

Ali Bin Rogha

“Artistic beginnings are like the beginnings of a student in school.”

Ali Abdullah Bin Rogha Al Zaabi was an Emirati singer and poet born in 1947 in Ras Al Khaimah, UAE. He was one of the first Emirati singers to dominate the music scene in the 1960s and 1970s before his retirement in 1987.

Bin Rogha learned how to sing and play the oud by the sea in Ras Al Khaimah. He grew up having late-night singing sessions with his friends and spent long hours mastering his skills. He was an Emirati pioneer who shaped the musical scene in the UAE and cultivated traditional Emirati songs inspired by his culture. The following generation of music artists, such as Mehad Hamad, looked up to him and followed in his footsteps.

By the 1970s Bin Rogha's popularity had grown and spread to neighbouring countries across the Arabian Gulf. He began collaborating with renowned poets and most commonly with Emirati poet Salem Al Jamri who also wrote many of Bin Rogha's songs.

Bin Rogha's songs are amongst the earliest Emirati hits. They continue to be remastered, remade and resampled by other Emirati artists from generation to generation. His hit *Treed El Hawa* (You Want Love) became a major hit for a second time in the '90s after Emirati singer Abdelmonem Al Ameri reproduced it.



DID YOU KNOW?

Following Bin Rogha's retirement, a ban on the sale and distribution of his music cassettes was imposed at his request.

FUN FACT

Bin Rogha performed poems written by His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and H.E Mana Saeed Al Otaiba.

MUSICAL TERM

Bedouin solo melody: A form of Bedouin folklore characterised by singing in the desert and using vocabulary from the Bedouin dialect.

