

Alsarrah & the Nubatones

Saturday, November 17, 2018
7:30 pm

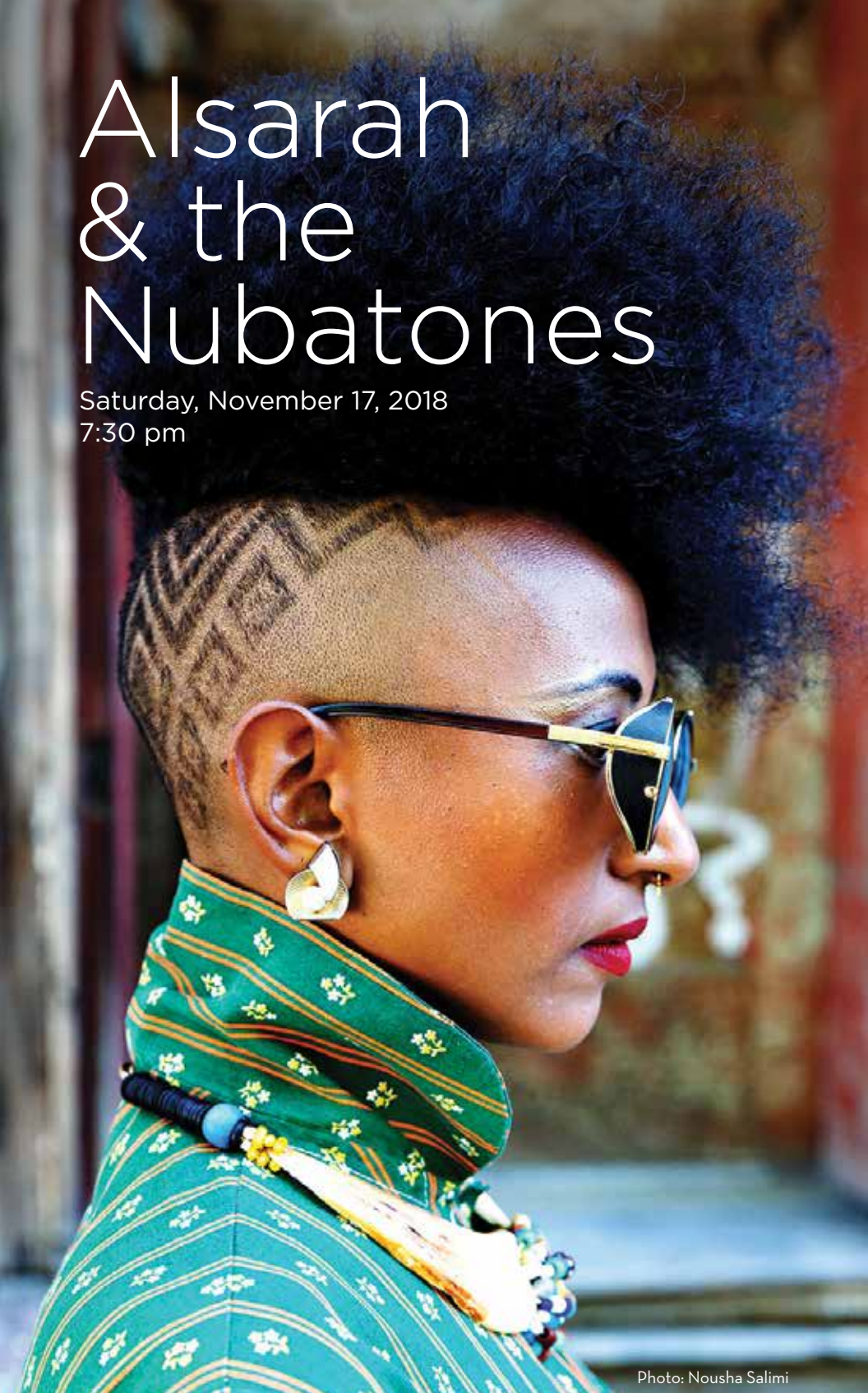


Photo: Nousha Salimi



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ALSARAH & THE NUBATONES

Saturday, November 17, 2018, at 7:30 pm
Hancher Auditorium, The University of Iowa

