase. "With this application LAU is delivering the right message and encouraging its students to open up and not only be a part of the better society the NGOs are aiming for, but to help create it," points out M.B.A. student Ali Zaydan.

For Hassan Baalbaki, project management coordinator at OCE, the application helps students realize what opportunities possibly await them. "We should accept to support and help each other in all our possible ways namely through volunteerism and community service," he stresses.

"This application will inform and educate the Lebanese youth on what civil society has to offer them and what they can do to help"

—Dina Abdul Rahman, lead coordinator, OCE program





Making music a teaching opportunity

By Amahl Khouri

Never afraid to take the lead, LAU mixes music and social media in a concert that has made students ask for more



LAU professor Dr. Martín Loyato may play the trumpet but he is very soft spoken. He doesn't waste time, either. He has only been in Beirut for 10 months, but he's already learning the *oud* and collaborating with Ziad Al-Rahbani, one of Lebanon's top performers.

Another thing he hasn't wasted any time on is making music cool on LAU campus, and not just cool, but *really* cool. In fact, his flagship student concert in May, "#WebLAU" created so many waves that it was repeated again on June 18th.

The initiative, born out of the Theatre in Performance Class, immersed the audience in an interdisciplinary project that involves dance, music, poetry, theater and visual arts, and revolves around the new world of social media.

As the backdrop for #WebLAU, Loyato used multimedia projections of poetry by contemporary British poet, Ms Moem, and Italian poet, Manuela Gallina, as well as a film by fellow professor Alireza Khatami. Most intriguingly, though, he invited audience members to engage simultaneously on social media, with people's Facebook comments, concert pictures and tweets being projected on a large screen as the band sang and played.

As soon as the concert began the feedback streamed in on the screen. "Congratulations from Dean Mansour from the bottom of his heart," wrote Dr. Sami Baroudi, the Communication Arts

"We feel more confident and less fearful when we communicate electronically"

—Dr. Martín Loyato, faculty member, Department of Communication Arts



Department chair, on the event's Facebook page. And one after the other, comments also came flooding in from students, both on Facebook and Twitter. "Phenomenal", "Perfect performance #weblau" and "Goose bumps #weblau" were just some.

The concert was, without a doubt, a remarkable achievement. Loyato took a group of mostly non-musician students and molded them into an amazing band that mixed Eastern and Western music genres effortlessly, rocking the Gulbenkian Theater that was packed to the brim. With each song, the crowd's cheers grew louder and louder. But in the same way that his soft Spanish lilt underlays his booming trumpet, Loyato made a quiet, educational point through it all. He is, in the end, an educator and music is his medium.

For Dr. Loyato, this was an opportunity to explore the possibilities of new technologies and social media, and think deeply about the effects of our actual social interactions.

"One time I was walking to my office, when I noticed a group of students leaving class. They were marching out in a straight line, one after the other and every single one of them was glued to their phones. That's how the idea developed," he explains.

To confuse matters, he contacted the two poets and asked them to submit poems about social media, which he projected on screen during the concert. "The show was a double edged sword," points out Loyato. "My students have to report on two concerts for my class. I wanted them to get distracted and then become aware of how that happened and report about it".

He believes that such initiatives allow young people to observe their surroundings profoundly. "We feel more confident and less fearful when we communicate electronically, meanwhile we are losing the spiritual and human touch of precious daily moments." Loyato has a vision for his students and #WebLAU is only the beginning.



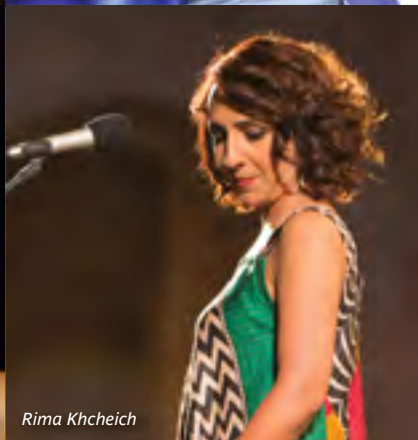
Hala Masri



Stephanie Mehanna



Tania Kassis



Rima Khcheich



Ziad El Ahmadi



LAU alumni paint on silence

By LAU Staff

Music touches the lives of each and everyone one of us. It crosses all boundaries enabling individuals to communicate without speaking. Music has played a vital role in the spiritual and personal fulfillment of many of the LAU's student body, including numerous alumni. Here we ask them what music means to them.

HALA MASRI '87

B.A. in Communication Arts (Radio/TV/Film)

Choir singer with Ziad Rahbani, Hala also previously sang in Feyrouz's 2003 concerts in Dubai and Qatar. From 1985 – 1997, she was both a choir and solo singer in Beirut Ensemble for Arabic Music conducted by Salim Sahab and sang solo in several concerts he conducted at Cairo Opera House. Hala has been LAU's Department of Communication Arts' theater coordinator since 1988 and is also production manager of all its stage productions.

"I'm an amateur singer who sings for the fun of it. I never sought singing as a profession so as not to lose the sense of liberty, sincerity and ecstasy music brings. I'm able to express my feelings in a sublime and translucent way through music. When I sing or listen to music I fly, my soul is purified. To me music is divine."

TANIA SALEH '90

B.A. in Fine Arts, Minor in Advertising

Singer, songwriter and visual artist, Tania has been paving her own path on the independent alternative Arabic music scene since 1990. Her music is a fusion of western tunes with traditional Arabic melodies she grew up listening to.

"Although I'm not a believer, but music is my religion. It reminds me of the universe's beauty and harmony. It is the reason why I am alive. In music, I can express feelings that cannot be expressed in most other art forms. When words and voices are added to the mix of instruments, music becomes extremely powerful. It can move mountains. It is the one human "invention" that is meaningful to all."

ZIAD EL AHMADIE '97

B.A. in Communication Arts (Radio/TV/Film)

Singer, *oud* player and composer, Ziad El Ahmadi's musical career began during his time at university. He has since composed music for more than 16 TV series, 10 documentaries and two films, as well as three albums of his work.

"According to Plato, music and rhythm find their way into the secret places of the soul. This is what music means to me. Because of its relation with mathematics we can expand the logic of humanity and through of its relation to sound, beauty and vibes we can purify the soul. With music we can express what we cannot write and say through words. It is the language of peace."

RIMA KHCHEICH '97

B.A. in Communication Arts

Rima, diploma holder in Oriental Singing from The National Higher Conservatory of Music, is fast becoming one of the most sought after singers of classical Arab songs. She is acknowledged both for the exquisite beauty of her voice and her profound knowledge of the traditional and modern Arab repertoire.

"Since I started singing at a very early age, I can't think of my life without music. It's the only activity that has never ended. Music is now my hobby, my carrier, my work and my life."

TANIA KASSIS '03

B.S. in Business Marketing

Crossover singer, Tania Kassis, embodies the new age of Lebanese cultural beauty with a multilingual pop-opera style of East-meets-West. Her name is known in such places as Paris' Olympia and the Sydney Opera House. She is also the founder and president of the cultural movement One Lebanon.

"Music is my therapy, it soothes my soul and helps my mind disconnect. Spiritually, music helps me find myself and contemplate life and its essence. Through it, as a universal language, I can spread messages of peace, unity and religious dialogues all around the world. Music unites and brings people together irrespective of their nationality, religion, social class, political affiliation and the like. Music fills my life."

MAYA HOBEIKA '04

B.S. in Business Accounting

Independent singer and artist, Maya collaborated with her brother Jad Hobeika, B.S '09 (also an LAU graduate) on her first album *Ward*, to create a collection of songs varying between Tango, Waltz, Jazz and Oriental. Maya is currently working on developing a musical identity influenced by eastern and western classical techniques to create an innovative genre of her own.

"Since I was a kid music astonished me by its magic. I used to be hypnotized by the grandeur of the singers' voices and the music of famous artists being played at home. With time music became the language of my soul and the purest expression of me as a human being."

BASHAR FARRAN '06

B.S in Hospitality & Tourism Management

Bashar's love for music, from an early age, lead him to become a much sought after musician and bass player.

"Music to me is simply my life. I dream about tunes, songs and compositions, music in general. Then I wake up to the same or different melodies. I go about my day dealing with everyone and everything with a certain soundtrack at the back of my head. It is my passion, my love. Come to think of it, words can never be as expressive as sound waves."

XRISS JOR '10

B.A. in Fine Arts, Minor in Theater & Teaching Diploma

Managed by Quincy Jones, Lebanese-American singer Xriss Jor made her international debut when she appeared on the first season of *The Voice Arabia*.

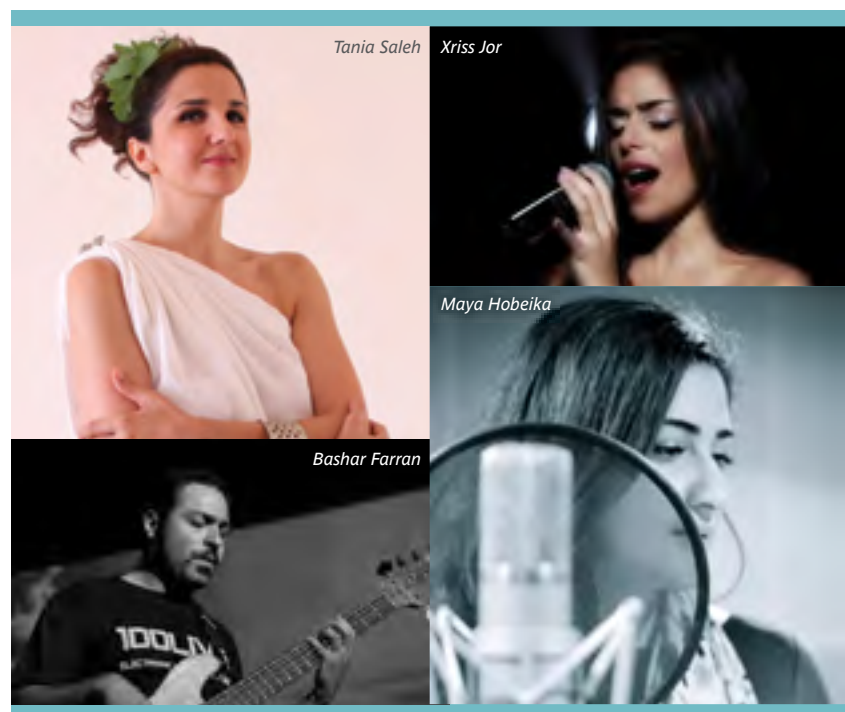
"Music to me is my life. It cures my moods, tingles my senses, uplifts me and pays my bills. Without music in my life, I would probably be teaching art."

STEPHANIE MEHANNA '09, '12

B.S. in Biology and M.S. in Molecular Biology

Stephanie became a lead singer during her first few years at university. She is currently part of vocal trio the *M Sister* that she co-founded with her sisters. Stephanie also shares a passion for teaching, as she enjoys communicating with students.

"My father, sisters, grandmas, uncles, aunts, cousins...we all know how to sing. Love for music comes naturally in my family. Music gives value to the moments I live. It intensifies my feelings and emotions. Nothing touches me more than a good voice or a great interpretation of a song. I have also finally realized a childhood dream, to sing with my sisters."



Spotlight

RIMA NASIR TARAZI (A.A. '49)

Songs of Freedom and Hope is a collection of Rima's songs in 16 volumes (8 vocals and 8 piano accompaniment) that she has written since 1950. Some of the lyrics to the music are set to the words of renowned poets and others to her own. In 2006, soprano, Tania Tamari Nasir, B.A. '62 (also a graduate of LAU), who happens to be Rima's sister in law, recorded with her a collection of 13 songs entitled *Ila Mata* (Until When).

LAU's first Phonathon

By Maya Hautefeuille

Calling for a culture of giving among members of the university's community results in more financial assistance to deserving students

This spring, in a room on campus temporarily turned into a call center, phone lines were kept busy as the Development Office conducted a Phonathon fundraiser among LAU's alumni community. The first initiative of its kind at the university, the telephone campaign tapped into its longstanding and established alumni support base, as graduates from as early as the 1950s eagerly responded to the appeal to give back to their alma mater.

Between April and May, six student callers telephoned 800 alumni to update their personal details, exchange news and inquire if they would be interested in making a gift to LAU. Half the targeted alumni pool was reached and the fundraising team managed to secure pledges of support for more than USD20,000, out of which USD10,000 has been received.

"This initiative comes in line with the Development Office's strategy to widen its fundraising activities and hence diversify the sources of its revenues," says Nassib Nasr, assistant vice president for development.

While specifically aimed at increasing funds for student aid under the umbrella 'Fulfilling the Promise: LAU Campaign for Academic Excellence' project launched in 2011, "an equally important dimension of the Phonathon is to help establish a culture of giving among members of the LAU community," explains associate director of development, Ghandi Fala.

In addition to financing a worthy cause, the phone calls therefore additionally served to promote communication between the university and its supporters through a personal connection. Joseph Hawa, the School of Engineering Alumni Chapter president, who provided valuable advice through his involvement in the planning for the Phonathon, commended the fundraiser for bringing old and new students into direct contact. "The Phonathon is a very efficient way to create a link between both the alumni and the university on one side, and the alumni and the undergraduates on the other," notes Hawa.

In effect, hearing from current students moved '92 alumnus Camille Barkho to donate one of the larger amounts

in homage to his own LAU education that was facilitated by a scholarship. "University is such an important stage in one's life where personalities and careers are sculptured," says Barkho while stressing the importance of helping others benefit once being in a position to give back.

On their end of the line, the student callers were overwhelmed by the show of support they received. "The alumni were so happy to receive news and be kept abreast of LAU's latest achievements," points out senior student Hrag Avedanian, who raised USD1,000 on his first call. "We felt like one extended family," he adds.

The students also acquired unique experiences and insights from their role as school ambassadors. "Fundraising is a valuable skill to offer to employers in today's job market", remarks Interior Architecture major, Nadia Itani. Conversing with graduates in all kinds of professions also provided opportunities for receiving valuable career advice.

"An important dimension of the Phonathon is to help establish a culture of giving"

—Ghandi Fala, associate director of development

"Speaking to people with good posts was encouraging for me as an LAU student, it hinted at what's waiting for us after we graduate," she declares.

In line with President Joseph G. Jabbra's vision to build an overall culture of philanthropic support at the university, the Development Office will continue to run more Phonathons in the coming year. As seasoned insiders of the school's community, past and current generations of alumni remain a privileged resource for fostering necessary changes from within. "Several alumni told us how by attending LAU their children and grandchildren had followed in their footsteps," enthuses Hrag, "It's this real sense of attachment to their alma mater, many years later, that makes me realize LAU was definitely the right choice to make."



Breaking down boundaries

By Amahl Khouri

LAU's university theater festival is a beacon of cultural resistance, friendship and learning

Is it radical to direct a play that makes the audience laugh and smile? If you're from Lithuania, a country with the second highest suicide rate in the world, then the answer is a resounding yes. "I want to make my audience laugh, because in Lithuania you never see people smile in the street," says Egle Kižaitė, director of *Forgive Them - They Do Not Know What They are Doing*.

The play, based on *The Decameron*, is a collection of lively Italian tales from the 14th century about a group of young Florentines who escape the plague stricken city to seclude themselves in the countryside in search of lighter matters.

Kižaitė, one of a group of students from the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, took part in LAU's 16th annual International University Theater Festival. This year, the Beirut campus hosted productions from Lithuania, Italy, Turkey, Syria and Lebanon.

Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences Nashaat Mansour paid special tribute to the "cultural resistance" of the Syrian participants who were able to come despite the difficult situation at home and precarious travel conditions.

Lebanon may not be living the same

difficulties as Syria, but LAU student director Sirine Dardari, who opened the festival with the play *Us and Them*, took heed of Dr. Mansour's words. "He talked about cultural resistance, about how important it is for us to unite, no matter where we are from. I think the festival itself is a way to explain how there are no boundaries between us as people. Here we are, sharing our knowledge of theater and our artistic points of view crossing language barriers and still we understand each other!"

Dr. Samir Othman, faculty member at the Higher Institute of Dramatic Arts in Damascus expressed gratitude for the opportunity that the festival awarded the students, who presented *The Marriage of Figaro*. "This was an amazing experience for our students. It not only gave them a huge burst of positive energy, it also gave them a chance to meet students from other universities."

In addition to the various productions, the festival also numerous workshops in subjects as diverse as capoeira, sound art and Jebe Bara drums. Dr. Fakiye Özsoysal, associate professor at Istanbul University gave a lecture entitled *Turkish Feminist Playwrighting & Feminist Theatre*

Companies in Istanbul.

"It is a learning experience for students. We've mainly been working on teaching them how to read a fiche technique. But in fact, the Syrian students – 35 in total are working on the event this year – learn how to run a festival for five days," says Dr. Mona Knio, LAU associate professor of theater in

"The students – 35 in total, are working on the event this year – learn how to run a festival for five days"

—Dr. Mona Knio, LAU associate professor of theater

the Department of Communication Arts and member of the organizing committee.

Busy in the light room above the Gulbenkian Theater is Ayman Ghali, a communication arts student and a member of the festival crew. "As well as learning how to work on a team, I'm also getting a lot of technical experience. I've been doing the social media promotion for the festival too. Yesterday I worked for 14 hours," he says smiling through his barely visible exhaustion.

The only indoor amphitheater in the whole Arab world

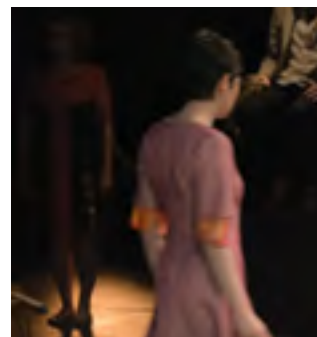
Since it first opened in 1971 with *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, the Gulbenkian Theater has played a vital role in campus life at LAU. Every year it stages two major and 20 student productions, as well as countless workshops by both local and international artists. It is also the home to the annual International University Theater Festival established in 1998. Today, the Gulbenkian Theater needs YOUR help. Please join hands with your alma mater so our beloved theater can get the upgrades it needs to continue as an inspiring environment for directors, writers, designers, actors, technicians and theater lovers. Whatever money we raise together, the LAU will match. Our success depends on your love and generosity.

For more information, please contact:

By calling +961 1 786456/64 ext.1731 or emailing: development@lau.edu.lb

A scene from the play Us and Them during LAU's 16th annual International University Theater Festival







"I couldn't understand what made these men behave so hideously toward the person they love"

—Lina Abyad, associate professor of Communication Arts



Tackling a taboo

By LAU Staff

Once again LAU leads the pack in a daring and harsh look at a reality that society often turns a blind eye to

All the stories in *This is not an Egyptian Film* are real. They're based on true accounts of women who have been cruelly abused by their husbands and loved ones. None have been sugarcoated.

All the women portrayed by the actresses are alive today and these were their stories. Each had a different tale to tell. As one unfolded, another interrupted it. Blow-by-blow, the actresses recounted the stories, all the while staring the audience in the eye. Interacting and overlapping with each other, the performers revealed the fear and loathing of the all too familiar narrative of a woman who falls victim to domestic abuse.

It is the audience, shifting uncomfortably in their seats and attempting to discreetly wipe away their tears, which clearly reflect the heartfelt pain and suffering of each character.

However, the play is not just about the women. The actors perpetuate the abusers' complex and obnoxious characters with admirable command. It was tough for the male actors to associate with abusers they were playing. One drags his 'wife' around the stage with a rope. "His thoughts and ways of thinking were alien and disturbing to me," said Rami Saidi, an LAU theater graduate, who found difficulty in identifying with his character.

LAU's Spring Major Production, directed by Lina Abyad, an associate professor of Communication Arts, was not for the sensitive or fainthearted. For Abyad this was the first time that she presented a performance directly related to a recent event. "I did a lot of research after the death of Manal al-Assi trying to understand the violence of these men," pointed out Abyad. Al Assi's husband beat her to death with a pressure-cooker in July 2013.



When looking into abuse, Abyad was most puzzled by how love and abuse were irrationally intertwined. "I couldn't understand what made these men behave so hideously toward the person they love," she explained. Through further research, she realized that the behavior of abusive men follows a clear pattern and it is this pattern that drives the play.

As Abyad began talking to others about her project, stories of the plight of a neighbor or an old aunt, their history as a battered woman or their childhood spent hiding behind doors watching their father abuse their mother would be whispered. "I met women who agreed to testify. Young people who witnessed the violence of their father on their mother. Even two girls came to bear witness to their boyfriend's aggressions. It was scary," she revealed.

When asked whether her play could bring about real change in ideology about violence? She replied, "What I can tell you is that about twenty people working on this show will never be victims or perpetrators of domestic violence."

Faculty Profile



Still on a high note

By Reem Maghribi

For over 25 years, Leila Dabaghi has been the driving force behind LAU's choir and is still going strong

"The satisfaction of helping to shape somebody is enormous"

—Leila Dabaghi, director of the LAU choir, Beirut campus



"I am seventy four now and I sometimes think it's time I stopped, but I enjoy teaching and would hate to give it up," says Leila Dabaghi who, nine years after retiring and almost three decades after first joining LAU's faculty, continues to run its choir.

Dabaghi is now a part timer, just as she was when she first joined the university in 1986. "I was teaching music to engineering students at AUB when LAU decided to revive the Boulos' Orpheus Choir," recalls Dabaghi, referring to LAU faculty member, Afif Boulos whose murder in the late 1970s during Lebanon's civil war ended the heyday of the choir he had founded and housed on campus.

"The President of the Republic at the time, Camille Chamoun, ministers and ambassadors, all used to flock to LAU for the choir's performances and operettas before Boulos' death. After we revived it, the Ras Beirut community, which had always been an international and participatory one, was also resuscitated."

Prominent author, and then LAU faculty member, Jean Makdissi was the instigator behind the revival of the choir, which held its first performance, a Christmas concert, under Dabaghi on 22 December 1987. "We held it at AUB's Assembly Hall because LAU wanted to make sure it kept any potential warring parties off campus." It was the first concert held in the area since the late 1970s and the choir sang to a full house. "People came not because of the quality of the performance, but simply because it happened," recalls Dabaghi.

In addition to the Christmas concerts, which have been held every year bar one since the relaunching of the choir, Dabaghi began in 1999 holding spring concerts. "We also performed one operetta when

Jean [Makdissi] was around because she was able to master the participation of her drama students."

In addition to running a choral course, which fed into the choir, Dabaghi taught the courses Fundamentals of Music, An Introduction to Music and Music Education, but her relationship with LAU predates her joining the faculty. "I attended my first year of university here, when it was still called Beirut College for Women (BCW), and I got my second job here as college recorder with the dean of students."

Dabaghi also, by chance, accompanied the Orpheus Choir rehearsals from 1968 to 1973. "While working at the Ford Foundation, a colleague wanted to join the choir but was shy so he took me along with him. Boulos recognized me, because of my mother, and asked me there and then to sit and accompany the choir on the piano."

Dabaghi's mother had been a teacher at Lebanon's National Conservatory of Music. "My mother was a good pedagogue. She had a diploma from the conservatory, but her teaching skills were entirely her own." Dabaghi had however not wanted to follow in her mother's footsteps and become a teacher. "The dream days of [conservatory founder] Wadi Sabra had gone and I was disappointed by the intrigues and manipulations that were going on. My mother always seemed stressed out." Circumstance led her from one job to another during the war but eventually Dabaghi found her home, and her calling, at LAU.

"The satisfaction of helping to shape somebody is enormous. I was mistaken and too immature when I told my mother I didn't want to teach. I have a talent for teaching."



Celebrating transformation

By Reem Maghribi

LAU's nurturing of a creative environment and design thinking is revealed in Metamorphosis, the Department of Design's exhibition of over 30 alumni works

Metamorphosis was the aptly chosen title of the department of design's first exhibition of work by graduates of their Graphic Design Program. "Our alumni have each gone on to work in different creative fields and we wanted to celebrate that," explains department chair Dr. Yasmine Taan.

Held during Beirut Design Week, the exhibition launch was teaming with alumni, students and guests, all there to mingle and view the divergent designs showcased on the walls of the Sheikh Zayed Hall on the Beirut campus.

"I see maturity everywhere in this exhibition. When we graduated we had no idea where we were heading, so it's lovely now to see my final product exhibited with people who shared a similar journey," says Abdallah Hatoum, whose metal mural of Beirut's corniche was on display.

Hatoum feels that his time at LAU helped him see that there was more to design than print and digital. "I worked on window displays before realizing I really wanted to design objects." He describes his exhibited work as "part of a series of interior design pieces replicating old spaces in Beirut that make up our collective memory."

Mira Hayek also identified her passion while at LAU. "I realized I wanted to be

a fashion designer while working on illustration during my graphic design degree. LAU was definitely the start of everything I am today."

Hayek went on to study fashion in Milan, while fellow alumnus Naji El Mir travelled to Paris. "Working for a large company for many years made me discover I wasn't made for the commercial world. Setting up on my own has helped me develop more cultural designs," explains El Mir, whose interest in modern Arabic typography led to a collaboration with the Khatt foundation, founded and run by fellow typographer and LAU alumna Huda Smitsluijzen AbiFares, who was a member of the exhibition's selection committee.

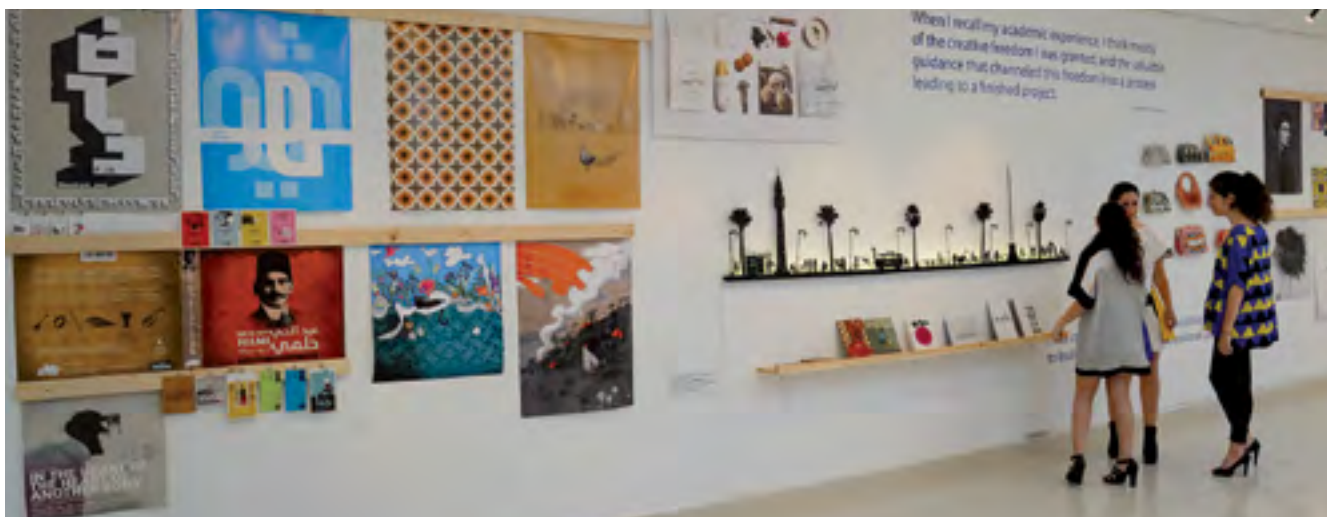
Also intrigued by Arabic typography, particularly calligraphy, is furniture designer lyad Aboul Naja. "I consider it an obligation to create from the experiences of our cultural heritage. There are much younger cultures that take pride in their history and we have thousands of years from which to draw inspiration," explains Aboul Naja. Made of wood and metal, and incorporating poetry written by his grandmother, a coffee table from Aboul Naja's collection stood as testament to his sensibilities. "I was happy to see my peers each walking their own path for a cause or a statement they believe

in," said the alumnus.

One of the more recent graduates showcased was Nour Kays. "Seeing all those familiar faces makes it seem as if it was yesterday," says the 2012 graduate who has continued to study and experiment in different applications of design. "I'm not sure I want to specialize in one industry, currently I'm working in branding while also designing bags."

Like Kays, alumnus Bahij Jaroudi studied for a postgrad degree in London. "Some of my favorite illustrators and animated films come from England, so being there made me feel closer to them." Drawing from a young age, Jaroudi enrolled in graphic design knowing he wanted to be a cartoonist. "Studying design influenced my drawing a great deal. Even now when I design a cartoon character, I approach it by experimenting with shapes and their relationship to each other. Due to my education as a designer I have an appreciation of abstract form."

How many of Jaroudi's characters have been inspired by fellow alumni or former teachers we can't know, but he expresses a sentiment shared by many whose work graced the exhibition: "It was great being part of the exhibit and seeing what everybody has been up to."



The power of music

By Irina du Quenoy

FEATURE



Tracing the route of Lebanon's classical music scene as it meanders through the country's turbulent history

On the evening of July 26, 2012, all of Lebanon, it seemed, made its way to the historic Beiteddine Palace to hear Romanian soprano Anita Hartig star in Puccini's *La Bohème* supported by the Lebanese Philharmonic Orchestra and the Ensemble Vocal des Choeurs d'Orange. Just two months later, Hartig would debut in the same role at Milan's famed La Scala opera house, and has since performed it at such celebrated venues as the Metropolitan Opera of New York and the Wiener Staatsoper in Austria.

The scene at that Beiteddine International Festival on that warm July night conjured up an image of the 1960s, an era in which, according to LAU professor of music, Leila Dabaghi, "Anyone who was anyone in Lebanon travelled to Baalbeck to hear world famous classical musicians at its international festival."

The dark years of the Lebanese civil war, however, interrupted the country's cultural movement. But as the country rose from its destruction and began to rebuild, its music scene began to recover defying any further disruption. Western classical music in Lebanon is currently experiencing a palpable revival, reflecting both the genre's firmly rooted local history and the efforts of dedicated musicians to move beyond scars left by turmoil and conflict.

"Our aim is to make it worthwhile for young people to play classical music professionally"

—Harout Fazlian, artistic director and principal conductor, Lebanese Philharmonic Orchestra



In 1928, according to Tyre-based historian Tatiana Baher, it was Russian émigrés who founded the AUB Institute of Music, which served as a platform for training many young classical musicians up until its closure during World War II. Dabaghi remembers the music department as having its own orchestra and, Reem Deeb, an LAU voice teacher and professor of music, confirms that up until the 1970s, even after the institute itself had ceased to function, the university had a major in musicology.

