

AL-QASAR

In the 1970s, Middle Eastern psychedelic pop emerged out of the lower depths of Beirut, Tehran, Istanbul... Guitars and fuzz pedals encountered the oud, Made-in-USA Ludwig drum kits shredded along to the darbuka. Hookah aromas mixed with booze and cigarette smoke. The local music scenes merged Eastern and Western influences, giving birth to a unique Oriental garage rock sound.

Intent on paying tribute to that era, French producer Thomas Bellier launched AL-QASAR in Los Angeles in 2018 by fusing an old school psychedelic garage sound - reminiscent of Ty Segall, King Gizzard or The Black Angels as much as of 1970s hard rock - with traditional instruments of the Arab world. The lyrics in literary Arabic speak of power, chaos, addiction, but also of liberty, dreams and passion. AL-QASAR's first gig abroad - in front of 6,000 people in the heart of Islamic Cairo - was a hard rock symbiosis with the Egyptian youth, who were deeply touched by the band's Arabic psych pop gems.

On stage, Thomas Bellier is joined by Moroccan vocalist Simo Bouamar (Natacha Atlas), Algerian electric oud hero Mehdi Haddab (Speed Caravan, Ekova, Africa Express), and darbuka player Amar Chaoui of Grammy-winning Malian Touareg band, Tinariwen. More than a timid fusion between East and West, AL-QASAR is the culmination of multiple musical traditions, the first 6-piece Arabian psychedelic hard rock band!

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