



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MDC Live Arts Launches Season Dedicated to Muslim Arts

Ojalá/ Inshallah Offers Wishes for Inclusion, Co-existence and Understanding

Miami, Sept. 18, 2017 – Miami Dade College’s (MDC) MDC Live Arts, Miami’s most eclectic performing arts series, announces its 2017-18 season, *Ojalá/Inshallah: Wishes from the Muslim World*, designed to explore the diversity of Muslim culture through the arts and challenge widespread assumptions concerning contemporary Muslim identity.

MDC Live Arts is one of only 11 organizations nationwide to be awarded through the **Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Arts (DDFIA)’s *Building Bridges 2016-17 Grant Program***, which aims to advance relationships, increase understanding and reduce bias between Muslim and non-Muslim communities. The Building Bridges Program’s goal is timely and compelling -- especially here in Miami. The Spanish word, “ojalá” means “I wish,” or “I hope so,” and derives its meaning from the Arabic phrase “insha’Allah” or “God willing.” It’s a reminder of the Moorish impact on the Spanish language and Hispanic identity shared by so many greater Miami residents.

“Ojalá/Inshallah bolsters our commitment to increasing global awareness and tackling pressing issues of our time through the arts,” says MDC Live Arts Executive Director, **Kathryn Garcia**. “For too many people, mass media representations are the principal influencers of their understandings of the Muslim world. With this project, we aim to provide alternative representations, illuminating the breadth of diversity present in the Muslim world while creating safe spaces where our community can explore commonalities that transcend differences.”

The season opens with **The Sachal Ensemble: Song of Lahore** on **Saturday, Nov. 4** at the **Olympia Theater**. A Pakistani jazz group—whose journey has taken them from obsolescence to international acclaim—play iconic jazz standards on traditional South Asian instrumentation, as well as traditional Pakistani folk songs. Faced with persecution from extremists in Pakistan in the 1970s, the devoted group of Lahori musicians convened secretly to rehearse and record. Fueled by a love of American jazz, the ensemble merged Eastern and Western music, crafting a sound that transcends war and oppression. Their journey, as told in a documentary by the same name, has led them to international stages, including Jazz at Lincoln Center. They perform cross-cultural recreations of classics by Duke Ellington, The Beatles, Dave Brubeck and Henry Mancini.

From American jazz standards played with a Pakistani twist to a Classical Arab orchestra; an Iranian female tar player to an Algerian male contemporary dance ensemble; a modern Moroccan gnawa collective to an Iraqi-American trumpeter; interactive art installations and a spoken word theater piece; and a Muslim Hip Hop night highlighting female forerunners—the season spans genres, regions and styles. Whether upholding, challenging or modifying tradition, the artists will dispell the notion of a monolithic Muslim identity, disrupt common stereotypes and celebrate Muslim and MENA communities as a valuable part of Miami’s richly diverse culture.

MDC Live Arts 2017-18 Season:

Sachal Ensemble: Song of Lahore

A Pakistani jazz ensemble—whose journey has taken them from obsolescence to international acclaim—play iconic jazz standards and Pakistani folk songs.

Saturday, Nov. 4, at 8 p.m.

Olympia Theater | 174 E. Flagler St, Miami, FL 33131

\$55, \$38, \$25

Tickets at: mdclivearts.org

Tania El Khoury: Gardens Speak & As Far As My Fingertips Take Me

During Miami Art Week, internationally acclaimed live artist Tania El Khoury (London/ Beirut) implements two immersive and challenging performance- installations that give voice to stories otherwise buried or silenced.

Wednesday – Saturday, Dec. 6-9

Check mdclivearts.org for times and locations

Tickets at mdclivearts.org

Sahba Motallebi

Iranian virtuoso of the tar and setar, and an ambassador of classical Persian music in the US.

Saturday, Jan. 27, 2018, at 8 p.m.

North Beach Bandshell | 7275 Collins Ave, Miami Beach FL 33141

Co-presented with Rhythm Foundation as part of the Axis of Love series

\$20 advance /\$25 day of show/ Axis of Love Series pass \$50

Tickets at mdclivearts.org

Cie. Herve Koubi: What the Day Owes to the Night

A breathtaking all-male contemporary dance ensemble, whose members hail from Algeria and Burkina Faso.