In the 1960s, after AUB acquired a pipe organ, talented professors and students from LAU's previous incarnation, the Beirut College for Women (BCW), joined forces with AUB performers to produce such complicated masterpieces as Mozart's masses, in what Deeb describes as "a great collaboration between the universities."

"There was," says Dabaghi, "a kind of renaissance of classical music in Lebanon" in those years. The establishment of the Baalbeck International Festival in the 1950s put Lebanon "on the global cultural map" and attracted such renowned figures as cellist Mstislav Rostropovich and the Royal Ballet's Rudolf Nureyev, as well as orchestras including the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Herbert von Karajan.

Earlier in the 1930s, Wadih Sabra, the composer of the country's national anthem, founded a music school in Ras Beirut that would later transform into the Lebanese National Higher Conservatory of Music. However, the civil war, as with so much else, disrupted Lebanon's vibrant classical music culture. The conservatory's headquarters, which moved to downtown Beirut, came under attack. Its collection of valuable Steinway and Bösendorfer pianos was chopped up with axes. Forced to relocate to Sin el-Fil, the conservatory "limped along," says Dabaghi, waiting for better days.

According to Harout Fazlian, artistic director and principal conductor of the Lebanese Philharmonic Orchestra (LPO), even though pre-war Lebanon did not have its own opera troupe, it was often visited by international opera companies that would perform at such venues as the Casino du Liban, the UNESCO Palace Theater, the Beirut Opera House (now better known as the Virgin Mega Store) and Le Grand Theatre (currently a shell whose fate is unknown).

The war also wiped out Beirut's fledgling opera tradition. The orchestra pit at the UNESCO Palace Theater was destroyed during the war. Both the Opera House and Le Grand Theatre were on the front lines and were forced to close down as hostilities overwhelmed the city.

"The establishment of the Baalbeck International Festival in the 1950s put Lebanon on the global cultural map"

—Leila Dabaghi, director of the LAU choir, Beirut campus

But the genre is finding its way back with a local flair to encourage a generation that were unable to appreciate it growing up. Fazlian has directed the LPO in local performances in a Lebanese Arabic translation of Mozart's little-known opera *Bastien und Bastienne* and in 2014, a performance of Mascagni's *Cavaleria Rusticana* with an all-Lebanese amateur cast garnered high popular acclaim. A success the LPO plans to repeat with a performance of Verdi's *La Traviata* at the Casino de Liban.

International opera stars are also coming back. While the Beiteddine International Festival has not, so far, followed up on the success of the 2012 *La Bohème* by staging another full opera production, Hala Chahine, the festival's director, characterizes the 2014 season as featuring a "major opera event," in the form of a solo performance by "leading bel canto tenor Juan Diego Florez, considered by some to be the heir to Pavarotti."

For its part, the Al-Bustan International Festival of Music & the Performing Arts has established a relationship with the Warsaw Chamber Opera and Russia's Helikon Opera troupes, bringing one or both of them to Lebanon annually since 1996, with periodic gaps in the timeline due to regional instability.

The 2006 conflict forced Al-Bustan to cancel opera performances for 2007. Other festivals have suffered similar problems. In 2013, the Baalbeck festival had to move all performances from its



spectacular venue at the Heliopolis in the Bekaa Valley to Beirut due to the Syrian crisis. And even the relative safety of the capital did not prevent opera diva Renee Fleming from cancelling her scheduled performance that year due to security concerns.

Still, in keeping with the cliché of Lebanon as a country where life goes on defiantly in the face of violence, the classical music scene continues to carry on. In June 2014, as Hamra was shut down by a security crackdown on ISIS-sponsored terrorist cells, the Lebanese Philharmonic Orchestra gamely continued on with its end of the season concert at its main venue, St. Joseph's church in the Monot district. The same weekend, the Beirut Chants festival drew mass audiences to downtown Beirut, eager to hear choral and instrumental performances by young Lebanese classical musicians.

"Several of the new festivals – for instance, Beirut Chants, the downtown Festival of Music, Beit-Mery, Tripoli, Jbeil, Saida - cater to young artists," points out Reem Deeb, providing them with an opportunity to showcase their talents locally in what remains a tough job market.

Deeb highlights the central paradox at the heart of Lebanon's indigenous classical music scene, while the enthusiasm and talent are there, career opportunities are relatively scarce. "There are not many jobs, so there is a tendency for music students to travel abroad and stay there. In Lebanon, classical musicians can survive if they work two or three part time jobs, whereas abroad one full-time job is all it takes."

Fazlian sees the LPO's mission as changing all of that. "This kind of thing takes generations, but our aim [at the Lebanese Philharmonic Orchestra] is to make it worthwhile for young people to play classical music professionally, something that's not historically true here," he says. When the orchestra was founded in 1999, originally as part of the conservatory, there was a dearth of local talent prepared to take players' seats in the pit.

"We were starting from zero," says Fazlian. The conservatory's president, Walid Gholmieh, went on a tour of Eastern Europe to recruit musicians. According to Fazlian, this made sense given the high quality of the East European classical music tradition. It was also financially attractive – unlike Western European players,

artists from Romania, Poland and Hungary would be willing to play for the salaries the LPO could afford to pay. Currently, the proportion of foreign players to Lebanese in the LPO is 65% - 35%. "Our goal," Fazlian says, "is to reverse this balance over time."

Though the LPO became formally independent of the conservatory two years ago, the music school continues to be the main source for future Lebanese orchestra members. Government subsidies make for low tuition and the fact that the conservatory has 11 branches across Lebanon makes it easy for students from all parts of the country to study without making an expensive move to Beirut.

The decision to physically decentralize the conservatory is not without its problems. "It has diluted the teaching," says Dabaghi. She also points out the lack of coordination between the government, which has its own "official" program for how classical music should be taught in schools and universities, and what is actually happening on the ground. "The schools do whatever they want and there is no coordination on the university level," Dabaghi says. The result, in her view, is an abundance of quantity, but a low level of quality musicianship.

Still, the appearance of numerous branches of the conservatory reflects a real growing demand among Lebanese parents for classical music education for their children, a demand nurtured in part by the active festival scene. "The conservatory opened a branch in Baaklin because of the experience of the Beiteddine Festival," says Hala Chahine. "Luckily, we have parents who love to introduce children to classical music – once they discover it, they are inclined to repeat and learn more."

Fazlian also highlights the importance of introducing the younger generation to the art form. "The LPO does concerts for young people," he says. "Once they are exposed to it, music will be their friend forever."

Creating a better tomorrow in Lebanon

By LAU Staff

Creative writing
competition challenges
students to imagine a
better, brighter future for
the country

"The young people of Lebanon are caged birds. If taught to fly, they can reach great heights; and they can take Lebanon to greater heights than it has ever achieved before. This generation of Lebanese is different in so many more ways than any previous one. This generation has grown up online and connected to the entire world. Thanks to technology, they know what it takes to make a country successful, and they have the means to make this a reality for Lebanon." This poignant passage is an excerpt from LAU student Sarah Alice Al Eid's award-winning essay, which she entered in the university's writing competition last spring.

Al Eid was inspired by the central challenge of the competition: "Create your tomorrow in Lebanon; what would make Lebanon a haven, so you can decide to stay." Inspired by an urge to express herself, Al Eid put pen to paper and wrote her essay. "I was so honored to learn that I had been chosen for first place," she enthuses.

The competition, organized by the Department of English Language Instruction, was open to all undergraduate students on the Beirut and Byblos campuses and was divided into two categories: essay and short story writing.

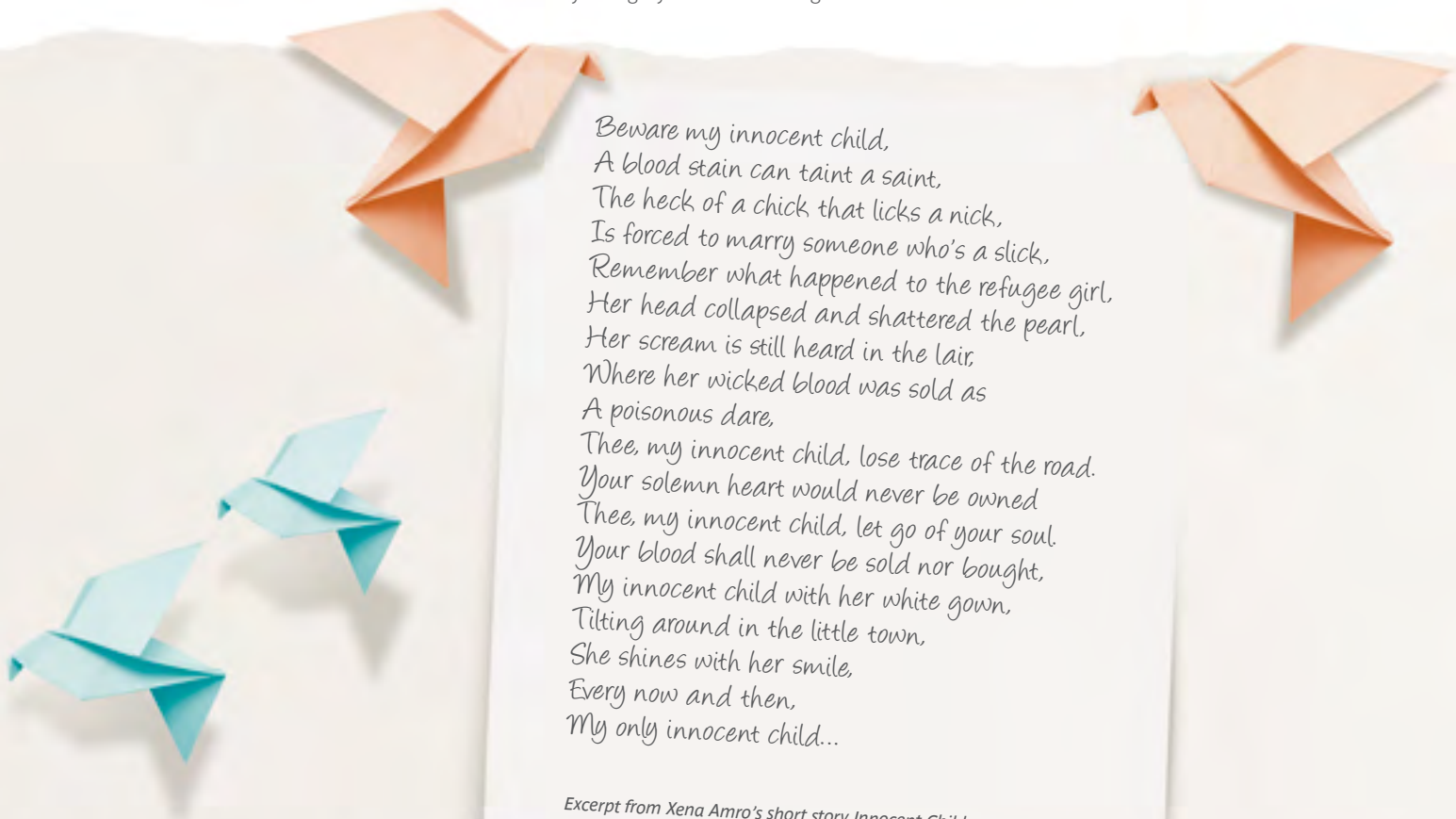
Xena Amro, first-place winner in the short story category wrote a chilling and visceral

account of what life is like for a young girl living in war and instability. "Many of the incidents that I describe in my story are derived from actual real-life events," she said.

Taken together, both these stories reveal the creative power of Lebanon's youth. "Hope for Lebanon lies in this generation, and if these individuals can give voice to that hope, it may one day become a reality," says Samira A. Shami, a veteran of LAU's English instruction. "We were really impressed by the very high quality of writing and ways in which this challenging topic was approached by our students," she adds.

An awards ceremony was held in May to honor the winners. "Award certificates as well as iPads for first place and iPods for second place winners were given out," says Dr. Rula Diab, associate professor of English/Applied Linguistics in the Department of Humanities and chairperson of the new Department of English Language Instruction. The prizes were funded by the Haas H. Mroue Memorial Fund, held in memory of Hass Mroue, a renowned Lebanese poet and writer who died tragically at the age of 41 in 2007.

"We hope that this annual competition, which enables us to appreciate and accelerate student writing, will draw even more participants next year," adds Diab.



*Beware my innocent child,
A blood stain can taint a saint,
The heck of a chick that licks a nick,
Is forced to marry someone who's a slick,
Remember what happened to the refugee girl,
Her head collapsed and shattered the pearl,
Her scream is still heard in the lair,
Where her wicked blood was sold as
A poisonous dare,
Thee, my innocent child, lose trace of the road.
Your solemn heart would never be owned
Thee, my innocent child, let go of your soul.
Your blood shall never be sold nor bought,
My innocent child with her white gown,
Tilting around in the little town,
She shines with her smile,
Every now and then,
My only innocent child...*

Excerpt from Xena Amro's short story Innocent Child

Globalization takes its toll on the world of music

By Toufic Kerbage

Composer, musician and part-time faculty member, Toufic Kerbage, has taught courses in music since 2005. He serves as the Dean of the Vocal Department and Musicology at the National Conservatory



Globalization is a word that triggers both feelings of hope and fear. Back in 1258, with the siege of Baghdad, a similar ambivalence to what globalization means also occurred, albeit in a different way. For after that date, the Mongol invaders unified a great expanse of land by adopting many of their “subjects” habits including Arabic script and Islam. It was a watershed moment in human history.

Another milestone occurred in 1948 when the U.S. Congress approved the Marshall Plan to help European economies return from the brink of bankruptcy and as such paved the way for American companies to make huge profits in the European industrial and building sectors. Europe had already lost its youth in the aftermath of the First World War resulting in the loss of artist dynamism and push back against previous artistic movements and trends.

In the pre-World War era art was seen to be the domain of the so-called bohemians, led by the artist who lived a life of honorable poverty. A way of thinking that was inherited from the Romantic era. Before then, in the Classical period, the artist was simply regarded as an “employee” affiliated to a particular palace, institution or court. Post Second World War, however, people viewed the artist as a friend, a colleague, a neighbor—and an intimate affair thus developed between the public and artists.

Musicians, whether commissioned or self-financed, usually had an “entourage” of friends and peers who offered both intimate and remote recognition and feedback on his or her work. In the last

two centuries, musicians of the Arab world had had until recently, their musical experience within those orbits: a close one with potentates, bourgeois salons, friends, colleagues and family and a remote one with the larger public.

Lately, in times of globalization and social media, we have seen these circles of recognition take on a different form. In a strange pattern of the over-polishing of representational behavior, the role of the character-artist has been re-shaped as if to be “double-staged”. The “universal” and polite language of Facebook or Twitter offers us insight into an artists’ life beyond mere details of their craft. The “concerns” of the cyber-public roam more into the artist’s social life and scandals or descriptive concert dates, either like old press reviews of Hollywood film stars or info-dots.

The artist’s life with its human-sized entourage and work procedures has collapsed. Large-scale musicians are confronted with double super-machinery, a hard and a soft one; batteries of electrically engendered sound, loud speakers that can reach to a public of twenty thousand concert-goers and a collection of programs, soundcards, etc.

The modern musician is to be super-powerful and omnipresent, incarnating the obsolete myth of the romantic chef d’orchestre leading an orchestra of “electronic knobs”. In these new super-heroes’ shows there is no place for modesty, an extreme narcissism is the favored model, whilst the texts still bear the seeds of human relation, more and more.



Campusnotes

For more details about these LAU activities, visit the news section of www.lau.edu.lb.

