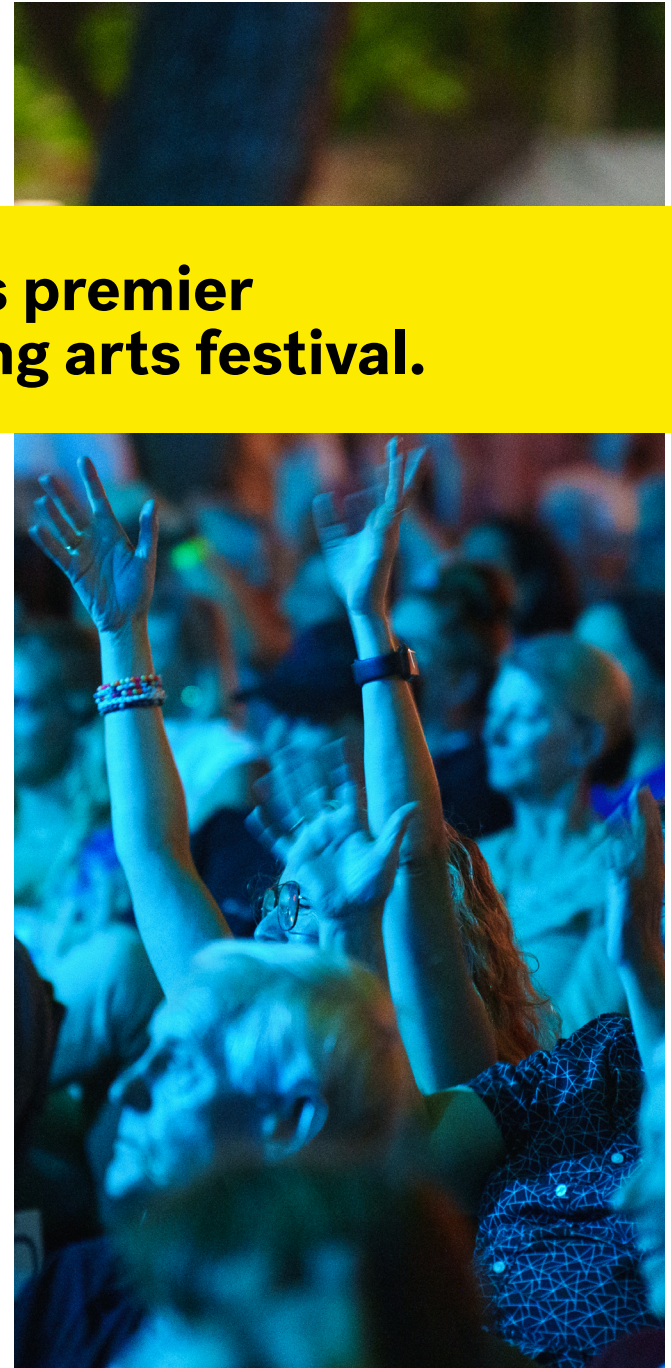




**America's premier
performing arts festival.**



From the General Director & CEO



MENA MARK HANNA

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I'm excited to share with you Spoleto Festival USA's 2025 Season in Review—a celebration of everything we accomplished together this year.

For 17 days each spring, Charleston transforms. Our city becomes not just a stage, but a living canvas where stories are retold and reimagined. In *Remember This*, the life and legacy of Jan Karski brought the enormity of World War II into sharp human focus. Etienne Charles traced the Afro-Caribbean roots of jazz and the Gullah Geechee tradition in *Gullah Roots*, connecting cultures and generations in sound. And in the world premiere of Alisa Weilerstein's *FRAGMENTS*, Bach's cello suites intertwined with contemporary voices, dissolving boundaries between past and present.

This year's Festival invited us to dwell in the spaces between—between sound and silence, movement and stillness, presence and mystery. Together, we filled Charleston's churches, theaters, gardens, and squares with an energy that was as much about possibility as performance.

As we look ahead, I am filled with gratitude—for the artists who dare, the audiences who believe, and the community that sustains us. The Festival's next chapter will honor our history while leaping boldly into the future: with visionary performances, vital conversations, and a Festival presence that resonates through every corner of Charleston.

Thank you for being part of this extraordinary community, and for believing—year after year—in the power of the arts to bring us together.

With gratitude and excitement,

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink, reading "Mena".



