

Four Magazine

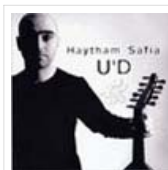
Fashion Issue

#006

Four Magazine, an online publication for young adult culture

07 FEBRUARY 2006

Haytham Safia, 'UD, Meditative Modes



Some three years after Haytham Safia made his debut as performer in the Netherlands, he brings his work to a point where admiration is due. At first listen, this well-crafted solo album, 'UD, submits politely to the extended musical traditions of the Arab 'ud and follows up on the rapid development and progress of Palestinian

music. Certainly, the way traditional Maqams (modes) are introduced and pursued by Haytham adds a distinctive and generous look to the CD, but furthermore, he sensationalizes Maqams by the sprinkling of his unique trademarks.

In ways, Haytham re-writes much of the traditional melodies and formulas. His 'ud grooves jump out as atmospheric while the use of the ambient sounds that he exquisitely produced on the instrument really spices things up, embellishing its meditative qualities. The Nahawand track is astonishingly lovely - dense, immersive and intermittently brilliant. You don't have to be a fan of 'ud music to enjoy this album. It's fantastic to drive to, with recurring themes beautifully underlined by traditional openings and endings. In short, 'UD is a true example of a contemporary and progressive approach to music making.

For more info, Vist www.haythamsafia.com

- Issa Boulos

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