

**America's premier
performing arts festival.**



From the General Director & CEO



MENA MARK HANNA

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I am pleased to share with you Spoleto Festival USA's 2024 Season in Review, highlighting the transformative power of the arts and the extraordinary efforts of our community.

More than 100 performances, in 13 venues, captivated audiences and showcased the incredible talent of over 380 multidisciplinary artists this past season. Through all our programming, Spoleto aims to open minds and inspire our community to build a stronger, more inclusive, and better world together. As you will see and read, in 2024, we did this and much more.

Charleston, S.C. is an intrinsic part of Spoleto Festival USA's work to bring artists and performances from around the globe to our beautiful host city. As we look to our 50th Festival in 2026, we are committed to this partnership and presenting a dynamic and captivating program for our entire community.

Thank you for your unwavering support and for being a part of our mission. Together, we will continue an exciting journey toward the 50th Spoleto Festival USA!

With heartfelt gratitude,



Watch a recap of our 2024 Season
youtube.com/@spoletofestivalusa



Creating an International Hub of Artistic Expression in Charleston, South Carolina



From Friday, May 24 to Sunday, June 9, 2024, the 48th Season of Spoleto Festival USA transformed Charleston into a vibrant, international hub of artistic expression. Over the course of 17 days, 13 venues hosted more than 100 performances, featuring 389 artists in 21 unique artistic disciplines. Spoleto’s programming explored themes surrounding immigration, democracy, and human rights while emphasizing joy and empathy through storytelling.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2024 FESTIVAL

- **Six world and national premiere** performances headlined the program.
- The **Front Row series featured six nationally touring acts** in the College of Charleston’s atmospheric Cistern Yard resulting in intimate and arresting performances not found anywhere else.
- **Bank of America Chamber Music, led by Charles E. and Andrea L. Volpe Director of Chamber Music Paul Wiancko**, included some of the most renowned performers in classical music along with emerging stars.
- **The Spoleto Festival USA Chorus performed four concerts** led by Director of Choral Activities Joe Miller.
- The **Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra under the baton of newly appointed Music Director Timothy Myers**, presented performances of Mahler’s Fifth Symphony, Shostakovich’s Piano Concerto No. 1 with Inon Barnatan, and *Had to Be*, a world premiere cello concerto by composer Nathalie Joachim.
- **Wells Fargo Jazz, curated by Larry Blumenfeld**, featured artists such as Terri Lyne Carrington, Dianne Reeves, and Charles Lloyd.
- **Community engagement and educational initiatives** promoted access to the arts through Pay What You Will, Open Stage Door, Tell Your Story, and K-12 education programs.

“I am so grateful to Charleston for teaching me what it means to be a musician in the service of society.”

— Yo-Yo Ma
May 2024



For nearly 50 years, the Festival and Charleston have been intrinsically linked. The city is the stunning backdrop for Spoleto’s range of offerings each season, and in turn, the Festival draws the world’s attention to Charleston. This cherished relationship is bolstered by countless individuals, organizations, government entities, and businesses – who we thank wholeheartedly!

A 2023 ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY SHOWED THAT

- Spoleto has a \$29.4 million economic impact in the Charleston area.
- Notably, 83% of out-of-town visitors stated that Spoleto was the reason they came to Charleston, and 93% would recommend a Charleston visit to friends and family.



SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA CHORUS



OLD CROW MEDICINE SHOW

“Spoleto elevates artists like myself to the same level as a tap dancer. All of us, whether entertainers or visual artists or writers, all get a chance to be lauded and honored by the city of Charleston, and that’s a rare thing.”

— Ketch Secor
Old Crow Medicine Show

CASUS CREATIONS: APRICITY



THE FESTIVAL IS ALL MADE POSSIBLE BY

- 26 full-time staff
- 285 seasonal staff
- Nearly 250 volunteers
- Over 1,000 donors, supporters, and friends
- Dedicated board members
- Countless partners and collaborators



LIGHTWIRE THEATER: THE UGLY DUCKLING

MARQUEE PROGRAMS

- A **world premiere opera, *Ruinous Gods***, was produced and commissioned by Spoleto Festival USA.
- A **world premiere play, *The Song of Rome***, was co-produced by Spoleto Festival USA and Octopus Theatricals.
- The play ***Dark Noon***, produced by fix+foxy, received its North American premiere.
- An evening with **Yo-Yo Ma** featured special guests **Angélique Kidjo** and **Jeremy Dutcher**.

- **L.A. Dance Project’s *Romeo & Juliet Suite***, choreographed by Benjamin Millepied, featured the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra under the baton of Timothy Myers.
- A **world premiere string quartet by Composer-in-Residence Reena Esmail** debuted during the Chamber Music series.
- For the first time, the Festival added **family programming with *The Ugly Duckling* by Lightwire Theater**.

Our Artists: Supporting Emerging and Established Talent



Spoletto Festival USA provides unique opportunities for established artists to stretch their artistry and explore new mediums. We welcome artists from around the world, creating an environment where emerging talents can learn from seasoned professionals.

