

DEPARTMENT
OF **CULTURE**
AND TOURISM
ABU DHABI

ANNUAL REPORT
2017

VOLUME I **CULTURE**

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM ABU DHABI *Volume 1—Culture*



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Chapter 1: Introduction



FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan once said, ‘A nation without a past is a nation without a present or a future. Our nation has a flourishing civilisation, deep-rooted in this land for many centuries. These roots will always thrive and bloom in the present and in the nation’s anticipated future.’

We are extremely proud of the millennia of rich history and deep cultural heritage that are reputational hallmarks of Abu Dhabi. As such, our mission at the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi is twofold: to sustain the cultural heritage and identity of our emirate while promoting our understanding and appreciation of art, architecture, music and other modern forms of culture to an international audience.

The Department achieves these goals by sharing Abu Dhabi’s unique museum legacy; fostering its wide-ranging conservation efforts, cultural events and exhibitions; and collaborating with and learning from other cultures around the world.

In 2017, Abu Dhabi added to its unique cultural landscape with one of the most anticipated events in its recent history: the unveiling and opening of the Louvre Abu Dhabi. This museum sits in our burgeoning Saadiyat Cultural District, and it reinforces Abu Dhabi’s standing in the international cultural scene.

Louvre Abu Dhabi took its place alongside our many other cultural and historic-heritage sites, such as Qasr Al Hosn and Manarat Al Saadiyat.

We have also worked this year to develop and promote the UNESCO World Heritage Site at Al Ain, including an annual programme of family-focused events at Al Ain Oasis. We also worked to develop and launch new programming at Al Jahili Fort and Qasr Al Muwajji.

In 2017, we reinforced our commitment to the vision of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan by honouring his values and continuing his mission to protect our cultural heritage. At the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi, we are proud to be spearheading this work.

Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak







FOREWORD FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

Culture is the energy that unites a nation. It plays an integral role in the success and sustainability of a country, forming the bond that connects us across generations and inspires us all to be expressive and to innovate.

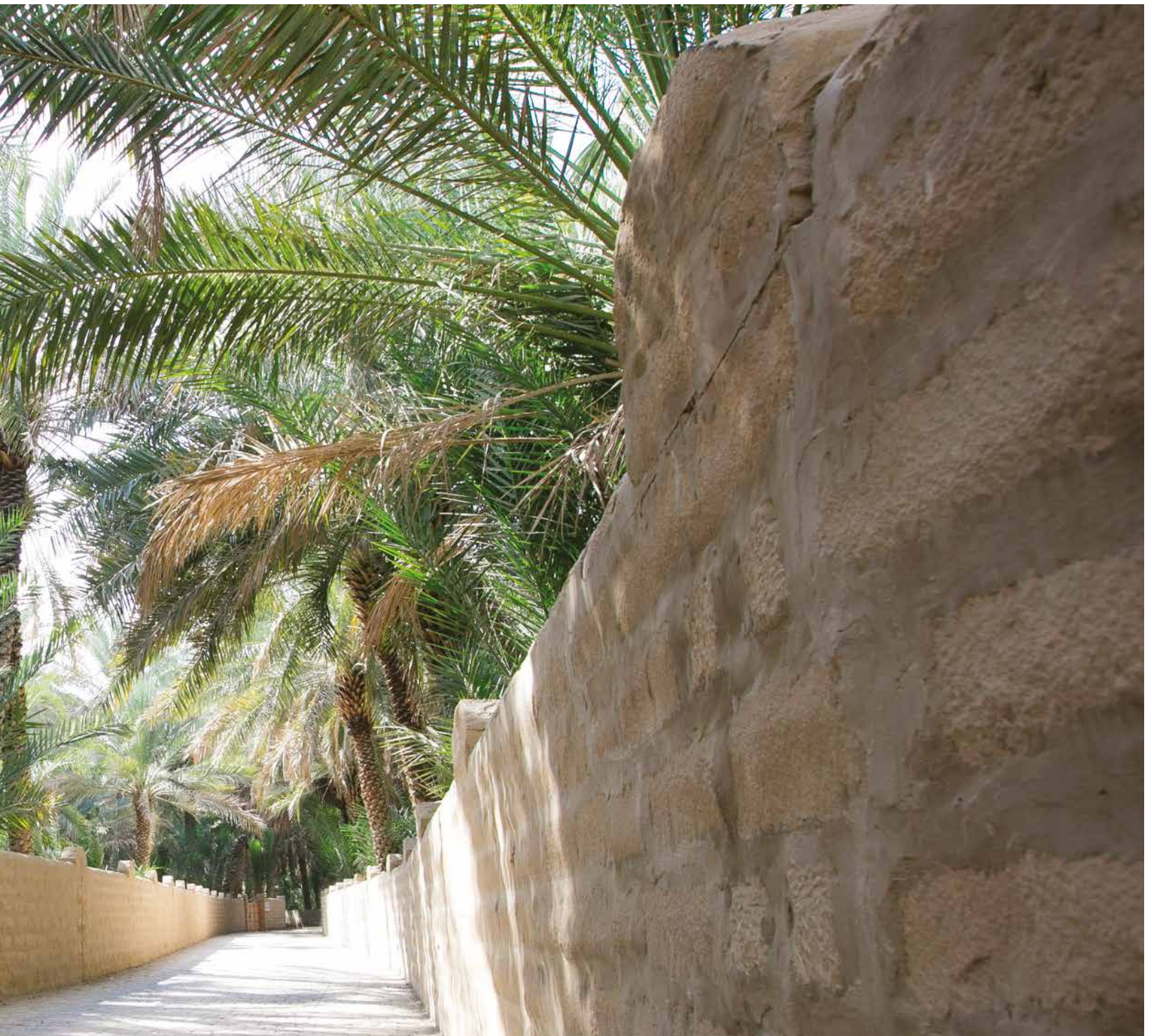
As part of its cultural vision, the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi is proud to bring diverse cultural platforms to audiences in Abu Dhabi, as well as to showcase the depth and wealth of Abu Dhabi’s local talent, which gives expression to the Emirate’s history, heritage, modernity and contemporary appeal. Championing the ongoing development of the emirate’s cultural initiatives, we have pioneered a range of programmes to enhance the accessibility and visibility of Abu Dhabi’s culture and heritage to ever-wider audiences. While the opening of Louvre Abu Dhabi was an exceptional addition to Abu Dhabi’s cultural landscape, the emirate has also witnessed other significant milestones in the past year, such as welcoming 230,000 visitors in five months of the first season of the Al Ain Culture Programme.

A specific component of our cultural mandate is to preserve our heritage and culture, safeguarding it for the generations to come. Working to accomplish this, we have strived to develop innovative and creative approaches to protecting and promoting tangible and intangible heritage, as this represents a powerful tool for the enhancement of intercultural dialogue and reconciliation. Among the most important milestones in this arena from 2017 was the inaugural Culture Summit, drawing the most influential current and rising arts and culture leaders from across the world to Abu Dhabi; the establishment of the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas; and the recognition of Al-Azi, a form of traditional Emirati poetry, as part of the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding list. With such actions we hope that both tangible and intangible heritage do not pass into faded memory with the passage of time, but rather remain vital and vibrant parts of our Emirati life and cultural cache. These initiatives remain in constant innovative flux, as we strive for ever-more efficient methods to preserve our culture.

Looking to the future, we are committed to further deepening global awareness of Abu Dhabi’s cultural essence as well as inspiring cultural awareness and pride in the emirate’s future generations. This mandate will frame all our efforts going forward.

Saif Saeed Ghobash





WORLD
HERITAGE SITE

THE CULTURAL SITES OF AL AIN:

- 1. HAFIT
- 2. HILI
- 3. BIDAA BINT SAUD
- 4. OASIS AREAS



HISTORIC
BUILDINGS

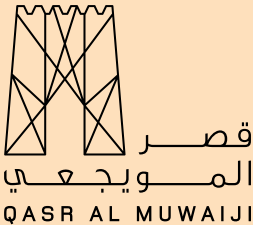
- 1. AL JAHILI FORT
- 2. QASR AL MUWAIJI
- 3. QASR AL HOSN

1.



AL JAHILI FORT قلعة الجاهلي

2.

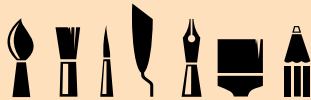


قصر المويجي
QASR AL MUWAIJI

COMMUNITY
CENTRES

- 1. AL MARSAM AL HOR
- 2. AL QATTARA ARTS CENTRE
- 3. BAIT AL OUD
- 4. CHILDREN'S ARTS CENTRE
- 5. MANARAT AL SAADIYAT

1.



AL MARSAM AL HOR المرسم الحر

2.



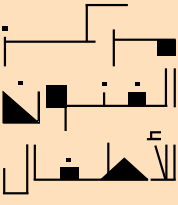
مركز القطارة للفنون
AL QATTARA ARTS CENTRE

3.



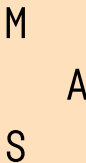
بيت العود العربي
BAIT AL OUD

4.



CHILDREN'S ARTS CENTRE

5.



منارة السعديات
M A N A R A T
A L
S A A D I Y A T

MUSEUMS

1. AL AIN MUSEUM
2. GUGGENHEIM ABU DHABI
3. LOUVRE ABU DHABI
4. ZAYED NATIONAL MUSEUM

1.

متحف العين
AL AIN MUSEUM

2.

جوجنهايم أبوظبي
GUGGENHEIM ABU DHABI

3.

اللوفر أبوظبي
LOUVRE ABU DHABI

4.

متحف زايد الوطني
ZAYED NATIONAL MUSEUM

CULTURAL PROGRAMMES

1. ABU DHABI INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR
2. AL AIN BOOK FAIR
3. ESDARAT
4. KALIMA
5. SHEIKH ZAYED BOOK AWARD
6. ABU DHABI ART
7. ABU DHABI CLASSICS
8. CINEMA AL QATTARA
9. CULTURE SUMMIT
10. EMIRATI MUSIC SERIES
11. MANARAT AL SAADIYAT RAMADAN EVENINGS
12. LITERATURE AND MUSIC FESTIVAL
13. NATIONAL TRADITIONAL HANDICRAFTS FESTIVAL
14. SOUQ AL QATTARA
15. UMSIYAT

1.

معرض أبوظبي
الدولي للكتاب
ABU DHABI
INTERNATIONAL
BOOK FAIR

2.

معرض العين للكتاب
AL AIN BOOK FAIR

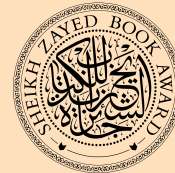
3.

إصدارات
esdarat
دار الكتب الوطنية

4.

كلمة
KALIMA

5.



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب
Sheikh Zayed Book Award

6.

فن
أبوظبي
abu dhabi
art

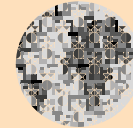
7.

موسيقى أبوظبي الكلاسيكية
ABU DHABI CLASSICS

8.

القطارة
AL QATTARA

9.



CultureSummit 2018
Abu Dhabi

10.

موسيقى
إماراتية
EMIRATI
MUSIC

11.

أميشتال
منازل السعديات
الرمضانية
MANARAT ALSAADIYAT
RAMADAN EVENINGS

12.

مهرجان
الأدب
والموسيقى
LITERATURE
AND MUSIC
FESTIVAL

13.

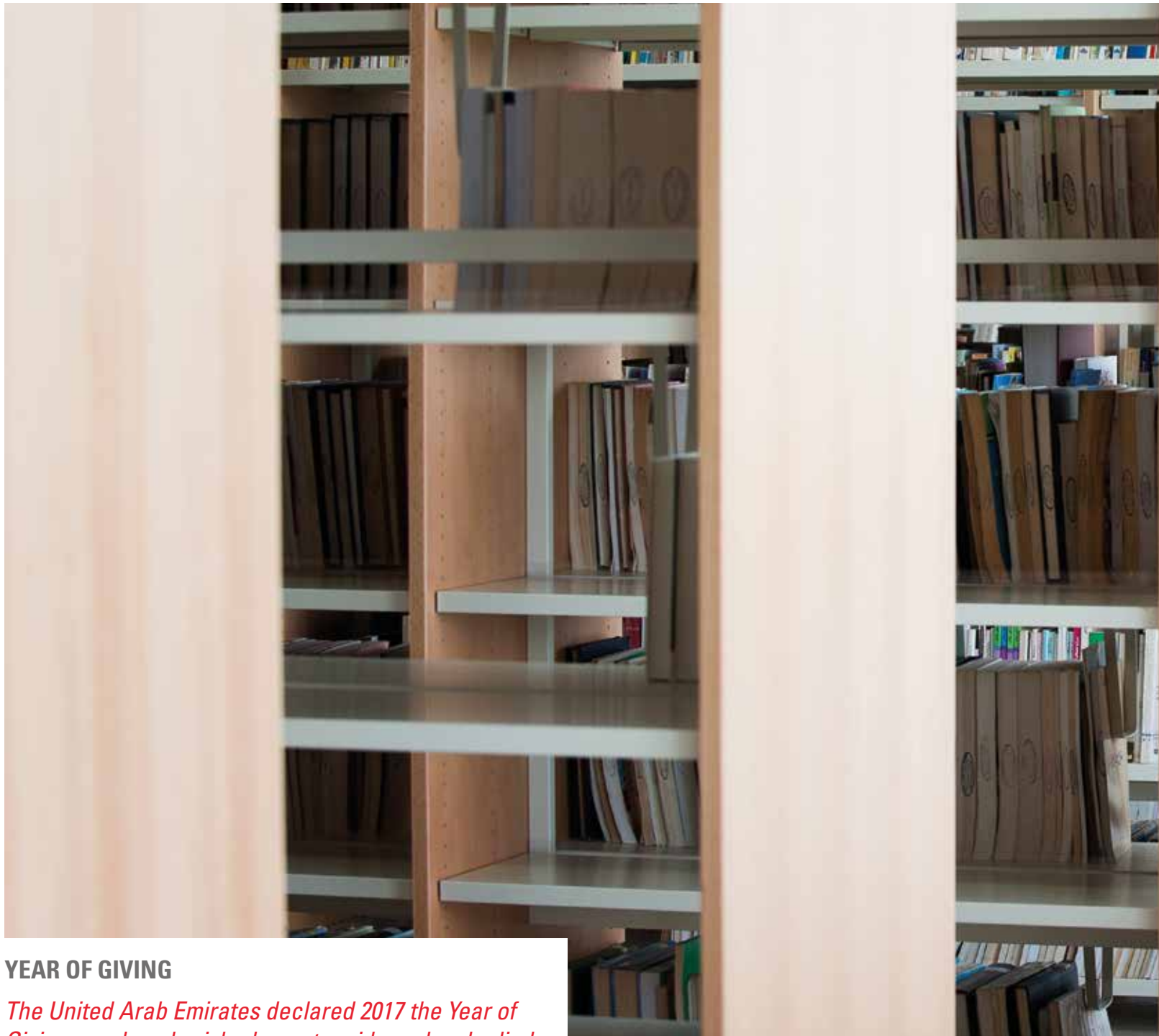
مهرجان
الحرف
والصناعات
التقليدية
TRADITIONAL
HANDICRAFTS FESTIVAL

14.

سوق القطارة
SOUQ AL QATTARA

15.

أمسيات
umsiyat



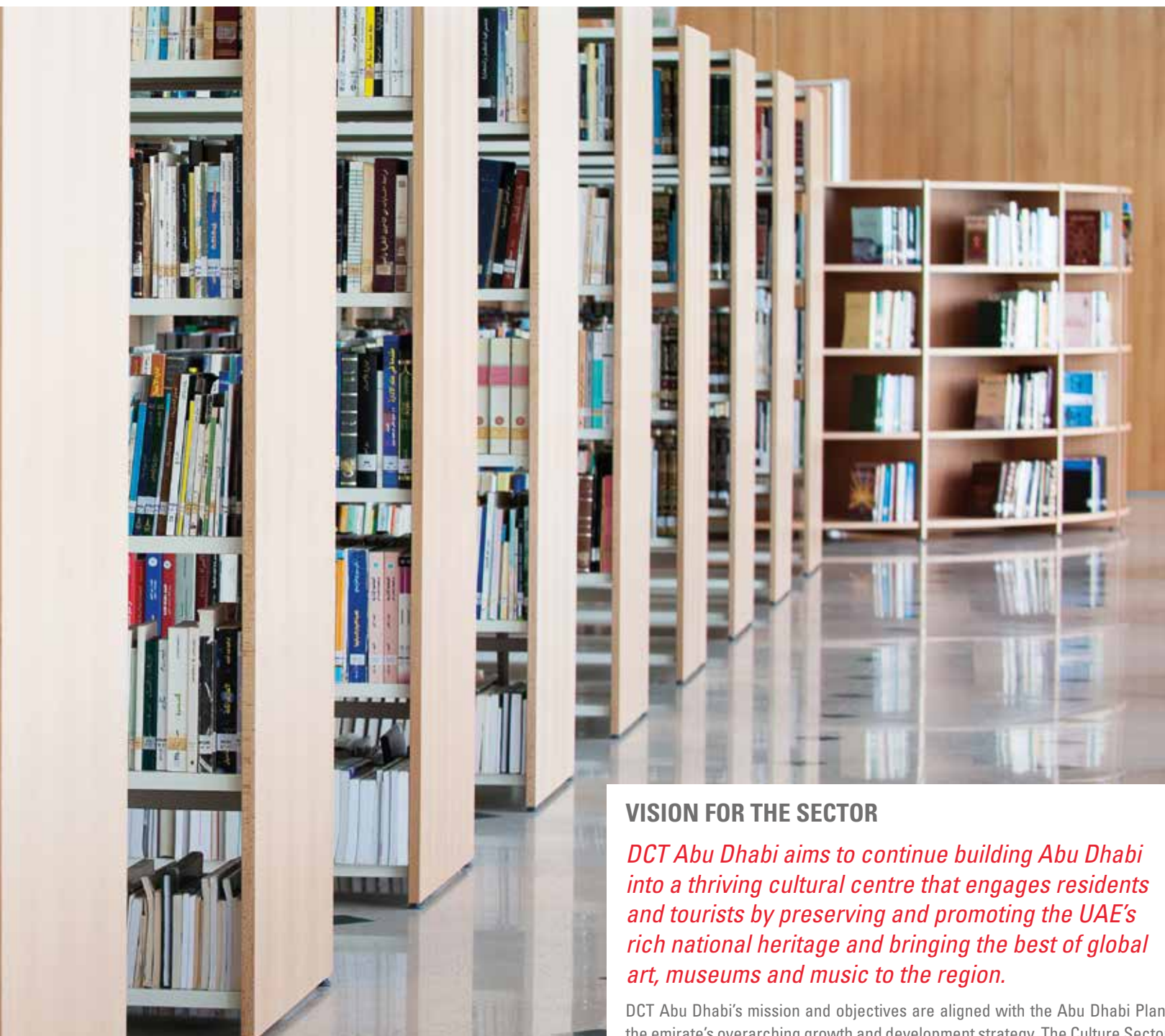
YEAR OF GIVING

The United Arab Emirates declared 2017 the Year of Giving, a value cherished countrywide and embodied by the founding father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

The Year of Giving initiative had three main pillars: corporate social responsibility, volunteerism and serving the nation.

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi) implemented several initiatives in 2017 to support government and citizen efforts in the Year of Giving. Some are discussed here, and some are discussed in the tourism volume of DCT Abu Dhabi's annual report.

1. **Reading initiatives:** DCT Abu Dhabi collected more than 30,000 books to donate to schools, hospitals and other entities across the emirate and abroad to highlight the benefit and importance of reading.
2. **Workshops in juvenile centres and prisons:** DCT Abu Dhabi organised outreach workshops and events for people in juvenile detention centres and prisons to help these individuals develop both personally and professionally and to increase awareness about the importance of reading.
3. **Volunteer employee engagement:** DCT Abu Dhabi encouraged employees to enrol on volunteer.ae and log in volunteering hours. In addition, DCT Abu Dhabi created a new excellence award to recognise employees with exceptional volunteer contributions.
4. **Donation of IT equipment:** DCT Abu Dhabi organised the donation of IT assets that have exhausted their book value. The assets were reformatted and provided to relevant charitable organisations.



VISION FOR THE SECTOR

DCT Abu Dhabi aims to continue building Abu Dhabi into a thriving cultural centre that engages residents and tourists by preserving and promoting the UAE's rich national heritage and bringing the best of global art, museums and music to the region.

DCT Abu Dhabi's mission and objectives are aligned with the Abu Dhabi Plan, the emirate's overarching growth and development strategy. The Culture Sector strategy consists of three main objectives:

Enhance cultural, intellectual and artistic creativity by creating a dynamic cultural scene and public-engagement programme, enhancing reading through libraries, creating and implementing artistic platforms, and training and developing UAE nationals in the specialised fields of culture to develop a dynamic workforce in the sector.

Enhance and promote cultural heritage by formulating adequate policies, regulations and mechanisms to preserve the emirate's heritage; conducting a full inventory of collections held by Abu Dhabi entities to establish the emirate's permanent collection; researching, documenting, publishing and promoting the emirate's intangible culture; and developing a comprehensive programme to weave art and heritage disciplines into the education curriculum.

Develop and support cultural tourism by defining the parameters for the identification, protection, conservation, rehabilitation, presentation, promotion and management of the emirate's cultural sites.

The museums, cultural sites and landscapes, libraries, events and programmes discussed in this report are crucial to meeting these three goals. The development of museums in Abu Dhabi helps to expand art collections, provides a platform to develop cultural heritage and tourism, and encourages cultural vocations among young UAE nationals. DCT Abu Dhabi has invested resources and years of research into documenting and conserving the archaeological sites and historic buildings described in this report to preserve the UAE heritage. The diverse exhibitions, programmes and events calendar aim to engage the community in the cultural scene.



**Chapter 2:
2017 highlights**



Opening of
Louvre Abu Dhabi,
first universal museum
in the Arab world

Al-Azi,
a form of traditional UAE
poetry, inscribed in the
**UNESCO Intangible
Cultural Heritage in
Need of Urgent
Safeguarding list**



Abu Dhabi's
Bait Al Oud,
the leading institute on
Arabic music, began
welcoming outside visitors
in its production atelier and
introduced **rebab** in the
teaching curriculum



Opening of
**Manarat Al Saadiyat
Art Studio**



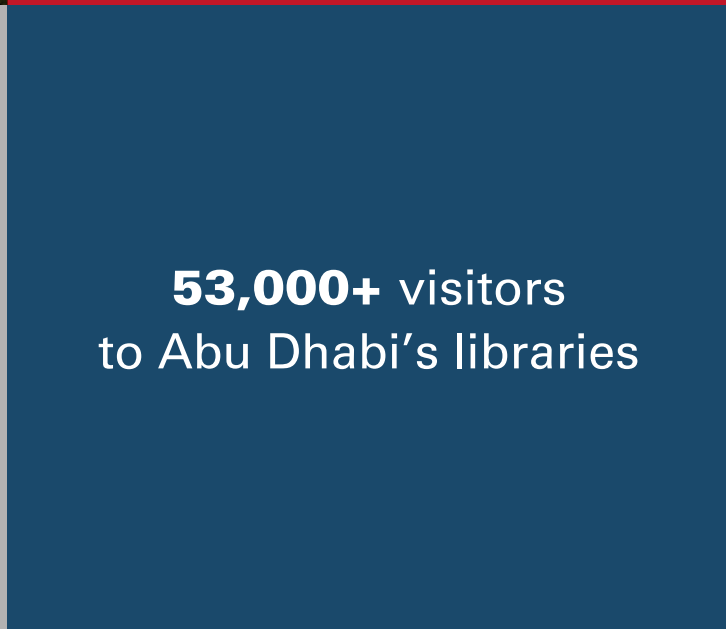
Exhibitions curated
by DCT Abu Dhabi, such as
**'Hajj: Memories
of a Journey'**
and the
**Guggenheim Abu Dhabi's
'The Creative Act'**,
reached thousands of people



First season of the
**Al Ain Culture
Programme**
attracted more than
**230,000 visitors
in five months**



Launch of the
**Talent Development
Programme**
with Abu Dhabi
Department for
Education and
Knowledge training
600 art teachers



53,000+ visitors
to Abu Dhabi's libraries

The discovery of an
8,000-year-old pearl
on Marwah

Establishment of the
**International Alliance
for the Protection of
Heritage in Conflict
Areas**

47 galleries from 30
cities in 18 countries
participated in
Abu Dhabi Art

**Abu Dhabi
Heritage Law**
established to protect the
emirate's heritage

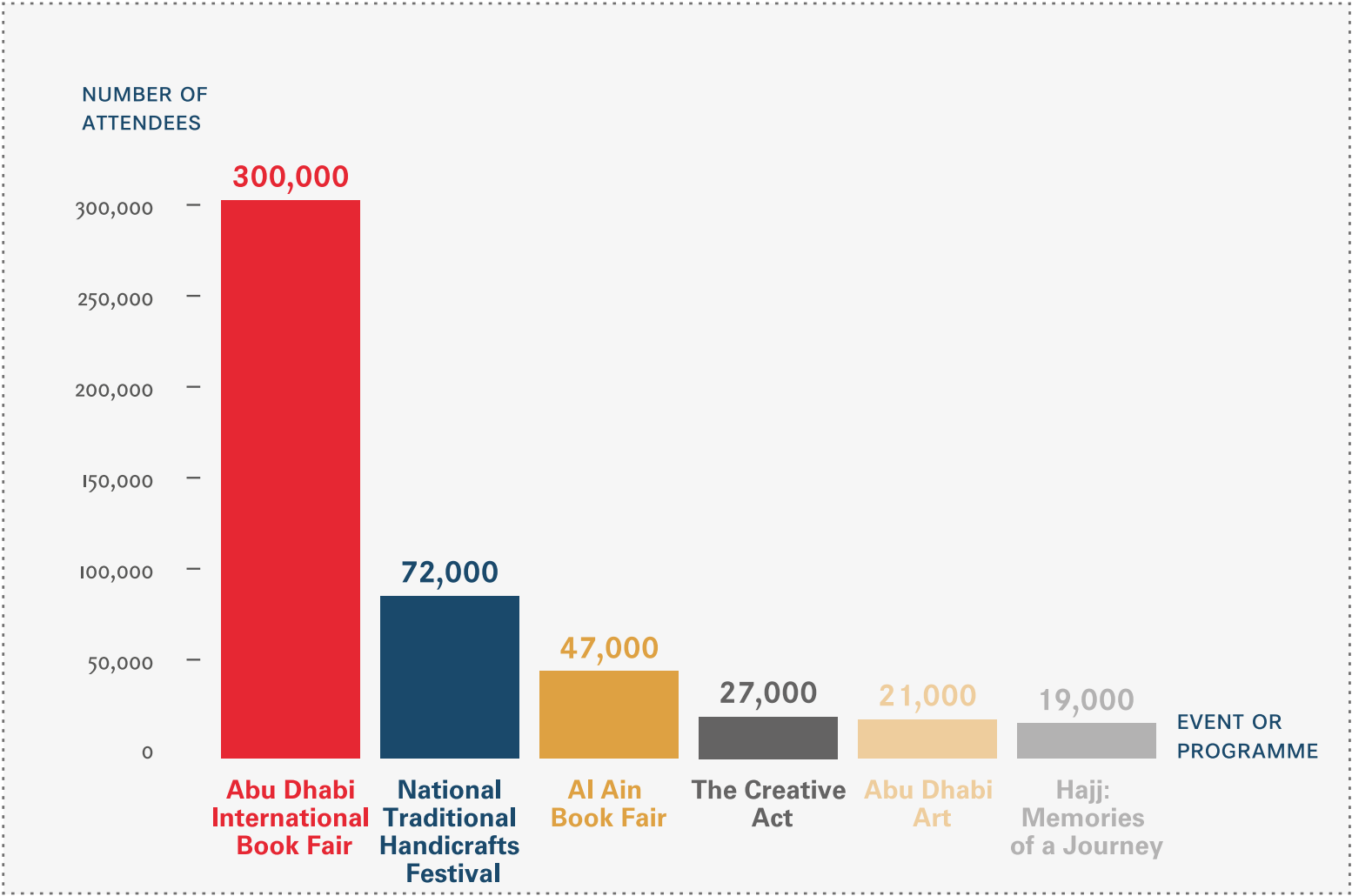
**Abu Dhabi
International
Book Fair**
welcomed
300,000 visitors
in person and 142,000
visitors online

Inaugural
Culture Summit
convened the most
influential current and
rising arts and culture
leaders internationally
in Abu Dhabi

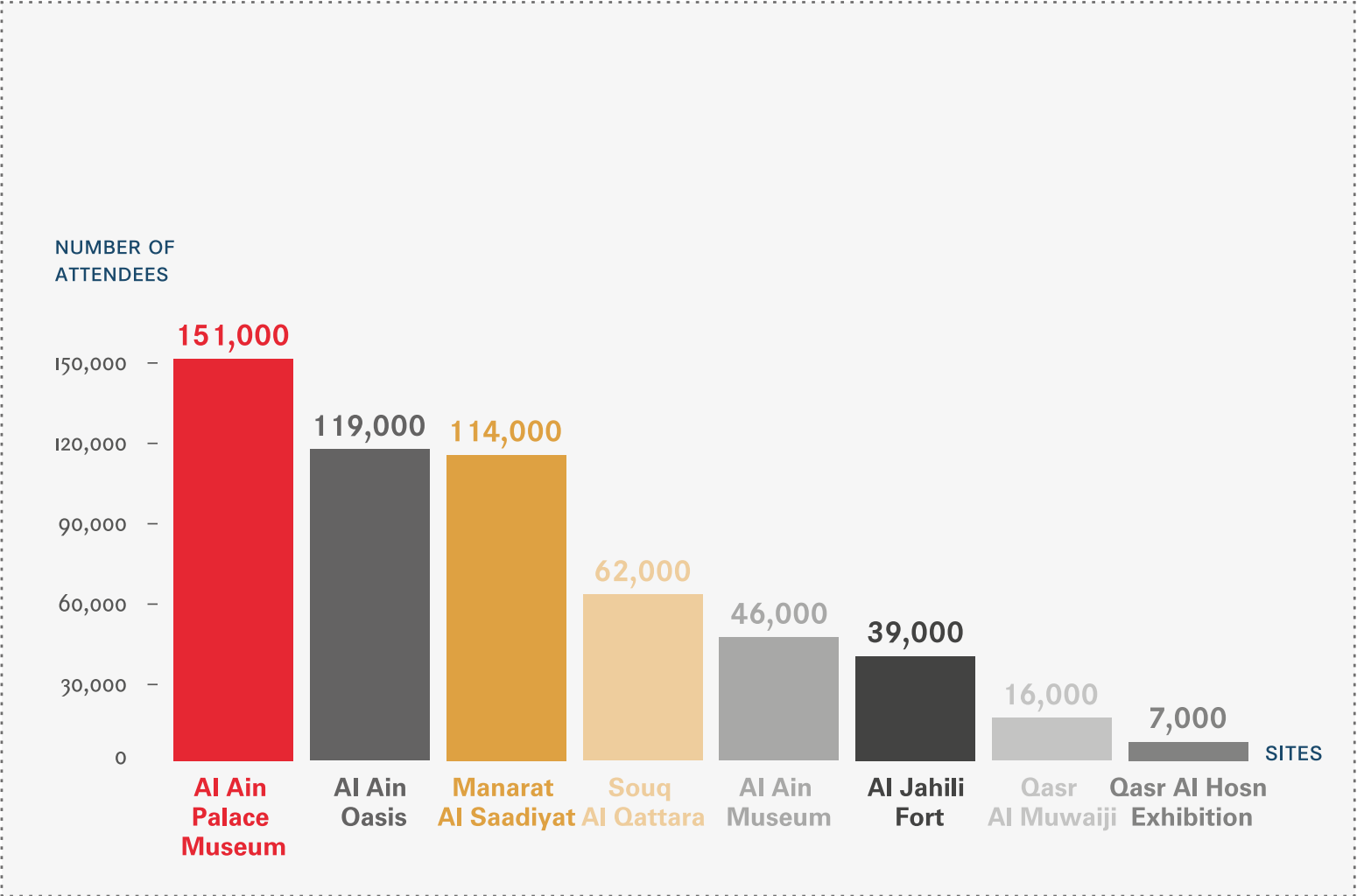
80+ publications
in 2017

Acquisition of
Leonardo da Vinci's
Salvator Mundi,
one of fewer than twenty
surviving paintings
by the sixteenth-century
Italian Renaissance
master

KEY EVENTS AND PROGRAMMES



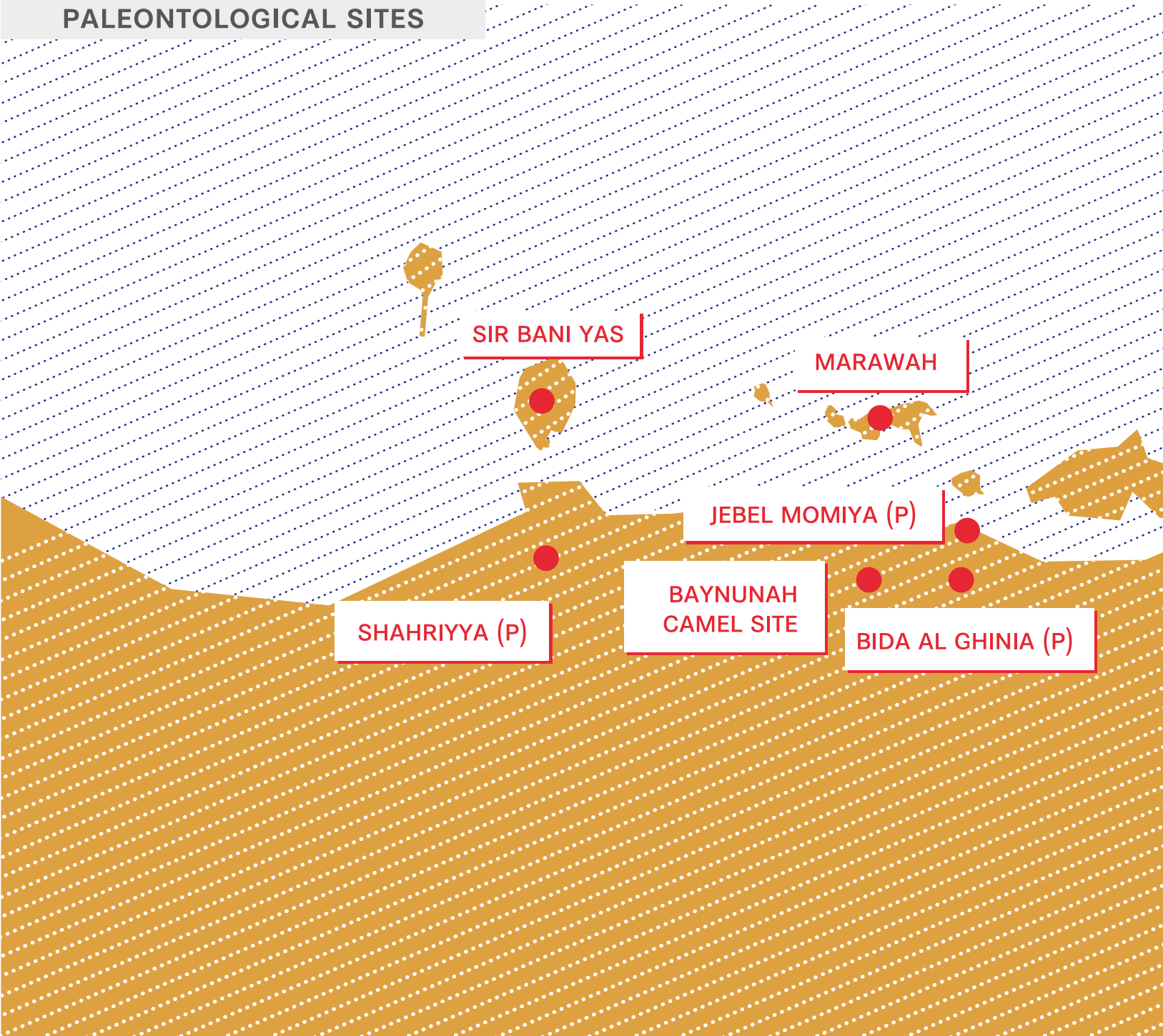
VISITORS TO KEY CULTURAL
SITES IN 2017





Chapter 3: Cultural sites and centres

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL SITES



The archaeological sites, historic buildings, community centres, museums and libraries of Abu Dhabi tell the story of the UAE’s cultural heritage and cultural scene, while providing a space for community engagement and dialogue. Understanding Abu Dhabi’s history links people to their land and roots and provides a foundation to shape the future.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Abu Dhabi has a rich archaeological and historic environment. In 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi led excavations and research across Abu Dhabi emirate sites, turning up findings that stretch humankind’s knowledge of the region, its inhabitants from millions of years ago and its role in maritime trade and commerce. These studies provide a deeper understanding of the country’s heritage and history.

AL DHAFRA

ABU DHABI

HILI 8*



AL AIN

SITES LABELLED WITH (P) ARE PALEONTOLOGICAL SITES DISCOVERED DURING THE BAYNUNAH FOSSIL PROJECT

* COMPONENT OF UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE CULTURAL SITES OF AL AIN

Hili 8 in Al Ain

New archaeological findings date Hili 8 further into the past than ever before.

With roots that extend back more than five millennia, Hili 8 is believed to be the location of one of the earliest agricultural settlements in the UAE. Archaeologists have conducted excavations in an effort to clarify the history of this site. Work began in March 2017 and continued through autumn, uncovering evidence of human occupants prior to Building III (previously considered the earliest structure at the site, dating to c. 3000 BCE). Continued analysis of the excavated material, including archaeobotanical remains, is expected to reveal the agricultural and economic activities in the initial settlement of the World Heritage Site of Al Ain.

During an Archaeology Open Day, members of the community were invited to visit the excavation site and learn about the importance of Hili 8's contribution to the UAE's cultural heritage. In less than two days, the event attracted about 700 public visitors and schoolchildren.

Marawah

The discovery of an 8,000-year-old pearl on Marawah.