ALSARAH
Voice

MAWUENA KODJOVI
Bass, Trumpet

NAHID
Backing vocals

RAMI EL-AASSER
Percussion

BRANDON TERZIC
Oud

Program will be announced from the stage

alsarah.com
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Photo: Nousha Salimi

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

ALSARAH

Alsarah is a Sudanese-born singer, songwriter, and ethnomusicologist. Born in the capital city of Khartoum, where she spent the first eight years of her life, she relocated to Taiz, Yemen, with her family to escape the ever-stifling regime in her native country. She abruptly moved to the U. S. in 1994, when a brief civil war broke out in Yemen.

Alsarah started her musical training at the age of 12. After attending the Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter high school, in Hadley (MA), she spent 4 years at Wesleyan University studying music with a concentration in ethnomusicology.



Photo: Nousha Salimi

Residing in Brooklyn (NY), she is a self-proclaimed practitioner of East African retro-pop. Working on various projects, she most recently has been working with the Nile Project, and was featured on their debut release, *Aswan* (named 1 of the top 5 must-hear international albums of 2013 by NPR). She has also collaborated with French producer Débruit on the album *Aljwal*, released via Soundway Records. She toured the release in July 2014.

She released her debut album *Silt* with her band Alsarah & The Nubatones in the spring of 2014, followed by *Manara* in September 2016.

Charismatic and independent, author, composer and ethnomusicologist, considered as the new standard bearer of East African retro-pop music, Alsarah belongs to the generation of artists pursuing an atypical path and drawing upon her origins' precious influences which she melds with her day-to-day ones.

ALSARAH & THE NUBATONES

Baptized “The new star of Nubian pop” by *The Guardian*, the Sudanese singer from Brooklyn Alsarah gracefully distills atemporal melodies over heady beats, at the crossroads of East African and Arabic influences.

Settled in Brooklyn, there is no doubt that the surrounding frenzy, multiculturalism, and constant tingling of the city consciously or unconsciously guide Alsarah and her musicians in the search for the perfect balance between urban culture, modernity, and traditional reminiscences.

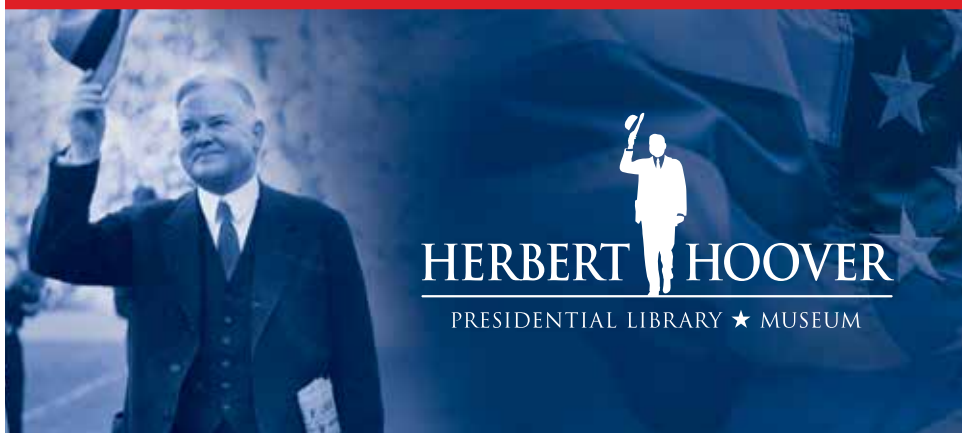
Inspired by both the golden age of Sudanese pop music of the '70s and New York's effervescence, Alsarah & The Nubatones build a repertoire where an exhilarating oud plays electric melodies on beautiful jazz-soul bass lines, and where sharp and modern percussions breathe new life to age-old rhythms.

Some major artists influences—such as Bi Kidude, the charismatic legend of taarab from Zanzibar, or the iconoclastic Grace Jones—give to Alsarah and her sister Nahid's voices an incredible richness which widen the musical spectrum while keeping a deep identity.

