

Salima Murad - Iraqi Jewish singer

(1900-1974) سلیمه مراد

Eness Elias ~ Iraq Still Honors This Jewish Star Known as the 'Voice of Baghdad'
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Salima Mourad takes the stage with her head slightly bowed and a big smile, wearing a sleeveless dress. She always looks stylish; she doesn't shout it out, it's simply part of her. She's hypnotic. You can't take your eyes off her, in the old film clips. She has a virtuosic voice that she uses in any way she sees fit, spanning a broad vocal range, singing softly and forte. She seems to know exactly what she's doing. There's a reason why Mourad, who passed away in 1974, is still considered one of the most famous and admired singers in Iraq.

Last week, a unique tribute was paid to Mourad within the framework of the Jerusalem International Oud Festival. Called "The Voice of Baghdad," the event took place under the auspices of the city's Confederation House and featured an impressive group of singers and instrumentalists, as part of a collaboration involving veteran producer and musician Yair Dalal, with artistic direction by Effie Benaya.

The life of Salima Mourad, who was born in 1900, sounds like something out of a Hollywood film: A young [Jewish](#) Iraqi woman begins to sing and turns out to be one of the greatest talents in the country and in the entire Arab world. She performs in the most prestigious venues, in cafes, at nightclubs and family parties, and becomes a famous and admired figure, as great as Egyptian singers [Umm Kulthum](#) and Laila Mourad - who was also Jewish.

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