

PRESS RELEASE

The Emirati-French Cultural Programme Continues with Unique Equestrian Choreography in Al Ain

Directed and choreographed by world-renowned Bartabas, an equestrian performance by National Equestrian Academy of Versailles will take place in Al Jahili Fort for five special days

Abu Dhabi, March 12, 2017: As part of the diverse array of events offered throughout the Emirati-French Cultural Programme, Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi), the French Embassy and the Institut français present an impressive equestrian performance. Choreographed by renowned director Bartabas, the show will feature horsemen and horses from the prestigious National Equestrian Academy of Versailles and will take place in the ancient Al Jahili Fort in Al Ain on 23, 24, 25, 27 and 28 March.

Presenting a unique equestrian choreography comprising 30 horses and fusing classical dressage, dance, fencing, poetry and music, the show will be performed in a purpose-built arena housed inside the iconic fort's internal courtyard. The Emirati-French Cultural Programme is initiated by TCA Abu Dhabi and, in France, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development, the Ministry of Culture and Communication and the Institut français.

HE Saif Saeed Ghobash, Director General of TCA Abu Dhabi, said: "This series of shows, reflected in an equestrian choreography by a true master of equestrian art, in the iconic venue of Al Jahili Fort is another milestone of our Emirati-French Cultural programme. The previous events of the programme included contemporary art commissions, theatrical performances and musical performance and have been created to celebrate the opening of the Louvre Abu Dhabi and to foster an environment of mutual artistic exchange, dialogue on creativity and innovative experiences in all forms of art: performing and visual arts."

Bartabas, a pioneer of combining equestrian art, music, choreography and acting, has invented and directed with tact, and artistic aesthetics, a new form of performing arts with Zingaro Equestrian Theatre since 1984. His numerous creations have previously been exhibited in New York, Tokyo, Istanbul, Hong Kong, Moscow and all around the world.

Alongside, focusing on artistic transmission, Bartabas founded the National Equestrian Academy of Versailles in 2003, inside the Royal Stables of the Palace of Versailles, which went on to perform numerous shows globally. The originality of this equestrian choreographic school-company is the

transmission of equestrian knowledge and practice of other disciplines such as fencing, dance, singing and Kyudo (traditional Japanese archery).

H.E Michel Miraillet, Ambassador of France to the United Arab Emirates commented: In 2011, UNESCO inscribed “Equestrian Art in the French tradition” on the representative list of intangible cultural heritage of humanity. France is proud to present the National Equestrian Academy of Versailles, which is in direct line with this French tradition of horse training, and echoes a shared passion with the UAE. This tradition will be encountering in March the Emirati long-lasting relationship with horses, for an exceptional show in the heart of the Emirati nation. France and the UAE are both utterly committed to culture as a way to lead to peace and harmony. The Emirati-French Cultural Programme dedicated to the celebration of the upcoming Louvre Abu Dhabi, has been thought out as a way to strengthen our relationship by presenting common passion and values to the public living in the UAE and across its borders.”

The choreography comprises of more than 15 scenes punctuated by poetry. The texts from 20th century writers such as Pierre Boulez, and Nuño Oliveira - a Spanish horse trainer that inspired riders and trainers all over the world - evokes the relationships between humanity and horses. The texts invite the spectators not to conceive horing as a science but as a journey of meditation, harmony and emotions. Very well-known partitions from Johann Sebastian Bach (Suites for Cellos), from Monteverdi (Salve Regina), from Stravinsky (The Rite of Spring) accompanies most of the scenes. A solo of Bartabas with Oud players will echo the regional musical repertoire.

Al Ain’s historic Al Jahili fort will stage five performances on March 23, 24, 25, 27 and 28.

Ticket prices begin at AED 50 and available at 800TICKETS

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ABOUT ABU DHABI TOURISM & CULTURE AUTHORITY (TCA Abu Dhabi)

Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority conserves and promotes the heritage and culture of Abu Dhabi emirate and leverages them in the development of a world-class, sustainable destination of distinction, which enriches the lives of visitors and residents alike. The authority manages the emirate's tourism sector and markets the destination internationally through a wide range of activities aimed at attracting visitors and investment. Its policies, plans and programmes relate to the preservation of heritage and culture, including protecting archaeological and historical sites and to developing museums, including the Louvre Abu Dhabi, Zayed National Museum and Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. TCA Abu Dhabi supports intellectual and artistic activities and cultural events to nurture a rich cultural environment and honour the emirate's heritage. A key authority role is to create synergy in the destination's development through close co-ordination with its wide-ranging stakeholder base.

<http://tcaabudhabi.ae/en>

ABOUT THE CULTURAL DEPARTMENT OF THE FRENCH EMBASSY/INSTITUT FRANCAIS IN THE UAE

The Institut français in the United Arab Emirates is the cultural department of the French Embassy. It is responsible for promoting French creation, thought and language, as well as fostering bilateral exchanges and cultural, artistic, educational, academic and scientific partnerships between France and the UAE.

It is involved in a vast range of activities, including: organization of and participation in exhibitions, lectures, shows and fairs, film festivals, concerts, dance and theatre shows; training of teachers of French as a foreign language; promotion of French higher education; support for French cultural industries and institutions in their development projects in the UAE and monitoring of French schools in the UAE.

As a government agency, the Institut français in the UAE is a key partner of Emirati cultural and educational institutions. It works in partnership and in tandem with other influential French bodies in the UAE, notably the Alliances françaises of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, French schools, the Paris-Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi and the Louvre Abu Dhabi museum.

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ABOUT THE NATIONAL EQUESTRIAN ACADEMY OF VERSAILLES

Created in 2003 by Bartabas within the Royal Stables of Versailles' Palace, the National Equestrian Academy of Versailles is a unique « corps de ballet » in the world. Based on the transmission as much as the arts of performance the daily teachings associate "Haute Ecole dressage" with varied artist disciplines such as fencing, dancing, singing or Kyudo, a traditional Japanese archery. Thus, the equerries develop a real artistic sensitivity, thanks to a very regular repertory, fully dedicated to the audience. It has been almost fifteen years now that the National Equestrian Academy of Versailles has become a reference which performs in Versailles, in the arena built for the occasion, but also in other French and international stages. Equerries and horses from this exceptional company directed by Bartabas make a commitment to preserve the French riding of lightness while reinventing the art of the cavalier choreographies.

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