

management.harkan@gmail.com

www.harkantrio.com

+33 7 86 82 36 75

Ebrahim Ahmadi | Percussion

Nidhal Jaoua | Kanun

Maia Darmé | Harp

Trio

HARKAN



About Harkan

Harkan is a one-of-a-kind band formed by internationally-renowned French classical **harpist Maia Darmé**, Tunisian kanun virtuoso **Nidhal Jaoua**, and Iranian Kurd percussionist **Ebrahim Ahmadi** on the daf, bendir, dayereh and dahol.

Harkan's repertoire blends original contemporary compositions with immemorial **music from across the greater Mediterranean**. The trio brings **jazz flavors**, meticulously woven arrangements inspired by **classical music**, and new colors to traditional melodies from Turkey, North Africa, the Levant, Persia, Spain, Italy, Greece... Fiery dances follow soothing ballads as the rhythm builds up – the musicians' dazzling fingers running on an ocean of strings.

Already a household name in Maghreb, the trio is now taking its trademark sunny performance style north of the sea. Harkan has captivated audiences at numerous festivals and prestigious venues including Festival Vand'Jazz, Festival Ôrizons, Festival Les Lantonnales, Festival La Saison Bleue, the International Harp Festival of Dinan, the International Guitar Festival of Issoudun, Festival Noctuel, Festival of Guîtres, Festival of Hergla, the National Theatre of Ceuta, the French Institute of Tunisia, the National Centre for Arab and Mediterranean Music, the Abdelliya Palace, Casa Árabe in Madrid and Córdoba, the Archaeological Museum of Sousse, the House of Tunisia in Paris, the National Theatre of Caen, of Neuilly, of Epinac, of Blois, of Vendôme, as well as the International Kanun Symposium and the World Harp Congress.

« Seeing the European harp and Oriental qanun together is akin to watching two distant cousins realize they have so much to tell each other. Their voices, similar yet of a slightly distinct timbre, responding seamlessly to one another. Their story kindled by the beat of ancestral drums, echoing tales of faraway journeys, promises and horizons yet to come. »

Tunisia Tourism, 27/12/2018



How it all started

At the heart of the project lies the surprising encounter of the pedal harp and the kanun – both relatively little-known outside of their native cultural traditions – but above all that of two brilliant performers eager to redefine what their instruments can do and challenge the preconceptions surrounding them.

The story began in 2016, when the two musicians crossed paths backstage at the Tunis Theatre – one stepping onto the stage as the other came off. Both driven by curiosity for the other's musical universe, they decided to collaborate.

They spent the next two years researching folk and art music of the MENA region over the past five centuries, **creating arrangements** that play on the striking similarities between the harp and kanun's tones, collaborating with contemporary composers on new creations, and **developing new playing techniques** for both instruments to allow them to venture into foreign music cultures.

In the summer of 2018, they launched “Harkan” (حرّكان) – a contraction of “harp” and “kanun”, but also, in Classical Arabic, the adverb indicating movement. A fitting name for the awe-inspiring duo, whose hands seem to dance in perpetual motion.

The band later expanded into a trio with the addition in 2022 of Ebrahim Ahmadi, an Iranian Kurdish master of traditional frame drums. The result is a richly varied program, technically remarkable yet deeply expressive, and accessible to all audiences, from first-time listeners to seasoned connoisseurs. The versatility of the trio and their unusual instruments never ceases to amaze. Harkan is a moment out of time and away from reality



Harkan in the Press

« With Harkan, the Eastern qanun and the Western harp are in perfect harmony. They seem to converse, answering and enriching each other. The band has already performed more than ten concerts across Tunisia, each drawing huge crowds – whether at Ennejma Ezzahra, the Municipal Theatre, the Abdelliya Palace, the Agora, the Sousse Museum, or the Hergla Festival. » [Tunisie Direct, 19/02/2023](#)

« An exceptional concert! » [Le Républicain, 16/05/2022](#)

« Trio Harkan offered the audience a true escape, transporting the packed crowd far and wide. For an hour and a half, music lovers were carried away by this Mediterranean soundscape shaped by a wealth of influences. »
[Le Journal de Saône et Loire, 24/01/2023](#)

« This union of the harp and kanun is simply magical. » [La Dépêche du Bassin, 28/07/2022](#)

« Harkan received a standing ovation. Over 800 listeners came to applaud the trio, who delivered nearly two hours of a fantastic show. »
[Sud Ouest, 27/07/2022](#)

« From the very first notes, the audience was won over by the magnetic presence and seasoned artistry of these young virtuosos. A sheer moment of bliss! » [La Presse, 18/09/2018](#)

« With Harkan, Maia Darmé weaves a beautiful dialogue between cultures, where the European harp and the Eastern kanun blend genres and respond to one another in perfect harmony. A band that people will be talking about for a long time to come. » [L'instant M, 11/03/2020](#)

« Absolutely stunning... A musical project unlike any other in the world. Ambitious and visionary young artists overflowing with talent. » [Le Quotidien, 20/12/2018](#)

« World-class musicians performing an eclectic repertoire on an unprecedented combination of striking instruments. » [La Dépêche du Bassin, 22/07/2021](#)

« Harkan carried the audience away in wonder. An exceptional evening, where the mesmerizing dance of fingers on the strings cast its spell. » [Tunisia Tourism, 27/12/ 2018](#)