Research



The beginning of a fruitful alliance

LAU and the University of Balamand signed an agreement for student and faculty exchange to promote the development of joint studies, research and training activities, as well as other educational programs of mutual interest. This agreement will open research and collaboration opportunities for students and faculty alike. Faculty members will be able to teach part or entire courses at either institution, and will be able to access utilities and facilities on both sites. "Such collaboration will enable us to accomplish much," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara, adding, "It enables us to offer our students the opportunity to excel in everything they do." The pact specifically focuses on fields of scientific research.

Debating nutrition and food

The alarming increase in the prevalence of nutrition and food related health problems in Lebanon and the region, and the lack of research and cooperation in the field, pushed LAU's Department of Natural Sciences to hold its first Nutrition and Food Research Day Symposium in April. "The aim was to bring researchers from Lebanon and the Middle East together to share their findings and foster inter-university collaboration in this regard," said Dr. Maya Bassil, LAU assistant professor and coordinator of the event. National and international scholars gave a number of concise technical presentations that allowed participants to inform and be informed about a diversity of topics from the behavioral and biological causes of obesity to the regional decline in food security.



Creating Opportunities



OCEAN, a boarding pass to the world

Fourteen top study abroad destinations, nine UN agencies and three international institutions stood on the Beirut campus this May ready to inform students, faculty and staff about cultural exchange and study abroad opportunities. "The objective of this event translates the mission statement of LAU, which is to transform our students into global citizens who transcend all types of parochial boundaries," said Elie Samia, executive director of the Outreach and Civic Engagement unit that hosted the event. Held in collaboration with the United Nations Information Center, the Outreach and Cultural Engagement Across Nations (OCEAN) allows those interested in extra-curricular experiences to identify creative international exchange opportunities in the fields of civic engagement and leadership, among others. "If they didn't come to us we would never be able to go to them," said Farah Salem, a first year education student, adding, "that's what makes this so wonderful!"

Improving Skills

Reading Arabic in New York

Situated in midtown Manhattan, the LAU New York Headquarters and Academic Center has become a hub for learning Arabic through a special program pioneered and implemented by the Summer Institute for Intensive Arabic and Culture (SINARC) that offers courses of high academic standard. To best suit the pace and abilities of the students, classes were offered at three levels—beginner, intermediate and advanced. The program mainly attracted graduate students of history, Middle Eastern studies and politics, and world literature, as well as professionals wanting to hone their Arabic writing and speaking skills. The classes are an opportunity to learn Modern Standard Arabic and practice the Lebanese dialect. One-on-one comprehensive tutorial sessions, tailored to accommodate people with packed timetables, are also offered.



Lectures

Journalism lessons from Syria

With Syria becoming the world's most dangerous country for journalists, the Department of Communication Arts, journalism emphasis, organized a conference in collaboration with Al-Monitor media site entitled: "Syrian Conflict Coverage" in April. The panelists addressed the challenges reporters are facing, proposing ways of overcoming them. They encouraged students to think critically about what is at stake, and discussed the limits to the information available, when covering the war that is brewing next door. Visiting Assistant Professor Monika Halkort warned that while social media has been hailed as a liberating influence with a huge positive impact, it has the inborn potential to misinform. "Hearing how gratifying it is for these journalists to be a vehicle for people's voices, despite the difficulties, is encouraging," stressed journalism student, Selim Njeim.



Architecture, politics and society

The university's School of Architecture and Design, with the collaboration of its Institute of Urban Planning and Institute of Democracy and Conflict Transformation, held an architecture symposium this February entitled "Architecture, Politics and Society." Offering an arena for inter-disciplinary exchange – a key priority for the university - the event centered on the underlying belief that architecture cannot be understood without factoring-in human behavior and attitudes. Professionals of various countries and backgrounds focused on how the interplay across disciplines can come together to solve problems on a local level. For example, issues such as congestion and transportation can potentially be solved through a partnership between architects, urban planners and politicians. "Most people do not realize how significant the role of architecture, and in the larger dimension urban projects, is to our existing political relationships," said Dr. Elie Haddad, the dean of the School of Architecture and Design. The event also showcased architecture students' projects.

The perfect bridge

The School of Architecture and Design, in collaboration with the Spanish Embassy in Beirut, hosted well-known Spanish architect Antonio Ortiz in a lecture entitled "Cruz y Ortiz - Projects and Works." Ortiz described some of his work, including the restoration of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and the football stadium he designed for popular team Atlético de Madrid in Madrid. One of the most important influences on architectural design, in his opinion, is the relationship of the design with the place, the location. He describes it as "its dialogue with the context." In keeping with this ethos, Ortiz discussed how in his view architecture is a synthetic art that is at its best when there is coincidence between use, geometry and material.



Community Engagement



Taking healthcare to the streets

The No Apathy-Pharmacy and Health Awareness Student Society (NAPHASS) students have a reputation for taking the knowledge and skills they learn in the classroom and applying them to the community. In May, the university's pharmacy students and faculty collaborated with the Byblos municipality to create a health day, raising awareness about the common medical problems of diabetes, dyslipidemia and hypertension. NAPHASS took to the streets of the old city, and set up booths to measure blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol levels. The team provided personalized counseling about medical conditions, medications, lifestyle and diet.

Regional leader in quality business education

LAU's School of Business played host to deans of business schools in the Arab world and Africa, who gathered, as members of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, to discuss the association's expanded future role in the region. A focus group held at the LAU Executive Center @Solidere hosted representatives from 12 countries and yielded a list of constructive recommendations for the association. "In hosting this focus group, we are asserting our commitment to being a regional university, building bridges with other business schools in the area and championing causes of quality business education," said LAU Provost George K. Najjar, who also acts as Middle East and Africa advisor to the accreditation organization.



Student Achievements



Recycling AC water

In the face of Lebanon and the regions' chronic water shortages, one LAU student has discovered a simple way to conserve the blue gold by using waste-water from air conditioners. Oudey Hamadeh, an international business student, has teamed up with five other Lebanese students to launch a product that will capture condensed water from AC units. Instead of the compressor throwing away the water, their design uses a pipe to collect it. The water is then cleaned and stored in a tank from which households can reuse it. It is clean enough to be used straight out of the tap. Hamadeh hopes it will revolutionize regional approaches to water conservation, as well as take away some of the guilt of using ACs. The idea, named Re-H2O, was part of a project Hamadeh and his colleagues designed at Intel and Injaz al-Arab's Sci-preneurship Innovation Camp.

MUN delegation gets lauded in New York

LAU's delegation to the Model United Nations New York won six – out of six – Best Delegate awards at the 15th Annual Global Classrooms International Model UN in New York in May, the highest ratio of awards per delegation. The six high-schoolers were trained by LAU students from the Outreach and Civic Engagement unit. Also, in recognition of the high status and achievements of the LAU MUN in the previous years, four LAU student leaders made it to the Global Classrooms International MUN 2014 secretariat in various leadership positions, joining students from top U.S. universities. For Dr. Elise Salem, vice president for Student Development and Enrollment Management, these successes had a special meaning: "Lebanon, despite the challenges that it has been facing, continues to produce young students who, when trained in our unparalleled MUN program, become beacons of hope."



Awareness



Stop underage marriage!

This March, LAU Beirut was packed with activists, officials and socialites who gathered for the launching of the Protect Underage Girls from Early Marriage campaign. The university's Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World, in collaboration with the National Commission for Lebanese Women, organized the event on the occasion of International Women's Day. The campaign is composed of four core elements that start with striving to issue a law that bans child and early marriage or that includes minimum safeguards. The second objective is to start a lobbying campaign for Lebanon to ratify the international Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages. The initiative also aims toward tightening penalties against abusive husbands and at continuing the fight to pass a law against domestic violence. LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra remarked, "Early marriage robs underage girls of their childhood, their education and health. This campaign is of paramount importance."

How body image reflects on mental health

Every year the Health Services Office organizes an event to draw attention to the health needs of Lebanon's youth. This May, the focus was on body disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia. The campaign is meant to highlight the spike in physical self-consciousness that occurs seasonally and to make students aware of how this phenomenon might lead to chronic self-esteem problems and ultimately to eating disorders. The aim was to get students to be cognizant of the pressures of looking good, through several entertaining and educational activities with brochures and questionnaires about healthy eating, anorexia, bulimia and body dysmorphic disorder. "It was nice to see many male participants, since this is an issue that is not exclusive to girls," commented Dr. Norma Mousally, a mental health counselor at LAU.



Homecoming 2014

A trip down memory lane



Each year, the summer marks a particularly special time for LAU as it invites different generations of alumni to return to their alma mater to join them in a trip down memory lane. Early August marked a month of sentimentality and reminiscing for LAU alumni who participated in four wonderful days of homecoming activities.



Beirut's famous Skybar was taken over by LAU alumni on August 5 during a wonderful evening filled with entertainment and an electric live performance by Reine Ackhar. LAU alumni from both campuses proved that they know how to have a good time as they let their hair down and danced the night away. LAU and its Alumni Association took the occasion to honor class of 1960 graduate - Leila Saleeby Dagher, president of the Alumni Association with the Alumni Recognition Award while the Alumni Achievement Award went to renowned Lebanese economist Dr. Rand Ghayad ('07).



The homecoming reunion on the Beirut campus was an intergenerational event on August 8, where members of the entire family came out to take part in the festivities. Following a cocktail reception and live music, graduates enjoyed a screening of the Lebanese film "Heritages-Mirath" directed by Philippe Aractingi, who was honored with the first-ever Alumni Excellence Award. The Makhzoumi Foundation and Forum for National Dialogue sponsored the screenings in both Beirut and Byblos campuses.



On August 7, graduates of the Byblos campus were eager to tour the premises and get a close-up look at all the new buildings, particularly the impressive medical building. Graduates became students again as they looked for their own photographs in their blown-up class pictures.



On August 9, the all-class President's Forum brunch was held on the Beirut campus giving graduates an opportunity to reconnect over a pleasant early afternoon meal and chit chat with LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara. "LAU is committed to academic excellence and excellence in everything we do," said Dr. Jabbara. The event brought alumni from all over the world back to their old stomping grounds and gave them an opportunity to relive their fondest university memories.

Filling the gap

By Reem Maghribi

LAU strives on an on-going basis to achieve yet higher standards of excellence, in terms of both the quality and relevance of its offerings. The university's seven schools and 17 departments regularly review their programs, seek accreditation and consult specialists in a bid to continually build on the quality and relevance of the courses offered. In doing so, LAU considers the needs of both its students and the marketplace. Recent reviews have led to the redevelopment of existing programs and the introduction of new ones.

M.A. Applied Economics

New to the academic programs of LAU's Department of Economics is a master's degree in Applied Economics providing prospective students with a solid background in economic theory and applied quantitative methods.

"The program was carefully designed in a collaborative effort over a period of two years," says professor of economics Dr. Walid Marrouch, "and our department [of economics] now boasts the largest number of tenured and tenure-track faculty members of professorial rank in Lebanon."

Although the program is structured so that a full-time student can complete the course of study within two calendar years, it can also be followed on a part-time basis.

The main aim of the program, which will see its first cohort enroll this fall, is "to provide a rigorous treatment of economic methods and policies preparing future professionals for jobs as applied economists in the private and public sectors," explains Marrouch, who teaches Advanced Microeconomics and Environmental and Resource Economics. Indeed, a tailored project also encourages students to work outside LAU with external constituents, such as research institutes, specialized regional and international organizations and banks.

The program is also a strong intermediate step to a doctorate in economics, and its electives offer students the opportunity to expand their knowledge in a diverse array of topics in local, regional and international contexts, including policy, development, environmental economics, finance and banking.

B.A. English Studies

A new undergraduate degree has been launched to replace the previous offering of a B.A. in English Language and Literature. The program is the result of a thorough review of the previous bachelors degree that encouraged students to choose between a focus on literature or linguistics.

Not only does the bachelor's in English Studies introduce a third discipline area – creative writing – but it also ensures that students gain credits in all three subjects regardless of the one they choose to specialize in.

The new program will enroll its first students in the fall and will run under the Department of English, itself a new addition to the School of Arts and Sciences. Professor of Applied Linguistics/TESOL, Dr. Nola Bacha, and current chair of the Department of Humanities, under which the previous B.A. was run, is excited about the developments.

"We have added new courses in the area of linguistics by embracing an interdisciplinary approach. We now offer options that consider the relationship of language to media, gender, law and power," enthuses Bacha.

Explaining the new discipline area of creative writing, Bacha says: "It's totally new and puts our program on par with those in the U.S. Students can now learn to write for media, film, advertising, as well critique, translation and much more. We have partnered with the Communication Arts Department to offer interdisciplinary courses that prepare students for the needs of the marketplace."



B.S. Bioinformatics

This fall, the university will welcome students of a new program of multidisciplinary study between the Department of Computer Science and Mathematics and the Department of Natural Sciences. "Programs in bioinformatics have been offered in Europe and the U.S. for fifteen years," says Assistant Professor Georges Khazen, himself a graduate of bioinformatics from Oxford. "We didn't have the technology in Lebanon to offer it before, but the field is booming."

A classically trained biologist may be unfamiliar with statistical and algorithmic knowledge while a classically trained computer scientist may be unfamiliar with the biology and chemistry required to properly interpret, analyze and manage the data. The program strives for a balance of both, while preparing students for new career opportunities in bioinformatics, biology, computer science, as well as the fast-paced healthcare industry.

Biologists who don't know how to use the supercomputers needed to analyze complex data will, explains Khazen, be left behind and become technicians. "We live in an era of big data, be it financial, social or biological. How can you analyze 22,000 genes if you can't use the machines?"

The field of bioinformatics continues to expand and research areas now include alignment of gene and protein sequences, design and discovery of new drugs, prediction of protein structures, regulation of gene expressions and pathways, interaction of proteins, as well as association of genes with different diseases.

"There are many career opportunities in this field, internationally and in the region," says Khazen. A pre-med program, the degree is also a strong stepping stone for future medics.



M.A. Migration Studies

Migration and refugee issues have become high priorities on the global agenda. The Middle East and Africa is both the source and recipient of migrants and refugees, and Lebanon, with its recent refugee influx and vast expatriate population abroad, is a prime example.

Migration studies, covering emigration, immigration, transit migration, labor migration, return migration, replacement migration, regular and undocumented migration, family reunion, transnational and diasporic relations, remittances, 'brain drain', etc, which is rapidly developing in many universities around the world, has emerged as a multidisciplinary field of study at the graduate level.

This places LAU in good stead to offer a strong, relevant and rich graduate degree in migration studies, enabling students to study the theory at a leading institution and couple that knowledge with relevant fieldwork. LAU's M.A. in Migration Studies is nearly the only program that offers an interdisciplinary graduate degree in migration studies with a focus on, and a presence in, the Middle East.

"It was always our intention to launch a postgraduate degree since founding the Institute for Migration Studies at LAU in 2007," explains Dr. Paul Tabar, director of the institute, chair of the Department of Social Sciences and professor of sociology and anthropology.

"Some of the program's courses are cross listed with our postgraduate degrees in international relations and gender studies," says Tabar, who will teach several courses, including those on theories of migration and transnationalism.





