Artist of the Month

Shehada Shalalda





Born in 1990 in Ramallah, Shehada Shalalda developed his love and passion for string instruments at a young age. Inspired by the desire to play his own instrument at musical performances, his interest focused on how to craft such instruments. He was convinced that instruments could be made in Palestine, a land with a rich heritage of handicrafts, even though the hardships of daily life under occupation had prevented many of his generation from pursuing their ambitions. Shalalda, however, refused to take on this burden and has continued to fulfill his dream to this day. He embarked on his journey as a teenager and has become a pioneer in the luthier's craft in Palestine, supplying local and international musicians and music students with locally crafted instruments.



In 2006, Shehada immersed himself in violin repair training offered in Ramallah by the visiting luthiers David Deroy and Leila Barbedette. A year later, he engaged in similar workshops under the guidance of Paolo Stucchi, Augustinus François, and Gianluca Montenegro. In 2008, he traveled to Florence, where he undertook an intensive three-month course in violin making and finishing – an experience that culminated in Shehada crafting his very first instrument. During this period, he learned from distinguished teachers that included Paolo Sorgentone, a former president of the Tuscan Violin Makers Association, as well as Marco Nedda, Jens Nørskov Hansen, and, once again, Stucchi and Montenegro.

These formative experiences led him to pursue advanced studies at the Newark School of Violin Making in the United Kingdom, where he deepened his expertise and ultimately earned a diploma in string instrument making and repair.

Upon returning to Ramallah in 2012, and with the support of Al-Kamandjati music center, Shehada established his first workshop. In this capacity, he collaborated with the center on the repair, maintenance, and creation of new string instruments. Continuing his professional development in the autumn of 2014, he traveled to France, where he worked under the supervision of the distinguished violin maker Patrick Robin for a period of two months, during which he crafted an additional violin.

Since then, Shehada has participated in various international exhibitions and competitions, showcasing his work and contributing to the global community of violin makers. Being recognized for his outstanding achievement, he received the Taawon Association Award for Excellence in the Cultural Sector in 2022. Shehada's work can be seen under his name on Instagram.

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