Located 100 km from Abu Dhabi, Marawah was home to the earliest inhabitants of the UAE. Archaeological research at this low-lying island revealed further evidence of Neolithic stone-built architecture. Excavations by DCT Abu Dhabi archaeologists in 2017 focused on a newly unearthed house that contained habitation deposits rich in archaeological artefacts. Teams recovered well-preserved stone tools and painted plaster fragments. The discovery of an 8,000-year-old pearl was of great importance.

Continued analysis of the finds should provide additional details about this settlement, which is without parallel in the Arabian Gulf and about the economy of the early sixth millennium BCE.

Sir Bani Yas

New finds provide additional detail on vital trade route through the UAE.

Excavations on Sir Bani Yas Island, part of the UAE's Al Dhafra region, have revealed the key role that the region played in maritime trade thousands of years ago. In spring 2017, archaeologists found a building constructed of stone dating to the Bronze Age (c. 2000–1800 BCE). The building contained imported ceramics from Bahrain as well as South Asia. One of the most remarkable finds was an example of a stamp steel, which was used to authorise shipments of goods around the Arabian Gulf and implies that merchants conducted sales and transactions. This discovery suggests that the island was part of a network established to facilitate trade in copper and other materials. DCT Abu Dhabi archaeologists Ali Meqbali and Abdulla Al Kaabi presented the results of the excavation at the Seminar for Arabian Studies in July 2017, and the object is currently displayed in Louvre Abu Dhabi.





Baynunah 6,000-Year-Old Camel Kill Site

Clues uncovered about ancient hunting patterns.

Excavations at Baynunah show that people used their knowledge of the environment to hunt wild camels 6,000 years ago. This discovery is important as there is now evidence that camels might have been first domesticated in the UAE.

In November 2017, lab technicians performed detailed 3D scanning on the 6,000-year-old wild camel skeletons discovered just to the south-east of the Baynunah forest. This unique location is a kill site, where Late Stone Age people hunted wild camels that clustered around an ancient lake. Lidar laser scanning, digital photography with photogrammetric rectification and filming provided a detailed 3D model of the site; this model will be used to support future analysis and interpretation as well as suitable educational tools for future exhibitions and museum displays.



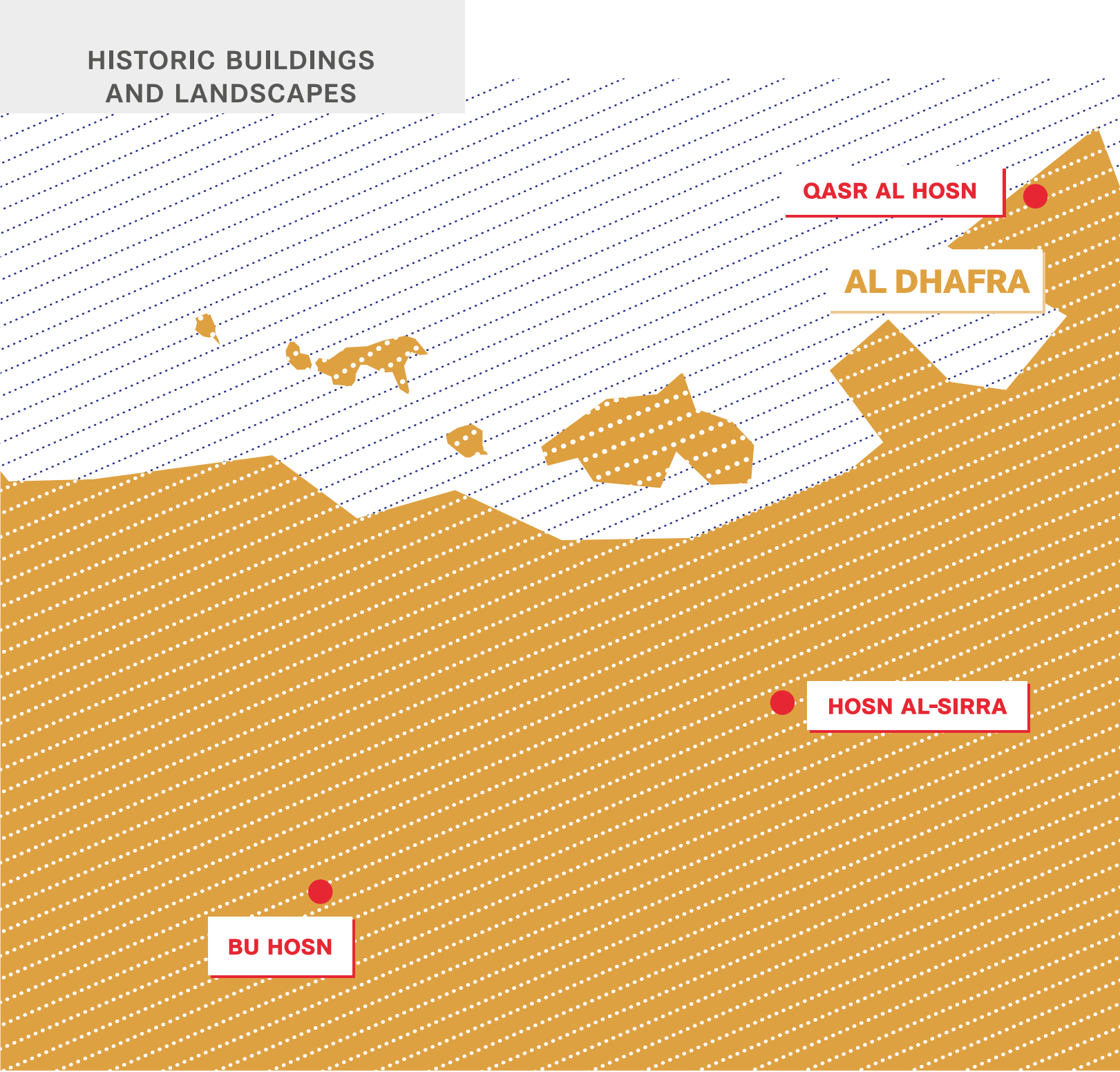
Baynunah Late Miocene fossil project

New publications highlight findings at Abu Dhabi fossil sites.

In December 2017, a team of palaeontologists conducted systematic monitoring of the majority of the known Late Miocene fossil sites in the Al Dhafra region. The team made visits to Hamra, Harmia, Kihal, Jebel Momiyah, Ras al-Qala, Shuwaihat and Umm al-Ishtan—fossil sites that belong to the Baynunah geological formation and date back 6 million to 8 million years.

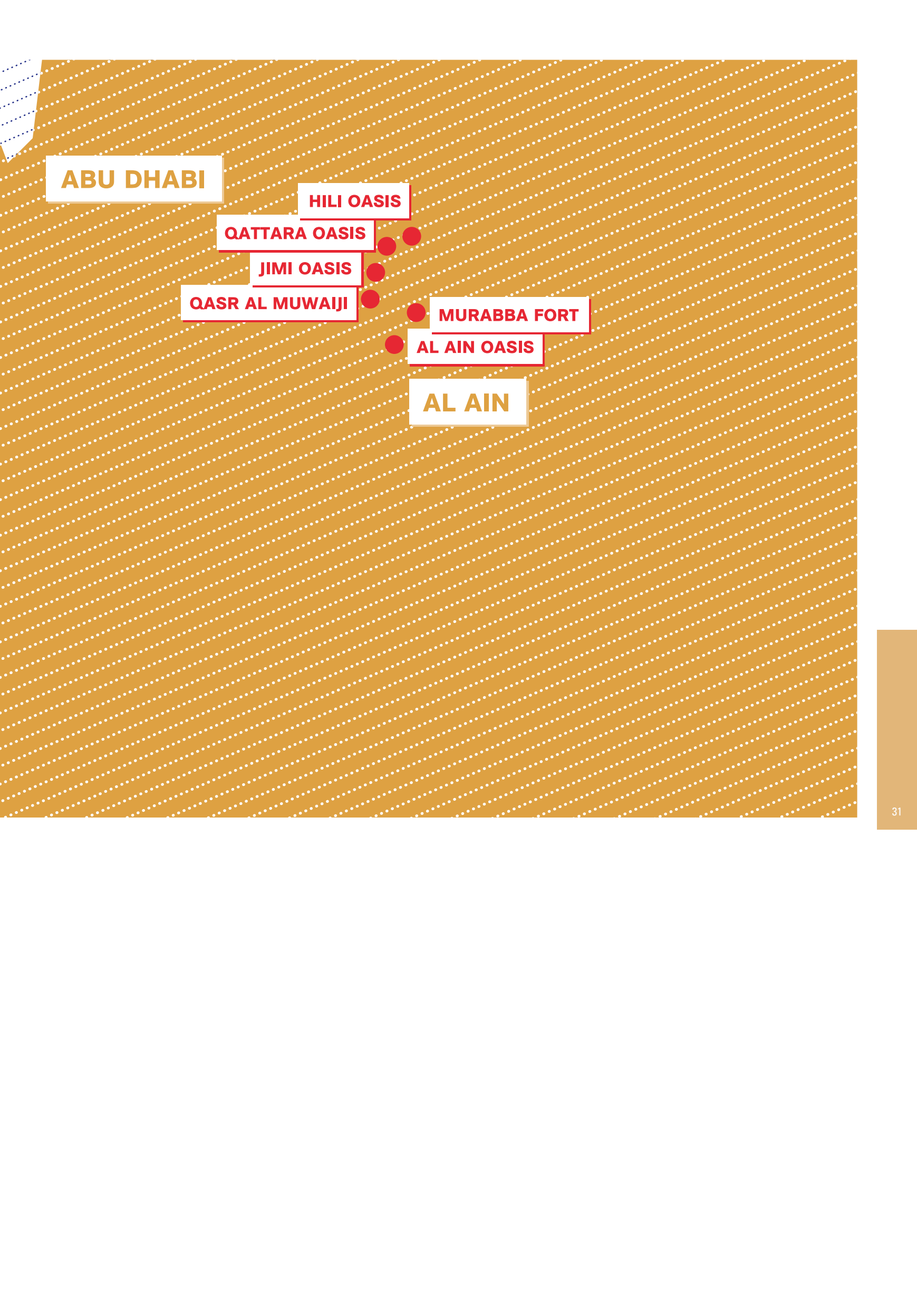
In 2017, a book was published about this work, and an important scientific paper described an early species of hippopotamus discovered in Abu Dhabi from the Late Miocene Baynunah Formation. New surveys conducted in December 2017 identified three new Late Miocene elephant trackway sites at Bida al-Ghinia (BGH1), Shahriyya (SHA1) and Jebel Momiyah (MIM2) to complement those already known at Mleisa 1, Mleisa 2 and Bida al-Mutawaa.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPES



HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

Much of Abu Dhabi’s rich heritage can be found in historic man-made buildings and ancient natural landscapes. DCT Abu Dhabi’s work in 2017 sought to ensure these important elements of Abu Dhabi’s heritage are protected and presented to the public. In addition to the sites described below, DCT Abu Dhabi continued to conduct its preventive and curative conservation measures throughout the emirate, including on the historic buildings of Delma Island, Muwaiji Mosque, Bin Hilal Mosque, Bin Bodowah Mosque, Bu Hosn Site, Al Jahili Fort and Murabba Fort.



ABU DHABI

HILI OASIS

QATTARA OASIS

JIMI OASIS

QASR AL MUWAIJI

MURABBA FORT

AL AIN OASIS

AL AIN



Qasr Al Hosn

Site restoration at Abu Dhabi island's oldest surviving building aims to preserve the cultural heart of Abu Dhabi.

The Qasr Al Hosn watchtower dates back to the mid-1700s, and was the home of the ruling Al Nahyan family until 1966. DCT Abu Dhabi is overseeing the restoration of the site, which marks a significant phase of the fort's conservation and the site's development. The site also consists of the National Consultative Council and the iconic Cultural Foundation Building. The entire site is an important landmark and destination in Abu Dhabi for residents and tourists alike.

Archaeological finds

In April–May 2017, conservation workers uncovered the remains of a number of internal structures cut down into the natural beachrock outcrop on which the fort was built. These investigations also provided new evidence for a building in the centre of the Inner Fort known from historic photographs; constructional details of the Outer Palace buildings (such as barjeels and polylobeds), the north-east majlis of Sheikh Shakhbut, buildings at Qasr Al Hosn from the 1950s and 1960s; and a historic well to the west of the Inner Fort. Recent archaeological efforts within the courtyard of the Inner Fort have also unearthed a number of well-preserved cannon balls that would once have been ammunition for the fort's cannons as well as coins and pottery shards dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Exhibition and events

The 'Qasr Al Hosn Exhibition' at Qasr Al Hosn Centre tells the story of Abu Dhabi, the historic layers of the city and the people who have made it their home. The exhibition includes treasured items from the past for the public to view and learn about the history of the fort as well as the master plan for the Qasr Al Hosn Fort's conservation. The exhibition also includes a film highlighting oral testimonials from the people who lived within and around the fort. The exhibition has enjoyed a steady flow of visitors since its opening in February 2017.



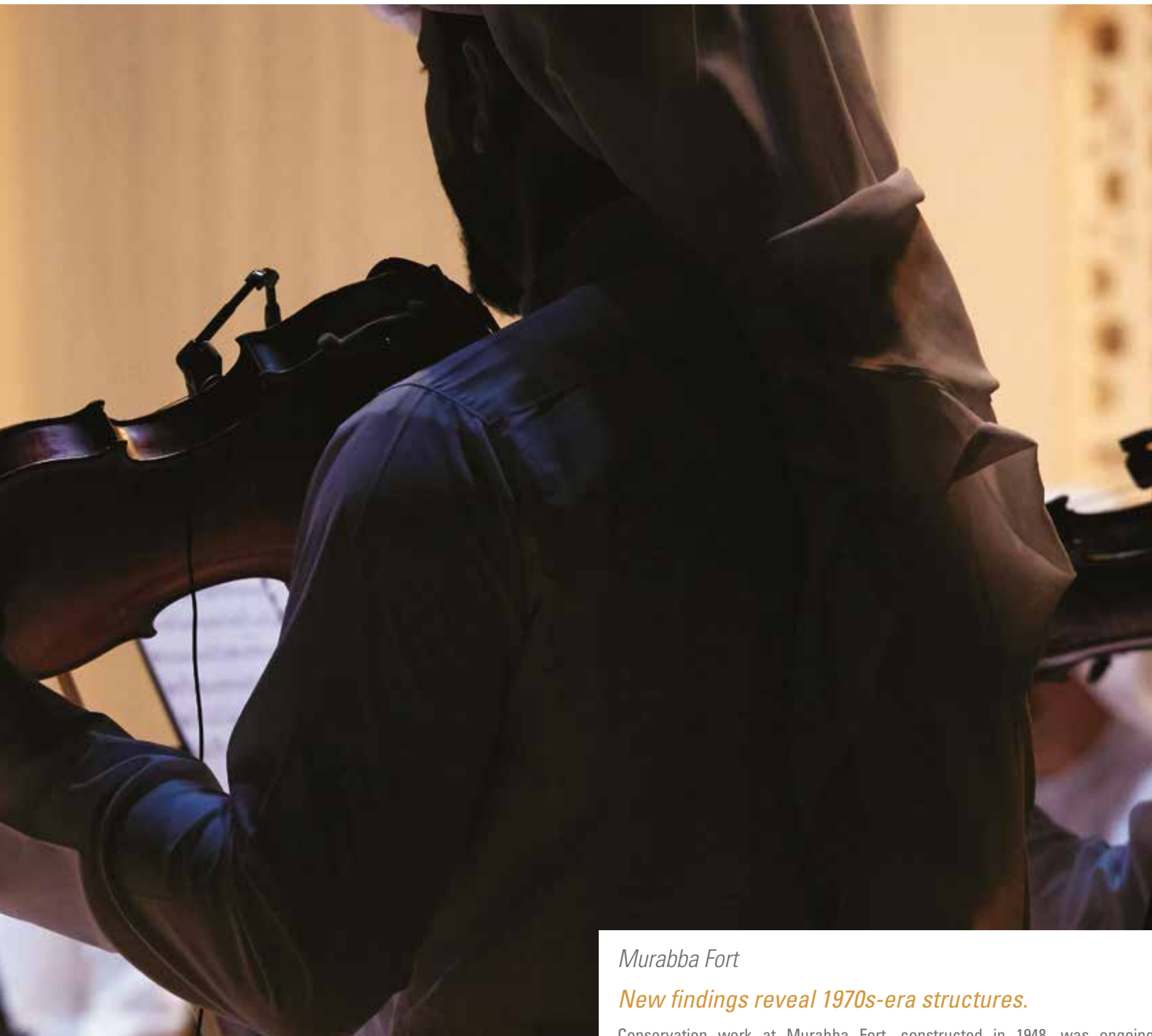
Qasr Al Muwaiji

Bait Al Oud concerts and poetry evenings held at Qasr Al Muwaiji.

Qasr Al Muwaiji, the birthplace of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE and the Ruler of Abu Dhabi, is an important cultural site in the UAE. Located in the centre of Al Ain, the building has been restored and serves as a museum and an exhibition space that tell the story of Al Nahyan rulers who have occupied the building.

In December 2017, musicians from Bait Al Oud, Abu Dhabi's institute of Arabic music, performed concerts in Qasr Al Muwaiji as part of the annual DCT Abu Dhabi Music Programme. Azerbaijani musician Shahriyar, together with Bait Al Oud teachers, took the audience on a musical journey through the Arab World and Asia Minor. The musicians were joined by prominent Emirati poets Hamed Al Hashemi and Ahmed Al Mannaee, creating a dialogue between international and traditional music and the voices, thoughts and visions of Emirati poets.

In collaboration with the Academy of Poetry, Qasr Al Muwaiji held a series of poetry evenings that were linked to the symbolic significance of Qasr Al Muwaiji, the birthplace of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE and the Ruler of Abu Dhabi.



Murabba Fort

New findings reveal 1970s-era structures.

Conservation work at Murabba Fort, constructed in 1948, was ongoing throughout 2017. Archaeological efforts found that part of the main gate and one of the rooms of the watchman's accommodations survive from the 1970s era of the Fort.

The Fort was entirely restored, and currently, interpretation works are ongoing to prepare the Fort to open for public visitation.

Hosn Al-Sirra and Bu Hosn

New research and analysis shed light on Abu Dhabi's history prior to the arrival of the Bani Yas tribes.

The desert area known as Hosn Al-Sirra (also called Mantiqat al-Sirra) lies about 30 km east of Madinat Zayed. The site's archaeological remains include a defensive wall and tower, evidence of a possible enclosure and industrial features associated with metalworking. In spring 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi partnered with interns from Zayed University to conduct a detailed field-walking survey and ceramic analysis, the results of which suggest the site was occupied primarily in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The site has therefore already contributed significantly to the understanding of an important but little-known period in the history of Abu Dhabi preceding the movement of the Bani Yas tribes from the Al Dhafra region to Abu Dhabi.

The fortified building at Bu Hosn, located in the desert south-west of Al Ain, is another important desert site from a similar period. Documentation and emergency stabilisation of the structure necessitated by erosion of base of walls by rain and wind took place in early 2017.





Al Ain World Heritage Site

A new survey of Hili Oasis builds the world's knowledge of this ancient site.

Dating from the third millennium BCE, the Hili Oasis is part of the UAE's UNESCO World Heritage Site at Al Ain. In February 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi and Zayed University collaborated to survey the oasis. It was the latest in an annual field school series that began in 2014 to introduce Emirati students to archaeological methodology and Al Ain's oasis landscape. The project, which has resulted in surveys of the Qattara, Jimi and Hili oases, seeks to understand the chronological development of the oases and their relationship to the activity identified in finds, assemblages and the archaeological record of the existing historic buildings. The project's mapping data and other information will further form the basis of an inventory of cultural heritage sites that will be used to prioritise conservation and interpretation of the oasis. Archaeologists presented the results of the Hili Oasis survey at the Seminar for Arabian Studies in London in July 2017 and at an international conference at Antibes, France, in October 2017.

DCT Abu Dhabi has also continued to develop the management plan for the Al Ain World Heritage Site as well as guidelines for the buffer zones—the areas that help protect the integrity of the site.

My Old House

In February and November 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi organised My Old House, a public tour of the historic and cultural sites of Al Ain. The programme aimed to increase awareness of the importance of the emirate's historic buildings. The programme offered the public an exploratory view of old houses and architecture in Al Ain, showcasing the building styles adopted by early Emirati residents.

This programme aims to create awareness around Abu Dhabi's tangible heritage; to introduce the public and the organisations working in Al Ain to the richness of its historic layers; to encourage them to preserve the past; and to protect the historic buildings from the risk of demolition and destruction of the cultural heritage.



COMMUNITY CENTRES

One mission of DCT Abu Dhabi is to nurture and enrich local artistic talents and to reach out to the wider segments of the community. Its goal is to provide an environment for professionals and talented newcomers to express themselves and exchange ideas and experiences. To this end, DCT Abu Dhabi manages a variety of community centres in and around Abu Dhabi that offer classes, art and heritage workshops, activities, events and programmes for all ages and in diverse cultural mediums, including a variety of visual and performing arts.



Manarat Al Saadiyat

Programming expanded in the newly refurbished space, with the introduction of Ramadan Evenings and MASmash, among other activities.

With a robust calendar of workshops, classes, activities and events, the newly renovated Manarat Al Saadiyat is a high-tech, purpose-built art centre for locals and visitors alike. Opened in 2009, the space offers an interactive platform for the community to engage with artistic activities that bring the vision of Saadiyat Cultural District to life. In addition to the outdoor Garden Pavilion event space, a 250-seat auditorium and three galleries for temporary exhibitions, Manarat Al Saadiyat now offers an Art Studio specifically designed to engage visitors of all ages in a variety of creative initiatives, with instructors who provide the highest levels of technical expertise.

Ramadan Evenings

Launched in May 2017, the Ramadan Evenings programme offered visitors the chance to experience the essence of Emirati culture through music and interactive programmes. Almost 4,000 people attended the 2017 edition, which presented performances and open classes led by instructors from Bait Al Oud playing Arabic instruments. Visitors looking to learn the basics of the qanun and oud were invited to attend special concerts. Performances, talks and poetry around the spiritual themes of Ramadan, as well as education workshops around the intangible cultural heritage of the UAE, were also introduced as part of the first edition of Ramadan Evenings.

MASmash

In December 2017, the MASmash programme offered attendees the opportunity to witness a variety of popular art demonstrations in different fields and disciplines. Many artists from the UAE and the region were invited to perform in the launch event of the newly refurbished Manarat Al Saadiyat. Performers included Sima, a contemporary dance company; Parkour DXB, a team that demonstrated the discipline of parkour, also known as free-running; Beatboxer Ray, the 2012 beatbox champion of the UAE; Emirati comedian Ali Al Sayed; and Kuwaiti brothers Ya'koob and Abdul'Rahman Al-Refaie, better known as Sons of Yusuf.



About oud maker Amr Fawzi

Amr Fawzi was born in 1973 and grew up in Cairo, Egypt, where he obtained a diploma in commerce in 1993. He studied oud playing at the Institute of Arabic Music in Cairo, but then moved to sculpture. He has worked in the field of artefacts, antiques and wooden art objects. During his studies at Bait Al Oud, he learned about the nature of the instrument and the types of wood used to make it. He met Naseer Shamma in 2000 and began to learn from him the theory and practice of the oud industry. He completed his studies in 2002 and graduated from Bait Al Oud in Cairo with honours. Since graduating, he has built more than 198 ouds. He has been working for two years as a master in charge of the Bait Al Oud workshop in Abu Dhabi.



Bait Al Oud

The organisation has grown into an integrated institute for teaching the history, theories and practice of Arabic instruments; in 2017, it introduced the first professional instruction in rebab and welcomed visitors to experience this cultural attraction.

Bait Al Oud was founded in 2008 to celebrate and teach the traditions of playing the oud, one of the world's oldest stringed instruments, and other Arabic instruments such as qanun and oriental cello. In the years since its establishment, Bait Al Oud's offerings have expanded. The institute offers courses in traditional Arabic instruments and also gives local and international visitors the opportunity to learn about the musical heritage of the UAE and the Arab world.

A new strategy

In 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi launched a new and ambitious vision for Bait Al Oud: to consolidate its current standing as an integrated institute for teaching the history, theories and practices of Arabic music. Moreover, Bait Al Oud is dedicated to providing a platform for innovation and creativity that supports the role of music in the capital's cultural scene.

As of 2017, Bait Al Oud offers music courses in oud, qanun, voice, cello and solfège, as well as its newest instrument instruction: rebab. The institute increased its class offerings to approximately 25 courses per week in 2017, including the introduction of curricula to help graduate musicians master these instruments and read musical tablature of every genre.

Outside the classroom, Bait Al Oud offers local and international visitors access to a workshop to see how an oud is made. The Bait Al Oud Concert Series, which showcases the talents of students, teachers and international musicians, staged eleven concerts in 2017 in a variety of locations across Abu Dhabi.



2017 BAIT AL OUD GRADUATION CONCERTS

18 April 2017:

Ahmed Ali Al-Mansoori (oud)



19 November 2017:

Mariam Amar and Jasmin Khaled (qanun)

Bait Al Oud graduation concerts

In 2017, Bait Al Oud celebrated the graduation of six students, each of whom performed in a graduation concert.

The 17 October graduation concert at Manarat Al Saadiyat featured Palestinian singer Nansi Khalaf Zakak. Zakak's concert focused on the various forms and characteristics that shape the Palestinian folk song. She presented an anthology of folk songs collected and documented through a field survey on her recent visits to Palestine. She also recorded and analysed a collection of these songs.

Opening of oud workshop and Bait Al Oud tour

In November 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi celebrated the opening of the newly renovated Bait Al Oud workshop, where an atelier makes ouds and qanuns, and a retail space. Ouds made in Bait Al Oud are designed to help musicians master the most difficult techniques, and meet the development of modern methods of playing that have emerged in recent decades. One of the most important features that distinguish the ouds made in Bait Al Oud is the accuracy of sizes as assembled by Naseer Shamma. These ouds are perfect instruments that are easy to handle and fix.

The renovated space was put to immediate use with the introduction of the new Emirati Experience tour series, which offers visitors the opportunity to experience various elements of the lifestyle, culture and attractions of Abu Dhabi. One experience invites visitors into Bait Al Oud, including an introduction to the history of the oud, qanun and rebab as well as their role in the evolution of classical music in both the East and the West. The tour also includes a performance of oud and qanun music and a visit to the new atelier workshop and retail shop.

The introduction of rebab instruction

The newest addition to Bait Al Oud's curriculum is instruction in rebab. The institute introduced rebab classes in September 2017 to further its mission of safeguarding the musical heritage of the UAE and training the next generation of professional rebab players.



19 April 2017:
Hassan Amar and Samer Al Kurdi (oud)

17 October 2017:
Nansi Khalaf Zakak (voice)



Al Qattara Arts Centre

Three new initiatives organised by DCT Abu Dhabi engaged the community in the contemporary art scene and provided a platform for UAE-based artists to exhibit their works.

Opened in 2011, after extensive renovation work, the Al Qattara Arts Centre was built to provide a venue where arts can be studied and practised by the community. The art and community centre consists of a traditional mudbrick tower and house located on a mound overlooking the date-palm gardens of the Qattara Oasis. At the centre, visitors can attend an extensive array of cultural programmes on heritage and art practices. The centre also includes a fully equipped pottery studio, a digital room accommodating photography and digital art classes, a spacious calligraphy studio and an exhibition hall.

In 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi organised three initiatives that contributed to an increase in visitorship to Al Qattara Arts Centre of nearly 66 % over 2016.

'Collage Mixed Media Group Exhibition'

From 15 April to 16 June 2017, Al Qattara Arts Centre organised the 'Collage Mixed Media Group Exhibition'. DCT Abu Dhabi reached out through an open call to artists from across the UAE to exhibit their works in a collective, community exhibition. The selection of artworks highlighted the use of mixed media as an art form and represented a unique opportunity for UAE artists of different generations and backgrounds to meet and interact.



‘Emirati Traditional Games’

Before new forms of media became part of every home in the UAE, traditional games were one of the few means of entertainment available to children. As in every society, games played an important role in transferring knowledge, traditions and concepts from one generation to another, as well as encouraging children to learn cooperation, solidarity, innovation and team spirit. With time, traditional games became a crucial aspect of the heritage of the UAE.

DCT Abu Dhabi organised the ‘Emirati Traditional Games’ exhibition to represent in a contemporary format the traditional games that shaped the consciousness of previous generations and that still inspire many today. The exhibition highlighted six of the most popular Emirati games: Al Teela, Habil Al Zaibal, Al Dusays, Al Zubout, Al Karabi and Al Miryhana. Modern artists offered their interpretations of these games and reflected the universality of these innocent activities and how they connected children, not only in the UAE but also around the world, through imagination and creativity.

‘Comic Craze’

The ‘Comic Craze’ exhibition, which ran from 24 September to 13 November 2017 in Al Qattara Arts Centre, showcased the UAE’s growing community of comic artists. These talented individuals use their art to observe and comment on the contradictions of human and social behaviour and the intricacies of modern life. The exhibition provided a setting for established artists to show their work and for new artists to develop their talents in a lively mix of cartoons, illustrated stories and animated films as part of a comprehensive entertainment programme. The exhibition was moved to Manarat Al Saadiyat with additional artworks from 23 November to 23 December 2017.

From 12 to 14 October 2017, Comic Craze artists led several workshops for attendees that focused on the basic skills needed to create comic art and on comics in general:

- Introduction to Comic Book Language: Expression and Emotion
- Making Comics: Drawing Sound and Movement
- Popular Stories
- Basic Painting and Drawing





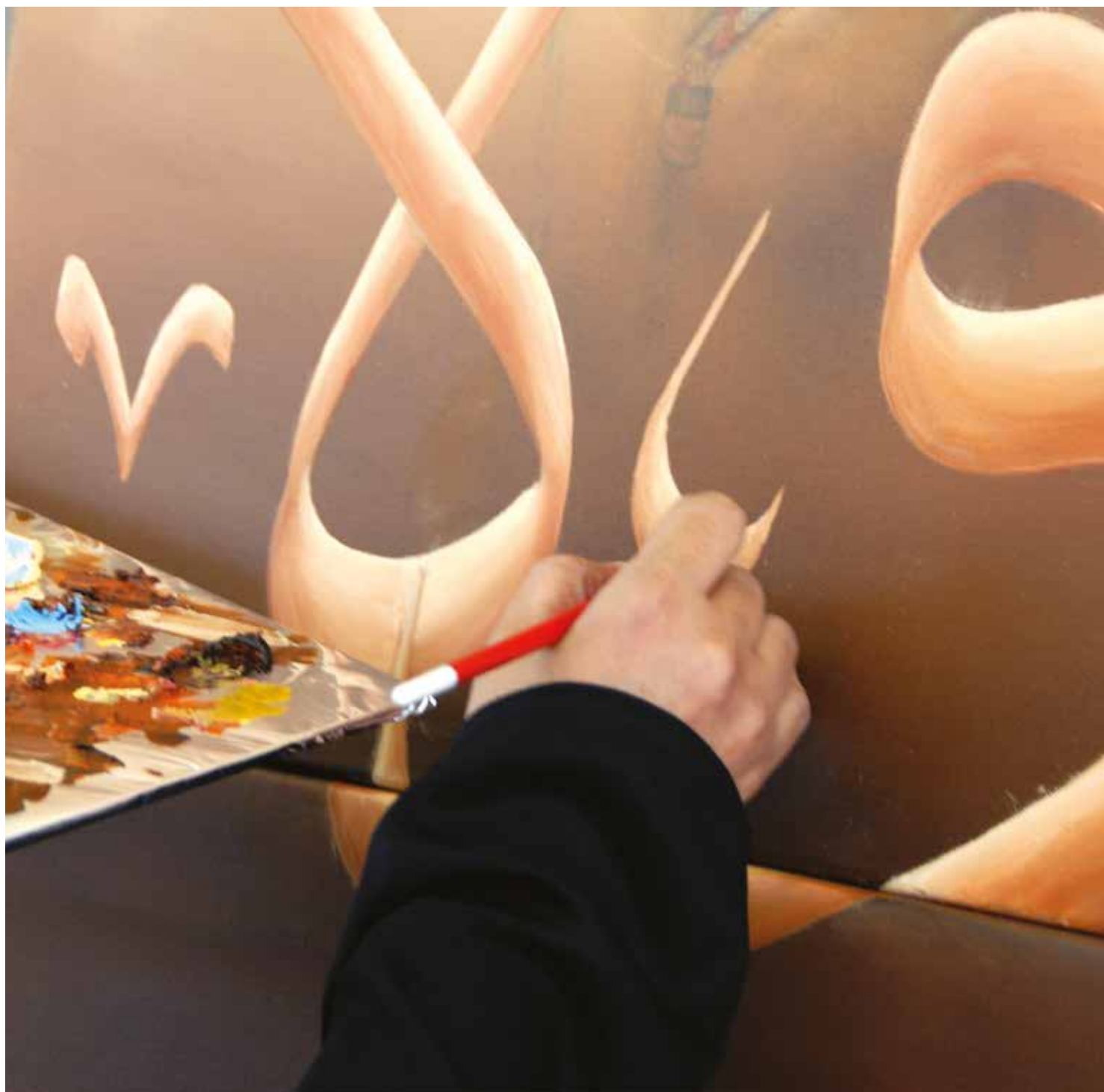
Al Marsam Al Hor and Children's Arts Centre

Al Marsam Al Hor and the Children's Arts Centre saw growth in their arts programmes.

In 2017, Al Marsam Al Hor, an art workshop centre, offered specialised learning programmes certified by the Ministry of Education, and it witnessed a 53 % increase in attendance.

The Children's Arts Centre, which was established in 1986 to nurture the artistic talent, curiosity and creativity of children aged six to fifteen, offered almost 300 classes in 2017, drawing more than 2,500 children.

The centre was also renovated to enhance the experience of the children attending the workshops and to accommodate additional courses, due to the increasing demand.





CURRENT MUSEUMS

This past year saw an important and much anticipated milestone in the opening of Louvre Abu Dhabi. The country’s first museum, Al Ain Museum, also had a busy year, attracting more than 30,000 visitors.





Louvre Abu Dhabi

The first of its kind in the Arab world, Louvre Abu Dhabi is a universal museum that brings together different cultures to shine fresh light on shared stories of humanity.

On 11 November 2017, Louvre Abu Dhabi unveiled to the world a 21st-century universal museum, welcoming thousands of visitors to explore the exceptional architecture and the masterpieces displayed throughout the galleries. *The Art Newspaper* reported that Louvre Abu Dhabi was the most significant museum opening of 2017. The press and social-media coverage around the opening alone had a global reach of more than 10 billion.

Louvre Abu Dhabi is an important component of Abu Dhabi's vision to invest in culture, education and tourism. Born out of a 2007 intergovernmental agreement between the United Arab Emirates and France, Louvre Abu Dhabi embodies a museum of international standards. Through Agence France-Muséums, a consortium of seventeen French partner museums, Louvre Abu Dhabi accesses invaluable French expertise and explores a new approach to museums.

The core staff of Louvre Abu Dhabi is more than half Emiratis, with the remaining staff coming from diverse nationalities. As part of the intergovernmental agreement, UAE nationals have been offered unparalleled training opportunities, including on-the-job training from experts in the field and opportunities to be placed in important French museums.





“Mari-Cha” lion, Lion dit de “Mari-Cha”, Southern Spain or southern Italy, 1000–1200 Bronze, ©Louvre Abu Dhabi - Greg Garay



‘For those of us who believe in the values of encyclopaedic museums—that their collections, representative of the world’s many and diverse cultures, can inspire curiosity and can lead to understanding and tolerance of difference in the world—Louvre Abu Dhabi is a bold experiment.’

-James Cuno, President and Chief Executive Officer of the J. Paul Getty Trust

‘It is hence perfectly logical that the new way of thinking about the history of creation, free from its obsessive Western-centrism, is displayed [at Louvre Abu Dhabi]. It remains to be seen whether the effects of this revolution will be felt everywhere, perhaps even at the Louvre.’

-Philippe Dagen, Art Critic, Le Monde, November 2017

‘Where [Louvre Abu Dhabi] is innovative is in being intercultural, with Western and non-Western work shown side by side.’

-Holland Cotter, Art Critic, New York Times, November 2017

Building architecture

Jean Nouvel, the French Pritzker Prize-winning architect, designed Louvre Abu Dhabi as a ‘museum city’ in the sea, with a contrasting series of fifty-five white buildings inspired by the medina and low-lying Arab architecture. Its iconic dome, comprised of 7,850 unique metal stars set in a complex geometric pattern, creates a moving ‘rain of light’, reminiscent of the overlapping palm trees in the UAE’s oases. Louvre Abu Dhabi also includes a 6,400-square-metre permanent gallery space, 2,000-square-metre temporary exhibition space, children’s museum, 270-seat auditorium, café and retail shop. A world-class restaurant will open in 2018.

Education and programming

The museum offers a variety of workshops and guided tours for visitors that require intensive training and immersion for guides. The museum also offers a robust interpretation programme, including a multimedia guide (available as a free mobile app or for rent on a tablet), interactive tables and films, among other elements. It also developed a series of publications in Arabic, English and French, which have been top sellers in the museum’s boutique.

Louvre Abu Dhabi opens to the world

The official inauguration of Louvre Abu Dhabi was held on 8 November 2017, with a full opening to the public on 11 November 2017. Louvre Abu Dhabi was inaugurated by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai; His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces; and Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic.

At the inauguration, heads of states, ambassadors, ministers, delegates and others were welcomed to the museum. The opening ceremony was attended by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain; His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco; and Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, President of Afghanistan. Dignitaries also included rulers and ministers from the United Arab Emirates, directors of museums from around the world, including those from France, and important international press.

The event featured speeches from His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and President Emmanuel Macron, followed by a performance by the Insula Orchestra that was blended with an Al-Shillah performance (a traditional Emirati vocal performance) and a light show on the signature dome of the museum.

Four days of public celebrations following the inauguration featured more than 250 musicians and singers from around the world as well as a number of programmes. On 9 November, the museum hosted a day of lectures called Louvre Abu Dhabi Encounters, which drew more than 300 specialists from the cultural world.

