

Letters to the Editor

WRITTEN BY JEWISH CHRONICLE READERS
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Concert healing salve

I would like to sincerely thank Jill Maidhof, Jacob Schrieber and other staff of the Jewish Community Center for bringing the **Yuval Ron Ensemble** to the Kansas City area and more particularly, to the JCC on April 3. This group of superb musicians from Jewish, Christian and Muslim backgrounds with roots in the Middle East, does much more than just make beautiful, inspiring music. They provide exactly the kind of healing salve which our conflict-ridden, traumatized world needs, especially in relation to the Middle East where religious tension often stokes the fires of war and aggression originating with political conflict.

I had a chance to talk with **Yuval Ron** after the show and he shared that he was inspired to start the ensemble after the second intifada in Israel and the Palestinian territories, out of concern for ongoing risk to innocent lives. He didn't mention which "side" the lives were on. I would say both, but in any case these distinctions were also absent when listening to mostly Hebrew and Arabic songs from all three Abrahamic faiths: the same sense of sacredness and peace pervaded the music from each tradition and judging from the response of the audience — a rather large one for a Tuesday night — I was not alone in appreciating this.

It's natural to rally around our own tribe/religion/nation when we are under attack and it is probably human nature to hold resentment and anger toward "the other" when members of their group have hurt us. **But it's also natural — even inevitable — to appreciate the humanity in others when we see and hear it in their sacred music and traditions.** Then we start looking for a way to connect and work with them rather than finding new ways to fight them. And fuel of resentment, which keeps conflicts burning, begins to die out.

Thanks again to visionaries like Yuval Ron and his troupe for keeping hope and peace alive and to those community leaders who had the vision to see the importance of bringing this precious type of experience to our community.

Shalom, salaam, peace.

Jim Fleming Kansas City, Mo.