

creative

SPECIAL



Allison Blas

Odd Days

One of these mornings,
I'm going to be abducted by aliens
while I grind coffee in my white bathrobe
with yellow duckies.

One of these mornings,
I'm going to look at my frazzled hair,
vacant gray eyes and blotchy skin,
crack my neck and flush the Prozac down the toilet.

One of these mornings,
I'm going to flip on the radio
and not hear the words "gun" "accident" "death" or "fear"
but "peachy keen" "nifty" "swell" and "lollipop".

One of these mornings,
I'm going to drive to school in an
ice cream truck, eating ice cream and play
duck-duck-goose and hide-n-seek all day.

One of these mornings,
instead of waking up at the crack of dawn
and doing all the things no one wants to do but does,
I'll just go back to sleep.

Allison Blas is a freshman majoring in journalism.

Wayne Bund Feasting the Siren

Give me more of tor to weigh and store do feast my blood on shore
a lore the least. East more: high noon in noun, deep verse in verb; hollow
my fallow and pump upon meat. More I score of food to flesh the
mouthing cord; I hoard before buoy, beast, or bellow boy, water prior to
the waves within: thirst raise ocean, eye dawn star, and more and more
my endless skin. My voice vectors volatile. Meal are symphonies: teeth
sinking skin syncopation; bones breaking bones tambour; outpouring blood
a river harmonious; flowing syntax my pores. I reach your breach,
fulfill my treat. More food to dine: knowing calves, showing stomach of young
slaughter, breast, thigh, hip and rib, shoulder, neck, chin and grin, more in-
take, more mountains in which to eat. Together we dine. I ache
the arches of your castle form, I crush your columns down, strike soft
your stone. Come on wings made aural and find your place. I flesh
solitude. Do feast on sound to call to death my own. Do rhyme do writher
and come here hither, food to dine an entire line to end. Consume and
perish. Heap the plates, unleash the mounds, murk drawn circles to
pact intact, derelict the story made lust by fact. You fly, you flee, alone I lie
and die to crest my lyric in coherent brook of house and home. Abhor my
shore and intake more.

Wayne Bund is a senior majoring in theatre arts.

Iris Moon Benson

David Bowie

With one match
at thirteen, I lit
your cigarette
birthday candles

I leaned forward, blew out
sucked smoke in
kissed

coals in my mouth
words cleaned
on my tongue

As we sang
lips wet

"time takes
a cigarette"

time takes
a quarter
in the slot

and I play
the juke box
wipe years
off my lips

napkins
a chalk board
windshield wipers
smoke sucked down
my throat

Iris Moon Benson is a senior
studying landscape architecture
and a student in the University's
Kidd Tutorial creative writing
program.

Aaron Shakra

To a jilted poetry teacher: a villanelle

You say "It's your own," you say "It's your own"
"Away from the norms, never conformed, this is how writing is born"
So what's this that you say about poems?

You approach the unknown by line editing your soul
"That rose isn't red — it's all been said — you have to reform"
You say "It's your own," you say "It's your own"

But this teaching is all preaching outgrown tomes
Clothed in blind traditions like religions of an oath you've sworn
So what's this that you say about poems?

Give us readymade quotes so that we may clone
the ashen smoke you exhale on all that won't conform
You say "It's your own," you say "It's your own"

Could you ever be taught, will you never be shone?
Past stillborn authority that says "It's always better in the form"
So what's this that you say about poems?

An old way withers, your clothes, now unsoiled
Still I learn with rhythm unturned, so I shall cease to scorn
What you say is your own, you say is your own
Now what's this that you say about poems?

I see my life
reflected
in a cup of chai
by the poisoned river
writing poems on my hand.

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Recipes:

By Natasha Chilingerian
Pulse Reporter

Well-prepared Middle Eastern food has a special poignancy; the rice is buttery and covered by a crunchy golden crust, the hummus is laden by a smooth garlic and olive oil taste and the beef kebabs have a distinct zing.

But locking in this cuisine's flavors can be tricky. Timing, temperatures, ingredients and care all play crucial roles in mastering the art of Middle Eastern recipes.

