

Script
Final Project: Audio Documentary
*Revolutionary Rhythms in Egypt and
at The American University in Cairo*

LEAD-IN: During the eighteen days of the January 25 Revolution, the number of musicians who have began singing for the revolution has grown. They were not restricted nor censored, but they were forced to deal with a different kind of pressure when the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces were in power after Egyptian former President Hosni Mubarak stepped down. Despite that, they still managed to find educational institutions, like AUC, their best venues to hold concerts and perform music.

(MUSIC: FADE IN, soundbites of Egyptian protesters during the January 25 Revolution) (0:9)

NARRATION: “Since the outbreak of the January 25 Revolution in Egypt, new realities emerged into the streets of Cairo, politically, socially not to mention artistically.” *(0:10)*

(MUSIC: FADE IN, AMPLIFY, chants and soundbites of Egyptian protesters during the uprising) (0:7)

NARRATION: “For eighteen days, Tahrir Square was an open stage to Egyptians from all socio-economic backgrounds, including musicians and artists. Although music bands like Eskenderella were able to freely perform and play their music in the country in places like the American University in Cairo, they still had to pay the price for singing controversial songs.” *(0:8)*

(MUSIC: FADE IN, AMPLIFY, Hazem Namira's song Ehlam Ma'aya, piano) (0:6)

NARRATION: "Although music bands like Eskenderella, were able to freely perform and play their music in the country in places like the American University in Cairo, they still had to pay the price for singing controversial songs." (0:12)

NARRATION: "Hazem Shaheen, lead singer of Eskenderella which first appeared in 2005, says that his band faces constant threats from thugs affiliated to the old regime." (0:11)

(MUSIC: FADE IN, background music, drums) (0:35)

*(CROSS-FADE-IN) **SOUNDBITE OF ESKENDERELLA'S LEAD SINGER HAZEM***

***SHAHEEN:** "The last time at the concert we held at El Fan Medan, a thug climbed on the stage with a sharp knife and a weapon. And we found out the next day that he did this in response to Basma El Hussieny when she said there's "no security" in the country." (:20)*

NARRATION: "Due to a public statement made by Shaheen's close friend, activist Basma El Husseiny where she said "there's no security anymore," the band was in serious danger." (0:10)

*(MUSIC: FADE IN, CROSS-FADE-IN) **SOUNDBITE OF SHAHEEN:** "Three hours past midnight, the police caught him. But at eleven and while the band was performing, the thugs were left unarrested and nothing happened to them except later. It was obvious that the police wanted the thugs to attack us, and we easily discovered that. But the audience on that day formed a human shield and reminded the police of January 28th and the shame the police has brought to Egypt." (0:29)*

(MUSIC: FADE IN, AMPLIFY, music of O'ud) (0:47)

NARRATION: “Shaheen and his band have also received threats for singing against the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, which has been ruling the country ever since former President Hosni Mubarak stepped down on February 11, 2011.” (0:22)

SOUNDBITE OF SHAHEEN: “Another incident was a concert in SH-EB-EEN EL-KO-UM in MIN-OUF-YA where people told us “this is not allowed and you can't insult the Egyptian military.” We tried to let them understand that we're not singing against the military, but we're singing against the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, the capitalists and those who are corrupt and want to ruin the revolution. They're always sending thugs to protests and concerts that are against SCAF and we're used to that.” (0:25)

NARRATION: “But Hazem's band wasn't the only case where this happened. On March 9, 2011, a sit-in was held at Tahrir where twenty-three-year-old artist Ramy Essam attended.” (0:12)

(MUSIC: FADE IN, song of Ramy Essam “E'ish, horreya, a'dala egtema'ya”) (0:55)

NARRATION: “Essam, best known as “singer of the revolution,” protested and entertained hundreds of Egyptians on that day, but within few hours, he was arrested and tortured by the military.” (0:16)

NARRATION: “Hundreds of military forces stormed into the square and attacked Essam who was at the sit-in. He was severely beaten and was later transferred to the Egyptian Museum where he was further tortured by several military soldiers. After his release, Essam later appeared on a

Youtube video that went viral where he said “the military refused to hear me so they continued beating.” (0:40)

NARRATION: “Despite Essam and Shaheen’s unfortunate experiences to perform in the streets of Cairo, both artists say A-U-C and other educational institutions are much more pleasant venues to perform their music.” (0:13)

(NAT SOUND of AUC, plaza) (0:34)

NARRATION: “President and founder of Developers Inc. Omar Ezzedin says that the presence of such revolutionary artists on campus have also helped engage students in national duties such as the parliamentary elections. Started in August 2011, Developers Inc. has been conducting human development trainings for student organizations on campus to develop students’ leadership and communication skills.” (0:35)

