KINAN ABOU-AFACH

A Guide on Syrian music from the #MannMusicRoom

SYRIA

Syria is a country located in Western Asia in a region widely known as the Middle East. Syria is bordered by five countries: Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, and Israel. The capital of Syria is Damascus, which is the oldest city in the world that has been continuously lived in. Syria is one of 22 Arab countries. The term Arab is a cultural term which refers to people whose native language is Arabic, but Arabic people come from a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds.





ABOUT THE OUD

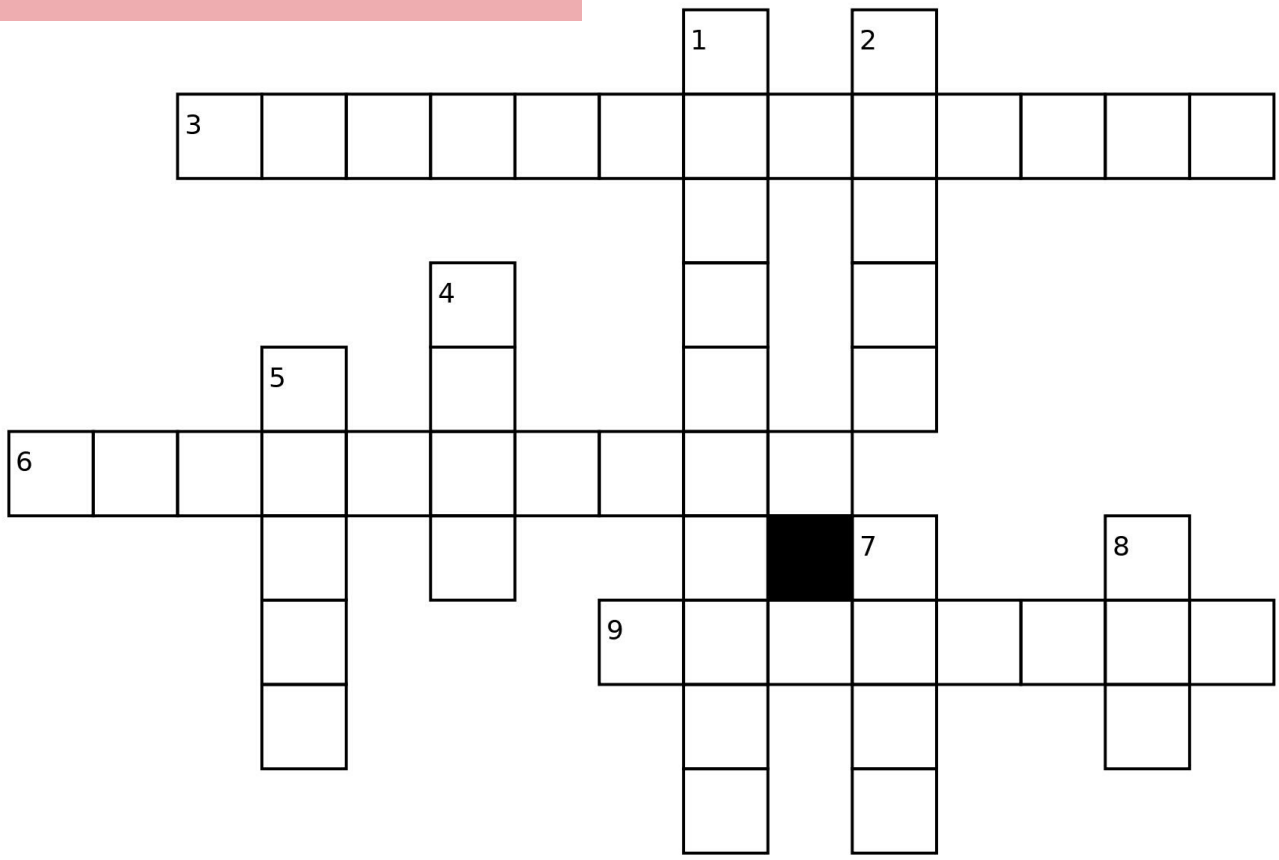
The Oud, which means "a thin strip of wood" in Arabic, is arguably the most popular instrument in Arabic music. This instrument has five strings and its body is shaped like a pear. The oud is very similar to an instrument called the "lute" which is a popular instrument in European countries. The oud does not have frets, which are the raised strips often seen on the neck of a guitar. Since the oud does not have these frets, it allows for unique notes called "microtones".