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS



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MANARA

If their debut album, *Silt*, was the mud the band came from, then 2016's *Manara* is the house built of that clay. Born out of a creative retreat for the band in Asilah, Morocco, in November of 2015, this album showcases a new intimacy in the creative process with the majority of the tracks being original compositions by Alsarah & the Nubatones.

Under the leadership of Alsarah, the band explores the many emotions and themes that mark the long journey after immigration begins. *Manara* is a quest, and also a celebration of all the ways in which we shift, change, and grow as we seek to build a new life. From the joy that comes from gathering with your loved ones, to the spiritual image of the sea—the oldest road in the world to a new ideal; from the generosity of the people met during the journey, to the way governments have been failing our humanity facing them, *Manara* is an invitation to introspection but also to consider our mutual differences as a means to share and enrich one another, in the face of the current anti-immigrant global atmosphere.

In an age of single-track downloads, *Manara* was made to be listened to from beginning to end, in the vein of classic albums such as Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of the Moon* and Prince's *Musicology*.

The questions, "What is home?" and "What does it sound like?" lie at the crux of the creation of *Manara*. As Alsarah explains, "Sometimes we leave home willingly, sometimes we are forced out, sometimes we plan to go back, and sometimes we don't know if we will ever see our loved ones again. But one thing we always know is that we don't want to forget, or be forgotten. As the sea takes us, *Manara* is the lighthouse anchoring our journey and the keeper of our secrets. Not a destination, but rather a marker along the way."



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Banda Magda

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6:30 pm and 9:00 pm

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Rahim AlHaj and string ensemble *Letters from Iraq*

Saturday, February 16, 2019
7:30 pm

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CLUB HANCHER

Kaia Kater

Saturday, March 30, 2019
6:30 pm and 9:00 pm

Of African-Caribbean descent and born in Québec, Kaia Kater has immersed herself in Canadian folk music as well as the music of Appalachia. With superb banjo skills, a jazz inflected voice, and a gift for song craft, she respects tradition while pushing forward.

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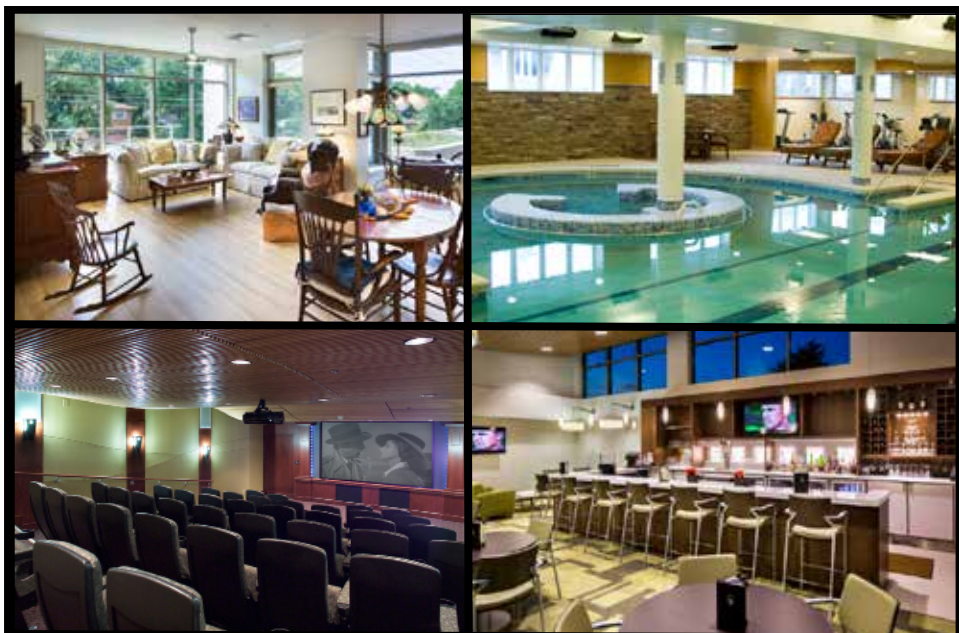
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