	<p>Mohamed Shahin is a world-renowned performer, instructor and choreographer of the Folkloric and Oriental dances (Raqs Sharqi) of Egypt. His expertise includes all styles of Egyptian dance, including Tanoura (Whirling Dervish) and Saidi Tahtib. As an innovative choreographer, Mohamed's magnetic personality has made him a highly sought-after dance mentor not only in Egypt, but throughout the world.</p> <p>The countries where Mohamed has been Teaching and performing: Brazil, South Korea, Malaysia, Greece, Turkey, South Africa, Lebanon, Russia, Colombia, Cyprus and the most of the year teaching in the USA.</p> <p>A native of Cairo and a trained mechanical engineer, Mohamed discovered his passion for Egyptian dance at the age of fourteen. His training began with the famous El Kawmia Troupe where he earned his degree in Egyptian Folklore, and initiated his lifelong career of performing at the most prestigious establishments. Mohamed has been dancing with the most renowned Egyptian folkloric choreographers of Egypt such as Mahmoud Reda, Hassan Afifi, Kamal Naim, Hamada Hossam El-Din, and Gedawy Ramadan.</p> <p>In addition to performing these folkloric styles Mohamed as well Study Ballet and Modern Dance and has been performs with the most famous choreographers in Egypt.</p> <p>Mohamed has also made numerous appearances for various Egyptian television programs, theaters, 5-star hotels, music videos, films and theaters as a dancer and choreographer. In addition to performing a wide variety of dances he is also the choreographer for his own folklore dance troupe. He also served as artistic director for Egyptian singer Samir Sabry's dance troupe.</p> <p>Mohamed's mission as a performer and instructor is to introduce the male folkloric dances of the Middle East into the West, which are still relatively unknown compared to "Belly Dance," their female counterpart. Tanoura dancing, for example, is a form of sacred Sufi dancing that has existed for centuries, but that remains generally unheard of outside the Middle East. It emulates the spinning motion of the Sufis, who use dance as a means of communing with the Divine. Tanoura dancers, originally persecuted by Orthodox Ottoman Turks for their "heresy" now boast an array of fantastic colors on their outfits to celebrate their vibrant tradition. Mohamed Shahin Mohamed also hopes to unite people with his love for the dance. "For me dance is one of few activities around which people can come together and forget their differences. It is a way for people to experience their common humanity," he says.</p> <p>In addition to Tanoura dancing, Mohamed performs and teaches Egyptian style or Oriental dance(Raks Sharki) and Folklore dance Mahmoud Reda style Saidi, Falahi, Melaya Laff, Nubian, Andalusian, Haggala, Baladi,</p> <p>Mohamed also teaching at the international Dance Festival "Ahlan wa Sahlan" in Cairo, Egypt. For more information about his dance workshops and performances contact Nourhan Sharif.</p>
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alt="Shahin" width="295" align="right" height="500" />(Article originally appeared in Gilded Serpent,
used by permission http://www.gildedserpent.com/)
 <h1>The Muwashahat:</h1> <h2>with Mohamed Shahin and Karim Nagi</h2> <h3>Workshop Review by Thalia
 posted January 15, 2009</h3> <p>The classically derived Muwashahat dance form has gained new visibility in the Middle Eastern dance field, and New York City area dancers were presented with a thorough introduction to the style by Egyptian folkloric and Oriental dancer Mohamed Shahin and Egyptian musician Karim Nagi this October. The two-day workshop culminated with a final day of benefit performances featuring both teachers and local dance troupes. This event was sponsored by Nourhan Sharif.</p> <p class="highlight">The Muwashahat genre is inspired by tenth century court poetry of Arab-Andalusia, developed when Arab intellectual and artistic culture flourished in Spain. The rhythms are complex.</p> <p>Musician Karim Nagi began the weekend series with a breakdown of the specific rhythms that would be featured in Shahin's choreographies. A lively and articulate teacher, Nagi incorporated both a verbal and physical breakdown of the Samai Thaqil (10/8) and Daarj (3/4) and York Sama'i (6/8). Nagi emphasized that this classical form of music was designed for concert halls and should be approached differently than folkloric or traditional Arabic music.</p> <p>Nagi and Shahin both suggested that, like Pharonic style dance, the Muwashahat is a reconstructed or invented dance form. Though there are historical references to dancers during the form's peak, no direct reference or description of the choreographies exists. According to both instructors, even the musical rhythms and lyrics have evolved through studying remnants of the formal, metered poetry. The Egyptian style Muwashahat was first developed for the stage relatively recently, 1979, by renowned choreographer Mahmoud Reda.</p> <p>Shahin's first dance workshop began with a tribute to his teacher, Mahmoud Reda. The two-hour session covered two separate sequences using the rhythms broken down by Nagi. Shahin's precise instruction included description for the mood and carriage that characterize the form. Muwashahat choreographies avoid the flourishes typical of cabaret and raqs sharqi styles, such as shimmies and head tosses. Light and flowing movements, graceful weight shifts, and restrained undulations marked Shahin's combinations.</p> <p class="highlight">As an instructor, Shahin was attentive to students. He analyzed movements thoroughly while managing to push dancers forward through the complex footwork and turns the musical genre demands. Shahin's calm and focused intensity conveyed well the innate elegance of the dance style.</p> <p>The second day began with second energetic musical presentation from Karim Nagi regarding the complex nature of classical Arabic maqam. Nagi conveyed a great amount of technical material in an entertaining and engaging manner. As musicians often insist, a strong dancer understands