Ticking all the right boxes

A taste of student clubs available at LAU

By Mehrnoush Shafiei

"The beauty of LAU is that the student life is really extensive—the campus is always alive and it feels awesome"

—Youssef Al Ghareeb, president of the Astronomy Club

LAU believes that an important component of a well-rounded education is getting involved in extracurricular activities. "Clubs are initiated by students for students. They provide an opportunity to engage in extracurricular pursuits and establish diverse relationships, thus contributing to the LAU goal of developing the whole person," says Rimam Jurdak, senior program coordinator.

Numerous studies have demonstrated that students who partake in such activities see an improvement in their academic life and life skills, including an increase in discipline, goal setting and working in teams. "Such clubs are not only providing opportunities to students, but they are also give back to the community," Alain Kairouz, lead program coordinator at the Byblos campus says.

Putting safety first!



The mission of the LAU Safety Awareness Club is simple: raise awareness and educate people about the prevention of avoidable injuries and death. The club was officially founded in 2012 and focuses on road safety, child safety, sports injury prevention, fire prevention, safe building standards and first aid principles. Preventing automobile-related deaths is an area of major concern, according to President Fidaa Al Fakhri, a fourth-year business management student. "Every year Lebanon faces many deaths due to people who disregard road safety," says Al Fakhri. "This is highly preventable with the right education and information," he adds.

The club recently teamed up with the Internal Security Forces and the Red Cross to host a road safety awareness event. To attract attention to the cause, the group enlisted the help of famed racecar driver Abdo Feghali. "Though planning these sorts of events takes up a lot of time, but the fact that we are adding value to our community and working to reduce the number of deaths makes it all worth while," Al Fakhri says.

Saving lives, changing minds



The scarlet icon of the Red Cross is recognizable worldwide, but what many people don't know is that in addition to their emergency services the organization has a dynamic global youth department. LAU's Red Cross Youth Department is one of five chapters throughout the country (the others are in AUB, LU, Balamand and BAU). "We work with all sectors of society—from the very young to the elderly—and we promote human values such as road safety, environmental awareness and youth health," explains Rami Mehio, fourth-year accounting student at LAU Beirut, adding, "Ultimately our goal is to promote peace by talking to people about the importance of these topics".

The club recently hosted a training session for university students on the topic of youth as behavior agents of change. "We had a role-playing session where participants would act out a particular scene of conflict and afterward we would have a discussion about how to mitigate such scenarios," Mehio explains. On a personal level, he points out that his participation in the group has enhanced his leadership and time-management skills.

Being positive



In 1945, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was established with the belief that political and economic agreements are not enough to build lasting peace. Rather the organization aims to focus on humanity's moral and intellectual solidarity as a means of establishing bonds between nations. It is in this spirit that LAU's student UNESCO club works to further the goals of the larger organization: mobilizing for education, building intercultural understanding and protecting freedom of expression.

"We are working to promote UNESCO's mission through hosting four large events each semester," says President Sarah Hanbali Al Masri, second-year banking and finance student. At over 75 members, the club's most popular event is the annual Lebanese Independence celebration they stage on campus each November. "It's essential for us to celebrate this day, which is important for our country," says Al Masri. "Everyone in our group believes that rather than just complaining about the situation it is crucial to do something positive in your community," she adds.

Stars in their eyes



Life for a university student can sometimes be so hectic that there is little time to simply stop and look at the sky. But for third-year civil engineering student Youssef Al Ghareeb, president of the Astronomy Club, looking at the stars holds a special significance. "I can't help but wonder, are we alone in the universe?" he muses philosophically. Once a month, about 80 enthusiasts get together to discuss astronomy, as well as marvel at the night sky. "People especially love the outdoors trips we organize," Al Ghareeb explains. A memorable highlight for the club being meeting Dr. Charles Elachi, director of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory at NASA and a former LAU Board of Trustees chairman.

Also noteworthy is the recent addition to the club's activities—celestial photography (a specialized type of photography that allows the capturing of astronomical objects). "As far as I know, this has never been done in the Middle East," Al Ghareeb says. What does the future hold for the Astronomy club? "We hope to meet with other likeminded university clubs and hold joint events."

Through the lens



They say a picture is worth a thousand words and that is the mantra that inspired LAU's Photography Club. President Khalil Fawaz, began this newly minted club in Fall 2013. With the help of his second in command, Youssef Al Ghareeb, the two have embarked on a campaign of raising awareness about the cultural heritage of Lebanon through photographs. Fawaz asks his members to travel to different villages in the country and capture the beauty of the countryside. "We believe that the youth need to be exposed to different corners of the country to truly gain an appreciation of Lebanon," explains Fawaz.

Equally admirable is that much of the group's events revolve around charity work. "For our second event we had this idea to make a statement about the Syrian refugee crisis—a controversial topic," Al Ghareeb says, adding, "We gave kids camera (old ones generously donated by LAU students) and asked them to go into their camps and take pictures of their daily lives." The club intends to host an exiting exhibition with these pictures and invite the public to attend.

Test your endurance



The dictionary defines 'survival' as the state or fact of continuing to live or exist, typically in spite of an accident, ordeal or difficult circumstances. LAU students who are members of the Survival Club definitely know a thing or two about endurance. President of the club, Richard Bshara organizes a survival crash course for a day before members embark on Survival Camp. "The purpose of the preparation is to get student ready mentally, emotionally and physically for what's to come," Bshara explains. The courses included first aid training, fire making and how to know the difference between edible and non-edible plants.

After passing this training course, the students are released into nature with very little to eat and drink. Subsisting on very little sleep they learn to brave freezing overnight temperatures and overcome the mental and psychological challenges they face in the camp. "I highly recommend that everyone participates in the Survival Club because it teaches teamwork skills—we face our fears together and bond over the difficult situations," he adds. Anyone hoping to add a little excitement to their life would be well advised to join the survival club.

Dr. Kerbage takes a look at Europe and the Mediterranean region to see how music differs even within a relatively small geographic region

People often claim that music is a "universal language" but how much of that is true? Amahl Khouri asks Dr. Toufic Kerbage to weigh in on the question.

MUSIC AS A NON-UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

"Within the same geographical zone, music is many languages. For some, it stands for social achievement and expression, for others, emotional endeavor and for those souls in a "receptive" mode, a universe of sounds.

Music is universal in the sense that its components are made up of notes. Its universality also stems from its ability touch the souls of all human beings.

The different genres of music, however, like languages and dialects, need to be understood, explored and lived. Hence, music has boundaries and socio-geographical sound-zones.

Understood by many, different genres of music do not appeal to all alike. The same type of music within a specific socio-economic group is not appreciated in the same manner, as it would be within another. Music therefore reflects the archetypal heritage of times gone by. It also arouses feelings and sketches images of past heroes and deceits.

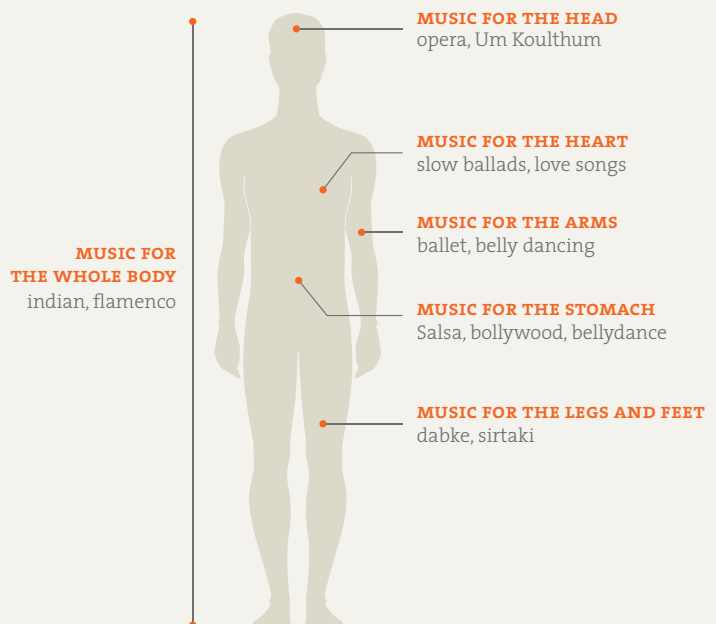
Post World War II, in the new land of opportunity that is America, democratization of pop took place in a "melting pot" of all sounds. Still, the old Sanskrit world of Indonesia, India, Arabia and Greece united under one pop music language and polyrhythm, and the Latin and Germanic trends that reaped a more polyphonic sound substance remain detached.

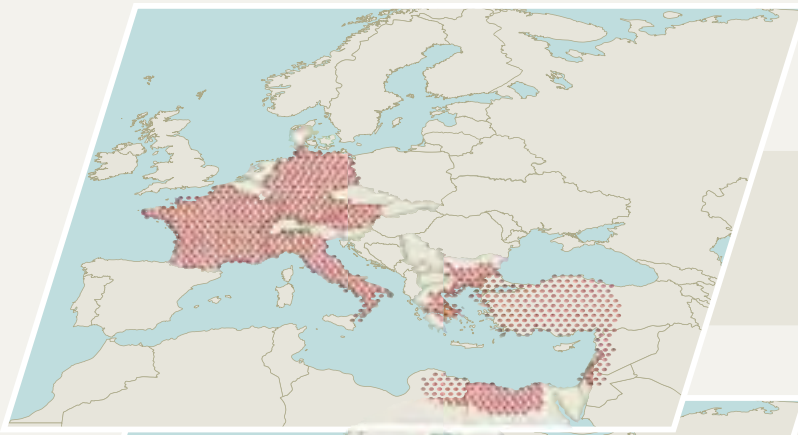
A united or common music language for all remains a thing for the future to yield."

FEELING MUSIC THROUGH OUR BODIES

Different kinds of music are experienced by different parts of the body. How can music be universal for all humans when its reception is divided even within our own body?

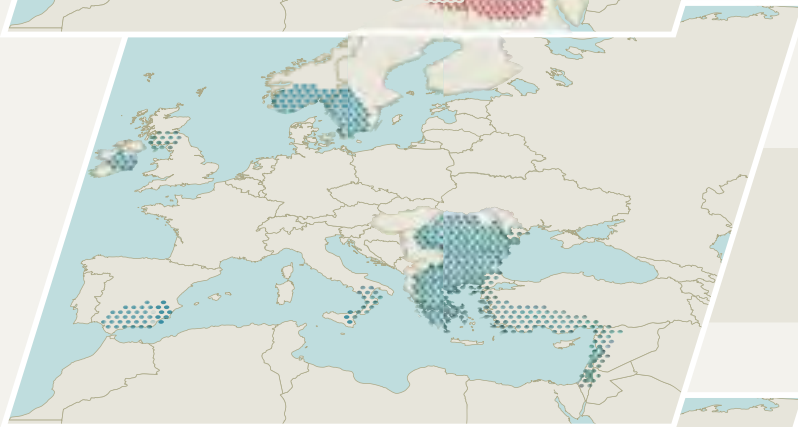
Dr. Kerbage weighs in:





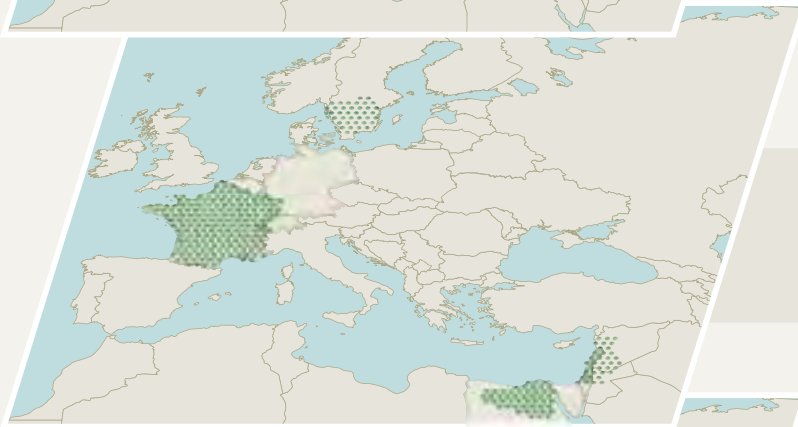
CONCERNED WITH LONG MELODIES

"The folk tradition and cultured music of Byzantium and the Ottoman empires have given the Middle East one of its specific and distinctive music genres, namely that of the "Endless Melody". Middle Europe gave us Opera with its lengthy arias, yet the melodies of the Mediterranean remain infinite."



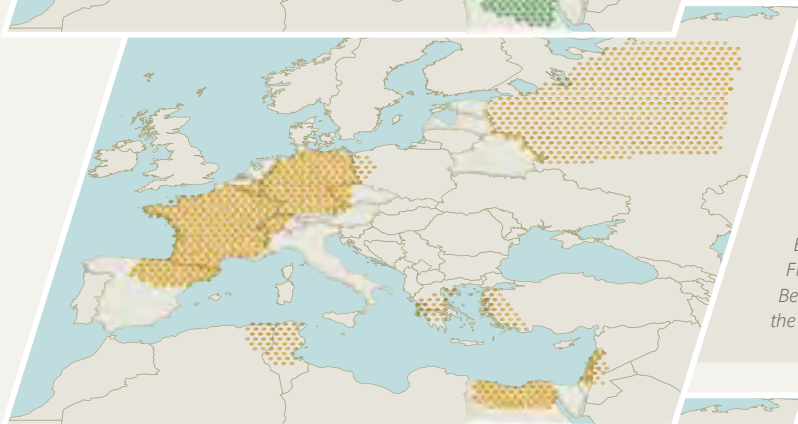
CONCERNED WITH DANCE FOOT MUSIC

"Nowadays, a uniting force in communities' lives is the use of the feet and chain dance, such as the dabke. Although sporadic from Scotland to Georgia, its occurrence intensifies by the time it reaches Lebanon and Palestine."



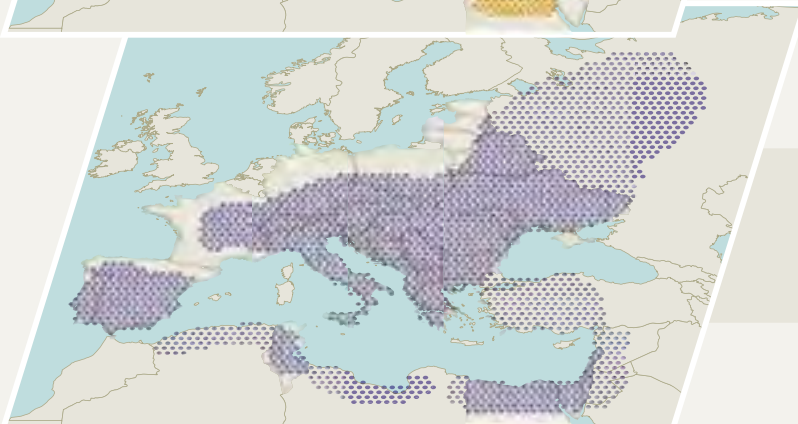
MUSIC DOMINATED BY TEXT

"Chansons à texte are a modern conception of the medieval chansons and the Abbasid "sawt". Text has become the major driving force of melody and not the other way round. French, Swedish and Arab poet-singers have been masters of this for centuries. The modern American ballad is absolutely a middle-solution giving a fair role to both, melody and text."



