

Nomadic Soul Drummers - Biography

Nomadic Soul Drummers, established by Mal "Malfouf" Settree in 1997/98 on the Sunshine Coast, developed out of a desire by Mal to learn how to play the Middle Eastern darabouka. He saw the band "Drum Arabic" with Andy Busital and some dancers at Woodford Folk Festival 1997/98. Mal was amazed by the "connection" between drummer and dancer. With a love of music and a strong desire to play a musical instrument, but with no formal training in reading music, the drum presented the perfect compromise for Mal. His first drum however, was not a darabouka but a African djembe.

Not long after Woodford, he joined Geoff and Rasheeda for a workshop with Egyptian, Aadel Amin in Brisbane. That evening Mal saw that same drummer/dancer "connection" between Aadel and dancer, Tamara Williams. By this time he was inspired and totally "hooked".

Aadel's lessons started Mal off with his drumming, but to really enjoy himself and to improve, Mal felt he needed other drummers. He started out with just a few keen people, teaching them what he had learned, and before long, numbers and interest grew. Mal started to see the group potentially as a band, not just a teaching environment. Nomadic Soul Drummers was born, and since then the group has grown every year, and has gone from strength to strength.

Mal says he never craved to be a drum teacher, but he knew the best way to learn was to teach others. Teaching has helped him to be a better drummer, and best of all, it has brought more friends into his life than he could ever imagine.

And that is really what the Nomadic Soul Drummers is all about. Drumming, music, dance, companionship, friends and more friends!! The author of this article and her husband had the greatest pleasure at the end of 2000 to have the Nomads drum both bride and groom to their wedding ceremony and to have them share in this most special day of their lives. A wedding day to remember!

The "Nomads" currently boast 15 to 30 drummers each Monday evening at the "Attic" in Maroochydore. These range from the very beginner to others who have been regulars throughout the years and have achieved a good standard of performance skills. Monday night sessions also provide wonderful opportunities for bellydancers to practise dancing to live music. The drummers love to drum for dancers, and a number of the members are also bellydancers, so they get double the pleasure! Mal also regularly holds beginners' workshops to introduce drummers to a full range of middle eastern rhythms. At the same time he and other members continue to learn and develop their skills by participating in workshops and lessons from professional and accomplished percussionists, such as Aadel, Jamal, Gassan, and Yuval.

But Nomads' music is not confined to the darabouka. Djembes are very popular. Zills, riqs, bass drums, tambourines, and other instruments such as the didgeridoo, sticks, mizmar, flute, guitar all add to the unique and developing musical flavour.

The Nomads perform regularly at Bellydance concerts and haflas, and community festivals and events, including the Woodford Folk Festival. One of the biggest highlights of the Nomad year is to perform at the AMED Extravaganza. The Nomads have been performing each year for the Extrav since 1999.

The Nomads meets every Monday evening 5-7 pm at "The Attic", Cnr Ocean & Duporth, Maroochydore. All interested in percussion and bellydancing are welcome, even if you just visiting the Sunshine Coast on holidays. The Nomads welcome you.

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