

# 2013 Performers

## Drumming Performance

### Jamal Mohamed



Noted hand drummer and percussionist Jamal Mohamed has been a featured artist in many international music and dance events. He has presented percussion workshops at venues worldwide, including Berklee College of Music in Boston; the National Institute of Fine Arts in Mexico City; the Tokyo School of Music in Tokyo, Japan; the American University in Cairo, Egypt; the Center for World Music in Bali, Indonesia; and the University of Hong Kong, to name a few.

He has performed with Sting, Mark O'Connor, Giovanni Hidalgo and many other well known artists. In addition, his music has been featured in the television documentaries Ramses the Great, National Geographic's Lions of Darkness (with D'Drum), and the film biography of bluesman Robert Johnson, Can't You Hear the Wind Howl? starring Danny Glover and Keb' Mo'.

Jamal also performs with the world music group Brahma and the jazz ensemble Jimpact. He serves on the faculty at Southern Methodist University's Meadows School of the Arts, where he teaches percussion and directs the Meadows World Music Ensemble. For more visit [www.jamalmohamed.com](http://www.jamalmohamed.com).

## Fashion and Modesty

### Elif Kavakci



Elif Kavakci was born in Turkey and grew up in Dallas, TX. She migrated to Dallas in 1988 with her family due to the hijab (headscarf) ban in Turkey. She is a fashion designer and the founder of KAVAKCI COUTURE. Her designs are worn by Muslim women who are in the public eye. She has held 4 fashion shows in Dallas. Her work has been featured on BBC World, The Huffington Post, The Dallas Morning News, Nisf Al Dunya as well as other international media outlets. She is also the editor in chief of HijabiTopia.com.

Kavakci strives to promote hijab and encourage Muslim women to dress more modestly through her designs and writings. She works with women reverts in terms of welcoming them in to the community and helping them connect with other Muslim women. She also does consultancy on how to dress Islamically and adjust to a more conservative wardrobe. In addition, Ms. Kavakci is a brand consultant to Islamic wear designers and labels. She consults designers who want to introduce their labels to the U.S. and Turkish markets.

Ms. Kavakci has recently relocated back to Dallas with her family and is currently working on her masters in Fashion Studies and Fashion Media at SMU. In her academic work she researches how fashion impacts society, and the role of dress in shaping ones identity. Her main goal in her research is to publish works that debunk stereotypes about Muslim women. For more visit [www.kavakcicouture.com](http://www.kavakcicouture.com)

## Fashion Show: Fashion Influenced by Islamic Design



### Yasmina Johnston

As a recent graduate from the Art Institute of Dallas, Yasmina Johnston has already made an emphasis in the local Dallas fashion industry. She first started out as an artist at Brookhaven College School of the Arts. There her talent was able to mature and gain character through studio art and film. Yasmina then later transferred to the Art Institute of Dallas to pursue a career in fashion design.

She is currently working for Neiman Marcus as the Women's Couture/Sportswear visual stylist at their Willow Bend location. By working as a visual stylist, Yasmina has been able to take her passion and knowledge of fashion to another level. As the result of her dedication in the industry, she has been involved in local fashion productions, which include working with Jan Strimple and other leading design professionals.

Yasmina launched the label inner.orbit.systems in 2011, which specializes in contemporary Abayas and concept ready-to-wear. The I.O.S. design philosophy coincides with the new generation of fashion, where experimental design and function is combined. Creating Abayas with uncommon materials and inventing new silhouettes. The I.O.S. Collection includes leatherwork pieces, Abayas, and one of a kind garments. Yasmina is working on her F/W 2014 collection that will include collaboration with other artists, bringing her dream another step closer.

Every dream starts with a vision, and every step that it takes to get there will be every step closer to your destiny.

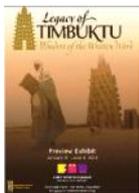
## Firqet Bladi Palestinian Dabke



Dallas based traditional Palestinian Dabke/Zaffe dance group, Firqet Bladi with tabla player Saher. Dabke, a traditional folkloric step dance, will be performed by Firqet Bladi; this group won first place at this year's first ever Dabke competition in Dallas, TX.