International acclaim

The opening of Louvre Abu Dhabi was proclaimed ‘undoubtedly the most significant museum unveiling of 2017’ by *The Art Newspaper*, an international publication that covers matters of culture and visual arts. And indeed, Louvre Abu Dhabi’s opening generated significant coverage across the world’s leading media outlets. From September through November 2017, more than 16,500 pieces of coverage reached audiences in more than forty countries in fifteen different languages. Among all Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Western European traditional news and Twitter mentions of Abu Dhabi during that period, one in five referenced Louvre Abu Dhabi. The warm reception was clear among both journalists and the general public, who shared conventional news stories about Louvre Abu Dhabi on social media.



Al Ain Museum

The country's first museum continues to draw crowds to its collection highlighting the cultural heritage of the UAE.

As the oldest museum in the UAE, the Al Ain Museum has a collection of works spanning centuries-old artefacts, weapons and pottery from the region. In 2017, the institution organised a series of events and programmes focusing on the museum's permanent collection, including its archaeology and ethnography objects.

Public engagement programming such as a Museums by Night tour in May, lectures and talks on the museum's history and its artefacts, and workshops on the museum's collection helped draw 46,000 visitors in 2017.

UPCOMING MUSEUMS

Two other museums are planned and will open in the coming years. The Zayed National Museum will be the national museum of the UAE. Guggenheim Abu Dhabi will be uniquely positioned to examine twentieth- and twenty-first-century art from truly international perspectives. Both museums will help build the Saadiyat Cultural District into a concrete manifestation of the commitment to facilitate an interactive dialogue between the UAE and world cultures.



ZAYED NATIONAL MUSEUM

The Zayed National Museum will be the UAE's national museum.

Conceived as a civic centre of learning and exchange, the Zayed National Museum will tell the story of Abu Dhabi and the UAE's ancient history. Inspired by the values of the founding father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the museum will explore key moments in the life of Sheikh Zayed and his transformation of the UAE, illuminating the rich history of the UAE and its cultural connections across the world.

Pritzker Architecture Prize-winning architect Lord Norman Foster designed the Zayed National Museum, inspired by falconry, an integral part of the UAE cultural heritage, with five towers reminiscent of the wingtips of birds.

Educational collaboration and outreach

In 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi developed a number of research papers in collaboration with interns from Zayed University majoring in Emirati studies. Zayed National Museum will be a resource centre for students interested in Emirati studies, and the education and outreach programme of the museum highlights the importance of this aspect of the museum.

Example public talks

The Rituals of Majlis and Gahwa

Exploring Majlis rituals and the historic roots of Gahwa preparation, serving and drinking, this talk by heritage specialists Abdullah Khalfan Al Hamour and Ali Salam Al Dhanhani looked at the hidden history of social Emirati hospitality and one of the most important intangible heritage elements that was inscribed in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2015.

Horses: Symbol of Identity

The Arabian horse is an important symbol of identity in the Arab region. Throughout history, horses were exchanged as prestigious gifts between rulers as an expression of their mutual respect. This talk by Saeed Al Suwaidi, a research specialist at the National Archive, and Mohamed Ali Al Matrooshi, researcher and owner of Arabian Horse Stud, explored the Arabian horses of Sheikh Zayed bin Khalifa Al Nahyan, who ruled Abu Dhabi from 1855 to 1909.

Archaeological Story of UAE

The story of archaeology in the UAE began in the 1950s with the excavation of Bronze Age tombs on Umm an-Nar Island by Danish teams at the personal invitation of Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan Al Nahyan, then ruler of Abu Dhabi. This talk discussed how the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan's encouragement led to the flourishing of archaeological study in the UAE, revealing its rich ancient heritage.



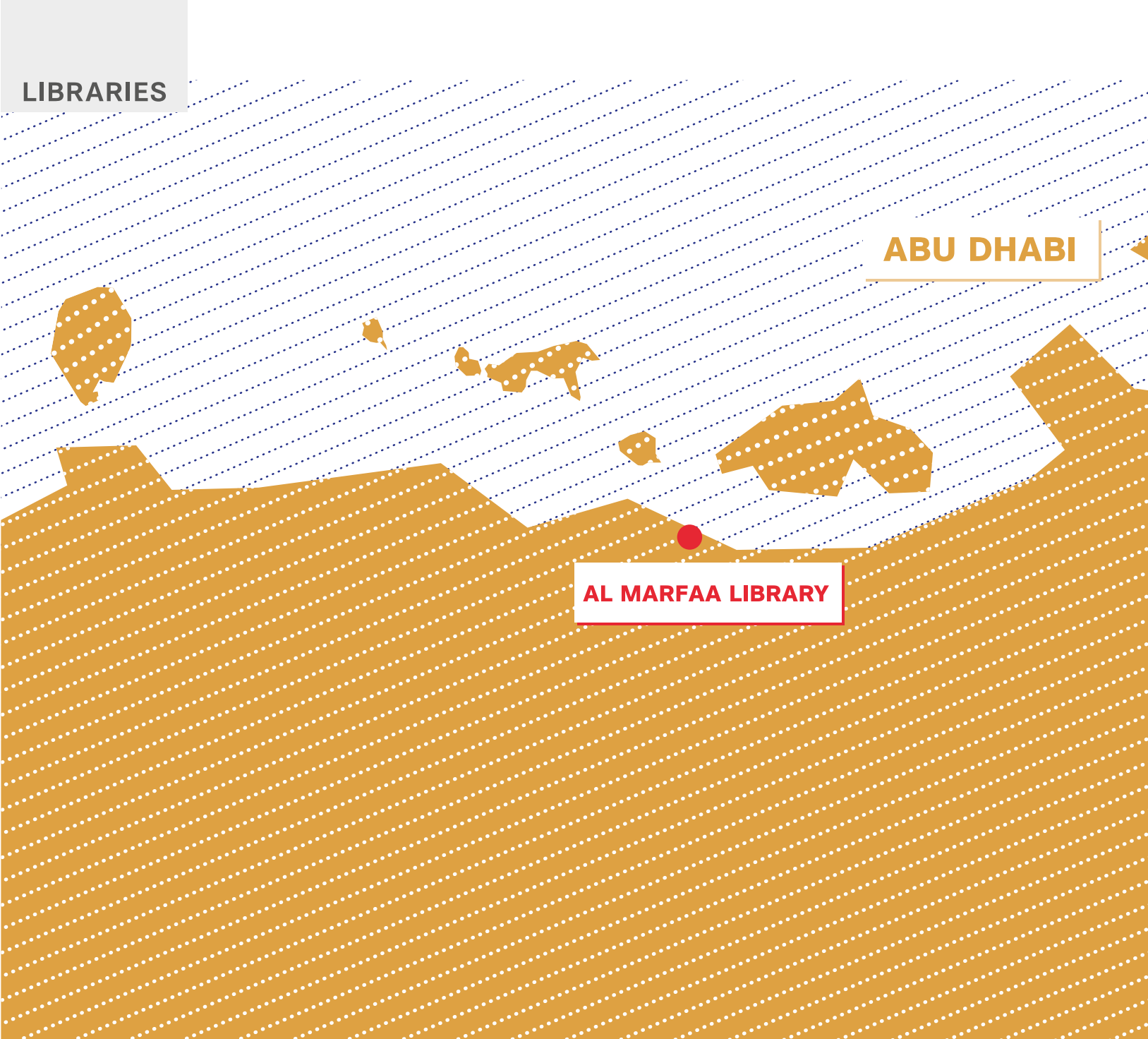
GUGGENHEIM ABU DHABI

Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, which is currently under development, will be a leading museum of modern and contemporary art and culture.

Situated at the north-western tip of Saadiyat Island, Guggenheim Abu Dhabi is being conceived as a preeminent platform for contemporary culture. From its location in the UAE—a central axis between Africa, Asia and Europe—the museum is uniquely positioned to examine twentieth- and twenty-first-century art from truly international perspectives. The museum will also celebrate the specific cultural traditions of the UAE and other countries in the region.

Guggenheim Abu Dhabi is designed by Pritzker Architecture Prize-winning architect Frank Gehry. In a blend of Arabian tradition and modern design, the monumentally scaled museum will include cones that recall the region's ancient wind towers. This state-of-the-art building will have galleries dedicated to its permanent collection alongside dynamic spaces for temporary exhibitions, site-specific installations and newly commissioned works of art.

As part of Guggenheim Abu Dhabi's pre-opening programming, DCT Abu Dhabi organised 'The Creative Act', a 2017 exhibition of the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi collection at Manarat Al Saadiyat.



DAR AL KUTUB

In 2017, Abu Dhabi's libraries increased their collections, staged events and competitions with high turnout and engagement, and improved their digital offerings.

Libraries are central gathering places for communities. Established in 1981, the National Library is one of the UAE's largest knowledge repositories and a vital resource for intellectuals, scholars and scientists. The National Library is responsible for the establishment of regional, community, children's and mobile libraries. It also acts as a publisher, translates the world's major literary works and promotes talented Emirati writers and researchers by publishing their books and academic works. The National Library collects, preserves and displays ancient Arab and Islamic manuscripts, covering a variety of topics from literature and religion to science and arts.

In 2017, more than 53,000 people visited Abu Dhabi's libraries. The year also included fifty-five programmes and 192 school visits.

In addition, the system modernised and adapted its offerings in several areas. A comprehensive digital library solution is currently up and running and will be enriched throughout 2018. Dar Al Kutub can now provide digital content in the form of online books, articles and audiovisual content. The complete manuscripts collection of 1,795 has been digitised, and 27,000 books were catalogued from the backlog of holdings. Two manuscripts were lent to Louvre Abu Dhabi.

In addition, Dar Al Kutub hosted several key programmes throughout 2017.

AL BAHYA PARK LIBRARY

AL WATHBA LIBRARY

KHALIFA PARK LIBRARY

MAZYAD MALL LIBRARY

ZAYED CENTRAL LIBRARY

AL AIN

About Sultan Almousa



Author of three books and a prominent figure on social media, Sultan Almousa has accomplished much in the field of anthropology through his love of history and ancient civilizations. Also a member of the Vatican religious dialogue committee, Almousa strives to bridge religions.

About Mohammed Hasan Alwan



Mohammed Hasan Alwan was born in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and currently lives in Toronto, Canada. The author of five novels, Alwan received the 2017 International Prize for Arabic Fiction for his most recent novel, *A Small Death*.

Abu Dhabi International Book Fair (ADIBF)

Launched by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the founding father, the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair celebrated its twenty-seventh anniversary in 2017 with an unprecedented number of offerings. The event featured more than 1,320 exhibitions and 416 workshops and seminars. Programmes highlighted culture, illustrators, creativity, culinary arts and cinema, among other elements.

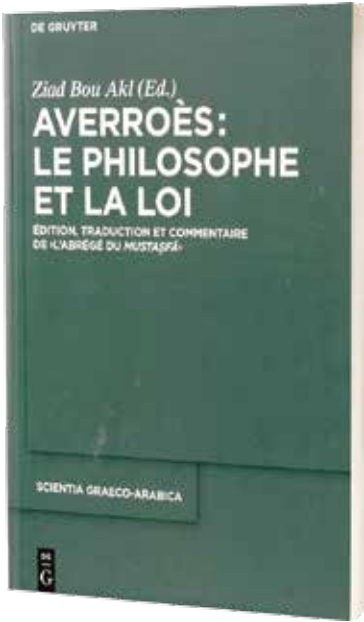
The number of lectures and cultural programmes increased from sixty in 2016 to sixty-five in 2017, while the number of book signings reached forty-five and featured famous authors such as Sultan Almousa and Mohammed Hasan Alwan. The creativity corner introduced two new sessions: 'Happiness and Positivity' for adults and children, and 'Excellence and Creativity' for children. In all, the book fair had 300,000 visitors in person and 142,000 visitors online, reached an audience of 1.6 million on social media (including 1.9 million video views on YouTube) and made a total of 28.5 million impressions during its one-week run from 26 April to 2 May.

The People's Republic of China took part in ADIBF as the fair's guest of honour, promoting the theme 'Reading China'. Chinese publishers presented more than 3,500 titles and held more than 400 activities at the fair to promote Chinese publications in the region. For this event, 300 titles were translated into Arabic and Chinese, showing the depth of cultural exchange and cultural cooperation between the People's Republic of China and the Arab world. Additionally, famous Chinese authors Cao Wenxuan (*Grass House*, 1997), Liu Zhenyun (*One Sentence Is Ten Thousand Sentences*, 2008), Yu Hua (*To Live*, 1993), Xu Zechen (*Jerusalem*, 2014) and Mai Jia (*Decoded*, 2002) attended a series of literature activities.

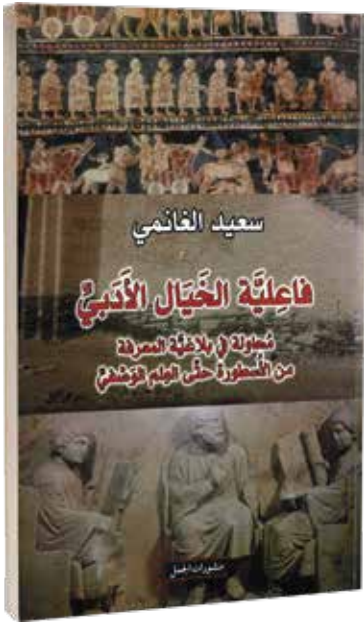
2017 WINNERS OF
THE SHEIKH ZAYED BOOK AWARD



Arab Culture in Other Languages:
David Wirmser for *Vom Denken der Natur zur Natur des Denkens*



Translation: Ziad Bou Akl (Lebanon/France) for translation from Arabic to French of *Ibn Rushd, Al-Darûrî fî usûl al-fiqh (Averroès: Le Philosophe et La Loi)*



Literary and Art Criticism: Saïd Al-Ghanimi (Iraq/Australia) for *Fā'iliyyat al-Khayāl al-Adabi (The Validity of Literary Fiction)*



Publishing and Technology:
Kalimat Group, Sharjah, UAE



Children's Literature: Lateefa Buti (Kuwait)
for *Bila qubba'a* (Hatless)

Literature: Abbas Beydoun (Lebanon)
for *Khareef al Bara'a* (The Autumn of Innocence)

Contribution to the Development of Nations:
Mohammad Chahrour (Syria) for *Al Islam wal Insaan* (Islam and the Human Being)

Sheikh Zayed Book Award

The Sheikh Zayed Book Award (SZBA) commemorates the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Founding President of the UAE and his pioneering role in promoting national unity and development. The awards are presented annually during the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair to outstanding writers, intellectuals and publishers, as well as young talent whose writing and translation in humanities objectively enriches Arab intellectual, cultural, literary and social life.

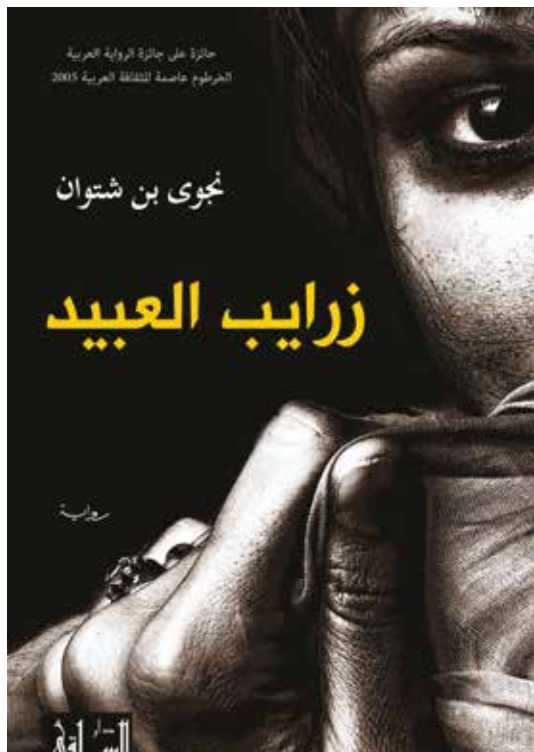
In 2017, the eleventh year of the award, 1,175 books were nominated from across the globe. The award ceremony is a key date on the literary calendar locally and regionally. The event was held 30 April 2017 at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre, and drew 1,200 publishers, authors and translators.

The Sheikh Zayed Book Award's 'Arab Culture in Other Languages' category was introduced in 2012 to recognise works published in non-Arabic languages on aspects of Arab civilisation and culture. DCT Abu Dhabi organises annual seminars to raise the profile of the SZBA as a catalyst for fostering Arab literature and to fuel writers' desire to be recognised. In 2017, the award organised a seminar in London bringing together sixty key stakeholders (UK publishers and literary editors) to explore further the international reach of the cultural prize.



Cultural Personality of the Year:
Abdallah Laroui

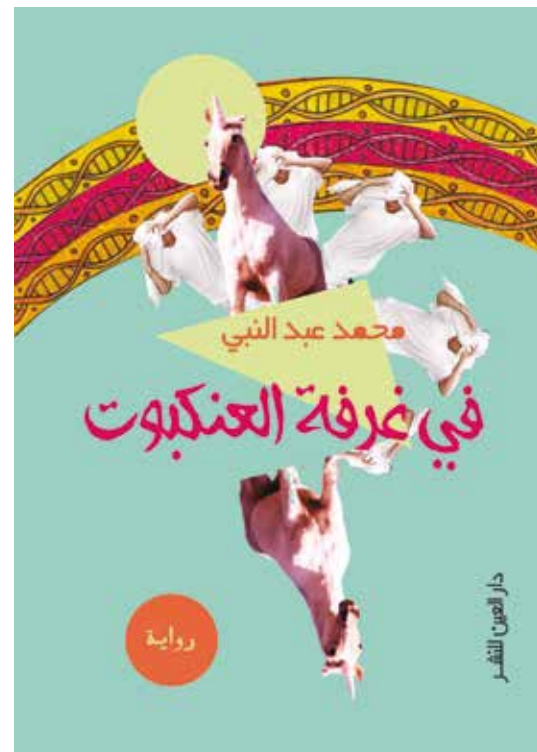
2017 SHORT LIST FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PRIZE FOR ARABIC FICTION



The Slave Pens
Najwa Binshatwan
Libya



The Bookseller's Murder
Saad Mohammed Raheem
Iraq



In the Spider's Room
Mohammed Abdel Nabi
Egypt

Al Ain Book Fair

In September 2017, the Al Ain Book Fair celebrated its ninth anniversary with impressive increases in both programming and attendance. A line-up of ninety exhibitors (up from seventy-seven in 2016) attended, providing the approximately 47,000 attendees (compared with around 43,200 in 2016) with more than 200 activities, double the previous year's offering. The cultural programme alone featured writers and speakers in seminars on an array of topics, while the twenty seminars and musical performances showcased fourteen speakers from different cultures.

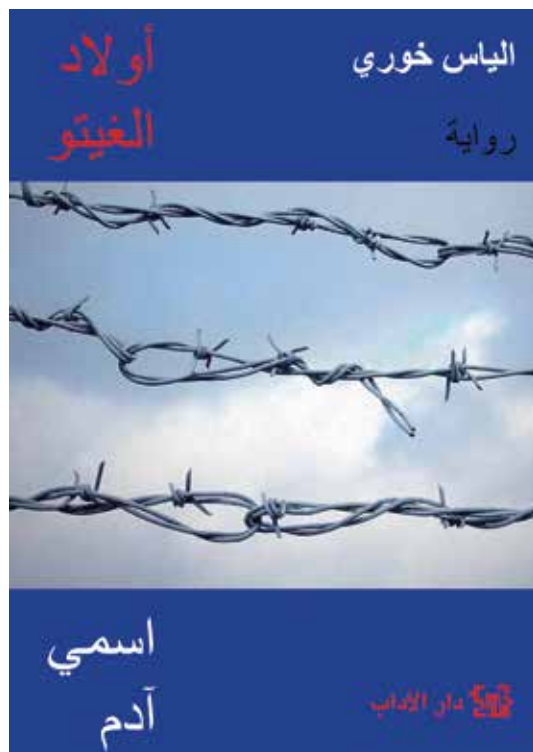
International Prize for Arabic Fiction

The International Prize for Arabic Fiction (IPAF), run in association with the United Kingdom's Man Booker Prize Foundation, is one of the most prestigious and important literary prizes in the Arab world. The number of nominations increased from 159 in 2016 to 186 in 2017; the number of publishers involved increased from 82 in 2016 to 91 in 2017; and the number of participating authors increased from 38 in 2016 to 42 in 2017.

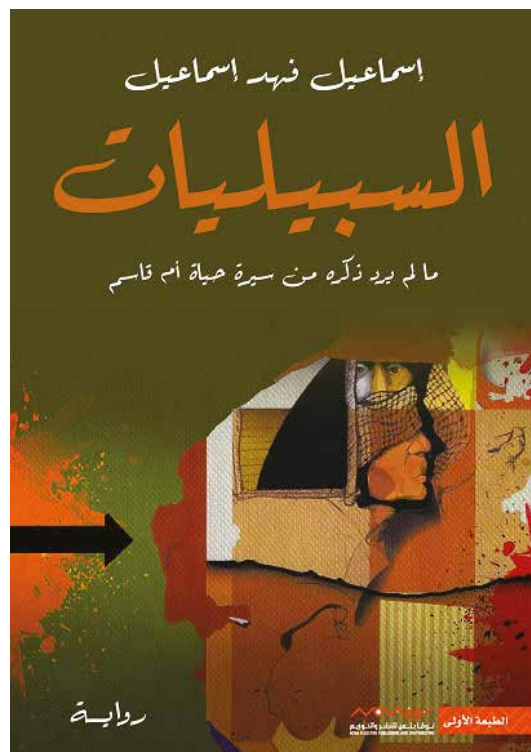
The long list of nominees, chosen from 186 entries from 19 countries, was announced on 16 January 2017. The six short-listed novels (above) were announced on 16 February 2017.

Kalima

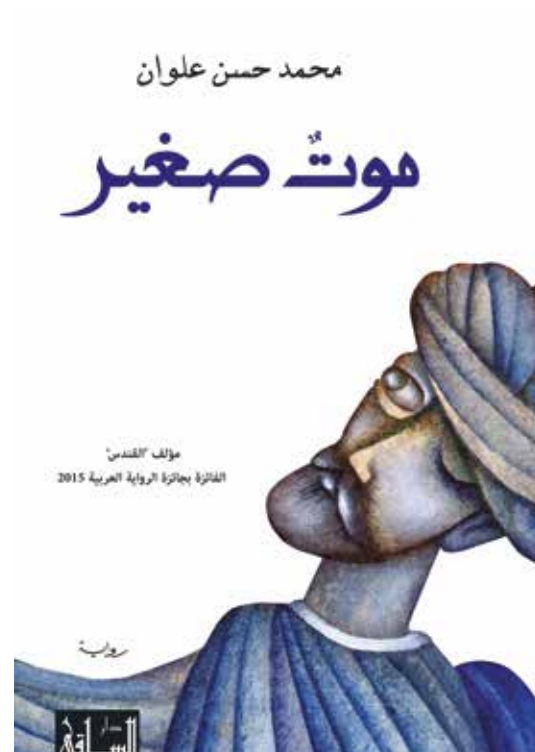
An initiative launched by DCT Abu Dhabi in 2007, Kalima is intended to help revive the translation movement in the Arab world and support the vibrant cultural activity in Abu Dhabi. In 2017, the project celebrated its tenth year with a the launch of a new branding initiative. It also continued its important work,



Children of the Ghetto - My Name is Adam
Elias Khoury
Lebanon



Al-Sabiliat
Ismail Fahd Ismail
Kuwait



WINNER: A Small Death
Mohammed Hasan Alwan
Saudi Arabia

translating and publishing twenty-five books, organising four book-signing ceremonies and participating in eight book fairs. Kalima also organised a cultural event at UAE University about translation in the new millennium and another event in cooperation with Al Multaqa Literary Salon about translation of world literature.

By the time of the 2017 Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, held in April–May 2017, Kalima had translated and published 925 titles from science, the humanities, and world adult and children's literature.

This year the United Nations passed a resolution confirming 30 September as International Translation Day to highlight the global role of translation in bringing countries and cultures together. Kalima commemorated this day by collaborating and providing a keynote speaker for a one-day seminar on translation at the UAE University in Al Ain. Kalima also celebrated in Abu Dhabi with events, including activities for children, at Dalma Mall.

At the 500-year-old Frankfurt Book Fair in October, Kalima presented public talks on three topics: (1) The Publishing Industry in Abu Dhabi; (2) Books, Piracy and Property Rights; and (3) Translation from German into Arabic.

Kalima also redesigned, restructured and relaunched its website in 2017.

The 'Little Writer in the Big Book' competition

Since 2012, Dar Al Kutub has organised The 'Little Writer in the Big Book' competition for elementary and secondary students with the purpose of supporting writing talents. In 2017, 400 students participated, joined for the first time by students from the Zayed Higher Institute for Humanitarian Care. The competition's twenty-two winning stories were published in a book to showcase the talent of the next generation and encourage future participation.



Chapter 4: Intangible heritage



DCT Abu Dhabi plays a key role in the preservation and nurturing of 'intangible heritage'—music, poetry, dance, spoken word and traditional handicrafts. These timeless cultural practices, which are intrinsic to the UAE's cultural identity, are being preserved, researched and promoted to encourage their transmission from one generation to another and to safeguard the cultural heritage of the UAE. At the same time as preserving the past, DCT Abu Dhabi acts as a cultural catalyst through its education and exhibition programme, supporting and inspiring artistic activity that responds to the present day and points the nation toward the future.



AL-AZI AND UNESCO INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE LIST

A form of UAE poetry was inscribed on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

Al-Azi, a form of traditional UAE poetry, was inscribed on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding list in 2017, in recognition of the practice's importance to the national identity of the UAE. Al-Azi joins seven other UAE intangible heritage practices on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, including Al-Sadu (a form of traditional weaving), Arabic coffee, Al-Ayyala, Al-Razfa, Al-Taghrooda, Majlis and falconry.

Abu Dhabi is also home to one UNESCO World Heritage Site: the Cultural Sites of Al Ain, which was inscribed in 2011.



NATIONAL TRADITIONAL HANDICRAFTS FESTIVAL

The fourth National Traditional Handicrafts Festival was held at Souq Al Qattara in Al Ain from 1 to 18 November 2017. The annual festival offers a platform to encourage and support practitioners of the handicrafts that help to define the UAE's national heritage.

The festival promotes traditional handicrafts and practices including Al-Khous, Al-Sadu, falconry and traditional performances. It also showcases skills such as Arabic coffee making, traditional Emirati cooking and performances such as Al-Ayyala, Al-Razfa and Al-Yolla. Finally, workshops include traditional handicrafts, pottery, traditional weaving and basketry.

In 2017, partners of the festival included Al Ain Municipality, Civil Defence—Al Ain, Emirates Heritage Club, General Women's Union, Khalifa Fund Sougha Foundation, Abu Dhabi Education Council, Red Crescent Ghadeer Project and Khalifa Foundation for Humanitarian Affairs Project to Support Productive Families.





AL AIN CULTURAL PROGRAMME

Programmes were held under the auspices of the new Al Ain Cultural Programme to preserve and promote the national identity and cultural heritage of the emirate.

BEYOND THE WALLS

TRAVEL THROUGH OUR TRADITIONS
Monthly, Oct 2017–Apr 2018

MY OLD HOUSE TOUR
Monthly, Oct 2017–Apr 2018

ARCHAEOLOGY MORNING COFFEE
27 Sept, 7 Nov 2017

ABU DHABI ART—BEYOND
Large-scale installations
by Manal Al-Dowayan (Al Ain Oasis)
and Nasser Al-Salem (Al Jahili Fort)
8 Nov 2017

ABU DHABI CLASSICS:
CONCERTGEBOUW STRING
QUARTET BIN HAMOODA FORT
9 Nov 2017

AL AIN PALACE MUSEUM

MY HERITAGE, MY RESPONSIBILITY
7–8 Dec 2017

WORLD HERITAGE DAY
19–20 Apr 2018

‘RAMSA’
Every Sunday, Oct 2017–Apr 2018

HANDICRAFTS WORKSHOPS
Every Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday,
yearlong



AL QATTARA ARTS CENTRE

‘COMIC CRAZE’ EXHIBITION
24 Sept–19 Oct 2017

‘EMIRATI TRADITIONAL GAMES’ EXHIBITION
16 Jan 2017–7 Jan 2018

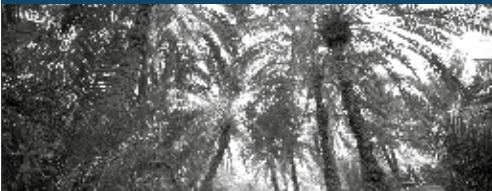
AL QATTARA CINEMA
24 Nov 2017



AL AIN OASIS

WEEKENDS AT THE OASIS
Every weekend, Nov 2017–Mar 2018

Starting from the West Gate and into the plaza of Al Ain Oasis, Weekends at the Oasis offers something for every member of the family to enjoy. A community market offers local produce, crafts and artisanal products as well as boutique novel concepts from the Al Ain community. Designed for children and teenagers, Art in the Oasis was inspired by the oasis palms.



AL JAHILI FORT

TRUCIAL SCOUTS: LIFE AND TIMES
2 Nov 2017–26 Apr 2018

MEMORY OF THE EMIRATI SONG
20 Oct 2017

ABU DHABI CLASSICS: LUCERNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA WITH NICHOLAS ANGELICH
12 Oct 2017

NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATION
2 Dec 2017

HANDICRAFTS WORKSHOPS
Every Tuesday, yearlong

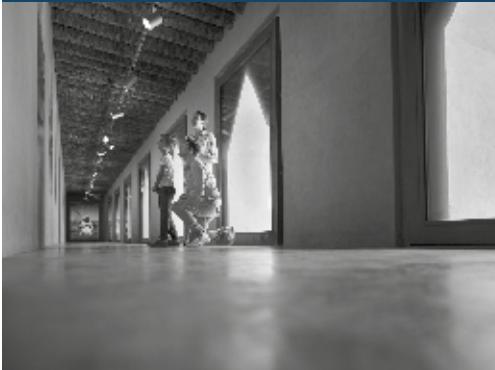
MILITARY BAND PERFORMANCE
Every Thursday, Oct 2017–Apr 2018

POLICE DOG SHOW
Every Wednesday, Oct 2017–Apr 2018

AL AIN MUSEUM

WRITE YOUR NAME IN CUNEIFORM WORKSHOP
Every Sunday, Oct 2017–Apr 2018

DRAWING ON POTTERY
Every Wednesday, Oct 2017–Apr 2018



SOUQ AL QATTARA

TRADITIONAL HANDICRAFTS FESTIVAL
1–18 Nov 2017



QASR AL MUWAIJI

AL-AYYALAH AND HARBIYA PERFORMANCES
Every Thursday, Oct 2017–Apr 2018

POETRY EVENINGS (ACCOMPANIED BY A WORKSHOP)
Monthly, Oct 2017–Apr 2018

‘YALSA’
Every Thursday, Oct 2017–Apr 2018

ROYAL ‘BISHT’ WORKSHOP
Monthly, Oct 2017–Apr 2018

RESTORATION WORKSHOP
Every Thursday, Oct 2017–Apr 2018

EXCAVATIONS AND TREASURE HUNTS
Every Wednesday, Oct 2017–Apr 2018

QASR AL MUWAIJI

FALCONER’S CAMP
Every Saturday, Nov 2017–Feb 2018

LITTLE MUSEUM PROFESSIONALS
Every Friday, May–Sept 2018

BAIT AL OUD:
SHAHARIAR OUD CONCERT II
20 Dec 2017





My Heritage, My Responsibility

Throughout 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi organised the My Heritage, My Responsibility programme at Al Ain Palace Museum. Visitors were invited to engage with various aspects of Emirati culture, including medicine, cuisine, garments, traditional markets, music and performances.



Travel Through Our Traditions

Throughout 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi organised a unique public tour called Travel Through Our Traditions, where visitors spent time with Emirati women and families in their homes and farms, giving them insight into the traditions and customs of Emirati life. The May edition of the programme celebrated the rituals and traditions of Emirati weddings. In October, the series focused on Kanaz, the traditional process of harvesting dates.



Chapter 5: Cultural programmes



Encompassing visual arts, performing arts, multidisciplinary events, education and outreach activities, DCT Abu Dhabi’s 2017 cultural programmes grew in number and size.

ABU DHABI ART

Abu Dhabi Art 2017 brought together forty-seven galleries to showcase the work of artists from around the world.

The ninth edition of Abu Dhabi Art welcomed both established and emerging galleries from thirty cities in eighteen different countries, offering works by a diverse group of globally celebrated and up-and-coming artists. This key event in the global art calendar provides an important sales platform for participating galleries (72 % of which were international galleries) and offers an opportunity to showcase ambitious installations and site-specific works by gallery artists to an audience of more than 21,000 visitors.

The Abu Dhabi Art Community Programme engages the wider community as well as local organisations known for supporting the cultural scene through a range of activities. Interactions include the annual Wings Project competition, which supports young, Emirati creative talent by inviting them to recreate the wing shape that forms part of the Abu Dhabi Art logo.

Abu Dhabi Art also runs collaborative projects with key universities, including artist residencies at Khalifa University and a nationwide architecture competition for students that culminates in the realisation of a project at Abu Dhabi Art each year. In this way, Abu Dhabi Art fosters creativity and innovation amongst a younger generation of artists, designers and architects while reaching out to new audiences.

In addition, the Majlis Fann programme connects patrons, curators and collectors from the international art community to the local art scene and provides a platform for arts professionals.

Galleries Week by the numbers

1,500 visitors

AED 250,000 in sales

29 artists represented by 6 galleries:

Athr (Jeddah)

- Abdulaziz Al Rashidi
- Asma Bahamim
- Mohamed Abdel Rasoul
- Mohammad Haidar
- Saddek Wasil

Cuadro Fine Arts Gallery (Dubai)

- Abdolreza Aminlari
- Ammar Al Attar
- Jenine Sharabi
- Michel Le Belhomme
- The Connor Brothers
- Zeinab Al Hashemi

Elmarsa (Dubai)

- Atef Maatallah
- Gouider Triki
- Halim Karabibene
- Omar Bey
- Slimen El Kamel
- Thameur Mejri

Galleria Continua

(Italy, France, China and Cuba)

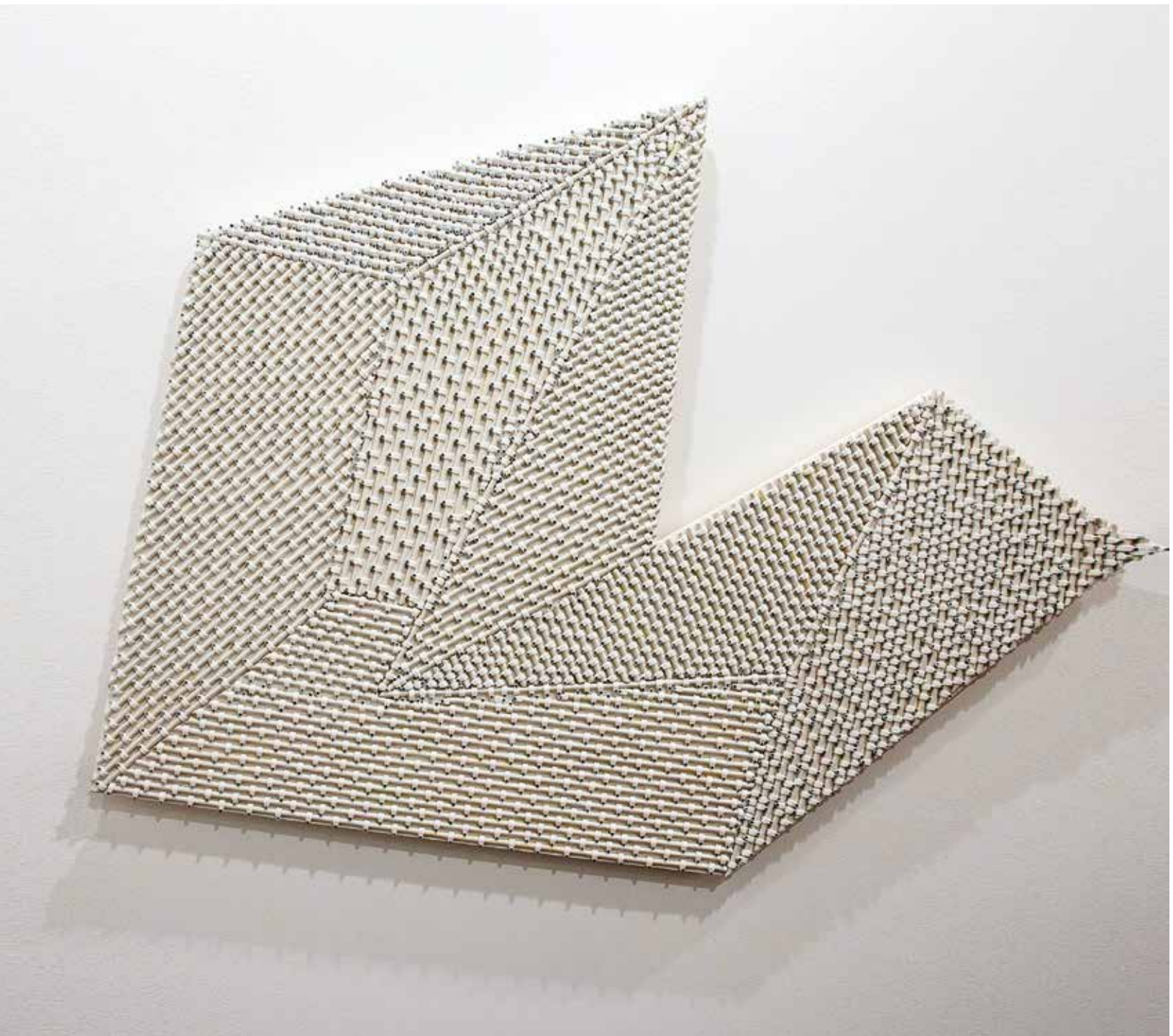
- Serse

Hafez Gallery (Jeddah)

- Abdulrahman Shahed
- Ali Cha’aban
- FilwaNazer
- Khalid Zahid
- Sarah Al Abdali

Salwa Zeidan (Abu Dhabi)

- Abdul Azzizal Fadli
- Abdul-Qader Al-Rais
- Adonis
- Fatema Al-Mazrouie
- Hussain Sharif
- Rose Hussein



Galleries Week

As part of DCT Abu Dhabi's effort to support up-and-coming artists and broaden the base of art collectors, Abu Dhabi Art introduced a pop-up Galleries Week from 12 to 19 April 2017 at Warehouse421. The inaugural event showcased six galleries and the artwork of twenty-nine emerging artists. With artwork costs ranging from AED 2,000 to AED 30,000, Galleries Week offered first-time art buyers entry into the world of collecting. The event also offered residents an opportunity to engage with the cultural scene in Abu Dhabi through a programme of talks, performances, workshops and film screenings.