In 2024, we welcomed 389 artists hailing from across the globe, including 40 states and 22 countries.

OUR 2024 ARTISTS INCLUDED

- 41 Choral fellows, ages 21 to 35
- 93 Orchestra fellows, ages 21 to 35
- 23 Chamber musicians
- 24 artistic companies, with over 181 artists
- 27 independent artists
- 21 artforms presented within our seven core artistic disciplines of ballet, theater, opera, physical theater, classical music, jazz, and contemporary music.



“It’s such a legendary place... known for being a place for a lot of forward-thinking artmaking in these classical realms like theater, dance, and music, but there’s also a huge support for the experimental.”

— Karim Sulayman
Tenor

“In my entire life, I never imagined I’d be on a stage like this.”

— Sasha Velour
June 2024



Our Community: Giving Back to Charleston



“What Spoleto and their program have been able to accomplish over these past several years is really incredible, and it’s no question that Charleston is the cultural capital of the South and Spoleto has been a huge part of that foundation.”

— William Cogswell
Mayor of Charleston

Each year, Spoleto’s commitment to community goes beyond concert halls and theaters to serve as a catalyst for cultural change through education and community engagement initiatives in Charleston.

IN 2024, WE CONTINUED SEVERAL KEY PROGRAMS:

The **Pay What You Will program** invites new audiences to set their own price for a variety of programs to make the Festival more accessible for those whom ticket prices may be a barrier. This year, we sold more than 250 PWYW tickets to 20+ performances, engaging 85 ticket buyers, 37% of whom were new to Spoleto

The **Open Stage Door program** offered 300+ free tickets to social-service organizations based in the metro Charleston area. This year, we:

- Partnered with 23 organizations, including: Ansonborough House, Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired SC, HALOS, HEART Inclusive Arts Community, Metanoia, Preservation Society of Charleston, Star Gospel Mission, We Are Family



The **Tell Your Story** initiative is a creative placemaking and social impact project that pairs emerging composers from the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra with community partners to create sonic memoirs inspired by their memories and cultures. This year, we:

- partnered with Charleston Jewish Federation and We Are Family
- shared the collaborative projects with a live audience on May 22. These and all past compositions can be found at spoletousa.org/tellyourstory

Free Education Programs include year-round classroom presentations, talks, and engagement opportunities for students of all ages with artists and staff. This year, we:

- Partnered with Meeting Street Schools, N. E. Miles Early Childhood Development Center at the College of Charleston, the Charleston Jazz Academy, and College of Charleston
- Worked with more than 15 artists to present arts programs
- Served nearly 200 students

Additional Free Programming: “Conversations With” and “Jazz Talks” Series

- Nearly 1,200 audience members attended Conversations With led by Martha Teichner and Jazz Talks with Larry Blumenfeld
- Free programming shares insights on music, culture, and artist background, enriching the performance experience

Our Audience: Engaging Diverse and Adventurous Art Seekers

The Festival attracts culturally daring and curious audience members from across the country and around the globe each year. This year, over 52,000 tickets were issued, raising nearly \$3.5 million in earned revenue.

OUR 2024 TICKET BUYERS

- Visited from 48 states and 13 countries
- 67% are local to the Charleston metro area
- 50% are new buyers
- 30% are donors

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR 2024 FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

Our donor community, which consists of over 1,000 individuals and 30 institutional funders from 24 states, raised over \$5.5 million for Spoleto in contributed support. We thank them for their dedication and generosity! Additional highlights include:

- Honored Joel & Kit Smith and Dr. Mary Thornley with the Mary Ramsay Civic Award for their generous contributions to their communities.

- Hosted the inaugural Opening Gala, the most successful fundraising event in Spoleto's recent history, raising nearly \$600,000 for the Festival.
- Celebrated lead support from long-time corporate sponsors Bank of America, Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina, and Wells Fargo, which have supported Spoleto for 30 years.



TROMBONE SHORTY & ORLEANS AVENUE

“I always enjoy Spoleto because of the quality of the programming and its ability to introduce me to artists and performances that stretch the boundaries of my experience.”

— Margaret B.

“I am so glad that the world comes to Spoleto once a year to enlighten us and bring us together!”

— James L.

“I really enjoy the creative theater I have seen at Spoleto over the years including *Dark Noon* and *Song of Rome!*”

— Gloria S.

“Keep Paul Wiancko and the Chamber Music series going! ABSOLUTELY MARVELOUS! As everyone says — it’s the beating heart of Spoleto.”

— Charles R.

Our Future: Be Part of the Spoleto Journey!



“Thank you for a magical experience! I will be eagerly awaiting the lineup for next year.”

— Evelyn T.



Join us for what the future holds as we approach our 50th Anniversary Season in 2026.

SPREAD THE WORD

Share the 2024 Season in Review with friends and family!

SIGN UP

For Spoleto emails at spoletousa.org/email-signup

ATTEND

Save the Dates for the 49th Festival:
May 23 – June 8, 2025

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For more information at info@spoletousa.org



THANK YOU!

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