NESMA MUSIC

presents

Rhythms of Oriental Dance

Starring **Nesma** and **Khamis Henkesh**

Directed by Gustavo Salmerón

Rhythms of Oriental Dance

Written by **Julia Salmerón** with the collaboration of **David Mayoral** and **Irene Bueno**

This publication is part of the DVD of the same title and it cannot be sold separately.

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ENGLISH

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- FALLAHI
- SAIDI
- MALFOUF
- AYOUP
- ROLL
- TABLA SOLO

Part 2
An Improvisation with Percussion and Dance

The Karaoke

includes the following themes:

Rhythms:
- WAHDA SOGAYARA
- WAHDA KIBIRA
- MASMOUDI SOGAYAR
- MASMOUDI KIBIR
- MAKSOUM
- FALLAHI
- SAIDI
- MALFOUF
- AYOUP

Percussion Beats:
- ROLL
- DOUM
- TAK
- TAK with Right Hand
- ZAK

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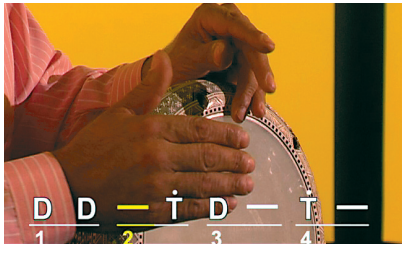
2. **Introduction to the Karaoke**

Using Karaoke for rhythms is a fun, educational way to get to know and further one's studies of rhythms and percussion.
With the aim of creating a clear and simple demonstration, we developed an exclusive system for rhythmic notation based on graphic symbols and dynamic signs. As the percussionist plays, the corresponding rhythmic pattern appears in the lower portion of the screen and a yellow cursor moves along with the beat synchronised with the percussion strikes.



With this simple teaching method, this **karaoke** was envisioned for people with little musical knowledge as well as for advanced musicians who would like to take up Egyptian percussion.

Dancers and choreographers will also benefit from this synchronised system, furthering their musical knowledge and being able to apply this knowledge to their artistic expression.
For the percussionist, whether a beginner or someone who has been playing for years, this karaoke serves as a guide and a practice method which will allow the player to hone his skills while providing him with an ideal introductory foundation upon which to build theoretical knowledge and rhythmic practice.

The nine rhythms and four ways to beat the tabla featured here are introduced one by one in the karaoke portion. A user friendly menu lets you select the rhythm or beat you want, slow the rhythm down, rewind or fast forward as much as you wish and change between scenes quickly and easily.

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"Dancers and choreographers will also benefit from this synchronised system, furthering their musical knowledge and being able to apply this knowledge to their artistic expression"

Each rhythm sequence is presented with different degrees of difficulty: the percussionist starts by playing the rhythmic base and the rhythmic pattern appears on the screen. He continues playing the rhythm, adding flourishes and filling the silences thus demonstrating possible variations; being able to identify the underlying basic rhythmic pattern is the foremost concern here. To finish the exercise the karaoke rhythmic notation disappears from the screen; now the ear alone must follow the rhythm, approximating a live musical situation.

3. **Terms for understanding this karaoke**

Beat – Rhythm – Rhythmic Pattern

The **Beat** in time is the regular, constant pulsation underlying in the music, a unit of time that repeats at a set frequency. When people clap their hands in time while listening to music they really are keeping time, beating in time. In our karaoke each beat is represented with a horizontal line below which appears the number which indicates the order or number of the beat. Not all music has a beat, as we can see in some improvisations (taksims) in Arab music.

1 2 3 4

The sequence and combination of different musical notes and rests over the beat in time create a **Rhythm.**

1 2 3 4

In the karaoke we have written the rhythm over the beat, using symbols that represent the different sounds of the tabla (Doum, Tak, etc).

D T _ T D _ T _
1 2 3 4

When a certain rhythmic combination is repeated indefinitely, it creates a **Rhythmic Pattern.**
Informally these rhythmic patterns are simply called rhythms. For example we can talk about the maksoum rhythmic pattern or the maksoum rhythm.

D T _ T D _ T _ D T _ T D _ T _
1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4

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4. The sounds of the tabla and their symbols

The **Tabla,** or *darbuka,* is a percussion instrument that is very popular in the southern Mediterranean countries and the Middle East.
Starting in the first half of the 20th century it began to be used commonly in the repertoire of classical Arab music.

