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Note: Images are available in the [online media gallery](#).

Season in Brief

Spoleto Festival USA announces a robust 46th season

May 27 – June 12, 2022 • Charleston, South Carolina

124 performances and events • More than 70 international artists • 10 world and US premieres

OPERA

- World premiere: *Omar*
- World premiere: *Unholy Wars*
- New production: *La bohème*

THEATER AND PHYSICAL THEATER

- Dock Street Theatre Play – announced February 22
- US premiere: Plexus Polaire's *Moby Dick*
- Dael Orlandersmith's *Until the Flood*
- Meow Meow in concert
- US premiere: Machine de Cirque's *La Galerie*

WELLS FARGO JAZZ

- Youssou NDOUR: Mbalax Unplugged
- Nduduzo Makhathini
- Tyshawn Sorey/Aaron Diehl/Matt Brewer
- Linda May Han Oh and Fabian Almazan
- Ravi Coltrane plays the work of Alice Coltrane
- Cécile McLorin Salvant

FIRST CITIZENS BANK FRONT ROW

- Rhiannon Giddens with Francesco Turrisi
- Allison Russell
- The War and Treaty
- Molly Tuttle & Golden Highway

DANCE

- Reggie Wilson/Fist and Heel Performance Group in *POWER*
- Stars of New York City Ballet
- Malpaso Dance Company

MUSIC

- Bank of America Chamber Music at Dock Street Theatre
- Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra plays reconstructed Edmund Thornton Jenkins work, György Ligeti, and the US premiere of Anna Thorvaldsdottir's *AIÓN*
- Spoleto Festival USA Chorus Concert: Voices of Romanticism
- Soloists and choristers of *Omar* in concert: Lift Every Voice
- Music in Time series: featuring the US premiere of Nico Muhly and Alice Goodman's *The Street*, a triple bill from Tyshawn Sorey for orchestra, and the US premiere of Jessie Cox's *Alongside a Chorus of Voices*
- Beethoven's Ninth Symphony
- Shakey Graves headlines the Wells Fargo Festival Finale at Firefly Distillery

HOW TO BUY TICKETS | SPOLETOUSA.ORG OR 843.579.3100

Available to the public beginning February 22 at 10:00am EST |

Donor pre-sale begins February 14; access is based on giving level.

Opera

- *Omar*

World premiere | Spoleto's long-awaited work and season centerpiece: Based on the life and autobiography of a Muslim African scholar enslaved in the Carolinas, this opera from Rhiannon Giddens and Michael Abels traces Omar Ibn Said's spiritual journey and underscores the indelible power of the written word. Directed by Kaneza Schaal, conducted by John Kennedy (May 27, 30, June 2, 5, 8, 12; College of Charleston Sottile Theatre)

- *Unholy Wars*

World premiere | Stitching together Italian baroque pieces from the 1600s, including Monteverdi's *Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*, Grammy Award winning tenor Karim Sulayman reframes the problematic narratives of the Crusades with an Arab American lens. (May 29, June 1, 3, 6; Dock Street Theatre)

- *La bohème*

New production | Yuval Sharon, who *The New York Times* has described as "the most innovative opera director in the US," sets Puccini's great opera in reverse, beginning with Act 4 and ending with Act 1, extracting hope and love from devastation and despair. Conducted by Vimbayi Kaziboni, (May 28, 31, June 4, 7, 11; Charleston Gaillard Center)

Theater and Physical Theater

- Dock Street Theatre Play

With performances spanning the length of the Festival, the mainstage play will be revealed February 22—the same day tickets become available to the public. (May 26 (preview) – 31, June 2, 4, 5, 7 – 12; Dock Street Theatre)

- Plexus Polaire: *Moby Dick*

US premiere | Directed by Yngvild Aspeli, this visual adaptation of *Moby Dick*—with seven actors, 50 puppets, and a whale-sized whale—transports the audience to a far-off Norwegian isle to present Herman Melville's age-old story of obsession. (May 27 – 31; Festival Hall)

- *Until the Flood*

In this one-woman tour de force, Obie Award winning Dael Orlandersmith portrays eight unique characters reacting to the aftermath of the 2014 murder of teenager Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. (June 3 – 6; Festival Hall)

- Meow Meow

From cabaret's rich history to pop culture hits, nothing is off limits for "the queen of chanson" (*Berliner Zeitung*)—the one-of-a-kind, post-postmodern diva known as Meow Meow. (May 26 – June 1; Festival Hall)

- Machine de Cirque: *La Galerie*

US premiere | In this spectacle of contemporary circus, the Quebec-based physical theater troupe makes its Spoleto debut with dizzying feats and an ode to creativity. (June 8 – 12; Festival Hall)

