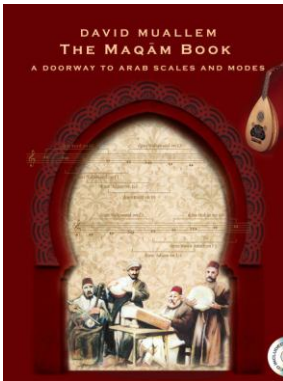


The Maqām Book – A Doorway to Arab Scales and Modes by David Muallem

The theories of the scalar systems of Arab and European music are so similar, that if you learn about one, you learn much about the other. Among the many reasons I had for writing this book was simplifying this fact and proving it. Nobody should be afraid of the Arab musical system.

David Muallem



The Maqām Book is the first systematic presentation of the system of scales and modes (*maqāmāt*) used in Arab music, and is intended for musicians of all backgrounds, as well as for the layman who seeks to understand and appreciate Arab music. The book includes a historical background, an explanation of the scalar systems used in European music and Arab music (with references to Turkish music and Persian music), and an analysis of 48 different maqāmāt, their transpositions and modulations. The attached CD demonstrates 39 maqāmāt played on the *qānūn*. The book is recommended as a textbook for courses on Arab music, Middle-Eastern and Asian music, and world music, and may be used for self-study as well.

About the author

David Muallem was born in Baghdad in 1931. He grew up in a musical family that was close to circles of composers and poets from whom he absorbed the richness of the Iraqi and pan-Arab music. As a child, he learned European music playing the violin and eventually participated in the founding of the first Baghdad Philharmonic Orchestra, which is still active to this day. Muallem is still in contact with members of the orchestra in Iraq.

In 1950, David Muallem immigrated to Israel where he researched Arab and Turkish music, alongside a career as an advocate and judge in the Israeli legal system.

Close to his retirement as a judge, Muallem joined the School of Eastern Music at Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan, where he taught and researched Arab music for many years, performing Arab music on the violin. A result of his work at Bar Ilan University and his interaction with faculty and students was the recognition of the great need for a textbook in Hebrew on Arab scales and maqāmāt. His love of music in general and of Arab music in particular motivated him to dedicate more than eight years to writing such a book that would serve teachers and students alike in the field of Arab music. This is the English edition of the Hebrew book.

In this book David Muallem develops the wealth of knowledge he amassed in his childhood growing up in a musical family in Baghdad, and brought up to date through the wide-ranging theoretical literature, particularly Arab literature, available to him. The result is an important contribution to understanding the world of the maqāmāt, both for students of Arab music and for their teachers.

Prof. Dalia Cohen – Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance

This book, an important and most essential source of information, explains thoroughly the principles of Arab music theory, and is worthy of a place of honor on the bookshelves of all those with an interest in the art of European or Arab music.

Prof. Taiseer Elias – Department of Music, Bar-Ilan University; Head of the Department of Oriental Music, Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance

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