SOUNDBITE OF PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER OF DEVELOPERS INC OMAR EZZEDIN:

“This the case with other organizations. If you see M-C-M, Model Council of Ministers, which is a really good organization that started after the revolution as well, they brought Eskenderella which is another revolutionary band as a form of branding and as a form of getting people to know their event and their closing. We brought as well the revolutionary singer Ramy Essam in one of our campaigns which was about the elections. We were asking people to be civically responsible and go vote in the elections, whatever their vote is.”(0:38)

NARRATION: “Current Student Union President Ahmed Alaa Fayed explains that events at AUC have become easier to host thanks to the revolution. He states that the revolution led AUC President Lisa Anderson to enforce a new freedom of expression policy at the university.” (0:16)

(MUSIC: FADE IN, Eskenderella's song "Masr Gamila") (0:40)

SOUNDBITE OF AUC STUDENT UNION PRESIDENT AHMED ALAA FAYED: "I think this new freedom of expression policy was a very clear message showing that AUC has regained its sovereignty over its campus, and that we can do whatever we want on our campus as long as its not conflicting with any of our values, of our AUC values. So, I think that was a message to all AUC community to show them that this is our campus right now and we can do whatever we want and as long as you're in AUC and not conflicting with AUC's code of ethics, you can do whatever you want." (0:33)

NARRATION: "Anderson's policy was imposed at the start of the academic year of 2011 where AUC students were informed via e-mail that "all speech is protected." Anderson's e-mail also stated that the new policy statement has been developed by a faculty-student task force "to replace the very restrictive policies of the past." Fayed also adds that the January uprising has led many positive changes to take place at AUC. He states that, before the revolution, AUC's Office of Student Development was restricting certain student activities on campus especially ones related to politics." (0:38)

(MUSIC: FADE IN, Violin, Hamza Namira's song "Erfa' Rasak Enta Masry") (0:42)

SOUNDBITE OF INTERVIEWER NADA BADAWI: "Is the Office of Student Development still restricting student activities in terms of who they can host, what events they can host and what kind of events that they can host? Are there any restrictions anymore after the revolution or has that changed?" (0:15)

SOUNDBITE OF FAYED: *“In the past as we go on, there have been some very popular situations M-A-L when they invited Mr. Ayman Nour and the O-S-D refused. When Mr. Hisham Shafick tried to unite all the student unions in Egypt and created Egyptian student union and he failed because of the O-S-D and the state security. So simply the O-S-D was reflecting on what the State Security wanted to do. So simply the O-S-D was just a tool. After the revolution, the case is different. We were able, under this union, to hold the first Egyptian student union in 30 years here on A-U-C grounds. Actually we were also to invite whoever we want. So simply we’re getting more freedom, but this is because of the revolution, not because the O-S-D changed its perception. Actually, the O-S-D throughout history didn’t have any problems, but the O-S-D itself tried as much as possible to avoid problems with, especially, the state security.” (1:10)*

NARRATION: *“Fayed believes that, thanks to the revolution, all activities are now permitted on campus.” (0:5)*

(MUSIC: FADE IN, Hamza Namira’s song “El-Wesh-osh”) (0:34)

NARRATION: *“Back in December, Shaheen’s band took part in Kazeboon, a campaign a group of Egyptians started against the Egyptian military. But he says that the band’s presence is also important in educational institutions.” (0:15)*

(CROSS-FADE-IN) SOUNDBITE OF SHAHEEN: *“We’re not affiliated to KAZ-EB-OOB. They only invited us to one of their shows in Maadi. The event was made especially for Ahmed Harara, Malek and other heroes that were injured in clashes between the army. We are always active and*

one example of that is that our band decided to go to the Ministers' Cabinet. We're all on the same boat, and we're part of those who believe in standing up for our fellow martyrs.) (0:31)

(MUSIC: FADE IN) NARRATION: "Eskenderella performed several times at AUC after the revolution, and Shaheen strongly believes that music has a big role after the January uprising. He believes that politicians, singers and other famous figures should be subjected to criticism when necessary. He, however, objects to anyone who stands in the way of freedom of expression. On the other hand, Ezzedin believes that there will still be some boundaries that students will have to consider when hosting events." (0:23)

(MUSIC: FADE IN, Eskenderella's song "Etgama'o EL-'OSH-A'", FADE OUT) (0:17)