Watch a recap of our 2025 Season
youtube.com/@spoletofestivalusa



2025 at a Glance

Spoletto Festival USA 2025 captivated audiences from May 23 to June 8 and distinguished itself as an extraordinary celebration of the performing arts. Our 49th Festival presented unforgettable performances spanning opera, theater, music, and dance, including impressive premieres that pushed artistic boundaries. The vibrant tapestry of performances was woven by an exceptional group of artists, unequivocally cementing Spoletto Festival USA's esteemed position as a preeminent global cultural event.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2025 FESTIVAL

- 6 World Premieres and 2 World Premiere Productions
- 2 U.S. Premieres
- 12 Front Row Series Concerts
- 33 Bank of America Chamber Music Series Performances
- 3 Festival Orchestra Concerts
- 2 Festival Chorus Concerts
- 11 Wells Fargo Jazz Series Programs



As the nation's preeminent performing arts festival, Spoletto Festival USA produces and presents work of the highest artistic caliber to diverse and adventurous audiences. Through innovation, education, and a commitment to our community, we harness the power of the arts to foster a culture of belonging and deepen and engage the public's appreciation for the arts in building a better world.



17 Days
120+ Performances
13 Venues
27 Full-time Staff
159 Seasonal Staff
276 Volunteers
450 Artists



▼ Dr. Joe Miller, Director of Choral Activities, marked his final season leading the Festival Chorus with an extraordinary series of performances, capping off his remarkable 19-year tenure. His farewell included two marquee choral concerts at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, and in a grand finale, Miller conducted the Festival Chorus and Orchestra in a monumental performance of Bach's Mass in B Minor.



“My journey through Spoleto Festival USA has been filled with some of the most memorable experiences of my life. It has been a continuous source of inspiration and learning, filled with some of the most generous, talented, and creative people. My soul has been enriched from the 19 years that I have dedicated to our artistic enterprise.”

— Dr. Joe Miller



MARQUEE PROGRAMS

- The sold-out world premiere production of Benjamin Britten's ***The Turn of the Screw***, directed by Rodula Gaitanou, captivated critics.
- Spoleto's world premiere production of Jules Massenet's opera ***Thaïs*** was a resounding success, thrilling audiences for two nights at the Charleston Gaillard Center.
- Cellist Alisa Weilerstein fully realized her ambitious ***FRAGMENTS***, completing its world premiere run with six solo recitals at the College of Charleston's Sottile Theatre.
- Manual Cinema's world premiere of ***The 4th Witch***, a Spoleto commission, engrossed audiences across six performances at the College of Charleston's Emmett Robinson Theatre.
- Gravity & Other Myths, the hailed Australian circus troupe, made a triumphant return to the Festival with the U.S. premiere of ***Ten Thousand Hours*** at Festival Hall.
- The U.S. premiere of ***White Box*** was an inspired multimedia performance blending dance, music, film, and projection.
- **Kronos Quartet** made a heralded Festival debut including the world premiere of "Mende Funeral Suite," a new piece by Charleston bandleader Charlton Singleton performed with drummer Quentin E. Baxter.

Our Artists



“I can’t believe we actually get to play there. We’ve played some really weird places, like Roman ruins and in Grand Central Station, but unique places like the Cistern make you stop and smell the roses a little bit longer. Plus, there’s something about a Charleston show that brings an X-factor we can’t really account for.”

— Ben Bridwell
Band of Horses

The 2025 Festival featured performances by renowned artists as well as emerging performers across 23 artistic genres including opera; theater; dance; and chamber, orchestral, choral, jazz, and contemporary music.

- | OUR 2025 ARTISTS | ARTISTS CAME FROM |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| • 450 Artists | • 35 States |
| • 40 Choral Fellows | • 28 Countries |
| • 92 Orchestra Fellows | |
| • 24 Chamber Music Artists | |



“This Festival has been an essential part of my artistic life since I was 21, and it remains a place where bold ideas take root and flourish.”

— Alisa Weilerstein
Cellist



“What a festival! Charleston, you kept us on our toes. Spoleto Festival USA, thank you for the wild ride — and to everyone who showed up with love and support: we felt it all. Chaos, connection, and a community that showed up big time.”

— Gravity & Other Myths cast



Our Community



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.

