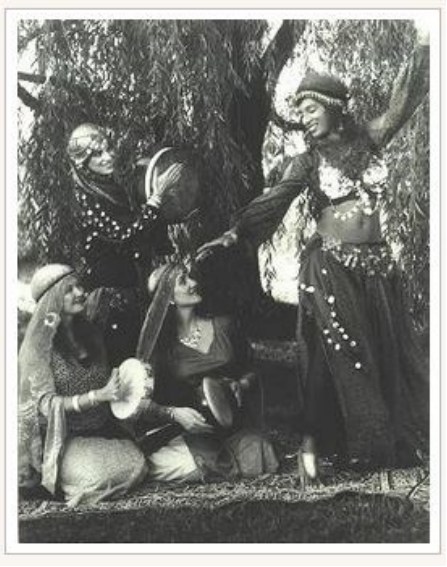

The Habibi Dancers
2026 ANNUAL CONCERT
PRESENT
METAMORPHOSIS
FEATURING
Devin Alfather



Habibi Dancers, Lansing's premiere Middle Eastern Dance Troupe, are a frequently requested performance troupe at many ethnic and outdoor festivals throughout Michigan and the Midwest. This troupe is a nonprofit organization formed in 1983 by former members of the Lansing Community College Middle Eastern Dance Troupe.

For more information visit: habibidancers.org

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Metamorphosis

April 11, 2026

Hannah Community Center

East Lansing, MI

Habibi Dancers

Featuring

Devin Alfather

With Special Guests:

Desert Spice of Sanura

Nar's Navel Academy

Kat from Kalamazoo

Khazna Khalil

Kindred Sisters

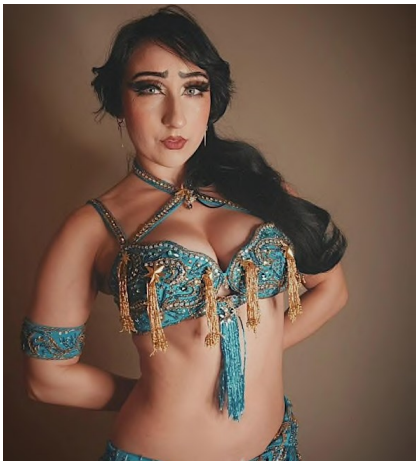
Sabrina Bint al Waha

7 Moons Bellydance

Troy Clarke

Rak Stars

Banat Habibi



Devin Alfather

Devin Alfather is a multidisciplinary dancer currently specializing in Theatrical Fusion Raqs Sharqi, Theatrical Circus Arts, and other contemporary Fusion dances. This notorious noodler is a multi-award winning dancer and choreographer, and is a continuous student of first person sources. She can't wait to share her brand of strange and unusual works with the world.

7 Moons Belly Dance of Macomb, Michigan promotes understanding and appreciation of Middle Eastern music and dance by preserving and sharing this rich cultural art through educational activities and programs including classes and performances.

Desert Spice, founded by Sanura Nar, continues her legacy with dynamic choreography and joyful dance. We honor her memories by blending dance styles and sharing our passion .

Kat from Kalamazoo is proud to be the first certified Datura Style Instructor in Michigan! She’s been dancing since 2009, and with Boheme Belly Dance since 2016. She also makes and sells wooden zils! Learn more at katfromkalamazoo.com.

Kindred Sisters is grounded in the love of Belly Dance and Sisterhood their goal is to promote body positivity, confidence, and self love. We are a collection of woman from

all walks of life. We include all levels of dancers and embrace different styles of dance to create choreographies to a wide range of music.

Sabrina Bint al Waha. Sabrina's eclectic career as a performer has given her a variety of unusual opportunities and a mélange of unique skills. She first learned the basics of this performance in 2004 while performing as a member of the Sisters of Salome in New Orleans, Louisiana. Since then, through research, practice and questionable life choices she has molded this skill into an act truly unlike any other. 22 years and many incarnations later, She can be found most weekends performing a version of this number as Sabrina the Siren, first mate of the Knotty Bits Pirate Circus.

Rak Stars: Baraka, Farouz Naseem, Nashwa, Najwa el Qamar, Stephanie

Banat Habibi: The student troupe of Yasmina Amal: Lori Friedlis, Cherie Morehouse & the Rak Stars



Habibi Dancers performing a Saudi Khaliji Dance, 1987

Habibi Dancers



Photographer: Maggie Pennell, 2022.

Garnett (Yasmina Amal) is a classically trained dancer whose repertoire ranges from ballet and modern to jazz and beyond. She is the artistic director of Michigan's "premier oriental dance troupe," The Habibi Dancers. Garnett teaches a variety of dance classes through the City of Lansing Parks and Recreation program at Foster Community Center and at In Step Dance Studio, in Potterville.

Arlyn (Mahtaab) has been dancing with the troupe since last century and hopes to continue choreographing, dancing, and enjoying the sisterhood of enthusiasts for years to come.

