

CD TRAY

—Mel Minter

*Under the Rose*, then, offers a deeply satisfying experience for the listener, the knowledge that each of us can make a difference, and the hope that we can all live in a world free from fear and violence and overflowing with compassion.

But it does more, as well. All net proceeds from this CD will be donated by UR Music to Direct Aid Iraq ([www.directaidiraq.org](http://www.directaidiraq.org)) in support of its heroic efforts to restore hope for the tens of thousands of Iraqi children whose lives have been devastated by violence, whether through the loss of home or family or through injury and disability.

This collection of 10 tracks—all collaboratively composed by the four players—offers a deep-soothing balm for the listener. From the most energetic to the most profoundly contemplative, each track takes the ears on a short, refreshing journey that reaffirms music's magical powers and the virtuosity of these splendid musicians.

Aby assisted by Jon Gagan (bass, keyboard), who also produced the CD, finding just the right textures and contexts to illuminate this unique pairing, and Barrett Martin (percussion), these two musical masters bring a fresh perspective to flamenco that echoes its distant past while perhaps anticipating its future. Whether playing in call and response (*The Coin*), weaving two lines together in a rhythmic dance (*A Storm Approaches*), experimenting with electronic embellishments (*Return to Andalusia*), or hewing closer to tradition (*Under the Rose*)—Alhaj and Liebert display a rare musical *simplicitas* that bridges cultures and genres.

The deep and soulful sound of Spanish flamenco is rooted in a unique series of historical events and cultural overlaps that stretch across centuries, reaching from India to the New World—none more important than the Moorish conquest of the Iberian Peninsula in the eighth century.

Early in the Moorish reign, an illustrious Iraqi oud player, Ziryab, fled Baghdad in fear for his life, as the story goes, and migrated to Córdoba, a cultural center of Al-Andalus (Andalusia). He brought with him a profound musical heritage and a host of innovations that laid the foundation for Spanish music. Among many other things, he initiated an evolutionary process that led to the development of the modern flamenco guitar.

The circle has come round again, and another illustrious Iraqi oud player, Rahim Alhaj, has fled political tyranny in Baghdad, carrying with him an ancient musical heritage and a head full of innovative ideas. Among those ideas is his determination to engage players across a wide range of musical genres to explore the common language of music, which reflects our common humanity.

On *Under the Rose*, Alhaj combines with the world-renowned guitarist Ottmar Liebert to unite the ancestral Iraqi tradition with modern flamenco, celebrating and exploring the family connections. Liebert, who has incorporated his own innovative ideas into the vocabulary of flamenco—bringing electric bass, synthesizer, electronics, drum kit, and more into the mix—proves a compelling musical foil to the ancient sound of the oud and Alhaj's contemporary approach to the instrument.

rahim alhaj • ottmar liebert  
jon gagan • barrett martin

under the rose

All music written by  
Rahim Alhaj, Ottmar Liebert,  
Jon Gagan and Barrett Martin

Published by  
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Rahim Alhaj Music/BMI  
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and administered by  
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Recorded and mixed at  
The Electric Company  
in Santa Fe by Jon Gagan

Produced by Jon Gagan  
Painting by Rafa Nasiri/[rafnasiri.com](http://rafnasiri.com)  
Design by Michael Motley

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Rahim Alhaj plays  
a Farhan Hassn oud.  
Oud tuning from treble  
to bass: F,C,G,D,C,F

Oud virtuoso Rahim Alhaj and world-renowned guitarist Ottmar Liebert, with Jon Gagan and Barrett Martin, unite ancestral Iraqi traditions with modern flamenco, celebrating and exploring musical family connections, combining the innovative with the ancient on ten stunning original compositions. Proceeds from the sale of the album will benefit Direct Aid Iraq and their work with Iraqi children.

**RAHIM ALHAJ** Oud + Voice

**OTTMAR LIEBERT** Guitar

**JON GAGAN** Electric Bass Guitar + Synthesizer

**BARRETT MARTIN** Drumkit + Percussion

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| The Seduction          | 04 |
| Do You Know I Love You | 05 |
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| Chasing You            | 07 |
| A Storm Approaches     | 08 |
| Return to Andalusia    | 09 |
| Spirit of Saladin      | 10 |



THIRTY TIGERS

[www.rahimalhaj.com](http://www.rahimalhaj.com)

under the rose

rahim alhaj • ottmar liebert • jon gagan • barrett martin



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