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Berklee Abu Dhabi Music Summit:
Exploring Music, Expression and Intelligent Innovation

November 8 - 9

Berklee Abu Dhabi, Saadiyat Island



Berklee Abu Dhabi
Music Summit

Berklee Abu Dhabi Music Summit: Exploring Music, Expression and Intelligent Innovation

Berklee Abu Dhabi presents a groundbreaking music summit designed to empower artists, educators, and music industry professionals across the MENA region.

This summit is a platform to explore the intersection of artistic expression and intelligent innovation while addressing the personal and professional journey artists take to discover their unique sound and creative identity.

Through focused sessions in performance, songwriting, education, music technology and production, health and wellness, and the music business (including rights protection and intellectual property), the summit offers practical tools, creative insight, and meaningful dialogue.

Whether you're an emerging artist or a professional, join us to explore what it means to create, protect, and evolve in today's dynamic music landscape.



DAY 1 - PANELS & PERFORMANCES

Saturday November 8, 2025
Performance Space

OPENING REMARKS & WELCOME SPEECH

10:30am - 10:40am

Gael Hedding: Director, Berklee Abu Dhabi

Mayssa Karaa: Artistic Director, Berklee Abu Dhabi

PERFORMANCE 1 : BERKLEE ABU DHABI STUDENTS

10:40am - 10:55am

OPENING REFLECTION: YOUR SOUND...YOUR IDENTITY - A REFLECTION ON MUSIC AND MEANING

10:55am - 11:05am

PANEL 1: YOUR SOUND, YOUR RIGHTS: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY IN MUSIC

11:05am - 11:55am - Panel

As music creators, performers or producers, protecting your work is essential to sustaining your creative identity and career. Yet, managing performance rights individually is nearly impossible in today's global music landscape. This panel explores how Collective Management Organizations (CMOs) bridge the gap between creators and the businesses, ensuring legal use of music, simplifying rights clearance, and securing fair economic reward for rights holders. With two CMOs now preparing to launch in the UAE, this discussion offers insight into how these organizations will reshape the Emirati music ecosystem and empower artists to claim their rights locally and internationally.

PERFORMANCE 2 : SAIF AL ALI

11:55am - 12:10pm

PANEL 2: YOUR SOUND, YOUR STORY: ALIGNING ARTISTIC IDENTITY WITH BRAND

12:10pm - 1:00pm - Panel

Artists today are asked to wear many hats: performer, creator, entrepreneur, and brand. But how can identity remain authentic while also opening doors to meaningful opportunities? This panel brings together both artists and industry professionals to explore how artistic vision and professional opportunities can align. The conversation will address the tension between authenticity and marketability, the risks of shaping identity around trends, and strategies that help artists stay true to themselves while building sustainable careers and collaborations.

LUNCH BREAK

1:00pm - 2:00pm

SESSION : AI IN MUSIC PRODUCTION AND ARTIST IDENTITY: MIRROR? COLLABORATOR?

2:00pm - 2:30pm

In this talk, I'll explore how musicians and producers are working with today's generative AI and machine learning tools – not just as instruments, but as mirrors that reflect our habits, reveal our patterns, and sometimes as collaborators in the creative process. The goal is to help us rethink our relationship with technology: not as a threat to our identity, but as an opportunity to see ourselves more clearly and to create in new, human ways.

PANEL 3: IMMERSIVE SOUNDSCAPES: EXPANDING THE BOUNDARIES OF IDENTITY THROUGH AUDIO

2:30pm - 3:20pm - Panel

Immersive audio technologies like Dolby Atmos and spatial sound are redefining how music is experienced, offering artists new ways to shape their sonic identity. This panel will examine how immersive formats can deepen artistic storytelling, transport audiences, and amplify cultural perspectives. From reimagining traditional sounds in 3D to crafting futuristic sound worlds, participants will reflect on how immersive audio can both preserve authenticity and open new creative horizons.

DAY 1 - Continued

Saturday November 8, 2025
Performance Space

PERFORMANCE 3 : DINA STARS

3:20pm - 3:35pm

PANEL 4: OWNING YOUR SOUND: THE POWER OF A SIGNATURE IDENTITY

3:35pm - 4:25pm - Panel

This panel features artists who have mastered the art of shaping a distinctive sound and building lasting careers around it. They'll share how authenticity can resonate deeply, whether on a global stage or within a dedicated community of listeners, and how staying true to one's voice can attract the right audience. Blending inspiring stories with practical strategies, this conversation shows that success comes in many forms, and it starts with owning your sound.

