

Asmahan

A versatile singer renowned for her powerful voice, enchanting stage presence and distinctive performance style.

Amal Al-Atrash, (1912-1944), better known by her stage name Asmahan, was an exceptional Syrian-Egyptian singer and actor who rose to fame in Egypt in the 1930s and early 1940s.

Born into a prominent family, she moved from Syria to Egypt with her mother and siblings due to political unrest. To earn a living, her mother, who had an excellent voice, began singing and playing the oud. She was a source of inspiration for Asmahan and her brother, Farid Al-Atrash, who also became a famous musician. Asmahan, like her mother, demonstrated vocal talent from an early age, and went on to sing songs written by renowned musicians in some of Egypt's most important venues.

Asmahan was a versatile singer celebrated for her powerful voice, enchanting stage presence and distinctive performance style. She was not only skilled in *tarab*, but she was also incredibly innovative. Her voice was regarded as one of the few in the Arab world at the time able to compete with renowned Egyptian singer Umm Kulthum.

Despite her short life, Asmahan performed and recorded several memorable songs composed by renowned musicians, including her brother Farid Al-Atrash. Asmahan also appeared in a number of critically acclaimed films, and some of her songs for these films became major hits. She was one of the most distinguished female Arab singers of the 20th century, paving the way for the female artists who followed her.



DID YOU KNOW?

Asmahan collaborated with the great artist Mohammed Abdel Wahab, singing one of his compositions for the Film *Yawm Sa'id* (Happy Day).

FUN FACT

Asmahan and her brother Farid Al-Atrash starred in the successful 1941 film *Intisar al-Shabab* (The Triumph of Youth), in which they portray two young singers looking for fame in Egypt.

MUSICAL TERM

Tarab: Arabic word referring to a state of musical bliss where the listener is deeply moved and carried away by a musical performance.

