



FALL 2006

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and much more...



RAMED Annual General Meeting

October 15th, 2006 at 10 am

Pasqua Rec. Centre

We will be discussing issues relevant to all members such as the 2007 Arabian Fantasy Show and workshop details.

Come out and tell us what's important to you. Make your opinion count.

Please note that you must have a current membership in order to vote.

Refreshments will be served.

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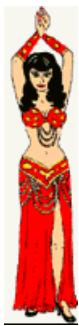


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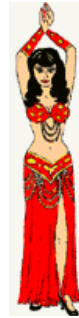
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Upcoming Events



AL WASEE DANCERS & SAKINAH FOLKLORIC TROUPE PRESENT "AN EVENING OF DANCE"

Friday September 29, 2006 7:30pm

The Exchange 2431 8th Avenue Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada

\$7 adults \$5 children under 12

Includes appetizers! Bar available! We are looking for performers!

This will be a fun laid back evening! A chance to meet out of town dancers in town dancers, show your stuff & a chance to just boogie to great tunes.

For more information go to www.ascherarose.com or call (306)543-9762

SWEET SEPTEMBER OASIS: FEATURING BELLYDANCE SUPERSTAR SONIA

Saturday Sept 30, 2006, 7:30 pm

The Exchange, 2431 - 8th Avenue, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada

Adults \$25 / Children (under 12) \$10

Includes Show & a fabulous Selection of Deserts! Bar available

For more information go to www.ascherarose.com or call (306)543-9762.

AROUND THE SPICE WORLD IN 80 MINUTES

Presented by Zarifah Dance Troupe, Artistic Direction by Aschera Rose

Saturday, November 25, 2006

University of Regina, 3737 Wascana Parkway, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada

A foray of ethnic Folkloric Dances from Around the World. Experience an array of colors and rhythms from the Middle East to Spain!

For more information go to www.ascherarose.com or call (306) 543-9762

ANNUAL RAMED ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

Sunday, October 15, 2006 at 10:00am

Pasqua Recreation Centre, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada

We will be discussing issues relevant to all members such as the 2007 Arabian Fantasy Show and workshop details. Come out and tell us what is important to you. Make your opinion count.

Please note that you must have a current membership to vote.

Refreshments will be served.

TRIBAL WORKSHOP & SHOW:

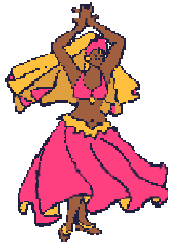
Workshop November 19 & 20, 2006 @ Pasqua Rec. Centre

"Nuptial Blessings" TWO SHOWS 7:00pm & 9:00 @ Oddfellows Hall

Buy your tickets early - last year's show sold out! Join us for the most fun and colorful wedding shower you've ever experienced.

There will be a tribal workshop in conjunction with this show.

See page 9 of this newsletter for more details.



August 2006 Denman Island Dance Retreat

Article by Barb Bell

Some of you may remember Elisabeth Smith's write up on the Denman Island Dance Retreat last year. She inspired a few more of us to venture off to Vancouver Island to attend the event this year. Roxanne Rogowski, Elisabeth Smith and myself set off on August 14th by plane to Victoria BC, picked up a rental car and drove North to Parksville where we spent the balance of our first day, wandering the endless sandy beaches and viewing the wonderful entries in the Parksville Annual International Sand Castle competition that had been held the previous weekend. We set off the next morning to drive to Buckley Bay where we caught the ferry for the short trip across to Denman Island. We entered what I can only describe as "double island time". Vancouver Island is a slower pace and Denman Island is one notch down on the time scale.

It's a beautiful island, almost undisturbed by holiday makers due to it's purposely limited ability to house extra visitors, although there was plenty of room for us. Elisabeth chose a bed and breakfast accommodation with a wonderful orchard and sea view from her bed, and Roxanne and I chose a place by the name of Hilltop Magic, run by a Cuban magician and his wife and trick dog Ricky! We were nestled amongst giant pines and a beautiful garden setting on the top of the island. The rustic quality of the setting and the slower pace of the island with it's local artisans and quaint village centre lent itself well to entering fully into the theme of our retreat "Dance Spirit" and offered a welcome change of pace for us.