BALLET & BELLY - HANDS AND ARMS

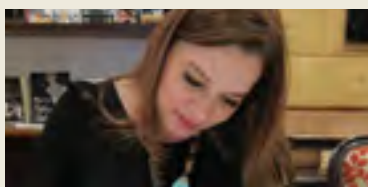
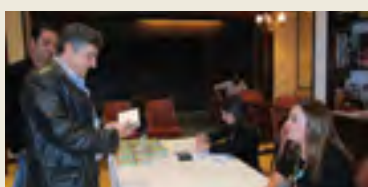
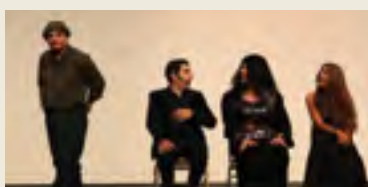
"Minoan statuettes gave us the first impressions of what could have been trance dance. Not related to foot stomping, this kind of dance has been elaborated in many a Mediterranean country. The time span from Cretan trance dances to Byzantine and Ottoman charm dances is lengthy. Yet, it was the passage through which Arabian representational performances went in Andalusia that would finally yielded "courtly representations". Mr. Petipa, who was born in Marseille, in the south of France, redefined Ballet at the Russian court, although it had originally come to life at the French court. Belly dancing, although having acquired a strong sexual connotation, was the "elegant" form of deploying the discreet beauty of body movements."



SIMPLE LOVE & MELODRAMATIC MUSIC

"Love being an all-encompassing subject for song, here there are more concepts, more similarities and more divergences than elsewhere. Although the musical languages differ, the burdens and infatuations remain the same. This diagram would look like a terrestrial globe with latitude lines in its width and each band of 30 degrees would involve a new musical dialect reiterating the same topics."

Alumni update



February

Planting the seeds

The same as every year, the Alumni Relations Office was present at the New Students Orientation Program held on Tuesday 4 February at both the Byblos and Beirut campuses. This year new students received a souvenir and a brochure introducing the association and how it would be beneficial to them after graduation.

Alumni lecture

As part of its "Keep Learning" alumni lecture series, the Alumni Relations Office organized this academic year's third talk entitled *Beliefs - Life's Creators and Destroyers*. On Friday 7 February at the Business Building of LAU's Beirut Campus, life coach, trainer and consultant, Johnny el Ghoul, spoke about how many people mistakenly look at the world and think that what they see is the real world. Whilst unbeknownst to them that beliefs morph their lives in a way that is only true to them.

Laughter therapy

The BCW Alumni Chapter presented the stand-up local comedy show "Scene Scene - Part IV" at LAU Beirut Campus' Irwin Hall Theater on Friday 21 February. The popular event attracted over 350 alumni and friends for an evening full of laughter and innuendo. Over 300,000 fans have watched the show starring Nada Tarabay, Raymond Saliba, Aline Ahmar, Chady Maroun and Gaby Hoayek in the four years it has been running.

Smokey flavors

On Saturday 22 February the Bahrain Alumni Chapter organized a Desert Camp at the Dheyafa Camp Tent in Sakhir. Families and friends, both adults and kids, enjoyed a fun packed day of games and live music starting at breakfast and going on well past the sumptuous barbecue lunch.

Balsam Al Khalil book signing

The Abu Dhabi Alumni Chapter organized a signing of Balsam al Khalil's book entitled *Travel Etiquette: a Guide for the Modern Traveler*. An avid traveler, Al Khalil, authored pocketsize pages of do's and don'ts for children and adults, including advice from what to pack to best behavior on an airplane. The event took place at Roul's Coffee & Bites in Central Market on Saturday 22 February.

March

Fun in the sand

Over 800 alumni, their families and friends enjoyed a full day of fun activities for both adults and kids at the Kuwait Alumni Chapter's Annual Desert Open Day on Friday 7 March.

Having a ball

Also on Friday 7 March more than 300 alumni and friends attended the Oman Alumni Chapter's 6th Annual Ball at the Grand Hyatt in the Sultanate's capital Muscat.

Al Khalil signs more books

Following the Abu Dhabi success, the Dubai & Northern Emirates Alumni Chapter also organized a signing by Balsam Al Khalil of her book entitled *Travel Etiquette: a Guide for the Modern Traveler* at Shakespear's in the Village on Saturday 8 March.

Gracing the catwalk

Hot on the heels of the recent book signing the Abu Dhabi Alumni Chapter organized its 21st Annual Fashion Ball on Thursday 13 March, in the Al-Thuraya Ballroom at the Beach Rotana in Abu Dhabi. More than 600 alumni and friends were treated to an unforgettable performance by singer Reine Achkar and serenaded by Lebanese music star Joe Ashkar.

Taking the Swiss by storm

The Switzerland Alumni Chapter organized the showing of "Dr. Laugh" by Pierre Chammassian (from the theatre de dix heures) on Wednesday 26 March at the VIP Oriental in Geneva.

Comedy at its best

The Byblos Alumni Chapter presented "Les Diseurs" in their brand new hit comedy show *The Come Back* with Pierre Chammassian, André Jadaa and Leila Estefan to a packed audience on Friday 28 March at the Olympia Theater in Kaslik.

April 2014

Another in the series

As part of its "Keep Learning" alumni lectures series, the Alumni Relations Office organized the fourth talk of this fiscal year entitled *Fit for Business - 4 Dimensional Personal Energy* by mynditude® founder and LAU alumnus Amr Habbal on Friday 4 April at the Business Building of LAU's Beirut Campus.

A leisurely stroll

The Qatar Alumni Chapter organized a walk followed by brunch on Friday 4 April. The stroll started at the Museum of Islamic Arts (MIA) Park and continued toward Souq Waqif with a stop at Zaatar w Zeit for a well-deserved brunch.

A taste of home

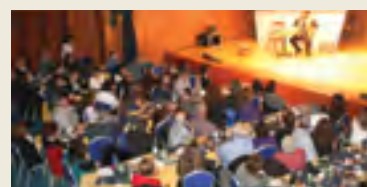
On Saturday 5 April, the Toronto Alumni Chapter organized a Gala Dinner at the Mazza Garden – Mediterranean Cuisine on 325 Westney Road with singer George Adra, a live band and a belly dancer.

Future alumni

Over 500 soon to be graduates attended the Alumni Relations Office's 12th Senior Students Orientation Activity that took place on Wednesday and Thursday, 16 and 17, and 23 and 24 April, at the Beirut and Byblos Campuses respectively. Apart from introducing them to the association and the benefits offered by being a members, each received a leather business card holder on which "LAU Alumni Association Class of 2014" was engraved on brass plaque.

Annual Gala Dinner

Al Bustan Rotana Hotel was the venue for the Dubai & Northern Emirates Alumni Chapter Annual Gala Dinner that took place on Thursday 24 April. During the evening, Lebanon's Minister of Education and Higher Education, Elias Bou Saab, was honored in recognition of his outstanding contribution to UAE and Lebanese education. Minister Bou Saab has held the position of vice president at the Dubai University for many years. Then the dazzling singers Fares Karam and Reine Ashkar made sure it would be a night to remember.



Alumni update



Networking reception

The Alumni Relations Office and the Offices of the Deans of Students (Career and Placement) at LAU held their 8th Annual Alumni Business Networking Reception on Wednesday 31 April at Beirut's Le Maillon restaurant in Achrafieh. The event brought together recent graduates and HR directors from key companies (in Lebanon and the Middle East) to discuss in an informal setup, market and employment issues. It was also an opportunity to catch up on the performance of LAU's graduates in the market. The event drew a crowd of more than 200 people.



May

Boogie Woogie

Over 200 alumni and friends enjoyed the Riyadh Alumni Chapter's 1970s Dance the Night Away on Thursday 1 May at the Lebanese Embassy.



Family fun

The South Lebanon Alumni Chapter organized a Family Day Out on Sunday 4 May at Barraj Gardens in Jiyeh at which more than 250 alumni with their families and friends had a great day out.



Carnival time

The Beirut Alumni Chapter organized "Kids Fiesta" day on Saturday and Sunday, 17 and 18 May at LAU Beirut Campus. In excess of 800 alumni and their children filled the campus grounds making the event an astounding success, as well as fun packed.



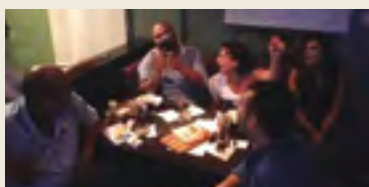
Basketball challenge

The Alumni Relations Office organized The Great Basketball Challenge - Alumni vs Varsity Teams. The game took place on Friday 23 May at the Beirut Campus. Alumni and friends enjoyed a competitive but friendly game, where victory was snatched by the Alumni scoring 105 to the Varsity Teams' 89. Congrats to LAU and to our great alumni in particular!



Tea please!

The BCW Alumni Chapter organized a Tea Time Fashion Show on Saturday 31 May at LAU Beirut Campus and presented a Recognition Award to the President of the Alumni Association Leila Saleeby Dagher. The event was a great success!



Quiz and karaoke night

The Ghana Alumni Chapter organized a Quiz and Karaoke night in May at the Champs Sports Bar & Grill Accra. The event was a huge success and great fun.



June

Saving our heritage

Members of the BCW Alumni Chapter visited the temporary home of Lebanese National Library at the Beirut port on Saturday 7 June, where Old books and magazines, from the library's archives when it was located in the parliament building in downtown Beirut, are being restored. Others were either destroyed or burnt during the war. The new library premises will be located in the capital's Sanayeh area.

Alfresco start to the day

On Sunday 8 June more than 140 people gathered at Toronto's Centennial Park to enjoy the annual "Breakfast in the Park" sponsored by the Toronto Alumni Chapter. The event was a huge success and even included a birthday celebration!

LAU president visits

On Monday 9 June, the Houston Alumni Chapter welcomed Dr. Joseph G. Jabbra to Texas' largest city with a very special reception at the beautiful home of alumna, Tania Shaheen and her husband, Wissam Tysoun. LAU's pharmacy students, who were completing their clinical rotations at Houston Methodist, also joined the group along with several prominent doctors and other friends of LAU. The gathering allowed everyone to have a personal visit with Dr. Jabbra while enjoying a scrumptious Lebanese dinner.

President to New England

Then on Friday 13 June, the Boston & New England Alumni Chapter welcomed Dr. Jabbra to Boston with a dinner at Viora Restaurant. During the reception alumnus Rand Ghayad was presented with an award of recognition for his recent achievements in banking and finance. NY/NJ Alumni Chapter president, Reham Haddad, and Dr. Jabbra presented the award to Rand, who also will be receiving this year's Alumni Annual Achievement Award from the university's Alumni Association at their annual dinner during Homecoming Week in Beirut in August.

In the Big Apple

The following day, Saturday 14 June, members of the NY/NJ Alumni Chapter and friends of LAU visited The Metropolitan Museum of Art. The evening began with drinks on the roof garden and a viewing of the Dan Graham Pavilion, followed by a tour of Phoenician and Lebanese related art and artifacts given by alumni Tony Faddoul and Maroun Kassab. President Joseph G. Jabbra and Vice President for University Advancement, Marla Rice-Evans, attended the event that culminated with dinner at Trattoria Pesce Pasta.

Washington Chapter Picnic

On Sunday 22 June the Washington DC Alumni Chapter sponsored a picnic for family and friends at Burke Lake Park in Fairfax Station, VA. The menu included all-time favorite *Saj* specialties such as *laham ajeen*, *zaatar*, cheese and choco-ba, as well as yummy homemade *fool m'damas* with all the trimmings courtesy of Gisele Azar, the chapter's president. In the afternoon members of AUB's DC Alumni Chapter joined the group.

July

Celebrating the life achievements of an inspiring alumna

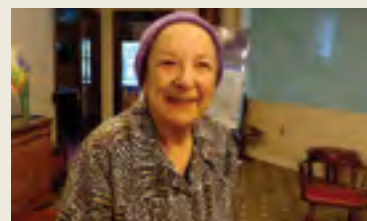
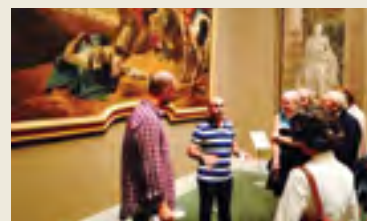
On Saturday 5 July the sun was shining in Montreal as LAU Alumni committee members took the opportunity to visit and take a stroll down memory lane with professor Chaké Der-Melkonian Minassian, a Lebanese-Armenian 1945 BCW graduate and author of several books, in her home to present her with an appreciation plate for her contribution to the academic community and her 75th year as an alumni.

A Ramadan Sohour

The South Lebanon Alumni Chapter organized its annual Sohour on Thursday 10 July at the Rest House in Saïda. Over 120 alumni and friends enjoyed a great Ramadan evening.

Annual Iftar

On July 18, the Bahrain Alumni Chapter organized its annual Iftar at the Golden Tulip. The Iftar included an open buffet and a variety of games that were enjoyed by adults and kids alike.





Mastering optical illusions

By LAU Staff

LAU alumna Tania Shaheen receives prestigious award for architectural design



Interior designer and alumna, Tania Shaheen (B.S. '98), was bestowed the American Society of Interior Designers' (ASID) honorary award for Best Architectural Feature for her work on a dome in a residential home.

"This award means so much to me on a personal and professional level. It is a huge honor to be recognized by your peers and ASID has a huge influence in our field, so it's very meaningful," said Shaheen.

Each year, the Texas Golf Coast Chapter hosts a Gala dinner, during which the annual award ceremony that recognizes the work of interior designers in both residential and commercial categories is held. With over 15,000 practicing interior designers, ASID is the oldest and largest organization for the profession.

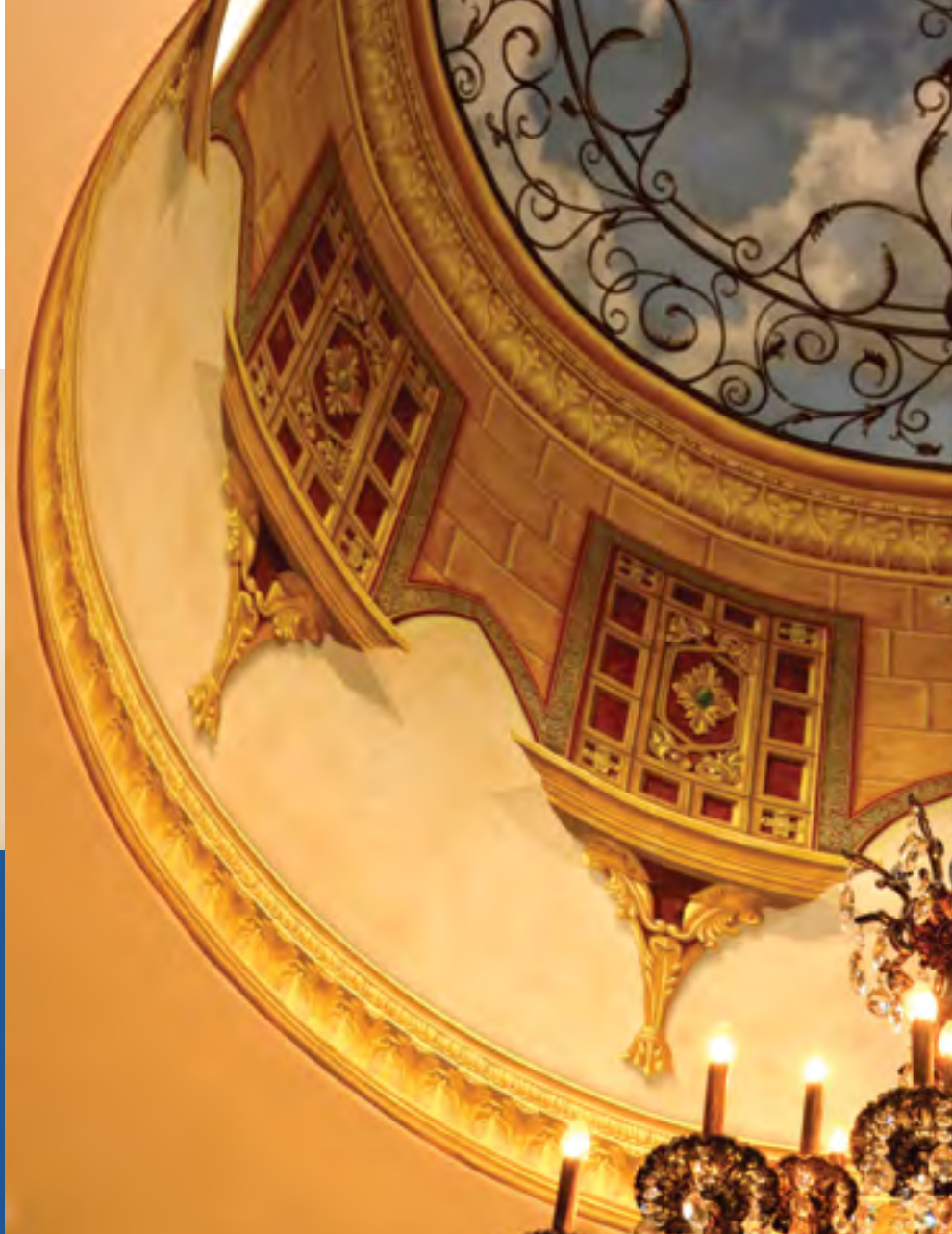
The concept for the project was trompe l'oeil architecture. Shaheen employed this technique in painting the surface of the dome that was made up of a cylinder—12

feet in diameter and 9 feet in height—topped with half a sphere. It was incredibly detailed and the calculations had to be perfect.