Anne (Nyla) began dancing as one of Garnett's students in at some point in the 1900s and is very proud of sill being vertical. She truly enjoys dancing along side her daughter and great friends in the Habibis. Anne's other habits include crochet, reality tv, death metal, gardening, cooking, whiskey swilling, atrocious karaoke singing, hoarding costume supplies, and cuddling with her elderly cat.

Sally (Sara) took a bellydance class because “all her friends were doing it” and couldn’t stop.

Melissa (Amirah) possesses a background in ballet, modern, and jazz dance. Her interest in bellydance was piqued when artistic director Garnett (Yasmina Amal) invited her to participate during another production, The Mudges Follies, in which they were both involved. Although initially hesitant to audition for the troupe, Melissa ultimately joined at Garnett's encouragement in 2001. Since then, she has found the experience to be highly rewarding, forming strong relationships within the troupe and greatly valuing both the art form and the community it fosters.

Marie (Najma) has been a troupe member since 2004. She holds a B.S. of Psychology from MSU and works for the State of Michigan. She cherishes the sisterhood she has with her fellow Habibi’s as evidenced in her stage name. The name Najma means star, in a group of stars. Which is how she feels when performing with the troupe, surrounded by the other stars.

Lauren (Zarina) began studying dance at the age of 3, starting with ballet, tap, and jazz. She took her first belly dance class with Yasmina Amal in 2000 and has been hooked ever since. From 2006-2012 Zarina taught belly dancing in Alpena before relocating back to the Lansing area. Zarina writes, sews, knits, draws, and paints at the small farm she shares with her husband Troy and their pets in Haslett.

Molly (Najida) has been dancing with the Habibis for over 22 years now. In all of life’s changes, dancing with her sisters is a constant. When not shimmying, Molly is a massage therapist and a devoted mother, partner, and nature lover. Thank you to her friends and family for all the support given to allow Molly her dance dreams.

Janelle (Sabeehah) began dancing with Garnett in 2001 joining the Habibi Dancers in 2005. Whatever makes you happy…do that.

Winona (Zurha) is celebrating her 20th year as a member of the Habibi Dancers. She enjoys the camaraderie and sisterly bond of the troupe on and off the dance floor. When not dancing, she loves spending quality time with her family, sewing/crafting, and roller skating.

Jessica (Marayam) is a dancer and bookworm. She tries to live up to Voltaire's quote, "Let us read and let us dance—these two amusements will never do any harm to the world."

Lisa (Nismah) joined the Habibis in 2007. While her dance background consists of jazz and modern, she was introduced to and fell in love with belly dancing when living in Atlanta, GA in 2005. Outside of dance, Lisa is the director of the American College Application Campaign and the mother of three young boys. When not working, mothering, or dancing, you can find Lisa at a concert manifesting an *NSYNC reunion.

Rachael (Rahil) has been with the Habibi dancers since 2011 and prior to that has studied an array of dance styles. She loves time in nature, good books and strong coffee.

Melissa (Azmara Amunet) began taking bellydance classes in 2009 and joined the troupe in 2012. Melissa has a career in the mental health field and has also taught beginner level bellydance classes in the Owosso area off and on throughout the years. Melissa is passionate about trauma education and awareness and also enjoys exploring the outdoors, traveling, kayaking, art & oddities, upcycling, music, spending time with family, and gently pushing herself outside of her comfort zone.

Carrie (Cara) joined the Habibi dancers in 2015, and loves the sisterhood of this wonderful group of women. Outside of dance, Carrie enjoys gardening, reading, quilting, staying active and constantly learning new things and living life as a crazy cat lady.

Melanie (Amber) took her first belly dance class in 2011 and became hooked. She is looking forward to many more years of dancing, laughing and learning.

Isabel (Radhia) has had the pleasure of dancing with the Habibis since 2022. In addition to dance, she enjoys time with family, antiques, history, and playing around with machinery.

Ashley (Soraya) started her dance journey with Irish, hip hop and ballroom dance styles before beginning belly dance in 2018. She quickly fell in love and joined the Habibi Dancers in 2023. She is passionate about animal rescue and dedicates her free time to saving cats and immersing herself in fantasy novels.

Makena (Isra) joined the Habibi Dancers in September 2024. She began taking classes to follow in her mom's (Nyla) footsteps who has been with the troupe since before she was born. Makena is currently a student at MSU pursuing a bachelors in Environmental Geoscience. Her other sources of dopamine include: cats, coffee, playing the drums, and attending local music and theater events.

LeighAnna (Lilia) started belly dancing in 2019 as a student with Yasmina Amal and joined the Habibi Dancers in 2024. When not dancing, she works in affordable housing and enjoys gardening, baking, and playing with her needy dog. She loves the rhythm and lyricism of Middle Eastern music and dance and is proud to be sharing the stage with so many talented performers.

