**Sharjah Fringe Festival**

**Factsheet**

1. **About Sharjah Fringe Festival**
* Sharjah Fringe Festival is the first-ever Fringe festival in the UAE and the Middle East.
* Sharjah now joins the global Fringe; a community that hosts the world’s largest arts and entertainment events.
* Family entertainment and children's theatre will be the focus of Sharjah Fringe.
* Sharjah Fringe is presented by the Sharjah Investment and Development Authority (Shurooq), in strategic partnership with the Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority.
* It is produced by the National Arts Festival, South Africa, and UAE-based Dolphin Creative.
* Information about the shows and locations can be viewed on [www.sharjahfringe.com](http://www.sharjahfringe.com)
1. **Why is Sharjah launching its very own Fringe festival?**
* Sharjah Fringe Festival reflects the vision of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, to transform the emirate into the cultural heartland of the region.
* Sharjah Fringe signals the start of a new artistic movement in the UAE in line with the emirate’s vision to embrace and encourage arts and creativity.
* Sharjah Fringe will help drive the tourism economy and will add to the wide range of entertainment choices in Sharjah.
* Sharjah Fringe fits well with Sharjah’s recognition as a family- and child-friendly emirate, its position as a hub of thriving creative arts and part of UNESCO’s Creative Cities Network.
* Sharjah Fringe will build bridges and promote social unity among different communities by introducing global cultures and art forms.
* Sharjah Fringe will encourage the exchange of new ideas, is inclusive and innovative.
1. **What are Fringe festivals?**
* ‘Fringe’ means 'outer edges of an area or group’, so a Fringe festival is an arts event where independent, experimental artists and performers stage their own shows in open, public spaces.
* The first Fringe festival originated in 1947 when eight theatre groups turned up uninvited to perform at the newly formed Edinburgh International Festival. They were not part of the official programme, so they staged their shows on the ‘fringe’ of the festival. This spontaneous artistic movement caught on and has since been adopted in many countries and at international festivals.
* Today, more than 200 Fringe events are held worldwide.
* Fringe festivals bring a creative buzz and vibrant energy. They are platforms for both established artists as well as those who are not considered part of the ‘professional’ community.
* Notable Fringe festivals include the Adelaide Fringe (Australia), the Brighton Fringe (UK), the New York Fringe (USA), and the National Arts Festival (South Africa).
1. **Top 5 Shows at the Sharjah Fringe**
* **The Bubble Show**: Features Maxwell the Bubbleologist’s breathtaking exploration of the dynamics of bubbles. UK-based performer Maxwell Graham combines comedy and artistry with audience participation and bubble tricks to keep everyone mesmerised.
* **Tom Thum and Jamie MacDowell**: This unique Australian duo bring to the stage only a guitar and a distinctive singing voice. Tom is a one-man orchestra who can mimic any instrument from a trumpet to drums while accompanying Jamie’s soul-stirring melodies and words. They are winners of the Best Music Award at the Brighton Fringe 2014 and the Adelaide Fringe 2016.
* **The** **I Hate Children Children’s Show**: Children get to be the stars of this award-winning magic and comedy show as they are invited on stage to become the heroes of the show, which stars Paul Nathan (HBO, StarTrek Voyager).
* **Grumpy Pants:** Spain’s Francisco Vita (aka Kiki Vita) will delight families in this hilarious show featuring perfectly crafted juggling routines, physical comedy and fork throwing.
* **Sticks Stones Broken Bones:** In this show that comes in all the way from South Africa, household junk and bits of rubbish are transformed into wordless shadow puppet stories. The puppets are created live and on the spot. Watch out for flying chickens, sneaky Ninjas and brain transplants!
1. **Logistical Details (How many shows, venues, artists, timings)**

Dates and Venues

* Sharjah Fringe will be held from January 16 – February 1, 2020 (over the course of 17 days).
* Four of Shurooq’s lively touristic and entertainment venues will host the Sharjah Fringe:

	+ Al Majaz Waterfront
	+ Al Qasba
	+ Al Noor Island
	+ The Flag Island

Productions and artists

* 35 ticketed productions
* 30 outdoor street performances, which are free and open to the public
* Each show will be held in different venues and and at different times to allow more people to enjoy the performances. This amounts to a total of up to 600 performances and 1,100 hours of entertainment.
* More than 50 artists from the UK, South Africa, Spain, Ireland, Australia and the UAE are taking part.

Timings and School Packages

* Special packages for schools will be on offer in the mornings.
* Regular programmes will begin late afternoon and continue in the evening for families.
* All shows have been categorised to suit different age groups: 4–6 years, 6–10 years, 10–14 years, and 14+ years.

Tickets

* All ticket prices were chosen within an affordable range, from **AED 35 – 50**, allowing all families the chance to enjoy the festival with their children.
* Tickets can be purchased online at www.sharjahfringe.com or from box offices in select locations in Sharjah including:
	+ Main Box Office at Al Qasba
	+ Box Offices at Al Majaz Waterfront
	+ Al Noor Island – sales at the entrance only
* Box Office Operating times: Saturday to Thursday – 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

 Friday – 1:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

* Queries and telephonic bookings can be made by calling: +971 6 556 0777
* If the performance is not sold out, you can buy tickets at the venue 30 minutes before the show starts.
* Concessions (discounts) are available on some shows for children, students (with a student card), and over 60s. Children under the age of 2 do not require a ticket.
* Tickets to Al Noor Island can be bought at the entrance to the island. They will be the same price as they are year-round but, during the Fringe, the tickets will give you free access to a number of performances — puppets, magic, bubbles, story-time, aerial dance, music and more.
1. **Social Media**
* To follow Sharjah Fringe Festival on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram: @shjfringe.