Although a professional percussionist can get a wide variety of sounds out of the instrument, the tabla produces three basic sounds whose names are onomatopoeias of the sound that are produced when you strike the instrument.

These sounds are the *Doum,* the *Tak* and the *Zak.*

The *Doum* is a lower pitched sound that is normally produced with the right hand open as it strikes the surface of the tabla. The instrument is struck in the centre of the tabla. The *Doum* can be played open, raising the hand after hitting the drum, or closed, if we leave the hand on the drumhead.
In order to identify the structure of a rhythm we notice first the *Doums* that make it up and their position in the rhythmic pattern.

The ***Doum*** is represented here with the letter **D** or **d** if the *Doum* is low.

The *Tak* is a bright, higher-pitched sound that is produced by hitting the drum on the edge of the drumhead, or skin, of the instrument. Normally it is made using the ring finger of the left hand, although it also can be done using the right hand. There are many ways of producing this beat and how it is struck affects the resulting sound. We can make it sound higher by hitting with the fingers between the drumhead and the rim of the instrument, or by modifying its timbre with the help of the right hand: while the *Tak* is hit with the left hand, the right hand covers part of the drumhead making it sound dryer (more staccato) or higher-pitched.

The ***Tak*** is represented here with a **T**
To differentiate the **high *Tak*** (played with the right hand touching the drumhead) we will use a **T** with a dot on top (**Ṫ**). When the Tak is lower or used with another beat to fill a space or a rest we will use a **t.**

The *Zak* is a high and hard sound that is very important for dance because it emphasizes many rapid hip movements as well as cuts to end movements. It is the hardest sound to produce on the instrument and requires a lot of skill for it to sound good. In rhythmic patterns, the *Zak* can replace a *Tak* without changing the rhythm. Although it is different from the *Tak,* the *Zak* is a variation of the former. In a rhythm we can use *Taks* and *Zaks* interchangeably to emphasize or follow the strong movements of the dancer. In all rhythms the high *Tak* can be replaced with a *Zak,* giving the rhythm more strength. Likewise, if a more peaceful rhythm is desired, the opposite can be done, or the normal Taks (**T**) can also be replaced with high Taks (**Ṫ**).

The ***Zak*** is represented here with a **Z.**

The ***Zak*** can be played more quietly, with the hand open and producing a less forceful sound. This is the sound the Fallahin (country folk) use when they play their rhythms. This sound will be represented with a **z.**

In the karaoke we use the **Z** or the **Ṫ** where the **T** is applicable, since they are interchangeable while playing. But for the explanations that follow, neither the **Z** nor the **Ṫ** will be used.

The rest, or ***Es*** simply indicates part of a rhythm in which the drum is not hit. However, when reading any rhythm, it is very important to follow these rests because they make the rhythm take on form and meaning. The silence of these rests can be filled with low *Taks,* though, and in that case it is called filler or flourish.

The rest will be represented with a **dash** _

To sum up:

Sound	Symbol	Sound	Symbol
Doum	D	High Tak	Ṫ
Low Doum	d	Zak	Z
Tak	T	Quiet Zak	z
Low Tak	t	Rest (Es)	-

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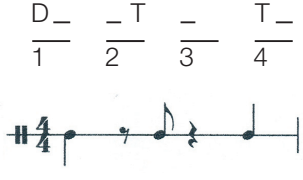
5. Detailed description of the nine rhythms

WAHDA SOGARAYA

Also known as: *Wahda*

The Wahda is a rhythm over 4 beats, slow and smooth. It is recognizable by only one Doum in the first beat of the rhythmic pattern. It is a gentle rhythm that accompanies the silence of the rests and is utilized in verses of classical songs as well as in Oriental dance pieces.
It is the rhythm which traditionally accompanies the dancer in the verses, almost always performed more slowly and sentimentally than the chorus.
It is used in combination with faster rhythms such as the Maksoum, the Masmoudi Sogayar or even the Malfouf.
Relating to dance, the Wahda is the rhythm of love and it is identified with writing in dance performances by means of gestures, gentle movements and vibrations, moving in time with Doum of the first beat of the rhythmic pattern depending on where the dancer places more emotional emphasis, on the melody or on the rhythm.
Once the dancer has moved all around the stage to the other rhythms, the Wahda Sogaraya is danced in one place to emphasise the verse and from this position arises all the intensity that the artist is transmitting.
Generally speaking, in this rhythm the Taks will not be substituted with Zaks.