Here, I will take you step by step through three of the most loved recipes from the Arab countries. First, you'll discover how to perfect tadeeg, a crispy crust that forms at the bottom of a pot of rice, for a creation of basmati with sliced potatoes. Next, I'll show you how to make real, ethnic hummus (you'll never buy the packaged kind again), perfect with warm pita bread. Finally, you'll learn how to take charge of

the grill and make juicy beef kebabs, which are delicious wrapped in flat chewy lavash bread and fresh greens.

• Potato Rice with Tadeeg

Basmati, the rice used in this recipe, is most notable for its aromatic, nut-like flavor and scent. It is small, yet long-grained, and is sold at most grocery stores. This recipe calls for turmeric, a spice which gives the rice a yellow color and an aromatic orange-ginger scent. Turmeric can be found in the spice section of most grocery stores.

- 1 large russet potato
- 2 cups basmati rice
- 4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 7 cups water
- dash of salt
- dash of pepper
- dash of garlic salt
- dash of turmeric
- 6 tablespoons butter

Slice potato into thick slices across, leaving skin. In a heavy, nonstick pan, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil and add the potato slices.

Sprinkle potatoes with salt and pepper and fry one side only until the cooked side is golden. Set aside. In a large pot, bring lightly salted water to a boil. Add rice, bring back to a boil and lower heat to medium. Boil for about 5 minutes, then taste the rice — it should be soft on the outside but crunchy on the inside. Drain rice into a colander. Rinse rice with cold water. Dry off pot, pour 2 tablespoons olive oil on bottom of pot and place potatoes on top, uncooked side down. Add rice in three layers, adding 2 tablespoons butter (cut into chunks) and a dash of turmeric after each layer. Sprinkle top of rice with garlic salt, pepper and turmeric. Place paper towel sheets on top of pot, cover with lid and cook on low heat for 35-40 minutes. Rice is done when paper towel becomes wet.

Tip: Adding extra-virgin olive oil at the bottom of the pan is the most essential step for a crisp tadeeg, as is keeping the heat low to ensure the crust won't burn.

• Hummus

This dip from the Mediterranean and Middle East regions has become increasingly

popular in the United States with packaged flavored varieties. This recipe guarantees an original homemade taste. Tahini, which gives hummus its toasted, nutty flavor, is a paste derived from ground sesame seeds. You can buy tahini at high-end or specialty grocery stores. White pepper comes from ripe peppercorns which have been shelled of their skin (black pepper is the result of dried, unshelled peppercorns). Paprika, a spice made from ground and dried chili peppers, is used simply to add color. White pepper and paprika can be found at most grocery stores.

- 2 cans chickpeas (reserve 4 tablespoons chickpea juice)
- 6 cloves garlic
- 4 tablespoons tahini
- 1-2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2-3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- pinch of salt
- pinch of white pepper
- 1/4 cup black olives
- 1 bunch parsley
- pinch of paprika
- Empty drained chickpeas into a food

processor and add 4 tablespoons of chickpea juice from the cans. Blend with garlic, tahini, salt and pepper, adding lemon juice a little at a time until smooth. Scrape onto a platter, sprinkle with paprika, drizzle with olive oil and decorate with black olives and parsley. Serve with heated pita bread.

Tip: Begin blending with 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and taste hummus before adding a second tablespoon. The flavor should have a slight citrus tone, but not be overpowered by the lemon.

• Beef Kebabs

A sprinkle of sumac is recommended here to add a real zip to kebabs. This spice comes from the fruit of a wild Mediterranean bush, and is often used as a souring agent in Arab cooking, as is lemon and vinegar. It can be found at specialty international or Middle Eastern grocery stores. Lavash is a soft, flat, unleavened bread of Armenian origin which comes in the form of a large sheet; most upscale and high-end grocery stores carry it.

- 2 pounds ground beef (15 percent fat)

- 1 onion
 - 1 egg
 - pinch of salt
 - pinch of pepper
 - pinch of allspice
 - 1 package lavash bread
 - parsley, green onions, and sumac (to serve)
 - 3-4 flat, 20-centimeter, stainless steel skewers
- Grate onion into the meat. Add egg, salt, pepper and allspice and knead together. Cover with wax paper and let stand for 30 minutes. Wet hands and mold meat into long, thin shapes around skewers. Grill about 5 minutes on each side. Add a portion of the bread to the grill for the last 2 minutes to heat. Place kebabs on a platter on top of warmed bread. Serve as a sandwich with green onions, parsley and a sprinkling of sumac and wrapped in remaining and warmed bread.

