

Shalabi Effect is:

Anthony Seck: electric guitar;
Sam Shalabi: Oud, electronics, toys
Alexandre St. Onge: Double Bass, electronics
Will Eizlini: Percussion, electronics

Shalabi Effect's sound:

Shalabi Effect is free improvisation. This does not mean atonal noise, although atonality and beautiful noises are ever present; it also doesn't mean that there is no melody, but the melodies are rarely if ever known ahead of time. The base sound comes from a combination of Middle Eastern modes, played by Sam Shalabi on the Oud, and the cinematic psychedelic style of Anthony Seck. Add to this concoction the experimental influence of Avant Guardiste Alexandre St. Onge, as well as North Indian percussion by Will Eizlini, and you get the current core sound stew; often spiced with special guests and their influences.

The best sound of Shalabi Effect is always from the first take, when the ideas have their spontaneous freshness: any attempt to "hard-code" an improvisation produces at best mediocre results. Attempts to actually recreate pieces always fails. At most Shalabi Effect will decide what key and mode to play in, some skeletal structure and ideas in the form of images or moods, or timing and transitions, as though they were scoring a movie. Even the more studio sounding tracks always begin with a free improvisation: any song like structure, as in On the Bowery (shalabi effect/st), was a creative layer added to the original raw improv.

Shalabi Effect was named after Sam Shalabi, but shalabi effect has no leader: A piece is always the construction of the ideas that come into the minds of the members and guests at the time of playing/recording. The sound is the resulting sum total of the aesthetics and communication between the musicians. Perhaps this is the significance of the name Shalabi Effect, which sounds like something drawn from an engineering text-book: [the] Shalabi Effect happens as a result of plugging all kinds of stuff together and turning the machine on to see what it does. Sometimes it's slow and sublime, sometimes it's scary.

Shalabi Effect Live:

People expecting to hear "their favorite song from the album" will be disappointed. It won't happen. Shalabi effect could never play the same song twice, even if they tried. Audiences might recognize phrases, refrains, favorite licks and rhythmic patterns, or perhaps some structural ideas. But these are always pushed into new contexts, new

milieus, transposed, sped up, slowed down, somehow passing new thresholds and taking up new roles in improvisations. Moreover the energy and feelings of the audience, the presence of people, and the atmosphere of the city and venue are inevitably woven into the mix.

Shalabi Effect performances have become more and more full as members have been bringing more and more toys to the shows. Expect to see lots of live electronics, a few strange instruments from remote forests, a variety of percussion and drone makers. You might also see a screening of old NFB (National Film Board of Canada) Nature movies that are often as experimental as the music.

Shalabi Effect Bio:

Shalabi Effect began in 1996 as a duo composed of Anthony Seck and Sam Shalabi. The duo played around town for a couple of years and released a cassette recording. In 1998 Shalabi Effect added Alexandre St. Onge on double bass and Will Eizlini on tablas. That year Aural Florida was recorded at Red Rocket Studios in Montreal, and was originally slated to be a "side" of a split CD produced by Alien8 Recordings. Nearing Y2K, Shalabi Effect recorded for a second time at Sound Of One Hand studios in Ottawa, and by July 2000 had released Shalabi Effect/st, which incorporated a remixed version of Aural Florida embedded among the 131 minutes. Shalabi Effect/st continues in the tradition of live improvisation based on Middle Eastern modes but Shalabi Effect's approach has become more experimental with the inclusion of strange semi broken electronics and a variety of odd instruments--- most of which happened to be lying around in the studio where it was recorded.

Returning from Touring the US in the Fall of 2000, the group stopped into the studio for the third time. This time with a mind to create an EP release that captured the mood of the tour. Ultimately the EP, entitled, "The Trial of Saint Orange", has a great deal more varied material, including a drum-n-bass mix. The Album is set to be released in September 2001.