**Quotes**

“The newly formed Al Qahwa Ensemble has already established itself as a champion of harmony and understanding. With conflict in the Middle East and as Syria continues to face unimaginable loss and destruction, the Al Qahwa Ensemble breathes life into the artistic traditions from these regions and gives audiences a new appreciation for them.”

**Dorian Cox**
Canadian Opera Company – Program Manager, Free Concert Series

 “…the most stunning musical moment of the evening, the superb Tollar singing, a capella, *Afdihi in Hafidhal Hawa Ow Diy’a*, a solo that transcended cultural barriers, a passionate, soulful, heart-rending bit of intense emotion that reached every person in Koerner Hall, Eastern, Western, whatever.”

**Robert Harris**
The Globe and Mail

 “It was uplifting, emotive and deeply spiritual whilst keeping a playful musical atmosphere. Having him play with our local musicians in Toronto was an honour to witness.”

**Alex Bordokas**
Small World Music Centre

“From exciting to sensual and soulful, the musicians of Al Qahwah - Maryem Tollar, Ernie Tollar, Demetri Petsalakis and Naghmeh Farahmand - never fail to thrill. Every performance is a joy.

If the songs they play with such artistry and skill are new to you, the music will touch you with its heart and beauty. And if you are familiar with the music, it will instantly transport you to all the places you love."

**Carol Kirsh**Curator - World of Music Concerts at Michael Garron Hospital

 “Members of Trio Arabica [3 of the members of Al Qahwa] showed their virtuosity throughout, but especially in a series of solos and duets that featured them in the second half of the show. Demetri Petsalakis displayed the range of the oud, a plucked string instrument. Vocalist Maryem Tollar sang a florid and melismatic solo; and then Naghmeh Farahmand did a mesmerizing improvisation on that "moon drum," the seemingly simple daf, which is both struck and shaken to produce an astonishing range of effects. All were met with enthusiastic applause.”

 **Laura Niles**violinist.com - News & Advice - Reviews