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Cultural Foundation Abu Dhabi, a cultural centre by the [Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi \(DCT Abu Dhabi\)](#), will host a diverse line-up of musical and theatrical performances as well as launch three new exhibitions as part of its 2024 season, including a major show that celebrates the work of pioneering Emirati artist Hussein Sharif.

Alongside the exhibitions and performances, a public programme of activities related to their respective themes will feature talks, tours, workshops and events. Cultural Foundation's

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public programme also includes its annual art residencies and mentorship programmes, aimed at supporting and nurturing artists and creatives.

Cultural Foundation's three new exhibitions will all open on Thursday 22 February 2024.

Hussein Sharif: Re-framing Reality will look at four decades of the artist's work, showcasing his multidisciplinary practice across painting, drawing, collage and sculpture. Born in Dubai, Hussein Sharif is one of the UAE's key postmodernist artists, and is part of the group of Five who rose to prominence in the mid-1980s and are considered the founders of contemporary art in the UAE. The Five includes artists Hassan Sharif, Abdullah Al Saadi, Mohammed Kazem and Mohamed Ahmed Ibrahim.

Hussein Sharif has worked with various mediums to respond to his surrounding environment and used recycled materials as a way of depicting changes in UAE society. His work has been exhibited internationally in numerous exhibitions including in Russia, Netherlands, France, Egypt and Germany. This new show extends to the surrounding site of Cultural Foundation, featuring different installations that encourage the audience to interact with the work. Curated by Aysha Al Hemeiri and Zuhoor Al Sayegh, the show will run until 1 September 2024.

Native: Plants in the UAE is a group art exhibition that showcases the UAE's native flora, exploring the life conditions of plants indigenous to the country's landscape and examining how the surrounding atmosphere both affects their growth and results in unique variations of colour, texture, size and behaviour. From the iconic Ghaf tree to resilient desert grasses, each specimen holds a story of adaptation and survival, told through a curated collection of art installations and informative exhibits that shed light on the ecological significance of these plants and trees.

Native promises an enriching experience that will resonate with nature enthusiasts, researchers, artists, and curious minds alike. The exhibition is curated by Sumayya Al Suwaidi and assistant curators Aysha Al Aseeri and Huda Marzooq and will run until 1 September 2024.

For the first time in the region, the work of world-renowned illustrator and young children's book author Eric Carle is being celebrated in an exhibition, Through the Seasons with Eric Carle, which showcases the wonders of nature throughout the year. With more than 70 books to his name including the famous The Very Hungry Caterpillar, this exhibition looks at Carle's brilliant imagery of the seasons, from hibernating bears in winter and hatching chicks in spring to colourful flowers in summer and ripe apple trees in the fall. Curated by Reem AlHashimi, the show features original artworks – including Carle's painted tissue-paper collages from nine classic picture books – as well as unpublished work and runs until 22 August 2024.

The Xinjiang Art Theatre Song and Dance Troupe will take centre stage on Sunday 4 February with Xinjiang is a Nice Place, promising an evening of unparalleled artistic expression through movement. To celebrate the Chinese New Year, the large-scale epic offers a multifaceted performance incorporating dance and vocal music. This event is co-

Abdullah Al-Ruwaished, one of the most beloved singers in the Arab world and an ambassador of Khaleeji music, will give an intimate performance of his most famous songs on Saturday 24 February. Titled Jalsa with Abdullah Al-Ruwaished, this special evening will transport the audience into the artists' world.

On Friday 19 April, artist Omar Elamin will perform modern music inspired by Sudanese folk songs, which thrillingly blends old songs with modern beats and promises an evening of eclectic sounds and rhythms.

The Modern Theatre Group will perform Atrasa, written by Sultan bin Dafon and directed by Omar Al Mulla on Friday 26 April. On the theme of time as one of the most valuable resources in life, this Emirati theatrical production for children promises to engage young audiences with a lasting life lesson on the importance of time and a message about how once lost it cannot be recovered.

The Very Hungry Caterpillar, a delightful and captivating theatrical production, will bring Eric Carle's beloved children's book to life through vibrant colours and compelling characters on Sunday 28 April. Through imaginative storytelling, children will be taken on a journey through a little caterpillar's transformation into a beautiful butterfly. Presented in partnership with Art For All, it's an introduction for young audiences and their families to the whimsical world of Eric Carle.

On Saturday 4 May, Cultural Foundation and **Abu Dhabi International Book Fair** will present a performance titled Fatima Al Hashmi - A Musical Journey through Arabic Language. With a variety of songs that feature different dialects, Al Hashmi will bring a fresh and contemporary sound to the world of Arabic music. From traditional to modern Arabic music, she will take audiences on a journey that showcases the beauty and complexity of the Arabic language.

Another children's performance will enchant young audiences on Friday 24 May and Saturday 25 May. This time it is the story of The Gruffalo's Child, based on the much-loved picture book by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, brought to Abu Dhabi by Tall Stories and in partnership with Centre Stage. The show follows the story of the Gruffalo's child who ignores her father's warnings about the Big Bad Mouse as she tiptoes out into the deep dark wood on a windy night.

Alongside this rich cultural programme, a wide range of daily activities will run at Cultural Foundation's Abu Dhabi Children's Library, which houses a selection of fiction, non-fiction, novels, autobiographies and reference materials in several languages, catering for children up to 14 years old. The Library hosts activities spanning early childhood development, reading, writing, arts and crafts, and exploration and innovation in its learning and play spaces.

In addition, monthly creative workshops and courses for adults and children at Cultural Foundation's Bait Al Khatt, Al Marsam Al Hor and Children's Art Centre art studios allow members of the community to develop skills in drawing, painting, sculpturing, pottery, fashion design, sewing, and Arabic calligraphy.

For more information about the performances, activities, and tickets, please visit culturalfoundation.ae.

ABU DHABI INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR

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DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND TOURISM - ABU DHABI