"The idea is that you take a space—a small space—and you try to make it functional and appealing to the eye," she explained. "The project began as an empty white dome with four unappealing windows."

"A major challenge was incorporating the four windows into the design," she pointed out, adding, "Elements in multiples of fours were used: four windows, four panels, eight arches, eight corbels, four repetitive metalwork, 16 metal chandelier arms, etc."

A further difficulty was unifying the design of the dome with the crown molding of the room. "To overcome this, an imitation of the 3D crown molding was painted in 2D."





The top of the dome was 35 feet high and required custom scaffolding to fit inside the rotunda. Because the rotunda was 13 feet from top to bottom, it had to be worked on several levels. The square working platforms did not exactly fit well into the round space, so the result was a lot of reaching and some quite awkward positions.

If that wasn't enough, the full mural couldn't be seen until the scaffolding came down, so Shaheen had to try to visualize what it would look like from 35 feet down while working only 6 feet away.

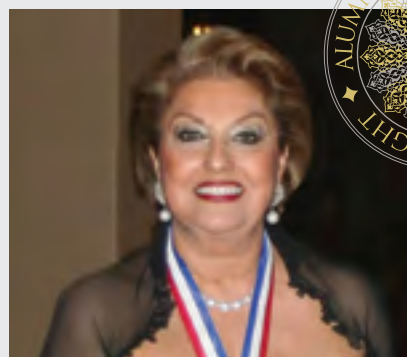
Since graduating with high distinction from LAU, Shaheen has been working and living in the United States. The university recognized her immense potential when she was selected as the recipient of the "Best Designer Award" in her graduating year, 1998.

To be successful in the field of interior design, one needs to perform well under

stress to meet deadlines, stay on budget and stay true to clients' needs, all skills Shaheen says she developed at LAU.

"This university has been instrumental in my professional success mainly because the interior design program is so well rounded—the instructors are all from diverse backgrounds—so when we graduate we are well equipped to start working right away," she says.

Though living thousands of miles away from her alma mater, Shaheen makes every effort to stay connected by hosting Christmas dinner for alumni in Texas. "LAU has many graduates spread out all over the world, no matter where you go you will find an LAU graduate who can help you," she says. "It feels like home."



Mabrouk Vicki!

Activist, fundraiser and an avid contemporary art collector, Vicki Shoghagh Hovanessian (A.A. '65) has been awarded the prestigious 2013 Ellis Island Medal of Honor. The medal is presented annually to American citizens, who have distinguished themselves within their own ethnic groups while exemplifying the values of the American way of life.

Past medalists include U.S. presidents, Nobel Prize winners and leaders of industry, education, the arts, sports and government, as well as everyday Americans, who have made freedom, liberty and compassion a part of their life's work. Hovanessian was one of 95 individuals who were presented with a 2013 Ellis Island Medal of Honor.

"I am beyond humbled to have been nominated and selected to receive such an honor," says Hovanessian. "I humbly receive this honor and share it with my fellow Armenians."

Coming from Beirut, Lebanon, Hovanessian believes that one has to work hard, dare, achieve and give back to the community. Her endeavors span the spheres of cultural heritage education, religion, politics and art. While her uncompromising work ethic has garnered her numerous awards, nevertheless, she remains steadfast in her humility and actively pursues her next great challenge.

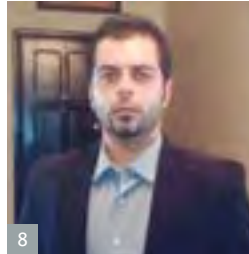
Her name is known in the Armenian circles of the East Coast of U.S., as well as among artistic circles of Armenia and U.S., as the former director of Vicki Hovanessian Contemporary Art. A passionate contemporary art patron, collector, independent curator and art advisor, whose activity includes spheres of cultural heritage, education, religion, politics, and art, Hovanessian was also the chairman of the Collectors' Forum of Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art.

Staying connected

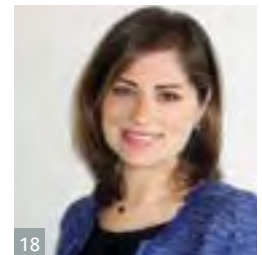
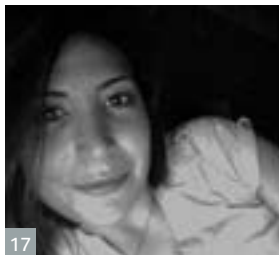
Rima Nasir Tarazi (A.A. '49) is 82 years old and still active in public and cultural matters. Although retired after many years of voluntary service and leadership roles in women's organizations, she remains the chairperson of the Supervisory Board of the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music at Birzeit University. Rima's sister-in-law, **Tania Nasir born Tamari (B.A. '62)**, also a graduate of LAU, is a remarkable soprano and has performed and recorded with her.



Elizabeth Agbajian born Apkarian (A.A. '50) continued her studies at Schauffler College in Cleveland from which she obtained a B.A. in Social Welfare in 1952. She is active as a volunteer member of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Affiliates and has participated in charitable and educational organizations in her community in both the U.S. and Armenia. In 2006, she received the prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honor, recognized by the U.S. Government and that is awarded to U.S. citizens from various ethnic backgrounds who exemplify outstanding qualities in both their personal and professional lives while continuing to preserve the richness of their particular heritage. Proud of being an alumna of LAU, Elizabeth is currently also involved in developing projects for the American University of Armenia and the Institute of Armenia at the University of Fouthern California.



It is with sorrow that we announce the passing away of **Gassig Tutelian born Sahakian (B.A. '52)**



Soraya Letterie, born Akhoundzadeh (B.A. '72) continued her studies at AUB, obtaining a sociology degree in 1975. She currently lives in Horssen, the Netherlands, where she is an occupational advisor. Soraya has three sons, two of whom are married, and one grandchild.

Leila Salim Assaf (A.A. '78) went on in 1980 to obtain a B.A. in Political Science from Schiller International University, London. She then returned to Lebanon and started a master's degree at AUB, but was unable to continue due to Israeli invasion of 1982. Since 1987, she has been living in Washington D.C., where she is a librarian and language specialist. At the moment, she takes pottery classes and is a handbuilding potter. [1]

Henry Matthews (B.A. '80) is an editor, designer, painter, translator and Arabic comic historian - who lives in Beirut. His late father, the former Spinney's manager, taught him to enjoy reading and now Henry is hoping to establish a documentation center for Arabic comics and children's books in the capital.

Rima Ahmed Musbah Mneimneh (B.A. '83) obtained a master's degree in Library and Information Science from Kuwait University in 2002. She currently lives between Kuwait and England. Before retiring in 1996, Rima

was a senior supervisor in Kuwait's banking sector having worked at the Industrial Bank of Kuwait, the Institute of Banking Studies and the Bank of Kuwait and the Middle East (currently Al-Ahli United Bank). In June 2005 she published a book about Naguib Mahfouz, which kick-started a career in writing. She is now a member of both the Kuwaiti Writers' and Journalists' Associations. [16]

Farah Chatila born Khayat (B.S. '84) lives in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and is in charge of marketing and communications of the annual International Exhibition Conference on Higher Education held there every April. She previously worked as a marketing consultant, a manager and owner of a children's clothes shop and a research assistant to a medical professor. Farah has been married for 30 years and has two children, Nour, who works at Impact BBDO in Riyadh and Saria, who is studying at Concordia University in Montreal.

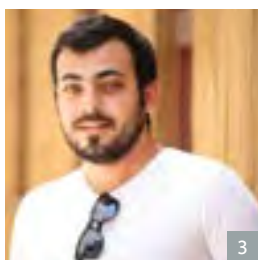
Sawsan Mojahed Darwaza (B.A. '85) lives in Amman, Jordan, where she is a producer and director in film and theater. She is the cofounder and CEO of Ma3mal 612 Productions and Ma3mal 612 Think Factory (an NGO that develops art and film projects with thinkers and workers from around the world). Sawsan is also the director and co-founder of Jordan and Palestine's Karama Human Rights Film Festivals.

She is currently preparing for festivals in 2014 in Mauritania and in 2015 in Washington. To address the lack of human rights films in the region, she founded Karama Atelier. Sawsan is also the president of the International Theatre Institute's Jordan Center. Her daughter, Karma Sweirky, is currently studying communication arts at LAU with an emphasis on film production. Her other daughter, Jude Sweirky, is planning to come to LAU in the fall to major in political science. [2]

Nada Baker born Loutfy (B.S. '89) continued her studies at AUB and Loughborough University in England, where she currently lives. A science and math tutor for both the English and Welsh boards, Nada also tutors pharmacy, nursing and biochemistry university students and is the head of and a professor at a tuition center called TutoringScience in Ashby de la Zouch.

Hussein Ali Murtada (B.S. '91, M.B.A. '08) lives in Beirut and is the senior-relationship manager in the Corporate Banking Department of the Bank of Beirut. Hussein is married to Nada Bleibel, who also graduated from LAU with a B.A. in Child Development Psychology.

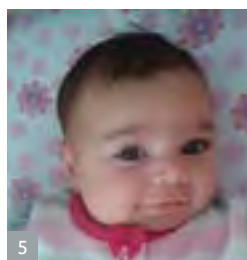
Samir Salim Gharzeddine (B.S. '93) obtained his master's in Computer Information Technology from the U.S. He currently lives



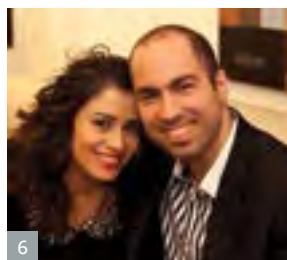
3



4



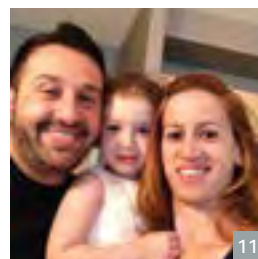
5



6



7



11



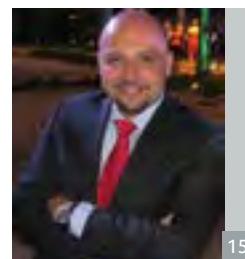
12



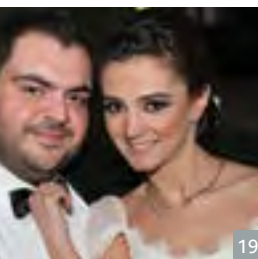
13



14



15



19



20



21



22

in Saudi Arabia and is working on his Ph.D. A general manager in IT, he is married to Rana El Kheshin and they have two girls, Celine and Cybelle, and twin boys, Ryan and Ralph.

Kaissar (Cesar) Aoun (B.S. '94) went on to obtain an EMBA from Melbourne University in Australia. He currently lives in Ain Aar in the Metn and is a manager at Mercedes-Benz/T. Gargour & Fils.

Imad El Ghazal (B.S. '94) also went on to obtain an EMBA from Hult Business School in the States. Imad is based in Dubai travelling intensively as Adidas Group's general manager for both Egypt and Northern Africa. Imad's know-how of crisis management, market penetration, startups and restructuring has made him a popular speaker at universities and economic forums. He is married with three young boys aged 14, 11 and 3.

Rola Yamout born Kobeissi (B.A. '96) went to France for her postgraduate studies and is currently a freelance cultural manager in Beirut.

Soha Audi born Gharzeddine (B.S. '97) currently works as Beirut sales administrator and official marketing agent for the real-estate company Sold on Cyprus. Soha is married to Rabiha Audi and is the mother of two girls, Rain and Ramaya. [21]

Anthony Hoglind (B.S. '97) went on to obtain an M.Sc. in International Business from Copenhagen Business School in 2004. His thesis was on "Strategies for Danish firms expanding into Asia". Currently living in Singapore, Anthony is the general manager of Regus One Fullerton. He assists major multinational corporations in expanding their operations and open up branches in Asia-Pacific. [14]

Mohammed Hanbali (M.B.A. '98) finished two years of his doctorate in Business Administration at University of Liverpool and started his dissertation in March. His key research interest is leadership and organization readiness for nonprofit organizations. [4]

Farah Al-Hashim (B.A. '00) obtained her M.F.A. in film at New York Film Academy. After having lived there she is currently in Lebanon pursuing a career as an independent filmmaker and writer. Farah also founded www.prelude-mag.com. Before Taking up her Ph.D. studies in fall, Farah will have shot a docudrama during the summer. She previously wrote and directed a short film by entitled "7 hours", which participated in the Morphos exhibition in Venice, Italy and the Festival de Cannes through ECU film festival special screening. The film also won three international awards: for "Best Short Film" at the 2014 Paris European Independent Film Festival,

and "Best Actress" and "Best Screen Play" at the 2013 Women's Independent Film Festival in LA, California. Still making the rounds at festivals, it has been screened in over 10 international and local festivals and is be screened in New York, Austria, Denmark, Japan and Russia as part of the ECU on the road tour.

Faysal Awar (B.S. '00) has been living in Dubai since 2001 and currently works for Rolls Royce Motor Cars Regional Office, as their regional general manager. He oversees the sales operations of Rolls Royce Business in the Middle East, African & Latin American Markets. Faysal is married to Olya and has a daughter, Vanessa.

Lena Edde born Naoum (B.S. '00) obtained her master's in International Hospitality Management at the University Center Cesar Ritz validated by Manchester Metropolitan University, U.K. She currently lives in Hazmieh and works as the sales development manager of Zwan, Bjorg, Bavaria and Hollandia.

Elie Hojeily (M.B.A. '00) lives in Beirut and is the branch manager of Byblos Bank in Dora.