PERFORMANCE 4 : SIENNA WILLIAMS

4:25pm - 4:40pm

SHORT BREAK

4:40pm - 5:00pm

PANEL 5: BEYOND THE ALGORITHM: AI AND THE FUTURE OF CREATIVE IDENTITY

5:00pm - 5:50pm - Panel

Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming the music industry — from songwriting and production to distribution and audience engagement. But what does this mean for the artist's voice and identity? This panel will explore the opportunities and challenges of AI in music, asking how artists can harness intelligent tools without losing authenticity. Industry experts, technologists, and musicians will discuss how to balance innovation with individuality, ensuring that AI serves as a collaborator rather than a replacement in the creative process.

PERFORMANCE 5 : WAJD BOU SAID

5:50pm - 6:05pm

PANEL 6: THE SOUND OF WELLBEING: NURTURING IDENTITY THROUGH HEALTH IN MUSIC

6:05pm - 6:55pm - Panel

An artist's sound is inseparable from their wellbeing. This panel looks at how mental health, physical care, and creative balance shape artistic identity. Panelists will share practical insights on sustaining creativity, managing pressure, and protecting the voice — reminding us that wellness isn't separate from artistry, it's at its core.

DAY 2 - WORKSHOPS

Sunday November 9, 2025

ON DAY 2 PLEASE ENSURE YOU REGISTER YOUR INTEREST TO ATTEND THE SESSIONS OF YOUR CHOICE USING THE REGISTRATION FORM
 LIMITED SPOTS ARE AVAILABLE - FIRST COME FIRST SERVE

LUNCH & OUTDOOR PERFORMANCE: DAY 2

12:00pm - 1:00pm (Outdoor space)

MUSIC LISTENING SESSION IN COLLABORATION WITH ANGHAMI

1:00pm - 3:00pm (Performance Space)

An opportunity for attendees/industry professionals to meet a number of pre-selected artists curated by Anghami through a speed-networking style session. Artists are paired with the attendees for a succession of rapid encounters as an effective exercise for the artists to play their music, share their journey, connect and receive feedback.

SHORT BREAK

3:00pm - 3:30pm

"CRAFTING YOUR ARTISTIC IDENTITY" : XCHANGE WORKSHOP BY MDLBEAST FOUNDATION

3:30pm - 5:30pm (Coworking Space)

Whether you're a musician, producer, songwriter, or creative entrepreneur, your artistic identity is more than just your sound; it's your story, your purpose, and the community you're speaking to. In collaboration with the Berklee Music Summit, This XCHANGE workshop will guide you through defining your artistic identity— from your personal narrative to your sonic identity and how you present yourself to the world.

AVID - DOLBY WORKSHOP: THE ART OF IMMERSIVE MIXING

3:30pm - 5:30pm (Recording studio)

What does it mean when someone says big warm lush sound? How do you create emotions from more than two speakers and how can you experience it? What would you need to know if you are a music producer, composer, musician or an engineer when stepping into the world of immersive mixing? In this workshop, Sreejesh Nair (Avid - Audio Application Specialist and Re-Recording Mixer) will be talking about crafting mixes and soundscapes that talk about story telling and how to carry excitement, emotion, and dynamics within a mix. What are some tricks, techniques and ideas he uses in his film mixes and how he achieves that even when having a very complex number of tracks or simpler counts. You will be going back with ideas, techniques and methods you can try and modify, to translate the emotion you have in your mind to the listener.

WORKSHOP ABELTON LIVE: ABLETON PLAYGROUND: FIND YOUR SOUND. SHARE THE SPARK.

3:30pm - 5:30pm (Ensemble room)

Ableton will host an interactive musical playground with Move, a device designed for immediate and intuitive creation, and Push, a standalone expressive device with 64 pressure-sensitive pads. Throughout the entire Summit, visitors will have the chance to freely experiment with these instruments, explore new ways of shaping sound, sparking ideas, and connect with experts who will be on hand to answer questions and give walkthroughs. Additionally, Ableton Certified Trainer Leonardo Rojas (DJ PHO) will showcase how the Ableton ecosystem, featuring Live, Push, and Move, empowers musicians to go beyond production and unlocks new possibilities for performance, creativity, and the development of a unique artistic identity.

DJ WORKSHOP BY BEATPORT CONNECT

3:30pm - 5:30pm (DJ Lab)

The session opens with an overview of Beatport's ecosystem and the opportunities it offers emerging artists. Following the introduction, participants will take part in an exclusive hands-on DJ workshop led by two of the region's rising electronic acts. In partnership with Beatport Connect, this session dives into creative mixing techniques, performance flow, and the artistry behind the decks. Designed for emerging DJs and electronic music enthusiasts, it's a chance to connect, learn, and be inspired by leading talent driving the culture forward. Featuring: Roberta Hickey - Director, Beatport MENA and DJs Fairplay and Off Course

BERKLEE ABU DHABI JAM SESSION

5:30 pm - 8:00pm (Outdoor Space)

Join us for the Wrap-Up Jam Session, an exciting opportunity to perform alongside an incredible lineup of talented local musicians and Berklee faculty. Musicians of all levels are welcome, and participants are encouraged to bring their instruments and join the groove!