The participants hailed from many places. Some came from Denman Island itself and from Hornby which is a neighbouring island. Others were from Surrey, Richmond, Vancouver, Quesnel, Fort St. John, three from Regina, and also two wonderful ladies from Yellowknife who had read Elisabeth's write up on the retreat last year in the RAMED newsletter! There were 24 ladies in total including two instructors, Lynette Harper from Nanaimo who is passionate about Turkish Dance and Bronwyn Simons from Denman who is presently immersed in studying the roots of Spirit Dancing around the world particularly from the Caribbean area. We ranged in age from 12 to somewhere around 65.

Lynette had recently returned from spending time in Turkey where she danced with the local women, enriching her vocabulary of Turkish gypsy moves as they are danced there today. Lynette is of Lebanese decent and has a beautiful vibrant vivacious energy that made the workshop fun and inspiring. The first thing we learned was the Salaamit'ha Om Hassan (Saidi) dance, which has a story to tell in the words of the song itself, about women going off to dance the Zar. It is a fun folk dance that we hope to share with others in Regina; perhaps if we teach it to enough dancers we can have fun with it at a Hafla soon. We started each day with this dance to raise the heart rate and the spirit! It is a joyful dance.

One of our sessions was on Tribal style dance and formations, first working in small spontaneous groups then moving into a large formation with all the dancers together. With the theme of the retreat being "Spirit Dance" the emphasis was on improvisational dancing, unchoreographed, rather than specific dance routines or moves.

Continued on following page...



Continued from previous page: *August 2006 Denman Island Dance Retreat* by Barb Bell

Lynette spent one afternoon going over Arab dancing and *tarab*, which to me is about interpretation of the music and letting our own spirit emerge. Through the ecstasy of the movement, the dancer interprets the music and allows the audience to experience the emotion of it. *Tarab* is the result, when the audience "feels" through the dancer and then as the audience "feels" it, they give it back to the dancer like a mirror, thus forming a continuous spiral of giving and receiving. This can be an ecstatic experience for the participants both dancers and audience.

After all the hard work during the first full day, we had a Fingertips and Toes night, where we were able to partake of henna & body decorations, a make up workshop and a zil workshop. I settled for a footbath and pedicure, which was another option! We began every morning with optional yoga, which was made very special by the inclusion of a series of graceful Indian Temple dance poses. We set the atmosphere in the dance space this way each morning. Yoga was lead by Gillian, a fellow retreatant who is from the island. She's a gentle modest lady with grace and poise but fooled me when she shed her yoga pants for a fabulous white cabaret costume, let down her long hair and danced a drum solo like a professional at our Friday night show.

The space itself is at the back of the village recreation centre, which is a log construction with wooden beams and floor. Our Middle Eastern food was lovingly prepared each day by Bruce, Lynette's patient husband, who also was our official photographer. He kept us well fed and happy.

We spent several sessions exploring ecstatic dancing to different rhythms, Native American, African drum, Sufi, Tibetan Chants and even the Rolling Stones. We were treated to a live Cuban drummer and an introduction to Haitian/Caribbean rhythms that we used to further explore ecstatic dance. These sessions were very experiential and what each of us discovered was personal and very much about the rhythm our own bodies embrace. Choreographed precision moves were definitely not on the agenda. The result was cathartic with release and relaxation taking over leaving us joyful and ready to dance without fear or self-consciousness. It is my experience that this form of release through dance is not accepted as readily in our culture as it is in many world cultures.

On Friday morning Lynette led us in a lively session on Turkish spirit dance which is better known as gypsy or Romano dance. She shared with us what she had learned in her recent travels to Turkey and in the evening at our Hafla, she entertained us with a saucy gypsy dance; we were treated to *tarab* first hand.

