



DZFEST

THE ALGERIAN FESTIVAL FOR ARTS & CULTURE
A THIRD EDITION

14 - 27 SEPT 2025
LONDON | NOTTINGHAM

PRODUCED
CULTURAMA



ABOUT

CULTURAMA



CELEBRATE CULTURE WITH CULTURAMA

Culturama was founded in 2013 with the mission to promote and preserve the wealth of Algerian culture. There was always a need to highlight the uniquely rich Algerian arts & traditions, which have gone underrepresented on the global stage. We are driven by our unending passion for culture and cultural exchanges & regeneration.

Over the years, Culturama has grown from a small community center to a thriving hub of cultural activity, with a wide range of programmes and events that attract visitors from all over the world, focusing on Algerian music and culture.

DzFest is one of our favourite events!

CREATE A COHESIVE COMMUNITY

Culture is essential for avoiding conflicts and for conflict resolution. It is an ideal means of communicating across language barriers, empowering people and facilitating social cohesion,

PROMOTE ARTISTS

Provide a platform for established and emerging artists to showcase their art to UK audiences.

DEVELOP COLLABORATIONS

Collaborate with emerging and leading cultural, educational and social organisations to widen the impact of our offerings and reach wider audiences

CATALYSE CHANGE

Modify the cultural narratives surrounding smaller and ethnic minorities to enact a change in visions, attitudes and help to solve intractable social and economic problems; to raise understanding between people and nations; and to encourage solutions to some of the major international challenges we all face.

PROMOTE ALGERIAN CULTURE

Through our events, we join the effort alongside other artists, individuals and organisation in the promotion of the understated Algerian culture.

WHAT WE DO



ABOUT

DZFEST

The Algerian Festival for Arts & Culture in the UK

The first British-Algerian Festival for Arts & Culture in the UK.

A culmination and a result of continuous efforts by the Algerian diaspora and the Algerian community in the UK to promote and celebrate its culture & heritage. To celebrate the British-Algerian and other hybrid cultures between two identities through the Algerian diaspora. To bring & share the much vibrant & hugely diverse yet unknown Algerian culture to all UK & international Audiences, to promote engagement & raise awareness, but also bring the Algerian communities together at a time where social isolation is increasingly becoming a reality.

2025 will see the **third edition** of DzFest after a frank success with the previous editions in 2022 and 2024



In this third edition

We will focus on the theme of **Sahara**, its culture, topography, its appeal and mystic.

This edition is another stepping-stone in an ongoing effort to make this culture ubiquitous and more mainstream.

We wish to **celebrate Saharan culture**, While the Sahara Desert is the world's largest hot desert, Algeria has a very significant portion of it within its borders. In fact, the Sahara encompasses over 90% of Algeria's total area.

So much of this large area is unknown to even Algerians, rich in culture and boasting some of the best music genres in the world, we will bring a taste of this Algerian culture, showcase films, debates, talks, games, songs, performances and various events around this theme.

OUR THEME



COUSCOUS & CULTURE!

Couscous workshop

KHAMSA BRIXTON
140 ACRE LANE,, BRIXTON, LONDON SW2 5UT



In collaboration with **Khamsa restaurant**

A rare opportunity to learn to roll your own couscous, cook it and eat it too!

Step into the heart of Algerian heritage through the **story of couscous**. This hands on workshop explores the rich history, cultural significance, and traditional techniques behind Algeria's most iconic dish.

Learn to roll your couscous from scratch and savour the flavours of a timeless tradition guided by **award-winning Chef Djamel Ait Idir**, owner of the renowned Algerian restaurant Khamsa and **recently featured on ITV4**.

****Meal included - bon appétit**



SUN 14 SEPT
11AM - 2PM



THE DESERT ROCKER

WED 17 SEPT
8 - 10PM

FILM SCREENING - LONDON

RICH MIX, CINEMA
35-47 BETHNAL GREEN RD, LONDON E1 6LA



Shoreditch High street, Bethnal Green, Liverpool street station

An intimate, spiritual and profound portrait of the extraordinary **Hasna El Becharia**, pioneer **Gnawa** artist.

The first female musician to break through the social barriers of this culture, she empowers and inspires women of all ages by reclaiming a musical tradition reserved for men for centuries.

A singularly talented artist, she leads women to redefine their roles and challenge cultural norms, one musical performance at a time.

Following by a **Q&A with director Sara NACER**

Award-winning Algerian documentary filmmaker based in Montreal, known for her films *Let them all go* (2019) and *The desert rocker* (2022).



