SHARJAH HOSTS FIRST MIDDLE EASTERN FRINGE FESTIVAL “Sharjah Fringe Festival”

Thursday 30 January, 2020

The first fringe theatre festival in the Middle East took place in Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates from 16 January - 1st February 2020

- Artists and performers from across the world, including the United States, United Kingdom, South Korea, South Africa, Australia and the Middle East, staged performancesin Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates.
- Sharjah Fringe programme has family focus.
- Venues include premiere cultural, family and leisure destinations “Al Majaz waterfront, Al Qasba, Al Noor Island and The Flag Island”.

Sharjah’s position as the cultural capital of the United Arab Emirates received a boost when it hosted the first Sharjah Fringe Festival – joining a long list of international fringe festivals that include Edinburgh, Brighton, Adelaide and the New York Fringe.

The seventeen day festival (starting on 16 January 2020) gathered street performers, theatre, dance, illusion and more with a family focus in the emirate of Sharjah. The festival has seen an offering of 1100 hours of creative inspiration for residents and visitors to the emirate.

Sharjah has long been known as the cultural capital of the UAE, a reputation that has grown through recent events like the Sharjah Book Fairand the Sharjah Art Biennale, produced by the Sharjah Art Foundation.

Presented by Sharjah Investment and Development Authority (Shurooq) in strategic partnership with Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority, Ahmed Obaid Al Qaseer, Chief Operating Officer of Sharjah Investment and Development Authority (Shurooq), explains, “Through Fringe, we wanted the 200-plus nationalities residing in the UAE to connect with the global language of the arts and build bridges across cultures in a variety of entertaining journeys with artists at our top public destinations.”

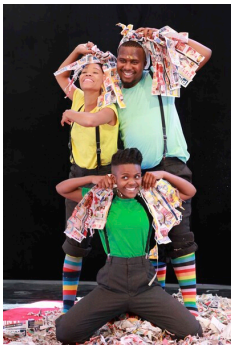
Performances have included bubbleologists in *The Amazing Bubble Show*and *The Fantabulous Bubble Show*, Australian beat-boxing duo Tom Thum and Jamie MacDowell, mentalist Brendon Peel in *Mind Games*, Fidget Feet’s aerial dance performances *Hatch*and *Strange Feathers*, Bulgarian dance and multimedia performance *Silent Legends*, shadow puppet piece *Sticks, Stone and Broken Bones*as well as revue shows and comedy from many UAE performers and comedians – and more.

Sharjah Fringe Festival was produced by South Africa’s National Arts Festival, the largest and most diverse arts festival in Africa, and international festival consultancy Dolphin Creative. Spokesperson for the National Arts Festival, Tony Lankester said, “Sharjah Fringe Festival is a truly global effort, our technical and production team came from South Africa, artists came from all over the world and so did the audiences. Sharjah is a beautiful city with wonderful locations and public spaces so it is really the ideal place for an interactive festival like this.”

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