Dance

- Reggie Wilson/Fist and Heel Performance Group: *POWER*

Drawing from extensive research, choreographer Reggie Wilson explores obscure histories of Black Shaker communities, reimagining their devotional practices and bringing a new perspective to the spectrum of American Christian religion, Shouts, and the evolution of Africanist worship, all through Wilson’s American postmodern dance lens. (May 28 – 29; College of Charleston Sottile Theatre)

- Ballet Encore

Stars of New York City Ballet, including principal dancers Sara Mearns, Unity Phelan, and Adrian Danchig-Waring, return to Spoleto for a program that features George Balanchine’s *Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux* as well as works by Christopher Wheeldon, Jerome Robbins, and Justin Peck. (June 1, 3, 4; College of Charleston Sottile Theatre)

- Malpaso Dance Company

Cuba’s brightest contemporary dancers showcase their full range of artistry through three disparate works: Sonya Tayeh’s *Face the Torrent*, Ohad Naharin’s *Tabula Rasa*, and Ronald K. Brown’s *Why You Follow*. (June 10 – 11; College of Charleston Sottile Theatre)

Music

- Bank of America Chamber Music

Violinist and host Geoff Nuttall curates 33 concerts with a signature blending of old and new—modern compositions and canonic gems. Joining the Dock Street regulars are the London-based Castalian String Quartet; recorder virtuosos Tabea Debus; and the series’ first saxophonist, Steven Banks. (May 27 – June 12; Dock Street Theatre)

- Music in Time series:

Music in Time

US premiere | In the first of this series directed and hosted by John Kennedy, members of the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra perform the US premiere of Jessie Cox’s *Alongside a Chorus of Voices*; Mikhail Johnson’s *Evil’s Peak*, a song cycle with text in Patois, inspired by a 13th-century frieze; and a composition from bassoonist Joy Guidry’s recent album, *Radical Acceptance*. (May 29; Festival Hall)

The Street: 14 Meditations on the Stations of the Cross

US premiere | Harpist Parker Ramsay, backed by eight voices of the Spoleto Festival USA Chorus, plays a new score

by composer Nico Muhly with text by librettist Rev. Alice Goodman. The work receives its world premiere at King's College, Cambridge. (June 7; St. Matthew's Lutheran Church)

Music in Time: Tyshawn Sorey, For Orchestra

"A composer of radical and seemingly boundless ideas" (*The Wall Street Journal*), Tyshawn Sorey's orchestral work takes centerstage. Selections include *For Roscoe Mitchell*, *For Marcos Balter*, and *Autoschediasms*, which Sorey and members of the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra craft—in real time—using spontaneous composition. (June 6; College of Charleston Sottile Theatre)

- Rhapsodic Overture

US premieres | Under the baton of Festival Resident Conductor and Director of Orchestral Activities John Kennedy, the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra presents the US premieres of Edmund Thornton Jenkins's *Rhapsodic Overture* (reconstructed by Tuffus Zimbabwe) and Anna Thorvaldsdottir's *AlÖN*. The ensemble also plays György Ligeti's Piano Concerto, featuring pianist Julia Hamos. (June 3; Charleston Gaillard Center)

- Lift Every Voice

Soloists and choristers of *Omar*, accompanied by pianist Brandon Waddles, join in song for an evening highlighting music of the Black experience. From Spirituals to contemporary melodies, pieces include Richard Smallwood's *Total Praise*, Betty Jackson King's *It's Me, O Lord*, and Ronald M. Carter's *Lift Every Voice and Sing*. (June 1; Charleston Gaillard Center)

- Spoleto Festival USA Chorus Concert

For the ensemble's inaugural solo performances, Director of Choral Activities Joe Miller leads the Spoleto Festival USA Chorus in a program based in romanticism. Ecclesiastical pieces by Bruckner, Brahms, and Rheinberger are paired with poetic partsongs from composers including Elgar, Pearsall, and Britten. (June 3, 11; St. Matthew's Lutheran Church)

- Beethoven's Ninth Symphony

The Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra and Chorus are joined by tenor Paul Groves and the Charleston Symphony Orchestra Chorus for a resounding performance of Beethoven's final symphony. (June 9; Charleston Gaillard Center)

- Wells Fargo Festival Finale ft. Shakey Graves

New venue | The celebratory culmination of Spoleto's 46th season moves to North Charleston this year. Picnics, blankets, and chairs are permitted; alcoholic drinks are sold on site. A Texas-theater-kid-turned-Americana rocker headlines the event. (June 12; Firefly Distillery, 4201 Spruill Avenue, North Charleston)

Wells Fargo Jazz

- Youssou NDOUR: Mbalax unplugged

One of the world's greatest voices opens the Wells Fargo Jazz series, bringing a mix of never-before-heard compositions and traditional Senegalese melodies in an acoustic concert inspired by his religious faith as a Sufi Muslim. (May 29; College of Charleston Cistern Yard)