- **Open Stage Door** offers free tickets to social-service organizations based in the metro Charleston area. In 2025, Spoleto issued 500+ tickets to 28 partner organizations, including:
 - Allegro Charter School of Music, AMOR Healing Kitchen, Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired SC, Beyond Basic Life Skills, Canterbury House, Charleston Jewish Federation, Charleston Music Teacher Association, Charleston RISE, Charleston Stage, Creative Living, East Cooper Community Outreach, Flip League, Let's Walk, Lowcountry Food Bank, Media Reform SC, Mental Health Heroes, Metanoia, NXT Mission, Postpartum Support Charleston, Preservation Society of Charleston, St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church, Star Gospel Mission, The Beloved Early Education and Care Collective, The Family Resource Center for Disabilities and Special Needs, The Green Heart Project, The LENS Foundation, We Are Family, Wings for Kids
- **Pay What You Will** invites new audiences to set their own price for a variety of programs to make the Festival more accessible to those for whom ticket prices may be a barrier. In 2025, Spoleto sold tickets to over 26 programs and performances.

- **Tell Your Story** is a free program that pairs emerging composers with community partners to create sonic memoirs inspired by their memories and cultures. In 2025, Spoleto partnered with two local organizations, Charleston Jewish Federation and We Are Family, whose collaborative projects were shared with a live audience on May 29.



Spoleto Festival USA is partnering with **Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts** to bring customizable arts-based teaching and learning programs to early childhood classrooms in Charleston, Berkeley, and Dorchester counties. Through this collaboration, known as **Lowcountry South Carolina Wolf Trap**, Spoleto Festival USA has already trained four dedicated teaching artists. These artists have successfully completed 18 classroom residencies, directly enriching the experience of over 200 Lowcountry students.

Our Community

- Spoleto conducts free **Education Programs**, including year-round classroom presentations, talks, and engagement opportunities for students of all ages with artists and staff. In 2025:
 - 341 students participated with 9 Festival artists.
 - 150 + students experienced in-school performances with Chamber Music artists.
 - 100 students attended workshops led by Festival artists.
 - 30 College of Charleston students attended performances and weekly lectures with Festival artists.
 - 30 teachers attended a creative education workshop and Festival performance.
 - 11 educational institutions partnered with Spoleto.
 - 2 Jazz Talks with curator Larry Blumenfeld and 4 Conversations With Emmy-winning CBS News correspondent Martha Teichner were hosted.
 - 2 talkbacks with the creative team of *Remember This: The Lesson of Jan Karski* were offered.



SPOLETO IN THE MEDIA

Spoleto Festival USA saw significant reach through earned media coverage and engagement across our social media platforms, including Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn where audience grew by 4,525 followers, with a 137% increase in reach and 71% increase in engagement.

Spoleto was featured in local, regional, and national news outlets in 160+ stories in 40 different publications, reaching 548 million+ readers.

Our Audience

The Festival drew a large and diverse audience for its 2025 celebration of performing arts.

- **48,000+** tickets issued
- **3,522** new ticket buyers
- **4,251** returning ticket buyers
- Audience came from **15 countries, 48 states**, D.C., and Puerto Rico
- **60.6%** are in metro Charleston
- **68.2%** are from South Carolina
- **86%** are from the southeastern U.S.



◀ In partnership with Beemok Hospitality Collection, we opened our 2025 Ticket Kiosk at The Charleston Place hotel. Guests were able to purchase tickets and merchandise from one of our box office agents, daily between May 19-June 8.

◀ In 2025, Spoleto curated, designed, and launched a line of merchandise steeped in the Festival's value of excellence and inspired by our home in Charleston, including a hat designed by SDCO Partners with Grizzly Wheeler.



Our Donors

The work to sustain Spoleto Festival USA is a collaborative effort among hundreds of supporters. The ongoing generosity of our individual donors allows the Festival to continue offering dynamic, international programs of the highest artistic caliber at competitive ticket prices.

- 1,050+ private donors
- \$5.8 million+ in contributed revenue
- \$500,000+ raised at the Opening Gala

A man, M. Edward Sellers, is speaking at a podium outdoors. He is wearing a grey suit and is standing in front of a large white tent. The podium has a sign that reads "M. EDWARD SELLERS". The background shows trees and a clear sky.

▲ Chair Emeritus member of Spoleto's board of directors M. Edward Sellers made a significant \$1 million gift in memory of his late wife, Dr. Suzan D. Boyd. The donation supports three organizational initiatives, including the expansion of education and community engagement programs, advancing the Composer-in-Residence position for the Festival's Chamber Music series, and the development of a new website.

"I really appreciate the 'perks' of the Spoleto Society but I give money because I believe the Arts (theater, opera, music, dance, and the visual arts) should flourish in our society."

— Patti T.

"I feel good about donating to the Festival. As a native Charlestonian, it's wonderful how it has impacted the city!"

— John G.

