

# How Arts, Culture, Music, and Architecture Make Cities More Livable

## The Case of the UAE's Cultural Capital & Abu Dhabi Festival

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مجموعة أبوظبي  
للثقافة والفنون

**ADMAF**





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# Sustainable Development Goals

“UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls on us to imagine more sustainable, more human, more creative cities.

Inventive cities that can act as a driving force for progress, both at the economic, social and environmental levels.”

Ernesto Ottone R.

Assistant Director-General for Culture, UNESCO

In line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, Abu Dhabi is a city whose mission is to stimulate collective and creative affinity for a better future for all.

Our soft cultural infrastructure which sprouted organically in the 1970's since the formation of the Union. It was immediately accompanied by public investments in iconic cultural landmarks and art venues that include the Cultural Foundation (1981) to the Louvre Abu Dhabi (2007), designed by Jean Nouvel.



Abu Dhabi is a cultural hub and destination. People choose to live here for our history and heritage, the cultural attractions, state-of-the-art infrastructure, and natural wonders.



## The Cultural History of Abu Dhabi

From the high arts, iconic architecture, old and new, to diverse musical programs, Abu Dhabi's cultural life is worth celebrating.

The strategically-conceived cultural areas of Abu Dhabi allow its people to share, create, and experience all types of creative artistic expression, forging its path towards becoming a creative city.



The five-year spending plan will drive economic growth, create new jobs and attract talent.

The funds will be used to develop new museums and to invest in the performing arts, music, media and gaming sectors.



Abu Dhabi to invest \$6bn in culture and creative industries



Significant projects currently in development include:

### **Zayed National Museum**

Designed by Pritzker Prize winning architect Lord Norman Foster of Foster + Partners



### **The Abrahamic Family House**

Designed by Sir David Frank Adjaye  
OBE RA



### **Guggenheim Abu Dhabi**

Designed by Frank Gehry



# Abu Dhabi Festival's Impact on the City




ABU DHABI FESTIVAL



# Vision

## Advancing Abu Dhabi as a Global Beacon of Arts & Culture

Through its flagship, the annual Abu Dhabi Festival, ADMAF creates rich cultural experiences at home and abroad, furthering Abu Dhabi as a leading cultural capital.



A festival for the young and adults.  
A festival for residents and cultural tourists.

**1,500** event  
since 2004

**80** events  
on average  
per year

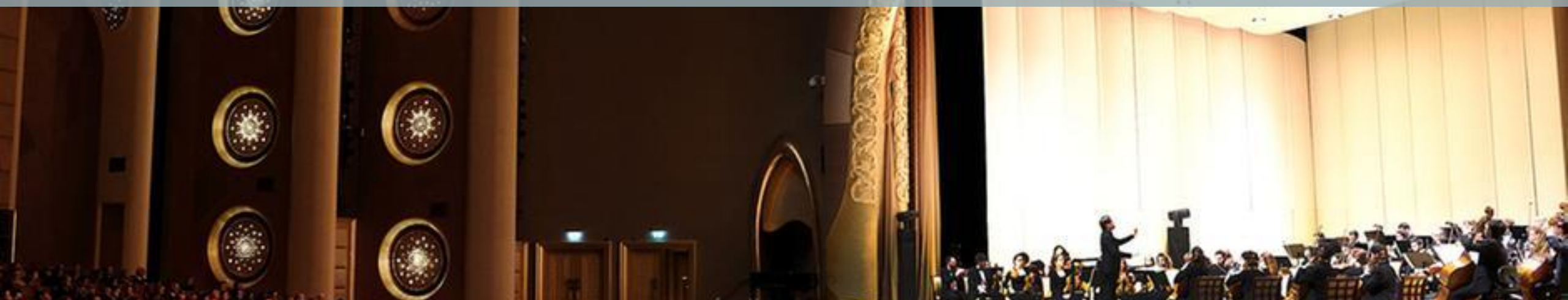
**21%**  
of events  
presented world-  
class artists

**72%**  
of events  
dedicated to  
creative  
education

**6%**  
Are co-productions and co-  
commissions with the world's  
leading organizations presented  
on international stages



# Putting into use the entirety of the cultural infrastructure in the 7 Emirates and Abu Dhabi in Particular



The Abu Dhabi Festival hosts its shows in the various arts venues in the city such as the Arts Center at New York University Abu Dhabi, the Auditorium at Emirates Palace Hotel, the Abu Dhabi Cultural Foundation among many others.



Abu Dhabi Festival brings the world's greatest singers and musicians to Abu Dhabi, many of them performing in the Middle East for the first time.



Through its Festival in the Park, ADF is also multi-faceted cultural celebration for people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds to come together in celebration of creativity through performances, workshops, film screenings and much more.



# Impact on Abu Dhabi

- Historical analysis estimates the Abu Dhabi Festival has been a key catalyst for over USD 1.63 billion of spend from 2008 to 2018
- Attended by 86 different nationalities every year
- 29,333 cumulative visits to Abu Dhabi Festival (16,734 unique attendees)

**Abu Dhabi residents see  
Abu Dhabi as:**

A cultural center (75%)

A destination with an  
international outlook (65%)

Welcoming (49%)

Entertaining (47%)

Impressive (42%)

Enhances community Spirit (92%)

*2018 Nelson Research*





## Conclusion

Artists, cultural organizations and NGO's are the change makers; the influencers.

We open doors for the future.

Once the fruit of our work is enjoyed by people,  
once our voice is heard,

it is inevitable for the governments and the private sector to reconfigure public spaces and build the necessary infrastructure for our creativity to blossom, for us to collectively re-imagine a better future for all.

Arts, music, culture and architecture make cities more livable by people.

But one cannot exist without the other.

The beautiful music halls need innovators, musicians and creative ingenuity to bring them to life.

And it is our duty to strengthen and support these innovators and creators by

creating the conditions for them to innovate and grow, now and for years to come.





THANK YOU

## **ABU DHABI FESTIVAL VISION:**

**ADVANCING ABU  
DHABI AS A GLOBAL  
BEACON OF ARTS  
AND CULTURE.**

- Established in 2004, Abu Dhabi Festival acts as a time of celebration but also as a time of gathering and exchange for the different communities ADMAF serves: the population of the Seven Emirates of the UAE, the region and the world. Abu Dhabi Festival is the time and the place where the year's work is shared, where new encounters are orchestrated and new ideas are forged, where long-trusted partners visit, new collaborations shape, and where artists and audiences connect.
- Abu Dhabi Festival commissions, produces, preserves and presents annually the greatest works of music and arts to create rich cultural experiences in the UAE and beyond.
- The Festival's strong international presence nurtures invaluable cultural dialogue based on mutual respect and understanding to build a more peaceful future through the arts.
- The Festival positions Abu Dhabi as a leading destination for culture and the arts.