The first year of Galleries Week drew 1,500 visitors and brought in more than AED 250,000 in art sales.



300 delegates

*in the areas of culture, arts and media industries
from eighty countries*

'Never before has there been an event dedicated to the role of global cultural leadership in world affairs. Abu Dhabi is a hub of cultural diversity, dialogue and exchange, which makes it the ideal place to welcome our international and regional friends and step up this important conversation. We believe that engaging both the regional and international community is crucial to achieving a future where coherence and tolerance are the new normal. I'm delighted to be part of this groundbreaking event.'

—HE Noura Al Kaabi, UAE Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development and Chairwoman of Media Zone Authority—Abu Dhabi and twoFour54

Select highlights of the Culture Summit 2017 agenda

The inaugural Culture Summit offered participants the opportunity to attend fourteen plenary sessions, including:

'Case Studies in Connectedness: New Collaborations for a New World'

featuring HE Noura Al Kaabi, Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs and Chairwoman, Media Zone Authority-Abu Dhabi and twoofour54; Irina Bokova, former Director-General, UNESCO; and Robert Lynch, President and CEO, Americans for the Arts.

'Global Culture Hubs: The Role and Lessons of New Cities in an Urbanising World'

featuring HE Mohamed Al Mubarak, Chairman, DCT Abu Dhabi; Richard Armstrong, Director, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation; Rula Jebreal, journalist, author, foreign policy analyst; and Ana Cristina Vargas, award-winning architect.

'The Universals: What the Arts Can Tell Us About How We Can Come Together'

featuring Sabine Choucair, Artistic Director of Clown Me In; Cynthia Schneider, Distinguished Professor in the Practice of Diplomacy, Georgetown University; and Dustin Yellin, Founder, Pioneer Works.

'Globalisation and the Other: Lessons from Refugees and the Dislocated'

featuring HE Faryad Rwandizi, Iraqi Minister of Culture; Sherrie Westin, EVP, Global Impact & Philanthropy, Sesame Workshop; and Natalia Kaliada, Cofounding Artistic Director of the Belarus Free Theatre.

In addition to these plenary discussions, the programme featured daily workshops, art displays, performances and presentations by an extraordinary array of globally known musicians, singers, dancers, composers and others. Some of those featured in performances and presentations include:

Classical and New Music Luminaries:

Tan Dun, Academy Award-winning composer; Sandeep Das, Grammy Award-winning composer, Silk Road Ensemble; and Maya Beiser, world-renowned cellist.

Celebrated Dance Artists: Liz Lerman, MacArthur Fellowship Award-winning choreographer; and Tim Casson, British choreographic and interactive dance maker.

Singers and Contemporary Music

Innovators: Ana Tijoux, French-Chilean music star; Sarah Elizabeth Charles, jazz vocalist, composer and producer; Falu Shah, internationally lauded Indian singer; Emeline Michel, Haitian music superstar; and Jo Lawry, Australian singer-songwriter.



CULTURE SUMMIT

The first Culture Summit took place from 9 to 13 April 2017 at Manarat Al Saadiyat in Saadiyat Cultural District. By convening the most influential current and rising arts and culture leaders internationally in Abu Dhabi, Culture Summit sheds light on the critical role that arts play in societal changes. Culture Summit 2017 celebrated and honoured the achievements of distinguished leaders for their contributions to cultural diplomacy and the vital influence their accomplishments have had on the world. The event received robust media coverage, generating more than 800 articles and references.

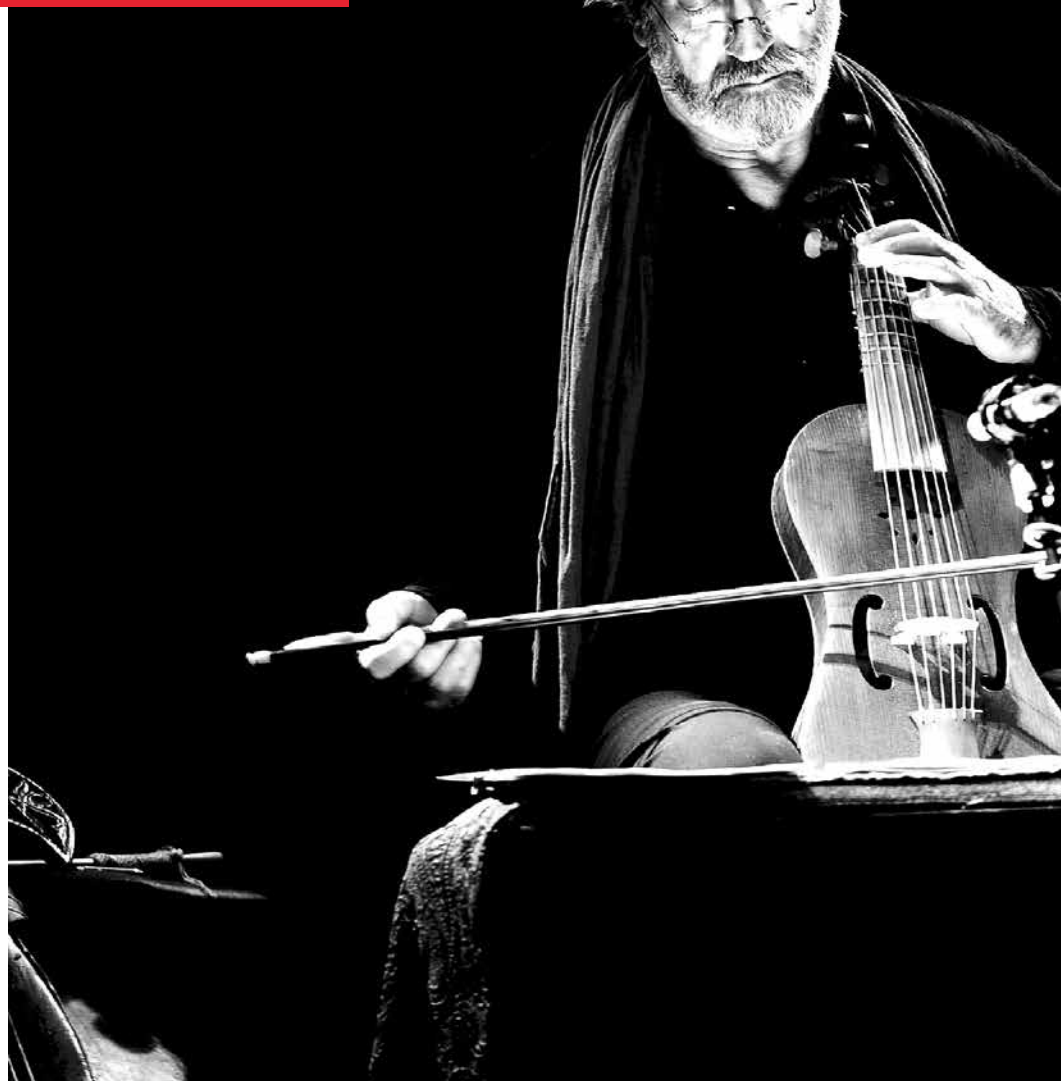
The programme, which featured the participation of renowned creative thinkers from more than eighty countries, was notable both for the calibre of its speakers and for its focus on identifying actions that the group of leaders can take to help address key global challenges. These range from combating extremism to reversing climate change and from cultural preservation to promoting the arts in education worldwide.

Esteemed participants included Dr Madeleine Albright, Former US Secretary of State; Eduardo Méndez, Executive Director of Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar; HE Dr Anwar Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs; HE Dr Zaki Anwar Nusseibeh, Minister of State and Cultural Adviser, Ministry of Presidential Affairs; Sherrie Rollins Westin, Executive Vice President of Global Impact and Philanthropy, Sesame Workshop; and Tabaré Perlas, CEO of West-Eastern Divan Orchestra.

The Culture Summit was hosted by DCT Abu Dhabi and presented in conjunction with the FP Group, publisher of *Foreign Policy Magazine*, and TCP Ventures, LLC, a producer of artistic ventures and an advisory firm focused on issues associated with culture.

Jordi Savall

13 and 15 January 2017



Renaud Capuçon and David Fray

20 January 2017



MUSIC PROGRAMME AND LITERATURE

The 2017–18 Abu Dhabi Music Programme and the first Literature and Music Festival provided many highlights in 2017.

2017 Abu Dhabi Music Programme

The DCT Abu Dhabi music programme encompasses dozens of concerts featuring musicians from the UAE and around the world.

The 2017 Abu Dhabi Music Programme is a series of music performances and events that celebrate the role of music in the emirate's culture. Activities include Abu Dhabi Classics, Umsiyat, Bait Al Oud Concert Series and the Emirati Music Series (both year-round music programmes). This programme is an integral part of DCT Abu Dhabi's cultural vision for the emirate.

Abu Dhabi Classics

From 12 October 2017 to 20 April 2018, Abu Dhabi Classics has offered a unique and immersive experience that allows visitors to explore and enjoy the magic and diversity of the classical music universe. The season includes some of the most promising talents in the field of Arabic and Western classical music, including the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra, the Trombone Trio of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and Staatskapelle Dresden with Rudolf Buchbinder. The season's concerts drew more than 3,300 attendees in 2017, including more than 1,000 people to see the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra at Emirates Palace. In 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi issued a tender to a private events management company to oversee the execution and marketing of the Abu Dhabi Classics Programme, which is now produced by Flash Entertainment.



The Music of 1,001 Nights

2-3 May 2017



The first half of 2017 included three distinct series: Jordi Savall on 13 January at the Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi and on 15 January at the Bin Hamoodah Fort in Al Ain; Renaud Capuçon and David Fray on 20 January at Manarat Al Saadiyat; and the Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse on 2 May at the Emirates Palace Auditorium in Abu Dhabi and on 3 May at the UAE University Auditorium in Al Ain.

Bait Al Oud Concert Series

The teachers and students of Bait Al Oud, the UAE's leading music institute, together with top international artists, performed a series of performances as part of the Abu Dhabi Music Programme. In 2017, a total of ten concerts were held at Bait Al Oud, Manarat Al Saadiyat and Qasr Al Muwaiji.

Emirati Music Series

This series of concerts aims to celebrate the UAE music tradition and to support UAE talents to grow on the local and international scene. The programme features prominent Emirati singers and musicians such as Ahmed Al Hosani, Said Al Salem and oud master Faisal Al Saari. Highlights of the series included a performance by Emirati singer Ahmed Al Hosani on Delma Island in December 2017.



Literature and Music Festival

The first annual Literature and Music Festival took place in December 2017.

In December 2017, Abu Dhabi presented a new Literature and Music Festival. This forum for artists, scholars, writers, musicians and people interested in the fusion of literature and music helped commemorate Arabic Language Day. The festival kicked off on 18 December at Manarat Al Saadiyat Auditorium with an inspiring and artistic light show that displayed poems and calligraphy on the Manarat façade and celebrated the Arabic language. The evening celebrated poems and musical instruments from the Arab world, featuring Hamed Alawi AlHashmi and Ahmed AlMannaee and performances by musicians from Bait Al Oud.

A concert with Jahida Wehbe and a group of musicians focused on Arabic literature, poetry and songs, including works by Al Mutanabi, Al Halaj, Nizar Kobani, Jubran Khalil Jubran, Ahmed Chawki, Ibn Arabi, Mahmood Darwish and Ahlam Mustaghmani. A shadow-puppet show was also part of the festival and focused on tales and 'hikayat' from Arab literature.



EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMMES

DCT Abu Dhabi preserves and promotes the rich cultural and historic heritage of the UAE using a variety of platforms to present and reflect the fundamentals of the emirate's identity to the region and the world. The exhibitions and programmes detailed here represent some of the highlights of 2017, from a large-scale music programme to exhibitions at Louvre Abu Dhabi, Manarat Al Saadiyat and the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, among others.



Exhibition: 'Hajj: Memories of a Journey'

Each year, millions of pilgrims make their way to the sacred city of Mecca. Through this holy journey, Muslims of all races and nationalities are connected by their shared faith. Such a unifying force is essential in these increasingly polarised times, and it is by exploring the memories of such endeavours that we can better understand the connectivity that underpins certain principal human values throughout history.

Curated and organised by DCT Abu Dhabi in partnership with Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque Centre, 'Hajj: Memories of a Journey' presents this sacred journey from a UAE perspective, through the Father of the Nation, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, and as seen by pilgrims from all over the globe. By presenting the history of this spiritual practice through the stories, objects and memories passed down from previous generations, as well as original commissioned works, the exhibition explores Islamic practices and wider social relations as well as the crucial values of openness, tolerance and understanding. The exhibition, which pieces together 200 artefacts from fifteen museums, runs from 20 September 2017 to 19 March 2018.

The exhibition drew a total of 19,000 visitors in 2017. In addition, a two-day workshop series took place at Zayed University campus, as part of the University Outreach programme.



Workshops and master classes

As part of the 'Hajj: Memories of a Journey' exhibition, several educational workshops offered attendees the opportunity to learn more about the heritage and rituals of the Hajj. These sessions were designed to encourage active engagement with objects in the exhibition. 'Islamic Patterns and Domes' introduced children aged six to thirteen years old to Islamic patterns, while 'Make Your Own Astrolabe' instructed children on how to create their own astrolabe. Two separate master classes on 'The Beauty of Islamic Geometry' were held for children and adults, enabling participants to explore traditional tools and techniques of Islamic geometric art. In addition, a series of dynamic workshops were delivered to participants of all ages.

Exhibition publications

The exhibition catalogue was developed in two languages, and the exhibition brochures were developed in five languages—Arabic, Chinese, English, Russian and Urdu.



Emirati-French Cultural Programme: Dialogue with Louvre Abu Dhabi

The Emirati-French Cultural Programme (EFCP) is one of the cultural initiatives between the UAE and France. The EFCP has been a journey of creativity, with several cultural events in 2017: a theatre performance titled 'Trance-Forms', an equestrian performance choreographed by Bartabas, the 'Co-Lab' exhibition in Louvre Abu Dhabi and the pyrotechnic show 'Museum Reflections'.

Equestrian choreography by Bartabas

In March 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi, in collaboration with the French Embassy and the Institut Français, presented a spectacular equestrian performance within the walls of the historic Al Jahili Fort in Al Ain. Directed by the renowned choreographer Bartabas, the performance featured artists from the National Equestrian Academy of Versailles in their regional premiere. The show comprised more than fifteen scenes punctuated by poetry in Arabic. Over the course of six days, nearly 2,500 people attended the event, including Royal Family members, representatives of governments, business leaders and the general public.

'Trance-Forms'

In February 2017, the EFCP partnered with the French National Academy of Dramatic Arts to conduct theatre master classes that took place in Abu Dhabi and Paris and concluded in the theatre production 'Trance-Forms', an experimental performance encapsulating the evolution of Abu Dhabi as a city, and the UAE as a country, through a portrayal of the universal concepts of youth, memory and love. Presented at Manarat Al Saadiyat, the program consisted of a multidisciplinary show using several art forms such as literature, dance, music and poetry.

**'Co-Lab'**

'Co-Lab: Contemporary Art and Savoir-faire' opened on 21 December. The exhibition was curated by Alia Zaal Lootah and featured four contemporary commissions created by UAE-based artists in collaboration with premium French manufacturers. Through mutual inspiration, the Manufacture Nationale de Sèvres welcomed Talin Hazbar to work on ceramics, the Manufacture de Beauvais opened up its art of weaving to Khalid Shafar, the Haute Verrerie d'art de Saint-Just collaborated with Zeinab Al Hashemi and the MTX Broderie Architecturale studios teamed up with Vikram Divecha.

'Museum Reflections'

In November 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi partnered with the French Embassy and the Institut Français to unveil a selection of works at the new Louvre Abu Dhabi in an artistic and poetic way: an audiovisual performance. The performance expounded on the significance of this selection of works as well as the architecture of Louvre Abu Dhabi through light, music and dance.



Exhibition: 'From One Louvre to Another: Opening a Museum for Everyone'

As part of the intergovernmental agreement, four special exhibitions have been organised by the French museum partners each year over the course of fifteen years in addition to others staged by the museum. The first, 'From One Louvre to Another: Opening a Museum for Everyone', opened on 21 December and was curated by Jean-Luc Martinez, President-Director of Musée du Louvre, and Juliette Trey, Curator, Department of Prints and Drawings, Musée du Louvre. Closing on 7 April 2018, the exhibit traces the history of Musée du Louvre in the eighteenth century through 150 paintings, sculptures, decorative arts and other works from Musée du Louvre and Château de Versailles. Some of these extraordinary masterpieces have not left France in more than 600 years.

Exhibition: 'The Creative Act'

'The Creative Act: Performance, Process, Presence' was the second exhibition of the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi collection, presented in Gallery 1 at Manarat Al Saadiyat from 8 March to 29 July 2017. The show brought together more than twenty artists of different nationalities and generations who have emphasised performance, process and human presence in their practice. 'The Creative Act' offered a transcultural perspective on these defining aspects of contemporary art by highlighting interconnections among artists working in various corners of the globe since the 1960s. The works on display revealed common sources of inspiration, lines of influence and distinctive contributions. Two commissions featured in the exhibition underscore Guggenheim Abu Dhabi's commitment to supporting the production of new work by living artists.

The exhibition unfolded through a series of chapters, each exploring the three themes. The first chapter presented novel approaches to painting realised through physical actions and the use of everyday materials. It also featured artists in the 1960s who used their work as vehicles for encouraging viewer interaction. The second chapter examined conceptual art practices in the UAE since the 1980s. The artists in this section recast routine actions and interrogated issues of personal and social identity through performances captured and preserved in photographs. The third chapter brought together a series of installations made since 2000 that drew visitors into powerful sensory encounters and addressed the impact on art of historic and contemporary sociopolitical events and shifts.



Workshops and master classes

Educational workshops, short courses and drop-in classes for families, teens and adults held in conjunction with the exhibition attracted more than 2,000 participants. Eighty-nine school tours brought in an additional 2,000 schoolchildren to see 'The Creative Act'. DCT Abu Dhabi also organised an Educators' Day during which teachers from K-12 schools and universities were invited to preview the exhibition and learn ways to share it with their students. The free programme included a guided tour, post-tour art-activity demonstrations and an educator's resource guide. DCT Abu Dhabi collaborated with Zayed University and NYU Abu Dhabi and featured artists Susan Hefuna, Ramin Haerizadeh, Rokni Haerizadeh and Hesam Rahmanaian on two public programmes that attracted large and diverse audiences of more than 1,000 combined.

Exhibition publications

A 200-page, fully illustrated, bilingual Arabic-English exhibition catalogue with artist interviews and scholarly essays was produced along with a bilingual brochure on the exhibition's themes and artworks.

Exhibition: ‘10 Years of Emirates Photography Competition’

The ‘10 Years of Emirates Photography Competition’ exhibition underscores the cultural scene of the UAE and its cultural diversity. Over the past decade, the Emirates Photography Competition has established itself as an important initiative in driving Emirati photography toward professionalism and raising awareness about the photograph as a lasting record. This exhibition, housed at Manarat Al Saadiyat from 27 November 2017 through 31 March 2018, showcases a decade’s worth of winning works in the previous editions of the Emirates Photography Competition.

The exhibition included 160 participants from forty-eight countries, twenty-one of whom hailed from the UAE. Exhibition design and delivery were completed by DCT Abu Dhabi’s exhibitions team.

Workshops and talks

In preparation for the imminent opening of the Photography Centre of Manarat Al Saadiyat, workshops around the photography medium were organised as well as a series of talks.

Exhibition publications

A bilingual exhibition catalogue in Arabic and English accompanied the exhibition and sheds light on ten years of winning photographs included in the previous editions of the Emirates Photography Competition.

Exhibition: ‘Trucial Scouts: Life and Times’

The ‘Trucial Scouts: Life and Times’ exhibition, presented at Al Jahili Fort in Al Ain, is a journey through the history of the UAE that goes back to the days before the Union was formed by the founding father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. It tells the story of the life and times of the Trucial Scouts, who were primarily tasked with policing the area and maintaining internal security, especially in suppressing banditry and settling disputes between tribes. The exhibition’s story is told through a collection of artefacts on loan from the Armed Forces Museum and Military History Centre in Abu Dhabi, all of which date back to the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s. These objects are testimony to the historic Trucial Scouts force that was formed in 1951 by royal order of the British Crown and whose headquarters was in the emirate of Sharjah.

Janadriyah Festival

In March 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi hosted the UAE Pavilion at the Janadriyah Festival in Riyadh. In the spirit of the festival’s focus on many aspects of culture and heritage, the UAE Pavilion hosted an extensive programme with more than fifty participating artisans with a wide range of skills, including handicrafts, falconry, poetry, horse riding and Arabic coffee making. Seventeen UAE families participated in coordination with the Khalifa Fund. Over the course of the two-week festival, the UAE Pavilion drew more than 1.7 million visitors to experience elements of UAE culture.

‘10 Years of Emirates Photography Competition’

Presentations by EPC Emirati winners followed by an open discussion

This panel included talks by seven Emirati winners of previous editions of the Emirates Photography Competition; they shared their portfolios and presented their concepts.

Moderator: Khalid Alhumeeri

Speakers: Ahlam Al Ahmed, Amani Al Shaali, Moza Al Falasi, Naser Hajy, Omar Al Zaabi, Saeed Nassouri, Yousef Al Habshi

Journeys in photography—Talks by expert UAE-based photographers

This panel included two talks on journeys in photography, starting with a photographer’s journey toward international recognition and distinction by Mohammed Arfan Asif, and ending with a talk on travel photography titled From Liwa to Ladakh, by Abbas Kapadia.

Moderator: Khalid Alhumeeri

Speakers: Abbas Kapadia, Mohammed Arfan Asif



EDUCATION AND OUTREACH: 2017 BY THE NUMBERS

500 art teachers were trained in field-specific rubrics to identify markers of talent in the field of art.



15 juveniles participated in a first-of-its-kind arts education outreach programme launched for Abu Dhabi's juvenile centre.



Artworks of **600** students were featured in Manarat Al Saadiyat in May.



866 students enrolled in classes at Al Qattara Arts Centre.



8,882 people participated in programmes at the Children's Arts Centre.



MUSEUM EDUCATION PROGRAMMES AND SCHOOL TOURS WELCOMED:

Al Ain National Museum: **4,264** students

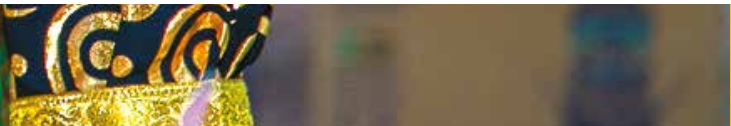




550 art teachers received professional development training by expert art teachers and artists, including Dr Najat Makki, Azza Qubaisi, Mohammed Ustaz, Ali Al Hammadi and Fatema Al Mazrouei.



Louvre Abu Dhabi's Education Portfolio launched with **4,000** copies distributed to schools across the UAE.



More than **2,000** people participated in programmes conducted at the Art Studio in the first two months of opening.



9,600 people participated in workshops, classes and special events held at Al Marsam Al Hor.



640 students attended the music outreach programme of Abu Dhabi Classics intended for students with limited access to performing arts programmes and people with determination.



Al Ain Palace Museum : **7,153** students



Al Jahili Fort : **607** students



Qasr Al Muwaiji : **2,245** students



EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

The education programme is intrinsic to the overall culture programme of DCT. Tangible and intangible heritage and visual and performing arts programmes are all supported by interpretation and educational tools that aim to create awareness among different segments of the audience, notably youth and students. Educational activities and resources aim to provide educators, families and parents with the tools to encourage awareness of art and heritage and create a generation of creative and innovative individuals proud of their identity and able to understand cultural differences.

Content development

Educator's Resource Guide

DCT Abu Dhabi produces Educator's Resource Guides (ERGs) to help guide teachers and enable them to use proposed exhibitions at Abu Dhabi's museums as teaching tools in their K–12 classrooms. Educators are encouraged to prepare themselves prior to leading the activities in their classroom by using the manuals to highlight the main points in the description for the selected artwork and prompting questions and activities to meet their teaching objectives and students' needs.

In 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi developed an ERG for Guggenheim Abu Dhabi's 'The Creative Act' exhibition at Manarat al Saadiyat and for the 'Hajj: Memories of a Journey' exhibition at the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque.

Additionally, an extensive Educator Resource Portfolio, based on the permanent collection of Louvre Abu Dhabi, was developed and delivered to all schools in the UAE in both English and Arabic. The cross-curricular portfolio was developed in line with Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) standards for use across disciplines for students of all ages.



Outreach

Juvenile Detention Centre Programme

In 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi launched an arts programme for the Abu Dhabi Juvenile Detention Centre to teach children skills and give them a positive outlook on life through expression and creativity. DCT Abu Dhabi conducted the programme every day for three months, from 15 March to 15 June 2017. The second phase began in January 2018.

Both boys and girls showcased the artworks they created in the programme during the annual 'Students Showcase' at Manarat Al Saadiyat. Some of the girls' artworks were sold at a craft fair, and the girls received the revenue.

Abu Dhabi Classics—School Outreach Programme

In 2017, more than 2,000 K–12 students attended open rehearsals with world-renowned orchestras and musicians. The aim of the programme is to introduce students to classical music through direct interaction with the orchestra members to understand the different components of classical music and comprehend the nuances of the different instruments and movements that are performed in the Abu Dhabi Classics programme.

The interactions between students and musicians were often meaningful and profound. Many students had one-on-one time with the musicians and were able to interact with them about their own musical practice and interest. Several of the visiting musicians offered in-depth, hands-on master classes for gifted students.



Talent Development Programme

His Highness Sheikh Hazza bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice Chairman of Abu Dhabi Executive Council, has launched the DCT Abu Dhabi Talent Development Programme, in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Education and Knowledge Department (ADEK).

As part of developing the artistic capital of Abu Dhabi, the Talent Development Programme supports gifted and talented students in the fields of visual and performing arts. DCT Abu Dhabi collaborates closely with ADEK on the six elements of the programme.

The first part of the programme was implemented in 2017 through the professional development of 600 ADEK art teachers who enrolled in a three-day intensive training workshop to learn how to identify talented and gifted students. The workshop was conducted by a team of specialists and held in Abu Dhabi, Al Ain and Al Dhafra.



Art Studio

Launched in November 2017, the Art Studio of Manarat Al Saadiyat is a multidisciplinary arts space with sessions and outreach initiatives for students, adults, children and families.

An ongoing programme of daily workshops, classes, activities and events has launched in Manarat Al Saadiyat, the Art Studio is specifically designed to engage visitors of all ages in a variety of creative activities.

Open seven days a week, the studio aims to attract children, teenagers and parents to practise art and to enhance their talents in the different fields of art. The studio serves as an art institute that offers classes, workshops, art camps and master classes to nurture artistic talents and support creativity and innovation. The Art Studio includes spaces for artists-in-residence who can spend two to three months in the space and supports the talents participating in the art sessions and workshops.

In December, Art Studio ran a successful Winter Camp for children ages six to fourteen; more than ninety children enjoyed the classes based on great artists of the world.

ArtWorks: A Teaching Artist Residency Programme

The programme, established in 2013 to develop a cadre of teaching artists who can practise and work in museums, arts centres and schools, hit a significant milestone in 2017 with the creation of three permanent working spaces within the Art Studio at Manarat al Saadiyat. Three emerging artists from the Salama bint Hamdan Emerging Artists Fellowship (SEAF) programme undertook the first in situ residency and learned how to create workshops under the guidance of the permanent Art Studio team.



Chapter 6: Publications



41

DCT Abu Dhabi publications:

- 5 books
- 9 catalogues
- 11 brochures
- 13 educational publications
- 3 publications specific to Abu Dhabi Art



39

books published by Dar Al Kutub, including:

25 books published by Kalima:

13 translated from French

9 translated from English

1 translated from Chinese

2 translated from Italian

14 books published by Esdarat

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2017 PUBLICATIONS

A closer look at four flagship publications from 2017 demonstrates the breadth and depth of the topics explored.

Book: A Thousand and One Fossils

Through a collection of photos and colour illustrations, DCT Abu Dhabi provides a look at the history of fossils in Abu Dhabi's Al Gharbia desert. Readers can gain a sense of the breadth of now-extinct mammals and the area's evolution over the past seven million years.

Catalogue: 'Hajj: Memories of a Journey'

This publication complements the narrative of the 'Hajj: Memories of a Journey' exhibition and reflects on the cultural and religious legacy of the spiritual movement. The 218-page guide reproduces numerous photographs from the exhibit as well as visual replications of historical artefacts. It also includes ten essays written specifically for this publication by renowned scholars from the UAE and across the world.

Included in the catalogue are detailed discussions of the historic relevance of hajj and explorations of different journeys made by dedicated pilgrims from around the globe. Readers can gain a greater understanding of the importance and challenge of this journey through first-hand accounts.

Catalogue: 'The Creative Act: Performance, Process, Presence'

The catalogue for The 'Creative Act' exhibition was produced in both Arabic and English and serves as a comprehensive documentation of the second Guggenheim Abu Dhabi collection. Readers can experience the exhibition through full-colour replications of the different objects and installations of art within the exhibit's three chapters. The catalogue also includes commissioned essays that revisit the historic narrative of modern and contemporary art from the region and the world.

Book: Archaeozoology of the Near East 9

Archaeozoology, or the archaeological study of faunal remains, is explored in-depth in *Archaeozoology of the Near East 9*, which focuses on the Near East region. Throughout the thirty-one research papers comprising this two-part volume, the authors discuss the significance of new research derived from significant archaeozoology sites and new findings on the history of animal exploitation throughout the region.

This collection is the latest publication from the International Council of Archaeozoology, a nonprofit organisation of more than 500 members from fifty countries.

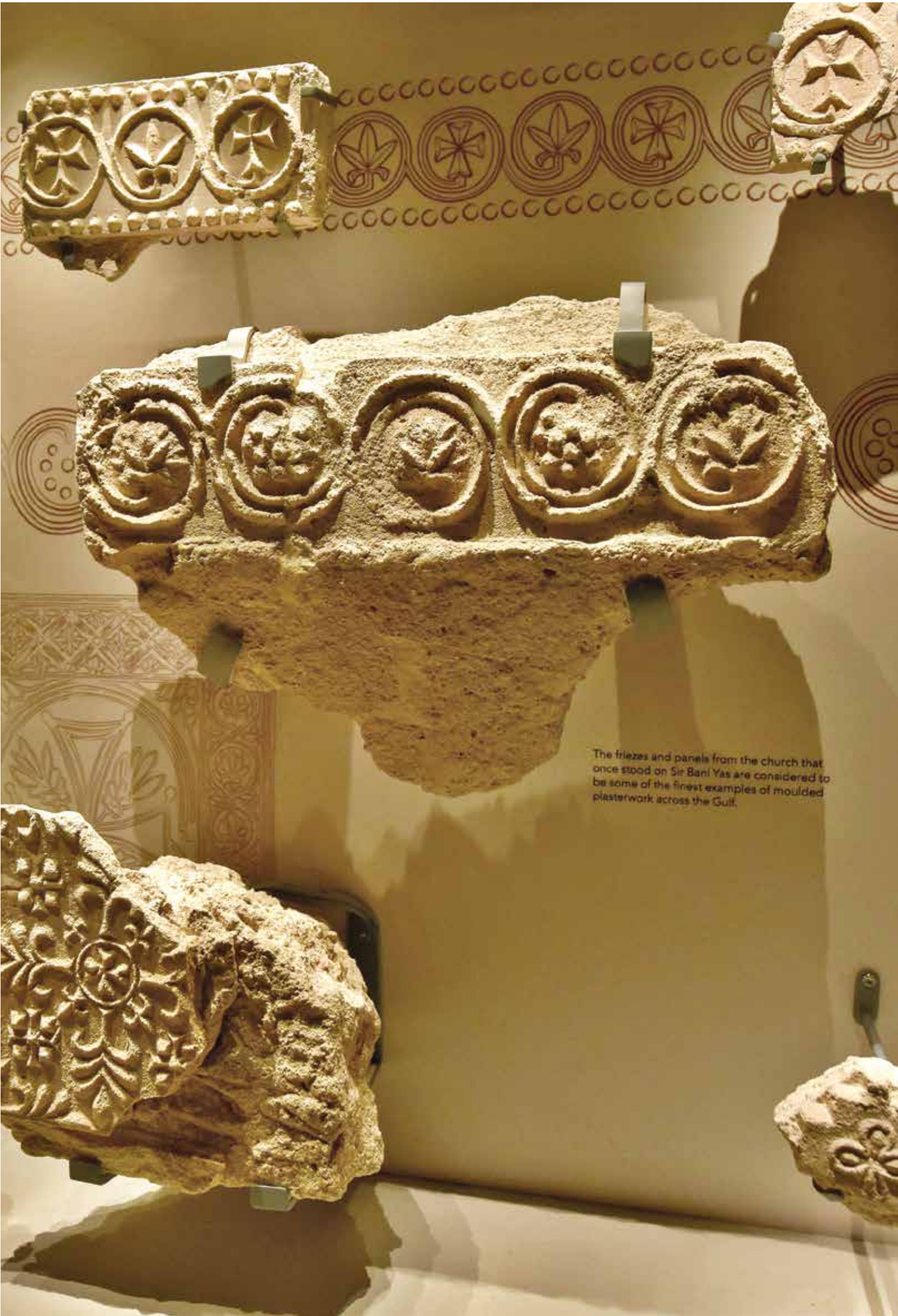


MEMORIES OF
A JOURNEY

رَحْلَةُ الْحَجِّ
رحلة
في الذاكرة



Chapter 7: New regulations for the sector



The friezes and panels from the church that once stood on Sir Bani Yas are considered to be some of the finest examples of moulded plasterwork across the Gulf.

Several new regulations affected the Culture Sector in 2017, including the Abu Dhabi Heritage Law, the Federal Antiquities Law and the Federal Immunity from Seizure Law.

ABU DHABI HERITAGE LAW

Passed in October 2016, the Abu Dhabi Heritage Law was designed to strike a balance between international best practice in the protection and promotion of cultural heritage, as adopted by international treaties and implemented by international organisations, and the UAE's legal framework on federal and local levels. The law emphasises that heritage is generally the property of the emirate and of the people of Abu Dhabi.

The legislation stipulates that all relevant cultural heritage accountabilities and mandates are the responsibility of DCT Abu Dhabi, clarifying its mandate in identifying, protecting, managing and developing Abu Dhabi's cultural heritage. The law also enables DCT Abu Dhabi to designate a tangible object or intangible practice as an element of cultural heritage and creates a comprehensive legal framework to protect those artefacts and traditions.

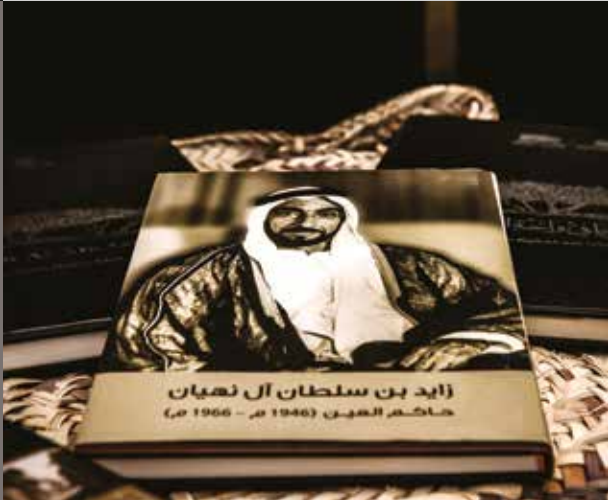
FEDERAL ANTIQUITIES LAW

The Federal Antiquities Law, passed in October 2017, significantly strengthens the protection of antiquities, including archaeological sites, documents and other national treasures. The law establishes stiff fines for defacing sites, violating licensing regulations and stealing or replicating artefacts.

DCT Abu Dhabi's specialists participated heavily in shaping the content and implementation details of the Federal Antiquities Law. DCT Abu Dhabi's contribution helped ensure the legislation successfully complements other UAE efforts to promote, protect and manage the cultural heritage of each emirate without creating a burdensome layer of regulation.

FEDERAL IMMUNITY FROM SEIZURE LAW

DCT Abu Dhabi led the federal effort to enact a law that provides museums, cultural centres, libraries and other cultural organisations with immunity from seizure of artwork borrowed from abroad for exhibiting in the UAE for a defined period of time. Passed in July 2017 with the cooperation of the UAE Ministry of Culture, the law was designed to align with the best practices applied in developed countries. The law had an immediate effect, facilitating the borrowing of artworks from different countries, mainly France, for the opening of Louvre Abu Dhabi.



Chapter 8: External collaborations



Today, many countries face turmoil and conflicts, and heritage is a deliberate target of destruction, pillaging and trafficking. Building on the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan's commitment to international cooperation and his strong belief in the fundamental role of heritage in shaping the next generation's future, the UAE has embarked on a global initiative to protect the world's cultural heritage currently threatened by acts of violence and aggression, which contradict all moral and religious values.

DCT Abu Dhabi has engaged in a multitude of partnerships and collaborations over the years. In 2017, three collaborations in particular yielded significant results.



DCT ABU DHABI AND UNESCO WORKSHOP: 'ETHICS OF COLLECTIONS AND THE FIGHT AGAINST ILLICIT TRAFFICKING OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN GCC COUNTRIES'

Abu Dhabi is committed to helping protect artistic and cultural artefacts in countries of conflict.

The looting of cultural property is especially acute in countries affected by armed conflict. Recent conflicts in the region, such as in Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen, and the rapid development and expansion of the art market in the GCC have created a high demand for cultural objects. These two factors have led to increased risk and potential for trafficking of cultural artefacts originating from countries without the necessary protective measures in place.