Sarah (Karima) fell in love with belly dancing when she took her first class with Yasmina Amal and joined the Habibi Dancers in 2024. Outside of dance, she works as an engineer, enjoys making new things, and explores other kinds of dance and music.

Metamorphosis

At the request of this evening's performers:

No flash photography or videorecording

Act I

Carnival Dolls ~ Habibi Dancers

Doll storage at the Carnival.

Choreography: Yasmina Amal

Music: Kitten Pig by Pentaphobe and Milieu by Beats Antique

Ali Baba ~ Banat Habibi & the Rak Stars

Algerian, Egyptian, and Saidi Styles.

Choreography: Yasmina Amal

Music: Ali Baba by Reda Darwish

Soundclash ~ Kat from Kalamazoo

Tonight's piece is a Datura Style Improvisation.

Music: Soundclash by Flosstradamus & Troyboi

The Sun Dance ~ 7 Moons Belly Dance

Inspired by the warmth, strength, and radiant energy of the sun.

Music: Raqs Li Shams by Helm

Runaway ~ Kindred Sisters

Kindred Sisters' goal is to promote body positivity,

confidence, and self-love.

Music: Runaway by Beats Antique

“X” Marks the Spot ~ Yasmina Amal

Music: Duel by Bond

Journey Back in Time ~ Desert Spice of Sanura Nar’s Navel Academy

Take a journey back in time with Desert Spice.

Music: Remember the Time by Michael Jackson

Scars ~ Habibi Dancers

An empowering song about self-love.

Choreography: Soraya Music: Scars by Alessia Cara

Mish Asfeh (I’m Not Sorry) ~ Habibi Dancers

It’s not about blame, but about stepping away and new beginnings.

Choreography: Maryam Music: Mish Asfeh by Zeyne

Act II

Cakkidi ~ Habibi Dancers

Turkish / Jazz Fusion.

Choreography: Yasmina Amal Music: Çakkidi by Kenan Doğulu

Techno Habibi ~ Habibi Dancers

A fun combination of modern club sound with traditional Middle Eastern music.

Choreography: Mahtaab

Music: Habibi by Timor Jana, Afronom & Asln

Heavy Metal Bellydance ~ Rak Stars

Hard Rock meets Chiftetelli.

Choreography: Yasmina Amal

Music: Heavy Metal Bellydance by Suhaila Salimpour

O' Mama ~ Kindred Sisters

Grounded in the love of Belly Dance

Music: O' Mama by Dikanda

Tango de Verre ~ Sabrina Bint al Waha

"The greatest thing you'll ever learn is just to love
and be loved in return." Eden Ahbez

Music: Tango de Roxanne by OctOver

Buttons ~ Desert Spice of Sanura Nar's Navel Academy

Enjoy this fun, high energy dance set to
hip-hop, pop, and R&B rhythms.

Music: Buttons and Tasemat by Pussycat Dolls and Homous

Beraha Ya Sheekha ~ Khazna Khalil

If I had 2 words to describe myself, energetic and creative.

Music: Beraha Ya Sheekha by Bahha Sultan

"Half" Cane Dance ~ Habibi Dancers

Dancers politely share a cane, Or NOT!!

Choreography Yasmina Amal

Music: An Eznek ya Ma'alem by Rola Saad

Jazz-n-Darbuka ~ Habibi Dancers

A fusion of Middle Eastern percussion with the melodic and harmonic structures of jazz.

Choreography: Rahill & Najma

Music: Jazz-n-Darbuka by Artem Uzunov

Shrine ~ Devin Alfather

A new, playful work created just for The Habibi Dancers

Music: Shrine by Beats Antique, Drum Solo 1 by Gamaal Goma

There's still time to take a class with Devin Alfather!

Our annual spring show is always accompanied by a full weekend of fabulous workshops from accomplished professional performers and instructors.

Our weekend concludes with one more workshop. *Snake Eyed* incorporates multiple styles of Raqs Sharqi, Fusion Bellydance, waving, and contemporary dance. Undulating layers atop fancy footwork with unexpected, atypical and complex pathways.

The class runs from 1-4 pm here at the Hannah Center on Sunday. Space is still available. Registration will open at 12:30 pm for $95.

On-Stage Visuals

Master of Ceremonies..... George Kepler
Director..... Garnett Kepler
Lighting Design..... Zoe Thomsen
Stage Hands.....S. King, L. Docktor, L. Schmunsler, R. Rodgers
Curtain..... C. Heintzelmann
Costumer..... A. King, M. Rogers
Sets.....A. King, M. Peterson, R. Rogers
Workshop Director..... M. Rogers, A. King
Program..... Jessica Trotter
Graphic Design.....August Ayala Jr.
Public Relations/Marketing.....Rachael Brunger
Ushers..... M. Siedelburg, E. Poole, R. Clegg,
J. Austgen, R. Sandusky, S. Wilson, T. Clarke
Photography.....Jason Trotter
Videography.....Kat from Kalamazoo





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