

Salaam Duo

Teacher Resource Guide

Lotus Blossoms 2025



About Salaam Duo

Salaam plays an expansive mix of traditional and original Middle Eastern music. Exquisitely rendered melodies are woven with stories and musings, taking the listener on a musical journey. Their sound, while deeply rooted in maqam and entrancing Middle Eastern rhythms, is infused with the band's fresh and authentic interpretations of Arabic, Turkish, and other regional music.

They have performed throughout the US, recorded eight albums, and have been interviewed and featured on NPR's All Things Considered. Salaam, whose name means Peace, is a musical ambassador for peaceful coexistence.

The Middle East

The Middle East is the area around the southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Middle Eastern countries include Turkey, Cyprus, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Jordan, Egypt, Sudan, Libya, and the states and territories of Arabia proper (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Yemen, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, and the Trucial States).



Important Phrases

“Ma’a Salaam” – Go in peace (good-bye)

“Salaam alaykum” – Arabic for "Peace be with you"

“Shalom alechem” – Hebrew "Peace be with you"

Middle Eastern Music

Baladi means 'of the country' and is a style of Egyptian folk dance from the early 20th century which is still very popular. Thus, Egyptian Beledi means 'of the country of Egypt.' It came about when farmers moved to the city and began dancing in small spaces. Egyptians have Baladi people, Baladi bread, Baladi rhythms, Baladi music, and Baladi dance. Baladi can take the form of traditional songs, often with a verse-chorus structure – some popular examples include "That il Shibbak" and "Hassan ya Koulli."¹

Middle Eastern Instruments

The Bandir, or Bendir is a wooden frame drum with a membrane. The drum is kept vertical by inserting the thumb of the left hand in a special hole in the frame. Two strings of gut are stretched across the inside back of the drum, touching the skin, to provide resonance. The Bendir is often used in religious ceremonies.²



The Darbuka (also known as Doumbek) is the most iconic percussion instrument in middle-eastern music, and has been played for over 100 years. The name "Darbuka" most likely came from the word "daraba", which means "to strike" in Arabic.³ The doumbek is a goblet-shaped drum with a thin hide stretched over the top to form a resonator.

¹ Ramzy, Hossam. "Baladi." Egyptian Music and Dance, www.shira.net/baladi.htm.

² "Bendir Archives." Delaram Music Instruments and Accessories, www.delaramm.com/product-category/percussion/bendir/.

³ Collaborator, Areviews App. "What Is Doumbek? How to Play Doumbek?" Sala Muzik, Sala Muzik, 13 June 2020, salamuzik.com/blogs/news/what-is-doumbek-how-to-play-doumbek#:~:text=Doumbek%20drum%20is%20a%20percussion,of%20doumbek%20is%20very%20old.

The Jozeh, used in the Iraqi Maqam vocal tradition, is named for the Arabic word for coconut, because the soundbox of this instrument is made from a coconut shell. This instrument is open on both sides with one side covered with glued-on fish skin, which is found in Iraq.

It has four strings that are attached to the tuning pegs in an open pegbox at the top. The strings pass over a floating bridge (ghazala) on the fish skin and are attached to a metal plate that is part of the post at the bottom. The post connected to the wooden neck passes through the coconut shell and serves as an extended type of foot.⁴



The Naqqarat is an Iraqi kettle drum with a rounded back and a hide head, usually played in pairs. The rounded section of a naqqarat is made of baked clay, while the flat side consists of treated skin fastened around the rim with string which is tightened over the back of the bow.⁵

The Ney is a simple, long, and Arabic flute, one of the oldest musical instruments and the main wind instrument of Arabic and Middle Eastern music. It has been around for 5000 years! The Arabic Ney (or Nay) Flute is a culturally and historically rich, ancient musical instrument that is traditionally a hollow cane with usually five or six finger holes.⁶



⁴ “Joze.” MAQAMAT International Academy Of Arts And Heritage, www.maqamat.academy/def-joza/.

⁵ “Naqareh.” DBpedia, dbpedia.org/page/Naqareh.

⁶ Ethnic Musical. “5 Interesting Facts about Arabic Ney.” Ethnic Musical, 25 Apr. 2022, www.ethnicmusical.com/ney/5-interesting-facts-about-arabic-ney/?srsltid=AfmBOoqRdel211muQwsTbLNjJUSMuGehu-mMx2hw0mDJH7220vs4x6Ve.



