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Al Andalus Ensemble offers echoes of Iraq

by David Stabler, **The Oregonian**

Wednesday March 25, 2009, 3:11 PM

[Al Andalus Ensemble](#) is one of the few local groups that has the knowledge and credibility to put on a concert called "Baghdad." The husband-and-wife team of Tarik and Julia Banzi specialize in music that bridges East and West, classical and world music from the Middle East, North Africa and Spain. "Baghdad" is their latest concert, a musical tribute to those who lost their lives in the "war on terror."

The best way to describe the style of Al Andalus, which splits its time between Tangier, Morocco and Portland, is "contemporary Andalusian," pairing the oud (parent of the Renaissance lute) and flamenco guitar. For "Baghdad," the Banzis will be joined by Charlie Bisharat, the Grammy-winning violinist who has played with Alanis Morissette, the Rolling Stones and Jane's Addiction.

Among other music, the concert will pay tribute to Ziriab, an important Persian musician from Baghdad who established the first music conservatory in Europe in 822 A.D.

Tarik and Julia Banzi also are releasing their latest CD, "21 Strings," at the concert, which will include the ney (Arabic reed flute) and darbuka (ceramic drum). Sounds we don't often hear in these parts.

7:30 p.m. Saturday, Kaul Auditorium, Reed College, 3203 S.E. Woodstock Blvd., \$15-\$25, 800-838-3006, www.brownpapertickets.com