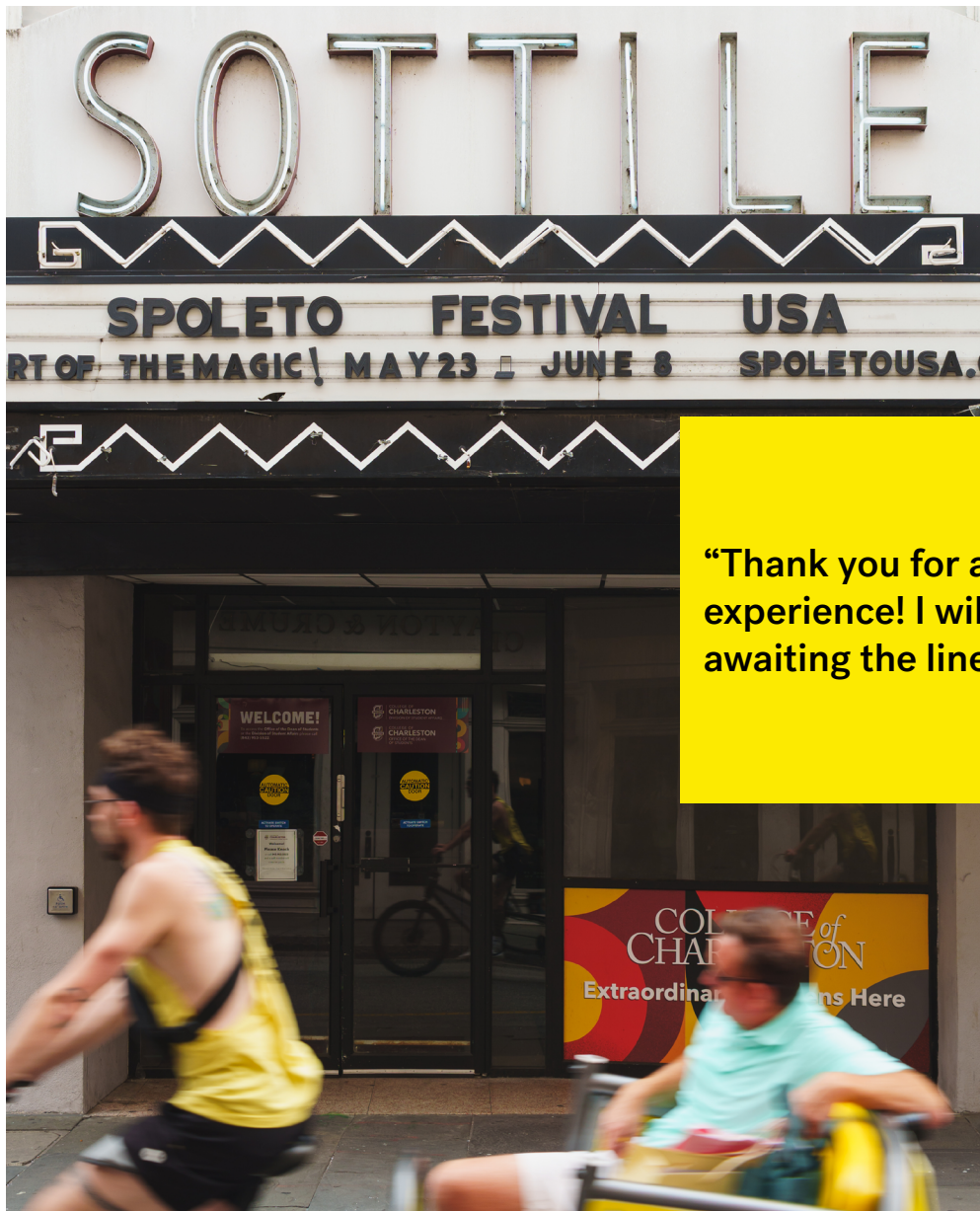
"I am proud to be a donor for such an amazing and important world-class arts festival in my hometown."

— Sarah L.

"After 20 years of attending Spoleto, we continue to be pleased and excited by the eclectic nature of the performances offered... it continues to be most satisfactory."

— Charles R.

Our Future



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

— Emily K.



Join us for what the future holds as we approach the 2026 Festival.

SPREAD THE WORD

Share the 2025 Season in Review with friends and family!

SIGN UP

Subscribe at spoletousa.org/email-signup

ATTEND

Save the Date: May 22 – June 7, 2026

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@SPOLETOFESTIVALUSA

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CONTACT US

Reach out via info@spoletousa.org

PHOTO CREDITS

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THANK YOU!

Spoletto Festival USA

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