Tip: The secret to a great kebab is making sure the meat stays put on the skewers. It can take some practice, but be sure to pack meat on good and tight before taking it to the grill.

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The Jazz Temple

By Carl Sundberg
Pulse Columnist

It's these places that the real source of humanity exists. It's these dark and humid rooms, halls, bars and garages that people will see that it's still okay to be alive. To know that the sickness that persuades people to do evil things with their minds and bodies can be forgiven and that inner peace will be found again. The horrors of our modern America exist elsewhere. This is a place of music. This is a hall of sound.

These musicians who stand on their soapbox in a significant circle lay out the real truth. Music is the only truth. No matter what people try and do, music will never lie. It will never mislead. It will never die. It exists without us, amongst us, in every breeze, in every sunset, in the birds, in the ocean and in the mountains. It is everywhere. It has a will of its own.

The outside of this place will be in stark opposition. People around, frightening. Thoughts, terrible. Actions, disgusting. Killing, raping, stealing, hurting, shoving, lying. The Ten Commandments sacrificed on any given street corner, in any given home, at any given time, somewhere. But not here. This is a holy ground. Not in any religious sense, but a spiritual sense, if you will. A room, a simple room with people playing music that speaks in the universal tongue. Expressing pain, excitement, joy, anguish, sadness, and pleasure. Talking in a way that any man, woman or child can hear and complete with their own minds and souls.

It does not impose fear, swirling in my head again ... the guitar is coming in over the top, doubling the sax in fourths, the violin plays a tremolo pitch that is so eerie and bohemian, perfect as the drummer belts out a driving backbone of 7/8 time, behind that the bassist is grinding away with a bow, creating this lulling swing gypsy rhythm that has placed me near the fifth sun, the place I have come to recognize is the final resting place of the soul, the last stop before we forge into new material, that place that makes us realize we still have a long way to go.

no, this is the heart of freedom, this jazz, this rock, this funk, this blues. This spilling from the instruments. Tonight it is a saxophone. Alongside that, it could be drums and guitar. Across the stage maybe a bass and a violin. These players, all of them, any of them, are helping us here. They are helping us become one mind, for maybe a short interval, a song duration, a tempo change, but there it is. Nothing mind-boggling. Nothing complex. This is simply music.

Here I sit no longer paining myself over events that have taken place in the past. It's stupid to let any war, any drunk, any rainy day, any conflicting interests, or any one person make me feel any sort of mental distress. No, tonight I will choose to listen on my own. Away from everyone, in the corner, if that is what it takes, with a smile on my face, no longer accepting judgment or dish-ing it out, however hard that is. I can only place the jazz in my head and convert it to energy to use to gain strength from the small things that may just come to mean nothing.

I'm trying to empty the sickness, expel the misery. I clear my head at these dark nightclubs of bleeding jazz and roiling blues, and these little things, the notes, they make me remember who I am.

Sometimes I forget that I love nothing more completely than music until I hear it again as it fills me up and flows from me. It is a sacred and personal peace. And I will remain with it, as it will with me, until I die.

The saxophone line is

... the guitar is coming in over the top, doubling the sax in fourths, the violin plays a tremolo pitch that is so eerie and bohemian, perfect as the drummer belts out a driving backbone of 7/8 time, behind that the bassist is grinding away with a bow, creating this lulling swing gypsy rhythm that has placed me near the fifth sun, the place I have come to recognize is the final resting place of the soul, the last stop before we forge into new material, that place that makes us realize we still have a long way to go.

And you can see it burning red now and you can feel the music lifting you up past the fence of your dumb awareness so that you can get a glimpse of it, the music pushing you higher and higher, until it has hit its peak, extended its grasp, and you are almost crying, because you know there will be a time when you will no longer be able to know this music, where all earthly connections will be lost, except possibly faded strange memories, and you will know this is true right before you reach up and touch the sun, for the last and only time, as it falls underneath like the last notes of that powerfully transcendent hypnotic melody that these simple humans have created, right there in front of you.

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His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.
This piece is from an upcoming short story/poetry collection, "The Unjust Righteous and the Idiot Savant."