



# UAE Culture Comes to the Smithsonian Folklife Festival

June 21, 2022



Emirati culture and traditions will be celebrated when the Smithsonian Folklife Festival returns to the National Mall.

Developed in partnership with the UAE Ministry of Culture and Youth, and supported by the UAE Embassy, [United Arab Emirates: Living Landscape | Living Memory](#) will be the first nationally recognized event in the U.S. that highlights the Emirates' diverse history and unique culture. The exciting program will introduce Festival attendees to the arts, poetry, cuisine and

other cultural traditions that have made the UAE an inclusive, modern and pioneering nation in just 50 years.

“Situated at the crossroads of three continents, the UAE has always been a hub for social, cultural and intellectual diversity, and this heritage has shaped our values, rich traditions and outlook for a better future. We welcome this Smithsonian celebration and are delighted that visitors from the U.S. and around the world will have the opportunity to experience our Emirati culture and hospitality firsthand,” said H.E. Yousef Al Otaiba, UAE Ambassador to the U.S.

The full program schedule is available [here](#).

You can also tune in to the Festival’s livestreamed events on Smithsonian Folklife’s [YouTube channel](#).

WATCH TEASER VIDEO NOW



*“Even as there’s massive skyscrapers and all of the technologies when we think of the UAE, there’s all these layers there [...] UAE is a young country, but it’s ancient. You have people living who remember a very different UAE, who talk about it and share photos. It’s unique to go to a place where it’s really a living memory.”*

- Sabrina Lynn Motley, Director of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival



# What to Expect at the Folklife Festival

Inspired by the *majlis*, an Emirati tradition of gathering and dialogue, the 2022 Smithsonian Folklife Festival will showcase distinct elements of the UAE's cultural heritage. Artisanal and culinary demonstrations, poetry and musical performances, storytelling, films, workshops and more will explore three central themes: Place, Creativity and Belonging.

Visitors to the festival will be able to engage in activities that reflect a diversity of cultural expressions found throughout the UAE.

For example, visitors can participate in a workshop to create perfumes and incense, learn the art and techniques behind Emirati home cooking, watch master falconers demonstrate the ancient skill of falconry, listen to the traditional, plaintive songs of pearl divers – and much, much more.

To learn more about the Festival, check out [this article](#) from *Smithsonian Magazine*.

## From the Feed



[@SmithsonianSec](#)

For generations, Bedouin hunters ensured their survival through partnership with falcons. The tradition continues in the United Arab Emirates today through falcon racing. Women and girls, shown in this photo by Vidhyaa Chandramohan, are increasingly learning falconry. #UAEinDC

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At our #2022Folklife Festival, June 22–27 and June 30–July 4, learn about this traditional sport's history and future. See falcons and falconers in action on the @NationalMallNPS and discover UAE's maritime culture, musical instruments, poetry, perfume, coffee, and more. #UAEinDC



[@SmithsonianFolk](#)

This summer at the #2022Folklife Festival, meet the beekeepers from Hatta Honey in the United Arab Emirates' mountain region, and taste the three distinctive flavors of honey produced from native plants.

Save the dates for the Festival: June 22–27 and June 30–July 4



### [@UAEEmbassyUS](#)

Today, @UAEMCY Minister Noura Al Kaabi met with more than 80 artists in the UAE who are participating in @SmithsonianFolk next week.

From bakers to poets, we can't wait to welcome the group to Washington, D.C. <https://bit.ly/3QquLwx> #2022Folklife



### [@UAEUSAUNITED](#)

The @SmithsonianFolk Festival returns to the National Mall on June 22-27 & June 30-July 4.

After a two-year hiatus, #2022Folklife features the UAE. Explore and experience AE culture and history right here in the us: <https://festival.si.edu/schedule>  
@UAEMCY



### [@GulfStatesInst](#)

Join us on the National Mall on June 24:

AGSIW, the @SmithsonianFolk Life Festival, and @UAEEmbassyUS will host a discussion featuring three culture bearers from the UAE. #2022Folklife



### [@TheNationalNews](#)

More than 80 artists from the UAE will take over Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington  
<https://t.co/7uVZOzICpG>



## Meet the Participants



Among the more than 80 UAE performers set to represent their country at Folklife are Abdulla Lutfi and Asma Baker – young artists from the renowned Tashkeel Studio in Dubai.

Asma and Abdulla, who were both diagnosed with autism at an early age, are strong advocates for neurodiversity in the arts.

They pride themselves on their ability to view the world in unconventional ways.

Asma is a sketch artist and poet whose work offers a look into the complexity of human emotions, while Abdulla, a comic-strip artist, is known for his lighthearted takes on the Emirati way of life.

Both will have their artwork on display, including some available for purchase, at the Festival.



Also among the featured performers are mother-daughter falconry duo Ayesha and Osha Al Mansoori. The pair will hold flying demonstrations with live birds of prey throughout the Festival in partnership with U.S.-based falconer Phung Luu.

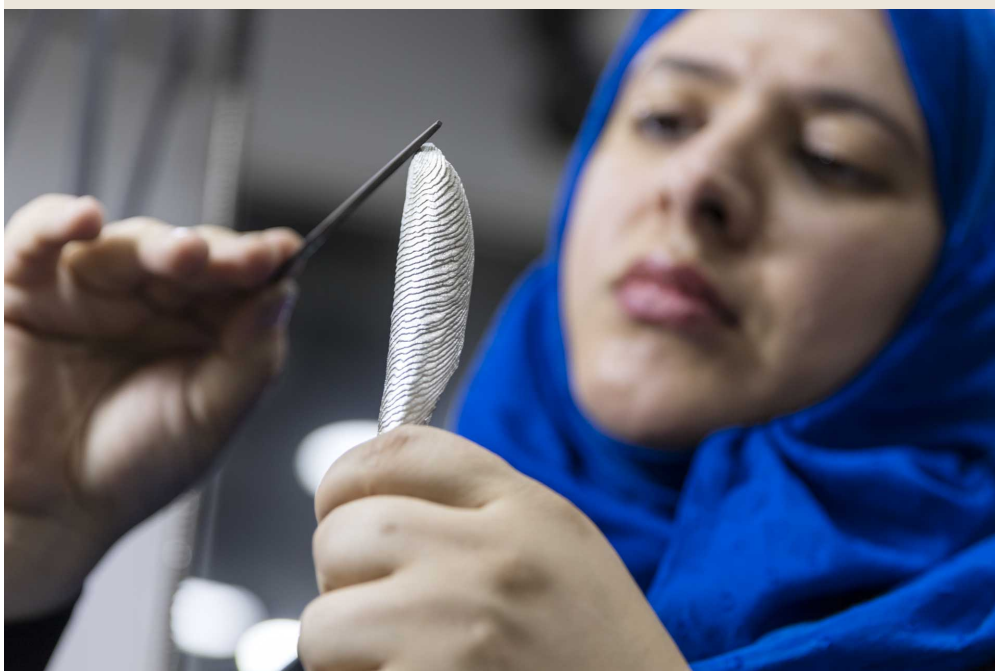
The inspiring pair have been featured in media outlets around the world for their efforts to get women and girls more involved in the sport. Osha was even the subject of a [short documentary](#) for her brilliant work as the Emirates' youngest female falconer.



Jewelry artist and sculptor Azza Al Qubaisi will also be representing the UAE at the Festival.

Azza is known for her work with metal and natural materials. Her unique jewelry collection, “Marine Symphony,” which consists of pendants and rings fashioned out of cuttlefish, is an homage to the UAE’s rich natural resources and history of maritime trade.

She will showcase her work at the Folklife Festival Marketplace.



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