« A palpable connection between the artists, who successfully bridged two utterly different musical worlds. Listening to the kanun and the harp becomes a game of hide-and-seek – a riddle to unravel. Harkan's future shines bright. » [Musicien.tn, 13/09/2018](#)

« The camera struggles to keep up with the virtuosic dance of fingers across the strings. » [Tunivisions, 13/08/2018](#)

« A richly flavoured musical journey, marked by subtlety, stage charisma, technical mastery, sensitivity, and, above all, the spellbinding fusion of the harp and kanun. The notes of each instrument seem to embrace those of the other, savoring, for the length of a piece, a taste of its culture. » [La Presse, 03/08/2018](#)



Maia Darmé

On the pedal harp and artistic direction,

Maia Darmé is a French soloist of international renown, hailed as an ambassador for her instrument. Recognized for her commanding on-stage presence and expressive playing, she has been invited to headline concerts in over 30 countries spanning all continents. As a classical soloist, she has performed with numerous national orchestras – including in Morocco, Tunisia, Ukraine, Colombia, the Caribbean, and Malaysia – and on some of the world's most prestigious stages, such as the Berliner Philharmonie, the Golden Hall in Vienna, and the Great Festival House of Salzburg.



Winner of the First Prize by unanimous decision at the UFAM International Competition and laureate of the Arts Initiative Prize from the Gatsby Foundation, Maia works closely with contemporary composers, premiering works dedicated to her. An eclectic musician, she is equally at ease playing historical, traditional and electric harps. She regularly experiments with a variety of musical genres and she pursues the most unexpected artistic projects, appearing on stage with her harp in six theatrical productions, collaborating with dance companies, and joining ensembles spanning rock, hip-hop, jazz, reggae, and experimental electronic music. She is also a prolific arranger, whose scores are published by Profs Edition and SMP Press.

She playing the Celtic harp in Brittany at the age of six, before continuing her studies in classical harp at the conservatories of Épinal, Bordeaux, and Paris. She went on to learn under the guidance of some of the world's most acclaimed harpists. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Harp Performance at the Australian National University under Alice Giles and toured Down Under with the much-loved Seven Harp Ensemble (SHE). She then pursued a Master's in Composition at Columbia University, New York, exploring electroacoustic music at the legendary Computer Music Center. She completed her education with a Master's in Jazz Harp at the Milan Conservatory under Park Stickney. Additionally, she holds a Master's degree in International Affairs from Sciences Po Paris.

Nidhal Jaoua

On the kanun, Nidhal Jaoua is a Tunisian virtuoso known for his versatility and for expanding the expressive possibilities of his instrument through eclectic and innovative musical fusions. He has shared the stage with numerous renowned singers – including Georges Wassouf, Ramy Ayach, Wael Jassar, Haydar Hamdi, Ghalia Ben Ali, Naï Barghouti, and Omar Rahbani – and has been touring internationally since 2009.

For five years, he appeared live as a resident musician on several Tunisian television shows. A co-founder of the group Jazz Oil, Nidhal is also active as a soloist and composer in several fusion projects (Nawather, Bab El West, Le Lanceur de dés, among others), continuing to perform across a wide range of styles – from oriental music to jazz, funk, Latin, and reggae.



He began his musical training at the National Conservatory of Tunis, where he earned his diplomas in Arabic music and kanun with distinction. He later refined his art through masterclasses with leading Turkish masters of the instrument such as Halil Karaduman and Göksel Baktagir, before studying jazz at the Higher Institute of Music of Tunis under Fawzi Chekili. In 2010, after completing a master's degree in musicology, he decided to relocate to France. Nidhal joined the Harkan adventure in 2025.

Ebrahim Ahmadi

On percussion, Ebrahim Ahmadi is a Kurdish-Iranian musician who plays the daf, dayereh, dahol and bendir (traditional frame and bass drums), as well as the setar (a three-stringed lute). Born in Iran's Kermanshah province during the Iran-Iraq war, Ebrahim grew up immersed in the sound of Sufi music echoing through the Kurdish mountains, where he began his formal training on the daf and setar with masters Jawad Aziz and Hosseyn Rostami.

He later moved to Tehran to study psychology while refining his daf technique under the guidance of master Farshid Gharibnejad. There, he joined several musical ensembles – 40Daf, Tarang, and Mehrvarzan – with whom he toured in India, Azerbaijan, Iraqi Kurdistan, the United Arab Emirates, and France.

Ebrahim went on to complete two doctoral theses: the first on the history of music therapy in the Middle East, and the second on the effects of traditional Iranian music on anxiety and depression. He practiced as a psychologist in Tehran for several years, juggling between his work, teaching music therapy at the university, and pursuing his musical career.

Forced to flee Iran, he settled in France in 2016. Today, he continues to share his art through the cultural organization Jamira, performs with the band Miksi, and leads daf workshops in Bègles and Blanquefort. He became part of Harkan in 2022, turning the original duo into a fully-fledged trio.



Contact Us:

Booking / Press: Céline Demange

Email: management.harkan@gmail.com

Website: www.harkantrio.com

Phone: +33 7 86 82 36 75

Instagram: [@harkantrio](https://www.instagram.com/harkantrio)