THE DESERT ROCKER

THURS 18 SEPT
6 - 9PM

FILM SCREENING - NOTTINGHAM

BROADWAY CINEMA
14-18 BROAD ST, NOTTINGHAM NG1 3AL



Nottingham



When
Women Gather
Creativity | Friendship | Wellbeing

An intimate, spiritual and profound portrait of the extraordinary **Hasna El Becharia**, pioneer Gnawa artist. The first female musician to break through the social barriers of this culture, she empowers and inspires women of all ages by reclaiming a musical tradition reserved for men for centuries.

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This event is produced in collaboration with **Broadway Cinema** and **Communitree**



NARRATING NORTH AFRICA IN ENGLISH: A LITERARY TALK WITH FAYSSAL BENSALAH

TALK, CONFERENCE

THE NAVE AT ST ETHELBURGA'S CENTRE
78 BISHOPSGATE, LONDON, EC2N 4AG



Friday 19 Sept
6.30 -9.30PM

Supported by



A literary discussion on the **rise of the North African novel in English**, exploring themes such as its historical exclusion from broader African literature, the unique challenges faced by Algerian AND North African authors writing in English within the Anglophone literary world, and related topics.

Benssalah will also delight us with readings from his published work.

An especially timely topic given the growing introduction and promotion of English in Algerian education.

A great evening of debate and questions in a magical venue in the heart of the City of London

Fayssal BENSALAH: Award-winning Algerian author;

He is a short story writer, novelist and academic, holds a PhD in Critical and Creative Writing from Cardiff University. He was educated at Constantine 1 University (CIU) and graduated with an MA degree in Anglophone Literature.

His novel, *The Couscous Western*, was the runner-up for the 2023 Graywolf African Fiction Prize.

His short story, 'The Last Shot of Ahmed Bey's Cannon' won the inaugural 2020 Toyin Falola Prize, and 'Citizen Sarah' was longlisted for the 2023 Afritondo Short Story Prize.



Innovation in the Desert: Technology, Culture and Sustainable Development in the Sahara

CITY OF LONDON

 Moorgate | Old street

SAT 20 SEPT

1 - 5 PM



A **panel discussion** dedicated to exploring the vast potential of the Sahara Desert through innovative and sustainable strategies.

This event will gather a **panel of experts, professionals, and thought leaders** to discuss the future of the region in terms of economic models, **ecological preservation, infrastructure development and cultural heritage.**

From **pioneering tourism models to sustainable agriculture, and from technological innovation** to the transformative power of **artificial intelligence**, the discussions will spark new ideas and partnerships for a resilient and prosperous Sahara.

The day will conclude with an **informal networking session**, a chance to connect with like-minded innovators, professionals, and artists over **traditional sweets and refreshments inspired by Saharan culture.**

A DzFest event - In collaboration with the TIDE centre of Oxford University & PACT Network

ALGERIAN SAUCE

A STAND UP COMEDY HOUR

RICH MIX, THE STAGE
35-47 BETHNAL GREEN RD, LONDON E1 6LA

 Shoreditch High street, Bethnal Green, Liverpool street station

Ever been to a country where they have a condiment named after your people?

Join Mehdi for a stand up comedy show about the joys of dealing with corporate culture, marriage, being a North African, marriage & history and much more!

Mehdi Walker, if that's his real name (it's not), is an Algerian comic based in Paris, France.

Ever since he started doing stand-up in 2019, Mehdi has opened for acts like Carmen Lynch (Fallon, Colbert) and has performed all over Europe and North America. Since early 2024, he has been touring his debut comedy hour "Algerian Sauce" in various cities in France (Paris, Lyon, Toulouse, Strasbourg) and Europe (Berlin, Barcelona Fringe Festival).

Feat. Thomas Henry

Selected for the New York Comedy Festival, and featured in the Guardian and on the BBC, Thomas entertains crowds in New York, Paris and London with his witty observations and charming delivery.

"One of my favourite new acts." Kim Donat, Stand Up New York **"A talented comedian." The Wee Review** **"Full of boyish charm." Chortle**

Artistic Direction: Safia BENYAHIA



THURS 25 SEPT
7.30 - 9.30PM



MASTERS OF CEREMONIES

UNLEASH YOUR PUBLIC SPEAKING GENIUS

RICH MIX, THE STAGE
35-47 BETHNAL GREEN RD, LONDON E1 6LA



Shoreditch High street, Bethnal Green, Liverpool street station

SAT 27 SEPT
12.PM - 1.30PM

Public speaking is not a talent – it's a skill, one that can be learned, practiced, and mastered.

A **dynamic session** designed to unlock your confidence and refine your voice.