From 2 to 4 April 2017, representatives from DCT Abu Dhabi, the International Council of Museums (ICOM), Interpol, UNESCO, UNIDROIT and the World Customs Organization gathered alongside museum and art experts in Abu Dhabi to attend a workshop on the ethical and legal standards regarding the acquisition, collection and management of artworks, antiquities and other cultural artefacts. Participants discussed how to develop reference tools and policy frameworks that encourage an ethical art market and prevent illicit trafficking in public and private collections.



DCT ABU DHABI–VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM– PERI FOUNDATION ROUNDTABLE ON

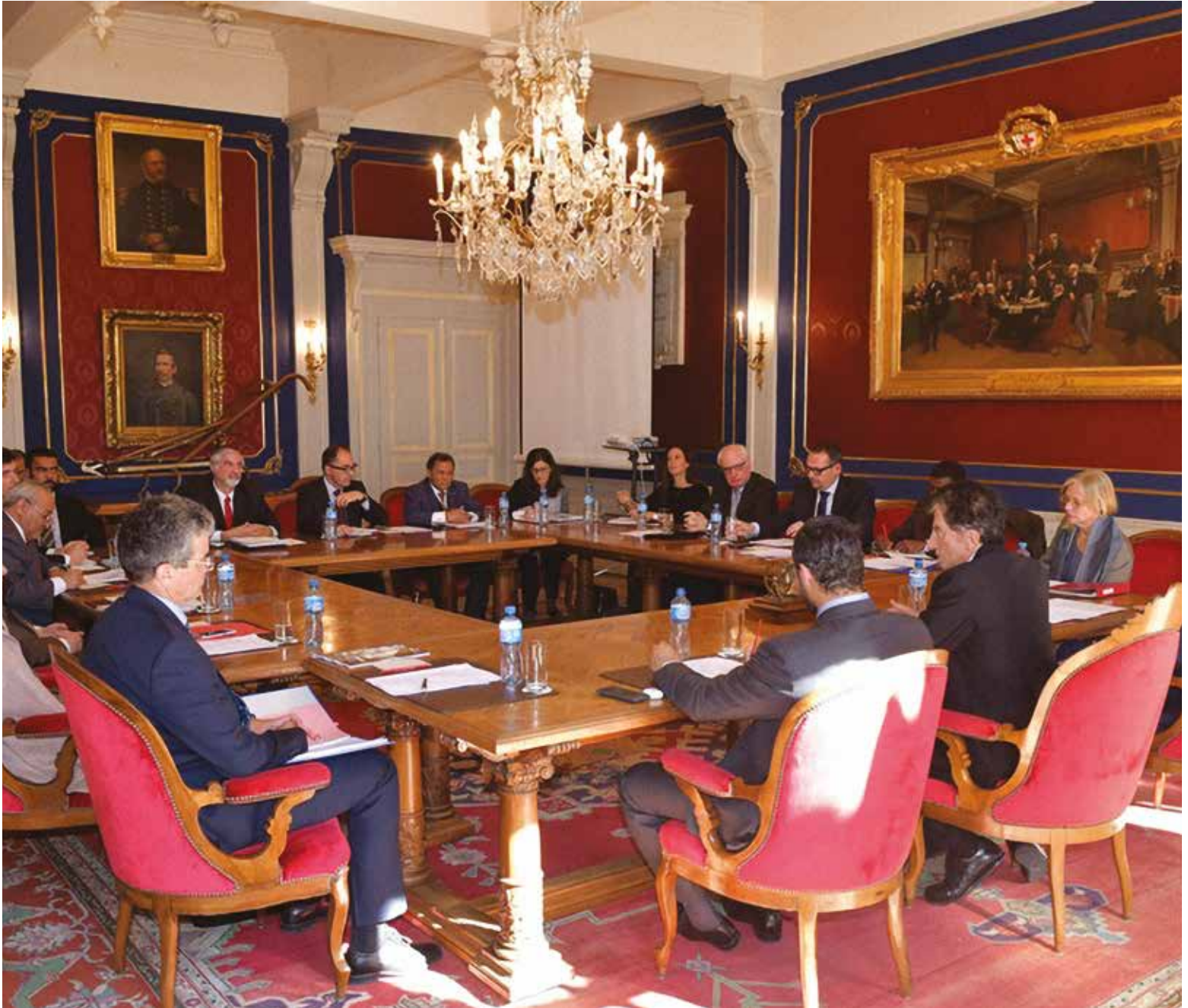
Abu Dhabi was a key participant in a new initiative to protect artefacts and cultural heritage.

In October 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi partnered with the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the Peri Foundation to organise a roundtable discussion with thought leaders in the field of cultural heritage to discuss modernising conventions around reproductions of art. The roundtable was one of five held in 2017 as part of the Reproduction of Art and Cultural Heritage (ReACH) programme, which was launched at UNESCO in May 2017. Representatives from the international museum community discussed best practices from around the world concerning the production, storage and dissemination of digital and physical reproductions.

Other roundtables were held in the People's Republic of China, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States. The collective insights from the roundtable programme will be used to draft a new convention concerning the role of museums and other organisations in the reproduction of works of art and cultural heritage, which can be shared and adopted by museums as best practice.

Dr Tristram Hunt, Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, said, 'With its location at the crossroads between East and West, and its rich history in trade and cultural exchange, Abu Dhabi is the ideal location for the third in the series of ReACH roundtable events. The MENA [Middle East and North Africa] region is a key area for our research in terms of the urgent need to document cultural heritage that is currently at risk due to armed conflict, and the great efforts being made by countries such as the UAE in the protection of these sites.'¹

¹Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi hosts ReACH roundtable', Emirates News Agency, 12 November 2017, <http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302646025>.



DCT ABU DHABI–GETTY CONSERVATION INSTITUTE

In 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi and the Getty Conservation Institute signed a memorandum of understanding reflecting common goals and joint collaboration in the fields of preservation and conservation.

The main aim of the MoU is to launch an international course on the conservation of earthen architecture in 2018. The course would be a first in the MENA region and would welcome architects, engineers, conservationists, heritage managers and archaeologists who work with earthen buildings and archaeological sites.

A joint workshop in December 2017 brought together international experts who will be teaching the course, which will be held in October and November 2018 in Al Ain.

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HERITAGE IN CONFLICT AREAS (ALIPH)

The Abu Dhabi Declaration illustrates how the UAE set a new standard on the topic of culture and heritage for the international community.

In December 2016, Abu Dhabi hosted a conference to bring together public, private and nongovernmental institutions to commit to protecting and preserving the endangered cultural heritage of the Arab world, particularly in times of war, unrest and terrorism. Thirteen heads of government, the director general of UNESCO, twenty-five other state representatives and more than 400 participants attended. Led by HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, and French President at the time, François Hollande, the summit resulted in the creation of the Abu Dhabi Declaration.

The declaration consists of two major actions. First, it established an AED 367 million (USD 100 million) fund for the preservation and restoration of sites of cultural significance. Second, it created an international network of safe havens for the temporary protection and preservation of endangered cultural property, such as antiquities and national treasures.

In spring 2017, the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas (ALIPH) was established in Geneva, with the UAE and France as its founding members. ALIPH, chaired by American philanthropist Thomas Kaplan, will serve as the central function to attract, manage and invest in resources to support preventive and emergency protection programmes for cultural property in danger of destruction, damage or looting due to armed conflict. In addition, ALIPH will contribute to the rehabilitation of such property, and offer support for professionals working in the field. More than USD 75 million was pledged by France, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Morocco, the UAE and Chairman Thomas Kaplan. Germany, Italy, Mexico, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, as well as the World Monuments Fund, pledged their support in achieving the alliance's aims. In addition, the National Museum of China and the country of Morocco have joined the network of safe havens. The United Nations Security Council also adopted a resolution to protect the world's cultural heritage and support the aims of the alliance.

In 2017, three ALIPH board meetings were hosted in Paris and Geneva to develop the governance, structure and action plans of ALIPH. DCT Abu Dhabi was involved in all aspects of the AED 367 million (USD 100 million) all chaired by HE Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak, Chairman of DCT Abu Dhabi and representative of the UAE on the ALIPH Board, as well as Jack Lang, President of the Arab World Institute.

This initiative and the Abu Dhabi Declaration are historic milestones. The initiative as a whole sends a strong cultural message to the world: the UAE and its partner countries are committed to supporting humanity in fighting extremism and safeguarding cultural identities. These efforts will ensure the legacy of peace and tolerance is passed on to future generations.

ALIPH FAST FACTS
Donors (commitment)

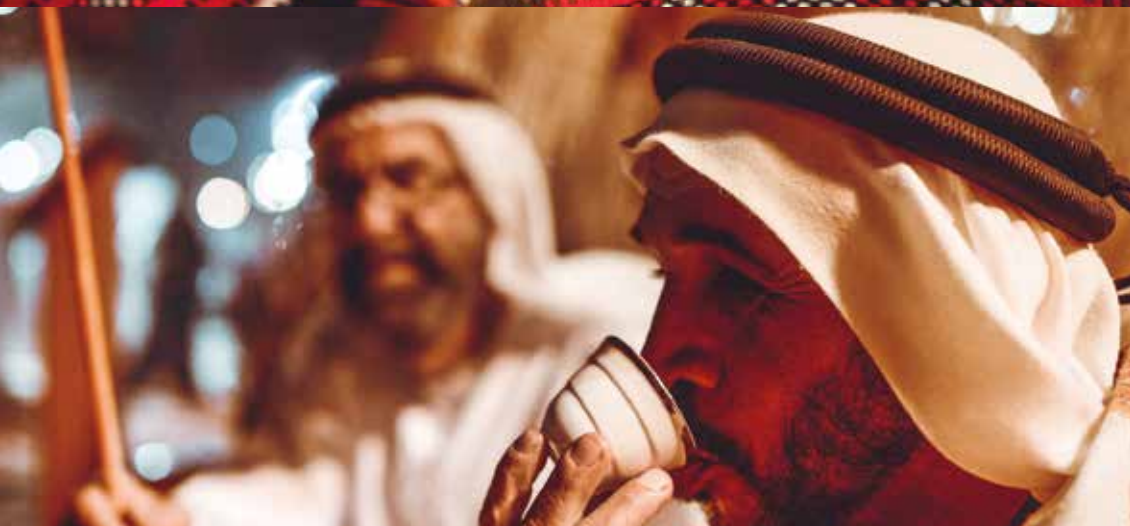
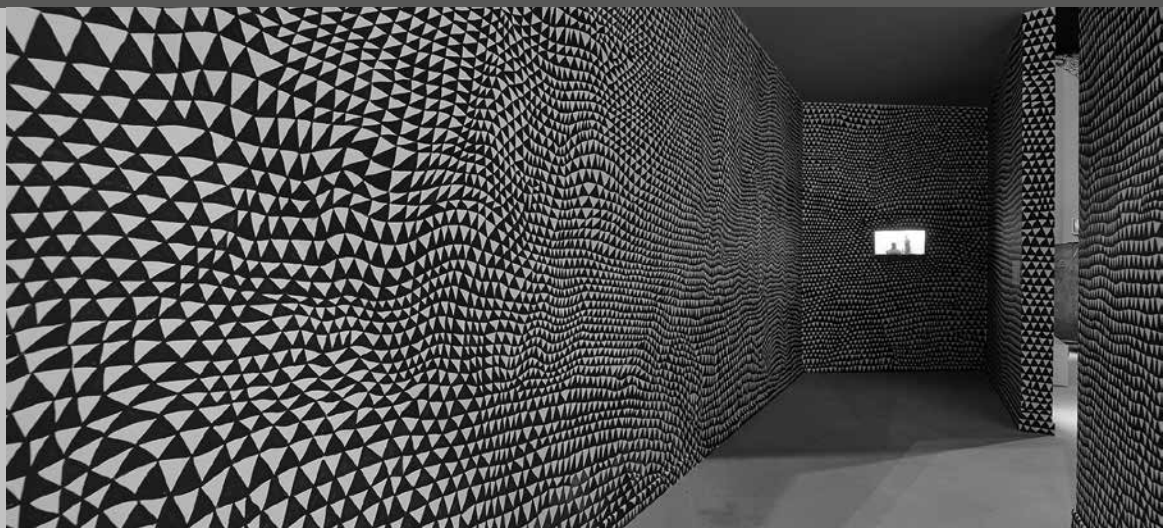
UAE (US \$15 million)	France (US \$30 million)	The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (US \$20 million)
Kuwait (US \$5 million)	Luxembourg (€3 million)	Morocco (US \$1.5 million)
Thomas Kaplan (US \$1 million)	The Gandur Foundation	The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Board members:

- Mr Thomas Kaplan, private donor and Chairman of ALIPH
- HE Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak, representative of the United Arab Emirates, founding member of ALIPH
- HE Jack Lang, 2017 representative of the Republic of France, founding member of ALIPH
- HH Hussah Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah, representative of the State of Kuwait
- HE Ali Ibrahim Ali Al-Ghabban, representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- HE Guy Arendt, representative of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg
- HE Mehdi Qotbi, representative of the Kingdom of Morocco
- Ms Mariët Westermann, representative of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
- Mr Jean-Claude Gandur, private donor
- Mr Richard Kurin
- Mr Markus Hilgert
- Mr Marc-André Renold
- Mr Francesco Bandarin, representative of UNESCO
- Mr Jean-Luc Martinez, Chairman of ALIPH Scientific Committee

Scientific committee members:

- Mr Jean-Luc Martinez, President-Director of Musée du Louvre
- Mr Qais Hussein Rashid Al-Magases, Deputy Tourism and Antiquities Minister of Iraq
- Mr Lu Zhangshen, Director of the National Museum of China
- Mr Joshua David, President and CEO of the World Monuments Fund
- Mr Samuel Sidibe, Director of the National Museum of Mali
- Ms Bahija Simou, CEO of the Royal Archives of Morocco
- Mr Jean-Yves Marin, Director of the Musée d’Art et d’Histoire of Geneva
- Ms France Desmarais, Director of Programmes and Partnerships, International Council of Museums



Chapter 9: Looking to 2018



In 2018, DCT Abu Dhabi will continue to develop programmes, properties and capabilities to enhance cultural creativity; preserve and promote cultural heritage; and develop and support cultural tourism. All development and initiatives are aligned with the Abu Dhabi Plan.

KEY EVENTS AND PROGRAMMING

DCT Abu Dhabi will organise the second annual Culture Summit from 9 to 12 April 2018 at Manarat Al Saadiyat, Saadiyat Cultural District in Abu Dhabi, and at other locations in the UAE. This year's programme, titled 'Unexpected Collaborations: Forging New Connections Between Heritage and Innovation, Near and Far, Creativity and Purpose', will focus on partnerships that are unique and different and that blend tradition and innovation.

DCT Abu Dhabi's 2018 calendar will also include the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair in April, Abu Dhabi Art (including Galleries Week) in November and the Literature and Music Festival in December. Abu Dhabi's libraries, community centres and museums will continue to offer a robust calendar of workshops, seminars and exhibitions to educate visitors.

DCT Abu Dhabi will continue to develop an Emirati artists programme to connect artists with expert international curators and critics, give their work international exposure and raise the level of appreciation and knowledge of contemporary art among the general public.

NEW AND IMPROVED CULTURAL SITES

In 2018, DCT Abu Dhabi will launch the construction of the Zayed National Museum, which will tell the history and culture of the UAE and Sheikh Zayed.

Qasr Al Hosn will be reopened after the completion of its conservation plan.

The Mezyad Desert Park, part of the Al Ain UNESCO World Heritage Site, will be opened to the general public.

Dar Al Kutub will introduce a revamped digital library to improve public access to free resources, including books, periodicals and journals.

Bait Al Oud (BAO) will have several initiatives in 2018:

- increasing the production of ouds;
- increasing the visibility of BAO as a tourist attraction, focusing on networking more than marketing by bringing tourist groups to visit BAO through liaisons with destination management companies and tour operators;
- opening violin classes (which will be the fifth internal department);
- attracting more Emirati to BAO and staging more concerts.

The UAE Pavilion for the Arts will occupy Foster + Partner's iconic UAE Pavilion, which was designed and built for the World Expo 2010 in Shanghai. The building will be used as a space for Abu Dhabi's creative community to come together, work, collaborate and create. The facilities will nurture talent by providing both general and specialised facilities such as coworking spaces, workshop labs, exhibition spaces and food and beverage outlets. The refurbishment of the UAE Pavilion is intended to bring about the following changes:

- ensuring the character of the UAE Pavilion building is revitalised yet retained as per the original design.
- establishing a common space for cultural and sports purposes to be used by everyone.
- designing a cultural hub for the community.
- delivering a facility that not only can be used by different academic establishments but also is open to the general public during non-working days. In addition, ensuring the facility has the ability to generate revenue.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH INITIATIVES

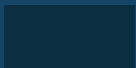
DCT Abu Dhabi will launch innovative programmes to further embed arts and heritage in the UAE education curriculum.

DCT Abu Dhabi will establish a mentorship programme for students in cycle three to help guide them through the application process for entry into prestigious art colleges and universities and assist them in developing comprehensive art portfolios.

DCT Abu Dhabi worked with experts in the visual and performing arts to establish criteria and guidelines on how to select gifted students in the field. DCT Abu Dhabi will also continue to expand its arts enrichment classes at the Art Studio at Manarat Al Sadayat in the fields of acting, dance, mime and drama.

In May 2018, DCT Abu Dhabi will host an exhibition and concert featuring the work and progress of all students enrolled in the Talent Development Programme. In addition, DCT Abu Dhabi will establish a scholarship awards programme for UAE students enrolled in the Talent Development Programme, thus expanding its existing range of scholarships.

DEPARTMENT
OF **CULTURE**
AND TOURISM
ABU DHABI



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ABU DHABI

ANNUAL REPORT
2017

VOLUME 2 **TOURISM**

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM ABU DHABI

Volume 2—Tourism



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Chapter 1: Introduction



FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The Tourism Sector is dedicated to driving the evolution of Abu Dhabi into a world-class destination of distinction, as expressed through our commitment to conserving, promoting and leveraging Abu Dhabi’s heritage, culture and leisure assets.

The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi fulfils this mandate by means of continuous investment into Abu Dhabi’s diverse array of leisure, entertainment and cultural attractions, and a comprehensive programme of profile-raising events organised in partnership with a network of sponsors and industry stakeholders.

We work closely with the emirate’s tourism industry partners to provide guidance and ensure that service providers exceed global standards of excellence, making our destination as attractive as possible to the international traveller. This work has been supplemented with the introduction of the Abu Dhabi Advantage Events incentive scheme, which aims to develop even more recurring private sector-led events.

As an indication of the effectiveness of our support in 2017, a record number of people stayed in our 162 hotels and hotel apartments during the year, with 4,875 million visitors checking in; an impressive 9.8 % year-on-year rise.

Throughout the year, key overseas markets performed strongly. As an illustration, our guests from the People’s Republic of China increased by 60 % compared with 2016, to number more than 372,000, and India provided more than 360,000 visitors, a growth of 11 % over 2016. The United Kingdom remains the largest European source market, registering a 13 % rise to more than 270,000 people, while the United States’ market also showed a dramatic rise of more than 23 %.

These figures provide a focus and a further challenge for us as we enter 2018; we have great confidence in delivering even better results as we continue to innovate our strategies and maximise the potential our wonderful emirate and its resources has to offer.

Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak





FOREWORD FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

As part of its mandate to support Abu Dhabi’s tourism sector, the Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi works to comprehensively promote the emirate, with all its diverse and wide-ranging assets, with a strategic focus on key overseas source markets. In so doing, the Department seeks to increase global awareness and visitation numbers—thereby boosting the sector’s contribution to the overall economy and fulfilling its responsibilities to support economic diversification.

In working toward this vision, we frame Abu Dhabi as a ‘destination of distinction’, a place where the visitor can star in their own ‘extraordinary story’, a place of unforgettable experiences; authentic yet cutting-edge, thrilling yet family-friendly, luxurious yet still surprising. Our ever-growing annual calendar of events, which we are working to enhance with closer ties and incentive schemes with partners from the private sector, is already packed with world-class entertainment experiences of every type—from the musical to the culinary, from the sporting to the interactive.

Abu Dhabi Summer Season, Abu Dhabi Classics, the HSBC Abu Dhabi Golf Championship, the Red Bull Air Race, Abu Dhabi Festival, Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, the Dar Al Zain Festival, the Sheikh Zayed Heritage Festival. These tentpole events play a pivotal role in raising international awareness of the emirate’s tourism credentials.

Abu Dhabi is also at the forefront of demand for major conventions and conferences, which reflects its growing appeal as a ‘go-to’, all-encompassing business tourism destination. In 2017, the Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau submitted successful applications, along with partners and stakeholders, to host eight conferences in the coming years; these forums are expected to attract around 45,000 delegates and contribute more than AED 600 million to the local economy. Abu Dhabi also welcomed sixty-nine business events during 2017, an increase of 53 % over the previous year.

We overlay these initiatives with strategic marketing and promotional campaigns targeted to give any potential visitor compelling reasons to experience Abu Dhabi. In 2017, we conducted a total of 107 international campaigns in key source



markets, of which thirty were online. As a measure of the scale and effectiveness of the engagement achieved, more than eighteen million social media interactions and fifty million YouTube views were recorded from our digital efforts.

Eleven Abu Dhabi-promoting trade shows were hosted overseas, held in cooperation with stakeholders such as destination management companies, hotels and high-profile attractions. Notably, the largest-ever delegations from Abu Dhabi visited ATM Dubai and WTM London.

In responding to the growing popularity for authentic and immersive travel, 2017 saw the launch of the 'Emirati Experiences' portal, enabling visitors from across the world to gain firsthand insight into local culture, history and heritage by being guided around Abu Dhabi with the assistance of an Emirati. To supplement this initiative, we also launched the Emirati Cuisine and Hospitality Capacity Building programme, to encourage four- and five-star hotels to promote culture through authentic local cuisine.

As we move forward, we will continue to strive for excellence in our mission; to take the 'message and essence' of Abu Dhabi's touristic offerings' out into the world, and to reinforce the reasons why a traveller should visit this unique and compelling destination.

Saif Saeed Ghobash

DESTINATION

- 1. ABU DHABI
- 2. ABU DHABI CONVENTION BUREAU
- 3. ABU DHABI EVENTS CALENDAR
- 4. ABU DHABI EVENTS BUREAU
- 5. GOLF IN ABU DHABI



TOURISM
SECTOR

- 1. ABU DHABI SUMMER SEASON
- 2. ABU DHABI FOOD FESTIVAL
- 3. ABU DHABI FESTIVAL
- 4. ADVANTAGE ABU DHABI
- 5. ABU DHABI ADVANTAGE EVENTS
- 6. EVENTS LICENSING SYSTEM
- 7. THIS NEW YEAR’S EVE,
THERE’S NO PLACE LIKE ABU DHABI
- 8. MOTHER OF THE NATION FESTIVAL
- 9. DAR AL ZAIN FESTIVAL
- 10. AL NUKHBA
- 11. MAMSHA AL KHAIR
- 12. EMIRATI TOUR GUIDE
- 13. EMIRATI EXPERIENCES



3.



4.



5.



3.



6.

نظام ترخيص الفعاليات
EVENTS LICENSING SYSTEM

9.



10.



11.





YEAR OF GIVING

The United Arab Emirates declared 2017 the Year of Giving—a value cherished countrywide and embodied by the UAE’s founding father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

The Year of Giving initiative had three main pillars: corporate social responsibility, volunteering and serving the nation.

The Department of Culture and Tourism—Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi) implemented several initiatives in 2017 to support government and citizen efforts in the Year of Giving. Some are discussed here, and some are discussed in the culture volume of DCT Abu Dhabi’s annual report.

- 1. Tours of key tourism attractions for orphans and children with special needs:** DCT Abu Dhabi distributed free tickets to events and tourist destinations and organised special trips for orphans and children with special needs to familiarise them with cultural sites and attractions within the emirate of Abu Dhabi. One trip, planned in partnership with Awqaf and the Minors Affairs Foundation in Dubai, brought fifty orphans from Dubai to see the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, Wahat Al Karama and ‘Masha & the Bear on Ice’ at Zayed Sports City Ice Rink.
- 2. Events and trips for elderly citizens:** In partnership with Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque and the Ritz-Carlton, DCT Abu Dhabi organised special trips for elderly citizens to cultural and historic sites, including Qahr Al Hosn and Wahat Al Ain, as well as heritage events, including the Al Wathba Festival and the Liwa Date Festival. In addition, DCT Abu Dhabi reserved a number of free tickets to major events for orphans and people with determination.
- 3. A walking tour for special needs:** A group of people with determination, led by Sultan Al Karrani (one of Abu Dhabi’s accredited Emirati Tour Guides), visited the Al Wathba Wetland Reserve. Nestled between Baniyas City, Musaffah and the Abu Dhabi–Al Ain Road, the unique ecosystem is a sanctuary of aquatic and bird life in the emirate.
- 4. Preservation of Grace Initiative:** In collaboration between DCT Abu Dhabi and the Red Crescent in Abu Dhabi, the ‘Hifdh Al No’ma’ (Preservation of Grace) Initiative has been launched to encourage all hotels and restaurants to distribute food to needy families and other groups of people in Abu Dhabi. The initiative also aims to reduce environmental waste in the emirate by overcoming the waste aspects and redistributing food to the needy.
- 5. Volunteer employee engagement:** DCT Abu Dhabi encouraged employees to enrol on volunteer.ae and log volunteering hours. In addition, DCT Abu Dhabi created an excellence award to recognise employees with exceptional volunteering contribution.





VISION FOR THE SECTOR

DCT Abu Dhabi aims to make the emirate an inspiring destination for visitors to experience cultural authenticity, diverse natural offerings, dynamic family-leisure entertainment and ambitious business opportunities.

DCT Abu Dhabi's overarching strategic objective is to increase the total number of visitors annually to the emirate and ensure tourism accounts for a greater percentage of non-oil GDP by 2021, where the sector is an important component of reaching Abu Dhabi's economic diversification goals.

To achieve this goal, DCT Abu Dhabi is actively working to build the emirate's leisure and business tourism resources alongside its image as a destination that caters to visitors with state-of-the-art offerings, from culture and entertainment activities to business facilities and convention centres.

The DCT Abu Dhabi Tourism Sector is charged with supporting the evolution of Abu Dhabi into a world-class destination, in line with our commitment to conserving, promoting and shaping Abu Dhabi's heritage, culture and tourism assets. DCT Abu Dhabi also aims to ensure the emirate gradually becomes a destination for niche markets such as cruise and medical tourism, building on Abu Dhabi's growing assets in both areas.

We fulfill our mandate through continued investment in Abu Dhabi's diverse array of leisure, entertainment and cultural attractions, as well as a comprehensive programme of profile-raising events organised in partnership with a network of sponsors and industry stakeholders. We also work closely with the emirate's tourism industry partners to provide crucial, industry-related guidance, helping to ensure that service providers exceed global standards of excellence.



Chapter 2:
2017 in numbers

TOURISM SECTOR HIGHLIGHTS

Abu Dhabi's movement toward becoming a top destination of choice for both leisure and business tourists is clear when looking at the sector's performance for 2017. China and India led as top source markets by hotel guest.

4.9M+

hotel guests (increase of 10% over 2016)



AED 2.94B+

hotel room revenues



AED 1.96B+

food and beverage revenue



4–5 stars: 218,000+

number of hotel rooms by star rating



345,000+

cruise visitors in the 2016-2017 season (increase of 49 % over 2015–2016 season)





2.52
days average length of stay



12.29M+
guest nights (increase of 2 % over 2016)



72 %
occupancy rate



AED 363
average daily rate



1–3 stars: 56,000+
number of hotel rooms by star rating

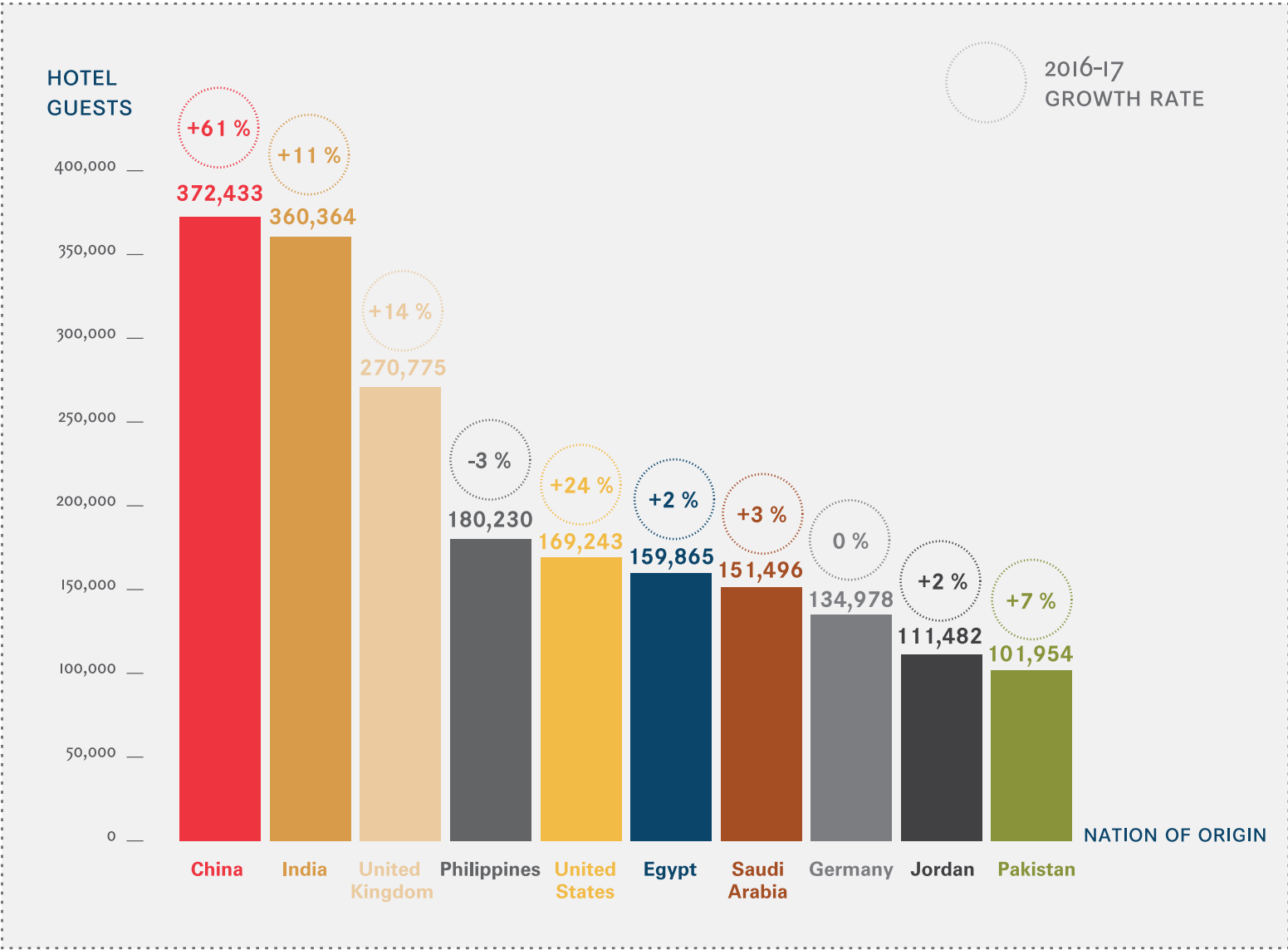


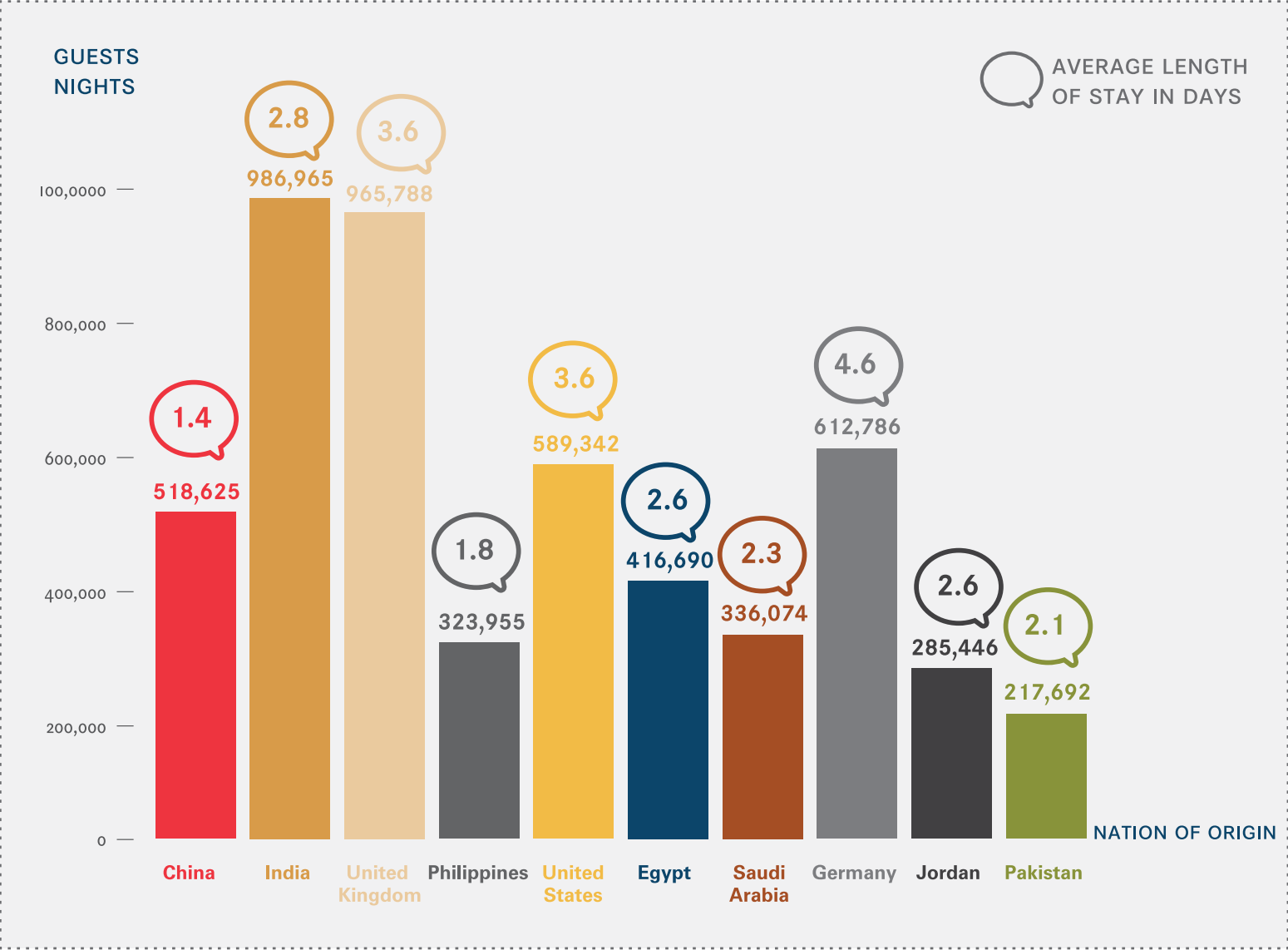
161
vessels in 2016–2017 season (increase 40 % over 2016–2016 season)



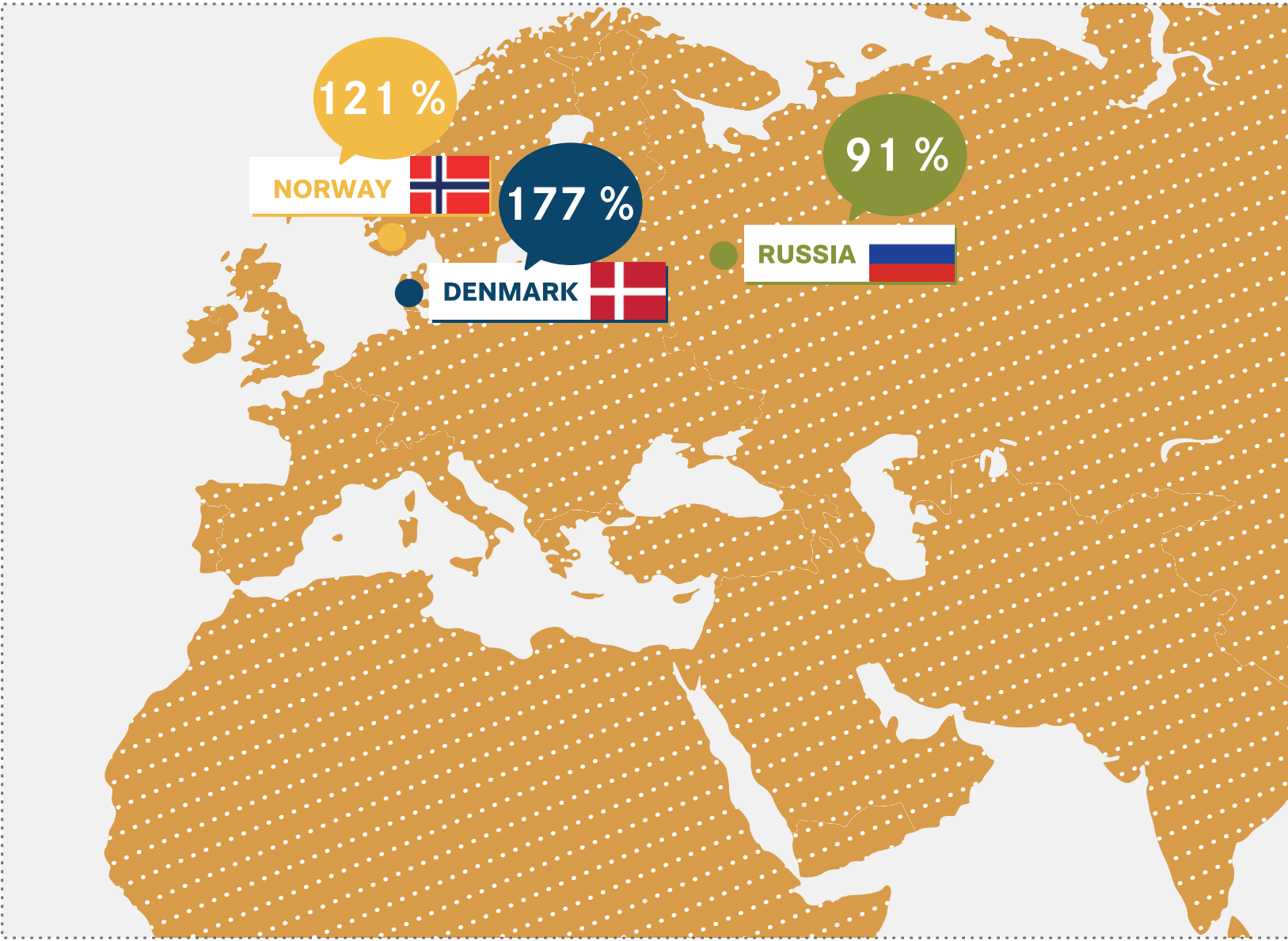
75M+
visitors to shopping malls in Abu Dhabi and Al Ain City