The traditional Hafla that is the highlight of the retreat each year is attended by local islanders as well as the dancers at the retreat. It was fun to perform for our fellow dancers and some locals who obviously have an appreciation of our dance form. There were approximately 14 performances that evening, and some danced in duets or trios, so just about everyone participated. Roxanne performed a cane dance, which was fun and lively. Roxanne had been unable to fit her cane in her suitcase, so being the fine improviser that she is, we stopped at the Home Hardware store in Qualicum Beach where she purchased a piece of doweling, which she covered in white and blue electrical tape and made an awesome cane, that worked not too badly, but was a bit on the slippery side!!

Continued on following page...



Continued from previous page: *August 2006 Denman Island Dance Retreat* by Barb Bell

Elisabeth wowed us all by smuggling her new Isis wings in her suitcase! She kept them hidden and on the night surprised many of the audience with her dramatic entry and sombre beginning that built to a crescendo as she opened her beautiful pleated red iridescent Isis Wings, the like most of us have never seen before. It was a very dramatic performance and after the wings opened, like a butterfly that breaks free from its chrysalis, the music and mood changed and we were uplifted by swirling wings and shimmering light. A spectacular show from the Prairies! I chose to dance improv to an Egyptian pop piece. Seemed a good way to test how well I can perform without choreography and what I had been working on all week at the retreat.

Apart from this marvellous opportunity to explore the freedom of spirit dancing and the improvised interpretation of Middle Eastern music at this retreat, I personally enjoyed the other dancers immensely. The calibre of dancing was high and even though the youngest was only 12 years old, Zoe could shimmy with the best of us, she has many years of dancing experience with her instructor mother. We all danced, zilled, drummed and had fun together. A bonus for me was the afternoon swim off the big flat rocks on the other side of the island in the very frigid ocean water. I wouldn't have missed it for anything! And of course, the blackberries!! I'm one of those Prairie girls who happens to be very partial to those juicy big ripe blackberries that grow so profusely at the West Coast!! I could be a West Coast girl just for the blackberries!!

This was a summer adventure to be sure. Exploration of a new island and a deeper exploration of the spirit that moves me to dance! I feel very grateful to the Denman Island ladies, particularly Bronwyn, who so subtly created and held the space for us to safely explore this interesting topic, and for Lynette who worked with Bronwyn to lead us there.

TIPS FOR PRACTICING FINGER CYMBALS



By Azura (Barbara Tomporowski)
September 6, 2006
Copyright B. Tomporowski

Zills are an integral part of a dancer's mystique. Their clear chime cuts through the conversation in a restaurant to signal the dancer's arrival. In her skilled hands, they add another layer of depth and percussion to the music. The ability to use finger cymbals - or *zills*, as they are often called - is an important skill for advanced dancers.

Yet for beginners who are struggling to play Middle Eastern rhythmic patterns while performing isolations, zills can be frustrating and cumbersome. When used by an unskilled dancer, they can also be torturous for the audience. I learned this the first time I tried zilling, when my cat stalked out of the room. Shira's article on zilling (<http://www.shira.net/zills.htm>), which provides excellent suggestions about buying zills, putting elastic on them, and practicing with them, puts this peril succinctly: "Please Don't Torment Your Family & Neighbors!"

Continued on following page...

Continued from previous page: Tips for Practicing Finger Cymbals By Azura (Barbara Tomporowski)

Like any other dance skill, the only way to master zills is to practice regularly. One easy way to start is to take an introductory class on zilling. The class should discuss how to hold the zills, how to strike them so they produce a clear ringing sound, and basic rhythmic patterns such as *beledi*, *saidi*, *chiftetelli*, *masmoudi*, *malfuf*, and *maqsoom*. One of the best aspects of an introductory class is that you will be able to hear if you are off the beat, but it is a low-pressure situation because most participants will be beginners as well. If you can't take an introductory class, some teachers include zilling as part of the technique in their regular classes.

Videos can be helpful after you take an introductory class, or if you want to practice on your own. *Finger Cymbals with Ansuya*, which is produced by the International Academy of Middle Eastern Dance, is excellent for beginners because it teaches basic patterns. It includes the "straight four" rhythm, which is easy to use in unfamiliar music, as well as bolero and an Arabic variation of the *chiftetelli* rhythm.

