

# Simon Shaheen--Composer, Oud, and Violin Virtuoso, to Perform at Connect Arab America: Empowerment Summit 2023

*Shaheen, is one of the most significant Arab musicians, Performers, and Composers of his Generation*

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, September 27, 2023 /

EINPresswire.com/ -- The Arab America Foundation is excited to announce that [Simon Shaheen](#), one of the most significant Arab musicians, performers, and composers of his generation, has been confirmed to perform at the [CONNECT Arab America: Empowerment Summit](#) on Friday evening, November 3, 2023, at the Doubletree by Hilton Orlando Hotel at SeaWorld.

Shaheen will perform with his music ensemble at the Fann wa Tarab Arab Classic Music Concert on Friday night, November 3, 2023, starting at 8 p.m. Shaheen will be accompanied by; Firas Zreik, qanun; Gilbert Mansour, percussion; Rami Abuolaya, nay, and Nadia Raies, vocal.

The summit will cover a range of topics, including entrepreneurship/business, women empowerment, youth leadership, and celebrations of our rich heritage through captivating cultural



**CONNECT** →  
**ARAB AMERICA**  
EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT

**ORLANDO**  
**2023**  
Hosted by  
**TEAM FLORIDA**

NOVEMBER 3-4, 2023  
DoubleTree by Hilton Orlando Hotel SeaWorld

**Arab AMERICA**  
FOUNDATION



presentations, music, entertainment, cuisine, and exhibits.

“We are delighted to welcome Simon Shaheen, a trailblazer who has paved the way for the promotion of Arab classic, folk, and fusion music in the United States, said Warren David, President of Arab America. “His performance at our upcoming summit serves as a powerful testament to the Arab America Foundation’s mission to celebrate our heritage and empower Arab Americans.”



Simon Shaheen dazzles his listeners as he deftly leaps from traditional Arabic sounds to jazz and Western classical styles. His soaring technique, melodic ingenuity, and unparalleled grace have earned him international acclaim as a virtuoso on the 'oud and violin.

“

His (Shaheen's) performance at our upcoming summit serves as a powerful testament to the Arab America Foundation’s mission to celebrate our heritage and empower Arab Americans”

*Warren David, President,  
Arab America*

A professor of music at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, his work incorporates and reflects a legacy of Arabic music, while it forges ahead to new frontiers, embracing many different styles in the process. This unique contribution to the world of arts was recognized in 1994 when Shaheen was honored with the prestigious National Heritage Award at the White House.

Other Honors and awards Mr. Shaheen has received include The City of New York Cultural Award, the University of California in Los Angeles Department of Music Recognition Award, an Honorary Doctorate from the American University of Beirut, the United Nations

Outstanding Artistic Contribution Award, Arthur L. Johnson Award for Social Justice, New Jersey State Heritage Award, The Foundation For Autism, Recognition Award, and Berklee College of Music Award for contributions to the advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and education.

Shaheen toured with his project, “Zafir,” in the USA, Canada, and the Middle East. “Zafir” reflected on the stylistic bonding between Arab music, and North African and Spanish traditional flamenco. He also has been touring and performing his oud concerto, which was commissioned by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and performed with several orchestras including the

Lebanese Philharmonic, Detroit Symphony, Rome Radio Orchestra, Athens Symphony, Syrian National Symphony, South Dakota Symphony, Chicago Sinfonietta, the Palestine National Orchestra to name but few.

In the 1990s he released four albums of his own: *Saltanah* (Water Lily Acoustics), *Turath* (CMP), *Taqasim* (Lyricord), and *Simon Shaheen: The Music of Mohamed Abdel Wahab* (Axiom), while also contributing cuts to producer Bill Laswell's fusion collective, *Hallucination Engine* (Island). He has contributed selections to soundtracks for *The Sheltering Sky* and *Malcolm X*, among others, and has composed the entire soundtrack for the United Nations-sponsored documentary, *For Everyone Everywhere*. Broadcast globally to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations Human Rights Charter. But perhaps his most notable success has come with *Blue Flame* (ARK21, 2001), where he leads his group, *Qantara*, on a labyrinthian journey through the world of fusion music to discover the heart of the Middle East. The album has been nominated for eleven Grammy Awards, and the band's performances have been called "glorious."

A Palestinian, born in the village of Tarshiha in Galilee, Shaheen's childhood was steeped in music. His father, Hikmat Shaheen, was a professor of music and a master 'oud player. "Learning to play on the 'oud from my father was the most powerful influence in my musical life," Shaheen recalls. He began playing on the 'oud at the age of four, and a year later studying violin at the Conservatory for Western Classical Music in Haifa. "When I held and played these instruments, they felt like an extension of my arms."

After graduating from the Academy of Music in Jerusalem in 1978, Shaheen moved to New York City to complete his graduate studies in performance at the Manhattan School of Music, and later in music education and musicology at Columbia University. In 1982, Shaheen formed the Near Eastern Music Ensemble in New York, establishing a group that would perform the highest standard of traditional Arab music. This time also marked the beginning of Shaheen's workshops, lectures, and residencies in the American educational system. As a champion and guardian of Arab music, Shaheen still devotes almost half of his time to working with schools, colleges, and universities, including Julliard, Columbia, Cornell, Princeton, Brown, Harvard, Yale, and many others.

His concert credits are a veritable compendium of the world's greatest venues: Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Cairo's Opera House, Theatre de la Ville in Beirut, and Belgium's Le Palais des Arts. In May of 2004, Shaheen appeared at Quincy Jones' "We Are The Future," fundraising concert in Rome in support of children's educational programs in underserved regions around the world. He conducted the theme song "We Are The Future," composed specially for the event and was performed by all participating vocalists in front of a half-million-strong crowd. Additionally, Shaheen has been collaborating in performances and recordings with world-renowned artists including, Sting, Carlos Santana, Quincy Jones, Al Dimeola, David Brubeck, Mohammad Abdul Wahhab, Bill Laswell, Jeff Beck, Angelique Kidjo, Cheb Khalid, Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Sayyed Makkawi, Sabah, and others

WARREN DAVID

1313999600

[email us here](#)

Arab America

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/658204905>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.