

Town Hall
Seattle
Presents

GLOBAL

RHYTHMS

2023
2024

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Photo: Samadoss Maitoul

Town Hall Seattle, in association with SAMA: Seattle Sacred Music & Art, presents

Bab L'Bluz

September 28, 2023, 7:30pm in The Great
Hall Curated by Jon Kertzer



Bab L' Bluz

Yousra Mansour — lead vocals, awisha, guembri

Brice Bottin — guembri, guitar, backing vocals

Nazir Dahmani — drums, sampler, backing vocals

Mehdi Yachou — flute, percussion, backing vocals

Set List*

El Watane

Ila Mata

Glibi

El Gamra

Yemma

Ijabiyine

Africa Manayo

Waydelel

Gnawa Beat

**May vary from the order listed*

Media
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About Bab L' Bluz

Bab L' Bluz are reclaiming the blues for North Africa. The quartet was formed in 2018 with the intention of paying tribute to the Gnawa culture* with major inspiration from blues music. The band's name literally translates as "gateway to the blues" in Arabic. Co-founder Brice Bottin states that "We wanted to remember that the blues, so closely linked to America, stems from African music." He elaborates that "The African blues includes other pentatonic music: Mauritanian hassani, the Berber music found in Morocco's Atlas Mountains, the music of Mali, which is the true source of the blues, as well as the true source of Gnawa music."

Fronted by an African-Moroccan woman in a traditionally male role, the band is devoted to a revolution in attitude which dovetails with Morocco's 'nayda' youth movement — a new wave of artists and musicians taking their cues from local heritage, singing words of freedom in the Moroccan-Arabic dialect of darija. Ancient and current, funky and rhythmic, buoyed by Arabic lyrics, soaring vocals and bass-heavy grooves, the band's sound seems to pulse from the heart of the Maghreb.

The group's lead vocalist, Yousra Mansour, grew up in El Jadida, a fortified town on Morocco's Atlantic coast, and was exposed to a diverse range of musical styles, including those of Janis Joplin, Oumou Sangaré, and Erykah Badu. She also attended the annual Gnawa Festival in nearby Essawira where she fell in love with the trance grooves of Gnawa music. Young Yousra was raised by a strong, widowed mother, a science teacher who inspired her daughter to follow her dreams. Despite resistance at first, Yousra persisted in singing Gnawa-style music with friends and at home. However, she notes that injustice persists everywhere, with corruption, racism, and poverty, as well as notions of visas and borders, which continue to affect society. For this reason, Yousra and her bandmates believe that art can be used to open minds and change mentalities.

*Gnawa is a term used to define both a Moroccan music style and a Muslim religious brotherhood that invokes God and many prophets.

Donate To Earthquake Relief In Morocco

Earlier this month, a magnitude 6.8 earthquake shook an area of Morocco in the Atlas Mountains near Marrakech. At this time, over 3,000 lives have been lost. Many villages near the epicenter face total devastation and it is a struggle for aid to reach them. To meet the most immediate needs of the local population, Bab L' Bluz asks that donations be made to Delight Maroc, an event management group in Marrakech that is devoting resources like tents, trucks, and food to helping villages in need. Scan the QR code to donate.



UPCOMING GLOBAL RHYTHMS CONCERTS



The Klezmatics
12/7 at 7:30 PM
Hanukkah
Dance Party



Yungchen Lhamo
1/26 at 7:30 PM
Soul-Stirring
Tibetan Sounds



Justin Adams & Mauro
Durante with special guest
Ganesh Rajagopalan
3/1 at 7:30 PM
Global Grooves: Music from
North Africa, Italy, and India



The Campbell Brothers
5/4 at 7:30 PM
Sacred Steel Revival

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