Saturday, Feb. 10, 2018 at 8 p.m.

Co-presented with Olympia Theater

Olympia Theater | 174 E. Flagler St, Miami, FL 33131

\$55, \$38, \$25

Tickets at: mdclivearts.org

Amir El Saffar: Two Rivers Ensemble

A master trumpeter “uniquely poised to reconcile jazz and Arabic music without doing either harm” –the Wire

Saturday, Mar. 3, 2018 at 8 p.m.

North Beach Bandshell | 7275 Collins Ave, Miami Beach FL 33141

Co-presented with Rhythm Foundation as part of the Axis of Love series

\$20 advance /\$25 day of show/ Axis of Love Series pass \$50

Tickets at: mdclivearts.org

Hip Hoppa Locka

Muslim Hip Hop Night in Opa-locka!

Saturday, April 21, 2018 at 8 p.m.

The Arc | 675 Ali Baba Ave, Opa-locka, FL 33054

Co-presented with the Opa Locka Development Corporation

FREE

RSVP at mdclivearts.org

Innov Gnawa

A young musical collective dedicated to exploring Morocco’s gnawa music tradition.

Saturday, May 5, 2018 at 8 p.m.

North Beach Bandshell | 7275 Collins Ave, Miami Beach FL 33141

Co-presented with Rhythm Foundation as part of the Axis of Love series

\$20 advance /\$25 day of show/ Axis of Love Series pass \$50

Tickets at: mdclivearts.org

The Combat Hippies: Amal

Showcase of a work-in-progress theater/spoken word piece about the effects of war on both U.S. combat veterans and Middle Eastern refugees.

Coming in May 2018

MDC Live Arts Lab | 300 NE 2nd Ave, Building 1, Miami, FL 33132

FREE

RSVP at: mdclivearts.org

Layali al-Andaluz: Ojalá/Inshallah Season Closing Gala

In a nod to Moorish Spain and cross-cultural connections, Arab Classical music meets flamenco in an enchanting evening featuring the National Arab Orchestra and special guests.

Saturday, May 12, 2017 at 8 p.m.
Olympia Theater | 174 E. Flagler St, Miami, FL 33131
\$65, \$48, \$35
Tickets at mdclivearts.org | olympiatheater.org

Nb: Please note that due to Hurricane Irma, the Layali al-Andalus program that was originally slated for October 7 has been rescheduled for May 12.

>> [Click here](#) for season photos.

>> [Click here](#) for season videos

To purchase tickets, and learn more about the **2017-18 MDC Live Arts Season**, call 305-237-3010, or visit mdclivearts.org.

MDC Live Arts is Miami's most eclectic performing arts series. Created in 1990 as Cultura del Lobo, MDC Live Arts has a celebrated history of bringing extraordinary national and international performing artists to Miami. The annual series presents today's most exciting artists and designs meaningful engagement between these artists, the students of MDC, and the greater community. MDC Live Arts seeks artists from across the globe who push boundaries and honor traditions relevant to Miami's diverse community, and aims to offer audiences opportunities to discover new ideas, perspectives and forms of expression. For more information, please visit www.mdclivearts.org.

***Ojalá/Inshallah: Wishes From The Muslim World** is made possible by the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art's Building Bridges Program. **The Building Bridges Program** is the grant-making arm of the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, which is an extension of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. The program supports national efforts to advance relationships, increase understanding, and reduce bias between Muslim and non-Muslim communities. The mission of DDFIA is to promote the study, understanding and appreciation of Muslim arts and cultures. For more information, please visit www.ddcf.org/what-we-fund/building-bridges.*

***The programs of MDC Live Arts** are additionally made possible with the generous support of: Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council; the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners; the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture; the National Endowment for the Arts; and National Performance Network (NPN). MDC Live Arts is a Partner of the National Performance Network (NPN). Major NPN contributors include the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Ford Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Amal is a National Performance Network/Visual Artists Network (NPN/VAN) Creation & Development Fund Project co-commissioned by MDC Live Arts in partnership with Su Teatro, MACLA and NPN/VAN. For more information: nprweb.org*

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This and other MDC releases are available on the web at www.mdc.edu.

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