

Nass Lounassa means "people of good company" in dialectal Arabic Maghrebian

#### Al-nass

Al-nass ("the people") is a collective improvisation in a rhythm built on a 7/4 clavé. You can find this clavé in medieval and folkloric musics in the Mediterranean basin. Both employed tones (Bb-7B9 and 7B9-Ab) and the role of rhythmic horns are thought to put the percussions in value. The melody is played at the end as close call.

Soloists: Mehdi Nabti, Phyras Haddad, Kullak Rojas-Viger

#### Oud Phyras

This rhythm and the bass line on the scale hijaz on F were originally written for duo percussions duet: congas and darbuka. During a rehearsal, our percussionist Phyras Haddad proposed to make an oud improvisation rather than derbouka. Soloist: Phyras Haddad

#### Dhikr Oud

Dhikr (or Zikr in Turkish) is of particular importance in Sufism. The word means "evocation", "reminder", "souvenir". It's the mental or vocal repetition of an individual or collective word or phrase that serves as a support for meditation. The goal is renunciation of the world, to rid the heart of earthly concerns. I composed this groove and the bass line to accompany a mystical song of the Sufi brotherhood in Morocco Aissawa during our concerts. Here, it serves as a support for an oud improvisation.

Soloist: Phyras Haddad

# Sadkiyya Variation

Sadkiyya is the name of a Moroccan mystical song in tribute to Moulay Abdadellah Sadki, a 17th century Sufi who lived in Fes in Morocco. When I played music during jam sessions in Morocco with musicians of various Sufi brotherhoods, we improvised on the Sadkiyya, a rhythm in 6/4 on the G7 tone. I played this saxophone riff that I have chosen for the bass as accompaniment of a solo percussion. This riff is a palindrome built on an axis of symmetry (GG-Bb-Bb-C-GG). The end is a "deconstruction" a technique often used in classical music since Bach. Soloist: Kullak Rojas-Viger

#### MT

Dedicated to my son Theodore. This 9/8 groove was composed after hearing in Morocco a choir of the Sufi brotherhood Aissawa. The melody on two chords (G-7 and D-7) is typical of the mystical songs (diwan) of southern Algeria.

Soloists: Mehdi Nabti and Nicolas Boulay

# New Hamadcha

I played a lot in Morocco with Abderrahim Amrani Marrakchi, musician (percussion, oud), singer, composer, poet and leader of the Hamadcha Sufi brotherhood of Fez. He taught me a great many historical facts, rhythms and melodies from different unknown brotherhoods, techniques used to communicate musically during live playing etc. This composition, written on two rhythms ("Gdari" and 5/8 "Hadra" 5/4) of the brotherhood of Hamadcha, is reminiscent of his teaching. The melody contains symmetry elements, and the rhythm of the snare drum is the inverse of the rythm "gdari".

Soloists: Mehdi Nabti and Nicolas Boulay

### Al-Dhikr

This groove is the same as "dhikr oud." This piece serves mainly to highlight the singer Turkish Irem Bekter. The key is A, the saxophone improvises on hijaz mode on A and Amaj. Soloists: Mehdi Nabti, Nicolas Boulay and Irem Bekter

#### **Dhikr Vatiation**

Simply a variation of the previous track. This title features Kullak-Viger Rojas on a timbales solo totally unexpected at that time.

Soloist: Kullak Rojas-Viger

## Al-mjerred

Al-Mjerred means "stripped" in dialectal Arabic Maghrebian. It is a trance rhythm of the Aissawa brotherhood from Morocco. This is actually a polyrhythm which superimposes different rhythmic cells in 5/8, 5/4 and 10/4. The saxophone introduction plays a riff based on the accents of one of these rhythmic cells. The drums plays another of these cells. The walking bass is here to creates an effect of movement. During the solo, saxophone improvises on a "Coltrane Cycle": Amaj / EB7 / Abmaj / B7 / Emaj / G7 / Amaj. Soloists: Mehdi Nabti and Lionel Kizaba

## Interlude (Istanbul)

Improvisation duet flute / vocals with the Turkish singer Irem Bekter.

# Elévation (Al-mjerred 2)

Second part of Al-Mjerred. All the flute melodies are taken from the trance ritual of the Aissawa sudi brotherhood of Morocco. Everything else is improvised live. Soloists: Mehdi Nabti, Irem Bekter and Nicolas Boulay.

# Al-lounassa

Al-lounassa means both "the Company", "stand near" and "pass the baton". It's a musical technique used in some North African Sufi brotherhoods to sing mystical poems togather. The melody is a memory of mystical melodies (diwan) played by musicians from the oasis town of Timimoun in southern Algeria. The very end of the piece is a saxophone call with two lines from the brazillian song "tico tico-".

Soloists: Kullak-Viger Rojas and Lionel Kizaba



