

## UNESCO organises an evening of Syrian cultural heritage in Brussels, July 4



In the framework of the “Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Cultural Heritage” project, UNESCO is organising an evening to celebrate Syrian cultural heritage.

The “Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Cultural Heritage” project is a pioneering initiative funded by the European Union and supported by the Government of Flanders and the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs. The main objective of the project is to contribute to restoring social cohesion, stability, and sustainable development through the protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage in view of the on-going and growing destruction and loss of Syria's rich and unique cultural heritage.

The 2017 UNESCO survey report on “Intangible Cultural Heritage of Displaced Syrians” highlighted the power of intangible cultural heritage to provide a sense of belonging, strengthen psychological, social and economic resilience, and, in many cases, help mediate conflicts by fostering intercultural communication and mutual appreciation. However, more support is needed to ensure the continued transmission of intangible cultural heritage in the particular circumstances of displacement, which entails encountering a new context and host community.

Intangible cultural heritage is a central part of the identity and memory of an individual and a society. In order to safeguard this rich heritage, it is essential to foster its transmission from generation to generation and to maintain its every day role in society.

The aim of the event is to ensure that this cultural heritage is kept alive and celebrated by Syrians inside and outside the country.

The evening will open with the launch of the book 'Syrian Traditional Music' by Hassan Abbas. This will be followed by a concert with the Ensemble Fawaz Baker and the opening of the exhibition ‘Syrian Living Heritage’ by Houda Kassatly.



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**Event Information :**

Date: 4 July 2018

Time: 6.30pm

Place: Rotonde Bertouille, BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts  
Rue Baron Horta 11, 1000 Brussels

Free Entrance. Registration required at:

<https://www.bozar.be/en/activities/145031-syrian-living-heritage>

Due to limited spaces, we kindly ask participants to inform us if unable to attend at:

[brussels@unesco.org](mailto:brussels@unesco.org)

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**Event Programme:**

Registration and welcome:	6.30pm
Launch of the book 'Syrian Traditional Music' by Hassan Abbas	7.00pm
Concert by the Ensemble Fawaz Baker	7.15pm
Photo exhibition 'Syrian Living Heritage' by Houda Kassatly and Reception	8.00pm

**Launch of the book 'Syrian Traditional Music' by Hassan Abbas**

Hassan Abbas is a researcher in the field of culture. He holds a doctorate in literature from the new Sorbonne University. From the years 1992-2017, he worked as a professor and researcher at the French Institute for the Near East (IFPO) in Damascus and then in Beirut. He was responsible for the cultural department at the institute from 1992-2006 and then a professor at the Higher Institute of Dramatic Arts in Damascus. He is currently the Director of the "Culture as Resistance" program at the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship at the American University of Beirut. Hassan Abbas published many research papers in the fields of culture and citizenship and a number of books. He also co-founded many organizations working in culture, human rights and citizenship and he is the founder and president of the Syrian League for Citizenship.

**Concert with 'Ensemble Fawaz Baker'**

Fawaz Baker is a composer, Oud player and singer hailing from Aleppo, Syria and currently living in Paris, France. He performs with several ensembles in France and Europe, including his own bands. Baker began his career studying with masters of Arabic and Turkish music, before training at the Lyon School of Jazz, where he studied improvisation and its possible applications in traditional music. A former director of the Aleppo Conservatory, Baker continues to teach music and to share his knowledge of this priceless heritage with the next generation of musicians, whether in Europe or in



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the Middle East. Fawaz Baker never ceases to revisit the rich Middle Eastern heritage where Syriac, Arabic, Armenian, Kurdish and Turkish music have come together.

In this performance, he weaves together with his accomplices Samir Homsy and Khalil Jerro a refined musical journey. The audience will discover pieces that truly reflect the rich heritage of Syria and the Middle East.

### **Photo Exhibition ‘Syrian Living Heritage’ by Houda Kassatly**

Houda Kassatly, an ethnologist and photographer, has always been devoted to works touching the memory and the heritage of Lebanon and the Middle East. Ms. Kassatly is an associate researcher with the Interdisciplinary Unit of Research on Memory at the Saint-Joseph University and the University of Balamand. She has published numerous books and articles on the Arab world and has founded a publishing house called “Al Ayn”, specialising in the cultural, architectural and especially photographic heritage of the region. At a time when wars, conflicts and reconstructions are destroying architecture and other local heritage sites, this small artisanal publishing house tries to preserve heritage by image and text. Through its photos, the “Syrian Living Heritage” exhibition is an example of her outstanding work. This collection is for the first time hosted in Brussels at the Centre for Fine Arts, BOZAR.

### **Reception**

All participants are warmly invited to attend a reception which will follow after the event.

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### **Useful links**

Visit the event page at BOZAR, Centre for Fine Arts:

<https://www.bozar.be/en/activities/145031-syrian-living-heritage>

Consult the programme:

[http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Brussels/Final\\_04.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Brussels/Final_04.pdf)

Registration:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc8qiAggbjrDAue3kczrpTHDedgQyorqa5BLe9R5mhNZLxjnA/viewform>

Project “Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Cultural Heritage”:

<https://en.unesco.org/syrian-observatory/emergency-safeguarding-syrian-cultural-heritage-project>

For further information visit the UNESCO Brussels website:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/brussels>

Tweeter: @UNESCOEU



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