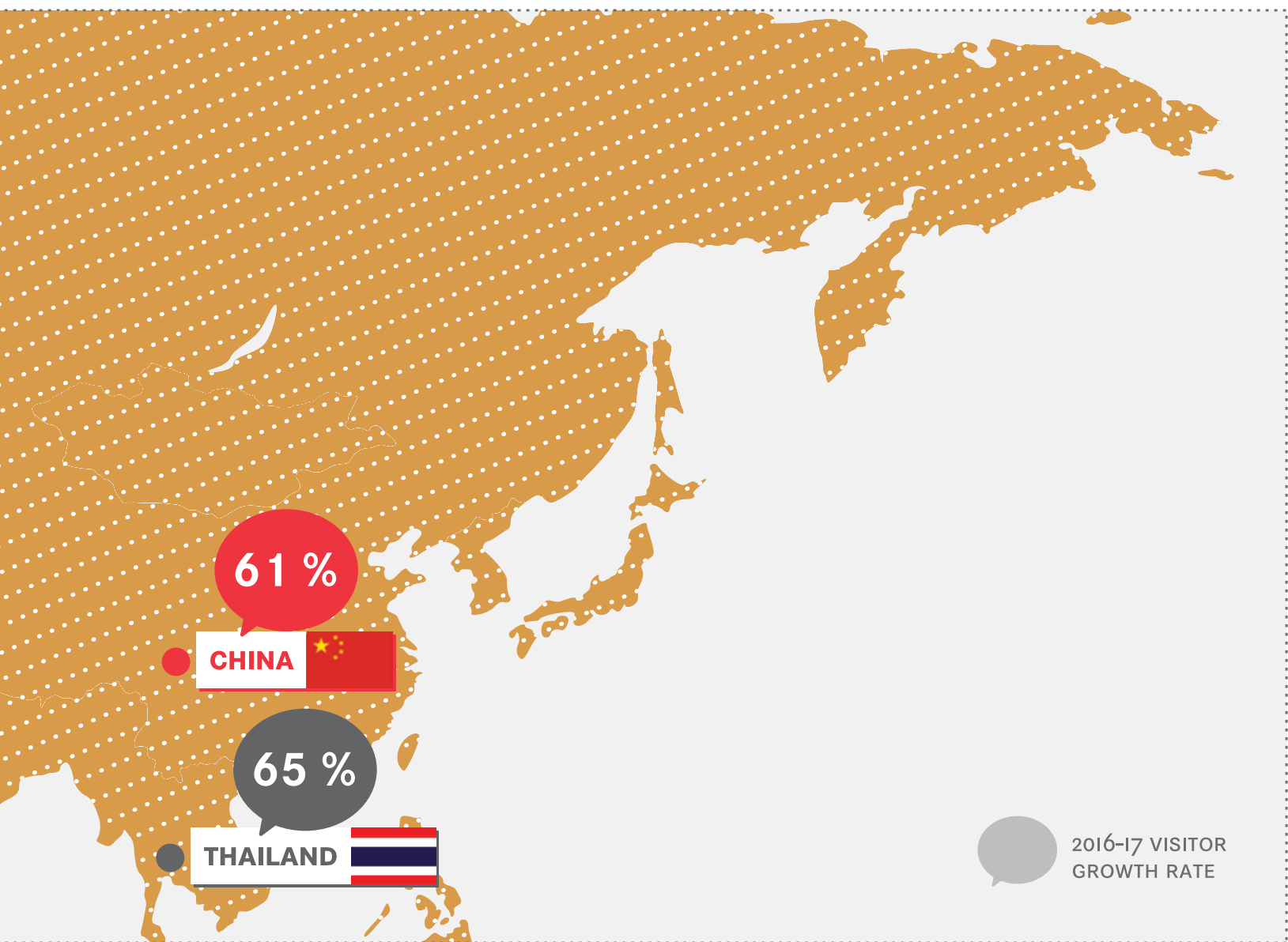
TOP 10 SOURCE MARKETS





TOP 5 FASTEST GROWING
SOURCE MARKETS





Leisure tourism

13M+

total visitors to leisure attractions

- Opening of the Louvre Abu Dhabi in November 2017, reinforcing Abu Dhabi's position as a cultural destination
- Sheikh Zayed Grande Mosque ranked as the world's second-favourite landmark by TripAdvisor
- 762 active Abu Dhabi licensed tour guides including 70 UAE nationals



Business tourism

69

business events

(increase of 53 % from 2016)

- **16** bids won for events to be held in the next 5 years bringing **50,000** delegates
- **2nd** best city to do business in, ranked by Ipsos (2017)

Events

5M+

Abu Dhabi event visitors

- **817** various events in Abu Dhabi in 2017
- Expanding venue space—**67,340 km²** of events venues across Abu Dhabi



107 

international joint promotion campaigns
in key source markets generating

 ~300,000

additional passenger trips

30 

online campaigns conducted

 >18M+

social media interactions
(+72 % over 2016)

>17M+

visits across DCT Abu Dhabi's 16 websites
(+130 % over 2016)



>24M+

page views (+67 % over 2016)

>50M+

YouTube video views
(+170 % over 2016)



11 

trade shows internationally
in cooperation with Abu Dhabi stakeholders
(destination management companies, hotels and attractions)

220

products represented in cooperation with Abu Dhabi stakeholders at the largest Abu Dhabi delegations ever at the ATM Dubai and WTM London





8

roadshows over

28

cities



82

familiarisation trips hosted



Chapter 3: Leisure tourism



NEW AND RENOVATED ATTRACTIONS AND EXPERIENCES FUEL GROWTH

In 2017, Abu Dhabi continued to develop its strength as a tourism destination, with development and growth in cultural attractions, experiences and specific sectors such as cruise and major events. The marketing and promotional activities support these efforts in communicating to the world why Abu Dhabi is a 'must visit' destination as well as providing travellers with compelling reasons to return in the coming years.

Opportunities for family entertainment grew significantly in 2017, and the newly opened Louvre Abu Dhabi is an important step in establishing the emirate as a beacon of cultural tourism. DCT Abu Dhabi continued developing the emirate's unique experience offerings through collaborations, newly developed cultural attractions with the Louvre Abu Dhabi and Bait Al Oud and selected developments in Yas Island and Sir Bani Yas. Visitors can now have an exclusive experience in Abu Dhabi thanks to the new Emirati Experiences tours. Beyond product offerings, DCT Abu Dhabi is actively involved in building the travel and tourism sector's capabilities.





EMIRATI EXPERIENCES

In October 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi launched an online portal offering unique tour experiences created by Emirati tour guides.

Emirati Experiences are excursions or activities designed and led by Emirati tour guides. These tour guides give guests special access into places and communities in their cities. A range of experiences are available, from learning about the ancient art of pearl diving to visiting an Emirati house to learn about daily life and culture. Further tours are highlighted in the sidebar. All tours allow visitors to experience an ‘insiders’ view’ of the destination.

The portal enables Emirati tour guides to upload and present unique tours; all the tours are designed and operated by licensed Emirati tour guides and enable end users to directly book their experiences. The programme is developed to promote and support the Emirati tour guides’ offerings; it allows direct connections between the Emirati tour guide and the tourist.

To view the offered Emirati Experiences, visitors can access and book via the Visit Abu Dhabi website. The sidebar presents three examples of the many Emirati tours available:

CULTURAL TOURISM

Abu Dhabi’s cultural heritage provides a rich experience for visitors to the emirate. From the World Heritage Site at Al Ain Oasis to the study and fabrication of Arabic instruments at Bait Al Oud to the newly opened Louvre Abu Dhabi, the emirate focuses on providing visitors with a diverse range of cultural experiences that highlight Emirati hospitality and the emirate’s universal world view on art, history and heritage. Details on Abu Dhabi’s cultural offerings are further explored in the Culture Sector portion of this annual report.

Emirati Experience tour examples

Al Ain Museums and Al Ain Oasis

The Al Ain Oasis city is the UAE’s first Unesco World Heritage site and is regarded as one of the world’s oldest continually inhabited settlements. A two-hour drive from the urban metropolis of Abu Dhabi, the oasis is settled among mountains, natural springs and vegetation, which have helped sustain the city for centuries. Al Ain contains an abundance of forts, archeological sites and historic buildings.

Guests who want an in-depth visit to this Unesco site through Emirati Experiences are treated to tours of the oasis, the Al Jahili Fort and the Qasr Al Muwajji museum, among other locations.

Bait Al Oud

Bait Al Oud is the leading Arabic music institute in the region, and visitors on the experience tour can learn about its history, listen to live performances and watch an atelier make traditional Arabic instruments such as the oud, qunan and rebabah.

Food Experience Tour

Guests can book a culinary tour of some of Abu Dhabi’s traditional food outlets and taste many beloved dishes on offer in the UAE, including a sampling of Arabic sweets and coffee.



Collaboration with Wahat Al Karama

DCT Abu Dhabi managed Wahat Al Karama on behalf of the Crown Prince Court (CPC). DCT Abu Dhabi's support included managing the visitor experience end to end, rolling out the event's marketing and communication activities in coordination with the public relations and communications department of the Martyrs' Families Affairs Office and developing school kits and providing school curriculum input in partnership with the Abu Dhabi Education Council and the Ministry of Education.

YAS ISLAND

Yas Island, a popular leisure, shopping and entertainment centre in Abu Dhabi, saw several important milestones in 2017. Ferrari World Abu Dhabi opened the Turbo Track, a new steel roller coaster, in the first quarter 2017. The roller coaster launches guests vertically through Ferrari World's famed glass funnel roof at 102 kilometres per hour, reaching the apex before plummeting back down into the park. The roller coaster's apex of sixty-four metres is the highest point on Yas Island.

In addition, Miral and Etisalat signed an agreement in 2017 to offer free public Wi-Fi on Yas Island. The partnership aligns with the country's 'smart' vision, which focuses on delivering Wi-Fi coverage across all UAE regions, including Abu Dhabi, Dubai and the northern emirates. The strategic project connects residents and visitors at all of the island's various leisure and entertainment assets.

SIR BANI YAS ISLAND

In 2017, Abu Dhabi Port Authority oversaw the construction of a bridge that connected one of the smaller islands to the main island, creating a landing area with beaches. This effort improved visitation to the islands and represents an initial step in establishing Sir Bani Yas as a cruise stopover. DCT Abu Dhabi is also developing a high-level master plan to develop the northeast area of the island and improve and protect the beach located to the north of the Anantara Hotel. This work is in the early stages but has laid the groundwork for progress.

CAPABILITY BUILDING IN THE SECTOR

The tourism sector is a vital and ever-burgeoning industry in Abu Dhabi, and more skilled workers are needed to unlock its full potential.

ABU DHABI TOUR GUIDE LICENSING PROGRAMME

In 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi launched the new Tour Guide Licensing programme, an immersive and in-depth course that aims to improve the quality of tour guides’ knowledge and enhance participants’ engagement skills, ultimately improving the tourist experience. The programme is offered by accredited training providers for interested candidates from all nationalities and will ensure tour guides in Abu Dhabi have a deep understanding of Abu Dhabi’s culture and history and a solid awareness of all the recent product offerings and experiences the emirate has to offer. The content may be extended in the future to support other frontline staff who interact with tourists such as museum guides.

The new curriculum includes four main elements to ensure that Abu Dhabi caters to the diversified needs of visitors:

- An enhanced training programme provides participants with foundational knowledge on culture (including Abu Dhabi history, heritage, religion and tolerance and the Royal Family); cultural institutions, museums, historical sites, music and performing arts and literature; Abu Dhabi’s districts, architectural styles and major landmarks; and general information on the city, its food and its legal system and laws.
- Different licensing tiers for tour guides were developed to tailor training to specific positions.
- A robust assessment methodology tests the attainment of students to maintain the highest quality of talent in the tourism industry.
- Accessible learning resources enable students to become familiar with industry best practises.

Currently, Abu Dhabi has a total of 762 active, licensed tour guides who speak Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Russian and Spanish.





EMIRATI TOUR GUIDE TRAINING

In an effort to encourage the involvement of UAE nationals in the tour guide profession, DCT Abu Dhabi is offering customised sessions designed for UAE nationals to be trained on the new curriculum. To date, eighteen UAE national graduates have benefitted from the newly launched curriculum. As recent graduate Naser Al Mansoori noted, 'As an Emirati, it's great to be able to provide a learning experience for our visitors. We are giving them the knowledge about our own country, which helps deepen and enrich their entire experience here'.

EMIRATI CUISINE AND HOSPITALITY CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME

The Emirati Cuisine and Hospitality Capacity Building Programme, created by DCT Abu Dhabi in 2017, encourages four- and five-star hotels across the emirate to feature and promote Emirati culture through its cuisine. An essential goal of this initiative is to strengthen the presence and presentation of Emirati hospitality and food in Abu Dhabi's hotels.

DCT Abu Dhabi is training and accrediting culinary hotel employees with the fundamental skills required to prepare Emirati cuisine and educate diners on its rich heritage through collaboration with leading industry partners. The programme established a framework of regular training, monitoring and reviewing to ensure Emirati culinary items are featured in food and beverage outlets in the finest hotels and hotel apartments across the emirate. The initiative is led by DCT Abu Dhabi's Emirati cuisine consultant Chef Khulood Atiq.



'HAYYAK—WELCOME TO ABU DHABI'

Unique, culturally themed airport hospitality service standards, Hayyak offers guidelines to all airport employees to ensure tourists who pass through the Abu Dhabi International Airport have a satisfying experience. Hayyak assists all employees at the airport, from concessionaires and food and beverage staff to immigration officers and airline ground staff, with providing consistent, professional customer service and communicating shared values, service guidelines, greetings and verbiage.

The Hayyak guidelines cover Abu Dhabi tourism products knowledge, its events calendar, cross-culture communication, Emirati culture and heritage and excellent customer service.

MIRAL AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME

Miral's Ambassador Programme attracts local youth to careers in the tourism industry by offering qualified candidates twelve weeks of on-the-ground training at two major Yas Island destinations: Ferrari World Abu Dhabi and Yas Waterworld. Candidates who complete the programme and exemplify desirable skills and capabilities are considered for a full-time position.

Throughout 2017, Miral held multiple Ambassador Programme open days intended to increase enrollment. The programme demonstrates Miral's enduring efforts and commitment to building a skilled local workforce that can contribute to shaping the future of the country's tourism industry, as well as support Abu Dhabi's Vision 2030 plan of creating a knowledge-based economy.



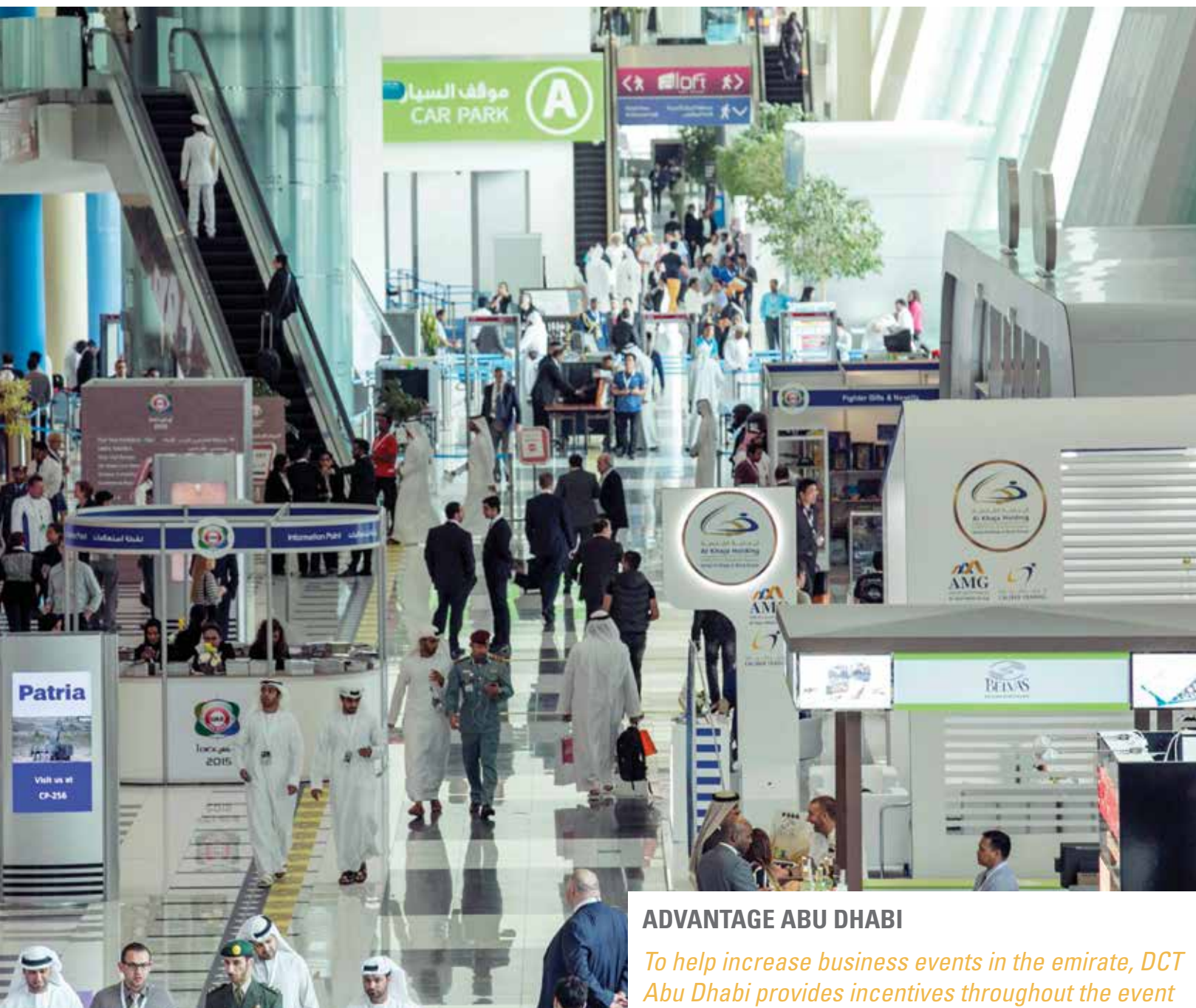
Chapter 4: Business tourism



A STORY OF SUCCESSFUL COOPERATION

Situated eight hours away or less from six billion people, the UAE is developing into a prime destination for business meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE). Abu Dhabi is an attractive destination given the city's resources, from its international airport to ample lodging to world-class dining options and a state of the art convention and exhibition centre. The development and growth of infrastructure such as Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi, Khalifa University of Science and Technology, Abu Dhabi Global Financial Market and Masdar, among others, is fueling the growth of the business events sector.

In the four years since the establishment of the Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau, Abu Dhabi has continued its progress as a leading destination for business events and was the fastest-growing destination for attracting conventions and associations in the Middle East, as per the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), now ranked seventy-fourth globally. This distinction laid the foundation for success in 2017 and beyond and is partly a result of the continued success of the Advantage Abu Dhabi programme, as well as strong partnerships with the Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company (ADNEC) and other partners.



ADVANTAGE ABU DHABI

To help increase business events in the emirate, DCT Abu Dhabi provides incentives throughout the event planning cycle.

Advantage Abu Dhabi is an initiative that acts as a catalyst to enhance social and economic development through hosting innovative and viable business events aligned to the Abu Dhabi 2030 Economic Vision.

Advantage Abu Dhabi is an incentive initiative aimed at improving the emirate's value proposition for business tourists and provides an array of support throughout the event planning cycle.

The Advantage Abu Dhabi programme provides a unique opportunity for event organisers to benefit from bespoke destination support. The initiative's mission is to aid the expansion of the emirate's already growing MICE sector and further promote its world-class venues and facilities, which already attract top organizations and events such as IDEX.

Advantage Abu Dhabi's success depends upon strong partnerships between government offices, industries and tourism attractions. DCT Abu Dhabi's methodology to generate business and visitor interest focuses on value creation for event management companies through financial incentives, education on venues and investment opportunities and infrastructure development.

COLLABORATION WITH ABU DHABI NATIONAL EXHIBITIONS COMPANY

DCT Abu Dhabi's strong partnership with ADNEC continued to blossom in 2017.

DCT Abu Dhabi works closely with ADNEC and its sales team on large conference bids. Many of these events were awarded to Abu Dhabi over large, established destinations such as Bangkok, Lisbon, Rio, Seoul and Shanghai.

A selection of joint activities with ADNEC

- Emirates Medical Association—Abu Dhabi—Convention Bureau—ADNEC MOU (memorandum of understanding)
- Abu Dhabi Appreciation Evening
- Meeting & Incentive Forums
- Site inspections
- Incentive Travel, Meetings and Events America Breakfast
- Incentive, Business Travel and Meetings Barcelona Breakfast
- ICCA Workshop, autumn 2017
- Brussels Association Lunch, autumn 2017



MAJOR BUSINESS EVENTS IN 2017

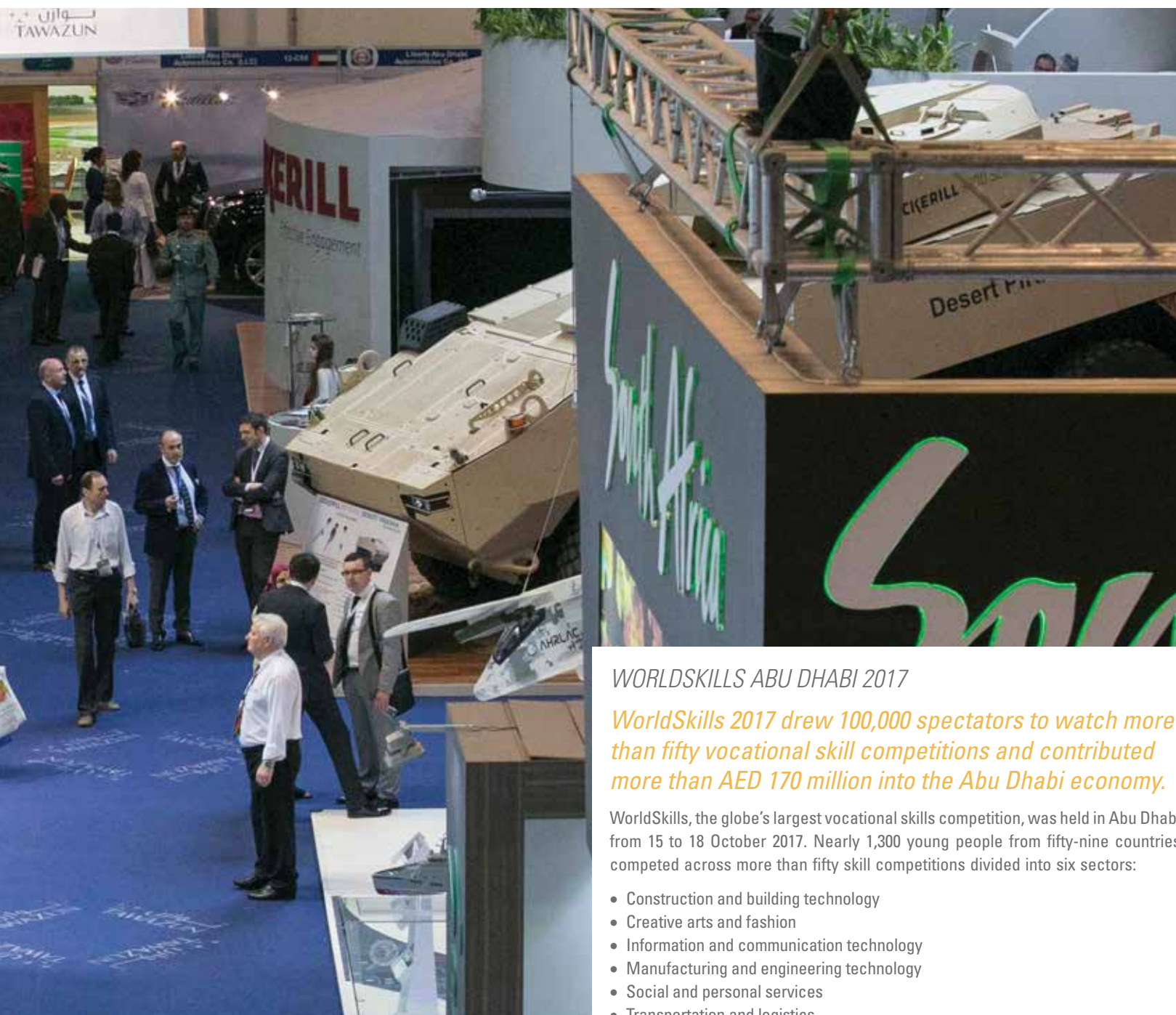
Abu Dhabi hosts hundreds of business events each year. The 2017 highlights included several major trade shows, exhibitions and conferences in a range of industries, including defence and healthcare.

INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE 2017

IDEX 2017 brought more than 100,000 conference attendees to Abu Dhabi.

One of the world's largest and most important biennial defence and security exhibitions, the International Defence Exhibition & Conference (IDEX) 2017 was held in Abu Dhabi from 19 to 23 February. IDEX is the only exhibition and conference of its kind in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, putting Abu Dhabi on the map as an experienced host city for events of this magnitude.

Across the five days of the conference, 1,250 manufacturers and suppliers from fifty-seven countries exhibited the latest equipment, technology and defence and security systems for more than 105,000 attendees from 142 countries. Also, decision makers from across the defence industry participated in private roundtables where they discussed their biggest challenges as well as potential solutions. Companies and manufacturers also provided live demonstrations of their products and equipment.



WORLDSKILLS ABU DHABI 2017

WorldSkills 2017 drew 100,000 spectators to watch more than fifty vocational skill competitions and contributed more than AED 170 million into the Abu Dhabi economy.

WorldSkills, the globe's largest vocational skills competition, was held in Abu Dhabi from 15 to 18 October 2017. Nearly 1,300 young people from fifty-nine countries competed across more than fifty skill competitions divided into six sectors:

- Construction and building technology
- Creative arts and fashion
- Information and communication technology
- Manufacturing and engineering technology
- Social and personal services
- Transportation and logistics

The competition attracted 100,000 visitors from all over the world, including contestants and their families, experts, officials and journalists. According to the WorldSkills organization, the competition 'aims to inspire young people to study technical education and vocational skills for entrepreneurship or for their career'.

INTERNATIONAL DIABETES FEDERATION 2017 CONGRESS

Healthcare practitioners, policy makers and students gathered in Abu Dhabi for the 2017 IDF Congress. The congress had an estimated economic impact of more than AED 150 million.

More than 8,000 members of the global diabetes community, representing 182 countries around the world, gathered in Abu Dhabi for the 2017 International Diabetes Federation (IDF) Congress from 4 to 8 December 2017. IDF is a global organization that is 'engaged in action to tackle diabetes from the local to the global level-from programmes at community level to worldwide awareness and advocacy initiatives'.

The scientific programme developed for the conference aimed to provide access to the latest developments and research in diabetes clinical practise, management, education, prevalence and public health issues. Discussions and research topics fit into several key topic streams, including:

- Basic and clinical science
- Diabetes and disasters
- Diabetes in women and children
- Living with diabetes
- Education and integrated care



KEY CONGRESS AND EVENT BID WINS EARNED IN 2017

Abu Dhabi's victories in several congress and event bids for the coming years will contribute to a healthy and growing business tourism sector. The Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau submitted successful applications along with partners and stakeholders to host eight conferences, which are expected to attract around 45,000 delegates and contribute more than AED 600 million into the Abu Dhabi economy.

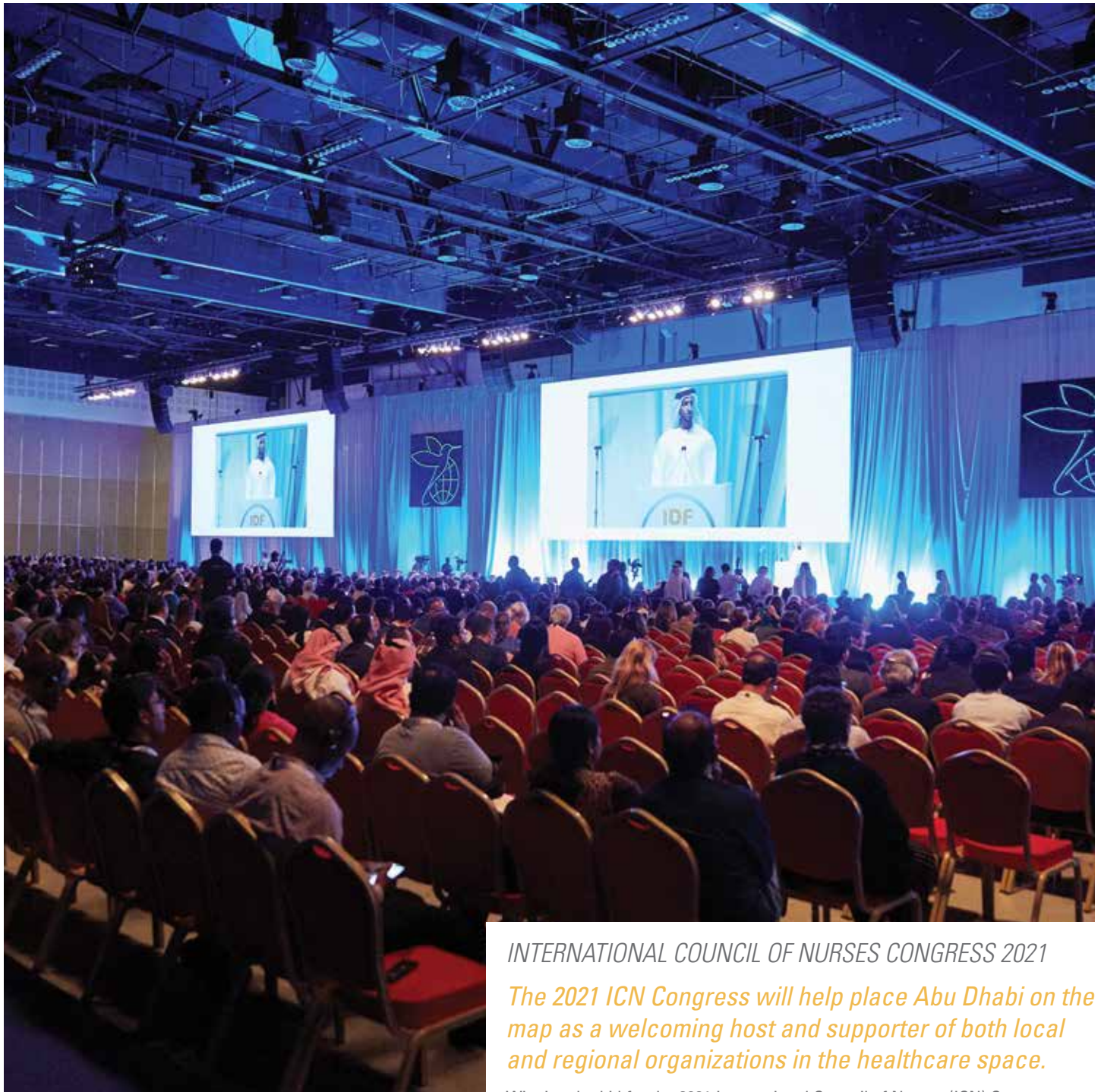
WORLD CONGRESS OF NEPHROLOGY 2020

This conference will offer an efficient platform for timely scientific exchange, debate and communication between healthcare professionals.

The Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau won the bid to host the International Society of Nephrology's (ISN) World Congress of Nephrology in 2020, with an estimated 4,000 delegates. The ISN, which has more than 10,000 professional members from more than 150 countries, has a significant international footprint and caters to healthcare professionals involved in preventing and treating kidney disease and advancing kidney health worldwide.

Other bid wins in 2017

- World Urban Forum: 10,000+ delegates in 2020
- World Energy Congress: 6,000 delegates in 2019
- Congress of the World Union of Wound Healing Societies: 6,000 delegates in 2020
- World Roads Congress: 5,000 delegates in 2019
- World Conference of Family Doctors: 4,000 delegates in 2020



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES CONGRESS 2021

The 2021 ICN Congress will help place Abu Dhabi on the map as a welcoming host and supporter of both local and regional organizations in the healthcare space.

Winning the bid for the 2021 International Council of Nurses (ICN) Congress was no small feat for the Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau. The ICN, founded in 1899, is a federation of more than 130 national nurses' associations and represents more than twenty million nurses worldwide. ICN is the world's first and widest-reaching international organization for health professionals.

The 2021 ICN Congress will draw an estimated 6,000 delegates to the emirate. According to an ICN press release, these international congresses are the largest gathering of nurses in the world. The Emirates Nursing Association stated it was motivated to support Abu Dhabi's bid to host the ICN Congress, as it demonstrates the emirate's commitment to women's health.

INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF MIDWIVES 2023

Abu Dhabi won a tough contest to host the ICM Triennial Congress of 2023, which will represent the interests of more than 300,000 midwives globally.

The Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau won its bid to host the thirty-third International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) Triennial Congress in 2023, with an estimated 4,000 delegates attending, beating out Chile and Germany. The emirate's high healthcare credentials and reputation as a safe destination for international events worked in the emirate's favour when securing itself as event host.

The ICM's mission is to support, represent and work to strengthen professional midwives' associations throughout the world. There are currently 116 of these associations represented in 102 countries and on every continent; together these groups represent more than 300,000 midwives globally.



Chapter 5: Leisure events



AN EVER-GROWING CALENDAR ANIMATES LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES IN ABU DHABI

DCT Abu Dhabi’s efforts toward building and refining the emirate’s leisure resources and unique offerings in the events space contributed to an extensive published calendar of events in 2017. The establishment in autumn 2017 of the Advantage Events Abu Dhabi will encourage further growth in the coming years, offering an incentive for the private sector to engage in event planning and delivery.

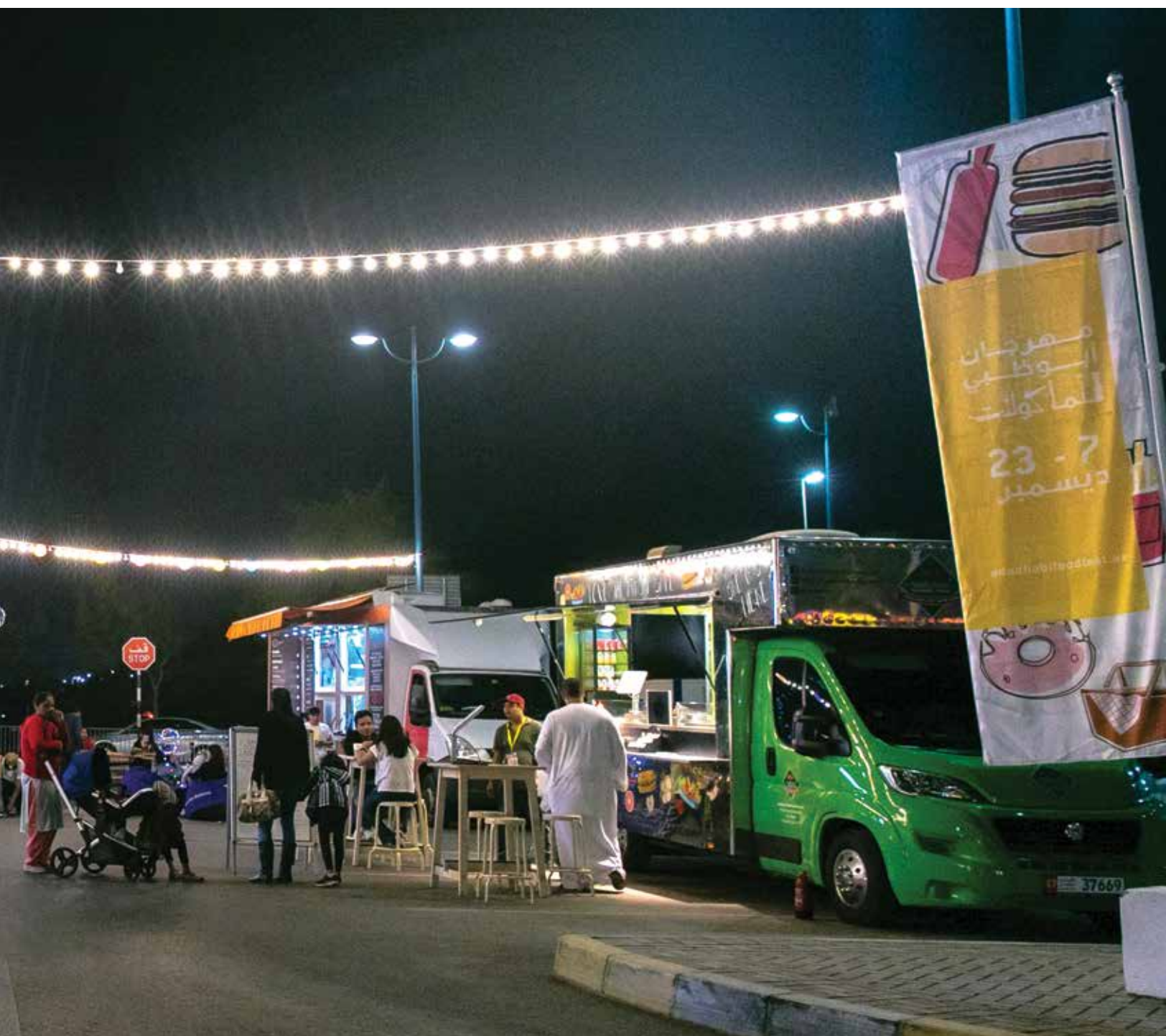
ABU DHABI ADVANTAGE EVENTS

A new incentive grant encourages private-sector engagement in festivals and other events.

