

Get to Know Guides

Sahra Halgan - Barzakh Festival 2023



Discover new global sounds as powerful tradition-bearers and genre-shattering musicians converge over two evenings that blend cultures, styles, and genres. [Barzakh Festival](#) draws inspiration from the idea to create a meeting place of musical streams that crosses diverse cultures. Global-minded musicians reflecting varied influences and identities, bring the contemporary and the traditional together in a boundary-shattering lineup filled with musical revelations.

Get to Know... [SAHRA HALGAN](#)

[Sahra Halgan](#) is a singer, songwriter, and record producer from Somaliland. When started singing at 13 years old, she faced backlash because performing on stage was not accepted in her community. When the Somali war broke out in the late 1970s, and ultimately led to a bombing focused in Somaliland in 1988, Halgan (a 16-year-old at the time) worked as a nurse for the Somali National Movement. Soon, she relocated to Lyon, France as a refugee. There, she released two albums in response to the war, focusing them on themes of love and gratitude. In 2015, she returned to Somaliland and founded a cultural center devoted to music and poetry.



WHAT IS PSYCHEDELIC ROCK?

Psychedelic rock is inspired and influenced by psychedelic culture, which uses electronic sound effects and hypnotic visuals to create a hallucinogenic feeling. Although the genre was originally centered around the [United States "hippie" movement](#), it has spread across the globe. Now, Sahra Halgan combines psychedelic rock with traditions from Somaliland to create a cross-temporal sound.

Artist Inspiration

Sahra Halgan draws much of her inspiration from topics such as love, gratitude, and the rebuilding and sustaining of her nation after the war. Through using psychedelic rock-inspired techniques, she allows listeners to imagine a future world where their personal and national problems can be addressed through love and gratitude.



ACTIVITY

Write a song!

Sahra Halgan draws a lot of her inspiration from the Somali war, as it was happening during her adolescent years and came to define her music career in many ways.

Try to think of a similar event in your country. It could be a war, a political contest, a natural disaster, etc.

Use the struggles and challenges that these events brought to you (either on a personal or a group level) to create a piece of music (or other work of art) of your choice.

Consider drawing inspiration from psychedelic rock or other genres that might help you tell your story.

Learn More



FURTHER VIEWING

[Sahra Halgan live at Expo 2020 Dubai](#)

[Sahra Halgan - Discography](#)

[Sahra Halgan ft. Joss Stone - Somaliland](#)

[SAHRA HALGAN TRIO - Sukiyaki Tokyo 2016 Archive](#)

[Sahra Halgan's Mission to Revive Music and Art in Somaliland](#)



FURTHER READINGS

[The Summer of Love and Protest: Transatlantic Counterculture in the 1960](#)

[Politics & Popular Music: Youth, Authority, & Popular Music in East Africa](#)

[The Ethiopia-Somalia War of 1977 Revisited](#)

[Music and Metre in Somali Poetry](#)

[Music in War, Music for Peace: A Review Article](#)

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