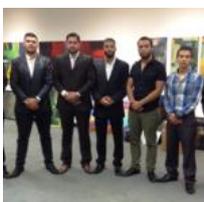
The group is made up of a team, and includes: Abdullah Dahduli, Arar Abulhaija, Orabi, Tariq Atari, Mouyyah Abdulhadi, Yousef Alhajj and features drumming by Saher Eltaweel.

## Hisham Syed



Hisham Syed is the Co-Chair of the International Museum of Muslim Cultures – Texas Affiliate. We are honored to have him to tell us more about the Timbuktu exhibit on display at the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History.

## Iraqi American Association of North Texas Art and Culture Committee



Iraqi Chobi Dance Group—carrying on the heritage and culture of the Iraqi people and unique style of folkloric dance.

Group members: Mohamed Dowej Aljayashi, Esam Talal Albayati Ahmed Jameel, Mohamed Saad, Fadhil Satar, Saif Hamza, Rami Aldarraji, Ahmed Waleed, Ali Y Edan, Ahmad Alani, Hazem Altemimi, Ashraf Edan, Karam Aldarraji, Haydar Altammimi. For more visit [www.iaant.org](http://www.iaant.org).

## Nasheed



### Fez Meghani & Aftab Ali

Fez Meghani & Aftab Ali are Muslim American singers, songwriters and producers, whose music focuses on conveying values of Hope, Peace, Love, Generosity and Kindness – all of which are core ethics of Islam.

They have performed numerous shows all over North America and Southeast Asia, including the acclaimed Islamic Music Festival (2010 and 2011) in Kuala Lumpur, attended in person by the Queen of Malaysia. Inspired and encouraged by their passion for devotional music, they released an album titled, “From One Soul” in 2010. The album is available on Amazon, iTunes, and FezMeghani.com. They have also produced 4 music videos including “Oh Allah” filmed in Cairo, Egypt and “The Time of Ramadan” shot in Dallas, Texas. You can check out these videos on their YouTube channel: <http://youtube.com/fezmeghani>.

**Fez Meghani** was born in Karachi, Pakistan, brought up in Dubai, U.A.E., and has resided in the United States of America since the age of 17. Fez recognized his gift of writing and composing at the age of 16. Since then, he has produced 5 musical albums that traverse a mystical landscape covering spirituality, love, expressions of faith, and the quest for personal search to get closer to the Divine. The feedback to his brand of music has been immensely positive, and Fez realized that his work, with a religious message, is able to resonate with those looking for a combination of modern sounds and values of faith. IN addition to performing his brand of devotional music, Fez also travels around the nation, speaking at conferences, conducting workshops and acilitating sessions on the role, diversity and impact of Music in Islam. Fez currently resides in Dallas, Texas, is married to Khairunissa Meghani – his wife of 10 years – and is the proud father of a 4-year-old girl, Shifa Inaaya and a 1-year-old boy, Izaan Ali. For more visit [fezmeghani.com](http://fezmeghani.com).

**Aftab Ali** was born in Karachi, Pakistan, and relocated to the United States at the age of 22. Aftab developed an appreciation for music at the age of 15 through his brother’s guitar-playing skills. Being blessed with a unique and dynamic voice, Aftab has played with multiple bands at numerous venues in Pakistan and North America. In 2002, Aftab met Fez at a concert and they became great friends. With their penchant for developing catchy tunes, their commonalities around expression of devotion through music, and their distinct styles, the chemistry was immediate. Since then, both of them have worked together to produce songs and devotional pieces, and perform for audiences as large as 30,000 in stadiums across North America. Concertgoers who witness their performances rave about the individuality of their unique styles complimenting one another. Aftab currently resides in Dallas, Texas, and is married to Sameena Hussain Ali – his wife of 10 years – and is a doting father to his 1-year-old girl, Aiza Sofia.

