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Alwan for the Arts

Is Proud to Present

Musical Performance: Alwan Festival of Sacred Music Presents A.J. Racy –The Soul Remembers

Saturday, February 19, 2010 at 9:00 p.m.

Alwan for the Arts, in the inaugural concert of its 2011 Festival of Sacred Music, is proud to present acclaimed musician and scholar A.J. Racy in a solo performance of a program featuring instrumental works and improvisations by this Lebanese-born composer, multi-instrumentalist, and ethnomusicologist. The theme of the performance is inspired by the mystic notion of universality and the Sufi doctrines of Unity of Being and Divine Love, with the program offering an intimate experience of the spiritual and cultural ethos of the Middle East and of music's transcendental power. This event will be held at Alwan for the Arts at 16 Beaver Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10004. Admission is \$25 regular, \$20 students/seniors/members. Doors open at 8:15 pm.

About the Musician:



A. J. Racy, Ph.D. is a performer, composer, and Professor of Ethnomusicology at the University of California at Los Angeles. Born in the village of Marjeyoun in southern Lebanon, he comes from a well-known family of artists, scholars, and academicians. Racy is internationally recognized for his extraordinary musicianship and his numerous publications, including his award-winning book, *Making Music in the Arab World: The Culture and Artistry of Tarab* (Cambridge University Press, 2003). He is a master of many traditional instruments, particularly the *nay*, a reed-flute, and the *buzuq*, a long-necked fretted lute. He has performed extensively in Lebanon and has appeared in major U.S. theaters, such as Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, and the Hollywood Bowl and at international venues, including the Beiteddine Festival in Lebanon, the Commonwealth Institute in England, the Institute of Fine Arts in Mexico, the School of Music of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, and the Villa-Lobos Institute in Brazil. He has lectured widely in North

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America, as well as in Finland, Greece, Mauritius, Réunion, England, Turkey, Mexico, Brazil, and throughout the Arab world. He has composed for and performed with the Kronos Quartet and the Sacramento Symphony Orchestra, as well as for feature and documentary films. He has performed with many renowned artists including, Kenny Burrell, Shujaat Khan, Tsun Yuen Lui, Sting, Tito Puente, Djivan Gasparyan, Wadi al-Safi, Cheb Khaled, and Shaykh Hamza Shakour. His music has been released on a number of CDs, including four Lyrichord albums, *Ancient Egypt*, *Taqasim*, *Mystical Legacies*, and *When the Rivers Met*, and on a Kronos Quartet release titled *Caravan*. Dr. Racy is the recipient of numerous honors and tributes from a variety of cultural institutions for his outstanding artistry and his continuous work toward greater intercultural understanding and cooperation.



About Alwan for the Arts

Since its founding in 1998, Alwan for the Arts has been an organization dedicated to the presentation and production of the arts and cultures of the Arab world, Middle East and North Africa. Alwan organizes film festivals and screenings, book/poetry readings and signings, lectures and conferences, art exhibits, musical and theatrical performances, and language and literature classes. In 2003, Alwan established a center at 16 Beaver Street in lower Manhattan. In the second decade of its existence, Alwan remains committed to providing a space for reflection, dialogue, and growth in the arts and cultures of the peoples of the Arab world, Middle East, North Africa, and their diasporas, serving their communities and educating the broader public through programs that enrich the artistic and cross-cultural encounter.

*Alwan for the Arts is grateful to **Union Square Awards** for its support in 2007 and 2008. Alwan is also grateful for support from **Lower Manhattan Cultural Council** and the **New York City Department of Cultural Affairs**.*