Z-Helene's Zills for the Intermediate and Advanced Dancer is more challenging. Drills build the ability to zill dexterously while starting rhythms on either hand. The patterns become increasingly faster and more complex, beginning with triplets (striking the zills together on the right hand, then the left hand, then the right), before moving on to "flips" (striking the zills four times), and then patterns of five and six strikes. The video also demonstrates how to alternate ringing sounds with clicks and clacks to make the music more interesting.

The next step is to learn different patterns and recognize them in Middle Eastern music. There are several compact discs that teach these patterns. *Uncle Mafufo's 25 Essential Rhythms* is excellent because the narrator describes how to count each rhythm before demonstrating it. The album includes commonly used patterns as well as more unusual rhythms based on five, seven, nine and ten beats. *Rhythm Rides for Doumbek*, with Billy Woods and David Korup, is also good for beginners. Like *25 Essential Rhythms*, the narrators describe the count for each rhythm.

Although this album contains only thirteen patterns, it features several variations, which helps in recognizing different versions when you hear unfamiliar music.

Jalilah's Raks Sharki 4: The Rhythm Workshop is not as easy to follow because it does not count or describe each rhythm. However, it is useful for advanced dancers because each rhythm is accompanied by a short segment of music. This illustrates how the rhythm sounds when you hear it performed by several instruments within a routine.

As you learn rhythmic patterns, you also need to improvise dance steps while zilling. Compact discs such as *Uncle Mafufo's Drumsongs for Dancers* or *Rhythms of the Dance* by Solace are good because the songs focus on one rhythm and are mostly medium-tempo. Once you become more comfortable with different rhythms, you can try zilling to other music. Many Egyptian pop songs contain the *saidi* beat, and full-length Oriental routines produced by artists such as Jalilah, Yousry Sharif, Nourhan Sharif, Hossam Ramzy, and Amir Sofi, contain sections of *malfuf*, *masmoudi*, *chiftetelli*, *ayoob*, *maqsoom*, and *saidi*.

With only ten minutes a day, you can improve your playing by practicing one pattern from an album or video and spending a few minutes zilling while improvising dance steps to music. In practicing dancing while zilling it is helpful to start with the isolations that are most comfortable for you, such as figure eights and hip circles, before trying hand movements, combinations, and travelling steps. It is important to stand up when playing and stay in correct dance posture, with your arms slightly bent at the elbow and extended to the side.

Using this method has enabled me to improvise to the most common rhythms and use triplets or the straight four rhythm with some songs that I have not heard before. My cat no longer leaves the room when I'm practicing; now she sleeps peaceably as I zill away. With patience and practice, you can improve your zilling and become a percussionist as well as a dancer.



RECIPE CORNER

Arabian Cauliflower with Tahini

Creamy tahini makes a super dressing for cauliflower, in this traditional Middle-Eastern mezze. Dip into it with a fork or a chunk of bread.

- 1 small head of cauliflower, broken into florets or sliced 1/2 inch thick
- 2 to 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1/2 cup tahini, any lumps mashed with a fork
- 1/2 to 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Dash of hot pepper sauce or cayenne
- A few tablespoons of water, as needed

Garnishes

- Paprika
- Chopped parsley and/or cilantro
- Lemon wedges

Cook the cauliflower by steaming or boiling until just tender; do not overcook. Drain and set aside.

Mix the garlic with the tahini, cumin and lemon juice. Season with salt, pepper and hot pepper sauce.

At this point the mixture is a dense thick paste. Add a little water, tablespoon by tablespoon, until the mixture is creamy, then mix with the cauliflower.

Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

At serving time, garnish with a sprinkle of paprika, chopped parsley/cilantro and/or lemon wedges.

Serves 4 to 6.

