



FAIROUZ

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Monitor presents the Baalbek Folk Festival featuring the fabulous Fairouz

LEBANON



MCD 71383

A MONITOR INTERNATIONAL COMPACT DISC

INTRODUCTION

Lebanon is a small country geographically and in terms of population, but it has bulked large in history and enjoys an extraordinarily rich cultural heritage. Three thousand years before Columbus, Phoenician mariners pushed their galleys out into the Atlantic, past the Pillars of Hercules, and explored the coasts of Western Europe as far as Britain. They may even have beaten Columbus, since they reached the Canary Islands. The cedars of Lebanon furnished wood for Middle Eastern natives and for Solomon's temple - a gift from Hiram of Tyre.

Lebanese folk music comes from the mountain villages, where because of restrictions on music of Islam, Christian and Druze villagers took the lead in developing and preserving a musical tradition which is peculiarly Lebanese. There are three major types of folk music in Lebanon, all associated with Christian/Druze festivals. *Mijana* has a slow beat, with long phrases drawn out and mournful. *Ar Rozanna* is much faster, akin to a western two-step. *Ritaba*, the third type, is very slow, with phrases more elongated than *Mijana*. The national dance of Lebanon is a *dabke*, in which the dancers form a circle and describe various steps, led by a leader who waves a white handkerchief. Wherever you find a Lebanese on the face of the earth (and there are more outside Lebanon than inside, due to emigration) the strains of the *dabke* set him to snapping his fingers and stamping his feet, just as the love-songs and sad songs of the Lebanese *leit-motif* pull his thoughts toward his lost homeland.

THE PROGRAM

1. ISSIT BAALBEK - The Story of Baalbek

- Chorus
- Recitative: **Wadi al-Safi**
- Chorus

The chorus, accompanied by the orchestra (which includes Western instruments) sings several verses of the history of Baalbek. They tell of the building of the temples and the glorious past of Baalbek. Then they sing nostalgically of the crumbling of the city through war and time and other natural causes, until nothing is left but the bare columns and steps.

2. SOUT EL-REEH - Voice of the Wind

Fairouz, with chorus and orchestra; Recitative: **Wadi al-Safi**

This is a romantic song which would invoke nostalgia among absent emigres, reminding them of the past. The soloist is really singing about a girl from Baalbek and her sweet voice. She says, "don't take her from us."

3. GHANNI LI BAALBEK - Singing to Baalbek

Medley and chorus featuring **Fairouz**

a. The chorus sings of the beauty of the singer's voice and the glories of Baalbek. Her voice is so sweet that it makes the very stones of Baalbek sing.

b. REHLI FI BAALBEK - Tour of Baalbek

Recitative and chorus continue the Baalbek story.

c. ISSIT BAALBEK

Solo: **Fairouz**

The Baalbek story is a story of glory.

d. HAWN RAH NIB'AA - Here We Remain

Solo: **Fairouz**

The singer calls back the absent ones to the homeland, saying that no matter what happens our hearts will remain here for all time.

e. SARRAH FIL BARRIYEE - Wandering in the Fields

Chorus and orchestra

This is a symbolic song typical of the duality of Lebanese culture. The words describe the fields, the stars, the black woods. All of this is a dream, a memory to those who have left the homeland.

f. RAHOO - They Are Gone

Solo: **Fairouz**

The soloist sings sadly of the great emigration from Lebanon. Some of the phrases describe the lament of Sannin (the mountain overlooking Baalbek) for the emigres, the cry of birds as they take wing, the departure of ships - where have they gone? Where did they land?

2 4. a. DABKE, with oud, flute, drums. Orchestra

b. 'AYN AL-MAYY - The Water Spring

Solo: **Wadi al-Safi**

This is a very typical and traditional Lebanese mountain folksong.

c. YA NATOOR - The Watchman

Wadi al-Safi and chorus - song and *dabke*

Another typical folksong. The watchman of the village is also a symbol of the entertainment that follows a village wedding or evening feast - he is called upon as a sort of master of ceremonies.

d. YABU AL-IYOON AL-SOOD - Black Eyes

Wadi al-Safi and chorus.

This is an example of *mijana*, with singing and dancing that speeds up as the singers throw questions back and forth - "Will she? Won't she?" etc. This is a part of the village wedding ceremony.

(b, c, d - accompanied by orchestra in *dabke*)

5. TIKHMEEN RAHIT HILWIT AL-HILWEEN - The Sweetness of the Sweet Ones is Gone.

Solo: **Fairouz**

This song is accompanied by the flute and oud, strummed with one finger. It is a love song, rather melancholy and dwelling as usual on some attraction that has been lost.

6. MEDLEY - Folksongs with chorus, flute and drums, in *dabke* rhythm.

Solo: **Fairouz**

a. YA KARM - The Vineyard

A love song associated with the ripening of the grapes as a symbol of love.

b. SHATTI YA DINI - Rain, Come Down on Our Crops

This is a harvest song of the mountains.

7. KHIDNI LIL ARDH ILLI RABBITNA LUBANAN - Take Me to the Beautiful Land Which Raised Me, Lebanon

Solo: **Fairouz**

The soloist sings directly to the emigre - I am hungry for grapes and figs. Bring me back to our village, over long-forgotten roads; plant me there in the soil of our village, in the soil of Lebanon. I kiss the walls of the old house, and pray under the sky for my return.

8. LOWAYN? - Where To?

Fairouz, with chorus

This is a contrapuntal song with the soloist answering the chorus, defending those who stay on in Lebanon, thus:

Fairouz: Why do you leave?

Chorus: It is too hard to stay here. The land is too poor, the crops fail; we cannot make a living.

Fairouz: But some things are still here - the birds singing, the flowers, the soft spring.

Chorus: These are not enough. Life is too hard. There is no hope here for us.

Fairouz: Our village is beautiful. Our festivals are gay.

Chorus: These are not enough.

9. FINALE - *Dabke*

NOTE: This recording was made at an actual public performance of the Baalbek Festival. Consequently, there is no claim to the utmost in high fidelity possible in controlled studio conditions. But the Festival is captured with all its excitement, applause and movement on stage.

LEBANON

Monitor presents the BAALBEK FOLK FESTIVAL featuring the fabulous FAIROUZ

1. 1. ISSIT BAALBEK - The Story of Baalbek
2. 2. SOUT EL-REEH - Voice of the Wind
3. 3. GHANNI LI BAALBEK - Singing to Baalbek
 - a) The Song
 - b) Rehli Fi Baalbek - Tour of Baalbek
 - c) Issit Baalbek - The Story of Baalbek
 - d) Hawn Rah Nib'aa - Here We Remain
 - e) Sarrah Fil Barriyee - Wandering in the Fields
 - f) Rahoo - They are Gone
2. 4. a) DABKE
- b) 'AYN AL-MAYY - The Water Spring
- c) YA NATOOR - The Watchman
- d) YABU AL-IYOON AL-SOOD - Black Eyes
5. 5. TIKHMEEN RAHIT HILWIT AL-HILWEEN - The Sweetness of the Sweet Ones is Gone
6. 6. MEDLEY
 - a) Ya Karm - The Vineyard
 - b) Shatti Ya Dini - Rain, Come Down on our Crops
7. 7. KHIDNI LIL ARDH ILLI RABBITNA LUBANAN - Take Me to the Beautiful Land which
Raised Me, Lebanon
8. 8. LOWAYN? - Where To?
9. 9. FINALE: DABKE

Total Playing Time: 46:00

The Chorus & Orchestra of the BAALBEK FOLK FESTIVAL featuring vocalists FAIROUZ and WADI AL-SAFI



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