## Mrs. Nabila Shiraz’s class at Read Institute of Texas

Elementary School children from Read Institute of Texas, will be performing three **Nasheeds**: Allah’s names, Surah Names and the five pillars of Islam.

## Presentation: Art & Convivencia in Islamic Spain



**Pamela A. Patton** - Chair and Associate Professor of Art History at Southern Methodist University.

Her research has won grants from the Kress Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Spanish Ministry of Culture. Her first book, *Pictorial Narrative in the Romanesque Cloister: Cloister Imagery and Religious Life in Medieval Spain* (Peter Lang) appeared in 2004. Her second, *Art of Estrangement: Redefining Jews in Reconquest Spain* (Penn State University Press, 2012), examines the transformation of Christian perceptions and portrayals of Jews during the Iberian Reconquest. Prof. Patton's articles and essays have concerned monastic architectural sculpture, the text-image relationship in manuscripts and the portrayal of ethnic and religious minorities in high and late medieval

Iberia. A 2011 recipient of the SMU President's Associates Outstanding Faculty Award, she teaches courses on medieval art and architecture, the visual culture of medieval Iberia, Jewish –Christian relations in medieval Europe, and symbol and storytelling in medieval art. Dr. Patton's newest research project concerns the semiotics of skin color in medieval Iberia and its environs.

## Puppeteer

### Mustaqiim Sahir



Brother Mustaqiim is a youth activist, author and entertainer. He is currently the Enrichment Coordinator for the YZK Institute in Richardson. This multi-talented brother is committed to using his talents to help educate the youth about Islam in order to build their character.

Brother Mustaqiim converted to Islam in 1989. In 1993 he left a recording contract in Hollywood, moved back to the east coast, started a family, and began recording Islamic songs. He moved his family to Istanbul, Turkey in 1997 and recorded his song and music video entitled *This is Islam*, which sings that "Islam is all about peace". A few years later, for this song and video, brother Mustaqiim received a letter of praise from President Clinton. Now with a Master of Education, he is using his education and entertainment skills to create educational products for teaching the Islam and Good Character.

## Sharmina Zaidi (IANT Girl Scouts Brownie Troop 647)



Our Troop is a part of the Girl Scouts of North America Service Unit 164. We are affiliated with IANT. The girls in our Troop are Brownies which is 2nd and 3rd grade and come from various schools in the community. Their Troop Leader is Sharmina Zaidi. For more visit [iantgirlscouts.weebly.com/](http://iantgirlscouts.weebly.com/).

## Spoken Word

### Aceil Rashid



**Pluralism in Islam.** Aceil Rashid graduated from the University of Texas at Dallas in 2010, with a Bachelor's of Arts in Biology and Psychology. She continued her experience in the field of Social Work and is orienting and establishing her career in that direction. Aceil is also a qualified mediator and has trained in the practice of Alternative Dispute Resolution. In her free time she spends time as a peace activist championing the humanitarian rights of individuals to live a life free from oppression. She is also an avid poet using her talent for words to inspire others around her to action.

### Storyteller—Gene Edgerton



Gene Edgerton is a storyteller and cross-cultural trainer, who specializes in helping others understand Nordic and Middle Eastern cultures. He lives in Dallas, TX and has travelled to over 30 countries. He has lived and worked in eight different countries, including the Sultanate of Oman and Afghanistan. He enjoys listening to folktales from around the world and personal stories that people share that show paradigm shifts in cultural values and personal behaviors.

### Storyteller—Melody Bell



Melody “AFI” Bell is called a Griot (gree-o) - A oral historian, storyteller, musician, poet and singer. She is a Dallas native, who loved listening to stories told by her mother and family members. This led to her teaching ten years for Dallas as a special educator. She loved telling stories so much she became a full-time Griot. Melody Bell has appeared on WFAA Channel 8 “Family First,” FOX Channel 4 “Insights” and many special interest stories in the Dallas Morning Newspaper. She touches thousands of children and adults with heartfelt talent as she lifts the spirit of all people regardless of age. Her gift of oral stories must be shared.