

Riverside  
Dance Festival  
1984



The Riverside Dance Festival  
presents

ANAHID SOFIAN DANCE COMPANY  
Middle Eastern Dance and Music

May 9 & 11 at 8 PM  
May 13 at 2 PM

DANCERS

Helen Anderson	Pat Dandonoli	Myriam Eli
Susan Harding	Helene Johnson	Janis McAdams
Dianne McPherson	Delrosa Marshall	Liz Miller
Jean Musacchio	Abbe Ravens	Ellen Saltonstall
Brenda Solomon	Susan Sonnenfeld	Vikki Webberley

MUSICIANS

Joe Zeytoonian	Oud, Percussion, Vocals
Souren (Sudan) Baronian	Clarinet, Kaval, Saxaphone, Percussion
Ara Dinkjian	Oud, Kanoon, Percussion
Rowan Storm	Percussion, Vocals

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Program Choreographed by Anahid Sofian

- PROGRAM -

PART I

SEERAHAR (Premiere)

Dianne McPherson Liz Miller  
Anahid Sofian Vikki Webberley

BRIDE'S DANCE

Anahid Sofian

RAKS BELEDI

Pat Dandonoli Delrosa Marshall  
Ellen Saltonstall

SWORD DANCE

Helene Johnson

MOROCCO

Helen Anderson Susan Harding Dianne McPherson  
Liz Miller Abbe Ravens  
Anahid Sofian (leader) Brenda Solomon  
Susan Sonnenfeld Vikki Webberley

- PAUSE -

"THE JEZEBEL SPIRIT"

Myriam Eli Susan Harding  
Helene Johnson (red entity) Janis McAdams  
Dianne McPherson Delrosa Marshall (yellow entity)  
Ellen Sonnenfeld Vikki Webberley

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

- featuring the middle eastern jazz of Souren (Sudan) Baronian  
and other members of his group, Taksim

- INTERMISSION -

In the lobby, "Trail of the Sphinx", a musicvideo produced by Media Mannelta Productions, music by Stefan Tischler's Port Said, starring Anahid Sofian.

PART II

SHIKHAT

Helen Anderson    Jean Musacchio    Abbe Ravens  
   Susan Sonnenfeld

TAKSIM

Janis McAdams

SULU KULE

Susan Harding    Liz Miller    Abbe Ravens  
   Brenda Solomon    Susan Sonnenfeld

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

- featuring Joe Zeytoonian and Rowan Storm

DANSE ORIENTALE

Anahid Sofian

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DANCE NOTES

SEERAHAR and BRIDE'S DANCE - Armenian dance and music are most noted for their haunting sweetness and lyricism. A traditional women's dance, set to an old troubadour song, and a solo maiden's dance, are especially characterized by a graceful and expressive flow of the arms and hands. (Bride's Dance was made possible by a grant from New York State's CAPS program.)

RAKS BELEDI - Represents a classical folk style of Egyptian "Belly dance" (called awalem) as opposed to the more familiar cabaret and theatrical style. Including sections for solo improvisation, this sensuous dance emphasizes highly intricate isolations of body movements. Traditional percussion accompaniment in a 4/4 meter also called "Beledi".

SWORD DANCE - This improvised solo dance depicts the strength and skill of traditional men's combat dances, which were adapted by the street and cabaret performers for their spectacular entertainment value.

MOROCCO - Derived from the Berber dances of southern Morocco and incorporating elements of trance dances found throughout the Middle East, this dance conveys the mystical power and vitality of tribal communion. Accompanied by percussion ensemble in North African style and meter (8/4 and 6/8).

THE JEZEBEL SPIRIT - Inspired by and performed to the music of Brian Eno and David Byrne\*\*, this dance is a unique fusion of the oldest and the new, utilizing middle eastern movements and motifs within a contemporary jazz-rock idiom. Tonight's performance presents the opening dance of a 5-part work in progress. (\*\*My Life in the Bush of Ghosts; Sire Records)

SHIKHAT - In descriptions of the notorious dancers of the ancient port of Gades (now Spanish Cadiz) during the time of the early Roman emperors, there's a striking resemblance to the Shikhat dancers of Morocco, and both Andalusian and North African traditions are said to have descended from the Carthaginian world. With movements "both delicate and indelicate", the Shikhat dance contains strong Berber and African elements. Traditional music, in variations of 6/8 meter.

TAKSIM - The work "taksim" means improvisation in musical terminology, and in this slow, sinuous dance both dancer and musician display a sensitive rapport. The meter used is chifte telli, a rhythm in 8/4 time.

SULU KULE - The gypsy quarter in Istanbul and also a descriptive term for their lively music performed in a complex 9/8 meter called "karshilama". This fast-paced dance is accented by the intricate use of finger cymbals and tambourines, and allows for sections of improvisation. Traditional accompaniment.

DANSE ORIENTALE - The famous (or infamous) "belly dance" of the Middle East, also known as Raks Sharki (dance of the East in Arabic) and Danse du Ventre (abdominal dance in French), known to be one of the oldest dance forms in the world. It is reputed to have been a ritual and therapy dance in origin, concerned with fertility and childbirth (its specific use of the stomach muscles and breathing apparatus is the same as is taught in natural childbirth techniques). Some argue this point, but whatever its origins, the dance is a marvel of body isolations and coordination, requires mastery of numerous rhythms, abilities in both choreography and improvisation, and allows for a wide range of interpretation. Traditional accompaniment.

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