SOUNDBITE OF EZZEDIN: *"The difficulties that I might be facing are not regarding policies of AUC. I mean I can get any speaker I want, I can promote any idea I want as long as it's within certain boundaries, more of cultural and ethical boundaries that don't have to do with political boundaries. But the problem with getting keynote speakers and getting, for example, entertainment sponsors is that everyone now is trying to get these people, so there's a very high demand on them and sometimes it's hard to get these people and it's hard to reach them as well."* (0:37)

(MUSIC: FADE IN, "Feeha Haga Helwa") (0:30)

NARRATION: "Ever since the revolution, student organizations at AUC are more keen than ever to host revolutionary artists and figures. Clubs like Model Council of Ministers, Help and Volunteers in Action held concerts at AUC where they hosted revolutionary singers. Singers like Hamza Namira, Cairokee and Maher Zein are just a few to name." (0:27)

(MUSIC: AMPLIFY, "Feeha Haga Helwa", FADE OUT) (0:10)

NARRATION: "Fayed also emphasizes on the importance of being engaged in politics. He believes that, unlike before, AUC's student activities should reflect the revolution and current events." (0:11)

(MUSIC: FADE IN, piano opera) (1:09)

SOUNDBITE OF BADAWI: *"Throughout AUC's history, there were regular entertainment events where student organizations used to host singers like Mahmoud El-Esseily, Mohamed Hamaki, Amr Diab and many others. How have these entertainment events changed now after the January uprising? (0:28)*

SOUNDBITE OF FAYED: *"OK, I personally believe that after the revolution everyone is trying to adapt to what's happening and trying to, as much as possible, to seek the maximum output and the maximum outreach any organization can reach. So simply they are trying to see what the people want to listen and want to see on campus and they try to get these bands here. For example, before the revolution, if anyone would have got like Eskenderella or any political band or whatever, no one would have showed up for the event, but now, everyone come and attend the event. On the other hand, in the past, when Esseily used to come, everyone used to come and see Esseily, but now when ESS-EILY comes, no now it's a revolution time. So that's the point, now is a revolution time, so let's all concentrate on the revolution in all terms even when it comes to entertainment, we should be entertained through revolution related issues. So, that's the issue right now and it's something that's happening throughout Egypt and it's just reflecting on AUC on a very small scale." (0:55)*

NARRATION: “Like many AUC club presidents, Ezzedin talks about his organization’s achievements in hosting revolutionary events and public figures.” (0:8)

(BACKGROUND MUSIC: FADE IN, Cairokee’s song “MAT-LOOB ZA’-EEM”) (0:35)

SOUNDBITE OF EZZEDIN: *“Our opening ceremony had the Egyptian revolutionary band Cairokee and we had this band because it promoted new songs and new kind of music that engaged people to move and to ask for their rights and being civic responsible. That was the opening of the conference where people learned how to develop their country. We thought that getting such a band would be helping us for branding, it would be more attracting for more people to come and that’s the case with all other organizations.” (0:32)*

NARRATION: “Ezzedin’s club targets not only AUC students, but students off campus as well.”(0:8)

(MUSIC: FADE IN, Opera music, FADE OUT) (0:40)

SOUNDBITE OF EZZEDIN: *“We’re targeting mostly students, not just AUCians, especially that we’re talking about something like rebuilding Egypt, so we cannot just restrict it to AUC. Since the first day, we have had volunteers from other universities. We made trainings and gave trainings, and gave the human development trainings to other organizations. The awareness campaign of us was remade in PortSaid and Alexandria. Students approached us and they liked us to re-make it. And I guess in our conference we have many delegates from other universities.” (0:35)*

NARRATION: “As many AUC clubs hold entertainment events to encourage their colleagues to

engage in politics, Egyptian artists still struggle to freely perform their music.” (0:8)

(MUSIC: FADE IN, AMPLIFY, Cairokee’s song “Sakteen”, FADE OUT) (0:5)

NARRATION: “With the military council leaving the rule by the end of June 2012, artists hope for a presidential candidate that would enable them to play their music more freely. (0:10)

(MUSIC: FADE IN, AMPLIFY, Cairokee’s song “Sakteen”, FADE OUT) (0:7)

NARRATION: “This has been Nada Badawi on revolutionary music in Egypt and at The American University in Cairo. Egyptian website for citizen journalism, mosireen, megapload.com and AUC’s archives have been used to produce this documentary. Special thanks to Ahmed Alaa Fayed, Omar Ezzedin and Hazem Shahin for volunteering their time and sharing their stories.” (0:22)

(MUSIC: FADE IN, AMPLIFY, Cairokee’s song “SAK-TEEN”, FADE OUT) (0:15)