

# Melhem Barakat

“I imagine while composing... I imagine fog, dawn and water...”

Melhem Barakat was a singer, songwriter, composer and actor born in 1942 in Lebanon. His passion for music was nurtured by his father when he began teaching him how to play the oud as a young boy.

His musical talent became evident to his family and friends when he composed lyrics to a song using words written in a school journal. He also used to sing and regularly perform at school recitals and talent shows. When he turned 16 years old, Barakat decided to drop out of school and enroll himself at the National Institute of Music in Lebanon where he studied music theory, Arabic singing and Solfège.

Barakat also created his own musical genre through his stage performance and musical compositions; he was known for his energetic melodies that mixed his unique style in improvisation with classical Arabic music.

Since the beginning of his career in the 1960s, Barakat achieved colossal stardom in the Arab world, most notably in Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan. His musical repertoire had many successes and he composed songs for some of Lebanon's most beloved singers including, Sabah, Wadih El Safi and Magida El Roumi.

Amongst Barakat's musical hits were the songs “*Habibi Inta*” (You Are My Love), and “*Ala Babi Wa'ef Amarain*” (Two Moons Standing at My Door). He also participated in many of the renowned Rahbani Brothers' musicals and theater productions. Amongst his on-screen appearances, Barakat had several hits in Lebanese movies such as “*Wahdi Ana*” and “*Kboush El Touti*”.



## DID YOU KNOW?

Barakat took great pride in only singing in colloquial Lebanese dialect, especially during a time where Arab singers favoured singing in Egyptian dialect due to its popularity.

## FUN FACT

Solfège is a musical system found in all cultures around the world and is associated with the famous musical pattern do-re-me-fa-so-la-ti.

## MUSICAL TERM

**Solfège:** A type of musical education that uses different methods in teaching the basics of western music in terms of aural skills, pitch singing and sight-reading.

