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Where Bro Meets Habib

Wednesday 23 March 2005 1:30PM

For young people in south western Sydney, Hip Hop music is an effective way to get people to stop and listen.

NOMiSe, a 20 something rapper and performer of Lebanese/Palestinian background is rapping about Bankstown, racism and world politics. He is fusing Arabic lyrics and music with western sounds. His mentor, Monkey Mark, a veteran of the Hip Hop scene in south western Sydney, is doing the same but with Koori music.

Whereas Hip Hop is the language of young people today, Zajal is its traditional Lebanese equivalent and informs NOMiSe's music. Like rap music, it is verses sung in Arabic that are sometimes spontaneous and sometimes rehearsed.

Joe Harb, a retired taxi-driver now in his 70s, is carrying on the tradition in Melbourne. Known as the Lebanese Frank Sinatra, Joe has been singing the Zajal since he was a teenager in Lebanon and is now the regular Zajal artist at parties and weddings.

Street Stories is an archived program which is no longer broadcast

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