

Laura Maria De Gaspari is a dancer, teacher and choreographer. During the years 1990/1992 she worked with **Suraya Hilal's** dance company composed of 9 Arabic musicians and the dancers Anne Ashcroft and Lita Petrou. The dance company founded by Hilal pioneered Egyptian dance and music on the concert stage for the first time in Europe. During 1992 to 1994 she travelled to the Middle East researching the costumes and culture of the rituals, which expressed the inner spiritual power of this dance. From 1994 to 1997 she lived in a Catholic contemplative congregation where dance was part of the liturgy. After leaving the congregation, she taught Egyptian dance in Brussels for the **Al Andalous, Academy for World Dance and Music, founded by Moroccan singer Moustapha Largo** . She currently teaches Egyptian dance **in the Netherlands (Laktheather)** and collaborates with a smaller ensemble of musicians.

Select Performances

1990/91 *Divine Rites* [Sadlers' Wells, London](#), Opera House Oxford

1991/92 *Colours of Cairo*, touring in England, Denmark and The Netherlands performed in [Rasa Wereldculturencentrum](#) in Utrecht and [Tropeninstituut](#) in Amsterdam.

2000 A live performance with the musical Ensemble of the Centre Cultureel Arabe from Brussels in Pangaea, Leuven

2001 *An evening of Arabic and Indian dance*, with Antonia Volonia. Cultureel Centrum Leuven, with the musical ensemble of **Mousta Largo**.

2002 An evening with joint performances: Egyptian dance with the musical ensemble of Mousta Largo and Flamenco dance with **Marissol Valderrama** Maison du Peuple St Gilles, Brussels

2003 An evening of Arabic dance and music with Anya Vedant, the ensemble of **Mousta Largo** and Belgian-Tunisian singer **Samia Bengali**

2004 *Mystieke Dansen uit Egypte*, a solo performance with the musicians of the Layali El Sharq ensemble produced by [Cultuur Centrum Leuven](#), [Stuk](#) , [Leuven Universiteit](#).

2005 guest teacher for **Belgian choreographer Thierry Smit** for his production *D'Orient*, which blends oriental movement with contemporary dance

2006 *Bint El Balad* , St Jackson, Lane , London, a live Baladi performance with the "Baladi Blues Ensemble" a production of Raqs Wa Musiqua (**Guy Shalom** and Sarah Kahan), London.

2007 *Baladi Rhythms*, performance with **Ibrahim el Minyawy**, Petit Port, Leiden, NL.

2007 Performance at the Festival Van Oriëntaalse Danskunst, Leiden, NL with Dorit Ashra

2009 Performance with **Haytham Safia** and Osaama Mileegi at the Gallery Petit Port in Leiden, NL

2011 Performance with **Sattar Al Saadi** at Gallery Petit Port.

Workshops with live music

2002-4 A series of workshops with the musicians of Mousta Largo, Brussels

2007 Workshop with Ibrahim el Minyawy, Petit Port, Leiden, NL.

2009 Egyptian Dance with Live Music with Haytham Safia and Osaama Mileegi, Laktheather in Leiden.

2011 Workshop with Sattar Al Saadi, Laktheather , Leiden.

Additional interests

2008/9 1st Year Teacher Training Course Style Yvengar (Amsterdam).

2010/11 Member of Kamer Koor Cappella Stella Maris.

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Musicians short Biography

Ibrahim el Minyway (Master Tablah player) is ranked among the most demanded Arab percussionists and performs regularly for cultural centres in Europe: his son Ali performs with **Natasha Atlas**.

Gamal Al Kordy (Accordeonist player) was accordeonist for the **great artist Farid El Atrach** . **Emile Bassily** played for **legendary Om kelthoum**.

Haytham Safia has played with Holland Synphony Orchestra and performs regularly in the Netherlands. He was invited at the prestigious [Prinsengrachtfestival](#), [Vredeburg](#), [Het Concertgebouw](#), [Het tropeninstituut](#).

Osaama Mileegi (Master Tablah player) performs in the Hatham Safia's ensemble, notably the quartet No Blues.

Sattar Al Saadi (Irak/Netherlands) musician for the Iraqi Maqam Ensemble, Utrecht, with the **internationally known** Iraki singer Farida en Mohammed Ali, descendends of **legendary** musician **Munir Bashir**.