The Riq (also Riqq, Reqq, Rik) is the tambourin played in the Middle-Eastern World. It has five double jingle pairs in the frame and is usually around 9" in diameter. It accompanies classical Turkish and Arabic music but is also common in folk music from these areas. Traditionally, the riq has a wooden frame and a fish skin head. Sometimes, complex inlay artwork is used to decorate the frame.⁷

Activity: Make Your Own Drum!

You will need an empty container, like a can or Tupperware, balloons, and a rubber band. Take your balloon and carefully stretch it over the opening. Use a rubber band to hold the balloon in place. Now you've made a drum! Compare with others to hypothesize how size and shape affect the tone, or sound, of the drum.

Helpful Links & References

- <https://www.salaamband.com/index.htm>
- [Salaam videos](#)

⁷ "Riq." World Percussion by David Kuckhermann, worldpercussion.net/instruments/riq/.

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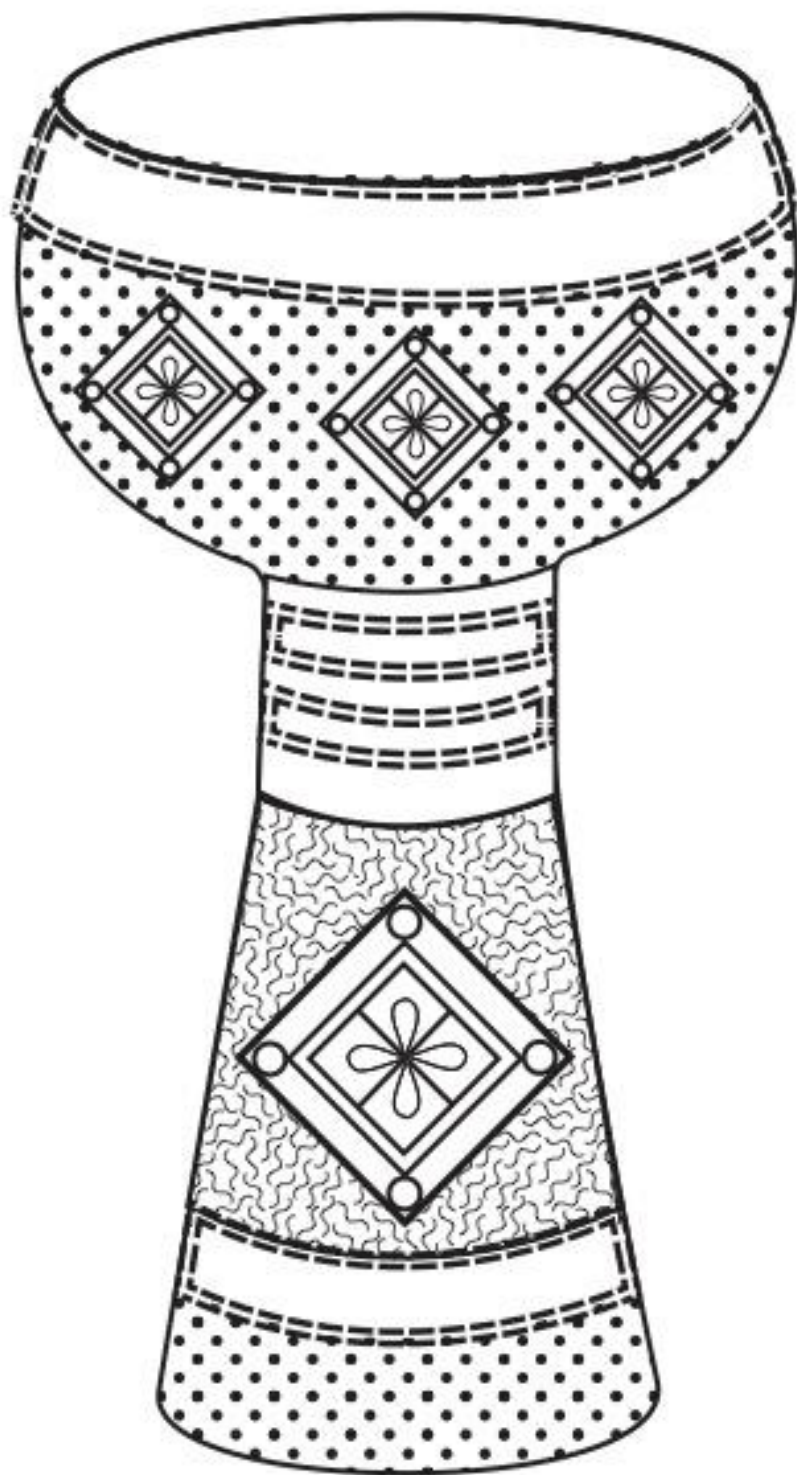
For more information regarding **Lotus Blossoms**, please contact Tamara
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lotusfest.org

