



## ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN AND ISLAMIC CULTURES

### Muslim Women in Pop Music

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#### EWIC Staff: Datasheet

- ❖ In 2010, Deeyah Khan, a critically-acclaimed Muslim pop singer of Punjabi and Pashtun descent, who lives in Norway, has founded Fuuse, which has won various awards such as an Emmy and a Peabody, and also nominated for the British Academy of Films & Television Arts (BAFTA). Fuuse is an arts and media production company that focuses on human rights, gender equality, and social justice all over the world. It has produced an online video series, three CDs, and two documentaries.<sup>1,2</sup>
- ❖ Yuna, a Muslim Malaysian singer-songwriter and businesswoman based in Los Angeles, first started out as a solo MySpace artist in 2006. Since then, she has been awarded the Anugerah Industri Muzik (AIM) honors — the local equivalent of the Grammys — every year since 2010.<sup>3,4</sup>
- ❖ In 2012, Shila Amzah, a Muslim Malaysian pop singer based in China, won *Asian Wave*, a 2012 Chinese reality singing talent show that features contestants from Asian countries.<sup>5</sup>
- ❖ Ani Zonneveld, a Muslim Malaysian-born pop singer based in Los Angeles, has been writing music for 20 years and her albums “Ummah Wake-Up,” “One,” and “Islamic Hymns: Celebration of Life,” discuss what it means to be a Muslim. She is the first Malaysian to have ever won and been nominated for a Grammy.<sup>6</sup>
- ❖ In 2012, Muslim Dutch, Moroccan, and Algerian jazz and pop singer, Rajae el Mouhandiz, who lives in the Netherlands, created a short documentary film called [Hope](#) which discusses Muslim women’s representation in pop culture. [Hope](#) was debuted in MUSLIMA: Muslim Women’s Art & Voices, a global online exhibition that took place from March 2013 through December 2013. MUSLIMA features the art of Muslim women around the globe.<sup>7</sup>
- ❖ Muslim Egyptian pop singer Omnia Hegazy, who is based in Los Angeles, combines guitar-driven American pop/rock and maqam-based (traditional Arabic melodies) Arabic folk with lyrics about women’s rights and political freedom, while combating perceptions of Muslim women. She has produced two EPs (a collection of songs that are too short to be a complete album) and has been featured on *The Huffington Post* and *The Daily Beast*.<sup>8</sup>
- ❖ Muslim Turkish pop music singer, Sezen Aksu, who is based in Turkey, is the first female Turkish artist to compose and perform her own music. She is known as the “Queen of Turkish Pop” and has produced 25 studio albums since 1977. She is also politically involved in support for constitutional reform, minority rights, women’s rights, the environment, and educational reform in Turkey.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.asafeworldforwomen.org/global-news/general/634-deeyah-pop-star-to-activist.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://fuuse.net/fuusefilms/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.npr.org/2013/12/30/258382710/muslim-pop-star-yuna-on-the-rise-in-america>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/14/arts/international/yuna-has-become-poster-girl-for-young-hijabsters.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/14/arts/international/yuna-has-become-poster-girl-for-young-hijabsters.html?_r=0)

<sup>5</sup> <http://news.asiaone.com/News/Latest%2BNews/Showbiz/Story/A1Story20120925-373536.html>

<sup>6</sup> [http://america.pink/ani-zonneveld\\_405049.html](http://america.pink/ani-zonneveld_405049.html)

<sup>7</sup> <http://muslima.globalfundforwomen.org/content/mainstream-muslima>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.aquila-style.com/focus-points/mightymuslimah/omnia-hegazy-muslim-womens-voices-at-wesleyan/102338/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.sezenaksu.com.tr/en/biography>