

## 'Ud to Palestine

"Then, of course, I was becoming a man," said Palestinian musician **Issa Boulos**, recounting a teenage romance. "So I needed to start talking politics—because that's what Palestinian men do." The approach, said Boulos, director of the University's **Middle East Music Ensemble**, failed to win over the young woman, but it did inspire a song, which he played at Thursday's Noontime Concert Series in Fulton Recital Hall. Titled "Being Peace: A Palestinian Memoir," the 45-minute program included five compositions by Boulos, all strummed on an 'ud (or "oud"), a pear-shaped traditional Middle Eastern stringed instrument. As he played, colorful abstract paintings and black-and-white photographs of Palestinian children flashed across a large projector screen.



Seated on the dimly lit stage, Boulos shared stories of his life in the Middle East, including two years in the mountains being "hunted by the Israelis"; his arrest; and time in prison. "How can you maintain peace in the absence of justice?" he asked the audience of 50 before launching into a melancholy melody. Boulos capped off the concert with a brief instrumental, joking it would help "calm you down—to calm myself actually."

B.E.O.

*Photos: Issa Boulos plays the 'ud at Fulton Recital Hall (top); Photos and paintings flashed on the screen (bottom).*

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