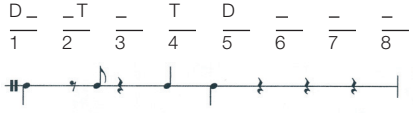


WAHDA KIBIRA

Also known as: *Wahda Tawila*

The Wahda Kibira is a slow rhythm over eight beats. The first four are the same as in the Wahda Sogaraya, so that the many variations that one finds of this rhythm are fundamentally derived from differences in the second measure of this rhythmic pattern. In the documentary we see two very different variations: one with a Doum starting the second measure and the other with a strong Tak instead of the Doum.
This rhythm is very common in classical Arabian music and also in the verses that accompany traditional Arab singing, although nowadays this tends to be simplified into shorter rhythms like that of the Wahda Sogaraya. It is also used as accompaniment in Taskims, instrumental improvisations, and in Mawals, vocal improvisations.
Because it is a long rhythmic pattern, when played in dance pieces it is sometimes divided; therefore, the first Doum in the first bar is struck with force, as is the Doum and Tak in the second bar, in the case that a strong rhythmic base is desired. If not, if the melody is emphasized more, the performance doesn't require such forceful strikes. All the same, the flow between dancer and percussionist goes both ways in Oriental dance, so that if the dancer takes charge of the rhythm or melody in the performance, the percussionist will follow her. This aspect is, of course, irrelevant in situations in which the source of the music for the performance is a recording.

Base 1



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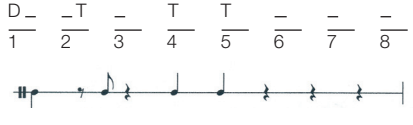

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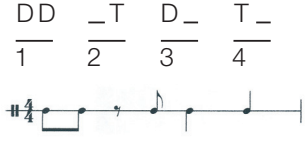
MASMOUDI SOGAYAR

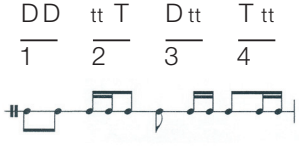
Also known as: *Báladi*

This is a medium speed rhythm over 4 beats. It has a bright yet deliberate feeling. It is identified by a pattern of two Doums in the first beat and one in the third. Its use is widespread: it is found in much popular Egyptian music as well as in traditional classical song, modern Egyptian song and in compositions specifically for Oriental dance, particularly in Baladis. Its use is prevalent throughout the Middle East.

Base



Variation



MASMOUDI KIBIR

Also known as: *Masmoudi*

This is a slow rhythm over eight beats. It has the same basic structure as the Masmoudi Sogayar but its rhythmic pattern is twice as long. It is very common in classical Arab music, in sung music as well as music for Oriental dance. In songs it can be found in the introduction or between verses, either as an instrumental solo or played by the whole orchestra. There are many variations; the most basic is also the most common: two Doums and a variation of three Doums. However, depending on the composer, the melody or the individual performance, there might be countless other variations.

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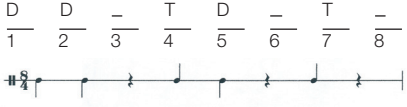

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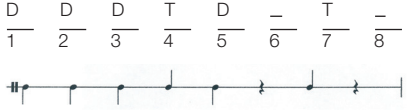

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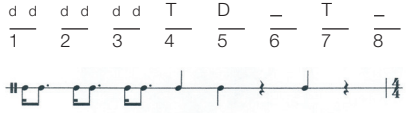

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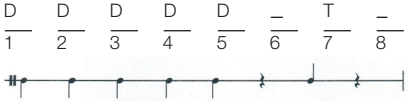
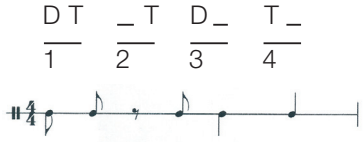


MAKSOUM

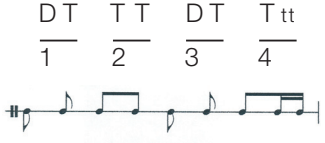
Also known as: *Wahda We Nus, Báladi*

The Maksoum is a medium-high speed rhythm over 4 beats that is very popular in dance music and is pervasive in Arab countries. Its lively character is found in many forms: modern song, classical long song forms, popular music and music composed for Oriental dance. It is the dance rhythm par excellence.
While resembling the Masmoudi Sogayar, it differs by having only one Doum on the downbeat and by being in general slightly faster moving.