MAQAM

The Maqam (plural Maqamat) is a system of scales that make up the melodic frameworks in Arabic music. Each maqam is based on scale that is typically made up of seven notes. One of the most popular maqamat is Maqam Rast, which Kinan plays for us on his cello. Using this scale, he emphasizes the difference between Arabic music and classical music. Within maqamat, melodies can be composed or improvised. Composed music is written music. For example, it is what you will see if you look at sheet music. Improvised music is made up on the spot. In Kinan's improvisation, he selected three notes and then used only those three notes to make up his own song.

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CROSSWORD



Down:

1. Syria is found in what region of the world
2. a system of scales in Arabic music
4. The European instrument is very similar to the oud
5. raised strips often found on the neck of string instruments
7. one of the most popular maqamat is the Maqam
8. a very popular instrument in Arabic music
3. A style of performance with the artist creating music on the spot
6. a major difference between classical music and Arabic music is the use of...
9. Syria's capital city

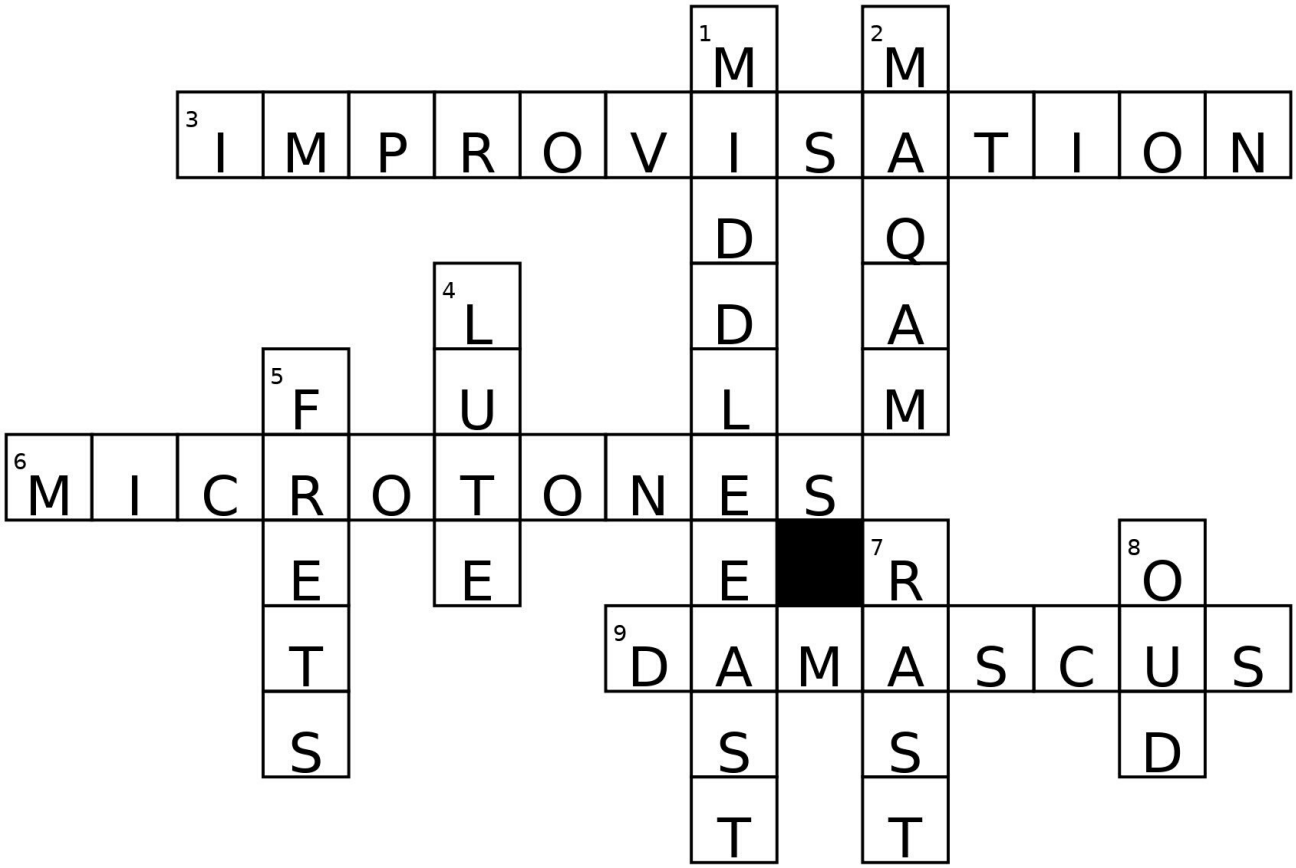


COLOR IN THE SYRIAN FLAG!

Adopted on February 22, 1958, abandoned on September 28, 1961, and then readopted on March 30, 1980. A horizontal tricolor triband of red, white, and black, with two green stars charged in the center.

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CROSSWORD ANSWERS



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Across:

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