Hind Mneimneh Nader (B.S. '02) currently lives in Dubai, where she is a finance director in a private equity firm.

Staying connected

Jihad Nehme (B.E. '01) lives between Lebanon and Saudi Arabia and is currently a principal consultant and the head of Edarat Group's Project management office, as well as a shareholder in ASSASS Engineering. He was previously IT manager at Sanita then an IT project manager at Sakr Power Systems. Managing a portfolio of projects of over USD15 million, Jihad has been PMP certified since 2008.

Nathalie Tannous born Jabbour (B.S. '02) lives in Doha, Qatar. PMP certified in 2008, she is acting projects account manager at the Qatar Foundation. Natalie is currently pursuing an Agile Project Management Certification. [13]

Noor El Fadl (B.S. '03) lives in Amman, Jordan. She began her career by setting up tasmeemME.com, a website to help designers in the region, for which she won ArabNet, in Lebanon, as a startup. Noor recently also won two golden awards, in Jordan, for being the best online web service.

Mohammad Adnan Itani (B.S. '03) currently lives in Bahrain, where he is the country's merchandise manager at Light Household (FUCOM WLL). He is married to Suzan Juma and has 5-year-old Haya and 2-year-old Omar. [7]

Charbel Tarabay (B.S. '03) lives in Dubai, where he works as a business development manager at Aconex. He was previously the process manager at COWI A/S on the Muscat International and Salalah Airports Project in Oman. This year, from a group of the company's 30 BDMs worldwide, he won second position - placing him in the lobby of the Aconex Presidents' Club. Charbel is married with two children.

Rabih Abou Shakra (B.S. '04) lives in Lebanon, where he is a marketing and business development manager. After traveling and exploring businesses in Iraq and Kuwait, he returned to Lebanon having progressed from executive to supervisor to director. Rabih married Sara Abou Salman in 2008 and they have a daughter.

Claire Amer Amer (B.A. '04) who currently resides in Rabieh is both a businesswoman and singer. She is the owner of the fireworks company Kaissar Amer and studio-event management company PLLUR, as well as a real-estate entrepreneur. Claire has also opened a professional music studio in Jdeide

Susan Daniel Fayad (M.A. '04) lives in Richmond, Virginia, in the States, where she is an author of children's books and college instructor. She published the award winning children's book *My Grandfather's Masbaha*, which is available on Amazon, Book Depository and other book sites. Susan is married with two children.

Reina Jamhoury (Pharm.D. '05) lives in Jounieh. She opened her own pharmacy in

2007 in Dekwaneh. Reina is married with three children. [12]

Abir El Eid Zebian (B.S. '05) is moving to Canada for good after having lived in the United Arab Emirates. She is married and has a daughter, Noha, who is almost three years old. [11]

Christine Audi (M.B.A. '06) is currently living in Alberta, Canada and has a new baby girl, Aleen, who was born on April 22nd. [5]

Ibrahim Dannaoui (M.B.A. '06) lives in Beirut and is the information security manager at the Syrian Lebanese Commercial Bank. Ibrahim holds CISM, PMP, COBIT 5 Foundation, ITIL V3 Foundation, ISO 22301 Lead Implementer Certificates. [15]

Nadim Demackie (B.A. '06) lives in Beirut and works as a producer, senior film and video editor, photographer and graphic designer. Nadim freelances as TV producer and coordinator. He edits TV shows, including reality shows, commercials, short films, documentaries, exhibitions, concerts, conferences and events. He designs and operates lighting and sound for theater performances, as well as designs all kinds of print, film and video graphics. Apart from his professional photography jobs, he also teaches photography. He is married to Roula Ansari and has a baby girl named Haya. [6]

Mazen Ayoub Salameh (B.S. '06) lives in Dubai and is district operations manager with Dubai Properties. Having been in the business for eight years, Mazen focuses on providing retail and residential property management, soft operations and facilities management. He also specializes in mixed-use properties, service charge management and capital expenditure. He is a certified Home Owners Association Manager and has extensive experience in business development. [10]

Ibrahim Deeb Badawi (B.S. '07) lives in Tyre, where he opened a new fine dining restaurant for the Abou Deeb Restaurants and Hotel chain, at which he is the general manager. [8]

Abass Ali Haidar (B.S. '07) is currently living in Lebanon and joined Transmed this year as their district manager. Abass also started his own business - a fun food concept - Munchies House. The restaurant now has three branches. Married in 2012, he and his wife are expecting their first child before the end of the year.

Charbel Maurice Khair (B.E. '02, M.B.A. '07) lives in Lebanon and is the head of Risk, Support Design and Development. Maurice is getting married in September.

Majd Walid El-Masri (B.S. '08) obtained his M.B.A. from AUB before gaining his C.M.A. He

lives in Tripoli and is the managing director of the money transfer and exchange company Masrico in Lebanon and the media and advertising company GIG in Ghana, and is currently founding a construction company here. Majd, who married two years ago, is also Financial Modeling MasterClass certified.

Sara Ismail Makki (B.S. '08) carried out her postgraduate studies in Milan, Italy, at the SPD, Scuola Politecnica di Design. She now lives in Beirut, where she is an environmental and visual graphic designer at Dar Al Handasah Shair & Partners. Sara is currently working on environmental branding for the Salaheddine University of Erbil. [17]

Imad Mkanna (M.B.A. '08) lives in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where he is a training manager after having been a senior trainer. Imad is married and has one child.

Rola Assi (M.A. '09) recently completed her doctorate (April 2014) in International Investment Law at Université Aix-Marseille III in France, with highest level of distinction for a Ph.D., the permission to publish it and proposed for a dissertation award. Rola currently works as a lawyer in an international law firm in Paris, where she lives. [18]

Maria-Rita Chakar born Kassis (M.A. '09) lives in Baabda and is the Beirut managing editor of Al-Monitor (www.al-monitor.com). She was previously the coordinator for Study Abroad & International Exchange at OCE-LAU. With an M.A. in Intl Affairs and certificate in management, Maria-Rita has focused on policy analysis and media with an emphasis on the Middle East and Gulf. In 2013 she married Michel Chakar. [20]

Karim Muhtar (B.S. '09) has been working as a freelance graphic and web designer in Lebanon. He recently started a new design and product development consulting business, Productra (www.productra.com).

Abbas Sibai (B.S. '09) lives in Beirut and is the head of the information and public relations unit of the National Tobacco Control Program at Lebanon's Ministry of Public Health. As of May this year he also became the CSR manager for Al Ahli Holding Group. Abbas is interested in promoting a beneficial culture for the country's youth. He is the president and founder Live Love Lebanon, the NGO behind Live Love Beirut crowd-sourced Love campaign for Lebanon, who have recently launched the official National Tourism Campaign. He founded Aie Serve a youth NGO in 2007, is a certified SALTO Youth Euro-Med Youth Trainer and an adviser at Rotaract Club of Beirut, the youth partner of the Rotary Club. [9]

Najwan Suleiman born Fares (M.S. '09) lives in Abu Dhabi, where she's a lecturer at Fatima College of Health Sciences. She is currently

working on her Ph.D. in Science Education at Curtin University in Perth, Australia, and is also an adjunct senior lecturer at the country's Monash University. Najwan married in earlier this year.

Rana Shehadi Zaher (B.A. '09) lives in Saadiate, Damour, and held the post of child protection assistant at Save the Children International. She recently welcomed a new member into her family, a baby girl called Taline. [22]

Sara Ezzeddine Tannir (M.B.A. '10) got married in February 2014 and moved to Dubai. [19]

Bassem Mohammad Rida Jaber (M.I.S., B.S. '11) currently lives in Mayfadoun and is an agent for Metlife Alico. He and his wife are expecting their first child in November.

Majd Touza (B.E. '11) lives in Erbil, Iraq, where he works in trading and contracting.

Sami Fares Sadaka (B.S. '10, M.B.A. '12) is moving to Scotland in September where he starting a Ph.D. in Accounting & Finance at the University of Glasgow. The Adam Smith Business School there accepted that he conduct his research on the role of socio-cultural and political factors in shaping the evolution of accounting and finance professions in Lebanon and the region, as compared with first world countries, and the evolution of the accounting and finance profession and professionalization.

Jad Sankari (B.E. '12) will be joining the University of Michigan to complete his master's degree in Mechanical Engineering or Manufacturing and follow his dream to work in automotive or aerospace industry. He currently lives in Michigan, where he is an automotive design engineer.

Hamad Mohamad Abdallah (B.S. '13) is the administrative manager at Rayak Hospital in the Bekaa, where he lives. Hamad obtained his M.A. in International Relations at Regents University's Webster Graduate School in London in 2014.

Fawzi Nabil Aidi (B.S. '13) lives in Dubai and is a commercial executive at NBS FZ LLC. He is hoping to do a Master's in Quality Management at the University of Wollongong there. Fawzi organized Fujairah's national day event in December 2013 and has just completed his task as production manager of a live daily Ramadan program on Dubai TV. [3]

Dr. Stephanie Nadim Atweh (B.S. '12, PharmD '13) is currently at medical representative at Eli Lilly SA, a multi-national pharmaceutical firm located in downtown Beirut. The co-founder of the LAU Student Society of Health System Pharmacies (LAU-SSHP) at the LAU School of Pharmacy, Stephanie also volunteers as a clinical pharmacist at Health Outreach to the Middle East (H.O.M.E.), an NGO that offers medical mobile clinic services to under-served areas.

Nour El Chedrawi (B.S. '13) is moving to the U.K, where she will study Environmental Policy Regulation at the University of Cambridge. Noor is interested in finding innovative ways of mobilizing private finance for sustainable development. Living between Saudi Arabia and Lebanon, she completed two trainings, one at Ernst and Young and the other with the United Nations Environment Program.

Karim Hobeiche (B.S. '13) lives in Hazmieh. Prior to graduating, Karim has been working for his father and they have since launched "Fabric Ville". To learn about the various types and qualities of fabric he started work in the warehouse, now he is in sales and is helping to manage and improve the company's different departments. Karim is currently working on launching an online brand that sells Indian silk cushions and other random decorative or functional items.

Darine Kuteish (B.S. '13) lives in Khaldeh. She is a research analyst in Ipsos in the marketing department and manages the advertising department in Lebanon, while handling projects all over the MENA region. Within a year after graduating, the former SABIS basketball coach, had worked in most of the major departments at

Ipsos, and was eventually given the responsibility to the manage and head the company's advertising department in Lebanon, one the six major departments of Ipsos Global.

Fouad Namey (B.S., M.I.S. '13) currently lives in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea and is the plant administrator at Consolidated Contractors Int'l Company.

Mira Shaheed Wehbe (B.S. '13) lives in Jbeil and works as a news graphic at LBCI in Adma.

Ismail Fouad Agha (B.S. '14) lives in Africa's Ivory Coast, where he is a graphic designer.

Nazha Gali (M.B.A. '14) moving to Durham in the U.K. this September to continue she Ph.D. studies in business management. She currently works as a research assistant in AUB's business department. Nazha submitted her first paper for publication with two more potentials in the pipeline.

Mario Roger Kallab (B.E. '14) lives in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where he is a project engineer at Nesma Trading.

Bassem Nasri (Dr.) began his university studies in LAU but graduated from AUB. He continued to obtain an M.B.A. from the CASS School of Business at City University, London, and Doctorate of Business Administration – Franchising from Grenoble Ecole de Management, France. Since November 2003, Bassem has been running a franchise development and consultancy business, where he helps companies grow and expand regionally and internationally through franchising. He is currently active on a regional consulting and education development project with a wide range of products and specialties in franchising and family business advisory. Previously the Saudi Arabia (East) & Bahrain regional manager for Express International Group, Bassem also co-manages the family's quick service restaurants with his sister Hania Nasri Kiwan

LAU Alumni's NEW mobile application

- Stay connected to LAU & fellow alumni
- Discover the latest LAU & alumni news
- Find out about alumni events at LAU and near you
- Search the alumni directory
- Link up with alumni chapters
- Receive event notifications

**Download it now
and start making contact!**



WHY I GIVE BACK

Nouhad A. Daou
(B.S. '86)



What did you study at BUC?

I joined BUC in 1981 at its off-campus program in Louaize as a dual degree Engineering student. In 1983 I travelled to the U.S. and graduated from Texas Tech University in 1985 with a B.S.C.E. I also received a B.S. in General Science from BUC in 1986.

Where do you live now?

I have been living in Nigeria and Ghana for the past 24 years, but my family recently relocated to Lebanon. I am happily married to Daniella Rizcallah and we have three children, Celine, Antoine and Corine.

What have you been doing since graduating?

I've worked as a civil engineer on several different projects. From 1986 to 1989 I tried my luck as a small-scale building contractor in Lebanon and then moved to Africa to pursue opportunities there.

Why do you give back to LAU?

When you are trained in the American educational system, you become deeply attached to your school and look forward to appreciating the institution that helped you become a better person. LAU has a special place in my heart and gave me many fond memories.

How would you like your donation to be used?

I would like it to help underprivileged students pursue their dreams.

How would you describe the institution when you attended?

At the time BUC was a medium-sized university challenging the larger ones. My time there was characterized by a solid education, lasting friendships and an altogether positive experience. I'm proud to see LAU has joined the big league.

What message would you like to convey to your fellow alumni and current LAU students?

Miracles happen when we are united and willing to offer a helping hand to others. Follow your aspirations and seek the truth.

What would you like to see LAU achieve in the near future?

I'd love to see LAU become more of a regional destination for neighboring students. We can all contribute to LAU's success, particularly expatriates, who can act as ambassadors for LAU in our respective countries.



Fulfilling the Promise

LAU Campaign for Academic Excellence



PETER AND ANN TANOUS ARE FULFILLING THE PROMISE

A long-time supporter of LAU, Peter Tanous was a member of the university's esteemed Board of Trustees from 2007 to 2013; he had previously served on its influential Board of International Advisors from 2006 to 2007.

Tanous is committed to LAU's mission and has over the years supported the university generously. He was the founding chairman of the American Task Force for Lebanon 25 years ago and until recently served as its president.

Peter and his wife Ann recently instituted the LAU Peter and Ann Tanous Scholarship, which is awarded at the American Task Force for Lebanon dinner in Washington D.C. every other year. This scholarship is bestowed on an undergraduate student, primarily on a need basis and can be used for books and tuition, as well as room and board. These funds make it possible for a deserving and gifted student to receive a world-class education from LAU.



Scan this code with your Smartphone
to go to our giving page

For more information, please contact:

Beirut Development Office
Tel. (961) 1 786456 Ext. 1323
Fax (961) 1 803658
P.O. Box 13-5053
Chouran Beirut 1102 2801, Lebanon
Email: development@lau.edu.lb

New York Development Office
Tel. (212) 203 4333
Fax (212) 784 6597
211 East 46th St.
New York, NY 10017
Email: nydevelopment@lau.edu



BEIRUT CAMPUS

P.O. Box 13-5053 Chouran
Beirut 1102 2801, Lebanon
Tel. +961 1 78 64 56
+961 3 60 37 03
Fax. +961 1 86 70 98

BYBLOS CAMPUS

P.O. Box 36
Byblos, Lebanon
Tel. +961 9 54 72 54
+961 3 79 13 14
Fax. +961 9 54 62 62

NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS & ACADEMIC CENTER

211 East 46th Street
New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel. +1 212 203 4333
Fax. +1 212 784 6597



www.lau.edu.lb



مدفوع مسبقاً Pastage paid Port payé

CO 0292

RVU