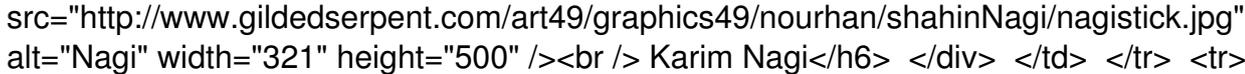
the rhythm but interprets and ornaments and connects to the audience through a song's melody. While playing the *buzuq*, Nagi introduced the concept of the musical maqam and led participants line by line through the lyrics of the day's choreography, "Habib Elrouh," using Shahin's translation. According to Nagi, the words of Muwashahat poetry reveal an ecstatic passion. From "Habib Elrouh": "The love of my soul, I give you my all. my all, my all, I surrender." This mysterious devotion could pertain to either a specific person, a leader, or denote religious/spiritual fervor.

The choreography to "Habib Elrouh," also featured on Shahin's CD, is challenging. Like the first evening's combination, elaborate footwork and turns and arm undulations challenged dancers of all levels. Shahin's enthusiasm for this unique style kept the students in the full studio engaged throughout the four hour session. Despite the typically humid, airless New York City studio, Shahin had more energy than any of the dancers in the room.

These emerging instructors' willingness to support each other was notable. Nagi and Shahin frequently called on each other's expertise. Nagi assisted Shahin with the recorded music and also provided percussion during the dance session. Their combined abilities (and detailed handouts) made this complex and intellectually challenging form accessible while keeping dancing-- high intensity dancing--the focus of this three day event. Dancers left the studio sweaty, worked out, inspired by new movements and a deeper appreciation of the complexity of Arabic music, and infused with the underlying sentiment of Muwashahat poetry -- remnants of centuries old bliss.

The weekend event ended with a show that benefited **Doctors Without Borders** and featured solos by both instructors and many local troupes. Due to other dance obligations, this writer could not attend. Nourhan Sharif's enduring dedication to presenting classical and contemporary Egyptian dance and music continues to benefit New York City dancers and many worldwide.

More information:
Farida Fahmy's online article on Mahmoud Reda's exploration of the Muwashahat: <http://www.faridafahmy.com/Muwashahat.html>

Photos from evening show-
<div align="center"><h6> Nagi kicks</h6></div>
<div align="center"><h6> Nagi</h6></div>
<div align="center"><h6> Shaheen</h6></div>
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