See attached coloring sheets that may engage younger learners.



lotus
BLOSSOMS

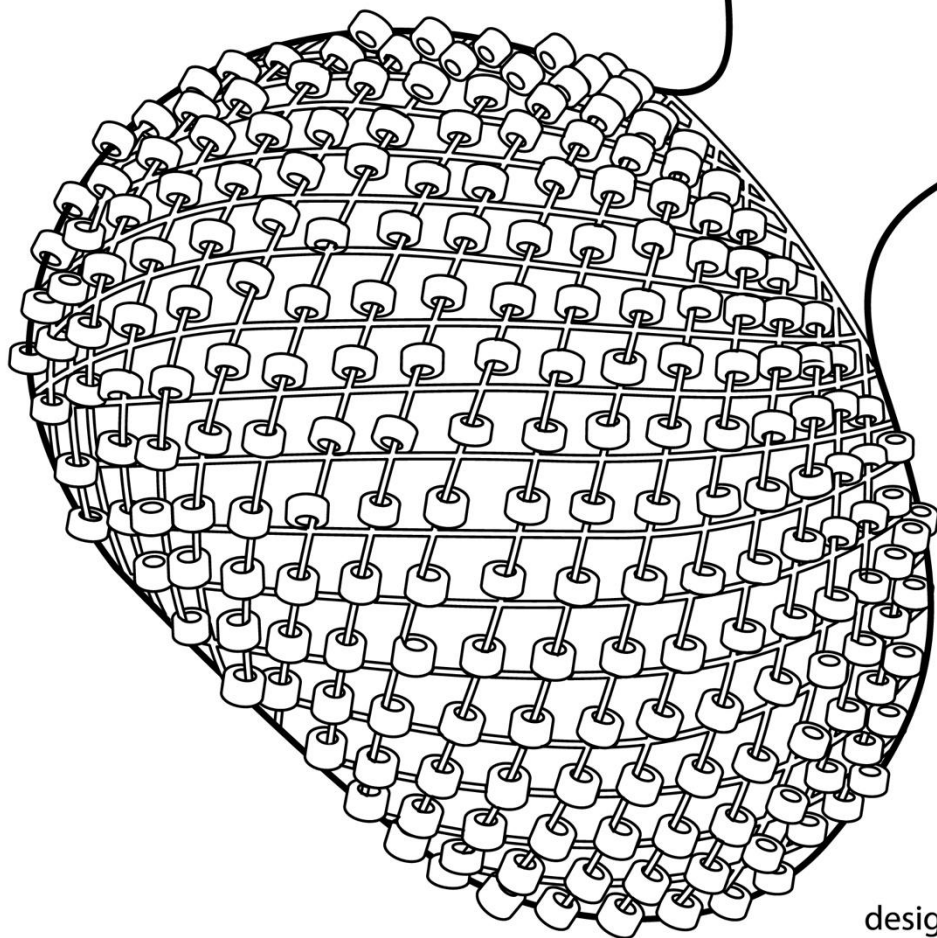
Color your own doumbek!



www.dariamusic.com

SHEKERE

Originally from Africa, shekeres are usually made of dried gourds surrounded by netting called a skirt. The netting contains beads, seeds, shells or other wonderful rattling things!



Throughout Africa, designs for shekeres vary in size, shape and how they are played. Sometimes they are even called by a different name.

Find more coloring pages and fun musical activities for kids
at www.dariamusic.com!