In the autumn of 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi introduced Abu Dhabi Advantage Events. This incentive grant, open to all entities in the retail and events industry, aims to motivate private-sector engagement toward increasing the number of emirate-wide leisure and entertainment events and festivals, ultimately boosting the emirate’s appeal as a thriving tourism destination.

Major, long-term objectives for the incentive scheme include encouraging public- and private-sector partnerships to develop recurring events around the emirate and foster collaboration among the organisers of existing and new festivals in developing programme content.

Abu Dhabi Advantage Events witnessed the successful enhancement of content and experiences flagship initiatives such as the New Year’s Eve concert featuring Katy Perry, Games Con Abu Dhabi and private-sector programming around the Abu Dhabi Food Festival.



MAJOR LEISURE EVENTS IN 2017

Each month of 2017 provided tourists with opportunities to participate and engage in Abu Dhabi's local culture, cuisine and family-friendly activities.

January

- Chinese New Year at Ferrari World Abu Dhabi
- Abu Dhabi Pop-up Festival
- Abu Dhabi HSBC Golf Championship
- H.H. President of UAE Polo Cup
- Bride Show Abu Dhabi
- Abu Dhabi Classics: David Fray and Renaud Capuçon
- Russian Parade in Al Ain Mall

February

- Love Food Festival
- Kids and Family Festival
- Health & Fitness Fun Festival
- Red Bull Air Race World Championship 2017
- Abu Dhabi Wilson Tennis Cup
- Winter Festival at Wadi Adventure
- Abu Dhabi Pet Festival
- Al Ain International Show Jumping Competition
- Full Moon Desert Party with Camping

May

- Abu Dhabi Summer Fair
- Ramadan Gathering 2017
- Street Food Market Yas
- Classic Car Show
- Mercedes Night Cycle Race
- The Musician Day in the Mall at World Trade Center, Abu Dhabi
- Abu Dhabi City Indoor Run
- Beat the Camel

June

- Manarat Al Saadiyat Ramadan Evenings
- Eid al-Fitr in Abu Dhabi 2017
- Lego City Workshop at Dalma Mall
- A Week Long of Eid Celebrations at Yas Waterworld
- ZooGantic Eid!
- South Indian International Movie Awards
- Say Yas to Eid at Yas Marina

September

- Oktoberfest Yas Island 2017
- Eid Carnival – The Mall at World Trade Center Abu Dhabi
- Family Fun & Fitness Day!
- Yas Island Cycle Race
- Hudayriat Al Bwanish Sailing Race
- Rainbow Circus
- Harry Potter in Concert

October

- Korea Festival 2017
- Nitro Circus Live
- Festival of Lights at Ferrari World
- Abu Dhabi Grand Slam 2017
- Al Ain International Jujitsu Championship under 18
- Top Archer Competition
- Abu Dhabi Dash 2017

March

- Mother of the Nation Festival 2017
- Unique Equestrian Choreography in Al Ain
- ITU World Triathlon Abu Dhabi
- Abu Dhabi Swimming Festival 2017
- The Queen of Fado: Mariza
- Hamad Al Ameri Concert
- Mother's Day Celebration at Marina Mall
- Splash @ Yas Marina

April

- Springtime Festival at Yas Marina
- Sir Bani Yas Kite Fest
- Film screenings at Warehouse421
- Fashion Days in Abu Dhabi
- Wael Jassar Live at Marina Mall
- H.H. Sheikhha Fatima bint Mubarak Women's
- International Shooting Championship
- Swiss Spring Festival
- Making and Looking Together, Parent and Child
- Abu Dhabi World Professional Jiu-Jitsu Championship

July

- 17th FINA World Championships
- French Summer Camp 2017 by Alliance Française
- Talents around the World
- Abu Dhabi Summer Season 2017
- 14th Edition of FIFA Club World Cup
- Abu Dhabi Sports Festival 2017
- Abu Dhabi Unplugged
- Super Heroes Kids Camp

August

- Thai Festival Activities at Yas Mall
- Yas Waterworld Neon Nights
- Eid al-Adha Celebrations in Abu Dhabi
- 24th Abu Dhabi International Chess Festival
- Emirati Women's Day 2017
- Namaste Abu Dhabi

November

- Al Ain Festival 2017
- Three-day Family Fun Festival at The Walk at Al Seef
- Al Qattara Cinema Programme at the Al Qattara Arts Centre
- Taste of Abu Dhabi 2017
- 2017 Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix
- Mohammad Assaf Concert
- Chic Lady Show Abu Dhabi
- National Sailing Day Regatta

December

- Abu Dhabi Food Festival 2017
- Dar Al Zain Festival 2017
- This New Year's Eve, There's No Place Like Abu Dhabi
- New Year's Eve on Al Maryah Island
- 46th UAE National Day celebrations
- Sheikh Zayed Heritage Festival
- Kadim Al Sahir and Balqees Concert
- Nassif Zeytoun Stay and Fadi Harb Concert
- Creamfields Abu Dhabi 2017
- Nancy Ajram Concert
- FIFA World Cup UAE 2017

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2017 CALENDAR

MOTHER OF THE NATION FESTIVAL

The Mother of the Nation Festival commemorates the inspirational values of Her Highness Sheikhha Fatima bint Mubarak.

This year’s festival—held 26 March to 4 April 2017 on the Corniche—brought together visitors from different cultures and generations to celebrate the best aspects of contemporary culture within Abu Dhabi and the UAE.

The target audience for the Mother of the Nation Festival was families, gourmet food lovers and bloggers, investors in the food and beverage sector and visitors from other emirates. **More than 197,000** people from all walks of life enjoyed multiple, family-friendly activities including:

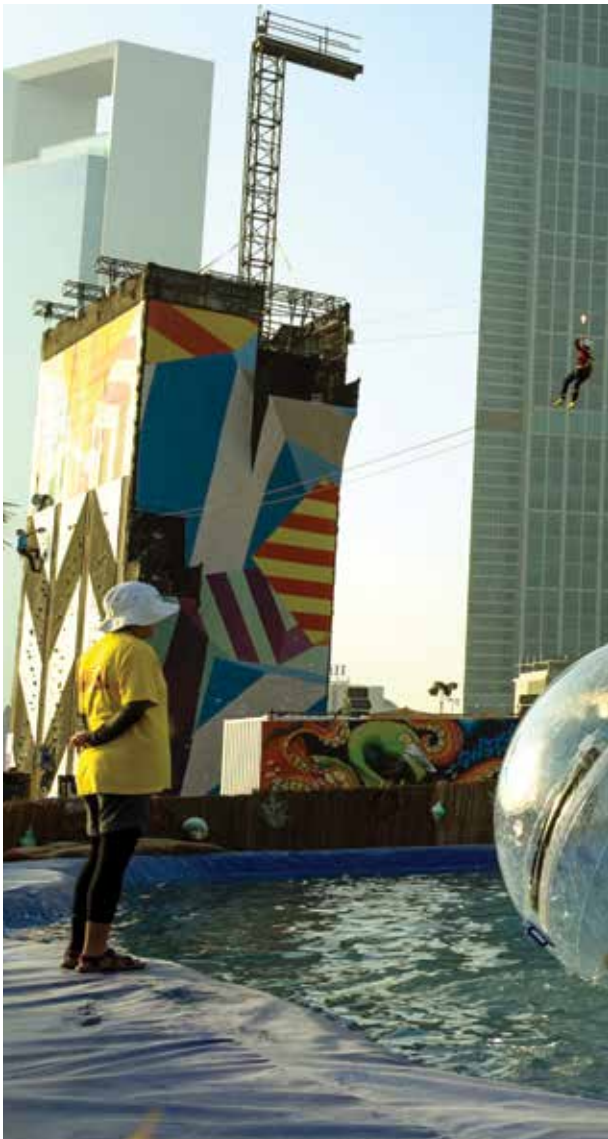
- Regional-class performances: Both on stage and roaming the beach, entertainers such as magicians, martial artists, musicians and poets entertained the crowds.
- Signature events: These anchor attractions took place across different zones—including the Main Stage, Progress Zone and Happiness Zone—and included acts such as Abu Dhabi Big Band and the Arabic Orchestra. Signature events also included interactive displays such as PixelPyros, a large-scale light installation that projected computer-generated fireworks on a huge screen. Each show was uniquely choreographed by the crowd, as up to thirty people could use motion sensors to set off the fireworks.
- Souq: The Souq Zones contained interactive historical displays intertwined with seventy local and expat vendors displaying their wares in funky, pop-up style shops. This zone was spread throughout different areas of the festival, creating the quintessential urban experience.

Other festival highlights included a number of interactive conversations:

- **Dr. Shefali**, a world-renowned clinical psychologist and prolific author, explained at the Majlis the fundamentals of conscious parenting and why it is critical in today’s world. Her discussion of parenting strategies—and of how we can redefine what it means to discipline our children—was particularly meaningful to audience members.
- Similarly, visitors were captivated by **Becky Anderson**—CNN’s high-profile anchor—describing how her mother inspired her as she built a career in media and journalism.

A number of partners participated in the event, including the Abu Dhabi Chess Club, Sheikhha Fatima bint Mubarak Ladies Sports Academy, Abu Dhabi Distribution Company and the UAE Jiu-Jitsu Federation.

Every interactive conversation, performance and programme at the festival helped visitors along an engaging and entertaining journey of growth that embodies Her Highness’s inspirational values of collaboration, conservation empowerment and sustainability.



Dr. Shefali



Becky Anderson



Partnerships and sponsorships

- Yas—Presenting Sponsor
- Etihad Airways—Official Airline Partner
- Official Events Partners—
 - MBC Group
 - Summit Events
 - Oberoi Events
 - Alchemy Project
 - YAK Events
- Dust Thani—Official Hotel Partner

ABU DHABI SUMMER SEASON

DCT Abu Dhabi partnered with leading UAE event organisers to create a spectacular, memorable series of events for the summer season.

The series featured more than ten events and activities across Abu Dhabi, Al Ain and the Al Dhafra region, and its target audience encompassed UAE residents (adults, children, families and students) as well as visitors, particularly from the nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), India and the United Kingdom.

In all, more than 22,000 tickets were sold in 2017, and more than thirty hotels participated in promotions by offering attractive tour packages to visitors.

46TH NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS

The UAE celebrated its forty-sixth National Day with a number of national and heritage events from 23 November to 3 December 2017.

The events were held across the emirate and co-organised by government, private and community agencies. The National Day events showcased forty-six unique cultural and heritage items that express the emirate's spirit and reflect the values of loyalty, pride, allegiance and belonging to the homeland. In addition, National Day included interactive presentations, parades featuring the military authorities in the country and, for the first time, fireworks displays along the entire Abu Dhabi Corniche. National Day also included educational and entertainment activities.

During the National Day celebrations, Yas Island hosted a range of family fun activities and various heritage events. At Yas Mall, Ferrari World, Yas Waterworld, Yas Links and Yas Marina, visitors had the opportunity to participate in a number of programmes and events. On 1 to 2 December 2017 at the Abu Dhabi Corniche, the UAE Knights, an aerobatic team featuring skilled pilots, performed an air show.

For the 2017 National Day celebration, DCT Abu Dhabi planned for four venues to display fireworks shows across the emirate, including at Abu Dhabi Corniche, Al Wathba, Al Ain and Al Dhafra, over two days.

ABU DHABI GRAND PRIX

On 26 November 2017, the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, part of the F1 racing series, drew approximately 195,000 spectators.

The auto race was only one part of a four-day celebration. Away from the racing action, visitors were treated to a packed programme of entertainment. Abu Dhabi Grand Prix ticket holders received complementary access to Yas Island Parks, including Ferrari World Abu Dhabi and Yas Waterworld. A-list musical artists such as Calvin Harris, J. Cole and Pink performed at the Yasalam after-race concerts, and after-hours parties attracted the F1's top stars, making the four-day spectacle the most vibrant social and sporting occasion of the year.

In addition, oasis areas in all public sections boasted a wide range of exhibitions, challenges and games that catered to spectators of all ages, making the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix one of the greatest value-for-money events in the world.



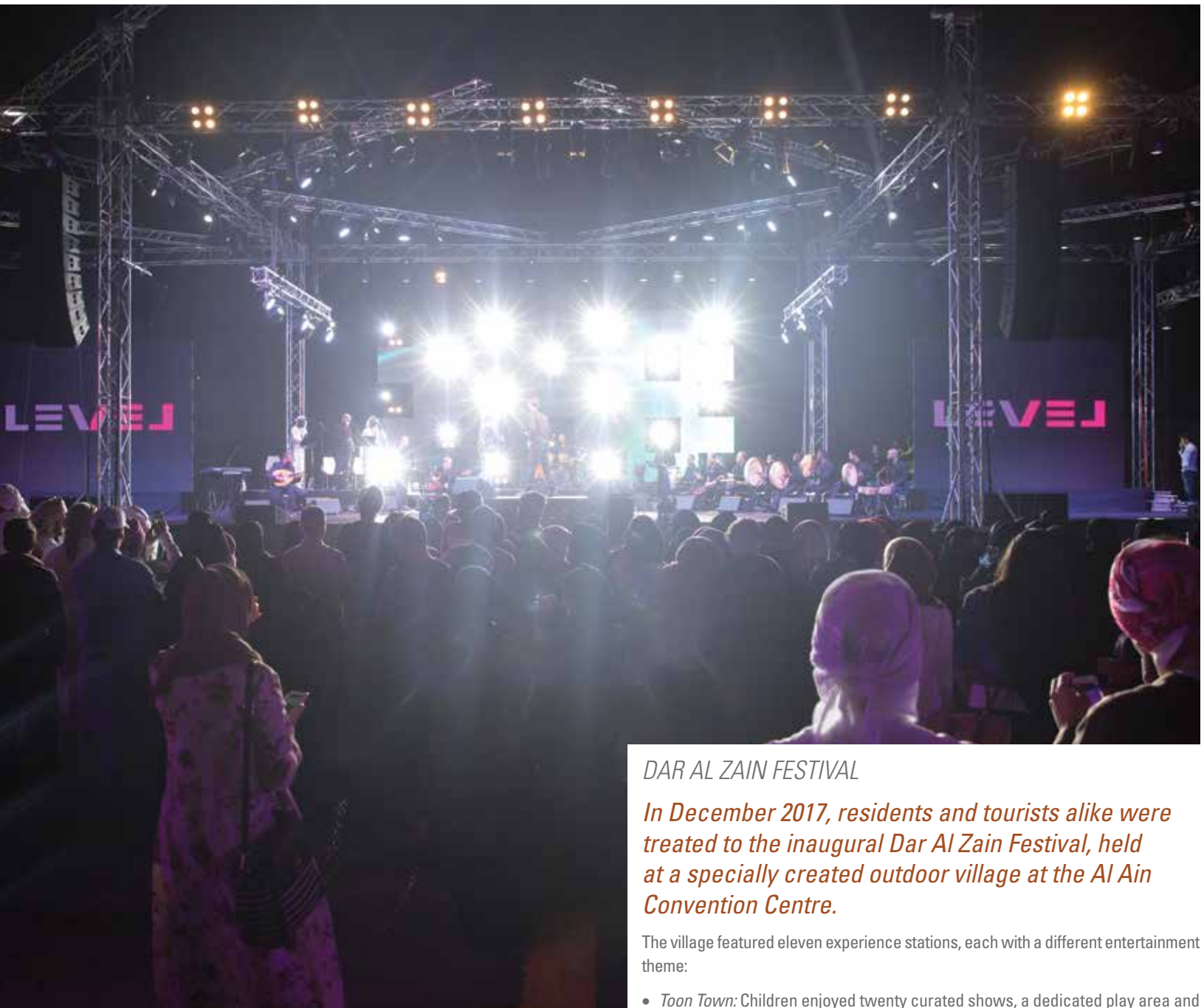


ABU DHABI FOOD FESTIVAL

Spread across seventeen days and three weekends, the 2017 Abu Dhabi Food Festival (ADFF) was a spectacular celebration of international cuisine.

With events held across Abu Dhabi city, Al Ain and Al Dhafra, the annual flavour-filled celebration has a range of attractions and experiences, from street feasts and fine dining to cooking demonstrations from some of the world's most celebrated chefs. The festival also includes the renowned Restaurant Week and engaging initiatives, such as the longest pizza in the UAE, Picnic by the Park, family eating challenges and movies.

In 2017, ADFF served up fifteen new feature events, including the Beach Feast, the Big Picnic, Delicious Cinema, Festember, Market to Kitchen, the Top Secret Long Table, the ever-popular Street Feast in both Abu Dhabi and Al Ain, Truckers Carnival and a Truckers Park in Al Dhafra. More than 73,000 people attended ADFF this year.



DAR AL ZAIN FESTIVAL

In December 2017, residents and tourists alike were treated to the inaugural Dar Al Zain Festival, held at a specially created outdoor village at the Al Ain Convention Centre.

The village featured eleven experience stations, each with a different entertainment theme:

- *Toon Town:* Children enjoyed twenty curated shows, a dedicated play area and other family-oriented activities.
- *Simsim Outer Space:* Attendees watched the Simsim gang discover outer space and engaged in a competition to see who knows the most about science. The attraction included interactive games and science-themed activities.
- *Looney Tunes—'Little Tweety Hood':* Visitors enjoyed the classic tale of Little Red Riding Hood retold with lovable characters from *Looney Tunes*. Activities included creating Tweety cages, colouring and mask making.
- *My Little Pony:* Kids met the characters from Ponyville through a twenty-minute live, interactive musical adventure.
- *Spoon and Fork:* Visitors enjoyed a rich culinary experience, with a dedicated food and beverage zone bringing together forty food and beverage operators.
- *Shopsters:* This retail zone was home to more than forty-five exhibitors for attendees who enjoy shopping.
- *Glow in the Dark:* This twenty-five-metre glow-in-the-dark tunnel depicted Al Ain's history, culture and monuments. It also featured an interactive storyboard, which was created during the ten days of the festival by visitors to the village, all supervised by professional artists.
- *Fun and Games:* Visiting families could participate in six activities including a Lego playground, a Hasbro playground, a pirate terrain, a soft playground for toddlers, a large customised colouring book and a wishing stand.
- *Sound On:* Visitors were treated to featured special performances by several Arab celebrities including Myriam Fares, Balqees, Mohammed Al Shehhi and Majid Al Muhandis, as well as performances by five bands and DJs.
- *Meylas:* This local hospitality area displayed a number of handmade local products and a seating area reflecting Emirati heritage.
- *a-MAZE-ing:* This installation delighted festivalgoers with an installation of glow-in-the-dark graffiti art.

In all, 40,000 visitors attended the festival.



NEW YEAR COUNTDOWN VILLAGE—THIS NEW YEAR, THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE ABU DHABI

More than 55,000 people rang in the New Year together at celebrations across the different venues around Abu Dhabi including the Corniche, Yas Island and Al Maryah Island.

New Year's Eve is one of the rare occasions that almost everyone in the world celebrates. As part of its effort to showcase Abu Dhabi to the world as a place for celebration—and as a potential destination for yearlong leisure and entertainment—DCT Abu Dhabi organised a 2017 New Year's celebration from 28 to 31 December. The celebration took place in an area on the Corniche dubbed the 'Countdown Village', featuring three stages with a variety of entertainment, including Angry Birds (a kid's show), disc jockeys and bands including DJ KEZA, Tarabband and The Boxtones.

In addition to these performances, attendees enjoyed more than fifteen on-site interactive installments and games, as well as fitness challenges. Twenty-two retail shops and forty-three food and beverage booths were set up for people to shop around and enjoy a nice meal family and friends.

The countdown event on New Year's Eve was televised and gathered more than 10,000 people on the Corniche. A-list star concerts with Hussain Al Jassmi and Tamer Hosny headlined on the main stage on 31 December. At midnight, a ten-minute firework show took place along 2.2 kilometres of the waterfront.

On Yas Island, the headliner for the 31 December 2017 show was American pop star Katy Perry. Maryiah Island's concert featured the headliners Kathem Al Saher and Balqeess.





55,000+

People rang in the New Year together at celebrations across the different venues around Abu Dhabi including the Corniche, Yas Island and Al Maryah Island





Chapter 6: Destination access



CLOSER AND EASIER FOR THE WORLD

In 2017, Abu Dhabi made important strides in improving access to our destination through both the air and sea, as well as introducing a range of visa initiatives to help increase visitation.

AIR TRAVEL HIGHLIGHTS

Abu Dhabi International Airport continued to drive visitors to Abu Dhabi, and a new charter flight initiative was a step toward drawing more visitors from Russian and Commonwealth of Independent States markets.

Traveling to Abu Dhabi is exceedingly convenient thanks to the Abu Dhabi International Airport, a modern transport facility that boasts a full array of shops and amenities. In 2017, the airport saw 23.4 million passengers move through its doors. The airport had eighty operating airlines connecting the world to Abu Dhabi, giving foreign visitors numerous travel options. Etihad Airways alone offered direct flights from more than 100 cities to Abu Dhabi.

Friday, 27 October 2017 marked the first charter flight from Moscow to Abu Dhabi. DCT Abu Dhabi worked with Anex Tour and Azur Air to arrange the route. The arrivals were met by a local dance group called Al Ayala, which performed in the arrival guest area.

The charter flight initiative was designed to augment capacity, complementing existing services to help increase the number of passengers from Russia, given the relaxation of visa requirements for that market.





CRUISE HIGHLIGHTS

Cruise ship calls to Abu Dhabi increased in 2017.

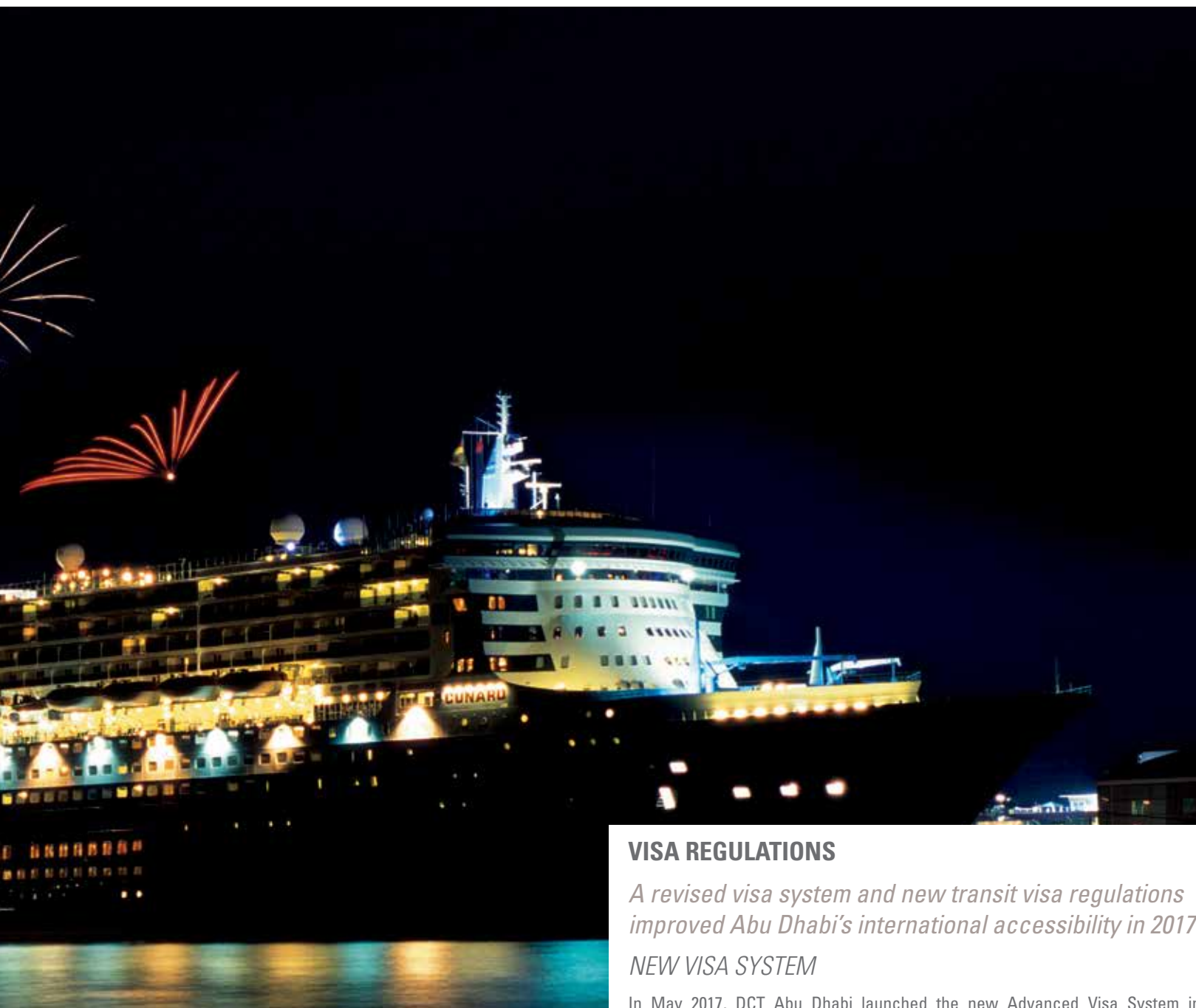
The cruise terminal in Port Zayed offers visitors excellent transport links to a variety of cultural attractions and entertainment activities, as well as the emirate’s growing range of luxury hotels and resorts. The terminal can accommodate two large cruise ships and one smaller vessel for a total capacity of 4,500 passengers. The terminal also includes airline check-in counters, operated by Etihad Airways in 2017, which allows disembarking passengers to deposit their luggage and prepare for their flight before arriving at the airport, as well as additional facilities such as a duty-free shop, Majlis, souvenir shop, taxi and bus stand and play areas for kids.

During the 2015–16 season, 231,660 tourists took part in 113 cruise ship calls to Abu Dhabi. Those numbers jumped by 50 % during the 2016–17 season, with 345,664 tourists taking part in 161 ship calls. Port Zayed accounted for the bulk of visitors (291,363 visitors across 134 ship calls), while Sir Bani Yas Island attracted 54,301 visitors across twenty-seven ship calls.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

A major factor in the increase in cruise traffic in 2017 was the establishment of strategic partnerships. DCT Abu Dhabi teamed up with two major entities, Etihad Airways and Abu Dhabi Ports, to continue to attract cruise companies to establish a base in Abu Dhabi. These efforts resulted in home port commitments from AIDA, Celebrity and MSC for the 2017–18 season along with the confirmation of nine regional rotational callers, a record to date. In addition, the cruise sector is working hard to collaborate with international cruise and charter flight companies to increase the number of visitors to the emirate.

DCT Abu Dhabi’s cruise department led and managed a Cruise Industry Development Committee to encourage the sector’s growth and development. This collaboration helped resolve multiple challenges including, but not limited to, obtaining passenger and crew visas.



VISA REGULATIONS

A revised visa system and new transit visa regulations improved Abu Dhabi's international accessibility in 2017.

NEW VISA SYSTEM

In May 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi launched the new Advanced Visa System in collaboration with the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs. The new system, which enables hotels and other establishments to issue tourist visas for visitors, is designed to increase the number of travellers in the coming years.

DCT Abu Dhabi organised a workshop in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Immigration Department and the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce to present the new system to hotels and destination management companies (DMCs). In all, more than eighty members of the hospitality industry attended the workshop and participated in the Q&A session.

TRANSIT VISA

As of May 2017, it is possible to issue four-day (or ninety-six-hour) transit visas for people of all nationalities travelling through Abu Dhabi International Airport. The launch of the new visa service is part of the 'Life in Abu Dhabi' initiative by the Abu Dhabi Government and is aimed at showcasing the destination to stopover visitors, as well as encouraging future visits by travellers through offering a 'taste of Abu Dhabi' via short-stop transit tours.

The transit visa project was jointly implemented by several parties including the Abu Dhabi Executive Office, Abu Dhabi Airports, General Directorate of Residence and Foreigners Affairs—Abu Dhabi, Etihad Airways, the Department of Transport—Abu Dhabi and DCT Abu Dhabi.

NEW VISAS ON ARRIVAL

In January 2017, visas on arrival were introduced for Russian visitors. During the same year, visas on arrival were issued in Abu Dhabi for more than 16,000 Russian visitors as well as more than 80,000 Chinese visitors, for whom visas on arrival have been available since September 2016.



Chapter 7: Regulatory support



A PROACTIVE REGULATOR SUPPORTING THE SECTOR

DCT Abu Dhabi is a proactive regulator in the sector that engages stakeholders on an ongoing basis to improve regulations and the regulatory environment— with an aim to facilitate business and visitor number growth within the tourism industry.

EVENTS LICENSING SYSTEM

A new system simplifies event organising by connecting twenty-two government entities via one platform.

In March 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi launched the Abu Dhabi Events Licensing System (ELS), which connects twenty-two government entities with event organisers to provide a simplified (and speedy) system for registration, licensing and approval. The ELS platform streamlines event planning and provides unified registry and permit approvals from all government entities for all types of events conducted in Abu Dhabi, such as conferences, exhibitions, meetings training courses and workshops.

This system allows ELS to serve as a true single point of contact for all license application processing and fee payments making it easy and simple.

Venue owners and event organisers with a trade license for activities related to organising events or exhibitions can register on the Abu Dhabi ELS. To date, 625 events have been registered on the system, including B2B events such as corporate meetings as well as cultural, religious, and sporting events.



INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

Throughout 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi hosted workshops with hotels to successfully address a number of visitor experience issues.

These workshops resulted in several new policies and procedures, including the five detailed here:

- *Improved procedure and shortened notice period to issue visas for delegates and visitors:* The General Directorate of Residence and Foreigners Affairs announced the new visa system with an objective of supporting tourism stakeholders.
- *Supported familiarisation trips and events:* In response to requests from hotels, DCT Abu Dhabi increased the ceiling on the number of complimentary rooms available during familiarisation trips from 3 % to 10 %.
- *Improved oversight of jet skiing:* To ensure jet skiers are operating within the municipal rules and not entering prohibited zones, the Department of Urban Planning and Municipalities defined laws and penalties for violation. The new procedures were approved 1 June 2017.
- *Refined permitting for marine activities at Saadiyat Beach:* DCT Abu Dhabi met with Saadiyat hotels and formulated a list of unapproved maritime activities for Saadiyat Island Beach. The list was subsequently approved by the Environment Agency—Abu Dhabi, helping to protect the beach and visitors from damage, noise and pollution.
- *Revised security camera (CCTV) requirements for hotels:* To comply with the CCTV system, hotel establishments were asked to provide and maintain a certain number of cameras based on capacity and number of rooms. The types of CCTV systems were clearly identified for all hotel establishments. Follow-ups and regular visits are being conducted to ensure compliance.

Whenever the standards are amended, hotels are given a grace period to comply based on average time needed.



Chapter 8: Marketing and promotion highlights



**NEW BRAND, NEW CAMPAIGNS—
A GLOBAL FOOTPRINT**

In 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi began the development of a robust and consistent destination brand for the emirate, anchored on the campaign tagline: ‘Your Extraordinary Story’. DCT Abu Dhabi developed an integrated offline and online campaign to reach its international B2B and B2C audiences and stimulate awareness and reconsideration of Abu Dhabi as a destination.

ABU DHABI—‘YOUR EXTRAORDINARY STORY’

In 2017, the primary destination brand campaigns were organised around the idea of ‘Your Extraordinary Story’.

The premise of the campaign is to position the emirate as a place of untold stories, a rich and distinctive destination that offers an authentic and differentiated experience through the richness of its people and natural resources. By inviting visitors to create their own rich stories, the full variety of Abu Dhabi can be showcased, from ancient Bedouin campfire tales to the groundbreaking vision in the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque. The campaign has sparked an increase in brand interest of between 50 % and more than 280 % in markets such as the Germany, India, the United Kingdom and the United States.

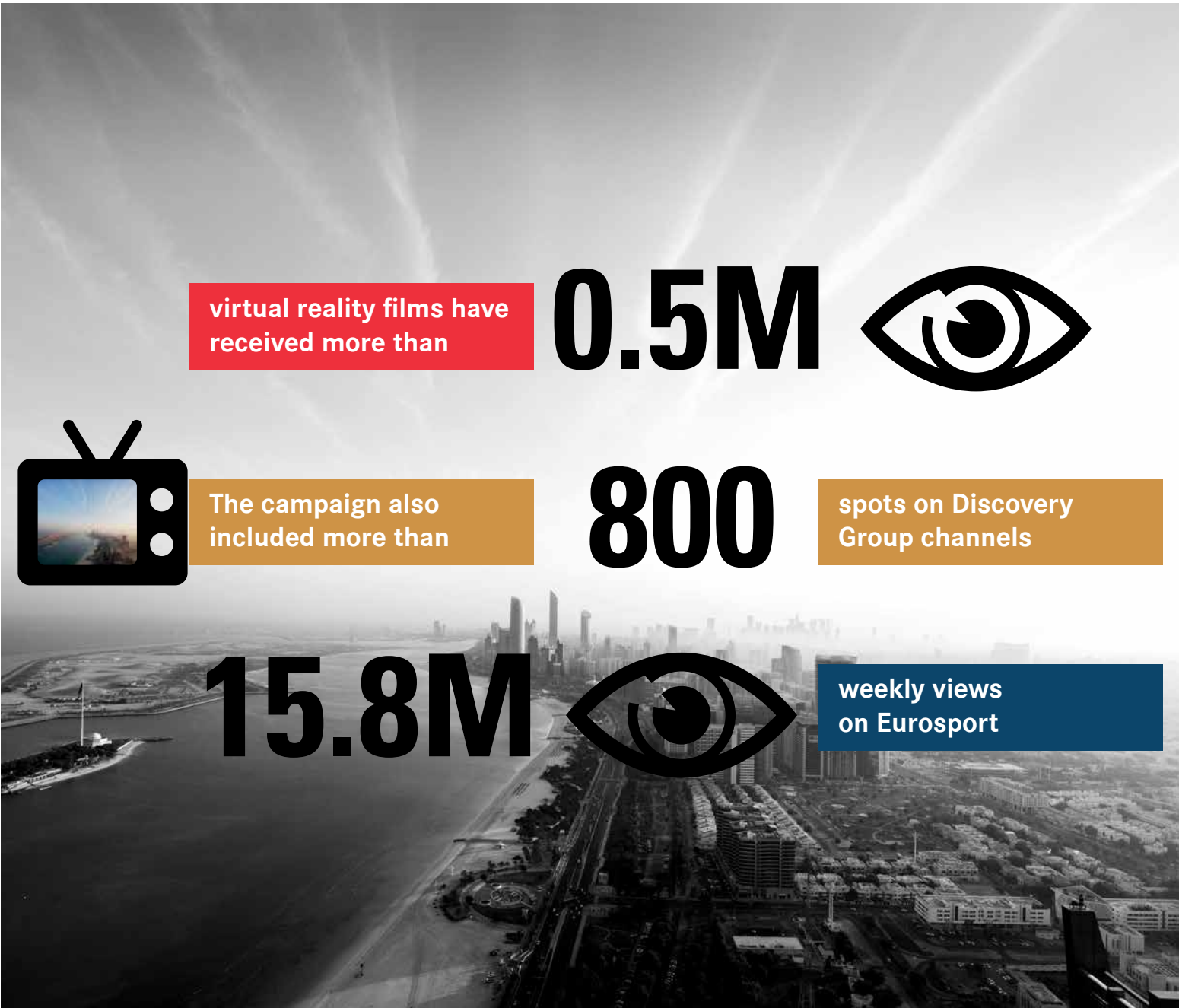


MANCHESTER CITY FOOTBALL CLUB CAMPAIGN

As part of the playout of the 'Your Extraordinary Story' idea, DCT Abu Dhabi developed a campaign that focused on the extraordinary stories of Manchester City (Man City) Football Club fans from around the world. The campaign asked fans from around the world to share their favourite and most 'extraordinary' stories on social media or through a dedicated microsite hosted on visitabudhabi.ae for a chance to win the trip of a lifetime to Abu Dhabi.

During football preseason, the campaign engaged fans on social media using the hashtag #ExtraordinaryCityStory—creating strong, emotive content for global football fans linking Abu Dhabi with extraordinary stories and experiences. To achieve increased brand awareness, a new logo was created to use on Man City brand assets and throughout Visit Abu Dhabi's seasonal campaign.

To introduce the Extraordinary City Story initiative, three, first-team players shared their own extraordinary city stories, resulting in more than one million video views and record traffic to the visitabudhabi.ae hosted microsite.



DESTINATION CAMPAIGNS

To communicate Abu Dhabi’s Extraordinary Story to the right audience in key global markets, DCT Abu Dhabi partnered with several well-known media brands.

CNN campaign

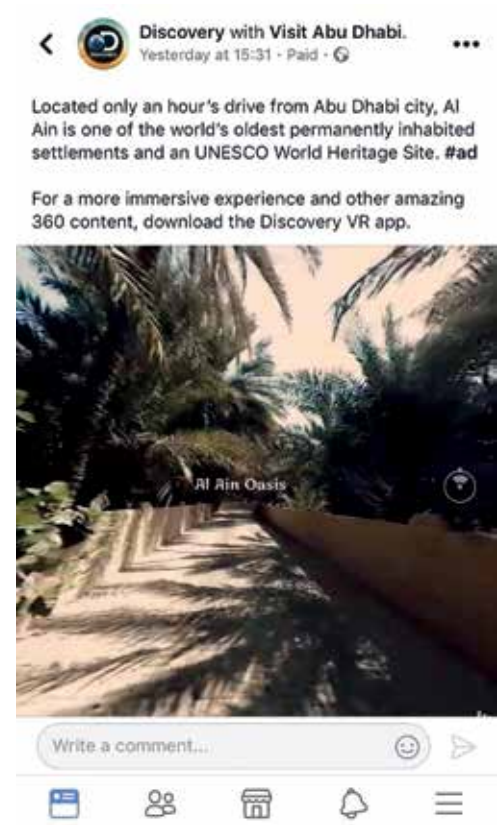
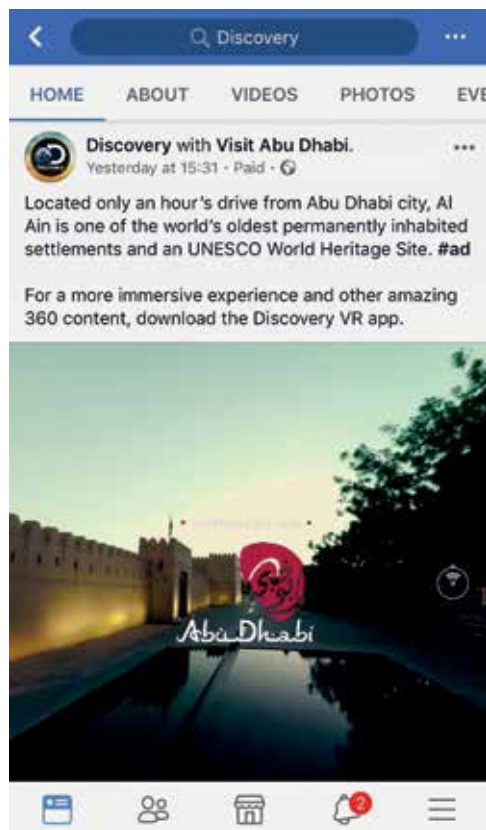
DCT Abu Dhabi created a ‘Be Here Now’ series of four videos, each fifteen seconds long, to air on CNN International’s TV and digital platforms, including social media. The four videos, which focused on history, fun, culture and luxury experiences, ran from September to December 2017 in Asia Pacific, Europe, the GCC and the United States. The TV campaign reached more than 200 million households.

