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PRESENTS....

ARTIST – ALIF	TITLE – AYNAMA-RTAMA
FORMAT – CD/LP/DL	LABEL – NAWA RECORDINGS

RELEASE DATE: 04/09/2015



Alif is the collective sound of five musicians at the forefront of independent music in the Arab world, and **Nawa Recordings** is a label dedicated to bringing new alternative music from the Arab world and elsewhere. Conceived in 2012 and taking its name from the first letter of the Arabic alphabet, Alif features **Khyam Allami (Oud)**, **Tamer Abu Ghazaleh (Vocals/Buzuq)**, **Bashar Farran (Bass)**, **Maurice Louca (Keys/Electronics)** and **Khaled Yassine (Drums/Percussion)**.

Their self-produced debut, **Aynama-Rtama** (Arabic - translated as *Wherever It Falls*) is a reflection of its time and environment. Recorded between Beirut in Cairo in 2014, it is a shape-shifting album that twists and turns when you least expect it. From the lead track Holako (Hulagu) - featuring a poem by late Iraqi poet **Sargon Boulus** (1944-2007) rendered into song for the first time - the band immediately reveal their intention. Louca's gritty electronic percussion melds with Allami's rhythmic oud, and builds until the explosion of a driving rhythmic section, backing Abu Ghazaleh's frenzied Buzuq, leads to a cinematic climax of soaring strings and raging drums.

The startling synergy of these five musicians is retained throughout the album with the effortless and hypnotic groove of Farran's bass in Yalla Tnam (Lullaby) leading the sparse yet tense homage to insomnia, until the song reaches its sparkling and colourful heights just as the protagonist is about to finally reach his slumber. While a fiery sermon rages in Al-Khutba Al-Akhira (The Last Declamation) as the tumult of Yassine's acoustic percussion give way to Louca's piercing synths, intertwining with Abu Ghazaleh's potent diction.

From the melancholic beauty of Dars Min Kama Sutra (A Lesson From Kama Sutra) - which features the tantalising verses of renowned late Palestinian poet **Mahmoud Darwish** (1941-2008) - to the majestic and surreal album-closer Eish Jabkum Hon? (What Brings You Here?), penned by the band's own Tamer Abu Ghazaleh, each track bursts with rhythmic drive and fervour. The band's wide ranging influences along with their unified and intriguing energy, give birth to a soundscape that is at once familiar and unknown.

Mixed by **Ali Chant** of **Toy Box Studios, Bristol**, UK (P.J. Harvey, Rokia Traore, Yann Tiersen, Gruff Rhys, John Parish) and mastered by **John Dent** of **Loud Mastering**, UK (Bob Marley, Nick Drake, Yann Tiersen, Massive Attack, Nick Cave), *Aynama-Rtama* traces a complex labyrinth of genres, sounds and emotions, rendered as a unique postcard of the tumultuous rollercoaster-ride of its time.

The album is adorned in artwork featuring a painting by Syrian-Lebanese visual artist **Semaan Khawam**. His colourful and surreal paintings combined with original typography by Egyptian designer **Salma Shamel** perfectly compliment the complexities latent in Alif's music and lyrics. All editions will also feature new English translations of the poems and lyrics by **Nariman Youssef**.

It will be available on CD, black & limited edition red coloured 12" Vinyl LP and download, including Mastered for iTunes and lossless high-definition 24-bit/96kHz audio files, the first time for a production from the Arab world.

"[A] coiled energy and rhythmic drive propel the pieces with a level comparable to a fully electrified outfit, offering proof that the same degree of excitement can be reached via lower volume and sheer acoustic attack." - THE WIRE

For album artwork, band photos and more please contact: Lauren Barley | lauren@rarelyunable.com | Tel: +44 (0) 7729 407 032