- Nduduzo Makhathini

A profound spirituality imbues pianist Nduduzo Makhathini's improvisatory performances. Embracing the traditions of fellow South African jazz greats like Bheki Mseleku and Abdullah Ibrahim, Makhathini also draws influence from the American jazz canon to create a cross-continental, multilayered melodic groove. (May 30; College of Charleston Cistern Yard)

- Tyshawn Sorey / Aaron Diehl / Matt Brewer

In this collective trio setting at the Cistern Yard, percussionist and MacArthur Fellow Tyshawn Sorey shares the stage with pianist Aaron Diehl and bassist Matt Brewer. Sorey also leads members of the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra in concert on June 6. (June 4; College of Charleston Cistern Yard)

- Linda May Han Oh and Fabian Almazan

In six intimate concerts, the husband-and-wife duo of superstar bassist Linda May Han Oh and pianist Fabian Almazan explore sonic possibilities as their international musical senses align. (June 2 – 6; Festival Hall)

- Ravi Coltrane: Universal Consciousness

The Melodic Meditations of Alice Coltrane | In a loving tribute to his mother, Ravi Coltrane mines the musical legacy of Alice Coltrane, an incomparable keyboardist, harpist, and singer. (June 3; College of Charleston Cistern Yard)

- Cécile McLorin Salvant

Performing selections from her newest album *Ghost Song*, the Grammy Award winning jazz vocalist and MacArthur Fellow makes her third Festival appearance. (June 10; Charleston Gaillard Center)

First Citizens Bank Front Row

- Rhiannon Giddens with Francesco Turrisi

With two critically acclaimed albums—*there is no Other* and *They're Calling Me Home*—Rhiannon Giddens and Italian multi-instrumentalist Francesco Turrisi illuminate the universality of music and the commonality of human experience. (May 28; College of Charleston Cistern Yard)

- Allison Russell

One of the top emerging Americana artists, Allison Russell makes her first Spoleto appearance following the release of her Grammy-nominated solo debut, *Outside Child*. (June 1; College of Charleston Cistern Yard)

- The War and Treaty

With their signature bluesy but joyful fusion of Southern soul, gospel, country, and rock-and-roll, husband-and-wife duo Michael Trotter Jr. and Tanya Trotter's concerts create an exhilarating exchange of energy with the audience. (June 2; College of Charleston Cistern Yard)

- Molly Tuttle & Golden Highway

A two-time International Bluegrass Music Association Guitar Player of the Year, Molly Tuttle combines astounding musicianship with insightful songwriting and sparkling vocals for an unforgettable concert experience. (June 9; College of Charleston Cistern Yard)

Artist Talks

- Conversations With, hosted by Martha Teichner of CBS News

Rhiannon Giddens and Michael Abels on the creation of *Omar*. (May 28; Charleston Gaillard Center)

Dael Orlandersmith of *Until the Flood* (June 5; Randolph Hall, 66 George Street)

Mena Mark Hanna, the General Director of Spoleto Festival USA (June 7; Dock Street Theatre)

- Jazz Talks, hosted by Wells Fargo Jazz advisor Larry Blumenfeld, *Wall Street Journal* jazz critic

Yousou NDOUR (May 28; Randolph Hall, 66 George Street)

Tyshawn Sorey (June 2; Randolph Hall, 66 George Street)

Special Event

- Festival Feast

Curated by Culinary Institute of Charleston's Kevin Mitchell, a South Carolina Chef Ambassador, and James Beard Award winner Rodney Scott, this chef-driven dinner takes inspiration from *Omar*, following the centuries-long progression of culinary traditions from West Africa to the Lowcountry. The menu features a blend of modern interpretations of Senegalese dishes, Nat Fuller's Feast, and barbecue, all with an emphasis on the local ingredients of South Carolina. (May 26, Union Station, 652-A King St.)

SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA

Spoletto Festival USA was founded in 1977 by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Gian Carlo Menotti, who sought to create an American counterpart to the annual Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy, that he had founded in 1958. Now in its 46th year, Spoleto Festival USA is internationally recognized as America's premier performing arts festival. For 17 days and nights each spring, Spoleto Festival USA fills Charleston's historic theaters, churches, and outdoor spaces with performances in opera; theater; dance; and chamber, symphonic, choral, and jazz music. Spoleto's mission is to present programs of the highest artistic caliber while maintaining a dedication to young artists, a commitment to all forms of the performing arts, a passion for contemporary innovation, and an enthusiasm for providing unique performance opportunities for established artists. Beyond its role as a launching pad for young talent, Spoleto also serves as a catalyst for cultural change and has aided in Charleston's flourishing as a top arts and culture destination. With General Director Mena Mark Hanna at its helm, the 2022 season takes place May 27 to June 12 in various locations on the downtown peninsula. Spoleto Festival USA is a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization.

Images: A selection of high-resolution images can be found in Spoleto Festival USA's [online gallery](#). For more information, visit the [press room](#).