BBC campaign

DCT Abu Dhabi’s campaign on BBC World News consisted of fifteen original pieces on a dedicated ‘Abu Dhabi Unwrapped’ page, including personal accounts of Abu Dhabi from travel writers and social media influencers as well as articles penned by DCT Abu Dhabi. A companion TV plan targeted Europe, excluding the United Kingdom; the Middle East; and South Asia with more than 1,000 spots lasting either thirty or sixty seconds. The digital campaign made 11.2 million targeted impressions from September to December 2017.

Discovery Networks + Eurosport campaign

DCT Abu Dhabi developed three virtual reality films communicating the key features of Abu Dhabi, promoted via digital and social platforms. To date, the virtual reality films have received more than half a million views. The campaign also included more than 800 spots on Discovery Group channels such as Animal Planet, Discovery, DMAX (in Germany, India, the United Kingdom and the United States) and TLC. The campaign also stretched to Eurosport, the number-one sports channel for the European market with a weekly reach of 15.8 million viewers.



National Geographic campaign

The National Geographic campaign was planned around National Geographic's, website and social media accounts. More than 1,400 thirty- and sixty-second TV spots aired from September to December 2017 with custom editorial content on Abu Dhabi appearing in digital and print platforms. In April 2018, there will be a special, invitation-only consumer event at National Geographic headquarters in the United States featuring a talk by Robert Reid, National Geographic Travel's 'Digital Nomad'.

MBC campaign

DCT Abu Dhabi partnered with the number-one TV and radio network in the GCC to produce destination reports, advertorials, a Ramadan game show and radio programmes. Key markets for the campaign include the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as well as the UAE.

Focus on China

DCT Abu Dhabi has increased its efforts to capture the awareness of and convert Chinese travellers to visit Abu Dhabi. The effort has involved lowering access barriers to Chinese travellers by preparing digital platforms (including the website and mobile application) to fully support Mandarin-speaking users. DCT Abu Dhabi secured visitabudhabi.cn to be hosted on Chinese servers to ensure fast delivery of content within mainland China. In addition, partnerships with the popular technology companies WeChat and Weibo help DCT Abu Dhabi reach Chinese travellers through regular social media posts.

DCT Abu Dhabi also partnered with Baidu to bring awareness of Abu Dhabi via the company's popular search engine, with banner promotion across hundreds of Chinese websites as well as Baidu's travel website. The results of these efforts have been encouraging, as Chinese traffic on visitabudhabi.cn has increased significantly thanks to the Baidu partnership.

TripAdvisor and other travel platforms

DCT Abu Dhabi partnered with TripAdvisor, the world's number-one travel website, in 2017 to promote Abu Dhabi across key markets and increase consideration of Abu Dhabi as a destination and, eventually, travel bookings in Abu Dhabi.

With precise advertising to a relevant audience that has previously shown an intent to visit Abu Dhabi or the wider region, the campaign generated an overall ROI of 600 %, with more than 2,000 hotel bookings and nearly AED 7 million in additional revenue.

In addition, DCT Abu Dhabi partnered with the Lonely Planet and Beautiful Destinations to promote the emirate via their platforms throughout 2017.



DCT Abu Dhabi's focus on China resulted in

223M

online impressions from Chinese nationals in 2017, as well as:

- **988M** social media reach
- **1.6M** social media engagement
- **32,000** social media followers on WeChat and Weibo
- **11** influencers invited to Abu Dhabi



1.9M

visits to visitabudhabi.ae by Chinese
nationals in 2017

DCT OFFICES WORLDWIDE



OUR GLOBAL PRESENCE

In addition to maintaining offices around the world, DCT Abu Dhabi engaged in a variety of activities to expand Abu Dhabi’s global presence.

DESTINATION PROMOTION

DCT Abu Dhabi’s destination promotion team mounted customised campaigns in several key markets around the world. The team partnered with tour operators, retail travel agencies, online travel agencies, inbound tour operators, global distribution systems and MICE/business planners, as well as industry partners such as airlines, attractions and hotels to increase the awareness of Abu Dhabi as a prime business and leisure destination and boost inbound tourism (as measured by number of hotel guests and guest nights).

SALES CALLS

DCT Abu Dhabi’s promotion team made around 5,000 sales calls in 2017, as well as prearranged face-to-face meetings with existing and/or potential distribution partners to further develop campaigns:

- Provide updated destination and product information
- Initiate joint marketing programmes (JMPs) and promotions
- Develop featured product and destination coverage
- Exchange data, expertise and general tourism information
- Position the destination as a world-class, sustainable leisure and business destination

As a result of these efforts, the team secured 250 leads, six Indian weddings and three seminars for 2017–18. The meetings also helped maintain existing business relationships as well as forge new ones across distribution channels.



JOINT MARKETING PROGRAMMES

In 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi signed 107 contracts with third parties such as international tour operators and international agencies to promote the Abu Dhabi emirate through creative, compelling and innovative promotions designed to appeal to a variety of local markets in their own language. The JMPs created precision targeted promotions, which attracted around 300,000 visitors.

DISTRIBUTION PARTNER WORKSHOPS

DCT Abu Dhabi conducted 200 trainings workshops for more than 4,000 distribution partners' staff members in 2017, targeting the following areas: reservation (call center), product, sales and distribution and marketing and communication. The workshops were intended to train and educate staff to effectively sell Abu Dhabi as a destination, as well as promote its products and events.

ROADSHOWS

DCT organised eight roadshows in twenty-eight cities in focused markets in 2017, resulting in almost 1,000 business leads and various agreements. DCT Abu Dhabi has also developed a series of 360 video experiences that are presented at exhibitions and roadshows in virtual reality via a 4-D buggy.

FAMILIARISATION TRIPS

In 2017, more than eighty distribution partners and 1,259 tour operators visited the emirate of Abu Dhabi to experience the destination and learn about what it has to offer, including Emirati culture and hospitality, multiple attractions and activities and a wide range of top-quality hotels. The goals of the trips were to help increase partners' and operators' enthusiasms about the region, package the destination and sell it through their distribution channels and increase promotion in their home markets.

A photograph of a smiling woman wearing a black hijab, positioned in the foreground on the right side of the frame. In the background, a large palm tree trunk is visible, and the scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day. The image is partially overlaid by a red rectangular box on the left and a grey rectangular box at the bottom right.

107

**contracts with third parties to promote
Abu Dhabi globally**



300,000

additional visitors to Abu Dhabi
from joint promotion campaigns



TRADE EXHIBITIONS

DCT Abu Dhabi participated in eleven trade exhibitions in thirteen countries internationally in 2017, in collaboration with approximately fifty Abu Dhabi stakeholders representing 250 products in the emirate of Abu Dhabi. This involvement maintained and increased Abu Dhabi product exposure among trade partners attending the shows, as well as increased the media coverage of Abu Dhabi in international media outlets.

INCENTIVE, BUSINESS TRAVEL AND MEETINGS (IBTM ARABIA) IN ABU DHABI

In February 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi hosted IBTM Arabia in Abu Dhabi in cooperation with Reed Exhibitions. The exhibition specialised in business, meetings, seminars and conferences. More than 250 hosted buyers attended from different countries.

SOUTH ASIAN TRAVEL AND TOURISM EXHIBITION (SATTE) IN INDIA

In February 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi participated, alongside nineteen other Abu Dhabi stakeholders, in South Asia’s largest travel and tourism exhibition, which is in its twenty-fifth year. Because of SATTE, DCT Abu Dhabi arranged to lead two weddings and secured twenty other leads.

JEDDAH INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM EXHIBITION IN THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

In February 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi exhibited at Jeddah International Travel and Tourism Exhibition, an important event for players in the Middle East travel industry. DCT Abu Dhabi’s campaign focused on promoting the summer season, Eid and National Day holiday.





INTERNATIONALE TOURISMUS-BÖRSE (ITB) BERLIN IN GERMANY

In March 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi participated as Abu Dhabi pavilion in ITB Berlin in cooperation with sixty product representatives from Abu Dhabi. ITB Berlin is the world's leading travel trade show and the world's largest tourism convention. It provides unique opportunities to benefit from the leading think tank of the global tourism industry.

CHINA OUTBOUND TRAVEL & TOURISM MARKET (COTTM) IN CHINA

In March 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi traveled with five Abu Dhabi stakeholders to the COTTM exhibition, a B2B event focusing only on outbound travel. DCT Abu Dhabi participated in 150 meetings, while stakeholders took 223 meetings, all of which generated around thirty deals with airlines, hotels and DMCs.

RIYADH TRAVEL FAIR (RTF) IN THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

In April 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi participated alongside eleven Abu Dhabi stakeholders in the RTF exhibition, which is the most prominent place in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to showcase tourist products, services and investments.

ARABIAN TRAVEL MARKET IN DUBAI

In April 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi led the largest ever delegation to the Arabian Travel Market—the leading global event in the region focusing on the inbound and outbound travel industry. Joining the delegation at the Abu Dhabi pavilion for the first time was Abu Dhabi Airports Company, Abu Dhabi Health Authority, Cleveland Clinic, Department for Economic Development, Tourism Police, the General Directorate of Residence and Foreign Affairs and the Tourism Development and Investment Company. Also present were representatives from Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau, Al Ain Oasis, Cruise Abu Dhabi, the Louvre Abu Dhabi, Qasr Al Muwajji and Wahat Al Karama.

The pavilion was split across Abu Dhabi's three distinct regions: Al Ain, Al Dhafra and Abu Dhabi city. The emirate's expanding portfolio of attractions, experiences and events was highlighted, including Al Ain Oasis, the UAE's first Unesco World Heritage site and the newly opened 175-room Aloft Al Ain Hotel attached to the iconic 25,000-seat Hazza Bin Zayed Stadium. Abu Dhabi's pavilion stand covered 1,000 square metres.





INTERNATIONAL TOURISM BOURSE (ITB) IN CHINA

In May 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi and seven Abu Dhabi stakeholders participated in ITB China, which is a new travel trade show exclusively focused on the Chinese travel market. The three-day event gathers international destinations, service and travel technology providers in Shanghai to connect them with handpicked Chinese buyers.

WORLDWIDE EXHIBITION FOR INCENTIVE TRAVEL, MEETINGS AND EVENTS (IMEX) IN GERMANY

In May 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi traveled with eighteen Abu Dhabi stakeholders to participate in IMEX in Germany, a show where the global meetings industry continues to do business while maximising connections. DCT Abu Dhabi’s participation resulted in twenty-two leads.

WORLDWIDE EXHIBITION FOR INCENTIVE TRAVEL, MEETINGS AND EVENTS (IMEX) IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

In October 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi traveled with six Abu Dhabi stakeholders to participate in IMEX in the USA. Ten leads resulted from the participation.

INCENTIVE, BUSINESS TRAVEL AND MEETINGS (IBTM WORLD) IN SPAIN

In November 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi alongside sixteen Abu Dhabi stakeholders participated in IBTM World, which is the leading global event for the MICE and the business travel industry. Twelve leads resulted from DCT Abu Dhabi’s participation.

Abu Dhabi Week in India and China

Abu Dhabi Week Event is a B2B, B2C, C2C and media event featuring a collection of Abu Dhabi’s cultural and tourist attractions, intended to encourage more Indian and Chinese tourists to consider the emirate as a holiday destination. Some Abu Dhabi partners participated to showcase their products, including Etihad Airways, Louvre Abu Dhabi, Sir Bani Yas and Yas Island. The India-based events were held from 27 October to 5 November in Mumbai and New Delhi and attracted more than 11,000 visitors, seventy media and eighty trade partners.

The China event was held from 19 to 22 October in Shanghai, in conjunction with the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. The event gave Shanghai citizens and visitors the opportunity to discover Abu Dhabi as a vivid tourist destination and helped increase people-to-people connections between China and the UAE. More than 2,500 visitors attended the event, and another 30,000 people viewed the live stream. More than fifty tour operators and fifty-four media agencies attended.



Special events hosted in Abu Dhabi

The Meet China forum

is the only UAE B2B event focused on the world's number-one outbound market. In August, DCT Abu Dhabi attended the event, which brought a group of seventy-five Chinese travel buyers from nine cities to meet with leading tourism suppliers including top hoteliers, local DMCs, leisure attractions and retailers.

South Indian International Movie Awards (SIIMA)

In July 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi hosted the SIIMA event in ADNEC. The two-day event kicked off in four languages and around 150 stars of Bollywood cinema and 3,500 people were present. Some stars visited some of Abu Dhabi's biggest destination attractions and tweeted online about their experience, further stretching the event's reach.

LONDON WORLD TRAVEL MARKET (WTM) IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

In November 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi participated in the London WTM with a delegation of forty Abu Dhabi stakeholders representing the emirate's attractions, hotels, resorts and tour operators and destination management companies. DCT Abu Dhabi's exhibition stand covered 609 square metres and highlighted the Louvre Abu Dhabi, which opened just a few days after the event concluded.

INTERNATIONAL LUXURY TRAVEL MARKET (ILTM) IN FRANCE

In December 2017, DCT Abu Dhabi with seven Abu Dhabi stakeholders participated in ILTM, which is the leading invitation-only luxury trade exhibition. Abu Dhabi's participation offered the opportunity to showcase the emirate's luxury products, hotels and resorts for VIP clients; it also highlighted the newly opened Louvre Abu Dhabi.

SUMMARY OF 2017 DIGITAL MARKETING REACH

Social media

60 social media accounts
15,000 social media posts
3.1M community size
18M interactions (72 % increase over 2016)
980M impressions (65 % increase over 2016)



Online

16 websites
30 online campaigns
17.7M visits to websites (130 % increase over 2016)
24.1M page views (67 % increase over 2016)
3.1B impressions (26 % increase over 2016)



YouTube

109 videos (110 % increase over 2016)
50M video views (170 % increase over 2016)
35,000 subscribers (105 % increase over 2016)



Influencers

85 influencers (13 influencers in 2016)
1,024 posts (70 % increase over 2016)
543M reach (233 % increase over 2016)
17.5M engagement (830 % increase over 2016)



CAMPAIGN IN THE SPOTLIGHT:
MOTHER OF THE NATION FESTIVAL

Online reach

82M reach via online promotion



Website

215.000 visits
331.000 pageviews



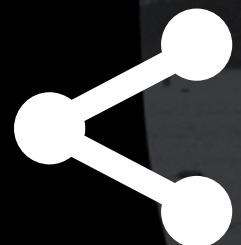
Supporting websites

2,203 visits on visitabudhabi.ae
17,240 visits on abudhabievents.ae



Social media

1.200 social media posts
54M reach on social media
11.3M social media engagement
(comments, likes, shares, etc.)



YouTube

2.6M views
7.2M impressions



Influencers

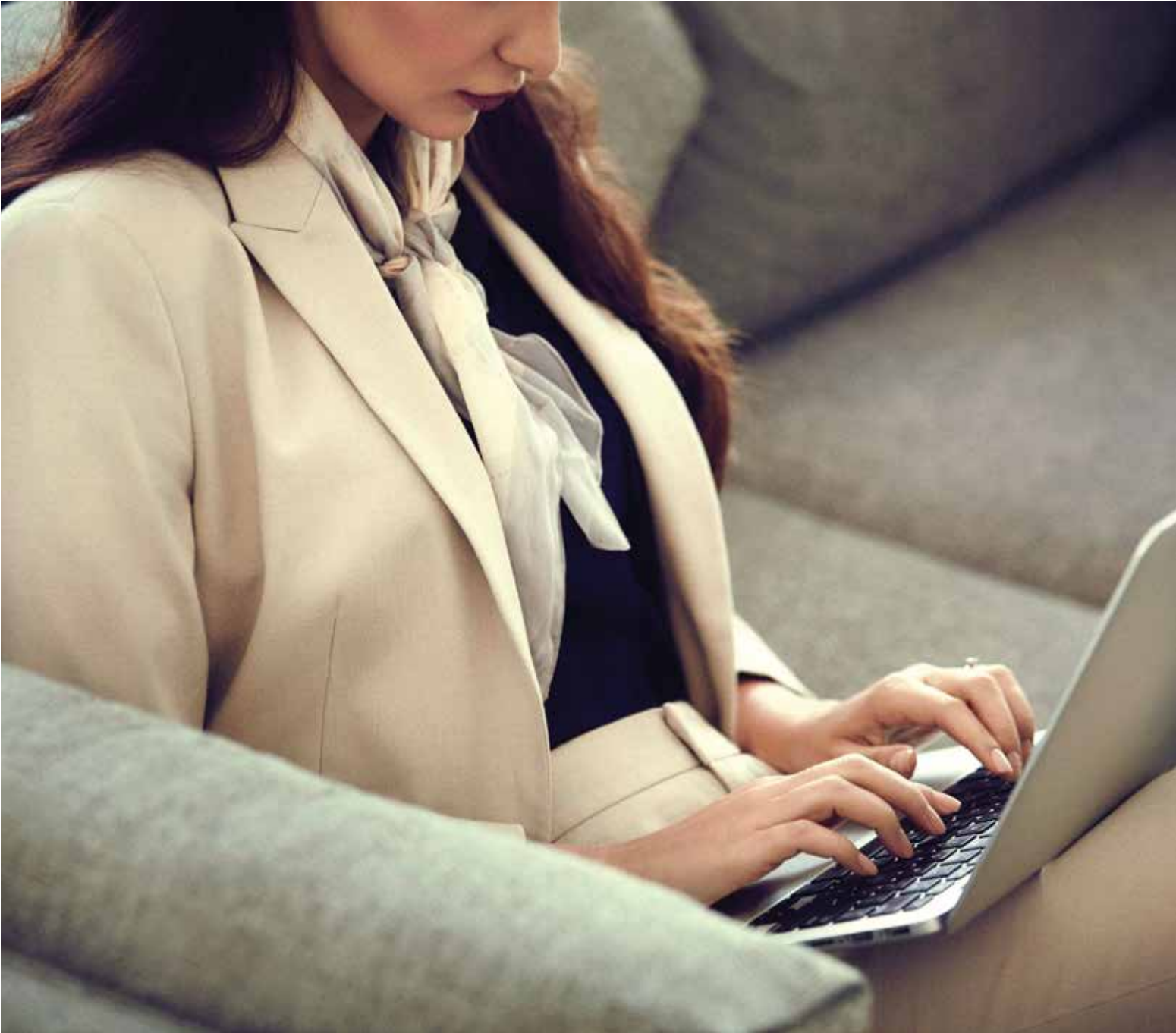
1 female actor and 3 influencers from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Abdelaziz Jamal, Mohamad Bak, Muhannad Al Harbi) via their social media channels

4 female TV presenters:
9 posts/videos
3.5M reach on Instagram
19.7M video/story views on Snapchat
35.300 engagement across Snapchat and Instagram





Chapter 9: Looking to 2018



PROGRESS IN THE YEAR AHEAD

In the coming year, DCT Abu Dhabi will build on Abu Dhabi’s branding efforts with a major destination campaign, continue building Abu Dhabi’s product and experience offerings and continue close collaboration with industry partners across all segments of the industry.

BUSINESS TOURISM

To continue growing business tourism, DCT Abu Dhabi will work with a new strategy to penetrate corporate business events, take advantage of the large meeting room capacities of Abu Dhabi’s hotel properties as well as implement a strategy to attract more exhibitions to Abu Dhabi. DCT Abu Dhabi will primarily target four areas:

- Development of leisure packages and offers for business tourism to increase the benefits from business events taking place in the emirate.
- Development of a healthcare sector value proposition to improve Abu Dhabi’s position as a leader in healthcare events.
- Positioning Abu Dhabi as a top destination for corporate MICE events to increase the benefits from business events taking place in the emirate.
- Increased membership activity in international industry associations.



MEDICAL TOURISM

In 2018, DCT will build on its partnership with the Department of Health—Abu Dhabi (DOH) to increase awareness of Abu Dhabi's medical tourism offerings through promotions as well as participation in medical tourism B2B exhibitions. Specialised medical tourism products and packages are being developed with a range of stakeholders, including hospitals, Etihad Airways and inbound tour operators, tailored to various target markets. This effort will build on the foundational work undertaken in 2017 with DOH and the Department of Immigration to set up appropriate medical tourism facilitation, such as medical tourism visas and medical product accreditation.

DCT Abu Dhabi is creating specific branding for all medical tourism marketing and promotional collateral that can be used through all partner channels. The team is also developing workshops and familiarisation tours designed to showcase the destination's medical tourism facilities, product offerings and booking channels to target markets. Abu Dhabi tour operators will have the opportunity to create packages specifically designed to appeal to each of the target markets and promote via all partner channels.



LEISURE TOURISM

DCT Abu Dhabi will continue to develop and launch diverse new products as it works to improve visitor experience in when visiting the emirate, with established and already-popular assets continuing to be robustly marketed—locally, regionally and globally.

New initiatives in the pipeline include two from DCT Abu Dhabi's partnership with Miral on Yas Island: Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi and CLYMB. The former is due in the summer of 2018 and will be one of the world's largest indoor theme parks, offering visitors twenty-nine rides, family-friendly attractions and a full calendar of shows and live performances. CLYMB, meanwhile, will feature the world's largest flight chamber and the world's tallest indoor climbing wall.

In addition to the Miral partnership, DCT Abu Dhabi's leisure tourism initiatives for 2018 include the development of a digital platform for trip itinerary and planning in Abu Dhabi; the development of an itinerary for mosque tours in Abu Dhabi, working closely with the General Authority of Islamic Affairs & Endowments, to boost the popularity of mosque tours to tourists; and the development of a cycling trail on Hafeet Mountain.

DCT Abu Dhabi also expects that the new Advantage Events Abu Dhabi incentive scheme, set up to develop content and programme collaboration with the private sector to build on the already established annual calendar of vibrant and diverse events, will also begin to pay dividends in 2018.

Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi

When it opens in summer 2018, Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi will be one of the world's largest indoor theme parks, offering visitors twenty-nine rides, family-friendly attractions and a full calendar of shows and live performances. The park will feature six immersive worlds: Metropolis and Gotham City, inspired by the universe of DC Super Heroes and Super-Villains; Cartoon Junction, Bedrock and Dynamite Gulch, themed after iconic animated brands such as Looney Tunes and Hanna-Barbera; and Warner Bros. Plaza, reminiscent of old Hollywood, where these seminal characters and stories were originally brought to life.

Miral is developing Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi in partnership with Warner Bros. Consumer Products and DC Entertainment.

CLYMB

Also set to open in 2018, CLYMB will feature the world's largest flight chamber, where visitors will be able to mimic the experience of skydiving. The venue will also feature the world's tallest indoor climbing wall (forty-three metres) as well as retailers, food and beverage outlets and a space for hosting parties.. CLYMB will be linked to Yas Mall, making it highly accessible to the rest of Yas Island's entertainment and leisure offerings.



DESTINATION CAMPAIGN: ABU DHABI 'UNTOLD STORIES'

'Untold Stories' will be the centrepiece of DCT Abu Dhabi's 2018 tourism campaigns. The cohesive campaign is an important step in defining both Abu Dhabi's brand and domestic and international travellers' perceptions of that brand.

To reflect the 'voice' of Abu Dhabi, the campaign will introduce twelve characters, including animals, buildings and people. For example, an animal character named 'Sinbad Flamingo' flies every year to Africa and stops by the mangroves in Abu Dhabi. A human character could be Rocket Boy, who is based on a real twelve-year-old English child who lives in Abu Dhabi and loves speed—and would spend all his time at Ferrari World if allowed. An example building 'character' is the Louvre Abu Dhabi, which represents the crossover of time and geographical locations.

LEISURE EVENTS

In 2018, the Events Bureau will continue developing a pipeline of recurring private sector-led events with the Abu Dhabi Advantage Events incentive scheme. The Events Bureau is aiming to secure between seven and nine new multi-year, content-relevant events during peak travel periods in key source markets—the People's Republic of China, the GCC, India and the UAE—or integrate to DCT-led industry platforms. Confirmed events include LightFields 2018–20 and Games Con 2018–20. The Events Bureau will also anchor a monthly, three-day music festival from January to April 2018 and October to December 2018.

The Events Bureau will launch an 'always on' Abu Dhabi Retail and Food & Beverage calendar. In addition, the Events Bureau will work to mount one mainstream flagship festival or concert every month, curate industry-led events into a series of themes where possible and take fuller advantage of dynamic pricing and marketing synergies. These efforts will help align tentpole events, curate distinct event themes, develop dynamic demand pricing and aggregate always-on, private-sector events to increase a consumer demand.

2017 AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

As a city, Abu Dhabi's presence and recognition on the global stage is increasing rapidly. The reasons are plentiful and reflect the experiences of visitors and residents alike. In 2017, the Numbeo Crime Index named Abu Dhabi ' #1 Safest City in the World'. Ipsos Top Cities 2017 declared Abu Dhabi ' #2 Favourite City', ' #2 City for Doing Business', ' #3 City for Living' and ' #6 City for Visiting'.

A select list of 2017 awards for DCT Abu Dhabi and hospitality industry members are listed below. We look forward to building on this recognition with the initiatives, programmes and technology that have elevated Abu Dhabi thus far.

Best International Wedding Destination 2017

Abu Dhabi won the award for 'Best International Wedding Destination' at the 6th edition of India's Best Awards hosted by *Travel+Leisure*, one of the world's leading magazines in the travel and hospitality sector. This was the second year in a row that Abu Dhabi received the award.

Overseas Luxury MICE Destination of the Year

Abu Dhabi was named the 'Leading Overseas Luxury MICE Destination' at the prestigious China Travel and Meeting Industry Awards held in Beijing, China. The emirate was one of more than forty destinations nominated and the award was presented to DCT Abu Dhabi representatives at a gala dinner in front of more than 200 of China's travel and tourism industry elites.

2017 Global Partner Award from Expedia Media Solutions

DCT Abu Dhabi won this award for its marketing campaign focused on promoting the emirate to visitors from Germany, India, the United Kingdom and the United States. The campaign raised awareness about popular destination offerings and promoted top deals to potential tourists.

Silver Award for DCT Abu Dhabi's destination video

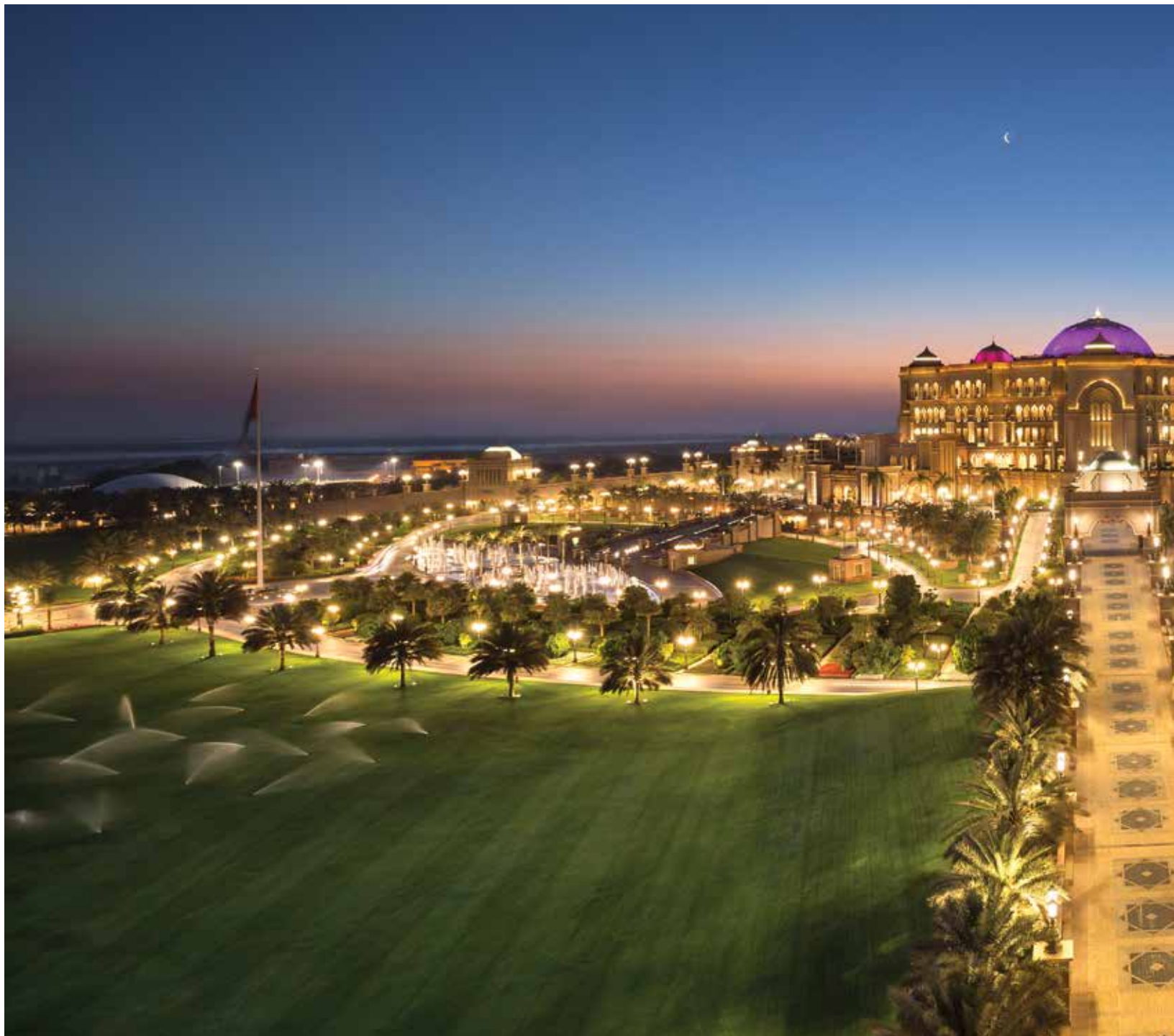
'Abu Dhabi: Your Extraordinary Story'

Every year, The Golden City Gate, supported by the Federal Associations of German Film and AV Producers e.V. in Wiesbaden, Germany, honours achievements in international tourism promotion in film, print, campaigns and innovations in nineteen categories.

Industry awards and prominent events

- Gold Stevie Award winner for the 'Visit Abu Dhabi' website and mobile app in the categories 'Hospitality & Leisure', 'Best Home/Welcome Page' and 'Travel App'
- '2017 Most Innovative Marketing Award' *China Travel Agent* magazine
- 'Best Marketing in Abu Dhabi' Abu Dhabi Government Communication Forum
- 'Best Middle Eastern Campaign of the Year', Expedia EMEA Awards 2016 (announced 2017)
- 'Best Travel Mobile App in the UAE', Best m-Government Service Awards 2017
- 'Best Travel Mobile Application', MobileWebAwards 2017
- Second place, 'Best Exhibitor in the Middle East 2017', ITB Berlin Convention
- Abu Dhabi ranked ' #1 in the UAE' and ' #2 in the Middle East' for 'Guest Experience', and ' #1 in the Middle East' for 'Online Reputation of Hotels' by the Olery Guest Experience Index Report 2017
- World Travel Awards 2017:
 - Saadiyat Island: 'Middle East's Leading Beach Destination'
 - Al Maryah Island: 'Middle East's Leading Lifestyle & Hospitality Development Project'
 - Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital: 'Middle East's Responsible Tourism Award'
 - Ferrari World: 'Middle East's Leading Theme Park'





SELECTED AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS IN THE INDUSTRY

HOSPITALITY AWARDS

Zaya Nurai Island

- 'Middle East's Leading Luxury Villa Resort', World Travel Awards 2017

Rosewood Abu Dhabi

- '#5 Hotel in the Middle East', *Condé Nast Traveler* Reader's Choice Awards 2017
- 'World's #41 Luxury Hotel', Flight Network

St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort

- Listed among 'Middle East's Leading Resort Residences' and 'World's Leading Resort Residences', World Travel Awards 2017
- 'Best Wedding Hotel', Haute Grandeur Global Hotel Awards 2017

Yas Viceroy Abu Dhabi

- 'Best Weekend Destination Hotel', *Food & Travel Arabia* GCC Awards 2017

Jumeirah at Etihad Towers

- 'Middle East's Leading Luxury Business Hotel' and 'United Arab Emirates's Leading Lifestyle Hotel', World Travel Awards 2017
- 'Best City Hotel, North Africa and the Middle East', *Travel+Leisure* World's Best Awards 2017
- 'Best Dining Destination', *Food and Travel Magazine*



Tilal Liwa Hotel

- 'Best Hotel Services' and 'Best Culinary Experience', Haute Grandeur Global Hotel Awards 2017
- 'Best Desert Resort', Arabian Travel Awards 2017
- 'Majestic Falcon Award for Quality and Excellence', Otherways Association
- 'Best Luxury Desert Resort' and 'Best Luxury Scenic View Hotel', World Luxury Hotel Awards 2017

Sofitel Abu Dhabi Corniche

- 'UAE's Luxury Business Hotel and Convention Centre', World Luxury Hotel Awards 2017

Eastern Mangroves Hotel & Spa by Anantara

- '#8 Resort in the Middle East', *Condé Nast Traveler* US Readers' Choice Awards 2017

Qasr Al Sarab Desert Resort by Anantara

- 'Luxury Eco-Friendly Hotel, Middle East', Luxury Travel Guide Awards 2017
- '#2 Resort in the Middle East', *Condé Nast Traveler* US Reader's Choice Awards 2017

Telal Resort

- 'Country Winner—United Arab Emirates, Luxury Desert Awards', World Luxury Hotel Awards 2017
- 'Luxury Wildlife Resort: Continent Winner—Middle East', World Luxury Hotel Awards 2017

Beach Rotana Abu Dhabi

- 'World's Leading Corporate Resort' and 'Middle East's Leading Corporate Resort', World Travel Awards 2017

Park Rotana

- 'United Arab Emirates's Leading Business Hotel', World Travel Awards 2017

Jannah Burj Al Sarab

- ‘United Arab Emirates’s Leading Hotel Residences’, World Travel Awards 2017
- ‘Best Suite Hotel in United Arab Emirates, Haute Grandeur Global Hotel Awards 2017
- ‘UAE’s Luxury Contemporary Hotel’ and ‘Middle East’s Luxury Brand’, World Luxury Hotel Awards 2017
- ‘Best Small Hotel—Arabia’, International Hotel Awards 2017

Jannah Marina Bay Suites

- ‘Best Services Apartments on a Global Level’, Haute Grandeur Global Hotel Awards 2017

Al Seef Resort & Spa by Andalus

- ‘Best Lifestyle Hotel in United Arab Emirates’, Haute Grandeur Global Hotel Awards 2017
- ‘Middle East’s Luxury Villa Resort’, World Luxury Hotel Awards 2017

Danat Al Ain

- ‘Best Family Resort’ and ‘Best Resort Hotel’ in the UAE by Haute Grandeur Global Hotel Awards 2017
- ‘Luxury Garden Resort’ by World Luxury Hotels Awards 2017

Emirates Palace

- ‘Best Venue for Big Fat Weddings’ at the Experiential Venue Awards 2017
- ‘Best Housekeeper in Asia Award’ at the International Housekeeper’s Summit 2017
- ‘World’s Leading Luxury Beach Resort’, ‘World’s Leading Conference Hotel’, ‘Middle East’s Best Hotel Spa’, ‘Middle East’s Leading Luxury Hotel’, ‘Middle East’s Leading MICE Hotel’, and ‘Middle East’s Leading Hotel Suite’ (Palace Suite), World Travel Awards 2017

Shangri-La Hotel

- ‘#2 Hotel in the Middle East’ and ‘#35 Hotel in the World’ by *Condé Nast Traveler* US Readers’ Choice Awards 2017

Dusit Thani Abu Dhabi

- ‘Best Luxury Hotel’ and ‘Best General Manager in the Middle East’, Haute Grandeur Global Hotel Awards 2017
- ‘World’s #28 Luxury Hotel’, FlightNetwork, 2017

Four Seasons Hotel Abu Dhabi at Al Maryah Island

- Included in *Condé Nast Traveler* 2017 Hot List: ‘The World’s Best New Hotels’

RESTAURANT AWARDS

Li Beirut

- ‘Best Middle Eastern Restaurant’, *Food and Travel Magazine*

Tanjore Restaurant

- ‘Indian Cuisine Country Winner’ by World Luxury Restaurant Awards

Eastern Mangroves Hotel & Spa by Anantara

- ‘#8 Top Restaurant in the Middle East’ by *Condé Nast Traveler* US Reader’s Choice Awards 2017

Sofra

- ‘Best Casual Dining Restaurant’ by BBC Good Food ME Awards 2017

Hoi An

- ‘Best Pan Asian Restaurant’ by BBC Good Food ME Awards 2017

SPA AWARDS

ESPA Spa at Yas Viceroy

- ‘Best Hotel Spa in the Middle East’, Haute Grandeur Global Spa Awards 2017

Qasr Al Sarab Desert Resort by Anantara

- ‘Best Resort Spa in the Middle East’, Haute Grandeur Global Spa Awards 2017
- ‘World’s Best Desert Spa’, World Spa Awards 2017

Dusit Thani Abu Dhabi

- ‘Best Luxury Boutique Spa in the Middle East’, World Luxury Spa Awards 2017

DEPARTMENT
OF CULTURE
AND **TOURISM**
ABU DHABI