By *Marlena Spieler*, special to the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) October 4, 2000

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Aschera Rose Belly Dance & The Bellydance Superstars

Present Workshops with Sonia

Saturday September 30th Egyptian Style

Sunday October 1st Bellynesian Style

See www.ascherarose.com or 543-9762 for details

Plus don't miss the fabulous Bazaar with vendors from in & out of town.

Zarifah Dance Troupe Presents

"Sweet September Oasis" with special guest Sonia

September 30th

\$25 adults, \$10 for 12 & under.

Doors open at 7pm Show at 7:30pm

Includes fabulous desserts & coffee tea plus a cash bar will be available!

At The Exchange 2431 8th Ave. Limited seating buy early.



*Al Wasee Dancers & Sakinah Folkloric Troupe
Present An Evening of Dance*

Friday Sept. 29th, 7:30pm 2005

at The Exchange 2431 8th Avenue,

Includes appetizers! Cash bar available!

Tickets: \$7 adults \$5 children under 12

We are looking for performers!

This will be a fun laid back evening!

A chance to meet out of town dancers in town dancers,
show your stuff & a chance to just boogie to great tunes.

**Moroccan Sheikhatt Workshop
With Aschera Rose**

Oct. 21st 2:30pm – 4:30pm \$30

At the South Leisure Centre

170 Sunset Drive Regina, SK

FALL CLASSES

See website for Aschera's upcoming fall classes. Session one starts Sept 18th and Session 2 start Nov 4th. Flamenco Gypsy is full but the Tuesday night (yes new time slot!) Saidi style Sword/Cane is waiting for you. It is a fun choreography, bouncier than the usual sword choreography so can be used for either prop.

www.ascherarose.com



Zarifah Dance Troupe Presents

Around the Spice World in 80 Minutes

Sat. Nov. 25th, 2006 University of Regina

Zarifah Dance Troupe with The Bedouins of the Red Tent, Barbara Diaz, Jeanne & The Blue Lotus Dancers will present traditional & fusion dances.

For tickets & info 543-9762 or www.ascherarose.com

Tribal Belly Dance Workshop

With Linda & Carleen and guests Rosa Mirijello-Haynes, Barbara Diaz, and Jennifer Neudorf.

**November 18 & 19
Pasqua Neighbourhood Centre**

Join us for a day of dance and celebration. This year we'll explore Kathak and Flamenco dance (guest instructors Rosa Mirijello-Haynes and Barbara Diaz), two dance forms that are influential to Tribal Belly Dance. All levels of dance will be accommodated. \$55/Saturday, \$25/Sunday. For more information or to request a registration form contact:

Carleen: 757-2927.

Nuptial Blessings A Tribal Belly Dance Experience

In many cultures around the world, women gather to bless a bride to be. In North America we call it a "shower", in the Middle East it is a "sabaa". Join us as we gather to adorn our bride for her nuptials..

If you enjoyed the Tribal Epic last year, complete this year's tribal experience with a reawakening to this ancient dance and the celebration of the female spirit.

**Saturday, November 18
Two Shows! 7 & 9pm
Odd Fellows Hall, 2080 Rae St**

Advanced Tickets \$15

Available at:

**UFORIA Streetwear, 3024 13th Ave
\$20 at the door**

NEW PHOTOS AND ARTICLES ON THE AZURA WEBSITE!

<http://azura.sasktelwebsite.net/>



Beginner and Intermediate Class

Wednesdays 8-9 p.m.
September 20 – December 6, 2006
Glencairn Recreation Centre
\$75 for 12 sessions

This class will teach a pop choreography with camels, Saidi jumps, the jewel, and layering. Bring zills and a veil!

To register call Barbara Tomporowski (Azura) at 352-3368.

Belly Dance with Julie Geiger

Julie will take you through basic isolation techniques and help you love the body you're in.

**Begins Monday September 18,
2006
8 - 9 p.m.
Douglas Park School
\$50 / 10 sessions**

**To register contact Julie
at 924-5908.**

Jeanne

Available for private and semi-private lessons, workshops and performances.

For more info, call (306)585-6588, e-mail derosier@accesscomm.ca, or visit users.accesscomm.ca/derosier.