This workshop is ideal for anyone who wants to develop the art of public speaking, whether you're just starting out or looking to take your performance to the next level.

Discover the speaker within you – and learn how to speak so people want to listen.

Led by **Sabrina Hasni**, a passionate speaker and advocate for empowering others through communication and personal growth. Hasni is an active member of Toastmasters International and a coach with the McGuire Programme, where she supports individuals in overcoming stammering and building confidence. Alongside her coaching work, Sabrina is a professional consultant in the renewable energy sector, where she contributes to sustainable solutions for a greener future.

Led also by **Jamela DAMANI & Suzana KALCIC**



SINGING THE LEGACY OF EL ANDALUS

SINGING WORKSHOP

RICH MIX, THE STAGE
35-47 BETHNAL GREEN RD, LONDON E1 6LA



Shoreditch High street, Bethnal Green, Liverpool street station

SAT 27 SEPT
2 - 3PM

More singing workshops, this time in **London**.

Dive into the world of Andalusí classical music, a genre that traces its origins back to El-Andalus in southern Spain and has since anchored roots in North Africa and especially **Algeria** which boasts not one but three schools of Arabo-Andalusí music.

Singing workshop led by Oud & music virtuoso **Yaz FENTAZI & Mezzo-soprano Rachida LAMRI**

***No Arabic knowledge needed to take part.**



AMAL

[THE ALGERIAN MUSIC ASSOCIATION OF LONDON]

RICH MIX, MAIN STAGE

35-47 BETHNAL GREEN RD, LONDON E1 6LA



Shoreditch High street, Bethnal Green, Liverpool street station

SAT 27 SEPT
8PM

Born out of love, love of community and love of music.

Founded in February 2025, following the hugely successful Algerian-Andalusi singing workshops at DzFest 2024, AMAL is a **vocal choir** bringing together parents, children, musicians, and aspiring singers to celebrate and re-discover their heritage.

With a **varied repertoire spanning Algerian classics and timeless favourites.**

AMAL will take to the stage for the very first time at Rich Mix.

Come and support them on this special debut as opening act for Gaâda Diwane Béchar



FROM THE EDGE OF THE SAHARA

RICH MIX, MAIN STAGE

35-47 BETHNAL GREEN RD, LONDON E1 6LA



Shoreditch High street, Bethnal Green, Liverpool street station

SAT 27 SEPT
8.30PM - 11PM

GAÂDA DIWANE BÉCHAR

RETURN TO THE RICH MIX AFTER 10 YEARS!

Experience the electrifying spirit of Diwane music with **Gaâda Diwane Béchar**, the legendary ensemble that has brought the mystical sounds of the Algerian Sahara to international stages.

Rooted in centuries-old **Gnawa** and **Sufi traditions**, **Diwane** is a sacred musical rite born from healing ceremonies – fusing hypnotic rhythms, call-and-response chants, and the deep pulse of the **Guembri** (three-stringed lute).

From the oasis city of **Béchar**, where Arab, Berber, and Sub-Saharan cultures meet, Gaâda Diwane revitalises this powerful heritage with vibrant energy, bringing ancient trance into dialogue with contemporary sound. Prepare for an unforgettable evening of ancestral grooves, spiritual ecstasy, and the timeless heartbeat of the desert with this rare UK performance.



About Gaâda Diwane Bechar

One of Algeria's most celebrated musical ensembles, known for preserving and revitalising the sacred Diwane tradition – a spiritual musical form rooted in Sub-Saharan African heritage and passed down through generations of Gnawa communities in southern Algeria.

Formed in the city of Béchar in the 1986 by master musician Abdelkader "Baba" Hamida, the group blends traditional percussive instruments like the guembri and krakebs with trance-like rhythms and call-and-response chants that evoke themes of healing, ancestral memory, and communal unity.

Over the past decades, Gaâda Diwane Bechar has brought Diwane to international stages, from Africa to Europe, while remaining deeply rooted in the ritual and communal aspects of the tradition. Their performances are immersive, hypnotic, and profoundly moving – offering audiences not just a concert, but a spiritual and cultural experience.

Their presence at DzFest is both a celebration and an act of cultural preservation, connecting UK audiences with one of Algeria's richest and most soulful musical legacies **from the Edge of the Sahara to London.**

****Including a special opening act by AMAL [The Algerian Music Association of London]**



ABOUT OUR

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A HUGE THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS & PARTNERS FOR MAKING OUR WORK POSSIBLE!



PARTNERS & VENUES

RICH MIX

B R O A D W A Y



SUPPORTED BY



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