Base



Variation 1



Variation 2

FALLAHI

(The farmer)

Fallahi is a rapid rhythm over 2 beats. Its rhythmic base is similar to the Maksoum's, but it is faster and substitutes Taks with softer Zaks beat with the hand open. As its name indicates, it is the rhythm of the traditional music of farmers in rural areas on the banks of the Nile. Like the Saidi, it is present in other forms of folkloric Egyptian music, songs and Oriental dance music where it is easily recognized in dance entrances and finales.

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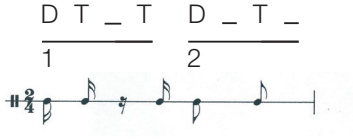

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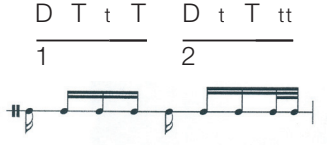

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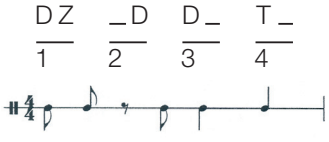
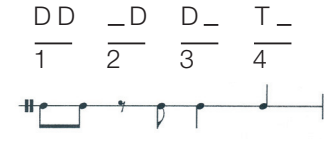
SAIDI

Two Doums, one at the end of the second beat and beginning of the third give this rhythm great force and power, thus making it popular in non-folkloric music as well. Variations in the first beat of the bar can confer the rhythm great richness. Originating in the A-Said region of the upper Nile, this traditional rhythm has spread through the Middle East. Despite its folkloric origin, it is used in modern song and in Oriental dance pieces.
Dance performances change depending on the musical setting into which the rhythm is inserted. When accompanied by folkloric instruments such as the mizmar or the rababa, the dance is performed with traditional dancesteps from the saidi. On the other hand, if the setting is a musical piece that doesn't have folkloric instrumentation, the dance is performed according to the music which accompanies it.

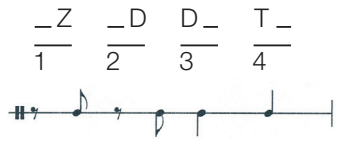
Variation 1



Variation 2



Variation 3



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MALFOUF

Also known as: *Laff*

This rhythm over 2 beats is vigorous, fast and normally used alternatively with other rhythms like the Maksoum or the Masmoudi Sogayar, found in the verses of sung and instrumental songs. It is repeated often in Oriental dance pieces in the entrances and finales because of its force and impetuousness. Its rhythmic pattern is the same as that of the Wahda Sogaraya but it is played faster and more vigorously. Variations can be built on the pattern by doubling the Doum and depending on how the rests are filled.

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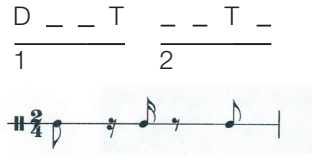

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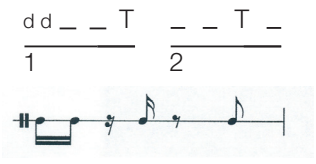

AYOUP

Also known as: Zar

This is a fast rhythm over 2 beats that changes as the music develops, starting slowly and building in speed until it reaches its impetuous outcome. It is found primarily at the end of Oriental dance piece and in percussion solos.
It is an Egyptian rhythm originally for Zar ceremonies that has gradually been introduced into popular Egyptian music, especially in music for dance. Despite the fact that the dance music has lost its ceremonial associations, dancers normally refer to them with movements taken from the Zar ritual.

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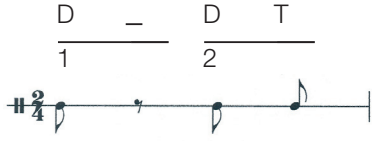
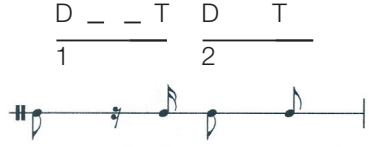


Variation 1



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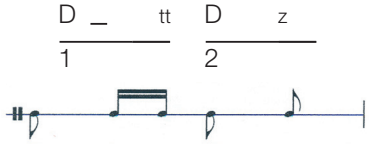

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ROLL

It is made up of a rapid succession of quick soft Tak hits played with both hands and its pitch depends on where the tabla is struck. It has an important role in Oriental dance and is used frequently in tabla solos, as a variation over an accompaniment of other percussion instruments or to fill the silence between the main beats of a rhythm. According to the dancer's desired effect, the percussion roll, whether played in a tabla solo or accompanying the melody, is normally danced to with rapid vibrations.