Customs of Middle Eastern Makeup and Decoration



The following is an excerpt from the website of Me'ira the JOYFUL DANCER

"The following handout was compiled for a workshop which I am participating in. You are free to copy and use it as you wish You can view Meira's website at joyfuldancer.home.comcast.net"

HENNA: Staining the nails, skin and hair with henna is the favorite way of enhancing beauty amongst women in the Middle East. It is used as both a hair treatment as well as a dye to make decorative designs on the skin. Henna cosmetics are made from the Egyptian evergreen plant, Lawsonia inermis, whose shoots and leaves yield an extract which is mixed with catechu, an astringent substance obtained from various trees and shrubs. Arabians crush dried berries from this plant to obtain a red powder.

Black henna (saumer) is reserved for the soles of the feet and hands while red henna is used for the tips of the fingers and toes. It involves the additional use of another paste made from powdered lime (nura) and powdered crystal amoniac (shanadah). The orange markings then turn black and then remain on the skin for about twenty or thirty days. Both red and black henna can commonly be purchased from international grocery stores.

The application of henna is a ritual which may take up to 6 hours. After all ingredients are mixed and designs applied the person shouldn't disturb painted areas for 6 hours or more, depending upon the richness of color and how long you want the design to stay on. This recipe was given by a Moroccan woman for henna application: (1) Purchase fresh red powder henna (Afshan or Sadaq brands boxed and wrapped. 2) one cup brewed black tea, allowed to sit overnight, 3) 1 tsp of fresh lemon juice from a lemon which sat in the sun 12 hours or more, 4) glass bowl, not ceramic, 5) mixing spoon, 6) Rose and Orange water to wash hands and feet before application. For application, the traditional N. African tool is a Mishwak pick, but you can also use cake decorators, stencils from craft shops (taped to body first). There may also be available for purchase henna pens from Pakistan.

KOHL: Kohl (khur, kuhl, kahal, or kohol) is a black substance used by the women of the Arabian Peninsula as eyeliner and eyeshadow. Apart from making the eyes look brighter and larger, kohl was once believed to have value as a protection against eye disease. Its blackness also controls the sun's glare in the desert, and thus it is used by both men and women of the desert. Kohl is powdered antimony, a brittle metallic elementary body of bright bluish-white colour and flaky crystalline texture. Artemis imports, a belly dance mail-order supply house, sells both light and darker grades of kohl of fine quality. It can also be found at middle eastern grocery stores, but beware of any powder which does not appear to be very finely and consistently ground. The "kohl" pencils used in modern makeup are a completely different item and should not be applied in the manner the powder is applied, next to the eye.

To apply kohl you need: 1) a small stick or large toothpick which has both ends rounded off. Place this in olive oil overnight so that it soaks into the wood. You may also use the olive oil to clean your stick after use. 2) a packet of kohl powder.

IMPORTANT: If you wear contact lenses you must apply kohl BEFORE inserting lenses. (Mandatory legal disclaimer: In my experience this has not damaged my gas-permeable contact lenses, however I accept no liability if somehow you feel that it has damaged yours.) To proceed with application: pick up stick in right hand to apply to right eye. Dip tip of stick into kohl powder. Hold stick parallel to eye, and starting at the inner point of the eye, run it between the eyelids ACTUALLY TOUCHING THE EYE. (It doesn't hurt, really.) Re-powder stick, pick up in left hand and repeat on the other side. You may also enhance your eyebrows, or draw points off the end of your eyes.

You will feel when it is in the correct location, and you will have your eyelids nicely black around the roots of the eyelashes with no white skin showing. Kohl is water-proof but not "spit-proof", which is a great attribute in hot climates. A tiny amount of powder will last you a couple of years, and it's much healthier for your eye than commercial cosmetics which you wouldn't dare put into your eye. Excess powder will gather at the corner of the eyes and you can remove it. It is much less artificial looking than painting a line outside the lids with commercial eyeliners; people will notice your eyes, but they won't be quite sure why.